

**THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS**

Number 70

January/February 98

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Hi, welcome to the 70th edition of our Newsletter. The weather in St. John's is "wonderful grand". Since Christmas we have had no snow, so we are able to walk around the city in just shoes. Auction catalogues have been coming fast and furious lately, i.e., Maresh, Hennock, Lyon, etc., with nice material in all. I will publish the prices realized when I receive them.

My thanks go out to Horace Harrison, Dean Mario and Bob Dyer for their continuing support winding in large and small items for our Newsletter. If any of our membership has a small or large article, please send it into me. You have my thanks.

DUES NOTICE

In my haste to put out the November/December Newsletter on time, I omitted ticking the box for our tardy members. If the box is ticked here ☐ you are in arrears. A form is provided for same. If you are not paid by our next Newsletter mailing, this will be our last mailing to you.

This form means that your Newfoundland Study Group dues have not been paid!

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The rise and fall of the railway



A Backward **GLANCE**

Bert Riggs

On the morning of Dec. 2, 1968, the first Canadian National buses pulled out of the railway terminals in St. John's and Port aux Basques, inaugurating the CN Roadcruiser service.

There had been trial runs of the proposed bus service for several months but it was not until Dec. 2 that paying customers were part of the trans-island run. With this new passenger bus service came the end of the passenger trains which had served Newfoundland for more than 80 years.

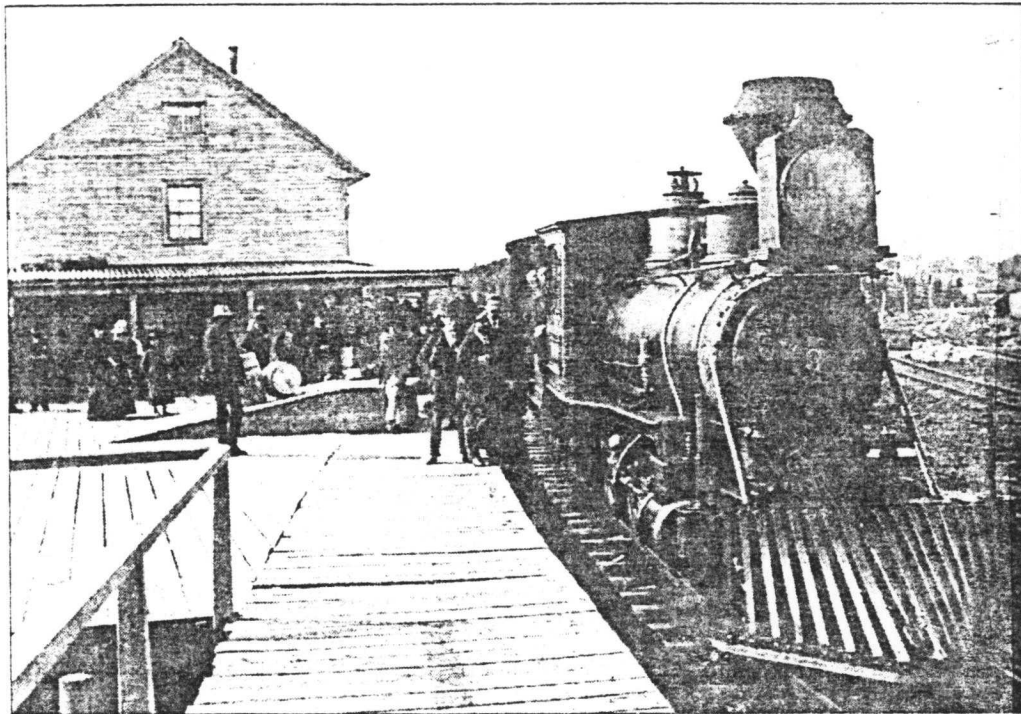
There had been attempts, spearheaded by the Canadian railway promoter Sandford Fleming, to interest the Newfoundland government in financing the construction of a railway across the island as early as 1868. Interest was high but it was not until 1874 that the government had the necessary monies to invest in a survey to determine the best route. The survey team recommended a line extending from St. John's in a northern and western curve, terminating at St. George's on the west coast. The estimated cost was \$8.5 million, a sum the government did not have.

In 1878 William V. Whiteway was elected prime minister; his platform included the construction of a rail line as far as Hall's Bay at the western end of Notre Dame Bay. He saw the railway as a means of removing economic dependence on the fishery alone, as the railway would open up the interior of the island to mineral exploration, lumbering and possibly agriculture.

Whiteway soon had the necessary legislation in place, and in 1881 a contract was signed between the government and Albert Blackman's Newfoundland Railway Company to build the line as far as Hall's Bay within five years at a cost of \$5 million. Construction began in August and by the next fall the railway had reached Holyrood.

Blackman's company was in a constant state of financial turmoil and declared bankruptcy in 1884. The trains kept running, however, and the first mayor branch line from Brigus north to Harbour Grace opened later that same year. The main line was as far west as Whitbourne.

In 1885 Robert Thorburn replaced Whiteway as prime minister. He took a more cautious approach to railway construction, but did finance a branch line



File photo

Locomotive No. 9 pauses at the railway station in Whitbourne, c. 1900, at the height of public interest in the growing railway service. In the background is the Whitbourne Hotel.

from Whitbourne to Placentia as a make-work project.

Shortly after Whiteway's return to office in 1889, the government entered into a contract with a company under the direction of Robert G. Reid to complete the line to Hall's Bay. Once construction reached the central part of the island, a change of plans saw the track go west over the Topsails to Bay of Islands and then to Port aux Basques. On June 29, 1898, the first passenger train to ride the rails completely across the island left St. John's, arriving in Port aux Basques 28 hours later.

For the next 20 years, that was the limit of railway travel in Newfoundland. There were stops at all communities along the route, but in many areas the track was quite a distance from settlements on the coastline. In order to use the train, people from these communities would have to travel overland, by horse and cart or by walking, to the nearest railway station. For many the railway was something that they heard much about but never saw.

In 1909 Edward Morris was elected prime minister. Included in his platform was the construction of branch railways. This began soon after he took office with branch lines completed from St. John's to Trepassy, Whitbourne to Hear's Content, Harbour Grace to Grate's Cove and Clarendville to Bonavista. The spiralling cost of con-

struction and the redirection of government spending into the war effort resulted in plans for branches to the Burin Peninsula and Bonne Bay being cancelled.

Controversy always plagued the railway, even before it had even left the designer's table. First there were the financial difficulties encountered by Blackman. Then, in 1898, a contract for the operation of the rail service between the Reid company and the government of James Winter resulted in a public outcry and helped bring down the government.

When Robert Bond became prime minister in 1900, the contract was negotiated but at a cost to the government of millions of dollars.

The Reid Newfoundland Company operated the railway from 1901 to 1923, but it lost money yearly. The company finally convinced the government to take over the operation in 1923. For the next 26 years the railway was a constant drain on the treasury, increasing the government's deficit and debt yearly, despite a number of cost-cutting measures.

With confederation in 1949, the railway became a federal responsibility, operated by Canadian National Railways. While many positive and productive changes were brought about, CN was no more able to make a profit

than previous operators had been. In 1968 it introduced a bus service on a trial basis; within a year the passenger train was gone. The freight service continued until 1988; by 1990, the lines that it had taken 17 years to construct were all removed, just in case anyone had the crazy notion that the train might be brought back some time in the future.

There are no more winter nights being marooned on the Gaff Topsails because of snow on the tracks. There is no more wondering if the wind warnings from Wreck House will result in delays getting home. There are no more "Trouters' Specials" on the 24th of May weekend. There are no more excursions 'round the bay.

Books have been written about the Newfoundland railway; songs have been sung about it; plays have been staged about it; pictures and postcards have been produced showing the train engines gleaming in the summer sun. The train that was once the butt of many jokes, and the train that provided exemplary service and meals of the highest quality is now an object of nostalgia. It is a part of our heritage that deserves to be remembered.

Bert Riggs is an archivist with the Centre for Newfoundland Studies at Memorial University. He welcomes readers' comments and questions via The Telegram.

SPECIAL BNAPS SPRING MEETING AT ORAPEX'98 IN OTTAWA

As mentioned at BNAPEX'97 in St. John's, there will be a special BNAPS spring meeting at ORAPEX'98 in Ottawa, Ontario. ORAPEX is a national level Canadian exhibition that is hosted by the RA Stamp Club and will be held at the RA Centre in Ottawa, on Saturday April 25 and Sunday April 26. A number of BNAPS members and dealers normally attend ORAPEX which probably has the best selection of BNA material for sale of any show in Canada.

In conjunction with this two day event, a block of rooms has been reserved on April 23, 24 and 25 at the Market Square Inn along with two meeting rooms for study group and other BNAPS activities on Friday April 24. On Saturday and Sunday, BNAPS activities will move from the hotel to the RA Centre.

Although arrangements have not been finalized as of mid-December, a visit to the Alta Vista mail processing facility has been arranged for Thursday evening April 23. Transportation will leave the hotel for the terminal at 6:30 PM. Alta Vista was the first mechanized mail processing plant in Canada and has undergone many changes since it opened in the early 1970's. Please advise Doug Lingard if you will be going so enough guides will be assigned.

On Friday, there will be meetings at the hotel during the day. About 5:00 PM, transportation will be provided to the RA Centre for those wishing to mount their exhibits. It is expected that they will return to the hotel at about 8:30 PM and join any other interested members and their spouses for a late dinner at a local restaurant at about 9:00 PM.

Most members will probably spend Saturday at ORAPEX and attend the RA Stamp Club's wine and cheese reception and awards ceremony at 7:00 PM at the RA Centre. After the wine and cheese reception, it will be dinner at a local restaurant at about 9:00 PM. Sunday is an open day, and it is expected that most members will return to the show.

The Market Square Inn is in the heart of old Ottawa. There are hundreds of restaurants and boutiques right around the hotel and a large 200+ store shopping centre is only three blocks away. The hotel is within walking distance of the Parliament Buildings and other tourist attractions. A block of 25 rooms has been reserved on a first come basis for the evenings of Thursday April 23, Friday April 24, and Saturday April 25 @ a special BNAPS rate of \$75 Cdn. a night (about \$55 US) for up to four persons per room. These will be held until the end of February and members must quote "BNAPS" to obtain this special rate. The Market Square Inn is at 350 Dalhousie St., Ottawa Ontario K1N 7E9. The phone numbers for reservations are (613) 241-1000, or 1-800-341-2210 and the fax number is (613) 241-4804. In late April, day time highs are normally in the low 60's (F) and evening lows in the high 40's (F).

The only costs associated with this event will be your hotel, meals, local transportation to and from the show (about a \$13.00 Cdn. taxi ride which can be shared among members), frame entry fees (\$7.00 Cdn. per 16 page frame) and Saturday night's wine and cheese reception tickets (\$5.00 Cdn. per person). These tickets must be purchased in advance and they and the show's prospectus and entry form can be obtained from Doug Lingard at 2425 Blackstone Crescent, Ottawa, ON K1B 4H3 (613) 737-4864. Also, Marva Paige and Larry Paige (VP of Member Services) have attended ORAPEX for several years and can be reached at 1145 Shillelagh Road, Chesapeake VA 23323 (757) 547-5296 for more information.

If you were too late in entering your exhibit at St. John's, why not have it judged by national level standards at ORAPEX, where 75 of the 200 frames have been reserved up until March 15 for BNAPS members? Enter early as these frames will not last long.

NEWSLETTER

CANADIAN
RE-ENTRY
STUDY GROUP

Two Newfoundland Re-Entries Identified From Plate Proof

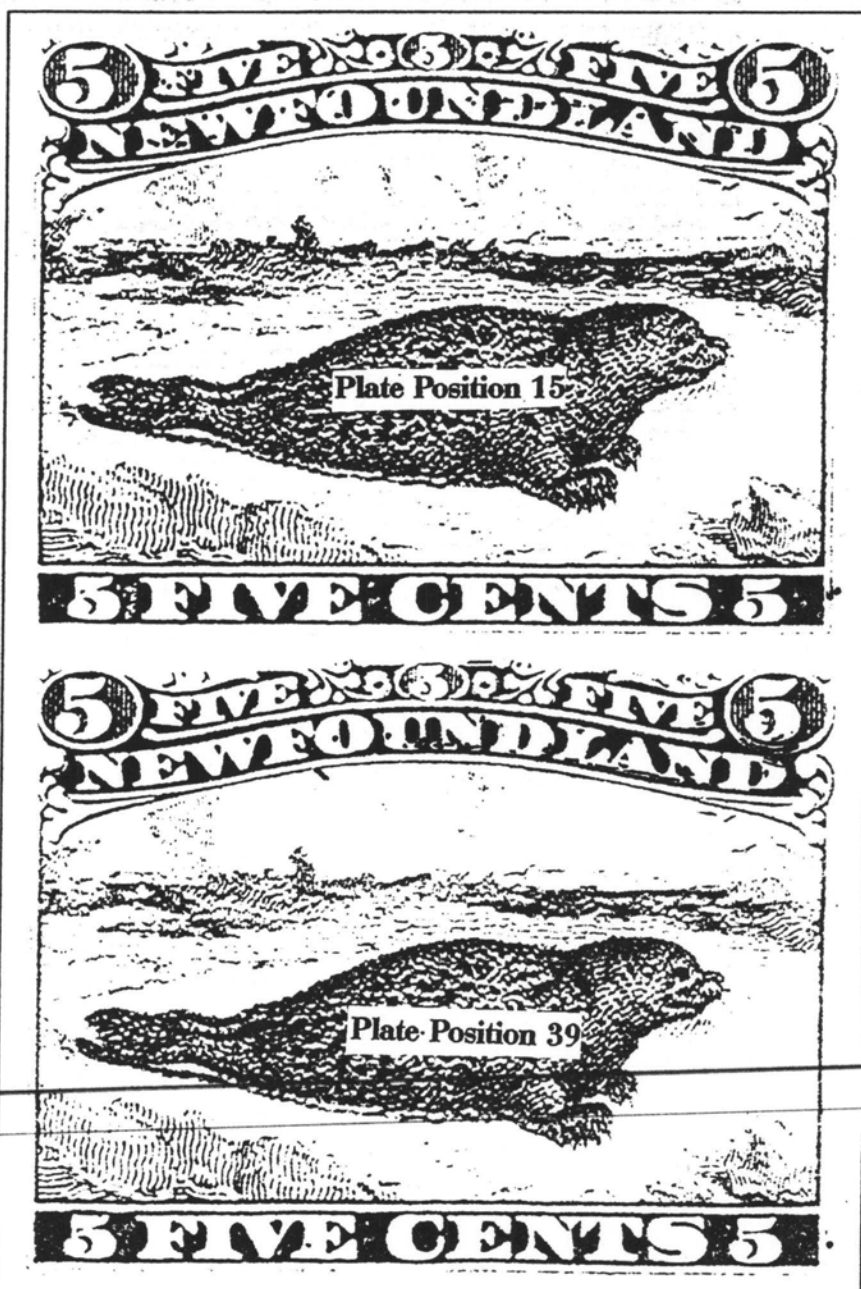
Thanks to John Jamieson of Saskatoon Stamp Centre it is now possible to plate the beautiful 5c Newfoundland seal issue which first appeared in 1864 in brown (#25), then in 1868 in black (#26), and finally in 1876 in blue, the rouletted stamp (#40).

The brown plate proof was photocopied and re-entries drawn on the copies from the sheet.

Shown right are two re-entries from the writer's collection: Top re-entry, PP15, is brown, No. 25 and the bottom, PP39, is blue, No. 40.

Ralph in Vol. 6, No. 2 showed a misplaced re-entry, which is Position 95 as he had guessed, and in Vol. 14, No. 2 he also guessed the position of the re-entry shown in that Newsletter as being from Position 90; he was again right!

Way to go, Ralph!



UPDATED LIST OF 1897 PAID ALL & SURCHARGES

Norris R. Dyer

I loved St. John's and BNAPEX '97. I appreciated talking to study group members on the 1897 provisionals. The show, as well as follow-up letters from those who attended my presentation, have expanded the list of usage dates. Please see if you can be of further help, from your collections, old (or new) auction catalogues, etc. October 19, 1897 is first day of use of the provisionals and I bet someone has a Type III (NSSC #71 or SCOTT #77) on cover with an earlier date than October 22nd.

PAID ALL & 1897 PROVISIONALS USAGE DATES

(Updated 10-1-97)

PAID ALL

Sept. 24, 27, 29

Oct. 1, 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21

Nov. 3, 4, 26, 27

Dec. 4

18 dates on cover

Earliest is September 24th

PROVISIONALS

Sept. -----

Oct. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25
27, 29, 30

Nov. 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12
13, 22, 23, 24, 27, 30

Dec. 3

23 dates on cover

Earliest Type I is Oct. 19th

Type II is Oct. 19th

Type III is Oct. 22nd

any new finds - please send dates to Norris (Bob) Dyer, 1708
Granada Court, Petaluma, CA 94954
(E-mail is nrdyer@worldnet.att.net)

PUNCH BOWL

Lat. Long.: 53° 05' N 55° 45' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1888 [Walsh and Butt]

1890 (Way Office) [Almanac] [Michael O'Brien, waymaster]

1892 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [Michael Brien,
postmaster]

1893 (Post Office) [Pratt] [Michael O'Brien, postmaster]

Closed: 1931 [Walsh and Butt]

No postal markings known.

RAGGED ISLANDS

Lat. Long.: 55° 00' N 58° 15' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1890 (Way Office) [Almanac] [Isaac Pumphrey, waymaster]

1893 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [Daniel

Pumphrey, postmaster]

1893 (Post Office) [Pratt] [Daniel Pumphrey, postmaster]

1901 [Walsh and Butt]

Closed: 1905 [Walsh and Butt]

No postal markings known.

RED BAY

Lat. Long.: 51° 44' N 56° 25' W

Population: 296 (1971)

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1890 (Way Office) [Almanac] [John C. Pike, waymaster]
 1892 (Post Office) Labrador West [Almanac] [John C. Pike, waymaster]
 1893 (summer Post Office) [Pratt] [Josiah H. Penney, postmaster]
 1893-1900 (winter Post Office) [Pratt] [Horatio W. Pike, postmaster]
 before 1948, year-round office, money order service
 Apr. 1, 1949 Non-accounting MOON 54375
 POCON 004243

Postal Code: A0K 4K0

TYPE	COLOUR	PROOF DATE	EARLIEST	LATEST
A1			May 10, 1925	June 20, 1960
C1			Apr. 17, 1965	Feb. 13, 1978
H1			July 3, 1952	
P1		Mar. 13, 1973	July 3, 1974	Feb. 7, 1978
P2		Oct. 7, 1977		
P3		June 24, 1981	Feb. 7, 1983	Aug. 22, 1988
R1			July 3, 1952	Apr. 7, 1965
R2			Aug. 22, 1988	



A1



C1



H1

004243

RED BAY
N F

P1

004243

X, 7 1977

RED BAY
LABRADOR

P2

004243

VI 24 1981

RED BAY
NFLD. - T.N.

P3

ST. LEWIS

Lat. Long.: 52° 22' N 55° 41' W

Population: 214 (1971)

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1953? Non-accounting MOON
POCON 004694

Postal Code: A0K 4W0

TYPE	COLOUR	PROOF DATE	EARLIEST	LATEST
C1		May 20, 1953	Jan. 19, 1965	Aug. 31, 1974
E1			Mar. 20, 1986	
P1		Mar. 13, 1973	July 7, 1974	
P2		Aug. 19, 1981	May 26, 1986	Mar. 30, 1992
P3			Oct. 6, 1992	***
R1		July ?, 1953	Sept. 1, 1962	Aug. 7, 1974
R2			May 26, 1986	



C1



E1

004693

ST. LEWIS
N F

P1

004693

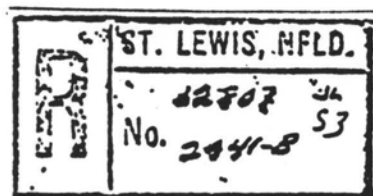
VIII 19 1981

ST. LEWIS
NFLO. - T. N.

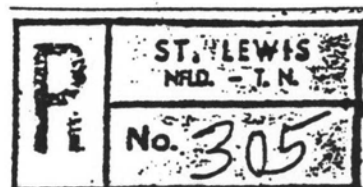
P2



P3



R1



R2

SAND BANKS

Lat. Long.: 53° 07' N 61° 02' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1937 [Walsh and Butt]

before 1948, summer office, no money order service

Closed: Mar. 31, 1949

No postal markings known.

SANDY HOOK

Lat. Long.: 52° 32' N 55° 48' W

Population: 71 (1971)

Origin of Name:

Opened: ?1972 Non-Accounting MOON

POCON 007005

June 30-Oct. 8, 1973

June 21-Sept. 11, 1974

June 18-Sept. 6, 1975

June 17-Sept. 7, 1976

June 28-Sept. 30, 1977

June 20-Sept. 30, 1978

June 11-Sept. 29, 1979

June 16-Sept. 12, 1980

June 15-Sept. 5, 1981

June 21-Sept. 9, 1982

Postal Code: AOK-5B0

TYPE	COLOUR	PROOF DATE	EARLIEST	LATEST
C1		May 30, 1972		
P1		Mar. 13, 1973		
R1		May 29, 1972		

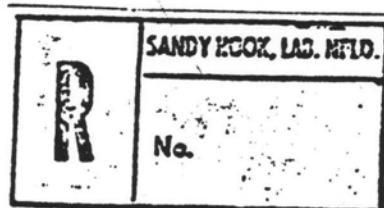


C1

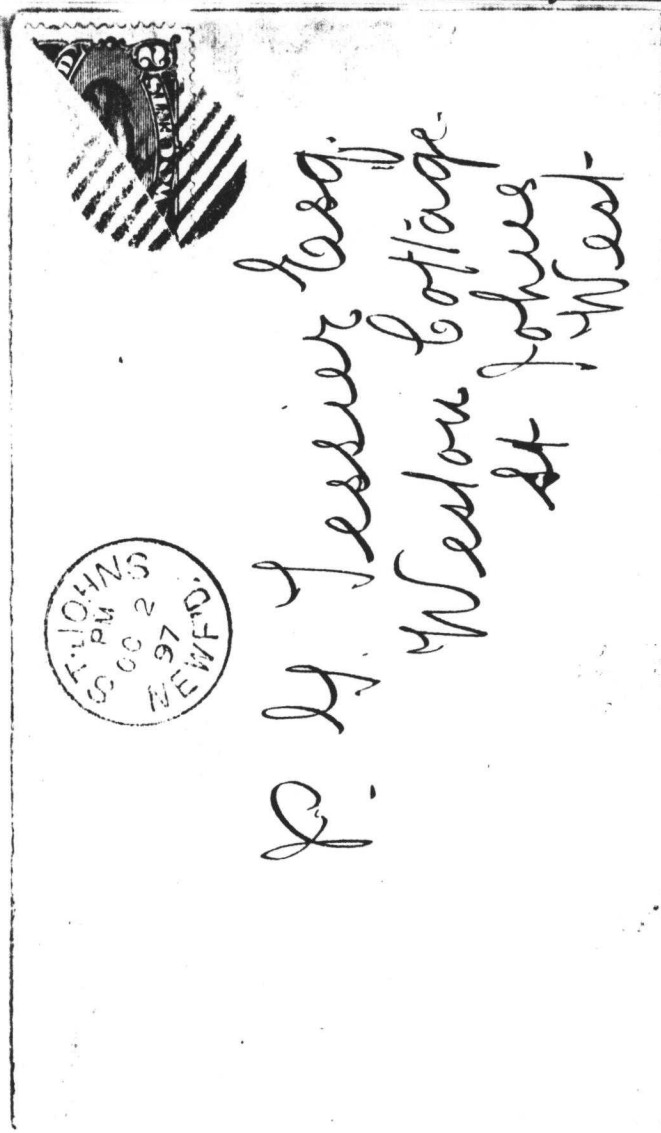
007005

SANDY HOOK
N. J.

P1



R1



28 JANUARY 1998

DEAR JOHN: FURTHER TO BOB DYER'S RECENT REQUEST THE ABOVE MAY BE OF SOME INTEREST. THE 1897 BISSET IS AGAIN USED ON OC 2 AND IS ADDRESSED IN A DIFFERENT HAND. MEMBERS MAY RECALL THAT PAUL BUREGA HAD A SIMILAR BISSET IN HIS "FIRST CENTS" EXHIBIT/COLLECTION (ALSO SEE MARECHT & SON SALE - APRIL 13-14, 1994 LOT # 646 - AGAIN IN A DIFFERENT HAND). I RECALL SEEING A SIMILAR COVER TO TESSIER IN THE STOCK OF ALAN STEINHART BUT THIS WAS SOME TIME AGO. THE OTHER COVER SHOWS TESSIER'S PENCHANT FOR PHILATELIC COVERS (d. 1911) OR HE HAD AN OVERSUPPLY OF THE 12c VALUE. BEST REGARDS.

SINCERELY,

Alan Mario