

# CANADA SMALL QUEEN'S 1870-1897

## SYNOPSIS

This Exhibit presents the values of the Small Queen's of Canada which were in issue from 1870-1897. The exhibit includes the 20c & 50c values together in one chapter as they were issued at the same time and were sold in the Post Offices from 1893 to as late as 1899. The exhibit is divided into chapters which represent each of the values. The production material for the 12 ½ cent & 15 cent values that were not issued are also displayed. The exhibit includes rates & routes when necessary, but is not an in depth study of such. Each chapter starts with production material, the printings, and the usages. The exhibit does not intend on focusing on minor varieties but does show the more well known varieties

The Three cent stamp was the first stamp issued on January 13, 1870 for the purpose of use for the domestic rate throughout Canada for the entire Small Queen era. For this reason there is a greater emphasis on the 3 cent versus for example the 8c which was issued in 1893.

### Production Material

Each value starts with the Essay, Die proofs and Plate Proofs. Although there are 47 die Proofs in the exhibit they are very scarce. These have been accumulated at various auctions and collected for over 20 years of showing this exhibit. The die proofs in this exhibit represent the largest collection of Small Queens die Proofs currently in existence. The 5c large die proof, the 10c Dull Claret and Sepia grey are the only recorded copies. There are 4 or less of most of the other die Proofs. The earliest die proof was the 1c black die proof prepared in January of 1870. There are 3 recorded.

There are 7 blocks of four of the Plate Proofs in the exhibit and the only known 3c lilac plate proof recorded. The exhibit displays the partial reconstruction of positions of the 2c running horse Essays. There was one sheet produced.

### The Stamps

The 3c was the first stamp issued for the purpose of the domestic rate throughout the period. There are a large number of mint blocks throughout the exhibit chosen because they better display the subtle shades. One of the challenges in this area is to determine some of the subtle shades especially in the 3c & early 10c stamps. Careful analyses and comparisons have been made in determining the shades.

The exhibit includes the largest block of 28 of the 10c dull rose. Also displayed is the largest multiple and only known block of four of the 3c soft paper variety. One of the rarest varieties is the 3c perforation 12 ½ x 12 ½. The exhibit displays mint and used stamps the earliest use and one of two foreign uses. The only known sheet of the 6c which is the highest value with a sheet still in tact is shown. Also in the 6c section is the major re-entry 5 on 6 variety of which there are 5 mint examples recorded. There is the largest known thick hard paper variety block of six which is the discovery block. Lastly there is a double impression 2c mint single of which only two are recorded. The author discovered in the last year the 1c long strand of hair variety on an imperforated pair which is believed to be the only one on the imperforated stamp.

## Domestic Use

Another challenge in this area is to obtain very fine clean covers in good condition. There are few very fine condition covers available. The earliest recorded use of the Small Queen stamps are three 3 cent domestic covers dated January 13, 1870 of which two different domestic destinations are shown. Highlights of domestic use examples include a 2c soldiers letter, 2 different examples of the 2c bisect usage, a Cariboo express cover carried completely out of the mail system and a 3c registered ICR Perfin cover.

## Foreign Use

One of the most interesting and important sections of the Small Queen issue is the expansion of the use to many more foreign destinations. Again clean foreign destination covers are difficult to find and often have some faults because of the long distances travelled. Canada joined the UPU on July 1, 1878. Foreign mail prior to this date is much more scarce. The exhibit displays the earliest small Queen cover to Cape of Good Hope. Also included are Pre- UPU covers to Brazil, Italy, Ceylon, Peru, India and Uruguay. Scarce foreign UPU rate destinations include, Egypt, Guatemala, China, Seychelles Islands, Argentina, Siam Thailand and Cuba. The exhibit concludes with the 20c & 50c Widow Weeds which were issued in 1893 for the purpose of parcel post. Several commercially used foreign destinations are displayed including mail to Australia, Sweden and British Honduras.

## Personal Research

The exhibitor discovered the earlier date of use for the half cent Small Queen cover in an auction that had not been previously discovered. The exhibitor recent discovered the 1c long strand hair variety on a vertical imperforate pair in a larger lot at a stamp show. The exhibitor has completed original research on the 3cent 12 ½ X 12 ½ perforation including recording numbers available, post offices they were purchased from and recording the earliest and latest uses. Study has been derived from auction catalogues, texts, articles and catalogues. The exhibitor has kept records for twenty years with respect to numbers of scarce items.

## Importance of the Small Queens

This was the most important era of the Canadian Postal system because of the increasing demand, expansion of the Postal system, and it was the longest running series of any Canadian stamp set. Further there were significant changes and simplification of the foreign Rates. The demand quadrupled for stamps because of population growth, commercial growth and the increased public familiarity with the postal system. Joining the UPU provided a less costly service to foreign destinations. During this period the printing equipment was improved and refined especially in terms of more accurate perforation techniques.

This exhibit was last shown at the 2022 in Canada at London Ontario and received a Large Gold and received the Grand award and was in the Champion of Champions in Cleveland in 2023. Some items added, include the afore mention earliest date of use for the ½ cent Small Queen and the earliest known use of a Small Queen cover to Cape of Good Hope. The yellow colour of issue 1c Die Proof, and all of the blocks of 4 of the plate proofs except the 3 cent.