

currency inflation. With the introduction of steamships in the late 1830s, a collector can find trans-Atlantic mail carried by early steamships. River steamboats also had mail clerks for Canada, and steamboat mail is very collectible in the late 1840s into the 1850s.

IX. 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY NEWFOUNDLAND

“Newfoundland was a self-governing Dominion of the British Empire from 1855–1933, when it became a Crown Colony. In 1949 it united with Canada.” – *Scott Classic Stamp Catalogue, 2007*.

Newfoundland issued almost 300 postage stamps while a Dominion and Crown Colony, 30 pieces of postal stationery, and almost 75 revenue stamps. Because of that, it provides collecting opportunities for general collectors as well as material for specialists or topical collectors. It attracts those who collect definitive or commemorative stamps, airmail stamps, postal stationery, revenues, varieties, postal history/rates, as well as those just fond of stamps from the earlier years of philately. There are no “wallet-busters” in Newfoundland’s 20th century issues except for several very rare airmails.

The Pence Issues (1857–1865)

“In 1856 the British Government authorized the issue of Newfoundland postage stamps, which were placed on sale from 1 January 1857. Stamps were slow to become popular and many continued to send letters unpaid, the recipient paying upon delivery...” – Colin Lewis, BNAPS Exhibit Series #42.

The 1857 emanations were imperforate in nine values from 1d to 1s, in various shades of brownish claret and scarlet vermilion. The 3d issue was a triangle—the only 19th century BNA triangle—in yellow green. A second printing in 1860 was of just five of the values, from the 2d to 1s in orange or Venetian red. The last printing in 1861 had all the values again, in violet brown, rose lake, and green for the 3d triangle. Common rates were 3d for local and inland (colonial) letters, and 6d for mail to Great Britain.



The stamps were recess-printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co. (London) in various sheet formats, from as few as 20 stamps (5 x 4) to as many as 120 (12 x 10). Some of the stamps in the last two sets are watermarked STACEY WISE 1858 and copies showing the watermark sell for a premium. Essays of the 3d, 6d, and 1s were produced followed by plate proofs of all stamps. These were in black. Proofs in bright colors are Perkins Bacon trade sample sheets from 1902 onward. These are also fervently collected by specialists.

Quantities issued of some of the pence issue are quite low, especially the 1s stamps of the first two printings (only 1,000 of Scott #15, for example), making

them among the most costly of Newfoundland stamps. Covers of all of these stamps are exceedingly rare. Pence forgeries are common, many created by Spiro or Sperati, but distinctions are well documented in a number of standard Newfoundland references.

We recommend that collectors of modest means who desire examples of the pence stamps seek out the 1861 set. Sound examples of mint stamps can often be bought from online auctions for just a few dollars. The first issue, pictured above, is another pence issue that is easily obtained in nice condition at a modest cost. There



were a large number of remainders of the 1861 set, with some on sale at the General Post Office in St. John's as late as 1917.

The Cents Issue (1865–1898)

At the beginning of 1865 Newfoundland introduced a decimal system of currency. This required the issuance of a new series of postage stamps, replacing the pence stamps in place since 1857. The new stamps are commonly called the “Cents Issues.” No longer would the country's stamps be printed in Great Britain, as it was decided the new cents stamps should be printed in New York. The contract was awarded to the American Bank Note Company (ABNC) of New York. Except for the 1¢ first printing, the ABNC printed all Newfoundland stamps from 1865 to 1879. At that point, printing was transferred to the British American Bank Note Company in Montreal or Ottawa.

The first six issues were printed in sheets of 100 (10 x 10) on yellowish or stout white paper in quantities of 100,000 (both papers). The designs provided homage to Queen Victoria (12¢ and 24¢), 10¢ for the Prince Consort, a 2¢ codfish (an important Newfoundland export), a 5¢ Harp Seal, and a 12¢ schooner. Many of us can still recall our introduction to the beautiful animal stamps from Newfoundland that could be bought for pennies—the green or orange codfish, or the Newfoundland dogs, seals, etc. The animal designs started with the 1865 issue and would become a philatelic tradition until unification with Canada. The rates intended were: 2¢ green for drop covers; 5¢ brown for inland; 10¢ black for double rate inland; 12¢ red-brown for Great Britain; 13¢ orange yellow for U.S. and Canada, and 24¢ blue for the double rate to Great Britain. A 1¢ dull purple Prince of Wales stamp was issued in 1868 for circulars. Subsequent stamps were released, including Queen Victoria designs—a 3¢ vermilion and 6¢ dull rose in 1870 due to a reduced



inland rate. Different shades of several of the stamps were subsequently issued, and rouletted versions of the 1¢ to 5¢ values came out in the late 1870s.

Proofs and color trials were issued for all of the ABNC stamps except for the rouletted issues. Plate inscription blocks are very popular, while margin singles can be found with full inscriptions. Actually, multiples of *all* the cents issue are in great demand. Sammy Whaley has documented almost 1,000 covers franked by the first cents issues. The 6¢ first printing is the one seen most often, while examples of the 1¢ and 2¢ rouletted issues are quite rare. The rarest, paying the proper rate, is the 24¢ (two known). Whaley's study is *Newfoundland: 1865-1879, the New York Printings*. The most expensive of these stamps is the 5¢ brown seal. Centering is a challenge on many of these issues; it greatly influences price.

New cents designs were issued by the British American Bank Note Co. (Ottawa) in 1880, starting with a 1¢ brown Edward, 2¢ green codfish, 3¢ blue Victoria, and 5¢ seal. In 1887 colors were changed and a ½¢ rose Newfoundland dog and 10¢ black schooner were added. A final new design in 1890, in black, was of Queen Victoria. All sheets were 10 x 10, except the 10¢ schooner, which was 5 x 10. In 1894, four Montreal printings resulted in a new color for the ½¢ dog and 5¢ seal and use of ABNC plates with new colors for its 6¢ Victoria and 12¢ Prince Consort. A special limited printing in 1896 (probably philatelically inspired) of 10,000 each was issued of the ½¢ orange dog, 1¢ brown Edward, 2¢ green codfish, and the 3¢ Victoria in both blue and brown. In November 1897, during a stamp shortage, Colonial Secretary J. Alexander Robinson ordered the last printings of cents stamps; they were the ½¢ orange dog, the 1¢ Edward in yellow-green, and the 2¢ orange codfish.

The second cents issues, unlike the first cents issues, have fewer proofs of the BABC stamps. Plate proofs of the ½¢ are known as well as color trials. Die proofs and plate proofs of other values have been reported but are seldom seen. The 2¢ orange cod is known imperforate. Some but not all of the BABC sheets have plate inscriptions. The good news is that most mint copies of the latter cents issues are not expensive. Covers are less expensive for most of the 1880–1898 issues than the first cents issues, and are in greater supply.

The 1897 Cabot Issue

At the beginning of 1897, Colonial Secretary Robert Bond decided to issue a long set of stamps to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of



Newfoundland by John Cabot. One stamp would be dedicated to Queen Victoria and others promoted Newfoundland. Bond sensed a potential for increased revenue for the post office, with the U.S. Columbians and Canadian Silver Jubilee sets as models. There would be 14 stamps from the 1¢ Victoria to a 60¢ Cabot. Die and plate proofs were made in various colors. The stamps were recess-printed by the American Bank Note Company in 10

x 10 formats. One hundred sets of the stamps overprinted SPECIMEN were also issued. In order to maximize sales, existing Newfoundland issues were recalled. As a further fillip the plates were destroyed after printing, barring further printings. Given all this, a complete set of this important issue can still be obtained for a modest amount. Lower values are commonly seen on covers but values from 24¢ to 60¢ often overpay required rates and are less desirable to postal historians.

What seemed like a good plan became a disaster. The public ate up the 1¢ and 2¢ low values but eschewed the higher values. One could still buy the 60¢ at the post office in St. John's as late as 1936. By September, the two low values were almost exhausted. The 1¢ was needed for drop mail, circulars, and other 3rd class use. With the plates gone, and few older 1¢ stamps to be found, Newfoundland had its first postal crisis. New 1¢ and 2¢ values were ordered but they would not arrive until early December and a fix was needed by mid-October.

Newfoundland's 1897 Surcharged Stamps

In early October 1897 a metal handstamp with PAID ALL was used in place of 1¢ stamps. Then on October 19th, 40,000 of the 1890 Queen Victoria were released, surcharged ONE CENT in three different fonts locally. The settings were in 50, and only 2 of the stamps have a gothic font (sans serif). Blocks showing all three fonts are highly desirable but catalogue for more than \$1,000. Trials (190 of them) were also made with red surcharges, red & black surcharges, or double red surcharges. These are also very valuable. The 1897 surcharges were the first 3 of 15 stamps to be surcharged. There was also a surcharged postal card. The new 1¢ red Victoria arrived in early December, and the postal crisis was over.



The Royal Family Issue (1897–1901 and 1908)



This is one of the most famous BNA sets because of the images portrayed. It shows the reigning monarch and three future kings: Edward VII, George V, and Edward VIII (his first image ever on a postage stamp). Both the queens of Edward VII and George V are also depicted. An additional 2¢ stamp with a map of Newfoundland is closely linked to the set as it was issued when the 2¢ Edward stamp's final 1908 printing was lost at sea with the sinking of the *S.S. Sylvia*. These stamps were produced by the American Bank Note Company in sheets of

100 or 200. There are die proofs and plate proofs of all issues. Forty-seven different SPECIMENS are known, including three of the map stamp. The stamps mint or used can be purchased for very modest amounts. Imperforate values of the set also exist, initiating a practice that continued for a number of future sets. These are described by some writers as “postmaster perquisites.” They are still widely sought, and covers are easily obtained. The most difficult value to find is the 1¢ red Victoria since it was only in use from December 1897 to June 1898, when the color was changed to green to reflect Newfoundland’s compliance with U.P.U. regulations.

The Guy Issue of 1910

The year 1910 marked the 300th anniversary of the first attempt to settle the island, by John Guy. Eleven values from 1¢ to 15¢ were lithographed by Whitehead, Morris & Co. Ltd. of London, which would become printer of Newfoundland issues until 1929. They portrayed King James I, Guy, Francis Bacon, King Edward VII, King George V, as well as Newfoundland scenes. They were issued in either sheets of 100 or 200. The first 6¢ Bacon had the Z in COLONIZATION reversed (Scott #92) and this was corrected with another printing. This issue has an amazing number of varieties, including different perforations, imperforate copies, and various proofs in black and trials in different colors. In 1911, the six high values in the set were issued engraved, again with numerous varieties. There are no marginal inscriptions or plate numbers on either set. The higher values (6¢ and above) are scarce on cover, especially paying correct rates, as is the case with the next two sets.



The 1911 King George V Coronation Issue

The set returned to the use of portraits of the Royal Family. Values were from 1¢ to 12¢, featuring King George V and Queen Mary, and other members of the Royal Family. The set was engraved in sheets of 100. As in the previous set, copies are known imperforate and there are black proofs and color trials.

The 1919 Caribou Issue

“We lost more sailors in the War than all the rest of the Colonies and Dominions put together!... I have a parish of about 300 families, and from these 75 young men took part in the fighting on land and sea. Of those, 22 laid down their lives.... Our Caribou Issue of stamps shows to the world something of what our Newfoundland boys did.” – Rev. E.A. Butler, 1928.

This set was issued in 12 values, from the 1¢ to 36¢. The animal pictured is a composite of a caribou and moose. The phrase “Trail of the Caribou” was originated by a Royal Newfoundland Regiment chaplain. Four values bear the word UBIQUE, which stands for “everywhere,” in honor of the Naval Forces. The other stamps commemorate special engagements. The 1¢, 2¢, and 3¢



values were printed in sheets of 200. The higher values are in sheets of 100. The lower values have marginal plate numbers. All the values are known as imperforate proofs. Several stamps were issued in more than one shade, the most famous involving the 15¢ value. Its primary color is dark blue but it also exists in Prussian blue. Other varieties include partial double printings.

The 1920 Provisionals

Low values of the caribou set were popular and had high usage. This combined with irregular steamers from London led to a shortage in 1920. A handstamp POSTAGE PAID was utilized and four surcharged issues released, after several (rare) trial surcharges. Surplus high values of the Cabot set were used, in blocks of 25. The 30¢ Cabot was surcharged TWO CENTS and the 15¢ and 35¢ Cabots THREE CENTS, with bars above and below to obliterate the Cabot value tablets. The initial 3¢ surcharge lower bar did not cover the 15¢ values. Three thousand were surcharged before this was noticed. This is Type I. This was corrected in Type II. The scarce Type I is the most costly of Newfoundland's 20th century issues, outside of some airmails and rare sub-varieties. It and the TWO CENTS values are known with inverted surcharges. Covers are fairly common except for the 3¢ on 15¢.

Pictorial Issues, 1923–1924.

The designs on this series of 14 stamps were scenic or historical landmarks. Values were from 1¢ to 24¢. This engraved set was issued in sheets of 100. The stamps are comb-perforated at 13.8 x 14 perforations, or line perforated at 14.2 x 14.2 and a variety of other gauges. There are imperforate proofs and color trials.

Newfoundland's first booklet was created from the 1¢ and 2¢ values. There are plate numbers on the 3¢ only. This set and subsequent (non airmail) sets can be obtained for modest prices. As is the custom with most Newfoundland issues, covers bearing the high values are somewhat scarce.

Publicity Issues, 1928–1931

Three sets of the publicity stamps were issued. They contained royal portraits, land-sea transport, buildings, scenic, views, and a map. The goal was to attract business and tourists. The first set had 15 values, in sheets of 100 either comb or line-perforated in seven different gauges. The initial values were from 1¢ to 30¢. There are die proofs of all values, and SPECIMEN copies are reported for the 3¢, 6¢, and 20¢. Small crosses exist in the margins to aid in quartering panes into blocks but there are no marginal inscriptions.



In 1929 a new firm was awarded the printing contract, John Dickinson & Co. When Whitehead, Morris, Ltd. refused to turn over the plates, new dies and plates had to be produced. This led to discernible differences in the re-engraved issues. The

second issue had only nine stamps, comb- or line-perforated as in the previous issue. The original 8¢, 9¢, 12¢, 14¢, 28¢, and 30¢ values were not produced. The portrait for the Prince of Wales on the 4¢ value was changed. The differences between the same values in the first and second issues are published in all the main philatelic catalogues. Discovering the differences is entertaining. Plate numbers exist on the 2¢ and 3¢ values, and there are proof color trials and imperforate or partially perforated examples of the 1¢ to 4¢ values. The 6¢ can be found with a SPECIMEN overprint, as well. The new printer was unable to timely deliver a sufficient quantity of the new 3¢ stamp (used for inland mail) so the 6¢ value of the pictorial issues was surcharged THREE CENTS (Scott #160) and used for several days until a new supply arrived. There are trial surcharges, and the final stamp is known printed with an inverted surcharge.

The third publicity set came out in 1931 and was watermarked. There are 11 values in this set, the 9 from the second set and the 8¢ and 30¢ stamps newly re-engraved. The stamps were in place for only a year, and are scarcer than the first two sets. Die proofs exist for all the watermarked stamps. There are plate numbers on the 1¢ and 2¢. The 1¢ is known partially perforated and the 2¢ and 3¢ can be found with inverted watermarks.

Resources Issues, 1932–1938

The new set included animals, views, and royal portraits. It was watermarked and released in sheets of 100, line- or comb-perforated. Ultimately there would be 20 values in the set, although most catalogues distinguish the 1932 values (7¢, 8¢, and 24¢) from the initial set. The 48¢ high value in the set was released in 1937. There are plate numbers for the 1¢ to 3¢ values. The 1¢, 5¢, 25¢, and 30¢ stamps are known with SPECIMEN overprints. Gummed imperforate copies exist for all stamps and those for the lower values exist in large numbers. Most values are known with inverted watermarks. Six different booklets were issued using the 1¢ to 3¢ stamps. There are also many proofs.

1933 Land and Sea Provisionals

A rate change led to a shortage of 15¢ stamps for registry to Canada, the U.S., and Great Britain. A watermarked 15¢ airmail was overprinted “L & S Post” for “Land & Sea” and side bars covered the words “Air Mail.” Speculators bought the 70,000 issued on the first day. Inverted overprints exist, as do vertical strips with and without the overprint. They are exceedingly rare.

1933 Sir Humphrey Gilbert Issue

Once again, Newfoundland honored Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who annexed the island for the United Kingdom in 1583. The 14 values, from 1¢ to 32¢, were engraved in sheets of 100, comb-perforated 13.5 x 13.5 or line-perforated 14 x 14. There were no marginal inscriptions. The images were of Gilbert, Queen Elizabeth, or related history. Fewer than 30,000 were issued of the higher values. SPECIMEN examples exist of all the values, and there also are imperforate proofs.

Issues Honoring the Monarchy

The 1935 Silver Jubilee and 1937 Coronation Issue used common designs shared by other British Empire countries. They are all known with SPECIMEN overprints.

The Long Coronation set of 1937 is the last of the many interesting issues of Newfoundland. The 11 values from 1¢ to 48¢ were printed in sheets of 100, line- or comb-perforated and watermarked, although some of the stamps are known without watermarks. Each value has a cameo of King George VI and Newfoundland animals, or scenic, views. Some of the values have re-entries. They are also known imperforate (gummed) and in black proofs. This set has so much philately going for it, one could specialize in it alone and develop a great collection.

In 1938 four royal portraits were issued of King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth, and Queen Mary. They are known imperforate and have marginal plate numbers.



The 1939 Royal Visit to Newfoundland was honored by a 5¢ stamp. A subsequent shortage of 2¢ and 4¢ stamps led to it being surcharged. All three stamps are very common.

Second Resources Issue, 1942–1949

Ten values from the 1932 Resources set and the four values of the 1938 royal portrait set were reissued in perforation 12.5 x 12.5 between 1942 and 1949. The values were from 1¢ to 48¢. There are many different marginal plate numbers for each of the 14. All values are known imperforate. All are also known with “security hole punches.”

Miscellaneous Late Issues, 1941–1947

A 5¢ commemorative was issued in 1941 for Sir Wilfred Grenfell. In 1943 a 30¢ value featured the Memorial University in St. John’s. This was surcharged to 2¢ in 1946 during a shortage of the regular 2¢ value. In 1947, Princess Elizabeth was honored by a 4¢ stamp and Newfoundland’s last commemorative was for John Cabot shown on the deck of his ship *Matthew*.

Airmail Stamps and Postal History

Newfoundland airmails are world-famous. They include three of the rarest Commonwealth issues: the 1919 Hawker, 1927 De Pinedo, and 1930 Columbia, with fewer than 300 copies of each issued. The second stamp issued was used to frank mail on the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic by air in the Vickers-Vimy aircraft in 1919, flown by Alcock and Brown. The third was issued for a flight to Halifax. A permanent set was issued in 1931 unwatermarked. Soon a watermarked set of the same values was issued. Eight thousand of the \$1 value were surcharged \$1.50 to carry mail to Europe on the 1932 Dornier DO-X flight. The Labrador airmail set of 1933 is one of the most beautiful sets of the 1930s from any country. Eight thousand of the



75¢ value were surcharged to \$4.50 for mail to Europe on the 1933 Balbo flight. Both the Dornier and Balbo are known with inverted surcharges. A 7¢ stamp was issued in 1943 for normal usage. Although some of these stamps are very expensive, a number of the airs can still be obtained reasonably.

See also the section on BNA airmails.

Postage Dues

The first postage due stamps were issued in 1939 in seven values. Their low usage makes them difficult to find on cover. Four additional varieties were issued in 1949 with perforation changes, so collectors try to get all eleven.



Postal Stationery

Newfoundland issued 17 post cards, three post bands, six stamped envelopes, four registered envelopes with printed registration markings, and four business reply envelopes. The highlight of this group is a surcharged post card issued in 1889 during a shortage of 2¢ cards. Only six copies are known to have been used during the provisional period.

Revenue Stamps

There are almost 75 issues for revenue, transportation taxes, custom duties, money orders, liquor taxes, and war savings stamps. Although Newfoundland stopped issuing regular stamps in 1947, some revenue stamps were still issued as late as 1964.

Tobacco taxpaid stamps also are collected, although there are not very many of them. They tend to be scarce to rare.

Slogan Cancels and Other Areas

Slogan cancels exist from the 1920s until Confederation with Canada and are collected on cover, on 2" x 4" pieces, or on stamp. This is a fairly limited area.

Collectors specialize in many Newfoundland topics not discussed above but also worthy of philatelic exploration.