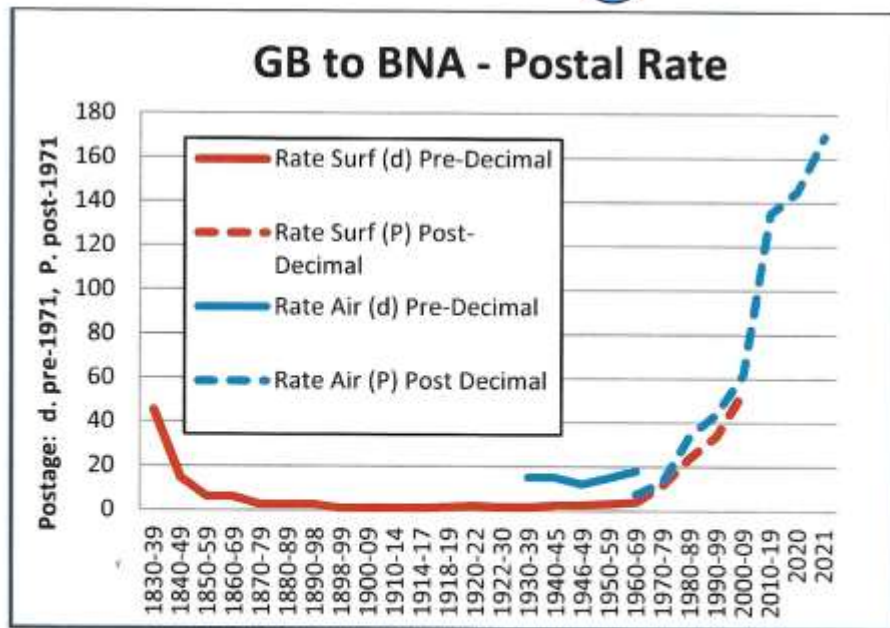


15 Decades of Mail from Britain to Canada

- Rates and Efficiency of Service

Scope and Plan: Exhibit covers the period 1850 – 1999 with examples for each decade illustrated on a separate page in chronological order. British North America (BNA) has been used to reflect inclusion of the Pre-Confederation North American Colonies.

Study is based on my searching many thousands of covers for information on efficiency of trans-Atlantic postal services between Britain and Canada. Where both date of mailing and arrival are available the covers have been input into a spreadsheet enabling analysis by date, area and type of service. I have recorded over 900 covers, sourced from my own collection supplemented by auction catalogues, internet sales, philatelic articles and information from other collectors. ● - Highlights rare or unusual items.



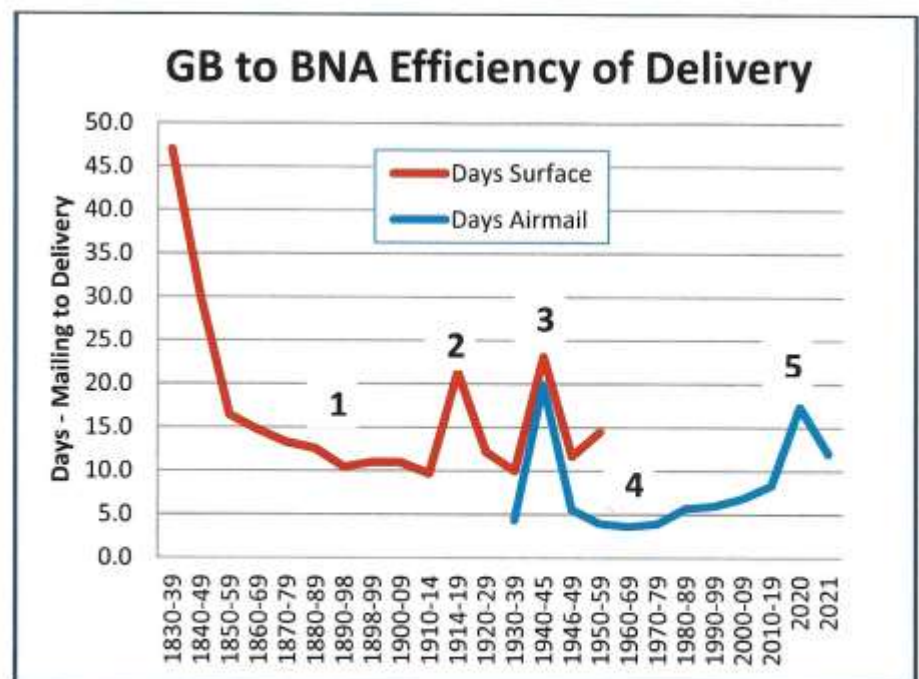
Rates reflect the price for the lowest weight increment.

Note: Horizontal scale is variable and includes postal rates through to the present for comparison. Break in the curves reflects 1971 decimalisation (1P = 2.4d). Surface rates were available until 2011.

Rate information comes from the Great Britain Philatelic Society website and personal research.

Efficiency of Delivery - average time in days for delivery of items over specified periods. Horizontal scale is by decade but incorporates significant subsets of the data to reflect critical periods.

- 1) Delivery improvements (technology and infrastructure) throughout Victorian era
- 2) Efficiency decreased during WW1.
- 3) Trans-Atlantic Air Mail to Canada began in 1939 but disrupted by WW2.
- 4) Air Mail efficiency at peak 1950s – 1970s and has declined ever since.
- 5) Preliminary data for COVID is reflected at right of graph but is beyond timeframe of this exhibit.



1850 – 1859: Decreasing rates and expanding service. Most mail sent unpaid (paid by recipient)

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	16.6 days (25 examples)	1/- decreasing to 8d via USA, 6d via Canada.



25 Jul 1851, folded letter ($\frac{1}{2}$oz) from Liverpool to Quebec 'per Europa' (Cunard), handstamped 1/- black (unpaid) placed in closed bag to Boston, arr: 4th Aug, forwarded overland to Quebec where received 8th Aug. Circular 1s/4d Cy **postage due** (1/- Sterl. converted to 1s/2d Cy + 2d Cy for inland BNA postage). **Del. 14 days**

1 Oct 1852, double rate folded letter ($\frac{1}{2}$ -1 oz) from Edinburgh (131 cancel) early example prepaid by stamps.

Sent on the Cunard America from Liverpool (4 Oct) to Halifax and on to Kingston (16 Oct). 2x1/- + 2x2d = 2/- + 4d for Inland BNA postage (red '4' indicates this has been prepaid). **Del. 16 days**



11 Feb 1859, folded letter sent from Glasgow to Hamilton, Canada West. Postage paid using 4x2d stamps = 8d for transport via Boston. Rec'd Hamilton 28 Feb 1859. **Del. 17 days** – winter delivery susceptible to delay either crossing Atlantic or during Canada portion of trip.

1860 – 1869: Bigger, faster Steam ships, increased competition, and improved roads and rail. Confederation of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia (1867). Mail consistently marked with receiver date making efficiency easy to track.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	14 days (66 examples)	6d via Canada, 8d via USA reduced to 7d 1868.



26 Jun 1862 Kilmarnock, Scotland via Liverpool to catch Allan Line 'Hibernian' on summer routing (Saint Lawrence River open for shipping) to Quebec (arr. 9 Jul.). Rec'd Hamilton, Canada West 10 Jul. Postage paid 6d for Canadian route. **Del. 14 days.**

9 Nov 1861 Stranraer to Hamilton (same address as above), via Liverpool per Cunard, 'Asia' to New York (21 Nov), Rec'd Hamilton 28 Nov. Postage paid 8d for route via USA. **Del 18 days.**



18 Jan 1868 London to Canada West via USA, 7d paid (early usage, rate reduced from 8d on 1 Jan 1868). Sent via Queenstown on Cunard 'Russia' to New York, then by closed bag to Hamilton and on to St Catharines. Circular, quartered red inspector mark confirming correct rate. **Del. 19 Days.** – Winter routes often subject to delays.

1870 – 1879: NWT and Manitoba became part of Confederation (1870), British Columbia (1871), Prince Edward Island (1873). Formation of General Postal Union (Later UPU) provides consistency of rates between member countries in 1875.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	13.3 days (39 examples)	3d thru Canada, 4d via USA both reduced to 2½d

21 Nov 1871 – London to North Douro, Ontario. Postage paid of 3d, this item weighed > ½oz and should have been double rated at 6d.

Hand stamp 'INSUFFICIENTLY STAMPED' and ms 4½ (3d postage due + 1½d fee for partially paid postage), converted to 12c due in Ontario on receipt. Receiver mark indecipherable.



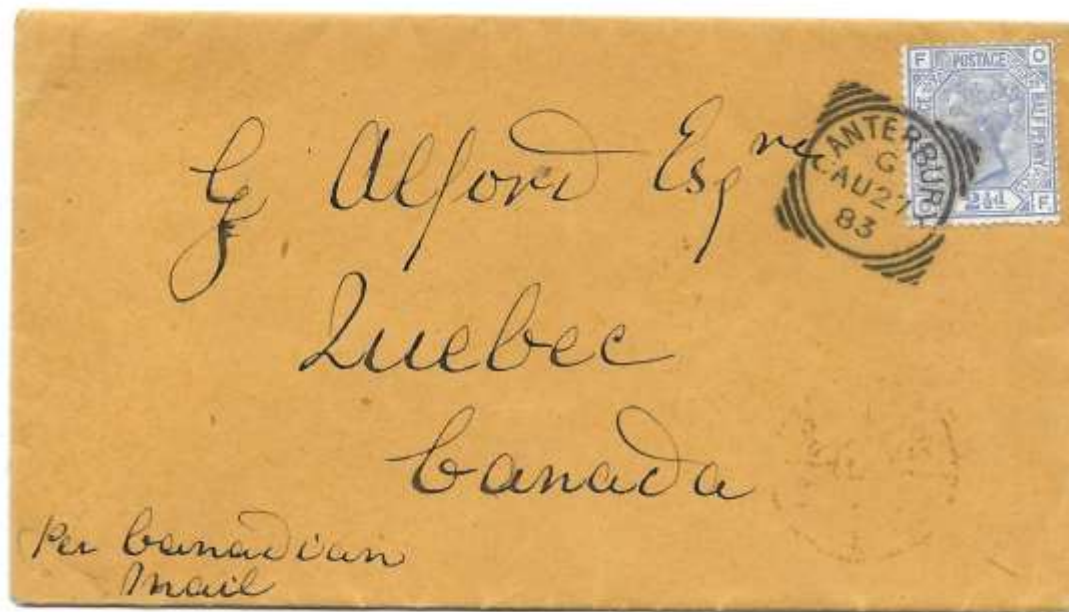
15 Jan 1875 – Letter from Lombard Street, London, simply addressed to the 'Honourable Mr Justice Crease, British Columbia'. With text 'Via Canada' for the Trans-Atlantic trip, in the USA it was carried by train to San Francisco then by boat north to Victoria – a distance of ~ 7000 miles for 3d. Del. 41 days.

18 Apr 1878 – Mourning letter from Edinburgh to Montreal at the 2½d UPU rate. Received Montreal 29 Apr. Del. 11 days.



1880 – 1889: Western provinces connected to rest of Canada by rail (1884) creating more efficient movement of rail. Three different 2½d stamps were used during the decade

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	12.5 days (27 examples)	2½d per ½oz throughout decade



27 Aug 1883 Canterbury to Quebec 'Per Canadian Mail'. Quartered red hand stamp on reverse was applied in London for the Liverpool Packet. Packet stamp is dated 26 Aug which seems to be an error with date unchanged from previous day. 2½d blue stamp introduced in 1880 to meet UPU colour for International rate. Rec'd 9 Sep 1883. Del. 12 days.

25 May 1885 same correspondence as above. Blue stamp replaced by lilac 2½d stamp in 1884 (problems with non-fugitive ink), however, lilac stamp was unpopular since it was prone to fading. Rec'd Quebec 7 Jun 1885. Del. 13 days.



22 Nov 1889 cover from Manchester to Prescott, Ontario, with bicoloured 2½d Jubilee (introduced on the 50th year of Victoria's reign) stamp paying postage. Rec'd Prescott 3 Dec 1889. Del. 11 days.

1890 – 1899 - Yukon Territory separated from NWT Territory (1898). 1d post across the British Empire first introduced 25 December 1898.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	11.3 days (E. Canada 10.4 days, W. Canada 16.5 days)	2½d decreasing to 1d per ½oz (1898)

23 Dec 1891 letter 2½d
Edinburgh to Ottawa by
Dominion Line's S.S. Toronto to
Halifax on to Ottawa by rail,
rec'd 7 Jan 1892 (Del. 15 days
during winter season).



22 Aug 1896 Liverpool to Montreal
printed 1d International Post Card.
Montreal receiver for 29 Aug 1896.
(Del. 7 days). Quickest delivery I've
recorded for Surface Trans-Atlantic Mail.

16 Feb 1899 London to
Moosomin, Assiniboia, North
West Territory. 6 years
before Saskatchewan became
a separate Province.
Moosomin was connected to
the east by the CP Rail system
in 1882.

A very fragile, illustrated
cover, marking the Empire
Penny Post – 'Hands across
the sea' and 'A penny all the
way'. Rare to find to a remote
location. Back-stamped
Moosomin 3rd Mar. (Del. 15
days during winter season).



1900 – 1909 Queen Victoria died (1901), Edward VII becomes King. Alberta and Saskatchewan separated from NWT as Provinces (1905). Postcards a tool for casual/non-proprietary mail.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	11.8 days (E. Canada 10.8 days, W. Canada 13 days)	1d Empire rate throughout decade, same for post cards



14 Aug 1901, Paddington, London to Montreal, printed ½d green domestic post card (introduced 1898) up-rated with ½d blue-green stamp (introduced 1900) to pay the 1d International Post Card rate. Rec'd Montreal 22 Aug. Del. 8 days.

28 Sep 1904, Red Lion, London W.C. to Kola, Manitoba. 4 x 1d Edward VII stamps Registered double rate cover (2d Postage ½oz-1oz + 2d Reg. fee). Rec'd Winnipeg 8 Oct. Del. 10 days.



29 Aug 1908, picture postcard from the Franco British Exhibition, London (postmarked on the grounds) to Lachute, Quebec with 1d International Postcard rate. Rec'd Lachute 11 Sep 1908. Del. 13 days.

1910 – 1919 George V became King (1910), 1st World War (1914-1918)

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	Pre-War 9.7 days, during WW1 21.4 days	1d increased to 1½d, 3 Jun 1918 (+50%)

18 Jul 1913, Plymouth to Toronto. Recipient left, forwarded to General Delivery on 29 Jul.

Classified 'Unclaimed 9 Aug', Returned to Plymouth where rec'd 20 Aug. Assume received 28 Jul – Del. 10 days.



23 May 1918, London to Winnipeg, Registered letter, paid 3d (1d postage + 2d Registration Fee). Back-stamped Winnipeg, Jun 13 1918. Del. 21 days – An average delivery during WW1



24 Aug 1918 London to Rife, Alberta, 1½d postage paid – first increase in Empire Rate occurred on 3 Jun 1918. Back-stamped Rife, Sep 19 1918. Del. 26 days.

1920 – 1929 - A decade of change beginning with a roar and ending with a crash. Aside from Registered mail, very few items have evidence of a delivery date. Air mail available in Canada.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	12.2 days to E. Canada, 13.8 days to W.Canada	1½d raised to 2d 1920, decreased to 1½d 1922.
Air	Available In Canada, advertised as saving 1 day to Winnipeg, 2 days to West Coast	Postage as above + Air mail fee 11d (1927), 9d to 7d (1928), 4d (Nov 1929).

16 Dec 1920 Huddersfield to Montreal, Registered letter 2d fee + 2d Postage for 2d Empire rate. Del. 17 days – Over New-Year. Only dateable example of this rate I've found. ●



26 Oct 1928 London to Winnipeg Registered letter (1½d Empire rate + 3d Registration Fee). Rec'd Toronto 4 Nov and Winnipeg Nov 6 (backstamps). Del. 11 days.

? Jul 1929 London W.1. letter to Vancouver, BC with Air Mail sticker. Postage paid of 8½d (1½d Empire rate + 7d Air Mail charge), stamps include the 1d and 1½d UPU Congress stamps issued 10 May 1929. Letter would have been carried by sea to New York then onward to Vancouver by air. No legible dates on envelope. ●



1930 – 1939: A decade with 3 Kings – George V, Edward VII & George VI. Airmail emerging - initially for connecting within Canada, Transatlantic flights (1939) limited by threats of 2WW.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	10 Days	1½d unchanged during decade
Air	4.4 Days in 1939	2½d (1½d+1d Fee) 1931, 2d (1½d+½d Fee 1934), 1939 Air thro'out 1/3d



14 Feb 1930 Southend-on-Sea to Clinton Ontario by Air in Canada. Postage 1½d + 4d Air Fee = 5½d. Rec'd Clinton 25 Feb. Del. 11 days.



28 Jul 1932 Liverpool to Port Credit (sic), Ont. Should be Port Credit, Near Mississauga, Ont. 1½d surface rate. Manuscript date of receipt. Del. 9 days.



4 Aug 1939, North Devon to Calgary with 1/3d Airmail rate, via Southampton on first Imperial Airways flight direct to Canada (5 Aug), Foynes (Ireland), Botwood (Newfoundland), Rec'd Montreal (Aug 6) and Calgary (Aug 7). Del. 3 days.

1940 – 1949 – 2nd World War and post war – fluctuating prices and efficiency, start of a slow recovery.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	23.8 Days (WW2), 11.7 Days (Post War)	1½d increased to 2½d – 6 May 1940 (+66%)
Air	19.9 Days (WW2–Non-Military), 5.6 Days (Post War)	1/3d reduced to 1/- 17 Jan 1947 (-20%)

28 May 1840 Newcastle-On-Tyne to St Albert, Alberta. 2½d Surface Rate paid with Centenary of Postage Stamps Commemoratives. Backstamp St Albert Jun 14 1940 (Del. 17 days).



28 Jan 1944 Blyth, Northumberland to same recipient in St Albert. Sent 1/3d Airmail Rate. Back stamp Feb 21 1944 (Del. 24 days).



20 May 1948 Salisbury, Wilts to Hussar, Alberta, 1/- stamp cancelled with 'A DISTINGUISHED CAREER NURSING'. Backstamp Hussar May 26 1948 (Del. 6 days).



1950 – 1959 – Elizabeth II became Queen on death of her Father (6 Feb 1952), slow to introduce QEII stamps as economy measure. Few non-registered items have evidence of Delivery date.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	14.5 Days	2½d increased to 3d, 1 Oct 1957. (+20%)
Air	3.8 Days	1/- (per ½oz) increased to 1/3d 1 May 1952. (+25%)

10 Aug 1954 Cardiff, Wales to Halifax, Nova Scotia Registered double rate letter. Postage paid with George VI 8½d registered envelope + 2/9d mixed reign stamps. (Del 3 days).



19 May 1959 Worthing, Sussex to High River, Alberta, Air mail letter sent for 1/3d cancelled with slogan 'CHEAP RATE TRUNK CALLS 6PM - 6AM & SUNDAY AFTERNOONS' encouraging people to make phone calls outside peak hours. Letter was received on 23 May - stamped on forwarding to Calgary. (Del. 4 days).



22 May 1959 Manchester to Winnipeg, Manitoba sent by 3d Surface rate. University of Manitoba used a Receiver stamp of 9 June 1959. (Del. 18 Days).

THE REGISTRAR
The University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

1960 – 1969 – First stamp with Machin head issued 5 Jun 1967. Non-registered items have no evidence of delivery date. Wider variety of rates for non urgent mail.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	No data	3d increased to 4d, 17 May 1965. (+33%)
Air	3.6 Days, 2 Days by Air Express	1/3d (Per ½oz) increased to 1/6d 3 Oct 1966. (+20%)



Mr. & Mrs. D. L. F. Gilbert,
2705- 10th St. S. W.
Calgary,
Alberta,
Canada.

1 Jan 1965 from Lloyds Bank, Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Calgary. Large envelope, double rate (0.5oz to 1 oz) registered Air mail. Paid 51d (30d postage, 21d registration fee). Backstamped Calgary Jan 4 1965. Del. 3 days



11 Dec 1969 London to Beaconsfield, Quebec, Second Class Air Mail rate (unsealed) = Printed Papers ≤ ½oz.

7d paid by Machin stamp with displaced perforations.

Del. No evidence of date of receipt.

The Scott Family,
62, Jasper Road,
Beaconsfield 870
QUEBEC

Canada.

NOTE
DISCALLED RATE.

1969
PRINTED PAPERS
ZOWE & < ½oz

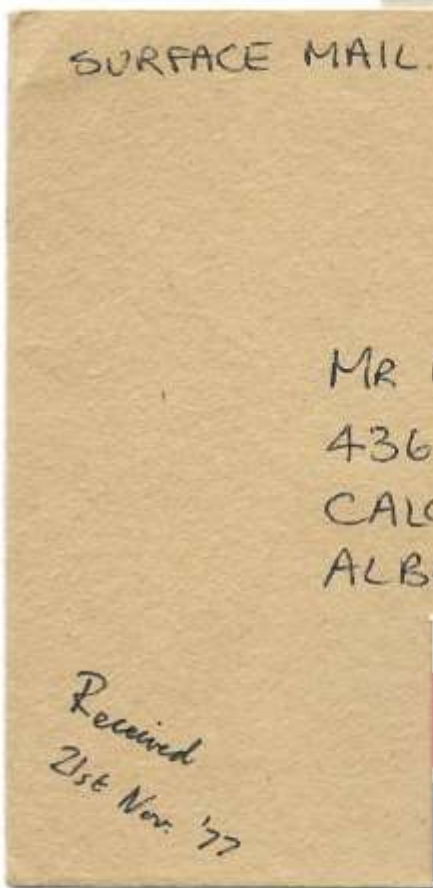
1970 – 1979 – Decimalisation (15 Feb 1971), period of civil unrest and high inflation in Britain.
 National Postal Strike in Britain 20th Jan to 8th Mar 1971.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	No data	4d ($\leq \frac{1}{2}$ oz) converted to 2P at Decimalisation an increase of 0.8P. Six increases during decade to 11½P in 1979 (+589%). First weight limit increased to ≤ 15 grams 29 Sep 1975.
Air	3.9 Days	1/6d ($\leq \frac{1}{2}$ oz) converted to 7.5P at Decimalisation (unchanged). Four increases during decade to 13P in 1979 (+73%).

17 Mar 1971, Oxford, to Beaconsfield, Que. Double rate Registered Air Mail. 15P Postage + 15P Registration Fee = pre-decimal rate of 6/-. Del. 3 days shortly after Postal Strike ended.



14 Nov 1977, Andover, Hants to Calgary. Sent Surface Mail (unsealed) for 7P, apparently transferred to Air Mail since received 21 Nov. Del. 7 Days.



12 Dec 1977, Ascot, Berks to Calgary, Air mail 11P, <10g rate. Dec 30 Receiver hand stamp. Del 18 Days during Christmas rush.

1980 – 1989 – Continued high inflation, Dec 1984 ½P demonetised, no ½P incremental rates after 3 Sep. 1984, highest stamp with ½P: 20½P. Swiftair only service with consistently dated mail.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	Only 1 item with receiver date – 28 days!	Seven increases during decade from 11½P in 1980 to 24P in 1989 (+109%)
Air	Air 7.4 Days, Swiftair 4.6 Days.	Seven increases during decade from 13P (≤10g) to 34P in 1989 (+161%).

By air mail
Par avion



24 Nov 1983, Sussex Coast to St Albert, Alberta. Unsealed Xmas card sent at the 20½P Printed Paper rate (≤10g.). 20½P was the highest value of stamp with a ½P increment.

Swiftair
Express
Expres

By air mail
Par avion



Mr. J. Visser - Greenwood
3207 Westgate Avenue

REGINA Sask.

Above: 5 Jul 1984, Watford, Herts, to Regina, Sask, sent by Swiftair bearing £1.92 stamps (42P postage, 11 to 20g letter rate + £1.50 Swiftair fee. Entered Canada though Toronto, 8 Jul. and received Regina 9 Jul. Del. 4 days.

AIR MAIL



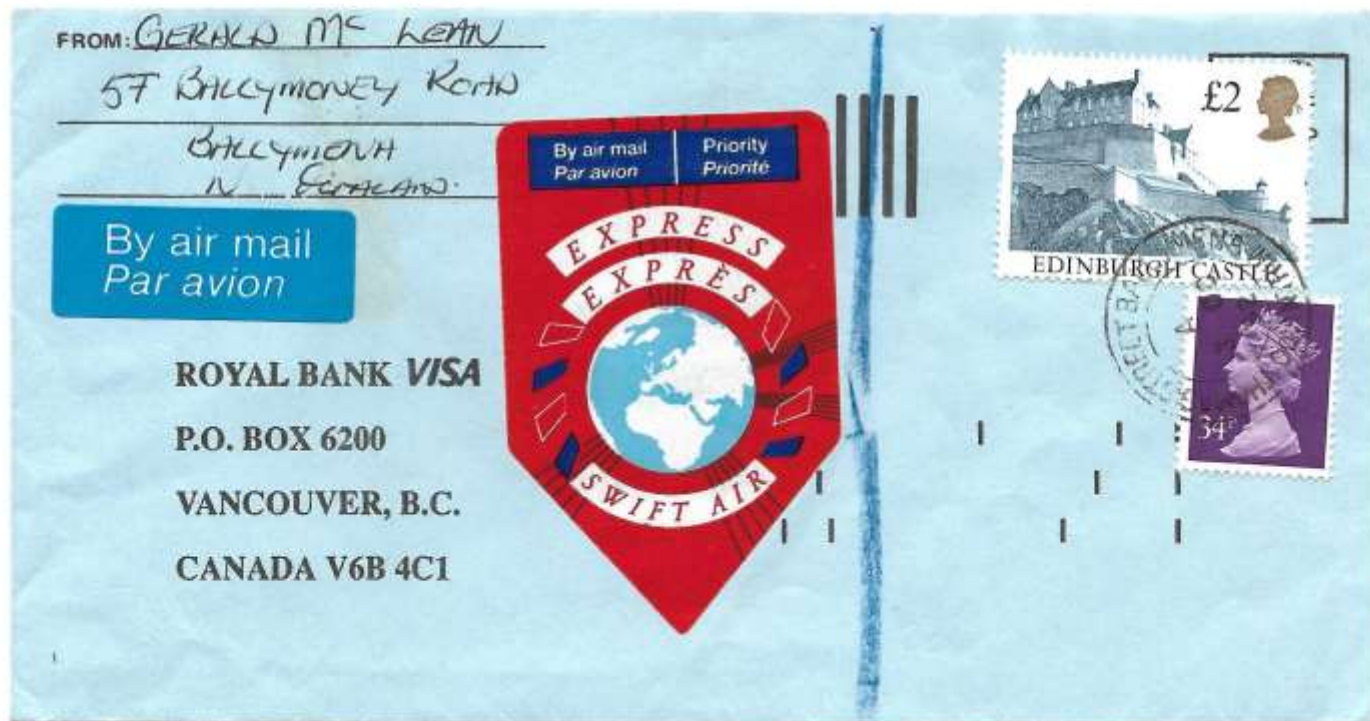
Mr & Mrs Bill Lumsden
~~2301 10011 123 Street~~ 70 ST. GEORGES CRES.
Edmonton Alberta
~~TEN 1M9~~ TSN 3M7
Canada

Left: 11 Dec 1989, Hemel Hempstead, Herts to Edmonton, Alberta. Postage paid 34P (≤10g Airmail). On arrival it was forwarded to a new address and received an Edmonton cancel dated 23 Dec 1989. Max Del. 12 days during Christmas rush. (1 of only 6 dated regular mail examples from 1980's)

1990 – 1999 – Slowing of inflation of postal rates. Virtually all mail sent by Air Mail. Efficiency slowing and costs rising. Exhibit ends at turn of Millennium when Y2K concerns threatened to destroy the world's computer operating systems.

	Avg. Delivery	Rate
Surface	No dated examples	Five increases during decade: 24P in 1990, 34P in 1999 (+42%)
Air	Air 6.3 Days, SwiftAir 5.2 Days.	Five increases during decade: 34P (≤10g), 44P in 1999. (+29%) Fee for Special Delivery increased from £1.75 to £2.85 (+63%)

3 Oct 1992, Ballymena, N. Ireland to Vancouver – Priority Mail by Swift Air at £1.95 Fee + 39P postage. Back-stamped 8 Oct 1992. Del. 5 days.



17 Nov 1997, York to Calgary, 43P rate paid with stamp marking the Golden Wedding Anniversary of marriage of Princess Elizabeth and the Late Prince Phillip. Cancel slogan a 'Nestle Quality Street Magic Moments'

Letter entered Canada at Montreal on 19 Nov (Barcode backstamp). It reached the Calgary sorting office on 5 Dec (overcancel: 087 T2E OAO 970512 19:15 BEST WISHES JOIE ET PAIX) and was delivered on 9 Dec. Del. 20 Days – delayed by Canada Post rotating strikes.

