

The Stamps of Canada, Chapter IX

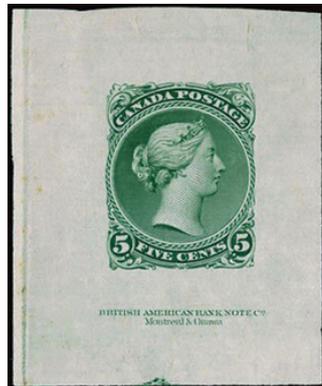
Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added

Chapter IX.—The Large 5¢ Stamp.

Although it somewhat interrupts the chronological sequence of our narrative, it will be as well to give the history of the large 5¢ stamp which, though not issued until 1875, really belongs by virtue of its type and general appearance to the series of 1868. It is known that the die for this 5¢ stamp was engraved in 1867 at the same time the dies for the 1/2¢, 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 6¢, 12-1/2¢ and 15¢ values were prepared for, in the *American Journal of Philately* for June, 1868, it is stated:—

The Canadian Government have had a 5 cent stamp prepared, engraved of the same type as the present set, the most noticeable difference being the circle round the head which is corded. The specimen sent us is printed in brown on India paper, bearing the Company's imprint underneath.

Though the die was all ready, as amply proved by the above extract, no plate was made as there was then no postal rate which required such a denomination. In 1875, however, the single letter rate between Canada



Large Trial Color Forest Green die proof on India paper, Sc. 26P showing the entire Imprint at bottom and die sinkage at left.

and Great Britain was reduced to 5¢ as stated in the Postmaster-General's Report for 1875, viz.:—

A treaty for the formation of a General Postal Union, and for the adoption of uniform postal rates and regulations for International correspondence, was arranged and signed at Berne, Switzerland, in October, 1874, by the representatives of the Post Offices of the chief Nations of the world. This agreement took effect between all the countries which were directly parties to the Treaty in July last. The Treaty did not include the British Possessions beyond the sea, but Canada has, with the concurrence of the Imperial Government, applied for admis-

sion as a member of this Postal Union. Meanwhile the letter rate of postage between Canada and the United Kingdom has, by arrangement with the Imperial Post Office, been reduced to the International rate of 2-1/2 pence sterling—5 cents currency—established by the Union Regulations; and this reduction has also been made applicable to correspondence passing by way of New York, making the rate between Canada and the UK uniform at 5 cents by whatever route conveyed.

Although the Report alluded to above is dated June 30th, it must have been published at a later date as the "July last" mentioned refers to July, 1875. When the 5 cent rate came into operation stamps to fit this new rate were wanted in such a hurry that, as a temporary expedient, a plate was made from the die engraved in 1867 pending the preparation of a die conforming to the small sized stamps then in general use. There was only one printing and the total number issued is believed to have been about one million. Mr. Howes says it was issued on October 1st, 1875.

In 1877 the 5¢ single letter rate was, by treaty, extended to embrace the German states of Prussia, Baden, Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony and Wurtemberg and in the same year the rate on a single letter to Newfoundland was reduced from 6¢ to 5¢. At this time, of course, the small sized 5¢ stamps were in use but it will better preserve the continuity of our study of the postal rates to make one more extract from the Postmaster-General's Reports—that for 1878,—viz.:

At the meeting of the International Postal Congress, which, under the provisions of the Postal Treaty of Berne, concluded in October, 1874, took place at Paris in May, 1878, Canada was admitted to be a member of the General Postal Union from the 1st July, 1878, and in consequence the rate of letter postage between Canada and all Europe became one uniform charge of 5 cents per half ounce. Newspapers and other printed matter, and samples and patterns of merchandise also became subject to uniform postage rates and regulations for all destinations in Europe. The 5¢ rate was, thus, now well established, and Canada had obtained membership in the Universal Postal Union, for which she had been striving since 1875.

This large 5¢ stamp was printed by the line-engraved process, like the other denominations of similar designs. The portrait forming the centrepiece is like that on the values of 1868 though the medallion is enclosed within a "corded" circle instead of an ordinary plain line. "CANADA POSTAGE" is curved above the portrait, as usual, while below is "FIVE CENTS". The numerals, shown in the lower corners, are somewhat smaller than those on the other denominations of this type.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 100, in ten rows of ten, and with regard to the marginal imprints Mr. Howes tells us that "The sheet bore four marginal imprints, arranged as before, but of a slightly different type for the 1868 issue. This new imprint is in capitals and lower case letters on a colored strip 56 mm. long and 2-1/2 mm. wide, with a border of pearls, and reads: "British American Bank Note Co. Montreal". [Front cover, a Plate Proof block, Sc. 26P, with full imprint. JFD.] Doubtless the words FIVE CENTS in shaded Roman capitals would be found over the second and third stamps of the top row if one were fortunate enough to possess this portion of a sheet." The stamps were printed on the wove paper then in use and perforated 12 in the usual manner. [Actually, the usual perf was 11-12 x 12. Shown here is an example of the rare perf 12 all around. JFD.]



5¢ olive green in the rare perf 12 (Sc. 26a), one of only three known.

Reference List: 1875. Engraved and Printed by the British American Bank Note Co., Montreal. Wove paper. Perf. 12.

25. 5¢ olive green, Scott's No. 37. [Now Sc. 26. JFD.]



1875 5¢ olive green, perf 11½ (Sc. 26) tied by Hamilton "5" duplex, Mr 7, 76, on mourning envelope to Glasgow, Scotland, manuscript "via New York" backstamped Mar 22.



5¢ Olive green perforated 11-1/2x12 (Sc. 26) used as the sole franking on a cover from Quebec to Lannion, France via England. The rate to France was 10¢ per 1/4 oz. but the preferred rate to England was only 5¢, thus this usage through England saved the sender 5¢. Stamp tied by "Quebec/DE 9 75" duplex c.d.s and grid cancel, red "London/Paid/22 DE 75" c.d.s. and "PD" in circle handstamp; Paris transit and Lannion arrival c.d.s. on reverse—believed to be the only known Large Queen cover displaying this rate