

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Newsletter of the BNAPS

First Day Cover Study Group

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Editor's Notes

The lead article in this issue describes the cachets for Canadian FDCs produced by Oregon residents Al and Arlene Van Dahl. Few cachets were more ubiquitous during the 1950s and 1960s, but they haven't been subjects of much study to this point. Some collectors may now find them worthy of a closer look.

Greg Joughin, who might be described as an adherent rather than a member of the study group, shares with us his approach to storing his FDCs in response to a request for such information in Issue 36, while Michael Pierce describes some Christmas FDCs bearing the Westerwood brand name, another one associated with Uncover Corporation whose roster also included Fleetwood and Kingswood. Michael also shares several hand-made cachets produced by a Calgary dentist.

Members Bob Vogel and Gary Dickinson have both published BNAPS handbooks about FDCs featuring Caneco and H&E products for the autumn season. These are both noted within.

Submitting Articles to First Impressions

Articles may be submitted in writing or MS Word, and scans should be in JPEG format at 300 dpi. E-mail submissions should be sent to Gary Dickinson at gandbdickinson@shaw.ca or mailed to Gary at 648 San Michelle Road, Kelowna, B.C., Canada, V1W 2J1.

CANADIAN FIRST DAY COVERS BY THE VAN DAHLS

by Gary Dickinson

Al and Arlene Van Dahl were residents of Albany, OR who published general purpose FDCs that could be used in any country for any stamp issue. Although they did not service their FDCs, they did market them through their philatelic newspaper, *Western Stamp Collector*, which was published from 1933 until it was succeeded by *Stamp Collector* in 1981. Their Canadian market appears to have been rather substantial and their cacheted covers are still readily available on the resale market.

Two main sources of information were drawn upon for this review. The first is a pair of articles by Ralph Nafziger which appeared in the periodical *First Days* more than 30 years ago. (1, 2) No other studies of the Van Dahl cachets are known. The second major source of information is the website of the BNAPS FDC Study Group located at www.canadafdc.org, and search "Van Dahl."

The Nafziger articles provided the typology that is used here along with some background information about the Van Dahls and their operation. The articles have no information about FDCs for Canadian stamp issues. The website is the source of most of the cachets used in the illustrations accompanying this article.

The Cachet Makers

Al Van Dahl (sometimes noted as Vandahl) was born in the Netherlands in 1884 but grew up in Sweden where he trained as a pharmacist but left the university to become a printer. He worked in Sweden, Germany, and Canada as a printer before immigrating to the United States in 1911. Photographs of Al and Arlene Van

Dahl in their later years are shown in Figures 1 and 2.



Figure 1. Al Van Dahl



Figure 2. Arlene Van Dahl

Arlene Van Dahl was born in Illinois in 1895 and married Al in Chicago in 1914. The couple ran newspapers in four different states before moving to Oregon where they both worked as linotype operators. Three more moves in the Pacific Northwest

brought them back to Mill City, OR where they bought the weekly newspaper, the *Mill City Logue*, in 1930.

During the early 1930s the Van Dahls gradually increased the philatelic content of their newspaper until the *Logue* incorporated the *Western Stamp Collector* with a circulation of 8,000 in 1935. Arlene served as editor of the philatelic section of the newspaper.

Beginning in 1935 they advertised blank white envelopes and a wide variety of philatelic supplies for sale. At the suggestion of a former editor, they began to print cacheted envelopes for sale and included their first advertisement for them in the April 20, 1948 issue.

The Van Dahls kept no records of how many cacheted envelopes were printed or sold, or of first or last dates of use for each type. Almost all of their covers were sold without servicing except for a few for each American stamp issue that they made for their own use or for friends.

Al Van Dahl died at the age of 70 on March 3, 1954 but Arlene carried on with the newspaper business. In July, 1976 she discontinued the merchandising and commercial printing departments of the business to concentrate on the newspaper. The remaining 25,000 cacheted envelopes were sold to an Oregon stamp dealer who re-sold them over the following years. Arlene Van Dahl died on October 27, 1992 at the age of 97.

Cachet Types

Ralph Nafziger's four types of general purpose cachets could have been identified as two main types, each with two subtypes, but his categories are used here for comparative purposes. He noted such factors as earliest and latest known ads, earliest and latest known FDCs, types of envelopes, and prices. As he didn't consider the use of the

covers in other postal systems, some information for Canada is compared with the American data here.

Nafziger's Type I (Figure 3) features a circle enclosing an outline map of North and South America. The only text, "First Day Cover," is in script.

The first known use of Type 1 in the U.S. was on August 11, 1948 while the first known use in Canada was for Scott 282, the stamp commemorating Newfoundland joining confederation, on April 1, 1949 or some eight months after the first American use of this type. (See Figure 4)

The last known use of Type I in the U.S. was on February 27, 1959 while the last Canadian use was Scott 349 on November 1, 1954.

The Van Dahl cachets are all unsigned but are readily identifiable by their designs.



Figure 3, Type I



Figure 4

The only feature differentiating between Types I and II is that in the second instance the text is printed in all capital letters. (Figure 5) This type's first American use was on January 2, 1952 while the last was June 25, 1958. The earliest and latest known uses in Canada were for Scott 318 on November 3, 1952 and Scott 370 on June 5, 1957. This again represents a somewhat shorter active life of Type II for Canadian than for American stamps.



Figure 5, Type II

Type III (Figure 6) represents a different cachet design than the two previous versions although the global figure is still present. A large quantity of envelopes shown encircling the globe suggests the increasing use of airmail for delivering the mail. The figure on the globe probably represents a polar perspective.

This cachet was first used in the U.S. on November 20, 1953 and in Canada on April 1, 1954 while last usage was on December 8, 1977 in the U.S. and June 30, 1966 in Canada although the latter date is an outlier as the next latest use was October 12, 1961.

The Van Dahl Type IV general purpose cachet is shown in Figure 7. It differs only slightly from Type III. The easiest way of differentiating between the

two is by the font of the "o" in "cover." The hole in the donut is wider and rounder in Figure 6 compared with Figure 7 where it is narrower. Additional differences include a different shape to the letter "c" in "cover" and differences in the pile of mail near the bottom of the globe.



Figure 6, Type III



Figure 7, Type IV

Type IV was first used with an American stamp on January 26, 1961 and lastly on December 8, 1977. Strangely, Type IV appears on a June 10, 1954 cachet for the Canadian Wilding issue (Scott 337-341) as shown in Figure 8 but the next use didn't occur until April 19, 1961 which is more in keeping with the U.S. first usage. It isn't clear how a cachet that probably wasn't

created until 1961 came to be used with a properly dated day of issue postmark some seven years earlier.

Nafziger did not record a last day of use for Type IV, likely because it would have occurred after the remaining stock was sold by Arlene Van Dahl in 1976. The last known use in Canada occurred in 1971.



Figure 8

From the entries on the FDC Study Group website for Van Dahl cachets, Type III appears to have seen the greatest use from among the four types. The other three types were used in quantities that were similar to each other.

There is considerable overlap in the periods of usage for Types I through III but almost no overlap between Types I through III and Type IV. No uses of Types I through III were reported after 1962 whereas the majority of Type IV uses were after 1962.

Approximately half of the Van Dahl cachets are postmarked before Al's death in 1954 and half after that. Almost all of the Type I and II cachets are postmarked before his death and almost all of the Type III and IV cachets are cancelled afterwards.

Use of Colour

All of the Van Dahl cachets were printed in two colours, but a large number of different colours were used to vary the combinations for each type of cachet. The text, always reading "First Day Cover," was

printed in one colour and the artwork, always including a globe, was printed in the other.

Most of the colours that were used in printing the cachets were relatively unobtrusive browns or blues, but there was an occasional dramatic colour such as the pink illustrated in Figure 9 or the orange shown in Figure 10.



Figure 9



Figure 10

Although Nafziger did not report the various Van Dahl colour combinations consistently, he did indicate that there were at least 24 different versions among the four types of cachets.

The FDC Study Group website shows at least 19 different colour combinations among the four types of cachets, with blue lettering on brown artwork the predominant variety.

Type I had the greatest variety with seven different colour combinations. Listing the colour of the lettering first, the varieties included: blue & brown, blue & orange,

green & brown, green & pink, red & blue, red & brown, and red & green.

Type II had five different combinations including: blue & brown, blue & orange, pink & green, red & blue, and red & green.

Types III and IV had fewer different colour combinations than Types I and II, and the lettering is always blue. Type III colours were: blue & brown, blue & olive, and blue and orange.

Type IV combinations are blue & brown, blue & dark brown, blue & green, and blue & olive.

Errors and Oddities

Given that the Van Dahl general purpose cachets were used for Canadian stamp issues for some two decades, there are relatively few recorded errors and oddities.

Figure 11 shows the text of a Type II cachet without the second colour for the artwork. Figure 12 has a misplaced blue text on a Type II, while Figure 13 has the text on a Type I cachet shifted to the right. These three are all the result of errors occurring during the printing process.

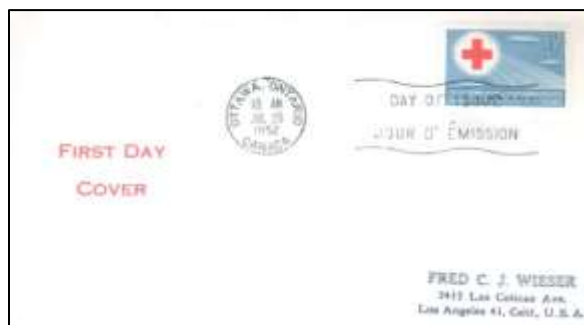


Figure 11

Figure 14 provides a good news-bad news story. The good news is that this is the only Van Dahl cachet recorded thus far for a Newfoundland stamp. The bad news is that the cover presents a cachet that wasn't created until a decade later. It is indeed a FDC for Newfoundland #249 dated June 17,

1939 with a typed cachet at the top of the envelope, but the cachet is obviously an add-on in two colours.



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

References

1. Ralph H. Nafziger. "Oregon Cachet-makers Al and Arlene Van Dahl" *First Days*. Vol. 27, No. 6 (August 1982), pp. 820-828.
2. Ralph H. Nafziger. "Oregon Cachet-makers Update." *First Days*. Vol. 32, No. 6 (September 1987), p. 748.

HOW I STORE MY FIRST DAY COVERS

by Greg Joughin

I came across *First Impressions* thanks to some Googling a few years back, and I now find myself at least skimming the newsletter pretty regularly. I saw the question in Issue 36 about how collectors collect and store their FDCs, and figured I'd answer, despite not being a member of the FDC Study Group.

First, just a bit of background. I started collecting Canada Post Official FDCs as a kid in the early 1980s, and I now have at least one configuration of each OFDC issue since they were first offered for sale in April, 1971. My aim is to collect an example of *all* OFDC configurations deliberately issued by Canada Post, which I'm guessing will take years—I expect it'll be a waiting game for some of the errors, special issues, and oddities.

I physically store my primary collection of covers upright in Ikea Pingla cardboard boxes. They're like banker's boxes but smaller—at 28cm × 37cm × 18cm—and no longer seem to be available in Canada. Luckily I bought what's likely more than a lifetime's supply before they were discontinued. I chose these boxes because they're a decent size for a single row of covers—think old-school library card catalogue—and also because they're opaque, to keep the UV away.

From Amazon I buy black chipboard sheets which I custom-cut to size and use as dividers between years, and at both ends of each box, to keep everything flat. I get between two and six years of covers in each box, depending on the era. Each issue is contained in a 1.5 mil (i.e. 0.0015") clear

polypropylene envelope, which I sourced in two sizes—5" × 8" ones from U-Line for small, regular covers, and 6.75" × 10.75" ones from Staples for the largest sizes. One of these years I'll see about putting labels on one of the top corners of each polypropylene envelope, so it will be easier to flip through the middle of a year and pluck out the issue I'm looking for.

All my duplicates are sorted by date, consolidated by year in unsealed polyethylene freezer bags, and stored in fairly large, clear, polypropylene storage bins. This is less rigorous than my primary collection, but still pretty organized and not bad as far as archival storage conditions go.

This system that I've honed in on is relatively inexpensive—much cheaper than Lighthouse Vario pages and binders, for example—and I think it has a lot of advantages. For example, my system lets me pull any cover randomly, lets me see both the front and the back of each cover, facilitates slow and random organization by date and then by Chung & Narbonne catalogue number, and allows me to add items anywhere throughout my collection without massively upsetting the organization of existing covers. I can't imagine doing most of that with two- or four-pocket pages in a binder.

I'll be quite interested to read about what others are doing in an upcoming issue! You could also contact me at: gjoughin+fdc@gmail.com.

FLEETWOOD, KINGSWOOD, AND WESTERWOOD

by Michael Pierce

Fleetwood—848, Kingswood—226, Westerwood-0. That was the tally of the number of FDCs by brand name on the FDC Study Group website (www.canadafdc.org) at the end of August, 2018.

The Fleetwood brand first appeared with a Canadian stamp issue in 1947 and was last seen in 1986. The Kingswood brand was used extensively from 1970 until 1976 on FDCs that also carried the Fleetwood parent name.

Both Fleetwood and Kingswood FDCs were products of Unicover Corporation based in Cheyenne, Wyoming which sold its Fleetwood Division to the Mystic Stamp Company of Camden, New York on April 2, 2007.

Unicover applied for a U.S. federal trademark for Westerwood on August 12, 1985 to provide the following goods and services:

“Philatelic products, namely stamps, stickers, illustrated or printed envelopes, cards and panels of paper or paperboard on which stamps and/or cancellations are or are intended to be affixed for philatelic purposes, and printed philatelic album pages.”

The application included the note that the “First Use Anywhere” of the trademark was on January 1, 1969.

The year after Westerwood’s trademark was registered it made its first, and apparently only, appearance on Canadian FDCs for a set of Christmas stamps issued on October 7, 1970. The set included five-5 cent stamps, five-6 cent stamp, and one 10 and one 15 cent denomination. They were assigned Scott catalogue numbers 519 to 530.

The stamps were all designed by school children and were selected from

among 50,000 entries by children under thirteen years of age who addressed the theme “What Christmas Means to Me.”

The FDCs for these stamps are attached to album pages identified as “Westerwood by Fleetwood.” The pages for the twelve stamps are identical except for a note recognizing the designer in the upper left corner. They are three-hole punched to fit in an album or binder, and have three slots to hold the cover securely in place. The covers themselves carry the Kingswood brand and the cachet appears to have been created by a child. One album sheet for each of the four stamp denominations is shown in Figures 1 through 4 below and an example of the note recognizing the designer is given in Figure 5. Anyone knowing of other Westerwood album pages is invited to contact the editor.



Figure 1. Scott 519



Figure 2. Scott 524



Figure 3. Scott 529



Figure 4. Scott 530



Figure 5. Note for Scott 530 enlarged

TWO NEW BOOKS FROM BNAPS

First Day Covers of the H&E Stamp Company

Gary Dickinson

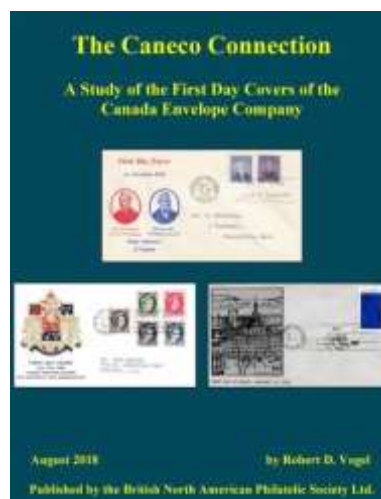
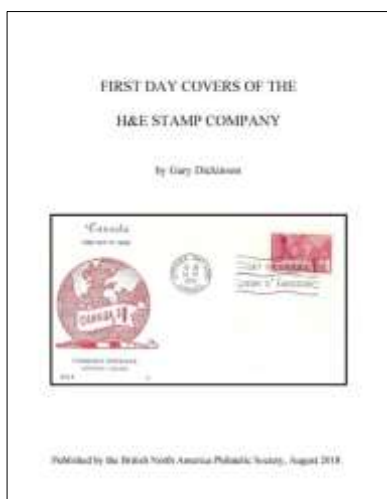
Released August 2018.

86 pages, 8.5x11, spiral bound.

Colour C\$32.00 [ISBN 978-1-927119-91-4].

First Day Covers of the H&E Stamp Company is Gary Dickinson's fourteenth BNAPS book about different aspects of Canadian First Day Covers. In this volume, he describes and illustrates the contribution of a small Ottawa firm, the H&E Stamp Company, founded by Earl Graziadei and Harold Crick during the 1950s and 1960s, that could easily be considered the high

point of Canadian FDC publishing. From its beginning in 1955 until the business closed in 1972, the small company, operating primarily from Graziadei's basement print shop, was one of the leaders in the Canadian FDC marketplace. For a few short years in the mid-1950s, their cacheted covers were the de facto leaders of the pack.



The Caneco Connection - A Study of the First Day Covers of the Canada Envelope Company

Robert D. Vogel

Released August 2018.

326 pages, 8.5x11, spiral bound.

Colour C\$112.00 [ISBN 978-1-927119-92-1].

In 1954, the Canada Envelope Company (Caneco) began to prepare not only First Day Covers with suitable cachets for the stamp issue being commemorated, but also printed inserts with information relating to

the subject(s) of the stamp issue. The FDCs were usually addressed to specific representatives of CANECO customers, but some were addressed to individuals without a company reference, likely

friends of employees and, eventually, possibly to FDC collectors who had asked to be included in the mailings. After studying his collection, Bob found that other companies were utilizing the same envelope but with their own return addresses on the reverse. This was cause for further study. Starting in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Bob found Elliott-Marion, Dominion Engineering Works and James H. Wilding, all Montreal businesses,

choosing the same cachet and in most cases similar information inserts. When Caneco ceased production of their own cachets in 1973 and substituted Rosecraft and NR Covers cachets, James H. Wilding and Dominion Engineering Works followed suit. These two companies continued with their programs until 1975 and 1983 respectively. Caneco continued their program until 1984 when they ceased to be in business.

A CACHET-MAKING DENTIST: SCANS FROM MICHAEL PIERCE

Member Michael Pierce sent along scans of the four FDCs shown below. Figure 1 is a business corner card for Dr. R.A. MacRae, a Calgary dentist who went to the trouble of having his business corner card and the “First Day of Issue” cachet printed in script. The cover is postmarked on the day of issue of the fourth and final stamp in the Maple Leaves in Season set issued in 1971. The remaining covers are for the three bird stamps issued on July 23, 1969. The cachets appear to be hand-drawn with coloured pencils. The envelopes are self-addressed by Dr. MacRae and probably are the more customary office stationery.



Figure 1



Figure 3



Figure 2



Figure 4