

Charles Verge

CANADA'S FIRST STAMP?

I recently found references to Canada's 'first stamp' in *Pages from a B.N.A. Scrapbook* in *BNA Topics* (Vol. 8, #5, Whole #80, May 1951, page 122). This article is made up of small paragraphs of items clipped from older philatelic magazines and periodicals. Item #1 quotes from *The American Philatelist* of 10 January, 1893 which itself quotes from *Meekel's Weekly Stamp News* (#98, 16 November, 1892). All three refer to the existence of a Canadian stamp prior to the 3d Beaver of 1851.

The illustration accompanying this letter shows what it is purported to look like. It is found in both the *BNA Topics* and *The American Philatelist* articles. *Meekel's*, on page 2, describes it as follows: "The first stamp ever used for postage in Canada was that used on the Quebec & Richmond Railway, in Lower Canada in 1849. It is circular-shaped, black (engraved die), typographed on white wove paper, with open space in the center to write the value." John Reginald Hooper, President of the Canadian Philatelic Society provided the illustration to *The American Philatelist*. Additional information is provided in that publication on this stamp (page 12). They "were attached by wafers to letters handed to the conductors of the trains, the railway authorities rendering accounts to the post office. Mr. Hooper knows of no specimen in existence other than the one from which our illustration is made, this being the property of Mr. Joseph Malo. This stamp was taken from a letter dated December, 1850. The value is inserted in red."

I am seeking additional information on this 'stamp', if it really did exist and if any of your members know the whereabouts of any examples of it. I

would appreciate it if they could contact me by e-mail at vergec@sympatico.ca or by mail at P.O. Box 2788, Station D, Ottawa, ON, Canada K1P 5W8.

PS. So would your Editor!



John Hillson

POSTCARD TO USA

At the recent convention in Dumfries when I showed, among other things, a 1¢ postcard posted in 1873 to the United States and over-franked with a 6¢ Small Queen, several members commented that my explanation that postcards were treated as letters and at that time the half ounce cross border rate was 6¢, therefore as there was no 5¢ stamp at the time an overpayment of 1¢ had been made, was quite incorrect. Apparently there was an agreement between Canada and the States that, effective in 1872, postcards could pass at the rate of 2¢.

I am no postal historian, but since the card was formerly in the Horace Harrison collection – I bought it in one of Bob Lee's sales, and before that it had been owned by Bill Simpson, I thought it might be worthwhile checking the facts before I re-wrote the page. I did seem to remember looking them up before preparing it but I could have misinterpreted what I found.

The relevant information is to be found in the late Allan Steinhart's excellent monograph 'The Postal History of the Post Card in Canada' on page 8. The agreement took place not in