

# PRECANCELS CANADA

THE PERIODIC NEWSLETTER OF THE BNAPS PRECANCEL STUDY GROUP

ISSUE NO. 10 - August 2019

## **CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

### **PRE-CANCEL POPULARITY**

How popular is the collecting of pre-cancels? As one of the many different areas of philately, it is a question that many Study Group organizers wonder about. There are many, many study groups in BNAPS which attract the attention of its members. The policy of BNAPS encourages and supports the operation of study groups.

However, study group organizations evolve mainly as a result of the efforts of a few members who have a common interest in a topic. If one reviews the history of the various Study Groups, you can see how they start, operate and die over time. Their evolution is usually due to a specific subject area attracting the attention of some of the membership. Perhaps this is just an indication of how philatelic interests manifest themselves – and there certainly is nothing wrong with that.

Pre-cancel collecting became an active interest (again) of a few specialists some 10 years ago. A Study Group was formed by a few aficionados. It flourished for about 3 or 4 years and then fell by the wayside as some of the primary collectors shifted their interests elsewhere. As we know, that interest was revived by a few specialists about 18 months ago and is trying to gain some momentum again.

Certainly, there is some significant interest in this speciality of philately as we have nearly 100 members on the books. With the use of on-line computing, we have been able to produce and distribute newsletters to them without having to be organized with dues. The mechanics of putting the issues together and distributing them is not overly onerous and the current organizers are willing to put in the effort. Of course, write-ups by members would greatly improve the contents.

So how about it? Do we want to make the effort to increase the study and collecting of Pre-cancels or do we want to let it continue as just another area of interest?

## **EDITOR'S MESSAGE**

Greetings to all Canadian Precancel enthusiasts.

As the end of summer approaches, vacations end and thoughts of doing some work on our stamp collections arises again. I hope you enjoy the articles that various contributors have provided for this Newsletter #10 and don't forget that we need to have some contributions from our members in order to keep the newsletter going. Write an article, send some information, an image of some interesting item or whatever you think others might like to see and read about.

**It's up to you!**

**I can be reached at:**

**marascod@telus.net**

# **ARE DIFFERENT BAR PRECANCELS ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC TOWNS?**

**By Tom Meyerhof**

In the 1954 edition of the Noble Official Catalog of Canada Precancels edited by H.G. Walburn, he makes the observation:

“Until recently, it has been assumed that they [bar precancel devices] originated in Ottawa, but it is now believed that many of the rollers used were prepared locally . . . So far, only three towns have been so identified.”

In the body of the catalogue he proceeds to identify style I as associated with Beamsville ON, style T with Toronto, and style U with Montreal. In the 1978 edition of this catalogue, he makes the same assertion in the introduction that three towns have been associated with three different styles. However in the body he only names Beamsville and Montreal, no longer associating style T with Toronto, which I assume was a typographical error as no third town is mentioned elsewhere in the body of the catalogue. George E.L. Manley in describing the style T precancel in *Maple Leaves*, December 1974 also notes “Type T (like Types R and S) was only used in Toronto, as far as is known”. In his 1982 book on the Canadian map stamp, R.B. Winmill in describing precancels on these stamps also indicates that style I was used at Beamsville, style T at Toronto and style U at Montreal.

As I do not have other older editions of the precancel catalogue, I can not confirm when the notion that specific bar style precancels were associated with specific towns was dropped, but the 1988 Canada Precancel Handbook edited by H.G. Walburn states “It is not clear why Mr. Winmill associated these overprints with the three cities or towns. They were not used exclusively in these communities”. The relationship is also no longer mentioned in recent editions of the Standard

Canada Precancel Catalogue, edited by D. Marasco and B. Field, perhaps as the result of this theory being discredited.

To try to confirm the idea that different bar precancels styles originate from different towns it is necessary to have precancel stamps with additional town cancels or precancel stamps on covers that indicate the point of mailing.

In a quick search I found two blocks of 10¢ Small Queens in the Eastern Auction of 25 October 2012 listing the Rev Izzett - Walburn precancel collection. These two blocks each with a type T precancel, lots 765 and 766 shown below, have a Toronto SP 7 97 cancel, and a Toronto JU 7 97 cancel respectively.



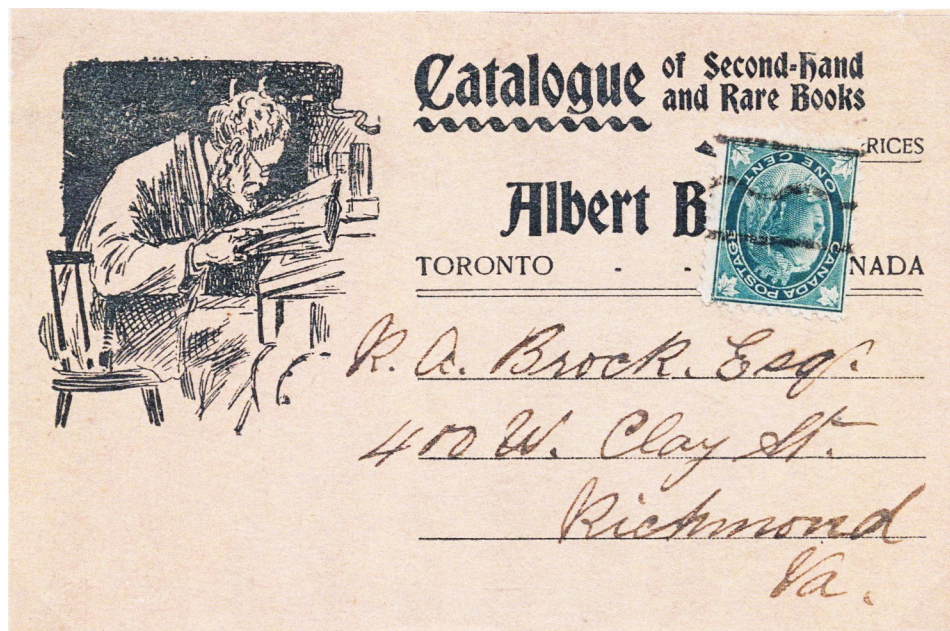
766



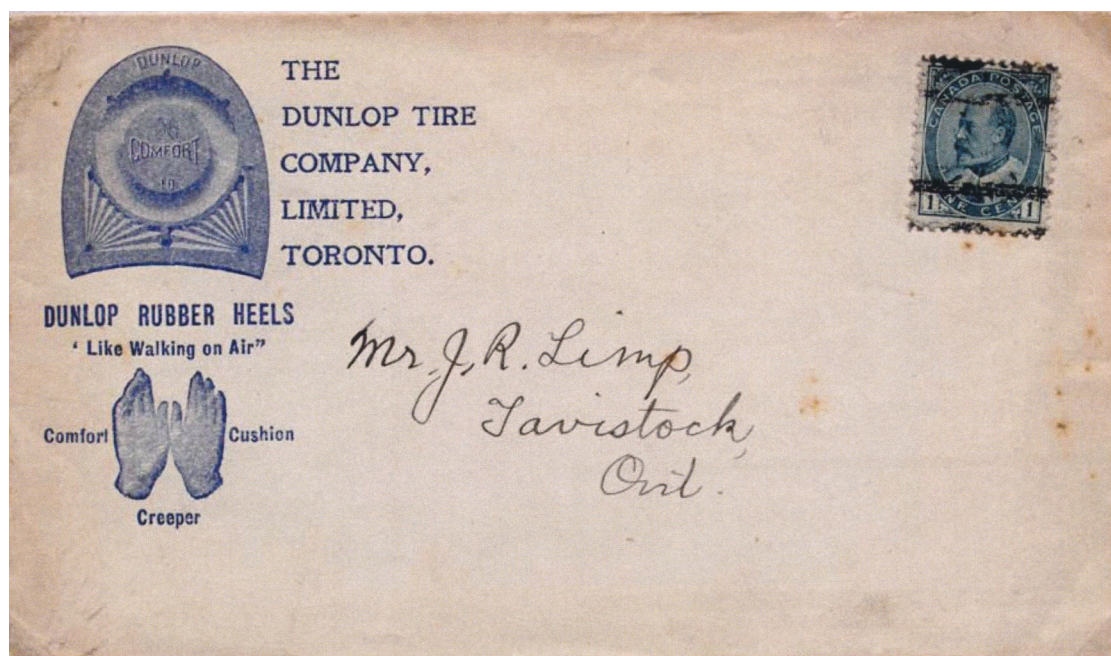
765

In looking for precancel covers, I noted that lot 9 (not photographed) in the Robert Lee Auction of 20 February 1998 featuring Harry Lussey's precancel collection is described as including a T-75 on an illustrated wrapper for John Britnells [books], Toronto and a T-75 on an illustrated cover for Wilson, Lytle, Badgerow [manufacturers], Toronto. David McLaughlin's BNAPS Exhibit Series No. 77 on the Maple Leaf Issue has a photograph of a catalogue wrapper franked with a T-67 from a Toronto bookseller shown below.



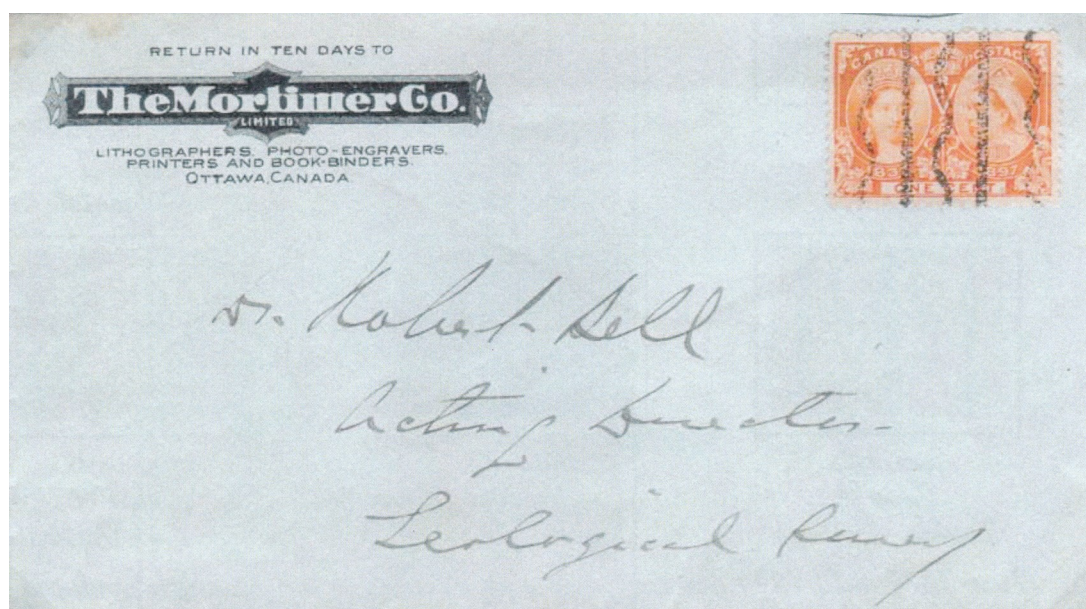


Alan Selby's BNAPS Exhibit Series No. 45 on the King Edward Issue has a T-89 on a Dunlop Rubber cover from Toronto which he refers to as "Toronto type T" and is shown below.





Herb McNaught's BNAPS Exhibit Series No.44 on the Diamond Jubilee Issue shows an advertising cover from Toronto franked with a T-51, but immediately below is a second T-51 cover originating in Ottawa.



While this latter cover appears to disprove the hypothesis, one possibility is that since the Ottawa post office was originally responsible for preparing precancelled stamps and this cover was being sent from a government printing supplier, Mortimer & Co., to a federal government department, it could have been given a local stock of precancels to facilitate written communications with the Geological Survey. In a limited search, I was unable to locate any style I or U style precancelled items that could provide an indication of their point of mailing. However I have observed that the T and U style precancels are much more common than the I style, which is consistent with the fact that Beamsville in the Niagara fruit belt would likely use far fewer precancelled stamps than the much larger cities of Toronto and Montreal. Beamsville also never had a town style precancel.

Are other members of the Study Group aware of precancel covers or additionally cancelled bar precancel stamps which support or disprove the theory that these three styles were used only or predominantly in specific towns?

## ARE THESE PRECANCELS?

By Tom Meyerhof

Sometimes it is not obvious if a stamp has been used as a legitimate precancel on third class mail when it is no longer tied to a cover or piece. I recently encountered two such examples.

The left stamp (centre image shows back side) below looks like a possible 1 bar Style A precancel variant on a 20c Small Queen. For comparison the right stamp is a normal 2 bar Style A 50c Small Queen precancel. A close examination of both stamps under magnification shows that the width of the bar on the 1 bar stamp varies from 3.0 mm to 3.8 mm, while the top bar of the 50c stamp is consistently about 4.0 mm in width and the bottom bar varies in width between 4.0 mm and 4.8 mm. The spacing between the bars on the 50c stamp varies from about 3.2 mm to 3.5 mm. The 1988 Canada Precancel Handbook gives the Style A bar width as 3.25 mm and the bar spacing as 5.0 mm so both stamps could be considered compliant given the roller wear and ink transfer irregularity on both stamps. The appearance of the overprint ink also looks similar on both stamps, and there is no apparent ink absorption on the paper fibres on the perforation tips or in the perforation holes underneath the overprint on both stamps, consistent with stamps separated from a sheet after the overprint was applied. Surprisingly the 20c stamp has original gum somewhat disturbed from being affixed to paper, making the lack of ink on the perforation tips or in the perforation holes also supportive of precancellation prior to separation. Does anyone else know of similar precancel on this stamp?



The right stamp below, listed on eBay in March 2019, is a 3c Jubilee apparently precancelled with the Montreal 21 roller known to have first been used as a pre-cancel in 1889 (Jarrett, Boggs). When the demand for precancelled sheets arose due to mail volumes at post offices in several cities including Montreal, St John, Ottawa and Toronto in 1888, various cancelling devices were used. In Montreal, the 21 roller first used in 1858 was brought back into service for use on then-current stamps, such as the 3c Small Queen (below right). This was a temporary measure prior to the official issue of precancelled sheets of various denominations of Small Queen stamps by Ottawa in 1889 using various bar style rollers, considered by some as emergency use precancels while catching up with demand for this labour-saving means.



### **A question From David MacLellan**

I also collect Canadian stamps with perforated initials (OHMS and private perfins). I have quite a few good "advertising covers" but not a single one with a perfinned precan stamp. The perfinned precancels exist as you know in both bar and town types but I have never been able to find one properly used on cover. It's a bit of a mystery. Does anyone have one?

If you have one contact David MacLellan: [davidmaclellan@rogers.com](mailto:davidmaclellan@rogers.com)



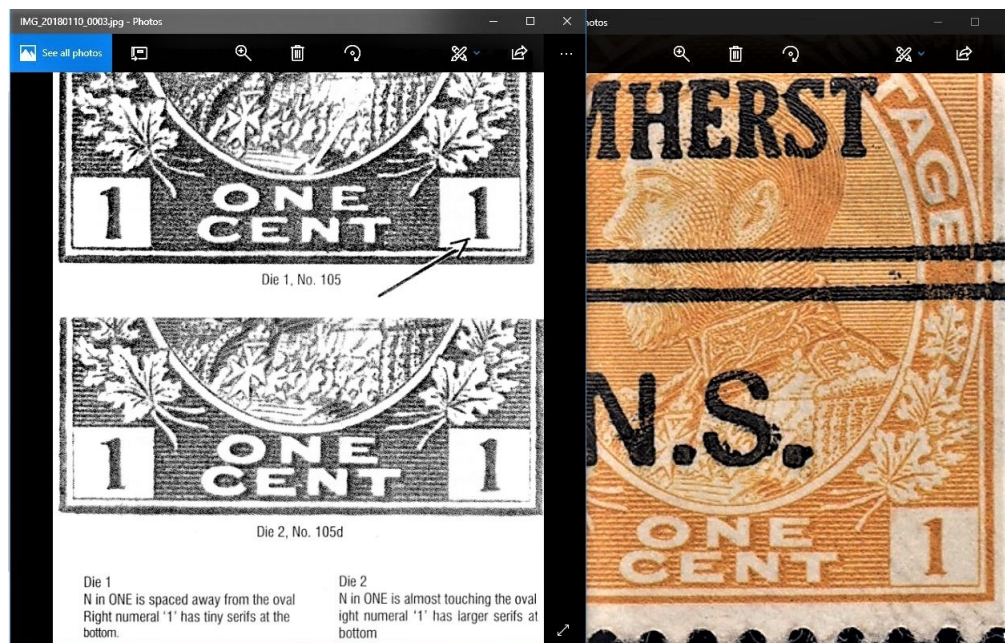
## A New Amherst Discovery!

By Michel Gervais

Many precancel stamp collectors are aware that there are only 2 copies of the Amherst 1-105 presently known to exist, and based to the 7th edition of The Standard Canada Precancel Catalogue, it is also believed that both copies are of the Die I variety.

One of these Amherst copies was originally owned by the renowned philatelist Harry W. Lussey, and was sold at the Robert A. Lee Philatelist's "Harry W. Lussey Canadian Precancel Collection" auction in February 1998. The stamp appeared again, 19 years later, in an auction in February 2017 I submitted the winning bid on this lot.

When I received the stamp, I was in awe realizing that I finally had a scarce Amherst in my collection, and knowing that the stamp was previously owned by Harry Lussey added to my enjoyment. I obviously examined the stamp closely and to my surprise and excitement, I discovered that this Amherst is undeniably of the Die II variety! I then contacted several other knowledgeable precancel collectors and they agreed with my finding. This new discovery therefore means that there are not 2 copies of the Amherst 1-105 that exist, but a unique copy of 1-105 (Die I) and a unique copy of 1-105d (Die II)!



## **A Question from Ron Pazdzierski**

My query is about the Style X Precancels, specifically the thick line bars as in

- 1: 1954 Queen Elizabeth II Issue –X-337-A, X-338-A, X-339-A, X-341-A,  
(why is there no thick lines in stamp # X-340?)
2. 1987 – 1972 Queen Elizabeth II Issue  
X-454-A, X-456-A, X-457-A, X-458-A, X-459-A, X-460-A

Who printed these?

The general question is how were the thick line bars formed?

At the start I will admit I do not know the process of the line printing. Perhaps someone could enlighten me by explaining process or direct me to a written article on this subject.

However my observation is that easily discernible thick lines on the above stamps are not plentiful. As well I have examined my inventory of the Warning strips of 20, as well as a full sheet of # X-454-A, and am not able to note a pattern for thin bars or thick bars horizontally or vertically.

So the question again is

Were the thick bar stamps all printed on one full sheet?

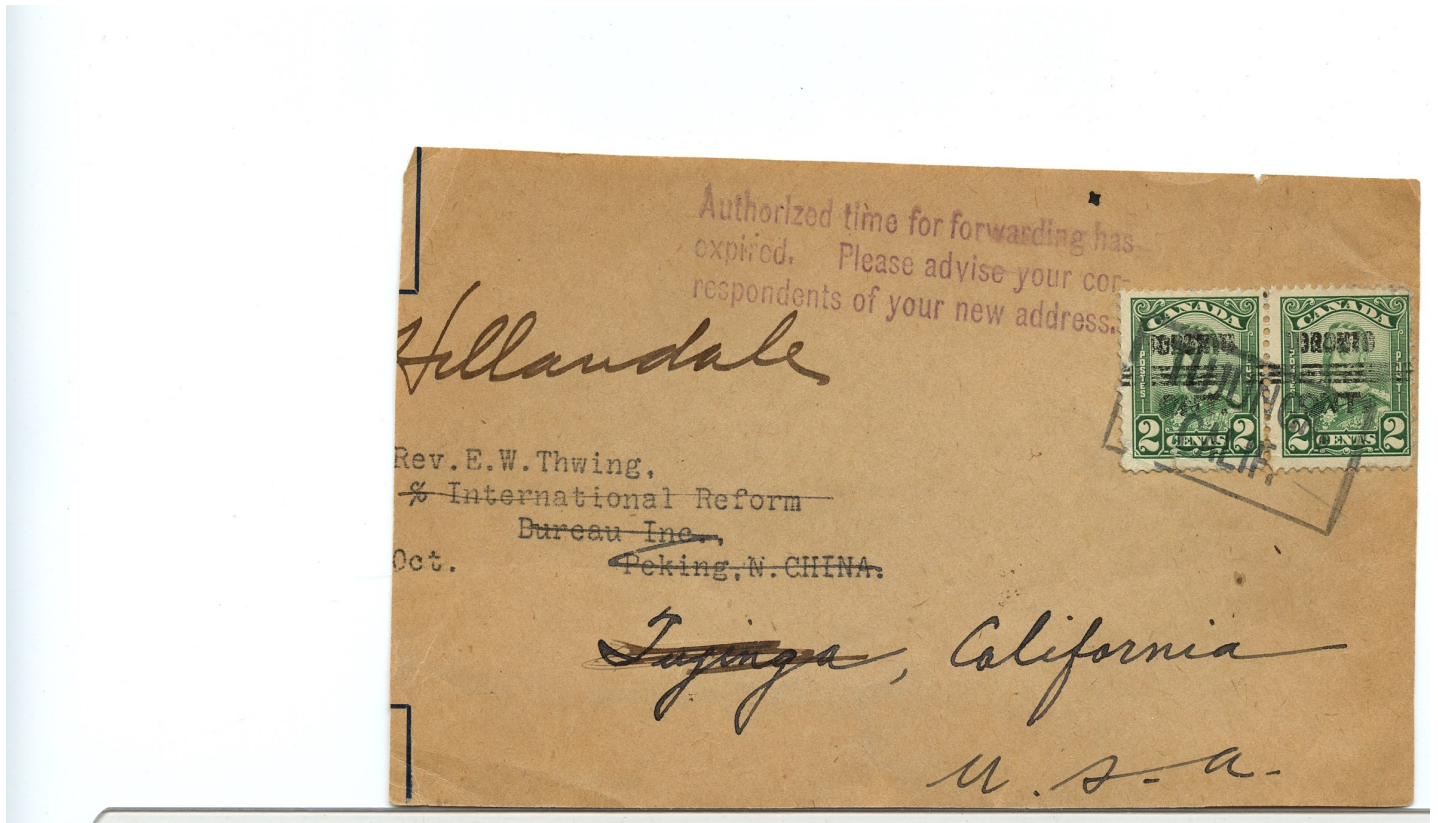
Were the thin bar stamps all printed on one full sheet?

3. Does one full sheet, for some explainable reason, contain both thick bar and thin bar stamps?

Would appreciate receiving input on above.

If you can offer Ron an answer please get in touch with him at: [ronpaz@shaw.ca](mailto:ronpaz@shaw.ca)

## An Unusual cover sent in by Gary Steele



Well travelled, rerouted and Advice Handstamps!

An Oddity from Chatham Ontario, but not a precancel!

