



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
POSTAL HISTORY  
RESEARCH GROUP

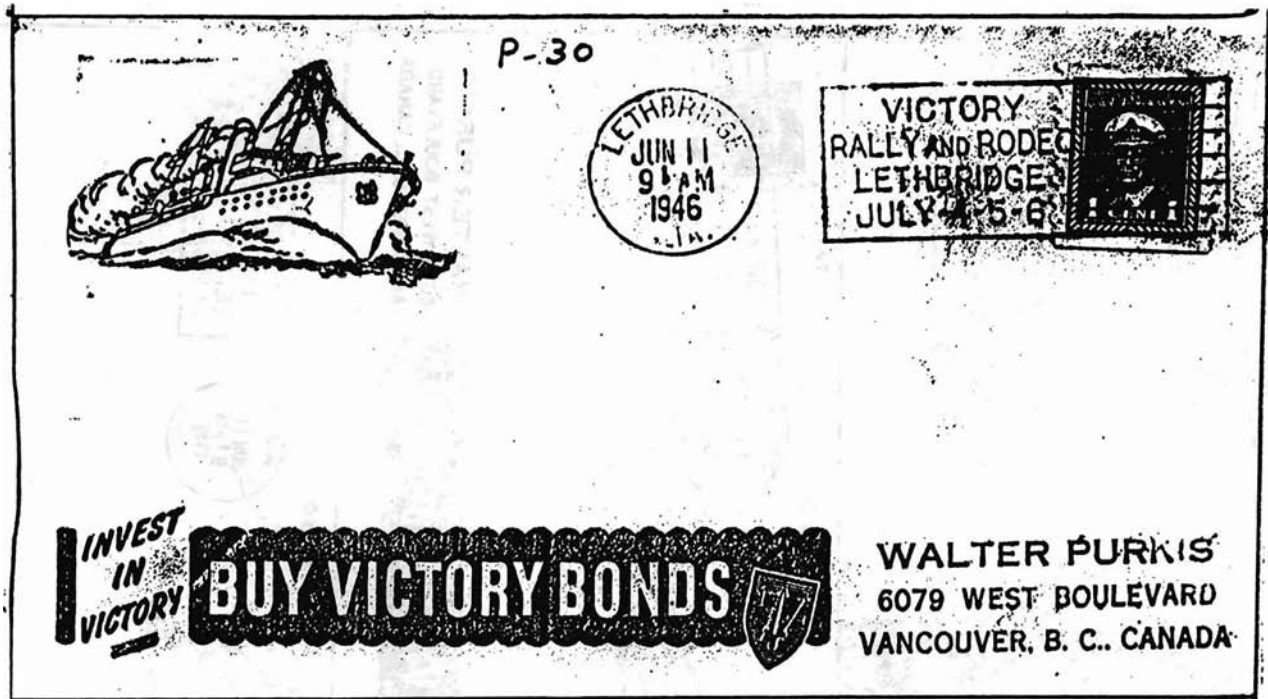
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October 2006

### WALTER PURKIS – VICTORY BOND COVERS


Walter Purkis was a small time stamp dealer who had a great love of stamps and did much to encourage the young and old in Kerrisdale to enjoy the collecting of stamps. In the 1940's he operated a stamp shop at 6079 West Boulevard, and if not drinking, provided excellent service to his customers. Starting in 1944 he produced a series of pictorial covers for the fifth and sixth Victory Loan campaigns bearing such wartime slogans as "Buy War Savings Stamps" and "Buy Victory Bonds". Most of the illustrations were based on government wartime propaganda material, produced to stimulate the sale of war savings stamps and war bonds. The covers were produced in small quantities in a variety of colours and he often received orders for more covers than he had serviced. He usually solved the problem by only supplying covers to those who made a fuss. As a result the President of the British Columbia Philatelic Society was occasionally called upon to remind Mr. Purkis to send the covers or provide a full refund. Which he did..




Most of the reported covers were dated between May 1944 and July 1946 or in June 1957. All covers appear to have been addressed to his Kerrisdale store or in 1957 to 3702 Quebec Street. Cec Coutts is attempting to list all known Walter Purkis covers and has provided illustrations of those reported to date. Cec would appreciate receiving Xerox copies of any additional covers.

More Walter Purkis covers

P-20




*W.E. Purkis  
3702. Quinceway  
Vancouver 10  
B.C.*


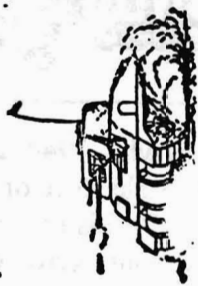


**PUT VICTORY FIRST**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-25




CORNWALL  
OLD HOME WEEK  
AUG. 3RD 10TH



**WALTER PURKIS**  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

**INVEST IN VICTORY**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-30




VICTORY  
RALLY AND RODEO  
LET BRIDGES  
JULY 4-5-6

**WALTER PURKIS**  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA


**INVEST IN VICTORY**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-01



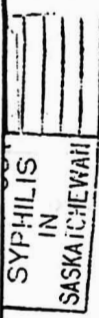
PRICE ALBRO  
JUL 11 1945

**WALTER PURKIS**  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA





**PUT VICTORY FIRST**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-5




SYPHILIS  
IN  
SASKATCHEWAN


**WALTER PURKIS**  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

**PUT VICTORY FIRST**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-10




**WALTER PURKIS**  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA



**PUT VICTORY FIRST**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

P-15

*Walter Purkis  
6079 West Boulevard  
Vancouver*



**PUT VICTORY FIRST**  
**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

More Walter Purkis cover

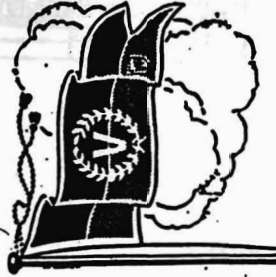
P-35



**INVEST IN VICTORY BUY VICTORY BONDS**

WALTER PURKIS  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

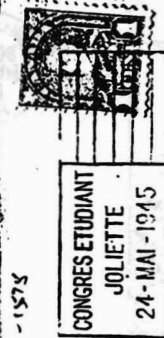
P-40



Walter Purkis  
3702 Quebec Street  
Vancouver 10 B.C.

**VICTORY BONDS**

P-45



WALTER PURKIS  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA



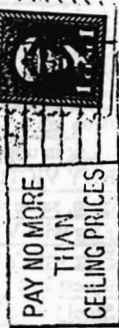
P-50

BE AN **Active** MEMBER OF THE **25 Club** **WAR SAVINGS STAMP** EVERY **FRIDAY!**



WALTER PURKIS  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

P-55



WALTER PURKIS  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

BE "UP TO DATE" IN '44 Join the **25 Club**

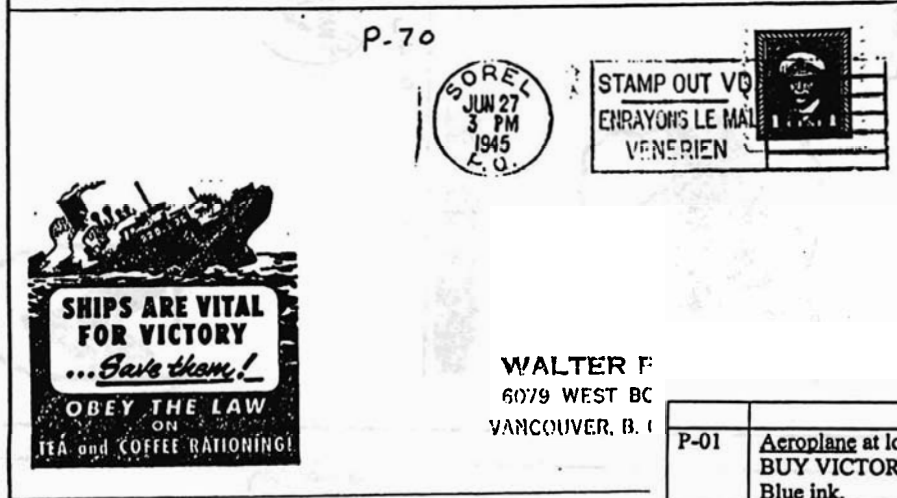
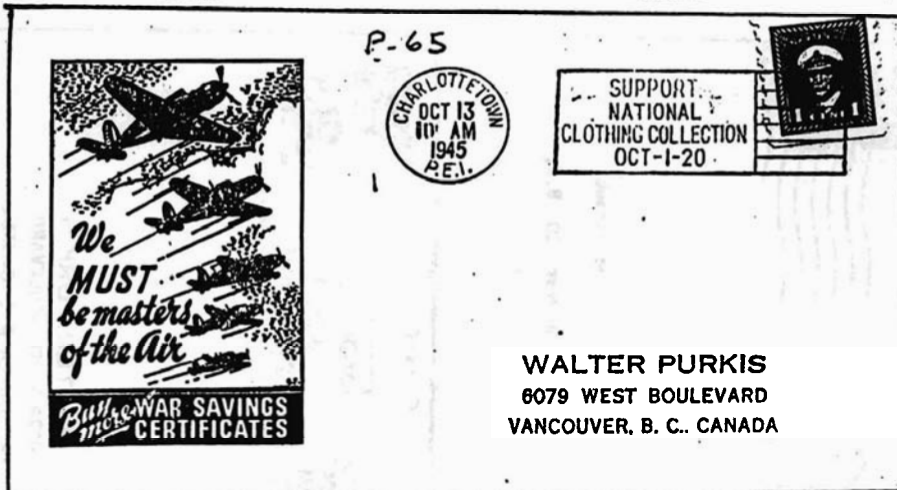
P-60

OUR TROOPS MUST HAVE THE BEST EQUIPMENT **Buy War Savings Certificates**



WALTER PURKIS  
6079 WEST BOULEVARD  
VANCOUVER, B. C., CANADA

More Walter Purkis covers



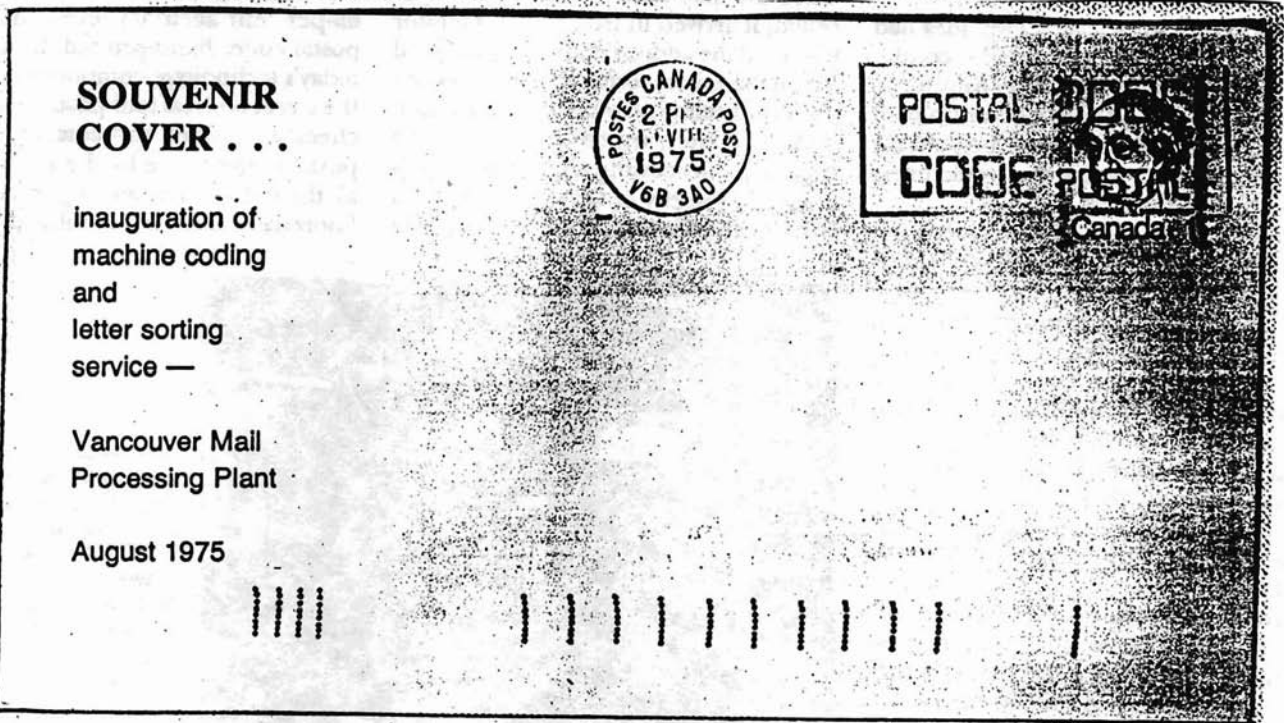
Walter Purkis Patriotic Covers

P-01	Acroplane at lower left of cover. Below that the text PUT VICTORY FIRST BUY VICTORY BONDS. VI in text could mean the 6 <sup>th</sup> Bond Campaign. Blue ink.
P-05	Tank, same text as P-01. Blue ink.
P-10	Ship, same text as P-01. Blue ink.
P-15	No vehicle, text same as P-01 in larger font.. Green and blue ink.
P-20	Soldiers in combat with shield and VI. Same text as P-01 in a larger font. Blue ink.
P-25	Tank in upper left corner. At lower left, the text INVEST IN VICTORY BUY VICTORY BONDS. Green ink.
P-30	Ship, same text as P-25. Green ink.
P-35	Flag with V inside wreath, same text as P-25. Blue ink.
P-40	Flag with V inside wreath in upper left corner. At bottom left, the text - Invest In The Best Buy VICTORY BONDS. Brown ink.
P-45	Shield with VI at lower left. No other text. Blue and green ink.
P-50	BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE 25 CLUB. Buy a WAR SAVINGS STAMP EVERY FRIDAY! Image of soldier. Text is in upper/middle left. Blue ink.
P-55	Image of a 25¢ War Savings Stamp in lower left and text reading - BE "UP TO DATE" IN "44" join the 25 Club. Black ink. This cover bears the control number E-25-16 at lower edge.
P-60	Image of combat soldiers loading a mortar. Text reads - OUT TROOPS MUST HAVE THE BEST EQUIPMENT Buy more WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES. Brown ink.
P-65	Five fighter aeroplanes in flight with text reading - We MUST be masters of the Air. Buy more WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES. Blue ink.
P-70	Image of ship sinking in lower left. Text reads - SHIPS ARE VITAL FOR VICTORY ... Save them! OBEY THE LAW ON TEA and COFFEE RATIONING! Black ink.
	Research coordinator is Cecil Coutts 34820 McLeod Avenue, Abbotsford, BC. V3G 1G9. E-mail: cec.coutts@telus.net.



## INTRODUCTION OF BARCODE READER – Vancouver 1 August 1975

Thanks to Fred Danells of Canada Post Vancouver Heritage Club and *Performance Magazine* for the history of the development of automated mail sorting by Owen Donald Lewis.



**ON AN OTHERWISE ORDINARY DAY IN** June, Owen Donald Lewis, surrounded by his wife and six of his seven daughters, couldn't wait to start a tour of the Ottawa Mail Processing Plant. The 86-year-old veteran fidgeted in his wheel chair, raring to go, eyes dancing with excitement.

"He's been talking about this for years," said daughter Dodie Lewis, with a laugh.

Lewis' excitement was due to a connection he has with the mail-sorting process that dates back quite a few years. In 1951, Lewis had a brilliant idea that would, decades later, form the basis for Canada Post's mail-sorting system.

"It's called marking the mail, and it's the principle underlying modern sortation," said Michel Mancini, the Canada Post Learning consultant who arranged Lewis' tour.

"Barcode technology on the letter is what's really helped us out," adds Brian Dunmall, superintendent of Operations—and Lewis' guide. "We couldn't do without it."

It is exactly that barcode technology Lewis envisioned 65 years ago, that now enables the corporation to sort as many as 32,000 pieces of mail an hour, compared to 1,800 pieces an hour before the technology became available.

It all began shortly after Lewis joined the Post Office in Ottawa as a reporter for *Postmark*, the government publication that preceded *Performance* magazine, and two decades before automation became a working reality.

"I had just taken exams for External Affairs and they used the Hollerith system of matching punch holes. Well, you couldn't punch holes in letters, but it occurred to me that you could use the same marking system and print it in fluorescent ink, which could be read by ultraviolet light," said Lewis, who knew about fluorescent ink from his Air Force days.

He jotted down his idea and passed it on to his editor. Within a couple of days, Lewis was summoned to Deputy Postmaster General Walter J. Turnbull's office. He remembers the details of that meeting vividly.

"I spent the whole time getting there trying to shine my shoes on my pants and slick down my hair," recalled Lewis with a

warm chuckle. "I got down to his office—it's the prime minister's office now, you know. You could step right into the fireplace, and he (Turnbull) came around from behind his huge desk—it looked like an acre, but wasn't."

"It's called marking the mail, and it's the principle underlying modern sortation."

—Michel Mancini,  
Learning  
consultant

Turnbull questioned Lewis for a few minutes and concluded that, since the young man knew little about how mail was sorted but was clearly observant, he needed a proper tour of sortation plants to understand the process.

Tours of several plants in Canada and the U.S. were arranged. When he returned, Lewis met with Turnbull again and was asked whether he had changed his mind as a result of the tours.

"No", I said, "I'm more convinced than I was before," said Lewis.

Turnbull arranged a separate office for Lewis, from which he could work towards making his idea a reality, and gave him the authority to hire whatever expertise he needed.

Lewis was convinced that if the mail could be coded, and the code electronically read by a machine, then mechanically sorted into the appropriate destination bin, it would speed up the process.

Turnbull also believed Lewis' idea had merit and, because he was under considerable pressure to simultaneously downsize his department and speed up mail sortation, he too was on the look-out for the electronic expertise that would bring Lewis' idea to fruition.

There was already some mechanization that allowed mail sorters to reach more pigeon holes; but electronics had not yet been explored for mail sortation, and the current system was slowing down.

In fact, one of the first things Lewis noticed while working for the Canadian Post Office Department in 1951 was that it was taking up to ten days for a letter to travel from Montreal to Ottawa, a distance that used to be covered in 24 hours in 1938.

In the post-war years, urban centres were exploding with new construction, which created new addresses that letter sorters had to quickly memorize and apply. This caused a bottleneck at sortation plants.

Manual sorting meant each piece of mail was physically handled four to eight times before reaching its destination. First it was sorted by province, then by city or town, then again by city area and then by route, and all the sorting depended on the transportation available.

With postal walks changing by one or two blocks at a time, letter sorters had an onerous task memorizing and revising their 'sorts.'

Turnbull eventually found the expert he needed at Federal Electric Manufacturing Co. (FEMCO), the Canadian affiliate of International Telephone and Telegraph. Dr. Maurice Levy was an electronics expert working in FEMCO's research and development department.

Levy was hired to develop a system based on Lewis' idea, and he spent a great deal of time under Lewis' tutelage learning the postal system and the details of his vision. By late 1952, Levy had a mandate to build a working model.

His electronic barcoding system was named Canadian Post Office Electronic Letter Sorter-Prototype, or CPOELS-P.

The handmade model was tested at postal headquarters in Ottawa in 1953. It worked, and in February 1955, Levy

unveiled the machine at the National Electronics Conference in Chicago.

Unlike today's systems, the CPOELS-P relied on typists to apply the barcode. Once the mail had been faced and cancelled, it arrived in front of an operator who read the address and manually typed a code based on certain rules onto each piece, indicating province, city and street.

A year later, a prototype machine capable of processing all mail then generated by the city of Ottawa was built in Canada and assembled in the Langevin

had limited success because they could not read hand-printed postal codes very well. Over the years, the systems have become more sophisticated and can now achieve an overall read-rate of 85-per-cent accuracy, even with many postal codes hand-printed. In fact, with today's technology, computers read both the street address and postal code, then check a database and correct errors in postal codes made by the sender. With all the innovations moving today's mail, fluorescent barcodes are still at the core of



Owen Donald Lewis (centre) and his son-in-law watch with fascination as the multi-line Optical Character Reader at the Ottawa Mail Processing Plant processes mail at speeds reaching 32,000 letters an hour.

building. It had cost considerably more than anticipated, and although it might have recouped that cost eventually, it was never given a chance. With a change of federal government, the project was scrapped and Turnbull left the Canadian Post Office Department.

Canada Post would not automate again until the 1970's, when a Belgian coding system was adopted and Canadian postal codes had been developed. That early automation still needed manual keying stations to apply a fluorescent barcode for sortation by a Letter Sorting Machine (LSM). However, it wasn't long before Optical Character Readers (OCRs) were incorporated, which can 'read' a postal code typed on a letter and spray a fluorescent barcode onto it. Early OCRs

Canadian mail sortation, exactly as Lewis had once envisioned—though he could not have imagined machines reading and applying the barcodes on their own.

"In fact, the fluorescent sortation barcode system, which by the way is exclusive to Canada Post in North America, has a lower error rate than black barcodes, used in some other countries," said Roger Gosselin, CPC technical advisor with Engineering Services.

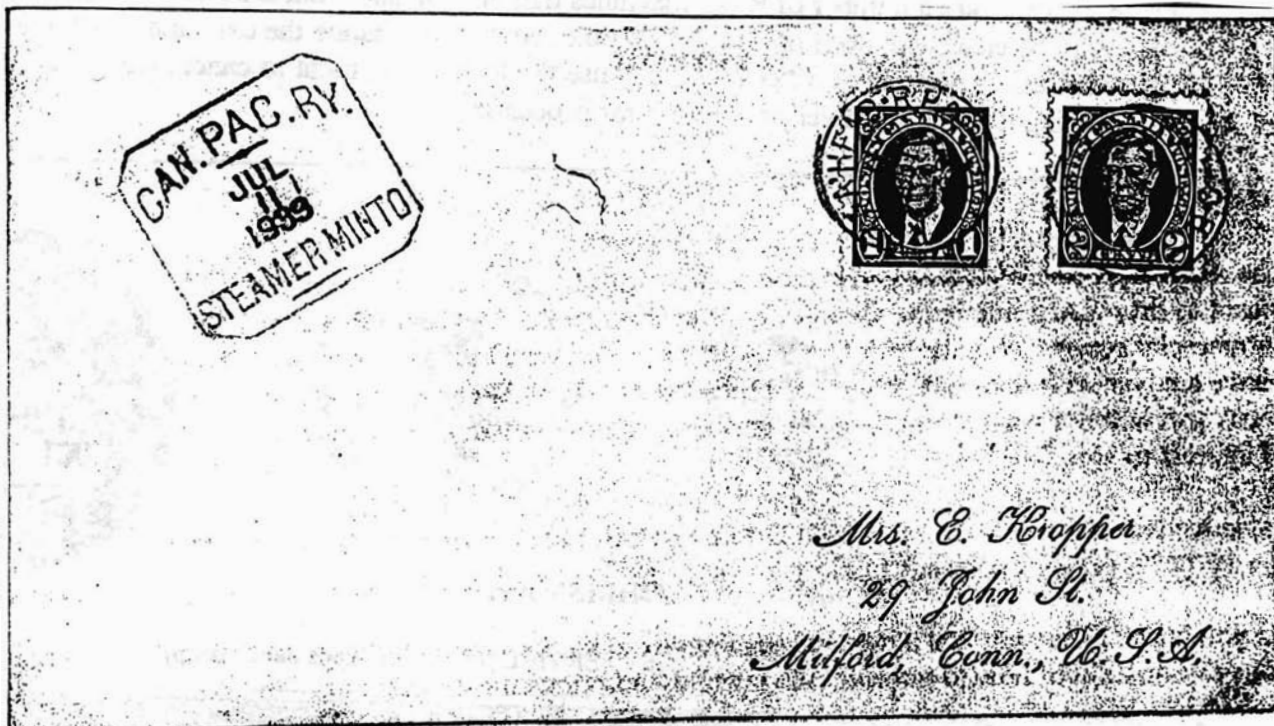
By the end of his two-hour plant tour, Lewis' energy was clearly flagging. He had taken it all in with gusto, and when asked whether it was what he had envisioned all those years ago, he said no, he hadn't imagined anything that sophisticated, but he was glad that his idea had been a useful one. ■

**STEAMER MINTO – AGAIN new dates**

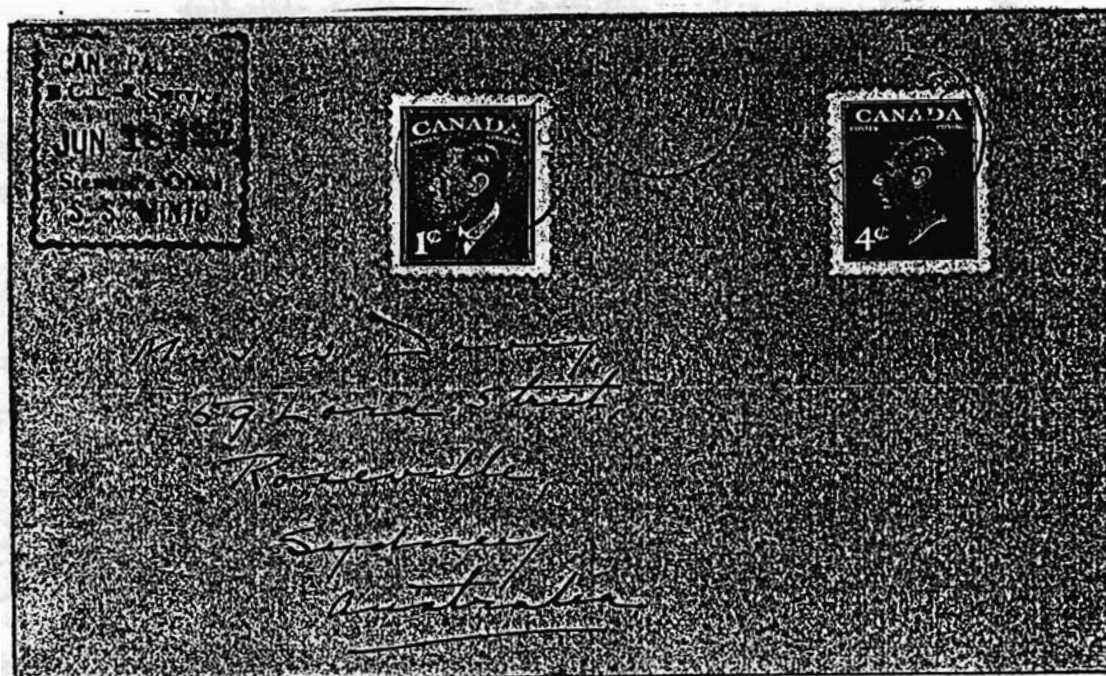
See Volume 14, Number 3, pages 451 to 455 - and Volume 14, Number 4, page 473

In response to the earlier information on the *Steamer Minto*, T. Malcolm Jones sends copies two covers in his collection that extend the period of usage for Ludlow S-149a and S-148. Both appear to be favour cancels.

New early date for Ludlow S-149a - Jul 11 1939 (formerly July 23 1949)



New late date for Ludlow S-148 – Jun 18 1952 (formerly December 30, 1950)

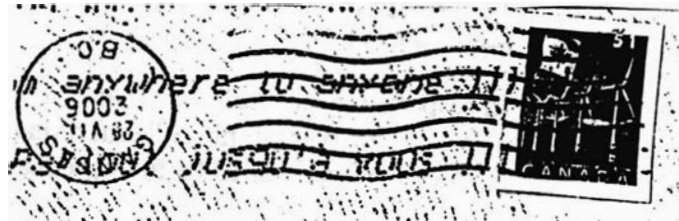


The last voyage of the S.S. *Minto* was April 23, 1954



### GANGES RAPID CANCELLING MACHINE

The Ganges Rapid Cancelling Machine has returned to service briefly in July 2006. It was last reported in June 2000 and like the 2000 report the hub is inverted.



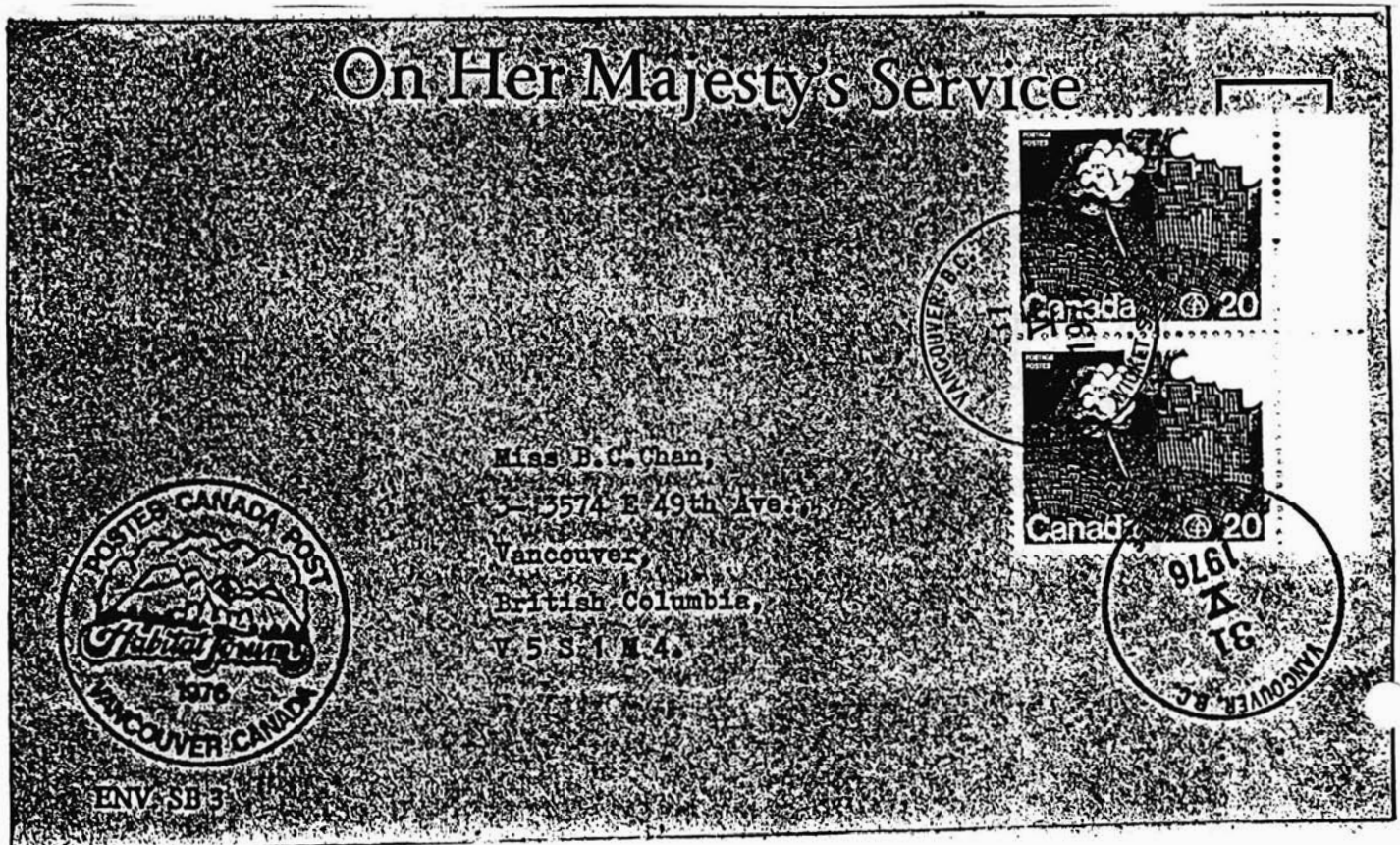
Presently there are a number of RCM machines that are "on site" but are not in use because the volume of mail to be cancelled does not justify the time required to change the date and to ink the machine. There are also a number of offices that only use the RCM equipment to cancel local mail as most of the letter mail goes to Vancouver or Victoria for processing.

### More Pictorial cancels



### Habitat Forum – Vancouver 1976 – OHMS cover

VANCOUVER, B.C. / 31 / V / 1976 / WICKET SERVICE (Public Relations hand stamp)





## RICHMOND TO VANCOUVER – A MONTH IN THE MAIL SYSTEM

The letter below was mailed in Richmond and was cancelled at Vancouver MPP on August 14, 2006 using an IPS model MST RCM that was withdrawn in 1995. The letter appears to have then been sent to Edmonton for processing where it was placed in a clear plastic envelope (see below) with a letter explaining the delay. It was delivered in Vancouver about a month later.

Why the delay?



CUSTOMER SERVICE  
9828 104 AVE NW  
EDMONTON AB T5J 0J8

August 14th, 2006

Incident: PA060814-27<O>

Dear Customer

We wish to inform you that late delivery of this item was caused by an irregularity that occurred in our mail processing service.

We sincerely regret any inconvenience caused by this most unfortunate situation.

Please be assured that we are constantly striving to prevent this type of incident.

For further information, please contact our Customer Service Office by phoning 1-800-267-1177.

Havley Petersen  
5251 Bunting Ave.  
Richmond, B.C.  
V7E 5X3



Mr. B. Topping  
Richmond Retired Teachers Association  
460 Angus Drive  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6P 5K2

*Performance* magazine is produced by Canada Post six times a year to keep postal employees aware of changes that are taking place at the corporation and is distributed to all employees free of charge. Although much of the information is of an in house in nature, most issues contain item of general interest to postal historians. The item on barcodes in this issue and one on the development of a parcel hub at the Vancouver Mail Processing Plant that will be in the next issue of *BC Postal Research* are examples of this type of material. Unfortunately many of the items contain information on post office changes that are not recorded elsewhere and should be picked up by the philatelic press. For this reason some items that are not directly related to British Columbia, such as the figures quoted below, are included to preserve them for future postal historians. Hopefully there is no objection to this policy.

## \$4 billion

Commercial Sales revenue target for last year (an increase of 5.6 per cent over 2003).

**51** The number of locations where employees are also official Passport Receiving Agents, able to receive passports on behalf of the Government of Canada.

**12%** The percentage increase of revenues for Unaddressed Admail by August 2004, compared with the same period the previous year. Revenues for Addressed Admail are six per cent higher than the year before.

**4.3%** The percentage decrease in greenhouse gas emissions that Canada Post's fleet and facilities were able to achieve in 2004 compared to 2003 emissions.

**\$1,870,000** The amount raised in employee donations and events alone for the United Way.

**21** The number of Aboriginals who received the corporation's first Aboriginal Education Incentive Awards for overcoming obstacles and returning to school.

**1%** Canada Post's current share of the \$400 million annual pre-paid long-distance phone card market in Canada.

**1,000** The number of Delivery employees who joined Calgary's SeniorConnect, a volunteer program that provides support to seniors who may not have a strong local network of family or friends.

**3,000** The number of employees who cast their vote when asked in the fall to pick their choice of new designs for service recognition pins and watches. Bravo!

**15,000** The approximate number of employees who were sent an Employee Satisfaction Survey in October. Some

40 per cent of those surveyed responded.

**1,000** The number of corporate outlets converted from manual cash system to Retail Outlet Support System (ROSS) through Retail Outlet Automation by November.

**38** The number of new Edger Facer Machines that replaced 25-year-old Culler Facer Cancellers, improving delivery by reducing the amount of mail rejected from the mechanized sorting stream.

**8%** Overall improvement shown over 18 months in results of the 2004 Process Maturity Assessment, a comprehensive survey that measures the methods and processes a company uses to accomplish work, based on criteria established by the National Quality Institute. Results indicate a growing set of strengths and six common areas that require increased

focus, including: alignment (as opposed to "silo-thinking"), integration among teams, planning, deployment, change capacity and leadership.

**77** The percentage of Canadians who mail at least one card for the holidays, according to recent surveys.

**28** The percentage of Canadians who send a gift in the mail for the holidays.

**57** The percentage of all cards and gifts mailed each year that are sent specifically during the holiday season.