

Trail of the Caribou

By Freres Meyerson



In the February issue of TOPICS we discussed the postmarks used by the American Forces stationed in Newfoundland prior to Pearl Harbor Day (Dec. 7, 1941). These postmarks are rather scarce and the reason for their scarcity is explained by Mr. E. Jagger in the Feb. 15, 1952, issue of "Stamp Collecting." According to Mr. Jagger, five of the postmarks previously discussed were in use until late April or early May in 1942. They were then replaced as follows: APO 801 became APO 862, APO 801A became APO 863, APO 801B became APO 864, APO 801C became APO 865, APO 801D became APO 866.

We still find two discrepancies, the cover that we have from APO 801B has a rubber stamp FORT PEPPERELL whereas Mr. Jagger gives STEPHENVILLE as the point of origin. Our cover from APO 801C is rubber stamped STEPHENLAND, and Mr. Jagger says it should be GANDER.

Two unlisted Newfoundland items turned up in the New York auctions during March. The first was a strip of 4 of the 20¢ black, Scott #171, perforated SPECIMEN over the four stamps. We have now seen the same condition on the 2¢, Scott #164, and the 6¢, Scott #168. It is possible that the entire set exists perforated SPECIMEN. Do any of our readers know of any of the other values so perforated? This item was seen and examined at the Harmer, Rooke Auction of March 12. The second item was seen at the H. R. Harmer Auction two days earlier. It was a used copy of the 3¢, Scott #165, double printed with the second print a few mms. higher.

This time it was a New York dealer looking for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow! After the end of one of the recent auctions we were waiting to pick up a few lots that we

had purchased at the sale. This dealer came over to us and asked how it happened that we had missed out on the Newfoundland lot that he had bought. The lot in question consisted of three blocks of the 1¢ Guy with the NFW error. We answered that we already had the three different perforation varieties and did not need duplicates. Very proudly he showed us the reverse side of one of the blocks so that we could see the pencilled notation "12x11½". We had checked the perforations previously and thought it to be the regular 12x12. He promptly took out a gauge and showed us that it measured less than 12 so that therefore it had to be the perf. 12x11½. We then measured the vertical perforations of the suspect against the horizontal perforations of one of the other blocks and we showed the dealer that they matched, rather conclusive evidence that it was the regular so-called perf 12x12. He had fallen prey to the same mistake that most others make. The perf 12x12 really measures 11.8x11.8 and when a gauge perforated 12 is put alongside, it is evident that the perforations are less than 12, and the wish being father of the thought, it is immediately assumed that it is the scarce variety recorded in Boggs, 12x11½. We've said it before and we will say it again, in our estimation that stamp does not exist and we won't believe it does until we measure it ourselves. We know that Dr. Willan proved to us that the 2¢ Guy existed in the 12x11½, or 11.8x11.3, to be exact, but thus far no one has been able to show us the 1¢ variety which should also be perforated 11.8x11.3. Incidentally, Boggs is the only one to list this variety as it is not found in Gibbons, Scott or Holmes. What's the verdict, does it exist? We know one dealer who now doubts it. How about you?