

Confederation

The Newsletter of the BNAPS Large and Small Queens Study Group

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5¢ Small Queen “Feather In Hair” Plate Position Confirmed

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The “Feather in Hair” is one of the most sought-after constant plate varieties of the Small Queen issue. It has been documented in literature since at least 1951, having graced the front page of BNA Topics¹ where it was described as a new variety by A.L. Pemberton, as follows:

“The flaw, which might be aptly be described as the “feather in hair” variety, is most marked. It consists of a diagonal mark, which is heavily printed, extending from the centre of the Queen’s head at the top, through the “D” of Canada, where it is most clearly visible, to the thin white line surrounding the words “Canada Postage.”



In 1989, Hillson² described it as follows:

“The most noticeable variety on this value resulted from damage to the second Montreal plate, and is known as the “Plume in Hair” which aptly describes it as it extends from the Queen’s head of the edge of the vignette. It is scarce.”

In 1991, Reiche and Sendbuehler³ added some information about shade and potential printing period:

“A variety which has been recorded for some time is the so called “Feather in Hair” Variety. This plate flaw gives the appearance of a feather in the Queen’s hair. It is a constant variety and comes from the Montreal-Ottawa printing period. The flaw appears on a grey not grey-brown shade, as suggested. The period of the flaw is around 1887 to 1889.”

Figure 1. Newly Discovered Feather in Hair 5 Cent Confirming Plate Position.

Finally, Hillson and Nixon⁴ provided yet more information in their 2008 book:

“The one variety that is really prominent is the so-called “Plume of Hair” or Straw in Hair.

Caused by damage to the plate, the variety is from the twin-plate “Montreal” plate, but neither the position nor the pane has been identified. The damage is a 6 mm gash, which extends from just to the rear of the centre, approximately, of the Queen’s tiara, to the upright of the “D” of “CANADA.” It is a scarce stamp, and the damage must have been repaired before the move to Ottawa. Certainly, no Ottawa printing with the variety has been reported. It is known with the 12 x 12.25 perforation of an 1888-89 printing”. [emphasis added].

¹ BNA Topics, July-August 1951, volume 8, number 7, whole no. 82, p.190-191.

² The Small Queens of Canada, John Hillson, Second Revised Edition,, 1989, p.61.

³ Constant Plate Varieties of the Canada Small Queens, Hans Reiche and Mike Sendbuehler, Third Revised Edition, 1991, p.74.

⁴ Canada’s Postage Stamps of the Small Queen Era, 1870-1897, John Hillson and J. Edward Nixon, 2008, p.145.

Feather In Hair contd.

Well, the stamp illustrated at Figure 1 has just been found, providing us with an exact position for this constant plate flaw. Indeed, the stamp has a sheet margin at right showing a portion of the Type V imprint, confirmation that the flaw is located as position 60.

In addition to the feather, there is also what appears to be a plate scratch to the left of the imprint (next to “nk” of “Bank”) which I have not previously seen, and which is likely to have occurred at the same time as the damage on position 60.

Confirmation of plate and pane

As was noted by Hillson and Nixon, the “Feather in Hair” stamp comes from the twin-pane “Montreal” plate, that is a plate with two panes of 100 stamps, each having the Type V imprint on each side of the pane, with plate number 1 and 2 at the top of the pane. Thus, that leaves two possibilities for the actual plating of this stamp. In order to confirm this I have reviewed images of other 5¢ right imprint pieces.

Figure 2 is cropped from a picture of the sheet pane of 100 which was recently offered at auction. This is from the first single plate of 100 (No. 1 in the Hillson & Nixon list of 5¢ plates⁵). I have added a black line along the top frameline of the stamp in order to better gauge the alignment of the plate imprint (with the line intersecting the left leg of “n” of “Bank”). In addition, note the wide spacing between the stamp and the imprint:



Figure 2: Detailed from position 60, Plate “1”

Figure 3 is cropped from a right imprint block of 4 which had previously been identified, and which I believe to be, from the second single plate of 100 (No. 2 in the Hillson & Nixon list of 5¢ plates). It is in a pale olive-green shade of 1887. I have added the same black line. The black line intersects the right leg of “n” of “Bank”. There is also a narrower spacing between the stamp and the imprint.



Figure 3: Detail from position 60, plate “2”

⁵ Ibid, p.143.

Feather In Hair contd.

Figure 4 is cropped from the single stamp showing the “Feather in Hair” flaw depicted at Figure 1. Again, I have added a black line in the same position. It is definitely not from either of the single plates of 100 as the black line is not a match to plate “1” and the spacing between the stamp and the imprint is wider than in plate “2”.



Figure 4: Detail from position 60 with “Feather in Hair” flaw

Therefore, it has to come from the twin-pane “Montreal” plate (No. 3 in the Hillson & Nixon list of 5¢ plates). But due to a lack of high-quality scans of right imprint material, I have not been able to confirm whether the flaw is from the left or right pane. I would appreciate receiving high quality scans of 5¢ right imprint pieces, especially from the imperf printings as they were printed from the twin-pane “Montreal” plate. Some have indicated that due to the small size of the sheet margin, it would have to come from the left pane, but caution is required as sheet margins were often and easily trimmed. I will wait until definitive proof is obtained before passing judgment on whether the flaw was from plate A or B (together representing the twin-pane “Montreal” plate).

Printing period

In recent years, Eastern Auctions has described the “Feather in Hair” plate flaw as being printed in “grey, hint of olive, Montreal “Gazette” printing, perf 12x12¼”. The stamp illustrated at Figure 1 is perforated 12x12¼, as is the example #5 illustrated at the end of this article. Of note is that this specific perforation combination was used during the temporary “Montreal Gazette” printing.

Based on the examples I have examined (#3 to #6 illustrated at the end of the article), the colour tends to be much closer to grey than olive green. I would describe it as “olive-grey”. I am only aware of one dated example, being the ex-D. Roberts and Dr. Frank (“Jura”) example postmarked in St. Pierre & Miquelon in January 1890. This would tend support a printing from 1888-1889.

My opinion is that the stamp is illustrated at Figure 1, indeed, from a “Montreal Gazette” printing. And based on my examination of about six examples of this plate flaw, I believe that all examples I have examined were from a “Montreal Gazette” printing. It is quite conceivable that damage was made to the plate (to position 60 and the plate scratch in the imprint) during a move (in haste?) of the plate following a fire at the Montreal printing facility. It is also quite conceivable that a limited number of the 5¢ value was printed while in the temporary “Gazette” facility before the move back to Ottawa. It can be assumed that after moving the plates from Montreal to Ottawa, it is likely that the plates were re-entered, repaired or otherwise checked to ensure the plates were suitable for printing after such a move. In any event, the damage to the plate was noticed and fixed as the “Feather in Hair” does not exist in a true grey shade from the 2nd Ottawa printing period.

Known examples

There have been few examples of this flaw found by collectors. I have illustrated below some of the known examples (courtesy of the auction houses as noted underneath the images):

Feather In Hair *contd.*

| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
| <p>#1. Spink, June 2007, ex-Bill Simpson, Dr. Frank ("Jura")</p> | <p>#2. Spink, June 2007, ex-D. Roberts, Dr. Frank ("Jura")</p> | <p>#3. Eastern Auctions, March 2012, ex-Ted Nixon</p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p>#4. Eastern Auctions, October 2012</p> | <p>#5. Eastern Auctions, October 2012</p> | <p>#6. Newly found example</p> |

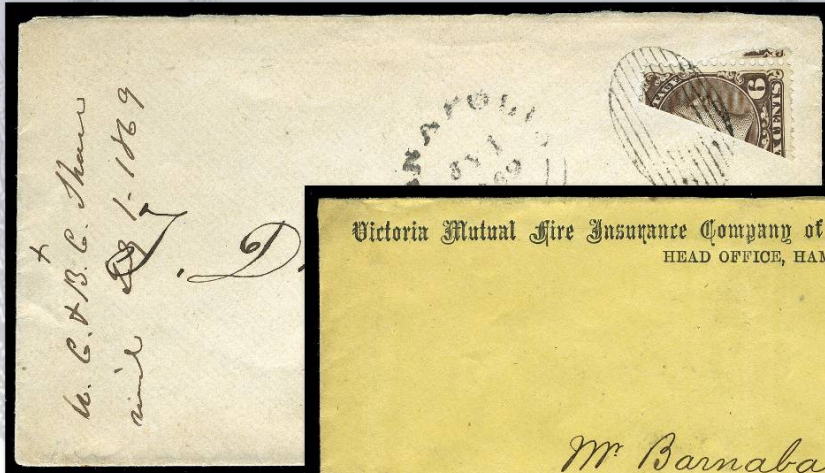
Now that the plate position of the plate flaw is known, we should all be on the lookout for right imprint pieces of the 5¢ value. Who will be the first one to find it mint or on cover? I urge collectors who have more information to share about this plate flaw, the plate imprints (especially imperf plate imprints) or illustrations of other examples (I am willing to maintain and update census) to contact me at guillaume@vadeboncoeur.ca.

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1877 Illustrated advertising to Portugal



1c Plate proof block



10c Die proof in dull rose lilac on watermarked thin paper



20c Die proof in black with die number



1/2c pair, imperforate between



50c Die proof in black

How glorious it is as you view an auction catalogue and on every page WOW.

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Sparks Auctions of Ottawa will be holding this sale in November 2015. It will be a highlight of the auction season and for those collecting 1870 to 1897 Small Queen postal history and stamps, a necessary precursor for the 2016 New York international show.

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email: info@sparks-auctions.com www.sparks-auctions.com

Request for Census Information

Wayne Smith (waynesmithtor@yahoo.ca) provided us with two databases for this newsletter and would appreciate further information if you have additional information not included in his database.

1. Census of Known NB Numeral Covers Bearing LQ Frankings

1: 25 My 28/70
 2: 22&24 No 28/68, 25 Nv 8/70, 23&24 No 11/70, 23&24 1870
 3: 28x4 My 29/71, 24&35 Ju 1/71
 7: 25 Sp 11/69
 8: 25 My 8/68, 25 Ja 13/70
 9: 25 Ja 14/70
 10: 22&25x3 Oc 6/68, 22x2&25 De 1/68, 25x2 Fe 8/69, 25x2 Ju 10/69, 25 ?? date
 11: 28 Au 19/69, 24&35 Jy 17/71
 13: 28 Ap 12/68, 28 My 4/68, 24&25 My 11/68*, 24&27 My 16/68, 27 My 19/68, 25 Jy 6/68, 25 JY 10/68, 25 Jy 31/68, 25 Au 8/68, 25 Au 18/68, 25 Au 25/68, 25 Au 28/68, 25 Sp 8 68, 25 Oc 7/68*, 25 Oc 25/68, 25 Oc 30/68, 27 Oc 9/68, 25x2 No 2/68, 25 Nv 7/68, 27x4 No 68, 24&25 De 9/68, 25 De 17/68, 25 ?/3/68, 25 Ja 14/69, 25 Fe 13/69, 25 Mr 6/69, 25 Mr 13/69, 22 date ??, 23 ?? date
 16: 25 Ju 6 68
 18: 25 Ap 16/69, 25 Ap 18/69
 21: 25 Ap 8/68, 22&24 Oc 12/69, 22&24 Oc 14/69, 27 Oc 20/70, 27 No 25/70, 24&37 My 2/71
 22: 25 Mr 2/69, 24&NB6 Mr 8/69, 24&NB6 Mr 20/69, 25 Mr 24/69*
 26: 22&24 Ju 7/68, 25 Ju 7/68*, 25 De 18/68*, 25 De ?/68, 22&24 1868, 25 Au 11/69, 25 Oc 29/69, 23&24 Jy 27/70*, 23&24 Jy 29/70, 23&24 Au 8/70, 24&35 Mr 31/74
 30: 23&24 Oc 22/70
 33: 22x3 No 10/69
 39: 25 Ap 1/68, 25 Oc 1/69*, 25 date?

* = Cover noted in N. Brassler PHSC journal June 1987 article but I have not seen

S. Gibbons sale Sp 26/75 had a 3c 1868 and a 3c 1869, both #26 grid from Upper Gagetown to Butler MPP, in Canning with ms via Sheffield these may be new or could be included in above

2. Large Queens Bearing Early Dates, April 1st, 1868 or Earlier

Arnprior - #25 Ap 1/68
 Galt - #25 Mr 19/68 (ex Firby auction – suspicious date)
 Hamilton - #29 Mr 9/68, #29 Mr 12 or 13/68 (Fawn), #29 Mr 16/68, #25 Mr 26/68, #24 Mr 28/68, #25 Mr 2?/68, #22 Mr 30/68, #24 Mr 31/68, #29 MR ?/68, #25 Ap 1/68, #25 Ap 1/68, #27 Ap 1/68, #29 Ap1/68
 London - #25 Ap 1/68
 Magog - #25 Ap 1/68
 Montreal #25 Mr 21/68 (city not completely clear)
 Oshawa - #25 Mr 31/68
 Ottawa - #29 Mr 2/68, #29 Mr 2/68, #29, Mr 7/68, #22 Mr 27/68, #21 Mr 31/68,
 Port???? - #25 Ap 1/68
 Quebec - #21 Ap 1/68, #25 Ap 1/68,
 Simcoe - #25 Mr 31/68
 St. John - #25 Ap1/68,
 York - #28 Mr 31/68
 Town not clear #25 Ap 1/68, #25 Ap 1/68
 #26 – Seen Waterford Oc 1/75 and Thornsby Oc 2/75. I have seen a second Oc 1 but I am of the belief it is a case of the second date number being off the edge and is therefore Oc 10 to 19th.

Prices for these are all over the place. Last Nov a SON Ap 1/68 on 3c sold for \$163cdn on Ebay. I sold my Mr 2/68 for \$1,900+ buyers' fee in 1995 and Saskatoon had the other Mr 2 listed last year at \$2,950.

Request for Census Information contd.

The early #29's are explained by the rate to UK change from 17c in late Feb 1868 to 15c so the new stamps would have been sent out as soon as possible. At the time Hamilton was the fifth largest city but seems to have received a shipment of Large Queens early or ignored a request not to use them beforehand. My guess is Hamilton requested a shipment of 5c Beaver stamps and received #24 and #25 instead.

An interesting point on the Hamilton strikes are they all have CW in the dater except one of the #25 Ap 1/68 which has ONT in the dater. Stéphane Cloutier pointed out to me that at the time Hamilton was using a double broken circle hammer with ONT (introduced 1867-02-05), the Berri Duplex (CW) in use until 1873-04-16 (killer section modified in 1872 but dater not modified), and a single broken circle hammer with CW that stayed in use until 1872-12-02 so it is expected that CW and ONT would be seen at the same time. As a side note Stéphane also pointed to the work done by the Green Foundation in certifying the third #32 with its Hamilton Mr 16/70 CW cancel. The Foundation showed how they determined that the date was appropriate for the stamp. He noted that as the duplex dater and the single broken circle are very near identical the #32 could have either one of them – a careful measurement using an overlay would be needed to know for sure. Either way - no impact on the value of the #32.

Letters to the Editor**John Hillson – Reply to Six-Cent Plating Article, April 2015 (Confederation #59)**

In Glen Archer's piece on the Six Cents Small Queen, he makes the assertion that the first plate, made in 1871, had the letter 'A' added to it. I do not know why some enthusiasts seem blind to certain facts, and I honestly cannot understand the reasoning.

1. Check letters were added to Small Queen plates to distinguish one plate from another. It was not the practise to do so on the earlier Large Queen plates, and only became necessary as Small Queen plates proliferated. If there were only one Small Queen plate, why on earth put a letter on it to distinguish it from other non-existent plates.
2. Some 25 million 6c Small Queens were printed up to 1888. If there were only one plate – discounting the relatively small number produced by the poorly made 'Ghostly head' plate – how come? It could have been repaired not more than twice according to the increasing number of dots – and yet it was still in good enough nick to be producing high quality impressions in the 2nd Ottawa period. The only plate I am aware of that ever produced such a high volume of stamps is the 1859 5c Beaver and it was repaired 10 times.
3. The printers were entitled to make a new plate after 4 million stamps had been produced from an existing one. And get paid for it. Does anybody seriously suppose they were trying for some sort of record? Admittedly many plates produced more than 4 million, but 25 million plus? Come on, be realistic.
4. There was no 'B' plate or 'C' plate – only one twin pane plate, as per the 1903 destruction schedule, with the panes stamped 'B' (upside down as it happens) and 'C'
5. I have 1st Ottawa specimens both with single dots, from the 1871 plate, and with 2 dots from the 'A' plate – the two plates were in use at the same time.

Finally, I have to say that when two Large Queen plates were made, and in 1871 two Small Queen 2c plates with a roughly comparable usage to the 6c, why anyone would believe the printers would be so incompetent as to make only one SQ 6c plate, to be frank, I find incomprehensible. To me it is obvious that two were made in 1871, employing the same gimmick of the position of the lower left guide dots, to distinguish one plate from the other as was used with the 6c Large Queens, but one of them was, for some reason, so poorly executed that it was only brought into service once, around the end of 1873 – the 'Ghostly Head' plate – and a third plate had to be made in a hurry – the 'A' plate.

One other fact I forgot to mention – a rather important one. On the 1871 plate the end stamps of row One and Two (i.e. the 10th stamps from the left) are in line vertically with one another. On the 'A' Plate, the 10th stamp in the 2nd row is shifted quite prominently to the right. Plate impressions on mild steel are not inclined to wander around at will. Interestingly the whole of the 10th vertical row is not accurately placed – unfortunately it is only the left half of the top two rows of the 1871 plate that a position piece still exists.

Six-Cent Small Queen Hairball Variety on Cover

Guy Jeffery (guyjeffery5@gmail.com)

Here are three scans of a "hairball" on cover. As far as I know this is the only known hairball on cover, and certainly the only known cancelled with such clear fancy cancels. The cover is a Registered Province of British Columbia envelope dated 4 Feb 98 from Barkerville to Caribou BC. The back has two Barkerville and one Soda Creek CDS.



The cancels on the stamps are Lacelle 66. This is a later strike of the star and the numeral 3 is not visible. If anyone else has a "hairball" on cover I would like to know.



The One-Cent Small Queen Uprated on Cards for Foreign Destinations

Vic Willson (lloydwill@aol.com)

Until January 1st, 1890, only designated cards (P3 and P4) were by regulations permitted for international destinations, US and Mexico excepted. On and after that date domestic one-cent cards uprated with an additional one cent (either two half-cents or a single one-cent stamp) were permitted.

This is a census of the use of the one-cent Small Queen on government cards through the late 1890s. It is based on my collection, Brian Murphy's, Allan Steinhart's, the Arfken post card books, various Firby auctions and Eastern catalogues over the last two years.

Pre-1890: The following destinations have been seen by me uprated with domestic cards, uprated with a single one-cent Small Queen: United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, France, Denmark and Bermuda. None are common, though the UK is the most common. Mostly these were not charged deficient for letter rate, which was supposed to happen, and any marked as deficient are rare.

1890 onwards : The list does not differentiate specific government cards. Other than for the most common countries (UK, Germany, France), none is common, many are unique. Perhaps the most spectacular is the oversize for UPU domestic card sent to Japan and rated shortpaid for the letter rate. Very few uprated cards are found much beyond 1898, as the use of Leaf and Numeral stamps superseded the use of the one-cent Small Queen. Your correspondence and reporting of other items is desired.

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| ALGERIA | DUTCH EAST INDIES | PALESTINE |
| ARGENTINA | FRANCE | RUSSIA |
| AUSTRALIA | GERMAN EAST AFRICA | RUSSIAN FINLAND |
| - SOUTH AUSTRALIA | GERMANY | ST. PIERRE & MIQUELON |
| - WESTERN AUSTRALIA | HONG KONG | SEYCHELLES |
| AUSTRIA | INDIA | SOUTH AFRICA |
| AZORES | ITALY | SWEDEN |
| BELGIUM | JAMAICA | SWITZERLAND |
| BERMUDA | JAPAN | TURKEY |
| BOLIVIA | LIBYA (TRIPOLI) | TURKS ISLAND |
| BRAZIL | NETHERLANDS | UNITED KINGDOM |
| BURMA | NEWFOUNDLAND | |
| CAMBODIA | NEW ZEALAND | |
| CHINA | NORWAY | |
| DENMARK | REUNION | |

Chairman's Column

Bill Radcliffe

I would like to start this newsletter asking for articles so if anyone has something for us please sent it so we can get the winter newsletter out on time. The BNAPEX study group will meet at 2:00 PM September 13 in Niagara. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or a presentation you would like to give at the seminar.

So far this year your chairman has found a few nice things; this is one of them, a Ten Cent rate three color Small



Queen cover to Germany which is in the very short preferred rate period to go along with my Five Cent rate from the same period. This rate was put into effect on April 1, 1877 by Germany because France and Spain blocked Canada from membership into the UPU in 1876. Germany and Canada negotiated a 5c per ½ oz. rate to match the 5c rate with England. This rate lasted a little more than a year until August 1, 1878 when Canada was accepted into the UPU. The first cover I show is the cover I found this year which is 1 oz. 10c rate mail from Toronto to Chemnitz Germany on September 29 1877, reaching Germany on the 20th of October.

The other cover I'm showing is the 5c ½ oz. rate mailed from Montreal November 23 1877 arriving in Klingenthal December 9 1877. I found this cover on eBay 5 years ago. To my knowledge these are two of the three preferred rates pre UPU known; the third one was ex. Arfken, last sold in the Eastern Nixon sale last year. If any members



know of others please contact me or our editor. If any one has any inquires I can be contacted by phone (856-589-1945) or email bsbvp88@hotmail.com.

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