

# The U.S.-Canada Peace Centenary: a joint issue that never materialized

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The 1959 St. Lawrence Seaway issue (Canada Scott 387, United States Scott 1131) was the first joint stamp issue between Canada and the United States, but another joint issue was considered many years prior to this.

When World War I was declared in 1914, Canada and the United States agreed to issue a set of stamps commemorating the 100th anniversary of peace among English-speaking people. The stamps are better known as the joint issue commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of the War of 1812.

Although bits and pieces of the story, including the essays and models, were known on either side of the border, this is the first time, as far as I can gather, that the full story has been told.

The first reference I found to this proposed joint stamp issue was Carl P. Rueth's editorial note in the July 28, 1958, issue of *Linn's Weekly Stamp News* that was added to the article "Canada-U.S. In New Issue Accord." Rueth's note reads: "While it is true that the two nations concerned have never yet taken such a step (referring to the Seaway joint issue), the idea was considered in 1914 as a tribute to the first century of peaceful neighborliness between them. A set of at least four suggested designs, two for each, was drawn up. But the outbreak of World War I brought the abandonment of that project ..."

In 1914, John W. Hamilton of St. Paul, Minnesota, a leading light in the World Peace Postage Association, proposed a "Peace Ballot Stamp," a proposal espoused for more than 20 years. Hamilton's basic proposal was for the issue of a "permanent government postage stamp ... with an added peace design, for voluntary purchase in every country."

Hamilton proposed three stamps in denominations to cover domestic and international mail rates. The design was to be left up to the issuing country, but he hoped that each stamp would bear the legend "Pax Per Legem" ("Peace through law"). The proposal was for the United States to issue two definitive

stamps showing peace symbols and to give postal patrons the opportunity to buy the Peace stamps or regular definitives. Hamilton and his supporters felt that the overwhelming sales of such stamps would show world leaders that people chose peace over war.

Hamilton continued his efforts for such a stamp well into the early 1930s, mounting a massive letter-writing campaign to many foreign governments, but principally to his own. Although not complete, the third assistant postmaster general's (APMG) files in the library of the Smithsonian Institution National Postal Museum (cataloged as 210.7-2 Stamps, Postage — Peace Anniversary Commemorative — J.W. Hamilton Correspondence) give a very good overview of the pressure he put on the United States Post Office Department (USPOD) and their response to this proposal.

NPM visitors and stamp collectors around the world usually define treasures as outstanding and exceptional philatelic material. For me, the archival records that museums house also are impressive treasures. Within their files are gold mines of information that allow collectors, researchers and historians the ability to add pertinent and primary source material to their collections, manuscripts, articles or books.

The APMG files in the NPM library are such a treasure. Daniel Piazza, assistant curator of philately at the NPM, found the original "Peace Ballot Stamp" file and mentioned to me the potential for an article. Following

his discovery of the article, I wrote the book *The 1959 St. Lawrence Seaway Joint Issue and Its Invert*. During the research phase of the book, I found Carl Rueth's note, and it brought me back to the files at the NPM, where I found a file on the proposed 1914 joint issue (DS-431).

The U.S. Congress created the Third Assistant PMG Office July 2, 1836, to basically handle the finances and bookkeeping of the USPOD, and to administer the dead letter office, the registered-mail service, postal money orders and the postal-savings system. When postage stamps were issued in 1847 and, later, postal paper was introduced, both were considered accountable paper and fell under the direction of the third assistant PMG. Most of the files at the NPM from this office relate to the Stamp Division, although there are correspondence files related to other issues of interest to the third assistant PMG.

The first recorded mention of the 100 Years of Peace stamp was in a January 19, 1914, letter to Alexander M. Dockery (1845-1946) from John A. Stewart, chairman of the executive board of the American Committee for the Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Peace Among the English-Speaking Peoples, 1914-15. Dockery was governor of Missouri, from 1901-05, and third assistant PMG, from 1913-21. The committee was formed in 1910 and boasted as members three sitting or former U.S. presidents, Woodrow Wilson, William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt



Figure 1. The three presidents of the United States involved with the American Committee for the Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Peace Among the English-Speaking Peoples: Woodrow Wilson, William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt. The presidents are shown here on United States Scott 832, 685 and 557, respectively.



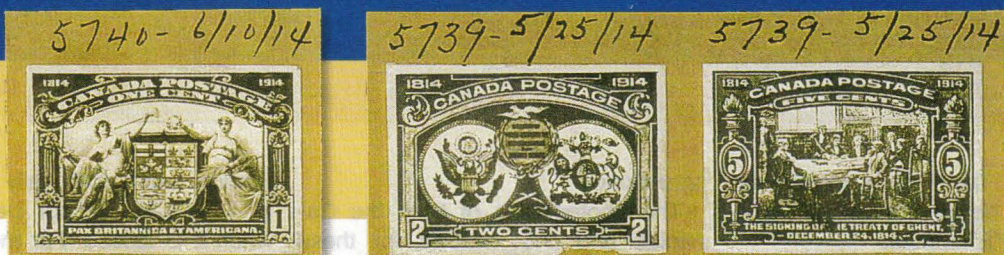


Figure 2. Designs for the proposed Canadian stamps for the peace centenary. The 1¢ denomination is similar in concept to Third Assistant PMG Alexander M. Dockery's sketch "D," the 2¢ denomination is an original Canadian design, and the sketch for the 5¢ stamp is the design from which Dockery's sketch "E" comes.

(Figure 1). One of the committee's undated reports in the U.S. National Archives mentions their plan of action. Number 23 on the list is the "issuing of stamps, coins ..."

Dockery proceeded quickly with the request. A day later, W.C. Fitch, chief of the stamp division, called the director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) to ask what the cost would be to produce stamps for this event. Bureau Director Joseph E. Ralph (1863-1922; director, 1908-17) responded by letter January 22, 1914, stating that the cost for one million commemoratives (500,000 of each of 1¢ and 2¢ denominations) would be "\$587.30 if they are the same size as ordinary stamps, and \$671.51 if they are the size of the Panama-Pacific Commemorative stamps [Scott 397-404]. Additional stamps would cost \$55.00 and \$78.00 per million, respectively, of the sizes of the ordinary and of the Panama stamps." The cost included the price of two dies, two rolls and two plates, and the printing, cutting and perforation of the stamps.

A few days later, Dockery agreed to two stamps "of 2¢ and 5¢ denominations to commemorate the Centenary of the Treaty of Ghent." Ralph was informed in writing January 27. He was directed to prepare designs that "should symbolize Peace, and should bear the words 'U. S. Postage, 2 (or 5) cents. Peace 1814-1914.' The size should

be the same as the current ordinary stamps, but the long dimension should be horizontal instead of vertical."

On the same day, Dockery wrote to Stewart, telling him that the "Postmaster General will probably order the issue of commemorative stamps" and asking Stewart for design suggestions that "commemorate some prominent incident connected with the treaty."

A day later, Dockery sent a memorandum to Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson (1863-1937; Texas Congressman, 1899-1913; postmaster general, 1913-21). To this memorandum were attached four sketches representing ideas for the stamps. Sketch "A" was for a 2¢ stamp showing a female figure, representing peace; a flying dove; and olive branches.

Sketch "B" was for a 5¢ stamp showing President James Madison, who was president of the United States in 1814. Sketches "C" and "D" were not related to a particular denomination. Sketch "C" shows a dove of peace bearing an olive branch, and sketch "D" features a hemisphere "with America and Great Britain on either side, at the left a female figure representing 'America' with the American flag in the background, and at the right 'Britannia' with the British flag in the background."

Dockery liked sketches "A" and "B." On March 3, he sent Burleson five sketches prepared by a committee appointed by Stewart and led by Dr.

George Frederick Kunz (1856-1932).

The concept of a joint issue with Canada came in a May 25, 1914, letter to Dockery, from Calvin Windsor Rice (1868-1934), chairman of the Committee on Medals, Insignia, etc., later renamed American Peace Centenary Committee, 1914-1915: "We recently had a call from the officers of the Canadian Committee on the Peace Celebration and they state that if a letter from you, showing the participation of the United States Government in this celebration, that Canada would take a similar step and they even thought that if we could get sketches of the proposed designs that Canada would adopt the same illustrations for the center of their stamp, thus showing the cooperation between the two countries."

The BEP was asked to prepare models June 12. Dockery sent them four sketches to work with. They included sketches "A," "B" and "D" mentioned above and a new one labeled "E," which features a picture received from Canada of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. On June 29, Judge Alton B. Parker (1852-1926, 1904 Democratic presidential nominee), chairman of the Peace Centenary's Committee on Legislation, sent Dockery a letter enclosing photographs of the proposed Canadian Peace stamps (Figure 2). The 1¢ denomination is similar in concept to Dockery's sketch "D," the 2¢ denomination is an original Canadian



Figure 3. These black-and-white wash drawings were based on sketches "D" and "A" for the proposed United States Peace Centenary issue. Also shown are the 2¢ deep red and 5¢ dark blue die essays listed in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers* as 537-E1 and 537-E2, respectively — proof that the U.S. Peace stamps were close to being printed and issued.



design, and the sketch for the 5¢ stamp is the design from which Dockery's sketch "E" comes.

The third assistant PMG's file on the subject is replete with exchanges of letters, including one in which Dockery writes to Parker that "I am inclined to doubt the wisdom of two countries adopting identical designs, because of the confusion that would arise ...". Parker was consulted throughout the design process, and the stamps were publicly announced July 29, 1914, with sketch "D" being selected for the 2¢ denomination and a version of sketch "A" without the dove for the 5¢ denomination (Figure 3). The United States went so far as to create die essays for the stamps. These essays, also shown in Figure 3, are listed in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers* as 537-E1 and 537-E2.

With the onset of World War I, both countries canceled their Peace stamps that were to be issued in fall 1914. The BEP was informed September 17 to

stop work.

The photocopies of both the Canadian and U.S. models for these stamps in the third assistant PMG files are not sufficiently clear for reproduction. Figure 2, the Canadian models, are courtesy of the Brigham Collection, and the U.S. models (based on sketches "D" and "A") were taken from Max G. Johl's *The United States Commemorative Stamps of the Twentieth Century* (1947), page 72.

The NPM is devoted to presenting the colorful and engaging history of the United States mail service and showcasing the largest and most comprehensive collection of stamps and philatelic material in the world. The museum uses exhibits, public programs, research and its websites to make this history available to visitors, collectors and scholars from around the world.

The National Postal Museum is located at 2 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C., across from Union

Station, and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except December 25, when it is closed. For more information, visit the museum's website at [www.postalmuseum.si.edu](http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu) and the Arago site at [www.arago.si.edu](http://www.arago.si.edu).

## CORRECTION

In the O Canada column in the February 2010 *Scott Stamp Monthly*, Figure 6 refers to a stamp issued for William Edward Hall during Black History Month, but a pane of stamps honoring the late Roméo LeBlanc, 25th governor general of Canada, is shown in error.

The correct image is shown in the digital edition of the February 2010 SSM, which can be accessed free by subscribers at [www.linns.com](http://www.linns.com).

LeBlanc died June 24, 2009, and the stamp was issued February 8. Since 1950, Canada Post has established the tradition of issuing a stamp for a former governor general or prime minister shortly after his death. The Hall stamp was issued February 1. ■

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Year(s)	Scott # Range	Normal	Retail	Price
1926-27	#627/44 (5)	21.75	17.50	
1928	#645-50 (6)	38.75	31.50	
1929	#651/81 (7)	25.00	19.75	
1930-31	#682/703 (7)	5.15	4.15	
1932	#704-15 Bicent.(12)	36.50	28.50	
1932	#716/25 (6)	7.00	5.65	
1933	#726/34 (7)	3.50	2.80	
1934	#736-39 (4)	1.50	1.15	
1934	#740-49 Parks (10)	15.50	11.95	
1935	#752-71 Farleys(20)	29.75	23.75	
1935-40	#772/902 (83)	70.50	52.75	
1935	#772-75 (4)	1.80	1.40	
1936	#776-84 (6)	5.50	4.25	
1936-37	#785-94 Army-Navy(10)	5.15	3.95	
1937	#795-802 (8)	3.95	3.15	
1938	#835-38 (4)	2.35	1.85	
1939	#852-58 (7)	5.50	4.35	
1940	#859-93 Famous Americans (35)	42.50	32.75	
1940	#894-902 (9)	3.75	2.85	
1941-49	#903-86 (84)	27.75	20.75	
1941-43	#903-8 (6)	3.50	2.75	
1943-44	#909-21 Flags (13)	4.95	3.95	
1944	#922-26 (5)	1.65	1.30	
1945	#927-38 (12)	3.25	2.60	

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1946	#939-44 (6)	1.70	1.35	
1947	#945-52 (8)	2.75	2.20	
1948	#953-80 (28)	8.25	6.50	
1949	#981-86 (6)	1.70	1.35	
1950-59	#987/1138 (119)	36.50	28.50	
1950	#987-97 (11)	3.50	2.75	
1951	#998-1003 (6)	1.75	1.40	
1952	#1004-16 (13)	3.50	2.75	
1953	#1017-28 (12)	3.35	2.60	
1954	#1029/63 (5)	1.85	1.50	
1955	#1064-72 (9)	2.70	2.15	
1956	#1073-85 (13)	6.25	4.95	
1957	#1086-99 (14)	3.35	2.60	
1958	#1100-23 (21)	5.50	4.25	
1959	#1124-38 (15)	4.25	3.35	
1960-69	#1139/1386 (195)	60.55	46.50	
1960+	#1139-73 (35)	9.50	7.50	
1961+	#1174-90 (17)	5.50	4.35	
1962	#1191-1207 (17)	4.85	3.85	
1963	#1230-41 (12)	3.25	2.50	
1964	#1242-60 (19)	5.85	4.65	
1965	#1261-76 (16)	4.25	3.40	

Year(s)	Scott # Range	Normal	Retail	Price
1966	#1306-22 (17)	4.85	3.85	
1967	#1323-37 (15)	4.75	3.85	
1968	#1339/64 (25)	8.75	7.00	
1969	#1365-86 (22)	9.00	7.15	
1970-79	#1387/1802 (276)	111.75	85.00	
1970	#1387/1422 (24)	8.25	6.50	
1971	#1423-45 (23)	7.50	5.95	
1972	#1446-74 (29)	9.25	7.35	
1973	#1475-1508 (34)	10.00	8.00	
1974	#1525-52 (28)	9.75	7.75	
1975	#1553-80 (28)	9.25	7.25	
1976	#1629/1703 (21)	10.00	8.00	
1977	#1704-30 (27)	12.25	9.75	
1978	#1731/69 (29)	19.00	15.00	
1979	#1770-1802 (33)	16.50	13.25	
1980-84	#1803/2109 (182)	128.50	99.50	
1980	#1803/43 (31)	17.00	13.50	
1981	#1874/1945 (42)	29.50	23.50	
1982	#1950/2030 (30)	23.50	18.50	
1983	#2031-65 (35)	24.75	19.50	
1984	#2066-2109 (44)	33.75	26.50	
1985-89	#2110/2437 (126)	131.75	99.50	

Year(s)	Scott # Range	Normal	Retail	Price
1985	#2110/66 (27)	32.50	25.75	
1986	#2167/2245 (22)	23.00	18.50	
1987	#2246/2368 (20)	17.50	13.95	
1988	#2339/2400 (30)	29.75	23.75	
1989	#2347/2437 (27)	29.00	23.50	
1990-94	#2348/2876 (178)	207.00	160.00	
1990	#2348/2515 (25)	30.75	24.50	
1991	#2532/79 (19)	19.50	15.50	
1992	#2611/2720 (38)	39.75	31.75	
1993	#2721/2806 (47)	54.50	42.75	
1994	#2807/76 (49)	62.50	49.50	
1995-99	#2948/3369 (251)	322.50	250.00	
1995	#2948/3023 (49)	65.75	51.75	
1996	#3024/3118 (53)	65.00	51.50	
1997	#3120/75 (40)	45.75	36.50	
1998	#3179/3252 (51)	69.50	55.00	
1999	#3272/3369 (58)	76.50	63.50	
2000-4	#3370/3886 (180)	216.95	165.00	
2000	#3370/3446 (38)	41.50	33.50	
2001	#3500/48 (38)	45.00	36.50	
2002	#3552/3695 (41)	50.00	39.50	
2003	#3746/3824 (30)	40.95	32.75	
2004	#3832/86 (33)	39.50	31.75	
2005-9	#3896/4434 (175)	177.20	140.00	
2005	#3896/3964 (43)	48.50	39.50	
2006	#3987/4119 (40)	47.50	38.75	
2007	#4120/4220 (31)	27.95	22.95	
2008	#4221/4373 (36)	31.75	25.75	
2009	#4374/4434 (25)	21.50	17.50	



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