

Newfoundland News

SIDNEY T. HARRIS, 10 Walsingham, St. Johns Wood Park, London N.W. 8, England
BNAPS 1500

In this the second article of this new series I want to bring up a subject which is of great importance to all collectors of Newfoundland stamps, both present and future. I am referring to the listings of Newfoundland in what is of course the North American Bible of Philately "The Scott Catalogue". I would like to make it clear first of all that my criticism is directed to the one country in which we are interested here in this column, and that is the listings of Newfoundland itself. First of all may I complain that the illustrations provided particularly of the first cents issues and the following issues are not only inadequate but extremely bad. Some of the illustrations are almost unrecognisable except to the expert who is very familiar with the stamps of this country, but surely we are giving information to future collectors as well as the present ones and I do feel that the illustrations themselves could very well use a new set of illustrations showing the stamps in better illustrative form.

Now turning to the listings themselves I feel that I must point out that apart from the pence issues a great many of the groupings are wrong and inaccurate. Take for instance the first cents issue quoted in Scott as 1865 to 1894. There were two separate printings of some of these stamps, one group on white paper and the first printings on a thin yellowish paper. Surely these two separate printings should be separated and not given just "a" numbers for the white paper issues. The next group is given as 1868 to 1894, but here again there are several different printings and issues printed on different dates but they are all lumped together under one grouping from S.32 to S.36. Going still further down the listings have a look at the issues grouped under 1887 to 1896, S.57 shows the ½ cent orange-red issued in 1896, this is followed by S.58 the ½ cent black which is stated to be issued in 1894. How is it possible to list one stamp published at a later date with a later number than the one issued in 1896? We can go on for quite a long time with criticism of the grouping of listings, but I particularly want to draw attention to the listings of 1932 to 1937,

S.183 to 199. There are really two completely different printings and issues, one dated in 1932 January, and the other from 1932 to 1938 where both the colours and values were changed, and in my opinion the two printings should be separated and divided into two separate groups to which they belong.

In addition it must be pointed out that a great many important varieties, perforations, imperforates etc. are not listed at all in the Scott listings, and important shade varieties are missed out too. One example for instance is in the Caribou issue of 1919 where Scott lists S.124 the 15 cent dark-blue and omits any reference at all to an important shade in prussian blue which is quite a scarce stamp, and definitely a shade which should be catalogued.

Again with regard to pricings the Scott catalogue is completely out of date and requires a review of its pricings from the pence issues right to the end of the story in 1949. Many prices are quite unrealistic and are not in keeping with the general market of today's values, particularly when the scarcity is known of many of the middle commemorative and other permanent issues.

One could go on for a very long time on this subject and perhaps go into far too much detail. There is an old saying that "comparisons are odious" but in this case I must make an unfavourable reference to the Scott listings as those compared with the Stanley Gibbons Part I where the listings are far superior and in a great deal more detail, and I must add, considerably more accurate and up to date. I know that a great many of my fellow collectors in North America will agree with what I am saying here, as I have already discussed this with many of them, and I should like to draw the attention of Scott Publications to the remarks I have made above and earnestly suggest to them that the time has arrived when they should seriously consider completely rewriting, and adding to the listings of Newfoundland. In this connection I am quite sure that there would be willing help from all Newfoundland enthusiasts in doing this, thus giving a

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