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CANADIAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Maple Leaves

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Whole No. 213

Vol. 20 No. 9

JUNE 1987



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MAPLE LEAVES

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Vol. 20 No. 9

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EDITORIAL

The April issue marked a change in printer to one a little nearer to hand, the services of Richard Printing having been used for many years. We are still feeling our way and hope to achieve satisfaction fairly soon.

In this issue we feature a short item from the indefatigable Yellow Peril. Short it may be but members are urged to take note. A fuller article in 'The Canadian Philatelist' (Jan/Feb 1987) shows that the practice of creating varieties is not an isolated one. Furthermore, it is quite possible that printers' waste has escaped from the printers; whilst such material is neither the result of faking nor forging, possession is illegal. We would not wish to tell members what not to collect but we feel that all members should take great care before spending hard-earned cash on dubious material, however spectacular it may appear.

We were pleased to receive, on behalf of the Library, a batch of cuttings from 'The American Philatelist' concerning, mainly, the Canadian Registry System. The donor failed to identify himself so we were unable to respond. The UK postmark was, as ever, sufficiently illegible to offer no clue as to origin.

If you plan to go to Convention this year please remember our President would like your booking form by 1 August. And finally, don't forget the one day seminar on 13 June – see the April issue.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In accordance with Rule 19, notice is hereby given of the Society's Annual General Meeting, to be held at the George Hotel, Lichfield, on Saturday 26 September 1987.

In accordance with Rule 17, nominations for the following offices are solicited:-

1. Vice President (from South of England)
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Three Committee Members, one from each region.

The retiring Committee Members are:-

A.S.Mackie (Scotland), D.G.Manton (North), L.E.Warren (South). They, together with the retiring Secretary and Treasurer, are eligible for re-election.

Nominations and any proposed amendments to the Rules should be sent to the Secretary by 26 June 1987.

FELLOWSHIP

Members of the Society are eligible for election as Fellows for:-

- (a) Outstanding research in the Postal History and/or Philately of British North America, or
- (b) Outstanding services in the advancement of the interests of the Society.

Nominations are solicited for submission to the Fellowship sub-committee in accordance with Fellowship Rule No. 2. Such nominations must be on the prescribed form which is available from the Secretary, and must be submitted by 26 July 1987.

CANADIAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Annual Subscription £7, payable to Treasurer John Hillson.

Canadian members may settle in \$CAN (\$14) via Wayne Curtis and US members in \$US (\$10.50) via John Siverts. North American members requiring airmail service should add \$5CAN or \$3.75US. Please make your cheques payable to Wayne or John respectively.

Members who have not paid the current year's subscription by 31 December will be removed from the *Maple Leaves* circulation list and reinstatement will incur an additional fee of £1 or its \$ equivalent.

**FORMING A COLLECTION OF EARLY
CANADIAN STAMPS AND COVERS (Part 2)**
By Geoffrey Whitworth, FRPSL, FCPS



The Pence Stamps.

Printing

The contract to produce the stamps was given to a New York firm which was already printing stamps for the U.S. and other countries. They were using a method known as 'recess' printing where even the finest lines can be reproduced in detail. The required design is reversed and an engraver cuts the lines into a small piece of steel, known as the die. After checking, this is hardened and on to it is rolled a steel roller which picks up the design in relief. After this is hardened it is ready to roll over the printing plate as many times as required to give a stated number of stamps per sheet. Printing takes place by squeezing the ink into the hollows on the plate and wiping off the surplus. Then a slightly damped paper is pressed onto the plate and carefully lifted away so as not to smudge the impression. After gumming and drying the sheets are ready for checking and despatch.

At this time all paper was hand made and the first paper to be used for Canadian stamps was quite thin and showed feint 'laid' lines. Papers were bought from many suppliers and this resulted in a variety of thicknesses and characteristics. In order to start a simple collection, go for the stamp's appearance and perfection and leave the paper problem until a second copy comes your way.

And now to discuss the stamps in value order.

The Individual Values

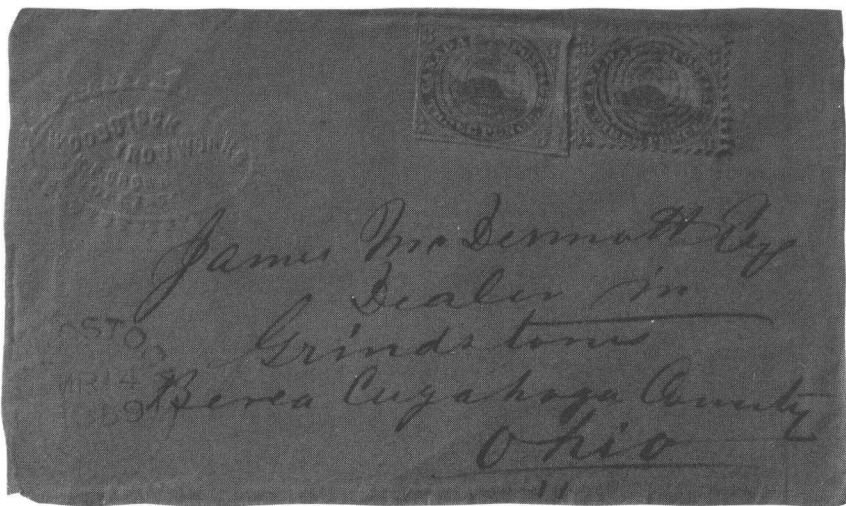
- ½d. value. Issued August 1857 Imperforate
From November 1858 perforated 11¾
- Design:- The profile head of Queen Victoria taken from the 4d. stamps then current in England.
- Colour:- Deep rose to pale and pinky shades.
- Uses:- Newspapers, -per copy Domestic, to U.S. and U.K. but if to the U.K. via America 1d. was demanded from the recipient for transit charges.
'Drop' letters i.e. letters posted in a post office for delivery to a box in the same office.
Printed papers and periodicals up to 3 oz. weight.
Registration fee of 1d.
Used in multiples to make up letter rates or as required.



June 1859 ½d. perforated used on a musical programme sent from Quebec to Three Rivers.

- 3d. value. Issued 23 April 1851 Imperforate.
From November 1858 perforated 11¾
- Design:- Canada's national animal, the Beaver, is the central feature. It is surmounted with a crown and V R.

- Colour:- Orange vermillion. Later printings were redder and browner. One printing is a scarlet shade on very thin paper.
- Uses:- The domestic letter rate per ½ oz. This applied to letters for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.
Multiples to make up higher rates as required.
Used with a 6d. stamp for the 9d. rate to California, Oregon, British Columbia and Vancouver Island.



March 1859 A combination of threepenny stamps, unperforated and perforated, used on a letter to America.

- 6d. value. Issued 15 May 1851 Imperforate
From January 1859 perforated 11¾
- Design:- The head of Albert, Prince Consort, taken from an etching by W.H. Egolton, under the supervision of Chas. Heath.
- Colour:- Colour matching was very inconsistent and printings vary from slate violets to purples, greenish greys and brownish violets.
- Uses:- The letter rate to eastern U.S. per ½ oz.
Double domestic letters.
In combination with the 3d. to make up higher rates.
Multiples as required.



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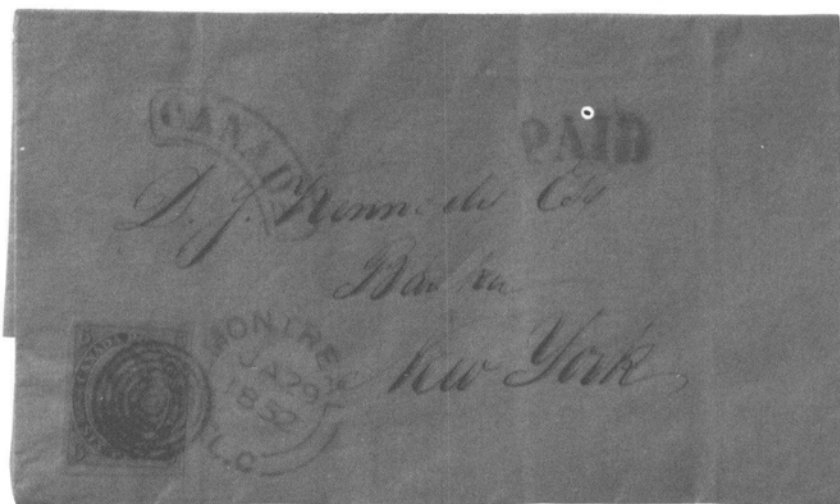
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January 1852 A sixpenny stamp used on a letter to New York.

7½d. value. Issued June 1857 Imperforate

Design:- The 'Chalon' head of Queen Victoria taken from the die of the 12d. stamp, by now withdrawn from circulation. Canadian currency and its sterling equivalent of 6d. are clearly indicated in the spandrels and oval.

Colour:- There was only one order for stamps but two depths of a deep olive green are found.

Uses:- The letter rate to the U.K. by Canadian steamer from Montreal or Quebec. In March 1854 new transatlantic rates came into force and followed the old domestic scale:-

not exceeding ½ oz. one rate of 7½d. Cy.

not exceeding 1 oz. two rates.

not exceeding 2 ozs. four rates.

There was no 1½ oz. rate.

If a letter was not fully prepaid the postage due was:-

For every 1 rate short the postage due was 6d. Stg.

plus a half fine of 3d.

making a total of 9d. Stg.

The British Post Office collected an extra 3d. for its services causing the recipient to pay 1/- altogether.

7½d. was the book rate up to ½ lb. to U.K.

The letter rate to Newfoundland and B.W.I. via Halifax. From 1 January 1858 it prepaid the registration fee to U.K.

- 10d. value. Issued January 1855 Imperforate
- Design:- The head of Jacques Cartier, discoverer of the St. Lawrence river, a navigator out of St. Malo where the original portrait was held. The stamp was required to prepay postage when letters were sent via New York and the Royal Mail steam packets. Canadian currency and the sterling equivalent of 8d. are clearly indicated.
- Colour:- Dark blue. A second small printing was on a whiter paper which gives the stamp a lighter colour.
- Uses: In March 1854 the postage rate for mail carried by British mail packets was reduced to 10d. Cy per ½ oz. letter. Greater weights carried the same increasing scale as for the Canadian line. The fine for being short paid was at this time slightly higher.
- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Postage due for one short rate | 8d. Stg. |
| Fine | 6d. |
| British Claim | 4d. |
| Total to be paid by recipient | 1/6d. Stg. |
- In combination with a 7½d. stamp on a registered letter to U.K.
- Multiples on heavier letters.
- 12d. value. Issued May 1851 Imperforate
- Design:- The central feature is the head of Queen Victoria taken from a portrait painted by Alfred Edward Chalon R.A.. This was painted after the Queen's first visit to the House of Lords. The value is clearly expressed in words 'twelve pence' as well as in figures in the four spandrels. Canadian currency is implied as the stamp was for multiple rates.
- Colour:- There was only one printing in deep black printed on a thin laid paper.
- Uses:- The double 6d. rate to eastern American towns. Multiple domestic rates

For information beyond the normal catalogue listings our Society Library has a number of useful books.

The most recent is by Mr. Robson Lowe; Volume V of the Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps. North America.

The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada by W.S. Boggs, volumes I & II, published in 1945, contains much information on the handstamps used during this period as well as the stamps themselves. This is a compilation of all earlier research work known at that time and carries many very useful illustrations. Volume II contains the results of searching the archives of the American printers and the Canadian Post Office; Acts of Parliament; changing postage rates; letters to the printers concerning new stamps; the possibility of perforations and many more topics

The Canada Specialized catalogue has a very good listing of plate proofs, these on the whole are cheaper than the stamps themselves and are well worth having. (Published by Lighthouse, Montreal).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By the time you read this I shall be in Canada looking forward to visiting CAPEX 87. I know that after my visit I shall be suffering from despondency brought about by feasting on a gourmet menu of B.N.A.

As usual I shall return home determined to have a bonfire and revert to bird-watching. BUT NO! not this time, because, after forcing my way through the front door, I shall find that the C.P.S. of G.B. members have come to the rescue again by inundating me with reservations for Convention 87.

I had not envisaged you all being as keen as one member who, upon receipt of his 'Maple Leaves' on 13 April, rang me that night to give me a verbal booking for his party. I think he may have heard that on the day of the visit to Bird's Bakery there is to be a visit for the overflow to the Bass Brewery at Burton. The excursion on Friday will be to Shugborough, the ancestral home of Lord Lichfield.

Having whetted your appetite with the list of exhibitors in the last issue of 'Maple Leaves', Esther and I are hoping the social events noted will induce those undecided members to take the plunge and fill in the booking form.

In conclusion, may I suggest you follow the example of one member, who sent his competition entry in April, and send in your competition form now and help to ensure an exciting Convention viewing session.

Derrick Avery.



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We are now planning another important B.N.A. sale for early autumn. If you have items which you would like included in this superb auction, contact Frank Laycock or Geoffrey Manton. We are prepared to travel to any part of the world for suitable properties.

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**A £2000 RARITY FOR 10P?
By The Yellow Peril**

Photo by P.Prude



Yes! This exciting “rarity” can be had for only 10p! The above pair is one of the “Maple Leaves in Four Seasons” stamp issued in 1971. There are four stamps (one for each season) to the set but the “Autumn” stamp is the only one listed with part of the design missing and it catalogues \$4000 in the 1987 SCOTT Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps. The normal stamp, which catalogues only 10c, can easily be converted to the \$4000 rarity by erasing the grey inscriptions with an eraser. It is likely that there are other Canadian stamps that can be similarly altered.

The writer is grateful to member John Talman of John H. Talman Auctions Limited, Toronto for making him aware of this excellent fake.

Note:

The rate of exchange at the time this report was prepared was £1 = \$2 Can or £2000 = \$4000 Can

It is always a good policy to be familiar with the ‘caveat emptor’ doctrine.

* * * * *

SOCIETY TIES

The ties feature the Society’s logo on a plain ground and can be obtained from Brian Stalker, the Secretary, at £5 each. Overseas members should add 30p postage (sea mail) or 80p (Airmail). A choice of green or navy blue background is available.



Essay proof of Sir Sandford Fleming's 3d Beaver, Canada's first stamp. Reproduced by courtesy of the National Postal Museum, Ottawa.

The organisers claim that this International exhibition will be the biggest ever staged in Canada. With some 800 exhibits from private and government collections, 133 dealers and 93 postal administrations, they could just be right.

Among the items on display will be the world famous rarity, the 1856 1c magenta of British Guiana as well as lithographed essay proofs of the 3d Beaver, designed by Sir Sandford Fleming in 1851.

A number of C.P.S. of G.B. members will be exhibiting and we hope to include a short report of the show in the August issue.

SMALL QUEENS – The Enigma Variations **by John Hillson**

A reassessment of the 'Five on Six Cents' and the one cent 'Strand of Hair' varieties.

For some time there have been reports of there being more than one plate and more than one position on those plates from which the 'Five on Six Cents' re-entry has been identified; quite recently George Arfken did a summary of most of the articles which have appeared on this subject in the 'Canadian Re-entry Study Group' edited by another of our members Ralph Trimble. It seemed high time that a fresh attempt be made to sort out the fact from the fiction.

Let us be quite clear on one point at the outset. A true 'Five on Six' must show clear evidence of part of the 5¢ design superimposed on the 6¢ stamp, i.e. horizontal straight frame lines unique to the 5¢ as far as this issue is concerned and straight cross hatching similarly superimposed. The odd curved line and a few dots to my mind will not do, and this point will be returned to later.

There were three theories as to the probable cause of the variety, which I trust I will be forgiven for restating.

1. An old plate was used and imperfectly burnished off before being laid down as a new 6¢ plate.
2. A multi-relief roller containing reliefs of both the 5¢ and 6¢ values was used and over-rocking took place.
3. The wrong roller was used.

First Theory

The Montreal 6¢ plate was made in 1887; it is from Pane 'B' of this plate that the variety came (after, according to Boggs, a very late repair c. 1896). At that time the original 5¢ plate, which was certainly in service in 1885, the second 5¢ plate not being made until 1886, might have still been in use. More certain the Post Office owned the plate, not the printers; to burnish off an old plate is a more expensive process than preparing the surface of a fresh piece of steel anyway and, as Boggs pointed out in his article which appeared in *The Collectors Club Philatelist* 38, 59–72, March 1959 on the subject, reputable printers do not re-use plates.

Second Theory

The second theory is more plausible, but presupposes that the printers knew in 1871, when two designs of the 6¢ were prepared and one approved, that in some four years time a 5¢ was going to be needed and the design that they would have had to put onto the transfer roller in 1871 would be approved when the time came, and they would do this at their own expense and risk. Then, having gone to all this trouble, when the rate was needed they issued a 5¢ Large Queen instead. If they had had the Small design on the relief from the beginning the 5¢ Large Queen would never have been issued; it would not have been needed. Could the 5¢ relief be added later, say in 1875/6? No. To do so would have meant jeopardising the 6¢ transfer relief roller because it would have to be softened, the new relief(s) added, then re-annealed. That would risk ruining the whole tool. A prudent company would not run such an unnecessary risk, particularly when the PO would pay for a new additional value roller – the 5¢ – anyway.

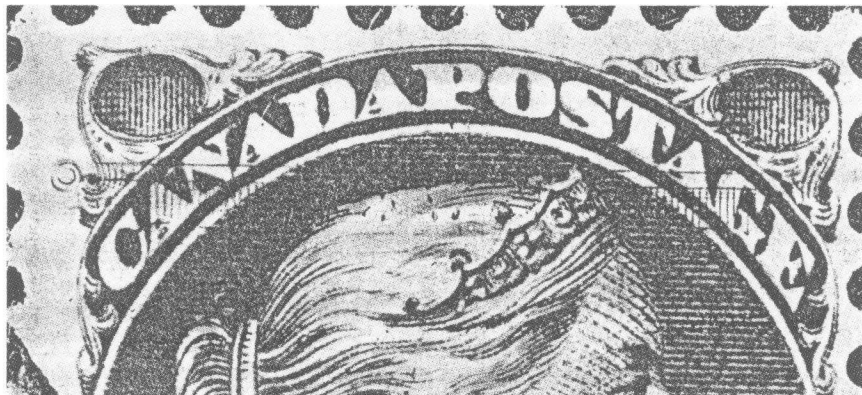
Third Theory

That leaves us with use of the wrong roller. Boggs' article referred to above goes into great detail about the size of transfer rolls and to my mind proved his point on the arithmetic alone. It is a superb piece of work.

If use of the wrong roller was the cause how come all these 'other' 'Five on Sixes' – constant carelessness? No, there aren't any others.

There's Only One!

In the *London Philatelist*, Vol 78, p. 55–59, the late Peter Hurst thought he had identified two stages of the variety, and that it came from position 25 on the plate. Unfortunately he did not appear to have noticed that the configuration of the positional block of 12 which contains the variety in the 5th vertical row is the same horizontal rows 2 and 3 & 8 and 9. The 5th vertical row is 'jumped' so 85 fits the bill as neatly as 25. As far as 'two stages' is concerned the late W.E. Lea wrote a letter, same volume, page 124, where he asserted the two illustrations of the variety were of two different 'Five on Six'; in fact the 'other' was shown at Philymphia as such and gave rise to a letter from Derrick Avery in *ML* Jan 1981 that after careful comparison at the exhibition of the 'two' varieties, he could discern no difference between them. He was quite right, there is none, other than depth of printing which is what fooled both Hurst and Lea. Careful examination of the illustrations and a very clear blow-up, which will be found in *ML* June 1956 p 104 and is reproduced here, shows they are in identical positions – the confirming clue being the short outer top right frame line of the 5¢.



The 'Five on Six Cents' Re-entry

What about the other ones that were reported by E.M. Blois at positions 20 and 21 on late Ottawa printings from the Montreal and Ottawa 'A' plate made in 1873 (which we also now know to have been a 100-subject plate)? His report is of varieties 'similar to' the 'Five on Six' and what is identified is an 'arc' – no mention of the straight lines peculiar to the 5¢. Even more interesting is mention of the positions above, 10 & 11 being 'weak at the top' (Topics 11, p. 290–2). Further, the variety does not occur in the earlier yellow-brown printings. To digress for a moment, Lea at one time wrote that one had to re-enter the whole design, one could not repair only part of an impression; Boggs quite properly refuted this in the article previously referred to, and pointed out one could re-enter any part of a subject on a plate. However it is possible that Lea might have been partly right, that it might have been difficult to control the traverse of the relief roller below a minimum distance. If that is so then there is a strong chance that the Blois 'Arc' varieties on the M & O plate were caused by our old friend over-rocking – of a multi-relief 6¢ roller – when repairing positions 10 and 11 at the bottom which after repair would leave the tops relatively weak.

Strand of Hair

Where does the one cent 'Strand of Hair' come into all this? If over-rocking is possible, and it does have difficulties which will be examined, then it is a likely cause of these varieties also. Hurst was right¹ when he said there are three and probably four different. They all have two things in common whatever their length, their approximate position on the Queen's head, and their shape; not just the curve, but also a small blip that appears on the underside of all of them, which

indicates the cause to be, not accidental damage as I once believed, but mechanical. If it is possible that the reliefs on the one cent and the six cents transfer rollers were close enough to allow inadvertent re-entry to occur, then the one part of the design that is common to all Small Queens, other than the vignette, is the curved label that encloses the legend 'Canada Postage' and the first portion of that which would enter the design is the curve at the top.

The difficulty is that it is commonly accepted that the rollers had only two reliefs on them opposite to one another, so that over-rocking could not occur. There is however no proof that only two relief rollers were made. Hypothetically if one postulates six relief rollers of a diameter of $2\frac{1}{4}$ " the arithmetic just about fits. Unfortunately it doesn't prove anything except over-rocking might be possible. The only other explanation for the one cent and six cents 'Arc varieties' if they may be so called for the moment, is continual misplacement of the reliefs when repairing the plates. Since the craftsmen who carried out that work were highly skilled it is difficult to accept incompetence as the cause.

Summary

To sum up, there is one 'Five on Six Cents' re-entry from pane B, Montreal plate, position not totally determined; there are a number of 'Arc' inadvertent re-entries on the M & O six cents 'A' plate and from a late Ottawa one cent plate – and MAYBE who knows on what other denominations or plates similar varieties may be discovered. Worth a look?

¹. *B.N.A. Topics*, Oct. 1970

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MEETING

Bristol and District Federation is running a two-day convention at the Somerset Hall, Portishead, on Saturday/Sunday 8 and 9 August. In conjunction with the show the South West Region of C.P.S. is holding a meeting throughout the afternoon of Sunday 9 August.

It is proposed to follow the format of the London meetings whereby members are invited to give a short display to entertain their fellow enthusiasts. Each display will be limited to a maximum of 40 sheets.

WOULD ALL MEMBERS WHO FEEL ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE SUCH A DISPLAY PLEASE CONTACT David Sessions, 36 The Chimes, Nailsea, Bristol, BS19 2NH (Tel 0272 852323) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT A SCHEDULE CAN BE PREPARED.

The show opens at 10 am on each day and our meeting starts at 2 pm so there will be opportunity to browse around the dealers' stands before getting down to the serious matter of the day.

Any enquiries to your Editor — meanwhile book the date in your diary:— Sunday 9 August — Somerset Hall, Portishead, nr. Bristol.

A SECOND COLEMAN

Whatever area of Canadian (or other for that matter) philately one collects, it seems that sooner or later one comes up against the 'impossible' — that item of which only one or two examples are known and are well out of reach.

Squared circle collectors certainly have this problem with Coleman, Ontario. The only known copy was discovered by the late Dr. Carstairs and was sold in November 1985 when his collection came under the auctioneer's hammer. Thus only one of the devoted band of squared circle collectors could possibly hope for completion.

All is not lost, however, for Dr. Warren Bosch has now discovered a second copy, on a 3c Small Queen and dated 'Oc 1, 94'; the original example's date is illegible. The hammer was 'proofed' on 25 April, 1893.

Regular conventioners will no doubt recall Stanley Cohen showing some alarmingly good examples of squared circle forgeries but the provenance of the new discovery suggest authenticity. It was found in the small city of Urbana, Illinois, on Friday the 13th (of March) no less, where Dr. Bosch was attending a conference of chemistry teachers. The item is likely to be auctioned in Toronto though nothing had been fixed at the time of writing. One imagines that such a find will come under very close scrutiny before changing hands.

Let this be a message of hope to collectors everywhere!

Photocopies of cancellations on stamp do not reproduce well but, in view of the importance of this find, we have attempted to illustrate here the second copy of the Type 1 squared circle from Coleman, Ont, dated 1 October 1894.



FORGOTTEN TO BOOK FOR CAPEX IN TORONTO?

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PLAYING BOOKLET ROULETTE by Dale Speirs

Although I do not collect booklets as part of a specialized collection, I do like to buy them from the vending machines whenever I have an even number of quarters. 50¢ booklets are better than the government lottery, since the latter is good only for the fireplace or the compost heap if one loses. If a booklet turns out to be ordinary, then one can still use the stamps on the mails. If the booklet is an error, then one can look forward to anything from a new coat to paying off the mortgage, although in most cases such errors will buy about a glass of beer.

I have yet to pay off the mortgage with a booklet but have picked up a few minor varieties. Figure 1 shows a booklet pane with a partial dry print. The 34¢ stamp at bottom right did not print completely. The lower right corner is not squared off and is partially missing. During the printing process, the paper lifted slightly or the ink was blocked by some scrap of paper that subsequently fell away.

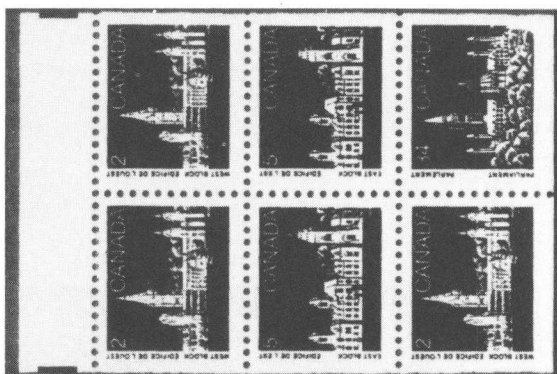


Fig. 1. Partial dry print.

Figure 2 shows a common variation of the booklet. There is an unusually wide bottom margin, easily spotted by the fact that the perforations do not go all the way to the edge as in figures 1 and 3. Figure 3 shows an unusually wide selvedge at the top of the booklet pane. This variation is interesting because along the top of this is a faint, sky-blue line, not at all the dark blue of the 34¢ stamp.

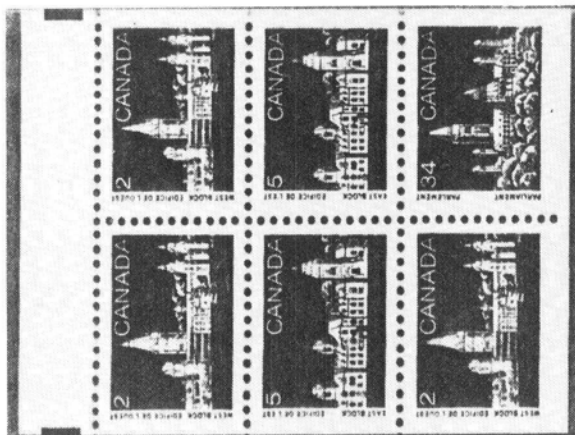


Fig. 2. Wide margin.

This booklet series, depicting various aspects of the Parliament Buildings, will be difficult if not impossible to obtain in fine used condition. The stamps are so dark that most postmarks show up very poorly. For this reason it is not uncommon to see stamps that could be reused for postage without anyone the wiser. One is surprised that Canada Post would allow such dark stamps to be released.

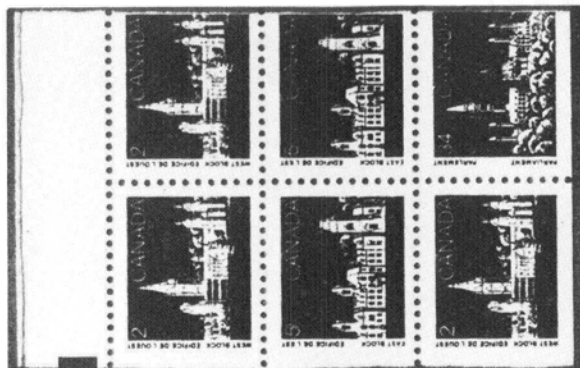


Fig. 3. Wide selvedge.

ADMIRAL PLATE INSCRIPTIONS by Hans Reiche, FCPS

G.C. Marler in his excellent handbook of the Admiral issue shows the various types of plate inscriptions which were used on each value. Around 1915 the inscriptions with 'OTTAWA No', with and without a letter 'A' were transferred to the plates by a transfer roller. The plate numbers following the inscription were entered by hand. It is therefore not surprising that one can find a few inscriptions which appear to be entered twice or entered with a wrong plate number. This kind of inscription is interesting and collectors should keep a watch out for examples. A couple of such inscriptions are illustrated. These sketches are not to size but indicate the kind of entry which was made. Some of the inscriptions are weak and photographs would not show this well enough.

The 1c green shows a doubling of the plate number with an 'o' from 'No', and a '15' instead of the '118'.

The 2c red shows doubling of the word 'Ottawa' and instead of plate '158', '157' was entered.

The 1c yellow shows doubling of the letters 'No - A' from plate 170 U.

The 2c War Tax shows a wrong plate number '18' entered.

OTTAWA-NO - d 1 5 8

1 c green Plate 118 UR

OTTAWA - NO - A 1 5 7 8

2c red Plate 158 U

WIA - NO - A

1c yellow Plate 170 U

NO - A 1 0 8

2c red War Tax Plate 10 UR

THE STORY OF A CANADIAN STAMP COLLECTION (Part 6) by Stanley F. Cohen, F.C.P.S.

Some six months later, the collector wrote me indignantly that he had obtained a London Certificate of genuineness for the stamp and sent me a photocopy. The letter was very rude and suggested that I had better learn a bit more about the stamps before expressing an opinion on them. I studied the Certificate carefully. It simply stated 'Stamp submitted. SG.72a'. 'Very badly torn and repaired.' What it did not say was that the stamp was not SG.72a at all. I suppose the (quite famous) issuing Society had not even bothered to mention this fact since the condition of the stamp was so bad that it was hardly worth bothering with. But I am very cross with Certificating authorities both in London and Toronto who tend to mislead collectors in this and other ways. I am sorry to say that some of the Certificates issued for early Canada are extremely suspect. I have even seen the same stamp submitted to one authority receiving a genuine Certificate and to another saying it was a fake.

The collector, with his 'Certificate', was then able to sell through auction this horrible copy. I advised the auctioneers that, despite the Certificate, the stamp was clearly not genuine but they sold it just the same for almost £100. To my horror, a CPS member bought it, against my advice, and it remained in his collection as his sole copy of the variety. This kind of thing encourages the fakers and it is very bad for the hobby. Apart from which I was totally discredited and didn't much like that either.

So much then for an early Canadian stamp, and now, for just one modern one.

The 1964–8 cent surcharge

As explained earlier, my Canada collection basically stops at 1900, but there are a few later exceptions. I have always had a fad, if not a passion, for the unusual in varieties and misprints. It so happens that, unlike GB where there seem to be 'errors' or 'missing colours' for almost every modern issue, Canada Post have a fine printing record and such varieties are quite rare for modern Canadian stamps.

It was this that made the extraordinary 5 cent Seaway of 1959 with inverted centre (SG.513a Cat. £12,000) so popular and in demand. I never acquired a copy but bought myself something else which I valued even higher because it is quite unique . . .

In July 1964, the recently issued (May) 7 cent airmail stamp, was overprinted with the figure '8' in bars prior to the release (Nov.) of the 8

cent blue airmail. Some time following this I noticed a Lot in a J.N. Sissons catalogue that I considered must be the most extraordinary error of modern Canada. It was a Mint corner block of four of the 7 cents value which had two stamps showing the overprint, and in the same block, two stamps unsurcharged. What had happened in the printing process was that the lowest corner stamp had folded over the one above it, and the '8' surcharge was printed on the back gum of the lowest stamp. Once folded back into position, the variety, with and without surcharge, appeared. It was a unique block, and, to me just about the best possible of varieties

Accordingly I bid on the Lot and was able to acquire it for a few hundred dollars. But now explain this. Why should a variety like the 5 cents Seaway invert be worth tens of thousands of dollars, with a whole sheet of them printed and many mint and used copies surviving, and yet this unique and marvellous missing surcharge be worth mere hundreds? This is one of the odd factors of our wonderful hobby that I shall never comprehend. I suppose it all adds up to the fact that one man's meat is another man's poison, as the saying goes. It also gives the spice of variety itself to the hobby of Kings and the King of hobbies.

The twilight years

Now as I look back over the years I can honestly say that my hobby of collecting Canadian stamps has been one of the big bonuses of life. The countless hours spent on them, the great friendships they led to, the exhibition awards and the contacts made through them, are only a few aspects. Of course, the pecuniary gain over the years, through shrewd buying and trading, backed by long experience, is also a consideration but it is not paramount. More thrilling is the joy at discovering a new, perhaps unique, gem or an incredibly rare and beautiful cover.

The saddest aspect is, over the years, to lose so very many of your erstwhile friends and fellow collectors. One by one, as the years draw by, they disappear from the scene, their familiar faces no longer to be seen at any Convention. Then, soon afterwards, their collections, the pride and joy of their lives, are sold, usually by auction.

I have often thought that these collections might have been sold during the life times of their owners rather than by their widows or families. At least some pleasure is derived from the sale of one's stamps, as well as by their acquisition. Also the burden and strain is taken away from the family left with the responsibility and trauma of selling the collection of a loved one. Of course, most auction houses do the necessary work involved admirably, but somehow it is just not the same as if the collector himself were alive to see the results of all his labours,



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which usually end up realising prices far beyond his own thoughts and evaluations.

It was while contemplating all this, in my home now in the sunshine of southern Spain, where I have lived in retirement these past few years, that, on an impulse, I suddenly decided it was time that I sold my own Canadian collection. After all, I have to realise that my Canadian collecting days are over for I am unable to add anything to them over here. The stamps lie in bank vaults, seldom seen and apparently unwanted, for none of my children nor my grand-children seem the slightest bit interested in them.

In any event the collection is just about as complete as it could ever be. True, I do not have a copy of the 2 cents Large Queen on laid paper, as one of the Judges once said to me at an International Exhibition. My Large Queens exhibit, he told me, had 'brought tears to his eyes' . . . hopefully tears of joy, I thought . . . but 'Did I know that it could never get a 'Gold' because it lacked the 2 cents laid paper?' I just smiled because I knew his reasoning for this even before he told me. 'Suppose we did give your exhibit a Gold', he said, 'what would we be able to give to an exhibitor who showed Large Queens that included a 2 cents laid paper?'

Of course, it was fair criticism and it was not for me to enlighten him, but the judge was quite wrong. Like most judges at exhibitions he was living in the past and his thinking was governed by rules and regulations laid down very many years ago. Since those days, a number of new discoveries of unique items in the Large Queens series have been made, of which quite a number were to be seen in my particular display, for instance, the only known copy of the 1 cent yellow with the major re-entry, whereas the 2 cents laid paper is known in as many as three copies. I suppose I could write another chapter on judges at exhibitions, indeed I have been one myself, but I have already written far too much as it is.

Another factor in the decision to sell is diminishing eyesight. I no longer find it easy to see those minute re-entries which once so delighted me. Then, too, the thought of passing on my collection to those younger generations of collectors, who perhaps will gain as much pleasure as I did in the acquisition of my stamps, of which a tiny glimpse has been seen in these pages, is a happy one.

The end.

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