

ESKIMO ART ON XMAS STAMP

Postmaster General Eric Kierans has announced that an Eskimo carving has been chosen for illustration on a five-cent Canada Post Office Christmas stamp that is to be released in November. The new stamp reproduces "Family Group", a work by an unknown Eskimo artist, which was acquired by the Winnipeg Art Gallery in 1960.

The vertical stamp, 24mm. x 30mm., has been produced by the photogravure process, Laurentian blue being used as a background for the carving which is printed in black. A white denominative "5" appears in the upper-left segment immediately under the left side of the words "Christmas-Noël", which are also in white. "Canada" is printed in a lower white panel beneath the predominant blue. The Canadian Bank Note Company Limited, of Ottawa, which produced the design, will print 218,600,000 of the new stamps.

Considerable success in fostering Eskimo art during the past few decades has been achieved by Government agencies and other interested bodies. The original preference of the native craftsman for ivory has been replaced by a wide use of soapstone, which is accepted today as synonymous with Eskimo carvings. A polish for the soapstone pieces is achieved by rubbing with stone dust and the end product is frequently carefully wrapped and immersed in seal oil to impart a desirable lustre. A rare prehistoric soapstone, unearthed near the northern settlement of Igloolik, dates between 500 and 1300 A.D.

In early days, the carved objects were generally miniatures, a choice believed to have been influenced by the migratory habits of Eskimos and their avoidance of unnecessarily large burdens. It is also known that miniatures were placed in the last resting-place of a tribe member in the belief he would have no difficulty in enlarging them for future use. In some instances, the Eskimo attempts to create likenesses of animals he has never seen; this has been associated with the primitive idea that to make a likeness of an object will serve to materialize it. The Eskimo hunter may also be trying to influence the return of creatures that have left his immediate area.

FRENCH HOUSING EXPERTS VISIT

Eleven major French house-builders and developers arrived in Canada recently on a three-week visit, to examine "off-site" manufacturing of timber-frame construction elements, the basis of a building technique that combines rapid "on-site" erection with quality control and economy.

An expanding need for housing in France has generated an interest in Canada's fast construction methods. This mission, which is sponsored by the federal Department of Trade and Commerce to develop greater acceptance of these techniques, could lead to increased use of Canadian lumber, plywood and allied building products abroad.

The group is visiting Quebec City, Fredericton, Montreal, Edmonton, Victoria and Vancouver, ex-

amining housing sites, construction operations and lumber production.

The visitors will also spend several days in Ottawa attending technical lectures on various aspects of house construction, touring research establishments and observing construction methods at building projects.

ELECTRONICS TO JAPAN

Over \$7 million in sales to Japan over the next two years has been forecast by the seven Canadian firms that exhibited last month in the Japan Electronics Show.

The Canadian exhibit, which was sponsored by the federal Department of Trade and Commerce, received over 35,000 trade visitors during the seven-day show, and so many inquiries were received by the participating companies that all representatives had to extend their stay in Japan to make follow-up calls. Sales in excess of \$40,000 were concluded on the fair-site which, says the Department, is unusual for a technical trade show of this nature.

EUROPEAN BALLET TOUR

The Department of External Affairs announced recently that the Canadian Government would give a grant to les Grands Ballets canadiens of Montreal for an eight-week tour organized under the programme of cultural exchanges with foreign countries. Over 30 performances are being arranged for the tour, with stopovers in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Britain, Italy and Germany.

D'ARCY MCGEE MEMORIAL RESTORED

A memorial to Thomas D'Arcy McGee, a Father of Confederation assassinated in Ottawa in April 1868, will be restored to its original condition in the Côte-des-Neiges Cemetery in Montreal.

Mr. Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced recently that his Department would pay \$12,000 for the cost of restoration and that the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal would continue to look after the gravesite.

The restoration, scheduled to be completed by September 1969, is in keeping with Government policy, tabled in the House of Commons this year, to mark and preserve the gravesites of the Fathers of Confederation.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee was a delegate to the Charlottetown and Quebec Conferences on Confederation and a frequent speaker in favour of Canadian union. He served as the Minister of Agriculture from 1864 to 1867 in the coalition ministry formed to work towards the union of the British North American colonies. From Confederation until his assassination he was the Member of Parliament for Montreal West.

He was assassinated by James Patrick Whelan outside his Ottawa boarding house as he was returning from a late sitting of the House of Commons. His efforts to discredit the Fenians, an Irish movement