

A philatelic and postal history of NEWFOUNDLAND

(a continuing series of articles by Brien C. Damien; conclusion)

Newfoundland: the age of Confederation

"... Newfoundland became the tenth province of Canada immediately before midnight on March 31, 1949," states a government publication. Let it suffice to state also that the event mentioned — Confederation — and its indirect results have since revolutionized nearly every phase of Newfoundland life. Newfoundland's transformation from a woe-begotten colony into a relatively prosperous Canadian province was pioneered by Joseph R. Smallwood, the island's first premier and foremost political leader of all time.

Jurisdiction over the Newfoundland postal system was transferred to the Canada Post Office — which brought its own stamps, bilingual forms, and Canadian coins and currency. Small villages, known by the distinctive Newfoundland term "outport" were abandoned and are being abandoned, the residents "centralizing" into larger centres where better medical, educational, social, and postal facilities are found, and where nearby highways link them to the capital

and regional centers. Thousands of miles of highway have been reconstructed or built anew where none existed before. With the exceptions of the south west coast, the eastern shore of the Great Northern Peninsula, and most of Labrador, no part of the Province of Newfoundland does not benefit from highway mail service. Highway services provided the third ribbon, parallel to boat and rail lines until 1968, when railway mail services were phased out. Newfoundland's 500-mile-plus section of the 5,200-mile Trans Canada Highway spans the wilderness, linking outports and regional centers while taking over mountain, swamp, lake, and forest with asphalt. The 50-foot wide lifeline has opened the interior of the island at a rate undreamed of only a few years ago.

In the air, planes of highly advanced design link St. John's with Montreal, 700 air miles away, in two hours. Airports at Gander, Stephenville, St. John's, St. Anthony, Marystown, St. Albans, Deer Lake, Goose Bay, Churchill Falls, Twin Falls, and Wabush are tied together to the mainland by Air Canada and Eastern Provincial Airways mail flights.

A NOTE

The foremost purpose of this work has been to collect and organize accurate facts on various aspects of the philatelic and postal history of Newfoundland. For that reason, this has not been titled, "the . . . history" but rather "a . . . history." This meager exploration of the field has not touched at many points which might be considered important; these have been well-covered by others writing on this topic. (See the bibliography). In this final copy, footnotes have been omitted to improve general interest content and readability; other copies extensively annotated exist, and it's my hope that future researchers will find them helpful.

There is still much work to be done on this topic, and I wish that this will provide a basis and inspiration for further work. The true philatelist, the true student of postal history, will not fail to report his findings after questioning and researching.

Thank you for your interest.

**See Librarian's notes page 31
regarding a bibliography**

—BRIAN C. DAMIEN
North Brewer, Maine
7 July 1969

Postal buildings, stamps, and transportations have changed drastically even in remote areas. For example, let's examine the case of Twillingate on Newfoundland's northern coast: Twillingate was settled for many years beforehand, but did not have a post office until 1851. Until 1863 it was serviced by sailing vessels; since then steamships and motor vessels have been employed. Confederation brought a ferry to the mainland of Newfoundland, then a causeway, a new postal building, and highway mail service. Dog teams, horse teams, railway boats, and privately owned motor vessels have all been used for the mails to Twillingate, but now a truck *drives* to the main island of Newfoundland, daily. Having corresponded with the seventh postmaster of Twillingate, Mr. W. A. Manuel, one begins to feel that Mr. Manuel and Newfoundlanders in general take pride in being part of Canada.

What does the future hold? These are the possibilities: hovercraft riding on a cushion of air, zipping mail across the Cabot Strait in minutes rather than hours—the increased popularization of electronic facsimile, which combines telephone lines with the Xerox process—and aircraft traveling anywhere on the earth in a fraction of the present time. It can only be hoped that Newfoundland and Canada will have the foresight to recognize true progress; "The major advances in civilization are processes that all but wreck the societies in which they occur." (Alfred North Whitehead).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador

- Mr. Allan M. Fraser, Mr. Nimshi C. Crewe,
- Mr. Michael P. Murphy, Provincial Archives
- Miss Mona Cram, Mrs. Grace Butt, Public Library Services
- Mr. Daniel E. Puddester, Tourist Development Office

Provincial government of Nova Scotia

- Mr. C. B. Ferguson, Nova Scotia Archives, Halifax

Canada Post Office/Postes Canadiennes

- Mr. D. R. Clarke, District Director of Postal Service, St. John's
- Mr. W. A. Manuel, PM Twillingate
- Mrs. R. Parsons, PM Trinity, T.B.

General Post Office of Great Britain

- Mrs. J. D. Farrugia, Post Office Records, HQ Bldg., GPO, St Martins-le-Grand, London EC1

City of St. John's

- Mr. R. J. Greene, Asst. City Clerk

Individuals

- Mr. Albert B. Perlin, St. John's
- Mr. G. T. Oliver, St. John's
- Mr. M. S. Brainard, Brookings, Oregon
- Mr. Daniel W. Reed, Enfield, Maine

To all of the above, and others who may have been inadvertently left out, "Thank you!"

Congratulations on past and present Year Books

CANADA — MINT
Floral issues, Birds, Cuzor Côté, 50c Expo 70, Non-stop 15c, Armistice 15c, #149-159, and many others. Blocks, Plate bl. and Matched sets, singles, or some full sheets.

**JOHN FELIX / 91 Augusta Ave., No. 409
Toronto, Ontario, Canada**

WITH BEST WISHES TO BNAPS

L. E. JARVIS

GREETINGS To all our members FRED KEANE (No. 565)

SCOUT STAMPS A SPECIALTY

CHESTER ERNEST LEE

6933 La Jolla Blvd.

La Jolla, California 92037

1859s — ALL VALUES I need 4-ring numeral and fancy cancels

on and off cover

BERT LEWELLYN

137 Clearview Ave.

Huntingdon Valley, Pa. 19006

CURRENT INTERESTS

1) Exhibition and Fair Covers. 2) Hotel Corner Cards. 3) Western and Maritime Postmarks. 4) Numeral Cancels.

JOHN SIVERTS

Box 425, Wilmington, Del. 19899

WE NEED . . .

PRE-1947 CANADIAN

FIRST DAY COVERS

Ship with price

QUALITY INVESTORS, LTD.

P.O. Box 891 Middletown, N.Y. 10940