

# Victorian Canada—Part 8—Leafs, Numerals

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

## The Maple Leaf and Numeral Issues



FIG. 35

Die Proof on India paper with No. and Imprint  
"American Bank Note Co., Ottawa."

For nearly twenty-eight years (Jan. 1870 - Nov. 1897), the design of the basic series of Canadian stamps remained unchanged, and the Small Cents issues with the portrait of the young Queen continued in use. Shortly after the Jubilee issue however, the first of a new series appeared,—the "Maple Leaf."

Neither the "Widow Weeds" portrait used in the series of 1893, nor the Von Angeli painting used for the Jubilee issue, were chosen for vignette of this new series. Instead the portrait was taken from the studio photograph made by W. & D. Downey of Ebury St., London, chosen by Queen Victoria as the official Jubilee portrait. This was reproduced in full size in the June 1897 issue of *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, and formed the Frontispiece for Vol. 7. See page 39.

The reception given this new issue was generally favorable, but did meet with two objections. The first objection came mainly from the philatelic press of that date which pointed out the oval was too small, allowing insufficient space for the portrait and giving it a crowded appearance. The second objection arose from the French speaking portion of Canada's population. Since there were no figures of value, and the denominations being designated in English only, considerable difficulty arose in distinguishing between the various values.

Within less than a year, the second objection led to the issue of the "Numeral" series. At the same time, the new design embodied the changes suggested by the first objection. It will be noted that the oval on the "Numeral" series overlays the border line, whereas in the "Maple Leaf" issue the oval does not touch this line. A less crowded and balanced design was the result. (Figs. 34 & 35).

While the "Maple Leaf" issues all appeared during 1897-98, the "Numeral" series appeared over a period of four years. The 5c "Numeral" was not included in the original series, and did not appear until July 1899. The depletion of supplies of the 20c large "Widow Weeds" of 1893 caused the issue of the 20c "Numeral" in December 1900, and the necessity for a new value created the 7c in December 1902. The 20c value is difficult to secure in any condition, and superb copies are extremely scarce.

Both the "Maple Leaf" and "Numeral" issues were used concurrently. After the appearance of the "Numeral" issue the use of the earlier series was generally restricted to the English-speaking provinces. This interesting phase of postal history could well be illustrated with a page of two covers, used at approximately the same dates, preferably late 1898 or 1899. One cover would be franked with copies of the "Maple Leaf" used from Ontario, the other from Quebec with the "Numeral."

An interesting variety exists on the 1/2c "Numeral." The vertical, right marginal row of perforations is entirely missing. (Fig. 36). This variety has probably been overlooked by specialists,—but what a rush there would have been if this missing row of perforations had occurred between two rows of stamps!

To agree with the regulations of the Universal Postal Union, the color of the 2c domestic rate stamp was changed from purple to carmine. The



FIG. 36

Unperforated right marginal copy of the 1/2c "Numeral." — Two copies known.



FIG. 37

2c Surcharge on the 3c "Numeral" issue, with the surcharge "showing thru."



FIG. 38

Inverted Surcharge on the 3c "Maple Leaf" issue.





FIG. 39

The Victoria Booklet Pane. The #1 Booklet pane of Canada.

mand for the 3c carmine "Maple Leaf" or "Numeral" stamps. These were surcharged down to 2c in late July and early August, 1899. The new 2c carmine mentioned above, did not appear until late August. These surcharged stamps provide interesting material for study. The surcharges come in variations of thickness of the letters, there are numerous minor flaws and broken letters, and they appear in misplaced positions. Some have the surcharge "showing thru," (Fig. 37).

Both stamps exist with surcharges inverted. Numerous counterfeits of these scarce varieties exist, but usually the counterfeiter has erroneously placed the inverted surcharge at the bottom of the stamp. Its correct position is at the top. (Fig. 38).

The privately issued, unauthorized, so-called "Port Hood Provisionals," listed as Scott's #88b and #88c, are unworthy of recognition, and even the "of-

plates of the 2c purple, numeral stamp were used in printing this new stamp. Early printings show the outer frame made up of four very thin lines (Scott's type I). Later printings show the frame made up of a thick line between two thin ones, or a total of three, (Scott's type II). While it is possible that type II is the result of retouching done directly on the plate, it is more likely that it is nothing more than a worn plate impression.

After the adoption of the uniform Penny Postage rate there was little de-



FIG. 40

Imperforate block of 12 from the "imprimature" sheet, showing the sheet construction for booklet pane printings.

—From the Lichtenstein Collection.

ficial explanation'' by the Port Hood Postmaster, which appeared in the contemporary press,—*smells*.

With the exception of the 3c Numeral, all values of both issues exist imperforate. Other desirable varieties include, (2) 1½c ML, re-entry on stamp #41, (2) 6c ML, re-touched bottom frame line on stamp #91, (3) 2c Num., purple, on thick paper, (4) 8c Num. in brown-orange shade, (the entire printing being delivered to T. Eaton & Co.), (5) 5c Num. in Prussian blue shade on both bluish and olive toned papers, (6) Impression size variations due to shrinkage of paper, and (7) yellowish toned paper varieties, for most Numeral values. Other shades, re-entries and retouches exist.

Probably the most sought after item among these issues is the 2c carmine Booklet Pane, (Fig. 39). This has been especially true since being listed in the 1943 Scott's catalogue. This is the #1 Booklet of Canada, and is exceptionally scarce. Each booklet contained 2 panes of six stamps each, and a special plate was prepared for their production, consisting of 60 impressions, (6 x 10).

Fig. 40, showing the bottom (?) strip of 12 from the "imprimature" sheet, reveals the existence of *tete-beche* panes in the layout of special booklet plates.



*The Official Downey photo, full length*



1898 8 Cents Mixed Franking Registered Cross Border "The Beehive Wall Paper and Window Blinds" Advertising Cover, mailed from Chatham, Ontario on DEC.14 (inner broken circle datestamp) to New York, through Buffalo (DEC.16), franked with a 6c QV Leaf (Sc. 71) and a 2c purple QV Numeral (76), paying the 3c postage rate plus 5c registration rate.

*As with the Jubilees Issue, given the brevity of this section of the original article, I am also including our relevant Classic Canada sections.*



# The Stamps of Canada, Part 42

## The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897

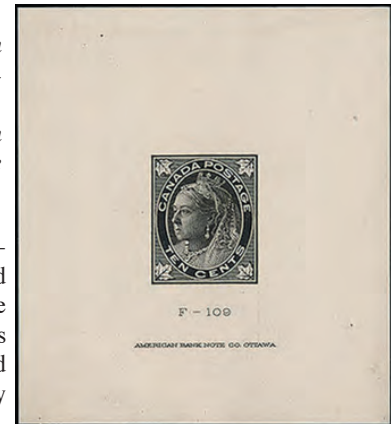
*Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added*



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.

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.

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....



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*

# The Stamps of Canada, Part 43

## The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897

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

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.

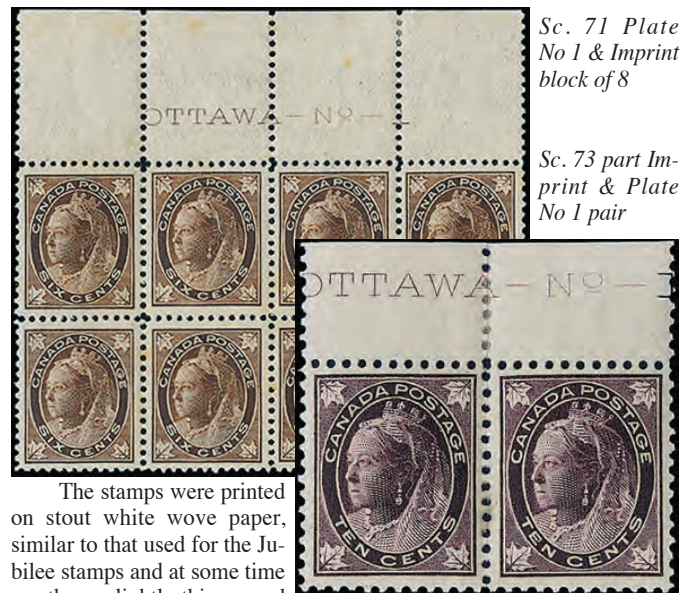
The stamps, like those of the preceding issues, were printed from line-engraved plates and, with one exception, these plates contained one hundred impressions arranged in ten horizontal rows of ten each. The exception referred to occurred in the 1/2¢, the first plate for which contained 200 stamps, arranged 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

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



*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.*



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 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

# The Stamps of Canada, Part 45

## The Maple Leaf Issue of 1897—Usages

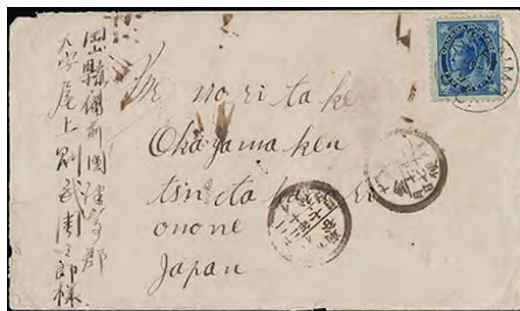
*Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added*

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

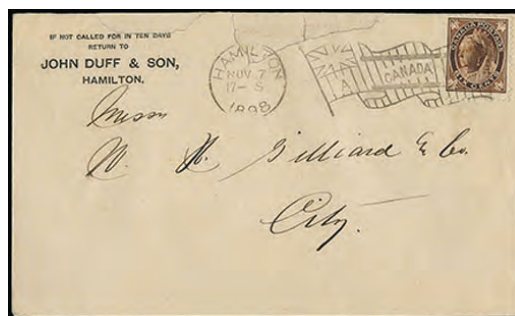
1/2¢, Sc. 66, paying the householder rate and tied by a Hamilton 25 JU '98 three-ring cds to un-addressed illustrated Canadian Pacific Railway Circular.



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.

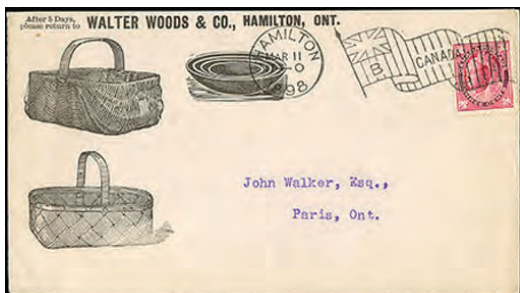
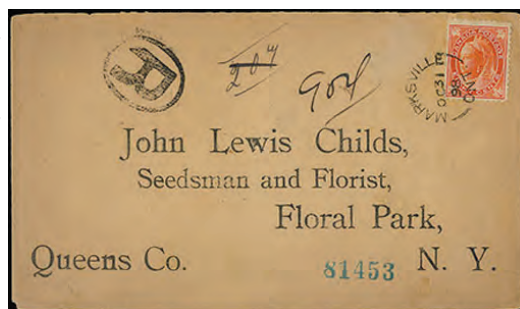


6¢, Sc. 71, tied by Hamilton 7 NO '98 Flag cancel to triple Rate Drop Letter (2¢ per oz.).

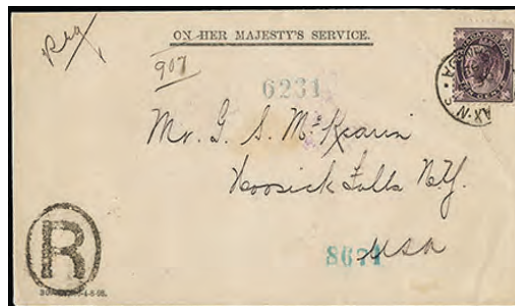
Sc. 68 var, 2¢ Bisect, paying the unofficial but accepted 1¢ County Rate, tied by Sussex 13 SP '98 cds to cover to Nauwigawauk



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¢.



# The Stamps of Canada, Part 46

## The Numeral Issue of 1898

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



*The complete set of Numerals, Sc. 74-84, plus in the upper left the 1/2¢ Maple Leaf, Sc. 66, for comparison purposes with the Numerals design.*

The “maple-leaf” issue had not been long in use before complaints were made that owing to the lack of plain numerals it was a difficult matter to distinguish the various denominations. In its issue for April 2nd, 1898, the *Metropolitan Philatelist* stated another ground for complaint and also referred to a forthcoming change, viz.:—

*Much dissatisfaction is expressed by the French speaking inhabitants of the rural parts at the lack of figures of value on the stamps, the denomination in all cases being printed in English which they are unable to understand. It has, therefore, been decided to alter the new stamps by removing the maple leaves from the lower corners and inserting large numerals of value in their place. The space occupied by the head will also be somewhat enlarged and the value will be placed on a straight band below.*

A few months later the redrawn stamps made their appearance, for the *Monthly Journal* for July 30th, 1898, records the issue of the 1¢ and 3¢ denominations as follows:—

The design is certainly improved, the oval being enlarged so that its outer line covers the outer line of the rectangle at each side and at top and bottom. The band being the same width as before, this allows a larger space for the head, which no longer appears so closely “cribbed, cabined and confined.” The inscriptions remain unchanged, but in each of the lower corners is a plain rectangular block, containing a colored numeral. (*See 1/2¢ stamps above left for a comparison.*)

Mr. Howes states that these two values were issued on June 21st, 1898, and, following its usual custom, the Canadian Post-office did not place the other denominations on sale until the corresponding values of the old series were all used up. Thus, the 1/2¢, 2¢ and 6¢ did not appear until early in September, the 8¢ was placed on sale in the first few days of October, the 10¢ was issued in the early part of November, while the 5¢, which was the laggard of the series, was not on sale until July 3rd, 1899.

Although the design was entirely redrawn and the wider oval gave the portrait a less cramped effect, it did not satisfy all the critics—though, so far as this fact is concerned, it is doubtful if any stamp issued anywhere at any time has met with universal approbation!

The stamps were produced by the usual method of steel engraved plates and they were printed in sheets of 100, in ten rows of ten, as had now become the regular custom.

*To Be Continued*

# The Stamps of Canada, Part 47

## The Numeral Issue of 1898

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

The imprint on the Numeral issue is like that on the sheets of the "maple leaf" issue and, again as with that series, the numbering of the plates started with "1" for each denomination. So little interest seems to have been taken in these marginal varieties that no authoritative record of the several plates employed has been kept. Mr. Howes gives but one plate for the 1/2¢, 6¢, 8¢ and 10¢ values, three for the 5¢, four each for the 2¢ and 3¢, and six for the 1¢, but it seems highly probable there were many more especially for such values as the 1¢ and 2¢ which were used in very large quantities.



7¢ olive yellow top margin Plate No 1 Imprint block of eight



2¢ carmine die II top margin Plate No 18 Imprint block of eight

In 1901 there were rumours that some of the stamps of this type had been re-engraved, the foundation for the canard being the following paragraph from the *Weekly*:—

Mr. H. A. Chapman has sent me a specimen of a re-engraved 1¢ Canada numeral, in which the differences from the first issue demand recognition. The re-engraved type is shorter and wider than the one preceding it. I note also that the 2¢ is said to exist in the same condition.

In reprinting this statement the *Philatelic Record* observed "Can this be true; or is it only another case of a slight difference caused by the shrinkage after wetting the sheets for printing purposes?"

The *Monthly Journal* for September, 1901, soon set the matter at rest as shown by the following extract:—

Miss A. L. Swift very kindly informs us that a friend of hers made enquiries at headquarters in Ottawa, and was assured that no re-engraving whatever has taken place, and that any differences that exist must be due to shrinkage or expansion of the paper during the process of printing. Our correspondent, who is a well-known American writer upon philatelic subjects and a careful philatelist, tells us that the 1/2¢, 1¢ and 2¢ of the numeral type and several values of the Maple Leaf type, show these variations, and adds that in the case of the 1/2¢ of both issues one size is found in grey-black only, and the other in deep black only. It is possible that the amount or thickness of the ink employed may have some effect upon the varying shrinkage of the paper.

The same journal refers to the matter again in the following month, viz.:—

In reference to the question of the variations in the size of the stamps of the last two issues of this Colony, a correspondent tells us that he has been studying these stamps, and has come to the conclusion, no doubt correctly, that the variations are due to differences in the quality and thickness of the paper. As in the old case of the Ceylon stamps the longer copies are on thicker paper than the short ones. All stamps that are printed on damp paper, and especially those from plates engraved in *taille-douce* [copper plate printing], are liable to vary in this way.

The above seems to be the most reasonable explanation of the differences, for the measurements of the so-called long and short stamps are practically constant, which one would naturally expect to find if two sorts of paper, differing slightly in thickness and quality, were used.

*To Be Continued*



# The Stamps of Canada, Part 48

## The Numeral Issue of 1898

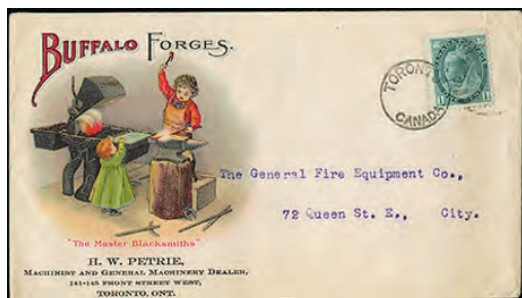
*Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added*

In our February 19 issue we completed the text portion of the Numerals Issues section from B.W.H. Poole's "The Stamps of Canada." In this installment we present usages that were not covered in the text, but which I feel should be part of our coverage. JFD.

1/2¢ black (Sc. 74) franking tied by Halifax 6 JY '99 cds to multi-colored advertising local cover, paying the unsealed circular/printed matter rate.



8¢ orange (Sc. 82) tied by Kingston 10 NO '98 cds to registered cover to USA, paying 3¢ postage plus 5¢ registration, cover with transits and 14 NOV Clinton, Iowa arrival on back.



1¢ grey green (Sc. 75) tied by undated Toronto Station 'B' duplex cancel to illustrated advertising drop letter "City." cover.



10¢ brown violet (Sc. 83) tied by roller to undated (likely 1899 or 1900) Parcel Tag from Toronto to Halifax, paying for a 10 ounce fifth-class parcel (1¢ per ounce).

2¢ carmine die 1 (Sc. 77), three copies plus a diagonal bisect (unofficial but tolerated usage), all tied by grids to domestic registered cover (7¢ rate) from Frizzleton 25 JU '00 to Halifax.



Four 1/2¢, 1¢, 2¢ and 20¢ Numeral plus 2¢ Map in eight stamp 27¢ combination franking, all tied by Winnipeg 9 AP '12 cds cancels to registered envelope to USA (Sc. 74x4, 75, 77, 84, 85).



received 19 AP and Canadian stamp applied next day and tied by duplex cancel, re-directed to Japan with Yokohama 15 MY receiver on back.

5¢ blue (Sc. 79) paying the 5¢ UPU rate used for forwarding a cover originally mailed from Southampton, England 5 AP '00 with a 1d lilac to Victoria, British Columbia, re-

Reference List. (The numbers to the left are the author's issue count.) 1898-9. Engraved and printed by the American Bank Note Co., Ottawa, on white wove paper. Perf. 12.

- 60. 1/2¢ black, Scott's No. 74.
- 61. 1¢ green, Scott's No. 75.
- 62. 2¢ purple, Scott's No. 76.
- Not in author's list, 2¢ carmine, Scott No. 77.
- 63. 3¢ carmine, Scott's No. 78.
- 64. 5¢ dark blue on bluish, Scott's No. 79.
- 65. 6¢ brown, Scott's No. 80.
- Not in author's list, 7¢ yellow, Scott's No. 81
- 66. 8¢ orange, Scott's No. 82.
- 67. 10¢ brown-violet, Scott's No. 83.
- Not in author's list, 20¢ olive green, Scott's No. 84