

TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP
OF THE
British North American Philatelic Society

Newsletter No. 52

May 1996

BITS AND PIECES

First, a quick apology: the more eagle-eyed noticed that I had a couple of illustrations wrongly numbered in the last issue. Sorry. I have received a bundle of photo-copies and notes from Allan Steinhart, which will be used over the next few months. However, following the recent spate of auctions, there must be others with new material worth an airing

Jack Arnell has responded to the re-discovered '1/5½ Cy' handstamp illustrated on the first page of Newsletter #51. He has allocated the number C21, leaving space in the system to cater for the unlikely event that other handstamps in this category may re-emerge. A variant of a previously catalogued handstamps is included at the end of this Newsletter.



Figure 1: Amherstburg, Upper Canada to Dover, twice forwarded, 7th December 1840.

UNITED KINGDOM - FORWARDING LETTERS AFTER 1840

The letter above was written in ... and prepaid the through rate, one shilling and twopence Sterling, one shilling and fourpence Currency. It was carried on the 'Caledonia' out of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and reached its first address, Dover, on 18th. It was then forwarded to Sandwich, paid a penny postage (manuscript mark, the inland rate for letters weighing less than half an ounce from 10th January 1840). But the letter missed

again, this time payment effected with a penny stamp. The various markings are:

Amherstburg, 7th December 1840.
'PAID', m/s '1N2 Stg 1N4 Cy'.
London, Paid, 18th January 1841.
Dover, 18th January 1841 (reverse).
Sandwich, 19th January 1841 (reverse).
Sandwich, 19th January 1841.

UNEXPLAINED SHIP LETTER

Dr Dorothy Sanderson has unearthed another unusual and attractive cover, which has so far eluded a convincing explanation. Unfortunately the contents are missing and there are no inscriptions to help - however, I have reproduced both sides, and you may know of other covers from the same correspondence for comparison.

The letter appears to have originated in the Maritime Provinces, and to have been carried to Halifax, Nova Scotia by private ship. It bears a '2' and '5', both deleted, which - and this is pure speculation - could have been charges raised:

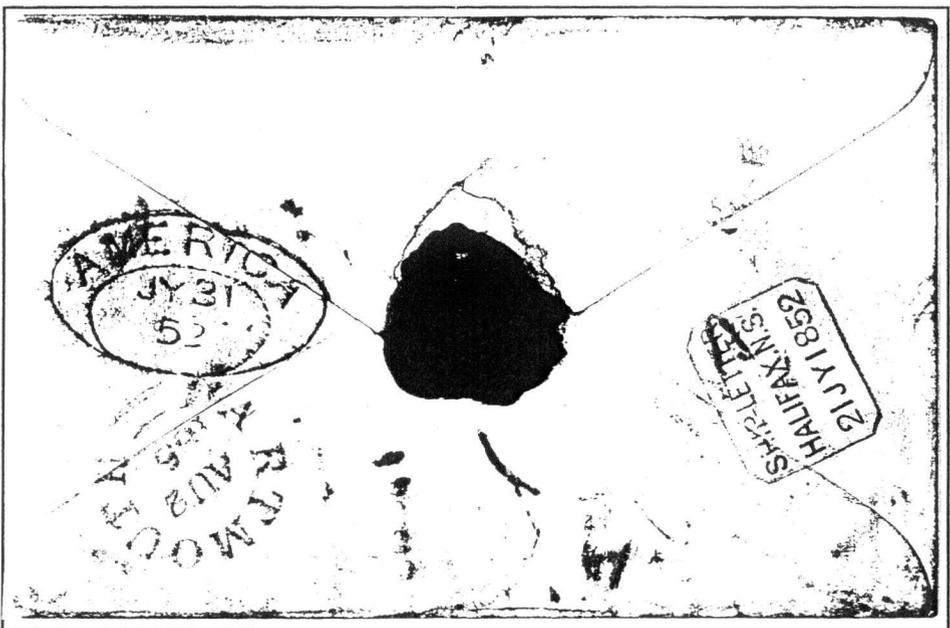
1. On route to the ship.
2. On arrival at Halifax.

The '2' may have contributed to the '5'. From Halifax, the cover was carried to Liverpool, arriving there on 31st July (note the dated oval 'AMERICA'), more often seen on mail from the United States.

The final charge was '1/3'. It is possible that the extra charge was a claim by Nova Scotia on top of the normal postage somebody must have some ideas ?



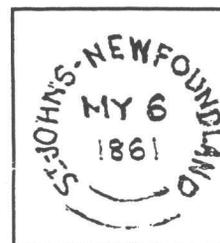
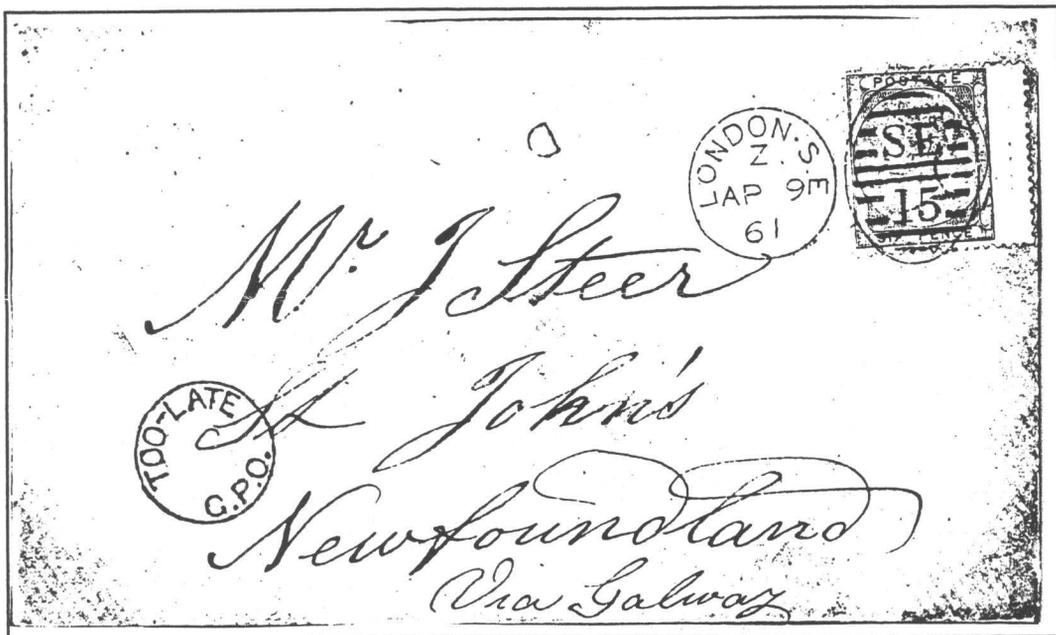
Figure 2: Halifax ship letter, sent to England by British Packet.



THE GALWAY LINE

Following the theme of unusual covers, Michael Jackson has shown me an 1860's cover from England to Newfoundland. Directed 'Via Galway', in London on 9th April 1861, the day that the 'Columbia' sailed, and marked 'TOO LATE' it was passed to the Cunard Line 'Asia'. The letter travelled from Liverpool on the 13th April, to New York on 25th April.

It was eventually picked up by the Galway Line 'Columbia', on her return voyage on 30th April 1861. The letter arrived in St. Johns, Newfoundland on 6th May. (Details by Michael Jackson, shipping dates courtesy of Walter Hubbard and Fred Winter's excellent book, which deserves more frequent acknowledgement, in my view).



Reverse

Figure 3: Too late for the 'Galway Line'.

THE STEAMSHIP 'GUADALQUIVER'

I would be grateful for information about a steamship, the details of which have eluded me. Some time ago, I bought a number of letters from the second half of the 1840's, which had been carried 'in the open mails' through the United States - they were from different correspondences, for the most part but not exclusively, addressed to Upper Canada. One of them was directed 'per Steamship Guadalquiver to New York'. It was dated London, 13th August 1847, and made New York on 29th August. I will include a photocopy in a future Newsletter I have run out of space in this one. Unable to find a mention of the ship in the 'Handbook on Transatlantic Mail' listing, or in N.R.P. Bonsor's 'North Atlantic Seaway', I had to wait until I could get access to 'Lloyd's List' (now on microfiche ... I wish that somebody would put some of these source documents on CD-ROM!). Lloyd's confirms the sailing, marks the ship '(s)', steamship, and the Master as 'Hoskin'.

One more for the 'pioneer steamship' listing but no record of the 'Guadalquiver', which does not appear in 'Lloyd's Register', except as a 'Messageries Maritimes' vessel built in 1888. The most likely explanation is that she was registered in the United States, or Continental Europe, possibly Spain, since the Guadalquivir River is in Spain. It also seems likely that she may have been an older vessel, renamed when sold on (and possibly sold and renamed again, soon after this voyage). I will pass on the query to the Maritime Museum at Greenwich and to the Ministry of Defence Historical Records Branch in Whitehall; in the meantime, it would be helpful if the North American side of the Study Group could see what they can discover in Canada and the United States, perhaps starting with New York on 29th August 1847. It seems likely that the vessel would have made more than one crossing, and when I have more time I will check Lloyd's List more carefully.

OTHER VESSELS

I have neglected Allan Steinhart in the last couple of Newsletters, but have received a host of interesting photocopies. I thought that I would stay with ships (one I'm saving for a later front cover), but two appear below.

The first is the only 'Britannia' maiden voyage cover that I have seen to Prince Edward Island ... paid a shilling at Liverpool, it has been charged a further eightpence for the passage from Halifax, Nova Scotia to the island. Lovely.

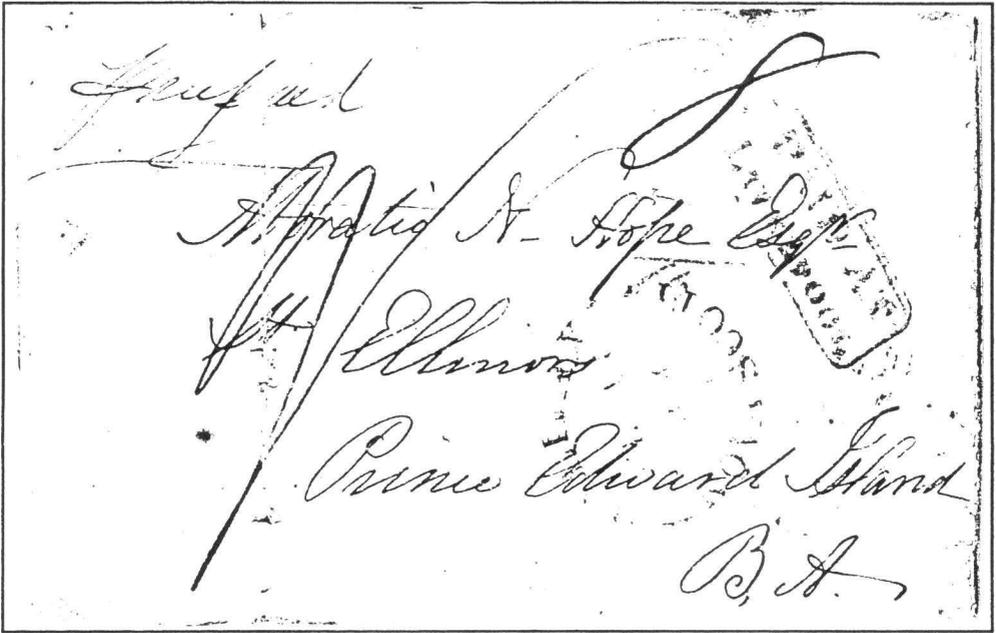


Figure 4: A letter from England to Prince Edward Island, carried to Halifax by the Cunard Line 'Britannia', on her maiden voyage.

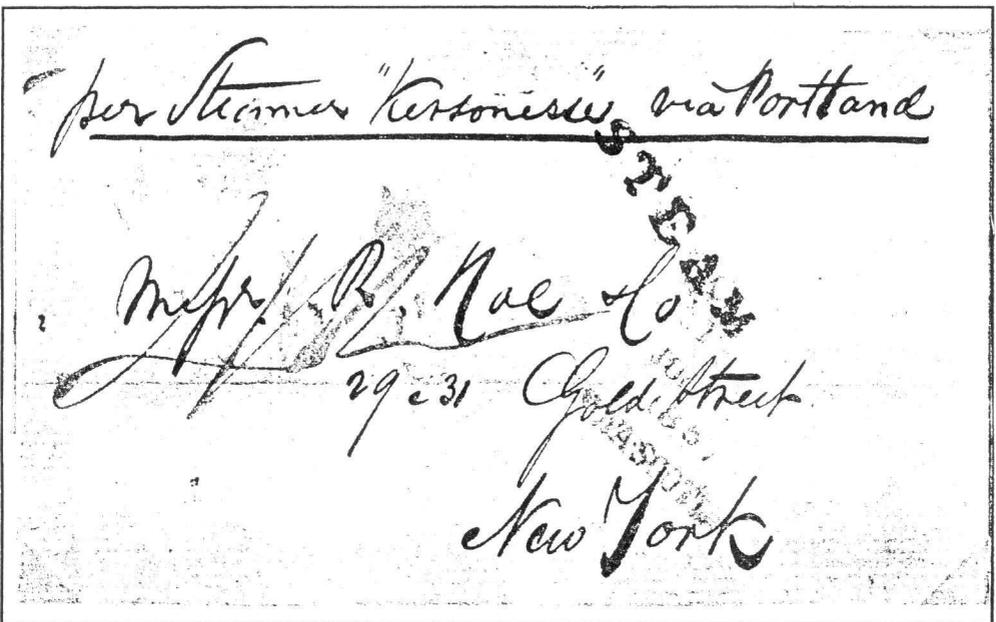


Figure 5: A letter carried by the North Atlantic Steam Navigation Company's steam ship 'Kersonesse', from Halifax to New York.

The second cover was carried from Halifax, Nova Scotia to New York, via Portland, on the steamship 'Kersonesse'. Allan has supplied a potted history which I quote verbatim (for once, I found my typing out-paced my reading!). The company ran a service from Liverpool to St.

Johns, Newfoundland; 'Kersonesse' carried this letter on the second of her voyages for the company: St. Johns on 3rd July 1857; Halifax (where the letter originated), and Portland, Maine. She was launched in 1855, 1409 tons, and saw service as a Crimean War troop transport.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

In my first attempt at a Newsletter, I showed a cover to St. John's (later Prince Edward) Island; had I looked more carefully at Allan Steinhart's earlier photo-copies, I would have found a copy

of a letter from the same correspondence, better in every respect than the one shown except for the contents, which will remain a mystery until Allan revisits his photo-copier.

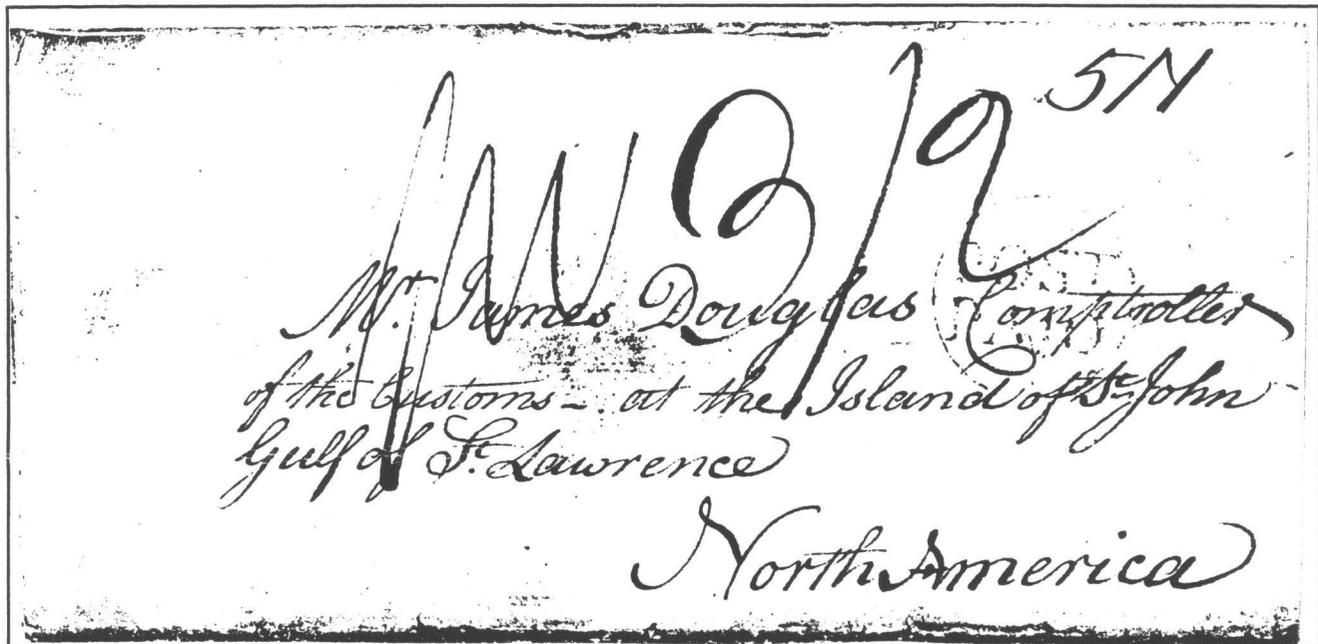
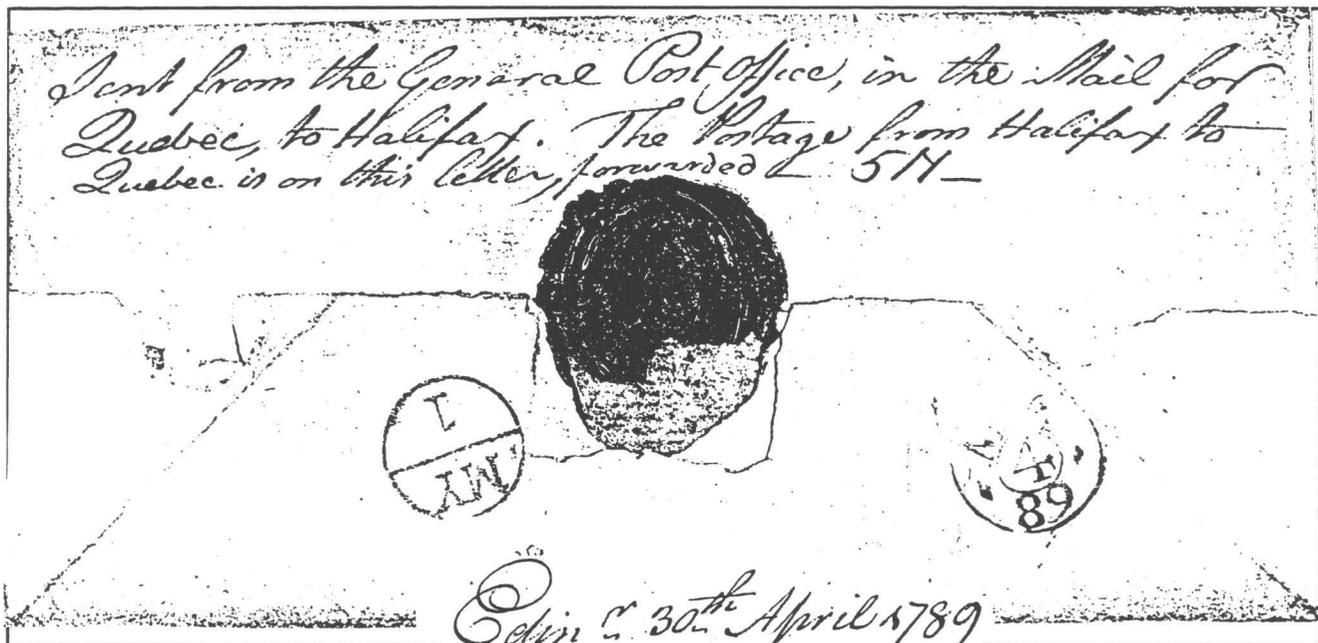


Figure 6: Scotland to St. John's Island, 1789.



The letter is from Edinburgh, Scotland, and is dated 30th April 1789. It bears Bishop Marks: 'MY/1' (Edinburgh) and 'MAY 4 89' (London). The Falmouth Packet 'Portland' sailed on 11th May 1789 for Halifax, Nova Scotia. The rates: pre-paid 3s 2d Sterling, double rate, including 1s Sterling London to Halifax, Nova Scotia, a further '5N' (5s Currency) was charged for the double rate from Halifax to Prince Edward

Island, viâ Quebec. This route was apparently imposed in London, explained by the inscription on the reverse: 'Sent from the General Post Office, in the Mail for Quebec, to Halifax. The Postage from Halifax to Quebec is on this letter, forwarded 5N'. It seems extraordinary that a letter at Halifax was sent some 600-700 miles to Quebec, only to be returned to Prince Edward Island, but this appears to have been the case.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Newfoundland tends to receive less than its fair share of coverage in the Newsletter - Douglas Campbell has sent me photo-copies of some of the covers from his Newfoundland collection (he has also sent some Prince Edward Island photocopies, which will appear later). For starters, I have chosen two underpaid letters, the

first, not trans-Atlantic, is to Quebec. Dated 16th May 1848, it was prepaid fourpence (Sterling, fourpence halfpenny Currency, the port-to-port rate, effective from 1765 to 8th April 1865). The mark is in red. At Halifax, the letter was marked 'MORE-TO-PAY', and charged '1/8' (Currency) to Quebec.

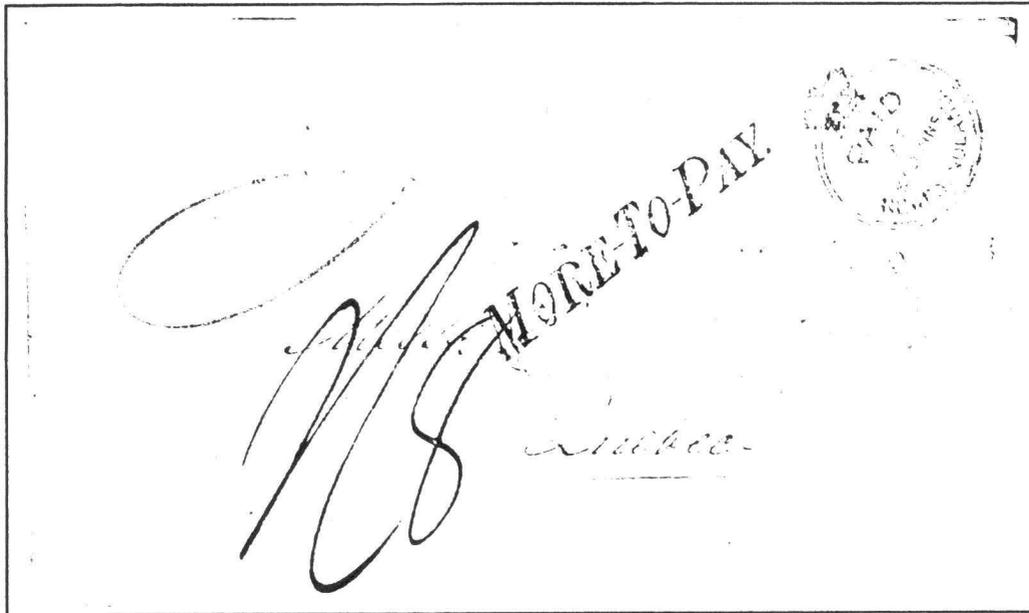


Figure 7: Newfoundland to Quebec, 16th May 1848.

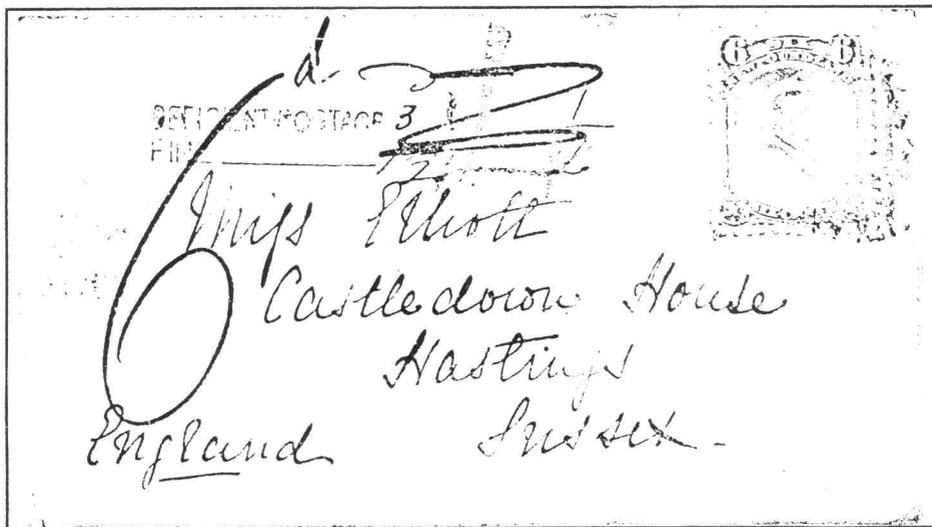


Figure 8: Newfoundland to England, 4th December 1873.

The second is of particular interest to me, as it bears a fine for underpayment, and the appropriate accountancy mark. Dated 4th December 1873, it was prepaid six cents, but weighed over half an ounce. Threepence postage and a penny halfpenny, the half-fine, in all fourpence halfpenny (Sterling) was claimed. The cover shows the '4' handstamp, augmented by a manuscript '1/2'. It has been attributed variously

to Halifax, and to use on board a ship. This cover has a black 'LIVERPOOL BR. PACKET' on the reverse (I don't know the date), and may have been carried by the 'Hibernian'. My copy of this mark was carried on the Allan Line 'Scandinavian'. I am yet to be convinced that the '4' was not used at St. John's, and accept that the 'DEFICIENT POSTAGE / FINE' would have been used at the same time and place.

HANDSTAMP VARIETIES

A couple of variations on the handstamp theme follow - two '8dStg' marks, apparently Hamilton, Upper Canada, similar to Arnell D4, but with the 'd' underlined.

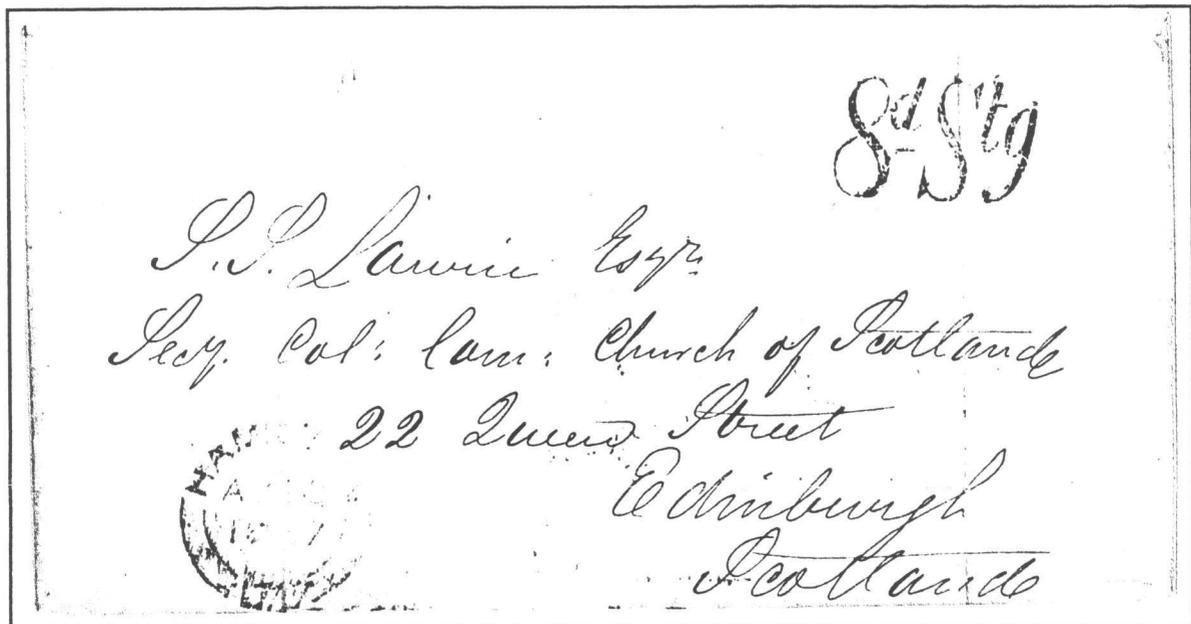


Figure 9: 10th August 1857, Hamilton, Upper Canada to Edinburgh, Scotland, unpaid eightpence Sterling; arrived Liverpool 23rd August 1857.



Figure 10: April (25th ?) 1859, Amherstburg, Upper Canada to London, England, arriving 16th May 1859. 'FREE', charged eightpence Sterling, 'OFFICIAL PAID' (to the account of the Royal Hospital, its frank withdrawn in 1840).

Jack Arnell has written to say that he is planning the release of a new publication probably during, or shortly after, CAPEX. It will be soft-cover, about 120 pages including over 100 reproductions from his collection, and is divided into 10 chapters:

1. Introduction;
2. Private, or 'By favour' covers;
3. Ship Letters;

4. Falmouth packet Letters;
5. Ferriage;
6. Pioneer Steamers and Freight Money;
7. The British Contract Steamers;
8. The United States Contract Steamers;
9. The Canadian Contract Steamers;
10. Later Developments.

Jack anticipates that the price will be in the order of CA\$30.00 UK£15.00.

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