Uncovering the history of two classic Canadian issues

The Eastern Auctions sale of Oct. 21, 2011, included production files for Canada's 1898 Imperial Penny Postage and 1908 Tercentenary issues.

On Oct. 21, 2011, two American Bank Note Co. (ABN) production files were offered for sale at Eastern Auctions Ltd. The production files of the 1898 Imperial Penny Post issue (Scott 85-86) and the

had been in private hands since they were originally bought at the ABN Archives sale on Sept. 13, 1990. The Imperial Penny Post pair depict the

1908 Quebec Tercentenary set (96-103)

same design: a map of the British Empire, in two different color schemes (Scott 85 is black, lavender and carmine, and 86 is black, blue and carmine), and the eight stamps of the Quebec set show various royalty, explorers, military persons and Quebec historical scenes.

If you are a serious collector of an issue of stamps, whatever country might pique your interest, and you wish to exhibit and receive high awards, items from production files, when available, are a must for the display. In general, such files visually describe the whole process that a stamp

goes through from its creation to its printing.

Sometimes the files also contain correspondence or annotations to help in setting the time frames and order in which designs were produced and considered by the printers and postal authorities.

In Canadian philately, production files in private hands are rare, although recently some production files from the 1950s have appeared on the market.

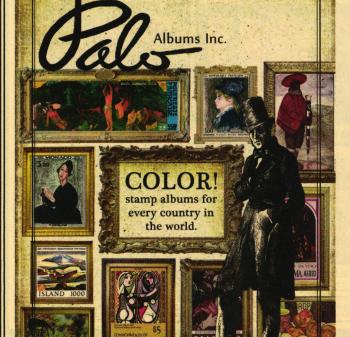
However, in the last few years, dealers and auctioneers have shown a tendency to remove much of the valuable artwork. die proofs and plate proofs in these files to sell them separately, as more people are interested in owning a single item rather than the whole file with the paperwork associated with the stamp's production. This is a pity, because the two - artwork and paperwork - are hand in

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Figure 1. Warren L. Greene's preliminary sketch of the 1898 Imperial **Penny Postage** map stamp sold for \$4,000 Canadian at auction last October.

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Scott #11, 11a block of 24, one inverted.

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CANADA

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glove when putting together a serious exhibit.

The 1898 map stamp file was owned by Hugh Westgate, who used it in his exhibit to demonstrate the development of the concept of the issue by Sir William Mulock (1844-1944; Postmaster General of Canada, 1896-1905) to its production by artists and engravers of the ABN.

Sir William wanted the stamps to promote the successful realization of his dream for Imperial Penny Postage. They were issued on Dec. 7, 1898, with Imperial Penny Postage coming into effect on Christmas Day of that

The very first item one would show in an ex-



Figure 2. The Prince of Wales is in civilian dress in this artist's model of the 1/2¢ stamp of the 1908 Quebec Tercentenary set; the lot of nine models of the issue brought \$55,000 Canadian at auction.

hibit of the map stamp would be the original watercolor and pencil sketch (Figure 1) prepared by Warren L. Greene (lot 202, \$4,000; all values cited here are hammer prices in Canadian dollars).

On June 7, 1897, Greene became the chief executive officer of the Canadian subsidiary of the ABN. He had started as an apprentice engraver with ABN in New York in 1882 and had moved to ABN's office in Ottawa in 1887.

Two of the many other lots that would be important in creating a great collection of the map issue were the unique complete set of mint sheets of all four issued plate numbers (Plates 1-3 and 5, Lot 235, \$8,500) and the 25-stamp part proof sheet of the unissued Plate 4 (Lot 234, \$7,500).

The most valuable item in the sale was Lot 221, a unique zinc progressive plate proof sheet printed on wove paper. It sold for \$29,000.

The 1908 Quebec Tercentenary set was the first Canadian stamp issue to have some of its wording in French. The ABN production

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file was the nucleus of a prominent collection of the 1908 issues known as the Libra collection. The file has never been on public display since it was sold in 1990.

Lot 1 had nine items, comprising artists' models for the eight values of the set, each with hand-painted vignettes.

The ½¢ (Scott 96) was originally proposed with the Prince of Wales in civilian dress (Figure 2). This was later changed to military dress; the auction lot contained both models. The military dress vignette of the prince is superimposed on a die proof from the civilian dress production.

The lot was estimated at \$40,000 but sold at \$55,000. The new owner has indicated that the models and the other items he purchased in this sale will be integrated into his 1908 collection and that it will be exhibited in 2012.

There were two complete sets of die proofs in their color of issue in the sale (Lots 7 and 8). Lot 7 sold for \$11,500 while lot 8 fetched \$7,000 (the proofs in Lot 7 were all the same size and those in Lot 8 were not). For \$8,000, a winning bidder purchased a complete set of plate number blocks (Lot 30).

An exhibit of stamps also calls for examples of the single use of stamps on cover. The high value of the 1908s, the 20¢ (Scott 103), used on a registered cover to Austria, realized \$4,000 (Lot 108) in this Eastern Auctions sale.

Unusual postal history used in period for this issue, a short-lived commemorative series, is very difficult to acquire. Only one first-day cover (July 16, 1908) bearing all eight stamps of

the issue is recorded, and was not in this sale.

Souvenir covers posted with all eight stamps after the first day are available, and are valued up to \$2,500 depending on condition and destination. One such cover, dated Sept. 9, 1908, and addressed to Milwaukee, Wis., sold in the auction for \$2,300 (Lot 66), while another to Panama dated Sept. 15, 1908, sold for \$1,350 (Lot 67). ■

SHOW NEWS

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Plans for national exhibition in Scotland

Show welcomes general exhibits, also seeks Scandinavian displays.

The Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies will host an Association of British Philatelic Societies' national exhibition Oct. 19-20 in Perth, Scotland. The event will take place in Strathearn hall of the Dewar's Center.

The exhibition will include traditional philately, postal history, aerophilately, thematics, revenues, cinderellas, open-class, one-frame exhibits, picture postcards and literature. En-

tries of any appropriate country or subject are welcome, but organizers would particularly welcome entries of Scandinavian philately to give the exhibition a strong Nordic presence.

The philatelic congress of Great Britain will follow the exhibition, on Oct. 20-22, in the Queen's Hotel. Perth.

For information, visit the web site www. perth2012.com. ■

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