

# Canadian Postal History: Overseas Rate and Route Study Using Decimal (Cents) Franked- and Stampless-Covers

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

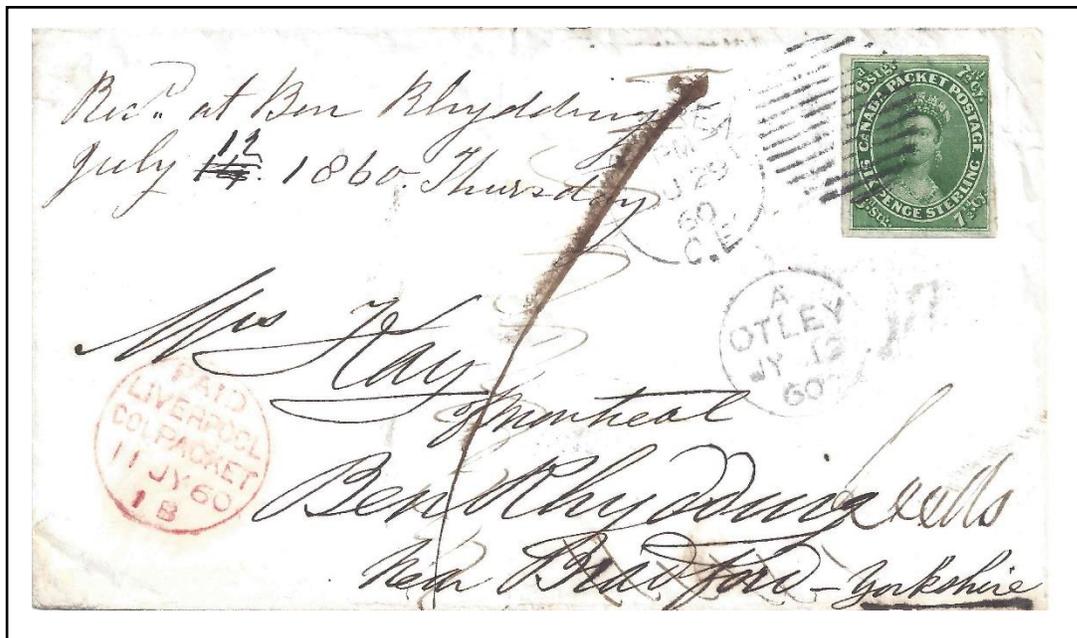
Exhibit explores Canadian outgoing postal rates and accompanying routes to worldwide locations during decimal period (1859-1868). A slight overlap into Large Queen period using mixed frankings demonstrates changing postal rates during this classical period of Canadian philately.

## BACKGROUND

During early days, sender had a choice of paying postage up front or having postage paid by recipient with a small penalty. In addition, use of postage stamps was optional. Thus, an estimated 1/2 of mail was stampless. Sometimes, mailer would partially pay postage with stamps and/or cash. For different types of mail such as regular covers, registered covers, printed matter, newspapers, parcel post, etc. there were widely different rates. Oftentimes, postage requirement for foreign countries was misunderstood by

Canadian postmasters (PMs) as well as PMs in transit countries and/or final destinations. Determination of exact amount of postage, penalties, forwarding fees, etc. could be confusing and challenging. Examples will be illustrated in exhibit.

There are two key references on overseas postal destinations during decimal era, one a formal census of outgoing franked correspondence from pre-Confederation Canada (1). The second is a textbook dealing with postal usage during Decimal era (2) but only covers a limited number of tabulations of foreign covers. Firby census shows a relatively small number of mail pieces sent overseas from Canada. At the time only Canada West (present day Ontario) and Canada East (Quebec) were united. Although new discoveries



*Rare use of Pence stamp on cover to UK a year after introduction of Decimal Issue (July 1859).  
Slash represents forwarding fee of one Pence. Canada has never demonetized its stamps.*

have been made since 1984 update (including some items presented here), the bottom line is that outside of Gt. Britain (recorded total of 222 postal items of any kind), France (24 covers) and foreign (rest of world that amounts to 72 postal items), a small number of covers exist which makes foreign decimal postal history collecting a difficult area. A goal of my research is to eventually update the original Firby census adding in new decimal covers that have surfaced including stampless examples.

## ORGANIZATION/PLAN OF PRESENTATION

The 4-frame exhibit is organized into 7 main chapters. 1) Letter mail to Gt. Britain (Allan Rates); 2) Letter mail to Gt. Britain (Cunard Rates, including 1868 special rate); 3) Demonstration of First Packet Principle; 4) Exotic Destinations within U.K.; 5) Registered Letter Mail to U.K.; 6) Non-Letter Mail to U.K.; 7) Foreign Mail (France, Belgium, German States, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Papal State and Italy, Greece (Corfu), Spain, Gibraltar, Mauritius, Barbados, Jamaica, Tobago, Cuba, Australia, India and Peru.

Major headings for each chapter are in bold printing and sub-headings are 90% black. Significant covers are outlined in red rather than the normal black. Those covers that required original research to unravel rates and routes have a small magnifying glass adjacent to cover.



Those covers with a certificate of authenticity will have a © adjacent to the cover. If on a cover, the town cancel, an important transit or destination or a postal marking which adds to the story is not readable, I will provide my best interpretation. To demonstrate rarity, I will provide a note on the known population “ \_\_\_ recorded to date”. Many such covers are show here that have less than three known reported findings, some only one.

## REFERENCES

- 1) Charles G. Firby, *The Postal Rates of Canada, 1851-1868. The Provincial Period-A Recording, Part II, for Canada 1859 Issue Stamps*, 1976, revised Sept. 1, 1984.
- 2) G. B. Arfken and Arthur W. Leggett, *Canada's Decimal Era, 1859-1868*, VGG Foundation, Toronto, 303pp, 1996.