

Dots & Scratches

Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties
Study Group of BNAPS



*A spectacular and unusual major re-entry on the 1¢ Victoria Numeral issue (Unitrade #75).
To learn more, including why it is particularly unusual, see page 20.*

Dots & Scratches

Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties

Study Group of BNAPS

January 2021, Volume 8, Number 1, Whole Number 25

Table of Contents

My Two Cents – From Your Editor.....	3
Varieties on the Half Cent Large Queen: New Discoveries and Imagery By Brian Hargreaves	4
An Interesting Observation: Two Proof Sheets with Different Sized Impressions By Michael D. Smith.....	7
Remembering the Mysterious “Broken Stamen” Variety By Scott Robinson.....	8
Uncharted Territories – Varieties of the Map Stamps of 1898 By Scott Robinson.....	11
New Finds and Discoveries.....	18
Cover Image Information	20

BNAPS Re-entries and Constant Plate Varieties Study Group

Chairman: Bill Radcliffe
478 Media Road
Oxford, PA 19363 USA
Email: bsbvp88@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Scott Robinson
4371 Chateau Pierrefonds
Pierrefonds, QC H9K 1L7 Canada
Email: scott@flyspecker.com

This newsletter and previous issues are available as PDF files from the BNAPS website.
Submissions for and feedback about the newsletter should be sent to the Editor, Scott Robinson.
All other correspondence should be addressed to the Chairman, Bill Radcliffe.

All articles and images are copyright ©2021 by the author and/or study group.

My Two Cents – From Your Editor

Welcome to the first issue of Dots & Scratches for 2021. I thank readers for their patience and apologise for not being able to publish regular issues of the newsletter last year. 2020 was a difficult year for many of us and presented some significant obstacles to my own ability to get the newsletter out as your new editor. My expectation is to publish at least four issues of the newsletter this year.

Although Covid-19 is likely to be around for a while yet, the arrival of multiple vaccines should soon start to turn the tide of this battle. As Winston Churchill stated back in 1942 when the Allied forces had their first significant victories in WWII, “This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.” So, while there will still be much more effort required to contain and defeat this pandemic, I do believe we are now finally fighting a winning battle. Hopefully stamp shows will return and philatelic clubs will be able to resume in-person meetings later in the year.

A Sponsor for Dots & Scratches

I am extremely pleased to announce that membership dues for our study group will continue to be waived for 2021. Since there are some costs associated with the email broadcasting and electronic distribution of this newsletter, I decided to seek out a sponsor for Dots & Scratches this year. I am thrilled to report that my first choice, Deveney Stamps Ltd, has agreed to be our sponsor. Deveney Stamps has been serving Canadian stamp collectors for more than 40 years. They offer a vast selection of Canadian and BNA stamps including revenues, precancels, proofs and varieties via approval, eBay, and their own excellent website. While confirming the sponsorship, Kayle Deveney said, “We are excited and honoured for the opportunity to support BNAPS study groups, especially in the area of Canadian plate varieties. This is a fun and challenging area of Canadian Philately and we focus a large part of our inventory on it because of the growing popularity we have seen with collectors in recent years. Happy hunting!” I encourage all readers to visit deveneystamps.com where the high-resolution images allow variety hunters to effectively review the offered varieties or even find others lurking in Deveney Stamps’ regular inventory.

In This Issue

In addition to the usual featured varieties and my ongoing Map stamp column, this issue includes an article from Brian Hargreaves highlighting some little-known ½¢ Large Queen varieties. Michael D. Smith offers up a short article illustrating how the resizing and distortion of Canada’s early stamps due to paper shrinkage can also apply to proof sheets. I provide some reminiscences from my early collecting days and how my understanding of the “Broken Stamen” variety from the 1964-66 Floral Emblems and Coats of Arms commemorative series has evolved over time.

I reiterate my previous invitation to all members of our study group to submit articles or scans of stamp varieties for publication in the newsletter. If you have some knowledge or expertise on a specific stamp issue, examples of constant plate varieties, or even an opinion you want to share, please do not hesitate to forward them. I am also glad to work with you to create an article for other members to enjoy. Please share your knowledge with the rest of the study group.

Cheers!



Varieties on the Half Cent Large Queen: New Discoveries and Imagery

By Brian Hargreaves (bhargrea@email.com)

The Half Cent Large Queen is in many ways a confusing value for variety hunters. The more obvious varieties are actually not one-offs, but are quite common. Three varieties, in particular, are progressive flaws that can be found to a greater or lesser extent in several plate positions – the “Chignon” variety in six positions in column 3, the “Line above P in POSTAGE” in eight positions in column 2, and of course the “Spur” which is found in no less than 33 different positions!

It is therefore a pleasure to be able to report three new examples of one-off constant plate varieties which, with the aid of the scans below, readers can now search for with some interest and enthusiasm! One is a completely new unreported discovery, the other two have been written about in the literature, but never properly illustrated.

Scratch through “HALF”

Mention of this variety was first made by Horace Harrison in 1976 and Hans Reiche in 1977, but with no illustrations or images. *Maple Leaves* later published an article by Dr. Z. M. Gordon in 1984 which included a rough hand-drawn illustration of the variety. Gordon was able to plate this flaw to position 26 since it was located just below the well-known “Dot in E” variety from position 16 in a block of eight.

Harrison thought that this flaw was “a late occurrence in the life of the plate”, perhaps leading to its replacement by the Small Queen Half Cent issue in 1882. Gordon, however, had three examples of the variety, all perforated 11 ½ x 12, which he dated to between 1873-1878, and therefore did not agree!



Figure 1: Scratch through HA of HALF

Two Dots in “T”

This variety was also reported by Reiche in 1977, but without illustration. Reiche suggested that it came from plate position 100 – a strong possibility given the large bottom and right margins, and the lower right margin position dot visible on my copy of the stamp.

I have already featured this variety in my “Lonely Hearts” column, but with no response. Perhaps with this extra information readers may be able to find a matching copy to definitively prove the plate position.



Figure 2: Two dots in T of CENT

Scratch or Relief Break in Left Margin

This variety is unreported to my knowledge. I have two examples to prove constancy (see Figure 3 on following page). They somewhat resemble the “Line above P” variety in the upper margin or the “Spur” variety that occurs in a similar location on the Two Cent value.

I look forward to hearing from readers with information or matching copies for any of these rarely seen varieties.

References

- The Large Queen Stamps of Canada and their Use, H.E. & H.W. Duckworth, British North America Philatelic Society, 2008
- Notes on the Half Cent Large Queen, Horace W. Harrison, BNA Topics, July-August 1976
- A Large Queen’s Report, Hans Reiche, Canadian Wholesale Supply, 1977
- Half Cent Large Queens Flaw, Dr. Z. M. Gordon, Maple Leaves, August 1984
- More Solitary Varieties Seek Matching Partners for a Constant Relationship, Brian Hargreaves, Dots and Scratches, January 2018



Figure 3: Spur into centre of left margin

An Interesting Observation: Two Proof Sheets with Different Sized Impressions

By Michael D. Smith



Figure 1

Recently, I wanted to compare the position dots in the upper margin of my 10¢ Consort proof sheets to show that the same plate was used to print them. I overlaid my early plate proof on top of my late plate proof and scanned the top of the sheet. I then did the same thing with the right edge of the sheets to show the right-side guide dots as well. I was surprised to notice that the stamp impressions did not line up consistently across the top or down the side.

Figure 1 shows the overlaid top row and Figure 2 the overlaid right column from the proofs.

I then measured the stamp designs. The design impressions on the earlier proof sheet typically measure about 18.25 X 22.75 mm. The impressions on the late proof sheet measure about 18.5 X 22.5 mm. When one looks at the stamps as singles, they are perceived to be the same size, when in reality, they are not. Not only are the proof impressions of different sizes but the margins between the stamps are also slightly different.

Like other early Canadian issued stamps, these proof sheets were apparently printed on different papers that shrank differently after printing. The late plate proof is also mounted on card stock while the early proof is not. Although these two proofs were printed many years apart, they still illustrate how different sized stamps could be printed from the same plate. It would be interesting to measure the impressions on the actual plate to determine the true intended size and proportions.

If the printed sizes varied this much on the actual production stamps, it would have been very difficult to set up the perforation equipment which had to be done by hand with spacers set between the perforating wheels. If two or more different papers were present in the stock to be perforated, it would be very labor-intensive to re-space them every time a different paper was fed through the perforator. No wonder many of these stamps are so poorly perforated.



Figure 2

Remembering the Mysterious “Broken Stamen” Variety

By Scott Robinson

I began collecting Canadian stamps in the early 1970's when I was still a pre-teen. By the time I had reached my twenties, my own Lyman's catalogues and a well-worn library copy of Glenn Hansen's *The Guidebook & Catalogue of Canadian Stamps* had introduced me to re-entries and other constant plate varieties. My first Scott catalogue, the *1985 Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps*, listed some modern varieties that I hoped to find in my own collection or on envelopes around the house. One of the first to catch my eye was a mysterious “broken stamen” variety listed for the 5¢ Newfoundland Pitcher Plant stamp (Scott #427) issued as part of the 1964-66 Floral Emblems and Coats of Arms commemorative series. Unfortunately, the catalogue did not include an image of the variety and I was forced to examine my copies without success or really knowing what I was looking for.

The 1988 edition of the catalogue included some other varieties in this series and even a rather poor, faded image of the “broken stamen”. This image did little to explain exactly what the variety looked like but did indicate that it appeared on the most rightward flower pictured on the stamp. Examining my copies, I was disappointed to find that I still did not appear to have the variety. The following year, the catalogue included a slightly better image along with an arrow indicating the break in the carmine ink that made up this variety. Another quick examination of my stamps yielded yet more disappointment.

As I got older, my interest in modern varieties waned and I became much more interested in Canada's classic engraved stamps and their varieties. I still do not own a copy of the “broken stamen”, but I became interested in it once again when I launched my FlySpecker website back in 2015. Although my site focuses on pre-WWII engraved Canadian stamp varieties, I wanted to include a few more modern varieties to illustrate that these types of varieties were still available in modern issues. A quick review of my old catalogues revealed that, as the Scott catalogue evolved and became the Unitrade catalogue, the “broken stamen” listing now mentioned that it occurred at plate positions 13, 37, 39, and 41. A colour version of the same carmine ink break on the rightmost flower was also included.

The Floral Emblems and Coats of Arms commemorative series was printed using a combination of engraving and offset printing. For the Newfoundland Pitcher Plant stamp, the frame, coat of arms, text, value and background shading were printed in black using traditional intaglio printing from engraved plates. The green and carmine shades of the flower were printed on an offset press from lithographic plates. Although these processes are very different, both involve placing multiple images of the stamp design onto a plate for printing of complete panes. For lithographic plates, this is usually accomplished using a step and repeat photographic process whereby a film is created with all the impressions required to print a complete pane in one of the required colours. This film is then used to produce an impression of the pane as many times as required by the plate setup. In this case, the plates contained 300 subjects made up of 6 panes of 50. Two lithographic plates would need to be created, one for the green colour and one for the carmine.

Since the “broken stamen” variety involves only the carmine ink, it is caused by an issue with the relevant lithographic plate. The pattern of the plate positions where the varieties occur tells us something about how they came about. Since they do not appear in a consecutive sequence on the panes, they were not caused during the step and repeat process. However, since they do appear in the same positions on each of the six panes on the plate, then they were likely caused by some minor damage to the original film negative used to produce each pane. Knowing this, I was a little confused by the catalogue listing since it stands to reason that random damage to the film would not cause the exact same variety to appear at four different positions on the pane.

After a more detailed read of my old Glenn Hansen book and an email exchange with a member of the Stamp Community Forum (www.stampcommunity.org), I was surprised to learn that the “broken stamen” was actually

four different constant varieties. Each pane on the plate and therefore each post office sheet shows the same varieties, but they are slightly different in appearance at each of the four positions. Pictured below is an example of a normal Newfoundland Pitcher Plant stamp followed by the four different versions of the “broken stamen”.

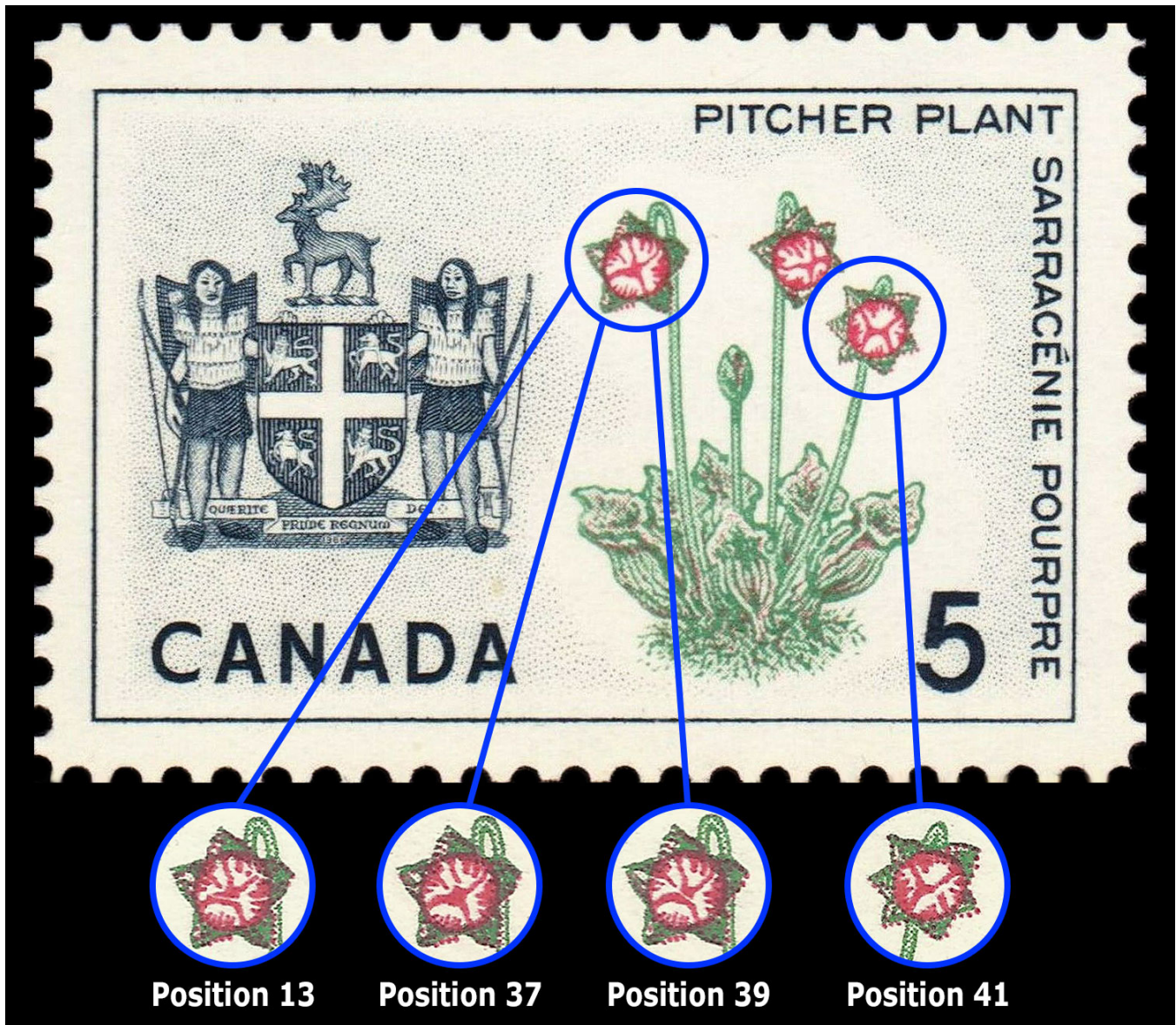


Figure 1: The four different varieties of the “broken stamen”

The carmine-coloured lines in the center of the flowers are actually the outlines of the inner petals and do not appear to have anything to do with the stamens. Each flower includes a series of X-shaped lines at its centre with each variety position showing a distinct small break in these lines as follows:

Position 13: The leftmost flower shows an almost horizontal white line that breaks through the lower centre area of the X-shaped carmine lines and proceeds into the right side of the flower.

Position 37: The leftmost flower shows a clean break in the top left tail of the X-shaped carmine lines.

Position 39: The leftmost flower shows a white line that breaks through the lower centre area of the X-shaped carmine lines similar to the version at position 13. However, the white line at this position appears a little higher and with a sharper downward right slope. It proceeds into the left side of the flower.

Position 41: This is the only position that shows the variety in the rightmost flower. Here it appears as a clean break in the bottom right tail of the X-shaped carmine lines.

The variety from plate position 41 is the version that has appeared in most philatelic literature for decades to illustrate the “broken stamen”. It is the only version shown in Hans Reiche’s *Canada Steel Engraved Constant Plate Varieties*. It is one of two varieties shown in the old Darnell catalogues. And it was the only position illustrated in the Unitrade catalogue until 2017 when images of the other positions were added. This version of the variety is also notable because it appears in all lower left plate blocks of this stamp.

Notes and References

- Canada Steel Engraved Constant Plate Varieties, Hans Reiche, The Unitrade Press, 1982
- The Guidebook & Catalogue of Canadian Stamps (Second Edition), Glenn Hansen, Regency Publishing Co., 1973
- The Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps, Ed: D. Robin Harris, The Unitrade Press, 2017
- Many thanks to Stamp Community Forum member, BlackJag, for supplying the original scans of these varieties for use on my website.
- My library of old Lyman’s, Darnell, Scott and Unitrade catalogues was also used in researching the evolving catalogue listings for the “broken stamen”.

DEVENEY STAMPS LTD.

ESTD 1977

🍁 Specializing in Canadian Varieties & Re-entries 🍁



Featuring high resolution images

ONE OF CANADA'S LARGEST ONLINE STAMP INVENTORIES

WWW.DEVENEYSTAMPS.COM

TOLL FREE: 1-888-232-0282



info@deveneystamps.com

Uncharted Territories – Varieties of the Map Stamps of 1898

By Scott Robinson

Plating Map Stamps Using Red Plate Characteristics

This second introductory column will explore some more details about the red plates and how their unique characteristics at almost all plate positions make plating the Maps such a rewarding pastime. For those who wish to attempt a complete plated collection of Maps, the red plates are the key. For more general variety hunters who seek out the very collectible re-entries and retouches found on the black plates, you will still need to understand how to recognise these plate positions from the red plate characteristics that are much easier to spot when casually looking through a dealer's stock or viewing an online auction that does not have high-definition scans.

Unless you are fortunate enough to have access to images of full sheet scans of the Map stamps or proofs, you will need a good, published reference for plating purposes. Fortunately, there are two excellent yet distinctly different publications that are dedicated to plating the Maps:

- The Canadian Map Stamp of 1898 - A Plating Study, by Whitney L. Bradley, 1989
- The Canadian 1898 Christmas Map Stamp - A Definitive Plating Study, by Kenneth A. Kershaw & Roger Boisclair, reprinted in 2009

Both of these publications are published by BNAPS. The first publication, by Whitney L. Bradley, is my go-to Maps plating reference. Although much has been written about the Maps over the last century, Bradley was the first to devise a comprehensive plating system. His system, that focuses firstly on the red plates, has become the standard for plating the Maps. His book has good background information on the issue including a colour guide for the ocean shades plus over a thousand black and white illustrations done by the author to show the details of each plate position. While hand-drawn illustrations are not the best approach for showing fine stamp details, Bradley's are surprisingly accurate most of the time.

Bradley's system divides the red British colonies into specific regions and then devotes a section of the book to each region for red plate A (as used with black plates 1, 2, and 3) and then red plate B (as used with black plate 5). He presents a *Principal Outstanding Feature* of the red plate for each position. This could be an extra island or colony, a misplaced or misshapen red plate detail, or even colonies that are completely missing. He then lists more minor *Confirming Features* of the red plate and finally specifics for differentiating the black plates (in the case of red plate A). The book is almost 190 pages and spiral bound. Longley Auctions, the new sales agent and distributor of BNAPS books, lists the book for only \$26 plus shipping on their website at longleyauctions.com.

The second publication is actually a reprinting that combines four separate BNAPS books into a single volume that covers all Map plates and varieties. The book includes three main sections, covering black plates 1-3 and 5, by Kenneth A. Kershaw. There is also a section devoted to black plate 4 stamps (that were never officially released by the post office) and a compilation of numerous journal articles that are co-written with Roger Boisclair. This book uses high-resolution images of the stamps to illustrate each variety and plate position. While not quite as user-friendly as the Bradley book, this larger book includes more updated information and its images, including close-ups of the Tonkin Gulf detail and cable retouches, are extremely useful for differentiating the corresponding black plates used with red plate A.

Kershaw uses a different approach from Bradley in that the detailed listings are ordered by plate position rather than Bradley's ordering by specific red plate regions. However, Kershaw does also include short sections that feature images of the main red plate varieties arranged by region. The book is approximately 500 pages and spiral bound. Longley Auctions lists the 2004 reprinted colour version of the book on their website for \$83 plus shipping.

Red Colony Regions

The key to plating the Maps from red plate characteristics is to become familiar with what the red plate should look like without any varieties. Presented below in Figure 1 is an idealised version of what the red plate should look like. The red colonies have been fitted correctly to the boundaries shown on the black plate and other colonies that are not represented on the black plate are shown in the form of solid red circles. No actual Map stamp looks anything like this since, in addition to the numerous red plate varieties, almost none of the various red islands and small colonies are circular or correctly fitted to their boundaries, plus the overall alignment of the black and red plates is rarely very accurate.

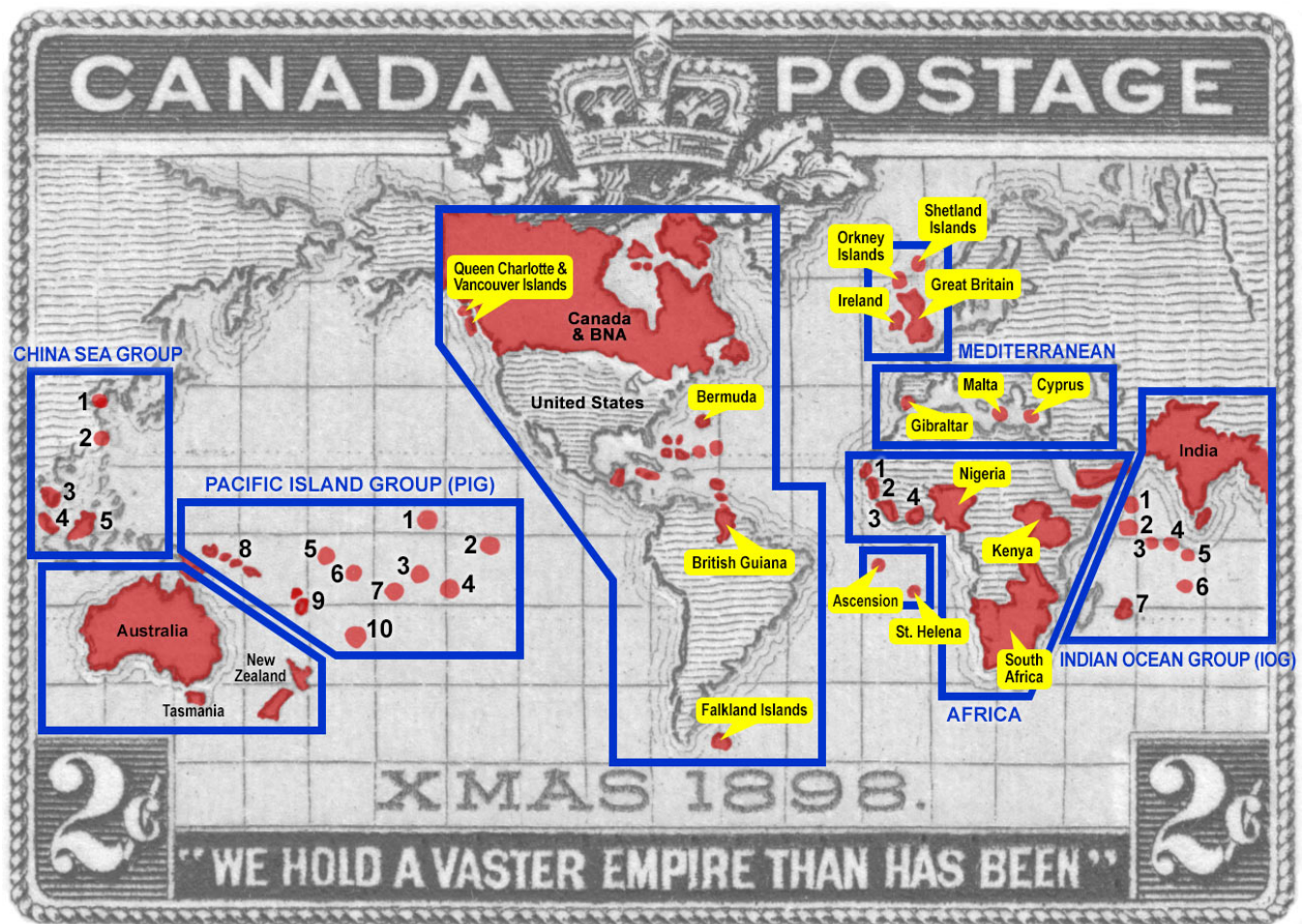


Figure 1: Idealised version of British colonies from the red plate with commonly used regions and colony names/numbers identified

The various regions used by Bradley and Kershaw to group the colonies, plus the names or numbers commonly used to identify the specific territories or colonies within each region, are indicated in Figure 1. The importance and major aspects of each region (from left to right) are discussed below.

China Sea Group

This region normally has five distinct colonies that are referred to by number rather than name. This region is only occasionally referenced by Bradley when there is an extra island or mark. Kershaw refers to this region much more frequently making note of the shape of the various colonies as confirming features for the plate position.

Australia and New Zealand

This region consists of four major islands. Mainland Australia and Tasmania and the two main islands of New Zealand. The shapes of these islands are usually distorted and the pairs of islands representing each country are

often joined. This region is frequently referenced by Bradley and Kershaw usually to indicate extra dots and islands between Australia and New Zealand.

Pacific Ocean Group

This region, called PIG for short, consists of 10 individual islands or island groups. It is frequently the source for principal varieties that can be used to plate a Map stamp. Almost 40% of red plate A and 25% of red plate B stamps can be identified and plated from this region. Both Bradley and Kershaw frequently reference the extra, missing, misplaced, or completely irregular shapes of the islands in this region.

The Americas

Strangely, this region is further divided by Bradley into the United States and South America even though it is not often referenced for plating purposes. The small island colonies in the Caribbean area are frequently severely distorted and/or joined together so are of little use for plating. Extra territories in the United States or near Bermuda are the most common varieties. Kershaw also makes reference to the shape of the Queen Charlotte and Vancouver islands as confirming features for some plate positions.

Great Britain Region

This region consists of Great Britain with its island territories of the Orkneys and Shetlands to the north and Ireland to the west. The region is used only sparingly as the principal variety or a confirming one for plating.

Mediterranean

This region is normally composed of three named colonies: Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus. Although rarely used as the principal plating feature, the distorted shape of these colonies or additional small dots near them are often used as confirming features for plating.

Africa

This region is known mainly to have additional small red dots that are confirming features, but it occasionally has very large extra colonies that serve as the principal feature for plating. The various colonies are referenced by number and name.

Ascension and St. Helena

Although this region normally consists of only the two main islands, extra red dots and small islands make the region a frequent source for both principal and confirming features for plating. Red plate A tends to have twice as many of these as red plate B. Both Bradley and Kershaw make frequent reference to this region. Since many of the extra islands and dots are similar, confirming features from other regions are usually needed for plating.

Indian Ocean Group

This region, often called IOG for short, is only second to the PIG region as the main source for principal varieties that can be used for plating. It is particularly important for red plate B. While not subject to as many radical varieties as the PIG region, it is a frequent source for extra islands or the displacement and size variation of the normal islands. Since many of these varieties are similar, confirming features from other regions are usually needed for plating.

How does it work? A Plating Example

As an example of how even a basic magnifying glass or low-resolution scan can often be used for plating the Map stamp, I am going to repeat an amusing case laid out by Roger Boisclair in *BNA Topics* from 1998. In that year, Canada Post issued a commemorative stamp honoring the 100th anniversary of the Map stamp and Postmaster General William Mulock's introduction of Imperial Penny Postage to Canada. The issue featured an attractive stamp-on-stamp design with an image of an original Map stamp.

Figure 2 shows an image of the 1998 commemorative stamp with the 1898 Map stamp enlarged. Notice how the poor reproduction and grainy resolution of the Map stamp make it almost impossible for fine details of the black plate to be distinguished. However, the red plate reveals a number of interesting characteristics.

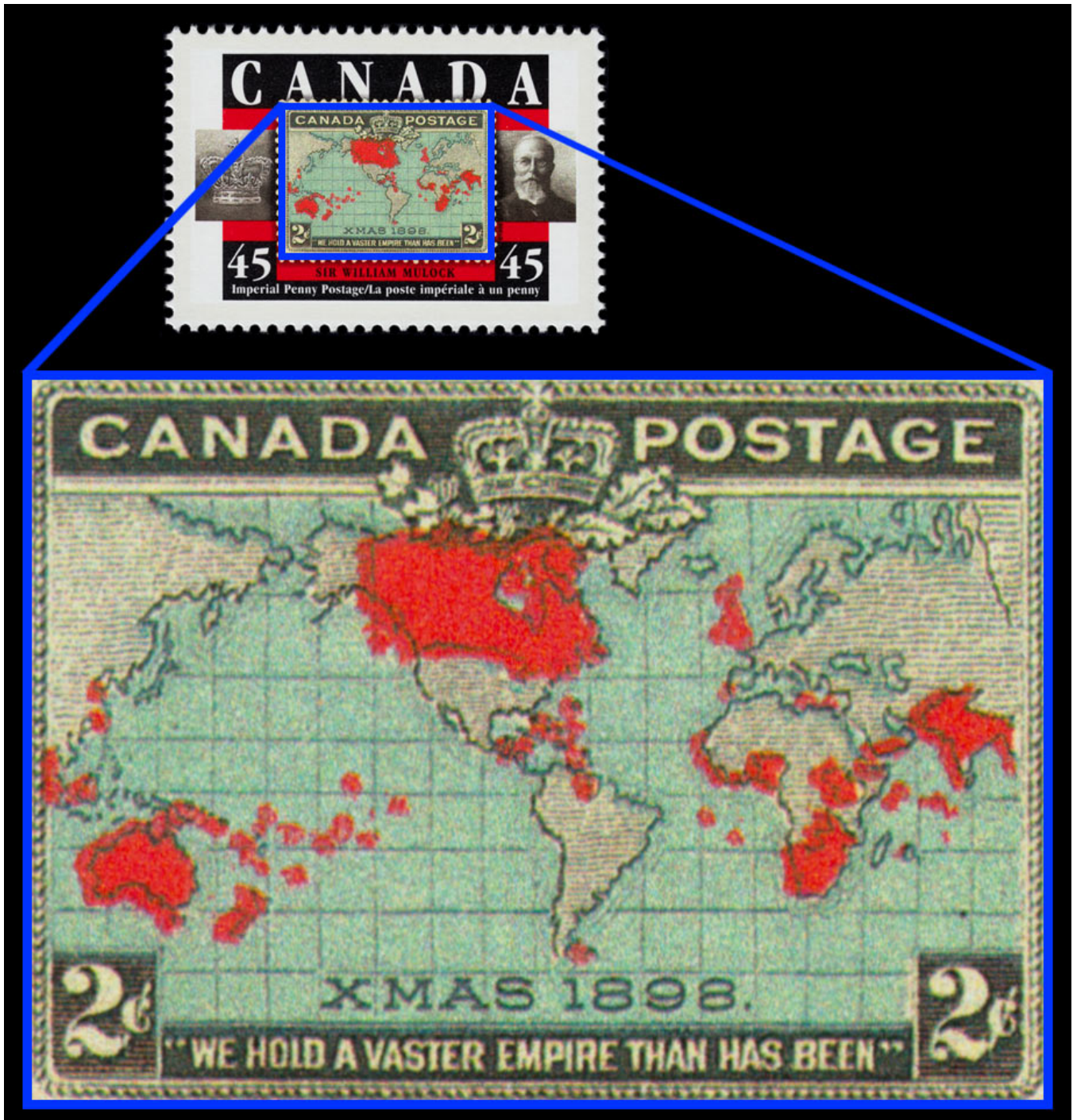


Figure 2: Enlargement of the Map stamp image shown on the 100th anniversary commemorative

Since the PIG and IOG regions are where most Map stamps can be distinguished from each other, this is where I usually look first. Examination of the PIG region reveals a number of additional islands and tiny red dots. The most obvious of these are indicated in Figure 3. I next look in the PIG sections for red plates A and B in my Bradley book to find a match. While there are several positions with some of these characteristics, there is no exact match for my stamp.

Next, I proceed to the IOG region where there is a very obvious misplacement of island 1. Instead of appearing well north above the other islands and next to most eastern tip of Africa, it appears to be positioned below island 2. This is also shown in figure 3. A quick look in my Bradley book and this variety is the first one listed in the IOG section for red plate A. Bradley considers this to be his principal outstanding feature for plate position 10. As confirming features, he illustrates similar extra dots and islands to our stamp for the PIG region. He also notes an extra dot above the island of St. Helena which is similarly present on our stamp.

My next step is always to confirm this information with the stamp images in the Kershaw book. A quick look at the page for red plate A, position 10 confirms all of these features as shown in figure 3 below.

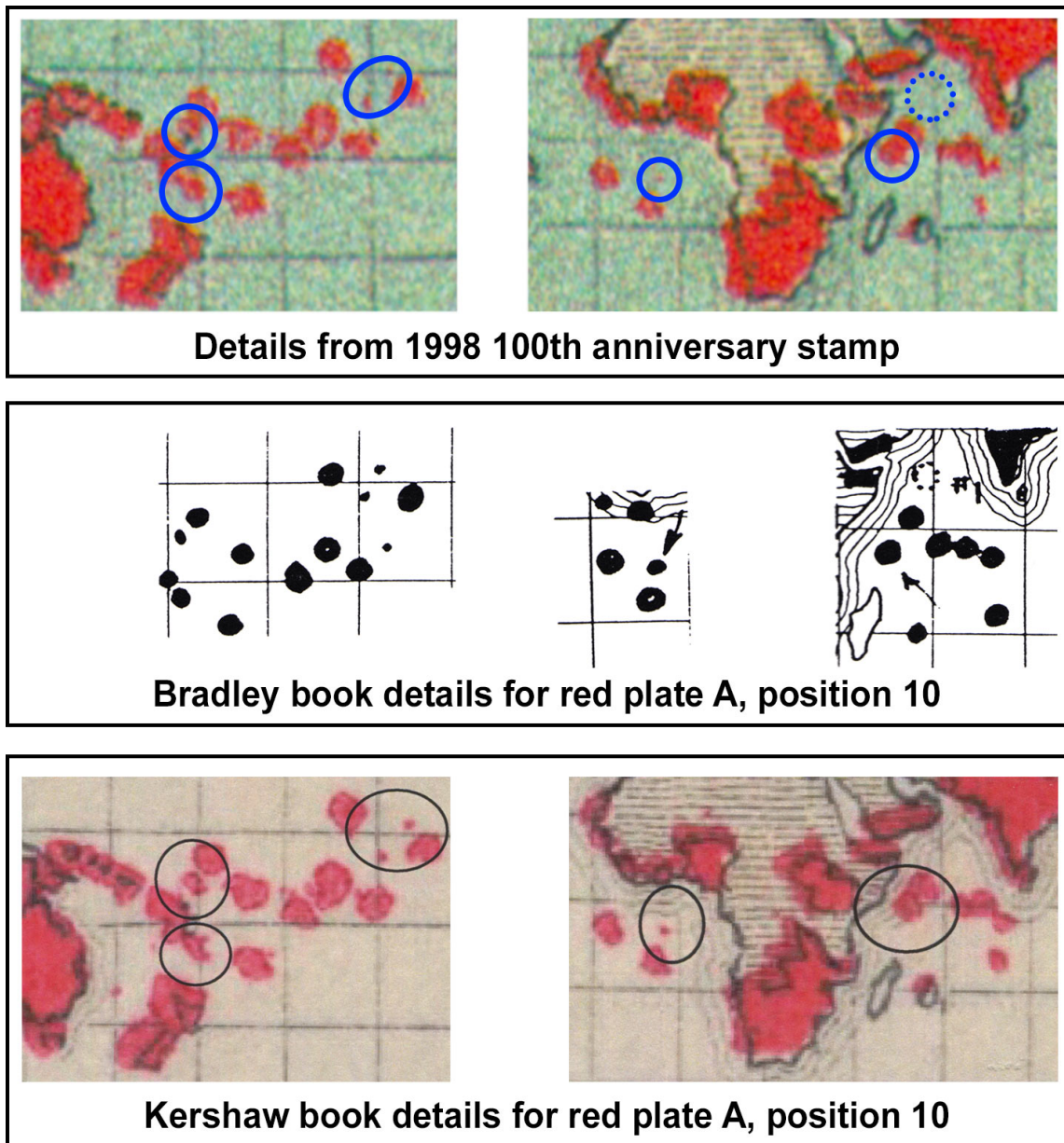


Figure 3: Comparison of the anniversary stamp with details of red plate A, position 10 from the Bradley and Kershaw plating books

Now that the stamp is confirmed to come from position 10 of red plate A, the corresponding black plate (1, 2 or 3) also needs to be determined. The stamp cannot come from black plate 3 since all copies of stamps printed from that plate are known to have lavender (or faded grey) oceans rather than the blue oceans seen here. Plate 3 also has a major retouch of the right-side cable and some prominent dots in the right margin. There is no trace of these elements visible.

Since black plates 1 and 2 do not have any varieties between them (other than a faint dot in the margin of plate 2 which would likely not show here), the only possibility for determining the black plate would be something distinctive in the Tonkin Gulf area. The guide dots and lines situated near the Tonkin Gulf at the far-left side of the stamp were discussed briefly in my previous Uncharted Territories column. The presence and specific location of these marks can also vary considerably between plates and positions. The Bradley plating book provides a key for the locations of these marks that can be compared to a master illustration near the beginning of the book but does not provide a convenient image for each plate and position. For this particular plate position, Bradley indicates that plate 1 and 3 have similar guide dots (at his location 15) located just to the right of Hainan island in the middle of the gulf. He indicates that plate 2 has a guide dot (at his location 8) that is further north and touching the coast of the gulf.

Bradley's system for identifying Tonkin Gulf criteria requires flipping pages in the book and using some judgement to determine if the illustrated location matches your stamp. I have also found it to be rather inaccurate in some cases. Fortunately, this is an area where the Kershaw book shines since it provides highly magnified images of the Tonkin Gulf details for most plates and positions. The images for the corresponding black plates for red plate position 10 are shown below in Figure 4. Notice that the guide dot for plate 2 is not only located further north but is also much bigger than the corresponding dots from plates 1 and 3. Even in our very limited resolution image, it is clear that the guide dot for our stamp is a match for black plate 2.

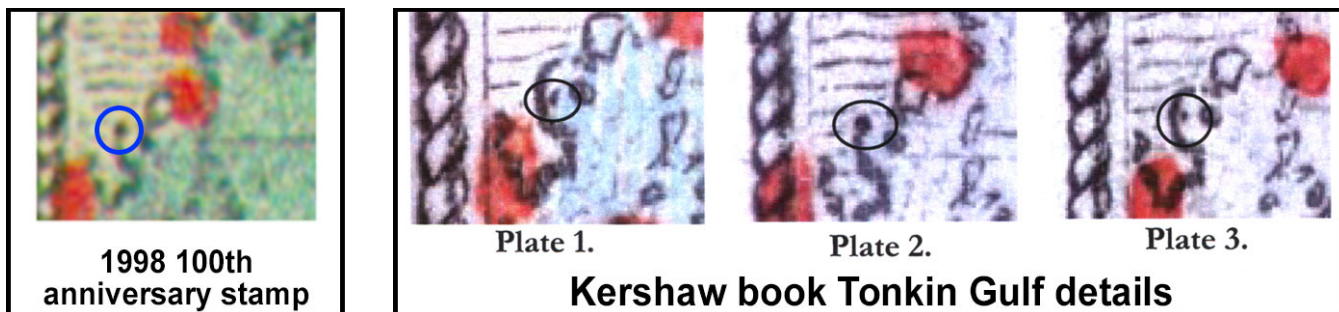


Figure 4: Comparison of Tonkin Gulf detail from the anniversary stamp with the various black plate alternatives as presented in the Kershaw plating book

So, there we have it. The Map stamp shown on the 100th anniversary commemorative is plated to black plate 2, red plate A, position 10. This is commonly abbreviated to 2A10 by Map stamp specialists.

Plating Summary

Most Map stamps can be easily plated, even with limited magnification or questionable scans, by following the procedure outlined here using the reference books from Bradley and Kershaw. To do this, you need to have a good mental image or reference for how a “normal” red plate should look without any varieties. This will come naturally to you as you examine and plate more Map stamps. The plating procedure I use can be summarised as follows:

- I begin by examining my stamp copy for perceived variations in the normal red plate characteristics. Sometimes these variations are obvious varieties, but they may also be tiny red dots or subtle size and shape anomalies.
- I then search for matching examples of these variations in the appropriate regional sections of the Bradley book for red plate A and then red plate B.

- If the variations do not match any of Bradley's *Principal Outstanding Features* or a postmark is concealing some vital information, I check them against his *Confirming Features*.
- Even if I find a match for the principal feature, I still check the confirming features to ensure my identification is correct.
- I then go to my Kershaw book.
 - If I have identified the red plate position from the Bradley book, I confirm it by using the actual stamp images on the appropriate page for that position in the Kershaw book. This is helpful for tentative identifications since the images will often show other minor variations or subtle nuances to the shape of specific islands and colonies that may help in confirming my identification.
 - If I have had no luck with the Bradley book, I will consult the specific sections of the Kershaw book where the red plate variations are listed by region. If this does not help, I either assume my stamp is not plateable or I may do a page-by-page review of each position in the Kershaw book.
- Once I have determined the red plate and position, I proceed to identify the details of the black plate.
 - Obviously if my stamp is from red plate B then I know it must be from black plate 5. The two reference books will guide me in finding any interesting varieties such as retouches, re-entries, or marks from plate damage.
 - If red plate A, then I will try to use the ocean colour to help determine the black plate. Although this cannot be done with lavender copies, the shade of the blue oceans can sometimes be used to narrow the black plate selection. The Bradley book provides a colour guide and some useful help in this respect.
 - If the black plate does show a variety such as a retouch, re-entry or minor plate damage, then identifying the black plate is usually easy. Both references have sections at the front of the book that review these varieties in detail. The Kershaw book is particularly useful in identifying the bottom cable retouches that can occur on both plate 2 and 3 from the same positions.
 - If there is no significant variety on the black plate, I refer to the Bradley book which often provides important details of minor black plate marks, smudges, and cable weaknesses that may be useful.
 - The last resort for identifying a black plate or to confirm an identification is to review the guide dots and arcs that may appear in the area of the Tonkin Gulf. The Kershaw book provides images of the key differences for most plate positions.

Remember that there are some Map stamps that just cannot be plated. A few positions have virtually identical red and black plate characteristics. Other stamps may have postmarks that obscure key details. It should also be remembered that the vibrant colour and method of printing for the red plates can lead to visible transitory variations that are not constant. Although plating the Maps can be tricky for some plates and positions, it gets easier with practice. Variations to the normal red plate characteristics will become more obvious and you will eventually become familiar with the more subtle details that separate the black plates. Personally, I find nothing more satisfying than doing some detective work to find that elusive Map variety or desired plate position hidden in a low-resolution image from an inexpensive eBay listing. In just the last month, I have been fortunate to find nice unidentified copies of the catalogued major re-entry from plate/position 5B91 and the major misplaced entry from 2A84.

References

- Plating the Map Stamp of the new 1998 Imperial Penny Postage Commemorative Stamp-on-Stamp, Roger Boisclair, BNA Topics, British North America Philatelic Society, Fourth Quarter 1989

New Finds and Discoveries

After having shared two varieties from the 13¢ value of the 1935 Pictorial definitive set in our last issue, Earl Noss returns with a beautiful copy of the “dots in N” variety from the same stamp. It shows a clear dotted vertical line in the N of CANADA as described by Ronald Tuckwell in his *Fortunate Flaws* column in the April 1950 issue of BNA Topics. Hans Reiche plates this variety to plate 1, lower right pane, position 46 in his 1982 publication, *Canada Steel Engraved Constant Plate Varieties*. Since 2018, this variety has also been listed in the Unitrade catalogue as #224iv, where it is described as a “vertical scratch”.



Figure 1: The “dots in N” variety

Robert Coulson has shared an interesting re-entry on the ½¢ Small Queen. This stamp was printed from a single plate with two panes of 100 stamps. The plate is generally believed to have been re-entered up to three times resulting in several states of numerous re-entries, mostly of a minor nature. Although the various re-entries manifest themselves in different ways on this stamp, many of them feature sharp doubling at the top right corner resulting in a blurred appearance to the hatch lines and various areas of doubling or line extensions.

Shown in Figure 2 is a magnified view of a normal stamp, a typical re-entry, and the unusual triple entry shared by Robert. Notice that the typical re-entry shows upward extensions of the diagonal hatch lines above “AGE” and sharp doubling of the part of the top frame line that extends into the margin. Robert’s stamp shows the same type of diagonal hatch line extensions but also a distinctive tripling of the extended upper frame line.

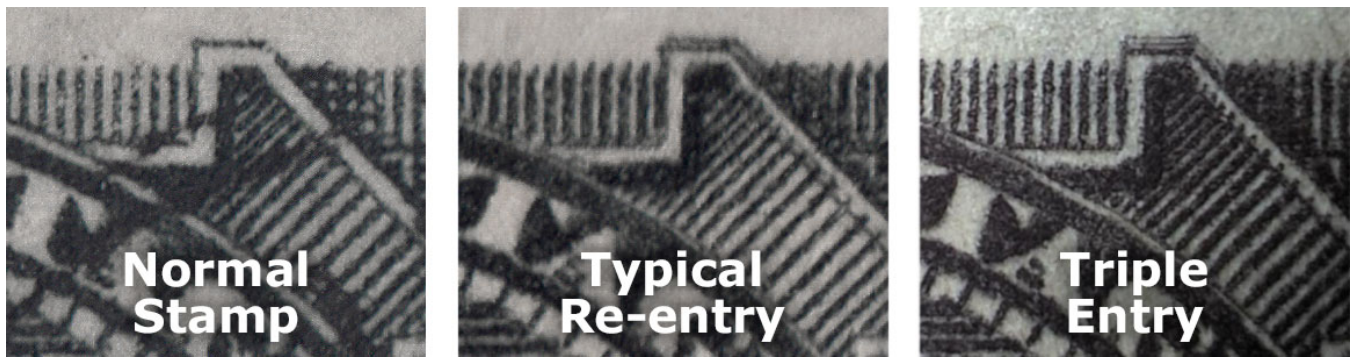


Figure 2: Magnified examples of the top right corner of various 1/2¢ Small Queens

A full image of Robert's stamp is shown below in Figure 3. I have not been able to plate this triple entry. The sharp appearance but localised tripling definitely suggests a constant plate variety rather than a slip print or other printing anomaly. I welcome any further information or other examples from Small Queen collectors.



Figure 3: 1/2¢ Small Queen with signs of a triple entry

Cover Image Information

This spectacular and unusual major re-entry on the 1¢ Victoria Numeral issue (Unitrade #75) was shared by Earl Noss. His lovely pair, shown below, gives a perfect comparison of the re-entry to a normal stamp. While the left stamp exhibits the typical re-entry doubling of the lower frame lines, numeral boxes, hatch lines and lettering, it is the striking doubling in the lower half of the portrait that make it so unusual. Strong and noticeable re-entries in the portrait area are particularly uncommon on Canadian stamps. This example shows distinctive horizontal doubling of all the lines and strokes in the Queen's dress, veil, and neck. The doubling becomes more of a thickening by the height of the Queen's cheek and ear, and is almost imperceptible near the top of the stamp where there is only a hint of the re-entry in the thicker veins of the maple leaves.

Noted Victoria Numeral collector and writer, Peter Spencer, has shown me a second copy of this re-entry which he says comes from one of plates 5 to 8 in their re-entered state.

