

There are **249** stamps classified as “Official” in the Canadian Catalogues; of this number **136** are “Five Hole” or Large O.H.M.S. and **61** are “Four Hole” or Small O.H.M.S. There is some duplication between these two: **24** stamps are in both Four- and Five-Hole categories.

Then there are **17** stamps overprinted with OHMS, and **35** overprinted with “G”

Again, there is some duplication, **12** stamps appear in both OHMS and G overprints while **13** stamps appear in the Four Hole and OHMS overprint, but there are **ONLY 8 STAMPS** which appear in the FOURHOLE, the O.H.M.S. and G OVERPRINTS... This exhibit is about these eight stamps, and **What, Why and When:**



10 c Great Bear Lake



14 c Hydroelectric Dam



20 c Combine



1 O.H.M.S. Dollar



2 c King George VI



3 c King George VI



7c Canada Goose



10 cent Special Delivery

It all starts with perforating stamps

Following the conclusion of World War II, the Department of the Post Office in Canada issued a series of stamps named appropriately: The Peace Issue

The series issued on September 16, 1946 marking Canada's return to peace. The set consisted of six pictorials: 8 cent farm scene, 10 cent Great Bear lake, 14 cent Hydroelectric Plant, 20 cent combine, 50 cent lumbering, the \$1 train ferry.; 3 airmail and special delivery stamps: 7 cent Canada Goose, 10 cent special delivery and 17 cent airmail special delivery.

For the purposes of this exhibit only 6 of the above listed stamps appear, because they were the only six to also be reproduced in the OHMS and G overprints as well.

All stamps perforated with type II perforations: 4 holes in uprights of "H"



10 cent Great Bear Lake

Position A



14 cent Hydroelectric Plant

Position A



20 cent Combine

Position A



\$1 Train Ferry

Position A



7 cent Canada Goose Airmail

Position A



10 cent Special Delivery

Coat of Arms & Laurels, Position A

Starting in 1939 the Post Office Department perforated stamps for Government only use with the Initials O.H.M.S. This perforating was done manually. It was hard work and needed a high degree of strength and fitness to force the perforating die through several sheets of sheets.

The increased role of Government required more "Official" postage stamps The Volume of stamps perforated by fiscal year:

1945-46: 22,158,036; 1946-47: 24,391,906; 1947-48: 15,202,393; 1948-49: 14,026,963

To fulfill these needs, required one worker, 3 hours a day, every day in the year to produce enough stamps. Employees considered it punishment to be assigned this work, and "...some employees have quit rather than undergo the physical exertion required to operate the machine for extended periods"

Only Eight...Usage on Covers

**POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES
CANADA**

This side to be filled in by office of origin
Le recto est à remplir par le bureau d'origine

REGISTERED ARTICLE
Envoi recommandé

ENTERED AT THE OFFICE OF
Enregistré au bureau de poste de }

DATE 9/2/48 **UNDER NO.** 437
A495-543 *sous le* }

ADDRESSED TO Miss Jean
Adressé à }
CAMPBELL

AT 155 Maple St., Penticton B.C.
à } BOX 1027 B.C.

39D-400M-21-11-46

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT
AVIS DE RÉCEPTION**

To be filled in by sender
indicate below his full address

*A remplir par l'expéditeur,
inscrire ci-dessous son adresse
complète.*

PLACE OF ORIGIN OF REGISTERED ARTICLE
Lieu d'origine de l'objet recommandé

(1) **IN PRINTED CHARACTERS**
En lettres moulées

RETURN TO Manager
Retournez à }
National Employment Office
PENTICTON B.C.

STREET AND NUMBER
Rue et numéro

(1) **PLACE OF ORIGIN OF REGISTERED ARTICLE**
Lieu d'origine de l'objet recommandé

(1) **IN PRINTED CHARACTERS**
En lettres moulées

CANADA

10 CENTS 10

Acknowledgement of Receipt card using 10 cent Great Bear Lake Position C

Mailed February 2, 1948, from Penticton B.C.

IF NOT DELIVERED IN SEVEN DAYS
RETURN TO POINT OF ISSUE
SI NON LIVRÉ DANS SEPT JOURS
RETOURNEZ AU POINT D'EXPÉDITION

SPECIAL DELIVERY

O. H. M. S.
S. S. M.

BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO
230 PM
DEC 4
1952

14 CENTS 14

TO: [Handwritten address: 102 Cedar St. Belleville, Ont.]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION
COMMISSION D'ASSURANCE-CHÔMAGE

RETURNED FOR BETTER DIRECTION

BELLEVILLE ONT. DE 5 52

Special Delivery paid by 14 cent Hydroelectric plant stamp

Mailed December 4, 1952 from Belleville, Ontario

Overprinting is less expensive than perforating...

In the spring of 1949 one of the perforating machines became inoperable, and it was determined that repair or replacement would be too costly. An analysis of having the stamps overprinted by The Canadian Bank Note Company demonstrated that although it might cost \$7 more than perforating it would be much better to do that "...because employees object to doing this job over a lengthy period."

The Post Office Department contacted the Bank Note Company in July 1949 and asked them to begin overprinting O.H.M.S. on several stamps currently selected in quantities which would serve a about six months usage.

By September of 1949, the OHMS Overprints were released and in use for Government use and as predicted the overprinted stamps became a big hit at the philatelic bureau, so much so that sales there covered the additional costs of overprinting.

One of the benefits of having stamps overprinted was that a precise number so overprinted was now available. This was not the case with perforated stamps

Seventeen stamps were overprinted but for purposes of the exhibit only the following 6 are of interest:



10 cent Great Bear Lake

1,000,000 overprinted



14 cent Hydroelectric Plant

1,000,000 overprinted



20 cent Combine

400,000 overprinted



\$1 Train Ferry

65,000 overprinted



7 cent Canada Goose

400,000 overprinted

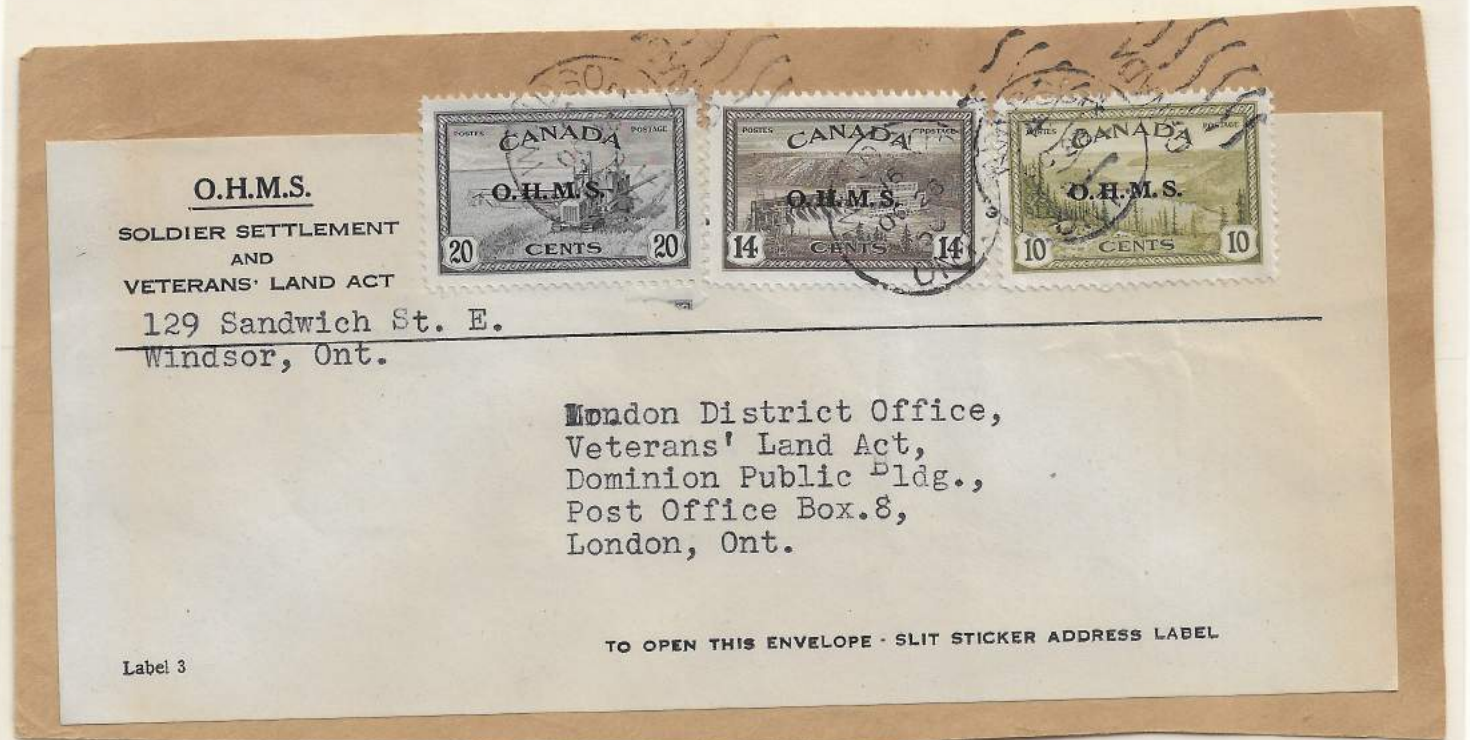


10 cent Special Delivery

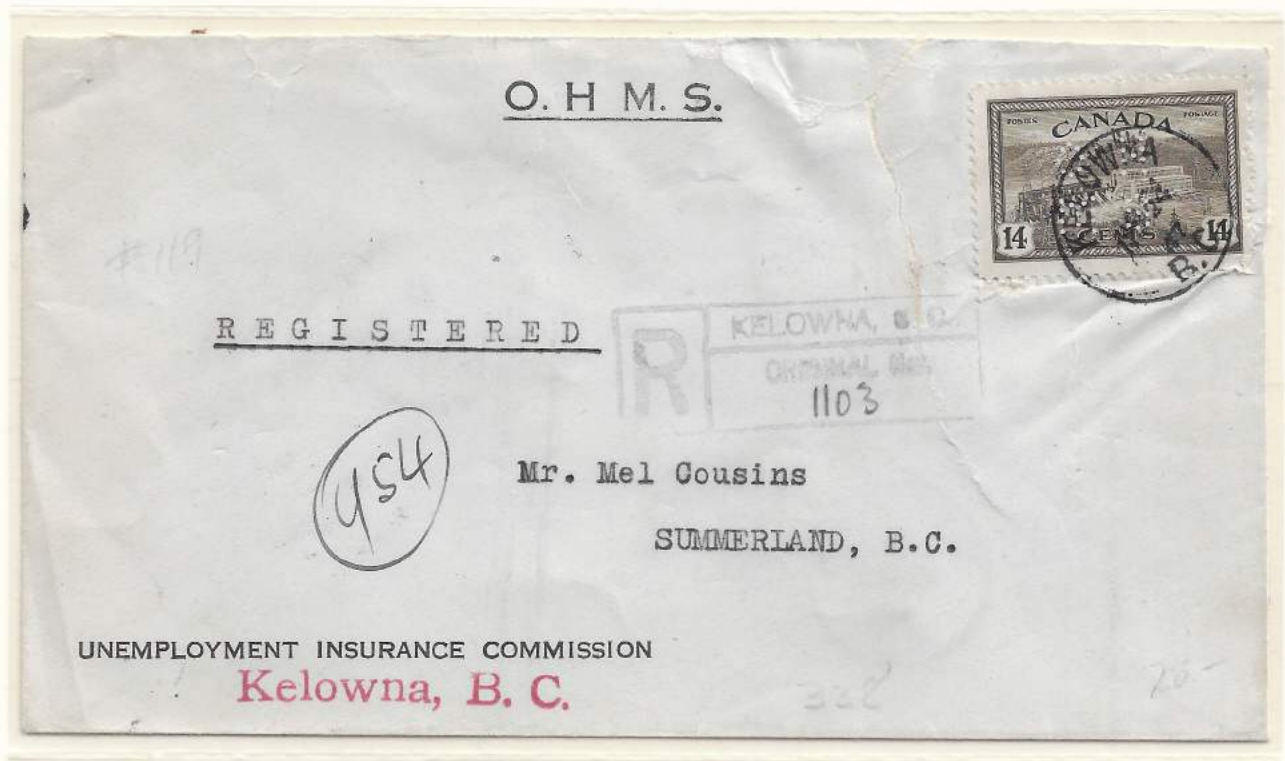
Coat of Arms & Laurels

175,000 overprinted

Only Eight: Usage on Covers



Cover using 10 c Great Bear Lake, 114 cent Hydroelectric Plant and 20 cent Combine,
All O.H.M.S. Overprints, totaling 44 cents to pay for 21 ounce rate from Windsor Ontario to
London Ontario, Mailed October 23, 1950



OHMS NOT Bilingual.... "G" solves concerns...

Early in 1950 the Post Office department became aware of concerns about how appropriate the Overprinting of O.H.M.S was:

"Shortly after the overprinted stamps appeared in general use two Members of Parliament and one private citizen criticized the Department for not using a bilingual equivalent of the letters O.H.M.S. One of the critics, Monsieur Jean-Francois Pouliot, M.P. suggested: "G" for Gouvernement or Government....I believe this suggestion is the best possible solution. ...suggest that no action be taken ...until overprinting have been in use for one year, i/e. until September 1950"

From a letter to the Postmaster General from the
Deputy Postmaster General, February 27, 1950

In September 1950 OHMS overprinting was discontinued and replaced by overprinting with a G and for purposes of this exhibit the following stamps were overprinted with a G:



10 cent Great Bear Lake
975,000 overprinted



14 cent Hydroelectric Plant
600,000 overprinted



20 cent Combine
700,000 overprinted



\$1 Train Ferry
60,000 overprinted



7 cent Canada Goose Airmail
400,000 overprinted



10 cent Special Delivery
Coat of Arms & Laurels
160,000 overprinted

Last Perforated stamps, a result of a shortage...

...and then there were 8

In January and February 1950 there was a shortage of the new 2cent and 3 cent King George VI, 1949 revised design. These stamps had been overprinted O.H.M.S. but the supply ran out, so ever resourceful Post Office Officials brought out the old perforating machine and perforated many of these stamps.

Eleven months later in April 1951 the Post Office reported that the last perforating machine had been disabled with the pin block removed and the pins hammered out of alignment.

With the addition of the 2 stamps perforated there were 8 Only that appeared in the 3 types: four hole perforation, OHMS overprint and G overprint



2 cent sepia



3 cent rose violet

issued 1950 OHMS

2 cent sepia: 1,000,000 overprinted

3 cent rose violet: 2,000,000 overprinted



2 cent sepia



3 cent rose violet

Issued January/February 1950

Number perforated unknown

Estimate: 600,000 – 1,000,000 each



2 cent sepia



3 cent rose violet

issued September 1950 overprinted G

2 cent sepia: 1,500,000 overprinted G 3 cent rose violet: 7,520,000 overprinted G

There are Only 8: 10 cent Great Bear Lake...



Plate #1 UL, Position C



Plate #1 UR, G overprint



Block of Four OHMS Overprint

Original issue four-hole Sept.16 1946, Overprinted O.H.M.S. Fall 1949, overprinted G Sept. 1950

Designer: Herman Herbert Schwartz, Engraver: Silas Robert Allen

Original issue: quantity unknown; Number Overprinted OHMS: 1,000,000; G overprinted: 975,000

There are Only 8: 14 cent Hydroelectric Plant

Original issue four-hole Sept. 16 1946, Overprinted O.H.M.S. Fall 1949, overprinted G Sept. 1950

Designer: Herman Herbert Schwartz, Engraver: Arthur C Vogel

Original issue: quantity: unknown, Overprinted O.H.M.S.: 1,000,000 Overprinted "G": 600,000



Block of four Overprinted G



Plate #1 LL, Position A



Plate #1 LL OHMS

There are Only 8: 20 cent Combine



Plate #1 UR overprint G



Plate #2, LR, OHMS Overprint



Block of Four Position C, used

original issue four-hole Sept.16 1946, Overprinted O.H.M.S. Fall 1949, overprinted G Sept. 1950

Designer: Herman Herbert Schwartz, Engraver: Silas Robert Allen

Original 4 hole issue: quantity unknown; O.H.M.S: Overprinted: 400,000; "G" overprinted: 700,000

There are Only 8: \$1 Train Ferry

original issue four-hole Sept.16 1946, Overprinted O.H.M.S. Fall 1949, overprinted G Sept. 1950

Designer: Herman Herbert Schwartz, Engraver: Silas Robert Allen

Original Issue: Quantity unknown; Overprinted O.H.M.S.: 65,000; Overprinted "G": 60,000



Plate #1, LL, Position A ●



Plate #1, UL G Overprint



Block of six OHMS Overprint, left selvedge

There are Only 8 : King George "Post-Postes":

2 cent sepia and 3 cent rose violet



Left margin block of 4 Position F



Block of 4, Position F



Plate Block #1



Plate Block #1



Block of 4



Plate Block # 4, LR

There are Only 8: 7 cent Canada Goose, Air Mail...

...The Last Air Mail stamp issued in Canada



Block of Four, Position A



Block of Four G Overprint

Major Re-Entry Right Side



Plate # 2, LL OHMS Overprint



Plate #1 LR G Overprint

An iconic Canada Goose flying over a landscape reminiscent of Northern Ontario is an appropriate symbol for a Canadian Airmail stamp. The stamp was designed by Herman Herbert Schwartz, and engraved by Silas Robert Allen. Numbers Issued: Four Hole: unknown, O.H.M.S: 400,000,

G: 400,000

There are Only 8: 10 cent Special Delivery

The 1942 issue with the Flags on either side of the Coat of Arms was issued as part of the Wartime series. As in prior Special Delivery Stamps Canada's Coat of Arms is centre and is flanked by flags of Canada's armed forces, the Navy, the Army and Airforce.

When WWII ended a new regular series (Sept 1946) of stamps was issued and included was a new Special Delivery, again with Canada's Coat of Arms centre but now flanked with Laurel and Olive leaves symbolizing peace.

This design continued and when perforating Official stamps ceased in 1949 the same design for the Special Delivery stamp was overprinted O.H.M.S. The overprinting O.H.M.S. lasted only one year and in 1950 Official stamps were stamped with a G, for Government or Gouvernement.

The overprinted G was the last Special Delivery stamp issued by the Post Office. On December 22, 1951, the Post Office announced the end of issuing Special Delivery Stamps because of the "...the comparatively small sale of the item." After this time additional regular postage as applied and a sticker or handwritten note requesting Special Delivery.



Only Eight: Usage on Covers

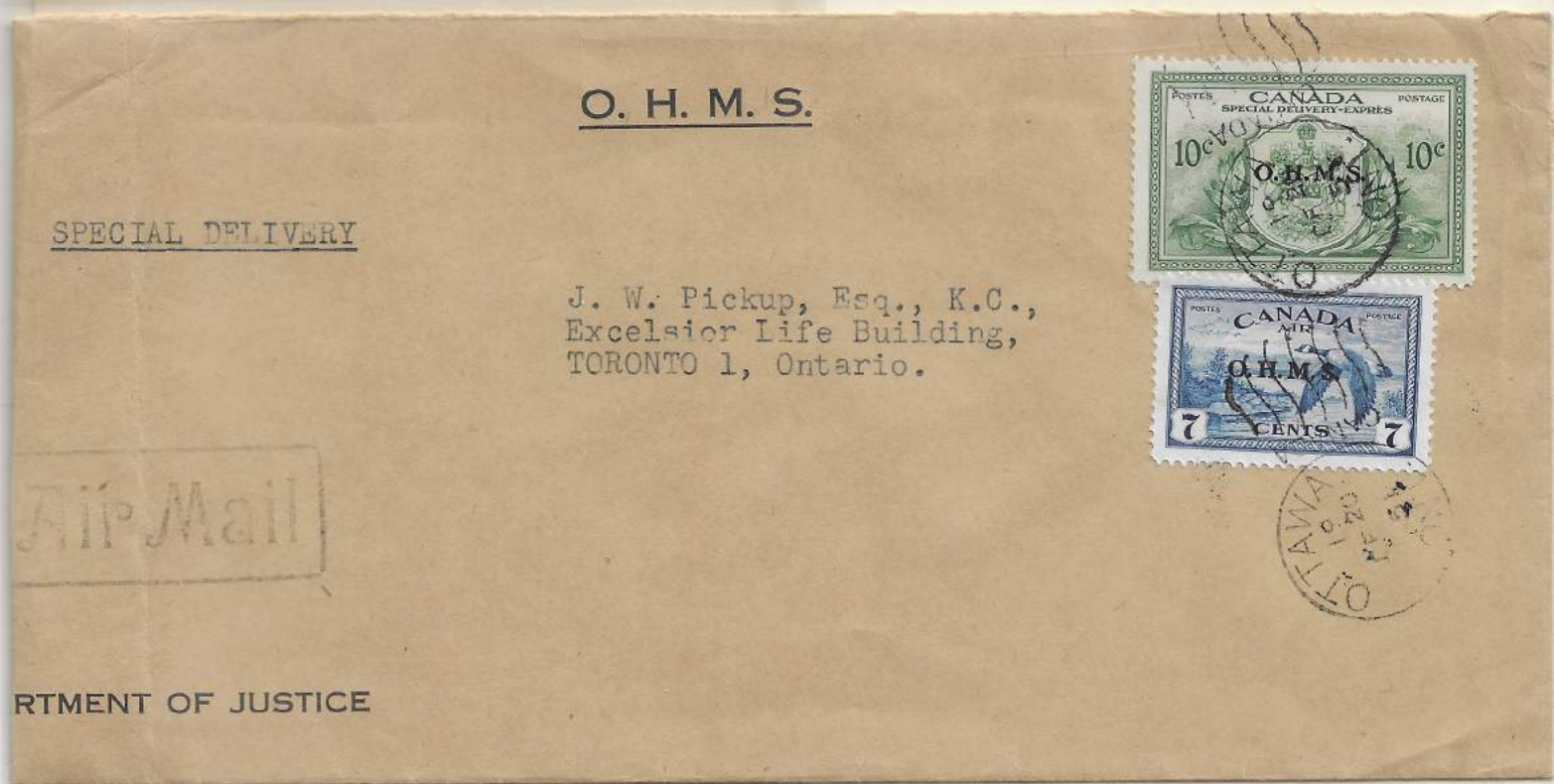


Cover to the left

From the Assistant Secretary to the Governor General, Harold Alexander, 1st earl of Tunis to the Social Editor of the Ottawa Citizen. Mailed on July 1st, 1948, using 10c Special Delivery Stamp, Position A. showing the Coat of Arms and Laurel Leaves

Cover Below

Special Delivery and Air Mail, using 10 cent Special Delivery stamp and 7 cent Canada Goose, both overprinted with O.H.M.S. Mailed from Ottawa on December 20, 1951



Only Eight...

In a little over 15 months, there were three types of official stamps employed:

4 hole perforated, O.H.M.S. Overprinted, G Overprinted

Why and How did this happen:

From 1939 until 1949 stamps for "official" Government use were perforated with the initials: **O.H.M.S** (On His Majesty's Service).

As a result of a breakdown of one of the perforating machines, the Post Office Department was forced to find an alternative which was overprinting the stamps with **O.H.M.S**

This worked well, and was less expensive than perforating the stamps, but as bilingualism became a political imperative, the overprinting of stamps with **O.H.M.S.** was replaced with overprinting a "**G**" for **Gouvernement or Government**.

And there was the shortage of stamps in early 1950 which resulted in the old perforation machine being brought back into service to perforate two stamps.

While many stamps were perforated, or overprinted with OHMS or G, only eight were in the three types.

There is much to study and collect in just these eight stamps and would provide insights into all aspects of collecting Official stamps in Canada, like the plate blocks in all types or the varieties with different perforation positions, such as the following:



10 cent Great Bear Lake

Position C



14 cent hydroelectric Plant

Position C



20 cent Combine

Position C

And the **Missing period** variety in the O.H.M.S type like the ones below:



10 cent Great Bear Lake



14 cent hydroelectric plant