

EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS

OTTAWA FANCY CANCELS 1870 TO 1877

Significant Items:

The exhibit is a series of fancy cancels all from Ottawa to illustrate the varied and numerous design that were used by the postal clerks during a seven year span. Items with a grey border are previously unrecorded or earliest recorded date or a Christmas Day cancel. The exhibit shows many different designs but the office did use very many geometric cancels that characteristically had many straight lines sometimes of varying lengths to make complicated, distinctive cancels. The exhibit shows how similar some of the designs were.

Some significant items are:

Eight previously unlisted Ottawa fancy cancels

Earliest recorded date (ERD)

Ottawa geometrics used as a cancels when received in Ottawa on two examples of letters mailed from Menie, Ont.

Dated Christmas Day letter.

General information:

Early Canadian cancels began with numerals assigned to particular post offices but by the time that the small queens were introduced in 1870 many post offices began cutting cork cancels into unique designs. Toronto had many different numeral 2s and a wide variety of masonic, ship, leaf, and, star cancels. Kingston had masonic and religious symbols. Many smaller offices had letters and initials. Ottawa had different designs but many had distinctive geometric cuts called Ottawa Geometrics.

By the early 1880s the number of post offices and the volume of mail had increased greatly. Cork and and the use of cork and wood cancel hammers was almost eliminated in larger post offices.

Bibliography

BNAPS Fancy Cancel and Miscellaneous Marking Newsletter.

Fancy Cancels on Canadian Stamps 1855 to 1950 edited by D.M. Lacelle Second Edition

Stamps of North America by Fred Jarrett 1929