

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER

of the Newfoundland Study Group of BNAPS

Number 12

July/August 1987

NEWFIES AT CAPEX 87

by Paul Burega

CAPEX 87 has come and gone. If you missed this great show, you will have to try again in 10 years. The nine days of the exhibition went by quickly. With over 3600 frames of exhibits to examine, along with over 200 exhibits in the literature section, one could spend an enjoyable time reading and learning.

However, no show is complete without dealers and postal administrations and agencies. While one had to hunt out Newfoundland items, many unique items were to be found. While prices were not cheap, there were bargains if one looked hard enough.

However, the best part of any show is meeting old friends and forming new ones. I ran into many of the members of our study group, and met some Newfie collectors who were not. All I talked to enjoyed the show and had managed to find one or more "goodies" to add to their collection.

Canada Post had a strong presence at the show. The award medals were not medals in the traditional sense. Instead, they were miniature replicas of a Canada Post mail box. They came in two sizes for small and large awards, with silver awards being cast in silver, and gold awards in gold.

Study group members were well represented at this show. Several of the competitive exhibits and awards went to study group members. The Court of Honour and the Jury were also both represented by study group members.

Robert Pratt's exhibit, Newfoundland 1865-1880, consisted of eight frames of award winning material. Material in this exhibit encompassed proofs, stamps, and covers of the first cents issue.

Proofs includes progressive as well as final die proofs, along with plate and Goodall proofs. The mint stamps were well represented with many of the larger multiples being the largest known. Covers demonstrated the various rates and usages of the period. Included was a first day of issue of the 1¢ postcard, with an additional 1¢ stamp to pay the 2¢ postcard rate. Robert's exhibit received a large gold award. He also received a special award which was the gift of the Federacion Filatelica Colombiana, a lovely gold replica of precolumbian art. Robert Pratt, along with Gerald Wellburn were the two candidates for the Grand Prix, National. Mr. Wellburn had 10 frames entitled B.C. Specialized. The Grand Prix was awarded to Mr. Wellburn.

I also had an exhibit on the first cents issue entitled Newfoundland: The First Cents Issue 1865-1897. Shown were six frames of proofs, stamps, covers and stationery. Awarded to the exhibit was a large silver award.

Allan Selby had not one but two exhibits at CAPEX. His first exhibit was entitled Newfoundland: The John Cabot and Royal Family Issues 1897-1908. Five frames showed proofs, stamps, and covers including an 1d sailor's rate cover used just prior to the adaptation of imperial penny postage. A large silver also graced this exhibit. Allan's second exhibit of five frames was entitled Canada: The King Edward VII Definitive Issue 1903-1912. This was a fine exhibit which gathered a vermeil.

While the competitive exhibits were a treat to enjoy, some excellent material lay in the Court of Honour. Included was material from the Royal Philatelic Collection including a nice selection of Newfoundland. Displayed were a selection of the 1857 scarlet vermilion shades, the 1860 vermilion shades, colour trials of the 1865 and 1868-73 cents issues. The 1876 rouletts were represented by blocks of four. Later issues were represented with die proofs, artist's designs, and stamps for the 1897-1901 and 1931 sets.

Her Majesty the Queen also showed air mail issues including the 1919 "Hawker" unused, on cover, and the unused example sold in aid of the Marine Disasters Fund which included signatures of the parties involved in the flight. The "Alcock and Brown" issue was represented by an unused setting of twenty-five, including a cover. The 1921 35¢ included a block of four with overprint inverted. A 1927 "DePinedo" and a 1930 "Columbia" were both shown on cover.

An extraordinary showing of Newfoundland Postal History and Stamps 1743-1879 was in the Court of Honour by study group member Neville Clifford-Jones. The early stampless covers were the earliest I had seen. The transition period from pence to cents stamps was well represented by covers showing combinations of pence and cents stamps. Included in the cents covers was a small cover from Newfoundland to New Zealand, franked by three 10¢ consorts. Mr. Clifford-Jones was also an apprentice on the international jury.

Our study group members made a strong showing. I really enjoyed the show, and was exhausted after nine days. My only complaint was that the concrete floors were hard on the feet. Many people I talked to found that their feet were sore at the end of the day. One enterprising person brought a folding chair to sit on while he examined the many exhibits. That was one way to beat the problem. From my view, the show was a success, and thanks go to the committee members who made it possible.

TWENTIETH CENTURY POST OFFICES

Palmer Moffat reports the following "missing years," many of which were contributed by Doug Hannan:

Hopedale	1924
Forteau	1934
Freshwater, BDV	1946
Main	1936
Rigolet	1904
St. Fintan's	1942
Summerford	1946
Terrenceville	1934

THE GENERAL ITALO BALBO FLIGHT, 1933

by Bert Warr, Jr.

This article deals with the Italian Air Armada flight made in 1933 to "The Century of Progress Exposition" held in Chicago during that year. Although some mention is made of other points along the route the Italians took, the major emphasis of the

story are the Newfoundland and Labrador legs of the trip, the mail carried by the armada, and the stamp issued by the Newfoundland Post Office.

On the morning of July 2, 1933 an armada of 25 Savoia-Marchetti flying boats left Orbetello, Italy, heading north-west over Europe. Later that same day the planes landed on the Zuider Zee in Holland. However on landing one of the planes overturned and a mechanic, Sgt. Ugo Quitovale was killed. The armada left Holland and proceeded to Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Three days later on July 5, 1933 the armada landed at Reykjavik, Iceland. Mail was carried from Italy and her colonies along with dispatches from Holland and Iceland apparently for delivery to points along the route and official dispatches to the "Century of Progress" exposition at Chicago.

After considerable mechanical and weather delays the planes left Iceland for the most dangerous and longest leg of the trip on July 8, 1933 and arrived at Cartwright, Labrador later that afternoon with all 24 planes landing safely and in excellent condition. While at Cartwright the planes took on fuel and supplies and waited on better weather before continuing the flight to Shediac, New Brunswick and then Montreal. There was an unofficial mail of approximately 24 covers picked up in Cartwright by the armada, most being sent by employees of the Hudson Bay Company in Cartwright and some being intended for round trip mail. This mail has a mixture of Newfoundland, Canadian, and U.S. frankings. This number of 24 covers may seem a little high when one considers the number to have come on the market in the last few years.

In the early morning hours of July 13, 1933 the armada left Cartwright heading southwest and arriving at Shediac that afternoon. The armada rested there taking on more fuel and supplies. Then departed the next day for Montreal to the applause of the people of Quebec and the entire world. For this was a major feat in aeronautics even at this time. The success of the Italians was broadcast over the entire world on many new services, radio and telegraph. On July 15, 1933 the armada arrived at Chicago and stayed there until July 19, 1933 for many social events and honors for their leader, General Italo Balbo. The armada left Chicago and flew to New York. There the mayor presented to aviator a medal to commemorate his astonishing feat. The armada left New York on July 25, 1933 and headed northeast to Shediac, N.B. arriving there that same day. They took on fuel and supplies and then flew to Shoal Harbour, Newfoundland the

nest day. Of the 24 planes making up the armada, only 23 arrived at Shoal Harbour on the afternoon of the 26th. The 24th was forced to make an emergency landing at Prince Edward Island. On the morning of the 27th, this plane rejoined the squadron after making a successful flight from P.E.I. where some minor repairs had been made.

The arrival of General Balbo and his men caused quite a fervor among the local politicians of the time and they took advantage of his trip to drum up some publicity for themselves. The Newfoundland Post Office supported the visit by issuing a specially surcharged air mail stamp. The stamp was prepared by surcharging the current 75¢ Labrador airmail stamp with the following: "1933-Gen. Balbo-Flight-\$4.50" and two rectangles to obliterate the value tablets and a line beneath the date. This surcharge was prepared at St. John's by Robinson and Co., a local printer, in a setting of a block of 4 in black ink.

This stamp was very expensive when one considers that at the time that it was issued, 1933, was the depths of the great depression. The high face value of \$4.50 can be attributed to the Italians as General Balbo would fly no mail to Europe for less than \$3.75 a half ounce letter. The other 75¢ went to the Newfoundland post office department as this was the normal airmail rate for an airmail letter to a foreign destination other than Canada, U.S.A., or Great Britain.

The stamp was released for sale on July 24, 1933 at the G.P.O. in St. John's. Of the 2,010 blocks of four surcharged, ten blocks had to be destroyed as they were defective. This left a total of 8,000 mint stamps placed on sale at the post office. Several blocks with the surcharge inverted were intercepted by the post office checkers and either cut up or torn up. However, one block escaped detection and fragments for at least one stamp was reconstructed from salvaged pieces. This inverted surcharge is one of the rarest 20th century airmail stamps and as such when a copy comes onto the market it usually commands a high premium. The surcharge also appears on the 10¢ airmail stamp of the same issue but many collectors and students believe this to be a proof.

The four surcharges of the setting varied slightly so that all positions can be allotted and the stamp placed to its correct position in the setting. These are listed below:

- (1) Upper-Left Stamp No. 1
Curve in lower left serif of "H" in "FLIGHT"
- (2) Upper-Right Stamp No. 2
Blurred marks in lower portion of "E" of "GEN"
- (3) Lower-Left Stamp No. 3
Thin left arm of "T" in "FLIGHT"
- (4) Lower-Right Stamp No. 4
Upper part of first "B" in "BALBO" has a break

The majority of the Newfoundland mail was prepared and cancelled at St. John's on July 26, 1933, with most of the envelopes carrying the specially prepared provisional. However, at least one cover is known with a block of the \$1 blue and a 50¢ green of the 1931 airmail issue.

There were a very small number of covers cancelled at Clarenville on the trans-insular railway. They bear a violet rectangular "Clarenville" postmark of July 28, 1933 that is tied to the stamp. At Shoal Harbour a supplementary mail of 70 covers was added to the mail from St. John's. These exist with the provisional tied by either a July 26th or 28th Broken Ring Shoal Harbour cancel. There have even been some seem dated as late as August 7th, 1933, often with the rectangular Clarenville backstamp and more often than not posted by the Italian crews. All the covers bear the double lined cachet in green or blue showing the planes in flight and the following wording: "CROCIERA-AEREA-DEL-DECENNALE-ITALIA-NORD AMERICA", this was applied when the mail reached Rome on August 12, 1933.

Upon arrival in Rome, the mail was backstamped with a special cancel prepared by the Italian authorities, "CROCIERA-AEREA-DEL-DECENNALE-LIDO di ROMA-12 8 33 XI 19," usually in black and seldom in green or blue. Mail marked for return to St. John's bears a large violet registered postmark of August 28, 1933, or August 29th or 30th. The return mail also carries various redispatching postmarks of Aug. 15, 1933 from Italy.

The armada left Shoal Harbour on August 8, 1933 and after 11 hours of flying time, 9 of the seaplanes touched down at Horta in the Azores. The rest of the squadron landed at Ponta Delgada also in the Azores. They left the next morning headed for Lisbon, Portugal where on take-off plane No. 13 commanded by Lt.

Squaglia overturned and crashed, resulting in his death. The remaining 23 planes reached Portugal safely and on August 12th, 1933 completed their magnificent journey by landing at Ostia near Rome.

BALBO AIRMAIL CHECKLIST

Mint Stamps

- 8,040 prepared by surcharging 75¢ Airmail of Labrador Issue.
- 40 destroyed as defective or inverted copies.
- 8,000 copies placed on sale at G.P.O. St. John's on July 24, 1933.
- At least 8 copies of this 8,000 are known as inverted surcharge.
- 8 copies of the 10¢ issue of Labrador airmail set exist with surcharge but are believed to be proofs.

AIRMAIL COVERS

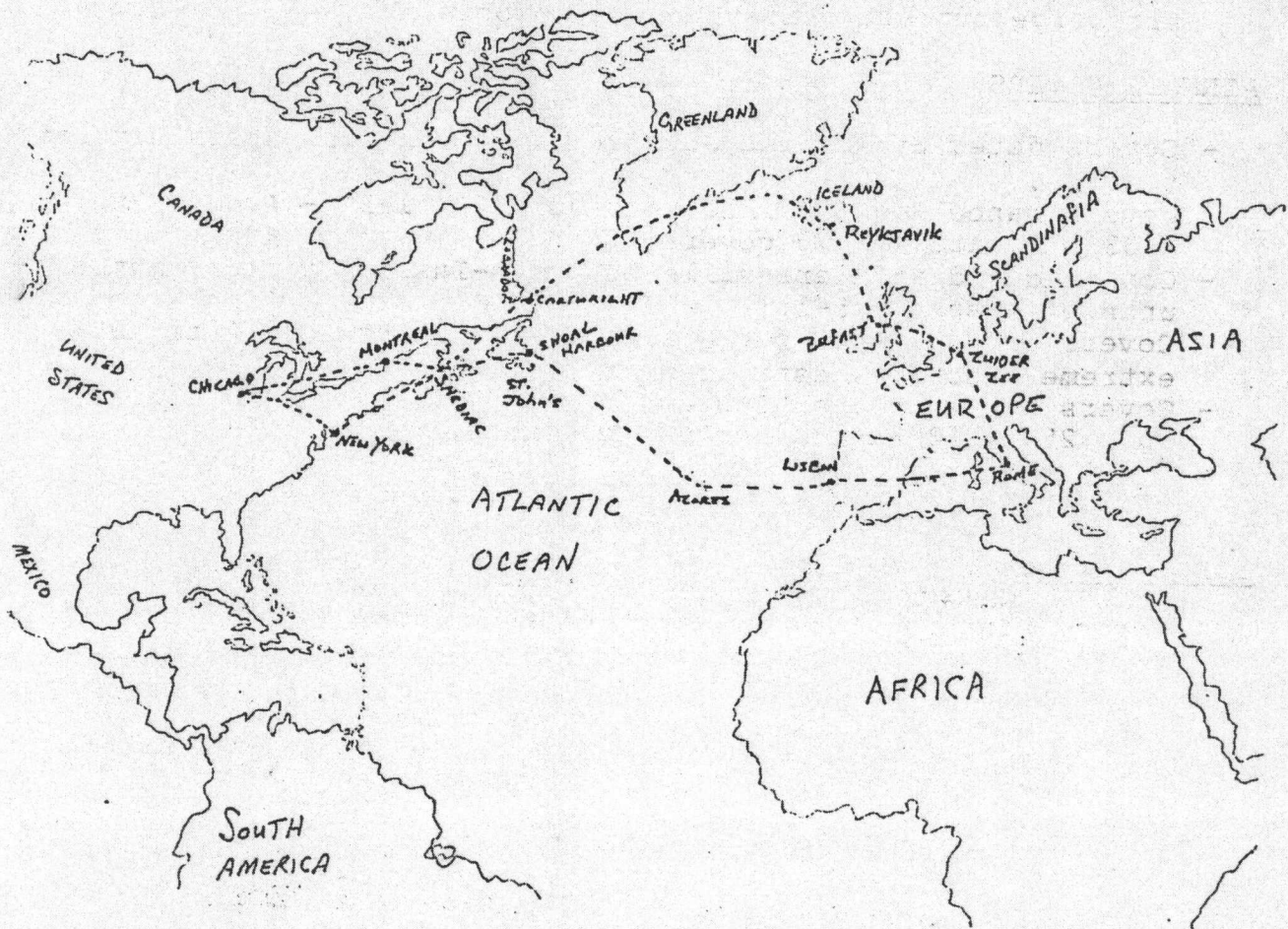
- Covers dated St. John's July 26th, 1933 1,083 pieces carried to Rome.
- Covers cancelled Shoal Harbour July 26, 1933 - August 7th, 1933 estimated at 70 covers.
- Covers dated at Clarenville on Trans-Insular railway number unknown possibly 5-10.
- Covers dated at Harbour Grace July 25th, or July 26th, 1933 extremely scarce, estimated at 3-5 covers.
- Covers dated on the "Conception Bay Railway, Post Office" July 25, 1933 number unknown possibly unique. ?
- Total number of covers carried is estimated at over 1,100 pieces, but less than 1,200 pieces.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

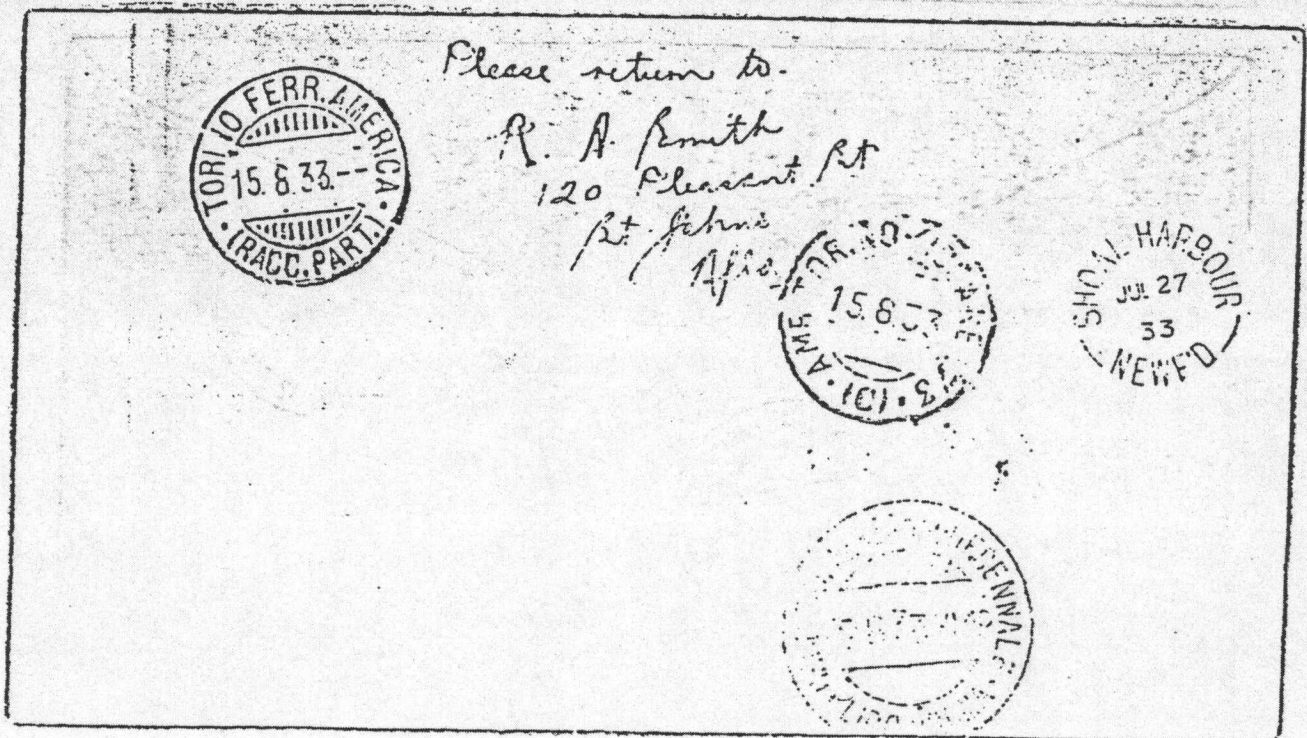
- (1) Boggs, Winthrop S., "The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Newfoundland", c. 1975, Quarterman Publications, Inc., 5 South Union St., Lawrence, Mass. 01843.
- (2) Charlton's Stamp Bulletin, No. 14, January 1980, Charlton International Publishing Inc., 299 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1Z9.
- (3) Harmer, Cyril H.C., "Newfoundland Airmails, 1919-1939," c. 1984, American Airmail Society, Cinnaminson, N.J., U.S.A.

- (4) Lowe, Robson, "The Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Vol. V, The Empire in North America", c. 1973, Woods of Perth (Printers) Ltd., 3/5 Mill St., Perth, Scotland.
- (5) Apfelbaum, Earl P.L., Public Auction Catalogue Sale #529, January 9-10, 1985, 2006 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A. 19103.

GENERAL BALBO FLIGHT 1933

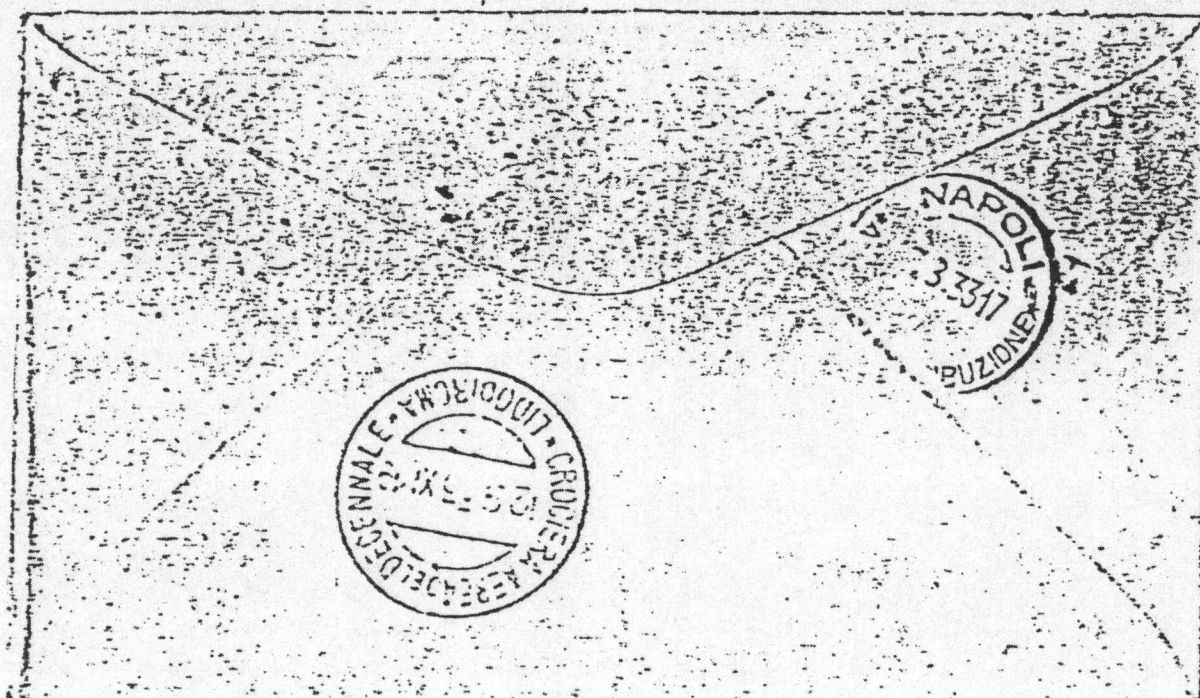
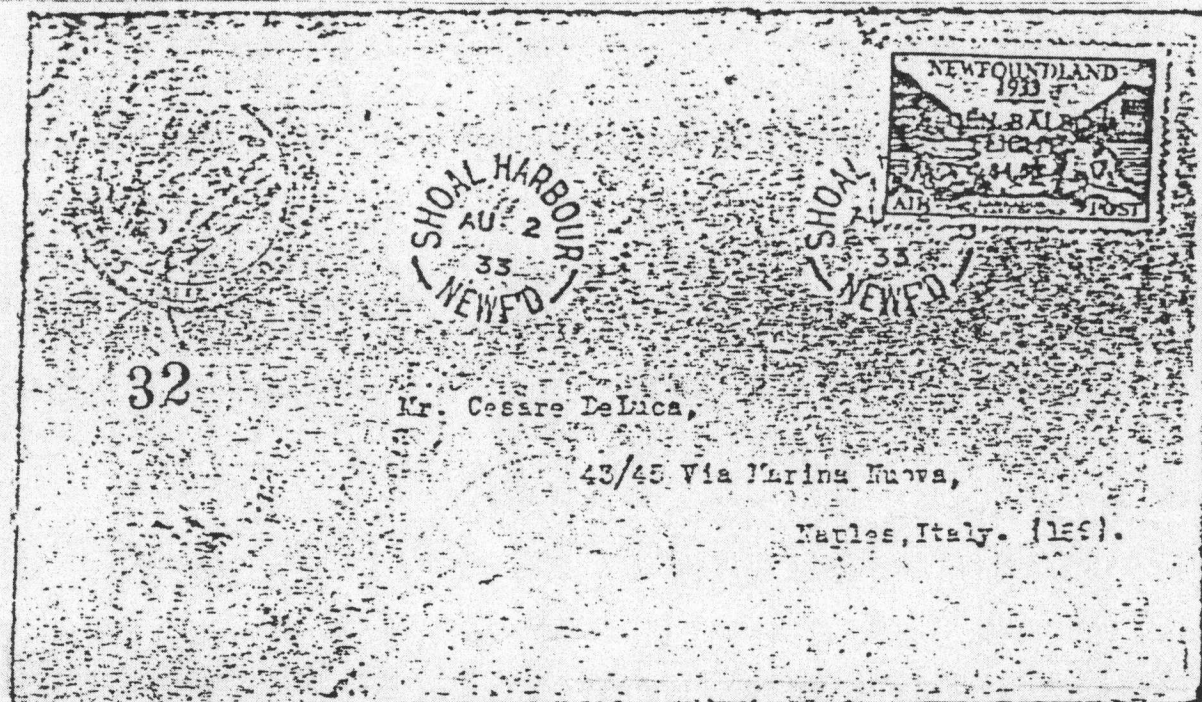


First Flight Cover Carried by General Balbo postmarked
St. John's July 26th, 1933.



NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
July/August 1987

Scarce Balbo Flight Cover postmarked Shoal Harbour
August 2nd, 1933, only 70 covers were tied by this
postmark.



Scarce Balbo Cover tied by Harbour Grace July 25th, 1933
First Day of Issue Cancel. Very few covers are tied by the
Harbour Grace Cancel!



Scarce Balbo Cover tied by Conception Bay R.P.O. July 25th
1933 on an G.H.M.S. Envelope.

