

Chairman's Message

I hope you all had a great summer, even though we were unable to meet in person or attend our favourite stamp show. However, a number of auction houses have provided Map stamp collectors with buying opportunities. I hope you've had a chance to add material to your collections via these auctions. Perusing the "prices realized" from some of these auctions, it appears that the Map stamp is as popular as ever with some very high bids required to acquire material.

We had a good "turnout" for our study group Zoom meeting that was held in conjunction with BNAPEX VIRTUAL 2021. Presentations by Rob Lunn (a unique usage of the Map stamp), Paul Grimm (Squared Circle postmarks of Nova Scotia on the Map stamp), Scott Robinson (a new Map stamp plate combination of black plate 2 and red plate B), and yours truly (Barred Circle postmarks on Map stamp covers) provided a range of Map stamp topics for the attendees. They were all very well received! The presentations were followed by some informal group discussion and show-and-tell. Thanks to each of the folks who took the time to prepare the presentations or contributed to the discussion. For those who missed the meeting or who may wish to revisit some of the topics covered, this special issue of the Map Stamp Report provides highlights, summaries, and some additional details from the presentations.

Rick Friesen, Chairman and Report Co-editor
Kirkland, Quebec
rickfriesen5@gmail.com

My Two Cents – From Your Editor

Following this special BNAPEX meeting issue, we plan to publish one more regular issue next month to close out 2021. This issue provides highlights from the BNAPEX presentations plus my own article that expands upon my presentation about a newly discovered Map stamp plate combination. Finally, we close the issue with information on some newly published Map stamp research and an invitation for study group members to participate in some ongoing research studies.

Video of the BNAPEX meeting presentations will soon be available from the BNAPS website. We will provide details and links as soon as we have the information. Enjoy your latest newsletter!

Scott Robinson, Report Editor
Pierrefonds, Quebec
scott@flyspecker.com

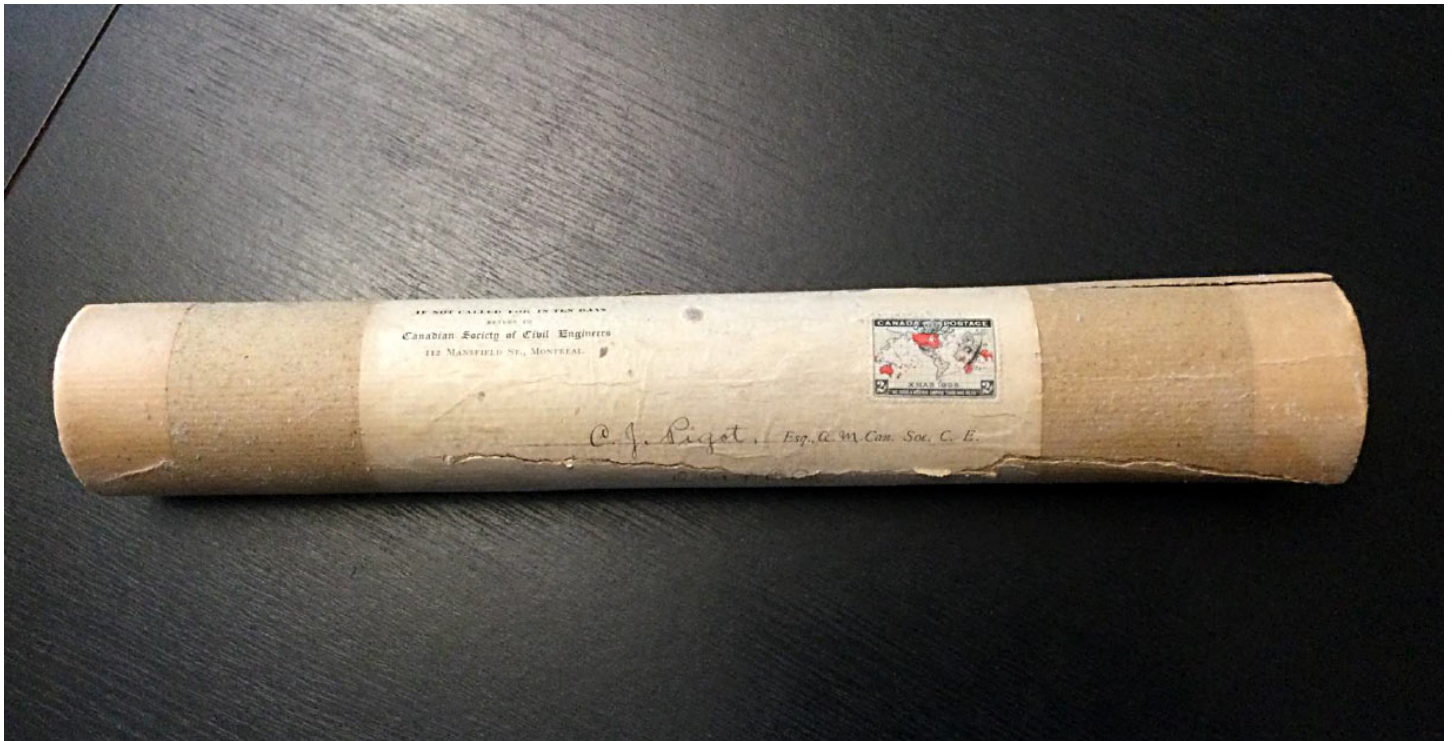
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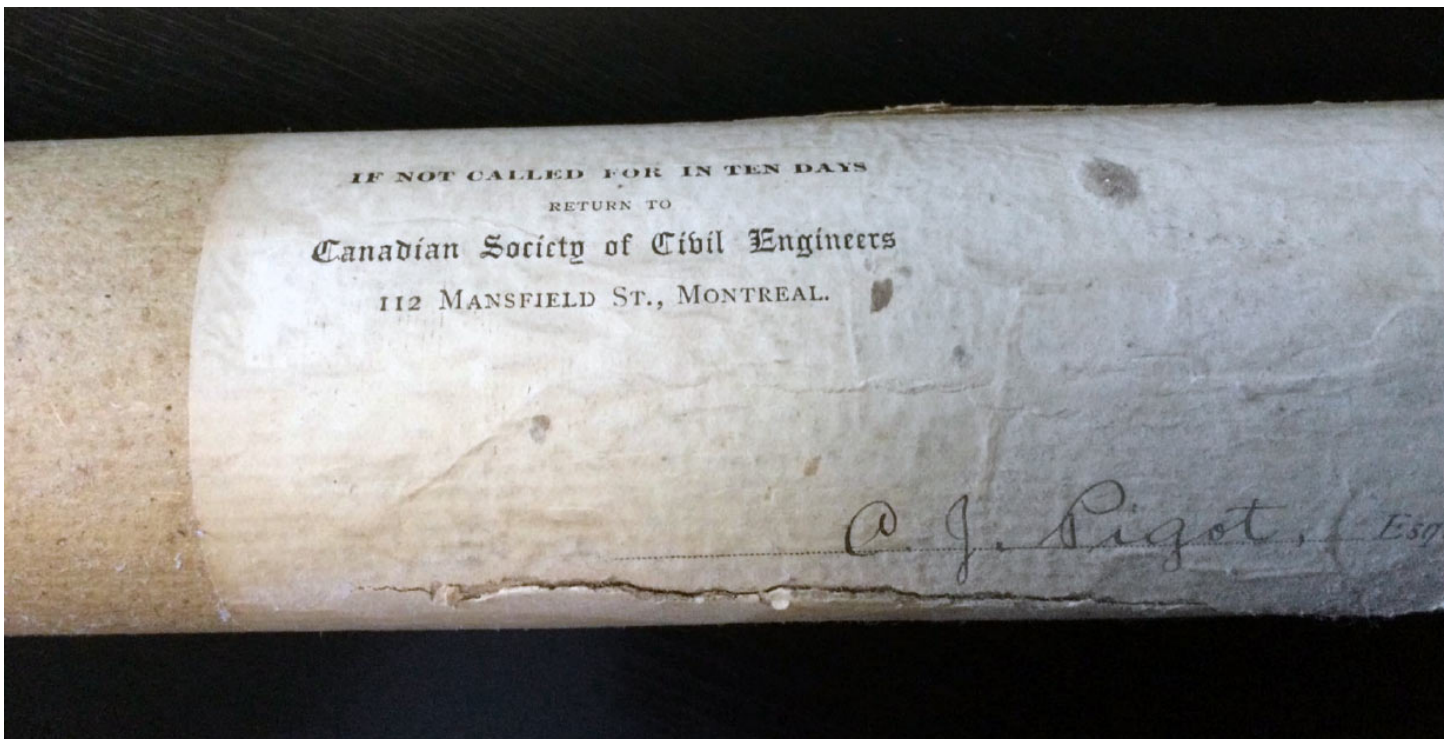
BNAPEX Recap: An Unusual and Possibly Unique Map Stamp Usage

As presented by Rob Lunn

Our Zoom meeting began with a nice presentation of a very unusual Map stamp usage from Rob Lunn. Rob has collected and exhibited the Map stamp for almost forty years, although he recently sold most of his collection to concentrate on other areas. He shared some images of a very interesting mailing tube tied with a single Map stamp.



The tube was mailed from the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers to a C. J. Pigot and may well have contained his certificate from the society. The tube came to Rob from fellow collector Ron Smith via his wife who is a member of the Pigot family.



The stamp is tied with a faint 1899 Montreal cancel and appears to pay one of the commercial rates at the time for various types of documents at 1¢ per two ounces. This tube and its contents likely required the double rate of 2¢ because of its excess weight.

A very interesting and possibly unique surviving usage of the Map stamp. However, as mentioned by Ron, not a convenient piece for displaying or exhibiting.



Note: Although difficult to see in the images, the Map stamp appears to have the large extra colony in South America that would plate it to red plate A, position 37. – Ed.

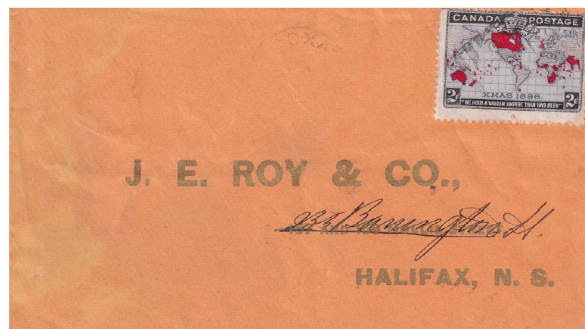
BNAPEX Recap: Nova Scotia Squared Circle Postmarks on Map Stamps

As presented by Paul Grimm

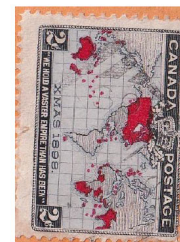
Paul Grimm presented his extensive collection of Map stamps and covers that bear Squared Circle postmarks from 21 towns in Nova Scotia. Collecting Squared Circle cancels has been a popular specialty for many Canadian philatelists and the Map stamp is well suited to study these postmarks since the size and colouring of the stamp enable the cancel to display beautifully on both the stamp and on covers. Squared Circle postmarks from many of these Nova Scotia towns are quite scarce with less than 10 strikes known, including Canso (2 on cover, 4 off-cover), Maccan (1 on cover, 6 off-cover), Newport Landing (1 on cover, 7 off-cover), and Kentville (8 off-cover). Shown here are 6 slides from Paul's 46-slide BNAPEX presentation, highlighting these towns. The full presentation will be available on the BNAPS website in due course.

NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Canso



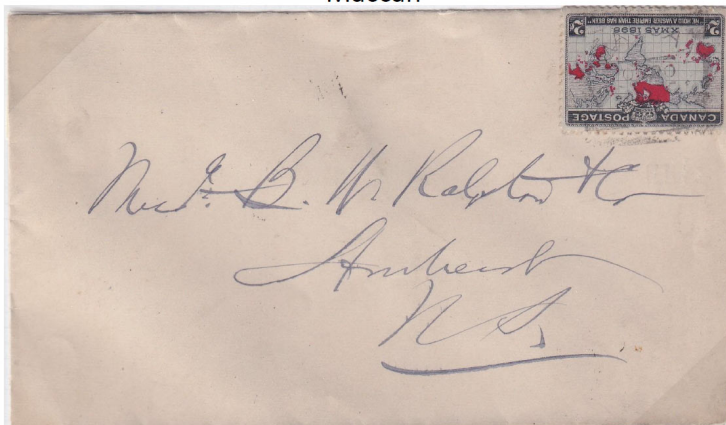
ERD -/AP 5/95
LRD: -/DE ?/99
RF: - 40
OC: - 4
C: - 2



Only 2 known on Cover

NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Maccan



ERD -/JU 6/94
LRD -/SP 23/01
RF: - 35
OC: - 6
C: - 1

Maccan is very typically poorly struck, great strikes are very rare.
Also, often found in Bluish-green ink. This is believed to be the
only known cover

NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Maccan on stamp



Three Maccan strikes on stamp,
All poorly inked as usual!

NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Newport Landing



ERD -/DE 4/94
LRD -/JU 28/16
RF: - 35
OC: - 7
C: - 1

Newport Landing had several periods of use, up to and including the Admiral period.
This appears to be the unique Newport Landing Cover.

NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Newport Landing on Stamp



NS Squared Circles on The Map Stamp

Kentville



ERD-/OC 6/93
LRD-/AU 25/"10"
RF: - 25
OC: - 8
C: - 0

Kentville, JA 25 99, Not known on cover!

A Significant New Map Stamp Plate Combination Discovery

By Scott Robinson

As many Map stamp collectors and plate variety enthusiasts will already know, each Map stamp was printed using three separate plates, one for each colour of the design. Although authoritative or even contemporary documentation of the specific plates produced and used for each colour do not exist, the number and specific pairings of the black and red plates has been well documented in the philatelic literature for many decades. This article provides evidence for a new and previously undocumented plate combination.

The Black Plates

The black portion of the stamp was printed by the usual intaglio process from four engraved plates numbered 1, 2, 3 and 5. A plate 4 was also produced but never used, although imperforate proofs from this plate exist in the Canadian Postal Archives and are known in the collector community. Plate 5 was heavily reworked and re-entered after a small quantity of stamps had been printed, leading to a second state of that plate.

The Lavender/Blue Plates

The lavender/blue oceans on the Map stamps were printed separately using the typographic relief printing process from electrotypes plates. The number of plates used to print the oceans is speculative and impossible to deduce from the stamps themselves because the oceans are printed in light shades and their boundaries are obscured by the black ink. The details of the oceans are generally indistinguishable from copy to copy except for the colour. However, some recent discoveries do provide evidence that there was more than one plate used for the lavender/blue oceans.

The Red Plates

Like the lavender/blue oceans, the red territories on the Map stamps were also printed from electrotypes plates using the typographic relief printing process. Unlike the oceans which show many shades but virtually no differences that can be attributed to plate varieties, the red territories show no significant differences in shade but are chock full of plate varieties. These varieties include numerous instances of missing, misplaced, or added islands and territories.

Two distinctly different red plates were used for printing the Map stamps. The so-called red plate A is believed to have been used exclusively with black plates 1, 2 and 3 (plus the proofs of black plate 4), and red plate B was used exclusively with black plate 5. This plate combination schema, shown in Figure 1, has been established for more than 70 years and has remained unchallenged until now.

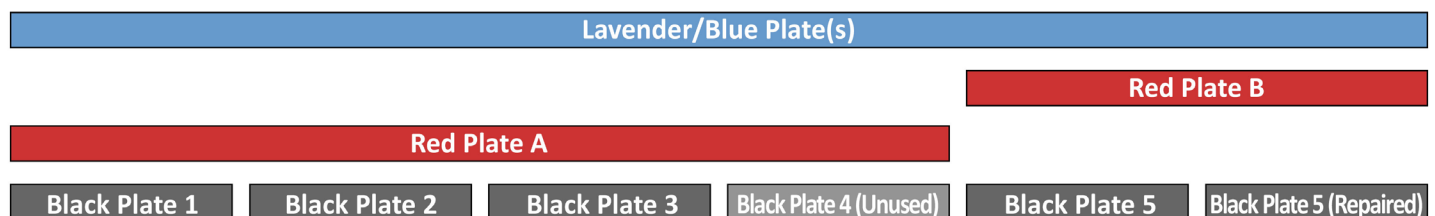


Figure 1: Graphical representation of traditional Map stamp plate assignments

Discovering a New Plate Combination

Over the last few years, I have examined thousands of Map stamps in an effort to assemble all of the black plate varieties for display on my Flyspecker.com website and to complete my own personal collection of all 400 distinct black plate positions. During this research, I have come across two stamps, shown in Figure 2, where I could not reconcile the appearance of the black and red plates to a single plate position.



Figure 2: Two unusual Map stamps

The first of these unusual Map stamps was provided by my friend, Mike Smith, who sent me a selection of scans from a collection he had purchased a while back. He warned me to check the plate position assignments as they had not been verified by him. The scan in question was labelled as 2A92, meaning that it was position 92 from black plate 2 and red plate A. This position is known to have substantial retouching of the cable at the bottom and the lower sides on black plate 2. After checking my reference books, I was fairly satisfied that the retouched cable matched position 92 from black plate 2. However, since similar retouches also appear at several plate positions from black plates 2 and 3, I decided to check the red plate characteristics. At this point, I was disappointed to find that the red plate A varieties mentioned in my references did not match this stamp.

It should be noted that some positional varieties of red plate A do evolve somewhat during its usage with the three black plates. Also, because of their vibrant colour and the method of printing, the red plates will occasionally show characteristics that are transitory in nature and related as much to printing and inking variation as they are to plate differences. Not every red mark on the Map stamps is constant. So, I did a careful examination of all the retouched plate positions in my reference books and stamp copies to see if the observed red plate varieties matched another position. To my dismay, they did not. Even allowing for some transient printing issues, the general shape of the red plate islands and colonies just did not seem to match. Then it occurred to me to check position 92 of red plate B as normally used only with black plate 5. To my surprise, the variety characteristics of position 92 of red plate B matched my black plate 2 stamp.

Figure 3, on the next page, shows a comparison of Mike's stamp (2B92) in the middle, with a normal 2A92 stamp above and a normal 5B92 stamp below. Notice that the two upper stamps from black plate 2 show the same retouched cables. Although it is hard to see without a highly magnified image, both of these stamps show a bottom cable that has been retouched using two horizontal lines. The inner line also turns up and continues into the left cable until just above the left value tablet. The outer retouch line turns up and continues into the right cable past the centre of the stamp. The bottom stamp from black plate 5 is also retouched but has only a single outer retouch line at the bottom of the cable. This line rises to the left so that it appears in the middle of the cable for the last few leftmost links. Notice also how the top of the cable is very faint since it has not been retouched with an inner horizontal line. The left cable is slightly doubled and blurry since there is a re-entry as expected for position 92 on black plate 5.

What makes the middle stamp unusual is that it does not show the same red plate characteristics as the normal plate A stamp from position 92 above. The main characteristics that differentiate red plate A from plate B are highlighted in yellow. Notice that all of the characteristics of plate A are missing from the middle stamp, but that it does possess all the red plate B characteristics of the lower stamp.



Figure 3: Comparison of red and black plates for position 92

Having satisfied myself that Mike's stamp was indeed from black plate 2 and red plate B, I let Mike know about it and resigned myself to the fact that this was likely to be the only such stamp I would ever see. To my surprise, I was recently looking at Map stamps on eBay when I came across what looked like a nice black plate 2 re-entry from position 47. When I checked the red plate, I was shocked to find that it did not match the expected position 47 characteristics of red plate A at all. This time, I went straight to my reference material to see what red plate B looked like at this position and, sure enough, there was a match! It goes without saying that I immediately purchased the stamp.

Figure 4, on the next page, shows a comparison of my stamp (2B47) in the middle, with a normal 2A47 stamp above and a normal 5B47 stamp below. Notice that the two upper stamps show the same black plate re-entry. This is most visible as some rightward spurs coming from the right value tablet and the cable at right. There is also a line that cuts off some of the bottom text which is most visible at the bottom of "BEEN". Some faint marks in both "2" values are also just barely visible. The bottom stamp from black plate 5 shows a normal stamp with no sign of re-entry.

Again, the uniqueness of the middle stamp is that it does not show the same red plate characteristics as the normal plate A stamp from position 47 above. Instead, it shows all the red plate B characteristics of the lower stamp. The main characteristics that differentiate red plate A from plate B are highlighted in yellow. This is particularly noticeable for the islands in the Pacific Ocean that are configured very differently between the two red plates.



Figure 4: Comparison of red and black plates for position 47

Conclusions

The two unusual Map stamp examples illustrated here show clearly that at least some Map stamps were printed from black plate 2 using red plate B. It was previously thought that red plate B was used exclusively with black plate 5.

While it is hard to identify shades in images of stamps that are over 120 years old, subject to oxidization, and scanned with different scanners, it does appear that both of these plate 2B stamps have similar ocean colours. So, it is certainly possible that they came from the same print run. In fact, the ocean colours of both stamps could be favourably compared with the bright blue green ocean shade traditionally associated with black plate 5 stamps. They are certainly not the very deep greenish blue shade that is normally found on black plate 2 stamps.

It is also extremely unlikely that I would have come across two of these stamps without even looking specifically for them unless there are a reasonable number of them in existence. Perhaps, when black plate 5 was being repaired and re-entered, the new red plate B was used for a short time with black plate 2.

Whatever the explanation, it is clear that this new combination of plates must be exceedingly rare. For more than 70 years, the Map stamp has been studied, plated, and written about by many specialists without this combination of plates being discovered. Perhaps other new plate combinations are also out there. For now, I have updated my illustration of Map stamp plate assignments, shown in figure 5, to reflect this new combination.

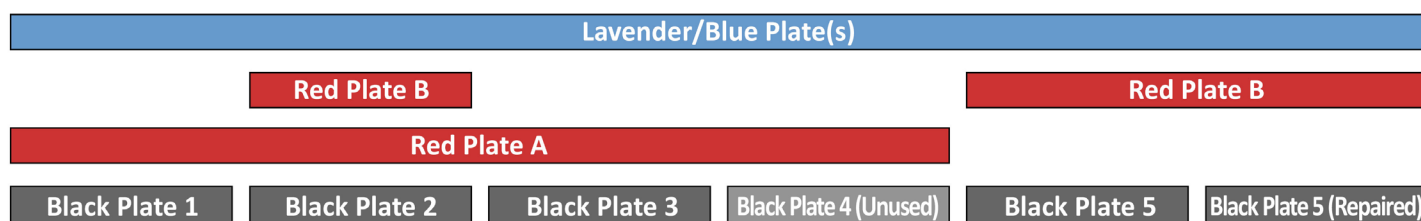


Figure 5: Graphical representation of revised Map stamp plate assignments

References and End Notes

- *The Canadian 1898 Christmas Map Stamp - A Definitive Plating Study*, Kenneth A. Kershaw & Roger Boisclair, Reprinted by the British North America Philatelic Society, 2009
- *The Canadian Map Stamp of 1898*, Frederick Tomlinson, The Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, 1960
- *The Canadian Map Stamp of 1898 - A Plating Study*, Whitney L. Bradley, British North America Philatelic Society, 1989
- *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada*, Winthrop S. Boggs, Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1974 (annotated reprint of original publication from 1945)
- Many thanks to Michael D. Smith for sharing scans of his collection with me and for granting permission to use them here.

Note: This article and the author's BNAPEX 2021 presentation are based on the author's previous featured cover article that appeared in the November/December 2020 issue of *The Canadian Philatelist*, the journal of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.

BNAPEX Recap: Barred Circle Postmarks on Map Stamp Covers

As presented by Rick Friesen

The Barred Circle hammers were issued to 9 towns in Canada (Halifax, Hamilton, London, Montreal, Ottawa, St. John, Seaforth, Toronto, and Winnipeg) and St. John's, Newfoundland. They were introduced in 1892 and most were used for only a few months before being abandoned or replaced by the Squared Circle. However, the Montreal hammers (of which there are 5) and the St. John's hammer continued to be used during and after the Map stamp period primarily, but not exclusively, as transit or receiving backstamps on registered mail. Map stamp covers with Barred Circle strikes from all 5 Montreal hammers and the St. John's hammer are known. Shown here are 4 slides from the BNAPEX Virtual presentation, highlighting covers with strikes from 4 of the Montreal hammers (7¢ registered cover with a Hammer 1 transit backstamp, 8¢ registered cover with a block of 4 Map stamps and a Hammer 2 transit backstamp, and a 7¢ registered drop letter cover with postmarks from Hammers 2-4) and the only known Map stamp cover with a St. John's, Newfoundland, Barred Circle postmark. A full census of all documented Map stamp covers with Barred Circle postmarks is in preparation and will be published on the BNAPS website in due course.

Montreal Hammer 1



- 7¢ registered from St. Catharines, ONT, to Roberval, QUE
- MR 29 N12/99 transit backstamp
- vertical pair plating position 3-A-84/94



Montreal Hammer 2



- 8¢ registered from Goderich, ONT, to New Bedford, MA
- DE 23 A11/98 transit backstamp
- block of 4 plating position 1-A-43/44/53/54



Montreal Hammers 2-4



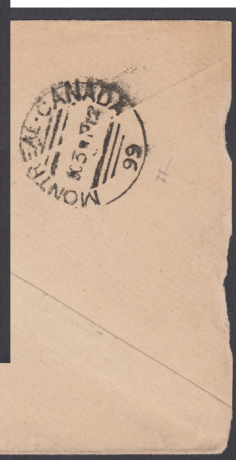
- P3 TM
- H4 dispatch
- year missing



- P5 TM
- H3 transit



- 7¢ registered drop letter
- 3 different Hammers on OC 3/99
- plating position 2-A-98



- P12 TM
- H2 backstamp

St. John's, Newfoundland

2A75

2A35

3A62

1A72

- only documented Map cover
- 9¢ registered double weight Empire rate from Halifax to St. John's
- 27 JY 99 receiver
- LRD of use of hammer



Note: The St. John's barred circle postmark on this cover is not its only outstanding feature. The legitimate (non philatelic) use of four Map stamps from three different plates and featuring all four of the generally accepted major ocean shades is highly unusual and desirable. – Ed.

Map Stamp Research: New Publications and Ongoing Research Requests

New Publications

Rick Friesen's census of RPO postmarks on Map stamps/covers, entitled *Railway Post Office (RPO) Postmarks of Canada on the 1898 Canadian 2¢ Imperial Penny Postage Issue (The 'Map Stamp'): A Cover Census and a Roster of Off-Cover Cancellations*, was made available on the BNAPS website in October. It provides a census of Map stamp covers postmarked with RPO hammer strikes - about 250 covers are listed. The listing for each cover includes an illustration (if an image is available), RPO cancel identification, origin (if known), destination, and provenance. The publication also updates the 1987 Lew Ludlow roster of RPO cancellations on off-cover Map stamps.

This publication and Rick's two other Map stamp postmark census publications are available for download from the BNAPS Map Stamp Study Group page at <https://bnaps.org/studygroups/Map/newsletters.htm>. Please take a look and let Rick know of any errors or additions to these censuses.

Ongoing Research Requests

Earliest Dates for Map Plates and Shades

As mentioned in our previous report, several study group members are currently researching the earliest appearance of the various Map stamp plates and ocean shades. While it is well known that the stamp was available and used before its official first day of issue on December 25, 1898, the specific first use of the various black plates and appearance of the various ocean shades is only anecdotally documented.

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 bottom of this page.

Lavender/Blue Ocean Plates and Varieties

Some recent discoveries of constant or at least semi-constant varieties on the plates used to print the lavender/blue oceans of the Map stamp have opened up the possibility for further exploration of the number of plates and their pairing with the black plates. If you are interested to participate in this research or if you have scans of Map stamps with unusual ocean marks or anomalies to contribute, we would be eager to hear from you. We are particularly interested in collectors who have large quantities of plated Map stamps in order to compare specific plate positions to establish constancy and determine black plate usage. Please contact the editors using the information shown on the bottom of this page.

BNAPS Xmas 1898 Map Stamp Study Group

Chairman & Report Co-editor: Rick Friesen
Kirkland, Quebec
Email: rickfriesen5@gmail.com

Report Editor: Scott Robinson
Pierrefonds, Quebec
Email: scott@flyspecker.com

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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