

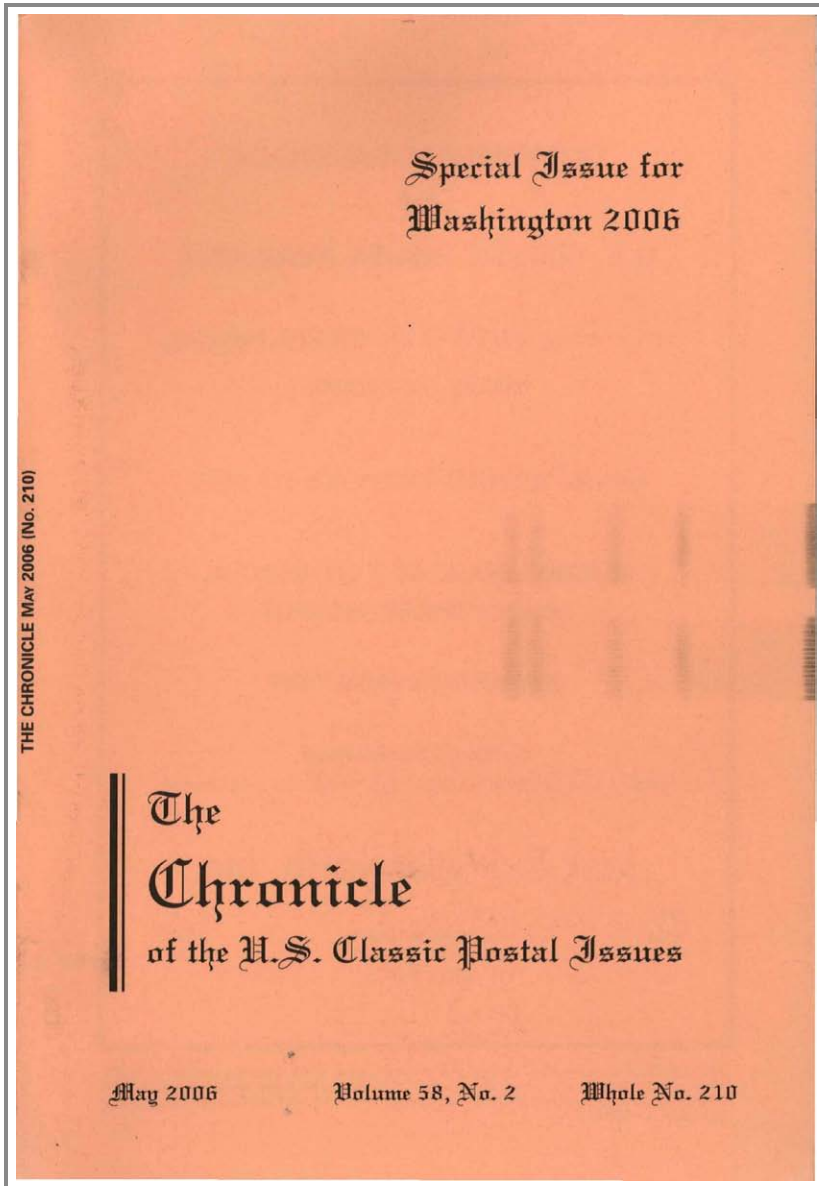


# U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

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**THE PEMBINA POST OFFICE—RED RIVER B.N.A. MAIL SERVICE:  
A FURTHER UPDATE**

JEFFREY M. FORSTER

In *Chronicle* 189 (February 2001), I described the mail service from Red River Settlement (now Winnipeg), via the Pembina post office, farther down the Red River in Dakota Territory.

That article described the private courier service which existed from Red River Settlement and which allowed mail from there to be delivered to other parts of Canada through the United States mails. During the 1869 era, mail service from western Canada to eastern Canada had to use the U.S. mails because there was no regular trans-Canadian transportation link.

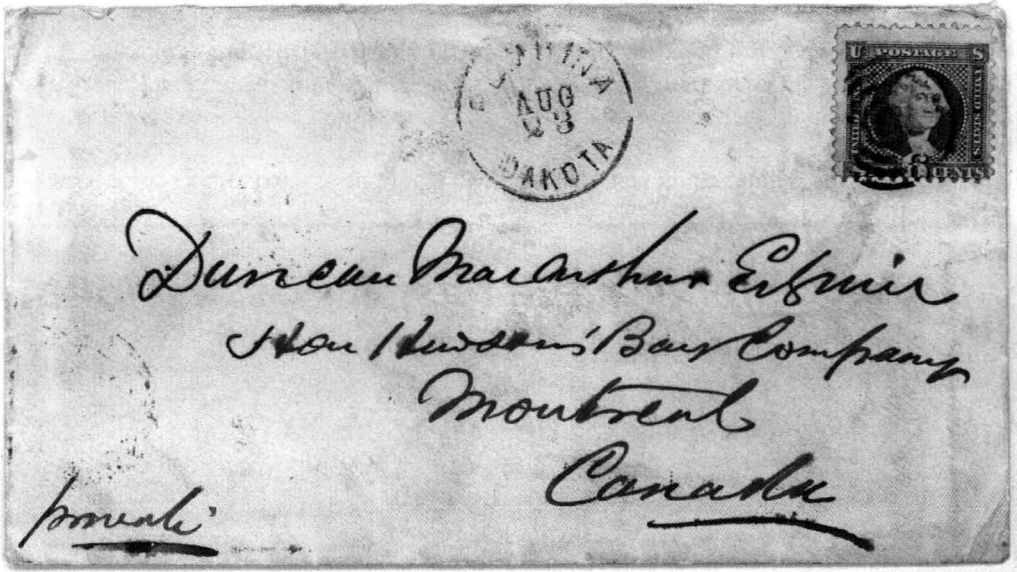


Figure 1. 6¢ 1869 stamp, tied to a cover addressed to Montreal, originating at Red River Settlement (now Winnipeg) and carried down the Red River to enter the U.S. mails at Pembina, Dakota Territory, for eastbound transit via the U.S. mails. This is the first recorded 6¢ 1869 cover to show this unusual usage.

As that article stated, the rate in 1869, if fully prepaid from the United States to Canada, was 6¢ (10¢ if unpaid). The article pictured two covers sent from Red River Settlement, down the Red River to the Pembina, Dakota Territory post office, across the U.S. and on to Montreal, Canada. One cover, dated July 13, 1869, was franked by three 2¢ 1869 stamps. The second cover, dated 30 September 1870, bore a pair of 3¢ 1869 stamps. Both covers were addressed to Duncan MacArthur, c/o the Hudson Bay Company in Montreal.

In *Chronicle* 193 (February 2002), I updated the census by adding a cover that had

been lot 399 in the Henry C. Gibson sale held by Philip H. Ward, Jr., on June 14-15, 1944. There was no photograph of the cover in the auction catalog, but in response to the first article, Dr. John L. Robertson told me that he owned the Gibson cover, which was then illustrated in *Chronicle* 193. This one was dated September 6, 1869 and franked with a strip of three 2¢ 1869 stamps. Again, the addressee was Duncan MacArthur.

I am pleased to report that a fourth cover has now appeared, this one franked with a 6¢ 1869 stamp. See Figure 1. That cover was lot 2186 in the auction held by Charles Firby on March 26, 2005, and was purchased by this writer. Like the others, it is addressed to Duncan MacArthur, c/o the Hudson Bay Company, in Montreal, Canada. It has a clear, black postmark showing Pembina, Dakota, dated August 23, 1870.

The stamp is tied with a black target cancel and on the reverse is a Montreal receiving mark showing September 3, 1870. This is the first cover to appear showing a 6¢ stamp paying this usage. The cover was submitted it to the Philatelic Foundation and received a good certificate in August, 2005.

This now makes a total of four recorded covers franked with 1869 stamps reflecting the Red River B.N.A. mail service from Red River Settlement via the Pembina post office back into Canada. If any readers have additional covers featuring this unusual usage, I would be happy to further update this listing in a future *Chronicle*. ■

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