

THE ROUND-UP ANNEX squared circle study group newsletter

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With this issue of Annex begins a series of articles by Bill on various aspects of the squared circle hammers. The first installment presents Bill's findings on the significance of the numbers found on the hammers on display at the Postal Museum in Ottawa. However, before getting to Bill's presentation, several other topics will be covered.

NEW REPORTS AND FINDINGS

WATERLOO, ONTARIO - A new late date for the year 1915 has been reported. According to the Handbook, the latest date for this year is AM/JAN 26/15; however, two strikes, one dated AM/AU 11/15 and the other AM/AU 14/15 are now known.

MORDEN, MANITOBA - A strike for the year 1914 has been reported; the strike is a backstamp dated -/MY 23/14.

NANAIMO, BRITISH COLUMBIA, STATE TWO - Jim Hennok reports a new time mark for this hammer, on strikes dated 9/FE/42 on a block of 25 of the Chateau de Ramezay.

BEETON, ONTARIO - Jim also reports the first strike of this scarce hammer on a Map stamp or cover, dated -/JU 21/99. (See below) By the way, the cover has been sold.



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FOURTH EDITION HANDBOOK ERRATA

An interesting note from Jeff Switt contains information requiring some corrections to the Handbook. Jeff points out that the RF for GRIMSBY (page 22 of the Handbook) is in error; the RF should be 15 and not 10 as listed. Another error Jeff has spotted occurs in the caption accompanying the illustration at the bottom of page 134. This is, of course, LONDON, ONT. TYPE 1, STATE 2 and not TYPE 2. Change the caption accordingly and on page 24 (LONDON, ONT., STATE 2), add at Error Indicia, WV/JA 12/95. Notice that this is a match for the already listed error indicia Wd/JA 12/95! Jeff further points out that there is a typographical error in the RF tabulations on page 410; at RF 20, the numbers should be 500-849 and not 599-849. (The correct numbers for RF 20 are shown in the graph on page 409). Finally, Jeff has provided some additional information regarding the damaged lower bar at DUTTON. On page 390, in the description of hammer damage at DUTTON, add:

b/k "The lower bar is undamaged as late as -/JY 22/96, but damaged as early as -/AU 12/97. See photograph of damage on 10/SP 27/00 on page 22 and a sketch of the damage on page 389."

Also, at DUTTON, page 21, add the line:

"Hammer Damage: Pair of nicks in lower bar: see photograph, page 22 and sketch of damage, page 389, with description on page 390. Lower bar undamaged as late as -/JY 22/96 and damaged as early as -/AU 12/97."

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

Since the membership list was published in the last issue, the following changes in the roster have been received:

NEW AND/OR RENEWED MEMBERS

Clarence Finger, Cadillac Coin & Stamp, 4324 W. Saginaw, Lansing, MI 48917
Peter J. Wiedemann, P.O. Box 564, Cambridge, ONT. N1R 5W1
Alexander M. Unwin, P.O. Box 1686m, Bellevue, WA 98008
Lewis M. Ludlow, Gamlen Chemical Co., #303, No. 1 Iwata Bldg., 10-18,
Higashi Gotanda 5-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS (Corrections Underlined)

Robert Corless, 1826 Indianola Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85015
Colin Banfield, 32 Coolgardie Ave, Chigwell, Essex, ENGLAND

DECEASED

R.S.B. Greenhill, 3 Highbury grove, Haslemere, Surrey, ENGLAND GU27 1BB

There are several copies of the transcripts of Bill Moffatt's seminar at BNAPEX '81 still available. The 34 page document costs \$3.00 (US) which covers the cost of transcribing, printing and mailing. In addition, there are copies of the Checklist of Squared Circle Strikes available at \$1.25 for the 14 page list; again the charge covers only the cost of printing and mailing.

A STUDY OF THE POSTAL MUSEUM'S SQUARED CIRCLE HAMMERS

INTRODUCTION

Last year, in preparing a pen-and-ink sketch of the PORT MAITLAND hammer, I discovered an apparent anomaly in the information given in Douglas Crawford's paragraphs on the Squared Circle Hammer in the Third Edition Squared Circle Handbook, pages 8 to 11. Therein it is stated that the number "12" stamped on the back side of the hammer head and on the end of the handle, pertains to the thread size. In laying the thread spacing out on the basis of 12 threads per inch, I noted that the sketch did not appear to have the same proportions as the photograph. I then scaled the thread spacing of the photograph against the stated dimensions of the head and concluded that the actual thread spacing was actually much finer than 12 per inch; it appeared to be at least 16 and perhaps 20 threads per inch.

Evidently the "12" did not pertain to thread size; I wondered what its significance was. Several other questions then came to mind. It appeared that the slightly projecting ring at the neck of the head, into which the handle was screwed, was knurled (although no mention of that feature is made in the Handbook). In addition, it was not clear to me from the photograph just where the brass collar ended.

Since Doug's article was written, additional Squared Circle Hammers have been found; nine now reside in the Postal Museum. I thought, then, that perhaps if I could find out what numbers appeared on the back side of the other hammer heads, and on the handles, some pattern might become evident.

Consequently, I wrote to Jim Kraemer asking for information about numbers on the handles and heads, how they were orientated, whether knurling was present on the other hammers, thread size, and if there was any evidence that the hammer faces had been hardened after cutting of the lettering.

Not long after, I received a reply from Jim with the requested information. Rich Toop, at the Postal Museum, independently examined the hammers at Jim's request; the reply to the various questions was a result of both examinations.

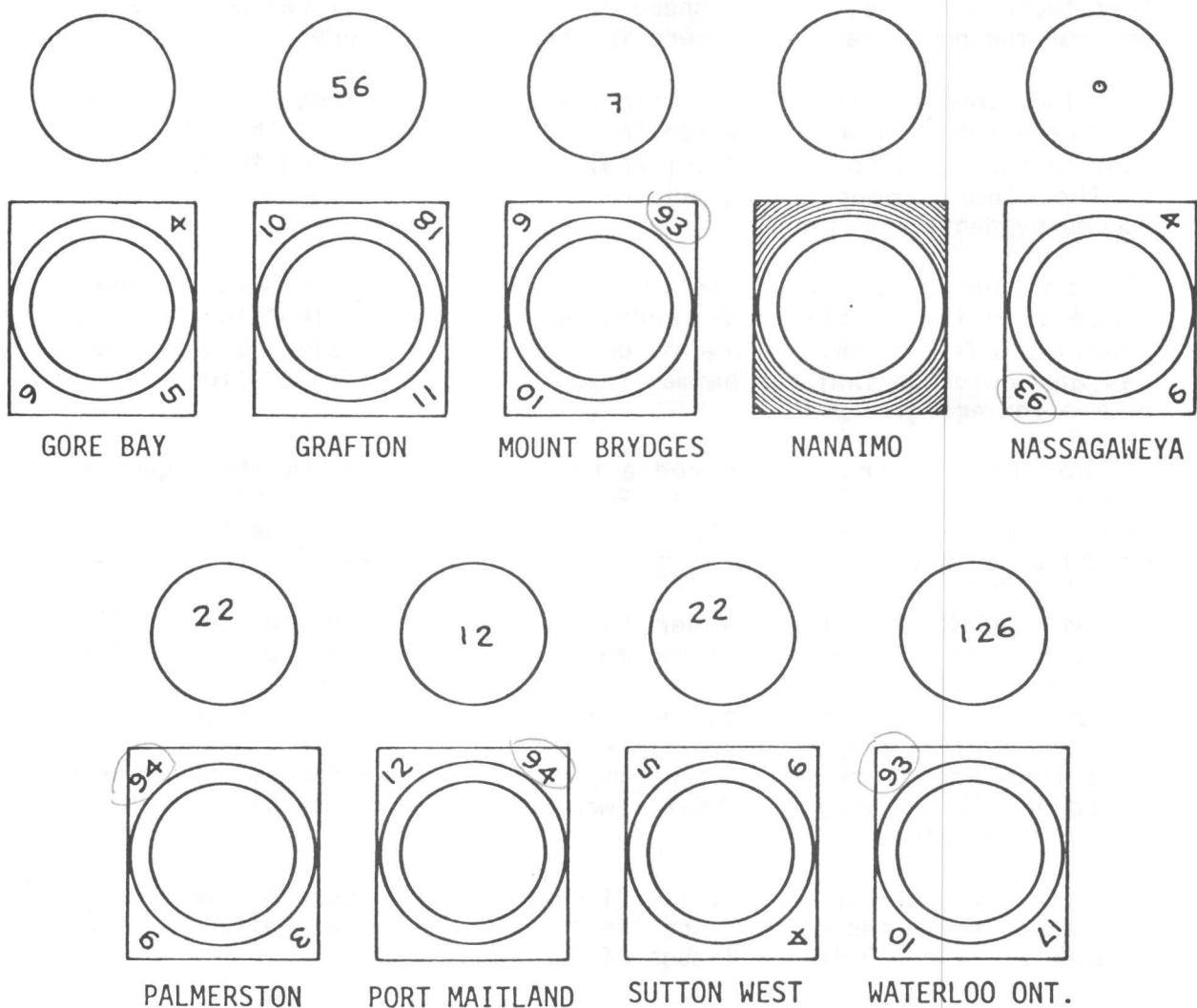
At BNAPEX '81, Jim Kraemer introduced me to Ron McGuire and Rich Toop, and made arrangements for me to personally examine the hammers. They were not then on display, so Allan Barker, specialist at the Museum, took me to the storage area to view them. I was able to confirm the information supplied by Jim Kraemer and Rich Toop. Some further questions arose as a result of my study of the hammers, but answers could not be resolved at that time. Hopefully, it may be possible to answer them later.

In this issue of Annex, I will deal with the numbers appearing on the hammer heads and handles and the thread size; other matters will be considered later in future issues of Annex.

SIGNIFIGANCE OF THE NUMBERS ON THE SQUARED CIRCLE HAMMERS

The thread size on all nine hammers is 20 per inch; thus the number "12" appearing on the PORT MAITLAND hammer does not pertain to thread size. It is interesting that present-day wand-type handles are still 20 threads per inch. The handle issued with the WATERLOO, ONT. hammer is missing; it was at some time replaced with a standard wand-type handle which was attached to the hammer head when it was acquired by the Museum. The handle issued with the NANAIMO hammer is similarly missing; it was replaced with a locally made wooden wand-type handle, which was attached to the head when the hammer was turned over to the Postal Museum.

The numbers which appear on the backs of the hammer heads and ends of the handles are shown in the drawing below. The numbers have the orientation shown when the hammer head is placed face down on the page, with the province abbreviation at the bottom.



The NANAIMO hammer was modified to a broken circle some time between DE 23/96 and DE 30/96, on the basis of the presently reported latest date for STATE 1 and the earliest reported date for STATE 2. The closely spaced concentric rings on the sketch of the NANAIMO hammer indicate the material removed in modifying the hammer, presumably by lathe turning. Any numbers which were stamped on the back side of the head, in its as-issued state, would have been removed during the turning operation.

The following table contains data for the eight remaining hammers which have numbers stamped on them, arranged in the order of proofing dates:

Hammer	Proofing Date	Numbers
MOUNT BRYDGES	9/ 12/ 93	9 10 <u>93</u>
NASSAGAWEYA	9/ 23/ 93	9 4 <u>93</u>
WATERLOO, ONT.	11/ 2/ 93	10 17 <u>93</u>
PALMERSTON	9/ 20/ 94	9 3 <u>94</u>
PORT MAITLAND	11/ 9/ 94	12 <u>94</u>
GRAFTON	11/ 21/ 94	10 11 18
GORE BAY	4/ 29/ 95	4 6 <u>5</u>
SUTTON WEST	4/ 29/ 95	4 6 <u>5</u>

Perusal of these numbers and comparison with their proof dates suggest that they probably represented the date that machining of the heads were completed and it was ready for lettering to be engraved. However, the numbers appearing on the PORT MAITLAND and GRAFTON hammers do not completely fit such a pattern.

If this interpretation is correct, then it took only two days after machining of the MOUNT BRYDGES head to engrave the lettering in time for the known proof date. Longer times, ten days to about two weeks, occurred for NASSAGAWEYA, WATERLOO, PALMERSTON, GORE BAY and SUTTON WEST. Interestingly, GORE BAY and SUTTON WEST were proofed on the same day and carry, presumably, the same numbers stamped on the head. I choose the word "presumably" because it is not entirely clear that the number shown as "6" in the above table might not be a "9" on either or both hammers. The orientation of the numbers on the GORE BAY hammer leads me to believe that the number is "6"; the matter is less clear in the case of SUTTON WEST.

In the case of PORT MAITLAND, "12" cannot be the month since the hammer was proofed on NO 9/94; if it was the day, the date was probably 10/ 12/94. I think it unlikely that this was intended as a requisition number since many hammers were made in 1894, and this hammer's proof date was late in the year. Possibly it was an employee's identification number; the same number also appears on the end of the handle.

In the case of GRAFTON, numbers "10" and "11" (for 10/ 11/94) would be consistent with the proof date of 11/ 21/94; however, "18" instead of "94" is a puzzler.

I think it more likely that the numbers represented the date on which the machining was completed, and the head ready for engraving of the lettering, than that it represented the date on which the entire hammer head was completed. The reason is that if they represent the date of completion of all the work to be done on the hammer, then the hammers would have been held, in some cases, for more than three weeks before proofing and shipping.

From evidence in the Proof Book, the manufacturer did a lively business in producing a wide variety of different cancellers in addition to the Squared Circles; I think, then, that the hammers would have been quite promptly shipped when completed.

Turning now to the numbers stamped on the handles, we find:

Hammer	Numbers on Head	Number on Handle
MOUNT BRYDGES	9 10 93	7
NASSAGAWEYA	9 4 93	none; center hole
WATERLOO, ONT.	10 17 93	126
PALMERSTON	9 9 94	22
PORT MAITLAND	12 94	12
GRAFTON	10 11 18	56
GORE BAY	4 6 5	none visible
SUTTON WEST	4 6 5	22

The only hammer whose handle carries a number also appearing on the head is PORT MAITLAND. The character stamped on the MOUNT BRYDGES handle is a mirror image "F"; it seems most peculiar to me that a punch would be made to produce a mirror-image character such as this. One possibility is that it was an "E" in which the upper horizontal bar was broken or damaged so that it left no impression. There is no number on the NASSAGAWEYA handle, which is also the only handle of the group which contains a center-hole, such as might be used for a tallstock in lathe turning. There is no visible number on the GORE BAY handle; it may have originally carried a number, but the end of the handle is very badly scored and none is now to be seen. The digit "6" of "126" on the WATERLOO handle (a late model wand-type) is shifted upward with respect to "12"; a similar feature appears in the number "22" which occurs on both the PALMERSTON and SUTTON WEST handles; the right-hand "2" is shifted upward with respect to the left hand "2". No particular pattern is evident to me. Jim Kramer suggested the possibility that the numbers on the handles represents production runs of the threaded handle ends. The data is too limited, however, to draw any conclusions.

There is an urgent need for additional material for future issues of Annex. Reports of new findings and correspondence in general has slowed considerably over the past two months. The Annex is going to be only what we as a group collectively make it. If we all can contribute a few items now and then, it will lighten the burden on Bill who has, to date, been the principal contributor of the Annex material.