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In this issue of the newsletter, we feature the first half on an extensive article by John Aitken discussing and listing the types of R.P.O. cancellations used during the Centennial Definitive era.

CENTENNIAL ERA R.P.O.s BY JOHN D. AITKEN

Canadian railway post office cancellations can form an interesting sideline to a Centennial era postal history collection. They can be collected in a variety of ways and degrees of specialization. As well, they serve as a link with past mail handling practices and a reminder of why such Centennial era innovations as postal codes and general tagging were introduced.

The first Canadian railway cancel was applied in 1853, and the last in 1971. According to Lewis Ludlow (pg. 13) railway mail use peaked around 1920, to be gradually supplanted by aviation. As a result, although Ludlow's Catalogue of Canadian Railway Cancellations carries some 3,000 basic listings, less than 80 of them relate to the Centennial period.

There are three basic kinds of R.P.O. cancels: train runs, depots, and clerk marks.

The most common of these, train runs, are usually composed of two or three route segments, for example: "Toronto & Montreal" or "Hx. Br. & Yar." (Halifax, Bridgewater and Yarmouth). In the indicia section, as well as the date, there is a train number where the time mark would normally appear. Odd numbers show trains moving north or west, even numbers indicate south or east.

Ludlow (pg. 188) defines depot cancellations as "postmarks emanating from railway stations administered by the Railway Mail Service. These offices operated for only a portion of each day; they were not regular post offices and provided no registration or money order service. ... (These stations) will not be found in any of the official postal guides since such railway station postal activity was not under the control of the Postmaster General." The indicia of these cancels includes time and date.

Clerk marks usually include the name of a mail clerk along with the train run and the date. Most are very uncommon.

Both rubber and steel cancellations were used in a variety of shapes. They have been divided into many varieties and sub-varieties to assist classification.

R.P.O. cancels appear in three ways: as originating postmarks applied to mail picked up and sorted on route; as transient marks on the back of registered mail; and as identifying marks on facing slips placed in mail bags after sorting. Depot cancels come only as originating marks. As a rule the train runs are found as originating or transient markings, while most clerk marks come on facing slips. Anything is possible on philatelic mail, and for some routes it is difficult to find non-philatelic examples.

In addition to the different runs, depots, and clerks, different train numbers for the same cancel may be available depending on frequency of service or a change in train schedules. As well, further specialization is possible by collecting different hammers for the same cancel. Both train number and hammer studies are ongoing projects of the BNAPS RPO study group.

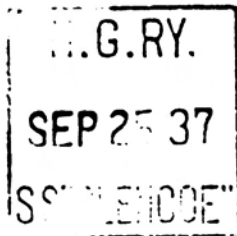
The attached list records the 1982 Ludlow catalogue numbers and cancels (with / denoting a space between the top and bottom lettering on the hammer). I have shown the cancel type and the period of use given by Ludlow's catalogue. Where known to me, train numbers, the number of different hammers available and the number of these available in the Centennial period are shown.

I invite correspondence on this subject.

CANCELLATION TYPES

- 1E. Single line square or vertical box, frame line connected or unconnected at corners any size; controlling factors - single frame line and shape.
- 5H. Run at top, with or without R.P.O. etc., clerk or town name at bottom; latter and size control.
- 5I. TRAIN No.. clerk or steamer name at top, run at bottom; latter and size control.
- 7B. Run at top, with or without R.P.O., clerk or steamer name at bottom & latter controls.
- 7D. Run or steamer at top, with or without R.P.O., T.P.O., etc., province or district at bottom, which controls.
- 9A. Run with M.C. at top, clerk number, with or without "No." at bottom.
- 9E. Run at top, M.C. at bottom.
- 12A. Run at top. clerk name at bottom.
- 12C. Run at top, clerk name at bottom, single frame line is wavy, feathered, fluted or otherwise decorative which is the controlling factor.
- 13B. Railroad alone, or preceded by run, at top, province, letter, number or other wording at bottom.
- 15. Run at top, dot or blank at bottom.
- 15D. Run or steamer at top, province or CANADA at bottom.
- 17. Run with R.P.O. or T.P.O. at top; ornament, maltese cross, dot or blank at bottom, with or without side ornaments.
- 17A. Run with R.P.O. at top, clerk number or letter, with or without "No.", at bottom.
- 17B. Run with R.P.O. and clerk number at top, dot at bottom.
- 17C. Run with R.P.O. or T.P.O. at top, train designation or time period at bottom, latter wording includes ROUTE, N. DIV., NIGHT and DAY.
- 17H. Run at top, R.P.O. or T.P.O. at bottom, with or without side ornaments.
- 17J. Run with R.P.O. at top, clerk name at bottom.
- 17Q. Run at top, R.P.O. below on second line, clerk name at bottom.
- 22H. Three line entry, clerk name at bottom, run at top.
- 22J. Three or more line entry, beginning with FORM or DE, run at top, clerk name at bottom.
- 23E. Partially framed strike, single horizontal, slightly curved, line under clerk name at bottom; run, in pencil, to the side.
- 25B. Small ring cancellation, station name at top, province at bottom.
- 25C. Small to medium ring, railroad or city and province at top, station name or terminal with or without R.P.O. at bottom.

CANCELLATION TYPES



1E



5H



5I



7B



7D



9A



9E



12A



12C



13B



15



15D



17





17A



17B



17C



17H



17J



17Q

Letter to Mr. T. J. ...
Tr. 100 500, 7/31

A. Janssons

22H

From Reg. & No. Bat., R.P.O.

Tr. No. 5 FEB 25 1955

A. A. FELKER

22J

... 20
... w 60
... core

23E



25B



25C



25F

Centennial Period R.P.O. Clerk Marks

<u>Ludlow #</u>	<u>Cancellation</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Period of use</u>
MA20	DE CAM & LEVIS ¹	22J	1968
MA98	H & C / W. E. DAWSON ¹	22H	1966-1969
Q165D (Q165H)	MONT. & TOR. R.P.O./M. MILLAR ²	5H	1967-1971
	MONT. & TOR. R.P.O./H. TAYLOR	5H	no date
Q165E	TRAIN No./Mont. & Tor. R.P.O.	5I	1958-1967
Q165F	Mont. & Tor. R.P.O./J.C. GIGNAC	7B	1960-1968
Q165G	Mont. & Tor./R.P.O./F. PONTBRIAND	1E	1965-1967
0138A	Longlac & Wpg/Wm. C. Kenyon	1E	1966-1968
0138B	Long. & Wpg. R.P.O./A. Janssens	22H	1967-1968
0138C	LONG. & WPG./R.P.O./A.P. MOORE	1E	1966-1967
0138E	LONG. & WPG. R.P.O./J.F. PIERI	17J	1967
0263B(0263E)	OTT. & TOR./J. BEECH	1E	1970-1971
0336A(0337G)	TOR. & CAP./TOR. DIS. R.M.S.	7D	1968-1969
0336D(0337K)	Tor. Capreol(in pencil)/R. COTE	23E	1968
0357V	T. L. & W./J. J. MILLER	22H	1967
0384B	TOR. & NORTH BAY R.P.O./F.G.DYKE	5H	1963-1967
0425B(0425C)	Wash-N.Bay (in pencil)/R.COTE	23E	1968
W180A(W179H)	WINNIPEG DISTRICT/R.P.O./J.S.FINCH	17Q	1946-1969
W180C(W179B)	WINNIPEG DISTRICT R.M.S./L.E.HUBER	12C	1946-1967
W180D(W179M+P)	WINNIPEG DIST./P.J. HANDKAMER	12A	1967
	WINNIPEG DIST./J.H. LONGSTAFF	12A	1967-1969
W180C(W179O)	WINNIPEG DIVISION/J. NOLAN	12C	1955-1968
W196H(W190D)	WPG. /E.A.C. La Riviere (& M. JAW removed)	1E	1967-1971

1. One Hammer

2. Train Numbers 58 & 59

RIGHT: Postmarks & Clerk Mark