

# Fancy Cancels during the Small Queen Period 1870-1897

**Purpose:** This is a marcophily exhibit featuring domestic fancy cancels on Canadian stamps, covers and postal cards during the Small Queen Period: 1870-1897.

**Scope:** This exhibit provides information on the period of use, the post office of origin, and the philatelic significance such as postmaster initials, for over 600 fancy cancels. More than 50 cancels in this exhibit are previously unrecorded.

Examples showing how partial strikes and the deterioration of a cancelling device sometimes produced ‘different designs’ are shown. However, fake and forged fancy cancels and the techniques for distinguishing them from legitimate cancels are not included in this exhibit.

**Exhibit Plan:** The exhibit is organized into ten Sections based on categories of cancel designs. Sub-classes within each main category are described on the first page of each Section.

Section	Pages
Title page	1
I. Letters, Initials, and Place Names	2 to 48
II. Stars	49 to 64
III. Crosses	65 to 80
IV. Crowns, Flags, and Crests	81 to 88
V. Masonic Symbols	89 to 92
VI. Geometric Shapes and Patterns	93 to 104
VII. Leaves and Flowers	105 to 112
VIII. Faces, Bogey Heads and Masks	113 to 116
IX. Miscellaneous Pictorials	117 to 118
X. Numerals	119 to 128

**Significance (Rarity):** During the 1870s and 1880s, the number of post offices increased faster than official obliterators could be provided to them. In response to this lag, many Postmasters produced their own cancelling devices using a variety of materials and featuring a wide range of designs. Many of the fancy cancels produced during this 20-year period were in use for a short period of time, and in small post offices with relatively low letter volumes.

Items in this exhibit that are the ‘only reported’ and / or the ‘discovery’ copy are noted by **bold text**.

Items of significance are denoted with a **red border**.

**Research:** The originating post office for many fancy cancels is still unknown. Cancels for which the post office is unknown are mounted on a **gray background**.

Linking cancels to specific post offices represents a continuing effort. A recent example of this research is shown with the ‘Alexandria’ Ontario cancel (see ‘A’ in the Letters, Initials and Place Names Section).

Original research is denoted with a 