

# The Stamps of Canada, Part 34

Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added

## Chapter XI.—The 20¢ and 50¢ Stamps of 1893.

The Postmaster-General's Report for 1892 states that "Postage stamps of the value of 20 cents and 50 cents are about to be issued. These will be useful in prepayment of parcel post."



Sc. 46

Sc. 47

These high values were, of course, intended to be used in making up relatively large amounts of postage. They were not issued to be used in prepayment of any specific rates though a study of the postal rates of the period show that the postage on a parcel weighing up to one pound sent to the United Kingdom would require a 20¢ stamp, while a two pound parcel sent to Japan would take the 50¢ denomination. The same rates show that the postage on one pound parcels sent to Newfoundland was 15¢, though no stamp of this value had been issued subsequent to the series of 1868 nor has one ever since been included in the regular series.

These new 20¢ and 50¢ labels were issued on February 17th, 1893, and while alike in design, except as regards the denotation of value, they are quite dissimilar from any of the previously issued postage stamps of the Dominion both as regards size and design. The portrait shows Queen Victoria in her widow's weeds and is similar to that shown on the Bill stamps which were first issued in 1868. Above the portrait CANADA POSTAGE is curved, and on straight labels at the foot is the value in words, while between this inscription and the lower part of the medallion are figures of value.

The stamps were, as usual, produced by the line-engraved process, and they were printed in sheets of 100 at the Ottawa establishment of the British American Bank Note Company. The manufacturer's imprint was shown twice on each sheet—in the centre of the upper and lower margins. This imprint consisted of the words "British American Bank Note Co. Ottawa," on a strip of solid color measuring 38 mm. in length and 2-1/2 mm. in height. This colored strip has square ends and is enclosed within a pearly border.

Both values were printed on the wove paper used for the other denominations then current and the perforation was the usual 12 made by single-line machines.

Evidently these values were but sparingly used, for Mr. Howes tells us:—

Both were ordered to the number of half a million copies in 1893, and in 1895 25,000 more of the 20 cent and 30,000 more of the 50 cent were delivered, with a final 200 copies in 1896. These quantities were sufficient to last until the 20 cent was superseded by the newer type in 1901, and the 50 cent by the King's head stamp in 1908. Some 1,500 of the 20 cent were returned for destruction and about 10,000 of the 50 cent.



Imperforate pairs of the 1893 20¢ and 50¢, Sc. 46a and 47a

It seems hardly possible that but 200 copies of each were supplied in 1896—i.e. two sheets of each value—if they were the normal perforated stamps. Possibly this small supply consisted of the imperforates—both values being known in this condition—and if so they may have been printed to fill a special requisition. The imperforate 20¢ is on the normal shade but the 50¢ is, as Mr. Howes observes, in a "peculiar black blue" shade. There are no marked varieties in shade as can easily be understood from the few printings which took place.



1897 usages, the 50¢ on "The Halifax" corner card, the 20¢ on a registered cover, both addressed to Montreal,

To be continued

# The Stamps of Canada, Part 35

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## Chapter XII.—The 8¢ Stamp of 1893.

Until 1889 the registration fee had to be prepaid by means of the special stamps issued for the purpose. When, in 1889, a uniform registration fee of 5¢ was adopted the public were given permission to use the ordinary postage stamps in making up the difference between the old rate of 2¢ and the new one....In 1893 it was decided to discontinue the use of special registration stamps altogether and to permit the payment of the registry fee by means of regular postage stamps. As the rate of domestic postage was 3¢ at that time and the registration fee was 5¢, a new stamp, by means of which both postage and registration could be paid together...would be useful. Consequently an 8¢ denomination was issued, this being recorded in the Philatelic Record for October, 1893... [it] "resembles in design the 3 cents of the current series; but the head of the Queen has been turned the other way, and is now to the left."

This stamp...was printed from steel plates in sheets of 200 arranged in ten horizontal rows of twenty stamps each....there were no marginal imprints of any kind. This denomination was printed on wove paper and perforated 12 like the others....

The 8¢ is known entirely imperforate in the blue-grey shade, which was one of the earliest if not the first shade for this stamp....This stamp provides a large number of very distinct shade varieties....A writer in the Canada Stamp Sheet for October, 1900, says:—There are three varieties of this stamp, the slate, the lilac-grey and the purple. The first and second tints are comparatively common, but the purple is not found in every dealer's stock nor...many stamp collections....The total number issued of these stamps was 5,885,000, but unfortunately there are no



*Left to right, violet black, blue gray, slate*

records of the quantities of each of the three printings. It will be noticed that there is no 8 cents in the King Edward VII issue, for...the inland rate had been reduced to 2 cents; therefore the...combined postage and registration stamp is a 7 cents.

The first delivery of these stamps, and of course the first printing, was of 100,000, as recorded in the stamp accounts for 1893. As these accounts were made up to 30th June...the stamps were doubtless delivered just before the accounts were closed, so that opportunity had not been given to distribute the new value. For the next few fiscal years the amount received from the manufacturers averaged over a million and a half annually, so that by the time it was superseded it had been printed to the number of at least 7-1/2 millions.

**Reference:** 1893. Engraved and Printed by the British American Bank Note Co. Ottawa. Wove Paper. Perf. 12. 8¢ grey, Scott's No. 48. 48a, 49 or 49a. [Scott no longer lists a 48 or 49 and this stamp is now Sc. 44 violet black, with 44a blue gray, 44b slate and 44c gray.]