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# The Reply Coupons of Canada and Newfoundland

## Part I—Introduction

AN EXAMINATION of the first 16 volumes of BNA TOPICS will disclose articles or notes on every possible phase of B.N.A. philately, with one exception: the Reply Coupons of Canada and Newfoundland. The purpose of this article is to attempt to fill this gap, and to bring these interesting varieties of postal stationery to the attention of the members of the Society.

Before the founding of the Universal Postal Union in 1874, the international mail service was in a state of chaos. The exchange of mails between the different countries of the world was based on separate agreements with each country, with no uniformity. Postage rates and weight units varied, not only between one country and another, but also within each individual country, according to the route used. The postage paid on **each article** was shared by the various postal administrations through which the article travelled, making for a very complicated accounting system. As the traffic increased, so did the confusion, until it was realized that only an entirely new system would bring order into chaos.

The Berne Congress of 1874 introduced the needed simplifications. It was agreed that the contracting parties would form a single postal territory for the exchange of mails, with a schedule of rates fixed within clearly defined limits. Each country was to keep the postage it collected, and was to settle with the other countries of the Union for their services on the basis of the **weight** of mails transported.

The resulting simplification in accounting procedures and generally lower rates led to a substantial increase in the volume of correspondence exchanged. It was not long before there were many demands for the introduction of a method by which a person could prepay the reply to a letter sent to another country. Sending a postage stamp would not do, for it could not be used to pay the postage on a letter mailed in a foreign country. The reply-paid postcard (*carte postale avec réponse payée*) was introduced, but did not fill the need completely. International reply stamps were suggested, but for a number of reasons were not acceptable to the members of the Union. Of the many proposals that were made, that of Great Britain was adopted at the Rome Congress in 1906. International Reply Coupons were to be sold to the public by the different countries of the Union; these could be exchanged in any other country of the Union for a postage stamp that would pay the postage on a single weight letter to any country of the Union.

Prepared under the supervision of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, these International Reply Coupons were made available to the various postal administrations at cost. (These coupons are the only postal values sold or redeemed throughout the world that are prepared by a single authority.) They are now sold in most of the countries of the world, the minimum selling price being regulated by the Universal Postal Union. The country that redeems them is reimbursed by the country that originally sold them under con-

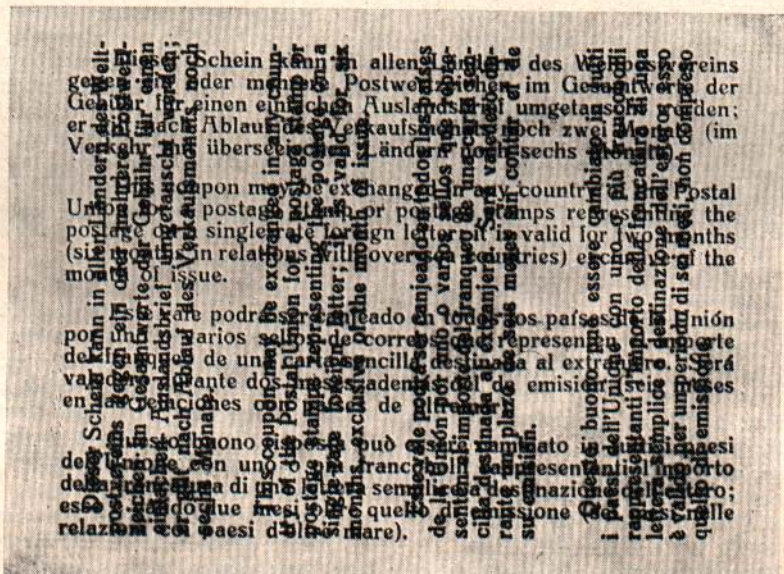


FIGURE 1—CANADA INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPON OF TYPE INT VII. The design on the front is typical of the Rome types. Type Int VII was prepared from Type Int VI by the addition of the overprint in red on the back of the coupon.

ditions laid down by the Convention in force.

(It is interesting to note that the idea of an International Reply Stamp was revived at the Congress held in Ottawa in 1957. The main reason is to eliminate the great deal of accounting that is involved in the redemption of the millions of coupons sold each year. It may well be that the International Reply Coupon will be abolished at the next Congress.)

**The International Reply Coupon** was an immediate success. In the 50 years since its introduction it has been issued by over 200 postal administrations; there are probably over 2,000 varieties available to collectors. Similar coupons have been issued by other groups of countries. In 1927 Imperial (now Commonwealth) Reply Coupons were issued for use within the British Commonwealth. The Postal Union of the Americas and Spain issued coupons in the period 1936 to 1956. Other types that have been introduced include: Japan-Manchuria (1936-1945), Japan-Ryukyu (1956 to date), French Colonial (1926 to date), Spain-Spanish Colonies (? to date), and the Arab Postal Union (1956 to date).

The collection of Reply Coupons has been much neglected. A preliminary catalogue of International and Imperial (Commonwealth) coupons was published serially in "L'Entier Postal"; the listings were based on the holdings of a small group of collectors in France. French Colonial coupons are listed in the sixth edition of the ACEP "Catalogue des Entiers Postaux de France . . . (1949)". On this continent a small but active specialist society, the Society of Reply Coupon Collectors, was organized in 1954. Although the membership stands only at 40, the society issues a monthly bulletin, holds mail auctions three or four times a year, and, most important, has issued four catalogues, listing the coupons of the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain, Imperial and Commonwealth coupons, Japan-Manchuria coupons, and the French Colonial (French Postal Union) coupons. Work is beginning on a catalogue listing International coupons.

The collecting of Reply Coupons is a most interesting sideline. Many new items are discovered almost daily. 'Used Abroads' abound. In short, it is an almost unexplored field. True, coupons are hard to find, but this makes the 'chase' the more inter-

esting. If any member of BNAPS would like more information, drop a note to the author of this article at 4078 West 37th Ave., Vancouver 13, B.C., or to the secretary of the Society of Reply Coupon Collectors, Dr. Allan Hauck, 1640 North Monroe St., Fremont, Nebraska. We will be glad to help you.

## **Part II—The International Reply Coupons of Canada and Newfoundland**

Since the introduction of the International Reply Coupon in 1907 (about a year after the Berne Convention was signed), 18 different types have been issued, differing in some way in the design or inscription on the front or back of the coupons. These types fall into two main groups, differing in the design on the front of the coupons. **Figure 1** shows the front and back of a coupon issued by Canada of Type Int VII, typical of the Rome design. **Figure 2** is a reproduction of a Canadian coupon of Type Int XVIIIn, typical of the design used since the London Congress of 1929.

The 18 types are different in many ways. Enough of these differences are tabulated in Table I to enable anyone to classify the coupons into the various types. A check list of the coupons issued by Canada and Newfoundland is presented in Table II. (It should be noted that many of the coupons issued by the various countries of the world have been revalued. The form of the revaluation varies considerably: revaluations by letterpress, rubber stamp, manuscript, cheque-writing machine or by the addition of a postage stamp, have all been used. Canada and Newfoundland have used only revaluation by manuscript.)

## **Part III—The Imperial and Commonwealth Reply Coupons of Canada and Newfoundland**

Two main designs have been used for the Reply Coupons used within the British Commonwealth. These may be divided into 12 different types, differing from each other in some detail of the design or watermark in the paper. Table III lists enough of these differences so that the coupons may be properly classified. **Figure 3** shows the design of a Canadian coupon of the Type Imp III, and **Figure 4** illustrates a coupon of Type Com XI.

A checklist of these coupons appears in Table IV.



Dieser Schein wird in allen Ländern des Weltpostvereins gegen ein oder mehrere Postwertzeichen im Gesamtwert der Gebühr für einen einfachen gewöhnlichen Auslandsbrief umgetauscht.

This coupon is exchangeable in any country of the Universal Postal Union for a postage stamp or postage stamps representing the amount of postage for an ordinary single-rate letter destined for a foreign country.

هذه القسيمة يمكن استبدالها في جميع البلدان الداخلة ضمن اتحاد البريد العالمي بطابع أو طابعين بريدية بقيمة التخليص على خطوط غادي من الوزارة الأولى برسم الخارج

本券得在郵會各國兌換等於該國寄國外普通信函起首重量郵資之郵票

Este cupón podrá ser canjeado en todos los Países de la Unión Postal Universal por uno o varios sellos postales que representen el importe del franco de una carta ordinaria de porte sencillo destinada al extranjero.

Этот купон во всех странах Всемирного Почтового Союза обменивается на почтовую марку или марки на сумму представляющую собой стоимость оплаты простого письма в одну единицу веса по адресу за границу.

FIGURE 2—CANADA INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPON OF TYPE INT XVII. Type Int XVII differs from Type Int XVIu in that the period at the end of the English paragraph on the back is under the "n" of "amount"; in Type Int XVIu, the period is under the "u".

TABLE I. ABBREVIATED TYPE CHART FOR INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPONS

Type	Front of Coupon	Back of Coupon	
		German Paragraph Ends	English Paragraph Ends
<b>PART A: ROME TYPES</b>			
Int I	Name in Italics	umgetauscht . . . (lines between paragraphs) (as above but no lines)	adopted the . . . (lines between paragraphs) (as above but no lines)
Int II	(as above)	getauscht. (as above)	(as above)
Int III	(as above)	überseeischen . . . (in red)	(as above)
Int IV	Name upright	Verkehr . . . sechs Monate. (in red)	month of issue. months, . . . (in red)
Int V	(as above)	er gilt	exclusive of . . .
Int VI	(as above)		
Int VII	(as above)		
Int VIII	(as above)		
<b>PART B: LONDON TYPES</b>			
Int IX		Gebühr für . . .	the postage . . .
Int X		wichtsstufe . . .	addressed to . . .
Int XI		getauscht (in Roman letters)	(as above)
Int XII		getauscht (in Gothic letters)	(as above)
Int XIII	French paragraph includes the words: "l'Union Postale Universelle"	(as above)	(as above)
Int XIV	(as above)	(as above)	rate letter . . .
Int XV	Imprint 18 mm. long	(NO German)	of postage . . .
Int XVa	Imprint 13 mm. long	(NO German)	(as above)
Int XVlu	"Formule C22" in upper corner	lichen . . .	for an . . .
Int XVIn	(as above)	(as above)	(Period under 'u' of 'country')
Int XVII	"C22" in upper corner	(as above)	(as above but period under 'n')

TABLE II. CHECK LIST OF THE INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPONS OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

Type	Value	Probable Date of Issue
<b>PART A: CANADA</b>		
I	6 cents	1907
II	6 cents	1908
VII	9 cents	1925
VIII	9 cents	1926
IX	7 cents	1930
XI	12 cents	1937
XII	12 cents	1939
XIII	12 cents	1940
XIV	12 cents	1941
XV	12 cents	1948
XVa	12 cents	1954
XVlu	12 cents	?
XVIn *	12 cents	?
XVIn	15 cents	April 1, 1959
<b>PART B: NEWFOUNDLAND</b>		
XIV	12 cents	1941

\* Note: Two varieties exist for XVIn 12 cents: the country name is either 1.45 cm. long or 1.57 cm. long, the difference being due to a different size of type used.



FIGURE 3—CANADA IMPERIAL REPLY COUPON OF TYPE IMP III. Note the last line of the redemption paragraph reads “THE EMPIRE.”



FIGURE 4—CANADA COMMONWEALTH REPLY COUPON OF TYPE COM XI. Note that the French inscription is a translation of the English inscription that appears on Type Com XII. This is typical of the many errors that are to be found on Reply Coupons of all kinds. There is nowhere near the same kind of care taken with Reply Coupons as in the printing of other postal values.

**TABLE III. ABBREVIATED TYPE CHART FOR IMPERIAL  
AND COMMONWEALTH REPLY COUPONS**

Type	Watermark	Last Line of Redemption Paragraph
Imp I	Small GvR up	OF THE MONTH OF ISSUE
Imp II	(as above)	THE EMPIRE
Imp III	Large GvR horiz.	(as above)
Imp IV	as type Imp III, but with	with violet rubber stamp overprint beginning 'EXCEPTIONALLY'
Imp V	Large GvR horiz.	THE EMPIRE
Imp VI	(as above)	VALUE IN INDIA IS 2½ ANNAS.
Imp VII	(as above)	VALUE IN INDIA AND BURMA IS 2½ ANNAS.
Imp VIII	(as above)	VALUE IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN IS 2½ ANNAS.
Com IX	(as above)	the exchange value in India is 2½ annas and in Pakistan 1 anna 9 pies
Com X	(as above)	the exchange value in India and Pakistan is 2½ annas.
Com XI	Large EiiR horiz.	(as above)
Com XII	(as above)	the exchange value in India is 16 naye paise and in Pakistan 2½ annas.

**TABLE IV. CHECK LIST OF THE IMPERIAL AND COMMONWEALTH  
REPLY COUPONS OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND**

Type	Value	(See note below)
<b>PART A: CANADA.</b>		
Imp I	5 cents	1926?
Imp II	5 cents	1934
Imp III	5 cents	1936
Imp V	5 cents	1939
Imp VI	5 cents	1941
Imp VIII	5 cents	1948
Com IX	5 cents	1953
Com IX	6 cents	June 15, 1954
	Note: This coupon exists with security background missing	
Com X	6 cents	1956
	Note: The French inscription is not grammatically correct	
Com XI	6 cents	1957
	Note: The French inscription is a translation of the English inscription that is characteristic of type Com XII	
<b>PART B: NEWFOUNDLAND</b>		
Imp I	5 cents	1926?
Imp V	5 cents	1939

Special Note: The dates listed are, with the exception of Canada Com IX 6 cents, the years when the coupons of the various types were first printed. The years of issue for Canada will likely be later than these dates.

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