

BNAPS Fancy Cancel Study Group Newsletter 28

Nov. '01
Dave Lacelle

- Group News

The study group meeting at the convention in Ottawa was well attended, there were about 10 of us, and was a good blend of both advanced and beginner fancy cancel collectors. The meeting was thus pleasantly informal, with wide range of questions and discussion. We have two new members; Mr. G. Portch, 4894 Dundas St. West, Islington Ont., M9A 1B5, and Mr. P. Thibaudeau, P.O. Box 356, Chesterville Ont., K0C 1H0, and an old member (Mr. D. Fridhandler) has returned to the fold and rejoined the group.

It was suggested at the Study Group Directors meeting at the convention, that (as a last resort ONLY), the "Miscellaneous Cancel Study Group" could be folded into our group. The group exists, but cannot seem to find an Editor. If this happens I suppose that I would add a page to our newsletter for those whom are M.C. S.G. Members. The Fancy, and Miscellaneous Cancel Study Groups overlap from time to time. I imagine many of you are members of both groups, any comments on the above? We also share some philatelic space with the Large and Small Queen Study Group. It is probably better to have more groups, however more liaison between them is desirable. See page four for the two ring numeral request, which could actually have been from either of the other two groups.

I have recently completed a small file which lists D&S numbers, and corresponding Lacelle numbers. This is intended as an assist to anyone who may wish to convert from D&S numbers to the newer Lacelle numbers. If any of you would like this list just Email me.
<lacelle@mars.ark.com>.

I have commenced the break-up, and sale of my fancy cancel reference collection which was used for the new book. Please note, I have always considered myself more of a researcher, than a collector, and intend to remain active in this field. The collection will be sold in small lots over the next several years by Robert A. Lee Auctions #203-1139 Sutherland Ave. Kelowna BC, V1Y 5Y2 <<http://www.stamp-bids.com/current.htm>>. My first items should appear in his December sale. He has four sales annually, uses Lacelle numbers for his fancy cancel items, and has a very good web site showing the items for sale. If you are not receiving his catalogue, or are not viewing this site, you are missing out.

REVISIONS TO PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS

Newsletter 1, "Crown Wax Seals"

The "Vankleek Hill" entry should read type 1.

The seal identified as "Little Current" should read "Little Rideau". Note, this is the first example of a Type 1 seal used as a cancel. Note also that it is probably philatelic, as the Jubilee issue was used at least 40 years after these Type 1 seals were issued.

Newsletter 2, "Town Names"

"Aberfoyle" is now confirmed as the entire name, also noted as earlier use, Apr. '92.

Add. "Senate Ottawa, 3,3, May '22, Cancels Postal Stationary. In red."

Newsletter 20, "Crown over Registered"

Add "Mar. '57, type B1, Toronto Ont. to France, free strike".

Add "Jan. '86, type B3, Halifax to Annapolis, free strike. New late use, and again indicating use in N.S. only."

Newsletter 25., "O.H.M.S."

My reference to "O.H.M.S." on early covers stating that this meant "free" government mail was incorrect. Early use of O.H.M.S. merely means that the mail was to be carried by postal office means, as opposed to private, or favour carriage. In the 1940's, O.H.M.S. perfins, (and later overprints) were put on stamps to be used for government mail, which otherwise would have required "Free" markings, counter signings, multiple accounting systems etc. As well as standardization, the "O.H.M.S." designation means that civil servants (or others) could not "liberate" the postage stamps for unofficial use. The O.H.M.S. marked stamps thus imply "free" use by the Government for Government business. Later on, the overprint was changed to "G".

CANCEL AUTHENTICITY.

This is a topic which was mentioned at the study group meeting, and is in particular concern to anyone starting to collect in the fancy cancel field. I have researched this topic extensively, (I do not like to waste my money any more than anyone else!) and have identified 23 different criteria to determine a fancy cancels' authenticity. I shall present some of the basic criteria below but first, some consideration of the three types of questionable authenticity; spurious, bogus, and fake. I quote from the new book;

"I consider "spurious" to mean an honest mistake on the part of some previous cancel describer. For " example, the centre of a worn oval parcel from Fredericton N.B. Has a circular "ring" in the middle, which is actually where the base of the handle attaches. This cancel is known in a full range of deterioration, and in the last stages has been listed in various publications as "Os", "8s", "Bs", and "Ds" (See D127). All of these are 'spurious', there was no intent to defraud when only the one stage of the cancel was known. "Bogus items are intended to fool people into believing that they have something new, previously undescribed, and thus probably rare and desirable. ... "Fake" items are intended to mimic authentic cancels. In many cases they will be scaled wrong, incorrect in fine details, or will be on incorrect issues of stamps.

Some initial things to check for cancel authenticity are, to compare with the illustration in the book, the correct period of use/stamp use, and any notes in the book on ink types, wear, etc.

The following are some of the other basic considerations:

1. Are there any other cancels - even a trace? While it is true that some receiving P.M.'s re-cancelled poorly cancelled stamps, this practice was not common. The fake cancel may be carefully placed over the trace of another cancel. Check with oblique light for different "shininess" and also a possible imprint of the other cancel on the back. Sometimes a black light (ultraviolet) will reveal different inks. Pen cancels (usually an "x") may have been removed, this is difficult to detect, however the stamp background may be lightened by the ink eradicator.
2. Is the ink water soluble? Official cancel ink was supposed to contain an oil-based substance to assist paper penetration, and was not water soluble. Some P.M.'s however used regular writing ink, which is soluble and will fade over time. Some fakers actually hand painted their productions, an overnight soaking will usually remove these entirely. Some fakes have too much ink, immersion in water will produce a sudden ink "cloud" in the water. If genuine, this

surplus ink would have come off when the stamp was soaked from it's cover. A cautionary note about soaking - use cool, or warm water, NOT hot. Even legitimate cancels may fade or run in hot water. Coloured inks may be more susceptible to this.

3. Does the ink penetrate to the back as expected? This is a somewhat learned thing however comparison with cheap radial, blob, etc. non-fancy cancels can give an idea how much penetration to expect for how heavy a strike. When these stamps were new, they had certain ambient humidity from paper manufacture, travels in outside humidity, and the moisture from printing, gluing, and affixing the stamp. This in part reduced the ink penetration. A hundred year old stamp has probably been stored in a dry book or box, has lost all ambient moisture, and will allow heavy ink penetration. If "cancelled" now, the modern ink will penetrate deeply. A cautionary note, some coloured (especially purple) inks may penetrate heavily as they may have been somewhat water soluble, and thus soak through the stamp when it was soaked off.

4. Does the ink stain at back? Another aspect of ink penetration is that the gum on the back of the stamp acted as a barrier to further penetration. If the stamp had already been soaked off, and a cancel "applied" then any back paper (fuzz from old album pages, paper, or hinge remnants) may have traces of ink.

5. Does the ink penetrate past the perf. holes at the back? See the cut for an example of what it should NOT look like. The glue normally extended up to the cut perf hole, and would usually act as a barrier to cancel ink. If a fake cancel was applied to an off cover stamp, ink often penetrates past the perf. holes. Another similar concern is that normally there is a tiny gap between where the cancel goes from the stamp to the cover due to the change in paper thickness. This would also tend to keep ink out of perf holes. Note also, some fake on cover cancels are hand drawn, the 'artists' may forget to include this gap. Cautionary note, ink penetration into perf. tips is to be expected as this was a freshly feathered surface when the stamp was used.



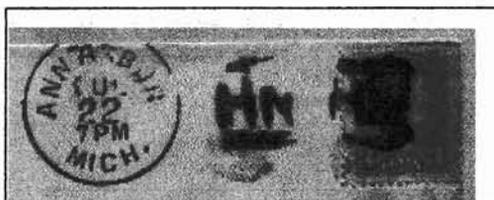
6. Is the strike "Too good to be true?" I find this is a somewhat dubious criteria. If a P.M. went to considerable bother to carve a fancy cancel, would he not also try to get good strikes from it? The P.M.'s were also more interested in cancelling the stamp than with tying it, or producing lightly cancelled collector items. A good dark 'socked on the nose' cancel was thus proper. The perfection of the cancel may also depend upon how busy the P.M. was on that day, and also upon how worn the cancel device is.

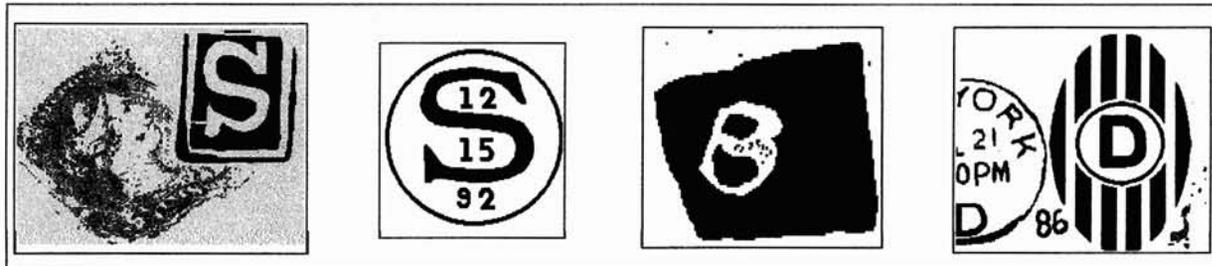
There are many other criteria, I have not touched upon ways to chemically detect modern inks, photocopy ink, (hint "liquid paper" thinner fluid), dot matrix or ink jet printers etc. If you wish to experiment, please write "fake cancel" on the back, so we are not confusing others.

CORRESPONDENCE AND QUERIES.

Two very interesting covers have been brought to my attention recently. Ron Ribler has shown me this "HN" cancel (The P.M.'s initials) from Ann Arbor Michigan (July '84) used on a S.Q. cover from Waterford Ontario.

There are a few other U.S. fancy initial cancels known on S.Q.'s, such as; the Newport Vermont "S", the New York city "Registered D depot, an intaglio Boston "B" as well as several official New York City Depot. cancels (letters C, D, F, N, and P noted on Canada). Some of these are shown on the next page. This sub-sub field of foreign cancels on Canada is the one area that I shall retain as a personal collecting field. Please forward any other examples to me.





Dean Mario has sent in another copy of this "M" from Merlin Ont. Oct. '31. The other cover of this (see D280) is described as "Bogus, a philatelic item (probably produced as a joke) mailed to Fred Jarrett..." This latter item was however on a 1931 stamp. Dean's cover has a Small Queen. It would appear that the local P.M. was co-operating with these "unusual" mailings, as the CDS is in the same purple/red ink. If this S.Q. were soaked off, it would cease to be a joke.



Roger Boisclair would like to know of any confirming strikes of this item. It is similar to the four items in the last newsletter, in that I was aware of it, but only as a single strike, and could not list it as such. If anyone has any other strike (note, on Map stamp, so thus a late fancy), or any other information, please tell me.



There has been a request (by the Large & Small Queen S.G.) for new early or late dates for the two ring numeral series. Some of these hammers were partly reused as fancy cancels, the late dates thus "shade into" fancy cancel dates. I have sent them a detailed letter of these reuses, and present some of the examples below. As mentioned earlier, this is a nice example of how the study groups can work together. Lacelle 38 (Sept. '70 - Oct. '70), and 39 (Oct. '70 - Nov. '70) incorporate the "2" part, Lacelle 99, Sept. '69 and 108, Nov. '69 are cut up "9's", and the 9 portion may have been incorporated into other Kingston "9's" up to Jan. '71. There are also some two ring mimics; Lacelle 40, a "Toronto 2", Lacelle 69, the "4" of Watson's Corners Ont. (July '70 to Jan. '77), Lacelle 135, the "one ring 13" from Belleville Ont. Oct. '70, as well as several deformed or worn strikes of other numeral cancels, see Lacelle D12, D13, D22, D24, D29, D30, D69, D73, and D89. The contact person for this information is Mark Berner, 3767 Notre Dame West, Montreal, Quebec H4C 1P8.

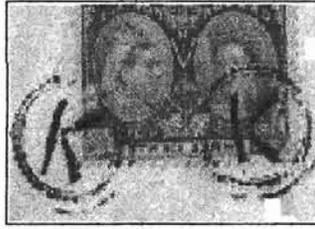


Brian Hargreaves has sent in several items. The first is an example of Lacelle 565 the "L" from Lilly's Corners Ont. The P.M. was Mr. C., Lilley and the P.O. name was changed to London East during this cancels period of use. (How many "L's" can you have from just one P.O.!) Brian's example is on a five cent L.Q. (which had a short but appropriate period of use for this cancel) and is "shortened" at the top-



probably by another stamp or piece of paper overlapping. The "K" item is on cover, probably

from Centreville N.B. (based on the return address) and is on a three cent Jubilee. (The P.M. of Centreville was Mr. L. B. Clarke from Jan. '72 to Mar. '27!!) This is the only known strike, please send me any confirming information. He also sends a copy of Lacelle 400, "EM" but on a three cent S.Q. instead of the two cent L.Q., as I noted. These stamps overlapped in use. The last item, a reversed two had been seen by me before, and probably should have been in the deletions section of the new book as 'bogus'. As I remember, it was on top of a CDS, penetration was bad, perf. holes were stained and it looked "too good".



John Hillson has sent in Lacelle 1346, the St. Catherine Bogey Head cancel used in Nov. 24, 1881, one year earlier than reported previously. I rechecked my data, the other five covers are all between Nov. 23, and Dec. 13 '82. All are more worn than his example. This cancel would logically have been used around Halloween Oct. 31 (or around All Saints, or All Souls Days, Nov. 1, and 2nd), so it is not unexpected that it was used at the same time in both years.



It is appropriate that this newsletter is being put together early in November given the item above. If appropriate, a dues notice is included with this newsletter. (Trick or treat?) Dues are \$7.00, and apply for the period Convention '01 to Convention '02. Thank you, and

Good Collecting,

Dave. Lacelle.