A '2040' MYSTERY

by Roger Fox #009

Like all good mysteries, you have to go back in time to lay a foundation of information on which to base the mystery! In this case we will look at the following 3 series of 10¢ coupons:

CTC S20-C '2' prefix, small serial number,
Stephen Bachand coupons,
CTC S25-C '2' prefix, large serial number,
Wayne Sales coupons, and,
CTC S26-C '2' prefix, small serial number,
Wayne Sales coupons.

As you know, these 3 series all printed by B.A. Banknote, share a common back plate dated 1996, and follow each other both chronologically and numerically. Although there are 3 distinct series identified, they fall into only 2 main groups: the Stephen Bachand coupons, and the Wayne Sales coupons. Also, it is not the regular run coupons in either group that is mysterious, rather, it is the 'replacements' used.

Some would argue that there were NO replacements used in any of the 3 series or 2 groupings as they were not identifiable and that the printer elected to replace damaged coupons with notes from a different 'area' of the printing. Sure the replaced notes did not follow numerically, but beyond that, there were no other differences, and once in circulation, no one could tell a regular note from a replacement note. This practice is very similar to how the same printers replace Bank of Canada notes damaged in production. The big difference in this common practice between Bank of Canada and Canadian Tire notes is that the Bank of Canada orders are open-ended and have no ordered limits whereas the Canadian Tire Corporation orders are in blocks of millions of coupons and do have definite ordered limits. The main reason for the CTC ordered limits is to allow the other bank note printing company to tender quotations. If the current printer is successful, and then the numeric run can continue as it did in the 3 series, 2 groupings we are looking at in this article. If the current printer is not successful, the other bank note printer will often start over at '1' or use a different 'replacement' issue which not only creates a new series, but will interrupt the current numerical count.

Lets now look at these so-called replacements. It appears that the printer elected to preprint notes for replacing damaged coupons from a 'created' area beyond and higher than the CTC ordered limits, and this practice has been confirmed not only for the 10¢ coupons in this article, but in other denominations also printed by B.A. Banknote.

In the 3 series, 2 groupings we are looking at here, the first series or group 1 contained 15 million notes, starting with 2000000001 and ending with 2015000000. These are all small serial numbers and are all signed by Stephen Bachand. In a perfect world with no mistakes, there would be no need to go any further, and the first new Wayne Sales 10¢ coupon of the CTC S25-C series would have been 2015000001, but that is not reality! As most members have found while going through these 15 million coupons as they were being issued, there were coupons found in new bundles with serial numbers above 15 million still with small serial numbers and still signed by Bachand. None of these notes above 15 million were issued in regular bundles but rather sporadically throughout the regular 15 million run interrupting the regular numerical sequence and thus indicating their purpose as replacement coupons and not an over-run of regular notes.

By recording low and high serial numbers it has been found that the highest S20-C small serial number Bachand 10¢ note is 2015042063, while the lowest new CTC S25-C large serial number 10¢ Wayne Sales Coupon is 2015042766 or 703 numbers apart. Since 10¢ coupons are bundled in 500's, then it is assumed that the first CTC S25-C Wayne Sales 10¢ coupon is number 2015042501. If this assumption is correct, then there were 42,500 extra notes over the order limit of 15 million to be used as replacement coupons for the S20-C series.

We now move into the second main group of coupons which contains the 2 series CTC S25-C and CTC S26-C. It appears Canadian Tire ordered these 2 series as one order of 25 million and to be continued numerically after the previous 15 million order. Therefore, projecting a final coupon in this run at 2040000000. To complicate this 25 million order and to make things interesting for us collectors, B.A. Bank Note elected to use both large and small serial number heads with the break at 2029000000. This of course is the reason for the 2 series within this 25 million order.

As in the previous 15 million order, the printer elected to preprint notes for replacing damaged coupons from again a 'created' area beyond and higher than the CTC ordered limit of now a combined 40 million total. And, as we all know, coupons beginning with '2040' started appearing sporadically replacing regularly numbered notes in this new Wayne Sales run. Since this S25-C series began with large serial numbered coupons, the replacements also had large serial numbers, and all began with '2040'. The regular run of large serial numbered notes continued on until coupon number 2029000000 and the large serial numbered replacements have been found up to 2040112500 or so.

Beyond 2029000000, the regular run reverted back to the small serial number format and continued on to note 2040000000 in the CTC S26-C series, and small serial numbered replacements then appeared with serial numbers above 2040114000, and on up to 2040159999.

Now here is where the mystery comes in. If the CTC ordered limit of regular coupons ended at 2040000000, then coupon number 2040000001 should be a large serial number replacement but there have been several small serial numbered '2040' coupons found above 2040000001, but below the lowest large serial numbered '2040' replacement.

Are these small serial numbered coupons above note number 2040000000 replacements or not? If so, where would they be used since chronologically they would have been printed at the beginning of the CTC S25-C Wayne Sales run and as we all know, the beginning of this run were

..... continued on page 11

A '2040' MYSTERY cont'd

all large serial numbered notes. No small serial numbered '2040' coupons were ever found in large serial numbered bundles. So these small serial numbered notes do not fit chronologically! Sure, later when the large serial numbers ended, small serial numbered replacement '2040' coupons were printed but their numbers are above 2040114000 and well beyond these lower numbered small serial numbered coupons.

So, are these 2040 notes in question genuine replacements or not? At first I said yes, they are indeed genuine replacements! After all, all the notes above 2015 were replacements and we knew the ordered limits of the next order to be 25 million, so it is straight math to say that notes above '2040' would and should be replacements. But the mystery remains as to where these small serial numbered notes would be used. Confused?

Well, I think I may have the answer, or at least a possible conclusion. In doing the low-high studies on the Bachand coupons at the beginning of this article we concluded the regular CTC S20-C run did indeed end at 2015000000 and that 42,500 more coupons were printed as a numerical overrun to be used as replacements. We also concluded that the first CTC S25-C Wayne Sales 10¢ coupon would be numbered 2015042501.

Based on this, add the CTC order of 25 million and the last coupon is no longer 2040000000, but 2040042500! Since these '2040' coupons in question have small serial numbers as did all of the CTC S26-C notes from 2029000001 to 2040000000, then these mysterious '2040' notes are merely regular coupons to complete the 25 million order! Based on this then, the first Wayne Sales '2040' large numbered replacement should be 2040042501.

This then tells us that there are BOTH regular issue '2040' coupons and replacement issue '2040' coupons with the serial number level indicating one from the other. Therefore, if the last regular numbered coupon is 2040042500, then ALL '2040' coupons above this number wether they are large or small serial numbered will be considered replacements.

It is also interesting to note that if B.A. Banknote had used identifiable replacements like the '1' prefix in previous issues, this mystery or confusion would never have happened as the regular issue would always be separate from the replacement issue. With using a straight numerical sequence of 40 million numbers over the 3 series or 2 groupings, the printer had to alternate regular numbered notes and replacement notes in bands to not only give the customer, Canadian Tire, their correct order count but also have the convenience of pre-printed replacements.

Hope this solves the mystery, clears up the confusion and gives us all more to ponder!

..... continued on page 12

MORE ON REPLACEMENTS!

by Roger Fox

As we are finding out, some replacement coupons seem to be very common while others are very difficult to find. This I believe ties into coupon distribution, and for you, the hunter, luck of the draw!

What YOU find versus what someone else finds at about the same time and within the same series. It appears the printers sometimes seem to 'dump' excessive replacements by the bundle. If you are lucky enough to find a substantial grouping or a whole bundle, then that replacement will likely be fairly common. On the other hand, studying the framing coupons around a replacement note or grouping can sometimes indicate quantity of replacement use.

For instance, the CTC S17-Da '999' 25¢ coupons, of which there have been very few discovered so far, is a good example of 'correct' use of replacements. The fact that there have not been many found is not the point here, but how they have been used so far in this series. They all appear to have been issued in numerical order parallel to the numerical order of the regular issue. This is a relatively small series or print run of 3 million coupons. To again show the value of Jerome's framer study, the '999' 25¢ replacement I have is number 9990000220. The framer coupons around this replacement are 9901525582 & 9901525584. Could this indicate that there were 220 errors found and replaced in 1.525 million notes? If we project that to the end of the proposed printing of 3.0 million notes, then could we say there were less than 450 replacements used?

Although this could be considered a good print-to-error ratio, how many '999' notes were actually pre-printed – 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000? If the excess pre-printed notes are not all used, what do the printers do with them? By rights, they should be destroyed, but we know sometimes they are not, but rather bundled up and shipped out to the gas bars and stores for regular use.

By observing this over several series, we know the printers are not consistent. In very large runs of 10¢ coupons, for instance, it is not unusual for 150,000 or more replacements to be pre-printed. Because of the large quantity of the order, the replacement coupons quite often are not used in numerical order parallel to the numerical order of the regular issue.

Again, this is revealed by recording the framing coupons around the replacement. Here, you could find a very 'high' numbered replacement in a relatively 'low' point in the issue, or a 'low' to 'medium' numbered replacement near the end of the run. However, because 'high' numbered replacements are found does not mean that ALL the 'lower' numbers have been used before the whole order is printed. By studying framer coupons we can also tell that some notes are replacement coupons and some are replacement sheets, So send your replacement information to Jerome.

There is no way to prove how many replacements were ACTUALLY issued. Only time, and the actual notes found will dictate quantity and rarity!