

## Synopsis

### SMALL COVERS AND CARDS

**Introduction:** This is a two frame experimental class exhibit.

**Purpose:** The exhibit provides an eclectic display of small covers, mourning covers, lady's letters, post cards and postal stationery which would not be acceptable in today's mail. With mechanization of postal service it became necessary for the Universal Postal Union (UPU) to set a minimum size for letters and postcards. Canada used a Toronto slogan cancel in 1957 to declare a minimum size of 4" x 2¾", in 1999 Canada Post issued a template for '140mm long x 90mm high x 0.18 thickness', switching to metric measurements. These are the current 2024 UPU requirements. 192 member nations currently adhere to UPU regulations.

**Background:** Early self-folded stampless covers were small essentially because paper was expensive and not readily available to the average person. Often letters were delivered by hand and not through a postal authority. As postage stamps became available, refinements to postal systems became necessary. In the Victorian era (1837-1901) people had become more affluent and a great deal of importance was placed on the niceties of life, including letter writing for social pleasure.

**Plan:** The exhibit plan is on the title page.

**Treatment:** The exhibit begins with stampless self-folded letters (SSF). Literary quotes set the tone for each page. SSF letters were most often business related. Next are the personal mourning covers, followed by lady's letters recognized by their long and narrow shapes. After this is social correspondence, the day to day notes to family and friends, covering the 'niceties' of life before the onset of the digital age. Printed stationery, post cards and a whimsical US Mail item conclude the exhibit. Millimetre measurements for each cover and card are noted.

**Note: Acquisition Difficulty**

The polaroid instant photo postcard is common, a postally used card is difficult to find, not expensive, just elusive.