

CENTENNIAL DEFINITIVES
STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER
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Paid
#3487
Dec 3/88

It is once again time to renew memberships for the 1989 season. Our membership fee will again be \$5 Canadian (for Canadian members) and \$5 US for our American members. Please make any cheques payable to Douglas Irwin.

In this newsletter we present more information on the recent discovery of mint copies of the 6¢ orange, Winnipeg tagged hibrite stamps. Also, since many of our members are not members of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, we are reproducing a very interesting article which recently appeared in the Canadian Philatelist.

HIBRITE NEWS

More information has surfaced on the 6¢ orange Winnipeg tagged hibrites since the last newsletter. Our thanks to both Ed Butler and John Jamieson for providing both mint and used copies for examination. It appears that the total number of mint copies has not increased from the first announcement. Of the four corner blocks in the original find, only the lower left corner survives intact as a block of four. The other three corners have been split up producing more perfed all around singles and many of the singles have been sold from one dealer to another making the total number of copies appear to be more than there actually are.

The total find seems to have originated from two partial sheets. The two right corner blocks and many of the single stamps are well centred while the two left corner blocks of six are off centre.

A single stamp from the right side of the sheet was originally sent into the Vincent Greene Foundation for their opinion last fall. It was issued with a genuine certificate (figure 1) Earlier this year, a single stamp from position 83 was sent into the Foundation and it did not receive a good certification. They reported that the stamp had been tampered with but gave no further details (figure 2). However, the Foundation blew it when



they tried to assign the stamp a catalogue number (they gave it a 6¢ black number).

A few of our members have not liked the appearance of some of the stamps in this find. Some of the mint copies seem to have gum which is cracked or has a sweated appearance. In the first edition of "Canada, The 1967-73 Definitive Issue", Keane and Hughes describe the used copies that they examined to have what appears to be black ink under ultraviolet light. Indeed, the used copies that I have examined also appear to have dark black ink under UV light. However, some of the mint stamps from this last find that I have examined have a much lighter shade of ink under UV light. Another of the mint singles that I examined from the latest find appears to have patches of fluorescence from the front of the stamp bleeding onto the gum side around the perf holes. Some of the mint stamps did not seem to have a uniform fluorescence over the face of the stamps (they had very bright fluorescent spots on a hibrite background) while others did appear uniform in fluorescence.

My advise to any member contemplating buying a mint single of the 6¢ orange, Winnipeg tagged, on hibrite paper, to examine the stamp closely before purchasing. We are not making any judgement on the stamps from this latest find, but we do not like certain characteristics of some of these mint copies.



N^o 3564

VINCENT GRAVES GREENE PHILATELIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 100, First Canadian Place
Toronto, Canada
M5X 1B2

CERTIFICATE NO: 3564

DATE: September 29, 1987

COMMENTS: Canada, Scott No. 459bp,
(Canada Specialized (1987-
1988) 410ef) perf. 12½ x 12,
Mint, O.G., N.H., genuine in
all respects.

ISSUED TO:



VINCENT GRAVES GREENE PHILATELIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

By:

[Handwritten signature]

authorized signature

COLOUR IN PHOTOGRAPH MAY NOT
EXACTLY MATCH ORIGINAL ITEM.

Neither the Foundation nor any director, officer, employee, agent or consultant will be liable for any financial loss or damage suffered (whether as a result of negligence or otherwise) as a result of any opinion which may be expressed by the Foundation or any director, officer, employee, agent or consultant as to any item submitted to the Foundation.

ANY TAMPERING WITH THIS CERTIFICATE RENDERS IT VOID

FIGURE 1

VINCENT GRAVES GREENE PHILATELIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 100, First Canadian Place
Toronto, Canada
M5X 1B2

CERTIFICATE NO: 0924

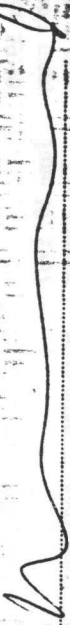
DATE: January 12, 1988

COMMENTS: Canada, Scott No. 460,
tampered to make it appear
to be the Hibrite Winnipeg
2 bar variety.

ISSUED TO: E. Butler



VINCENT GRAVES GREENE PHILATELIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

By: 
.....
authorized signature

COLOUR IN PHOTOGRAPH MAY NOT
EXACTLY MATCH ORIGINAL ITEM.

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ANY TAMPERING WITH THIS CERTIFICATE RENDERS IT VOID

FIGURE 2

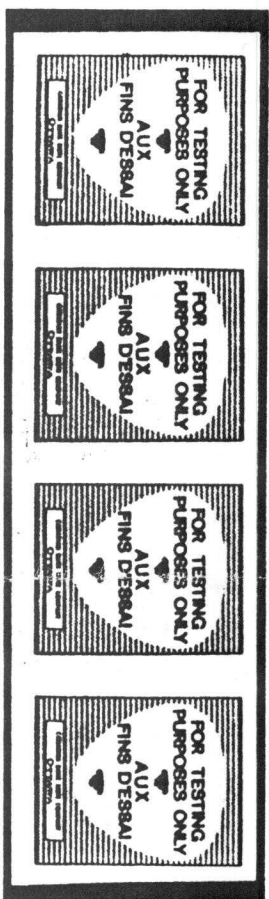


Fig. 1: Strip of four imperf. test coils.

Canada's Test Coils of the 1960s

by E.R. Toop

This article is about the Canadian test coil, engraved and printed by the Canadian Bank Note Co. Ottawa, Ontario, (fig. 1) and (fig. 2). Reference to this item in philatelic circles carries various nomenclatures, such as test coil, Canada test coil, test coils, Centennial testing coil and imperforate testing pieces. While philatelic descriptions may vary, the Canada Post Office referred to this item as "dummy rolls" and "dummy roll postage". I prefer simply to call them "test coils" for the purpose of this article.

These test coils were produced by the Canadian Bank Note Co. in 10 rolls side-by-side, similar to the regular Centennial 6-cent orange coil stamp with a break-off feature. They can be found imperforate and perforated 10. The inscription reads: "For testing purposes only—aux fins d'essai, Canadian Bank Note Company, Ottawa".

A few of the test coils have appeared from time to time in auctions and philatelic dealer lists. They also have received a number of brief write-ups in *The Canadian Philatelist* (vol. 23, no. 3, P. 102; vol. 27, no. 3, P. 186; and vol. 30, no. 3, P. 169).

A September 1978 Vancouver auction listed an imperforate pair with an estimated value of \$85. Another Toronto auction in 1978 listed an imperforate pair and imperforate strip of four; however, no estimated value was mentioned. In July 1979, an imperforate pair was listed by a philatelic dealer for \$55 and finally, in October 1980, a further listing by another philatelic dealer offered imperforate pairs for \$9.50. These offers are but a few of probably many over the past few years and show a great disparity of prices as noted, notwithstanding great interest by philatelists.



Fig. 2: Strip of four test coils perf. 10 vertically.



Fig. 3: Outside wrapper of test coil roll with "dummy" markings.

Whether one classifies this item as philatelic or merely as a testing piece is best left to the individual. It did, however, play an important part in the development of the 100-coil stamp rolls used today. It was officially used by Canada Post as part of their new approach to marketing postage stamps in roll form in conjunction with the new plastic stamp dispenser, both of which were made available in April 1969.

The initial supply of test coils to Canada Post were imperforate and apparently rolls of more than 100 were produced by the Canadian Bank Note Co. Equipment development by Canadian Bank Note Co. to meet production levels of the 6-cent orange stamp for the post office obviously encountered numerous technical problems which delayed production of the 6-cent orange Centennial coil until the end of February 1969.

A chronological sequence of activity, beginning in 1967, follows. It is hoped this information will provide a better insight of the facts relating to a rather mysterious and interesting item used in conjunction with marketing of the new 6-cent orange Centennial coil of 1969.

June 19, 1967

The director of accounting, Canada Post, wrote to Scribe Internationale Inc., Rosemount, Ill., in response to their letter of enquiry June 1, 1967 re: The availability of dummy roll postage for testing in vending machines they were producing. They were advised that dummy roll stamps should be available in January 1968. The size of the rolls would be 500 stamps; however, later in 1968, dummy rolls containing 3,000 stamps produced from an uninterrupted web would be available. Rolls of 3,000 stamps made up of spliced rolls of 500 and regular rolls of 3,000 dummy stamps were offered as being available later in 1968 and requested advice as to the number of each roll re-

quired. A nominal charge would likely be made for any rolls supplied.

The Scribe Company was also advised that the new roll stamps (6-cent orange) would measure 24 millimetres across the width of a roll which is the horizontal dimension of each stamp, and the vertical dimension of each stamp would be constant at 20 millimetres from the centre to each row of perforations. The perforations would be 1 mm x 1 mm; that is to say, the diameter of the perforation would be one millimetre and the dam or spacing between tangents would be one millimetre.

December 4, 1968

The PMG, Eric Kierans, responding to Charles Turner, MP, House of Commons, Ottawa, regarding an enquiry on behalf of Tansley Import Co., London, Ontario, about the availability of dummy stamp rolls conforming to the specifications of the new rolls of 100 stamps to be offered for sale early in 1969, advised the equipment to produce the new rolls had been developed to the stage whereby production could be anticipated to begin by the end of 1968. Barring any major setback in equipment development, The Canadian Bank Note Co. confirmed February 17, 1969 as a delivery date for an initial supply of the new stamp rolls. Sales in post offices were planned to begin March 1, 1969. Dummy rolls representing actual production would not be available until about the end of December 1968, the date when regular production was expected to start. The reason for this was that the perforating of new rolls would be done on new equipment and the perforating mechanism was still not operative. Some unperforated dummy rolls had been produced on the new equipment and a tube of 10 of these rolls were enclosed for whatever use they may be to Tansley Import Co.

Tansley Import Co. would be advised im-



Fig. 4: Strip of perforated dummy rolls with one larger size coil creasing perforations in middle of subsequent coils.

mediately when perforated dummy rolls became available.

February 7, 1969

The Postage Stamp Division, Canada Post, in a directive to directors of postal service and postmasters, grades 12 and 13, advised of the planned introduction of rolls of 100 by 6-cent stamps (6-cent orange) and a new plastic stamp dispenser—Rol-Pac. This was a new approach to marketing postage stamps in roll form, together with a new plastic stamp dispenser, slated for release on or about April 1, 1969. The rolls of stamps would be sold at face value from stamps printed in sheets of 1,000 which would be perforated and rolled to form a tube of 10 rolls of 100 stamps, easily detached from the tube by snapping it off.

The new stamp dispenser, Rol-Pac, manufactured of durable opaque polystyrene was to be sold at five cents each. This, together with the new 6-cent roll at face value, was intended to encourage the public to purchase stamps in quantity, thereby reducing wicket transactions with resultant savings.

Publicity and illustrated posters introducing the new 100 by 6-cent roll postage and plastic dispenser would be provided to post offices by the public relations branch.

A sample of the Rol-Pac and a 'dummy' tube of stamps was also supplied to district directors and postmasters grade 12 and 13 to illustrate their use and ease of separation of each roll of 100 stamps.

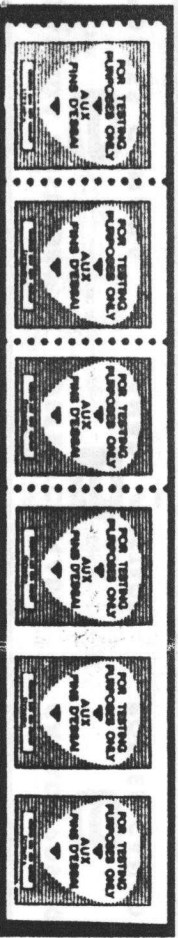


Fig. 5: Strip of six test coils showing imper examples changing to perfor 10.

were mailed to the Toronto comptroller. Six hundred and ten dummy rolls were also forwarded to the comptroller.

The Toronto Postage Stamp Depot was to arrange for packaging and distribution of the blister packages to all offices outlined.

March 11, 1969

The Postage Stamp Division, in its letter to the director of accounting, confirmed that the plastic wicket display stand developed in 1967 to stimulate sales of the commemorative stamp box would again be used to display the new Rol-Pac dispenser and the 6-cent roll postage.

Arrangements had been made with Precision Packaging Co., Don Mills, to manufacture 600 clear plastic blisters, each of which would contain a Rol-Pac dispenser with a dummy roll of postage inserted and six, 6-cent stamps attached to the end of the roll, protruding from the dispenser and appearing as part of the display.

The requirement for 37 rolls (one roll for spoilage) of 6-cent stamps to meet the needs of the manufacturer in preparing the displays, plus 600 Rol-Pac dispensers, was approved by the director of accounting on the basis that any unused portion of the extra roll of postage stamps would be returned to the Postage Stamp Division. Displays would be supplied to all staff post offices and postal stations. Patrons would not be able to tear off stamps from the display.

March 12, 1969

This letter from the director of accounting, Canada Post Headquarters, to Tansley Import Co. of London, regarding their previous enquiry for dummy rolls identical in size, format and perforations to the new 6-cent x 100-on rolls together with a strip of five stamps taken from a preliminary production run of the new 100-on 6-cent rolls, compliments of Canada Post.

Tansley Import was also advised that the new rolls of 100 x 6-cent stamps were being produced on equipment designed and constructed by the supplier, The Canadian Bank Note Co. Ltd. Progress in developing this equipment had been somewhat slower than anticipated because of numerous technical problems; thus production did not begin until the end of February. Although difficulties still being encountered resulted in production being about one-third of that projected for this time, the month of March



Fig. 6: A pair of the six-cent orange perfor 10 stamp and the test coil perfor 10.

was being devoted to building an inventory sufficient to permit distribution and sale of the new rolls by April 1 or shortly thereafter.

March 20, 1969

This letter from the Toronto District director of postal service to Precision Packaging Co., Don Mills, confirmed shipment of 600 dummy rolls to which the regular 6-cent roll postage stamp (6-cent orange) had been attached. In some instances five, 6-cent stamps had been attached and in others six, 6-cent stamps were attached. It was felt both lots would adequately serve their purpose in the display.

Precision Packaging was requested to advise the Toronto District director when the blister packages were ready for delivery to the Canada Post Office.

March 21, 1969

The Toronto District director in his letter to the director of accounting, Canada Post Headquarters, Ottawa, confirmed the preparation of the Rol-Pac dispenser blister but regretted that the memorandum of instructions from Canada Post Headquarters did not accompany the supplies received for preparation of the rolls to be contained in the dispensers. Original instructions had been received by phone and notations made during the telephone conversation that five stamps were to be attached to each dummy roll. Upon receipt of the supplies, preparation of the dummy rolls with five stamps was commenced and 361 rolls were prepared in this manner before receipt of the headquarters memorandum. The remaining 239 rolls were prepared with six stamps attached to each roll.



Fig. 7. Another example of the test coil wrapper.

As a result, 461, 6-cent stamps were surplus to the requirement in preparing the 600 dummy rolls and were enclosed with this letter.

March 28, 1969

The Postage Stamp Division of Canada Post Headquarters to district directors of postal service and postmasters, grades 12 and 13, confirmed distribution to postage stamp depots of the new Rol-Pac dispenser and rolls of 100 x 6-cent stamps (6-cent orange), with sales in post offices to begin April 21, 1969.

Production of this new type of roll postage necessitated the development of a new manufacturing process and new machinery was engineered by the manufacturer, The Canadian Bank Note Co. Production was in the early stages but would not operate at total capacity until several further refinements were completed. Accelerated production would meet all future demands.

The plastic wicket display stand developed in 1967 to stimulate sales of the commemorative stamp box which was supplied to all staff post offices and postal stations was used again to display the new Rol-Pac. A clear plastic blister containing the Rol-Pac was manufactured as an attachment to the display stand. The blister was mounted on a red circular base and attached to the stand by a self-tapping screw. A new advertising show-card was inserted in the top of the display.

The Rol-Pac attachment was shipped to all post offices and postal stations originally supplied with the plastic display stand. Replacements for display stands supplied to postmasters in 1967 were not made and if the original stands could not be located, the Rol-Pac attachment was to be displayed in a prominent location or used in conjunction with an easel-type poster supplied from Headquarters for viewing by the public.

The Rol-Pac dispenser was normally to be sold only with a roll of postage.



Fig. 8. A strip of five six-cent orange stamps attached to test coils as used in the Canada Post Office marketing demonstrations.

identical in size, format and perforation to the 6-cent orange Centennial Coil.

As to how test coil examples became available to philatelic sources, it is, in my view, simple to explain, given the quantities supplied to various organizations as indicated.

Philatelic curiosity, in particular about items used by the Canada Post Office, serves to indicate a need for official explanations as they

occur. While the test coil described is not postally valid, it does, however, form an important facet of our philatelic history.

REFERENCES

1. *The Canadian Philatelist* Vol. 23, No. 3, P. 102; Vol. 27, No. 3, P. 186; Vol. 30, No. 3, P. 169.
2. Canada Post Office files.
3. Various auction catalogues and dealer philatelic lists and advertisements.

December 8, 1980

The Engineering Branch, Canada Post Headquarters, in response to an enquiry from a stamp dealer as to how imperforate testing pieces (test coils) were turning up on the philatelic market, advised that the Canadian Bank Note Co. considered these as non-postal items having no philatelic value. They were neither requested nor authorized by Canada Post Office. It was further stated that these test pieces were produced a number of years ago for testing the feasibility of gummed labels in different kinds of roll format. As they were purely for internal use, the Canadian Bank Note Co. was somewhat puzzled as to how examples become available to outside sources.

It will be observed from the foregoing that these test coils were an integral part of Canada Post's marketing strategy in the sale of the Rol-Pac dispenser and the new 6-cent orange coil stamp. As this was a departure from previous production of coil rolls of 500, new techniques were required by Canadian Bank Note Co. Thus, we have the test coil having served a very useful purpose, not only in overcoming technical problems, but also as a useful marketing tool.

It is interesting to note that imperforate test coils generally were provided until such time as perforating difficulties were overcome, at which time specimens were made available



MISPERFS

VAUGHAN MACPHERSON
HAS SENT IN A
COUPLE OF
INTERESTING
MISPERFS.



DOES ANY OTHER
MEMBER HAVE
SOME VARIETIES
FOR OUR
NEWSLETTER?

