



AIR MAIL STUDY

GROUP OF BNAPS

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BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY LTD.

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December 15, 1992

MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN AIRMAIL STUDY GROUP British North America Philatelic Society

I would like to welcome all those who will receive this first Newsletter of the Airmail Study Group. The Group was formed by a number of the members of the Semi-Official Airmail Study Group during the 1992 BNAPS Convention at St. Charles, Illinois.

These members considered that the existing Study Group did not have a sufficiently broad mandate to attract many collectors of Canadian airmail stamps, so this Group will cover all types of Canadian airmail up to the introduction of all-up first-class mail.

The Newsletter editors of the Semi-Official Airmail Study Group produced some excellent articles, but were unable to publish very frequently, or to obtain the cooperation of enough members to submit articles on a regular basis. Such involvement of a large proportion of the members is essential to the success of the new Group, and I certainly hope this will happen.

The Vice President, Study Groups, Jon Johnson, joins me in wishing all success to the new Canadian Airmail Study Group.

Bill Robinson

Wm.G. Robinson, OTB
President

THE NEW AIR MAIL STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Ed Christman has already written to members of the former Semi-official Study Group to outline the changes that took place at the BNAPS Annual Meeting in St. Charles, Il. A new Air Mail Study Group was formed with a mandate to encompass all Canadian air mail up to the introduction of the "All Up" air service on July 1, 1948. The new executive is as follows;

Chairman - Ed Christman, Jr.	Sect./Treas. Basil Burrell
5419 Jason St.	911 Huckleberry Lane
Houston, TX, 77096	Glenview, Il, 60025

The position of Editor is yet to be filled. Mike Painer and Bill Topping will act as interm editors for this and the next two issues of the Air Mail News Letter but will leave the responsibility of filling the position to the Annual Meeting at Toronto in September.

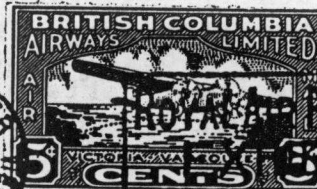
In the mean time we need material to print. The job of an editor is to edit a news letter not to write it. If YOU want the news letter to continue it is up to YOU to provide the editors with material to print. We are looking for short items similar to those in this news letter. We would also like to see the establishment of a QUERIE section where members could ask questions or raise points of interest. All such material should be sent to one of the interm editors listed below.

Interm editors - Bill Topping	Mike Painter
7430 Angus Drive	7088 Angus Drive
Vancouver, BC.	Vancouver, BC
V6P 5K2, CANADA	V6P 5J7, CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA AIRWAYS - 1928 AUGUST 3 - second flight

Face -VANCOUVER / AUG 3 / 5 PM / 1928 / BRITISH COLUMBIA

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WHEN IS A FIRST FLIGHT NOT A FIRST FLIGHT?

by Bill Topping

When it is flown at the wrong time or on the wrong day.

Just because a flight cover is marked as a "First Flight" or is sold as a first flight does not mean it actually was on the first flight. The problem is one of definition and British Columbia Airways Limited is a good example of the problem.

A letter from J.F. Murray, District Superintendent of Postal Services, Vancouver, states "this letter will be conveyed on the first flight..." and the envelope is postmarked "VICTORIA / 2.30 PM / JUL 23 / 1928" and carries the "FIRST FLIGHT" cachet used on the flight. Since July 23 marked the start of regular passenger service, the flight is, for philatelic purposes, the "first flight" from Victoria to Vancouver. According to Clement S. Ernst, a Seattle stamp dealer, the newly appointed Vancouver Postmaster, G.H. Clark, refused to place any mail on the return flight and thus covers from the return flight are unknown. (I would love to have this statement proved wrong.)

On August 3, 1928 the use of semi-official stamps was authorized and the "First Regular Flight" took place. "First" flight covers from Victoria to Vancouver have a cachet with the above wording and are dated "VICTORIA / 11 AM / AUG 3 / 1928" and backstamped "VANCOUVER / AUG 3 / 12:30 PM / 1928". There appears to have been no cachet applied on the return flight, which was carried out with little or no co-operation from the Vancouver Postmaster. Cover on this flight must be dated at Vancouver earlier than 11 AM to have made the noon flight. A number of covers dated "VANCOUVER / AUG 3 / 5 PM / 1928" and marked on the face as a "First Flight" were back stamped "VICTORIA / 6:30 PM / AUG 3 / 1928". These should not be classed as "First Flight" cover but rather "First Day" covers. All Vancouver-Victoria covers are rare but these late covers seem to be more common than those of the earlier "first" flight.

The flight times can be confirmed by the news reports of the British Columbia Airway flights on August 3, 1928. On the day of the first regular flight the Ford Tri Motor plane left Victoria shortly after 12:00 noon, with A.H. Wilson as pilot, and arrived in Vancouver about 1:00 PM returning to Victoria about 40 minutes later. A second flight was made from Victoria to Vancouver leaving about 4:15 PM and arriving at Vancouver about 5:00 PM and then returning to Victoria almost at once. Many of the supposed "First Regular Flight" cover were carried on this later flight as is indicated by the time number in the postmarks. There are also a number of covers that missed both flights and although dated on the front on August 3 the backstamps are dated August 4, 1928.

In the case of the Vancouver-Victoria flights it would help if the catalogues listed the time of the flight as well as the date in cases where more than one flight was made on the first day. A further discussion of the topic of "When is a first flight not a first flight?" will appear in the next news letter.

The AIR MAIL STUDY GROUP - is a study group under the BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY and meets on an occasional basis. News Letters are published three times a year and are available to all members in good standing. Membership fees are \$5.00 US / \$6.00 CAN and are payable to the treasurer, Basil Burrell, address elsewhere.

This news letter was edited by Bill Topping assisted by Michael Painter.

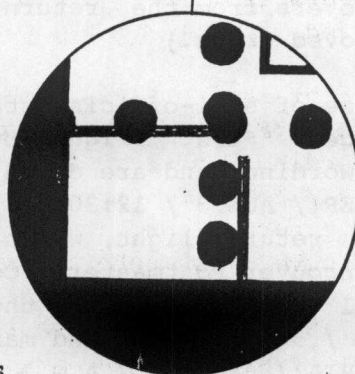
GUIDELINES ON THE CANADIAN AIRWAYS LTD. SEMI OFFICIAL AIRMAILS

By Mike Painter

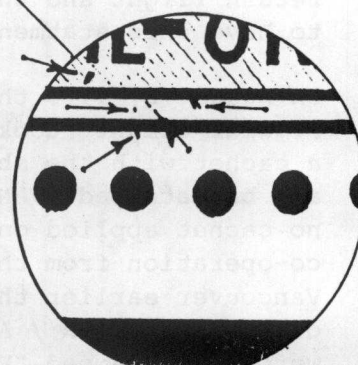
The pair of stamps (Unitrade Spec. CL52) shown at the right have two guidelines in the selvage of the lower left corner. The enlarged sketch of this corner shows them in more detail. The lines are in the same orange colour as is used in portions of the stamp design.

A full pane of fifty of these stamps has the same guidelines (although the little piece on the corner has been detached so only the vertical line shows).

The Semi Official airmail stamps typically have many constant flaws and the Canadian Airways stamps are no exception. The pair shown and the full pane which also bears the guidelines, both have a number of identical marks, just five of which are shown on the enlarged drawing at the right. This confirms what one would expect, that they came from the same position on the sheet.



Guidelines



Flaws

The Canadian Airways semi official stamps were printed in sheets of two hundred, which were cut into four panes of fifty (five by ten) before being issued (Holmes, Robson Lowe, Longworth-Dames, Unitrade Specialized). In addition to the pair shown above, and the full pane with the guidelines in the lower left corner, I have a lower right corner, an upper right corner, an upper left corner and two complete panes. The latter are from the identical position on the sheet as indicated by a large number of identical flaws. None of these other corners or panes shows any sign of guidelines. However, constant flaws indicate that the upper right and upper left corners are from a pane identical to the one with the guidelines, so they don't add any information.

This doesn't provide enough basic data to decide the position of this pane with the guidelines. It could be from any of the four possible positions on the sheet. Neither does it give enough information to decide whether the guidelines were confined to one pane or occur on two or (possibly) three panes. The fact that one pane doesn't have them on any corner indicates that they were not in the form of a square in the middle of the sheet, which would otherwise seem logical.

Nor is it clear if the marks were used for positioning the stamps themselves, (or, to be more accurate, the cliches of stamps), or to help align the guillotine that cut the sheets into four panes. It's possible they were to align the perforators, but this seems unlikely as the stamps themselves could do that.

Study Group members are invited to advise the Editor if they have any corners with similar guidelines. A xerox or complete description could help answer some of the questions raised above.