

THE BNA PERFORATOR

Published by the British North America Philatelic Society – The BNA Perfin Study Group

Volume 45 Number 2

May 2024

Whole Number 171

Editor's Post

¶ It is with sadness that I report that our Study Group membership has decreased by one with the passing of Bob Pickell in British Columbia. The current membership is 71

¶ This year BNAPEX will be held at St. Lawrence College in Kingston ON August 23rd to 25th. Our Study Group has reserved the 13:20 time slot on Saturday the 24th. Currently Russell Sampson and I both intend to be in attendance and to host the session. We need to start building the agenda and we are proposing member presentations of 10

cated on a first come first served basis so please send along your topic ASAP—you don't want to miss out!

¶ Printing costs for this issue were \$15.00 and the mailing costs were 1 @1.94 and 5 @ \$1.30 (\$8.44) for a total of \$23.44. Donated postage of \$2.76 reduced the Study group expense to \$20.68

¶ A reminder that it is a goal of the Handbook Editors to have the annual updates completed before each BNAPEX. It does take some time to organize the material and make the changes. If you have new findings to add please forward them to Russell



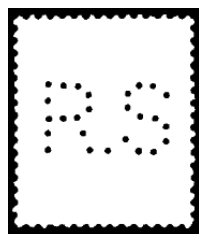
to 12 minutes each on any topic the member chooses. There will be some time at the end of each presentation for questions/comment/input/etc. Audio/visual equipment will be available. We hope to see many of you there. Time slots will be allo-

and I as soon as you can. Thank-you.

¶ Again, if you have something you would like to share with the Study Group and need some assistance in putting an article together please contact me—I am more than happy to help. Editor.

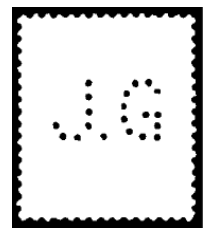
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Mis-matched Covers #5 Osler Hammond and Nanton (O11 & O12)

Jim Graham

Osler Hammond and Nanton

This was a firm of financiers and brokers based in Winnipeg which played a large role in the early development of the Canadian West; Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The firm carried the names of the three principles, all were born in Ontario but made their names and their fortunes in the opening of the West; Sir Edmund Boyd Osler (1845–1924)¹; Herbert Carlyle Hammond (1844-1909)² and Sir Augustus Meredith Nanton (1860-1925)³.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 1 and 2: The 2 Osler Hammond and Nanton patterns. O11 is known on KEVII and KGV Admiral issues and O12 on KGV Admiral to KGV I War issues. Neither pattern received official Post Office approval.⁴



Figures 3 and 4. A 5¢ and a 2¢ KEVII paying the 7¢ registered mail rate from Calgary AB to Okotoks AB June 7, 1907 (see Footnote 1). Okotoks is a few miles south of Calgary. Each has the O11 OHN perfin in position 6.

Osler Hammond and Nanton used two perfin patterns; O11 and O12 (Figures 1 and 2).

Calgary and Edmonton Land Company⁵

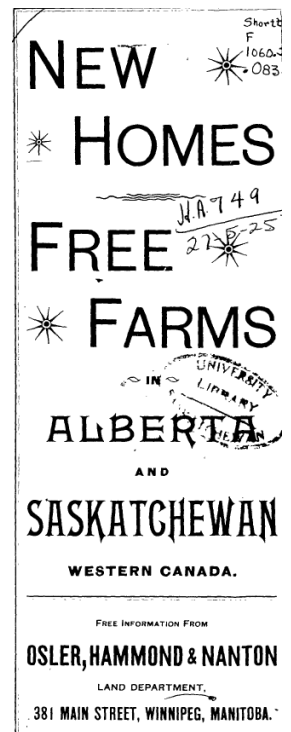
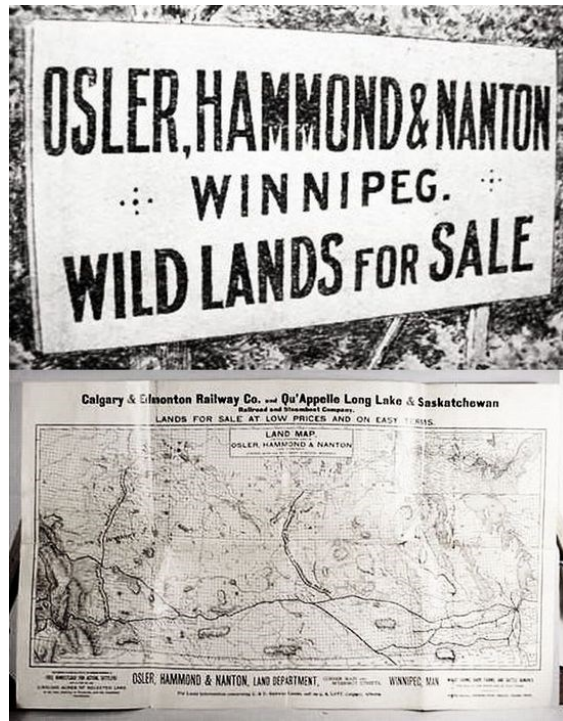
The Calgary and Edmonton Land Company was the direct result of the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Calgary in 1883. 1885 saw the first at-

tempt to connect Calgary and Edmonton by rail. This venture of the Alberta and Athabasca Railway Co. failed in 1887. It was followed by the Alberta and Great Northwestern Railway which sold its interests to the Calgary and Edmonton Railway in 1890. This Company was incorporated by the Federal Govern-

ment to build north from Calgary to Edmonton and south from Calgary to Fort MacLeod.

The Federal Government incentivised the new Railway by granting it 6400 acres for every mile of track completed. To sell and manage these lands the Railway incorporated the Calgary and Edmonton Land Company in 1891 and it in turn engaged Osler, Hammond and Nanton to run the business (Figures 5 and 6). The distance between Edmonton and Fort MacLeod is about 290 miles giving the Company over 1.8 million acres to “manage and sell”.

Canadian Pacific Railway took over operations of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway in 1891 and in 1902 signed a 999-year lease essentially to prevent a takeover by the Canadian Northern Railway.



Figures 5 and 6: Early Osler, Hammond and Nanton adds advertising its access to land and its role in Canada’s westward expansion.⁶



Figures 7 : A 2¢ KGV and a 1¢ KGV 1915 War Tax paying the 3¢ forward letter rate from Winnipeg MB to High Bluff MB May 10, 1915. It was redirected to Portage La Prairie. The corner card reads LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE Co. LTD. WINNIPEG MB. Each stamp has the O12 OHN perfin in position 1.

Law Union and Rock Insurance Co. Ltd.⁷

The Law Union Fire and Life Insurance Company (Law Union Insurance for short) was established in London, England in 1806. Its headquarters at No. 126 on Chancery Lane, close to its target client base

of legal professionals. Over the years, it absorbed the Crown Life Assurance Company (1892) and the Rock Life Assurance Co. (1909) and at that point changing its name to Law Union and Rock. It is still a thriving business today. Osler, Hammond and Nanton were agents for the insurance company. (Figure 8)

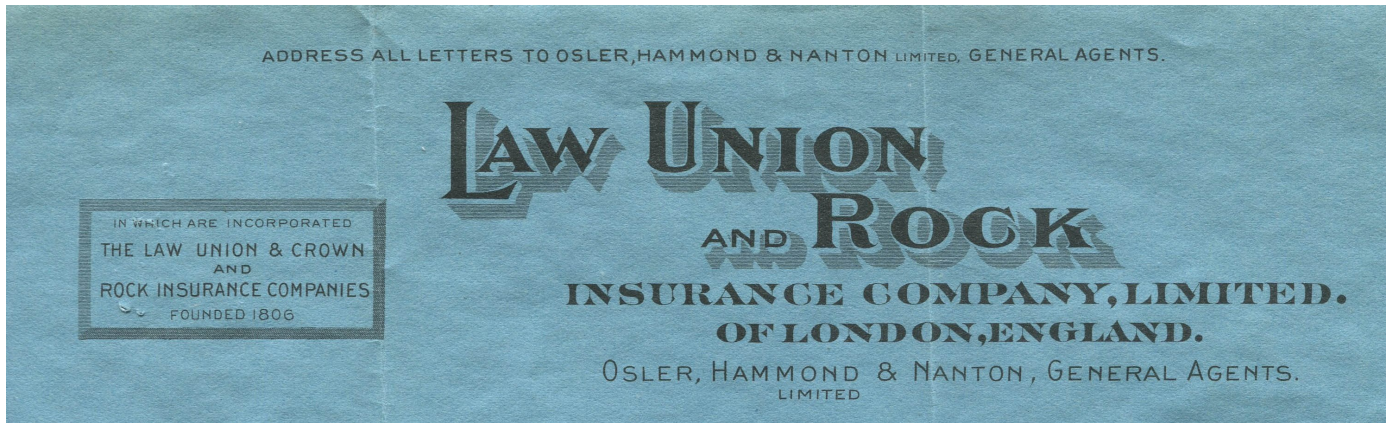


Figure 8: Letterhead from correspondence of Osler, Hammond and Nanton identifying the firm as agents for the Law Union and Rock Insurance Companies.

References:

1. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/osler_edmund_boyd_15F.html
2. <https://inthewindermere.home.blog/2020/04/22/hammond/>
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus_Meredith_Nanton
4. Canadian Stamps with Perforated Initials; Jim Graham, Russell Sampson Editors. <https://bnaps.org/PerfinHandbook/>
5. The Calgary and Edmonton Railway in Alberta. https://www.paulpettypiece.com/c_and_e_railway.htm
6. <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/2100.html>
7. Claxity <https://claxity.com/law-union-insurance/>

Endnotes

1. Sir Augustus Meredith Nanton was also the Managing Director of the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company (Reference 3 above), itself a user of perfin. He also had the honour of having a town named after him in Alberta.



Figures 9 and 10: The A6 pattern of the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company in use 1903-1910



Figure 11: A tied pair of 4¢ KGVI (orange vermillion) with a Nanton AB CDS cancel 10-24-1953 (Author's collection)

An Analysis of a Great West Life Perfin with Random Holes – Towards a Theory of Partial Perfins

(Specimen from the David MacLellan Collection)

Russell D. Sampson, January 23-February 15, 2024

Absence of evidence, is not evidence of absence.

Carl Sagan

ABSTRACT

A Great West Life (GWL) perfin from the collection of David MacLellan exhibits four apparent extra perforations or “random holes” [1]. The possible causes of these extra perforations have been deduced from an image analysis. The analysis strongly suggests the four extra perforations were produced by the perforating die incompletely penetrating the sheets of stamps. The machine operator appears to have then recognized the error, re-inserted the sheets back into the machine and subsequently generated a second, more complete perfin pattern. This analysis further suggests that perfins with “missing holes” may not be due to the absence of a pin (i.e., broken-off, or missing), but instead may be the result of an uneven vertical alignment of the pins within the die block or the backward movement of the pins upon impacting with the sheets of stamps. It is also important to note that blind perfins did not appear to be associated with the extra perforations of this GWL specimen.

INTRODUCTION

The perfin in Figure 1 and 2 is a GWL perfin (position 1) on a Unitrade MR4 (see Figure 3) and has four apparent extra perforations. The perfin is from the collection of David MacLellan and the images were graciously supplied to the editors of the Handbook for analysis. These extra perforations are marked X1, X2, X3 and X4 in Figure 2. What could these extra perforations be caused by? A good place to start in any such investigation is to use Occam’s Razor – “The simplest explanation is often the correct explanation.”

Starting from this assumption, a good working hypothesis is that the four extra holes are caused by a partial penetration of the GWL die through a stack of stamps. The sample in this study could therefore have been near the bottom of a stack of sheets fed through the machine. The operator of the G17 machine, upon noticing this very poor initial result,

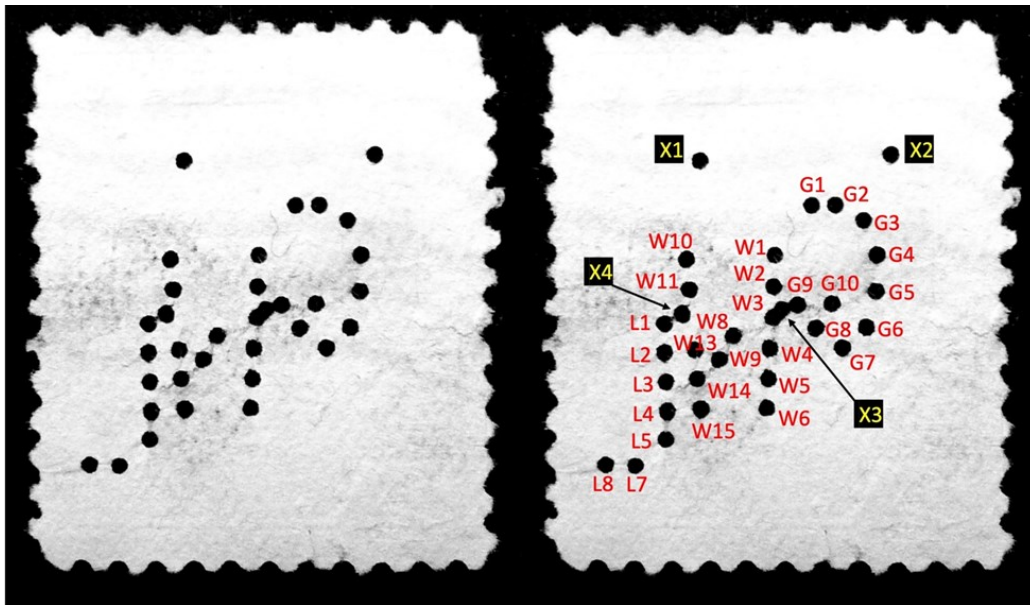


Figure 1 and 2: The image on the left has been rectified and contrast enhanced from the original supplied by David MacLellan. The image on the right is the same but with perfin perforation numbers inserted according to the Tomasson and Johnson method [2]. The four extra holes of the perfin are labelled X1, X2, X3 and X4.



Figure 3: The ink-side of the G17 perfin on Unitrade MR4. All original images supplied by David MacLellan .

may then have re-inserted the partially perforated stamps back into the machine and perforated them again.

METHOD

To test this hypothesis a digital image analysis was performed. First the original images provided by David MacLellan had to be rectified since the images were from a digital camera and not a flatbed scanner (see Figures 4 and 5). If the sensor-plane of the camera is not plane-parallel with that of the stamp this can produce a “keystone” effect where the image of the stamp is not a rectilinear polygon (i.e., not a rectangle with right-angle corners). This apparent distortion was corrected using built-in software on an iPhone. Next the contrast of the images was adjusted to make the perforations appear as dark as possible without causing any obvious loss of definition of their edges.

The images were then imported into PowerPoint where the perforations were numbered. The numbering system for the more complete pattern was derived from that established by Tomasson and Johnson [2].

A red circle was then produced from the “Shapes” toolbar in PowerPoint and scaled to fit around the perfin perforations of the more complete GWL pattern. These circles were then copied, pasted and carefully fit around each of the perfin perforations according to methods previously outlined in this journal [3].

Once all the red circles were overlain the perfin perforations (see Figure 6), the entire digital pattern

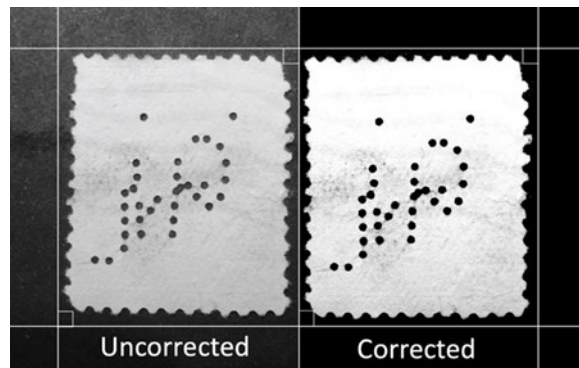


Figure 4 and 5: At left is the uncorrected image of the specimen taken with a digital camera. The white orthogonal lines are drawn to better reveal the departure from a rectilinear polygon. The image at right is the same image but rectified using the tools supplied in an iPhone. The contrast has also been adjusted to make the perfin perforations more distinct.

was “Selected” then “Grouped” (found in the “Arrange” pulldown menu in PowerPoint) and then “Copied” and “Pasted” onto another copy of the perfin. This copy of the more complete G17 pattern was then carefully moved over the four extra perforations (marked with yellow crosses and numbers) until a match was achieved, (see Figure 7). This original analysis was achieved assuming that the operator of the GWL machine re-inserted the stamps in the same orientation as their first attempt (i.e., perfin position 1).

RESULTS

A very close match was achieved after moving the red-circle pattern upwards by about 4.0-mm (scaled to the actual perfin), then to the right by 1.3-mm and finally by rotating the digital pattern by -1° (see Figure 6 and 7). The maximum mismatch between the more complete pattern and the four extra perforations – even using the un-rectified image – was estimated to be only about 0.2 perfin diameter (see Figure 8). This relatively small deviation may have been caused by a small residual uncorrected error from the “keystone” effect, and finally limitations within PowerPoint from its image rotation algorithm since it can only be adjusted in increments of a single degree. The fact that the rectified image shows only a modest improvement in fit over the un-rectified image suggests the method outlined in this study may be somewhat robust with regards to image quality. Thus, archival images from past publications (e.g., photocopies) may still be suitable for this kind of digital image analysis.

Nonetheless the results clearly suggest that the initial hypothesis is consistent with the analysis and its resulting data. Thus, the initial working hypothesis – defined here as an educated guess unsupported by observation and/or experimental data – can now be ele-

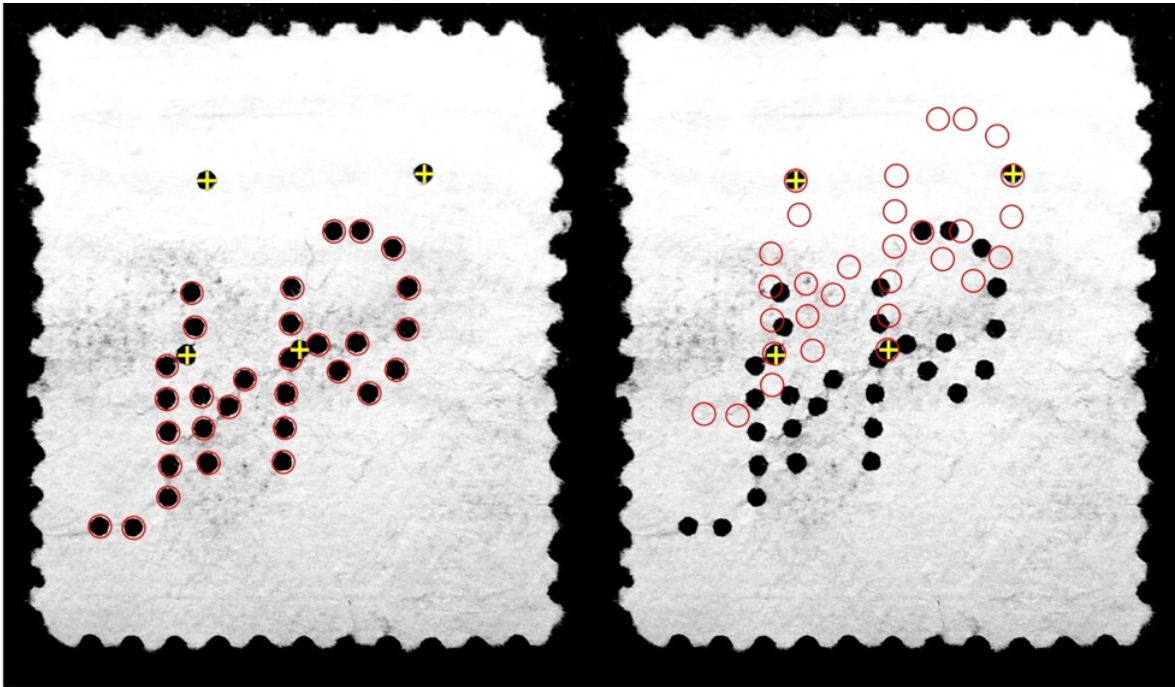


Figure 6 and 7: The image on the left has red circles produced in PowerPoint carefully aligned around each of the perforations from the more complete perfin pattern. Perforations W7 and L6 are missing and these two perforation pins were also found to be missing on stamps in the author’s collection. The G17 is well known for having missing pins. The image on the right shows the displacement of the more complete GWL perfin pattern until it matches with the four extra perfin perforations. As can be seen the match is very good and strongly suggests the four extra holes are a result of a poorly performed initial pass through the machine.

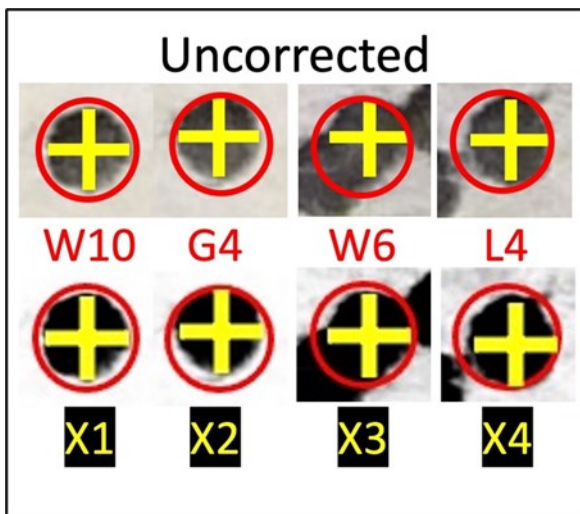


Figure 8: Close-up images of the four extra perforations (marked with yellow crosses and numbers) and the matched perforations from the more complete pattern (red circles and numbers). The top row of images is from the uncorrected (i.e., un-rectified) image while the bottom is from the rectified image. The small offset between the red circles and yellow crosses strongly suggests the proposed hypothesis is correct. The fact that the rectified image shows only a small improvement over the un-rectified image suggests that the method in this paper may be fairly robust with regards to image quality.

vated to the domain of a theory – defined here as a logically consistent explanation supported by significant evidence.

CONCLUSIONS

The definition of “random holes” in the glossary of the Handbook [1] states that these extra perforations are caused by double perforations (i.e., going through the machine twice). However, to date, there has been only one published report on the occurrences of these extra perforations or “random holes” [4], and no published empirical analysis as to their possible cause. The analysis and the data of this study clearly suggests that the four extra perforations in the GWL sample from the MacLellan collection were produced by the die of the machine not fully perforating the stamp on its first pass through the machine. This may have been caused by over-stacking the sheets of the stamps into the machine. The more complete pattern is consistent with a G17 (Winnipeg) perfin die.

Cummins advertised that their machines could perforate up to four sheets at a time [5]. This further suggests that a second more complete pattern was likely produced when the stamps were passed

through the perforating machine a second time, possibly without stacking the sheets of stamps.

However, after discussions with Jon Johnson [6], it is apparent that these results may have more significant and wider applications to perfin studies. If this theory is correct, then it suggests that some of the perforating pins in the dies were either a) not all the same length, b) inserted into the die block so the ends of the pins were not in vertical alignment with the other pins or c) were not firmly affixed within the die block so that upon impact with the sheets of stamps the pins were forced back into the die block (see Figure 9).

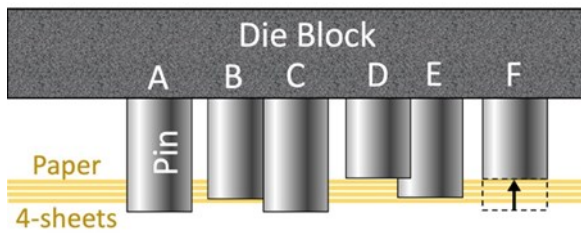


Figure 9: Side-view schematic of a perfin die with uneven vertical pin alignment or loose pins. Pins A and C are long enough to perforate all four sheets of stamps. However, pins B and E are only long enough to perforate the first three sheets of stamps, thus possibly producing two blind perfins on the bottom sheet. Pin D – at the position in the schematic – is not long enough to perforate any of the sheets of stamps. Finally, pin F is not firmly affixed within the die block and the force against the sheets of stamps has pushed it back into the die block, thus at best, producing a blind perfin on the top sheet has pushed it back into the dies block, thus at best, producing a blind hole on the top of the sheet.

The amount of unevenness in the pin’s vertical alignment, coupled with the thickness of the stack of sheets of stamps, could explain why some perfins have missing perforations and – as is the case with this GWL specimen – why some perfins exhibit “extra holes”. Also, the level of force applied by the machine’s operator may not always be sufficient to fully perforate the entire stack of stamps, thus leaving partial perfins. With this in mind, there is nothing to say an operator may have attempted to perforate a number of sheets of stamps exceeding the manufacturer’s recommendations, thus causing the pins to stop before reaching the final sheet. It is important to keep in mind that not everyone follows instructions.

The results of this analysis also suggest another curious thing. With the partial first strike producing

the four extra perforation, one would expect that there should also be evidence for blind perforations, and yet there appears to be none even though the more complete perfin pattern appears to prove that the pins are still there. Therefore, it appears possible that partial perfins can occur without the presence of blind perforations from the remaining pins. Curious indeed.

Therefore, it may be incorrect to always assume that a pin is actually “missing” when a perfin has a missing perforation. “Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence” [7].

REFERENCES:

1. Tomasson, Gary, and Johnson, Jon, editors, (2023), **Canadian Stamps with Perforated Initials – Positions, Sixth Edition**, (Addendum E, Perfin Glossary), British North American Philatelic Society, <https://bnaps.org/PerfinHandbook/PerfinHandbook.htm>
2. Tomasson, Gary, and Johnson, Jon, (1981), **A Perforated Insignia Coding System**, BNA Topics Vol. 38, NO. 5, pg. 14 (Sept. – Oct.)
3. Sampson, Russell D. (2023), **Canadian General Electric C15 with Multiple Perfins and Perfin Positions**, BNA Perforator, Vol. 44., No. 4, Whole Number #168 (September)
4. Tremblay, Conrad, (1997), **Random Holes**, The BNA Perforator, Vol. 18, No. 2, Whole Number 102 (March 31)
5. Sampson, Russell D. (2023), **Evans, Colman & Evans (E6) – Evidence for and Against a Single Die Machine**, BNA Perforator, Vol. 44., No. 4, Whole Number #168 (September)
6. Johnson OTB, Jonathon (2024), personal communications (January 24, 2024)
7. Sagan, Carl (1977), **Dragons of Eden**, Random House, pp. 263

Province of Saskatchewan

P19 Pattern

Kerry Bryant and your Editor are undertaking a die study of the Province of Saskatchewan P19 pattern incomplete dies. We would appreciate a scan of the back and the front of all stamps with a incomplete pattern **and** a date stamp cancel with a readable day, month and year. The scans would be preferably in colour at a minimum of 400ppi. Your contribution will reach us at: kerrybryant@myaccess.ca
jdgraham2@gmail.com

Thank-you

INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY OF CANADA

A Tale of Three Cities

Jim Graham

10M-2-8-15

FORM NO. CAN. F. 1379.

\$ 25⁰⁰ West Branch N. S. Dec 29th 1916
(Town) (Date)

On or before the first day of Oct 1917, for value received,
I promise to pay to INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY OF CANADA, Limited,
(A Corporation organized under the laws of the Province of Ontario)

or order, the sum of Twenty five DOLLARS
with interest after maturity at 8 per cent. per annum until paid.

Payable at Bank of Nova Scotia in Pictou (Name of Local Collector) (Town) Nova Scotia.

This Note given for #46 plow Machine. (Insert name and full description of Machine)

Post Office West Branch N. S. Miles North
County Pictou Con Miles East
Lot, Tp. or Parish Miles South
Witness to Signature Miles West
Local Agent J. W. Ross of said Post Office

(Fill out all blank spaces except number. Signature must be witnessed. If name is foreign or illegible, write it plainly in the margin.)

ST. JOHN NUMBER
15699[#] Year 1916
(REFER TO THIS NUMBER AND YEAR)

2090
1916

Figure 1: A promissory note between J. W. Ross and the International Harvester Company of Canada in the amount of \$25.00, December 29th 1916. (Image reduced to fit)

Introduction

The promissory note in Figure 1 leaves us with some unanswered questions. It is dated December 29th 1916 between the International Harvester Company of Canada and J.W. Ross of West Branch Pictou County Nova Scotia. Mr. Ross promised to pay \$25¹ for a plow (I cannot decipher the script writing which may be the plow model Figure 2) some 9 months later, October 1st 1917, and to do so at the Bank of Nova Scotia in Pictou NS (I know, its not really a city!). I read the blue script as the 4th of October suggesting Mr. Ross took full advantage of the 3 days

grace permitted on the payment of a promissory note (Endnote 1).

Assumption

The Promissory Note has a clear “ST. JOHN NUMBER” handstamp in the upper right hand corner and what appears to be a pre-printed 15699 as the receipt number. When I first saw this promissory note I built myself a nice little story. A travelling IHC salesman from the IHC office in Saint John was making the rounds in Nova Scotia on the Intercolonial Railway—Saint John to Moncton, Moncton to Truro and Truro to Pictou, marketing the Company’s

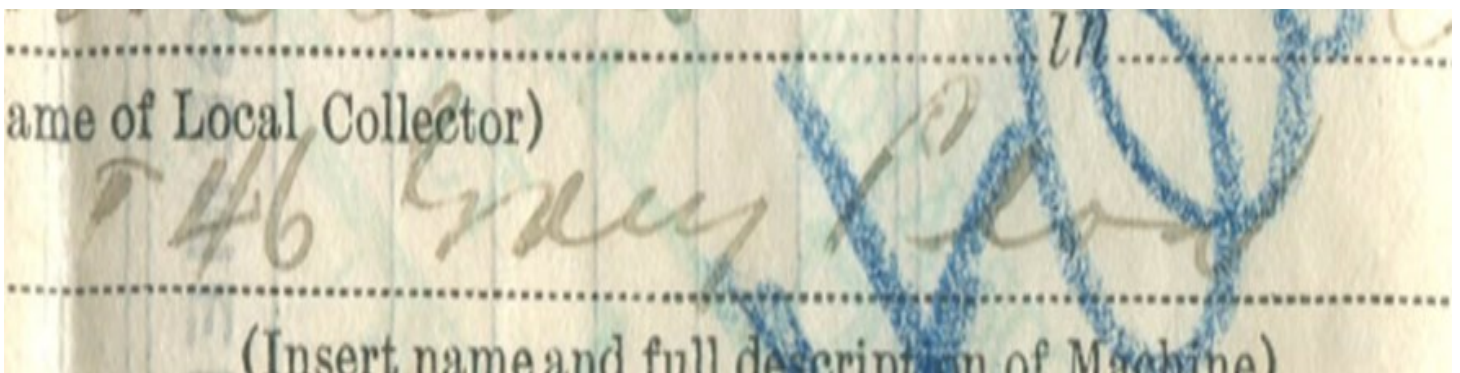


Figure 2: An enlarged image of the description of the plow. The mark in front of the 46 may or may not be a number sign (#). (see Endnote 2).



Figure 5

Figures 3, 4 & 5: Figure 3 is the Montreal IHC pattern and Figure 4 is the Saint John pattern. An enlarged image of the two 1¢ KGV Admiral stamps shows both stamps have the Montreal pattern in position 3; the top stamp has an incomplete punch.

wares showing pictures of various IHC farm equipment a catalogue. He met Mr. Ross and sold him a plow³.

The Promissory Note was drawn up and as required, the 2¢ Excise Tax, required by the Canadian Government, was paid, with two green 1¢ KGV Admiral stamps (Figure 3). I was quite surprised to discover that both 1¢ stamps had the Montreal IHC pattern (Figure 4) and not the Saint John pattern! (Figure 5). Both are in Position 3.

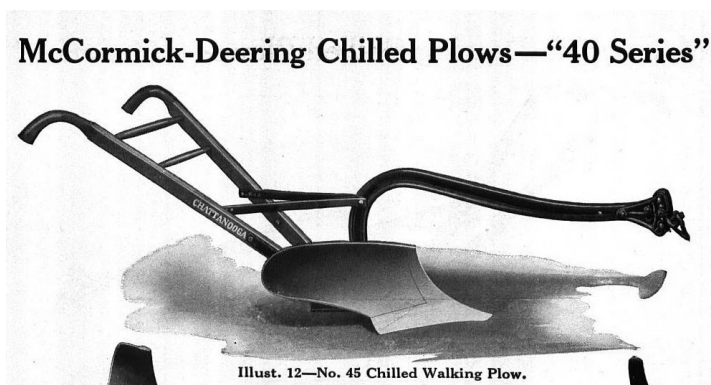
The Saint John IHC pattern is known on KEVII issues and I have three Saint John IHC covers addressed to Northern Nova Scotia communities in the same time period as this promissory note; Port Hastings (1912), Scotsburn Station (1918) and Scotsburn (1919), all with the I21 pattern. I cannot think of a logical explanation for the promissory note to be from the Saint John office and the perforated stamps to be

from Montreal, some 800 miles away. Your theories are most welcome.

Endnotes

1. John Hall of the BNAPS Revenue Study Group pointed me to Issue #45 of the Canadian Revenue Newsletter (June 2004) and the article “Canada’s Excise Tax on Cheques and other Types of Commercial Paper 1915-1953” by Christopher Ryan. “Promissory Notes exist in 2 types: Time and Demand. Time-notes are payable at the time specified in the document plus the ‘days of grace.’ During the 1915-1953 period Canadian law required that three ‘days of grace’ be added to time-notes unless other provisions were specified in the document.”

2. Russell Sampson provided a copy of McCormick Deering advertisement for ‘40 Series Plows’. The image below is of a Model 45 and the Table shows that a Model 46 was made. The source of these images² also tells us that the International Harvester



Illust. 12—No. 45 Chilled Walking Plow.

Specifications

No.	DESCRIPTION	CAPACITY	WEIGHT, LB.
43	Light 2-horse	8 x 10-in.	102
44	Medium 2-horse	9 x 11-in.	128
45-A	Regular 2-horse	10 x 12-in.	144
46	Three-horse	12 x 14-in.	176

Company was a marketing agent for McCormick Deering plows.

References

- Canadian Stamps with Perforated Initials; Jim Graham, Russell Sampson Editors. <https://bnaps.org/PerfinHandbook/>
- Wisconsin Historical Society. <https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/ihc/id/24622>.