

The Percy Band's Collection of documentary postal materials illustrates most aspects of the operation of a pioneer post office in Upper Canada. The items range over the years 1782 to 1874. The selection microfilmed in this section illustrates:

- (a) rules, regulations and actual procedures used by Alexander Hamilton at Queenston post office, and
- (b) the first post-marks of the post offices of Upper Canada of 1828 as well as many of Lower Canada.

The Archives wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the concern of Mr. Band that the full historical value of his collection should not be lost to students of Ontario's history. To this end he is here making them available for consultation only. The significance of this collection can be better appreciated when one knows that the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of the Canadian Post Office reported in 1846 that,

We shall presently have to submit a detailed statement of the actual condition of the department, to which a short account of the rise and progress of the Post-Office establishment in these provinces may, we hope, be advantageously prefixed. That account must necessarily be a short one, for we have to regret the absence of such documents as would enable us to furnish a more detailed history of the department; and it will be seen that the absence of more authentic records has compelled us to copy from the Quebec Almanac of remote years, lists of the post-offices then in existence, and that we have derived from the same source some scraps of information respecting the number of mails then transmitted between different places, and their gradual increase.\*

[Footnote]\* Previous to the appointment of the present Deputy Postmaster-general [T. Stayner, 1831], no records were kept in the post-office. The documents belonging to the department were treated as private property by each successive holder of the office, and removed by him or his representatives on his resignation or death.

(Imperial Blue Book No. 721, return dated 3 August 1846, pp. 4-5.)

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