

Chairman's Message

Welcome to the second issue of the Xmas 1898 Map Stamp Report. I hope you all enjoyed the content of the first issue, and thanks again to Scott for his super editorial acumen. Many of you "attended" our first study group Zoom meeting in April and were treated to some excellent presentations from members of the group. The presentations reflected the diverse collecting interests of the members - from Western Canada postal history to discussions on plating. So, I think the study group is off to a great start! The current membership of the study group stands at 27, so please talk to your collector friends and invite them to join the study group if they are interested in any aspect of Map stamp philately. And please make a note of the Zoom meeting that the study group will hold on Saturday, September 4, from noon to 2PM (EST), in conjunction with BNAPEX 2021 VIRTUAL. We are still looking for presentations, whether they be short or long, for the meeting. Currently, we only have a couple of presenters lined up so it may be a short meeting unless others get involved! The same is true for the Report - we would welcome articles of any length on any aspect of the Map stamp. I hope you enjoy this issue of the Map Stamp Report - please send your comments, whether critical or laudatory, to Scott or me so that we can make this publication as useful and informative as possible. I hope you are enjoying your summer and "see you" in September.

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My Two Cents – From Your Editor

Following our Zoom meeting in April, I noticed that we had some novice Map collectors in the group in addition to the experienced specialists. With this in mind, this issue begins with another introductory article from me explaining the basic terms and concepts, plus key publications used for the study of the Maps from a plating perspective. This is followed by some short articles and submissions with interesting Map covers. I also offer an invitation for study group members to participate in an ongoing research study of the earliest cancel dates for specific Map plates and ocean shades. Finally, a brief summary of my Zoom presentation on the Map stamp's only misplaced entry is included.

And now, on with the show!

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A Review of the Terms, Descriptions, and Publications Used in the Study and Plating of the Map Stamps

By Scott Robinson

This second introductory column will explore some of the terms and detailed aspects of the Map stamp that are often mentioned by specialists and authors when referring to the stamps. Some of these terms may seem obvious to experienced collectors or Map specialists but may also be new to collectors in this study group who are exploring the details of a particular stamp issue for the first time. Plating publications and a summary of the British Empire possessions shown on the Map stamp by region is also discussed.

Coordinate Systems

One of the most basic tools for describing varieties or other specific aspects of a stamp is a coordinate system for locating the object of discussion. Map specialists tend to use two different coordinate systems. The typical top/right/bottom/left directional system is my favourite since it is universal and also provides a convenient way for doubling up the terms, so that a right, top margin is different from a top, right margin. In these cases, the first term is the modifier and the second is the main directional feature. So, the right, top margin refers to the right side of the top margin. Up/down and above/below are also useful in this system when not referring to the absolute top or bottom of the stamp.

The second coordinate system that is used with the Maps is the north/east/south/west system. Although this system has been used by specialists and writers to describe aspects of almost all stamp issues, it is even more commonly used with the Maps since it lends itself to the geographic aspect of the stamp's design. More importantly, the N/E/S/W abbreviations provide a useful shorthand for locating, describing, and writing about the stamps. Writing that an extra red dot is located "E" or "SE" of another feature is much shorter than saying it is "to the right" of or "to the lower right". On the other hand, I find differentiating descriptions such "NE margin" or the "EN margin" to be a little confusing.

Many writers use the N/E/S/W and top/right/bottom/left coordinate systems interchangeably depending on the context of what is being described. Readers should be aware of both systems since they are each used and welcomed by writers in this and other publications.

Plate/Position Nomenclature

The Map stamps also use a very specific nomenclature for describing the plates and positions of each stamp. As outlined in my previous introductory article, the Maps are generally printed from four black plates (1, 2, 3 and 5), an unknown and indistinguishable number of lavender/blue ocean plates, and two red plates (A and B). The black plates are recognised and numbered by the actual plate numbers that appear in the margin at the top of the printed sheets. The red plates are arbitrarily named A and B as a method for distinguishing them. No red plate numbers or letters actually appear on the printed sheets. Map experts agree and examination of millions of Map stamps has shown that virtually all stamps printed from black plates 1, 2, and 3 are printed from the same red plate which we refer to as plate A. The stamps printed from black plate 5 use a different red plate that we refer to as plate B.

Since all of the Map stamps use the same plate layout of 100 stamps in 10 columns across 10 rows with stamp position 1 at the top left and stamp position 100 at the bottom right, it is possible to refer to any specific Map stamp by its black plate number, followed by its red plate letter, and finally the specific plate position of the stamp. So 1A3 refers to the lovely re-entry that can be seen at plate position 3 printed from black plate 1 and red plate A. Stamp 5B20 refers to the stamp at position 20 printed from black plate 5 and red plate B.

This system is also useful since it can be expanded to describe other combinations as the need may arise. For example, 4A50 would be used to describe an unreleased stamp from position 50 printed with black plate 4 and red plate A. Although never officially released, Map stamps printed from black plate 4 and red plate A do exist in proof form.

This BlackPlateNumber/RedPlateLetter/PlatePosition nomenclature is the standard that will be used throughout the Map Stamp Report.

Descriptive Terms

The Map stamp design and its guide dots and lines lead to a few terms that may not be obvious to all readers. The frame of the stamp design is in the form of a twisted or braided rope or cable. The word “**cable**” has become the standard for describing this border and each twist or braid is usually referred to (perhaps inaccurately) as a “**link**”. The British Empire possessions that show in red on the stamps are often referred to as territories and colonies. While the strict dictionary meanings of these terms are slightly different and some of these possessions might more accurately be described as protectorates, Map stamp specialists and writers generally use the terms “**territory**” and “**colony**” interchangeably, often with the larger possessions referred to by the former word and the smaller possessions by the latter.

The Map stamp design also prominently incorporates a grid of the geographic coordinate system using vertical lines of “**longitude**” and horizontal lines of “**latitude**”. While these lines appear most prominently over the oceans, they also appear partially or faintly over several of the larger northern land masses including Russia and China, and also Africa. The equator is not singled out but is represented by the 0° line of latitude. There are also two faint dotted horizontal lines representing the boundaries of the **Tropic of Cancer** in the north and the **Tropic of Capricorn** in the south.

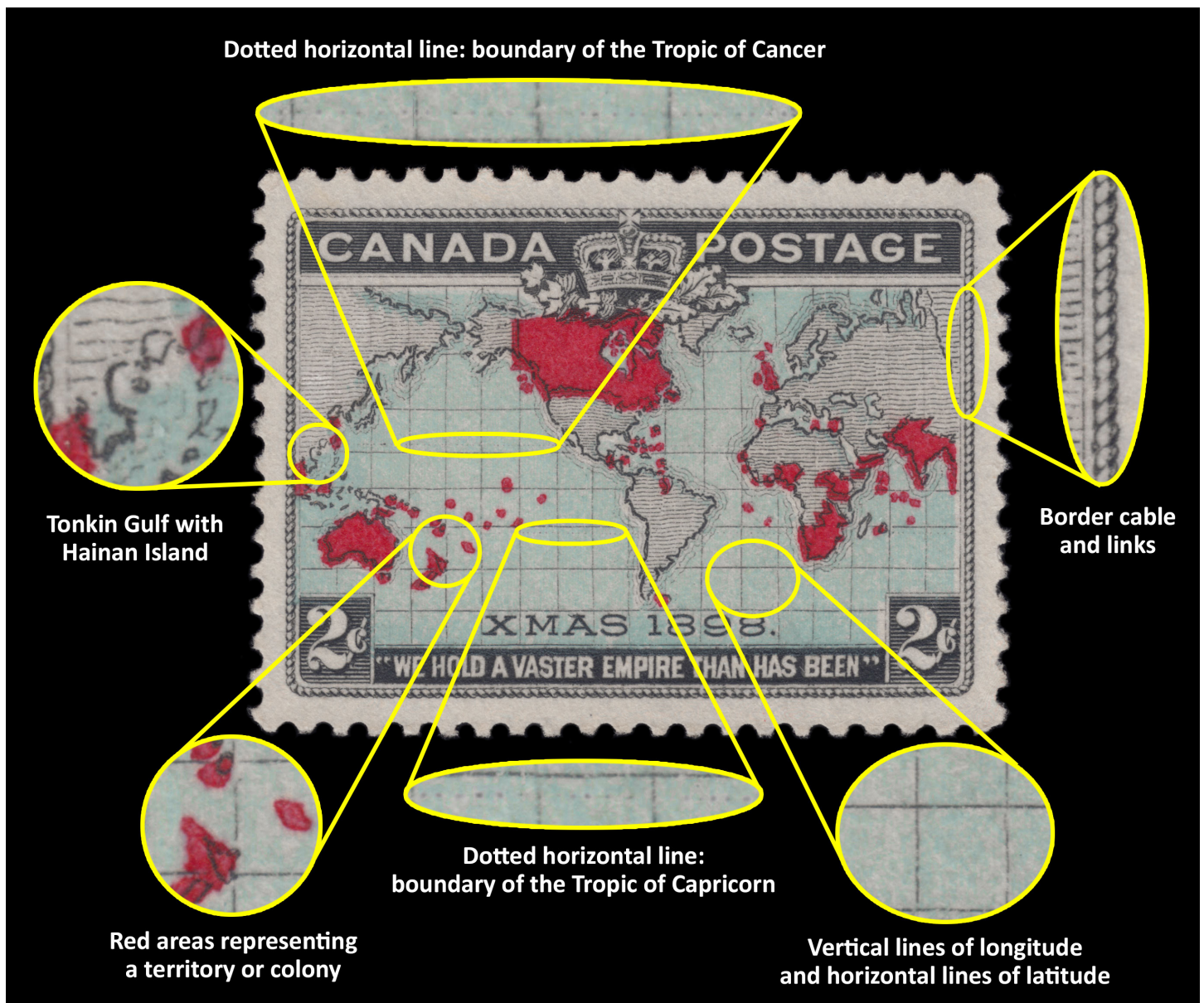


Figure 1: Illustration of basic terms typically used when discussing or plating the Map stamp.

The Gulf of Tonkin, or **Tonkin Gulf** for short, appears on Map stamps as a prominent semi-circular gulf at the centre left side of the stamp. In the centre of the gulf is **Hainan Island**. This region is important because several guide dots and compass arc lines used for the initial layout of the plate are often still visible here. These guide marks do not appear for all positions and are generally slightly different at each plate position. They appear commonly on stamps from black plates 1, 2 and 3 and are frequently the only way to separate and identify the black plate used with red plate A.

The various guide dots usually appear as small dots to the left of Hainan Island, either in the sea of the gulf or on the land to its left. Very occasionally there is more than one guide dot. The dots may also be accompanied by short arc shaped lines that usually pass through the centre of the dot. Magnified images of the Tonkin Gulf showing typical dots and arcs are shown below.



Figure 2: Examples of Tonkin Gulf dots and compass arcs.

Left image shows a typical dot directly west of Hainan Island with a strong arc line.

Middle image shows a vertically elongated dot south west of Hainan Island with multiple faint arc lines.

Right image shows a large dot on the coastline plus a smaller dot in the gulf below, both with strong arc lines.

While not as useful for plating Map stamps, readers should be aware of additional longer vertical and horizontal guide lines that may also appear on the stamp. Although these lines are aligned so that they would intersect with the guide dot, they are not normally visible in the Tonkin Gulf region. The vertical line is usually most visible just to the left of Australia, but it may also appear below in the left value tablet and lower margin or above in areas of China or Russia and the top margin. Traces of the guide line appear at many positions from black plate 1 but are almost always very faint and can be extremely hard to see on copies with strongly coloured oceans. The author believes that the line was subject to rapid plate wear and is most readily found on the earliest printings.

The horizontal line or **center guide line** usually appears to the east of the Tonkin Gulf between the dotted line of the Tropic of Cancer and the 20° line of latitude below. For only a few positions it appears just below the 20° latitude line. The line is most visible in the Pacific Ocean but may occasionally appear as far east as the Atlantic or even the Red Sea. This line is seen on only a few positions of black plate 2, perhaps as many as 10 positions on plate 1 (mostly the bottom row), and about a third of the positions on plate 5. Like the vertical line, it can be very faint, is subject to plate wear, and is difficult to detect with strongly coloured oceans.



Figure 3: Detail of plate position 1A2 showing both vertical and horizontal guide lines.

Plating Publications

For those who wish to attempt a complete plated collection of Maps, the red plates are the key. For more general variety hunters who seek out the very collectible re-entries and retouches found on the black plates, you will still need to understand how to recognise these plate positions from the red plate characteristics that are much easier to spot when casually looking through a dealer's stock or viewing an online auction that does not have high-definition scans.

With 400 positions distributed across 4 black plates, identifying specific Map stamps can be complicated and requires a good, published plating reference. Fortunately, there are two excellent yet distinctly different publications that are dedicated to plating the Maps:

- **The Canadian Map Stamp of 1898 - A Plating Study, by Whitney L. Bradley, 1989**
- **The Canadian 1898 Christmas Map Stamp - A Definitive Plating Study, by Kenneth A. Kershaw & Roger Boisclair, reprinted in 2009**

Both of these publications are published by BNAPS. The first publication, by Whitney L. Bradley, is my go-to Maps plating reference. Although much has been written about the Maps over the last century, Bradley was the first to devise a comprehensive plating system. His system, that focuses firstly on the red plates, has become the standard for plating the Maps. His book has good background information on the issue including a colour guide for the ocean shades plus over a thousand black and white illustrations done by the author to show the details of each plate position. While hand-drawn illustrations are not the best approach for showing fine stamp details, Bradley's are surprisingly accurate most of the time.

Bradley's system divides the red British colonies into specific regions and then devotes a section of the book to each region for red plate A (as used with black plates 1, 2, and 3) and then red plate B (as used with black plate 5). He presents a *Principal Outstanding Feature* of the red plate for each position. This could be an extra island or colony, a misplaced or misshapen red plate detail, or even colonies that are completely missing. He then lists more minor *Confirming Features* of the red plate and finally specifics for differentiating the black plates (in the case of red plate A). The book is almost 190 pages and spiral bound. Longley Auctions, the new sales agent and distributor of BNAPS books, lists the book for only \$26 plus shipping on their website at longleyauctions.com.

The second publication is actually a reprinting that combines four separate BNAPS books into a single volume that covers all Map plates and varieties. The book includes three main sections, covering black plates 1-3 and 5, by Kenneth A. Kershaw. There is also a section devoted to black plate 4 stamps (that were never officially released by the post office) and a compilation of numerous journal articles that are co-written with Roger Boisclair. This book uses high-resolution images of the stamps to illustrate each variety and plate position. While not quite as user-friendly as the Bradley book, this larger book includes more updated information and its images, including close-ups of the Tonkin Gulf detail and cable retouches, are extremely useful for differentiating the corresponding black plates used with red plate A.

Kershaw uses a different approach from Bradley in that the detailed listings are ordered by plate position rather than Bradley's ordering by specific red plate regions. However, Kershaw does also include short sections that feature images of the main red plate varieties arranged by region. The book is approximately 500 pages and spiral bound. Longley Auctions lists the 2004 reprinted colour version of the book on their website for \$83 plus shipping.

Red Colony Regions

The key to plating the Maps from red plate characteristics is to become familiar with what the red plate should look like without any varieties. Presented below in Figure 4 is an idealised version of what the red plate should look like. The red colonies have been fitted correctly to the boundaries shown on the black plate and other colonies that are not represented on the black plate are shown in the form of solid red circles. No actual Map stamp looks anything like this since, in addition to the numerous red plate varieties, almost none of the various red islands and small colonies are circular or correctly fitted to their boundaries, plus the overall alignment of the black and red plates is rarely very accurate.

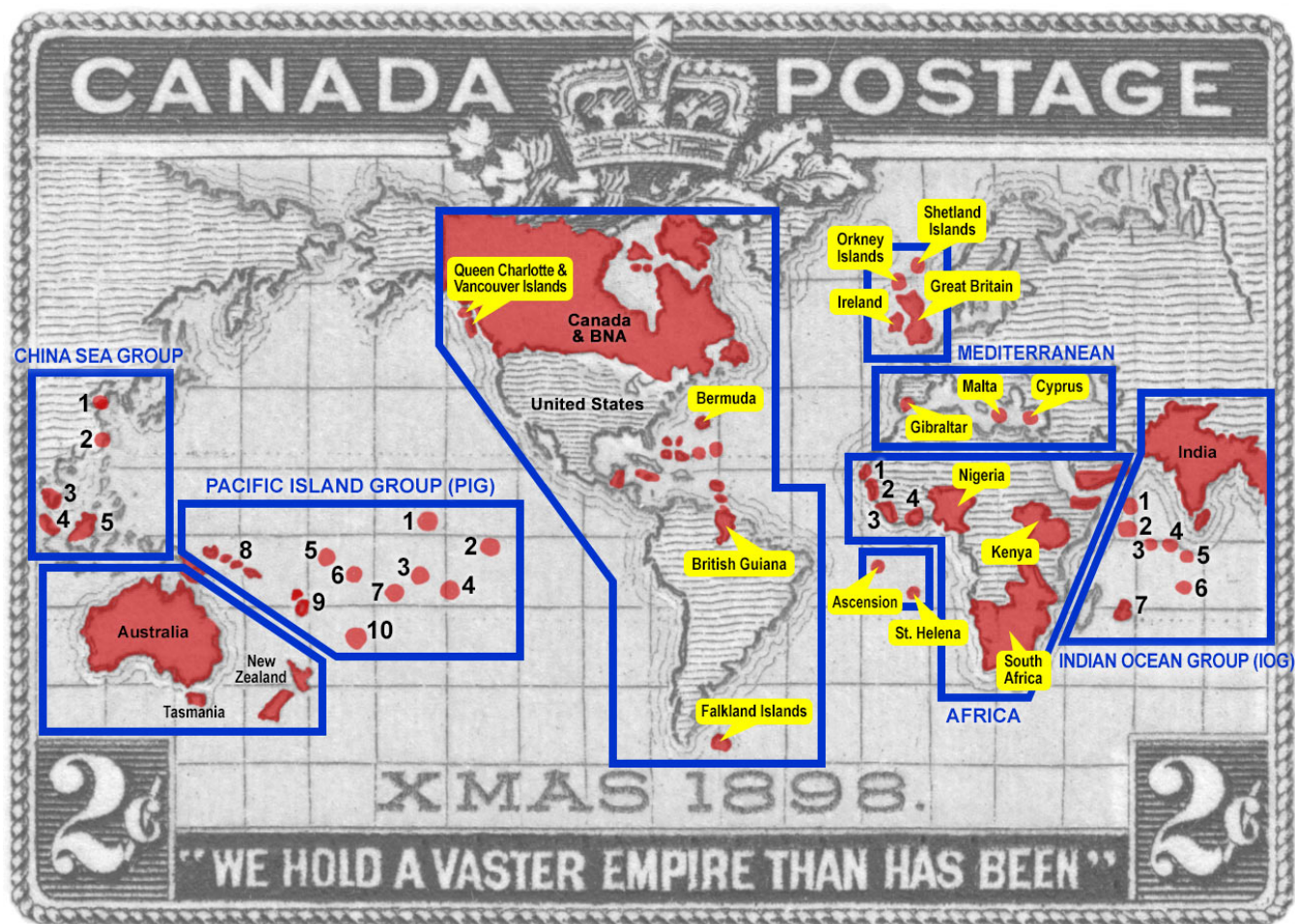


Figure 4: Idealised version of British colonies from the red plate with commonly used regions and colony names/numbers identified

The various regions used by Bradley and Kershaw to group the colonies, plus the names or numbers commonly used to identify the specific territories or colonies within each region, are indicated in Figure 4. Note that some of the specific colony names and their boundaries are not geographically accurate and some are only colloquialisms for groups of smaller ever-changing colony states. The importance and major aspects of each region (from left to right) are discussed below.

China Sea Group

This region normally has five distinct colonies that are referred to by number rather than name. This region is only occasionally referenced by Bradley when there is an extra island or mark. Kershaw refers to this region much more frequently making note of the shape of the various colonies as confirming features for the plate position.

Australia and New Zealand

This region consists of four major islands. Mainland Australia and Tasmania and the two main islands of New Zealand. The shapes of these islands are usually distorted and the pairs of islands representing each country are often joined. This region is frequently referenced by Bradley and Kershaw usually to indicate extra dots and islands between Australia and New Zealand.

Pacific Ocean Group

This region, called PIG for short, consists of 10 individual islands or island groups. It is frequently the source for principal varieties that can be used to plate a Map stamp. Almost 40% of red plate A and 25% of red plate B stamps can be identified and plated from this region. Both Bradley and Kershaw frequently reference the extra, missing, misplaced, or completely irregular shapes of the islands in this region.

The Americas

Strangely, this region is further divided by Bradley into the United States and South America even though it is not often referenced for plating purposes. The small island colonies in the Caribbean area are frequently severely distorted and/or joined together so are of little use for plating. Extra territories in the United States or near Bermuda are the most common varieties. Kershaw also makes reference to the shape of the Queen Charlotte and Vancouver islands as confirming features for some plate positions.

Great Britain Region

This region consists of Great Britain with its island territories of the Orkneys and Shetlands to the north and Ireland to the west. The region is used only sparingly as the principal variety or a confirming one for plating.

Mediterranean

This region is normally composed of three named colonies: Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus. Although rarely used as the principal plating feature, the distorted shape of these colonies or additional small dots near them are often used as confirming features for plating.

Africa

This region is known mainly to have additional small red dots that are confirming features, but it occasionally has very large extra colonies that serve as the principal feature for plating. The various colonies are referenced by number and name. Note that Somalia (at the eastern tip of Africa) and Yemen (at the base of the Arabian Peninsula) are shown here in the Africa region although extra dots or islands around these territories are usually associated with the Mediterranean or Indian Ocean Group.

Ascension and St. Helena

Although this region normally consists of only the two main islands, extra red dots and small islands make the region a frequent source for both principal and confirming features for plating. Red plate A tends to have twice as many of these as red plate B. Both Bradley and Kershaw make frequent reference to this region. Since many of the extra islands and dots are similar, confirming features from other regions are usually needed for plating.

Indian Ocean Group

This region, often called IOG for short, is only second to the PIG region as the main source for principal varieties that can be used for plating. It is particularly important for red plate B. While not subject to as many radical varieties as the PIG region, it is a frequent source for extra islands or the displacement and size variation of the normal islands. Since many of these varieties are similar, confirming features from other regions are usually needed for plating.

Outro

Hopefully this review article helps to bring novice Map stamp collectors to a more even level with more advanced Map specialists when discussing the details of the issue. It is also hoped that the basic terms and concepts discussed here can be accepted as the standards for studying and plating the Map stamp in future articles and study group meetings. I welcome comments and suggestions from all members. If I have gotten something wrong or left something out, please let me know.

Note: Portions of this article are taken and revised from an article that appeared in Dots & Scratches (Vol. 8, No. 1, Whole No. 25), the newsletter of the BNAPS Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties Study Group.

A Map Cover to the Yukon

By Vic Willson (lloydwill@aol.com)

I am interested in uses of each 19th century Canadian stamp, and in my section on Maps I acquired some time ago the cover shown here. Sent from Great Village, NS on January 5, 1899, the cover was sent to Dawson, YT. It has a Victoria, BC transit dated January 12 on the back, along with a faint Skagway, Alaska cancel dated 22 (with no discernable month), which fits with the time frame and the only Alaska town cancel with a "Y" at the end of the town name. In his Yukon Postal History text, R. G. Woodall reported that the earliest mail during the winter of 1898/99 left Skagway on February 1, 1899. This timeframe fits well with this cover, part of the near ton of mail transported by dog teams. The mail arrived in Dawson on February 28.



There is no Dawson receiver indicated on the cover, but the address to Dawson was scratched out and Doll River added. Doll River was a mining camp below Dawson. While I once located it on an old Yukon map, I cannot find it now and that name does not come up in Canadian place name searches. In any case, as you can see, someone noted “no P. O.” on the front of the cover and it was returned to Canada.

The cover was returned in late spring up the Yukon with the mail contract via Lake Bennet and received U.S. Dead Letter Office marks: a triangular DLO handstamp on the back dated June 26 (under the OS stamp) and DLO “RECEIVED IN BAD CONDITION” handstamp dated June 27, 1900 on the front. These were probably put on in Dyea, Alaska just north of Skagway. The cover was opened to find a return address, and the U. S. Officially Sealed stamp affixed to close it. Eventually, the cover was probably dropped off at Victoria by one of the coastal steamers going back and forth, and finally sent to the Canadian DLO at Ottawa, where it was received with a July 10, 1900 cancel, which completes the tale.

Covers to mining camps, like those to soldiers in the field, are scarcer than coming out of the camps. Paper was often scarce, and important uses such as fire starters and toilet paper took precedence over saving a cover. In the early days of the Klondike gold rush, mail was enormously important both for morale and for business. Lugging covers around was hazardous to their survival, especially to those actually mining. I find a lot more material coming out of Dawson than going in. Anyone having incoming Map covers to Dawson, please forward scans to the editor or to me directly via my email shown in the byline of this article.

If you have an interesting Map destination cover, please share it with the group. Where and how they went is a really interesting focus given the largely limited time frame of their use.

Reference

- The Postal History of Yukon Territory Canada, R. G. Woodall, Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1964

Note: The time frame of this cover is particularly interesting since it has cancels ranging from January 5, 1899 to July 10, 1900. With more than a year and a half in transit time, it shows the determination, if not punctuality, of postal workers to get the mail through even in the most remote areas. - Ed.

Featured Maps

This regular column is aimed at featuring member submissions of Map stamps, multiples, covers, proofs, etc. If you have a favourite piece with an interesting cancel, plate variety, or just an interesting story, please email us a scan (ideally 1200dpi or higher) together with a brief description and we will share it with the group.

First up for this issue we feature a nice cover with interesting red plate varieties submitted and described by **Vince Chermishnok**.

As a red plate enthusiast, position 31 from red plate A used with black plates 1-3 has got to be one of my favorites; an example of which can be found affixed to the cover shown here. The cover features a Broken Circle postmark from STARKEY'S N.B. dated October 18, 1900. The receiving marks on the reverse show CODYS N.B. and KINGMAN ME (Maine) dated, respectively, October 18 and 20, 1900.



Figure 1: Cover mailed from Starkey's, New Brunswick going to Kingman, Maine. Inset shows closeup of Map stamp with red plate varieties from 1A31.

In this instance, the stamp from 1A31, shows a later state of the red plate at that position that has enough distinctive features to make it one of the most striking examples from the plate. Immediately noticeable is the additional island south of Mauritius and the red dot in the right-hand margin. Also in the Indian Ocean Group, there is an ink trail that snakes its way between Island 2 and Mauritius. Some extra tiny marks are also visible in the region as is a projection extending due west from the north of India. The continent of Africa and surrounding area has its own share of unique markings including a dot due south of Gibraltar, projections from Cyprus, and a dot just beneath Nigeria. At the left-hand side of the stamp, the China Sea Group features a particularly prominent Island 2 that is more than double the size of Island 1. The last area to examine, and no less impacted, is the Pacific Ocean Group where islands 5, 6, & 7 form a unique configuration where extra red marks and protrusions make them appear almost joined to one another. There is also a dot or protrusion north of island 10 and a distinct southward protrusion from the eastern side of island 8.

For anyone keen on the red plate varieties of the Map stamp, this instance stands out.




Figure 2: Another example of 1A31 with the major red plate varieties highlighted. The black plate shows extensive wear at the centre of the top cable that is not in evidence with the on-cover example.

Our second submission is an album page with an interesting registered cover shared by **Colin Smith**. He writes:


Although I do not collect the Map stamp per se, I do include map covers in some of the Canadian subjects I collect. Consequently, I thought you might like to see a page from my collection of the Lot Number Postmarks of Prince Edward Island which shows a registered cover with three copies of the grey stamp.

Lot 14

The Lot 14 Post Office was located in Arlington from October 1857 to 1st July 1914.



Cancel type	Split ring
Diameter	21.5 mm
Proofed	MR 19/81
ERD	MR 15/00
LRD	OC 11/12



Registered cover to New York, via Fitzgerald Station, P.E.I.,
Ch'town & Tignish M.C. & St. John, N.B. – **March 15, 1900. (ERD)** Ex Hennok

Figure 3: Colin's album page showing cover with three Maps used to make up the 7¢ registered letter rate to the U.S. (2¢ postage & 5¢ registration) plus information on the Lot 14 post office and earliest recorded date cancel.

Ongoing Research Request – Earliest Dates for Map Plates and Shades

Several study group members are currently researching the earliest appearance of the various Map stamp plates and ocean shades. The stamp's official first day of issue, and the date that the 2¢ letter rate within the British Empire came into effect, was on Christmas day, December 25, 1898. Cancels with earlier dates are well known and reasonably straightforward to acquire with some time and effort. The earliest reported examples are claimed for December 6 and 7.

So, while the Map stamp is well known to have been used postally before its official first day of issue, very little research has been conducted regarding the earliest appearance of the specific black plates and ocean colours. The vast majority of December 1898 stamps will come from black plate 1 with both the lavender and blue oceans. Plate 2 dominates by January 1899 and plates 3 and 5 start appearing in February and March. Specific earliest recorded dates (ERDs) are not easy to pin down with certainty since identification of the plates, ocean colours, and the dates of the cancels themselves are often subject to some judgment for stamps and covers that are more than 120 years old. Complicating this further is the fact that post offices are also well-known to occasionally show the wrong indicia date when setting up their cancels.

If you are interested to participate in this research or if you have scans of early dated Map stamps or covers to contribute, we would be eager to hear from you. We are also interested to learn of any existing published information on this topic. Please contact the editors using the information shown on the last page of the report.

Want to Give CAPEX22 a Helping Hand?

BNAPS has introduced a matching funds program to allow members to make a monetary donation to CAPEX22 and the Society will match your donation 1:1, in effect doubling your contribution. The program will run until February 2022. As you know, CAPEX22 (June 9-12, 2022) is the first single-frame international exhibition and is the first major international show in Canada since 1996. If you have never been to an international show, you will be in for a treat. Because of this program, BNAPS will become a Partner Sponsor and will have a premium position with a booth on the exhibition/bourse floor, a relaxation room for guests and members to meet or just get off of their feet, a seminar room named BNAPS Room for the entire convention, sponsorship of the Awards program and a few other perks—all high visibility activities.

You can donate directly on the BNAPS website, click on "Donate". Canadians can donate directly on the CAPEX22.org website. Don't forget to identify yourself as a BNAPS member in order for CAPEX to get the matching funds. For U.S. and Canadian donors, for donations over \$25, you will receive a tax statement that will permit you to take a tax deduction. Thanks in advance for your help for Canadian philately!



Zoom Meeting Presentation – The Map Stamp's Only Misplaced Entry

By Scott Robinson

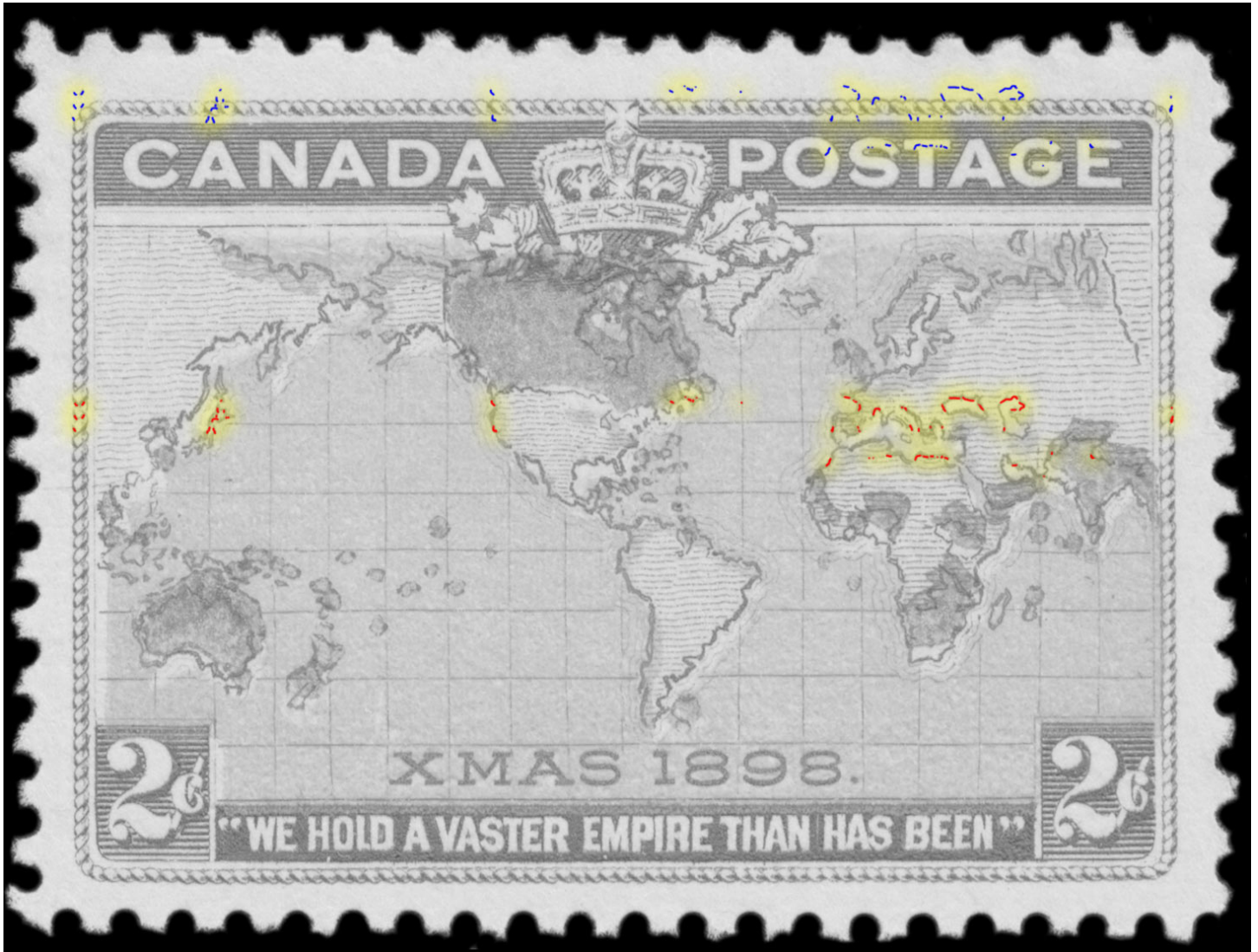
During the group's first Zoom meeting, back in April, I made a short presentation highlighting the only known misplaced entry on the Map stamps. For those who could not attend, a summary of my presentation follows.

I have always been fascinated by the well-known variety from black plate 2, red plate A, position 84 (2A84). This red plate A position is identified by an extra island above New Zealand, some additional red marks in Africa, and a rather oddly shaped representation of Great Britain and Ireland. However, it is the black plate 2 features that makes this stamp exceptional. The top margin shows upward extensions of both the left and right cables. Several small marks also appear across the top of the stamp just above and below the top cable. The most distinctive of these are some hairline patterns across the left side of the top margin. There are also faint marks in most letters of "POSTAGE" with a stronger arc-shaped mark in the "O". My mint copy with very deep blue oceans is shown below.



This variety has commonly been referred to as a major re-entry in most of the philatelic literature. While the extensions of the side cables do have the appearance of upward doubling caused by a typical re-entry, they are not typical of other re-entries on this issue and the marks in the upper margin above POSTAGE do not seem to correspond with any doubling of the cabling below or the letters even further below. Clearly this is not a typical re-entry. Ralph Trimble correctly classifies this variety as a misplaced entry on his website at re-entries.com.

A couple of years ago I decided to investigate just where these misplaced entry marks came from. A little experimentation in Photoshop allowed me to produce the image shown below where the misplaced entry marks are highlighted in blue and their corresponding locations on the normal stamp design are highlighted in red.



The image clearly shows that the hairline marks in the top margin are from parts of the coast of lower Europe, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea. The most obvious marks in "POSTAGE" are from the upper coast of Africa. Other more minor marks in the top margin come from the coasts of North America and Asia. So, this black plate variety consists of a partial misplaced entry that is almost half a stamp too high. I would suggest that a dropped transfer roll is the most likely cause for the misplacement. Whatever the cause, this is certainly one of the more spectacular varieties of this issue.

BNAPS Xmas 1898 Map Stamp Study Group

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This newsletter and previous issues are available as PDF files from the BNAPS website.
Submissions for and feedback about the newsletter should be sent to the Editor, Scott Robinson.
All other correspondence should be addressed to the Chairman, Rick Friesen.

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