

Canada's follow-up to "Two Newly-Discovered Letters ..."

Charles J G Verge FRPSL FRPSC

RICHARD ASHTON'S ARTICLE "Two Newly-Discovered Letters Shed Light on the Royal Philatelic Collection" in the June 2018 issue of *The London Philatelist* peaked my interest in its reference to Commander Godfrey-Faussett's "interview" in Melbourne with the Postmaster General of Canada (PMG). The result of which was that the Commander expected that the PMG "will have got together some good stamps to present to HRH in Canada – certainly he has had lots of time to look for them."

The PMG was Sir William Mulock KCMG, PC, PC (Can), QC (1844–1944, PMG 1896–1905), probably the most well-known of Canada's PMGs and a keen stamp enthusiast who gave Canada, amongst other things, Imperial Penny Postage and the long Victoria Jubilee issue. At the time of the "interview", Sir William was in Australia representing Canada at the opening of Australia's first parliament on 9 May 1901 by the Duke of Cornwall and York.

For several years now, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) has been deaccessioning many duplicate items in its collection. The beneficiaries of this action have been the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library (HSPL) of the Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation, the American Philatelic Research Library and the library of the Royal Philatelic Society London. All three of these are members of the Global Philatelic Library and have been helping each other out with many programmes and activities in support of philatelic literature and research.

In early 2017, the HSPL, the world's largest and most comprehensive library on British North America philately, received 40 cartons of material I had selected from lists provided by LAC. One of the books on the list I thought to be an original copy of Clifton Howes' *Canada, its Postage Stamps and Postal Stationery*. Although not a reprint it turned out to have been rebound in 1941 on order of the Post Office Department and presented to the well-known lawyer and philatelist, Raymond A Jamieson QC (1895–1992) of Almonte, Ontario. The fascinating story of why the book was presented to Jamieson is described in six letters from the Post Office which I found in the book. It is likely that Jamieson slipped them in the book when he received it and they have remained there since his philatelic library was turned over to LAC after his death. That story is beyond the scope of this follow-up article.

Amongst the letters in the book was one dated much earlier, that had nothing to do with the book, but Jamieson must have acquired the letter somehow (Fig. 1). The letter is germane to Ashton's article. It is from Dr Robert Miller Coulter, Deputy Postmaster General of Canada (1859–1927, DPMG 1897–1923) to Charles Nathanael Robertson (1870–1941) and dated at Ottawa 6 May 1902. It reads:

"Dear Sir,

I enclose herewith cheque for \$1383.22 in payment of stamps furnished by you for presentation to His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York.

Yours truly,

(Original signed)

R. M. Coulter

Deputy Postmaster General

C. N. Robertson, Esq.

Ottawa, Ont."

It is evident from this letter that Sir William did take Commander Godfrey-Faussett's interview to heart and, on his return to Canada, ordered his department to procure material to be presented to the Duke. What role Robertson played in the assembling of the material, what the material consisted of or where it was found is not known. Additionally, no information on the subject is reported in Sir John Wilson's *The Royal Philatelic Collection*, Nicholas Courtney's *The Queen's Stamps* or Sir Joseph Pope's *The Tour of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York through the Dominion of Canada in the Year 1901*.

It always intrigues me when documents spread far and wide are put together and further the research in our hobby. These two letters don't answer the queries we have as to what was given to the Duke of Cornwall and York on his visit to Canada in 1901 but it helps put some pieces together.

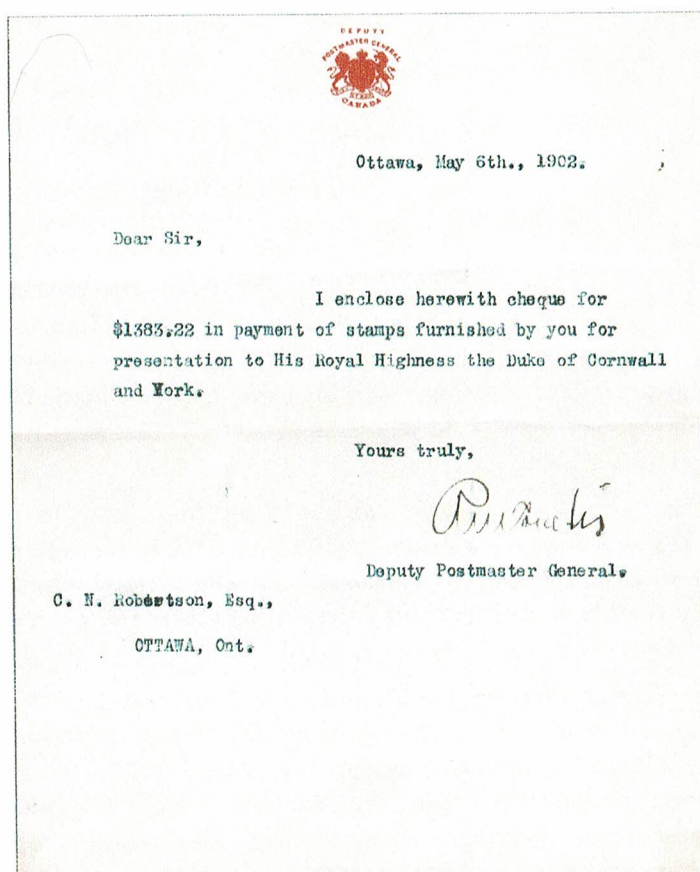


Figure 1. Letter from the Deputy Postmaster General of Canada to C N Robertson accompanying the cheque in payment for the material presented to the Duke of Cornwall and York in Canada in 1901.

References

1. In 1901, Captain Sir Bryan Godfrey Godfrey-Faussett, GCVO, CMG (1863–1945) is listed in Pope's book (see below) as Commander B Godfrey-Faussett RN, ADC. He was promoted to Commander in 1899 and Captain in 1906 five years after the Royal tour.
2. Howes, Clifton A FRPSL. *Canada, its Postage Stamps and Postal Stationery*. Boston, The New England Stamp Co. 1941, 287pp and plates. The HSPL already had two copies of the original edition of the book but usually will pick any other originals offered to it.
3. Robertson was Secretary-Treasurer and Manager of the Journal Printing Co. in Ottawa, Ontario. His firm published the *Ottawa Evening Journal* and the *Ottawa Journal* between 1885 and 1980. Little is known of his philatelic endeavours although he is known to have been an avid collector of the Jubilee issue. He is listed as a member of the St Lawrence Stamp Collectors' Club of Montreal in 1926 and is mentioned on page 62 of Butler's *The North American Philatelic Year Book*, 1927.
4. Cimon Morin FRPSC, retired Director of the Canadian Postal Archives, believes the material might be proofs but he is not sure. He also mentions that the finding aid RG3 at LAC seems to stop in 1901 when it comes to ministerial correspondence.
5. A recent email exchange with Michael Sefi LVO FRPSL FRPSC, Keeper of The Royal Philatelic Collection (RPC) indicates that The RPC has no information as to the material presented or when it was presented.
6. Wilson, Sir John Bt KCVO, *The Royal Philatelic Collection*. Ed. Clarence Winchester. London 1952, xiv–85. Each of the five sections of the catalogue portion of the book starts at page 1 for a new section.
7. Courtney, Nicholas. *The Queen's Stamps: The Authorised History of the Royal Philatelic Collection*. London 2004. xiv–337pp.
8. Pope, Joseph CMG, *The Tour of their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York through the Dominion of Canada in the Year 1901*. Ottawa, King's Printer 1903, x–372pp.