

Confederation

The Newsletter of the BNAPS Large and Small Queen Study Group

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May 30 Virtual Meeting of LQSQ Study Group

Over 25 members and other BNAPSers attended the first Zoom meeting of our group, moderated by our Chairman (who had the idea initially) and hosted by Mike Halhed. The agenda was developed from volunteer presentations by 8 different members. After a discussion of Study group business, indicating a future virtual meeting this summer, Darin noted that this and future meetings will be recorded and put on the BNAPS website, to promote the group and allow those who cannot attend to view the meeting. He noted that dues are a nominal C\$10 but waived for those who present or send in items for the newsletter. Also, Darin proposed to start a listserve for members to interact, pose questions, and chat. No time is yet set for its activation.

Bill Burden began the presentations with a showing of his new website that focuses on Small Queen stamps, including flaws. It permits viewer magnification of items shown. It is still in *continued on p.7*

Response to Jim André's query on the 6¢ - Bill Burden

It is from position 5 of the B pane. There is actually quite a bit written about the top row of that plate and positions 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 all show "Pitting". I believe the 'story' is that the ink was somewhat corrosive but poor storage of the plate has also been mentioned, if I remember correctly.

Attached is a scan of a strip of 3 which confirms the position and the plate. It would be no problem for me to

provide scans of all 5 positions if of interest.



At one time I planned to do a 'study' of these varieties as I believe it is possible to show examples of various states of wear for each position. I have been 'assembling' examples, but alas, other (philatelic) interests have become gas-like and have expanded to fill my stamp time.

8 Cents Small Queen on Cover Newly reported Earliest Date of Use

At the time of printing, (2008), Hillson and Nixon's Canada's Postage Stamps of the Small Queen Era 1870-1897 illustrated what was the earliest reported 8 Cents Small Queen used on cover. That example was dated September 8, 1893, and was mailed at Quebec, Canada. The example below was mailed at Elmsdale, N. S. on September 1, 1893, six days earlier. It arrived at the Lower Stewiacke Post Office the same day, having traveled in the Mail Car of the West-bound Halifax & Amherst run of the Intercolonial Railway.



In the rush to provide a denomination to pay both the single rate and Registration Fee, (effective August 1, 1893) it appears that two plates were used for the initial printings. This example is from Plate #1 in Medium Blue Grey shade, Perf. 12 x 12.



A photocopy of a portion of the reverse of the cover illustrating the routing and verifying the date.

8 Cents Small Queens on Piece Largest Reported Number of Copies

Recently, a trove of some 900 covers and other philatelic material was auctioned off. The material related to the mining activities of one Henry Mitchell. Among the items was this portion of a wrapper which was sent from the Chief Gold Commissioner, Halifax, N. S. (AU 4 '97 CDS). Other pieces of mail from this period indicate that Mr. Mitchell was then living at Old Bridgeport (Mines), N. S. so that is the presumed destination of this rather large mailing. The total franking is 72 cents, so deducting the 5 cents Registration Fee, the postage paid covers a weight of 22 ounces—overpaid by 1 cent.

The significant philatelic feature of this item is the fact that postage was paid using 9 x 8c Small Queen stamps....the largest number of that denomination ever reported on cover or piece. It is known that another piece exists with 5 of the 8c, and this writer has a block of 12, but that is off paper. In general, large multiples of this issue are scarce, and this is noted in discussions by several philatelists. My reasoning is that the 20c and 50c Widow Weeds were issued around the same time, and these provided ample coverage for heavier correspondence and parcels.



This example illustrates late use of Plate #1 in the Very Deep Blackish Purple shade, Perf. 12 x 12.

A photocopy of the red seal used on this package identifies the sender as the Chief Gold Commissioner, Halifax, N. S.



3 CENT LARGE QUEEN PLATE FLAW- Tom Meyerhof (meyerhof@magma.ca)

Some time ago I acquired a 3¢ Large Queen “cracked plate” stamp (Unitrade 25v) from Glenn Archer which he described as “The flaw is actually a transfer roll flaw from the first 3c plate - it can be found in more than one plate position and a strip of three is known from a plate proof - this one is especially prominent, orange red shade on the thin crisp paper of the earliest printings . . .” A scan of this stamp as well as the flaw detail are shown below.

Variety in Orange Red on Paper 1



Close-up of Flaw



Harrison Sketch



Horace Harrison first commented on this variety in a 1961 article in *Maple Leaves*¹ where he sketched it (right illustration above) with the description “ . . a severe plate crack in the left margin. This has only been observed on one copy, on the thin crisp transparent paper, and, while it appears to be unmistakably a plate crack, reports of additional examples are desired to establish that it is constant, beyond question.” This same sketch appears in the Duckworths’ 2008 book on the Large Queens² where it quotes Harrison’s description as “a severe plate crack in the left margin. This has only been observed on one copy, on thin crisp transparent paper”.

In 2014 Brian Hargreaves in an article in *Confederation3*, showed a plate proof strip of three stamps that all exhibit this flaw. This suggests that the transfer roll itself must have contained this errant feature. Interestingly on this strip the strength of this flaw appears to diminish from the right stamp to the left stamp, the direction in which the subjects would normally be laid down in preparing the plate. Could this errant feature have been the result of a piece of foreign matter adhering to the transfer roll for just a few positions on the plate, or was it a slight unwanted metal ridge on the transfer roll which was not spotted until initial stamp production had commenced? Either scenario could explain the scarcity of the observed variety. On the other hand, the lower left position dot relative to the stamp above appears very slightly different from that in the Hargreaves strip suggesting another plate position was also affected by this flaw. Given the strength of the flaw on the above stamp relative to the Hargreaves plate proof strip, it could be the adjoining plate position on the right side of the strip. As few examples of this variety exist on used stamps, the flaw was probably caught after only a few sheets had been printed and sold to the public, when the transfer roll was likely burnished to remove this defect.

Examination of the stamp with a 15x magnifier suggests the flaw was caused by contact with an irregularity in the transfer roll rather than being the result of a plate crack as indicated by Harrison and repeated by the Duckworths. A plate crack caused by excess or repeated printing press pressure would have resulted in a metal stress fracture with sharp irregular margins and thus would appear similar to an engraved line with sharply inked edges. Some cracked plate examples found on the 3¢ value include one with a line through the 'NTS' of 'CENTS', and another with a diagonal line running from the Queen's chin towards the top right scroll and extending through the margin. In both cases the extraneous lines appear as sharply-defined irregular fissures. In contrast, the extraneous line in the left margin of the 3¢ stamp above exhibits a more flowing pattern and diffuse edges. The fact that this stamp is on Paper 1 which was only used for a few months in 1868, early in the life of printing the 3¢ values also supports the conclusion that this is a transfer roll flaw rather than a plate crack. Insufficient use would have occurred for repeatedly applied printing pressure to cause printing plate stress cracks by this point. The printer would likely have removed this plate from service as defective and replaced it if the damage had occurred after such limited use.

The author would like to acknowledge the valuable input provided by Glenn Archer in the development of this article.

¹ Horace Harrison, *Maple Leaves*, vol 9, no 1, pp 5-7, October 1961

²H.E. & H.W. Duckworth, *The Large Queen Stamps of Canada and Their Use*, Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation, 2nd edition, pg 94, 2008

³ Brian Hargreaves, *Confederation*, vol 55, February 2014

Scanner Accuracy comment Tom Meyerhof (meyerhof@magma.ca)

Since you asked for feedback on your March 2020 newsletter article on using a scanner and PC to measure stamp perforations, I found an odd issue. I refer specifically to your conversion factor for inches to centimeters. It has been set internationally as 2.54 in/cm exactly since the early 1930s. Your factor appears to be an earlier American attempt at the conversion. A short explanation can be found at <https://www.metric-conversions.org/length/inches-to-centimeters.htm>. Obviously in practical terms this is only a trivial difference and does not affect the actual measurement result.

A more serious deficiency in this measurement approach is the accuracy of the scanner stepper motor itself such that what is assumed to be say exactly 1200 dpi may in fact be +/- a small amount. It has been recommended that the scanner dpi accuracy be checked by scanning an accurate ruler at several platen locations, both horizontally and vertically and if needed applying a correction factor for each location while also ensuring that the stamp is placed on the platen at constant location to which the correction factor applies. I have attached an extract from a commercial perforation measurement software product that discusses this.

I ran into this problem myself about 1 year ago while making perforation measurements on my PC using a ruler I had scanned at nominally 1200 dpi and then calculating the perforation gauge on stamp block scans supplied by a colleague who had also used nominally 1200 dpi. It turned out his scanner was accurately set at 1200 dpi, while my scanner scanned at 1194 dpi, thus causing a discrepancy of about 0.5%. This required a correction factor (eg my 11.59 measurement was actually 11.66). He wanted measurements to 2 decimal points while trying to confirm that the stamp printer had used several different perforating wheels over a period of time. The general concept of the scanned ruler method is shown at <http://brcstamps.com/sq/>

Brian Hargreaves asks:

The lockdown has encouraged me to revisit some of my puzzling and unidentified items. The attached image has what appears to be a circular cancel in red. I am fairly confident that the lower letters spell out 'St.John N.B. But I am struggling with the lettering above. I don't think it's a date, because the wording seems to end in either a D or a Y. No numbers visible.



I don't think it's a Registry Date Stamp, because, according to Harrison's book, the 'Registered' is always at the top of the circle, not in the middle as here. Could it be a Commercial/Bank revenue type cancel? Any suggestions welcome.

Gerald Wulkowicz wondered in the last Confederation whether there is a list of reported dates for the #30C. I don't know the answer to that, but I can contribute a couple of dated examples from my own collection. September 4 and 7.

Is this a mere coincidence that Gerald's and my examples are all within one week of each other? Or is there some more rational or significant reason for their proximity? One of my examples was posted from Quebec, and Gerald's item comes from somewhere beginning with H. So they can't all have come from the same post office.

Earl Noss reports

Shown is a neck flaw in Sc36, top lefty stamp in the block



development as a replacement to his earlier version but was praised by viewers.

Jack Forbes discussed the largest franking with 8¢ Small Queens (shown above) and also the early use of the stamp on cover (also shown above).

Mark Berner discussed the Wolfville oval cancel used mostly on LQs and asked for reports of the cancel for his study.

Jim McCormick updated viewers on his plating of the 6¢SQ across the three states.

Vic Willson discussed a 2¢ printed matter will to the US ca. 1869-70 and conjectured about possible payment of the postage due in the US on printed matter prior to 1871. Mike Halhed gave the feature presentation of the night on his development of a searchable database of fancy cancels of the 19th century. He showed a method to overlay dated cancels to permit determination if one is a degraded state of another, with some convincing examples. The db is stored on the cloud and can be accessed by permission from him. The intent is to continue to add covers sent as jpegs or similar to Mike so the searchable db can continue to expand and be used by collectors.

Chairman Darin concluded the meeting after almost 3 hours of interest with thanks to presenters and to attendees for the inaugural event. Several nonmembers attended, including Board Chair P. Charles Livermore, to gain some insight into how the process works. A new member was signed up to the SG, Bill Radcliffe informed your editor. It is hoped the virtual meetings can become a vehicle to gain new members both from BNAPS and from the wider philatelic community.

The next meeting is tentatively pegged for July- keep watching for notice.



Dots in Right 1 of 12½¢ Large Queen – Vic Willson
There are two separate stamps in the 12½¢ that have a dot in the right numeral 1 shown here. The top left stamp's dot is in the middle of the numeral, the lower stamp dot is high up on the numeral. Based on the right margin position Jim Watt and I think this is positions 19-20, 29-30 of one sheet.



Large Queen covers to US – Scarce States and Territories – Wayne Smith

Recently a member asked me how many Large Queen covers to California I was aware of. I came up with a list of 38 covers which was much more than I expected. Some of these have been sold as California being a rare destination which got me thinking where in the US are the rarest destinations for LQ covers. Of the 38 covers, one was forwarded from California to Arizona Territory and one was from Victoria, BC to Illinois sent via San Francisco.

Based on my records of 1,450 covers with Large Queen stamps to the US here are the rarest destinations:

Arizona Territory

6c - Indiantown, De 14/72

6c – London, Ju 8/69

Colorado Territory

6c x 2 – Montreal, Ju 7/70

Kansas

3c x 2 – Montreal, No 19/69

6c – Berlin, Au 11/7?

6c – New Dundee, Ja 21/69

Idaho Territory

6c – Grimsby, Ju 10/68

Kentucky

3c x 2 - ??, Ap 27/69

6c – Guelph, 1870

6c – Tiverton, Au 21/69

Nevada

12½¢ x 4 - Woodstock NB, My 29/71

Missouri

6c – London, Oc31/70

6c – London, Mr 14/71

6c – Montreal, Mr 20/71

6c - Ottawa, Sp 28/70

Texas

15c + 2c Small Queen – Toronto, Sp 23/95

Utah

½¢ LQ + ½¢ SQ on 1c postal stationary – Halifax,
Jy 12/95

Virginia

3c x 2 – Montreal, Ja/ 68?

6c - Sherbrook, Nv 2/70

6c – Quebec, Oc 28/70

6c - Toronto, Sp 23/71

Delaware

6c - Montreal, My 7/68

6c - Montreal, Sp 15/69

Indiana

1c Yellow – Brantford, Jy 15/69

3c x 2 – Pembrooke, Jy 31/69

3c x 2 – Bowmanville, Ju 22/69

6c – Newberry, Ju 24/68

6c – Peterboro, My 17/69

Florida

3c + 1c yellow x3 St. Hyacinthe, Ja 5/70

3c + 1c Small Queen x3 St. Hyacinthe, Ju 4/70

Oregon

6c - Victoria – date?

6c - Charing Cross, No 11/71

6c - Fort Garry, Jy 23/71

6c – Lawrencetown, Jy 13/71

6c x 2 – Picton, Jy 28/68

Georgia

6c – Hamilton, De 29/68

6c – St. Catherines, Nv 6/71

Washington DC

3c x 2 – Beamsville, Mr 20/69

3c x 2 - Ottawa, Ap 9/68

6c – WO Cumberland Bay, ?/23/70

6c - Fort Gary, Mr 12/72

6c x 2 - Montreal, Fe 7/71

Maryland

6c - Halifax, De 22/68

6c – Montreal, De 22/70

Nebraska

6c - London, Sp 6/69

6c – Montreal, Fe 24/71

Washington Territory

3c x 2 – Menina, 25 Aug 68

6c – Victoria, Oc 7/68

South Carolina

3c x 2 – Ottawa, Sp 23/??

Other scarcer states not listed are 7 covers to Minnesota and Wisconsin, 9 to Rhode Island and 12 to Iowa.

I have not seen any covers to Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, or West Virginia.

If anyone has additional LQ covers to these areas, please send details to wayesmithtor@yahoo.ca

Short Transfer on 3 Cent Small Queen – Earl Noss

I once had the pleasure of sharing stamps with the famous John Hillson, & right up to the day he past away. I sent John a stamp from a good friend of mine who is over 100 years old by the name of George Pond. George let me scan three book of SQ re-entries for him. And I found this 3 cent SQ with Short entry at top. I sent George's stamp to John & he was quite happy to see another like his. You can see the balls at top are missing.

