

Synopsis: Three Cents Small Queen 1870 - 1879

PURPOSE:

This is a stamp exhibit (supported by one proof) displayed in chronological order. You will not find here large multiples or rate covers to exotic destinations. No trade sample proofs (printed on thin card in black, red, brown and green) or proofs prepared by competitors vying for the printing contract (Canadian Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. proofs of 1891) are shown as they played no part in the printing of the stamps.

IMPORTANCE:

The three cents small Queen paid the domestic letter rate per ½ ounce from JA/1870 to MY/07/1889 and then per ounce to JU/18/1897. It also paid the letter rate to USA from JA/01/1875 to MY/07/1889 per ½ ounce and then per ounce from MY/08/1889 to June 18/1897.

SCOPE:

The earliest known use of the three cents small Queen is JA/12/1870. The exhibit begins at the start of the "3 cents small Queen" period and continues to June 19, 1897 when the small Queens were replaced by the Diamond Jubilee Issue.

CHALLENGE:

Dated copies of the three cents small Queens are eagerly sought after by many calendar collectors so dated copies are elusive

CONDITION:

The combination of small margins between stamps and inaccurate early perforating machines resulted in well centered stamps being elusive.

PRESENTATION:

Deliveries, orders and classes are presented chronologically by predicted earliest use. Delivery date, quantity delivered, colour of the ink, perforation, paper and paper thickness are all listed for each delivery, order and class.

METHOD:

It is noted that a particular dated stamp may be late use of an earlier printing. Care has been taken not to include stamps that are the same as an earlier printing. The method of using dated stamps off paper has been used by; Shoemaker, on the three cents small queens, 1941, Mitreit on the one cent small Queens, 1963 and Whitworth on the first decimal issue, 1966, although he used covers.

DELIVERIES:

The Duckworths recorder deliveries of large and small Queens from the delivery of the first printings up to June 30, 1872. Unfortunately the British American Bank Note Company's Journal 'A' which contained the information on quantities delivered and dates of deliveries has subsequently been lost. A calculation has determined that the average time from delivery to first use during the period April 1, 1868 – June 30, 1872 was 44 calendar days. If the Duckworths reported delivery before a certain date then predicted first use is before that date plus 44 days.

ORDERS:

From July 1, 1872 to June 6, 1892 stamp orders by the Post Office Department were recorder in the Post Office letter book and scans of these letter may be found on the internet at heritage.canada.ca but no record of orders subsequent to June 6, 1892 has been found. In the period July 1, 1872 – June 6, 1892 it has been calculated that first use is on average 87 calendar days after the date of the order.

CLASSES:

For the period June 7, 1892 – June 18, 1897 it has been assumed that first use of each class occurred on the first day of each quarter.

COLOUR NAMES:

Many of the shades identified are illustrated exactly on the Stanley Gibbons Colour Key No. 2530. Each colour "chip" has a hole approximately 5 mm in diameter. When placed on the stamp such that the only part of the stamp showing is an uncancelled part of "3 CENTS 3" (which is the most densely coloured part of the stamp) and part of the white background, this will eliminate most of the colour "noise" resulting from the many degrees of shade on the stamp and the cancel. You can train your eye to ignore the white. The use of a low powered magnifying glass helps.

PERFORATIONS:

The perforation traditionally stated to be 11½ is actually 11.6, 11¾ is correct, 12 is either 11.9 or 12.1, 12¼ is really 12.3 and 12½ is correct. Effectively the editors of the catalogues have rounded perforations off to the nearest ¼ of a perforation per 2 cm. Perforations in this exhibit have been measured using a Stanley Gibbons Instanta perforation gauge.

In the period January 1883 – October 1885 Shoemaker frequently reports perforation 12 X 12¼ where I measure 11.9 X 12.1. Now in Shoemaker's time it was common to report perforations to the nearest ½ a perforation per two centimetres. Shoemaker was a bit of a pathbreaker in leading the change to reporting perforations to the nearest ¼ of a perf./2 cm.. Today collectors report perforations to the nearest tenth of a perf./2 cm. Now 11.9 to the nearest ¼ perf./2 cm. rounds off to 12 but so does 12.1. Shoemaker was right that his perf 12¼ has more perforations/2 cm. than his perf. 12 does. But there is a perforation that measures 12.3 which would round off to 12¼. This exhibit shows two of them at Printing Orders 74 and 75. Both stamps measure 12.1 X 12.3. Perforation 12.3 is rare and this exhibitor has only found ten examples in all the values of the small Queens.

PAPER THICKNESS:

Paper thickness has been measured with a Mitutoyo No.2804S-10 paper micrometer. Four measurements, one in each quadrant of the stamp were taken where possible and the average reported. Care has been taken not to count measurements taken at points where the dated cancel has become embossed in the stamp, which can increase the apparent measurement by as much as 60%. The gauge is marked to 0.0001" but the marks are about 1/8" apart so a result with the fifth digit after the decimal point being either a 5 or a 0 can be accurately interpolated.

PAPERS:

For this study the Duckworth numbered identification system has been used for paper 10b and extended to include the papers used after paper 10b. Papers 16 and 17 are not shown as they are only known used on the 15 cents large Queen. Papers 1 to 10a were used in printing the large Queens but have not been found on any small Queens.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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