



TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP  
OF THE  
British North American Philatelic Society

Newsletter No. 69

June 1999

EDITOR'S NOTES

I owe everybody an apology - just as I was beginning to get into a routine of producing the Newsletter on a regular basis, a number of family matters have diverted me to various corners of the British Isles (one of the problems of early retirement is that family and friends assume that you are under-employed and desperate to be found something 'useful' to do). In fact, the reverse appears to be true and I appear to have far less time now than when I was commuting to London! I will be better in future.

I have one important issue to raise ... when Allan Steinhart suggested to me that I might relieve Jack Arnell of some of the work associated with the Newsletter, he didn't mention that the tasks of editor and chairperson were rolled into one. I do not believe that the present arrangement is as good as it could be.

I have slowly come to realise that it is not practical for the TransAtlantic Study Group to be run from this side of the Atlantic, by somebody who rarely, if ever, travels to North America. Editing and producing the Newsletter is not a problem (apart from the obvious additional cost of postage to North American subscribers, currently \$CA2.65 per copy), but there are many other tasks which would be better accomplished by leadership in North America.

I would be grateful for suggestions and comments on how this situation could be improved. I am happy to continue to fulfil the work of editor, but I believe that these tasks are distinct from those of 'Chairperson' and believe that the Study Group would benefit if someone in North America would consider assuming the higher profile functions.

AN UNDERPAID COVER



Figure 1: An underpaid cover carried by Canadian Packet,  
14<sup>th</sup> October 1864

The cover illustrated at Figure 1 (shown briefly in black and white in TANNEWS #57) was

originally in Allan Steinhart's collection and he let me have it because I have a special interest in

underpaid covers (he didn't much like covers with stamps). It was prepaid 10c at Quebec for the Canadian packet to England, an underpayment of 2½c, and was charged 2d plus 3d the half-fine, 5d in all. In England, with the remainder of the fine, the addressee was charged 8d. Of particular interest is the 'CANADIAN PKT E' handstamp, applied by the Ocean Mail Clerk

aboard the Allan Line 'Peruvian'. I have a (unsubstantiated) theory that all unpaid, underpaid and registered mail carried on these ships was accounted for by the clerks on board. It would be interesting to be able to show other examples, in particular those carried on the return voyages (west), which seem to be especially rare.

### COMBINATION COVERS

To continue with some more stamped covers, the following two are examples of Large and Small Queen stamps used in combination. I make no claims to know anything about stamps, but I believe that these are uncommon and was surprised at how little information I was able to

glean from either HE and HW Duckworth '*The Large Queen Stamps of Canada and their Use, 1868-1872*' or GB Arfken '*Canada's Small Queen Era 1870-1897*' (the best books on the subject on my shelf). Older volumes such as Jarrett or Boggs do not seem to cover the subject, either.



Figure 2: Montreal, Canada East to Everton, England, 4<sup>th</sup> April 1872.

The first cover shows a combination in the transition period. The Large Queen stamps were issued in 1868. Shortly afterwards it was decided that they should be replaced by smaller stamps on grounds of economy. The Small Queen stamps began to make their appearance in 1870, but the six cent stamp was not available until 1872.

The writer paid 8c (GPO Notice #2/1870, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1870, effective 6<sup>th</sup> January 1870: the rate for a half ounce letter between the UK and the Dominion of Canada was 8c viâ the US by US

or British Packets) by a combination of a 2c Large Queen and a 6c Small Queen stamp.

The letter was carried the Cunard Line '*Parthia*', which sailed from Boston on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1872. (Hubbard and Winter, page 68) and on arrival at Liverpool was marked as having been carried by a United States Packet.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 1867 Cunard Line vessels were under contract to the US PMG on eastbound voyages and were treated as US Packets, which accounts for the Liverpool transit handstamp.

## TRANSITION TO THE PREFERENTIAL RATE

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1875 the Canadian Post Office issued an order (Department Order #15, 1<sup>st</sup> September 1875) which included: 'It has been arranged that the postage rate on letters passing between Canada and the United Kingdom shall from and after 1<sup>st</sup> October 1875, be an uniform

rate of twopence halfpenny Sterling, equal to five cents Canada currency, per half ounce, by whatever route sent or received. A five cent postage stamp for the convenience of the public in prepaying letters is being prepared and will be issued as soon as ready.'



Figure 3: Montreal, Canada East to Everton, England, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1875.

No five cent denomination plates had been prepared for the Small Queen issue in 1870 and the shortfall was met by printing stamps from the Large Queen five cent plates which had been prepared in 1868, but not used (Report of the Postmaster General (Dominion of Canada) year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 1876).

Some stamps appear to have been released before the previously recorded issue date - all sources known to me have the issue date as 1<sup>st</sup> October 1875, the letter at Figure 3 is earlier and before the rate reduction to five cents.

The letter above has been paid eight cents for a United States Packet out of New York; the Inman Line 'City of Berlin' departed New York on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1875 and made Queenstown on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1875 (Hubbard and Winter, page 224). The letter was delivered the following day.

I am not aware of any other examples of the five cent Large Queen stamp being used before 1<sup>st</sup> October 1875, particularly on trans-Atlantic mail; if you know better, please send me details. In the meantime I shall send a copy of this Newsletter to the 'Large and Small Queens' Study Group.

## REGISTRATION

I have read in 'BNA Topics' of the formation of the 'Registration' Study Group. Thanks to Horace Harrison, with assists mainly from Allan Steinhart's and Dorothy Sanderson's collections, the trans-Atlantic aspects of that subject have been reasonably well covered, and I have offered to provide the relevant issues of our Newsletter

to the new group, to avoid duplication of effort. The information published in TANEWS was, however, amended and updated and I would be interested to hear your views as to whether it would be worth reprinting the issues as a single article. I still have dozens of Horace Harrison's covers yet to be included.

## RECIPROCAL REGISTRATION

The illustrations below are of a cover recently acquired by Dorothy Sanderson; it shows one more aspect of the complicated subject of trans-Atlantic registered letters. Reciprocal registration with the United Kingdom was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1858, but fees could not be paid through to destination until 1<sup>st</sup> April 1859. In the interim Canadian letters had a penny registration fee prepaid and were charged a further sixpence fee on arrival, in addition to any postage due.

The sender prepaid the Canadian registration fee in cash at Watertown; the Canadian Post Office charged postage, initially '6' as though for the Canadian Packet, then '8' for the British Packet from New York. The letter was carried by the Cunard Line 'Africa' out of New York on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1858, arriving Liverpool on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1858. The British Post Office corrected the charge to '1/2' including the British registration fee.

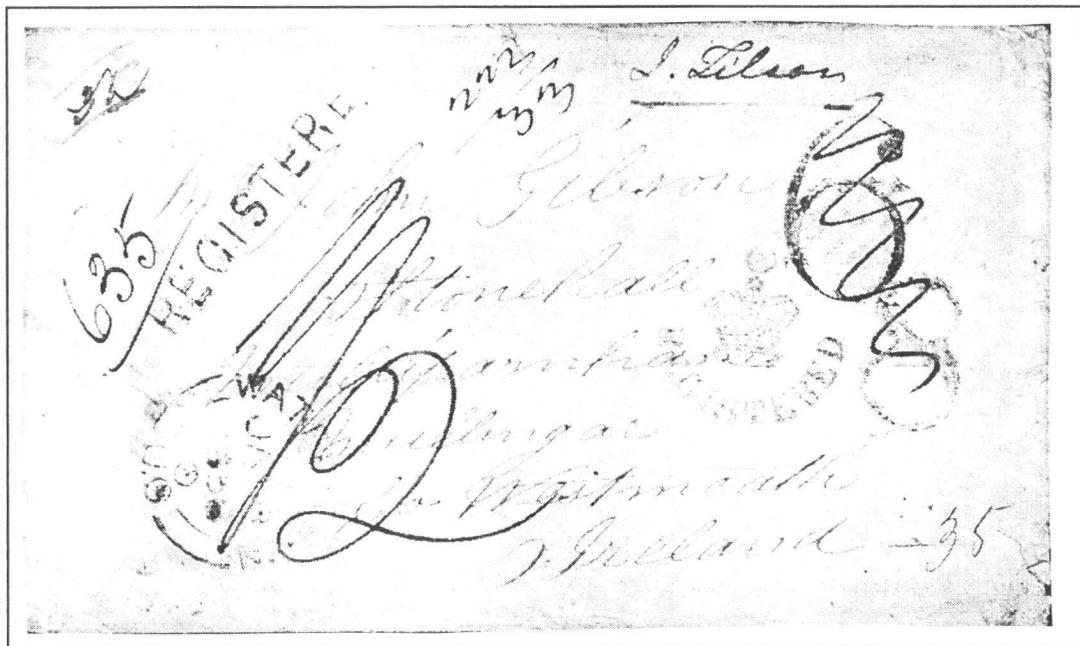


Figure 4: Watertown, Upper Canada to Mullingar, Ireland, 19<sup>th</sup> January 1858.

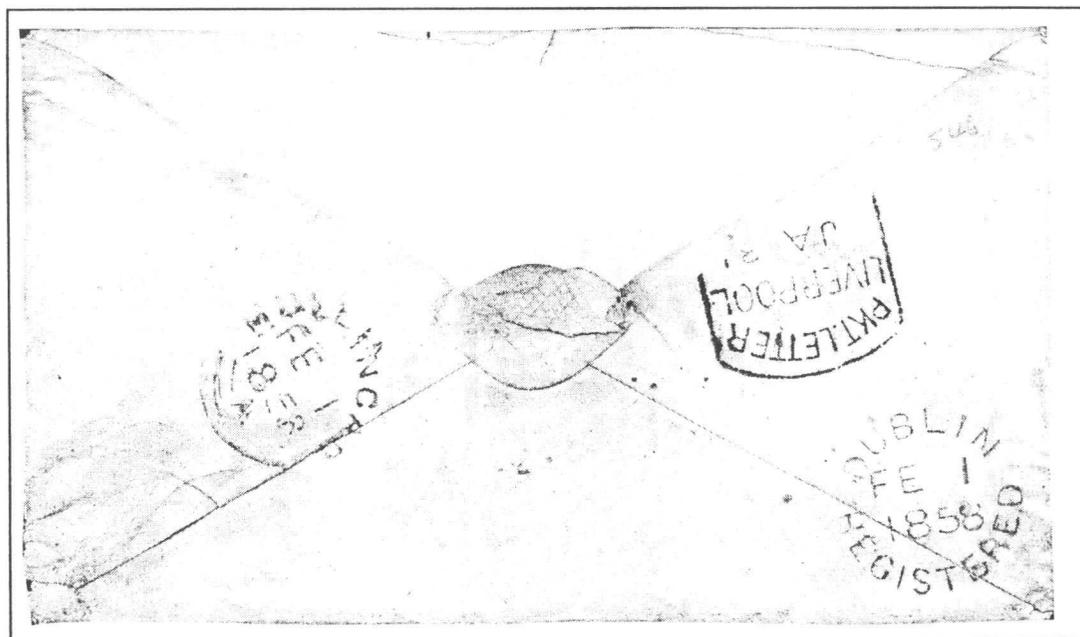


Figure 5: Reverse of the above letter.

## EARLIER REGISTERED LETTERS

Pre-dating Dorothy Sanderson's cover is one from a large world-wide collection of registered covers accumulated by the late Martin Willcocks. It was, in effect, a 'Money Letter' in North America, although a system of registration was in place in the United Kingdom.

This is only the second example I have seen of a registered letter to British North America during the period when the United Kingdom registration fee was a shilling. The other, from the same correspondence, is in Allan Steinhart's collection. If you know of others, please send me a photocopy.

Before 1858, there were no reciprocal arrangements for the exchange of registered letters between the United Kingdom and British North America.

From 6<sup>th</sup> January 1841 until 14<sup>th</sup> April 1849 (when the registration fee was reduced to sixpence, Post Office Notice, April 1849.) on prepayment of postage and the British Registration fee of a shilling Sterling, letters could be registered in the United Kingdom as far as the port of departure.

However, instructions on handling registered letters were issued to post offices and agents overseas (quoted in TANEWS #58 and illustrated in Figures 2, 3, and 4 of that issue).

Arrangements in North America were left to the discretion of the Colonial Post Offices; in Canada they were handled as Money Letters. The example shown below has a clear manuscript 'M' to that effect, but no extra charges were raised.

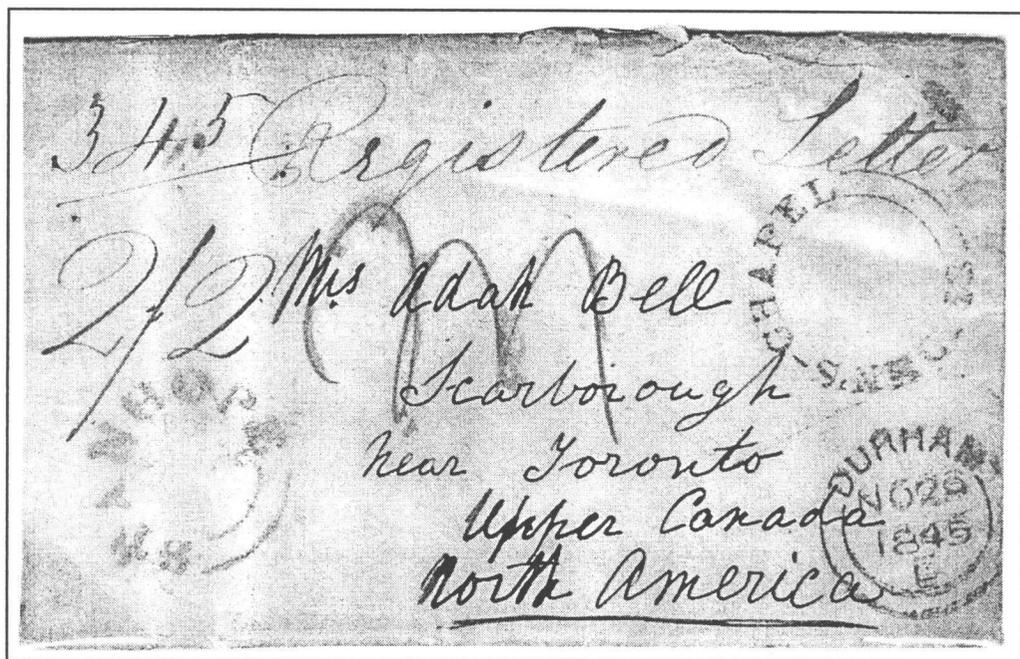


Figure 6: St. John's Chapel, England to Scarborough, Upper Canada, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1845.

The letter was prepaid one shilling and twopence the rate to Canada by British Packet (Post Office Instruction No. 4/41, February 1841 (clarification of July 1840 rate)), at that time *viâ* Boston, plus the one shilling registration fee, two shillings and twopence in all. It was carried on the Cunard Line 'Acadia' (Hubbard and Winter, page 21: 'Acadia' departed Liverpool on 4<sup>th</sup> December and made Boston on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1845).

The letter was not sent directly to Toronto, but was first recorded as a money letter at Montreal. Instructions to Postmasters and Post Office Agents in the Colonies, 1841, stated: 'Should the address of any Registered Letter be entered on the bill, its safe arrival should be acknowledged by your signature against such entry ... and the Letter Bill returned to the General Post Office'.

REGISTRATON (CONTINUED)

Further examples of trans-Atlantic registration before reciprocal registration was introduced were included in a large consignment of photocopies which Horace Harrison sent me some time ago. There are too many covers in his beautiful collection to use at once, so I am introducing a few at a time, as I find space.

It seems that these early covers never showed evidence of the prepayment of the Canadian penny registration fee.

Figure 7 shows a letter prepaid eightpence Sterling, tenpence Currency for the British Packet, plus a penny Canadian registration fee. The sixpence British registration fee was collected from the addressee.

The second is much richer fare, a double weight letter prepaid twenty pence Currency (one shilling and fourpence Sterling). In other respects, the covers are similar, although the 'REGISTERED' handstamps differ.

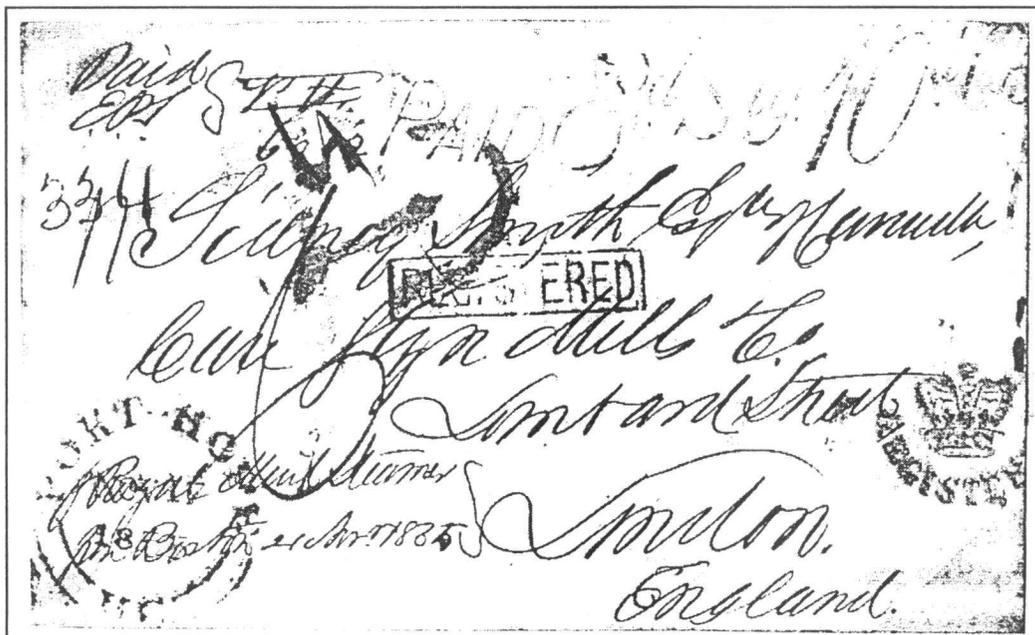


Figure 7: Port Hope, Upper Canada to London, England, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1855.

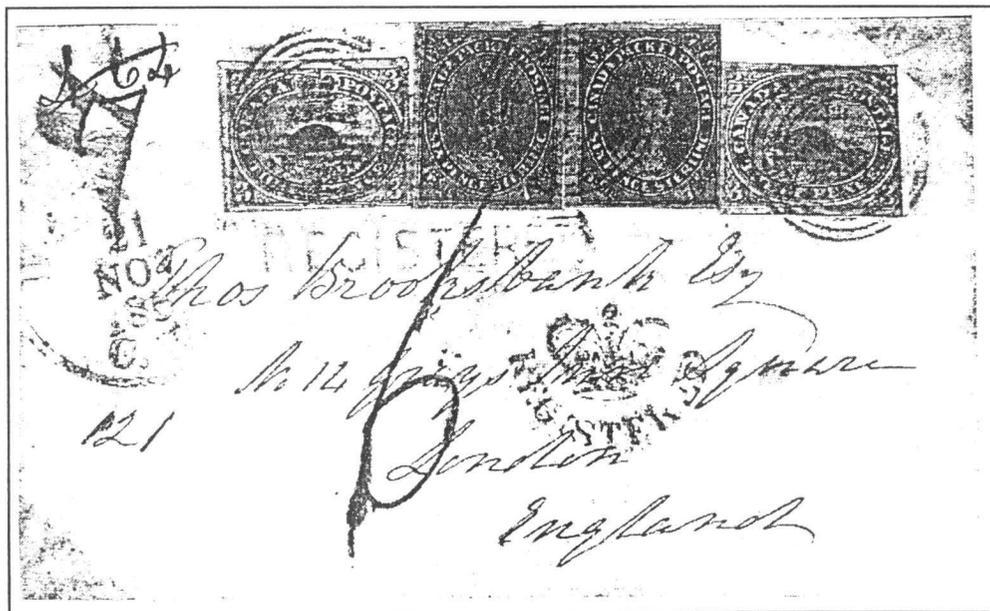


Figure 8: Barrie, Canada West to London, England, 21<sup>st</sup> November 1857.

REGISTRATION - BRITISH EMPIRE RATE

A much later cover in the Martin Willcocks collection shows five copies of the Map Stamp used with two half cent Numeral Issue to pay the triple rate, six cents for one to one and a half ounces, introduced on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1898, plus five cents registration fee to the United Kingdom.

The stamps have been cancelled with the 'MONTREAL QUE R.1' roller cancel, which Martin stated was one of several Canadian rollers used on registered mail at this time. There was another cover in the lot, from Toronto used internally. If any of you know anything about these cancellations, please let me know.

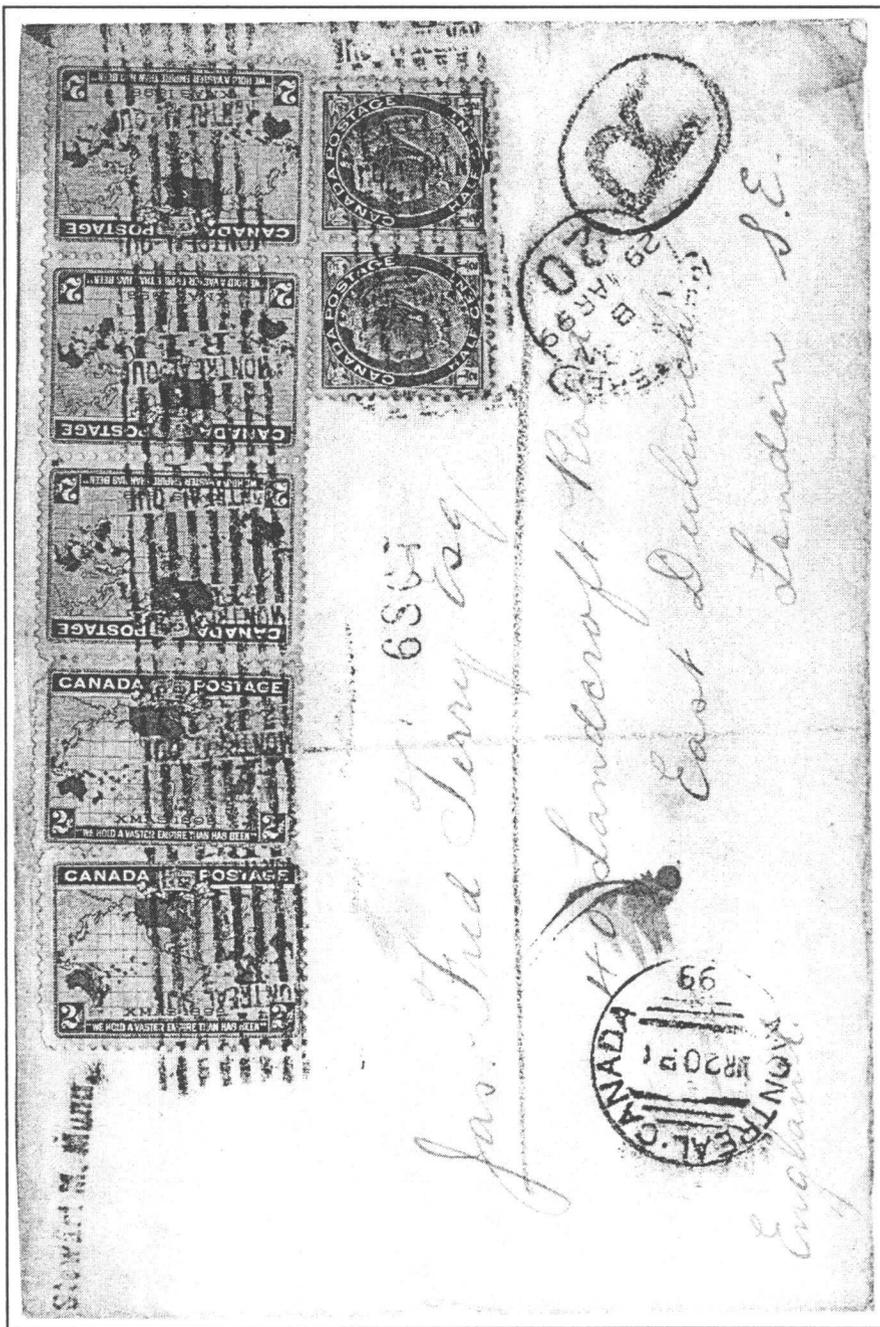


Figure 9: Montreal, Canada to London, England, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1899.

## LATE FEES

Jack Arnell risked a test e-mail, giving me additional information that he has gathered on late fees. This is the first of several e-mails that I managed to destroy, but he has kindly re-transmitted the information. Because it is a trans-Atlantic mail item in its own right, I have reproduced it in full; I hope that Jack will forgive me:

'Dear Malcolm, You should be more careful with your e-mail files. Not everybody is going to be able to generate what was sent earlier. I am still new enough with it to be fairly careful to save a copy of what I send. Below is what I sent you earlier, so print it out NOW.

Following some badgering from my three daughters, I finally broke down and signed up for the Internet, etc., so we can correspond more readily. Your coverage of Late Letters in Newsletter No. 67 has prompted this e-mail. I have accumulated a number of such letters out of curiosity more than with the thought of forming into any sort of collection, but do have a number of different types - all from Britain, I must confess, as I have never seen any from BNA or the US. Notwithstanding, I am sending a list of my holding and shall be happy to bring photocopies of any you would like to use when we come over for the Windermere meeting, or, if there is a rush, by the not very reliable Postal Service. These are:

### ONE PENNY LATE FEE

1. 18411220 Forres to Ancaster, U.C. Forwarded through Liverpool, with ms. 'Paid 1d' (in red) and 1d red cut adhesive. Sent by U.S. packet to New York; ds. 'SHIP' and rated 27 cents, subsequently 1/9.

2. 18500410 Glasgow to Pictou, N.S., with 1d red cut adhesive and small 'GLASGOW L' hs. Rated 1/- at Liverpool; Cunard '*Cambria*' to Halifax, where struck with '1/1½ encircled hs. (C.3).

3. 18500410 Scarborough to Toronto, U.C. Rated 1/2 for closed bag through New York; same voyage as 2 above. At Toronto, struck with '1/4' encircled hs. (A.5).

4. 18520605 Keith to New York. Prepaid and struck 'PAID' and '21 CENTS', plus 1d red cut adhesive. Carried by Collins '*Arctic*'; no further markings.

5. 18540530 Liverpool to Portland, Me. 1d red perf adhesive; Liverpool hs. '3 CENTS'. Carried by Collins '*Pacific*' to New York and ds. '24 AM PKT'.

6. 18540704 Glasgow to Kingston, U.C. 1d red perf adhesive and small 'GLASGOW L' hs. Bs. Liverpool and struck with 7d. Carried by the Cunard '*Niagara*' to Boston in closed bag for Kingston, where struck with 10d (D.27).

7. 18580429 Bridport to Smiths Falls, U.C. Late fee paid with an embossed 1d envelope. Carried by Cunard '*Persia*' to New York in a closed bag for Montreal, where struck with 10d (D.20).

The next two may not be Late Fees, but just careless stamping, I include them to be on the safe side - let me know what you think. Both have 1d red adhesives, and are stamped 'INSUFFICIENTLY STAMPED (London) / PREPAID (Liverpool).

8. 18680201 London to St. Catharines, Ont. British ms. '9' and BNA '27c'. Carried by Inman '*City of Washington*' to New York.

9. 18691124 Liverpool to Garafraxa P.O., Wellington Co., Ont. British ms. '8' and BNA '23' (G.14).

10. 18740808 London to Brookline, Mass. with 1d red and 2d blue adhesives, and boxed 'L1' to show 1d Late Fee paid in cash. Carried by Cunard '*Bothnia*' from Queenstown to New York, where bs. 'PAID ALL'.

### TWO PENNY LATE FEE

11. 18420926 Newcastle-on-Tyne to Montreal, L.C. with 2d blue cut adhesive. Ms. '1/2' at Liverpool. Carried by Cunard '*Britannia*' to Halifax; Struck with boxed '1/4d' (A.2) at Quebec.

12. 18710216 London to Montreal, Que. with two 1d red adhesives, ms. '3' and London 'PAID' ds. Carried by Allan '*Caspian*' (maiden voyage) to Portland, Me. ds, at Montreal.

### THREE PENNY LATE FEE

13. 18561017 Glasgow to New York with strip of three 1d red adhesives and small 'GLASGOW' hs. (no 'L') and red '1/-' with PAID. Struck with red '5 CENTS' at Liverpool. Carried by Cunard '*Asia*' to Boston.

That's all for today, I'll try to find you something else later. All the best, Jack.'

I have no argument with Jack's comments, but a strong feeling that his example of G.14 (#9 in his list), really ought to be in a specialist underpaid and fines collection!

TOO LATE

Another aspect of tardiness are those letters which have arrived 'Too Late' to be included in the mail which would have connected with the next sailing, and have been marked by the post office to explain why the letters were held over

(and thus delayed). Unlike late fees, these appear on both sides of the Atlantic, although I have not seen any from the Maritime Provinces. A few illustrations follow, the letters are more-or-less self-explanatory.



Figure 10: Toronto, Upper Canada to Bannockburn, Scotland, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1852.

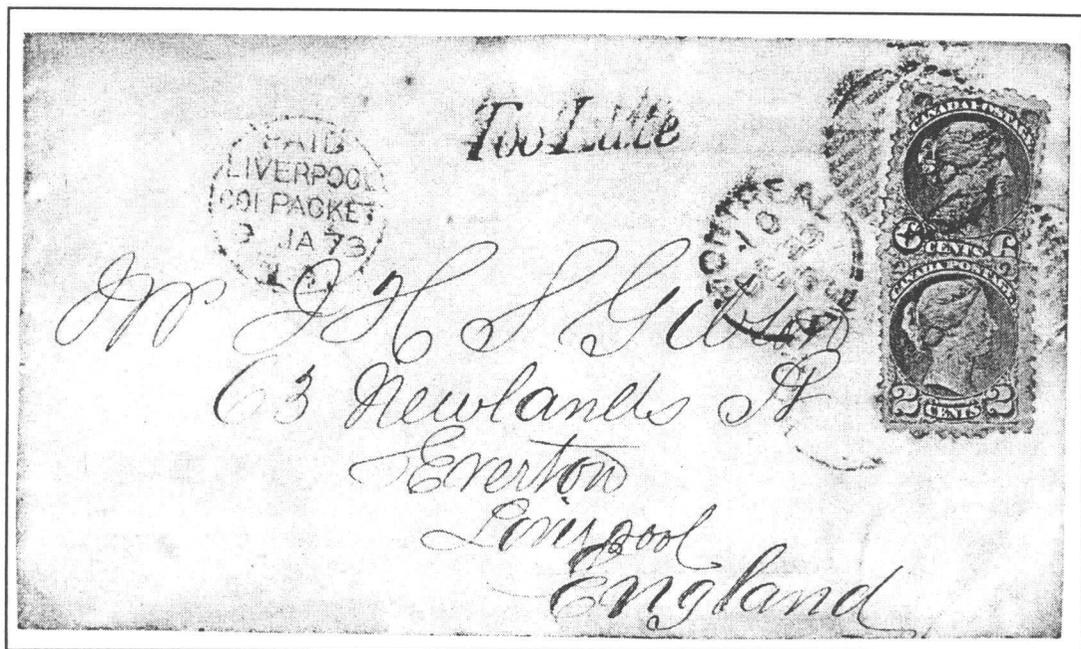


Figure 11: Montreal, Canada East to Everton, England, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1873.

The first illustration, Figure 11, is a letter from the quartermaster of the 71<sup>st</sup> Highlanders, ordering supplies of tartan cloth. Posted unpaid and marked 'O.H.M.S.', possibly in the hope of avoiding postage, the letter was nevertheless charges one shilling and twopence Sterling.

The letter was not received at Montreal until 22<sup>nd</sup> March, presumably too late for the New York mail due to collect with the Cunard Line 'Asia' and was held over for the next sailing, 'Niagara' out of Boston on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Unfortunately, it has no arrival marks to substantiate this sailing.

The next letter, Figure 11, was paid eight cents for the British Packet out of New York. It was actually carried by a Canadian Packet, the Allan Line 'Peruvian' out of Portland, Maine, arriving at Liverpool on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1873.

Conveniently, this one picked up a Liverpool 'COL. PACKET' transit mark and it can be assumed that the 'Too Late' handstamp was applied to explain why the letter was sent by the less expensive route.

The third was prepaid the General Postal Union rate, five cents. I do not understand the route options after 1875 and hope that Jack Arnell will come to my help.

Posted in Montreal on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1877 the letter could have been routed to any vessel under the post-1875 arrangements. It has an indistinct Liverpool 'COL. PACKET' transit which could be 20<sup>th</sup> November 1877, suggesting that it was carried by the Allan Line 'Polynesian' (J.C. Arnell 'Atlantic Mails', page 360), but I am not clear about the sending of Canadian mails through Halifax, Nova Scotia at this time.

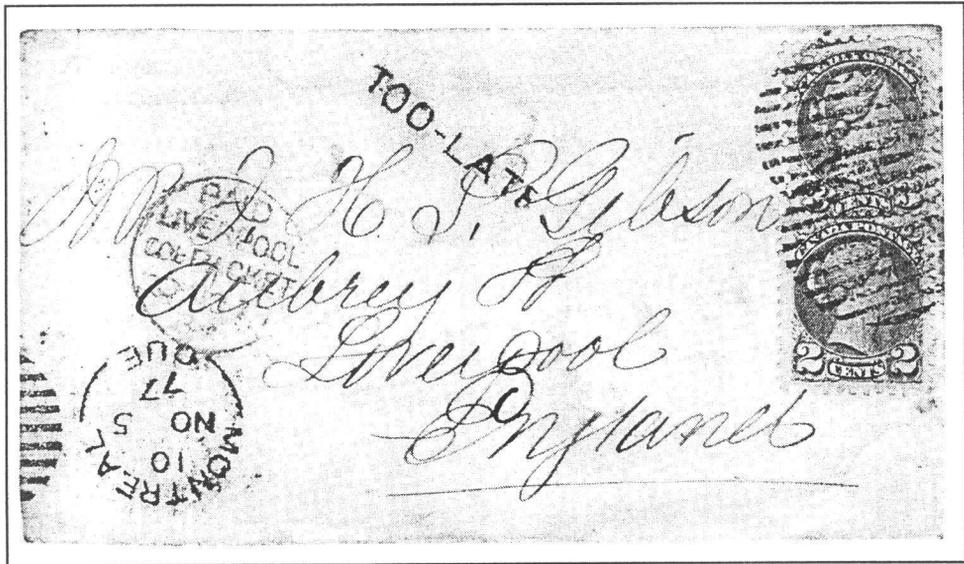


Figure 12: Montreal, Canada East to Liverpool, England, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1877.

I have not seen any examples of 'Too Late' handstamps used on mail from the United Kingdom, and would be grateful for photocopies of any that you may have.

I have had no response, other than the one from Jack Arnell, to my request for further information about late fees. Please have another look and see if you have any in your collections.

I have received a number of letters, a few containing contributions; thanks. One promise of material to come is from David Whiteley, who writes *'As regards your interest in Trans-Atlantic airmail I can help you with that, as in recent years I have been accumulating air-mail rate covers to overseas destinations from 1925 to 1942, and I have several Trans-Atlantic 'Clipper' covers covering the 1939-1942 period and also several 'Hindenburg' covers from Canada to Europe at the special Canadian rate of sixty cents per half ounce. I also have numerous Post Office Bulletins regarding Trans-Atlantic service. If you are interested I could probably put together a monograph on the topic. I would, however, need considerable lead time as I have other commitments, not the least being the reports for the Newsletters, and foolishly I have agreed to act as interim editor of the newly forming Trans-Pacific Study Group.'*

I wish I had been informed before of David's willingness to accept the editorial duties of a study group Newsletter! He mentions his commitment as 'interim editor' ... in my experience, there is no such thing as an 'interim editor' - once accepted, only death or serious disability is considered sufficient excuse to escape the commitment!

That apart, I am grateful for his letter and would welcome an opportunity to include more 20th Century material in TANEWS.

I feel that TANEWS is a place to publish unpolished articles, exposing them to friendly criticism and comment, attracting more material and information for the preparation of a better article in a more formal publication.

I also see the various Newsletters in the BNAPS arena as being mutually supporting, insofar as those specialising in one area will invariably have material of great interest to another study area. It is important that cross-fertilisation takes place and David Whiteley's work is crucial to that aspect.

As I am certain that many of you will have material which could support the preparation of his monograph (and contributions (with notable exceptions) have been a little thin on the ground recently), a brief look through your albums and drawers should produce some Trans-Atlantic air-mail covers that could be used to help David and add a different flavour to these pages in the meantime. I do not exclude pioneer flights, ship-

to-shore, rocket mail, lighter-than-air and the wide variety of air-mail rates in the fifties and sixties. Remember, in a very few months, this will be the 'last century'. I would also welcome ideas for the millennium issue of the Newsletter.

E-Mails: I must apologise for my ineptitude in handling E-Mails ... Sorry, Jack. I have also lost one headed 'PEI' - if you sent one such which has not received a reply, please repeat. I have a more serious problem with E-mails, though. One arrived with an attached illustration (graphic). I have been unable to dig the picture out of the text. Those of you who use E-mail regularly may wish to brief me on possible standard methods of exchange - certainly it would provide the quickest, cheapest and easiest approach to providing contributions to the Newsletter.

To start the air-mail issue, here's an early item. The first experiments to encourage the use of aircraft for mail started at the beginning of the twentieth century and continued until after the Second World War.

The illustrations on the back page concern a letter carried on the 'First United Kingdom Aerial Post', London to Windsor thence, by surface transport, to Ottawa, Canada. An accompanying newspaper cutting, from an unknown newspaper, indicates that the demonstration flights were not entirely successful and did not receive universal approbation; the cutting reads:

'THE AERIAL POST - A Decision by Postmaster General is Approved.

London, Oct. 9 - Great satisfaction was expressed in aviation circles at the decision of the postmaster general to continue experiments towards the establishment of the aerial post. The subject formed the main topic of conversation last afternoon among members of the Aero Club.

"The authorities ought never have leant themselves to such a scheme," said Mr. Macfie, the well-known aviator. "It was foolish, because a twenty mile flight from Hendon to Windsor could not prove anything except that aeroplanists are still dependent on the weather. It has prejudiced thousands of people against aviation. In two or three years it will be, no doubt, possible to accomplish flight with greater regularity, but it is manifestly absurd to attempt a mail service by air at the present time."

Mr. Morrison and Mr. Bradley spoke in the same strain, adding that Mr. C.G. Grey had justly characterised the project in *The Aeroplane* as *The Aerial Farce*." The editor of *The Aeroplane* himself volunteered the information that he had received numerous letters denouncing the scheme as being

detrimental to the progress of aviation.

"One aviator - poor Hubert," he continued, "has had his legs broken, and on several occasions the flying men had to ascend under most dangerous conditions as when Hamel made the initial trip."

There was no flying in connection with the Aerial Post, from London to Windsor, yesterday. Three small bags will remain to be carried to Windsor.'

I should add that I am not the 'Monty' to whom the card is addressed!

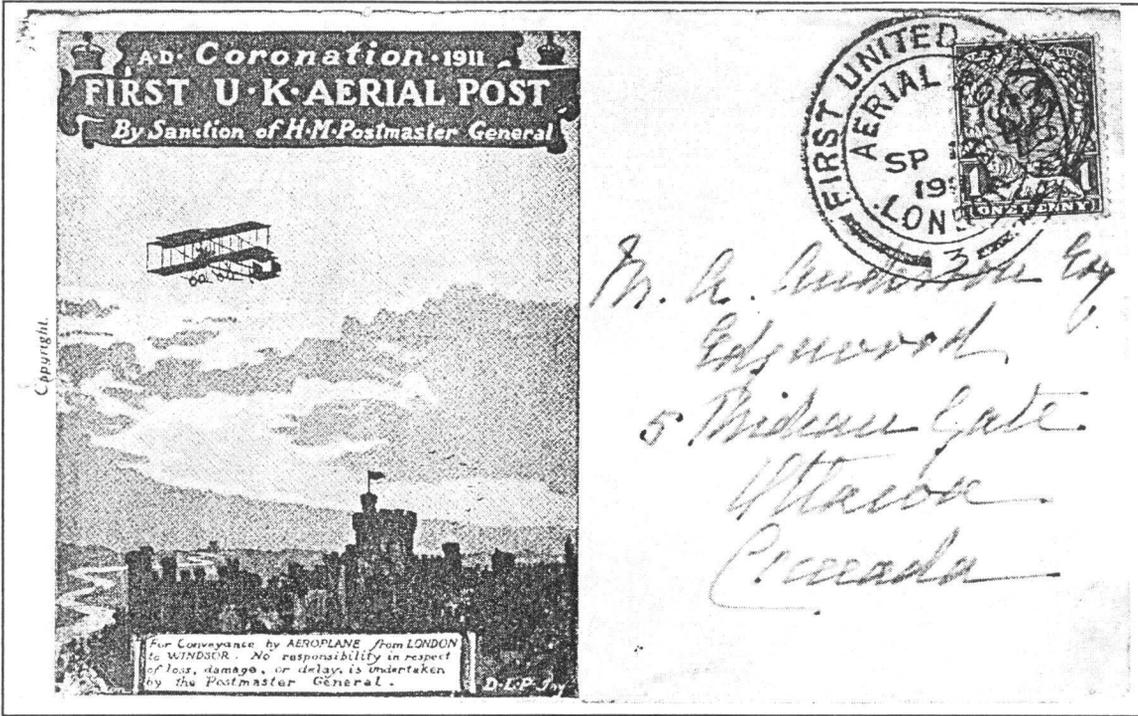


Figure 13: London, England to Ottawa, Canada 12<sup>th</sup> September 1911.

<p><b>INSTRUCTIONS.</b>  <b>Envelopes,</b> stamped, containing special note paper. Inland, 1d.  <b>Cost of Postcards,</b> stamped, Inland, 6d.  <i>Adhesive stamps must be affixed to make up the required fee for postage abroad.</i>  <b>Where to Purchase and Where to Post.</b>      Army &amp; Navy Stores, Arding &amp; Hobbs, John Barker's, John Barnes, Benetink's, D. H. Evans, Ganage's, Harrod's, London Aerodrome, Selfridge's, Whiteley's and General Buildings, Aldwych.  <b>CAUTION:—Letters</b> by Aerial Post must not contain coins or other valuables, they cannot be registered, should not exceed <b>quarter oz.</b> in weight, and unless posted in the <b>SPECIAL BOXES</b> at the above establishments they will not be conveyed by Aerial Post.      For date of termination of Aerial Post and further information, see General Notice on special Post Boxes at above establishments, also Daily Press.  <b>Sole Wholesale Agents:—</b>  <b>P. C. Burton &amp; Co., Ltd.,</b>      GENERAL BUILDINGS, ALDWYCH, W.C.      Net Profits of Aerial Post devoted to Public Charity.</p>	<p><b>FIRST UNITED KINGDOM AERIAL POST.</b>      In commemoration of the Coronation of their Majesties the King and Queen.</p> <p>9 September, 1911.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">FOR CORRESPONDENCE.</p> <p>Dear Monty,      This letter literally is a plea to you - London is wild for this aerial post - keep it, it will be valuable later - I have heard nothing from Montreal</p>
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Comments, further inputs (especially photocopies) and contradictions, please, to:

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