

DO THE SIGNED SOUVENIR SHEETLETS OF CANADA 92 11th WORLD PHILATELIC YOUTH EXHIBITION HAVE OFFICIAL POSTAL STATUS?

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In this article, the authors question the catalogue listing of this stamp issue as found in the leading stamp catalogues.

From 25 to 29 March 1992 the 11th World Philatelic Youth Exhibition was held in Montreal under the auspices of the Federation Internationale de Philatélie. The exhibition main themes were to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montreal and the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America. The Canadian Bank Note Company located in Ottawa; Ontario did the required printing.

Canada Post magazine *Details No. 5, 1992* provided four images with denominations for printing by lithography. There were two 42¢ values, depicting respectively, Montreal and Ville-Marie. These were printed se-tenant in six colours on Harrison Coated paper.

This se-tenant sheet of 25 subjects was issued in a 5 subject x 5 subject format having printer marginal inscriptions with indicators for both the applied colours and the paper maker name in the four corners. As the panes have images of 13 for Montreal and 12 for Ville-Marie the quantities of each are different. *Details* only states 15 million were issued. When analysed it is found there are 600,000 panes of 25. Further study shows 7.8 million Montreal stamps were printed but only 7.2 million Ville-Marie stamps.



Fig 1 Inscription sheet sold only by the Canada Post philatelic agency.

A 48¢ value depicts Exploration honouring Cartier. This was printed in five colours on Harrison Coated paper. The quantity printed was 15 million.

The stamp was printed in sheets of 25 subjects arranged in a 5 subject x 5 subject format having printer marginal inscriptions with indicators for both the applied colours and the paper maker name in the four corners. Thus 600000 panes were issued.



Fig 2 Inscription sheet of the 48¢ value, sold only by the Canada Post philatelic agency.

Finally, an 84¢ value was issued which depicts Encounter, honouring Columbus. This value was printed in seven colours on Harrison Coated paper. The quantity printed was 15 million.

As with the other values, the stamps were printed in sheets of 25 subjects in a 5 subject x 5 subject format having printer marginal inscriptions with indicators for both the applied colours and the paper maker name in the four corners. Thus 600,000 panes were issued.



Fig 3 Inscription sheet of the 84¢ value, sold only by the Canada Post philatelic agency.

The images below show the sheet format as sold in regular postal outlets. These had no marginal inscriptions.



Fig 3 The sheets issued in normal postal outlets



In addition to these denominations being released in sheet format, another product was created at the same time. It was a specially designed sheetlet having the same four images as released in the sheet forms. But now they are combined to be printed on to a sheet of the same Harrison Coated paper having various French and English explanation sentences.



Fig 4 Signed sheetlet; on Harrison Coated paper

It was planned to engrave on to this sheetlet the signature of Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve. The quantity ordered and printed was to be 400,000. During the quality control phase, the printer realised that engraving printing onto coated paper did not produce a quality item. The Canadian Bank Note Company wanted to destroy them. However, it was decided to save the best finished ones from this production and give them as a gift to the Organising Committee of CANADA 92 (stated in Richard Gratton article in Canadian Philatelist March/April 2013, Vol. 64, No. 2). This was done so that the committee could offer them as a saleable memento to those who attended to help defray the exhibition costs. From the initial souvenir sheet printing order of 400,000 a total of 10,000 were deemed suitable to be given away. They are not listed in the Canada Post *Details* magazine. Nor were they released with the 1992 Year set.

In short, the government entity, Canada Post, did not issue or sell this specially made, signed, sheetlet. We, therefore, question the validity of its catalogue listing in all the major stamp catalogues.

Upon encountering this printing problem, Canada Post were caught in a dilemma. They had publicly announced that they were printing a special sheetlet having the same stamp designs and denominations. They now had no souvenir sheetlet to provide to the public. To overcome this problem, Canada Post had the Canadian Bank Note Company redo

the same souvenir sheet having the same stamp images and denominations but without the signature on it. However, Canadian Bank Note Company found that to do this additional printing they did not have enough Harrison Coated paper available.

To complete the required order, the Canadian Bank Note Company resorted to using a different quality of paper that was made by Coated Papers Limited.



Fig 5 Unsigned sheetlet; on Coated Papers Limited paper

Thus, Canada Post was able to fulfil its public statements that it would be issuing a souvenir sheet promoting the Canada 92 11th World Philatelic Youth Exhibition. This is the unsigned souvenir sheet that was publicly issued and sold by Canada Post. This is confirmed by the information released from Canada Post *Details* media and as seen in the 1992 Yearbook pages.

When examining the mint stamps made from paper supplied by these two paper makers the reverse of the two papers exhibit a major difference which makes the two types readily differentiable. Harrison Coated paper exhibits tinted gum with pale circle like bubbles. Coated Papers Limited paper exhibits pale smooth gum - see fig 6 below.



Fig 6 Harrison coated paper on left and Coated Papers Limited paper on right

When examining the back of used stamps made from paper supplied by these two paper makers the differences are less obvious but still clear. Harrison Coated paper exhibits a ribbed-paper effect. Coated Papers Limited paper exhibits no-mesh-pulp-like paper effect - see fig 7 below.



Fig 7 Harrison coated paper on left and Coated Papers Limited paper on right

With this correction made from the initial disastrous printing order, four new stamp varieties were inadvertently created.

When they are separated from the sheetlet format, they mimic but do not match the Harrison Coated paper issued stamps. The separate four stamps are completely different in the paper makeup from the single items as found in the sheet format issued by Canada Post. The issued unsigned souvenir sheet, since it is from its own and separated form, requires a separate catalogue numeration.

They are scarcer than the normal sheet stamps and they need to be listed as separate items in the stamp catalogues with pricing that reflects this.

Here are the scarcity factor formulations for those stamps on the Coated Papers Limited paper found on the souvenir sheetlet:

42¢ Montreal $7800000 / 400000 = 19.5$ x scarcer; while 42¢ Ville-Marie $7200000 / 400000 = 18$ x scarcer and the 48¢ and 84¢ values $15,000,000 / 400,000 = 37.5$ x scarcer. These ratios, of course, assume that all the stamps contained within the sheetlet have been separated out which will clearly not be the case. The scarcity factors for these single stamps on Coated Papers Limited paper will, in reality, be much higher.

From the information seen in the public catalogues there seems to be a problem of mis-descriptions. These catalogues publicly state that the stamps that they list are those issued by the country's issuing authority. However, the signed souvenir sheet was not issued by Canada Post.

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