



BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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A registered cover from the Minto General Store to Vancouver, dated Apr 1, 1941. Backstamps are Shalalth (Apr 2 duplex), Vancouver (Apr 2 CDS) and Vancouver Postal Station K (Apr 3 CDS).

This issue's **Favourite Cover** is from Minto Mine, located on the Bridge River, northwest of Lillooet and about 200 km north of Vancouver. Minto was a promising 1930s gold discovery. A townsite, usually known as Minto or Minto City, was established nearby in 1934 and soon boasted 300 residents. A post office opened on Jan 1, 1935.

While nearby Bralorne and Pioneer mines proved to have plenty of reserves of ore, the gold at Minto was soon played out. By 1938 the mine had failed. In 1942, however, Minto's status as an isolated, interior ghost town made it the perfect destination for a new

group of residents: 25 Japanese-Canadian families, considered enemy aliens and forcibly relocated from the BC coast until after the end of WWII.

In 1960, when the last residents left, Minto Mine post office closed (June 17). That year the Bridge River was dammed as part of a gigantic hydroelectric project to provide power to Vancouver. Minto City, along with its neighbouring hamlets of Wayside and Congress, disappeared beneath the waters of Carpenter Lake, a new artificial reservoir. At extreme low water, apparently, the outline of the townsite is still visible. — *Andrew Scott*

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Editorial

Thank you to all members who responded with thoughts and comments about subscription fees. We suggested an annual fee of \$15 for a quarterly **print edition** of 16 pages, including several pages in colour. This is very much in line with what other newsletters are charging. Nobody disagreed with our recommendation, so that is what we've decided on. Most print subscriptions, both one and two-year, have now expired. Two or three members who paid beyond 2014 will have personal notes of explanation attached to this issue. Everyone else will need to decide whether to resubscribe at the \$15 rate or receive the **free digital edition**. (You can, of course, have both.)

Several members said they would pay a modest fee for a digital edition, but we decided to keep it free. If you shift to the digital version, please make sure we have your email address. You can also download it from our file-sharing site (see below).

We will honour paid 2014 print subscriptions through this issue and next. If we have not received your renewal by then, we will shift your subscription to digital. Finally, we are happy to accept donations (and we thank those who donated last year).

Harold Alexander Price

It is with great sadness that we note that one of the giants of BC philately closed his albums for the last time on January 18, 2015, in Kelowna, BC.

Alex (pronounced "Alec") was born on Nov 18, 1921, in Vancouver. Others have commented on Alex's achievements in the Second World War, his community contributions, his love of wife and family, and his long association with the Canadian Pacific Railway in western Canada. I would like to reflect briefly on his passion for history—especially for CPR postal history in British Columbia.

Alex was a consummate postal historian. I first met him some 25 years ago when he and his wife Renee had just moved to Kelowna from Vancouver. Alex was in Bob Lee's viewing room, meticulously going through a bulk lot. "More junk!" he bellowed at me, a relative novice to the strange world of postal history, then went on to explain what, in his view, was good in this lot and what was "crap."

Thus began a long and mutually fulfilling friendship. I would see Alex at the quarterly Bob Lee auctions, and we would correspond on issues of postal interest and eventually ended up chatting almost daily. Alex introduced me to the cerebral side of BC postal history and I introduced him to eBay. I would say that I certainly got the better of the deal.

We attended philatelic conventions together, including the PNW regional meetings of BNAPS, where Alex would entrance the gathered devotees with his talks and his never-before-seen philatelic material. The meeting I organized in Barkerville was one of my favourite times with Alex.

Alex (along with Gray Scrimgeour) helped greatly with the editing of my book, *BC Post Office Revenues*. I'll never forget how he instructed me on the proper use of "due to" and "owing to." His suggestions made my foray into the world of publishing a successful one—at least in Alex's opinion (which meant the world to me).

In his later years, when Alex was not as mobile as he used to be, I would become (in his words) "his philatelic ferret," getting to know his collecting interests as well as I knew my own. It was easy to search for him while visiting dealers or other collectors.

Alex was my great friend. I feel extremely lucky to have had the chance to know him, and I will miss him very much. He could always make me laugh when he told me "I can't go yet, I don't have it all!"

Alex, in my opinion, you did have it all.

—Tracy Cooper

The *British Columbia Postal History Newsletter* is published quarterly by the BC Postal History Study Group, an affiliate of the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS).

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Free digital newsletters can be downloaded as PDF files at the following websites: for issues 1 to 59, go to www.bnaps.org/hhl/n-bcr.php; for later numbers, visit https://spideroak.com/browse/share/Andrew_Scott/Backissues. Issues 89 to present are in full colour; earlier newsletters are in b&w. File size is approximately 2 Mb / issue.

Straightline markings: a preliminary update

Last issue's article on Vancouver suburban straightline markings did not result in any new reports, which reinforces our impression that these handstamps are unusually rare. We don't yet know *why* they're so rare, but we'll follow this topic and report back on it from time to time.

Several study group members wrote in about other straightline markings, however. Clearly, these kinds of handstamps are a neglected research area, and we'll try to pay more attention to them in the future. Study group chair Tim Woodland sent along the NEW WESTMINSTER straightline below. This type of marking was often added to a poorly or incorrectly addressed cover as a directional aid. Was it postally applied, he wonders? I believe so, Tim, and there were quite a few different types. I've seen them for Vancouver and North Vancouver, as well.

Tim also submitted an interesting straightline of a type I've never seen before, from Holberg on Vancouver Island (below). It's on the back of a registered cover from the Alaska Pine Co. Tim wonders if this was perhaps a marking used internally by the company. Does anybody know?

Group member Jim White pointed out that most of the straightlines he'd seen were on such items as letter bills, money orders and facing slips. Others were provisional cancels—probably used while waiting for cancelling equipment to arrive from Ottawa. "I have thought that maybe the straightline cancels were used within the Post Office Department," he writes, "rather than for mail." Indeed, many straightline markings may originally have been intended for internal use only, then some-

how found their way into more general service and ended up being used on the mail.



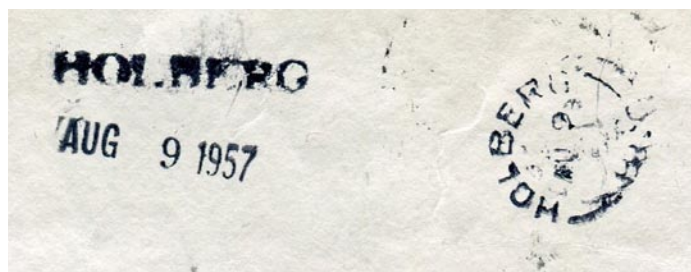
Jim also commented on the Vancouver AMF post office, which employed many different straightline markings, a few of which (from *Transportation Proof Strikes of Canada*, by Paul Hughes) are shown above.

—Andrew Scott



Here and there

Two significant events for those interested in BC postal history will both, unfortunately, take place on the same April 24-26 weekend. • The Pacific Northwest Regional Group of BNAPS will meet at Vernon's Village Green Inn. For more information, contact Peter Fralick at 250-982-2474 or Shirley Ann Frick at 604-584-9265. • WESTPEX will be held at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront. Earlier in the week there will be a two-day APS seminar on Western Postal History, with a presentation on colonial BC and Vancouver Island by study group member Dale Forster (April 22, in the am). Visit www.westpex.com for further convention and exhibit details.



Gibsons Landing to Brazil for MS Gripsholm

by Andrew Scott

This censored airmail cover from Gibsons Landing to Brazil would be interesting enough even without the docketing. But it's the little phrase in the lower left corner—"Returning on Gripsholm"—that really got my attention. The sender was trying to get a letter to a Canadian, formerly resident in Hong Kong, who was being transferred to New York on the famous WWII repatriation vessel, the MS *Gripsholm*. The ship was scheduled to make a stop at Rio de Janeiro, and mail for passengers could be sent there. It's quite a story.



Double-weight cover dated Gibsons Landing on Oct 23, 1943. (From Dec 15, 1937, to Aug 31, 1945, the airmail rate to Brazil was 35 cents per ¼ oz). It was sent care of the Canadian Legation at Rio de Janeiro, for safe transfer to the Gripsholm when it arrived in Rio about Nov 15, 1943.

Gibsons to Brazil continued

The *Gripsholm* was an ocean liner, built in 1925 for the Swedish American Line. It saw use on transatlantic crossings between Goteborg, Sweden, and New York, and also as a cruise ship. During WWII, it was chartered by the US state department (as was another SAL ship, the *Drottningholm*) and employed as an exchange and repatriation vessel under the protection of the Red Cross. It made 11 round trips to various parts of the world, travelling fully lit up at night so that it could easily be identified, and eventually repatriated more than 27,000 prisoners of war, diplomats, journalists, missionaries, sick and wounded civilians, and women and children to countries on both sides of the conflict. In 1946 the “mercy ship,” as it was known, was returned to its owners.

The ship’s two longest expeditions were in 1942 and 1943. Our cover is from the latter journey, which began on Sept 2. The liner left New York with 1,330 Japanese civilians aboard, then stopped at Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo, Uruguay, to pick up additional Japanese passengers. The exchange point—Mormugao in Portuguese India (or Goa)—was reached on Oct 15. The Japanese repatriation vessel *Teia Maru* arrived at about the same time, carrying 1,500 US, Canadian and other Allied nationals, including several hundred from Hong Kong, and a transfer was successfully made. The *Gripsholm* left Goa on Oct 21 and returned home via Port Elizabeth, South Africa, and Rio de Janeiro (reached about Nov 15, when our cover was transferred to the ship), and eventually docked at Jersey City, opposite New York, on Dec 1, 1943.



Reverse, showing censor number. There are no receiving marks. A similar cover (with a different franking) is known with the same address, from A Logan at Ocean Falls, also dated October 1943.

So who was Mrs S V Logan? What little I’ve found out comes from a book by a female freelance photographer from Detroit, Gwen Dew, called *Prisoner of the Japs*, published in 1943 by Alfred A Knopf. Here Logan is described as the housekeeper at Hong Kong’s Repulse Bay Hotel, where many residents, including author Dew, sought sanctuary at the height of the fighting for the British colony. She had “a burr as thick as a fog over the Scottish moors,” according to the writer, and worked tirelessly before the colony’s surrender to keep the hotel functioning. Dew was repatriated in 1942, on the *Gripsholm*’s first major expedition. Mrs Logan must have made it back on the second trip, in 1943, after enduring almost two years of captivity.

Between 1944 and 1946, the *Gripsholm* made a number of shorter voyages, mostly carrying German civilians and POWs from the US and exchanging them in Lisbon or Goteborg, or at Mediterranean ports. Many of the POWs were German submarine crews and other naval prisoners. In 1945 the *Gripsholm* travelled to Port Said and Bombay, through the Suez Canal—a longer journey. There are a number of websites dealing with the ship’s unusual history. The best one, I found, was at <http://salship.se/mercy.php>.

Early stampless mail from Quebec to VI and BC

by Gray Scrimgeour

In 1951, Charles McDonough reported his acquisition of about 50 Canadian stampless covers, including "quite a few addressed to a John V Woolsey, Victoria and New Westminster."¹ One letter was addressed to him at San Francisco (when he was on his way to Victoria in 1859; at least one other cover to Woolsey at San Francisco exists). He had resided in Quebec, and that was the point of origin for most of the covers, which span the period 1859 to 1864. A year later, W E D Halliday provided some information on Woolsey and his life in the west.² Neither writer firmly describes the routes followed by individual covers, whether they were carried via Panama or Overland. With more recent references and online newspaper archives (*British Colonist* and *Daily Alta California*), we can now determine routes for these covers and often assign specific steamship sailings.

John Vanfelson Woolsey (1838–1909) was the son of a prominent Quebec merchant, John William Woolsey. J V Woolsey arrived in Victoria in late Spring 1859. He taught school there for a short time, then moved to the mainland by August 1859.² He is listed in the 1863 *British Columbia Guide and Directory* as "Wolsey [sic], John, clerk in the Treasury" at New Westminster. He worked at the Treasury Department from 1860 to 1865; until September 1862 he was under Captain William Driscoll Gosset, then BC colonial treasurer. (Gosset was acting postmaster-general of the colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver Island from June 1859 to July 1860; he probably designed the colonies' first postage stamp.³ Gosset returned to England on sick leave in September 1862.) In October 1865, Woolsey's position was terminated by the colonial secretary, so he went to the Cariboo for a short time, then returned to eastern Canada.² Woolsey served as a supply officer in the 1885 Rebellion, for which he was awarded the North West Canada Medal.

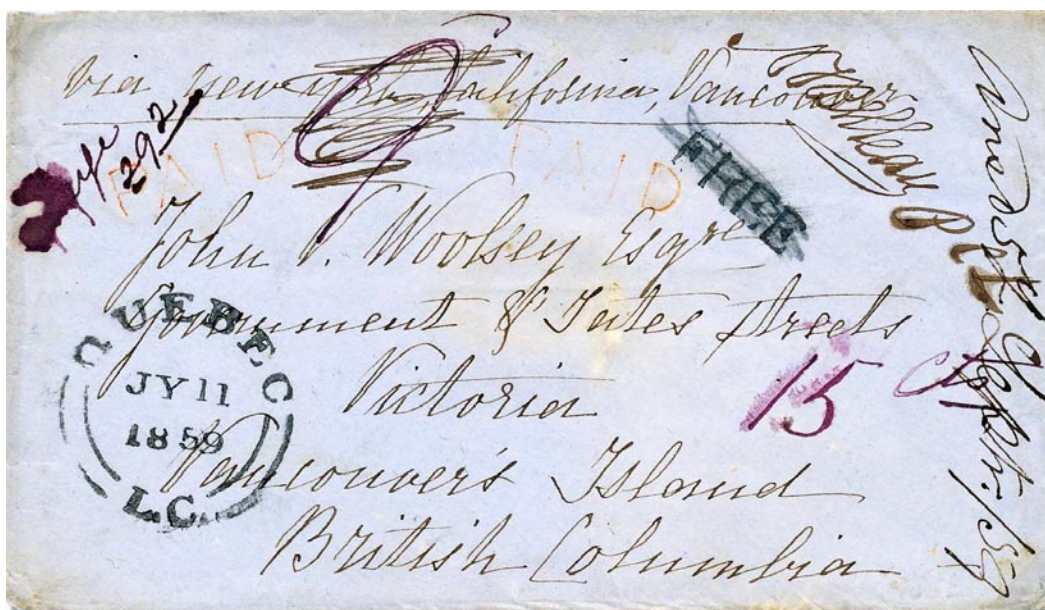


Figure 1. Stampless cover from Quebec (July 11, 1859) to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, endorsed "Via New York, California, Vancouver." Dispatched via Panama.

A number of the covers from Quebec to John Woolsey have come on the market over the years. For example, Lot 710 in the Stuart Johnstone Sale (J N Sissons Ltd, April 19, 1972) contained four covers from Quebec to Woolsey at New Westminster. Individual covers appear for sale periodically. A cover to Woolsey in New Westminster, posted in Quebec on December 7, 1860, is shown in Jack Wallace's exhibit.⁴

I have two covers from Quebec to Woolsey. The earlier one is shown in Figure 1. It was mailed at Quebec on July 11, 1859. The only backstamp it bears is Montreal, July 12, 1859. Initially, the envelope

Stampless from Quebec continued

From early 1860 until March 1861, the default route (ie, the dispatch route followed unless another route was stipulated) across the continent was the semi-weekly Butterfield's Express, which went from St Louis to California via Arkansas and Texas twice each week. Starting July 1, 1861, there was a new default service: the Overland Mail Co, which operated daily stage-mail dispatches. Its Central Route was further north, from Kansas through Wyoming and Salt Lake City. The Central Overland Route was followed until the trans-continental railway was completed in May 1869. This Overland route was used unless a letter was specifically endorsed for "Steamship" or "Panama." Newspapers and packets (and occasionally letters) were sent from Canada to British Columbia through Panama until the completion of the railway.³

From April 1861 to June 1861, however, the Overland mails were interrupted. Because of activity related to the impending Civil War, the Butterfield Route was discontinued on March 12, 1861. The last run started west from St Louis on March 21, 1861, and reached San Francisco sometime early in April (the second-last trip arrived on April 3).⁹ The first daily service by the new Overland contract left St Joseph, Missouri, on July 1 and reached Sacramento, California, on July 18.

My 1861 cover falls in the short period that had no Overland contract mail service. I have no explanation for why it entered the US at the Windsor-Detroit exchange point. Halliday² mentions an 1859 cover from Victoria to Quebec via San Francisco that entered Canada at Windsor. Using the online newspapers, I have determined the cover's probable dispatch route to the Pacific, via Panama. It was apparently too late for carriage by the Butterfield Route. The *North Star* (of the Atlantic and Pacific Steamship Company) departed from New York on March 21, 1861, with the mails. The *SS Golden Gate* arrived at San Francisco from Panama with these mails on April 14, after 13 days and 19 hours. The *SS Pacific* departed San Francisco for Victoria on April 16; she arrived at Victoria at 7 am on April 24. The *SS Otter* would have carried the letter to New Westminster later that day.

These two covers demonstrate some of the complexity of the mail routes between eastern Canada and British Columbia before the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885. Until then, United States mail routes were used to cross the continent, and communication by mail was quite slow.

This article was previously published, in French, as "La poste à ses débuts entre Québec et l'île-de-Vancouver et la Colombie-Britannique" (Bulletin d'histoire postale et de marcophilie, No 125, Sept-Déc 2014), pp 27-29. The Bulletin is the quarterly journal of La Société d'histoire postale du Québec (SHPQ).

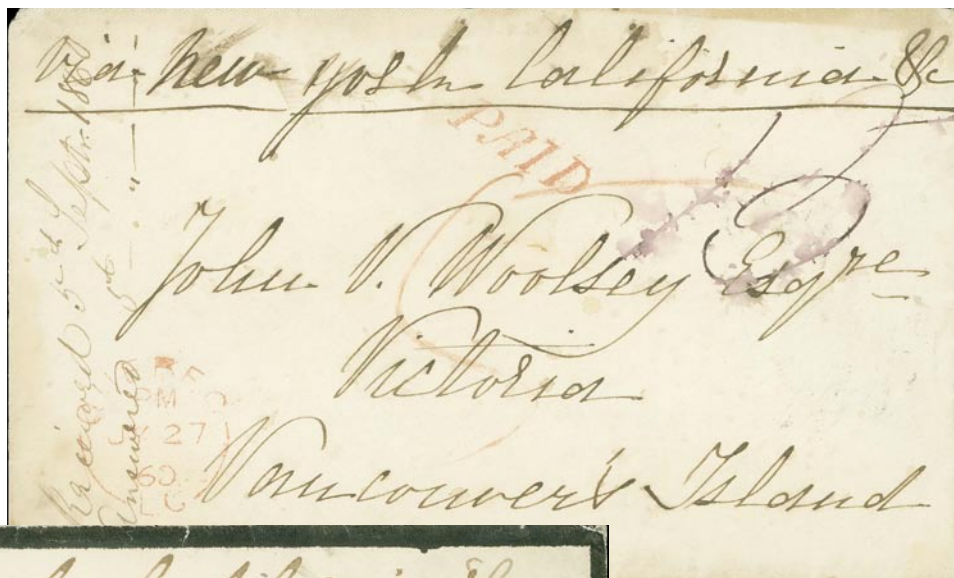
Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank Ferd Belanger for identifying the Windsor backstamp on the 1861 cover (Figure 2).

Endnotes

- 1 "Interesting Stampless Covers," *BNA Topics*, Vol 8, No 3 (March 1951), pp 72-73.
- 2 W E D Halliday, "Covers Addressed to John V Woolsey, 1859-1864," *BNA Topics*, Vol 9, No 2 (February 1952), pp 39-40.
- 3 A S Deaville, *The Colonial Postal Systems and Postage Stamps of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1849-1871*, Legislative Assembly, Victoria (1928), pp 56-67.
- 4 J M Wallace, *British Columbia and Vancouver Island*, BNAPS Exhibit Series #52, British North America philatelic Society, Ottawa (November 2008,) p 28.
- 6 R Frajola and M Perlman, "Post Office Overland Mail Directive Handstamps," *Western Express*, Vol 61, No 2 (June 2011), pp 4-12, online at www.rfrajola.com/overland/Overland_Handstamps.pdf.
- 7 S Walske, *Heart of the West: San Francisco as a Postal Hub from 1849 to 1869*, www.rfrajola.com/swlondon/SWL.pdf.
- 8 E C Reed, "U.S. Mail Steamship Co Sailings to Panama 1849-1859," *The Chronicle of the Classic Postal Issues*, Vol 31, No 2 (May 1979), pp 98-116.
- 9 G J Kramer, *The Butterfield Overland Route*, APS (2013), online at stamps.org/userfiles/file/MyAPS/Exhibits/Kramer-Butterfield-346649.pdf.

Stampless from Quebec continued

Right: To Victoria with Quebec JY 27/60 dispatch split-ring in red, italic "PAID" handstamp, Montreal JY 28 transit backstamp, "Received 5th Sept 1860" docketing at left.



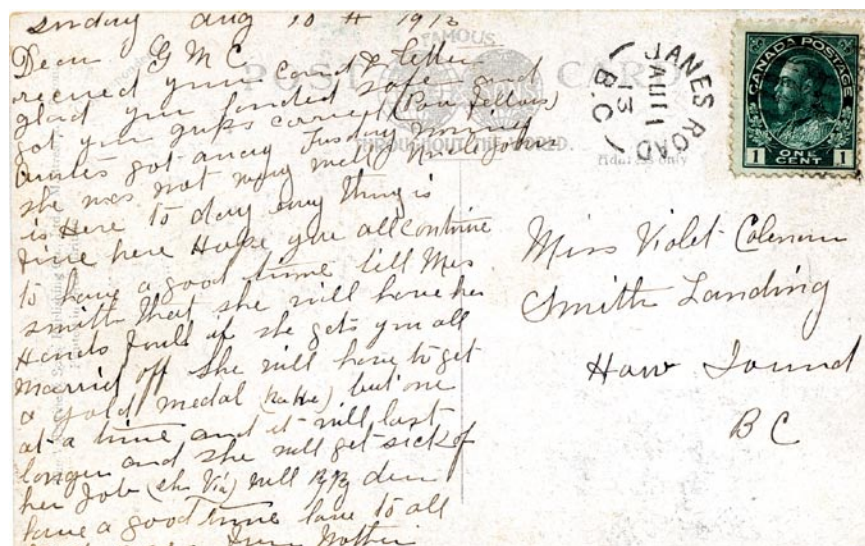
Left: mourning cover to New Westminster with light Quebec OC 6/60 split-ring in red, italic "PAID" handstamp, "Rec'd 22nd Nov 1860" docketing. Backstamps: Montreal OC 7 and Mon. & Kings. GD. TRK. R.W. Post Office/No. 2/A OCT 8 1860 railway cancel.

Right: mourning cover to New Westminster with Quebec MY 8/61 split-ring in red, italic "PAID" handstamp, "Received 24 July 1861" docketing, Montreal MY 9 and Windsor MY 17 backstamps.



Three Woolsey covers from the recent Eastern Auctions sale of the Jack Wallace collection (Oct 16, 2014). All show a manuscript "15" in purple ink, indicating the prepaid rate to California, but only the top and bottom covers have a manuscript "5," denoting colonial tax to be paid. The top two covers travelled overland to San Francisco via New York. The bottom one may have gone via Panama. All three arrived at Victoria by steamer from San Francisco; the bottom two were then sent on to New Westminster. From top to bottom, the covers realized \$310, \$260 and \$200 (buyer's fee not included).

Remembering the old Janes Road post office



AU 11/13 split-ring to Smith Landing, Howe Sound (later renamed Langdale).



It seems appropriate that after last issue's feature on Vancouver suburban post offices, we received this wonderful scan from study group member Russ Janes. It shows the Janes Road post office and grocery run by William Janes at 41st Ave and Nanaimo St, about 1911. The office was opened in 1910 and became a sub office in 1918 (Janes Road no longer exists). The family patriarch, Thomas John Janes (1855-1926), was a pioneer settler in South Vancouver. He was born in Cornwall and came to BC in 1883. First he worked as a butcher in Granville (Gastown) and later ran an early stage between Vancouver and New Westminster.













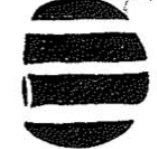










BC cork cancel survey: Part I (Victoria)

by Tracy Cooper

Welcome to the first of what we hope will be a series of research articles and information requests concerning cork cancel use in British Columbia. This initial questionnaire focuses on the various types of corks used in Victoria.

Cork cancels, made primarily from cork bottle stoppers, have fascinated postal historians for years. "Fancy corks"—carvings with an intricate or interesting design, or ones that showcased the artistic talents of the postmaster—have a particularly passionate following among collectors. The current leader in fancy cancel research is Dave Lacelle, who publishes a quarterly postal history newsletter for BNAPS that caters to those interested in this field. For more information, or to download back issues of Dave's publication, go to www.bnaps.org/hhl/n-fcm.php.

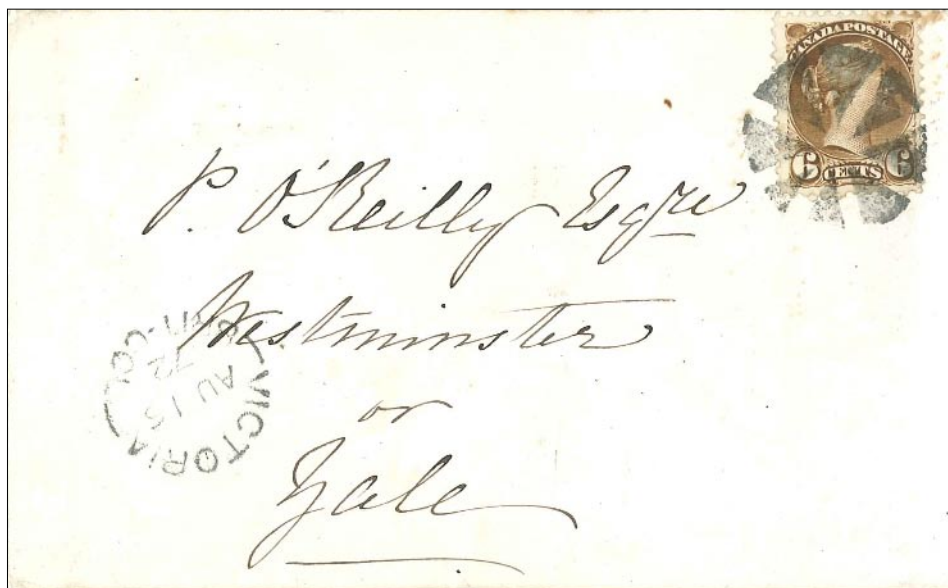
The intent of the articles in our newsletter is to catalogue not just the "fancy" cancels but all corks used in major BC centres, and also to record the dates and periods of usage. We are starting with Victoria but will include New Westminster and Vancouver in future articles. If sufficient interest is shown in the project, it could be expanded to other towns.

VICTORIA, B.C. 1872-99 POSTMARKS AND CANCELLATIONS	TYPE I 	TYPE II 	TYPE III 	TYPE V 	TYPE IV 
V.1  8 segments in oval 28 mm. Jul-Nov 1872	V.2  Narrow bars, 3 cuts 23 mm. Oct 1872	V.3  Burst of arrows, oval 28 mm. Oct 1872	V.4  "1" within a whorl 23 mm. Nov '72-Jan '73	V.5  Geometric 23 mm. Nov 1872	V.6  4 bars in oval 24 mm. Mar to Nov 1873
V.7  5 bars, lower broken originally 24 mm Mar-Nov 1873	V.8  4 heavy bars, cut 24 mm Apr-Dec 1874	V.9  7 thin bars 24 mm. Feb '75 to Jan '76	V.10  5 crude bars 23 mm. Nov 1875	V.11  5 bars, diagonal cut 22 mm Sep-Dec 1875	V.12  5 thick bars cut 23 mm. Jun-Nov 1875
V.13  5 bars vertical cut 22 mm. Jun-Jul 1876	V.14  Diamond grid Outline 23 mm Aug-Sep 1876	V.15  Geometric 24 mm. Oct 1876	V.16  Arrows (incomplete) 2 mm. Mar 1877	V.17  5 heavy bars 22 mm. Jan '77-Dec '77	V.18  Bars with V cut 23 mm Oct-Dec 1877

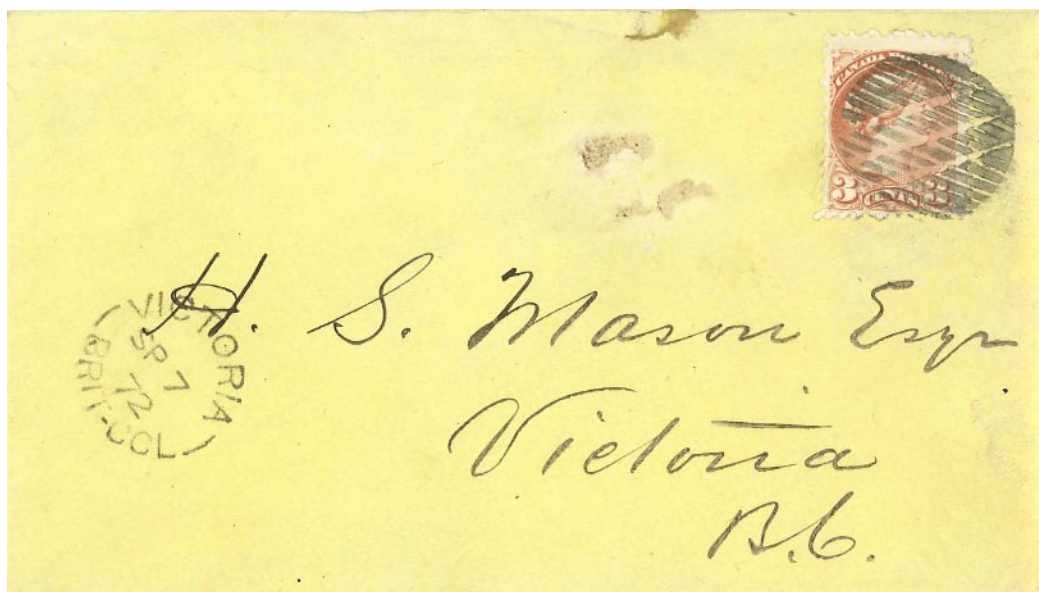
Victoria cork survey continued

Well-known postal historian Gerry Wellburn was the first to take a keen interest in cataloguing the various cancels used in Victoria. Two huge finds formed the basis of Gerry's research, namely the O'Reilly and Helmcken correspondences. I suspect that most current BC postal historians have at least a few covers from these two accumulations. In later years John Keenlyside furthered research and interest in Victoria's corks by exhibiting his holdings. I was fortunate enough to acquire the original research compiled by Gerry. His data forms the basis of this article. (Gerry's cork illustrations were originally published in the newsletter in 1998, on pages 207 and 208.)

Gerry compiled a methodology for classifying cancels and corks used in Victoria, with seven different "types" of cancels and 56 different corks. The cancels are ordered from V.1 to V.56 and range from



Wellburn V.1 AU 16/72 6-cent double-weight domestic rate. Unusual, as the cover was to be delivered to New Westminster or Yale. Cork in use July-Sept 1872.



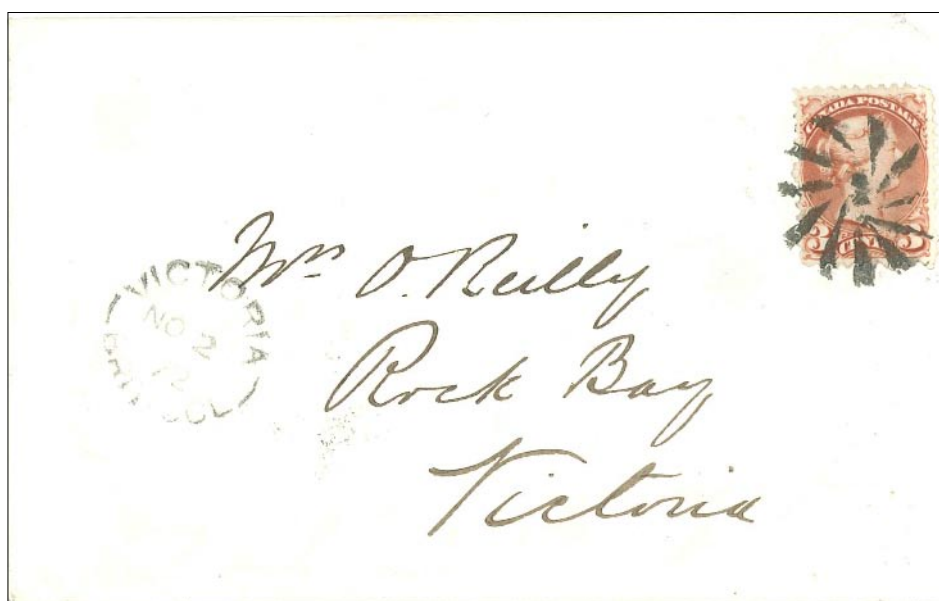
Wellburn V.2 SP 7/72 3-cent single letter rate. Mailed in Victoria to Victoria but obviously not considered a drop letter (which was a 1-cent rate at the time). In use Sept-Oct 1872.

Victoria cork survey continued

*Wellburn V.3 OC 15/72 1-cent printed matter rate.
Victoria to Yale. Cork in use Oct 1872*

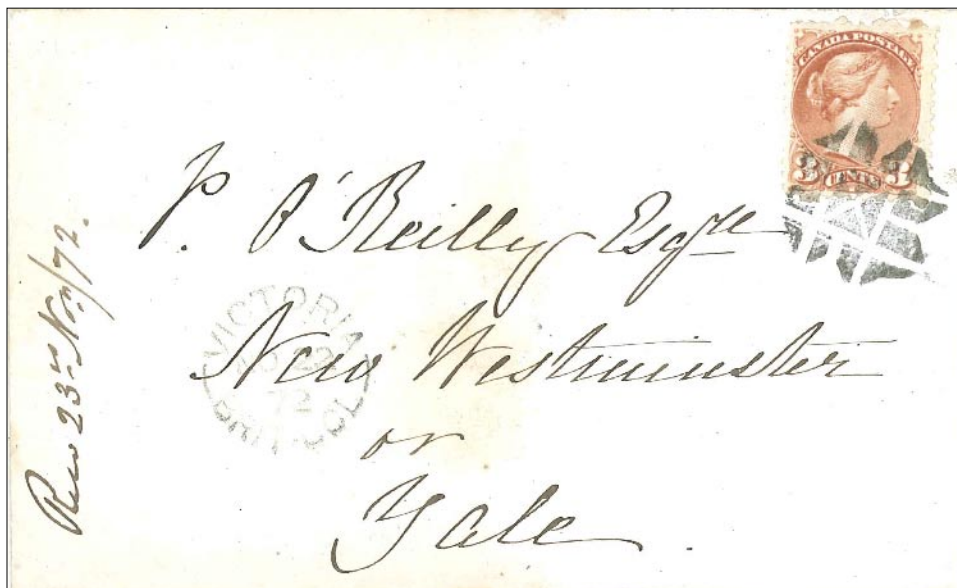
simple segmented corks to fancy “chalices” and “pumpkin heads.” Gerry even went so far as to catalogue periods of usage in a monthly spreadsheet that he continually updated until his death. This first newsletter article will focus on corks V.1 to V.18, as noted in the illustration. The second article in the Victoria series will focus on V.19 to V.42 and the third on V.43 to V.56 (with the curious hybrid V.60 thrown in for interest).

We are requesting readers to send in the dates of usage for each cancel they have in their holdings—not just early and late dates. If you have a cancel that you’re unsure of, please send a scan or photocopy to the editor and we’ll try to determine if the cancel was used in Victoria or perhaps applied elsewhere—on the steamships that plied the waters between New Westminster and Victoria, for example.

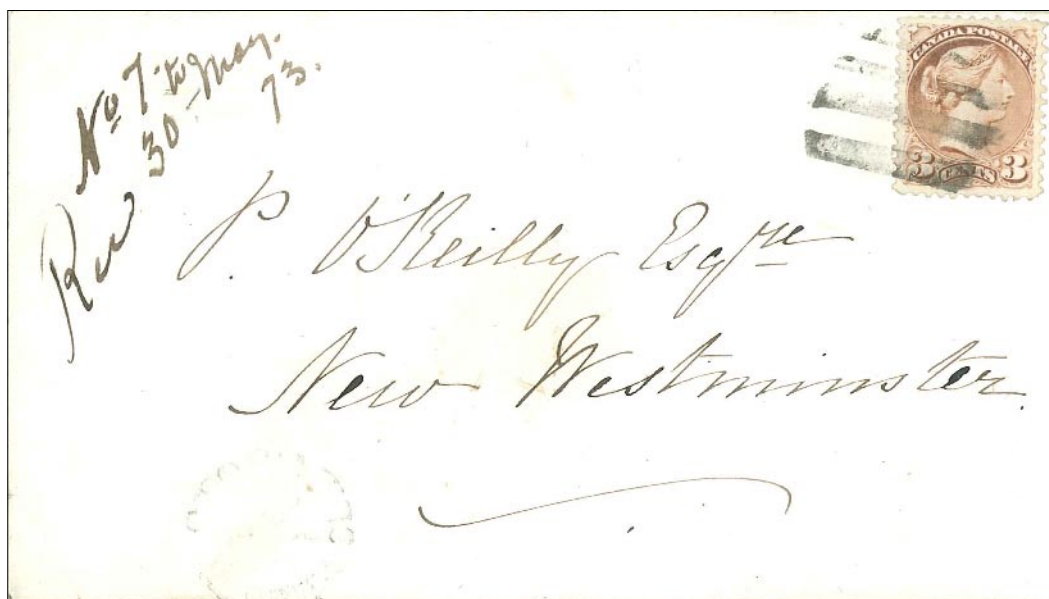


Wellburn V.4 NO 2/72 3-cent domestic letter rate. The O'Reilly home was at Rock Bay, outside the drop-letter zone. This cork is unusual in that it incorporates a “1” at the same time that Victoria was still occasionally using the old colonial numeral “35” hammer. In use Nov 1872-Jan 1873.

Victoria cork survey continued



Wellburn V.5 NO 22/72 3-cent domestic letter rate again addressed to the mobile Mr. O'Reilly. Cork in use Nov 1872.



Wellburn V.7 MY 30/73 3-cent domestic letter rate. In use Mar-Nov 1873.

The results of your reports—including any new or additional Victoria cork cancellations that surface as a result of this project—will be published in future issues of the newsletter. This is the “research” aspect of our hobby, which fascinates us and keeps us engaged in collecting and reaching out to fellow philatelists.

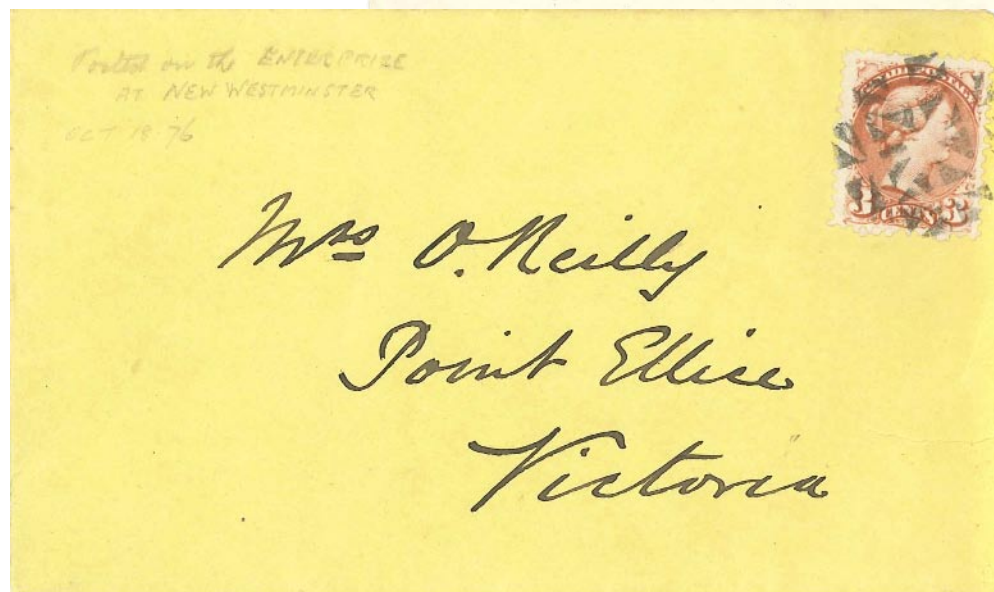
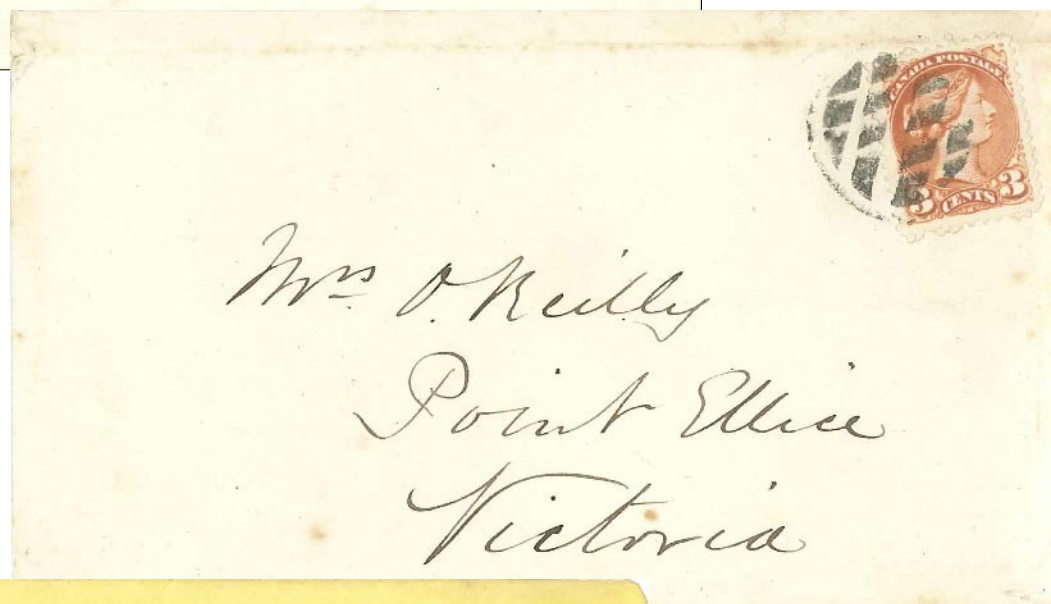
We look forward to seeing and hearing about your findings.

Victoria cork survey continued



Wellburn V.13
JUL 15/76 3-cent
domestic letter rate,
"unclaimed," and
forwarded to the
DLO in Ottawa. By
1876 the PO Dept
had sent out instruc-
tions that unclaimed
letters were no lon-
ger to be advertised
in local newspapers.
Cork in use June-
July 1876.

Wellburn V.14
3-cent domestic
letter (not a drop
letter). AU 12/76
Victoria backstamp.
Cork in use Aug-
Sept 1876.

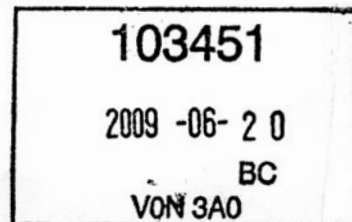
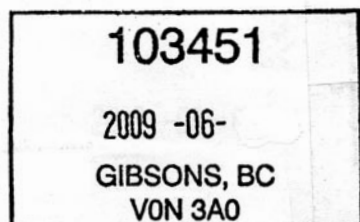


Wellburn V.15
According to famed
BC philatelist Gerry
Wellburn, this cover
was posted on the
steamer Enterprise at
New Westminster but
cancelled in Victoria,
as indicated by the OC
18/76 backstamp. Fancy
cork in use Oct 1876.

Wellburn had access to the entire O'Reilly correspondence and persuaded the family to part with the envelopes but not the contents (which now reside at BC Archives or Point Ellice House).

Recent post office update from Sechelt

Changes are afoot in Sechelt, the editor's own backyard. For many years now the town has had a retail postal outlet as well as the main corporate post office. Indeed, there were two retail outlets at one time, #1 and #2 (655325 and 656623); #1 operated from 1989 to 1998, #2 from 1990 to 2009. #2 was located at Clayton's Heritage Market in the Trail Bay Centre mall. In 2009, Shoppers Drug Mart moved into the mall and took over the retail outlet. The office number changed to 103451.



The outlet's first datestamp read Gibsons instead of Sechelt; strikes have only been seen on one day, June 1, 2009. "Gibsons" was quickly excised and the marking continued in use for another two months. Next came a large, circular "wing" datestamp, which only saw use in July 2009, as staff found it difficult to wield and requested a different type. Eventually a datestamp in a traditional, rectangular "wing" style appeared and remained in regular use until January 2015, when Shoppers was replaced with a Rexall Drugstore outlet (and a new number, 104931). Interestingly, the outlet also seems to have been renamed. It is now the Trail Bay post office. The town name of Sechelt no longer appears.

