



THE CALGARY STAMP

CALGARY PHILATELIC SOCIETY — ESTABLISHED 1922

VOLUME 2, No. 9

NOVEMBER 1979

WHOLE No. 11



CENTRAL PARK — CALGARY

CIRCA 1928

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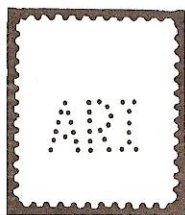
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IS PUBLISHED AND PRINTED IN CALGARY TEN TIMES A YEAR
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CHAPTER No. 66 OF THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF CANADA

ALBERTA RAILWAY AND IRRIGATION COMPANY

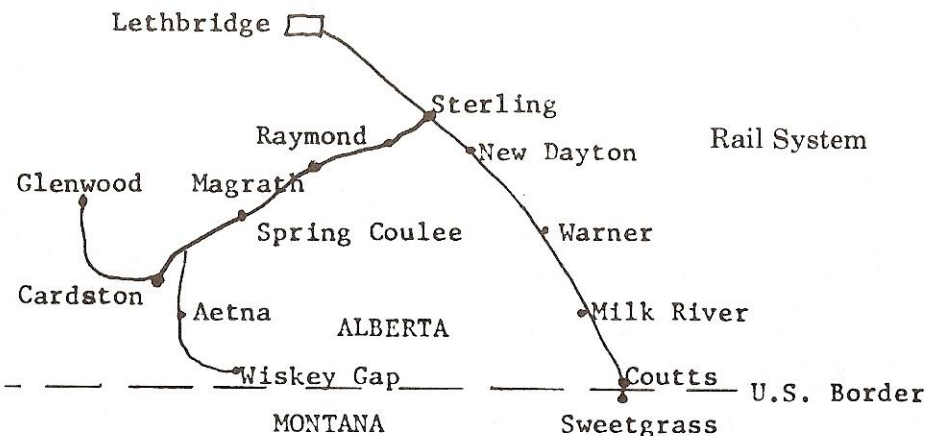


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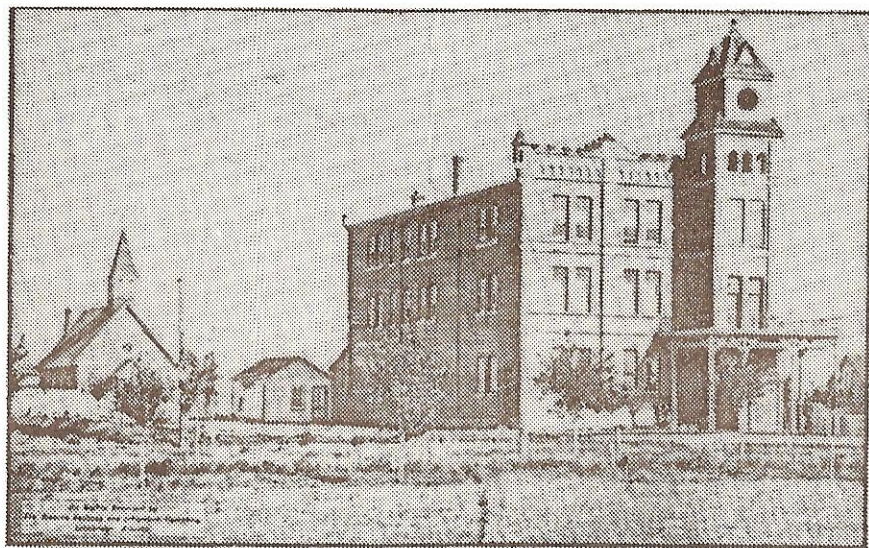


Many of the companies that pioneered the prairies are now forgotten, their hard work forgotten and the results of that work being accepted as the way the prairies are. One such Company that changed the prairies in its short eight year life was the Alberta Railway & Irrigation Company, incorporated in 1904. Its incorporation was a merger of the Alberta Railway & Coal Company, St. Mary's River Railway and the Canadian Northwest Irrigation Company for more economic development of the land south of Lethbridge.

The Alberta Railway & Coal Company had constructed much of the rail trackage around Lethbridge with the main east-west line through Lethbridge being leased for 999 years to the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1898. At the time of the merger, the AR&CC had rail trackage from Lethbridge to Sweetgrass, Montana, where it had an interchange with the Great Northern Railway, owned and operated several coal mines, and was developing an irrigation project on its granted land (substantially financed by the CPR). The St. Mary's River Railway ran from Sterling to Cardston. The Canadian Northwest Irrigation Company was developing and irrigation project along the St. Mary's River and had a narrow guage railway which is believed to have been abandoned as the other trackage was standard guage.



The Alberta Railway & Irrigation Company added to its rail system a spur to Glenwood and a second, southwards, towards Wiskey Gap. The irrigation project was successful and land formerly useless became suitable for homesteading farmers. The land agent was Osler, Hammond & Nanton in Winnipeg (also land agents for the Canadian Pacific Railway). The CPR had held a major interest in the Alberta Railway & Coal Company, and by 1908 the CPR held controlling interest in the Alberta Railway & Irrigation Company. On January 1, 1912, the Alberta Railway & Irrigation Company was absorbed by the CPR.



General Office — Lethbridge

ARI

Postal History — For those interested collectors, the Alberta Railway & Irrigation Company was one of ten Canadian railways to use the postage stamp security procedure of perforating its initials through postage stamps. The perfin used was ARI. This perfin is the second scarcest of the railway perfins with only four known copies when the Third Edition of the Canadian Perfins Handbook was issued. This might be considered reasonable for a very small, old company that only existed for eight years. What might be considered unusual is that this perfin is more common in U.S. stamps than in Canadian ones. Due to the limited number of perfins found, both in Canadian and U.S. stamps, one might assume that the perforated stamps were not used on all correspondence for the life of the Company and/or there were few stamp collectors around to save these special stamps when they were in use.

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CANADA'S STAMP PAPER

The various printing processes used to print Canadian postage stamps — steel engraving, photogravure and offset lithography — require three different finishes of paper to achieve top quality reproduction of postage stamp designs. The total volume of paper used for postage stamps is relatively small, and therefore the different papers were developed around commercial standard paper stocks.

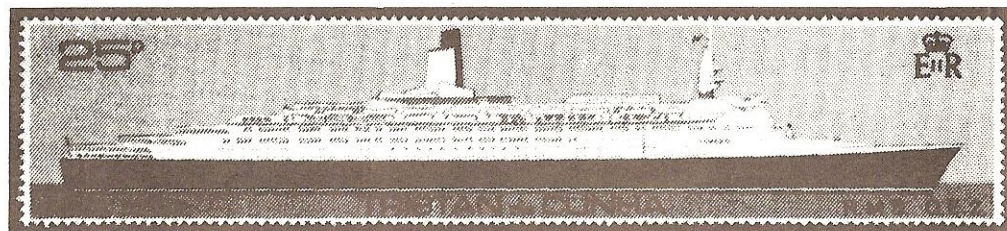
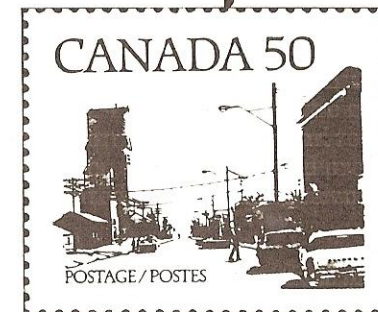
For the past several years, two different base stocks have been used. The base stock for sheet-fed lithography printing, e.g., Inuit stamps, has used a commercial offset base paper. The sheet contains traces of optical brightener, which can be seen on the gummed side but is usually effectively masked by the clay coating on the side to be printed. The amount of show-through of the optical brightener (fluorescence) on the printed side may vary within a run, depending on minor variations in the clay coating.

A bulkier base stock has been used in the production of paper for steel engraved printing, e.g., the one-to seven-cent Prime Minister definitives. The same base paper is also used, with a different clay coating, for printing by gravure or by a combination of gravure and steel, e.g., the 15- to 30-cent Tree definitives.

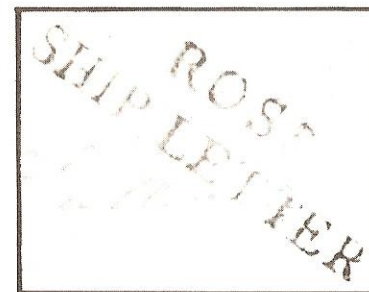
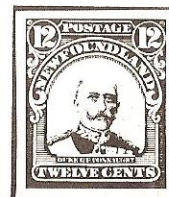
To improve the quality of stamp paper further, the three printing companies — Ashton-Potter Limited, British American Bank Note Company and Canadian Bank Note Company — have been working with the paper manufacturer, Abitibi Provincial Paper, to standardize the base paper.

Beginning with the 1979 Quebec Carnival stamp issue, a standard bulkier base stock will be used for all three of the finished papers. This will allow the paper manufacturer to produce the one base stock in large quantities, in three or four production runs a year, and to control the consistency and quality of the base paper better. As before, the base paper will then be gummed and prepared for the different stamp printing processes: left uncoated for steel engraving; either coated one side for gravure or gravure and steel printing; or coated one side for litho or litho and steel printing.

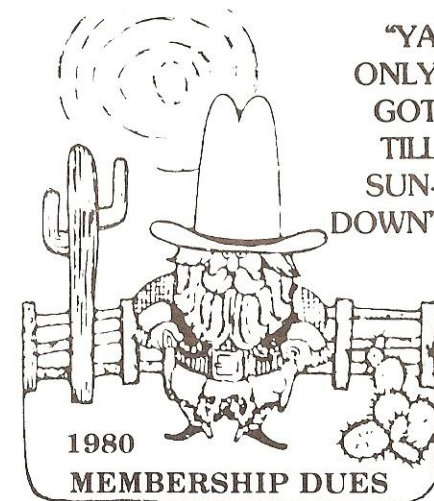
This change to a standard base stock for all three finished papers should result in improved consistency of Canadian stamp paper and reproduction in observable paper variations.



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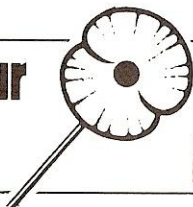
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NOTICE

It was previously published that your editor, Don Bowen, would no longer be editing, printing and publishing the Bulletin. Since there were no volunteers, I had decided to continue with a few editions. However, I have been unable to continue with the Bulletin, and this will definitely be my last issue, as personal circumstances do not allow for my continuance of this publication. I am confident that there are many able 'editorial' persons who could do the same or better than I have done in the past within the Society's membership. For example, it is my understanding that a past editor of the Albertan is a member of the Calgary Philatelic Society.

Don Bowen

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1st Tuesday in each month 7:30 p.m. held at the
Central Public Library — 616 MacLeod Trail

3rd Tuesday in each month 7:30 p.m. held at the
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VISITORS WELCOME - SEE YOU THERE