

Victorian Canada—Part 6—The Small Queens

By Ed Richardson (*From the Stamp Specialist Volume 12, The Maroon Book*)



FIG. 23

Imperforate strip of the 10c Lilac-rose, with partial imprint.
(Note "Montreal").

The Small Cents Issue

If the reader is looking for a series of Canadian stamps which is ideal for the specialist of moderate means, he needs to seek no further, as the Small Cents issues literally "have everything"! Most denominations are inexpensive enough to permit the specialist obtaining them in sufficient quantities for study.

Imperforates are known for all denominations, (Fig. 23), a fine lot of them coming onto the market recently from the "Green Collection." Apparently these were "issued" in quite sizeable quantities. Another variety, horizontal pairs, imperforate vertically *between*, is known of the 1½c.

The origin and necessity of all small cents bisects seems questionable with the exception of the 1c bisect used in November, 1897 on copies of *The Railway News*.

Copies "off-set on back" are known of most values and are not scarce, but the 1c yellow, late shade, comes *printed* on both sides. Only a few copies are known. Several double strikes have been recorded for the 3c and 8c, and Hamilton lists a 2c deep green with a triple impression. The only recorded watermarked variety in this issue is a "stitch" watermark found on the 3c Indian Red, the early shade.

The comparative low catalog value of most denominations makes it possible for the student of these issues to obtain both mint and used multiple pieces at moderate cost. The usual mint blocks are without interest unless they show the position of some plate variety, re-entry, etc. However this is not true of marginal pieces showing the manufacturer's imprints. These imprint pieces are of particular interest in the study of these issues, as they are one of the important keys to the knowledge of plates used, and to the identification of the various printings. Most values of this series were in use for twenty-seven years!

The imprints are of three main types:

(1) "British American Bank Note Co., Montreal



FIG. 24

Pair of the 2c blue-green, with a bottom margin "Ottawa" imprint.

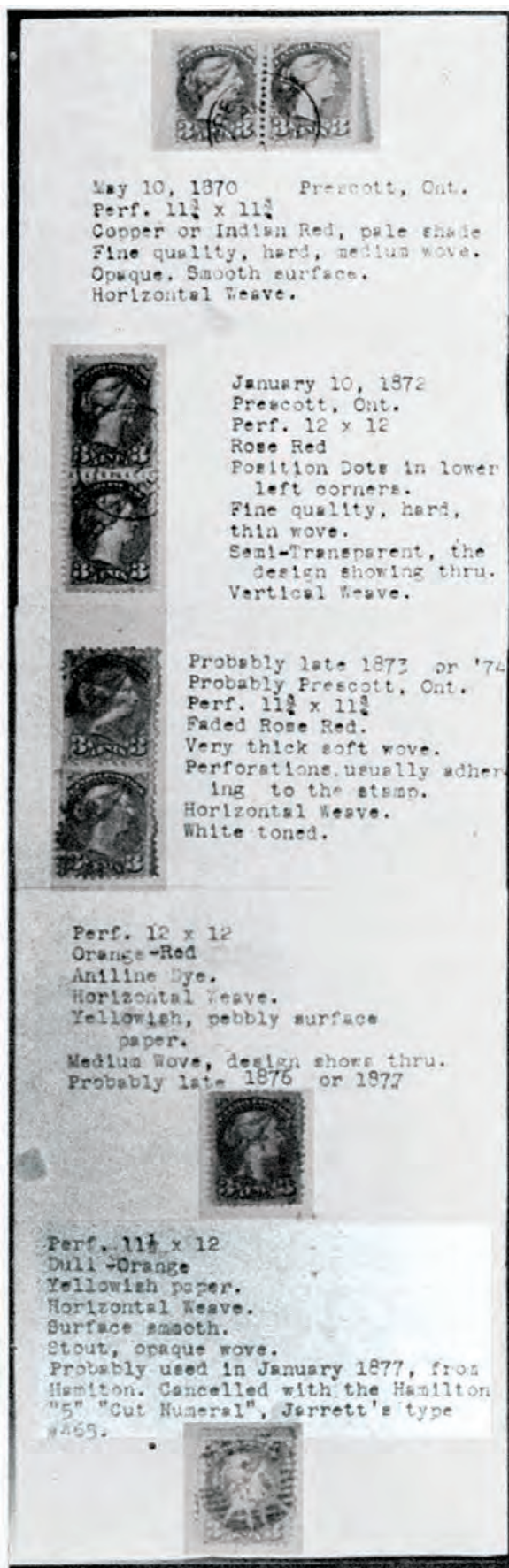


FIG. 25

A few examples of the many shade, paper and perforation varieties of the 3c Small Cents issue.

& Ottawa," in small colorless capitals.
(2) "British American Bank Note Co.,
Montreal" (Fig. 23), in larger, color-
less capitals and lower case letters.
(3) "British American Bank Note Co.,
Ottawa," (Fig. 24), in small colorless
capitals.

Additional data regarding these
imprints follows:

Imprint #1. 1mm high, 51 mm long.
Occurs once in each of the four margins.
In addition to the printer's imprint, the
denomination is designated in capital let-
ters, 4mm high in the top margin, above
stamps #2 and #3. In use from 1870-1875.
Shoemaker reports a variety of this im-
print, $1\frac{3}{4}$ mm high, 47mm long, with
BANK NOTE in capital letters and the
balance of the imprint in upper and
lower case.

Imprint #2. $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm high, 56mm
long. Position varies with each value,
apparently occurs only in the top and
bottom margins on some, and on all four
sides in others. The denomination is
designated in capital letters, 6mm high,
occurring once in the top margin, in
varying positions. In use from 1875 until
1892. (Since early 1888 all printing was
done at Ottawa, therefore the early Ot-
tawa printings were made from "Mon-
treal" plates.)

Imprint #3, type 1, used on 200 sub-
ject plates. 1mm high, 40mm long. Oc-
curs in top margin above stamps #10 and
#11, and twice in the bottom margin, be-
low stamps #185 and #186 on the left,
and stamps #195 and #196 on the right.
There were no imprints in the side mar-
gins. The denomination is designated
twice in the top margins, in thin capital
letters, 4mm high.

Imprint #3, type 2, used on 100 sub-
ject plates, for 2c value only. 2mm high,
49mm long. Occurs once in the top and
bottom margins only. (Fig. 24).

The reason for placing so much
emphasis upon the imprint varieties is
their importance in distinguishing be-
tween the "Montreal" or early issues

and the "Ottawa" or late issues. However other means of identification have been worked out by Canadian specialists based upon a study of (1) perforations, (2) shades, (3) position dots, (4) gum, and (5) the tone, thickness, quality and "weave" of the paper. (Fig. 25). One of the finest of these studies appeared in the March 8, 1941 issue of *Stamps*, entitled "*The Three-Cent Small Queen Issue of Canada*," by L. D. Shoemaker. No less than 37 different "classes" or varieties of the 3c value are listed. The rarity of the lot is the perf $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$, Indian-red.

As would be expected of an issue in use for so long a period, numerous plate varieties, retouches, re-entries, and damaged or worn plate varieties exist.

Those interested in proofs will find that several denominations exist in die proof. Plate proofs exist of all values on cardboard, and of some values on India paper. Finished, gummed proofs on wove paper, and perforated 12, exist as color trials for the 1c, 2c and 3c values. Two interesting essays in both the plate proof and the finished state, were made for the proposed $12\frac{1}{2}$ c and 15c values, which were never issued.

Because of their comparatively low catalogue value, many collectors neglect to form a collection of Small Cents issues on cover. However this was one of the most interesting periods in Canadian history, and a representative collection showing examples of various rates, combinations and unusual postal markings, together with an assortment of colorful "corner cards," would prove to be anything but dull.

No other period in Canadian postal history compares with that of the "Small Cents" for richness of cancellation material. Many a Canadian collector has filled albums with cancellations on the 3c value alone, and has been afforded a great deal of pleasure at very small expense. Those familiar with U. S. postal history during this same period (1870-97), will recall it was during those years that U. S. postmasters "went hog-wild" in their invention of fancy cork cancellations. Apparently this fad took hold among their brother postmasters in Canada, and we find a striking similarity in some of the cancellations used in the two countries.



FIG. 25

Two singles of the 3c Indian-red, used from Three Rivers, Que., and tied with a very fine example of the "Maple Leaf" cancellation.



a.
Hamilton "5"
Jarrett's type
#162



b.
Ottawa "1"
Jarrett's type
#164



c.
origin
"unknown"



d.
Dunnville (?)
Jarrett's type
#1395a (?)



e.
Bealton, Ont.
Jarrett's type
#963a



f.
Stanstead, L. C.
A late use of the
4-ring numeral.



g.
Diamond Jubilee
Machine "Flag"
cancel.



h.
Victoria, B. C.
"Sunburst Crown"
Jarrett's type #854.



i.
"unknown"
somewhat similar to
Jarrett's type #1371

FIG. 27

Some examples of the unusual cancellations which may be found on the Small Cents issues.

The main classifications of these varied cancellations are listed below. Those interested in this branch of philatelic Canada will find Fred Jarrett's 1929 B.N.A. Book to be the standard guide, and it is quite complete.

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| *Crowns | Targets & Rings | Ship & Railroad |
| Flowers | 1 Ring Numerals | Registration |
| Leaves | 2 Ring Numerals | Towns |
| Faces | 3 Ring Numerals | Territorials |
| *Stars | *4 Ring Numerals | Precancels |
| Crosses | *Other Numerals | Paid |
| Masonic | Initial Letters | *Flags and other |
| Cogwheel | *Other Geometric Designs | early machine types |
| Bars & Grids | | |

*Examples shown in Fig. 27.

Many of the cancellations are shown to best advantage on cover or in pairs and strips, being too large to show much of the detail on a single stamp. (Fig. 26). Among those held in highest favor by Canadian cancellation collectors are the crowns, leaves, flowers, Masonic emblems and the various types of numerals. The 1c and 3c values provide the bulk of the cancellation material. The 2c stamp was not as commonly used and it is difficult to secure any large quantities of fine cancelled copies.

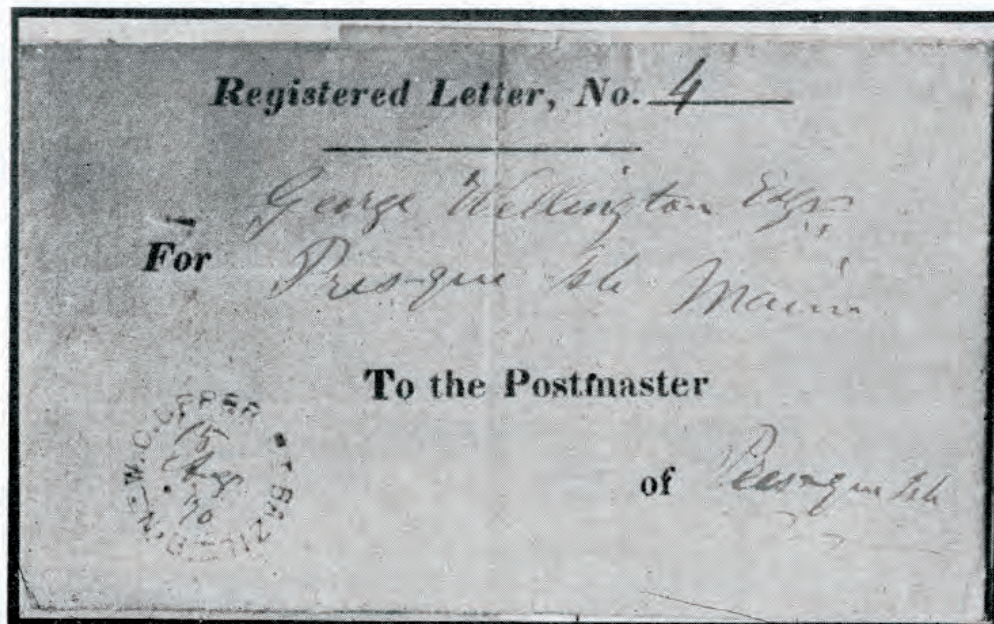


FIG. 28

Registered Letter Receipt, used as a wrapper around the original cover. Mailed at W. O. (Way Office) Upper St. Basil, N. B. on Aug. 15, 1870. It was backstamped the same day at Grand Falls, N. B., apparently the nearest regular postoffice. Received at Precque Isle, Maine, Aug. 19th.

Registration

Canada's registration system started in 1854. An agreement between Canada and the U. S. in Oct. 1856 provided for the registration of "cross the border" letters. If desired a complete record of each registered letter could be obtained. An example is the Registered Letter Receipt shown in Fig. 28.

The original letter was wrapped in a special form, addressed in care of the receiving postmaster. The inside provided space for the addressee's signature, and for the receiving office's postmark showing the date of its delivery.

The series of Registered Letter Stamps was issued on November 15, 1875. The 2c was intended to prepay the registration fee within Canada, the 5c—to the U. S., and the 8c—to the United Kingdom. This latter rate was reduced to 5c in 1877, and in 1889 the domestic rate was raised to 5c. Until 1878, when a uniform foreign rate of 8c was adopted, the registration fee to foreign countries was an



FIG. 29

Pair of the 2c registration stamps with the "2" imprint over stamp #5.

amount "equal to the postage." What an interesting group of covers could be assembled showing the proper use of these stamps in making up these various rates, during the different periods!

Engraved and printed by the British American Bank Note Co., their "Montreal & Ottawa" imprints with denominations indicated in capital letters and figures (2c only) 6mm high, (Fig. 29), appears on all printings, with one exception. The increased domestic demands for the 5c value necessitated a new plate in 1888. This bears the Ottawa" imprint.

Less appreciated by collectors generally, but probably rarer than the 8c value, is the 2c carmine (Scott's Scarlet), a companion stamp to the 3c carmine (Scott's Carmine-red) of October 1888.

The "Widow's Weeds" Issue of 1893

Intended for prepayment of parcel post, two new high valued stamps appeared in early 1893. These were the 20c and 50c Victoria in "Widow's Weeds," a design quite different from all preceding postal emissions, but copied after the Third Issue Bill Stamps of 1868,—in use just twenty-five years earlier!



FIG. 30

Compare the 1868 Canada Bill Stamp with the 1893 postal issue. No small wonder, that the 50c Bill stamp frequently passed for postage duty!

The design varies but little from the Bill stamp. This similarity caused some confusion, and examples exist where the 50c Bill stamp was used to prepay postage. The ornaments in the upper corners were changed and the shading around the eyes deepened, with the result that the facial expression was improved. The over-all

measurement is slightly wider and taller than the revenue.

There was evidently very little use for these values. Although only slightly more than a half million each of these were printed and issued, the 20c was not replaced until December 1900, while the 50c remained in use for over fifteen years.

According to Howes, an order was placed with the printer in 1896, for 200 copies of each value. It is unlikely that this small order would be for the perforated stamps, and it is probable that these 200 copies, two sheets of each value, were the imperforates.(!!)

Supplemental Illustrations

1870-79 Issues



Sc. 34



Sc. 35



Sc. 36



Sc. 37



Sc. 38



Sc. 39



Sc. 40

1888-97 Issues



Sc. 41



Sc. 42



Sc. 43



Sc. 44



Sc. 45

1893 Issues—"Widow's Weeds"



Sc. 46



Sc. 47



Sc. 46a "Widow's Weed" Imperforate corner sheet margin pair



Sc. 47a "Widow's Weed" Imperforate corner sheet margin pair

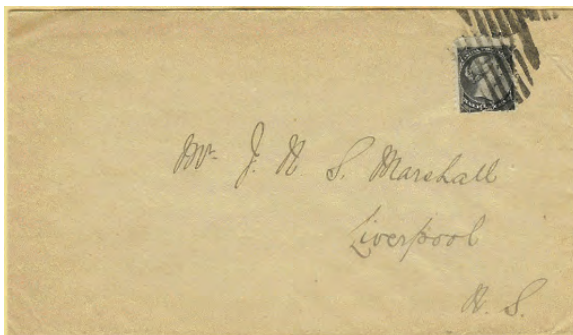


1882 1/2¢ Montreal Imprint Block



1870 1¢ Ottawa Imprint strip. Yellow being extremely difficult to show, we also show a computer-enhanced image of the imprint.

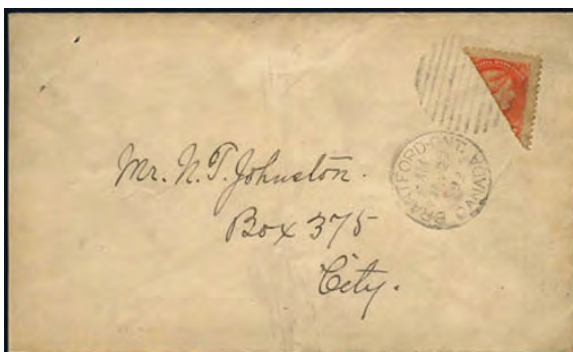
The Covers



1/2¢ (Sc. 34) tied by grid cancels, paying the unsealed envelope rate in Liverpool, Nova Scotia.



Above, 1872 6¢ yellow brown (Sc. 39) on a cover to the U.S., tied by Ottawa Maltese Cross cork cancels, with a FE 17 73 circular date stamp at the lower left, also with a private advertising handstamp in blue.



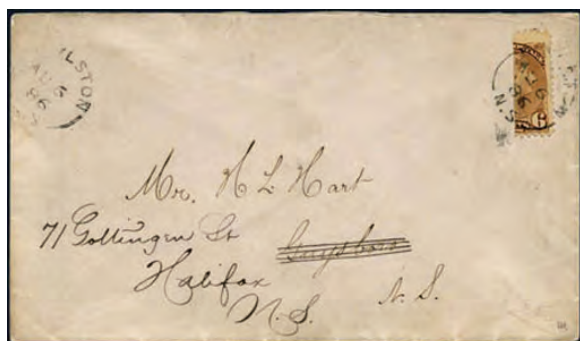
1873 3¢ bisect, Sc. 37 variety, tied to intercity cover by Brantford, Ont. Jan 29, 1892 duplex cancel, paying the interim 1-1/2¢ rate in effect for 1 day only.



3¢ dull red (Sc. 37), tied by Brantford, Ont. duplex cancel on an advertising cover for animal breeder G.H. Pugsley featuring two pug dogs.



1876, 5¢ Slate Green (Sc. 38) on cover to "Judge Commissioner, Island of Jersey", tied by cork cancel, also with light Paspebiac, Que. FE 16 86 cancel, Jersey MR 3 86 receiving cancel on reverse.



1872 6¢ bisect (Sc. 39a) tied to a forwarded cover by a Boylston, N.S. Aug 6, 1886 circular date stamp, paying the 3¢ rate to Guysboro, NS, forwarded to Halifax without a further charge.



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



1888 3¢ bright vermilion (Sc. 41) with 1875 5¢ dark green registry stamp (Sc. F2), both tied by bluish green grids on 1891 (Mar. 30) hotel advertising cover to London, Canada, with matching "Lucknow/ Ont." origin circular date stamp with "R" in oval, "W.G. & R.K. & P." (March 31) and London (March 31) backstamps.



3¢ dull red (Sc. 37), tied by Brantford, Ont. duplex cancel on an advertising cover for animal breeder G.H. Pugsley featuring two pug dogs.



1888 3¢ Bright Vermilion (Sc. 41) tied by light strike of indistinct circular datestamp on Hog, Hen and Bee Breeder's illustrated cover to Toronto, with 1898 transit and receiving backstamps.



1870-89, 1/2c-10c Small Queens, Montreal Printings (Sc. 34-40), one of each value, plus 15¢ gray Large Queen (Sc. 30) and 5¢ Registration stamp (Sc. F2), all tied by "R" registry handstamps on 1890 cover to New York, also with manuscript and handstamp registration numbers, Montreal backstamp.