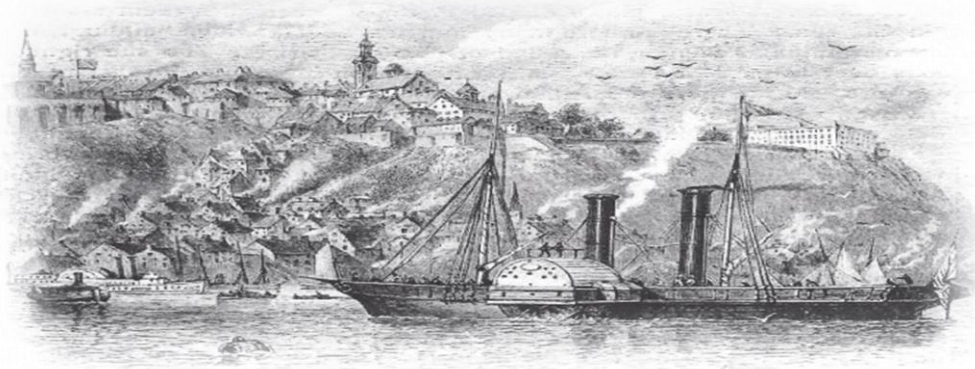


# THE STEAMBOAT MAIL OF QUEBEC CITY



*A St. Lawrence River Steamboat in front of Quebec City harbor, circa 1860.  
Canadian Pictures Drawn with Pen and Pencil by The Marquis de Lorne, The Religious Tract Society, 1885.*

## **Purpose of the Exhibit:**

To illustrate the origins and development of Quebec City's St. Lawrence River Steamboat postal services and the usage of the different postmarks used by this service, from the beginning, circa 1809, to the end of the contracted mail routes in 1859.

## **Plan:**

The exhibit covers 50 years of development of the service (1809-1859) and is presented in two main parts:

1. Private Steamboats: 1809-1841
2. Contract Steamboats: 1841-1859

## **Treatment:**

This one frame (16 pages) exhibit is presented chronologically and divided in two parts as noted in the plan. The emphasis is on the usages of the different postmarks used by this service. The postal history of steamboat service, rules, routes, etc. are also explored.

## **Philatelic Importance:**

The port of Québec City was, until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the main entry water highway to North America. The steamboat route from this port to Montreal and beyond was at the time, the busiest summer (May to November) postal route in British North America. It was then supplanted by railroad.

## **Knowledge, Personal Study, Research, Sources:**

While the study of Canadian steamboat Mail Service has been extensively researched, especially by Stulberg and more recently Parsons (see references below), many discoveries have

been made since by the author, especially with regard to period of usage or color usage. Main reference sources:

Fred G. Stulberg, *Upper and Lower Canada Steam-Boat Mail to the 1860's*, Hennok's Series of PH Collection #7, 1989, 137 pp.

Robert Parsons, *The Steamboat Mails of Eastern Canada*, Bill Longley Ed., 2002, 292 pp.

## **Original Research:**

The author has done and continues to do research in the philatelic literature and auction catalogues. Much personal research at the Archives (Canada and Quebec) has been also necessary. In the Exhibit, *new discoveries or new dates of usage made by the author are indicated in blue.*

## **Condition and Rarity:**

Every possible effort has been taken to include items in the best condition obtainable, but we need to mention that these letters are more than 150 years old and many presented here are unique or just a handful are known. *Unique or important items are indicated with a red dot.* The pedigree of some items, when known, is indicated as follow: (Ex. ....)

## **Highlights:**

1826 Steamboat Letter to Moose Factory (Unique)  
1830 Framed Steamboat postmark (3 known in private hands)  
1841 Quebec Triangle postmark (3 shown / 14 known)  
1850 Oval Postmark revival (3 known in private hands)

The only postmark not presented here is the 1852 Steamboat CDS with indicia "2" known to date to one example (Archives and private hands.)