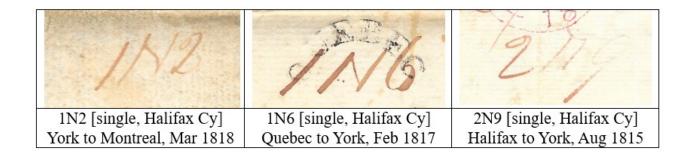
The Selective Use of [New] York Currency and Halifax Currency in Rating Mail in Upper Canada to Late August 1821

by John R. Reynolds

1080	Pain 16 -	0.10	
Pd 8d [single rate, York Cy]	Paid 10d [single, York Cy]	d 10 [single rate, York Cy]	
York to Ancaster, Feb 1817	Queenston - York, Jun 1821	Kingston to York, Jan 1803	
///	Paids 1148	248:	
1N [single rate, York Cy]	Paid 1N8 [double, York Cy]	2N8 [double rate, York Cy]	
Kingston-Montreal Mr 1819	Prescott to York, Jan 1821	Sandwich to York, Feb 1801	



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About the Author

John Reynolds lived and taught in Downtown Toronto between 1969 & 1971. Apart from running a school stamp club in Cabbagetown, his main philatelic interest was the Centennial Issue. He occasionally used Opal booklets purchased from a machine at Islington subway station, near where his now wife lived.

On their return home to Stoke-on-Trent, UK, he began collecting Canadian postal history, mainly relating to Toronto. Over the years he specialised in Machine and Duplex cancellations and Transatlantic mail, contributing to study groups and writing the occasional article for *PHSC Journal* and *Maple Leaves*.

They have returned to Toronto several times and, in 2023, were greeted with "Welcome home," by the manager of his old apartment block in Yorkville, much to the amusement of the grandchildren.

The research presented here is the result of his long-standing interest in early routes and rates to and from York/Toronto. It is a work in progress which is now coming home!

The author welcomes questions and comments about the study and is particularly interested in seeing scans of early Upper Canada postal items with similar ratings. Please contact him via the Editor at editor@postalhistorycanada.net.

Cover illustrations:

Upper: Six examples of postal rates in York Currency

Lower: Three examples of postal rates in Halifax Currency

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Introduction

Postal historians have long noted the presumed "overcharging" of some mail items in Upper Canada in the years leading up to late August 1821, under York postmaster William Allan and others. In 1977 Allan Steinhart found a report of a February 1820 meeting at the House of Assembly questioning William Allan about such postal matters. In it, the postal rates quoted by postmaster Allan were higher than the official rates expressed in Halifax currency. In 1921 William Smith had earlier reported on this inquiry and the lack of an explanation or a conclusion. Comments on these higher rates have been made about individual letters exhibited in several collections published over the last 45+ years. As far as I am aware, nobody has suggested an explanation of the rates charged at that time, other than comments about "overcharging" or "unofficial rate".

This re-appraisal suggests an explanation for these rate markings found on some, but not all, Upper Canada postal items from the time. I have found relevant evidence in my collection of York postal history and in published collections and auction catalogues. I am aware of the limitations of this evidence from about 50 paid-for letters to late August 1821, and would welcome further relevant reports. Postal and non-postal history sources, including contemporary maps, have provided useful context.

Evidence has emerged of two charging or rating systems in use on mail in Upper Canada between at least early February 1796 and late August 1821. Kingston Post Office had opened in 1789 and York by February 1798. The established Halifax Currency ratings of 4½d, 7d, 9d, 11d, 1/2d [to 400 miles] etc. were only used on Upper Canada mail to, through and from Lower Canada throughout this time.

However, there is evidence that a different rating was used on all mail sent *within Upper Canada* prior to September 1821. William Allan stated that the rates were 8d, 10d, 1/- and 1/4d [to 300 miles]. These are clearly higher amounts than those expressed in Halifax currency.

In my recent research on currencies in use in North America, I have found that as well as Halifax currency, [New] York currency was an official unit of account in Upper Canada at this time and had also been used in Montreal from 1760.³ I am convinced that Allan and other postmasters in Upper Canada were correctly rating mail in York currency, the legal and local currency familiar to the recently arrived Loyalist American settlers.

The use of [New] York currency was officially dropped by the Currency Act of 1821³ resulting in Halifax ratings being used on all mail within, to and from Upper Canada from early September 1821.

The study is in seven parts:

- Part 1. Colonial Currencies, Conversion of Sterling Rates of Postage to Halifax and [New] York Currencies.
- Part 2. Official Distances, Postal developments in Upper Canada to late 1821 and William Allan's 1820 inquiry answers.
- Part 3. [New] York Currency rates used in Canada to late August 1821.
- Part 4. Halifax Currency rates used on mail to and from Upper Canada to late August 1821.
- Part 5. Two currencies used on one letter. Rated first in Halifax Currency, then forwarded in York Currency.
- Part 6. Following the Currency Act of 1821 All rates now in Halifax Currency.
- Part 7. Concluding comments and a plea for help.

PART 1. Colonial Currencies, Conversion of Sterling Rates of Postage to Halifax and [New] York Currencies 3,4,5,6 & 7

Before checking out the rates marked on letters in our collections, we perhaps need to remind ourselves that most of them originally belonged to the world of business and administration of past times. To understand this context, we need a brief look into the realms of banking, financial accounting and the workings of Colonial Currencies.

Financial and political background to exchange rates

In financial accounting, business accounts were usually kept in one currency, for order and consistency. Coins and bills from other systems were notionally converted to that system for bookkeeping purposes. A generally accepted conversion system or "rating" of other currencies was used, typically based on their weight and the value of the precious metal they contained. In 1775 the Troy rates, where three pence sterling = 1 pennyweight (dwt) of silver, with 24 grains = 1 dwt, ceased to be used in Canada. British colonies all initially used the system of Pounds, Shillings and Pence Sterling as the unit of account, 7 where 12d = 1/- and 20/-= £1.

In the Americas in the late 18th century, the Spanish Silver Dollar was widely used as the basis for currency exchange calculations. It was worth 8 [New] York shillings or 5 Halifax shillings or 4 shillings and 6 pence Sterling. The Halifax rating remained in common use in Nova Scotia and was later adopted in Quebec by the British authorities under James Murray following the capture of Quebec City in 1759,⁵ as well as in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The [New] York rating was introduced in the Montreal and Three Rivers area by Jeffery Amherst who took the towns with his British-American troops in 1760.⁵ French rule ended with the Treaty of Paris, signed in February 1763. In 1765 the British military authorities introduced a Quebec rating, worth 6 shillings. This rating had little support and was dropped in 1777 in favour of the Halifax rating.

With many British-American merchants and settlers, [New] York currency continued to be used in Montreal and the upper country for many years. With increased trade with Quebec, Halifax and beyond, Montreal merchants turned to favour the use of Halifax currency in their transactions. Both currencies were legally acceptable units of account until 1821.

Shortly after Independence, the Continental Congress met in New York in 1785 and established the dollar as the official currency of the new United States of America, as a decimal system with 100 cents to a dollar.

Although Upper Canada formally adopted the Halifax rating under the 1796 Currency Regulations,⁴ [New] York currency remained in use, as is seen by the postal rates used by Willcocks, Allan and others. Table 1 shows the converted postal rates.

The Currency Act of 1821 dropped York currency as an official Unit of Account,⁴ though it continued in local use until the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841. Evidence shown here indicates that Halifax ratings had replaced York ratings on postal items by September 1821.

Postal charges were recorded by postmasters on each letter and listed on letter bills to accompany the mail. Charges were also listed on other documents, later used to collect payments due. Rates marked in red ink indicated prepayment in cash in person or billed to the sender's account. Those in black ink were unpaid, with payment due from the recipient in cash or billed to the recipient's account. Most senders and recipients were involved in business, government, military or legal matters and had accounts which would usually be settled monthly. Three such monthly accounts are shown in parts 3 and 4 of this study. Whichever currency was marked on the letter and recorded by the postmaster was used for book-keeping purposes, and the final total payment would be made in whichever unit of account was agreed – in Sterling, Halifax or [New] York currencies. Postmasters' and much Government business was Free.

1792 Post Office Guide.⁸ Sterling postal rates converted to Halifax currency.

Postal charges in Canada were based on the British Post Office system of number of sheets and distance carried, in a series of rate steps in Sterling currency. The distance and rate steps in Sterling, converted to Halifax currency, are shown in Table 1. They are based on the 1792 exchange rate of 4/6 Sterling = 5/- Halifax [60/54 = 1.11*x].

Sterling postal rates converted to [New] York currency.

The postage rates used and stated by William Allan were based on [New] York currency, much used in Upper Canada and Montreal at the time, especially by the thousands of incoming Loyalists following American Independence in 1783. The distance and rate steps in Sterling, converted to [New] York currency, are shown in Table 1. They are based on the exchange rate of 4/6 Sterling = 8/- [New] York [96/54 = 1.78x].

Distance in miles	Rates in Sterling	1792 – 1843 Rates in Halifax Cy	Rates in York Cy to late Aug 1821
0 - 60 m	4d	4 ½ d [4.44d]	8d [7.11d]
61-100 m	6d	7d [6.67d]	10d [10.67d]
101-200 m	8d	9d [8.89d]	1/- [1/2.22d]
201-300 m	10d	11d [11.11d]	1/4 [1/5.78d]
301-400 m	1/-	1/2 [1/1.33d]	1/10* [1/9.33d]
401-500 m	1/2	1/4 [1/3.56d]	2/-* [2/0.89d]
501-600 m	1/4	1/6 [1/5.78d]	2/4* [2/4.44d]
601-700 m	1/6	1/8 [1/8d]	
701-800 m	1/8	1/10 ½ [1/10.22d]	
801-900 m	1/10	2/1 [2/0.44]	
901-1000 m	2/-	2/3 [2/2.67d]	
1001-1100 m	2/2	2/5 [2/4.89d]	
1101-1200 m	2/4	2/7 [2/7.11d]	
1201-1300 m	2/6	2/9 [2/9.33d]	
1301-1400 m	2/8	3/- [2/11.56d]	

Table 1. Distance and Rate steps in **Sterling, Halifax and York Currencies** used in assessing postal charges in British North America from 1792 to 1843 [Halifax Cy] and to late August 1821 [York Cy]. Calculations are based on the 1792 exchange rates of 4/6 Sterling to 5/ Halifax Cy [60/54 = 1.11x], and 4/6 Sterling to 8/- [New] York Cy [96/54 = 1.78x]. *Higher rates/longer distances not seen by me in York Cy area [Upper Canada to Montreal].

PART 2. Official Distances, Postal developments in Upper Canada to late 1821 and William Allan's 1820 inquiry answers.

1765/c1790 - BNA Official Distances

Montgomery⁸ shows a table of distances and rates in Sterling, based on the 1765 amendment to the Act of 1710, for 20 BNA post offices between Halifax & Michilimackinac, a total distance of 1813 miles, rated 3/6 Sterling for a single letter over the entire route. Longley⁹ shows the same information in a manuscript Table of Distances and Rates, circa 1790, recently discovered in Toronto Public Library. Both lists include post offices opened in 1789 and Fort Erie, likely officially opened in 1801. York is not listed as it was not yet laid out nor on the original route between Niagara and Kingston.

The distances in miles between these places are shown below. They are approximate. Details of rate steps and rates are shown in Table 1.

Michilimackinac, 317 miles to Detroit; 230 to Fort Erie; 35 to Niagara; 140 [by water] to Kingston; 50 to Augusta; 34 to Matilda; 35 to Cornwall; 41 to Coteau du Lac; 45 to Montreal; 45 to Berthier; 45 to Three Rivers; 90 to Quebec; 360 to Fredericton; 82 to St John; 36 [by water] to Digby; 20 to Annapolis; 70 to Horton; 17 to Windsor; 46 to Halifax.

Total 1813 miles, rated 3/6 Stg per single letter.

Postal developments in Upper Canada from 1763 to late 1821.^{2, 10, 11 & 12}

French rule in New France officially ended with the February 1763 Treaty of Paris. Under Deputy Postmasters General, Benjamin Franklin and William Foxcroft, the British in the American Colonies extended their military posts between New York and Montreal via Albany, and from Montreal to Quebec via Three Rivers. Hugh Finlay was appointed postmaster at Quebec. The Troy weight system used in New France was replaced largely by Halifax Currency, except for Montreal, Three Rivers and areas west, which used [New] York currency. The use of Sterling remained an option until about 1780.¹³

Under British control, communication west from Montreal remained sporadic. The remote forts and settlements at Niagara, Detroit, Michillimackinac, Saint Joseph and Sault-Sainte-Marie continued to be served by fur traders and other couriers by trade canoes, and larger vessels in summer. The overland "Winter Express" ran along the southern shore of Lake Ontario to Niagara, then the northern shore of Lake Erie to Detroit. Locations and routes are shown on the maps, Figs 1 and 2, based in part on information from the maps of Surveyor General, David William Smith and Mrs Elizabeth Simcoe. 16

The American War of Independence ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in September 1783. Loyalist American and First Nations refugees became eligible for land grants in what was to become Upper Canada. In 1787, used to having a postal service in their old communities, the incomers petitioned the government for the extension of post offices from Montreal into the new districts.²

This was granted in 1789 with the opening of Lachine, Cedars, Coteau du Lac, Lancaster, Charlottenburg, New Johnstown/Cornwall, Osnabruck, Matilda, Augusta [Prescott 1800], Elizabethtown [Brockville 1810] and Kingston. Sandwich, on the Detroit River, and Niagara were also granted post office status in 1789. Fort Erie was on the route, but may not have had an official one until 1801. These are shown on Figs 1 and 2.

Regular mail couriers served this route with an annual overland "Winter Express", now along the British north shore of Lake Ontario and in summer utilised any ships going up the Saint Lawrence River to the Lake. The forts of Michillimackinac, Detroit and Niagara were served by ships as opportunities arose. Much mail continued to be sent privately by any person or vessel going in the right direction.

With the 1791 splitting of the then Province of Quebec into two to create the Provinces of Lower and Upper Canada, the British government gave Loyalists a place to live under British legal and land-holding systems as well as the English language. The facility to use their familiar [New] York currency in Upper Canada is key to this study. Lower Canada retained its French customs, religion, culture, language and a different currency.¹⁷

Also in 1791, land at West Niagara was laid out as the town of Newark which became the first capital of Upper Canada under Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe. In 1793, with the threat of American invasion, Simcoe moved his government officials and Queen's Rangers to the site of Toronto and re-named it York.

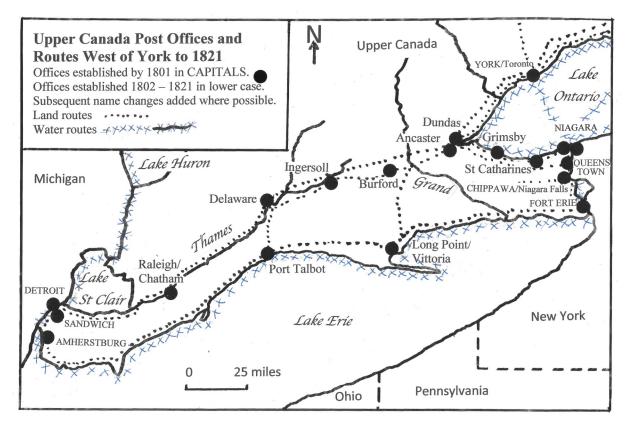


Fig 1 Map. Upper Canada Post Offices and Routes West of York to 1821. The Lake Huron route led to Michillimackinac, Saint Joseph, Sault-Sainte-Marie and beyond. The earliest route from Niagara to Detroit followed the north shore of Lake Erie. The Loyalist settlement and establishment of York as capital in 1796 led to the development of routes along the north and southwest shore of Lake Ontario and inland along the Thames River towards Detroit. Dundas Street was later laid out north of this route. London, 13 miles upstream from Delaware, did not get a post office until 1825.

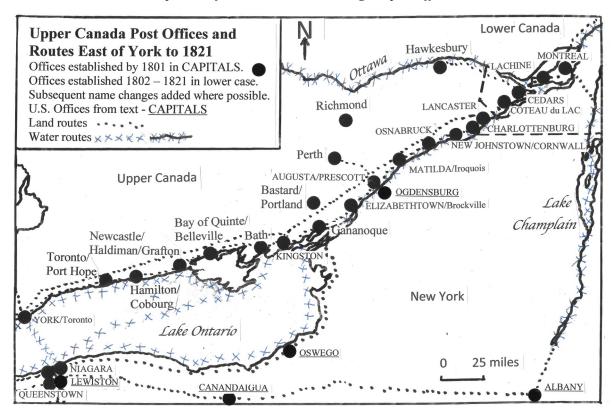


Fig 2 Map. Upper Canada Post Offices and Routes East of York to 1821. The Ottawa River route led to Michillimackinac, Saint Joseph, Sault-Sainte-Marie and beyond. The earliest route to Niagara followed the St Lawrence and south shore of Lake Ontario. The Loyalist settlement and establishment of York as capital in 1796 led to the development of routes along the north shore of Lake Ontario. Dundas Street was later laid out north of this route. Also shown are offices in Lower Canada to Montreal and two routes to Albany for mail to New York.

York had a good harbour for a naval base and, with newly-built Fort York, was a more defensible site than Newark. York became the permanent capital of Upper Canada on February 1, 1796.

In 1792 Hugh Finlay, DPMG of BNA negotiated a Postal Convention with the United States for the passage of mails between Britain and Lower Canada via New York and Montreal during the Winter season when there were difficulties with the overland Halifax route.² The Americans had opened a post route from Albany to Canandaigua in 1794, which was extended to Niagara in October 1797, a year after Fort Niagara was handed over to them.^{14.}

The actual date of opening of York post office is uncertain. Following problems with the Winter Express, Peter Russell, administrator of Upper Canada, wrote from York on November 22nd 1797 to Hugh Finlay at Quebec suggesting that a separate bag for York letters be made up and that Finlay appoint some person to act as postmaster to distribute them. Russell recommended "*Mr William Willcocks, a Merchant resident here, as a Gentleman capable and willing to execute the duties of it*". ¹⁸ The earliest York manuscript postmark recorded is February 11, 1798. ¹² William Willcocks is reported to have attended to the 1798/99 Winter Express from Montreal. ¹⁹ Fig 9, formerly in the Stulberg collection, shows a copy of a York Post Office bill, in Willcocks's hand, for postage of letters sent and received by Surveyor General, D.W. Smith, during February 1799. This document is analysed in Part 3.

DPMG Hugh Finlay left the post office in October 1799, being unfairly dismissed as a defaulter. He was succeeded by George Heriot in April 1800. William Willcocks resigned as postmaster of York in 1801 "... his reasonable charges for rent of an office.... disputed; although.... the revenue was productive beyond expectation. It is likely that William Allan, local agent for the Montreal merchants Forsyth, Richards & Co., then became postmaster. Stulberg discussed dates, as a bill signed by Donald McLean indicates that McLean held the position in 1807.

In 1810 Heriot provided fortnightly trips throughout the year between Montreal and Kingston, but "owing to the badness of the road beyond Kingston was unable to give a regular service to York except fortnightly in winter". This was extended to Niagara the following winter, with couriers to Amherstburg or Sandwich "as often as commercial requirements demanded it". Heriot resigned in March 1816 after long disagreement with Gordon Drummond, the Governor General. He was replaced by Daniel Sutherland, Quebec businessman, banker and former postmaster of Montreal.

William Allan's evidence reported in *The Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada*, for Tuesday February 29, 1820.¹

The report was of a meeting of the House of Assembly, with 16 legislators present, questioning William Allan, Esq, Postmaster at York, about postal matters, including post office openings, rates of postage and mileages.

Post offices opened by William Allan:

Allan named four post offices opened west of York before the war of 1812-14: [Opening dates and corrections are added from the PHSC database]¹² Dundas [1814], Grimsby [1816 – opened after the war], Queenstown [1800] and Chippewa [1801]. He did not mention Fort Erie [1801] or Ancaster [1812] and incorrectly lists Amherstburg [1801] as being opened after the war.

Four post offices west of York opened after the war were: Vittoria [1819, replacing Long Point, opened 1816], Delaware [1819], Port Talbot [1819], and St Catherines [1817]. He does not mention Raleigh [1816], or Burford [1819]. Ingersoll was opened in 1821, within the timeline of this study. See map, Fig 1.

Ten post offices opened east of York after 1798 were: Newcastle [1814, became Haldiman 1820], Bay of Quinte [1816, became Belleville 1817], Perth [1816], Bastard [1816], Gananoque [1817], Toronto [1817, became Port Hope 1817/1820], Richmond [1818], Hamilton [1819, became Cobourg 1822], Hawkesbury [1819] and Bath [1819]. See map, Fig 2.

Allan had been York postmaster for about 15 years and stated that he had no general control over the Post Office Department or any discretionary authority from the Deputy Postmaster General to regulate the rates of postage from York to the post offices west of it. Perhaps this was legally true, but Allan's correspondence with other postmasters indicate that he was certainly in charge. This is demonstrated by the contents of Fig 13a, transcribed in Part 4, document c), below. He was so important to the system that in 1816 George Heriot, DPMG for BNA, recommended that Upper Canada have a separate DPMG and Allan should have the title.²

Postage rates stated by William Allan are detailed and discussed in Part 3.

PART 3. [New] York Currency rates used in Canada to late August 1821.

[New] York currency was introduced to the Montreal and Three Rivers area in 1760 by Jeffery Amherst and continued to be used in Montreal and the "upper country" for many years. With postal headquarters in Quebec, where Halifax currency was widely used as the unit of account, mail in Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and beyond was rated in Halifax currency. As Montreal and settlements in Upper Canada developed, using York currency, their postmasters must have arranged for the use of York currency in rating the mail *within* their areas for local accounting purposes. Halifax currency was used for Upper Canada *inter-provincial* mail.

In this part I show letters rated in York currency. Part 4 deals with letters sent out of the area, rated in Halifax currency. Some letters from the "upper country" to Montreal were rated in York currency, as in the case of Kingston, an office opened in 1789. Later ones to Montreal were rated in Halifax currency, as in the case of York, opened by Feb 1798.

It is possible that the 1791 division of the old Province of Quebec into Lower and Upper Canada caused Montreal postmaster, Edward Edwards and DPMG Hugh Finlay in Quebec to simplify accounting within Lower Canada and favour Halifax currency over York currency in postal rates. In time, Montreal merchants chose to use Halifax currency in their general business, in keeping with the rest of Lower Canada and beyond.

However, the old-established 1/- York currency rate on Kingston to Montreal mail continued to be used until that currency was dropped as a unit of account in 1821. Fig 7 shows an 1819 example.

Distances and measuring miles in Upper Canada

The earliest York currency rates used in Canada were based on the 1765 table of Distances and Rates of Postage in Sterling, listed in part 2. The 1792 Postal Guide set rates in Halifax currency from June 1^{st 8}

William Allan is likely to have been familiar with an 1800 book of postal matters compiled by George Heriot, then Deputy Postmaster General for British North America. This book includes a "sketch of a route proposed for a General Post in the Province of Upper Canada", and the mileages associated with this route from the provincial line to Amherstburg, 519 miles distant. The survey was made by Hewitt Ridout for the Acting Surveyor General. A report of distances ascertained by William Willcocks, then Postmaster at York, also published in 1800, was included in this book. There are slight differences between the Ridout and Willcocks mileages.

The 1800 lists of mileages are not as clear or accurate as the 1829 tables of distances and rates subsequently produced by T.A. Stayner, the later Deputy Postmaster General, and widely used by postal historians.²² These sources are used in the tables in Parts 3, 4 and 5 of this study. The 1800 lists were produced before many post offices were opened. They require careful interpretation, as distances are often measured using concession lines and lot numbers as reference points. Not all of these points became post offices.

Postage rates and Distances stated by William Allan in his 1820 evidence:

Allan could not inform the House of distances, but was able to give rates of postage charged west from York "to Dundas, 8d; Grimsby, 10d; St Catherines, 10d; Niagara, 10d; Queenstown, 10d; Chippewa, 10d; Vittoria, 1/-; Amherstburgh, 1/4; Sandwich, 1/4." [see Table 2].

Further questioning revealed that Allan was unable to give rates from Kingston to several places: "I can only speak positively as to the postage rate to York, which is 10d. I believe the same to Niagara". He was not challenged over any of these rates, all of them failing to conform to the rates used elsewhere in Canada.

Allan had failed to give distances between any places, apart from in three supplementary answers about distances from York to Vittoria [about 100 miles], Port Talbot [about 150 miles] and Amherstburg [about 250 miles].¹

Distance in miles	Rates in Sterling	Rates in York Currency	Offices stated by Allan in 1820 Except*	Ridout UC miles from York 1800	Willcocks UC miles from York 1800
0 - 60	4d	8d	Dundas Ancaster *	36 KHT 56	36 KHT -
61-100	6d	10d	Grimsby St Catherines Niagara Queenston Chippewa	- - 76 - 94	- - 81 Newark 89 -
101-200	8d	1/-	Vittoria 100	Charlotteville 91 via Ancaster 183 via Niagara	Charlotteville 196 via Newark
		Not seen, likely 1/-	Port Talbot 150	-	-
201-300	10d	1/4	Sandwich 250 Amherstburg	226 246	245 257
301-400	1/-	1/10	-		
401-500	1/2	2/-	-		

Table 2. York Currency postage rates used **west of York**, within Upper Canada, **to or from York, to August 1821,** based on letters seen by me and offices listed by Allan. The three mileages given in the fourth column are from Allan. Mileages in columns five & six are explained in the text. KHT = King's Head Tavern, head of Lake Ontario, where the route west to Sandwich diverged from the lakeshore route to Niagara. Allan gave no rate to Port Talbot, but was likely 1/-. The distance between York and Vittoria/Charlotteville varies, depending on the route taken.

*Ancaster was not mentioned by Allen. The 8d Ancaster letter is from my collection.

Listed below are examples of letters rated in York currency. An early example is followed by four routed west of York and four routed east of York. Parentheses indicate {earlier or later} sections of the route and rate of the individual letter. Approximate mileages are based on 1765 table [t], 1800 Ridout list [r], 1800 Willcocks list [w] or later, 1829 tables, by T.A. Stayner [s]. Sources are referenced, with JRR being mine.

Following the lists are details of two items showing written confirmation of the use of [New] York currency on mails within Upper Canada.

Early use of [New] York currency rates in Canada

The earliest example of the use of York currency rates I have come across was an illustration in BNAPs e-letter, Jan 2024

1/- York Cy rate for 101-200 miles.

Date	From	To	Miles	Rate in York	Source
				Currency	
1796 Feb 9	Kingston	Niagara	140t	1N	BNAPS e-
	["Kinston"]		200+ via		letter Jan
			north shore		2024^{23}

Single 1/- rate. 1N in red. Written by Alex Wilkins ...Feby 96. Straight-line KINSTON 9 Feb^y, to David William Smith Esq, Acting Surveyor General, Upper Canada, Niagara. Endorsed: *His Majesty's Service, per the Winter Express*. The 1/- rate is for 140 miles [direct], per the 1765 table then current. The Winter Express, overland along the north shore, was via the new site of York, later measured at 227 miles [Ridout 1800], 232 miles [Willcox 1800] and 276 miles [Stayner 1829].

Smith was a senior member of the Provincial Legislature, later based in York, and maker of early maps of Upper Canada. Examples of Smith's post office accounts are shown towards the end of this part and the end of Part 4.

[New] York currency rates used within Upper Canada west of York to August 1821

The [New] York currency postage rates used west of York within Upper Canada are shown in Table 2, based on letters seen by me. Apart from the 8d York to Ancaster rate in my collection [Fig 14], the four rate steps shown in the third column and offices west of York in the fourth column are the ones stated by William Allan in 1820. The three mileages stated by Allan are noted. KHT= King's Head Tavern, head of Lake Ontario, where the route west to Sandwich diverged from the lakeshore route to Niagara.

Examples of the four York currency rates used west of York are shown below in date order. 1/4 York Cy rate for 201–300 miles. See Fig 3

Date	From	То	Miles	Rate in York Currency	Source
1801 Feb 4 m/s	Sandwich	[?York]	226r, 245w	2N8 [2x1/4]	JRR ²⁴

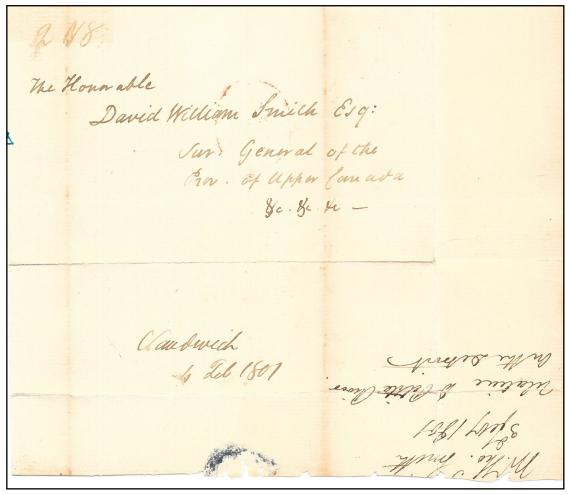


Fig 3. Double 1/4 rate. 2N8 in red. Written by "Mr Tho. Smith, 3d Feby 1801, re Petite River on the Detroit". M/s Sandwich 4 Feb 1801, to The Honourable David William Smith Esq, Suvr General of the, Prov of Upper Canada, & & &. This is the earliest York cy rate I have seen. Unfortunately, no town is indicated in the address, but was likely York. The same rate applied to Niagara. Smith was a senior member of the Provincial Legislature, based in York, and maker of early maps of Upper Canada.

1/- York Cy rate for 101-200 miles.

1817 Feb 2	{Baltimore	Lewiston}		{P 25c US}	McDonald
Mar 20	Queenston	Charlottesville	107r v FErie	Ferry 2d +	1988^{25}
Queenston		Norfolk Co	113w vKHT	1N = 1N2	

Single 1/- rate. 1N added to 2d ferriage, for 1N2 due. Cross-border, pre-paid 25c US, Baltimore to Lewiston. The route from Queenston to Charlottesville could be via Fort Erie or Kings Head Tavern. The 25c US rate is already paid on this letter, but when unpaid this rate is converted to 1/3 York Cy and added to the British rate.

10d York Cy rate for 61-100 miles.

See Fig 4

1819 Jan 1?	York	Grimsby	72s	Paid 1N8	JRR ²⁴
				[2x10d]	



Fig 4. Double 10d rate. Paid 1N8 in red. OHMS letter from Adjutant General's Office, dated 31st Dec 1818, containing enclosure. YORK xx JAN 1819. To Major A Nelles, 4th Lincoln Militia, Grimsby, 40 Mile Creek.

1821 Jun 21	Falls/Niagara	York	89w 106s	Paid 10d	JRR ²⁴
	Queenston		overland		

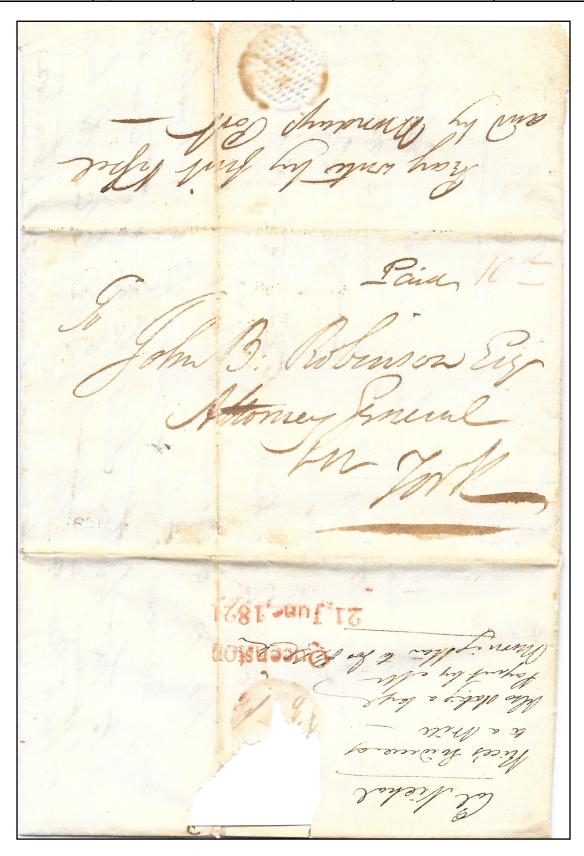


Fig 5. Single 10d rate. Paid 10d in red. Written by Robert Nichol at Falls of Niagara, June 21, mailed at Queenston 21 June 1821, h/s in red, to John B Robinson, Attorney General, York. Endorsed on back: "*Pray write by first vessel and by Monday's post*".

8d York Cy rate for 0-60 miles.

1821 Aug 15	Dundas	York	45s	1N4 [2x8d]	Harrison
				money letter	1987^{26}

Double 8d rate. 1N4, pre-manuscript money letter ²⁷ to John H Dunn, Receiver General, York. Harrison states "4 rates sterling for 1 ounce", but there is no sign of 1 oz endorsement on the letter. More likely it is double 8d York Cy rate for under 60 miles.

Note the use of York currency paying the British postage on letters crossing the Niagara River to and from the United States. I have seen six examples, all after the war of 1812-14, the earliest being the Feb 1817 one from Baltimore to Charlottesville via Queenston listed above. Below in a) is a 1799 bill in York currency including Niagara mails. In b) is an 1812 instruction on the use of York currency on cross-border mail exchanged at Niagara. Has anyone seen an earlier instruction?

A December 1802, cross-border letter from Sandwich to Canandaigua via Niagara is rated in Halifax currency and is listed in Part 4.

Mileage anomalies and [New] York currency rates used within Upper Canada east of York and to Montreal to August 1821

Distance in miles	Rates in Sterling	Calculated rates in York Cy	Rates used in York Cy	Offices seen. Except*	Ridout miles from York 1800	Willcocks miles from York 1800
0 - 60	4d	8d	8d			
61-100	6d	10d	10d			
101-200	8d	1/-	10d	Kingston	151	184 [177s]
				Brockville	199 Elizabethtown	- [233s]
201-300	10d	1/4	10d	Prescott	- [245s]	250 Johnstown
				*Matilda	222	- [260s]
				*Cornwall	249	295[294s]
				To UC/LC boundary	273	323
301-400	1/-	1/10		-		
401-500	1/2	2/-		-		

Table 3. York Currency postage rates used **east of York**, within Upper Canada, **to or from York, to August 1821**, based on letters seen by me. Actual rates used on letters are shown in column four. In the fifth column I have not seen letters from York to Matilda or Cornwall, whose rates are likely to be 1/- [see analysis of 1799 bill in Part 3 a).]. Mileages in columns six and seven are explained in the text.

The widespread use of 10d rates seems to ignore distances. All are well below the 1/2 Halifax Cy rate for 301-400 miles between York and Montreal [equivalent to 1/10 York Cy]. Note Kingston [opened 1789] to Montreal, under 200 miles, was 1/- York Cy, the correct rate, as calculated [Fig 7].

The [New] York currency postage rates used east of York are shown in Table 3, based on letters seen by me. Distance and rate steps are shown, with actual rates used listed alongside calculated rates. The widespread use of 10d rates seem to ignore distances.

Kingston to Montreal letters were rated 1/- York currency, a rate likely established following the 1789 opening of Kingston Post Office, before the 1791 division of the old Quebec Province into Lower and Upper Canada. York to Montreal letters were rated in Halifax currency, as shown in Part 4.

Four examples of York currency rates used east of York are shown below in date order. 10d York Cy rate [under-rated] for 101 – 200 miles. See Fig 6

Date	From	То	Miles	Rate in York Currency	Source
1803 Jan 31	Kingston	York	151r, 151w, 177s	d10	JRR ²⁴

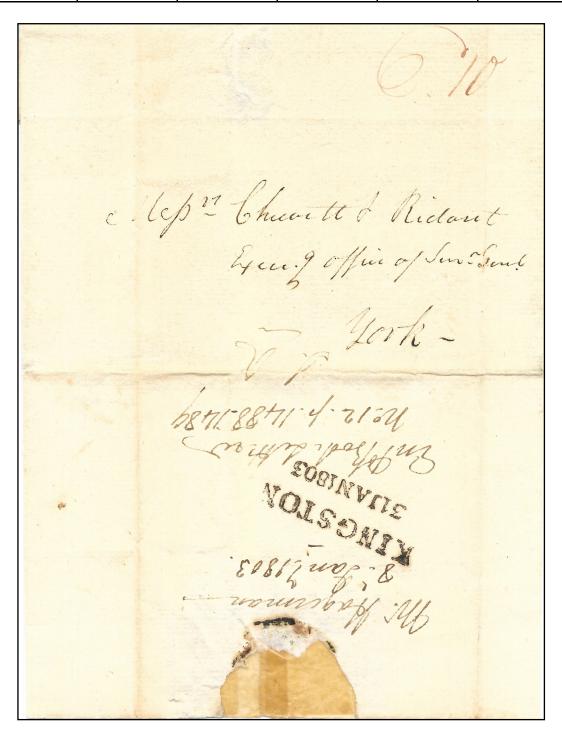


Fig 6. Single 10d rate. d10 in red. KINGSTON 31 JAN 1803* straight-line h/s in black on back. Endorsed "Mr [CA] Hagermann 8th Jany 1803,...". to Messers Chewitt & Ridout, Execy Office of Recr Genl, York. The rate should be 1/- *ERD for this marking, ref 5925.020 in PHSC database.

Ī	1819 Mar25	Kingston	Montreal	177r 194w	1N	JRR ²⁴
ı				199s		



Fig 7. Single 1/- rate. 1N in black. Straight-line KINGSTON 26 March 1819 h/s in black on back. From Patrick McGan to Messers Millar & Parlane, Merchants, Montreal.

10d York Cy rate [under-rated] for 101 - 200 miles.

1820 Jan 25	Brockville	York	199r, 233s	Paid 1N8	JRR ²⁴
			Elizabethtown*	[2x10d]	

Double 10d rate. Paid 1N8 in red. BROCKVILLE straight-line h/s in brown on front. To Mr Thomas Ridout Esq, Surveyor General, York UC. Endorsed "John Booth, 25" Jany 1820. Enclosed in...." on receipt. The rate for this distance should be 1/- x = 2/- Elizabeth town became Brockville after the death of Isaac Brock in 1812.

10d York Cy rate [under-rated] for 201 - 300 miles.

Saa	Fig	Q
See	rig	O

1821 Jan 9	Prescott m/s	York	250w, 245s	Paid 1N8	JRR ²⁴
			Johnstown	[2x10d]	
				money letter	



Fig 8. Double 10d rate. Paid 1N8 in black. M/s PRESCOTT 9 Jany in black. To George Crookshank Esquire, Acting Receiver General, York. Docketed "Oliver Everts Esqr. Inspector of the Dist of Johnstown, enclosing Bank Bills to the amount of £35.0s Currency" & "Rec'd 15th January 1821? By Post.." in red. This is a pre-manuscript Money Letter. ²⁷ The rate for this distance should be 1/4 x 2 = 2/8.

Rates from York to Matilda and Cornwall have not been seen by me, but are likely to be 1/- [see analysis of 1799 bill at beginning of part 4]. All are below the 1/2 Halifax currency rate for 301-400 miles between York and Montreal [equivalent to 1/10 York currency].

Unlike west of York, the rate steps used east of York do not correspond with the mileages from the two lists for Upper Canada published in 1800 by Ridout and Willcocks.²¹ The postage marked on letters in Table 3 appear to ignore distances, rating everything up to at least 250 miles at 10d. Allan was clearly not overcharging!

His stated belief that the rate from Kingston to Niagara was also 10d fits in with this thinking. But was he correct? The land distance given in Ridout is 227 miles, with 232 miles in Willcocks. However, direct across Lake Ontario is about 140 miles. The 1796 example of the 1/- rate, listed above, conforms to the 140 miles from the 1765 distances and rates table then current.

Written confirmation of the use of [New] York currency on mails within Upper Canada.

In addition to the above York currency rates marked on the front of letters, I have seen two examples of written confirmation of the use of York currency on mail in Upper Canada. One is a bill and the other is an instruction to a postmaster. I describe each below.

a). D.W. Smith's February 1799 bill from William Willcocks, York Postmaster.

The use of [New] York currency rates on mail probably originated with an agreement between the postmasters of Kingston, Montreal and DPMG Hugh Finlay in Quebec. York currency would likely be used for accounting purposes when Kingston opened in 1789. With the opening of York Post Office by Feb 1798, William Willcocks, presumably with the agreement of DPMG Hugh Finlay, used York currency on letters sent within Upper Canada, but not to Montreal and beyond, where Halifax currency was in use. William Allan likely became York postmaster in 1801.

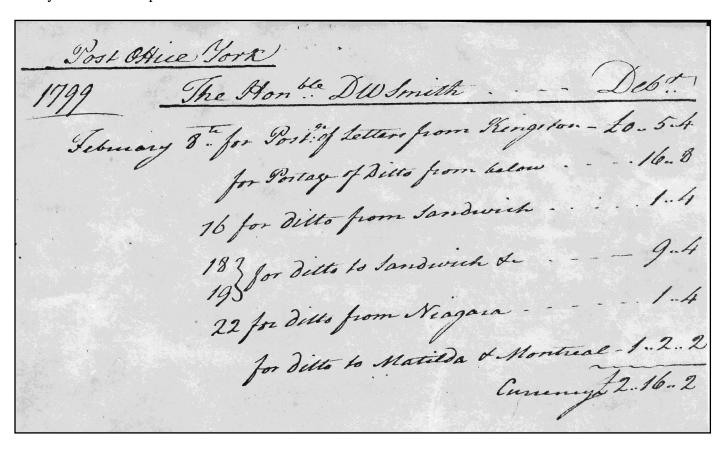


Fig 9. York Post Office bill for postage charged to Hon. DW Smith during February 1799, in William Willcocks's hand. The calculations are in [New] York cy, as explained in the text. Ex Stulberg copy, from Ontario Archives.

The Stulberg collection contained a photocopy of a document in the Ontario Archives, a very early debit account of postage for letters to and from York for the month of February 1799. This is shown in Fig. 9 and transcribed below:

"Post Office York

1799 <u>The Honble. D W Smith</u>	Debit.
February 8 th for Postage of letters from Kingston	£054
for Postage of ditto from below	168
16 for ditto from Sandwich	14
18/19 for ditto to Sandwich etc	94
22 for ditto from Niagara	14
for ditto to Matilda & Montreal	<u>122</u>
Currenc	y £2162"

It is in the hand of postmaster William Willcocks to The Honble. D.W. Smith. David William Smith/Smyth was a member of the Legislature and the Surveyor General of Upper Canada. The total owing was £2.16.2 currency. All six sub-totals are even numbers. All York rates are even numbers. This, and the following analysis, strongly suggests that the account is in York currency.

for Postage of letters from Kingston - Likely made up of: 4 x 10d from Kingston, plus 3 x 8d from places nearer to York.	£054
for Postage of ditto from below [beyond Kingston]-Likely made up of: 15 x 1/- plus 2 x 10d.	168
for ditto from Sandwich Made up of: 1 x 1/4	14
for ditto to Sandwich etc Made up of: 7 x 1/4	94
for ditto from Niagara Made up of 2 x 8d [under 60 miles across Lake Ontario]	14
for ditto to Matilda & Montreal - Possibly made up of 2 x 1/- [to Matilda] plus 11 x 1/10 [York cy conversion of 1/2 Halifax cy s	122 rate to Montreal].

This 1799 Bill appears to use a 1/- rate to Matilda, ca. 260 miles from York, but I have not seen any confirming letters to or from there or Cornwall [295 miles]. For accountancy purposes, it appears that the 1/2 Halifax currency York to Montreal rate is converted to 1/10 York currency. In practice, Allan was using the 1/2 Halifax currency rating on letters between York and Montreal.

b). An 1812 example of written confirmation of the use of York currency on cross-border mail exchanged at Niagara.

Rosenthal¹⁴ reports a letter from Niagara Postmaster, J.W. Crooks, to Surveyor General, Thomas Ridout, York, dated 4th January 1812:

"Your letter for England is forwarded under cover to Mr Moore, Agent for British Packets at New York, with whom we correspond, and who no doubt will do the needful. The postage is 18 sh. [shillings] York, at the debt of your account".

The letter is backstamped with a straight-line NIAGARA.

Cross-border mail through Niagara at that time was possibly already being rated in York currency and postmaster J.W. Crooks was accounting for Upper Canada mail in that currency. A Feb 1817 example from Baltimore to Charlottesville via Queenston is listed above. Mr Moore is likely the same Agent mentioned in the letter from William Allan to William Hands, postmaster at Sandwich, dated York, 18 Feby 1816, [Fig 13b]. This gives instructions for dealing with mail from Sandwich to New York via Montreal to be rated in Halifax Cy. See end of Part 4 [below].

PART 4. Halifax Currency rates used on mail to and from Upper Canada to late August 1821.

Distance in miles	Rates in Sterling	1792-1843 Rates in HalifaxCy	Examples of single or multiple rates seen in use to or from Upper Canada to late August 1821	Approximate mileage
0 - 60 m	4d	4 ½ d		
61-100 m	6d	7d	Cornwall-Montreal, 1821	86t 82s
101-200 m	8d	9d		
201-300	10d	11d	Sandwich-Niagara>Canandaigua, 1802	265t
301-400 m	1/-	1/2	York-Montreal, 1812 – 1821[eight]	376s
			Niagara-Montreal, 1814	345t 475s*
			Ernestown-Kingston-Montreal, 1818	200+ error
401-500 m	1/2	1/4		
501-600 m	1/4	1/6	York-Quebec, 1812, 1817, 1820	556s
			Quebec-York, 1820	
			Quebec-Asphodel, 1821	abt 510
601-700 m	1/6	1/8	Saginaw>Detroit-Montreal, 1792	610t
			Halifax>Montreal-Detroit, 1800	
701-800 m	1/8	1/10 ½		
801-900 m	1/10	2/1		
901-1000 m	2/-	2/3		
1001-1100 m	2/2	2/5	Kingston-Halifax>UK, 1817	1017t, 1079s
			UK>Halifax-Kingston, 1815	
1101-1200 m	2/4	2/7	<u> </u>	
1201-1300 m	2/6	2/9	Ancaster-York-Halifax>UK, 1816	abt 1299
			UK>Halifax-York, 1815	1256s
1301-1400 m	2/8	3/-	,	
L				1

Table 4. Distance and Rate steps in Sterling and **Halifax Currencies** used in assessing postal charges **to and from Upper Canada from 1792 to 1843.** The fourth column shows examples of use to and from Upper Canada to August 1821, based on letters seen by me. Arrows [>] indicate origin or destination of letter, not included in the rating. Mileages in column five are from 1792 table [t], or 1829 table[s]. *Overland distance between Niagara and Montreal, via York.

All the examples of Halifax Currency-rated letters seen by me are inter-provincial, to, through, or from Lower Canada, or the United States. No Halifax currency ratings have been found used on mailings sent entirely within Upper Canada until the Currency Act of 1821 dropped York Cy as a unit of account, as shown in Table 5.

In this part I show Upper Canada letters sent and received rated in Halifax currency. The intriguing observation of the examples of mail shown in Table 4 is that they are exclusively on *inter-provincial mail to or from Lower Canada*, plus an early one into New York State. I have not found any examples of the use of Halifax rates on mailings sent *within Upper Canada* until September 1821, when York currency was dropped as a unit of account.

In Part 3 I looked into the origins of York currency use in postage rates in the area of Montreal and the "upper country". With postal headquarters in Quebec, where Halifax currency was widely used as the unit of account, mail in Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia was rated in Halifax currency. The official 1/- Sterling to Halifax currency rate varied over the years, rising from 1/2, to 1/4 in 1765 and falling back to 1/2 in 1792.²¹

As discussed, the 1791 division of the old Province of Quebec into Lower and Upper Canada, and Montreal merchants favouring the use of Halifax currency, likely led to Halifax currency postal rates replacing ones in York currency at Montreal and Three Rivers.

Evidence shows that inter-provincial mail *going out of and coming into* the York currency area was rated in Halifax currency. Presumably this was for accountancy purposes required by Post Office headquarters in Quebec. Included in the list is an 1802 Sandwich–Niagara 11d Halifax currency rate heading over the New York border.

Listed below are seven inter-provincial Upper Canada examples of letters rated in Halifax currency in date order. Their routes and rates are included. In the list, parentheses indicate {earlier or later} sections of the route and rate of the individual letter. Approximate mileages are based on 1765 table [t], 1800 Ridout list [r], 1800 Willcocks list [w] or later, 1829 tables, by T.A. Stayner [s]. Sources are referenced, with JRR being mine.

Following the lists are details of three items confirming in their content the use of Halifax currency on some mails in Upper Canada.

1/8 Halifax Cy rate for 601-700 miles.

Date	From	То	Miles	Rate in Halifax Cy	Source
1792 Jan 24	{Saginaw} Detroit	Montreal	610t via Niagara	1/8	Steinhart 1996 ²⁸

Single 1/8 rate collect. Written by Ch. D. Le Pallier at Saginaw, Mich, mailed at Detroit, Feb 14 h/s to James Morrison, Montreal. Detroit was under British control until 1796.

By February 11, 1798 York Post Office had opened.

11d Halifax Cy rate for 201–300 miles.

1802 Dec 5	Sandwich	Niagara	265t	11d Paid to Niagara	McDonald 88 Sanderson 98
Dec 30 Niagara	{Niagara	Canandaigua NY State}		{12½¢ US due}	Sanderson & Montgomery '10 Plate 12 ²⁹

Single 11d rate. Mailed at SANDWICH 5 Dec 1802, 11d paid in red to Niagara, rec'd Dec 30. Forwarded by F. Forsyth, cross-border exchanged at Fort Niagara into US. Canadian paid markings crossed out. Rated 12½ c US due to Canadagua NY. Later Niagara cross-border mail was rated in York currency to August 1821.

1912 Dec vv	Voulz	Oughag	556c	3N [2v1/6]	IDD ²⁴
1812 Dec xx	York	Quebec	556s	3N [2x1/6]	JRR ²⁴

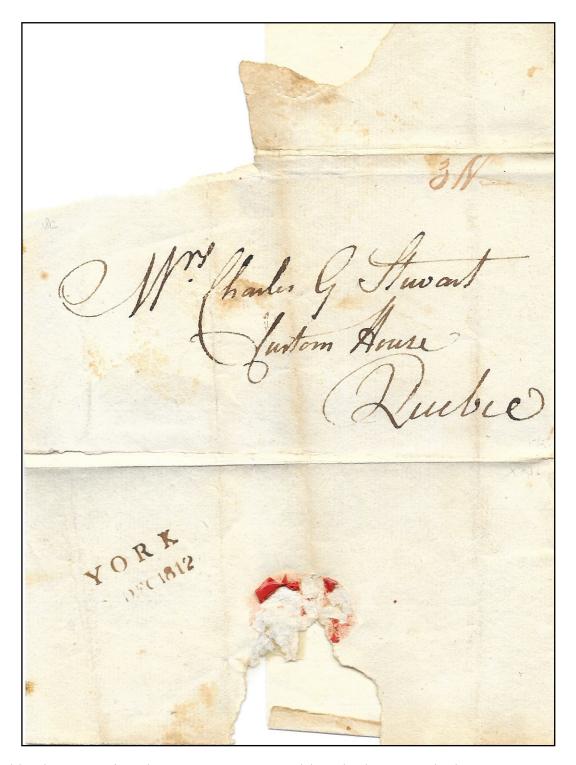


Fig 10. Double 1/6 rate. 3N in red. YORK DEC xx 1812 h/s on back to Mrs Charles G. Stewart, Custom House, Quebec.

2/9 Halifax Cy rate for 1201–1300 miles.

See Fig 11

1815 Jul 8	{HarwichUK	Halifax}		{2/2 stg pd}	xJRR sold
Aug 16	Halifax	York	1256s	2N9	Maresch
Halifax					2018^{30}



Fig 11. Single 2/9 rate. Inland postage 2N9 in red. Paid packet letter from HARWICH, Essex, June 8th, LONDON PAID 8 JY 8 1815. Rated 2/2 stg in red m/s for UK inland plus Falmouth packet postage to Halifax. HALIFAX fleuron, 16 AU 1815 in black. From Mary Taylor to Mrs Dennison, York Town, Upper Cannada[sic].

2/5 Halifax Cy rate for 1001-1100 miles

1817 Apr 3	Kingston	Halifax	1079s	Paid 2N5	Arnell '85
H May 14	{Halifax on	to UK}		{2/2 Stg due}	Firby '97 ³³

Single 2/5 rate. Inland postage paid, 2N5. Kingston 3 Apr 17 h/s. HALIFAX fleuron, My 14, 1817. Additional rating 2/2 Stg to London UK [1/2 Packet, plus 1/- inland]. Carried by Falmouth packet, *Francis Freeling*. Falmouth h/s Jun 8 and London Sept 29 receiver.

1819 Jan 4	[York]	Montreal	376s	Pd 3N6	JRR ²⁴
				[3x1/2]	
				money letter	

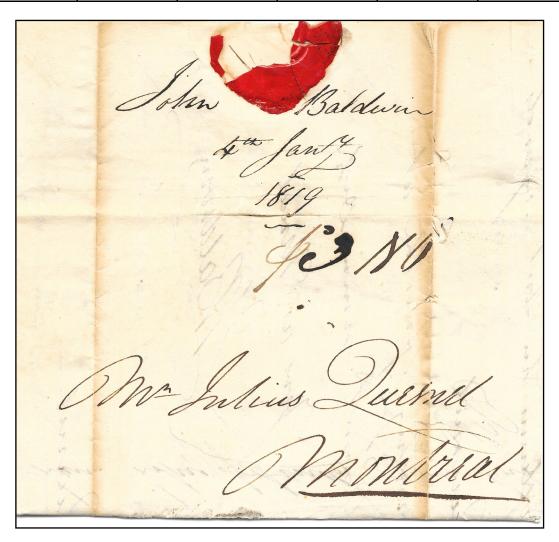


Fig 12. Triple 1/2 rate. Pd 3N6 in black. Pre-manuscript money letter.²⁷ Internally dated York Jany 4th 1819. No York h/s. From John Baldwin to business partner Jules Quesnel in Montreal. Letter refers to enclosing £80 Halifax currency.

7d Halifax Cy rate for 61-00 miles

1820 Mar 17	Cornwall	Montreal	86t 82s	7d	Maresch
					2007^{31}

Single 7d rate. Letter from Cornwall to Montreal. Image not seen by me.

The December 1802 letter from Sandwich to Niagara, then on to Canadaigua, NY, rated in Halifax currency, follows the accounting procedure of Niagara postmaster, Joseph Edwards. A 1798 account, transcribed in a), below, is also in Halifax currency.

However, a 1799 account, transcribed in a), above, is in York currency, which was also in use on cross-border mail in the Niagara area from at least January 1812 [see Part 3].

Written confirmation of the use of Halifax currency on some mails in Upper Canada.

In addition to the above Halifax currency rates marked on the front of letters, I have seen several examples of written confirmation of the use of Halifax currency in Upper Canada, including two bills, and instructions to a postmaster. I describe three below.

a). 1799 letter & 1798 bill from Joseph Edwards at Niagara PO to D.W. Smith at York, immediately before the opening of York PO. [Reference to Quebec currency (Currency used in Quebec?), presumably meaning Halifax currency, not York currency]

```
Rosenthal<sup>14</sup> shows an unpaid 1798 bill with a 1799 letter attached. The bill is made out to: Honbl David Smith Esq
.. to Joseph Edwards Dr.
1798 Mar 1<sup>st</sup>.
For postage of letters from Detroit delivered [to] him by Mr Pollard [postmaster].
£2.12.2 ½ Quebec Cy.
```

The attached letter reads:

Sir Niagara, 29 Mar 99 Please pay the above to James Clark Esq Your most humble servt. Jos. Edwards [To Honbl D W Smith.]

Edwards at Niagara PO was chasing Smith for non-payment of postage for the previous March 1798. He was writing on March 29, 1799, a year after York post office had opened. The bill, dated Mar 1st, was for mail received by Smith [likely in York] only from Detroit, at some time in the previous month, February 1798. Post office billing up to the date of the opening of York PO was likely in Halifax currency. Edwards probably used "Quebec Cy" by mistake, thinking of "currency used in Quebec". PO accounts were likely settled in Halifax currency at the office of DPMG George Heriot at Quebec. The £2.12.2 ½ bill, with a ½d in the totals, is not possible for postage rated in Sterling or York currency. A later bill from William Willcocks at York PO to Smith for payment of postage for February 1799, Fig 3, is billed in York currency [see Part 3a].

David W. Smith was an army officer, politician, Surveyor-General of Upper Canada and mapmaker. Joseph Edwards was postmaster at Niagara. Richard Pollard was a merchant, Legislature office holder, judge, JP, Church of England clergyman and postmaster at Detroit/Sandwich. James Clark was a merchant, lawyer and Legislature office holder based at York.

b). 1807 bill from Donald MacLean at York Post Office to Dr Baldwin.

[Use of Halifax currency for mail sent out of Upper Canada]. Stulberg 19 shows an 1807 bill/receipt:

"Doctor Baldwin,
To the Post Office at York Dr.
1807 April 10th. To One letter for Mr Wyatt £ ..5..6.
Received payment in full,
Donald MacLean
D.P.M."

One letter at 5/6 suggests one between York & Halifax at double the 2/9 Halifax currency rate for 1201 –1300 miles.

Donald Maclean was a JP and Clerk of the House of Assembly from 1801. This seems to be the only reference to him as a postmaster. William Warren Baldwin was a doctor, businessman, militia officer, lawyer, judge, JP, architect & Reform politician. Charles Burston Wyatt followed D.W. Smith as Surveyor General of Upper Canada.

c). 1816 instructions from William Allan to William Hands at Sandwich. [Use of Halifax currency beyond Upper Canada, for mail to Montreal and New York].

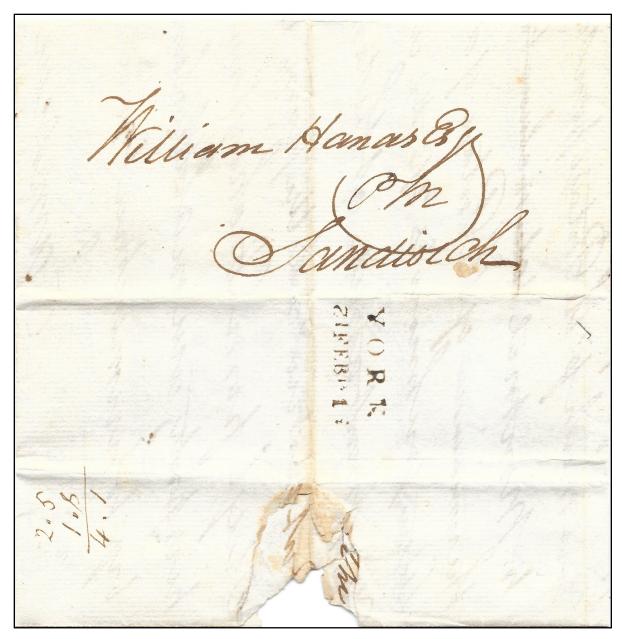


Fig 13a. Free-rated letter, YORK 21 FEB 1816 h/s on back. From William Allan to William Hands P.M. Sandwich. The contents refer to the use of Halifax cy. Note calculation on back: 2.5 plus 1.8, total 4.1 Halifax cy for entire journey [Sandwich-Montreal-New York].

Fig 13a shows a Free-rated 1816 letter, internally dated York, 18 Feby 1816, with YORK 21 [2 inverted] FEB 1816 h/s on back. It is from William Allan to William Hands, P. M. Sandwich. As both correspondents were postmasters, postage was free, and should have been marked as such. Fig 13b shows part of the contents.

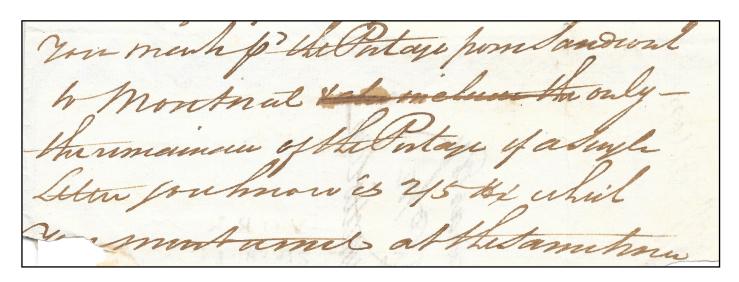


Fig 13b. Part of contents of 13a, Allan instructs Hands to remit Halifax cy. ".. you mark Pd the postage from Sandwich to Montreal ----[crossed out]—only the remainder of the Postage of a Single Letter you know is 2/5 Hx which you must remit at the same time."

The same letter and contents are illustrated in Palmer³² and Arnell³⁴. Palmer provides a partial transcription, but Arnell's is a better copy. They stress the importance of the contents instructing Hands on how to deal with Transatlantic letters from Sandwich, via Montreal and New York, in Halifax currency:

"Swanton is on the lines which divide Lower Canada from States and is the extent of the British territory thus.

The Postage from Montreal cost/ is 9d Cuy for a Single Letter.

From Swanton to New York 30 Cents 1.6

For Mr Moore the Agent for trouble ---- 2

2/5 Cy

British Postage alone is stampt paid at the difft offices in Canada, and the American & Mr Moore allowance, must be remitted to Mr Sutherland at Montrl. which he marks on the letter & is responsible alone therefore to U States. So that when you take any letter in at your office to be forwd for England via New York you mark Pd the postage from Sandwich to Montreal ---- [crossed out]—only the remainder of the Postage of a Single Letter you know is 2/5 Hx* which you must remit at the same time." See fig 13b.

* Palmer transcribes this as 2/5Cv.

Not mentioned by Palmer or Arnell but of great significance are two doodles made by Hands, marked on both the inside and back of the letter after he had read it [Fig 13a]. They are a calculation of 2.5 [Montreal – New York as transcribed above] plus 1.8 [600+ miles Sandwich – Montreal] for a total 4/1 for the entire journey. These rates are in Halifax currency, to be remitted to Montreal.

Mr Moore is presumably the same Agent mentioned in the letter from Niagara Postmaster, J.W. Crooks, to Surveyor General, Thomas Ridout, York, dated 4th January 1812. His account was in York currency. See end of Part 3 [above].

PART 5. Two currencies used on one letter. [Rated first in Halifax currency, then forwarded in York currency].

Fig 14 is an interesting 1817 letter showing two ratings in the two currencies. It is not unusual to find separate individual ratings in Halifax currency for different legs of the journey on the Halifax-Quebec-Montreal-York route. However, this letter from Quebec reached York at one Halifax rate. It was then forwarded beyond York on its last leg which was duly rated in the local York currency.

1/6 Halifax Cy rate for 501-600 miles, Quebec to York. 8d York Cy rate for 0-60 miles. Forwarded York to Ancaster

See Fig 14

Date	From	То	Miles	Rate	Source
1817 Feb 10	Quebec	York	556s	1N6 Hx Cy	JRR ²⁴
Feb 24 York	York	Ancaster	56r 61w MV*	Pd 8d Yk Cy	

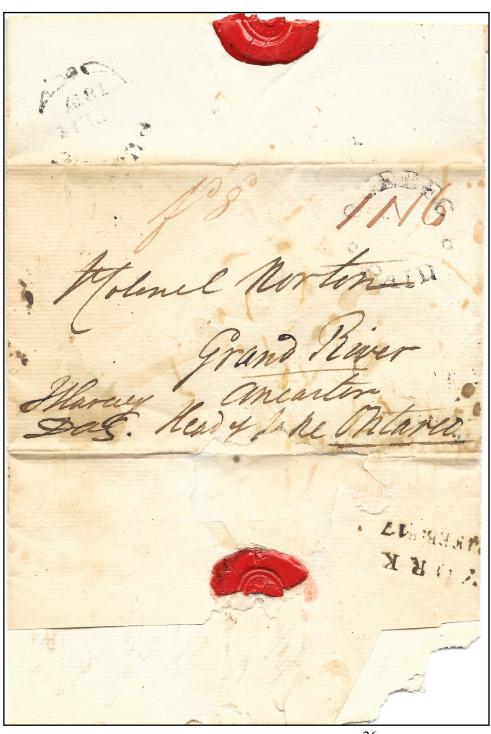


Fig 14. Single 1/6 Halifax Cy rate. Paid 1N6 for 501-600 miles from Quebec. Straight line h/s YORK ?24 FEB 1817 transit on back. The whole distance was over the 600 miles initially paid for.

Single 8d York Cy rate. Additional Pd 8d in red for up to 60 miles, forwarding beyond York to Ancaster.

The military likely had a postage account at York, to which this amount was debited.

From J Harvey [Deputy Adjutant General] at Quebec to Colonel Norton, Grand River, Ancaster, Head of Lake Ontario. *MV= Mohawk Village, near Ancaster, from the Willcocks 1800 list.

"Colonel" Norton c1760 -1825, 11 was the mixed-race Scottish/Mohawk chief, interpreter, schoolmaster, missionary [translated St Matthew into Mohawk], author, traveller etc. Six Nations Lands were around Brantford. The letter mentions having "served the country in the late War".

PART 6. Following the Currency Act of 1821 – All rates now in Halifax Currency

Matters of the 1820 enquiry appear to have been dropped, likely because someone realised that Allan was using the perfectly legal York currency in his ratings, a practice that had gone back more than 20 years. The Currency Act of 1821 dropped York currency as an official unit of account, and Halifax ratings replaced York ratings on all postal items from September that year.

Distance in miles	Rates in Sterling	1792-1843 Rates in	Examples of single or multiple rates seen in use after 1 st Sept 1821	Approximate mileage
0 - 60 m	4d	4 ½ d	Brockville-Gananoque, 1821	32s
61-100 m	6d	7d	York-Niagara,1824 York-Queenston, 1828	76r 81w 99s
101-200 m	8d	9d	Kingston-Cornwall, 1822 Vittoria-York, 1823	98r 101w 117s 100+
201-300 m	10d	11d	Cornwall-York, 1821 Brockville-York, 1822 Kingston-Hawkesbury Mills 1823 Perth-York, 1826 Queenston-Sandwich, 1826	249r 294s 199r 233s 200+ 200+ abt 215
301-400 m	1/-	1/2	York-Montreal, 1823	376s
401-500 m	1/2	1/4		
501-600 m	1/4	1/6	Quebec-York, 1822	556s

Table 5. Distance and Rate steps in Sterling and Halifax Currencies used in assessing postal charges within and beyond Upper Canada from early Sept 1821, as the Currency Act of 1821 dropped York Cy as a unit of account. The fourth column shows examples based on letters seen by me. Mileages in column 5 are explained in the text. Apart from the continuing use of the 1/2 and 1/6 Halifax rates, the new 4 ½ d, 7d, 9d and 11d Halifax Cy rates replaced the York Cy rates used within Upper Canada up to the end of August 1821.

Table 5 shows examples of Upper Canada mailings rated in Halifax currency from September 1821. Most were to and from places within Upper Canada which were previously rated in York currency. Also listed are examples of the pre-existing, continuing use of Halifax currency ratings out of the province to Montreal and Quebec.

Listed below in rate order are five examples of Upper Canada letters rated in Halifax currency from September 1821. Four are between places within Upper Canada previously rated in York currency. Their routes and rates are included. In the list, parentheses indicate {earlier or later} sections of the route and rate of the individual letter. Approximate mileages are based on 1765 table [t], 1800 Ridout list [r], 1800 Willcocks list [w] or later, 1829 tables, by T.A. Stayner [s]. Sources are referenced, with JRR being mine.

4½d Halifax Cy rate for 0-60 miles.

Date	From	То	Miles	Rate in Hali-	Source
1821Sep 19	{New York Brockville	Morristown} Gananoque	32s	{Paid 18½c} 4½ d due	McDonald p 27 1988 ²⁵

Single 4 ½ d rate due. Cross-border from New York, paid to the border, endorsed "via Morristown/St Lawrence County". BROCKVILLE h/s to Joel Stone, Gananoque, U Canada. Gananoque PO opened in 1817.

7d Halifax Cy rate for 60-100 miles.

See Fig 15

1828 Apr 15 Apr 24	York {Lewiston	Queenston Boston}	89w 106s 400+	Pd7d +2dFer {25c US}	xJRR sold Maresch
Lewiston					2018^{35}

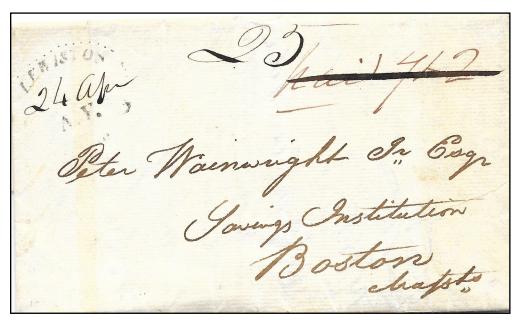


Fig 15. Single 7d rate. Paid m/s 7 & 2 in red, for overland rate to border, plus 2d cy ferriage over Niagara River. Internally dated "York 15th April 1828". No York despatch or Queenston transit. LEWISTON N.Y. oval h/s with m/s 24 Apr, all in black. Paid rates struck though & m/s 25 [cents] due in black for onward charge to Boston, over 400 miles.

9d Halifax Cy rate for 101-200 miles. Cross-border.

1822 Feb 28	{GlasgowUK	New York		{20 ½c=AP	Palmer p102
Apr 22	New York	Cp Vincent}		1N3 incl F}+	1986^{32}
New York	Kingston	Cornwall	117s	N9 Can=2N	
May 1					

Single 9d rate. Transatlantic ship letter from Glasgow to New York, Apr 22. American postage 20 ½c plus ferriage converted to AP 1N3. KINGSTON 1 May 1822 h/s, to Mr William McFarland, Merchant, Milleroches, Cornwall, Upper Canada. N9 added = 2N total due. Mille Roches was a Seaway Village, drowned in 1958.

11d Halifax Cy rate for 201-300 miles.

See Fig 16

1822 Aug 1	Cornwall	York	249r, 295w	1N10 [2x11d]	xJRR sold
			294s	money letter	Maresch
				money letter	2020^{36}



Fig 16. Double 11d rate. 1N10 in black. Pre-manuscript money letter,²⁷ containing enclosures, hence double rate. CORNWALL h/s in black. To John H Dunn Esq, Receiver General, York. Docketed "Mr Bruce, Deputy Collector, Cornwall, enclosing the sum of six pounds and ten shillings currency to the Recr. Genl. Dated 1st Augt. 1822" & "Rec'd 7th August 1822".

1/2 Halifax Cy rate for 301-400 miles.

1823 Nov 6	York	Montreal	376s	Paid 1N2	JRR ²⁴
				money letter	

Single 1/2 rate. Paid 1N2 in red, internally dated York, Nov 6^{th} 1823. Pre-manuscript money letter, ²⁷ ref "Enclosed is bank bill \$50", converted & annotated "£12-10-". This should have been rated double [2x1/2 = 2/4]. No York despatch. From John Baldwin to business partner, Jules Quesnel, Montreal.

William Allan was always busy in business and politics. His entry in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography²⁰ is extensive and there is no mention of any irregularities in his life. DCB quotes: "As the *Church* stated in his obituary [1853], he 'acquired the entire confidence of all classes of the community by his excellent habits of business, his punctuality in all transactions, and his perfect integrity."".

In 1820 James Scott Howard³⁷ became Allan's assistant at York post office. Allan was involved in founding the Bank of Upper Canada in 1821, eventually becoming President, and was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1825. He had less time for postal duties and J.S. Howard took full control of York post office on July 2, 1828. In 1827 Thomas Allen Stayner³⁸ took over from Daniel Sutherland as DPMG of BNA and in 1829 he oversaw extensive revision of postal matters in the British Provinces in North America. That is another story.

PART 7. Concluding comments and a plea for help

In the 200+ years since 1820, nobody seems to have commented that William Allan and other postmasters were determining postal rates in Upper Canada in the local [New] York currency. Perhaps it was so obvious at the time that nobody thought to mention it for posterity!

The evidence presented here shows the operation of two charging systems in use for mail in Upper Canada from at least February 1796, in the case of Kingston, and February 1799, in the case of York, to August 1821. Halifax currency ratings were used on mail to, through or from Lower Canada throughout this time. York currency ratings were used exclusively on all mail sent within Upper Canada and from Kingston to Montreal to August 1821 when The Currency Act of that year dropped York currency as an official unit of account.

I can only speculate on the procedure taken to settle the postage up the accounting chain. Sterling and both currencies were acceptable units of account. The internal Upper Canada postage accounts at that time were in York currency. Smith's 1799 bill [Fig. 3, in Part 3], was settled in York currency at York PO. The accounts surplus from York was then likely converted and forwarded in Halifax currency on a quarterly basis to PO Headquarters at Quebec.

In 1816 William Allan instructed William Hands [Fig 13b, in Part 4] that postage from Sandwich to New York via Montreal was to be accounted for in Halifax currency at Montreal. All Halifax currency-rated postage to and from Upper Canada was likely accounted for at Quebec in Halifax currency. Onward transmission of all postal revenue to London would probably be rated in Sterling. How much hard cash actually moved to the British Treasury with this paper accounting exercise is uncertain and beyond the scope of this study.

Finally, from September 1821, Halifax currency ratings were used on all mail within, to and from Upper Canada, with minor changes due to an exchange rate re-calculation from October 21, 1843, affecting rates from 10d stg.²¹

Ratings by distance and weight per half ounce or fraction were introduced from January 5, 1844.

The Uniform Letter Rate of 6d per half ounce or fraction was introduced on April 6, 1851.

Help!

In my Introduction, I acknowledged the limited availability of letters of this period and seek further evidence from postal historians to support, challenge, amend or refute these conclusions. Please respond via the Editor.

Documentary evidence:

- * Free-rated items between postmasters, containing instructions re payments in any currency.
- * Free-rated items to or from William Allan prior to the 1807 bill from Donald MacLean. Any find would confirm Allan's earlier postmastership.
- * Examples of Post Office bills/debits from postmasters to account holders in any currency.
- * Hand-written or printed tables of distances and rates in [New] York currency.
- * Newspaper announcements.

Rated letters:

- * Sighting of early letters from 1760 showing ratings in any of the three currencies.
- * Sightings of York manuscript postmarks, including February 11, 1798 and February 26, 1800, as reported in the PHSC Database, with rates and destinations.
- * Rates between Montreal and Kingston and places east of Kingston, opened in 1789.
- * Rates on Niagara cross-border mail.
- * Examples of Upper Canada letters showing postal rates in either of the two currencies to the end of 1823 that do not conform to these conclusions.

Archives:

* Letters in family papers in various archives [e.g., at the Ontario Archives, York University, City of Toronto Archives, Toronto Reference Library, or University of Toronto].

Has anyone seen any references to, or evidence for, supposed "overcharging" by William Allan or anyone else, prior to Steinhart's 1977 report from 1820? There is no mention of such a practice in Max Rosenthal's 1964³⁹ and 1968⁴⁰ articles on York postal matters.

Even after giving up his postal duties in July 1828, William Allan remained an important figure in the postal history of Upper Canada. As Commissioner of the Canada Company, his signature was appended to hundreds of weekly returns of company transactions from about 1833 to 1839. These were mailed back to the headquarters in London, via New York, usually as ship letters via Liverpool or Portsmouth. He was a corner stone in the building of York.

His entry in DCB²⁰ begins:

ALLAN, WILLIAM, businessman, militia officer, justice of the peace, office holder, judge, and politician; b. c. 1770 near Huntly, Scotland; m. 24 July 1809 Leah Tyrer Gamble in Kingston; d. 11 July 1853 in Toronto.

I hope that this study will go some way to restoring the good names of William Allan and other postmasters among postal historians.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Gray Scrimgeour of the PHSC Editorial Committee for very useful comments and advice on an earlier draft of this study. Many thanks too to Bob Stock and Matt Britton for getting it over the line.

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See Chapters V & VI. Note: Smith misses out Matilda in 1789 list, [his p89] [Part 2 above].

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- 7. en.wikipedia.org/History of the Canadian Dollar has a useful summary in section 3.2, Units of account and rating systems.
- 8. Montgomery, Malcolm Beresford. *The Postage Rates of The North Atlantic Mails (1635–1950)*. Southampton: Author Published. (1991).

Table 10 in annex B p B10: BNA Halifax – Michilimackinac Post Offices. Distances and Rates of Postage (in Sterling). Single letters. Effective 10 October 1765.

Table 16 in annex B p B16-1 lists rates, with 1792 – 1843 rates from Post Office Guide, 1 June 1792, "General Rules for Rating Letters".

1792 PO Guide. This is widely quoted in many places, but I haven't managed to find a copy! The PHSC website includes this information in a table of early rates: https://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/Rates/early.php

9. Longley, Bill. [Circa] 1790 Table of Distances and Rates. *PHSC Journal*. 173 (Nov 2019): 24-5. Copy available on the PHSC website:

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This section of Part 2 relies on information from four main references [2 above and 10-12 below]:

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https://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/postOffices/index.php

York manuscript dates of 11 Feby 1798 ERD and 26 Feby 1800 LRD were originally in Graham, W. Bruce, Handelman, David, ed. *Ontario Broken Circles*. No location: Postal History Society of Canada, (1999): 228.

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15. Smyth/Smith, David William, Surveyor General of Upper Canada. *Map of the Province of Upper Canada describing all the new settlements, townships etc, with the countries adjacent from Quebec to Lake Huron etc...* London: William Faden, Charing Cross. (1800). Printed map.

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www.davidrumsey.com shows several editions.

https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/serviet/workspace/handleMediaPlayer?
lunaMediald=RUMSEY~8~1~4040~330018 [last 10 digits are variable & cover the map]
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- 24. JRR indicates item in my collection. xJRR indicates item formerly in my collection, now sold by, as indicated, e.g. ref 30.
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- 26. Harrison, Horace W. *Canada's Registry System*. Toronto: Hennok's Series of Postal History Collections No. 5. (1987): 4.
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