

The Bi-Centennial of What?

By J. J. CHARRON, RPSC 6741



Ever since the new 5¢ Bi-Centennial stamp appeared in September 1963, I've been puzzled by the English and French inscriptions on it. That Franklin did come to Québec from Philadelphia to set up a general mail service organization in 1763, is an historical fact. But let us look at the inscriptions on this issue. Are they correct?

It is well to point out that the English and French inscriptions convey two different meanings. A "FIRST LAND ROUTE" is not a "PREMIERE ROUTE POSTALE" and vice versa. If this Bi-Centennial stamp is to commemorate the establishment of a regular postal service between Québec, Trois-Rivières and Montréal, then the French inscription comes the closest in describing this Bi-Centennial event.

FIRST LAND ROUTE

That the route, shown on this stamp, is the "FIRST LAND ROUTE", can be disproven. I have in my possession a certified copy, in French of course, which reads (translated) as follows:

"Ordinance of April 30, 1734.

Charles Marquis of Beauharnois, Commander of the Military Order of St-Louis, Governor and Lieutenant General for the King in New France.

Gilles Hocquart, Knight Councillor of the King, Intendent of Justice, Police, and Finances of the said Country.

Sieur Lanouillier De Boiscler, Chief

Roadmaster in this country, gave us an account of his visit on the North Shore from Québec to Montréal, of the roads that he traced and those he had traced under our orders, of the state in which they were found and of the ferry installations on the different rivers that flow into the St. Lawrence River, so that travel by land will become just as easy as by water," etc.

The document goes on to explain the various rates charged for ferry crossings for wagons, pedestrians, cattle, etc. This Ordinance is further substantiated by a commemorative plaque at the Porte St-Jean (St. John's Gate) in Québec City which was put there by the Sites and Historical Monuments Commission - Canada, and reads as follows:

"On the 5th of August 1734, Lanouillier De Boiscler, Chief Roadmaster of

New Issue Service

British Commonwealth — Mint — Used
Canada New Issues Mint
(Regular Issues, Commemoratives, coils,
Tagged Issues, ovpt.G, Booklets and
Stationery Items)
Canada First Day Covers
(on Rosecraft envelopes)
Canada Plate Blocks
United States Mint.
United Nations Mint

Want List Service

British Commonwealth Current Issues,
Mint, Used. Price List free on request
Obsolete Queen Issues—Mint—Used
Geo. VI Issues—Mint—Used
Canada Modern Issues Mint.
Canada Modern Plate Blocks
Philatelic Supplies — Catalogues —
Albums — Stock Books — Hinges — etc
(Price List free on request)
Postage extra under \$2.00

W. Murray Hall

P.O. Box 122

Ottawa 2, Ontario, Canada

New France, started from Québec by coach to Montréal, thus officially inaugurating the King's Highway in Canada".

PREMIERE ROUTE POSTALE

The French inscription, which can be translated verbatim without losing its meaning, gives the impression that no courier service existed prior to 1763. It is inconceivable that for 29 years, prior to 1763, with a "King's Highway in Canada", that no letters or correspondence were carried or handled. No regular postal service existed, but the mail did go through. I said at the beginning that the French inscription came closest to describing the Bi-Centennial event. But the stamp does not say anything about the Bi-Centennial event.

In "Bogg's Handbook", Vol. 1, page 2, one reads:

"A few years later, however, the road was decided upon and in 1734 it was opened. Post houses were established at nine mile intervals and ferries put into operation across the larger rivers. Although the courier service, as heretofore, was primarily for government despatches, the couriers were allowed to take any letters that might be entrusted to them by private persons. The fees were ten sols (10¢) from Québec to Montréal and vice versa, five sols (5¢) to Three Rivers, with proportionate rates to other settlements. This was the maximum extent of the Postal Service in Canada during the French Control".

In "Canada and Newfoundland Stampless Catalog" by Konwiser and Campbell, 1946, page 7, one reads:

"A post road between Québec and Montréal was built under the French régime, with post houses at intervals. These post houses were taverns and supplied horses, etc. for travellers as well as for postal service".

In "BNA Topics", Vol. 21, page 235, one reads:

"There was no general mail service before this time, but Franklin did find a system of post houses along

(Continued on page 91)

Public Auction Sale

March 16 - 18, 1964

Superb U.S. Entires,
Latin America,
Europe Rarities,
Whole World classical and
modern rarities and sets,
2800 Lots, 40 Photos.
Ask for free catalogue.

March 19 - 21, 1964

Old German States,
Br. Colonies incl. beautiful
Collection of Ceylon,
Rarities of New Britain,
Specialized Orange Free State,
etc.
2800 Lots, 40 Photos,
Ask for free catalogue.

Europe,
Latin America,
Rare sets of the Whole World,
Lots by Countries,
2800 Lots, 40 Photos,
Ask for free De Luxe catalogue.

Specialized Collections

Private Treaty,
Ask for free catalogue.

FRED RICH

55 West 42nd Street,
New York 36, N.Y.

An Urgent Appeal From The Secretary

Statements for Membership dues for 1964 were sent out the first of December, and while the results have been quite good, several hundred members have neglected to remit, to date.

As the Society's membership listing is being published shortly, in order to avoid any members being left off the list, please remit your dues without further delay to the Secretary,

Box 3144, Station C. Ottawa, Canada.



PARLIAMENT HILL

from page 60
master plate. Only the plate inscriptions differ from plate to plate. It is believed that this new method will be used for the next Canadian stamp.

It will be remembered that the previous coils and booklet panes sometimes showed guide lines in the margins. These guide lines have not been noticed for some time on the new regular issues and it was thought that they would not appear again, due to better alignment of the printing and cutting machines, but we have them once again. They seem to be less frequent than on the previous issues, so keep a sharp watch for them.

The double and triple printed envelopes of the 4¢ and 5¢ values seem to be more common than anticipated. A number of reports have now been received on this subject and we would not be surprised to find that several hundred of these double and triple printed envelopes exist.

Of interest are the returns from Government establishments of the official stamps. All establishments have been asked to return their stock of official stamps. We have noted perforated, OHMS and some of the better G overprints. I wonder how many of the 50 cents Lumber and Fish dollars will be returned?

BICENTENNIAL . . from page 88

the post road. These served as a foundation which he expanded and developed".

Finally, a commemorative plaque appears on the Post Office at the corners of Windsor and St. James Street West in Montréal, put there by the Sites and Historical Monuments Commission of Canada, which reads as follows:

"From 1693 couriers, the first known of whom was Pierre DaSilva, called the Portuguese, carried the mail between Québec and Montréal".

BI-CENTENNIAL OF WHAT?

The purpose of this stamp, according to the Post Office Department, is to commemorate the Bi-Centennial of regular postal service. But does it say so? No, it mentions the "FIRST LAND ROUTE" and the "PREMIERE ROUTE POSTALE".

In conclusion, why not a new issue in 1964 to commemorate the 230th (crazy figure but it works out that way) anniversary of the "FIRST LAND ROUTE" and the "PREMIERE ROUTE POSTALE"?

The slogan for the Niagara Falls Convention was 'A Second Honeymoon at Niagara Falls'. Take it from a Westerner 'When it's springtime in the Rockies it's a first Honeymoon!'