

**NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES**

Brockville, ONT – Strike dated PM/SP 30/99 on 2 Cent Leaf Overprint; previously unreported on this stamp.

Yarmouth, NS – Strike on 2 Cent Jubilee, dated PM/AU 18/97; previously unreported on this stamp.



Iberville, QUE – Strike dated -/JU 21/97 on a 2 cent Jubilee; previously unreported on this stamp (far left).

Bowmanville, ONT – Unreported date indicia error; reversed “4” indicia on a 3 cent SQ stamp; strike dated -/AU 24/96 (left).

Dunnville, ONT – Strike on 8 Cent Jubilee, dated -/JY 6/97 (below left); previously unreported on this stamp.

Huntsville, ONT – Strike on 10 Cent Jubilee, dated -/AU 11/97 (below middle); previously unreported on this stamp.

Lakefield, ONT – Strike dated 1/AU 9/98 on a 10 cent Jubilee (below right); previously unreported on this stamp.

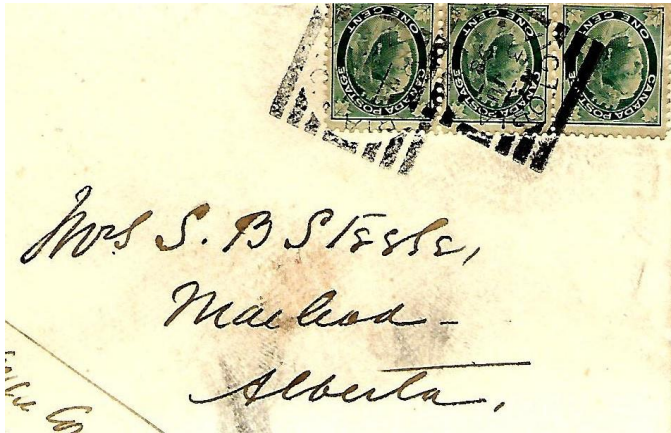


Lindsay, ONT – Strike dated -/AP 28/98(?) on a 6 cent Leaf issue; previously unreported on this stamp.

Orilla, ONT – Strike dated -/FE 20/98 on 6 cent Jubilee; previously unreported on this stamp

Owen Sound, ONT – TM indicia “C” reversed on a strike dated C/MR 16/98 on a 6 cent Leaf; previously unreported on this stamp.

## NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES (Continued)



Rockton, ONT. - An additional example of an omitted month error on a strike -/10/96; a backstamp indicates month of December.

Neepawa, MAN – Strike dated -/NO 28/98 on ½ Cent Numeral; previously unreported on this stamp.

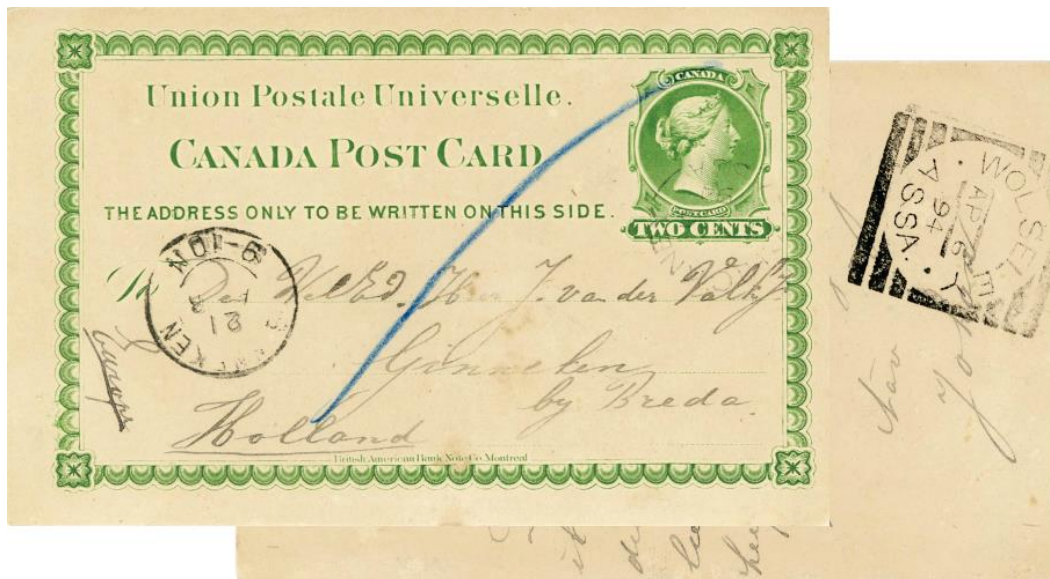
Victoria, B.C., HMR III – Indicia error, dated NT/3 JU/98 on cover (left), with a historical connection; cover addressed to Sam B. Steele, NWMP while with the Yukon Field Force.

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### Why Were There Two Wolseley Squared Circle Hammers?

Brian Copeland

In the fifth edition of the squared circle handbook, Jack Gordon wrote in reference to Wolseley Hammer II: "No reason has been put forward as to the need for two hammers in close succession at this small town." Hammers eventually wear out but, as Jack noted, Wolseley was a relatively small town. Its annual postal revenue in 1895 was just over \$1000. In contrast, the Regina post office (100 km. west) had revenue in 1895 of almost \$7900. And Victoria, B.C., which went through three squared circle hammers, had revenue of just under \$40,000 in 1895. Moreover, wear and tear on the hammer would have been mitigated because there was a split circle hammer in use at Wolseley throughout the squared circle period.



**Figure 1.** Chickney, Assa. (April 6, 1894) to Holland with a Wolseley Hammer I transit mark (-/AP 6/94)

## Why Were There Two Wolseley Squared Circle Hammers? (Continued)

Wolseley's Hammer I was proofed on March 29, 1894. The earliest reported strike is April 6, 1894 (Figure 1). The latest recorded date is Sept. 28, 1895 (lot 1601 in Lee's June 1994 auction). The proof date for Hammer II is unknown. Usage has been reported from Oct. 12, 1895 (Figure 2) until April 3, 1900.



**Figure 2.** Wolseley Hammer II: -/OC 12/95

There is no evidence that usage of the two hammers overlapped, so Hammer II apparently replaced Hammer I. Based on the examples below, my hypothesis is that within less than a year of use, something unusual happened to Hammer I that caused the upper and side bars of the hammer to not print. This eventually led to its replacement; strikes of Hammer I are elusive, so there is limited data available. Gordon reports just 4 examples on cover and 12 on stamp or piece, although others likely exist. Scans of examples of Hammer I from readers would be welcome to help shed light on its fate.

Early use of Hammer I yielded nice clean strikes (Figure 1). Another early example is illustrated in Bennett's 2005 catalogue for the Hennok sale: it shows an April 23, 1894 strike on a 1 cent small queen (lot 2200) that printed well.

However, strikes I have seen from early February 1895 and later did not print well. Partial strikes on stamps resemble those from a split circle hammer – the town and date printed well, but the top and upper side bars of the squared circle did not. There is usually some evidence of the bottom bars printing. When the bottom bars are not visible (as in Fig. 5 below), strikes can be distinguished from a split circle because of the horizontal bars above and below the month and day, as well as the two dots on either side of the year.

A comparison of Figures 3 and 4 illustrates the change in the impression from Hammer I. Figure 3 is a crop of Figure 1. Figure 4 shows a scan of a Wolseley Hammer I transit mark, 15 months later, on a cover from Lorlie, Assa. It was struck hard (the year date "95" has made an indentation into the paper), and yet the only indication that the squared circle bars are present is at the bottom and lower right.



**Figure 3.** AP 6/94



**Figure 4.** JY 16/95

**Hammer I strikes from an 1894 card and an 1895 cover**

## Why Were There Two Wolseley Squared Circle Hammers? (Continued)

Figures 5 and 6 are partial strikes included here to show that the problems in printing the upper and side bars were persistent.



**Figure 5.** FE 9/95      **Figure 6.** SP 18/95  
**Hammer I strikes on piece from 1895**

The hammer struck the stamp in Fig. 5 very hard: indentations on the paper on the reverse side of the piece are evident for both the town name "WOLS ..." and the month "FE". And yet the upper and left side bars did not print. The strike in Fig. 6 is similar to that in Fig. 4 – the lower right part of the bars printed but the upper bars did not.

The Sept. 28, 1895 strike illustrated in Lee's 1994 catalogue is consistent with the above – a bottom bar of the squared circle hammer shows, but there is no evidence that the side and upper bars printed. The Kerzner Auction held by Sparks in Feb. 2017 had a sock-on nose Sept. 23, 1895 strike (lot 3680). Again, the bottom bars printed (albeit without clarity) but the upper and side bars did not.

Overall the evidence suggests that something happened to Hammer I that caused it to not print correctly. Whether it was faulty, or the result of an attempt to modify the hammer, is unknown. Its replacement, Hammer II, provided clear strikes over its four and a half years of use. Figure 7 illustrates an example from 1899. It was chosen to complement Figure 1, as it is another transit mark on a cover from Chickney.



**Figure 7.** Chickney, Assa. (March 21, 1899) to London, Ont. with a Wolseley Hammer II transit mark (-/MR 21/99.)