

Canada Two-Ring Numeral Cancels FROM THE MARITIME POST OFFICES

The two-ring numeral cancels of nineteenth century Canada span two important areas for collectors, the Large Queen and early Small Queen periods. This has been a hindrance of sorts to collectors of the two rings, for it meant either incompleteness (not all cancels are known on all denominations of both issues) or delving into both fields, no mean financial task.

One way around this hindrance is to approach collecting two-rings by area or Province.

Historical Background:

After the union of the colonial postal administrations on April 1, 1868, a novel group of official obliterators was introduced in Canada. The device was two thick rings surrounding a number. The outer diameter of the rings is about $\frac{1}{16}$ " of an inch.

The numbers assigned ran from 1 to 60 and were issued to sixty important post offices throughout the country. No official listing of these numeral assignments has ever been found, but it would appear the order of assignment was "roughly" based on the amount of annual postal revenue.

Montreal, the busiest office received number 1, Toronto 2, Quebec 3, and so on through to 60. All of the numbers except 17 and 20 have been associated with post offices by cover evidence.

The post offices at which the two-ring numeral cancel was used are listed in the next column in order of numeral allocation.

The twelve Maritime Post Offices where this cancel was used are highlighted below.

1	Montreal	31	Oshawa
2	Toronto	32	Barrie
3	Quebec	33	Sherbrooke
4	Halifax	34	Chatham
5	Hamilton	35	Lindsay
6	London	36	St. Johns
7	St. John	37	Amherst
8	Ottawa	38	Bowmanville
9	Kingston	39	Whitby
10	Sydney	40	Cornwall
11	Fredericton	41	St. Marys
12	St. Catharines	42	Acton Vale
13	Belleville	43	Windsor
14	Quebec	44	Owen Sound
15	Brantford	45	Perth
16	Brockville	46	Dundas
17	Nor. Knowl.	47	Napanee
18	Yarmouth	48	Simcoe
19	Peterborough	49	Prescott
20	Nor. Knowl.	50	St. Andrews
21	Coderich	51	Pictou
22	Galt	52	St. Hyacinthe
23	Woodstock	53	Three Rivers
24	Stratford	54	Truro
25	New Glasgow	55	Berlin
26	Windsor	56	Brampton
27	Ingersoll	57	Paris
28	Sarnia	58	St. Thomas
29	Colborne	59	Clinton
30	Pictou	60	Newmarket

This exhibit illustrates the Two-Ring Numeral Obliterator throughout its entire known period of use in the Maritime Provinces. It includes issues from both the Large and Small Queen periods.

10 - Sydney, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,137
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 10

Earliest Reported Use: April 2, 1869
Latest Reported Use: June 18, 1874

Comments: The "C.B." in the cancel for Cape Breton.



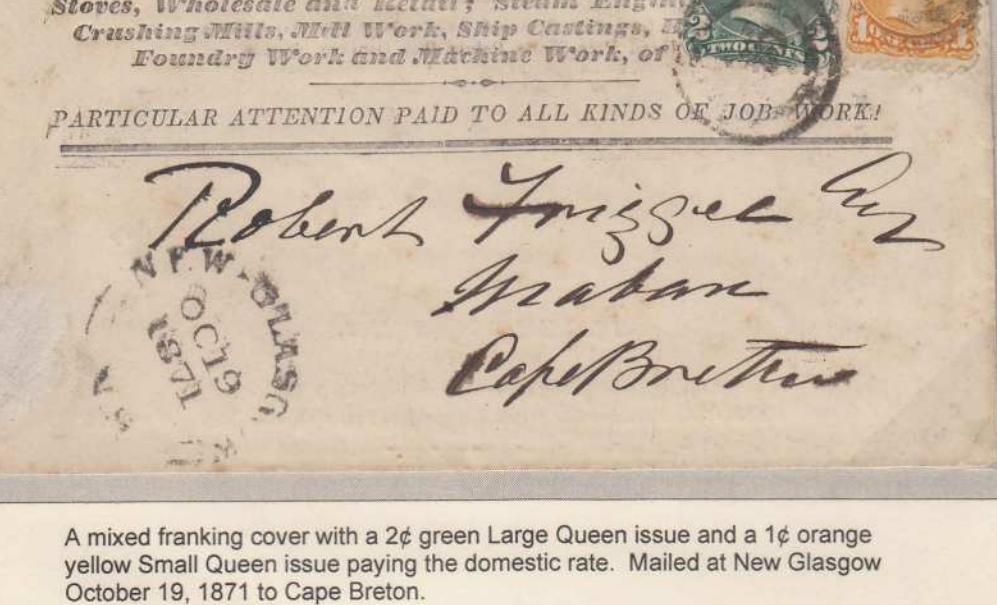
1/2 orange, 3/6 dull red, and 6/6 yellow brown paying the 10¢ rate for 1/4 oz. to France. This pre-UPU rate was in effect from October, 1870 through January, 1876.

25 - New Glasgow, Nova Scotia

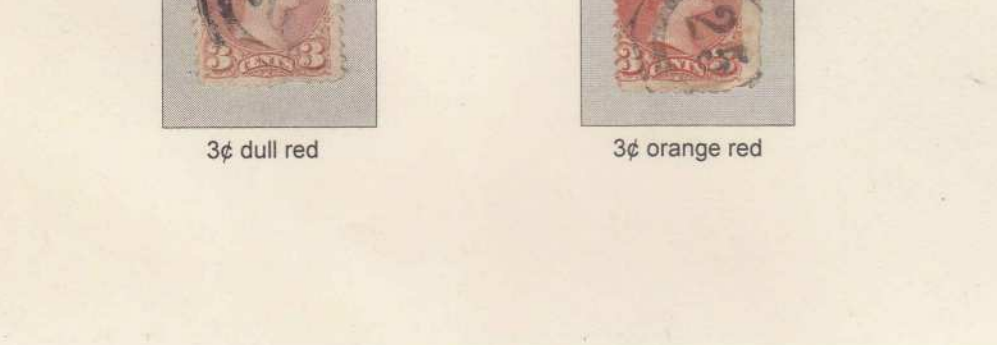
Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,239
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 3

Earliest Reported Use: May 21, 1869
Latest Reported Use: March 6, 1873

Comments: Covers with strikes of the two ring 25 have an increased rarity factor of 4.



A mixed franking cover with a 2/6 green Large Queen issue and a 1/6 orange yellow Small Queen issue paying the domestic rate. Mailed at New Glasgow October 19, 1871 to Cape Breton.



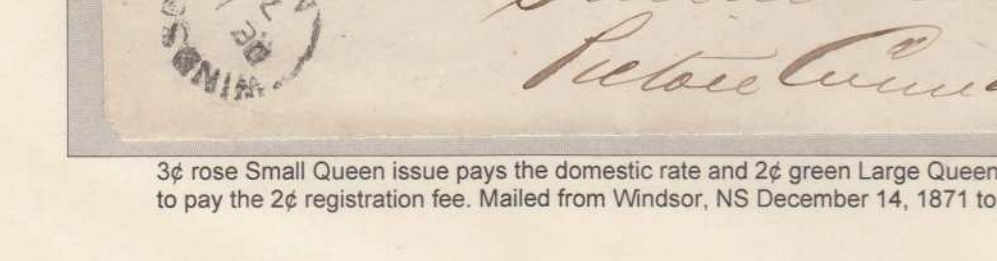
43 - Windsor, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,340
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 4
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 3

Earliest Reported Use: May 10, 1869
Latest Reported Use: January 30, 1887



3/6 red Large Queen issue pays the domestic rate. Mailed November 18, 1869 to Hon. Ed Palmer, Charlottetown, P.E.I. Palmer was a member of the Provincial Legislative Council representing Queens County (Charlottetown and Royalty).



3/6 rose Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate and 2/6 green Large Queen issue used to pay the 2¢ registration fee. Mailed from Windsor, NS December 14, 1871 to Stellarton.

4 - Halifax, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$26,505
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 7

Earliest Reported Use: March 31, 1869
Latest Reported Use: April 30, 1869

Comments: During the period of use of the Halifax two-ring the duplex "H" was the normal obliterator. Although the latest reported use is April 13, 1869, it was obviously used later as proven by the Small Queen stamps.



3/6 red Large Queen issue paying the domestic rate from Halifax April 30, 1869 to Barrington. This is the latest reported use of this cancel.



7 - St. John, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$23,652
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 1
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 1

Earliest Reported Use: April 12, 1869
Latest Reported Use: June 10, 1870

Comments: This is the most common of the two ring numerals. Different hammers were in use and the differences can be distinguished by the bottom slope of the number.



New Brunswick #8 strip of three paying the 3¢ domestic rate St. John New Brunswick Dec 27, 1869 to Bridgetown, NS. Very late use of this issue, a full 14 months after the introduction of the Large Queen issues.

St. John, New Brunswick (cont.)

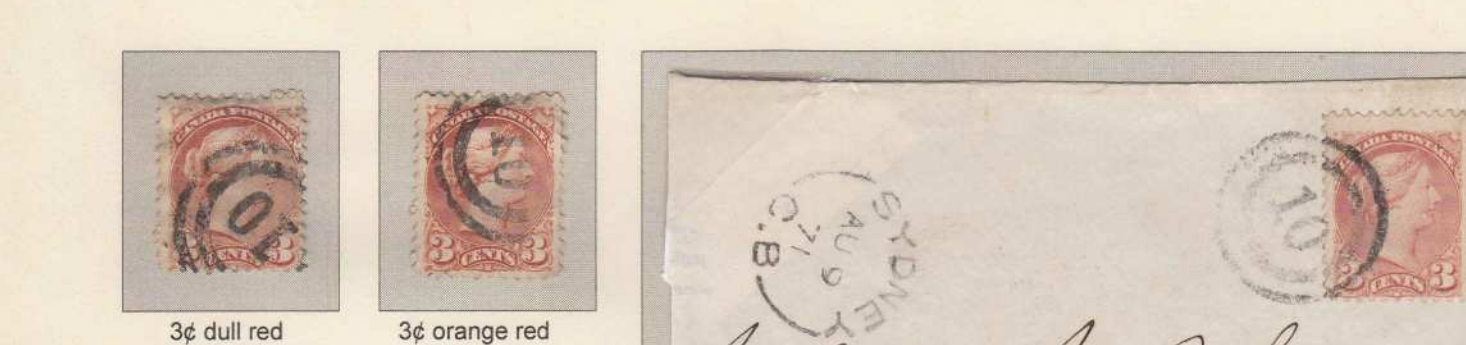


3/6 rose pays the rate to the U.S.A. St. John JU 12 1872 to Lowell, Mass.



1/6 orange strip of three pays the domestic rate St. John SP 19 72 to Cambridge, NB.

Sydney, Nova Scotia (cont.)



3/6 dull red Small Queen issue paying the domestic rate from Sydney August 9 Malagawatch, Cape Breton.



1/6 yellow and 2/6 green Small Queen issues paying the 3¢ domestic rate from Sydney April 10, 1874 to Bridgewater.

11 - Fredericton, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$7,955
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 2
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 2

Earliest Reported Use: April 3, 1869
Latest Reported Use: August 17, 1880

Comments: The two ring 11 was replaced by the "11" duplex obliterator in early 1882. Although the latest date reported, August 17, 1880, is based on cover evidence, this hammer is known on the 1887 Queen Victoria Jubilee issue of 1887.



3/6 red Large Queen issue paying the domestic rate. Mailed from Fredericton January 13, 1870 to St. Stephen, NB.

18 - Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

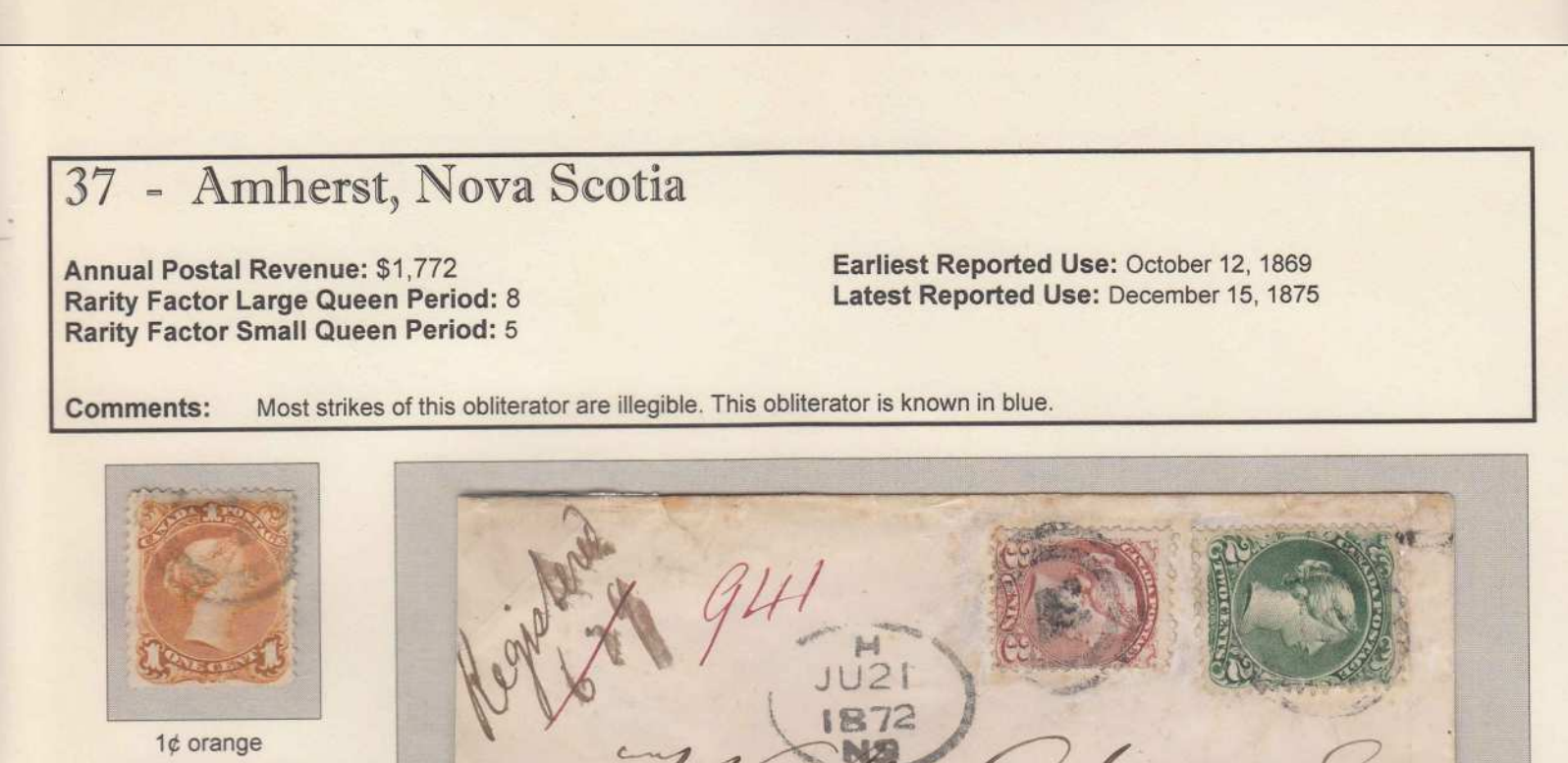
Annual Postal Revenue: \$3,373
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 7

Earliest Reported Use: August 11, 1869
Latest Reported Use: March 27, 1875

Comments: Most strikes of the two-ring 18 are of poor quality.



3/6 dull red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate. Mailed Yarmouth August 21, 1871 to Sarnia.



1/6 blue Victorian postal card mailed from Yarmouth Sept. 19, 1872 to Londonderry. Beginning in 1871 the rate for postal cards was one cent.

30 - Pictou, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,581
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 7
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Earliest Reported Use: April 8, 1869
Latest Reported Use: October 8, 1881

Comments: The two-ring 30 strike is usually faint.



3/6 dull red Small Queen issue mailed from Pictou January 12, 1871. Although addressed to the United States the cover only pays the domestic rate of 3¢. The rate to the United States at this time was 6¢. The cover bears a handstamp MISSENT TO ST. JOHN and has Saint John and Amherst cancels on reverse.

34 - Chatham, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,308
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 8
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 8

Earliest Reported Use: December 12, 1872
Latest Reported Use: May 23, 1879

Comments: Various obliterators were in use concurrently. Since two ring obliterators are known on the 3/6 Large Queen, this cancel must have been in use during 1869-1870, although no dated covers have been reported. Thus, Large Queen covers are very rare.



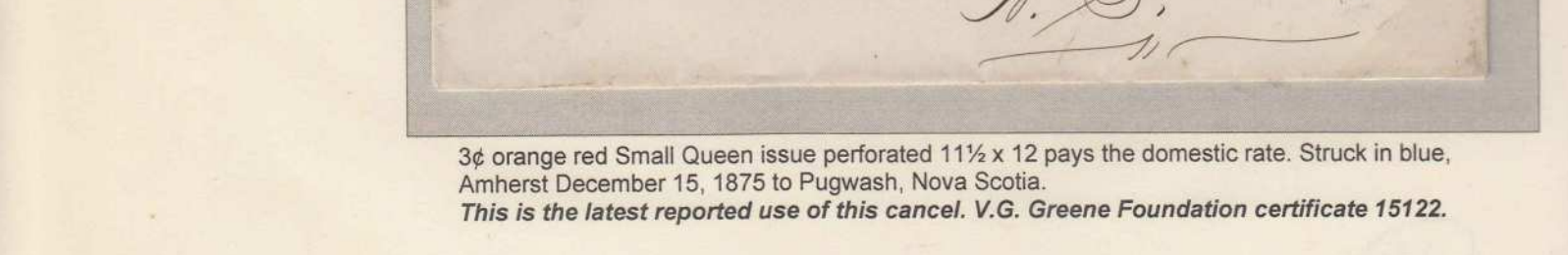
3/6 rose Small Queen issue on mourning cover pays the domestic rate. Mailed Chatham, NB March 19, 1873 to Resigouche.

37 - Amherst, Nova Scotia

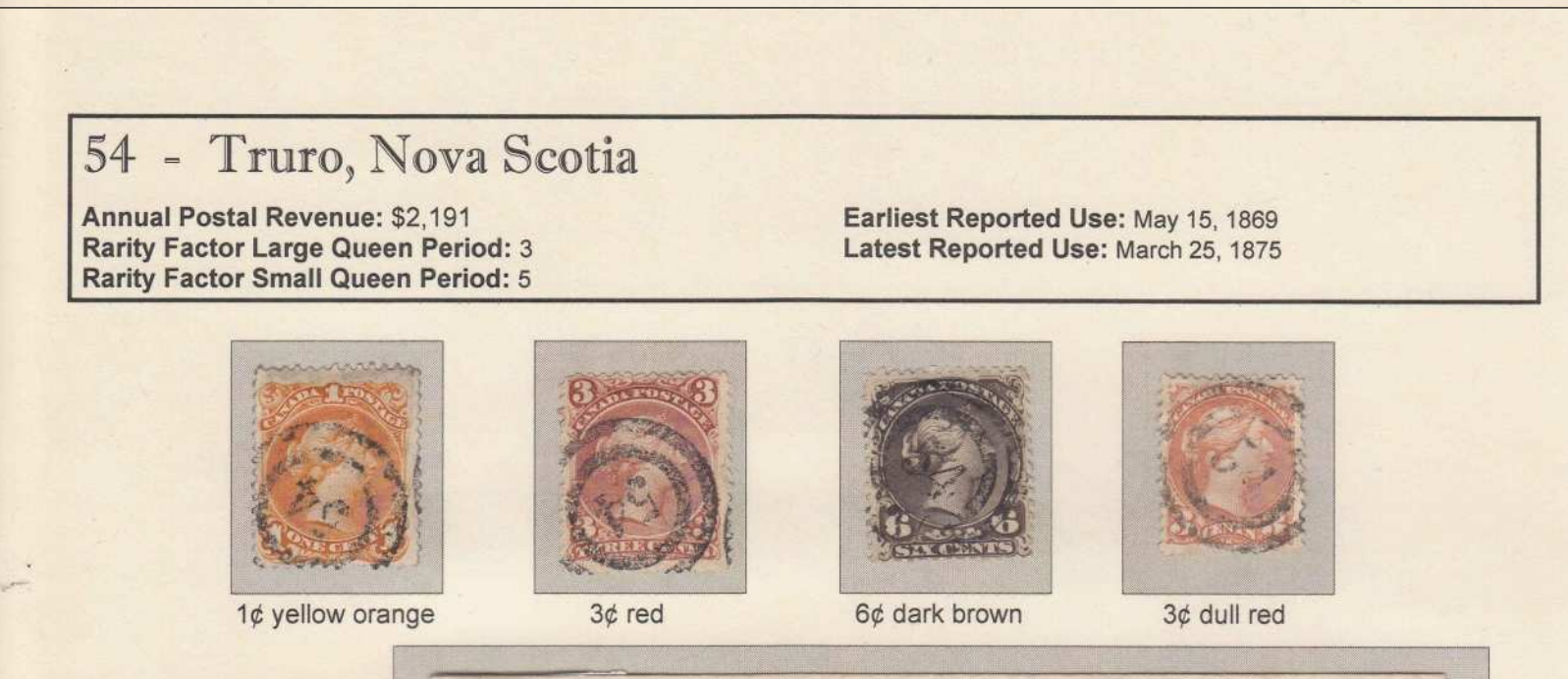
Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,772
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 8
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Earliest Reported Use: October 12, 1869
Latest Reported Use: December 15, 1875

Comments: Most strikes of this obliterator are illegible. This obliterator is known in blue.



2/6 green Large Queen issue and 3/6 dull red Small Queen on registered cover Amherst June 19, 1872 to Cornwallis.



3/6 orange red Small Queen issue perforated 11 1/2 x 12 pays the domestic rate. Struck in blue. Amherst December 15, 1875 to Pugwash, Nova Scotia. This is the latest reported use of this cancel. V.G. Greene Foundation certificate 15122.

50 - St. Andrews, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,165
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 10
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 4

Earliest Reported Use: May 22, 1872
Latest Reported Use: February 21, 1900

Comments: Of all the two-ring cancels, cover evidence proves this to be the one in use the longest.

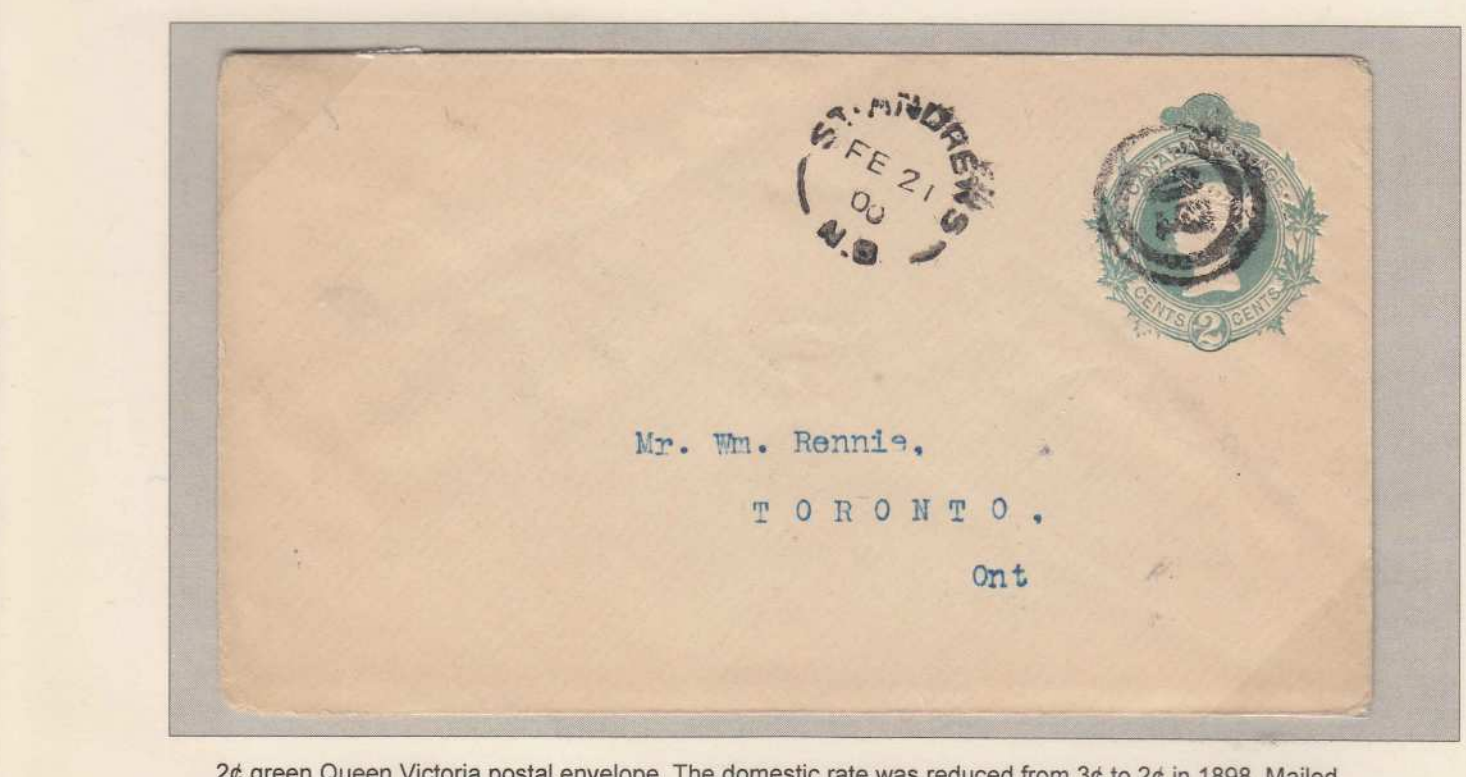


3/6 vermilion Small Queen issue and 3/6 rose Diamond Jubilee issue paying the double domestic rate of 6¢ for 2 oz. Mailed from St. Andrews OC 20 1897 to Kent Co., NB.

St. Andrews, New Brunswick (cont.)



3/6 vermilion Small Queen issue pays the rate to the United States and registry fee paid by 5¢ registration issue. Mailed St. Andrews November 18, 1880 to Boston.

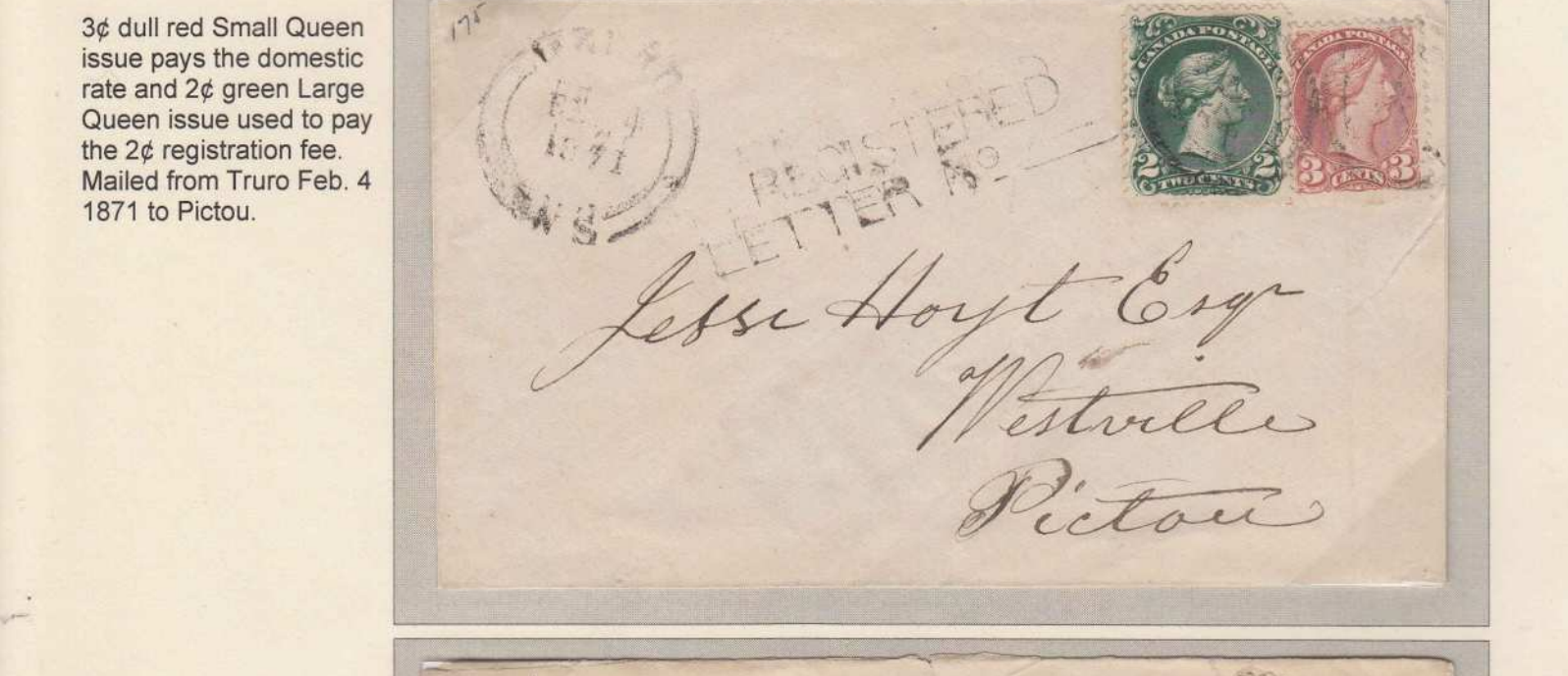


2/6 green Queen Victoria postal envelope. The domestic rate was reduced from 3¢ to 2¢ in 1898. Mailed St. Andrews February 21, 1900 to Toronto. This is the latest reported use of this obliterator.

54 - Truro, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,191
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Earliest Reported Use: May 15, 1869
Latest Reported Use: March 26, 1875



3/6 dull red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate and 2/6 green Large Queen issue used to pay the 2¢ registration fee. Mailed from Truro Feb 4 1871 to Pictou.



3/6 copper red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate. Mailed from Truro June 2, 1870 to New Annan.

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Historical Background:

After the union of the colonial postal administrations on April 1, 1868, a novel group of official obliterations was introduced in Canada. The device was two thick rings surrounding a number. The outer diameter of the rings is about $15/16^{\text{ths}}$ of an inch.

The numbers assigned ran from 1 to 60 and were issued to sixty important post offices throughout the country. No official listing of these numeral assignments has ever been found, but it would appear the order of assignment was "roughly" based on the amount of annual postal revenue.

Montreal, the busiest office received number 1, Toronto 2, Quebec 3, and so on through to 60. All of the numbers except 17 and 20 have been associated with post offices by cover evidence.

The post offices at which the two-ring numeral cancel was used are listed in the next column in order of numeral allocation.

The twelve Maritime Post Offices where this cancel was used are highlighted below.

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8	Ottawa	38	Bowmanville
9	Kingston	39	Whitby
10	Sydney	40	Cornwall
11	Fredericton	41	St. Marys
12	St. Catharines	42	Acton Vale
13	Belleville	43	Windsor
14	Guelph	44	Owen Sound
15	Brantford	45	Perth
16	Brockville	46	Dundas
17	Not Known	47	Napanee
18	Yarmouth	48	Simcoe
19	Peterborough	49	Prescott
20	Not Known	50	St. Andrews
21	Goderich	51	Pictou
22	Galt	52	St. Hyacinthe
23	Woodstock	53	Three Rivers
24	Stratford	54	Truro
25	New Glasgow	55	Berlin
26	Windsor	56	Brampton
27	Ingersoll	57	Paris
28	Sarnia	58	St. Thomas
29	Cobourg	59	Clinton
30	Pictou	60	Newmarket

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4 - Halifax, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$26,505
 Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
 Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 7

Earliest Reported Use: March 31, 1869
 Latest Reported Use: April 30, 1869

Comments: During the period of use of the Halifax two-ring the duplex "H" was the normal obliterator. Although the latest reported use is April 13, 1869, it was obviously used later as proven by the Small Queen stamps.



1/2¢ black



1¢ brown red



1¢ yellow orange



2¢ green



3¢ red



6¢ brown



3¢ red Large Queen issue paying the domestic rate from Halifax April 30, 1869 to Barrington
This is the latest reported use of this cancel.



12 1/2¢ blue



1¢ orange



3¢ vermilion



1¢ yellow orange pair



1¢ deep orange pair

7 - St. John, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$23,652
 Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 1
 Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 1

Earliest Reported Use: April 12, 1869
 Latest Reported Use: June 19, 1876

Comments: This is the most common of the two ring numerals. Different hammers were in use and the differences can be distinguished by the bottom slope of the number.



1/2¢ black



1¢ red brown



1¢ yellow orange



2¢ green



3¢ red



5¢ olive green



6¢ dark brown



12 1/2¢ blue



15¢ red lilac



New Brunswick #6 strip of three paying the 3¢ domestic rate St. John New Brunswick DE 27 1869 to Bridgetown, NS. *Very late use of this issue, a full 14 months after the introduction of the Large Queen issues.*

St. John, New Brunswick (con't)



1¢ yellow



1¢ deep orange



2¢ green



3¢ rose



3¢ copper red



6¢ yellow brown



3¢ rose pays the rate to the U.S.A. St. John JU 12 1872 to Lowell, Mass.



1¢ orange strip of three pays the domestic rate St. John SP 19 72 to Cambridge, NB

10 - Sydney, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,137
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 10

Earliest Reported Use: April 2, 1869
Latest Reported Use: June 18, 1874

Comments: The "C.B." in the cancel for Cape Breton.



1/2¢ black



2¢ green



3¢ red



6¢ yellow brown



12 1/2¢ blue



15¢ red lilac



1¢ orange, 3¢ dull red, and 6¢ yellow brown paying the 10¢ rate for 1/4 oz. to France. This pre-UPU rate was in effect from October, 1870 through January, 1876.

Sydney, Nova Scotia (con't)



3¢ dull red



3¢ orange red



1¢ yellow
blue cancel



3¢ vermilion
blue cancel



3¢ dull red Small Queen issue paying the domestic rate from Sydney August 9 Malagawatch, Cape Breton.



6¢ chocolate brown



6¢ yellow brown
blue cancel



3¢ vermilion



1¢ yellow and 2¢ green Small Queen issues paying the 3¢ domestic rate from Sydney April 10, 1874 to Bridgewater.

11 - Fredericton, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$7,595

Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 2

Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 2

Earliest Reported Use: April 3, 1869

Latest Reported Use: August 17, 1880

Comments: The two ring 11 was replaced by the "11" duplex obliterator in early 1882. Although the latest date reported, August 17, 1880, is based on cover evidence, this hammer is known on the 1897 Queen Victoria Jubilee issue of 1897.



1¢ yellow orange



3¢ red



6¢ yellow brown



6¢ brown



12½¢ blue



15¢ red lilac



3¢ red Large Queen issue paying the domestic rate. Mailed from Fredericton January 13, 1870 to St. Stephen, NB.

18 - Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$3,373
 Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
 Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 7

Earliest Reported Use: August 11, 1869
 Latest Reported Use: March 27, 1875

Comments: Most strikes of the two-ring 18 are of poor quality.



3¢ red



2¢ green

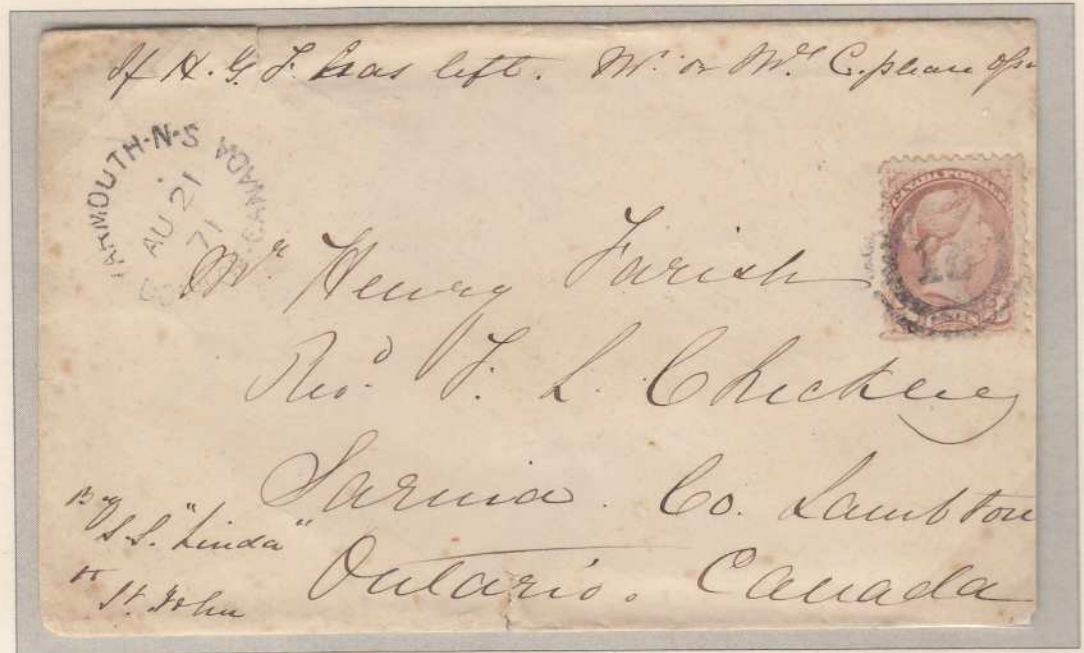


6¢ yellow brown



3¢ rose

3¢ dull red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate.
 Mailed Yarmouth August 21, 1871 to Sarnia.



1¢ blue Victorian postal card mailed from Yarmouth Sept. 19, 1872 to Londonderry. Beginning in 1871 the rate for postal cards was one cent.

25 - New Glasgow, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,239
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 3

Earliest Reported Use: May 21, 1869
Latest Reported Use: March 6, 1873

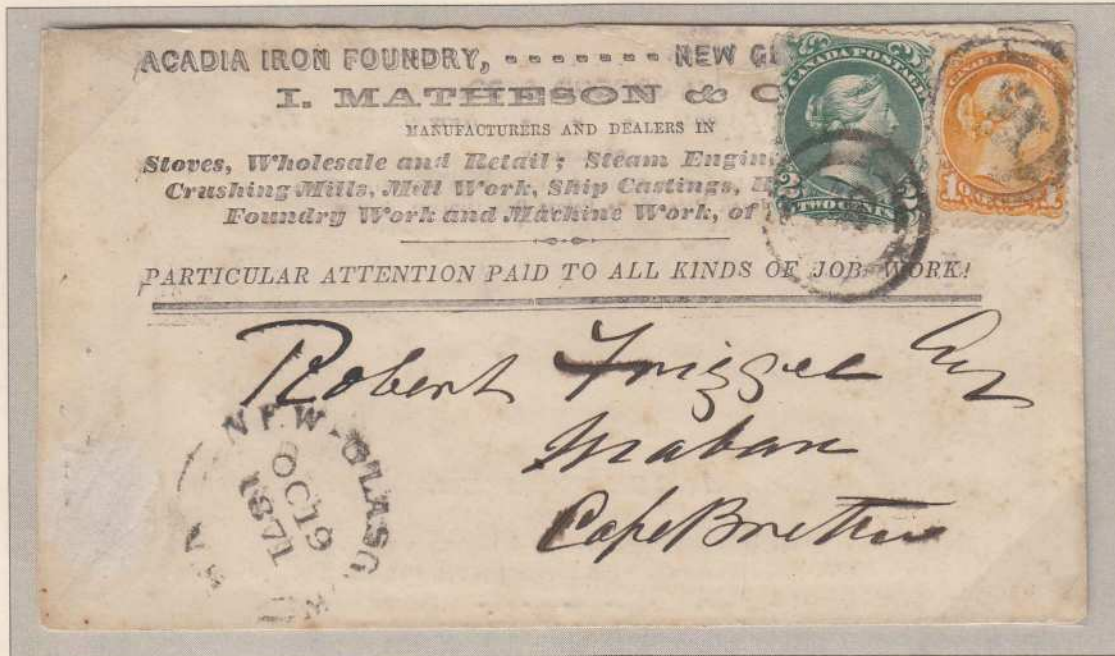
Comments: Covers with strikes of the two ring 25 have an increased rarity factor of 4.



3¢ red



12½¢ blue



A mixed franking cover with a 2¢ green Large Queen issue and a 1¢ orange yellow Small Queen issue paying the domestic rate. Mailed at New Glasgow October 19, 1871 to Cape Breton.



3¢ dull red



3¢ orange red

30 - Pictou, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,581

Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 7

Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Comments: The two-ring 30 strike is usually faint.

Earliest Reported Use: April 8, 1869

Latest Reported Use: October 8, 1881



1¢ red brown



3¢ red



5¢ olive green



6¢ yellow brown



15¢ red lilac



3¢ dull red



3¢ vermilion



3¢ dull red Small Queen issue mailed from Pictou January 12, 1871. Although addressed to the United States the cover only pays the domestic rate of 3¢. The rate to the United States at this time was 6¢. The cover bears a handstamp MISSENT TO ST. JOHN and has Saint John and Amherst cancels on reverse.

34 - Chatham, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,308

Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 8

Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 8

Earliest Reported Use: December 12, 1872

Latest Reported Use: May 23, 1879

Comments: Various obliterators were in use concurrently. Since two ring obliterators are known on the 3¢ Large Queen, this cancel must have been in use during 1869-1870, although no dated covers have been reported. Thus, Large Queen covers are very rare.



1¢ brown red



2¢ green



3¢ red



12½¢ blue



3¢ vermilion



3¢ rose Small Queen issue on mourning cover pays the domestic rate.
Mailed Chatham, NB March 19, 1873 to Restigouche.

37 - Amherst, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,772
Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 8
Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Earliest Reported Use: October 12, 1869
Latest Reported Use: December 15, 1875

Comments: Most strikes of this obliterator are illegible. This obliterator is known in blue.



1¢ orange



5¢ olive green



3¢ dull red



6¢ yellow brown



2¢ green Large Queen issue and 3¢ dull red Small Queen on registered cover Amherst June 19, 1872 to Cornwallis.



3¢ orange red Small Queen issue perforated $11\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ pays the domestic rate. Struck in blue, Amherst December 15, 1875 to Pugwash, Nova Scotia.

This is the latest reported use of this cancel. V.G. Greene Foundation certificate 15122.

43 - Windsor, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,340
 Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 4
 Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 3

Earliest Reported Use: May 10, 1869
 Latest Reported Use: January 30, 1887



1¢ brown red



3¢ red



6¢ dark brown



3¢ red Large Queen issue pays the domestic rate. Mailed November 18, 1869 to Hon. Ed Palmer, Charlottetown, P.E.I. Palmer was a member of The Provincial Legislative council representing Queens County (Charlottetown and Royalty).



3¢ rose Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate and 2¢ green Large Queen issue used to pay the 2¢ registration fee. Mailed from Windsor, NS December 14, 1871 to Stellarton.

50 - St. Andrews, New Brunswick

Annual Postal Revenue: \$1,165

Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 10

Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 4

Comments: Of all the two-ring cancels, cover evidence proves this to be the one in use the longest.

Earliest Reported Use: May 22, 1872

Latest Reported Use: February 21, 1900



2¢ green



1¢ yellow



3¢ vermilion



6¢ yellow brown



20¢ vermilion



1¢ orange



3¢ rose



3¢ vermilion Small Queen issue and 3¢ rose Diamond Jubilee issue paying the double domestic rate of 6¢ for 2 oz. Mailed from St. Andrews OC 20 1897 to Kent Co., NB.

St. Andrews, New Brunswick (con't)



3¢ vermilion Small Queen issue pays the rate to the United States and registry fee paid by 5¢ registration issue. Mailed St. Andrews November 18, 1890 to Boston.



2¢ green Queen Victoria postal envelope. The domestic rate was reduced from 3¢ to 2¢ in 1898. Mailed St. Andrews February 21, 1900 to Toronto. *This is the latest reported use of this obliterator.*

54 - Truro, Nova Scotia

Annual Postal Revenue: \$2,191
 Rarity Factor Large Queen Period: 3
 Rarity Factor Small Queen Period: 5

Earliest Reported Use: May 15, 1869
 Latest Reported Use: March 25, 1875



1¢ yellow orange



3¢ red



6¢ dark brown



3¢ dull red

3¢ dull red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate and 2¢ green Large Queen issue used to pay the 2¢ registration fee. Mailed from Truro Feb. 4 1871 to Pictou.



3¢ copper red Small Queen issue pays the domestic rate. Mailed from Truro June 2, 1870 to New Annan.

