



THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER

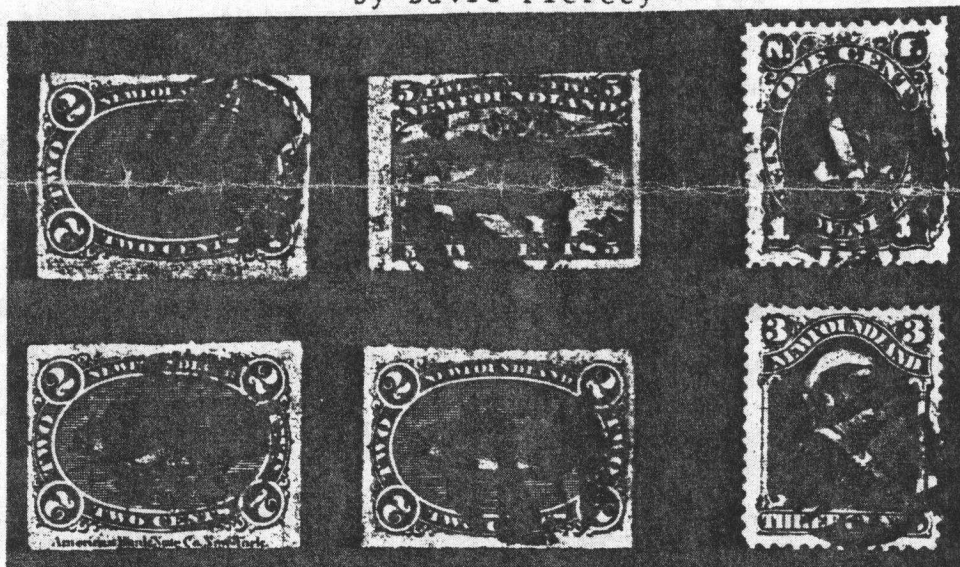
of the Newfoundland Study Group of BNAPS

Number 28

March/April 1990

SOME COMMENTS ON THE INTALIGO "N" KILLER

by David Piercey



I have several examples of the intaligo "N" killer on loose stamps issued in the late 1870's or early 1880's, and an example on postcard dated May 1, 1882. Pratt, in his Nineteenth Century Postal History attributes this "N" to the Coastal North mail route conducted by the Newfoundland Royal Mail Steam Packet Company from 1877 to sometime around 1888, when their mail contract was transferred to another company. The "Plover" was the primary mail boat through much of this period, and sailed very regularly north from St. John's to a final terminus usually at either Fogo or Tilt Cove. During the summer fishing season, the Plover would also cross the Strait of Belle Isle to Battle Harbour, Labrador, and also do the Labrador West mail run. In 1880, the Post Office in St. John's apparently placed a P. O. employee on board the Labrador North steamer (the Hercules in 1880 and 1882, the Kite in 1881), and Pratt surmises that this was the beginnings of the use of the intaligo "N" killer, "the first designated Newfoundland TPO.

He writes:

A circular date stamp reading LABRADOR - NEWF must have been introduced about this time (1880). The only one recorded so far is on a front to Twillingate dated July

27, 1882. The stamp on it showed a black "cork" cancel cut out to make a white "N" in relief indicating the Labrador and Coastal North route. Fairly common on individual stamps, it is also seen on a cover to PEI dated St. John's August 6, 1883. These two devices are probably the earliest Newfoundland TPO markings. They would only appear on correspondence originating on the north coast of Labrador and proceeding via Coastal North to St. John's. Several similar cancellations have been found on stamps of the period. (p.454)

I believe, however, that this intaligo "N" was used as a standard killer on board the Plover, and not on board the Labrador North coastal steamer. For one reason, the cancel on loose stamps is not particularly difficult to find, whereas genuine Labrador covers from this period are extremely scarce.



As another reason, the intaligo "N" is found on covers without Labrador markings or obvious connections. My postcard dated May 1, 1882 at St. John's is postmarked before the Plover made her 1882 Coastal North run across the Straits from July 17 onward, and thus before she had arrived in Labrador that season. I believe, instead, that my postcard was received by the Plover's mail clerk or purser, was then dutifully cancelled with the "N" killer, and was eventually dated when the card entered the mail stream upon the ship returning to St. John's. I surmise that this would have been a standard procedure upon receiving mail from towns en route which would not have had their own cancellation or postmarking devices. (In 1882 there were still only approximately 40 post offices in all of Newfoundland,

and the Pritchard and Andrews types were just beginning to be introduced for such towns.)

Finally, my last reason is that the "N" makes more sense as a generic marking for Coastal North, as there is also apparently a generic marking for Coastal West (an intaligo "W" - which I have yet to see and therefore assume that it is much less common than the "N"), the south coast service which was introduced about the same time as Coastal North.

I would also like to observe that there appears to be some variation among the "N's" in my collection. All appear to be enclosed in a ring of about 21mm in diameter, suggesting a common holder for the "cork". Yet the corks themselves nevertheless vary. In some, the "N" is composed of fine vertical and diagonal strokes, to the point where one begins to become unsure if the intended intaligo design is really an "N". In others, the intaligo portion is composed of much broader and definite strokes, leaving no suspicion as to what was intended. Accordingly the sizes and shapes of the solid "background" segments vary as well, suggesting that either the "N" was "reengraved" over its period of use or even that various "dies" were used, one succeeding another as the first one wore out. I believe thus that I can ascertain three different "N's" in my collection, and thus supporting Pratt's observation that "several similar cancellations can be found". Perhaps they might even correspond to different years of Coastal North's service.

I would be most interested in discovering if other members of the study group can either support or refute my hypotheses through inspection of similar material in their collections, and I invite correspondence on this or any other aspect of "Cents" issues philately. My address is David Piercey, 2424 117 Street, Edmonton, Alberta CANADA T6J 3S3.

NEW MEMBERS

Horace Harrison, 1802 Indian Head Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21204

MOVING MEMBERS

Robin Moore, 45 Bellevue Crescent, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1E 5T4

Charles F. Boubelik, Box 40, Canon City, Colorado 81215

VARIETY ON THE 1897 2¢ CABOT



New member, Peter Robertson of the United Kingdom, submits this photocopy of a mint block of the 1897 2¢ Cabot (Scott no. 62). The top right stamp shows a round blob of ink, the same otherwise this stamp shows no damage front or back and provides no evidence to account for this fault. Presumably, some transient "foreign body" got onto the plate during printing.

This is the first report of this kind of a variety on any Newfoundland stamp to the study group. Peter would like any information on this variety anyone in the study group can supply.

INFOFINDER

There still are a number of copies available of Bob Pratt's INFOFINDER, the index to his book THE NINETEENTH CENTURY POSTAL HISTORY OF NEWFOUNDLAND. If you do not have one, you can get one by sending your check to me, C. A. Stillions, 5031 Eskridge Terrace, N. W., Washington, D.C. 20016. The price is \$5.00US to study group members or \$7.00 to nonmembers. Remember, Bob is donating all profits from the sale of the INFOFINDER to the study group.

COMING EVENTS

BNAPLEX'90, October 18-20, 1990, Tremont House, Galveston, Texas, Annual convention and exhibition of the British North America Philatelic Society. Annual meeting of the Newfoundland Study Group. Information can be obtained from Vic Willson, P. O. Box 10420, College Station, TX 77840, U.S.A.

AVIATOR DOUGLAS C. FRASER

Rob Moore reports on the death of Captain Douglas Fraser who flew a number of first air mail flights in the early thirties. The following article on Capt. Fraser appeared in the 6 March 1990 edition of THE EVENING TELEGRAM.

Aviator Douglas Fraser dead at 86

Capt. Douglas C. Fraser, the pilot who opened Gander to the rest of the world when he landed the first plane there, died Monday in St. John's at the age of 86 years.

The renowned aviator flew a Foxmoth aircraft with attached skis onto a snow-packed runway Jan. 11, 1938.

In his earlier years, Capt. Fraser flew for a British flying company, Imperial Airways which later became known as one of the true pioneers of North American Aviation and has since piloted every kind of peace-time mission conceivable, from air surveys to emergency pick-ups to weather forecast flights. As well, in 1931, he along with several other St. John's businessmen formed Old Colony Airways to promote aviation in the 1930s.

During his career he claimed to have only used one navigational aid other than his eyes; a 12-inch-by-six-inch map of Newfoundland and Labrador and part of Quebec.

As well, Capt. Fraser completed the aerial survey of a site in 1935 which is now Gander International Airport.

Born in St. John's in 1904, Capt. Fraser's flying career lasted from 1930-42.

Educated at Bishop Feild College in St. John's during the 1920's, he followed family tradition and attended Framlington College in Suffolk, England.

Capt. Fraser received an honorary doctor of laws degree from Memorial University in 1983 and is a member of the Canadian Aviators Hall of Fame.

Gander Mayor Doug Sheppard says the town "takes great pride in being associated with such a promi-

nent and distinguished Newfoundland and Canadian aviator.

"An important part of our aviation history and heritage has passed with the recent passing of Capt. Douglas Fraser."

One of Capt. Fraser's last official roles as an honored member of Canada's flying fraternity was his attendance as special guest at the 50th an-

niversary dinner of Gander International Airport in 1987.

He is survived by his son Stuart and daughter-in-law Linda, with whom he resided in Topsail; his daughter Glenda and son-in-law Derek Tuffin and five grandchildren.

Remains resting at Carnell's Memorial Funeral Home until further funeral arrangements are made.



FRASER

FRASER, Douglas Cowan (Capt.) LL.B (Honorius Causa) — Member of Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame. Passed peacefully away at the Health Sciences Centre, on Monday, March 5th, 1990, aged 85 years. Pre-deceased by his wife Maude, 1958. Leaving to mourn his son Stuart and daughter-in-law Linda, with whom he resided; daughter Glenda and son-in-law Derrick Tuffin; five grandchildren: Susan, John, Steven, Alan and Sara; special nephew Dr. Barry Fraser and his family; a large circle of relatives and friends. Resting at the Carnell Memorial Chapel, Freshwater Road. Visiting hours 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday. Funeral service on Thursday, March 8th, 1990 at 11 a.m. from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Interment in General Protestant Cemetery. Flowers gratefully accepted, or donations in his memory maybe made to the Newfoundland Lung Association.

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