



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
POSTAL HISTORY  
RESEARCH GROUP

Volume 1 - Number 2

JUNE 1992

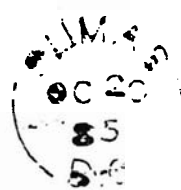
## SUMAS POST OFFICE

By Cecil C. Coutts

Established 1 July 1872  
Closed 1 September 1912  
Reopened as Atchelitz 1 September 1912  
Closed 31 August 1946

This post office takes its name from the Sumas Indians. The name means "a big opening" and likely referred to the lake and river there which, at flood times, provided a large opening from the prairie to the Fraser River. The Journals of Simon Fraser refer to this spot.

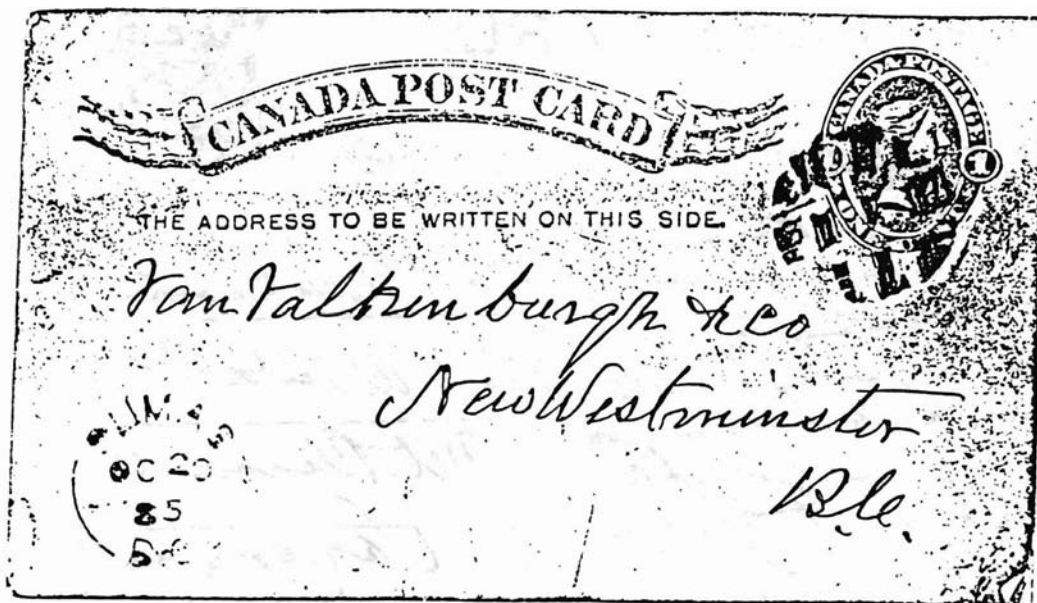
The first postmaster, David Miller (1830-1903) came from Brighton, Ontario to Sumas in 1862. He farmed at first with his brothers-in-law, Chester and James Chadsey. Later he opened the first store and post office on the prairie at Miller's Landing. This was the first Federal post office in the Upper Fraser Valley. Miller served as postmaster until 9 January 1889.



Type "B"  
proof  
unknown



Segmented  
cork  
1885



Type "B"  
proof  
MR 9 '89



Type "A"  
proof  
OCT 26 '10

Post card dated "Sumas Oct 21st 1885" from C. Chadsey

On 1 February 1889, Donald McGillivray (1838-1913) was named Sumas postmaster. He farmed two miles south of Miller's Landing. McGillivray was active in public life. In 1878 was elected to the House of Commons. He was a Reeve of Chilliwack Municipality from 1884-86. He married Susan Hall, a daughter of Cpl. William Hall of the Royal Engineers. McGillivray was also a lay preacher at Sumas Methodist Church, situated across the road from his farm. Although this church is no longer used for services, it is still standing after 100 plus years.

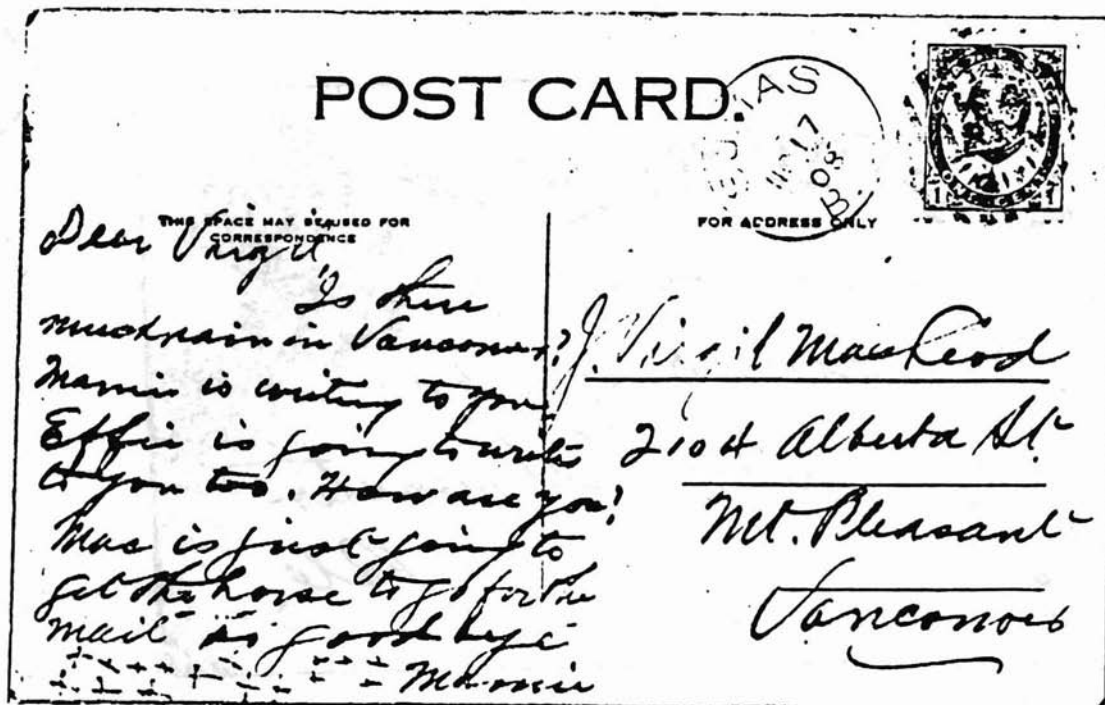
Postal correspondence of 26 December 1891 dealt with McGillivray's request to get a reduction in his bond. The current bond was with London Guarantee and Accident Company in the amount of \$1600 with an annual premium of \$12. McGillivray argued that the amount was excessive since the premium was twenty-five percent of his annual salary. The Post Office Inspector agreed and recommended to Ottawa that the bond be reduced to \$800 which would cut the premium in half.

An attempt was made in 1895 to secure a post office at Hopedale (South Sumas.) Population was centered in that area. After much bantering, that idea was dropped when Sumas Post Office was moved from McGillivray's home to that of John A. MacLeod. MacLeod (1861-1938) was a school teacher and farmer who lived on South Sumas Road, just west of Lickman Road. His appointment commenced 1 March 1900 and terminated 9 June 1910.

Thanks to the efforts of the MacLeod family, the first Registered Mail Record Book for Sumas Post Office is preserved in the Chilliwack Archives.

First outgoing registered letter was dated 16 November 1883 and sent to Mike Dunn at Kamloops. First incoming register was received 30 November 1883 addressed to Mr. Corbould (Fraser Valley M.P.)

Initials in this historic ledger leads us to the identity of postal clerks at the time.



Under the supervision of David Miller:

Laura (Mrs. David) Miller (1834-1914.)  
Alma Bonter (1865-1925.) She was Mrs. Miller's neice.

Under the supervision of Donald McGillivray:

Catherine (Kate) McGillivray - daughter of Donald.  
Julia (Mrs. Donald) McGillivray. (Second wife.)

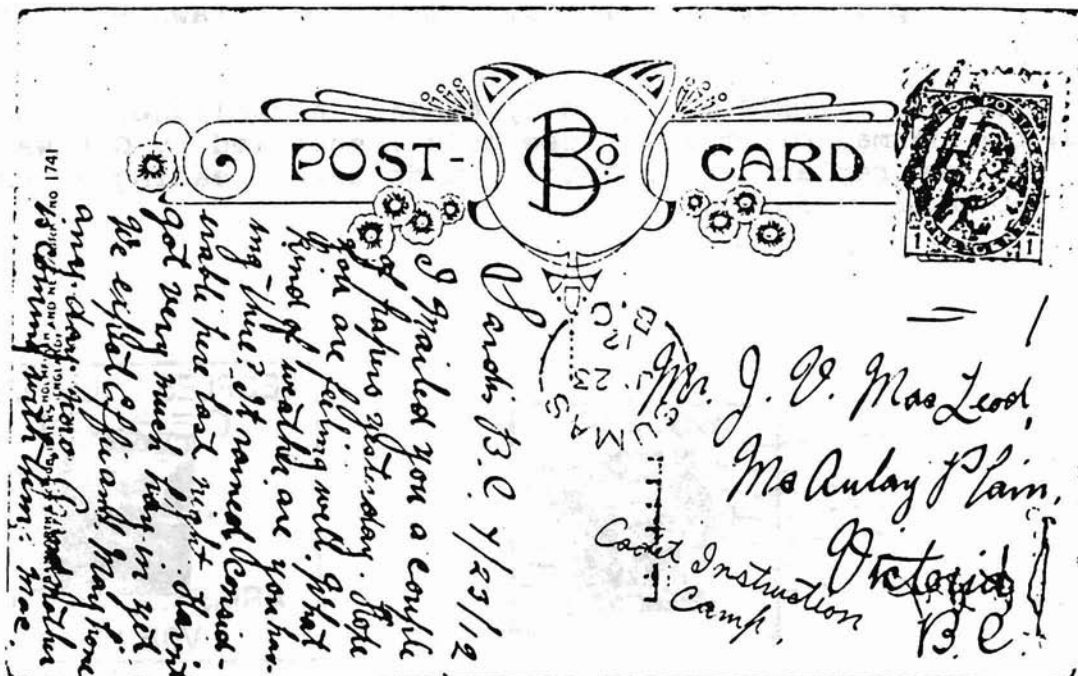
Under the supervision of John MacLeod:

Clara Jane (Mrs. John) MacLeod (1867-1903.)  
Andrew D. Clark (1867-1960.) Brother-in-law of John MacLeod.  
Eloise (Mrs. Andrew) Clark (1872-1933.)  
John Virgil MacLeod (1890-1931.) Son of John MacLeod.  
Malcolm Chadsey MacLeod (1888-1915.) Son of John MacLeod, killed  
in World War 1.

On 1 July 1910 Christine (Mrs. W.J.) Orr (1861-1913) was named  
postmaster. It was at this same time that Sumas Post Office moved from  
MacLeod's place to the Atchelitz Store. The store was owned and operated  
by her brother Fred G. Barr.

On 1 September 1912, the name of the post office was changed to  
Atchelitz to avoid confusion with Sumas, Washington. Atchelitz Post  
Office remained in the Atchelitz Store under various postmasters until  
1933. Thereafter, it opened in a new store on South Sumas Road a short  
distance east of Lickman Road. First postmaster at the new location was  
Robert MacDonald.

Atchelitz Post Office closed 31 August 1946. Rural Route #1 Sardis was  
extended to serve customers in this area.



1912 card with Type "A" cancel proofed Oct. 26, 1910.

Seen also is 8-bar killer.

## REGIONAL MEETING - MARCH 1992 - a report

As part of the BNA Regional meeting in Vancouver the proposal for the formation of a British Columbia Postal History Research Group was discussed. The 25+ members present agreed with the proposal that the study group should be primarily dedicated to research and that all members will be expected to contribute on a regular basis. Andrew Scott (who was absent) was elected (appointed) as Chairman and he has since accepted the position. Bill Topping, who had produced a sample news letter, accepted the position of Editor and it was agreed that he should also act as Treasurer and Secretary. An annual fee of \$5.00 was set to cover costs and it was suggested that the news letter should be published quarterly. This was agreed to and where possible news letters will be published for distribution at the regional meetings.

Since the meeting close to 20 BNA members have signed up for membership and it is expected the number will increase as people hear of the formation of the study group. A membership directory will be produced shortly. The response for material for publication has been good but more is needed for the next issue -  
THE EDITOR NEEDS YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS !!!

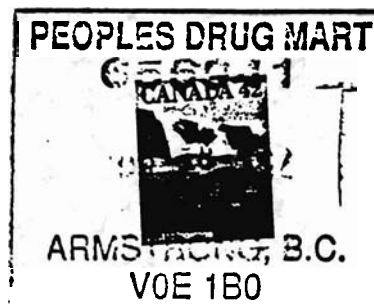
### POSTAL WATCH

#### REGIONAL POSTAL OUTLETS

Worth an occasional visit -

Have you visited your local Retail Postal Outlet or local Franchise lately. Privatization has brought a number of unexpected changes in cancelling equipment. In the past all equipment was supplied by Ottawa but under the new Franchise system the operator must pay for all replacement equipment. As a result a number of operators have found it quicker and cheaper to purchase replacements from the local rubber stamp shop than to wait for delivery from Ottawa which can take over a month.

A recent visit to ARMSTRONG (RPO 1) 656941 established January 23, 1990 with the normal dater box (see below) supplied by Ottawa showed that it had been replaced by a locally made dater reading at the top  
PEOPLES DRUG MART / 656941.



## QUERIES

### **92-03 Blank hub**

Ron Leith writes - This appears to be a commercial cover. Any idea which town or why the odd indicia configuration?

Ed. - The cover appears to be from Gibsons as a number of envelopes with Gibsons' corner cards exist from 1980 IV 27 to 1980 X 30 with a blank hub of type 4A1. A similar type 4A1 hub for Gibsons is dated 1980 X 1 is in my collection. The hub translates 1 August - 8:30 11 [PM] mail. Why the inverted hub I do not know. Anyone care to comment?



### **92-04 VANCOUVER WEST**

A number of cancels reading VANCOUVER WEST has been reported by Sam Horton. They are dated December 1975 and appear to have originated at the Vancouver - West Vancouver Postal Station which was opened October 11, 1955, replacing Hollyburn. Speculation is that the type "C" hammer issued in 1955 had become worn and a replacement hammer with the same wording "VANCOUVER - WEST VANCOUVER" was requested. Confusion over the use of VANCOUVER twice on the hammer caused the manufacturer to omit the second VANCOUVER. The hammer appears to have been in use for a number of years as cancellations dated between December 6, 1975 and July 3, 1979 are recorded. A registered cover showing Vancouver, West Vancouver in the registration box has recently been reported.



### **92-05 LOWER NICOLA**

LOWER NICOLA (021601) changed to a "B" Franchise on October 9, 1990 and was issued with a new dater. The first dater read 021601 MERRITT BC VOK 1Y0. The postmaster objected to the Merritt designation and requested a change to Lower Nicola. After about a year he had his own dater made which reads 021601 LOWER NICOLA BC VOK 1Y0. Has anyone a copy of the Merritt date stamp?

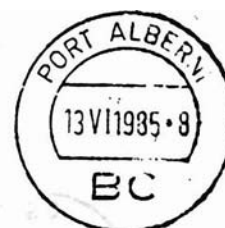
# RESEARCH REPORT - MACHINES

Following the first Research Request I learned that if you list cancellation types you must also show copies of the markings. As a result, in future, I will attempt to illustrate all marking types mentioned in the text.

On the basis of replies received and discussions with a number of postmasters the information in News Letter 1 has been updated. Offices that have been permanently closed and equipment removed have been deleted. All Vancouver Island offices with the exception of Sooke appear to still have equipment on site. Pitt Meadows counter service closed in January 1992 but the office still exists as a distribution centre.

<u>Post Office</u>	Type	Late Date	PO or MPP closed
Courtenay	9C	1990 10 22	
Duncan	9C	1990 10 10	
Nanaimo M1	9C	1990 10 22	(1)
M2	9C	1990 04 30	(1)
Parksville	4A1	1990 10 29	
Port Alberni	9B	1990 10 24	

Type 9B



- (1) - Nanaimo Machine 1 reported 11 III 91  
Machine 2 in occasional use 23 II 92

Type 10

## VANCOUVER REORGANIZATION

Gibsons to VON 1VO 4A1		1990 08 01	
Langley to VA3 4NO	9C	1989 12 21	
V3A 4NO	10A	1990 07 12	1990 09 10
New Westminster	9C M1	1988 12 06	1991 11 08
	9C M2	1986 12 09	1991 11 08
Pitt Meadows	2K	1991 10 07	1992 01 01 (2)
Port Coquitlam	9C	1989 10 25	1991 03 25



- (2) - still used as a distributiin centre

Type 9C (M1)

## OTHER RECENTLY UNREPORTED MACHINE CANCELS

Agassiz	4J	1986 03 10	(3)
Aldergrove	9B	1988 11 02	
Fruitvale	4J	1990 12 21	
Kaslo	4J	1988 10 11	
Logan Lake	4A1	1989 10 06	(4)
Sooke	4A1	1990 08 09	



- (3) - Agassiz machine removed  
(4) - Logan Lake still in use mainly at Christmas

Type 2K

Type 4A

Type 4A1

Type 4J



# FROM CANADA POST

Since the publication of the revised edition of "British Columbia Post Offices" a large number of opening, closings and changes have taken place. Arrangements have been made with Canada Post to obtain a computer printout of the list of distribution orders (OSO#). These orders contain most but not all changes and from time to time additional information will be added. At the present time lists will be published twice a year each covering a period of about 6 months. The editor has access to the full distribution orders and can supply additional details upon request. Please quote the order number (OSO) and the name of the office.

## PROGRESS



PROGRESS is shown in both the 1983 and 1991 editions of "British Columbia Post Offices" as closing 1971 06 30. It did close but it appears to have reopened again in September. The date is not given in the postal records. The office is still open.

Also -

On page 72 of BCPO the number for Vancouver @ Kingsway PO should read 656933 not 656533.

OSO #	DATE	OUTLET AND/OR SITE	OLD RC#	NEW RC#	REMARKS
271	91/05/01	Van. RPO #118	646849	656886	conversion
272	91/08/06	Avolla	656712		closure
273	91/08/06	Athelmer	654817		closure
274	91/09/24	Enderby	642134	68268	conversion
275	91/09/24	Enderby		71838	conversion
276	91/09/24	Monte Lake	644498		closure
277	91/09/24	Van. RPO #17	647802	59811	conversion
278	91/09/24	Penticton RPO#2	654639	68691	conversion
279	91/09/25	150 Mile House	650389	68276	conversion
280	91/09/26	Langley RPO#4	650692	58467	conversion
281	91/09/30	Coquitlam RPO#18	654044		closure
282	91/09/30	Victoria RPO#41	644336		closure
283	91/10/02	Powell River RPO #1	649171		closure
284	91/10/02	Terrace RPO#3 to RPO#6	652008	72893	cls/opening
285	91/10/17	Mayne	644269	63304	conversion
286	91/10/17	Briscoe	640794	57320	conversion
287	91/10/18	Penticton RPO#1	645559	71676	conversion
288	91/10/18	Penticton RPO#4	646156	68705	conversion
289	91/10/21	N. West RPO#8	644919		closure
290	91/10/25	N. West RPO#33	644994	56324	conversion
291	91/10/28	Van. RPO Minnot	651559		closure
292	91/10/30	Van. RPO#162	57150	68462	conversion
293	91/10/30	Van. RPO#34	647977	28195	conversion
294	91/11/04	Surrey RPO#24	19791	68438	conversion
295	91/11/04	Victoria RPO#45 to RPO#54	642836	73784	cls/opening
296	91/11/08	N. West Main	644838	73989	conversion
297	91/11/12	Surrey RPO Surrey N.		73997	opening
298	91/11/12	Genelle	641286	72419	conversion
299	91/11/15	Fernie RPO#1		69765	opening
300	91/11/15	Coquitlam RPO#1		74179	opening
301	91/11/18	Silverton	655147		closure
302	91/11/18	150 Mile House	645389		closure
303	91/11/19	Victoria RPO#39	644323		conversion
304	91/11/20	Monte Creek		73369	conversion
305	91/11/20	Chilliwack RPO#5 to RPO#6	653691	74160	cls/opening
306	91/11/21	Van. RPO#73	651192		closure
307	91/11/26	Creston	12947		closure
308	91/11/26	Ashton Creek	66436		closure
309	91/11/27	Van. RPO#30	55557		conversion
310	91/11/27	Coosops	641529	62553	conversion
311	91/12/11	Abbotsford RPO#13	654256		closure
312	91/12/16	Wells RPO#2	654256	72699	conversion
313	91/12/17	Vernon RPO#3 to RPO#5	650869	75248	cls/opening
314	91/12/23	Van. RPO#97	648531		closure
315	91/12/23	Cariboo Centre P.O.	12726		closure
316	91/12/23	Village Sq. P.O.	13706		closure
317	91/12/23	Kamloops RPO#12			add change
318	91/12/24	Coal Harbour	641391	73547	conversion
319	92/01/06	Abbotsford RPO#16		75477	opening
320	92/01/08	Sooke East P.O. Fr.8	656984		closure
321	92/01/08	Van. RPO#79	55131		closure
322	92/01/13	Halfmoon Bay			operator chang
323	92/01/13	Port Coquitlam Main	645854	74675	conversion
324	92/01/13	Van. Unit 6	647381		closure
325	92/01/13	Van. Unit C	647381		closure
326	92/01/22	Victoria Unit A	645567		closure



# BRIT COL cancellations

The "BRIT COL" cancellations of British Columbia makes an interesting sideline in the collecting of British Columbia postal history. The cancellations are not common but are worth the search. A number of markings were illustrated in Frank Campbell's "Canada Post Offices 1775 - 1895" but it was not until the late Jim Pike took an active interest that a listing was developed. The publication of the Proof Strikes by Paul Hughes has made it possible to document more fully the strikes.

The "BRIT COL" abbreviation appears to have been used in 1871 on the first hammers shipped to B.C. after Confederation, ie Victoria and Cariboo. Starting in 1872 the normal "B.C." abbreviation was used but from December 1881 until March 1883 the "BRIT COL" abbreviation was reintroduced on many of the hammers issued. The regular "B.C." abbreviation came back into use in late 1883 and has continued in use ever since.

Three railway post offices markings also are found with the "BRIT COL" abbreviation. C.P. RY. M.C (Ludlow RR-25 type 11) was used between 1886 and 1897 and the Nelson to Midway route used two different hammers (Ludlow W-98A & W-96 type 17F) from 1908 to 1926 and 1927 to 1955 respectively.

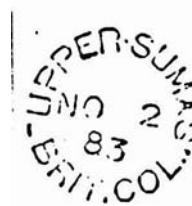
No satisfactory explanation has been given for the use of "BRIT COL" rather than "B.C." on the early British Columbia hammers but most of the other western territories used a three or more letter abbreviation so the "BRIT COL" form may have appeared logical.

The following list of "BRIT COL" dates is from "Territorial Post Offices of Canada" by Robinson and Topping.

POST OFFICE	TYPE	DIAM.	PROOF	DATE EARLY	LATE
CARIBOO	A	22		1872 05 31	1872 09 07
CHEMUNUS	A	21	1883 10 06	1884 12 10	
CLINTON	A	22		1874 06 20	1902 01 14
CLINTON	B	29		1879 03 27	1880 11 11
CLOVER VALLEY	A	22	1883 11 09	1892 03 21	1892 06 09
COMOX	A	22	1883 11 29	1885 08 06	1897 12 03
C. P. RY. M.C.	B (11)	23	1886 08 02	1887 02 09	1898 09 24
DOG CREEK	A	22	1882 08 05	1890 12 12	1901 02 16
DRYNOCH	A	21	1882 08 16	1883 03 26	
EMORY	A	22.5	1881 12 02	1883 07 16	1883 09 24
ESQUIMALT	A	21		1873 09 15	1890 01 22
HALLS PRAIRIE	A	20	1883 11 09	1891 11 23	1917 06 11
KAMLOOPS	A	21	1883 08 09	1883 11 04	1893 07 20
LANGLEY PRAIRIE	A	21	1883 11 09	1888 11 16	1891 03 04
NEL. & MID. R.P.O.	B (17F)	23.5	1927 06 29	1931 10 10	1955 07 08
NELS. & MID. R.P.O.	B (17F)	22.5	1908 04 23	1909 05 21	1926 03 13
NEW WESTMINSTER	A	21		1872 04 13	1879 09 12
NEW WESTMINSTER	B	29		1879 08 29	
NEW WESTMINSTER	B.	22.5	1883 06 02	1883 07 20	1892 09 22
NORTH ARM	A	23.5	1882 03 06	1892 03 21	1892 09 02
PAVILION	A.	24	1882 03 25	1890 12 04	1904 02 13
PAVILION	A	22.5	1878 05 06	1897 03 09	
PORT MOODY	A	21	1882 12 09	1884 12 06	1888 01 10
PORT MOODY	A.	20		1885 11 16	1900 03 20
QUESNELLE	A	21.5		1873 04 27	1891 11 01
QUESNELLE	A.	23		1892 10 01	
UPPER SUMAS	A	20.5	1883 11 02	1897 09 01	1904 04 25
VICTORIA	A	22		1872 01 09	1872 07 12
VICTORIA	A	21.5		1872 08 09	1879 07 20
VICTORIA (T/SF)	A	20.5	1872 07 28	1877 09 24	1878 12 02
VICTORIA M.O.O.	B	25		1877 10 18	1882 10 13
VICTORIA / CANADA	B	23	1882 09 07	1882 10 20	1895 01 16
YALE	A	21.5		1872 04 15	1881 08 14
YALE	B	29		1879 01 26	1880 08 29
YALE	B	23.5		1883 03 06	1911 02 18

Type A

Type B



Ludlow 11 & 17F



New Westminister 29mm  
only reported date





Forms should be mailed to Bill Topping  
B.C. Postal History News Letter  
7430 Angus Drive  
Vancouver, B.C. V6P 5K2

The purpose of this page is to provide opportunities for members to obtain information on areas of special research. It makes it possible to tap a large number of collections that might otherwise be missed in the study of a particular topic. It is hoped all members will take advantage of this aspect of the news letter. The previous item on recent machine cancellations produced a number of very useful comments.

Please check your collection for late dates for the following

BRIT COL - CANCELLATIONS

POST OFFICE	TYPE	DIAM.	PROOF	DATE EARLY	LATE	.
CARIBOO	A	22		1872 05 31	1872 09 07	
CHEMAINUS	A	21	1883 10 06	1884 12 10		
CLINTON	A	22		1874 06 20	1902 01 14	
CLINTON	B	29		1879 03 27	1880 11 11	
CLOVER VALLEY	A	22	1883 11 09	1892 03 21	1892 06 09	
COMOX	A	22	1883 11 29	1885 08 06	1897 12 03	
C. P. RY. M.C.	B (11)	23	1886 08 02	1887 02 09	1898 09 24	
DOG CREEK	A	22	1882 08 05	1890 12 12	1901 02 16	
DRYNDOCH	A	21	1882 08 16	1883 03 26		
EMORY	A	22.5	1881 12 02	1883 07 16	1883 09 24	
ESQUIMALT	A	21		1873 09 15	1890 01 22	
HALLS PRAIRIE	A	20	1883 11 09	1891 11 23	1917 06 11	
KAMLOOPS	A	21	1883 08 09	1883 11 04	1893 07 20	
LANGLEY PRAIRIE	A	21	1883 11 09	1888 11 16	1891 03 04	
NEL. & MID. R.P.O.	B (17F)	23.5	1927 06 29	1931 10 10	1955 07 08	
NELS. & MID. R.P.O.	B (17F)	22.5	1908 04 23	1909 05 21	1926 03 13	
NEW WESTMINSTER	A	21		1872 04 13	1879 09 12	
NEW WESTMINSTER	B	29		1879 08 29		
NEW WESTMINSTER	B.	22.5	1883 06 02	1883 07 20	1892 09 22	
NORTH ARM	A	23.5	1882 03 06	1892 03 21	1892 09 02	
PAVILION	A.	24	1882 03 25	1890 12 04	1904 02 13	
PAVILION	A	22.5	1878 05 06	1897 03 09		
PORT MOODY	A	21	1882 12 09	1884 12 06	1888 01 10	
PORT MOODY	A.	20		1885 11 16	1900 03 20	
QUESNELLE	A	21.5		1873 04 27	1891 11 01	
QUESNELLE	A.	23		1892 10 01		
UPPER SUMAS	A	20.5	1883 11 02	1897 09 01	1904 04 25	
VICTORIA	A	22		1872 01 09	1872 07 12	
VICTORIA	A	21.5		1872 08 09	1879 07 20	
VICTORIA (T/SF)	A	20.5	1872 07 28	1877 09 24	1878 12 02	
VICTORIA M.O.O.	B	25		1877 10 18	1882 10 13	
VICTORIA / CANADA	B	23	1882 09 07	1882 10 20	1895 01 16	
YALE	A	21.5		1872 04 15	1881 08 14	
YALE	B	29		1879 01 26	1880 08 29	
YALE	B	23.5		1883 03 06	1911 02 18	

I can add no new dates ☐

I do not collect "BRIT COL" ☐

Name .....

Address .....

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