

Canada's 1933 commemoratives for UPU committee and grain exhibition

One 1933 commemorative stamp was purpose designed, the other comprised a definitive stamp with a commemorative overprint.

In 1933, Canada hosted two international conferences that were each commemorated by a single stamp.

The first stamp issued was the 5¢ Government Buildings, Ottawa, international-rate commemorative stamp (Scott 202),



Figure 1. On May 18, 1933, Canada issued this 5¢ Government Buildings, Ottawa stamp (Scott 202) to commemorate the opening of the meetings of the executive committee of the Universal Postal Union in Ottawa, Ontario.

shown in Figure 1. It was created for the executive committee of the Universal Postal Union, which met in Ottawa, Ontario, from May 18 to June 28, 1933, in preparation for the 10th UPU congress to be held in Cairo, Egypt in 1934.

The committee's mandate was to deal with the international postal service problems arising between UPU congresses and to set agendas for future conferences.

The stamp was issued on May 18, the opening day of the committee's first meeting. The British American Bank Note Co. used two plates, No. 1 and No. 2, to print 5.1 million stamps. The stamps were perforated gauge 11 and printed in sheets of 100, with plate imprint information only in the upper

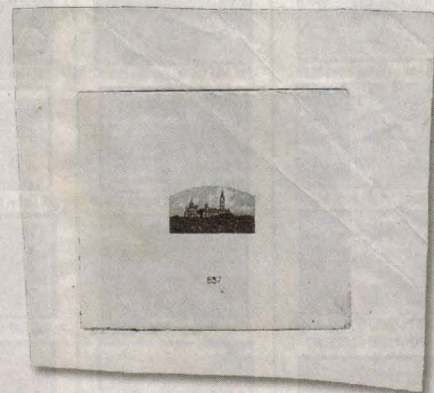


Figure 2. This stock vignette was proposed and rejected for the design of the 5¢ Government Buildings, Ottawa stamp.

left and upper right corners of the sheet. The sheets were cut into post office panes of 50 for distribution and sale.

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authorities decided to overprint the 20¢ Harvesting Wheat definitive (Scott 175) that had been issued Dec. 4, 1930. The stamp had an appropriate design for the subject, as it depicted grain harvesting in the Canadian prairie with grain elevators in the background.

The British American Bank Note Co. re-

ceived an order for a new printing of 1.56 million stamps to be overprinted "World's Grain Exhibition & Conference" in three lines at the top and "Regina 1933" at the bottom.

The printer reviewed the die proofs originally prepared in 1929 and approved by the post office in 1930. A new die proof with the overprint was submitted for the approval of Gaboury

on May 29, 1933. On the same day, the printer was informed to order the electros for the overprints and was directed to print it in blue ink rather than the black ink as had been used for the die proof shown in Figure 5.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 200, perforated gauge 11, and cut into post office panes of 50.

A major constant plate variety with the right top arm of the "X" in "Exhibition" broken is
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Figure 5. A die proof for the 20¢ World's Grain Exhibition and Conference stamp (Scott 203). The issued stamp bore the overprint in blue ink instead of the black ink that was used on the die proof.

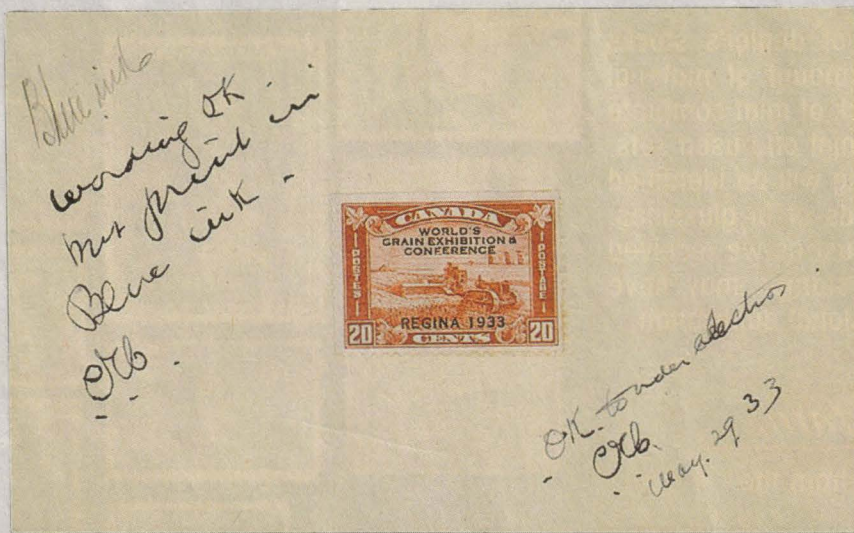


Figure 6. A constant plate variety on the 20¢ World's Grain Exhibition and Conference stamp has a broken X in the word Exhibition.

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O CANADA

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known for this stamp. The variety, shown in Figure 6, occurs at position 19 in the sheet.

Charles Bailey, a mid-20th century Toronto, Ontario, collector and dealer, identified another eight minor varieties that specialists can look for. Unfortunately, he was not in a position to plate their positions, as he found these varieties in an accumulation of used stamps.

For the record, the summary of his findings are: commas between the letters "T" and "I", "X" and "H," and between the "3"s in "1933"; dots over the "E" and "I" and between the "X" and "H"; a stroke on the letter "R"; a broken letter "R" and a low set "Regina 1933" overprint.

For this commemorative, 75 imperforate pairs of stamps (Scott 203a) also exist. Three of these pairs are with the broken "X" variety.

The Grain Show Building that housed the displays of the 1933 Exhibition burned to the ground in 2009.

Readers interested in collateral material for their collections might like to know that the Grain

Exhibition's organizing committee issued a QSL card, shown in Figure 7, to promote the exhibition. QSL cards confirm two-way radio communication between two amateur radio stations or the one-way reception of a signal from an AM radio station, FM radio station, television or shortwave broadcasting station. QSL cards were typically the same size and stock as standard postcards and were designed to be mailed.

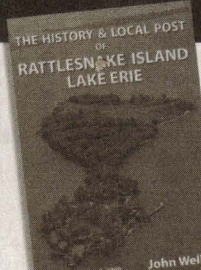
The QSL card is from the collection of the author. The illustrations in Figures 2, 3, 5 and 6 are courtesy of the Canadian Postal Archives. ■



Figure 7. Both sides of a QSL card promoting the World Grain Exhibition and Conference held in Regina, Saskatchewan, from July 24 to Aug. 5, 1933.

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