

Synopsis: Three Cents Small Queen 1870 – 1897

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE:

L. D. Shoemaker published his study of the three cents small Queen in stamps magazine in March 1941 and re-published it in Topics Vol. 7, No. 5 1950. Shoemaker listed 39 different classes of three cents small Queen. But he did not relate his classes to the deliveries from the printers.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE HERE:

The Duckworths recorded deliveries of large and small Queens from April 1, 1868 to June 30, 1872. Unfortunately the British American Bank Note Company's Journal 'A' which contained the information on quantities delivered and dates of deliveries has subsequently been lost. It has been determined that the delivery of 3¢ stamps on December 9, 1869 must have been the first delivery of small Queens in order for the first use of a 3¢ small Queen to be January 12, 1870. The Classes Shoemaker listed are referenced with the deliveries and orders.

DELIVERIES: Small Queens were recorded by the Duckworths being delivered from December 9, 1869 – June 30, 1872. A calculation has determined that the average time from delivery to first use during the period April 1, 1868 – June 30, 1872 was 44 calendar days. If the Duckworths reported delivery before a certain date then predicted first use is before that date plus 44 calendar days. This collection will show 12 deliveries of the three cents small Queen listing paper type, perforation and shade of each.

ORDERS: Quantities of small Queens ordered by the Post Office Department from July 1, 1872 to June 6, 1892 were recorded in the Post Office letter book and scans of these letters may be found on the internet at heritage.canada.ca but no record of orders subsequent to June 6, 1892 has been found. In the period July 1, 1872 – June 6, 1892 it has been calculated that first use is on average 87 calendar days after the date of the order. This collection will show 113 orders of the 3¢ small Queen.

CLASSES: For the period June 7, 1892 – June 18, 1897 it has been assumed that first use of each class occurred on the first day of each quarter. This collection will show 12 classes of the 3¢ small Queen.

IMPORTANCE: The three cents small Queen paid the domestic letter rate per ½ ounce from JA/1870 to MY/07/1889 and then per ounce to from MY/08/1889 to JU/18/1897. It also paid the letter rate to USA from JA/01/1875 to MY/07/1889 per ½ ounce and then per ounce from MY/08/1889 to June 18/1897.

SCOPE: The earliest known use of the three cents small Queen is JA/12/1870. The exhibit begins at the start of the "3 cents small Queen" period and continues to June 19, 1897 when the small Queens were officially replaced by the Diamond Jubilee Issue, however many were used after June 19, 1897.

CHALLENGE: Dated copies of the three cents small Queens are eagerly sought after by many calendar collectors so dated copies are elusive.

CONDITION: The combination of small margins between stamps and inaccurate early perforating machines resulted in well centered stamps being elusive.

PRESENTATION: Deliveries, orders and classes are presented chronologically by predicted earliest use. Predicted delivery date, quantity delivered, colour of the ink, perforation, paper and paper thickness are all listed for each delivery, order and class (quantity of classes unknown).

METHOD: It is noted that a particular dated stamp may be late use of an earlier printing. Care has been taken not to include stamps that are the same as an earlier printing. The method of using dated stamps off paper has been used by; Shoemaker, on the three cents small queens, 1941, Mitreit on the one cent small Queens, 1963 and Whitworth on the first decimal issue, 1966, although Whitworth used covers but, the principal is the same.

COLOUR NAMES: Many of the shades identified are illustrated exactly on the Stanley Gibbons Colour Key No. 2530. Each colour "chip" has a hole approximately 5 mm in diameter. When placed on the stamp such that the only part of the stamp showing is an uncanceled part of "3 CENTS 3" (which is the most densely coloured part of the stamp) and part of the white background will eliminate the colour "noise" resulting from the many degrees of shade on the stamp and the cancel. You can train your eye to ignore the white. The use of a low powered magnifying glass helps.

PERFORATIONS: The perforation traditionally stated to be $11\frac{1}{2}$ is actually 11.6, $11\frac{3}{4}$ is correct, 12 is either 11.9 or 12.1, $12\frac{1}{4}$ is really 12.3 and $12\frac{1}{2}$ is correct. Effectively the editors of the catalogues have rounded perforations off to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ of a perforation per 2 cm. Perforations in this exhibit have been measured to the nearest $\frac{1}{10}$ of a perforation per 2 cm. using a Stanley Gibbons Instanta perforation gauge.

In the period January 1883 – October 1885 Shoemaker frequently reports perforation 12 X $12\frac{1}{4}$ where I measure 11.9 X 12.1. Now in Shoemaker's time it was common to report perforations to the nearest $\frac{1}{2}$ a perforation per two centimetres. Shoemaker was a bit of a pathbreaker in leading the change to reporting perforations to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ of a perf./2 cm.. Today collectors report perforations to the nearest tenth of a perf. /2 cm. Now 11.9 to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ perf. /2 cm. rounds off to 12 but so does 12.1. Shoemaker was right that his perf $12\frac{1}{4}$ has more perforations/2 cm. than his perf. 12 does. But there is a perforation that measures 12.3 which would round off to $12\frac{1}{4}$. This exhibit shows two of them at Printing Orders 74 and 75. Both stamps measure 12.1 X 12.3. Perforation 12.3 is rare and this exhibitor has only found ten examples in all the values of the small Queens.

PAPERS:

For this study the Duckworth numbered identification system has been used for paper 10b and extended to include the papers used after paper 10b. Papers 16 and 17 are not shown as they are only known used on the 15 cents large Queen. Papers 1 to 10a were used in printing the large Queens but have not been found on any of the small Queens.

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