



First Impressions

**BNAPS First Day
Cover Study Group
Issue No. 2
April 2009**

Membership Response is Strong

Welcome to the second issue of First Impressions! Chairman Gary Dickinson and I can happily report that as of this issue our membership stands at 25—no small accomplishment and a hint that there are a significant number of collectors of Canadian FDCs.

This issue contains articles by three of our members, all very diverse in their interests; they give all of us an idea how each of us approaches the hobby in our own way.

Kudos to Gary Dickinson for his prolific and scholarly writing on the KGVI era FDCs. Due to fortunate circumstances Gary and I both had articles in the January issue of *First Days* (The American First Day Cover Society Journal), giving the US collectors a look at how far we've come.

Doug Holmes has the first of a series of articles on catalogues—his expertise in this area will help guide us to a better understanding of the issues involved and the solutions available to us.

Bob Vogel has an interesting article on Rosecraft cachets, showing how even the most “common” cachets have uncommon feature worth noting and collecting. Enjoy!
- George Basher

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**Submitting Articles to
First Impressions**

Articles should be submitted in either manuscript or MS Word, and scans of covers should be in JPEG format. E-mail submissions to gbasher@nycap.rr.com or mail to George Basher, 4 Foxwood Circle, East Greenbush, NY 12061, United States.

Study Group Meets at BNAPEX— Save the date!

Save the dates! September 11-13 will be the Annual BNAPS Conference and BNAPEX in Kingston, ON. The St. Lawrence Seaway Regional Group is hosting the event on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the St. Lawrence Seaway. This will be the first opportunity for the FDC Study Group to have a face-to-face meeting—I hope all of you get the chance to attend. Detail on the BNAPS website.

THE "COMPLETE" COLLECTION OF CANADIAN FDC CACHETS TO 1949

By Gary Dickinson

A challenge faced by collectors of Canadian FDC's is that of knowing when the limits of a particular collection have been reached. Occasionally the boundaries are clearly defined, but more often the limits are unknown. There has been so little research and documentation of extant FDC cachets that it is difficult if not impossible to know how many need to be collected to attain completion of a given collection whether that collection is for a decade, a reign, a cachet-maker, or some other criterion. This article gives a preliminary assessment of the number of cachets produced to the end of the 1940's, in part to suggest what a "complete" collection might entail, but also to stimulate others to attempt similar estimates for later decades. These first approximations will undoubtedly need revision as research continues in the future.

Four main sources of information were drawn upon in attempting to identify the number of cachets that had been produced from 1927, when the first ones were issued, through 1949, the end of the period under consideration. The earliest

studies of Canadian cachets were published by Melvin Baron, a New York collector who wrote extensively on the topic. He was responsible for 67 articles in *First Days* and *BNA Topics* between 1977 and 1997 which included the period under consideration and dealt with uncacheted as well as cacheted FDC's. Pierre Ethier's website (http://members.tripod.com/~mr_fdc/) shows full-colour scans of many cachets from the period and is a useful source of cachet images. Bruce Perkins wrote articles and drafted a catalogue of FDC's for the latter part of the period under consideration. The series of monographs by Gary Dickinson which appear on the BNAPS King George VI website (<http://www.kgvi.ca/research.html>) was also used for information on seven stamp issues in the latter part of the pre-1950 era. Duplicate cachets reported by more than one source were eliminated, although in some instances it was difficult to work (*Continued on Page 3*)

TABLE I DOCUMENTED CACHETS FOR CANADIAN FDC'S TO 1949

| SCOTT # | DESCRIPTION | ISSUED | CACHETS |
|---------|--------------------------|------------|---------|
| 1-140 | | | 0 |
| 141-148 | Historical&Confederation | 29/06/1927 | 3 |
| 149-159 | Scroll | 1928-29 | 0 |
| 162-177 | Arch/Leaf | 1930-31 | 0 |
| 184 | Admiral Provisional | 24/06/1931 | 0 |
| 190 | G.E.Cartier | 30/09/1931 | 0 |
| 191 | Arch/Leaf Provisional | 21/06/1932 | 9 |
| 192-194 | Economic Conference | 12/07/1932 | 13 |
| 195-201 | Medallion | 01/12/1932 | 21 |
| 202 | U.P.U. | 18/05/1933 | 5 |
| 203 | Grain Exhibition | 24/07/1933 | 10 |
| 204 | Royal William | 17/08/1933 | 10 |
| 208 | Cartier | 01/07/1934 | 28 |
| 209 | Loyalists | 01/07/1934 | 15 |
| 210 | New Brunswick | 16/08/1934 | 8 |
| 211-216 | Silver Jubilee | 04/05/1935 | 52 |
| 217-227 | Pictorial | 01/06/1935 | 30 |
| 231-236 | Mufti | 1937 | 47 |
| 237 | Coronation | 10/05/1937 | 199 |
| 241-245 | Pictorial | 1938 | 29 |
| 246-248 | Royal Visit | 15/05/1939 | 158 |
| 249-262 | War Issue | 1942-43 | 67 |
| 268-273 | Peace Issue | 16/09/1946 | 26 |
| 274 | Bell | 03/03/1947 | 172 |
| 275 | Citizen | 01/07/1947 | 64 |
| 276 | Royal Wedding | 16/02/1948 | 63 |
| 277 | Responsible Govt. | 01/10/1948 | 58 |
| 282 | Newfoundland | 01/04/1949 | 83 |
| 283 | Halifax | 21/06/1949 | 38 |
| 284-288 | Postes-Postage | 15/11/1949 | 42 |
| | Total | | 1,250 |

definitively with some of Baron's verbal descriptions, most of which lacked illustrations. Excluded from this summary were coil stamps and back-of-the-book issues such as air mail, special delivery, and registration stamps.

The total number of cachets documented from 1927 to 1949 was 1,250 as shown in Table I. The largest number (199) occurred for the 1937 Coronation issue (Scott 237) followed by the Bell commemorative of 1947 (Scott 274) with 172 cachets and the Royal Visit issue of 1939 (Scott 246-248) with 158. Together those three issues accounted for 43% of all documented cachets for the period. After those issues, the largest numbers were for the Newfoundland enters Confederation issue of 1949 (Scott 282) with 83 cachets and the War Issue definitives of 1942-43 (Scott 249-262) with 67.

After the first few cacheted FDC's appeared on June 29, 1927 for the Anniversary of Confederation and Historical stamps (Scott 141-148), there were no cachets until 1932 when the Arch/Leaf Provisional (Scott 191) appeared with nine cachets. A highlight of the King George V era was the 1935 Silver Jubilee series (Scott 211-216) with 52 reported cachets.

It is interesting to compare the numbers of documented cachets for the six commemorative stamps issued in 1933-34 and the six commemoratives from 1947-49, more than a decade later. In the first case a total of 76 cachets are known compared with 478 for the later period. To some extent the discrepancy may be accounted for by more thorough research and reporting of cachets for the later period but a more significant factor is the rapid growth of interest in FDC's on the part of both collectors and cachet-makers during the period which resulted in a real growth of cachet production and collection.

There appear to be ample opportunities for the continued discovery of new cachets as they surface with considerable frequency. Reporting these discoveries has been greatly simplified and expedited by the Internet and other methods for communicating data, and the FDC Study Group can play a lead role in encouraging and supporting the spread of information. Other members will continue the process of acquiring, organizing, codifying, and reporting the status of these activities thereby extending the boundaries of the field.

Catalogue Concepts

By Doug Holmes

One of the study group's goals is to produce a catalogue. This seemed to mean different things to different people, so I went back to the definition to see why we agree we want one, but disagree as to what it is. The definition I found was: A catalogue is a systematic arrangement of records. This covers the catalogues I am familiar with – stamp catalogues, Sears catalogues and library card catalogues. But given it can cover all these kinds of catalogues, small wonder it doesn't really explain what a First Day Cover catalogue would look like.

What I like about the definition is that it exposes what I believe to be the key to solving our problem. There are two parts to the definition, the "systematic arrangement" and the "records".

Looking at the "record" part first, it is important to remember that we are concerned with information about the covers. If we were talking about the actual covers, we would be discussing albums and binders, shoeboxes and shelves, acetate sheathes and low humidity environments. A catalogue contains some information about the cover, enough to serve two purposes. The first is to distinguish the items from each other and the second to provide information that applies to all instances of that item. The Sears catalogue entry for a washing machine would provide distinguishing information like make, model and features so you could get a number to order and a price to pay. The card catalogue provides title and author so you can get a catalogue number that enables you to find the actual book.

For some people, it is the stamp that differentiates covers. Identical generic covers with two different stamp issues are quite distinct for them, but two covers for the same stamp with RoseCraft and Schering cachets may not be worthy of notice. The one thing I do notice about true collectors is (*Continued on Page 4*)

their tendency to look for variability at ever-finer levels as their knowledge, collections and audience expand. So one problem we face is deciding what information is relevant to distinguish one cover from another.

Leaving that problem for the moment, I'd like to discuss the two parts of a "systematic arrangement", the selection and the organization. The Sears and library catalogues deal only with the items available, either through Sears or at the library in question. The Library of Congress offers a wider range of books than your local library, but even it is limited. We do not know all of the variations of covers available, so any catalogue must focus on what is known and a subset at that.

Library catalogues always had three routes for me; by title when I knew the book, a separate bank of cards for authors and the Dewey Decimal system itself let me look by topic. So books had three separate catalogues, each organized differently. We face the same problems with First Day Cover catalogues. We each have our own interests by subject and views on organization. I don't believe there is such a thing as a single First Day Cover catalogue.

So, how does this help? My proposal for cataloguing is that we treat this as a two-part problem. Part one is to arrange a collection of records and the second is to provide the means of identifying and organizing records in the collection into multiple separate catalogues.

Those Crafty Rosecraft Cachets

By Bob Vogel

During the early 1960s I remember purchasing Rosecraft cacheted covers at the stamp counter at Eaton's in Winnipeg. These were sent off to Ottawa to be returned stamped with the Day of Issue cancellation. My interest soon waned in collecting these, only to be renewed some 45 years later when I realized how beautiful they were and that Mr. J.C. Rosenbaum of Montreal was the premier cachet maker in Canada.

Up until recently I thought the cachets were prepared beforehand so collectors could either send them to Ottawa or have them cancelled at their local Post Office. A couple of years ago at a stamp show in Toronto I purchased a postal stationery card UX106 with a Rosecraft cachet never giving it much thought.

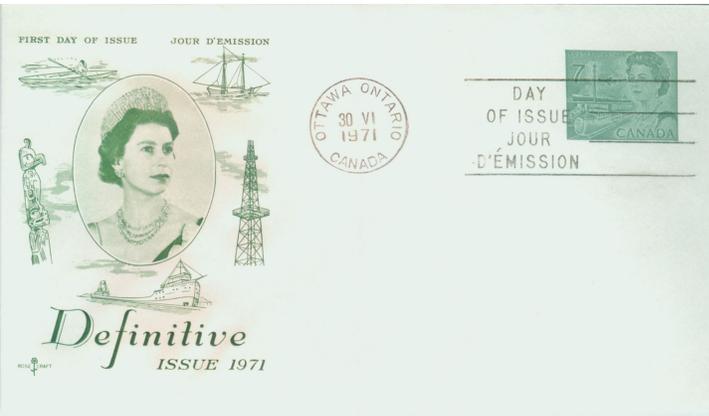
A short time ago at another Toronto stamp show I fortunately found a couple more pieces of postal stationery showing Rosecraft cachets on UX105 and U92. I mentioned these to a fellow collector, Andrew Chung, he and I discussed these at length and wondered how they were produced. After much dialogue we came up with the solution. As these postal stationery items were not for sale to the public prior to the day of issue, they were ordered from the Post Office FDC Service, cancelled with the day of issue sans the cachet. Once received the crafty cachet maker applied the cachet and sold these to collectors unbeknownst to them the process.

This certainly shows the ingenuity of a cachet maker, providing collectors with some unique items for their collection. I wonder if there are others examples in a dealer's box yet uncovered. If any members have other such items I would be anxious to know.





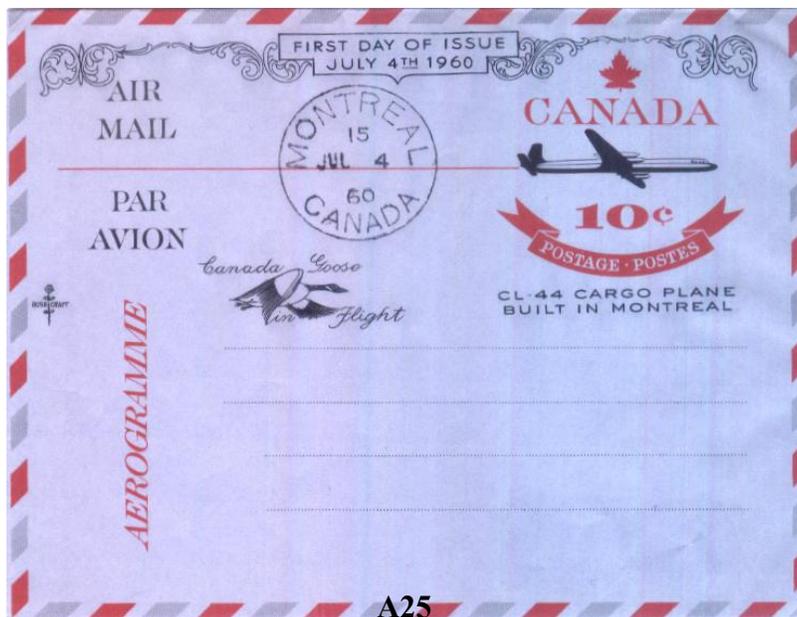
U92 (scan reduced)



UX105 (scan reduced)

When joining this study group I asked Gary Dickinson if he knew anyone who could provide me with any background information on J.C. Rosenbaum and JCR and Rosecraft cachets. He passed my name along to George Basher and Ivan Hebert-Croteau and between the three of them I obtained a wealth of information.

Perusing Ivan's site on Rosecraft cachets I was amazed to find another item, which falls into this category, a 1960 Aerogramme, A25. Fortunately I was able to purchase an example of this off Ebay.



I would appreciate any feedback at berlinb@csolve.net

We Need Your Articles!!

The success of this newsletter—and the study group—depends on all of us who join. There is a real shortage of written information about Canadian FDCs and one of the prime purposes of this Study Group is to change that. Please contribute—no matter what your writing skills or experience—and share your knowledge with the rest of us.

Please send your submissions to: George Basher, 4 Foxwood Circle, East Greenbush, NY 12061 United States, or gbasher@nycap.rr.com. MS Word is preferred, but I'll work with what you have.

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**We'll be on the
World Wide Web Soon**

We expect that this FDC Study Group will do some or all of the following things, depending on participant interests:

- * publish an occasional newsletter (at least 3 per year,
- * arrange for publication of member articles, monographs, and other writings,
- * develop catalogues and other sources of information about FDC's,
- * facilitate the exchange of FDC's among members,
- * convene meetings at BNAPS conferences, and
- * serve as a "home" for all Canadian FDC collectors.

The British North America Philatelic Society
The Society for Canadian Philately

Joining the First Day Cover Study Group

1. The first year of membership will begin whenever you sign up and end on December 31, 2009 regardless of when you sign up. The annual fee is \$10 Canadian.
2. If you are NOT now a member of BNAPS, you have two options:
 - A. Join BNAPS and receive free membership in the FDC Study Group until December 31, 2009. The BNAPS membership application is available on their website at <http://www.bnaps.org/form.htm>. Your dues should be sent directly to BNAPS, and they will forward a portion of that to the Study Group.
 - B. Join the Study Group as a trial member until December 31, 2009 and pay only the \$10 study group membership fee. You must join BNAPS by the end of that period to retain your membership in the Study Group. Your dues for the first year of the Study Group should be sent to Treasurer Gary Dickinson.
3. If you ARE now a member of BNAPS, you may join as many study groups as you wish, including the FDC Study Group whose membership fee is \$10. Your dues for the first year of the Study Group should be sent to Treasurer Gary Dickinson.
4. Any \$10 membership fees for the Study Group may be paid by PayPal (click on "Send Money", use Gary Dickinson's e-mail address shown above, and check "Services/Other") or by cheque or cash to Gary Dickinson, 648 San Michelle Road, Kelowna, B.C., Canada, V1W 2J1.