

Confederation

The Newsletter of the Large and Small Queens Study Group

Number 17

November 2000

A Rough Guide to Papers Used

1870-1897

Auction Alert

The Horace W. Harrison Canadian Postal Stationery Collection is in the midst of being auction by Robert A. Lee.

The first two sessions were in June and September 2000. The next two sessions are January and May 2001. Lee calls this "The finest Canadian stationery collection ever offered in four public auctions."

Further information is available from Robert A. Lee Auctions, #203 -1139 Sutherland Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y 5Y2, phone 1-800-755-2437, or e-mail to stationery@stamp-bids.com.

A note to any dealers in our membership: If you have an auction or sale coming up with LQ and SQ material, let me know (well ahead of time) so I can put the information out to our members.



by John Hillson

I don't know if you share my difficulty to differentiate the various papers used on Large and Small Queens from photographs of their backs. Those in Boggs aren't bad but he shows only four, while Duckworth shows some ten used between 1868 to 1872.

If it were not from the excellent descriptions accompanying the latter pictures, could you honestly tell the difference between say Duckworth's Paper 1, a thin transparent paper, and Duckworth's Paper 4, a stout paper equally transparent, from the photo. So it really does boil down to description and that inevitably can lead to misinterpretation.

From time to time I have heard of collectors checking paper thickness with a paper gauge. There are a number of problems with this.

First the gauge has to be continually recalibrated to ensure its accuracy.

Secondly, manufacturers when using mechanical gauges - it may be different with electronic ones - always measured papers in stacks and averaged the answer.

Thirdly, postage stamps have ink on top

which may vary in thickness, and may have gum underneath which is clearly going to affect the outcome. So it is best to forget gauges, in my view, which brings one back to descriptions.

To simplify matters, one can divide the papers into hard and soft, and thin, medium and thick.

Dealing with hard and soft first, the major characteristic common to the hard paper is that the perforations are generally cleanly cut. That doesn't mean it can't have confetti still adhering, but that is the fault of the perforator, not a characteristic of the paper.

Soft paper, on the other hand, has more "give", the result is that the papers' perforations tend to have a slightly woolly appearance, that is the holes tend to have fibres still attached, because the perforator has tended to slightly tear through, rather than cut through.

To take an example from immediately before the Small Queen period: the laid paper on which the 1¢ and 2¢ Large Queens were printed is thick soft. The 1¢ can be easily spotted in any catalogue showing it in company with other Large Queens because of the appearance of the perforations.

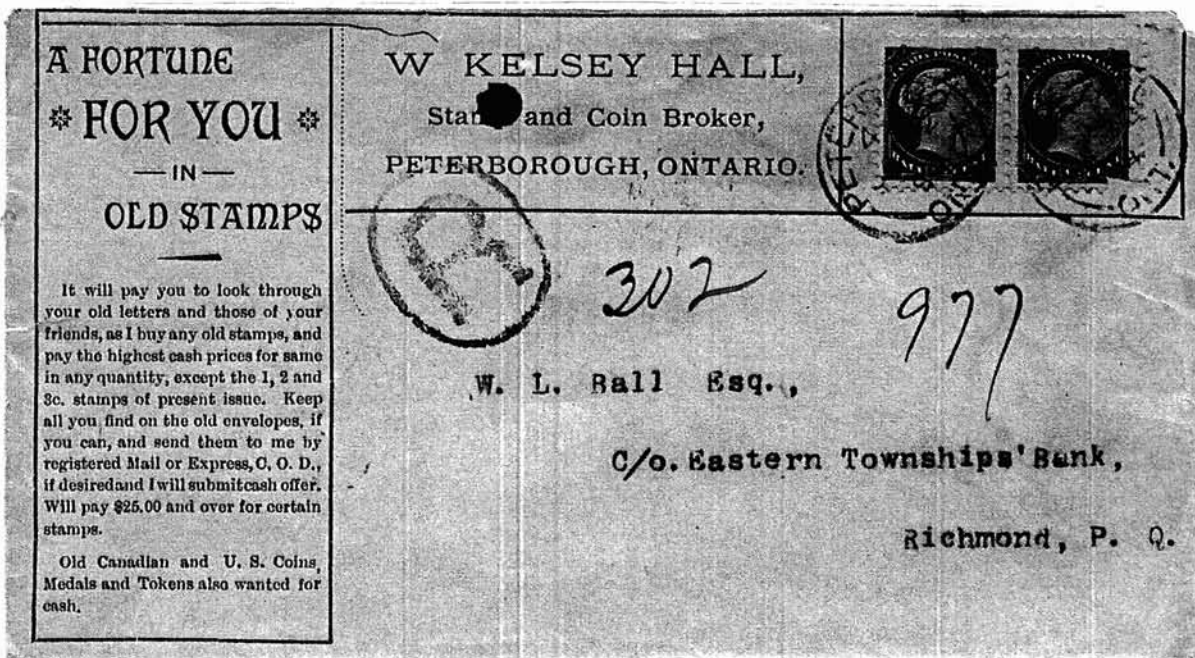
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Using the Half-Cent Small Queen

Back in one of the very early newsletters, I asked what a half-cent stamp was good for. The answer then was for bulk mailings of advertising cards to every household along the carrier's route. Pictured here are two covers at the other extreme, with half-centers paying the full rate.

Robert Haslewood shares a cover from Montreal to London, England, July 27, 1894, on which 30 half-cent stamps paid the triple letter rate of 15¢. Was the sender trying to make a statement or just using up a bunch of scrap postage?

Ted Bowen sent in a cover from W. Kelsey Hall, Stamp and Coin broker in Peterborough Ont. On the front we see 2 half-cent stamps and a Registered marking. Was Mr. Hall a favored patron of the post office to mail registered letters for a penny? No, the other 7¢ is on the reverse, 14 more half-cent stamps along with a Richmond, Quebec December 24 postmark, and several faint R.P.O. markings.



**The William Rennie
Correspondence**
A Personal Recollection
by *Richard M. Lamb*

William Rennie established the William Rennie Seed Company in 1870. After he retired, his sons Thomas, John, and Robert (later to become Major General Rennie) conducted the business in partnership with Thomas as president.

In the early 1890s the firm was located at 136 Adelaide Street East at Jarvis in Toronto in a neat three story building which it occupied until the early 1950s.

Envelopes which have survived are mainly 1894-1900 so that the Small Queens represent only a four year period. They are mainly from rural customers in the richest arable farming areas of Canada, namely southern Ontario and the Prairie Provinces.

need for the 1/2¢ or 6¢ values. This also applies to the Jubilee, Leaf, and Numeral issues whose covers were frequently destroyed to soak off very fine c.d.s. 6¢, 7¢, and 8¢ values. Rennie Company perfins which commenced in 1912 of course missed the Small Queen era.

The Rennie find fills a gap between the Crown Lands correspondence and the Evans, Bruce, Pearce, and Tyler finds. It lacks the scarce early shades and fancy cancels but is notable for a huge number of registered and small town envelopes all neatly opened with a sharp knife and then stored under ideal conditions in wooden boxes.

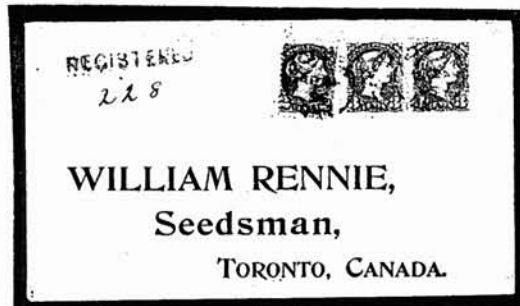
There are some nice advertising covers including fairs, exhibitions, agricultural corner cards, manufacturers, and town promotionals. Squared circles were just attracting interest and the 1954 Whitehead illustrates

1902 membership list of 22 names includes pioneer dealers G.A. Lowe, E. Marks, and E.Y. Parker. Also listed is Captain (Robert) Rennie at Adelaide and Jarvis Streets, the address of the Rennie Seed Company.

Robert Rennie enlisted with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada as a rifleman in 1881. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1887, was a captain in 1902 or earlier, and became a lieutenant colonel in 1911.

In France, as Brigadier General in 1915 he commanded the 4th Canadian Brigade which comprised four infantry battalions. They were the 18th (London), 19th (Toronto), 20th (1st Central Ontario regiment), and the 21st (Kingston).

Serving at that time in the 1st Central Ontario Regiment was none other than Lt. Vinnie Greene, later to become one of Canada's greatest philatelists. He was



The small return envelopes with bold type left little space for stamps on registered mail. Those customers with 1¢ and 3¢ Small Queen values often used two of each for the 8¢ rate.

Others having a 3¢ value on hand bought a 5¢, otherwise it was a single 8¢ franking. The 2¢ values mostly arrived on drop letters from Toronto businesses. Few customers would have a

four of them. The 1893 rarities like Foothill and Coleman were too early for this find but 1894 Waterdown and Kingsville could have embellished Rennie covers.

Let me now refer to the History of the Toronto Stamp Collectors Club 1892-1992 by Gary Scrimgeour (153 pages, hardbound, 1994) which should be in every philatelic library. The

chairman of the first three CAPEX exhibitions. He formed a marvelous collection of BNA and judged internationally.

In 1975 the Vincent G. Greene Philatelic Research Foundation was established and now has new premises in Toronto housing a library, meeting room and provides an expertization service.

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**The Rennie
Correspondence**

Continued from Page 3

It is not known if Vinnie and General Rennie were friends before or during the war but they were certainly well acquainted in later years. The next mention of General Rennie is found in the minutes of the TSCC reporting on Anecdote Night, and I quote:

"Fred Jarrett showed a collection of Canadian stampless covers on March 19, 1959. While the covers were being passed around, Vinnie Greene (chairman for the evening) 'started a chain reaction on anecdotes by bringing up the story of how Gen. Rennie raided the Archives at Queen's Park and how Fred successfully hooked up with him, getting such rarities as a pair of beautiful 6d on cover, pair of 3d (one with major re-entry) and many more, all of these under Crown Lands correspondence. It was explained how Gen. Rennie got permission from Atty. Gen. Price to do this somewhere around

1926.'"

I have a few comments regarding this amazing story. Apart from his 1902 TSCC membership and a registered handwritten envelope in 1924 from Rennie Seeds to a stamp dealer in New York, possibly from the General, I have no clues as to his philatelic knowledge, collecting interests, or activities.

It is unclear why, with an eight-year accumulation of covers in his business premises, the General would raid the Crown Lands files.

In 1926 Fred Jarrett might have been in the Archives making tracings for his illustrations in his 1929 Stamps of British North America. He could have spotted items of interest and advised the General. He, after demobilization, might have become a little bored at his desk and would have relished planning and executing this attack.

The famous local General, especially if he appeared at the Legislature in full uniform with his medal ribbons, would likely have

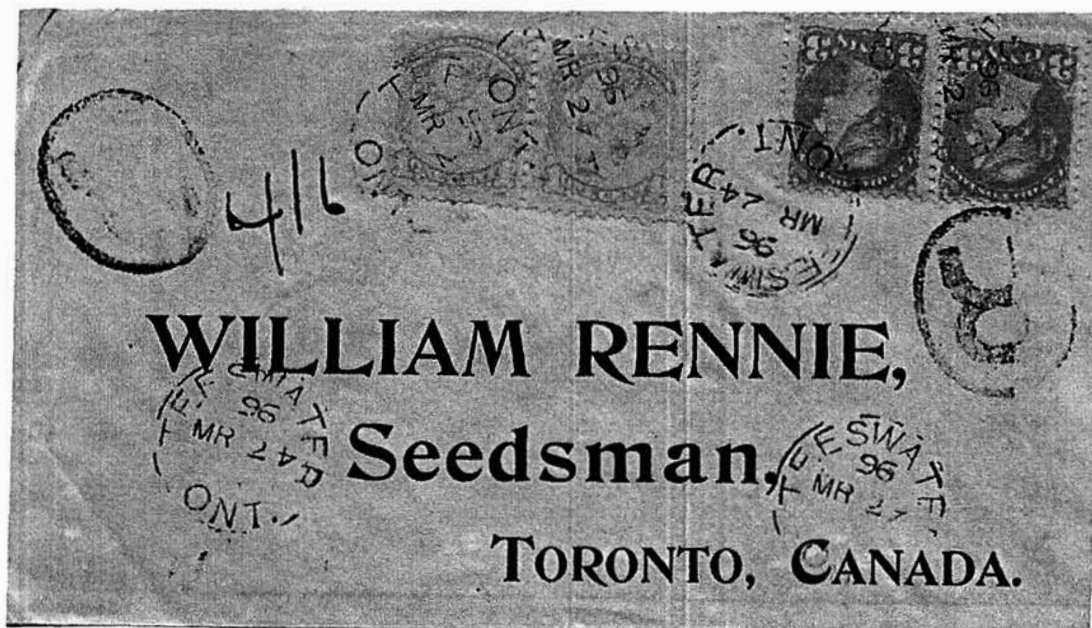
had the covers selected, liberated, and declared government surplus in a matter of minutes. I cannot find auction lots in either the Jarrett or Greene sales which match the covers in question. Neither can I find any reference to a personal collection being sold on behalf of General Rennie or his estate.

Major General Rennie, CB 1918, CMG 1917, DSO 1915, MVO 1915, served in France 1915-1918 and participated in the Second Battle of Ypres and fought at Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, and Amiens, winning the Croix de Guerre. He was mentioned in dispatches on seven different occasions.

After surviving four years of carnage in the First World War, General Rennie died in Sunnybrook Hospital on December 17, 1949, three weeks after fracturing his hip in a fall on an icy street.

He was 87 years of age and a veteran of 68 years in the militia. He was for many years president of Rennie Seeds with which he

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The Rennie Correspondence

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was connected for over 40 years.

After the General died, Vinnie Greene apparently was asked to dispose of the Rennie covers. In the TSCC 100th anniversary book already mentioned, George Wegg told the author that Vinnie Greene and Charlie Foster sold over 25 shoeboxes of Rennie Seed covers at TSCC meetings. The proceeds of over \$800 went to the General Rennie estate. This works out to \$32 a box. It is unclear whether bundles of 100 filled 25 boxes or whether they were sold as mixed boxes.

the 15¢ Large Queens in various shades - a sight not likely to occur today or ever again.

Having arrived in Canada in December 1950, I joined the West Toronto Stamp Club the next year. In 1952 I visited the home of Charlie Foster who still had many boxes in his den of Rennie covers in bundles of 100. I do not know if he or Vinnie Greene had already offered them at the TSCC.

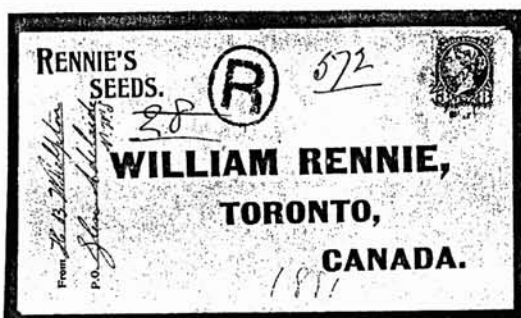
I had no idea what I was looking at but the Map stamp covers seemed reasonable at \$25 a hundred. I bought a bundle and shipped these off to England at £1 each. I repeated this until the well ran dry. The other covers were 3¢ Small Queens, 3¢ Leaf, 2¢ and 3¢

out of 80 years in business? How many covers were removed from "Aladdin's Cave" before the holding became an estate problem? Rumour has it that some were traded off by the General to Vinnie Greene and others.

Another question: where are the shipping tags or envelopes used for mailing out orders? They could have gone by 5th Class mail in 1890 at 1¢ per ounce up to five pounds and also could be sent by registered mail.

I have yet to see a William Rennie corner card or letterhead between 1870 and the early 1890's. - perhaps a member can provide some information.

This is my story or recollection of two philatelic giants, Fred Jarrett and Vinnie Greene and a distinguished soldier Major General Rennie plus a wonderful find of Canadian covers.



Distribution would have occurred in 1950-1951. There could have been 40,000-50,000 covers in all, including the group I will describe later.

At the time there were six dealer members. Fred Jarrett, whose stock already included covers from Hale, McMurchie, the Beare music bench and F.L. Green, was probably not too interested. George Wegg may have been a buyer for his new store at 15 Richmond Street East. I visited him there in early 1951 armed with a letter of introduction from Robson Lowe. I vividly recall his desk top was covered with mint blocks of

Numerals and both surcharges. I believe there were still a few hundred 8¢ Small Queens at \$50 a bundle, but as 100 would cost a week's pay at Massey Harris, I passed.

After a couple of years of sales, I found that all of the Jubilees and most of the registered covers had been sold to club members and others.

Charlie Foster was TSCC secretary at the time and, as a banker, likely did the bookkeeping for the Rennie estate sales.

There are a few unanswered questions. Why did Rennie Seeds only save eight year's worth of covers

Corrections

Dr. J. Frank wrote to correct my mis-reading of the postmark on his "Letter to South Africa" in the last newsletter. The correct town is Lennoxville, Que. and not Lemonville.

Richard Thompson also e-mailed with this correction.

Dr. Frank also corrected the author of the "Essays and Proofs of B.N.A." to be Minuse, K. & Pratt, RH, not Minkus as was noted in "This and That."

John Gordon wrote to point out that the Moffatt and Hansen book listed as first edition (page 6, issue 14) was actually the 4th edition. The first three editions were prepared by Dr. Whitehead.

Chairman's Column

Ron Ribler

Another busy period has passed with some interesting results. First, we finally published the book "Canada's Three Cents Small Queen" and delivered virtually the entire printing to John Jamieson at the Saskatoon Stamp Centre, who has exclusive sales rights to the book.

The book is all black and white, so a CD showing the book in full color accompanies it. The CD will work on Windows machines and on Macs. If you order the book from SSC and you use a computer, be sure to ask for the CD also. The book is the result of almost 25 years specializing in the stamp and I hope collectors will find it useful.

We went to Providence for the APS Stamp-Show and won a gold for the Three Cents Small Queen exhibit and a vermeil for the book. Then we went on to Schaumburg for the BNAPS meeting and had several interesting meetings.

The Study Group met and was attended by 14 BNAPSers. They were Bob Turkowski, Bill Radcliffe, Vic Willson, Bernard Schubert, Richard Morris, Jack Gordon, Don Kaye, Bob Lane, John Burnett, Bob Lee, C. Quattrocchi, Horace Harrison, and Merv Woike.

Bob Lane raised the question about putting our newsletter on the web site (he is the webmaster). Reaction was mixed. Some felt that if we gave away the newsletter, no one would join the group. Others felt that since not all members had computers, they would not likely leave the group. We all felt that wider dissemination would be in the

best interests of philately and BNAPS. I am suggesting that we put every alternate newsletter on the web to spread the word and to help get new members. Roy and I would like to know how the membership feels about such a move.

John Burnett did a "show and tell" with some interesting covers. Richard Morris gave a talk on his new Color Guide System and showed his new Guide for the Admiral issue. In the remainder of the session, I presented some mystery covers to see if any of those present could help find answers. We actually did find several. I showed the CD of the book on my laptop to illustrate the items. Everyone felt the CD really enhanced the value of the book.

While in Schaumburg I also put up my exhibit one more time. This time I was awarded "almost a gold."

We are still hoping that more of you will submit items for the newsletter. Please do not be bashful of reluctant to share your information or ideas. Controversy is welcome. Let us hear from you!

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Rough Guide to Papers Used

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The laid on which the 3¢ was printed was a thin hard paper, not easily spotted in the way the 1¢ can be. A second more "hands on" approach is to flick the paper gently. Try it with a bit of writing paper and then with a bit of kitchen roll. It will sound different and feel different. It's the same with stamps.

As to thickness: thin papers tend to be slightly transparent, medium and stout papers, opaque. Thick hard papers are like thin card. Thick soft on the other hand have specific characteristics which will be touched on later.

As far as I am aware, only three of the papers cited by Professor Duckworth carried on into the Small Queen printing: Paper 10, creamish in colour, horizontal grain, and compared with subsequent papers used, of very good quality, and is generally of medium thickness. Most 1870-1871 1¢ and 3 ¢ Small Queens are to be found on this paper, includ-

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ing all of the copper and indian reds. The Duckworths describe its colour as "whitish", this may simply be a difference in my interpretation from theirs.

The second is their Paper 8, the rare thick soft white paper which for some unaccountable reason keeps being described as "blotting paper." Blotting paper has no grain and tears easily. This paper has a fine horizontal grain made up of tiny horizontal lines which are not easy to see, so one has to look carefully.

Stamps characteristically tend to have much confetti adhering. They also tend to be badly centered, but well centered copies do exist. It is known to have been in use in about the end of 1871 and can be found on the 1¢ and 3¢ Small Queens as well as the Large Queens in print at that time.

The third Duckworth paper is Paper 9b if I have interpreted their description correctly. This is the thin soft white paper in use on Small Queens in 1872, and thus can be found on all four original Small Queen denominations. Apart from its thinness, the most obvious trait is its white colour which makes Paper 10 look creamy.

The papers used from then on until about the end of 1888 fall into two main categories, a medium weight paper which has what Shoemaker described in his 1941 article on the 3¢ Small Queen as having a pebbly surface which can be whitish or creamy in tone, or a thinner paper with otherwise

the same characteristics, but where viewed from the back the design can be seen, unlike the former where the paper is opaque.

Shoemaker divides these two papers into four categories including one where the grain is vertical rather than the more general horizontal. It is actually the same paper but fed into the press sideways instead of the normal way.

Such stamps can be identified by being taller and narrower than those with a horizontal grain, due to paper shrinkage after being printed (on damp paper which shrinks against the grain as it dries). One can also breathe lightly to see which way it curls: side to side if it has a vertical grain, top to bottom if horizontal.

Stamps can be found from the mid 1880's printed on a thick hard horizontal wove paper, a paper almost the feel of a thin card. It is distinctly rare, but the professionals don't seem to have cottoned on to it yet so there you have the chance of a bargain.

A very small quantity of stamps were printed during the Montreal period on a pelure paper. This paper is sometimes called "onionskin" which exactly describes its characteristics - thin, transparent and hard. I have a 6¢ SQ late Montreal printing (since it has four position dots) on this. I remember acquiring a copy which I thought might be a second on the same value, it certainly appeared thin but not as transparent when the two were side to side. It turned out to be a Duckworth Paper 4. It was not even thin. These oddities do turn up from time to time as the printers probably got down to old stock. It looks as if

they employed the same stock control as the Post Office - last in, first out.

Two other papers that must be mentioned, though they exist only on the 15¢ Large Queen. The first is the thick carton paper which appeared in 1880 and is recorded only in a dull deep violet colour. It has a horizontal grain. An even thicker version was used for the Dead Letter Office label.

The second is the "Alexander Pirie" water-marked paper which Boggs describes as a medium white wove with a horizontal mesh used c. 1877. The stamps were perfed 11.5 x 12. I had a copy many years ago for which I paid £25, which was a lot for me in those days. (Come to think of it, it still is.) Anyway, a dealer "friend" of mine cast doubt on it and acquired it with the rest of my Canadian collection in 1965. About 10 years or so later he sent me a photocopy of the stamp, still on my original album page, with a price tag of £1250. Words occasionally fail me.

At about the same time the British American Bank Note Co. was hoping to move into their new Ottawa premises but were delayed due to structural problems. They had to move into the Gazette Building as the lease for the Montreal premises had run out. They introduced a poor quality paper that resembles rag-stock. This was in use from then until the contract ended in 1897, though there was a slight improvement in quality around 1894. These were the thinnish to medium weight papers whose backs appear with random fibres under magnification, are generally toned yellowish, occasionally to a pale tan, and are of

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course the Second Ottawa papers, though as stated appeared first in 1888 before the premises were occupied.

To sum up, to an extent the study of papers has been perhaps made over-complicated by some writers. If one studies first the easily acquired specimens, the common Second Ottawas and the Montreals, it becomes easier to see the differences as the more uncommon or difficult papers are added.

Op.Cit:

Boggs "The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada"

Firth "Canada The Fifteen Cents of 1868"

Duckworth "The Large Queen Stamps of Canada and Their Uses 1868-1872"

Shoemaker "The Three Cent Small Queen Issue of Canada"

Editor's Column

Roy Sass

I've noticed in some of the auction catalogs I receive there have been a good number of Rennie covers illustrated. I became curious as to the who, when and why of these covers so I started asking around. Dick Lamb came through with more than I expected and I believe his comments and recollections will be interesting to members who didn't know the Rennie family.

I attended the World Stamp Expo in Anaheim in July. On the days I was there, there was a dearth of attendance.

A dealer from my home town said traffic was about one-third of what he expected - and his booth was the most crowded I saw.

One benefit of the low attendance was that a collector had plenty of time, and did not feel rushed, in talking with a dealer. As to why the turn-out was so low, I believe it's because there are one or more stamp shows in the Los Angeles area just about every weekend - so this was nothing special.

The empty hall allowed me some time to talk with John Jamieson about things in general, to purchase a 12 1/2¢ LQ with a "dot in the right one", and to talk about the Rennie covers. John told me that the Rennie covers are the basis of many studies of small town postmarks from Assiniboia. John explained that covers to Rennie with 3¢ postage were the farmers' orders for seeds and the 8¢ registered covers contained the farmers' payments.

Moving on to Ron Ribler's new book, Canada's Three Cent Small Queen 1870-1897, Reflections of a Generation, I found it very interesting and informative.

Ron has devoted one chapter to the stamp itself, beginning with the essays and proofs, moving on to the First Ottawa, Montreal, and Second Ottawa printings and the shades, a section on how to tell a Scott 37 from a Scott 41 and going on to plates, perforations, papers and printing varieties, oxidation, gum, watermarks fluorescence, and overprints.

Ron has used photos of stamps from his collection and line drawings where appropriate to illustrate his points. The black and white photos in the book are OK, but seeing them in color

from the accompanying CD is much better.

The book goes into good detail on the usage of the 3¢ Small Queen during its years of currency. There are chapters for Rates, Registration, Usage, Advertising Covers and various cancellations and markings. Each chapter is thoroughly documented with covers illustrating the salient points. I was particularly interested in the section on Advertising covers, perhaps because all I see at the office are today's plain white envelopes.

Quoting from Ron's conclusion, "Collecting the Three Cents Small Queen has taught that, even after all the time that has elapsed since 1870, new things are still being discovered. ... The Three Cents Small Queen offers the opportunity to select a specific area for collection and then to expand it in many directions."

Ron's book addresses the Three Cent Small Queen on many levels and in much detail, and will be a great source of information for both the casual and the specialist collectors. Contact John Jamieson at Saskatoon Stamp Centre to order.

Technical note: The CD works on both PCs and Macs. The instructions on the CD say to "Press the 'View the book' button" once adobe Acrobat Reader is installed. This works on the PC. On the Mac, double-click on the CD icon on the desk top. You will get a window with five file icons showing. Double click SMLQUEEN.PDF to launch Acrobat to view the book.