

CANADA: 1985 - 50c Parliament Booklet Usages

Purpose

This exhibit answers the question, "how did Canada Post customers Use those booklet stamps, especially the low values?" With the 16c worth of stamps that remained after the first class letter rate stamp was removed, mailers used ingenuity to get every penny of their money's worth.

Introduction In 1985 Canada Post issued a newly designed vending machine stamp booklet with the engraved stamps featuring views of Canada's parliament buildings. The mechanical vending machines that dispensed them were designed to take two 25c coins, thus the value of the stamps had to add up to 50c. The first class letter rate at this time was 34c, thus the booklet pane was configured as 34c, 2 x 5c and 3 x 2c for a total of 50c. Those low value stamps did not pay any specific rate, and some customers just discarded them. Others used them in combinations to make up valid postage rates during the era of this booklet and beyond. This exhibit shows both in-period and later usages.

Challenge The difficulty of acquisition of commercially used covers with these low value booklet stamps is extreme. The contents of this exhibit took over 10 years to collect. The stamps are of minimal catalogue value and relatively modern, so postal history dealers do not stock them. They are mainly found by serendipity, with higher frankings often on stamp collector or dealer mail.

Organization

1.	Domestic Mails
2.	International Mails
3.	Special Services
4.	Incorrectly Franked Mail
5.	Conclusion



34c rate cover franked with multiple low value booklet stamps