

**A Unique Map Stamp Cover Co-Canceled with an Ottawa Crown and a Squared Circle
(Rick Friesen)**

Shown in **Figure 1** is a domestic Map stamp cover front with a Powassan squared circle cancel dated -/JA 12/00, first listed in a Robert A. Lee auction in 2002¹ and now in my collection. It is one of 5 documented Map stamp covers with a Powassan squared circle postmark.² It is addressed to Mrs. W.H.A. Fraser in Ottawa. William H.A. Fraser is listed in an Ottawa city directory from the period³ as residing at 135 MacLaren St., and he is listed as a partner in Fraser & Co., a wholesale lumber business located at 74 Napean St. and co-owned with John B. Fraser.

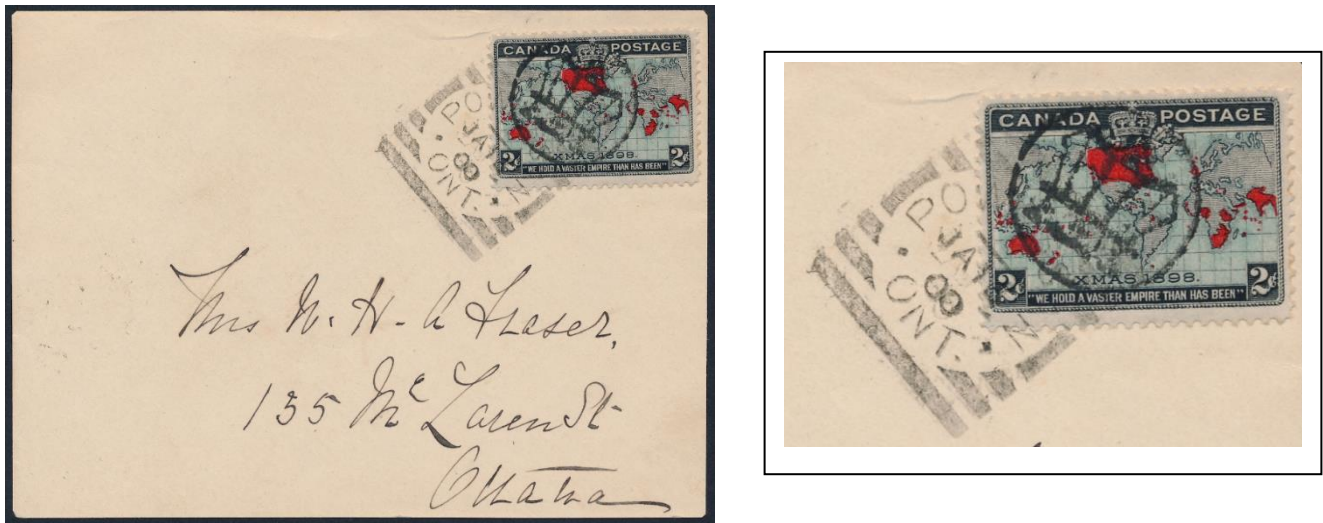


Figure 1.

In addition to the Powassan squared circle, the Map stamp is co-canceled with a SON Ottawa Crown postmark.⁴ This cover is unique in that it is the only cover documented in the *Census of Squared Circle Map Stamp Covers*² with an Ottawa Crown postmark. Since the Ottawa Crown was known to be extensively forged, the question is whether this is a fake Ottawa Crown cancel or whether it is an authentic use of the Ottawa Crown postmark as a canceling 'receiver'.

The Ottawa Crown postmark (see **Figure 2**) is a "fancy cancel" (Lacelle fancy cancel #1284) that was proofed in April 1880 and used until the early 1900's.⁴ Smythies⁴ published a study of this postmark and its forgeries based on an examination of the authentic strike from the Pritchard and Andrews proof book.



Figure 2.

A Unique Map Stamp Cover (Continued)

The characteristics of this postmark, as reported by Smythies, can be found in the accompanying Table (below). Both genuine and forged postmarks are known on the Map stamp and examples of each were displayed by Anders in his Map stamp exhibit.⁵ Also included in the Table are several characteristics of the postmark that were identified by Anders.

Characteristics of the Ottawa Crown Postmark

Crown	Smythies	Anders	This Cover
Diadem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 small triangles forming a Maltese Cross ~4 mm square • square between triangles makes a neat intaglio Cross • diadem rests on top of the frame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four symmetrical triangles with a clear "X" between them • fakes have triangles too close together 	conforms to Smythies
Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 sectors with vertical lines that meet the top and bottom of the frame • central rectangular sector - thick border lines, measures ~6.5 x 2.5-3 mm, closed at the top by the lower triangle of the diadem • internal sectors - each similar in size, has a small curved arch (the top of which is 4.25-4.5 mm from the base), top line is thick and vertical line is 7.5 mm and thin • outer sectors - narrower than internal sectors, thin lines with outer lines curving slightly outward, vertical line 6 mm • outer frame - unbroken line at sides and top, measures 15 x 8 mm (maximum) 		conforms to Smythies
Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 thick horizontal lines measuring 14 (upper) x 13.5 (lower) mm separated by 2.5-3 mm • in between is a short horizontal bar and 2 triangles pointing inwards that typically block the ends and are in line with the outer frame lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centre ornament at the base of crown is a short rectangle 2 mm long • fakes are too long, 2.8 mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conforms to Smythies • rectangle ~2 mm
Outer Circle	regular, unbroken circle with diameter nearly 21 mm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diameter 22 mm • fakes \leq20.5 mm and not a true circle 	regular circle with diameter ~20.5-21 mm

First, as can be seen by comparing the proof strike (left side of **Figure 2**) and the cover strike (**Figure 2** right side), the characteristics of the cancel compare favourably with both the Smythies and Anders descriptions (see Table). Second, the use of the Ottawa Crown as a 'receiver' can be rationalized in one of two ways. D.B.T. Davis published a study of the postmarks used by the Ottawa Main post office⁶ on behalf of the federal government.

A Unique Map Stamp Cover (Continued)

Although the Ottawa Crown is included in this list of government handstamps, Davis suggests that the “outlined crown OH-2” (Davis’ nomenclature) probably does not belong in the list since “no government-specific use has been noted for it”. However, examples of its’ use are known for “re-cancelling lightly-cancelled stamps on covers directed to Ottawa”. It could be argued that the cover shown in **Figure 1** exemplifies this practice.

Alternatively, it is possible that the Ottawa postmaster viewed the use of the Powassan squared circle to cancel the Map stamp as an incorrect use of a ‘dater’, and then applied the Ottawa crown as a ‘correct’ obliterator.⁷ Either of these explanations would be appropriate and, taken together with the favourable postmark characteristics, suggest that this is an authentic use of the Ottawa Crown on a Squared Circle Map stamp cover.

References

1. Robert A. Lee March 2002 auction #103, Lot #3609
2. R. Friesen, *Census of Squared Circle Map Stamp Covers*, BNAPS website, pg 278 (2020)
3. *The Ottawa City Directory 1901*, Ottawa: Might Directories Ltd.
4. E.A. Smythies, “The Ottawa Crown Cancellation and its Forgeries”, in *Maple Leaves*, Vol. 9, No. 10, Whole No. 82, pg 171 (1963)
5. J.T. Anders, *Imperial Penny Postage 1898*, ORAPEX 2002 Exhibit (note that all 3 of the genuine examples exhibited by Anders are SON strikes on off-cover Map stamps and would therefore not have tied the stamp to the cover)
6. D.B.T. Davis, “Ottawa Post Office Official Handstruck Free Markings”, in *PHSC Journal*, No. 97, pg 2 (1999)
7. Explanation offered by members of the BNAPS Large and Small Queens study group
8. David Lacelle (Chairman of the BNAPS Fancy Cancel Study Group) notes that “Yours (referring to this cover)_has two of the “primary” “Correct” details I look for in this cancel.”

NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES: TYPE ONE

ST. Ann’s, ONT: Second reported strike for 1904; light transit backstamp strike on 2 Cent Edward cover dated -/AP 2/04.

NOVA SCOTIA AND NEW BRUNSWICK

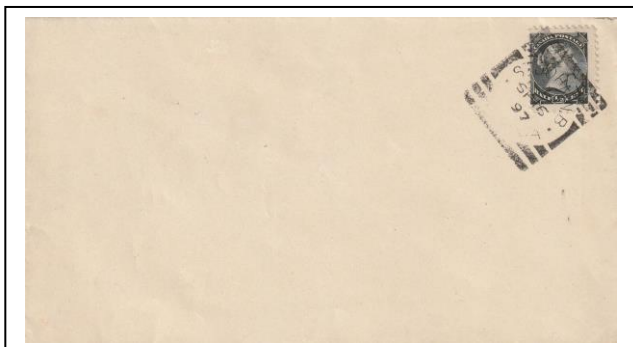
Canning, NS: First reported strike on a QV Leaf issue; 3 Cent issue on cover, strike dated *FE 2/98.

Stellarton, NS: First reported strike on a 5 Cent Small Queen; strike on cover is dated -/JY 26/95.

Fredericton, NB: First reported strike on a 3 Cent Letter Card, dated PM/JY ?/95; possibly the 27th.

Rothsay, NB: Backstamp on 2 Cent Letter card, dated -/AP 6/03. Handbook indicates strike on a Letter Card but does not indicate the denomination.

St. John, NB, Hammer 2: First reported strike on a ½ Cent Small Queen, dated 1/SP 16/97; single franking householder mail, sent unsealed and unaddressed for bulk delivery of local, printed matter material. (Below)



NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES: PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND and QUEBEC

Charlottetown, PEI: First reported strike on a dollar Jubilee issue; very light strike on a \$1 Jubilee stamp, partially dated ?/AP 25/98.

Eastman, QUE: First report of a strike associated with a 3 Cent QV Numeral issue; backstamp on cover with Sherbrooke, Que squared circle dispatch postmark; Eastman strike dated -/SP 10/98.

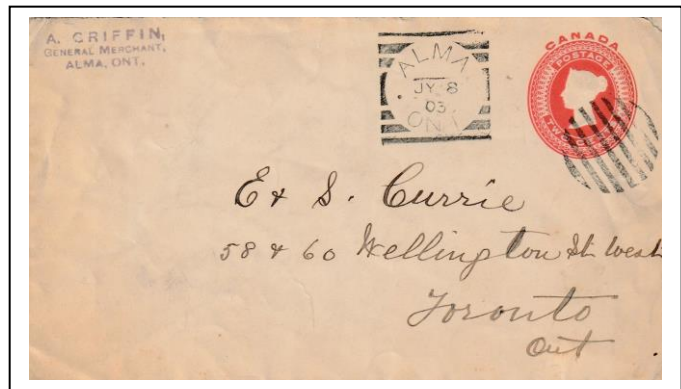


Hull, QUE Hammer 2: First reported strike on a 15 Cent Jubilee issue; strike on stamp is dated -/JU 28/97 (Right)

ONTARIO

Acton, ONT Hammer 2: First reported strike on a 5 Cent QV Leaf issue; strike on registered cover dated -/JA 22/99 (Below, left)

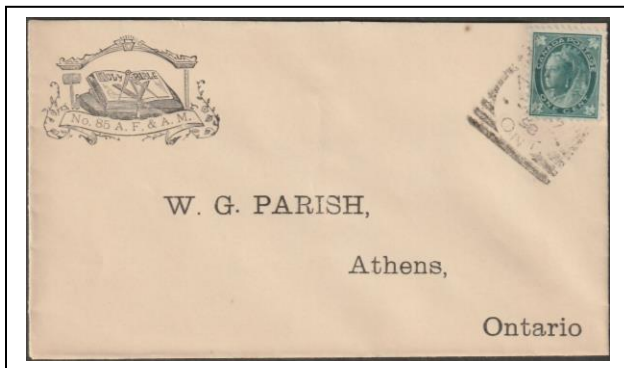
Alma, ONT State 2: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Gov't Envelope, strike dated -/JY 8/03. (Below, right)



Alma, ONT State 2: First reported strike on a 1 Cent Leaf issue, muddled strike possibly dated -/FE 24/98..

Athens, ONT: First reported strike on a 1 Cent QV Leaf issue; strike dated AM/AP 27/98. (Below, left)

Hamilton, Canada: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Gov't envelope; strike dated 18/OC 17/95. (Below, right)



Little Current, ONT: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Jubilee; strike on a pair of stamps is dated -/JY 15/97.

NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES: ONTARIO (Continued)

Mill Brook, ONT: Second example of the earliest reported date of use; strike on a 3 Cent Small Queen stamp, dated -/JU 10/95.

Peterborough, ONT: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Gov't Envelope; strike dated -/OC 25/03 (Below, left)

Powassan, ONT: First reported strike on a 2/3 Government Envelope (U14): strike dated -/SP 15/99.

Powassan, ONT: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Jubilee; light strike on stamp is dated -/JA 10/01.

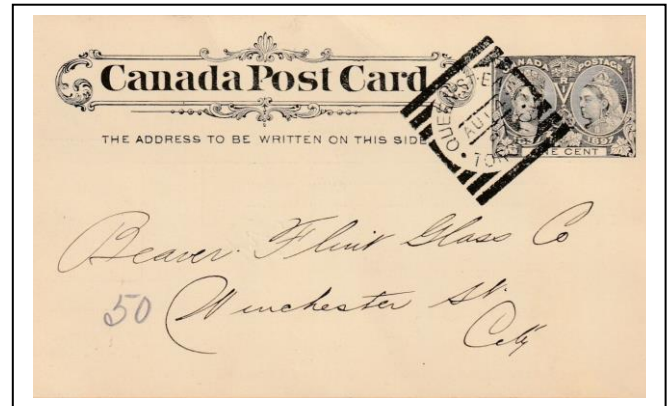
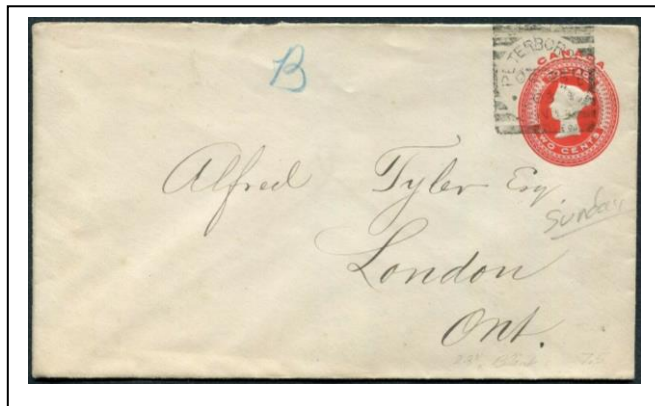
Roseneath, ONT: First reported strike on an 8 Cent Jubilee; strike on stamp dated -/AP 20/99.

Teeswater, ONT: First reported strike on a 1 Cent Jubilee; strike on stamp is dated -/SP ?/97.

Thornhill, ONT: Two examples of the inverted indicia block, both on Edward postcards; strikes dated AM/FE 8/09 and PM/FE 8/09. This occurrence is noted on the Sixth Edition Handbook but does not indicate the time mark(s).

Toronto - Bleecker Street Hammer 2: Second reported and only on- cover example of the missing year date indicia strike, on a 1 Cent Government envelope with pair ½ cent Small Queen issues, dated -/JA 22/-.

Toronto Queen Street East: First reported strike on a Jubilee Postcard; dated -/AU 14/97 (Below, right)



Wallaceburg, ONT: First reported strike on an 8 Cent Jubilee; strike on stamp dated AM/JU 23/97.

Winona, ONT: First reported strike on a 2 Cent Jubilee issue; strike on stamp dated -/JA 10/01.

Wooler, ONT: A second reported 1901 date; strike on drop rate cover with QV 1 cent Numeral dated -/OC 7/01.

MANITOBA, ASSINIBOIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, and RPO's

Gretna, MAN: First reported strike on a 15 Cent Jubilee; light strike on stamp is dated -/MY 23/98.

Morden, MAN: First report of a strike for 1921; backstamp on a card, dated -/MR 5/21. Every year from 1894 to 1923 has now been reported, confirming one continuous period of use. followed by the two brief periods of later use in 1934 and 1946.

Winnipeg, MAN Hammer 2: First reported strike on a 10 Cent Jubilee; strike on stamp is dated 4/FE 16/98.

NEW REPORTS AND UPDATES: MANITOBA, ASSINIBOIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, and RPO's
(Continued)

Moose Jaw, ASSA: First reported strikes on a 1 Cent Small Queen issue; strikes on a strip of 3 stamps, dated PM/DE 29/94. (Below, left)

Regina, ASSA: First reported strike on a Jubilee postcard; strike is dated -/AU 17/97.

Nanaimo, BC, State 2: First reported strike on a 1931 Cartier issue; strikes on stamp pair are dated AM/JUL 1/33. (Below, right)



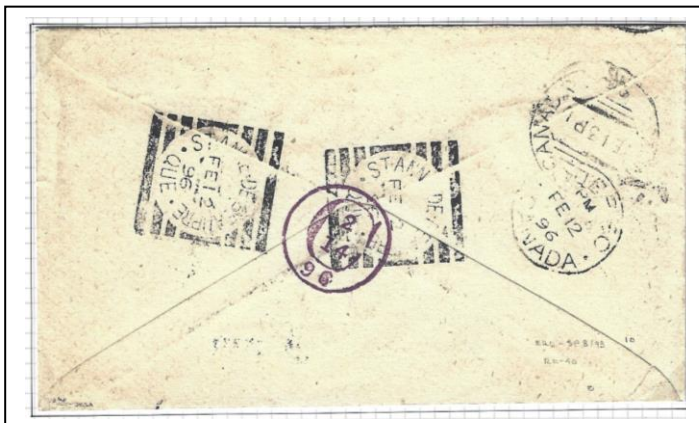
Victoria, BC Hammer 2: First reported strike on a Jubilee postcard; strike dated -/JY 17/97.

Victoria, BC Hammer 3: First reported strike on a 15 Cent Jubilee issue; strike on stamp dated NT/MY 10/98.

Napinka & Winnipeg MC No. 1: First reported strike associated with a 5 Cent QV Numeral issue; backstamp on cover franked with 5 cent and 3 cent QV issues; strike dated EAST/JA 12/01.

AN EXCEPTIONAL ST. ANNE de BEAUPRE REGISTERED COVER

Bill Pawluk sent along several reports, including this registered cover to New York with multiple strikes of the St. Ann de Beaupre, Quebec squared circle; the strikes are dated -/FE 12/96. Only 10 covers total are reported bearing this postmark. Note the Montreal Hammer II Barred Circle transit postmark on the back of the cover, dated FE 13 P1/96, and the Quebec, Canada CDS dated PM/FE 12/96.



With regard to the purple, circular postmark on the back of the cover, Bill offers the following insight:

"The cover most likely travelled in a closed pouch from Montreal to New York. I am quite certain that it is a NYPOD marking. I have seen various similar markings but unable to determine the significance of the letters. I have discussed this with other collectors; however, no one seems to know."