

Trail of the Caribou

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This seems to be my month for tilting at windmills and I feel just about like Don Quixote for all the good that it is doing either philately or myself. It was all occasioned by the fact that I just picked up my new copy of Vol. 1 of Scott's 1963 catalogue and turned hurriedly to the Newfoundland section to see if any of the glaring errors had been corrected. Unfortunately no, Scott persists in perpetuating old mistakes rather than correcting them with the old cry that any change would harm those collectors that had erroneously purchased the material on the basis of a catalog number. What about thousands and millions of philatelists to come, are they to be ignored? To start with the pence issues Scott lists quite a few of the bisects and yet I know for a fact that it omits at least two of them and according to Boggs several others. An Examination of a cover in the Harry Goody collection and illustrated in the Jan. '59 issue of Topics will show the existence of a bisect of the 1d., Scott #1. Then recourse to the first photo in Boggs' admirable book on Newfoundland published in 1942 will reveal the existence of a bisect of #15a. I won't even go into the matter of those other bisects listed in Boggs and not listed in the catalogue as I have not seen them and yet I'm rather certain that Boggs would not have listed them had he not been certain of their existence. Now, what about Scott #'s 10, 14 and 16, do they belong in a general catalog? It is generally admitted that they were never used and should be relegated to the position of plate proofs, in fact Scott #10 is reputed to have made its first appearance in 1893. To continue with the first cents issue of 1865, what is the basis for the listing of the bisect of the 5c, Scott #25, there was no need for a 1/2c rate until the late 1880's. Why is the imperf of the 2c red orange, Scott #48 listed when it is nothing but a proof, it doesn't belong in the general catalog but rather in a specialized BNA catalogue. There are plenty of minor details between Scott #48a and Scott 92Ab but we will omit them at present as we have no desire to quibble or split hairs. It is our

firm belief that an imperforate horizontal pair of #92Ab does not exist and that the imperforate singles that one sees are manufactured from singles that have imperforate margins at the left between the design of the stamp and the left margin and this variety was fully written up on page 212 in the Oct. '56 issue of TOPICS. We have our own personal doubts as to the validity of the imperforates classified as "a" varieties under #98, 99, 100, 101 and 103 as we have several and they are unquestionably proofs and we have the feeling that the listings are also proofs. Now as to Scott #113a, this belongs in the same category as Scott #92Ab as it too is made from a single with an imperforate left margin between the design and the edge of the sheet. Pairs have never appeared in more than 25 years of assiduously checking catalogues, exhibitions or renowned collections. Scott #114a should also be deleted as it is a proof and not an issued imperforate. Then we come to the bete noire of our existence, the continual listing of Scott #130b, a stamp that no one has ever been able to produce. We have questioned its existence innumerable times and yet like Topsy it turns up in every re-issue of the Catalogue. The next listings that we find fault with are two that we have also spoken about more times than we care to mention — it might give our age away. What bothers us is the persistent listing of Scott #'s 160b and 160c when they are pure and simple trial colors as stated in the catalogue. Either take these out as they don't belong in a general catalog or insert the red and red and black doubled overprint on Scott # '75-77 and the red overprint on Scott #127 as these are just as much entitled to catalogue listing if Scott #'s 160b and 160c are. They are all color trials. Since I am running out of space I will merely question the listing of Scott #'s 214a and 216a. This issue abounds in gummed imperforates on watermarked stamp paper with the exception of the 3c and 5c which are only known ungummed. Yet, these two are listed and the others are not. To our way of rea-

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NEW POSTMASTER-GENERAL OF CANADA EXPRESSES HER VIEWS

By LORNE W. BENTHAM

Recently, Prime Minister Diefenbaker announced a number of changes in his Cabinet. Those changes included the appointment of a new Postmaster-General to succeed the former Postmaster-General, The Hon. William Hamilton, who was defeated in the federal election held June 18th.

The Hon. Mrs. Ellen Fairclough was appointed the new Postmaster-General, and many readers may be keenly interested in her views about the Philatelic Agency of the Canadian Post Office Department, and what she thinks about stamp collecting in general.

I asked Mrs. Fairclough why Canada hasn't as yet released a series of commemorative stamps each year which would depict scenes from our many beautiful national parks, especially in view of the fact that the tourist trade is Canada's second most important industry, and also that many countries are using this method of advertising their scenic beauties to the world.

Many Problems

In reply to that question, Canada's new Postmaster-General said:—

"As you have said, Mr. Bentham, several countries around the world are using postage stamps as a means of publicizing their points of natural interest. Canada has done this too, with stamps showing Canadian scenes, historical events and natural resources.

"This idea of using our National Parks as a theme for a series of stamps is quite good, although I can see some problems. I think that an artist would have difficulty in making enough significant difference between the various parks in a scenic picture of this size. Also, we have so many parks we would have trouble in keeping the series within bounds while avoiding charges of favouritism.

"The greatest problem of all is that we issue only about six commemorative stamps each year. As a result we have a tremendous backlog of ideas, and each year brings its new quota of anniversaries and special events."

I brought up the subject of how other countries are printing its stamps in multi-colour and expressed surprise that Canada hasn't done the same. To that statement, Mrs. Fairclough commented:—

"You will undoubtedly see many more Canadian stamps in two colours, but if by multi-colour you mean more than two colours, you raise quite a difficult problem. At the present time this would mean a changing of our printing method to lithography, a process which cannot yet guarantee a constant supply of stamps of the same tone and registry.

"The fine engraving and the trueness of registry secured from intaglio printing, which we now use, has made Canadian stamps some of the finest being produced in the world to-day. I can see no reason at this time, why we should abandon a form of printing which has given us fine craftsmanship as well as many beautiful stamps."

With Canada's centennial year in 1967, I queried Postmaster-General Fairclough on how the Post Office Department plans to postally honour this great event in Canadian history.

"We have not yet made any definitive commitments for a stamp programme for 1967," said Mrs. Fairclough, "but we do have several suggestions under consideration. We would be pleased at any time to have further suggestions from the public as well as designs from competent artists.

"Our efforts at present are concentrated more on a programme leading to Confederation. It is expected that the first stamps in this programme will commemorate the Quebec and Charlottetown conferences of 1864 which laid the foundations for confederation. We are also considering a series of stamps using the provincial floral emblems—for example the dogwood of British Columbia and the trillium of Ontario."

Confederation Symbol

"We are expecting that some symbol will be developed for the Confederation year and should this symbol be suitable for a stamp design we may use it for an issue in 1967. I can assure you that the Canada

Post Office Department will not let such an important event pass without giving it very special treatment. It has been suggested that we consider, on this occasion, the abandoning of our restrictions and print more than the usual five or six stamps."

I asked her how much profit the Post Office Department makes on a special commemorative issue, and used the 5 cents St. Lawrence Seaway commemorative of 1959 as an example. To this Mrs. Fairclough explained:—

"The cost of manufacturing stamps depends upon the quantities ordered, the size of the stamp and the number of printing colours. The Seaway stamp was one of the most expensive stamps purchased by the Department and cost approximately \$35,000. After taking into account the advertising and labour costs involved in the selection of philatelic stock and the sale of this stock,

the net profit amounted to approximately \$20,000."

During the course of this interview Mrs. Fairclough revealed that she has been an ardent stamp collector ever since she was very young.

"I started as a child to collect stamps," she said, "and collected avidly and with a complete catholicity of purpose until well in my teens. Since then my collecting activities have been somewhat sporadic but I still continue to collect. I have quite a large collection of stamps now and can truly claim to be a collector. But I am probably the world's worst philatelist. Frankly, I don't know what I have . . . Like many a collector, I am waiting for just a little free time to devote to my hobby so that I may enjoy the discovery of what I have. Perhaps I needed the spur of this latest appointment (Postmaster-General) to re-awaken me to an old love."

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NEW POSTAGE STAMP TO HONOUR EMINENT POLISH CANADIAN

Ottawa: A new postage stamp honouring one of Canada's most eminent citizens of Polish birth, Sir Casimir Stanislaus Gzowski, will go on sale at post offices throughout the country March 5th, 1963, it was announced today by the Hon. Ellen L. Fairclough, Postmaster General.

In announcing the new stamp, Mrs. Fairclough said the Gzowski issue was intended to honour not only Canadians of Polish extraction, but also those of many other races and origins who had contributed to the growth and development of the Canadian nation.

Sir Casimir Stanislaus Gzowski was born in Poland in 1813 and came to Canada as a young man. He was an intimate friend of many of the Fathers of Confederation. An engineer of great ability, he took part in the building of the Grand Trunk Railway. He also built the International Bridge across Niagara Falls and was first chairman of the Niagara Falls Park Commission. He was one of the early officers of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers (now the Engineering Institute of Canada), and was one of

the founders and an early president of Wycliffe College. He served as a Senator on the board of the University of Toronto for approximately 20 years.

The stamp, which will mark the 150th anniversary of Sir Stanislaus' birth, will be of the five cent's denomination. A number of Canadian designers, including several artists of Polish descent, have expressed an interest in submitting designs for the stamp.

The Gzowski stamp will form a part of the Canada Post Office programme of special issues for 1963. Mrs. Fairclough noted that details of the complete programme for next year would be released within a short time.

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soning they are putting the cart before the horse and listing as imperforates the only two that cannot possibly be true imperforates but that are unquestionably imperforate, un gummed plate proofs on water-marked stamp paper. I know we won't be loved for this, but we just had to have our say.