

# Background on Perfin Users of Canada by Al Pearson

## THE ANGLO-NEWFOUNDLAND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

The Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company was incorporated on January 7, 1905, at St. Johns, Newfoundland, with a capital of \$5 million. The forces behind the incorporation were the publishers of the London Daily Mail, Alfred C. Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) and Harold Sidney Harmsworth (later Lord Rothermere).

In the early 1900's, Lord Northcliffe began looking for a secure and continuous supply of newsprint for his publishing interests in the United Kingdom. In the event of a European war, the normal suppliers in Scandinavia would have much difficulty assuring delivery to Britain.

The Harmsworths decided to examine North America as a permanent source of newsprint and, as a hedge against the rising cost of newsprint, they also looked at the feasibility of establishing their own pulp and paper mill.

Following exhaustive studies, and on the recommendation of Sir Mayson Beeton, the company's first president, Grand Falls in Newfoundland was chosen as the site for this industry.

In spite of opposition both locally and abroad, construction began in July of 1905 and by midsummer of 1909 the mill and the townsite were substantially completed.

Formal opening ceremonies were held October 8 and 9, with the official opening taking place at 8:30 p.m. on October 9 in the presence of over 1500 guests. The first roll of paper was produced on December 22, 1909.

The initial capacity rating of the mill was 30,000 tons annually. Today the mill capacity is rated at approximately 300,000 tons per year.

The town of Grand Falls, which grew around the mill, was administered by the company until 1960, when the 6,000 community residents began handling their own government. The town was incorporated January 1, 1961, and in 1964 was presented with an official coat of arms by the honourable Vere Harmsworth on behalf of the family which had initiated the development of the industry and the community. The era of industrialization may have begun with the Grand Falls development.

In more recent history, Anglo-Newfoundland merged with Price Brothers and Company in April of 1961 to form a group of companies ranging as one of the largest newsprint producers in the world. On April 29, 1965, the company name was changed to Price (Nfld.) Pulp and Paper Ltd. to take advantage of the competitive edge the name "Price" enjoyed from over 100 years of world marketing.

In 1966, the company name again changed, to the Price Company Ltd. - La Compagnie Price Limitee in the 150th anniversary of the founding of the first Price establishment at Quebec City in 1816.

In 1974, the Abitibi Paper Company Ltd. acquired controlling interest in Price Company Limited.

As for the Perfin pattern used by the company (Canada No. A-4, shown below) some information on the perforator has come to light through correspondence with the friendly general manager at Grand Falls, who just happens to be a collector. He has tracked down one of the local residents who operated the perforator from 1917-1919. This clerk felt that the perforator had been in use since the plant startup in 1909. The Woolley BNAPS Handbook, however, lists the A-4 Perfin as known on the issues of 1911-31



Although the perforator make and model are unknown to him, the oldtimer who operated the perforator recalls that it was a single-head unit with a hand crank which perforated the stamps one at a time. The perforator had no feeding device, so the stamps were separated into strips and the strips fed by hand as the head was cranked up and down. Unless attention to the centering of the stamp was followed, the stamps with random Perfin centering would result.

The present location of the perforator is unknown, but it is believed to have been scrapped some years ago. Because the AND Perfins are relatively scarce, the probable start date and final use date of the perforator will probably take a lot of searching through dated copies.

I would appreciate any information that anyone can supply on this particular aspect of the A-4 Perfin.