



BRITISH COLUMBIA
POSTAL HISTORY
RESEARCH GROUP

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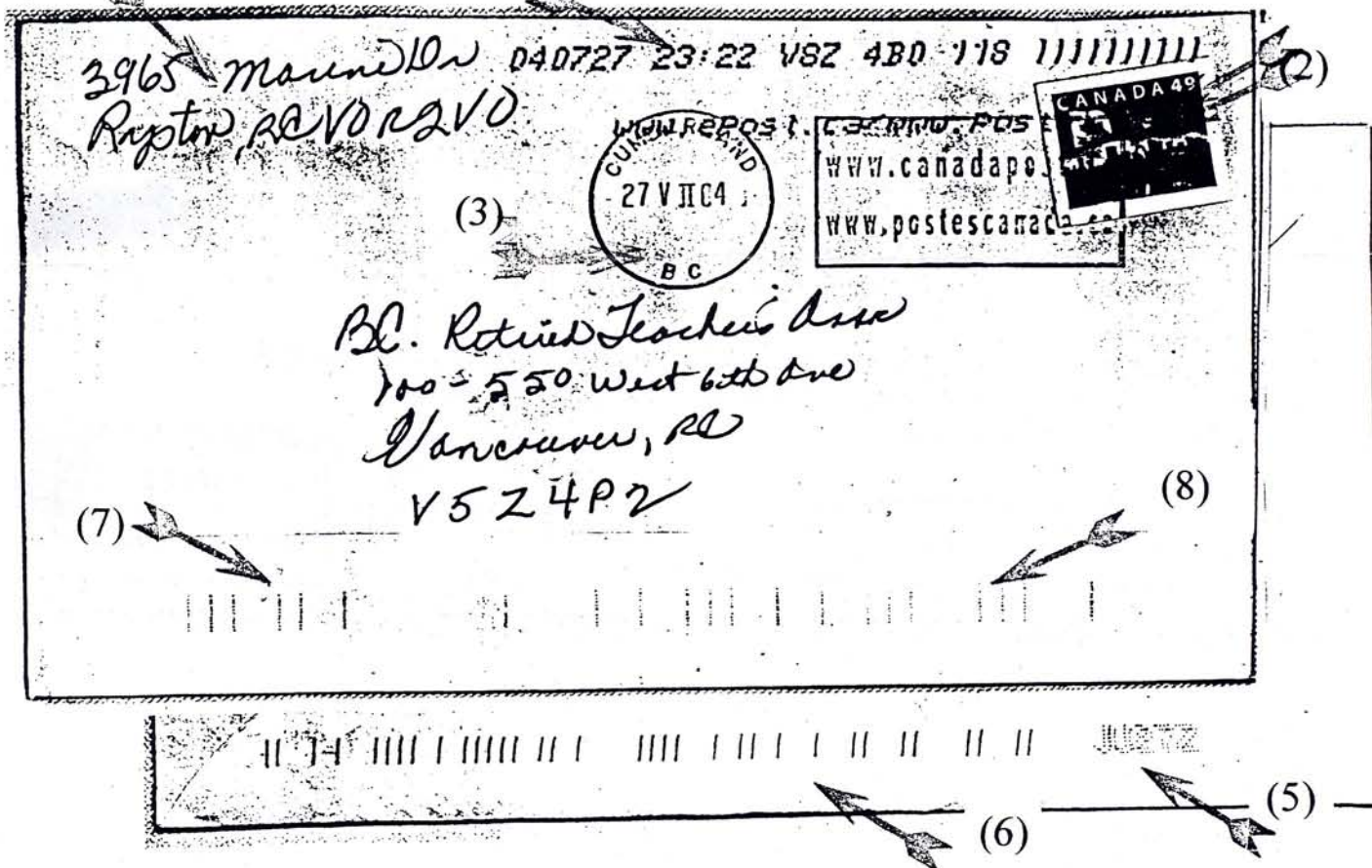
READING MODERN POSTAL MARKING ON LETTER MAIL

In the past "Postal History" consisted mainly of the identifying of rates and routes and collectors were highly impressed by the detailed discussion of the routing of a particular letter. Collectors today tend to ignore the route taken by a particular piece of mail from the time it enters the postal system until it reaches its destination. This is because most collectors do not understand the many jet spray marking applied to the average envelope that in many cases provide a much better history of the routing than was possible with mail from the 1920's or 1930's. The average envelope today will have at least three jet spray markings that indicate where and when the mail was processed. In most cases the marking will provide the location and time the letter entered the processing equipment and the time at which it was dispatched for delivery to a courier or postal station. Very little has been written on the modern mail processing equipment and as a result most collectors have little or no understanding of the postal markings applied to present day mail.

Envelope written at Royston, mailed at Cumberland, coded at Victoria MPP and delivered at Vancouver.

(1)

(4)



READING MODERN POSTAL MARKING ON LETTER MAIL - 2

The majority of Canada's letter mail is processed at one of three Mail Processing Plants (MPP), namely; Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver. Prior to the Second World War most letters were cancelled at the point of mailing, using a metal dater or machine cancel, and with the exception of registered letters received no other postal markings. Today as the result of centralized mail processing the letter mail is rarely cancelled at the point of mailing but rather is transported to a major MPP where letters are cancelled and electronically sorted at the rate of nine letters per second. MPP's still exist in smaller centres and these postal depots process mail in the more traditional manner. In many cases the letter mail is placed in one of two letterboxes, one for local mail and the other for out of town letters. Starting in the late 1960's primitive electronic equipment was introduced to cull, face, and cancel (CFC) the envelopes. In the mid 1970's Optical Character Readers (OCR) that were capable of reading the postal code were introduced. The postal code was electronically translated into a bar code that was sprayed, as a series of orange lines, by a Jet Spray Printer. (JSP). Over the next thirty years continual improvements in the scanning and coding equipment took place so that today over 90% of the letter mail is machine processed.

READING THE MARKINGS

The envelope on the previous page is typical of small town mail and was addressed in Royston, mailed in Cumberland, cancelled in Victoria and coded at Vancouver, while the envelope was still at the Victoria MPP, and then transported to Vancouver for delivery. A full description of the letter requires eight (8) separate pieces of information. *SEE NUMBERS ON ENVELOPE*

The address in the upper left hand corner indicates the writer of the letter lived in Royston.

- (1) Return address- 3965 Marine Drive
Royston V0R 2V0

3965 Marine Drive
Royston, BC V0R 2V0

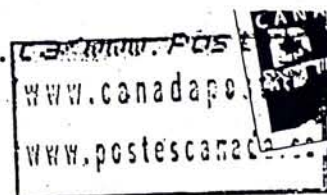
The Canada Letter Mail rate was \$0.49 for up to 30 g.

- (2) Postage paid with current 49 cent stamp.



*The letter was mailed at the Cumberland Post Office where the postage was cancelled.
Note; the letter should have been mailed in the "Out of Town" mailbox
for direct delivery to Victoria*

- (3) The Cumberland cancellation reads -
CUMBERLAND / 27 VII 04 / B.C.
(I.P.S model 4900 Rapid Cancelling Machine)



READING MODERN POSTAL MARKING ON LETTER MAIL - 3

The letter was then dispatched to Victoria MPP for cancelling, coding, and sorting.

The basic processing equipment in Victoria MPP is an Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft model – AEG LE 891 L-2 Multi Line Optical Character Reader (MLOCR) which consists of a Pre-bar Code Reader, a Verifier, and a Jet Spray Printer as well as 128 sorting bins. The AEG equipment is capable of sorting mail at the rate of 32,000+ letters per hour. In recent years the AEG MLOCR has been fitted with facing equipment as well as an Imaje Jet Spray Printer model Jaime 1000 that is used to cancel the postage.


The envelope was first placed in the facing equipment which, using the florescent bars on the postage stamp, turned the mail so that the envelope was upright with the postage stamp facing the operator. No markings were placed on the envelope by this equipment.

The envelope then passed through the Image Jet Spray printer model JAIME 1000 that consists of two heads ("A" and "B") each containing four spray jets each. The equipment located the 49 cent stamp and then activated jets 1 and 2 on head "B" to cancel the stamp. Jet "B-2" sprayed the date, time, MPP postal code, machine number and jet "B-1" sprayed a Post Office slogan below it..

(4) The "B-2" line translates –

July 27, 2004; 11:22 PM; Victoria MPP, CFC 118 //////////////

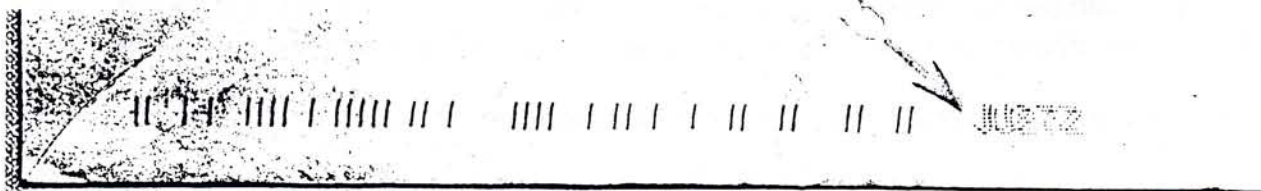
040727 23:22 V8Z 4B0 118 //////////////

www.ePost.ca


At the same time the envelope passed through the AEG Multi Line Optical Character Reader (MLOCR) that read the bottom two line of the address to locate the postal code that is then sprayed on the face of the envelope, as an orange bar code, 9 mm above the base of the envelope.

In this case the MLOCR was unable to read the hand written address and as a result only the date and the plant identification letter were sprayed in the lower right hand corner of the back of the envelope 7 mm above the base.

(5) Right hand marking reads - - JL27 Z (July 27 Z = Victoria)

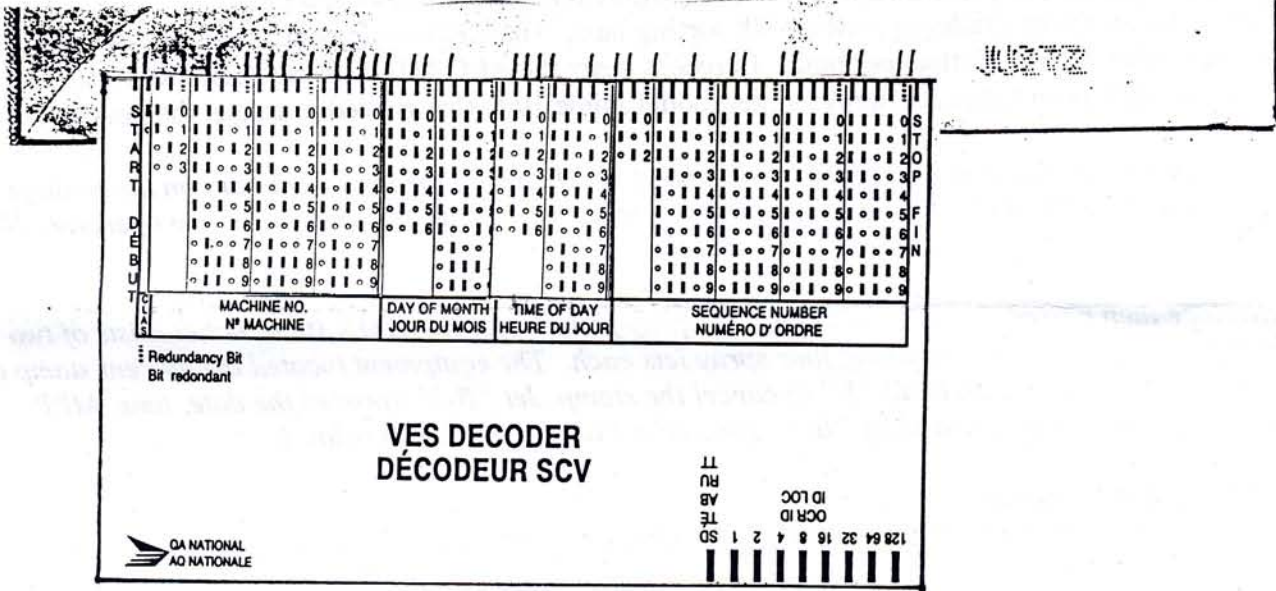


Since the MLOCR was unable to read the postal code the envelope was rerun through the MLOCR and this time the full Video Encoder System (VES) marking consisting of the machine number, the day of month, the time of day (using a 48 hour clock) and a sequential identification number was sprayed on the reverse of the envelope to the left of the date/plant marking which was again sprayed on the envelope.

READING MODERN POSTAL MARKING ON LETTER MAIL - 4

(6) The VES marking is read by using the "VRS Decoder card."

Machine "0718", Day "27", Time "46" (48 hour clock), Sequence number "06933"



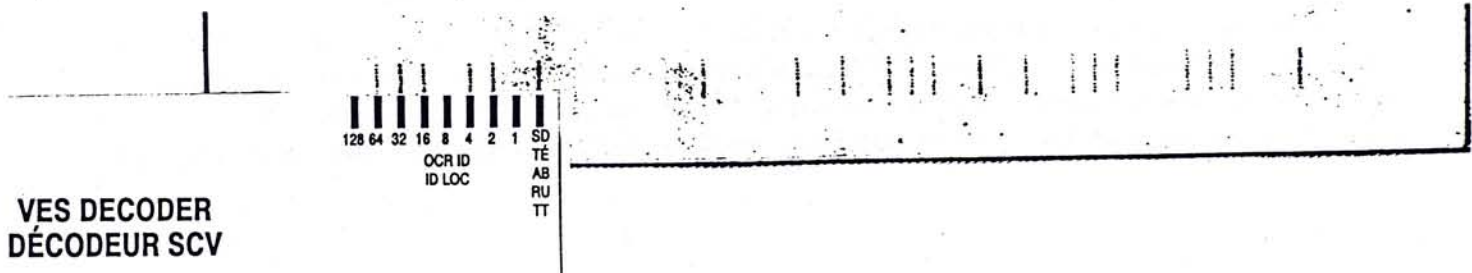
At the same time as the VES marking is sprayed on the reverse of the envelope a video image of the face of the envelope is made and image is transferred to the AEG Remote Video Coding (OVIS) desk in Vancouver via a coaxial cable where the postal code is read by an operator and the encoded on the video tape.

The image is then transferred back to Victoria and the envelope was again run thru the MLOCR in conjunction with the videotape using the Sequential Number to identify the envelope. The postal code together OCR number was sprayed as an orange barcode on the face of the envelope 7 mm above the base. The code is read in two parts, at left the machine number, (read using the VES Decoder – OCR ID card) and the postal code at right (read using the Bar Code Reader card).

The AEG MLOCR then spraed the OCR number and the Postal Code as indicated by a series of 5 mm orange bars 8 mm above the base of the envelope. The machine number, located at the left, can consist of up to 9 bars with bar "S0" always being a part of the number. The postal code can consist of up to 27 bars with parity bars appearing at each end of the sequence. It is read by using a Bar Code Reader card.

The OCR machine number is the total of the bar ID numbesr shown on the OCR ID Reader card.

(7) OCR number 118 is read using the OCR ID card -- $64 + 32 + 16 + 4 + 2 + 0 = \text{OCR } 118$



READING MODERN POSTAL MARKING ON LETTER MAIL - 5

The Canadian Postal Code is a six digit alpha numeric (letter, number, letter, number, letter, number) code that is sprayed as a bar code to the right of the machine number and can be read by using the Bar Code Reader Card. The card is divided into six parts consisting of letter, number, letter, number, letter, number, and can be read by matching the bars on the envelope to the bars shown on the card.

(8) Postal code V5Z 4P2 is read as follows using the Bar Code Reader -

"...|" = V ".|.|" = 5 "||.|" = Z "|.|" = 4 "|.|" = P "||.." = 2
 V 5 Z 4 P 2

P A R T I T Y P A R T I T E	A - .111	0 - 1.1.0	A - .111	0 - 1.1.0	A - .111	0 - 1.1.0	S T A R T R E A D D E B U T	TABLE X0 = VN X1 = VT X2 = VP X3 = MN X4 = MT X5 = MP X6 = BN X7 = BT X8 = BP X9 = HT	CC#AAL-00-024-ACE-8219		
	B - 11..	1 - .1.1.	B - .11..	1 - .1.1.	B - 11..	1 - .1.1.					
	C - .1.1	2 - .1.1	C - .1.1	2 - .1.1	C - .1.1	2 - .1.1					
	E - 11.1	3 - .1.1	E - .11.1	3 - .1.1	E - 11.1	3 - .1.1					
	G - 1..1	4 - 1.1.1	G - .1..1	4 - 1.1.1	G - 1..1	4 - 1.1.1					
	H - 1..	5 - .1.1	H - 1..	5 - .1.1	H - 1..	5 - .1.1					
	J - .11.	6 - .1.1	J - .11.	6 - .1.1	J - .11.	6 - .1.1					
	K - .11	7 - .1.1	K - .11	7 - .1.1	K - .11	7 - .1.1					
	L - .1.	8 - 1.1.1	L - .1.	8 - 1.1.1	L - .1.	8 - 1.1.1					
	M - .1..	9 - 1.1.1	M - .1..	9 - 1.1.1	M - .1..	9 - 1.1.1					
	R - .1.1	N - .1.1	N - 1.1.1	V - 1.1.1	R - .1.1	N - .1.1					
	S - 1.1.	P - 11..	P - 11..	W - 11..	S - 1.1.	P - 11..					
	V - .1.1	T - .1.1	R - .1.1	X - .1.1	V - .1.1	T - .1.1					
	Y - 11.	W - 1..	S - .1.1	Y - 11.	Y - 11.	W - 1..					
	X - Table	Z - .1.1	T - 1.1.1	Z - 11.1	X - Table	Z - .1.1					
	A N A N A N									BOTTOM OF BAR CODE	Switch/ changer "A" for/pour
	Bar Code Reader - Lecteur d'indexation									EDGE OF ENVELOPE	

Out of town mail received at Vancouver MPP is sorted using the Martin Marietta Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) equipment that operates at the rate of 32,000 mail pieces per hour. The DBCS equipment uses the first three segments of the postal code to sort the envelope for delivery, to regional sorting stations or post offices and uses the remaining three segments to break the envelopes into individual walks or pick up points. The mail is then dispatched via truck for transportation to the final sorting location. At the same time the mail, as it was in this case, would be broken down into individual postal walks or delivery point using the last three items of the postal code. The DBSC equipment applies no marking to the envelope.

"V5Z" is one of the postal codes for Vancouver, Postal Station "C" located at 2405 Pine Street

(9) Address of recipient -

*BC. Retired Teacher Assoc
 100 - 550 West 6th Ave
 Vancouver, BC
 V5Z 4P2*

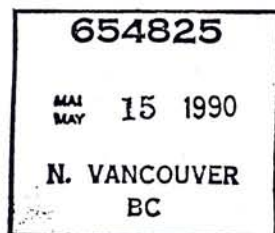
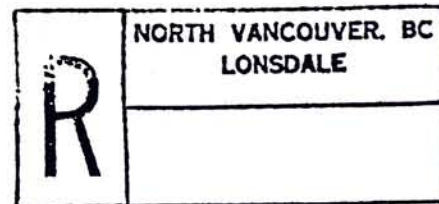
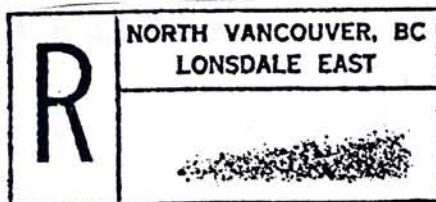
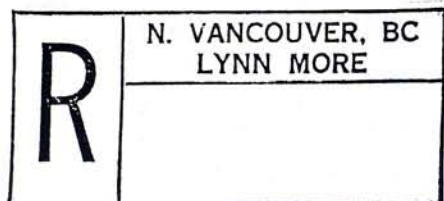
REGISTRATION MARKINGS 1885 TO 1900

In response to a request for information of registered letter hand stamps used in British Columbia, Ron Leith has provided the following summary of the regulations in force prior to 1900 and the use of the registered letter stamps. He has also made reference to the use of the straight line "REGISTERED" and the circle "R" hand stamps. Unfortunately, he has no information on the introduction of the "R/ORIGINAL NUMBER" hand stamps than came into use in the 1920's.

- May 1, 1855 Domestic registration introduced in UC and LC at *1d prepaid cash*. Most Post Offices were issued straight line "REGISTERED" handstamps
- Jan 1, 1865 Registration to Colonial BC set at *5¢ prepaid cash* but valid only to San Francisco. No registration service was available beyond to Victoria
- ???? Registration extended to Colonial BC from San Francisco
- July 1, 1867 Registration to Colonial BC reduced to *2¢ prepaid cash*
- Apr 1, 1868 Registration fee payable by *2¢ prepaid cash or postage stamps*
- July 20, 1871 BC Joins Confederation
- Oct 1, 1875 Registration payable by *2¢ postage stamps only*
- Nov 15, 1875 Registered Letter Stamps (RLS) introduced with domestic registration payable by *2¢ RLS or 2¢ postage stamps (RLS not valid for postage)*
- Oct 1, 1876 Registration payable by *2¢ RLS only*
- Jan 1, 1889 Registration payable by *2¢ RLS or 2¢ postage stamps*
- May 8, 1889 Domestic registration fee increased to 5¢ payable by any combination of *5¢ RLS and/or 5¢ postage stamps*.
- Aug 1, 1893 Small Queen 8¢ issued to pay 3¢ postage + 5¢ registration
- Jan 1, 1894 RLS stamps withdrawn (approximate date)
- Jan 1, 1895 "R" oval h/s required on all registered letters (approximate date)

THE END OF THE BOXED "R" HAND STAMPS

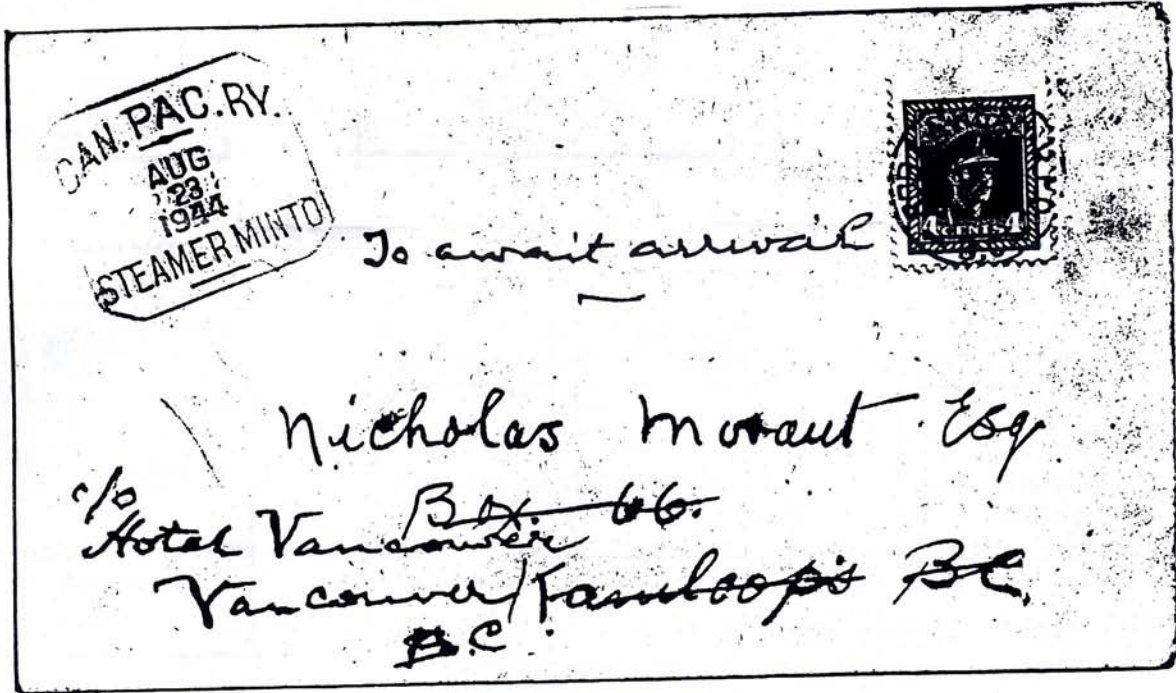
In the Spring of 1990 the Canadian Post Office quietly did away with the registered mail system, that required the back stamping of registered mail, and replaced it with a green label "Security Mail" which did not require back stamping. At the time the new Postal Franchise system was being introduced and many of the new franchises were issued with boxed "R" registration even though they were no longer required. The boxed "R" hand stamps below were never used on mail.



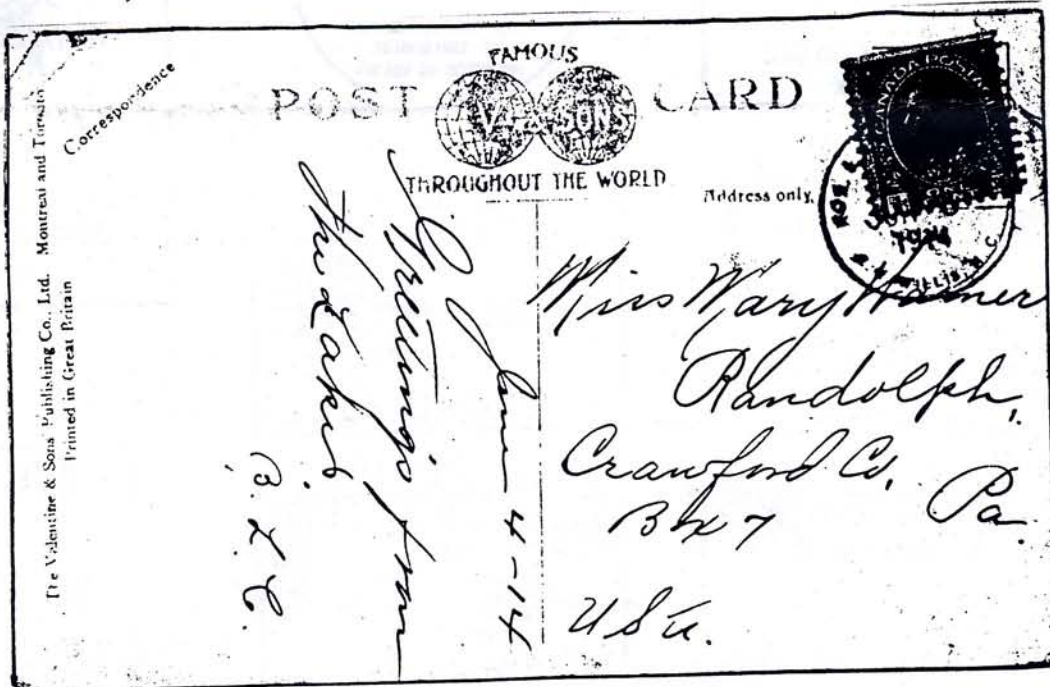
STEAMER MINTO

See Volume 14 Number 3 pages 451 to 455

Pete Jacobi, as a follow up to the S.S. MINTO cover shown on page 455 (Oct. 2005), provided a copy of the earliest reported marking for Ludlow S-49a, dated August 23, 1944. The return address on the back indicates it was mailed by "Capt. J. Thompson, S/S/ Minto, Nakusp, B.C." This is an excellent example of the commercial use of the ship's ticket stamp on cover.



At the same time Pete enclosed a nice example of "ROB & A'HEAD R.P.O. / E.N. WILLIS, M.C. cover (Ludlow 131D) dated June 6, 1914, a recent addition to the Ludlow Catalogue.

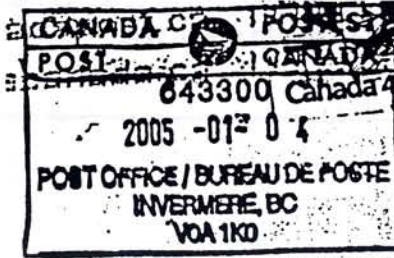


WINGS AND OTHER NEW DATERS

Invermere - three daters
INVERMERE BC

INVERMERE, BC

INVERMERE, B.C.



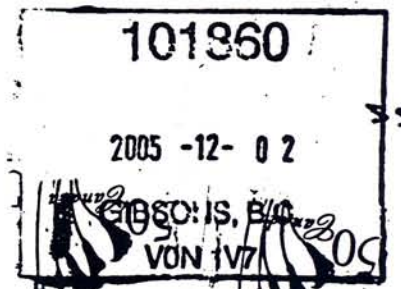
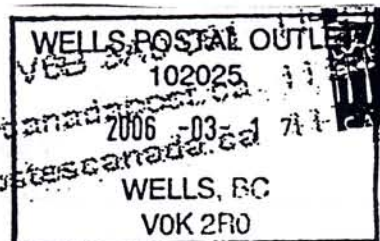
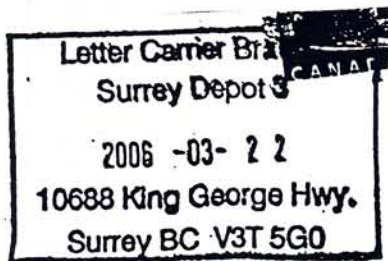
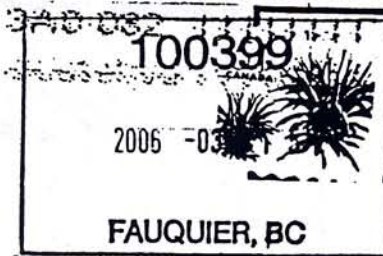
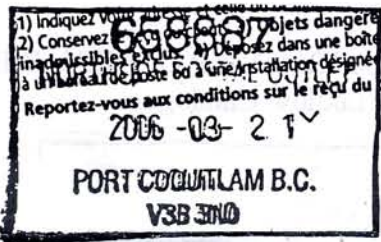
Windermere spelling error
WINDERMERE

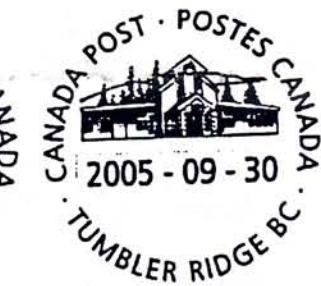
WINDEMERE

MESACHIE LAKE (46 x 46 mm)



PORT COQUITLAM RC 658887
Correct - RC 656887





FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2005-2006

Surplus from previous year	\$728.5
Dues	
Dues @ \$8 x 60	488.00
Advance dues @ \$7.50 x 21	210.00
	<u>1426.50</u>
BNA grant	116.00
	<u>1542.50</u>
News letters 300 @ \$1.50	450.00
Surplus	<u>1092.50</u>
Less advanced dues	210.00
Net surplus	<u>882.50</u>

The British Columbia Postal History News Letter is published quarterly in conjunction with the British North America Philatelic Society.

Membership fees are;
 \$8.00 for 1 year
 \$15.00 for 2 years
 in Canadian or US dollars.

Individual Issues sell for
 \$2.00 post paid.

Dues are payable to the Editor
 Bill Topping 604-261-1508
 7430 Angus Drive
 Vancouver, BC, V6P 5K2, Canada

DUES –

Dues notices have been included with this News Letter.
 Dues are \$8.00 for 1 year and \$15.00 for 2 years \$US/Can.

If you received a dues notice please return the notice
 with a check made out to Bill Topping.

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