

Newfoundland Postage Stamps, 1857–1947 : A Brief Historical and Iconographic Study by Thomas F. Nemec, Ph.D.

Between January 1, 1857 and June 24, 1947 approximately three hundred different postage stamps were released by the Newfoundland Post Office. These stamps were used for letter, parcel and airmail until April 01, 1949 when they were replaced by Canadian stamps. Since they were not demonetized, Newfoundland stamps can still be used legally on mail posted in Canada.

Besides Newfoundland's definitive, commemorative and airmail stamps, collectors can study and collect postage due, official seal, revenue, money order, transportation, customs duty, beer, war savings and cigarette stamps. Philatelists can also collect various types of covers, such as stampless, postal rates, pioneer airmail flight and first day covers, and postal stationary, including post cards, envelopes, wrappers and advertising covers.

Collectors of the stamps of British North America still avidly compete for Newfoundland stamps and covers at stamp auctions throughout the world. In fact, a few Newfoundland stamps and covers are counted amongst the world's great rarities and have catalogue values in the tens of thousands of dollars. Nevertheless, most Newfoundland stamps are priced well within the reach of collectors with even modest budgets.

Besides their value to collectors, Newfoundland's stamps are also noteworthy for their designs. From either an aesthetic or an iconographic perspective close study of the designs can yield fascinating results. Although some of the designs are either derivative or similar to those used by other colonies and countries, many were unique and are considered gems by many philatelists. From an iconographic perspective the designs reflect the concerns and priorities of Newfoundlanders and especially the politicians and officials involved in the selection process. Many concerns such as natural resources, geographic landmarks, historical monuments, and colonial and national symbols recur and represent continuities between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The designs reflect changes in the British royal family from the reign of Queen Victoria to King George VI.

Pence Issue

The Colony's first adhesive postage stamps were printed in England by the firm Perkins, Bacon and Co. Ltd. The stamps were the result of prolonged efforts by the "Post Master", William Solomon. His father, Simon, had served as the Colony's first "Post Master" from 1809 to 1839 (A.B. Perlin, 1959:128).

The "Pence" issue as it is called by collectors consisted of nine different values from one pence to one shilling. Except for the inscription, "St. John's, Newfoundland", the stamps are similar in design to those printed previously for other colonies and countries.

1d. & 5d. The central motif is the Royal Crown in profile. It is surrounded by stylized versions of heraldic flowers or floral emblems of the United Kingdom: English roses, an Irish shamrock and a Scottish thistle (Poole, 1922:8; Pratt, 1981:10).

3d. The central motif on Newfoundland's only triangular stamp consists of a pyramidal arrangement of joined circles containing a rose in the uppermost and a thistle and shamrock in the lower.

2d. 4d. 6d. 6½d. 8d. and 1s. The inner circle contains a stylized rose at the top of a stem to which are also attached a shamrock on the right and a thistle on the left.

Solomon's choice of design can be interpreted as an attempt to unite, at least symbolically, the two largest ethnic groups in Newfoundland, the English, Irish and Scots. These groups were deeply divided by social class, religious denomination, and political ideology.

First Cents Issue

With the adoption of decimal currency by the Colony, the Pence issue was replaced by the "First Cents" issue (Perlin, 1937:211). This set was engraved, printed and perforated in New York and released on November 15, 1865 (Boggs, 1942:51). The designs are less abstract than those of the Pence issue. Sammy Whaley (2004) has presented research showing earliest known use (eku) dates for these New York printing issues.

2¢. A codfish is depicted in profile swimming to the left. The designer mistakenly omitted the split in the fish's tail (Perlin, 1937:211).

5¢. A seal is depicted on an ice flow. The designer has been criticized for providing the animal with forepaws instead of flippers (Poole, 1922:11; Lowe, 1973:462).

10¢. A portrait of (Francis Albert Augustus Charles Emmanuel) the Prince Consort (Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha), husband of Queen Victoria.

12¢. A bust in profile of Queen Victoria as a young woman.

13¢. Described as sailing vessel or top-sail schooner, it could be labelled a 'banker' or offshore fishing vessel.

24¢. A portrait of the young Queen Victoria. She appeared with a tiara on the 12¢ stamp, but wears a royal crown, earrings and necklace here.

Collectively, these designs underline the contemporary significance of the cod and seal fisheries, trade and commerce, and the monarchy.

Second Cents Issue

The next set of stamps, the "Second Cents" issue was engraved, printed and perforated in New York and released at intervals between 1868 and 1875. Images of the royal family predominate.

1¢. A portrait of the Prince of Wales in Highland dress. He later became King Edward VII.

3¢. & 6¢. A portrait based on a photo of Queen Victoria in profile. She is shown in "widow's weeds" at her own insistence (Perlin, 1959:128).

Rouletted Perforations

Between 1876 and 1879 the First and Second Cents issue had some of their values released with a rouletted perforation that resemble (slits) format.

1880-1896 British American Bank Note Co. (Montreal Printing)

Beginning in 1880 the Colony's stamps were engraved and printed in Montreal. Although most of the new designs were modified, versions of previous issues (e.g., the seal on the 5¢ stamp) are more correctly drawn, in 1887 two new designs were introduced.

½¢. A portrait of a Newfoundland dog, a representative of that indigenous breed closely involved with life and work in Newfoundland's outports. The design is based on an original portrait by Sir Edward Landseer which hung in London's Tate Gallery (Lowe, 1973:471). This was "the first postage stamp ever issued to have a dog on it" (Boggs, 1942:65).

10¢. A foreign-going brigantine of the sort used for transatlantic trade in the early nineteenth century. Between 1890 and 1896 most new stamps issued were reprintings in different colours of the 1880 issue, except for a new three cent stamp that was engraved and printed in Ottawa in 1890.

3¢. A small profile bust of Queen Victoria. She is crowned with a laurel wreath. Copies on pink paper without gum may be due to immersion in sea water (a shipment of the stamps was damaged in a shipwreck; Poole, 1922:15).

The Cabot Issue

Newfoundland's first commemorative issue, The Cabot issue, was released on June 24, 1897, the 400th anniversary of the Island's discovery by John Cabot. Besides the Cabot voyage, the set also honoured the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign. The initial proposal for the issue was made by Daniel W. Prowse, historian and jurist. The series was designed by R. Ostrander Smith and the final selection of designs was made by Sir Robert Bond, the Colonial Secretary (Perlin, 1937:213; Lowe, 1973:475). Clearly intended to advertise Newfoundland and its resources to the world, the fourteen designs were even more graphic, emblematic and symbolic than those of any previous issue. In addition to a framed scene, each stamp carried an explanatory caption.

- 1¢. "Our Queen, Sixtieth Year of Her Reign." This profile of Queen Victoria in widow's weeds is based on either a contemporary photo or portrait.
- 2¢. "Cabot 'Hym That Found The New Isle'." As no portrait of John Cabot existed, one of his son, Sebastian, was used. The portrait was done by Holbein for King Edward VI (Huber, 1922:25).
- 3¢. "Cape Bonavista The Landfall of Cabot." The scene of the legendary landfall and the contemporary lighthouse was based on an R. E. Holloway photo (1905:68). Printed in sheets of 200 subjects; upon being severed created both bottom and top straight-edged stamps (Walsh, 1991).
- 4¢. "Caribou Hunting, Newfoundland Sport." This view of a hunter with his gun standing over a dead caribou stag is based on a photo of an American sportsman hunting on his own land (Boggs, 1942:69). H. Clay Pierce was a successful businessman from St. Louis, Missouri and the only identifiable American citizen depicted on a Newfoundland stamp. A photo published in 1905 by Bayne and credited to S. H. Parsons (1899) is similar to this scene.
- 5¢. "Mining, One of the Colony's Resources." Two men are depicted working by lamplight in an underground mine. The design may have been based on a contemporary steel engraving. The scene celebrated the Colony's emerging mining industry. This became the first postage stamp with a mine-motif in the world.
- 6¢. "Logging, One of the Colony's Resources." Three men are depicted with a team of oxen hauling logs through the forest. Like mining, logging was emerging as a major industry.
- 8¢. "Fishing, One of the Colony's Resources." A crew of inshore fishermen in two boats is depicted 'hauling' or unloading fish from a codtrap. The design may have been based on a contemporary photo. The Colony's fisheries were its economic mainstay.
- 10¢. "Cabot's ship The 'Matthew' Leaving The Avon." An example of artistic license as the designer used the portrait of the Santa Maria, Columbus' ship honoured on a three cent stamp in the United States in 1892. The latter in turn was based on a Spanish engraving (Lowe, 1973:475).
- 12¢. "Ptarmigan. Newfoundland Sport." Three partridge are depicted standing on the ground. The premier, indigenous, upland game bird was abundant throughout the Colony.
- 15¢. "One of The Colony's Resources." A small colony of a dozen seals is depicted. The seal hunt conducted from large vessels each spring was an integral part of the Colony's economy.
- 24¢. "Salmon Fishing. Newfoundland Sport." Two men are depicted in a river boat; one with a rod has brought a salmon alongside the boat and the other is using a net to bring the fish on board. The design is based on a photo by R.E. Holloway (Boggs, 1942:71).
- 30¢. "Seal of The Colony." Based on the repetitive designs of the official seals granted to the Colony by George IV, William IV, and Victoria (Swan, 1977 87-90), the stamp's design portrays an allegorical group symbolizing the historical importance of Newfoundland's fishing industry. The mythological figure, Mercury, stands in the center holding what is described on the Colony's seal as a caduceus, a contemporary symbol of commerce (Swan, 1977: 87). His stance shows him conversing with Britannia. Present next to the boat prow is a kneeling fisherman who looks dressed more like a naval seaman. It seems he is presenting fishes in his net to Britannia. Dressed like Mercury in a classical manner, she extends her right hand to him and with her left she supports an oval shield decorated with the Union Badge or Jack. Beneath these figures is the motto Haec Tibi Dona Fero (I bring you these gifts) followed by the label, Seal of The Colony.
- 35¢. "Coast Scenery An Iceberg off St. John's." The scene depicts a large iceberg off the coast, a common scene each spring and summer. The design may have been based on a photo by R. E. Holloway (see Views in Newfoundland "Englands Oldest Colony").
- 60¢. "Henry VII who Granted Charter to Cabot To Discover New Lands." The design is based on a painting by Holbein. Henry, the first of the Tudor Kings, rewarded Cabot with £10 for his discoveries and later a small pension (Huber, 1922:25; Perlin, 1937:214).

In October, 1897 as supplies of one cent stamps were exhausted, a quantity of the three cent stamp of 1890 depicting a bust of Queen Victoria was overprinted in the office of The Royal Gazette in St. John's. Altogether 40,000 stamps were surcharged "ONE CENT". Since three slightly different type faces were used, collectors tried to buy up the issue which had been intended for franking newspapers and circulars sent out of Newfoundland.

The 1897 Royal Family Issue and The Map Issue

The Cabot issue was soon replaced by the Royal Family issue, which was engraved and printed in New York and released individually between December 04, 1897 and October 21, 1901 (Walsh & Butt, 1992:10). R. Ostrander Smith, originally affiliated with the American Bank Note Co., is believed to be the designer (Boggs, 1942:71). With this issue, numerals first made their appearance in the sheet selvage margins of some of the issued values. These numerals denoted the printing plate that was utilized.

½¢. A portrait of Prince Edward of York (later King Edward VIII and then the Duke of Windsor) as a curly-headed child. This value was printed in 200 subject sheets thereby creating both right and left hand straight-edged stamps (Walsh, 1991).

1¢. Similar to Cabot 1¢ value, a portrait of Queen Victoria in widow's weeds. This value was issued twice in red and in green colours. According to (Walsh, 1991) the green colour was printed in sheets of 200 subjects having two different printing plate layout styles. Depending on this plate layout some sheets have both right and left hand straight-edged stamps.

2¢. A portrait of the Prince of Wales in uniform (later King Edward VII).

3¢. A portrait of the Princess of Wales (later Queen Alexandra).

This also printed as a 200 subject sheet (Walsh, 1991).

4¢. A portrait of the Duchess of Cornwall and York crowned with a tiara. The stamp was released during the official visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to St. John's in August, 1901.

5¢. Portrait of the Duke of York; first portrait of the future King George V to appear on any postage stamp.

On August 31, 1908 (Walsh & Butt, 1995:10) a two cent stamp was issued which depicted a vignette or outline map of the Island showing the cross-country railway line. The stamp was rushed into print due to the temporary loss of a consignment of the two and five cent stamps of the Royal Family issue with the wreck of *S.S. Sylvia* near Cuttyhunk, Massachusetts in March, 1908 (Walsh & Butt, 1995:10). Despite the best efforts of American Bank Note Co. officials some of the two cent stamps were smuggled into the hands of collectors. While government officials considered to demonetize that stamp, the "Map" stamp was produced to meet the urgent need for two cent stamps (Perlin, 1937:216). This value was printed as a 200 subject sheet with gutter (Walsh, 1991).

The John Guy Issue

Newfoundland's second commemorative issue was released on August 15, 1910 in honour of the tercentenary of the first organized attempt at permanent English settlement in Newfoundland, and in particular, the plantation established at Cupers Cove (Cupids) in Conception Bay in August, 1610. Backed financially by fellow stockholders in the London and Bristol or Newfoundland Company, John Guy served as the plantation's first governor.

Called the "Guy" issue by collectors, the series consists of eleven different lithographed stamps and five engraved stamps. The latter were necessitated by the widespread public criticism of the poor quality of the lithographed stamps. The engraved designs were similar to the higher lithographed values (six cents through fifteen cents). Similar to the Cabot issue, each stamp contains a framed scene or portrait and an explanatory caption.

1¢. "King James Who Granted Charter to Guy." A portrait of King James I, who granted a charter to the Newfoundland company on May 2, 1610 (G.T. Cell, 1982:5). The design is based on an engraving by Van Dyke (Boggs, 1942:80).

2¢. "Arms of the London & Bristol Company for Colonising Newfoundland." Headed by an elk, a shield is depicted with crowned lions and unicorns separated into quarters by a cross. But rather than a portion of the Arms of the Society of Merchant Adventurers of Bristol granted in 1569 (Cuthbertson, 2008), the shield was derived from that awarded to Sir David Kirke by Sir John Borough, Garter Principal King of Arms by order of King Charles I in 1637/38 (Poole, 1922:20; Swan, 1977:85). The erroneous caption repeated an unfortunate error traced to the distinguished historian, D.W. Prowse in his history of the Colony (1895:93; A. Perlin, 1937:217). The design lacks the motto and attendant Beothuk in Kirke's Arms which was the basis of the Dominion's coat of arms adopted in 1928.

3¢. "John Guy Who Established First Permanent Colony." John Guy, the Colony's first governor, was a merchant adventurer and former sheriff from Bristol who later served in the House of Commons and as mayor (ENL, I:764-768).

4¢. "Guy's Ship 'The Endeavour'." In July, 1610 Guy embarked from Bristol. In the winter Guy's settlers performed many tasks including the building of "... a twelve ton pinnace (a small, light vessel, generally two-masted and schooner-rigged), the *Endeavour*, which they used for exploration" (G.T. Cell, 1982:5-6).

5¢. "View of Cupids." In 1910 a monument and flagstaff were erected to Guy's memory and Newfoundlanders in Toronto presented the community with a large "Union Jack" measuring forty by thirty-two feet (Boggs, 1942:80). In 2002 the Cupids museum provided information that this flag measurement as recorded was incorrect. The correct measurement is twenty-one feet by thirty-six feet.

6¢. "Lord Bacon The Guiding Spirit in Colonization Scheme." Sir Francis Bacon became Lord Verulam, not Lord Bacon as the caption described him. While Lord Chancellor to King James I he was instrumental in obtaining a charter for the Newfoundland company in which he was a prominent shareholder. The same design appeared earlier in Prowse (1895:92), who described it as being from an old portrait.

8¢. "View of Mosquito." Like the five cent stamp, a contemporary view of the community is provided. Renamed Bristol's Hope in 1910, Mosquito was part of the colony of Bristol's Hope (ENL, I:264-265) established in 1617 with a headquarters at Harbour Grace.

Emphasis now shifts from the origins of English settlement to economic development and the monarchy.

9¢. "Logging Camp, Red Indian Lake." Ten men are depicted standing in the midst of a logging camp.

By 1910 Red Indian Lake was a logging center that supplied the new paper mill at Grand Falls (Boggs, 1942:82). A photo of this view can be found (McGrath, 1911:112).

10¢. "The Paper Mills, Grand Falls." The new mill at Grand Falls, one of the world's largest at that time (Huber, 1922:29), was owned by the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co. An imaginary view of the paper mill and the Exploits River is provided -- imaginary since air travel that would have permitted aerial photography was still years in the future.

12¢. "King Edward VII." A portrait in profile of King Edward in dress uniform. He died May 6, 1910 while the stamps were being produced.

15¢. "King George V." A portrait of the new King in dress uniform was rushed into production. In fact this is the first postage stamp issued after his accession to the throne to provide his portrait (Huber, 1922:29).

The 1911 Royal Family Issue

The Coronation of King George V on June 19, 1911 provided an opportunity for a new set of stamps to be issued, the second set in less than twelve months. Except for the Seal of the Colony, the entire issue was devoted to members of the royal family, some of whom had not been portrayed previously. It is no surprise, given the increasing interest of collectors of British Commonwealth stamps around the world, that local sales of postage stamps increased to an unprecedented high (Huber, 1922:31). Since each stamp was fairly small and the frame design proportionately large, the portraits appear crowded and the captions minuscule. The issue was engraved and printed in London.

- 1¢. Queen Mary. Printed as a 200 subject sheet with gutter (Walsh, 1989: 7-8).
- 2¢. King George V.
- 3¢. Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII and then the Duke of Windsor.
- 4¢. Prince Albert, later King George VI.
- 5¢. Princess Mary, later Countess of Harewood.
- 6¢. Prince Henry, later Duke of Gloucester.
- 8¢. Prince George, later Duke of Kent.
- 9¢. Prince John.
- 10¢. Dowager Queen Alexandra.
- 12¢. Duke of Connaught, uncle of King George V.
- 15¢. The Seal of the Colony is depicted.

The Caribou Issue

The Caribou issue was released on January 02, 1919 in the aftermath of World War I. Planning for the issue in 1918 took account of a stamp shortage and the government's desire to make a patriotic gesture. Hence the issue commemorated the achievements of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the thousands of other Newfoundlanders who served in the British Navy and other branches of the service.

The series is comprised of twelve values from one to thirty-six cents and all share a common, basic design. Based on a composite design derived from sketches submitted by J.H. Noonan, a Customs official in St. John's, the center piece is an animal's head facing left that has the features of a caribou combined with a moose's antlers. The caribou had already been chosen in 1914 as the badge of the Newfoundland Regiment (Huber, 1922:37; Boggs, 1942:91). The 1¢, 2¢ and 3¢ were printed in sheets of 200 having two panes of 100 subjects. These 200 subject sheets were surrounded by a double line in the colour of the stamp. Each sheet of 200 had a plate number; 1, 2 or 3 positioned outside this double line on alternating sides (Walsh exhibit *Newfoundland Plate Numbers 1897 - 1947*).

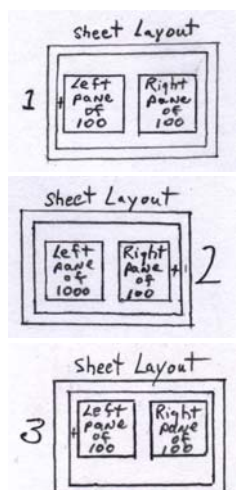
Below the "caribou" on four stamps in the series is a ribbon entwining two sprays of oak lettered "Royal - Naval - Reserve" and on the remainder "Trail of the Caribou", a phrase proposed by Lt. Col. Thomas Nangle, the Roman Catholic chaplain of the Newfoundland Regiment (Lowe, 1973:489). Below the ribbon appears the name of one of the engagements in which Newfoundland forces had distinguished themselves or simply the Latin word Ubique ("Everywhere"). Except for Suvla Bay near Gallipoli, all the engagements were in France.

Royal Newfoundland Regiment Engagements

- 1¢. Suvla Bay.
- 3¢. Gueudecourt.
- 4¢. Beaumont Hamel. Newfoundlanders suffered more heavily in proportion to numbers than any other branch of the British army at Beaumont Hamel (Boggs, 1942:91).
- 6¢. Monchy.
- 10¢. Steenbeck.
- 15¢. Langemarck.
- 24¢. Cambrai.
- 36¢. Combles.

Royal Naval Reserve Engagements

- 2¢. 5¢. 8¢. and 12¢. Ubique ("Everywhere").



Following the stamps' appearance, Sir Charles Alexander Harris, the Governor, criticized the issue for not portraying any likeness of Their Majesties and asked that it be withdrawn from sale. The Government, however, took the position that there was no slight intended and furthermore that Newfoundland's stamps were not required to bear their likenesses (Huber, 1922:39). This issue contains, according to C. Francis Rowe and John M. Walsh (1994), what appears to be the *first stamp booklet of Newfoundland*. It consists of 4 panes of the 1¢ green, Suvla Bay stamp, with each pane having 6 stamps plus a tab. Between each pane is an interleaf that has an advertisement from an English firm. The front cover has "SUDAN POST OFFICE", plus other information, written in English while the back cover has an Arabic translation of the front cover (Walsh & Butt, 1998:14). Initially, from all appearances and per verbal information provided by the original owner, an elder veteran and a friend of Rowe's, it was thought that this booklet was prepared for and released to those sick and wounded Newfoundland soldiers to enable them to write home while they recuperated from their battle injuries received during World War I. However, some new thinking suggests that this booklet was an essay prototype for development of the idea for Newfoundland's 1926 booklet. Due to transatlantic shipping problems and the inability of a British printer to meet Newfoundland's requirements, shortages of two and three cent Caribou stamps developed by 1920. The short-term needs of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs were met in part by overprinting the fifteen and thirty-five cent stamps of the Cabot issue with the surcharge "THREE CENTS" and the thirty cent stamp with "TWO CENTS" in September, 1920. The issue dates being September 13 for the narrow Type I overprint, September 13 in p.m. for the wider Type II, September 15 and September 24 respectively (Walsh & Butt, 1992:15).

The Pictorial Issue

The next issue, the "Pictorial" set, celebrated Newfoundland's natural beauty, resources, landmarks, outport communities and Newfoundlanders who had fought in the Great War. Based largely on photos taken by R.E. Holloway and published in 1905, Archibald Gibb, a St. John's businessman, produced designs, some of which were chosen by government officials. Engraved and printed in London, the stamps were released on July 09, 1923, except for the two highest values which were released in April, 1924. If the purpose of the issue was in part to advertise Newfoundland's natural assets, the purpose was defeated somewhat by the small size of the stamps, and thus smaller than usual frames and captions.

- 1¢. "Twin Hills, Tors Cove."
- 2¢. "South West Arm, Trinity."
- 3¢. "The Fighting Newfoundlander." The statue in Bowring Park, St. John's, depicts a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment (Cpl. Thomas A. Pittman of Little Bay East, Fortune Bay posed for sculptor Basil Gotto) about to throw a hand grenade. This value was printed as a 200 subject sheet (Walsh, 1987: 18-20).
- 4¢. "A Quiet Nook, Humber River." A man is depicted in a small boat on the famous salmon river (Holloway, 1905:92).
- 5¢. "Coast Scenery at Trinity" (Holloway, 1905:45).
- 6¢. "Upper Steadies, Humber River." Two men are depicted in a small boat (Holloway, 1905:97).
- 8¢. "Quidi Vidi Village, St. John's" (Holloway, 1905:37; Views in Newfoundland "Englands Oldest Colony").
- 9¢. "Caribou Crossing Lake." Four caribou are depicted swimming across a lake (McGrath, 1911:19).
- 10¢. "Humber River Canon." Canyon was not misspelled by the printing company as has been recorded. The photo issued by Holloway (1905:94) has a tilde in a word in the caption "Humber River Cañon".
- 11¢. "Shell Bird Island" (Holloway, 1905:87).
- 12¢. "Mount Moriah Bay of Islands" (Holloway, 1905:84).
- 15¢. "Humber River Near The Little Rapids" (Holloway, 1905:98).
- 20¢. "Placentia From Mount Pleasant."
- 24¢. "Topsail Falls near St. John's." This picture is the reverse of Holloway's photo (1905:39). Research by Cliff Brown identifies the boy in the picture on the left as being Holloway's son Bert.

The Publicity Issue

Despite Canada's claim on behalf of the Province of Quebec, Great Britain's Privy Council decided in favour of Newfoundland's claim to Labrador in 1927. The decision was celebrated in part by the "Publicity" issue, a set of fifteen stamps which were engraved and printed in London. The lavish pictorial series was intended in part to publicize Newfoundland and thereby promote economic development in general and tourism in particular (Lowe, 1973:504). The stamps were released on January 03, 1928, except for the one and two cent values that were released a day earlier (Walsh & Butt, 1992:18).

- 1¢. A detailed map of Newfoundland and Labrador. The map labels the mainland portion of the Dominion, "Newfoundland Labrador", and delineates the boundary with Quebec. Cape Bauld appears above Cape Norman, a situation that would be reversed on the 1929 reprinting. The map is set in an elaborate framework that includes the floral emblems of England, Ireland and Scotland (roses at the top, shamrocks at the lower right and thistles at the lower left; Perlin, 1937:226).
- 2¢. "S.S. 'Caribou' 9 Hours To Sydney, N.S." Specially constructed to contend with arctic ice, the new steamer was owned and operated by the Newfoundland Railway. It maintained a regular passenger and freight service between Port aux Basques, the western terminus of the railway, and North Sydney, the eastern end of the Canadian National Railway (Perlin, 1937:226). It was torpedoed by U-69, a German submarine, sinking twenty miles from Port aux Basques on October 14, 1942 (D. How, 1988:59).
- 3¢. Portraits of King George V in dress uniform and Queen Mary crowned with a tiara, a design approved by Their Majesties (Boggs, 1942:101).
- 4¢. A portrait of the Prince of Wales in dress uniform (later King Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor). The portrait appears under the motto ICH DIEN ("I Serve") and three ostrich feathers, the motto and insignia of the Prince of Wales (I.H. Evans, 1981:582).
- 5¢. "Express Crossing Newfoundland." A steam locomotive is hauling a coal car and four passenger coaches.
- 6¢. "Newfoundland Hotel, St. John's." The Hotel depicted with Harbour and Southside Hills as a backdrop. Although a private enterprise, the Government guaranteed a bond issue of \$450,000.00 to facilitate construction of a modern hotel that would promote tourism (Perlin, 1937:226; Boggs, 1942:101).
- 8¢. "Hearts Content First Trans-Atlantic Cable Landed 1866." Cyrus Field chose the community in Trinity Bay as the terminus of the first transatlantic submarine cable.
- 9¢. & 14¢. "Cabot Tower, Signal Hill, St. John's. First Trans-Atlantic Wireless Signal Received 1901." Erected to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Cabot's discovery of Newfoundland and the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign, Cabot Tower was the site chosen by Guglielmo Marconi for receipt of the first transatlantic wireless signal in 1901 (Holloway, 1905:30; Views in Newfoundland "Englands Oldest Colony").
- 10¢. "War Memorial, St. John's." Designed and modelled by the English sculptors, F.V. Blunstone and Gilbert Bayes, the National War Memorial erected on the King's Beach honoured Newfoundlanders who died during World War I. The monument depicts Liberty holding high the torch of freedom. The bronze figures below represent the forestry corps, the merchant marine, the army and the navy (P. O'Neill, 1975:18). Earl Haig unveiled the Memorial on July 01, 1924, the eighth anniversary of the battle at Beaumont Hamel. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment was under his command at that time.
- 12¢. & 28¢. "General Post Office, St. John's." Located on Water Street, the building was opened June 5, 1886 (Pratt, 1985:22) and extensions were added in 1923 (Boggs, 1942:102). The building was demolished in 1957 and a new post office constructed on the same site (J. Don Wilson, 1994).
- 15¢. "First Airplane to Cross Atlantic (Non-Stop) Leaving St. John's 1919." A Vickers-Vimy airplane is depicted rising from Lester's Field, St. John's. The scene commemorates John Alcock's and Arthur Whitten Brown's takeoff on June 14, 1919, the beginning of the first successful, non-stop, transatlantic flight. (St. John's to Clifden, Ireland; Dalwick and Harmer, 1953:43-44).
- 20¢. "House of Parliament, Colonial Building, St. John's." Constructed between 1847 and 1850, the building housed the Parliament of Newfoundland between 1850 and 1934, when the Commission of Government was appointed.
- 30¢. "Grand Falls, Newfoundland Labrador." The Grand River was renamed the Hamilton River and then officially changed to the Churchill River in 1965. The design is based on a photo taken by Varick Frissel in 1925 when he was a Yale University student.

In August, 1929 due to a shortage of three cent stamps, one thousand sheets of the six cent stamp of the Pictorial issue were overprinted locally with the surcharge "THREE CENTS".

The Post Office Department's longer term requirements were met by a contract with a competitor of the firm that had supplied the Publicity issue in 1928. The result was the "Re-engraved" issue, i.e., re-engraved versions of some of the 1928 issue (1¢ - 6¢, 10¢, 15¢ - 20¢). Although the designs of the 1928 stamps were closely copied, numerous differences can be discerned through careful study.

On January 01, 1928 the Government of Newfoundland officially adopted the coat of arms granted to Sir David Kirke during the reign of King Charles I in 1637. Accordingly, it began to appear on government documents and by 1931 paper with a simple facsimile of the arms as a watermark was used in reprinting the Re-engraved issue of 1929. With this watermarked version of the Publicity issue of 1928, collectors now had to contend with discovering the telltale watermark from the backs of stamps as well as minute differences in the engraved designs from the original 1928 issue. Re-engraved versions of the eight and thirty cent values of the 1928 Publicity issue appear for the first time on this paper (Boggs, 1942:108). The 15¢ value of 1931 was gummed following the perforation procedure, according to Gary J. Lyon (Walsh, 1994).

The First Resources Issue

The third issue to appear since the onset of the Depression was the "First Resources" issue of 1932. The same firm responsible for printing the issues of 1929 and 1931 supplied this new set of twelve different engraved stamps on paper watermarked with the official coat of arms. The designs portray members of the royal family, picturesque scenes, economic activity, and natural resources, including those of particular interest to foreign sportsmen. All the stamps were released on either January 02 or August 15, 1932, except for the 48¢ stamp released on January 05, 1938. The 1¢—5¢ values were printed in 400 subject sheets (Walsh, 1990: 8-10).

- 1¢. "Codfish 'Newfoundland Currency'." Although described by Albert Perlin as "possibly the ugliest stamp Newfoundland had ever issued" (1959:128), the stamp realistically portrays a catch of fresh cod. The caption could be a painful reminder to inshore fishermen that they were rarely if ever paid in cash by fish merchants and therefore had to pay their debts literally in 'fish' (the generic term that applied specifically to cod). The photo credited to Holloway can be found in McGrath, (1911:128).
- 2¢. A portrait in profile of King George V in dress uniform.
- 3¢. A portrait of Queen Mary wearing a tiara and necklaces.
- 4¢. A portrait of the Prince of Wales in dress uniform (later King Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor).
- 5¢. "Caribou 'Monarch of the Wilds'." Based on a statue in Bowering Park in St. John's, a caribou stag is portrayed in profile standing on the barrens as if he was trying to catch a scent from the wind.
- 6¢. From a photograph of "H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth of York" at age six years (later Queen Elizabeth II), holding a teddy bear. This was the first likeness of the Princess on any postage stamp. Robson Lowe, the philatelist, says "this was for some years one of the most popular stamps in the world" (1973:514).
- 7¢. A portrait of "H.R.H. The Duchess of York" (later Queen Elizabeth and then the Queen Mother).
- 8¢. "Corner Brook Paper Mills." An aerial view is provided of the large pulp and paper mill situated on the Humber Arm.
- 10¢. "Salmon 'King of the Rivers'." An Atlantic salmon is poised midair attempting to leap a waterfall. The Newfoundland Tourist Development Board photos taken by J. C. Parsons, Corner Brook.
- 14¢. "Newfoundland Dog." A pedigreed champion served as the design model (Boggs, 1942:110).
- 15¢. "Northern Seal 'Baby Whitecoat'." A whitecoat is depicted lying on ice. Historically, the seal fishery was one of Newfoundland's most important industries.
- 20¢. "Cape Race, 'Transatlantic Beacon'." Located at the extreme southeast corner of the Island closest to the transatlantic shipping lanes, Cape Race served as the chief landmark for ships' navigators crossing the Atlantic on sailing ships. For this reason and the frequent shipwrecks in the area a lighthouse was constructed by the British Government in 1856. Members of the Myrick Family have served as keepers since 1874 (ENL, I:333-334). The design may have been based on a photo by R. E. Holloway (see Views in Newfoundland "Englands Oldest Colony").
- 24¢. "Loading Iron Ore, Bell Island." A view from Conception Bay of the S.S. Willemsplein at a large pier at Bell Island loading iron ore. The tremendous iron ore deposits at Bell Island were mined between 1894 and 1966 (ENL, I:167-169). The S.S. Willemsplein was wrecked at Shag Rocks near Peter's River, S.M.B. (St. Mary's Bay), in 1945.
- 25¢. "Sealing Fleet 'Off For The Hunt'." Eight steamers are depicted sailing through the narrows. The departure of the fleet of large vessels from St. John's Harbour each February or March was a major event. Vessels were sometimes destroyed by the arctic ice pack they worked amongst in search of seals.
- 30¢. & 48¢. "Leaving For The Banks." Ten two-masted schooners in full sail are also depicted sailing through the Narrows. Since their crews fished offshore on the Grand Banks the vessels were called 'bankers'. Historically, some storms were famous for having caused the deaths of hundreds of fishermen.

The Sir Humphrey Gilbert Issue

On August 03, 1933 a lavish pictorial set of fourteen stamps was issued to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the annexation of Newfoundland by Sir Humphrey Gilbert on behalf of Queen Elizabeth I. She had granted him letters patent in 1578 “which allowed him free libertie and licence...to discover...such remote heathen and barbarous landes...not actually possessed of any Christian prince or people...” (ENL, 2:521). Half-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, Gilbert claimed Newfoundland while visiting St. John's on August 05, 1583 by the Julian calendar (or July 26 by the present Gregorian calendar). The series carries the inscription, “Sir Humphrey Gilbert.” This issue engraved and printed in London. Quantities printed are provided (Peatman, 1999).

- 1¢. A portrait of Sir Humphrey Gilbert. The design is based on an engraving in a travel book, Huroologia, published by Henry Holland in 1620 (Boggs, 1942:115).
- 2¢. A frontal view of Compton Castle in Devonshire, the ancestral home of the Gilberts.
- 3¢. The Gilbert coat of arms and crest. The latter was the inspiration for the name of one of Gilbert's ships, Squirrel. The family motto is Quid Non (“Why Not?”).
- 4¢. View of Eton College's quadrangle and founder's tower where Gilbert began his studies in 1551.
- 5¢. “The Token From Her Majesty.” Queen Elizabeth I gave Sir Walter Raleigh a token for his half brother, Gilbert, modelled after a ship's anchor.
- 7¢. “The Commission.” Queen Elizabeth I is portrayed sitting on her throne and holding the sceptor and the letters patent towards Gilbert, who is kneeling at her feet. Three courtiers are in attendance. The scene probably took place in June, 1578 (D.B. Quinn, 1983:9).
- 8¢. “Fleet Leaving Plymouth.” Led initially by the Bark Raleigh (200 tons burden), Gilbert's fleet comprised the Delight (flagship; 120 tons), Golden Hind (40 tons), Swallow (40 tons), and the Squirrel (10 tons; Quinn, 1983:19-20).
- 9¢. “Arrival at St. John's.” Five ships are erroneously portrayed entering the Harbour where there should only be four (the Bark Raleigh having returned to port two days out from Plymouth).
- 10¢. “The Annexation 5th Aug. 1583.” Gilbert is portrayed in the midst of a small crowd accepting a piece of sod as a token of English sovereignty (Quinn, 1983:22). Gilbert's tent and a single ship in the Harbour can also be seen.
- 14¢. “I Have Engraven There The Arms Of England.” Following the annexation, Gilbert “...had a permanent token of English sovereignty erected in the shape of a pillar of which was attached the arms of England” (Quinn, 1983:22-23). The Royal Arms are portrayed.
- 15¢. “We Are As Near To Heaven By Sea As By Land.” Before he and his crew aboard the Squirrel were lost on the return voyage, Gilbert was seen by Edward Hayes, Captain of the Golden Hind, “...sitting abaft with a book in his hand, [and] cried out to us...” his last recorded words, probably from Sir Thomas More's Utopia (Quinn, 1983:27). Gilbert is portrayed reading in the stern and a wave is about to break on him. The Squirrel was lost on September 09 (August 31 by Gregorian calendar), 1583.
- 20¢. John Mason's map of Newfoundland (Insula olim vocata Noua: Terrae) was published in Sir William Vaughan's The Golden Fleece in 1626 (E.R. Seary, 1971:12). A larger view of the map can be found in Prowse's history (1895:106).
- 24¢. A frontal portrait of Queen Elizabeth I. According to Keith Matthews, “When Elizabeth became Queen the English fishery was insignificant and likely to remain so; when she died in 1603, England had become the most powerful nation in Newfoundland.” (1968:44).
- 32¢. “Statue at Truro.” A view of the statue of Gilbert which stands over the south porch of Truro Cathedral in Cornwall [not Devonshire as Boggs maintains (1942:117)].

The Silver Jubilee Issue and The Coronation Omnibus Issue

In 1935 all of the British colonies and dominions issued special stamps in recognition of the Silver Jubilee of the reign of King George V. Those issued by crown colonies were identical in design (“Omnibus” issue) except for the colony's name and Newfoundland's issue released on May 06, 1935 was no different. This may be connected to the suspension of Newfoundland's elected government due to near bankruptcy and the appointment of a British-dominated Commission of Government in 1934.

Each of the four different values (4¢ - 24¢) provides an identical view of Windsor Castle to the left and a portrait in profile of King George V set in a medallion to the right. The stamps were engraved and printed on a different type of watermarked paper in England.

A second “omnibus” issue common to all the crown colonies was issued on May 12, 1937 to celebrate the Coronation of King George VI. Similar to the Jubilee issue, each of the three stamps in the series is identical except for denomination and colour. The design includes portraits of Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) to the left and King George VI to the right separated by St. Edward's crown, the orb and two scepters. The portraits were based on a photograph by Bertram Park (Lowe, 1973:526).

The Long Coronation Issue

Instead of depending entirely on crown agents to prepare their stamps, Newfoundland also issued a commemorative set to celebrate the Coronation, the “Long Coronation” series. This may be due to the fact that Newfoundland “...was juridically still a Dominion...” (P. Neary, 1988:48) and as such still had the right to issue its own postage stamps. The new series of eleven stamps (1¢ - 48¢) largely repeated the designs of the current definitive issue, the 1932 “First Resources” issue, by simply adding the new King's portrait to the right thereby forming an elongated design. Thus, for example, the 8¢ to 25¢ values combined the designs of the 1932 issue for the same denominations with the new King's head. However, the 7¢ value used the design of the 5¢ caribou and the 48¢ the design of the 30¢ bankers.

- 1¢. “Codfish, ‘Newfoundland Currency’.” A single cod is depicted in profile, swimming.
- 3¢. An outline map of the Island plus a small portion of southern Labrador separate from Quebec's North Shore are illustrated.

1938 Royal Family, Royal Visit, Sir Wilfred Grenfell, Memorial University College, Birthday & 1947 Cabot Issues

On May 12, 1938, the first anniversary of the Coronation, a series of four new stamps was released. Three of the four introduced new portraits of the King, Queen and Princess Elizabeth as she was at twelve years of age. Queen's Mary's portrait used on the 1932 3¢ value of the "First Resources" issue was repeated.

Although war with the Axis powers was imminent, the new King and Queen visited Canada and the United States in 1939. On their homeward journey they visited Newfoundland. To celebrate a "Royal Visit" stamp was released on June 17, 1939. The five cent stamp contains portraits of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth separated by Newfoundland's coat of arms. This stamp was surcharged "2/CENTS" and "4/CENTS" in November, 1939 to meet a temporary shortage due to delayed shipments, which in turn were due to German submarine attacks. The overprint values were printed on the original stamp sheet size of 100 subjects, not on a 25 subject format (5 x 5) as has been previously reported (Boggs, 1942:124 ; Lowe, 1973:530). This explains why the imprint inscription position located in the bottom sheet margin can be found (Walsh & Butt, 1992:37).

Despite the War a five cent stamp was released on December 01, 1941 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the work of the Grenfell Mission in Labrador and Northern Newfoundland and in memory of its founder, Sir Wilfred Grenfell, K.C.M.G., M.D., who died in 1940 at 75 years. Based on a painting by Gribble, the design shows Grenfell in a winter coat on the ship Strathcona II. He is looking at his approaching hospital ship Maravel. Icebergs are in the background. The issue was printed on unwatermarked paper in Ottawa (Boggs, 1942:125). The black and white photograph was taken by F. C. Sears (Walsh, 2005).

Despite the bombing of London, reprinting of the 1932 "First Resources" issue continued throughout the War (and afterwards) as various quantities of the different values (1¢ to 48¢) were required. Because the Perkins, Bacon & Co. printing plant was destroyed by enemy aerial bombing, the contractor had to subcontract the printing job to Waterlow & Sons. In some cases the original plates or dies were used and in others new dies were made or the original dies re-engraved. John Ayshford's study "The Last Stamps of Newfoundland" provides excellent coverage of the Second Resources Issue (1942-49).

On January 01, 1943 a thirty cent stamp was issued to commemorate Newfoundland's most important memorial to those who had paid the supreme sacrifice in World War I: Memorial University College. As more Newfoundlanders went to war and the Battle of the Atlantic was being fought outside the Narrows, the stamp symbolizes the Dominion's contributions, past and present, to the Allied war effort. Flanked by two fir trees in the foreground, the design provides a frontal view of the College from Fort Townshend. Later, due to a postal rate change and a subsequent shortage of two cent stamps, the Memorial issue was surcharged "TWO CENTS" locally and released on March 21, 1946.

On April 21, 1947 Princess Elizabeth's twenty first birthday was celebrated with the release of a four cent stamp depicting her portrait. And finally, on June 24, 1947, Newfoundland's last stamp for surface letter mail was issued: a five cent stamp commemorating the 450th anniversary of John Cabot's legendary sighting of Bonavista. Cabot is depicted on the deck of the Matthew studying the land.

Airmail Stamps

The collection and study of airmail stamps (aerophilately) is popular throughout the world. Since Newfoundland was the first member of the British Commonwealth to issue an airmail stamp (1919) and then went on to produce some famous philatelic rarities, the Dominion is still well known to collectors. The stamps were often named for the pilot, the plane or the destination (Walsh & Butt, 1992:44).

In response to the offer of Lord Northcliffe, owner of the London Daily Mail, of £10,000 for the first successful non-stop transatlantic flight, several competing teams came to Newfoundland to take up the challenge. They also carried small amounts of mail, some of which was franked with special stamps.

The first and rarest airmail stamp, the "Hawker", was issued in connection with the flight of Lieut. Harry G. Hawker and Lt. Commander K. MacKenzie Grieve on May 18, 1919 from St. John's in the Sopwith bi-plane Atlantic. Although they crashed west of the Azores, they were rescued and the mail salvaged. Two hundred copies of the three cent value from the 1919 Caribou issue were surcharged "First/Trans-/Atlantic/Air Post/April 1919" primarily for use on letter mail (Lowe, 1973:490).

The second competing team, Captain F.P. Raynham and Major Charles W.F. Morgan, made two unsuccessful attempts in April and July in the Martinsyde. Captain Raynham later sailed for England with the mailbag. Again, the 3¢ value of the Caribou issue was used but this time the stamps were not surcharged, just inscribed by hand "Aerial/Atlantic/Mail" and initialed "JAR" by the Postmaster General, John Alexander Robinson (Lowe, 1973:494).

The third competing team were successful in winning the London Daily Mail prize. Captain John Alcock and Lieut. Arthur Whitten Brown took off from Lester's Field, St. John's in a Vickers-Vimy bi-plane on June 14, 1919 and flew non-stop to Clifden, Ireland in just over sixteen hours. Instead of approximately thirty stamps prepared for the flight of the Martinsyde, 10,000 copies of the 15¢ seal colony stamp of the 1897 Cabot issue were surcharged locally "Trans-Atlantic/AIR POST/1919/ONE DOLLAR". Half of the funds collected from the sale of the stamps were dedicated to the Permanent Marine Disasters Fund (Boggs, 1942:135).

In November, 1921, a pioneer airmail flight was attempted by Major F. Sydney Cotton from Botwood to Halifax. His De Havilland 9 plane, however, got no further than Deer Lake. The mail was forwarded to Halifax by surface routes. Prior to the attempt 14,000 copies of the 35¢ iceberg stamp of the 1897 Cabot issue were overprinted locally "AIR MAIL/to Halifax, N.S./1921" (Lowe, 1973:499).

On May 18, 1927 local newspapers carried the notice that letter mail would be accepted at the General Post Office the next day for forwarding to Trepassy where it might be airmailed to Italy, if the pilot, the Marquis Francesco de Pinedo, was willing to carry it aboard the S.55 flying boat, Santa Maria II. Commander de Pinedo was on his way from New Brunswick to the Azores via Trepassy, where he landed on May 20th. For this flight 300 copies of the 60¢ King Henry VII stamp of the 1897 Cabot issue was overprinted with "Air Mail/DE PINEDO/1927" and used primarily to frank letter mail (Lowe, 1973:502).

On September 25, 1930 another official notice was issued regarding an overseas airmail flight. The Belanca monoplane Miss Columbia had arrived at the Harbour Grace airport on September 22 and the pilot, Captain Errol Boyd, was willing to carry a few pounds of letter mail to England. For this flight 300 copies of the 36¢ value of the 1919 Caribou issue were surcharged locally "Trans-Atlantic/AIR MAIL/By B.M./"Columbia"/September/1930/Fifty Cents" (Lowe, 1973:509-510).

In preparation for the establishment of regular airmail service, both domestic and foreign, three different denomination airmail stamps were released beginning January 02, 1931 (Walsh & Butt, 1992:45). They were engraved and printed in London on unwatermarked paper initially and watermarked later. Albert B. Perlin, the renowned St. John's philatelist, submitted sketches which were adopted with modifications. The designs were redrawn to scale by J. Scott (Dalwick and Harmer, 1953:116).

15¢. A biplane with skis is depicted flying over a man driving a sled drawn through the snow by a dog team with fir trees in the background. 70,000 copies of this stamp were overprinted "L. & S. Post" (Land & Sea Post) and released on February 09, 1933 to meet a shortage of regular 15¢ stamps (Lowe, 1973:520).

50¢. "Vickers Vimy Leaving St. John's With First Transatlantic Air Mail Passing Over The First Carrier of Ocean Mail." A biplane is depicted flying over St. John's Harbour and a sailing ship (described by Lowe as an 18th century sailing packet; 1973:512).

\$1. "Historic Trans Atlantic Flights." The elongated design includes the transatlantic routes (dotted lines) of seven historic pioneer flights between Newfoundland and western Europe. The flights noted include: "Koehl - Ireland to Greenly Is. 1928," "Lindbergh - New York to Paris-1927," "Sir J. Alcock - St. John's to Ireland-1919," "Hawker - Uncompleted Flight 1919," "Kingsford Smith - Ireland to Hr. Grace-1930," "De Pinedo - Trepassey to Azores-1927," and "U.S. Navy - Trepassey to Azores-1919." In the corners of this 1931 stamp design is a symbol from ancient India for 'good luck'. Some have mistaken this symbol for the Nazi swastika. The major difference between the Nazi swastika and the ancient symbol of many different cultures, is that the Nazi swastika is at a slant, while the ancient swastika is rested flat. This stamp was later surcharged for a special overseas flight, Per Dornier DO-X.

Dornier DO-X

The Dornier DO-X flying boat stopped at Holyrood, C.B. on May 19, 1932 enroute from the U.S.A. to Europe (C.H.C. Harmer, 1953:136). 8,000 copies of the stamp were surcharged locally "TRANS-ATLANTIC/WEST TO EAST/Per Dornier DO-X/May, 1932/One Dollar and Fifty Cents". A fraction of the DO-X stamps released on May 19 were used to frank letter mail. On May 21 the huge plane took off and flew to Horta in the Azores that evening (Lowe, 1973:516-7).

1931 Pictorial Airmail Issue, 1933 Labrador Airmail Issue, General Balbo Flight & 1943 Airmail Issue

As airmail became more common and more remote locations in Newfoundland and Labrador were being reached by plane, new airmail rates came into effect. This necessitated a new regular issue of airmail stamps. Designed by J. Scott, the series of five stamps called "Labrador Airmails" was engraved and printed in London and released on June 9, 1933 (Lowe, 1973:521).

5¢. "Put to Flight." A biplane is depicted driving a covey of eight "ptarmigan" (partridge) to wing.

10¢. "Land of Heart's Delight." A party of three sportsmen are depicted, two in a canoe on a pond near their float plane, and one cooking at a campfire by their tents.

30¢. "Spotting the Herd." A biplane with skis is depicted flying near the Beothic, a sealing vessel wedged in the arctic ice pack off the coast. Some of the ship's crew is portrayed at work on the ice. The plane could serve as a spotter to locate patches of seals for the sealing fleet.

60¢. "News From Home." A plane is depicted taxiing to a banker, a fishing ship on the Grand Banks. Seven of her two-man dories are fishing nearby. A ship in full sail is shown in the background.

75¢. "Labrador The Land of Gold." Eight men and their dogs are depicted panning for gold at a river, possibly in the recently discovered gold field at Katsao near Wabush. Two log cabins are shown in the foreground with three planes flying in the background. 8,000 copies of this stamp were surcharged locally "GEN. BALBO/FLIGHT/\$4.50" for franking half ounce letter mail to be carried on a special flight to Rome.

On July 24, 1933 overprinted stamps (75¢ Labrador Airmails) were issued in connection with the imminent arrival of Italian fleet of twenty four (reserve plane used) Savoia-Marchetti flying boats lead by General Italo Balbo. The "Armada" as it was called was returning from the Century of Progress Exposition celebrated at Chicago. The flight had stopped at New York and at Shediac, New Brunswick before landing at Shoal Harbour, Trinity Bay the afternoon of July 26. Mail had been held at St. John's by postal authorities pending Balbo's arrival. Late on July 25 a special train carried the mail, that had been precancelled with St. John's Nfld July 26, 1933 date, to Shoal Harbour. However, some mail for this flight was cancelled on the train with July 25, 1933 date (Walsh, 1997: 30-37). A fraction of the 8000 overprints were used on letter mail sent with the flight to Rome via the Azores on August 8th. In 2008 Jean-Claude Vasseur provided information that the Balbo covers were not numbered in St John's but in Shoal Harbor by the Balbo crew; same was done for United States return flight mail.

Newfoundland's last airmail stamp depicts a plane flying over Signal Hill, St. John's possibly on its approach to Torbay airport. Based apparently on a contemporary photo, the design includes the East End of St. John's and its harbour. Similar to the Memorial University College stamp, two fir trees flank the design on the left and right. The stamp was engraved and printed in Ottawa and released on June 01, 1943. Trans-Canada Airlines had inaugurated regular service between Moncton, N.B. and St. John's via Sydney and Gander on May 01, 1942 (Dalwick and Harmer, 1953:172).

Although remote from the large population centers of Canada and the United States, Newfoundland through its stamps is well known to collectors throughout the world. Thanks to portraits and scenes on its stamps, some of Newfoundland's geographic landmarks, natural resources, economic activities, historical events and monuments, communities, cities, and last but not least, the people and their national symbols are known to those who have tracked down the stamps of Newfoundland now called Newfoundland and Labrador.

Professor Thomas F. Nemeč, Ph.d served as secretary of the St. John's Philatelic Society for twelve years. Outside interests include serving as an honorary research professor of anthropology at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland. He retired from this position in 2007. Ongoing newly found information since Professor Nemeč's original article was printed has been provided by John M. Walsh.