

Stamp Specialist:

Victorian Canada—Part 3—The Pence Issues

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

The Pence Issues

Canada's first series of postage stamps, the "Pence Issue" was authorized by the Post Office Act of August 1850. Produced by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, New York, the original series consisted only of the 3d, 6d and 12d denominations. The first printings were on laid paper, and were issued during April, May and June 1851. Subsequent printings were on various types of wove paper, the rarest variety being the "ribbed." The additional denominations of this series were issued as follows: 10d, June 1855; 7½d, June 1857; and the ½d, August, 1857.

Due to the rarity of the famous 12d black, a collection of a single specimen of each denomination is a herculean task for even the "well heeled" specialist. However this issue abounds in "by-ways," and a short excursion down a few of these may result in sufficient material to make this section of any Canadian collection, both representative and interesting. At least, one should be able to fill a few album pages.

Of course large blocks and strips in this issue are "show pieces," but also desirable are fine pairs of the ½d and 3d (Fig. 7), which are frequently available.

A great deal can be accomplished with the shade and paper varieties. This is particularly true of the 3d and 6d values. Without undue stress on minor differences, it is possible to obtain about six or seven varieties of shade and paper combinations, in each of these two values. In the 3d, the best of these is the Indian-Red on either thick or thin soft ribbed paper. In the 6d, which does not occur on ribbed paper, the best is the Grey-violet on either thick hard, or thick soft, wove paper.

Stitch watermarked copies are known for all denominations with the possible exception of the 12d. While unauthorized, both the 3d and 6d are known bisected on cover. Numerous re-entries can be found on the 3d, and exist on the ½d, 7½d and 10d values. In the 10d, variations occur in the width of the oval surrounding the portrait of Cartier. The diameter measurement of the narrow type is 17mm, and for the wide is 18mm. This was due to paper shrinkage.

Engraved counterfeits of the ½d, 3d (Fig. 8), and 7½d are known to exist. Lithographed forgeries of the ½d and 7½d also exist. Num-



FIG. 7

A fine pair of the 3d Beaver.



FIG. 8

A counterfeit 3d. The design is lacking in detail. On this particular counterfeit, the forger faked a cancellation, and imitated the rare "ribbed" paper!



FIG. 6

Examples showing the combination use of U. S. and Canadian stamps to prepay the postage from a Canadian point of mailing to a destination in the U. S. The 3d Canadian stamp prepaid the postage from point of mailing to border, while the U. S. stamps prepaid the postage from the border to the U. S. destination.

—From the Lichtenstein Collection.



FIG. 11

Pair of the short-lived 3d perforated Beavers, prepaying rate to the U. S.

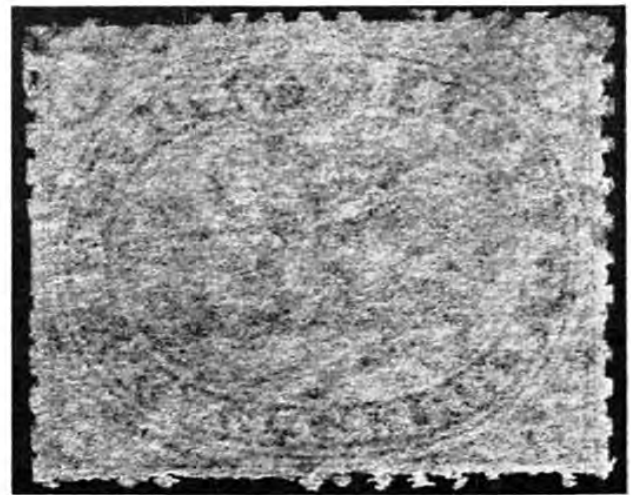
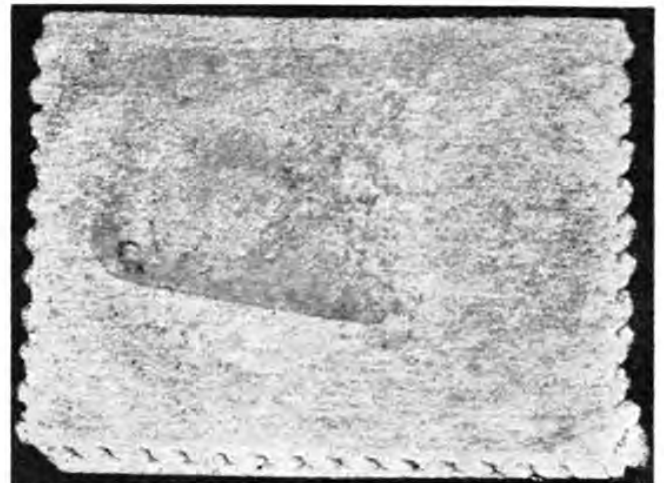


FIG. 12

Upper: Trial roulettes on the 3d beaver.
 Lower: Trial (?) hyphen-hole perforations
 Both are probably the results of experiments conducted by the Post Office Department, in efforts to discover a satisfactory method of separation. (See notes).

—From the Lichtenstein Collection.

Additional Images



Left to right, 1851 Pence Issues, Sc.1-3. The first Pence Issues of Canada were printed by the New York firm of Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, the same firm that printed the United States 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 Issue.



Canada 1858, 3p Red, Perf 12, Sc. 12



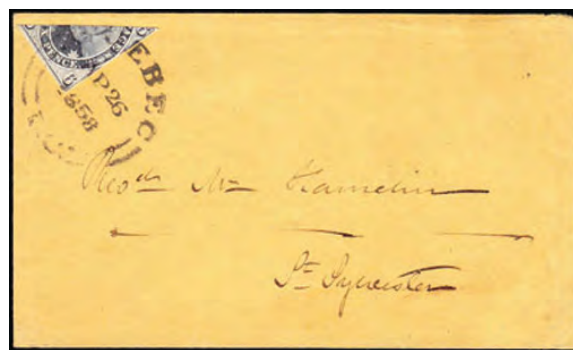
1851 12p Black on Laid paper, Sc. 3, horizontal pair, the finest of the three recorded used pairs.



The 12p design was taken from the full length painting by Alfred Edward Chalon, R. A., which was ordered by the Queen for her mother, the Duchess of Kent, as a souvenir of Her Majesty's first visit to the House of Lords on July 17th, 1837, the final day of the session.



1851 12p Black on Laid, Sc. 3, tied by bold target cancel on double-rate bluish folded cover to New York City, with red "Montreal L.C. Jy 21 1852" circular datestamp, matching "Canada" in framed arc cross-border handstamp, red "Paid" handstamp. The 12-pence stamp was issued for prepayment of the basic letter rate to Newfoundland, Bermuda and the West Indies, but its value corresponded to the double 6p rate to the United States.



The earliest recorded use of the eight known 6d bisects, Sc. 2a, postmarked Quebec, April 26, 1858