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First Impressions

BNAPS First Day
Cover Study Group
Issue No. 6
March, 2011

Dear Readers:

Welcome to my first attempt at editing the newsletter of the First Day Cover Study Group. I hope to be able to maintain a quarterly pace of publication, but my ability to do so will depend greatly on your ability to supply a constant stream of information that will be of interest to our fellow study group members. At the left you'll see how you can submit your contributions. I hope to hear from each of you in the very near future.

Submitting Articles to First Impressions

Articles should be submitted in either manuscript or MS Word, and scans of covers should be in JPEG format at 300dpi. E-mail submissions to Gary Dickinson at gandbdickinson@shaw.ca or mail them to Gary at: 648 San Michelle Road, Kelowna, B.C., Canada, V1W 2J1.

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I would like to express the appreciation of the study group to George Basher for designing First Impressions and getting it off to a good start, and to Bob Vogel for taking on the chairpersonship (if there is such a word) of the FDCSG in the recent reorganization.

Inside this issue you'll find annual reports from the former chairperson for the 2009 and 2010 calendar years. In summary, the study group appears to be off to a good start. We have more than 40 members and money in the bank with no need for expenditures to this point. Doug Holmes has provided yeoman service in launching our website, www.canadafdc.org.

Bob Vogel provides what could very well be the last word on the subject of the maple leaf cachet. He describes how he tracked the elusive cachet to its source and rendered it harmless.

Gary Dickinson has provided an update of Marcel Cool's 1985 study of the first Canadian first day cancellation which was used on the Newfoundland joins Confederation issue of April 1, 1949.

The last editorial word here pertains to some information that has been provided recently by Noel Almeida from Melbourne, Australia. Although Noel is not a member of the FDCSG, he is a keen student of Australian Overseas Mailers first day covers and wanted to make sure that we use the company name correctly. There are s's at the ends of both words. I had some earlier correspondence with Noel and FDCSG member Mark Lerner regarding Overseas Mailers cachets. Mark advised that we need to be wary about identifying covers as OM because Jay Leach, who operated the company, used five different approaches to his FDCs. He 1) handpainted his own designs, 2) added handpainted details to covers printed by others, 3) added rubber-stamped cachets to covers printed by others, 4) added both rubber-stamped cachets and handpainted details, and 5) added writeups to unmodified FDCs created by others.

ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2009 AND 2010

January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009

1. With the support of the BNAPS Vice-President for Study Groups, Barry Brown, approval was given in the fall of 2008 to revive the FDC Study Group which had lapsed several years earlier. George Basher and Gary Dickinson led the organizational effort and member recruitment began in the late fall. Annual dues were set at \$10 Can. and promotional materials were prepared and circulated to known FDC collectors.

2. Although some members signed on in late fall, 2008, the official first year of the FDCSG began January 1, 2009. New members gradually signed on during the year and the total reached 34 by the end of December. Two elder statesmen, Bruce Perkins and Bob Markovits, were designated Honorary Members and have the full rights of regular members but are excused the payment of annual dues.

3. The first issue of the FDCSG newsletter, First Impressions, was produced and circulated by editor George Basher in January with subsequent issues in April, October, and December. The intention is to produce four issues of the newsletter each year, subject to the willingness of members to contribute to the supply of editorial material.

4. Member Doug Holmes provided significant contributions of his time and expertise in designing and implementing the Study Group's website and catalogue project. By the end of December more than 6,000 FDC scans had been placed in the Gallery by eleven members. The website will continue to evolve in 2010.

5. The first meeting of the FDCSG was held on September 12, 2009 at Kingston, ON at the BNAPS annual exhibition. Of the sixteen people attending, only six were members of the study group. As a result, most of the meeting was devoted to explaining the purposes and activities of the group. Four new members were recruited as a result of attending the meeting.

6. The Chairperson also serves as Treasurer and reports that revenues for the FDCSG have thus far been derived from three sources, as indicated below:

Annual membership dues (32 @ \$ 10)		320.00
Donations		
John Jamieson	\$20.00	
Bob Markovits cachet sale	83.55	103.55
BNAPS ex officio memberships		80.00
Total		503.55

To date there have been no expenditures and the bank balance at December 31, 2009 is \$503.55.

7. Dues for 2010 will be waived as there appear to be no requirements for revenue beyond the current resources.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Dickinson, Chairperson and Treasurer
January 4, 2010

January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010

1. Membership during the 2010 year increased from 34 to 41. Canadian membership included 14 from Ontario, 7 from British Columbia, 2 each from Alberta and Manitoba, and 1 each from Saskatchewan, Quebec, and New Brunswick. There are 8 members in the United States and 1 in Great Britain while 4 members haven't indicated their place of residence.
2. Newsletter editor George Basher produced Issue 5 of *First Impressions* during the year.
3. Member Doug Holmes contributed a great deal of his time and expertise to developing the study group's website (www.canadafdc.org), and it now houses more than 16,000 FDC images. A good start was made towards developing catalogues of FDCs.
4. The second meeting of the study group was held on September 4 at the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C. during the annual BNAPEX. Member Rick Deegan chaired the meeting which was attended by five people. Guest Pascal LeBlond from Library and Archives Canada talked about some of the collections that might be of interest to FDC collectors, and Rick Deegan showed and discussed a number of FDC "firsts" from his collection.
5. The Chairperson also serves as Treasurer. There were no expenditures of Study Group funds during 2010, and the bank balance stood at \$630.55 at year end.
6. Membership dues (normally \$10 per year) for 2011 will again be waived as there is no requirement anticipated for funds to be spent during the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Dickinson, Chairperson and Treasurer
January 3, 2011

THE M A P L E L E A F C A C H E T R E V I S I T E D

by Bob Vogel

Gary Dickinson wrote two articles on this subject, the first in our January 2009 "First Impressions", the second in the December 2009 issue. The first article dealt with this early cachet used on the MacDonald stamp of 1927. The second with the suspicion that this cachet was an add-on.

While going through a dealer's box at our local stamp show I came across the cover in Figure 1. I mentioned to the dealer that this was an add-on. He said, "Yes I know that." When asked how he knew he said "because I did it, as well as many others. Whenever I found an uncacheted FDC with plenty of white space I would apply the hand stamp and colour it." We can now attribute this to Ted Wright of George Wegg



Figure 1

Limited. I have a number in my collection that I have scanned and uploaded to the gallery. When time permits I will change the captions to reflect my findings. Mystery solved!

Recently I received a scan of the cover shown below (Figure 3) from Bruce Perkins. Up until now he had thought the add-on was produced by Dick Malott as indicated by the return address stamped with a similar coloured ink (Figure 2). When I showed this to Ted he remembered the cover well. Note the sharpness of the strike. It must have been made very early in the life of the hand stamp.

Return in 3 days to:
R. K. Malott Major (Rtd)
16 Harwick Crescent
Ottawa, Ontario, K2H 6R1

Figure 2



Figure 3 (Image courtesy of Bruce Perkins)

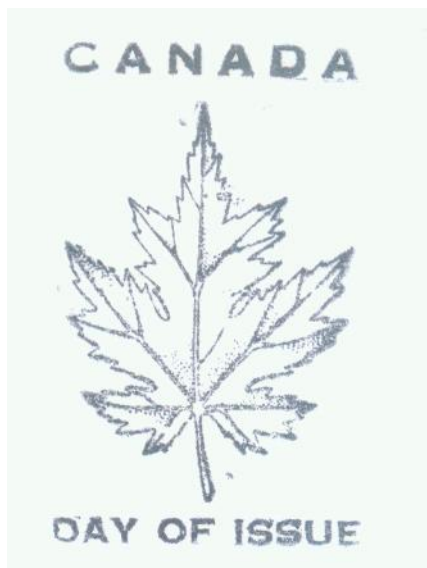


Figure 4

Fortunately for me Ted gave me the hand stamp used to produce these add-ons. He felt it was time to retire it any way. I have included a proof strike (Figure 4) to finish off this article.

CANADA'S FIRST OFFICIAL FIRST DAY CANCELLATION

by Gary Dickinson

The four cent stamp issued by Canada (Scott #282) on April 1, 1949 to mark the union of Newfoundland with Canada has a dual significance for FDC collectors. It was the first issue for which Canada Post kept and published a record of the number of FDC's it serviced, which amounted to 47,588 in this case. It was also the first time that an official first day of issue cancellation was used. Marcel Cool reported on this cancellation in an early issue of *Canada First Day Cover Specialist* in 1985 (1), and the information he provided is reviewed and updated here.

COOL'S FINDINGS

Cool noted that two distinct versions of the slogan cancellation were prepared for the "FIRST DAY/ OF ISSUE" slogan. He indicated that the internal, parallel horizontal lines on Type 1 were shorter than those on Type 2, and that the slogan was in larger type on Type 1 than on Type 2. He provided no measurements, and the illustrations were smaller than actual size, so it was not possible to determine the relevant dimensions from Cool's information. He also reported that there were three time marks for each dater hub accompanying the slogan types, with Type 1 having 4, 7, and 9:30 p.m. and Type 2 having 5:30, 7, and 10 p.m. Cool indicated that he had not seen any a.m. time marks for either slogan type. He reported that the Type 1 cancel had been proofed at 4:00 p.m. on April 1, 1949 and Type 2 was proofed at 4:30 p.m. that same day.



Type 1



Type 2

RECENT OBSERVATIONS

A sample of 27 FDC's with St. John's cancellations was examined recently to determine if Cool's report was still valid. His basic findings regarding Types 1 and 2 were generally confirmed. The interior parallel lines were found to be 17 mm. long for Type 1 and 20 mm. for Type 2, and this was the simplest and most accurate way of differentiating between the two types of slogans. The size of the type on Type 1 appears somewhat smaller upon visual inspection, but the length of each line of text is only 1 mm different, that is, 16 mm. for Type 1 and 15 mm. for Type 2.

Two additional types were noted among the 27 examples reviewed. The interior parallel lines of Type 3 measured 28 mm. and those of Type 4 were 35 mm. The "First Day..." lettering of both Types 3 and 4 appeared to be the same size as that of Type 2. Types 3 and 4 were both postmarked with 7 p.m. time marks.



Type 3



Type 4

It's puzzling as to why there should apparently have existed four different dies for this slogan cancellation. Cecil Coutts (2) confirmed Cool's observation that there were two dies for St. John's in the proof book. He also noted that there was one other use of the same "First Day..." slogan, a single die proofed for Halifax for Scott #283 which had 17 mm. inside lines. Coutts also noted that a single die for Ottawa with 27 mm. inside lines had been proofed but no use of it has been reported. It remains unexplained as to why there would be four dies used for the St. John's slogan cancellation when St. John's had no more than two canceling machines.

Two new time marks were also noted. Four covers with Type 1 cancels had 9:30 a.m. markings whereas Cool had not noted any a.m. time marks. In addition, one cover with a Type 1 cancellation had a 5:30 p.m. time mark whereas Cool found this time mark only with Type 2 cancels.

CONCLUSION

The first Canadian official first day cancellation marked an interesting and complex start to a lengthy series of first day cancellations that has extended for six decades thus far. The revised list of types and time marks for this first effort is as follows:

Type 1 (17 mm. inside lines): 9:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 9:30 p.m.

Type 2 (20 mm. inside lines): 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 10 p.m.

Type 3 (28 mm. inside lines): 7 p.m.

Type 4 (35 mm. inside lines): 7 p.m.

NOTES

1. Marcel Cool. "First Day of Issue Slogan Cancels, Part I." *Canada First Day Cover Specialist*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (October, 1985), p. 40.
2. Many thanks to Cecil Coutts for information provided in a personal communication.