

Newfoundland

A Study of the Rates Post Decimal Conversion 1865 to 1873

Newfoundland converted its currency from pounds, shillings and pence (Sterling or Newfoundland Currency) to decimal currency (Dollars and Cents) on 7 April 1865. As is often the case, when decisions of this nature are made, Newfoundland was ill-prepared from the postal standpoint. They had failed to obtain new stamps in decimal currency printed in time for the conversion. The first decimal stamps were received at St. Johns on November 15th 1865, more than seven months later. During the interim period Sterling stamps were still used or the option was to pay the postage in cash or send mail unpaid for the recipient to pay the postage.

Businesses and private individuals had got used to sending letters with adhesive stamps affixed so the pence issues were given a conversion value in the new decimal currency. The pence stamps were either denominated in Sterling or Newfoundland Currency. These two currencies were not on par as two and a half pence Sterling was equal to three pence Newfoundland Currency. Upon conversion to decimal currency the three pence Newfoundland Currency stamp was valued at five cents whilst the five pence Sterling stamp equated to ten cents.

The exhibit shows examples of the new currency rates from decimal conversion day through to 1873 when the first postal stationery postcard was issued. The order of usage is Colonial, Maritime Provinces, Saint Pierre et Miquelon, United States of America and Great Britain.



The first postal stationery postcard was issued in October 1872. This example was mailed from St. John's to the out-port of Burgeo on 2nd October 1873.

Colonial
Decimal Currency Rates Before Cents Stamps Available
Carbonear to Harbor Grace

Decimal currency rates were introduced on 7 April 1865¹ although there were no cents stamps available until 15 November. This meant that pence stamps, that were used, had their value converted to cents. The option to be able to pay postage in cash or sent unpaid to be collected from the addressee continued. The top letter is the only recorded example of first day usage. The bottom letter is an example of a 3 pence Newfoundland Currency stamp used to pay the new 5 cents domestic rate.



Mailed Carbonear 1865 7 April. Received Harbor Grace 8 April.
 Rated 5 cents per ½ ounce¹ unpaid.

Harbor Britain to St. John's



(E)

Mailed Harbor Britain 1865 25 August. Received St. John's 15 September.
 Rated 5 cents per ½ ounce¹. The 3d adhesive is the green shade of the second pence printing and converted to 5 cents.

¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Colonial

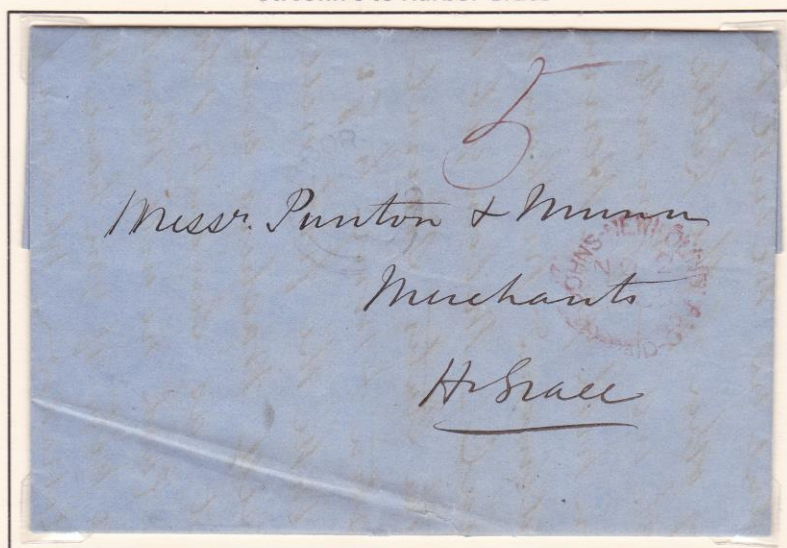
The First Decimal Currency Stamp for Colonial use Harbor Grace to St. John's

The top cover is an example of the 5 cents brown seal that was the first decimal currency stamp issued for Colonial use on 15 November 1865. The lower letter is the last recorded example of the paid in cash rate before the 5 cent stamp became available.



Mailed Harbor Grace 1866 3 December. Received St. John's 3 December.
Rated 5 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce¹.

Letter Rate Paid in Cash St. John's to Harbor Grace



Mailed St. John's 1865 2 November. Received St. John's 3 November.
Rated 5 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce¹.
¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Colonial

Use of Pence Stamps in the Decimal Period

Carbonear to St. John's

During the years 1867 to 1868 Newfoundland was continually having problems due to stamp shortages, especially at outposts. Although the printing contract had ended with Perkins Bacon of London the new printer The American Banknote Co. of New York was little faster in fulfilling new requisitions. Surplus pence stamps were again pressed into use. The 5 pence Venetian red of the second printing is the only known example used in the cents period to pay the double letter or single registration rate. There were no examples recorded by Pratt².



(E)

Mailed Carbonear 1867 6 September. Received St. John's 7 September.

Rated 10 cents per ½ ounce single registered or double letter rate per ounce¹.

Registered letters were enclosed in green wrappers and often did not have registration details on the cover.

St. John's to Carbonear



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1868 22 October. Received Carbonear 22 October.

Rated 5 cents per ½ ounce¹ paid by 3 pence stamp of second printing.

¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. ² Pratt "The Pence Issues of Newfoundland".

Colonial
Double Rate Use
Carbonear to St. John's

Although the 5c brown seal was nearing exhaustion in most offices there were a few locations where a small supply was still available. The upper cover paying the double rate is one of three recorded examples of the franking¹. The lower cover has a bisected 10 cents paying the 5 cents rate. There are three recorded covers with this use whilst this cover, previously unrecorded, increases the total to four¹.



Mailed Carbonear 1868 30 October. Received St. John's 31 October.

Double rated 10 cents per ounce as a letter or 10c per ½ ounce single registered².

Registered letters were enclosed in green wrappers and often did not bear registration details on the cover.

St. John's to Bareneed



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1869 23 July. Via Brigus 24 July.

Rated 5 cents per ½ ounce².

¹ A Cover Study 1865-79 by Sammy Whaley. ² Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Colonial
The 1870 Rate Reduction
St. John's to Harbor Grace

The Colonial rate was reduced from 5 cents to 3 cents in 1870 when a new Act was passed¹. The 1865 issues were still available and the 2 cents was combined with the later issued 1 cent to pay the rate. The top cover has the 1 cent brown from the November 1868 printing whilst the lower cover has the 1 cent from the May 1871 printing. Whereas the earlier 1 cent was printed by the National Bank Note Co. of New York the later printing reverted to the previously used American Bank Note Co. of New York².



Mailed St. John's 1870 16 August. Received Harbor Grace 17 August.
 Rated 3 cents per ¼ ounce¹.



Mailed St. John's 1872 3 May. Received Harbor Grace 3 May.
 Rated 3 cents per ¼ ounce¹.

¹ Act 33 Victoria cap. V. ² Boggs Postage Stamps and Postal History of Newfoundland pages 58 & 62.

St. Pierre et Miquelon (SPM)
Single and Double Rate Mail
SPM to Harbor Grace

Although SPM was a French Colony the rates when carried aboard a Newfoundland mail-boat were the same as those for Colonial mail as long as Newfoundland stamps were used. Newfoundland parliamentary papers of 1870 record comment that "the Islanders should be treated as our own"¹. The Watts correspondence was between a father and son. Research I have undertaken shows that Horatio, the son, worked for a period of 10 years for his father's import and export business, from about 1869, in SPM. Many of the covers were previously classified as of Colonial origin but this has now been corrected in an updated publication².



Via St. John's 1871 7 August. Received Harbor Grace 8 August.
 Rated 3c per ½ ounce³.



Via St. John's 1870 20 December. Received Harbor Grace 22 December.
 Double rated 6c per ounce³.

¹ Pratt 19th Century Postal History of Newfoundland. ² Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley. ³ Post Office Notice 1870 9 May.

St. Pierre et Miquelon (SPM)

The 13 Cents Rate

SPM to Harbor Grace and Harbor Grace to SPM

The top cover has been treated as an incoming ship letter and charged 10 cents plus the inland rate of 3 cents¹. Although marked as a consignee letter aboard the vessel "Douro" that fact has been ignored and the normal rate charged for carriage by a non-contract vessel. This cover has not been previously recorded and is the only one of this franking. It is also the earliest known cover franked with the 10 cent black on white paper. The bottom cover was charged the outport rate via Halifax although it is marked direct mail and was probably forwarded aboard the first sailing of the coastal west mail-boat from St. John's on 22 June 1871. The new rate by mail-boat was 3 cents². The latest of the 5 recorded covers³.



Via St. John's 1871 19 April. Received Harbor Grace 21 April.
Rated 13c per ½ ounce as incoming ship letter plus inland rate¹.



Mailed Harbor Grace 1871 21 June. Via St. John's 21 June. Received SPM 24 June.
Rated 13c per ½ ounce outport to first port¹.

¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2. ² Post Office Notice 1870 9 May. ³ Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley.

St. John's to Charlottetown

The top cover is the earliest recorded at the rate¹ and the only one with this franking. It has been fully paid to Halifax and handstamped 3 pence (Sterling) due for the onward transmission to Charlottetown. The lower cover has been fully paid to its destination. Stamps are from the 1865 first cents issue.



Mailed St. John's 1866 24 July. Received Prince Edward Island 30 July.
Rated 10c paid per ½ ounce port-to-port to Halifax. 3d Sterling collect Halifax to Prince Edward Island.

St. John's to Point Prim



Mailed St. John's 1872 13 May. Via Charlottetown 20 May.

Rated 13 cents per ½ ounce².

¹ Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley. ² Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Maritime Provinces

Nova Scotia

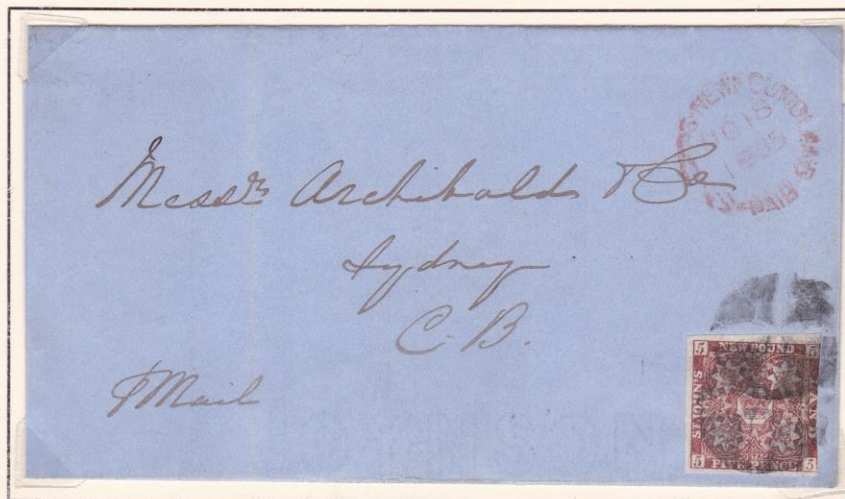
St. John's to Sydney, Cape Breton

Examples of letters paying the new cents rates by Sterling stamps. In this instance the 5 pence Sterling stamps convert to 10 Newfoundland cents. Both items were carried direct from St. John's to the port of North Sydney thus not incurring any inland charge. There are 8 recorded covers of this franking.



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Mailed St. John's 1865 5 September. Received North Sydney 9 September.
Rated port-to-port 10 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce¹. The adhesive is the 5d red brown of the third pence printing.



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1865 18 October. Received North Sydney 21 October.
Rated port-to-port 10 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce¹. The adhesive is the 5d Venetian red of the second pence printing.
¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Maritime Provinces

Nova Scotia

Circular Rate Before and After Decimal Currency Stamps Available

St. John's to Little Bras D'or, Cape Breton

These two circulars both pay the same decimal Currency rate introduced on April 7 1865¹. Because a 2 cent decimal stamp was not available until 15 November 1865 the 1 pence Sterling stamp converted to 2 cents. The top circular is one of two recorded whilst the lower one is the only recorded item².



Mailed St. John's 1865 25 July. Via North Sydney 27 July.

Rated 2 cents (1 penny Sterling) per 2 ounces¹. The adhesive is the 1d brown purple of the first pence printing.



Mailed St. John's 1867 30 April. Via North Sydney 3 May.

Rated 2 cents per 2 ounces¹. The adhesive is the 2c of the first decimal printing.

¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2. ² Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley.

Maritime Provinces

Nova Scotia

Paid in Stamps

St. John's to Sydney, Cape Breton

The top letter pays the port-to-port double rate and has been charged a collect amount of 10 cents, being the unpaid Nova Scotia internal rate. This is the only cover of the rate recorded to Nova Scotia and the earliest use of the 10 cents stamp¹. The lower cover has been paid the single rate to destination.



Mailed St. John's 1866 24 January. Via Halifax 29 January. Received North Sydney 1 February.
Rated 20 cents per ounce port-to port St. John's to Halifax¹ plus 10 cents Nova Scotia currency collect.

St. John's to Wilmot

Paid in Cash



Mailed St. John's 1866 21 March. Via Halifax 26 March. Received Wilmot 27 March.
Rated 13 cents per ½ ounce¹.

¹ Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley. ² Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.

Maritime Provinces

Nova Scotia

Letter Rates Paid by Stamp

St. John's to Christmas Island, Cape Breton

Both covers have been paid by 13 cents stamps from the first cents printing. Nova Scotia ceased to be an independent colony of Great Britain from July 1 1867 when it joined the Dominion of Canada. Mail from that date would be subject to the rates and conditions of the Dominion. The lower cover is the only recorded item paying the double rate².



Mailed St. John's 1866 16 October. Via North Sydney & Sydney 19 October, Plaister Cove 2 November & Mabou 4 November.
Rated 13 cents per ½ ounce¹.

Harbor Grace to Sydney, Cape Breton



Mailed Harbor Grace 1866 25 December. Received North Sydney 28 December.
Double rated 26 cents per ounce¹.

¹ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2. ² Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley.

United States of America
Use of Pence Stamps in the Decimal Period
St. John's to Baltimore

Both these covers were mailed in the interim period between decimal currency being introduced on 7 April 1865 and stamps becoming available on 15 November. The top cover is franked with 4 pence from the third pence printing, whilst both have a 1 penny stamp from the first printing. Additionally, the lower cover has a bisected 6 pence from the third printing and a manuscript 2 (pence) paid in cash. Both frankings equate to the new 10 cents port-to-port rate and are the only recorded examples¹.



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1865 18 October. Via Boston 28 October. Carried Cunard "Africa"⁴.
 Rated 10 cents (5 pence Sterling) port-to-port per ½ ounce². 5 Cents USA inland rate collect³.

St. John's to New York



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1865 14 November. Via Boston 22 November. Carried Cunard "China"⁴.
 Rated 10 cents (5 pence Sterling) port-to-port per ½ ounce². 5 cents USA inland rate collect³.

¹ The Pence Issues of Newfoundland 1857-1866 Robert Pratt. ² Act 28 Victoria cap. 2. ³ Act of 3 March 1855. ⁴ Hubbard & Winter page 53.

United States of America
Pence and Cents Use in Decimal Stamp Period
St. John's to Boston

The top cover was carried by a non-contract vessel to a port on the eastern seaboard then forwarded to Boston and charged as a ship letter. Although, cents stamps were available from November 15 1865 the post office still accepted pence stamps to pay the port-to-port rate. This is the only recorded cover with this franking¹. The lower cover is the earliest recorded use of the new 10 cents stamp to USA².



(E)

Mailed St. John's 1865 14 December. Received Boston 25 December.
 Rated 10 cents (5 pence Sterling) port-to-port per ½ ounce³. 10 cents USA incoming ship letter rate collect⁴.

St. John's to Westin, Massachusetts



Mailed St. John's 1866 11 June. Via Boston 21 June. Carried Cunard "China"⁵.
 Rated 10 cents port-to-port per ½ ounce³. 5 cents USA inland rate collect⁶.

¹ The Pence Issues of Newfoundland 1857-1866 Robert Pratt. ² Newfoundland Census 1865-1879 Sammy Whaley. ³ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2. ⁴ Post Office Notice Effective 1863 30 June. ⁵ Hubbard & Winter page 54. ⁶ Act of 3 March 1855.

Great Britain
Cunard Registered Packet Letter Paid Stamp and Cash
St. John's to Dumfries, Scotland

The top registered letter has been paid in cash for the fee whilst a stamp pays the 12 cents postage. It is the only recorded cover at the rate and the earliest use of a cent stamp issued 15 November 1865¹. The 12 cents registration fee was reduced to 8 cents from 1 February 1866 in a reciprocal agreement with Great Britain. The lower cover shows use of the first issue 12 cents stamp on thin yellowish paper.



Mailed St. John's 1865 14 December. Received Dumfries 1866 2 January. Carried Cunard "Asia"². Rated 20 cents per ½ ounce (12 cents postage 12 cents registration fee)³. Latter was paid in cash.

Cunard Packet Letter
Harbor Grace to Poole, Dorset



Mailed Harbor Grace 1866 24 December. Via St. John's 25 December. Received Poole 12 January. Carried Cunard "Java"². Rated 12 cents per ½ ounce³.

¹ Newfoundland Specialized Stamp Catalogue. ² Hubbard & Winter pages 53 & 54. ³ Act 28 Victoria cap. 2.