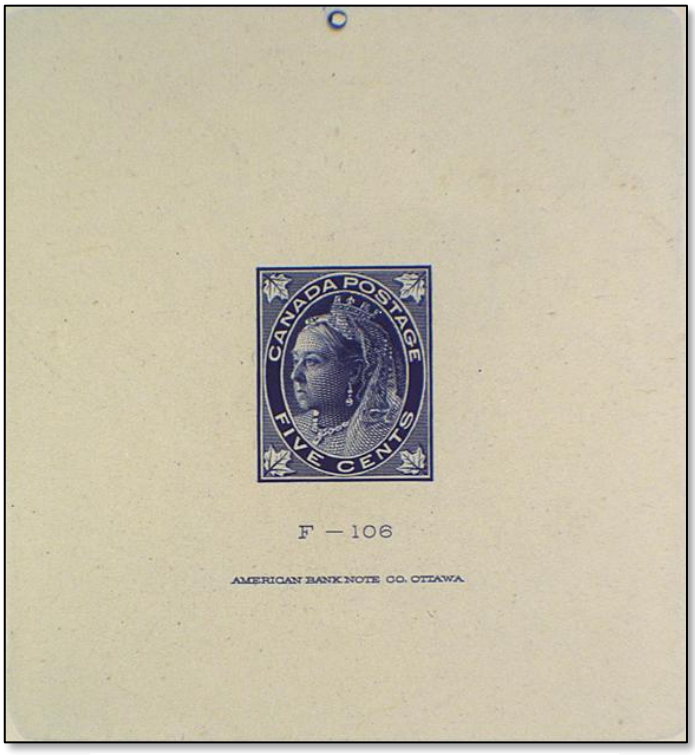
The Maple Leaf Issue of Canada
1897-1898



F-106 Hardened Die Proof

A Presentation to
The Royal Philatelic Society London

March 6, 2025

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David McLaughlin has been a collector of Canadian stamps and postal history since his youth and began to specialize in the Maple Leaf issue of Canada 1897-1898 in the mid 1970s. Since his retirement in 2016 he has been active in organized philately in Canada and abroad. From 2018 to 2024, David was the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) International Liaison Officer. He was the concept originator and Chairman of the CAPEX 22 International One Frame Stamp Championship exhibition held in Toronto June 2022 featuring 400 One Frame international exhibits.

Currently, David is a director of Federación Interamericana de Filatelia (FIAF) and President of the Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation in Toronto.

The Maple Leaf Issue of Canada 1897-1898 Exhibit

The exhibit upon which this presentation and display is based has been developed over the last 20 years. It has been exhibited nationally in Canada since 2010 and was awarded the Grand Prix at national level exhibitions in 2011, 2012, 2018 and 2019. It has been exhibited internationally since 2015 and has been awarded Large Gold medals at the following international exhibitions and FIAF and FIP patronage exhibitions.

- FIAF Exfil 2018, Santiago, Chile
- RPSL Stockholmia 2019, Stockholm, Sweden
- FIAF Buenos Aires 2019, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- FIAF Rio Grande 2021, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina
- Emirates 2022, Dubai, UAE
- FIP London 2022, London, UK
- FIP Hunfilex 2022, Budapest, Hungary
- FIP IBRA 2023, Essen, Germany
- FIP EFIRO 2024, Bucharest, Romania

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Introduction

This presentation is the story of the eight (8) stamps issued in 1897 and 1898 that comprise the Maple Leaf Issue of Canada. Prior to confederation in 1867 the Province of Canada and the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia each had Pence and Cents issues of stamps. After confederation, beginning in April 1868, the Dominion of Canada issued its first stamps commonly called the Large Queen issue which was followed by a smaller version of similar design beginning in 1870 called the Small Queen issue. The Small Queen issue remained in use for 27 years. The 15-cent denomination of the Large Queen issue remained in use until January 1900 and the 20 and 50-cent Widow Weeds stamps of the small Queen issue remained in use throughout the 1897-1898 Maple Leaf Issue period.

The shortest in-period duration for a Maple Leaf issue stamp was 23 weeks; the longest was 18 months, with the remainder replaced within 6 ½ to 10 ½ months after issue. Each denomination issue date was different dependent upon depletion of old stock of that value.

Essays

Three different essays and sets of essays are known for the Maple Leaf issue. A set of four essays, prepared by the American Bank Note Company (ABNC), are in the Library and Archives

Canada (LAC) collection. The set includes essays for the ½-cent, 2-cent, 20-cent, and 50-cent values. In keeping with previous sizing of the 20-cent and 50-cent values, the essays of these values were of a larger size stamp. The 2-cent and 20-cent values had tipped in engraved medallion vignettes of a young Queen Victoria facing left. The ½-cent and 50-cent values had tipped in photographs of Princess Alexandra, and Prince Edward. The photograph for the ½-cent value is missing. The hand painted essay framing for the ½-cent value shown in figure 1 is styled with ornate scrolls. While each essay design was different, the scrolled appearance of each is a common trait.

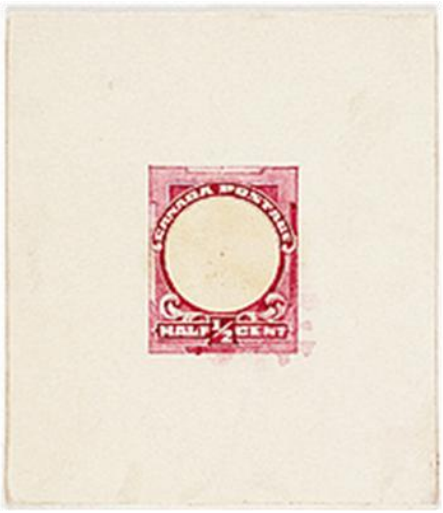

Fig. 1 *Courtesy LAC*

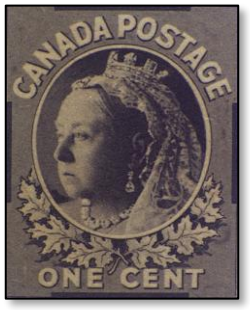

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Two essays exist with a W & D Downey photograph of Queen Victoria tipped in. One of these essays features a single garland of maple leaves at the bottom and the second features two garlands of maple leaves, one on each side of the vignette. Reduced stamp sized sepia photographs of the single and double garland essays are shown in the display and figures 2 & 3.

A sketch essay based on a Heinrich Von Angeli portrait of Queen Victoria is known and has been seen in several older auction catalogs.

Features from the various essays that were incorporated in the final design include the W & D Downey portrait as the model for the vignette, oval framing of the vignette enclosing all lettering, rectangular outer framing, and the use of maple leaves, one in each spandrel. Scrolled framing was abandoned in favour of double geometric framing which set the framing style for Canadian definitive stamps for 50 years.

Modified Offset Transfer Method

James H. Baxter in Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving[1] illustrates large scale models prepared by artists that were used to hone the design, symmetry, and perspective of the stamp and to assure a pleasing appearance. No such large model for the Maple Leaf issue has been found; however, the Maple Leaf issue essays shown in figures 2 & 3 do exist as large format essays in another collection.

Baxter further describes the modified offset process used by ABNC to transfer designs of the 1893 Columbian Issue of the United States and the designs of most stamps that ABNC printed

in the 19th century, to dies. A reduced stamp size reversed photographic print of the model was made on a thin metal plate using the ferrotype process (commonly referred to as tintype in Canada). The engraver cut the major lines of the photographic image, that he wished to transfer to the die, directly into the ferrotype metal plate. Engraving ink was rubbed into the lines. A cardboard proof was pulled and, while the ink was still wet, the cardboard proof was placed face down on the die and the lines were transferred to the die with a plate press.

Fig 4

Fig 5

It is likely that the leaves and frame lines from the reduced model ferrotype were included in the details transferred to the master die (figure 4) by the modified offset process to provide the engraver with perspective guidance.

Dies

The vignette was engraved by Charles Skinner at ABNC NY on the master die (figure 4) and the vignettes on all values are identical. Other authors have written that the corner leaves and the outer frame lines were entered separately for each value, but it is clear from the letter engraver's proofs of the master die and the half cent value (figure 5) that the frame and leaves were on the die at these initial stages. In addition, a small vertical mark on the upper left leaf on each of these letter engraver's proofs is repeated on the die proofs of every value and on three unissued essay proofs.

The ABNC contract with the Post Office provided for work on the dies to be done at ABNC NY up to the hardening of the dies. Hardening of the dies was required to be done at the ABNC Ottawa plant. Two observations can be made which show that the contract requirements were followed. First, unhardened die proofs of the one and two cent values bear the ABNC NY imprint whereas the hardened proofs were changed to ABNC Ottawa. Second, all 49 large die proofs sold at the September 1990 Christie's ABNC NY Archives sale were from unhardened dies as they were made by ABNC NY before the dies were hardened at Ottawa and stayed in the ABNC NY vaults for 93 years.

Die sizes for all values except the 3-cent value are 65 mm W x 74 mm H as measured from the die sinkage on cardboard backed proofs. The 3-cent die measured 51mm W x 62mm H by its sinkage. Die numbers for the Maple Leaf issue are sequential by denomination from F-102 through F-109, although, based on the different die size for the 3-cent die indicating a different batch of die stock, and the use of 3-cent die proofs for colour section of other values before October 1, 1897, the dies may not have been produced in the numbered order.

The design, including vignette, upper portion of the oval frame with words Canada Postage, basic outer rectangular frame and leaves, was transferred from the master die to each value die. The ½-cent letter engraver's proof shows the typical completion of initial engraving on the die for each denomination, with the bottom half of the oval frame complete with value lettering added along with the thin oval line creating the outer white oval frame.

The four spandrels of the final design are filled with horizontal lines. Remnants of scribe lines indicate that the spandrel lines were added with a combination of etching followed by engraving. The etching process started with the application of an acid-proof ground on the full die. A ruling machine added equally spaced scribe lines through the ground in each spandrel. Where the scribe lines extended through the leaves or beyond the frame lines, those areas were recovered with the ground. The die was then placed in a tray which was swayed back and forth in an acid bath allowing the acid to etch the exposed metal in the scribed lines. Once removed from the acid bath and all acid washed off, the ground was removed, and a gravure was used to deepen and finish the spandrel lines.

Scribe lines through leaf and white frame area.

Fig. 6

Early stage die proofs show remnants of the scribe lines (figure 6) in the leaves, inner white frames and outside the outer frame. Although polishing of the final dies has removed many scribe lines, some remnants can still be found on die proofs, plate proofs and stamps.

Wear Indicators

Small wear indicators were added to each die except the three-cent denomination die. The wear indicators (figure 7) consist of two shallow, near vertical lines engraved in the Queen's veil. As the plate wore with usage, these shallow lines would disappear (figure 8) from the plate and printed stamps.

Fig. 7

1 Cent Plate Proof
Strong Wear Indicators

Fig. 8

1 Cent Printed Stamp Wear
Indicators Disappearing

Die States

Three different states exist on die proofs. Each of these states have different treatments for the oval fill between the upper and lower lettering. Hand drawn sketches are used below to detail the different oval fills as scans do not reproduce clearly. The predominant fill type (figure 9) which occurs on all dies and plates except for the 3-cent value used fine horizontal lines.

The initial state of the 3-cent die (figure 10) used vertical lines for the side fill of the oval frame areas. After the 3-cent transfer roll was made, the die was annealed, and the vertical lines were removed and replaced with parallel diagonal lines creating state 2 (figure 11) of the 3-cent die.

Fig. 9

Fig 10

Fig 11

Die proofs prepared later for presentation to dignitaries show that all dies were changed to have the side oval fill as parallel diagonal lines, but a new transfer roll was made for only the 3-cent denomination. It is likely that the dies were returned to ABNC NY to make the changes to state 2 as that was where the expertise was to make the changes.

Transfer Rolls

The images from each die were transferred to the plates with standard transfer rolls. The roll destruction records show the roll numbers and quantity of images of different values on each roll. A certifying letter dated May 15, 1925, on Canadian Bank Note Company (name changed in 1922) letterhead confirmed the destruction of rolls per Table 1.

Table 1

Roll No.	Denomination	No. of subjects
99	½ Cent	4
100	3 Cent St. 1	4
106	1 Cent	3
	5 Cent	3
107	3 Cent St. 2	4
108	1 Cent	2
	2 Cent	2
	8 Cent	1
	10 Cent	1

There is no indication of the destruction of a roll for the 6-cent stamp; however, it is probable that the 1-cent denomination on Roll 108 should read 6 cents.

Plates and Printing

The plates for the half-cent through eight-cent values were laid down with 200 subjects each in a 20w x 10h format without a gutter between the left & right panes. The ten-cent plate was laid down as a single pane with 100 subjects in a 10w x 10h format. All sheets, whether in the 200 or 100 subject formats, had selvage on all sides. Each pane was required to have the plate number imprint in the top selvage. Plate numbers by stamp denomination are as follow:

Half Cent	Plate No. 1
One Cent	Plate No. 1,2,3 & 4
Two Cent	Plate No. 1,2,3 & 4
Three Cent	Plate No. 1,2,3,4,5 & 6
Five Cent	Plate No. 1
Six Cent	Plate No. 1
Eight Cent	Plate No. 1
Ten Cent	Plate No. 1

The plates were unhardened. Some references indicate that the plates were curved, and that the stamps were printed on a rotary press. While this was true for the succeeding Numeral issue, there is no evidence of the rotary press gripping hole marks on any of the Maple Leaf plates nor any hairlines on the stamps typical of the Numeral issue. The facts that four plates were used for each of the 1-cent and 2-cent stamps and that initially there were only four plates for the 3-cent stamp indicate that a four-platen flat press was used. On this type of press each of four plates in succession were inked, wiped of ink, hand polished, paper sheet applied, impressed and sheet of stamps removed. Then the cycle recurred.

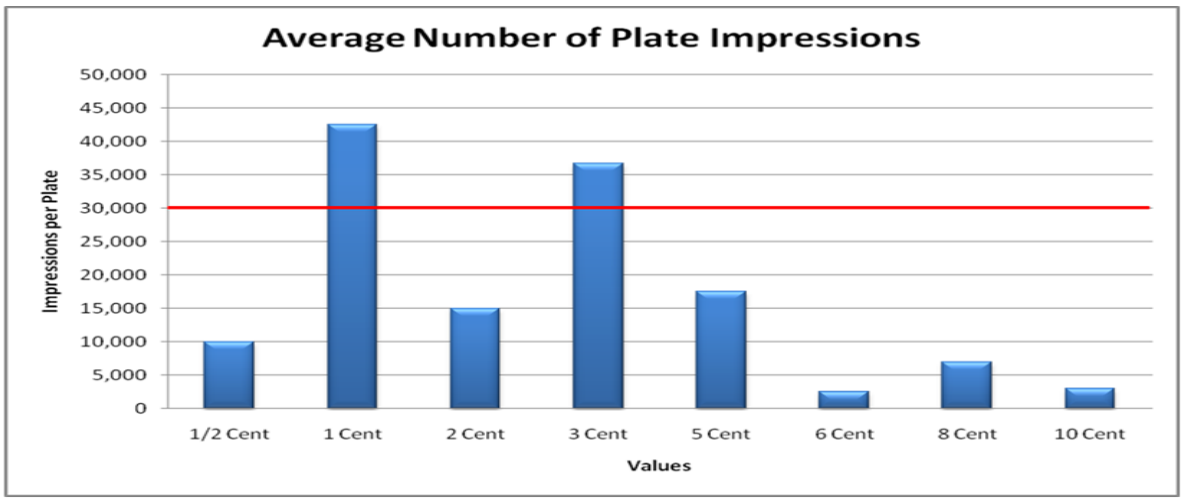

Fig. 12

The contract required that each plate be suitable for 30,000 perfect impressions, before requiring rework and a further 25,000 impressions after reworking. Only the 1-cent and 3-cent values (figure12) surpassed the 30,000-impression threshold for requiring re-entering.

Half Cent

The half cent plate was rushed into production due to a shortage of half cent stamps from the Small Queen issue. Some philatelic journals of the time attributed this shortage to collectors

rushing to buy up the existing stocks of half cent stamps to hasten the new issue release; however, this was likely not the case, as postmasters had frequent instructions in the monthly supplements not to sell any half cent stamps to people who had no valid use for them. Regardless of the reason, the shortage was acute, and the half cent plate was rushed into production. The rush into production is substantiated by the ½ cent transfer roll no. 99 being the first roll and being a single value roll with four ½ cent subjects to lay down 200 subjects on only one plate.

The first delivery of 500 panes was made to the Post Office on November 5, 1897. Upon incoming inspection at the Post Office two problems were found. First, there was only one plate imprint on the sheet straddling the two panes and second, the panes had been separated by guillotine instead of by perforations. Due to the urgent need for half cent stamps. the Post Office accepted this first shipment. ABNC removed the single imprint and replaced it with two imprints for future deliveries. Traces of the removed single imprint can be found on the upper selvage of panes from the revised plate.

Full top of pane plate strips showing the single imprint between positions 1L10 an 1R1(figure 13) and guillotined stamps used on cover from that first delivery are rare.

Figure 13. Half Cent State 1R 1-10

To improve the quality of the half-cent plate the plate was extensively re-entered after only 1350 impressions and again after 5000 impressions creating 4 states of the plate.

State 1 Original single imprint plate.
State 2 Modified double imprint plate.
State 3 Double imprint plate, re-entered.
State 4 Double imprint plate after second re-entering.

Some subjects on the plate were re-entered in several states. An extensive plating study of the half-cent stamp was conducted and published by the late Kenneth A. Kershaw[2].

One Cent

On the one cent Maple Leaf die the fill in the left and right centre portions was composed of the standard parallel horizontal lines. This was the design that was transferred to transfer roll 106 used to lay down the four 1-cent plates. The Library and Archives Canada (LAC) collections include full proof sheets of each of the four plates laid down in this fashion. Plates 1 and 2 were used for production printing as laid down but, on plates 3 and 4 the right-side oval frame fills were recut to darken the image prior to being used for production printing.

On plate 3 the recutting was done with crosshatched diagonal lines (figure 14). The recutting shows clearly on the plate proofs, but the lines are not discernible on the printed stamps. On

plate 4 the recutting was done with near vertical lines which are clear on the plate proofs, but not evident on the printed stamps. Errant recut lines on two stamps clearly show the vertical recutting. On position 4R 6 (figure 15), a recut line extends into the lower bar of the letter E of postage creating a broken E. On position 4R 18 a recut line extends into the inner white oval frame.

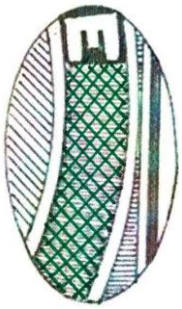

Plate 3 Crosshatched oval fill recuts. (Hand sketched for clarity.)

Fig, 14

Plate 4 vertical recut lines extent into bottom bar of "E" pos'n 4R 6.

Fig. 15

Three Cents

State 1 on transfer roll 100 was used to lay down plates 1 and 2. The vertical line fill can be readily discerned on the plate proof and in cases on the stamps.

State 2 on transfer roll 107 was used to lay down plates 3 - 6. The new diagonal line fill is also readily discernible on the plate proofs but not as evident on the stamps.

Six Cents

As with most values the frame lines on the 1-cent plate were recut. The rigor with which the recutting was done can be seen on the famous engraver slip at the bottom of position 1L 14 (figure 16). No catalogs state how many sheets were printed with engravers slips; most sources just say corrected later. First delivery of the 6 cent panes was on November 22, 1897, with 250 panes of which 125 would have been left panes including the error. The next delivery was on November 26, 1897, for a further 950 panes of which 475 would have been left panes for a total of 600 left panes. The low frequency that these errors appear in auction catalogs supports the 125 number. Only one engraver's slip is known precancelled and no engraver's slip has been seen on a cover in 50 years of collecting.

Engraver's slip pos'n 1L14

Fig. 16

Eight Cents

Like the 1-cent plates 3 & 4 the right side of the oval frame fill was recut on the eight-cent stamp; however, the recutting was more concentrated and precise. Only the bottom half of the

fill area was recut with parallel lines sloping to the upper right. The recutting is visible on all 200 subjects on the plate proof sheets.

Outer Frame Line Re-cutting

Frame line recutting was done on most plates. The half-cent plate shows horizontal frame line extensions at LR corners of 1R 19 and 1R 29 (figure 17). A vertical frame line extension exists on 3R 56, and a horizontal extension exists at 3L 88 (figure 18) on the 1 cent plates. Other minor frame line recut extensions can be found on various plates.

Fig 17  ½ Cent 1 R29 Recut Ext'n

Fig 18  1 Cent 3L 88 Recut Ext'n

The deep recutting of the 6 cent frame lines resulted not only in the famous engraver's slip, but also in the propensity of ink to smear vertically during stacking of the sheets due to ink not being fully dried. These vertical ink smears can be found at all four corners.

Plate Proofs

Most plate proofs in private hands originate from the ABNC Archives sale in 1990 and the quantities shown in catalogs per values are the quantities from that sale. Not all panes of plate proofs in the ABNC Archives sale had plate number imprints as the imprints were trimmed from the sheet top. Before the ABNC Archives sale, plate proof imprint blocks from 1-cent plates 2 & 4, 2-cent plate 4, and 3-cent plate 6 were known in private hands.

Papers

All denominations of the stamps, except the five-cent value, were printed on unwatermarked wove paper. Stamps were printed on both horizontal wove and vertical wove paper as per table 2. Horizontal and vertical wove paper originated from the same machine rolls. The difference is in the way that the sheets were cut in converting rolls to sheets to minimize wastage. Some stitch watermarks did occur due to repairs to the wire screens on the paper machine.

Table 2

Paper Types	½ Cent	1 Cent	2 Cent	3 Cent	5 Cent	6 Cent	8 Cent	10 Cent
Vert. Wove	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Horiz. Wove	√	√	√	√			√	√
Blue Opaline					√			

The Post Office required that the blue 5-cent stamp be printed on bluish paper. Test printings (figures 19a – 19d) on various bluish papers were done.

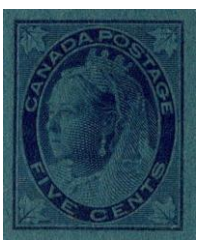

Fig. 19a

Fig. 19b

Fig. 19c

Fig. 19d

The final paper selection for the 5-cent stamp was blue opaline paper sourced from ABNC NY. The blue opaline paper choice and sourcing was noted in the Post Office Order book notation for the first Maple Leaf stamp orders placed on November 1, 1897.

The 3-Cent Progressive Die Proofs

The Essays and Proofs of British North America[6] identified five items with Essay-Proof Society Catalog numbers 69PX-A, 69PX-B, 69PX-C, 69PX-D and 69PX-E as Progressive Die Proofs.

69PX-A is a 3-cent brown die proof with side ovals hand painted in white and a handwritten note on the bottom stating "*another method of treatment suggested by Mr. Macdonough. Something of this kind ought to be done."* This item was in the Gerald E Welburn RDP collection, and an image of 69PX-A is in his Canada, Maple Leaf Issue[4] book published in 1970. Mr. Macdonough's suggestion was implemented with the creation of 69PX-C.

For the three items identified in the Essays and Proofs book as 69PX-B, 69PX-C and 69PX-D, my collection includes multiple examples of each including 2 of the 3 known large proofs of 69PX-C with selection numbers (#1 and #4) written on the face. The description in the Essays and Proofs book deals exclusively with the different treatment of the side oval frame area between the upper and lower lettering, however, there are other differences.

In 69PX-C (figure 19) the dots have been removed from the lozenges formed by the two sets of lines on the Queen's cheek. Additional engraving has been done to darken the nostril and lips.

In 69PX-B (figure 20) the full set of lines from the temple to the chin have been removed. Their removal also leaves the other set as dashed lines with line interruptions wherever the two line sets formerly crossed. The 69PX-B vignette changes are a progression from the dot removals in 69PX-C. The die sinkage on both 69PX-B and C are 51mm W x 62mm H, identical to the 3 cent die and the miscellaneous small pitting marks on the die proof are identical on 69PX-B, 69PX-C and the 3 cent die proofs proving that all were made from the same die.

Master Die Vignette
Fig 18

69PX-C Vignette
Fig 19

69PX-B Vignette
Fig. 20

The vignette of the 69PX-D (figure 21) does not show any of the vignette changes outlined above on 69PX-B and C. In fact, the only variances on the 69PX-D proof between the master die vignette and the vignettes of any 3-cent proofs are the addition of wear bars in the Queen's veil. Otherwise, all three vignettes are identical. There are no wear bars on any of the 3-cent die proofs in my collection nor on any 3-cent plate proofs.

An overlay (figure 22) of the master die letter engraver's proof and a 3-cent die proof made with the Greene Foundation's VSC shows perfect correlation on the vignette details.

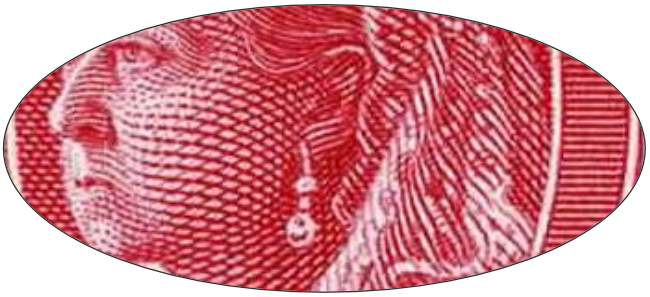

Fig.21

Fig. 22

The die sinkage on 69PX-D is 68 mm W x 74 mm H which is larger than the 3 cent die proofs and the 69PX-B and C proofs and larger than any other Maple Leaf issue die proof.

Fig. 23

Fig. 24

Fig. 25

Each of 69PX-B, 69PX-C and 69PX-D have different side oval treatments (figures 23-25) from white blanks on 69PX- B to a combination of horizontal and vertical lines on 69PX-C and thick horizontal lines on 69PX-D. 69PX-D also repeats the thick horizontal lines to fill the space at the top of the oval frame between the words Canada and Postage and at the bottom between Three and Cents. The maple leaf veins on 69PX-D have also been more heavily engraved. These oval frame and leaves features of 69PX- D are identical to the final design for the replacement 3-cent stamp of the Numeral issue.

My conclusion is that 69PX-A, 69PX-B, 69PX-C and 69PX-D are all essays for the framing treatment of the Numeral issue which followed the Maple Leaf issue and that the 69PX-D die undoubtedly was a new die made from the #100, 3-cent roller which was redundant after the #107 roll was made with the state 2 die image.

In collecting and studying the Maple Leaf issue since 1974, I have never seen a copy of 69PX-E except for the black & white photograph in the Essays and Proofs book; however, there are differences between the Essays and Proofs book photograph of 69PX-E and other 3-cent Maple Leaf die proofs. The most evident is that the Queen's forehead is farther away from the oval frame than in other Maple Leaf dies. Also, the oval frame width and the lettering are both thinner. The Brigham Auction Ltd catalog of June 2014 for the Late Victorian Issues sale, lot 263, showed a triglyph of three progressions of a vignette with the oval frame with similar positioning of the Queen's forehead and narrow oval frame & lettering.

Unissued Essays

The 15-cent 1868 Large Queen stamp and the 20-cent and 50-cent Widow Weeds stamps were the high value stamps available prior to the Maple Leaf issue. Table 3, using data from the July 1, 1897, Postmaster General's report, shows adequate stock of these older denominations.

Table 3

Denomination	Stock on Hand June 30, 1897	Prior Year Usage
15 Cent Large Queen	144,850	57,800
20 Cent Widow Weeds	303,600	55,950
50 Cent Widow Weeds	467,200	14,600

Nevertheless, Maple Leaf series dies F-110 to F-112 were produced for the 15, 20 and 50 cent values. Proofs from these dies are unissued essays.

Fig. 26

Fig. 27

Fig. 28

When The Essays and Proofs of British North America[6] was published in 1970 only two small proofs of the 15-cent unissued essay were known: one reported as dark brown on card and the other as dark violet blue on pale blue wove paper. These large black essay proofs of the F-110 to F-112 dies (figures 26 – 28) are the only proofs known with the ABNC imprint and die numbers. Based on F-113 being the number assigned to the first of succeeding Numeral issue dies (3-cent) prepared there are no other unissued dies to be discovered.

The Official Postal Guide monthly supplement for January 1900 states "*The issue of the 3 cts., 6 cts., and 15 cts. stamps from the Department has ceased.*" The rationale for ceasing the distribution of these values was that stamps of the 3-cent value and multiples of 3 cents were no longer required due to the domestic letter rate reduction to 2 cents, on January 1,1899. The 20-cent stamp was not replaced until December 24, 1899, and the 50-cent value not until October 6, 1908.

Aniline Ink

Aniline ink is a coal tar-based ink that produces bright colour and soaks deeply into the paper. In the Maple Leaf issue some print runs of the two-cent stamp were printed with aniline ink. On mint stamps printed with aniline ink the design is quite visible from the back. Aniline ink will bleed when wet and has been used by some countries to prevent the re-use of stamps.

The cover below (figure 29) retrieved from the wreck of the S.S. Labrador on Mackenzies Rock in the Hebrides on March 1, 1899, illustrates the ability of aniline ink to bleed when wet compared to other inks used on the one cent stamp used on the same cover.

Fig. 29

This cover is an international rate cover to France, franked with a pair of 2-cent Maple Leaf stamps and a one cent stamp to make up the 5-cent UPU rate. All three stamps floated off in the seawater, however, only the two 2-cent stamps bled onto the envelope. The only indication that another stamp was on the envelope Is a partial Eugenia, Ontario postmark that tied the 1-cent stamp to the envelope.

Two Cent Overprints

The Imperial Penny Postage (IPP) rate came into effect on December 25, 1898, allowing for ½ oz. letters to be mailed to the UK and 37 British colonies at the rate of 2 cents (equivalent to 1d) compared to the UPU rate of 5 cents per ½ oz. to other international destinations. Seven days later, on January 1, 1899, the domestic letter rate was reduced from 3 cents per oz. to 2 cents per oz. With these changes the 3-cent stamp status went from most in demand to least in demand as there was no other rate that the 3-cent stamp paid.

Postmasters were authorized to exchange patrons' 3-cent stamps for an equal value of other denomination stamps and to return full panes of 3-cent stamps to the Post Office Department. From January 1899 until mid July 1899 the Post Office Department filled orders for 2-cent stamps from available stocks of the violet-coloured Maple Leaf and Numeral issue 2-cent stamps and the 2-cent map stamp issued in December 1898 to commemorate the inauguration of the IPP. Prior to re-issuing the existing Numeral 2-cent stamp in carmine colour on August 22. 1899, the Post Office Department had existing stocks of 3-cent Maple Leaf and Numeral issue stamps overprinted with 2 CENTS (figure 30) by electrotype. The quantities of overprinted stamps are estimated as 1,375,000 Maple Leaf issue and 2,745,000 Numeral issue 3-cent stamps. The overprinted stamps of both issues were from plates 5 and 6. The earliest recorded date (ERD) for the Numeral issue overprint is July 28, 1899, and August 10, 1899, for the Maple Leaf issue overprints.

The normal spacing between overprints on adjacent stamps is 7 mm however narrow spacing of 4 mm exists between columns 3 and 4 and between columns 7 and 8.

Fig. 30

Corner block of Two Cent overprint with inverted overprint & normal spacing.

Ex. Dale - Lichtenstein

Fresh Entries

Fresh entries made during the plate laydown can be found on most values. One fresh entry repeated on several values shows a misplacement of a set of two curved lines, one running through lettering and the other running through either the corner spandrel lines or white oval frame. A typical example is on the 3-cent plate pos'n 5L 74 (figure 31). These fresh entries result from the deep cuts made by the letter engraver preparing the oval frame for the master die. These cuts, made to create the outer edges of the oval frame, were deeply cut to function as a stop for other lines around the lettering to be cut towards. These deep cuts became high relief points on the transfer roll.

Fig.31

Fig. 32

A fresh entry on the 2-cent plate position 2L 21 (fig 32) shows that a similar deep cut was made around the letter "O" in TWO in the lower right corner.

Re-entries

Theoretically, re-entries should only have been warranted in the 1-cent and 3-cent stamps as those were the only values that exceeded the 30,000 thresholds for plate-impressions stipulated in the contract. The ½ -cent plate was an outlier. Although only 10,000 impressions were made with the ½-cent plate it was re-entered twice, once, after only 1350 impressions and a second time after 5,000 impressions. The re-entries may have been done to improve the quality as the plate was rushed into production. It may also have been an opportunity for staff at the new facility to practice re-entering on a stamp which was intended for newspapers and circulars only. Nevertheless, the re-entries were extensive. The late Kenneth Kershaw, PhD. studied these re-entries and his work was published by the British North America Philatelic Society in 2006 titled "Plating the More Distinctive Re-entries in the Half Cent Maple Leaf Stamp[2]".

Re-entries of the 1 cent and 3 cent plates can be found usually with minor doubling, and 3-cent plate 5 re-entries can also be found on some of the 2-cent overprinted stamps.

Postage Rates

Single denominations of the Maple Leaf issue prepaid one or more regular mail rates or fees.

Canada had preferential rate agreements with the USA for exchange of letters and post cards at domestic rates and with Newfoundland for letters only; however, all other postage rates to the USA and Newfoundland were at the same international rate as to other countries.

Half Cent

- Newspapers and periodicals weighing less than one ounce.
- Unaddressed circular rate, up to 2 oz. The unaddressed circular rate was commonly called the Householder rate.

One Cent

- Domestic privately produced post cards or picture post cards & same to USA.
- Drop letters (up to 1 oz.) in towns & cities without free carrier delivery.
- Samples of products (up to 4oz).
- Transient newspapers, not posted from the office of the publisher (up to 4 oz.).
- Book Packet (up to 4 oz. and for each additional 4oz., or part thereof).
- Printed matter (up to 4 oz and for each additional 4 oz. or part thereof).
- Miscellaneous Matter (up to 2 oz. & for each additional 2 oz. or part thereof).
- Printed matter to international destinations, open for inspection, (up to 2 oz. & for each additional 2 oz. or part thereof).

Two Cent

- Privately produced post cards or picture post cards only to the following countries which allowed them, (Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Newfoundland, and Switzerland).
- Drop letters (up to 1 oz.) in towns & cities with free carrier delivery.

- Letters (up to ½ oz.) to /from soldiers & seamen on active service in Canada or overseas.
- Samples (up to 4 oz.) to international destinations.
- After Jan 1, 1899, Domestic letters (up to 1 oz.) & to USA by preferential agreement.
- After Jan 1, 1899, letters (up to 1/2 oz.) to UK, Newfoundland, & 36 other British Empire signatories to Imperial Penny Post (IPP) agreement.

Three Cent

- Domestic letters (up to 1 oz.) and to USA & Newfoundland by preferential agreement.

Five Cent

- Letters (up to ½ oz.) to all international destinations except USA & Newfoundland.
- Privately produced post cards & picture post cards to international destinations except to Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Newfoundland, & Switzerland.
- International commercial papers (up to 10 oz.).
- Registration fee.
- Acknowledgement Receipt (AR) fee.

Six Cent

- Double weight (up to 2 oz.) domestic letter rate and same to USA & Newfoundland.
- Registered drop letter rate (up to 1 oz.).
- 4th class parcel post rate (up to 4 oz.) for closed parcels.

Eight Cent

- Domestic letter rate (up to 1 oz.) plus the registration fee and same to both USA & Newfoundland through the preferential agreements until Dec 31, 1898.

Ten Cent

- Double weight (1oz.) UPU letter rate.
- Single weight (1/2 oz.) UPU letter rate plus registration fee.

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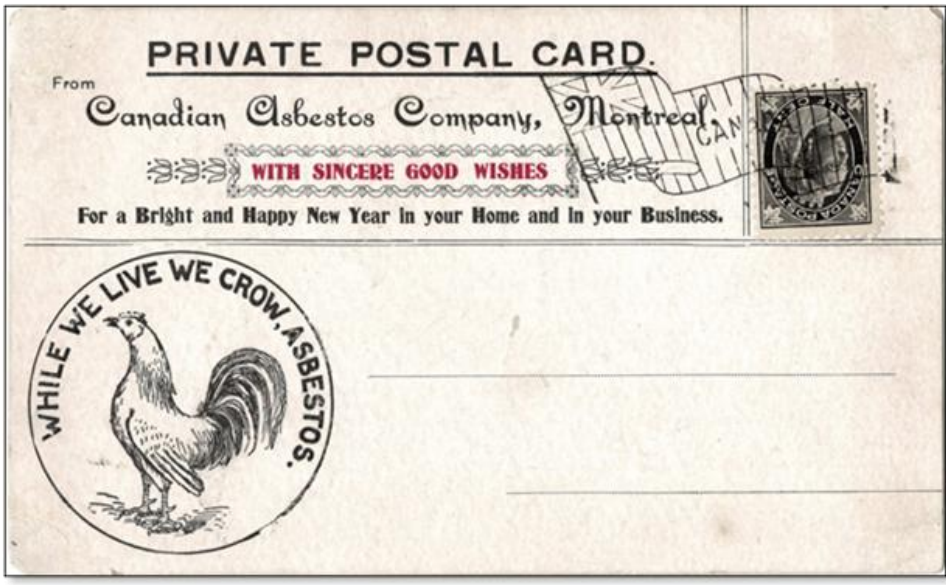

Top – Unaddressed Circular Rate
Middle - Seaman's Rate
Bottom – Sextuple Registered UPU Letter Rate

3 Cent 6L 51-94 with On-Face Offset & 2 Cents Overprint