

HELLENIC STEAMSHIP COMPANIES
and their
HANDSTAMPS

19th -20th Century

NIKOS ANTYPAS

Author: Nikos Antypas
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Translator: Irene Angelidou
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e-mail: nicolasantippas@yahoo.com

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HELLENIC STEAMSHIP COMPANIES & their HANDSTAMPS

19th -20th Century

Α/Π "ΙΘΑΚΗ" 1923

Α/Π "ΕΞΕΝΟΥΛΑ" 1923

Α/Π "ΝΑΥΚΡΑΤΟΥΣΑ" 1925

Α/Π "ΙΕΡΑΕ" 1925

Α/Π "ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ" 1925

Α/Π "ΠΟΠΗ" 1926

Α/Π "ΟΥΡΑΝΙΑ" 1927



Port of Rotterdam
S/S Urania
March 27th 1928

S. Antipapas has served as
Steward under my command on
the S/S Urania for the last eleven months.
I have found him steady,
reliable and obliging and I am pleased
to say he has carried out his duties
a thoroughly efficient



ΑΤΜΟΠΛΟΙΑ ΙΘΑΚΗΣ
ΕΔΡΑ ΕΝ ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΙ

Εν Πειραιὶ 17. Φεβρουαρίου 1928
ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ ΑΡΙΘ. 8-12

Μ.Α.: 127439

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ ΕΜΠΟΡΙΚΟΝ ΝΑΥΤΙΚΟΝ

ΦΥΛΛΑΔΙΟΝ ΑΠΟΓΡΑΦΗΣ

Τοις Σταύρου Ανδρέα
Γεωργίου και της Ελπίδας

από τον Σταύρου Ανδρέα

από τον Σταύρου Ανδρέα

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από τον Σταύρου Ανδρέα

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από τον Σταύρου Ανδρέα

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PROLOGUE

The research and study of Greek steamship company handstamps began in the 1950s and the 1960s, through articles with limited references, and that is due to the incomplete or lost primary historical material. A great love for these beautiful, impressive, even charming, handstamps, along with the wish to illuminate the reader and the collector, were the guiding forces behind the completion of this study.

In Greece, a country surrounded by sea, following liberation¹ the largest part of the transportation of passengers and goods, as well as meeting the postal needs of the islands, coastal towns, and the handling of foreign correspondence, was carried out by sea routes, utilising the marine vessels at their disposal. However, despite the extended postal and commercial steamship traffic of the era, only limited material (stamped letters, bills of lading, monographs, etc.) is extant. It is precisely this reason that has acted as a restrictive factor for the present work.

Further obstacles which hindered the research were posed by the large size of the rubber handstamps, affecting their legibility and identification, by the clumsy stamping by company agents, and by the poor quality of the ink.

The student expecting to read a piece of literature, or a complete history of steam navigation handstamps and companies will find their expectations to have been let down, because most of these were companies of individual ownership with one or two steamships, and belonged to people who had decided to try their luck. As for the short-lived companies with limited financial capacity, it was too difficult to make sense of their history since their steamships changed owners, agents, names, tonnage, and type quite often (e.g., postal, passenger, cargo, mixed-use).

The beginning was easy to define – at least chronologically – up until almost the second decade of the 20th century. However, the end is somewhat fluid and, in a way, undefined due to the lack of basic facts.

The time period between the first and second chronological parameters, with its rich and unique characteristics, is the object of this study. No particular ambition was fulfilled, apart from the awareness of filling in several gaps, of repaying a debt, of making a contribution, of shedding light into the subject, with every meaning of the word.

Unverifiable handstamp imprints and documents were avoided, or at least presented with reluctance, because in taking up the pen, the author's sense of responsibility is towards the reader and, most of all, towards these marvellous handstamp imprints – the finest specimens of their category, not only in Greece but also abroad. Thus, they have no need to be showcased among sensational details or unnecessary additions.

¹ After the Greek Revolution of 1821 against the Ottoman Empire that led to the founding of the modern Greek state.

The reader will certainly notice that some agents and companies have not been mentioned because of insufficient data, whilst other companies that have been unknown so far are included. Also noticeable is the absence of Hellenic trading companies which were based on the Black Sea and were active with shipping offices, where agreements were made for the chartering of steamships to the ports of the Sea of Azov from the middle of the 19th century until around 1900.

Almost all of the handstamp imprints are pictured at approximately their actual dimensions, with deliberate imperfections, in order to dissuade any ambitious forgers. They are found on Greek and foreign postage stamps, postage due stamps, stationery, envelopes, receipts, bills of lading, charter parties, stocks, tickets, postcards, postal stationery cards and many other types of documents.

Undoubtedly, the greatest difficulty for this work was gathering the material. In November 1984, near the shores of the Congo River (formerly known as the Zaire River), when I decided, without any hesitation, to embark on the study of steamship stamps, Anastasios, my brother, showing great understanding, stood by my side while I collected this rich material which was crucial to the completion of this book.

I avoided long passages and footnotes so the material, divided into chapters that include all stamps marks - sixteen hundred and fifty - seven in total - is a pleasant and easy read.

Special thanks to everyone who assisted, in one way or another, in the completion of this study.

Nikos Antypas

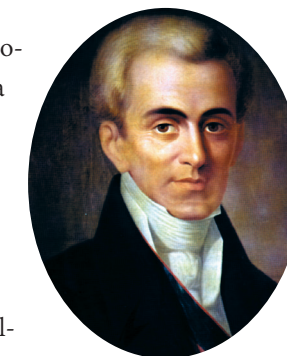
INTRODUCTION

Postal History

One of the main concerns of the first governor of independent Greece, Ioannis Kapodistrias, was the creation of a merchant fleet and simultaneously the establishment of a postal service, which was created by the 17th Resolution, of 2 September 1828.

The headquarters of the post office moved in tandem with that of the government, and the first post offices were established in Argos, Tripoli, Epidaurus and Syros. At coastal post offices, the post was handled by health officers whilst in the hinterland by the local elders, leading figures of the community. The latter then handed over the mail for distribution to their representatives, who in turn delivered it on foot to the village elders at their destination, and from whom they received new mail to be dispatched.

The mail's dispatch from and arrival to the distribution centre was done by a postman on horseback on land, and by steamers to ports on scheduled days and hours every week. Postage charges were paid 'against receipt' at the office of the postal director according to the pioneering principle of a letter's weight, and not according to distance; i.e. a one-page letter cost 5 para, two-page letters cost 10 para, a letter weighing under 10 dramia² cost 30 para, and those over 10 dramia cost 40 para. Anything heavier than twenty-five drams was considered undeliverable.



Ioannis Kapodistrias

Contracts with Hellenic Ships

From 1833 until the end of 1837, the need for the marine transport of mail was met by high-speed sailboats.

On 29 August/10 September 1833, an important agreement was signed between the Greek government and businessman Fragiskos Feraldis. The Feraldis Contract is considered to be the first contract for the distribution of mail to foreign destinations. Particular importance is placed on the captain and 2/3 of the crew being of Greek descent (Article 1). At the same time, 'Mr Feraldis is obliged to maintain for the service of His Majesty, the King of Greece, six high speed vessels – Greek in their entirety – that are well equipped and with a capable crew, with a capacity ranging from 100 to 140 tonnes.'

Although the duration of the contract was set for two years, the following year

*The high-speed vessel
"Esperos" of Leipzig, 1833*



² One dram, after the Arabic dirhem, was used to measure weight in Greece. It was the equivalent of 3,203 grammes. 400 dramia equalled one oka.



A Greek Captain (Musée Cosmopolite) Paris, 1850.

the government requested an amendment, signed in Nafplio on 17/29 May 1834. With this new contract, the number of high-speed vessels increased to 11 and sailing trips were then established between Nafplio-Trieste via Brindisi, Nafplio-Syros-Messina-Livorno-Nafplio-Malta-Marseilles-Nafplio-Syros-Smyrna, and Nafplio-Syros-Chania-Alexandria.

The postal service also used small fast sailing ships, known as 'royal vessels', which carried not only mail but also passengers and goods, after paying the corresponding ticket price or charge.

The needs of domestic mail distribution were only occasionally handled. The government decided to use the steamer *Anatoli* for this purpose (Announcement of the General Post Office of 9 December 1835, Government Gazette (FEK) No. 3 of 30 January 1836).

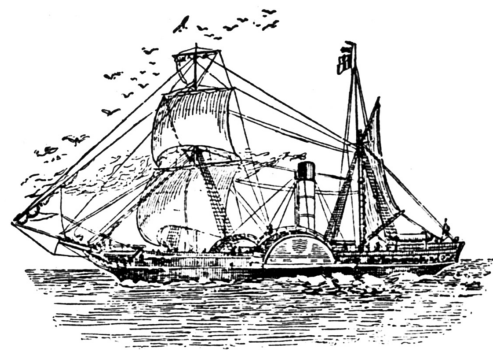
The steamer's postal service extended from Piraeus to Skyros, Chios, Cesme, Smyrna, Mytilini, Tenedos, Dardanelles, Gallipoli and Constantinople.

In 1837, there was an attempt to use French steamships for postal service, which ultimately failed to materialise. This is demonstrated by the contract signed in 1836 by Admiral Cohran for the creation of a postal service that would extend from Marseilles to Constantinople, and which would be operated by steamships.

Between 1840 and 1860, Greek warships, which had already been withdrawn from military action, were used for the postal service. The names of the ships have survived: *Othon*, *Gorgo*, *Miltiades* and *Maximilianos*. The first steam-engine vessel manufactured in Greece to service the postal needs of the new state was a wooden paddle steamer with a capacity of 180 tonnes. The vessel was launched on the island of Poros on 2 April 1837, and it was named *Maximilianos* in honour of King Otto's brother, Maximilian.



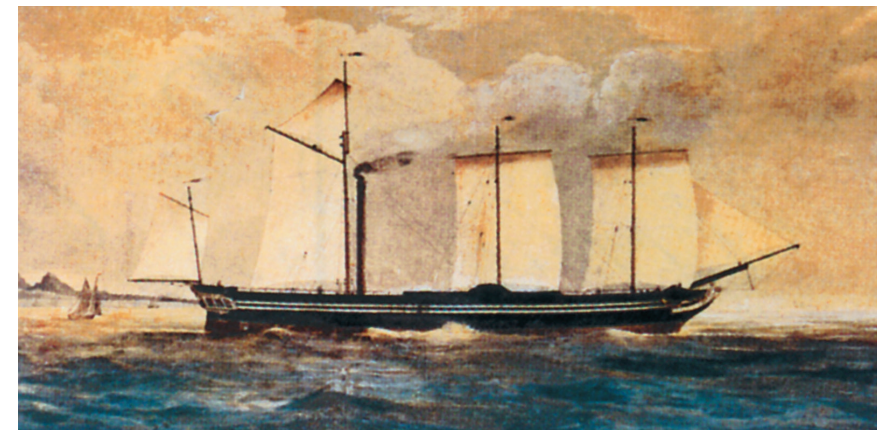
SS Maximilianos



SS Othon



King Otto of Greece



The Carteria, one of the six known as 'royal vessels'.

and remained in the postal service until October 1841. The steamship's route ran between Piraeus-Syros, Piraeus-Nafplio and other harbours, mainly in the Aegean Sea.

Ionian Government Steamships

A notable effort to organise coastal navigation was made in the Ionian Islands between 1820 and 1860. In 1825, the English officer John Cohran secured from the Ionian State, which was under British protection, the monopoly of maritime transportation to and from the Ionian Islands for a decade.

The vessel used for this purpose was built in England and was named *Sir Frederick Adam*.

In April 1827, the ship was sold to the Ionian Government. Until and including 1833, the steamship operated in the Ionian Islands and abroad, as far as Ancona, Brindisi and Otranto, Italy. In February of the same year, the ship was renamed *Edtanissos*, as Sir Frederick Adam, the Lord High Commissioner, had left the Ionian Islands.

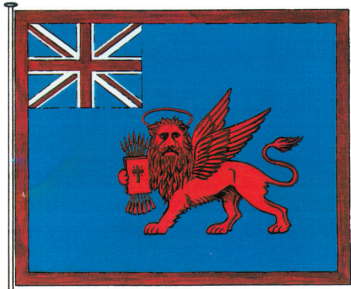
Three years later the steamship *Ionio* was used on the same route, with departures on the sixth and twelfth of every month to Paxi, Lefkada, Argostoli, Zakynthos, Patras, Vostitsa (Aegio), Loutraki and returned via the same ports.

The *Eptanisos* was sold in 1858 for £2,600.

Letter posted to Corfu in 1848 with the manuscript instruction, 'Con vapore Ionio'.



Letter posted from Corfu to Venice in 1830 bearing the handstamp 'Ionio'.



Flag of the Ionian Islands

When the Ionian Islands joined Greece in May 1864, the SS *Ionía* became the property of the Greek government which subsequently gave it to the first Hellenic Steamship Navigation company.

The two ships finally retired from active service in 1855 for two main reasons. As early as 1833, the Ionian maritime and postal needs were served by sailboats. The main reason, however, was the strong competition with the Austrian company *Lloyd Austriaco*, which offered more cost-effective and more frequent routes carried out by new vessels, more tolerant of weather conditions. In letters from the Ionian islands, and especially from Zakynthos, between 1839-1840 we encounter the *Ionía* hand-stamp and, between the years 1850-1852, the handwritten indications 'Col Vapore Ionio' and 'Con Vapore Ionio'.

Foreign Companies whose steamships regularly entered Greek ports, according to the signed contracts.

ADRIA
(Royal Hungarian Steamship Company, based in Fiume), [Government Gazette A', no. 7/1894]

It was required to maintain regular monthly routes between the ports of Trieste, Fiume, London, Antwerp, Patras, Aigio, Zakynthos, Kefallinia, Corfu, Katakolo, Kalamos, Piraeus and Syros.

SOCIETE COMMERCIALE BULGARE
(Bulgarian Steamship Company, based in Varna) [Government Gazette A', no. 130/1905]

It was required to maintain regular weekly routes between Varna and Piraeus - putting in to Constantinople and the Dardanelles en route to Piraeus, whilst on the return leg to Varna putting in to Chios, Mytilene, Smyrna, the Dardanelles, Constantinople and Pyrgos. At a later point, the company had the right to include the ports of Syros, Kalamata and Patras every 13 days, or on a weekly basis, on both legs of the journey.

CUNARD STEAMSHIPS CO.
(English Shipping Company based in Liverpool)

It was required to maintain the following: regular routes - a) Liverpool, Gibraltar, Palermo, Messina, Patras, Corfu, Ancona, Trieste and Venice. From Venice to Liverpool with direct calls to Corfu and other foreign ports every month - b) Liverpool, Gibraltar, Malta, Syros, Smyrna, Constantinople and Thessaloniki. From Thessaloniki to Liverpool with direct calls to Syros and other foreign ports every third week. On an ad hoc basis, from abroad to the Greek ports of Aigio, Zakynthos, Kefallonia, Katakolo, Piraeus and Nafplio. Direct calls to the port of Volos were added by a supplementary contract in 1901.)



The First Postal Contracts

Special reference should be made to the postal contracts signed by the Greek government with foreign companies.

Specifically, mainly in the second half of the 19th century, contracts were signed with Austria, France, England, Russia, and Germany. The most important of these are the contracts with Austria and France, particularly since an intense competition had developed between these countries for the monopoly of coastal navigation and the connection of the country to the rest of the world.

The Contract with Austria

The first contract with a foreign state was signed in Nafplio on 23 February 1834. The shipping lanes included the Patras-Trieste route, with a stop at Corfu. Each postal dispatch between Patras and Trieste was charged at 10 kreuzer; i.e. 5 lepta. This contract was rightly considered an important one because it constituted the first organised effort of Greece's maritime connection with Europe.

The Contract with the French Post Offices

Three years later, in December 1837, a contract was signed with the French government. This contract is the first formal contract signed between Greece and a foreign country for the transport of mail by steamships owned by the French Government and managed by the Maritime Shipping Company (Messageries) on behalf of the French Post offices.

The agreement included the arrangement of a regular Mediterranean route that would provide three monthly trips between Marseilles and Constantinople with intermediate stops at Athens (Piraeus) and Alexandria. The first Mediterranean ships were the *Ramses*, the *Mentor*, the *Leonidas*, the *Tancrede*, the *Dante*, the *Lycurgue*, the *Minos*, the *Scamandre*, the *Eurote*, and the *Sesostres*, with on occasion additional new routes: Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, Malta, Syros, and Smyrna.

The Contract with the Austrian Lloyd

In April 1843, a new supplementary contract was signed between the Greek Post Office and the imperial and royal Austrian Lloyd company. The voyages would henceforth be executed solely by steamships.

It should be noted that the Austrian company Lloyd, which was established on 3 September 1835, considered its primary objective



Ticket (payment) of Lloyd Austriaco, issued to a passenger named Avlonitis, from Alexandria to Piraeus (1857).



A map of Lloyd's routes (1895).

COURTZI PM et Cie
(Ottoman Steamship Company of the Aegean Sea, based in Constantinople), [see Chapter 19, Aegean Steam Navigation P.M. Courtzis]

DANOISE FERENEDE DAMPS KIDS
(Danish Steamship Company based in Copenhagen) [FEK No. 36/1888]

It was obligated to maintain regular monthly transport services between the Baltic Sea, Antwerp and the ports of Patras and Piraeus, as well as the Ottoman and Russian ports in the Black Sea. It could also call at Nafplio and Katakolo under exceptional circumstances.

DEUTSCHE LEVANTE LINIE
(German Eastern Steamship Company based in Hamburg), [FEK A '63/1891]

It was required to maintain regular transport services every twenty days between Hamburg, Antwerp, Piraeus, Syros, Smyrna, Thessaloniki, Constantinople, Gala i, Brăila and Tinos with occasional calls at Nafplio, Volos, Kalamata, Corfu, Katakolo, Thera, Kimi, Limni and Kimasio. From 1899, the regular monthly line between Hamburg and Piraeus became more frequent with a second departure added, from Newcastle to Piraeus. From 1900, the route was modified as follows: departures from Hamburg directly to Malta and Piraeus on the fifteenth and thirtieth of the month. From Piraeus to Smyrna, Constantinople and Odessa, departures from Hamburg on the first, eleventh and twenty-first of the month; a regional route to Rotterdam, Antwerp or Algiers, alternating with Malta and Piraeus. From Piraeus to Syros, Smyrna or Thessaloniki and alternating with Constantinople. Twice a month return from Odessa and from Batumi and every month from Syria to Piraeus, with calls at Patras, Zakynthos, and other ports. The ports of Kymasi, Limni, Atalanti and Volos were added to the return voyage every month.

THE ELLERMAN LINE
(British steamship company based in London) [FEK A 4, No. 130/1905]

The company operated the Papagiannis route (see related chapter) and was required to maintain regular transport services with its lines from Liverpool, Malta, Syria, and Constantinople, with calls at Corfu, Patras, and Piraeus. Occasional voyages between Liverpool, Patras, Piraeus, and other Greek ports, with authorisation from the Greek Government, and with calls at foreign ports also took place.

FRAISSINET et Cie
(French Steamship Company)
Excerpt from the 1875 Contract, Government Gazette 1875 and 1882.
It was required to maintain a) Weekly lines between Marseilles and Constantinople

with stops in Naples, Piraeus, Gallipoli, Dardanelles and Raidestos. Every fortnight, there was an additional stop in Patras, but only during a vessel's return voyage. As of 1882, it was also required to maintain a regular line with weekly trips between Piraeus and Volos. Calls at Lavrion became a regular and monthly occurrence as of 10 July 1897.

LIGNE FRANCO-BELGE

(Franco-Belgian steamship company based in Antwerp), [FEK A', no. 91/1900]

It was required to maintain regular transport services between Austria-Hungary, Greece and the East. From 1901, a new line was added between Trieste and Alexandria with calls at the ports of Brindisi, Corfu and Patras.

Emergency calls not covered by regular routes, such as at the ports of Kymi, Agia Marina and others, were taxed under Article 1 of Act BPK'.

HADJI-DAOUT-FARKOUH

(Ottoman steamship company based in Smyrna) [FEK A', no. 159/1899]

It was required to maintain, on the one hand, regular weekly transport services between Piraeus and Chania, Rethymnon, Heraklion and Alexandria, and, on the other, Chios, Smyrna, Mytilene and Constantinople for Port-Said, Jaffa, Beirut, Tripoli and for Lymnos, Thessalonica, Kavala, Porto-Lagos, Dedeagatch, Samos, Kalymnos, Symi, Rhodes, Makri, Kastelorizo, Finike, Attalia and return through the same ports (See Ch. FZ 182).

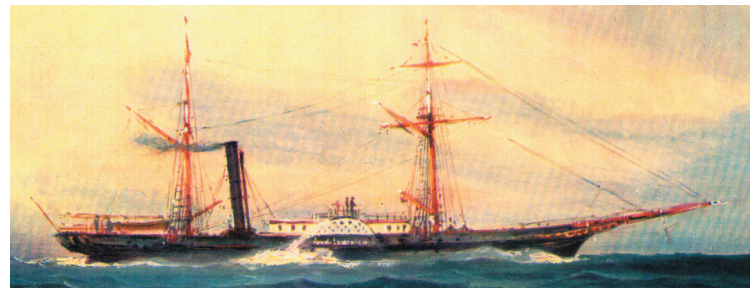
FLORIO E RUBATINO

(Italian steamship company based in Genoa) [FEK A', no. 95/1901]

It was required to maintain regular transport services between Italy, Greece and the East on the following routes:

A) Genoa, Livorno, Naples, Palermo, Messina, Katania, Chania, Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Dardanelles, Constantinople and Odessa every 14 days and return by calling at the same ports; b) Between Genoa, Livorno, Naples, Palermo, Messina, Katania, Chania, Piraeus, Chios, Smyrna, Dardanelles, Constantinople and Odessa every 14 days and return by calling at the same ports; c) Trieste, Venice, Ancona, Bari, Brindisi, Corfu, Patras, Piraeus and Constantinople every 14 days and return by calling at the same ports; d) Brindisi, Corfu and Patras every week and return by calling at the same ports.

From 12 August 1904, and every 15 days, the steamer of the first line, after its calling at Piraeus was required to call at Syros as well, but only during the first voyage.



The Arciduca Lodovico

to be Trieste's connection with the countries of the eastern Mediterranean and, for this purpose, six paddle steamers were ordered from England, which were delivered in 1837. At 5 a.m. on 16 May 1837, the steamship *Arciduca Lodovico* departed from Trieste on its maiden voyage to Constantinople, where it arrived on 30 May after a fourteen-day journey.

Between 1837-1838, four shipping routes of this company were in operation with calls at the Greek ports of the Ionian Sea, Patras, Piraeus and Preveza. In 1843, the Greek route was inaugurated, which included Italian ports, the Ionian Islands and Missolonghi, Patras, Nafpaktos, Aigio, Itea and Loutraki. In 1853, the Thessaly route operated with calls at Thessaloniki, Karitsa (for Larissa), Volos and Styliada. In 1857, the company operated the Trieste-Constantinople express line and the Trieste-Smyrna line. These lines were adjusted in the following years according to the changing requirements.

Apart from the regular routes, there were also extraordinary maritime routes for the accommodation of travellers and visitors. From 1870 to 1910, the following lines were in operation: Trieste-Corfu, Albania-Ionian Islands, Alexandria-Cyprus, Trieste-Constantinople-Galat, Trieste-Constantinople-Batumi via Volos, Trieste-Constantinople-Odessa via the Aegean Islands.

The large number of maritime routes, and the introduction and organisation of steamship navigation attest to the Austrian company's leading position in the eastern Mediterranean.



Other Ships of the Lloyd Company

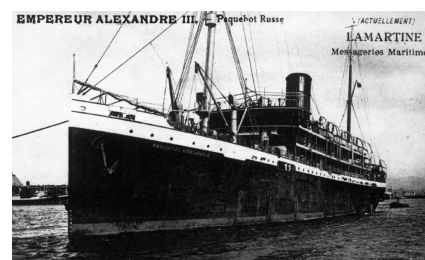
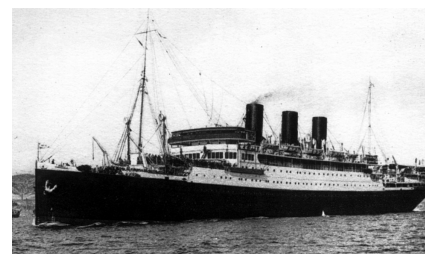


French Contracts

The new French contract signed of 20 May 1844 was the answer to Lloyd's initiative of expansion. The following eleven steamships of the French government now operated the Marseilles-Greece-Turkey line: *Eurotas*, *Leonidas*, *Lycurgue*, *Mentor*, *Minos*, *Rodomanthe*, *Scamandre*, *Sesostres*, *Tanrede*, *Pericles* and *Telemaque*. The Marseilles-Alexandria-Beirut route was operated by the steamships: *Alexandre*, *Caire*, *Egyptus*, *Louqsor*, *Nil*, *Oasis*, *Dante* and *Ramses*.

In April 1853, a new contract was signed with the company 'Societe des Services Maritimes des Messageries Nationales', which was later renamed 'Societe des Services Maritimes des Messageries Imperiales'.

With this contract the lines increased significantly: Marseilles-Constantinople with calls at Malta, Syros, Smyrna, Mytilene, Dardanelles, Gallipoli, Genoa, Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, Messina, Messina, Alexandria, with direct connection to Greece, Syros,



Steamships of the company Messageries Maritimes.

*Above: The Champollion,
Below: The Empereur Alexandre III*



Handwritten notation 'Paquebot des Messageries Imperiales'. On 1854 letter from Marseilles to Syros, from the trading house Dromokaitis Bros & Sons to Athanasios Ladopoulos & Sons.

FREITAS A.C. et Cie

(German Steamship Company based in Hamburg) [FEK A', no. 56/1888]

It was required to maintain regular routes between Hamburg, Amsterdam, Brindisi, Bari, Trieste, Fiume, Venice, Patras and Kefalonia. Between August and January, fortnightly, with calls at Aigio, Zakynthos, Katakolo and Kalamata.

HOLLANDAISE

(Royal Dutch company based in Amsterdam) [FEK A', no. 36/1873]

It was required to maintain a regular route between Holland, Palermo, Malta, Messina, Syros, Constantinople and Odessa every month and under exceptional circumstances between Holland, Nafplio, Corfu, Patras, Katakolo and Bari, as far as Trieste.

The steamships of the company that departed from foreign ports also called at the ports of Syros, Nafplio, Corfu, Patras, and Zakynthos. From July 1905, steamships from Smyrna called every month at Limni, Kimasio, Ayia Anna and Kimi on their return voyages.

JOHNSTON Wm and Co.

(English Steamship Company based in Liverpool)

It was required to maintain regular transport services twice a month between Piraeus and the ports of Antwerp, Liverpool, Thessaloniki, Constantinople, Galați and Brăila.

From 1 February 1896, the steamships of the company put in four times a month at Piraeus with a call at Volos.



Advertising postcard of foreign companies with departures from Mytilene to New York and vice versa.

KHEDIVIAL

(English, formerly Egyptian, steamship company based in Alexandria)

It was contracted to maintain regular transport services between Alexandria, Piraeus, Syros, Chios, Smyrna, Mytilene, Dardanelles, Gallipoli, and Constantinople, at a minimum of every 15 days. The company had the ability to maintain new routes between Egyptian and foreign ports with calls at the ports of the Peloponnese and the Ionian islands, but only after prior notification of the relevant authority.

In 1899, it was recognised as an English steamship company under the name 'Khedivial Mail Steamship and Graving Dock Company Limited' and replaced the Egyptian 'Khedivie'.

LEYLAND F. & Co.

(English steamship company based in Liverpool)

The above-mentioned company sold its steamships to the English company 'The Ellerman Line Limited'. Consequently, according to the Provision of Article no. 1 of Law BPK', it was required to call at Greek ports until the replacement company signed a new postal contract with the Greek government, which was approved by the Resolution of 19 May 1905, but only for the Papayannis route.

MEDITERRANEAN NEW YORK & Co.

(English steamship company based in Liverpool), [FEK A', no. 52/1896]

It was required to maintain regular transport services to a maximum of every six weeks between New York and Patras with a return voyage, and calls at Zakynthos, Katakolo, Kalamata, and Pylos under exceptional circumstances.

MOSS & Co.

(English steamship company based in Liverpool)

It was obliged to maintain regular transport services twice a month between Liverpool, Malta, Syros, Smyrna and Constantinople. The steamships of the company had the right to make direct calls at Liverpool.

PAPAYANNI & Co./Papayannis & Mousambinis

(English steamship company based in Liverpool)

The Greek government signed a contract with this company on 21 June 1856. In the contract, the steamships are described as 'screw propeller' steamship for the first time. They were required to provide free mail delivery between Liverpool, Malta, Syros, Smyrna, and Constantinople. The company sold its steamships to the English company 'The Ellerman Line Limited'. The steamships that entered Greek ports as of 1904 were subject to Article no. 1 of Law no. 122, until the latter company signed a new postal contract with the Greek government.

Rhodes, Piraeus, Kalamata, Hydra, Spetzes, Nafplio, Gythio, Chalkida, Thessaloniki, and, finally, the Middle East, Syria, and Palestine.

With the outbreak of the Crimean War on 30 November 1853, the Lloyd Company increased the frequency of its routes in order to satisfy the high demand because of the war. Messageries Imperiales did likewise and, during the same period, also ceased its routes to

Greece. In early 1856, after the end of the Crimean War, Messageries Imperiales and Lloyd limited their voyages between Piraeus and Syros.



ARMAND BÉHIC

President and Director of the 'Messageries Maritimes' company from 1860 until 1891, with the exception of a three-year break. He managed the company during its 'golden' age. He died on 2 March 1891.



ANDRÉ LEBON

Born in 1859 and died in 1938. He was the true successor of Armand Béhic. He was Minister of Colonies. He maintained strict control over the company for twelve whole years.



FÉLIX ROUSSEL

He entered the company's board of directors in 1912 and, two years later, succeeded André Lebon. He carried all the weight of the tragic war years.

The alternation of ships for the delivery of mail continued until 1857. In the middle of the same year, official agreements were then initiated between the government and steamship companies for the transmission of mail



GEORGE PHILIPPAR

After the death of Félix Roussel he undertook the management of the company from 1926 to 1941. Following the major crisis of 1930 and the Second World War, the company fleet was considerably weakened. In 1948, a few years after its liberation, France received 75 'Liberty' ships. During the same year, the company was nationalised, and its steamships were transported to shipyards for repairs. It was no longer possible, however, to compete against commercial airlines and the company gradually sold its ships to foreign companies. On 21 October 1973, 'Messagerie Maritimes' merged with 'Compagnie Générale Transatlantique' (C.G.M.) and, in 1977, it was officially dissolved. 'Messagerie Maritimes' ceased to exist.

to ports of the interior.

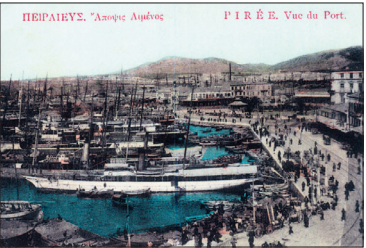
One of the most important agreements was the ban of the illegal collection and transportation of mail by ship's captains, crew and passengers.

In order to ensure their mail's speedier delivery, some of the public handed their letters directly to the agencies of the departing ships or even to the ships themselves, always with stamps, otherwise they would not be accepted. In this way, shipping agencies continued to transmit the correspondence of private individuals by stamping it with

their handstamps either at the place of receipt, the place of delivery or during the voyage.

The shipping companies that had a contract with the Greek government for the transmission of domestic and foreign mail signed public contracts much later than 1900, even if they already transported mail officially or unofficially.

A description follows of how mail was distributed in Volos prior to the liberation of Thessaly, taken from an article written by N. Gatsos from the local newspaper *Simaia*.



Postcards showing different ports. From the top: Preveza, Piraeus and the Tzelepis Pier.

'It took longer for the institution of the post office to become established in the Turkish empire. Suffice it to note that it was not until 1881, namely until the year of liberation. No public Turkish post office existed, and domestic postal communication was carried out via the passengers and drivers [of various vehicles]. Parcel delivery was also carried out by these honest means, parcels which usually were very bulky and heavy, depending on the type of currency of kurus, beçliks, yirmiliks, even the rare liras that were being mailed.

Domestic letters were transported and delivered by sailboats. At a later time, when the Russian, Austrian, Greek, and French steamships began calling at our port, they also delivered the mail.

PRINCE LINE

(English steamship company based in Liverpool) [FEK A' no. 7/1894]

It was required to maintain regular transport services every month between Liverpool, London, Antwerp, Malta, Patras, Piraeus, Syria, with a return leg. Under exceptional circumstances, between London, Antwerp, Patras, Piraeus, Volos, Corfu, Kefalonia, Ithaca, Lefkada, Zakynthos, Katakolo, Kalamata, Pylos, Ayia Kyriaki, Gytheio, Nafplio, Syros, Halkida, Limni, Lavrion, Stilida, Kea and other Greek ports with the authorisation of the Greek government.

LA PHOCEENNE

(French steamship company based in Marseilles)

The company's main responsibilities were to maintain regular transport services and free delivery of the mail between Marseilles, Messina, Syros, Smyrna, Raïdestos and Constantinople, as well as a ten per cent fee discount for the transportation of cargo, offering a lower price than Messageries Imperiales.

ROSTAND et Cie

(French steamship company based in Marseilles)

Its designated routes for the transmission of mail were set as follows: Marseilles, Livorno, Malta, Syros, Smyrna, Mytilene, Dardanelles and Constantinople. The postage for letters to Eastern ports was 2 Frs; 1 Fr for a letter weighing up to 30 grams, whilst printed matter and newspapers were charged at 4 centimes per sheet.

SERVICE MARITIME ROUMAINE

(Romanian steamship company based in Bucharest) [FEK A' no. 61/1905]

It was required to maintain regular weekly transport services between Constanza and Piraeus with calls at Constantinople during the outward and return voyage. It was also allowed to include the port of Alexandria every fifteen days during the outbound and return voyages.

RUSSIAN et Cie

(Russian steamship company based in Odessa), [FEK A' no. 28/1895]

Ten years after the first contract of 1848, a second agreement between the Greek government and the company was signed in Athens on 5 July 1858. The company was required to operate a route every fifteen days between Odessa, Constantinople, and Piraeus, with the possibility of an extension to Marseilles and Trieste. The transmission of mail was also possible between Greece, Russia and Turkish ports on condition that the company steamers call at the respective ports. All transmission of mail was free of charge apart from mail to and from Egypt. For the Smyrna-Egypt route a fee of 18 silver copecks had been established for letters weighing up to 30

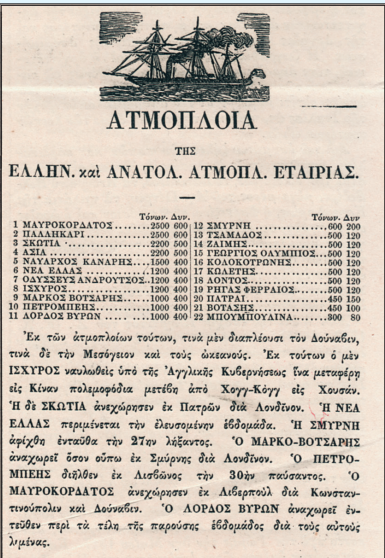
grams. The steamships of the company started operating in December 1859.

The company was required to maintain regular transport services between Piraeus and foreign ports with the following lines: Every Sunday at 10 a.m. from Piraeus to Alexandria – Every Sunday afternoon from Piraeus to Smyrna, Constantinople and Odessa – Every Friday morning from Odessa, Constantinople and Smyrna – every Sunday morning from Alexandria.

From 12 November 1903, they called at Volos as follows: a) every fifteen days, Saturday afternoon directly to Smyrna, b) Every fifteen days, Wednesday afternoon to Thessalonica, Ayion Oros, Kavala, Porto Lagos, Dedeaqatch, etc.

WESCOTT & LAURANCE
(English steamship company based in London),
[FEK A', no. 130/1905]

Initially, it was required to maintain transport services between London, Antwerp, Piraeus, and Syros once a month, although later this was increased to twice a month. The company had the ability to include additional Greek ports apart from the ones mentioned above with the authorisation of the Greek government.



Advertisement of the Greek and Eastern Steamship Company of Stephanos Xenos (1860).

Each consulate also maintained its own special post office, which was protected due to treaties with the Turkish government.

These specific offices were managed by the current secretary of each consulate. The distribu-

tion of the received mail was not made to each house, as there were no postmen available, but it could only be received through the consulate.

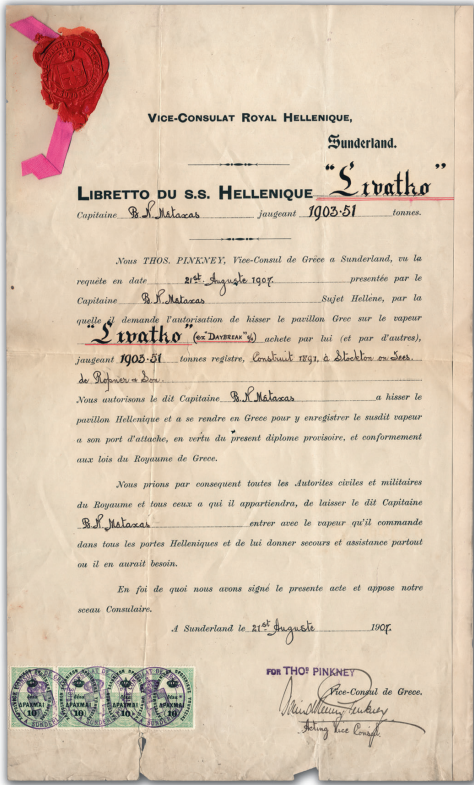
On the day of each steamship's arrival, the consulate's secretary, in the company of Albanians (the so-called Kavasides), would board the ship by way of a special boat bearing the flag of the consulate, and received the mail bags and money parcels. After exactly two hours, as much as was needed in order to sort the letters and place them in boxes in alphabetical order, people expecting mail gathered at the pavement in front of each consulate. Then, the secretary stepped out and, with the posture and look of a priest performing a memorial service, called out the names of the people who had mail.

Each of the people present answered by saying 'present' and received the letter. Only the newspaper delivery was done in a less celebratory manner, since it was done in secret and at a different time, for fear of the Turks, especially during troubled times.

Passport issued in 1907 at the Vice Consulate of Sunderland for the S/S Livatho, owned by V. N. Metaxas from Kefalonia.



A mounted postman delivers a letter.



Manuscript Notations (Pioneers)

The steamship *Maximilianos* began its post service in August 1937 on the route Syros-Piraeus-Kalamai until October 1841.

The following handwritten indications are found on letters.

Handwritten notation: 'Via the Maximilianos'.

'Via the Maximilianos'. On a letter dated 1-8-1840 from Athens (via Piraeus) to Syros.

Handwritten notation: 'Via the Greek steamship'.

'Via the Greek steamship'. On a letter dated 25-1-1840 from Athens (via Piraeus) to Syros.

Handwritten notation: 'Gr. Steam.'.

'Gr. Steam.' On a letter dated 25-9-1840 from Kalamai (via Piraeus) to Syros.



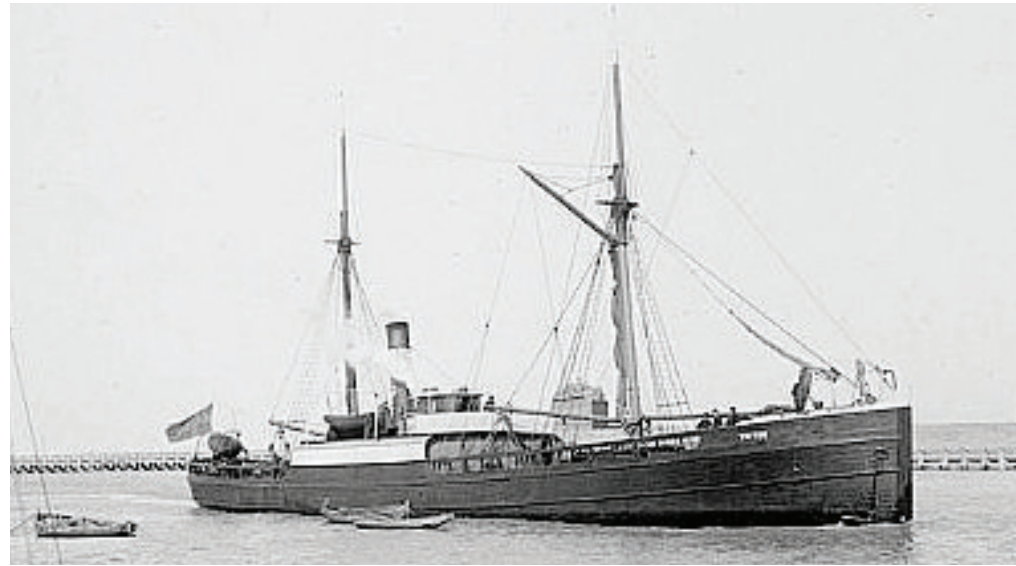
Photograph taken aboard Greek steamship.

CUPPA LAMBROS STEAMSHIP CO.

The pioneers were Jerome James Cuppa (London) and Constantine George Lambros (Liverpool).

The company bought its first steamship in 1888 named "EUXINE". A few years later,

in 1892, they added three more ships to their fleet named "TRITON", "HALCYON" and "SEVERN" with agencies in Syra, Salonique, Candia, Canea, Constantinople, Gallipoli and Hodeida.



S.S. Triton



S.S. Euxine



A1



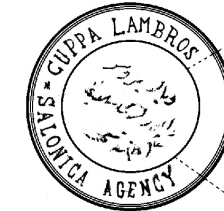
A2



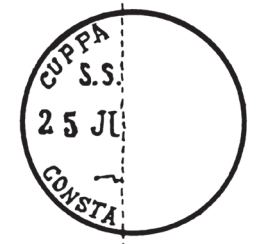
A3



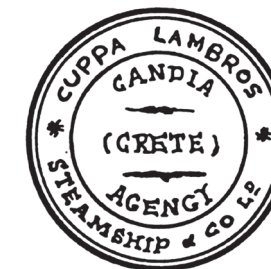
A4



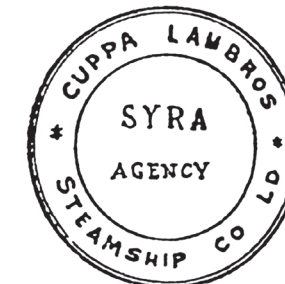
A5



A6



A7



A8



A9



A10



A11



A12



A13

S.S. TRITON

A14



Type A1, Syros agency. On Greek postage stamps.



Type A12, S/S. HALCYON. On an Ottoman postage stamp.



Type A7, Heraclion agency. On a Cretan revenue stamp.



Type A9, Chania agency. On an Ottoman revenue stamp.



Type A1, Syros agency. On Greek postage stamps.



Type A9, Chania agency. On a Cretan revenue stamp.



Type A13, S/S. EUXINE. On Ottoman revenue stamp.



Type A5, Salonica Agency. On Ottoman postage stamp.



Type A11, HODEIDAH (MER ROUGE) agency. On an Indian postal card.

ANGLO-IONIAN STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY

B2

Mich. A. Embiricos & Mari A. Embiricos

1919

The above-mentioned company was founded on 25 February 1919 by shipowners Michael A. Embiricos & Mari A. Embiricos as shareholders.

The Ships of the Company

VOSTITSA	PELAGOS
MYRTOON	PONTOS
PATRAI	SYROS

A single handstamp has been found:

Ἀγγλο-Ιονική Ἀτμοπλοία
Ὁ Διευθυντής

B1

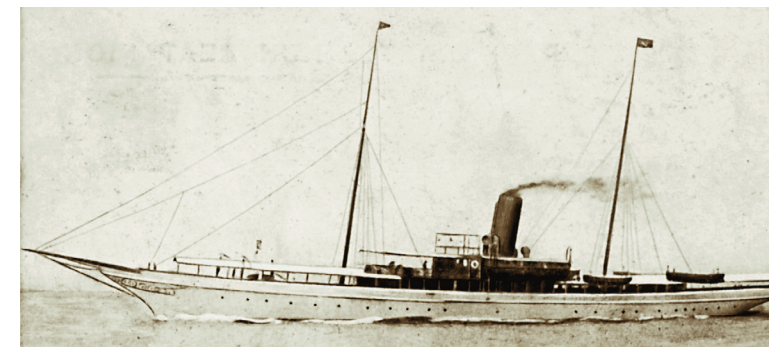
STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY GER. AGGELATOS

C3

The shipowner of the company was Gerasimos Aggelatos.

Initially, the company had one steamer at its disposal, the S/S. POLICOS, a 347-ton. passenger steamship. Subsequently, two additional ships were bought, the 2997-ton OLYMPIA, and the 463-ton ACHILLEUS.

Gerasimos Aggelatos later became partners with his brother, Panagis Aggelatos, establishing the CEFALONIA STEAM NAVIGATION P. GR. AGGELATOS.



The Polikos