

Rate for Mailing Photographs in the Large Queen Era

Mark Berner

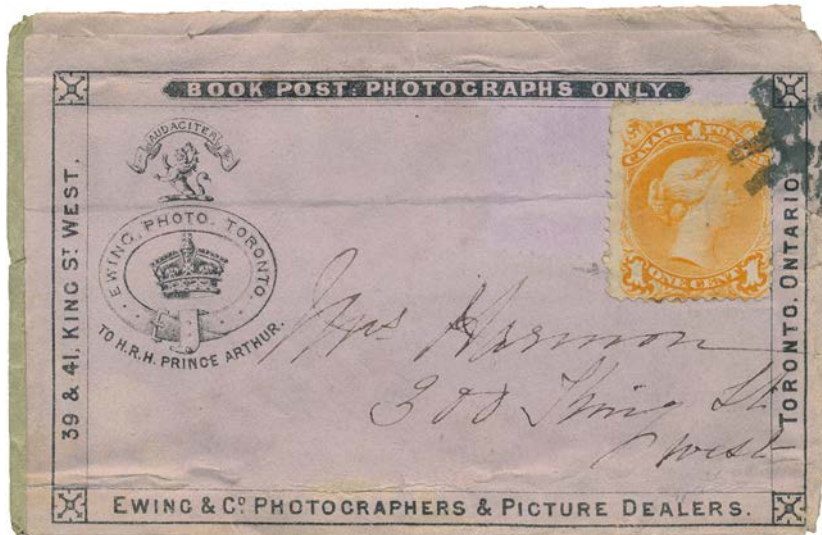


Figure 1. Ewing & Co. Photographers & Picture Dealers, Toronto, paying one-cent photographers' rate.

The Large Queen Era is somewhat loosely defined due to the overlapping of Large Queen and Small Queen issues, the latter issue being phased in over a number of years. All of the Large Queen values, except for the five-cent, were issued April 1, 1968. The five-cent value was issued October 1, 1875. The one-cent and three-cent Small Queens were issued in 1870 to meet the rising demand for the most commonly-used values. The half-cent Large Queen was not replaced by the half-cent Small Queen until 1882 and the fifteen-cent Large Queen was used until replaced by the fifteen-cent Jubilee in 1897. Therefore, the Large Queen Era might be considered to extend from 1868 to the mid/late 1870's, except for the use of the half-cent value to 1882 and the fifteen-cent value to 1897.

The rate for mailing photographs was included under the general category of domestic printed matter (later to become Third Class Mail). The essential requirements for printed matter to qualify for this rate were open covers to allow for inspection and the absence of any letter or written communication.

The specific reference to photographs can be found in The Post Office Act 1867, which came into effect April 1, 1868. General Regulations, Part XVI, section 179, states that:

Book and Newspaper Manuscript, Printer's Proof Sheets, (whether corrected or not) Maps, Prints, Drawings, Engravings, Photographs (when not on glass or in a case containing glass), Sheet Music (whether printed or written,) to any address in Canada or in the United States, may pass in covers

open at both ends or both sides, provided that no letter other communication intended to serve the purpose of a letter be enclosed therein, on prepayment when posted in Canada, by Postage stamp, of the ordinary printed matter rate of one cent per ounce, or upon payment of that rate on delivery of such matter when received in the mails from the United States.

I am aware of only three photographers' rate covers from the Large Queen Era. The cover illustrated in this article, circa 1870, consists of an illustrated wrapper surrounding a stiffened, cardboard-like mailing sleeve, open at both ends. It is from Ewing & Co. Photographers & Picture Dealers, 39 & 41 King St. West, Toronto. The one-cent yellow-orange Large Queen stamp (#23) is tied by a cross-road cork cancel.

The second cover is a wrapper enveloping a mailing sleeve illustrated with a crowned 'Notman Montreal / Photographer To The Queen'. Along the bottom of the wrapper appear the words "Additional Copies can be had by sending the No. on cor. of Photograph". It was sent to Hawkesbury. The one-cent Large Queen (#23) is cancelled with a two-ring #8 obliterator. This cover resides in a private collection.

The third cover appears in the Large Queen sale of Brigham Auctions February 22, 2014, lot #65. It is the same type of wrapper surrounding a mailing sleeve as the other two. Like the second cover, it is illustrated Notman Montreal, but the words along the bottom are "Branches – At Toronto & Halifax". It was mailed February 27, 1876 (manuscript date upper top left – 27.2.76) to Cambridge Mass. The two copies of the half-cent Large Queen stamps (#21) and the one-cent Small Queen (#35) tied by cork cancels pay the two-cent rate. The catalogue describes "rare two cent photographers rate to the USA". Since the same rate applied to both Canada and the United States, this payment of two cents represents a double rate for photographs weighing more than one ounce.

Whereas the words "Book Post: Photographs Only" appear along the top of the cover illustrated in this article, both Notman covers have the words "Paid, Book Post; Printed Matter Only".

I would be grateful for information about any other Large Queen covers demonstrating the photographers' rate. Please email me at: drmberner@videotron.ca.



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