

The 1951 King George VI Issue Of Canada

SYNOPSIS

The King George VI low value definitive stamps were originally scheduled for release on June 6, 1949 with only Canada and the value appearing on the stamps. However, the stamps were withheld by the federal government because with an upcoming election, the government felt it would be better to include some French text on the stamps. The basic design was modified to include "Postes" and "Postage" and issued on November 15, 1949. The original unissued design was finally issued on January 19, 1950. Only two plates were used for each value (1¢ to 5¢) and since both the Peace issue higher value definitives and the George VI low value definitive with "Postes" and "Postage" were both concurrent at the time, some usages will include a mixture of issues. Although it was not compulsory to use "Airmail" stamps for airmail and "Special delivery" stamps to denote special delivery, it was still a very common practice to do so and therefore in some instances, these special stamps appear alongside the George VI definitives on cover.

The exhibit starts with the preproduction progressive die proofs and the final design die proofs in colour of issue. This is followed by the individual sheet and coil stamps. A selection of lower left plate blocks are displayed (as this corner shows the Post Office order number in the left selvage). No attempt has been made to show all four corners of each plate. Likewise, the rolls of 1¢ and 3¢ coil stamps have a starting strip in the colour of the stamp design consisting of 10 gummed and perforated segments in the size of the stamp, with the first segment being slightly larger and having the denomination stamped on it in blue ink. A similar white strip was found on the end of each roll, but with no printing on it. Every possible example of each has purposely not been shown.

The bulk of the exhibit shows a selection of usages of the King George VI stamps paying various rates. Examples with Registration, Special Delivery are shown for both domestic and international destinations by surface mail and airmail.

The exhibit is concluded by a few examples of postage due for short paid rates and returned mail.

REFERENCES

1. Dr. Robert C. Smith and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz, **Canada Domestic and International Postal Rates and Fees 1870 – 1999**, The Press for Philately, 2000.