

Victorian Ceylon

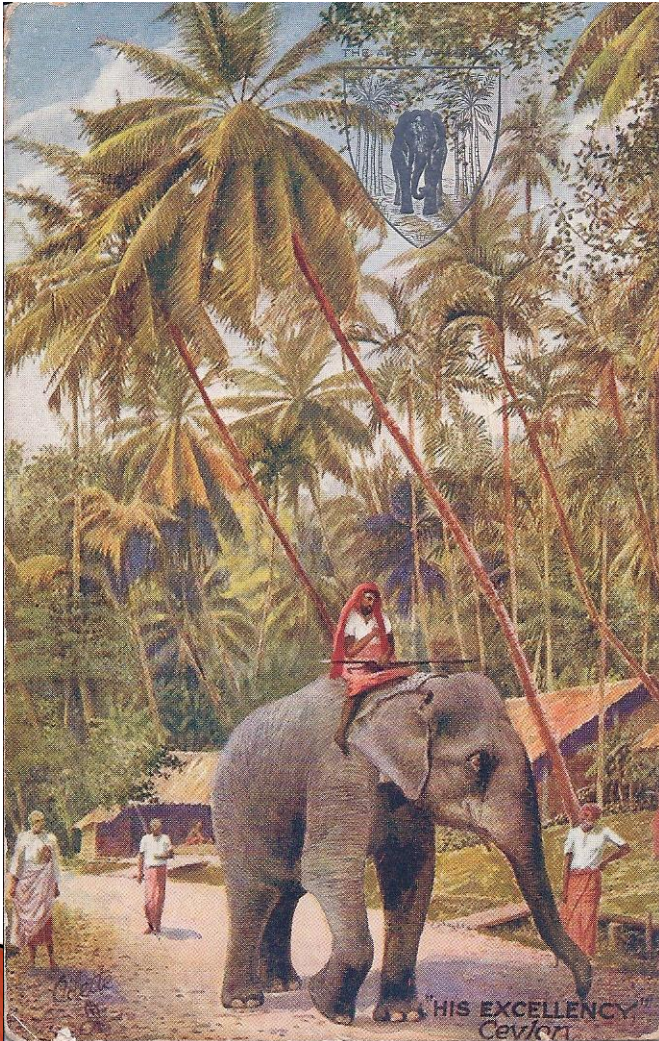
The Road to Tea Trade

Kathryn Johnson

Collectors Club of New York

April 17, 2013

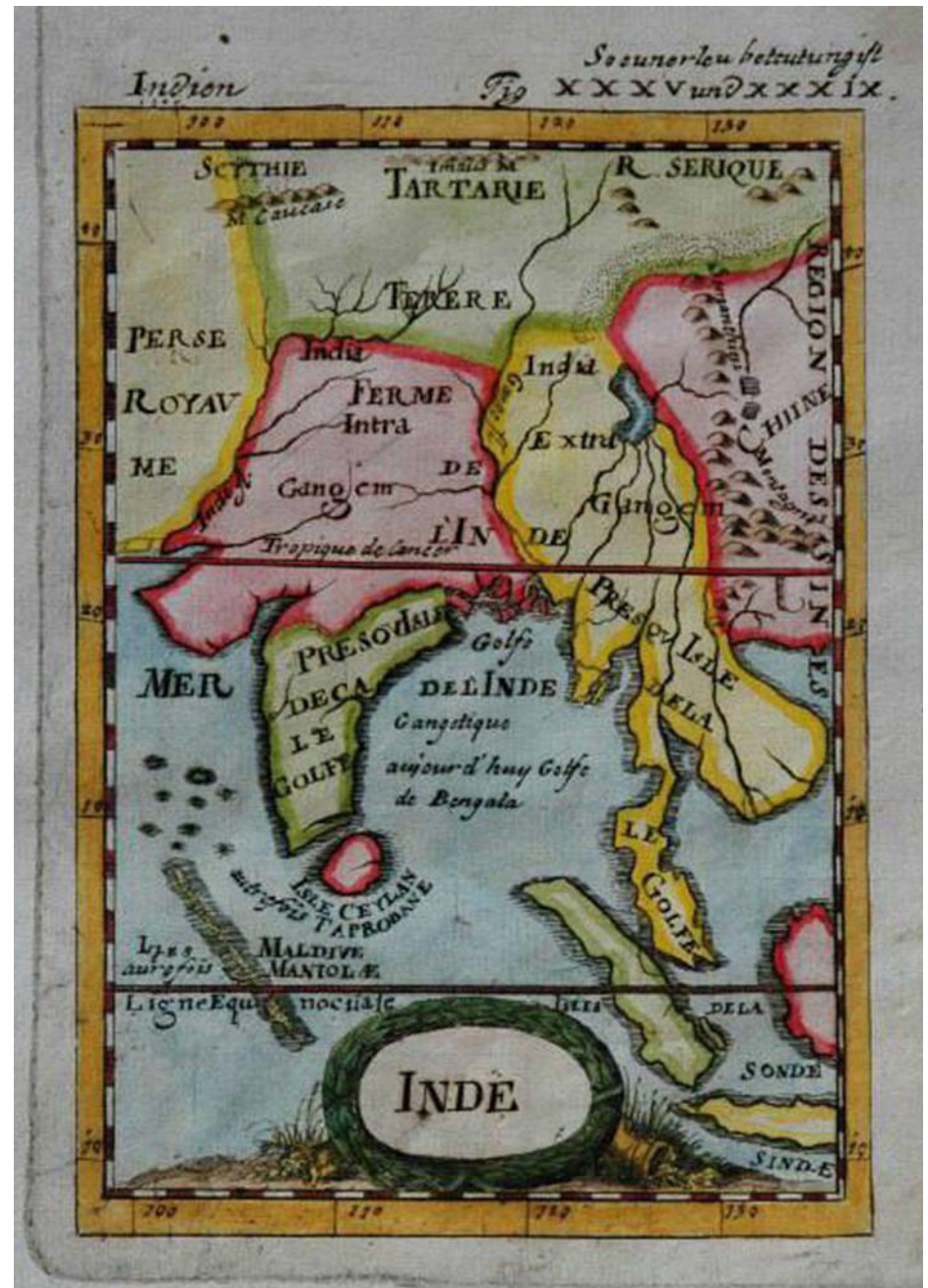
Why Ceylon?



- ▶ Sure seems exotic
- ▶ Stamp collecting
 - Takes us to far away places
 - Captures imagination

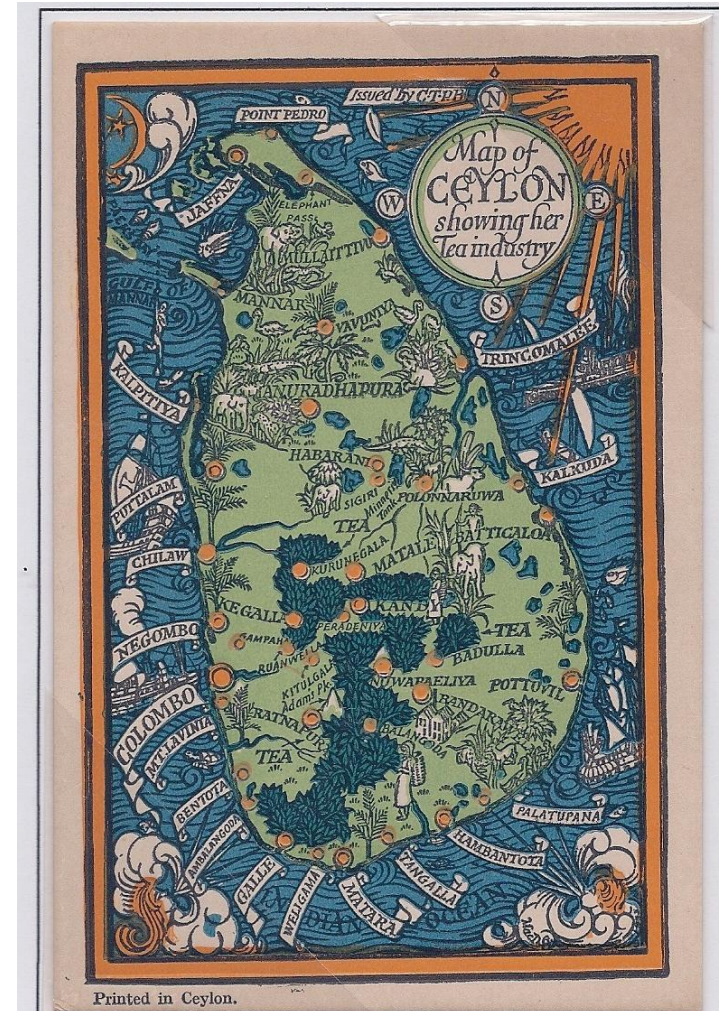
Early View

- Portuguese
- Dutch
- British Colony

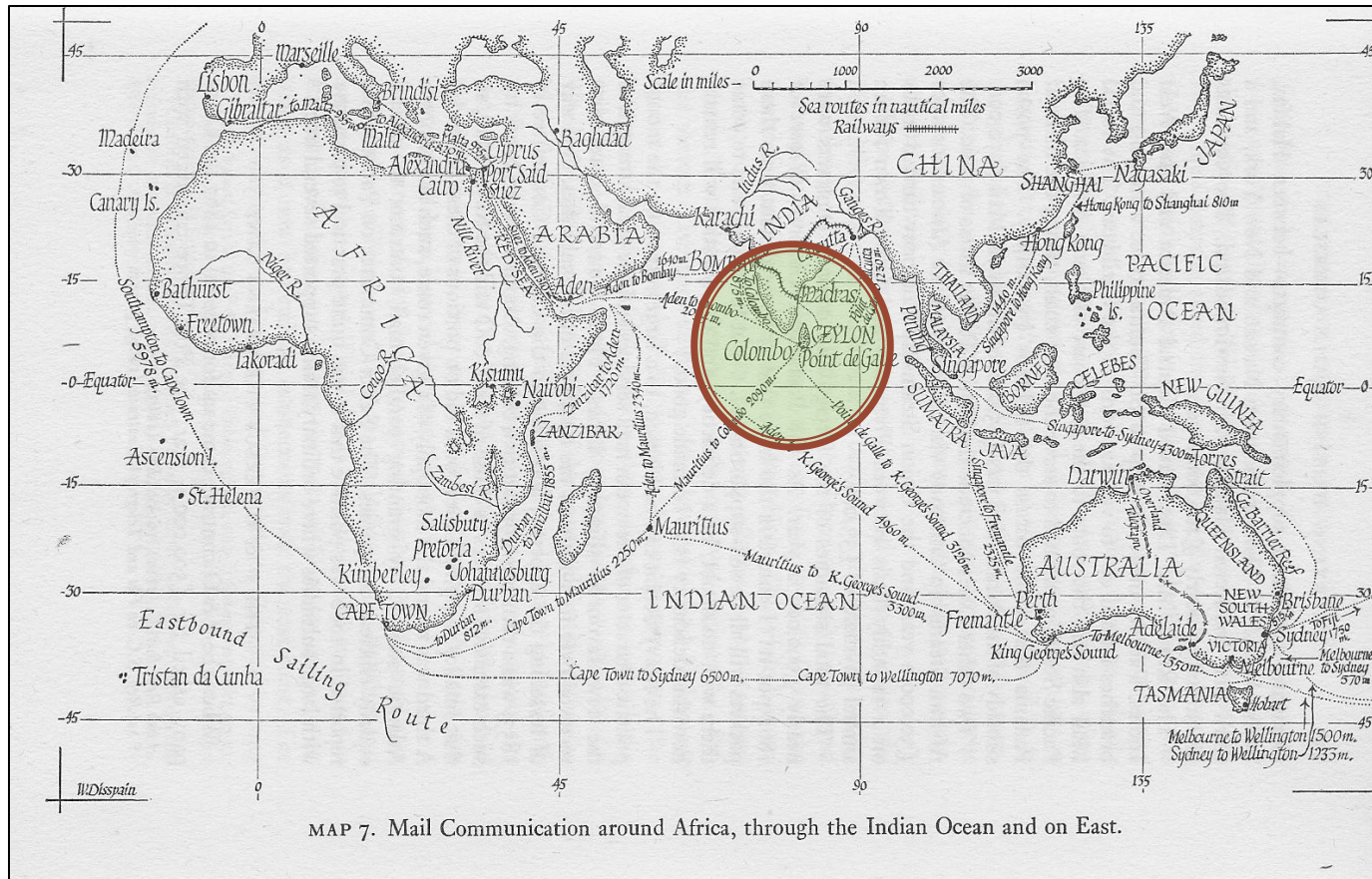


Outline of Talk

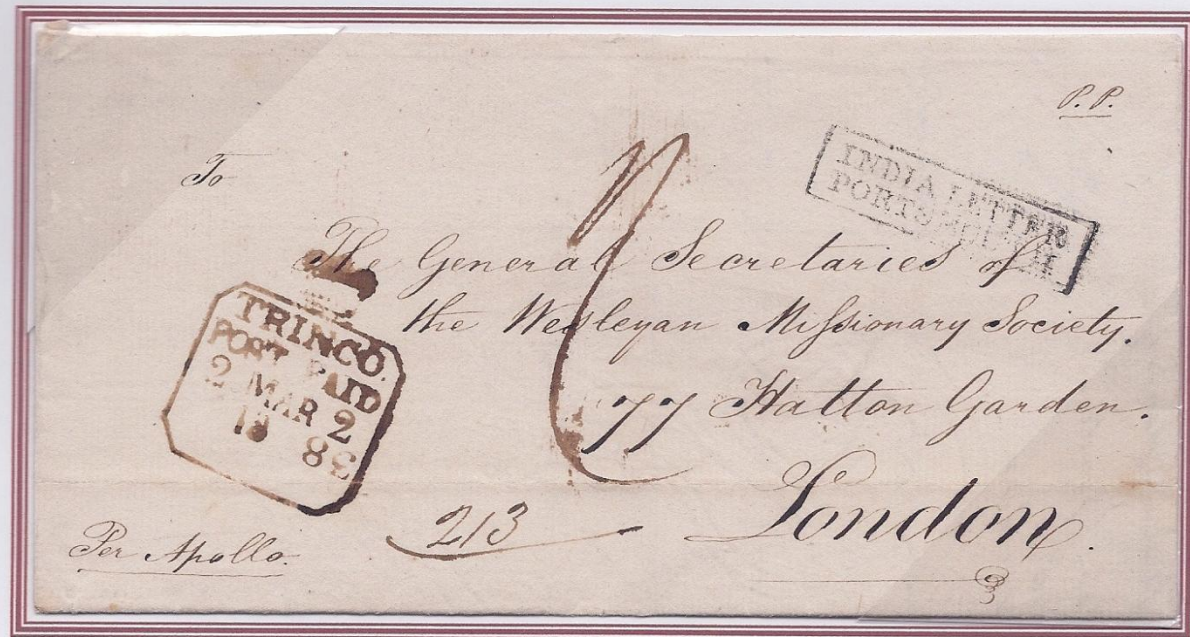
- ▶ Stampless Mail
- ▶ Classic Victorian
- ▶ Great Era of Tea
- ▶ Tying Theme:
 - Agricultural Progression



Early Routing of Mail – Via Africa



Trincomalee – London – 114 Days



Ex Hackney, Oxley

From: Trincomalee, Post Paid

To: Missionary letter to London, England

March 2, 1838

Ceylon Markings: Trinco. Crown Shield. Variety: Clerk error in insertion of date slugs, year reversed and inverted.

Note: This marking struck before the shield was damaged. Damaged apparent in later dated shield in scanned image.

Destination Markings: Boxed India Letter Portsmouth and "213" docking mark.

Rate: 1/- comprised of 8d from port of landing to London and 4d India Letter fee. Rate established March 1835.

Route: Carried by East India Company, via Cape of Good Hope to England, on sailing vessel Apollo.

Received: June 24, 1839, 114 days transit.

Kandy – Bannockburn – 138 Days



From: Kandy, Post Paid

To: Bannockburn, Scotland

June 24, 1836

Ceylon Markings: Kandy Crown Shield, raised crown above shield.

Destination Marking: Boxed India Letter Portsmouth

Boxed "1/2" Scottish toll or wheel tax, 1/2d.

Rate: 1/7d comprised of:

1/- rating at Portsmouth consisting 4d India Letter fee and 8d inland, Portsmouth to London. 1/- marking on left crossed off for re-rating. In London, re-rated to 1/7d for Portsmouth to Bannockburn distance 3d for miles over 300, at 1d per 100 miles, plus 4d for total 1/7d.

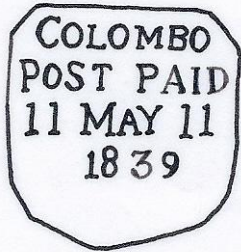
Route: Carried by East India Company, via Cape of Good Hope, to London arrival via Portsmouth.

Received: November 9, 1836, 138 days transit.

Ceylon in the Stampless Mail Era

- ▶ A stopover on the way to or from India
- ▶ Evolved to tran-shipment of goods
 - Mail carried from the Port Cities

A Variety of Crown Markings Used

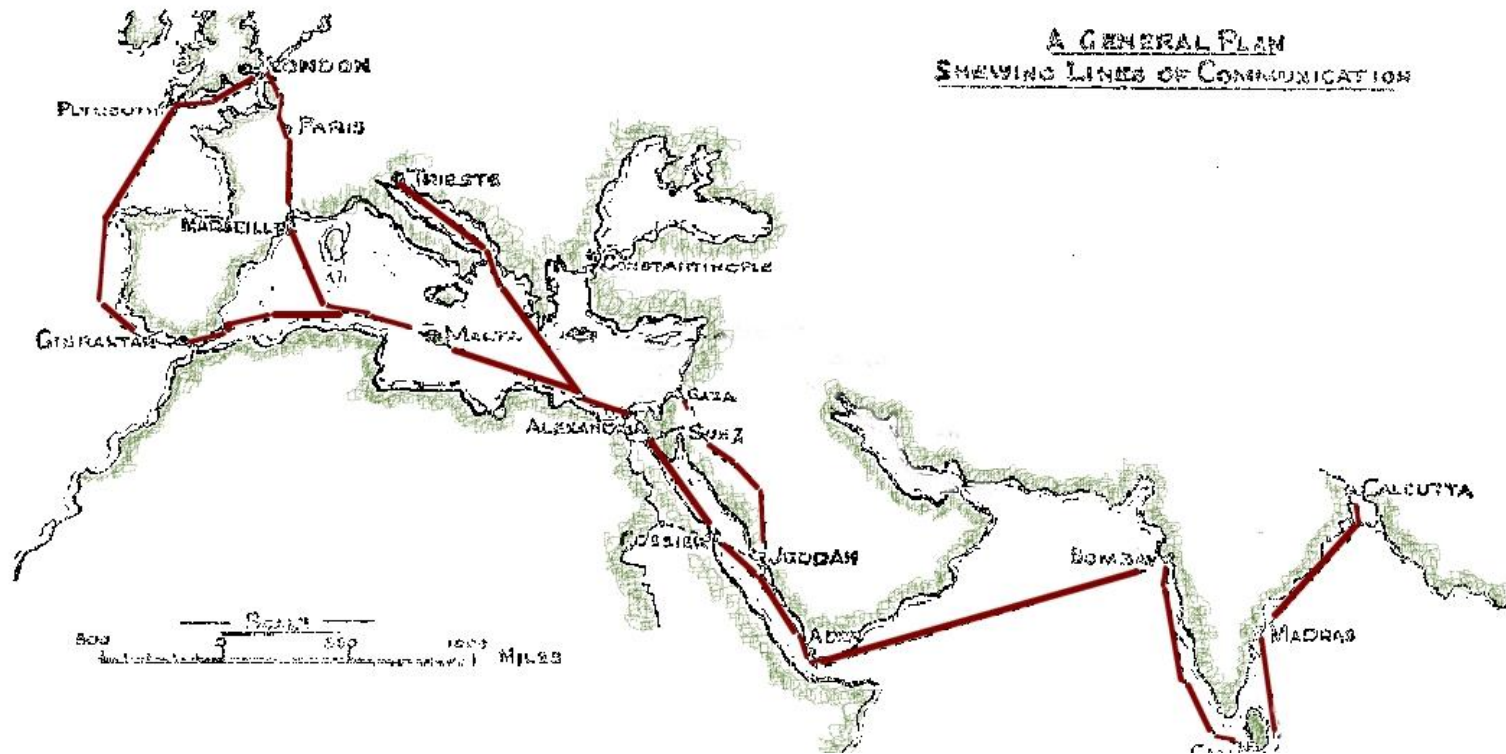


From: Colombo

May 11, 1839

Marking: Shield, no Crown. Crown presumed bent back or broken off from the original handstamp. This marking, in this condition, remained in use for two years. Rate: 1/- comprised of 8d from port of landing to London and 4d India Letter fee.

Faster Mail from Ceylon to Europe



Transit Time Reduced – 42 Days

The Peninsular and Oriental
Steam Navigation Company
(P&O), under British contract,
operated the Hindostan.



From: Colombo To: London via Southampton April 16, 1845
Marking: Colombo Crowned Oval, Post Paid crossed off used instead of Post N Paid, below.
Rate: 1/- letter rate. Unpaid, indicated by Post Paid crossed off. Note: per Hindostan, bottom left.
May 28, 1845 receipt, 42 days transit.

Routing Through India

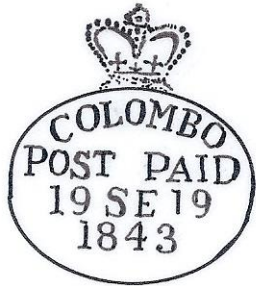
- ▶ October, 1844
- ▶ Via Marseilles



Ceylon in the Stampless Mail Era

- ▶ A stopover on the way to or from India
- ▶ Evolved to Tran-shipment of Goods
 - Mail from the Port Cities
- ▶ **Coffee became a Crop of Opportunity**
 - Planted by coastal cities
 - Limited by transportation
 - Island largely a jungle
 - Shipped as a wholesale good

Coffee Estate Mail



From: Colombo To: London via Falmouth September 20, 1843

Marking: Colombo Crowned Oval, Post Paid. Used at the General Post Office (GPO) Colombo only, in use for only three years.

Rate: 1/- per ½ oz comprised of 8d inland and 4d India Letter fee.

November 13, 1843 receipt, 54 days transit.

From Ceylon coffee plantation manager to investor in London: "Our estate is advancing rapidly, we now have over 270 acres planted."

Early Ceylon Coffee Production



GK
Ouwah
F — 3
GK
Ouwah — 17. 1.
S — 3
P.B. — 2
" —
Triage — 1. 1.
I
GK
Ouwah — 6. 1.

32 Ck. 3 Pkts.

March 29/68
Shipped in good order and well conditioned by GEORGE STEUART & CO. in
and upon the good Ship called the "*Lehelula*"
whereof is Master for this present Voyage. *Coop.*
and now riding at Anchor in the *Colombo Road* and bound for *London*.

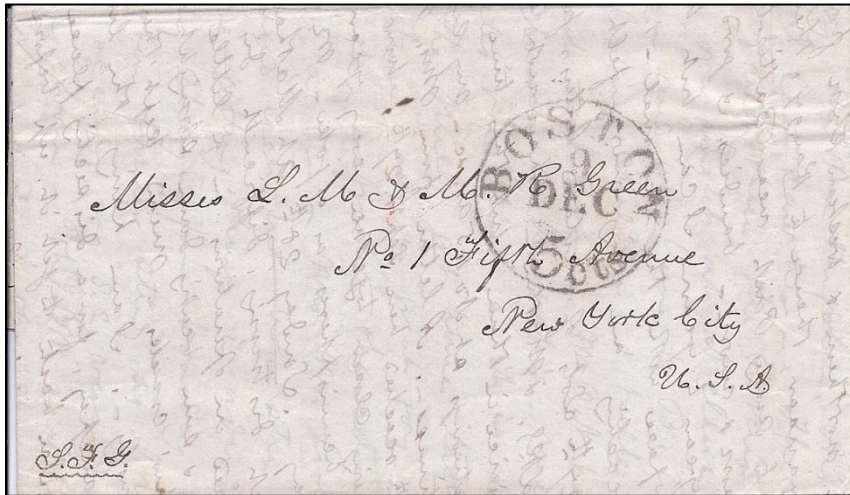
Thirty two basks and three Barrels

Coffee 109 net Cwts 293 3. 18.

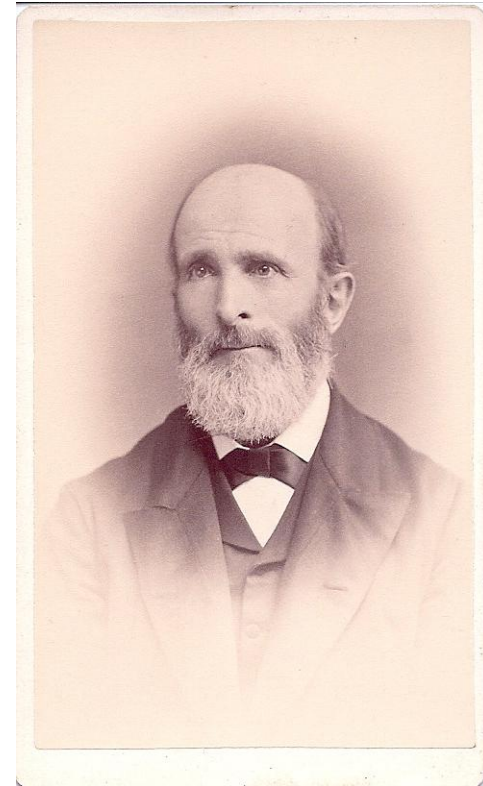
being marked and numbered as in the Margins and are to be delivered in the like
good order and well conditioned at the aforesaid Port of *London*
(the Sct of God, the Queen's Enemies, Fire, all and every other dangers and accidents of the Seas, Rivers & Navigation of whatever
nature or kind soever accepted) unto *Order*

or to its Assigns, paying Freight for the said Goods *Two Pounds &*
fifteen Shillings per ton of 16 cwt
with Frimage and Average accustomed. In Witness whereof the Master or Purser of the
said Ship hath affirmed to *Two* Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date: the one of
which *Two* Bills being accomplished the other *one* to stand void.
Dated in *Colombo* 19th *December* 1868. *Plot*
Weights & Contents unknown to

Missionary Mail



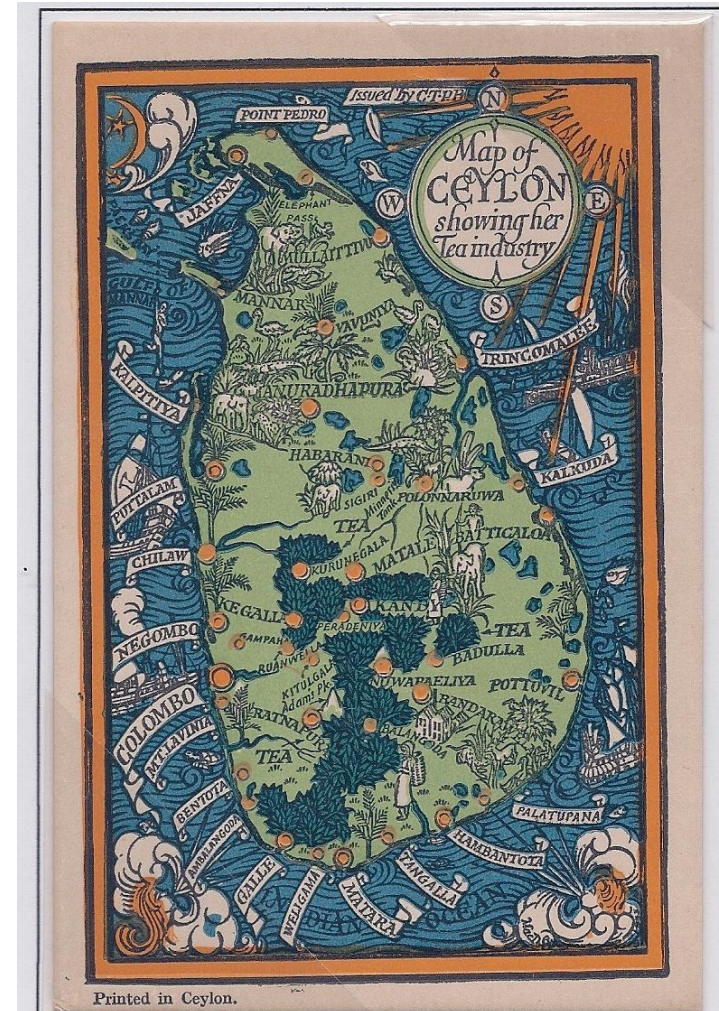
Missionary Packet
September, 1857



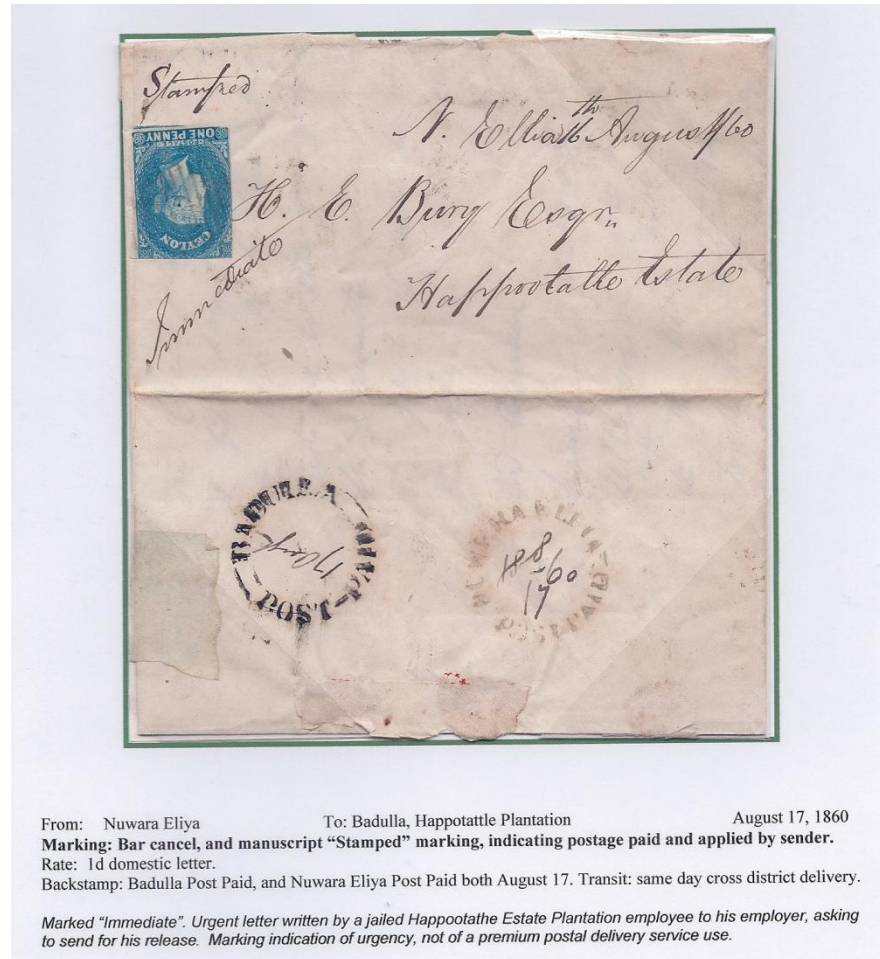
Samuel Green

Outline of Talk

- ▶ Stampless Mail
- ▶ Classic Victorian
- ▶ The Great Era of Tea
- ▶ Tying Theme:
 - Agricultural Progression



Bar Cancel & Circular Post Paid w/Manuscript Dates



Letter sent from a Coffee Plantation
Note: Marked Stamped & Immediate

First Stamps & Their Cancels



Appropriate Marking:
Two tied bar obliterators
Rate: 1/6d on piece.
From an 1868-1872, 1 oz cover,
routing via Southampton.



From: Colombo

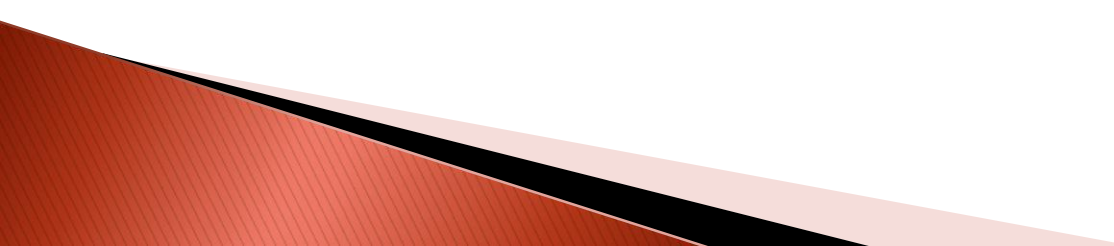
To: London

April 14, 1860

Marking: Six with full bar obliterator cancels on six 1d strip.



↑ Forgeries



1857 Mail to India

Note placement of stamp

Earliest Known Use:
5d on Cover. Stamp issued
July 2, 1857



Galle Steamer
Marking
On Reverse



From: Galle

To: Bombay, India

October 3, 1857

Marking: Tied barred oval cancel.

Rate: 5d per ½ oz foreign rate to India. Effective January 1, 1856, rate comprised of 4d India and 1d domestic. Backstamp: Galle Steamer Post Paid October 3, 1857. Arrival stamp Bombay.

1860 – Three Stamps for 9d to London

Unusual Three Color Combination with Three Bar Cancels



Ex Hackmey, RPSL Cert.

From: Colombo

To: London

August 3, 1860

Marking: Cancelled with three thin, 13 bar obliterator cancels.

Three color combination of 6d, 2d and 1d used instead of single 9d stamp.

Rate: 9d for $\frac{1}{4}$ oz letter rate via Marseilles.

Routing: Via Marseilles reduced travel time by one week, and cost 3d more than via Southampton.

Backstamp: Colombo Post Paid applied in red ink.

1864 Perforated Series



Note dated pen cancel
Stamped under $\frac{1}{2}$ oz

Discourage removal by runner

1866 Bar Cancel with Paid



Marking in use
With Bar Cancel:
1864-1868
20 mm x 20 mm



Three Oval Bar Cancels on Piece
Rate: 3/4d rate, triple rate via Marseilles.

From: Galle To: London April 18, 1866
Marking: Tied oval bar cancels and new Galle small circular paidstamps.
Rate: 10d, ½ oz applicable rate from 1863-1868, comprised of 6d per ½ oz British plus 4d per ½ oz French Transit marking.
Datetamped: Galle Paid, April 18, 1866, Receiving: London May 14, 1866.

Examples on Piece: Issues from late 1860s to 1870s, found with bar cancels and circular paid stamps.

1870 Pearson Hill Cancel



Marking: Heavy Bar Cancels

From: Colombo

To: Horsham, UK

February 2, 1870

Marking: 14 bar obliterator with combined "B Colombo" timestamp indicator.

Rate: 9d foreign letter front, ½ oz letter 1868 rate, new lower cost routing via Southampton.

Pearson Hill Obliterator



Cancel in use:
1866 - 1873
41 mm x 30 mm



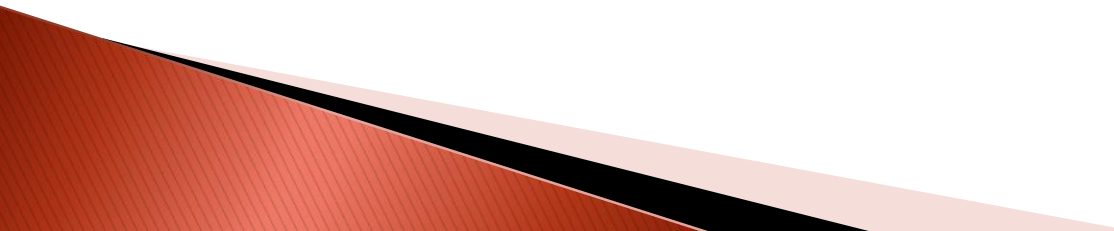
Marking: Bar Cancels with cds

Bar Obliterator with Circular Date Stamp
In use for only seven years, this heavy combined obliterator datestamp was issued in Colombo to replace the fine lined bar cancel, providing the datestamp information and more effective



From: Colombo October 26, 1870
Marking: 14 bar obliterator with combined Colombo B cds. Letters "B" and "C" are used as timestamps of mail processing, early letters for postal indication of early in the day mail processing.
Rate: 1d domestic letter.

Ceylon's Coffee Industry

- ▶ Coffee is only a wholesale crop, requiring planting, some tending, and much later, harvesting
 - ▶ Initially it is grown near the coffee plantations which are collapsing. It is also, at first, a commodity.
- 

Carving Plantations from Jungle



Commercial Handstamps & Letter Obliterators



From: Galle

To: Suffolk, England

May 9, 1877

Marking: "B" obliterator cancel with double side bars and commercial handstamp cancel.

Rate: 32c foreign letter rate via Brindisi.



"B" Obliterator on
1860s Two Pence

Letter Obliterators



Letter "H" is
on Sans Serif
Letter cancel
in Ceylon

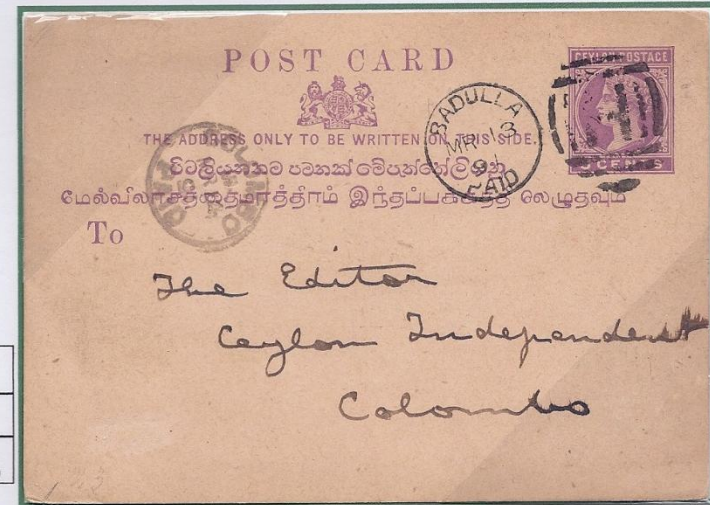
Cancel in use:
1888-1900
22 mm x 28 mm

Letter & Year	Main District Office	District
H 1888	Badulla	South Central
I 1890	Ratnapura	Subanagamuwa (Western Central)

Large Multiple on piece: →
12 5c stamps, six "I" obliterators



Cancel in use:
1890-1895
22 mm x 28 mm



From: Badulla March 13, 1891
Marking: Badulla "H" obliterator with Badulla paidstamp. Rate: 3c domestic postcard.



From: Ratnapura To: London, England October 25, 1893
Marking: Dual Ratnapura "I" obliterator handstamps with Ratnapura cds.
Rate: 15c foreign letter rate paid on 5c lettercard uprated 10c.

Something Happened Here

- ▶ Calamitous crop failure of coffee due to disease in the early 1880s.
- ▶ That failure lead to Ceylon's ultimate success in tea

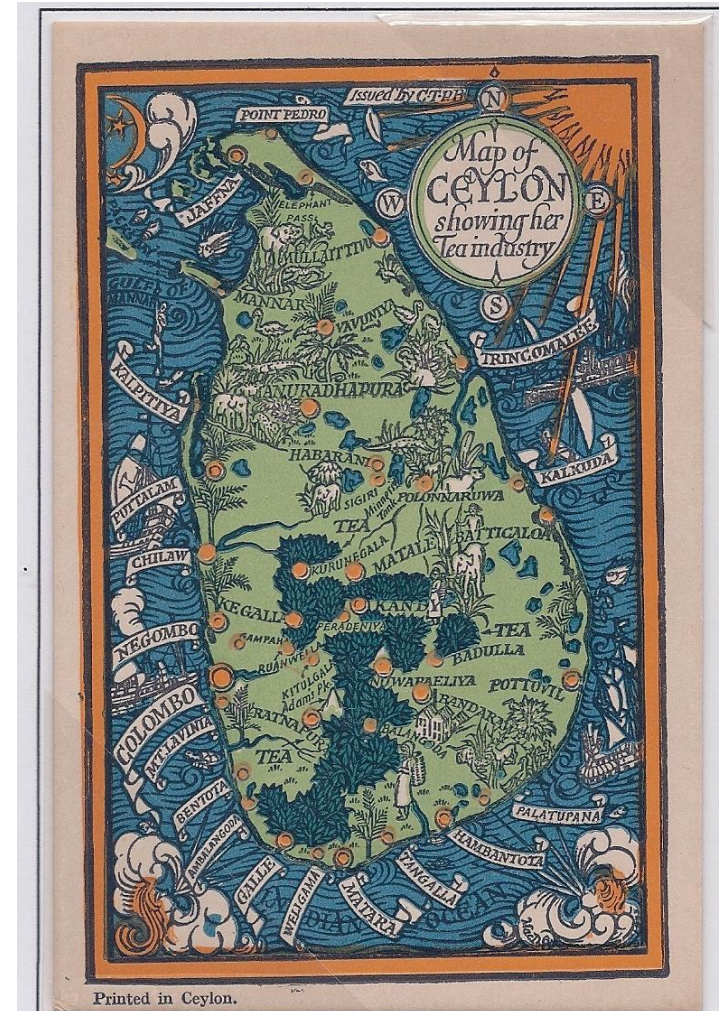


Coffee to tea transition

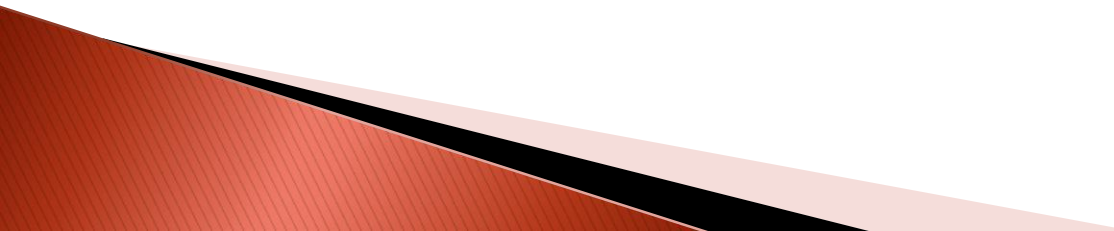
Men Picking Coffee Berry

Outline of Talk

- ▶ Stampless Mail
- ▶ Classic Victorian
- ▶ The Great Era of Tea
 - Agricultural Progression



Why Tea Was Different

- ▶ The tea grows well and the plantations expand rapidly to the interior where land is cheap to encourage development.
 - ▶ The tea requires a different labor force: plant once and harvest several times a year, which makes financing much less risky.
- 

Why Tea Was Different

- ▶ Laborers now are needed year round and the Tamils bring their families from India.
- ▶ Money stays in the colony and living conditions improve for the workers.

Post Offices

- ▶ From a Few Dozen
- ▶ To 118
- ▶ To 340
- ▶ 75% of Growth in tea plantation areas

British owned coffee plantations in Ceylon were quickly turned over to grow tea in the 1870s. By the 1880s, tea was growing on more and more plantations, with new plantations carved from mountainous jungle acreage. Roads were built to improve access and move the tea crop out. Mail services connected the island, and allowed plantation businesses to remain connected while operated remotely.

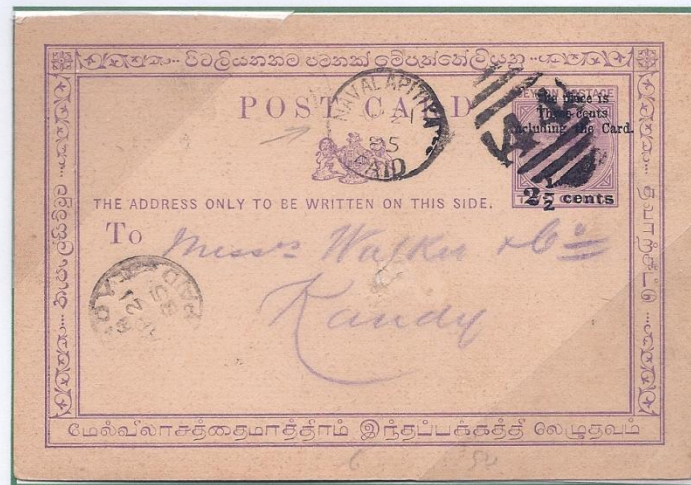
Tea Plantation Post Offices

* Some post offices were for single plantations

* Over 25 post offices opened for Central District plantation mail services

* Post Offices located just a short distance apart as the crow flies, but miles from other postal facilities on difficult mountain roadways.

↓ Marking: #44 Navalapitiya
April 2, 1885
Rate: 2 ½c district postcard.



Representative locations:
These post offices all within the Central District.



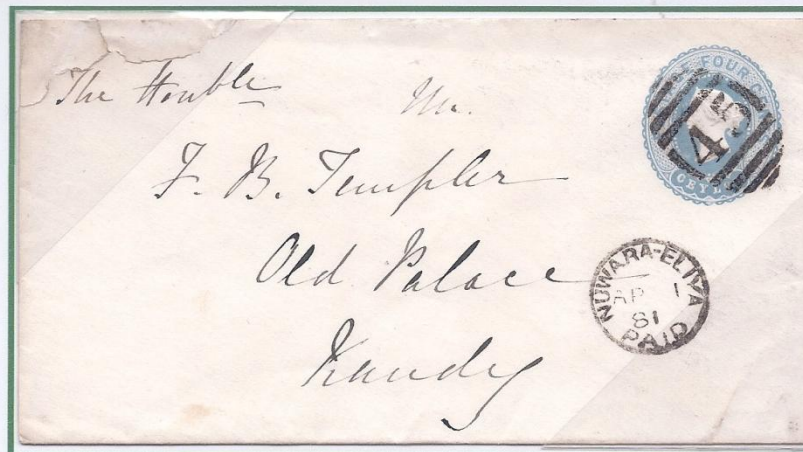
#36 Haputale, #37 Hattton



#38 Kaduganawa, #39 Kotmale #40 Madawalatenna



#41 Madukele, #42 Matale, #43 Maturata



← Marking: #45
Nuwara Eliya
April 1, 1881
Rate: 4c 1878 UPU domestic

Comparing Coffee to Tea

Why So Many Post Offices on Such a Small Island?

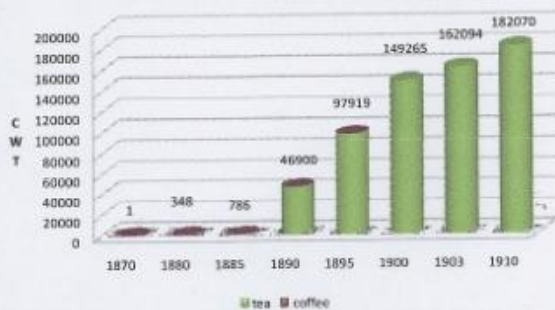
Why the Sudden Ceylon Tea Export Growth:

- Climate and Geography—Able to grow the best tea
- From limited acreage to 380,000 acres of tea plantations
- Branding, “World’s Finest Tea” 1893 Chicago World’s Fair

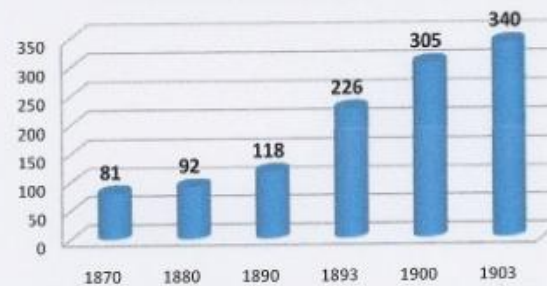
Why the Sudden Ceylon Post Office Growth:

- Plantations employing 450,000 and 800,000 = more mail
- Railway Expansion—1000 miles of new track = access
- Mail Coach Expansion—Coaches reach remote outposts

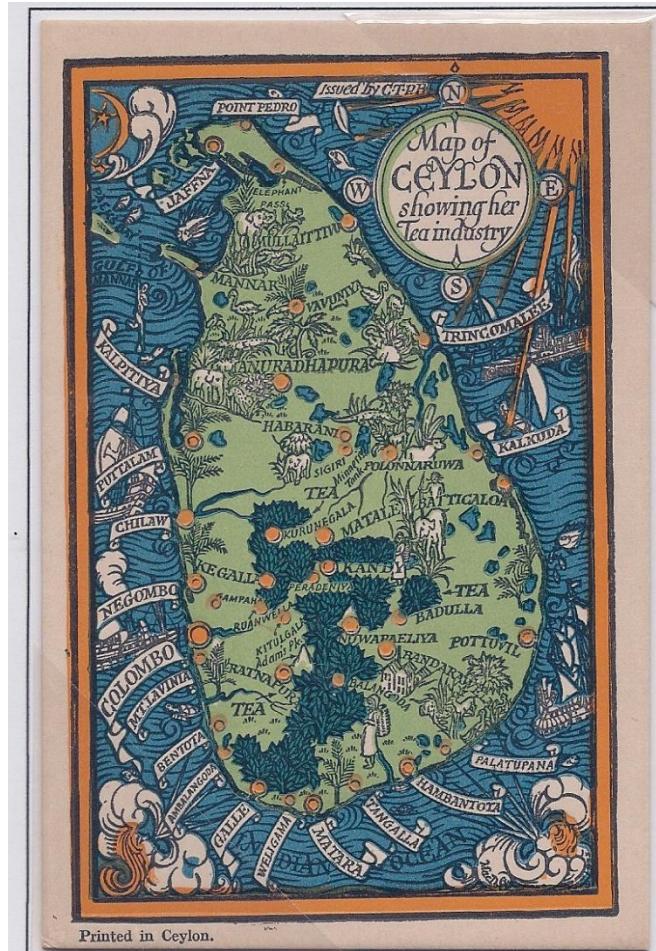
Growth in Ceylon Tea Export



Growth in Ceylon Post Offices

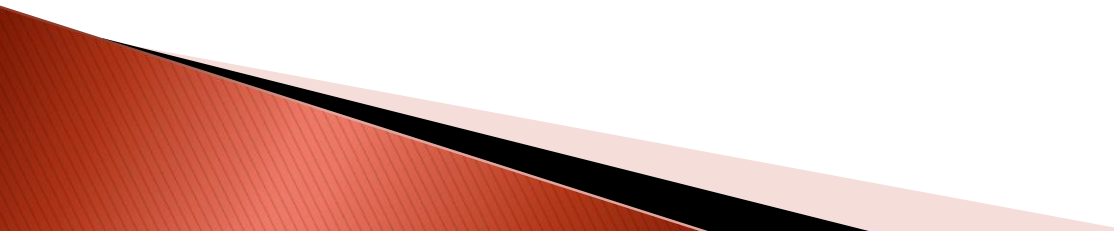


More and More Plantations



- *By 1897 Tea Plantations covered more than 390,000 acres carved from Ceylon's jungle interior.*

Great Era of Tea

- ▶ The new plantations and railroads all command new cancels.
 - ▶ The fiscal documents show much larger crops, different, less risky financing patterns and taxation of vastly larger and more expensive agricultural equipment.
 - ▶ Major growers advertise jointly to promote Ceylon tea as a brand.
- 

The Letter Cancels

Replacing Bar and Circular Cancels



Cancel in use:
1880-1899
22 mm x 30 mm

The Colombo General Post Office used the "A" with diagonal obliterator bars from 1880 to 1899. The bar cancels were inset with a Sans Serif "A" and were used with Colombo circular datestamps. Cancels found in four nearly identical formats of 25 mm to 30 mm length.



Cancels have 25 mm to 30 mm bar length and slight differences in the Sans Serif "A" design.



From: Colombo

January 11, 1896

Marking: Three tied "A" Obliterator cancels. Rate: 15c 1892 foreign letter rate to New York.



From: Colombo

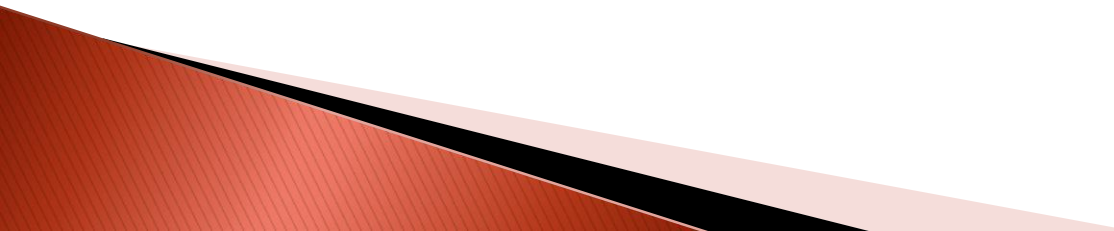
To: Moscow, Russia

November 19, 1899

Marking: "A" Obliterator 25 mm size with faint cds.

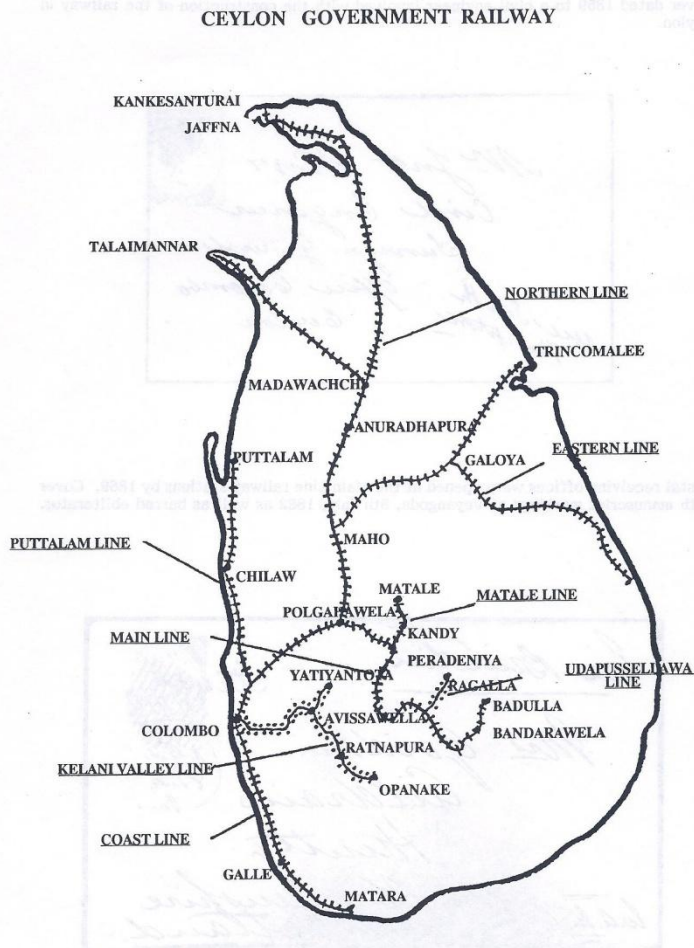
Rate: 5c 1892 rate on UPU post card. Arrival: Moscow November 19, 1899.

Investment in Plantation Labor

- ▶ The tea grown at higher elevations is from the more desirable varieties and commands a premium.
 - ▶ Planters demand railroads for shipping tea to the coast.
- 

Railway Lines into the Interior

- ▶ Bring crops out
- ▶ Expanded postal network



Rail Lines for trade connection with India, common route for transporting India labor used on plantations.



↑ Northern District Cancels 52 - 63, largely coastal towns

Importance of the Mail

THE ORIENTAL BANK ESTATES COMPANY, LIMITED.
Craque Lea ESTATE.
 Invoice of Tea despatched from Estate on *29th Decem^r 1900*

Marks.	No. of Packages.	DESCRIPTION.	Nett lbs.	REMARKS.
<i>351/372</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>Pro. O'g. Pek</i>	<i>220 0'</i>	<i>Invoice N° 23</i>
<i>466/499</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>Pro. Pek</i>	<i>340 0</i>	<i>Moni Chis</i>
<i>260/274</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>O'g. Pek</i>	<i>135 0</i>	<i>For local sale</i>
<i>368/398</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Pek N° 1</i>	<i>216 0</i>	<i>Factory Method</i>
<i>400/429</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>Pek N° 2</i>	<i>270 0</i>	<i>Hand Sales</i>
<i>O.B.E.C.</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>11810</i>	<i>Machine Packed</i>
<i>7</i>				

Lowst Crak

[Signature] Superintendent.

- ▶ Weekly Tea Reports
- ▶ Business Orders
- ▶ Remote Plantations

Plantation Post

- ▶ Examples of Post Offices added in Tea Growing Areas



Rail Service – a 30 Year Project

- ▶ Carving tracks through mountains
- ▶ Service Central Ceylon
- ▶ Bringing tea out
- ▶ Expanding Mail



Importance of the Mail

▶ Remote Tea Plantation Mail Service



↑Marking: Colombo

April 30, 1897

Large cds with wide format large letters. Daily newspaper wrapper, Rate: 2c wrapper.
By 1892, "The Times of Ceylon" provided same day daily news delivery via rail mail service.

Sample, Turned Cover



Branding Begins

- ▶ Tetley's India & Ceylon
- ▶ Lipton Plantations



Larger Plantation & Tea Factories



11/10/97 C 1111 @ 1000 538

No. 1043

Exchange for ~~£ 102.9.9~~ Colombo March 1898

Six months after sight of this our First of Exchange (second and third of the same tenor & date being unpaid) please pay to Ourselves or Order the sum of ~~One hundred & two Pounds, Nine Shillings & Nine Pence~~ 100/2/9

Value received, and place the same with or without Advice to account of

Hyatt & Co. 97/98

To Messrs H. H. Indall & Co. London

Accepted, 11/10/97

Payable to order of H. H. Indall & Co.

100/2/9

First of Exchange.

101016

Drawn under Letter of Credit dated 3rd Decr. 1897

Marketing & Branding Ceylon Tea

APRIL 28, 1894

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

531

HIGHEST HONOURS.
LIPTON'S DELICIOUS TEAS
 Have gained the HIGHEST and ONLY AWARD in the British Section at the
WORLD'S FAIR, CHICAGO.

° FROM THE TEA GARDENS TO THE TEA POT °



1/- & 1/4 PER LB.
 FINEST TEA THE WORLD CAN PRODUCE.
 No higher Price. **1/7 PER LB.** No higher Price.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Delivered Carriage Paid for an extra 1d. per lb. to any address in Great Britain on orders of 5 lb. and upwards. Samples sent free on application.

LIPTON, Tea and Coffee Planter, CEYLON.
 THE LARGEST TEA, COFFEE, AND PROVISION DEALER IN THE WORLD.
 Sole Proprietor of the following celebrated Tea and Coffee Estates in Ceylon—Dambatenne, Laynasottie, Monerakande, Mahadambatenne, Monakelle, Poggonie, Hanagalla, and Gupianella, which cover thousands of acres of the best Tea and Coffee land in Ceylon.
 CEYLON TEA AND COFFEE SHIPPING WAREHOUSES: MADDENIA HILLS, CIVILIAH GARDENS, COLOMBO.
 CEYLON OFFICE: UPPER CHATHAM STREET, COLOMBO.
 INDIAN TEA SHIPPING WAREHOUSES AND EXPORT STORES: HARE STREET, STRAND, CALCUTTA. INDIAN OFFICES: DALHOUSIE SQUARE, CALCUTTA.

General Offices: BATH STREET, CITY ROAD, LONDON, E.C.
 BRANCHES AND AGENCIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Lipton, A Household Name



GLASGOW
LIPTON'S
CELEBRATED
Tea, Coffee & Cocoa Estates

Cover several thousand acres of the finest Tea, Coffee and Cocoa land in Ceylon, viz.:—Dambatenne, Laymastotte, Monerakande, Poo-prassie, Lesmoir, Hanagalla, Gigranella, Mahadambatenne, Karandagalla, Sunny Peak, Torrington, Oakfield, Nahskettia, Upper Lye-grove, Bunyan, Eadella, Ovoca, Panilkande, Bandara Eliya, Cairn-bill, Lowlands.

Ceylon Offices:
 CINNAMON GARDENS,
 COLOMBO.

Indian Chief Offices:
 LIPTON'S BUILDINGS,
 CALCUTTA.

Australian Office:
 414 KENT STREET,
 SYDNEY, N.S.W.

New Zealand:
 47 CUSTOM HOUSE ST.,
 AUCKLAND, N.Z.

CEYLON OFFICES

GOVERNMENT

CONTRACTORS
 BY SPECIAL APPOINTMENT

TEA MERCHANTS

Chief Offices & Warehouses, CITY RD LONDON.

LIPTON

PRESERVE WORKS, ROUEL ROAD, G.E.

LIVERPOOL

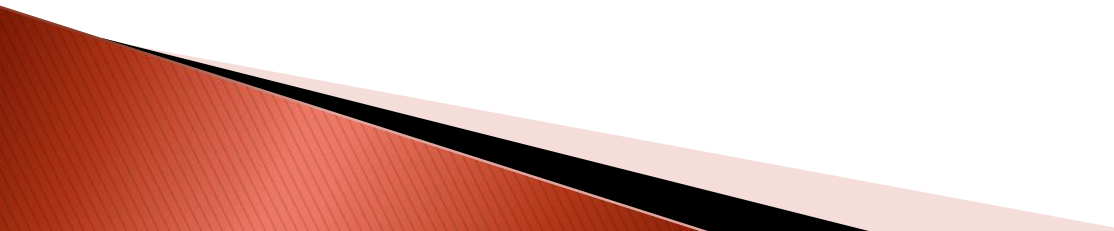
DUBLIN

CALCUTTA OFFICES

Lipton, LTD
LIPTON LTD.,

W. Cochrane

Ceylon Tea Grows the Economy

- ▶ Tea requires processing after picking
 - ▶ Tea growers develop vertical integration
 - ▶ Jobs in producing packaging a retail ready product
 - ▶ This further developed the economy, capturing all the markups
 - ▶ Ceylon never had that with coffee
- 

Great Wealth from Ceylon Tea



Questions?

- ▶ Thank you

