



# BC Philatelic Society Newsletter

*Bringing stamp and postal-history collectors together since 1919*

The BC Philatelic Society — Always on-line at [www.bcphilatelic.org](http://www.bcphilatelic.org)

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## Stamp war for the Falkland Islands and the first Christmas stamp (Part 2 of 2) — by Virgil Soh



▲ *First essay of the Map Stamp*



▲ *First Christmas stamp. Picture engraved by Charles Skinner. Designed by Warren L. Green. Based on map by George Parkin*

[bcstamps.co.uk](http://bcstamps.co.uk) | [stampboards.com](http://stampboards.com) | [mapstamp.org](http://mapstamp.org)  
[en.merccopress.com](http://en.merccopress.com) | The Guinness Book of Stamps Facts & Feats by James Mackay

Our previous issue discussed the “postage stamp war” between Great Britain and Argentina. Britain issued its 1933 centenary stamp showing sovereignty over the Falklands; Argentina retaliated in 1936 with a stamp delineating their claim. However, little did Argentina know Britain’s claim was first made 38 years earlier, by Canada, with what is arguably the first Christmas stamp.

In 1898, Britain introduced a one-penny postal rate (equivalent to two cents Canadian) both at home and abroad, for letters transmitted throughout most of the British Empire. To commemorate this event, Canada’s Postmaster General, Sir William Mulock, introduced a new stamp which pictured a world map with the British Empire, including the Falklands, in carmine.

In planning for the new stamp, Sir Mulock had decided that it should show a Mercator projection, which increases the relative size of land masses the closer they are to the poles. More to the point, perhaps, a Mercator projection of the world is rectangular and easily incorporated into a stamp.

Sir Mulock consulted George R. Parkin who, with J.G. Bartholomew and Son, published in 1893 *The British Empire Map of the World on Mercator’s Projection*. Parkin’s proposal of “a

miniature reproduction of his map of the British Empire with Canada in the centre” was accepted.

Two printings of this stamp exist: half of the printing of almost 20 million was printed with blue oceans and half with lavender oceans. The frame, value tablets, and inscriptions are in black. At that time Britain held the largest empire on earth, which explains the inscription at the bottom of the stamp, “WE HOLD A VASTER EMPIRE THAN HAS BEEN”. Wags called it the “Has Been” stamp.

Parts of German South West Africa, German East Africa, the Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State, Portuguese East Africa and the island of Borneo plus some other countries (or at least parts of them) were also by accident included in the British Empire, which made the empire vaster than reality. Over-inking of the carmine portions of some printings of the stamp also seemed to greatly expand the Empire.

But one question remains: Why is it also called the world’s first Christmas stamp? One explanation was that the stamp was scheduled for release on the Christmas Day. It was actually issued Dec. 7, 1898. To coincide with the effective date of the postal rate implementation, it was inscribed “Xmas 1898.”

### this issue

- Stamp war for the Falkland Islands and the first Christmas stamp
- Researchers find simpler way to detect fake stamps
- New copy of rarest Canadian stamp — worth up to \$1M, found in U.S.

And more...

An often-repeated story suggests that when a post office official presented the new Canadian stamp to Queen Victoria, he suggested that it could serve as a tribute to the prince. The official was referring to the then Prince of Wales (three years later King Edward VII) whose birthday was Nov. 9, the date originally selected for the release of the issue. Queen Victoria is said to have replied, “Which prince?” in a tone that made clear she would not be pleased with a royal connection other than herself. The official replied “the Prince of Peace,” referring to the Christ child. So, is Canada’s Map Stamp the first Christmas stamp? That seems to have been a matter of Royal prerogative!

## Researchers find simpler way to detect fake stamps

— by Phil Taylor, securingindustry.com

A team of scientists in Italy have developed a new and simpler technique for detecting counterfeit postage stamps.

Current means of identifying fakes generally rely on taking a tiny sample for laboratory analysis - which in the case of very rare items could have an impact on value if the sample is subsequently found to be genuine.

The researchers - led by Ludovico Valli of Università del Salento - decided instead to use a technique known as Fourier transform infrared (FT-IR) spectroscopy to create a spectral database of 150 years of stamps issued since the unification of Italy.

The database allowed the researchers to look at the constituents of stamps - including the adhesive used to attach them to envelopes, the paper composition and make-up of inks - and chart the changes in stamp production over the decades.

With the database in hand the team were also able to identify counterfeits of two very rare stamps, including the 1961 Gronchi Rosa (pictured), which was determined to be a forgery because the ink used in its manufacture did not use kaolin, and a re-gummed 2 cent red stamp issued in 1865.



The work is published in the journal Analytical Chemistry.

Earlier this year, Luxembourg-based Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP) said that the Canada Post may be losing as much as C\$10m a year from the activity.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY'S

Two-day Regional Stamp Show in honour of the 75th anniversary of the final victory of the schooner "Bluenose" in the Fisherman's Trophy Race of 1938

12 Dealer Tables • Coffee and Tea • Free Admission • Free Parking • 30+ Frames of Exhibits • Most Popular Exhibit • 50/50 Draws • Special Show Covers

Friday, Sept 20, 10am-6pm / Saturday, Sept 21, 10am-4pm

West Burnaby United Church, 6050 Sussex Ave  
(1 block north of Metrotown Centre)

VANPEX 2013

## New copy of rarest Canadian stamp — worth up to \$1M — found in U.S. — by Randy Boswell, canada.com

For nearly 80 years, there have been only two known examples of Canada's rarest stamp: the two-cent, 1868 "Large Queen" on laid paper, a postal treasure so scarce it's absent from the Canadian government's own collection — and estimated to be worth as much as \$1 million.

Now, an unidentified American stamp hobbyist has revealed his discovery of a third copy of every Canadian collector's wildest dream, creat-

ing a serious stir among postage specialists across North America and shedding new light on how a production anomaly 145 years ago — followed by the apparent distribution of this one-of-a-kind sheet of stamps from a Hamilton postal station in 1870 — produced this country's greatest philatelic rarity.

The idea that a new "Large-Queen-on-laid" had been found was so startling to the Canadian stamp-collecting community it prompted a To-

ronto-based postal history research organization to conduct an exhaustive probe of the claim before issuing a 10-page report last month verifying the artifact's authenticity.



Newly discovered stamp, a 'Large Queen on laid paper' bought for two cents in 1868 and then for about \$5 this year by a U.S. collector could be worth \$1M.

## BC PHILATELIC:

- This summer, for the first time, our club had regular summer meetings. We had a good turnout for every meeting; 30 members and a guest attended our Aug. 31 auction, where sales totalled more than \$300.
- **Philatelic Daffynitions** by BC Phil President **Bob Ingraham**: *Hinge (daffynition 2) — A tiny piece of gummed glassine paper that may be worth half the catalogue value of a mint stamp, or more! Issue — (1) A topic of debate. Example: "Why are you making such an issue out of this itty bitty stamp? We'll pay for it somehow!"*

## Friends of BC Philatelic Society:

The BCPS enjoys the support of the following stamp dealers:

- **ALL NATIONS STAMP & COIN**  
5630 Dunbar St, Vancouver, B.C.  
604-684-4613 / [collect@direct.ca](mailto:collect@direct.ca)  
[www.allnationsstampandcoin.com](http://www.allnationsstampandcoin.com)
- **F.V.H. STAMPS**  
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