



# BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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Whole number 110

June 2019



This issue's "favourite cover" was the most unusual item received by the editor in a package from former study group member Jim White, shortly before his death in August 2018. The front of the roughly opened envelope is normal enough: domestic rate (2 cents per ounce plus 1 cent war tax) from Mount Tolmie (on Vancouver Island north of Victoria) to Percy Barraclough, care of the geodetic survey at Jasper, dated July 8, 1922. However, it's the reverse (shown at reduced size) that holds our interest.

"Your letter," it says, "dropped from aeroplane at

Terrace Camp, Moose River, BC. Elevation 6,000'." Another note, in orange crayon and a different hand, seems to have been scrawled by someone in the plane. It reads: "Writing from the machine—splendid day—went right through to Kitchi R." ("Kitchi" is unclear; could this be an abbreviation?) Jim White guessed that the envelope "was flown privately from Jasper and dropped to recipient from the air, probably with other items, supplies, etc."

The cover certainly brings new meaning to the concept of airmail delivery!

## In this issue:

- |                                      |        |                                      |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| • Favourite cover: out of the blue   | p 1123 | • Musher Clyde "Slim" Williams       | p 1130 |
| • Notes from all over                | p 1124 | • "Service Suspended" mail to Norway | p 1133 |
| • Wellburn's Fraser River collection | p 1125 | • Powell River postmarks, Part 3     | p 1135 |
|                                      |        | • Henry Hunter and Hunterville       | p 1138 |

## From our readers

Canadian Stamp News columnist **Everett Parker** has again given the *BC Postal History Newsletter* an enthusiastic review (Vol 43, March 5, 2019, page 8). Parker focused on issue #108 (December 2018). He had particular praise for Tracy Cooper's article on early Saltspring Island mail from the US, and also for Glenna Metchette's story about Mary Josephine Cornwall and Ashcroft Manor.



The item above, submitted by **Gene Labiuk**, provides an inauguration date for Prince Rupert GTP mail. Gene found the piece in the Nov 5, 1914, issue of the *Niagara Falls Evening Review*.

Earlier this year study group member **Greg Nesteroff** came across a note in the Aug 19, 1935, issue of the *Nelson Daily News*, stating that a post office and a large boarding house were to be built at the mining community of Tye, located on the west side of the south arm of Kootenay Lake. Bill Swayne

had been appointed postmaster.

Greg wondered if any of us at the newsletter had heard of a Tye post office? We had not, and Tye was not listed in any of the standard reference books.

The mystery was soon solved, however. Greg discovered that the correct spelling of Bill's name was Swain, and that he was the first postmaster of the Bayonne post office, located at the Bayonne gold mine. Swain was also the mining camp cook. Bayonne post office was open from 1935 to 1944, then again from 1946 to 1956.

The confusion probably arose because the mine was served by a nearby rail station named Tye. In 1930 the CPR completed a line along the southwest shore of Kootenay Lake, connecting Kootenay Landing and Procter. A small building, water tank and 53-car siding were constructed near the mouth of Cultus Creek, and the stopping place was named after William Francis Tye, a construction engineer for the Columbia & Western Railway and, from 1904 to 1906, chief engineer of the CPR.

## Subscription renewal time

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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 2018 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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Dues are payable to the editor: Andrew Scott  
5143 Radcliffe Rd, Sechelt, BC, Canada V0N 3A2

Editor: Andrew Scott  
email: [andrewscott@dccnet.com](mailto:andrewscott@dccnet.com)

Associate Editor: Tracy Cooper  
email: [tracycooper100@shaw.ca](mailto:tracycooper100@shaw.ca)

Study Group Chair: Tim Woodland  
email: [twoodland@telus.net](mailto:twoodland@telus.net)

Newsletter submissions may be sent to the editors at the addresses above.

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.htm](http://www.bnaps.org/hhl/n-bcr.htm); for later numbers, visit [https://spideroak.com/browse/share/Andrew\\_Scott/Backissues](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 1.5 Mb/issue.

# Wellburn's colonial BC Fraser River collection

by Andrew Scott

In our last issue (No 109) we published a brief note to bring attention to the significant historical ephemera that Brian Grant Duff has been auctioning, week-by-week and page-by-page, at Vancouver's All Nations Stamp and Coin ([allnationstampandcoin.com](http://allnationstampandcoin.com)). The 45-page British Columbia collection is the last, according to Brian, of the late Gerald Wellburn's exhibits, and focuses mostly on the early colonial history of the Fraser River, including, of course, the gold rush.



Figure 1 (top): March 1864 folded letter from Victoria (oval PAID frank) to Four Mile House, Douglas Portage, re gold-mining on the Bonaparte River. Figure 2 (below): hand-coloured 1860 Royal Engineers map of Fort Hope.

For me, all Wellburn's collections reveal an eclectic taste and artistic sensibility. His main interest was postal history, of course, and some extraordinary covers have been or will be offered. But it's the letters and unusual miscellaneous documents that really fascinate me: the 1858 Australian shipping poster announcing



*Fraser River continued*

passage to BC's goldfields; the hand-coloured 1860 Royal Engineers map laying out the new community of Fort Hope (see figure 2); the note to James Murray Yale, Hudson's Bay Company chief factor at Fort Langley, dated 1830, only three years after the establishment of that remote outpost. There are statements of account and bills of exchange, deeds of land (approved by Gov James Douglas himself), early newspaper clippings, and receipts for forwarding packages by express.



Figure 3 (top): 1863 OHMS cover to Col Moody, franked Field Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, War Office.

Figure 4 (below): February 1865 cover from San Francisco to Vancouvers Island, rated "DUE 7."

Why are these old scraps of paper so intriguing? In colonial times, most people, surely, would have assigned them to the nearest garbage can. The philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin considered that old texts and treasured historical objects possessed a kind of aura, "a strange weave of space and time," that could illuminate or interpret some aspect of the world they came from. Those who study such documents are doubly blessed: they have access not only to the physical objects themselves but also to the stories these objects carry with them.

*Fraser River continued*

Consider the 1859 letter sent to the magistrate at Port Douglas, which reads, in part, "An Indian informed us a man had been killed on the trail. We found the person dead and the body badly bitten. We found tracks of three Bares where they had twice attacked him. We Burried the Body near where it was found. We thought it a duty as a British subject to advise you." The letter was sent from Port Pemberton, a short-lived way station on the Douglas Trail, itself a short-lived route to the gold diggings on the upper Fraser, soon to be made



Figure 5 (top): June 1, 1862, from Omagh, Ireland, to Peter O'Reilly, justice of the peace and gold commissioner (J.P. & G.C.) at Fort Hope, "Via Southampton & Panama." 1s 3d postage paid. Red crayon 4s marking. \$1.50 rating probably express charge. Figure 6 (below): Nov 1, 1861, "Officer's Letter" to Capt Luard, New Westminster, from Bath, "Via St Thomas & Panama." 1s 10d postage paid. London (Nov 2) and SF (Jan 4) transits.

obsolete by the completion of the Cariboo Road. This may be the only existing piece of mail to originate at Port Pemberton, which makes the letter scarce enough, but the story carried with it certainly enhances the document's "aura."

The items in this collection are mostly incoming, thus there are no precious BC stamps on them (though plenty of British, German and US ones). And, strangely, there is nothing to Fort Yale (named after the aforementioned James Murray Yale) at the head of navigation on the Fraser. But the addressees read like a



*Fraser River continued*

Who's Who of colonial BC society; historical figures abound. There are covers to John Boyd of Cottonwood House; Capt Henry Luard (figure 6) and Col Richard Moody (figure 3) of the Royal Engineers; Robert Williams c/o Hibben & Co, Victoria's pioneer bookseller and stationer; and colonial officials Francis Claudet (superintendent of the assay office), Capt William Gosset (Vancouver Island postmaster-general), Peter O'Reilly (BC gold and Indian reserve commissioner, figures 5 and 7) and H P P Crease (BC attorney general).

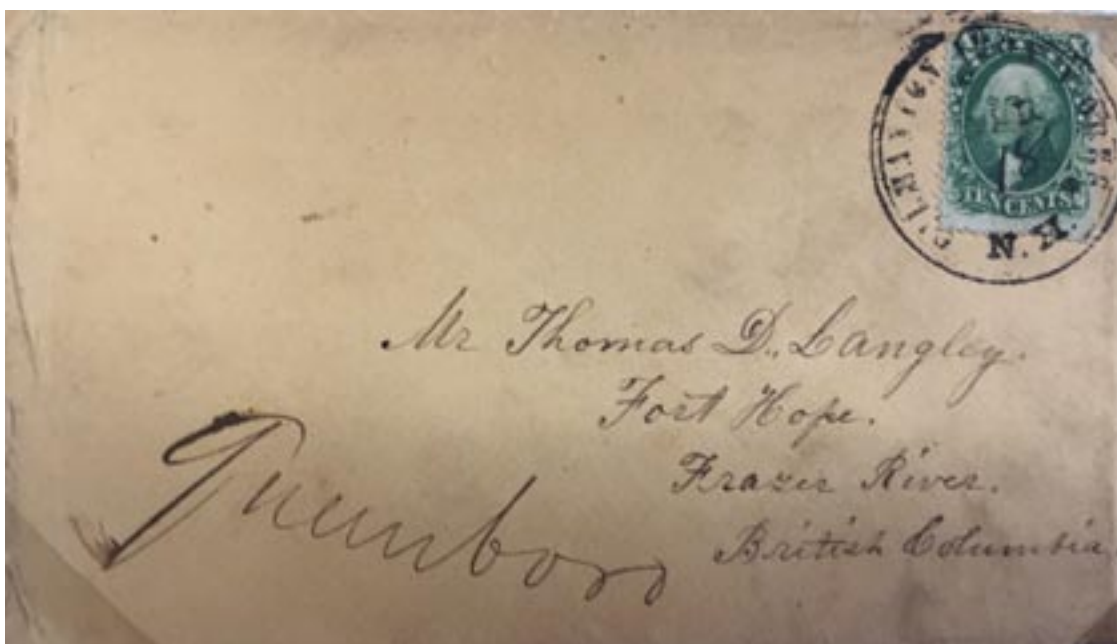
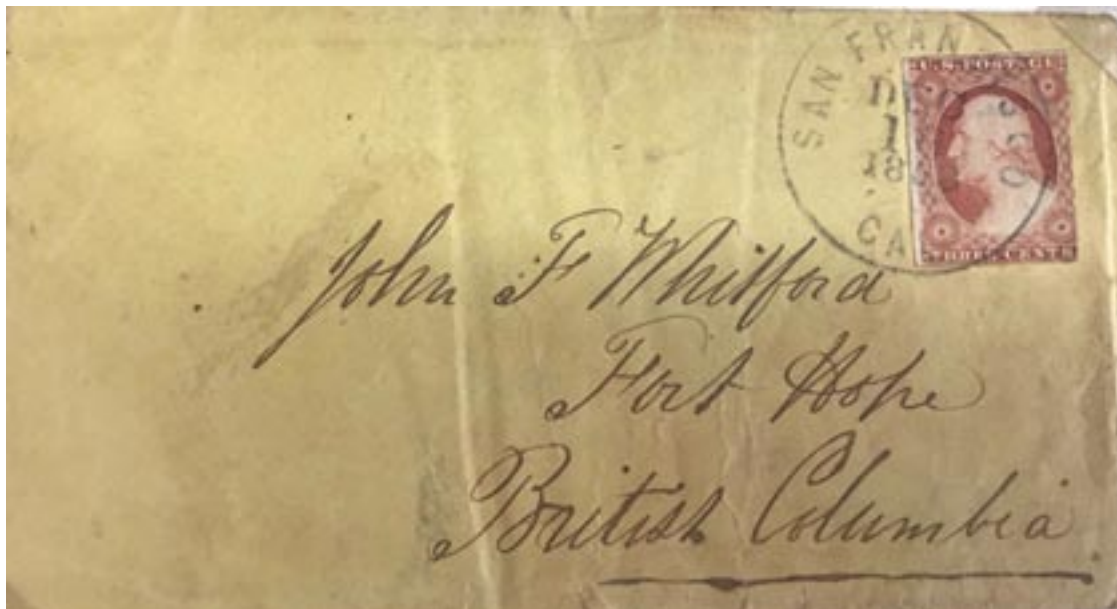


Figure 7 (top): Walla Walla, Washington Territory, to New Westminster, November 1867. Sent "Politeness of Mr Lean," ie by private hand to Walla Walla? Eleven cents postage (one cent overpaid). Figure 8 (below): March 1863 cover from Beverstedt, kingdom of Hanover, to Fort Hope, "by Overland Mail." April 11 New York transit.

Some of the covers are addressed to places I've never heard of. There's one, for instance, to Mrs Hendrick at Four Mile House on the Douglas Portage (figure 1); the contents concern the discovery of gold on the Bonaparte River, a tributary of the Fraser. Another, from England, went to Four Mile House "near mouth of Quesnel," a quite different location. An 1858 cover (figure 9) from New Hampshire is addressed to Fort Hope, to Thomas Langley (a prominent Hudson's Bay Co director after whom the municipality of Langley

*Colonial Nanaimo continued*

is named); the word "Queensboro," an early name for New Westminster, is scrawled across it. An item dated July 1857 (a gold rush precursor?) travelled from "Parks Bar" on the Fraser to Oroville, California. And there are incoming covers from small express companies like Alta and Reynold's that one rarely sees associated with BC, plus two rare Freeman & Co covers to Victoria dated 1857 and 1858.



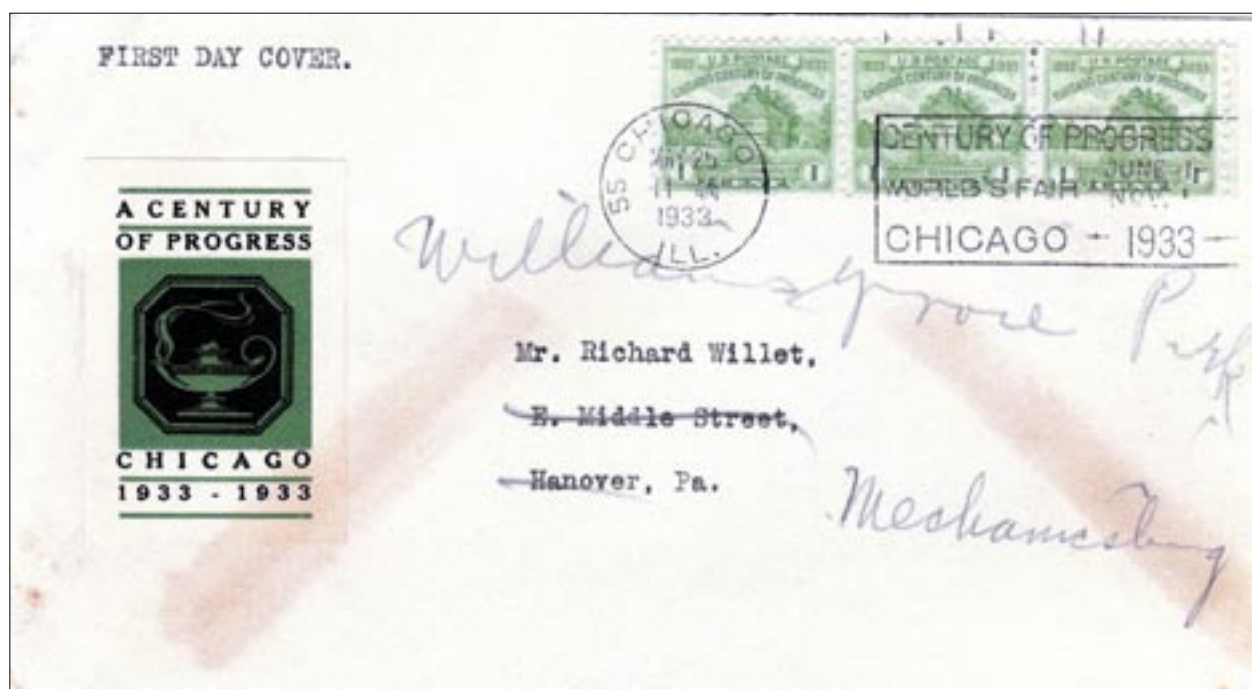
*Early covers to Fort Hope. Figure 9 (top): 1858 3c rate from western US. Figure 10 (below): 1859 10c rate from New Hampshire to Thomas Langley. Redirected to Queensboro (old name for New Westminster).*

No doubt many of these pieces will go for great prices, and eyebrows will be raised. For instance, an invoice for goods supplied to the Hudson's Bay Co at Fort Langley, dated March 1859, sold in auction #1189 for \$5,000, while a pretty, three-colour stamped cover (figure 8) from Hanover to Fort Hope, dated 1863, realized \$9,500 in auction #1202. Even Wellburn's hand-drawn title page realized \$700. But if you don't anticipate adding any items to your own collection, at least go to the All Nations website and enjoy the illustrations and commentary. And breathe a quiet thank you to the Great Collector, for saving all this "stuff." You'll never see its like again.

# Clyde “Slim” Williams—musher extraordinaire

by Glenna Metchette

Clyde “Slim” Williams arrived in Alaska in 1900 at the age of 18 and spent the next 30 years trapping and hunting, and delivering mail by dogsled. He bred wolfdogs, which were smarter than any other animal in the bush, he decided: tireless and strong, with an almost-human kind of understanding. Teams of eight to 12 dogs pulled sleds containing 200 to 300 kg (450-700 lb) of mail, which meant that each dog had a load



Top: Unused realphoto viewcard — “Slim Williams’ dog team mushing from Alaska to Chicago arrives Telkwa BC.”

Below: Chicago “Century of Progress” May 25, 1933, first-day cover forwarded to Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

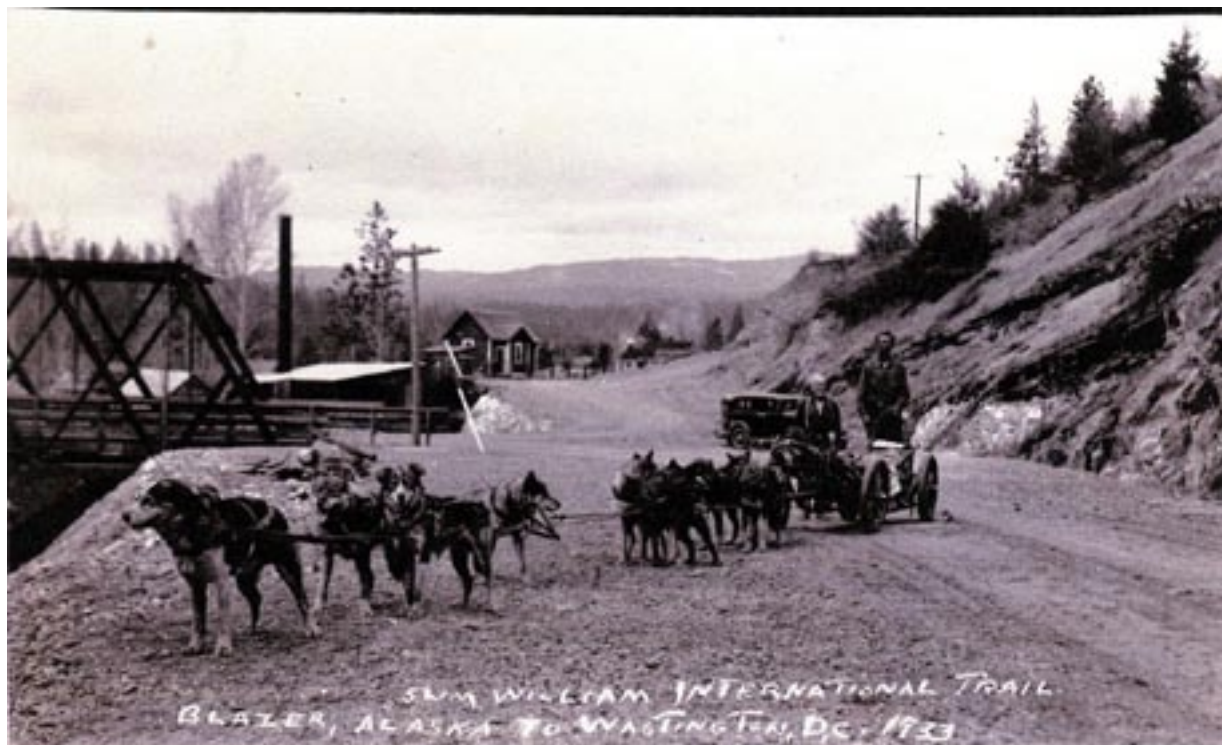
of up to 40 kg (90 lb). Mail sacks weighed 23 kg (50 lb) each. Rubber-lined waterproof bags were used to protect the mail from snow, rain and mud, and the dogs often wore moosehide moccasins to protect their feet from jagged ice.



*Slim Williams continued*

Slim boasted that he bred the best teams in Alaska, and it was this braggadocio that inspired Donald MacDonald, an Alaska road commissioner, to persuade Slim to promote the building of the Alaska Highway by travelling the proposed route by dogsled, using only crude maps, and continuing all the way to the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition, often referred to as the Chicago World's Fair.

On Nov 20, 1932, Slim started out from Copper Center, Alaska, in minus-40° weather, without a stove, tent or compass, with only the stars, the trees and the sun to guide him. He planned to live off the land. After



*Unused realphoto viewcard: "Slim William (sic) international trail blazer, Alaska to Washington, DC, 1933."*

reaching Atlin in northern BC, he entered a wilderness that would not be relieved for 900 km (550 mi). His exact route is not known, but he almost certainly followed the long since abandoned Yukon Telegraph Trail to Telegraph Creek on the Stikine River, and the Collins Overland Telegraph Trail, built in the 1800s, to reach Hazelton on the Skeena.

Hazelton was the original gateway and staging area for the Omineca gold rush of 1869-73. By 1915 it was the largest community in northwestern BC, with three hotels, a Hudson's Bay Co post, a jeweller, watchmaker, photographic shop, bank, newspaper, hospital, telegraph office and a post office that had opened May 1, 1899.

After covering 3,000 km (1,800 mi) through the wildest sections of Alaska and BC, Slim reached civilization at Hazelton on May 15, 1933. The planned three-month trip had taken twice as long. He had cooked over an open fire and slept on his sled. He had got lost more than once and suffered snow blindness. He had broken through lake ice. Tragically, one of his favourite dogs had been killed by wolves. Waiting for him was a \$50 cheque from MacDonald to help defray expenses.

The rest of the trip would be made on roads, and at night to keep the dogs cool. Spring thawing now made sledding impossible, so he mounted four Model T wheels on his dogsled and continued toward the Chicago World's Fair. By the time he reached Seattle he had become a celebrity. In Chicago Slim and his team arrived at the fair on Sept 16, 1933, nine months and 26 days after leaving Copper Center. Slim, with a police escort, passed crowds along Michigan Ave as he drove his team to become part of the fair's popular Alaskan exhibit.

After the fair closed for the season, Slim and his team continued to Washington, DC, bringing the total distance of his journey by dog team to more than 9,000 km (5,600 mi). He camped in a city park and spent

*Slim Williams continued*

the winter discussing the proposed Alaska Highway with legislators. He enjoyed a dinner with President Franklin Roosevelt and the first lady. The president did set up a commission with Canada to explore building a highway, but while it was now considered feasible, it was deemed too costly.

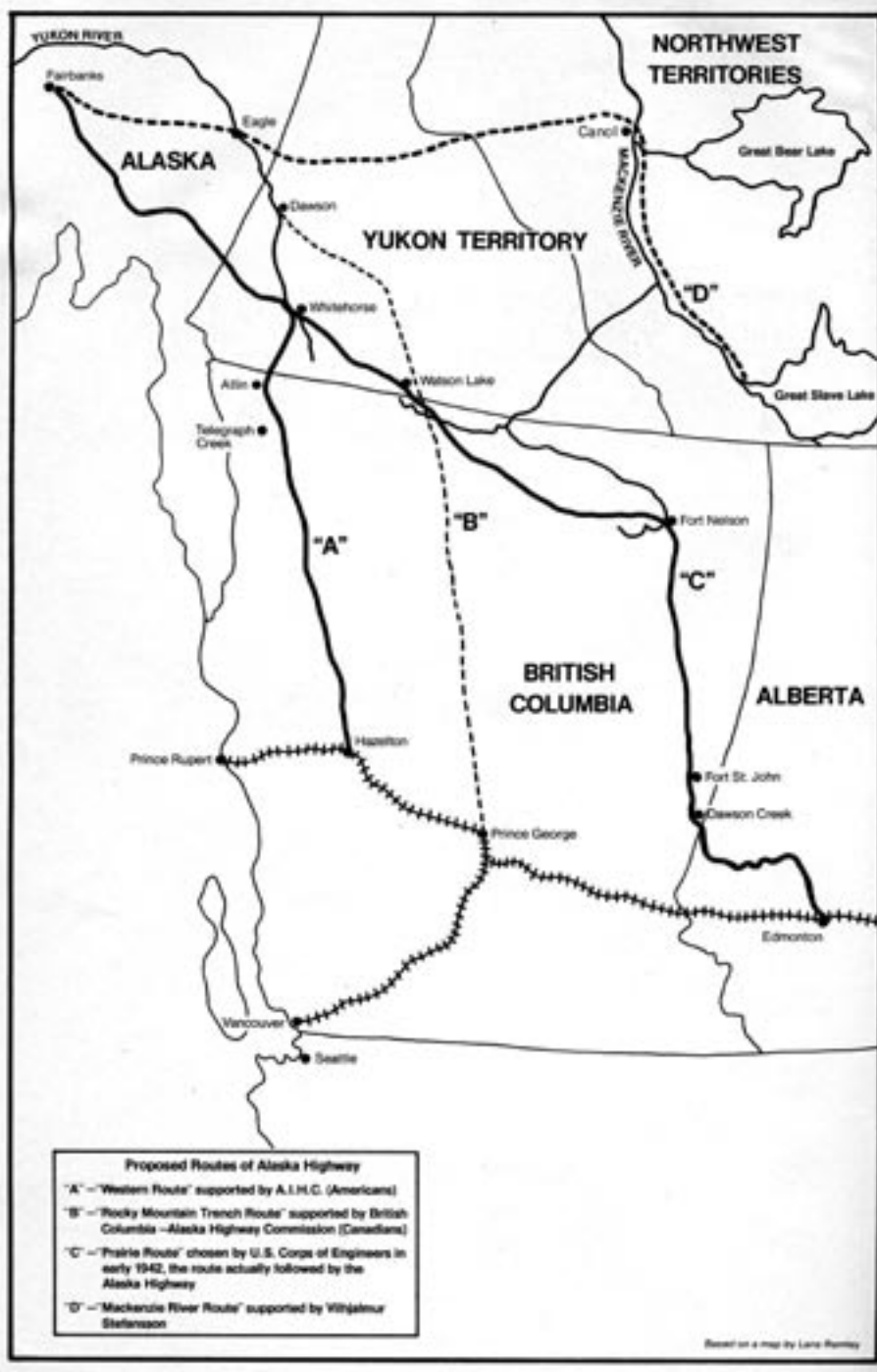
Slim returned to the Chicago fair for its second season, and met and married Gladys. He was amazed when his wolfdogs submitted willingly to her fondling and attention. All others were warned not to touch them. Slim gave up his trapline for the lecture circuit. An appealing speaker with a great reservoir of stories, he charmed his audiences.

After two years, Slim got bored. MacDonald encouraged him to "make some noise for the highway" by going on another trip. Slim and John Logan, both members of the Adventurer's Club of Chicago, made the same trip on motorcycles with Blizzard, a husky given to them by supporters. The motorcycles were pushed more than ridden across streams, bogs and swamps. Eventually a horse was purchased to carry their outfit. When the gasoline was exhausted, the horse towed the cycles. On Nov 9, 1939, they reached Hazelton. Bearded and filthy, each had lost nine kg (20 lb). Slim was immediately hospitalized with pneumonia. They abandoned their plan to reach the New York World's Fair because the trip had taken too long.

WWII changed everything. The Alaska Highway was needed to supply fuel and materials to new airfields, particularly those at Fort Nelson and Watson Lake. Consequently, Route "C" on the map, from Edmonton and Dawson Creek, was chosen. The Alaska Highway project is still heralded as one of the greatest engineering feats of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And Slim, who lived to be 93 years old, played an important role.

**Sources:**

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 Hope, Eve, Librarian. Hazelton Pioneer Museum & Archives. Correspondence, 2018.  
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 Newbury, Lynn. Hazelton, BC. Correspondence, 2018.  
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*From Crooked Road, the Story of the Alaska Highway, by David Remley (based on a map by Lana Remley). Williams took Route "A."*

# Lost at sea: the saga of a sailor's letter

by Brian Copeland

This is the story of a wartime cover from the coast of BC that arrived at its destination almost five and a half years after being sent—long after the sender had perished.



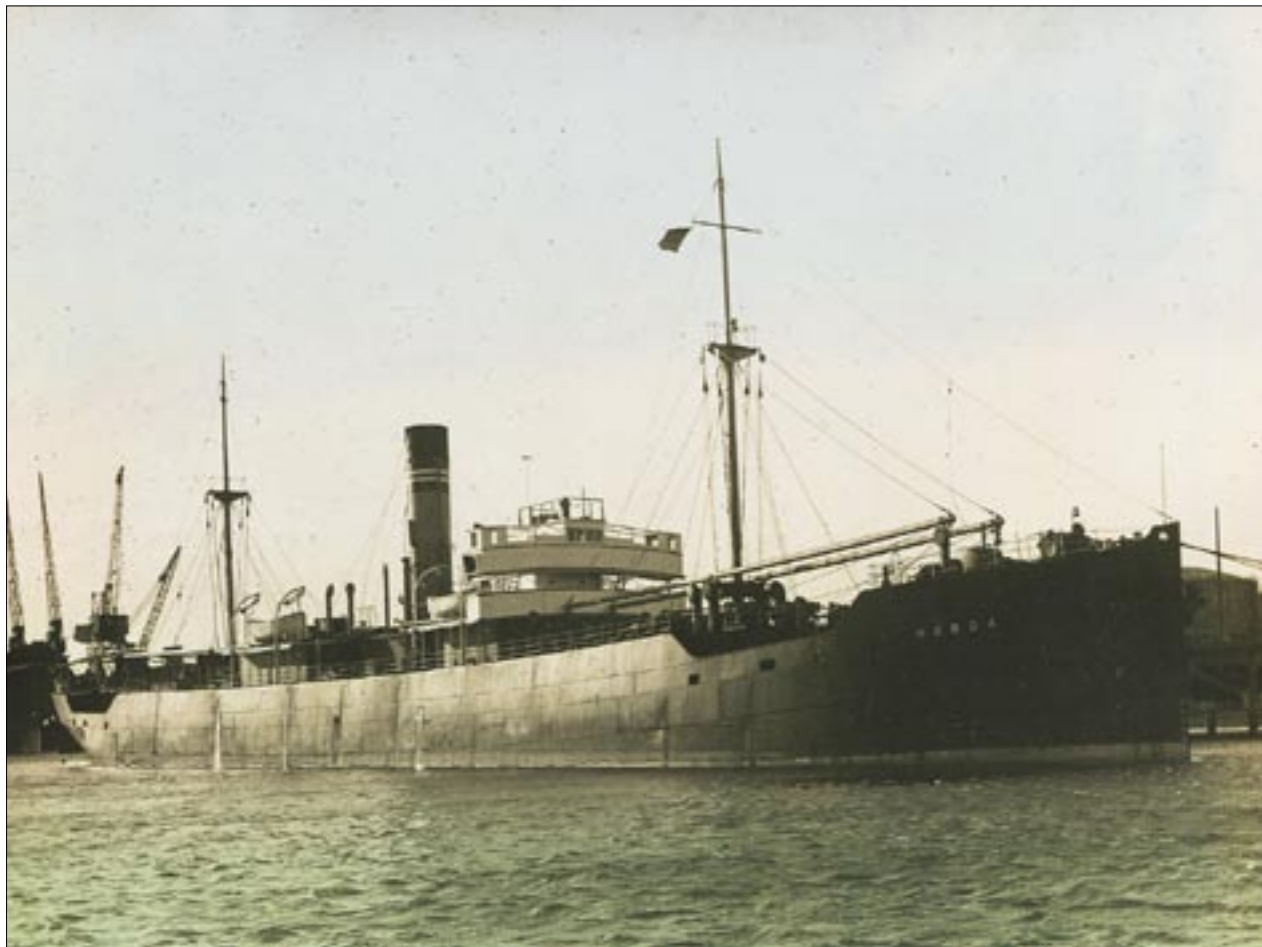
Cover sent from Union Bay, BC, on April 3, 1940, to Bergen, Norway. Opened by Censor C. 36. Marked "MAIL SERVICE SUSPENDED/SERVICE SUSPENDU" and held in Ottawa until the war was over. A "Canadian Postal Censorship/Ottawa, - Ont." datestamp was applied in blue ink on Aug 18, 1945. It was received in Bergen on Sept 19, 1945.



*Lost at sea continued*

The cover was posted to Bergen, Norway, from Union Bay on Vancouver Island on April 3, 1940. It was sent to the Censorship Office in Ottawa where it was opened and resealed with a label stating "Examined by Censor C. 36." However, Germany invaded Norway on April 9, 1940, just after the letter was posted. Mail service to Norway was suspended and the cover could not be sent onward. A two-line handstamp—"MAIL SERVICE SUSPENDED / SERVICE SUSPENDU"—was applied in blue ink.

Normally such mail was returned to the sender. However, the return address was the Norwegian cargo ship *SS Hørda*, owned by J L Mowinckels Rederi, a shipping company in Bergen. Since it could not be returned to the sender or forwarded to the head office of the shipping company in Norway, it was held in Ottawa for the duration of the war.



*Postcard showing the SS Hørda.*

After the war was over, it was finally sent on its way to Norway. The "SERVICE SUSPENDED" stamp was crossed out and an oval "Canadian Postal Censorship/Ottawa, - Ont." datestamp applied to the back of the cover on Aug 18, 1945. It was received at Bergen a month later, on Sept 19.

Records available from the website *warsailors.com* indicate that the *SS Hørda* left Portland, Oregon, on March 29, 1940. It passed Tatoosh, an island off the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, on March 31. This is consistent with it being in Union Bay on April 3, 1940, when the letter was mailed. Union Bay was a coal port that served the mines in Cumberland. The *Hørda* was likely there to pick up coal.

By June 1940, the *Hørda* was operating in the North Atlantic and made several voyages between Liverpool, Halifax and New England over the next year. It did not survive the war. On March 24, 1941, it was sunk by the German submarine *U-97* while en route from Liverpool to Halifax. All aboard perished, including the sender of this cover, Samuel Svendsen, who was the third engineer. Two years later, on June 16, 1943, *U-97* was sunk in the Mediterranean.

# Powell River, Part 3: MOONs and POCONs

by Morris Beattie

The Powell River post office used a number of MOON and POCON datestamps. This article lists and identifies these markings based on size, style and wording. Part 1 of this series on Powell River postal history appeared in issue #106, June 2018, and Part 2 in issue #107, Sept 2018. *(Please note: illustrations are not reproduced at original size.)*

## MOON cancels

The use of MOON cancels in Canada was instituted in 1923; they were replaced by POCON cancels in 1973. Five different examples of the Powell River MOON number 9612 have been observed, dating from 1954 through 1970. No proofs exist for any of these markings. All the examples are rectangular, almost square in shape. The dimensions can be challenging to measure as the imprints generally have thick outlines and sometimes vary in size slightly depending on the amount of pressure applied to the cancelling device. The cancellers often wear with age.



Mn1



Mn5



Mn3



Mn2



Mn4

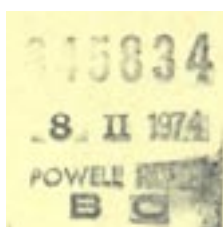
- Mn1) Sagar Type 2 (only type with all serifs)  
30x26.5 mm, Powell River in U/I case, red & purple inks seen, 1954-57 usage noted
- Mn2) Sagar Type 7 (MOON 16-17 mm long, B - C 5 mm apart)  
29x24.5 mm, all CAPS, red ink noted, 1959-64 usage noted
- Mn3) Sagar Type 1 (MOON 15 mm long, B - C 3-4 mm apart)  
28x24 mm, all CAPS, red & black inks noted, 1957-63 usage noted
- Mn4) Sagar Type 10 (MOON 14-14.75 mm long, B - C 2 mm apart)  
28.5x25 mm, all CAPS, 24-mm name, black ink, 1962-65 usage noted
- Mn5) Sagar Type 10 (same as Mn4)  
29x24.5 mm, all CAPS, 21-mm name, black ink, 1966-70 usage noted

## POCON cancels

The Powell River POCON number for the main post office is 645834; the postal code, for those cancels that have one, is V8A 4R0. The earliest Powell River POCON reported so far has a date of Feb 8, 1974. POCON hammers show considerable variation over their period of use. Generally, the cancels are black, but the occasional use of red and purple inks has been observed. The thickness of the cancel's outline varies, but it is not certain if this variation results from the cancel itself or from differences in the absorbency of the paper. From 1978 until 2011, all Powell River POCONs are

*Powell River continued*

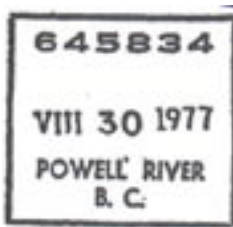
rectangular, and after 2011 new cancels are circular. From 1983 on, all cancels have “Powell River, BC” or “B.C.” above the postal code. The width of the code varies and can be used to distinguish some of the markings, as noted below.



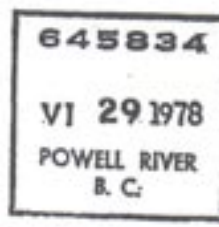
P1



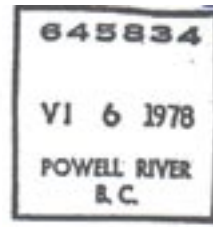
P2



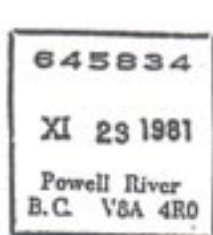
P3



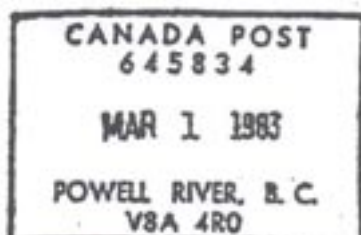
P4



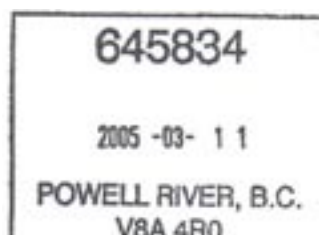
P5



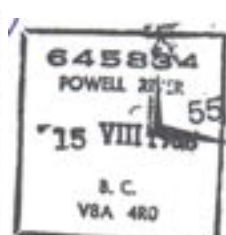
P6



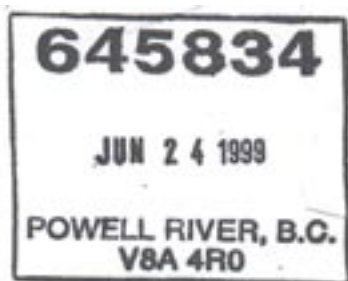
P8



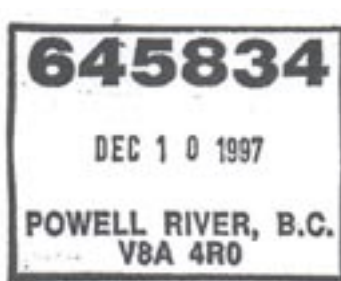
P12



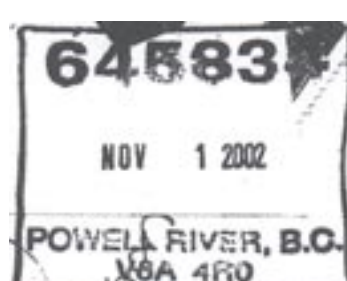
P7



P9



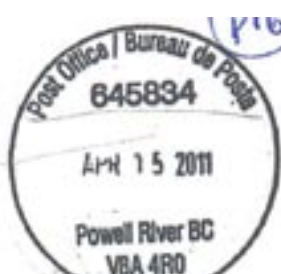
P10



P11



P13



P14



P16



P15

P1) 30x30-mm. Unframed. Numeral in slender 6-mm font. “Powell River” in upper case. Roman numeral month and no postal code (Pritchard & Andrews style, proofed May 1973). 1974-78 usage noted.

P2) Like P1 but with no dater. 1976-78 usage noted.

P3) 27x30 mm. Box almost square. Two-mm numeral. Roman numeral month. Upper-case “Powell River.” No postal code. Aug 30, 1977, proof date. 1980 usage noted.

P4) 28x30 mm. Similar to P3. June 29, 1978, proof date. 1978-81 usage noted.



*Powell River continued*

P5) 30x30 mm. Similar to P3. June 6, 1978, proof date. 1986-88 usage noted.

P6) 30x30 mm. Square box. Upper/lower-case "Powell River" and postal code in serifs. Postal code on same line as "B.C." Nov 23, 1981, proof date. 1986-88 usage noted.

P7) 30x30 mm. Square box. "Powell River" directly under POCON numeral. "B.C./V8A 4R0" at bottom. 1985-92 usage noted.

P8) 31x48 mm. Rectangular box. "Canada Post" above POCON numeral. Sans serif. 1983 usage noted.

P9) 38x48 to 39x49 mm, depending on expansion and wear. Rectangular box. Six to 6.5-mm font for POCON numeral. Seventeen to 18-mm postal code width. "V" of code under first "L" of "Powell River." 1996-2005 usage noted.

P10) 37x49 mm. Similar to P9. Seven-mm font with thick numerals for POCON. Seventeen-mm postal code width. "Powell River" and postal code in tall, narrow font. 1997-98 usage noted.

P11) 38x48 mm. Similar to P9. Six-mm font for POCON numeral. Twenty-mm postal code width. "V" of code under "EL" of "Powell River." 1995-97 usage noted.

P12) 38x50 mm. Rectangular box. Six-mm font for POCON numeral with 24-mm POCON width. Seventeen-mm postal code width. 2004-05 usage noted.

P13) 26x45 mm. Rectangular box. POCON numeral in 4-mm font. Postal code width 11.5 mm. 2005-11 usage noted.

P14) 38-mm diameter circle. Bilingual. Eleven-mm postal code width. Fifteen-mm POCON numeral width. Upper/lower text. 2011-13 usage noted.

P15) 30x48 mm. "Wing" design. Bilingual. Postal code 11 mm. POCON numeral width 14 mm. 2011-13 usage noted.

P16) 38-mm diameter circle. Similar to P14. Bilingual. Fourteen-mm postal code width. Seventeen-mm POCON numeral width. Upper/lower text. 2012-16 usage noted.

## More Colonial Nanaimo

In the last issue of the newsletter (#109, March 2019) we published an article by Bob and Dale Forster on the colonial postal history of Nanaimo.

Included was a census of known Nanaimo colonial covers. Wouldn't you know it, but as soon as the newsletter came out, another cover, unreported in the Forster census, appeared. This is to be expected, of

course, and part of the value of publishing these types of lists. No doubt other Nanaimo colonial covers are out there waiting to be described. If so, please let us know.

The cover was a highlight of Vancouver's All

Nations sale #1200 (March 9, 2019), lot 133. It was addressed to "The Secretary, Vancouver Lodge, Victoria, V.I." and dated July 8 (with an unclear year). Formerly part of the Jack Wallace collection, it realized \$503 against an estimate of \$400.

The cover was in rough condition and had no markings on the reverse.

According to the album page write-up (which was sold with the cover), the stamp, "affixed and cancelled in Victoria," paid the BC postage rate.



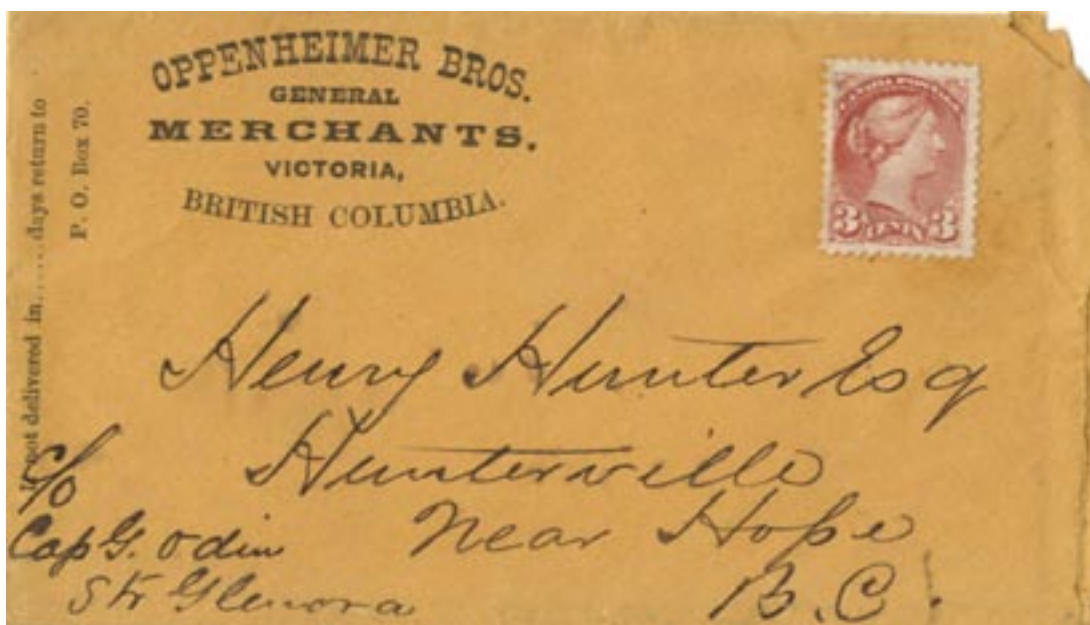
"The year must have been 1868," the write-up continued, "because the circular datestamp was not used until early 1868 and the supply of Vancouver Island 5-cent stamps was exhausted by November 1868."

# Philatelic fortuity: the Henry Hunter find

by Tracy Cooper

**From the files of the late Alex Price:** Many, many years ago, Alex was continuing my BC postal history education as we perused a number of his albums. We came to some Fraser River way-mail covers I'd never seen before. The story below is in Alex's own words. I think we can all relate in one way or another to a tale of intrigue and acquisition.

"I had some things to show you re Hunterville," said Alex, "so brought them to the banquet only to find you were not attending. I don't recall whether or not I told you the Hunterville story but it is worth repeating. Many years ago I met a daughter of Henry Hunter, I forget through what circumstances (*editor's note: Hunter was a pioneer merchant in the eastern Fraser Valley*). She was by then a very old lady living with her daughter in New Westminster. Later, I visited her in company with Stuart Johnstone, whom you may or may not know about. Stuart, a Vancouver neighbour, had the second-best colonial BC collection extant (*second only to Gerry Wellburn*). The old lady had told me she had letters carried by Fraser River steamers to her father's place at Hunterville. Stuart (*who had an almost fanatical passion for BC postal history*) got very excited, stuffed about \$1,000 into my pockets, telling me to get them at all costs, he and I to split.



Not the "blue tobacco job": another merchant cover to Hunterville, "near Hope." Note the endorsement, "c/o Cap G. Odin, Str. Glenora." Enclosed Oppenheimer letter is dated July 19, 1877.

"We met in her daughter's kitchen. I had brought a bottle of wine and some flowers. Small party, much discussion. The old dear brought out a small wooden box, much polished, and produced therefrom 22 envelopes, all addressed to Henry Hunter. She wanted to know two things: were there any duplicates, and what would we do with them? I told her that as far as I was concerned, they would be mounted for display and never sold in my lifetime. All this time, Stuart, a very impatient man, was quietly prodding me to shove money at her, take what we could, and flee. She ended up giving us 11 covers, with enclosures, for nothing. Later, we had a problem. Who got the odd cover? Stuart got it, but in turn gave me a colonial BC cover. The Hunterville cover in question was the blue tobacco job.

"When Stuart died years ago, his BC went at auction (1972 *Sissons sale* #311), and one lot contained all the Hunter stuff with some other things and went for about \$150, I think. I didn't bid. I bid on Hennok's offering just to keep the rest of you honest, although I would not have been unhappy if unsuccessful. I had my five Hunter covers in my pocket at the banquet. The old, old, lady, Henry Hunter's daughter, died years ago, her name then being Annie Laidlaw. Her daughter, in whose kitchen we had the meeting, died about three months ago age about 85. What happened to the other 11 covers you ask? They were turned over to the Irving House museum gang at New Westminster, a fate worse than death. I tried subversively to divert this move but did not succeed. Delicate business."