

# The Registry

Newsletter of the BNAPS registration study group

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## Introduction

**T**HIS 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. 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.

Please see the announcement on The Back Page. A new editor is solicited.



# New Brunswick pence mystery cover

George Arfken

THE 1857 New Brunswick pence cover shown in Figure 1 is a striking example of New Brunswick correspondence with the United Kingdom. The two 3d stamps at upper right plus the 3d bisect paid the 7d per ounce postage to England. Then what about the two 3d stamps at lower right and left? If the cover were addressed to the other Maritime provinces or to Canada, one would immediately identify these two stamps as paying the 6d currency registration fee.

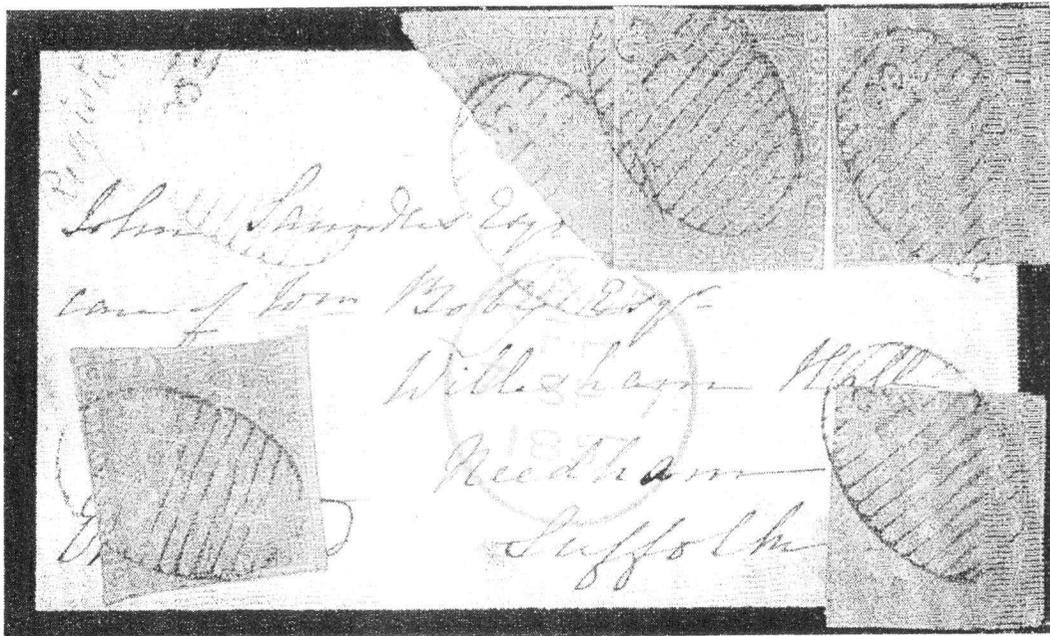


Figure 1. Multiply franked cover NB-UK (1857)

New Brunswick 3d stamps, in various forms.

British domestic registration was 6d stg equivalent to 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d cy. Was this a problem? Let us turn to an British document of 1857 that will open more registration questions. From *Canada's Pence Era*, p 250:

Registration of Letters and Packets of Printed Paper for Cert in British Colonies

On the 1st January next and henceforth, Letters or Packet of Printed Papers addressed to any of the undermentioned British Colonies may be registered on application of the person posting it, provided the postage, together with the Registration fee of sixpence, be paid in advance.

Canada, Trinidad, New Brunswick, Sierra Leone, Mauritius, Prince Edward Island, Gold Coast, Ceylon, Barbados, St Helen, South Australia, Western Australia, Turks Island, Cape of Good Hope.

Rowland Hill, Secretary  
General Post Office, 12th December, 1857.

Note the North American colonies listed in this circular: Canada, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island but *not* Nova Scotia [*or Newfoundland, for that matter—dh*]. We know that Canada did not have prepaid registration to the UK in 1857. Does the inclusion of New Brunswick imply that neither did New Brunswick? What about Nova Scotia? Does the absence of Nova Scotia from Rowland Hill's circular mean that Nova Scotia did have prepaid registration to the UK! in 1857? Starting when? Charles Firby and George Arfken are trying to find answers to these questions and would appreciate any help the readers can provide. Firby can be reached at [firbystamps@prodigy.net](mailto:firbystamps@prodigy.net); Arfken's email address is [garfken1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:garfken1@tampabay.rr.com) (don't leave out the 1).

Back to the cover. We can hold off these unanswered questions about registration. Apparently the sender applied the 7d at top right at home. At the post office, the cover was found to be just over one half ounce and another 7d in stamps was required. So the sender added the 3d stamps at lower right and lower left, and another 3d bisect top left. That second bisect is missing but you can see the upper right grid and the empty space where the second bisect had been affixed. So the cover is not a registered cover but is a wonderful double rate cover, properly paid 15d with four 3d stamps and two 3d bisects. Firby and Arfken still ask your help in answering those registration questions.

*Editor's Comments.* First concerning registration in the British Colonies. We should be very careful about drawing definitive conclusions from post office announcements. In some cases, announce-

ments simply reiterate earlier announcements. As a simple example, both Jephcott, Greene & Young, and subsequently MacDonald, quote a Nova Scotia official announcement, which says that in 1841, money letters would be covered in wrappers. They conclude that money letter wrappers came into use in that year. In fact, these white Nova Scotia wrappers exist from 1838. Presumably, there had been an earlier announcement, which has not yet been found. (These wrappers had been in use from somewhat earlier in the UK, and are extremely rare.) Sometimes, there is no earlier announcement, but the already existing practice is simply confirmed in an announcement—for example, although cross-border ferriage is known on covers as early as 1817, there was no official announcement (that we know of) until 1829.

Other phenomena occur: for example, there is no mention of AR service in any British postal guide or other source until 1891, and all the literature (British registration specialists) says that it did not begin until that year. A recent purchase by the author is of an 1886 British AR form (ex-Sussex), with printing date of March 1879 (UPU-mandated AR service was initiated worldwide in April 1879). (There was also other evidence that British AR service existed prior to the alleged starting date.) A more familiar example is the absence of AR from the domestic portion of Canada postal guides until 1903. Some authors have concluded that domestic AR service was not available until that year, on the basis of this absence—but a domestic AR form exists, dated 1883.

Of interest then is the 1856 registered cover from UK to Canada shown in one of the earlier issues of the *Registry*. This predates Hill's announcement, and shows that in fact registration to Canada was available prior to 1857.

Finally, concerning bisects—we all know my opinion that when the bisect cover is genuine, the cover is basically a favour cover, and does not merit special attention. —dh



## Remailed and registered

David Handelman

SHOWN in the illustration is a 1918 US “penalty cover” initially mailed to Vancouver, but then remailed (not simply re-addressed and forwarded) and registered in Canada, to Harbin. Harbin (in Manchuria) was under the control of White Russians (opposed to the Communists, who had taken over most of Russia by this time).

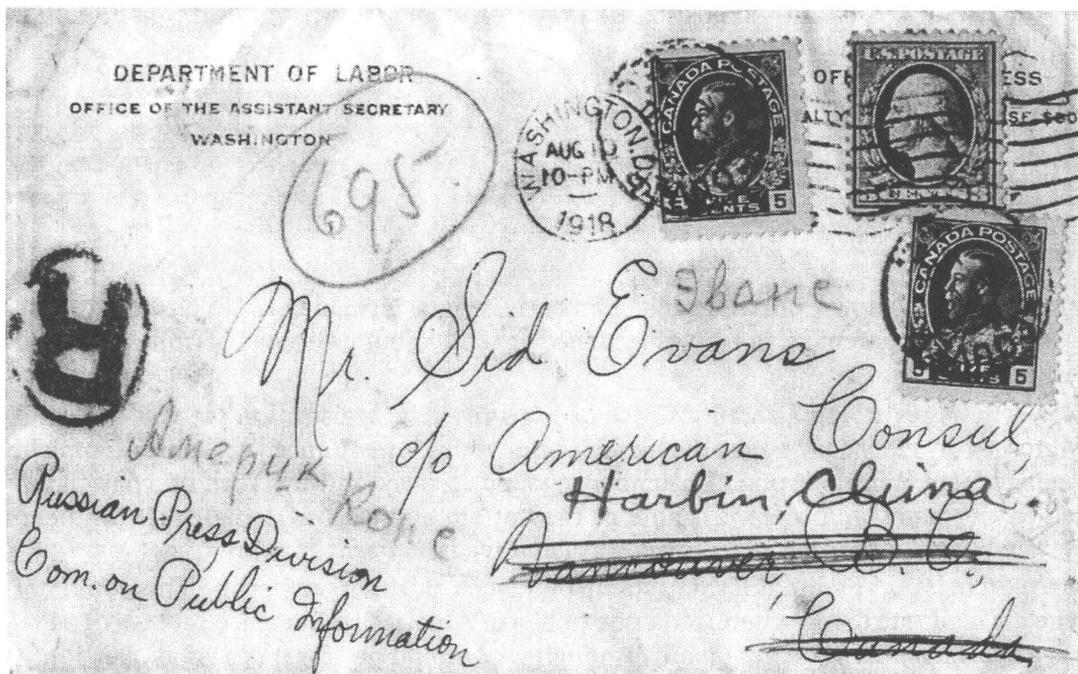


Figure 1. Remailed Washington–Vancouver–Harbin (1918)

Franked properly in Canada.

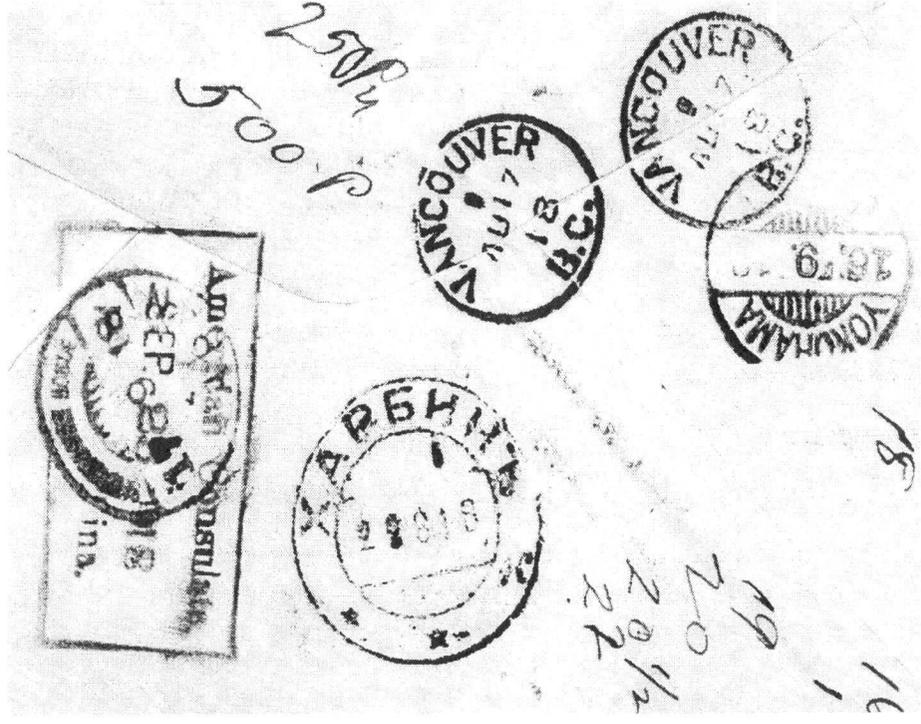


Figure 1a. Reverse

The rectangular handstamp is a receiver of the American Consulate in Harbin. On top of it is a Japanese dater with very small lettering.

Since the penalty cover was addressed to a foreign country, a US 3¢ stamp was added—this in fact was unnecessary, as mail carried free in the US could continue free to and in Canada (this was true since 1889). At Vancouver, presumably at the American Consulate, it was found that Sid Evans had moved to Harbin. There it was franked with 10¢ postage, paying the registration fee (5¢) and the UPU rate to China. The only reasonable explanation is that it was remailed by the Consulate (rather than merely forwarded), since how else can we explain the fact that it was registered, and the stamps added to pay both registration and UPU rate. (Forwarding would only require the difference between the UPU rate and the amount paid.)

It was sent via Yokohama and another Japanese office (the postmark is illegible), finally arriving in Harbin (note the use of Cyrillic in the postmark). Parts of the address have been transliterated into Cyrillic, e.g., the name, Evans, and “Amerik Kons”.



## Weird airmail

David Handelman

ILLUSTRATIONS 1 & 1a show front and back of an early official airmail cover to Germany. The weird thing about it is apparent in 1a—it was returned to sender, but a German stamp was added and postmarked in Berlin.

The letter was sent as registered airmail in December 1930. The registration fee was 10¢ and in the period March 1930–February 1931, the airmail rate was 15¢ per ounce [Arfken & Plomish, p217]. It was mailed from Winnipeg on 11 December 1930 and received in New York two days later. It was addressed to Germany, and there is a note at the bottom applied in Germany. It has been somewhat obliterated (some paper has been torn away) and reads, *Adressa . . . ogen*.

Most peculiarly, there is an 8Pfennig German stamp on reverse postmarked Berlin. This could not possibly cover the air mail rate to anywhere, let alone to North America (the surface rate was 30 Pf). Perhaps this was a special fee for returning mail, although who would pay for it is a good question. I guess this means that the letter was remailed rather than returned to sender directly. The notation on reverse *Air mail via New York* is in the same crayon as the notation on the front, so presumably was done in Germany, and refers to the return trip.

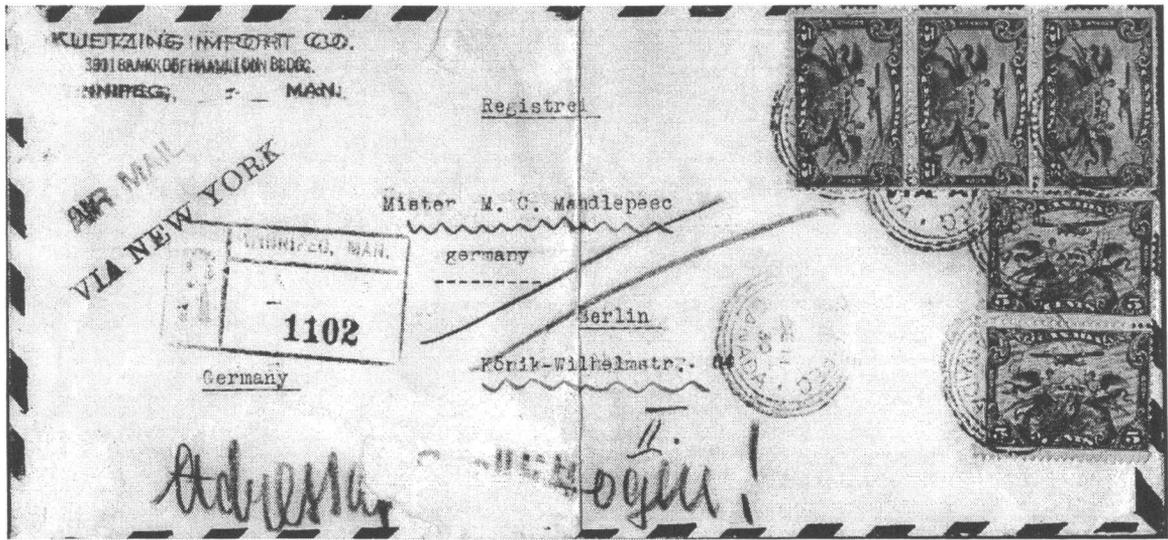


Figure 1. Registered air mail to Germany (1930)

Postage made up of 10¢ registration fee plus the short-lived air mail rate to Germany, 15¢.

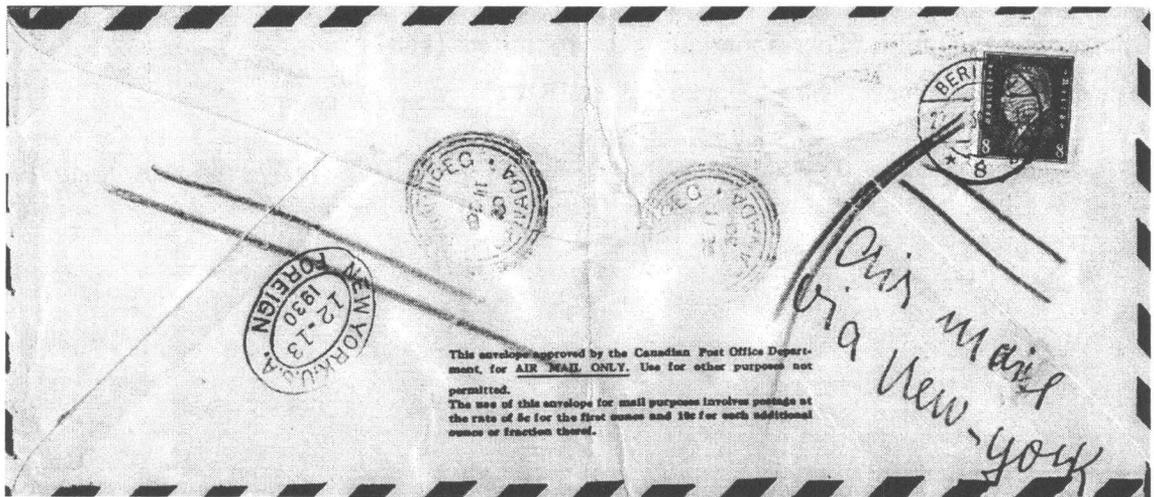


Figure 1a. Reverse of airmail cover

With 8 Pf German stamp (issued 1928).



# Undeliverable

David Handelman

ILLUSTRATIONS 1 & 2 show two registered covers which could not be delivered, apparently for different reasons. In neither case can we be certain why they were stopped, but we can make some educated guesses.

The first one is addressed to Dublin in 1937, and is handstamped in red, "Correspondence to this address prohibited" (and again in French), evidently a Canadian marking (the letter never made it out of Canada, as is clear from the postmarks in Figures 1 & 1a). My first thought was that this was money sent to purchase Irish Sweepstakes tickets (which were illegal in Canada until about the 1970s). However, Charles Verge had a list of known sweepstakes addresses, and this one wasn't on it. Perhaps it is an IRA address?

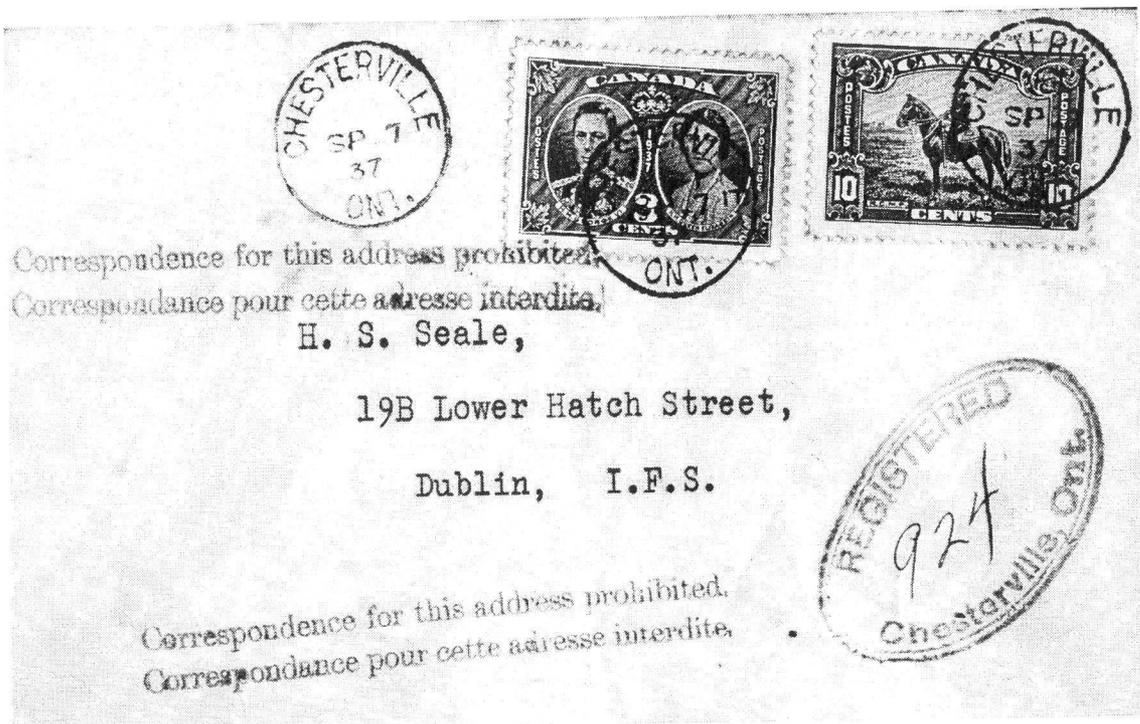


Figure 1. Chesterville to Dublin “Correspondence . . . prohibited” (1937)

Postage made up of 10 ¢ registration fee plus 3 ¢ Empire rate. An IRA address?

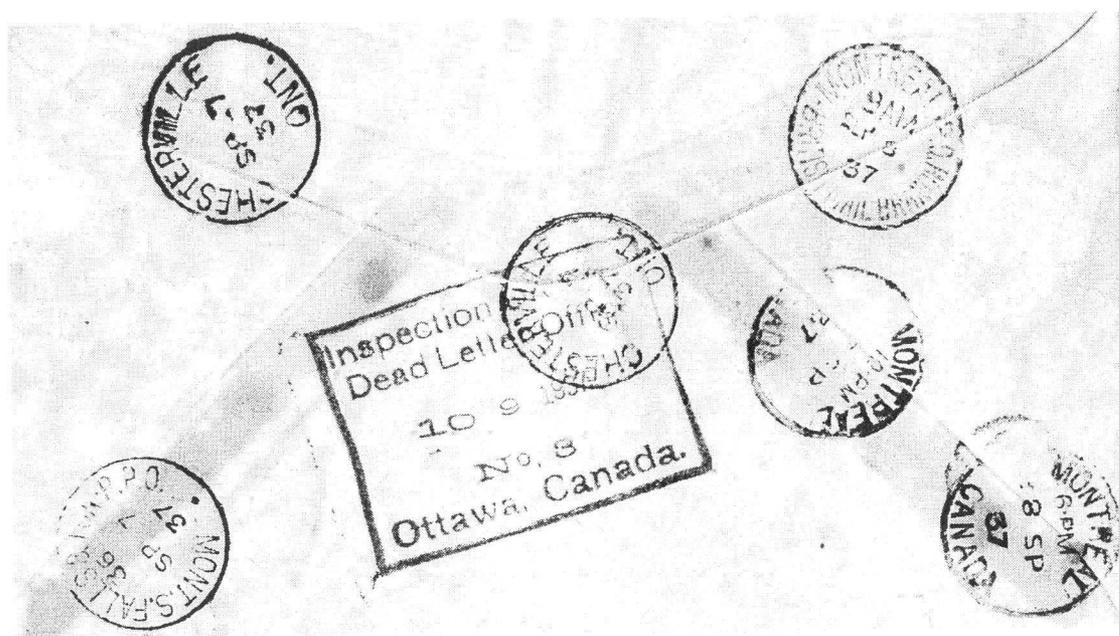


Figure 1a. Reverse of Chesterville cover

Sent from Chesterville via the Montreal, Smiths Falls, and Toronto RPO to Montreal, thence to the British Mail Branch, and from there sent to the DLO in Ottawa. There are no further postmarks, so we do not know when it was returned.

The second one is more innocuous. It is a registered letter from Toronto to Lindsay in 1957 which was stamped NON-TRANSMISSIBLE. The postage is correct—20 ¢ registration fee plus 5 ¢ domestic rate. I suspect that the reason this was refused was the typescript at the left—“\$2.00 cash”. Letters containing an indication of their value (except on a customs advice) cannot be forwarded through Canadian mail. Just above the typescript is a manuscript G. T., perhaps the initials of the clerk who decided it was not transmissible. (Or maybe the account number, 22200, was known to be for purchasing Irish or other sweepstakes tickets!)

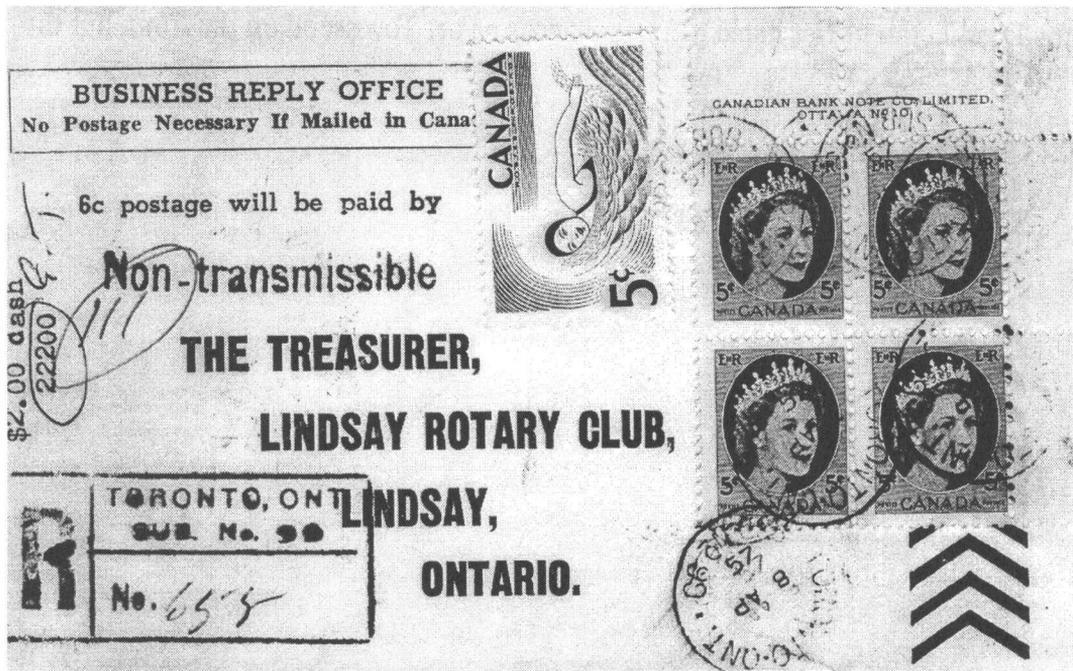


Figure 2. Toronto to Lindsay “Non-transmissible” (1957)

Postage made up of 20¢ registration fee plus 5¢ domestic rate, with a plate block (#10) on a reply envelope.

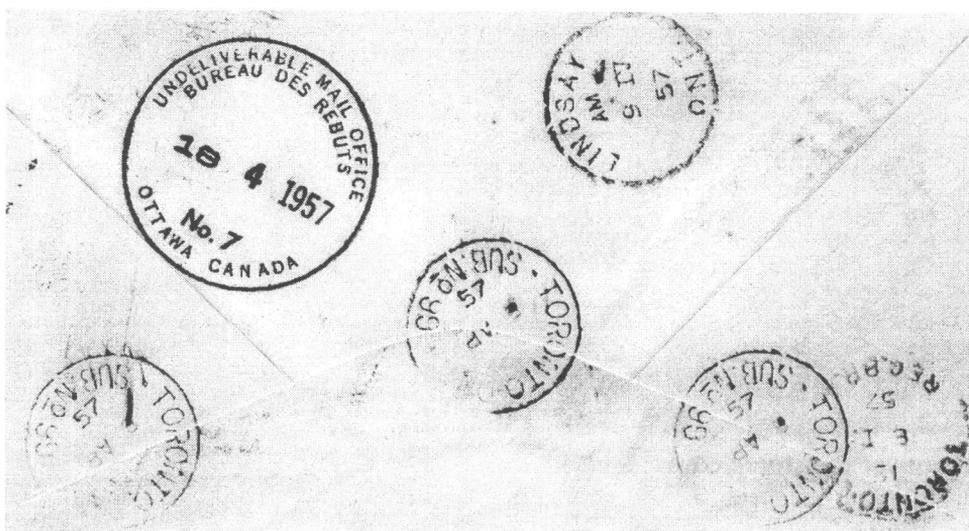


Figure 2a. Reverse of Toronto to Lindsay cover

Sent from Toronto Sub 99 to the Toronto Registration Branch Office, then to Lindsay, and finally to Ottawa and the Bureau of Undeliverable Mail (formerly known as the DLO).



## Early Vancouver registered

*Gray Scrimgeour*

THE cover shown in Figures 1 & 1a is grubby, and is missing a stamp (an RLS—its outline can be seen). However, it’s the earliest registered cover I’ve seen from Vancouver. Postmarked there 9 February 1888 and addressed to Tulare City (California), it has a Victoria transit postmark of the same date, and a Tulare CDS dated 22 March 1888. It was handstamped “Return to Writer”. Readable postmarks on the return trip are Port Townsend (WA) dated 30 March and Victoria of the

same date, then the Dead Letter Office dated 9 April. There's a Port Townsend on the front, but the date is not readable.

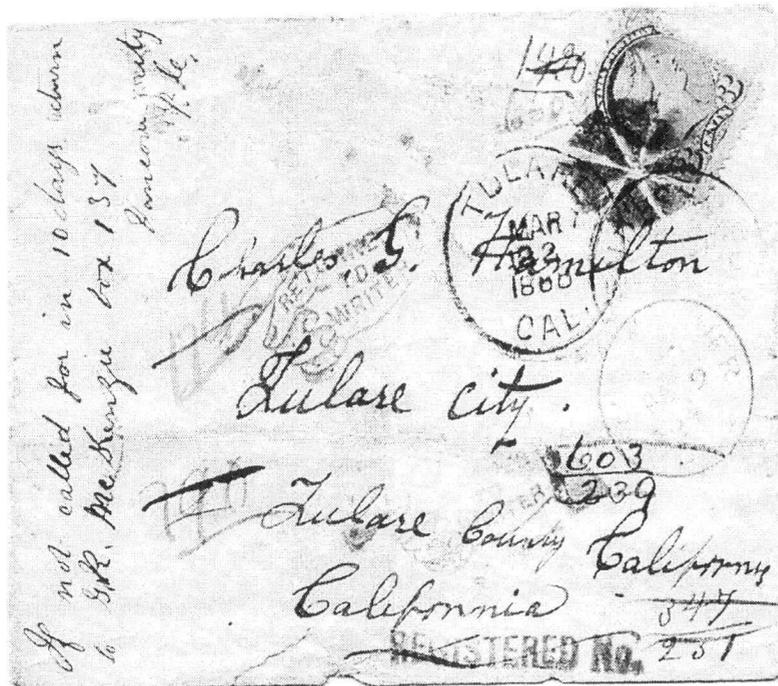


Figure 1. Vancouver–California returned to sender (February 1888)  
Missing 5¢ RLS.

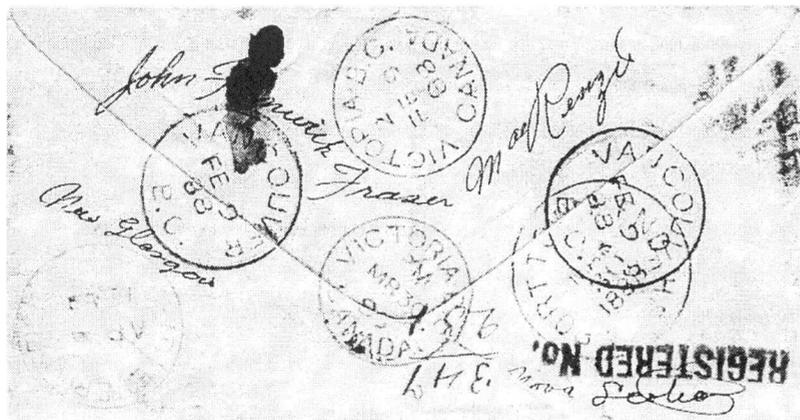


Figure 1a. Reverse of Vancouver registered cover  
The image has been cropped.

On the front, there is the instruction “If not called for in 10 days, return to G R McKenzie box 137 Vancouver City BC”. On the reverse, in a pattern that misses all the postmarks, is the return address or signature *John Fenwick Fraser MacKenzie, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia*. This name and address was applied while the envelope was open, probably in Ottawa at the DLO or after the letter was returned to MacKenzie. There is a wide variety of registration numbers. Just think—if this had been mailed merely a few weeks later, the missing RLS would probably have been the 2¢, not the 5¢!



## World War II patriotic sticker

David Handelman

I don't recall seeing many so-called “propaganda” stickers on the front of registered covers, at least from Canada. The one in the illustration shows one, with a nasty picture of Hitler. It is in red on black, and the swastika background may not come out very well. There is faint vertical text which almost certainly will not be legible—it says “Kinsmen Club”.

The letter was mailed from London to India, with postage of 16 ¢. Registration was 10 ¢, but the Empire rate was 3 ¢ for the first ounce and 2 ¢ for each additional, making this overpaid by 1 ¢. It has been examined by Exchange Control, as usual, at Toronto, and stamped "Passed for export". We see this so often that it just doesn't register any more.

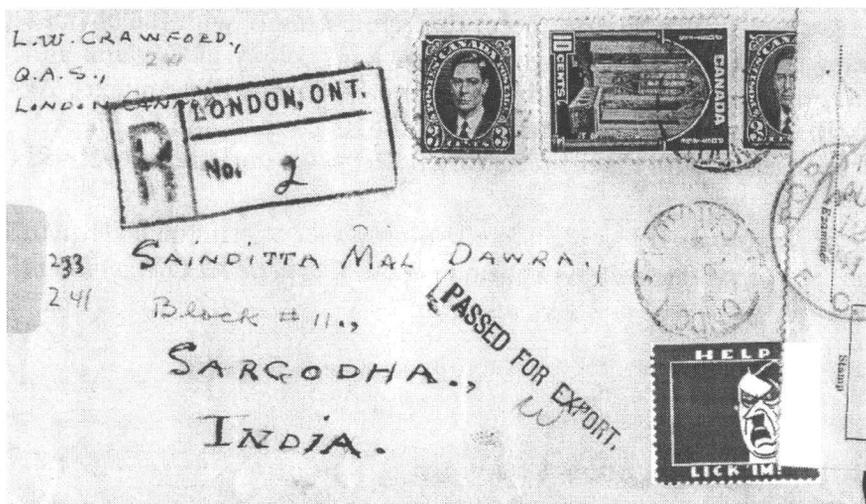


Figure 1. Help Lick 'Em (1941)  
Note the very low initial registration number, 2.



## Another early use of the 2¢ RLS

David Handelman

**A**n earlier issue of the *Registry* contained an article by George Arfken listing some early uses of the 2¢ registered letter stamp. Although ostensibly issued 15 November 1875 (how was this date arrived at?), the stamp is not known used until early December. Its use was not compulsory on registered matter until around October 1876. Figure 1 shows a triple rate cover dated late January 1876. I picked this up on e-Bay a few months ago.

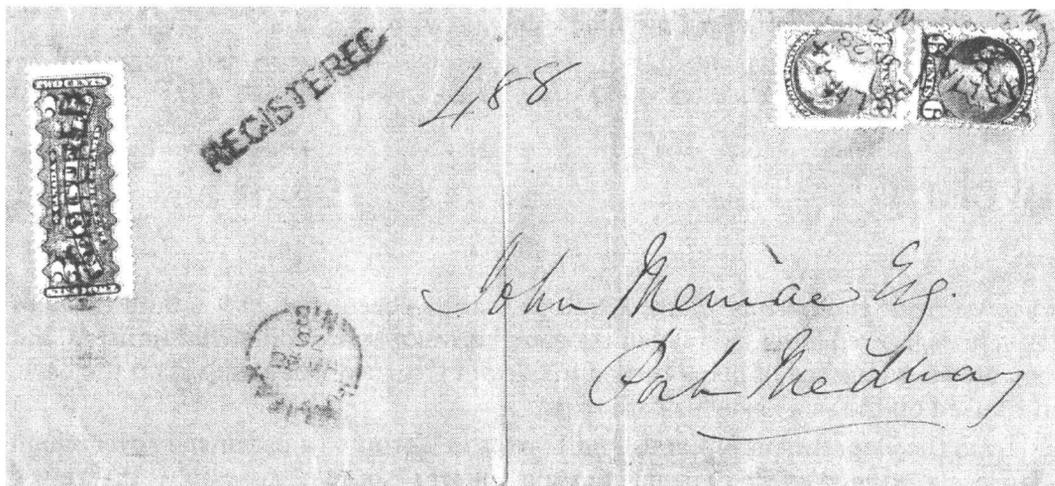


Figure 1. Early use of 2¢ RLS (28 January 1876)  
Postage made up of 2¢ registration fee plus triple domestic rate. From Halifax to Port Medway (Ns). Oddly (for a registered letter), there are no backstamps. The RLS is barely tied by the registered straightline.



# Philatelic?

David Handelman

THE interesting cover shown in Figure 1 is addressed to a Roger Deteste (probably derives from the French word *teste*, which evolved to *tête*, rather than from *detester* with the obvious meaning) in New Hebrides. New Hebrides was governed as joint colony of England and France, hence the *condominium* appearing in the address (this is a standard term in this context). As a British colony, it was eligible for the Empire rate, which was 3 ¢ for the first ounce, and 2 ¢ for each additional; hence at quadruple rate, together with the the registration fee (10 ¢), the letter is overpaid by 1 ¢. Is it philatelic?

The sender is Georges Dubuc of Montreal. It has a cinderella on reverse, referring to a German “psychology week” that took place in 1927. The address appears to read *Geomètre du Condominium* (geometer? maybe this means surveyor?)

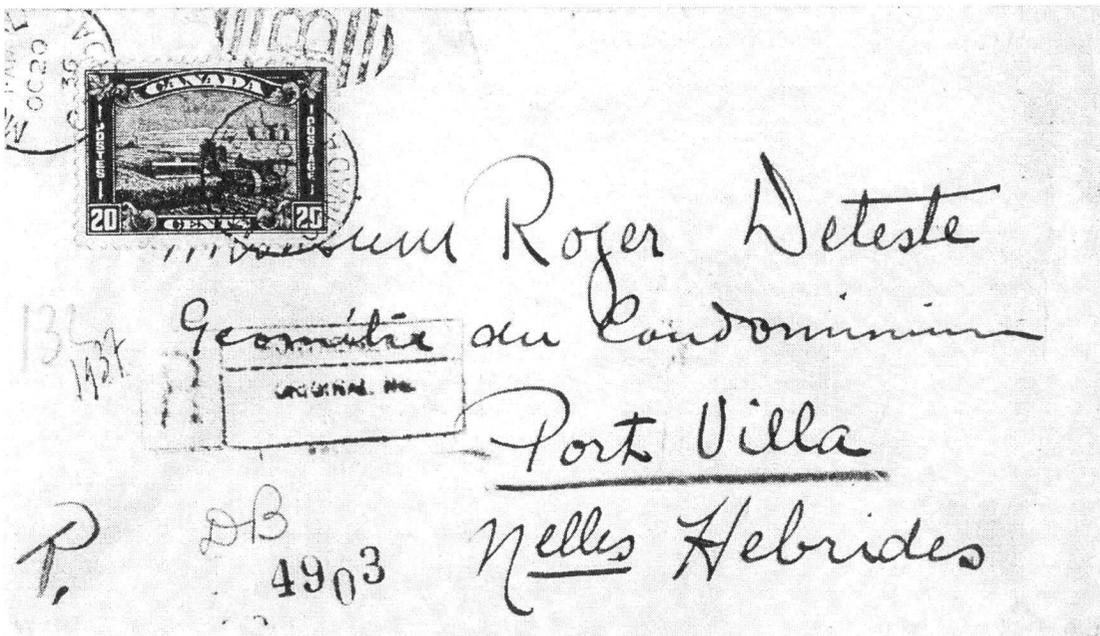


Figure 1. Montreal to New Hebrides

Backstamped at British mail branch (Montreal), Vancouver, and Sydney (NSW).



## Early recycling

David Handelman

THE cover shown front and back is a large envelope that has been used twice, both times as a double weight registered letter. Rемаiled registered envelopes are somewhat unusual, but this one is more so, as instead of being turned inside out (“turned”) or stamped on the back, this one has been franked on the same side for both trips.

Initially mailed from the Department of Lands and Forests in Toronto (a provincial government department) on 13 December 1909, it was cancelled at the Ontario House of Assembly. It received the crown duplex, and the large blue double oval dater on the front. The postage of 9 ¢ pays the registration fee of 5 ¢ plus double domestic rate at 2 ¢ per ounce.

It was addressed to James Wilson, a Crown Lands agent at Kinmount, where it arrived the next day. One day later (15 December 1909), it was remailed by him, to what appears to be a legal firm—Godfrey, Hale & Allen—or a really early country & western band, at Tory Hill. On remailing, the original handstamps were all struck through some in black, others in red. The same postage was paid, this time killed (literally) by a heavy roller, presumably at Kinmount. The strike is so poor, that

it is impossible to verify the name. The number 2 in the upper left corner might be a registration number, but it is difficult to figure out which numbers belong to which office (except that the struck through 1617 was obviously applied at Toronto).

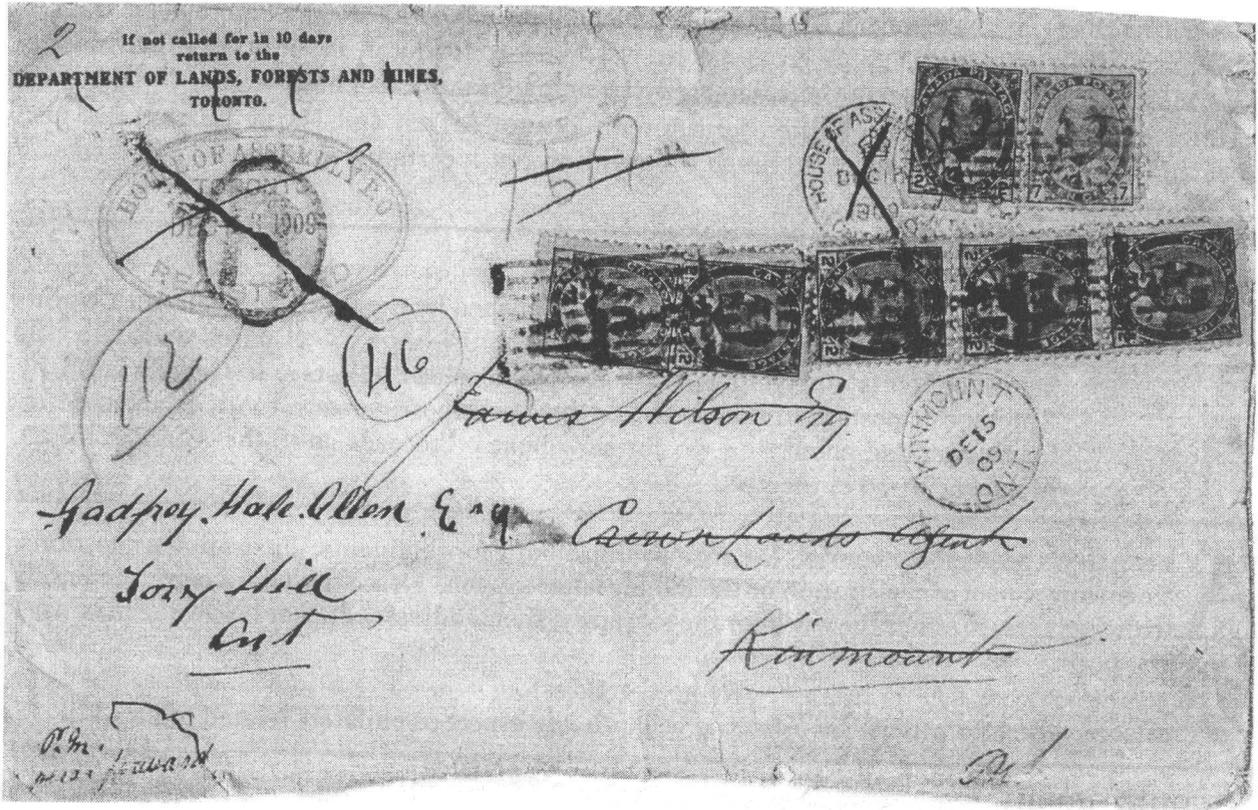


Figure 1. Re-used registered letter (1909)

House of Assembly to Kinmount, then Kinmount to Tory Hill. Double rate in both cases.

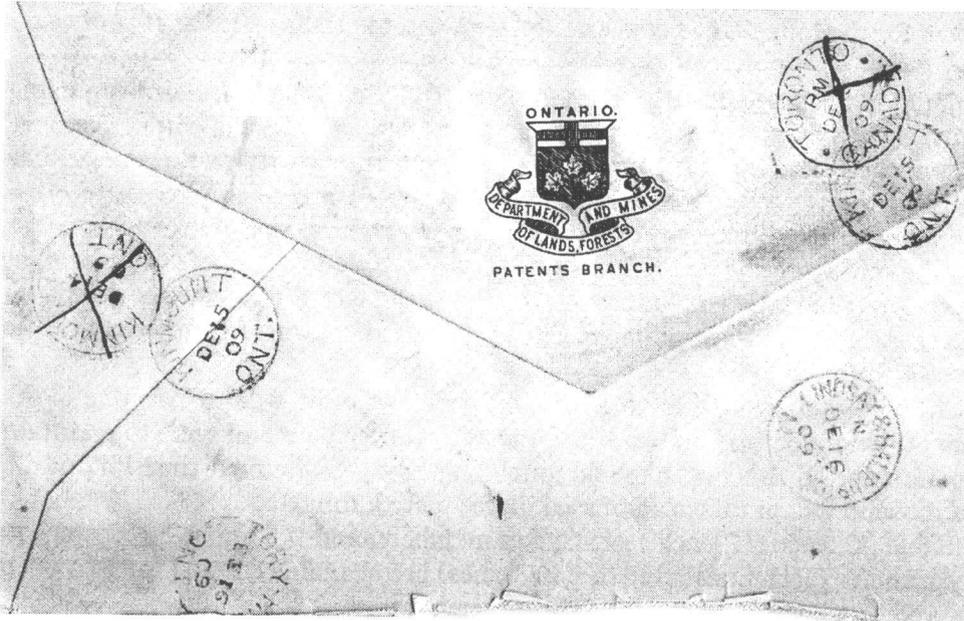


Figure 1a. Portion of reverse

Postmarks from the first trip were struck through.



# The back page

## Hot Flashes

**B**Y this time (late November), we all know that El Supremo, Horace Harrison, has died. This particularly affects this study group, as he was a key contributor, in addition to having the most extensive collection of Canadian registration material in existence.

However, his magnum opus (written jointly with George Arfken and Harry Lussey) has just appeared. I haven't been able to spend much time with it, but it certainly is impressive in terms of size and weight!

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## Other stuff

**NEW BOOKS:** My AR monograph has just appeared, published by the PHSC. It deals with world-wide AR, with emphasis on Canada and the US. At 158+vi pages with 180+ illustrations, it is a bargain at \$c25.69 plus postage. (Postage to Canada is \$6 by Xpresspost; postage to the US is \$c9 by Xpresspost; postage to UK is about \$c17 for airmail and about \$c8.50 for slow boat.) Proceeds go to the Allan Steinhart Memorial Fund of the PHSC.

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**A**s 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).

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## Announcement

**I**(dh) am sorry to say that I cannot continue as editor of the *Registry* for much longer. As editor of *Topics*, I have been devoting an enormous amount of time to the hobby, and I simply cannot maintain the schedule for both this newsletter and *Topics*. I hope that someone will volunteer to take over the editorship of the *Registry*, so I will have some time to myself. I plan to continue as editor of *Topics*. Part of the reason for the long delay between this issue and the last one is the lack of time.

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The *Registry* was prepared in the typesetting language (plain) T<sub>E</sub>X ("tek"), on a Macintosh, using the 11C 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.

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**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 #12 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!