

Eclectic & Eccentric Admiral Postal & Fiscal History

Admiral definitives were current from about 1912 to 1928 except for a 3¢ stamp issued in 1931. That 17-year period provides a wealth of postal history fuelled by rate changes, World War I military mail, the War Tax, the explosion of rural mail, the expansion of railway post offices, the settlement of the prairies, and advances in technology.

A one-frame exhibit can't do justice to the postal history of the Admiral era. What this one does is wander through the era using a diverse selection of unusual and zany items. It explores rates, postal and fiscal usage, errors, and destinations.

Plan of the Exhibit

1. Dates & Rates
2. Covers & Cancels
3. The Stamp's the Thing
4. Foreign Affairs
5. Fiscal Extravagance
6. (Admiral Postal History)²

Dates & Rates



This postcard, mailed from Liverpool, Great Britain, to Saint John, NB, was short paid ½d, and charged 10 centimes double deficiency. The postage due was paid with a 2¢ carmine Admiral stamp postmarked OC 31 / 14, three months after the start of World War I.

The message on the postcard reads in part:

“Just a PC to let you know that I got here quite safe this morning. We had great weather all the way across. Hoping to hear from you soon.”

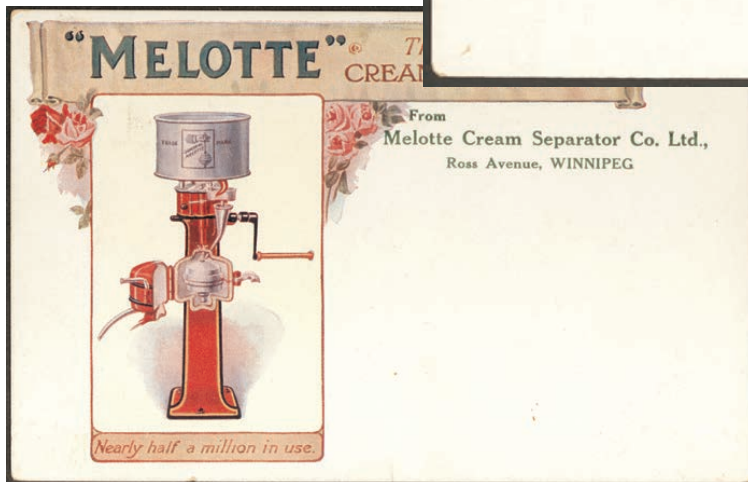
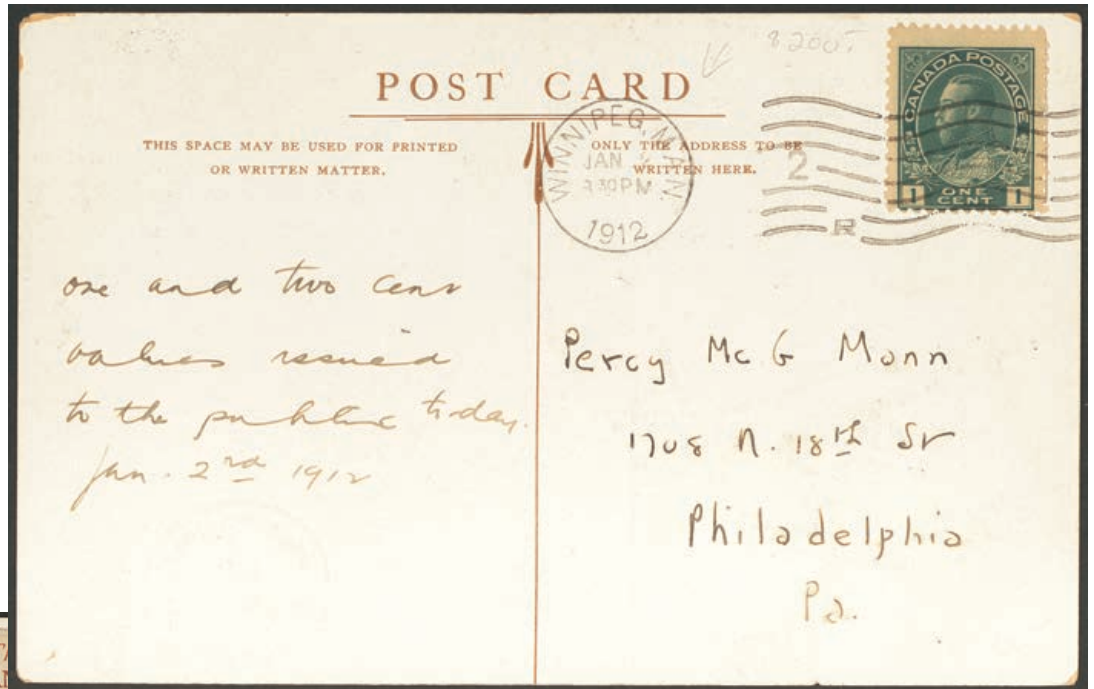
Had the writer just crossed the Atlantic?

Dates & Rates

First ...

Postcard from Winnipeg to Philadelphia franked with a 1¢ Admiral stamp paying the postcard rate to the U.S. The postmark date is JAN 2 / 1912.

The message reads:
 "One and two cent values issued to the public today. Jan. 2nd 1912"



... and last

Postcard to Belgium with a 4¢ stamp paying the UPU rate set on 1 Oct. 1925.

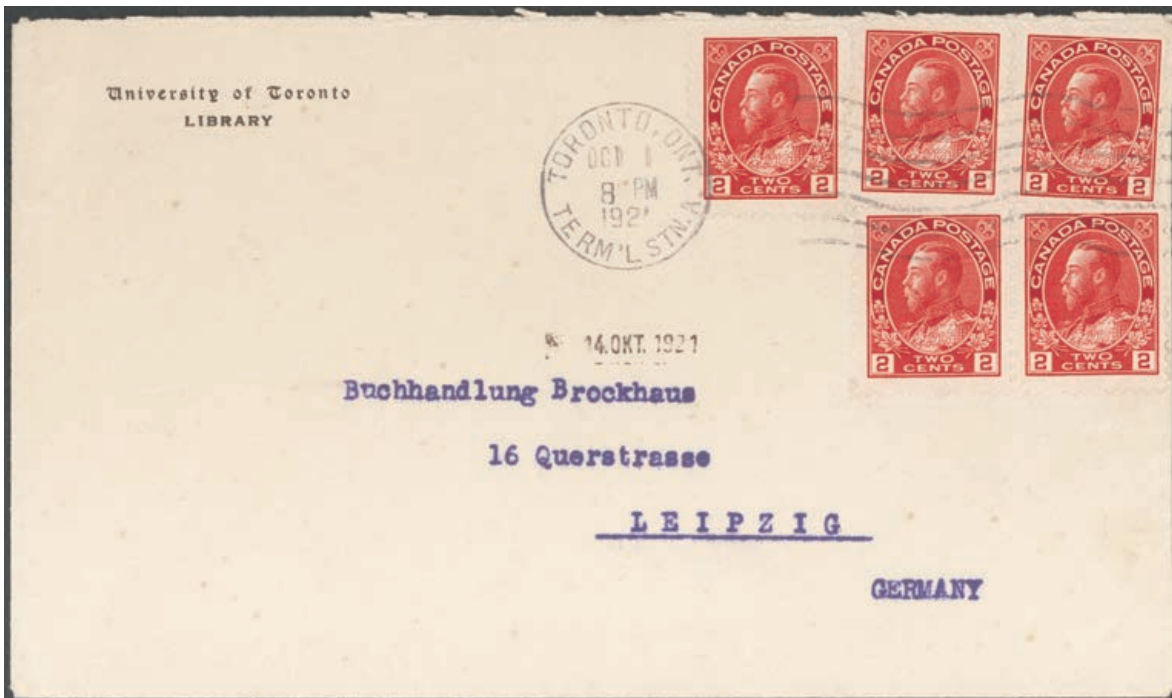
The end of the Admiral period is nominally 1928 when the Scroll issue began replacing Admiral stamps.

So, what's this postcard postmarked APR 6 / 1929 doing here? The 4¢ Admiral was replaced by the 4¢ Scroll stamp on 16 Aug. 1929 so the usage is in period.

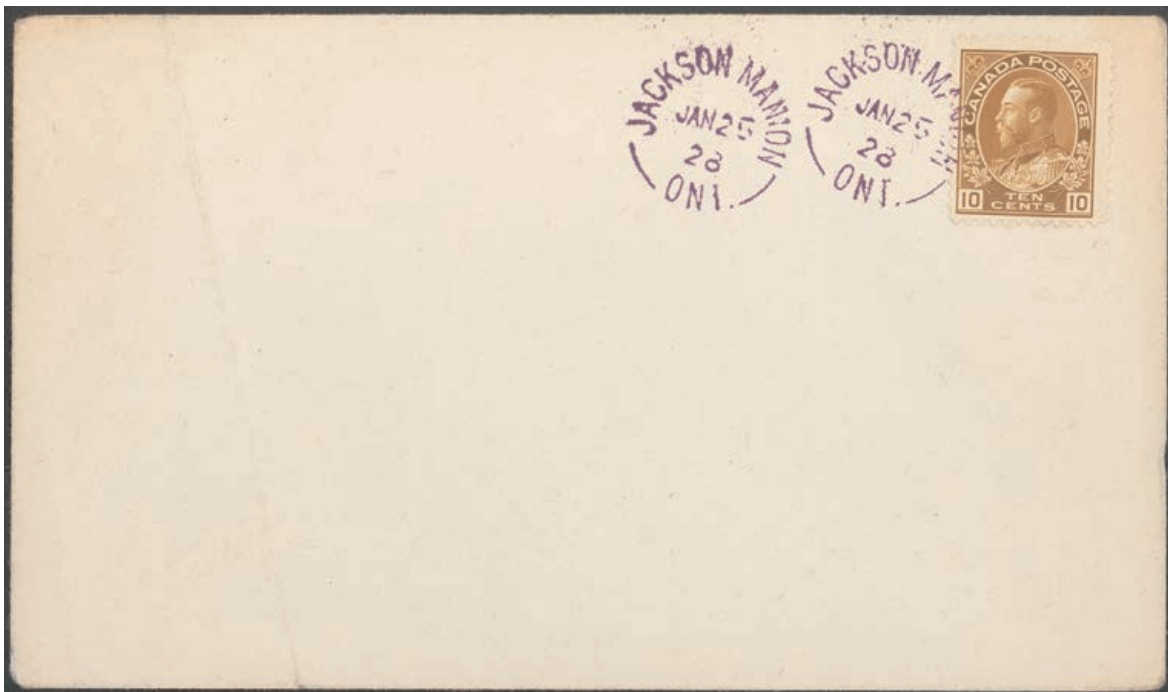
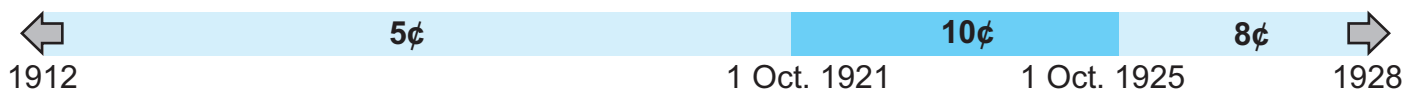


Dates & Rates

Postal history first day covers



Five 2¢ carmine stamps pay the 10¢ UPU first class rate to Germany. The rate during the Admiral period is illustrated below. The cover is dated OCT 1 / 1921, the day the 10¢ rate came into effect.



Philatelic concoction? Maybe not! The postmark date, JAN 26 / 28, is the day the Jackson Manion post office in northwestern Ontario was opened with C. W. Cook as postmaster. Cook resigned on 25 July 1928, and the post office closed on 19 April 1940. Perhaps Cook was testing the postmarking device, or perhaps he was creating souvenirs of the opening.

Dates & Rates



Overpaid

Postcard to Russia dated AU 20 / 13. The UPU rate was 2¢ so this is overpaid 1¢. Overpaid postcards to British Empire and UPU countries are not uncommon after the War Tax was introduced on 15 April 1915 because the tax did not apply to these countries. However, this card was mailed in 1913.

The recipient is Maurice Hache, a French citizen and Director General of Pathé cinemas in Russia. The postcard was sent by his sister who was visiting Caughnawaga, QC.

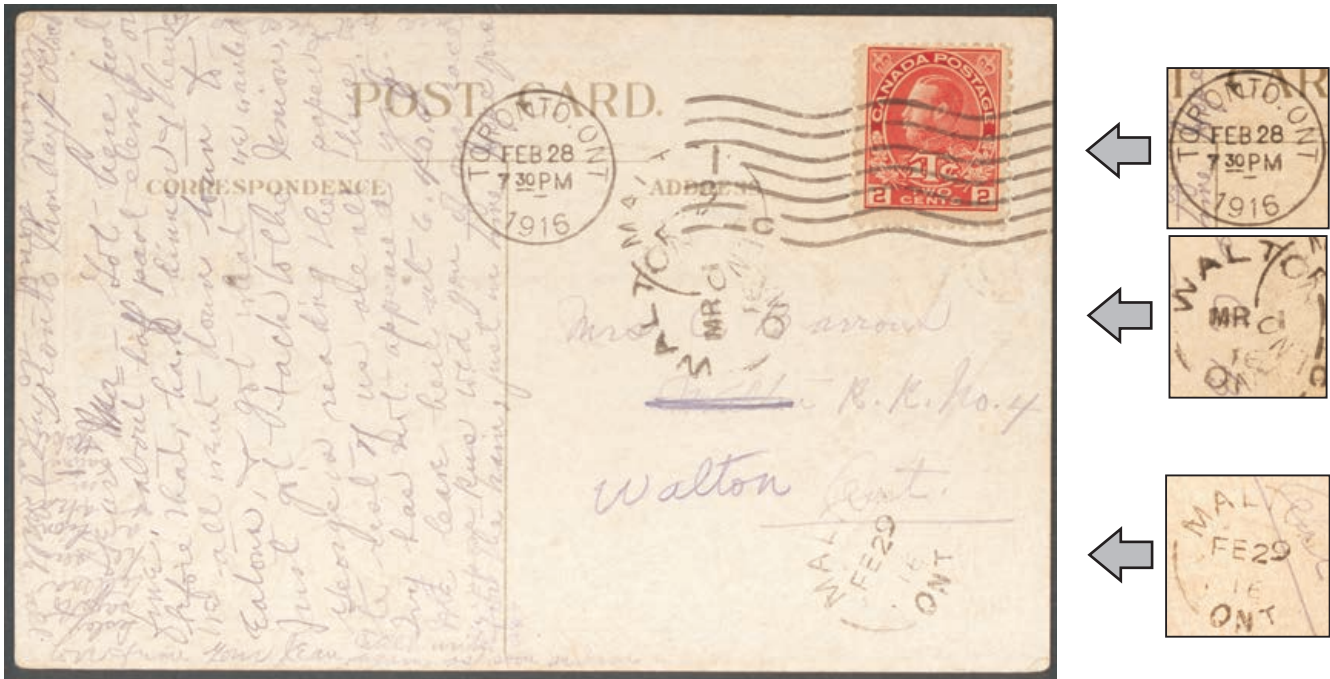


Short paid

Cover to France dated JUL 20 / 23 with Montreal duplex. The UPU rate from 1 Oct. 1921 to 30 Sept. 1925 was 10¢ so this cover is short paid 3¢. Short paid covers with no postage due markings are scarce.

There is a large blank area to the right of the 2¢ stamp. Was there a third stamp that fell off? There is no sign of it nor of any postmark that might have been applied to it.

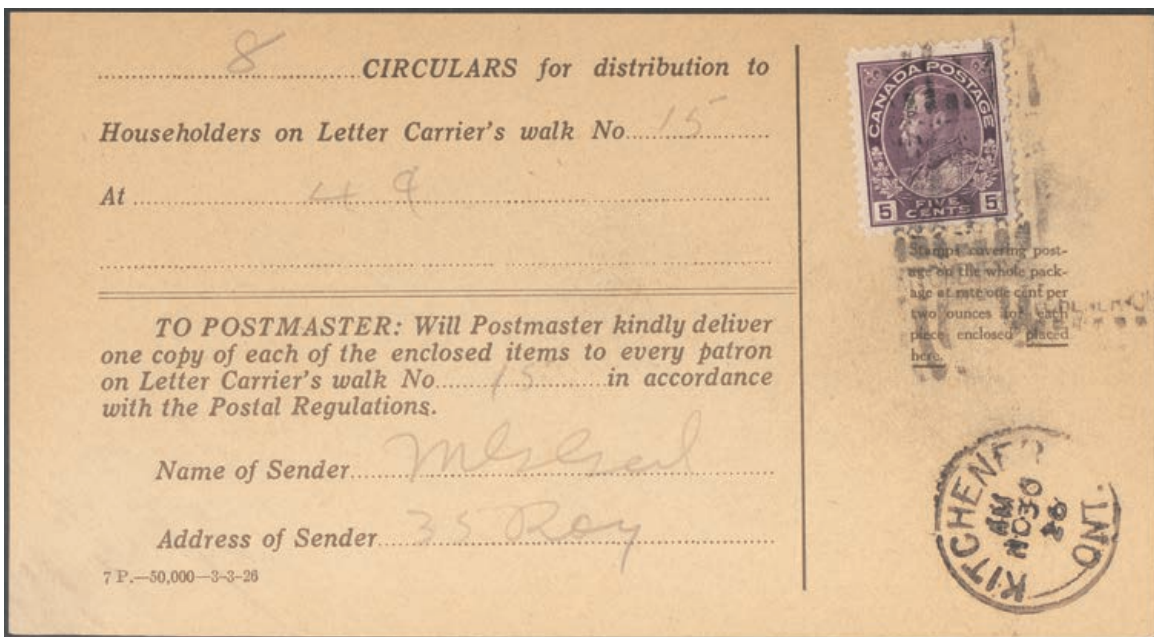
Dates & Rates



1916 was a leap year

But don't take my word for it. Here's incontrovertible proof from the Post Office. The postcard was mailed from Toronto on 28 Feb. 1916, and delivered to Malton, ON. Unfortunately, the actual destination was Walton, ON, about 45 km east of Goderich.

Whoever routed the postcard mistook the "W" in Walton for an "M". To mark its detour, the card received two strikes of a Malton split ring cancel on 29 Feb. 1916. It was then forwarded to its correct destination where it got a Walton split ring receiver cancel dated 1 Mar. 1916.



Bulk? Really?

Circular rate bulk payment form for 8 circulars distributed to householders on a letter carrier's walk. In 1926, the rate was $\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ per item weighing less than 2 ounces except for distribution on rural routes, so this form overpays by 1¢.

Was the sender short of circulars? Or did the letter carrier have a short walk?

Covers & Cancels

Christmas cheer



1¢ yellow paying the printed matter rate (unsealed Christmas card) cancelled in Winnipeg with a red machine cancel dated DEC 24 / 1928. Why the red ink?

From 1926 to the late 1940s, the Post Office offered the “Advanced Posting Service” in selected cities. People brought their Christmas cards early to the Post Office. The Post Office kept them until the last delivery day before Christmas. On that day, it cancelled the cards with red ink and delivered them.

Reference: P. Charles Livermore, “The Advanced Posting Service”, *BNA Topics*, Vol. 63, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 2006.



1¢ green paying the domestic postcard rate. A ho-hum Christmas greeting postcard until one notices the dates. It was mailed from Galt, ON, where it received a machine cancel dated DEC 24 / 1030 AM / 1914.

At its destination, St. George Brant, about 15 km away, it got a receiver cancel from an obviously dedicated postal worker dated AM / DE 25 / 14.

Covers & Cancels



In 6161, more than four millennia after Admiral postage stamps were first issued, Canada Post decided to cater to a new generation of Admiral collectors. Harnessing the absolute latest in replication technology to ensure breathtaking verisimilitude, it reissued those haloed definitives.

To the delight of postal history collectors, Canada Post recreated the ancient practice of physically delivering messages written on parchment. The Post Office affixed a stamp on each enclosure, and defaced it with a black mark called a "postmark" to prevent its reuse. A truly timeless collector's item.

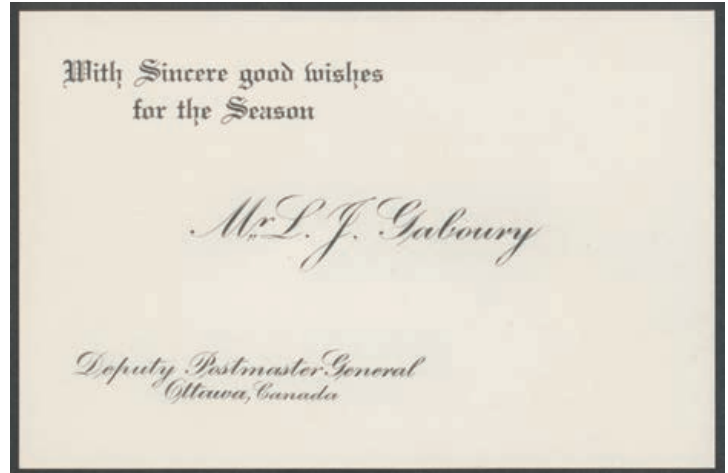
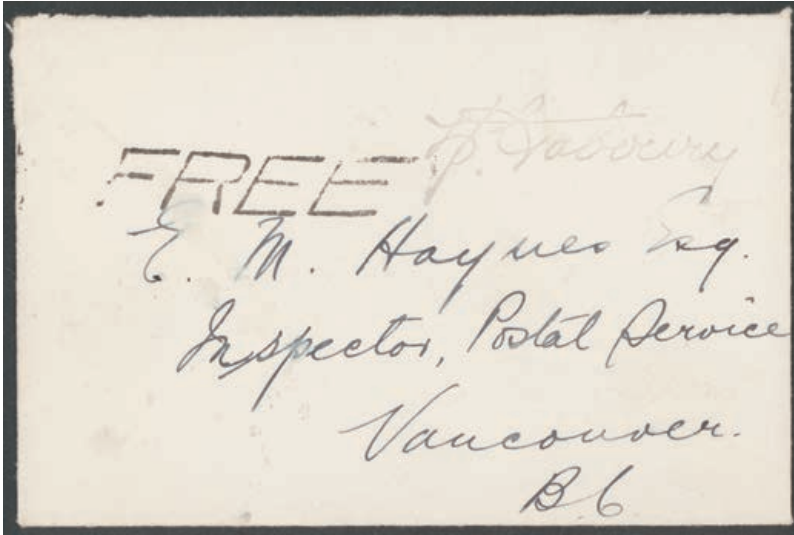


Alive and well

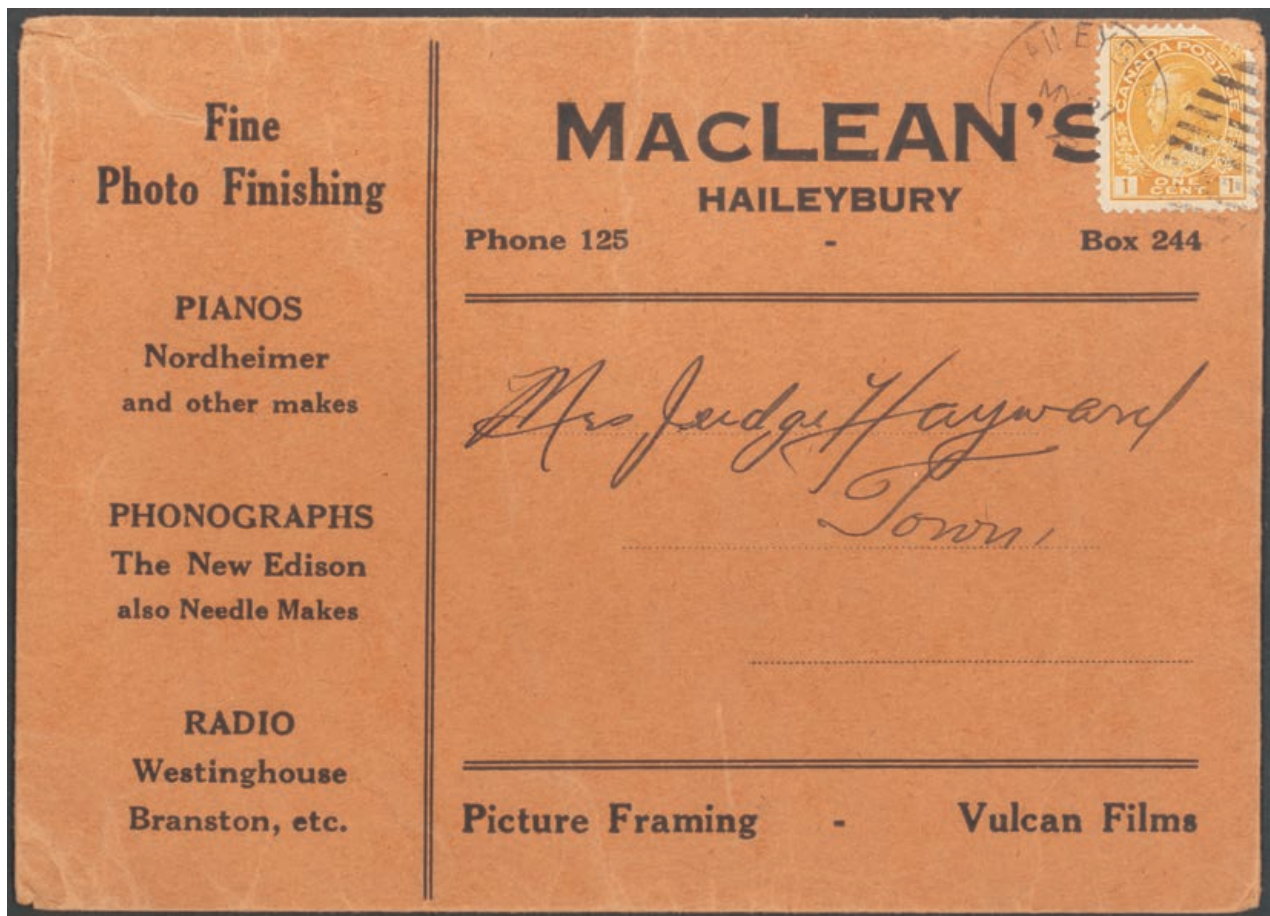
Private order envelope produced by Dominion Envelopes Ltd. with 1¢ yellow typographed King George V oval issue and blue "CANADA POST OFFICE" precancel (same colour as the address) paying the third class printed matter rate. Yes, Virginia, "personal" ad mail in the Admiral era was alive and well.

Covers & Cancels

Twins!



Tiny cover, free-franked, with 1928 Christmas wishes from Louis-Joseph Gaboury, Deputy Postmaster General from 1923 to 1935, to E. M. Haynes, Inspector, Postal Service, Vancouver.

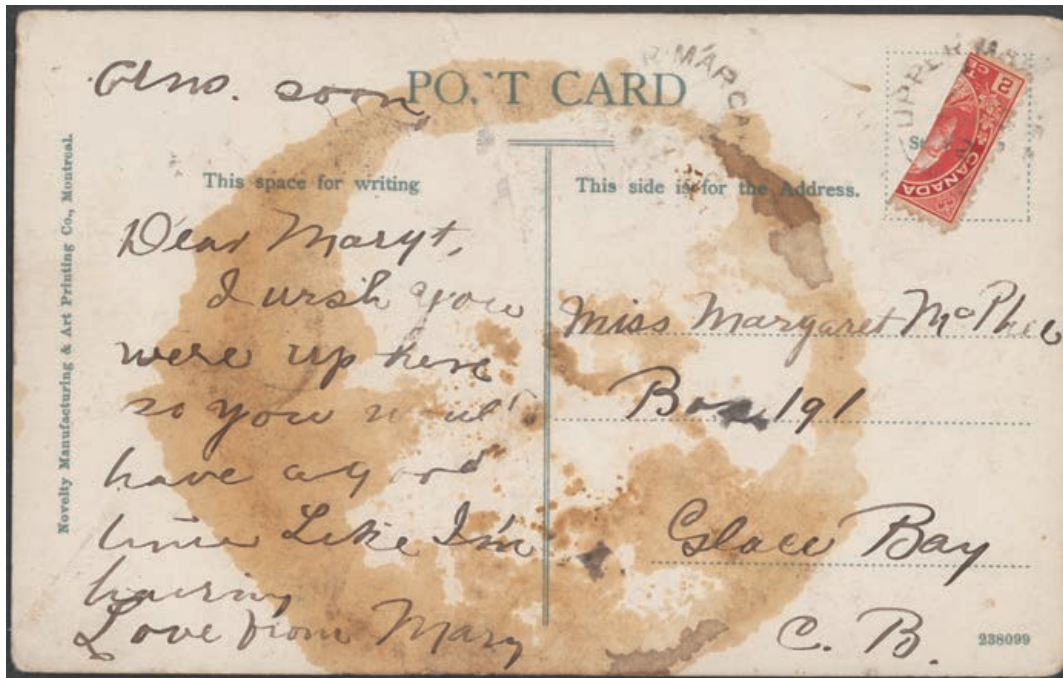


Cover with photographs franked with 1¢ yellow dated MY 27 / 25.

Photographs were classified as printed matter and charged at the third class printed matter rate, 1¢ per 2 oz in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico throughout the Admiral period. The envelope was mailed unsealed.

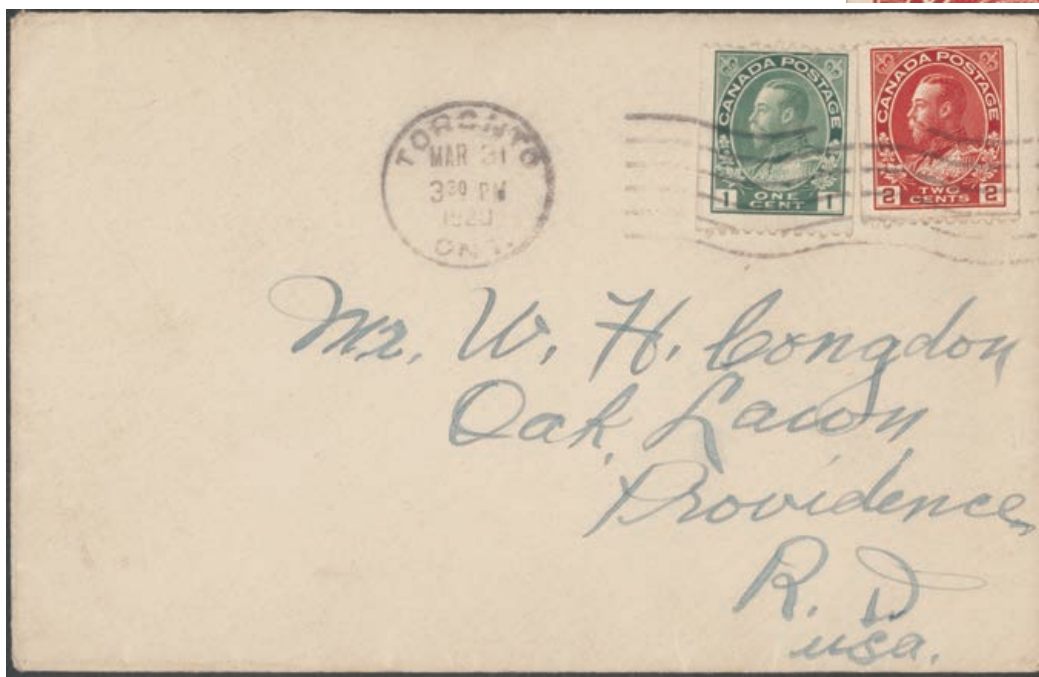
The Stamp's the Thing

Damaged goods



1¢ postcard rate paid by a bisected 2¢ carmine stamp postmarked Upper Margaree, Cape Breton, about 80 km north of Port Hawkesbury. The year is 1912, but the day and month are illegible. Pity someone used the postcard as a coaster for a coffee cup.

Reference: Peter Douglass, "2¢ Carmine Bisect on Nova Scotia Postcard", *The Admiral's Log*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Dec. 2013.

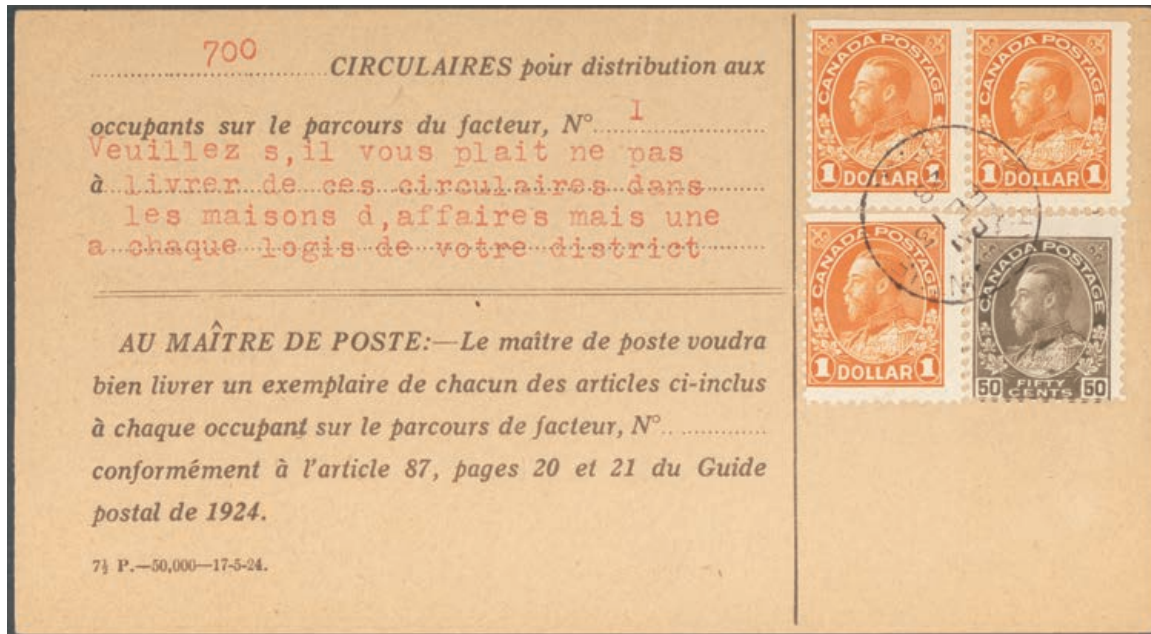


3¢ first class rate to U.S. paid with 1¢ and 2¢ perf 12 endwise coil stamps. Postmarked MAR 31 / 1920.

The two coils have tears at the top left and right sides. Collectors deplore damaged stamps, but this cover is gold to Admiral specialists because the tears reveal where the stamps came from – a vending machine that dispenses coils from a roll of 500 using a gripper mechanism.

The Stamp's the Thing

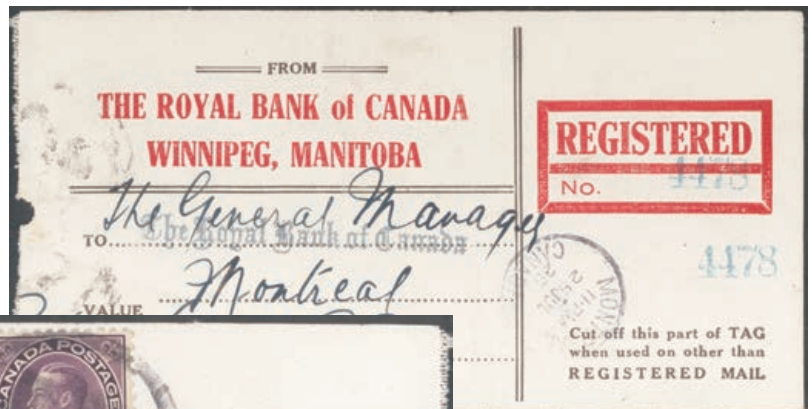
Why were 2.6 million \$1.00 Admiral stamps issued?



Circular bulk rate payment form for 700 circulars to be delivered to homes but not businesses on letter carrier's walk No. 1. On 29 Apr. 1925, the rate was set to ½¢ per item weighing less than 2 oz except for rural routes. This is a bilingual form (English on the back). Note the form number in the indicia: 7½ P.

About 2 million bulk payment forms were printed between 1924 (the first printing) and 1927. The \$1.00 stamp was issued on 22 July 1923. If a tenth of the forms had at least one \$1.00 stamp, that would account for 200,000 stamps.

The money packet rate from 1 Apr. 1922 to 30 June 1926 was 5¢ per oz plus registration plus 1¢ War Tax. This money packet, mailed on 25 July 1925, must have weighed 93 to 94 oz.
 $93 * 5¢ = \$4.65$
 $\$4.65 + 10¢ \text{ registration} + 1¢ \text{ War Tax} = \4.76



Money packets must have consumed a large quantity of \$1.00 stamps. The number mailed during the Admiral period is unknown so there is no estimate of the number of \$1.00 stamps used.

Foreign Affairs

Foreign stamps on Canadian mail



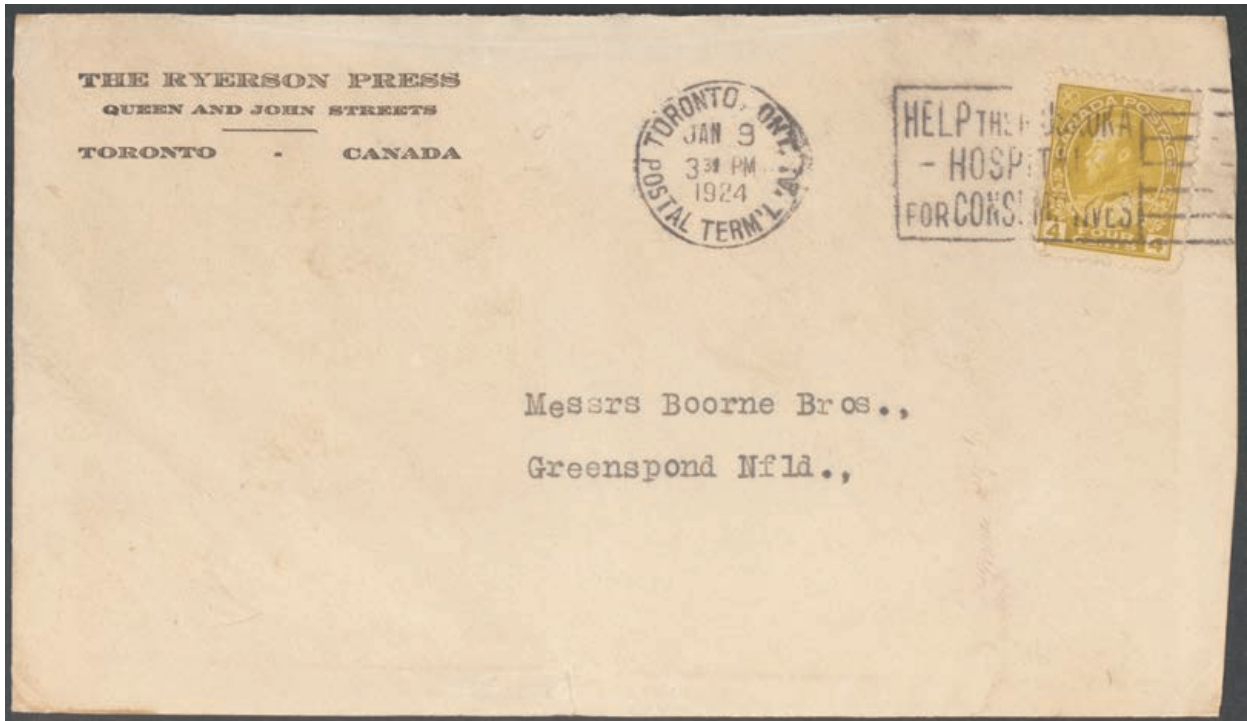
Mailed from Victoria, BC, on SEP ?? / 1924 with 4¢ paying the British Empire rate to England. In London, the address was struck out, a Naples, Italy, address written in red, and a ½d stamp added presumably to bridge the UPU rate. There are two London machine cancels dated 24 and 25 SEP / 1924 on the back.

In Naples, the letter was redirected back to England. Two Naples cancels dated 28 IX / 1924 and 29 SETT 1924 were struck on the back, the original London and Naples addresses were crayoned out in blue, and apparently the original London address rewritten on the front: the Forum Club (a women's club) in Grosvenor Place, SW1, London.



Cover to Holland cancelled JUL 20 / 1925. The UPU rate was 10¢ so the letter was short paid 1¢. Double deficiency postage due works out to: 1¢ x 2 x 5 centimes = 10 centimes; however, between 13 June 1921 and 30 Sept. 1925, the UPU set the minimum charge to 30 centimes. It appears 30 centimes postage due was assessed ("T/30" written in pencil), which equated to 12½ centen in Dutch currency. The postage due stamp was date stamped 8 VIII 25. The most common foreign postage due stamps found during the Admiral period are from Great Britain, France, Switzerland, and the U.S.

Foreign Affairs



A foreign land

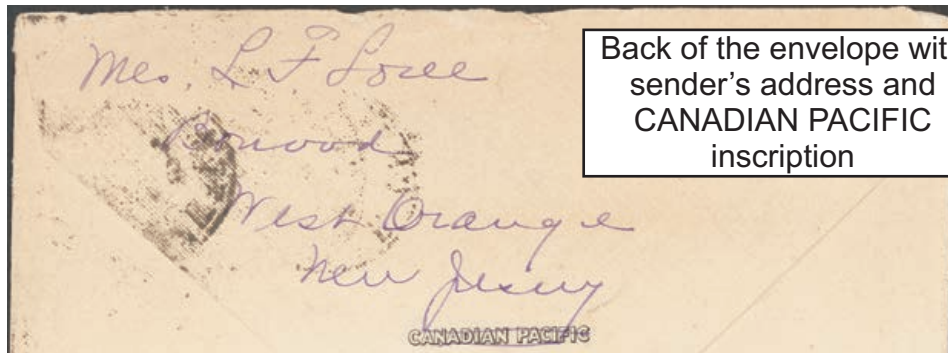
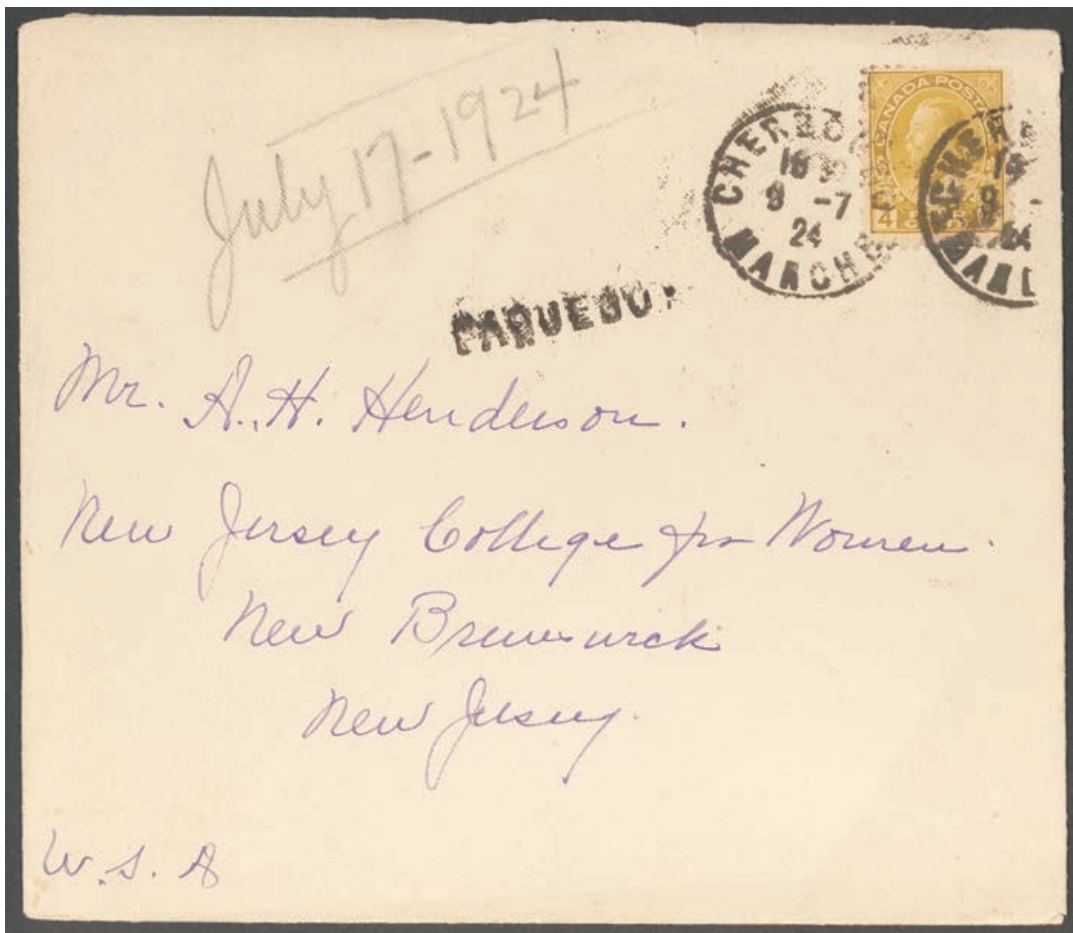
Newfoundland was a British Colony until it joined Canada in 1949. The British Empire rate was in effect until 1 Sept. 1925 when the domestic letter rate was applied to all parts of North America. The cover is postmarked JAN 9 / 1924, at which time the British Empire rate for first class mail was 4¢ for the first ounce.



Canadian stamp rides the U.S. mails

No question this cover has a philatelic connection. However, it sailed through the U.S. mail system from St. Louis, Missouri, to Helena, Montana, a distance of about 2,400 km, with no hint of protest.

Foreign Affairs



Back of the envelope with sender's address and CANADIAN PACIFIC inscription

U.S. sender, U.S. recipient, Canadian stamp, French postmark

According to the rules established by the Universal Postal Union at its Vienna conference in 1891, mail posted on a ship at sea was franked by stamps of the country to which the ship was registered at the postal rate established by that country. At the next, possibly foreign, port, the mail was transferred to the mail system where it was postmarked possibly with a special paquebot cancel, processed, and delivered.

This cover was posted on a Canadian Pacific steamship. Although both sender and recipient had U.S. addresses, a 4¢ Canadian stamp was affixed to the envelope since it was posted on a ship registered in Canada. The ports of call of the Canadian Pacific trans-Atlantic services included Montreal, Quebec, Southampton, Cherbourg, Hamburg, and Antwerp. The letter was posted at sea prior to the next port of call, Cherbourg, where it was handed over to the French Post Office which applied a PAQUEBOT marking and a Cherbourg, Manche, cancel dated 9 July 1924. 4¢ was the British Empire first class letter rate.



Front

Back

Fiscal Extravagance

An Expensive Cheque

The Special War Revenue Tax was passed on 8 April 1915 and came into effect on 15 April 1915. Amended from time to time, it imposed taxes on a wide variety of goods and services.

In particular, it imposed a tax on Bills of exchange and promissory notes at the following rate:

15 Apr 1915	2¢ per item
19 May 1920	2¢ per \$100 or fraction thereof
1 Aug 1922	2¢ per \$50 or fraction thereof

This document shows the tax paid on a promissory note on 5 August 1920 when the rate was 2¢ per \$100 or fraction thereof. The amount of the note was \$117,656.14 (written in the lower left corner on the front), which means the tax was \$23.54. It was paid with 47 Admiral 50¢ postage stamps and two 2¢ fiscal War Tax stamps.

The 50¢ stamps are from plate 2. The blocks are among the largest known from this plate.

Reference: Edward Zaluski, *Canadian Revenues Volume Three Federal War & Excise, Customs, Consular Fee, Postal Currency, and War Savings Stamps*, 1990.



Fiscal Extravagance

A Rare Luxury

The Excise Luxury Tax was imposed on 19 May 1920 on a wide range of luxury goods. It was repealed seven months later on 20 Dec. 1920.

Retailers were initially required to pay the tax to the Revenue Dept. by cash, but this was changed to excise stamps on 1 Nov. Prior to 1 Oct. 1923, war/excise stamp taxes could be paid by postage stamps. This included the 1920 Excise Luxury Tax. However, the Revenue Dept. discouraged the use of postage stamps since the Post Office got the money.

This Excise Luxury Tax payment is dated 18 Dec. 1920, two days before the tax was repealed. The tax of \$2.00 was paid by 13 10¢ plum and 14 5¢ blue Admiral stamps cancelled by a nine-hole punch as per Revenue Dept. regulations.

Ex Ian Bett.

Reference: Christopher D. Ryan, "Excise Luxury Tax of 1920 Paid by Admiral Postage Stamps", *The Admiral's Log*, Vol. XII, No. 1, Dec. 2010.

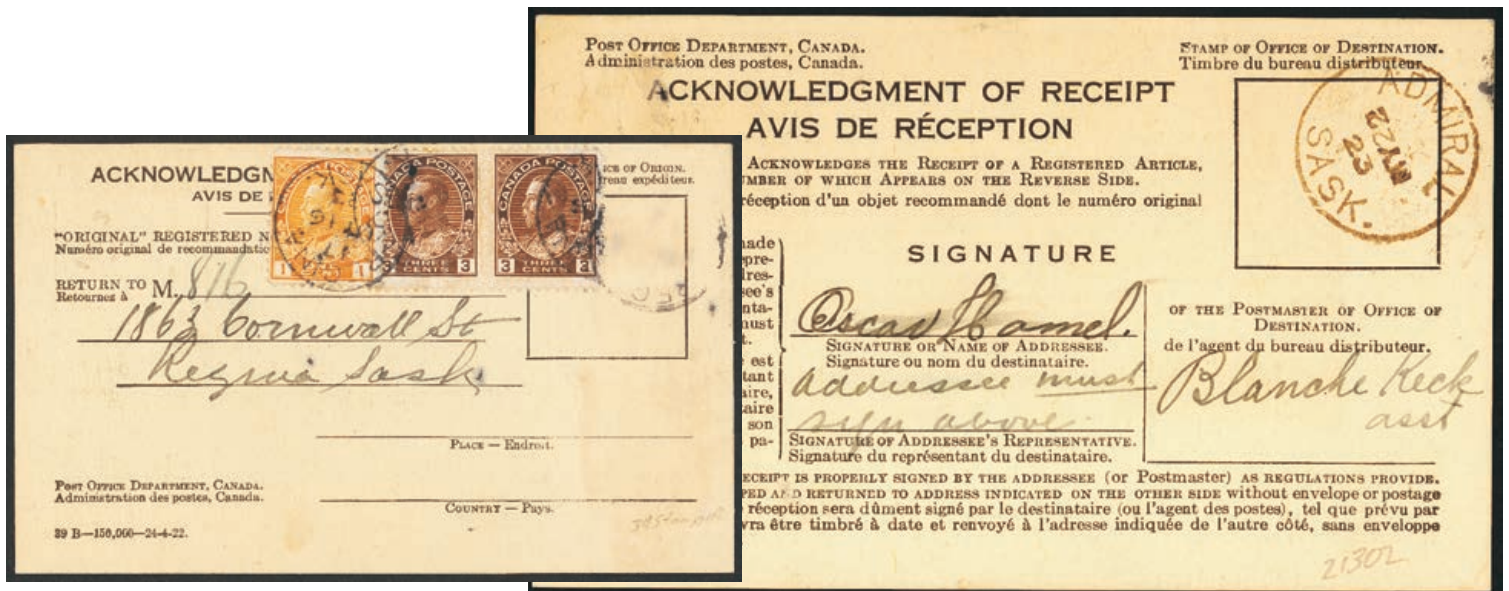


(Admiral Postal History)²

Admiral is in southwestern Saskatchewan, 65 km south and slightly west of Swift Current. The community was incorporated as a village in 1914 with a population of 144. The railroad came to Admiral on 19 Jan. 1914, and the first two grain elevators were built later the same year. The population peaked at around 250 in the mid-1920s, but had lost close to one-third of its residents by the end of the 1930s. Admiral was restructured from a village to a hamlet on 17 Aug. 2006.



Admiral duplex cancel dated MR 20 / 16, applied as a receiving mark. The 2¢ domestic postcard rate was paid with two 1¢ War Tax stamps. The recipient, E. W. Spurr, was manager of the Admiral branch of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, and was overseer of the Admiral town council from 1918 to 1923.



Acknowledgement of Receipt (AR) card mailed with a registered letter from Regina on 16 May 1923. The 10¢ AR service fee was paid with one 1¢, two 3¢, and presumably a third, missing 3¢ stamp. The back has an Admiral circular date stamp dated MY 22 / 23 (day and month inverted). The recipient was Oscar Hamel who with his father Gidion came from Quebec in 1912 to take up a homestead in the Frenchville area. The card is signed by an assistant postmistress, Blanche Keck. She was employed by the then postmaster of Admiral, Albert E. Rodgers.

Reference: Leopold Beaudet, "Admiral Postal History", *The Admiral's Log*, Vol. XII, No. 1, Dec. 2010.