

# THE SQUARED CIRCLE POSTMARKS OF NEW BRUNSWICK

## Synopsis – BNAPEX 2018

### Scope of the Exhibit

The “Type 2” squared circle postmark hammer was distributed to fourteen New Brunswick post offices, most in 1893 to early 1894. In order of proof date, these were:

- 1893 – Clifton and Rothesay (June 15), Baie Verte, Butternut Ridge, Newcastle Creek, Milltown, River Louison, Petitcodiac
- 1893 – Fredericton, Sackville, Woodstock, Indiantown, Shediac
- 1895-1897 – St. John (3 hammers)

Preceding these, St. John in 1892 received a “Squared Circle Precursor” hammer - of a quite different design, which because it includes some elements of the squared circles traditionally has been included with them.

### Squared Circle Post Marks

The “squared circle” postmarks contained both a stamp “killer” and dating data in one hammer, obviating the need for two strikes on each envelope. They thus were more efficient, more “interesting” and more compact than the previously used duplex hammers – and more durable. The name derived from the design – an outer square formed by horizontal thick lines cut to frame a circle which held the town name, N.B., inside the rim (and on St. John, also CANADA). Within that was room for mailing data (“indicia”) in 3 lines – a time mark (often omitted, especially by smaller post offices), the month and day. and the year arranged as: **TM / MM DD / YY**.

All of the New Brunswick squared circles were manufactured by Pritchard & Andrews.

### Organization

The one New Brunswick “Precursor” issued to St. John is included on the title page as a “prologue” to the main subject (see notes on page 2 of this synopsis).

Thereafter, the each squared circle hammer is presented in order of proof date.

The presentation of each strike includes: illustration of the proof strike (*scanned directly from the BNAPS handbook “The Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada, Fifth Edition”*); examples on cover (and occasionally stamps); usage dates; time marks; and for scarcer types, the number of known covers. Emphasis is on covers because they show the entire strike – complete strikes are too large to fit on any single Canadian stamp – even the Jubilee and Map issues. Other comments about the postal vicinities, strike clarity, etc. are added.

### Exceptional Items

Important or items with few known examples are stressed by black outlines around the item. **Among them are two CLINTON strikes – of 5 reported on cover.** In addition are (perhaps the only) two examples of the ERD of the “precursor”; Newcastle Creek and Butternut Ridge Bridge strikes on the stamp; and the St. John Hammer I with a “1” time mark.

### **General Comments on Squared Circles Strikes and the “Precursors”**

For a number of post offices, the strikes are almost always very light – in fact, close to unreadable. The reason probably lies in the hand stamp itself – applied by direct pressure with a hand-held gripping device rather than at the end of a wand which allowed greater ease of use to provide “power” to produce an inclusive clear strike.

The exhibitor includes the “Squared Circle Precursor” only because tradition deems it to be germane to the study of Squared Circles, as do both major hand books.

The exhibitor sees virtually no true comparisons. The outline is a defined linear circle (none in the later format). There is no square. The date and time mark are on only one line, and the time mark follows the date.

The only likenesses are: the placing of the town, province, Canada inside the circle and the division of the remainder of the circle area into thirds – even here, the precursors use two sets of three lines, and the squared circles only single lines. (For a further discussion, see Hanson & Moffatt (page 245). Elsewhere these types have been assigned a more appropriate designation as “barred circles”.

### **History of This Exhibit**

This one-frame exhibit in slightly different formats has won gold awards at Oxpex (Woodstock, ON) in March 2017 and a small gold at Canpex 2017. The latter excluded the “precursor” and was criticized for the omission.

### **Bibliography**

Hansen, Glenn and Moffatt, W.G. *The Squared Circle Postmarks of Canada* – A handbook of the British North America Philatelic Society; Friesen Printers, Altona, Manitoba; 1981

The Squared Circle Study Group, J.S. Gordon editor; *The Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada, Fifth Edition* – A Handbook of BNAPS; Printed in Canada by BNAPS; 2001

Catalogue and internet site of Sparks Auctions, Sale #23, Feb. 2, 2017; Ted Kerzner’s Squared Circle Cancellations of Canada

(website is still available, and is much more inclusive than the catalogue – a really fine contribution to the study of Canadian squared circles)

March 10, 2018