SASKATCHEWAN TERRITORIAL MAIL: 1846 TO 1905

SYNOPSIS OF THE EXHIBIT

PURPOSE

This is a postal history exhibit showing the settlements in the Northwest Territories (NWT) in the 1870s that later became settlements in Territorial Saskatchewan. One example of mail carried by HBC courier is shown from The Pas, in 1846. Until 1876, mail for the land in Saskatchewan Territory was carried free by HBC couriers. Few existing examples of such mail from Saskatchewan exist. Emphasis is placed on the towns, with secondary emphasis on routes and rates.

SCOPE

The exhibit covers the periods from (1) the free mail service in the NWT supplied by HBC couriers, (2) to 1876 when five post offices opened from 1876 to 1882, and (3) the SaskatchewanTerritorial period from 1882 to 1905, when Saskatchewan became a province.

ORGANIZATION AND TREATMENT

The first part of the exhibit deals with the HBC courier mail and the five post offices opened from 1876 to 1882 [Northwest Territory period]. The balance of the exhibit shows, in alphabetical order, the towns of the Territory of Saskatchewan to 1905, when Saskatchewan became a province. The mail routes and rates are shown for each town.

CHALLENGE

The Territory of Saskatchewan, during the early years [prior to 1905], had a very small population. A good percentage of the population was illiterate, thus making written material quite scarce, particularly letters to and from the smaller settlements and towns. Thus, the Land Titles covers have been a saviour for Sask. Territorial collectors. Rarity or 'challenge factor' is based on collecting Saskatchewan Territorial material for over 20 years and guided by the collections of Robinson and Scrimgeour, as well as the perusal of numerous auction catalogues.

SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

- The Pas 1846 cover carried by HBC courier, winter packet, to Indian Settlement Red River
- Grandin NWT 1889
- Carleton NWT 1877
- Prince Albert letter dated 1867 with U.S. stamp
- Humboldt [territorial P.O. open for two months]
- St. Peter's Monastery [territorial P.O. open 8 months]
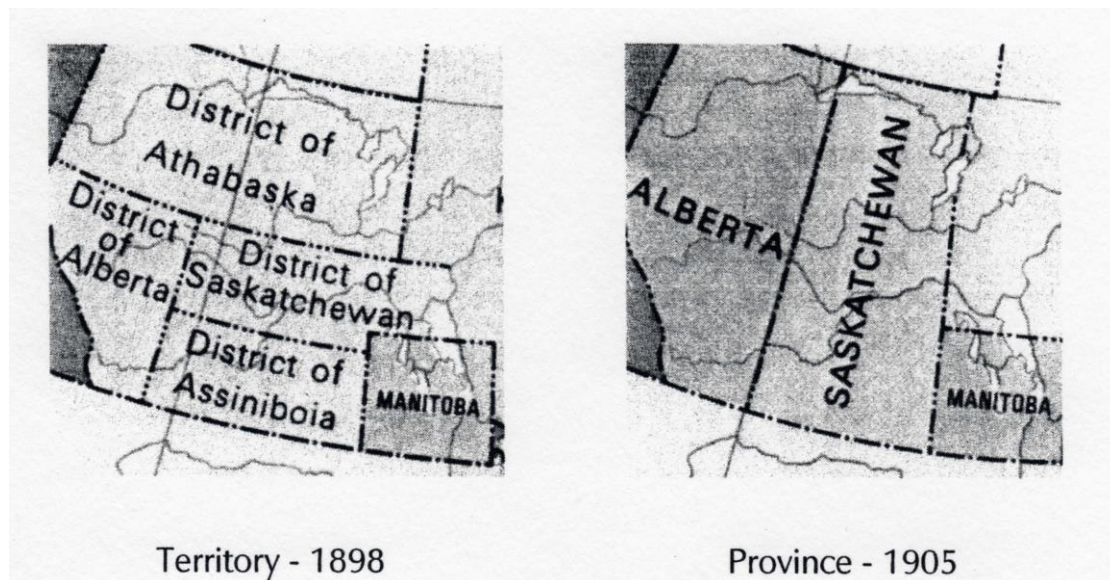
References:
- Scrimgeour, G. ,"Early Postal History of Saskatchewan", *PHSC Journal* No.124.
- Robinson,W., *Territorial Post Offices of Canada*
- Dr. D. *Thompson personal notes*

Saskatchewan Territorial Mail: 1846 to 1905

This exhibit presents mail to and from settlements that became or were in the Territory of Saskatchewan. The Northwest Territories were controlled by the Hudson's Bay Co. until 1870, then transferred to Canada. In 1882, a large part of the territories was separated into four provisional districts: Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabaska, and Saskatchewan. Territorial Saskatchewan was enlarged, reaching its largest size in 1898 (map below). When the Province of Saskatchewan was formed in 1905, it took in much of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and Athabaska Districts.

Post offices in this region were opened in the 1870s, before the provisional districts were established. Saskatchewan had 5 offices: Battleford, Carleton, Grandin, Prince Albert, and Stobart with N.W.T. in their postmarks. After 1882, new Saskatchewan postmarks had SASK or SASK. at the base of their broken circles.

Mail to and from towns in Territorial Saskatchewan up to 1905 is shown. An example of mail carried by HBC courier in 1846 is presented. Territorial towns are presented alphabetically, and mail routes and rates are explained.

Territory - 1898   Province - 1905

Plan of the Exhibit

1. Trade routes and settlements between 1846 and 1885
2 .The Pas-1846 Hudson Bay courier mail from The Pas to Indian Settlement, Red River.
3. Five Post Offices opened from 1876 to 1882 in Saskatchewan Territory during the North West Territory Period.
4. Settlements and towns in Saskatchewan Territory from 1898 to 1905, shown in alphabetical order.

Items of particular philatelic interest [rarity or importance] are marked with a red dot. As no census of surviving covers exist, rarity has been based on 25 years of personal study and research.