

THE SMALL QUEEN ERA: 1870-1900

A STUDY OF THE RATES, REGULATIONS & USES.

The covers in this exhibit demonstrate the changes in Canadian domestic and foreign postage and registration rates and postal regulations from the initiation of the Small Queen (SQ) era in 1870 until the Jubilee and Leaf Issues of 1897 eventually replaced them, essentially by 1900. Since the SQs were never demonetized, they are often seen used in combination with other issues of Canada. Several examples of these later usages are included. Large Queens, issued earlier than the SQs, remained valid and are also seen used during the SQ era.

The SQ era began with the issuance of the 1 cent. and 3 cent values in early 1870. Subsequently were issued 6 cent ('72), 2 cent ('72), 10 cent ('74), 5 cent ('76), ½ cent ('82), 20 & 50 cent ('93), and 8 cent ('93) values.

In addition, in 1875/76 the Canadian Post Office issued three Registered Letter Stamps (RLS) to better identify registered mail. A 2 cent value paid the domestic registry rate, a 5 cent value the rate to the United States, and an 8 cent value for mail to the United Kingdom. The exhibit includes covers which illustrate the changes in regulations (often ignored) for the use of these stamps during this period.

On August 1, 1878 Canada became an official member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). This action greatly simplified postage rates to many foreign countries that were also members of the UPU. Prior to becoming a member of the UPU, Canadian rates to foreign countries were many and varied. As a member, the basic rate per ½ oz. was set at 5 cents and registration an additional 5 cents.

During the SQ era there was a notable broadening of Canadian correspondence to the world. Therefore this exhibit places emphasis on displaying a broad selection of covers to foreign destinations.

The exhibit is arranged as follows:

I. DOMESTIC MAIL (frames 1-4)

- First class letter rates
- Special 2 Cent letter rates
- Registered Mail
- Non-letter rates
 - o Printed matter
 - o Newspapers
 - o Post cards
 - o Parcel post
- "FREE" mail

II. MAIL TO THE UNITED STATES (frames 4-5)

- Letter rates
- Registered Mail
- Non-letter rates
 - o Printed matter
 - o Wells-Fargo express
 - o Post cards
 - o Fifth class

III. MAIL TO THE UNITED KINGDOM (frames 6-7)

- Letter rates
- 2 Cent Soldier's Rate
- Registered Mail
- Non-letter rates
 - o Printed matter
 - o Newspapers

IV. MAIL TO COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE U.S. & THE UNITED KINGDOM (frames 7-10)

- Australia & New Zealand
- Asia & Africa
- The Americas
- Europe

V. "END" OF THE SMALL QUEEN ERA