



A harder way to collect these Cello-Paqs is to collect them still in their packaging. This can be difficult because they were not announced by the Canadian Post Office, and so were used up by the general public and missed by many stamp collectors of the time.

The Christmas stamps first issued by Canada in 1964 are known to be available both tagged and untagged in miniature sheet format. The other definitive stamps were issued in Cello-Paqs as they were introduced, until the Cello-Paqs were discontinued in 1967.

## XI. AIRMAILS

### Pioneer Airmails of Canada and Newfoundland

A few flights took place early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Only a few cards and covers exist, but they have no specific designations. Toward the end of WWI, various flying clubs and groups began printing stamps for demonstration flights. For example, the Aero Club of Canada began printing stamps for their demonstration flights. The flights, which were carrying covers bearing both the special stamps and Canadian stamps needed to pay postage for mail carriage, were supported by the Canadian Post Office. Some of these flights produced rarities.



## Semi-Official Stamps of Canada

In the 1920s, certain private companies were permitted to print stamps for regularly scheduled flights, particularly in the northern parts of Canada, where no roads existed or where winter travel was difficult. These semi-official stamps were intended to pay the extra costs and to be placed on the backs of regular franked mail. On occasion, the semi-official stamps can be found on the address sides of covers. The stamps as well as covers are collected. Some philatelists collect proofs and varieties of these stamps, in the same way government stamps are collected. No companies produced authorized semi-official stamps for Newfoundland. Most surviving covers bearing semi-official air labels were prepared for collectors; covers used for regular (commercial) mail are quite scarce.



## Stamps of Canada and Newfoundland

At the end of WWI, prizes were offered for airmail-crossing of the Atlantic, to spur development of air travel. Newfoundland was a natural starting or intermediate point, and some of the great airmail attempts and flights are associated with Newfoundland stamps prepared for those flights. These were overprinted Newfoundland stamps of the period, and some are the great rarities of airmail collecting. In most cases, no more than 100 or 200 stamps were prepared, and in some cases almost all



were used on covers sent with the flights.

Canada issued its first airmail stamp in 1928, and continued issuing airmail stamps until 1946. Thereafter ordinary postage stamps were used for airmail service, which gradually became identical with regular service for domestic mail in 1951, and by 1971 became the only service for foreign mail except for parcels and other classes of mail. The airmail rate fluctuated between 5¢ and 7¢ during the stamp period. There are a few varieties on various issues, and plate number blocks are collected. Airmail special delivery service was also available, with special stamps printed for this service between 1942 and 1946. Special delivery for airmail was paid with regular stamps thereafter. The airmail stamps are generally affordable, although imperforate and part-perforate varieties exist for the 1931 and 1933 issues.

Newfoundland airmail stamps were first issued as overprints for special flights. All are very expensive except the 1919 Alcock and Brown flight overprint in used condition. The first regular airmail stamps were issued in 1931 and the last in 1943. Again, several overprinted airmail stamps commemorated various special flights. All

are expensive. Collecting Newfoundland airmail covers and stamps comprehensively is an activity for a well-funded collector.

### First Flights

By 1928 the Canadian Post Office began scheduling regular flights to transport mail. Various routes were investigated, and as these services began, most covers carried on the first flights bear special markings. These first flight covers (FFCs) became very popular, and the number of covers for many flights was in the thousands. This has resulted in first flights between various cities whose covers are very inexpensive and readily collectible. Related to this were airport dedication covers, prepared when new sites were developed. Most first flights have special cachets commemorating the flight and are easily identifiable. Many took place in the northern and western parts of Canada, where airmail provided much better service than road transport, which could be slow or nonexistent in winter. First flights continued throughout the 1930s, and except for a hiatus during WWII, continued into the 1950s. Jet travel seems to have ended the emphasis on their preparation.

**Airmail Rates and Routes.** Collecting airmail covers that were used commercially or personally (non-first flight covers) has long been of interest to collectors. In the 1930s, expansion of airmail service both domestically and to foreign destinations caught the imagination of collectors, and it has remained high ever since. The semi-official covers and FFCs detail much of domestic expansion of airmail. However, much of the interest in how Canadian airmail expanded to foreign countries is both shown and documented by Canadian airmail covers to foreign destinations. Obviously the first expansion was to and through the U.S. as it developed its airmail



schemes. As early as 1925, Canadian covers could be included in the Contract Airmail system (CAM) of the U.S. by placing U.S. stamps of the correct fee on covers also paying the Canadian rate to the U.S. Early examples are highly prized by both U.S. and Canadian airmail collectors. So far, the earliest examples of Canadian airmail carried by this service are from 1927. After 1928 per agreement, the airmail fee could be paid entirely with Canadian stamps. The U.S. expanded its system both to Canada and to the Caribbean and Central and South America in the late 1920s and into the 1930s with the Foreign Airmail contracts (FAMs). Canadian mail could participate, generally at the combination of the standard airmail rate to the U.S. plus the U.S. fee to the country in the FAM system. The early rates are often confused and confusing to both postmasters and collectors. The fees became more standardized by 1931. Expansion to South America led to very high ¼ oz. fees to mail letters, and most correspondence is commercial, sent as mining and railroad companies expanded in Central and South American countries. Because of the high airmail fee, high-value Canadian stamps sometimes can be found on such covers.

While mail across the Atlantic and Pacific remained restricted to ships in the



1920s and early 1930s, expansion of airmail service in Europe led to the interesting combinations of airmail, surface, and resumed airmail delivery of mail. Thus, one can collect covers that were carried by airmail in

North America, by ship to England or Europe, and by resumed airmail service in a European country. Where service was not available, a marking of colored parallel bars was used to cancel AIR MAIL handstamps often applied to Canadian airmail covers. By the mid-1930s England had begun various airmail systems within the British Empire to Africa, Asia, and Australia. Canadian covers could utilize this service, so that collecting airmail examples to various destinations under the constantly changing rates is a challenge. Similarly, as the U.S. expanded trans-ocean mail service, Canadian mail could take advantage of the U.S. air services. The Pan Am clipper service went from San Francisco via Hawaii, Midway, Wake Island, and Guam to the Philippines. From there mail could be sent to Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, and various other Asian countries. All such mail is very desirable. The fees were high, so for many of these routes one sees the use of 50¢ and \$1 stamps.

World War II both restricted and expanded airmails from Canada. New routes, especially the Pan Am route to India via South America and Africa, opened new collecting possibilities, and this has become an area of great interest to airmail collectors. Mail sent to military personnel overseas, official mail, and commercial mail supporting the war effort can be found to many of the airports along the route that developed. Branching lines in Africa went to Egypt and South Africa as well. Mail to and from a number of countries in Asia passed through India. Covers bound from India to Canada bear a wide variety of rates that depended on the particular route followed—routes seemingly determined by the destination of the next airplane to leave. Such incoming airmail covers supplement the knowledge we gain from studying outbound Canadian airmail covers. After the war, resumption of commercial traffic, along with the new knowledge of remote places, led to many new airlines and routes throughout the world. Rate changes were common as carriers contracting the flights tried to determine costs to carry the mail, so that the early postwar period is one in which collecting new routes and rates is interesting to airmail collectors. As systems developed and standardized, the number of new routes decreased, and little new material of that sort is found now. Airmail service has become the standard, and in most situations surface mail is no longer available under postal schemes, but is left to private carriers or contracts between Canada Post and private carriers.

## XII. CANCELLATIONS AND POSTMARKS

Cancellations were intended to prevent a stamp from being reused. Over the course of time these have evolved to serve many purposes in addition. The discussion below summarizes the major types of cancellations collected—on stamp, on cover, or both—from 1851 onward. Initially, stamps were to be cancelled separately from any date cancels. This was occasionally ignored, and later was changed so that cancels of stamps often included the town and date. Collectors accumulate them by varieties, on different stamps, and with different ink colors.

### **Target Cancels**

The earliest cancels, other than pen scratches, were 7-ring target cancels made of brass. These were widely distributed to the larger towns. They are found in black, blue, and less commonly in red or green ink. Used throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century in various similar formats, target cancels are one of the commonest to be found in that period.

### **Duplex Cancels**

Originally developed to cancel, date, and identify the office of origin on a letter, the duplex cancel made its debut in Canada in 1860. The original instrument was long-handled with a metal striker composed of a killer and a changeable dating circle all in one device. The original hammers were supplied by D.G. Berri and Company of England, where duplexes were first used.