

The Newfoundland Specialized Stamp Catalogue (NSSC):

A Brief Survey of the Eight Editions by Thomas F. Nemeč, Ph.D. December 2011

Tom Nemeč retired from teaching as a full professor of anthropology in 2004; in 2007 he retired as an honorary research professor.

Those who study Newfoundland stamps, stationery and postal history must do research by consulting renowned philatelists and studying philatelic and historical publications, stamp and auction catalogues (with prices realized) and retail price lists. To better understand their own collections Walsh and Butt discussed their research results with local, national and international philatelists. Encouraged, they decided to publish a catalogue without prices that was a useful handbook in 1988. It boldly introduced a new numbering system to replace the antiquated systems initially developed in the USA and UK in the 1800s. As such, they challenged philatelists to reconsider the organizing principles underlying the now orthodox established systems. Following feedback they produced the 2nd edition in 1992. Realistic valuations for stamps and collateral material were suggested along with Walsh's findings on plate numbers which challenged the work of some specialists. Butt also introduced his preliminary work on outport, town and city post offices and cancels. The 17,000 km coasts of the Colony (since 1824) had anchorages that had been the sites of seasonal fishing and whaling stations since the 1500s. Eventually, between 1200 to 1500 outports were eventually established - some of which had post offices - by the late 1800s. The 3rd edition (1995) added postal rates, first flights and heretofore unknown perforation varieties. Recognition of the popularity of local pre-1949 viewcards or picture postcards (ppcs) was represented by a long list of publishers with the card captions and numeric labels. By the 4th edition (1998) that list had grown to 3600. Although most ppcs were printed locally, many others were produced elsewhere during the Edwardian era. Collecting them became a new popular hobby. Following Butt's death in 2000 Walsh soldiered on facilitated by the emergence of internet web access. The 5th (2002) added yet another collateral field of ephemera: commercial covers with or without cachets and advertisements. The rapid proliferation of business stationery reflected the Colony's developing economy and affords time capsule-like views of the products and services provided. With the expansion of the collateral sections the specialized catalogue was now also an indispensable handbook.

The 6th edition (2006) challenged existing Canadian catalogues by incorporating substantial contributions on "New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island and Classic Canada to 1951" (NSSC, 2006: 334). It was written by Walsh "with assistance from C.R. McGuire and contributions from Charles J.G. Verge and detailed Canada postal rate information from Brian D. Murphy and with help from Robert C. Smith." McGuire points out "It complements the period that Newfoundland existed as its own country." The cataloguing principle Walsh and Butt introduced in 1988 to enumerate Newfoundland issues continues: "... stamps printed from the same plate and/or with the same design are all listed together under one whole number." As a hefty volume of more than 500 pages, with colour illustrations it is a continuing labour of love for Walsh and a testament to his colleague John G. Butt.

In 2010 the 7th edition, a tome of well over 600 pages, was released; updates continued. Due to its size it has been re-released in two volumes: *Newfoundland Specialized, Vol. I* with 378 pages and *British North America Specialized, Vol. II* with 265 pages. In Vol. I the major addition is Peter de Groot's (deceased in 2010) research dealing with the rate fee structure as found on revenue documents. Now one could finally make sense of the franking found on documents. Volume II contains two additions: postal rates for NB., NS., BC. and PEI. and semi - official Canada airmail issues. The flights covers involving these semi-official issues are placed in sequential and chronological order.

The 8th edition was released in 2012 as two eBooks; **Walsh Newfoundland Specialized Stamp Catalogue** and **Walsh British North America Specialized Stamp Catalogue**. Together they have more than 750 pages of information. The many semi - official flights are now incorporated as well a substantial listing of Canada Government Official Airmail Flights to 1996. Forgery items of Newfoundland stamps as well all the BNA Colonies are added.

Now, the question is: what will a 9th edition contain, not whether?

p.s.: by Walsh: this 9th edition has removed the previously listed and separate 1876 - 79 Rouletted issue. Now they are found under their corresponding original dies found in the First Cents and Second Cents issues. Because of this the sequence of whole numbering has changed throughout. They were moved because NSSC lists stamps by die changes not by paper separation techniques. Rouletted is a term used when a wheel having slits is employed to cut paper to enable its separation.

The 1897 Cabot Trial Surcharges are renumbered to enable placement into their sequential year of production.

The Newfoundland section has 490 pages.

The British North America section has 569 pages and has revenue issues as stated.