

Philately in old Quebec

BY C. E. A. HOLMES.

After having been away two years from the old capital I resolved to see once more its old walls and its antique houses. On Monday, February 19th I left Montreal with a few friends "en route" for Quebec. We arrived only 1 hour and 20 minutes late (!) and as soon as we stepped out of the cars we were surrounded by a crowd of howling cabmen who were yelling in an ear-splitting manner and all we heard for the next ten minutes was "cab sir," and "wageen monsieur." At last we made arrangements with one of them and he triumphantly showed us to an old shabby "rig" which he had assured us was the best on the stand. At last we arrived to the summit of an awful steep hill known as "Palace Hill"—why it is thus called I do not know. I didn't see any palaces around a sure thing, and after fifteen minutes drive in the old "bone-shaker" we were soon among the "old folks at home."

It was so very cold that I did not go out till Wednesday. That day I met several old acquaintances and finally struck a college mate. He showed me around the city, in 80 seconds, and as I had not seen any stamp shop I asked him if there was any in town. He told me there were several and he proceeded to show me a few.

The first one we visited was more of a tea store than anything else; however a huge cotton sign in front of the door informed the inquisitive that this shop was that of the Rousseau Stamp Co. We went in and I asked the clerk to show me some stamps. He immediately rushed to the window and got a few sun burnt approval sheets, the price thereon being the most exorbitant I ever saw, of course I took nothing from those sheets and I asked him to show me their stock. The clerk then with opened mouth and eyes asked me what I meant. I explained to him what a stock of stamps was and he finally told me they had none so I left this company's (?) tea-stamp store while the clerk continued weighing tea and coffee, putting them up in small parcels.

After leaving this place my friend brought me down John St. This street is Quebec's nicest, widest, etc. and the people may judge of its extent by the following which I have picked out of one of Buie's works:—"Quebec has in fact but one street, and that is St. John street, about as wide as a side-walk of James St. in Montreal."

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A commercial traveller engaged to be married was commissioned by his firm to go to France, and while there he received a letter from his fiancée. Carefully removing the stamp he placed it in a locket he got made for the purpose. From time to time he would produce the stamp from the locket, and fervently kiss the side on which the gum had been, on each occasion he would think of his love moistening it with her sweet lips. On his return home she wished to know what was in his locket, and laughed on being told. She then confessed that she had moistened the stamp on poor dear Fido's wet nose.

Why are stamps on a sheet like distant relations?

Because they are only slightly connected.

A certain Scotch girl's beau writes that his sweetheart is so jealous that she won't even allow him to embrace an opportunity of filling the blank spaces in his album.

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