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A LITTLE HISTORY.

There are a great many issues of stamps which have a history unknown to the average stamp collector. It is very interesting indeed to know the cause or reason why such and such an issue was brought into use, and since there have been a large number of what are to the uninterested, uncalled for changes in the issues of the stamps of Canada since their first appearance in 1850, I shall in this short article endeavor to give a list of reasons for the most prominent issues and varieties.

The 12 pence was issued to prepay letter postage to Great Britain but was in use only for a short time when the postal rates were greatly reduced, and the 6 pence sterling stamp was put into use, This value being a British denomination was equal to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pence in Canadian currency, a shilling being equivalent to one shilling and three pence of Canadian currency.

These early issues (1851-57) are records of the transition state of the monetary systems of the then Province of Canada, the stamps in many instances showing the decimal as well as the old currency. At this time if the letters were sent through the United States the postage was 8 pence sterling or 10 pence Canadian currency, which was cause for issue of the last mentioned denomination in 1855. A year or so later, the rates for postage to Great Britain, not changed, the  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d green stamp was introduced.

When the decimal currency (dollars and cents) were adopted the 6 pence sterling —  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pence currency, was

changed to  $12\frac{1}{2}$ c (1859) green. The 8 pence sterling—10 pence currency—was represented by the 17 cent (1859) blue; it was in this year the monetary denominations were all changed.

In 1862 during the course of the civil war in the United States, some trouble arose between that country and Great Britain which required the presence of British troops in the Province of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, for a very uncertain length of time, and as these troops were brought from the British Isles, where it was customary always to allow soldiers' letters to go or come, to or from any part of the world at the rate of one penny per half ounce; the privilege was demanded by the two or three thousand men sent here. The various Governments decided as they none of them had a stamp of the denomination required—two cents—new dies should be obtained, which very soon resulted in the issue of the 2 cent of the respective Provinces. Strange as it may seem not one hundredth part of these stamps which were issued specially for the purpose were used as letter postage, the soldiers preferring to use the 5 cent stamp which contained a representation of the emblem of Canada, the beaver. This was a rather strange affair as they had to pay five cents in cash for that stamp, as only the 2 cent was kept at the regimental post-offices; but maybe they took a fancy for the beaver.

The stamps of the Prince Edward Island to many seem to be odd in denomination, but the fact that the currency not only differed from that of Great Britain but also from the rest of Canada as it