

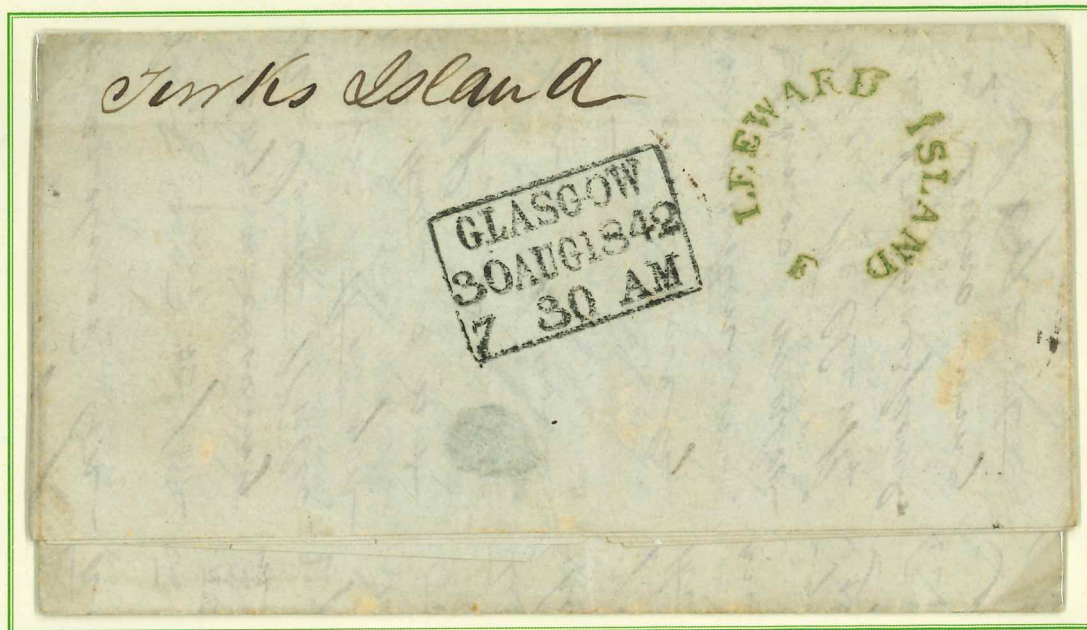
HAITI

BRITISH POST OFFICES ABROAD

Cap Haitien

When regular transatlantic mail sailings by the The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company started from Great Britain in December 1841, Grand Turk was one of the distribution centres in the West Indies. Thus the earliest postal markings of Turks Islands were manuscripts written on the back of Packet letters in transit or sorted there.

From the correspondence of A. R. Murray



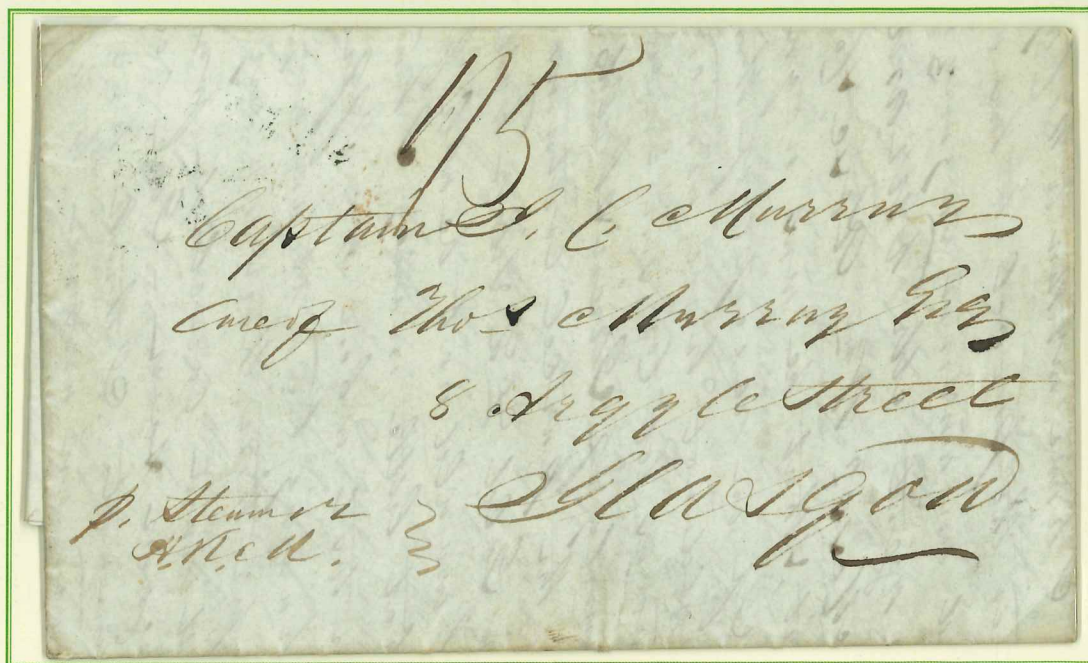
Cape Haitien, written 12 July 1842 and carried privately to Turks Islands. Posted as a Packet letter and rated 1 shilling. The letter is endorsed on the back 'Turks Island' by the R.M.S.P. agent, there being no post office. Put on board the Trent the letter arrived at Falmouth August 27. Handstamped on arrival 'Leeward Islands F' in green as the letter was not forwarded to London.

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24 August 1842, from Cap Haitien, forwarded and put on board the R.M.S. at Môle St. Nicolas. Rated 1s 5d as the rate for unpaid letters from a foreign post office in the West Indies (except Spanish colonies). Forwarded per R.M.S.P. 'Tay' to Havana, arrived at Falmouth on 12 October and Glasgow on 15 October. The writer describes in his letters to his parents the terrible experiences after the earthquake of 7 May 1842, which almost completely destroyed the town and killed 6,000 of the inhabitants.

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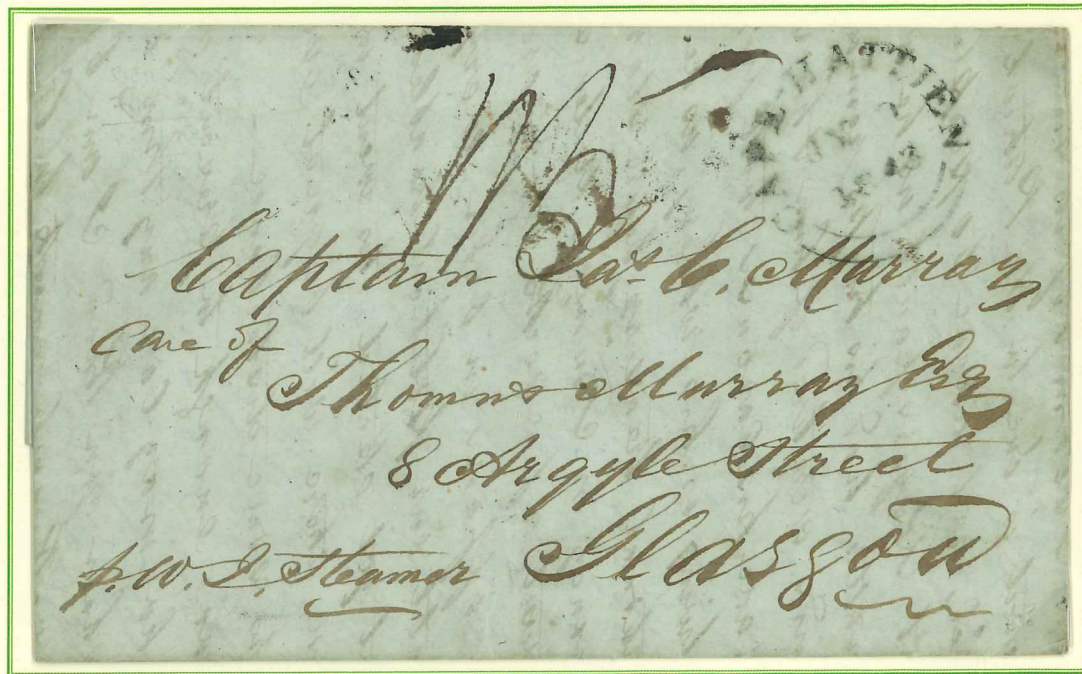
Cape Haitien, written 17 May 1842. Carried privately and posted at Dover June 25 as an inland letter, rated 2 pence. " ... before this reaches you, you may probably have heard of the dreadful catastrophe that has taken place. This town is in ruin ... I am one of the very few safe, although I have lost everything ... as I now write (on board a vessel) the town is being pillaged by the natives who are fighting amongst themselves ..."

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8 July 1843, from Cape Haitien to Glasgow rated 1s. 5d on arrival. Sent to Havana and transferred to the Packet 'Teviot' coming from Mexico. Arrived at London on 5 August and delivered the next day. Handstamped with the first and large handstamp of the British post office which had been opened in 1842.