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HOW WERE THEY PRINTED

Since the previous article with respect to quantities printed from the various plates as well as the number of Map Stamps still extant, I came into possession of some of Bradley's reconstructed plates, wherein he had both identified and located all of the 100 various positions for Plates 1, 2 and 3.

In order to complete each plate Whit had utilized a mixture of Lavender, Deep Blue and Light Blue. During my rummages I had been able to accumulate various quantities of Whit's preliminary plate assemblies, and by making use of these I was able to substitute matching colours for some of the Lavender's and light Blue's, thereby creating full plates with as close to single shade Blue's and Deep Blue's, as was possible. Since I was still utilizing Whit's original work, I did not feel too irreverent performing these alterations.

As I proceeded with the various substitutions, I pondered the "raison d'être" for such variations in the blue shades from Deep Blue to Light Blue especially on the Plate 1 stamps. A plausible explanation was simply that the colours were run at different times, using different dye lots. But how could this have occurred ?

Having Finally assembled the matching colours into their respective categories, I attempted to locate some information as to when the various lots of stamps were actually printed and/or delivered to their destination. The closest I came to the solution was that all 19,927,500 copies of the Map Stamp appear to have been delivered to the Postal authorities by the end of December 1898.

As we are well aware, there are not simply two variations of this stamp as originally assumed, (SC.#85, SC# 86) nor are there only four varieties as the current Unitrade Catalogue notes in their comments, but as Whit Bradley suggests in his plating study, there are six and maybe eight colour varieties, depending on how you categorize the Lavender shades. (This does not include the various oxidized changelings) As so often transpires when studying this particular stamp, an evolution occurs, not too dissimilar from untangling a ball of wool, you pull one loose strand and another surfaces. Thus it was with this latest enigmatic query, so I decided to revisit Whit's original newsletters, written some twenty years ago. I soon became fascinated by communications between Whit and Geoff Whitworth¹.

They were communing on the topic of printing and re-entries, and particularly on Plate 5 and stamp 91. What captivated my interest was Geoff's reference, as set out in Whit's last newsletter relating to a book written by John Easton, this book being a rewrite of a book originally compiled by Fred Melville in 1916, entitled "Postage Stamps in the Making", and Geoff's suggestion as to how the Map Stamp was printed.

It was while I was reading that article, that a rationale and perhaps a plausible explanation as to the plate and colour variations came to mind.. Contemplating my initial quest a theory began evolving

This theory begins with an hypothesis expounded by Geoff Whitworth in his letter to Whit Bradley, that the printing process for the various black plates utilized a novel machine known as THE FOUR-PLATEN POWER PRESS², (which is described later in the newsletter). For this machine to function four plates were required to produce a run of stamps, and each of the plates was numbered, in order to identify which sheets were printed from which plate, thus providing a means of identifying any inconsistencies which may develop.

Now to my theory, which is based on the idea that maybe there was some substance in Geoff's theory and there was a change in the printing process, from the traditional rotary press which had been used to produce previous stamp issues, to this new press. This change would have used the four initial plates, being numbers 1 to 4, for the primary run of black plates. I also suggest that the first run may have produce a quantity of about five million stamps. As you will see from the description of the printing press which follows, the four plates were all in use consecutively at the same time, as the press run progressed. Presumably the finished product was stacked according to the plate number from which the finished sheet was produced.

It is a suggestion, put up for comment, that after the initial run, the results for Plate 4 proved to be very faulty, and these stamps were destroyed, and the plate was retired.

Since the printing process required four plates, a new plate, being Plate 5 was ordered. In the meantime, stamps were required under the delivery contract, and the stamps from Plates 1, 2 and 3 were processed through the colour stages of the Red Plate first, and then the Lavender and/or Blue Plates last resulting in the quantities of about 1.75 million Blue and a similar quantity of lavender being delivered.

This would help to explain why Plate 5 had been produced in such a rush, and when Plate 5 finally appeared the Black plate printing resumed. It is quite possible that there may have been one initial run to produce another 1.5 - 2 million stamps to make up for the destroyed stamps from Plate producing enough to meet that initial order requirement. Over the next two weeks the remaining stamp order was finished with additional black Plate runs.

With the black plates being completed in stages, the colour runs would be done at different times, hence the colour variations would be done at different times with diff-erent colour batches being made each time. Depending on the way in which the finish-ed black plate copies were stored, deter-mined which plates were utilized for which colours, hence the varied quantities with slightly varied finished black plate copies were stored, determined which plates were utilized for which colours, hence the varied quantities with colour colours, hence the varied quantities with colour combinations.

¹ Geoff had compiled that marvelous tome on The Five Cent Beaver Issue, published by The R.P.S., London ²See reference to this work under the Four- Platen Power Press

I am assuming here that the initial run took place over six days, at 850sheets or 85,000 stamps per day. This assumption is based on the production which is set out in the next article.

THE FOUR-PLATEN POWER PRESS

This machine was developed in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing at Washington, and when first brought into use, was a much simpler process than previous rotary presses. It also retained the all important feature of wiping the recently inked plate by hand, which was considered by most printers to be vital at that time. It operated on the principle of speeding up production by allowing the three processes of inking, wiping, and printing to be carried on at the same time.

This was achieved by providing spaces for four separate printing plates, which were laid on beds connected by an endless chain, that allowed the plates to be moved around a square, stopping at intervals at various stages. A printer (operator "A") and two assistants (operators "B" & "C") were usually employed on this particular machine.

These three individuals, would be positioned at Stages I, III and IV as shown in the diagram below, with the printer assuming the place of honour at Stage III, the wiping stage.

As the four plates began their journey around the table, the machine would pause at each of the relevant stages, and while Operator "B" at Stage I, was removing the printed sheets from Plate No. 4, in front of him, Plate No. 1 ahead of him was being inked automatically by the roller positioned between Stage I and Stage II. In the meantime Plate No. 2 would have reached the printer/operator "A", who wiped it by hand in the usual way. At the next stage, or Stage IV, the third operator "C" was engaged in laying the blank paper on to Plate No. 3, which had already been wiped. The next movement saw Plate No. 3 with its paper, pass under the impression cylinders, which was the actual printing stage, and reach the first operator, operator "B"



The foremost distinction of the Four-Platen Press was that four plates were required in the production process. This particular design of the Power Press became widely used and was utilized by the industry well into the mid 1950's, although by then it had been greatly improved in detail. However the original principle and mode of operation remained the same.

The machine was driven by electric power and had an average output of about 850 sheets an hour with a minimum speed of eighteen impressions a minute for heavier work. In securing this speed the original process of Wiping was abandoned in favour of an automatic wiper, being placed between Stages II and III.

In some cases the plates were duplicated by electrotyping, rather than incurring the expense of manufacturing four distinct printing plates. Utilizing the transfer roller, one plate was made which was then used as a master for a number of electroplates being produced from a wax or lead impression. There were instances when the electroplates were chromium plated which' enabled them to be used as many times as the steel plates without showing signs of wear. If they began to wear the chromium face was floated off and the plate refaced. The chances of varieties developing with an electroplate were slight, and it was even less likely that a defective electroplate would be chromium-plated. The chromium face itself was too hard for the plate to suffer minor damages in printing.

BERMUDA, BAHAMAS & BR. WEST INDIES ON THE MAP STAMP

In the years following Columbus' discovery of the West Indies subsequent Spanish Conquistadors delivered hoards of gold and jewels to the Spanish royalty during the 16th and 17th centuries. The promise of riches being readily available in the New World motivated the Dutch and European explorers as well as the British entrepreneurs, to establish themselves in this apparently lucrative part of the globe.

Once these regions had been explored, it was apparent that an indigent population was all that remained after the Spanish annihilation of the Caribes and other native. This soon led to the conclusion that invasion and colonization was essential to exploit the areas and any natural resources that may have been available. The accommodating climate led to the development of the initial salt and sugar plantations, which created an enormous demand for labour. As these economies expanded they in turn fostered the "slave trade" which then led to the colonial expansion into the Northwestern African areas. The constant warring between the French, Dutch and English and the continual flow of ships by the various nations created opportunities for the inevitable piracy, both freelance and sanctioned, which in turn created all sorts of drama and intrigue, that still chronicles the history of the area.

Certain natural resources such as the turtles in the Caymans and the natural fruits and vegetables of the islands, created other demands.

By the latter part of the 19th century, when the Map Stamp was issued, the transformation of the colonies had been established as the subsequent generations of the forced immigrations from slavery began to populate the area, and the subsequent conversion was to have a dramatic impact over the area in the next fifty years.



THE WEST INDIES PORTION OF THE MAP STAMP WITH RED AREAS IDENTIFIED

PRECANCELS

(contributed by the previous editor John T. Anders)

Precancels, as the name implies were a means by which the Postal Service attempted to speed up the processing of large volumes of mail received from the large users of the service, as for instance magazines and newspaper publishers as well as catalogue houses such as the larger department stores and seed houses.

As the name implies and by definition, the term precancel is nomenclature used for a cancellation that has been applied to a stamp before it has been sold to a customer, and is designed to be affixed on outgoing mail prior to its delivery to the post office, hence the stamps have been cancelled prior to being affixed to a piece of mail.'

Styles of precancels are many and varied and many examples consist of bars or lines made with a brush, pen or rollers in the early postal system. As the use progressed direct printing was applied, and all processes affixed the precancel to entire sheets.

Initially in 1888, the precancelling process was completed at the Ottawa post office - with complete sheets being struck by what was referred the "killer" then in use. The "killer" as it was named, referred to a hammer style canceling device which consisted of the numeral 1 in a circle created by 19 horizontal lines.

Subsequent to the "killer" creation, the next Canadian precancellations styles consisted of various straight, wavy or broken lines, applied to sheets of stamps with hand rollers, usually made of hardened rubber. Some of the rollers appear to have been locally made whilst others were supplied by the postal authorities in Ottawa. Unless these stamps are found on a cover it is almost impossible to discover where they had been applied.

Toronto precancelled items were initially created, by ruling lines with a pen across each row of stamps: These forerunners, while unofficial, are nevertheless of historical interest.

It was the increasing volume of mail, which prompted the postal authorities to develop means to expedite the handling of large quantities of similar pieces such as circulars, newspapers, catalogues and samples. By 1889 the Postal Department adopted the official recognizance of the practical value of precancels as a method of saving labor and expediting mail. This resulted in the development of a revolving self-inking roller, which precancelled a row of stamps at a time, and was used to prepare sheets of varying denominations. The Line Types (as the above were called) being applied by hand show numerous varieties such as double, diagonal, vertical etc.. During 1892 the wavy line between straight lines was introduced. This was applied to sheets by a self-inking hand roller ten stamps wide.

In 1895 a standard type (Electro Type) was adopted, which was used from that time until the city types were introduced in 1903. This was printed a sheet at a time from an electro, and the squared off curves of the wavy line is characteristic of this type².

CABEEN, Richard McP *STANDARD HANDBOOK OF STAMP COLLECTING *, 1957, Thomas Y Cromwell Co., Publisher pp 109

² BOGGS, Winthrop S., *THE POSTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY OF CANADA* Quartermain Publications Inc. 1974, pps 729-730. The first regular precancels were issued in 1889 beginning with the bars on the Small Queens issue. These were classified by Walburn as styles A to D. It is suggested that the early styles A to D had a life span of less than a year which would indicate that styles E onwards followed in 1890. Styles K to N were probably issued in 1891 followed by R in 1892, style S in 1894 and styles T and U in] 1895.

A new bar style made its appearance in 1922, followed by style W in 1928, style X in 1935 and finally style Y in 1973. The last precancel was issued in 1977 - Scott #7\$7. In 1982 the Post Office announced that no further precancelled stamps would be issued.

MAP STAMP PRECANCELS

It has been suggested that only the first two plates of the Map stamp were used for precancelling - a study of the available pre-cancelled Map stamps may be useful in establishing whether this is correct. The Standard Canada Precancel Catalogue illustrates two styles of precancels on the Map stamp, styles T and U.

Due to the large size of the Map stamp many varieties are noted such as inverts, doubles, verticals and horizontal overprints. It should be noted that precancelled Map stamps are not common. :

R. B. Winmill notes three different types of precancels for the Map stamp.³

(i) The "Beamsville Overprint" was apperently used on the grayish lavender shade only. Other researchers have stated that this overprint exists on other shades. It has not been established yet that this is an authentic precancel.

(The author has not seen this overprint)

BEAMSVILLE TYPE

(ii) The second overprint listed by Winmill, the "Toronto Overprint", is in fact the regular style T

(iii)The third overprint is listed as the "Montreal Type" and is actually type U.



It is not clear why Winmill associated the three overprints with the three cities as they were not exclusively used there. He may have taken the information from an article by Merv Quarles which applied the same criteria to the Jubilees of 1897. The article goes on to quote Hetherington in "Canadian Precancels" Maple Leaves Vol. 2 Page 104 as saying that " this group of overprints was in continuous use from 1894 to 1903 and were cancelled by electrotype a sheet at a time."

³ WINMILL, Ron B.

^{*}THE EVOLUTION OF IMPERIAL PENNY POSTAGE and THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN 1898 MAP STAMP.* Jim A Hennok Ltd., Publisher, 1983, pp 224-225-2

There follows examples of precancels used on the Map Stamp:

TYPE T - HORIZONTAL PRECANCEL



TYPE U - VERTICAL PRECANCELS



While there were no indications of actual forgeries of the Map Stamp, there is evidence of the famous forged "Montreal" cancel. Similarly forged precancels have been discovered and samples of these follow:

FORGERY PRECANCEL



Obviously the stamps are genuine, and it is the precancel stamp on the item that is forged. To identify this one has only to look at the thickness of the inked lines, to see that these are much thicker than the genuine, However a second method of determining the genuine from the fake, is also available.

ANOTHER MEANS TO IDENTIFY FORGERIES

It is interesting to note that the ink used in the genuine precancels shows through the reverse side of the stamp as a stain, in the same impression as the front side. The ink used in the forgeries does not show through.

HORIZONTAL PRECANCEL REVERSE SIDE



The reverse side of the genuine precancel showing the ink seepage through the paper.

FORGERY PRECANCEL REVERSE SIDE



The porgeryprecancel back side, with no indication of the impression on the face of the stamp.

It is interesting to note that the ink used in the genuine precancels shows through the stamp as a stain. The ink used in the forgeries does not show through.

THE LARGEST BLOCK OF PRECANCELS



THE ABOVE SCAN IS REPRODUCED FROM RON WINMILLS BOOK AND IS THE LARGEST BLOCK OF MAP STAMP PRECANCELS THAT IS KNOW TO BE IN EXISTENCE AT THE TIME THAT HIS BOOK WAS PRINTED IN 1982.

QUERIES:

There are still some questions surrounding the early precancels such as:

- Were the precancels imprinted in the local offices, or did they have to be ordered from Ottawa?
- Were the "S" style of the precancellations made from an electroplate a sheet at a time or from a roller with a series of wires formed into an "S" shape welded to it?

- Were the early precancels applied by a hand roller, or was there a machine developed to imprint the design, and if so when was did it come into use?

STAMPEX '05

THE BRITISH ISLES

Have you ever noticed the appearance of the outline of the British Isles, as it appears on the Map Stamp, and wondered why it is, that the Island, which was the basis of the existence for the Map Stamp, appears in such a faint image, and then is represented by a series of globular red blobs in the finished product.



While I have no answer to this enigmatic query, it is a fascinating observation that the outline of Australia, New Zealand and the Island of Newfoundland all have somewhat distinctive outlines, similar to those of Europe in the above scan.

NOTE: This scan was reproduced from a stamp without any trace of red.

The first multi-national level philatelic show to be hosted in Toronto for a decade, STAMPEX '05 was held in Toronto, October 14-16, 2005.

"CANADA'S SEVENTH NATIONAL PHILATELIC LITERATURE EXHIBITION", was held at the same time with 180 entries from around the world, being judged by an International Panel.

The Map Stamp Study Group was well represented in both the Literature and the Open Philatelic Competition, at this show.

The Periodicals and Newsletter category boasted 48 entries with the "2003 Christmas Map Stamp Newsletter" being awarded a Silver-Bronze. Our congratulations to our previous editor, John T Anders for this award.

The category for Handbooks, Monographs, Pamphlets and Studies had 92 entries, with Ken Kershaw's publication, "*Plating the Canadian Xmas Map Stamp of 1898*" taking a Silver Award. Our congratulations to Ken on this award.

In the same category Fred Fawn was awarded Vermeil for his publication "*Canada – Imperial Penny Postage of 1898*". The Single Frame category, had 15 entrants, and Fred was awarded a Silver for his exhibit "*Canada – 1898 Map Stamp Postal history: Rarest Destinations and Usages*" Our congratulations to Fred on both of these awards.

		Plate No 2				
			Barris and a		Positions 6	This is a scan of one of Whit Bradley's recon- structed Plates. This par- ticular scan is of Black Plate 2 / Red Pl. "A", Blue Colour, Positions 6 to 50. Originally Whit had included some Lavender colours from Pl. 2, to complete this particu- lar page. These were replaced by a matching shade from some of the corresponding positions contained in Bradley's working copies from the Editor's collection.
16	17 Re-entry	18	19 Re-entry	20	16 to 20	
POLITARIA DOLLARDA POLITARIA 26	27 Re-entry	28	29 Re-entry	30	26 to 30	
36	J7 Re-entry	38	39 Re-entry	40	36 to 40	
					Positions 46 to	50

THE WHIT BRADLEY RECONSTRUCTS