

THE SMALL QUEENS OF CANADA - EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD

1. A 1¢ drop letter rate paid by an unauthorized but genuine use of a 2¢ bisect.
2. A faked cover bearing an imperforate 2¢ made from a large margined stamp.
3. Two examples of similar large margined stamps that could have been used to make the imperforate 2¢ on the cover in Figure 2.

There are many possibilities for fakery and tomfoolery in the Small Queens of Canada, in large part because of their long period of use (1870-1897) and the various known dealers and collectors who enhanced or made covers at the end of the 19th Century. Some covers, however, may look fake but are entirely genuine.

Figure 1, an August 3, 1886 one cent Guysborough, Nova Scotia, drop letter bears a two cents Small

Queen bisect to pay this one cent rate. The use of bisected stamps was not authorized in Canada after Confederation of the British North American provinces in 1867. Although this usage had never been authorized in the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada prior to Confederation it was authorized in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

For many years after Confederation, in fact through the remainder of the 19th Century, postmasters in the Maritime provinces (most usages with certificates are known from Nova Scotia) disregarded the regulations and continued to accept the pre-Confederation use of bisects. Good Small Queen bisects are known for the two cents to pay a number of one cent rates and the six cents to pay the three cents domestic letter rate per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Figure 2 shows an imperforate two cents on a June 18, 1897 cover from Whycocomagh, Nova Scotia addressed to Margaree Forks, Cape Breton Island. Genuine imperforates of all the Small Queens were issued in small quantities in the 1890's (most around 400 copies). A very small number, mainly of the imperforate three and ten cents, are known genuinely used. The two cents on this cover is made from cutting off the margins on a regularly perforated stamp. Examples of large margined stamps, that could have been cut down to make a similar cover, are shown in Figure 3.

Certificates of authenticity should be obtained for all unusual usages of the Small Queen period.

