

Confederation

The Newsletter of the BNAPS Large and Small Queens Study Group

Volume 67

April 2019

When Did the Balloon Go Up...on the 15 Cent Large Queen?

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I purchased this item (Figure 1) some months ago on eBay primarily because 4 ring numerals on large queen pairs are not that common, and a 4 ring 27 on a 15 Cent pair would make a lovely addition to my numeral collection.

However examination under a glass after receipt has revealed it to be much more interesting than I could possibly ever have imagined.

Figure 2 is a close-up scan, with the tip of what can only be the bottom imprint clearly visible in the lower left corner. All well and good, but where is the balloon flaw that is normally found at plate position 97?

It has always been my understanding that this flaw exists on all printings of the 15 Cent value. Indeed this seems to be confirmed by Watt and Fawn who, in their plating work on the 15 Cent, state that 'the flaw probably occurs on all printings'. However I am now beginning to wonder whether this is certain. This pair is definitely from an early printing. I have looked at all my other 'balloon' examples, but all of them seem to be on the #30, with the exception of a #29.



Does this suggest that the flaw arrived somehow during the earliest printings, and was therefore NOT present throughout the life of this denomination? Could I be wrong, and what looks like the imprint is something else entirely? How and when did the balloon flaw get onto the plate?

Members are invited to examine in particular their 15 Cent imprint holdings to see whether they also can find PP97 examples without the balloon flaw.

I would be delighted to be contacted with any relevant information.

Important Notice re: ORAPEX 2019 Gathering

Guillaume's invitation to our annual stamp gathering may be found on Page Four.

Note the date has been moved up to **Friday** evening.

Expertising at the VGGF – My Experience

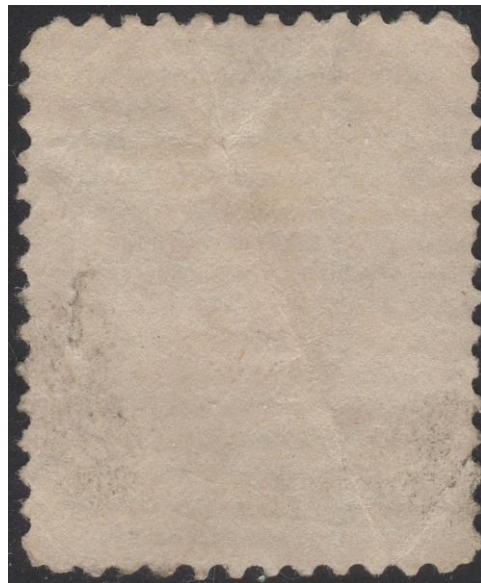
Glenn Archer (glennarcher@hotmail.com)

I'll start this short article by saying I'll probably be giving up my 10+ years role as editor here, and let someone with fresh energy and ideas take on the task. I'll still be around and, who knows, maybe I will contribute an article or two to Confederation.

I hope you'll excuse if this reads as hastily written – it is. A contributor pulled his article relatively soon before publishing, and admittedly I'm trying to add some "filler" in an effort to get you a read before ORAPEX. With the success of e.g. Dots and Scratches, which usually has crossover interest from the readership here, we are getting very few original articles and I just have not had time to "shake the trees" the last two years,

1. Why and how I started

My involvement with the VGGF coincided with Michael Smith's discovery of the third Two-cent Large Queen on laid paper (#32). I got a call from Ted Nixon, it was probably a Tuesday afternoon in late spring (2013 I think), "would I mind coming down to the Greene on Saturday to look at a stamp someone had submitted". Later I learned the Greene gets about one submission a year from a collector who thinks (s)he has a #32, and in most instances it takes about thirty seconds to dismiss the submission (side note: several were two-cent Small Queens). Mike's stamp was the exception.



The owners of the two existing examples were, understandably, reluctant to provide their stamps for examination. Ultimately the Greene was satisfied they had enough input from external opinions (myself, Richard Gratton and others) and that a study and understanding of the paper sufficed as evidence to authenticate the stamp as genuine used.

One of the joys of stamp collecting is discovering the friends you never knew you had. Mike is a great guy with a keen stamp mind, and we have enjoyed many conversations since.

2. Continued involvement

At the first meeting I attended, which was a Saturday in January 2014 I think, I guess they were "sizing me up" when they invited me. There was some interest from specialist dealers at the time to classify Large Queen papers by Duckworth group. I sorted some papers, but ultimately the committee decided they should only certify papers where Unitrade provided a separate catalogue listing.

Expertising at the VGGF contd.

One thing I learned about myself at my first committee meeting is that I talk to myself a lot when I examine stamps. There is plenty of discussion at meetings, but when I got stares from a few of the committee members I clued in that I was carrying my own conversation. I think they just found it funny. Somehow they decided to put up with me.

Meetings last about five hours. At least two independent eyes examine each item before any decision is taken. There is sometimes a difference of opinion on items, which means they get held back for closer examination.

I've been asked a few times where one gets in-depth knowledge of stamps. Well, first off, we are all continually learning and the VGGF committee is no different. Expertising does sharpen one's eye, and forces you to examine critically. A fault you would happily overlook in your own material must be called out on a certificate. The second thing I'd say is this: the more you read, the more you study stamps, the better you will get at it. I used to buy a lot of small collections, and build my own from them; the experience of handling a lot of material makes you a better student.

3. What sort of material do you see...

Every meeting is different, as is the variety of material we see. I'd estimate there are 100 to 150 submissions a month. Sometimes we see a lot of mint QV (it is pretty straightforward to examine), sometimes modern errors, sometime we get a group of shady-looking material with hidden faults that takes a long time to examine.

The majority of submissions today come from dealers and auction houses. The auction business at its higher-end is quite healthy, and philatelic material with third-party expert opinions sells better.

Common submissions:

- Prussian Blue (Newfoundland 1919 issue, the fifteen-cent): Is it, or no. The VGGF has agreed reference standards in its extensive in-house collection, but new research is in the works and a better answer to the question should be coming some months from now.
- Five Cent LQ, 26 or 26a: There seems to be a new one submitted every month. Sadly, I see a disappointing trend in classic Canada where reperforating is far more common.
- Original gum and Never Hinged: There is a LOT of reperforated and regummed material turning up for expertization. The faker's first task is to try and remove evidence of the cancel, usually a pen cancel; fortunately for us, the VSC-6000 is good at revealing these. Once we suss out the cleaned cancel, it almost always is accompanied by regumming and reperforating. Some of the sprayed-gum techniques we see today are very convincing, and it is getting harder to spot the doctored ones. Sweated gum is common too.
- Pence Issues: We are discovering more and more excellent repairs in Pence issues, amongst the repairs added margins, repainted framelines and retouches of stamp design, and rebacking of proofs to make them resemble issued stamps. Many of these repairs probably date back 50-60 years.

Invitation to the Orapex Gathering, Ottawa, Friday May 3rd starting at 7pm

Once again this year I will be hosting a gathering during Orapex for members of the Large and Small Queen study group (and other enthusiasts of early Canadian philately). If you have not previously attended, the gathering is an informal evening where fellow collectors of early Canadian stamps, cancels and postal history share their passion of philately, share information, ask questions, compare notes (or stamps, or covers) and even do a bit of buying, selling and swapping, or simply sip a glass of wine. Many discoveries were made during past events, varieties identified, orphaned stamps re-united and lifelong connections made between fellow collectors.

Due to prior commitments, I am tied up Saturday evening. As such, the gathering will be taking place on **Friday May 3rd starting at 7pm** – but you can join later (after 10 p.m.) if that works better. I am located in downtown Ottawa at 320 McLeod Street (corner of O'Connor). If you are from out of town and haven't yet booked your accommodations for your stay in Ottawa, I recommend the Best Western Plus Victoria Park which is conveniently located across the street from where I live.

If you are planning on attending, please email me at guillaume@vadeboncoeur.ca, or call me/text me at 613-818-0445 and I can provide additional information, direction, where to park, etc. I look forward to seeing you in just a few weeks. If you haven't been to Orapex, you are missing on a strong show and exhibit and a great time of the year to be in Ottawa.

Guillaume Vadeboncoeur

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CANADA

Census of On-cover Widow Weeds

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While the 20 and 50 cent "Widow Weeds" stamps of 1893 properly belong with the Small Queen issue, they are not typically presented with them in either exhibits or reference works on the Small Queens. By themselves they are too small a collecting focus for much more than a couple frames in exhibits and are somewhat orphans in 19th century collecting of Canada. Part of that is because there is so little postal history material available. I provide an initial census of on-cover uses of the two stamps here to provide some perspective on their use.

The clearly intended purpose for the stamps was to pay higher amount postage on parcels, bulk newspaper mailing receipts, and registered bank mailings of currency and coin. The 15 cent Large Queen was still in use and stocks were not used up until the end of the 19th century, but more of those would be needed than a 20 or 50 cent stamp on large value mailings, There are plenty of used copies of both Widow Weed values available on stamp websites and in dealer stocks, suggestive that they were soaked from packaging. Fred Jarrett remarked in his book "Stampin Around" that he used to soak many blocks of the 50 cent Edward from bank packaging as a youth, suggesting the fate of most Widow Weeds also. Nevertheless, there was a need for mailing commercial and private letters with higher weights. Printed matter, for example, would fit into that category at 1 cent per four oz. as well as parcel post at 6 cents per four ozs. Commercial enterprises that sent weighty documents might want better protection, such as registration and sealed envelopes. The two values provided such service for many years, the 20 cent until issuance of the Edward 20 cent in 1904 and the 50 cent Edward in 1908. Clearly the latter was not needed until stocks of the 50 cent Widow Weed ran out. Totals printed, per Hillson and Nixon (2008, p. 191) are 525,200 of the 20 cent and 530,200 of the 50 cent.

Relatively few covers have remained intact. I have gone through the last 60 years of auction catalogs, reference works, and notes from presentations to list 59 covers with either or both values, by themselves or with other stamps. Send Glenn Archer new items not listed for an update to this list; "parcel" means parcel post below.

| FRANKING | ADDNL FRANKING | REG? | FROM | TO | CANCEL DATE | |
|----------|-------------------|------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|----|
| 20¢ | | | Winnipeg | Pontypool England | Oct. 20, 1893 | 1 |
| | | | Montreal | Italy | Ju 24, 1895 | 2 |
| | | | Toronto | Toronto | Nov. 14, 1895 | 3 |
| | | | Quebec | Sweden | Mar. 12, 1896 | 4 |
| | | | Montreal | Scotland | Jy 17, 1896 | 5 |
| | | Yes | Halifax | Montreal | Aug. 20, 1896 | 6 |
| | | | Ottawa | London England | Nov. 18, 1896 | 7 |
| | | | Halifax | London England | May 29, 1897 | 8 |
| | | Yes | Berlin | Germany | Jan. 17, 1899 | 9 |
| | | | Montreal | Honduras | Dec. 28, 1899 | 10 |
| | | | Fredricton | Massachusetts | Nov. 10, 1902 | 11 |
| | | | Fredricton | USA | Nov. 19, 1902 | 12 |
| | | PM | Ottawa | Brussels Belgium | und | 13 |
| | | | Toronto | Argentina | Apr. 16, 1895 | 14 |
| | 5¢ RLS | Yes | Niagara Falls | Germany | Ju 28, 1893 | 15 |
| | 10¢ SQ | | Cobourg Ont | Corrington England | Dec. 16, 1895 | 16 |

| FRANKING | ADDNL FRANKING | REG? | FROM | TO | CANCEL DATE | |
|----------|---|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----|
| | 3¢ SQ | Yes p/p | Halifax | Yarmouth | Ju 27, 1895 | 17 |
| | 2¢ PSE | Yes | Montreal | NYCity | Feb. 1, 1896 | 18 |
| | 15¢ LQ + 2x2¢ SQ | | Toronto | Berlin Ont | Feb. 28, 1896 | 19 |
| | 5¢ SQ | Yes | Ottawa | Austria | Ju 23, 1896 | 20 |
| | 2 x 5¢ SQ | | Quebec City | Sweden | Aug. 11, 1896 | 21 |
| | 2¢ SQ + 5¢ SQ + 8¢ SQ | Yes | Toronto | Switzerland | Apr. 9, 1897 | 22 |
| | 5¢ SQ | Yes | Ottawa | Colchester England | Oct. 1, 1896 | 23 |
| | 10¢ SQ | Yes | Ottawa | Germany | Jy 26, 1897 | 24 |
| | 5¢ NUM | Yes | Nelson BC | Scotland | Mar. 23, 1898 | 25 |
| | 1¢ NUM | Yes | Niagara Falls&London RPO | Germany | Aug. 9, 1899 | 26 |
| | 2¢ NUM + 10¢ NUM | No | Montreal | Liverpool England | Oct. 19, 1899 | 27 |
| | 5¢ NUM | Yes | Charlottetown | Australia | My 15, 1900 | 28 |
| | 1¢ PSE | yes | Toronto | Detroit | Ju 6, 1910 | 29 |
| | 24 x ½¢ SQ + 8¢ SQ | Yes | | Germany | | 30 |
| | 20 x ½¢ SQ | Yes | | Germany | | 31 |
| | 2 x ½¢ + 1¢ + 2¢ + 3¢ + 5¢ + 6¢ + 8¢ + 10¢ + 15¢ LQ + 5¢ RLS (overpaid 2½¢) | Yes | domestic | domestic | | 32 |
| | 10¢ SQ + 2x2¢ SQ | Yes p/p | domestic | domestic | | 33 |
| 2 x 20¢ | 5¢ SQ + 2¢ SQ | Yes | Yarmouth | Bridgewater NS | Nov. 5, 1897 | 34 |
| | 5¢ SQ + 2x2¢ SQ | | Halifax | ? NS | Nov. 9, 1897 | 35 |
| | 2¢ SQ | | Toronto | Berlin Ont | Jan. 18, 1899 | 36 |
| | 8¢ SQ | Yes | Toronto | Berlin Ont | Feb. 23, 1899 ? | 37 |
| 50¢ | 30 x ½¢ SQ | Yes | Windsor | Germany | Mar 13, 1895 | 38 |
| | | Yes | Moncton | Bangor ME | Ju 7, 1895 | 39 |
| | | Yes | Halifax | Montreal | Aug. 17, 1896 | 40 |
| | | Yes | Montreal | NYCity | Oct. 14, 1897 | 41 |
| | | ? | Halifax | NS | 1897 | 42 |
| | | Yes | Kingston | Chicago | 2-May-00 | 43 |
| | | | Montreal | New Brunswick NJ | Oct. 9, 1905 | 44 |
| | 5¢ RLS | Yes | Niagara Falls | Germany | Ju 28, 1893 | 45 |

| FRANKING | ADDNL FRANKING | REG? | FROM | TO | CANCEL DATE | |
|-----------|--|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|----|
| | 2x20¢ EDW | PP | Ottawa | Brussels Belgium | Oct. 6, 1906 | 46 |
| | 2x2¢ EDW + 2x7¢ EDW + 20¢ EDW | PP | Ottawa | London England | Feb. 14, 1907 | 47 |
| | 5¢ EDW +2on3¢ PSE | Yes | Toronto | Detroit | Ju 6, 1910 | 48 |
| | 2x2¢ NUM + 5¢ NUM + 10¢ NUM + 20¢ NUM | Yes | Halifax | Queens Port NS | und | 49 |
| 2 x 50¢ | 2¢ NUM + 5¢ NUM + 10¢ NUM + 20¢ NUM | ? | Halifax | ?NS | Nov. 17, 1902 | 50 |
| | 5¢ EDW + 2x2¢ EDW | Yes | Toronto | Smithville, Ont | Aug. 3, 1905 | 51 |
| 3 x 50¢ | 2x2¢ NUM + 2x20¢ NUM | ? | RPO | South Africa | Dec. 4, 1901 | 52 |
| | 5¢ EDW | Yes PP | Halifax | Sydney Mines | Jy 28, 1903 | 53 |
| 20¢ + 50¢ | 5¢ RLS + 1¢ SQ + 1¢ PSE | Yes | Victoria BC | Germany | Ju 28, 1893 | 54 |
| | ½¢ SQ + 1¢ SQ + 2¢ SQ + 3¢ SQ + 5¢ SQ + 6¢ SQ + 8¢ SQ + 10¢ SQ + 15¢ LQ | Yes | Hamilton | NYCity | May 6, 1896 | 55 |
| | 5¢ SQ + 2¢ SQ | Yes | Toronto | Hastings Ont | Jan. 3, 1898 | 56 |
| | 2¢ NUM + 10¢ NUM | PP | Ottawa | Brussels, Belgium | Jy 14, 1899 | 57 |
| | ½¢ + 10¢ + 15¢ LQ + 5¢ RLS | Yes | Hamilton | Colombia | Mar. 12, 1894 | 58 |
| | 2 x ½¢ + 1¢ + 2¢ + 3¢ + 5¢ + 6¢ + 8¢ + 10¢ + + 15¢ LQ + 2¢ RLS + 5¢ RLS | Yes | domestic | domestic | | 59 |

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