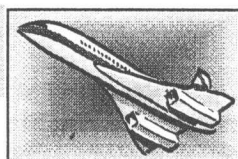


# THE PACIFIC MAIL



*The Quarterly Journal of the British North American Philatelic Society  
Trans-Pacific Study Group*

**Chair: Brian Murphy**

**Secretary/Treasurer:**

**Editor: David H. Whiteley**

*Volume 1 No. 2*

*September, 1999*

## **Collecting Trans-Pacific Mail by Gray Scrimgeour**

I collect trans-Pacific covers as part of my British Columbia collection. My B.C. interests stop about 1905, but I continue the trans-Pacific materiel to about 1910 so that I can find a few more covers. Also, the B.C. backstamps on incoming covers vanish after about 1910. Like Brian and Alec, I save both inward and outgoing mail, between Canada, Asia, Australasia, and Oceania. I also collect mail I can afford to or from B.C. involving any interesting foreign country. My one item from Chile to B.C. can't be in my trans-Pacific collection; unfortunately it came from Tierra del Fuego up the east coast of South America. Because I relate my trans-Pacific collection to B.C., I don't collect Canadian mail via San Francisco (or Seattle, Portland, or Tacoma). I also feel that mail via the U.S. Ports not handled across the Pacific by a Canadian Mail Service. Having examined a great many trans-Pacific covers, I know that I'm eliminating the majority of trans-Pacific covers, but that's my own choice. Canadian mail through Suez to Australia, for example, certainly belong in the group's area of study. If we overlap examples with other groups, that's no problem; sharing of information with other groups can add to everyone's knowledge and enjoyment.

### **A Response from David H. Whiteley**

Gray Scrimgeour and other collectors of trans-Pacific materiel to Asia do not collect mail originating in Canada but carried to the Far East by mail ships departing from United States West Coast Ports, partly on the grounds that this mail was not handled by a Canadian Post Office and in Gray's case by a B.C. Post Office. In 1887, however, Exchange offices for handling mail for the Far East

## **Editorial**

*The First edition of the newsletter, which was sent to a selected list of prospective members, was well received by many, some of whom have either sent us their subscriptions or have indicated a desire to become involved. Some of those solicited have done a fabulous job of talking and publicising the formation of the Study Group. Special thanks are sent to Alec Unwin, Brian Murphy, and Gray Scrimgeour for the efforts on behalf of the Group.*

*As you know the BNAPS convention at Vernon will soon be upon us. A Group meeting has been arranged for 12.00 Noon on Saturday September 17th. No guest speaker has been arranged as it is our desire to discuss the aims and objectives of the Group; areas of interest to members or prospective members; The election or confirmation of Officers and a ratification of the dues established, (arbitrarily set by myself and Brian at \$10.00 per annum to realize start up expenses). It is hoped that there will also be time for show and tell period, so please bring along some interesting items for discussion. Materiel for this issue and the start of a third issue is to hand but I require materiel and articles on all aspects of Trans-Pacific mail. I hope to be able to establish a question and answer page. and to accept small advertisements, free of charge. I hope to see a good turn out at Vernon, until then Happy hunting.*

### **New Members**

*Gray Scrimgeour, Victoria, B.C.,  
Ron, McGuire, Ottawa. Ont.  
Mac McConnell, Walton on the Hill, Staffordshire,*

### **For Sale**

*Steam on the North Pacific: British Columbia to the Orient - 1887 - 1941, by David H. Whiteley. \$19.95 Cdn. \$12.50 U.S. Postage & Handling extra. Soft Cover with illustrations and tables.*

Vancouver as the attached table of instructions to Postmasters sets out. These instructions remained in Force until at least the outbreak of World War I. I did have in my collection covers from the early 1900s (1903-05) that had passed through the Montreal, Windsor and Vancouver offices, which were re-directed to connect with mail steamers departing San Francisco, Seattle and Tacoma. I do, however, agree with Gray when he states that mail departing from a U.S. port was usually carried by either a U.S. or Japanese flag carrier.

### Instructions to Postmasters

#### **Incoming Mails**

The Postmasters at Hong Kong and Yokohama to make up mails

For: Victoria B.C. To Include Matter for Victoria, Places in Vancouver Island, Pacific United States, Mexico, Central America and West Coast of South America.

For: Montreal. To Include matter for Montreal, Newfoundland, Great Britain and European Countries

For: Vancouver. To include matter for Vancouver and all other places in Canada and the United States.

#### Outgoing Mails

To be made up at Montreal.  
Vancouver and Victoria

For Yokohama and Hong Kong

To be made up at Halifax ..

For Yokohama: To Include Matter for Japan only  
Hong Kong to include matter for Hong Kong, China and Straits Settlements\* (not to India unless directed)\*\*

\*. *China for the most part is better reached via Japan*

\*\* *Doubtful whether matter for British India should be sent Hong Kong. (P.M.G.s comments & revisions)*

Railway Mail clerks and distributing offices.  
**East of Montreal** to be instructed to send matter for dispatch for above places to Montreal

That is for China & Japan intended for the route via Vancouver.

**Montreal** to be instructed to make up mails via Vancouver to connect with Steamers leaving that Port, and on other days to send matter via Windsor. do.

**Windsor** to be instructed to send matter via San Francisco to connect with steamers leaving that Port and via Vancouver to connect with steamers sailing from that Port. do.

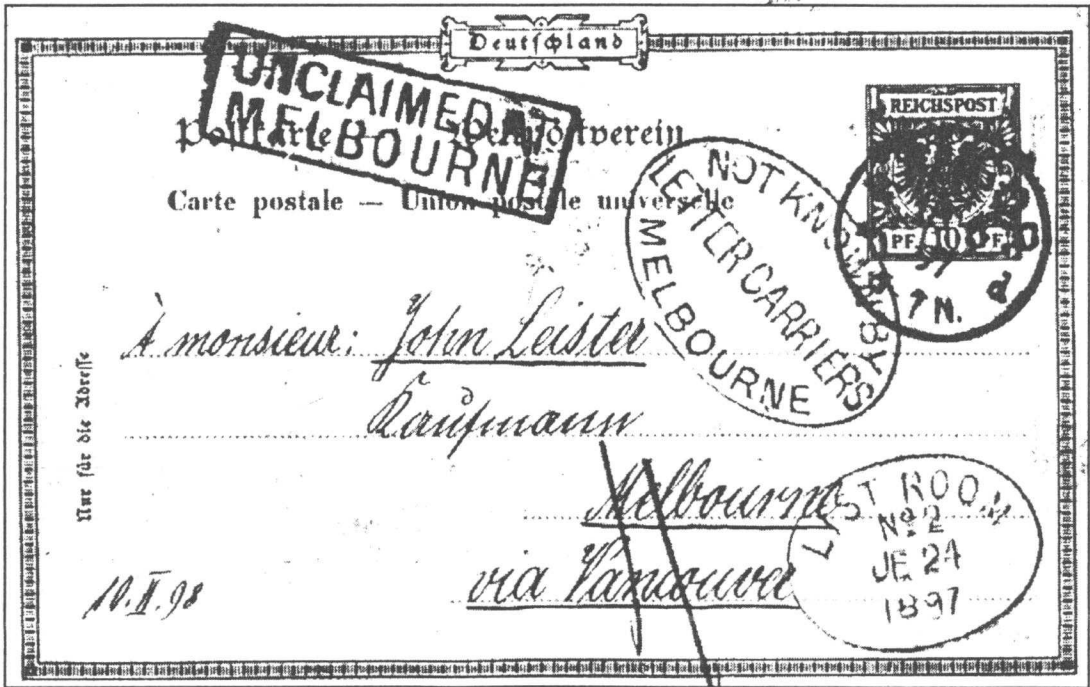
Railway Mail Clerks and dispatching offices  
**West of Montreal** to be instructed to forward matter to Vancouver on such days as will make connection with Steamers sailing from that Port and on the other days via Windsor for do.

<sup>1</sup>. Directions to Postmasters from Office of the Postmaster General, 2nd November 1887, National Archives of Canada RG3 D-3 Reel C-7227 Vol #6 1887-820.

Once the basics had been approved further amendments were made to include Seattle and Tacoma as points of departure as the U/s/Japanese Mail ships began scheduled sailings in the early 1900s. Also much of the mail from Western Canada was sent directly to Vancouver where it was re-directed as necessary to make the first available

### From the Mac. McConnell Collection

Mac. McConnell collects materiel to and from Europe that transits Canada, to and from the Far East and Australasia. He also has items that originated in Canada. His covers are always well researched as to departure dates and routings as exemplified by the cover illustrated below. The first is a cover from Ratibor, Germany to Australia via Vancouver, 1897.



Ratibor, May 14, 1897 d/s. Departed London May 20, 1897, (See attached G.P.O. Circular), Sent via Vancouver to Sydney, Australia by S.S. Miowera. Returned from Melbourne Unclaimed.

N.B. This was the last voyage from Vancouver as a mail ship to Sydney by the Miowera. She was replaced by the S.S. Aorangi I.

DESPATCH OF MAILS FROM LONDON FOR  
**AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI,**  
 UP TO THE END OF JUNE 1897.

DESTINATION	ROUTE	DESPATCHED FROM LONDON
Victoria .....	Via Brindisi (or Naples) ..	Every Friday evening.
New South Wales .....	Via Vancouver or via San Francisco (for letters &c. specially addressed to go by those routes) .....	On same dates as to New Zealand and Fiji.
Queensland* .....		
South Australia .....		
Tasmania .....		
Western Australia .....	Via Brindisi (or Naples) ..	Every Friday evening.
	Via San Francisco .....	Saturday afternoon, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 12.
	Via Brindisi (or Naples) ..	Every Friday evening, †
New Zealand ‡ .....	Via Vancouver (for letters &c. specially addressed to go by that route) .....	On same dates as to Fiji.
	Via Vancouver .....	Thursday evening, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 10. Supplementary—April 21 (evening), April 24 (afternoon), May 22 (afternoon), June 12 (afternoon), June 16 Every Friday evening. ((evening).)
Fiji † .....	Via Brindisi (or Naples) ..	
	Via San Francisco (for letters &c. specially addressed to go by that route) .....	Saturday afternoon, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 12.
Parcel Mails for all the above mentioned colonies, except Queensland and New Zealand .....	Direct from the Thames ..	Every Thursday morning.
Parcel Mails for Queensland § .....	From the Thames, via Melbourne .....	Every Thursday morning.
	Direct from the Thames, via Torres Straits .....	Afternoon of March 30, April 27, May 18, June 8.
Parcel Mails for New Zealand .....	Direct from the Thames ..	Wednesday morning, March 17, 31, April 14, 28, May 12, 26, June 9, 23.

\* On the 12th of March, 9th of April, 7th and 25th of May, and 18th of June correspondence for Thursday Island and Cooktown, in the North of Queensland, can be sent either by the direct route of Torres Straits or by way of Adelaide. If meant to go via Adelaide on those days, such correspondence must be specially so addressed; but correspondence for the South of Queensland is sent by the Adelaide route unless specially superscribed to go otherwise.

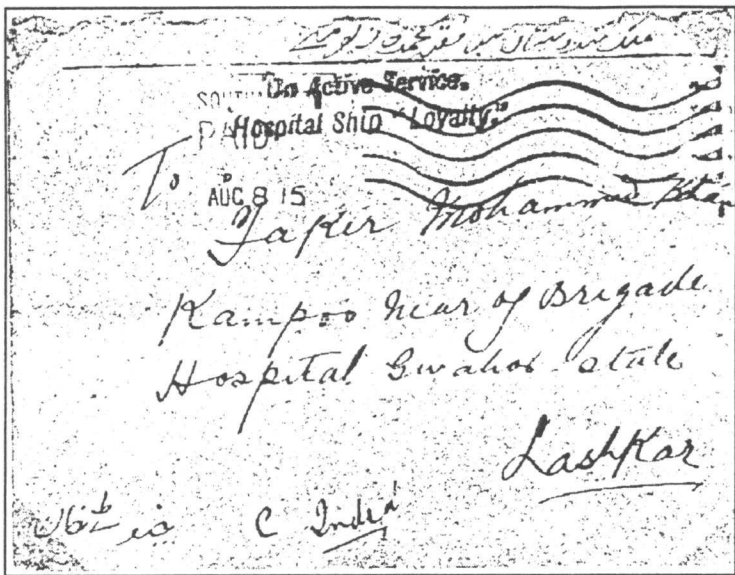
† Correspondence for New Zealand posted in the week in which there will be a Mail from London going via San Francisco, and also in the previous week, will be forwarded in that Mail; but correspondence posted up to the evening of the first or second Friday following a despatch via San Francisco will gain by being forwarded via Italy. The Post Office will in each case send the letters &c. by the best route; and there will be no occasion to superscribe them specially as to route.

‡ Correspondence for Fiji will be sent by way of Vancouver, unless specially superscribed to be otherwise forwarded, or posted in time for despatch via Italy on the first and second Fridays following the final despatch via Vancouver.

§ Parcels for the extreme North of Queensland are sent only via Torres Straits. Parcels for the rest of the Colony are sent via Melbourne, except when they would arrive more quickly via Torres Straits.

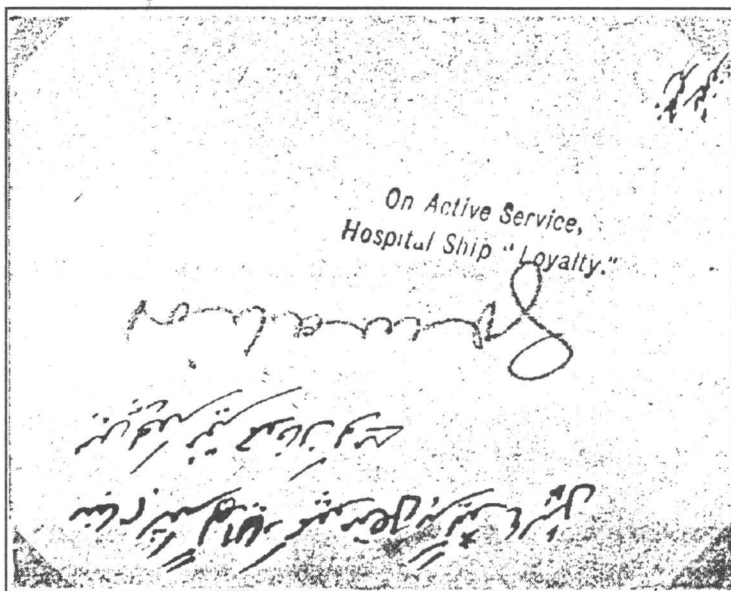
Note the various routes used by the G.P.O. to despatch various classes of mail to Australasia and Oceania and the endorsements required for specific routes.

Another interesting cover from the Mac. McConnell collection is a cover from the Hospital Ship *Loyalty* ex C.P.R. mail ship, *Empress of India*. She was purchased by the Maharajah of Gwailor in August, 1914 and converted into a Hospital Ship. She served as Hospital ship for Indian troops from October 1914 to February 1918 mainly in the Mediterrean, carrying wounded from Suez back to India. She also saw service at Gallipoli.

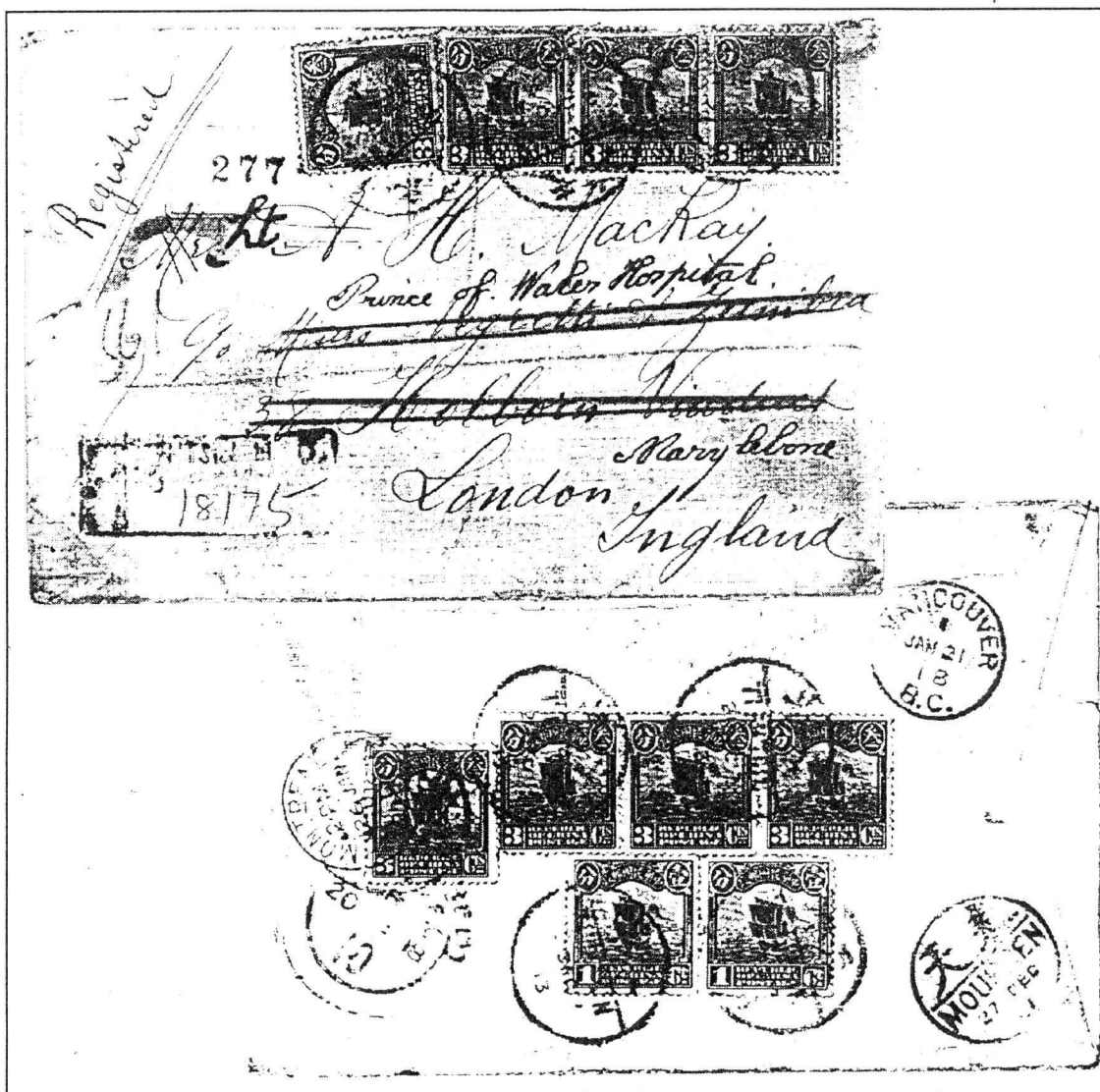


Southampton Paid August 8, 1915 machine cancel "On Active Service/ Hospital Ship 'Loyalty'" hand stamp. Addressed to Brigade Hospital, Gwailor State.

back showing another "On Active Service / Hospital Ship Loyalty. two faint back stamps. Bombay September 25, 1915 and Gwailor State August 30, 1915.



The third cover is a 1917-18 registered cover from China to London , that got caught up in the Russian Revolution. It started out over the trans-Siberian Railway but was later re-directed through Vancouver.



Mailed from Tiensin, North China, December 23, 1917 and despatched for transit via Trans-Siberian Railway. Arrived Moukden December 27, 1917. As rail service had ceased due to the collapse of Russia and the revolution the letter was diverted to for transit by C.P.R. steamer from either Hong Kong or Shanghai to Vancouver, Vancouver transit dated January 21, 1918, Montreal transit dated January 26, 1918 and London receiver February 20, 1918.

N.B. Mac. McConnell in his commentary states that the Moukden transit stamp was usually only applied to the top letter in a bundle of mail destined for Europe via the trans-Siberian Railway. Moukden was situated on the Chinese Eastern Railway Line, which was operated by the Russians, between Peking (Beijing) and Chita, where it connected with trans-Siberian Railway. (editor)

# Pan-American Airmail "Clipper" Service from San Francisco to Manila 1935

By

David H. Whiteley

In the early 1930's Pan-American Airways undertook a number of experimental flights across the North Pacific, using Flying boats to test the feasibility of a trans-Pacific passenger and-mail service between San Francisco and mainland China. Bases were established at Honolulu, Guam, Wake Island and Manila, where the early flights terminated. The service was extended to Hong Kong (October 21, 1936), to connect with the Chinese National Airways. The first regular passenger flight from Manila to Hong Kong was not until April 1937. The service was also extended to Singapore (May 1941), where it connected with both B.O.A.C. (British Overseas Airways Empire Route. And the Australian QUANTAS airline. In November of 1935 the Canadian Weekly Bulletin for November 9, 1935 contained the following announcement:

## November 1935: **Trans-Pacific Air Mail Service, First Flight.**

The United States Post Office Department announced the inauguration of an air mail service from San Francisco, Calif., by Honolulu, Hawaii, and Manila, P.I., to Canton, China and return. Service will be performed via Guam and air mails will be carried also to that place.

Service on the first flight will terminate at Manila. The first Flights each way are scheduled to leave on the following dates:

Westbound leave San Francisco November 22, 1935:  
Eastbound, leave Manila December 2, 1935.

The rates (postage and air mail fee combined) for articles to be carried on this route are as follows:

United States ( Mainland) to Hawaii	25c. per half ounce
United States (Mainland) to Guam	50c. per half ounce
United States ( Mainland) to the Philippines (or onward despatch by ordinary means)	75c. per half ounce
Hawaii to Guam	25c. per half ounce
Hawaii to the Philippines (or onward despatch by ordinary means).	50c. per half ounce
Guam to the Philippines (or onward despatch by ordinary means).	25c. per half ounce
Guam to Hawaii	25c. per half ounce
Guam to the United States (mainland)	50c. per half ounce
Hawaii to the United States (mainland).	25c. per half ounce

Stamp collectors wishing to secure cancellations of first trans-Pacific flight may send any desired number of envelopes bearing their home address under separate cover endorsed: "By First Contract Trans-Pacific Flight," to the Postmaster, San Francisco, Calif., (or to the Postmaster, Honolulu, Hawaii), (or to the Postmaster, Guam), with a postal money order remittance payable to the Postmaster to cover the cost of the stamps required to be affixed thereto.

Any such articles intended for the first flight should be posted in time to make connection at San Francisco November 22. Such mails may be registered (for the required registry fee). All articles for despatch by this route should be marked 'By Air Mail.' and articles destined to the Philippines and points beyond should bear the blue label "Par Avion - By Air Mail," which may be secured without expense at post offices.

Separate special cachets will be placed by post office at San Francisco on all articles despatched by the first flight from San Francisco to Hawaii, from San Francisco to Guam, and from San Francisco to the Philippines. Separate special cachets will be placed by the Post office at Honolulu on all articles despatched by the first west-bound flight from Honolulu to Guam and from Honolulu to the Philippines, and on all articles despatched by the first east-bound flight from Honolulu to the Philippines, and on all articles despatched by the first east-bound flight from Honolulu to the United States (mainland). Separate special cachets will be placed by the post office at Guam on all articles despatched by the first west-bound flight from Guam to the Philippines, and on all articles despatched by the first east-bound flight from Guam to Hawaii and from Guam to the United States (mainland). The director of posts of the Philippines advises that a cachet will be placed on articles despatched by the first east-bound flight, at the following rates of postage for a half ounce letter, which rates include the air mail fee.

From Manila to Guam	0.56 pesos – 28c. Canadian
From Manila to Hawaii	1.06 pesos – 53c. Canadian
From Manila to Canada via the United States	1.56 pesos – 78c. Canadian.

All articles carried on the first westbound and eastbound flights will be back stamped by the post office (including Manila) of receipt on the route.

**THE POSTMASTER WILL PLEASE GIVE THE ABOVE EVERY PUBLICITY**

*(NAC. Post Office Weekly Bulletin Vol. XV, no. 766 (9 Nov. 1935. P.4)*

It is interesting note that from the following announcement contained in the Weekly Bulletin for January 23, 1936 that initially there was no provision for the transmission of Canadian mail matter by Pan-American Clipper service until at least late January 1936. Therefore I would like to know of any mail matter originating in Canada that was carried by Pan-American Clipper Service between November 1935 and February 1936.

January 1936: **Trans-Pacific Air Mail Service.**

Arrangements have now been completed for the despatch of air mail correspondence from Canada, prepaid with Canadian Postage stamps, via the United States for despatch by the recently inaugurated air mail service from San Francisco to Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippine Islands.

The postage rates, including air mail fee, from Canada for such air mail correspondence will be as follows:

To Hawaii	25c. per half ounce
To Guam	50c. per half ounce
To The Philippines	75c. per half ounce/

The above rates include, in addition to the Pacific air transit, air mail transmission where available in Canada, the United States and Hawaii, but not in Guam or the Philippines.

Such air correspondence will be endorsed "Air Mail" via San Francisco.

**THE POSTMASTER WILL PLEASE GIVE THE ABOVE EVERY PUBLICITY**

*(NAC. Post Office Weekly Bulletin, Vol. XVI, no.777, 23, January 1936, p. 2)*





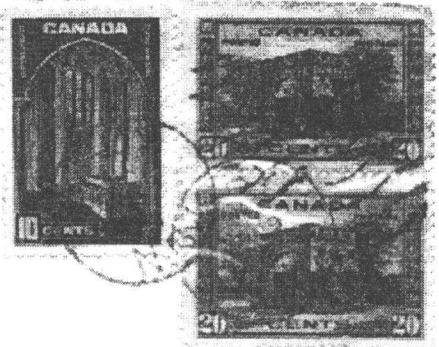
Scott #215. 10c. "Windsor Castle," 3 x Scott # 233. 3c. Carmine, Scott # C6. 6c. Blue & a 10c. stamp missing having fallen off the front the cover in transit, paying 25c. per 1/2oz. special "Pacific Clipper" Air Mail Rate plus 10c. Registration fee to Honolulu, Hawaii. Dated Montreal March 1st, 1939. Honolulu Receiver dated March 11th, 1939. Returned unclaimed Honolulu April 16th, 1939, & Montreal April 17th. Receiver.

From  
Nixon



VIA TRANS-PACIFIC  
AIR-MAIL.  
CHINA-CLIPPER-  
TAR AVION

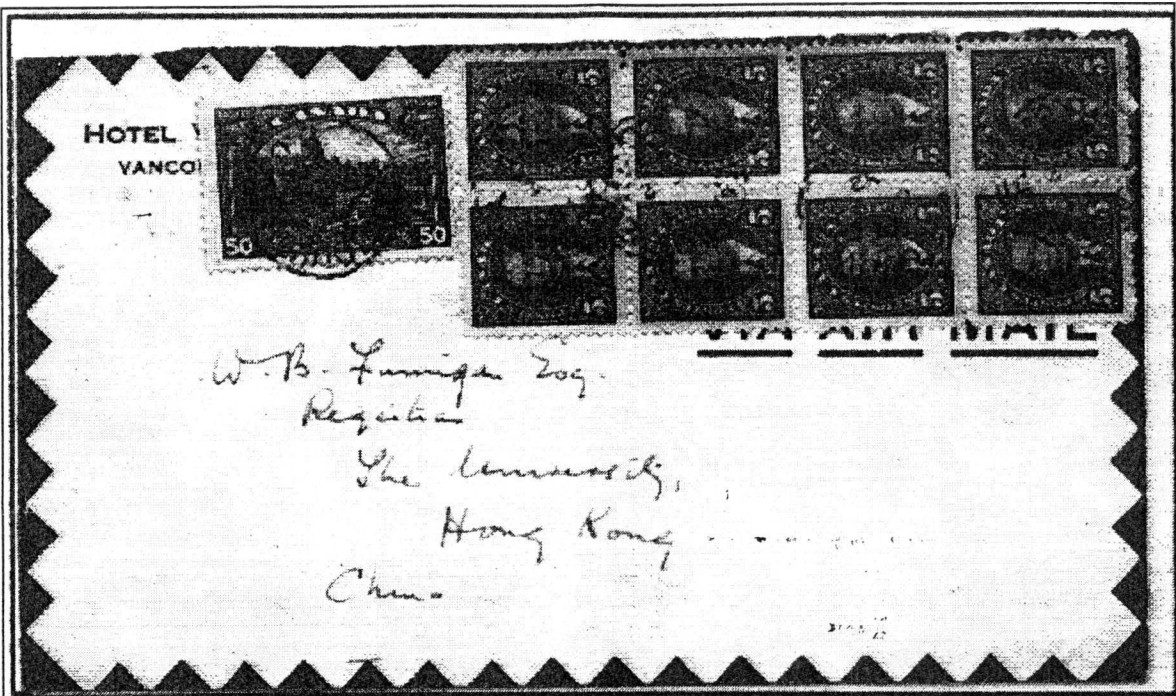
Four Lodge  
Digby, Nova Scotia  
Canada



*Mr. Richard Lane*  
c/o St. Richard Lane, U. S. N.  
Army - Navy Club  
Manila - Philippine Islands

Hold until  
Arrival.

Scott #235; Five cent blue, Scott #241; Ten cent rose - carmine & 3 x Scott #243; Twenty cent red-brown paying the Seventy-Five cent Clipper rate to the Philippine Islands. Dated Digby N.S. August 19, 1939. Sent via San Francisco and Pan-American Clipper to Manila. Manila P.I. Receiver dated September 2, 1939.

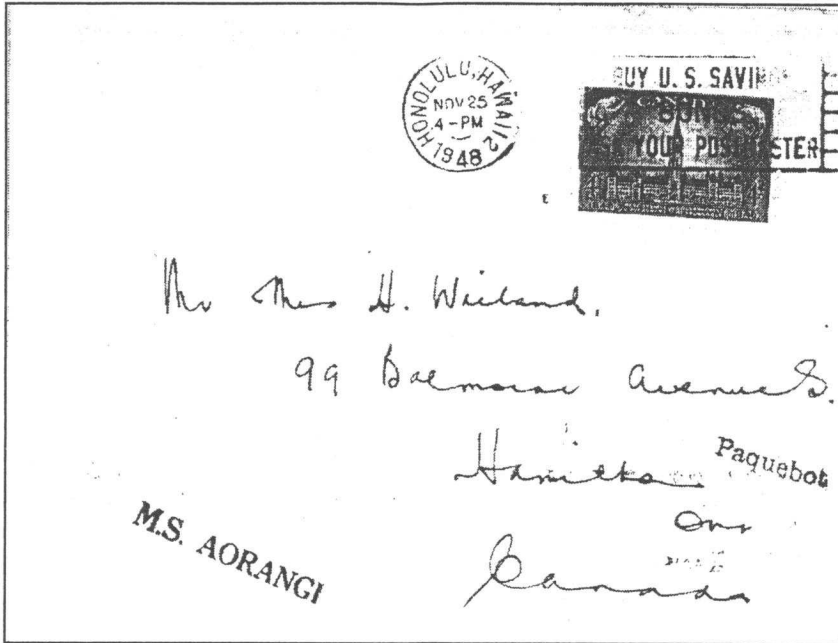


8 x Scott #235. 5c. Blue & Scott #244. 50c. "Parliament Buildings Victoria, B.C." Paying the Under 1/2oz. "Clipper" Rate from Vancouver to Hong-Kong via San Francisco. Dated Vancouver, October, 2nd, 1939.

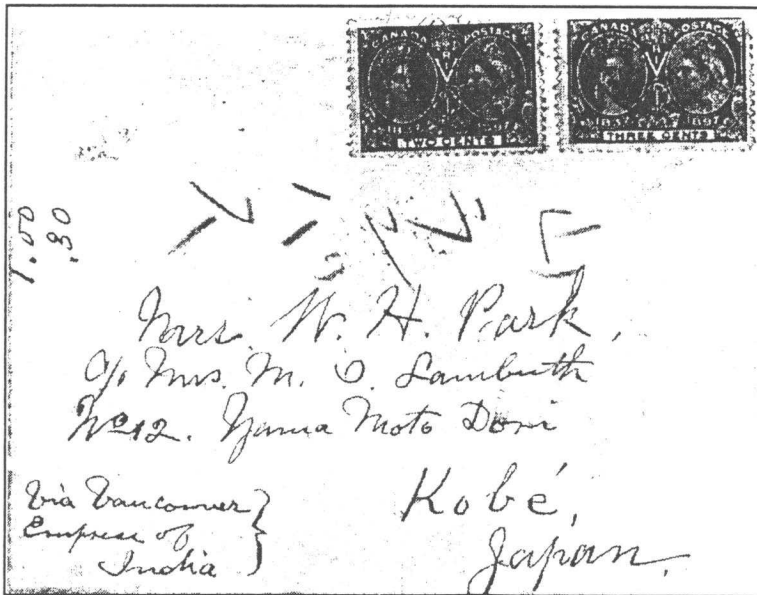


2 x Scott # 243. 20c. "Fort Garry" & Scott # 244. 50c. "Vancouver Harbour paying the special 90c. Pan-American "Pacific Clipper" Rate on censored cover to Calcutta, India. Canceled Vancouver B.C. November 13th, 1941. Calcutta Receiver dated December 4th, 1941. Brown Indian Post-Office "Passed by Censor" tape with rectangular censor stamp.

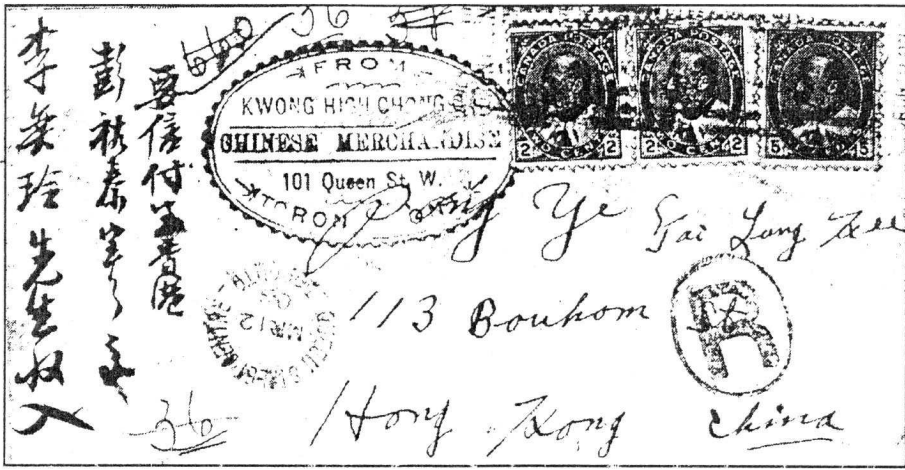
More Items from the Gray Scrimgeour Collection



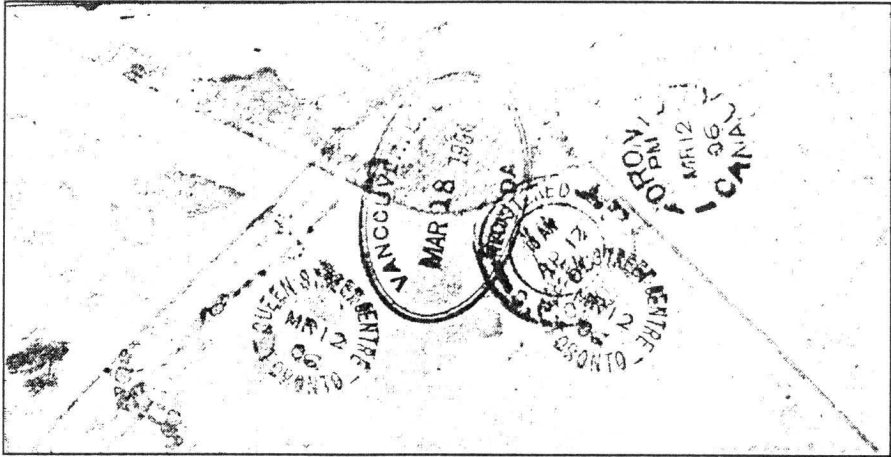
1948, Greeting card cover, mailed on board the *R.M.S. Aorangi II*. Postage Paid with a Scott Canada #277 4 cents, grey. Landed at Honolulu and placed in the U.S. mail stream for onward transmission to Canada. Dated Honolulu November 25, 1948. Purple "M.S. AORANGI" hand stamp and small purple (different shade) "Paquebot," hand stamp.



1897 Jubille cover from Winnipeg to Kobe, Japan. Dated Winnipeg July 23, 1897. Endorsed "Via Vancouver Empress of India," she sailed Vancouver August 2, 1897, Arrived Yokohama August 16, 1897, (Yokohama Receiver). Kobe receiver August 17, 1897.



Front of Registered cover from Toronto to Hong Kong. Toronto Queen Street Centre split ring d/s. March 21, 1906 Also Toronto Roller cancel. Probably carried from Vancouver by C.P.R. *Empress of Japan*.



Back of Registered letter from Toronto to Hong Kong. Two Toronto Queen Street Centre split ring d/s. March 12, 1906. Toronto Canada split ring March 12, 1906. Vancouver B.C. oval transit March 18, 1906 and Victoria Hong Kong Registered Receiver dated April 12, 1906.