

THE 1898 CHRISTMAS MAP STAMP NEWSLETTER

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2007 XMAS BULLETIN

The 2007 Xmas copy of the Map Stamp Newsletter has been published as the lone bulletin for this year, not by desire but as a result of the time and research required to expand the contributions received from members of the study group to produce sufficient material to fill the requisite pages for a full publication.

QUARTERLY in 2008

There is definitely a desire to retain the objective of a quarterly newsletter, and it is hoped this can be achieved in the coming year by submissions from members augmented by the inclusion of many of the topics we are compiling in conjunction with the publication of the forthcoming volume on the Map Stamp.

CHANGELINGS

We were provided with an excellent article from John Milks, focusing on his extensive research into the somewhat perplexing issue that has confounded the Map Stamp aficionado's for generations. The subject chosen by John has been referred to by various nomenclatures the more popular of which is "Muddy Oceans" as well as "Changelings".

Unfortunately, subsequent to receiving this article from John, we were contacted by his daughter who advised that he had subsequently suffered a stroke, and while he has made some recovery, he does not recall the experiments he carried out to substantiate his conclusions. We extend to John our best wishes for a recovery from this unfortunate infirmity.

P.I.G. ISLAND NAMES

The article on the Island naming was inspired by what appears to be the prototype of the Map Stamp, the proofs of which were sold at the 1990 America Bank Note liquidation sale. Also consulted was the actual map from which the Map Stamp was designed.

THE CENTRE CROSS RATIONALE

The third article in this bulletin, which advances a substantiated rationale for the unique centre crosses that appeared in all of the production sheets of 100 stamps of the Map Stamp was motivated by the examination of a full imperforate sheet from Plate 5.

This sheet is believed to have been one of the original sheets that were mounted and hung in Mulock's office when he was Postmaster General at the time of the original printing of the Map Stamp in 1898.

A copy of the Centre Cross article also appeared in the Nov/Dec issue of "The Canadian Philatelist"¹.

**MEMBERSHIP
REMINDER
2008 MEMBERSHIP
FEES ARE DUE.
DETAILS ARE SET OUT
ON THE LAST PAGE OF
THE NEWSLETTER.**

¹ The Canadian Philatelist the bi-monthly journal of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.

SOME INTERESTING ITEMS

Harry Voss sent us some fascinating scans of items from his collection:

ACREASE IN THE PRINTING OF THE STAMP



UNIQUE USE OF THE MAP STAMP

The following were apparently given out at a stamp show in the U.K. at the turn of the century (19th to 20th)



Promotional info on the Reverse Side of a Map Stamp.



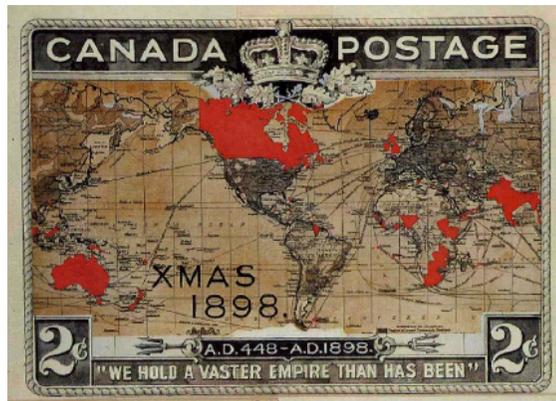
A lighter impression of the same item.

A MAP STAMP REDISCOVERED

The 2006 Xmas card I received from the president of our study group, the card featured a fascinating depiction of the Map Stamp in a motif which I did not readily recognize. Amid the usual festivities surrounding the jovial occasion, I did not immediately pursue the origin of the illustration, and it wasn't until I came across a sale catalogue featuring the stamp design once more on its cover that I began to pursue the origin and the source of the item.

The item as displayed on the cover of the catalogue, was there for the purpose of promoting one of the items up for auction. This item being the entire production file for the Map Stamp from the America Bank Note Archives. This item was described as featuring the original map, essays, die proofs and proof sheets of the two typographic zinc plates as well as a damaged mock up of the sheet layout.

Subsequent discussions with Fred regarding his Xmas card, confirmed that indeed the item featured on his postcard, was the one and the same item as the one utilized on the cover of the catalogue, and related to the prototype stamp produced by the America Bank Note Company immediately prior to the final Map Stamp design being placed in production.



As can be seen from the print produced above, the subject stamp which, for the purpose of this article, is referred to as being "Neptune's Spears" was virtually identical in all respects to the final stamp produced except for the elimination of the spears and the related writing as well as the location of "XMAS 1898" including various names on the land masses and oceans as well the numerous traffic lanes.

The notations on the Map Legends regarding the colouring indicates that the red areas shown on this map indicate the land masses which were British Possessions, and are reasonably inclusive of those used to define the British Empire on the final edition with the exception of the various island groups, and parts of the redefined African possessions.

When one examines this particular map in detail however it seems reasonable to conclude that this was the prototype used for the final engraving of the die from which the Map Stamp was ultimately produced, and when the author compared actual overlays compiled with copies of the Map Stamp, it was very difficult to locate many variations.

The actual map from which this reduction was produced was:

THE BRITISH EMPIRE
MAP OF THE WORLD
ON MERCATOR'S PROJECTION
BY G.R. PARKIN AND J.G. BARTHOLOMEW

It is not clear who G.R. Parkin² was, however research on John Bartholomew suggests he was clearly the map maker, and was credited with having popularised the familiar layer colouring on maps in which low ground is shown in shades of green and higher ground in shades of brown, then eventually purple and finally white.

The colouring scheme is not too apparent when one examines the subject stamp, however there was also some suggestion that the Bartholomew company was the first to adopt pink as the colour for the British Empire as well as being credited with initiating the use of the name '[Antarctica](#)' for that area of the southern hemisphere. Thus we may have the reason for the red of the British Empire, as shown on the final issue of the Map Stamp.

The most obvious deficiency regarding the utilization of this stamp as the final pattern for the Map Stamp is the absence of the markings within the Pacific and the Indian Oceans as to those Island Groups. There are definite markings indicating Singapore, Borneo and New Guinea as well as a splash of red for the area where Fiji is indicated. Additionally Ascension and St. Helena are clearly marked as well as Gibraltar, Cyprus and Malta.

This then leaves one to wonder how the selection was made for locating where the dots would be placed to identify those items we now refer to as the Pacific Island Group and the Indian Ocean Group.

What would seem a reasonable assumption, is that someone with geographical knowledge of the area, as well as some cartography experience was possibly asked to indicate on the copy of the map from which "Neptune's Spears" was compiled, the various areas where it would be reasonable to place the appropriate marks. Perhaps this task was undertaken by Sir William himself, or one could also assume that Sir William in conjunction with Sandford Fleming completed the task at hand.

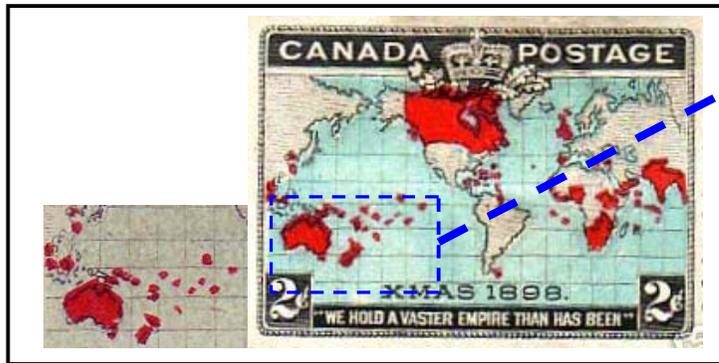
In any event the marks which were placed in the various areas have left us to ponder: what are the names assigned to the dots.

² Fred Fawn published an earlier article in *Male Leaves*, with research indicating Parkin migrated to Canada and became a master at Upper Canada College in Toronto

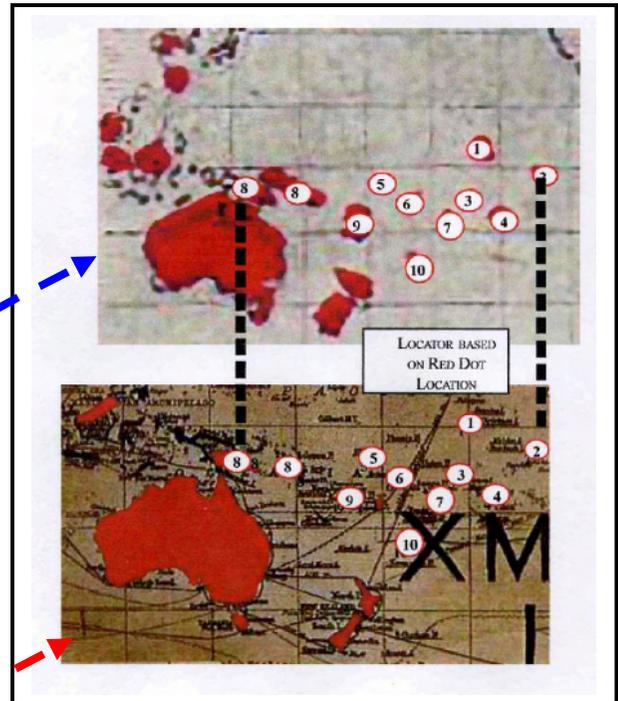
INVESTIGATING THE ISLAND NAMES

The first step in establishing a comparison of the two subject stamps and the relevant island locations to derive a comparable location on the “Neptune” stamp was to create a large template of that portion of each stamp where the Pacific Island Group were located. The illustrations below demonstrate those portions of the map which were developed for this exercise.

LOCATING THE ISLANDS ON EACH MAP



SEGMENTS OF MAP USED FOR NAMING



Having located the Islands on the smaller version of the Map which was used to create “Neptune’s Spears”, a larger version was then consulted in order to determine which Islands were at the relevant locations on the map itself. The thought being that the architects of the die which was used to print the red dots on the Map Stamp ultimately , may possibly have used this map to provide the source originally.

The Grid as prepared from the Map Stamp was locked as a group to ensure that none of the locations would shift relative to each other. The grid as prepared from the map stamp section was then transferred to the appropriate segment of the stamp from the “Neptune” stamp. What this revealed was that the various islands were not in appropriate locations.

As an example, when the circle noted as # 8 was placed atop Fiji, which seem the most logical match, none of the remaining dots matched, not did they even come close. The next choice was to match the # 8 circles with New Guinea, which produced the most logical configuration, except that Fiji now became # 6 and the #10 was then on the north Island of New Zealand.

Many more anomalies occurred as the grid was moved among the various identified locations, and what became readily apparent was that the Map Stamp designers had appeared to use some very broad artistic license in locating the red dots for the Pacific Island Group.

Once the areas had been selected, a method for transferring the pattern of the Pacific Island Group from the Map Stamp to the “Neptune” stamp was devised. Utilizing a computer graphics programme, circles were placed on each of the various islands making up the Pacific Island Group, and a pattern was created, which was then transferred to the corresponding area selected from the “Neptune’s Spears” Stamp.

(NOTE: It was interesting to note, that in completing the process of marking the islands with the circles, it appeared that the architects of the Map Stamp Die had moved New Zealand closer to Australia, than the distance which was reflected on the map itself)

The next illustration provides the graphics of how this process was achieved.

(continued to next page)

INVESTIGATING THE ISLAND NAMES

(continued from previous page)

The reason for utilizing this strategy is reasonably obvious when one looks at the map which the architects worked from and the many islands which were grouped so close together, and in very haphazard arrangement.

At this juncture it was decided there would have to be some rationale utilized to determine which islands were intended to be represented as part of the British Empire in the Pacific. There are many conflicting areas cloaked in red on the Map Stamp, and it is obvious that there was a strong political motivation to reflect as large and powerful a British Empire as was feasible for purposes of pure propaganda. The Islands in the Pacific were switching loyalties between Germany, France and Great Britain as well as Spain with great alacrity in the latter 19th century.

It was therefore quite feasible that the authors and architects of the Map Stamp allowed themselves some liberal interpretation as to what would be placed in this otherwise large empty blue space on the stamp.

There was also a very large political football being bantered about, and substantial monetary gains were to be anticipated if the Pacific Cable could be completed to Australia, as well as through Indonesia to India.

This probably added more fuel to the desire to fill in that great blue void on the stamps which represented the Pacific Ocean. Bearing this in mind, a list was prepared utilizing the prepared grid of numbered dots as a guide to san any and all islands on the map which may have been under British affiliation in 1896 .

Utilizing this list, appropriate names were attached to likely locations for the representative islands.

The following are the assumptions made as a result of this exercise.

1. Gilbert Island (although eventually linked to Ellice no other fit)
2. Christmas Island
3. Ellice Island (although eventually linked to Gilbrt no other fit)
4. Easter Island (while further east seems mostobvious)
5. Salomon Island
- 6 Fiji ?? (fits here, but the 2 dots in 9 confuse the issue)
7. Samoa
8. New Guinea
New Hebrides
9. Fiji (two dots Should be at dot 6 but probably too large)
10. Tonga

Rather than clarify the names for Pacific Island Group, this probably only adds to the already expansive list of Pacific Island names which at last count totalled at least five versions, however it may offer a rationale for the original location of the dots.

ORIGIN OF THE OCEAN COLOURS OF THE 1898 MAP STAMP

by John E. Milks

Much has been written about the appearance of colour changelings, i.e. the colour of a stamp which differed from that ordered by the Postmaster General

THE RESEARCH PROCESS³

by John E. Milks

In order to examine the subject of changelings, a number of synthetic dyes having different structures were tested by mixing each dye with drying oil, such as linseed, to simulate a printing ink.

The results obtained were surprising; particularly the discovery that some of the dyes were not only fugitive but faded only as long as any unreacted oil was present. To retain some of the colour an increase in the concentration of the dye beyond the threshold for complete fading was needed. The air oxidation of dyes on fabrics requires activation by sunlight, however the rapid fading of the dyes in the printing ink used on the Map Stamp did not require the sunlight and occurred simultaneously in the dark.

Although detailed particulars of the mechanism for the colour change has yet to be determined, a direct combination of the printing dye with oxygen in the air did not take place in a similar manner as with dyed fabrics. In some way the creation of the initial reaction of molecular oxygen and drying oil behaved as an oxygen transfer agent for the oxidation of the dye.

These associated reactions are accomplished in as little as two to three days when white lead is added as a drier. It is noteworthy that certain organic compounds have an opposite effect by catalyzing the oxidation of drying oils and have been used when freedom from metallic contamination is required.

The significance of the above results is that colour changelings would take place prior to the distribution of the finished stamps if the desired colours had come from a binary mixture of a fugitive dye and a non-oxidizable dye, or a coloured stable I inorganic pigment.

³ Editor's note : These notes and the following article were written by John Milks to explain the results of the research be carried out in an effort to determine whether the changelings occurred as the result of external influences or from internal reactions within the compounds used to develop the colours of the oceans.

ORIGIN OF THE OCEAN COLOURS OF THE 1898 MAP STAMP

by John E. Milks

WHAT IS A CHANGELING?

The appearance of a changeling has been stated to occur after the stamps were distributed to the public, and the cause of the changelings were as result of chemical reactions applied either physically or atmospherically by sunlight. That light is required for fading of dyed fabrics over time has been confirmed from many studies. Changes in the colour of postage stamps, accordingly, have been assumed to be yet another example of the instability of some dyes to air oxidation.

AN EXAMPLE OF A "MUDDY OCEAN" CHANGELING



One of the many questions regarding the printing of the 1898 Map stamp is why many of the ocean colours, which were once blue-green and/or blue have been transformed to colours of gold through deep gold to black brown, yet the same phenomenon does not occur to affect the colours of other postal issues of the same time period, viz a viz the 1897-1898 Queen Victoria 'Maple Leaf' nor the Numeral Issue'.

Frederick Tomlinson in his 1960 book "The Canadian Map Stamp of 1898", suggested "Stamps stored in damp places are often found with what appears to be an oxidized sea.... All of these varieties are changelings."

In an earlier in the Map Stamp Newsletter Vol. 2, No. 3, as well as the Canadian Philatelist Vol. 53, No. 2, pg. 62, 2002, I (i.e. John Milks) had expressed the view that these colours do not come about by an oxidation reaction nor are they colour changelings. It was my belief at that time that these were the colours of a layer of lead sulfide (PbS) on top of the underlying colour of the printed stamps. If anything, I felt that these stamps had been defaced by lead sulfide as much as any discoloration originating from mildew.

Of equal interest to me at that time was a perplexity as to why the American Bank Note Co. selected the two synthetic dyes, in order to produce half the oceans in green and the other half in blue, particularly since it was well known that resolute colorants were available which were stable to change.

X-ray fluorescence spectra show that no inorganic pigments contributed to the colour of the oceans. All colours came from synthetic dyes.

For the initial printings of the Map stamp, the first dye to be used was present in a high enough concentration to produce a colour which has been characterized as lavender, which were those stamps issued to the public on December 7, 1898. Some time later, additional printings were made with smaller amounts of dye and the resulting colours had no resemblance to any colour that produced the grey in the majority of the stamps.



THE "BLUE OCEANS" OR LAVENDER

NOTE: The original order for the stamp specified that half the oceans were to be green and half blue

Two leading candidates for the identity of the dye are Methyl Violet and Crystal Violet, the former being a blue violet or lavender and the latter a violet blue. The philatelic colour for lavender in the Stanley Gibbons Colour Key is the same as violet blue. It is more that likely that crystal violet-was chosen for blue oceans.

The second of the two dyes for printing the ocean colours is found in various shades of green and blue. According to Clifton A. Howes in his book on Canadian Postage Stamps and Stationary the first shipment to Winnipeg was in lavender or pale blue; the second shipment which arrived on December 13, 1898 and all the thousands received thereafter were printed in pale green. No date was given for the change in colour to predominantly blue.



THE PALE "GREEN OCEANS" OR BLUE

NOTE: The original order for the stamp specified that half the oceans were to be green and half blue

Tests with Methylene Blue, a dye which is stable to air oxidation in linseed oil showed that by varying the concentration of the dye on the surface of wet cotton fibers⁴, the range of green and blue in the oceans could be simulated. A low concentration of dye gave a turquoise green whereas a high concentration gave a turquoise blue. The same range of colour could be duplicated by successive dilutions of a stock solution of Methylene Blue in water. In the absence of water the colour produced at high concentrations in linseed oil was a blue without any green and corresponded to cyan-blue.

⁴ Wet cotton fibers are a convenient substitute for wet paper fibers. The purpose was to simulate the water in the paper at the time the oceans were printed. The wet printing process arose from retained water added to the paper for the initial printing of the black portions from engraved plates

EVER WONDERED WHY?

Have you ever wondered why the centre cross “+” was placed in the centre of the of the Canada Map Stamp sheet? Or queried the reason for the Tonkin Gulf dot ?

Contemplation of these idiosyncrasies does suggest that perhaps there was a purpose for these marks, and also that it seems reasonable that the function could have been related to the printing and/or Design of the sheet.

The other mystery, surrounding this stamp is the lack of individual proofs of the Map Stamp. Freed Fawn’s publication issued in June 2004, has illustrations of five engraved die proofs., and there are various quarter sheet proofs, but apparently these are the only single or individual proofs. Which is somewhat surprising considering the numbers that exist for other stamps produced in that same period.

There appears on the market from time to time, what are referred to as Progressive Proofs, but these items appear to have been cut from a larger sheet of stamps, if one can draw any conclusions from the margins surrounding the individual items.

In a quest for possible answers to these questions the author happened upon a full sheet of Imperforate Map stamps, which had apparently emanated from that collection of full sheets that once hung in Sir William Mulock’s office. It was while completing a detailed examination of this marvellous item, that a myriad of facets about the layout and design of the stamp were discovered.

One of the various features of this sheet was a series of small dots which appeared in strategic positions within the sheet. Their location, and the precision with which they were positioned was such that there could be no mistake about the intention that they had served a definite purpose. However the purpose did not seem to have any relationship to the appearance of the stamp itself. One could only conclude that their function related to the structure of the plate.

What had been uncovered were four small dots, similar in size to the Tonkin Gulf Dot, and located in four precise locations.

Two of the dots were dead centre, in the margin between Stamp 5 and Stamp 6 and in line with centre cross at the top of the sheet and a counterpart was located a the bottom of the sheet between Stamp 95 and Stamp 96.

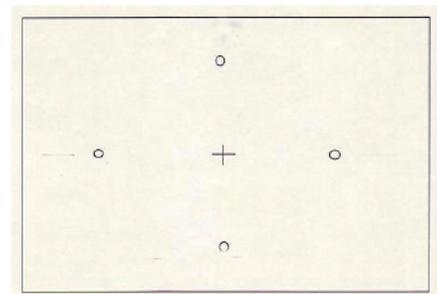


DOT IN TOP MARGIN BETWEEN ROWS 5 & 6

DOT IN LOWER MARGIN BETWEEN ROWS 5 & 6



Two similar dots appeared in the centre lines at each side between the 5th & 6th rows on the left, between Stamps 51 & 51 as well as between stamps 60 & 70 on the right.



DOTS ON SHEET IN RELATION TO CENTRE CROSS

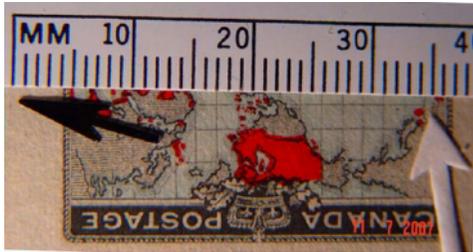
The next detection was a series of 10 dots in a row down the right side of the sheet; one dot beside each of the ten stamps a specific distance out from the final stamp row locations 10 to 100.



While contemplating the reason for these various dots, a thought occurred as to the rationale for the dots to be printed, and it seemed reasonable to assume that these dots had to be made by small protrusions on the plate, which were identical in height to the stamp itself. The next thought involved the motivation for these obtrusions to be there.

The first step in seeking the raison d’être for the ten dots extending down the right side, was to measure their distance from the edge of the contiguous row of stamps. What the first analysis revealed, was the fact that there was no relationship between the distance from the edge of the stamp, but on further examination, this analysis did reveal a relationship to the distance between the Tonkin Gulf dots.

EVER WONDERED WHY? (cont'd)



DISTANT FROM TONKIN DOT TO MARGIN DOT

The distance between these ten dots measured vertically, was identical to the distance between the Tonkin dots on a vertical row of stamps, and further when measured horizontally the dots were an identical distance from the Tonkin dots on the tenth row of stamps, and also equal to the horizontal distances on all the Tonkin dots on the various rows of stamps.



DISTANT BETWEEN TONKIN DOTS

A fascinating finding, but why these dots should be there, and what purpose they served in this location was even more of a mystery. This query mandated a re-visitation to the Tonkin Dots.

I had read previous theories, which had suggested that the Tonkin Dot had been used as an anchor point to ascribe arcs for the layout of the Map Design itself, however, perhaps there was another purpose for this particular dot at this legendary geographic location.

As one analyzes the Map Stamp's particular Mercator projection of the world; one is conscious of the fact that this particular configuration which was utilized, bestowed upon the Tonkin Gulf a location that was equidistant from both the north and the south axis of the stamp. Utilizing this feature, place a pin through the Tonkin Dot, and then pivot the stamp around that point. This will create a symmetrical circumference around that point.

Interesting one may say, but what relevance does this have to the dots.

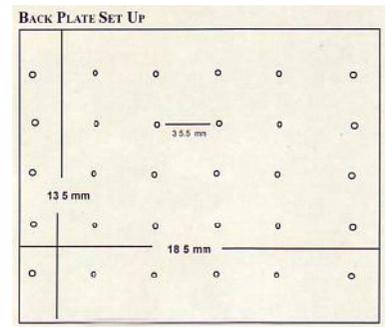
Consider for a moment, the fact that the plate of 100 stamp dies, is made up of 100 individual small plates, being the individual Map Stamps in the obverse design. Also consider the assembly of one hundred of these miniature plates which had to be joined together to create the larger master plate. To attain this objective required a method of assemblage so as to ensure that these individual plates had to be affixed in a symmetrical pattern, so as to ensure their perfect alignment.

To fully comprehend this accomplishment, imagine laying out a tile floor with individual pre-cut, square tile. If one has ever done this task, one realizes the need to start with a perfectly square tile in the centre of the area and then work to the edges, carefully gluing each tile in place, abutting adjacent tiles, with edges perfectly matching. Now envision the small pieces of the mosaic that was to become the printing plate for Map Stamp.

To accomplish this task some method was needed to layout a piece of metal, to which could be affixed the individual plates. In contemplating this assignment, one should focus on the securing of one initial stamp plate, not necessarily in the centre of the plate to which all are to be affixed, but perhaps at one side. How would the first be affixed? Contemplating this assignment, I was certain that there had to be a connection between the plate and the map die. and then the thought occurred. If there was a dowel on the plate, and a slot on the map die for the dowel, mystery solved. The slot or hole in the Map Stamp die would be slid over the dowel, and then affixed to the plate.

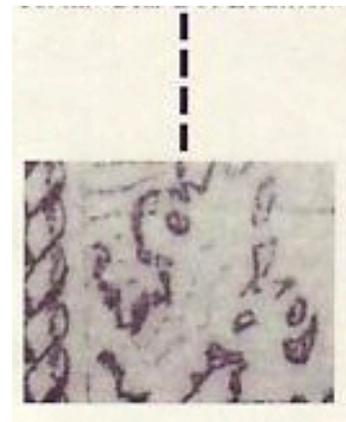
Thus the solution. This was how the printers affixed the map die to the plate. They designed a plate with minutely small, dowel like protrusions placed in lateral lines horizontally and vertically, all equidistant from each other.

PLATE LAYOUT WITH DOWELS FOR AFFIXING BLACK STAMP DIES



The miniature stamp size plate designs for printing the Map Stamp then had a small hole drilled through the Tonkin Gulf.

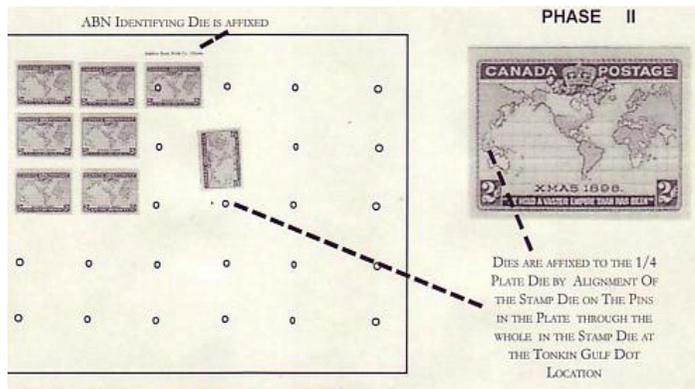
THE HOLE AS DRILLED IN THE TONKIN GULF



EVER WONDERED WHY? (cont'd)

THE TONKIN GULF DOT THEORY

This hole or slot was then placed over the protruding posts or dowels on the quarter plate die, and then each was aligned individually with each other. The positioning of the posts ensured equal distance between the stamps and with each other, and the positioning was aligned by utilizing the centre line of latitude which is in the dead centre of the stamp die, and runs across the stamp. The centering is ensured through the rotational accuracy via the Tonkin Gulf Dot axis, and the alignment of the stamps in a row laterally. The reason that the Tonkin dots appear in the printing, is that the dowels or posts protrude to the height of the printing surface of the stamp.



UTILIZING THE SMALL HOLE DRILLED IN THE TONKIN GULF (Tonkin GulfDot)
THE INDIVIDUAL BLACK DIES WERE AFFIXED TO THE QUARTER PLATE

THE METHOD USED TO LAYOUT THE PLATES

Having developed a raison d'être for the Tonkin Dots, the next quandary was a rationale for the centre line cross and the four dots between the rows and columns, as well as a plausible reason for the quarter sheet proofs.

In the quest for Proofs of the Map Stamp, the one recurrent constant was the consistency appearance from the proofs in Fawn's publication, the only proofs which existed were quarter sheets, be it quarter sheets of Plate IV, as are illustrated in Fred Fawn's volume of his Map Stamp Exhibit, and the various quarter sheets in the Archives at Ottawa, but the only extant sheets of proof formats are primarily quarter sheets. There were individual copies of the stamp in Black only, and in Black and Red as well as Black and Blue, but they had all been trimmed from larger sheets of printed stamps. Was there a message here?

While contemplating this presumption, and perusing the Full sheet of stamps, a further observation was made.

There is very symmetrical appearance for each quarter segment of the full 100 stamps. Each sheet divides very proportionally into 4 plates of 25 stamps in 5X5 rows. To maintain symmetry the Bank Note impression occurs above or below the centre row of each quarter.

Immediately above the centre row on the upper two quarters, i.e. (above row 3 and row 8 appears the printer's name), which is also symmetrical with the identical marking beneath the centre stamp or Stamp 93 of the left quarter sheet and stamp 98 on the right hand counter part. This could indicate that the full sheet was made up from identical quarter sheets, with the top two quarter plates being identical, and the bottom 2 quarters likewise, the only difference being the printer's plate name being above or below the centre row of stamps.

This hypothesis also explains the reason for the quarter plate proofs. As the 5X5 plates were made, proofs were pulled in the various stages, adjustments would then made as required, new proofs done, then when a final plate was deemed ready, the quarter plates would be mounted on a master plate for the production plate of 100.

This then set in motion a theory to explain the original enquiry which had to do with the analysis of the "+" centre mark cross, and the 4 dots between the 5th and 6th rows horizontally and vertically.

The last piece of the puzzle.

THE FINAL HYPOTHESIS.

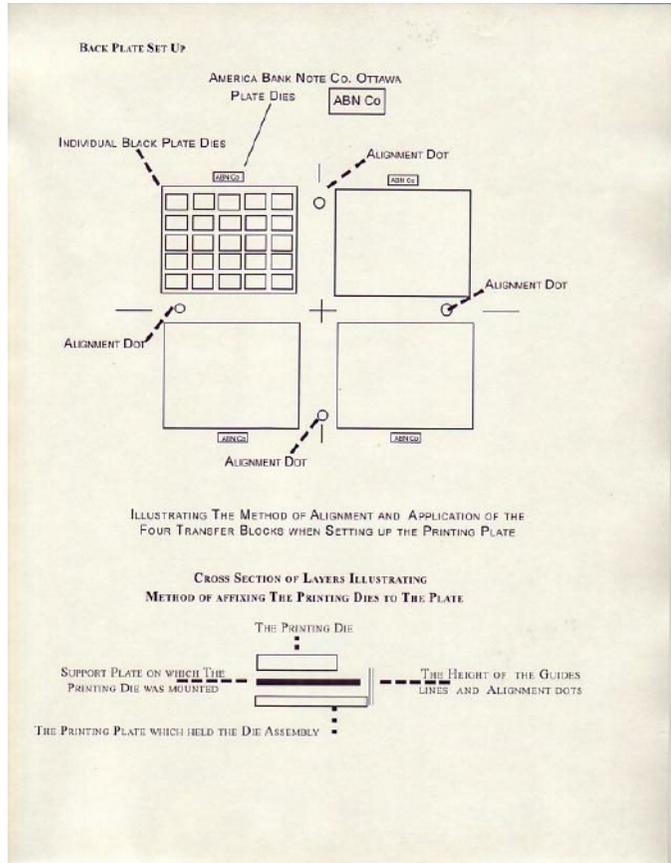
The small dies were assembled into the 4 plates of 5X5 or 25 stamps, and then as each of blocks of 25 were approved from the various Proofs, the four plates would have to be assembled into the master plate of 100, hence the centre cross and 4 dots which would enable each of the plates to be aligned as quadrants into their final and proper positions for use in the printing process.

THE LOWER LEFT QUARTER SHEET AS PRINTED



THE AFFIXING OF THE PLATE DIES

The following diagram, which has been enlarged on the enclosed sheet, illustrates the manner in which this was achieved utilizing the Centre Cross and the four dots located in the positions between the fifth and sixth rows (Stamps 41 – 51 & 50-60)and between the fifth and sixth columns (Stamps 5 –6 & 95 - 96) on the full sheets.



All that was left now to be queried was this strange row of 10 dots down the right side of the full sheet of stamps.

If the theory of the plates being produced in quarters was correct then the dots were really 5 dots in the upper plate and five dots in the lower plate, that were still unused.

Well the solution was of course alignment.

When the individual stamp dies were aligned, they were set up using the dowels or posts on the plate as the alignment marks. The first stamp die would have four alignment marks to square to, which would then diminish by one as each successive stamp die was attached, however the fifth stamp die affixed required at least a single alignment dot, hence the one left over, which was still apparent.

THE AFFIXING OF THE PLATES TO THE PRESS

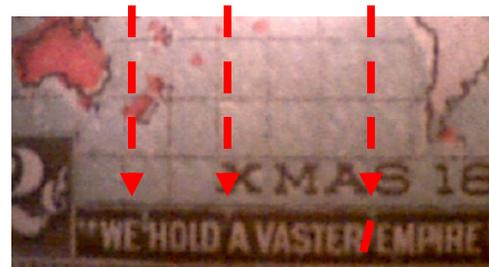
All of this tied together nicely except for one last item, which was the curvature of the plate needed to fit the rotary press, as it would not be possible to bend a plate to fit the press after the full 100 stamp dies were attached, without some distortion.

Obviously the one plausible explanation would have been, that each of the stamp dies themselves was moulded as was also the base plate to which these individual dies were affixed, and prior to the final attachment to the master plate.

The only query remaining was which way to bend, and perhaps the answer to this subject lays in the plate cracks that have been observed in some of the Plate 5 stamps.

When examining a number of stamps from Plate 5 many have deep V's appearing in the bottom motto line

“WE HOLD A VASTER EMPIRE

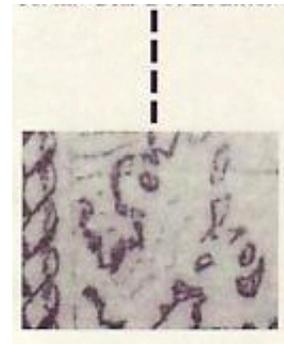
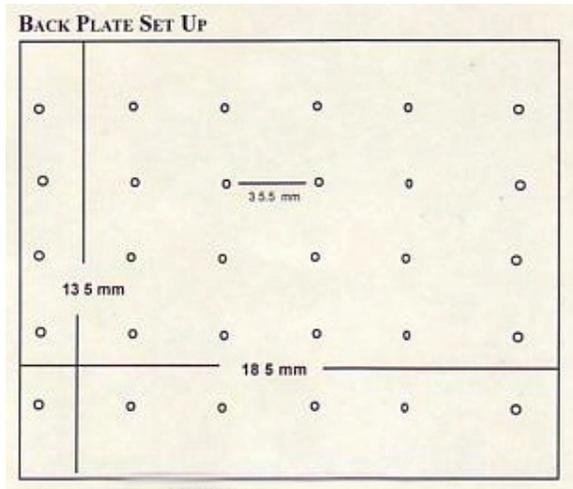


which would suggest that the curvature was made along the length of the stamp, suggesting the bending was along the North/South axis, which would further imply that the printing took place from West to East, i.e. the Pacific was printed prior to the Eastern Hemisphere.

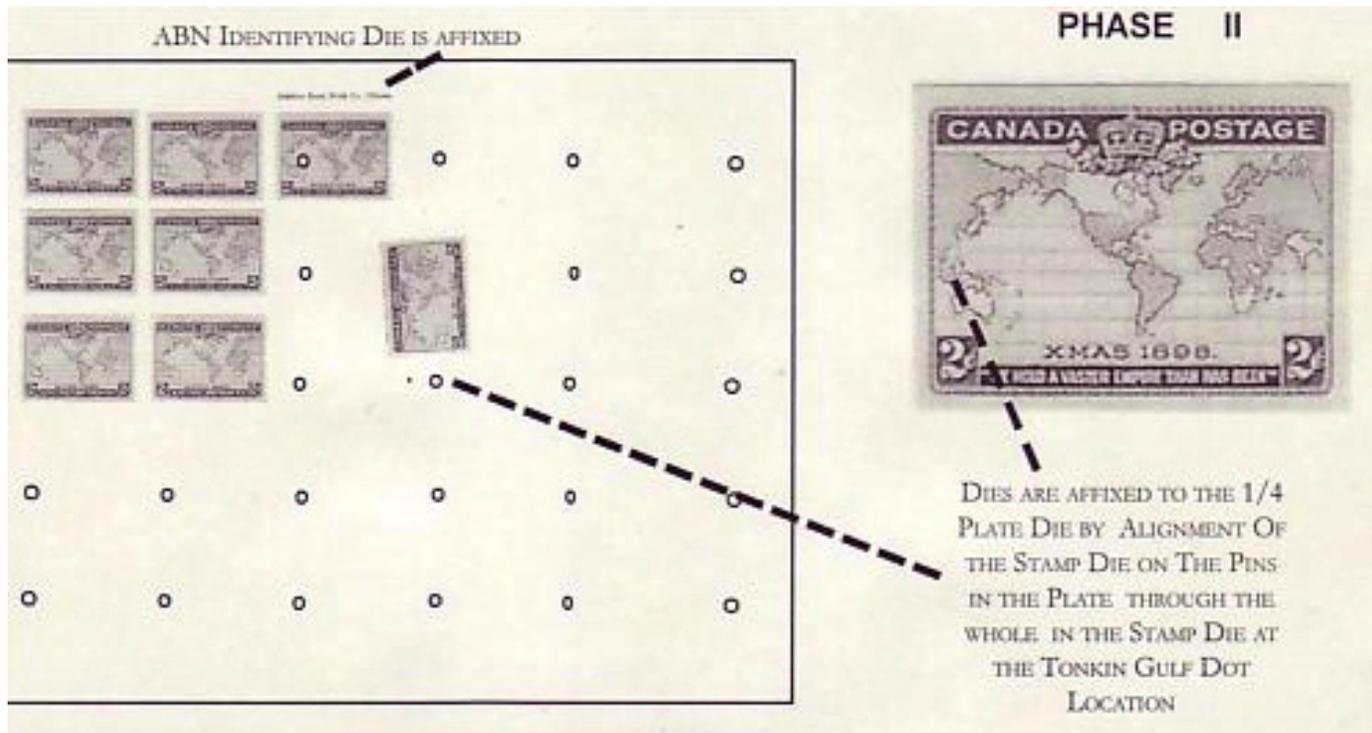
So are these plausible explanations as to some of the design constituents, and is there adequate evidence to substantiate these theories ?

There is no doubt that these premises will raise many questions and topics for discussion, and members of the study group are anxiously solicited for their comments on these hypothesis.

THE LAYOUT OF THE DOWELS AND / PINS ON THE QUARTER PLATE TO WHICH THE BLACK DIES WERE AFFIXED THROUGH THE TONKIN GULF



THE HOLE AS DRILLED THROUGH THE TONKIN GULF



THE MAP STAMP WEBSITE

The Map Stamp Study Group now has a web site located at the following address:
<http://mapstamp.org/index.html>
 While the site is still under construction, the aim is for the visitor to eventually have access to all of the bulletins which have been compiled to date as well as access to much of the information compiled on individual items such as examples of the various re-entries, the various plates as well as colours printed on each of the black plate copies.

WHAT & HOW THEY WERE PRINTED

The various black plates 1, 2, 3 & 5 were used at various times in the period during which the Map Stamp was printed from December 1898 to December 1899.

Plate I came into use in early December of 1898 and was used for the full production through the balance of 1898. Once Plate II came into production, Plate I was retired and likely stayed on the shelf until the retouches and re-entries were made to correct some of the wear and tear that had occurred. All of the Lavender and Blue stamps issued in the first month of 1898 were completed using the black sheets printed from this plate.

Plate II came into use in early January 1889 and was used for the production through the months of January and February of 1889 until Plate III was brought into use on March 7th 1899.. All of the Black prints required for the Lavender and Blue stamps issued in those two months were completed by this plate until Plate III came into production. Plate II was used to produce the required Blue varieties solely after Plate III was utilized, and then was retired when Plate V was brought into use. At that stage Plate II likely stayed on the shelf with Plate I until the retouches and re-entries were made to both of those Plates.

Plate III came into use in March of 1899, and it appears from various studies by a variety of scholars that the production from this Plate was exclusively what is now referred to as Lavender stamps.

Plate V was placed in production in May of 1898, and continued to be used to produce Black prints until June when production of stamps ceased for July and August. Production began again in September of 1889 when it appears all plates were used to print the black sheets needed. The research indicates that the black prints from Plate V were used solely with Red Plate B.

PRODUCTION BY PLATE

Plate 1 - 5,181,150
 Plate 2 - 6,180,525
 Plate 3 - 4,782,600
 Plate 5 - 3,786,100

THE COLOURS PRINTED BY PLATE

Plate	Light Blue	Deep Blue	Very Deep Blue	Bright Blue Green	Lavender
1	8 %	8 %			8 %
2			21 %		8 %
3					24 %
5				13 %	6 %
Unallocated	Deep Lavender				4 %
Total	8 %	8 %	21 %	13 %	50 %

MEMBER EXHIBITS AWARDS

Rob Lunn one our members from Fredericton, New Brunswick exhibited his Map Stamp collection in the St Petersburg, Russia World Philatelic Exhibition this past June. and was awarded a Vermeil. The exhibit had previously won a Vermeil at Novapex in 2006.

Our heartiest congratulations to Rob on this achievement.

2008 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

THE DUES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE MAP STAMP STUDY GROUP REMAIN AT:

CANADIAN \$10 PER ANNUM
 U.S. \$12 PER ANNUM
 FOREIGN \$ 15 PER ANNUM
 PAYABLE JANUARY 1, 2008

THE DUES ARE DESIGNED TO COVER THE COST OF PRODUCING THE BULLETIN AND THE COST OF DISTRIBUTION WHETHER IT BE BY SNAIL MAIL POST OR INTERNET.

IN THE CASE OF THE INTERNET, THE STUDY GROUP NOW HAS A WEB SITE
 @ <http://mapstamp.org/index.html>

FEES MAY BE PAID BY CHEQUE TO:

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 471 ORIOLE PKWY., TORONTO, ON, M5P 2H9
 OR BY PAYPAL TO: OFO471@AOL.COM