

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 158

January-March 2015

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In the last newsletter your Editor, Bob Dyer asked for someone to volunteer to co-edit your newsletter. I have enjoyed The Newfie Newsletter for many years and when the call went out for help I couldn't turn down the opportunity to get involved. Although I have not edited a Philatelic publication, I do have experience editing various newsletters for other organizations including the Walker Mineralogical Club in Toronto, Ontario (past editor), and the York Durham Heritage Railway Association in Uxbridge, Ontario (present editor). Like many, I was introduced to stamp collecting at an early age by my father. He is now a young 92 and we continue to enjoy the hobby together, going to local stamp shows whenever we can.

My collecting interests include the Canadian provinces, as well as Canada, Great Britain, and many British Commonwealth countries, especially in Africa. I am a member of the RPSC and the BNAPS.

I want to thank Bob Dyer for his encouragement and guidance, and I look forward to working with him on the newsletter in the future.

Malcolm Back



Howard (brother), Cyril (father), and Malcolm Back on the occasion of Cyril's 90th birthday, celebrated in Hamilton Ontario with a flight in the Lancaster bomber.

Chairman/Editor: Norris (Bob) Dyer, 1708 Granada Court, Petaluma, CA 94954
Editor: Malcolm Back, 97 Stuart Street, Stouffville, ON L4A 4S4
Treasurer/Circulation: Martin Goebel, 13 O'Mara Place, St. John's NL A1A 5B7

nrdyer@comcast.net
mback1217@rogers.com
goebel@nf.sympatico.ca

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**Some Thoughts on "More Proof of Printed Sheet Size of the 3c
Newfoundland 1923 Pictorial Issue" in the Last Issue**

By C.A. Stillions

I have to take issue with John Walsh's conclusions concerning the 3c Newfoundland 1923 Pictorial Issue expressed in the last Newfie Newsletter. I do not believe the extraneous perforation holes in the top selvage of the top center block of eight is proof of a double pane sheet. They do indicate the sheet moved through the perforator with the images in the vertical orientation. The extraneous holes just indicate that this particular sheet hung-up moving through the feeder mechanism and over lapped with the previous sheet. It is not unlike today when the batch feeders on our computer printers pick up more than one sheet of paper at time. It is interesting to note that today's product engineers still have not been able to solve the same sheet feeder problems their great grandfathers faced. In order to prove the printing plate was laid down with multiple panes, full proof sheets or plate proofs multiples with a gutter need to be found.

Also John Walsh also states "...some lower values in the 1942 Second Resources were printed in sheets having 4 panes of 100 images." This statement is not supported by John Ayshford's, "The Last Stamps of Newfoundland"¹. Ayshford examined the Waterlow archives before they were broken down and sold. He does not list any printing of any values using plates with more than two panes of 100 images. Only the last printings of the 1c Codfish, 2c King George VI, 3c Queen Elizabeth, 4c adult Princess Elizabeth, and the 5c Caribou are recorded using plates with two panes of 100 images. All others are from plates using a single pane of 100 images. I hope there was a "typo" and John meant to say "...some lower values in the 1942 Second Resources were printed in sheets having 2 panes of 100 images."

1. *The Last Stamps of Newfoundland*, by John Ayshford, Edited by Mike Brachi, 1978, Robson Lowe Limited.

Response from John M. Walsh FRPSC

As Stillions does say I (Stillions) do not believe. He is entitled to his opinion or any belief he wishes. So, all we have here is he does not believe. And I do believe. Whereas I (Walsh) believe and can show images that prove it. Others have stated such items that the images show do not exist. Utter foolishness. Both are opinions because Stillions and Walsh were not there at time of printing. However Walsh can prove his opinion. Just because a person (Ayshford) says he studied 1942 archival material does not show he saw the original plate. He saw what was saved in storage by the company. He saw what was cut and stored. When you read his article there are discrepancies here and there in it. Other persons have stated that these printing companies did not have the printing presses to do double pane sheets or even four pane sheets. That was proven false by Walsh. The same was shown for the 1932 issue; yet no one saw any multiple printed material in their archives. The layout of the 1942 issue demonstrates that large sheets were used and then cut down.

All have beliefs that do get turned into opinions; the above is mine. Others will have their own.

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The Perfin Corner - GK perfins. by Barry Senior

1911 Royal Family Issue

The 1 cent, 2 cent and 5 cent values are recorded. All are known in positions 1, 3, 5 and 7 while the 2 cent and 5 cent are known in other positions as well.



Position 1



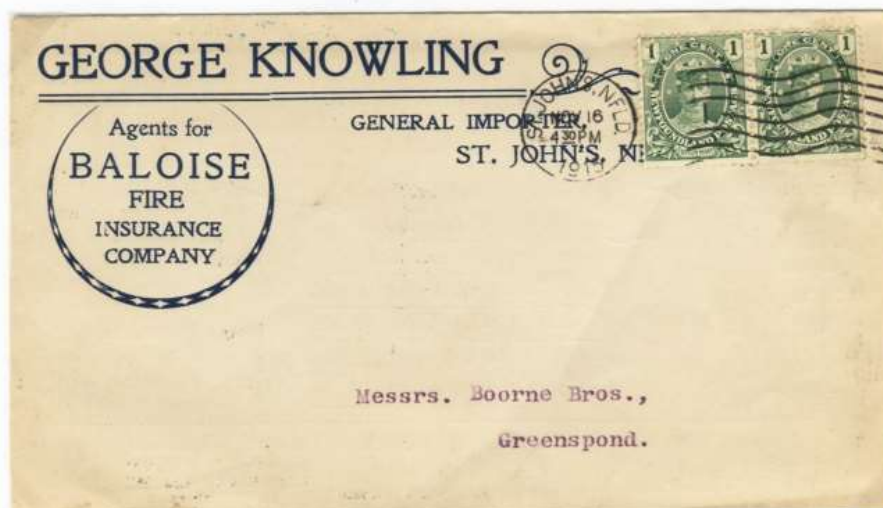
Position 3



Position 5



Position 7



2 cent Inland Letter Rate, 1915. This is the only such recorded usage.

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My Favourite Covers by Rob Moore

Pope Furniture has provided us with some of the most interesting illustrated advertising covers to collect. These covers, like the Newfoundland furniture that is illustrated on them, are very desirable to Newfoundland collectors. According to therooms.ca/museum/mnotes7.asp, "it is believed that Pope's was Newfoundland's first and longest surviving furniture factory. This firm began making furniture and coffins in 1860 and later expanded to mass produce a general line of household furniture including mattresses and bolsters. Pope's Furniture Factory ceased to operate in 1958."

I am providing images of my Pope collection showing various hutches for dining room, curio cabinets, dressers and wash vanities for bedrooms. Other covers have printed on the front "Manufacturers of Furniture for seventy years/seventy-five years/eighty years and ninety years with illustrations showing their factory buildings on the back of some of these covers. Figure 1 is showing an actual wash vanity as illustrated on cover as it was used in many out-port communities in bedrooms before modern plumbing was introduced.



Figure1. Wash Vanity similar to one from Pope's Furniture. Pope had their firm name ink stamped on the back of each piece. This one does not because it was either refinished or could have been made by another Newfoundland furniture maker.

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My Favourite Covers - continued



Figure 2. Cancelled St. John's, June 10 1933, a two drawer dresser and a wash vanity similar to the one illustrated in Figure 1. This cover shows Pope's distinctive comb stained wood grain. The reverse has illustrated buildings same as figure 4.



Figure 3. Cancelled St. John's May 22, 1937, the reverse shows same illustrations as figure 4.

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Their factory building on the corner of Waldegrave & George Street actually still stands and visitors to St. John's will see that it is occupied by a restaurant called Relish Gourmet Burgers, and before that it was the Salvation Army Thrift Shop.



Figure 4. Illustrations of Pope's Factory buildings on reverse of cover

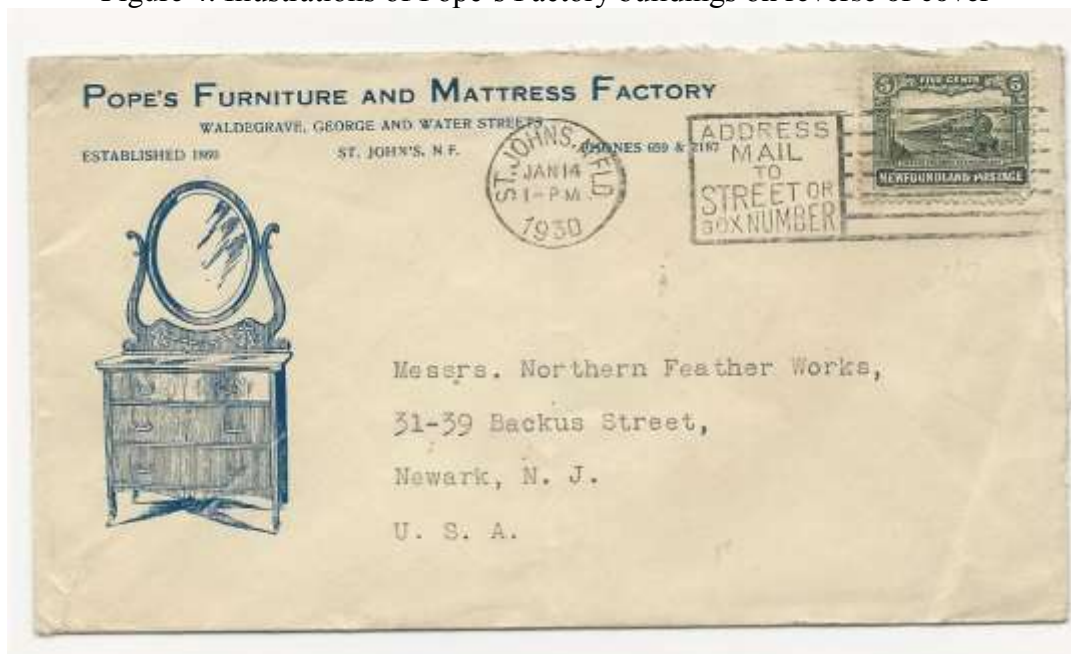


Figure 5. Cancelled St. John's, January 14, 1930, illustrating five drawer ladies dresser. The reverse has no cancels.

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My Favourite Covers - concluded



Figure6. Cancelled St. John's, June 26 1922, illustrating a curio cabinet. The reverse has no cancels.



Cancelled St. John's September 10 1927, illustrating dining room hutch. The reverse has no cancels.

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Rev. Butler and the Orphan (Part 1) by Bruce Robertson

I have often wondered how Rev Butler managed to build his mail- order stamp business into a world-wide operation, working out of a rectory in the remote community of Sandy Point, St Georges Bay, on the south west coast of Newfoundland.

Of course stamp collecting was still in its hey-day during the period Butler was trading in the early 1920s to late 1940s. No doubt Newfoundland's north American location, together with its proud status as Britain's oldest colony together with its unique role in the development of trans-Atlantic flights and airmail, assured a place on the world's 'philatelic map'. Additionally, Newfoundland's colourful and well designed stamp issues proved eye-catching and popular stamps which were sought after by collectors around the globe.

But Sandy Point, with "about 300 or 400 people living here" as young Clive Hynes described it[i] , was a long way from the hustle and bustle of Nassau Street New York or across the Atlantic, the hallowed portals of Stanley Gibbons and the auction houses of London – nor could Rev. Butler's mail order operation compete with the resources or huge philatelic departments of stores such as Gimbels in New York or Selfridges in London.

Instead, Butler pursued a course of constant classified advertisements in popular journals and magazines such as Popular Mechanics and issuing annual price lists. But he also appears to have hit upon a novel marketing angle – instead of advertising himself in stamp magazines and periodicals, he advertised the magazines and periodicals - securing tie-ups where he offered a selection of stamps in return for a new subscription[ii]. The publications loved it. He was not beyond emphasizing his clerical credentials and making a discreet 'recommendation' of the particular publication. Today we would recognize this as 'product placement' – a little bit like getting your brand of watch to be worn by James Bond in the latest block-buster movie. But getting your stamp dealership mentioned approvingly in all the leading philatelic publications was surely a stroke of marketing genius.



Fig 1. Incoming cover to Rev Butler in 1946 with the printed address label supplied by Butler to his customers, with the customer's reference number in the left-hand box.(Author's collection)

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Rev. Butler and the Orphan (Part 1) - continued

We have no way of really knowing how successful Butler's marketing was, or how many customers he 'had on his books' at any one time. However we know from the customer number labels that he had a system for recording customer's details – and towards the end of the 1930s, the numbers were approaching 2000. We must remember that this was well before electronic communications – even his corner-card covers were invariably hand addressed up until the 1940s[iii].

This brings us to musing on the hand-writing found on the majority of Butler's outgoing covers. Examples of Butler's own hand-written addresses are quite easy to spot, and demonstrate a strong style and several 'signature' characteristics.



Fig 2. Butler's distinctive handwriting on a self-addressed Imperial Air Mail 'first flight' cover with double rim circular Botwood NFLD cancel of 6 Aug. 1939. Butler invariably used the 'rounded' capital A, as in 'U.S.A'. He wrote his initial 'E' as a backward '3'. His 'N' were compacted at the top and the cross bar on his 't' were what are known as 'flying' cross-bars. Collectors will recognise the cover as produced by A.C. Roessler, and supports the theory that Butler co-operated with Roessler in a number of philatelic 'partnerships'. (Author's collection)

Writing in other hands pop-up regularly, but are far less distinctive or assured. I have always assumed that Rev Butler might have enjoyed the help of his wife, Caroline in handling correspondence – or perhaps enticing the help of his younger children (John, Clare and Christabel) with the lure of weekly pocket money. I have no evidence of any such arrangements.

In Part 2, I will reveal the fascinating details of one of Rev. Butler's helpers".

Part1 , continued on next page with Figures 3 and 4.

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Fig 3. Butler Corner Card Cover with blue double rim oval Postal Telegraphs/Sandy Point, St. George's cancel dated May 1, 1931. Hand written address not in Rev Butler's hand. The number '460' is taken to be the customer's mail-order reference number. (Author's collection)



Fig 4. Butler's Price List Corner Card Cover with a split-ring Sandy Point/NFLD cancel of 19 Nov. 1941. Hand written address not in Rev Butler's hand. The addressee, Stephen G. Rich, was a well known American philatelist and 4th President (1935-1939) of the West Essex Philatelic Society, Verona New Jersey[iv] (Author's collection)

[i] Letter from Clyde C Hynes, dated Sandy Point St Georges, March 19th 1938 to South. Portland Maine U.S.A. In the author's collection.

[ii] Bob Dyer briefly covered this area of Rev Butler's work in his article in The Newfie Newsletter Number 123, March/April 2007 where he cited examples of tie-ups with *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*, *Stamp Topics* and *Weekly Philatelic Gossip*. The Author has seen other examples including Lindquist's *Stamps*, and even *The Canadian Stamp Collector* 'Official Organ Canadian Philatelic Society – Canada's only Philatelic Journal'.

[iii] There are examples of Butler covers with typed addresses, but these appear on philatelic covers and quite possibly were prepared by third parties for particular issues, or on Butler's catalogue mail-outs. Type written addresses began to be used on Butler's outgoing commercial correspondence in the 1940s – although not universally, and many examples of hand-addressed covers can be found.

[iv] Stephen R Rich's Presidency of the West Essex Philatelic Society and his membership of the S.P.A. (Society of Philatelic Americans) was confirmed by Bob Parkin, current President of the West Essex Philatelic Society in email correspondence with the author.

End of Part 1; watch for part 2 in the next Newfie Newsletter

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Newfoundland Airmail & Slanted Surcharges – Jean-Claude Vasseur

When does a stamp curiosity deserve to be a variety? D. R. Thistle, owner of the Newfoundland Gazette and King's printer (from 1924) is known to have surcharged two of the famous air mail stamps of Newfoundland: the "Columbia" (1930) and the "DO-X" (1932).

Both were surcharged on a small a press allowing only a surcharge on blocks of four stamps. Both were a late order by the G.P.O. requiring the work to be performed within few days, sometimes a weekend. Very likely operation of the press was manual, and time performance being a prerequisite, the result was not as good as expected. The main consequence being that centering, alignment and inking of the surcharges were significantly variable.

"COLUMBIA":

Most of the 75 surcharged blocks were slightly slanted, usually counter-clockwise (to the left). Here below at left, (scarce) almost perfect stamp (excellent alignment, inking and fair centering), in center a (usual) stamp (significantly slanted) and at right a stamp with poor inking AND SLANTED... and no variety is mentioned or should be mentioned. As an example the following stamps – as far as I have been able to compute them from large size printing – are slanted between 0 and 4%:



about 0%



about 2.5%



about 4%

... and, to my point of view, the stamp at left is a more valuable stamp than the stamp at right!

"DO-X":

This stamp does not escape the same reproaches.

First of all, the vertical distance between surcharges is larger by about 1mm from the distance (center to center) of stamps. This is such that if the "ONE DOLLAR" value is correctly cancelled on



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the lower row, same is almost un-cancelled on the stamp of the upper row. Stamp at right is a good example of what can be found if the overall surcharge on the block is somewhat too high. (author's col.)

Same thing horizontally! If surcharges at right of the blocks are well centered, surcharges at left are to the left by about the same amount (1 mm).

Additionally, most stamps/blocks show poor inking, misalignment and slanting ... as above stamps. Let's forget poor inking and misalignment. It is time to speak of slanting as this was the subject of the announcement made in the Newfie Newsletter NN 156. Before going in detail on the problems related to this announcement, I am showing below another detail relating to the overall surcharge – NEVER MENTIONED AS FAR AS I KNOW - which would interfere with the discussion. See below (author's col.):



This picture has first of all been aligned with a tool to insure that the stamps are shown perfectly horizontal. Then I have trace lines, perfectly horizontal (with my computer) below the upper line of each of the stamps.

OBVIOUSLY, WHILE SURCHARGES AT RIGHT ARE HORIZONTAL, SURCHARGES AT LEFT ARE NOT. FURTHERMORE THE LOWER LEFT SURCHARGE IS MORE SLANTED THAN THE SURCHARGE JUST ABOVE.

Note: While stamp at lower right is perfectly centered, this example also shows the horizontal and vertical error of alignment of the surcharges on the other stamps.

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As computed by me, the slanting percentage on the line "TRANS-ATLANTIC" (lower left stamp) is about 0.8% ... but other lines in the same stamp may show differently ... as well as the lines in stamp above which looks less slanted (not measured).

The value (0.8%) may be small, but compared to the presumed references (3.3% and 1%), it is significant and may impair results on single stamps.

1st problem: The discovery that all of the stamps of a block have different slanting puts a question mark on the interest to introduce a reference for slanting surcharges on single stamps.

2nd problem: When V.G. GREEN is mentioning 3.3%, is it the "overall" slanting of the surcharge block (and how was this measured/computed?) or is it the slant of an individual stamp? If this is an individual stamp: which position on the block, which line and how was it measured?

Now let's see how a philatelist could handle the problem. Very likely he will do as I did. Make an accurate scan of his block or stamp (600dpi or better), use an imaging tool to be sure that the stamp(s) are perfectly horizontal, trace horizontal and vertical lines to delimitate the selected area, then print the result, make measurements, distance and elevation, the later requiring a microscope (I have been using a 40x binocular) to evaluate the elevation in tenths of a mm. and finally compute the percentage. Quite simple ... but the method suffers from a number of uncertainties:

- respect of proportions on a scanner is questionable;
- respect of proportion while printing is questionable;
- measurements (especially the elevation) is questionable due to the presence of pixels on final picture.

Actually, I did measurements that way... and was not fully confident in the result.

3rd problem: While we still do not know what has been measured (and should be measured in the future), the philatelist has a technical problem to measure accurately similar stamps. Not only he does not know what has been measured, but there is uncertainty on the results found using ordinary methods at disposition of a philatelist.

I presume that V.G. GREEN has been using performing imaging tools to do so ... which are not in the hands of philatelists. **May be, V.G. GREEN is expecting the public to send their (numerous) examples for certification?**

Finally the pertinence and interest of the announcement and its usage in catalogues must be discussed.

To my knowledge, the block measured by V.G. GREEN is the most slanted block known. Fair enough for making measurement (as far as what has been measured is well documented). Also, to my

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knowledge, some catalogues intend to use the value as a reference, i.e. “the variety SLANTED refers to stamps having a slant of at least 3.3% ”. This is nonsense. The reference refers to the most slanted block known. It is unlikely that similar stamps would be found.

What philatelists are expecting is a reference which, in an ocean of slanted stamps, permits them to qualify their stamps as STRONGLY SLANTED, even at a lesser estimated value than shown in the article. This would require making a sufficiently large database of the existing stamps in order to evaluate what is sufficiently rare to deserve such aqualification, since catalogues have decided to list this “variety”. (see below)

To summarize:

- **The reference is insufficiently documented;**
- **Philatelists are unable to make as accurate a measurement;**
- **The listing in catalogues is useless for philatelists, as is.**

Now, let’s come back to my first question: Is this stamp deserving of a special notation for slanting surcharge?

I do believe that slanted “DO-X” are mentioned in catalogues because the red surcharge on the large “DO-X” is appealing and slanted stamp, when in blocks, striking.

Actually equivalent percentage of slanting occurs on a large proportion of the other surcharges produced by D. R. Thistle, and making a special case of the “DO-X” which was produced in the same conditions, with about the same proportion of errors is not appropriate.

They are all badly printed surcharges and electing the most badly printed surcharge to the rank of a reference is not deserving philately, especially when the conditions of the establishment of the reference are not well documented.

Catalogues have decided to specify these stamps in their listing as a high value variety. They should not. Scarce stamps throughout the production of D. R. Thistle are the few stamps without defect. The defective stamps are the majority and should be treated as such. The slanted “variety” should not be mentioned. It is just a “curiosity” of D. R. Thistle production.

Meanwhile, I do not expect the catalogues editors to change their mind and will continue to list slanted “DO-X” surcharges. Thus, I propose that their listing of the “DO-X” should be amended as follows:

stamp (slightly or significantly defective) basic value;
stamp no defect high premium on basic value;
strongly slanted premium on basic value.
Note: a block is known with 3.3% slanting.

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It would remain to put a realistic method of estimation and value of what is “strongly” slanted. Obviously 1%, as mentioned in the article, is not the appropriate value as it has been demonstrated above that, within a fine block, at least one stamp is close to matching this goal and that overall a large quantity of stamps actually do match it! Experts must debate the matter on the basis of a larger study. Likely a value of around 2.5% would be more appropriate.

In my opinion, it would be better to remove the so-called “slanting variety” which, as demonstrated, is not a variety but a curiosity of D. R. Thistle production. Meanwhile the mention of the block of the “DO-X with the largest known slant” should remain, leaving it up to the market to decide on its value when available ... as well as for similar blocks (not stamps!) which may or may not show up.

“BALBO”:

This surcharge was made the year after by Robinson and Co... and they were surcharged similarly on a small press allowing only blocks of four – perhaps even the same press.

Besides the well-known varieties, examination of the numerous examples available on the market, including blocks, shows, as above, inconstancies in the production with a large percentage of examples showing misalignment, slight slanting and variations in inking. Actually, perfect stamps are scarce... as above, and no varieties are mentioned except the essay (on 10c), inverted surcharge and inverted watermark ... **and there is no reason to mention misaligned or slanted stamps ... as they are the majority. As above, a well centered and horizontal surcharge is more valuable than stamps illustrated below!**



Above at left, poor inking, surcharge to right and significant slanting to the left, at right SLANTED to the left 3%.

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Financial Statement as of December 31, 2014

	Item	Debit	Credit
Dec. 31, 2013	Balance Forward from Previous Year		\$1,582.77
	BNAPS Stipend and Membership Credits (overdue)		0.00
	72 Membership dues ^(6 memberships were paid in advance in 2013)		675.73
	12 Membership dues paid in advance		97.00
	Newsletter reimbursement (advertising)		0.00
	Donations		158.89
	Service Charges (Cheques, etc.)	0.00	
	Newsletter Postage (4 issues)	325.65	
	Paper and Copying	490.85	
	Misc. Stationary and Postage	23.52	
	Totals	\$840.02	\$931.62
Dec. 31, 2014	Balance on hand		\$1,674.37

-----✂----- **Membership Application / Change of Information Form** -----✂-----

BNAPS Newfoundland Study Group			
Name:	<hr/>		
Address:	<hr/>		
	<hr/>		
Postal Code:	<hr/>	Email:	<hr/>
Telephone:	(Home): <hr/>	(Office):	<hr/>
Annual dues:	Canadian Dollars	\$13.00	\$5.00 (email only)
	US Dollars	\$13.00	\$5.00 (email only)
	British Pound	£8.00	£3.00 (email only)
<p>Please make your cheque or money order payable to: BNAPS Newfoundland Study Group Care of the Treasurer Martin Goebel, 13 O'Mara Place, St. John's NL A1A 5B7, Canada Goebel@nf.sympatico.ca</p>			
<p><i>All <u>new</u> members are requested to kindly remit a copy of this form for accounting and mailing. Thank you!</i></p>			