

EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS

The Squared Circle Postmarks of Nova Scotia BNAPEX 2023

Purpose of Exhibit: To display the usage of the Squared Circle Postmarks as used in the Province of Nova Scotia from the period of 1893 – early 20th century including examples on stamp and on cover, where known to exist.

Exhibit Plan: The exhibit is displayed Alphabetically by town name and exhibits both Type one (Thin bars) and type 2 (Thick bars) beginning with Type 1 of which there were only two towns. Thence we proceed with type 2 of which there were 30 towns with two hammers known for Halifax and Sydney. The exhibit displays strikes on both stamp and cover where known and also includes illustrated covers, special stamp usage especially the Jubilee issue of 1897 and the 2c Map Stamp of 1898 as well as indicia used and indicia anomalies. It also includes a page of the 1892 Barred Circle Hammer of Halifax which is considered a precursor to the Squared Circle and thus, part of the Squared Circle Story.

Treatment and structure:

- The acronym **ERD = “Earliest Recorded Date”**. **LRD = “Latest Recorded Date”**
- The objective of this exhibit is to display all of the 33 known squared circle hammers used in the province of Nova Scotia during the period of 1893 – 1916 (including 2 Type 1 Hammers and 31 Type 2 Hammers).
- We strive to show an example on stamp and on cover for each hammer and in this regard, the collection is complete. It also should be noted that the Squared Circle postmarks were used primarily during the last period of the reign of Queen Victoria and can be found on Small Queens, Large Queens (rarely), Leaf and Numeral issues and the Jubilee and 2c Map stamp issues and can also be found on the Edward issue of 1902, the Quebec Tercentenary issue (rare) and occasionally the Admiral issue up to and including World War I period.
- Additional special items shown are usage on Jubilee stamps of 1897 and on the 2 c Map Stamp of 1898 both on stamp and where possible on cover. Some of these items are unique or very rare and in many cases the item may not exist or are currently unknown on cover.
- Although a few items are scarce to very rare, as in one or two known examples it should be noted that this collection has taken most of a lifetime to build with new additions to the collection still being added over the past couple years. Many of items in this collection/exhibit are scarce to rare, known in less than 10

examples based on current roster in the 6th Edition Handbook of squared circles.

History and general information:

- The widespread usage of the squared circle cancelling devices commenced in 1893 and appeared to be generally, somewhat unpopular with postmasters. In fact, these hammers were issued to only about 325 post offices across Canada and in Nova Scotia only 33 towns and cities were issued the hammers. Many larger and significant towns did not have squared circle hammers, notably; Berwick, Middleton, Bridgewater, Bridgetown, Shelburne, Lawrencetown and others.
- The large outer dimension did not allow for a full strike on any single Canadian stamp of the era, thus, finding well-centered and nearly full strikes on any stamp is very difficult. Hence, the collecting of these postmarks on covers is much more desirable though much more difficult as many stamps were soaked off in the collections of the day.
- For some reason, some postmaster seemed reluctant (or lazy) to re-ink their ink pads and hence, many strikes for many towns are particularly weak and full bold strikes are exceptional and uncommon.
- Due to limited space, details on each item are kept at a minimum, concentrating on the handstamps and covers.
- The pages in this exhibit have been enhanced with a full strike image taken from the "6th Edition of the Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada Handbook" (online resource) The purpose of this is to show what a full clear strike should look like.
- Where possible, examples exhibited have been chosen for the clearness of strike but also keeping in mind, due to the absolute rarity of the material, some covers may show wear, age or damage. Every item in the exhibit is over 100 years of age.

General Squared Circle Study and Research:

This exhibitor has been collecting Squared Circle Cancels for nearly 50 years and can testify to the difficulty in acquiring new material. The most frequent source for collectors is in auctions when retiring or deceased collector's accumulations have been consigned for sale. Occasional finds can also be made at dealer's tables in the

various exhibitions. Some very rare items exist in as few as one example known and thus, may only come up for sale once or twice in a collector's lifetime.

Exhibit Plan:

Each town exhibited contains one example of the hammer on stamp and one on cover. Additional pages for each town display special items such as illustrated covers, Map Stamp and Jubilee covers, registered and other exceptional or unusual material. The City of Halifax received detailed and special treatment due to the two hammers in use, chronology of use and special material such as time marks and date anomalies.

Previous Awards:

A previous version of this exhibit was exhibited once before in BNAPEX in 2008 and in The Valley Stamp Club (local) show). It was awarded a Vermeil in 2008 at BNAPEX and gold at the local show. This exhibit has been completely redone and greatly expanded with additional material.

Bibliography

The Squared Circle Postmarks of Canada 1981 – W. G. Moffatt and Glenn Hansen

The Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada – 2001, The BNAPS Study Group, Edited John Gordon

The Squared Circles Postmarks of Canada 6th Edition (2020) – Rick Friesen Phd. BNAPS Study Group

Provenance

Hennock, Kerzner, Smythies and others