

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

TRANSATLANTIC STUDY GROUP

Newsletter No. 9

October 1988

As a result of my pleas for contributions from group members for the newsletter, several very interesting items have been received, which form the basis of this issue.

A QUESTION RE A COVER TO FRANCE

I was sure that there might be a better interpretation of the rates shown on Allan Steinhart's cover shown in the last newsletter, and Maggie Toms has come forward with a discussion of the accounting system used with such letters and gives her conclusions. I am sure that you will find this both useful and enlightening. I reproduce it in entirety.

"In line with your comments (Arnell) in the Sep-Oct 1985 TOPICS, although the Toronto postmaster calculated the Canadian portion of the postage by the half ounce, this was not the proper procedure. There seemed to be considerable lack of uniformity in the way these postage due covers were rated in Canada.

On prepaid letters to France, the single rate of 8d Stg. or 17 cents per 1/4 oz. was divided thus:

Sea rate	3d
Colonial inland	1d
British transit	1d
French postage	3d.

It had to be this way, as on prepaid letters by Canadian packet to France, Canada accounted to Great Britain for each single letter at the rate of 4d per 1/4 oz. (May-Jun 1984 TOPICS). This left the residual 4d of the 8d rate for Canada. The 4d which Great Britain claimed was divided - 1d British transit and 3d French postage. If the letter went by Cunard packet, the 3d sea postage would also be claimed by Great Britain.

According to the 1856 Anglo-French convention (Art XIV), Great Britain paid France for her postage on prepaid letters at the rate of 1 franc per oz. However when rating individual letters, the French postage was calculated at 3d per 1/4 oz. On unpaid letters, Great Britain accounted to France for her postage at the rate of 2 francs per oz., but Canada accounted to Great Britain on these unpaid letters (if by Canadian packet) for each single letter at the rate of 6d per 1/4 oz. - 1d British transit and 5d French postage. This is why the rate was 17 cents on prepaid single letters from Canada to France, and 21 cents on unpaid single letters from France to Canada.

I suppose a number of scenarios could be postulated to account for the British rate marks and the Short Paid/Half Fine handstamp, but presumably at this point a postage stamp or stamps were missing, and the cover was treated in the same manner as if it were addressed to Great Britain. This was corrected by crossing out the 1/- and the handstamp, which was noted by the @ mark.

The 1/4 was the correct rate for a double letter and was probably in

agreement with the statement of the letter bill, and was so marked on the cover; however the actual weight may have been slightly more. The missing stamps created an unusual situation and, for whatever reason, the letter was forwarded Paid to Destination.

France returned the letter without any claim for postage, in accordance with Art XXXIV of the convention, which provided that letters paid to destination be returned free of charge. However, probably because of the difference in weight from a double to a triple letter, Great Britain chose to treat it as an unpaid letter from France to Canada, and rated it 2/3 postage due - 15d French postage, 3d British transit and 9d British sea postage. The United States transit fee was not included, and I do not know what the arrangements were for its payment. In this case, it seems as if the onus was on Canada to secure the payment. To the British claim of 2/3 or 57 cents, Canada needed to add the United States transit charge and Canadian inland postage. If delivery was involved, an additional fee may have been added.

British claim	57 cents
U.S. transit	10 cents
Canadian inland	<u>7 cents</u>
	74 cents.

And that is the closest I can come to the total postage.

I think that the Montreal postmaster knew a little more about how to handle French letters than the Toronto postmaster. If this letter had been addressed to Toronto, the postage due might have been settled at about 56 or 57 cents."

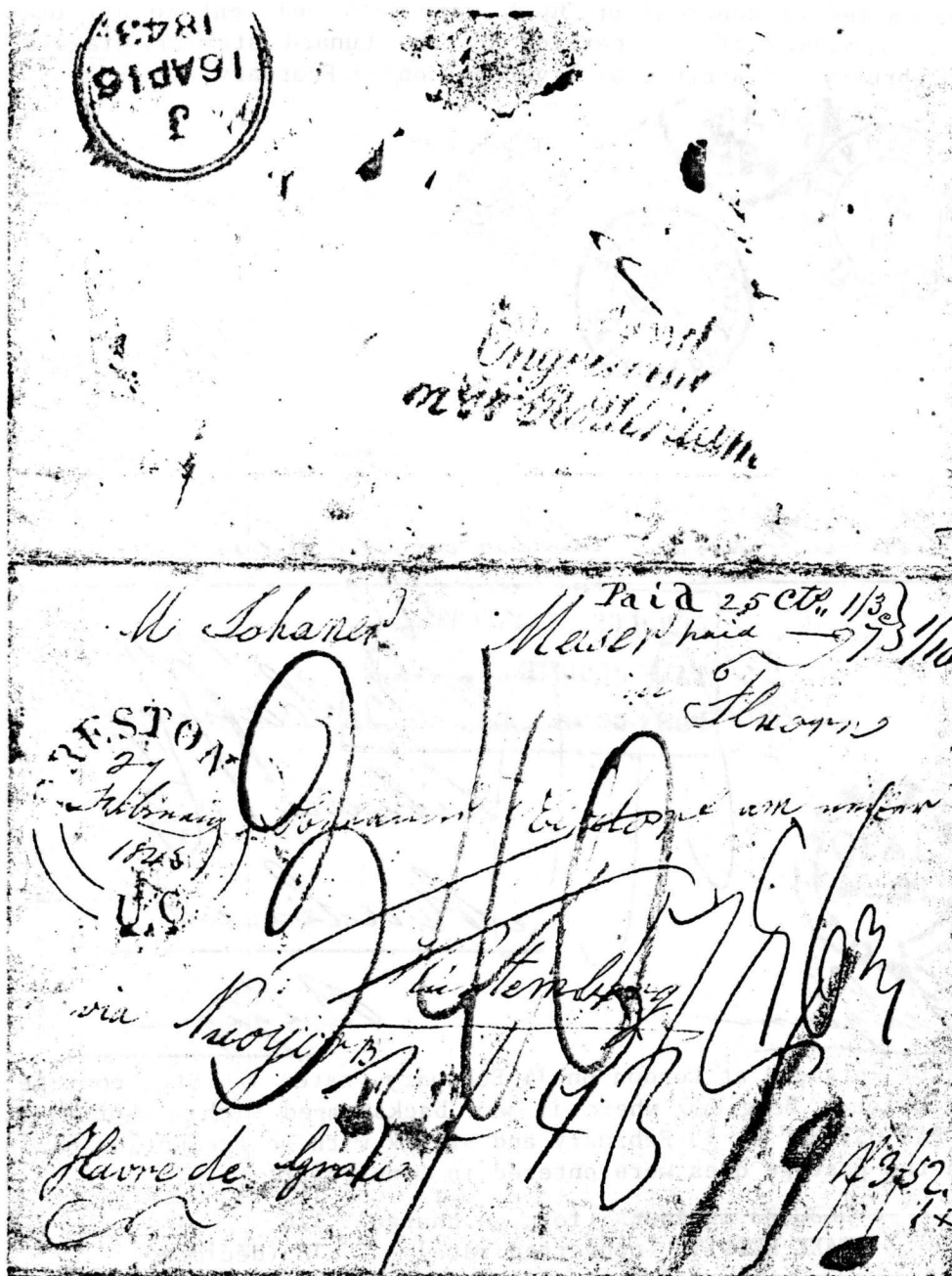
#### POSTAGE IN FIVE CURRENCIES

James van der Linden has sent a photocopy of a cover from Preston, U.C. to Wurtemberg, which passed through the United States, Great Britain, Holland, Prussia and Thurn & Taxis on its way. As it progressed along this route, it collected additional increments of postage in the respective currencies, which are all shown. His interpretation of the various numbers shows his expert knowledge of the mid-19th century postal markings.

The letter was written in Preston on 27 February 1843 and was mailed with 1/10 Cy. postage prepaid [upper right], representing 7d Canadian inland postage to Queenston and 25 cents (1/3 Cy.) U.S. inland postage. Although directed to go by an American sailing packet from New York to Havre, it was sent to Boston to connect with the Cunard steamer Columbia sailing on 1 April, and arrived at Liverpool on 14 April. It was backstamped at London on 16 April and rated 5/4 Stg. postage due as a double letter in brown ink [lower right], made up of 2 x 1/- packet postage and 2 x 1/8 British postage to Holland.

London sent it to Rotterdam, where it was backstamped "England over Rotterdam" and rated 340 cents in red ink (64d x 5 = 320 cents British charge + 20 cents Dutch transit).

It went from Holland to Prussia via the border office at Emmerich, where the 340 cents was crossed out and this converted to Silbergroschen by dividing by six to give 56 3/4 Gr. in dull red [centre right], which was equivalent to 199 Kreuzer (56 3/4 x 3.5).



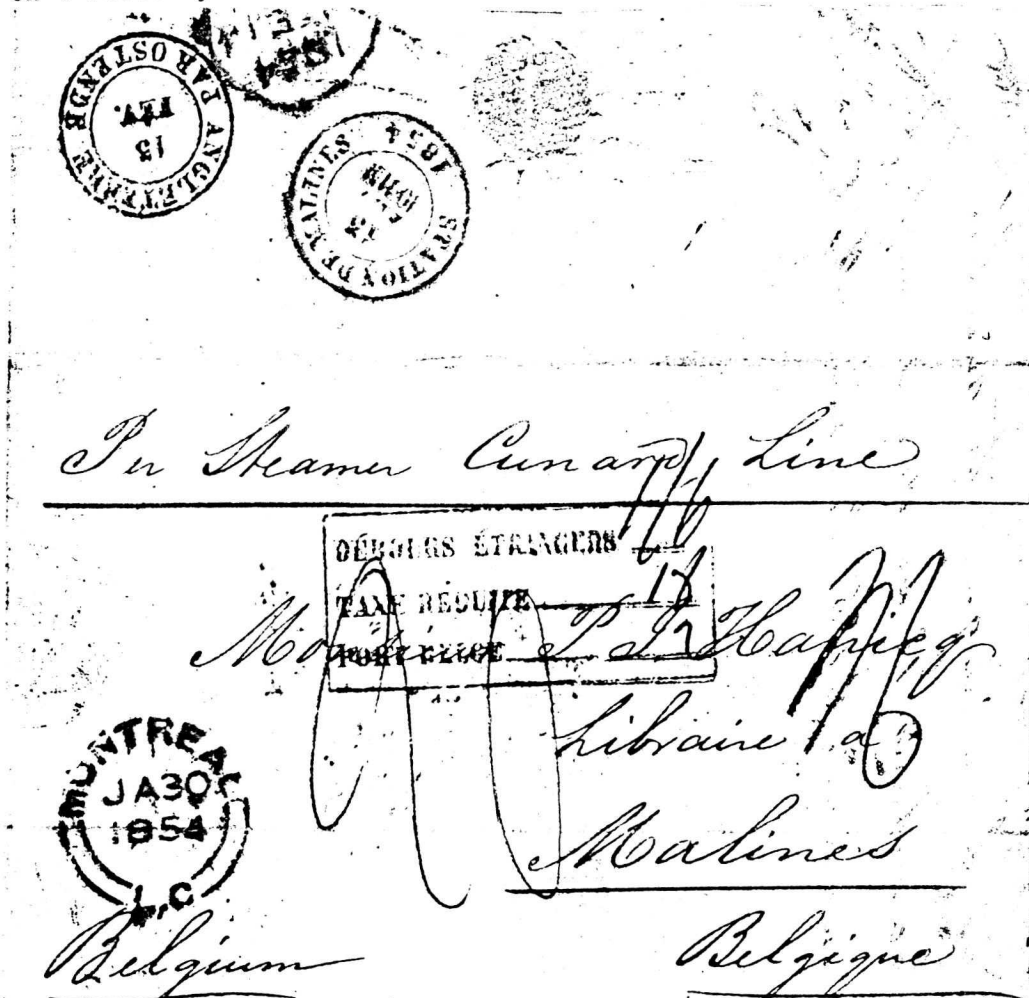
The Prussian/Thurn & Taxis transit rate was 7 Gr. or 24 Kr., which when added to 199 Kr. gave 223 Kr. or 3 Gulden 43 Kreuzer. This was marked as "3f43" in blue ink [bottom centre].

In the lower right hand corner, the "/9" in red crayon is the Wurtemberg inland postage of 9 Kr., which was added to the 3f43 to give a total postage due of 3 Gulden 52 Kreuzer. This is shown as "3/52" in the extreme right corner. The "lx" below it was the "Botengeld" (delivery fee).

\* \* \* \* \*

James sent a second cover, which shows the Belgian accounting handstamp.

This had been mailed at Montreal on 30 January 1854 and sent in a closed bag via Boston to London. It was carried by the Cunard steamer Niagara from Boston on 1 February and arrived at Liverpool on 13 February.



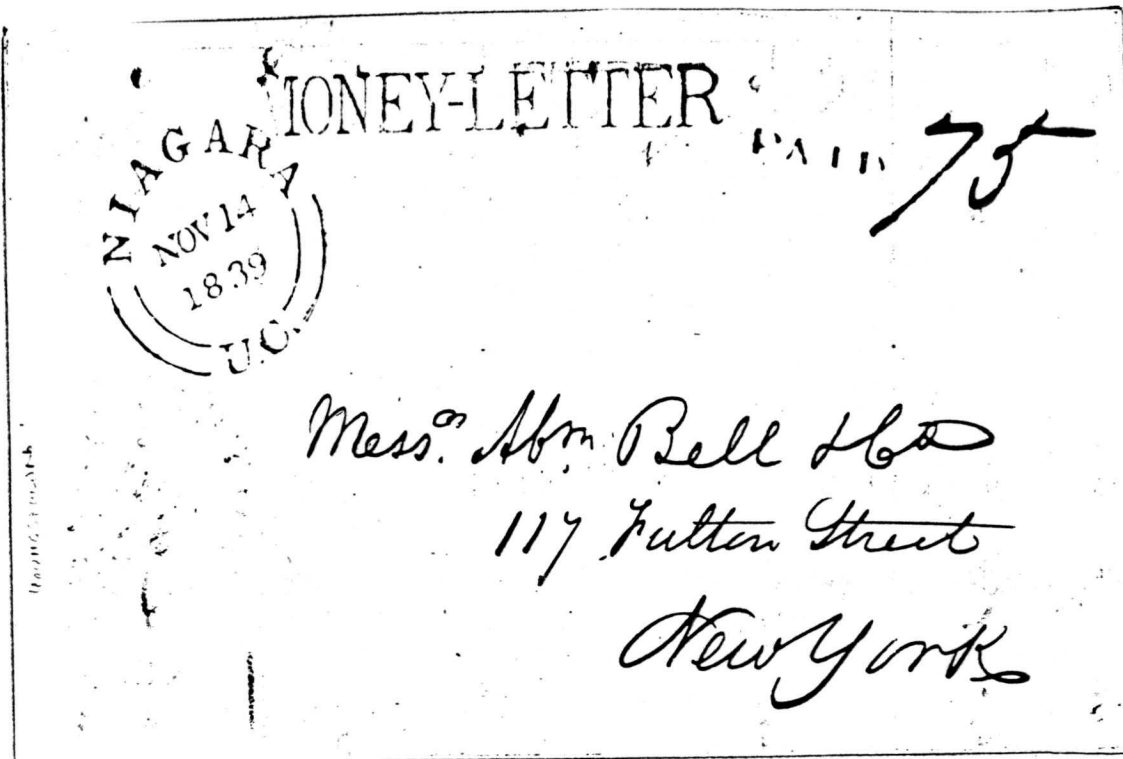
It was backstamped at London on 14 February, rated 1/6 Stg. postage due, and sent to Ostend, Belgium, where it was backstamped with a double circle "ANGLETERRE PAR OSTEND" on 15 February and struck with an accounting handstamp, within which the postage dues were entered in manuscript:

DEBOURS ETRANGER (foreign charge)	1/6
TAXE REDUITE (converted rate)	18 (décimes)
[1d Stg. = 1 décime]	
PORT BELGE (Belgium postage)	2 (décimes)

The décime total was 20, which was shown in the centre of the cover in blue ink. The "STATION DE MALINES" backstamp appears to have the incorrect date of 13 February, as the letter could not have got there before 15 February at the earliest.

FREIGHT MONEY - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Allan Steinhart writes: In the Mar-Apr 1988 Canadian Philatelist, there is an article by J.C. Arnell on Freight Money on transatlantic letters. A few days after the receipt of the magazine, I acquired a most important cover - important for its contents relating to Freight Money.



In this article, Arnell noted that Canadian postmasters at Montreal, Kingston and Queenston corresponded directly with the New York steamer agents over Freight Money, but that this arrangement was soon terminated and such monies were forwarded to New York via Stayner less commissions, except for the Montreal post office.

The cover (shown above) was previously in the Stulberg and Palmer collections. It gives some detail which differs from the previously published information. On the Niagara frontier, the main exchange offices between Canada and the United States were QUEENSTON, U.C. and LEWISTON, N.Y. Besides these offices, Fort Erie- Buffalo and Niagara, U.C.-Youngstown, N.Y. were local exchange offices, and mail from the interior of Canada did not pass through them, only that originating locally in either direction.

This cover has a red "NIAGARA NOV 14 1839 U.C." datestamp and a faint red "YOUNGSTOWN NO 16 N.Y." datestamp. There is also a red "MONEY-LETTER" handstamp (Harrison Type 2) and it is marked "PAID 75", the "PAID" being applied at Niagara. No Canadian postage is shown as the letter was free franked in Canada, as we shall see, and is charged triple rate in the United States; three times the 25¢ single rate over 400 miles from Youngstown to New York City.

The letter is addressed to Abraham Bell & Co., who were the agents for a number of shipping companies in New York. On the flap, the cover is endorsed "Alex. Davidson A/C /Postages /Niagara, U.C. / 11/14, 1839" and "L6". The contents of the letter document the amounts of money collected and remitted by Alexander Davidson to Abraham Bell & Co. The account is reproduced on page 6.

First a bit about Alexander Davidson (1794-1856), who was at this time the Niagara postmaster. He came to Canada in 1821 and settled on a 400-acre grant in D...(?) Township, becoming a teacher and publishing the Canada Spelling Book, which was the first copyrighted book in Upper Canada and which

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Abm Bell & Co New York

In acct with Alex<sup>r</sup> Davidson Niagara Wb.

		— Cr —	
1839	May 11	Pay 18 single letters sent for the Liverpool	4.50
		1 Newspaper	.2
	13	Pay 1 double and 2 single letters	1.00
	July 1	Pay 1 Packet	1.25
		1 do	.75
		1 do	.50
		15 single letters 25c <sup>t</sup>	3.75
		2 Newspapers	.4
	Aug 15	Pay 16 single letters 25c <sup>t</sup>	4.00
		8 Newspapers	.16
	Oct 12	Pay 1 double letter	.50
		9 single do	2.25
		14 Newspapers	.28
	14	Pay 2 single letters	.50
			3.53
			19.50
		— Dr —	
1839	Nov 14	Job commission on above 7 1/2 p <sup>er</sup> cent	1.46
		Cash in full	18.04
			19.50
			\$
		\$18. Lumber money	\$16.57
		J. A. D. S. Co Postage %	266

sold about 130,000 copies by 1856. He published other books as well. By January 1837, Davidson was in Niagara(-on-the-Lake) as postmaster, where he ran a bookshop, the post office and sold stationery, hardware and garden supplies. He served seven terms on the town council, was a school trustee, on the Board of Health and president of the Board of Police. In 1850, he was Niagara's first mayor. He also edited and published the Niagara Mail.

In contradiction to Arnell's article, this letter shows Alexander Davidson, postmaster at Niagara, collecting and remitting Freight Money directly to Abraham Bell, without going through Stayner. The Freight Money listed here appears to have been collected on behalf of mails for the pioneer steamer Liverpool. The dates of the forwarding of the letters by Davidson ties in with the sailings of the Liverpool from New York as follows:

Niagara Mails

11 & 13 May 1839  
 1 July  
 19 August  
 12 & 14 October

Liverpool Sailings from N.Y.

18 May 1839  
 6 July  
 24 August  
 19 October

Another important point in this letter shows that Abraham Bell & Co. allowed Davidson a commission of 7½% on the direct collection of Freight Money, and it appears that Stayner got no share of this. It also shows the exchange rate between the two currencies, viz. "\$18 Canadian money ---\$16.57". This difference was one of the reasons for the surcharge on postage introduced in 1842.

Further, the letter confirms that the charge on letters was 25 cents for a single letter; 50 cents for double letters; 75 cents for triple letters, etc., as previously reported. Whether the Freight Money charge actually appeared on the covers remains open to question, but I suspect that it did not, as it appears that no Canadian postage appeared either on letters which originated at Niagara. Davidson was also an agent of the United States Post Office.

Probably the most important point illustrated by this letter is that there was a Freight Money charge for newspapers sent from Canada to Britain via the United States on the Liverpool. Whether this Freight Money on newspapers was charged on the other pioneer steamers or sailing packets remains to be seen. The charge as shown here was 2 cents per newspaper. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time this information has been presented to students of transatlantic mail. Whether a newspaper by such a route with Freight Money shown will ever be found is very doubtful.

Ed. note - We thank Allan for sharing this information with us first!

#### SPRING COMMERCE ON THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

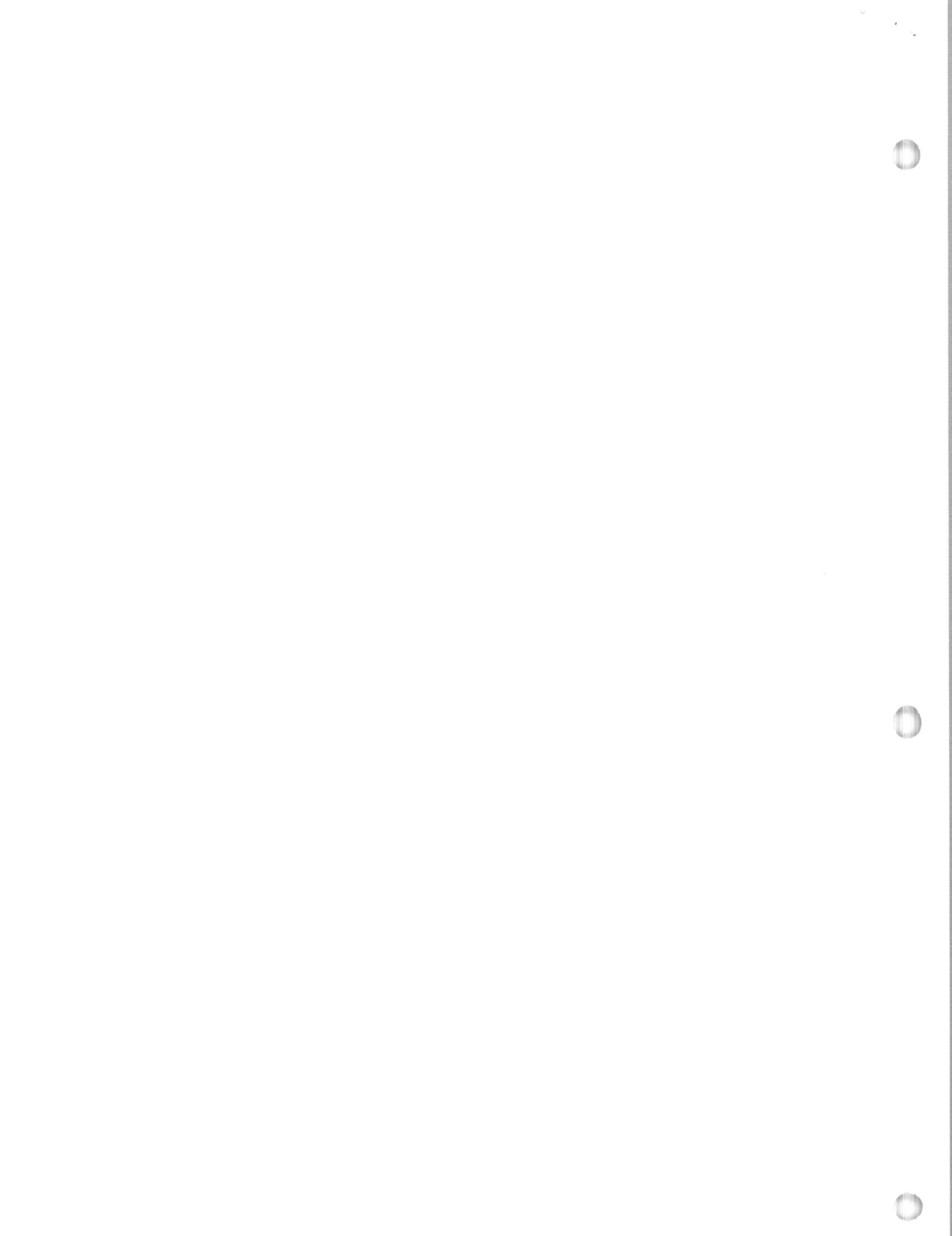
Historians have always stressed the importance of the St. Lawrence River to the early development of the Canadas, and many an account can be found of the assembly of sailing vessels of all varieties waiting in the Gulf in late April and early May for the ice to clear, allowing them to race to Quebec City for an early cargo. Perhaps not as much attention has been paid to the arrival of such an early cargo in Britain.

I have a letter from Thomas Hudson & Co., Liverpool dated 15 April 1845 to Pickersgill, Tibbits & Co., Quebec, marked "p Sarah". The contents reflect as well as anything I have seen what a British importer was prepared to pay for such a cargo:

"You will receive this by Capt Davies of the Sarah & we hope you will load her with a real good Cargo, & with the quick dispatch which your M<sup>r</sup> P. promised the Writer, and which is the sole reason we give her such a high freight - you know it is 1/- above the rates now current - but our great desire is an early Cargo - we have promised Capt<sup>n</sup> D. £5 if he arrives in Lpool, one of the first ten Ships from Quebec, so we rely on your promise

We expect you will give us as much overmeasure in this Cargo, as you did undermeasure in the "Nailers" last year, & thus balance that a/c -

A notation on the inside of this letter shows that it was received on 23 May and answered on 12 June. This elapsed time may represent how long it took to find a cargo and to load it on the Sarah.



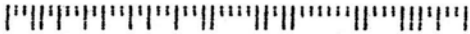


ADDITIONAL GROUP MEMBERS

I have been remiss in listing the members of the group who have joined over the past year. On several occasions, I did not have space, but now I can acknowledge the following to bring our membership to 41.

- John White
- Bill Lea
- J.J. MacDonald
- Gerald Bennett
- Robert Parsons
- James Lehr
- E.A. Quinn

Jack Arnell



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