

Canada's 1953 Coronation issue

CHARLES J.G. VERGE

To commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on June 2, 1953, Canada issued a single 4¢ violet stamp a day before the event (Scott 330, Figure 1).



Figure 1. Canada issued a 4¢ violet stamp in 1953 to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.



Figure 2. Emanuel Otto Hahn, stamp designer.

Canada never joined in the concept of British Empire and Commonwealth omnibus issues for royal events and, therefore, went it alone for the Coronation issue as well.

The bust of the queen used for this stamp was based on a photograph taken by Yousuf Karsh and designed by Emanuel Otto Hahn (Figure 2). Silas Robert Allen engraved the portrait. Brief biographies of Karsh and Allen were presented in previous O Canada articles in *Scott Stamp Monthly*.

Emanuel Otto Hahn (1881-1957) was born in Germany and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1888. He studied under his brother at the Central Ontario School of Art and in a number of German institutions, returning to Canada to become an instructor at the Central Technical School.

In 1910 he became an instructor at his alma mater and in 1922 was named head of its sculpture department. He was a founding member and first president of the Sculptor's Society of Canada.

In addition to sculpture and funeral monuments, he is best known as a medalist and coin designer. Some of his coin designs, created in the 1930s, are still in use in Canada.

He had a great love for the Canadian

wilderness, and because of this, he was the first choice of the Canada Post Office when it sought a designer for the National Wildlife Week stamps issued between 1953 and 1957 (Scott 322-324, 335-356, 352-353 and 360-361), some of which can be seen in Figure 3. He also designed the 1953 \$1 Pacific Coast Totem Pole stamp (Scott 321), also shown in Figure 3.

Hahn was commissioned to design the Coronation stamp in early spring 1952, weeks after the queen succeeded to the throne and months before the stamp was needed. At the time he submitted his first design, the coronation date had yet to be chosen.

His drawing for a 10¢ stamp was prepared in April 1952, based on Karsh photographs of the queen and Prince Phillip. This design was quickly discarded, because a queen regnant's husband does not become king upon the accession of his wife. Prince Phillip would not be crowned alongside the queen. However, in reverse, a king's spouse is crowned queen.

Hahn's design was not forgotten. A modified version of his original drawing was used in 1957 to commemorate the visit to Canada by the royal couple (Scott 374, Figure 4).

Hahn submitted two other designs



Figure 3. Examples of Emanuel Hahn's Canadian stamp designs include the 1953 \$1 Pacific Coast Totem Pole stamp (Scott 321, left), and Canada's National Wildlife Week stamps of 1953-57, a few of which are shown here.



Figure 4. From left to right, cutouts of the Karsh photographs, the Hahn design and the 1957 stamp commemorating that year's royal visit (Scott 374).



in April and June 1952 before submitting another in November of that year, which turned out to be the basis of the approved design (Figure 5). One of the reasons Hahn submitted several designs is that the Canada Post Office — and Canada Post since 1981 — pays special attention to any stamp portraying the monarch. Stamps bearing royal effigies require royal approval, and Canadians are quick to criticize a stamp design that they feel slights the monarch or the monarchy.

Hahn's November design went through several versions, and major refinements were made to the vignette of the queen. Maple leaves were added in the bottom panel. These were also modified as time went on. Hahn drew pictures of the vignette and reproduced the same vignette as if it were to be used for a coin (Figure 6).

On December 23, 1952, Deputy Postmaster General W.J. Turnbull approved a drawing that could go forward for further development. The crown on the upper portion of the approved design was not the same as found on the issued stamp.

Throughout January and February

1953, the engraver, Silas Robert Allen, produced several progressive proofs in various colors, with most being in the violet color of issue. Turnbull approved one of these proofs January 29, 1953. Again, the crown was not the one that appeared on the issued stamp.

After Turnbull's approval was received, several people requested a number of changes to the design. On the same day, an anonymous writer asked that the veins be reduced in the maple leaves, while at the same time requesting that the lines above and below CANADA not touch the word. The writer also suggested a toning down of the white space in the upper corners.

Hahn made notations on progressive proofs February 2 and February 7. In the first notation, he indicated, among other comments, that the head of the queen from this model should be used. He complained that the maple leaves and the horizontal background lines did not work "at all well."

Five days later he made notes to the engraver in which he requested a number of changes, such as unifor-

mity in the background behind the word CANADA and the corner maple leaves. He requested many other small changes to the background, and he wrote that his monogram "H" was too strong.

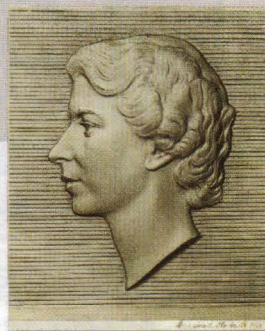
New progressive proofs in blue, purple and violet were prepared by Allen and submitted for consideration on February 12. Before approval was given on February 16 for the design to proceed, the engraver introduced the St. Edward's crown, also known as the Coronation crown, into the design to replace the one that had been in every Hahn essay since the beginning of the design process (Figure 7).

St. Edward's crown was refurbished for Charles II's coronation from an old crown. Charles II reigned from 1648 to 1685 and was crowned in 1661. The gold for his crown may have come from Edward the Confessor's crown (reigned 1042-1066, crowned 1043).

The stamp design still was not good enough, and other comments were made on February 16 exclusively about the queen's vignette, including: "Emphasize slightly lower eyelid — open eye"; "Remove straight-



Figure 5. Three other Emanuel Hahn designs, including the one that was approved as the basis for the issued stamp.



pressed effect where lips meet"; "Remove dark vertical line from centre of eye, down"; "Reduce shadow across bridge of nose"; "Lower lip has two parallel lines — should come together"; and "Reduce dark spot in hair." Figure 8 shows other comments as well.

Die proofs in rose violet, violet and purple were produced, and Turnbull approved the violet color February 23. The sheet marginal inscriptions were proofed on March 6 and approved, again by Turnbull, on March 9. It is interesting to note that during the year

the design phase proceeded, none of the many proofs in the possession of the Canadian Postal Archives was approved or initiated by the postmaster general. This is against the norm for many other issues of the period.

The Canadian Bank Note Company printed the stamp in sheets of 200 subjects. These were cut into post office panes of 50 stamps. Four plates (numbers 1-4) were used to print the 100,127,000 stamps that were produced. Although two plates would have been sufficient to print the stamps, plate 3 was used after plate 1

broke during the early stages of printing. Plate 4 became necessary when plate 2 developed a crack during the printing process.

The stamps were perforated 12. A variety of this issue was reported in the October 1953 issue of *Popular Stamps*. The anonymous writer, likely the journal's editor A.L. McCready, stated that five sheets were found with a white line through the length of column 7 on the sheet. *Popular Stamps* reported that two sheets with plate 2 and three sheets with plate 3 upper-left markings were found. This variety

JDS15 variety – Bright yellow-green flaw on right stamp, under “M” of stamp, position 20. First such discovery on a Junior Duck Stamp. Only a few available, one per customer. \$125.

The 2002 Florida duck stamp was issued with the image of the mottled duck reversed!



Top is reprint, bottom is original (Incorrect issue.)

The first time a duck stamp has been printed with the ducks going the wrong way!

The artist, John Nelson Harris, recognized the error AFTER Florida had printed and distributed most of the stamps. Harris demanded the state reprint 1000 stamps with the correct design, some intended for use with prints, the state complied.

The reprinted stamps are rouletted on four sides versus die-cut on the incorrect design. Pair signed by artist (error and normal stamp). \$150.

Sam Houston Philatelics

P.O. Box 820087, Houston, Texas 77282 • 1-800-231-5926

 We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, Amex. Please add \$1.50 s&h, TX res add 8.25% sales tax.

KANSAS		9	6.00	5	7.00	48	10.00
2	6.00	15	7.00	6	9.00	49	9.00
3	6.00	16	8.00	12	9.00	NEVADA	
4	6.00	17	6.00	13 # tab	9.00	1 tab	4.00
5	6.00	18	6.00	15 # tab	8.00	3	8.00
6	7.00	19	6.00	17 # tab	8.00	6 tab	10.00
7	7.00	20	7.00	17 full tab	10.00	9 tab	12.00
8	7.00	21	8.00	19 full tab	10.00	10	9.00
11	7.00	25	8.00	20 full tab	10.00	12	8.00
12	7.00	26	8.00	21 full tab	12.00	NEW HAMPSHIRE	
13	6.00	27	11.00	12	7.00	5	10.00
14	6.00	MASSACHUSETTS		13	7.00	8	9.00
15	6.00	6	12.00	14	6.00	8a	10.00
16	7.00	8	12.00	10	12.00	9	12.00
17	7.00	9	12.00	21	16.00	9a	14.00
18	7.00	10	12.00	23	10.00	10	8.00
KENTUCKY		14	10.00	MISSOURI		10a	10.00
1 tab	12.00	15	10.00	8 tab	12.00	11	8.00
2 tab	8.00	16	8.00	10	6.00	11a	10.00
3 tab	8.00	17	8.00	11 tab	7.00	12a	10.00
4 tab	8.00	18	8.00	13	6.00	13a	10.00
4	7.00	19	8.00	14 tab	7.00	14a	10.00
5 tab	12.00	20	8.00	15 tab	7.00	15a	10.00
6 tab	8.00	21	18.00	16 tab	7.00	16	8.00
9 tab	16.00	27	8.00	17 tab	7.00	16a	10.00
10	14.00	MICHIGAN		MONTANA		17a	10.00
16	9.00	9	20.00	35	12.00	18a	10.00
20	7.50	11	18.00	36	9.00	19	9.00
LOUISIANA		13	8.00	38	7.00	19a	10.00
2	10.00	15	8.00	39	7.00	20a	8.00
7	7.00	16	7.00	40	7.00	21	6.00
10	10.00	17	7.00	41	8.00	21a	8.00
11	10.00	18	7.00	42	9.00	22	6.00
12	10.00	19	7.00	43	9.00	22a	8.00
13	10.00	22	12.00	44	9.00	23a	8.00
14	10.00	23	7.00	MINNESOTA		NEW JERSEY	
17	10.00	24	7.00	2	10.00	6	10.00
22	16.00	25	16.00	3	10.00	7	12.00
28	24.00	MISSISSIPPI		4	10.00	8	10.00
29	8.00	12	10.00	46	9.00	9	10.00
32	8.00	13	10.00	47	9.00	10	10.00
MAINE		14	10.00	48	9.00	11	10.00

FREE MONTHLY PRICELISTS

TERMS: Payment with order. Five day return privilege. Add \$2.50 for ins. CA resids. include 7.75% sales tax.

McMILLAN & WIFE

Phone (760) 744-1435 • Fax (760) 744-5119

2742 Sarver Lane, San Marcos, CA 92069

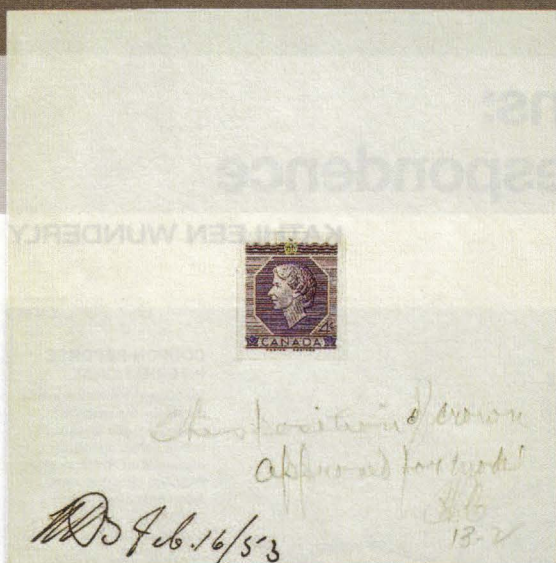


Figure 7. After a year of designs, the engraver changed the crown in the upper frame to the Coronation crown.

is not cataloged in the most recent (2007) *Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps*; therefore, it is impossible to get an independent verification of this variety.

All illustrations for this article, except Figures 1, 3 and 9, are courtesy of the Canadian Postal Archives.



Figure 8. One of the many die proofs for this issue in the Canadian Postal Archives to bear copious notes and instructions for changes.

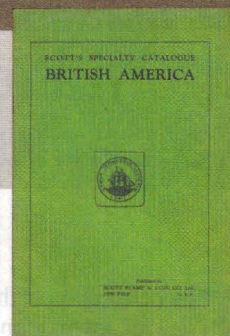


Figure 9. The Scott "British America" specialized catalog for 1934.

POSTSCRIPT

In the O Canada column in the January 2006 issue of *Scott Stamp Monthly*, I wrote about Canada's specialized catalogs from 1889 to 2005. Since then, I have found another specialized catalog. In 1933, the Scott Stamp and Coin Co. Ltd. published the 1934 *Scott's Specialty Catalogue: British America* (Figure 9).

The flyleaf indicates that it is "one of a series of Check Lists published for the convenience of collectors

using Scott's Specialty Albums."

The information contained in the catalog was a compilation extracted from the *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue* and covered the stamps issued by all British dominions, colonies and possessions in North, Central and South America.

The catalog contains 56 pages, including the green covers. On the cover is the seal of British Guiana. Why that colonial badge was chosen for the cover is not explained in the catalog's special notices page. ■

Save \$8.00 on the New 2008 BROOKMAN PRICE GUIDE

2008 BROOKMAN
OVER 70 YEARS AS THE NATION'S MOST ACCURATE AND RESPECTED GUIDE FOR RETAIL STAMP PRICES

U.S. Stamps
Canada Stamps
United Nations Stamps
First Day Covers
Autographs
and Postal Collectibles

Back By Popular Demand - United Nations Stamps
\$200 WORTH OF COUPONS INSIDE

UNITED NATIONS IS BACK!!

THE 2008 EDITION INCLUDES COMPLETE LISTINGS FOR UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK, GENEVA, VIENNA, KOSOVO ++

The 2008 Brookman Price Guide includes:

- * THOUSANDS OF IMPORTANT PRICE CHANGES TO BRING YOU UP-TO-DATE WITH THE EXCITING STRONG STAMP MARKET.
- * NUMEROUS IMPROVED AND EXPANDED LISTINGS TO MAKE THIS MORE USEFUL TO COLLECTORS.
- * THOUSANDS OF ILLUSTRATIONS - U.S. POSTAGE COMPLETE
- * NEW ISSUE UPDATES
- * U.S. STAMP IDENTIFIERS
- * COMPREHENSIVE PRICE LISTINGS FOR THE POSTAGE STAMPS OF THE UNITED STATES, U.S. POSSESSIONS, MARSHALL IS., MICRONESIA, PALAU, UNITED NATIONS, CANADA & PROVINCES
- * U.S. COMMEMORATIVE PANELS, SOUVENIR CARDS, SOUVENIR PAGES & POSTAL STATIONERY
- * U.S. REVENUES INCLUDING HUNTING PERMIT STAMPS
- * STATE DUCK STAMPS AND INDIAN RESERVATION STAMPS
- * CANADA HUNTING PERMIT STAMPS
- * FIRST DAY, INAUGURATION AND PATRIOTIC COVERS
- * SELECTED AUTOGRAPHS OF FAMOUS PERSONS
- * \$200 IN DISCOUNT COUPONS

2008 SPIRAL BOUND PRICE GUIDE

Retail \$27.95 - Sale Price only \$19.95*

2008 PERFECT BOUND PRICE GUIDE

Retail \$23.95 - Sale Price only \$16.95*

* = Publisher may increase retail price. If so, we will deduct the \$8.00 or \$7.00 from the new price.



PO BOX 90 DEPT BT, VANCOUVER, WA 98666 FAX 1-360-695-1616
email to larry@brookmanstamps.com CALL TOLL-FREE TO 1-800-545-4871
TERMS: Satisfaction Guaranteed. 5-day return privilege. Immediate refund if sold out. Mastercard, Visa, Discover and AMEX accepted. Provide card #, exp. date & 3/4 digit security #. WA residents please add 8.2% sales tax. U.S. customers add \$4.00 for shipping and insurance. Foreign customers add enough to cover additional shipping charges. email: larry@brookmanstamps.com. All items offered subject to prior sale. Website: www.brookmanstamps.com