

Dots and Scratches

Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties

Study Group of the BNAPS

Edited by Michael D. Smith



Unitrade #19, position 29.

Kershaw says the following: “The large tool flaw has not been found on commercially printed stamps and is assumed to be a storage accident, very common of early plate proofs.”

I have seen this example and two other used copies.

Whitworth has this plated to position 62, but upon checking the plate proof sheet it is at position 29. The scratch or tool flaw starts at the base of ‘P’ of POSTAGE coming across the hat, face, hand and ends in the ‘N’ of CENTS.

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FROM YOUR EDITOR

I hope everyone had a pleasant holiday season, and hope the New Year gives all of us time to find and share more stamp re-entries and flaws.

I have only included two articles in this issue. The first one submitted by Dr, James H. Watt will be rather interesting for those who collect the Cents Issue and specifically the 5c Beaver. Early researchers, prior to Whitworth, proposed more than one plate was used for this denomination. Dr. Watt revisits this subject and submits some pretty persuasive arguments for a multiple plate theory. I have also included images of many of the key positions and states he mentions in the article.

Brian Hargreaves sent an article on plate scratches found on both plates of the 6c LQ. He presents good illustrations of them and would like to hear of other copies found and or the plate positions. Some are listed in Duckworth but from what he shows there maybe more on both plates.

I am looking forward to editing Dots and Scratches this year and welcome any material submitted. Images are nice but I would appreciate a write up about them so I can edit it and make it into an article.

Hope you have a great time collecting stamps this year.

Mike

Up Coming Events



ORAPEX
May 4-5, 2019
RA Centre
2451 Riverside Dr.
Ottawa, Ontario
Saturday 10-6, Sunday 10-4
Free admission and parking.



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The 5c Beaver Stamp of 1859-1868

The Theory Of Irreconcilable Plate Flaws

By: Dr. James H. Watt

Firstly, every great lasting article should pay tribute to their predecessors.

Dr. Lewis Reford of Cents Issue fame shows perforation groups divided into three types: perforation 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 (1859-62), perforation 12 x 11 3/4 (1862-65), and perforation 12 x 12 (1865-68).

In 1929 Fred Jarrett writes the following:

“Several plates were used for the different printings, and each offers its quota of minor varieties.

From the limited material which we have been able to study, it seems apparent that the different plates were either given hard usage or were of poor steel, which developed flaws and soft spots, necessitating constant retouching.

These stamps will long afford plenty of material for argument among the learned, and many a pleasant and instructive hour will be spent by serious philatelists deciding on the fine distinctions between re-entries, shifts, and retouches.”

In 1943 Dr. L. Seale Holmes states:

“Several plates were used for the different printings, and each offers its quota of minor re-entries.”

In 1945 Winthrop S. Boggs states:

“The plates of the 5c Beaver are prolific in re-entries and flaws. The most important of the re-entries being the well known major re-entry.

NOTE ON PLATES

Plate I Perf. 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 - 1859-62. No Imprint.

Plate II Perf. 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 and 12 x 11 3/4 - 1859-64. No Imprint.

Plate III (?) Perf. 12 x 12 - 1864-68. Imprint

Plate III is quite probably, a re-entered state of plate I or II, most likely plate I.”

He also states Quantity Issued as 39,800,000.

Geoffrey Whitworth was of the opinion one plate was used. Chester Soule believed two plates were used. This caused great debate over the years.

The answer would not become apparent until 1990 ABN Archives Sale and more importantly the 1997 Trade Sample discovery in the 1997 San Francisco “find”. Someone had brought in a sample book containing proof sheets of USA #1 and 2 and all Canadian proof sheets and from the shades they were the pre-imprint proofs of the Cents issue Canadian stamps approximately 1863-64.

The “Sunray” flaws (Figures 1 to 3a) were on this sheet but so was the “Split Beaver” (PP #90) figures 4 and 4a.



Fig. 1

This stamp shows very strong examples of Whitworth’s flaws 28a and 13.

They are seldom this clear and wore away quickly.

Position 64 Whitworth’s State 4.

“Sunray” flaws.



Fig. 2

“Sunray” flaw starting in the most westerly tree curving slightly upward through the G of POSTAGE. Whitworth’s printing flaw 23a.
 Position 65, Whitworth’s state 4.



“Sunray” printing flaw 23a, look between the arrows for the faint line.



Fig. 3
“Sunray” flaw, Whitworth’s printing flaw 7. Position 75, Whitworth’s state 4.



Fig. 3a
Detail of printing flaw 7.



Fig. 4

“Split Beaver” position 90. Whitworth’s printing flaw 20.
Developed during the printing of Whitworth’s state 4 and is designated state 4a.



Fig. 4a

Detail of the “Split Beaver” flaw.

The following notable varieties are not seen on the 1863-64 sheet: “Burning Bush” plate position 10 Whitworth’s states 1 and 2 (Fig. 5), Major Re-entry plate position 28 Whitworth’s states 10 and 11 (Fig. 6), “Rock in Waterfall” position 53 Whitworth’s states 9, 10 and 11 (Fig. 7), and “Leaping Fish” position 54 Whitworth’s states 7 and 8 (Fig. 8).



Fig.5
“The Burning Bush”, Proof Specimen Position 10,
Whitworth’s printing flaw 68, state 1.

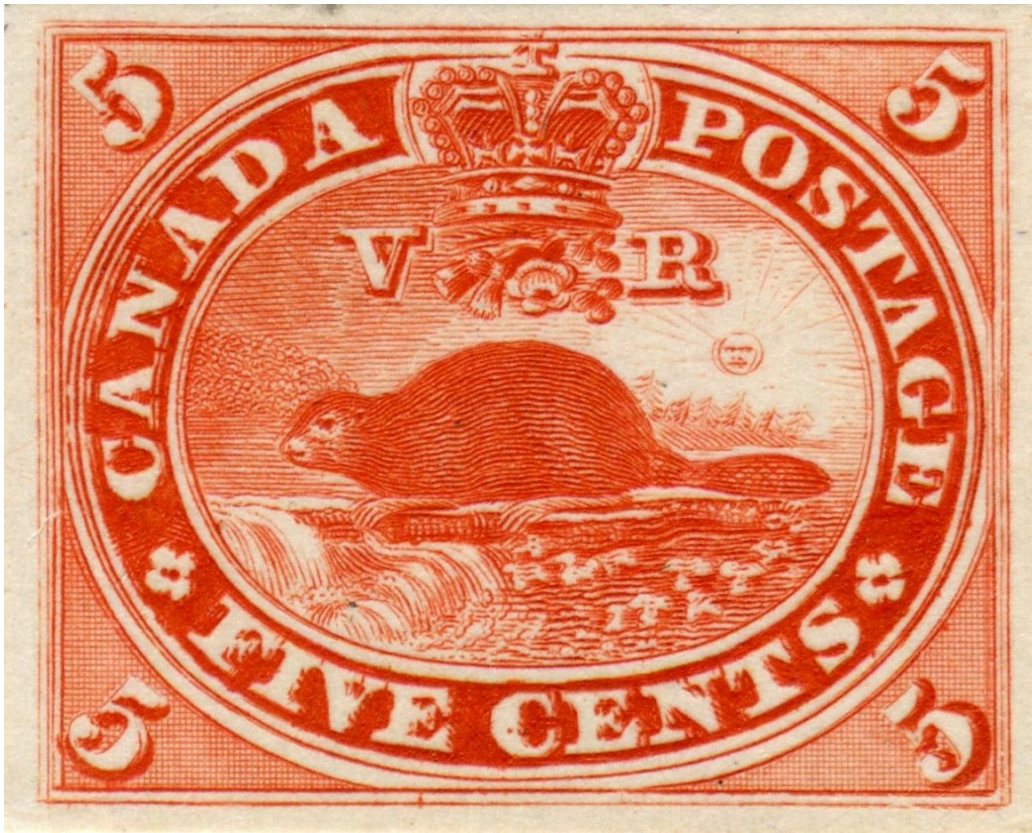


Fig. 6

“The Major Re-entry” Position 28, Whitworth’s states 10 and 11. Plate proof.



Fig. 7

“Rock in Waterfall” Position 53, Whitworth’s printing flaw 60, state 10/11.
Whitworth’s states 9, 10 and 11.



Fig. 8

“Leaping Fish” Position 54, Whitworth’s states 7 and 8.

Two proof sheets that I own were scanned for Ken Kershaw publication said to be states 10 and 11. The major re-entry (plate position 28) was present unchanged in both, the rock in waterfall was the small type and the only real difference was the “gouge” plate position 23 (Fig. 9). Since the “rock in waterfall” was larger in an earlier state, we designated that as state 9.



Fig. 9

“The Gouge” flaw, Position 23, Whitworth’s state 11.

In Dots and Scratches No. 4, May 1, 2015 issue, pages 14 -22, Michael Smith wrote an article extolling the virtues of the major re-entry at plate position #83. This position is present on the re-entered imprint sheet. Whitworth's State 8 shows re-entry 13 and evidence of a misplaced entry as well. By state 9 the plate was worn and a repair was made creating a new re-entry (#15) at this position but interestingly the traces of the misplaced entry can still be seen.

The imprints were added to the plate while printing state 6 and are attributed to state 6a. The re-entered imprint is located at position 30 and wore over the life of the plate to a weak state by state 11. State 6 position 38 has two flaws listed by Whitworth but State 7 is listed as normal. This could be evidence of a repair to the plate when the imprints were added. Another repair of the plate may have occurred at Whitworth's state 8 generating re-entry #13 on position 83. Evidence of another plate repair at state 9 may have changed the re-entry to #15 which lasted until the end of printing. Both re-entry #13 and #15 show the misplaced entry as well. The Major Re-entry at position 28 also developed during the last plate repair of this plate.

This got me thinking...There are no multiples joining a "log in waterfall", plate position #50 (Fig. 10), to a "split beaver", plate position #90, and no multiples of a "rock in waterfall", plate position #53, to a "leaping fish" plate position #54.

A block of three positions #53, 54, 64 showing the "rock in waterfall" does not show a "sunray flaw" at position 64 and it should if it was one plate. A strip of three (ex Wellburn) shows a "rock in waterfall, plate position #53, and normal stamps, no "leaping fish" on plate position #54.

There are two mutually exclusive re-entries...if re-entry #5 is at plate position #9 then there is no re-entry at plate position #83 on the sheet. There is never a "burning bush" beside re-entry #5 at plate position #9 and there is no trace of the "burning bush" on my later plate proof sheets.

Accordingly this proposal is closer than ever to the truth.

Four sheets two with almost identical guide dots oriented north and south but the east west "vector" shows a slight shift to the west when frame lines and dots of the first vertical row are compared. I attribute this to the basic fact that siderographers are expensive and they struck two pieces of steel in 1859 when the clamps were all in place. They did two more in 1864 (the re-entered imprint was always re-entered in that position). The question is does second plate struck in 1864 show a normal imprint at position 30? Need further verification on this.

Sheet 1- "Burning Bush" plate position #10 1859-early 1862, no imprint (very pitted plate, April 1862).

Sheet 2- "Sunray Flaws" sheet plate positions #17, 64-65, 75-used consecutively at first.

Sheet 3- "Leaping fish" plate position #54, and "low moon"- very pitted (Fig. 11), has re-entry 5 at plate position #9.

Sheet 4- "Major Re-entry (plate position #28), "Gouge" (plate position #23), Sickle flaw at plate position #58 (Fig. 12), Major re-entry at plate position #83.

The later two sheets used consecutively.



Fig. 10
 "Log in Waterfall"
 Position 50, Whiworth's printing flaw 29, state 3a
 Image cropped from cover below.





Fig. 11

The "Low Moon"

Position 34, Whitworth's printing flaw #59, states 9, 10 and 11.



Fig. 12

Sickle flaw-a faint curved line above the furthest right tree.
Position 58, Whitworth's printing flaw 30, states 10 and 11



Printing flaw 30

Summary: (Whitworth States)

States 1-2, Sheet 1

States 3-4, Sheet 2

States 5; and 7, 8 (re-entered state 5) plus subsequent ware, Sheet 3

States 6; 9-11 (re-entered state 6) plus subsequent ware, Sheet 4

It seems highly unlikely that a single unhardened steel plate, even with repairs being done, would be able to print the quantity issued of 39,800,000 stamps.

Perforation information may also be in question. I have a disagreement in principle with Dr. Reford because of two #12 3d Beaver covers. One dated Dec. 15, 1858 is perforated 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 and a second dated Dec 28, 1858 perforated 11 3/4 x 12 (11.93) ERD for this perforation. Some #16's have perforation 12 (11.93) down the sides and are not re-perforated. So there were apparently two gauges of perforation available for the early Cents Issue printings as well.

Contact Information:

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An interesting Large Queen Variety Found on Cover at ORAPEX.

Exploring the Six Cents 'Slashes' variety.

Brian Hargreaves (bhargrea@email.com)

I attended ORAPEX 2017. It was my first visit to the Show, and I was knocked out by the quality of material on the dealers' stands. I found no less than four large queen varieties on cover, and it is one of these that I have been looking into more closely.



Fig. 1

Figure 1 shows the cover dated December '69 with a nice tidy cancel on a Plate 2. Fortunately I had my glass with me, and I was able to quickly see what looked like Duckworth's Item I variety (page 118 in the second edition). A close-up is shown in Figure 2 – described as 'slashes' in the two numeral 6's. However because it was not exactly identical I sent some scans to Glenn Archer. His comment was that Harrison was not always accurate in his drawing, and that this was almost certainly the same item featured in Duckworth.



Fig. 2

By the way the eagle-eyed will have spotted that there are at least two other varieties visible – a vertical scratch in the margin below ‘SIX’, and a small scratch through the frame above the O of POSTAGE (figure 3).



Fig. 3

Scratch below "SIX"

Detailed checks of my other Six Cents turned up another example of this variety (I continue to be amazed how much easier it is to spot a variety once you know what you are looking for!). This example (Figure 4) is the right hand of this lovely pair, the left hand stamp of which has a striking unlisted variety of two vertical scratches at the top of the margin between the two stamps (Figure 5).



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

So the constancy of these particular ‘slashes’ is confirmed. However in my searches in my Six Cent stock I came across two other examples which are totally different. One is in fact Plate One! (Fig. 6). So there are clearly all sorts of slashes around. The other is another Plate Two variety (Fig. 7).

I cannot say whether these last two are constant plate varieties, so please look through your material and let me know. Who knows, there may be many more slashes out there waiting to be matched!



Fig. 6. Plate 1 example, note the guide dot is under the left scroll.



Fig. 7. Another Plate 2 example.

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