

# INTERNATIONAL, IMPERIAL AND COMMONWEALTH REPLY COUPONS OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

International Reply Coupons (IRC) were first introduced by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) on 01-10-1907. Their purpose was to facilitate the ease of exchange of mail between countries and to enable a writer to prepay the postage for the reply from a foreign recipient. Today the UPU consists of 192-member countries of which 77 are still issuing IRC's. Although all member countries do not issue their own coupons, all are required to redeem those issued by other member countries in exchange for appropriate postage.

Canada issued IRC's for 110 years commencing on 01-10-1907 and ceased sales on 13-10-2017.

## CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPONS: Frames 1 to 4 (pages 1 to 58)

The naming of major IRC Types and Models follows the same name as the city where the UPU Congress was held and where changes were made to the style, wording or value of the coupon.

**Rome:** Frame 1 (pages 2 to 8), **London:** Frames 1 to 3 (pages 9 to 35), **Vienna:** Frame 3 (pages 36 to 43),  
**Lausanne:** Frames 3 to 4 (pages 44 to 51), **Beijing:** Frame 4 (pages 52 to 55), **Nairobi:** Frame 4 (page 56),  
**Doha:** Frame 4 (page 57).

The numbering system used for IRC's is generally based on the image and text, and the sub-groups on the spacing. This was first developed by Paul-August Koch. From 1907 to present, there are 38 main types (Type I – Type XXXVIII) although not all were issued by Canada.

## CANADIAN IMPERIAL REPLY COUPONS (1927 to 1953): Frame 4 (pages 59 to 63)

The coupons were first introduced for use in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Australia, Canada, India, Newfoundland, New Zealand and the Union of South Africa. They began as a result of discussion between the Imperial delegates to the Postal Union Congress at Stockholm in August, 1924. Since the postage rates between the British Empire countries was far less than the minimum selling price set by the UPU for IRC's, it was unfair to the public to pay the UPU set minimum price when corresponding within the British Empire. At that time the IRC sold for 9 cents. The Imperial Reply Coupon when introduced, sold for 5 cents saving the public 4 cents. Eight types (I – VIII) of Imperial Reply Coupons exist.

## CANADIAN COMMONWEALTH REPLY COUPONS (1953 to 1976): Frames 4 to 5 (pages 64 to 77)

This coupon replaced the Imperial Reply Coupon which began to be phased out starting in August, 1953. The words "Imperial" and "British Empire" and the image of Britannia were replaced and modernized with words and a design more reflective of the nations within the Commonwealth. The word "British" was removed at the insistence of India and Pakistan. The new coupon was also modified to accommodate space for a second language other than English if desired at the suggestion of Canada. Sixteen types (IX-XXI) and sub-types of Commonwealth Reply Coupons exist but not all were issued by Canada.

## NEWFOUNDLAND INTERNATIONAL & IMPERIAL REPLY COUPONS: Frame 5 (pages 78 to 80)

**Especially Significant Items are identified by**  **Original Research by** 

### References:

André Hurtré: Catalogue Mondial des coupes-réponse Tome I. Historie, types, généralités; Pays de "A" à "H", Académie de philatélie, Paris 2010;  
Andrew Chung: Reply Coupons of Canada, Postal History Society of Canada Journal, #50 (30 June 1987), pp173-182;  
Peter Robin: International Reply Coupons: An Illustrated Guide to Their Types, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Printed by Minuteman Press, © Peter Robin 2009;  
Jack and Carol Yao: Yao's Catalogue of Worldwide Reply Coupons, Volume I – The UPU Coupons, July 2016, Quality Development LLC