

# The Registry

Registration study group

Newsletter of the BNAPS registration study group

Secretary: David Handelman—e-mail: dhandelman@freewwwweb.com (home), dehsg@uottawa.ca (office) ☉ Mathematics Dept, University of Ottawa, Ottawa ON K1N 6N5 CANADA

Editor: Vic Willson—e-mail: LLOYDWILL@aol.com ☉ PO Box 10026, College Station TX 77842 USA

## Contents

- Introduction • 1
- Letters: *Len Belle* on St Jacobs & lettres d'argent • 1
- Paige's pages *Larry Paige* • 2
- Another PEI money letter! *David Handelman* • 3
- An earlier US-Canada AR cover *David Handelman* • 4
- A heavyweight money letter *John Rossiter* • 5
- Pre-money letters *David Handelman* • 6
- Unusual use of a singleton 3¢ small queen *David Handelman* • 8
- A fascinating cover *Peter J McCarthy* • 9
- Postage due registered covers in the cents period *Len Belle* • 10
- More postage due registered cents covers *David Handelman* • 11
- The back page • 12

## Introduction

THIS group is devoted to the study of practically anything in postal history related to the registration and money letter systems of what is now Canada. A brief look at the contents of this issue shows the diversity that is possible, although this issue is much more heavily weighted towards money letters than past ones. The *Registry* is issued quarterly, subject to the availability of articles (long and short). Information on how to join appears at the bottom of The Back Page.

Once again the order of the articles was governed not by coherence or continuity, but simply by my desire to have the illustrations as close as possible to the relevant text.



We get W, Z, X, P, R, S, V, C, H, ...

From *Len Belle* by snail. With reference to the weird St. J registration marking (Newsletter #2, pp 9-10), Len reports a third example, used as a transit marking in 1915, on a registered letter addressed to Dr L Seale Holmes. This is the earliest strike recorded thus far.

Len also reports a second *lettre d'argent* (see Newsletter #4), similar to the previously reported one. From *Danny Handelman* by voice. Concerning the CPR steamer cover appearing on p 3 of Newsletter #4, what was deciphered as "Missanable, Quebec" refers to "Missanabie" and is in Ontario—in fact, in Algoma district (post office opened 1893)!



# Paige's pages

Larry Paige

SHOWN in Figure 1, is a cover showing the anomalous 2¢ registration fee to the us, effective in the period March–April 1888. Not many examples [*perhaps a dozen?*—dh] are known, but what makes this possibly unique is that it is a corner cover.



Figure 1. The 2¢ US registration fee (24 April 1888)  
Corner cover, mailed from a book dealer & publisher in  
Montréal, to Buffalo.

[ An interesting question is why examples of this rate are so difficult to find. Although it lasted only two months, one would expect large numbers of registered covers mailed to the us in general, and when it became known that the rate had been reduced, one would expect higher than normal usage. Perhaps people haven't been paying attention to dealers' stocks?—dh]

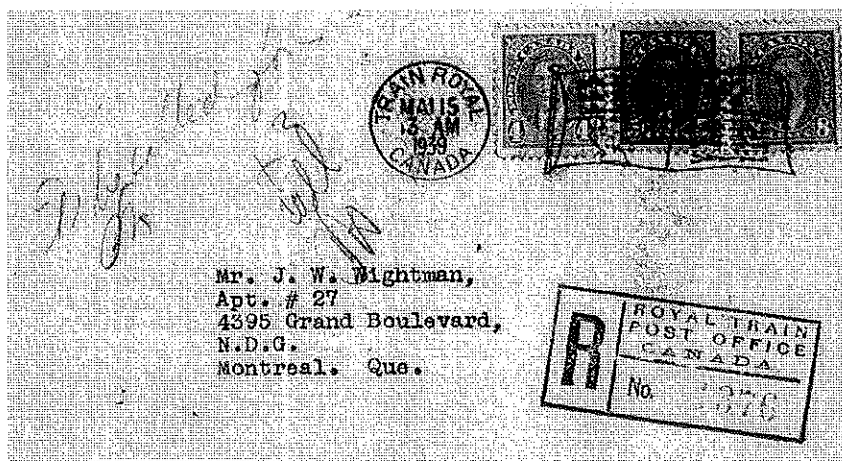


Figure 2. Purple royal train flag (15 May 1939)  
How the devil do we show it's purple? Only known with the French language hub. The "N.D.G." in the address of course refers to *Notre Dame de Grace*, often known to Montrealers as "no damn good."

Shown in Figure 2, is a royal train cover (or more accurately, a *train royal* cover). Afficionados of such material will be aware that the flag cancel was originally intended to be in purple, but the ink

smudged badly. About 50-75 covers are believed to have been cancelled with the purple ink before it was replaced by the default black ink. The post office replaced all the non-registered covers that had been purpled. The purple ink was retained for the rectangular registration handstamps (as these were applied by hand). The flag cancel on the illustrated cover was in purple, and very few such exist. [I am somewhat reluctant to include philatelic registered material in the newsletter, but I'm willing to be guided by readers' thoughts on the matter—dh]



## Another P E I money letter!

David Handelman

**I**N my article on money letter wrappers and money letters per se (Newsletter #1), I reported that just one money letter was known originating in PEI. On the Back Page of Newsletter #3, I mentioned that another one had come up as lot #1141 of the September 1999 Maresch auction sale. It is shown in Figure 1. I bought it for \$88 (including taxes and tip)!

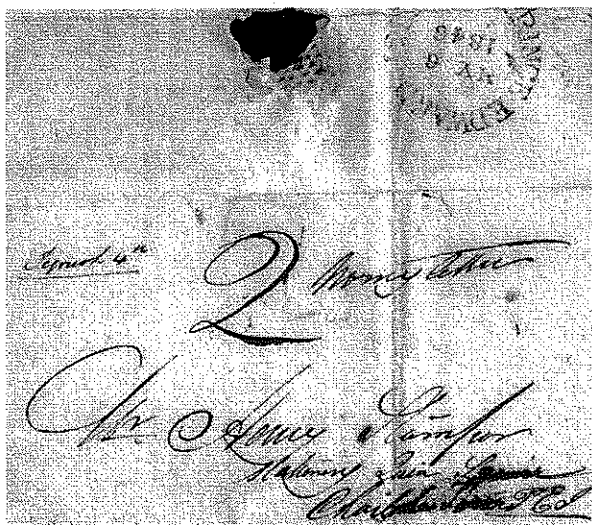


Figure 1. P E I money letter (1846)  
Island rate of 2d collect, from Tignish to Charlottetown.

Of special interest is that it is charged just the Island rate, 2 d collect. There was no additional fee for the money letter service, which involved extra attention; at this time, postage was by weight, not number of enclosures, and the single rate was charged. It was mailed from Tignish on 1 May 1846, and addressed to Henry Stamper. He ran a stationery business located at Queen's Square in Charlottetown. A great deal of his correspondence has survived.

Tignish May 1<sup>st</sup> 1846

My dear Sir

I enclose you a dollar on Halifax  
of 24/- which you will credit me with when  
I am long that it don't send the billiment

Figure 2. Top of the letter

To confirm that the folded letter did contain money, the first few lines of the letter are shown in Figure 2. They read,

Tignish May 1st 1846

My dear Sir

I enclose [xxx] a note on Halifax of 24/- which you will credit me with the same.

To the left of the large ms 2 rate marking is a small endorsement *Tignish 4th*, obviously referring to the date of mailing. The date of writing, 1 May 1846, is a Friday, and the fourth is thus a Monday. The question is, who wrote the endorsement? If the Tignish postmaster wrote it, it becomes one of the very few reported PEI manuscript town stamps (three others are known—see the excellent *Canadian manuscript town postmarks* by the author & Jacques Poitras, now out of print). It could also have been written by the sender, but not by either the addressee or the receiving postmaster, since the date of the Charlottetown handstamp—“Prince Edward Island” used only at Charlottetown—is the sixth, and neither of them could know what date it was mailed. The small size makes it difficult to compare with the letter writer’s *Tignish* in the dateline. Of course, it could be that the letter writer *was* the postmaster. The sender’s name is difficult to decipher, but it appears to be Blam—.



## An earlier US-Canada AR cover

David Handelman

**S**HORTLY after Newsletter #4 hit the stands, I came across the cover shown in Figure #1. It is an 1895 registered cover from Mekeel Stamp & Publishing Company to Yarmouth, handstamped RETURN REGISTERED RECEIPT. This is one of many ways in which the AR service was described in the us (more usual is *return receipt requested*, although there are at least ten variations on this). This predates by five years what was described in Newsletter #4 as the earliest us-Canada AR cover reported.

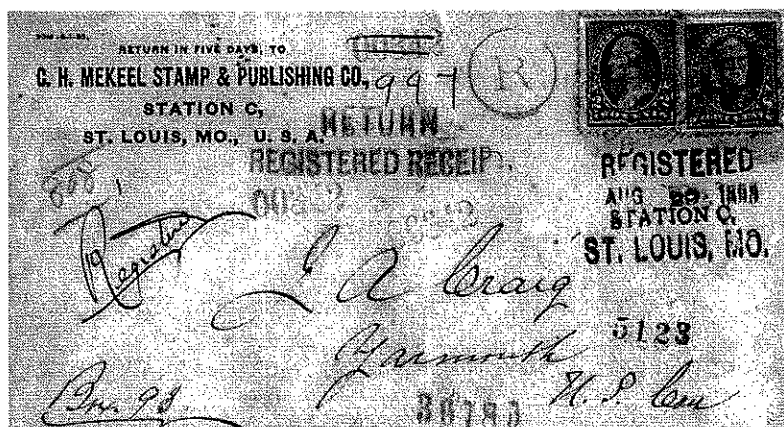


Figure 1. AR cover from St. Louis to Yarmouth (1895)

Although this is quasi-philatelic (that is, to or from a stamp dealer or collector, but properly franked with contemporary stamps, and likely on business; see #4), it has the additional feature that the RRR marking is handstamped. All the other early us-Canada AR covers have the RRR marking in manuscript. None of the early ones are marked AR—because the us regulations in force at the time required AR be marked only at certain ports of exit (e.g., New York, San Francisco, and a few others).

There was no charge above the registration fee for AR service on letters from the us, until 1925—although on international letters, the service had to be requested (it was automatic on domestic registered letters until 1910). The 10¢ is made up of 8¢ registration fee and 2¢ postage to Canada.

I bought this on e-Bay for \$ c 10 including postage, from a reasonably well-known dealer who shall remain nameless.

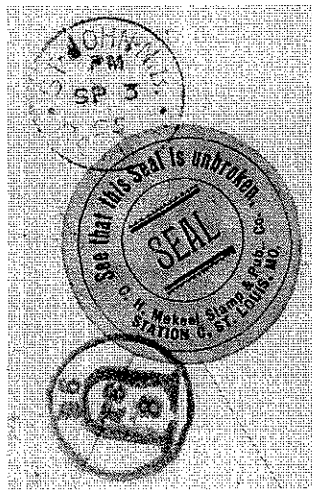


Figure 2. Reverse of cover

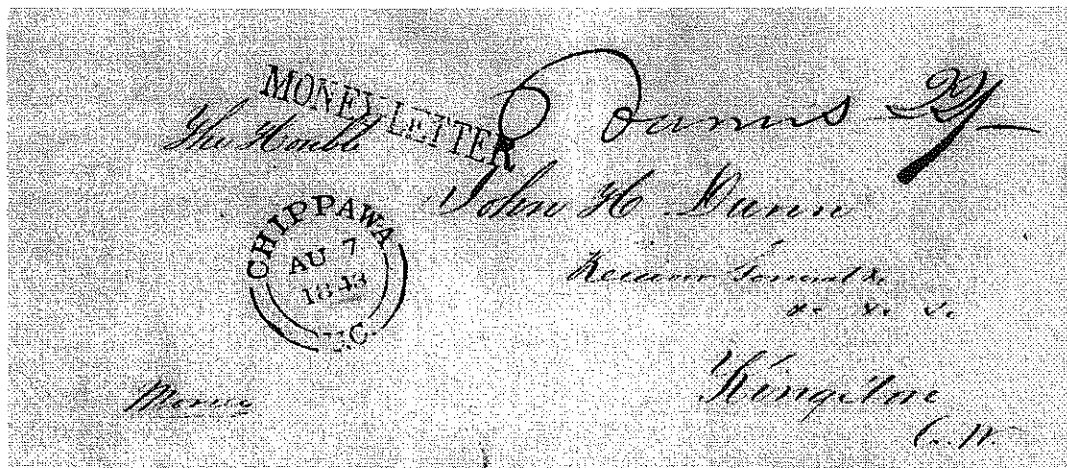
The seal was not broken—the envelope was slit at the top. I believe that the large purple “U” was applied at Chicago—but it could have been New York. Perhaps an American member can clarify this.



## A heavyweight money letter

*John Rossiter*

**T**HE heaviest recorded Canadian money letter of which I’m aware is in the Horace Harrison collection, and was written up by Mr Harrison in the PHSC J (#51, p16). It weighed in at 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> ounces, and was mailed 12 January 1832 to John H Dunn, the Receiver-General at York. I’ve run across a contender—not as heavy as Mr Harrison’s, but nonetheless very heavy. It was also mailed to Dunn, although by 1843, the provincial capital had moved to Kingston.



Heavy money letter (1843)

The cover was mailed from the Customs House at the Port of Chippawa on 7 August 1843 to Dunn at Kingston. This was a distance of 287 miles, and according to the letter, contained *Bank bills totalling £278/10/0 Sterling* and a cheque for £50 sterling. The letter was rated in black 6 ounces 22/-, meaning the letter was sent collect for the recipient to pay.

The very high postage of 22 shillings currency was made up from the distance and weight. The single rate (quarter ounce) for a distance 201–300 miles was 10d stg (approximately 11d cy at this time). Letters weighing an ounce or more were charged the single letter rate per quarter ounce (under an

ounce they were charged per enclosure up to quadruple), hence charged  $24 \times 10 \text{ d} = 240 \text{d}$  (one pound) sterling, and this was converted to 22 s cy. (Note that computations were normally done in sterling, and then translated the currency at the end.)

Have other members of the registration study group run across heavy money letters? The cost of mailing such heavy items makes it likely that practically all such correspondence would be to or from government agencies. Are there similarly heavy money letters between private individuals?



## Pre-money letters

David Handelman

THE earliest recorded money or cash letters in Canada are dated in the mid-1820s. The endorsement *money* or (less frequently) *cash* ensured that the post office would take special care of it. As we know (from Newsletter #1), the money letter system originated in the UK, formally in 1792, although no money letters that early are known. However, the system was developed by the early 1800s, and eventually was adopted in BNA.

In the UK, *money letter* literally referred only to coinage and not to securities, cash, notes, . . . , in contrast with the situation in BNA. To get around this restriction, senders often included a farthing coin (smallest denomination) with cash, to ensure the attention of the authorities.

Shown below are three folded letters dated 1825, 1821, and 1819 respectively, which according to the contents originally contained cash. There is no indication on the outside that they contained money, and so we can assume that the money letter system had not yet reached Upper Canada. All are charged multiple rates for the enclosure(s). The 1825 example is particularly suggestive, since the earliest reported money or cash letter is dated 1826—perhaps that was the year the money letter system began in Upper Canada. The 1819 cover is spectacular for other reasons. The middle one is relatively drab.

The 1825 cover (Figure 1) is addressed to Receiver-General Dunn at York. The letter, written at Fort Erie 9 April 1825, says *Sir, I have the honor to enclose the Sum of Twelve pounds 5/9 being the amount in full for duties on imports and condemned goods for the year 1824*. Docketing on the side confirms this.

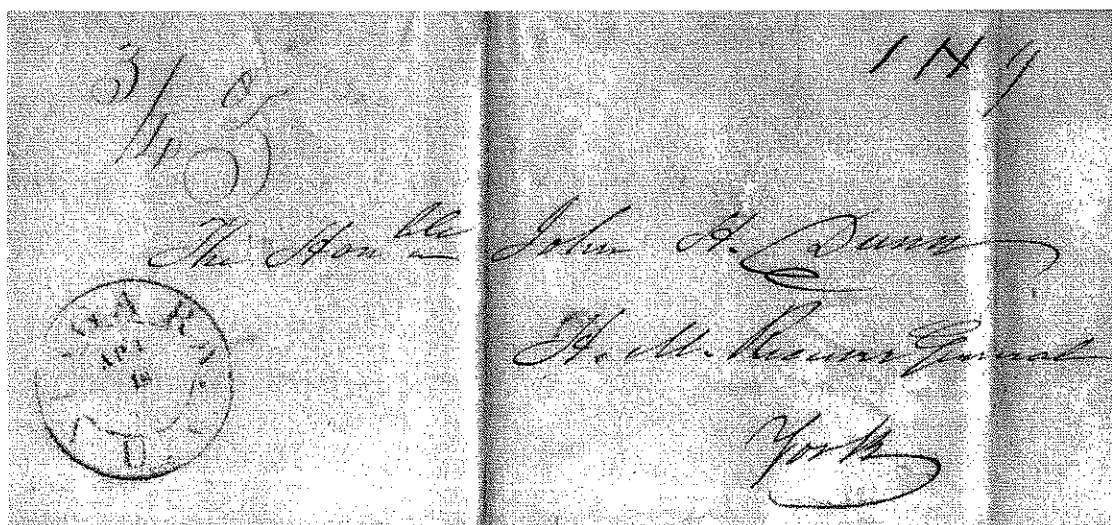


Figure 1. Pre-money letter (1825)

Rated in red (hence prepaid)  $3/4 \text{ oz}$  1N9 triple rate (two enclosures) of 7d cy, 61–100 miles. The typeset dated Niagara double circle is known used 1823–1829.

The 1821 letter (to guess who), shown in Figure 2 was mailed from the Deputy Customs Collector at the Port of Prescott and contained a draught for twenty five pounds, again confirmed by the docketing. Of course, one might argue that a draught is not the same as cash, but it is close enough.

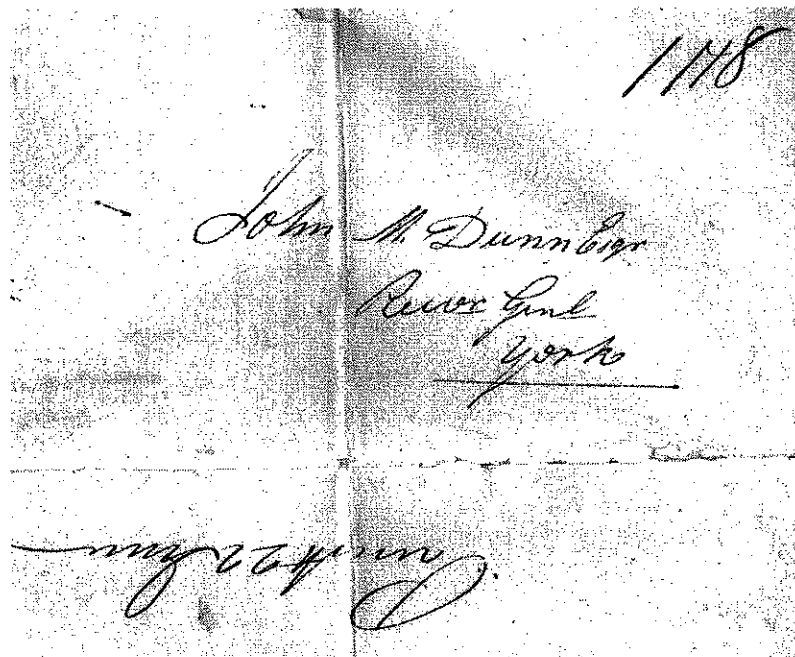


Figure 2. Pre-money letter (1821)

Rated in black (collect) 1 N8; the rate should have been double (one enclosure) 9d cy, 101-200 miles, but this was in the period (c 1810-21) when postmasters charged whatever they could get away with and pocketed the difference. The Prescott postmaster earned 4d cy. The manuscript *Prescott* is the earliest known example (by a month). I bought this recently from Doug Lingard.

The 1819 letter (Figure 3) was sent from Niagara, and contained sixty dollars in notes (according to the letter). The sender was R M Long, about whom I could find nothing. The addressee was Millar & Parlane, who seem to appear almost as often as Dunn. This item is an extreme rarity, because of the double oval cancel (hit twice), not because it is a pre-money letter.

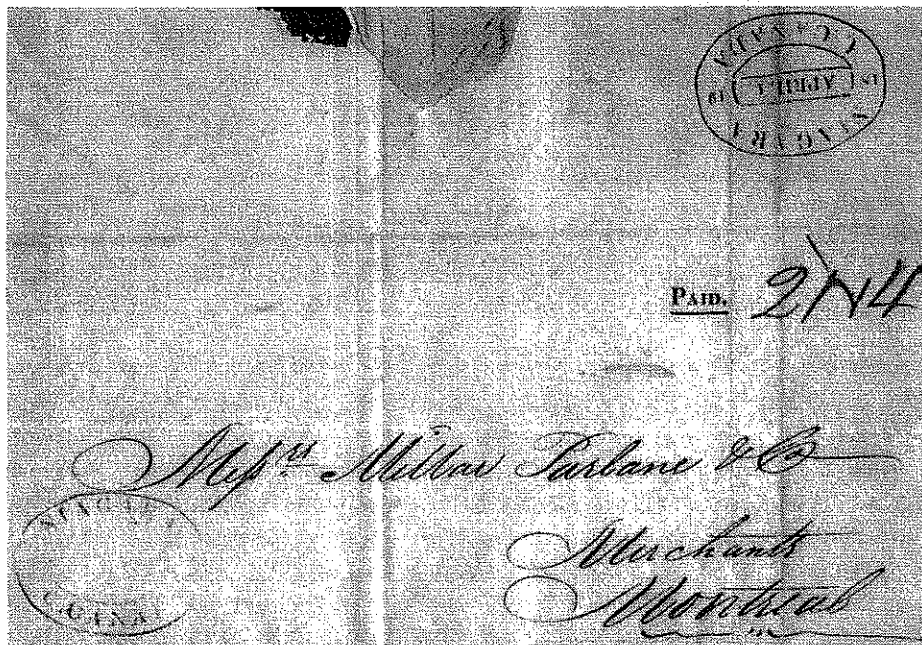


Figure 3. Pre-money letter (1819)

Two strikes of the rare Niagara double oval (about five have been reported; the year seems to have been permanent); the PAID handstamp (yes, it is a handstamp) is known on a few other covers of this period. Rated in red 2 N4 double rate (one enclosure) of 1/2 cy, 301-400 miles. I bought this in 1979 from Allan Steinhart for the then outrageous price of \$325.

I bet there are more covers of this type. It would also be interesting to see some letters dated after 1825 which definitely contained money, but were not considered money letters.

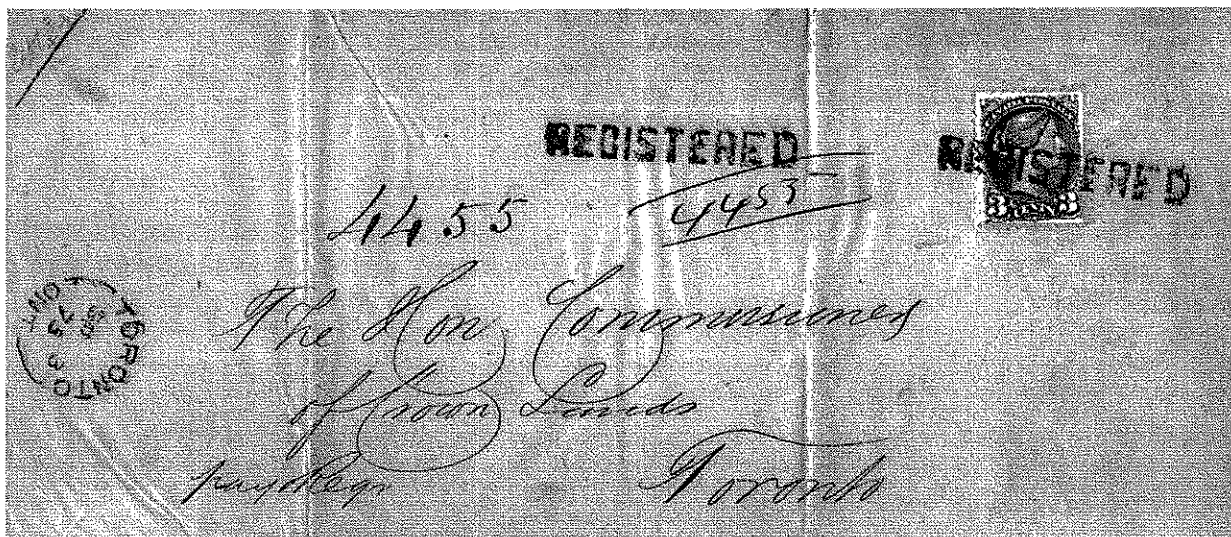


## Unusual use of a singleton 3¢ small queen

David Handelman

**C**OLLECTORS of US material seem to have a fetish for covers franked with just a single stamp. This is particularly noticeable among Bureau enthusiasts (of which Prexy fans are likely a significant majority). I haven't noticed so much interest among Canadian collectors, in part because Canada has not issued nearly as many different denominations as the US (imagine: 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>¢, 10.9¢, ... stamps).

In the current issue of *BNA Topics*, I pointed out that the 5¢ large queen was the first Canadian stamp that could pay the combined domestic postage and registration fees, although it was not issued for that purpose. Shown (in part because I'm running out of material), is a singleton 3¢ small queen (issued *before* the 5¢ large queen) paying the combined registration fee (2¢) and drop letter rate (1¢). The same thing is possible with a 3¢ large queen, and I wish I had one of those to show.



Registered drop letter with solo franking (1873)  
Mailed from Toronto, & addressed to the Commissioner of Crown Lands (what would we do without Receiver-General Dunn, Crown Lands, & Rennie Seeds?).

Of course, other early solo frankings are possible, but there aren't very many, and most are extremely unlikely. In the pence period, a triple rate domestic registered letter could be paid by the 10 d Cartier stamp (issued 1856; the registration fee was 1d at that time). A registered double drop letter or the special 2 d Québec-Lévis rate could be paid by a singleton beaver (and a quintuple drop registered letter could be paid by the Albert stamp, and naturally, a unidectuple drop registered letter is payable by the 12 d). I doubt that even Horace has an example of any of these.

In the cents period, the triple and the bizarre octuple drop registered letter (5 & 10¢) and the triple rate domestic registered (17¢) come to mind, but there may be a very obscure one that I've missed. A few more obvious possibilities arise in the large and early small queens period. From c 1876-1883, the only legal possibility involves domestic registered parcel post, since registered letter stamps were *not* permitted for this rate (this registration fee was 5¢), but unfortunately, the parcel post rate of 6¢ per four ounces does not lend itself to a singleton rate (when combined with the registration fee). Of course, registration stamps were required on all registered matter from 1883-1893 (and all non-parcel post from 1876-1893), and we're practically into the modern era.

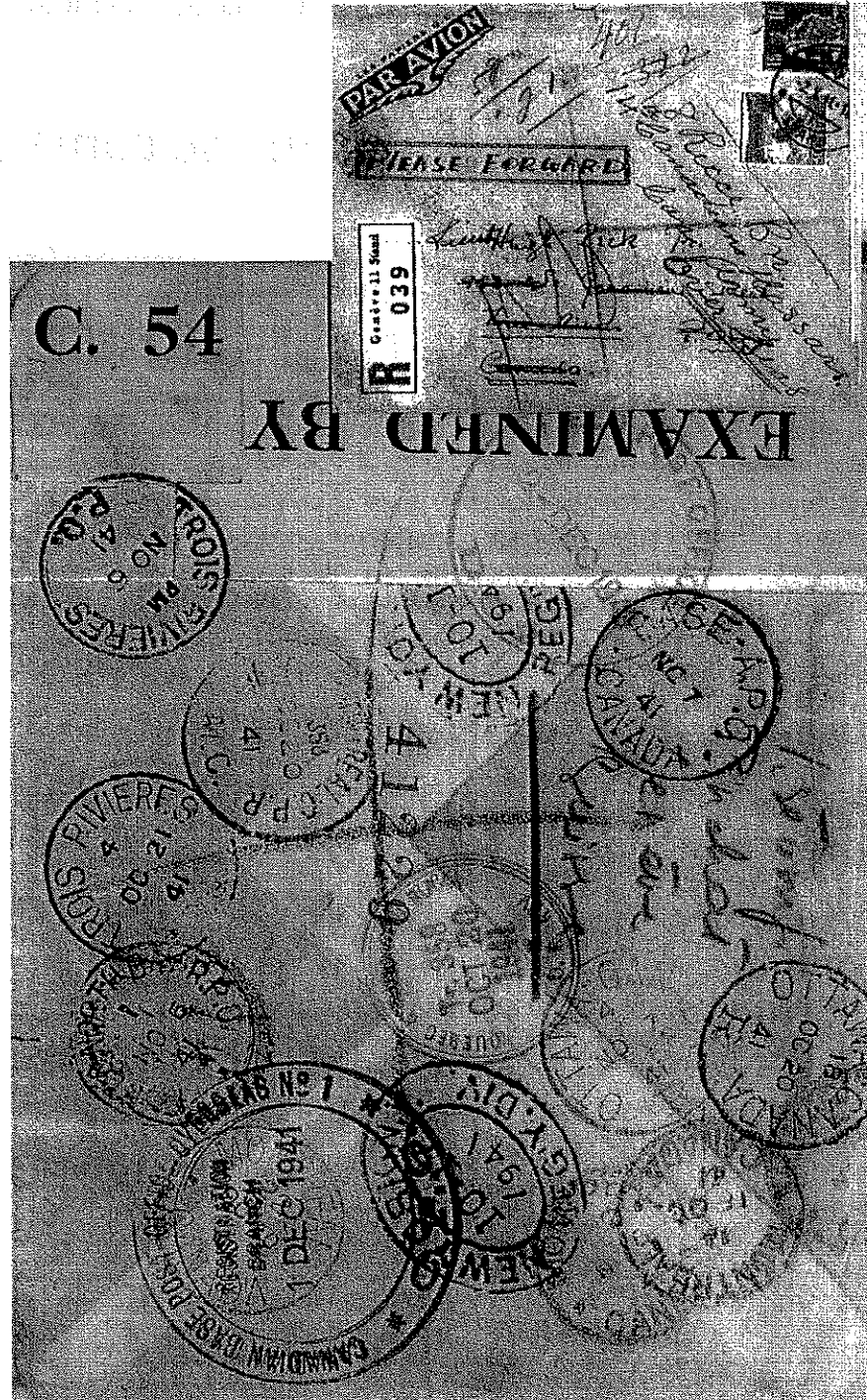




# A fascinating cover

Peter J McCarthy

**T**HIS cover should appeal to almost everyone. It is registered, air mail, censored, military, and has a number of RPO cancels, one of which is a new early date. It left Geneva on 2 October 1941, addressed to Hugh Peck in Three Rivers (QC), now Trois Rivières. It arrived in New York about two weeks later, then forwarded to Ottawa and Montreal on the same day.



Switzerland to ?? (1941)

It was put aboard CPR train 358, QUEBEC & MONTREAL C.P.R. M.C. A further clerk stamp was added, QUEBEC & MONTREAL R.P.O. J.O.B. ROY TRAIN, dated 20 October 1941. Previously, the earliest known date of use for this cancellation was 1944.

The cover finally arrived in Trois Rivières on October 21. In the meantime, Peck had been commissioned as a Lieutenant in the army (added in front of his name), and had been sent overseas with the Eighth Reconnaissance Battalion, Canadian Hussars, and the letter had to be forwarded. It was date stamped at Trois Rivières on 6 November 1941; it arrived in Montreal on the same date and put aboard train number 1, where it received the R.P.O. cancel MONTREAL & NORTH BAY R.P.O., arriving in Ottawa the following day and received at BASE-A.P.O. (Army Post Office).

From there, the cover was forwarded to Canadian Base Post Office Overseas (the big double circle at the bottom of the image, arriving 1 December 1941. The next day, it arrived at Field Post Office D02, where Lt Peck presumably picked up his letter, a mere two months after it was mailed.



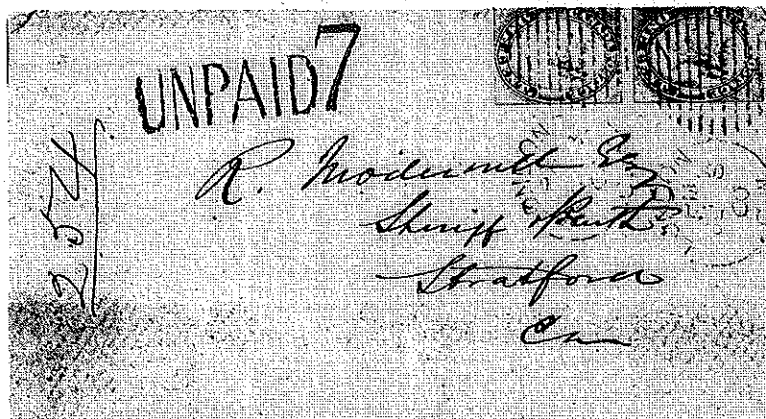
## Postage due registered covers in the cents period

*Len Belle*

THE Province of Canada switched to the decimal system on 1 January 1859 (most sources incorrectly give 1 July 1859, but this was the date that the stamps were issued), and the domestic registration and postage fees became 2¢ and 5¢ per half ounce (if prepaid) respectively. Payment of the registration fee was compulsory, and could be done either in cash or stamps, but prepayment of the postage was optional; however, the receiver incurred a substantial penalty if the domestic postage was not prepaid—the collect postage was 7¢ per half ounce. In contrast, registered letters to the US or UK had to be completely prepaid.

Either the whole of the domestic fee was prepaid or it was treated as unpaid, in which case any partial payment was deducted from the rate at 7¢ per ounce as a credit. Moreover, prepayment of the domestic rate had to be entirely in cash or entirely in stamps. Finally, the registration fee and the prepaid postage could be paid in different ways, e.g., both paid in cash, both paid in stamps, one paid in stamps and the other paid in cash. Of the four combinations, the commonest is both paid in cash, the scarcest is both paid in stamps, and the second commonest is registration fee paid in cash, domestic rate paid in stamps.

Shown in the figure is the still scarcer combination, registration fee paid in stamps, but domestic postage collect. There is no registration handstamp, but the number at the left and the franking indicate that the letter was registered.



London to Stratford (1860)

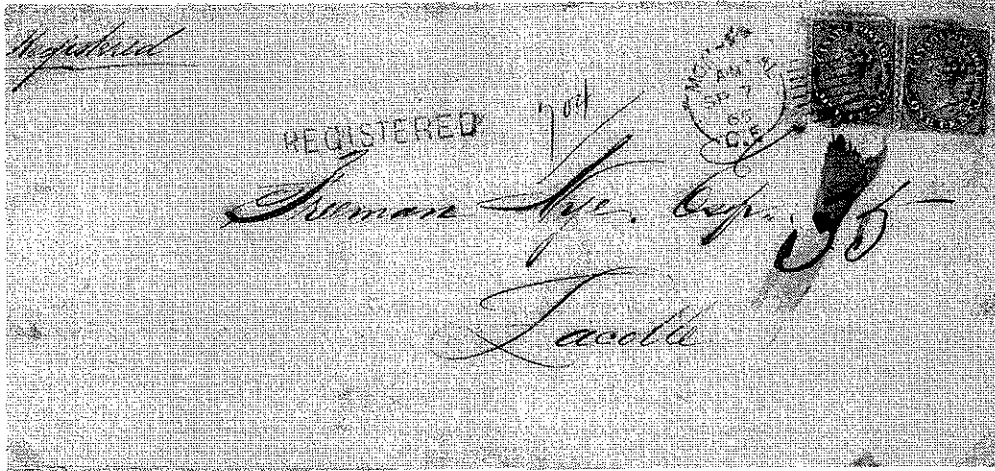
Registration fee paid in stamps & single rate domestic postage collect. Cancelled by two strikes of a London Berri duplex. The stamps, although in poor shape, form a vertical pair, with a line of completely blind perforations between them (this is probably the reason that the right stamp was torn before being applied).



# More postage due registered cents covers

David Handelman

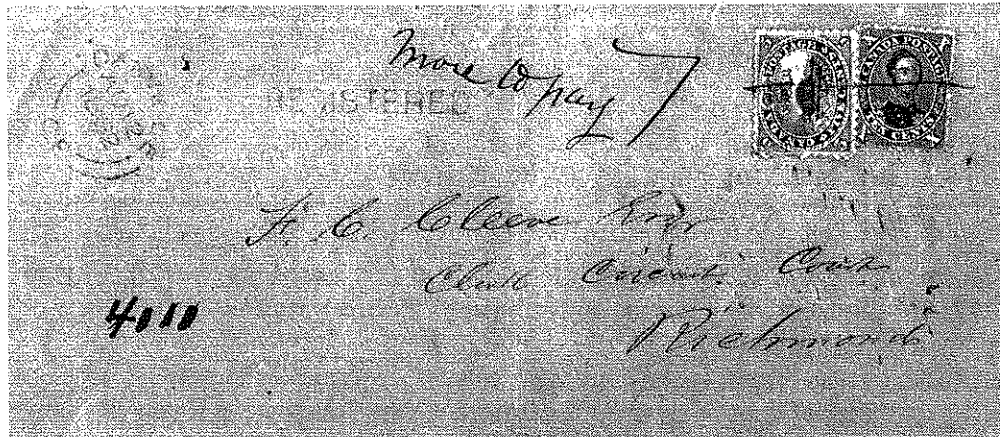
**F**OLLOWING up on Len's article, here are a few more examples of similar phenomena. The first one (Figure 1) is a quintuple rate registered cover, with the registration fee paid in stamps, but the domestic fee left unpaid, and so charged 35¢.



## Montreal to Lacolle, quintuple collect (1865)

Registration fee paid in stamps & quintuple rate domestic postage collect denoted by the ms 35 (¢). Cancelled by a Montreal Berri duplex, which has been tilted to hit the second stamp.

Figure 2 shows a miscalculation by the postmaster. The registration fee has been paid in cash, and 15¢ postage has been applied, which would be adequate for triple rate. However, the item was quadruple rate, and the postage due should have been calculated as though the item was unpaid, i.e.,  $4 \times 7¢ = 28¢$ , with the 15¢ credited, leaving 13¢ to be collected. Instead, it was charged as if it had been a single unpaid cover, for the difference in rates.



## Improperly rated (1862)

Paid as triple rate, but found to be one rate short, and incorrectly charged the single unpaid rate as a consequence. The stamps are pen cancelled, and the postage due is indicated by *More to Pay 7*. Mailed from Danville to Richmond (both in CE).

Next issue: a stampless unidectuple postage due registered cover in the cents period.



# The back page

## Hot Flashes

**E**VERYBODY, check your Canadian AR forms for watermarks! (No special fluid is required, just hold them up to a light source.) I accidentally discovered five different watermarks (some quite huge) on AR forms. These will be described in the April-June issue of BNA Topics, but I would like more data. It is conceivable that every printing used watermarked paper (although only a small number of forms exhibit a watermark). I would also like to know how to reproduce the watermarks for printing (without tracing them—I am hopeless at that) using a scanner.

## Other stuff

**P**ETER Jacobi (Secretary of BNAPS) is requesting information or material (for trade, purchase, or merely to xerox) on nineteenth century Rossland and area (BC) registered covers. Anyone who has something along these lines should contact him at beaver@bc.sympatico.ca, or by snail at 5295 Moncton St, Richmond BC V7E 3B2.

BNAPLEX 2000: I have asked, tentatively, for a 60 minute study seminar for this group for BNAPLEX in Chicago (31 August-2 September). Is there any interest in this? I had no response to this in the previous newsletter, so am repeating it here.

---

**A**s usual, we need more material. I (dh) will eventually run out of material from my collection. (Much of Horace's has already been published.) We are also still looking for comments, illustrations, questions, &c on any aspect of registration or the money letter system. Please send hard copy, preferably with text files, to either the editor or the secretary; their addresses appear below the masthead on the first page.

We need articles!

I can't resist pleading for articles for *Topics* as well (on *any* aspect of philately related to BNA). The situation is desperate—as I write this (late May 2000), I need to fill 30 pages. On top of that, other than the regular columnists' articles, there is nothing on hand for subsequent issues. I had hoped to move the publication dates back gradually, but the dearth of material prevents this.

Now that the name of the newsletter has been enshrined in zeroes and ones, I have have another suggestion, likely to yield the same level of burning controversy—is the current format, 12 pages at size 8 1/2" x 11" (stapled at the left) suitable, or shall we go to 16 pages at size 7" x 8 1/2" (half legal size; stapled in the middle)? Both have their advantages and disadvantages. There is no difference in the amount of work for me in terms of organizing, typesetting, or printing.

The Newsletter was prepared in *the* typesetting language (plain) T<sub>E</sub>X ("tek"), on a Macintosh, using the ITC Esprit font family. It is printed on the secretary's 600 dot per inch LaserWriter.

---

**M**EMBERSHIP in the *registration study group* of BNAPS is available to members of BNAPS, at an annual cost of \$10 (Canada), \$10 (US), and £5 (rest of the world). Payments should be made to the secretary (address on front page). Subscription to the quarterly newsletter (*The Registry*) comes with membership.

☉ **Reminder:** For some of you (you know who you are), either Newsletter #4 or this one is the last number of your current subscription. Please resubscribe if you wish to maintain your membership. (If this doesn't yield much response, maybe next time I'll put the initials of those to whom this is addressed, here—just kidding!)

Back issues are now available (@ \$2.50 (C) each + postage to members, and @ \$3.50 (C) + postage to non-members).



Remember to send your registered letters with AR!