

Fancy Cancel & Miscellaneous Markings Study Group Newsletter

September 2026
No. 101

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BNAPEX2026 is almost here and we are looking forward to seeing many of you there. The theme for our Study Group meeting will be Quebec fancy cancels. Mike and I have put together a PowerPoint presentation but we hope that you will bring in material for a show and tell. If you prefer not to bring material in, please send us scans of Quebec cancels and we will integrate them into the presentation. Please send them by September 13 at the latest.

Thanks again to members who provided material for this issue. We DEFINITELY need contributions. Please take a minute or two to scan and send us your favourite fancy cancel. We all have a cover or a cancel that has a special place in our collections. Do you have any suggestions for an article or a regular feature you would like to see?

Please send contributions to Mike or Ron c/o Fancy Cancel Study Group

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BNAPEX 2026

BNAPEX 2026 in Valleyfield is shaping up to be a fantastic show, one not to be missed.

The Fancy Cancel and Miscellaneous Markings Study Group will be holding our session on Saturday September 19 at 1 pm in room A (Maresch Room).

Mike and Ron

Bishops Crossing - A New Find – Mike Halhed

Bill Longley reached out to me with a stack of 16 covers from Bishops' Crossing, Quebec. Not surprisingly, the PM there was Mr. Bishop. Bishop's Crossing was a station on the Quebec Central Railway, and East Angus became an important industrial center after the paper mill was established in the early 1880s (Wikipedia). Most of the correspondence was to Miss Orrissa Embury (b. 1860 d. 1903) in East Angus, Quebec and runs from April 1880 through to March 1897. Orrissa never married and died young from today's standards.

Some of the cancels in the correspondence are quite plain and don't warrant much mention (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Examples of some of the less than exciting cancels from Bishops Crossing.

Fortunately, there were several surprises! The biggest discovery is that L1635 is now identified as “Bishop’s Crossing” in an attractive purple ink (Figure 2). It was listed as Unknown in the third edition of the Fancy Cancel Handbook but is now confirmed on six covers, none-the-less. The ERD is MY 3 89 and LRD is AU 6 91.



Figure 2. Example of a cover proving the post office for L1635 as Bishops Crossing.

This next fancy has been assigned L1076 since it's quite close to the cross from Peterboro. Ron Smith has a fourth example with an ERD of October, 1885. LRD is SP 28 86. There are three examples in the correspondence, and this is the best example in a green/blue ink (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Example of a cover with L1076. This updates the cancel as 'a similar cancel was used at Bishops Crossing.

Lastly, we have a new addition, TBD, which could be described as a purple geometric with intersecting lines. Perhaps it's masonic in nature (Figure 4).

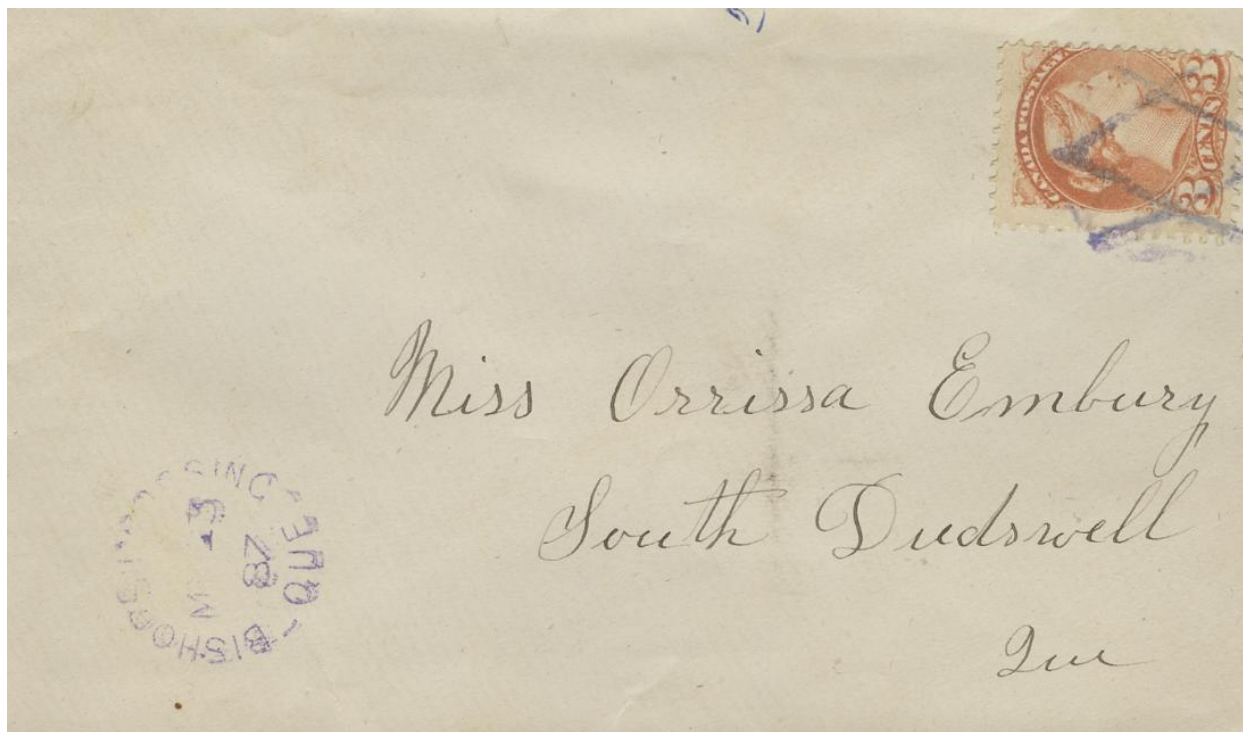


Figure 4. Example of a new cancel L17XX.

I'll bring the entire correspondence to BNAPEX in Valleyfield. – Mike

What is a fancy cancel? – Ron and Mike

We are a little disappointed in that we have not received any feedback on our article on “What is a Fancy Cancel?”.

This is your Study Group and we are sure that not everyone agrees with the opinions of just us two. Does this mean that we can add or delete cancel listings with impunity?

PLEASE send us articles, images, and opinions. We need your input!

L376a

Graham Searle sent in this lovely early fancy cancel. In fact it is likely the earliest recorded letters/initials cancel on Canadian stamps. The initials 'DPO' are a little unclear but when you tweak the cancel they are clear. This cancel was formerly L401 but the number was updated in the third edition to L376a.



'DPO' inside circle of bars. Used from Dumbarton, Upper Canada in September 1865 making this one of the earliest known letter cancels. The postmaster was J. Parker. This is the only known strike on cover.

Lacelle type 401

(VGG cert 11470)

Figure 1a. Image of L376a contributed by Graham Searle.



Figure 1b. Adjusted image with the 'DPO' initials enhanced.

New Cancels - What have you found lately? – Ron Smith

In an ideal world, before a cancel gets listed and given a new 'catalogue number', at least two examples should be known. Similarly, there remains a lot of geometric cancels for which the post office of origin has yet to be determined. We have created this section in the newsletter to show examples of cancels that are not listed in the Lacelle handbook.

If you have what you think is an unlisted cancel please send us a scan. Even if you only have one, maybe one of our readers has a second and confirming copy.

To start the ball rolling, here are some examples from my collection. I believe that they are sufficiently intricate that they qualify as fancy.

Anyone out there have a cover for either of these two?



Figure 1. Examples of unlisted cancels. Both of these are similar to listed cancels. But they do not exactly match any of the listed ones. Similar to L1625 (left) and L1619 (right).

This blue rectangle cancel from River John Nova Scotia is a new find. River John used two different purple RJ cancels (L764 and L765).



Figure 2. Unlisted cancel in dark blue from River John NS.



Figure 3. This intaglio 'B' does not match any of the listed cancels. It is closest to L278 (Welland) and L279 (Brockville). (see images below). This is a two cent rate, hence could be a drop letter. Could the PO of origin be Brome Quebec?



L278, Welland ON



L279, Brockville, ON

Figure 4. Examples of listed intaglio 'B' cancels similar to Figure 3.

My favorite covers - Paul Grimm

Paul Grimm sent in scans of the following four covers. This is a perfect example of ‘why’ your interesting or favorite covers can be of interest to your fellow collectors. All four of these are either the discovery cover confirming the post office of origin or unlisted in Lacelle.

This postcard confirms L652 as originating in Newville, N.S. (Figure 1). It has only been recorded in blue ink. I have added a scan of the example I have on stamp (Ron).



Figure 1. Example of Paul’s PC confirming the post office of origin for L652 as Newville, NS, and a stamp (Ron).

This attractive mourning cover has a ‘new’ fancy geometric cancel from Ottawa (Figure 2). Although unlisted in Lacelle, three covers have now been reported of which the one submitted by Paul is the earliest. Two of the covers are to the US and the third is a 4X weight domestic dated Oct 3, 1872.



Figure 2. New fancy geometric from Ottawa. It will receive a new number TBD.

Paul's last two covers are from Saint John NB.

This advertising cover with a 'barred A' (Figure 3a) is similar to L204 (Figure 3b). This is the only cover reported from Saint John. Saint John used a couple of similar cancels but they differ in the size and numbers of horizontal lines (example of a reduced cover lower right). Anyone else have an example of Paul's cancel on cover from Saint John?



Figure 3a. Saint John 'A' in bars. A new cancel. The size and details of this cancel differ sufficiently from that of L204 (see Figure 3b below) to warrant a separate listing.



Figure 3b. Example of L204 used in St. John.
(Ron)

