

The Canada 1992 Souvenir Sheet Forgeries

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In 2010, I wrote an article in French in *The Canadian Philatelist* on the backgrounds of the Canada 1992 Souvenir Sheet issue. Since then, dangerous forgeries of the signature sheet of Chomedey de Maisonneuve appeared on the market.

Some of these forgeries are extremely well done with the use of digital equipment (laser printers, scanners) and can easily fool most philatelists.

Lets us recap the backgrounds since it was written in French.

Originally, all the souvenir sheets were printed on Harrison coated paper with the engraved Chomedey de Maisonneuve signature in blue and they were all printed on the same paper used to print the other four stamps of this issue.

Since the engraving does not print well on coated paper, the printers at the Canadian Bank Note Company wanted to destroy the entire production because of poor printing results.

But instead it was decided to save the 10,000 nicest engraved sheets and give them to the Organizing Committee of CANADA 92 in order to help finance this International Youth Exhibition held in Montreal. All these engraved sheets were inserted in a special Lighthouse envelope (Illustration 1).

Beware! It is absolutely not guaranteed that if you bought a sheet AFTER the exhibition, inserted inside a special Lighthouse envelope, that it is a genuine engraved sheet.



Illustration 2. Regular unsigned Canada 92 Sheet on Coated Papers.

This is the reason why we have two different papers for this issue. This is great for all collectors because it is a simple way to find out if your sheet is genuine or fake.

To my knowledge, there are two very distinct fakes for this issue. The first fake is printed using laser printing while the second fake uses thermo gravure printing.

Let us look at all three different printings. First, using an ultraviolet lamp and secondly a digital microscope camera.



Illustration 1. Lighthouse envelope.

The printers wanted to re-print the souvenir sheet without the signature but probably did not have enough original Harrison coated paper for the job. It was thus decided to use another paper made by the Coated Papers Company to print the regular souvenir sheet (Illustration 2).

The first picture (A) shows the genuine signature sheet. It is printed on Harrison paper and the brownish printing is darker. Notice that under ultraviolet light (long waves) the engraving is light blue in colour, the brightness of the sheet is higher and its tint is much less reddish than the Coated Papers.

Pictures Aa and Ab show a high magnification of the letters M and E. As with all engraving printing, the letters have a surface relief that can be felt by passing your finger on the surface.

The second picture (B) shows the dangerous laser printing forgery. It is printed on Coated Papers and the brownish printing is lighter. Notice that under ultraviolet light the engraving is dark blue and the brightness of the sheet is lower with a distinct reddish tint. The high magnification shows that there are little white dots in all the letters (pictures Ba and Bb). If you run your fingers over the engraved letters, you can feel that they have a surface relief.



The third picture (C) shows the thermo gravure forgery. It is also printed on Coated Papers. Notice that under an ultraviolet light the printing is red. The high magnification shows the presence of a mixture of colours to obtain the blue colour (pictures Ca and Cb). The letters also have a feeling of relief.

I have been wondering for a while why these rare genuine souvenir sheets would not sell or catalogue for more than \$125.00 as only 10,000 were printed. Now I believe I know the rea-



Illustration A. Genuine signature sheet.



Illustration B. Fake using laser printing.



Illustration C. Fake using thermo gravure.

Illustration 3. Harrison and Coated Papers side by side (shade difference).

son: it is simply because there are so many forgeries on the market that this drives the catalogue price down.

Please examine the back of your sheet carefully using an ultraviolet lamp (long wave). Also look at the colour of the printing on the surface of the sheet. You will see that the genuine engraved signature sheet is always darker (Illustration 3). Also use high magnification to examine the engraved letters.

I hope that this information will help philatelists separate the genuine sheet from the counterfeit. ✉

REFERENCES

1. *The Canadian Philatelist*, Volume 61, number 6, pages 361 - 5.
2. Canada Post – Various press releases on Canada 92
3. Unitrade 2013 catalog – page 288

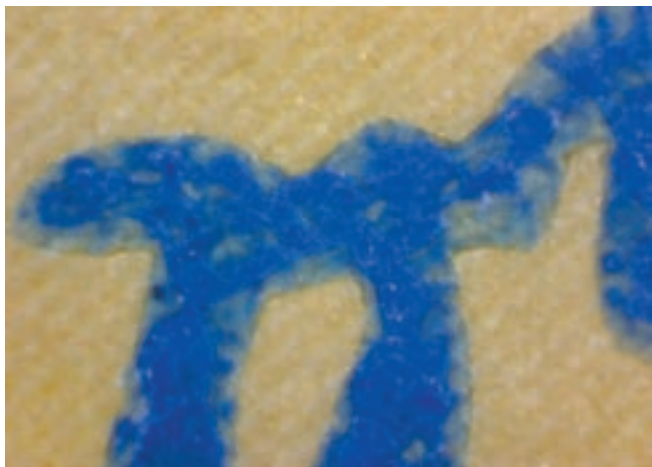


Illustration Aa. Genuine signature sheet.



Illustration Ab. Genuine signature sheet.



Illustration Ba. Fake laser printing.



Illustration Bb. Fake laser printing.

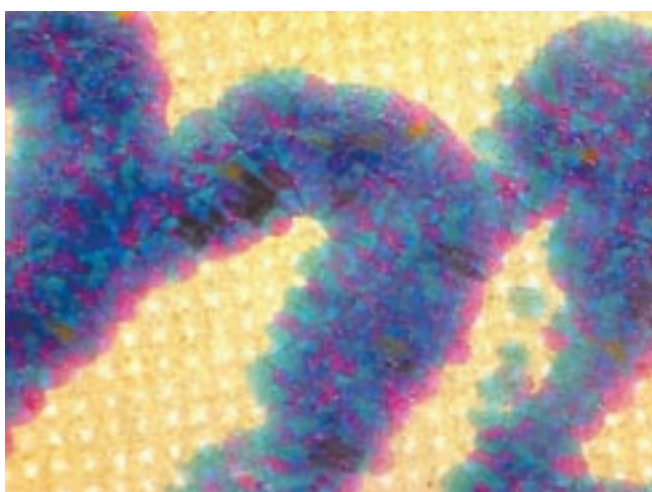


Illustration Ca. Fake litho gravure.

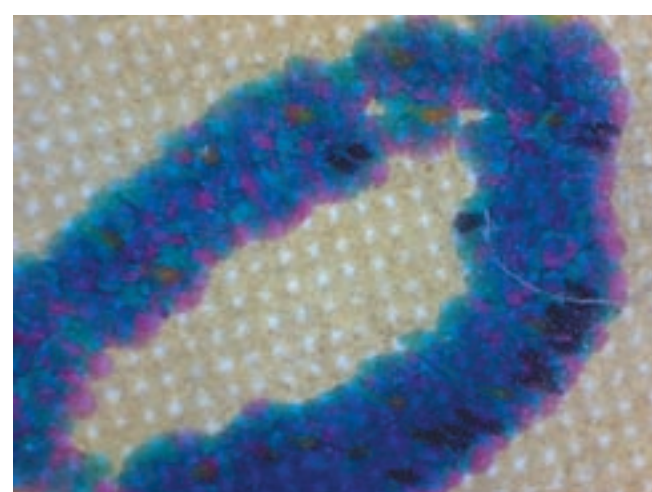


Illustration Cb. Fake litho gravure.