

# SQUARED CIRCLE POSTMARKS OF CANADA

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Updated, October 2022

Prepared by the BNAPS Squared Circle Study Group



Edited by Rick Friesen, PhD

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## **HANDBOOK UPDATES**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Handbook, released in January 2020, has been updated to reflect new reports and findings as of October 2022. It is anticipated that future updates to the handbook will be published on an annual or biennial basis going forward.

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## PREFACE

The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the handbook of the *Squared Circle Postmarks of Canada* had its beginnings at the 2018 BNAPEX Convention in Quebec City where, at a meeting of the BNAPS Squared Circle Study Group, it was decided to update the 2001 5<sup>th</sup> edition handbook. Being recently retired and looking for a new project to work on, I volunteered to lead the effort and edit the new edition. The volume you are now reading is the culmination of that effort.

From the beginning, the plan was to use the information that Jack Gordon and the Study Group had accumulated for the 5<sup>th</sup> edition as the baseline for the information for each hammer. The new edition would build on that information by adding data that had been reported in the intervening years in the *Roundup Annex* (the newsletter of the Squared Circle Study Group), gleaned from auction catalogues and internet sites (such as eBay), and contributed by members of the Study Group. We specifically polled the Study Group for updated information on the “high RF” hammers (i.e., hammers with RF70 or greater), as well as strikes on the 3¢ Jubilee and 2¢ Map stamps from the “rare” hammers (i.e., those having  $\leq 10$  strikes reported in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition handbook). I would like to thank each member of the Study Group who supplied data on the stamps/covers in their collections. Without this information, the new edition of the handbook would not be as comprehensive as it is.

One of the shortcomings of the previous handbook editions was that they were hardcopy books, and updates were not possible without reprinting the entire volumes. Therefore, it was also decided that the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the handbook was to be an electronic book so that updates could be made more easily and at regular intervals. Accompanying this change was a complete reworking of the way the information was displayed - a templated page was created and was used for each hammer, and for those very high RF hammers, each individual documented strike of the hammer is recorded. We have attempted to include as much information as possible for each ERD and LRD strike, as well as those strikes having indicia errors, including the stamp issue on which the strikes exist and the reference for the strike.

Those familiar with the 5<sup>th</sup> edition handbook will notice the addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> state of the Nassagaweya and Kaslo hammers as well as the absence of information on the so called “squared circle precursors”. It was felt that these postmarks, more accurately referred to as “barred circles” did not really fit into a handbook on Squared Circles - the nomenclature of the postmark as being a precursor to the squared circle is arbitrary and they really deserve a handbook of their own.

The RF values for the high RF hammers have been updated if required, and the new population reports for the 3¢ Jubilee and 2¢ Map stamps have been updated as well. This information can be found in a summary table in Appendix 1. We have attempted to illustrate representative and key strikes for each hammer. Many of these images come from the Sparks Auctions catalogues of the auctions of the Ted Kerzner Squared Circle collection that took place in 2017 and 2018. We would like to thank Sparks Auctions for allowing us to use these images in this handbook. We would also like to thank the many members of the Study Group who submitted images of stamps/covers in their collections and allowed us to include them in the handbook. I hope that

you agree that the inclusion of these images makes the handbook much more visually pleasant to peruse.

Finally, I would like to thank two members of the Study Group who have contributed a significant amount of time and effort in proofreading the manuscript. Brian Copeland reviewed the Western hammers and many of the Ontario hammers, and Gary Arnold (the editor of the *Roundup Annex*) handled the remainder of the hammers. Both of these gentlemen have done an excellent job and have caught errors made in entering the data. Thanks to you both! It is, however, likely that we have missed other errors or have omitted critical information. If such is the case, please forward this information to me for inclusion in updated versions of the handbook. Also, if you have other squared circle strikes on stamps or covers that merit addition to the current handbook, please forward these to me so that they can be reported in the *Roundup Annex* and added to future editions of the handbook. I can be reached by email at [rickfriesen5@gmail.com](mailto:rickfriesen5@gmail.com).

I hope you enjoy looking through this new 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the handbook of the *Squared Circle Postmarks of Canada* and hope that it proves to be an important source of information for your collecting pastime!

Rick Friesen, PhD  
Vice-chairman of the Squared Circle Study Group  
Kirkland, Quebec  
December 2019

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 WHAT IS A SQUARED CIRCLE?

Of the thousands of post offices in Canada active during the squared circle period, which may properly be considered 1893 to 1900, and beyond in some cases, most used duplexes or circular date stamps (CDS, with a full circle surround) or split circles (which lacked the full circle surround). The squared circle cancelling instruments were handmade from a steel block, with the rim lettering carefully cut out, and slots provided for the movable indicia, and fitted with a wooden handle.

One precursor squared circle was used briefly at Ottawa in 1880-81. The idea behind this postmark was probably the many squared circles in use at that time in Great Britain, the Colonies, Italy and other stamp-issuing entities. This postmark is unique in having a small circle diameter (only about 18 mm) and in the horizontal layout of the city name. There has been some discussion of how this postmark was created, possibly by adding horizontal bars to an existing city delivery postmark, but evidence is not conclusive on this point. Jarrett lists it as #371, and it is rarely seen.



It is believed that the intent of the squared circle as devised by the manufacturer, Pritchard & Andrews, Ottawa, in 1893 was to act as a duplex canceller, i.e., to provide a legible dated record of the dispatching office and at the same time render the stamps(s) invalid for future postal use, but in a more aesthetically pleasing manner than the typical duplex. Some offices would use the squared circle as a backstamp on incoming or transiting mail, but it is significant that receiving marks in those larger cities having squared circles are almost always split circles or CDS.

As evidenced by the many uneven or illegible strikes encountered, the squared circle was difficult to use and, in some cases, it was abandoned rather quickly with a return to earlier types of postmarks. The clerks in some offices mastered its use and produced long runs. In the larger cities, cancelling the mail was a chore requiring productivity improvement and, with the advent of widespread use of cancelling machines in 1898, the amount of “specialist material” declined.

### 1.2 INTRODUCING THE SQUARED CIRCLES OF 1893

As described by Dr. Whitehead in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Handbook, his article in *BNA Topics* in December 1951 was the first systematic attempt to list and describe these fascinating markings. Other collectors had also observed them, and put them aside for possible later study. It is significant that many of the early collectors of this marking were Railway Post Office collectors, and/or illustrated cover collectors.

The 1893 squared circles, Types 1 and 2, seem to have everything to please the postmark collector: wide geographical distribution, a spread over several popular stamp issues including the Small Queens, Jubilees, Maple Leaves, Numerals and Maps, varying periods of use, coloured cancels in some cases, towns of great rarity, and (fortunately) towns of great plentitude.

## The Two Main Types of Squared Circles of 1893:



Type 1, having a surround of eight thin horizontal bars, with thicker vertical side-pieces, was first issued to offices in April, 1893. Only 25 towns used it before it was superseded by Type 2 in June, 1893. They are listed in this handbook alphabetically regardless of province. Jarrett lists it as #372. As regards the early demise of this variety, it may be conjectured that a more robust design of horizontal bars was preferable. However, the Ottawa hammer stood up rather well to heavy long-term use. Note that 23 Type 1 hammers had side dots and 2 had curved lines separating the upper and lower lettering arcs.



Type 2, having a surround of six thick horizontal bars, with vertical side-pieces of varying height and thickness, was first issued to using offices in June, 1893. Over 280 offices used it, some in more than one device sequentially or contemporaneously. London used both Type 1 and 2, as well as contemporary markings of CDS and multi-ring types - a rich field for study. Variations in height and thickness of the side-pieces sometimes afford a means of identifying strikes of hammers that are otherwise similar in town name.

All Type 1 and Type 2 hammers were issued with thin horizontal bars separating the top, centre and bottom slots for the movable indicia. These 'indicia bars' provided support and kept the pieces of indicia type in proper alignment. Both hammer Types were manufactured by Pritchard & Andrews, Ottawa.

Due to the handmade nature of these instruments, certain variations in the bars and cutout openings within them are occasionally encountered and these sub-types are enumerated below.

### The Sub-types of Type 2 Hammers:

Type 2 (1) Jarrett's #373

Sub-Type (2) Top bar concave on its lower edge (Farnham, St. Gregoire, Sutton, Arnprior, Cornwall, Dunnville, Glamis, Thamesford, Estevan, Vancouver)



(3) Bottom bar concave on its upper edge (St. John Ham. I, Gore Bay, Lakefield, Wooler, Napinka & Win. MC No. 1)

(4) Both top and bottom bars cut in combining (2) and (3) (Melbourne, Cobden, Port Hope, Que. & Camp. MC Local No. 20, Souris & Win. MC No. 2)



- (5) Removal of metal from top and bottom bars forming thin bars (second states of Alma, Nassageweya, Wingham; the first two providing impressions of variable bar width)



- (6) Machining of centres of top & bottom bars forming two thin top bars & two thin bottom bars (Que. & Camp MC Local No. 20, second and later states)

- (7) All corners cut and rounded off (second state of Formosa Hammer 2, Kaslo)



- (8) The surround of bars has been drastically cut down leaving an interrupted circle (third state of Bobcaygeon, second states of Schreiber, Nanaimo)

- (9) All fixed rim lettering, including side dots, removed (one nude hammer)

- (10) Removal of indicia bars (second state of Bobcaygeon)



### Multiple-Hammer Cities and Towns:

Most offices used only one squared circle hammer, but two or more hammers were used in certain cities and towns. Separation and identification of individual hammers is done by comparison of lettering (size, shape and position) and the dimensions and thickness of the vertical side-pieces. In some cases, the several hammers were used only sequentially and a full date will identify the hammer unequivocally. In other cases, there is a complex chronology which this handbook will attempt to make clear.

Two hammers were issued to Bleeker St., Toronto, the first being a spelling error (Bleeker St.).

### Appearance of the Squared Circle Hammers:

We are fortunate that several of these devices have survived, enabling examination to determine what they looked like and how the movable indicia were changed. The Port Maitland hammer was described by Douglas Crawford in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Handbook as follows: "It is 4 ¾ inches in height and weighs 5 ounces. The handle is made of birch hardwood with a small brass reinforcing collar where it enters the steel cancelling head. Upon removing the handle from the head, the slots of inserting the movable type bars are made visible. The pieces of date type are made with a T section at the top, so that they are held in place when the handle is screwed in. The face of the



canceller measures about 25 x 28 mm, larger than the definitive stamps of the period so that a really full strike requires a sideways impression on a Jubilee or Map stamp, or a horizontal pair of small queens, etc.”

Several of the surviving devices, including Port Maitland, Gore Bay, Grafton, Mount Brydges, Nassagaweya, Palmerston, Sutton West. Waterloo (Ont.), and Nanaimo were turned over to the National Postal Museum in Ottawa.

**Damaged Hammers:** Many of the squared-circle hammers that saw extensive use show a worn appearance in later strikes. A few others show one-time events which became permanent features of the hammer in later strikes. Where applicable, these damages are documented on the individual hammer pages.

### 1.3 THE PROOF BOOKS OF CANADIAN POSTMARKS

In 1959 at the time of writing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Handbook, only one proof book of the Pritchard & Andrews (P&A) devices had been recovered, and that consisting of 193 pages in partial and damaged condition. More recently, additional books have become available for examination resulting in Robert A. Lee’s multi-volume set, “Proof Strikes of Canada”, which includes many types of cancellers, not just squared circles.

The proof book is about 14 by 20 inches, a large ledger type, with kraft-paper pages (deterioration over time is a major problem with documents). The proofs were struck on various pieces of paper, mostly white, and then pasted onto the page. The first entry is February 26, 1876, on the front page. Subsequent entries were continued to the back of the book, and then they started backwards towards the front, making entries on the backs of the pages already used. The last entry is April 30, 1895. Since the requisition numbers start well into the 70’s, it is clear that there are 3 to 5 pages missing from the book. Therefore, proofs from the last several months of 1895 on the backs of these pages are also missing.

The well-authenticated existence of strikes for several squared circle hammers on or before the proof date, in spite of a necessary allowance for delivery time, causes one to wonder. It may be that personnel of Pritchard & Andrews set up the hammers before shipment with what they thought might be the dates of arrival of the new hammer at its destination. This subject of unexpectedly early dates of use bears further study.

### 1.4 PERIODS OF USE

A study of the earliest and latest reported dates of use (ERD and LRD, respectively) given in the later sections of this handbook should be of some interest. An amazing diversity in period of use of individual hammers will be apparent. Some hammers of both Types 1 and 2 seem to have soon been lost, damaged or simply laid aside. In most cases damage can be ruled out, for even Type 1 with its thin line bars must have been robust enough as shown by the multitude of Ottawa strikes produced between 1893 and 1905. As for Type 2, with its beefier bars, termination of use due to damage seems improbable.

Loss possibly accounts for the brevity of some reported periods of use. This may account for the short lives of Great Village, Lennoxville, Matane, Stanstead and some others, including several

of the more recently discovered rarities which were only reported in one or two examples. If loss is the reason in such cases, why were replacement squared circle hammers not requisitioned? Was a different type of canceller ordered on the next requisition due to dislike of the squared circle? And, too, was it dislike which led to the cutting down of the hammers at Schreiber, Nanaimo and (later) Bobcaygeon?

**Exclusive Use:** Almost, if not complete, exclusive use of the squared circle hammer during a well-defined period is found in many towns. The result is that many of these strikes are common, happily so in some cases, for their history is full of fascination. When time marks are used, calendar collections can be assembled leading to matched pairs or sets on some days.

**Occasional Use:** Some offices seem to have put aside their squared circle hammers after a short period of initial use. Later, by several years in some cases, they were brought back into service again for one day or for a substantial period of time.

**Later Revivals:** Beyond recording extraordinarily late usage, this field has been relatively less explored. Late strikes have been reported for Halifax Hammer 2 (1908), Laurentides (1920), Magog (about 1946), Riviere du Loup Station (1913, 1946), Gore Bay (1928), Hamilton (1916), London Type 2 (1954), Port Arthur (1944), Waterloo, ONT (1922 and 1963), Woodville (1915), Morden (1946), and Prince Albert (1956).

**Survivals:** Some squared circle hammers have been found, mostly in small post offices, after the onset of organized squared circle collecting in 1951: Maccan, Port Maitland, Baie Verte, Gore Bay, Grafton, Nassagaweya. Most of these have been called in through official channels. It seems unlikely at this date that any others are still resting in the little wooden boxes in which they were issued, with type for indicia. In the larger offices, obsolete postmarking devices are turned in promptly, or so we have been told by postal officials.

## 1.5 SQUARED CIRCLE INDICIA

Both Type 1 and Type 2 hammers are alike in one important respect - between the town name at the top and the province at the bottom are three blank spaces separated by a pair of horizontal indicia bars (these can be faint or broken in appearance at times). These blank spaces were intended for the indicia consisting of the time mark (TM) if any (many small offices thought it unnecessary to use a time mark, in which case the top slot generally is blank), the month (MM), day (DD), and year (YY). The typical representation in the three indicia spaces is TM in the top space, month/day in the middle space, and year in the bottom space (TM/MM DD/YY).

**1. The Time Mark (TM):** The great variety in TM's and the frequency of changes at some offices have resulted in a field of specialty which has become very popular among squared circle collectors. The time of clearance may be expressed by clock marks (AM, PM, 7PM, 12NOON, etc.), by numerals (1, 2, etc.), or by letters (A, B, C, etc.). NT presumably meant too late for dispatch by train or boat that day, or after closing of the customer window.

**Clock Marks:** Many towns were content with AM, PM. At Toronto, one finds a large variety of hourly marks of varying rarity. Similarly, in later periods at the busy office at York Street there was some diversity, expressed rather differently than at the Toronto main office, but again of varying rarity.

**Numerals:** 1, 2 (evidently denoting AM, PM) can be found at several offices. Longer series are also found: Paris 1, 2 3 (very early usage); Belleville 2, 3, 4 (1 being a contemporary circular date stamp); 1, 2, 3, 4 at Halifax, Kingston and Peterborough; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in later usage of the London Type 1; 1 to 8 (early) and 10 to 23 (late) at Ottawa; 8,10,12,15-18,21 at Port Arthur; 1 to 10 at Winnipeg, and 1 to 24 (some extremely rare) at Hamilton.

**Letters:** A, B, C at Owen Sound in later years, and A, B, C, D at Paris (most examples) evidently signify 1, 2, 3 or 1, 2, 3, 4.

**Omitted:** In some offices where TM's were normally used, strikes can be found with these omitted, described in this book as 'blank above', 'blank', or 'bl'. They could have resulted from clerical forgetfulness in some cases, or Sunday dates where the window hours were reduced. At Halifax, a blank time mark slot is typically a case of a mislaid type. In most offices, TM's were never used and this space is blank.

**Star above date:** A small star or asterisk was in the top slot at Canning (all strikes) and at Stouffville (some dates in 99 and 00). It is an ornament, not a TM.

**Changes in Indicia Style:** Changes from one type of TM to another occurred at some offices. As long as time was indicated, a fixed style of indicia was not rigidly enforced.

**2. The Date:** Almost without exception, this shows the month, day and year. Numerals are used for the day and year, while months typically use a 2-character slug: JA, FE, MR, AP, MY, JU, JY, AU, SP, OC, NO, DE. Partial strikes showing -A, -R, -C, -O can be identified precisely; partial strikes showing -E, -P, -Y, -U are more ambiguous. After 1900, one occasionally finds 3-character slugs in use (JAN, JUN, JUL, NOV) but the squared circle hammers were not so equipped as issued. Therefore, these characters were borrowed from other types of canceling devices. Very rarely, a 'Quaker date' is seen, e.g., 29 2/96 for FE29/96. Typically, the month/day (MM DD) line is in the centre slot, with a 2-digit year (YY) below: MM DD/YY. A few towns (e.g., Martintown) placed the day first: DD MM. In reading the digits, 3 can resemble 5, a poorly struck 8 could look like a 3 but all true 3's are flat topped.

Three-line dates are not too common; MM/DD/YY may be found at Windsor, NS (in certain years), Matane, Formosa (late), Glammis (late), Listowel, and Merrickville (late).

**3. Error Indicia:** In this category we have inverted, omitted, misplaced, or error digits or month slugs in the date or TM, or in both. Inverted 8's are fairly common in all types of Canadian postmarks, including squared circles. Inverted 5's resemble 2's, and vice versa. Inverted 6's cannot be distinguished from 9's, but a 64 or 66 year date for a squared circle is clearly impossible. At a few of the larger offices where strikes are common, corrected versions of errors have been reported on the same day; such a matched pair is quite desirable material.

**4. Omitted or Weak Letters or Numerals:** Presumably, these are caused by the particular month slug being too short relative to other hammer features, including the other movable indicia, leading to difficulty in locking the head of the hammer after setting up the indicia.

**5. Nude Strikes:** These strikes lack any indicia - they are known for Ottawa (after 1903), Petitcodiac (1895-6), Farnham (after 1908), Glencoe (1899 period), Peterborough (after 1903), Toronto, Waterloo ONT, and Woodstock ONT (1899 period), Winnipeg Hammer 2; also London East, Wolfville and Hochelaga (one strike each); also partial nudes of Springhill Mines and Port

Perry. One hammer (believed to be Montreal) had rim lettering removed and received precancel usage.

## **1.6 MATCHED GROUPS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE**

The cities with two or more different TM's in use provide material for the increasingly popular assembling of matched pairs or groups. A pair of strikes, one with TM AM and the other with TM PM, used on the same day (as at Truro, St. John, Charlottetown, St. Hyacinthe, Brantford, Dundas, Waterloo ONT, Windsor, etc.) constitute a matched pair. A pair of Picton strikes with 1 and 2 above on the same day would provide a similar opportunity.

Great progress has been made with the popular longer series: Ottawa (1-8 inclusive), Hamilton (1-24 inclusive) and the Winnipeg hammers (1-10 inclusive, a more complex matter due to the frequent use of two hammers on the same day, often sharing the same TM's). For Hamilton, it seems clear that the TM's represent hourly intervals. It was originally thought that the Ottawa series represented intervals of 3 hours each, but more recent research has cast doubt on this assumption.

## **1.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEMPORARY MARKINGS**

Collectors have found various contemporary markings in regular or occasional use at many squared-circle offices during the 1893-1900 period. Often these are CDS or sometimes duplex. They are of three-fold importance:

- They complete or extend the range of TM's used in the larger towns. More extensive matched groups including squared circles and other markings are made possible.
- Some of the larger offices, where strikes at a 3¢ rate are common, are curiously scarce on 8¢ stamps. In such cases it is often found that a CDS was used on registered mail, presumably at a separate window dedicated to that service.
- Those periods, long or short, during which the squared circle hammer was laid aside can better be determined. At some medium-sized offices, it seems likely that during certain years or months, 2 postmarking devices were set up at the beginning of the workday.

## **1.8 COVERS WITH SQUARED CIRCLES**

In contemporary philately, particularly if competitive exhibition is intended, the inclusion of covers in collections has become one of the principal activities and this is also true of our cult. Perhaps the chief reason is that a cover carrying a full impression of a desired postmark is superior to a partial impression on a loose stamp. Many years ago, removal of the back side of covers, yielding fronts, was a common practice in order to reduce the bulk of the accumulation. Unfortunately, whatever postal history was resident on the back was lost, including the possible use of the squared circle hammer as a receiving or transit backstamp. Nevertheless, cover fronts are counted as covers in the population reports, as are government postal cards and private post cards. Stamps on piece are counted as off-cover strikes.

Where partial strikes are commonly found on off-cover stamps, the postmaster literally followed the instruction to use the surround bars (duplex function) to deface the stamp and keep all or most of the dated portion of the postmark clear of the stamp design. Beginning in 1899, after machine cancellations with their free-standing dater hubs became common in larger cities, it became a common practice to use a free strike of the squared circle with a heavy grid to deface the stamp.

Government issued postal cards have a thickness and texture very suitable for clear strikes of squared circle postmarks. Some of the best quality strikes for quite a few hammers occur on these cards. Especially desirable are covers bearing squared circles of two or more towns.

The desire for a full strike is not the only reason for acquiring covers. There are other aspects of postal history found on covers that are quite as important to many collectors. Often, we find markings of other and varied kinds which enhance covers and make for an aesthetically pleasing item, as well as being of postal history interest.

Small reason, then, that squared circle covers are in demand. Some advanced collectors regard as their minimum requirements for any given hammer (even the rarities) one strike on cover, and one off-cover.

## 1.9 SQUARED CIRCLES ON SPECIAL STAMPS

This field began to be popular about the time the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Handbook was published in 1964. The 1897 Jubilee issue, especially the 1¢ and 3¢ whose colours are suitable for displaying postmarks, has received the most attention. Many collectors have also gone after the 2¢ Map stamps, 15¢ large Queens, 5¢ Registration and 10¢ Special Delivery issues.

**Jubilees** – extensive collections of over 200 towns were formed in the 1960's. The great rarities on Jubilees are St. Ann's, St. Hilarion, Sackville, Eastman, Notre Dame St. West, Cache Bay, Forest, Hawkesbury, Markdale, Pipestone, Estevan, Innisfail, Rossland, Sandon and a few others. Beeton and Cache Bay were unknown in 1981 but two examples each are known today.

An examination of the data in the handbook for early/late strikes shows that there ought to be about 260 possible towns; some of these probably must be ruled out due to 1897-8 being a period of non-use for particular hammers.

**2¢ Maps** – This was first available for use in early December, 1898 and may be found throughout 1899, and many strikes bear 1900 dates. Accordingly, many squared circle hammers (about 220 possible, not all reported yet) may be found on this attractive stamp. Any 1898 date is desirable since the domestic and USA letter rate remained at 3¢ until the new year, with Christmas day being probably the most desirable. Indicia varieties are important here too, but the range is more limited at this time. Matched groups can be assembled for Halifax, Paris, Toronto, York Street, and Victoria. This field has become very popular.

The **15¢ Large Queen** and **20¢ Widow Weeds** with their larger size are favourable for showing upright full strikes of the squared circles. The colour of the 20¢ is especially favourable. Expect to find strikes from mostly the larger towns. To the extent they were used on packages, strikes can be messy. The 1880 Ottawa also occurs on the 15¢.

The **5¢ Registration Stamp** was on its way out when these hammers began to be issued. Expect to find these stamps with 1893 or 94 strike dates, but dated copies are rare. Neither the green

colour nor the narrow shape are especially favourable for showing postmarks, but this doesn't deter our stalwart crew. Based on the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Handbook listings, there appear to be about 49 possibilities.

Their immediate successor, the **8¢ Small Queen**, makes a very satisfying alternative with collections of over 120 towns having been formed.

The **10¢ Special Delivery** of 1898, used through the rate change in 1922, is becoming a popular host for squared circles with about 20 towns reported so far. Again, the dark green is not very favourable for showing cancels, but the size is favourable.

Many of the most comprehensive collections of squared circles have been based on the **Small Queen** issues, principally the 3¢ and 1¢ values which are optimal in colour as well as low in catalog value.

An intriguing possibility focuses on the **1898 Maple Leaf** set (the **3¢ and 8¢** being of greatest interest) as well as their successors the **3¢ and 8¢ Numeral issues**. In time, these lie between the popular Jubilee and Map issues, so a wide selection of towns is already known to be possible.

Quite a few collectors in the last 20 years have given attention to the **1912-28 Admiral issues**, the 2¢ red and 1¢ green being the ones most often encountered; there appear to be 28 possibilities (Newport Landing, Baie Verte, River Louison, Danville, Farnham (nude), Iberville, Laurentides, Melbourne, Riviere du Loup Station, Bobcaygeon (State 3), Cheltenham, Gore Bay, Hamilton, London Type 2, Mount Brydges, Ottawa (nude), Port Arthur, Rockton, Roseneath, Schreiber, Waterloo (ONT), Woodville, Wooler, Morden, Selkirk, Prince Albert, Nanaimo (State 2), and Souris & Winnipeg MC No. 1.

Newport Landing, Gore Bay, London, Hamilton, Mount Brydges, Port Arthur and Waterloo are the most common. Bobcaygeon, Woodville and Riviere du Loup Station present the most difficulty. Many of these will require a cover or postcard.

## 1.10 RARITY FACTORS (RF)

Rarity factors are a method of ranking different hammers according to scarcity (or abundance, if you prefer). They are principally of value in guiding trading activities between collectors, but many dealers will factor in RF's (as well as other attributes) when setting prices for their material. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Handbook, RF's were set by consensus using a committee of advanced collectors who felt qualified to set RF's. In the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Handbook, quantities reported on roster forms by collectors were used to determine RF's, a less subjective approach. In preparing this handbook, we have kept the RF's listed in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Handbook in many cases, except for some rarities where additional strikes have come on the market. The schedule of RF's as established in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition is shown below:

<b>RF</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>RF</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>RF</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>RF</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
<b>2.5</b>	10000+	<b>35</b>	178-224	<b>80</b>	34-43	<b>160</b>	6
<b>5</b>	5400-9999	<b>40</b>	140-177	<b>90</b>	25-33	<b>170</b>	5
<b>7.5</b>	3000-5399	<b>45</b>	112-139	<b>100</b>	21-24	<b>180</b>	4
<b>10</b>	1400-2999	<b>50</b>	92-111	<b>110</b>	17-20	<b>200</b>	3
<b>15</b>	850-1399	<b>55</b>	77-91	<b>120</b>	14-16	<b>220</b>	2
<b>20</b>	500-849	<b>60</b>	65-76	<b>130</b>	11-13	<b>250</b>	1
<b>25</b>	325-499	<b>65</b>	56-64	<b>140</b>	9-10		
<b>30</b>	235-324	<b>70</b>	44-55	<b>150</b>	7-8		

It may readily be seen that one or more serious defects is built into a system where quantities reported on roster forms by collectors are used to determine RF's. Strikes in dealers' stocks awaiting sale are not counted, thus "common" towns, particularly those lacking time-mark interest, can be commoner than we think. Likewise strikes of RPO squared circles residing in collections of RPO collectors who were not polled (or other non-specialized collections) are not counted.

Counterbalancing this is the presumed greater demand for RPO strikes since two sets of collectors are seeking them. Also, collectors specializing in Western Province cancels of all types create an additional demand for the Western Provinces/Territories squared circles strikes which is not reflected in the above RF table. Perhaps someday someone will devise a better system.

## 2. EXPLANATION OF THE LISTINGS WHICH FOLLOW

On the subsequent pages, the data for each hammer or hammer state include the number of strikes reported by collectors (as off-cover strikes and covers), the assigned rarity factor (RF), an illustration of the Pritchard & Andrews proof strike/enhanced strike, and examples on- and off-cover. A strike date that is in **bold** print indicates that an image of the stamp/cover is shown below. Each hammer is further detailed by the use of several Tables.

The first table lists the **Proof Date**, the earliest recorded date of use (**ERD**), and the latest recorded date of use (**LRD**). **Periods of Use**, where breaks in usage are known, are also tabulated, again listing the ERD and LRD. Continuity of use can be inferred from this table - breaks in usage indicating the absence of strikes in the interval. Where available, the stamp issue upon which each of the ERD and LRD is found is listed, as is the reference for the strike (a listing of the abbreviations for these references is found in Appendix 6.1). For many of the hammers with a RF70 or greater, we have attempted to tabulate all of the known strikes.

The second table describes **Time Marks**, again listing ERD and LRD where warranted, and the **Indicia Arrangement** (normal being TM/MM DD/YY). Reports of matched pairs (e.g., AM/PM same date), and periods of use where breaks in usage are known, are also noted. For some of the larger cities, relative proportions of the different time marks are given, when meaningful data can be developed.

Where applicable, the third table gives information on **Indicia Errors** or **Indicia of Interest** (known so far; more are being discovered all the time). The error is described as accurately as possible but sometimes the description is ambiguous. For example, one collector might describe a month listing as 'upside down' while another collector might describe it as 'inverted' or 'backwards'. Without an image accompanying the description, the descriptor is occasionally insufficient as an identifier.

Where applicable, a fourth table describes **Hammer Damage**, while a fifth table lists the **Stamp Issues** known (so far) to bear strikes of that hammer (Note that in the QV Leaf and Numeral issues, 2/3c refers to the provisional issues. 2cp and 2cr refer to the 2c QV Numerals in purple and red, respectively. All other issues should be self-explanatory). In this latter table, specific information is given for the 3¢ Jubilee and 2¢ Map stamps, if relevant. For both of these 'special issues', the number of documented off-cover strikes (X OC) and covers (X C) is listed. A summary table can also be found in Appendix 6.2.

For those towns having more than 1 hammer, a table that enables the collector to distinguish between the multiple hammers (**Hammer Separation**) has been included, and it can be found at the end of the listings for the first hammer in the town set.