

2-1529

## NEWFOUNDLAND

De La RUE'S NEWFOUNDLAND 1911 - 1928

The 1918 - 1920 Stamp Shortages - The Overprints

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These stamps, initially essays, anticipated a shortage of stamps in 1919. In late May 1918 the only low value stamps in the till were 1 ¢, 2 ¢ and 5 ¢ of the Coronation issue, and the 3 ¢ and 6 ¢ of the Royal Series. A tax on telegrams of 5 ¢, initiated on May 17, 1918, promised to use this value, and of combinations which would total 5 ¢ or 10 ¢. With no inventory of 10 ¢ stamps the 5 ¢ values were exhausted by September 1. This placed added pressure on the remaining low values. A supply of 2 ¢ Coronation stamps was ordered on August 23, 1918, but could not be delivered before the new Caribou stamps. The order was cancelled. It was suggested that the entire stock of the 60 ¢ Cabot issue be overprinted **"TWO 2 CENTS"** in three lines. The Royal Gazette Newspaper office in St. John's, overprinted several one-quarter sheets in red, one with a double strike, but the surcharge was bland, almost unreadable, and the idea was abandoned.

On December 24, 1918 the shortage of low value stamps became acute. Stamp sales of the low values at the St. John's postoffice stopped and cash only was accepted. Stamps were replaced by a **"POSTAGE PAID - G. P. O. - St. John's Newf'ld"** rubber stamp in three lines. Letters for local and internal colonial use were marked with this handstamp until January 2, 1919 when the new Caribou stamps arrived. Foreign mail continued to be franked with the proper postage.

The authorities seemingly could not agree, during 1920, on whether or not to replace the Caribou stamps with a new issue. Timely orders for stamps to refill the depleted inventories were not issued. The resignation of Postmaster General Dr. J. A. Robinson on December 6, 1919, following the creation of a new cabinet post, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, disrupted the orderly operation of the Postoffice. This effectively removed control of the Postoffice from the domain of the Colonial Secretary, causing the absence of further information in his record files.

The lack of stamps again became urgent by September 1, 1920. Slowness in delivery by W/M and lethargy within the new Cabinet office combined to create the situation. Overprinted stamps were prepared to supplement dwindling supplies of all values, until new printings arrived. On September 4th cash was again requested for local and inland correspondence and the old handstamp recalled. To aid the outposts in collecting cash a new handstamp was prepared with slightly larger letters which read **"Postage Paid - G.P.O. - St. John's, N.F."** in three lines.

Essay overprints of **"THREE CENTS"** in two lines with defacing bars 10½ mm apart were made in red and black on the 6 ¢ Cabot remainders. One remains used on cover. The first useful overprints were 500 sheets of the 15 ¢ Cabot series, reduced to 3 ¢ value by a black print of **"THREE CENTS"** and a value defacing bar above and below 11½ mm apart. They became available on September 13th. This narrow distance was insufficient to cancel both printed values so the spacing was changed to 13½ mm. About 3000 stamps of the narrow spacing, and then 4700 of the wide were made. Later 50,000, 35 ¢ stamps, were overprinted, but eliminating the lower bar. These new stamps appeared on September 14th.

A new problem, lack of 2 ¢ stamps, resulted in overprinting the 30 ¢ Cabot with the label **"TWO CENTS"** as an essay in red, and for use in black, in two lines with an obliterating line above. They began use on September 23rd. An attempt was also made to overprint the black 60 ¢ Cabot. Several essays remain. It was decided to delay printing them until further supplies were needed. Saturday September 25th brought relief when new stamps arrived from England.

1920 saw a continually embarrassing shortage of necessary stamps. The replacements seen here had their scarce varieties, with inverted overprints and missing printed values being predominant. The essays in blocks (probably unique), and full sheets of 25 O/P stamps are shown.



2-1531

# NEWFOUNDLAND

AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO

NARROW BLACK OVERPRINT

1920 - 11 SEPT

OVERPRINTED BY 'ROYAL GAZETTE'

PRINTED IN BLOCKS OF 25



*small  
width*

THIS SHEET HAS THE SAME SPACING OF THE LINES AS THE 6¢ ESSAY.



2-1440

# NEWFOUNDLAND

AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO

1920 - 11 SEPT

WIDE BLACK OVERPRINT

OVERPRINTED BY 'ROYAL GAZETTE'

PRINTED IN BLOCKS



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2-1450

# NEWFOUNDLAND

AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO

1920 - 14 SEPT

BLACK OVERPRINT

OVERPRINTED BY 'ROYAL GAZETTE

PRINTED IN BLOCKS OF



*Small handwritten note*



LOWER BAR MISSING

BOTTOM THREE MISSING





2-1460

# NEWFOUNDLAND

AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO

1920 - 23 SEPTEMBER

BLACK OVERPRINT

OVERPRINTED BY 'ROYAL GAZETTE'

PRINTED IN BLOCKS OF



INVERTED OVERPRINT



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