

Viewing The “Crossings” BNA Collection

by John F. Dunn

On January 23, Eastern Auctions of Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada conducted a public auction of the “Crossings” Collection of Premium Quality BNA stamps. In these viewings I usually stay away from focusing on such “picture book” sales of U.S. stamps. There are just too many of them and everything starts to look alike.

However, this auction of Canada and BNA also presented an interesting cross section of images that would have been worth reproducing anyway—and which just happened to be premium grade examples, so on that basis, and because it tells us something about the market in Canada for premium quality stamps, I selected it for a viewing.

Representing Nova Scotia, we see this XF NH example of the 1860-63 5¢ dark blue on white paper, perf 12, Sc. 10c, SCV \$2,000, which sold for \$2,566. (All prices in this report were converted from Canadian to U.S. dollars as of the auction date.)



And from Prince Edward Island we have this XF VLH 1861 3p blue on yellowish wove, perf 9, Sc. 2, SCV \$3,000. One of the finest in existence, it realized \$3,801.



Also in the P.E.I. section was an exceptional, lower SCV stamp that sold at a large multiple of SCV. It's a VF NH 1872 2¢ ultramarine perf 12, SCV \$60 that fetched \$333. I point this out because this large a multiple for a lower value stamp was the exception rather than the rule. While the auction realizations were strong across the board, the bidding seemed to be rational with high SCV stamps selling at good premiums over SCV and low value SCVs commanding two to three times SCV; in other words, the bidding was more sensible than what we see for some low value U.S. premium quality stamps, where five to ten times SCV is the norm and bidders seem proud to pay such prices for relatively common stamps.

(And coming back to that PEI #2 above, note that it was for a very lightly hinged stamp—in other words, someone valued the FRONT of the stamp more than the back, another sign of sensible bidding.)



Newfoundland included this XF NH 1861-62 2p rose imperforate issue, Sc. 17, SCV \$800 that sold for \$1,140.

And later in this section I came to a series of rouletted stamps that did very well, including this 1877 3¢ blue, Sc. 39,



which I selected because it showed the roulettes very clearly. With an SCV of \$2,200, this XF NH example realized \$4,751.



For something a little unusual, I selected this full imprint strip of three of the 1887 10¢ black perf 12, Sc. 59, SCV \$1,620 with double perforations running through the margin into the stamps. This VF NH variety went for \$1,615.



Another appealing variety in a well centered example was this 1920 3¢ on 15¢ scarlet with the Type I Provisional surcharge in black inverted, Sc. 128a, SCV \$3,000; this VF LH stamp realized \$3,088.

Shown next are two examples of



how the pair is supposed to look in a gutter pair (left, Sc. 184b) and how this error came out (right, Sc. 183a) with one string of horizontal perfs missing in the gutter, below the top stamp.



The

184b pair was part of a lot that also included the 1932-37 2¢ and 3¢, Sc. 186b, 187b, estimate \$750, that sold for \$641; the right, error, example, VF NH, was estimated at \$250 and fetched \$285.

Moving into Canada, we start with a pretty used stamp, the 1851 6p brown purple, Sc. 2b, with large margins, also with a socked-on-the-nose concentric rings cancel—but unlike many, it is light enough to add to, rather than take away from the image. With an SCV of \$2,500, it sold for \$2,471.



Another outstanding early Canada stamp is this 1856 3p deep red on medium wove paper, Sc. 4i, Unitrade CV \$333, realization \$380—still another strong realization, but not outrageous, as we too often see with U.S. stamps of this ilk—the sort of price that is sustainable in future sales.



Next up is another remarkable variety, an 1891-94 15c purple on vertical wove paper, perf 12, showing the “pawnbroker” plate variety, Unitrade 29ii, UCV \$2,138. One of the useful features in Eastern Auction catalogues is the use of magnified views of such varieties, so we can show you the stamp as well as giving you a look at the variety (arrow). And, as noted in my opening remarks, the “Crossings” Collection contained an XF NH example, which realized \$4,751.



The Jubilees section had many strong realizations for plate varieties, shades and just plain beautiful stamps. Shown here is one such example, the 50c deep ultramarine, Unitrade 60i, UCV \$1,710, in superb, wide margin, NH condition. This gem



fetches \$4,514. (Not shown, but worth mentioning, was an XF NH \$5 Jubilee, Sc. 65, SCV \$6,000, that went for \$9,503.)



One of my favorite issues is the 1898 Canada Xmas 1898—Penny Post—Map stamp (take your choice as to the name you like to apply). So I couldn't pass this section without presenting this VF+ NH example of the 2c black, deep blue and

carmine, Sc. 86b, which was hammered down for \$266 against an SCV of \$176.

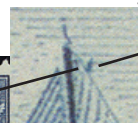
The 1904 Edward VII series included many exceptional examples of this difficult set. One of these was this 20c olive green, Sc. 94, SCV \$3,000. In XF NH condition, it realized \$4,989.



Another example of sensible premium bidding for added value was this XF 1920-21 KG V 2c carmine, Sc. 106, SCV \$1,125. The stamp was lightly hinged, but despite that, the Type C inverted lathework more than

made up for it, with a realization of \$2,186 for a rare lathework variety in exceptional condition.

Here's another irresistible variety, the 1926 2c on 3c carmine Die I with a two-line provisional surcharge doubled with one inverted, Sc. 140c, SCV \$675, hammer price \$713 for this VF stamp hinged in the selvage only—where the inverted surcharge really shows up well. This is another example of the “above and beyond” nature of the “Crossings” Collection. Where another collection might have contained a nice single, this one has the added ‘kicker’ of the sheet margin also showing the inverted surcharge.



Naturally, the Collection included more than one example of what is regarded as one of the world's most beautiful stamps, the 1929 Bluenose, picturing the schooner *Bluenose*. Shown here is the “Man on the Mast” variety (arrow), UCV 158iii, UCV \$3,801. Not enough just to have the variety, the Collection contained an XF NH example, which fetched \$4,514.

In the Back-of-the-Book section we find still another lot with more to offer than is usually seen, in this instance an XF NH 1875-76 8c blue on vertical wove paper, Sc. F3, SCV \$2,800—with the full “Eight” counter imprint. With all that going for it, the stamp soared to a well-deserved \$7,127.



Next we view still another XF NH stamp, in this instance the 1915 20c olive green with “Inland Revenue War Tax” diagonal overprint in black, Unitrade MR2Ci, UCV \$428, realization \$641.

And closing out this viewing is an 1879 yellow brown Officially Sealed issue, Sc. OX1, in what was conservatively described as VF NH condition. (It is centered a bit high, but most houses would have called this XF, so I compliment the lot describer on this conservative description.)



As explained in the lot description, “In our opinion the 1879 Officially Sealed is the rarest of all “back-of-book” and post-Small Queen era stamps to obtain in mint never hinged conditions. It is so rare, even the Unitrade Specialized Catalogue commented as a footnote: ‘VF-NH examples of OX1 are extremely rare (if they indeed exist.’ This stamp, which proves that they do exist, sold for \$3,326.