

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 134

January/March, 2009

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NEW FORMAT

Starting this year, the **NEWFIE NEWSLETTER** will be sent quarterly, rather than six times a year. This will save postage costs. There will be 16 pages per issue, however – so you will get 64 pages. It will allow for some longer articles than we have not had space for previously. **To make this work, I need your articles and pictures and quickly, as I don't have much in the queue.** We also exploring offering an electronic version as a PDF attached to email. This is a “new frontier”. You may already have received email about this by the time you get this edition. PDF's would be mostly in color whereas we are restricted to two-three color pages in hardcopies.

NEW RESEARCH – HELP NEEDED!

There are conflicting dates as to when the 1897 Cabot issue was released. Robert Pratt used June 22nd but most catalogues use June 24th. With some preliminary research we know how Pratt may have erred, but if the stamps did come out on June 24th where are the covers? Checking with several of our postal historians, the earliest date we can find is a philatelic usage to P.J. Tessier in St. John's of June 25th! If you have a June 24th (or earlier!!) please let me know right away as we are putting together an article about this for the second quarter's issue.

CREDIT CARD SURCHARGES

Did you know that it is against the law in some states to add a surcharge when a customer wants to use a credit card? This is the law in New York, California, Texas and Mass. I recently bought an expensive cover from a New York licensed auction house and brought this to their attention. They demanded a 3% surcharge (\$100+) on my credit card. The fellow I spoke with claimed no knowledge of the law and would not change the terms. I can't believe their margins are that small. He said that if they stopped surcharging they would no longer accept credit cards. Comments?

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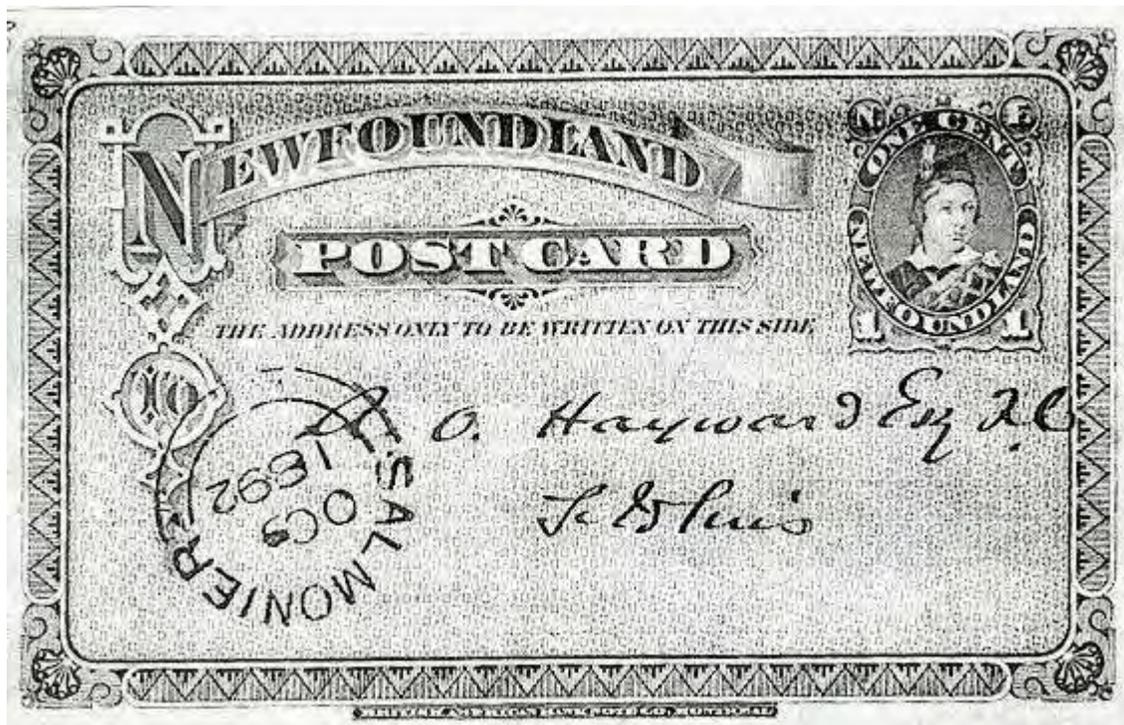
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ANOTHER GPO PROOF IS FOUND - Carl Munden

The Editor: Late last year Carl sent me this item. I apologize for the delay – it got misfiled!!



The recent discovery of a partial **BONAVISTA** double split circle handstamp has left only nine other locations to be discovered. Now that list has been reduced to eight!! I recently acquired a PC3 with a near perfect strike of **SALMONIER**. This card was sent from Woodlands Salmonier, datelined 8 OC 92, by one R.I. Pinset, regarding books, maps and bookcases in the Colonial Building. Salmonier received its first "normal" split ring in May 1894, suggesting the GPO device was in use from 1892 (Way Office until 1891) until 1894. It is strange that this marking has not shown up until now. It is possible that the others: Beloram, Hearts Content, Holyrood, Isle of Valen, New Perlican, Oderin, St. Mary's, and Trespassey may yet turn up in the future. The consensus in the past has been that these devices were held back in St. John's and not issued to their respective offices.

The icing on the cake was that this card was listed as a CDS (circular date stamp) and cost exactly \$20.

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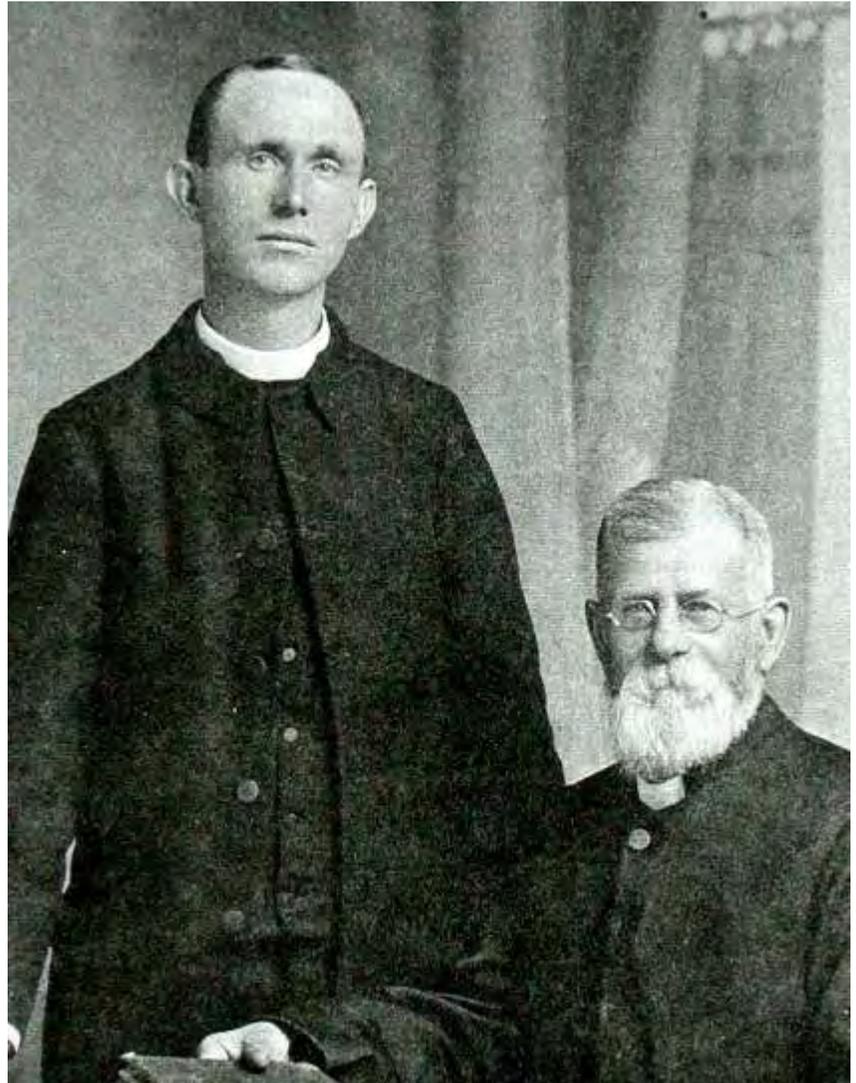
REVEREND E.A. BUTLER – FURTHER NOTES – The Editor

Since my two 2007 articles in BNATopics on the famous Newfoundland stamp dealer, Rev. E.A. Butler, I have been contacted by two of his grandchildren. Their comments are of interest, correct several errors in my work, and reflect a more serious side of Butler.

Granddaughter Gwendolyn Butler has pointed out that Butler's first name was actually "*Eleazar*" not "Eleser" which I used, based upon many references I had seen. Eleazar is an old Biblical name meaning "God has helped" says Gwendolyn, a name that "he did detest" she adds. She also informed me that one of the Reverend's children (a daughter) still lives – Chris Murphy, near Toronto. I would guess she is in her 90's.

Gwendolyn continues:

"Although I lived in San Francisco for nearly 40 years, I did retire here [Newfoundland] in what was supposed to be his retirement home, in 1999 [I would assume this would be near Stephenville Crossing]. He died [1955] before he could move off the island. Currently I am the only offspring to follow in his footsteps and become a priest. As you point out in your article, he was very forward thinking for a man in his time and place regarding the need for his daughters as well as his sons to be 'properly' educated..."



A grandson, David E. Messervey, has also contacted me, pointing out that I have "provided a much greater insight into his [philatelic] involvement ..." David says he is in possession of his grandfather's rubber stamps, letter head stationery, catalogues, gummed address stickers, notebooks and correspondence with stamp collectors. David also lives in Newfoundland. He recently sent me the photo in Figure 1. of Butler from around 1900-1905. The elderly gentleman was his father-in-law. Canon Robert Temple. I assume Butler admired Canon Temple, as he named a son after him, "Temple", born in 1909. (*Continued Next page*)

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REVEREND E.A. BUTLER – FURTHER NOTES (Continued)– The Editor



Label Butler often placed on the back of his correspondence

David Messervey continues:

Our family is indebted to you for the in-depth research conducted on Grandfather Butler, most of us were aware of his exploits but not in the detail you provided in your articles.

David also sent me a lengthy political “manifesto” by Rev. Butler from 1932 about the corrupt (or at least inept) Liberal government of Sir Richard Squires. Here are extracts from the last two paragraphs of this three-page document. They show that Butler had more concerns in life than just stamps and the church:

Every Nfld. Fisherman knows how to handle a boat of schooner and some are capable of handling the biggest ship afloat. You would not think much of a skipper who neglected to reef the sails on the approach of a gale but carried on, even against the advice of others, until in a panic the spars had to be cut away to keep the ship from sinking! Well, use your practical experience in that respect to understand how your “ship of state” has been handled by its skipper and crew. It is your ship and should it be lost on a voyage the loss will be yours. At present the Ship has reached the end of a voyage in a “water-logged” condition. It is now being re-conditioned and after June 11th will start on another voyage. The question is who are you going to appoint as the skipper and crew for the coming voyage? Fifteen of the old crew have left the skipper of the past voyage – some of them in disgust with the way he handled your ship – and they refuse to accept him as a suitable candidate for the stormy seas of the present. What are YOU going to do about it?

...Remember this, that WE MUST HAVE A LEADER IN WHOM ALL CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE for to go on as at present can only mean ruin to our hopes and independence. A few more years like the past and we would soon be ashamed to be even known as Newfoundlanders. What a blot that would be upon the manhood and womanhood of the country, such a blot as even the greatness of these who fought and bled for us in the great War would not be able to atone for. We are the corner-stone of the great Commonwealth known as the British Empire, We are descended from the stock that has made Britain greatest among the nations,
(Concluded Next page)

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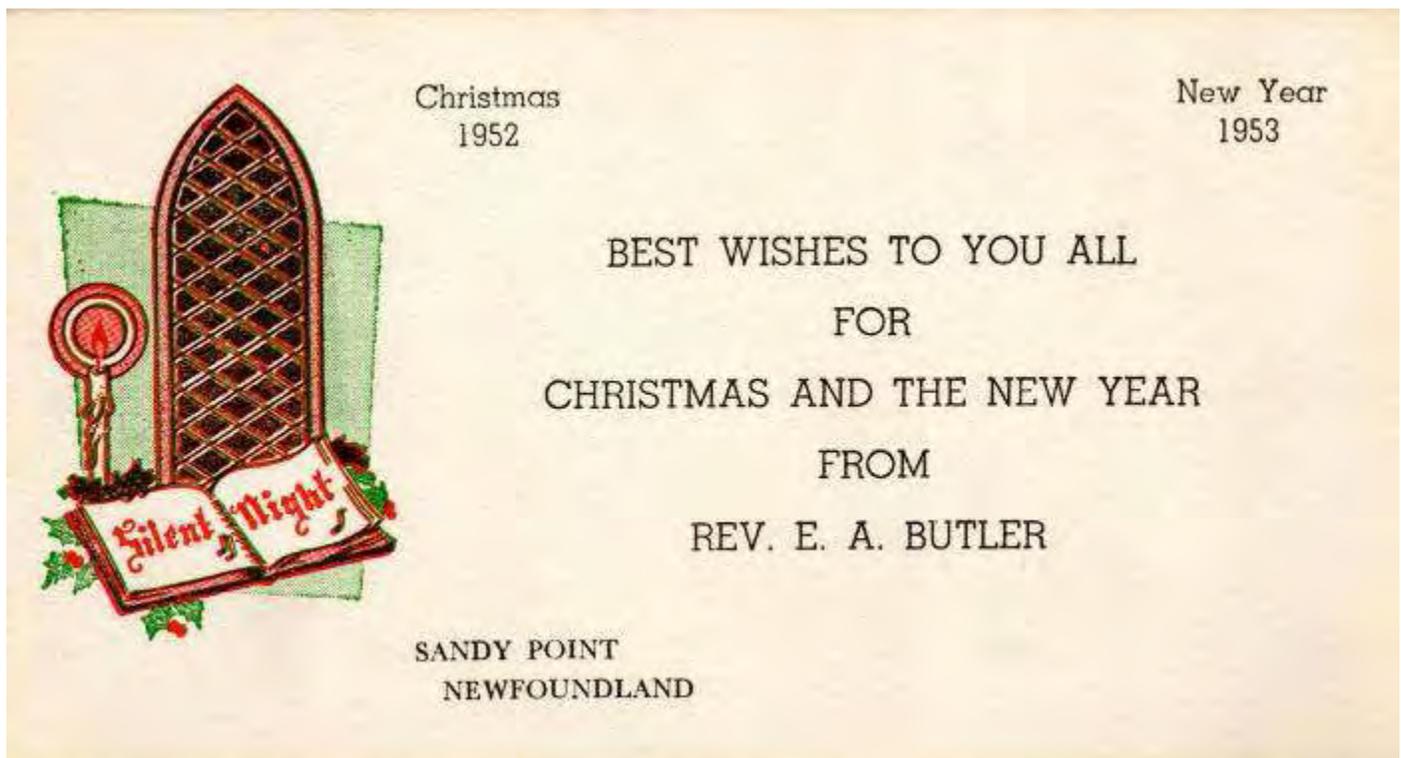
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REVEREND E.A. BUTLER – FURTHER NOTES (Concluded)– The Editor

We must then uphold the honor of our forefathers and hand down to future generations the greatness that we inherited from them. Prepare to mark your ballot and be sure that you make no mistake about it. Let your motto be-
“COUNTRY FIRST” and “GIVE NEWFOUNDLAND A CHANCE”

(Rev.) E.A. Butler, 1932, The Rectory, Sandy Point, St. George’s

Only two Liberals won their seats in the election and that did not include Sir Richard Squires. Prime Minister Frederick Alderdice then asked Britain to appoint a commission of inquiry into the current state of Newfoundland and its economy. That ultimately led to the elected government being replaced by a Commission of Government with all members appointed by Britain. In exchange, Britain would take care of Newfoundland’s debts. One can only wonder how our super-patriotic reverend felt about that course of events. A wry look at the history of Newfoundland, and especially its last decades before joining Canada, is *Colony of Unrequited Dreams* by Wayne Johnston, 1999, Doubleday. I strongly recommend it.



As Gwendolyn Butler said, Rev. Butler never got a chance to enjoy his retirement home ashore, even though Sandy Point was in a death spiral because of the massive winter storms in 1951 that no longer allowed passage by road from it to the mainland at high tide. The Christmas card above is the last the last document I have which originated with him. He died about two years later.

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The perfin corner by Barry Senior

Although the four-cent Princess Elizabeth, Scott #247, is probably the most common AYRE perfin cover, there are several varieties other than the commonly seen blue ad cover. Three additional covers are shown below. The Law Union and Rock Insurance Company is the only one I've seen and the Christmas theme is one of two – the other is for sale by a Canadian/Newfoundland stamp dealer. Red dots indicate scarcity.



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Bowring Brothers Limited
Coastal West Mail Service 1904-1919
An Overview by Brian Stalker



COASTAL TPO WEST

FE 27 13

SS Portia

Mail Clerk

David A Coady

The virtual monopoly over mail transport and communications in and around Newfoundland granted to the Reid family in 1898 was vested in the Reid Newfoundland Company in 1901. Several prominent parties took every opportunity to complain about the service provided by the RNC railway and fleet of coastal steamers. Partly to quell that criticism, a Government notice published in December 1903 invited tenders for a ten year contract to replicate the Coastal North and Coastal West TPO services previously provided by the Joseph Wood / Newfoundland Coastal Steamship Line consortium between 1888 and 1900.

On February 5th 1904 it was announced that a tender by Bowring Brothers Ltd had been accepted, providing 19 fortnightly trips of the Coastal North TPO and 26 fortnightly trips of the Coastal South & West TPO, for a period of fifteen years. Bowrings were to receive \$1,500 for each trip to Bonne Bay, or \$1,300 for each trip to Port aux Basques, of the South & West TPO; over \$36,000 pa (increased to \$38,000 in 1910) compared to \$13,000 pa paid to Reids for their all-year-round South Coast steamer *Glencoe*. Despite this seemingly generous subsidy, the St. John's *Evening Telegram* of February 5th was effusive in its praise:-

"...not for much longer will our city and out-port merchants and traders be at the mercy of the Reid Newfoundland Company...the new coastal service will be better than the old service...the trade and travelling public of the colony may rest satisfied that they will not much longer suffer from the ills and inconvenience of the past few years..."

Bowrings ordered two steamers, *Portia* and *Prospero*, from Murdoch & Murray of Glasgow for delivery by Sept. 1st. In the meantime SS *Mary Hough* took up the South & West T P O service on May 1st, calling at the following ports:-

Cape Broyle, Ferryland, Renew's and Fermeuse (alternately), Trepassey, St Mary's, Salmonier, Placentia, Mortier Bay (Marystown), Burin, St. Lawrence, Lamaline, Fortune, Grand Bank, Belleoram, St. Jacques, Harbor Breton, Hermitage, Gaultois, Pushthrough, Ramea, Burgeo, La Poile, Rose Blanche, Port aux Basques, Bay St. George, Port au Port, Bay of Islands and Bonne Bay.

The ports of call varied slightly during the period of the Contract, the main changes being:-

1907: Cape La Hune added;

1912: Francois and Rencontre added; Bay St. George and Port au Port deleted.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)

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BOWRING BROTHERS (Continued)

The following mail clerks served on Bowring's Coastal West TPO:

Michael F Aylward	May 1904 - June 1908;
David A Coad	June 1908 - April 1919; and
James S Whitten	May 1919 - onward.

Two styles of postmark were used on the Bowring ships:



1904-1906



1906-1920

Despite the optimism of the Evening Telegram, all did not go well on the first trip of the South & West TPO; the *Free Press* report from Channel on May 10th stated "SS *Mary Hough* arrived from St. John's and intermediate ports at 2am today and sails at 9am. She has been delayed unnecessarily at every port since leaving Burin owing to the crew's inexperience of this work, or negligence in performing it". Later we find that "Messrs Bowring Brothers Ltd having made an offer... to pay to the Government the sums of \$350 and \$200 in full settlement of the damage done to the Burin and St. Jacques wharves, respectively by the SS *Mary Hough*, ordered that the said offer be accepted".

On June 27th 1904 *Mary Hough* ran onto the Brandies, a shoal ¾ mile off Cape Ray, in thick fog. All crew and passengers were carried safely ashore and mail clerk Michael Aylward recovered all mail on board. By the end of July the *Mary Hough* had broken up and washed off the shoal.

SS *Prospero* took up the Coastal West TPO service in Sept/Oct 1904 through to about May 1908, after which she swapped routes with SS *Portia*, the latter transferring from the North to the Coastal West TPO. It was usual, from time to time, for the 'Northern' steamer to relieve the 'Southern' steamer for a few weeks during the early months of the year, allowing maintenance to be carried out before re-opening of northern navigation.



COASTAL WEST TPO

JUN 1 06

SS Prospero Mail Clerk **Michael F Aylward**

Pencil endorsement at top of cover 'Via Port aux Basques'.

Arrived Channel JU 3 06 and transferred to **N & W RAILWAY TPO** on cross-country train to St. John's.

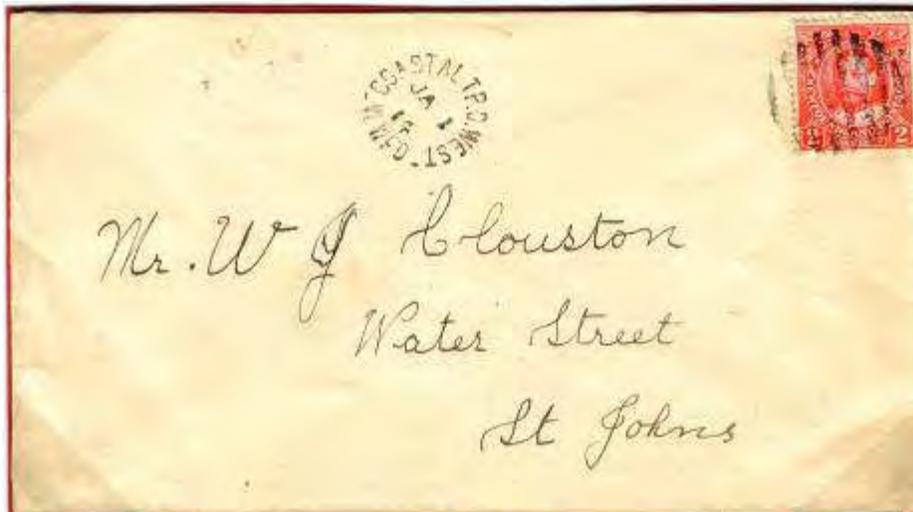
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BOWRING BROTHERS (Continued)



COASTAL TPO WEST

JAN 1 14

SS Portia

Mail Clerk

David A Coady

Probably posted in Fortune Bay, arrived St. John's JA 3 14.

A scarcity of merchant shipping during the Great War created attractive opportunities and in late 1916 / early 1917 Bowrings proposed to transfer *Portia* and *Prospero* to the French Flag. The Government blocked that proposal 'in view of the increased patrol of the North Atlantic Coast during the coming season' and during 1917 both vessels were fitted with wireless telegraphy and armed with a gun 'for defensive purposes'. However, late January 1918 saw *Portia* heading to Gibraltar and Italy with a cargo of dried fish, returning with salt from Cadiz, presumably replaced during her absence on the South Coast by *Prospero*.

A few weeks later, on February 24 1918, another of the Bowring fleet, *SS Florizel*, ran onto rocks and later sank off Cape Race. Of 138 on board, only 17 passengers and 27 crew survived. *Prospero* and Reid's *SS Home* were two of the vessels involved in heroic rescue efforts, and both *Prospero* and *Portia* were temporarily used to replace *Florizel* on the St. John's - Halifax - New York route.

Most reference sources state that the Bowring mail contract of 1904 was for twenty years...it was only for fifteen years...but on April 29 1919 Newfoundland's Executive Council noted that Messrs Bowring Brothers Ltd tender for Coastal Steam Service, North and West, for a subsidy of \$100,000 pa was approved. However, a major change of tack occurred within the next six weeks because the Minutes of the Executive Council also stated:-

June 10 *Whereas it is deemed necessary for the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of the Colony, to take possession of the Steamships Portia and Prospero; it is hereby ordered that the Steamships, with all their gear, tackle, fuel, food and equipment of every description be taken possession of by the Minister of Shipping for the public use of the Colony; compensation to be awarded in accordance with Section 7 of the War Measures Act, 1914.*

July 8 *It was ordered that, in connection with the carrying out of the Coastal Mail Service by the steamers Portia and Prospero, there shall be paid out of the Mail Subsidy for the said Coastal Service, such sums as the Minister of Shipping may require to meet current expenditure in the carrying out of the said service.*

Sept 2 *On recommendation of the Minister of Shipping, it was ordered that the purchase of the Coastal Steamers Portia and Prospero from Messrs Bowring Brothers Limited, for the sum of \$400,000.00 be confirmed.*

Thus, from mid-1919, Bowring's involvement with the Coastal Steam Services, North and West, terminated. *SS Portia* and *SS Prospero* were purchased and operated by Newfoundland's Ministry of Shipping.

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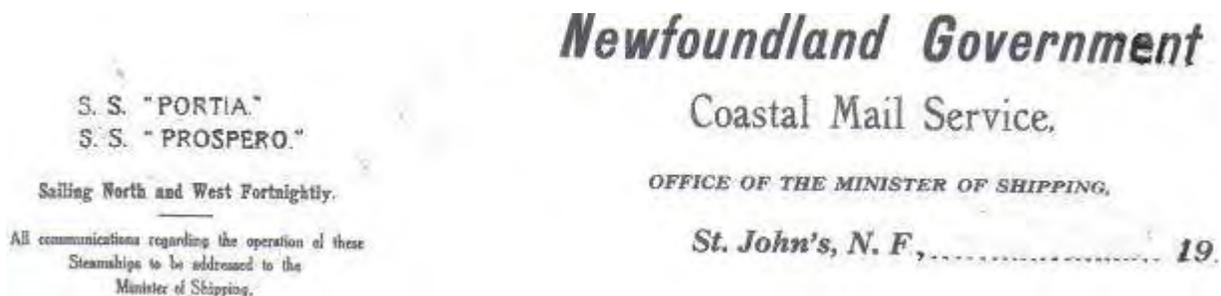
BOWRING BROTHERS (Concluded)

The Honourable Sir Edgar R Bowring, was a Member of the Legislative Council and Newfoundland's High Commissioner to Great Britain at that time, so it might be assumed that the change of ownership was by mutual agreement...that was far from the case! Documents found in The Rooms Provincial Archives, St. John's, reveal that following a Public Tender issued on 28th March 1919 the Colonial Secretary, with the approval of the Executive and acting on behalf of His Excellency the Governor in Council, wrote to Bowring Brothers on 1st May accepting their tender for both the North and West Coastal Steam Services for a period of ten years (as specified in the notice calling for tenders). However, on 27th May the Acting Colonial Secretary wrote to Bowrings:-

'After mature consideration, the Government do not feel disposed to enter into the Coastal Contract upon the terms in the last draft. With a few minor alterations, in which you would probably concur, the Contract might be acceptable to the Government for a period of five years or less. It does not appear to them that a long term contract passed upon existing conditions would be justifiable.'

Bowrings replied on the same day protesting about the change of term and on May 31st Eric Bowring wrote to the Colonial Secretary, the Hon. John R Bennett, withdrawing the tender and ended his letter with the words *'All negotiations must therefore be considered at an end.'*

Further exchanges ensued on June 2nd and 4th; meanwhile, the Government cabled Farquhar & Company of Halifax enquiring if steamers *Sable Island* and *Princess* could be chartered...they were not available. On June 10th Eric Bowring, with authority from the Directors in England, again offered *Portia* and *Prospero* for a ten year contract, but at \$120,000 per annum (up from \$100,000) and with a proviso to charge double the former freight and passage rates. The 'red touch paper' was well and truly lit...and three Orders-in-Council were issued on that day...one commandeering *Portia* and *Prospero*, another commandeering the shipping premises known as 'The Galway Wharf' in the occupancy of Messrs Shea & Co., and the third imposing a penalty of not less than \$1000 and not more than \$5000 per day for any violation of the foregoing Orders, with imprisonment of 6 months to five years in default of payment !!! Thus, from 10th June 1919, the Government took over Bowring's Coastal North and Coastal West services, severing what hitherto appears to have been a reasonably harmonious relationship with a major player in Newfoundland's coastal trade and provider of travelling post office services.



Letter Heading from 1919

Portia and *Prospero* were later transferred to the Newfoundland Government Railway, circa April 1924, who by then had taken over the Reid Newfoundland Railway and Steamship interests following Reids withdrawal from transportation services in 1923. Both vessels continued operating under ownership of the Newfoundland Railway on either the coastal or the St. John's – Halifax routes; *Prospero* was sold in 1937 and *Portia* in 1948.

Sources and References available from Brian Stalker at freda.brian@virgin.net

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NEWFOUNDLAND SLOGAN CANCELS - George McGowan
Part X

I received some feedback on the "Keep Sunday Sacred" (PS11) slogan from Pete Motson agreeing that they are mostly found on flight covers. I only have two non-flight examples in my collection, one is dated Oct 30, 1930 and mailed to San Francisco, Cal. USA. This date is the EKU as reported in the NSSC. The other is dated Nov 2, 1930 and is addressed to Rev. Butler, St George's.

The next slogan to appear at the Saint John's GPO is PS13, "Eat More/ Newfoundland Fish-/ Help Our Fisherman". This slogan was used from May 27, 1937 to Dec. 20, 1940, and occurs on two different dies (NSSC). On PS13, the "E"s in Newf... and Help line up vertically and on PS13a they are offset. Illustrated here (Fig 1) is an example of PS13 selected because it is abnormally shifted to the left, displaying the slogan almost fully.

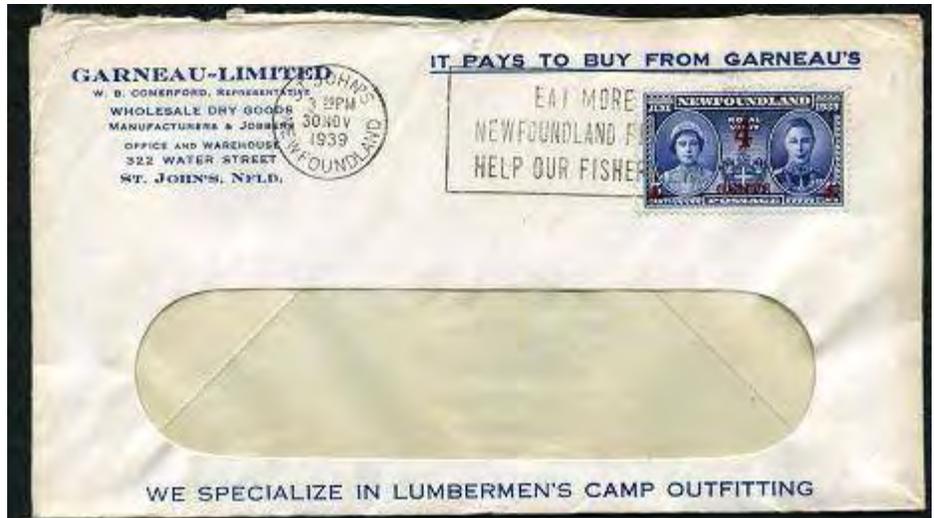


Figure 2 was posted on Dec. 20, 1937 and received a PS13. The address was incorrect, thus forwarded to St. Mary's and canceled again the next day, receiving a Dec. 21, 1937 postmark, also a PS13.

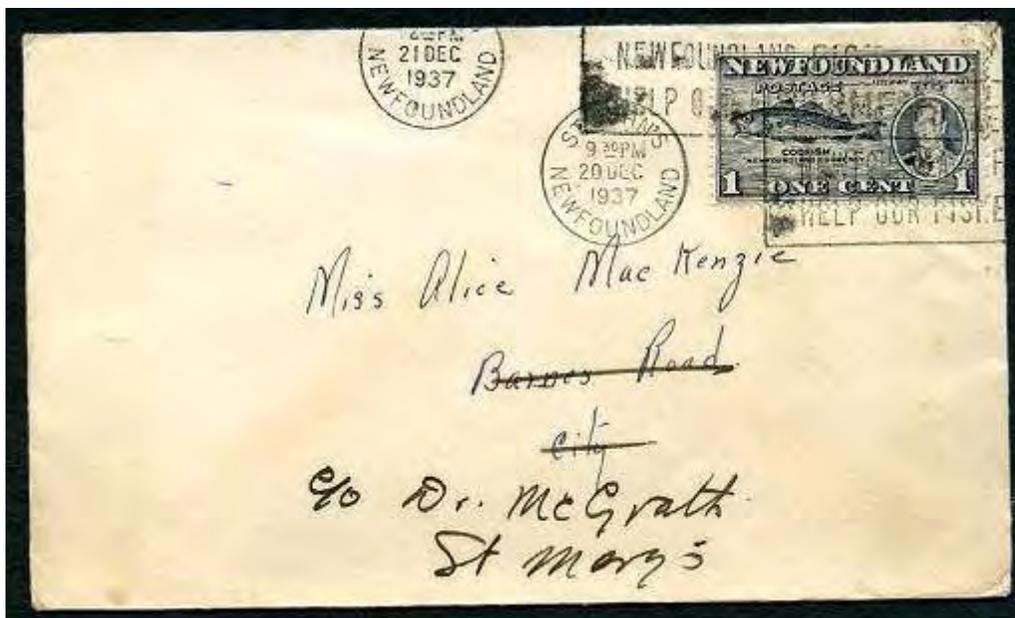


FIGURE 2.

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**NEWFOUNDLAND SLOGAN CANCELS (Concluded) - George McGowan
Part X**

Figure 3 shows a cover that went through the machine upside-down. The sharp eyed clerk noticed the error and ran it through again.



Figure 4 is an example of PS13a where the "E's" do not line up vertically.



Figure 5, also a PS13a, is dated Dec. 17, 1940, three days before the last known usage of this slogan.



As always, I would welcome corrections and comments, geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com

1937 BALLOON COVER



Editor: Newfoundland air mail collector, Jean-Claude Vasseur, submitted this for your enjoyment. We are also wondering what it was all about. "H.G." probably stood for Harbor Grace.

An email inquiry led to this answer from Brian Stalker, on Page 104 of his BNAPS book *TRAVELLING POST OFFICE POSTMARKS OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR*:

This 'monster' marking was used on covers to be carried on the 'First Transatlantic Manned Free Balloon Strato Flight', leaving Harbour Grace. However, the flight was aborted so the 'Traveling Mailbox' might not have traveled far.

The strike cancelled a 5¢ 'Caribou' stamp on a hand-drawn illustrated cover addressed simply to A.C. Roessler, Dover [but not the cover above] suggesting that it is a Roessler creation that was never intended to be carried by the regular mail service at any stage of its transit. Fifty covers were prepared.

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GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN – CARL MUNDEN

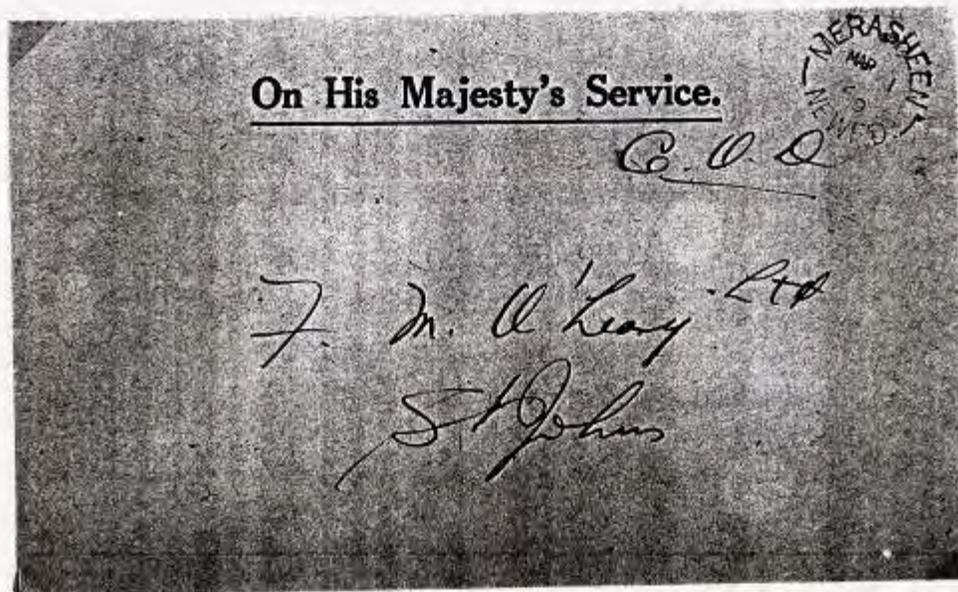
KINGWELL

AKA MUSSELL HARBOR Opened 1920. Closed Jul. 31, 1967.
Population 217



MERASHEEN

Open 1890 Closed Aug. 28, 1968 Population 318



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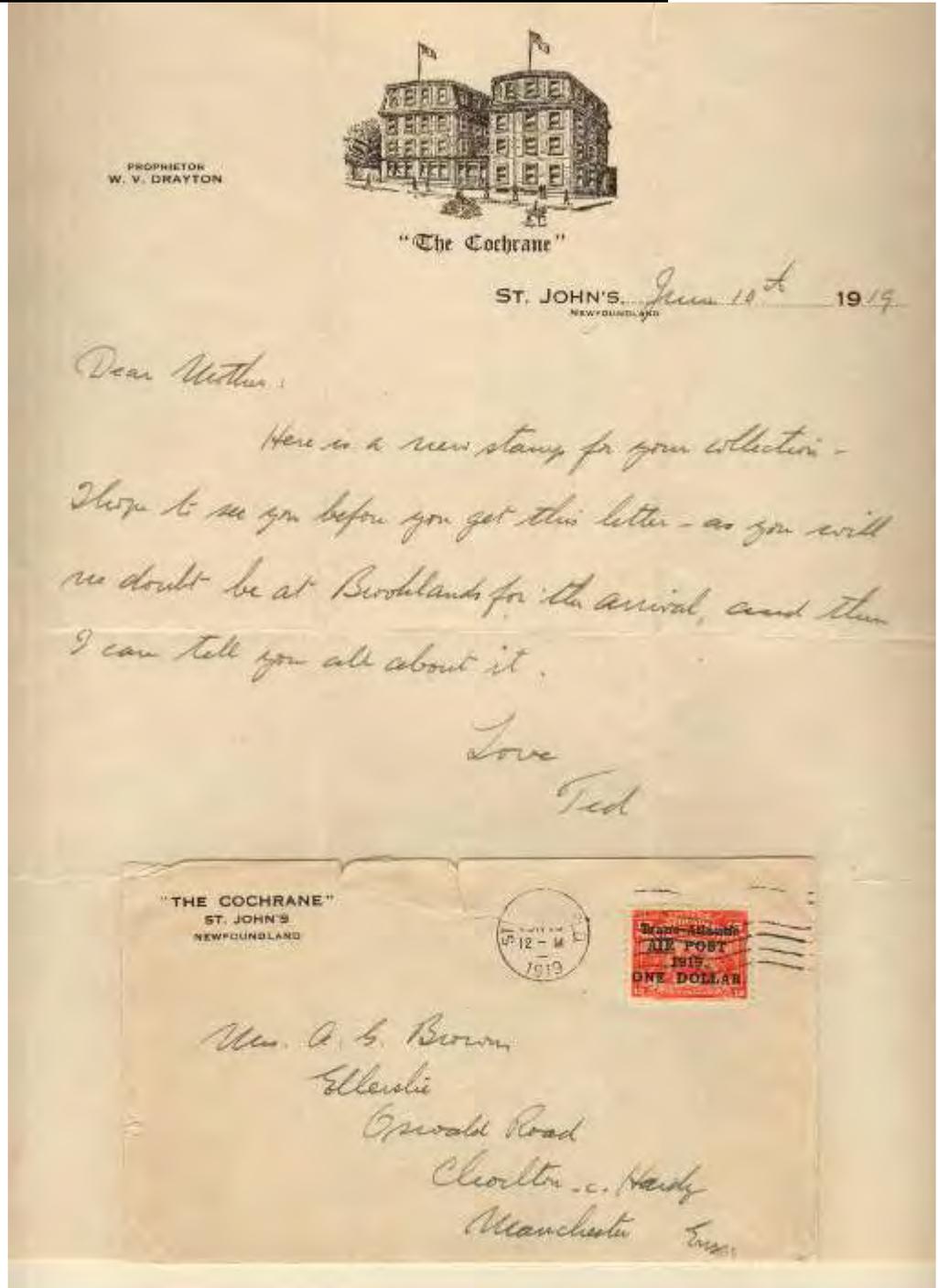
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LT. ARTHUR WHITTEN BROWN LETTER TO HIS MUM – The Editor

I was very fortunate to buy this in a 2008 auction. As you know, the 1919 Alcock/Brown flight is one of my interests. I have built a single frame exhibit about it. A second letter and more information about them will appear soon in BNATopics.

Alcock and "Teddy" Brown stayed at the Cochrane Hotel While preparing the Vickers-Vimy for their historic flight.

Here, Brown writes to his mother in Manchester, June 10, 1919, four days before the flight. He also addressed the envelope, which was carried on the flight. The stamp is Pos.#20, the "small comma" variety.



TEXT OF LETTER – Dear Mother,

**Here is a new stamp for your collection.
Hope to see you before you get this letter –as you will
no doubt be at Brooklands for the arrival, and then I
can tell you all about it.**

Love, Ted



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IMPERFS - MISSING COLOURS - INVERTS - MISPERFS - COLOUR SHIFTS - PRINTED ON GUM - BETTER VARIETIES



WANTED: NEWFOUNDLAND GUY ISSUE of 1910-11 (#87-103) and 1914 Money Order Tax overprint (#NFM 1) and all varieties. Proofs, mint or used multiples, Whitehead Morris trade sample sheets of 4, in any color and singles and pairs from those that were cut up. Any Die Proofs would be wonderful. Just getting started on Postal History of this issue so any covers are of interest, particularly usages to anywhere outside of Newfoundland with any combination of stamps. Single usages of any values other than 1c & 2c and these are still of interest if they carry nice clear postmarks of smaller Newfoundland towns. On this issue I'm a collector, not a dealer, so you don't have to be kind on pricing - Kind is you offering me the opportunity to acquire some neat items that will enhance the collection. Please phone or fax John Jamieson at Saskatoon Stamp Centre or email directly at ssc.john@saskatoonstamp.com

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