Customs duty & excise tax stamps on postal advertising material to Canada

HIS exhibit discusses the use of Canadian customs duty and excise tax stamps on incoming advertising mail. Usually such mail was sent as printed matter, but could be first class (letter) mail, or even airmail. Practically all the information here comes from a series of three articles by Christopher D Ryan, [R1-3].

In 1879, Canada implemented customs duty on mail from abroad containing or consisting of advertising. Payment could be made by a broker representing the sender, or by various other means. In 1914, Canada issued customs duty stamps to be applied by the sender (typically a large firm) to the item. The other methods of prepayment could still be used.

From the 1930s on, more and more exemptions were applied (e.g., periodicals other than daily became exempt from 1936). As a result, by the 1960s, customs stamps are rarely seen, disappearing by the 1980s.

During the period 1940–5, advertising periodicals (which by this time had mostly been exempted from customs duty) were charged the Wartime Exchange Tariff (W E T). Payment could be made with customs duty and excise tax stamps, in combination.

A complete set of tables of the relevant customs and WET fees can be found in [R1-3]; so can the fine details (such as the criteria for applicability of duties).

Issuance of customs duty stamps

First (unilingual) issue, 1, 2, 5¢, 1 August 1914; 10¢, October 1919:



Second (bilingual) issue, 2, 5¢, 1935; 1¢, 1936; 10¢, 1942:



Salient dates

1879, with revisions in 1897

• Customs duties on printed advertising material sent to Canada from abroad

1914, 1919

• First series of customs duty stamps issued (1, 2, 5, 10¢); General tariff (applied to U s, France) and British preferential tariff (applied to Commonwealth and Empire) rates

1923

• Most favoured nation (MFN) tariff introduced

1 October 1930

• Minimum customs duty, 2¢ (increased from 1¢)

1935 on

• Exemptions reduced the classes of mail liable to customs duty; second series of customs duty stamps issued

1 January 1936

• US moved from General Tariff to MFN status

1941-1945

• Wartime exchange tax (WET) introduced on all advertising material from abroad (essentially from US); this was an excise tax which could be paid with combinations of customs duty stamps and excise stamps

post-1945

Customs duty stamps rarely seen used, as exemptions excluded almost everything

Relevant rates to Canada (covering 1920–65)

US printed matter rate to Canada

For newspapers and periodicals other than dailies, 1¢ per four ounces, 1 February 1908–31 December 1958.

For other printed matter:

1¢ per two ounces, 1 January 1875–31 March 1932;

1½¢ per two ounces, 1 April 1932–31 October 1953;

2¢ for the first two ounces, and 1¢ for each additional two ounces, 1 November 1953-30 July 1958;

4¢ for the first two ounces, and 2¢ for each additional two ounces, 1 August 1958–30 June 1961;

3¢ for the first two ounces, and 1½¢ for each additional two ounces, 1 July 1961–6 January 1963;

4¢ for the first two ounces, and 1¢ for each additional ounce, 7 January 1963–6 January 1968.

US letter (first class) rate to Canada

2¢ per ounce, 1 July 1919–30 August 1931;

3¢ per ounce, 1 September 1931–30 July 1958;

4¢ per ounce, 1 August 1958–6 January 1963;

5¢ per ounce, 7 January 1963–6 January 1968.

[BW]

UK printed matter rates to Canada

Canadian magazine rate (for periodicals sent by Canadian packet), 1 d up to 6 ounces, 1½ d up to two pounds, and ½ d for each additional half-pound

Printed matter rate to UPU countries:

½ d per two ounces, 1 April 1879–30 April 1949;

1½ d for first two ounces and ½ d for each additional two ounces (or reduced rate, for newspapers or pamphlets without advertising, 1 d for the first two ounces and ½ d for each additional), 30 September 1950–30 September 1957. [B P S]

References

[BW] Anthony S Wawrukiewicz & Henry W Beecher, US international postal rates, 1872–1996, CAMA Publishing (1996).

[BPS] Website of the Great Britain Philatelic Society, gbps.org.uk/information/rates/overseas/surface/printed-papers-1875-1990.php

[R1–3] Christopher D Ryan, Canada's customs duty and war exchange tax on periodical publications and printed advertising matter, part 1, Canadian Revenue Newsletter 35, April 2001; part 2, ibid, 36, June; part 3, ibid 37, August.

Customs duty & excise tax stamps on postal advertising material to Canada

ANADA introduced customs duty on incoming postal advertising material in 1879. In 1914, customs duty stamps were issued, so that foreign senders could prepay individual items by applying them to the covers, although other methods of payment were more commonly used. The criteria for liability to the duty varied in times (so much so, that very few examples can be found dated in the 1960s or later). Charges depended on country of origin (basically, whether covered under the General Tariff, Most Favoured Nation (M F N), or British Preferential Tariff), and weight, and of course these varied in time.

Over the period 1940–5, an excise tax (WET) was introduced on incoming advertising periodicals (all known examples are from the US), which depended on a poorly defined value, not weight. Both excise tax and customs duty stamps (in combination) could be used to prepay this.

Since most of this mail was sent by printed matter, there often is no indication of dates, either of mailing or receipt. Combined with the byzantine rules and criteria, and convoluted rates' schemes, this sometimes makes analysis of these fiscally-stamped covers difficult (or interesting, depending on your point of view).

We show a few examples from UK, one from Germany, and all the rest are from the US. They are arranged in roughly chronological order, analysing the rates, or using the rates to estimate the date.

While the vast majority of the items were sent at printed matter (postal) rates, we also show a couple sent as first class (which were still liable to duty). There are also a couple of examples where we cannot be sure how the customs duty was made up, but can only suggest probable constructions.

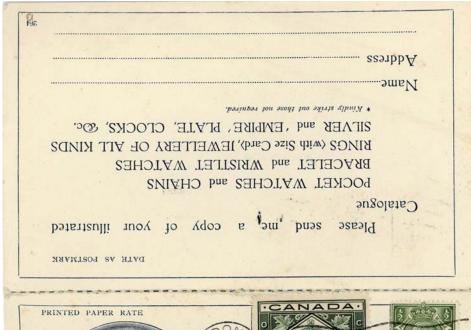
There is also a section on the Wartime exchange tax (WET), showing mixed uses of customs and excise stamps. And there are the usual weirdos at the end. It is difficult to decide on what the highlights are, since either none of the covers are highlights, or almost all of them are.

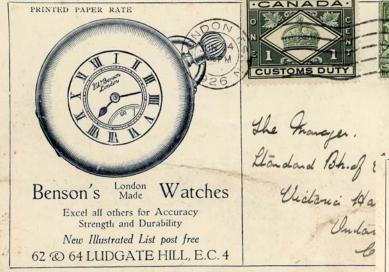


Customs duty stamp (as always, applied by sender) on front of first class cover from London to Winnipeg, 1931. Charged the minimal duty of 2¢, in effect 1930–2. Mail from Us and most other places almost always had the customs duty stamp on reverse.

From UK

Post card with return card attached, treated as printed matter.





London-Victoria Harbour (Ont), 1926. UK printed matter ½ d (Empire post card rate was 1 d) and 1¢ customs stamp (at most 1½ oz, under the British Preferential Tariff, 1 August 1914-30 September 1930).

Postage stamp is perforated B.

Watches, Jewellery, and small articles are sent post and insurance free at our risk by return mail. Orders executed on the V.P.P. or C.O.D. system (cash on delivery) if desired. The Catalogues will be sent you post free if the attached post card is completed and returned.

prices represent the best value obtainable. For those who desire to choose gifts of genuine worth, BENSON'S new illustrated Catalogues are of immense value. The wide assortment of new and pleasing models they contain afforts a large field for choice, and the reduced they contain the hest walls obtainable.

62 @ 64 LUDGATE HILL, E.C.4

Telegrams: Chronograph, Cent. London

STAMP



J. W. BENSON, LTD. The Watch Makers

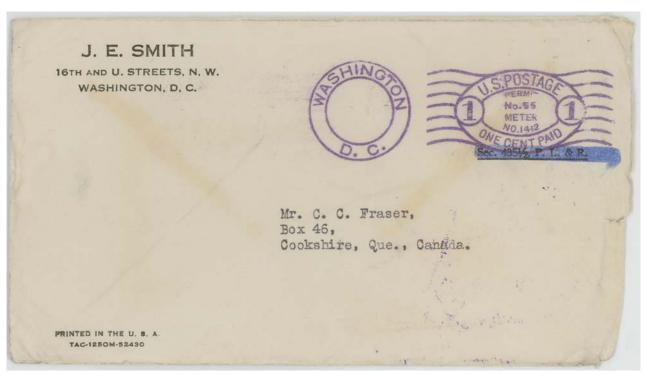
62 © 64 LUDGATE HILL LONDON, E.C. 4 **ENGLAND**

One hundred years ago

From UK
Sent as Empire first class (letter) rate

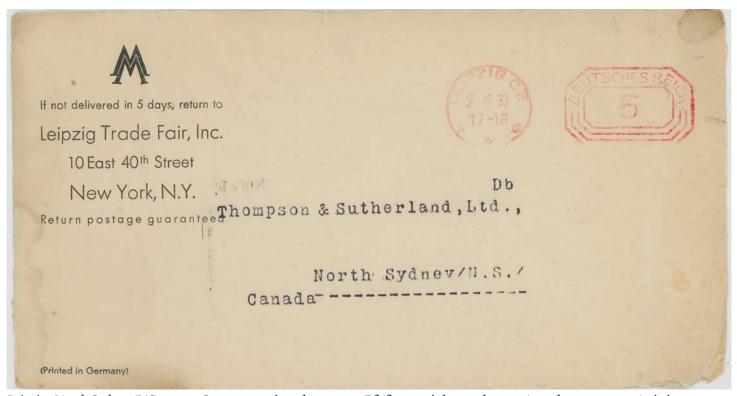


London to Winnipeg, January 1931. UK Empire letter rate 1½ d (up to an ounce), and 2¢ customs (under 2½ oz—minimum—in effect 1 October 1930–12 October 1932), on the front. Not sent as printed matter, because that would imply triple, and thus more than four ounces, which would entail a higher customs duty charge. No backstamps. Winnipeg National Revenue Branch 4 duty free handstamp.



DC-Cookshire (Que), before 31 March 1932. US printed matter rate 1¢ up to two ounces, in effect 1875–31 March 1932. Customs 2¢, under the General Tariff, up to 2¼ oz. Montreal duty paid handstamp.



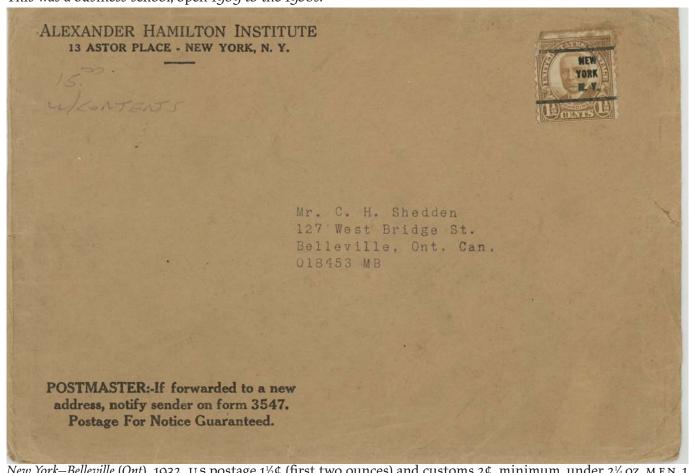


Leipzig—North Sydney (NS), 1932. Germany printed matter 5 Pf (first weight, under 50 g), and 2¢ customs (minimum, up to 2¼¢, M F N, 1 October 1930–12 October 1932), uncancelled.



Alexander Hamilton Institute, page 1

This was a business school, open 1909 to the 1980s.



New York—Belleville (*Ont*), 1932. US postage 1½¢ (first two ounces) and customs 2¢, minimum, under 2¼ oz, MFN, 1 October 1930–12 October 1932. Enclosed several booklets.

Distributing Manufacturing Expense

Here is a case where profits have dwindled because costs have been improperly figured. You are asked to calculate the costs of two items by a proposed new method.





ALEXANDER HAMILTON INSTITUTE

Profit Opportunities In Cost Finding

by

JAMES H. BLISS

Comptroller, Libby, McNeill & Libby



ALEXANDER HAMILTON INSTITUTE

Dwight E. Beebe Director of Service



Astor Place, New York, N.Y.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON INSTI

Profits Depend on Costs!

A business organization has for its primary purpose the producing of a profit from operations that will be adequate to compensate the owners with a fair return for their contributions of capital.

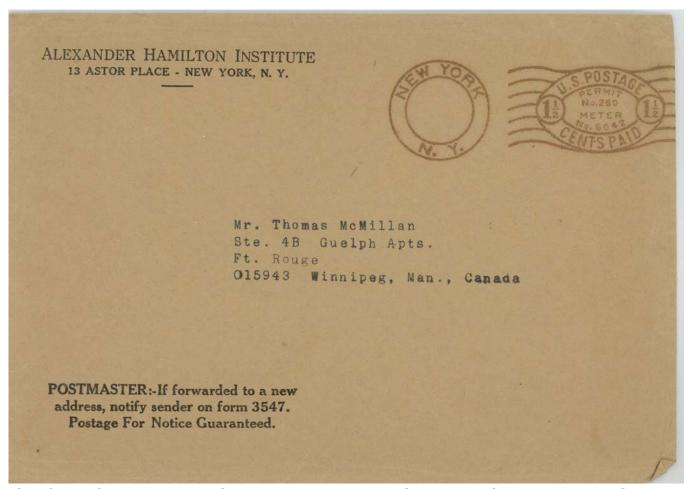
But from a managerial viewpoint, it is not enough to know that the income from the sale of products or services is sufficient to cover all expenses of production, distribution and administration, and leave a profit. It is necessary also that the correct unit costs be ascertained to furnish data upon which future policies may be based. To do this some sort of cost-finding system must be established.

In presenting the subject of "Cost Finding" we have not endeavored to discuss the requirements and operation of a cost system from an accountant's viewpoint, but rather from the viewpoint of the business man so that he may know the principles which underlie all cost-finding systems. The majority of persons in business are more interested in knowing the principles of cost finding than the technicalities of cost accounting. These are covered in your current reading assignment, consisting of:

- (1) This Guide.
- Mr. Bliss' Lecture.
- (3) The Text "Cost Finding."
- The Problem "Distributing Manufacturing Expense."

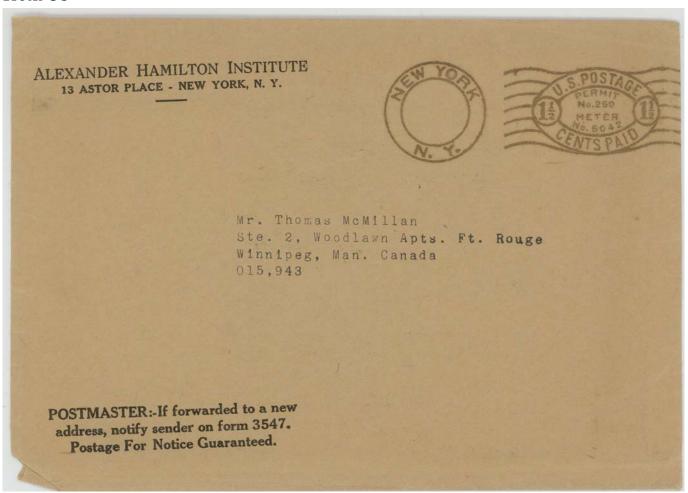
The Problem will prove an interesting test of the knowledge you have acquired from your reading.

8813 Esta



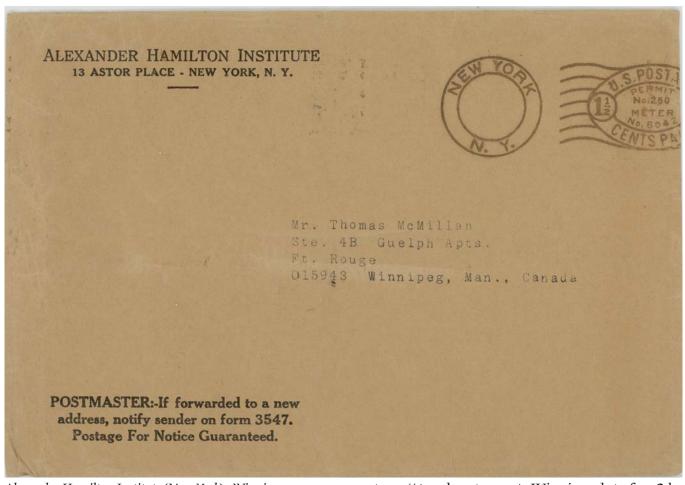
Alexander Hamilton Institute (New York)—Winnipeg, <1935. US printed matter 1½¢ (first two ounces). and customs 2¢. Winnipeg duty free 1 handstamp.





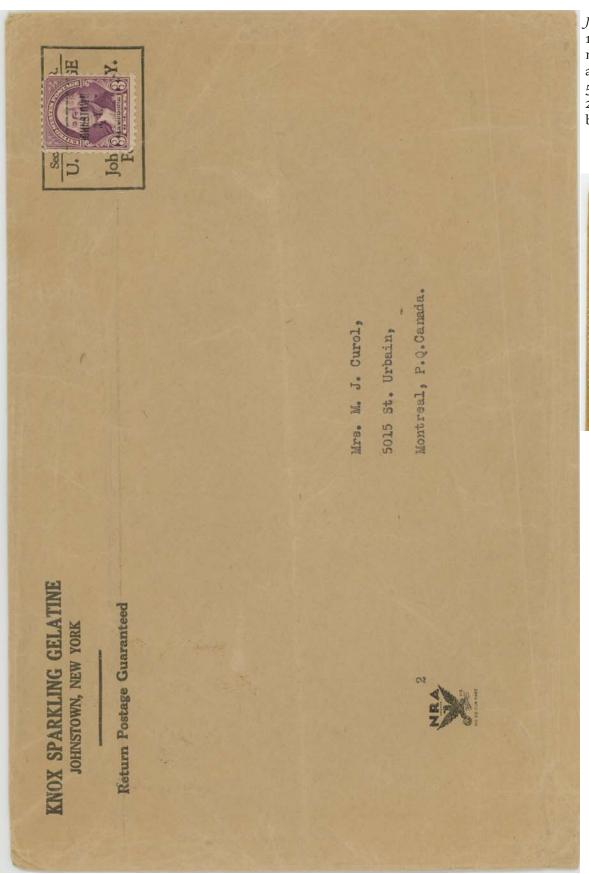
Alexander Hamilton Institute (New York)—Winnipeg, <1935. US postage 1½¢ and customs 2¢. Winnipeg duty free **4** handstamp.





Alexander Hamilton Institute (New York)—Winnipeg, <1935. US postage 1½¢ and customs 2¢. Winnipeg duty free **3** handstamp.

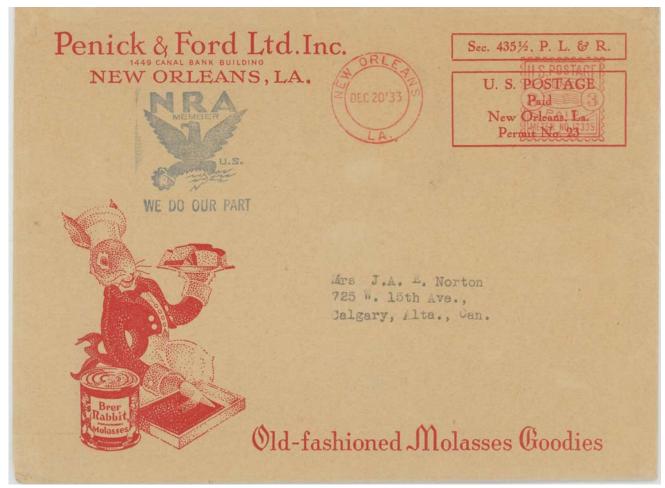




Johnstown (NY)—Montreal, May 1933—1935. Us double printed matter rate 3¢ for 2+-4 oz, and General Tariff customs, 5¢, for 2½-4 oz, in effect 25 May 1933—31 December 1935.



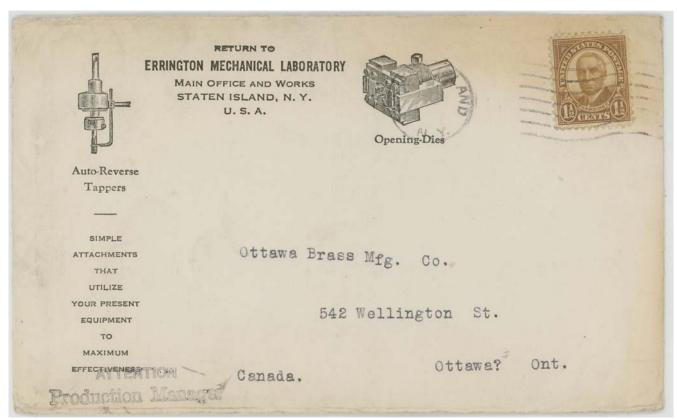
Apparently using out-of-date customs rates. Since foreign companies may not have been immediately informed of rate changes, this was bound to happen.



New Orleans to Calgary, December 1933. Us printed matter 3¢ (second weight 2^+ –4 oz) and 3¢ customs. There is no 3¢ customs rate under the General Tariff in effect at this time! The previous rate schedule (valid until May 1933) has 3¢ for $2\frac{1}{4}$ –3½ oz; this is consistent with double printed matter, 2^+ –4 oz. So the sender seems to have used the old rates, and the Calgary office didn't object.

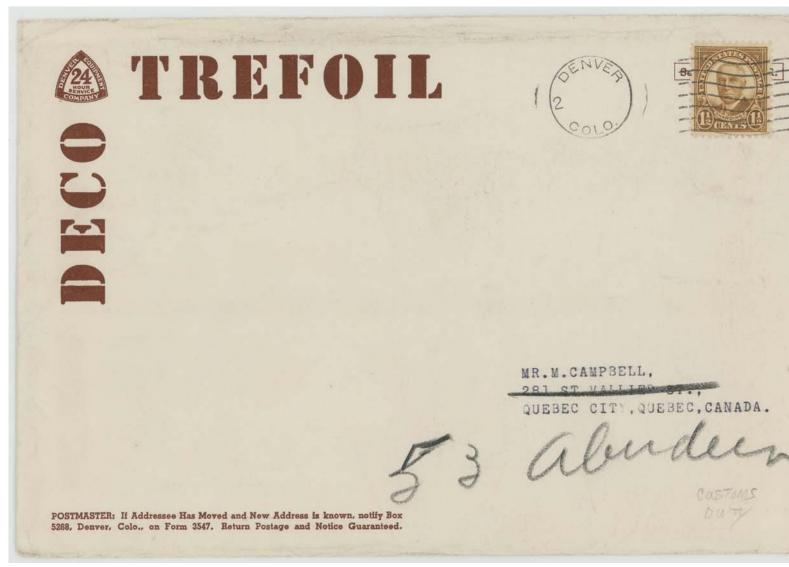
Calgary National Revenue Postal Branch 4 duty paid handstamp; day is inverted.





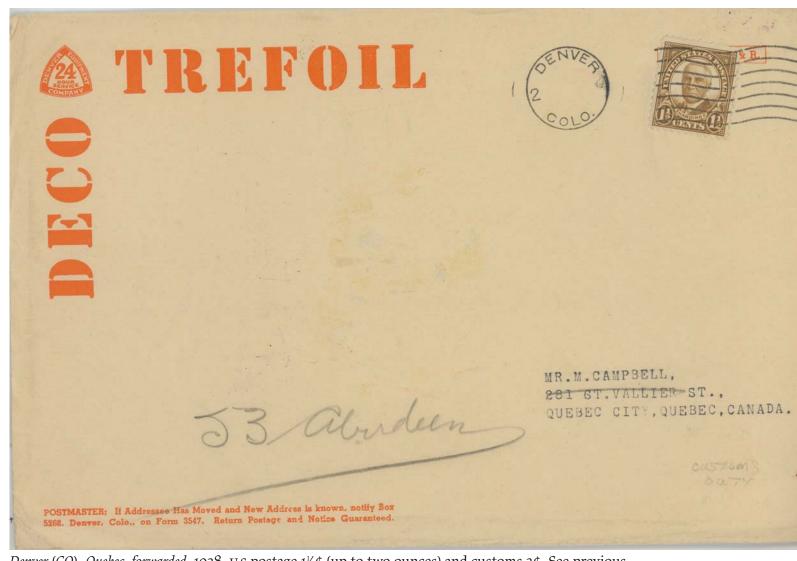
Staten Island (NY)—Ottawa, 1932—1935. Us postage 1½¢ (printed matter up to two ounces, beginning March 1932) and customs 2¢, either up to 2¼ oz if on or before 24 May 1933 or up to 1 oz if after. The unilingual customs stamp was superseded by the bilingual one in 1935, but companies could still have had them on hand for a while.





Denver–Quebec, forwarded, \geq 1936. Us printed matter $1\frac{1}{2}$ up to two ounces and 3 customs, M F N, $1^+-2\frac{1}{4}$ oz (so 1^+-2 oz), in effect 1936–47. Quebec National Revenue Branch duty free handstamp.





Denver (CO)—Quebec, forwarded, 1938. Us postage 1½¢ (up to two ounces) and customs 3¢. See previous.



Foreign firms could not be expected to keep up-to-date with the most recent customs duty changes. Here is another example, from early 1937, where the best fit suggests they were using the fee schedule ending in 1935.



Milwaukee–Toronto, January 1937. US printed matter rate 1½¢ (up to two ounces), and Canadian customs, 4¢.

For the period 1 January 1936—31 December 1947, 4¢ customs fee indicates a weight at least 2½ ounces (and since the firm itself applied both postage and customs stamps, they would know the weight exceeds 2 oz, so would require 3¢ postage.

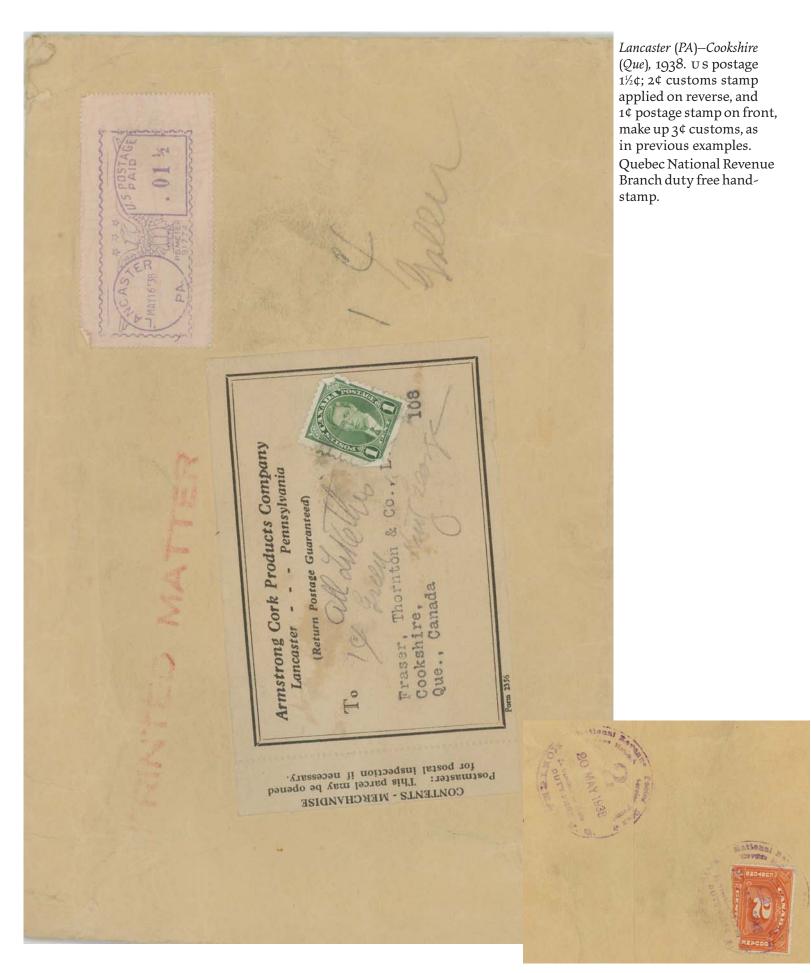
Instead, with the previous fee schedule, valid 25 May 1933–31 December 1935, 4¢ duty implies a weight of $1^+-2\frac{1}{2}$ oz (thus 1^+-2 oz), consistent with postage.





Washington—Kelfield (Sask), Moose Jaw customs office, March 1938. Us printed matter $1\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ (up to two ounces), and Canadian customs, 3¢, M F N, 1^+ – $2\frac{1}{4}$ oz (so 1^+ –2 oz).





Cleveland (OH)—Hamilton, year?. US postage 5¢; Canadian customs, 5¢. The US stamp was issued 1922; the customs stamp, 1935.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER CLEVELAND, OHIO RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED



FROST STEEL & WIRE CO.LTD. ATT- LAWRENCE ATKINSON, WORKS W HAMILTON, ONT. CANADA.

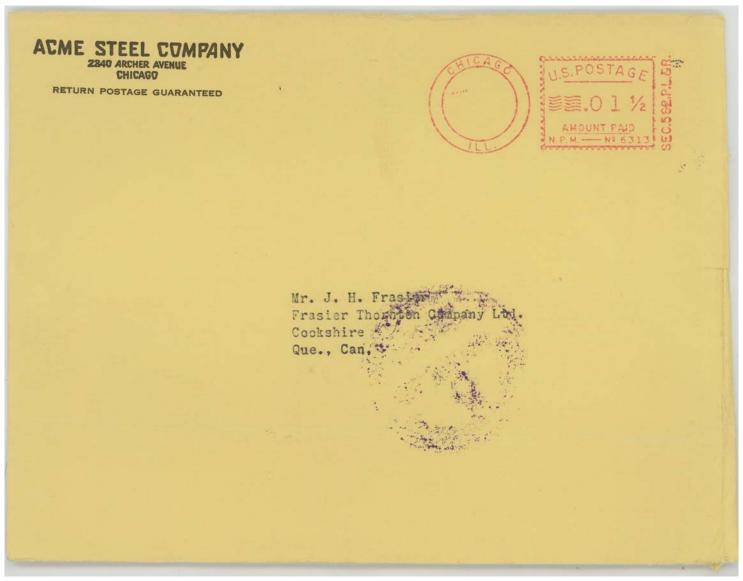
Good fit: Commercial papers, at $1\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per two ounces, but with minimum 5¢ (thus at most six ounces), in effect 1932–53. Customs fee of 5¢ indicates either $2\frac{1}{2}$ +-4 oz (1933–31 December 1935, which would imply 1935 only), or 4^+ -5½ oz (1 January 1936–1947), either of which is consistent with postage.

Adequate fit: Triple printed matter with overpayment by $\frac{1}{2}$, implying 4^+ –6 oz. The customs fee is consistent only with the 1 January 1936–1947 schedule.

PROCERESS 7301 EUCLID AVENUE CLEVELAND 3, OHIO



PLEASE DO N



Chicago—Cookshire (Que), May 1940. Us printed matter up to two ounces, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ¢, and customs 2¢, up to an ounce (1936–47). Montreal duty free handstamp.





New York—Winnipeg, 1940?. US printed matter 1½¢ and customs 2¢, up to one ounce, as previous cover. Oval Winnipeg duty free handstamp.



War exchange tax (WET)

The WET, an excise tax, was in effect 25 June 1940–12 October 1945, on magazines, newspapers, and periodicals from the US. The fees were interpreted as 10% on the wholesale (subscription) cost, rounded to the nearest quarter-cent, and a minimum of ¼¢. Soon after this was initiated, it became acceptable to use either customs duty or excise tax stamps (or both) to pay the excise tax. It could also be payable in cash for bulk mailings. There were many exemptions to this tax. Customs duty charges on magazines and periodicals (but not other classes for which customs duty applied) from the US were revoked as of 1 January 1936. So customs and WET cannot be found on the same item. The minimum customs charge in this period was 2¢—so if customs stamps totalled 1¢ or if there were an excise stamp, then the WET had been paid (and there was no customs fee).



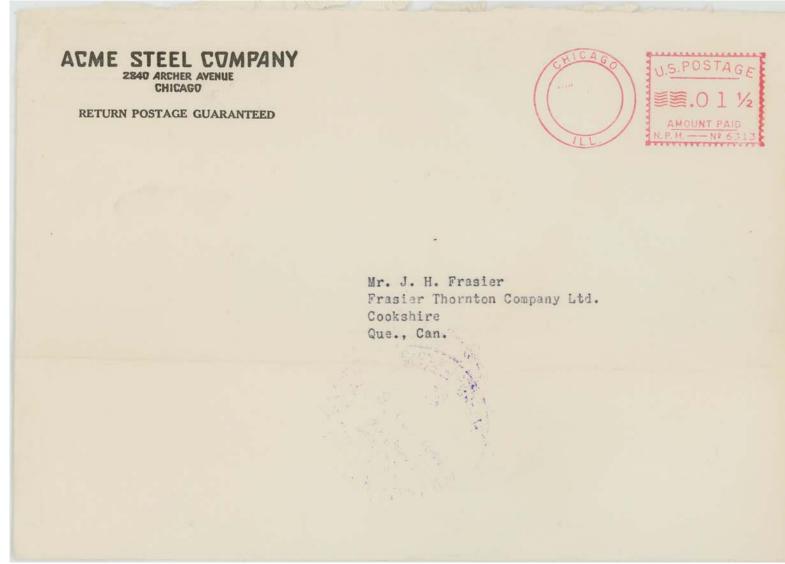
New York-Kitchener (Ont), post-1941 (slogan). Us printed matter $1\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ excise stamp, paying minimum WET.





New York—Kingston (Ont), January 1941. Us printed matter rate 1½¢, and Canadian customs stamps totalling 3¢, and ¼¢ excise stamp (WET on ca 32¢ single copy subscription). Purple Montreal duty-free machine cancel.





Chicago—Cookshire (Que), 1941. US postage 1½¢ (up to two ounces) and customs 2¢ (up to one ounce). Montreal duty paid handstamp. Serving wily coyotes for twenty years.



PROFESSIONAL ART MAGAZINE

READ BY 15,000 ENTHUSIASTIC ARTISTS, ART STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF ART

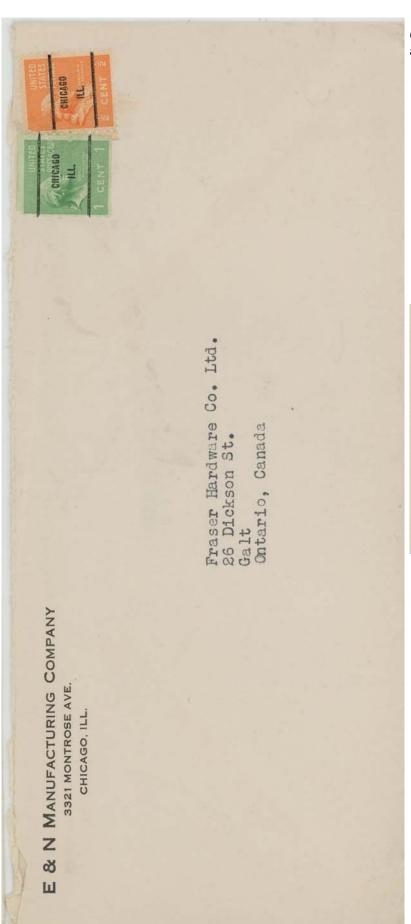
DOTY STREET MADISON, WISCONSIN RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

320 WEST

Madison (WI)—St Johns (Que), Montreal customs office, July 1941. Us postage 3¢ (double printed matter rate, up to four ounces); customs stamp 1¢ and excise tax $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ (WET $\frac{1}{4}$ ¢) on reverse.

Homas Lee 219 Richelie M M. John P. 2.





Chicago—Galt (Ont), 1942. Us printed matter rate $1\frac{1}{2}$ ¢, and 1¢ customs stamp paying WET.





Chicago—Guelph (Ont), 1943. US printed matter 1½¢ and excise ¼¢ (minimum WET). Galt duty paid handstamp.





Chicago−St Laurent (Montreal), 1944. US printed matter 4½¢ (triple); customs stamp 1¢ paying WET.

Mr. L. Juster Co., Ltd. Lambert, P. 2, Canada



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MONSANTO
MAGAZINE

Postmaster—If undeliverable FOR ANY REASON, notify sender, stating reason, on Form 3547, postage for which is guaranteed.

Return Postage Guaranteed

MONSANTO CHEMICAL COMPANY, ST. LOUIS, MO.



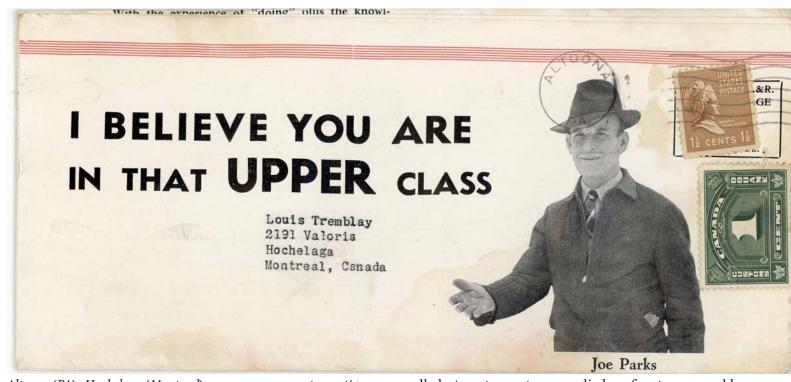
New York—Cookshire (Que), 1945. US printed matter $1\frac{1}{2}$ ¢, and uncancelled $\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ excise stamp (WET).





Portland (Maine)—Cookshire (Que), 1940–5. US special printed matter rate 1¢ per four ounces, available to Canada for newspapers and non-daily periodicals (1908–58), and uncancelled $\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ excise stamp (WET).





Altoona (PA)—Hochelaga (Montreal), 1940–5. US postage 1½¢; uncancelled 1¢ customs stamp applied on front, presumably WET. Folded booklet.

WHAT YOU GET IN EVERY PARKS CHICK

1. Over 50 Years Breeding

With generations upon generations of careful selection behind them you get in our Rocks something that just can't be found in younger strains. It is that completely balanced bird, ranking high in all important characteristics, which only a half century of selection could produce.

9. A Sure Market For Your Products

Whether you are in the egg businessthe broiler business, general farming or a breeder, you benefit by the demand already created for Parks Strain products. If you want to sell a few birds for meat you are sure of top market prices. If you sell your eggs to a hatchery or sell stock directly to other poultry raisers, you can count on a ready demand, for Parks Strain is so well known. We give you a free breeding certificate with every purchase so that you will permanently have a written proof of your purchases direct from us, the originators of Parks Strain.

8. No Pullorum Disease

The chief reason why our customers are able to raise nearly 100% of their chicks is because they have no pullorum (B. W. D.)

We eliminate it by bloodtesting the "long way". Each year a blood sample from every bird is sent to the State laboratory at Harrisburg to make certain that every breeder is free of the disease and able to reproduce clean, healthy chicks.

2. High Egg Production

Eggs . . . Eggs . . . this is the chief asset of our Rocks. We have turned out many "300 eggers", up as high as 357 eggs per year. However, it is good flock averages rather than high individuals that we breed for Our pullets trapped for the past several years under official R. O. P. supervision have averaged over 220 eggs per bird, weighing 25.9 oz. per dozen. Customers report many flock averages over 200 and up as high as 271 eggs per bird.

3. Good Meat Qualities

Rocks bring higher market prices per pound than any other breed. The males sold at broiler age often pay the cost of raising the whole brood. The price you get for your Parks layers after several years of profitable production is much more than the cost of replacing with new pullets. Our average body weight for pullets at the middle of the first year is 6.7 lbs. per bird.

4. Chick Livability

Many of our customers reported up to 100% livability this past year. With the breeding we have back of them, the care we use in hatching them and the disease freedom of our breeders you can very easily raise 95 to 100% of all Parks chicks if you use reasonably good brooding practices.

> 5. Rapid Growth

They grow and feather out rapidly and uniformly. The pullets come into production at 5½ to 6 months of age. Fast growing chicks like these start earning you profits sooner.

6 Low Pullet Mortality

Many of our customers report 95% to 100% of their pullets still alive and hearty after a full year of heavy laying. Here is where our years of breeding count most. We have selected our foun-

Here is where our years of breeding count most. We have selected our foundation stock year after year from the families that showed the greatest livability and withstood all kinds of conditions confronting them in the past half century.

This breeding for resistance and livability has reduced our pullet mortality to less than half that experienced in all the egg laying contests in the U. S., and it is to be remembered the egg contests have only the choicest birds of the nation's leading breeders.

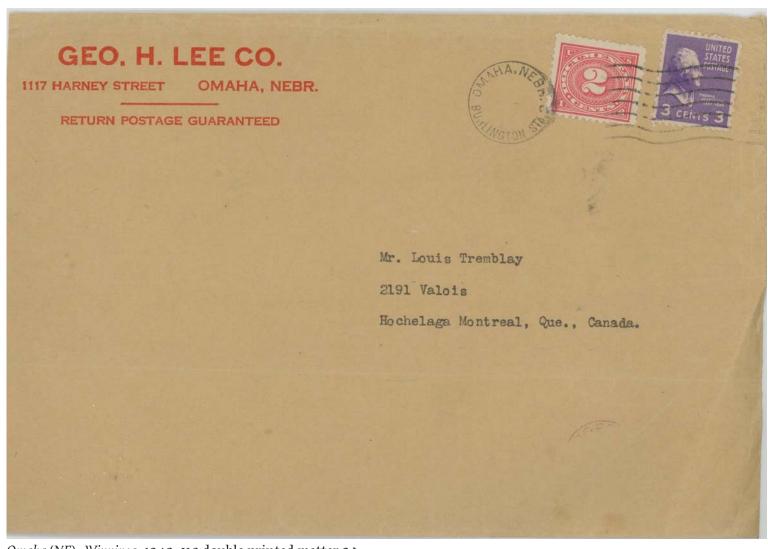
ALTOONA, PA.

7. Good Hatchability

Those who supply hatcheries with eggs or do some breeding themselves will be interested to know that only the blood of breeders averaging 85% hatchability or higher is used as the "seed stock" for reproducing our strain.

JOE PARKS & SONS

US 2¢ documentary stamp erroneously applied (in place of Canadian customs stamp?). No stamps on back.



Omaha (*NE*)–*Winnipeg*, 1940. US double printed matter 3¢.



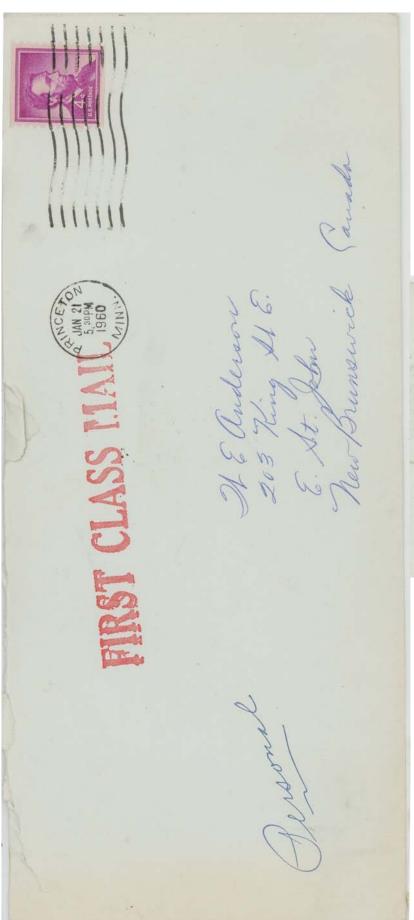


New York—Ottawa, post-1947. Us postage 10¢ and customs 1¢. Printed "Dear Doctor" letter shilling drugs, but sent air mail. Air letter was in production 1947–58, so out of WET period. Minimum customs fee was 2¢, so it looks like someone just added a mint customs stamp to this letter. On the other hand, it was liable to customs duty.





From US First class (letter)



Princeton (MN)–East Saint John (NB), 1960. Us first class 4¢ (up to one ounce), and 2¢ customs (up to one ounce, 1949–79). Return address is given as Cornwall (Ont).





POSTMASTER
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The Dominion Toy Mfg. Co.

161 Queen Street East
TORONTO 2 ONTARIO

Manufacturers and Importers

of Supplies

for Indoor and Outdoor

Carnivals, Concessionaires

Fairs

Bazaars

Parks

Celebrations

Amusement Resorts

Premiums and Dance Halls

REV. M. P. DWYER BONAVISTA. N. F. L.

PETUNING POSTAGE

OROMY

Toronto—Bonavista (Nfld), 1921—1930. Originally franked 4¢ (double printed matter rate to all UPU countries, 1 October 1921—30 June 1930), RETURNED FOR POSTAGE 2¢ more and struck through, and 2¢ stamp added; Newfoundland customs duty 1¢ stamp on reverse.

Newfoundland customs duty was 1¢ per ounce up to 15¢ per pound (John Walsh). Since this weighed more than 2 oz (and presumably more than 4 oz), it should have been charged at least 3¢ (5¢) duty. So presumably, some customs duty stamps are missing.

