

# Trail of the Caribou

By DAN MEYERSON (BNAPS L3)



SOME YEARS AGO we learned a lesson that has often been brought back to mind—we didn't know everything that was to be known about Newfoundland philately and if something came up that neither the catalogs, handbooks or our own information could catalog, if the price was reasonable we should still buy it and put it away. Some of them would undoubtedly prove "duds", but some of the others in later years might well become valued possessions as more was learned about the subject. We can well recall dropping in at the New York Office of Stanley Gibbons and being offered imperforate un gummed blocks of the airmail Essay put out by Whitehead Morris in the early 1920's and we didn't buy them on the spot—and the price was reasonable—because we wanted to pore through our Library and see what they were; they weren't cataloged. When we came back a week later they were gone and the asking price as it turns out was only about 25% of what we then learned was the going retail price. What brought all of this up was a transaction with Irwin Heiman, the New York dealer, who showed us four covers of the period of the internal flights. One was a duplicate so that we will discuss only the three varieties. Now we've looked through Boggs, the AAMS book and the bible of all Newfoundland airmail collectors, the book put out by Harmer and Dalwick, and came no closer to a decision. But we learned our lesson well back some 20 years ago and these covers are now in our possession. The three covers were posted at St. John's at 7 p.m. on February 8, 1923, the day that a flight left for Cartwright, Labrador and subsequently completed the return trip to St. John's on May 17, 1923. These however seem to be another breed of pups. They all are typewritten "By Aeroplane/Via Forteau" and all are franked with 1c and 2c Caribou, Scott Nos. 115 and 116 and are all cancelled by the "BUY MADE IN NEW-

FOUNDLAND GOODS" slogan. The first cover is addressed to Flowers Cove and bears an indistinct unframed circular receiving stamp from Flowers Cove that might be Feb. 26, 1923 and a St. John's backstamp of Apr. 5, 1923 with the "ADDRESS MAIL TO STREET OR BOX NUMBER" slogan cancellation. The second cover which is postmarked at St. John's on Feb. 8, 1923, exactly the same as the previous, is addressed to Battle Harbor and bears an unframed circular receiving stamp of Mar. 26, 1923 from Battle Harbor. No other markings are on the cover. The last, like the previous two had the same origin but was addressed instead to Hawke's Harbor. This cover bears no other postmarks at all and we have no proof that it was ever flown or delivered. Can any reader advise us if these covers are a part of Newfoundland aérophilately and if they were ever flown, with details of the flight. It would be appreciated.

James Law, BNAPS 516, now of London, Ont., but formerly of Toronto, has sent us a rather interesting item—it is a perforated copy of the 5c Seal, Scott No. 40, which is almost always seen in rouletted condition. We say almost always because now for the third time in several thousand copies we've seen a perforated copy. The first two we bought and this is the third. We can't recall where we got the first but it is perforated 10.6, a gauge never used in Newfoundland. The second however came from Sanabria and if our memory serves us right over the span of 18 years or so, he told us that the stamp originally had been hand-painted black to resemble the 5c Scott No. 26, and true enough the gauge which is 11.85 is that of the issued perforated stamps of that period. Jim's copy now is the same perforation and we just wonder if these were privately perforated in an attempt to defraud collectors or whether in the latter instance they were a very limited edition.

Does anyone have a perforated copy on full cover?

*The July 19th sale of H. R. Harmer, London contained an odd bit of Newfoundlandia—it was a plate proof block in grey of the 2c Scott No. 185 or 186 as we don't know the die so that we can't place it more definitely. The block sold for \$22.40 and it is strange that we haven't seen it before as it is undoubtedly part of a sheet of 100. Where are the other 96 copies? I see we neglected to mention that the block was in imperforate condition.*

*At long last the gummed perforated TRADE SAMPLES made from the same dies as produced the American Bank Note Co. Trade Sample Sheet about 1870, seem to be finding their true level. For a good many years these trade samples when perforated and gummed brought prices far beyond their truth worth since they were not contemporary color plate proofs. However at the sale held by the Equitable Stamp Co., of New York on Sept. 27th, they seem to have come closer to their true value. Two copies of the 2c Scott No. 24 in olive green and bluish violet sold at \$10.50 and \$9 respectively, while two copies of the 5c, Scott No. 25, in the same two colors realized \$17.50 and \$15 each. It is strange how the proofs of the more valuable stamps always realize more money even though they are issued in the same quantity as the cheaper stamps. A single of the 13c, Scott No. 30, in olive green was knocked down at \$13. The last item of note was a plate proof block of the 6c, Scott No. 35, in green that changed hands at \$15.50.*

*The Sept. 15 issue of Stamp Collecting had an interesting ad for the Newfoundland specialist on the front page. The firm of H. E. Wingfield advertised a horizontal pair of the 3c long Coronation, Scott No. 234, in the Die 1, in the line perf 14.1 that was imperforate between the stamps and at the right at \$98. The same ad also listed a mint vertical strip of four of the 15c Scott No. 239, in the line perf 13.7 showing two stamps imperf between horizontally at \$126. The interesting bit about this ad aside from the stamps is that the firm advises the specialist in which perforation the varieties are found. A long step in the right direction.*

*Our bit in the September issue of TRAIL concerning the Postal Telegraph cancella-*

*tions seems to have struck a responsive chord as two letters came in to-day from old members making additions to the list. The first was from N. W. Scales, BNAPS 1058, Evansville, Ind., who adds the following to our list: Port au Port, Botwood, Cape La Hune, Millerton Junction, Jackson's Arm W. B., Pool's Cove, Robinson's and Badger. Seeing some of those reported by Mr. Scales makes us realize that we neglected to mention in our copy that we meant only elliptical cancels. We think some of those reported by Mr. Scales are the square type which we will take up at a later date. However, there is no doubt about the LEWISPORTE reported by George H. Davis, BNAPS 1414, Ridgefield, Conn. who sent along the copy of his elliptical cancel struck in red. Thanks to both of you and I would appreciate a clarifying letter from Mr. Scales.*

*Years mean nothing to the stamp collector; it was more than 10 years ago, in the Jan. '51 TOPICS to be exact, that we first mentioned the two distinct color trial proofs to be found in the Guy Issue, Scott No. 87-97. The two distinct trials are the 3c in bistre-brown instead of brown olive and the 10c in orange instead of the issued violet black. At any rate through the medium of the Sept. 20th sale of H. R. Harmer of London we are now the proud possessors of these two trials. However we are still on the lookout for the trials of the 1c and 4c the first of which is slightly more blue than the issued stamp and the second which is more of a red violet than the issued dull violet. All other perforated gummed proofs submitted were exactly as issued and are indistinguishable from the normal. We would appreciate any help in finding the plate proofs of the 1c and the 4c.*

*At the same sale in London other prices that were realized were \$96.40 for an inverted surcharge on the 30c Cabot, Scott No. 127a, \$22.60 for a vertical pair of the 1c Scott No. 163, imperf between, \$224 for a similar pair of the \$1, Scott C11, a vertical pair of the \$1 stamp, Scott No. 11, imperforate between stamps and imperforate bottom margin also changed hands at \$229.60. An imperf block of the 3c, Scott No. 187, was sold for \$42, and unused horizontal pairs of the 6c, on watermarked and unwatermarked papers found new buyers at \$29.40. ★*

MERRY CHRISTMAS