

Draft of Regulations for the Evaluation of Postal History Exhibits

For some time now efforts at various levels have been undertaken to revise regulations governing postal history as a class. The draft presented below has been prepared by the Postal History Commission of the Inter-American Philatelic Federation. We are appreciative to the Editor, Tony Shaman, for allowing us to publish the results of our work in the Canadian Philatelist. Although this draft concerns mainly judges and exhibitors, we welcome comments from all readers with the hope that their feedback will help us improve it. I would like to express my gratitude to all those who, in response to my appeal, will email us with their opinions. The email address to contact us is jjad@rogers.com

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Art. 1 - The purpose of these regulations is to provide binding rules regarding exhibiting of postal history material. As such, they will help exhibitors to compete and the jury to properly evaluate various aspects of postal history exhibiting.

Art. 2 –Postal history defined

1. Postal history is a study of the development of letter-carrying services. Accordingly, a spectrum of issues embraced by this study begins when a piece of mail enters the letter-carrying system and ends when the mail is delivered to the recipient.

2. Although the postal history class was created to deal with the development of postal rates and postal routes over time, it also accommodated, other than those related to rates and routes, official markings which were placed on mail.

3. These special markings may originate from postal authorities or any other agencies, governmental or private, participating in processing of mail.

4. Therefore, the philatelic study of postal history means the identification and analysis of various markings found on pieces of mail and their functions to conclude and explain how the mail was processed.

5. Postal history aspects may include: postal rates, free frank privileges, postal routes, forwarding agent operations, disinfection of mail, the postal censorship of mail as well as censorship of mail by other governmental agencies.

Another possible approach embraces an examination markings found on mail by categorizing them according to their appearance (marcophily).

Postal history may also be looked at and analyzed through categories of recipients.

Examples: civilian prisoner mail, prisoners of war and internees mail, military mail, etc.

Finally, a subject of presentation may be individualized and analyzed ON THE BASIS OF the method of transportation of mail: railway mail (traveling post offices), ships' mail, air mail, etc.

6. The issues mentioned above in para. 4 remain dominant in postal history studies.

However, the focus of social and special study exhibits, currently included in this class on an experimental basis, is on issues and/or elements other than those defined above.

Art. 3 -Postal history material defined

1. In the general sense, postal history material comprises every document that allows us to present, interpret and/or explain letter-carrying practices. However, not every item which fits this definition may be shown in a postal history exhibit. It has to be stressed that some items may only be shown under specific conditions or in specific types of postal history exhibits.
2. In the strict sense, postal history material embraces only material that went through the letter-carrying system. It may contain various kinds of mail (e.g., covers, letters, postcards and other documents) which were accepted for delivery to a recipient, as well as any written/printed certificates of acceptance of the mail for delivery and/or acceptance of delivered mail by the recipient.
3. Collateral material may be defined as items allowed to be shown in a postal history exhibit despite the fact that they did not go through the postal system.
4. The provisions defining various kinds of postal history exhibits specify which items are allowed as collateral material within the respective sub-classes, and under what conditions.

As a principle, collateral material may only be shown in its genuine form; reproductions are allowed only to show the reverse side of the items shown.

Art. 4 –Approaches to postal history

Based on the subject of an exhibit, manner of presentation and/or material shown, we may distinguish the following sub-classes of postal history:

1. **Classical postal history approach** refers to the origins of this class. Such an exhibit presents the development and/or at the selected aspect(s) of letter-carrying services or a specified postal service as a process.

The focus is on markings originating from, or recognized by, the letter-carrying companies and/or their co-operators. The purpose of analysis here is to identify and explain the processing practices.

The allowed collateral material comprises maps, prints, decrees, etc., which may be shown only if it has a direct connection to the subject of presentation.

2. **Historical study** is a presentation of postal history aspect(s) of a specified historical event.

Consequently, a narrative, plan or other forms of write-up of such exhibits are two-sided, showing the characteristics of the presented event and an analysis of postal history aspects of the presented material with the focus on the latter.

Historical information should only constitute a background for the presentation of postal history aspects.

Also allowed is information which, by indicating a time frame of events, and/or the size of the group affected by the postal service, allows viewers to assess the rarity of the material presented.

3. **Marcophily** is a study of the physical characteristics of markings applied on postal history material during the operation of letter-carrying service. As such it is one-aspect approach to postal history.

Since the essence of this approach is the physical appearance of markings, it should include classifications of analyzed markings; for example, according to their form (such as manuscript annotations, hand stamps, machine cancels), shape, composition, etc.

A look at the physical characteristics of postal (and other) markings applied during the process might also be a part of a multi-aspect approach in other sub-classes of postal history.

4. **Social study**

1. Presents material generated in:

- a. the process of shaping new patterns of social interactions (decorum / etiquette) which followed the development of the postal service.

Examples: greeting (Christmas, New Year, Valentine, etc.) cards, decorative (Christmas) envelopes, decorative telegrams with Christmas or birthday greetings or marriage congratulations, mourning covers and folded letters, etc.

- b. the process of shaping new forms of existing social activities using the postal service as a tool. Example: fundraising for charities.
- c. the process of development of new business practices, utilizing the postal service as a tool, especially for advertising and selling. Examples: advertising postcards and covers, corner cards and corner card covers, letterheads, special pre-printed postal cards and pre-

2. Any non-philatelic, collateral material included in this sub-category must have an intimate connection with the operation or the objective of a postal system and may not exceed 30 % of the material shown.

3. Although a social study focuses on the social aspects, the exhibitor is expected to explore all possible postal history aspects of the items shown as well.

5. **Special study**

1. The subject of a special study may be a historical event, an individual achievement, an institution or certain kinds of activities.

2. The presented material needs to have a direct connection with the events, institutions, personalities, etc, presented in the study. This connection does not necessarily need to manifest itself in postal history elements of the items.

3. Possible affiliation includes: letters, covers, cards, etc, addressed to or originating from institutions or personalities, picture postcards with illustrations or other imprints connected to events, activities or institutions, corner cards and corner card covers, thanks for donation letters and cards/postcards, commercial transaction papers with imprinted or affixed revenues, covers/picture postcards/postal cards with labels and seals attached to them, etc.

4. Any non-philatelic collateral material shown must have an intimate connection with the operation or the objective of a postal system and may not exceed 30 % of the material shown.

5. The difference between special study and historical study is that in a historical study the presented material documents foremost the postal history aspects, whereas in special studies the focus is on documenting social and/or political events, functioning of social or political structures, individual activities and achievements, through contemporary material.

Art. 5 - Organization and composition of exhibit

1. An exhibit is a form of presentation. As such it requires a clearly defined subject and a meaningful story developed in a logical manner

2. Each exhibit should have:

- a. a title that clearly defines the subject of presentation;
- b. an introductory statement that explains in general terms a concept of presentation indicating its purpose and scope;
- c. a plan that specifies details of presentation and organization.

A plan in a multi-frame exhibit should indicate the number of sheets for each chapter, section, etc., of the exhibit.

In a one-frame exhibit, if the subject and the method of presentation allow it, a detailed plan may be replaced by an introductory statement. In such a case, adequate information regarding the purpose and the scope of presentation as well as its organization must be provided.

2. **Text** in an exhibit should be concise, clear and pertinent to the subject of presentation.

Generally, an exhibit should not be used for presentation of information exceeding the subject and/or scope of presentation as defined in the exhibit and allowed by provisions of these regulations. The above restriction does not apply to short references and annotations to celebrities or important events, etc., connected to the material shown.

The role of the text is:

- a. to lead the viewer through the presentation (title, introductory statement, plan and/or story line); and,
- b. to annotate the presented material (technical write-up).

With the exception of the title page and/or plan page, the text should not overwhelm the philatelic material shown.

If there is a need for the exhibitor to impart to judges lengthy but relevant information regarding references or the exhibitor's publications on the subject, a solution may be the inclusion of such information in a synopsis.

3. **Illustrations** in an exhibit should be used with caution.

If an important marking is unclear, its image may be reproduced but at least 30% smaller than the actual size.

If attention has to be drawn to an essential detail of a marking which is not clearly visible, it may be reproduced at least 30% larger than the actual size.

As mentioned in Art. 4, maps issued by letter carriers are allowed to be shown only in genuine form as collateral material in postal history exhibits.

Use of general maps or their reproductions is not recommended in exhibits because they usually display an abundance of details that detract from presentation and overwhelm the material on display. Drawing one's own map with only the details essential for presentation and reproducing it to the required size may be the solution.

In social and special studies the reproduction may be used to document that the item shown for its value for the development of subject of presentation went through the postal service and so should be treated as a postal history item.

The reproductions for this purpose should be no larger than 30% of original size.

Art. 6 -Time period classification of exhibits for judging purposes

Postal history exhibits will be judged in three groups determined by the following events:

- A. pre General Postal Union (GPU),
- B. GPU to the end of WWII,
- C. After WWII.

Each exhibit belongs to the period where it starts or where its main contents lie.

Art. 7 -Judging criteria

Judging means evaluation; evaluation may be viewed as a quantified recognition of some competitors over others. Quantification means allotment of points within prescribed limits, applied to various aspects of exhibiting.

Criteria and available points for all Postal History exhibits:

– Treatment (20), Philatelic Importance (10)	30
– Philatelic and Related Knowledge, Personal Study and Research	35
– Condition (10), Rarity (20)	30
– Presentation	5
– Total	100

The definition of philatelic importance for a classical approach, historical study and marcophily differs from such a definition applicable to social and special studies.

The assigned point scores will be entered on score sheets of an approved format.

Art. 8 - Final provisions

In the event of discrepancies in the texts arising from translation, the English text shall take precedence.

This is the corrected version of the text published in the September-October 2008 issue of The Canadian Philatelist, pp.286-289.