

PERFORATED POSTAGE AND ITS USAGE

OF

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY and SUBSIDIARIES

MONTREAL AND DISTRIBUTED OFFICES

1929—1966

The perforating of postage stamps to prevent employee theft began in England in 1868. In Canada, the 1896 Post Office regulations read: *Perforated Stamps: No object is made by the Department to the perforating of postage stamps with the initials of the individual or firms using them* . The quarterly supplement of the April 1910 Postal Guide stated: *No objection is made by the Department to the perforation of postage stamps with the distinctive marks (initials or other) of the individual or firm using them, but it must be understood that the designs employed should be for the purpose of identification and not for advertising.*

Canadian National Railways (CNR) was created as a Crown Corporation by the Federal Government by consolidating 7 independent and financially unstable railways between 1918 and 1923. CNR adopted the use of perforated postage immediately using different perforating machines in each principal office of Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver in 1923. The first Montreal machine was replaced when the Canadian Post Office gave CNR approval on March 13 1928 to use of a second pattern. To date the earliest recorded use to is June 6th 1929.

The focus of this exhibit is the second pattern used by, and distributed from, the CNR Montreal offices. Canadian usage was from 1929 until 1966; usage in the United States was from 1934 to 1955

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Items out lined in red are rare if not unique



The perforation pattern can appear on the face of the stamp in one of 4 ways; in order from the top the machine perforated the stamp from the front with the head up; from the front with head down; from the gum side with head up; or from the gum side with the head down. In this case the first 2 are most common.