



# The 1917 3¢ Confederation Commemorative

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Admiral Study Group meeting, BNAPEX 2008

(revised in 2018)

The 1917 3¢ Confederation Commemorative  
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# Introduction

- ❖ Based on a study by Richard M. Morris of the 1917 3¢ Confederation commemorative
- ❖ With few exceptions, the stamps illustrated come from Richard's collection
- ❖ Richard made most of his discoveries while sorting through bulk lots of used stamps
- ❖ I augmented Richard's discoveries with information from the plate proofs at Library and Archives Canada



# Outline

- ❖ Printing
- ❖ Plates
- ❖ Design types
- ❖ Re-entries, retouches, and other plate flaws

# Printing

## ❖ Design

- “The Fathers of Confederation”
- From a photograph of an oil painting by Robert Harris
  - 8 people in the original painting were omitted from the stamp
- Engraved by Edwin H. Gunn, American Bank Note Co.

## ❖ Printer

- American Bank Note Co. Ltd., Ottawa

# Printing

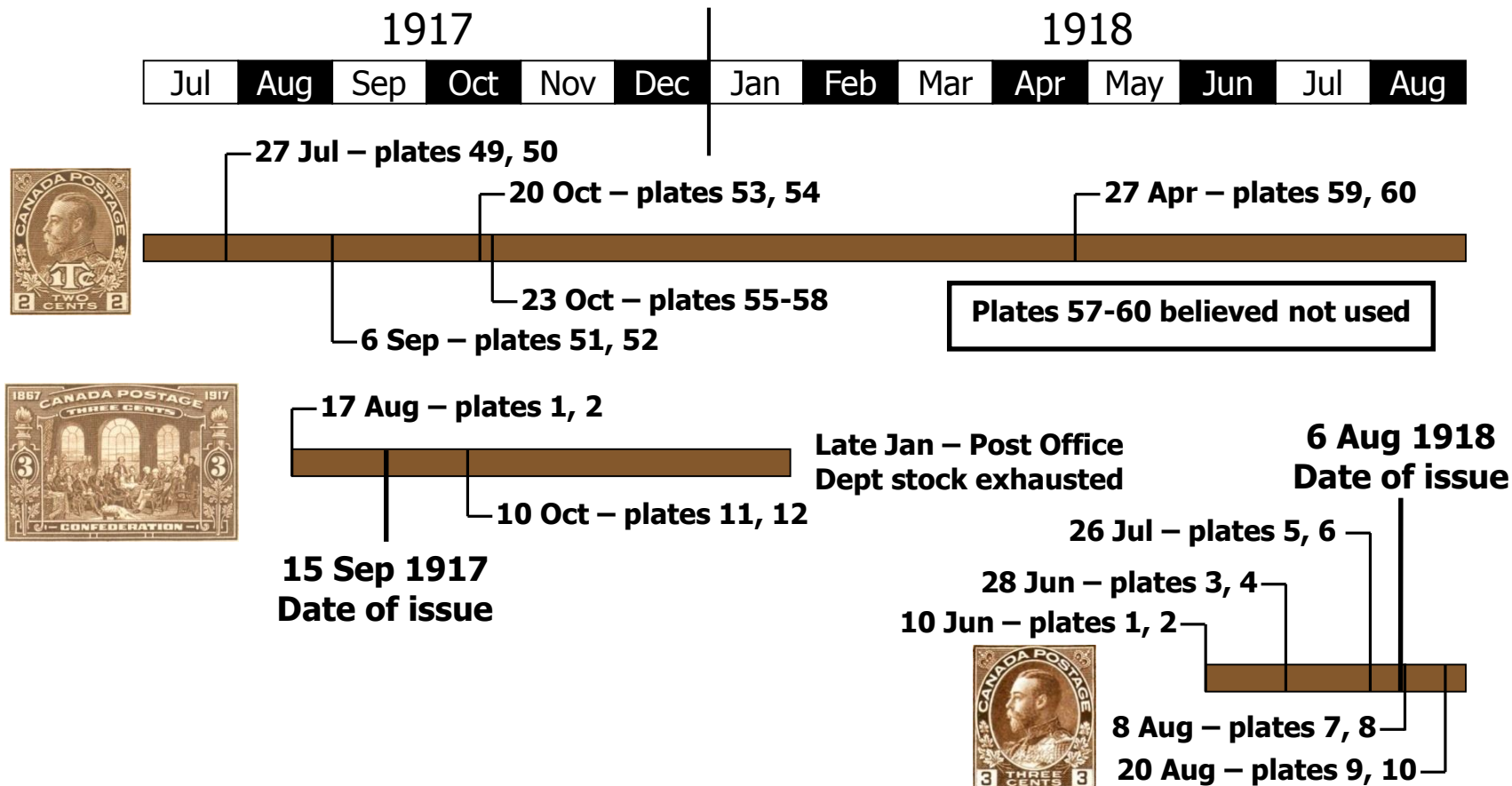
## ❖ Quantity

- 98,650,000

## ❖ Date of issue

- Saturday, 15 Sept. 1917
- Baron and Lum recorded first day postmarks from [*BNATopics*, Vol. 50, No. 1, Jan.-Feb. 1993]
  - Trois-Rivières, QC
  - Winnipeg, MB
  - Calgary, AB
  - Edmonton, AB
- Post Office Dept stock exhausted in Jan. 1918 [Boggs]
  - Few postmarks after March 1918

# Printing



# Plates

## ❖ Die

- O-G-194
- Die proofs in olive-brown and black

## ❖ Transfer roll [Boggs]

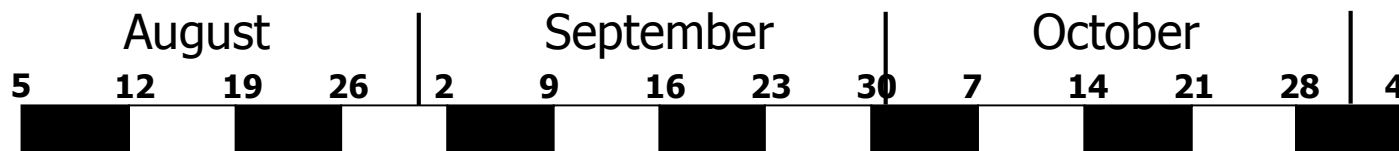
- 2 rolls manufactured
- 3 reliefs per roll

# Plates

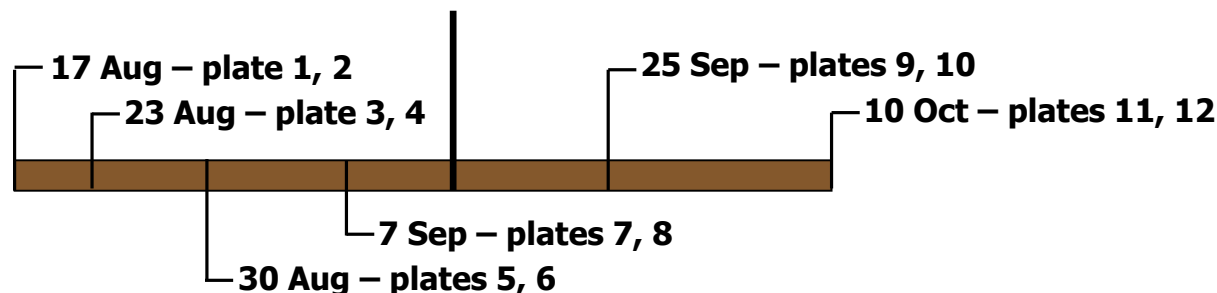
- ❖ Plates manufactured: 1 to 12
  - Approx 41,000 sheets or 8.2 M stamps per plate on average
- ❖ Sheets of 200 stamps (4 panes of 50)
- ❖ Imperforate stamps from plates 7, 8
  - 100 pairs reported
  - The philatelic literature reported that J. O. Labrecque (a prominent Montreal collector) got one pane, Frederick T. Norris got two panes, and a friend of Norris got one pane [*The Admiral's Log*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Dec. 2013, p. 23]
  - Sacks argues 200 pairs may exist [*BNA Topics*, Q1 2005] [*BNA Topics*, Q1 2013]



# Plate Approval Dates

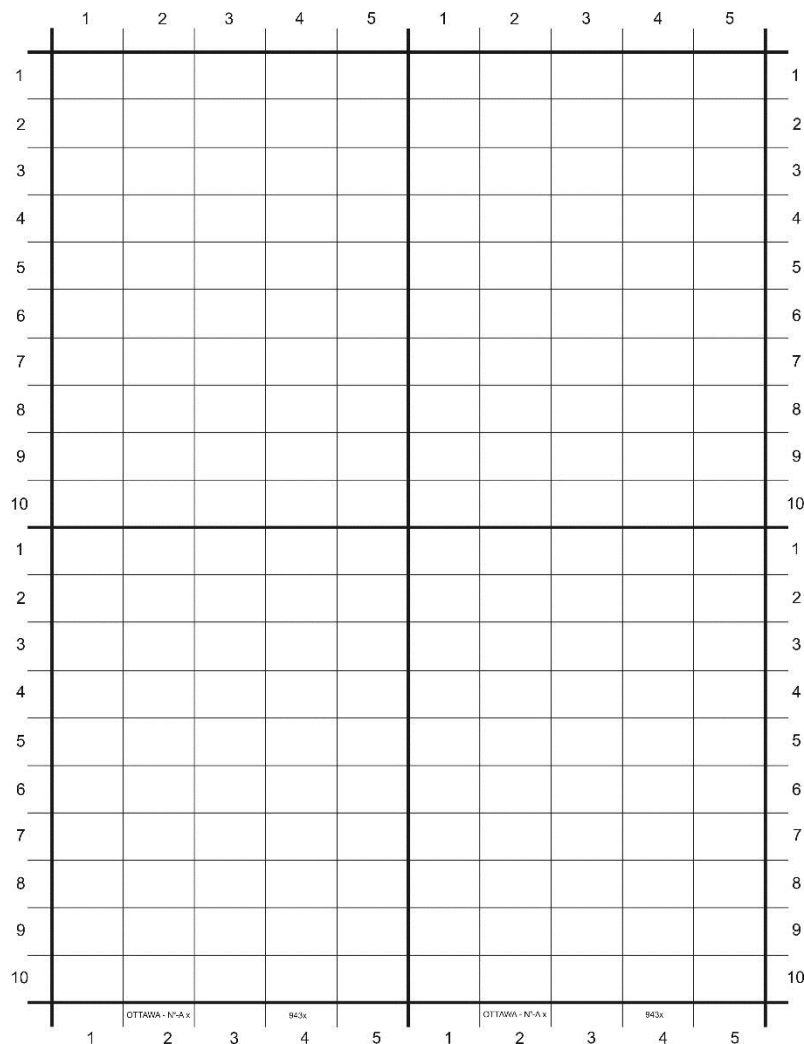


**15 Sep – Date of issue**



- The plates were approved in pairs
- Plates 9 – 12 were approved after date of issue
- There is roughly a 1 week interval between 1<sup>st</sup> 3 pairs of plates and 2 weeks thereafter

# Plate Layout



- ❖ 4 panes of 50
- ❖ No gutter between panes
  - The sides of the stamps touching adjacent panes have straight edges
- ❖ Imprint and Printing Order no. in bottom margin only
- ❖ Horizontal guide arrows in pane margin between upper and lower panes
- ❖ Vertical guide arrows in pane margin between left and right panes

# Plates – Imprint and PO Number



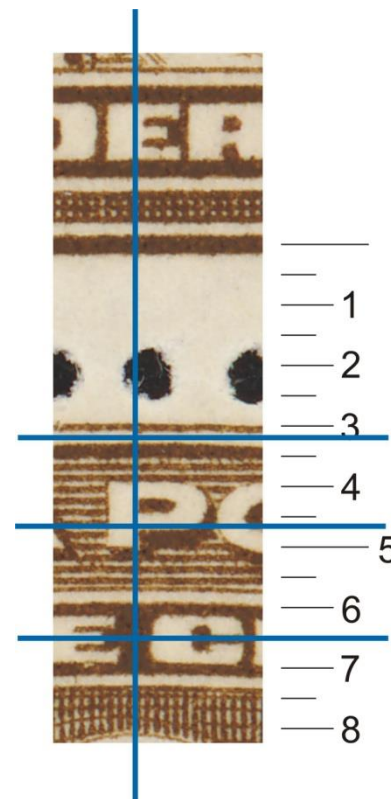
- Plate 5 LL & LR
- Note vertical guide arrow on LR block
- Note corner fold on LL block



- ❖ Imprint in column 2 of LL and LR panes
  - OTTAWA – Nº-A x
- ❖ Printing Order no. in column 4 of LL and LR panes
  - Plates 1-6: 943B
  - Plates 7-8: 943C
  - Plates 9-12: 943D

# Plate Guide Dots

- ❖ There are guide dots in the bottom sheet margin
  - Plate was laid out row by row, starting with the row at the top
- ❖ Distance from bottom of design to guide dot
  - Plates 1 – 6: 3.2 to 3.4 mm
  - Plates 7 – 8: 4.7 mm
  - Plates 9 – 12: 6.5 mm
    - Guide dot is “off centre” – in the “C” in “CANADA”
    - ERD: 25 Nov. 1917





# Plate Guide Dots

Plates 1 – 6  
Dot in arc



Top margin



Top of arc



Middle of arc



Bottom of arc

Plates 7 – 8  
Dot in P



Middle left



Bottom left



Middle left



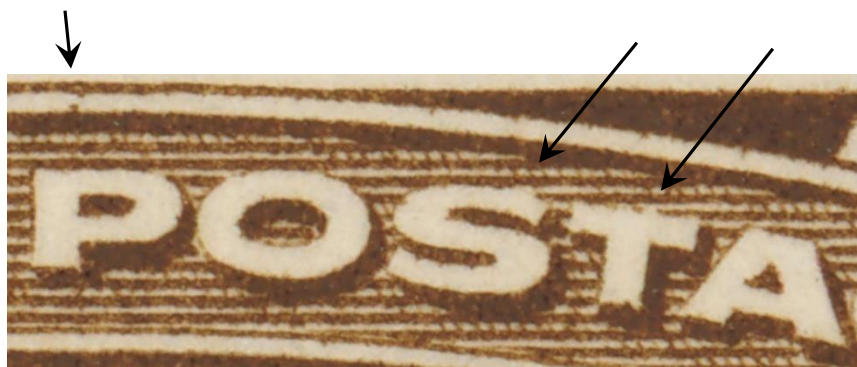
Bottom centre

Plates 9 – 12  
Dot in C

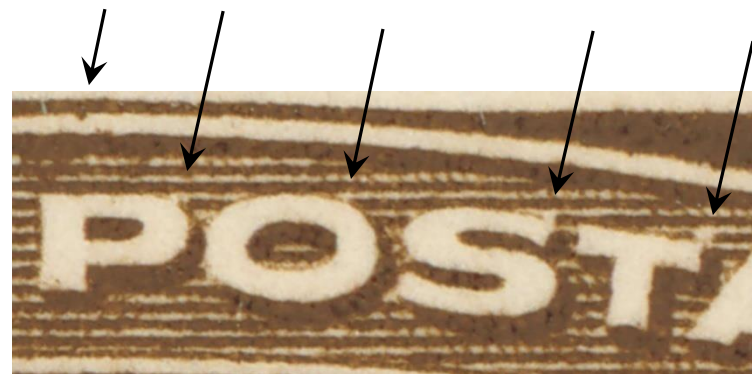
## Design types – Breaks Above “POST”



Normal – no breaks

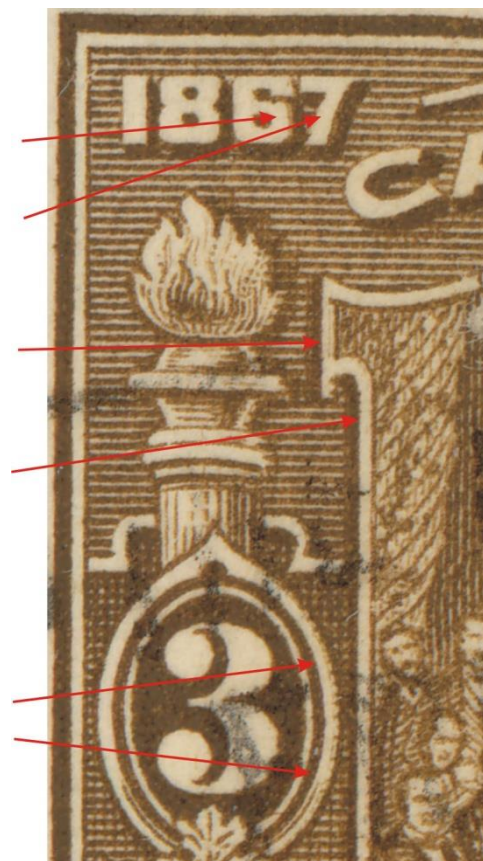
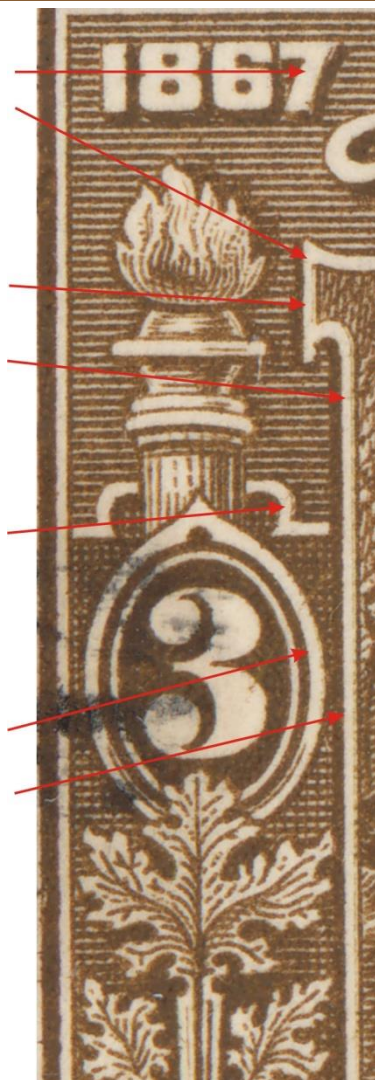


Break in horizontal lines at S and T  
Note the guide dot  
Plates 3, 4, 6?



Breaks above P, O, S, and T  
Note the guide dot  
Plate 5

# Major Re-entries





# Retouches

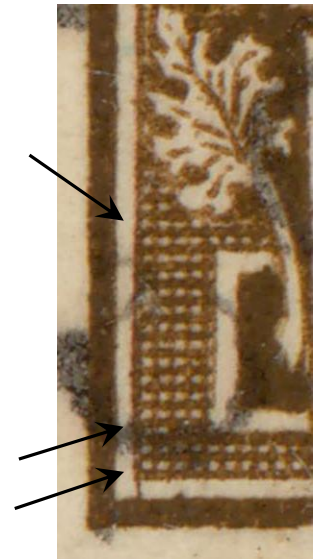


Retouch to right vertical line (RVL). Line is irregular and horizontal lines extend beyond it. Straight edge at top.



Retouch to RVL.  
Line is very irregular.

Re-entry? "17"  
is thin and lines  
in flame are  
doubled.



Retouch to bottom of  
left vertical line (LVL).  
Note the thick line and  
the extension into the  
white area.



## Retouch or Heavy Transfer?



Plate 5 LL 9/1 (UL stamp in corner block)

The horizontal and vertical shading lines are very thick, probably due to retouching



Plate 5 LL 10/1 (LL stamp in corner block)

Note the contrast in the shading lines. Stamps 9/2 and 10/2 are similar.

Note the break in the 2<sup>nd</sup> horizontal line from bottom. This is common.

# Plate Flaws



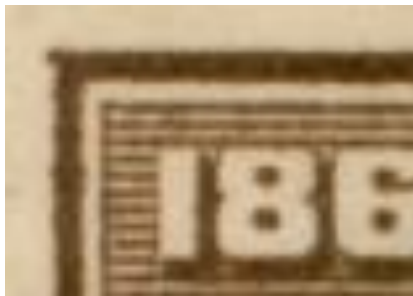
Defective transfer,  
LL corner, from  
plates 1 – 6



1UL1/2 - Engraver's  
slip in the arc over  
the "O" in "POSTAGE"



One of the best of  
the many examples  
of broken lines



Spur, UL corner



Spur, LR corner