



The Inverted Surcharges of 1899 – Are Any Of Them Genuine?

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BNA TOPICS

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Manuscripts should be double spaced - typewritten if possible, but legible handwriting is quite acceptable. Literature for review should be addressed to the Editor.

Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the Society or BNA TOPICS.

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

by MIKE STREET

One of our readers, incensed by what he terms a 'gross error' in an article in TOPICS almost two years ago, writes, "I suggest that you adopt the expedient employed in the learned societies—have all articles referred by 3 independent outside authorities. Presumably then, such (errors) would be avoided in future." He continues, "I can also recall seeing other errors in other articles which are just as serious—perhaps moreso. All authors ought to footnote all significant references as it permits other students to follow the research and lends a greater air of legitimacy to such articles—it also, in many instances, gives credit where credit is due."

Another correspondent congratulates us on recent issues of TOPICS but goes on to suggest that someone who is knowledgeable on what to print and what not to print should have some input because a recent article "Is not philatelicly sound, and not based on very much knowledge or research."

A third person wrote at length. "Whether an Editor's copy should be new material or reprint is, in my mind, not the proper question. Rather, it should be whether a piece of copy, new or reprint, should be published. To print new material that is scantily researched and faulty in its conclusions is far worse than reprinting an article that has real merit."

"It is easy for an editor to fall into the trap of begging for copy, only to receive a piece that should never see print. Then, the pressure to publish soon follows as the editor displays his reluctance and the writer becomes upset. The truth is that much philatelic writing is bad because the writers are untrained to properly research their subject."

The same correspondent was joined by another member in suggesting—very strongly—that any reprint of an old article, even one by a 'name' author, should be reviewed by one or more knowledgeable collectors to ensure that any original errors are corrected and that information which has come to light since the article was first printed has not outdated some or all of the original.

Finally, a fifth letter includes this para-

graph, "I would like to do some philatelic research on this issue, but do not feel I am competent. Can anyone do a piece on how to do research?"

Still want to be an Editor? It's not that bad! The excerpts quoted raise important points which should be addressed, and I'd like to cover them all, so this Editorial may go on a bit.

The first three writers are all concerned with "errors". The point seems to be that TOPICS should not print anything unless it comes with a 100% solid gold guarantee, not to mention pedigree. Quite honestly, if that were our policy, you would never see another philatelic article in TOPICS. I guarantee you that I can find at least one person to disagree with any opinion expressed by someone else. So where does that leave us?

Obviously, if a writer sends in an article that says "black is white.", it is not going to see print. On the other hand, if an article such as "The Inverted Surcharges" in this issue comes in—a piece which suggests that an earlier bit of philatelic wisdom may be wrong—the Editor cannot just throw it out. In this instance I relied on my own knowledge of things scientific to confirm that the equipment described in the article can do what the author says it does, and printed the article. The conclusion the author is suggesting may ultimately be proven, again, to be wrong, but there's enough evidence in the article to cause the question to be reopened. If it proves to be controversial, so be it—but controversy is not the purpose or the goal. The whole point in printing this or any article which is proposing a new point of view is to give it an airing and open it up for discussion by all interested parties. With the distances between our various homes, and the soaring cost of all means of communication and travel, what better way to get maximum exposure. Rest assured that TOPICS doesn't want to print any errors—ever. But we can't avoid it. Is it not better to print something that, however much it may cause disagreement, is still the result of hard work on

(Continued on Pg. 47)

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Jim Lehr



With the influx of membership dues for 1982 we have also received a number of questions on how our U.S. members can best pay \$15 Canadian. This is more of a problem for us Americans because we do not have the postal money order system that Canada has, and the cost to transmit Canadian funds is over \$4. Perhaps the easiest way is to ask your bank what the exchange rate is, or check the Wall Street Journal or other financial paper listing the going rate, and send a U.S. check for the proper amount. Since we have a U.S. account for U.S. funds, there is no need to add anything additional for bank charges.

Got a letter from Kirk Liggett of Philadelphia enclosing an article from Linns', by Fred Stulberg, suggesting the need for a new numbering system developed specifically for Canadian stamps. The use of Scott numbers certainly has real problems when you consider the larger complicated groups such as Small Queens, Admirals or the recent Centennial Issue of 1967. Sounds like a subject worth some consideration.

Dave Dixon wrote concerning some advertising matters and mentioned that he and others are considering organizing a Regional Group in Toronto. There should be enough members there to organize several groups! I've also received newsletters recently from three new Study Groups—Centennial Definitives, Postal Stationery and Re-Entries. As you know from past comments here, I believe Study Groups and Regional Groups are one of the most rewarding and helpful activities in BNAPS. Hope everyone will support these new groups.

Back in 1979 our Secretary, Ed Whiting, put out the most recent edition of the BNAPS Membership Handbook and Directory. This is

really an excellent and valuable book which I suspect only a few members are aware of and use. It starts by listing our constitution and by-laws, which every member should re-read periodically so as to become familiar with how the society operates and how the responsibilities are divided. Rules and regulations for the Library and Sales Department, as well as listings of special groups and officers, are out of date now but still helpful. Members are listed both alphabetically and geographically, a great help in seeing where our members are concentrated. As a PEI collector, for example, it is unbelievable that we have only three (3) PEI members! At the time of publication our total membership broke down as follows: 62% Canadian, 34% American and 4% overseas. The total membership of 1586 (including 53 applications pending) compared with 1537 by the 1979 convention, 1505 by 11/8/80 and just below 1500 at the end of 1981. When this handbook was published we had members in 16 overseas countries, the large majority of course in Great Britain. Although a new edition should have been published in 1981, it had to be delayed for financial reasons. Maybe this year.

NEW CIRCULATION MANAGER

Effective immediately, E. R. (Ritch) Toop is the new Circulation Manager for TOPICS. All questions or problems relating to receiving your copy of TOPICS should be directed to Ritch at P. O. Box 9026, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3T8.

(Editor's note: Envelopes for this issue were printed before this announcement and show the old circulation address. Envelopes for the May-June issue will be correct.)

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LETTERS

NOVA SCOTIA 12½¢

Though loath to comment on a reprinted article I am, for the record, adding a footnote to Jon Rose's "Nova Scotia 12½ cent"-TOPICS, November/December 1981.

In giving a figure of \$18,000 for the remainders of Nova Scotia stamps sold, Rose also implies that that was their face value. In his statement at the time, the premier of Nova Scotia clearly stated that the stamps had been "sold for" \$18,000. No one, of course, would have paid face value for demonetized stamps existing in comparatively large quantities.

I was told by the late Fred Jarrett that the face value of the stamps was \$180,000, ie, the purchasers paid 10 cents on the dollar. Jarrett got this information from Donald A. King, PMG in Halifax. Jarrett, a good friend of King, found an interesting note when going through King's correspondence after his death. As far as I know the information has not been previously published. I believe it's worth reproducing verbatim:

GROUP THAT BOUGHT

NOVA SCOTIAN REMAINDERS

(Source: Fred Jarrett, from note book in D. A. King papers)

A.A. Bartlett	\$5,100
Well to do, retired man	
L.H. Davies	\$5,000
W.M. Chase	\$3,000
Apple grower, wealthy Nova Scotian man, collector	
D.A. King	\$2,200
Donald King, Postmaster, Halifax Author, collector	
C.D. Rankin	\$1,800
F.P. Carvell	\$ 900

\$18,000

Vincent G. Greene
Toronto, Ontario

Thank you for passing this information on—ED.

PRECANCEL CORRECTION

There is a typing error in the May-June '81 TOPICS Precancel Specialist column. The first row of letters following the Type numbers should be deleted: For example, Calgary Type 1 N, should be Calgary Type 1.

Hans Reiche
Ottawa

EMERGENCY CANCEL

I have an envelope corner with the current 17 cent Queen stamp, which is cancelled:

Alberta District
Emergency No. 1

24 X 1981



Do you know the meaning of this? Is there a story behind it? I suppose it is strike related, but without the entire envelope I am at a loss.

George T. Hanson
Columbia Falls, Montana

It is almost certainly not strike related. Sounds like a post office burned down. How about it, readers—any details?—ED.

THE ½ CENT SMALL QUEEN

The article in Nov/Dec 'TOPICS' by Mr. Burden was most interesting, and it is of course possible that the ½ Cent plate was re-entered more than once. Unfortunately, the article was based on two false premises: 1) that because there are a lot of re-entries to be found on this stamp, it must have been repaired at least twice; and 2) that the original state showed, it was guessed, no re-entries.

As you look at it, the right hand pane is the No. 2 pane. The left hand pane being No.1. The block illustrated in the Nov.-Dec. article is a right hand block—note the guillotine guide on the left selvage. I have an imprint block of 12 from the right hand pane, Positions 3-8, Rows 1 & 2, in the original State 1; that is, the impression of both stamp and imprint is equally fresh, the shading lines fine, but the colour deep. After re-entering, as can be seen clearly from the illustration on P.19 of the article, the shading lines are broad and coarse. This block of mine shows re-entering of Positions 4, 5, 6 in Row 1, Position 5, Row 2, and a substantial

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re-entry in Position 8, Row 2.

It was normal practise to strengthen weak impressions after proofing and before putting a plate into service. One can only conclude that this work is so obvious on this particular value because of the myriad of fine lines that make up the design of the frame.

As far as the multiplicity of re-entries being due to a late repair is concerned, I also have an across-the-sheet block of 20 from the left pane with a weak imprint, but where every stamp impression has been re-entered. In addition, Positions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Row 1 and Positions 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Row 2 show clear doubling of the design, that of stamps from Positions 1/10 and 2/10 being particularly substantial. That is 14 re-entries out of 20 positions from the second state of the plate.

It should be remembered, also, that less than 46,000 impressions were taken from the plate. The British American Bank Note showed considerable ability in getting much more than the guaranteed 25,000 impressions out of a plate before it needed repair.

From the above it seems that Mr. Burden has not state 2 and state 3 blocks, but a worn state 1 and a fresh state 2. And very nice, too.

John Hillson
Glasgow, Scotland

Mr. Hillson is the author of 'The Small Queens of Canada' which is reviewed in this issue see Literature. A thank you to him for this contribution. - ED

10¢ CONSORT QUESTION

As a BNAPS member out in the Midwest, I sometimes have trouble obtaining data for my research. Can any member provide the following information on the 1859 10¢ Prince Consort, Scott #16 & 17?

Current catalogues list the color of #16 (first printing) as black brown, and #17 (25 later printings) a range of purples, violets, greys, lilacs and browns. Recently I have seen references to a "rare chocolate brown" and also to a "deep chocolate". Is the chocolate from the first printing and thus a #16? My 1929 Jarrett catalogue lists the first order at 100,000 copies, with two colors, a "brownish black" and "black brown". Could Jarrett's brownish black now be the chocolate referred to above? Bileski lists a chocolate brown as the highest in price, but does not relate it to Scott's numbers. Holmes leaves the impression that the first two printings may have been the black brown.

J. W. Hickey
Wichita, Kansas

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NOTES

TORONTO REGIONAL GROUP STARTS UP

Man of many hats Dave Dixon reports that over 80 BNAPSers responded to the recent questionnaire about forming a Toronto Regional Group. At press time the first meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 18 at a hotel in downtown Toronto. Members can contact Dave (address on P.2) for more information.

PRAIRIE BEAVERS MEET

The January issue of *Beaver Chatter*, the official organ of the Prairie Beavers Regional Group in Texas, brings news that the group meets all day Saturday, 4-5 times a year. From the sounds of it, a lot of people get out to the meetings. The *Chatter*, full of small philatelic items, is quite interesting. Any member in Texas (and any visiting BNAPSer) can contact Ed Richardson (address on the Business Side Page) for further information.

DELIVER US - PART II

John Wannerton in South Africa thought that the Dec. 31 arrival of his September-October TOPICS (mailed Oct. 2) was pretty good. Little did he know that John Hillson in Glasgow, Scotland received his November-December issue (mailed Dec. 2) on Dec. 14. Considering this, it is a mystery why two other November-December copies took until Jan. 17 to get to London, England; or, worse, one copy was not delivered in Victoria, BC until Feb. 9, 1982!

Other reports: Toronto, Dec. 8-11; Columbus, OH & Malvern, PA, Dec. 12; Wheeling, IL, Dec. 14; Winnipeg, Dec. 15; Marystown, Nfld., Dec. 16; Phoenix, Dec. 17; Wichita, Dec. 18; Glendale, CA, Dec. 18; Vancouver, Dec. 21; Truro, NS and Ottawa, Dec. 29; Kelowna, BC, Dec. 31; Richmond, BC, Jan. 8; Terrace, BC, Jan. 11.

It is too early to know the results of the Canada Post survey which was included in 200 Canadian copies of the January-February issue. Join us next issue to find out. Thanks to those who took the time to reply.

SALES CIRCUIT

Sales Circuit Manager Bob Jamieson has just returned from a trip to California where he

dropped in at a NORCAL Regional Group meeting with some books. Sales were encouraging, Bob reports. Some of the same books had also been at the Calgary Regional Group meeting. All regional groups can make this kind of arrangement.

Bob asks that TOPICS let members know that other sales books are circulating, and that he needs more material in all classifications. Write now for details on participating in the Sales Circuit either as a buyer or as a seller. (Address on Pg. 2)

Payment for purchases should be by money order, in Canadian funds, if at all possible. Cheques in \$US for the Canadian equivalent are acceptable. Members are asked to use stamps of philatelic value—no meters—on all correspondence.

Bob will be bringing sales books to Virginia Beach in October. He will be happy to return old books and pay any owner who advises that he/she will be at Virginia Beach also.

POSTAL MUSEUM

Despite Postmaster General Andre Ouellet's urging speedy action (TOPICS, Nov.-Dec. 1981) the position of Curator of Canada's National Postal Museum is still not filled.

It also appears that Mr. Ouellet's belief that the Curator should have considerable philatelic knowledge to go along with a strong background in museology has not yet filtered down. On February 2, 1982 an ad for a Curator—National Museum appeared in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. The ad listed museum background items sought in applicants, but nothing else. An enterprising reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen* called the number in the ad and learned that it had been placed by a management consultant firm, hired by the Canada Post Corporation to fill the National Postal Museum Curator's position.

More on this in future issues.

SUGGESTION FOR THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hans Reiche notes that the Public Archives in Ottawa have a letter from a Mr. A. G. Allison proposing a specially designed stamp for the 1897 Diamond Jubilee. The denomination was



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NOTES - Continued

to be 3¢, as the government initially planned only a single value. This is confirmed by one member of parliament writing to the PMG and stating that he had heard a 3¢ stamp would be issued and wanting to know what the design of this stamp would be. The file in the Archive is Record Group 3, Volume 513, File 1174. The proposed design by Allison is unfortunately in pencil and of very poor quality for photographing. Hans has attempted to make as good a reproduction of this drawing as possible. A picture of Queen Victoria was to be in the centre. The stamp was to be 1½ inches high and 1 inch wide.



SKETCHes of BNAPSers

by Dr. Robert V. C. Carr

Sketch No. 187

BOB JAMIESON

One of our quiet but outstanding members is Bob Jamieson. Although a native of Toronto, he was reared and educated in the New York City area, and worked with the British Ministry of Supply Mission until the war, when he returned to Canada, signed up with the RCAF, and went overseas.

After the war, he joined the Robert Simpson Co. of Toronto, starting as a copy writer, and working up to General Sales Promotion Manager in the Toronto area. Not only is Bob in advertising, but he is also in sales promotion, public relations, promotion, etc. He got involved in the "King Tut" art show and the Literary Luncheons meetings, and has worked with stage and screen stars, plus a few politicians. After thirty-three years of service with Simpson's, he recently retired, but is still involved in literary and art events.

Bob's philatelic interests include many specialties of Canada such as the Widow Weeds and Semi-Official Air Mails—we saw his silver award exhibit at Ottawa last fall.

Bob co-edits the Semi-official Air Mail Section of the Canada Specialized Catalogue belongs to the major stamp organizations of North America, plus local Toronto groups. Most important to BNAPSers, Bob has recently



revamped the sales circuit. (See NOTES, this issue—ED.)

I remember Bob best for sending me copies of original photos, previously unpublished, of the first air flights in Newfoundland in 1919, taken by an amateur photographer—you can imagine how I prize these!

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The INVERTED SURCHARGES of 1899

—Are Any Of Them Genuine?

by Julian C. Smith

There is considerable doubt as to the authenticity of the inverted surcharges of the 1899 Provisional Issues of Canada. This study is a first step in trying to establish whether or not genuine inverted surcharges exist, and, if so, how they may be distinguished from those that are not genuine.

BACKGROUND

In response to the lowering of the letter rate from 3¢ to 2¢ in late 1898, the stocks of 3¢ stamps in the Post Office Department vaults were surcharged "2 CENTS" in black by the Public Printing Office. An electrotype plate of 100 subjects was used. The surcharged stamps, both Maple Leaf and Numeral, were placed on sale in July and August 1899. Some time later, examples of inverted surcharges came on the market and were accepted as genuine variants. For many years both unused and used "inverted surcharges" were listed and priced in Scott's Catalog as Nos. 87a and 88a. Unused copies only were listed by Stanley Gibbons, Holmes, and Boggs.

The examples tested in this study came from Sale 7 of the Dale-Lichtenstein collection in January 1970, lots 1512 and 1514. Also offered in the same sale were corner blocks of four of both types (Lots 1513 and 1515). The single copies are both marked "SG" (for Stanley Gibbons) on the back. On page 343 of Boggs' *Canada* there is a photograph of another block of four of the inverted surcharges, and relative prices for unused copies (150 times normal for the Maple Leaf, 200 times normal for the Numeral). Also included is the statement, "Care should be taken in purchasing the inverted surcharge varieties, as there are a number of forgeries in existence, some extremely well executed."

In 1973 and 1974 Cyril Harmer and the late J. N. Sissons studied many examples of the inverted surcharges and concluded that, as the Canada Specialized Catalogue puts it, "There is no evidence that these stamps . . . ever emanated

from the post office." The details of these studies, unfortunately, have not been published; in fact there seem to be no publications dealing with this matter. (If there are, the author would be glad to hear of them; his address is 711 The Parkway, Ithaca, New York 14850, U.S.A.)

PURPOSE OF STUDY

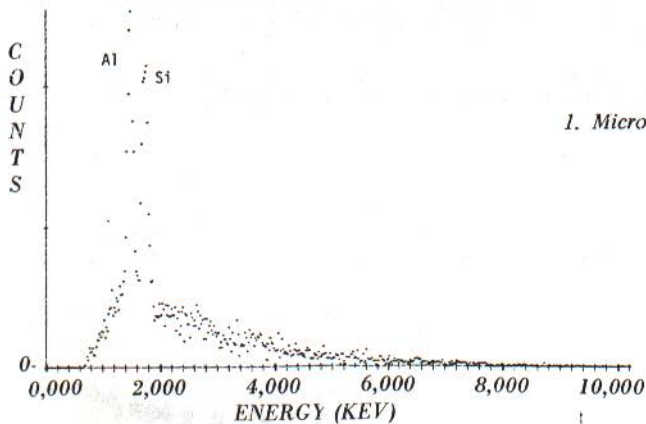
There remains the possibility that some—perhaps only a very few—of the inverted surcharges are genuine. Forged surcharges, one would expect, would be made with ink differing in composition from that used by the Printing Office. In this study, therefore, the inks of two examples of inverted surcharges were analyzed chemically and compared with the inks of two normal surcharges, to see if any difference exists. The appearance and morphology of the inks were also studied under a light microscope.

THE STAMPS AND TEST METHODS

The Maple Leaf and Numeral stamps tested are shown in the cover illustration. All four stamps are unused and have almost full gum. The stamps were subjected to analysis using a low-energy electron microprobe in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. In this nondestructive testing technique, a tiny area of the stamp is exposed to an electron beam; this activates the various atoms present, especially metals, creating peaks in the frequency-energy graph which permit chemical analysis of the particular area or spot being investigated.

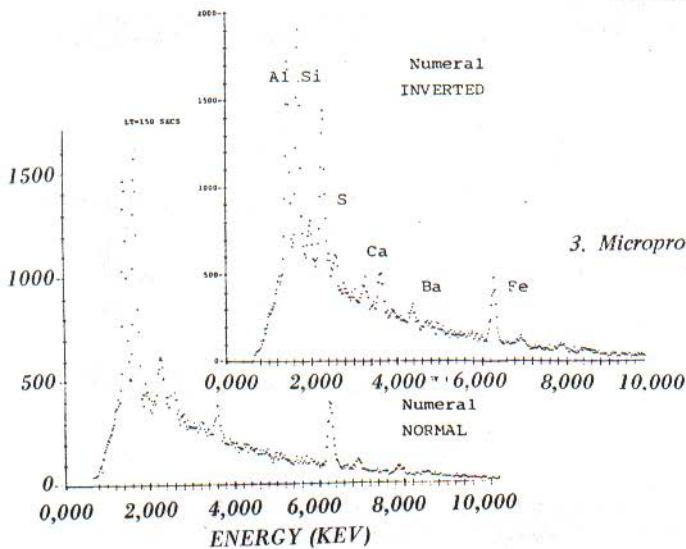
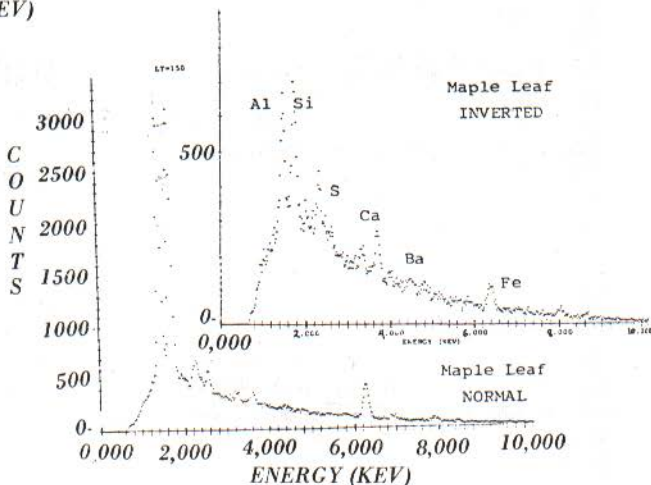
In these tests a spot with no ink on it, either black or red, was tested first to identify metallic atoms present in the paper. Then spots on the surcharges were tested, as far as possible at points where they were not underlain by the red ink of the stamp itself. The red ink of the stamp was tested separately.

After the analyses were made the surcharges, both normal and inverted, were examined critically under a light microscope at magnifications of 40 and 100 diameters.



1. Microprobe scan of paper alone.

2. Microprobe scans of Maple Leaf surcharges



3. Microprobe scans of Numeral surcharges

RESULTS

Illustration 1 shows the microprobe scan for the paper alone; it shows the presence of aluminum (Al) and silicon (Si) and not much else. Illustration 2 shows the scans for the normal and inverted surcharges on Maple Leaf stamps; Illustration 3 those for surcharges on the Numerals. In addition to the aluminum and silicon from the paper, sulphur (S), calcium (Ca), barium (Ba) and iron (Fe) are shown to be pre-

sent. The red ink (scan not shown) contained sulfur, calcium, and barium, but no iron.

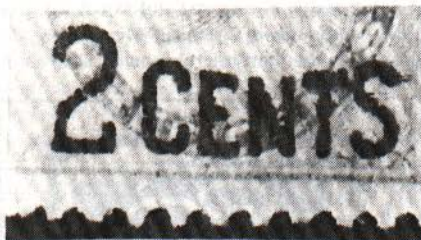
The scans for the normal and inverted surcharges differ somewhat, especially as to sulfur, but they are considered to agree within normal limits of variability. Excess sulfur may well have come from underlying red ink, since it was difficult to avoid it completely. There is no evidence, therefore, that the ink of the inverted surcharges differs chemically from that of the normal surcharges.



(A)



(D)



(B)



(E)



(C)



(F)

4. Enlarged surcharges: (A,B) Maple Leaf, normal. (C) Maple Leaf, inverted; (D,E) Numeral, normal; (F) Numeral, inverted

Examination of the normal and inverted surcharges under a light microscope also failed to reveal any differences. The size and shape of the ink granules and their distribution on the paper fibres were the same for all the surcharges examined.

SHAPE AND APPEARANCE OF THE LETTERS

The surcharging was not carefully done, and the appearance of the surcharges varies considerably from stamp to stamp depending on the amount of ink that had been applied. This is shown in Illustration 4. The ends of the letters are rounded in some examples, pointed or ragged in others; sometimes the letters are broken or incomplete when the inking was insufficient. But the basic shape and size of the letters are the same in all surcharges; again the inverted surcharges are not clearly different from the normal ones.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions from this limited study are that the inverted surcharges tested do not differ from normal surcharges in any of the following:

- a) The chemical composition of the inks,

- b) The morphology of the ink grains,
- c) The shape and size of the letters.

Thus the study does not answer the question, "Are any inverted surcharges genuine?" The examples tested may be genuine or they may not, although one would hope that stamps with such provenance are not forgeries. If they are not genuine, however, it can be said that the forger used the same ink and the same printing technique as were used in preparing the normal surcharges. The inking of the plates for the inverted surcharges was done no more uniformly than that for the normal surcharges.

FUTURE PLANS

Further study of the surcharges is underway. The inks of known forgeries will be examined to see if they have any distinguishing characteristics. Meanwhile, if any reader has additional information on this puzzling problem, the author would find it most welcome.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author wishes to thank Mr. John Hunt, Electron Microprobe Technician, for making and interpreting the scans; and Mr. D. D. Lee, Ph. D. candidate in Chemical Microscopy, for assistance in the light microscope studies.

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ANNUAL ROUNDHOUSE

My wife, Mac, and I enjoyed meeting with many old and new friends at BNAPEX '81 in Ottawa last September. Although there was much rain outside, the warmth and fellowship inside the Skyline was more than proper compensation. The meeting of the R.P.O. Study Group was well-attended, and demonstrated that there has been no slackening of interest in our railroad speciality despite my own temporary derailment of the Cowcatcher due to the pressure of business following recent increases in our corporate responsibilities in Japan. Dave McKain received numerous kudos for his interesting continuity of the Newsletter of the Study Group which continues with a membership of over 70, with some new members acquired in Ottawa. Bill Robinson and his wife came all the way from Vancouver, and Bill showed an extraordinary collection of recently acquired clerk strikes, the sum and substance of which resulted in a complete retyping of the Western Section for the new catalogue. All in all a splendid meeting, with everyone now pointing to Virginia Beach in 1982, Winnipeg in 1983 and back to San Francisco, our own stompin' grounds, in 1984.

MORE HELP WANTED

For the last couple of years, we have had a delightful correspondent, Palmer Moffat, from Tuscon, Arizona, who has been most helpful on the Newfoundland hammer analysis recently completed in the Newsletter. Palmer also made it to Ottawa, and we had the pleasure of a first meeting with someone we had come to know well from correspondence — a most enjoyable getting-acquainted meeting. Palmer gave us a partial strike for possible identification. On a 5¢ Small Queen dated September, 1896, is a square box ticket stamp type strike with at the bottom, the partial letters . . . MER / . . . OLI Back in Japan, we put this to-

gether with a strike sent to us some time ago by Gerry Carr, struck on a 2¢ or 3¢ Numeral, dated August 31, 1899, reading in two lines along the bottom STEAMER / . . . ROLINA. It would appear that the reading on the bottom is STEAMER / CAROLINA.

Knowing so much, what have we got? I can find no reference to the Steamer Carolina in any of my reference works. We feel sure that it was not a ship working in and around the



Can Anyone Help?

British Columbia coast. At first, we thought it might be an American vessel ticket stamp overstruck on a Canadian stamp; now, however, with two strikes on Canadian stamps, with a time spread of three years, this probability is reduced. Can anyone help on this? What does the top of this ticket stamp steamer strike look like? Has anyone ever heard of this vessel? Who owned it? Where did it steam? We need more data so that we can list this very interesting cancellation.

THE MONSTER!

Everytime I think I've seen the last word in a R.P.O. variety, some one comes up with something new. Honors today go to Bill Robin-



Bill Robinson

0-293A

son, who, in the middle of a new collection of previously unreported clerk strikes, came up with the illustrated H. N. Watson cancellation. The reading in the surrounding circle is TORONTO / H. N. WATSON, around a standard strike of 0-294, PT. HOPE & TOR. R.P.O. / No. 6, Train 92, dated December 17, 1946. At 36 mm diameter, this is certainly one of the largest railway cancellations in our listings. Bill's strike is on facing slip type paper; what a joy it would be to find this as a backstamp on cover. This new find of Bill's is herewith listed as 0-293A.

SURVIVAL COURSE

While I have had an interest in the stamps and cancellations of Canada for more than a quarter of a century, I am a relative newcomer to the Newfoundland equivalent. In getting involved in the T.P.O.s and R.P.O.s of Newfoundland, collating listings, verifying new reports and the like, it has been necessary to make myself more familiar with the geography and history of this most interesting area of British North America, an area we have never had an opportunity to visit. I have had help in my education from Bob Soper and Bill Robinson, and recently Don Wilson sent to me a copy of the August 1981, issue of "DECKS awash", which contains a couple of dozen articles on "The Railway in Newfoundland", then and now. This was a real educational eye-opener. Frankly, with all of the travail and difficulties encountered by the Newfoundland Railway in its various forms in the last hundred odd years, all of us should be grateful for each and every

Newfoundland T.P.O. we are able to add to our collection. I found these articles fascinating. Each is very knowledgeable and written with a personal touch that latently expresses love in the face of adversity. Since there are over fifty pages in this special issue on the Newfoundland Railway, it is not practical to make copies for everyone. However, we have made up a couple of sets and would be glad to send these out to anyone interested, on a returnable basis so that later they can be sent on to others. If you would like to see this issue of "DECKS awash", just drop us a line. Later, we will send a copy to the BNAPS Librarian so that we can have it on permanent file for future reference.



Jeff Switt

Q-264B

AN ANALYSIS

Some time ago, we adopted the approach that routine hammer analysis would be presented in the R.P.O. Study Group Newsletter. (For those wishing to join the Study Group, send U.S. \$5.00 or C\$6.00 to Dave McKain, 5 Meadowcrest, Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101, U.S.A.) However, from time to time we will take a long look at a single listing that has created interest among our specialists. Such is the case with Q-264B, ROUSES POINT & / (date) / MONTREAL, R.P.O., as illustrated herewith by a strike on a pair of 2¢ Numerals, dated July 2, 1901, a beauty sent in by Jeff Switt. In our various correspondences, several collectors have pointed out that there were at least two different hammers of the same lettering. In view of the interest expressed, we have made a thorough analysis of Q-264B and can now advise that there are no less than SIX identifiable hammers, each sufficiently different from the other to warrant separation. Since we are dealing with rubber hammers, it is important to recognize that minor differences in measurement cannot be used for separation. We feel that at least one or more of the identifying

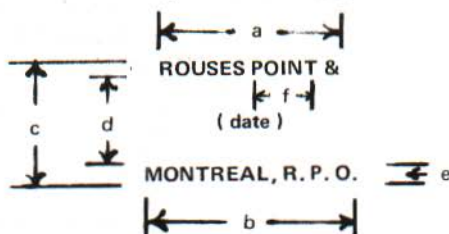
characteristics must be at least one millimeter difference to be definitive. With these points in mind, we call your attention to the accompanying chart. (Please note that Hammer VII is not Q-264B, but is Q-264F, ROUSES POINT N.Y. / (date) / MONTREAL, R.P.O. If the right hand portion of this strike is missing, it will appear to be Q-264B. There is a possibility that there is an ampersand [&] after 'N. Y.', but this has not yet been confirmed from the single known strike of Q-264F.) On this chart all measurements are in millimeters.

It will be noted that in most cases the length of ROUSES POINT & (a) is shorter than that of (b), MONTREAL, R.P.O.; however, for Hammer IV, both of these are the same, while for Q-264F, Hammer VII, (a) is longer than (b). As is apparent, the width of these hammers varies quite a bit. The same is true for the height, as small as 19 mm for Hammer II, and as tall as 27+ mm for Hammer III. A similar pattern is found for the internal vertical distance (d). Individual letters may be as small as 4 mm, or less, as in Hammers I, II, or VII, or as big as 5½ mm or more, as in Hammers III and IV. The length of POINT, (f), is a very critical measurement, particularly for sep-

aration of Hammers III and IV. Measurement of rubber hammer strikes takes a reasonable amount of discretion, especially on cancellations not struck cleanly. Thus in numerous instances we have given spread measurements which — in general — represent the outside limits of the measured length. Distances given on the chart for Hammers III and VI have been determined from cross-reference with Ross Gray photographed enlargements. We believe them to be quite accurate and know that Ross will advise if we have slipped somewhere along the line. We feel we are showing conclusive proof of six different hammers of Q-264B plus another in Q-264F. Six is only a minimum of course, others are possible.

To wrap up a more definitive picture on this listing, we would ask everyone to check their strikes against this chart and report their findings, with photocopies of the strikes being reported. We are particularly interested in extending date periods, and, of course, identifying any new hammers. Allan Steinhart, who recognized at least three different hammers, has recently reported dates in 1912 and 1915. We need to see copies since both would appear to widen known date spreads. How about others?

Q-264B/F CHART



	Q-264B						Q-264F (& = N.Y.)
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
a	33	33?	40?	44	38	33	38?
b	36½	36	44+	44	44-	37+	36-
c	21½	19	27+	25	21½	26-	24
d	4+/-	11	16+	15-	12	16+	17+/-
e	4+/-	3½/4	5½/6	5/5½	4½/5	4½/5	4+/-
f	10½	10?	12/13	13½/14	11½/12	9½/10½	10
known dates	1901/09	1910	1911	1911/12	1915	1919	1911

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plus the official hotel reservation**

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L—POSTAL STATIONERY OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

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N—REVENUES

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Freaks, plate varieties, etc., should be entered in accordance with the above instructions.

Specialized collections of single stamps should be entered in the group or sub-group for that particular issue. It is not necessary to exhibit all the material listed in the sub-group.

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WILL YOU FIND THAT ADMIRAL VARIETY?

by Paul V. Roling

Have you ever wondered how many stamps you should examine to have a chance of finding a given variety? I had; but now I have a simple way of approximating the number of stamps to examine.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT STAMPS

First, the number of different plates used to print the stamp and the number of stamps per plate need to be known or closely approximated. These two numbers are then multiplied together to arrive at the total number of different stamp positions possible. For example, there were 160 plates used for the 1¢ green Admiral stamp (#104), with 400 stamps per plate except for two plates with 200 subjects each. The calculation (158 x 400 + 2 x 200) results in 63,600 different stamp positions. If there were some distinguishing feature on each, there would be 63,600 different collectable 1¢ green Admiral stamps. Table 1 presents more such data for the 1¢ yellow through 3¢ Admiral stamps (#105 - 109).¹

Now an example. The major re-entry of the 1¢ green Admiral occurred in one of the 63,600 different positions. According to my method, therefore, checking 63,600 1¢ green stamps, one of the major re-entries should be found. The last statement assumes that: 1) each

plate was used for the same number of impressions, 2) the 63,600 stamps in the sample were previously unpicked; and 3) the mixture is representative of all years of issuance. None of these three assumptions is going to hold 100% true, of course, but they serve as a reasonable basis for our approximation.

Using assumption 1), the approximate number of copies which were printed of each different stamp position can be calculated by dividing the total number of stamps issued by the number of different positions. Thus, for the 1¢ green stamp, about 50,000 copies of the major re-entry were probably printed. Most copies of this re-entry probably have been destroyed, but some undoubtedly are still out there waiting to be discovered since only about 130 copies are known.

Now, if a variety which affects a whole plate is sought, such as the 2¢ red with prominent hairlines from plate 4, then the number of stamps that should be checked will be much less. There are 60,000 positions of this stamp, so that if all 400 positions on plate 4 had hairlines, then a selection of 60,000:400 = 150 stamps should produce one with hairlines.

For types or dies where a number of plates are involved, such as Type 1 of the 1¢ green,

ADMIRAL DATA — Table 1

Value	Number of Stamps Issued (in billions)	Number of Plates (400 Subject)				SE	Number of Different Positions	Approx. No. Printed of each Different Position
		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4 and up			
1¢ green	3.2	30	130 ^a	---	---	95	63,600	50,000
1¢ yellow	1.3	16	7	---	---	23	9,200	141,000
2¢ red	3.0	26	116	6	2	90	60,000	50,000
2¢ green	2.2	33 ^b	25	13	---	71	28,400	77,000
3¢ brown	2.0	4	18	1 ^c	91	114	45,600	44,000
3¢ red	1.1	23	12	---	---	35	14,000	79,000

^a Two plates are of 200 subjects

^b Five plates were used on the thin paper

^c Just over 1/2 of the subjects were retouched

Table 2
DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES
OF ADMIRAL STAMPS

Value	Type	Found		Expected	
		Number	%	%	
1¢ green	1	71	18	19	
1¢ green	2	331	82	81	
2¢ red	1	86	16	16	
2¢ red	1 (plate 4) ^a	5	1	0.7	
2¢ red	rest 2-4	459	83	83	
2¢ green	1	64	31	39	
2¢ green	1 (thin paper)	3	2	7	
2¢ green	2	84	41	35	
2¢ green	3	52	26	18	
3¢ brown	3 ^b	2	0.5	0.5	
3¢ brown	4-8 ^c	85	17	?	
3¢ brown	1-2, 9-14	423	83	?	

^a Plate 4 is the plate with prominent hairlines

^b Type 3 is the retouched plate

^c These types are the "file" marked stamps

one Type 1 should be found in about every five stamps, since 30 out of the 160 plates (19%) were Type 1.

CHECKING THE METHOD

Four "unpicked" lots of Admirals were obtained from a dealer and sorted for types.¹ Table 2 lists the data. For the 1¢ green stamps, Types 1 and 2 were separated. About 18% of the stamps were found to be of Type 1, while the rest were of Type 2. This distribution is in excellent agreement with the expected percentages of 19% and 81% respectively.

The 2¢ red shows a similar agreement between percentages found and expected for Type 1 and Types 2-4. Almost 1% of the 2¢ red stamps were from plate #4, based on prominent hairlines found. This finding compares favorably with the 0.7% expected.

For the 2¢ green stamps, agreement between percentages found and expected for Types 1, 2, and 3 and thin paper was not quite so good, but was still within acceptable limits.

Type 3 of the 3¢ brown is the retouched

plate. Just over half of the 400 subjects of plate #23 were retouched.² Calculation suggests that about 0.5% of 3¢ brown stamps should be retouched, and the results agree.

Also for the 3¢ brown stamps, the number of plates used to print the "file mark" varieties, Types 4-8, is not known. Here the method works in reverse—the 17% of "file marks" found suggests that about 19 plates were used.

STRAIGHT-EDGED STAMPS

The percentage of straight-edged stamps found was considerably below what was expected (Table 3). A possible explanation of this is that these stamps were often eliminated when bundles were sold to dealers, as dealers usually considered straight-edged stamps as damaged and did not accept them.

CONCLUSION

The number of plates, plate layout, and total number of stamps issued are all that are required to make the necessary calculations in order to insure a good possibility of finding a desired variety. The limited data presented here show that this method works for Admiral stamps. It should also work for any other issue of stamps if the same data are known.

REFERENCES

- Types, number of plates, and number of stamps issued are from H. Reiche, "Canada, The Admiral Stamps of 1911 to 1925", parts 1 & 2.
- H. Reiche, *B.N.A. TOPICS*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1956, pp 29-30.

Table 3
ADMIRAL STRAIGHT EDGED STAMPS

Value	Number found	% Found	% Expected ^a
1¢ green	2	½	11
2¢ red	5	1	11
2¢ green	13	6	19
3¢ brown	28	5	19

^a This percentage will be low since booklet pane stamps are not included

TOPICS NEEDS ORIGINAL MATERIAL

FOR PUBLICATION

EXHIBITION and BOURSE CALENDAR

This feature of TOPICS will list Exhibitions and Bourses, including FIP sponsored (International) exhibitions, which will have a significant BNA content. Information/prospectus should be sent to the Editor as soon as available and at least 3 months before the event.

1982

- MAY 7-9** -- The Winnipeg Philatelic Society Spring exhibition, Winnipeg Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Man. Information: Winnipeg Philatelic Society, Box 1425, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2Z1.
- MAY 8-9** -- **ORAPEX '82**, The RA Stamp Club's annual exhibition and bourse, RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Dr., Ottawa, Ont. Information: Arthur Guarda, ORAPEX '82, at above address, K1H 7X7
- MAY 15** -- **STAMPFEST '82** -- The Kitchener-Waterloo Philatelic Society's annual exhibition and bourse. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Queen & Weber Sts., Kitchener, Ont. Information: Leigh Hogg, P.O. Box 8101, Bridgeport, Ont. N2K 2G6.



- MAY 20-24** -- **CANADA '82**, International Philatelic Youth Exhibition, Queen Elizabeth Bldg., Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto, Ont. Co-sponsored by the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and Canada Post, under the patronage of the F.I.P. Information: CANADA '82, P.O. Box 204, Postal Station Q, Toronto, Ont. M4T 2M1.
- JUNE 3-6** -- 54th Annual Convention of the R.P.S.C. at VICTORIA 82, Empress Hotel, Victoria, B.C. Sponsored by the Greater Victoria Philatelic Society and the Vancouver Island Philatelic Society. Information: George Freeman, 3963 Cumberland Rd., Victoria, B. C. V8P 3J7.
- JUNE 11-21** -- **PHILEXFRANCE '82**, F.I.P. sponsored International Philatelic Exhibition, Paris, France. Information: Canadian Commissioner, Mr. Guy des Rivières, C.P. 245, Station B, Quebec, Quebec, G1K 7A9.
- JULY 2-4** -- **STAMPEX '82**, annual National exhibition and bourse, featuring the annual meeting of the Postal History Society of Canada. Sheraton Centre, Toronto. Information: STAMPEX '82, 565 Alness St., Downsview, Ont. M3J 2T8
- SEPTEMBER 1-5**: **SAN MARINO '82**, International Exhibition of Postal Stationery. Republic of San Marino. Information: Dr. G. A. Vanderburgh, P.O. Box 204, Shelburne, Ont. L0N 1S0.
- OCTOBER 7-9**: **BNAPLEX '82**, BNAPS own annual convention, exhibition and bourse. Cavalier Resort, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Information: Larry Paige, 1145 Shillelagh Road, Chesapeake, VA. 23323. Application forms in this issue.

1983

- MAY 19-22** -- **OAKPEX '83**, 10th annual exhibition of the Oakville Stamp Club, and 55th Annual Convention of the R.P.S.C. Information: D. Dixon, P.O. Box 1082, Oakville, Ont. L6J 5E9.
- JUNE 9-12** -- **PIPEX '83**, 43rd Pacific International Philatelic Exhibition of the Northwest Federation of Stamp Clubs, Edmonton Convention Centre. Hosted by the Edmonton Stamp Club. Information: Keith R. Spencer, P.O. Box 399, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2J6.
- SEPTEMBER 1-3** -- **BNAPLEX '83**, Westin Hotel, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Information: Beverlie Clark, 924 North Dr., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 0A8.

1984-7

- BNAPLEX '84** -- San Francisco, California.
BNAPLEX '85 -- Calgary, Alberta

- BNAPLEX '86** -- Open
BNAPLEX '87 -- Open

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MAIL TRANSPORTATION In Nineteenth Century Ontario

by C. R. McGuire

This series is an expansion of a paper given by C. R. McGuire at the Ontario Museum Association sponsored Heritage Conference – "By River, Road & Rail – Transportation in Nineteenth Century Ontario" – held from 25-29 January 1981 in Toronto.

** An asterisk beside a reference in this paper indicates the item or a facsimile is in the National Postal Museum, Ottawa.*

Part 2

PRIVATE COURIERS

From earliest times letters have been carried by someone considered to be reliable who was travelling in the appropriate direction. Such correspondence, known as 'favor' letters, were normally endorsed in the lower left hand corner with 'courtesy of' or 'by favor of' and the cooperating individual's name. An example seen recently is a letter sent from Kingston to Quebec and dated 15 August 1774. 'By Vincent la Forge, canoe or Bateau Lake Ontario' is written in the upper right corner. This endorsement indicates the letter was to be carried by favor of la Forge, and two other modes of transport common to the period.

There is a letter in the Ontario Public Archives (Russell Papers) written 23 November 1793 which refers to the 'favor' method of sending mail:

"As you take no notice of £120 (Halifax currency) which I sent you by Mr. Mathew Bell, I suppose he was not arrived before the day of your letter, which is the only one I have to acknowledge . . ."

The writer goes on to indicate the unreliability of the official mails and makes comments on the system in general:

" . . . I maintain an apprehension that some of your despatches may have miscarried and my letters lost, for the letter business is managed with unpardonable carelessness by the Post people . . . all the letters being thrown about in the merchants' shops and picked up by whoever pleases to take them

and as I live back from the river, I seldom receive mail for several days after their arrival, I think myself fortunate to receive them at all".

Until a post office was established, letters were left and picked up at inns, taverns and merchants' shops. Such establishments were usually conveniently located in settlements or on main roads.

"Favor" letters remained popular long after the postal system was established. Delivery was faster, more reliable and usually without cost. The following excerpt from a letter written on 26 July 1818 substantiates this:

"Yesterdays post brought me yours of the 15th & 16th and (I) observed the letter was noted as favoured by Col. Coffin but that gentleman never took charge of it as it was committed to the post office at Montreal and I had to pay for it 8/- - - with it tardiness as he has been here himself this past six days".

OFFICIAL COURIERS

In 1801 couriers were carrying mail on a monthly basis from Kingston to Niagara, along the newly opened Danforth Road via Ancaster. The 'road' was sufficient only for travel on foot. The courier stayed over at York to break the journey. During the open season, mail was carried on foot, horseback, canoe or bateaux. In winter the courier travelled on snowshoes or by dog team. He not only stopped at the post houses located at regular nine mile intervals, but would also anchor his small vessel, stop his horse or loosen his snowshoes at every settlement. The walking courier travelled at a rate of

about three miles an hour. His load of mail averaged about two hundred pounds. Most journeys could be made only on foot, along narrow paths through the forest. Travel was dangerous and tedious. Mail couriers had to travel over little known and poorly blazed trails, became storm or snow-bound, and of course encountered highwaymen. Their heavy loads had to be hauled over a variety of rugged, difficult terrain. Forging streams and even rivers was normal, and sometimes resulted in death by drowning or from exposure.

Use of and dependence on the American mails is mentioned in a letter Silvester Tiffany wrote on 3 January 1803, prior to giving up his position as Postmaster at Niagara:

"My time being taken up with settling my affairs, to remove from this country early in the spring, have been obliged to give over the Post Office; and as yet no person appearing to accept of it, the Mail

is now to be obtained at the States' garrison, and the public left to do their business in it as best they can, by sending across the River. It now becomes very necessary for gentlemen at a distance to have friends here for the management of their business in that office".

It was important for settlers to be located near the post office or to be prepared to travel to it on a regular basis to check for their mail. Inhabitants of remote areas were required to make the trip to the post office when their work permitted time away. People would cooperate and go to the post office in rotation, taking and returning with mail for their neighbours, and making stops along their journey. Mail was also distributed at 'bees's', religious services or similar gatherings.

To locate and inform addressees that mail was being held for them, notices would be circulated or published in newspapers.



"Early Canadian Postal Delivery", by A. Sherriff Scott, shows a postmaster distributing mail from his top hat after church services

In his letter* of 27 January 1829 to J. S. Howard, Postmaster at York, Stayner mentions:

"With regard to Advertizing Letters not called for - You say that "the smaller Offices do not advertize", but it is the duty of the Postmasters at such places to stick up a List of such Letters in their Offices for the information of the Public, and I fancy that every Postmaster knows this, at least I have taken much pains to impress it upon them. Where there is no News paper published this is the best & only way of managing".

The following schedule for the courier service appeared in the *Upper Canada Gazette*, York in 1807:

"The mail for Upper Canada will be despatched from the post office at Montreal, on the following days, to wit:

Monday, 14th January.

Monday, 12th February.

Monday, 10th March.

Monday, 7th April-the last trip.

A courier from Kingston may be looked for here in 14 or 15 days from the above periods, where he will remain 2 or 3 days, and then return to Kingston.

Another courier will proceed from this with the Niagara mail, via Messrs. Hatts, where the Sandwich letters will be left, both from Nia-

gara and this 'till the courier comes from there to return with them.

Letters put into the post office will be forwarded at any time by

W. ALLAN,

Acting Deputy Postmaster".(York)

The appointment of James Morris as the first Postmaster General of the Province of Canada was celebrated at a well attended testimonial dinner at Willson's Hotel, in his home town of Brockville, on 6 May 1851. During his speech, Morris recalled the courier service of earlier days:

"... A traveller passed the door of my mother's residence once a fortnight, usually on foot and not infrequently crippled from walking. On his shoulder this man, Anderson by name, carried a pair of saddle-bags, and altogether had more the appearance of a pilgrim going to some shrine to worship, than of a courier, yet he was the postman between Montreal and Kingston, and in those saddle-bags that way-worn traveller carried THE WHOLE OF THE MAIL MATTER FOR UPPER CANADA". (1)

Mr. Wood, the Postmaster of Cornwall, described the service as he remembered it:

"When I first took charge of the post office in this place (1808) the mail was carried from Quebec to Amherstburg on the back of an Old



A mail courier on horseback, ca. 1800



A mail courier approaching the "King's Head Inn" at Burlington. This Inn was a drop-off point for mail from about 1800 until it was destroyed during the War of 1812

Canadian pedestrian; he performed his trip once in three months, and his arrival was hailed with joy by the then contented and loyal inhabitants throughout the country". (2)

If circumstances permitted, couriers became postriders. Their performing mail service often depended on people subscribing to newspapers, as illustrated by an advertisement in the *Kingston Gazette* of 15 January 1811, headed 'Canadian Courant':

"Those persons in Kingfton who are indebted to Joseph Emerton for the Canadian Courant, are requested to make payment, on or before the 22d inst. to Mrs. Patrick in Kingfton, who will receive the money and discharge their accounts. As subscribers will receive no more papers on said Emerton's account, the Post requests such persons as wish for the Canadian Courant, to leave their names at Mrs. Patrick's by the 22d inst. ... Gentlemen of science are respectfully invited to promote the public fold by encouraging the prefs. Without subscribers for papers the mail must stop, as the profits of that alone will not meet the expenfe. Jan. 1, 1811. BERIAH CLELAND, Postrider".

Newspapers were still dependent upon the postrider in 1833, as this advertisement, from

the *Queenston Colonial Advocate*, indicates:

**POST RIDER WANTED
IMMEDIATELY**

The proprietor of this newspaper wishes to contract with a steady man (who can find and uphold his own horse), to deliver it to the subscribers once a week during the winter, on the route between York and Niagara via Ancaster.

The 1 January 1868 issue of *Leisure Hour* has a fine description of winter mail delivery, in an article entitled *Her Majesty's Mail in the Far-West*:

"Contracts are entered into by the postal authorities, for the transmission of the mails, with persons who quite understand the work. Throughout all the lake districts on Lake Huron and Superior the contracts are generally sub-let to Indians and half-breeds, who travel on snowshoes, and pack the mail-bags upon light sleighs, which are usually tugged along by six dogs, worked in pairs side by side. By providing frequent relays, and, at the same time, being perfect masters in the art of travel, these hardy mail-carriers contrive to transport the letters at the rate of about sixty miles a day".



"The Postman of the North" by Arthur Hemming, ca. 1895

The author continues by recounting that he:

"... sometimes travelled with the mail carriers from place to place along the route, and I can truthfully say that it is scarcely possible to picture a more weird scene of desolation than a wide expanse of frozen lake, covered thickly with snow, presents to the eye, more especially when journeying through the night - a course generally followed if there happens to be a sufficiency of light to discover the track. Night travelling is always preferable, because the snow is less trying to eyes by night than it is during the day; hence the risk of becoming snow-blind is materially diminished. Nothing seems to retain any semblance to reality as we tramp along over the snowy waste, with the dogs trotting after, jingling their sleigh-bells. The silvery moon spreads her pale light upon the snow, and the rays, instead of being absorbed or reflected, seem, by some mysterious agency, to accumulate, until one is tempted

to believe himself splashing through a shallow lake of light. Every visible object appears to be transformed into something intangible and unreal, the tracks upon the snow grow into huge proportions; trees dotted along the lake shore resemble giants such as we read of in fairy tales; a hillock of drifted snow takes the appearance of a mountain. Now one fancies rippling water is directly in the path, which, on a nearer approach, proves to be only snow ridged by the breeze, reflecting the light from the burnished facets of its myriad crystals. Anon, you feel certain that a deep ravine is directly in the way, the gloomy depths of which will have to be traversed; but the heart throbs more lightly when the imaginary cleft turns out to be only the shadow of a passing cloud. The silence is intense, and the listening ear fails to catch the faintest sounds, except it be the breathing of the panting dogs, the cheery tinkle of their neck-bells, and the rough crunch, crunch of the snow.

shoes as they splinter the crisply-frozen crust upon the snow. How vividly these scenes come back to my memory! I can recall even now the various incidents that marked each night journey over the ice-covered waters of Lake Huron.

The arrival of the mails at the mines was so punctual, that the day on which they were expected was kept as a kind of general holiday. The miners left their work, and the women and children their warm stoves, to group together upon the landing-place where the sleigh track led off across the lake; and it was quite a study to watch the many anxious faces gazing intently into the hazy distance, in hopes of being first to catch a glimpse of the bearers of good news or bad news, as perchance it might turn out to be, from the "old country."

The keenest and best-sighted at last proclaims the coming of the mail; others very soon make it out—a mere speck, however, as yet—moving over the snow towards the miners. Nearer and nearer the loaded sleighs approach, and soon they are at the landing, when fifty willing hands rapidly unpack the sleighs, and sturdy men rush off with the bags of letters to the primitive post-office. There is no such institution as a postman; hence the system of delivery is managed in this fashion. The postmaster unlocks and unseals the letter-bags, and tumbles their contents out upon a large table; then, picking up a letter and reading the address, he proclaims, in a stentorian tone of voice, that there is a letter for—say Jack Robinson; then Jack Robinson comes to the front, and, if there is any postage due, he has to pay it before he can obtain his letter; and so on the postmaster reads the addresses and delivers the letters until the stock is exhausted. The post-office presents a singular spectacle after the distribution of the mail, which comes only about once a month. The

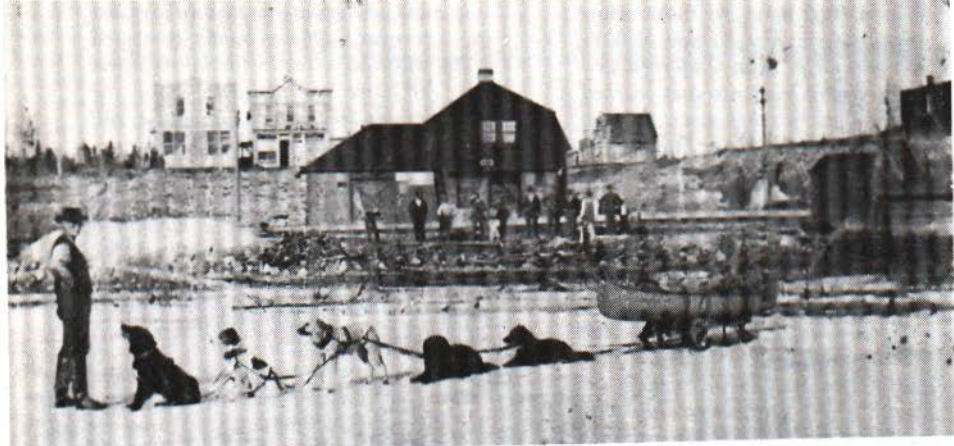
assembly divide into little groups, and each group has its own joys and sorrows. All is in public, compared with the privacy with which letters at home are perused. Soon the groups break up and disappear, and each goes back to his daily avocation; the Indians and the dog-sleighs take their departure; and everything settles down into the hum-drum routine of daily life at the mines, until the recurrence of another month brings about a similar scene on the arrival of Her Majesty's mail".

Thus we obtain a very vivid account of travel by mail carrying dog sled, the reactions of people in remote areas to the arrival of the monthly mail, and the method it was distributed by the postmaster.

In the 1830's mail was carried by Michael Labatte, using a bark canoe in summer and a dog sled in winter. Labatte was a typical voyageur who lived on an island in Victoria Harbour. His recollection of carrying mail is much less romantic, and probably a more realistic description of the conditions couriers endured during winter:

"I carried the mail to the "Sault" in winter on snow-shoes. I made the trip from Penetanguishene to the "Sault" and back (three hundred miles) with a sleigh and two dogs in fifteen days—snow three feet deep. I once made the trip in fourteen days. Dig a hole in the snow with my snow shoes, spread spruce boughs, eat piece of cold pork, smoke pipe and go to sleep. I often had inflammation of the leg. I would sharpen my flint, then split the flesh of the ankle above the instep in several places, and sometimes down the calf of the leg for a remedy. I was in the Shawanaga country when I could not get out, on account of floods. I was four days without food, which was cached at the mouth of the river. At another time I was five days without food, except moss of the rocks, on account of floods and soft weather". (3)

Another recollection I found clearly indicates what could result if a man lost his way, or



Mail delivery by dog team, Wabigoon, Kenora District, ca. 1902. Note CPR station in background

fell from exhaustion in winter. Joseph Giroux started for Thunder Bay — “. . . he lost his way . . . the snow was two feet deep and no roads . . .”. A search party “found him on the third day in the afternoon lying on some boughs behind a big oak log, his hands and feet frozen solid . . . his dog wrapped in the breast of his coat to help keep him warm. They made a stretcher . . . and carried him . . . on their shoulders, relieving each other by turns”(4) Giroux was saved but unfortunately suffered the loss of both hands and feet.

A letter posted in Toronto on 21 December 1881 was received forty-six days later in Moose Factory. The letter was picked up at the post office at Lake Temiscamingue by a Hudson's Bay Company employee who took it the four hundred miles to the edge of James Bay. He and others would carry mail to northern points, and undoubtedly endured conditions much like Labatte and Giroux well into this century.

THE DANGERS OF TRANSPORTING MAIL

People have always endured certain hardships, personal danger and difficulties moving the mail. The elements were probably the greatest hazard, in particular the harsh weather and

difficult terrain. Couriers could easily freeze to death or drown, while mail coaches were always susceptible to becoming stuck in muddy roads or blocked by snow storms. The *Cobourg Star* of 5 April 1831 states that “for some time past, in consequence of the unusually bad state of the roads, the mail between Kingston and York has been conveyed by a single unarmed courier on horseback”.

Mail robberies were another very real problem, and the same report confirms this in a rather ironical tone. It goes on to mention, as though it could hardly have been expected “in the present advanced state of our civilisation”, that thieves would not take advantage of the circumstances. An attempted robbery occurred “on Wednesday night last, as the courier was passing the dense woods between the taverns of Messrs. Smith and Harris”. The mail courier had a stick which he used to good advantage and continued on his route with only a hole in the mail bag made by the robber's sharp instrument. On his next trip the courier was accompanied by another traveller and the *Star* concludes, satisfied that “. . . the courier in future will always be properly armed and attended”.

Many quite candid accounts of mail couriers who encountered the criminal element have survived, as the following example shows:

Robbery of the Mail. – The mail from Kingston, including those from the western part of the Province, which left here on Thursday evening between 8 and 9, was robbed about fourteen miles below, near Grass' Creek, and this side of Fairman's tavern. The robbers, three in number, (none of whom had his face blackened) stopped the mail carrier, who was in a one horse waggon, while ascending a hill. Two of them seized the horse's head, while the third presented a rifle at the carrier's breast. They then cut the

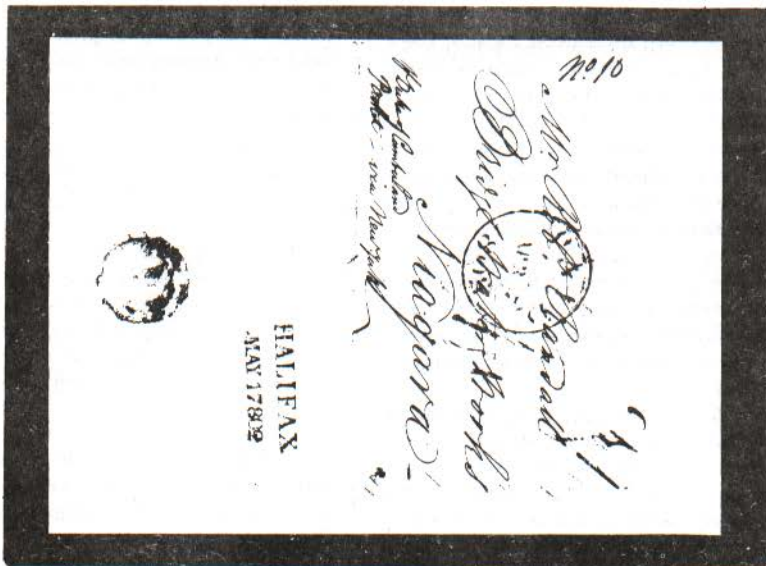
harness from the horse, threw the mail bag upon him and made off – first tying up the driver with the reins. It appears, by tracking the horse, that they carried the mail to a skiff in the creek not far off: that they then rowed down it to the river, and were seen, by some persons crossing to the American shore. The carrier succeeded with his teeth in getting one arm loose, so as to obtain his knife, and cut his fastenings. The horse has been found. We fear that at this season of the year the mail would contain considerable remittances for Lower Canada.

REFERENCES:

1. Paul L. Brown, *The Honourable James Morris, First Postmaster-General of Canada*, from the Official Catalogue – Capex '51, Toronto, 1951, Pg. 33.
2. 1863 Postal Guide, Pg. 4.
3. A. C. Osborne, *The Migration of Voyageurs from Drummond Island* from *Papers and Records*, Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, 1901, Pg. 139.
4. *Ibid*, Pg. 141.

Correction:

In Part I (Jan.-Feb. 1982) of this article, Reference 6 was incorrectly given as "1863 Postal Guide, P. 4". The reference should have been "Appropriate Postmaster General's Annual Reports".



This cover was posted in London, England 7 April 1802, rate '1/10' and endorsed 'per Duke of Cumberland/Packet – via New York' and was landed at Halifax. It was carried overland through New Brunswick, Lower Canada and the new routes in Upper Canada to Niagara.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

BNA Philately in Print

CANADIAN COASTAL AND INLAND STEAM VESSELS 1809-1930 by John M. Mills. Steamship Historical Society of America, 1979. 134 pp., \$20 US, from the Society, 170 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island, USA.

It's always a pleasure to stumble upon a good book one never knew existed. Doubly so when it turns out to be an outstanding work in its field. John Mills' *Canadian Steam Vessels* can truly be called the Campbell's of Canadian steamships.

Mills has successfully tackled the monumental task of listing 3,145 inland and coastal ships of the steam era. Published by a specialist society, it has unfortunately seen only limited circulation but deserves far greater recognition. In laying out the parameters of his study Mills has excluded service vessels and ships under 75 feet in length. Drawing heavily on sources with the same degree of unreliability as early postal records—Port Registers, Lists of Shipping and Reports of the Board of Steamboat Inspection—Mills has exhaustively compared lists to assemble a comprehensive catalogue. This despite a major problem with his sources because there was a very casual attitude toward recording proper names and differing methods used to obtain information over many years.

After slogging through this mess of material, Mills has augmented his listing using specialist and trade journals, local histories and gazetteers. The result is a cleanly organized and very clear compendium detailing each steamer with name changes (all cross-indexed), registry number, dimensions, tonnage, building port and date and ultimate disposition. Thus, every steamer can be easily traced with a capsule history.

What does all this have to do with postal history? Simply put, it is an invaluable reference guide for identifying the origin of all steamer cancels and pursers' markings for the Transportation cancel specialist. In addition, it is very useful for tracing steamers that were used on mail contract. For collectors of steamer viewcards the listing, complete with catalogue numbers, is a tremendous aid.

The most significant feature of the catalogue is the column listing the fate of each ship,

always the most difficult information to obtain. We learn that the *Jacques Cartier* was destroyed by fire on her trial run at Oka, Quebec in October 1875, and that a familiar ship that plied the St. Lawrence, the *Richelieu/Beauharnois*, ran for 109 years (1845-1954) making it the longest lived Canadian steamer.

While nearly all steamers now exist only in memory some, surprisingly, survived into the 1960's and even into the 1970's (two until 1977). A few run as barges, some more serve a new clientele as floating restaurants, and others are beached, slowly fading away. Three steamers, however, are still around as living reminders of a more graceful age—Toronto's *Trillium* (1910-57) was restored and placed back in service in 1976, the *Segwun* (1925-58) sailed again last summer in Muskoka, and the *Polona/Queen City* (built in Kingston in 1911) now runs under motor power. A number of other smaller steamers, outside the scope of this study, also remain in operation.

Mills' fine work fulfills a tremendous need in Canadian steamship history and is a valuable postal history reference guide. A future edition would be enhanced by a bibliography to offer the reader not familiar with the field a better grasp of the subject. The inclusion of Newfoundland ships, and some of the traceable ships under 75 feet, would be a major asset. An additional column detailing where the ship operated would eliminate some of the confusion arising from similar names. A major source, the Annual Reports of the Postmaster General, should have been consulted. It's unfortunate that there isn't more communication between specialist groups as we often plow the same turf, sometimes missing the larger picture.

—GJN

THE SMALL QUEENS OF CANADA; John Hillson, Pall Mall Stamp Company for Robson Lowe, 24pp; \$10.95 postpaid from George Wegg Ltd., Toronto

At long last students of Canada's Small Queen issue have a compact, well-written, handbook to refer to. Each value is thoroughly dealt with as to shades, quantities issued, number of plates and layout, perforations, paper,

usage, plate varieties, re-entries and printing varieties.

That perennial problem which faces all Small Queen collectors — how to tell the Ottawa and Montreal printings apart — is clearly and concisely explained by the author through charts and well-written text.

Three useful appendices are included with the book. The first gives the terms of the 1967 proposal of the British American Bank Note Company to print Canada's stamps, and the terms of the counter offer presented by the Canadian Government. Appendix B, by means of diagrams, explains the plate layout of the issue; while the last appendix covers the quantities of stamps issued to postmasters from 1870-1897.

The one serious flaw in the book is the lack of detail on the essays and proofs of this issue. Only two short paragraphs cover this important aspect of the Small Queens. It is to be hoped that the author will be able to remedy this deficiency in a future edition.

This book is certainly recommended for anyone contemplating collecting Small Queens. It will also prove useful to those who already collect this interesting and fascinating issue.

—DD

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The CENTENNIAL DEFINITIVES STUDY GROUP

Centennial Coils

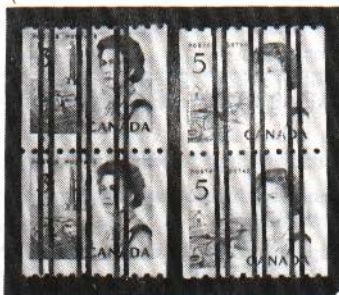
by Douglas C. Irwin

PART 1



Regular Centennial Coils

The sheet stamps of the Centennial issue were released on February 8, 1967. Coil stamps of this issue followed shortly after, later in February and in March of 1967. The coil stamps were printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company in vertical rolls of 500. They were issued in a 3¢ value for the third class rate, a 4¢ value for the local first class rate, and a 5¢ value for the domestic first class rate. The 3¢ and 5¢ coil stamps were also produced precancelled, with three sets of two thick black bars running vertically along the rolls of stamps. The coil stamps measure 21.25 mm from centre to centre of perforations, and 24.5 mm across; and are perforated 9½ horizontally.



Precancelled Centennial Coils

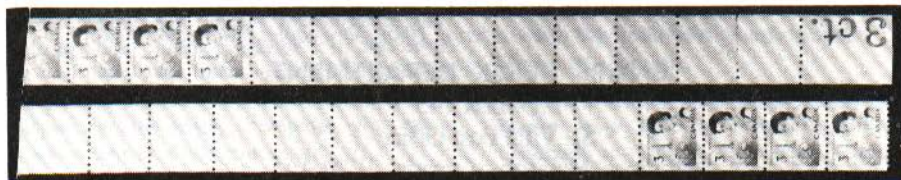
The rolls of 500 coil stamps have starting and trailing strips attached to the end stamps of the roll. The trailing strips consist of blank, white gummed paper, cut and perforated into ten segments. The first segment on the free end of the trailing strip is about as long as 1½

stamps, with a straight edge on the end. Between this segment and the roll of stamps are 9½ blank segments, perforated the same size as the coil stamps themselves, with the top of the last coil stamp glued onto the end quarter length segment.

The starting strips have the same format but are printed on blank, coloured gummed paper rather than white. The 3¢ coil has a yellow starter, the 4¢ coil has a red starter and the 5¢ coil has a blue starter. The face value of the stamps in the roll is marked on the starter strip in dark blue ink (almost matching the colour of the 5¢ stamps). The value markings are not always oriented in the same

manner, as shown in the photograph. Starter strips for coil rolls can have the value mark oriented either way, giving $5 \times 2 = 10$ different possible starters.

The last illustration shows a folded starting strip for the 3¢ precancelled coil. The strip is



Starting and Trailing Strips

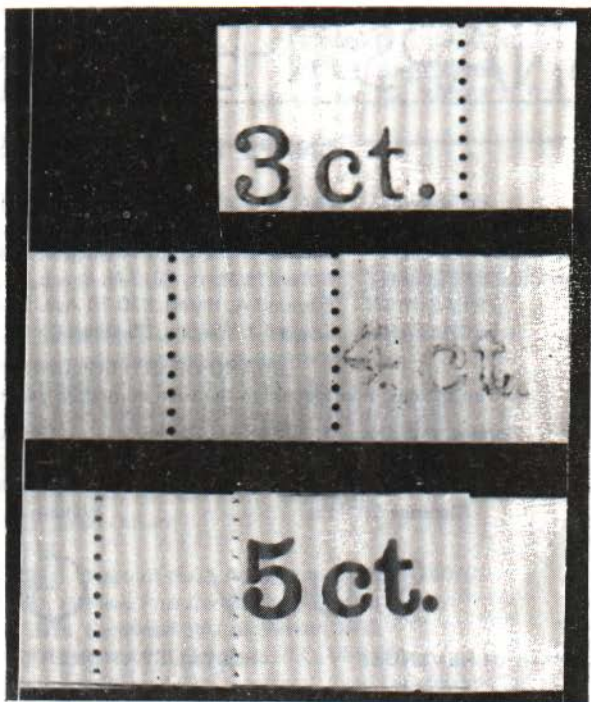
yellow, with the stamp value printed on the first segment of the starter as for the regular coils. The precancelled lines are also printed on this strip, not in black, but in red. The 5¢ precancelled coil also has red lines on its blue starting strip. A wound roll of coil stamps came with the starting strip sealed upon itself.

Like the Centennial sheet stamps printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company, the coil stamps seem to have two different types of dextrine gum. One is completely smooth and even in appearance, while the other is streaky in appearance under both reflected light and ultraviolet light. The streaky nature of the gum is more evident under strong ultraviolet light than under reflected room light.

Under ultraviolet light, there seems to be two different types of paper on which these five coil stamps were printed, either a non-fluorescent paper or a dull fluorescent paper.

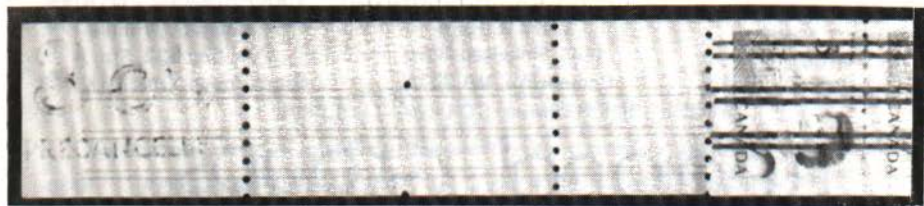
There are a number of varieties to be found on the five Centennial coil stamps. These will be discussed in the next article. The study group would like to thank Don Beaumont for his assistance in photographing the items for this series of articles on Centennial coils.

More detailed aspects of the Centennial



Coil stamp face value on starting strip

issue are discussed in the Centennial Definitives Study Group Newsletter. Subscription to the Newsletter is \$6.00 per year. More information on the study group can be obtained by writing the study group at: Centennial Definitives Study Group, 2250 Lawrence Ave. East, #406, Scarborough, Ontario, M1P 2P9.



3¢ Precancelled Starting Strip (folded)

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EDITORIAL (Continued from Pg. 31)

someone's part, and not obviously in error?

We must keep in mind that there are errors of fact, and differences of opinion, and the two are not the same. Certainly an author should keep track of his references and put in footnotes for crucial information, but the lack of this information with a manuscript should not preclude printing it. Again, an author should check his facts carefully, but if his references are wrong, he will be too. It could be said that absolutely every possible reference should be checked, but this would certainly bring an end to printed articles of any type. In other words, we can't have it all. The article which was 'not philatelically sound' offered a new opinion, but it was clear to me that the author had gone to considerable trouble to try and prove his point, so in it went.

On the point of reprinting articles, it should be mentioned that when this was proposed we had two ideas in mind. First, to bring to the members of BNAPS information from other current publications which the members might otherwise not get; and second, to revive and revise major articles which appeared in TOPICS, or wherever, in which there is a lot of interest but no up-to-date reference book or study.

You will not see in TOPICS an article which appeared in the last issue of the *Canadian Philatelist*, for instance, because so many BNAPSers belong to the Royal it would be silly to waste time getting permission to reprint. Our thoughts on older articles coincide with the writers quoted earlier.

The last point raised by our readers is harder to answer. Yes, a person's ability to find the information necessary to produce an article is extremely important. The third letter states the fact and the fifth letter confirms the problem—many people don't know how to research. I can, and will, say that any article that is so poorly researched as to be unable in my opinion to stand on its own will not be printed (how I get that across to the author is my problem). At the same time, people must be encouraged, and my promise doesn't help them much. I propose to end this Editorial by asking all knowledgeable members to help me help the writer of the fifth letter. Let me have, in point form, your methods and suggestions for an article on researching philatelic matters. I'll put an article together and run it in a future issue (I'll be sure to have one or two people check it out!) How about it?

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