

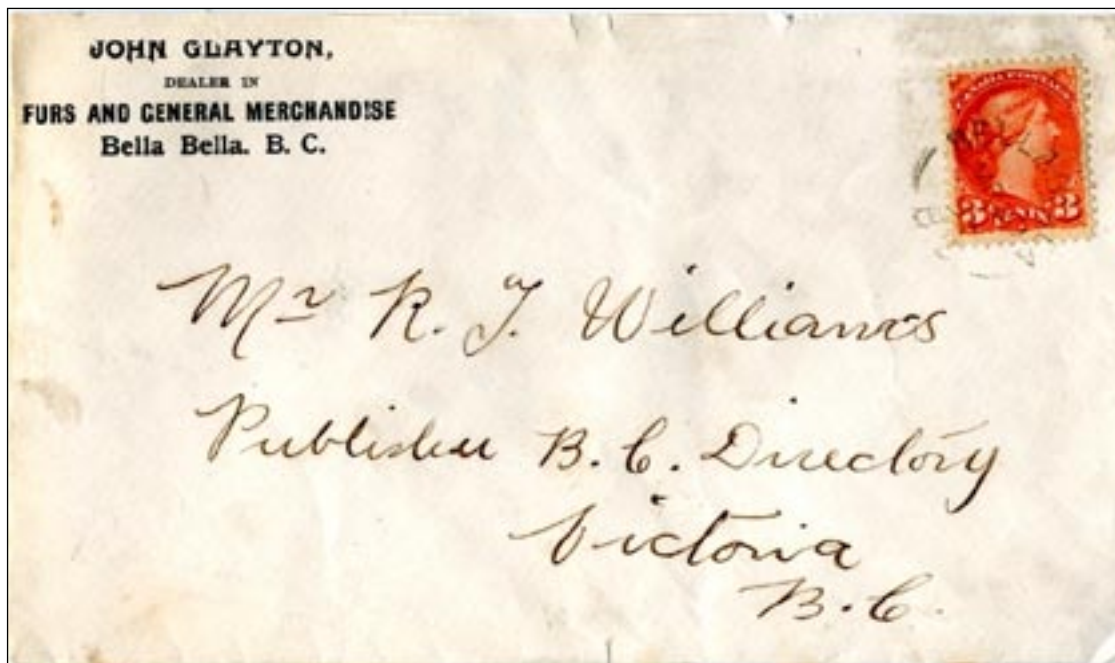


# BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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June 2018



*Three-cent letter rate from Bella Bella to Victoria, dated March 20, 1897. No backstamps. Ex-Wellburn.*

This 1897 merchant cover was mailed from the small indigenous community of Bella Bella on BC's remote central coast. Correspondence to the addressee—R J Williams, publisher of the *BC Directory*—is an important source of scarce BC postal markings.

John Clayton (1842-1910), originally from Leicester, England, came to the BC coast in 1873 and found employment with the Hudson's Bay Co, first at Bella Coola (1874-77) and then at Fort McLoughlin, just south of Bella Bella (1878-82). Chief Factor William Charles described him as "a good occupant, though uncertain, never knows how long he wants to remain, steady and sober."

Clayton, it turns out, remained for many years. In 1882, he bought both posts from the HBC, as well as considerable property, and operated them

independently. He and Tom Draney built the first salmon cannery in the Bella Coola area in 1900. Clayton's wife, Elizabeth Orten (1861-1941), whom he married in 1890, ran the Bella Coola store after his death at San Diego. (He'd travelled there with his son, seeking relief from respiratory ailments.) Well-known storyteller Clayton Mack was the grandson of John Clayton and Q'uit, the Nuxalk First Nation woman the trader had lived with before his marriage to Orten.

Do you have an interesting piece of BC postal history you'd like to see featured on the cover of the newsletter? It doesn't have to be rare or valuable, or in pristine condition, and it can be from any era. If so, let us know (email addresses on page 2), and we'll make the necessary arrangements. —Andrew Scott

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## Spring Schuyler Rumsey

Schuyler Rumsey has for many years been the official auctioneer at WESTPEX, the major philatelic exhibition held each Spring at San Francisco. Western express mail is often featured at Schuyler Rumsey auctions, and colonial-era express covers to and from British Columbia frequently find their way into these sales. 2018 was no exception. Some fine BC material was auctioned off this year, both in the general



WESTPEX sale (held April 26-29) and in the George Kramer sale of western trails and routes (April 27).

The WESTPEX sale had 77 BC stamp and cover lots (#103-42, #1257-95). A fine 24c rate cover from Victoria to the UK, franked with US stamps, went as low as \$250 (all results in US\$, 15% buyer's premium not included). An 1869 manuscript-cancelled cover from Soda Creek to Ontario, with a BC 3d blue strip of four and 10c US stamp, sold for \$550.

The sale had interesting Barnard's and Wells Fargo items, including a cover to Barkerville with a Lillooet straightline handstamp (\$1,900). A Ballou's Fraser River Express cover (shown at right) sold for \$1,800.

The Kramer sale had only 11 BC lots (#3389-99), but they were all heavy hitters. An 1867 Williams Creek cover to Canada West, with 5c and 10c Vancouver Island stamps, realized \$3,750. A double-weight New Westminster cover to Canada West brought \$6,000. A

rare Wheeler's/Barnard's combination cover went for \$9,000. A Freeman express cover realized \$4,000.

Other outstanding items included a three-colour 1862 15c franking to Toronto (shown at left, \$1600); an 1864 10c Wells Fargo cover from Victoria to England with two additional 10c US stamps (\$2,800); an 1865 1s cover from Melbourne, Australia, to Victoria (\$750); and a Barnard's Cariboo Express Paid label on an 1864 Wells Fargo paste-up to Canada West (\$9,000).



## Subscription renewal time

Print subscriptions are now due, at the annual rate of \$15, in Canadian funds for addresses in Canada, and in US funds for addresses south of the border. Please send cheques to the editor at the address below. Please keep in mind that emailed digital subscriptions continue to be **free**. (You can, of course, have both types of subscriptions.)

If you decide to shift to the digital edition, please make sure we have your email address. You can also download the newsletter from our file-sharing site (see below). We will honour paid 2017 print subscriptions through this issue and the next. If we have not received your renewal by then, we will shift your subscription to digital (if we have your email address).

Finally, we are happy to accept donations (and we thank those who donated last year).

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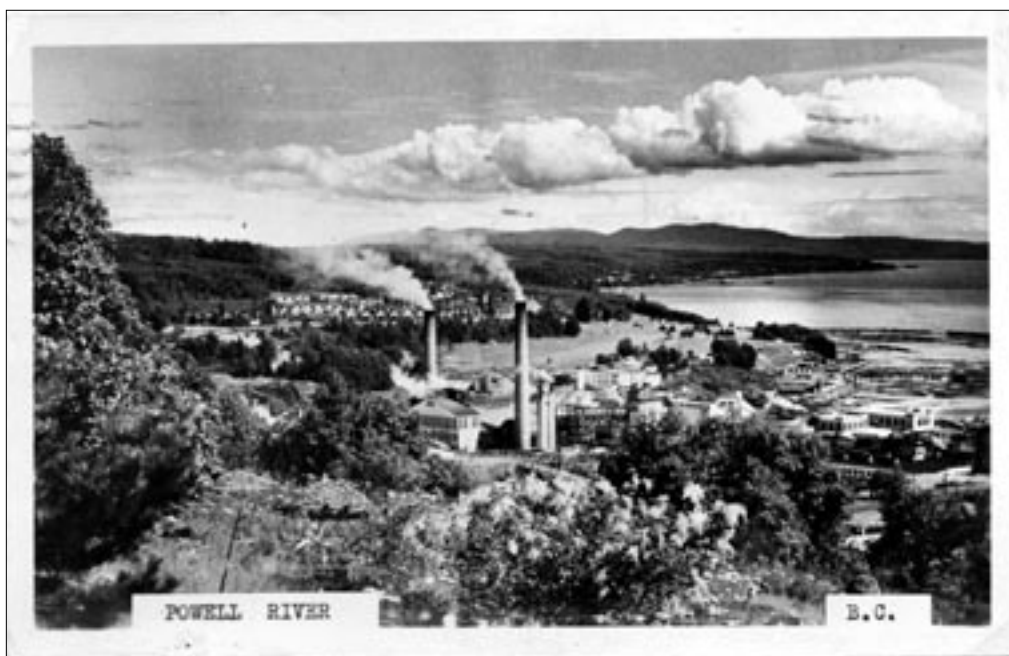
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# Postal history of the Powell River region: Part 1

*by Morris Beattie*

A review of the philatelic literature reveals that the Powell River region of British Columbia has been neglected in terms of its postal history and postal markings. For the purpose of this discussion the region includes the coastal area of the mainland from Theodosia Arm in the north to Jervis Inlet in the south, and an offshore area consisting of several islands, dominated by Texada and including Lasqueti and Savary. The overall study is quite comprehensive in scope and will be broken into a series of sections, as follows:

1. The history of the Powell River region and its post offices. A summary of the type A, B, C, D and M cancels of the main Powell River office from 1910 to the 1990s.
2. Other main post office markings: type G, MOON, POCON, registration, roller.
3. Main office miscellaneous markings: Klussendorf, meters, slogans. Way mail and ship markings.
4. Sub post offices: Westview (Sub 1), Cranberry Lake (Sub 3), Wildwood Heights (Sub 4), other subs (2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).
5. Other post offices in the region (Lang Bay, Gillies Bay, Blubber Bay, Bliss Landing, Lasqueti, Lund, Myrtle Point, Savary Island, Stillwater, Vananda, Froek, Foch, False Bay).



*Real photoview of mill and townsite with July 4, 1952, Powell River machine cancel on reverse.*

The history of the region's two areas differs in that Texada's early development was driven mainly by mining activity, while that of the mainland was primarily forestry-related. Economic activity in the region started on Texada Island, where iron ore was discovered at Welcome Bay in 1871, followed by gold at Van Anda in 1880. By this date, logging was taking place on the mainland at camps owned and operated by the Moodyville Sawmill Co. One camp, known as Dickenson's, was located within the present boundaries of Powell River Townsite, while the other, Dineen's, was just behind Willingdon Beach.

Over the period from 1880 until 1919 various mines were developed on Texada Island. Some had a very short operating life while others, such as Texada Iron, continued until 1977. The mining and distribution of limestone-based products from Texada Island continues to this day. Iron ore figured in political intrigue in the 19th century; Amor de Cosmos, then premier of BC, acted as agent for the sale of Texada Iron Mines in 1875 and was accused of using his office for personal gain. Over the period from 1914 to 1930, several logging operations were also active on Texada. During Prohibition, Texada was the site of a significant number of illegal stills; in more recent years marijuana has been a cash crop.



*Powell River continued*

On the mainland, J O'Brien established a logging camp in the Stillwater area in 1906 and was joined, in 1908, by Joe Scanlon and Dwight Brooks. The trio, who formed the Brooks, Scanlon and O'Brien Logging Co, recognized the region's pulp and paper potential. Timber and cheap electrical power were both needed for a successful paper-making venture, and by October 1909 the three lumbermen had managed to amalgamate rights to these resources that had previously been held by other companies. Early in 1910 the Powell River Paper Co (which became Powell River Co Ltd following a refinancing) began constructing a paper mill, and the first paper was produced in April 1912. The Powell River Co amalgamated with MacMillan Bloedel late in 1959 and subsequently operated as MacMillan Bloedel Ltd until it, in turn, was sold to Pacifica Papers Inc in 1998.



*Postcard from Bayreuth, Germany, to Dr I W Powell with Victoria receiver dated Sept 2, 1891.*

Powell Lake and Powell River were named in 1880 by Lt Cdr Vere Orlebar of HMS *Rocket* for Dr Israel Wood Powell, who in 1872 had been appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs for BC and who travelled up and down the coast during the 1880s. Powell River post office opened on Nov 1, 1910. As the table below indicates, it was not the region's first office; Lund, Froek, Stillwater and Van Anda all preceded it. Powell River quickly became the most significant office in the region, however, as shown by the revenue summary on the next page (to 1920 only).

Post Office	Location	Opening Date	Comments
Lund	Mainland	01/08/1892	
Froek	Mainland	01/08/1894	Closed 1902
Stillwater	Mainland	01/09/1905	Closed 1955
Powell River	Mainland	01/11/1910	
Olson Lake	Mainland	01/09/1914	Became Foch
Foch	Mainland	01/05/1919	Closed 1932
Bishop Landing	Mainland	01/06/1917	Became Bliss Landing
Bliss Landing	Mainland	01/04/1923	Closed 1960
Lang Bay	Mainland	15/07/1918	Closed 1955
Westview	Mainland	01/05/1927	Became Sub 1
Cranberry Lake	Mainland	01/02/1931	Became Sub 3
Wildwood Heights	Mainland	01/04/1934	Became Sub 4
Myrtle Point	Mainland	01/07/1914	Closed 1929
Van Anda	Offshore	01/06/1897	
Blubber Bay	Offshore	15/12/1911	
Gillies Bay	Offshore	15/03/1914	Closed 1931, open 1964
Lasqueti	Offshore	01/05/1911	
False Bay	Offshore	01/06/1917	Closed 1920
Savary Island	Offshore	01/03/1925	Closed 1980

*Powell River continued*

	Lund	Froek	Stillwater	Powell River	Olsen Lake	Bishop Landing	Lang Bay	Van Anda	Blubber Bay	Gillies Bay
1892	32.50									
1893	20.00									
1894	30.00	23.80								
1895	26.00	37.17								
1896	55.00	44.07								
1897	44.06	41.74						176.21		
1898	59.35	19.00						332.58		
1899	33.65	14.14						622.14		
1900	51.86	22.59						545.35		
1901	47.23	20.51						527.21		
1902	134.56	3.64						557.10		
1903	104.01							461.23		
1904	87.63							399.21		
1905	128.26							423.51		
1906	127.48							426.20		
1907	193.45							548.90		
1908	206.60							553.87		
1909	249.99		110.25					720.89		
1910	313.94		226.45	774.60				787.32		
1911	303.95		320.48	2055.23				843.17	27.50	
1912	376.87		294.30	2204.21				726.57	55.00	
1913	324.35		203.50	2875.70				721.45	102.92	
1914	339.05		140.27	2458.86	17.50			712.74	94.81	29.80
1915	570.05		134.65	4252.67	30.50			939.72	107.32	35.20
1916	563.54		371.53	5228.52	19.25			975.96	135.20	29.00
1917	555.36		422.54	5259.33	34.55	75.82		897.26	200.33	38.00
1918	604.96		304.28	5234.88	10.31	74.00	276.02	877.07	214.36	43.00
1919	563.90		527.00	5536.16	85.50	117.70	223.15	871.15	223.89	39.00
1920	588.74		671.85	6502.99	77.75	122.80	364.65	519.68	275.61	46.00

The original Powell River post office was apparently functioning prior to its official opening date of Nov 1, 1910. The receiving cancel on the postcard on the following page, for example, was applied on Oct 19, 1910, almost two weeks earlier (and an even earlier date is known from Oct 13). The first post office did not last long, as it was destroyed by fire in July 1911, at which time postal services were provided from a temporary location in the Gopher Club. A new Federal building was constructed by February of the following year, but the post office operated from a corner of the general store under postmaster R M Lane until January 1914. These early sites were located in the area known as the Townsite, but as the mill expanded over the decades the post office was moved to a location on Alberni Street (further south, in the district of Westview).

In 1915 R M Banham, who was to become Powell River's longest-serving postmaster, built a new post office that lasted until 1938, by which time postal activity had increased to the point where a more modern facility was warranted (also constructed by Mr Banham). This office was located in a new federal building on Second St, and its opening resulted in a half-day off school for local children, as Premier Patullo came for the unveiling. In October of 1939 the old post office building was demolished. By the 1970s more than 6.5 million pieces of mail were being handled per year, and a larger office was built at the corner of Alberni and Joyce streets, opening in October 1974. A list of postmasters is included below (to 1964 only):

Postmaster	From	Until
R J Randall	01-11-1910	29-08-1911
R M Calkins	01-01-1912	16-04-1913
R M Lane	20-05-1913	12-01-1914
R M Banham	08-02-1914	03-10-1941
W P Gardiner	05-10-1941	15-06-1945
L F Hawkes	01-09-1945	acting
H Rose	19-11-1945	16-11-1953
W A Edgar	17-11-1953	12-08-1957
I W Wishlaw	30-08-1957	1964

*Powell River continued*

In the early years there was no road to Powell River, the highway connection from Saltery Bay not being constructed until 1954 and not paved until 1958. Mail travelled to and from Powell River by boat, with a number of Union Steamship vessels visiting the area, including the *Venture*, *Lady Cynthia*, *Chelhosin* and others. Various ships' markings are known. Mail was often carried by passengers as a favour, or by the vessel as way mail, entering the postal service upon arrival in Vancouver. Canadian Pacific Railway bought the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co in 1901 and provided regular sailings to Powell River until the time of the highway completion in 1954. At first, mail delivery to Powell River was twice weekly, increasing to three times a week when the CPR vessel *Charmer* was assigned to the run. By December 1948 mail delivery was daily except Mondays.

Some mail was carried by air, with floatplanes initially landing on Powell Lake, as the full-length airstrip at Powell River was not completed until about 1954.

As their populations grew, the outlying areas of Westview, Cranberry Lake and Wildwood Heights got their own post offices. They ultimately became Powell River sub offices and will be discussed more fully in a later article.

The periods of use of the various split-ring, CDS and machine hammers (excluding slogan markings), shown in the table on the following page, are derived from examples that were available to the author of this article and to the editor. Any information that might fill in gaps or extend the known date ranges will be gratefully received. Examples of each hammer type are shown below and on the next page.



*Hammer A2. Note short, 3-mm arcs.*



*Proof strike of hammer DB1.*

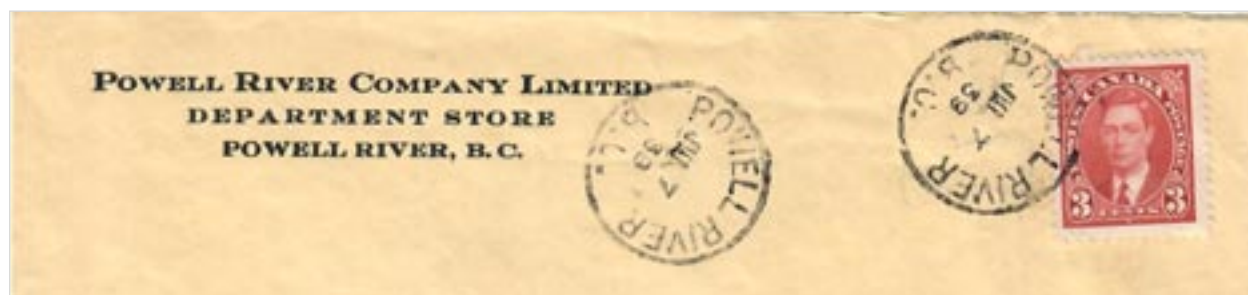


*The rare hammer DB2. See below.*

*Above left: a birthday card marked Oct 19, 1910, by Powell River's first split-ring hammer (A1). The official opening of the post office was on Nov 1, 1910, but several earlier strikes exist. Only two reports of duplex hammer DB2 are known, both from February 1940. A proof strike is dated Feb 12, 1940.*

*Powell River continued*

Hammer Type	Features	ERD	LRD	Remarks
A1	Split ring with 6-mm arcs	13/10/1910	03/03/1911	Initial hammer proofed SP 20, 1910.
A2	Split ring with 3-mm arcs	21/09/1911	20/01/1913	New after fire, proofed July 18, 1911
B1	Large letter CDS 23.5 mm diameter	14/01/1920	15/10/1964	
B2	Large letter CDS 24 mm	15/11/1939	19/04/1966	
C1	Small letter CDS, wide B.C. spacing, 23.5 mm	15/05/1958	17/09/1971	
C2	Small letter CDS, narrow B.C. spacing, 23.5 mm	16/02/1970	30/09/1987	
DB1	11-bar oval duplex, 23 mm	24/05/1912	29/10/1928	Proofed MR 23, 1912
DB2	7-bar oval duplex, 24.5 mm	22/02/1940	24/02/1940	Proofed FE 12, 1940
M1	Machine, month lines up with O&E, 22 mm	30/11/1930	21/04/1939	
M2	Machine, month lines up with W&I, 22 mm	10/08/1941	20/03/1961	
M3	Machine, close spacing of B.C., 22 mm	06/04/1961	11/06/1980	



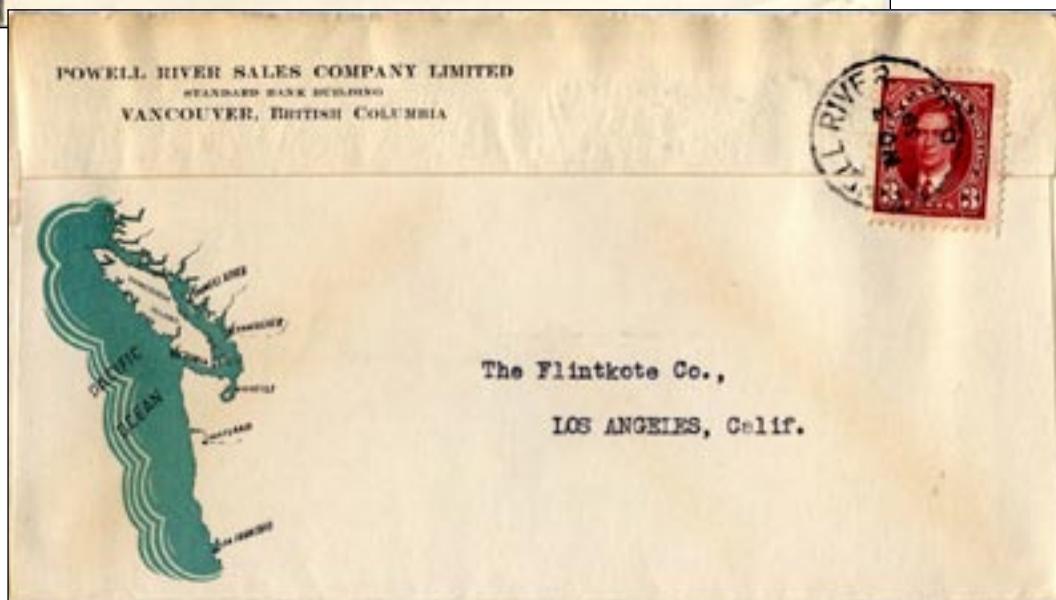
Upper row: Powell River cancel type B1 (slightly smaller in diameter than B2).  
 Middle row: Type B2 (left) and machine cancel M1 (right). M1 was used in the 1930s.  
 Lower row, from left to right: M2, M3, C1 and C2.



*Powell River continued*

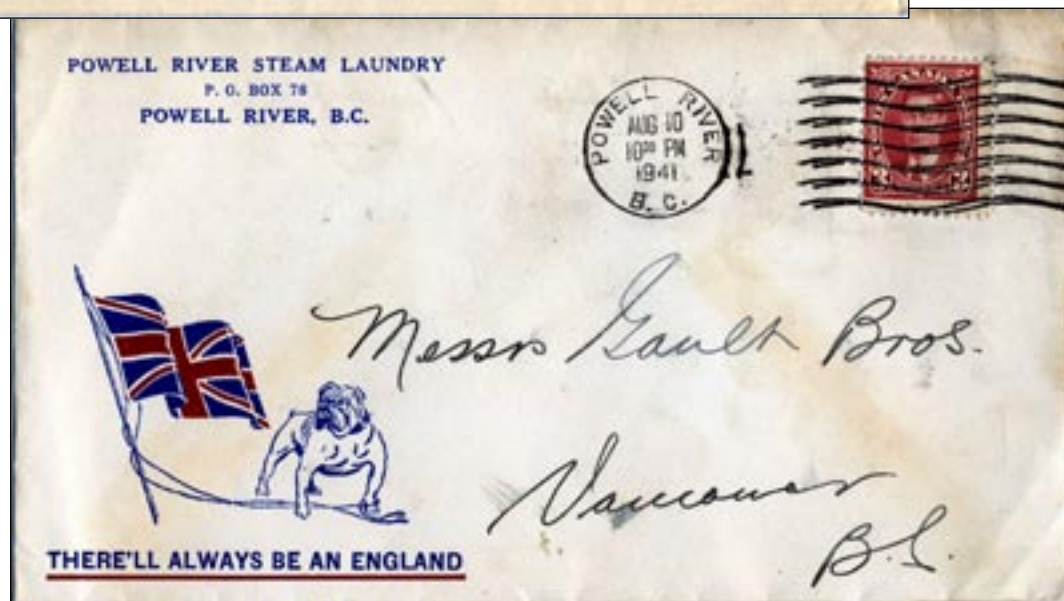
Illustrated advertising covers from Powell River from the 1920s to 1940s.

The hotel cover at left was sent from Vancouver to the New Republic, the Chinese Kuomintang newspaper in Victoria. Vancouver machine cancel dated Oct 6, 1920.



Centre: Type B1 Powell River CDS dated Nov 3, 1939, on Powell River Sales Co Ltd cover to Los Angeles. On reverse is a large image of the Powell River newsprint mills.

Right: Patriotic cover from the Powell River Steam Laundry to Vancouver, dated Aug 10, 1941, with Type M2 Powell River machine cancel.





# Senator Bostock's BC patronage appointments

by Tracy Cooper

The *Canadian Encyclopedia* defines political patronage as the dispensation of favours or rewards—such as public offices, jobs, contracts or other valued benefits—by a patron to a client. The patron is usually an elected official or someone otherwise empowered to make such grants. The relationship between patron and client is typically unequal, selective and discretionary; the patron does not generally grant favours to all potential clients, and chooses among them.

Hewitt Bostock was born on May 31, 1864, in Surrey, England, and died on April 28, 1930, at Monte Creek, BC, where he had bought the historic Monte Lake or "Ducks" Ranch. He came to Canada in 1893, and in 1894 founded *The Province* newspaper as a weekly in Victoria, then moved it to Vancouver as a daily in 1898. In 1896 Bostock was elected to represent Yale-Cariboo in the House of Commons under Wilfred Laurier, and in 1904 he was appointed to the Senate, becoming Liberal Senate leader in 1914 (and speaker in 1922). He broke with Laurier in 1917 over the World War I conscription crisis and joined Robert Borden's Union government. After WWI he changed parties again, rejoining the Liberals, and in 1921 became Minister of Public Works in the first cabinet of Mackenzie King.

Political patronage in the Post Office Department was the norm in Canada, and one of the roles of a senator was to recommend "appointments" to the postmaster general for various postmaster positions and mail contracts. I was fortunate enough to come into possession of a copy of Senator Bostock's record of such appointments for the years 1909 to 1911. Noted below and on the following page are a few examples from his appointment book.:

## BONAPARTE NORTH PO

Sept #42140

Dismissal of T D Pressey guilty of forgery, his son in law McGregor guilty of witnessing falsely. Andrew T Whitely recommended by petition. Dept: written to 30 March 1910 to appoint Whitely in place of Pressey. Confirmed 31st March 1910.

Form 13.

11-0109-402401

FREIGHT ADVICE. CUSTOMS REPORT No. \_\_\_\_\_

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COM NY.

Pro. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Station \_\_\_\_\_ 190

The following described property has arrived at this station consigned to you in  
You will please remove goods without delay as the  
same remain here entirely at Owner's risk (from  
any cause whatever) and expense.

Car No. \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_  
From \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION AND ARTICLES.	Weight.	Rate.	Advance Charges.	Total.
7 Pcs malse.	440	NORTH B.C.		8.87

If not removed within time limited by Car Service Rules, or Warehouse storage Rules, charges will be assessed at current tariff rates, and such charges together with freight charges, shall be a lien on the property. Bill of lading or shipping receipt issued at point of shipment must also be surrendered. When to order, bill of lading must be endorsed.

Consignee. \_\_\_\_\_ Agent. \_\_\_\_\_

A CPR customer freight advice from Winnipeg, dated Dec 12, 1909, at North Bonaparte (a small community located in British Columbia's Cariboo region).

*Senator Bostock continued*

### 70 Mile House

Mrs Mary Boyd resigns. James D Boyd (Conservative) recommended 5 June. James Murphy (approves) as there is no one else. Confirmed by Dept 10 June 1911.

### Edgewood and Steamer Wharf Mail Contract

W J Banting present contractor 52.00 per annum. Renewal recommended 15<sup>th</sup> April 1910. From 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 1910, confirmed for 4 years 18<sup>th</sup> April 1910.

Senator Bostock's ledger makes fascinating reading. If readers are interested in this sort of research material, let us know and we will publish the appointment book as a supplement to a future newsletter.



Left: One-cent Edward paying the postcard rate from 70 Mile House (also in the Cariboo) to Washington state, dated December 1909.

Below: Five-cent Edward paying UPU rate from Edgewood to Holland, dated Jan 14, 1911. Edgewood was located on Lower Arrow Lake in the Columbia region.



Hewitt Bostock (1864-1930)





# Joe Crosson: mercy pilot of the high Arctic

by Glenna Metchette

Pilot Joe Crosson was a hero of the Arctic airways. His tiny planes winged above the north countless times on rescue missions and in search of lost comrades. Crosson flew more mercy flights in the Alaskan twilight than any other pilot. When Point Barrow was ravaged with disease, it was Crosson who flew diphtheria serum through an Arctic blizzard to the suffering people. In 1926, Roald Amundsen and his crew flew the dirigible *Norge*, successfully crossing the North Pole, but when ice built up on the propellers, jagged shards tore the ship's outer skin and nearly punctured the volatile gas bags. At the mercy of stiff Arctic winds, they were forced to land at Teller, Alaska, surprising a few Inuit reindeer herders. The world demanded images of this first transpolar crossing. Crosson was hired to fly in a photographer above the Arctic Circle and fly out the film. In 1932, when members of an ill-fated scientific expedition were stranded on the sharp sides of Mt McKinley, Crosson landed halfway up a glacier and rescued them.

On August 15, 1935, a plane flown by Wiley Post with Will Rogers as passenger crashed just after take-off near Point Barrow, Alaska. Wiley Post (1898-1935) was the first pilot to fly solo around the world. Will Rogers (1879-1935) was a Cherokee cowboy, world-famous comedian, humorist, social commentator, vaudeville performer and actor. Both were killed instantly. Charles Lindbergh wired Crosson in Fairbanks, asking him to fly to Barrow, the most northerly community in the world, retrieve the bodies and take them to Seattle. Pacific Alaska Airways prepared a Lockheed Electra plane, and Joe Crosson, co-pilot Bill Knox and radio officer Bob Gleason climbed in and left on the long flights.



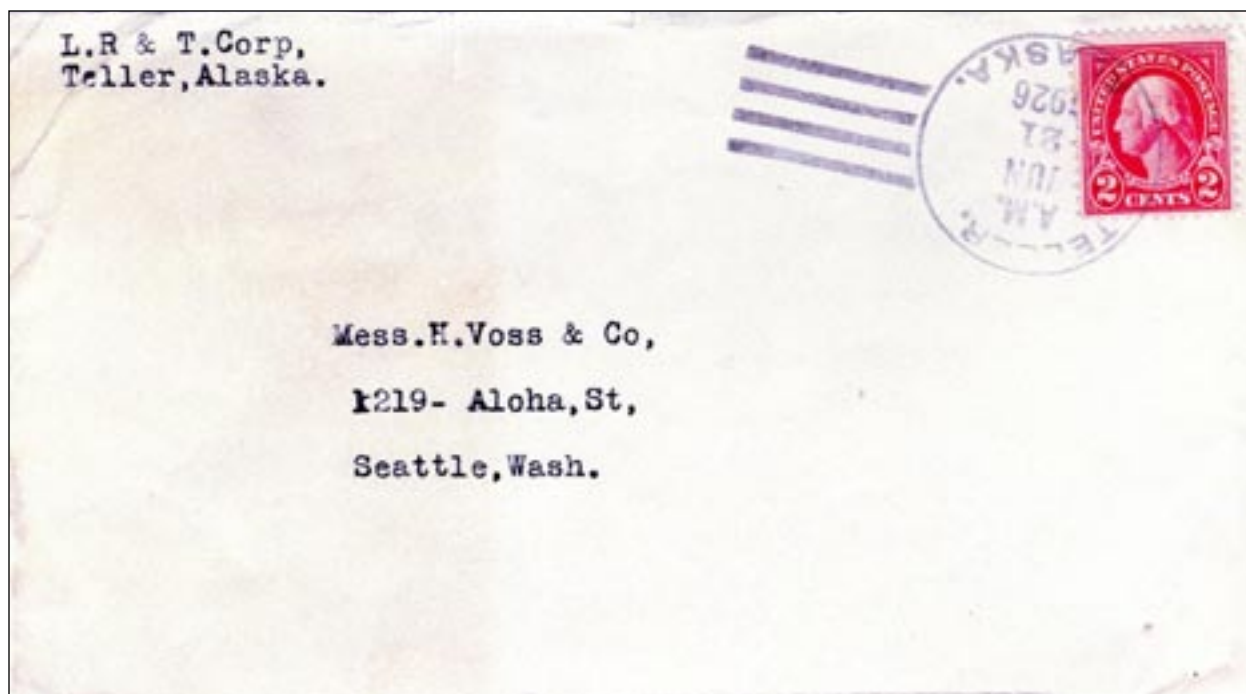
*A six-cent airmail rate cover made up to commemorate the landing at Vancouver, BC, of the Crosson funeral plane. The plane arrived on Aug 18, 1935. The cover, however, was mailed on Nov 4, 1935, at Vancouver.*

Nearing Prince George, BC, they received a transmission from their boss, the owner of Pan American Airways, parent company of Pacific Alaska Airways, saying they were to land in Vancouver instead. Crosson flew the funeral plane 2,375 km (1,475 mi) from Alaska to Vancouver in one day. Gleaming on the tarmac sat a shiny DC-2, with Pan American painted in large, bright-red letters on its side. Slowly Crosson realized their boss wanted his new plane in the newsreel photos. Crosson was deeply troubled by the publicity stunt.

Vancouver dignitaries paid tribute to America's illustrious dead in a quiet ceremony at the Sea Island Airport. Afterwards, Joe Crosson, personal friend of both Rogers and Post, took off for Seattle. There the



*Joe Crosson flight continued*



*Top: Two-cent cover from Teller, Alaska, where Crosson flew in 1926 to photograph the forced Amundsen dirigible landing. Above: Aug 15, 1938, cover commemorating the Will Rogers-Wiley Post Memorial Expedition.*

bodies were transferred to the newly painted DC-2 in front of a crowd of 25,000. Another crew then flew them to Burbank, California, where Will Rogers' funeral was held. The plane continued on to Oklahoma, where Wiley Post was buried.

The USA entered a state of mourning rarely seen outside of the deaths of presidents. Twelve thousand motion picture screens went dark for two minutes in tribute. Newspaper editorials called on President Roosevelt to declare a national holiday and day of mourning. Hollywood studios attempted to ban their actors from flying.

*Joe Crosson flight continued*

Fourteen years later, in Seattle, a cloud of gloom descended over the Crosson home. Joe Crosson was gone. On the morning of June 21, 1949, Joe had kissed his wife Lillian goodbye and headed to the office—not to some unknown region of the Arctic. Although only 46 years old, he had suffered a massive heart attack, leaving three sons and a daughter for Lillian to raise. Joe Crosson was born in Kansas, raised in Colorado, learned to fly in California and died in Seattle, but his life had been in Alaska, where aviation had such a huge impact. Crosson was a true Alaska pioneer, but not of the pick-and-shovel mining variety. His tools were propellers and wings, and he played a big part in linking Alaska to the rest of the United States and the world.

**Sources:**

National Air & Space Museum. "Remembering Wiley Post and Will Rogers." <http://blog.nasm.si.edu/aviation/remembering-wiley-post-and-will-rogers/> Accessed March 15, 2016.

Tordoff, Dirk. *Mercy Pilot: The Joe Crosson Story*. Alaska: Epicenter Press, 2002.

*Vancouver Daily Province*, August 19, 1935.



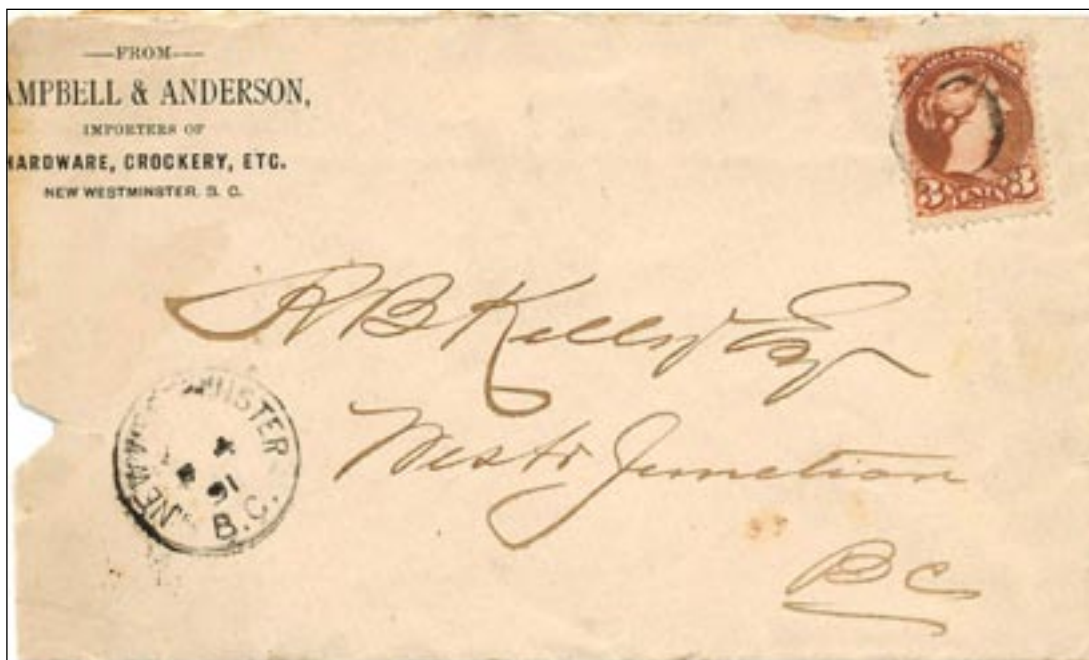
*Joe Crosson, circa January 1930. Courtesy Davis-Monthan Aviation Field Register.*

## Early mail to Coquitlam

In 1886 the Canadian Pacific Railway built a 14-km (9 mi) branch line to New Westminster from a point seven km (4.5 mi) miles east of Port Moody.

Seven years later, Jacob Rowland, the CPR agent, became postmaster.

This cover was mailed in New Westminster to the postmaster, "R B Kelly Esq, West Junction, BC," on Saturday, April 4, 1891 (the New Westminster month indicium is simply a "P").



This point was known as Westminster Junction, but the post office that opened there on March 1, 1891, was called Coquitlam. Robert B Kelly, proprietor of a hotel at the Junction, was the first postmaster.

The receiving date at Coquitlam is AP 1/4 (an error for AP 4, 1891). The proof date for this Coquitlam hammer is March 25, 1891—only **nine days** before this early use!—Gray Scrimgeour

# Knapp Island: an unusual destination

*by Brian Copeland*

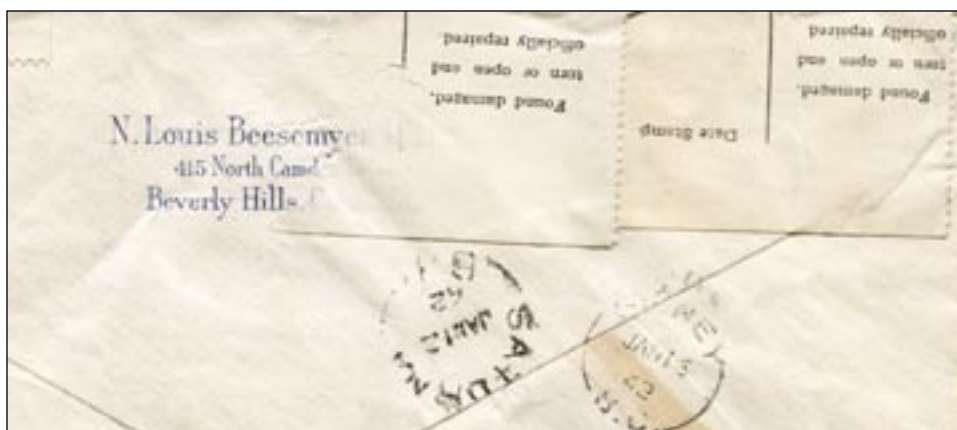


Here is a cover from N Louis Beesemyer (a dentist, whose clients included Mae West), sent from Beverly Hills, California, on Jan 10, 1942, to Colonel and Mrs Harv[e]y on "Col Harv[e]y's Island," c/o Caretaker of Saturna Isl PO, Victoria, BC. It reached Saturna Island on Jan 12, 1942 (see cover reverse on next page). The Saturna postmaster opened the envelope and figured out that Col Harvey's Island was Knapp Island, just north of Swartz Bay. He forwarded it to "Knap Island, Sidney," where it was received on Jan 15.



Left: James Swan Harvey and Mabel Agnes Gaudin Harvey with their children (BC Archives B-09778). Above: aerial photo of Knapp Island, in the foreground, with Pym Island in the distance.



*Knapp Island continued*

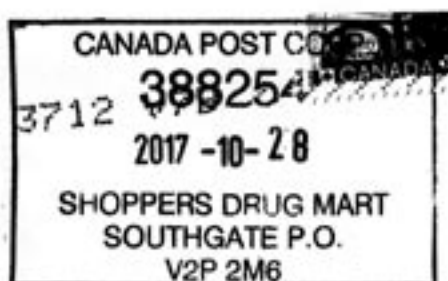
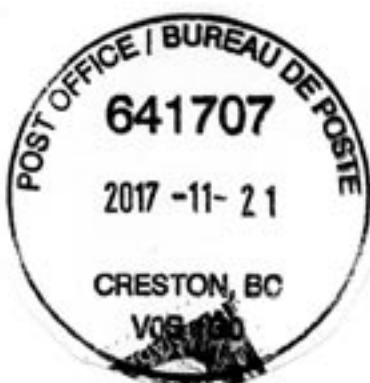
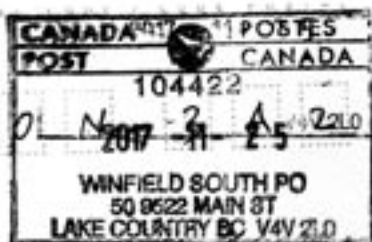
*Above: reverse side of envelope. Left: satellite view of Knapp Island (right), Piers Island (upper left) and the Swartz Bay BC Ferries terminal (bottom).*

Lt-Col James Swan Harvey (1872-1932) bought Knapp Island in 1912 and built a house there. His father was a Nanaimo merchant, also named James Harvey. His mother was Agnes Dunsmuir, second daughter of Robert Dunsmuir, the wealthy coal baron and politician. (Agnes's brother, James Dunsmuir, became a BC premier and lieutenant governor.) James Swan Harvey married Mabel Agnes Gaudin (1875-1945) in Victoria in 1899. He had died by the time this cover was sent. Someone crossed out "Col and" from the address, leaving Mrs Harvey as the addressee. After reaching Sidney, the cover was forwarded again on Jan 16 to 2469 Hazel St in Oak Bay, Victoria, where Mrs Harvey was probably living. After her death, Knapp Island was purchased by Victor Fleming, the legendary film director and producer, whose films included *Red Dust*, *Wizard of Oz* and *Gone with the Wind*.

*Editor's note:* a few more details that may be of interest. James Swan Harvey's original purchase in the area was Piers Island, next door to Knapp (but much larger). He and his family settled there in 1909 before moving to Knapp. Piers was expropriated by the federal government in 1932 as a prison camp for 570 Doukhobor men and women convicted of an unusual form of civil disobedience: public nudity. Most of the prisoners had been released by 1935, and ownership of the island reverted back to the Harveys. It was later sold and subdivided into about 130 waterfront lots, with the central portion reserved as parkland.

Knapp Island, named by British coastal surveyors after a popular Royal Navy instructor, was originally settled by Joseph Quadros, a native of the Azores, in 1889. Other owners have included Texas multi-millionaire Guy Waggoner, who built a luxurious home and small but active boatyard there. Entrepreneur Andrew Evans and his wife, Ann, a Shinto priestess, purchased the property in 1995 and constructed a shrine and elaborate dojo (practice space for martial arts) on the island.

## More recent BC post office cancellations



Note the "Cheftan" postmark (bottom row, centre) with not one but two spelling errors. Should be "Chieftain."