

The author has kindly allowed the publication of this article which first appeared in the September-October, 1979 B.N.A. TOPICS.

RAILWAY PERFIN

by JONATHAN JOHNSON

Mike Dicketts asked if I would write a review of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) and Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) perfins. As I am currently preparing a history of all Canadian Railway perfins this is a good opportunity for the reader to update BNAPS's Perfin Handbook information and, for myself, to obtain feedback from collectors on dates, cancels and new die types. To avoid confusion any date followed by an * is confirmed as accurate; any date mentioned without this notation is obtained from stamp issuance dating.

For the record, both the CNR and CPR requested and received approval of their perfins from the Post Office as required by Post Office regulations after April 1910*. The CPR perfins were approved December 1, 1910* and the CNR perfins on March 13, 1928*. (The Canadian Northern Railway perfins used by the CNR after 1917 had been approved November 9, 1910*.)

No. C17 was obtained from the Canadian Northern Railway in Winnipeg with the formation of the CNR. It seems to have gone out of use about 1927, probably immediately succeeded by C21a. That this is about the same time the Post Office approved the CNR perfins may or may not be a coincidence.

No. C19 did not come into existence until the mid-1940's in Toronto, and appears to have replaced C20. It was replaced by a postage meter in 1956*. Sometime in 1957* the perforator was forwarded to Winnipeg. Then in a regional reorganization the perforator was moved to Edmonton with the Treasury Department in August, 1961*. The perforator is still in use to date. It is of minor interest that this is the only confirmed non-Cummins Perforating Company machine used in Canada. It is a Perforating Company machine, model 6K, serial number 6K19.

No. C20 was obtained from the Canadian Northern Railway in Toronto. It was in use up to the mid 1940's. It would appear that C19 replaced C20 during the 'War' issue, but I have no theories as to

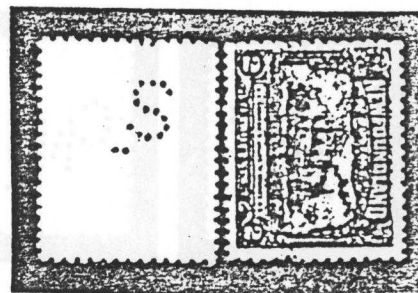
why C20 was taken out of use.

No. C20a is not listed in the BNAPS Perfin Handbook. The perforator is located in Vancouver where it remains in use to date. I have examined the machine and its perforation; all 10 dies are identical with the 'high' hole at the end of the 'N' (compared to the 'low' hole at the end of the 'N' in C20—see arrows). The earliest copies are 1922 issue Admirals although my first clear Vancouver cancel is June 15, 1928*. As C20 and C20a were in use simultaneously for about 20 years on opposite sides of the country I assume that there were two machines even though the die differences are minor. The perforator is a Cummins model 53.

No. C21 probably saw limited use between 1922 and 1928 in Montreal. In this case both my listed location and dates differ from the BNAPS Handbook. My contacts have several Montreal cancels and no Prairie cancels. I think that this perfin should be looked at closely by interested collectors to confirm the probable location of the perforator.

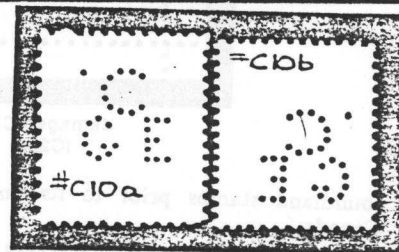
No. C21a came into use about 1928 and is still in use in Winnipeg to date. In June, 1978* the machine was disabled and I understand that the CNR shops had the perforator back in operation by September 1, 1978* with the machine in improved working condition. This perforator is a Cummins model 53, s/n (cast on the machine). One would suspect that this perforator probably replaced C17 about 1928.

No. C22 was used in Montreal and is a toughie to give an initial date of use. It probably came into use after 1917 (first use in U.S. stamps is 1917 issue) and my research indicates first usage about 1928 (considerably later than listed in the Handbook). If C22 came into use in 1928 then it does not overlap with C21 in Montreal, it is unlikely that two perforators would be in the same offices at the same time. If we don't worry about that for the time being, the perforator was used up to 1964*. Presently C22 is thought to possibly be the only Canadian perfin to be used in New-



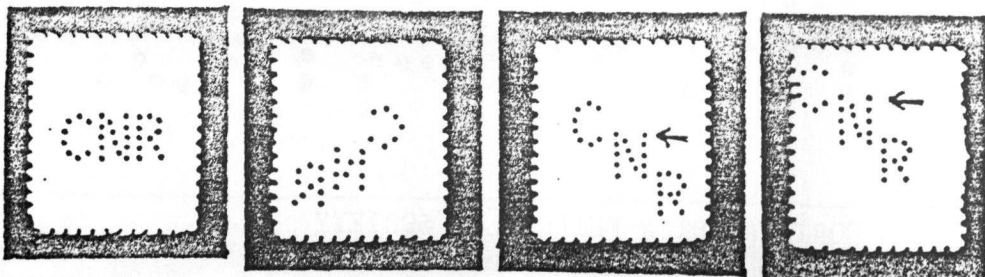
NEW PERFIN S3c

Dave Hodges has made the first new discovery of the 1980's. In a lot of misc. perfins, he found a Swift perfin with different code pins. A check of the U.S. Perfin Catalogue lists this as S2-25.5, Swift Company, city unconfirmed. The Canadian number will be S3c. It may be significant to note that this new perfin was in Newfoundland stamp #146.



C10a - 10b

The Canadian General Electric perfin die C10a was reworked or remade with larger holes and now is called C10b. The last issue the editor has seen on C10a is 3 Nov. 1952 and the first issue on C10b is 1st Apr. 1953. C.G.E. do not know what happened? What do you know about the end of C10a and the start of C10b?

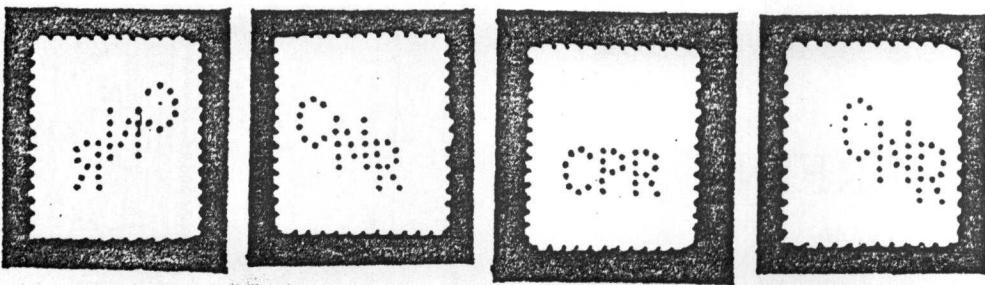


C17

C19

C20

C20a

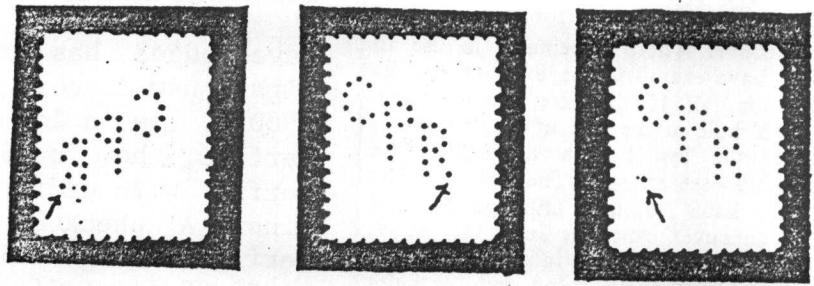


C21

C21a

C22

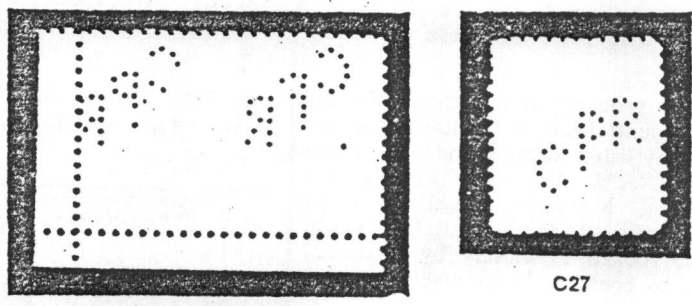
C25



C26

C26b

C26a



damaged C26a
(C26c)

C27

foundland stamps prior to its union with Canada.

Perfin collectors will be pleased to know that the CNR has no intention to stop using the three perforators they still have in use; C19, C20a and C21a. Although the quantities are not as large as in the past new perforated stamps will continue to appear with these dies.

No. C25 perforator was located in Ottawa and is believed to have seen only limited use between 1903 and 1912. Due to the age of the perforator and the lack of stamps we will probably never add much to this limited knowledge.

No. C26 came into use in Montreal during the Edward issue—I would suspect about 1910. The perforator started showing blind perfs and missing pins by the early 1930's. Sometime between 1932 and 1935 the perfin shows a dramatic improve-

ment in perforating, and a downward shifting of the last pin in the tail of the 'R'. I can only assume this improvement was due to a major repair to the C26 perforator, but for collecting purposes I have separated it by calling this variety C26b. This new listing is required to prevent extreme confusion with C26a which will be described below.

No. C26b is not listed in the Handbook and is probably the result of the C26 perforator being repaired. This perforator was located in Montreal and was used up to 1970* when it was retired to the CPR archives. Checking the dies in the perforator, all 10 show the identical shifted pin mentioned regarding C26. My simple method of separating the two perfin: pre-1932 stamps are C26; post 1935 stamps are C26b and those in between have to be checked for the pin shift. In C26 the holes in the tail of the 'R' are in a straight line

and evenly spaced; neither is true with C26b. In closing with these potentially confusing perfin, C26b is known on Newfoundland stamps and the perforator is a Cummins model 53.

No. C26a started use sometime shortly after 1912 in Winnipeg. The perforator was retired in 1964* and later is believed lost in a move of the CPR warehouse in Winnipeg. I have heard an unconfirmed report that it was sent to Windsor Station in Montreal in November 1964 and may still exist there. It should be noted that one or more (not likely more than two) of the code pins (see arrow) were broken during use; the earliest known stamp confirmed with the missing code pin is Scott #105. Without the code pin C26a is identical to C26. Fortunately C26 did not exist after 1935 so that is one way of separating the C26a's with broken code pins and explains why C26's seem to appear after the date I said that they no longer existed, 1935. The only way to tell a pre-1935 C26a with a broken code pin is by having a Prairie cancel or two die perforations on the same stamp, one without the code pin. For cataloguing purposes this damaged C26a is listed as C26c by several collectors. As this is only a broken pin and not a die change a separate listing is not warranted but does avoid confusion within one's collection.

No. C27 also started use sometime shortly after 1912 in Vancouver. The perforator was retired in October, 1964*, and sent to the regional warehouse in Winnipeg. Presumably it disappeared at the same time as C26a.

In closing I would like to remind all perfin collectors that every little bit of information helps to set a trend, and the best sources are the people that used the perfin. Dating by stamp issuance and postal cancels is helpful but can be misleading at times. In some cases it is possible that when a perforator came into use all stocks of stamps on hand might be perforated to possibly result in earlier issues being perforated (this was the case in reverse when the 5 hole OHMS perforator was used while the Post Office awaited delivery of the 4-hole OHMS perforator in 1939). Also when a perforator goes out of service, the supply of perforated stamps may continue to be used for years (Cominco's C16 perfin in Kimberly is a prime example where the perfin were available for use five years after the machine moved out of town and had been put in a museum). It is this challenge of confirming information about perfin, in addition to the perfin themselves, that makes the perfin field interesting to me.

I would like to acknowledge that perfin dies C20a and C26b were first brought to my attention by Jack Brandt. Should you have any questions, or comments, about the above perfin or any other perfin contact Mike Dicketts or myself at #605 921 5th Avenue, S.W., Calgary, Alta. T2P 0N9, and we will try to supply an answer.

V1-11~

Glossary of Perfin Terminology

- Perforator - a hand or electrically cranked machine with perforating pins used to perforate initials or designs in stamps.
- Perfin - a stamp perforated with a series of holes in the shape of a design or initials for security purposes (not cancelling).
- Pin - a flat ended, cylindrical, metal needle that punches one hole in a stamp.
- Die - a set of pins to make one complete design or set of initials.
- Perfin Type - a unique die.
- Perfin Variety - the less common of a minor difference between dies in one perforating machine.
- Head - horizontal male steel bar in which the perforating pins are set. Designed to hold one or more dies and move down and up to perforate.
- Perforating plate - horizontal female steel bar with drilled holes to accept the pins thus punching the holes in the stamp.
- Blind pin - when a perforating pin makes an indentation in the stamp without cutting through it. Usually a result of too many sheets of stamps in the perforator or a short pin.
- Broken pin - when a pin is broken off too short to touch the stamp during perforation resulting in no hole.
- Perfin position - the changing position of the perfin relative to the design of the stamp in an upright position, the result of feeding the stamps upright, sideways or inverted through the perforator.
- Perf-imperf - a pair of stamps with only one having a perfin in it.
- Mirror pair - a pair of stamps folded then both perforated simultaneously.
- Position pair - a pair of stamps with a different position in each but not a mirror pair.
- Multiple - parts of two or more perforations in one stamp caused by two or more perforating operations. May not necessarily be the same position.
- Mint perfin - an uncanceled perfin with full gum. Since perfins are a security procedure these stamps are most likely stolen or philatelically perforated.
- Type collection - has one sample of each perfin type.
- Issue collection - has one copy of every stamp possible with the same perfin type.
- Position collection - has all eight possible positions for every stamp possible with the same perfin type.

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is your newsletter, so use it. "WANT" ads and "TRADE" ads can be placed free on a first come, first used basis, however ads will only be placed once and then they will have to be resubmitted. No "FOR SALE" ads will be allowed.

The editor requires articles, lots and lots of articles about perfins. Do you have questions that the other members might help you with? What do you think of The Glossary of Perfin Terminology above? If you would like it changed, tell me? Please write, it is lonely out here in Calgary?

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The Roster

The list that follows details the initial membership of the Study Group, all of whom have indicated their willingness to exchange information and work with others to expand our knowledge about perfins. Corrections and change of address should be sent to Michael Dicketts, Secretary.

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 M.5 Ron Kitchen, 1387 Pearl Street, Ottawa, Ont., K1T 1C6 (P on CBC, LA, MD, NP, PS, PEI, TH/ (W/CB)
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 M.22 James E. Miller, Box 160, Kamloops, B.C. V2C 5K6 (P on Railways)
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LM.1- Mr. R.J. Woolley, #507 - 77 St., Clair East, Toronto, Ont., M4T 1M5

The above abbreviations are

- P - Position collector
 T - Type collector
 I - issue collector

The above list is up to 2nd February, 1980

RE-ISSUED PERFIN HAND-BOOK

The new reprint of the "Canadian Stamps with Perforated Initials" handbook is now available at a cost of \$4.50 from BNA Book Department c/o Doris Hollingshead 65 Howe Ave., Hamilton, Ont. L9A 1X2