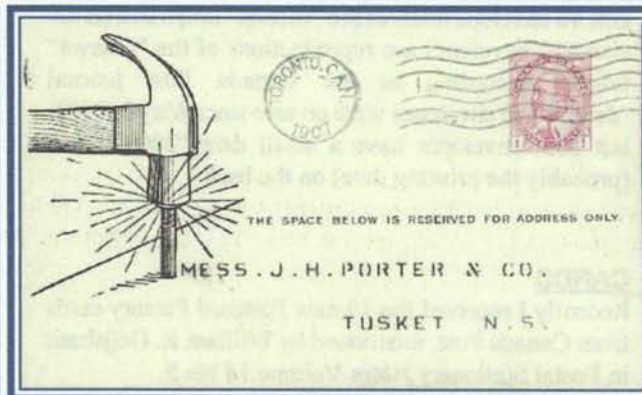
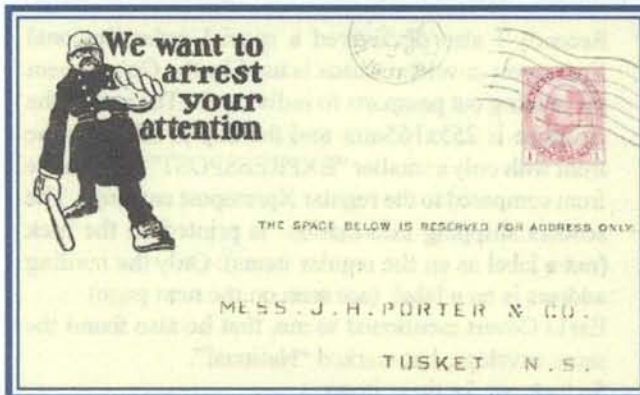


# Postal Stationery Notes

Volume 18 No. 6

JUNE 2003



## #7. ILLUSTRATED CARDS

**"Gordon, Mackay & Company, Toronto, Ontario"**  
by Chris Ellis

Donald Mackay was born in 1815 in Kildonan, Scotland, the youngest of ten children. In 1817 his family moved to Lybster, Scotland. In 1836 he moved to Montreal where, with two of his brothers, he set up a mercantile firm. In 1853, he and his nephew John Gordon moved to Hamilton in Canada West and opened a wholesale dry goods operation. Little is recorded of Gordon except that he too was born in Scotland and was the son of one of Mackay's sisters. Initially established as "Gordon & Mackay" they had set up shop on Main St. West in Hamilton by 1855. Hamilton was a good port town, ideal for importing goods, but the building of the railroad made Toronto a better location so in 1860 they moved shop to Toronto and set up at 11 Wellington St., later moving in 1871 to Front St. at the corner of Bay St. At this time, most of the goods they wholesaled were imported from Europe and especially Britain.

Continued on page 56



### Editor's Notes

Preparations for BNAPEX 2003, held here in London on September 25-27, are well under way and I am convinced, that we will be able to have Robert Lemire again talking about some interesting topic at our postal stationery study group seminar at that convention.

I hope to meet many postal stationery collectors at BNAPEX 2003. London is situated in a central location of South-western Ontario and is very easy to reach by car, bus, train and by airplane.

Dick Staecker

## What's New

### in Postal Stationery

#### ENVELOPES

The new non-denominational envelopes, with prepaid postage for anywhere in Canada are nice in design. The size #8 envelope features the "Bishop" tulips and on the size #10 envelopes are reproductions of the "Ottawa" tulips. According to the Canada Post journal "details" the envelopes were on sale since May 2, 2003, but both envelopes have a small date "2003.04.04" (probably the printing date) on the back.

#### CARDS

Recently I received the 19 new Postcard Factory cards from Canada Post, mentioned by William R. Geijsbeek in Postal Stationery Notes Volume 18 No.5.

There now are some changes to these cards (Wigalso):

1. There is a new UPC code series that is the same as for the Tourist postcards - 63491 xxxxx with the PCF's starting at 63491 02701.

2. What was the UPC code is now been assigned as the SKU [Stock Keeping Unit] and it appears below the PCF Ref: as so "SKU:260xxx".

3. I also note that the Ref: for the new PCF's has a space before the end number e.g. POST57-HFX 020

4. (Gauthier) The divider information about the company has the following words added: Firm and Site Web (French equivalent of previously untranslated caption parts). If reprints of former cards are made, it is possible the new divider will be used. It's a quick way to look for such reprints, especially when racks are replenished.

#### XPRESSPOST

On a regional letter size Xpresspost envelope, I recently purchased, I noticed that instead of a number missing in the date clock on the back, there only was a "12" above the "02". Maybe that means a change from the reverse of deleting the numeral of the current month on the date clock.

Recently I also discovered a special order Regional Xpresspost envelope which is used by the Government for sending out passports to individuals. The size of the envelope is 255x165mm and the flap is folded to the front with only a smaller "EXPRESSPOST" logo on the front compared to the regular Xpresspost envelope. The senders shipping information is printed on the back (not a label as on the regular items). Only the mailing address is on a label. (see scan on the next page)

Earle Covert mentioned to me, that he also found the same envelope, but marked "National".

So look out for these items.

More new Government of Ontario Xpresspost envelopes are also reported by Chris Ryan. See the following pages for a revised listing.

» « • » «

**DUES: Postal Stationery Study Group dues are Can. \$8.00 or equivalent per volume of six issues.**

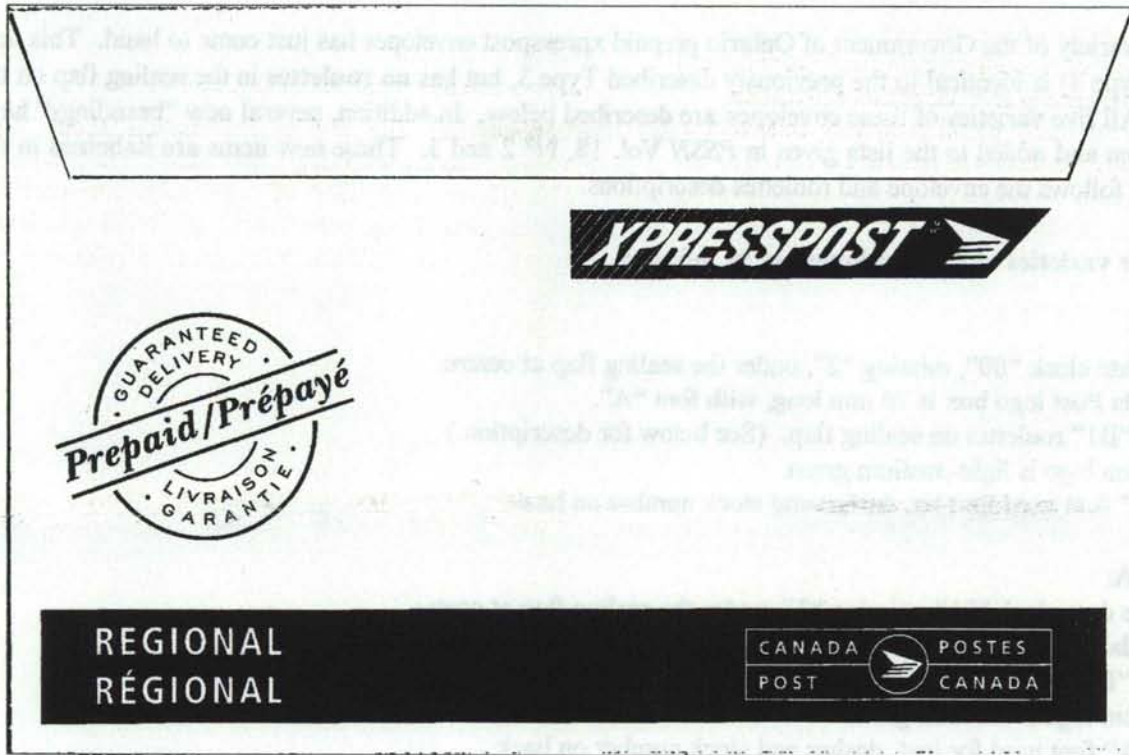
**Dues are now payable if your mailing label reads V18#1. Please renew soon and make your remittance payable to 'JOHN GRACE' not to BNAPS or the Postal Stationery Study Group.**

Dues or any change of mailing address should be sent to the Sec./ Treasurer John Grace, 734 Aspen Rd. Pickering, On. L1V 4H2 E-mail [jandmgrace@sympatico.ca](mailto:jandmgrace@sympatico.ca)

All information for the newsletter, and correspondence about the study group, should be addressed to Dick Staecker, 384 Regal Drive, London, On. Canada N5Y 1J7, phone (519) 455-9715, E-mail may be sent to [dstaecker@rogers.com](mailto:dstaecker@rogers.com)



Below is a scan (front and back) of the government special order Xpresspost envelope used for mailing passports.



↑  
label

## New Items for the Government of Ontario Xpresspost Envelopes

by Chris Ryan

A new variety of the Government of Ontario prepaid xpresspost envelopes has just come to hand. This new item (Type 4) is identical to the previously described Type 3, but has **no roulettes** in the sealing flap on the back. All five varieties of these envelopes are described below. In addition, several new "brandings" have been seen and added to the lists given in *PSSN* Vol. 18, N<sup>o</sup> 2 and 3. These new items are italicized in the list that follows the envelope and roulettes descriptions.

### The five varieties of the envelopes are as follows:

#### Type 1:

- Red date clock "00", missing "2", under the sealing flap at centre.
- Canada Post logo box is 76 mm long, with font "A".
- Type "B1" roulettes on sealing flap. (See below for description.)
- Trillium logo is light-medium green.
- "Thin" font used for text, dashes and stock number on back.

#### Type 2A:

- Purple date clock "01", missing "3", under the sealing flap at centre.
- Canada Post logo box is 76 mm long, with font "B".
- Type "B2" roulettes on sealing flap.
- Trillium logo is medium green.
- "Thick" font used for text, dashes and stock number on back.

#### Type 2B:

- As Type 2A, but Canada Post logo box is now 83½ mm long, with font "C" (thin).

#### Type 3:

- Green date clock "02", missing "4", under the sealing flap at centre.
- Canada Post logo box is 84 mm long, with font "D" (thick).
- Type "B1" roulettes on sealing flap.
- Trillium logo is dark green.
- "Thin" font used for text, dashes and stock number on back.

#### Type 4: (*New Item*)

- Identical to Type 3, except that there are **no roulettes** in the sealing flap.

### The roulette types are as follows:

#### Roulette "B1":

- A variety of Webb's Type "B" roulette. (See page 318 of the catalogue.)
  - A coarse roulette with individual cuts 2 to 3 mm in length.
  - The horizontal line dips from left to right across the flap, it is not parallel to the edge of the flap.
  - The left-side pair of slanted vertical lines are significantly closer together than in roulette "B2".
- The bottom ends of this pair are 24 to 25 mm apart.

Roulette "B2":

- A variety of Webb's Type "B" roulette.
- A fine roulette with individual cuts approximately 1½ mm in length.
- The horizontal line is parallel to the edge of the flap.
- The left-side pair of slanted vertical lines are significantly further apart than in roulette "B1". The bottom ends of this pair are approximately 33 mm apart.



25 %



25 %

The following "brandings" are known to this writer. New items are in italics.

On Type 1 envelopes:

- Carleton University, Admissions Services.
- Carleton University, Office of Registrarial Services, Faculty of Science.
- Conestoga College.
- Lakehead University, Office of Admissions and Recruitment.
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Registration and Claims Branch.
- Ryerson Polytechnic University (photograph).
- *University of Guelph-Humber (in black). ("Welcome. Learn more. Do more." in red-brown with circle and horizontal bar in navy-blue.)*
- York University, Schulich School of Business.

On Type 2A envelopes:

- Ryerson University (photograph).
- *Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology (in black) (with vertical "Seneca" in red box).*
- University of Guelph-Humber (in black). ("Welcome. Learn more. Do more." in red-brown with circle and horizontal bar in navy-blue.)
- *University of Ottawa, Strategic Enrollment Management, Office of the Registrar (photographs with university logo and web-address) in brown.*
- University of Waterloo ("join us and make Waterloo the next step in your future") in black.

On Type 2B envelopes:

- Ryerson University (photograph).

On Type 3 envelopes:

- *Georgian College* (“*Georgian - Your College - Your Future*”) in dark blue.
- *Ryerson University* (photograph).
- *Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology* (with vertical “*Seneca*” in box) in black.
- *University of Guelph, Admission Services* (in black). (“*Welcome to Guelph*” in dark red.)
- *University of Guelph* (in a black box) (photograph with caption “*Welcome to Canada’s best comprehensive University in a dark red box*”).
- *University of Ottawa, Strategic Enrollment Management, Office of the Registrar* (photographs with university logo and web-address) in brown.
- *University of Waterloo* (“*join us and make Waterloo the next step in your future*” in black).

On Type 4 envelopes:

- *Carleton University, Admissions Services*.

.....

continued from page 51 (#7. ILLUSTRATED CARDS)

From 1861 to 1876 Mackay purchased and operated the Lybster Cotton Mills at Merriton near St. Catharines and therefore began wholesaling some of his own produced goods. John Gordon was in ill health for many years and was said to have moved to France for medical reasons. He died in Paris in 1883 leaving Mackay in sole control of the firm.

In 1887 an aging Mackay signed a partnership agreement with his bookkeeper, Charles Robb, and James W. Woods, his business manager/chief European buyer, forming “Gordon Mackay & Co.” Woods had been born at Woodstock, Canada West on September 27, 1855 and when he was two his family moved to

Galt, Ontario. He began working in his father’s dry goods store, Woods and Taylor, in 1869 and had joined Gordon and Mackay as a buyer in 1874. By 1881 he had been already promoted to manager. Robb died in 1894 and on February 1, 1899 Gordon, Mackay and Co. Limited was formed as a joint stock company with James W. Woods as Business Manager and Donald Mackay as President. The agreement allowed Woods and other partners, including Woods’ own father, to buy out Mackay from company profits. On Mackay’s death in 1908, James W. Woods became President. By 1900 the company occupied an impressive four storey building at Bay and Front which covered 24,000 square feet. A great fire swept that district in April of 1904 destroying the company premises and that of several other nearby wholesalers on the south side of Front from Young to York Streets. However, Gordon, Mackay and Co. Ltd. rebuilt and expanded to occupy an adjacent building, eventually totalling 153,000 sq. ft. and employing 1500 people.

The company had begun buying out some of their competitors in 1891 and continued this practice into the early 1900s. In fact, of the 35 wholesale dry goods firms which existed in Ontario in 1874, only Gordon Mackay survived into the late 1920s. In the early 1900s they also began acquiring a number of manufacturers such as the York (later Puritan) Knitting Mills, and by 1927 they controlled eight factories worth \$2,500,000. In 1911, they



front of card #20

purchased two retail outlets including the Spence Store in Chatham and the Gould Store in St. Thomas, Ontario and the company began shifting more in to the retail than wholesale end of the business, eventually divesting themselves of the manufacturing firms. In 1927 they consolidated this retail business forming the Walker Stores chain. By 1947 they operated 41 Walker Stores all over Ontario from North Bay in the north to Cornwall in the east to Chatham in the west, as well as the Smith's department stores in Windsor. During the First World War, James Woods served as part of the British war mission in New York and Washington. For this work he was knighted in 1919. He remained President of the firm until 1940 and died in 1941. Sir James Woods was succeeded as President by his son William B. Woods (1885-1953) who served in that capacity until 1947. Eventually, in turn in 1954, his son, David M. Woods (b. 1912), became President.

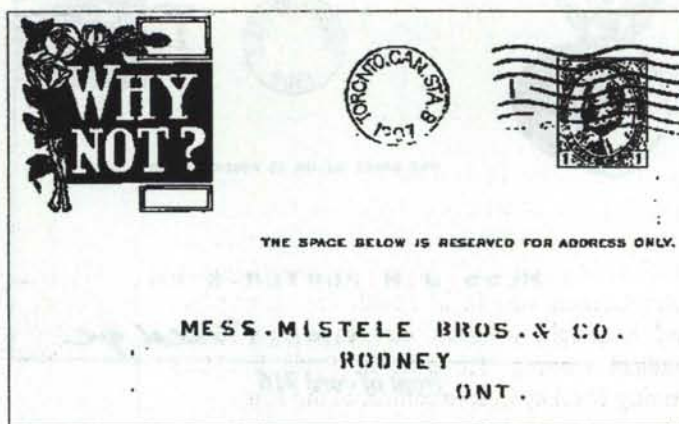
In the late 1940s the company began expanding their wholesale business throughout Canada eventually opening sales offices or branches from Vancouver to Saint John, New Brunswick. In January of 1957 they abandoned their headquarters on Front St. and moved to a brand new \$1,000,000 facility in the suburbs near the juncture of Highways 400 and 401. By this time they were known as "Gordon, Mackay and Stores Ltd." As late as 1969 they had profits of almost \$500,000 a year but their retail business soured in the early 1970s. The firm was purchased in 1972 by the Canadian division of British conglomerate Slater Walker Securities Ltd. through its subsidiary, Peoples Department Stores of Mount Royal, Quebec and Gordon Mackay ceased to exist.

Gordon Mackay was one of the most prolific users of Postal Stationery cards with front advertising during the Victorian (on Webb P18) and Edwardian (on Webb P23) era. The late Horace Harrison actually shows more examples of this series in his *Canada's Business Postal Cards* (2000) published as BNAPS Exhibit Series No. 22 than of any other single series. The company began using front advertisements in 1899 and continued to use them until around 1912. The Victorian examples are strictly salesmen calling cards but by Edwardian times many were sent to vendors to publicize specials for their growing mail order business. Unless otherwise noted, the text and illustrations on these cards are in black ink.

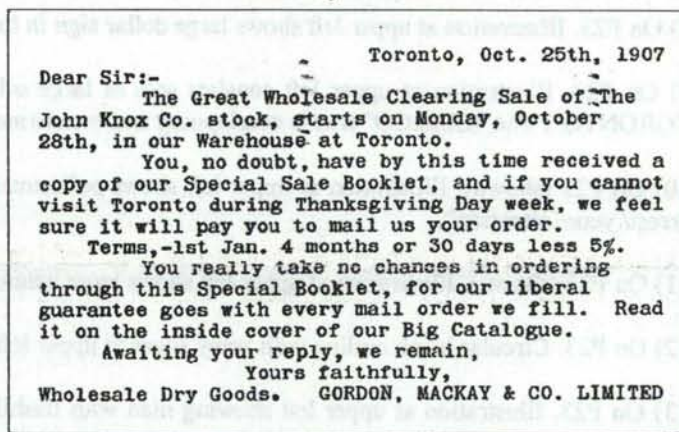
1) On P18. Red circular logo at lower left reading in script "THE Staple HOUSE of Canada." At top to left of stamp is thin italicized script text reading "When Our ...../ calls upon you ask to see samples of . . . / (slashes indicate line breaks). Below that text is a list of special offers with the number of the product in thicker black lines. The specials listed could vary considerably from salesman visit to visit so I treat the variation in what is listed as simply varieties of this type of card.

2) On P18 (shown). Same as #1 except the text at top to left of stamp impression the text reads in thin, italicized script: "When...../ calls upon you, ask to see samples of?". Again, the products listed as specials could vary in the short term so there are potentially many varieties of this type.

3) On P23 (shown). Illustration at upper left has large writing "WHY/ NOT?" in white on squarish black background with smaller, open double-outlined boxes at upper and lower right. At left and upper left are drawings



Front of card #3



Reverse of card #3



front of card #8



front of card #16

of a bouquet of roses. This card type is one of a large series of cards offering various mail order specials, several others of which are listed below. Almost all such cards have a date on the upper right on the reverse along with the sales pitch in purplish, typewritten appearing, text. The dates on cards I have seen indicate new ones could be issued as frequently as every five days. Assuming this was typical and given the length of time such a strategy was used (about three years), there could be over 200 different types of front advertisements. I suspect this estimate is an exaggeration, but it does suggest the list here has many gaps.

4) On P23. Illustration beside stamp and address space shows man catching fish and has text at upper left corner reading "A GOOD/ LINE".

5) On P23. Illustration at upper left shows mirror with script writing on glass reading "Just look into this".

6) On P23. Illustration at upper left shows mirror hand throwing postal card into wire waste basket above which there is text in large thick letters: "Don't throw/ this away".

7) On P23. Illustration at upper left has small solid outline of boy with arms outstretched at left of very large lettering reading "Oh/ Look".

8) On P23. Illustration at upper left shows large dollar sign in thick-lined square frame.

9) On P23. Illustration at upper left consists sole of large solid lettering reading "YOURS TRULY/ GM&CO/ TORONTO". The "GM&CO" text is overlapping and intertwined.

10) On P23 (shown). Illustration at upper left shows policeman with club to right of which is text "We want to/ arrest/ your/ attention".

11) On P23 (shown). Illustration at upper left shows large hammer hitting nail on head.

12) On P23. Circular black outline with wavy edges at upper left enclosing white text reading: "A/ Fact".

13) On P23. Illustration at upper left showing man with flashlight in white on square black background. Text in illustration reads: "Let us/ throw/ the/ light / on/ Some/ Facts".

14) On P23 (shown). Illustration shows man writing on blackboard and text on blackboard reads "Good" in script lettering.

15) On P23. Illustration at upper left shows hand and pen and includes text: "Jot It Down".

16) On P23. Illustration at upper left of sack with dollar sign on side.



17) On P23. Illustration at upper left shows two lines of text in square box. Upper line reads "Don't" and is in white lettering on a black background while the lower line reads "FORGET" in black on a white background.

18) On P23. Illustration at upper left consists of solid black box with white an greyish text reading "RESULTS/ FOR YOU/ ARE RESULTS/ FOR US!"

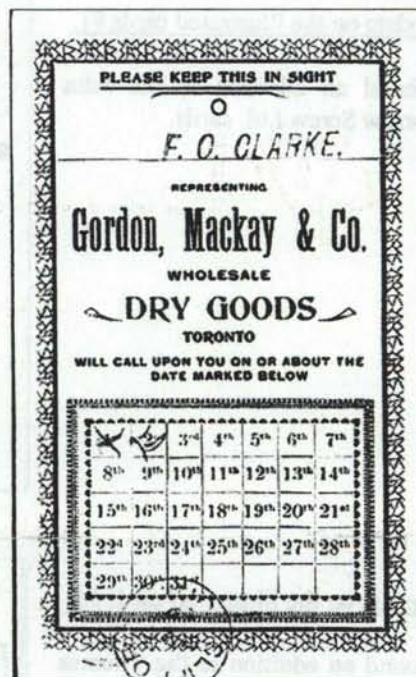
19) On P23. Illustration at upper left includes text "SAVE/ A/ LITTLE" in front of solid black box with irregular outline.

20) On P23 (shown). Illustration at upper left in red ink includes a circular chain, within the links of which are listed various product lines such as "PURITAN UNDERWEAR" and "SUSPENDERS". Within centre surrounded by the oval chain is text "GORDON MACKAY & CO/ LIMITED" in arc at top, and "CHAIN OF FACTORIES" at bottom. In very centre is hand holding a dagger(?) and words "Trade Mark"

21) On P23 (shown). Similar to 20) except the links in the chain are arranged in a more elongated hexagon shape which is wider from side to side (47.5 mm), than top to bottom (37mm).

22) On P23. Black ink illustration covers all of area at left and above address space except for immediate area of stamp impression. Illustration shows Bay and Front Street headquarters with trolley car passing. Text below stamp reads "PART VIEW OF/ WAREHOUSE". Text under narrow right edge of illustration above address space reads: GORDON, MACKAY & CO., Limited, TORONTO.

23) On P23 (shown). Same illustration as #19 but lacks text under stamp and between address space and right side of illustration.



front of card #2

Toronto, September, 1907.

Dear Sir,—

We certainly hit the nail on the head when we adopted our present Mail Order System.

Thousands of up-to-date merchants throughout Canada are doing a large amount of their buying through our BIG CATALOGUES with the most satisfactory results.

If you are not already in the habit of sending us your Mail Orders regularly, you will do well to do so, and, after a fair trial, you will find that both our service and our values are better than you have been getting elsewhere.

We are Mail Order Specialists, and our LIBERAL GUARANTEE goes with every Mail Order we fill.

Yours faithfully,

Wholesale Dry Goods.      GORDON, MACKAY & CO. Limited.

back of card #11

Acknowledgements: I thank Dick Staecker for providing information on some cards listed in this series and of course, a great debt is owed to the late Horace Harrison who provided details on many cards through the illustrations in his Canada's Business Postal Cards exhibit published by BNAPS as well as correspondence. Horace told me this was one of his favourite series and encouraged work on it – a very generous man all around. My information on the business history of the firm is derived from the company records themselves, donated by the fifth President, David M. Woods, to the Trent University Archives in Peterborough, Ontario. I thank especially Jodi Aoki, Archives and Special Collections Coordinator at Trent


University, for facilitating my examination of these materials which include materials as diverse as the original 1887 partnership agreement actually signed by Mackay, Robb and Woods to the programme celebrating the opening of their new north Toronto premises in 1957.

Update on the illustrated cards #1.

I found an addition to the John Morrow Screw Ltd. cards.

**THE... JOHN MORROW**  
**SCREW**  
*Limited*  
**INGERSOLL, ONTARIO**

ROUND AND BUTTON



CAP SCREWS

THE SPACE BELOW IS RESERVED FOR ADDRESS ONLY.


The Clark-Demill Co. Ltd.  
Hespeler Ont.



Update on the illustrated cards #6.

I found an addition to the Thomas Robertson and Company cards.

We carry a complete line of Porcelain




LAVATORIES,  
BATHS, SINKS, Etc.

**THOMAS ROBERTSON AND COMPANY,**  
*LIMITED*  
MONTREAL

PRIVATE POST CARD

THE SPACE BELOW IS RESERVED FOR ADDRESS ONLY.


*The Porcelain & Washroom Co  
Montreal  
N.B.*



On this 1897 Jubilee card someone wanted to be sure the mail sorting person can read the mailing address.

**Canada Post Card**

THE ADDRESS TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.



**W. H. JUDD & CO.,**  
**103 BAY ST. NORTH,**  
**HAMILTON, ONTARIO.**