



# BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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In the previous newsletter, we discussed some pioneer BC postal historians. In this issue, we follow in a similar vein as we start a review of the *Great Finds* of BC postal history material. These finds, such as Harvey Bailey, John Jane, R.T. Williams and others, have been the building blocks of many of our collections and we felt that it would be of interest to chronicle how these finds were made and, where possible, by whom. The details of the finds, as well as being of general interest, will likely include some humour and serendipity. If anyone has insight into details of any finds, please send them along and we include them for everyone's pleasure.

We start off in this issue, following an introduction of Alex Price on page 1477, with a 1995 letter from him, graciously provided by Gray Scrimgeour, detailing the Harvey Bailey find.

### *In this issue:*

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As an avid collector of all things Mountie, with emphasis on paper and philately, I recently purchased a collection which included the above sheet of the Scott / Unitrade 223, first issued on June 1, 1935. The Mountie is apparently the first non-Royal on a Canadian stamp. The sheet is postmarked in Barkerville on Thursday, August 4, 1938. I am attempting to locate information on the Post Office in Barkerville, as at 1938, and why this sheet may have been cancelled at that location. As an aside, the RCMP was not the police force of jurisdiction in B.C. until 1950, nor were members of the Force stationed in that area. I can be reached at [peter.german@shaw.ca](mailto:peter.german@shaw.ca).

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## Our Readers Write

*from Gray Scrimgeour*

I enjoyed your article about the top 10 BC postal historians. A great choice, and writeup. There should be a top 11, by including Alex Price. Much of the help Alex gave was anonymous by his insistence. But he should be acknowledged now. It was the same with local CPR history; he imparted his specialized and extensive knowledge to railway history authors -- always anonymously. When he found out I was leaving Toronto for BC, Allan Steinhart told me to get to know Alex. Al said, "He knows more BC postal history than any two people you can name." After I got to know Alex, I realized Allan was correct. Alex freely shared his knowledge of British Columbia, and we had many stimulating discussions. We all have benefited in major ways from Alex's help, directly or indirectly.

>

> All the best, Gray

I have again read the list of Top 10 Pioneer B.C. Postal Historians. I wonder if Warren Wilkinson belongs on the list because the person who did the research of his B.C. exhibit (Charles Firby) is still alive. While we were judging at BNAPEX in Vernon in 1999, Chuck told John Keenlyside and me that he had a major customer who wanted Chuck to build for him medal-winning exhibits for all of Canada's provinces. The customer turned out to be Warren Wilkinson. Chuck bought Bob Carr's expansive B.C. Express collection, and many Carr covers went into the Wilkinson collection. Many other fine B.C. covers were added by Chuck. Chuck prepared the exhibit pages for the material, I believe. I seem to recall that the Wilkinson collection was eventually sold by Charles Firby Auctions. Wilkinson owned a major B.C. exhibit but he himself probably did not do the research for it.

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## ALEX PRICE

One person who was not included in our initial list of pioneer postal historians but who certainly deserves mention in this light is Alex Price. Alex had an enduring interest in the Canadian Pacific Railway and Western Canadian history and was free to share his knowledge, becoming a mentor to several current prominent postal historians. Tracy Cooper outlined some personal aspects of Alex's philatelic activities in BCPHN #93, 2015, p 848.



Following a stint in the RCAF during WW2, he returned to Canada. As a young man, Alex worked for the B.C. Electric Railway and then went to work for the CPR immediately following university. Over his career he worked in a variety of engineering positions in Western Canada, including the famed Kettle Valley Railway, achieving the position of Deputy Regional Engineer Pacific. While generally avoiding the limelight, he contributed various articles related to CPR philately to journals and freely shared his knowledge about the many items he had. One of his great achievements was the *Great Find* of Harvey Bailey postal material. How this came about is disclosed in the letter from him that follows this brief bio.

### The HARVEY BAILEY CO. find

*Ed: The letter from Alex starts off and ends with some personal comments. We pick up and end the dialogue with the Harvey Bailey discussion. The structure and punctuation appear as they did in the original letter.*

...my name is taken in vain on the subject of the "Ashcroft Route" letters and the Harvey Bailey Co. For your ears only, I will tell the story, briefly. The reason for some secrecy is that there are still some Baileys around who might get raspy. In the late fifties, while Division Engineer at Penticton on the KVR, I had a young engineer working for me who collected defunct post offices, a subject totally foreign to me. He got me interested and I gradually gathered up some good things, largely from various railway venues and connections. In 1962 I was moved to Vancouver. At Vancouver, I had a Bridge and Building Master named Harold Moore, and he and I travelled a lot together in the process of inspecting bridges and other structures. He knew of my collecting interests and told me that I should take a look at a certain building on the railway station grounds at Ashcroft. The building, known as the Harvey Bailey building, was located a few hundred feet east and slightly to the rear of the train station building. Marathon Realty, the CPR real estate arm, wanted the land for a small retail development in Ashcroft, hence the Harvey Bailey outfit, defunct, had to go, along with their building. There was a deadline. We went to the building, through an unlocked door, up some stairs, and there, in an attic of sorts, was stacked from one end to the other, one side to the other, the firm's history, in punch files, five feet high. The whole mess was virtually undisturbed, although there had been a bit of pecking here and there. Harold left me with it, and I had a real problem, what to do. I did the best I could over the next few weeks. It was January, bitterly cold in the attic. I would do my CPR work in the regular hours, and then work most of the night in the attic, freezing cold, Coleman lamps. I was never disturbed. In the small hours I would stagger back to the hotel, shower, sleep for a couple of hours, then do my day's routine. Every couple of days I had to work into Vancouver, my HQ, so, using my truck, I would haul as much as I could home, much to my wife's disgust. My basement on west 49th Ave in Vancouver got pretty cluttered. Bill Topping came over now and then and helped go through file after file and cull out good stuff, including postcards from all over. On one occasion I scrounged a 5-ton truck and brought a good load in. I opened a trunk in the attic and it had bundles of Ashcroft Station "paper" therein, thousands of ordinary and registered letter bills and money order advices we see frequently now. I kept the good ones and unloaded the rest. I think Dick Lamb got them at two bits a pop. I see them for over \$10 now. There was a file of correspondence between Ashcroft Station Postmaster and the Inspector and others. Largely to do with screw-ups by the postmaster, some actually funny, like throwing up the eastward mail onto the westward train. One innocuous railway clerk's letter bill I like has the redeeming feature of having the date thereon putting in on the first train into Vancouver. While still thrashing around in the attic, the deadline for demolition of the building approached. On D day minus one, I got some help from the local section men, at night, and we cut an opening in the back side of the attic wall against what was known as the "house track". I had a box car spotted on that track below the opening. We made a chute from the attic into the box car. We used ballast forks, not pitch forks, ballast forks being broader, with more tines each and with rounded points, hence less damage. We got what we could, but still

left lots. I closed and sealed the car and billed it to myself at North Bend as a part load of track spikes. OCS, of course. Later at my leisure, I went through the material at North Bend, keeping and burning. The yardmaster at North Bend, years later, still asked me about that strange car of track spikes. From where I sit now, I can't believe some of the things I did but I am glad I did them. Much good HB stuff was lost. One thing I regret was that I did not save the firm's letter books which contained copies of all their outgoing mail from about 1887 until the 1920s, I think. I would have needed a warehouse to store them, but at the same time I couldn't see any point. They were all burned when the building was knocked down and torched. By the time I went through all this mess, I had picked up a pretty good historical and postal background, sufficient that I could recognize significant material quickly and keep it. My father, at the time approaching eighty, and intimately familiar with all of that country and people represented in the HB material, had a ball for years sorting through it and filing it in his own way. He stretched strings across my basement and hooked paper up with clothes pegs. Quite a sight. I believe that we culled over 5000 postcards with BC town cancels pre 1910. Unfortunately, every card had two file punch holes, but beggars can't be choosers. I sorted out all of what I called the "Klondyke" letters and not being too interested at the time, even though direct descended from true sourdoughs, I took them up to Fred Eaton for suggestions. He had an idea, gave me \$100 for them, and that was that. I kept a few for markers. Nice to see them in Ken Kutz' book. I met him briefly a few years ago.

Most people never get a chance at anything like the above. This was one of three for me.

Alex

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## Background to The Harvey Bailey Company

*Ed: In order to put this great find in context, we felt it worthwhile to provide a bit of background to Harvey Bailey and its presence in Ashcroft.*

The Harvey Bailey Store was established in 1886 as a general merchandise company and forwarding agent in Ashcroft, B.C. The Company was organized by William B. Bailey and Oliver Harvey both of whom had been book keepers for the CPR. The men had first opened a store in Enderby BC, however, it did not have the promise that was anticipated, so they set out to look for a better location. As a result, they came to Ashcroft and bought a store operated by Tom Kirkpatrick. In 1900, they tore down the original store and constructed a new brick building (Figure 2). This was the beginning of the most well-known store in Ashcroft history, the Harvey Bailey. Bailey also acted as postmaster in the "store" post office, as shown on the money order shown on the first page of this newsletter, and he operated William B. Bailey and Company, a storage and forwarding agency serving the Cariboo. The first Ashcroft post office operated from 1871 until 1899. The second Ashcroft post office originally, from 1886 to 1899, operated as Ashcroft Station, becoming Ashcroft in 1899.



Figure 1. Oliver Harvey on the left and William Bailey on the right. (Ashcroft Museum and Archives)



Figure 2. The Harvey Bailey store, before the 1916 fire. (Ashcroft Museum and Archives)

On July 5th, 1916, a large fire ripped through Ashcroft destroying much of the business section, and damaging the Harvey Bailey Store. It did not take long for businesses to rebuild, and before long, the Harvey Bailey was in full working order.

In 1909, the two founders of the company retired and the business was carried on by members of the Bailey family.

The Ashcroft Museum and Archives had a brief connection to Harvey Bailey as in the early 1950s the museum collection, founded in 1935 by R.D Cummings, the editor of the local newspaper The Journal, was moved to the vacant Harvey Bailey warehouse on the east side of Railway Avenue, where it remained on display for several years. When that building was razed by its owner, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the collection went into storage until the opening of the new combination museum and fire hall in Cumming's name in 1958. After that building had been overcrowded for several years, in 1982, the Ashcroft Museum and Archives was finally moved to its current location, the "Dominion Building", built in 1917 and originally the location of the Village Post Office, replacing the one burned in 1916. Originally a wooden structure, it was bricked over in 1933-1934.

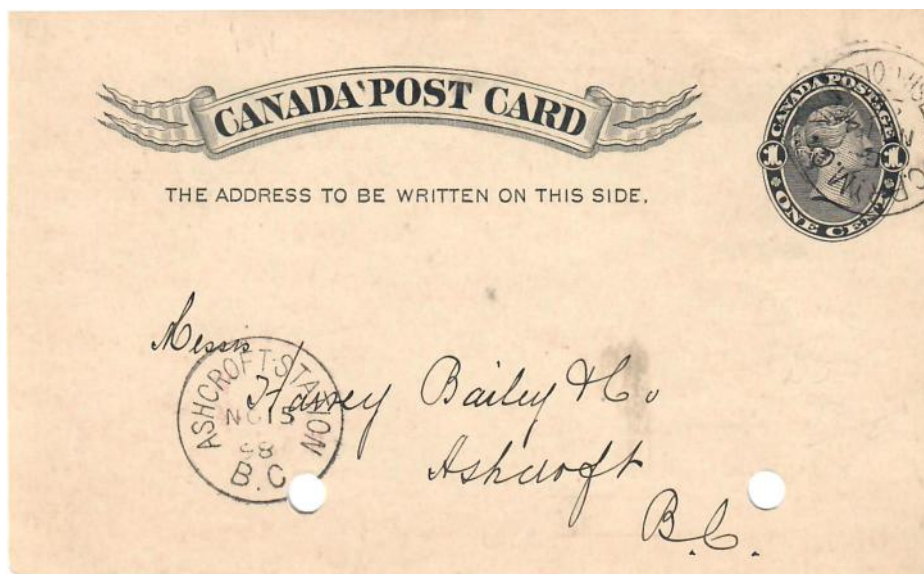


Figure 3. Postcard mailed aboard CPR mail car, arriving at Ashcroft Station Nov. 15, 1898.

## Registered Printed Matter – Victoria 1895?

by Tracy Cooper

This British Columbia postal history item in the recent Ocean Park Auction caught my attention. It was described as "Registered drop rate, very scarce rate. Franked with a 1 cent Small Queen and a #F1 registered letter stamp. Dated 1895"

I immediately knew that the description was incorrect as 'letter carrier service' was instituted in Victoria on July 3, 1888 and by July 31st had four letter carriers to carry out the service. As an office with letter carrier service, the drop letter rate was 2 cents, so obviously the description of a registered drop letter was incorrect. I also noted, from other VICTORIA BRIT COL./CANADA covers in my collection, that the date was actually July 8, 1893, not 1895 and from the scan it was obvious that the cover had been opened at both ends to act as a wrapper. The cover was addressed to the famous R.T. Williams, the well-known publisher of the Williams' Directory, and also a very early collector of BC Postal History. Finally, and most importantly, I had that niggling feeling that I had seen this cover before.



I was fortunate enough to secure this cover in the auction and while conducting research, I found this item referenced in Arfken's foundational reference book, 'Canada's Small Queen Era 1870 - 1897', figure 11, Page 166. A "NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC" dated May 8, 1889, that 'all classes of correspondence passing through the Dominion', could be registered, the rate being set at 5¢. Post Office Department Order #30, signed by Deputy Postmaster General W.H. Griffin dated Jan 14, 1888, and effective Feb. 1, 1888, defined in the first detailed way, the different classes of mail. Arfken noted that there was no definitive way of determining what the wrapper held, but speculated that it might have been some miscellaneous third class matter, such as a transient newspaper. It might also have been some printed matter related to the publication of the Williams' Directory, perhaps a draft of Directory pages or layout. The rate for third class matter at this time was 1¢ per 4 ounces, indicating that this printed matter weighed between ½ and 1 ounce. Obviously, it was important enough to the sender to pay the extra 5¢ for registration. Regardless of its speculative contents, as a registered third class matter postal history item, properly paid and franked in period, from British Columbia, 'dropped' at the Victoria Post Office, it is a very rare thing indeed.



Figure 1.  
Registered cover  
dated Jul 8, 1893,  
dropped at the  
Victoria post office.

## CORFIELD BC Post Office

by Tim Woodland

Sub-sets of BC postal history collecting include Post Offices which only had one Postmaster, and Post Offices named after the first Postmaster. CORFIELD is interesting because it was both. Open from 1887 to 1911 in the Duncan area of Vancouver Island, CORFIELD was named after and solely presided over by G.T. Corfield. Corfield owned the 320 acre Eureka Farm, a store and post office, and is also notable for employing a young poet, Robert Service.



Figure 1. CORFIELD Dec 10, 1904  
receiver on incoming Maitland Dougall  
correspondence from Japan.

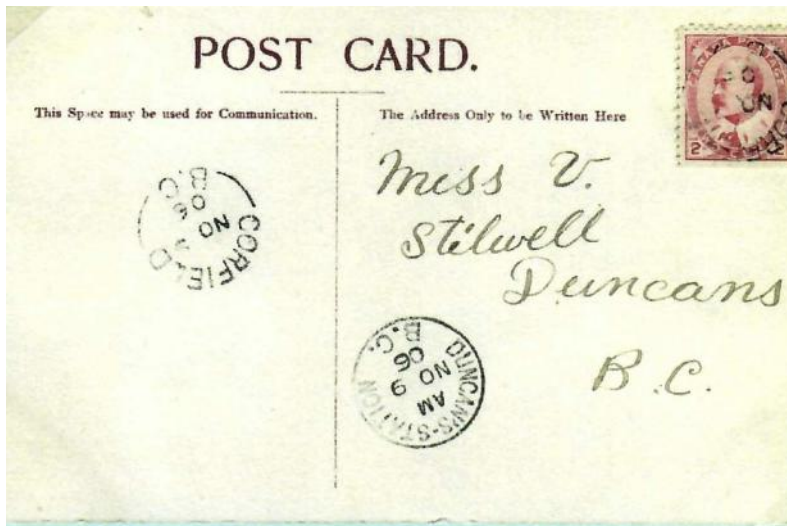


Figure 2. Cover mailed from Corfield to Duncan's Station, receiving Corfield split circle cancel dated Nov. 9, 1906.

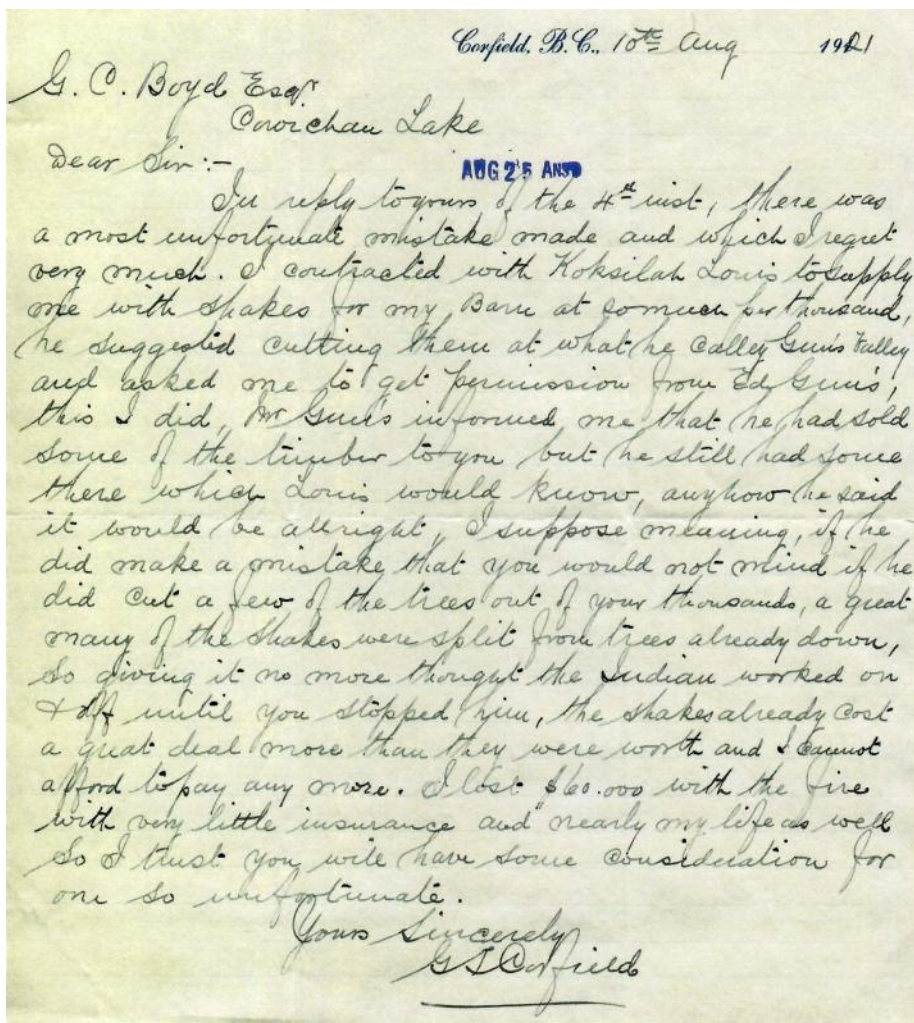


Figure 3. 1921 letter on Corfield BC letterhead to lumberman, discussing timber mistakenly cut for roofing shakes. Written, and signed by, former CORFIELD Postmaster and namesake G.T. Corfield.

(Size reduced to 65%)

I believe this study has the makings for one of the newer exhibition-style, "One Page" displays!



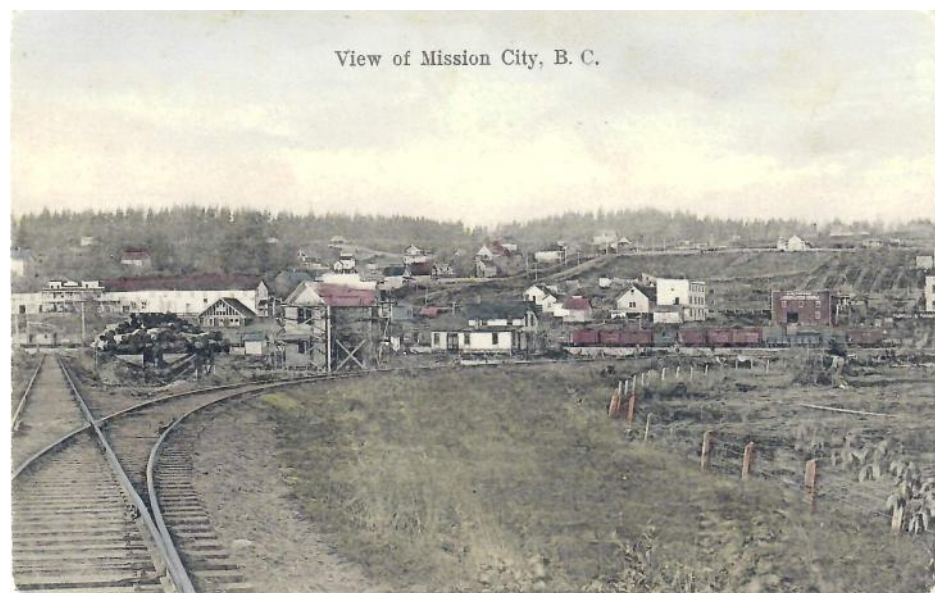
## MISSION JUNCTION - MISSION CITY - MISSION

*by Morris Beattie*

After a week-long journey across Canada from Montreal, the first transcontinental passenger train rumbled into Port Moody on the morning of July 4, 1886. On the way to its final destination in Port Moody, it had passed through a series of settlements in the lower Fraser Valley. One of these settlements was what we now know as Mission but at the time had a train station by the name of Mission Junction located about 2 km east of present-day Mission. The Mission Junction station had been built by the CPR at this location in 1885 as the company worked to complete the cross-country railway. The train station continued to operate here until 1892 at which time the second station was built at the Wye of the tracks in town. The function of the Wye is discussed later in this article. A third railway station was built in 1909. The real photo postcard showing the third train station shown in Figure 1 was produced in about 1910 by photographer George Alfred Barrowclough who lived in Vancouver and produced postcards of BC over the period from 1908 to 1912. The station on the postcard is identified as Mission Junction although the area was known as Mission City by this time. A postcard by Windebank & Stephens of Mission Junction showing a broader view of Mission City at about the same time is included as Figure 2. The Tudor-style train station is to the left of centre at about the middle level of the postcard.



*Figure 1. Real photo postcard of Mission Junction train station no. 3, c1910.*



*Figure 2. Postcard showing train tracks through Mission City, c1910.*



The CPR timetable dated July 3, 1886 shows the westbound train arriving at Mission at 10:39 am with two subsequent stops along the way as it travelled westward to Port Moody where it was to arrive at noon. This service was scheduled for six days per week.

Prior to the construction of the train station at Mission Junction, the site had been the location of St. Mary's Mission (hence the name of the settlement once alternatives including "East Vancouver" and "North Seattle" had been rejected), the oldest permanent residential school in BC. Father Foquet of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate arrived here in 1862, a few years after gold had been discovered along the Fraser River bringing in a rush of settlers, and established St. Mary's Indian Residential School in 1863. First Nations (Sto:lo) people had occupied the region for thousands of years. To make room for the train station, the school subsequently was relocated further up the hill in 1883 where it continued to operate, eventually becoming a government-run school that operated until 1985.

At the time of the first train's arrival in 1886 there was no post office at Mission Junction. Residents had to collect their mail by walking along the train tracks to the first Matsqui post office which had been opened in 1875 to the west of Mission Junction on the north side of the Fraser River. At the time, mail was transported to the region by steamer travelling between New Westminster and Yale. Following the arrival of the railway, the delivery of postal services quickly developed in the area.

A post office at Mission City opened on October 1, 1891. The request for a new post office location was made by the post office inspector Fletcher on June 8, 1891 and a more specific request regarding location was made on Aug 7, 1891 by James Tretheway, who owned the James Tretheway & Son Dry Goods and Grocery store. At this time, the general store had just relocated to the corner of Horne and Railway streets. Post office records show that James Tretheway was the postmaster at the Matsqui post office from January 1885 until that office was closed, at which time he became postmaster at Mission City. His wife, Mary Ann Tretheway arrived at Mission in 1884 and was a businesswoman as well as providing nursing services to the CPR. Although James is the postmaster of record, it seems highly probable that Mary Ann operated the post office on a day to basis. Table 1 summarizes the Mission City postmasters from 1885 until 1964.



Figure 3. Mission Junction Canadian Pacific Railway dater stamp, still in use in 1919, on back of CPR cheque.

| Postmaster      | Start Date    | End Date       |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| James Tretheway | Jan 1, 1885   | March 6, 1893  |
| M. Des Brisay   | April 1, 1893 | March 28, 1899 |
| Henry Bulwer    | May 1, 1899   | April 14, 1903 |
| James Plumridge | May 1, 1903   | Aug 31, 1945   |
| Art Plumridge   | Oct 5, 1945   | Sept 22, 1959  |
| William Hewlett | Sept 23, 1959 |                |
| J. Kelly        | May 1, 1964   |                |

Table 1. List of Mission City postmasters to 1964.

There were several locations, including the Tretheway store, for the post office over the period covered by the above table. James Plumridge initially operated the post office out of his bakery and grocery shop on Main Street. A new dedicated brick building was constructed in 1935 at the corner of Washington and Welton streets and the post office was relocated here by James Plumridge on Aug 31, 1936. The building was renovated and enlarged in 1955 and continues to serve at what is now 33191 First Avenue. Letter carrier service in Mission was not initiated until 1973.



*Figure 4. Photograph of post office located in the Plumridge bakery and grocery store.*

*<https://missionarchives.com>, accessed August 26, 2023.*



*Figure 5. Photo of brick post office in Mission City built in 1935.*

*<https://missionarchives.com>, accessed August 26, 2023.*



The post office revenues for Mission City show an interesting pattern. Over the period from 1891 until 1906 the revenues were consistently in the range of \$600 to \$1,000. In 1907 the revenues increased to about \$1,600 and continued to increase year by year from this point onward. The Canadian Bank of Commerce established a branch on First Avenue in 1907 and business activities in the region increased at this time, including a thriving agricultural sector that became well-known for strawberries.

The proof book shows a split-ring cancel, Figure 6, dated July 29, 1891. This split-ring cancel is scarce with the subsequent CDS cancel being more common. Examples of the CDS postmark for 1907 and 1908 are shown in Figures 7 and 8. The post office continued to operate as Mission City until Dec 15, 1973 at which point it became simply "Mission".

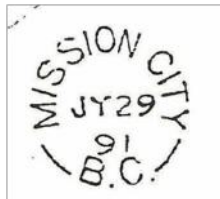


Figure 6. Proof impression of the Mission City split-ring cancel from Tracy Cooper, British Columbia Post Office Revenues, 1871-1921.

Following is a tabulation of the sequence of names used for the area:

- 1884 The area is known as "St. Mary's Mission"
- 1889 The area is known as "Mission Junction"
- 1891 The "Townsite of Mission" is laid out as part of a land promotion (the "Great Land Sale") by James Welton Horne but the area is known as "Mission City" and a post office by this name is located near the railway Wye.
- 1892 The Corporation of the District of Mission is formed. This area surrounds the townsite.
- 1922 The Townsite of Mission is incorporated as the "Village of Mission".
- 1950 The village is re-incorporated as "Village of Mission City".
- 1957 The village is re-incorporated as "Town of Mission City"
- 1969 The Town of Mission City and the District of Mission are amalgamated and the new municipality is known as the "District of Mission".



Figure 7. Postal stationery to New Westminster dated Feb. 10, 1907 with Mission City CDS.



Figure 8. Postcard addressed to Field B.C. mailed at Mission City, receiving Mission•City CDS dated Sept 22, 1908.

Various additional markings and variations have been utilized at the post office, including a Mission City duplex, Figure 9, a Mission City registration box, Figure 10, and Mission machine cancels, Figure 11.

Figure 9. Mission City duplex cancel dated Jan 8, 1939. On corner card addressed to USA.

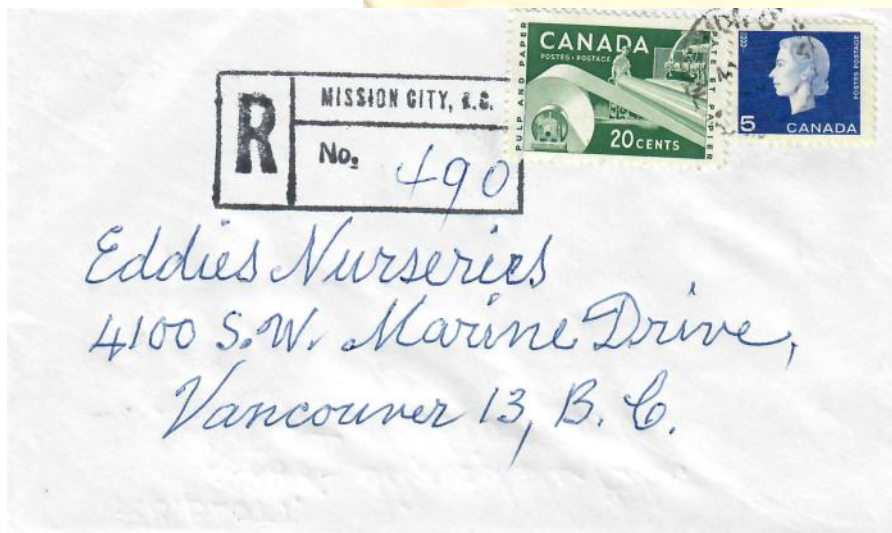
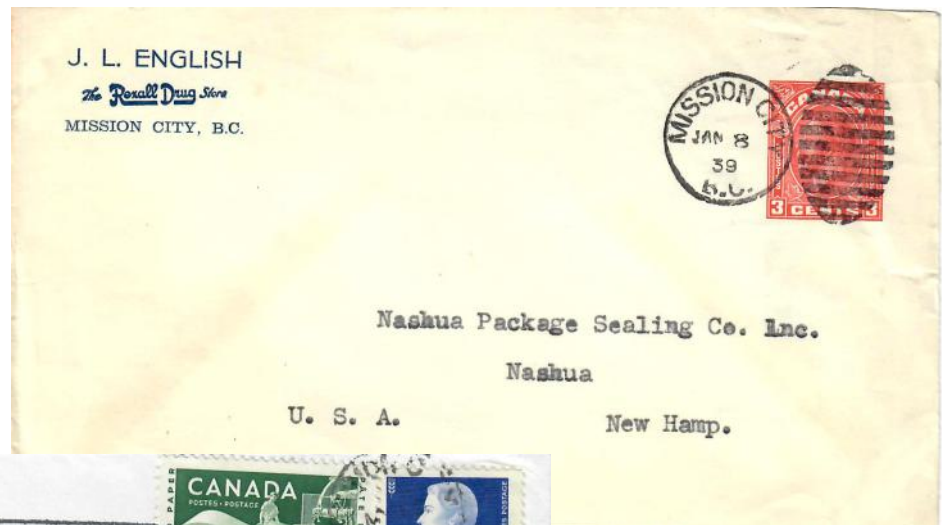


Figure 10. Mission City registration box on cover to Vancouver, dated May 16, 1963 and arriving in Vancouver (backstamp) at 11 pm the same day.



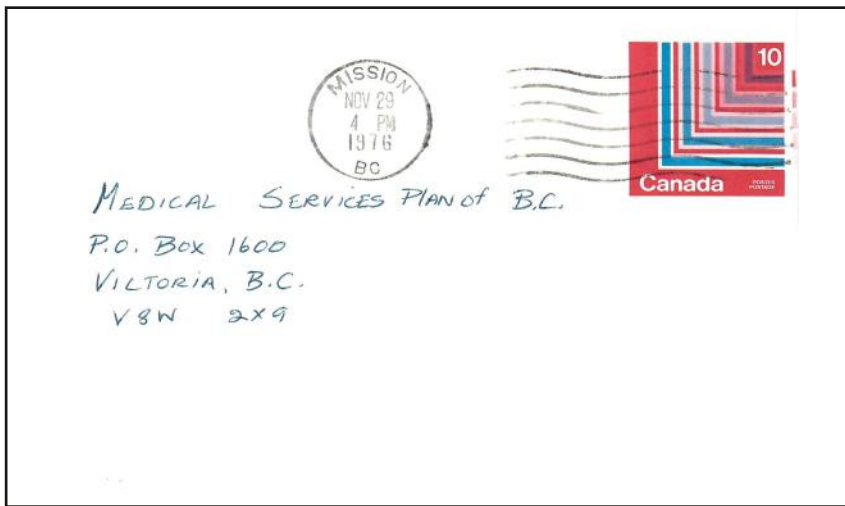


Figure 11. Mission machine cancel dated Nov 29, 1976.

Mission served as a transfer point for mail from surrounding post offices, providing the postal historian with opportunity for the study of mail movement in the region, an example for 1921 being included as Figure 12. This cover entered the mail service at Steelhead, BC, located about 9 km north of Mission and just east of Stave Falls. Steelhead had been settled by homesteaders in the period from 1900 to 1910 and functioned as a bedroom community for men who worked in Vancouver and commuted by train. It eventually became a logging community. The post office at Steelhead was open from 1915 until 1967. The cover in Figure 12 entered the postal service at Steelhead on Feb 12, 1921 and was received at Mission City the same day. It was placed aboard the train to Vancouver the next day, receiving RPO marking WT-239.164 (shown in Figure 13) and arrived in Vancouver the same day. It reached its destination in New York on Feb 18.



Figure 12. Front and back of cover mailed at Steelhead and transitioning through Mission on Feb 12, 1921, receiving the following markings:

- |                             |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Steelhead split-ring        | Feb 12, 1921 |
| Mission City                | Feb 12, 1921 |
| Hope and Van RPO, westbound | Feb 13, 1921 |
| Vancouver                   | Feb 13, 1921 |
| New York                    | Feb 18, 1921 |





Figure 13. Example of RPO marking WT-239.164 included in Figure 12.

In 1891 the CPR completed a short branch line from Mission across the Fraser River, using the swing-span Mission Railway Bridge that was also completed in 1891, to Huntington on the US border. This branch line shortly provided a link to the American railroads that had been under continuous development for several decades. This railway junction established the Wye mentioned earlier in this article.

## Queen Charlotte Airlines Courtesy Airmail

By Tom Watkins

Further to my 2023 short article outlining the courtesy airmail service provided by "Ginger" Coote Airways (GCA) in B.C., I thought I would share a few anecdotes about another airline that also provided courtesy airmail service in B.C., namely Queen Charlotte Airlines (QCA). QCA was founded in 1946 by Jim Spilsbury, reportedly with the purchase of a Waco Standard aircraft c/n CF-AWK, images of which can be found online. QCA maintained an office at the airport on Sea Island (Richmond, BC) and began operating a single route between Vancouver and Comox, BC.



The earliest mail carried by QCA I have been able to identify as seen below is postmarked Vancouver A.M.F. on October 8, 1946 and bears a straightline handstamp "Queen Charlotte Airlines", presumably indicating that it was flown from some coastal location such as Comox (there is no return address noted on the cover) to the Vancouver airmail field. Figure 1 shows one of two examples of this cancel that I have seen, both are from 1946.



Figure 1. An 1946 cover with straightline Queen Charlotte Airlines Ltd handstamp.



QCA underwent rapid growth in the first few years of its existence and by 1948 it had scheduled service from Vancouver to Comox, Nanaimo, Powell River, Minstrel Island, Alert Bay and Sullivan Bay and Zeballos. It also offered non-scheduled service to over 20 other coastal BC locations. I have found courtesy airmail carried by QCA from many (though not all) of these locations and below are two examples. The first is a cover originating from Sullivan Bay and postmarked at the Vancouver A.M.F. on August 14, 1947. The other is a cover from Zeballos and postmarked at the A.M.F. on October 17, 1947. Both bear the other known and more common QCA handstamp "Courtesy - Queen Charlotte Airlines - Vancouver - Canada" in red. Examples of this handstamp are also known in blue and green/turquoise.

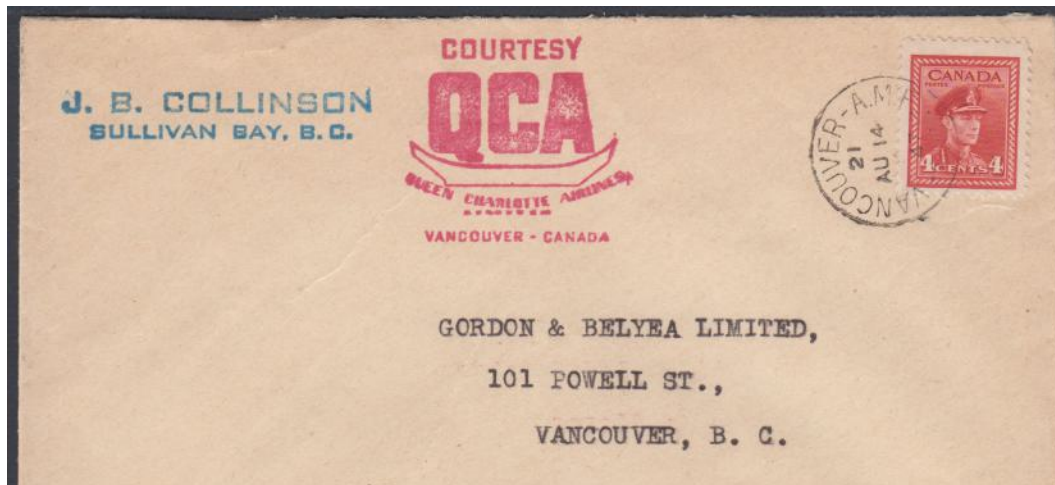


Figure 2. Cover from Sullivan Bay with QCA courtesy marking.

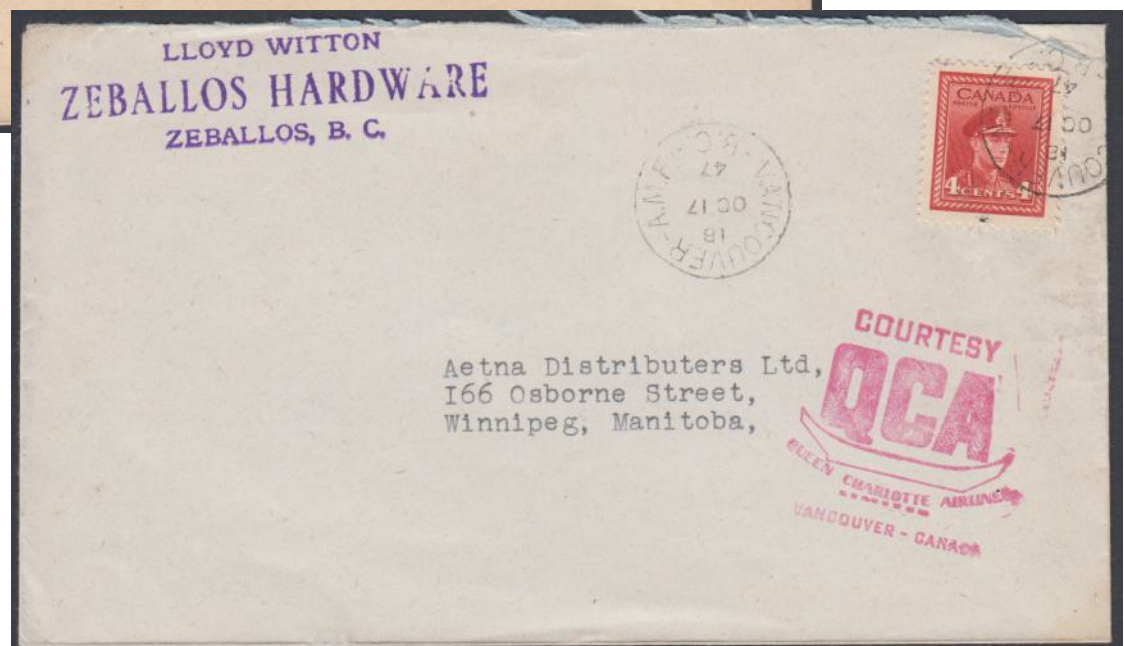


Figure 3. Cover from Zeballos with QCA courtesy marking.

The airline also carried mail from a number of non-post office points such as logging camps on both scheduled and non-scheduled service, often from remote logging camps along the west coast of B.C. Below are two examples of mail carried out of logging camps: the Gibson Brothers Logging Camp at Chamiss Bay, Vancouver Island and the B.C. Forest Products camp at Glendale Cove in Knight Inlet.

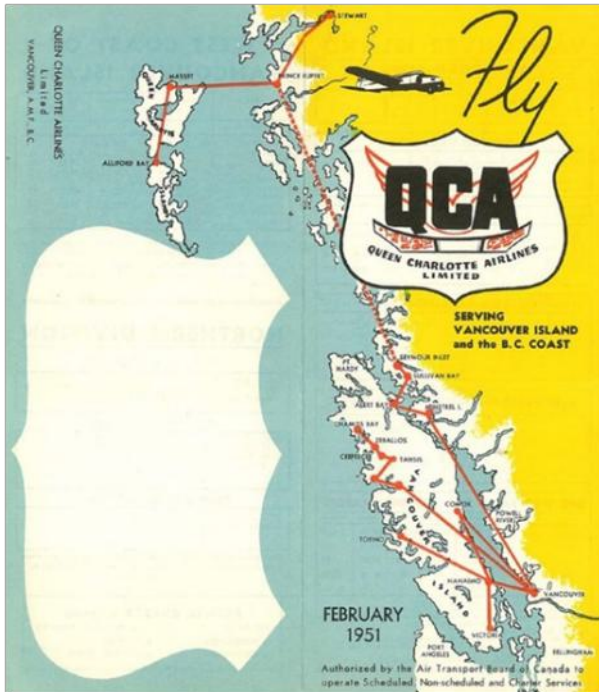


Figure 4. Front and back of a cover from Chamiss Bay with QCA courtesy marking.



Figure 5. Front and back of a cover from Knight Inlet with QCA courtesy marking.





QCA continued its meteoric growth and by 1951 its scheduled service extended to some 18 locations on Vancouver Island, the Queen Charlotte Islands and the BC Central Coast as far as Prince Rupert and Stewart.

Figure 6. QCA Route Map ca. February 1951.

I have obtained over 50 different covers carried by courtesy by QCA between 1947 and 1952 and have seen others. Though often postmarked at the Vancouver A.M.F., not all QCA courtesy covers were. By late 1948 and into 1949, much of the mail brought to Vancouver can be found cancelled at the main Vancouver post office, primarily by machine cancel and below are two such examples.

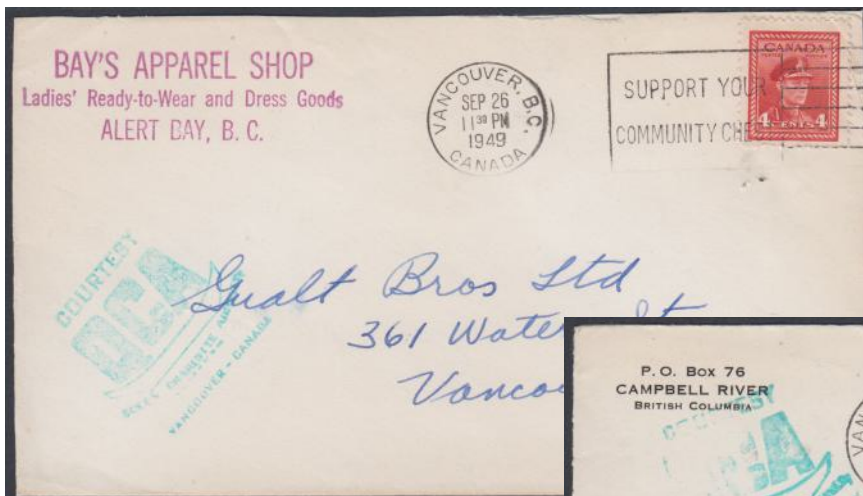


Figure 7. Cover with QCA courtesy marking dated 1949 from Alert Bay to Vancouver.



Figure 8. Cover with QCA courtesy marking dated 1949 from Campbell River.

By 1952, courtesy airmail appears to have also been flown into Prince Rupert and put into the mail system there. Below are examples of covers carried to Prince Rupert from Stewart and Alice Arm. This also seems to be the time during which blue ink begin to be used to apply the QCA handstamp.

Figure 9. Cover from Alice Arm to Vancouver with QCA courtesy marking.

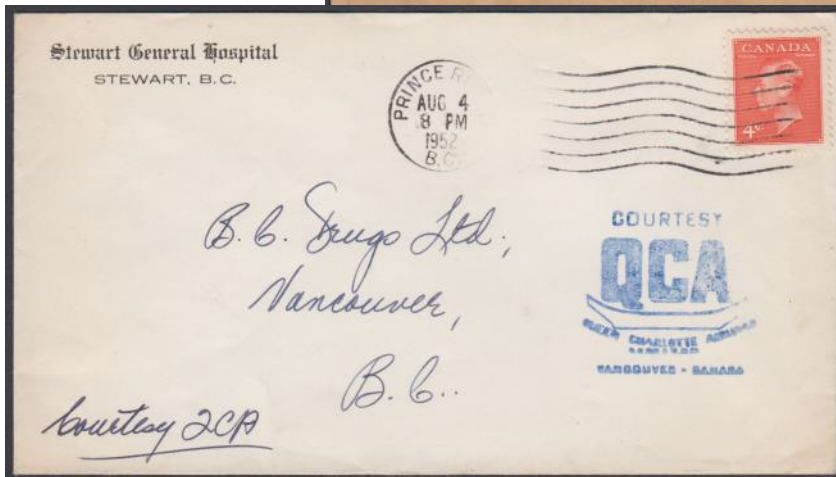


Figure 10. Cover from Stewart to Vancouver with QCA courtesy marking.

By 1949 QCA had grown to become the third largest airline in Canada and in 1955 it was sold to Pacific Western Airlines, bringing an end to the QCA name. Although QCA operated independently until 1955, I have only been able to find QCA courtesy airmail as late as August 1952. When looking at my holdings, courtesy airmail service provided by QCA appears to have peaked in 1948 and falls off sharply after 1949. Here is a breakdown of what I have:

| Year         | No. of Examples |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1946         | 2               |
| 1947         | 11              |
| 1948         | 18              |
| 1949         | 13              |
| 1950         | 4               |
| 1951         | 0               |
| 1952         | 3               |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>51</b>       |

|        |           |
|--------|-----------|
| My EKV | 08-Oct-46 |
| My LKV | 04-Aug-52 |

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Straightline cancel | 2  |
| Courtesy QCA cancel | 49 |



Figure 11. QCA floatplane ca. 1950s