

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Newsletter of the BNAPS

First Day Cover Study Group

Issue No. 14 January-March, 2013

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## Editor's Notes

This issue consists of two articles written by our first honorary member, Bruce Perkins, in 2001 and 2012. I “discovered” the first article recently while perusing the treasures contained in the *First Days* archival CD published recently by the American First Day Cover Society. It provides a concise summary of the impact of the entry of Canada Post into the FDC field. I thought that it would stand today as it did then as an important foundation for our field and was well worth reprinting as it would serve as a refresher to those members who had seen it a decade ago and a useful summation for newer collectors of FDCs. I wish to thank Bruce and Pete Martin, editor of *First Days*, for their permission to reprint the article.

I asked Bruce if he would like to update or expand on his original article, and he promptly and graciously supplied the second article appearing in this issue. He has provided a succinct account of the current status of FDC collecting and identified three cachet makers that weren't included in his earlier article.

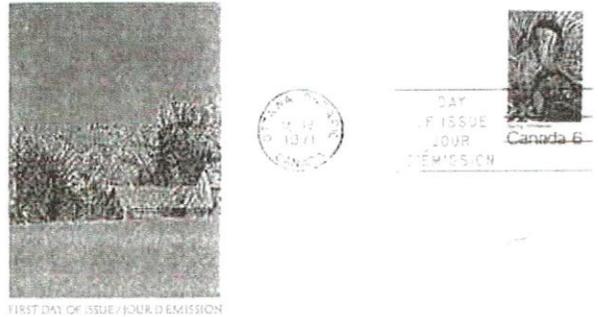
Both Bruce and your Editor would appreciate correspondence from any of you who might have further examples of cachets produced by the makers he discusses in his current article, or comments on any of the issues he has raised.

## Submitting Articles to First Impressions

Articles may be submitted in writing or MS Word, and scans should be in JPEG format at 300 dpi. E-mail submissions should be sent to Gary Dickinson at [gandbdickinson@shaw.ca](mailto:gandbdickinson@shaw.ca) or mailed to Gary at 648 San Michelle Road, Kelowna, B.C., Canada, V1W 2J1.

# THE DEMISE OF PRIVATE FDC CACHET MAKING IN CANADA

by Bruce Perkins



**Figure 1. The first official cachet issued by the Canada Post marked the beginning of the demise of private FDC cachetmaking in Canada.**

The story of the demise of private cachetmaking in Canada has been well documented in the pages of *FIRST DAYS* and in my catalog, *Canadian First Day Cover Handbook, 1950-59*, published by the AFDCS in 1994 and updated in the June One, 1996 issue of *FIRST DAYS*, for Canada's International show, CAPEX 96. The cachets of the 1950s documented by these two AFDCS publications show a vigorous FDC market, with most issues having 20 to 30 cachets reported.

When Canada Post started making cachets in the early 1970s, both the number of FDCs serviced and the number of cachetmakers who continued to make cachets dwindled

throughout the decade and fell to almost nothing during the early 1980s.

In this article I will repeat and review published information and combine this with some new material that I hope weaves together into a single coherent story.

In the field of Canadian First Day Cover collecting the defining moment, exclusive of its origins, was the emergence of the Canadian Post Office Official FDC on April 14, 1971 (Figure 1). This was followed in short order by the rapid decline of the private cachetmaker as a Canadian philatelic institution.

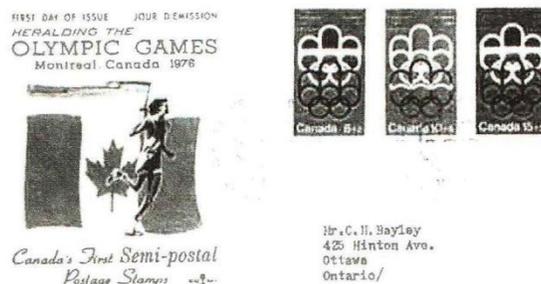
The story is best exemplified by what happened with Rosecraft Covers,



**Within a year of the first Canada Post Official FDC, two of the top three Canadian FDC cachetmakers ceased production. Figure 2, to the left, is the last Cole Cachet. To the right, Figure 3 shows the last H&E Cover.**

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**Figure 4. When Canada Post raised their FDC servicing fee from 5¢ to 10¢ per cover, Rosecraft was forced to cease production. Shown here is the last Rosecraft cachet.**

Canada's dominant cachetmaker. The departure of Rosecraft Covers in early 1974, Canada's leading FDC producer, marked the end of an almost 30-year era of cachetmaking. The JRC/Rosecraft era of cachetmaking was begun by Joseph C. Rosenbaum in 1942 and continued through the sale of the company to William Assad in 1967 (Perkins, 1995).

The Rosecraft cover business looked to be both prosperous and stable but, in 1969, storm clouds gathered on the horizon. Word spread that the Post Office was planning to introduce its own official First Day Covers. The private cachetmakers realized that such a move would be the end of them. No one knew that more than Assad.

Resolved to fight this intrusion of the government into the realm of private enterprise, he set out to solicit support. Cachetmakers and stamp dealers were urged to write their members of parliament in protest while Assad lobbied politicians, bureaucrats and post office officials. No cohesive protest was generated from the philatelic sector, however, and government officials blithely ignored dissenting opinion.

#### **Rosecraft loses three year battle with Canada Post Office FDCs**

On April 14, 1971, Canada Post introduced the first official First Day

Cover. The fallout was immediate as two major Canadian cachetmakers, Cole and H&E Covers (Rosecraft's main competitors) ceased production within the year (Figures 2 and 3). Other cachetmakers, having seen the writing on the wall, had stepped out in the preceding years. Of all the larger scale Canadian cachetmakers, only Rosecraft was still active by 1972.

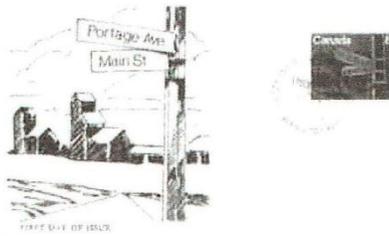
Assad was not going to quietly bow out and resolved to go head-to-head with the post office. He soon found, however, that the rules of the game had subtly changed. Before, information on upcoming issues had been readily given. Now such information had to be pried loose, often after much delay, leaving Assad scrambling to prepare his cachets on time.

The final straw came when the Post Office doubled their servicing fee from 5¢ to 10¢ per cover for a single stamp. This represented a brutal increase in costs and resulted in official FDCs being sold for not much more than what it cost Rosecraft to produce theirs. The economics were no longer viable and, faced with this reality, Assad regrettably discontinued the series. On April 17, 1974, the last Rosecraft FDC was produced (Figure 4).

The end of Rosecraft, more than any other event, signified the end of the private cachetmaker as a major player

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**Figure 5.** After Rosecraft produced their last cachet in April, 1974, Stu Blumenthal made the First S.C.S. Cover for the Winnipeg Centennial issue of May 3, 1974.

in the Canadian FDC scene. The Post Office, with its low production costs and extensive distribution system (through philatelic counters across the country), was a formidable cachet-maker. Collectors liked the convenience of buying FDCs up to 6 months after the Day of Issue and, once they were on board with the official covers, they tended to stay there.

This is not to say that the private cachetmakers simply vanished with the post office emergence. Several firms continued and a few brave souls even saw the end of Rosecraft as an opportunity to start new cachet lines. The market place had been irrevocably changed, however, and over time these smaller outfits dropped out one by one. Today, very little Canadian FDC action occurs beyond the realm of the official post office covers.

My previous article listed FDC totals for a number of issues of the early 1970s versus the early 1980s. This information is summarized and expanded upon in Table I in this article.

#### **The Last Three Private Cachetmakers of Canada**

Like the Phoenix rising from the ashes, some enterprising individuals saw opportunity in the ruins. Immediately following the last Rosecraft cachet, for Sc. B1-3, issued April 17, 1974, three operations from diverse parts of the country started their own FDC programs. They were: SCS covers



**Figure 6.** In 1978, SCS was sold to Gary Bartlett. Faced with diminishing interest and the \$5 Point Pelee regular issue of January 10, 1983, Bartlett made the last SCS Cachet for the Christmas issue of 1982

from Halifax, Nova Scotia (Perkins, 1991); NR covers from Montreal (prepared by long-time FDC servicer, Norman Rosenbloom); and Jones covers from Victoria, British Columbia (Perkins, 1998).

I spoke to Stu Blumenthal, owner of Scotia Stamp Studio and SCS covers, during a family vacation in 1988. When Rosecraft ceased production in 1974, Stu realized that his clientele would have no choice but to switch to the official FDCs prepared by the post office. Resolved not to let this happen, he set out to produce his own series of covers. The First S.C.S. cover was made for the Winnipeg Centennial issue of May 3, 1974 (Figure 5). He started out printing 1500 to 1800 envelopes for each issue, but this dropped to about 800 envelopes in the late 1970s and continued to decline.

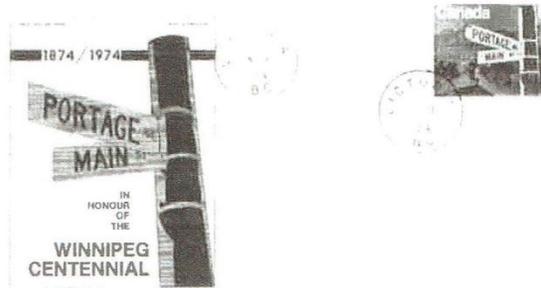
In about 1978, when the demands of regularly making cachets grew too large, Stu sold the cachet line to a fellow Halifax resident, Gary Bartlett. When the \$5 Point Pelee definitive was announced for release on January 10, 1983, Bartlett apparently felt the cost of this high value new issue was too much to bear. The last Scotia Cover Service cachet was made for the Christmas issue released on November 3, 1982 (Figure 6).

The first Jones Cachet was also made in response to the end of Rosecraft

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**Figure 7. Like the SCS cachet line, the First Jones cachet was made for the Winnipeg Centennial issue of May 3, 1974, immediately after Rosecraft produced their last cachet in April, 1974.**



cachet production (Figure 7). As with the first cachetmaker discussed, the first Jones cachet was for the Winnipeg Centennial issue of 1974. Brickley and Florence Jones operated the Stamp Mart in downtown Victoria, British Columbia.

I haven't been able to get any information on the number of cachets

printed. Most of the FDCs were sold from the store and a few covers were offered at the philatelic counter at the main PO in Victoria. By this special arrangement, postal clerks collected 5-cents per blank cachet for the Joneses. Despite being a local cachetmaker, these cachets are quite hard to locate in my area. I suspect that only a modest

### Table I Diminishing Canadian FDCs 1950s - 1990s

The total number of Canadian cachetmakers exceeds 700. This number encompasses a vast variety of individuals, groups, institutions, businesses and others who produced FDCs, many for only one stamp issue.

Date of Issue	Privately held Cachetmakers <sup>1</sup>	Additional Commercial Cachetmakers <sup>2</sup>	Average Number of FDCs Serviced per Issue <sup>3</sup>
1950s	22	3	48,956
1960s	29	5	102,370
1970s	16	6	134,722 (prior to the first PO FDC <sup>3</sup> )
1980s	5	4	48,366
1990s	1	4	not reported
2000s	0	4	not reported

**1. Privately held Cachetmakers** The number of privately-held cachetmakers reported includes only cachets (make either regularly or occasionally) that were privately run as a labor-of-love or a for-profit enterprise.

**2. Commercial Cachetmakers** For this table, I have listed only those who produced FDC lines where the FDC is not made as the end product, but as by-product of a larger private or government company. The four commercial cachetmakers of the 2000s are Canada Post, Canada House of Commons/Senate, Canadian Bank Note Co. and British American Bank Note Co.

**3. Average Number of FDCs Serviced Per Issue.** The average number of FDCs per issue has been computed from Official cancellation figures for the 1950s to the early 1970s. No official FDC totals were released after 1971. Figures were again released in the late 70s and early 80s. (Cool, 1984/1985)

**Table II The Last Private Cachetmakers of Canada**

*Only cachetmakers who produced cachets during the 1970s are listed here.*

Cachet	First Cachet	Last Cachet	Reasons for stopping
Cole	Sept. 8, 1965	Dec. 30, 1971	Post Office competition
H&E	Apr. 14, 1955	Mar. 17, 1972	Post Office competition
Rosecraft	Sept. 5, 1957	April, 17, 1974	PO servicing fee went from 5¢ to 10¢
Smith	June 30, 1967	June 30, 1977	Declining sales
Jones	May 3, 1974	May 11, 1979	Stopped for reasons of health
Grover	Mar. 3, 1947	June 20, 1980	Unknown
SCS	May 3, 1974	Nov. 3, 1982	Declining sales, \$5 stamp announced
NR	May 3, 1974	May 18, 1984	Sudden death of owner

number were made, probably no more than a few hundred per issue. Jones cachets were more a labor of love than a large commercial concern and they were discontinued in 1979 when Brickley Jones suffered a severe heart attack and was forced to retire. This business was sold to another stamp dealer but the cachet line was not continued.

**NR Covers Norman Rosenbloom**

I have not told the story of NR cachets in the pages of *FIRST DAYS*, so I will take this opportunity to explain how

they fit into the picture. The "NR" of the cachet line NR Covers is an acronym for Norman Rosenbloom, a Montreal area philatelist. Rosenbloom became quite well known as a servicer of Canadian FDCs. He started out in the early 1950s doing small amounts for himself and his stamp collecting friends. Business quickly grew so that by the 1960s Rosenbloom was servicing a large volume of FDCs for a host of different clients, including Joseph Rosenbaum, the original Rosecraft owner.

**Table III The US Cachetmakers of Canadian FDCs**

*Only makers active during the 1970s and later are listed here.*

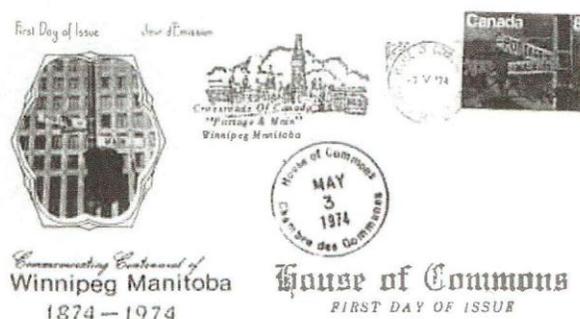
Cachet	First Cachet	Last Cachet	Comments
Cachetcraft	Mar 3, 1947	July 30, 1971	occasional issues
Overseas Mailers	Apr 1, 1954	Jan 31, 1973	See Note 1 below.
Jackson	Mar 11, 1964	Nov 7, 1973	all issues
Artopages	Oct 14, 1964	Nov 18, 1977	occasional issues to 1966, all in 1967-77
Fleetwood	Oct 10, 1957	Nov 21, 1986	See Note 2 below.
Colorano	Jan 31, 1973	Nov 7, 1994	discontinued all non-US cachets in 1994

1. Overseas Mailer cachets were made for occasional issues at first and later all issues. After March 11, 1964, Overseas Mailers imprinted small designs on Jackson cachets.

2. Fleetwood produced cachets for most issues of 1969-86 but only occasionally before that time. The cachets were signed "Kingwood" from 1969-1976 and Fleetwood during other times. Since 1986, Fleetwood occasionally produces FDCs for selected issues of special interest or within larger series of topical FDCs with stamps from a large number of countries around the world.

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**Figure 8. Norman Rosenbloom also took advantage of the demise of Rosecraft to issue his first cachet for the City of Winnipeg stamp issue of May 3, 1974.**

With the demise of Rosecraft Covers in early 1974, no time was lost by Norman Rosenbloom in getting his cachet out to fill the void. Like his compatriots, Jones and Scotia Cover Service, NR Covers made its debut for the 8¢ City of Winnipeg stamp issued on May 3, 1974 (Figure 8).

Of the three post-Rosecraft initiatives, NR was the largest and most national in its efforts. Rosenbloom made a serious effort to continue a Rosecraft caliber tradition with the new enterprise. Like Rosecraft, the NR cachets were often highly detailed and well thought out. Embossing was used in the cachet to give shine and a luxurious feel. Despite the best efforts of all concerned, however, the business didn't flourish. By late 1983 and early 1984 a lessening in the momentum of the series was evident. General purpose cachets were introduced and embossing was stopped as volume declined. Tragedy struck in the spring of 1984 when Rosenbloom died suddenly. This marked the end of NR Covers as the series did not survive his passing. The last reported NR Cachet is for the May 18, 1984 Tall Ships stamp. Sadly, Mr. Rosenbloom has the honour of being the last Canadian producer of FDCs. Table II shows the Canadian cachet-makers active at the end of the private cachet era.

### **Private Cachetmaking in Canada ends in 1984**

From the time the Canada Post Office entered the field, it took 13 years for the private Canadian cachetmaker to become extinct. By 1984 the Post Office effectively had the FDC field to itself. Canada Post's only competition came in a small way from south of the border.

### **The American Experience**

American producers of Canadian cachets have long been a major influence and have supplied the field with an abundance of riches. U.S. cachetmakers dominated and helped shape the early years and provided much needed depth and diversity over the following decades. Some FDC makers in this category produced cachets for every issue for at least part of the time they were active in Canada. Others produced cachets only for selected subjects that they felt would sell well.

The U.S. makers of Canadian cacheted FDCs also felt the effect of the Post Office juggernaut, but in different and more subtle ways. The U.S. customer for the Canada FDCs was often in the U.S. Unlike Canadian collectors, U.S. collectors had no easy access to the Post Office covers, sold all across Canada in local post offices. The USA, by virtue of its size also held



**Figure 9.** Colorano made their first cachet for the US Wool commemorative of 1971. Their immediate success led to a 21 year run of Canadian FDCs, starting with the Bishop Lival issue of January 31, 1973 and continuing until the World War II issue of 1994.



**Figure 10.** Fleetwood regularly produced cachets from 1969 to 1986, using the Kingwood name from 1969 until 1976. Fleetwood first produced cachets for selected issues starting in 1957. They continue to make the occasional FDC for special interest projects.

more diversified markets, including one for the upscale or more elaborate cachets like Colorano (Figure 9) or Fleetwood (Figure 10). Despite the protective insulation, interest in Canadian FDCs seemed to be on an irrevocable decline and the U.S. cachet-makers were soon also swept down the slope.

Fleetwood is an interesting case. They followed the trends of most U.S. makers of Canada FDCs. They produced occasional cachets under the Fleetwood name starting with the Royal Visit issue of 1957. From October 8, 1969 until early 1976, they produced cachets for nearly every issue under the name Kingwood. In 1976 they returned to the venerable Fleetwood name, making cachets for nearly every issue until the train stamps of November 21, 1986. It is worth noting that Fleetwood has not given up completely on Canada and does continue to produce the occasional FDC for special interest projects.

### The last makers from the US

Prior to the 1971 emergence of the Canadian Post Office cachet, a handful of prominent U.S. based cachetmakers were producing Canadian cachets on a regular basis. These include: C. George, Artopages, Jackson, Overseas Mailers, Fleetwood (using the Kingswood brand name) and Kolor Kover. By 1984 only

Fleetwood and relative newcomer Colorano were left. Fleetwood was on its last legs and discontinued regularly making cachets in 1986. Colorano, as we commented on earlier, is a more special interest item, with its trademark silk artwork. Nevertheless, even Colorano (who started in 1973) no longer makes a Canadian cachet. Table III shows a chronology of the last American based cachetmakers.

### Conclusions

What is there to learn from all this? Well, diversity goes when competition goes. This also means that interest for the collector goes as the "one size fits all" Post Office cachet only appeals to some collectors. It is clear that interest in Canadian FDCs, as measured by units per issue, has tumbled since the Post Office covers were introduced. There can be no doubt that, like the introduction of Australia Post Office cachets in that country, the demise of private cachetmaking in Canada was brought about by the introduction and production of official post office cachets. First Day Cover collectors in the U.S. can only hope this is not repeated in their country.

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## CANADIAN FDC COLLECTING IN THE MODERN ERA

by Bruce Perkins

I was pleased when Gary asked me to offer a few postscript comments with respect to the “demise of Canadian FDCs” article. I have been meaning to contribute to our fine newsletter for some time and so I welcomed this opportunity.

It has been quite an interesting decade for Canadian FDCs. When the “demise” article was published in 2001 we were just starting to see the widespread adoption of the Internet and electronic media. Now we have fabulous interconnectivity among all the players which has increased the flow of information ten-fold. This has allowed the field to flourish over the past seven or eight years. This burgeoning interest feeds on topic knowledge so having published articles like those in *First Days* and an active study group with a web site and its own journal is huge. We are also fortunate that our hobby is extremely well-tailored to the Internet age. FDCs are easy to view, easy to scan, and easy to mail. This makes for a very smooth back and forth.

Something we have now achieved, which will flow throughout these comments, is what I call critical information mass. By this I mean we now have enough information available on Canadian FDCs to make the field understandable, enlightened, and interesting to new collectors and more enjoyable to advanced ones. A critical mass has been reached. There is much more to do of course, but now we have a sturdy base which encompasses a significant body of published work and a growing collector community. The future for us seems impressively bright.

I would like to accomplish two things with these brief comments. Firstly, to share with you a short history of the modern Canadian FDC field to better illustrate the evolution of our

knowledge of the hobby. Secondly, I will look at and discuss some cachets that were not examined ten years ago.

If you can forgive me for being clumsy with my use of descriptive language, I would like to suggest that we are currently in the third wave of collector interest in the post-“demise” era (circa 1971) of Canadian FDC collecting. The first wave was instigated to a large degree by the articles Mel Baron wrote for *First Days* in the late 1970s and early 1980s. These were fantastic series on cachets from the 1930s to 1950. This was the first time any significant information on Canadian FDCs had been published and I for one was spellbound. I had rekindled my childhood interest in Canadian FDCs in the early 1980s and finding Mel’s articles was like a drink of water to a thirsty man. Very few pieces had been published anywhere prior to Mel’s and so the field was for the most part a complete mystery. I can remember there being very little dealer interest and nobody knowing anything about the hobby. Then along came Mel with his wonderful series of articles. Not done yet, in the late 1980s and into 1990, Mel that co-authored with Stan Lum a second series of articles looking at the classic period of Canada FDCs from 1897 to 1929. This sixteen-part series combined with Mel’s earlier work is our greatest resources, and it won the Ward Award of the American First Day Cover Society. In my opinion, Mel Baron, a kind and gracious man, was a key figure in the revival of interest in Canadian FDCs and is the architect of the first wave.

Another player at the time was Marcel Cool. In the mid-1980s Marcel published the *Canada First Day Cover Specialist* which had around 20 followers. This was the field’s first newsletter and it was a big hit among the small

collecting community. Whereas Mel looked at the stamp issues, Marcel looked more broadly and we got articles on cachet makers and other diverse topics. This was fantastic! We were starting to build a solid information base. Marcel's was a commercial enterprise, however, and it only lasted for two years. He also produced a price list and was starting work on a catalogue as well as marketing FDCs. I suspect complications from the commercial end took some of the fun away and Marcel did not continue past the late 1980s. The newsletter is a fine legacy, however.

A third person of interest is Pierre Dorval. In the mid-1980s he produced our first cachet catalogue, the 200-page *Canadian FDC 1927-1937*. I consider it to be a very useful resource as it shows full covers (Mel often just described the cachets) and has extensive lists of FDC locations. By today's standards the catalogue is quite primitive but at the time it was a wonderful asset. Pierre also wrote a series of articles from 1983 to 1985 in *Sous le Signe de la Marque Bishop*, the journal of the Quebec Philatelic Society. He provided an extensive look at Canadian FDCs from 1942 to 1950. The articles are all in French so I struggled a bit with them.

Together these three people and a few others not mentioned—George O'Neil and Robert Markovitz, for example-- brought the first information wave that laid the knowledge foundation. We now had something to build on. The second wave took up the challenge.

The second wave was based to a large degree around an informal study group that formed around the journal *First Days* in the late 1980s. There were a number of us who were deeply impressed with the works by Mel and later by Mel and Stan. So we started researching and publishing articles about Canadian FDCs in the journal. We were fortunate in that a number of cachet makers and old time dealers were still alive so we had a chance to interview some of them before the information trail dried up. We could also rely on previously published information on U.S. makers that had a Canadian

division which had not yet been discussed. Wayne Gasper and I wrote extensively. Dave Smetzer, Hal Lord, Scott Harnsberger and others also contributed. There were a number of people besides ourselves also pitching in. For example, John Aitken, who ran the BNAPS Centennial Study Group Newsletter during the 1990s often had Canadian FDC items in print. Larry Kobelt produced a list of all known cachet makers and their production dates. It was known as "Larry's List."

At the same time I started work on a cachet catalogue, one that I hoped would be a strong ambassador for our hobby. At that time, into the early 1990s, some well-known philatelists signed up to help. The contributing group included Wayne, Dave, and Hal as well as Mel Baron, Paul Estok, Ralph Mitchener, and Gilbert Kennedy. We completed a pre-publication draft in 1992 entitled *The Canada First Day Cover Cachet Catalogue 1947-1959*. I shipped copies to the group and everyone was keen but beyond our smallish community there still was not much interest. The solution was to offer it to the AFDCS and have them publish it, which they were excited to do. The catalogue was shortened for publication to 171 pages. The 1940s cachets overlapped with Mel's earlier listing and so were left out as was the general purpose section and the pricing structure. This made for a nice, neat presentation. The book was titled *Canadian First Day Cover Handbook 1950-1959* and was published in 1994. There were 150 copies printed and they were sold through the AFDCS.

Over the course of the 1990s information on Canadian FDCs continued to grow. We now had Dorval's catalogue and mine on the topic and an ever-increasing library of interesting articles. I would contend that by the beginning of the new century we had finally achieved critical information mass. There was now enough substance in our field to carry us forward to bigger and better things. It is the third wave that will do this.

The third wave, or current times if you like, is being shaped by three compelling forces:

eBay, the Internet, and the BNAPS FDC Study Group.

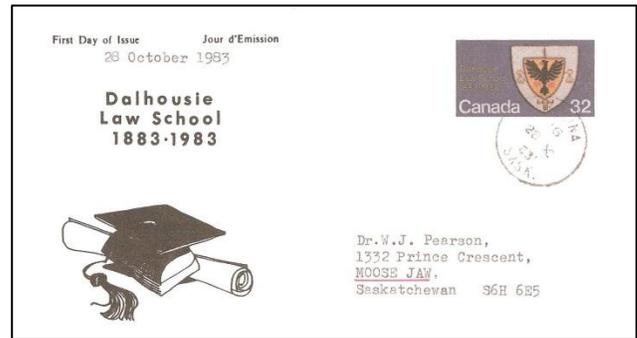
Until recently, the FDC world revolved around the AFDCS journal *First Days*. Even in the early 1990s it was still difficult to easily access FDC information from other sources. Bit by bit, however, the new world order was starting to seep in. Ebay was becoming a bigger presence, now a vast presence. It is a superb marketplace for FDCs. More and more people were now using the Internet to search out FDCs, either to purchase, sell, or learn about them. Today just about everybody is on the web so there is a lot of connectivity among collectors. Having an active study group has been a great thing and has allowed the field to take a huge leap forward. The BNAPS study group has provided a forum for enthusiasts to increase our information base and hence the appeal of our hobby. Gary Dickinson's article writing in *First Days* and his work on behalf of the study group is also important. I know we all appreciate his efforts. I gather the study group has a robust and growing membership so things can only continue to get better.

Current times have shown vibrant interest in Canadian FDCs. This is evidenced in part by the strong prices the covers are drawing on the various auction sites. It is also a lot of fun out there. Today we can search the world for FDCs and share information so easily you just have to smile.

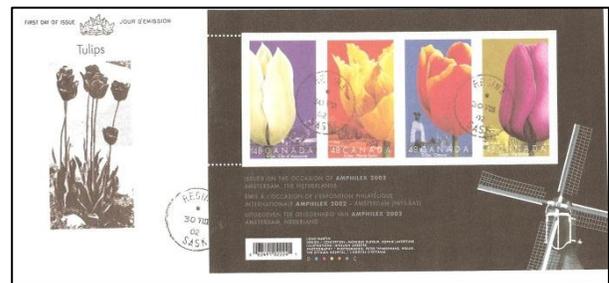
In the "demise" article I listed the known cachet makers who struggled on in the post-1971 era. There were a few that did not make the list, three of which I would like to share with you here.

The first is a maker out of Regina, SK called **Ken Covers**. He produced primarily black and white cachets that were very similar to the NR cachets and was likely inspired by Norman Rosenbloom, the producer of NR Covers. In fact, the two cachet styles could be confused quite easily. The Ken Covers series seems to have started in 1983 and my earliest as shown in Figure 1 is Scott 1003 issued on October 28. The latest I know of is for the Tulip

souvenir sheet of August 30, 2003 and it is shown in Figure 2. It does seem like Ken Covers produced cachets for most if not all of the stamps released during its production period. As such, the line constitutes a fairly major late-term cachet maker. While some FDCs are signed Ken Covers, many are not. Just remember that NR Covers stopped in 1984 so any cover with a later date that looks like an NR Cover is most likely a Ken Cover.



**Figure 1. This Ken Covers cachet, prepared for the Dalhousie Law School stamp (#1003), is their earliest known FDC. The series is very similar to NR Covers in both design and style, and it is possible that the maker intended his line to be a continuation of NR. It was becoming clear by the end of 1983 that NR was having troubles because when a cachet line starts using general purpose cachets, you know that the end is near.**



**Figure 2. This is the latest Ken Covers FDC in my collection. By now the series was running out of momentum. Several cachets from the later period are not printed envelopes but rather they are photocopies**

glued to envelopes. The Tulip cachet was made that way. They are neat and well-done but do indicate a diminishing of the enterprise.

A second maker of interest is Marg. I really like these cachets and think that they have great design and style. By all appearances Marg prepared cachets as promotional items for other firms. All the Marg cachets from the 1980s that I have are related to Foxboro, a manufacturer of industrial systems controls. I have a run of these covers that is somewhat hit and miss from December, 1980 to November, 1988. The earliest known Marg is shown in Figure 3. It was sponsored by Westinghouse and noted by Wayne Gasper in his October, 1990 article in *First Days*. Marg is also known to have a lone 1967 cachet which is shown in Figure 4. In this instance the cover was sponsored by Union Carbide and also noted in Gasper's article. As far as I know there are no Marg reports from the 1970s. Other Marg cachets are shown in Figures 5 through 7.

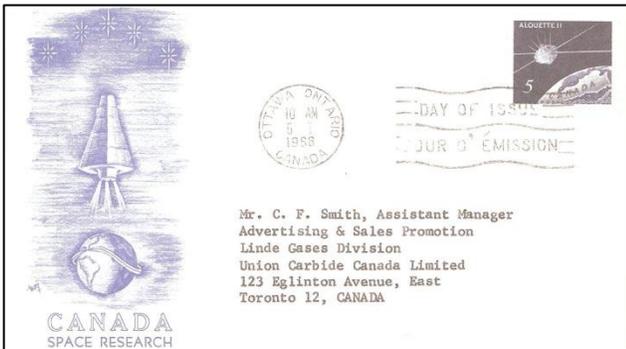


Figure 3. This is the earliest known Marg cachet prepared for the Space Research stamp (#445) of January 6, 1966. Gasper reports this cover with a Westinghouse information stuffer. My cover, which is shown here, did not have a stuffer but I think from its addressee it must have been Union Carbide. This raises the possibility that other companies might be linked to this cachet.

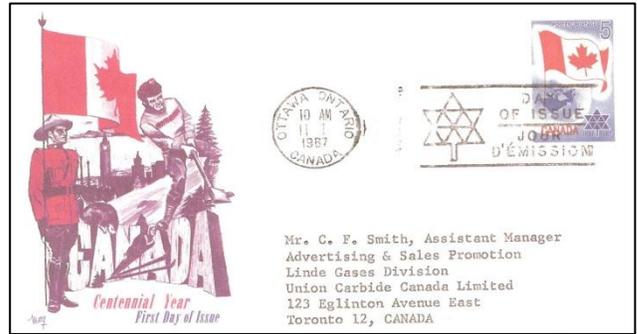


Figure 4. This is the only other Marg cachet known from the 1960s. It has only been reported with a Union Carbide stuffer. It has a very attractive design, a trademark of Marg, and is the Marg FDC that collectors are most likely to find.

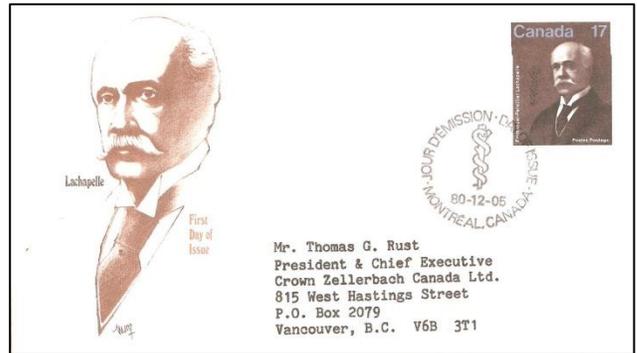


Figure 5. As far as I can determine, the cover prepared for the E.P. Lachapelle stamp (#877) of December 5, 1980 is the next Marg cachet after the 1967 cover shown previously. This was the beginning of a significant run of Marg cachets through the 1980s.

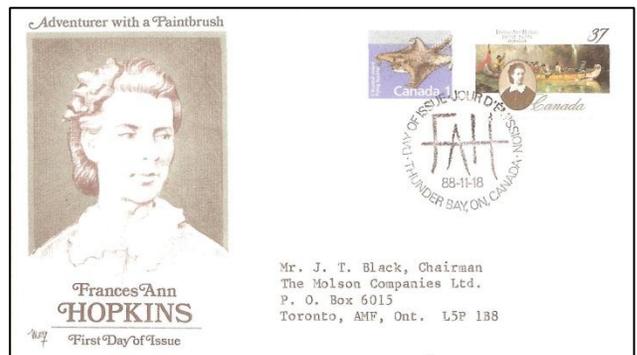
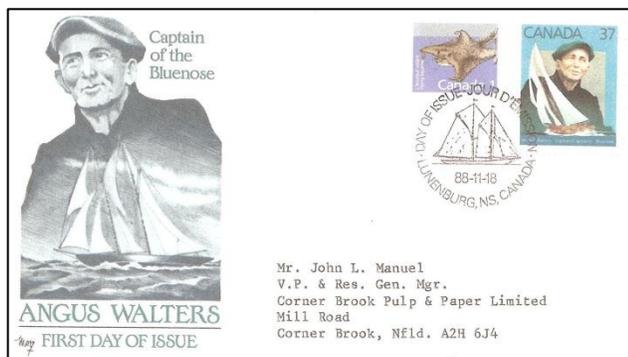
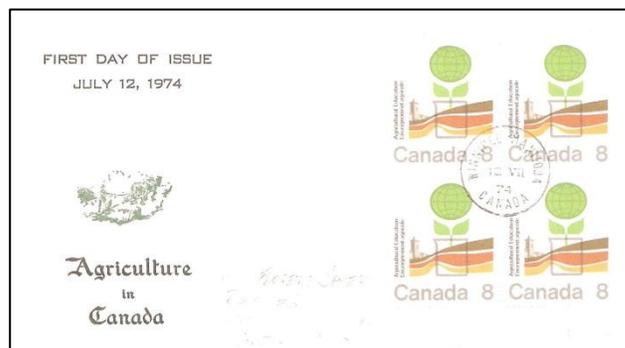


Figure 6. Frances Ann Hopkins, #1227.

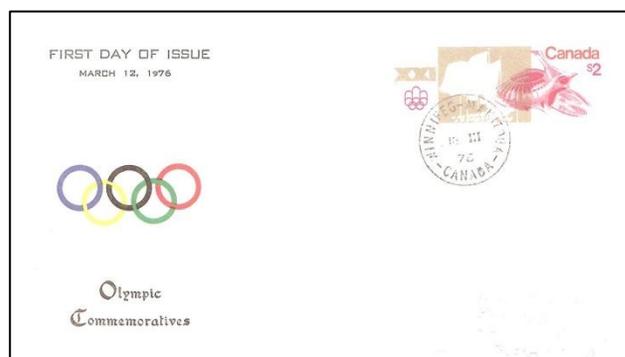


**Figure 7. Angus Walters, #1228. The Hopkins and Walters stamps were issued on November 18, 1988 and are my most recent Marg cachets. They both contain Foxboro stuffers. Of all the Marg covers from the 1980s in my collection, all of those that contain stuffers have Foxboro stuffers.**

The third and final cachet series I wish to share with you is by an unidentified maker. While this is a small bother, being unknown, it also means that there is an opportunity to solve a mystery. What we know so far is that the cachet line originates in Winnipeg and the timeline is a production period in the mid-1970s, perhaps only three or four years. The FDCs must have been produced in small numbers as they are difficult to find. The earliest and latest covers I have are shown in Figures 8 and 9. I have about a dozen different cachets in my collection from this maker. One possibility is that the addressee, Florence Sayers, was behind the line. I only say this because the design style in my mind speaks to a feminine touch. Also, most of my covers are addressed to her. I find these cachets to be quite attractive with an understated design style. I have yet to see any of these FDCs with official cancellations or indeed anything beyond the Winnipeg CDS shown below. Needless to say, any information about this maker would be gratefully received.



**Figure 8. Earliest known cachet by unknown Winnipeg maker, #640.**



**Figure 9. Latest known cachet by unknown Winnipeg maker, #688.**

There are still many stories to be discovered and told about Canadian FDCs. Although it becomes increasingly difficult with the passage of time to identify sources of information, with increasing numbers of collectors I'm sure we'll have some luck in doing so. I know Bob Vogel is a superb sleuth, and with several more like him we are bound to uncover some more of the hidden stories and continue to grow our fascinating field.