

Our Special Character : Andre' Frodel



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TITLE:
André Frodel collection [philatelic record]

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:
27 postage stamps.

DATES:
[before 1963].

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:
Andrzej Frodel, farmer, stamp forger, who would come to be known as André Frodel in Canada, was born in Lwów, Ukraine, worked in the Hungarian State Bank Note Company before World War II, gaining an extensive knowledge of stamp papers and lithographic inks. After the war he was part of the Polish Resettlement Corps in the United Kingdom. As a veteran of the Polish forces, and by marrying a family friend who had earlier emigrated to Canada, he was able to obtain a grant of land near Iddesleigh, Alberta, under the Canada Veteran's Land Act, and emigrated to Canada in 1948. The small farm failed to prosper, so Frodel and his second wife (his first wife had died during the war) sold the property in 1956 and moved to British Columbia. In B.C., Frodel drew on his expertise in inks, lithography and paper to eke out a modest living by altering stamps with such skill that only those knowledgeable on particular stamp issues could identify them as fakes. Some who knew Frodel and who have written about him allege that Frodel's intention was to make a living by demonstrating his skills for the interest of philatelists, rather than to engage in fraud, and that he was not complicit with some unscrupulous dealers who sold his work as unaltered stamps. The facts that Frodel earned small sums from these efforts, and that experts in the postage stamp issues involved were unlikely to be fooled, are used to support this view. The techniques that Frodel used to repair, re-perforate, regum, and otherwise modify stamps are unknown, as is the extent of his production in this area, and the portion of it that entered the market as genuine. Kraemer, James E.. "Who was André Frodel." Opusculum 1; an Anthology of Philatelic and Historical Papers. (This source is particularly valuable as it deals with the Frodel materials acquired by the National Archives from Frederick Eaton.)

Topping, Bill. "The Frodel Story." BNA Topics (January-February 1993): 16-19.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:
Fonds consists of a variety of forged Canada, British Columbia and Nova Scotia postage stamps, created by André Frodel.

REPOSITORY:
[National Archives of Canada](#)

TERMS GOVERNING USE AND REPRODUCTION:
Copyright: Unknown
Credit: Library and Archives Canada

CUSTODIAL HISTORY:
At the time of his death, Andre Frodel was a tenant of Vancouver stamp dealer Lieutenant Colonel Frederick E. Eaton, who had acquired numerous forged stamps from Frodel prior to his death. Eaton donated duplicates among these materials to the National Postal Museum. These materials were acquired by the Canadian Postal Archives as part of accession 1989-565. Further information on the complex custodial history of these materials can be found in: Kraemer, James E.. "Who Was André Frodel?" Opusculum 1: an anthology of philatelic and historical papers.

PROVENANCE:
[Frodel, Andrej, 1890-1963](#)

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VICTOR'S ACCOUNT OF ANDRE' FRODEL, by George Perantoni :

My father's dear friend Andre Frodel was a printer lithographer. Prior to WW2 he worked as a specialist of his field in several European cities. Victor told me that at one time Andre was involved in printing stamps for the Romanian postal authority prior to the war, and likewise he worked as a bank note money printer for the Hungarian government.

Like many other soldiers of the Polish 2nd Corps, he could not return to Lwów due to the so-called "betrayal of Poland" by the Allies, coupled with the subsequent Cold War. In the late 1940's he received a farming land grant in Alberta Canada, "a god forsaken frozen tundra" he reported to my father. He was not a farmer so he sold the land and moved to Vancouver where, needing work, he used his skills to make a modest and honest living as a philatelic artist producing "fantasy stamp art", not to defraud anybody, but to sell as high quality art, because he was a great artist. Imagine, he could slice a stamp in 2 halves, that is, separating the gummed side from the printed side! Then he could turn them around and rejoin them upside down or backwards. Using these, and other secret methods, he was able to produce amazingly beautiful philatelic stamp art. He even had a process of dissolving the paper of a stamp and lifting the print ! His art was often displayed in frames and hung on walls.

However, several years after his death he would become renown as one of the greatest "stamp forgers" in the history of philately. My father knew him very well, and he asserted that there could never be found a grain of dishonesty in Andre' Frodel. He was an upright noble person. He never defrauded anybody and nobody has ever accused him of fraud. He was an honest talented artist. He sold his products as art, and he never pretended that his stamp fantasies were postal originals. He died in 1963. Years after his death some of his art was fraudulently sold as true originals by unprincipled individuals. In the late 1970's the Canadian Postal Department investigated some of Andre's stamp fantasies which were being circulated as rare postal originals.

Today Andre Frodel's fantasy stamp art are highly prized and valuable collector items. You can find out more about Andre Frodel on the preset Google search engine attached to this website display.