

The Stamps of Canada, Part 42

The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897

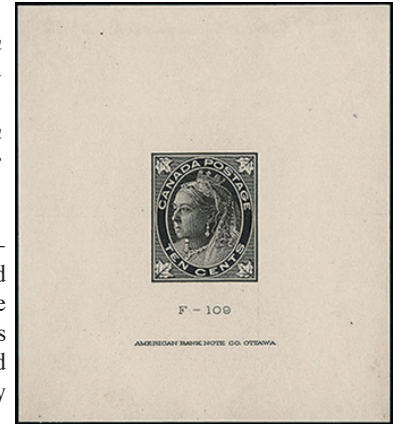
Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added



Above, complete Maple Leaf set, Scott 66-73, as issued.

Left, Maple Leaf Half Cent Large Die Proof in black, on thin card (65 x 69mm) with Die No F-102 and complete "American Bank Note Co. Ottawa" Imprint.

Right, Maple Leaf Ten Cents Large Die Proof in black, on thin card (61 x 69mm) with Die No F-109 and complete "American Bank Note Co. Ottawa" Imprint.



Soon after the printing contract was awarded to the American Bank Note Company it was rumoured that a new series of stamps would be issued, but for a time public expectations of the new

The Postmaster-General's Report for 1897, issued after the stamps had made their appearance, also refers to the new issue and to add completeness to our history we extract the following:—

stamps were overshadowed by the appearance of the Diamond Jubilee issue. A cutting from a Sept. 28, 1897 Ottawa paper shows, however, that preparations for a new set were well in hand, viz.:—

The design for a new postage stamp has been approved by the Postmaster-General. There is a portrait of Her Majesty as she appeared at the coronation, except that a coronet is substituted for a crown. The portrait has been engraved from a photo procured during the Jubilee ceremonies, and upon which was the Queen's own autograph, so that it is authentic. The corners of the stamp will be decorated with maple leaves, which were pulled from maple trees on Parliament Hill and engraved directly from them. Everything indeed is correct and up to date, and the new issue will reflect credit on Mr. Mulock's good taste. The engravers will take care to make this permanent and ordinary issue a tribute to their skill. The present stock of stamps it will take some months to exhaust, and not till they are done will the new stamps be issued. It may be about November of this year.

Owing to the change of contract for the manufacture and supply of postage stamps, a new series of stamps became necessary at the beginning of the present fiscal year. New stamps ranging in value from the 1/2¢ to the 10¢ denomination (inclusive) were printed, and the first supplies thereof sent out to postmasters as the corresponding denominations of the old stamps became exhausted. A considerable quantity of the higher values of that series (15 cents, 20 cents and 50 cents) remaining over from the late contract, these three stamps continued to be issued, so that the department, previous to the introduction of the same denominations in the new series, might, in accordance with the universal practice, dispose of the old stamps in each case, before issuing any of the new....

About a month later a circular was addressed to postmasters:
Circular to Postmaster.
New Issue of Postage Stamps, Etc.

The Postmaster-General has made arrangements for a new issue of postage stamps, letter cards, stamped envelopes, post cards, and post bands. These will be supplied to postmasters in the usual way. Postmasters are, however, instructed not to sell the stamps of any denomination of the new issue until the stamps of the corresponding denomination of the present issue are disposed of. The filling of requisitions by the Postage Stamp Branch will be regulated by the same principle—that is to say, no item of the proposed issue will be sent out until the corresponding item of the present issue has been exhausted....

R. M. Coulter,
Deputy Postmaster-General.
Post-Office Department, Canada.
Ottawa, 25th October, 1897.



Finished Die Essays for the Unissued 15¢, 20¢ and 50¢ denominations in black on thick wove paper in black, showing Die Numbers F-110, F-111 and F-112 and clear margin at top and from the hardened state of the die, showing Die No 'F-110' and American Bank Note Co. Ottawa" Imprint.

To Be Continued

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To conform to the regulations of the Universal Postal Union, the color of the new 1 cent stamp was green, and that of the 5 cents a deep blue. This necessitated corresponding changes in the colors of the other stamps of the new series; for example, purple instead of green being selected for the 2 cent denomination, and orange instead of slate for the 8 cent.

The first denomination of the new series—the 1/2 cent—was placed on sale on November 9th, 1897. About the end of the same month the 6¢ made its appearance, and this was quickly followed by the 1¢, 2¢, 5¢ and 8¢ in December. The 3¢ and 10¢ were issued early in January, 1898, so that official instructions that the new stamps were not to be issued until the supplies of the old issue were exhausted were fully carried out, though all values were on sale within the space of about three months.

The design of the new stamps is at once simple and effective. In the central oval is a three-quarter face portrait of Her Majesty, with head to left, which was copied from a photograph (right) taken by W. & D. Downey, of London, at the time of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Around the oval is a band of solid color containing the words CANADA POST-



AGE above and the value in words below, all being in Egyptian capitals. The spandrels are filled with a ground of horizontal lines on which maple leaves rest. While, as Mr. Howes observes, "much criticism was engendered by the fact that the portrait was too large for its frame, making the design appear cramped," public verdict, as a whole, expressed unqualified approval of the new design.

The stamps, like those of the preceding issues, were printed from line-engraved plates and, with one exception, these plates contained one hundred impressions arranged in ten horizontal rows of ten each. The exception referred to occurred in the 1/2¢, the first plate for which contained 200 stamps, arranged in ten rows of twenty stamps each. This is mentioned in the *Weekly Philatelic Era* as follows:—

By some misunderstanding the contractors, the American Bank Note Co., set the sheet up with 200 stamps, and the first five hundred sheets were so printed. The sheets were afterwards cut in two through the imprint, and we have these half sheets with a close imperforated margin on either the left or right edge. Afterwards sheets of 100 stamps were issued, all the stamps perforated on all four sides. Plate number collectors will find the earliest sheets difficult to obtain. Both sheets bear the plate number 1.

The imprint on the sheets followed the plan originated with the Jubilee series, "OTTAWA—No—1," etc., being placed in the centre of the top margin. Each value began with No. 1 and apparently for the 5¢, 6¢, 8¢, and 10¢ the one plate sufficed. For the 1/2¢, there were two plates [photo, next column], both numbered "1"; while for the 1¢ there were two plates, for the 2¢, three plates, and for the 3¢, six plates.



Sc. 69 Plate 4 pair



Sc. 71 Plate No 1 & Imprint block of 8

Sc. 73 part Imprint & Plate No 1 pair

The stamps were printed on stout white wove paper, similar to that used for the Jubilee stamps and at some time or other a slightly thinner and more brittle paper seems to have been used.

To be Continued

The Stamps of Canada, Part 44

The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897

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The unique 1¢ Plate Proof (Sc. 67P) Plate No 3 Imprint block of 14 in blue green color of issue on India paper mounted on card.

The imprint on the sheets followed the plan originated with the Jubilee series, "OTTAWA—No—1," etc., being placed in the centre of the top margin. Each value began with No. 1 and apparently for the 5¢, 6¢, 8¢, and 10¢ the one plate sufficed. For the 1/2¢, as we have already shown, there were two plates, both numbered "1"; while for the 1¢ there were two plates, for the 2¢, three plates, and for the 3¢, six plates.



The two Plate 1 versions, top on a top margin Plate No 1 and Imprint block of 12 from Pane B in colour of issue (black) on India paper mounted on card, large margins and a most attractive display item, extremely fine; bottom, issued plate block of eight with Plate No 1 and Imprint.



Left: 5¢ Plate Proof on India paper on card (Sc. 70P) in dark blue color of issue, but on white paper; Right: 5¢ as issued (Sc. 70) on bluish paper.

The paper for the 5¢ is of a distinctly bluish color—this being the first occasion on which colored paper was used for any of the postage stamps of the Dominion.

The perforation was the regulation gauge of 12, which has been in continuous use since 1858, and, as the *Philatelic Record* stated when first

chronicling the issue, "many of the stamps are badly centered, a characteristic defect of the American Bank Note Company's work." The 5¢ is known entirely imperforate. [All values are now known imperforate and are listed in Scott with "a" variety letters, valued as imperforate pairs.]

Reference List.

1897. Engraved and Printed by the American Bank Note Co., Ottawa, on wove paper. Perf.

12. [The leftmost numbers, 52-59, are the author's continuing count in his monograph.]

- 52. 1/2¢ black, Scott's No. 66.
- 53. 1¢ green, Scott's No. 67.
- 54. 2¢ purple, Scott's No. 68.
- 55. 3¢ carmine, Scott's No. 69.
- 56. 5¢ dark blue on bluish, Scott's No. 70.
- 57. 6¢ brown, Scott's No. 71.
- 58. 8¢ orange, Scott's No. 72.
- 59. 10¢ brown-violet, Scott's No. 73.



5¢ bright blue top margin Imperf pair, Sc. 70a, no gum as issued. These also can be found with original gum.

The Stamps of Canada, Part 45

The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897 — Usages

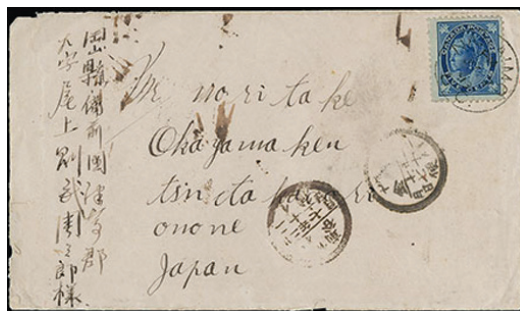
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In this wrap-up to the Maple Leaf section, we present a sampling of this issue on cover. JFD.

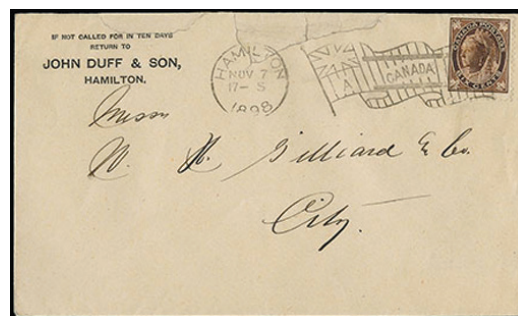
1/2¢, Sc. 66, paying the householder rate and tied by a Hamilton 25 JU '98 three-ring cds to un-addressed illustrated Canadian Pacific Railway Circular.



5¢, Sc. 70 tied by Nanaimo 7 JY '99 cds to 5¢ UPU rate cover to JAPAN, with 23 JUL Yokohama receiver on reverse.



1¢, Sc. 67, paying the 1¢ postcard rate and tied by Notre-Dame-du-Portage 15 JU '98 cds to illustrated Rule Britannia Patriotic Postcard to Montreal, with next day receiver on front.

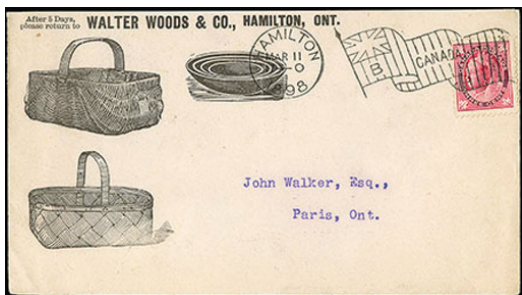
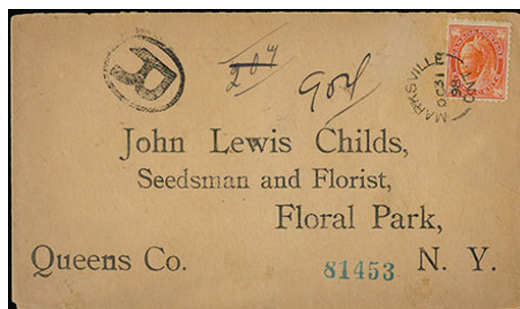


6¢, Sc. 71, tied by Hamilton 7 NO '98 Flag cancel to triple Rate Drop Letter (2¢ per oz.).

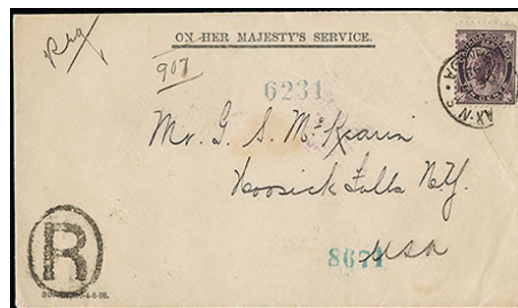
Sc. 68 var, 2¢ Bisect, paying the unofficial but accepted 1¢ County Rate, tied by Sussex 13 SP '98 cds to cover to Nauwigawauk



8¢, Sc. 72, tied by 31 OC '98 Marksville cds to registered cover to New York.



3¢, Sc. 69, tied by Hamilton 11 MAR '98 Flag cancel to illustrated advertising cover with additional to Paris, Ont.



10¢, Sc. 73, tied by Halifax 16 DE '98 cds to registered OHMS printed cover to USA with 19 DE Hoosick Falls receiver on back. Official letters could not be sent free

outside of Canada, so the rate should have been 8¢ (3¢ postage plus 5¢ registration) so this cover is overpaid by 2¢.