

NEWFOUNDLAND

The Long Coronation Issue – 1937 –

A Problem

PART 3

by Robert H. Pratt OTB

THE MODERN DISCOVERIES

In June 1976 I had the opportunity of seeing and handling a large number of proof sheets of the stamps printed by Perkins Bacon from 1932 onward. I still have negatives of some of the important sheets, and copious notes on those that were not photographed. These proof sheets, obviously from the retained files of the printer, were in color of issue and in black on various types of paper. They must have been the remnants of the 'Record Sheets' kept by the printer as indicators of color used, number of 'pulls' from the plate, and state of the plate. Evidently they survived the bombing and destruction of the Perkins Bacon premises in May 1940, and were not detected by the scrounging dust bin raiders, who provided many of the present Die proofs in collectors' hands.

There were black on white paper 'British Quality Parchment' Plate Proofs of all values of the 1932 Issue (including the 1 cent Booklet Pane, but omitting the 3 cent Queen) and the 1931 Airmail set. The 1937 *Long Coronation* Set in black on white .004 proof paper (all except the 1 cent Codfish and the Die II, 3 cent). Photographs of the complete sheets exist.

Another group of proof sheets appeared somewhat later. They too were examined and assorted photographs taken. This group came on various types of 'press room' papers, probably left over from previous runs of security documents. The papers included: (1) .0035" machine wove, red herringbone checkbook paper or 'book end' paper, printed on the obverse or clear side; (2) as (1) except color green; (3) as (1) except color blue; (4) as (1) except dark green; (5) as (1) except color light blue; (6) parchment .0045"; (7) Stamp paper, watermarked Newfoundland Coat Of Arms. These sheets were notable for the fact that pencilled remarks were found, usually on the bottom margin, indicating the number of 'pulls', the date or the order number of the lot. In color of issue, some of the notes included:

(a) 1 cent codfish, 1932, plate #5, paper (1),

"Order No. D.B. 291 (10,710) 15/2/39 ASC",
"Total Pulls 42,670"

(b) 2 cent King George V, 1932, plate #4 (U.L.), paper (2), "last impression after 10,000 pulls 25/1/38"

(c) 2 cent King George VI, 1938, No plate #, paper (3), "last impression after 11,000 pulls, Total Pulls 23,000 24/10/38", "10,000 printed 21/1/39, Total now 33,000"

(d) 3 cent Queen Mother, 1938, No plate #, paper (4), "last pull after 8,000 impressions 21/4/38"

(e) 4 cent Princess, 1938, No plate #, "Last impression after 5500 pulls, Total pulls 29,500"

(f) 5 cent Caribou, 1932, plate #4 (in M/S), Die II, paper (6), Color deep purple. Left border has engraved scroll work 'filler', "Sept 23rd 1938"

(g) 5 cent Caribou, 1932, plate #4, paper # (5), Color pale violet, "last impression 5500 pulls 15/11/38"

There were also sheets of errors, including part perforated stamps, stamps printed on gum side of pregummed sheet, erratic perforations, diagonal perforations, and so on. The last of this group contained the following values of the *Long Coronation* set in color of issue on .004 proof paper (Note the absence of the 3 cent value of either die): 1 cent Codfish, grey; 7 cent Caribou, blue; 8 cent Corner Brook, red; 10 cent Salmon, black brown; 14 cent Dog, black; 15 cent Seal, magenta; 20 cent Light House, green; 24 cent Bell Isle, blue; 25 cent Sealing, grey; 48 cent Fishing, purple;

The final lot I was able to see contained more sheets with remarks from the 1932 series, 3 sheets of the 1 cent *Long Coronation* issue, some from the 1938 issue with notes, and a few from the 1941 set. In addition there was a complete set of the 1932 and the 1937 (*Long Coronation*) issues on soft wove unwatermarked paper in black. My notes unfortunately are not detailed, however I presume that the 3 cent was *not* present in any Die form. The bottom margin notes on color of issue sheets are similar to those quoted above, and in some cases indicate the end of the printing of that plate. It should be seen

that the practice of making notes existed through the 1938 issue.

Herewith we again list bottom markings on the color of issue prints:

- (h) 1 cent Codfish, 1937, paper # (3), imperf., "last impression after 16,500 pulls"
- (i) 1 cent Codfish, 1937, paper # (3), imperf., "2nd printing 5,700" (Estimated 22,200 pulls total)
- (j) 1 cent Codfish, 1937, paper # (3), imperf., "2,000 18/5/37" (The stamp was presumed issued 12 May 1937 — a last fling?)
- (k) 5 cent Caribou, 1932, Plate 'S', paper (7), color deep violet, "Plate Ptrs 7 MAR 1939", Hand Plate 6800 Order No. IB291 asc"
- (l) 5 cent Caribou, 1932, Plate #3, color light violet, left border has engraved scroll work 'filler', "Last impression after 11,500 pieces ('pulls') 2/5/38"
- (m) 5 cent Caribou, 1932, plate #5, color light violet, "8,000 12/1/40 asc"
- (n) 2 cent King George VI, 1938, no Plate #, "Total pulls 54,500 16/10/39 21,500 asc"
- (o) 3 cent Queen Mother, 1938, no Plate #, "last pull 5640 28/7/38 Total pulls 13,640"
- (p) 3 cent Queen Mother, 1938, no Plate #, "last pull after 3500 10/10/38 Total pulls 17,140"

(q) 3 cent Queen Mother, 1938, no Plate #, "No 547 2/11/39 10,500" (Estimated total pulls now 27,640)

(r) 4 cent Princess, 1938, Color Trial dark blue, paper — plain soft, no Plate #, two sheets

(s) 4 cent Princess, 1938, color of issue, paper — plain hard, no Plate #, "29,500 Last Pull 2/2/39 (10,710) asc, Total Pulls 40,210, Total Pulls 2/9/39 50,300"

(t) 4 cent Princess, 1938, Color Trial dark blue, paper — plain soft, Plate #2, left border has engraved scroll work, 'filler', "date 5/10/39"

(u) 4 cent Princess, 1938, Plate #2, "29/12/39 14,000 asc"

(v) 1 cent Codfish, 1932, Plate #5, left border has engraved scroll work 'filler', paper # (3), "re-entered"

(w) 1 cent Codfish, 1932, Plate #5, paper # (3), "Last pull after 10,250 11/4/38"

(x) 1 cent Codfish, 1932, Plate #5, paper # (1), "Finish of Order No. T6072 (10,710) 7/2/39 asa", "Total pulls 31,960"

(y) 48 cent Fishing, 1937, no Plate #, paper # (7), perforated, "A.J. Hubbard 19/7/40"

These notes are of interest for several reasons:

FIRST, they demonstrate that there was no set rule for making a 'pull' at any given number of



Figure 13

impressions. The 'last pull' reference would then seem to apply to an 'end of run' situation which could be the end of the order or the end of work for the day. The reference sheet was printed on printing room scrap and filed away.

SECOND, it is apparent that some plates could be expected to last for over 50,000 impressions, or 5,000,000 stamps, if properly prepared.

THIRD, it is also seen that the Long Coronation Issue was not considered for long usage. The re-engraved 2, 3 and 4 cent stamps were printed in 1938 and in sizeable quantities. Strangely

there is the omission of the 7 cent Queen Mary which was said to be issued in 1938. Even the disliked 1 cent 1932 and the 5 cent Caribou came back to life. The new 48 cent value is indicated by one sheet endorsed to Mr. A.J. Hubbard who was president of the firm in 1940. It was presumed issued in 1937.

FOURTH, the printings of the 1 cent Long Coronation seem to indicate that several printings were necessary and the last one was done after the stamp was supposedly issued. Probably 2,420,000 stamps were printed in all.



Figure 14



Figure 15

FIFTH, finally, at least some indication of the total number of each value has appeared, and verification of the dates of appearance and use can be approximated.

More Discoveries — The Problem Solved

In May, June and July 1982 auctions were held by Sissons and LCD in Toronto. The holdings appeared to be of the same origin; this is a plausible assumption as the two companies are related. In each of the three sales appeared one lot which contained a full sheet of the 3 cent Long Coronation in color of issue.

1) Sissons, May 1982, Lot 38, "1937 3 cent Coronation, 3 cent plate proof sheet of 100, in color of issue, (on unwatermarked paper .005" thick) some pencil notations on sheet incl. "1st Plate", sheet shows full engine turning at left, faults in few, most F - VF. SCOTT #234.

2) LCD, June 1982, Lot 150, "3 cent Coronation plate proof sheet of 100, in color of issue (on unwatermarked paper .005" thick), some pencil notations on sheet, including in LR corner "2nd Plate", Left Border has engraved scroll work (engine turning) 'filler', SCOTT #234.

3) LCD, July 1982, Lot 97, "3 cent Coronation plate proof sheet of 100, in color of issue, (on unwatermarked paper .005" thick) some pencil notations on sheet incl. "1st Plate after 2000 pulls", showing worn lathework at left, almost all F - VF. SCOTT #234p5.

Note that descriptions 1) and 2) have been furnished to me as from the Catalogues, which I have not located. I have never seen the full sheets described here. What were the other pencil notations???

Possibly some explanation is needed concerning the "engraved scroll work 'filler'" in the left border. Stamp printing plates came in many sizes depending on the number of stamps to a plate and the size of the stamp. A printing press had only one size platen against which to print. The stamp plate was accommodated to the press by means of a *chase*, which was of fixed size but could contain various size plates, which were locked into it under pressure from a *quoin* (an expandable parallelogram which locked tight). If the amount of expansion was too little, 'filler' in the form of cut down printing plates (usually from lathe work used on bonds) was inserted between the *quoin* and the plate, so that the *quoin* could be expanded by its *key* and lock the plate into the *chase*. This is why Lathe Work will appear on one side of a printed stamp plate, and is usually trimmed off as it exists beyond the border of the finished stamp sheet and the perforations.

One more item must be included now to complete the data. This is Die #1226, (Figure 13). I had believed that only one impression of this Die existed until the catalogue of Phillips 21 April 1983 sale arrived. Lot 219 listed a group of twelve Die Proofs in black, "including 3 cents,



Figure 16

Dies I and II", all but 1c, 7c and 14c with reversed Die Numbers". So there are now two available. The die block is unusually small, being 7.9 x 5.7 cm. (the normal is approx. 9.5 x 6.0 to 11.0 x 6.0). The proof is in black on the usual .004" wove proofing paper. The numeral 6 is erratically placed next to the 122, when compared to the neatness of the other dies. There are no construction lines apparent on the surface of the die. The oval edge of the shading lines around the King's vignette is rough and uneven, and the horizontal shading lines are not as sharp and clear as on die 1220.

Recently I have been offered blocks of four from Items 1) and 2) above, and this is where I made my mistake. These blocks had the 'filler' at the left side of the printing and thus were from the left two columns. I do not know if they were from the same vertical location. The color was slightly different, those from "Plate 1" being less orangy and more brownish than those from "Plate 2". What led me astray was the fact that the 'filler' was exactly the same distance from the edge of the stamp to the edge of the 'filler' on each plate. This and the belief that a too 'runny' ink had been used led me to the erroneous conclusion that they were the same Plate. Otherwise how could this distance be so identical? At that time too, I was unaware of the lots in LCD and Sissons sales of July and May, and the June group escaped me. I was challenged on my statement and rightfully so, the result was this lengthy epistle.

I did not purchase the high priced items with the 'filler' (pretty but meaningless) and instead now have two simple blocks from the right hand corner of Plate 1 (Figure 14) and Plate 2 (Figure 15). These illustrate the significant design and color differences. What are the differences between them? There are three, difficult to determine without magnification, but there: (1) the ridge of the King's nose is no longer almost clear, it has a majestic row of engraved dots running down the appendage; (2) the background of the area surrounding the King's head is no longer composed of clear sharp horizontal lines, they are fuzzy; (3) the crown at the top of the vignette is no longer clear and precise, it too is fuzzy. Have I been repeating myself? Yes, the impressions are from Die II.

How was this made? That too had me bamboozled for a while. It probably happened like this: (1) The original die roller for Die I was rolled into the new smaller die block, however this time

with more pressure than had been used on the plate. Die 1214 (the King's vignette) was then rolled into the stamp impression in the new die block, creating the fuzzy appearance. Remember there are no construction lines on Die II. The new plate was then made from a new roller made from Die II. This could have been the method used as it would have been too costly to completely re-engage the design from bottom up and have it identical with the first Die. I feel that the new die was a deeper penetration of the old roller because the four border lines surrounding the stamps on Plate 2 are much more dominant than those on Plate 1. A deeper rolling (more pressure) would cause this, as the lines would widen out as the edge entered deeper into the iron. How were the left plate edges made to such close tolerances? 1937 was in the age of precision tooling (tolerances of up to .0001" were possible then and now) and modern methods of rocking in the rollers would make possible the setting of exact distances from the edge of the plate to the first impression. How stupid I had been.

To complete the record, prior to the advent of the proof sheets detailed above, other record sheets on watermarked stamp paper .003" thick have been available. These sheets were in a color identical with the stamps and were from the stamps designated as Die II (Figure 16). *N.B.* — See Phillips 21 April auction, Lots 228 & 229 "imperforate marginal pair Die II. The stamps from Die I and Die II are found perforated both Line and Comb 14. They exist with and without watermark on the same sheet and also variously imperforate between.

Some have made the assumption that Plate 1 was abandoned after 2,000 pulls (200,000 stamps). This could be true, however there is no proof that this was done, the plate might have been continued in use, even if in poor condition, until Plate 2 was finished.

It is my understanding that most of these sheets are now in the hands of Mr. Bileski of Winnipeg. I saw them prior to his acquisition, perhaps by now he has additional ones. It would be nice if he were to make an accurate list of the sheets and the information written on them that is not listed here. I have no quarrel with the belief that the stamps were not issued until August 1937. The work at Perkins Bacon evidently continued on until at least 18 May 1937 (1 cent sheet, item j) and work on the dies is recorded in March 1937. I believe a study of contemporary

newspapers in St. John's Newfoundland would indicate a First Day of Issue. Someone who has access to the microfilm files of the papers could perform this task. The essays for the next (Royal Family) group of four stamps were being developed in January 1938, so these could well have been issued on 12 May 1938, one year later than is accredited to the Long Coronation issue.

ARE YOU COMING TO BNAPEX?

EARLY EXHIBITION COVERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

by Kenneth Ellison

The first organized agricultural exhibition west of the Rockies, in what is now British Columbia, was held on 2 October 1861 in Victoria. Dr. W.F. Tolmie was President. Several small shows were also held, from 1859 on, in Sapperton by the Royal Engineers. These evolved, some years later, into the large Provincial Exhibitions held at New Westminster.

Envelopes with pictorial and printed advertising were used from the 1880's to the 1920's to give publicity to a company or event. The agricultural exhibitions of British Columbia used the post office to carry their advertising envelopes far and wide. This series will illustrate some of these special covers.



NEW WESTMINSTER EXHIBITION 1890

In 1886 the Royal Agricultural and Industrial Society of British Columbia was formed at New Westminster. With this society came more expansive shows. This 1890 cover, although used in January of 1891, was probably one of the earlier such covers used to advertise exhibitions in British Columbia.