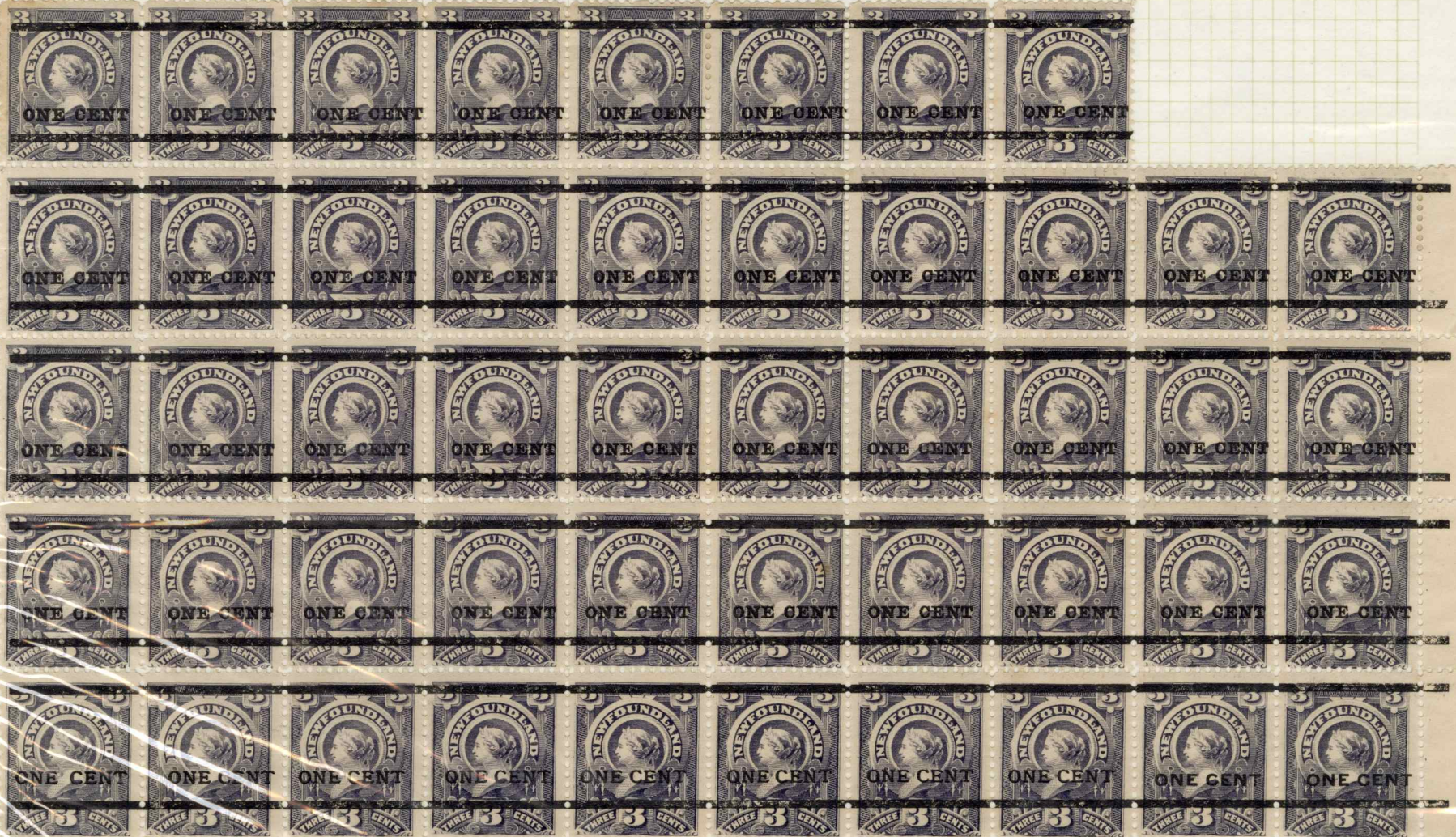


1897. Complete setting (as before less 2 stamps of Type 36.

Fig. 80 to 82.



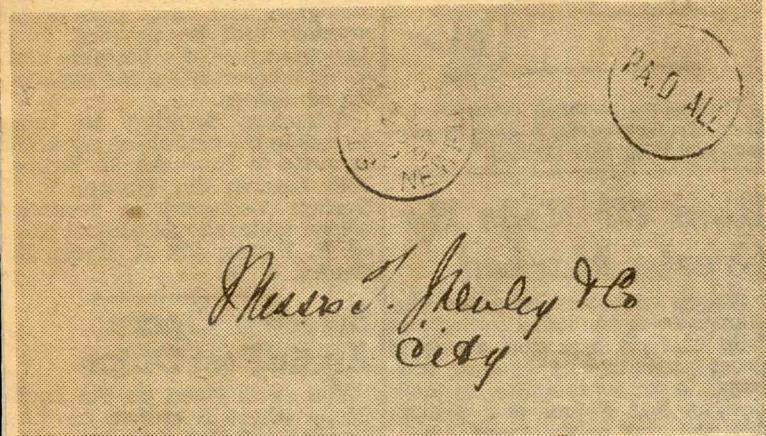
BRITISH AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO. LTD. LONDON

Purple

- NEWFOUNDLAND - The Provisional Of 1897

by The Freres Meyerson

The entire subject of the first of Newfoundland's Provisionals seems to be one fraught with much controversy. About the only point on which all of the authorities seem to agree is that there was an actual need for a provisional to supply a one cent stamp for New-



The "PAID ALL" frank applied to mail by postal employees in late 1897 and described in this article.

foundland. A good deal has been written on this score and in the ensuing article we will attempt to assemble all that has been published and present it as one complete and cohesive article.

Although there were 400,000 of the 1c Cabot stamp issued on June 24, 1897, by late September the entire stock had been exhausted and the Newfoundland postal authorities were forced to resort to the practice of surcharging for the first time in the history of the Colony.

There was an immediate need for a 1c stamp pending the arrival of the one cent stamp of the Royal Family issue that had been ordered from the American Bank Note Company at Ottawa. To tide the Colony over until the arrival of the new stamp, which did not appear until December of that year, it was decided to surcharge 400 sheets of 100 (10 x 10) of the 3c gray stamps of 1890.

The surcharge was to consist of the words "ONE CENT" in one line between two horizontal bars.

According to an article written by A. M. Strange in the August 1939 issue of "The Stamp Magazine" published in Great Britain, the task of surcharging the stamps was undertaken by the printers of the "Royal Gazette", the local St. Johns newspaper. Because the printer's supply of type was rather limited, it was thought best to halve the sheets of 100 so that only 50 stamps in a block 10 x 5, would be overprinted in one setting.

Even this precaution was not sufficient as the printer learned when he set up his press for the task. It was found necessary to use three different fonts. The first four rows comprising 40 stamps were surcharged with thick serifed letters which we will call Type A. The last row of 10 stamps had two different types of lettering, the first 8 stamps in the last row being surcharged with thin serifed letters, hereafter known as Type B, and the last

two stamps were surcharged with thick sans serif or block letters referred to in the rest of the article as Type C.

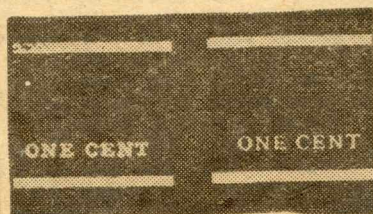
Although the type used for the first 8 stamps in the last row was identical, one of the stamps can definitely be positioned because in this one instance the space between the words ONE and CENT is 2mm. instead of the usual 1 1/4mm. This is a variety not catalogued in the standard books and known only to the specialists in the stamps of Newfoundland.

It is an interesting variety since the stamp in question, which is the first stamp in the fifth row or No. 41 in the setting, is scarcer than the rare Type C since there are two copies of the Type C in every setting or twice as many as there are of this stamp under dis-

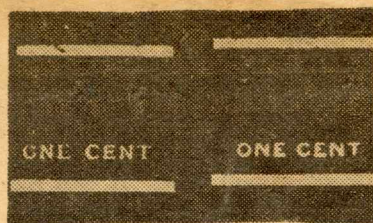
cussion, which we will call Type B1.

The setting of the surcharge is illustrated below:—

```
A A A A A A A A A A
A A A A A A A A A A
A A A A A A A A A A
A A A A A A A A A A
B1 B B B B B B B C C
```



Type A Type B



Type B1 Type C

Since we know that 40,000 stamps were surcharged, and since the setting was constant, the total numbers of each type printed were therefore as follows:

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Type A 32,000 stamps
Type B 5,600 stamps
Type B1 800 stamps
Type C 1,600 stamps
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The space between the bars of the surcharge has a slight variation. In the first row of the setting the bars are 165mm. apart, in the second, fourth and fifth rows the bars are 175mm. apart and in the third row the bars are 182mm. apart.

A further study of the setting will reveal that there are two outstanding blocks with examples of all the types. Both of these blocks are from the last two rows. The first block consists of stamps 31, 32, 41, and 42, this shows Type A(2), B and B1. The other desirable block is from the other end and contains stamps 38, 39, 48 and 49. This block would consist of Type A(2), B and C.

These stamps were surcharged for use on newspapers and printed circulars that were to be sent out of the Colony, and they were placed on sale during October, 1897. At the outset, in order to prevent speculators from cornering the entire issue and defeating the purpose of the surcharge, only five copies were sold to each applicant. However there were so many applications that the postal authorities began to fear that the entire supply would be sold out

before the new 1c stamps could arrive.

It was finally decided, as a last recourse, that all mail was to be handed over to the post office employees with the cash for the postage, and that the staff would apply the stamps themselves. This was done in the case of mail going out of the colony.

To further prevent the local speculators from using up the entire provisional issue by posting circulars to themselves, the officials franked all newspapers and printed circulars for delivery within the Colony with a black circular handstamp containing the words "PAID ALL" in the center. This was applied by the postal employees after the postage had been handed over in cash, and an example of this hand stamp is illustrated in the picture above.

Although it would seem as though all possible precautions had been taken by the postal authorities to prevent speculation, there must have been some leakage as the collector does occasionally see complete sheets of 50 of the overprinted stamps offered for sale at the various auctions. There were two such sheets offered at a Harmer-Rooke auction when they disposed of the S. A.

The fact that the sale of these stamps to the public was so well controlled provided a fertile field for the forger, and Harry E. Huber in his "Notes on Newfoundland" reports that the forgeries were made in all the three types of the overprint by a group including a printer in the employ of the "Royal Gazette" who had access to the original type used in surcharging the stamps.

There are several different types of forgeries known, in one case the bogus copy can be identified because the distance of the

In another instance, we have a bogus copy of Type C in which the two horizontal bars are closer together than they should be and they are also thinner than the bars of the genuine overprint.

Copies of the 3c gray of 1890 are reported with a red overprint, a red and black overprint on the one stamp, and a normal and diagonal overprint on the one stamp. Boggs in his book on Newfoundland contends that there are 100 copies of each of the three varieties just mentioned, but this point is disputed by so eminent an authority as S. A. Brown in an article published in the London Philatelist during May 1935.

Boggs may have lost sight of the fact that the settings are 50 as he says that a sheet was surcharged in red and when this was found to be unsatisfactory owing to the color showing very indistinctly against the dark background of the stamp, the same sheet was again surcharged in black. If such was the case there would be no reason for the existence of the stamps with the red overprint only.

Both Boggs and B. W. H. Poole in their books on Newfoundland state that the red and the red and black surcharges appeared on the market about 1904. However A. M. Strange and Fred Jarrett dispute this point in their notes on this subject. Jarrett in fact definitely states that the red and black surcharged stamps were regularly issued at the St. Johns post office and were obtainable during the first days of October 1897.

Nothing much seems to be known about the double overprint, one normal and the other diagonal, other than the fact that both Boggs and Strange mention it in their works. Gibbons also lists the Type A only as existing with the normal and diagonal surcharge but makes no mention of the diagonal and normal surcharge.

This is not the only example of a misfeed, as we have a copy, illustrated below, which is also part of a sheet that was fed into the press incorrectly.

tration, the surcharge slants upward to the right, and it is reasonable to assume that one of the



An example of a part of a sheet which was misfed into the press

In closing let us add that the diagonal surcharge mentioned in conjunction with the normal surcharge appears reading downward to the left and that the surcharge is not in its usual position, that is "ONE CENT" between two horizontal bars, but rather the word "ONE CENT" and then the two narrow bars exactly as it appears on the misfeed illustrated above.

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