

# International Mail

## crossing the Italian Peninsula

### in the Pre-Stamp Period 1815—1852



prepared for the Collectors Club of New York, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
by Thomas Mathà FRPSL

This exhibit shows the letter mail, the postal rates, the routes, the conventions and markings of foreign countries **transiting the Roman States** in the period from the Congress of Vienna (1815), when Europe was re-organized after the Napoleonic Wars, to the introduction of the postage stamps in Rome in 1852. Subsequently, the letter mail in the Roman States changed and new conventions modified also international relations and the mail system. It is mainly mail from and to the South of Italy, Ionian Islands and Malta that followed the route of Rome.



**PARIS to NAPLES.** January 2, 1833 by Royal Courier via Rome. Personal Letter from **Louis Philippe**, King of France, to **Ferdinand II**, King of Both Sicilies

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Thomas Mathà, born in 1972, is a lawyer and lives in Bozen, Italy. Since a very early age he developed a keen interest in postal history and published his first book on Postal History of the Allied Occupations of Trieste 1947-1954 in 1992. For the last 15 years he specialized in Postal History of Roman States, publishing articles in Italian and together with M. Mentaschi the book *Letter Mail* obtained several gold and large gold medals. With his collections he won many large gold medals. He is a Fellow of the Royal Deutscher Altbrief-Sammlerverein, the Italy & Col-  
onial Postal History Fellowship and Director and Honorary Treasurer of the International Association of Philatelic Experts (AIEP).

Old Italian States, with a special emphasis on international magazines. 2008 he published *from and to the Old Italian States 1850-1870*, that International Stamp Exhibitions worldwide. als at FIP world exhibitions. In 2005 he was Stamp Exhibition. He serves as a judge for Philatelic Society London, a member of the onies Study Circle. He is a Fellow of the Inter-

## A.1 — Exchange Post Offices for Transit Mail



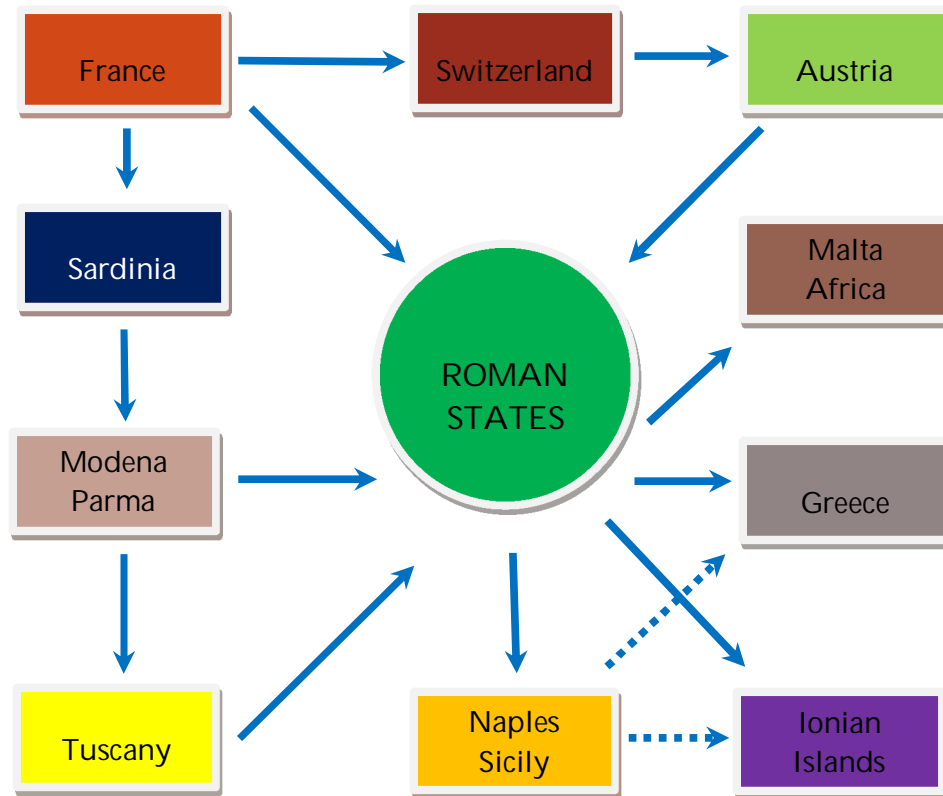
Valentine from Turin to Rome, but for Naples, 1840





## A.2—Transit Routes

### The System



**1846:** from the Austrian Postal System via Bologna, Rome and Naples to the Kingdom of Sicily: the distance of 1.200 km was done in 10 days. Sender and addressee paid together 22 ½ bajocchi, appx. 19 Kreutzer for the full transport. Not so bad, after all, considering the terrible streets in Southern Italy, and still **no railway** system in the South.

## A.2—Postal Conventions



**1846:** Naples to *Chalons sur Marne*, France. In 11 days for 1300 km. Naples by **mediation** of Roman States to Austria, than **intermediation** in closed mail via Switzerland to France. A total of 4 bi-lateral postal conventions made possible the transport of this letter. Without the Roman States no mediation of mail between north and south.

**These conventions contained rules about the Papal transit of mail:**

### Intermediation

Sardinia - Austria

France - Austria

Tuscany - Sardinia

France - Sardinia

### Mediation

direct conventions

Papal States - Austria

*Apecial agreement  
for Austrian Lloyd*

Papal States - Tuscany

Papal States - Naples

## A.3 — Exchange & Entry Markings

*Transito  
per lo Stato Pontificio*

Rome, 1850 – 1860

ANCONA

Ancona, 1825 – 1850 \*

*Antiche  
province aust.*

Mantua, 1843-1851

*Antiche  
province aust.*

Venice, 1843-1852

\* used for ship mail from Greece/Ionian Islands



Padua, 1817-1853



Venice, 1817-1843 \*\*

FRONTIERE

Ferrara, 1850-1856

SVIZZERA

Ferrara, 1817-1850

\*\* the R / Stato Pontificio from Rovigo was only for local mail

*Regno L. V.*

Bologna, 1843 – 1852

*Regno L. V.*

Ferrara, 1843 - 1852

REGNO  
LOMBARDO VENETO

Bologna, 1817-1852

REGNO  
LOMBARDO VENETO

Ferrara, 1817-1852

STATI  
EREDITARIAUSTRIACI

Bologna, 1817-1853

STATI  
EREDITARIAUSTRIACI

Ferrara, 1825-1853



1851, Rotterdam, Netherlands to Messina, Sicily, prepaid 75 cents to the French-Sardinian border and carried than via Parma and Modena to Roman States and Naples to destination, where 38 grana were charged, including other transit fees. The famous transit marking *Transito per lo Stato Pontificio* was struck in Rome.



## A.4 — General Guidelines

### How can you **identify** Roman Transit?

**Not always** you can see Roman Transit Mail so clearly.

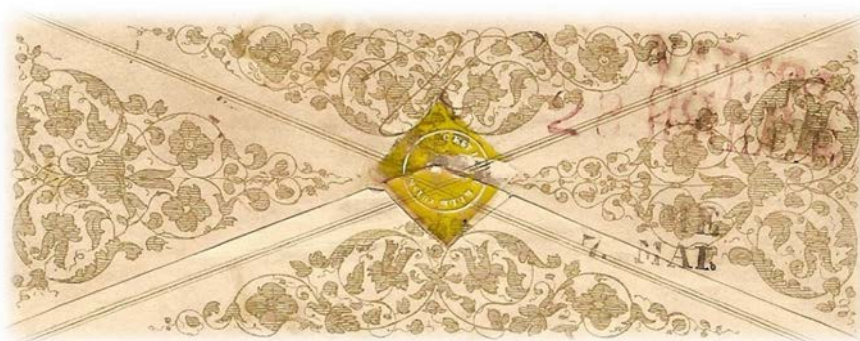
Only in few cases, beginning 1851, they introduced the marking "Transito / per lo Stato Pontificio".

Often there is any marking, cancellation or sign about the transit. You have to find out the transit with other elements:

#### **particular rates, time of transport**

Remember that the alternative way, by ship mail from Genoa/Leghorn to Naples/Messina, was uncommon and very expensive in the pre-stamp period.

In the exhibit, letters without any visible sign of transit, are explained with the above abbreviations to make clear the Roman transit.



Valentine Letter from **Palermo**, Sicily, April 28, 1842, directed to Fiume, Austria. On the back, the originating postmark from Palermo and Naples in transit. It was brought to the Roman border at Terracina and from there handed to the Papal Administration, via Roma, Bologna reached the Austrian border. In Venice it was marked **V / Stato Pontificio**, and went to Trieste and then down to Fiume in Dalmatia.

On the back 20 grana was prepaid in Sicily, of which 15 grana credited to the Post of Naples (upper left corner on the front), including 10 grana (8 bajocchi) Roman transit fees. On arrival, 14 Kreuzer Conventionsmünze were charged, due to Austrian Tariff of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1823, the corresponding fee for a letter with a distance of more than 12 Post Stations. *Valentine Letters from Southern Italy, and generally in the pre-stamp period, are truly scarce.*

## B.1 — Roman-Austrian Postal Convention

The **most important** of all the postal conventions for the transit mail crossing the Italian Peninsula. As far as the transit mail through the Old Italian States, it was applied for mail to/from

**Lombardy Venetia / Modena / Parma.**

The first so-called 'provisional' convention was signed in 1815 (followed by a later one in 1823). The Papal States paid to Austria 26 baj for unpaid letters per ounce from Lombardy Venetia, Parma and Modena. Exchange Post Offices were established in Ferrara and Bologna (to correspond with Venice and Padua).

Roman States

*Regno L<sup>o</sup> V<sup>o</sup>*

REGNO  
LOMBARDO VENETO

Austria

P  
Stato Pontificio

V  
Stato Pontificio



1818 (NOV 18) PARMA to PALERMO, via BOLOGNA, ROME, NAPLES. Pre-paid 2 decimi to the Roman border, and rated 10 grana in Naples. On arrival in Sicily 1 Tarì 14 grana (= 17 Neapolitan grana) charged. Sicilian control marking for foreign letter mail **MSG** (Marchese di San Giacinto). Sicilian Tariff of May 10, 1817.



## B.2 — Roman-Tuscan Postal Convention

This convention was important also for the transit mail to foreign (not Italian) countries, because the mail could proceed via Tuscany to Sardinia and beyond. The first convention was signed in 1823 (followed by a later one in 1841).

**Exchange Post Offices.** Papal States: Rome, Bologna, Perugia, Viterbo, Acquapendente.  
Tuscany: Florence, Siena, San Quirico, Radicofani, Arezzo, Castiglion Fiorentino, Cortona.

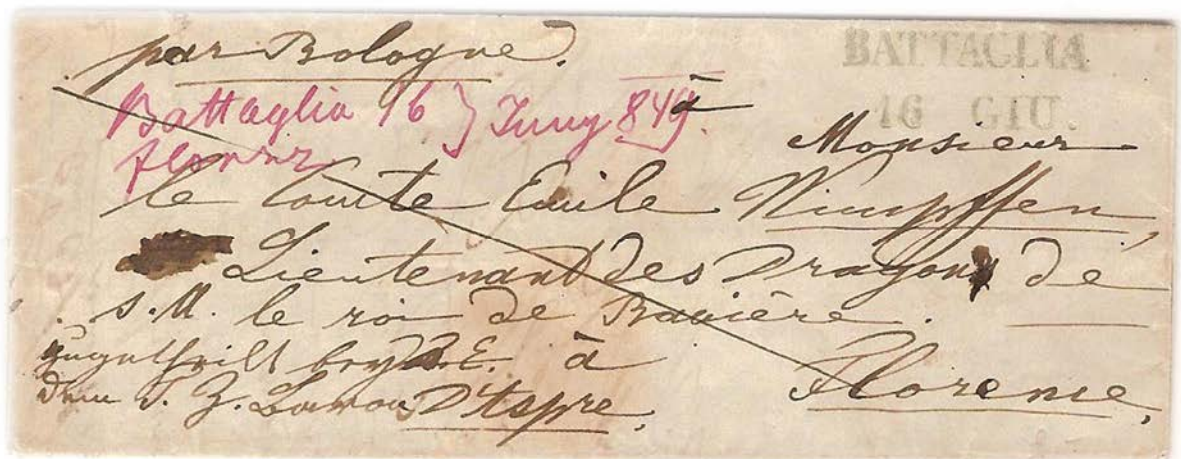
The exchange was organized as follows: with Bologna three times a week.

Acquapendente two times and Perugia only one. 1841 they were raised up all to five times.

Tuscany exchanged the Sardinian Mail and Papal States the Neapolitan and Sicilian Mail **without any fee**.

- 1) for Mail **beyond the Sardinian border**, Tuscany charged 11 baj for each 30 g
- 2) Roman States asked for Sicilian Mail to be shipped **beyond Sardinia** 8 baj transit fee for 30 g letters

In 1841, the transit fee was 12 bajocchi for 30 g letters. There were **never introduced any transit markings**.



1849 (JUN 16) BATTAGLIA to FLORENCE, as per endorsement **par Bologne**, prepaid only to the Roman border 6 Kr CM. The letter was addressed to Count **Franz Emil Lorenz Wimpffen**, **Lieutenant des Dragons de S. M. le Roi de Baviere**, fighting with Austrian Troops in the 1849 Risorgimento War against Sardinia in **Bologna**. The cover passed Bologna and was then handled to the **Austrian Military Field Post Office** in Tuscany.

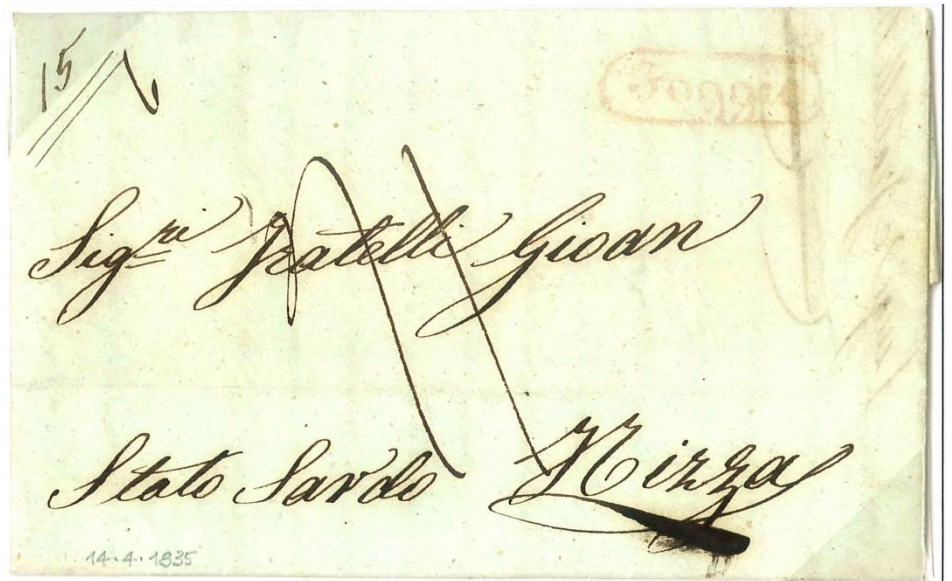


## B.3 —*Tuscan-Sardinian Postal Convention*

This convention introduced 1817 the possibility to forward the Mail from and the Southern Italian States. The first convention was signed in 1817 (followed by one in 1822 and 1838).

Exchange Post Offices - for Sardinia: Turin, Genoa, Sarzana  
for Tuscany: Florence, Leghorn, Pisa, Pietrasanta (later also Lucca).

All the mail from Sardinia via Tuscany to Roman States and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies and viceversa had to be shipped **only via Florence**. Transit fees: Tuscany paid to Sardinia 14 decimi for 30 g of letters of Transit Mail. Sardinia had to pay 60 centesimi for 30 g letters for Tuscan Transit Mail.



1835 (APR 14) FOGGIA to NICE, prepaid 15 grana to the Papal border (10 gr due to the distance, outside NAPLES, + 5 gr Papal transit), carried via NAPLES, ROME and TUSCANY. On arrival 21 soldi including Roman & Tuscan transit.



1837 (JUL 11) NAPLES to LAGUIEGLIA, near GENOA, prepaid 10 grana to the Papal border (5 + 5 Papal transit), confirmed by Neapolitan **AGDP**, carried via ROME and TUSCANY. Rated on arrival 17 soldi, including transit. On the back disinfection handstamp **NETTA FUORI / E SPORCA DENTRO** from ROME.

## C.1 — Roman-Austrian Postal Convention

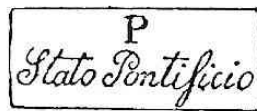
Please see for the other details chapter B.1.

The **Papal States** paid to Austria 80 bajocchi for unpaid letters per ounce from Austria, and 1 scudo for letters from the Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland, Prussia and the German States and Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Poland and Russia, Ottoman Empire and the Levant, **Austria** had to pay for Papal transit 20 baj per ounce for letters from Two Sicilies and beyond.

Roman States struck:

*Antiche  
province aust.* **STATI  
EREDITARI AUSTRIACI** **SVIZZERA**

Austria applied:



1816 (AUG 6) TRIESTE to NAPLES, carried via VENICE, FERRARA, ROME. Prepaid (red crayon) 6 + 12 Kr to the papal border: 6 Kr transit + 12 Kr Tariff of July 1, 1819 (more than 12 post stations). Charged 20 grana on arrival, of which 10 gr Papal transit, due to 1816 postal convention. Disinfection era, confirmed **netta fuori** / e back. against chol- by **Ferrara** / **dentro** on the





## C.2 — Special Austrian Lloyd Convention

With this Additional Convention with Austria of 1839, the Papal States introduced the possibility to send the mail from **Ancona** on behalf of vessels of the Austrian Lloyd to Trieste and to the Ionian Islands and Greece. So it was also possible to forward letters from foreign countries **via Ancona** to these destinations.

	Roman fee	Lloyd	Total
to Trieste and Venice	5 baj	8 baj	13 baj
to Constantinople/Alexandria	5 baj	30 baj	35 baj
to Smirne and Dardanelles	5 baj	25 baj	30 baj
to Athens, Canea, Syra, Suda	5 baj	20 baj	25 baj
to Patras	5 baj	15 baj	20 baj
to the Ionian Islands	5 baj	10 baj	15 baj

Markings used for foreign mail

ANCONA



1835 (OCT 15)  
TO, as per endor-  
Vapor **Jonio**" to  
from there on  
BOLOGNA, VERO-  
A double rate  
of which 5d for-  
Lloyd and Roman  
back 10 bajocchi  
zione" was noted  
firming prepay-  
trian border. On  
was charged  
than 12 Post Sta-  
border). Desinfection against cholera in ANCONA, confirmed by backside rectangular handstamp **Sanità di Ancona / Netto per contatto**.



CORFU to ROVERE-  
sement "Col Regio  
ANCONA, and  
surface mail via  
NA to ROVERETO.  
letter, prepaid 9d,  
eign credit to the  
States. On the  
double "Imposta-  
in ANCONA, con-  
ment to the Aus-  
arrival 28 Kr CM  
(2x14 Kr for more  
tions from the

Col Regio Vapor Jonio



Sanità di Ancona  
Netto per contatto

## C.3 — Franco-Austrian Postal Convention

As Roman States had a postal agreement with Austria, the mail with destination France, United Kingdom and Overseas could be regularly sent **via Austria and France** under the Franco-Austrian Postal Convention of 1817 (and 1844). It was carried via Milan and in closed mail via Switzerland to Huningue and St. Louis.

Milan

VIA DI  
UNINGA VIA DI  
UNINGA



St. Louis



Huningue / Paris



AUTRICHE  
PAR HUNINGUE



1836 (JUL 6) CURNON to NAPLES, routed via *Sardinia, Austria and Roman States*. It was pre-paid (as per **P.P.**) to the Roman border 16 decimes, of which 1 Franc French rate and 60 cent credit to Sardinia. On the back is marked the **7** bajocchi credit of ROME (10 grana), in addition with 5 grana domestic fee a total of 15 grana to pay be the addressee. Disinfection slizes against cholera in ROME.

tarif premium 1 Franc  
F. de change - 60  
1-60





## C.4 — Sardinian-Austrian Postal Convention

Only in very rare cases, letter mail from the southern part of the Italian Peninsula was shipped under the Sardinian-Austrian Convention of 1818.



MILANO  
L.T.

ITALIE  
P. LE PONT-DE  
BEAUVOISIN



1828 (APR 1) NAPLES to ANNONAY, carried exceptionally not via Rome, but the ancient route over the mountains to **Ancona**, and from there to Bologna, Milan (**Austria**), Turin (**Sardinia**), Pont de Beauvoisin (Lyon) and Paris. It was paid to the Roman-Austrian border 15 grana (confirmed by **AGDP**). As it was a cover of 7 ½ g weight, France credited 12 decimes for Sardinia (including Austrian fees) and 6 decimes for itself, for a total of 18 decimes. The letter was marked in Milan **Milano / L.T.** (Milano/Lettera Transito) and **T.S** (Transito Sardo) in Turin, at the French exchange post office with Sardinia **Italie / p. le Pont de / Beauvoisin**.

## C.5 — Franco-Sardinian Postal Convention



C.F.2.R

NIZZA MARITTIMA

The transit mail to and from the Two Sicilies, Papal States and beyond to France (and beyond) was carried via Tuscany and Sardinia and under the Franco-Sardinian Postal Convention from 1817 (followed by new agreements in 1822 and 1838). In the convention was also introduced the transit of letter mail from and to the South of the Italian Peninsula, followed also by particular transit markings. For letters (always for 30 g weight), France paid to Sardinia according to the 1838 convention: - 2,85 Lire for letters from Roman States or Modena (marking T.S. 2) - 3,25 Lire for letters from Two Sicilies and beyond (marking T.S. 3)

1815 (SEP 26) MARSEILLE to NAPLES, in **closed mail** via Sardinia + Tuscany to ROME and to destination. In NAPLES the control marking **AGDP** was applied. Nothing signed for prepayment. Rome debited the letter 20 bajocchi transit fees (25 grana), on arrival 36 grana were asked to the addressee. *I could not find any source for ratings in this early period.*

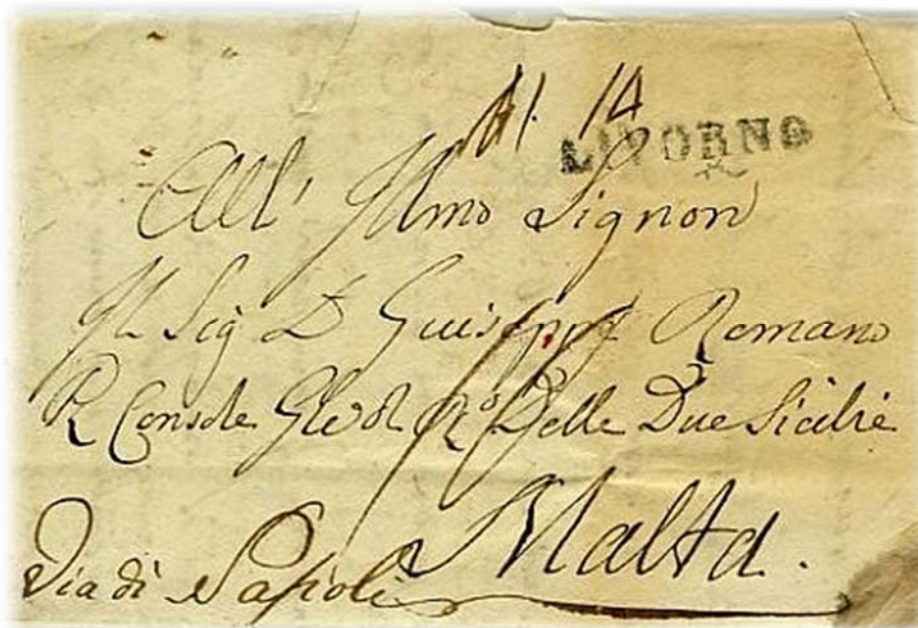


1815 (FEB 19) MARSEILLE to NAPLES, as above. ROME debited 50 bajocchi transit fees (weight of 15 denari, two sheets), on arrival **325** grana were asked to the addressee, probably the **cumulative amount** for all the letters of the company of the day or the week.



## C.6 — Roman-Neapolitan Postal Convention

This convention was signed 1816 and was just as important for the transit mail crossing the Italian Peninsula as the agreement Papal States-Austria. It was not only the basic agreement to carry all the mail to and from the Kingdom of Two Sicily (and a large part of the Mediterranean Area) to foreign countries, but also for the foreign letters to/from Ionian Islands and Greece before the start of the service by the Austrian Lloyd (the '**Otranto**' way). No particular conventional markings were introduced. The transit fees changed in the time and were defined by Circulars of the own Postal Administrations. The exchange Offices were **Fondi** (Naples) and **Terracina** (Papal States).



1819 (SEP 13) LEGHORN to MALTA, endorsed "**Via di Napoli**", carried in closed mail via ROME to NAPLES, from there by Neapolitan contract ships to Messina. From Messina shipped by British vessel to Malta. No indication of prepayment in letter was paid only to Naples (arrived SEP 23) and in Sicily in Old Si-14 grana (= 17 Neapolitan arrival in Malta. Discrepancy in Leghorn and Mal-

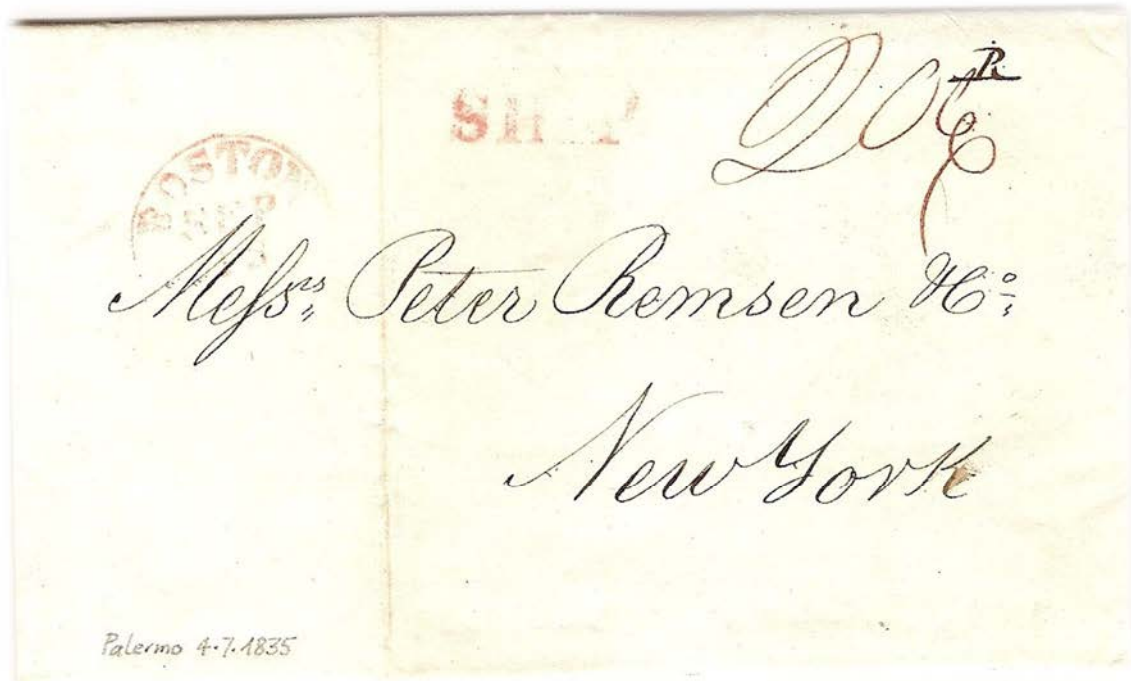


ta. No indication of prepayment in letter was paid only to Naples (arrived SEP 23) and in Sicily in Old Si-14 grana (= 17 Neapolitan arrival in Malta. Discrepancy in Leghorn and Mal-

## C.7 — Forwarding Agents

To finish some examples of letters carried on behalf of **Forwarding Agents**. This was another way to transport the mail to foreign countries, in sometimes faster and less expensive than by official mail service.

**SHIP**



1835 (JUL 4) PALERMO to NEW YORK, privately forwarded via Roman States, probably to United Kingdom and from there by a sailing ship to Boston, where it arrived on September 18<sup>th</sup> (a journey of 2 months 14 days). At Boston it was marked **SHIP** and rated for **20 ¾** cents postage due in New York. This amount consisted of 2 cents ship fee plus 18 ¾ cents inland fee for a single-rate letter from Boston to New York. The internal rates in the United States in 1835 were based on the number of sheets in the letter and the distance it was traveling. In this case, the letter had only one sheet and traveled a distance greater than 150 miles but less than 400 miles to New York (217 miles).

