

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

TRANSATLANTIC STUDY GROUP

Newsletter No. 8

August 1988

While I am still waiting for contributions from most of the Group members to broaden the scope of the newsletter, Allan Steinhart has given me enough material for a couple of issues, but it would be nice to have something from of you. If anyone would like to do a longer piece on a particular aspect of the transatlantic mails, it would be appreciated. In the meantime, we shall make out with short, specific items.

LATE FEE

We probably all have, or have seen, transatlantic stampless covers from England with a lone 1d red adhesive and the postage, whether Paid or Unpaid, shown in manuscript or handstamp. In my own case, I have assumed that the 1d adhesive was a Late Fee to assure that the letter was included in an outgoing mail, which had just been closed, but never came across any relevant material to confirm this.

When in England recently, I attended a Postal History Society meeting at Huntingdon, Cambs. The morning was devoted to exhibits and talks by Mr. & Mrs. Moubray (I have mislaid my notes with their first names) on overseas mail. He led off with mail to the Continent, and she followed with transatlantic mail. Towards the end of her exhibit were several covers with various Late Fees. These were explained as:

January 1849	3d at individual towns
19 November 1858	1d as an adhesive applied before mailing
January 1866	2d as an adhesive applied before mailing.

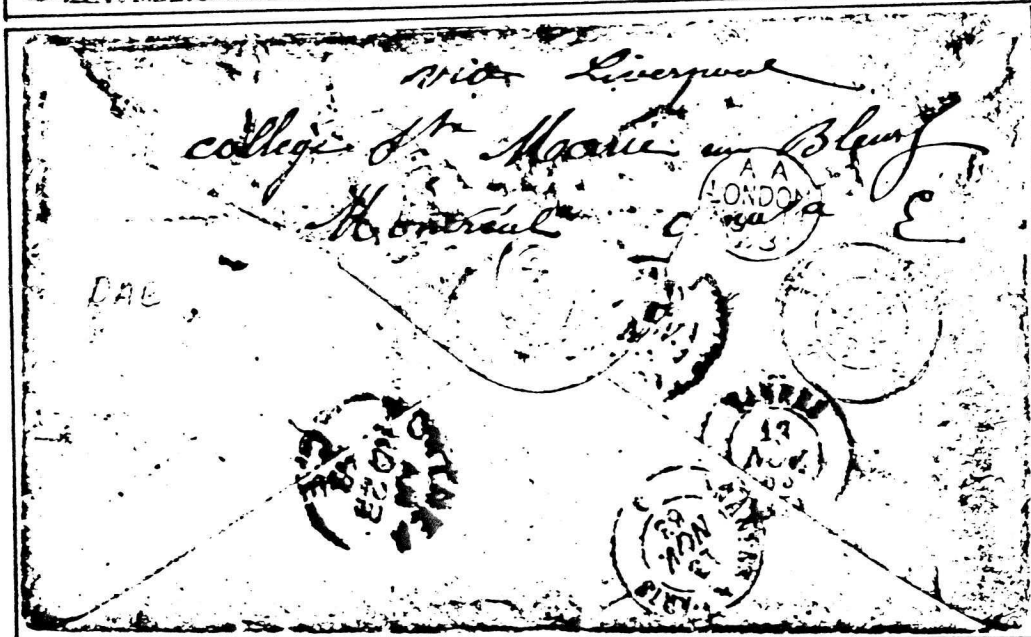
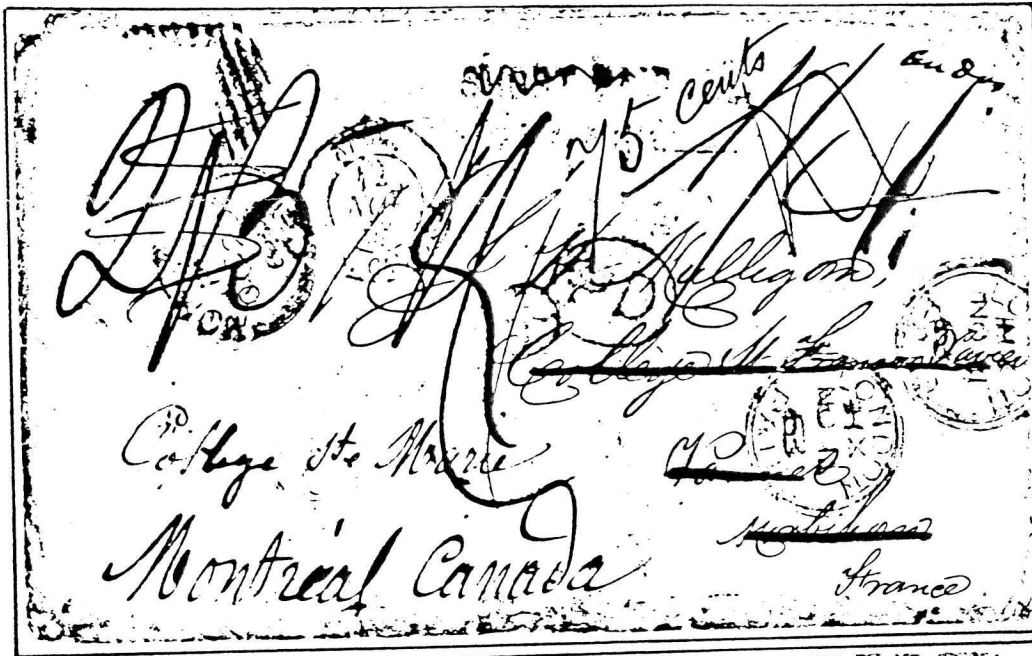
Since my return home, I have searched my library for a definitive statement on Late Fees, without success. One addition to the above is that there was a 6d Late Fee between 7:00 and 7:45 p.m. introduced at the Chief Office in the 1790s. (Two sources give 1790 and 1797 respectively). Another reference showed that Glasgow had a 1d Late Fee from early March 1849 until at least January 1857, while another quotes a 1d Late Fee for 6:00-7:00 p.m. and 6d for 7:00-7:30 p.m.

I am aware that a study of Late Fees by the late Stitt Dibden was published in the 1960s, but have not seen a copy, but would expect that there has been much new information since then.

If those members who have a copy of the Dibden study or have any other specific information on applicable dates, rates, etc. would send it to me, I shall collate it for a future newsletter, OR if someone knows the whole story and will write it up, it can be the subject of a future newsletter and also an additional chapter for the Handbook.

A QUESTION RE A COVER TO FRANCE from Allan Steinhart

This article is actually a long question. The illustrations show the front and reverse of a cover from Canada to France and returned to Canada. The cover was franked by a stamp which somewhere on its journey fell off or was removed. The cover is from Montreal and the stamp was tied by a Berri duplex cancel of Montreal dated October 29, 1863. It appears by the dates the cover was carried to England per the Allen Line Canadian Steamer HIBERNIAN sailing October 31, 1863 from Quebec to Liverpool arriving November 11, 1863.



The following markings appear on the front of the cover:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| MONTREAL PM OC 29 63 | Berri duplex | SHORT PAID/HALF FINE | (Crossed out) |
| LONDON HX NO 11 63 | PAID | RATES: 1/-, 1/4, 2/3 | (all crossed out) |
| ANGL. 12 NOV 63 | AMB. CALAIS 1 | 75 Cents | |
| ⊗ red | | Ⓟ PD | red |

and on the reverse:

VANNES 13 NOV 63 ?
VANNES A PARIS 13 NOV 63 ?
PARIS 13 NOV 63 ?
VANNES A PARIS 14 NOV 63 (60)
AA LONDON NO 14 63 (in blue)
MONTREAL AM NO 28 63 C.E.

On the reverse is also the return address and the endorsement "via Liverpool".

The single rate to France from Canada per Allen Line via Liverpool was 17 cents. The question is what is the explanation of the rates on this cover?

* * * * *

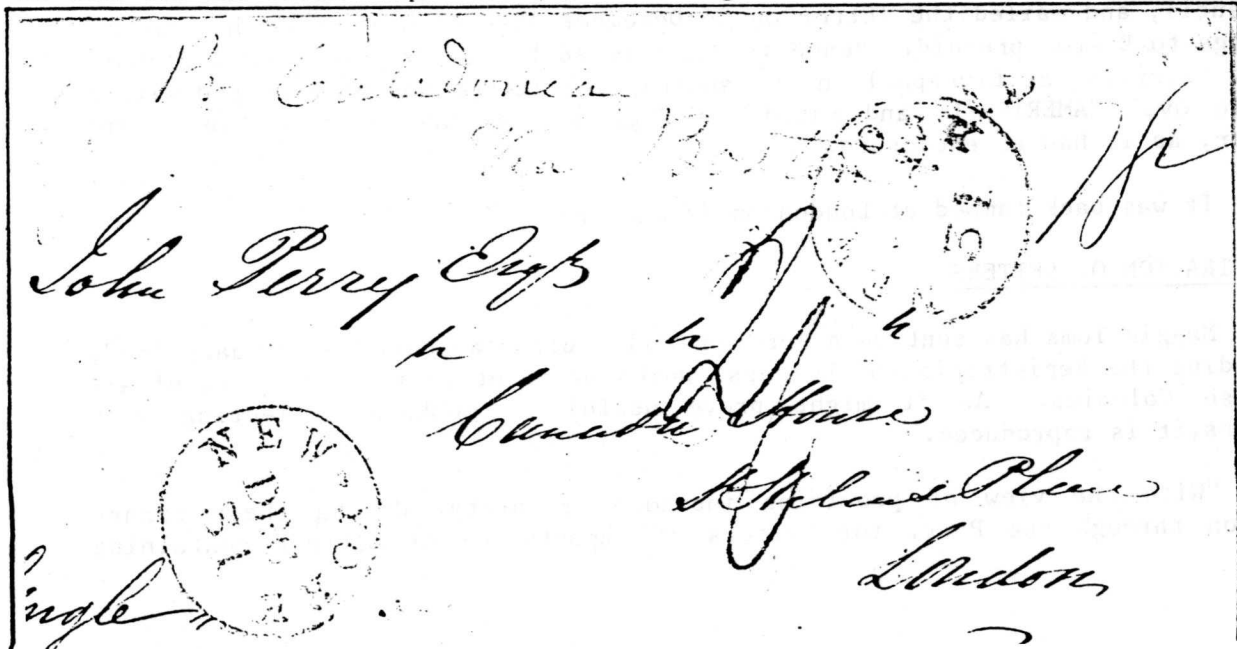
Before everyone else has a go at interpreting the rates on this letter, I offer the following, which is in line with the comments I made in the Sep/Oct 1985 Topics on Maggie Toms' analysis of B.N.A.-France postal rates via Great Britain in previous issues of Topics.

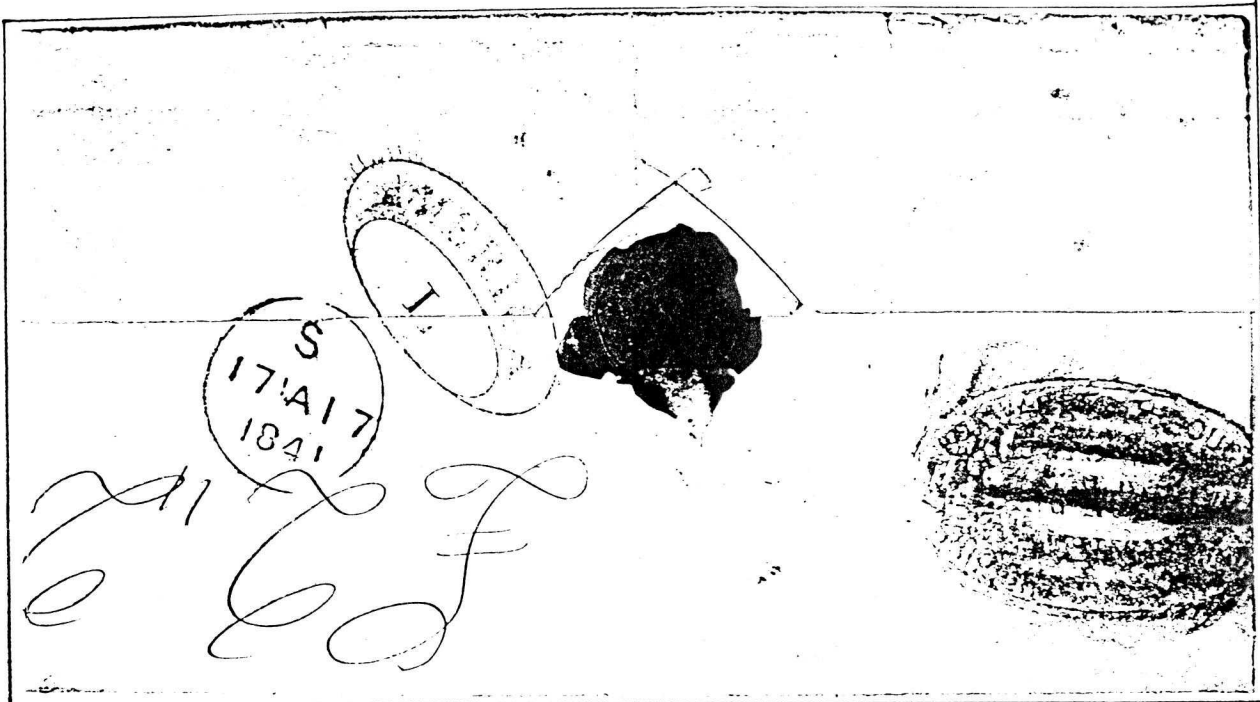
After the letter arrived at London with the adhesive stamp missing, it was struck with the "SHORT PAID/HALF FINE" handstamp and charged 1/- Stg. However, there was no fine on unpaid letters to France, so this was crossed out and it was rated 1/4 Stg. postage as a 1/4-1/2 oz. letter (4d Canadian + 2d British + 10d French) and accepted as a prepaid letter. It appears that subsequently it was decided that it was a 1/2-3/4 oz. letter (8d Canadian + 3d British + 15d French) and rated 2/3 (sic.).

It was returned to Canada on the Cunard Arabia from Liverpool on 14 November/Queenstown 15 November and arrived at Boston on 27 November in a closed bag for Montreal. At Montreal, the 2/3 Stg. was treated as postage due and converted to 54 cents, and 21 cents added as a single rate from France via the United States to give a total postage due of 75 cents.

AN UNUSUAL FORWARDING AGENT LETTER

The illustrated letter was written in Goderich, U.C. on 21 December 1840 and begins: "I trust - altho' it is very doubtful that this letter may yet be in time for the Steam Ship President - sailing from New York the 1st January."





The letter was taken privately to New York and delivered to a forwarding agent there, who applied his oval backstamp in red. This was subsequently obliterated with red crayon, but from what little is still legible, it appears to that of Hussey & Mackay, as it has the correct dimensions and the wording: "FORWARDED THROUGH HU..... & " can be read.

The President was not at New York as expected by the letter writer. She had sailed from New York on 2 November 1840 on her second homeward voyage and, encountering a severe gale, made only 300 miles in six days, so put back into New York. Sailing again on 11 November, she arrived at Liverpool on 27 November. She was laid up for the winter and did not depart on the third voyage to New York until 10 February, arriving on 3 March - two months after the anticipated New Year's Day sailing date.

There being no other steamer expected at New York in January 1841, the forwarding agent obliterated his handstamp, wrote: "Pr Caledonia Via Boston" in pencil, and mailed the letter on 31 December 1840 with 18 3/4 cents inland postage to Boston prepaid, whence it was carried by the Caledonia on 1 January 1841. Arriving at Liverpool on 16 January, the letter was backstamped with a double oval "AMERICA/L" and rated 2/- Stg. postage due as a double weight letter, as it had an enclosure.

It was backstamped at London on 17 January.

REGISTRATION OF LETTERS

Maggie Toms has sent me a Foreign Office Circular dated 31 January 1857, regarding the Registration of Letters, which was sent to the Governors of all British Colonies. As it might prove useful to members collecting such letters, it is reproduced.

"With the view of providing increased security, during their transmission through the Post, for Letters of importance, or Letters containing

valuable Enclosures, the Postmaster General is very desirous of affording to the Public the opportunity of registering Letters, forwarded in the Mails between the United Kingdom and all the British Colonies, with which a regular exchange of Mails takes place.

In those Colonies, the Posts of which are under the control of the British Post-Office, the privilege of registering Letters sent to the United Kingdom has been enjoyed for some time past, and Letters, professedly registered, are constantly received from other Colonies. But, as regards these last, Registration has not yet been placed upon any proper footing.

I have, therefore, to propose to you, the following arrangements:-

1. That any Letter or Packet of printed papers sent from the United Kingdom to Canada, or from the Colony to the United Kingdom, may be registered at the wish of the sender, provided the entire postage and the Registration fee be paid in advance.
2. That Letters, but only Letters, forwarded through the United Kingdom from Canada to any other British Colony, or to any foreign country to which Letters may be paid to destination, may also be registered at the wish of the sender, under like conditions.
3. That the amount of the fee to be levied for Registration shall be fixed by the Dispatching Office; that is to say, that the British Post-Office shall fix the amount of the fee for the Registration of Letters sent to Canada, and that your Government shall be at liberty to fix the amount of the fee for the Registration of Letters sent to the United Kingdom.
4. That the fee charged for the Registration of Letters sent from the United Kingdom to Canada, or vice versa, shall be equally divided between the Imperial and the Local Post-Office.
5. That in the case of Letters forwarded through the United Kingdom from Canada to another Colony, or from Canada to any foreign country with which there is a provision for registering Letters, two fees shall be collected from the sender of the Letters, one for the Registration as far as the United Kingdom, and the other for the Registration from the United Kingdom to the place of destination.
6. That upon this last class of Letters your Government shall account to the British Post-Office for one-half of the fee levied for Registration as far as the United Kingdom, and for the entire fee levied for the Registration from the United Kingdom to the place of destination. For example, supposing a registered Letter be sent from Sierra Leone to Nova Scotia, and the Government of Sierra Leone to have fixed sixpence as the amount of its fee for Registration, the Post-Office of Sierra Leone would collect on the Letter referred to, over and above the postage,

	s.	d.
For the Registration Fee to the United Kingdom	0	6
For the Registration Fee from the United Kingdom to } Nova Scotia }	0	6
Total	1	0

and would account to the British Post-Office for nine pence, that is, three pence for half the Registration fee to the United Kingdom, and six pence, the entire fee for the Registration from the United Kingdom to Nova Scotia, and, on sending the Letter to Nova Scotia, the British Post-Office would account to the Nova Scotia Post-Office for three pence, half the fee for the Registration from the United Kingdom to Nova Scotia.

I annex a Table shewing the several British Colonies and the Foreign Countries to which Letters sent from the United Kingdom may at present be registered, and the amount of the fee in each case. (Anyone interested in a copy of the table can have one by sending me a dollar to pay for the copying and postage).

I request that you will inform me, at your earliest convenience, whether your Government is willing to assent to these proposals."

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