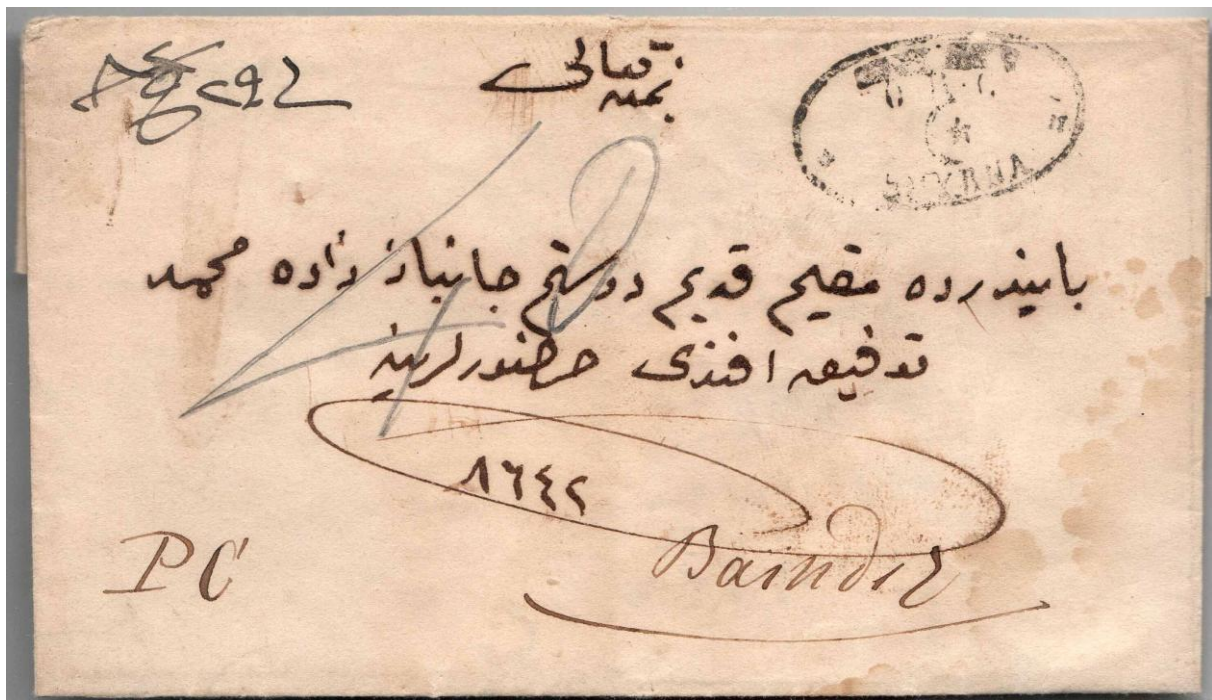


## **History of British Railway Companies in Asia Minor; first entrance of Imperialism to Ottoman Empire; With Postal History of OTTOMAN RAILWAY COMPANY and SYMRNE-KASABA RAILWAY COMPANY**

The British, French and Germans who were awarded with the privilege of the railway in the Ottoman Empire, each had individual zones of influence. France built up its zone of influence in North Greece, West and South Anatolia and Syria; England in Romania, West Anatolia, Iraq and the Persian Gulf; and Germany in Trachea, Central Anatolia and Mesopotamia. The Western investors of capital, upon the industrial revolution, built the railways which is an important and strategic mode of transportation, to carry at the most rapid way possible the important metals and the agricultural products which are the raw materials of textile industry, to the ports, and from there to their own counties. Furthermore by obtaining privileges such as profit guarantee per km, operation of mines within 20 km of radius, they caused the railway constructions to be widespread. Therefore the railway lines constructed on the lands of the Ottoman Empire and the routes they pass through, were shaped in accordance with the economical and political purposes of those countries.

The History of Turkish Railways and at the same time the Railway Postal History started in the year 1856. The first excavation for 130 km long railway line of İzmir-Aydın had been started in that year upon the privilege granted to a British Company. The selection of that line was not without reason. The region of İzmir-Aydın is crowded in population with respect to the other regions, with high commercial potential where ethnical members available to be a British market were living. That was a location where the raw materials needed by the British industry were easily accessible. Furthermore it had a strategic importance regarding taking the Middle East under control in order to inspect the Indian ways. Robert Wilkin, a merchant and entrepreneur living in İzmir (Smyrna), stated that he was acting on behalf of Joseph Paxton, George Whytes, Augustus William Rixon and William Jackson on the date July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1856, applied for privilege to the Ottoman Empire. That application was discussed and investigated at the Ottoman Parliament. On the date August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1856, the draft of the agreement to be executed with the Company was prepared. Upon the command given on the date September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1856, the privilege to establish a company and to build the railway was awarded to that investor British Group.



**Picture 1:** The subject envelope is a message sent specially from İzmir to Bayındır by SMYRNA O.R.C (OTTOMAN RAILWAY COMPANY) granted with the privilege of İzmir-Aydın railway.



**Picture 2:** A postal card regarding the inauguration of Aydın Railway.

Some of the historians consider the granting of the railway privilege to the British and their commencement to construction of İzmir-Aydın railway, as the first step of imperialism into the Ottoman Empire.







**Picture 4:** Cargos loaded from camels to trains at the Aydın Railway Station.



**Picture 5:** An envelope stamped duly with the train stamp of the Ottoman Mail service. 1874 cover from İzmir-Aydın railway line to Aydın with one piastre rate (bisected 2 piastres tied by number 6 Type B railway seal. Recorded dates of use are from 1868 to 1892.





**Picture 6:** 1900 20 paras postal stationary showing oval stripped number 18 railway cancellation. Recorded dates of use are from 1890 to 1901.