

MAIL FROM OUR MEMBERS

Let the editor beware the hack writer . . .

How can you reprint such trash?

This is the second time that *Topics* has degraded itself by printing material that is so erroneous, misleading and full of falsities as to make it a second-class magazine. I would think that before you include such things as *The Labrador Mails* by R. A. J. Miller, reprinted from *Linn's Stamp News*, you or the editorial board would check with somebody who has had experience in this field as to the authenticity and value of the article involved. This thing by Miller is a piece of poorly-done library research with very little basis in fact.

Who the hell ever heard of St. John's Colony? It was always Newfoundland. I never knew that the post office in St. John's in 1846 had any historic archive records. Frank Campbell's book and especially the items referred to with regard to St. John's were not tracings from old letters—they were tracings from records from the proof book in the General Post Office in London.

European whaling and cod-fishing fleets did not follow soon after 1846; they preceded this period by at least 200 years. The first fishermen came in the early 1500s. St. John's did not have a British post office in 1805. The post office in 1807 was responsible only to the governor and had no

connection, officially or unofficially, with the GPO in London.

Bags of letters were never made up at the GPO in London and sent to St. John's during the incumbency of Simon Solomon. Such letters as he did receive were forwarded on to him by an occasional vessel from Halifax. Simon Solomon's so-called "ARMS" postmark did not appear until 1827.

No one has yet figured out when or why the "superior seal" was sent to Newfoundland. Postmaster General W. S. Solomon had no funds to add a Labrador mail agent and while he was alive, never did so.

The first official record of mail transmission to Labrador was in 1863 after Solomon's death.

I don't think our friend has even looked at the early Newfoundland stamps; if so, while he would find "Newfound" at the top, he would have found "Land" running down the side and "St. John's" running up the other side.

I could go on and on but I think I have pointed out enough inconsistencies to rate this whole thing as nonsense. Before we perpetuate trash like like this, let's make sure that what we publish has merit and value and is not some hack writer's put-up.

— Robert H. Pratt

Standards for the 1967s

I am in agreement with Glen Hansen's suggestion that terms for the 1967 issue be standardized. I also think the lamps should be made standard.

In the Kingston area there are at least five styles of lamps. While these agree on both fluorescence and phosphorescence, there is considerable variation on the color obtained and, sometimes, on degrees of fluorescence.

— J. L. Purcell

Along with many others I have a feeling of frustration and dismay with the 1967 Definitives, however exciting a challenge this issue is.

As I see it the basic need is to establish a standard for the paper varieties using the UV light. After that the remaining problems,

such as tagging, booklets, shades, varieties, etc. will fall into line.

My suggestion is that, besides the excellent guides in your January issue, there should be a sample of each paper type in the proposed standards book, to serve as a comparison during the stamp study. I also wish to express my thanks to the many who are doing research on this issue.

— E. O'Callaghan

Under-the-counter deals?

Since the threat from the Canadian Post Office that there would be 45 or more stamps issued in 1974 there have been complaints from philatelists and others to the Postmaster General that such action was lowering the prestige of Canadian stamps.

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