

A HISTORY OF CANADA'S AIR MAIL STAMPS, 1928 - 1939.



(This cover is overfranked - the correct rate was 30 cents per half ounce.)

Six different air mail stamps in two denominations, were issued between 1928 and 1939.

This exhibit looks at why they were issued, and how their use reflects the development of the air mail system.

The stamps are referred to by the numbers C1 to C6, which they were allocated in the Scott Catalogue.

C1 issued September 21st 1928

Canada's first airmail stamp was issued ten days before the new rate and routes that were going to be introduced on October 1st.

According to a Post Office announcement, the new stamp showed:

Map of Canada on a globe with two female figures joining hands over a panel bearing the word "air"; at the top an airplane; at the bottom figures 5 with the word "cents" between.

The design of the stamp proved quite controversial. It was criticized as the figures were angels, but they each only had one wing! The printers said that one wing had been eliminated, so as not to crowd the design. There were also complaints that the angels on the stamp were female, but that in the Bible angels were referred to as "Sons of God", and were therefore male!

(The Airpost Journal, June 1996.)



Please note -

This exhibit is mounted on 11 x 11¼ inch pages.
The title page above is shown at 70% actual size.

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Synopsis

This is a one-frame exhibit, looking at why six different air mail stamps were issued in a period of 12 years, and how their use reflected the development of the air mail system in Canada.

To give a balance between the history of the stamps and their usage, the exhibit only shows highlights in the development the Canadian air mail system.

- The exhibit is mounted on 11" x 11 ½" pages, to give more room to describe the history and usage of the stamps.
- The exhibit consists of 12 pages. This complements the topic, as there is generally one page on why each stamp was issued, followed by a page on its usage. (The exception is C3, where there is not a page on its usage, as it was followed shortly by C4. - The page "saved" is used for the title page.)
- A one frame exhibit has been chosen, as it allows a balance between why each stamp was issued, and its usage. If the exhibit was expanded to more than one frame, the extra pages would look at additional usages, but that would distract from why the stamps were issued, which is a dual theme of the exhibit.

Organization of the Exhibit:

- Page 1 TITLE PAGE and design of C1 - ISSUED ON SEPTEMBER 21st 1928.
- Page 2 OCTOBER 1st 1928 - first day that C1 was required to be used.
- Page 3 CONFUSION ABOUT AIR MAL RATES - overfranked covers from the Experimental Prairie Air Mail service in December 1928.
- Page 4 C2 - ISSUED ON DECEMBER 4th 1930.
- Page 5 RATE CHANGES INTERNATIONALLY, AND WITHIN CANADA.
- Page 6 C3 - ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 22nd 1932, and the cancellation of Air Mail services during the Depression.
- Page 7 C4 - ISSUED ON JULY 12th 1932, and the special flights from Bradore bay.
- Page 8 AUGUST 1st 1932 - A CHANGE IN RATE TO THE U.S.A., but not through the U.S.A.!
- Page 9 C5 - ISSUED ON JUNE 1st 1935, but there were very few air mail services it could be used on.
- Page 10 THE CANADIAN AIR MAIL NETWORK EXPANDS and Trans-Canada Air Lines was created.
- Page 11 C6 - ISSUED ON JUNE 15th 1938, as the Post Office wanted a stamp to convey the idea that air mail was now widely available.
- Page 12 1939 - NEW AIR MAIL SERVICES ACROSS CANADA, AND ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

Rare and unusual items:

- The First Flight Covers to overseas destinations are rarely found.
- The cover on the title page is the only one I have seen featuring all six airmail stamps. It is also the only cover I have seen addressed to Lester Pearson, the future Prime Minister of Canada.

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