

Revised Synopsis

RATES, USAGE AND VARIETIES ON COVER DURING THE CENTS ISSUE ERA: 1859-1868

The objective of this exhibit is to display postal covers issued and used during the "Cents" era that illustrate the following:

- A) The most important postal rates (domestic, U.S. and international) used in this period.
- B) Variations of franking for these rates, that is, the day-to-day "usage" of the stamps that were sometimes not directly related to the regular "rate" or were used to makeup another rate such as the use of 2 five cent stamps to make up the regular 10 cent US rate at the time - this rate usually being paid by using the 10 cent stamp.
- C) Other usages such as under-paid covers, miss-sent letters, unusual cancels and rare routings as well as some use in the post-Cents era – after April 1, 1868. As well a variety of "stampless" covers of this era will be displayed showing unpaid, "free" rates and other markings where stamps were not required.
- D) Registration rates, which were often either "paid in cash" and thus no stamp was required or was used in various combinations of 1, 2 and 5 cent stamps.
- E) A selection of covers sent without stamps either in error or by special permission ("Free" franked).
- F) A sampling of some important varieties related to paper qualities and re-entries.

Rarity factors are indicated in the detailed descriptions provided as well as by placing a double frame (scarce) or red frame (rare) around the cover. In certain cases, scans have been made to point out and clarify remarkable features of a particular stamp or to show an important cancellation from the back of the cover. Many of the covers displayed are quite rare.

A number of references are useful in studying this issue the chief among them being by George Arfken and Arthur Leggett: *Canada's Decimal Era: 1859-1868*. Vincent Greene Foundation, 1996. As well, *The Canadian Posted Letter Guide, Volume 1*, 1996 edition by Charles Firby and Victor Wilson is an excellent checklist for this period.