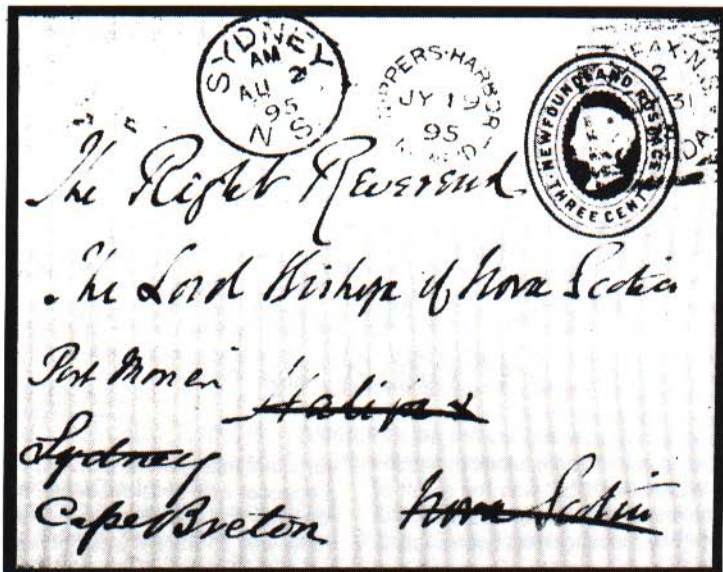


NEWFOUNDLAND WITH CANADIAN SQUARE CIRCLES

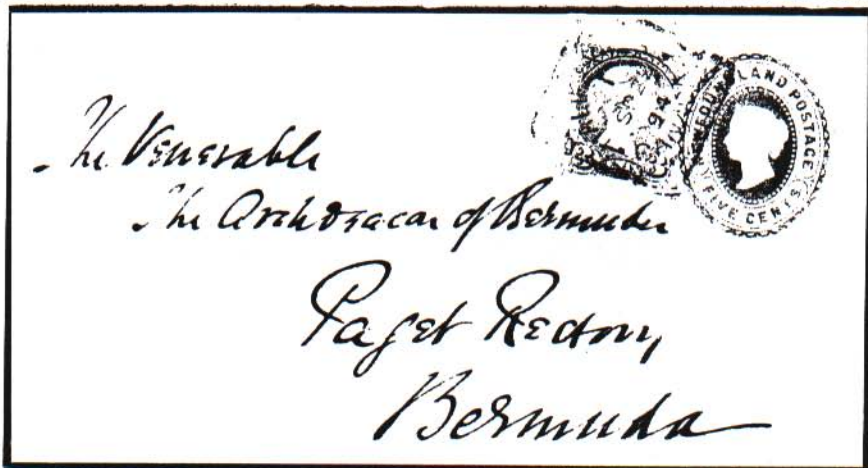
by Roger Grigson



The cover reported in the October 1964 TOPICS

In the October 1964 TOPICS N.W. Scales reported a Newfoundland 3 cent stationery envelope which carried an 1895 Halifax

Squared Circle in addition to the originating 'Nippers Harbor, Newf'd' cancellation. The Halifax mark had been added, apparently to



The 5 cent Newfoundland postal stationery envelope carrying a 3 cent Small Queen, both cancelled by a Halifax Squared Circle.

cancel the vignette, when the letter was redirected to Sydney, N.S. Mr. Scales stated that in twenty years of collecting Newfoundland, this was the first time he had seen a Canadian Squared Circle on a Newfoundland stationery item.

Reading this article, noticed while browsing through back issues of *TOPICS*, caused a bell to ring. On checking my collection I found a similar letter, in the same handwriting. It was also addressed to a gentleman of the Church, but in Bermuda. My cover was the 5 cent Newfoundland stationery envelope, to which had

been affixed a 3 cent Small Queen.

The only cancellation on the front of the cover is a Halifax Squared Circle, dated SP 22/94. On the reverse there is a New York transit mark (SP 25) and a Hamilton (Bermuda) receiver dated SP 29/94.

Can anyone explain this item? It appears that the value of the Newfoundland postage was recognized for partial payment of the rate to Bermuda. Is it possible that the letter, with the 3 cent Small Queen already attached, was posted on a ship which docked at Halifax?

PRECANCELS — THOSE WEAK DOUBLES — HOW & WHY

by H. W. Lussey

I was not, by any means, alone in assuming that a 'WEAK DOUBLE' was the result of the sheet making a second light contact with the plate after the precancel had been applied. It seemed to be a reasonable explanation, and in some instances a catalog listing may have been withheld due to the belief that the weak, and presumably second strike, was more of a kiss than a fully struck precancel.

Then came the 'Great Awakening'. I was offered a copy of Brockville 1-85 with a strong Invert and a very weak Normal. Applying the old theory that the Weak strike was due to an accidental second light contact with the plate after the precancel had been applied didn't work. How could the Weak strike be a Normal and the Strong strike an Invert? When I was mounting the item in my collection I noticed another copy of 1-85 with a very light strike of the precancel and then located another one in my duplicates. At long last a logical reason for 'Weak Doubles' began to take form.

Since the sharp clear strike was an Invert there was no way that a second weak strike could have come from a subsequent accidental contact of the sheet with the plate because it was a Normal. This is where the two copies with weak strikes came into play. They proved that some of the Brockville 1-85's had very light strikes, which would be the normal result of in-

sufficient inking of the plate. Apparently, if the precancel was at all readable, the sheet was released for use. However if the precancel strike was so weak it was not readily readable the logical step was to ink up the plate and precancel the sheet again. In this particular case the sheet was accidentally turned around when put back on the press for the second strike. The result was a very Weak Normal FIRST strike and a Strong Inverted SECOND strike.

I am not contending that every weak double in existence came about in this manner but I strongly suspect that a high percentage of them did. Since all of the other weak doubles in my collection, including duplicates, are normals I had no real basis for questioning the accepted theory. Now, however, I can appreciate that when very poor impressions were noted the plate was reinked and the precancel applied a second time. (Every sheet sent in for precancelling had to be returned to the Post Office Department.)

A careful examination of early Brockvilles in particular may turn up more of these. Geoff Walburn has mentioned that two similar copies were reported in the early 1950s but never listed. I understand this variety will soon be in the catalog as Brockville 1-85h.