

# Trail of the Caribou

By Freres Meyerson



Mr. E. H. Hiscock of St. John's, Newfoundland, BNAPS #234, has come forth with the explanation of what the printed control letters and numbers mean on the Newfoundland Cigarette Excise stamp as discussed in the September issue of TRAIL. According to Mr. Hiscock "These stamps adorned the product of the 'Imperial Tobacco Co., Ltd.' prior to Union and were in use about five years. The letters that you describe are a code indicating the month of manufacture and the figure indicates the year. Where a code letter is repeated it indicates a second printing for that month—or production budget exceeded. The code word is:

Q U E S T I O N A B L Y

Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May June July Aug. Sep. Oct. Nov. Dec.

Stan Wood, BNAPS #221, has just brought us to task for an item we had in TRAIL for Sept. 1950. That is just like Stan, he never forgets and he never gives up. But let's get back to the beginning. In TRAIL for Feb. 1950 we first made mention of the fact that we had just purchased a shade variety of the 5¢ Labrador Airmail, #C13. In the Sept. 1950 TRAIL we added that closer inspection of this shade variety had brought to light the fact that it was perfed 14.1 by 14.1 whereas the other block in our collection, the normal shade, was line perfed 13.7 x 13.7. We jumped at conclusions and advised all of our readers that the shade variety was also a distinct perforation variety. Now here comes Stan to blow our conclusions up in smoke. He says, "How many of the usual shade did you measure to come to the conclusion that they were all 13.7. I measured the rare shade that you got for me along with a copy of the usual shade and found that they were both 14.1. I then went through all the 5¢, 30¢ and the 75¢ that I had and found that the majority of the 5¢, all the 30¢ and the majority of the 75¢ were all perf 14.1. The Balbo stamps are also in both perfs. This explodes the fact that the rare shade is a rare perf also. Measure up all yours Dan and see what results you get." I immediately turned to the collection and to my duplicates to see if Stan was right and sure enough he was. In the case of the 5¢, the shade variety as well as another mint copy of the normal shade and three copies on cover were 14.1 whereas a block of four and three more copies on cover were 14.1 whereas a block of four and three more copies on cover were perf 13.7. One of the covers of the Wabash-Katsao flight was franked with both a 13.7 copy and a 14.1 copy. Two mint copies and 7 copies of the 30¢ on cover were all perf 14.1. One mint copy and two copies of the 75¢ on cover were also 14.1 as was one mint Balbo and 5 more on cover. From Stan's findings as well as my own it seems rather definite that the 13.7 variety is the scarcer of the two in the case of the 5¢ and 75¢ values. In the case of the 30¢ value we would like to know if any of our readers have examples of the 13.7 perforation as this variety, if it does exist, is missing from Stan's collection as well as our own.

We understand that Nelson Bond, BNAPS #84, is working on the first authoritative price list of Newfoundland postal stationery since the appearance of the Holmes catalog. Bond's list and catalog will be far more inclusive as it will include airletter sheets, registry envelopes, proofs, essays and specimens wherever known. Candor forces us to admit that the greatest portion of the list will be comprised of Canadian material. We would like to see it run serially in TOPICS.

# Bringing News About People and Stamps

By Rev. John S. Bain

In the column "Along Canadian Trails" published in the "Vancouver Daily Province" magazine section, there appears a story which is worth retelling. It deals with the Canadian stamp issued in 1949 to commemorate the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation with Canada. It is Scott #282. "On the stamp is a picture of the sailing ship 'Matthew' in which the explorer John Cabot sailed on his voyage of discovery to Newfoundland. Artists who were asked to draw the picture were unable to give an exact illustration of the famous ship until the post office found a model ship-builder in Newfoundland. For several years this Newfoundlander had been working on a model of the Matthew and had been writing to a man in Bristol, England, for exact information. Cabot's ship was built in Bristol and the man to whom the Newfoundlander was writing had himself made a model of the Matthew many years ago. During the war, however, the Germans had bombed Bristol and had destroyed not only the ship model but all the drawings that had been used when it was being made. A long search for information followed and finally, working with the Newfoundland ship model artist, and friends of the builder in Bristol, a perfect illustration was secured. In spite of taking all this trouble to make sure the illustration was correct, the post office received a complaint from a stamp collector. According to the Encyclopedia "Britannica," the collector said the ship's name should have been spelled with only one "t." But the post office had the answer; it sent the collector a photograph of a monument to Cabot that stands in Bristol Harbor. On the monument the name of the ship is spelled just as it is on the Canadian stamp, 'Matthew'."

## BNAPS

The day after issue of the new stamps at CAPEX you could buy

them below face! Several dealers started cutting the price in order to dispose of extra stamps that they had to buy in order to provide plate blocks for their customers. The face value of the stamps was 31¢ and they were selling at 30¢. One dealer offered "special" discount if a certain quantity was purchased. This leads me to comment on the plate block collecting in Canadian stamps. Many of the plate blocks purchased at prices now will advance away beyond the present market. Certain items are extremely difficult to obtain.

## BNAPS

Wanting this column to reflect at all times facts concerning philately, I have an observation to make which would seem to be opposite to a position I took some time ago. Having been given a want list by a friend to take to CAPEX for certain Newfoundland numbers, I found that prices for very fine items were high and that some of them were very difficult to obtain. It appears that at the present early Newfoundland commands good prices, while the more recent issues are not moving.

## BNAPS

Sir John Wilson, curator of the Royal collection, made a terse remark that should be taken to heart by Toronto philatelists and others in general, when speaking at the BNAPEX banquet. He said, "If philatelists are the 'mad dogs' people say they are, then those in Toronto and vicinity have failed to bite hard enough!" Think it over.

## BNAPS

Once again it is the Christmas season, and to each reader of the column I say from the bottom of my heart—

A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
and  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

With God's richest blessing. John  
8:16.