

UPON THE MATTER OF NUMBERING EQUIPMENT...

by Lou Fontaine #109, February 2003

British American Bank Note Company.

While looking at some Bank of Canada King George VI notes from the 1937 issue I happened to look at the numbers on a \$10.00 note with the Gordon/Towers signature. It sure looked like the same numbering equipment that was used to print the serial numbers on the CTC Gas Bar issues. As can be seen from this example I used the 1's and 2's for comparison and it is obvious that the 1's are flat topped on both notes. I did not find any differences in fonts used on the CTC 5 and CTC 6. To date, it appears that only 1 type of font printing head was used. (See fig 1)

The Bank of Canada notes of 1937 were printed by the British American Bank Note Company as were the CTC gas bars issues from Canadian Tire.

With the issue of the Queen's 1954 design, this numbering equipment is still in use. There are some Bank of Canada notes that have the same Font as the "Small Font" varieties in the CTC 7 issue. A case in point is CTC 7-D, the different font (1) on the 20¢ note appears identical with this 1954 \$1.00 note. (See fig 2)

The "Small Font" also exists on other values of the CTC 7 Issue. (Roger Fox brackets the narrow and wider font varieties down nicely in his article of Volume 7, number 4, September 1997.) The difference with the flat topped 1 and the curve topped 1 leads me to believe that either, different font printing wheels were interchangeable with each printing head or that there were in fact numerous print heads available in the printing of serial numbers on the gas bar coupons. I prefer using the figure 1 to differentiate fonts as it is the easiest and fastest way that I know of. Is it possible that the "Small Font" used on certain CTC 7 values are replacement notes? I later mention that there is also some relation with the S10 - S11 Issue.

Now here is another area to look into. Have you ever wondered about the S10 - S11 replacements? I have and here's the theory. I was looking long and hard at the numbers on some S11 replacements and the thought struck me, "Do these ever look like the numbers on the earlier Gas bar issues. When I did the comparison it was remarkable how close they were. (See fig 3)

I believe that when something went wrong during the printing of the S10 and S11 issues the production employees at the Bank note company set up print heads that were used on gas bar coupons to print replacements, but not necessarily the same one for all the values. Then I started looking at the "Small Font 1" on the 5 cent CTC 7 and Lo and behold, the numbers looked exactly like the normal numbers on the S10 - S11. (See fig 4)

Upon further examination of numerous CTC 5 and CTC 6 coupons I could find no trace of the "Small font" print head being used before CTC 7 and never with the CTC 8 or CTC 9. The more I think of this the more I think that it is just one machine but with the capability of using different font

type print heads. If the numbering under normal use went awry during the printing of the S10 and S11 then all they would do is print the required number of replacements using the different font.

Since the print heads are mechanical in nature, I believe that these print wheels were removable and repairable. When such repairs were done, or print wheels on a print head were replaced, there were some subtle differences in the way the number appeared. Look closely at the ones on these two 10¢ notes, you will see that they are different at the bottom where a couple are filled in and the others have just a straight line across. Note also the different type 7's on the second coupon, where the serif at the left of the 7 drops straight down and the other filled in. I have noticed this filled in 7 on the earlier gas bar issues, CTC 1, CTC 5, CTC 6 and CTC 7. You will also note some differences with the 1's with the replacement note in fig 3. So this repairing of print heads was efficient in the sense that the print heads had a much longer life. You will note this occurrence on all the digits on many of the CTC 8 coupons. See 25¢ note above with small 3's at start of serial number but remaining numbers all larger. There are many other examples in the gas bar issues where different print wheels were used for the same digit. (See fig 5 and fig 6)

From 1958 to 1972 the British American Bank Note Co. had the contract for printing Gas bar coupons CTC 1, CTC 5, CTC 6 and Store issues S1 to S3. So why don't we find replacements in these issues? One conclusion that can be drawn is that from 1958 to 1972 any damaged notes caused by the numbering equipment were just simply reprinted. The numbering equipment at that time probably only had the capability of printing the serial numbers in 1 font. When it came time to print the CTC 7, CTC 8 and CTC 9 the British American Bank Note Co. either got another machine or some new print heads. Could it be then, that when something went wrong with the numbering of these issues they just used another font print head? Is this why we find some different fonts used in CTC 7 and CTC 8 for some of the values? By the time it was time to print the CTC 9 we only see one font being used for almost the entire printing. A very short run of CTC 9 - 5¢ plain prefix S notes did appear in this issue for a brief time. Generally it can be assumed that the numbers were reprinted if things went wrong during the numbering sequence of this series. I hesitate to think that these were replacement notes but more as an employee error installing the wrong font prefix after some maintenance or cleaning. If these few notes are in fact replacement notes then that would imply that the employees made no errors or the machines did not malfunction during the printing of this entire series. (See Bulletin for info, Volume 3, Number 1 February 1993 by Don Bradt). I do not know of this piece of equipment being used between 1973 and 1989. Now in 1989 it became necessary to again use this machine that numbered the gas bar coupons and use it for the numbering the S10 and S11 issues.

Canadian Bank Note Company.

In 1954 some Bank of Canada \$1.00 and \$5.00 notes were printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company and it looks like the numbering equipment was used until 1972 when the new design currency was issued. In 1972 the Canadian Bank note Co printed the F003-01 5% discount coupon and Canadian Tire must have liked what they saw because the Canadian Bank note Co got the contract to print the Canadian tire coupons for several years, namely the S4, S5, S6, S7, S8 and S9 issues, a span of some 16 years.

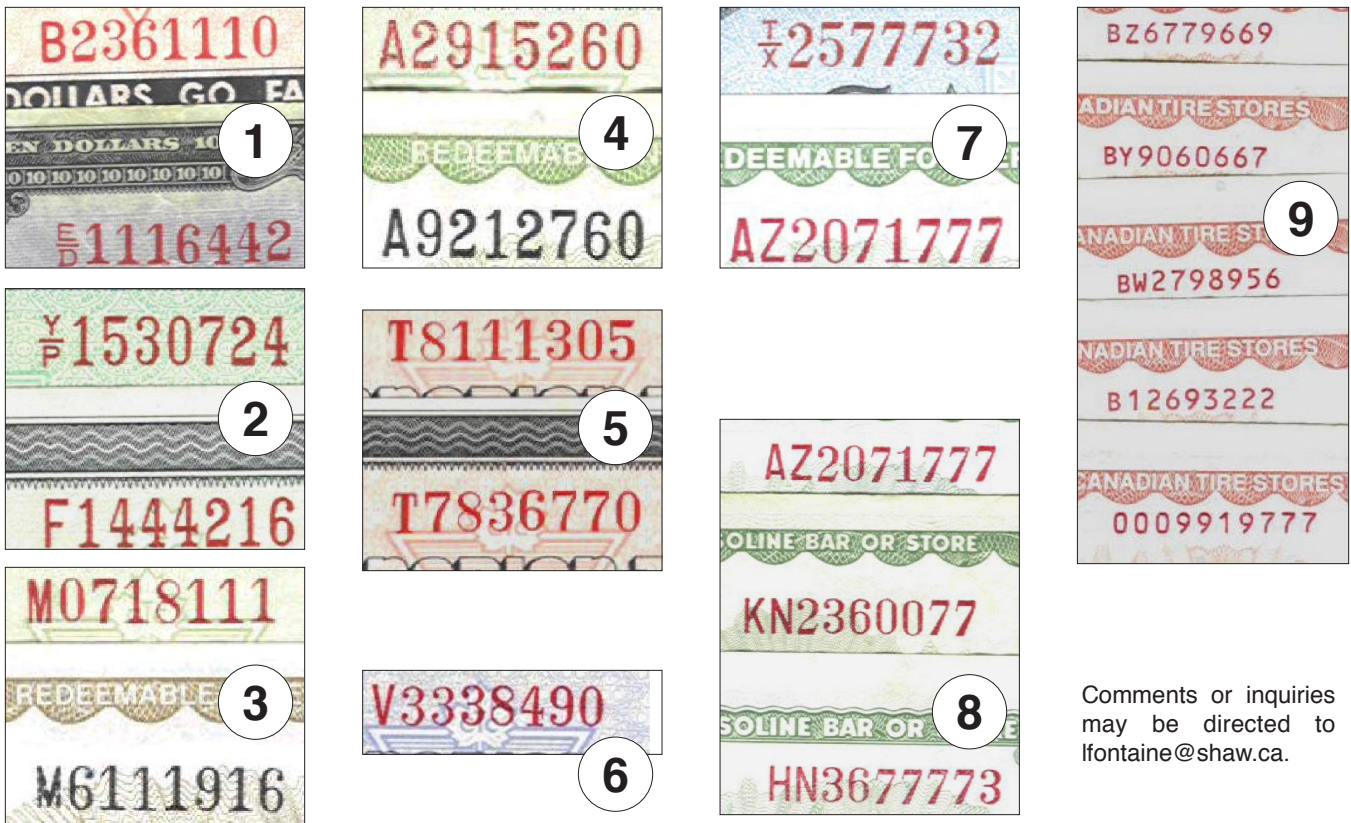
In 1972 The Canadian Bank Note company began using this old piece of equipment for numbering Canadian Tire money. The serial numbers on the 1972 5% discount coupon and Store series S4, S5 and S6 bear a striking resemblance to this same piece of equipment that was used for numbering some 1954 Bank of Canada issues. You can imagine how many print heads would have been required to print the numbers on the 1954 issue currency plus the Canadian Tire money. It appears that this piece of equipment was used for numbering Canadian Tire money only from 1972 to 1985, a span of some 13 years. (See fig 7)

From the image, I picked the 2 and 7 for comparison and they are identical as are all the other digits. Notes of this period, be it Bank of Canada or Canadian Tire notes, the printing heads on this machine could only go to 9,999,999. At the completion of a numbering sequence the prefix would be changed. The \$5.00 note and the 1974 S4 issue are good examples of all the prefix changes. In the middle of the printing of the S4 the 1976 Olympic issue was printed and the prefixes continue from where the S4 prefixes left off. After the olympics the S4 prefixes resumed from where the 1976 issue ended. When 1985 rolled around it looked as if

the entire group of prefixes AM to DM and AN to ZN were pretty well used up, But at this time some internal problems at Canadian Tire required Sasaki to fill in for the interim and the S6 and S7 series were printed. When the numbering on store series S6 was completed it does not appear that this piece of numbering equipment was ever used again. At least we know that this equipment was used for over 30 years if you count the years that it was used for regular currency and CTC money. (See fig 8)

The asterisk method used by the Canadian Bank Note Co on the S4 was a good idea. Unfortunately they did not follow through with all the S4 values and the S5 and S6. It did not start again until the S9 issue. So what did they do for some S4 values and S5 to S6 when things went wrong? My conclusion is that the affected group of coupons were simply reprinted. Upon completion of the S6 issue the Canadian Bank note company acquired some new numbering equipment. With the advent of the S7 issue the numbering is in a totally different and smaller font. This new equipment was used in numbering the S7, S8, S9, S13 & S14. A different type print head was used intermittently during the numbering sequence of the S9 and S13 issues. This is why you will see the Stretched and normal spacing varieties. The S9 and S13 replacements were denoted by an Asterisk preceding the serial number. None have been found in the S7 and S8 issues which indicates that when problems occurred they were reprinted. (See fig 9)

I did not have enough notes of 1937 or 1954 to be thorough and to break it down further but we can see that the numbering equipment used in the numbering of CTC coupons is a very important aspect of why we see what we see when we look at the numbers on our coupons.



Comments or inquiries may be directed to lfontaine@shaw.ca.