

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

CONTENTS AND NEWS

Page 1	News – <i>Editor</i>
Page 2	Mining the Pratt Archives – <i>C.A. Stillions</i>
Page 3	Perfin Corner – <i>Barry Senior</i>
Page 4	Gone But Not Forgotten, Page 31 – <i>Carl Munden</i>
Page 5-6	Wesleyville, Bonavista, Newfoundland – Postal and Telegraph Service – <i>George McGowan</i>
Page 7-8	1933 Balbo Flight Labels – <i>Jean-Claude Vasseur</i>
Page 9-11	The Hopedale “Viking” Flight of 1931 – <i>Editor</i>
Page 12-13	Lt. Sir Arthur Whitten Brown’s First U.S. Presentation – <i>Editor</i>
Page 14-15	1897 Surcharges – Annotated Exhibit Page 2 – <i>Editor</i>
Page 16	Advertisement



ARTICLES

Please submit some articles and/or photos for future issues.

BNAPEX 2010 NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP MEETING

Our workshop will be on Friday, September 3rd from 2-3 P.M. in Victoria at the Empress Hotel. CA Stillions has been working on a massive project to digitize thousands of color slides made by famous collector, Robert Pratt (see Page 2 for an example). An initial showing of some of the slides will be presented.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Here are some new members from 2009 and 2010: André Guertin (Ottawa), Tony Hine (Toronto), David Link (Stony Point, Alberta), Tom Meyerhof (Gloucester, Ontario), Gary Munn (email only, Canada), Everett Parker (Greenville, Maine), Bruce Robertson (London, GB), Bruce Walker (Austin, Texas), Louis Walsh (North Vancouver) and Eric Yendall (Ottawa).

CONGRATULATIONS DUE, AGAIN, TO PETER MOTSON

In the last issue we told you that Pete had won the Robert Pratt award for his BNAPS exhibit book (No. 54) showing his Newfoundland air mail exhibit. Now he has won a Large Gold for his exhibit at **London 2010**, an international show. **He scored a 97 and was Best of Class in the Aerophilately division.** The exhibit’s title was *Newfoundland Airmail Stamps & Airmail Flights: 1919-1948*.

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THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

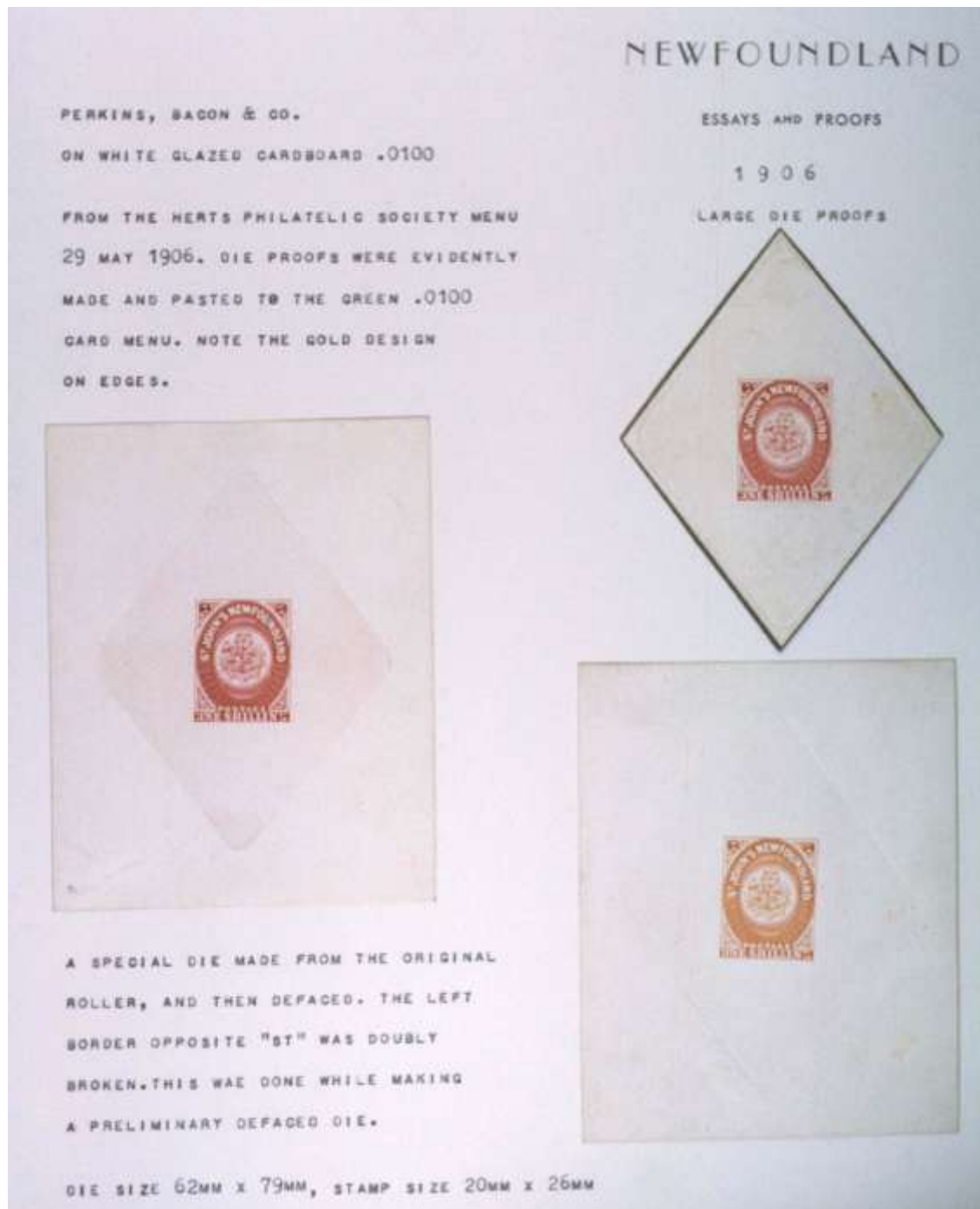
Number 140

July/September 2010

MINING THE PRATT ARCHIVES FOR PHILATELIC GOLD - AN UPDATE

C.A. Stillions

The 35mm transparencies, all 4398 of them, have been scanned. A representative scan can be seen below. I am now in the process of putting them into a data base. The data base will include the country be it Newfoundland, Canada, St. Pierre and Miquelon, or whatever; the item in the image be it stamps, proofs, covers, etc.; the issue of the item; and a description of the image. Hopefully I will have this done by the convention. But, even if I am not done there will be a trial sample for demonstration purposes.



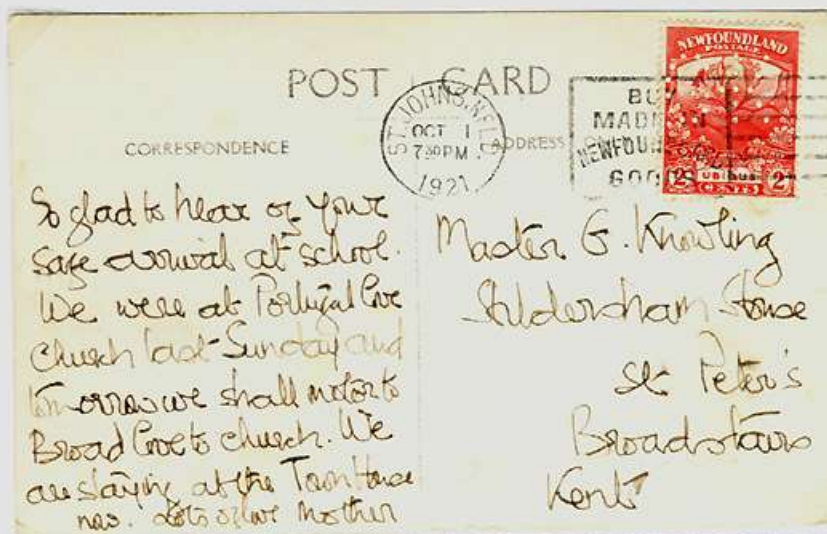
THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

The perfin corner by Barry Senior

A pair of the 1 cent value paying the 2 cent Postcard Rate to England. Although not a commercial usage it was certainly legitimate since it was to one of Knowlings grandsons at boarding school in England.



A two cent value paying the same rate under similar circumstances.

The three cent value paying the 2 cent Letter Rate to the USA plus the 1 cent War Tax fee. This is the only such cover recorded.



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

Number 140

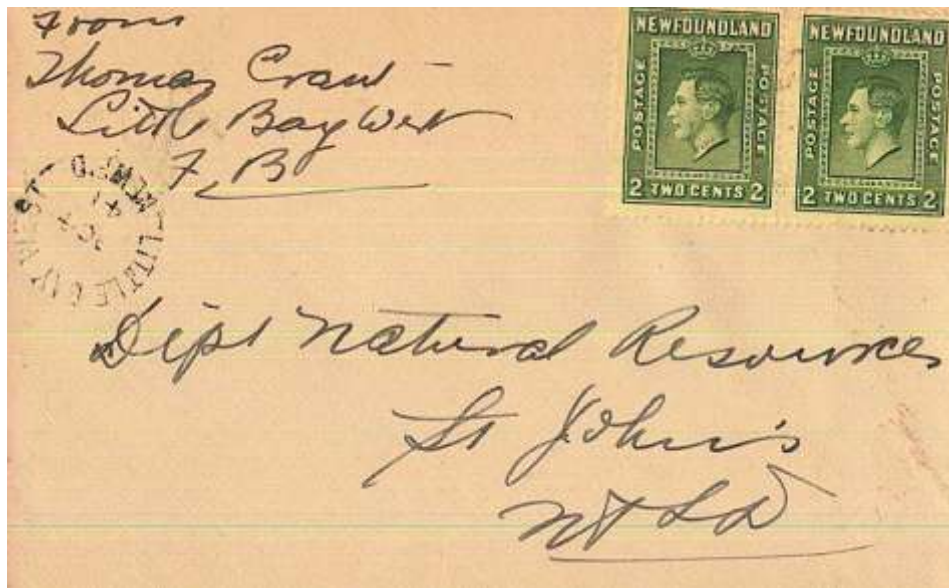
July/September 2010

Page 31

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN – CARL MUNDEN

LITTLE BAY WEST

Open 1899. Closed Nov. 8, 1969. Population 144.



STONE VALLEY

Open March 27, 1961. Closed July 5, 1971. Population N/K.



THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

Wesleyville, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland – Postal and Telegraph Service

George McGowan

Wesleyville is about an hour's drive north out of Gambo, and the Trans-Canada, prominent on the northwest side of Bonavista Bay. Originally it was known as Swain's Island, which is actually a tight group of many islands. It is said that the original settlers elected to live on the islands, rather than the mainland, to be closer to the fisheries and safer from the native Indians who occupied the interior.

Towards the end of the 1800's and the beginning of the 20th century, residents began moving their houses to the mainland, usually during the coldest of the winter months when the structures could be slid over the ice. This migration has been illustrated by internationally-known artist, and Wesleyville born, David Blackwood. My mother told the story of my Aunt Mary, who, upon learning that they would be moving the house to the mainland, jumped so high that she touched the ceiling. (Aunt Mary only reached the grand height of 4' 2" as an adult).

Today, some of the unoccupied islands carry the family names of the original occupants: Stockley's Island, Ford's Island, etc. In 1982, resident Naboth Winsor wrote a history of Wesleyville called The Sea. Our Life-Blood. In his book, on page 94, he describes *Postal and Telegraph Services*:

“We have not found any records of Postal Service for Swain's Island. In 1882 the mail service to the north side of Bonavista Bay was by a boat which ran for seven months of the year from Bonavista to Salvage and Greenspond. Probably Swain's Island residents had to send and receive their mail at the Greenspond Post Office. In 1884, Captain George Hann was Way Officer at Wesleyville,- the incoming and outgoing mail was left in his care; for which service, he received four dollars, every six months. In that year, the mail service was fortnightly, by a mail carrier, William Spurrell, who traveled from Greenspond to Cape Freels, and received for his services, thirteen dollars and thirty cents every three months. In 1891, Captain Hann was promoted to Postmaster, for which he received twelve dollars a year. In 1901, his daughter Mary Jane was Postmistress, and we have been told that her father erected for her a small building to serve as a post office. In 1902, mail service was provided by the S.S. Dundee, which left Clode Sound, Bonavista Bay, every Monday and Friday, and came as far north as Wesleyville. In 1910, mail service was provided by the S.S. Louise, which left St. John's every Tuesday at 7:00 pm, calling at Wesleyville, Newtown, and Cat Harbour. For about 50 years, mail was brought by the railway coastal steamers en route north. Also, for Forty years or more there was from May to December, a weekly mail service by boat from Gambo, and in the remaining months, overland, by dog team. Since the building of the Bonavista North Highway, 1959, mail has come from Gander; at present, six days a week.”

Illustrated here are two covers, the first, a registered letter to St. John's postmarked Wesleyville B.B. Newf'd ? 29, 1940 from Robert Mullett. Bob Mullett had a General Store across from the National Store not far from the present day Elementary School. The second, also addressed to St. John's is from the National Store, postmarked LABRADOR T.P.O. Jul 29 1946. This store was run by the Sainsbury's and closed its doors in 2009. (The second is written in the hand of Aunt Ethel Sainsbury).

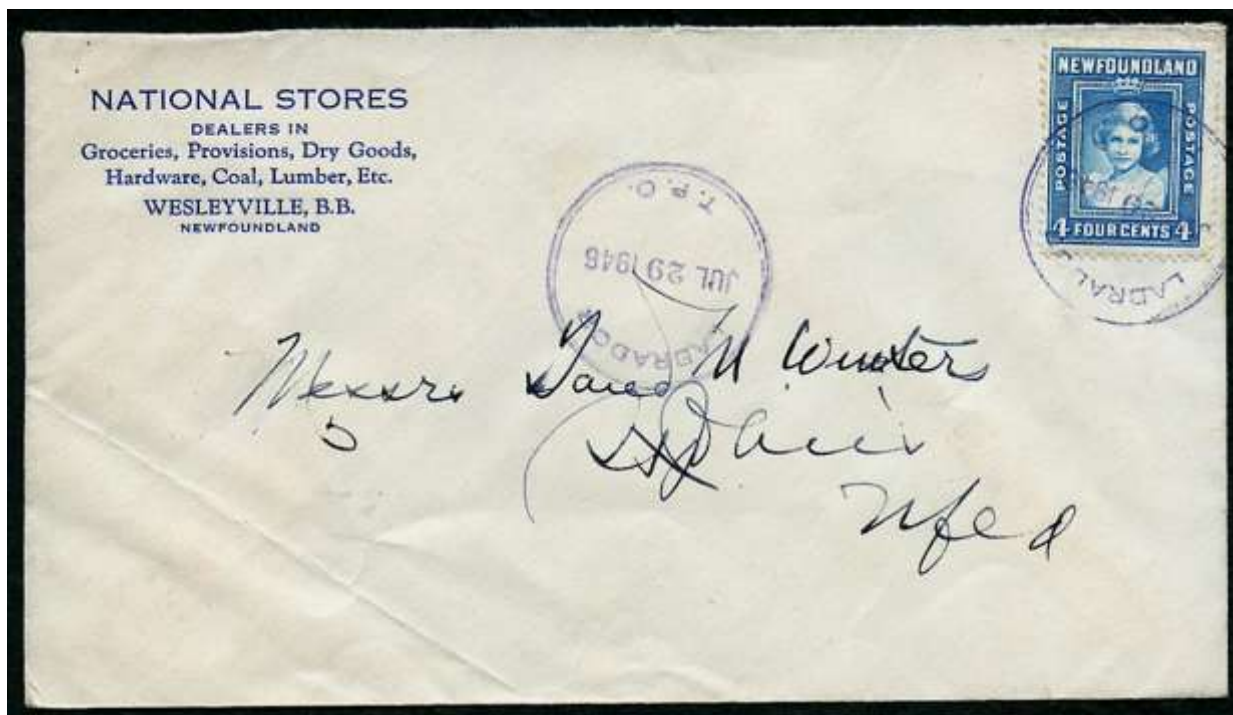
See Next Page For the Two covers

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

Number 140

July/September 2010

WESLEYVILLE COVERS - *Text on previous page.*



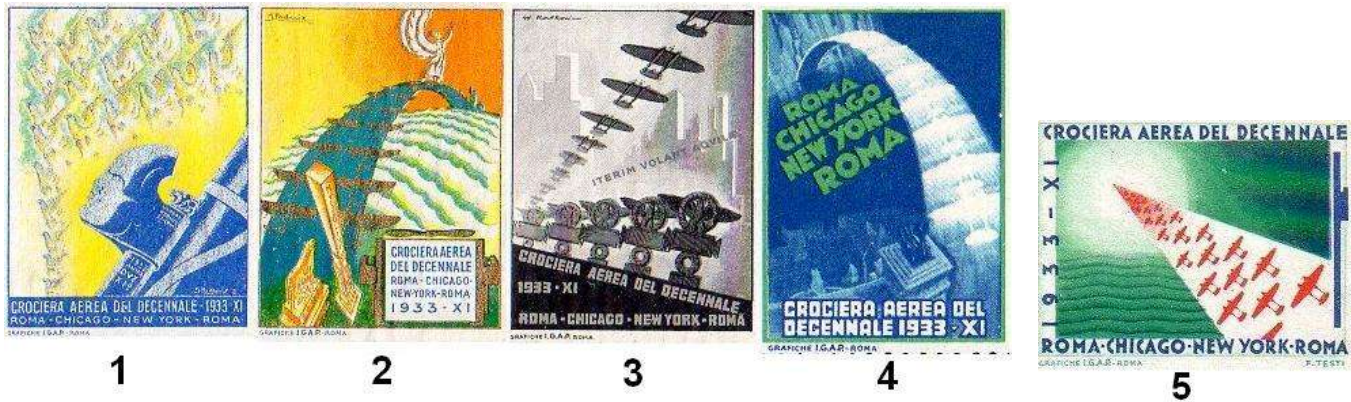
THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

1933 Balbo Flight Labels (Jean-Claude Vasseur)

Besides the 1933 Balbo 'Croceira del Decennale', Italia had produced 5 labels, 30mm x 40mm - except Nb 4 30mm x 41.5mm - which timely showed up on the 'Croceira' mail.



Work was done by GRAPHICE I.G.A.P. in Roma and at least three engravers have signed their works: S. Padini for 1 & 2, W. Rone Roni for 3 and F. TESTI for the last one.

They were produced in panes of 6, and, in the original edition of 1933 (150 panes each label) as well as in the second edition 1933/34, the 5 panes were stapled together in a booklet. It seems that two different booklets exist: one sold in Italy "for the benefit of the aviator's orphans" (upper booklet cover) and one for the US market where the Air Cruise is presented as a "Goodwill Flight" (at right of plane), while all this is pure propaganda of the Italian fascist regime. The booklets shown here are from the 1941 reprint (after Balbo death) which included one pane only produced by (poor) typography on white un-gummed paper while the original panes were produced by calcography or chromolithography in 3 or 4 colours on yellowish gummed paper (1st printing) white gummed paper (2nd printing). Labels 1 and 2 were enhanced by silver and gold (see details below). It should be noted that the Italian wording "Marche Commemorative" properly refers to labels while the English translation ('Stamps') is somewhat incorrect.



Original pane of 6 with staple holes

Historically, in 1933, Mussolini was still a benevolent dictator - officially Prime Minister of the King Victor-Emanuel III and author of a great number of social laws in his country. However, he forbade strikes, controlled unions and imposed a unique party, the 'PNF' (National Fascist Party). Outside of Italy, while maintaining a continuous pressure on neighbour countries, he was still opposed on numerous points to Hitler. In March 1933, he had signed the 'Pact of the Four' with England, France and Germany, to insured peace in Europe in respect of the Rules of the SDN (Société des Nations). It is only after the disastrous war in Ethiopia (1935/36) that he changed his mind. After the promulgation of the Racial Laws in 1938, he became an ally of Hitler in June 1940. By 1933, his objectives were clearly the reestablishment of the Roman Empire glory in Italy and around, as shown in the three first labels.



THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

1933 Balbo Flight Labels (continued)

TITLES: “CROCEIRA AEREA DEL DECENNALE” referred to the tenth anniversary of the access to power of Mussolini in 1922 and the institution of the fascist regime, in 1933; this, because the flight was initially planned for 1932 and was delayed to cope with the Chicago Expo. ‘XI’ – 11 in roman number – referred to the eleventh year of the fascist regime and the new way to count years as desired by the ‘Duce’ – the ‘Guide’ -. The rule became official in 1936.

LABEL 1: The ‘Duce’ head showed as part of a ‘Roman Bundle’ (see at right), emblem of the fascists. In the head a motto in Italian: “Vivere Pericolosamente” i.e. “Live dangerously” was after a poem by Gabriele D’Annunzio, a friend of Mussolini. Below the head, in Latin, ‘1933 Anno Dux XI’, i.e. ‘1933 Duce Year 11’.

The top background showed undefined figures.

LABEL 2: the name of Mussolini showed on the vertical spear beside a representation of the roman she-wolf with Romulus and Remus above letters ‘S.P.Q.R.’ (“Senatus Populusque Romanus”), Roman Empire motto ‘in name of Senate and Roman People’.

Above the planes, an allegorical figure with a branch of olive tree in the left hand – likely symbolizing peace – fly toward the Statue of the Liberty (seen in the far end). Note the title, framed by two golden ‘Roman Bundles’.



LABEL 3: The motto ‘ITERIM VOLANT AQUILAE’ - Eagles fly again – in between a squadron of planes and a line of Roman legion emblems with eagles on top – a double meaning!



The two other labels are more common, and are those usually found on the US and Newfoundland mail. Here is a cover from NY to Geneva (Switzerland), via Balbo flight, with two labels.

Acknowledgment: Many thanks to Ettore Patergnani (Italy) for his help.

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

THE HOPEDALE 'VIKING' FLIGHT OF 1931 – The Editor

Member Jim Leutje send me a scan of an original letter by (Canon) E.E. Rusted from 1963 about the August-September, 1931 Viking flight (AAMC FF-46 and NSSC FF-33). Pete Motson thinks the letter may have been sent to the daughter of flight navigator, Charles F. Rockwell. The seaplane was flown by explorer Com. Donald MacMillan. AAMC states that a total of 24 covers were postmarked in Hopedale, with six of those back to Carbonear. The letter provides clues but there is a lot of confusion in the literature about the Hopedale covers.



Note the date of the postmark is clearly AU 29 31. Although NSSC cites this date both the Harmer Newfoundland Air Mails book (Page 134) and AAMC (at least in the 1997 version) use "AU 2 31". The four covers I have seen are *all* from the 29th. The August 2nd date is so embedded in the literature that in three auctions I have seen it cited although pictured covers showed AU 29! Rev. Rusted iterates the August 2nd date (quoting the Harmer book) but his 1963 letter is 32 years after the fact, so one can forgive his total recall of details. Of the covers I have seen to Rusted, two are typed and two are handwritten (but by different people, neither of whom appear to have been Rusted himself). Rusted states the six covers sent to him by Rockwell (?) have Carbonear backstamps of September 12. These are NSSC FF 33a and list at \$2250 (2006). These may be the only covers of that variety; *however, at least one typed and one handwritten cover have the scarce date*. Would Rockwell have "mixed" the addressing in that manner? Rusted's letter indicates that Rockwell (?) mailed 12 covers to himself but has anyone ever seen one? These might be the covers suggested by AAMC FF 46 – Hopedale-Boston-Hopedale. The following pages show the first two pages of Rusted's letter.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

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

Number 140

July/September 2010

THE HOPEDALE 'VIKING' FLIGHT OF 1931 – Continued

Here is Page 1 of Rev. Rusted's letter. I have increased the contrast to enhance its readability.

Topsail C. B.,
Newfoundland
Sept, 19, 1963

Edith.
Dear (Miss) Edith,

The last letter I received from you, was, with the sad news of your dear father's death. I did so miss his cheerful letters. R. I. P.

The reason for this letter, is this. Someone is interested in the mail carried by Commander Macmillan in August 1931.

Your father, at that time, sent six envelopes, or covers addressed to me by that mail, & sent 12 letters addressed to himself, or friends.

The covers addressed to me, arrived safely. Backstamped Boston - Mass, Sept 8 - 12 M.

CONCLUDED NEXT PAGE

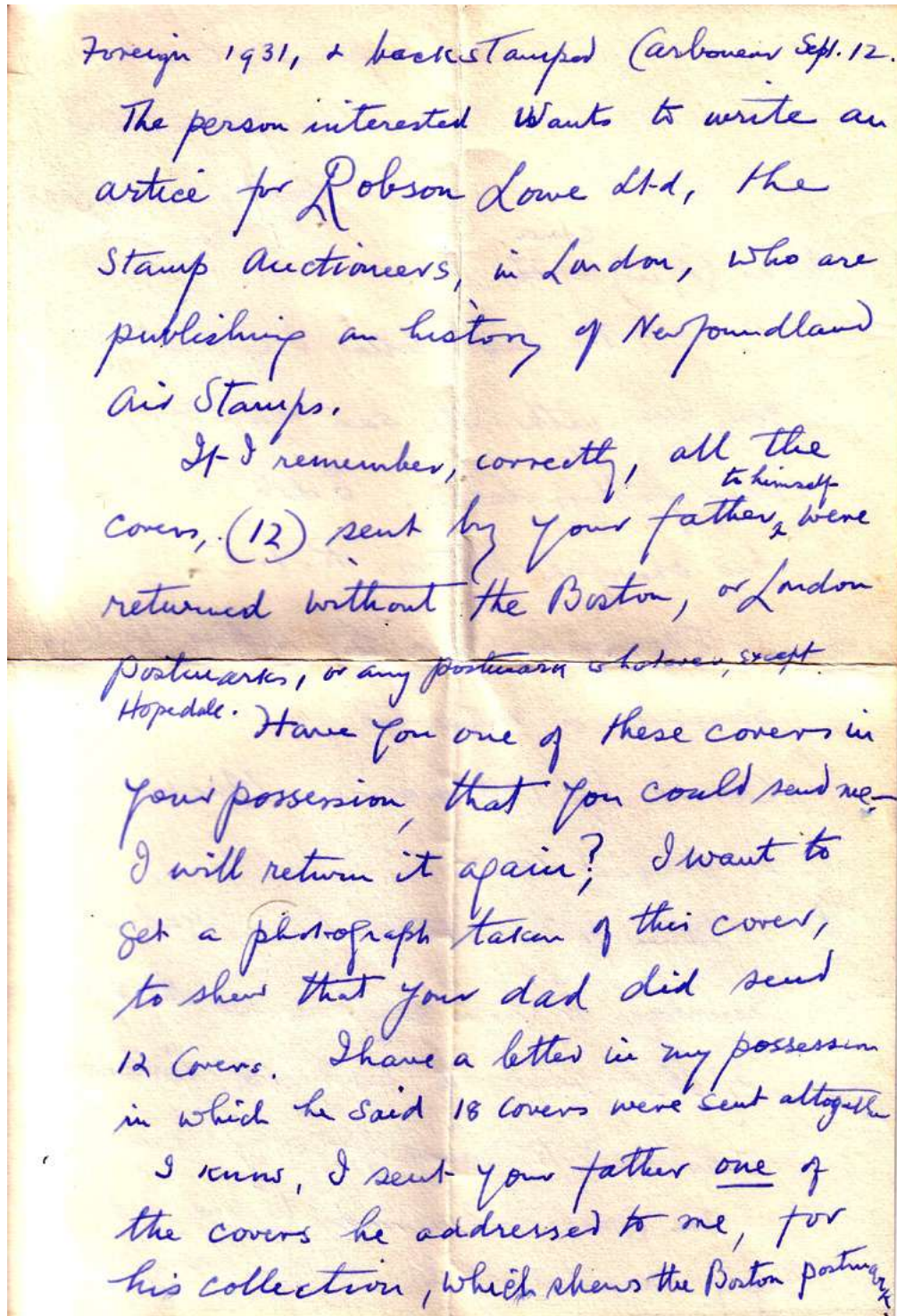
**THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS**

Number 140

July/September 2010

THE HOPEDALE 'VIKING' FLIGHT OF 1931 – Concluded

Here is the second page of Ernest Rusted's letter:



Foreign 1931, 2 backstamped (Carbonair Sept. 12.
The person interested wants to write an
article for Robson Lowe Ltd, the
Stamp Auctioneers, in London, who are
publishing an history of Newfoundland
Air Stamps.
If I remember, correctly, all the
covers, (12) sent by your father, ^{to himself} were
returned without the Boston, or London
postmarks, or any postmark whatever, except
Hopedale. Have you one of these covers in
your possession, that you could send me,
I will return it again? I want to
get a photograph taken of this cover,
to show that your dad did send
12 covers. I have a letter in my possession
in which he said 18 covers were sent altogether.
I know, I sent your father one of
the covers he addressed to me, for
his collection, which shows the Boston postmark.

Rusted continued – "Any information about this flight, or airmail carried by the Viking airplane that you can give me will be gratefully received." He concludes his letter with a line-by-line iteration of C.H.C. Harmer's description of the Hopedale flight in his book. Email me if you want those pages – Editor.

LT. SIR ARTHUR WHITTEN BROWN'S FIRST U.S. PRESENTATION – Editor



In June of 1919, Capt. John Alcock and Lt. Arthur Whitten Brown made the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic from Newfoundland to Ireland - *we all know that* – but I bet this is new to most of you - probably the only surviving program from Lt. Brown's first presentation to the public in the U.S., on October 16, 1919. Above are the front and back pages of the program which was signed by Brown. This piece was part of Dr. Matejka's famous Newfoundland air mail collection. The center pages are shown on the next page. I hope you can make out most of the text. Those of you who get PDF's can use Zoom to make page larger.

Brown was a U.S. citizen and his mother was from Pittsburg. He studied there – so it was fitting that he gave his first speech about his historic flight in that city. Alcock and Brown were knighted for their achievement, thus his title indicated on the front of the program. One can only wonder what the "slides and Motion Pictures" showed!

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

LT. BROWN PROGRAM (Concluded)

LANDED at Clifden at 8:40 A.M., Greenwich mean time, 15th of June, Vickers Vimy Atlantic Machine leaving Newfoundland Coast at 4:28 P.M., Greenwich mean time, 14th of June. Total time, 16 hours 12 minutes." (Signed) Alcock and Brown.

Such was the first, brief and modest message flashed from the airmen in Ireland to the Aero Club of America; the complete tale of an adventurous and amazingly hazardous enterprise was to be told later.

The J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau now has the rare privilege of presenting Lieut. Sir Arthur Whitten Brown, K. B. E., one of the only two men who have ever stood on the continents of America and Europe in the same day, who will tell his original story of this first great accomplishment of peace-times, the Story of the Non-Stop Trans-Atlantic flight as made by Capt. Sir John Alcock and Lieut. Sir Arthur Whitten Brown.

The navigator, Lieut. Sir Arthur Whitten Brown, K. B. E., A. M. I. E. E., M. I. M. E., A. M. F. A. I. E., was born in Glasgow. His parents were both American citizens, his mother being a member of the Whitten family of Pittsburgh. His grandfather fought with the famous Hampden's Battery at Gettysburg. Brown himself lived in Pittsburgh, where he went to continue the studies, at the Westinghouse works, which he had begun in the works in England. By profession he is an Engineer. He received a thorough knowledge of surveying, and being interested in Aviation, devoted time to the study of Aerial Navigation as applied to surveying. It was this hobby which in his frequent crossings of the Atlantic, by steamer, led him to persuade the captains to allow him on the bridge to take a shot at the sun, that made it possible to so direct the course of the plane that notwithstanding the mists and fog he performed what is acknowledged to be the greatest feat of navigation in the history of this science.

In 1914 he enlisted in the University and Public Schools Corps, later receiving a commission in the Manchester Regiment, serving with the 2nd Battalion in France during 1915. Transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, he was wounded and taken prisoner. After being interned in Switzerland he was repatriated in December, 1917. He was later engaged with the Ministry of Munitions on the production of Aero Engines. He is also a pilot of experience and has flown many types of machines.

This pilot, Capt. Sir John Alcock, is an officer of the Royal Air

Force and with but one exception has passed more actual time in the air than any other man, having flown 4,500 hours. Like Lieut. Sir Arthur Whitten Brown, Alcock was a prisoner of war when the armistice was signed, his record bombing trips over Constantinople having resulted in his falling at last into the hands of the Turks. Speaking of him, Brown said, "I watched the compass to see that we were on the course, watched the speedometer and fed Alcock. Yes, this was necessary, for Jack never took his hands off the controls during the entire flight. That in itself was a remarkable feat under a great strain. He is a remarkable chap and the best pilot I know."

Averaging a speed of 120 miles an hour, climbing, diving, looping the loop and at times flying upside down, because the fogs and mists of the North Atlantic had blotted out the sun, moon and stars and they had no sense of the horizon, the flight of 1,960 miles was successfully carried out. Among other things this stupendous achievement, the greatest of the age, set a new world's distance record for a heavier than air machine, a machine which could not alight upon the water. It is Brown's opinion now that the flying boat is the only plane for such a flight; had they been forced to come down it would have been impossible to start again from the water. A gravity gasoline tank at the top of the fuselage was arranged to be emptied first so it could serve as a life raft any time after the first two hours of the flight. This tank and the Safety-at-Sea Suits which both men wore were the only protection afforded them in case of a descent.

During the flight they flew through atmosphere so cold that ice caked on the instruments and shortly after the "take-off" the small propeller designed to drive the dynamo, generating current for the wireless radio set, jarred loose and was blown away, leaving the world in ignorance of the progress of the plane and the men were thus left without any means of signalling for aid.

The plane, a Vickers-Vimy, motored with Twin Eagle Rolls-Royce Engines, is the bombing type plane and its conversion to this great peace-time adventure was accomplished by merely replacing the fighting equipment with extra tanks for gasoline, giving a total capacity of 870 gallons, two thirds of which was used in the flight.

Alcock and Brown were knighted by King George last June upon their arrival in England, the announcement of this honor being made by Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill at the same time that he presented them with Lord Northcliffe's "Daily Mail" prize of \$50,000, offered in 1913 for the first non-stop unaided flight across the Atlantic.

These the center pages of the October, 1919 program for Lt. Brown's speech in Pittsburgh. The horizontal format makes it somewhat difficult to show but I do hope you can make out the text.

On December 19, 1919, Brown's flight partner, Captain Sir John Alcock, died in an aircraft accident in France. While Cyril Harmer wrote it was at Cote d'Evrard, a French group member (and Newfoundland air mail expert) Jean-Claude Vasseur says Alcock crashed his plane near a small city called Cottevrand, which is in Normandy.

Brown was stunned by Alcock's death and never flew again as a crew member. He joined Vickers and rose to general manager, dying in 1948.

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

NEWFOUNDLAND'S 1897 POSTAL SHORTAGE- ANNOTATED

Norris (Bob) Dyer - Page 2.

1897 POSTAL SHORTAGE



Only the low values of the 14-stamp Cabot issue of June, 1897 sold well. By mid-September just 15,000 1¢ stamps remained. With the plates destroyed, a crisis ensued. 1¢ stamps were used mainly for drop letters, circulars and third class mail.

This bisect was accepted at the G.P.O. on OC 2 97 only to meet the 1¢ rate. All recorded covers are addressed to P.G. Tessier.



THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

NOTES ON 1897 SURCHARGE EXHIBIT – PAGE 2.

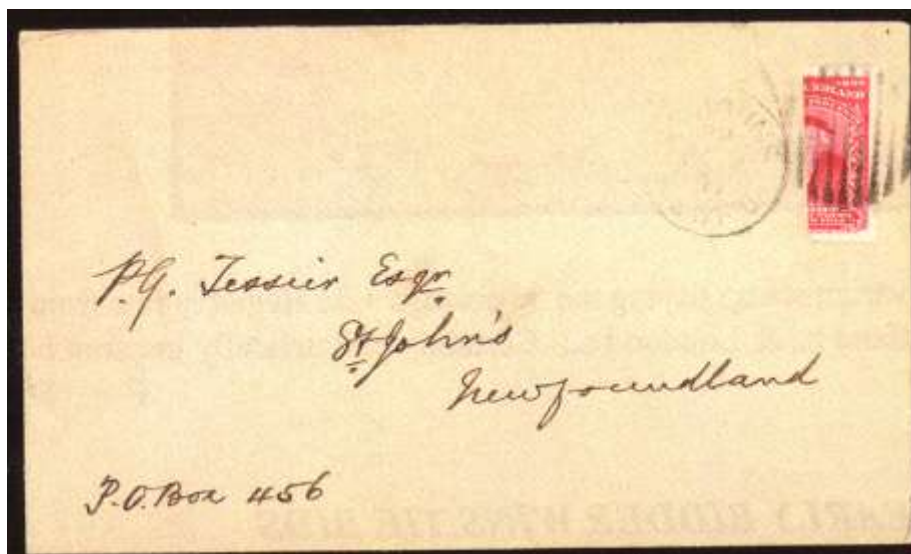
400,000 of the one-cent Cabot with the image of Queen Victoria were printed. Gregory Pope believes they were first made available to the public on June 25, 1897 (*Newfie Newsletter* #138, Page 15). It was the queen's jubilee year, so loyal Newfoundlanders could buy a pretty souvenir for just \$1 - a sheet of 100, and many did. The one-cent rate was heavily used for drop/local covers, also. Based upon data I found in Robert Pratt's work and estimates by Robson Lowe, I estimate one-cent stamps were used on upwards of 200,000 covers **a year** at this time. Even this high rate of usage would not lead to the mid-September shortage. Speculation and souvenir-buying must have generated more sales by the Post Office than for postal use. Also, supporting this conclusion is the small number of surviving covers franked with one-cent issue between June and September, 1897.

The block was purchased about twenty years ago in downtown Victoria when there were a number of stamp shops close to each other, either on Fort Street or Pandora Avenue (I cannot remember which). This dealer had sheets but a block of twelve was all I wanted at that point.

With the stock of one-cent stamps down to 15,000 on September 10th, Colonial Secretary Robert Bond telegraphed for "new designs for 1¢ and 2¢." In late September the surcharged issues were authorized (more about that later) as a stop-gap. They would **not** become available until October 19th, however, so other solutions were needed.

On October 2, 1897, a small number of covers were sent to P.G. Tessier, with *bisected* two-cent stamps (see example on bottom of exhibit page). Robson Lowe says they were "accepted" at the G.P.O. All covers from this date are to Tessier. In 1926, Herman Focke, in *Mekeel's*, 12-27 described him as one of Newfoundland's "greatest collectors and specialists." Indeed, we will hear more about attorney Tessier later in this series.

There is also something curious about the covers to Tessier – they are not all in the same handwriting. Was he concerned about being too obvious a presence at the G.P.O.? Tessier used bisected two-cent orange codfish stamps and the two-cent Cabot issue (also in low supply). This cover could serve as a suitable alternative for the cover displayed on this exhibit page.



THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 140

July/September 2010

Newfoundland Specialized Stamp Catalogue

The larger original version is sold out



7th edition
is now
available
in two
volumes



Volume I at 342 pages is the
Newfoundland Specialized section.
+ magnifier; Nfld. map; decimal
perforation gauge

Price: Can \$85-

Shipped Xpresspost
to North America \$110-

Int'l Airmail \$125-

Volume II at 263 pages is the **British
North America Specialized** section.
+ detailed stamp and postal rates of
BNA Colonies:
New Brunswick; Nova Scotia;
British Columbia;
Prince Edward Island;
Classic Canada 1851 - 1951

Price: Can \$60-

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to North America \$85-

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