

Dots and Scratches

Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties

Study Group of the BNAPS

Edited by Michael D. Smith



1TC vi Proof block, lower left proof is major re-entry from Pane B, Position 61.

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FROM YOUR EDITOR

The first article in this issue stems from several lots I won of the five cent beaver stamps from the Decimal Issue. I am in the process of trying to plate these stamps and ran into a “burning bush” variety which had a significant plate flaw. I have pictured at least three variations of this early variety that occurred on the first two states of the plate.

Brian Hargreaves submitted an article that shows some very interesting flaws on the Large Queens. It is uncertain if these flaws are constant as they are one of a kind examples at the moment. Brian would like to hear from anyone that may have another copy in hopes they can be proven constant varieties.

John Hillson wrote another short article expressing his concerns regarding the guide dot theory in plating this issue. John is a long time collector of the Small Queen issue and has written a number of books about them. He also has an extensive research collection.

The last article is about a variety that can be found on the ten cent R.C.M.P. stamp Unitrade #223iv. A very small mark that brings the value of this stamp up significantly.

I would appreciate any articles the members may submit. I will edit them for publication and allow you to see them for approval prior to publishing them in Dots and Scratches. Full images with wide margins around the stamp scanned at 1200 dpi are very helpful for inclusion in Dots and Scratches.

My best buy of the year at US \$19.59 is Unitrade #17v. Catalog value is \$1,000 as VF.

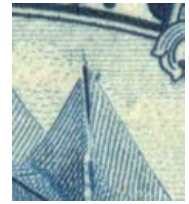


Good luck searching for varieties,
Mike



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Five Cent Decimal “Burning Bush” Variety

By Michael D. Smith



Fig.1 Unitrade 15TC iv, Positions 9 and 10.

The above pair of proofs (Fig. 1) are from the first state of the plate. Both proofs have flaws. Position 9 has a fresh entry and short entries, which will be discussed later. Position 10 has a fresh entry and the well known plate flaw “The Burning Bush”, Whitworth’s printing flaw 68, which is its most recognizable feature.

“The Burning Bush” exists on the first two states of the plate, and it has different appearances (Whitworth’s State 1, 2 and 2a or Kershaw’s State 1, 1b, 2a and 2b). See figure 2 for a larger image of position 10 proof.



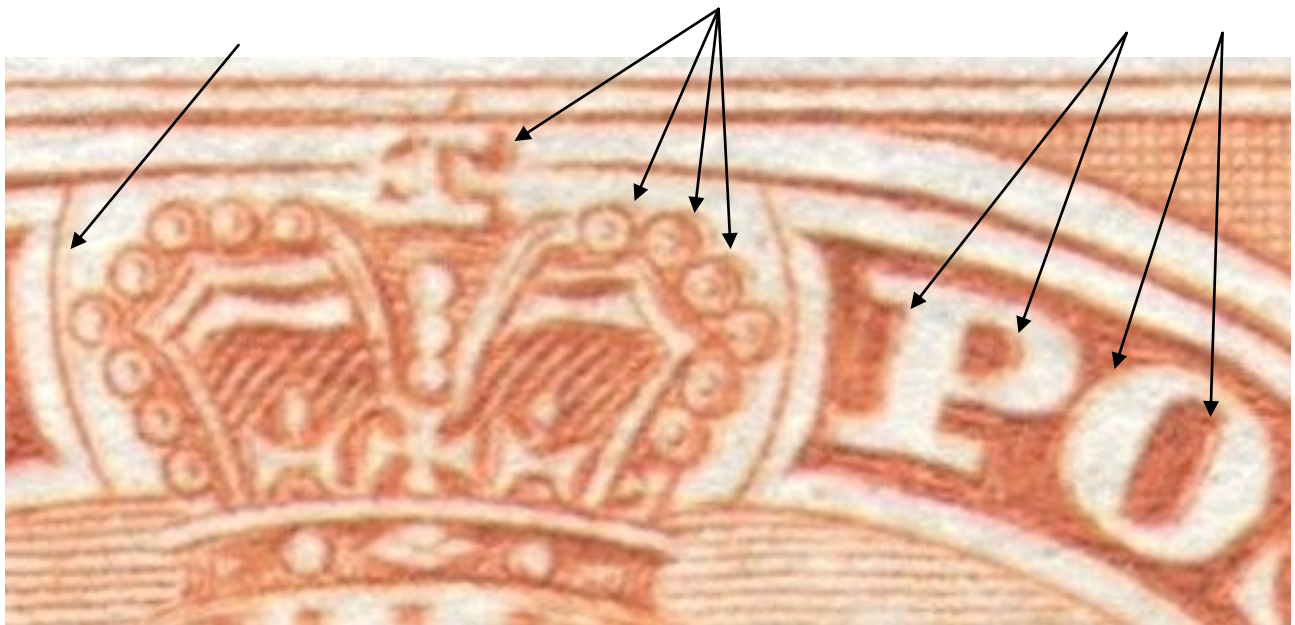
Fig. 2

Whitworth gives us the following information on the proof: “After the black proofs a number of sheets printed were on proof paper in an orange-red colour, some of which were over printed ‘SPECIMEN’. These were all printed from the plate in its original state, as they all show “the burning bush” flaw on position No. 10.” Knowing this proof is the original state we can now look at its characteristics.

Whitworth’s Features for Position 10, State 1. Kershaw’s state 1.



North margin guide dots. Only one dot NE.



Re-entry 11= fresh entry. Faint doubling of curved line left of crown, right ornaments of crown, and PO of POSTAGE. The left frame line is also suppose to show doubling if it is there it is very subtle and I couldn’t get an image of it.



“The Burning Bush” Printing flaw 68.

Kershaw illustrates a nice cover in his book *THE FIVE CENT BEAVER II*. The cover is dated DE 1, 1859. I have a cover postmarked Port-Sarnia AP 11, 1860, back stamped C.W.R. SARNIA-BRANCH, EAST, AP 12, 60. The date puts this stamp from State 1 possibly order 4. The cover is illustrated below.



“The Burning Bush” printing flaw. The heavy cancellation frames the variety nicely.



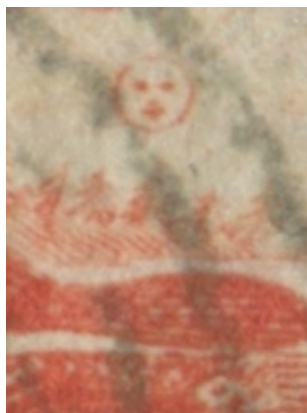
Whitworth’s State 1, probably Kershaw’s State 1b.

In State 2 Whitworth indicates re-entry 11 is reduced and there are 3 guide dots at NE, "The Burning Bush" is still present. On this copy I am hard pressed to see the re-entry this may be due to plate wear as the stamp appears to be printed from a worn plate. There is an extra line center right in the "O" of POSTAGE.

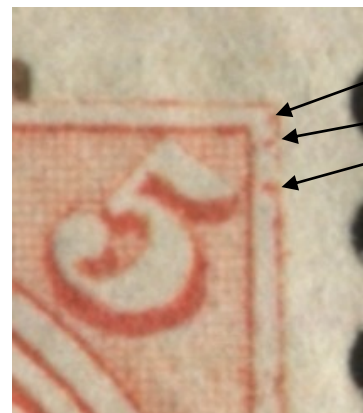
Whitworth's Features for Position 10, State 2, not illustrated in Kershaw's book.



Guide dot NW corner.



"The Burning Bush"
Partially hidden by cancellation.



Three guide dots NE corner.

State 2a has the same features plus a strong plate flaw that developed during printing. The flaw is below the E of FIVE and is Whitworth's printing flaw 124.

Whitworth's Features for Position 10, State 2a, Kershaw's state 2a.



Upper right
guide dots

Flaw 124

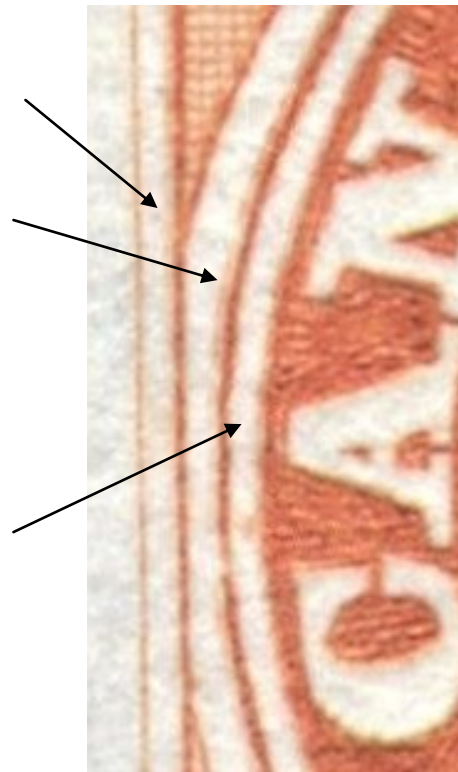
Both "The Burning Bush" and Flaw 124 disappear when the next repair is done to the plate producing State 3 of the plate. On the next page we will look at position 9 of the proof pair.

This nice proof copy of position 9 state 1 has a nice little fresh entry on it as well. This one is listed in Whitworth with the following description: “North margin guide dots. R. 37 = fresh entry. Short entry NW spandrel. Here are a blow up of proof and identifying features. Note short entry NE spandrel is not mentioned.

Whitworth’s features for Position 9, State 1



Two guide dots upper left corner. Note inner and outer frame lines re-entered probably part of R. 37. Short entry in NW spandrel. The upper right corner has one guide dot.



Re-entry 37. Inner vertical frame line and oval lines above CAN are doubled (very subtle).

Conclusion:

The Five Cents Beaver can be quite challenging to plate. There were 11 states of the plate and some of the states had plate damage during printing that altered the state of some positions. State 2 of position 10 had such an occurrence and state 2a reflects the altered state. Anyone plating these stamps has to recognize the position on the plate and the state of that position. A lot of the positions changed to a new state every time the plate was repaired and many of the changes altered the design significantly. Colors and perforations can help with printing groups. Dated copies might help eliminate some states that would be printed past that date. A good magnifier and references are a must.

Enjoy the hunt.

References:

THE FIVE CENTS BEAVER STAMP OF CANADA, Geoffrey Whitworth, The Royal Philatelic Society, London, 1985, 90 pgs.

THE FIVE CENT BEAVER II PLATING THE MORE NOTABLE VARIETIES AND RE-ENTRIES, Kenneth A. Kershaw, Published by The British North America Philatelic Society, 2007, 297 pgs.

SOLITARY VARIETY SEEKS MATCHING PARTNER FOR A CONSTANT RELATIONSHIP

By Brian Hargreaves

Part One of a regular 'Lonely Hearts' column – written in the hope of discovering new Constant Plate Varieties on Large Queens.

Horace Harrison and T. Lees-Jones were arguably responsible for the early identifying and reporting of most of the generally recognised constant plate varieties (CPV's) that are to be found on the Large Queen issue. Harrison's work in particular features prominently in an illustrated list of varieties in the two seminal Duckworth books first published in 1986. The Fifteen Cents in particular received special attention later in an article by Jim Watt and Fred Fawn in 1996.

It might be thought that this would be the final word on the subject. Not so. It is exciting to realise that significant discoveries are still being made today. One just has to think of the One Cent which, originally was thought to be variety free, now has the 'Burr To Left of Head' and the 'Temple Flaw'. One now listed in Unitrade, and the other will surely follow.

As a relatively recent variety 'nerd' I have become a little obsessive about these printing errors or flaws, call them what you will. In addition to collecting the recognised CPV's, I have been putting to one side a group of items showing unreported varieties ranging from plate scratches to printing flaws to extra dots.

The big question is, are they constant or not? Since they are 'one of a kind' at the moment, it seemed an interesting exercise to provide a few illustrated examples so that members can check their own collections to see whether they have a match.

Half Cent - Dots in the 'T' of 'Cent'

Plenty of examples exist of dots in the 'E' of 'Cent' and the 'D' of 'Canada', but I have not come across another copy with this variety.



One Cent Yellow – Plate scratch protruding from Lower Left frame line

A similar variety was reported some time ago in Confederation. That one was located under the 'E' of 'One'. This one is located under the 'O'.



Two Cents – Printing Flaw in Queen's hair



Three Cents – Plate scratch protruding from right hand frame line

Located a few millimetres above the lower right '3'.



Six Cents – Double Plate Scratch in the upper right corner of the left stamp

Duckworth illustrates 'Flaw 2.8' on page 118, but this variety has only one vertical scratch, not the two shown in the scan.



Editors note: There are quite a few marks on the two stamps of this pair so we will look at both stamps individually so one can see the other marks present.

Additional marks in left stamp of previous Pair.



In addition to the two marks in the upper right corner of this stamp there are a number of other marks on the stamp. In the lower left margin there is a sharp mark opposite the left 6. There is also a faint diagonal line in the central part of the "S" of SIX. There is a vertical line in the left side of the "O" of POSTAGE. And at the bottom center of the stamp there is a vertical line below the Queen's neck. There are also vertical lines in "C" of CENTS and one in the lower margin below X C.

Additional marks in the right stamp of previous pair.



The additional marks on this stamp appear most notably in the lower half of the design. There is a mark in the left margin next to scroll work above the left 6. There is a mark in the Queen's neck left center. Both 6's have diagonal marks. There are marks in the "E" and "T" of CENTS. A strong mark also shows in the bottom margin below "I" of SIX.

Fifteen Cents – Blob over the ‘O’ of ‘Postage’

Not illustrated in Duckworth or the Watt and Fawn article of 1996.



Conclusion:

It is unknown if any of the varieties mentioned here are constant.

Brian would be delighted to hear from any member who has any matching varieties in their collection (bhargrea@email.com).

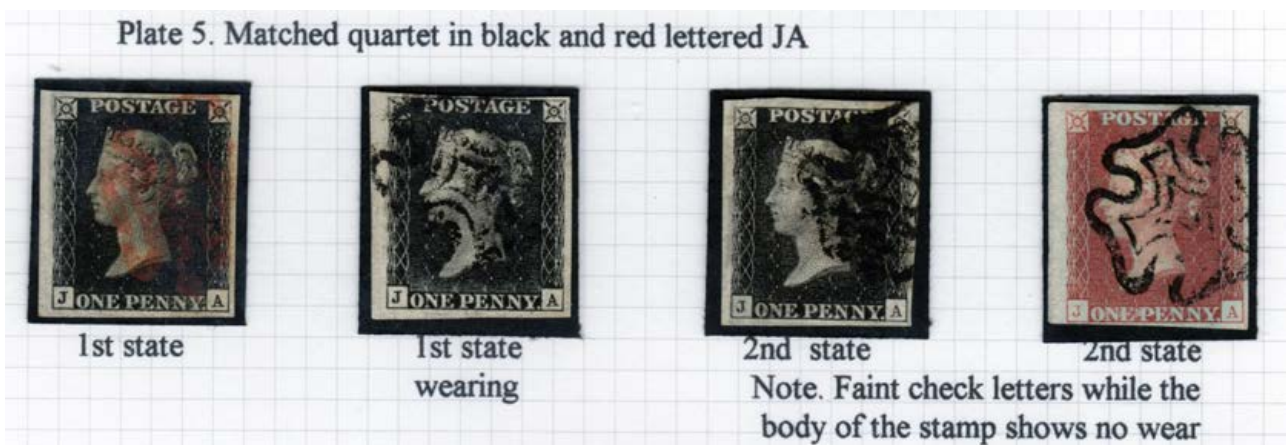
Six Cents Small Queen – The Myths Endure

By John Hillson FRPSL, FCPS

When I read Mr McCormick's latest offering in Dots and Scratches, I could not believe my eyes. Provable facts are completely ignored in favour of what, frankly, is an unproven theory. The Fact that B.A.B.N.C made at least four, and invoiced four Six Cents plates by mid 1871. Two of the plates invoiced were for the Large Queen issue and two were Small Queen issue plates. Or is the idea they were committing a fraud on the Post Office, and two Large Queen plates, but only one Small Queen plate was made? Fact, a plate bearing a single dot and another bearing two dots were in use in the first Ottawa period and the early Montreal period. Fact, the printers were entitled under the contract to make new plates after the 4 million postage stamp mark had been passed until the 1891 changes to the contract. Fact once paid for the plates were the property of the P.O.D. Fact, that the end stamp of the 'A' plate's 2nd row is not in line with the stamp above, whereas it is on the 1871 plate.

Now have a close look at the two plate blocks on page 17 of Dots and Scratches #9. Look carefully at the imprints. There is a slight slope on the imprint of the 1871 plate, while that on the 'A' plate is parallel to the stamp impressions. Furthermore, and I pointed this out in 1980, the right hand ends of the two imprints are not above the same point of stamp number 7. But there is another oddity about the 'A' Plate imprint, and indeed the letter 'A'. 25 million stamps produced before the final move to Ottawa according to the flat earthers using just one plate, and here we are with a second Ottawa printing and absolutely no sign of wear whatsoever in the letter A, and the printers never ever re-entered imprints or check letters once a plate was in commission.

As you know I collect GB Line Engraved; I bought my first penny black at the age of 14 and could accurately plate them in my late teens. I am illustrating four examples from Plate 5 a plate in use between June 1 1840 when it was first registered and withdrawn March 23 1841. 8,616,480 were printed in black plus about 1,500,000 in red., about 40% of the quantity of 6c Small queens printed up to 1888 and don't forget, as with all GB Victorian penny plates it was a 240 subject plate, not a mere 100. Just examine them carefully.



There was a second repair to the plate and I don't have an example, but by that time some of the check letters were almost invisible. You will just have to take my word for that.

These are all provable facts and need to be considered when studying the 6c Small Queen plates.

Ten Cent R.C.M.P. “Bird Cage” Variety

By Michael D. Smith



Fig. 1

At first glance this stamp looks like any other used Unitrade #223 (Fig. 1). Now one has to get a good magnifying glass out and take a closer look as this twenty to twenty-five cent catalogue value stamp. It has a printing variety that brings the catalogue value up to \$250.00 to \$375.00. This is Unitrade 223iv, the “bird cage” variety Plate 1, position 48 in the Upper Left Pane. See detail of the flaw below (Fig. 2). According to Boggs this stamp was printed from plates of 200 which were divided into four panes of 50. There were 2 plates made but the quantities printed from each plate is not given. At best you have a 1 in 400 chance of finding this variety if the same quantities were printed from both plates.

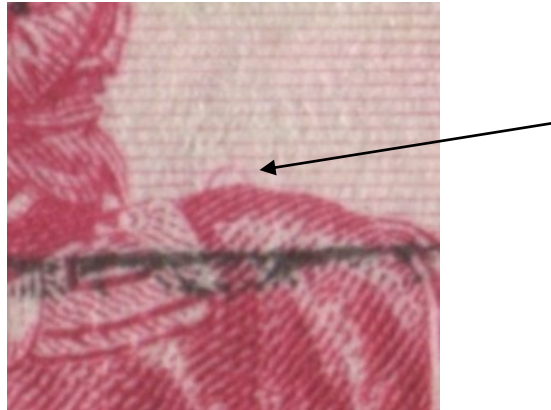


Fig. 2

Arrow points to “bird cage” flaw on horse’s back.

Reference:

2016 UNITRADE SPECIALIZED CATALOGUE OF CANADIAN STAMPS, Ed. D. Robin Harris, The Unitrade Press, pg. 112.

THE POSTAGE STAMPS and POSTAL HISTORY of CANADA, Winthrop S. Boggs, Quarterman Publications, Inc., Second Printing December 1975, pg. 405.