

# Confederation

The Newsletter of the BNAPS Large and Small Queens Study Group

Number 33

October 2007

Half-Cent Study cont'd.

I have a pair of the stamps on the watermarked paper. The watermark letters "CL" appear on the second stamp of the pair dated MY 9<sup>th</sup> / 1870. The tops of the "C" and "L" come to the middle of the stamp so the square stop and the rest of the watermark must come in the plate margin, as the stamps clearly come from positions 2 and 3 from the NW corner of the sheet.

4. Synchronously with the watermarked paper, the ordinary printings on horizontal wove tend to become thicker and lose their transparency so that we get fine black prints in late 1869 carrying through... part of 1873. The paper is a medium to thick wove of fine quality measuring 2.5 to 3.0.
5. There is a very rare thin semi-transparent vertical wove paper in the 1869 – 70 period with thickness 1.6 to 2.0. This paper is found on all other values but is exceedingly rare. I have seen only one copy of each. This paper is very soft and pliable, copies are often found badly damaged.
6. There is a fine or closely-lined vertical wove similar to the vertical wove paper of the one, two and three cents Large Queens commonly called First Printings. The paper is much thicker, however, and was issued later in late 1869 to 1870. The paper is inferior and colour is not so good.

The difference between this paper and the vertical paper of watermarked stamps is the weave. Watermarked paper is thicker, whiter and harder and, when held to light, distinct "XXX" criss-cross lines (appear)... In the fine closely-lined vertical paper these don't show and the vertical surface lines are also finer, the reason undoubtedly being that a finer wire mesh was used.

In 1874 until the end of the issue the British American Bank Note Co. started to use inferior paper and inks. One finds similar poor papers, inks and gum used for the fifteen-cents Large Queens of contemporary use. The colour of the stamp changes from a good black inking to every colour of grey imaginable. Towards the end of the issue the stamps tend to return to the

black shades but as paper (quality) is poor the stamps take the ink badly.

7. A thick horizontal wove, grey shade, stamps perf commonly 11¼ X 12.
8. In 1876 the horizontal paper changes to a thick hard vertical wove paper (often) perforating 11¼ top and bottom.
9. In 1877, the majority of stamps come on horizontal paper, perf. 12.
10. The vertical paper stamps of 1879 – 1880 of a distinct slate blue shade. (*editor's note: I have never seen a slate blue half-cent and suspect this to be a typo; if you have seen one, I would much appreciate the education.*)

The late vertical stamps can be distinguished from earlier ones as the paper is thinner and much poorer in quality. Like the fifteen-cent stamps from 1887 and later, they show a distinct embossing on the back. They also tend to be associated with the 12¼ perforation.

## Gum

In the early years 1868 to 1873 the gums are uniformly good quality; usually they are smooth, shiny and not too thickly applied, nor overly yellow.

In 1874, the gum begins to be variable. Early copies may be found with the purest white gum, well-applied and smooth; as a rule however the gum is yellowish and irregularly applied in a slanting or even diagonal direction as if applied with an ordinary wall paperer's brush.

In 1876 – 78 the gum may be any shade, white to yellow, dull to shiny, and may appear as rough streaks even with grit and blisters in it.

In 1879 until the end, the gum is smooth but yellowish and of poor quality.

The rarest gum I have found is on a large block of ten on late vertical paper printed 1879 or 1880 with thin smooth pure white gum of dull finish and so thinly applied so as to be almost unnoticeable.

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## The Half-Cent of 1868 to 1883 – A Study

Lewis L. Reford

*Editor's Note: The proprietor of Canadian Stamp Auctions kindly forwarded us a newly-discovered five-page comprehensive study written by Reford in 1943 to A. L. Macready of Cobden. Based on the material listed in the study (which appeared in the Harmer-Rooke sale of Reford's material) I am certain it is genuine. I do not know if this was ever published in whole or in part, but think it unlikely based on the fact that neither the Duckworths' nor Reiche makes reference to its existence.*

*I have edited the longish letter for brevity and rearranged the presentation of the information for easier reading, but have done my best to include all the pertinent information within. G.A.*

March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1943

I have just finished a study of some 1500 ½ cent black 1868 – 1883... I have some six half-sheets..., about 200 dated copies and a very well mixed range showing ten major varieties of paper.

Twenty-five copies showing its use:

- 1 – ½ on small circular, local drop post
- 6 – ½ on cover three cents (rate)
- 1 – mixed cover ½ cent and two - six-cents to make 12½ cents (rate)
- many pairs on drop letters and circulars to make one-cent postage.

### Perforation

Perf. 12 is the early and commonest perforation but 11¾ on one or more sides come in 1868 and 1869. 12¼, vertically only, comes in 1869 too but is very rare. In 1874 to 1876, 11¾ top and bottom is the rule. In 1877, the perforation returns to 12 but in 1878 – 79, 11¾ is the commonest. In 1880 until 1883 one finds the perforations equally mixed up.

Compound perforations can be very mixed in the middle period 1874 – 1879:

- 11½ top and bottom – rare
- 11½ X 11¾ - commoner
- 11½ vertically or all around – rare
- 12¼ top and bottom common in 1879 or later, 12¼ vertically or all four sides very rare late 1879 and following.

In the compound perfs of 1876 one finds 11½ on top, 11¾ on the bottom and vice versa – of 11¾ all around I have four copies and of 11½ only one. One may expect therefore any mixture on one or more

sides. The size of the perforation holes may show great differences in the same sheet; this form of irregular perforating only happens after 1873 as the early issues show a uniform small-holed perf.

Another sign of careless work is a regular irregularity of the size of the stamps in the vertical rows, wide-narrow, wide-narrow, right across the sheet. This is rare in the 1868-69 period but is common in later years. This may also occur in the horizontal spacing.

### Papers

1. 1868–69 stamps are mostly on a fine, horizontal wove, slightly transparent paper averaging about 90% at 2.0 thousandths of an inch. You get a very few copies as thin as 1.6 and the rest may go 2.1 to 2.5.
2. In April 1869 a rare opaque thick soft hairy paper was issued running to the middle of 1870. Its average thickness is 3.0 but a few copies run from 3.2 to 3.5. Most of the copies come in a creamy to slightly toned colour. Very thick copies are rare, and the deeply toned copies are due to the colour of yellowish gum being absorbed into the paper.
3. In late 1869 – 1870 the watermarked paper appears. It is a stout vertical wove of thickness 2.4 – 3.2. The main reason for the rarity of the watermark is that in the other values the watermark is not placed in the middle of the sheet as expected but to the margin... in all likelihood, the paper sheet had to be trimmed down to fit the smaller stamp and this way at least half the legend or watermark was lost. Apart from this, the paper was a small issue as I can find only seven copies on this paper.

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Small Queen Cover to "Chinese" Gordon Expedition a Gem Cont'd.

The cover shown here franked with a 5¢ small queen is postmarked at Quebec, November 21, 1884, and is addressed to Surgeon Major Hubert Neilson, Canadian Voyageurs, Wadi Halfa, Egypt. Neilson crossed the Atlantic with the Voyageurs from Sydney, Nova Scotia, arriving at Gibraltar in September 1884. Sailing from Gibraltar the Voyageurs arrived at Wadi Halfa around October 25, 1884.

Located at the second great cataract on the Nile, Wadi Halfa was the staging area for the relief column. Alas the relief column arrived at Khartoum three days too late. They found the garrison butchered and Gordon's head on a spear at the main gate. The life of one of the most remarkable generals and adventurers in the annals of British colonialism ended thus.

The illustrated cover only represents a 5¢ UPU rate to Egypt, from Canada cover; it is an exotic destination and as such would command a premium at a dealer's table. Because of the Voyageur association this cover is a pearl of much greater value.

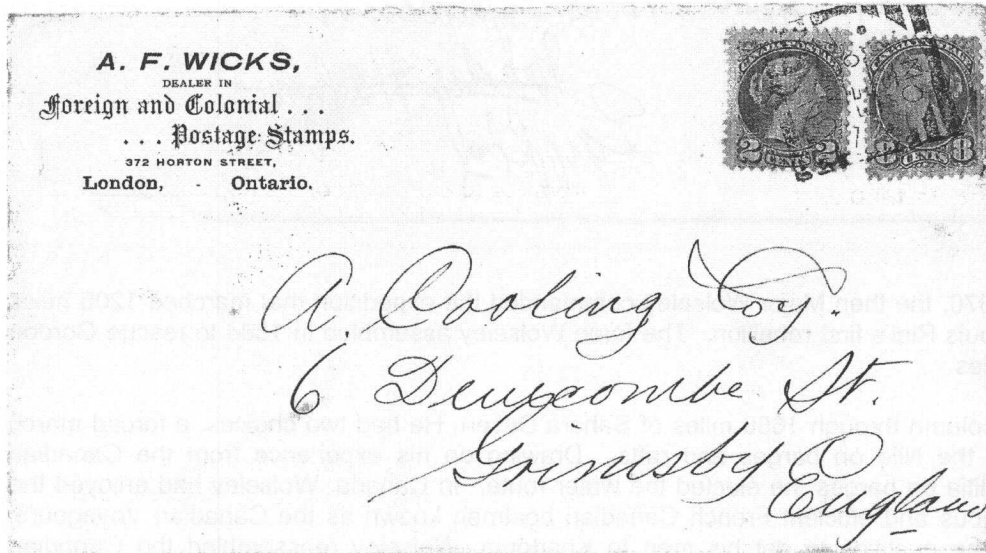
For the most part the Voyageurs were illiterate, and very little mail is known to have been sent to this expeditionary force. To date only seven covers are known to exist.

## Chairman's Column

Bill Radcliffe

I was unable to attend BNAPEX this year owing to the fact that I was getting married. I am grateful that Vic Willson volunteered his time and ran the meeting for me. As mentioned previously, I collect squared circles. Below is an example of a better Small Queen cover I picked up recently. Eight-cent small queens to any foreign destinations are rare. What makes this one special to me is that it has a London Type 2 squared circle, common on most small

queen stamps but until this discovery unknown on eight small queens. The registration department at the London PO may never have used the canceller; you don't find it on an eight-cent stamp. This rare rate or some combination using eight-cent stamps on standard mail would be the only way you could find this stamp on cover. The cover also has the AM/FE 0/95 error listed in the Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada handbook. Needless to say, I was very happy to add this to my collection of eight-cent square covers.



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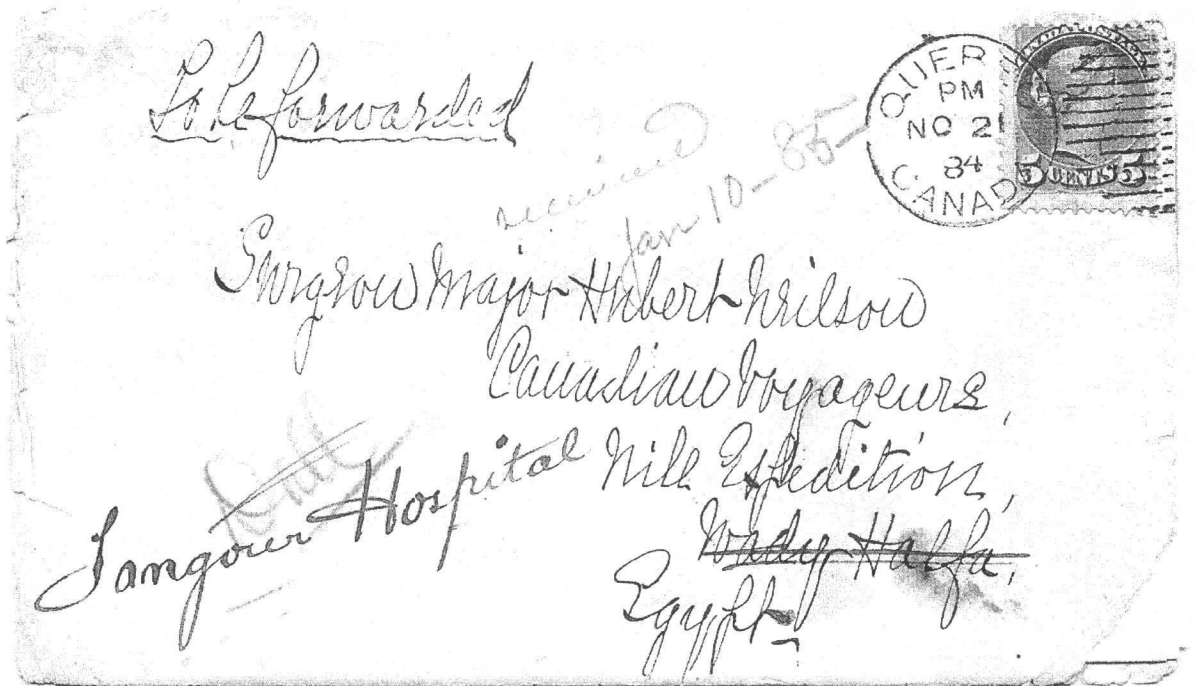
October 2007

## Small Queen Cover to "Chinese" Gordon Expedition a Gem

John Burnett

In April 1884 the legendary British general Charles "Chinese" Gordon and his garrison was under siege at Khartoum, the capital of Sudan at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile rivers. Gordon, 1750 miles upstream from Cairo, was surrounded by the forces of the Mahdi, an Islamic revolutionary movement opposed to Ottoman-influenced Egypt. The Mahdi rallied popular support and trapped most of the Egyptian garrison.

Gordon sent word that he had provisions to withstand a siege of about five months. After some hesitation the British government decided to send a relief column. This expeditionary force was commanded by Lord Wolseley, a British field marshal who contributed importantly to the modernization of the British army. Wolseley was, in fact, the real-life model for the "Modern Major General" in The Pirates of Penzance.



While stationed in Canada in 1870, the then Major Wolseley commanded the expedition that marched 1200 miles to the Red River to put down Louis Riel's first rebellion. The force Wolseley assembled in 1884 to rescue Gordon would face even greater difficulties.

Wolseley had to move a relief column through 1650 miles of Sahara Desert. He had two choices, a forced march across the desert or travel up the Nile on barges and rafts. Drawing on his experience from the Canadian expedition, where he moved militia on barges, he elected the water route. In Canada, Wolseley had enjoyed the assistance of particularly tenacious and efficient French Canadian boatmen known as the Canadian Voyageurs. Believing he needed these same qualities to get his men to Khartoum, Wolseley reassembled the Canadian Voyageurs for another assignment.



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Six-Cent Small Queen Block of Fourteen Cont'd.

From the clues, we can narrow down the date of printing. The yellow-brown shade tells us 1<sup>st</sup> Ottawa (1872-1874) or Montreal printing (1874-1888). The Ottawa printings are sharp, meaning this must be a Montreal printing. The three position dots confirm this, as the first Ottawa printing has just one position dot. Prior to 1876, all Montreal printings are perforated 11.5x12. This narrows the printing date to 1876-1888. The three position dots are known only on the "A" plate (second plate), and were a result of plate repairs. The three dots suggest a later state. I tend to believe then that this printing is from the 1880s, but that is just a hunch.

What remains are the large margins at bottom, and lack of significant re-entries. The bottom margin is sufficiently large that we should see the tip of the stamps on the next row along some of the perforations. But we don't see them. I measured, and am quite certain that this block is from rows 8-10. The left vertical row has position dots, meaning it does not belong to position 1. The left vertical row is from position 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

At first, I was hoping to find the major re-entry (or a minor one) on this block, but I found nothing of significance. The lack of re-entries simply tells us what this block does not represent.

I was also hoping that the three position dots would help identify the exact position of the block, but unfortunately I have no more information to go on.

Bill suggested that this block may be the largest known. However, have a look in [www.re-entries.com](http://www.re-entries.com) to see a used block of 18 from the first Ottawa printing including the major re-entry. John showed me a block of 15 from the second Ottawa printing. Perhaps my block is the largest 6c from the Montreal printing.

References:

Canada Small Queens Re-Appraised, John Hillson

Constant Plate Varieties of the Canada Small Queens, Hans Reiche

Canada - A Study of the 6 Cents Value, 1872-1897 by the West Riding Group, Maple Leaves, April 1957 (thanks to Graham Searle for digging this up).

## Editor's Column

Glenn Archer

I am especially satisfied with this issue, as it came together quickly and contains some good reading. I liked learning "the rest of the story" re: John Hillson's discovery of his 2-cent latent(s). I have purposely foregone writing an article for this edition to allow space for all your great stuff!

As you will see, one of our articles had its seeds planted over sixty years ago and, while I have edited it to my liking for reading, left it as intact as possible. The article was thrown together from memory by the original author and hidden in the leaves of a Reford Collection catalogue for probably fifty years! The writer did not want it published "as-is" but I don't think he would mind our treatment of it, nor its being published today. Some believe it impossible to accumulate primary study material today, but look what turned up! I will add one piece of information re: the half-cent LQ – it exists perforated 12 X 11.5 as well as 11.5 X 12.

Years ago I bought a sight-unseen used copy of Boggs at auction and, lo-and-behold, it was Bill Simpson's copy with extensive marginal notes and revisions. If this, and the lost correspondence of Huff / Whitworth re: Pence and Cents issue stamps can turn up, then I cannot possibly know what is out there waiting to be discovered. The hunt is fun, and who knows what will come of it.

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## Six-Cent Small Queen Block of Fourteen – A Study

Jim McCormick

I joined BNAPS earlier this year and, with encouragement from Bill Radcliffe, joined the LQ/SQ study group. My interests are very broad, but I spend more time searching through SQ material than anything else. There is so much variety in terms of perforations, shades, re-entries, and papers, and each value has its own peculiarities.

In January this year, I was lucky to find a used block of 14 in the yellow-brown shade. The block had some toning, possibly from the attached parcel wrapper and gum, so I soaked the block off the piece. The soaking was well worth it to clean up the block, and thankfully most of the toning disappeared. However, a fold in the block had weakened some of the perforations, and the leftmost column separated. I re-attached it, and don't worry too much about it.



Blocks are attractive for many reasons. First, I like how such a large block can stay intact for so long! Next, it looks great in a collection. But a large block provides a rare opportunity. With a little help from John Hillson, I learned a few interesting things about this block. Here are some clues:

- An average yellow-brown shade.
- The impression is not sharp.
- Perforations measure 12.1x12.1 on my new SG Instanta gauge.
- The stamps on the bottom row have a large bottom margin relative to the other stamps.
- All stamps have 3 position dots. Some appear to have two, but the third is likely hidden by perforations.
- No significant re-entries are visible.

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sometime previously the bottom latent had been identified as coming from Row 10/8. At the time I did not realise why; it was a case that happens far too often with over-enthusiastic students of the issue, putting 2 + 2 together and making 85.

Two things remain unknown about the bottom latent, what plate does it come from, and what position. It is likely from one of the 200 subject plates made in 1892. Because of the strip of three illustrated in Boggs, it can't be from the first or last column and the absence of selvedge indicates that it is unlikely to come from the bottom row. As my findings above show, it must be from the 9<sup>th</sup> column, no other makes sense. A strip of three, the largest multiple I knew of at the time, was insufficient to pin down a plate position. So how did the 'positive' position identification come about?

The answer lies with the top latent. Unbeknownst to me in 1985 was the existence of a block of 20, bottom 2 rows of 10 from the left of a sheet of twenty with the top latent at position Row 10/8. There is absolutely no sign of the bottom latent above it, nor anywhere else on the block. The two latent entries are quite separate varieties, but from the same immediate cause - entering the original impression half a stamp too high, and unbelievably it happened twice (Figures 3 & 4).

The positional block led someone, as had I, to assume (quite wrongly) that the bottom latent was immediately above the top one.



**Figure 3. Top Latent Entry.**

What was the cause of the siderographer's lapse one can only speculate; perhaps he had forsaken Scotch, and its well known medicinal properties, for rye. I actually had to buy an example of the top latent, but guess what. I got a second copy in a cheap lot of Two Cents in a recent CPS of GB auction - bit off centre but who cares. You do know the Society runs two auctions a year, don't you?



**Figure 4. Top Latent Entry in closer detail.**



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## The Latent Entries on the Two Cents Small Queen

John Hillson, FCPS

Some years ago when I still worked and lived in Glasgow, I visited a stamp shop which rejoiced in the name 'Aba Stamps' - the proprietor was a fan of the well-known Swedish group, and yes he could spell but didn't want any copyright difficulties. On the counter was a pile of remainder sheets which I had looked through before, but as there were some Small Queens among them I thought it might be worth a second look.

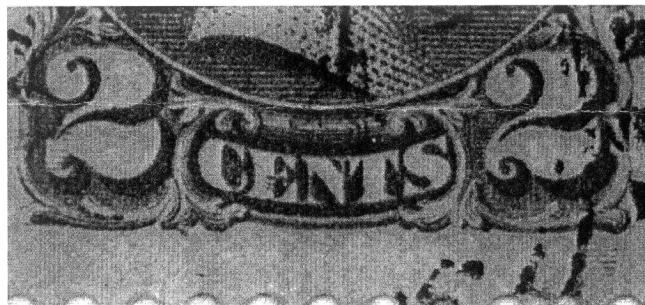
My eye fell on a piece which had a really horrible 3c - OK it's an imprint copy, but is still horrible with a companion nicely-centred 2c along side of it (Figure 1). That stamp had a smudge of colour bottom right so I wondered - is that a smudge of colour, or is it a stamp I have been seeking for twenty years. So I asked the price.



**Figure 1. Bottom latent entry on piece.**

I kid you not, the dealer's finger was trembling as he looked up Gibbons catalogue, as he reckoned I would only be interested in something quite

outstanding. At that time, Gibbons minimum handling charge for a stamp was 5p, so when he found the listing he looked up and said, "You can have it". Free gratis and for nothing. Who said the Scots are mean.



**Figure 2. Bottom Latent in detail.**

I took it home, and checked. You guessed it, the Two Cents was as fine a copy of the bottom latent as you ever are likely to see (Fig. 2) - lightly cancelled, and centred, save for a slightly larger bottom margin which is exactly what one wants. Anyway I went back to the shop and told Jimmy Gall, the dealer, what I had found. His reaction - if he'd known what it was he wouldn't have known what to charge me, and at that time I wouldn't have been able to tell him either. I think his pleasure at the find was almost as big as mine.

The important point about this example is that it not only shows the classic well-documented remains of the original entry, but also the tips of the design on the outer rim of the vignette, just below the central guide line, enabling me to pinpoint exactly what the cock-up was. The siderographer started the entry half a stamp too high. Yes too high, not too low. The reason I am positive is that plates were laid down from the bottom up, so this would be the first - misplaced as it happened - entry at the bottom of the plate, perhaps first-thing on a Monday morning before he was awake, or possibly first thing after lunch Friday afternoon - having been paid, the lunch was apt to have a high liquid content.

I wrote an article in *Maple Leaves* (Vol. 19 #10, April 1985) in which I 'proved' the bottom latent and the top latent were both part of the same variety. Indeed