

# Dots and Scratches

## Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties

Study Group of the BNAPS

Edited by Michael D. Smith



Unitrade 15Pv  
Major Re-entry  
Plate Proof Position 28, State 10/11

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FROM YOUR EDITOR

### **BNAPEX 2017 Calgary: 1-3 September 2017**

Dave Freeman has volunteered to host the study group meeting. It will be held **Sunday, Sept 3, 12:30 -1:30 in the Doll Room at the Hyatt Regency.** Dave will not be doing a formal presentation. He will have a computer and screen available and would like members and guests to bring things they wish to share. Bring the things you wish to share on a thumb drive, pictures, or actual stamps if feasible. Dave can be reached via e-mail at [dfreeman@latitude.ca](mailto:dfreeman@latitude.ca) if anyone has any questions about the meeting.

In the last month or so the stamp community has lost John Hillson and John Beddows tributes to both men are on pages 19 and 20..

John Hillson, well known collector and author, contributed an article for inclusion in this newsletter. It was published in *Maple Leaves, Journal of the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain*, April 2017, pg. 95. He asked me to include a picture of columns 9 and 10 of the 6-cent Small Queen pane A that was not shown in *Maple Leaves*.

John Beddows, a long time stamp dealer, from whom I have purchased stamps over the course of many years, will also be missed. I enjoyed seeing and talking with him at stamp shows.

Both of them are a loss to philately. Sorry to see them go.

In the first article of this issue I comment on the purchase of a small lot of plate proofs I purchased on eBay and three nice pieces for my collection.

The second article is John Hillson's where he again points out differences in the plates of the 6-cent Small Queen.

The third article concerns a plate flaw on the 10-cent blue Admiral Issue and what Leo Beaudet discovered when he examined plates at the Library and Archives Canada.

In the fourth article I revisit the 1868 Third Bill Issue 9-cent green as several emails came to me identifying the plate position.

I can sure use help with article submissions if you wish to write one.

Best regards,

Mike



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Vol. 4, Number 2      Whole Number 13

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**Annual Dues: \$10.00 (US) Payable January 2017 (Newsletter available as .pdf file on line).**

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# The Story Behind the Proof on Cover Page

By Michael D. Smith

I often buy nice items I find on eBay that the seller has not made an effort to properly identify. The proof on the cover was one of these. The seller was selling the lot as a mounted set shown in Fig. 1. This set was offered as Buy it Now but it was quite a while ago so I don't recall the price.



Fig. 1

When I looked at it on eBay I immediately spotted the major re-entry on the 5-cent Beaver pictured on the cover page. I then looked at the 10d blue specimen and noted it showed a major re-entry, also. It is the major re-entry from position 70 on the sheet (Fig. 2, next page). I felt the buy it now price was a steal for these proofs at that point. I didn't hesitate and pressed Buy It Now. When they arrived I found I had one more goody to add to my re-entry and plate flaw collection. To my surprise the 7 1/2d proof was also a minor re-entry from position 93. See Fig. 3 on page 6. The other proofs are nice but no other re-entries were found. So I got three very nice pieces for my collection at a very reasonable price.





Fig. 2

Here is a nice 10d proof showing the major re-entry from position 70. This is Unitrade 7Pi. Unitrade does not have a sub number/letter for this re-entry.





Fig. 3

This is the surprise piece I did not know I was getting. The minor re-entry is a thin line cutting the letters "GE" of POSTAGE. This is position 93 on the sheet of 120. This is Unitrade number 9P. The re-entry is not listed.

## References:

*2017 UNITRADE SPECIALIZED CATALOGUE OF CANADIAN STAMPS*, Ed. D. Robin Harris, The Unitrade Press.

# The Six Cent Small Queen Controversy

By John Hillson FRPSL, FCPS

It is true to say that the Six Cents Small Queen has presented more difficulties and more controversy than any other in the series, and yet even I was surprised to find written on page 189 of the April 16, 2016 Brigham catalogue that the ‘repair position dots...added by the engraver each time the plate was repaired’ – subscribing to the view that virtually only one plate was used during the entire 1<sup>st</sup> Ottawa and Montreal periods, when some 25 million of these stamps were printed. The reason for my surprise was that I came up with that nugget of wisdom many years ago, I think in the Small Queens newsletter I was editing and largely writing at the time, early in my long Small Queens journey. At that time I believed that all Small Queen plates, apart from the Ten Cents, made before the final move to Ottawa in 1889 were twin plates, and I wondered why there was no trace of ‘B’ pane (Type IV Imprint). Of course it did not exist, but at the time I thought there was only the one 6c. plate. Even at that time I had my doubts about the reason for those extra position dots, wondering why if they were added to indicate impression repairs for the 6c plate, why was it not done on other denomination plates too. The reason the idea does not stand water is that if indicating repair were the reason, then the left hand vertical row would have those indicating dots too. On the ‘A’ plate however, that row shows nary a one. Nor any other plate for that matter.

So the question that niggled was quite simply, why would a commercial enterprise, with routines, and a clear contract as to what they could do as regards repairs and additional plates treat this one value so differently to every other denomination in either the Large or Small Queens series – perfectly possible of course, but, since once paid for, the Post Office Department owned the plates, where was the commercial advantage in soldiering on with just one 100 subject plate, made in 1871 and to which, according to fiercely held opinion by many, the check letter ‘A’ was added at some indeterminate time in the plates history.

It is a fact that to meet demand, the printers had to make two Large Queen plates, distinguished not by check letters, but by the positioning of the lower left guide dot. It is also a fact that in 1871 two 2c plates were made, initially with no identifying check letters, but to which the letters ‘A’ & ‘B’ were subsequently added – we know this because the plate to which the letter ‘A’ was added has a distinct slope to the top imprint descending from left to right, as to the more normal parallel to the stamp area position. Pieces exist on both states. Demand for the 2c at the time was broadly similar to that of the 6c. So why would the printers’ be dumb enough to make only one?

Well they were not, because records show that by the report to June 30 1871 four 6c plates had been invoiced and paid for. Two were the Large Queen plates, the other two had to have been Small Queens. It is of interest to note that the report of June 30 1872, by which time over 5 million 6c’s had been printed, records one of the plates had been repaired, entirely in accordance with the contract terms; it is equally likely, that vast majority the stamps printed to that point had been produced by the original 1871 plate – or it would not have needed to be repaired. So was the second plate the ‘A’ plate, or was it, as might be contended, the rejected, or ‘Ghostly Head’ plate. Well, if you ordered two suits from your tailor and one were a perfect fit and the other not only did not fit properly but was also bursting at the seams, would you pay for it? The ‘Ghostly Head’ plate is the equivalent of that second suit. I had the privilege in 1889 of examining a large block, I think of 20, from that plate owned then by the late Bill Simpson and I remember remarking to him that the plate had never been finished as the spaces between the stamps had never been burnished off. I believe the block was subsequently broken up into blocks of four, which if it had been a positional block would have been an act of philatelic vandalism, I’m not sure it wasn’t since it was a unique



block. However let us suppose the Post Office did pay for the dodgy plate. This would have sanctioned its use, and therefore its use would not have been confined to a small window at the end of 1873. But it is all possible though unlikely.

Now turn to the check letter 'A'. Was it added to the 1871 plate, or as I believe, it is the second plate invoiced as mentioned above. A good time to add it would have been when check letters were added to the two 2c plates, perhaps in anticipation of plates yet to be made. But there are difficulties. First the check letters added to the 2c plates were not stamped centrally above the top imprint, but to the side by the counters – would not the same thing have been done to the 6c? Secondly there is no other case, Large - even those in use long into the Small Queens years, or Small where a single denomination plate received a check letter, not the Ten Cents, and surprisingly, not even the first two Five Cents Small Queen plates. So why would this, allegedly, single plate be given a check letter? It is not logical, but it is possible.

In my collection is a strip of 3, postmarked (unfortunately) in 1875, and which should be a normal 2 dot Montreal printing perforated  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ . But it isn't, its perforated gauges 11.85 all round which means it is a 1<sup>st</sup> Ottawa printing as that gauge is peculiar only to 1<sup>st</sup> Ottawa printings of whichever denomination one is examining (*Figure 1*). A BNAPs Newsletter editor informed me that the strip has no significance whatsoever, obviously he knows more about the subject than I, so I had better not mention I have one or two other similarly perforated examples. Of course you might think differently and with me it indicates a plate with two lower position dots was in operation before the move to Montreal.



Fig. 1

But so far we really have not got anywhere to resolve the matter. So let us examine some physical facts.

The top imprint of the 1871 plate, just like the 2c 'A' plate is at an angle to the stamps; the angle is not so acute but similarly slopes down from left to right, noticeable to the naked eye, but easily verifiable with a straight edge. The 'A' plate top imprint is parallel to the stamp printed area. This should be enough to show that we have two distinct plates (Figures 2 and 3, next page). But there is more.





Fig. 2



Fig. 3



It is a well-documented fact that while the right hand end stamps of both rows on the only extant right hand imprint block of 10 from the 1871 plate are directly above one another (Fig. 4), and the 10<sup>th</sup> stamp of the 2<sup>nd</sup> row of the 'A' plate is located well to the right of the same stamp on row 1 (Fig. 5). This in itself should be proof that these are different plates, but to the die-hard one plate aficionado it isn't. It is perhaps extraordinary, in spite of the years of intense scrutiny, no one seems to have noticed the reason for the displacement. The fact is the whole of the 10<sup>th</sup> vertical row, apart from Row 1/10 was entered at an angle from the other nine rows which are all parallel to one another. Almost imperceptible at the bottom of the extant sheet, the slight cant becomes more obvious the further nearer to the top one goes. I believe the phenomenon is unique to the Small Queen series, if not to all other Canadian plates. What I did not know, until recently, was what the balance of the 10<sup>th</sup> vertical row on the 1871 plate was like, but luckily my attention recently was drawn to a right hand block of 4 from that plate which has a large portion of the imprint in the selvage attached to the top right hand stamp which proves that 10<sup>th</sup> vertical row is quite normal and parallel to all its neighbours,



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

Green vertical line shows the shift in column 10.



And there is more. Also a bottom imprint block from the 1871 plate exists which appears noticeably closer to the stamp area than does its counterpart on the 'A'. Ah, you may say, that is because when re-entered. all the 'A' plate stamps shifted upwards. It seems to be a belief that an original re-entry on a stamp is obliterated by a further re-entry. This is not so. Examples on the 5c Beaver are known with double and even triple re-entries. I don't collect them, but can show an example from my GB Line Engraved collection. The first 1d back plate originally was not hardened, and has four well known re-entries in it.. Known as plate 1a it wore so rapidly it had to be completely re-entered, and in spite of being now in a worn state, all four re-entries survived (*Figure 2*). I have often wondered why there is absolutely no trace of the major re-entry from the 1871 plate on the 'A' plate; none at all, when it is supposed to be the same plate.

Still not convinced? Oh yes, positioning of the dots on the two plates is similar. A big surprise considering the preparation work on the plates was identical, but the fact is on the 1871 plate dots either impinge on the stamp design, or are very close to it, while on the 'A' plate they are well away from the stamps. If that had been the result of re-entering then the plate would abound in thickened base lines and/or doubled base lines. It doesn't.

A word more about those dots. There is a grain of truth in the notion that extra dots indicate plate repair.. Remember that the two Large Queen plates were identified by the different positioning of the lower left guide dots. One can be certain that the siderographer responsible for this tried the same gimmick on the first two Small Queen plates, the 1871 plate had the dots placed in the same position as the first Large Queen plate and the 'Ghostly Head' plate dots approximated to the positioning of the second Large Queen. But something went seriously wrong in making that plate – we do not even know if it had imprints. A second serviceable plate was needed, that really ought to be obvious, and so the 'A' plate was made, but in the same way the 1859 12 ½ Cents has extra guide dots, apparently because of a loose sidepoint that sprung when under pressure, the same thing happened when laying down the 'A' plate so that in its original state it had two dots from the outset – see figure 1 again. When it was repaired it acquired a 3<sup>rd</sup> and occasionally a 4th dot, while the 1871 plate got its second dot when it too was repaired.

Now if all the easily verifiable hard evidence does not convince you that the 1871 and 'A' plates are quite separate entities, then I will give up and take up knitting – or even worse – postal history.

Editors Note:

John asked me to also include an image of the 9th and 10th columns of A Plate. You will find it on the following page. I can furnish this as a separate file if anyone wishes to study it further.

Since John is no longer with us I only did minor editing to his submission consisting mainly of minor spelling corrections. Other than that this is presented as originally submitted.

## References:

**Maple Leaves**, Journal of the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, April, 2017, pgs. 95 to 101.

Columns 9 and 10 of Plate A



# Horizontal Line Flaw on 10¢ Blue Admiral

By: Michael D. Smith



Fig. 1

Scratch in outer portrait oval and "D" of CANADA

In April, 2016, I e-mailed Leopold Beaudet the stamp images shown in Figures 1 and 2 stating the following:

"I found an interesting variety on the Admiral 10¢ blue stamp, and don't see it listed in my references. There is a horizontal line running through the left outer oval band into the D of CANADA. Possibly an engraver's slip or plate scratch. I think it is too straight to be a plate crack.

The stamp is narrow, and appears to be a wet printing. It is on vertical wove paper.

It will be interesting to learn if anyone else has found an example of this flaw. Once seen, it really stands out on the stamp."



Fig. 2

Leopold Beaudet, editor of the Admiral Study Group newsletter, replied back that he examined the plate proofs of the 10¢ at Library and Archives Canada, and found the flaw on plate 16. The position is 16LR35. Along with the position, he provided the following comments: "The 10¢ blue was printed from plates 13 to 22. Plates 13 to 20 were used for wet printings only. Plates 21 and 22 were used for both wet and dry printings. I concur with the suggestion that this flaw might be a plate scratch."



# 1868 Third Bill Issue

## 9-cent Green with Re-entry Position Identified

By: Michael D. Smith

In the last Issue of Dots and Scratches I showed a re-entry on the 9-cent Bill Stamp (Fig. 1), E. S. J. van Dam's number FB 46. This re-entry is not listed. Several readers responded shortly after reading the article saying they found the position.



Fig. 1, Left stamp shows the re-entry. Right stamp has a dot below First "N" of NINE.

John Hillson was the first to e-mail me with the position of the re-entry as he found it on the first stamp of a block of 20 with complete top margin of the sheet (image on next page, Fig. 3). This places the re-entry at position one. He also pointed out that the dot below the first "N" of NINE on position 2 is also constant. All images of multiples show these details as well. Presented here are positions 1 & 2 from John's scan (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2, Note: Line through position 1 is caused by the stamp mount. (Image courtesy of John Hillson)



Fig. 3, Courtesy of John Hillson

If anyone would like a copy of any of these scans for further study let me know.

On the next two pages I show detail of the re-entry on position 1, and the dot below the “N” of NINE on position 2.

## References:

**THE REVENUE STAMP CATALOGUE**, E. S. J. van Dam, 2017 edition.





# Position 1

## Detail of Most Obvious Features



Re-entry of upper left showing best in the ball and adjacent frame line.



The mark in the right foot of "A" maybe a plate flaw instead of part of the re-entry.



The bottom frame line is doubled faintly under "NINE" and the lettering is doubled but not as boldly as in "CENTS".



All letters of "CENTS" are doubled and "S" is almost broken at top.



## Position 2

Large Dot Below "N" of NINE



The dot maybe be a guide dot or a possible plate flaw.

***IN MEMORY***  
***OF***  
***TWO GENTLEMEN***  
***WHO WILL BE MISSED***  
***BUT***  
***NOT FORGOTTEN***



# In Memory Of John George Beddows (1939-2017)



John Beddows passed away suddenly on Friday, July 21, 2017. Born December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1939 in Winnipeg, John worked as a secondary school teacher in Sturgeon Falls before joining the teaching staff of the adult education program in North Bay. Later he became a respected stamp dealer.

He had booked a table for the Postal History Society of Canada's Symposium in Hamilton. Apparently John had been living with a rare heart condition and Monday July 17 had to be flown from North Bay to Toronto St. Michael's Hospital and passed away on Thursday.

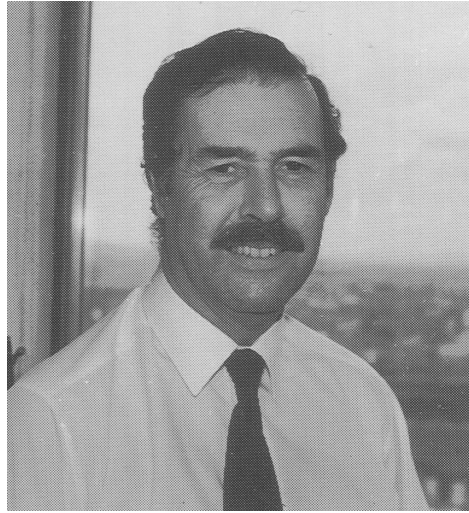
John made BNAPEX2011 in North Bay work. I remember walking down a corridor in the hotel to breakfast, John passed me going in the other direction, as he passed he said, "That bus is going to kill me." He must have sorted it out as there were no reports of a tour being cancelled. On another occasion I forgot my perforation gauge at John's table, when I approached his table the next morning John having seen me coming had the gauge in his extended hand before I had a chance to say a word.

On learning that John had passed away Andy Elwood wrote. "What a shock this is. I knew John very well as he was a mainstay in Eastern Ontario. He and Betty were always present at the RA stamp show as well as many other Ontario shows. He was known for his familiar approach to philately and was friendly and helpful to everyone. He is missed."

I can only echo Andy, John will be missed.

(Above courtesy of Richard Thompson)

# In Memory Of John Hillson (1933-2017)



I received a message from Graham Searle on Saturday July 15 that John Hillson had passed away unexpectedly that same day and ever since have been thinking about how important John was to me in my collecting the Small Queen Issue of Canada.

Clearly, there would never have been the book produced on this issue by the Greene Foundation in 2008 without John's enormous help and persistence in getting the job done. I could never have done this alone without him. Much of the content of our book came from earlier work by John. It was a perfect complement for the focus I had on printing plates and the operations of the British American Bank Note Co. We had extensive discussions about the subjects that should and should not be covered by our book on this issue which has such an enormous scope for collecting and specialist interest. On a personal level this project has been my most satisfying accomplishment and I will be forever grateful to him.

I loved to say (with my best Scottish accent) that John was a "wee bit stubborn" to which he always replied "that's because I am usually right Ted"!!

John and I did not actually meet face to face until early November 2009. It was Dick Lamb who had proposed that the two of us should combine to write a book on the Small Queen Issue. So we did the entire preparation (except editing and printing) by email and telephone. In November 2009 I went to Scotland, got off a train to an empty platform in Lockerbie, looked across to the other side to see a lone figure who was John. We spent several enjoyable days together and attended a regional meeting of CPS of GB in Moffat.

John gave a huge amount of himself over a very long time to CPS of GB. He challenged lots of us on specialist subjects- not just the 6c Small Queen printings, he also wrote about the challenges of OHMS perfins for instance, and collected Canada Revenues and early GB in detail.

I certainly will miss him and never forget him.

Ted Nixon