

## **Department of Finance**

### **5-Hole OHMS Perfin Mail (1923 – 1939)**

**Purpose:** The purpose is to substantiate the legitimacy of the 5-hole OHMS perfins by illustrating official usages that clearly demonstrate that for the first 17 years of service the 5-hole OHMS perforator was used exclusively by and for its original owner, the Department of Finance, and thereby reinstate trust in collecting this philatelic hot-topic. Valid Department of Finance usage was usually confined to the “closed loop” of Canada's monetary system meaning correspondence was either to or from the Federal Department of Finance in Ottawa, one of its nine Provincial Assistant Receiver General offices and/or local bank branches. Occasional use has included mail to ancillary services providers like Insurance, Alarm and Shipping Registry companies.

**Scope:** The pieces shown in this exhibit chronicle the earliest and latest known usages, scarce rates and destinations, largest known multiples (including the unique Bluenose block of six) and the only known 21¢ Registered Insured cover. The scope **does not** include 5-hole OHMS stamps that were prepared by the Post Office department for mandatory use on all official federal government mail effective July 1, 1939, **unless** it was used by the Department of Finance. The exhibit is also not intended to show every stamp known with a 5-hole OHMS perfin; it is intended to show valid Department of Finance usage by illustrating only dated stamps and covers.

**Challenge:** The greatest challenge is in sourcing material still on cover since the majority of the correspondence ended up at local banks and was destroyed so only collectors that had access to bank mail have been able to preserve the legacy of 5-hole OHMS perfins. On-cover material is typically found opened on 3-sides since that letter opening style was a normal banking practice so as a result many covers exist **only** in that format therefore that quality should be considered as the standard. The added challenge is verification that the 5-hole OHMS stamp on cover is indeed a genuine copy. Thankfully however, according to the noted Canadian Fake and Forgery specialist Ken Pugh, there have been no reports of forged 5-hole OHMS perfins found on cover.

**Knowledge:** With almost 40-years of general perfin knowledge and over 35-years of specific OHMS perfin knowledge, I have become one of the foremost researchers on the subject. I have regularly challenged the traditional Wrigley listings as containing unfounded issues with even more unrealistic positions. I understand the inner workings of a perforator and am well-versed in the postal rates and regulations from this time period including the use of government Free Frank privileges. Additionally, by studying correspondence, I have identified the location of all the provincial Assistant Receiver General offices thereby contributing to the growing knowledge of actual timelines and usages of this Federal Department perfin. Finally, as part of an exclusive four-person OHMS perfin study group, I have helped identify, list and value only the *confirmed-as-genuine* 5-hole OHMS stamp issues and as such am credited in the 2022 and 2023 UNITRADE stamp catalogue as a key contributor to the completely revised OHMS perfin listings.

**Rarity:** In general, all OHMS 5-Hole covers are rare, however this exhibit does illustrate several UNIQUE items including the earliest and the latest known uses; the largest known blocks of the

50¢ Bluenose, 50¢ Grand Pre, 4¢ and 8¢ KGV Medallions plus the only 20¢ Harvesting on cover. Additionally, the exhibit contains several key items that have 3 or less reported copies including a 10¢ Blue Admiral with Type “D” Lathework, 3¢ Parliament on cover and 10¢ Loyalist on cover.

**Condition:** All items shown are fully owned and from my personal collection. UNIQUE items may contain some small faults but are not distracting and can obviously not be upgraded. Other items are in the finest condition for their type and quality upgrades may not be available.

**Presentation:** Within the confines of eight double-width pages, this One-Frame Exhibit has limited white-space primarily due to large-sized covers and large multiples however the overall balance between quality philatelic items and the pertinent text still provides for an aesthetically pleasing exhibit. After the initial introduction page that includes the Exhibit Plan, the history, the pattern, some varieties and the unique 50¢ Bluenose block of 6, the balance of the exhibit is presented primarily in chronological date order based on the cancellation date on the cover (or piece) and culminates with the unique 21¢ Registered Insured rate Latest Recorded Date cover.

**References:** In addition to the exhibitor’s primary research, additional information can be obtained by referencing the following articles, catalogues, handbooks, and online resources.

1. Johnson, Jon and Tomasson, Gary [Editors] (2022), Canadian Stamps with Perforated Initials, BNAPS 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (weblink to letter “O” that lists only CONFIRMED OHMS items) and illustrates the unique 50¢ Bluenose block of 6. (See page 5.O.3 for pattern O9.) <https://bnaps.org/PerfinHandbook/O%20-%20Master%202022%2008%2001.pdf>
2. Harris, Robin, [Editor] (2022), UNITRADE Canadian Postage Stamp Catalogue – 2023 Edition, pages 662-663.
3. Harris, Robin, [Editor] (2021), UNITRADE Canadian Postage Stamp Catalogue – 2022 Edition, pages 655-656.
4. Pugh, Kenneth W. (2021 July) Pugh Reference Manuals of Fakes, Forgeries & Genuine, Series II - Release 5A (revised edition), The Genuine and Faked Perforated OHMS Official Stamps of Canada, privately published, Chilliwack, BC
5. Durbano, Patrick (2019 October) Presentation to the Philatelic Specialists Society of Canada (PSSC) OFFICIAL PERFINS - MINISTRY OF FINANCE 5-HOLE OHMS 1923 TO 1942 [https://philatelicspecialistsociety.com/presentations.php?file=054-\[DURBANO\]-Ministry-of-Finance-5-Hole-OHMS-1923-to-1942.pdf](https://philatelicspecialistsociety.com/presentations.php?file=054-[DURBANO]-Ministry-of-Finance-5-Hole-OHMS-1923-to-1942.pdf)
6. Tomasson, Gary and Johnson, Jon (1981 October), BNA Topics Volume 38, #5, Whole #285, pgs. 14 to 18 “A Perforated Insignia Coding System”
7. Wrigley, Roy, (circa 1979), The Catalogue & Guidebook of Canadian Official Stamps, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, J & M Publishing Co. Ltd.
8. Jephcott, CM, (1951) Collectors Club Philatelists, VOL. XXX, No. V, Pages 229-244, 281

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