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COLLECTION OF DE THUIN BISECTS OF THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES OF CANADA

The Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation's Expert Committee (Greene Foundation) was asked to adjudicate on the authenticity of 25 covers all bearing bisects from the four provinces of Atlantic Canada: New Brunswick (NB), Newfoundland (NL), Nova Scotia (NS) and Prince Edward Island (PEI).

The collection was the property of well-known and respected United States philatelic dealer, who likely knew what they were and never marketed them at any time in his long career. The collection was submitted by his estate, through an agent, to the Greene Foundation for expertisation in 2011.

The study of the covers started with research in the literature particularly the American Philatelic Society's (APS) handbook *The Yucatan Affair: The Work of Raoul Ch. de Thuin, Philatelic Counterfeiter*, which was compiled by a specialist APS editorial staff and published in 1974. The author also consulted with Mercer Bristow, Director of the APS's Expert Committee. As a second step, each cover was examined and annotated.

The results of this research and examination were submitted to the Expert Committee members on December 19, 2011. The Expert Committee agreed with the findings and issued certificates on December 28, 2011 for 24 of the 25 covers indicating that they were de Thuin forgeries. On the same day a certificate was issued for the 25th cover (NL 29b), also a forgery, indicating it could not definitively be assigned to de Thuin. The wording on the certificates for the 24 de Thuin forgeries includes the words "a forgery created by de Thuin". The other does not mention de Thuin but clearly states it is a forgery.

The 25 items show no duplication in the bisects except one: NL 28b. This in itself would have been a remarkable feat of collecting had the items been genuine as bisects of Atlantic Canada are uncommon. After the examination of each item the author found that a number of general comments could be made for many of the covers.

1. Some addresses gave the impression of being written over, doctored or using ink not of the period.
2. Some covers have added flaps and additional paper not belonging to the original cover.
3. Some covers seem to have been acid washed to remove original addresses or markings.
4. Other covers were cleaned.
5. A number of the PEI bisects are evident fakes as they are local letters that should not have Halifax backstamps.
6. A "Paid" in oval marking is found in orange and red on two NS covers and in black on a NB cover and a NL cover. They are identical markings that should not have appeared on covers of three different provinces.
7. A high percentage of the covers have no backstamps, no endorsements and no contents. (Pages have been cut out from the letter sheets to remove the written information that might have helped identify the authenticity of the covers in question-the date of the letter, the town of origin, etc.).
8. If the covers were stampless covers to which bisects had been added, the covers lacked the markings indicating rates (paid or unpaid) which is a usual feature on stampless covers.
9. Many of the handstamps are rubber hammers when the originals were hammers made of metal.

Note on numbering in this report.

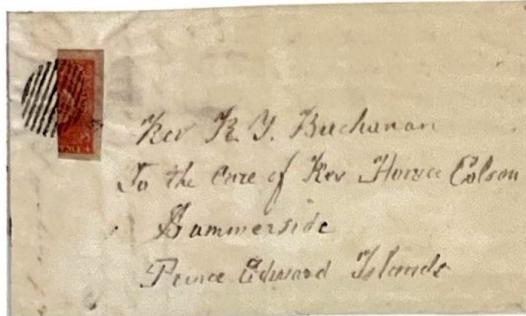
Throughout the research and expertisation process the covers were identified by a number given to them by the agent for the Estate and the Unitrade catalogue number of the genuine bisect. The agent also indicated what he thought to be the Unitrade catalogue number for each item. These were frequently incorrect particularly in the identification of the Province the bisect originated from. The author's report lists the covers alphabetically by province then in catalogue number order and disregards the agent's unique number and Unitrade identification. In the report and in this article the de Thuin markings, when catalogued, are identified by the number they are given in the APS's handbook.

NB 9a - Greene Cert. # 4143



1. The stamp is genuine
2. The black "Paid" in oval handstamp is not recorded for New Brunswick and is of a different colour than the cancel. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 9-C).
3. Although the 10¢ (NB 9a) was accepted as a bisect during the time it took to print a new 5¢ to replace the Connell stamp (NB 5 - 1860), this usage is out of period (1863).
4. The barred cancel is not recorded in the APS's handbook.

NL 18a - Greene Cert. # 4139



1. The stamp is genuine
2. The barred cancel is of two different coloured inks and is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 5-C)
3. A similar PEI Backstamp exists but the letters are differently shaped. In addition, the backstamp seems to be applied with the same ink as the "Paid" in oval handstamp found on NB 9a above. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 28-C).
4. The rate to PEI was 6½ d. in 1859.

NL 20a - Greene Cert. # 4136



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The markings all have the same ink. The infrequent use of the "d/3¢" in circle and the "More To Pay" would have resulted in a difference in the inking strength and colour than that found used for the Crepusfond CDS. The "d/3¢" is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 11-C). The "More To Pay" straightline is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 7-C).
3. Crepusfond is not a postal town in any of the Atlantic Provinces. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 14-C).
4. The rate to the US was 6d. Therefore the postage due is correct.
5. More telling though is the lack of postal markings from the US indicating receipt or postage due.

NL 23 a- Greene Cert. # 4137



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. An attempt has been made to erase the original address to Mexico, the postal rate markings and the "via" address at the top left. They have been replaced by a new "via" indication and a new address in England.
3. The rate of 6d. is correct for 1863 (front cancels) but it was 12¢ in 1868 (Liverpool backstamp).
4. The 1863 date on the two cancels on the front do not correspond to the 1868 Liverpool transit date on the back.
5. The "St. Johns, Newfoundland" cancel does not match any type known. The ink used to apply it seems to match the CDS cancels in the two covers above. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 16-C).
6. There was no direct sailing to Great Britain until August 17, 1863 - 11 days after the cover was posted and the crossing normally took six (6) days not the 25 days indicated by the handstamps.
7. The Liverpool backstamp is a de Thuin cancel (BC 7-C).
8. The "London PAID" CDS and the barred cancel on the stamp are not recorded as de Thuin forgeries in the APS's handbook.

NL 24b - Greene Cert. # 4134



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The handwriting and ink used for the address are similar to other unrelated covers.
3. The cover has been purposely acid washed or stained to hide postal markings and to change the address. See left bottom corner.
4. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 5-C).
5. The red "Paid" marking at top right has been added to hide other markings including what looks like a "9". This is a de Thuin cancel (BC 6-C).
6. The stamp was issued in 1865. The local letter rate was 2¢. It did not become 1¢ until April 1873. It is possible that the rate is correct. However since there are no date stamps it is impossible to know if the period of use is correct.

NL 27b - Greene Cert. # 4129



This is the only cover of the 25 submitted that the Expert Committee could not assign to de Thuin with certainty.

1. The stamps are genuine.
2. In 1880, the rate to France was 5¢ or 10¢ for a double weight letter. There was no 13¢ rate.
3. The cover seems to have something erased in the lower right corner.
4. The stamps do not belong to the cover. The three cancels tying them are all different.
5. The cover did not originate in Newfoundland.
6. The French markings are likely genuine.

NL 28b - Greene Cert. # 4128



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The "St. Johns, Newfoundland" CDS is a fake, as is the grid cancel. The CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 16-C). The grid cancel is not a recorded de Thuin cancel in the APS's handbook.
3. The "Dry Harbour, Jamaica" backstamp is a recorded de Thuin cancel (BC 18-P). The "Spanish Town, Jamaica" CDS and the "St. Ann's Bay" backstamp are likely de Thuin cancels (BC 23-P and BC 22-P) but are not recorded for those dates in the APS's handbook.
4. The rate to Jamaica in 1876 was 8¢ not 6¢.
5. A stamp may have been removed from the upper right corner as there is a trace of a cancel.

NL 28b - Greene Cert. # 4142



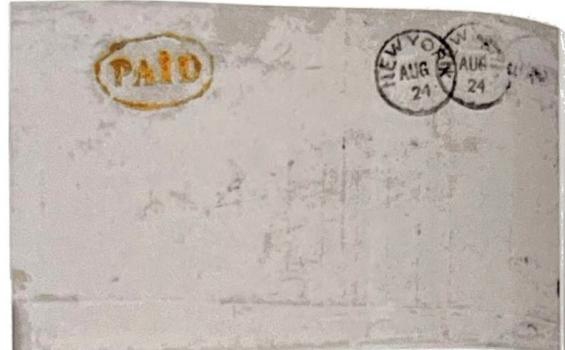
1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The "Paid" in oval handstamp is the same as the cancel on other covers in this group. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 9-C).
3. The grid cancel is not recorded as a Newfoundland cancel and is a de Thuin cancel (BC 4-C).
4. The handwriting and ink used for the address are similar to other unrelated covers.
5. The rate to the US during the period of use of this stamp (1865-1894) went from 10¢ (1865-1872) to 6¢ (1873-1875) and 5¢ (1876-1907). Since the cover is undated it is not possible to confirm the cover as belonging to the 6¢ rate period.

NL 31 bisect - Greene Cert. # 4125



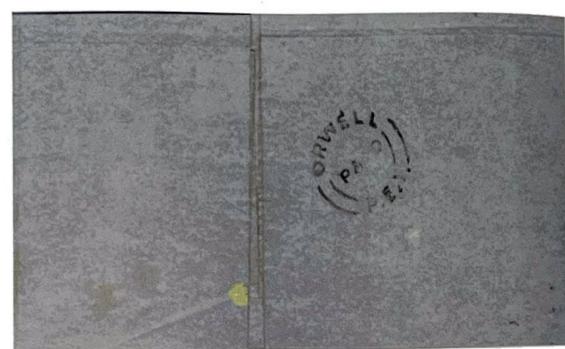
1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The 24¢ has never been recorded bisected.
3. Although there was a 13¢ rate to the West Coast of the US and the remainder of the rate might have been paid in cash, the rate applied between 1865 and 1871. In 1880, the rate to Mexico was 10¢.
4. The grids cancelling the stamps are different one from another.
5. There seems to be a blue postal marking under the stamps.
6. The "St. John Newfoundland Paid" CDS has been hand drawn or hand painted over another indistinct Paid handstamp.
7. The black "2" is similar in size and colour to the de Thuin "6" listed in the APS's handbook.

NS 2a - Greene Cert. # 4149



1. The stamps are genuine.
2. All markings are fake.
3. The red "Paid" in oval handstamp on the reverse is the same as the cancel on other covers in this group. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 9-C).
4. The oval grids are de Thuin cancels (BNA 1-C).
5. The "Halifax, Nova Scotia" CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 18-C).
6. The "New York" CDS on the reverse is a de Thuin cancel (US 3-C).
7. The handwriting and ink used for the address are similar to other unrelated covers.
8. There was no $6\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ rate during the period of Nova Scotia's independent postal service. The rate during the decimal period was either $12\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ or 17¢.

NS 4a - Greene Cert. # 4146



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The elongated barred oval cancel is unrecorded.
3. The "Orwell Paid" cancel on the front and back are de Thuin cancels (BNA 23-C).
4. The previous address has been removed and a new one added.
5. The writing and ink used for the address are similar to other unrelated covers.
6. The rate to PEI was 3d. However, there is no year date to justify the period of rate.

NS 5b - Greene Cert. # 4145



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The markings are fakes.
3. The barred oval is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 1-C).
4. The "6" is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 12-C).
5. The "Wood Islands PEI" CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 29-C).
6. The cover seems to have been acid washed.
7. A new address has been inserted.
8. The rate to PEI was 3d. not 1½d. as shown by the quadrisect.

NS 8a - Greene Cert. # 4144



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The markings are fake.
3. The barred oval is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 1-C).
4. The red "Paid" in oval handstamp on the reverse is the same but of a different colour as the cancel on other covers in this group. This is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 9-C).
5. The address seems to have been altered.
6. The drop or local letter rate was never ½¢.

NS 9b - Greene Cert. # 4148



1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The markings are fake.
3. The "Halifax" CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 18-C).
4. The segmented cork cancels are unrecorded and are not listed in the APS's handbook.
5. The Paid octagonal marking on the reverse is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 4-C)
6. The rate from NS to NL in 1861 was 8½¢ not the 3¢ stated by the franking on this cover.
7. The 2¢ was not issued until 1863 and therefore could not be used in 1861.

NS 11a - Greene Cert. # 4147



1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The letter sheet has been treated to lighten or remove the Spanish markings.
3. The red "Paid" dated handstamp has had its year date re-entered by hand.
4. The barred oval is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 1-C).
5. The "Halifax, Nova Scotia" backstamp is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 18-C) that has been enhanced to change the date.
6. The "London" backstamp possibly does not belong.
7. There is no 12¢ rate. The rate to Spain was 17¢.
8. The cover does not originate in Nova Scotia.
9. Palma de Mallorca and Barcelona are two different parts of Spain and therefore there is no consistency in the address.

NS 12b - Greene Cert. # 4141



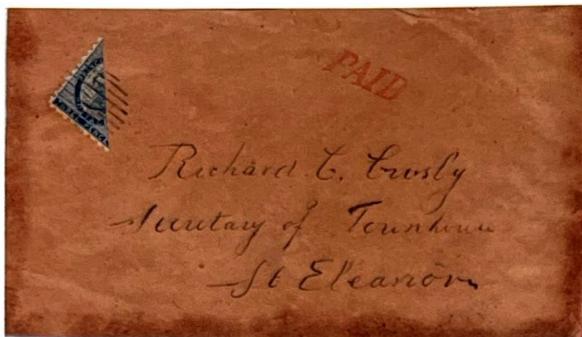
1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The barred oval is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 1-C).
3. The "Halifax, Nova Scotia" CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 18-C).
4. The other cancels seem to be genuine.
5. There is no 14¢ rate. The rate to France was 17¢.
6. The cover did not originate in Nova Scotia.

PEI 1d - Greene Cert. # 4133



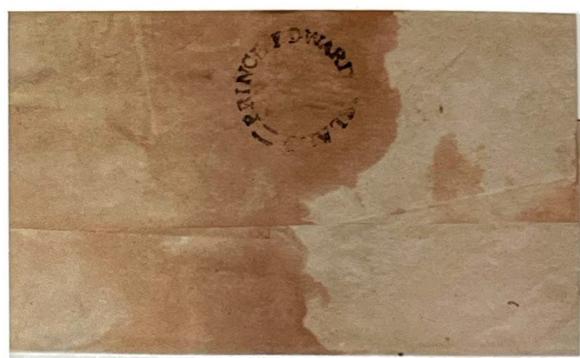
1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The address has been enhanced or changed.
3. The barred cancels are de Thuin cancels (BC 1-C).
4. The New York postage due handstamp is fake. It is similar to the original except that periods or stops are missing after the "U" and the "S". As well the original handstamp is made of metal while this one is of rubber. This is a de Thuin handstamp (US 2-C).
5. The rate to the US was 6d. via New Brunswick and not the 4d. shown here.

PEI 2a - Greene Cert. # 4130



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The cover seems to have been acid washed.
3. A new address has been inserted.
4. The postal markings are fake.
5. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
6. The red Paid is a de Thuin straightline (BC 6-C).
7. The "St Eleanors" CDS is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 26-C).
8. The internal letter rate in PEI was 2d. not the 1½d. shown by this bisect.

PEI 3a - Greene Cert. # 4126



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The cover has been dipped in a chemical and a new address entered.
3. The postal markings are fake.
4. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
5. The "Summerside PEI Paid" handstamp is similar to one in existence on PEI used 1859-1861 but is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 28-C).
6. The "Prince Edward Island" circular cancel on the reverse is similar to the de Thuin cancel (BNA 24-C) but without dates.
7. The internal letter rate in PEI was 2d. not the 3d. shown by this bisect.
8. There is no record of a Wilson College in Summerside and, even less, of a female professor called Jane Hubbard.

PEI 5e - Greene Cert. # 4138



1. The cover has been dipped in a chemical and a new address entered.
2. The postal markings are fake.
3. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
4. The US "Dead Letter Office" triangular handstamp on the reverse of the envelope is a de Thuin cancel (US 1-C).
5. The Dead Letter Office marking is superfluous as the letter is a domestic PEI letter.
6. The internal letter rate in PEI was 2d. not the 3d. paid by the stamps on the cover.

PEI 6e - Greene Cert. # 4140



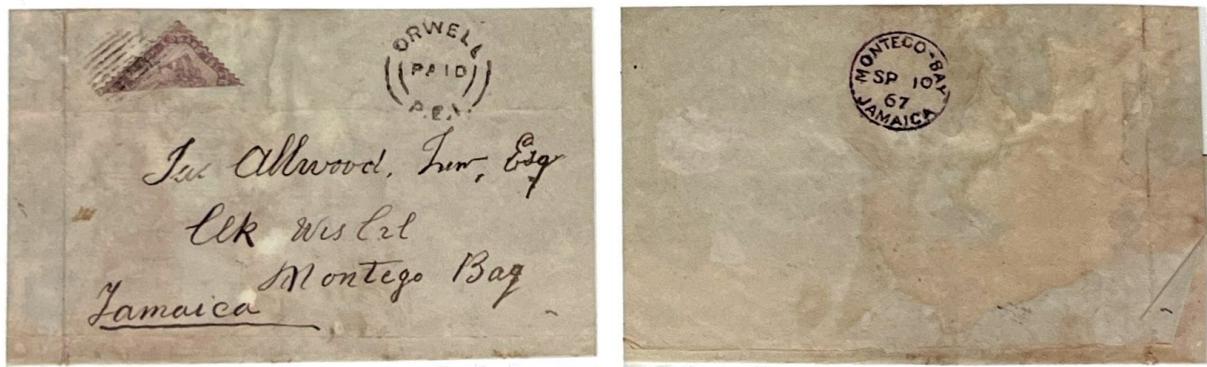
1. The stamp is genuine.
2. This letter originated in the United States if the "6" and the "cts 10" Exchange Office markings are to be believed. However it is franked with a PEI bisect and addressed to PEI. If it is an internal letter there is no need for the Exchange Office marking or the Halifax backstamp.
3. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
4. The "Halifax Nova Scotia" CDS is genuine.
5. The internal letter rate in PEI was 2d. not the 1½d. shown by this bisect.

PEI 7c - Greene Cert. # 4131



1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The cover and many of its markings are genuine.
3. The upper right corner has been torn off and replaced.
4. The original stamps have been removed from the torn piece and replaced by the stamps currently on the cover.
5. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
6. The "Prince Edward Island" undated cancel is an unrecorded de Thuin cancel in the APS's handbook. It is similar to de Thuin cancel BNA 24-C without the date information.
7. The rate to England at the time was 6d. stg or 9d. cy. This covers bears 7d. of postage.
8. The cover likely did not originate in Prince Edward Island.

PEI 8c - Greene Cert. # 4127



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The cover has been dipped in a chemical and a new address entered.
3. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 2-C).
4. The "Orwell Paid" cancel on the front is a de Thuin cancels (BNA 23-C).
5. The "Montego Bay" CDS on the reverse is a de Thuin cancel (BC 20-P).

PEI 9c - Greene Cert. # 4135



1. The stamp is genuine.
2. The rate is correct.
3. If it is an internal letter there is no need for the Halifax backstamp.
4. The barred cancel is a de Thuin cancel (BC 1-C).
5. The "Not called for" and the number "22" are de Thuin handstamps (BNA 8-C).
6. The "Halifax, Nova Scotia" CDS on the reverse is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 18-C). It has been enhanced in ink.

PEI 12b - Greene Cert. # 4132



1. The stamps are genuine.
2. The previous address has been removed and replaced by a new one.
3. The "London PAID" handstamp has been doctored to read 1872.
4. The barred ovals are de Thuin cancels (BC 1-C).
5. The "Prince Edward Island" backstamp is similar to the original but differs in the shape of and the distance between its letters. It is a de Thuin cancel (BNA 24-C).
6. The rate to England was 6¢; not the rate of 3¢ shown here.

These covers were offered for sale at a Harmers International auction on October 14, 2013 and were included in a Forgeries section. However, no mention was made of their origin and of the Greene Foundation certificates or the fact they were de Thuin forgeries.

¹All catalogue numbers are from the 2012 edition of the Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps (Unitrade).

²The Greene Foundation certificates are numbered F 4125 - F 4149.