

While not referred
to specifically in
this article,
Clench, Cobourg
1800's cabinetmaker,
used countermarks
on coins.

Canadian Merchant Countermarks

by Gregory G. Brunk

Introduction

Within the past two decades, numismatists increasingly have become aware of the role that countermarked coins played as advertising during the last century. Until recently, the only generally recognized Canadian advertising countermark was the well known stamp of Devins and Bolton, the Montreal pharmacist, but now we know of hundreds of different marks on Canadian coins and tokens, and over a dozen of these seem to have been issued for advertising.

What makes countermarked coins of particular interest to collectors is that each piece tells its own, individual story. Each of these coin bears witness to its exact location at one point in history. Pieces with the countermarks of Devins and Bolton must have passed through the till of that partnership sometime during the 1860's, otherwise they would not have the famous stamp "Devins & Bolton - Montreal." The silver dollars found with the distinctive "J.O.P." hallmark tell the story of Joseph Patenaude's attempts to increase the coinage of silver dollars (Gingras, 1959, 1965, 1982). Each was stamped by Patenaude and given out in change at his establishment. The twelve known specimens of the Findlay and McWilliam advertising stamp verify that these coins passed through the hands of this Montreal candy maker during the 1860's. Similarly, the one American large cent found stamped "Great Western Railroad Canada" must have had a role in the development of Southwestern Ontario.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the systematic evidence now available about the role of private countermarks in the numismatic history of Canada. Much of my discussion is based upon the specimens recently published in **American and Canadian Countermarked Coins** (Brunk, 1987) and the data I have collected since its publication. We now know of over 12,000 specimens of countermarked coins that were issued in either the United States or Canada, but the exact location of most of these issues is uncertain, as is even the country of origin of many of them.

Why is even the country where a mark was issued so hard to determine? As I will show, most of the Canadian merchants who stamped coins more often used United States coins as their vehicle than Canadian coins or tokens. As a result, the probability that a randomly selected Canadian countermark will appear on a Canadian coin or token is only about fifty percent! Similarly, many of the American merchants who operated before the Civil War commonly stamped their advertising slogans on Spanish-American coins, while Canadian tokens commonly were employed by the merchants of New England and other Northern American states. This means that many American countermarks appear on Canadian coppers.

This usage of foreign coins and tokens as vehicles for merchant advertising was quite common all around the globe in the last century, and the practice often makes it difficult to determine the county of origin of many countermarks (Brunk, 1987, 1988). For many North American issues all we can say is that a piece was struck here, but we are unsure whether it came from Canada or the United States (Mexico issued few, if any, advertising countermarks). In this article I will examine evidence concerning the merchant countermarks that we are reasonably certain are of Canadian origin.

The only contemporary account we have from someone who actually witnessed the stamping of coins during the nineteenth century come from Walter Gould, who later became an avid collector of these pieces. During the American Civil War, Gould was growing up in Bangor, Maine. Many years later, he wrote to Frank Duffield, who published Gould's recollections as part of his series "A Trial List of Countermarked Coins of the World" (1919). Duffield's work remained the standard reference on such pieces for over half a century. In the following account, Gould recalls his relationship with Ben Parker, whose "B. Parker" countermarks commonly are found on American large cents.

My first knowledge of Mr. B. Parker, commonly known as Ben Parker, was about 1862, when his place of business was an old wooden building for brass foundry and metal working at No. 3 Columbia Street, Bangor. My recollection is that most of the business done was making stencils for marking lumber, etc., repairing brass knuckles and ornaments for harness, locks and lamps. How long he had been at this location before the Civil War I do not know, but until about 1869 I knew the kindly old man, and was sent to him to get stencils made. It was his custom countermark coins with his name (B. Parker) for his customers. For other people he would countermark their names or initials when requested, usually on U.S. copper cents. I have seen his name and work on a few other coins.

I remember Mr. Thos. J. Stewart, the biggest manufacturer and exporter of birch bark shooks to the Mediterranean for oranges and lemons, calling for some stencils to mark the shooks, often taking from his pocket an old cent and asking Mr. Parker to stamp his initials (T.J.S.) on it, which Ben always did without charge. Years afterwards one of these 'T.J.S.' cents came into my hands with others.

In the 50's and 60's it seems to have been a common practice to mutilate, mark and hole coins. There were no law against it, and it mutilated coins, and those partly cut away were equally as desirable as the perfect and clumsy coins of the period. At one time I had more than 200 cents marked 'B. Parker' (quoted in Brunk, 1976: 107-108).

Private countermarks were issued in many nations during the nineteenth century, and we know of advertising issues from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Great Britain, and the United States. The most common British countermark is "Pears Soap". Andrew Pears advertised extensively in North America and his countermarks often are mistaken as being either Canadian or American. In the middle 1880's, he imported 250,000 Continental bronze coins into Britain, stamped them with his slogan, and then sold them for use as small change to various English merchants in incredibly large numbers, and soon many of them reached this continent in the pocket change of sailors and new immigrants who had passed through the British Isles.

Most European nations eventually tried to ban the stamping of their own, current coins, but could not act to prevent the marking of coins of other nations. This means that some merchant countermarks **never** are found stamped upon the coins of their home country (Brunk, 1987)! In Britain there was a major cry against the stamping of English coins, and Parliament banned the practice in 1853. That there never was such a cry against stamping coins in either Canada or the United States appears on to mean that the practice failed to become a major annoyance on this continent.

Stamping coins certainly was not the most common form of advertising in the nineteenth century, although it probably was used by thousands of merchants world wide. It seems likely that most of these people must have advertised in other ways as well, posting bills, using newspapers and journals, trade cards, and most commonly, placing advertisements in city, provincial, state or regional business directories, which were common in all parts

of North America in the nineteenth century. These business directories provide an excellent method of tracing the origins of many countermarked coins.

A large number of early British countermarks from the time of the industrial revolution were issued by merchants in the metal trades, silversmiths, pewterers, gunsmiths, and the like (Scott, 1975). A similar pattern can be seen for the United States, where so many merchants produced countermarks that we have a large pool of data to call upon. Of the individuals who have been identified, 109 were jewelers or silversmiths, 62 proprietors of hotels or restaurants, 37 gunsmiths, 25 photographers, and 22 patent medicine dealers.

Table 1
Source Of Countermarks by Province*

British Columbia	1
New Brunswick	3
Newfoundland	2
Nova Scotia	1
Ontario	12
Prince Edward Island	1
Quebec	15

*This table contains all merchant countermarks identifiable to province. Some of these pieces probably were not intended as advertising coins.

One purposive countermark also is known that was not a merchant issue. In 1922 the Al-Azher Masonic Temple of Calgary countermarked coins for use as mark pennies.

Of the hundreds of countermarks found on Canadian coins and tokens, only a small number have been identified to their place of origin. Most of these are self-identifying because the marks contain the city of issue. "Ketchum & Co. Ottawa" is a good example of such a mark. Table 1 presents the number of issuers known from each province. Not surprisingly, the East is far better represented than the West, which reflects the concentration of population during the period when most of these pieces were issued.

Previous Writers

It is surprising how long it took collectors to realize that there are so many advertising countermarks or that many of their issuers can be identified so easily. The first author to write extensively on North American merchant countermarks was Maurice Gould. During the 1940's, Gould suggested that some stamps might be silversmith hallmarks, an hypothesis verified by Dave Bowers, who was able to identify eleven American countermarks by looking through lists of silversmith marks (Gould, 1947).

Since that time a number of preliminary works have been written on these pieces. The publications are of two sorts. The first consists of general listings of the counterstamps known on Canadian coins by various authors (Gould, 1957, 1958, 1985; Hallenbeck, 1965; Foster, 1976, 1983; Rulau, 1983b: 202-205). The second consists of detailed studies of the history and issues of particular merchants.

Devins and Bolton, being the most prolific issuer, has received considerable attention (Gould, 1966; Baker, 1977; Buckley, 1979, 1981). Gingras (1959, 1965, 1982) spent considerable effort to unravel the mystery of the "J.O.P." marks issued by Joseph Patenaude, and Palmer (1981) has discussed the countermarks of T.H. Robinson. All the information presented by these authors is contained in the recent catalog by Brunk (1987), along with brief historical sketches of some of these merchants, but as this article shows,

the history of many Canadian merchants who stamped coins with advertising has yet to be investigated in any detail.

The Reasons for Countermarking Coins

In any discussion of private countermarked coins, it is useful to talk about two groups of countermarks. Unique pieces are only known from one example. Most of these are dog tags, keepsakes, love tokens, pocket pieces, or of other personal significance to their owners. We can hope to do little with these pieces because their origins are lost forever unless the pieces are completely self-identifying.

Of more promise are "purposive" countermarks. It seems fair to assume that if a countermark is found on two or more coins, it had some purpose. At one extreme, such pieces may be bland and uninteresting, having served such purposes as testing a new punch that proved ownership of a tool.

There are numerous counterstamps found on Mexican coins...a few are merely indentations made with hammer and chisel, and still others that were used by private individuals. Under this last classification fall what the author has named BRAND PIECES, because, owners of large estates in Mexico usually had a small die similar to the iron employed to brand cattle. As that particular brand proved ownership, the small die was used to stamp agricultural implements or any movable property about the estate, thus preventing the easy disposal of stolen property to neighboring ranches. The author, who spent his early life in Mexico, distinctly remembers seeing the arrival of a new die and its being tried on a coin (Pradeau, 1938: 132).

Table 2
Occupations

Beverages: Squirt, location unknown
Brokers: L.C. Barbeau, Montreal, Quebec
Candy Makers: Black's Chocolate, location unknown;
Carriage Makers: Robinson, Kingston, Ontario
Dentists: Dr. Page, St. John's, Newfoundland
Pharmacists: Devins and Bolton, Montreal Quebec
Grocers: Caron Brothers, Montreal, Quebec
Gunsmiths: T. Costen, Montreal, Quebec
Jewelers: Joseph Oliva Patenaude, Nelson, British Columbia;
Nicholas Ohman, St. John's, Newfoundland
Sewing Machine Makers: J.L.N. Solis, Montreal, Quebec
Skate Makers: J.A. Whelpley, Greenwich, N.B.

At the other extreme, these purposive countermarks share more noteworthy purposes, such as the advertisement of products. But few purposive stamps were not the issues of merchants. These include marks commemorating special events of organizations, such as the Al-Azhar Masonic Temple of Calgary, which with the large cents stamped "Vote the Land Free", the slogan of the Free Soil and Free Speech Party during the American presidential election of 1948. A few countermarks also appear to have turned well worn coins into trade tokens.

We know the occupation of only little more than a dozen of the individuals who stamped coins in Canada. Table 2 presents a listing of known occupations and products. Among this group are carriage makers, dentists, pharmacists, grocers, gunsmiths, jewelers, and machine makers. But a number of these pieces are unique, being represented by only one

specimen present in collections today. As such, they may not be advertising issues. A casual examination of table 2 shows that most of these merchants probably would have had stamps already prepared for making other materials, which they may have turned to when the time came to stamp coins.

Purposive Merchant Issues

Table 3 presents a listing of all the countermarks that appear to be Canadian and are known from two or more specimens. Most of these clearly seem to be advertising countermarks, but some had other purposes. The "J.O.P." and "N.O." marks are from jeweller hallmark stamps. The "IB" countermark may have turned coins into early trade tokens, as the stamp does not appear to have had an advertising purpose. The number of specimens of each countermark that currently are known is given, along with their probable date of issue. Most of the individual issues are noteworthy of comment.²

L.C. Barbeau (2340) was listed in the **Montreal City Directories** of the 1850's selling drygoods on St. Paul Street, but his countermarks list his occupation as "courtier" or "broker". This is the only Canadian advertising countermark that also includes "Canada" as part of its legend.

Black's Chocolate and Black's Chocolate Powder (3825, 2830) are thought to be Canadian issues because two of the only three countermarked coins that are found with these stamps are Canadian cents dated 1858 and 1876. The third piece is an American large cent from the 1850's, but we can infer that these coins almost certainly are not American issues. Merchants in the United States rarely stamped Canadian cents with advertising slogans, although Canadian tokens commonly are found marked.³ A similar Canadian countermark that does not bear a location of its issue is "Squirt" (37840), which is an advertisement for the popular soft drink.

Devins and Bolton (11530) were the most prolific issuer of stamped coins in North America, and the history of this partnership and their token issues has been well documented (Baker 1977; Buckley, 1981). It has been speculated that "Bolton's" (4210) was the countermark of one of these partners before the firm was formed, but we know little of him before 1863 (Baker 1977).

Today, we know of well over 500 examples of the Devins and Bolton mark on a wide variety of coins. The only other North American merchant who can rival their output was the enigmatic Dr. Wilkins of Pittsfield, New Hampshire (Bowers, 1987). We have over 350 examples of Wilkin's pieces, but until quite recently we had no ideal who he was or even where he was from! This is not an uncommon occurrence with countermarks because the field has been so little researched. Like many merchants, Wilkins did not bother to stamp his home town on most coins. He probably thought that if someone could not easily find out where he lived, that person would not travel a long distance to visit him.

Another pharmacist to stamp coins was T.H. Robinson (34700) of Orillia, Ontario. The best guess of the date of his issue is the 1880's, for he is known to have moved to Montreal around 1895 (Foster, 1983; 12). What is unusual about such a late issue countermark is that his marks are found on Canadian tokens and American large cents, not Canadian cents, as is the case of most such late issues, as will be noted below.

Thomas Costen (9730) was a gunsmith according to the 1854 **Montreal City Directory**. Only two examples of his mark are known. He probably used stamps initially intended to mark guns when he marked these coins. In the **Montreal City Directories** of 1868-1869 and 1870-1871, Findlay and McWilliam (14170) were listed as wholesale confectioners. Twelve of their advertising countermarks are known. Ketchum and Company (22700) was located in Ottawa from 1902 to 1930; they sold bicycles and various sporting goods. Only two of their countermarks are known.

The "IB" mark (20940) is one of the most interesting Canadian countermarks because of its numismatic history. The pieces have been known for a long time, having been recorded both by Wood (1914) and Duffield (1919), but they were not recognized as Canadian. Around the turn of the century it was a great fad among collectors to seek countermarked coins from the Caribbean islands. Because a West Indies attribution would raise the value of a coin, the "IB" countermarks were touted to mean "Isle Barbados". But the late nineteenth century also was a period when counterfeits and fabrications of the West Indies series were increasingly becoming a nuisance to collectors. The "IB" pieces eventually were assigned a status as fabrications similar to the "RF" (33360), "Texas" (39660), and "Wells Fargo" (42570) fantasies.

Only recently, Rulau (1983b: 48) has published an "IB" mark that was over stamped by Devins and Bolton, proving that the "IB" countermarks are not fantasies, but are contemporary or earlier than the Devins and Bolton pieces. Just within the past year, in one of the auctions of Bowers and Merena (March 26, 1987, lot 1118), another "IB" mark appeared on a token that was counter stamped "Quebec" on its reverse. These two bits of evidence seem to verify the "IB" countermark is of Canadian origin, but since the legend is not self-identifying, it is not an advertising token, but may be an early trade token or work check.

Two countermarks are of particular interest because their purpose was neither for advertising nor for use as trade tokens. Instead, these marks were stamped on coins in order to trace their progress across Canada. The best known of these coins bear the "J.O.P." hallmark of Joseph Patenaude of Nelson, British Columbia. Patenaude lost his jewelry firm in a court battle over the patent rights to a cheap method of refining silver ore. Following the episode, he became obsessed with promoting the free coinage of silver as a way to revive the Canadian mining industry (Gingras, 1959, 1965, 1982).

On several occasions Patenaude obtained one thousand silver dollars and stamped them with his hallmark in the center of the canoe. He gave them out in change at his optometry business, hoping that a demonstration of the wide circulation of his hallmarked dollars would be a persuasive argument to entice the government to mint more silver coins. His project was a failure, and until the late 1950's most collectors were baffled by the few "J.O.P." stamped dollars that turned up in their collection.⁴

Very recently collectors have begun to notice an apparently similar story concerning the Newfoundland twenty cent piece and two half dollars. It appears that these marks are from the stamps of Nicholas Ohman, who was a jeweler in St. John's during the 1880's. The stamps are far too small to have been used as advertising, so they must have had another purpose. Was Ohman an early advocate of the increased mintage of silver coins like Patenaude?

Table 3
Purposive Issuers

2340 L.C. BARBEAU/COURTIER/(BROKER)/MONTREAL/CANADA	
Probably issued in 1850's	8 Specimens Known
3825 USE/BLACK'S/CHOCOLATE	
3830 USE/BLACK'S/CHOCOLATE/POWDER	
Probably Issued in 1870's	3 Specimens Known
4210 BOLTON'S	
Probably Issued in 1850's	3 Specimens Known
9730 T. COSTEN/MONTREAL	
Probably Issued in 1860's	2 Specimens Known

11530 DEVINS/ & /BOLTON/-/MONTREAL Probably Issued in 1860's	542 Specimens Known
14170 FINDLAY/ & /MCWILLIAM/-/MONTREAL Probably Issued in 1860's	12 Specimens Known
20940 IB Probably Issued in 1850's	24 Specimens Known
21320 JOP Issued 1930's - 1040's	15 Specimens Known
22700 KETCHUM & CO./OTTAWA Probably Issued 1910's	2 Specimens Known
27640 J.W. MILLAR/TORONTO Probably Issued in 1860's	5 Specimens Known
29160 N.O. Probably Issued in 1890's	3 Specimens Known
34660 ROBINSON'S/KINGSTON/CARRIAGE WORKS Probably Issued in 1880's	14 Specimens Known
34700 T.H. ROBINSON/DRUGGIST/ORILLIA Probably Issued in 1880's	14 Specimens Known
35100 ROULEAU	
35105 JOSH ROULEAU Probably Issued in 1850's	16 Specimens Known
35385 M. RYAN/I. ONT. Probably Issued in 1870's	2 Specimens Known
37840 SQUIRT Probably Issued 1910's	4 Examples Known

The issues of J.W. Millar (27640) are quite interesting because all five known examples are found on American coins, the majority on American silver coins. Very few Canadian merchants stamped silver coins, and if documentary evidence on Millar did not exist, we would have to attribute these pieces to the United States, but according to the **Toronto City Directories** of 1856 to 1880, James W. Millar was a jeweler and watch maker in the city.

The stamps of Robinson's Carriage Works (34660) have been known for some time, but first were attributed to Kingston on the island of Jamaica, another example of the pro-Caribbean inclination of coin dealers (Byrne, 1975). There was some justification for this initial identification because the first piece was found on a 1797 English penny, but all the later stamps have been discovered on Canadian cents of the 1880's according to various editions of the **Kingston, Ontario, City Directory**.

Two types of countermarks were issued by Josh Rouleau (35100, 35105), an unknown merchant of French descent, presumably from Quebec. They only differ in whether the marks contains his first name. Another little know Canadian merchant who advertised by stamping coins is M. Ryan (35385). He listed his location as "I. Ont." This has been interpreted as meaning Ingersoll, Ontario, but the only two countermarked coins found with this stamp are American quarters.

Denominations of Countermarked Coins

It seems surprising today, but most Canadian merchants stamped more American coins than either Canadian coins or tokens. Table 4 presents a sample of 542 pieces know to have been stamped by Devins and Bolton. Of these pieces, 262 (48 percent) are American

large cents, colonial coins or various American tokens. In this respect, the pattern differs little from that in the United States during the same period, where 44 percent of the advertising countermarks appear on large pieces were struck on Spanish-American two reales, which were legal tender until the US government demonetized them in 1857. Very few Canadian countermarks are found on Canadian tokens, and the remaining 57 pieces known are on coins and tokens from various European or Asian countries.

Table 4
Devins and Bolton Issues

American Large Cents	249
American Colonial Coins	4
American Tokens	9
Austrian Coins	1
Canadian Tokens	236
Danish Coins	1
English Coins	12
English Tokens	9
French Coins	2
French Colonies Coins	2
Guernsey Coins	1
Irish Coins	5
Norwegian Coins	4
Portuguese Coins	1
St. Helena Coins	1
Spanish Coins	3
Straits Settlements Coins	1
Swedish Coins	1
Total	542

The Devins and Bolton pieces are typical of one strategy of countermarking coins used by merchants: stamp only certain, specific denominations or types of coins. Devins and Bolton only stamped copper or bronze pieces about the size of Canadian cents or American large cents. Their mark is unknown on any Canadian cent; they stamped no silver coins; and the Devins and Bolton stamp is only found on one large copper piece, a Leslie two pence token. A more commonly used strategy of merchants was to stamp all the coins, regardless of denomination, that went through one's till. Everything from the smallest copper coin to the largest silver coin, and in a few rare occasions, gold coins up to twenty dollar size, were stamped.

Having collected systematic data on over a dozen Canadian advertising issues, we can now examine the types of coins that were stamped by decade of issue. Table 5 shows the major types of coins stamped by all merchants other than Devine and Bolton, Nicholas Ohman, and Joseph Patenaude. The time periods are based on the estimates presented in Table 4, given the latest known date coin found stamped and the historical evidence available from city directories and other sources.

Table 5
Types of Coins and Tokens Counterstamped by Decade

	1850's	1860's	1870's	1880's	1910's
Canadian Tokens	11	1		12	
Canadian Cents	4	1		11	4
British Coppers	5	2		1	
American Coppers	26	11		1	
American Silver Coins	1	4	2		

This table does not include the issues of Devins and Bolton which are listed in table 4, or the issues of Nicholas Ohman or Joseph Patenaude, which were not struck for advertising purposes.

The first important fact to note is that countermarking for purpose of advertising continued in Canada for at least two decades into the twentieth century. This is a very different case from the United States, where, except for a few sporadic issues dating from the 1880's, most merchants seem to have stopped using coins for advertising by the late 1870's.⁵

There is a clear pattern to the types of coins struck by merchants by decade. During the 1850's and 1860's, American coins were very common. If countermarks were applied to coins randomly, we can conclude that during the 1850's and 1860's about half of the copper coins circulating in Canada were American large cents. A few American silver coins also are found stamped.

By the 1880's the situation has changed. In only one case in this later period is an advertising countermark found on an American coin, and only one stamp on a British copper issue. Over half the pieces from the later period that are stamped are Canadian cents, and most of the remainder are found on Canadian tokens that were issued much earlier, but still were in circulation.

Conclusion

This paper began with the observation that only recently have numismatists realized how many advertising countermarks were in circulation during the nineteenth century. This is a field ripe for research. Unquestionably, many pieces remain to be discovered. Today they are sitting, unnoticed in collections or desk drawers, of unrecognized historical value.

The field offers a particular fascination because so often it is difficult to even decide if a particular countermark is Canadian or American. This confusion arises from the extensive cross-circulation of coins that occurred between Canada and the northern American states during the nineteenth century. Almost half of the Canadian advertising countermarks of the 1850's and 1860's appear on American large cents, while many American stamps also are found on Canadian tokens. It was not until the 1880's that the situation changed and Canadian merchants turned predominantly to Canadian coins and tokens as a medium for their advertising activities.

Notes

1. For specifics on most issuers, see the geographical index to **American and Canadian Countermarked Coins** (Brunk, 1987). A few additional pieces have been identified to merchant or discovered since publication, which reflects the difference between the index and this table.
2. The numbers in parentheses refer to catalog numbers from **American and Canadian Countermarked Coins** (Brunk, 1987).
3. Before the American Civil War, large cents and Canadian tokens commonly were used for advertising in the United States. In 1857 the American government started replacing the large cent with the new "flying eagle" and later "indian head" small cent. This changed the type of coin that merchants desired to stamp. By the late 1870's most American merchants had stopped stamping coins for advertising, and there never was much overlap between the minting of Canadian cents and the use of large cents for advertising by American merchants.
4. It appears that the hallmark stamps that Patenaude used to mark coins were not destroyed after his death, and it is thought that they have been used within recent years to mark a few additional coins.
5. This seems to be a safe assumption because few American marks are found on coins dated later than 1874. (One noteworthy exception is the mark of the Roberts Dye Works of Elmira, New York, which was issued in 1890 on British coins). But the assertion is much harder to prove because of the pattern of mintage of American silver coins. The production of dimes and quarters, for example, dropped from around 30,000,000 in 1865 to only about 15,000 in 1879. Many bags of previously minted coins simply remained in bank vaults, to be distributed only many years afterwards or eventually melted. Therefore, it is possible, but unlikely, that American merchants continued to countermark coins in the late 1870's and 1880's, but we cannot prove this hypothesis because there were almost no coins of these dates in circulation.

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Photographs

14170 FINDLAY & MCWILLIAM / - / MONTREAL

This company sold confectionaries in the late 1860's in Montreal. Twelve examples are known.

(Reduction Size = U.S. Large Cent Size)



14170



2340

2340 L.C. BARBEAU/COURTIER/(BROKER)/MONTREAL/CANADA

Louis C. Barbeau sold drygoods in Montreal in the late 1850's. This is the only known merchant countermark to give the issuer's occupation in both English and French. Eight examples are known.

(Reduction Size = U.S. Half Dollar)

30880 PAQUETT & CIE/(Beaver)/MONTREAL/MNFRS

Only one example is known on a 1797 English Penny.

(Reduction Size - Roughly Size of U.S. Half Dollar)



30880



11510

11510 DEVINS/&/BOLTON/-/MONTREAL

This firm was a pharmacy in Montreal. the countermarks probably were issued in the late 1860's. Well over 500 examples are known.

(Reduction Size = U.S Large Cent)

34660 ROBINSON'S/KINGSTON/CARRIAGE WORKS

George W. Robinson sold carriages, pianos and organs in Kingston, Ontario during the 1880's. Fourteen examples are known.

(Reduction Size = Canadian Cent)

2825 USE/BLACK'S/CHOCOLATE

This countermark is thought to have been issued in Canada because two of the three known pieces are found on Canadian cents.

(Reduction Size = Canadian Cent)

35700 T.H. ROBINSON/DRUGGIST/ORILLIA

Robinson became an assistant pharmacist in Orillia, Ontario, in the middle 1850's. He had a large store that sold a wide variety of merchandise. Robinson moved to Montreal around 1895. Fourteen pieces are known.

(Reduction Size = Canadian Token)

27640 J.W. MILLAR/TORONTO

James. W. Millar was a watch maker and jeweler in Toronto from the late 1850's through the 1880's. Interestingly, all five known examples of this countermark are found on American Coins.

(Reduction Size = Large Cent)

23880 LANG/OTTAWA

Only one example of countermark is known, so it probably was not an advertising issue. Nothing is known about the merchant who issued it.

(Reduction Size = Canadian Token)



3825



34700



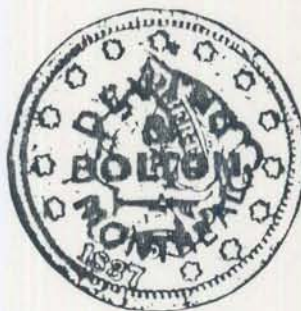
27640



34660



23880



42860 WHELPLEY/GREENWICH, NB

In the 1893 **Canadian Bradstreet Directory** this merchant was listed as a skate manufacturer in Greenwich Hill, New Brunswick. As only one example is known, this probably is not an advertising issue.
(Reduction Size = New Brunswick Penny)

13745 JAMES FAIRIE/-o-/MONTREAL

Only one example of this countermark is known on an 1865 United States Half Dollar.
(Reduction Size = Half Dollar)



42860



13745

(Reduction Size = Large Cent)

Devins and Bolton operated a pharmacy in Montreal. The firm was the most prolific issuer of countermarked coins in North America, and if you ever have seen a merchant countermark, you most likely have seen one of their stamps, which are common in many New England flea markets. In just one year, R.F. Buckley was able to locate over 400 examples, while Maurice Gould, who collected Devins and Bolton stamps on American large cents, put together a collection that included every large cent issued between 1827 and 1856.

Devins and Bolton formed their partnership in 1863, and this lasted until 1880. Devin continued in business as a druggist until 1892, and advertisements for his various patent medicines can be found in trade publications well into the 1920's. He particularly was well known for his "Vegetable Worm Pastilles." Devins and Bolton had a token struck in England that commemorated the Canadian Confederation of 1867 and advertised this product. But the tokens were such a close copy of the Canadian Large Cent that the shipment was seized by custom officials on its arrival in Canada.

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