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THE MANUFACTURE OF THE PLATES FROM WHICH STEEL ENGRAVED STAMPS ARE MADE

Although much has been published both in newspapers and philatelic journals about the printing and subsequent stages of a sheet of postage stamp before being finally desposed of for the purpose intended, never to my recollection have I seen or heard of an article on the manufacture of the plate from which the sheets are printed. In this article reference is only made to steel engraved stamps, and not lithographed or wood-printed ones.

Undoubtedly many suppose that the die for each stamp has been engraved separately and wonder how it is that it has been made with such mathematical precision. After a design has been agreed upon, it is engraved on a plate of soft steel the size desired and when completed highly tempered. The steel used in the engraving plate (as well as in the cylinder and printing plate hereafter described) is of an excellent quality and very soft, but capable of being highly tempered.

A cylinder, the length of which is sufficient to admit of the required number of horizontal dies, has one end rolled over the tempered die by hydraulic pressure. Just as if one rolled a cylinder of wax over a cent and obtained an impression, so by rolling the soft steel over the tempered, one of the die is obtained. After the impression is satisfactory the plate is adjusted for the next and when this is done the others are finished the

same until the cylinder contains the required number, after which it is highly tempered like the die.

The cylinder is now rolled, also by hydraulic pressure, over a plate capable printing the sheet, and the necessary number of vertical impressions made. When completed, the slightest imperfections (should there be any) are remedied and the plate tempered. It is now ready for the press and from the one die originally cut, one hundred (or whatever number may be on the plate) stamps are printed simultaneously.

"Collector."

NEW BRUNSWICK STAMPS.

The first N. B. stamps were issued in August 1851 and consisted of three varieties printed in colors upon blue tinted paper.

Three pence red, 6 pence yellow and 1 shilling violet, and were diamond shaped with the design placed diagonally across it.

They contain the British Crown in the centre, with roses above and below, a shamrock at the left, a thistle at the right, numerals in each corner and "New Brunswick above the value and "Postage" below and were not perforated.

They were manufactured in London Eng., by an engraver who it is said produced the first Nova Scotia issue. The color of these stamps, alone present a very interesting study there being some twelve or fifteen different shades. Nine years after these stamps were issued the decimal currency was introduced, necessitating a new issue,