

MERCHANT SAIL

The New York-London transatlantic sailing packet lines operated as follows:

Name of Line	Service Commenced	Service Terminated	Number of Years of Regular Operation	Total Number of Regular Packet Ships in the Service
Black X	1824	1868	44	26
Red Swallowtail	1824	1881	57	34

The London Red Swallowtail Line was the last transatlantic sailing packet line to remain in service. Its ships *Sir Robert Peel* (940 tons), *Rhine* (1,037 tons), *Liverpool* (1,077 tons), *Plymouth Rock* (973 tons), and *E. W. Stetson* (1,164 tons new measurement) operated until 1880, and the *Cornelius Grinnell* (1,117 tons) and *Ne Plus Ultra* (1,534 tons new and 1,396 old measurement) ran on schedule in the service until 1881. The last sailing packet to cross the Atlantic Ocean westbound was the *Ne Plus Ultra*, which terminated the Western Ocean sailing packet service upon her arrival from London on May 18, 1881. The *Liverpool* completed her last transatlantic packet voyage when she reached New York in November 1880. Of her thirty-seven years of continuous service in the ocean "shuttle," six years were in the Liverpool New Line (1843-1849), six in the Liverpool Blue Swallowtail Line (1849-1855), and twenty-five in the London Red Swallowtail Line (1855-1880). During this time, the packet had maintained a good average of 36 days on her westward runs, had made a crossing in 20 days, and had never exceeded 60 days from port to port. Upon her arrival in New York and her withdrawal from packet trade, the *Liverpool*, which holds the record for longest service in the transatlantic packet run, was not laid up, but promptly sailed for Bordeaux, France, and engaged in transient ocean freighting business.

From 1850 to the close of the sailing packet era, the following ships were placed in regular service on the established London lines operating out of New York:

Name of Ship	Line	Builder	Year Built	Service in Line	Westbound Passages in Days		
					Shortest	Longest	Average
OCEAN QUEEN (1,182 tons)	Black X	Westervelt & Mackey, New York	1850	1850-1855 (5 yrs.)	23	52	33
PALESTINE (1,751 tons)	Black X	J. A. Westervelt, New York	1854	1854-1861 (7 yrs.)	25	36	30
AMAZON (1,771 tons)	Black X	J. A. Westervelt, New York	1854	1854-1868 (14 yrs.)	24	36	28
ISAAC BELL (1,072 tons)	Black X	W. H. Webb, New York	1851	1857-1858 (2 yrs.)	19	45	33
DANIEL WEBSTER (1,545 tons*)	Black X	D. McKay, Boston	1850	1858-1869 (11 yrs.)	23	45	34
HUDSON II (1,801 tons*)	Black X	J. A. Westervelt, New York	1863	1863-1869 (6 yrs.)	24	44	33
SIR ROBERT PEEL (940 tons)	Red Swallowtail	W. H. Webb, New York	1846	1850-1880 (30 yrs.)	22	56	37
AMERICAN CONGRESS (863 tons)	Red Swallowtail	Newcastle, Maine	1849	1850-1879 (29½ yrs.)	21	77	36
CORNELIUS GRINNELL (1,117 tons)	Red Swallowtail	Boston, Mass.	1850	1850-1881 (31 yrs.)	24	48	33

*New tonnage measurement.

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