

# THE 1898 CHRISTMAS STAMP NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the 1999 Map Stamp Study Group - British North America Philatelic Society

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Whole # 1

Illustrated below is a dramatic example of a Plate 4 stamp  
See Page 6 for more information about these finds  
Courtesy of Fred Fawn



This new study group was formed by Doug Lingard, Francis Au and Bill Pekonen at BNAPEX'99 because the previous group led by Whitney L. Bradley ceased in 1990. Fred Fawn has agreed to be the chairman and Roger Boisclair as Secty-Treas. A new group was deemed important for several reasons. New information has come to the surface since the Bradley book was published in 1989. There has been a renewed interest by other collectors who did not participate in the original study group. More information has been compiled regarding Plate 4. At one time, it was concluded that stamps from Plate 4 did not exist. Furthermore, it was felt that some of the areas touched on by previous collectors but not concluded should be explored in more depth.

The name of the newsletter has been changed to take the group to the next level. The "Map" stamp is a modern description. Although the name "map stamp" is well known in North America, it has been described in earlier times as the "Christmas" stamp, and is known by others as such even today by collectors in other countries. For example, Sisson's 1998 stamp auction described the stamp as the "Christmas Stamp". There is also some confusion with those who collect map stamps as a topical interest. To those collectors, a map stamp means any stamp from any country and any period which illustrates a map. While it is true that the stamp we are studying includes a map, and there was a reason for the design, that was not the reason for the issue. For obvious reasons, it is desirable to attract an even larger collector audience to share our special interest. The use of "Christmas" stamp is justified for a number of reasons, even though there are those who dispute the claim and have very strong opinions about the subject. Those who dispute that title state that it is really an Imperial Penny Postage stamp, but that is not entirely correct. More about that a little later.

Clifton A Howes was a collector living in Boston. In 1910, he wrote a book about Canadian stamps. Page 178 is reproduced on a following page. Also, a message was sent to Wm. Mulock on August 11, 1898 by the Duke of Norfolk in England. The Duke was the Minister of Parliament in charge of the Post Office. In that letter, he specifies that the rate would become effective on December 25, 1898. (A copy of that letter will appear in a future issue.) Because of that effective date and the fact that the stamp design also includes the phrase "XMAS 1898" lends credibility to the claim for the **WORLD'S FIRST** Christmas Stamp title. Additionally, rumour also describes a story as to how the Duke established that particular date - linking it with the Prince of Peace.

Although dubbed as the Imperial Penny Postage stamp, that is an inaccurate term, as detailed by Clifton A. Howes. (See the reproduced page 178). Even the British Post Office authorities acknowledged the fact that the rate was neither a Universal Penny Postage nor even the Imperial Penny Postage advocated by others. It was dubbed by the Canadian post office as the Empire stamp, but that was not correct either. It can be argued that the Christmas Stamp label is probably the most appropriate name of any other name advanced anytime in the past. It is certainly the first Christmas stamp by that definition. It is not the first Map stamp. So, why not put our best foot forward?

Well, now that the fat is in the fire, let us know what you think about the title. Agree? Disagree? What name do you think we should use? Send me a letter stating how you feel about the subject. This newsletter is not cast in iron nor engraved on stone. It is being written on a computer. We can change things real fast whenever we want to.

Although this collector was asked to be the Provisional Editor of this newsletter, there is no intention to write everything to be published. This first newsletter is the exception in which I will be writing more than I want to in the future. But that is just to start the ball rolling. Fred Fawn Francis Au, Ron Brigham and J. T. Anders have contributed information. We are off to a good start. You will learn more about new developments. But information sharing is a two way street. Send your comments and reports directly to me at the above address so they can be included in future issues. There must be a renewed interest because it is once again becoming harder to find good material.

The initial plan is to publish this newsletter three times each year - at least at the start. As time goes by, it is hoped to become a quarterly publication, but that will depend upon the amount of material submitted by other collectors.

Fred Fawn has agreed to be the President of the study group, after being voted to that office in his absence for very good reasons. He has been contacting many collectors to encourage them to join and to contribute information about new finds. Fred has contributed the illustration of a Plate IV major re-entry used on the cover. Roger Boisclair has agreed to act as Secretary-Treasurer and keep track of the money. In the future, the original of this newsletter will be sent to him. Roger will reproduce as many copies as are needed and mail them out to members and to those interested in joining.

The membership fee is \$10. If you receive a copy of this newsletter, your name has been added to the list by Fred. It would be appreciated if you send your payment to Roger at the adress found on the masthead.

One of the first things to be decided is to define those areas which we should explore to a greater degree. That direction will be decided by those who contribute information. From an organizational viewpoint, better progress can be made if we all concentrate on one or several different segments at the same time. That will depend on who has the relevant material - some collect used while others collect unused or just covers.

One of my favourite subjects are the reported dates for the Orb cancels. Jim Felton conducted the intial research into this topic, but little has been seen since. He did not respond to a letter sent to him in 1995. We need to update his list. More later.

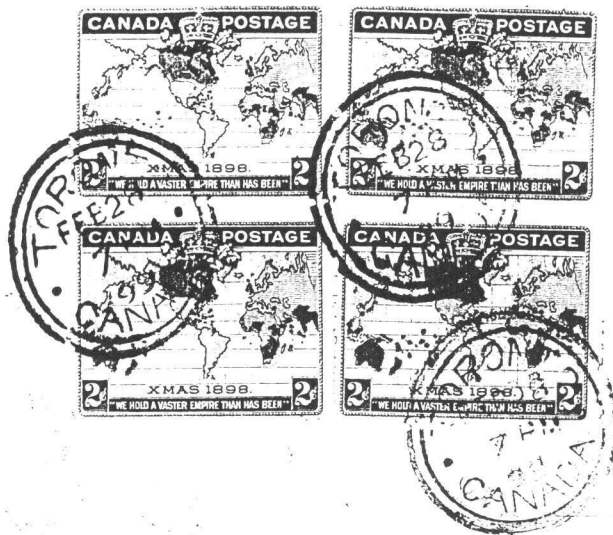
John Anders has sent in several provocative articles. He has conducted extensive research on the so-called "Fake" Mulready covers. He has found a match for the Berlin CDS use on them. His report opens the door to question the conclusion that these covers were fake. Yes, they were definitely "Favour" covers.....BUT.....John's report will be in the next issue. His information could prove the fact that sometimes the wrong conclusions can be reached when based on incomplete data. Anders is also looking for legitimate uses of multiple copies of the stamp. He has written a treatise on this subject. That article will also be in a future edition. To tease your imagination, a photocopy of a cover with a block of FOUR stamps is reproduced on the next page. Consider this - the cover shows three Toronto 2-ring Orb (hammer D) cancels -- two properly tied. Felton stated in Newsletter #20 "None of the 10 (orb) cancels (on Maps) reported are on cover to the best of my knowledge...In any instance Maps with a Toronto or Toronto station orb cancel are not at all common, and are perhaps a lot scarcer than uses elsewhere which are considered 'exotic!' " Any others to report?



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Francis Au has sent in some information about the re-entry lines on 2-7, 2-17 and 2-27. Look at his information, then re-examine your stamps. Some more information from Francis about 2-9, 2-19 and 2-29 will be included in future issues. Bradley mentioned something about the two different states on Plate 5. Some of these have shown up. Research is taking place to question the reasons why the so called Muddy Water stamps are that way. What started out as a hype by dealers to sell surplus stock of what have been considered as "damaged stamps" may, in fact, be something else altogether. The earliest date of use is another subject which needs open discussion.

The foregoing is just a deliberate tease to get you involved. Here are some other articles to entice you to send in your membership fees to Roger. And don't forget to send in your thought provoking articles to Pekonen for the inclusion in future issues.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Not long ago, Doug Lingard, BNAPS Vice-President for Study Groups, phoned me from Ottawa and said in a rather persuasive voice: "Fred, it is high time to re-start the Map Stamp Study Group". Before I could answer, Doug Added: "you will have two great map stamp enthusiasts, Bill Pekonen and Roger Boisclair, to help create a newsletter".

I felt honoured and excited to have the opportunity to continue and perhaps add to Whit Bradley's work; the first Map Newsletter having been issued in November, 1982. It is exhilarating to see that philatelic interest in the Map Stamp, Canada's Imperial Penny Postage Issue of 1898 is alive and well. Some friends collect the Map only, for a variety of reasons; others collect it along with other Canada and BNA issues. Thematic/topical collectors around thw world include it in their albums and exhibits. No "Christmas" theme collection would be complete without some unusual Map items. And there are collectors of map on stamps.

Recent articles and discoveries on Canada's Map stamp prove over and over that there is a great deal more to study and to enjoy. To paraphrase Whit Bradley's first Newsletter: "Send me your anecdotes, trivia, stories, serious articles and letters for inclusion in the next issue. Tell your friends about the Map Stamp Study Group...."

This first issue is being mailed from Richmond for expediency. Future editions will be produced and mailed to you by the Secretary. Roger has a more modern computer facility and we will be able to prepare better reproductions - improving the quality of this newsletter immensely. Fred will persuade you to share knowledge. Send your articles to the Editor, who will try to achieve balance in each issue. Then Roger will mail you the finished goods. (Known today as work sharing - sound like a good idea to me!) While we are on that subject of articles -- can anyone provide information updates on the categories reported by Winmill in his 1982 book? How about unreported RPO's? Precancels? Squared Circles? CDS's? and so on? For example, how many map stamps are there with a Sawbill, ON Cancel? Here is the extract from Clifton Howe's interesting book on early Canadian postal history.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE "CHRISTMAS" STAMP OF 1898

“**O**CEAN Penny Postage, which became the dream of Postal Reformers almost from the date of the adoption of the plan of Rowland Hill, is at length within measurable distance of becoming an accomplished fact. It is true that it is not yet to be the Universal Penny Postage, or even the Imperial Penny Postage so perseveringly advocated by Mr. Henniker-Heaton; but these will come in time, and an immense step in the desired direction has been taken by the adoption of the partial scheme, which is to come into force within a few months.” So wrote Major Evans in July, 1898,<sup>1</sup> upon the conclusion of the Imperial Conference on Postal Rates which took place in London during that month.

Many of our readers may have seen the illustrated envelopes, in various designs, which were issued some fifty or sixty years ago in advocacy of an “Ocean Penny Postage.” Great Britain, having committed herself to domestic penny postage in 1840, after the herculean labors of Sir Rowland Hill in that behalf, seems to have been looked to by succeeding postal reformers to furnish over-sea transportation along the same lines. Chief among these advocates was Elihu Burritt, the “learned blacksmith” of New Britain, Conn., who not only published documents on the subject but went to England and delivered addresses in support of the idea. Major Evans says:<sup>2</sup>—“What appears to have been the first pamphlet on ‘Ocean Penny Postage’, issued by Elihu Burritt, was probably published quite at the end of 1848, or early in 1849. It contains a poem dated Christmas, 1848, which may give us approximately the date of publication.” This proves extremely interesting, inasmuch as Imperial Penny Postage was put into effect on Christmas, 1898, just a half century later to a day.

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<sup>1</sup>Monthly Journal, IX: 1.

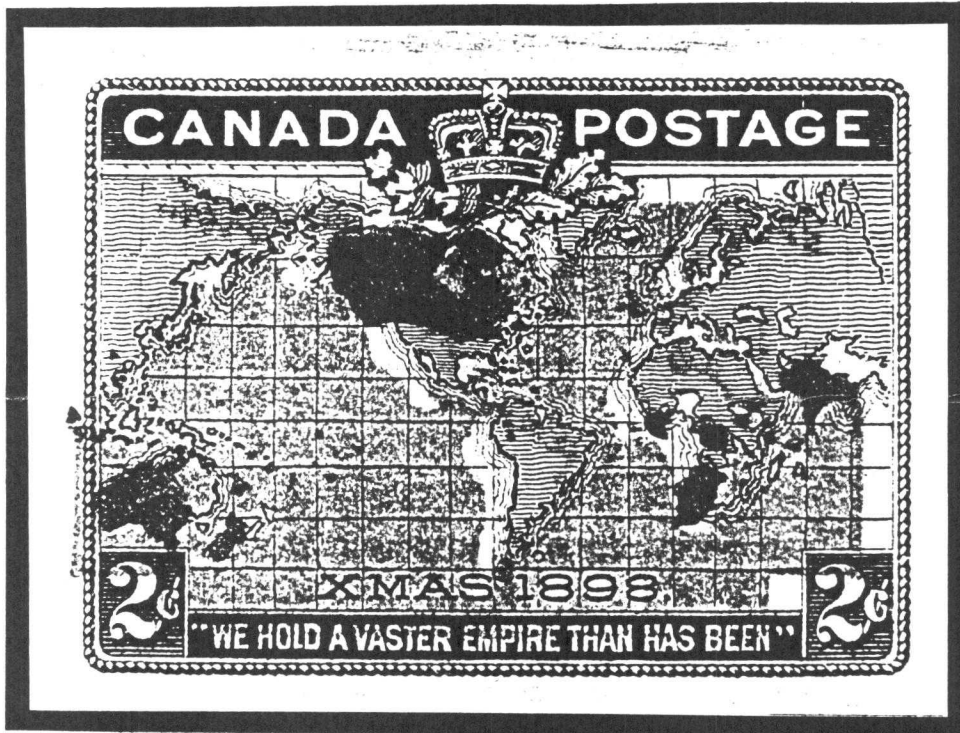
<sup>2</sup>Stamp Lover, I: 263.

# CANADA

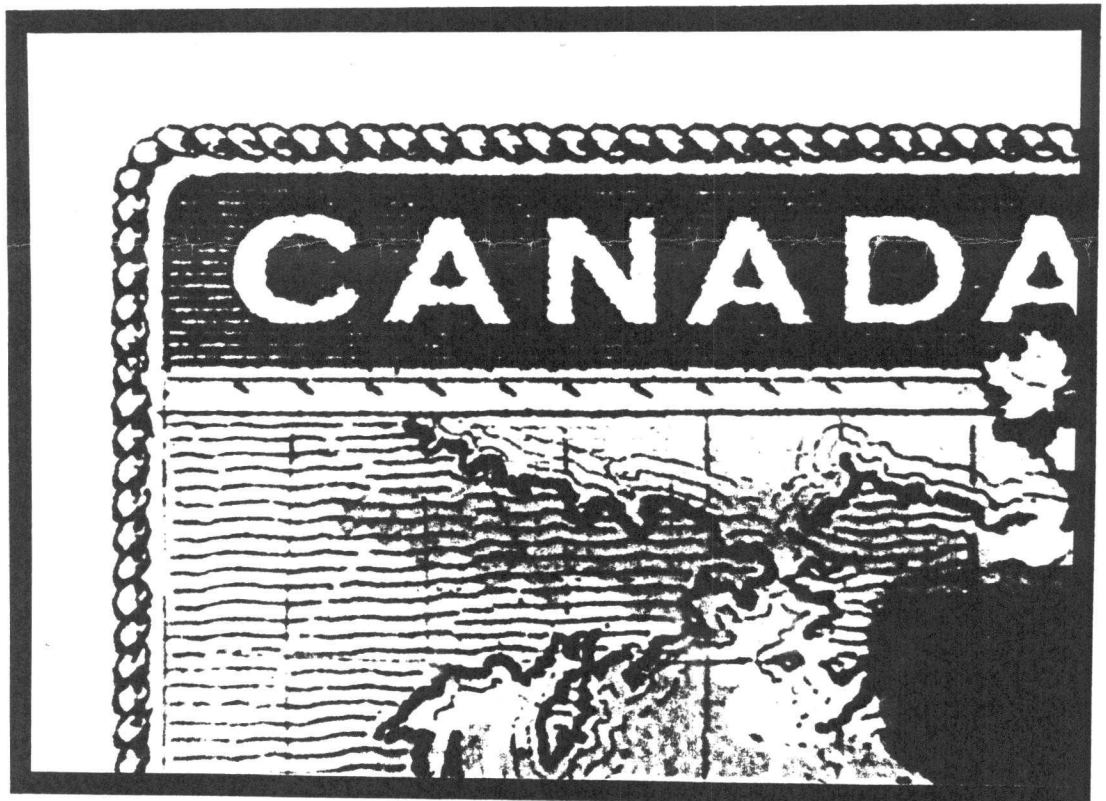
## IMPERIAL PENNY POSTAGE

THE UNISSUED PLATE 4.

MAJOR RE-ENTRY: PLATE POSITION #43.



Both the RED and the OCEAN COLOUR exhibit enormous shifts downward and to the left. Malayan States - Singapore and Burma are outside the cable line. "Canada occupies 1/2 of the USA and 1/3 of ALASKA"



An entry misplaced a full 3.0 mm below the proper position. The most noticeable feature is the row of diagonal slashes in the horizontal white band below CANADA. These are remnants of the upper cable that frames the design. Light evidence reveals portions of CANADA in Asia and the Arctic Ocean.

Francis Au has contributed the following page of unreported varieties. More next time.

### Black Plate Major Re-entries

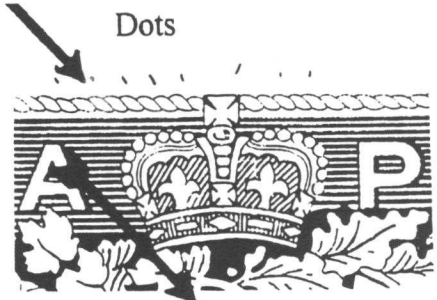
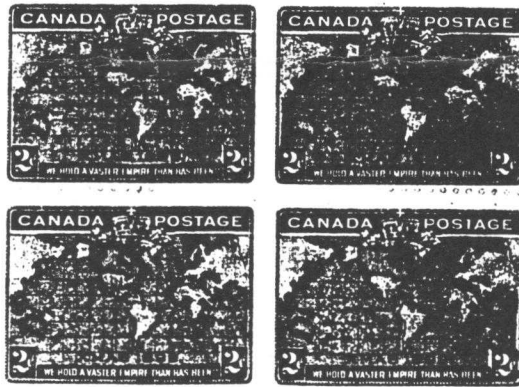


Plate 2  
Deep Blue  
6 7  
16 17



Dots



Stamp 7  
Green



Stamp 17  
Lavender

Stamp 7

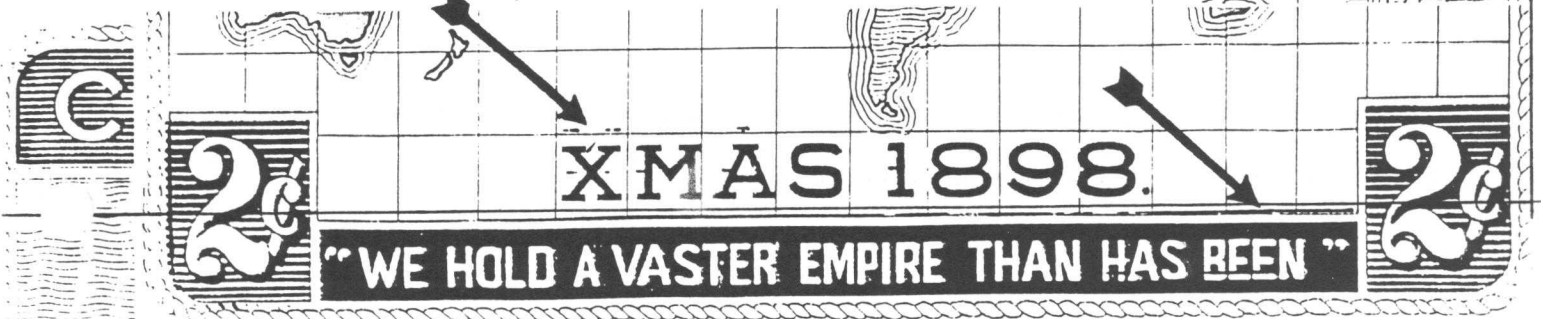


Stamp 17

### Unlisted Varieties

Extra impression in 'X MAS'

This re-entry occurs only on Lavender ocean.



## MEMBERSHIP LIST

### Honorary Members (No annual fee)

SUTHERLAND, Harry

Rowe, Kennerth

### Members (\* Paid up)

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AU Francis\*

BOISCLAIR, Roger

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NIXON, J. Edward

PEKONEN, Bill\*

REDDINGTON, Stuart D.

TALMAN, John H.

WATT, Dr. Jim

Editor's Note: If there is no (\*) opposite your name, please send \$10 to Roger Boisclair if you wish to continue receiving this newsletter. We have some interesting information already on hand for the next issue. And we want your articles as well.

### \*\*\*\*\*

#### INFORMATION WANTED:

There has been some talk about the **"WHITE XMAS"** variety. What is it? Does it really exist? Has it been exhibited? Does anyone have a copy? If so, please send the Editor a letter providing information -- maybe even a good photo-copy?. Will report any information in this newsletter.

#### ADVANCE NOTICE:

National Archives will be putting up an XMAS Stamp display at the National Museum starting in May this year. A special publication will also be available. The publication will feature our favourite stamp as the first Xmas stamp in the world. Watch for it!