

The Registry

registration
study group

Newsletter of the BNAPS registration study group

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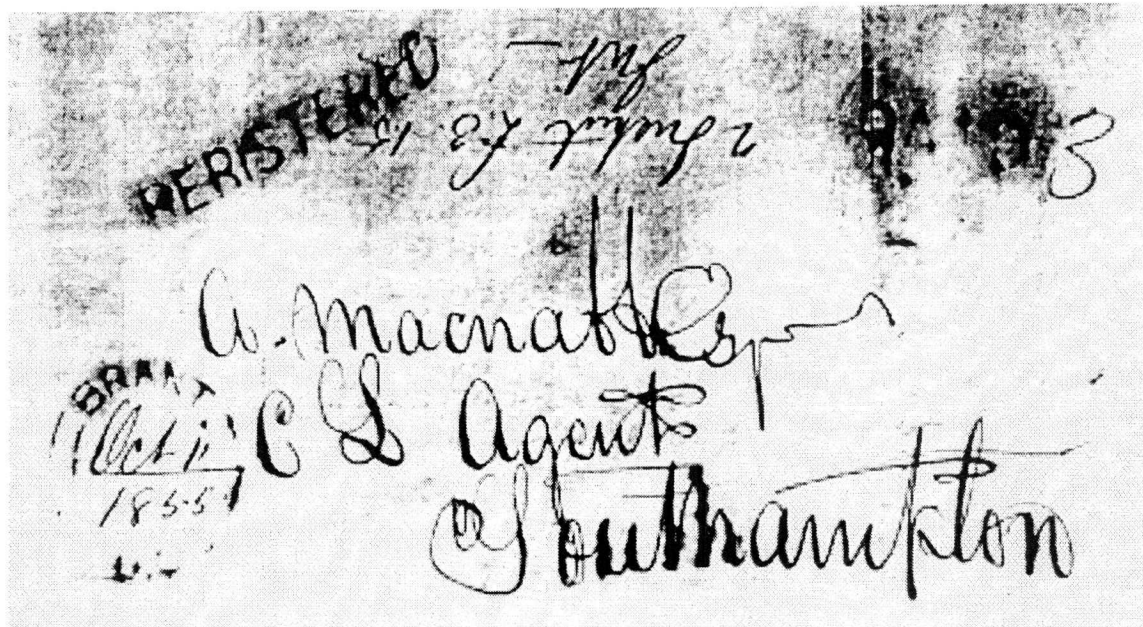
Introduction

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 not representative. 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.

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

From *John Rossiter*—not John Fretwell, this time. John points out that the REGISTERED hammer (see the earlier survey article by El Supremo, and the subsequent article by Len Belle) was applied at Brant, not Brantford. That was my mistake. (Interestingly, Brant changed its name to Walkerton in 1857. The residents of Walkerton—home of the epidemic e-coli induced disease—would probably like to change the name back.)

He also encloses an image of yet another REGISTERED cover, this one referred to in Horace's census. I have to confess that the similarity of the impression of the handstamp to the PAID and the Brant handstamps does make it look like the real thing, not one of Freddy's creations. The oiliness is likely due to the presence (or excess) of linseed oil in the ink recipe for handstamps. After a century, the oil has spread noticeably, and will continue to do so indefinitely. Many nineteenth century covers will eventually become completely stained because of the oil in the ink and wax seals.



Yet another REGISTERED cover (1855)

In the first year of registration in Canada. Postage of 3d domestic rate prepaid, plus compulsory prepayment of the 1d domestic registration fee, indicated by the registered (or reristered) handstamp. This one is in Horace's census, and was purchased from Robert A Lee Auctions. As usual, it was addressed to the Crown Land Agent at Southampton; also as usual, it has no registration numbers.



The little boxed R

David Handelman

THIS story began when I received an e-mail from member Mark Berner, asking about a small boxed R cancellation he had found on Canadian stamps from the late 1930s. He mentioned that it was recorded in Horace's classic work on Canada's registration system, reported by Allan Steinhart, but just before publication, so there was not much information on it. I had several examples of this cancel, going to the 1970s, and wondered just what its significance was.

Examples are shown in the illustration. Each is at 150% of actual size. The leftmost is black, large and coarse and very similar to Mark's, and was found on a 1942 registered packet mailed from Ottawa to the US. This is a *rubber* handstamp, so shows distortion. The middle one, in purple on a cover mailed from Dunbarton to Markham (ON) in 1947 has been extended in black pen to make a rectangle to enclose the registration number. The third one was found on a 1955 registered cover from the Halifax post office to the district mail contractor. It is quite a bit thinner, and also in purple; it has been especially carefully struck.

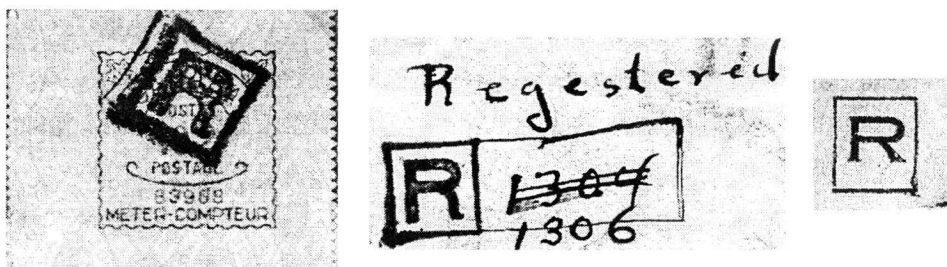


Figure 1. Three little boxed Rs

Respectively used in 1942, 1947, & 1955, at 150%.

At the study group meeting at BNAPEX 2000 here in Ottawa, I showed several other examples, but I couldn't remember where I had put them, so had to find others. There are more modern ones, which differ somewhat from the 1955 one, in that the R appears less elongated.

About an hour before the study group meeting, I ran into Andrew Chung, who out of the blue gave me a post office sign shown in Figure 2. I asked him about the significance of the R in the square. He said that it was to be applied to registered mail bag tags. It was occasionally used on registered mail, although it wasn't intended for this purpose. That explains the marking.



Figure 2. Post office sign

Courtesy of Andrew Chung; at $\frac{3}{8}$ size.

The sign is in blue and about 20 cm x 16 cm, printed on both sides (the other side has the positions of French and English reversed), and is made of a very thick laminated card or similar material. I made it into a stand-alone sign, and put it on the table where the study group was to meet. If I remember, I will bring it to the next study group meeting (at the next BNAPEX, Spokane).



A dropped postage due registered drop letter

David Handelman

IN recent issues of the *Registry*, we have seen that a “dropped” registered letter is not (necessarily) a drop letter (i.e., for local delivery) but a letter intended to be registered that is dropped in the mail box without receiving a receipt. The illustrated cover (obtained from John Frith about a month ago) is an example of this, but it is quite remarkable in other respects.

In addition to being a dropped registered letter (as indicated by the ballpoint manuscript notation *Drop* just above the registration handstamp), it is also a drop letter (local delivery), and special delivery was also requested. However, it is shortpaid and charged 10¢ postage due, which makes it a scarce postage due registered cover.

The cover is dated 25 January 1965 (it takes about a sixfold magnification of the poorly struck backstamps to see the year). The year is *not* 1963, because the 4¢ Cameo was issued 4 February 1963. (There was a big jump in the rates in November 1963.)

The rates at the time were 35¢ registration fee, 25¢ special delivery, and 4¢ drop letter fee, totalling 64¢. (The domestic rate was 5¢ at this time.) The sender applied only 29¢, making it shortpaid 35¢, if special delivery service had been applied. Without special delivery service, of course, the item is only shortpaid 10¢, which is the amount charged. If the letter had been taken to the counter, it would have been very unlikely to have been shortpaid—so the postage due charge confirms the *Drop* aspect of the cover.

The charge on postage due registered letters is one of those things that seems to have been interpreted in two different ways. According to the 1961 Canada Postal Guide (the wording of this particular paragraph does not change much over time), p 148, paragraph 641(c) (their caps):

No mail is to be knowingly accepted for registration unless fully prepaid, but if an insufficiently prepaid registered article is inadvertently accepted, it is to be forwarded to destination taxed SINGLE THE TOTAL DEFICIENCY as regards postage and registration fee.

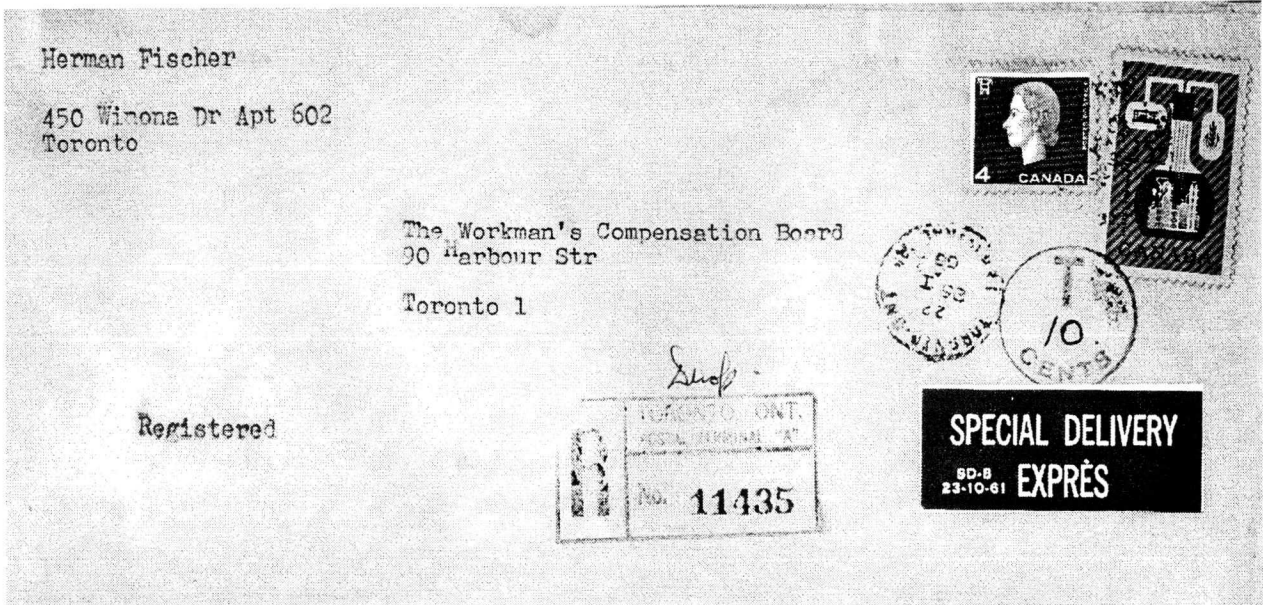


Figure 1. Registered drop drop letter (1965)

The worn dater reads TORONTO-ONT TERMINAL "A". On reverse are two poor strikes of a dater reading TORONTO-ONT REGISTRATION STN A. The cover is obviously commercial.

To begin with, this item should not have been accepted for registration, as it was short paid. Having accepted it for registration, the clerk apparently ignored the request for special delivery (the etiquette is barely tied by the postage due marking, so was not applied afterwards), and charged single deficiency on the registration fee. (As an aside, there was no restriction on special delivery itself—normal shortpaid special delivery covers go forward with double deficiency.) Or anyway, that's my reading of this cover. I have other shortpaid registered covers which were charged single deficiency on the registration fee and double on the regular postage (on covers with no postage applied).



Diplomatic free registered cross-border ...

from Jeff Switt

JEFF sent the image below. It is of a 1942 registered AR cover from the American Legation in Ottawa, addressed to Maryland. There is a handstamp reading **DIPLOMATIC MAIL FREE**, which apparently only covered the regular postage, as the 10 ¢ registration fee was paid for. It was also sent with **RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED** (typescript at lower left), the US term for AR. Presumably the AR fee (10 ¢) was not covered by the diplomatic privilege, and was applied to the Canadian AR card as usual.

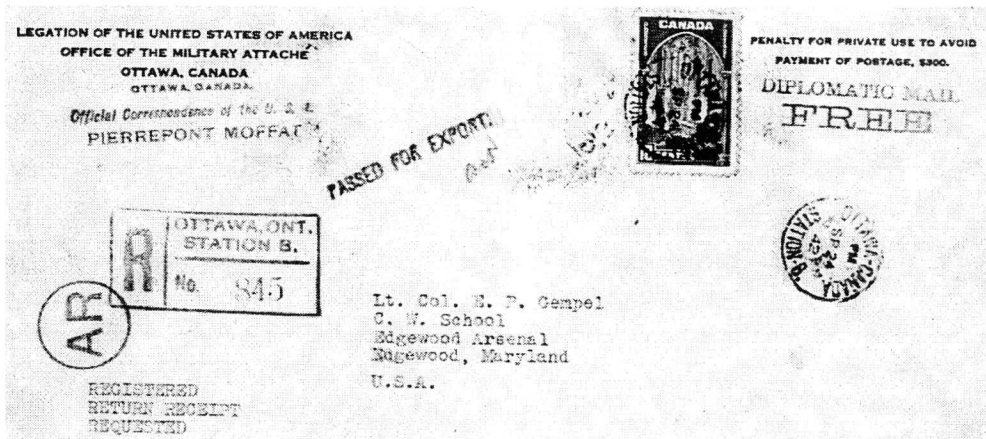


Figure 1. Free registered to us(1942)

Jeff comments that this is the only free registered mail he has seen with PASSED FOR EXPORT (financial controls during World War II). It is only the second free AR cover I've (*dh*) seen from Canada (and the first free AR to a foreign destination). Presumably, the "freeness" for diplomatic mail is a consequence of both the US and Canada being members of the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS); or there may have been a bilateral treaty between the US and Canada. Somewhat later, free registration was included in the PUAS agreement on diplomatic and consular mail.



Ms registered markings

David Handelman

I COLLECT Canadian manuscript town datestamps (and have co-authored, with Jacques Poitras, a monograph on them), so naturally I am interested in the analogous items dealing with registration—the postmaster, not having a registered handstamp, attempts to mimic one by drawing a rectangle about the town name and registration number.

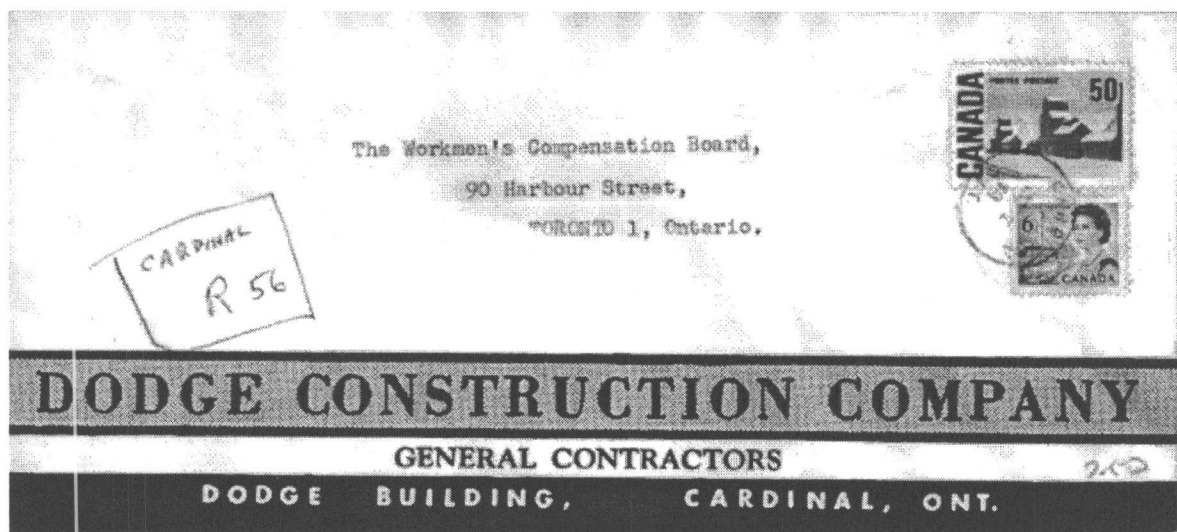


Figure 1. Provisional registration marking (1970)

Presumably the usual rectangular registration hammer was damaged or misplaced. Postage of 50¢ registration fee and 6¢ domestic rate.



Figure 2. Provisional registration marking (1928)

Note the unusual franking—three 4¢ Admirals (even one is very unusual on cover), paying the 10¢ registration fee and 2¢ domestic rate.

Whereas there are now about 650 different post offices known to be represented by manuscript datestamps, I have found only a couple of these provisional registration markings. This is one situation where modern examples are more elusive than earlier ones. The illustration shows a 1970 example (which is fairly remarkable in itself) from Cardinal. Although Cardinal is not a large town, it does generate a lot of mail, so this is all the more surprising.

Somewhat less remarkable is the 1928 example in Figure 2. From Cathcart (ON), addressed to Peterboro. Cathcart had been open since 1856, so presumably had had registration handstamps—likely their current one had been worn out. There is a poor Cathcart broken circle on reverse.



Registered printed matter to Denmark

David Handelman

DENMARK is a fairly difficult destination for registered letters from Canada, but not rare. The cover shown is registered printed matter, a very scarce combination. I think that I obtained this at e-Bay, recently.



Figure 1. Registered printed matter to Denmark (1904)

Postage of 7¢, made up from 5¢ registration fee and double 1¢ per two ounces UPU printed matter rate.

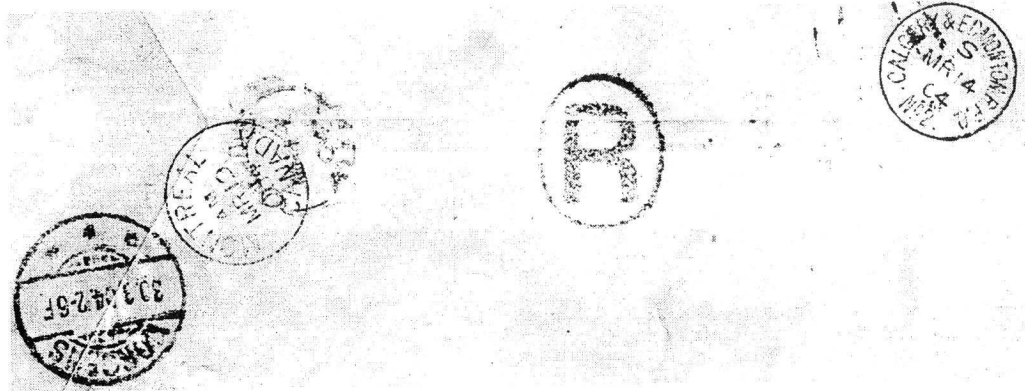


Figure 2. Portion of reverse

The cover was mailed from the Northern Assurance Company in Olds (Alberta Territory) in 1904 to what appears to be a lawyer (or legal student) in Horsens (Denmark). There is a standard registration cancel applied at London (E.C.) on the front, and there are datestamps of a western RPO, Montreal, and Horsens on reverse.

The cover is made of very thin paper, sealed and neatly slit at the right; it is not cut down (it is in remarkably good condition). The postage of 7¢ is what gives it away—the registration fee was 5¢, and first class mail would have been charged an additional 5¢ (UPU rate) per half ounce. The printed matter rate to UPU countries was 1¢ per two ounces.



Turned & registered both ways

David Handelman

A turned cover is an envelope (or more usually, a wrapper) which is mailed, and then turned inside out and mailed again (it can be turned more often as well, but this is rare). We see this occasionally in the stampless period, when paper was expensive and covers were usually folded letters. The example below was originally sent from Switzerland in 1933 as a registered letter (Figure 1), and then addressed on reverse and sent, again registered, back to Switzerland.

The cover is a very large sheet of what resembles butcher paper (smooth and shiny on one side, rough and dull on the other), measuring 37cm×49cm (14½"×18¼"). The "front" was mailed from Zurich to Hull, with postage of 2,60 Swiss francs (about 45-50¢). The rates in effect at this time were 30 centimes registration, 30ctm for the first weight, and 20ctm for each additional—so the package must have been 11 units of weight. (I think the unit of weight was 20 grams—it was certainly at least that; in any event the parcel weighed at least 200+g, about 7oz.) There is a faint purple Canadian customs handstamp.



Figure 1. Switzerland to Canada (1933)

On the back, showing the return trip, is 25¢ postage, cancelled at Hull. The rates in effect at the time are 10¢ registration, and 5¢ for the first ounce, plus 3¢ for each additional—so the cover was likely quadruple rate overpaid by 1¢. (No stamps are missing.)



Figure 2. Other side—Canada to Switzerland



Canada to Iceland

David Handelman

ICELAND is one of those destinations that rarely seem to crop up on registered letters from Canada. I was quite pleased to obtain the cover illustrated below on e-Bay recently, even though it had been very roughly opened. If you look very carefully at the image, you will see extensive repairs across the top (not affecting the stamps); in colour, these are far less visible.



Figure 1. Registered cover to Iceland (1933)

Postage of 15 ¢, made up from 10 ¢ registration fee and 5 ¢ UPU rate. The character in the return address that looks like a fancy letter *p* is actually the Icelandic letter

thorn, which is pronounced as soft th (as in thought, but not as in the). So the name of the sender is actually Mrs Th.Th.Thorsteinsson.

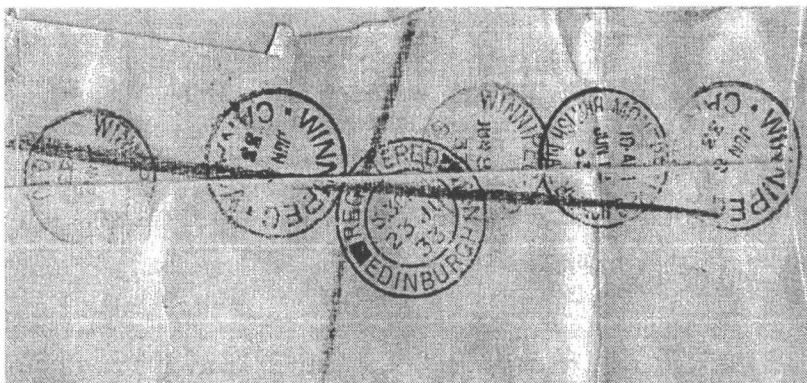


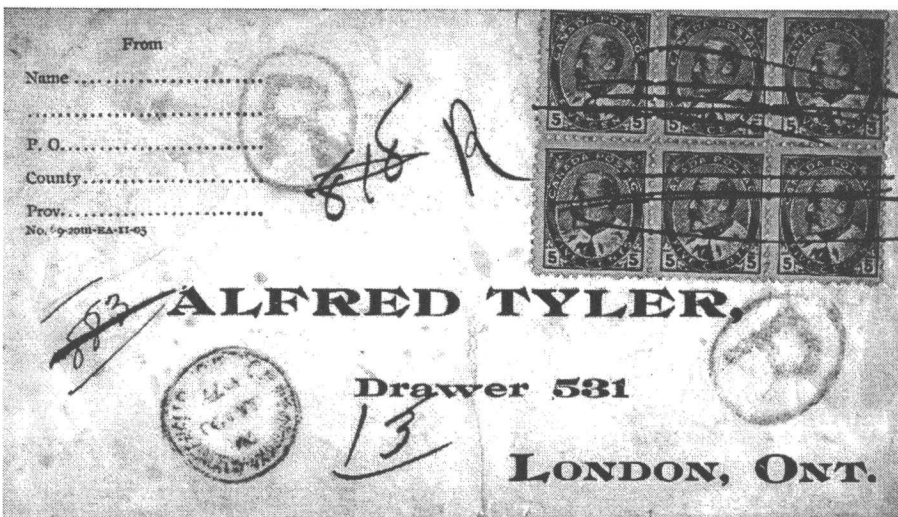
Figure 2. Portion of reverse
Postmarked at Winnipeg, Montreal (British mail office), and Edinburgh. The British blue crayon cross was applied. There are no Icelandic backstamps.



What's the rate? (2)

David Handelman

No one responded to my first "What's the rate" article, so here's an apparently easier one. There is a block of six 5¢ Edwards on this registered cover, dated 1904. The stamps are pen cancelled, and the poorly struck datestamp is an RPO (CP RY OTTAWA & SOMETHING), suggesting that it was mailed from a small town (without a datestamp), since normally RPOs did not accept mail directly from the clients to be registered. There are no backstamps, suggesting that this envelope was stuck to a parcel. There do not appear to be any stamps missing.



What's the rate? (1904)
Purchased at a Ron Leith auction many years ago, and sitting around in my problem pile since then. Despite the scan, the stamps' perforations are intact.

Registration at the time was 5¢; insurance can be excluded. This leaves 25¢ to be accounted for. A hefty parcel sent at parcel post rates? A substantial amount of printed matter? Any ideas? It's unlikely to be first class, since that would be an overpayment of 1¢ (twelve ounces). Fifth class had ceased to exist (1897) by this time. Perhaps some one has a similar cover addressed to Tyler?



Numero uno, again

David Handelman

RECALL from an earlier issue of the Registry, an article on registration number one. I finally found one in the small queens period, from the small town of Roland (Manitoba), in 1897. It is addressed to the Ætina Life Insurance Company in Toronto. This part of a considerable correspondence. Naturally, I found it on e-Bay.

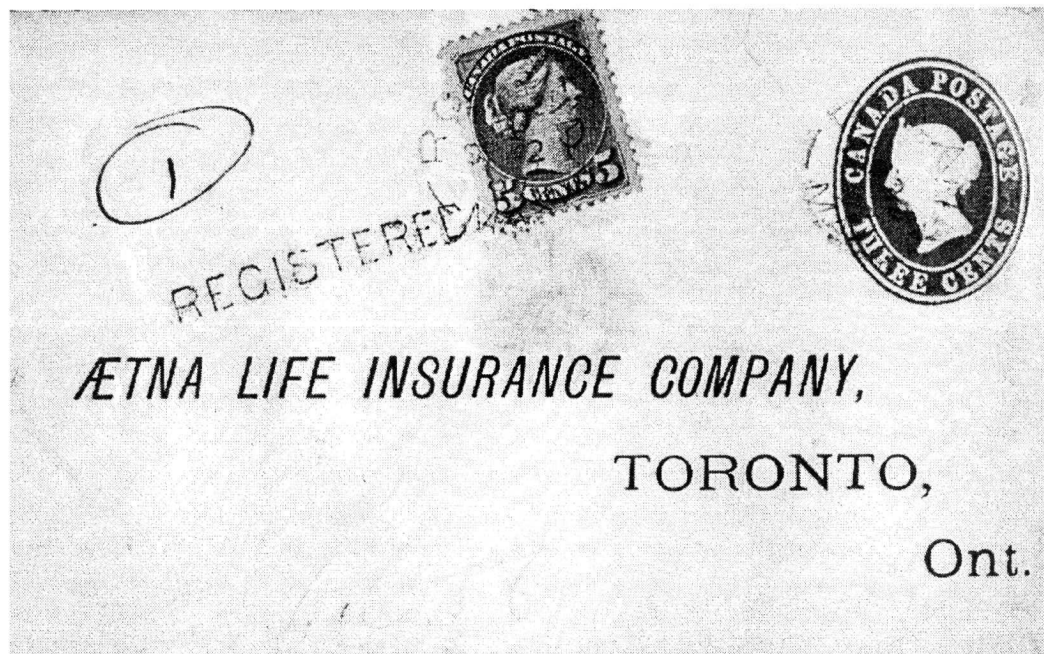


Figure 1. Registration number 1 (1897)

From Roland (Manitoba); on 3¢ stationery with 5¢ small queen added to pay the registration fee. There appears to be a second registration number (very faint), 4056, which was most likely added at Toronto.

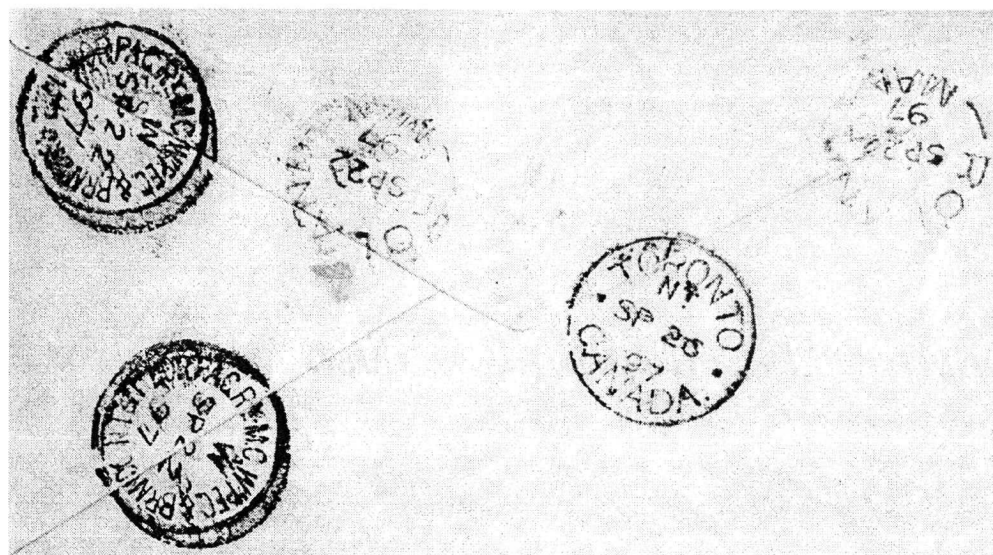


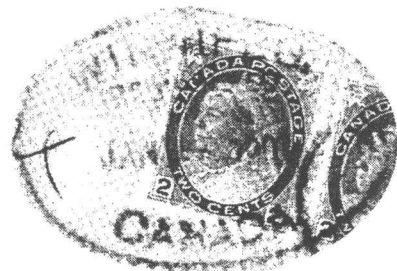
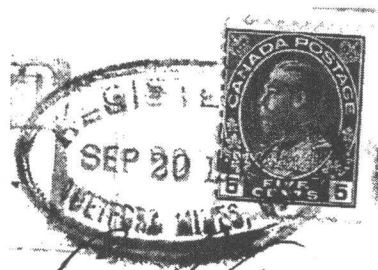
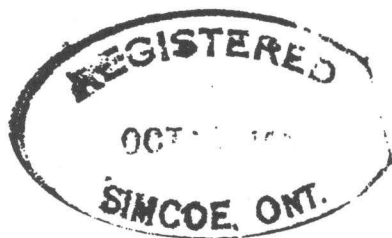
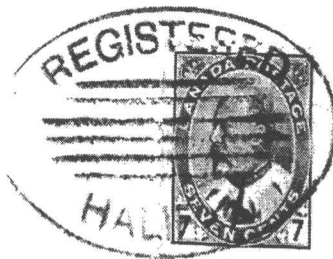
Figure 2. Portion of reverse

Showing two strikes each of Roland and an RPO (NOR PAC RY MC W'PEG & BRANDON), and a Toronto receiver.



More later ovoids

My solicitations resulted in contributions from Len Belle and Bob Smith. This continues the images of oval registration markings actually used in the twentieth century. More are solicited.



A further selection of 20th century ovals

Cobalt (1909) [LB], Halifax (1907) [LB], New Westminister BC (1916) [LB], Prince Albert (1916) [LB], Simcoe (1920) [RS], Simcoe (1923) [RS], St Thomas (1909) [RS], Sydney NS (1917) [LB], Thetford Mines QC (1913) [LB], Trois Rivières (1915) [LB], Toronto No1 (1917) [LB], & Winnipeg (1910) [LB]



The back page

Hot Flashes

THERE are some spectacular registered covers (small queens) in the current Longley auction sale. These are mostly from the Rixon collection. The auction takes place later in November, and I am tempted to delay sending out this issue of the Registry to reduce the competition!

Other stuff

BNAPEX 2001: A number of people showed up for the meeting of the study group at BNAPEX 2001 in Ottawa this past August—including El Supremo, John Fretwell, Mark Berner, George Arfken, new member Eugene Yount, and guest Tony Shaman (editor of the *Canadian Philatelist*). I hope I didn't miss anyone.

As usual, we need more material. 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 *Registry* was prepared in *the* typesetting language (plain) T_EX ("tek"), on a Macintosh, using the ITC Esprit font family. It is printed on the secretary's 600 dot per inch LaserWriter. We have now adopted xeroxing from the original (to save a lot of time), and the quality of the images has deteriorated correspondingly.

MEMBERSHIP 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 #9 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). Volumes I and II (each consisting of four issues) are available stapled for \$10 each plus postage to members and \$12 each plus postage to non-members.



Remember to send your registered letters with AR—abroad!—and register your postcards!