

# Postal Stationery Notes

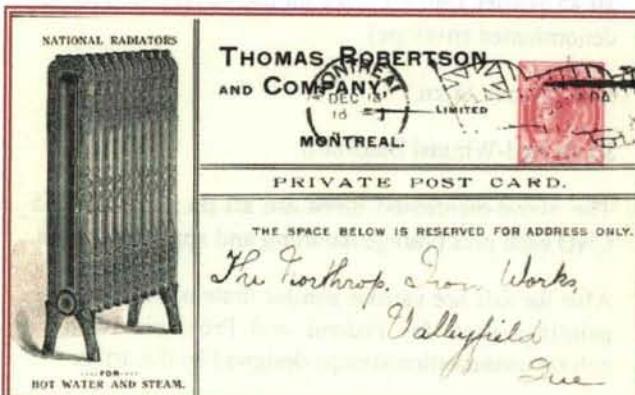
Volume 18 No. 4

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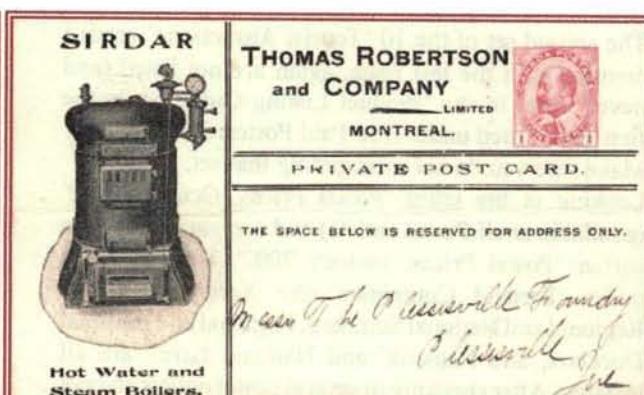
## #6. ILLUSTRATED CARDS

"Thomas Robertson and Company, Montreal, Quebec."

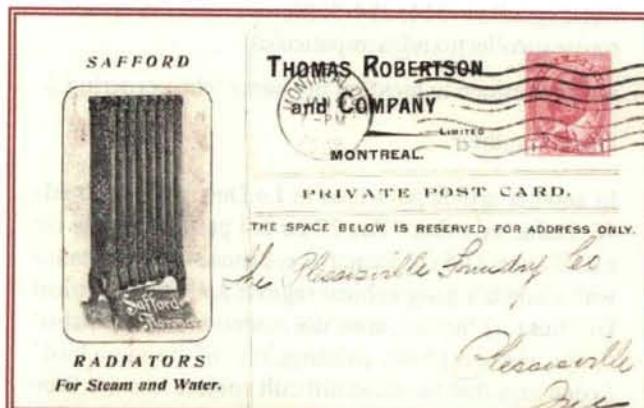
by Chris Ellis



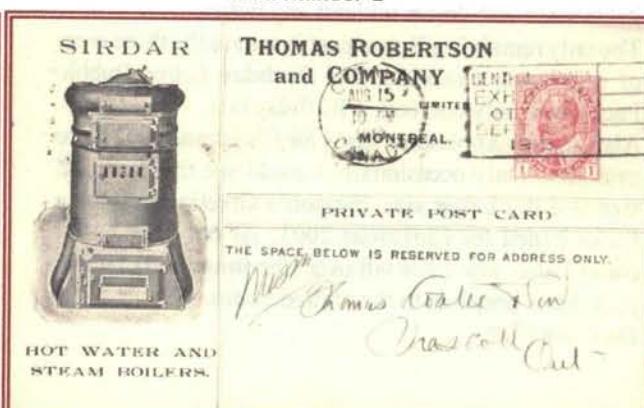
card number 1



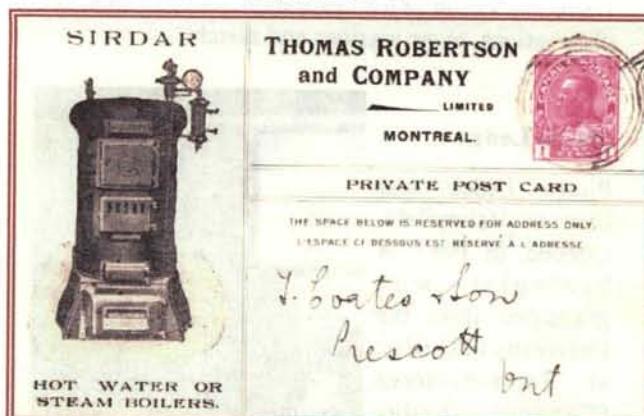
card number 2



card number 4

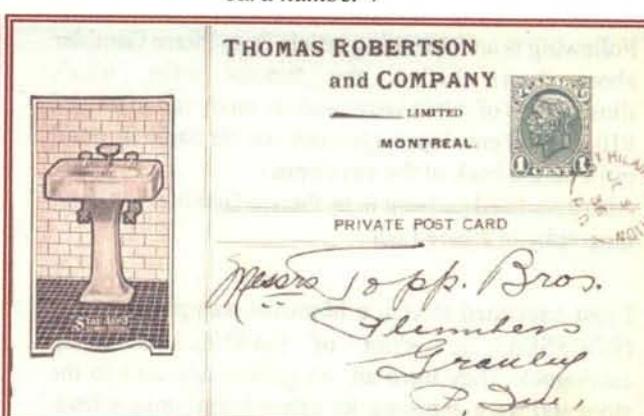


card number 7



card number 10

continued on page 34



card number 14

## *Editor's Notes*

### **A Healthy and Happy New Year to all of you.**

I do not have any new issues in postal stationery to report, as it is not easy to find out what is planned in postal stationery by Canada Post in the near future, not to mention for the year 2003.

In front of me I have the latest issue of "details", the January to March 2003 news magazine from Canada Post, in which all new stamp issues for the next 3 month are mentioned, but no new postal stationery is listed.

The second set of the 10 'Tourist Attractions' cards I mentioned in the last issue, again are not listed (and never were) in the 'Product Listing Guide', only the first set is listed under 'Pre-Paid Postcards'.

Make sure you do not miss getting that set.

Looking at the latest 'Postal Prices, October 2002' (available at all Postal outlets) and comparing it to the earlier 'Postal Prices, January 2002', I noticed that under 'Prepaid Containers' the Xpresspost Boxes Regional and National Standard, Regional and National Docubox, and Regional and National Large are all missing. After checking in several postal outlets and not finding any of these items anymore, I assume that these items were withdrawn without any notice.

The only remaining Xpresspost items are the three sizes of envelopes, two sizes and Birthday Letter Bubble Packs and only one box, a Birthday box.

Also no new Xpresspost items for Christmas 2002 were available. Only occasionally I could see the Standard size and the Letter size "Season's Greetings" Bubble Packs issued for Christmas 2001. At only one postal outlet I also saw a few left over Christmas 2001 bubble pack letter prepaids to the United States.

*Dick Staeker*

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Following is an interesting article from Pierre Gauthier about Pierre Leduc, the famous artist, who's illustrations of birds were used on many of the #8 and #10 prepaid envelopes. (you can see his name in small print on the back of the envelopes).

Also translated and sent in by Pierre Gauthier is a short biography of Pierre Leduc.

I just happened to visit a Montreal stamp store today (ROUSSEAU's, editor of DARNEll's stamp catalogue). They have an art gallery adjacent to the store and were exposing for sale original unique lead-pencil drawings made and signed by Pierre Leduc in

preparation for the Bird series. Several drawings, which are framed, are already sold. Here is a list of the remaining items:

\$0.45 American Kestrel (used for a no. 10 envelope)

\$0.45 Mountain Bluebird (used for a no. 10 envelope)

\$0.47 Lapland Longspun (used for a no. 8 envelope)

\$0.46 American Goldfinch (used for the current no. 8 non-denominated envelope)

\$0.45 Scarlet Tanager (used for the current no. 10 non-denominated envelope)

\$0.47 Arctic Stern

\$0.46 Red-Winged Blackbird

The above-mentioned items are all on sale for \$475 CND each plus postage/handling and applicable taxes.

Also for sale are various similar drawings and unique paintings used for Federal and Provincial wildlife habitat conservation stamps designed by the artist.

For more information, please contact Tania Elie or Luc Legault, at (514) 284-8686,  
[rousseaucollections@sympatico.ca](mailto:rousseaucollections@sympatico.ca)

Do not hesitate to mention my name when ordering...

Pierre Gauthier.

In another article published in Le Devoir on 2000-08-06, Leduc says that: 'The 27 birds I painted to date (in a 25.5 cm x 33.5 cm format) were chosen in accordance with Canada's geographical regions and ornithological families. (...) Stamps must not resemble any published image, picture, photo, painting, etc. of the same bird.' Leduc says that the most difficult subject was the Blue Jay given the fact so many images of this bird exist. Leduc finds most of his inspiration outdoors after long observations, photo sessions and sketches.

#### **Pierre Leduc**

Pierre Leduc was born in Valleyfield, Quebec, in 1957. A biologist who graduated from the University of Quebec at Trois-Rivières (Canada), Leduc



worked throughout his studies as a scientific illustrator of works in zoology, entomology and especially in botany.

As he pursued his studies and his work as a scientific illustrator, he embarked on a career as a wildlife painter, a career he has embraced full time since 1986.

Leduc's favourite medium is acrylic even though he sometimes uses oil or lithography on stone. Although generally working on one painting at a time, often the next painting is already taking shape in his mind. Leduc says: "I often ponder an idea for weeks or months before beginning a painting. During this period of time, I try to figure out how best to paint my subject. I can change the composition, I may accentuate or blemish the colours and I can add or remove anything I want. Finally, the result is

something between interpretation and reality." "Although I am still fascinated and inspired by the beauty of nature, it is not the subject itself as much as the research on light, composition and colours that captures me."

Since 1984, Leduc has done some solo exhibitions and has participated in well over fifty group exhibitions mainly in Quebec and Ontario, but also in Europe, in Africa and in the United States. The quality of his work brought him well-deserved collaborations with the Quebec Wildlife Foundation, Wildlife Habitat Canada, Newfoundland-Labrador Conservation Fund, Parks Canada, "Patrimoine-Nature" (Madagascar), Canada Post Corporation and the Royal Canadian Mint.

He presently resides in Stoneham near Quebec City.

**DUES: Postal Stationery Study Group dues are Can. \$8.00 or equivalent per volume of six issues.**

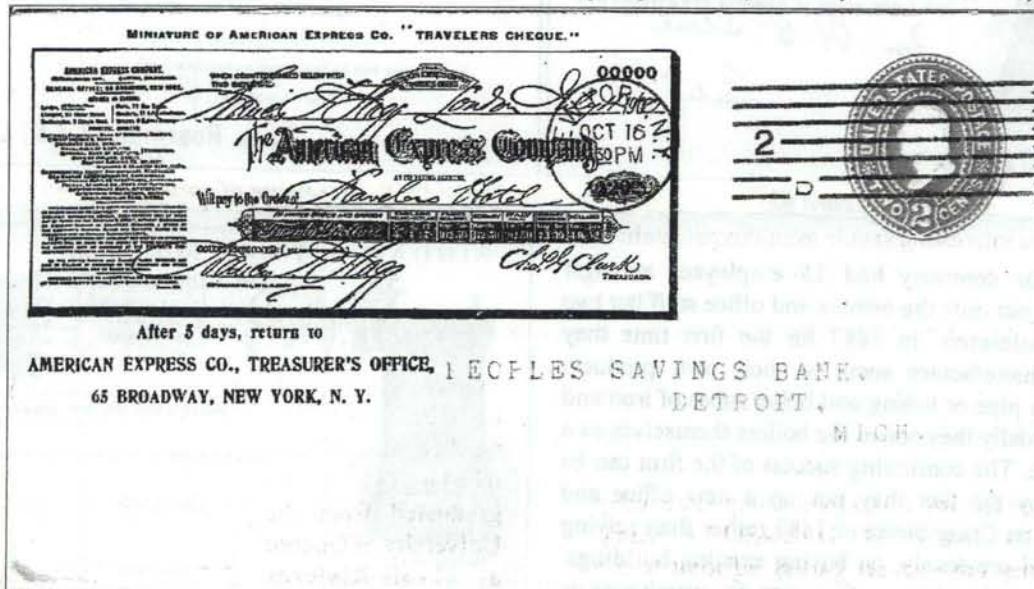
**Dues are now payable if you mailing label reads V18#1. Please renew soon and make your remittance payable to 'JOHN GRACE' not to BNAPS or the Postal Stationery Study Group.**

Dues or any change of mailing address should be sent to the Sec./ Treasurer John Grace, 734 Aspen Rd. Pickering, On. L1V 4H2 E-mail [jandmgrace@sympatico.ca](mailto:jandmgrace@sympatico.ca)

All information for the newsletter, and correspondence about the study group, should be addressed to Dick Staeker, 384 Regal Drive, London, On. Canada N5Y 1J7, phone (519) 455-9715, E-mail may be sent to [dstaeker@rogers.com](mailto:dstaeker@rogers.com)

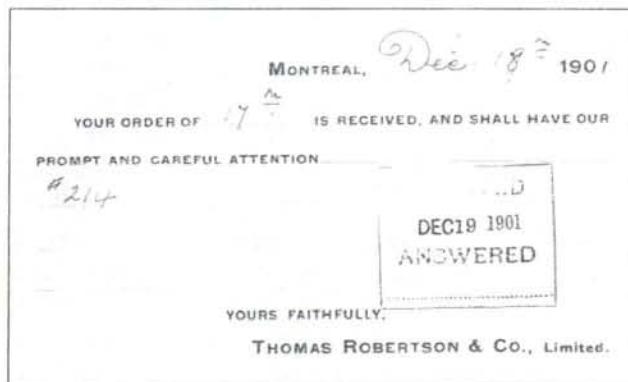


Below is a 2¢ American Express Company card with a Travelers Cheque facsimile very similar to the Canadian cards AMX 1 to AMX3, but with a 2¢ red U.S. stamp impression. (sent in by Pierre Gauthier)

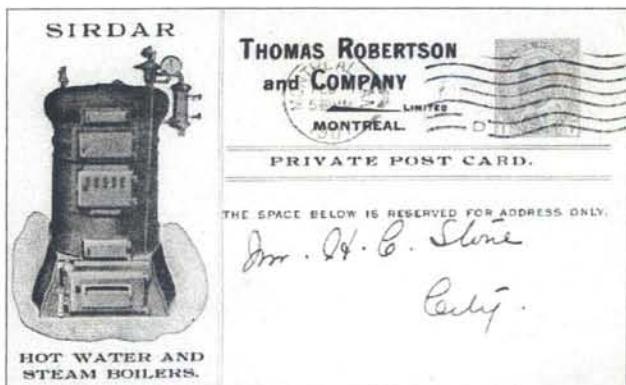


**#6 ILLUSTRATED CARDS:**  
**"Thomas Robertson and Company, Montreal, Quebec"**  
*by Chris Ellis*

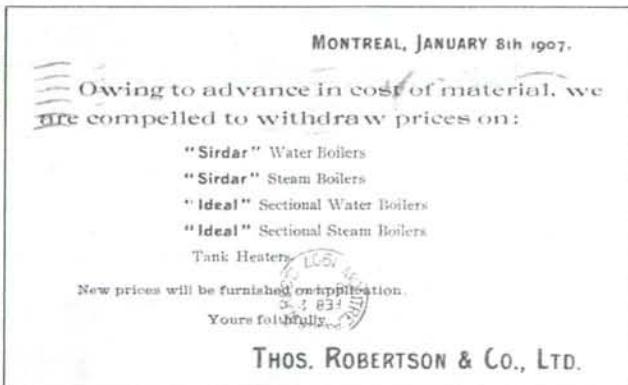
John Wilson was a Scottish merchant and Member of the British Parliament whose company, John Wilson and Son, was located in Glasgow, Scotland. Seeking to tap the burgeoning Canadian market, he formed a business partnership in 1852 with another Glasgow native, Thomas Robertson, the latter of whom moved to Canada to set up and run the business under his name. Their wholesale metal business opened an office on St. Paul St. near the Montreal waterfront later that same year. The burgeoning population of the city, which grew from 58,000 in 1852 to 90,000 by 1860, proved a perfect market for their range of metal raw materials such as steel plates and bar iron. Business expanded rapidly and in the late 1860s the sons of the two owners, James Reid Wilson and James M. Robertson, had joined the firm. In the 1870s, for reason which are not made clear, the old business partnership was dissolved. Thomas Robertson left the firm which continued to bear his name but his son remained with the company. A new partnership of John and James Wilson was formed. At around the same time the firm moved to a new larger warehouse and office at 9 to 11 Chenneville St. and later added an even larger property at the corner of Common and Colborne St. At this time they continued to be solely wholesalers and relied for their materials largely on the importation of European, and especially British produced, metals.



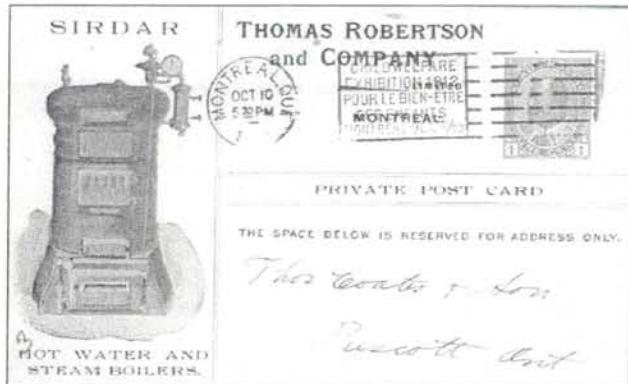
reverse of card #1



front of card #3



reverse of card #3

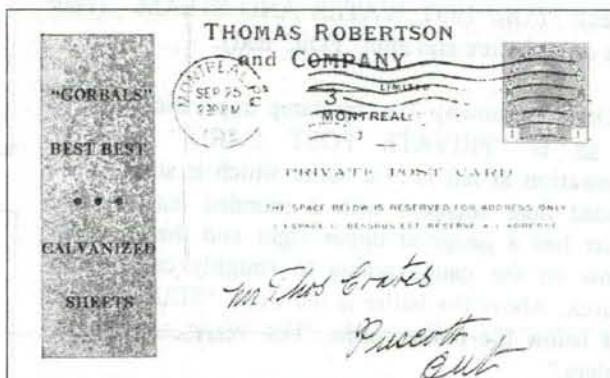


front of card #4

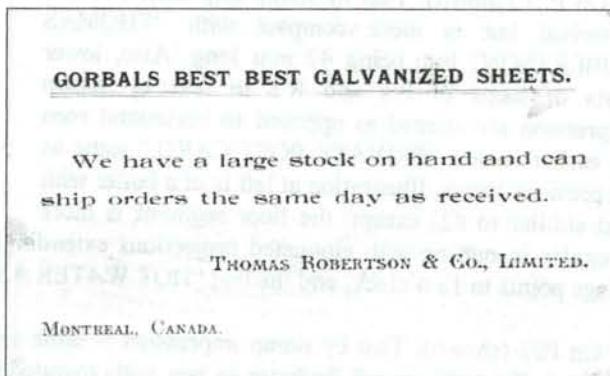
European suppliers and relied more and more on the USA as a source of metals, a source which was much more reliable not only due to its closeness but because of the developing rail system which was a more reliable method of transportation than the steamships which supported the business previously. The same rail system also began to open more westerly Canadian markets for the firm's goods and the GTR and CPR railways themselves created a large demand for metal raw materials. Another reason for the firm's success was the development of modern plumbing and bathrooms in the 1890s. While the company had dealt in some plumbing supplies going back to the mid-1880s, this product line increased business immensely. A major sign of success was, in 1896, the dissolution of the Wilson partnership in favour of a newly formed and publicly traded joint stock company. On January 2, 1897, the firm became officially Thomas Robertson and Company, Limited with John Wilson as President, James Wilson as Vice-President and members of the Robertson family as other directors. They had listed assets of over £103,000 and 21 employees at this time. John Wilson, the founder of the firm who had never left Glasgow, died in the early 1900s and his son took over as President with James Robertson becoming Vice-President.

In the early 1900s they continued to expand and purchased extensive amounts of property around the Craig and Common St. properties to house their iron pipe manufacturing and foundry. Another measure of success was the estate of James R. Wilson at Lacolle on the St. Lawrence River which was said to be a magnificent one containing a dairy and even a nine hole golf course. James Wilson died of pneumonia while visiting England in 1914 and John Robertson became President, a position he held until his death in 1922. At that time James Wilson's son John became President and his major contribution to the firm's growth was said to be the introduction of several new plumbing lines. The company survived the depression even though the ledger showed losses in some years. They opened branch offices in 1931 at Quebec City and in 1934 in Ottawa. The Ottawa warehouses and showrooms were actually purchased from Thomas McAvity and Sons, a company which was featured in an earlier PSN article in this Illustrated Cards series. The Second World War led to a demand of metals for guns, ammunition and armament which greatly helped the company's prospects as did the immediate post-war housing boom. By 1952 they had been in business for 100 years and employed 145 people. However, the company no longer exists today.

I can document in detail fourteen front advertisements, all in black ink, produced by Thomas Robertson and Company between 1899 and 1936 and expect others exist.\* Although they may differ in details of Webb card number, type size, font type and illustrations as described below, all of these cards incorporate the same basic design elements which include (see illustrated examples): a) text to the immediate left of the stamp impression reading: "THOMAS ROBERTSON/ and COMPANY/ LIMITED/ MONTREAL." (slashes indicate line breaks; there is also a horizontally-oriented, elongated, wedge-shaped printer's mark on the same line and to the left of "LIMITED" in all cases); b) an illustration at left often with text above and below; c) a vertical double line separating the text beside the stamp impression and the address space below it from the left of the card containing the illustration and accompanying text; d) two horizontal sets of double lines running from near the vertical doubled line at left to the right edge of the card and which separate the text and stamp impression from the address space; and e) the words: "PRIVATE POST CARD" between the two horizontal sets of double lines. The various types include:



front of card #8



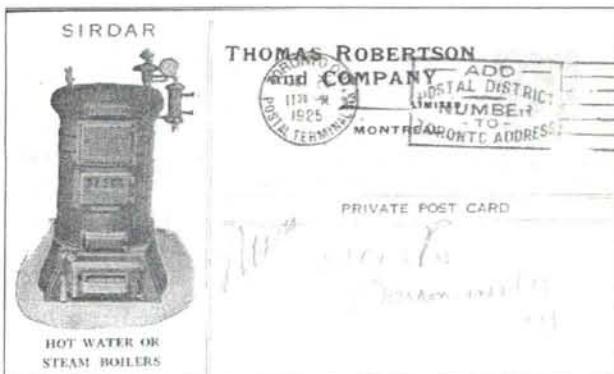
reverse of card #8

1) On P18 (shown). Text to immediate left of stamp impression in unscripted and upper line (THOMAS ROBERTSON) is 58 mm long. "PRIVATE POST CARD" text is serifed and followed by a period (e.g. CARD.). Illustration at left is of a radiator above which is text: "NATIONAL RADIATORS" and below which is text: "FOR/ HOT WATER AND STEAM." (Four dots occur before and after "FOR" text).

2) On P23 (shown). Text by stamp impression same as 1) as is "PRIVATE POST CARD." wording. Illustration at left is of a boiler which is sitting on a shaded floor segment with a rounded outline. The boiler has a gauge at upper right and the indicator arrow on the gauge points to roughly one to two o'clock. Above the boiler is the word: "SIRDAR" and text below the boiler reads: "Hot Water and/ Steam Boilers."

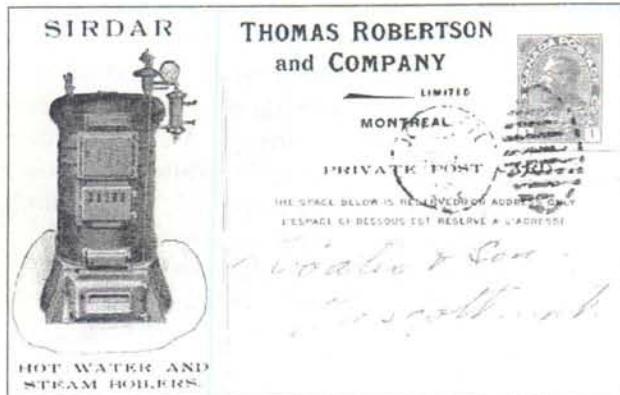
3) On P23 (shown). Text by stamp impression is still unscripted but is more compact with "THOMAS ROBERTSON" line being 47 mm long. Also, lower parts of loops of P's and R's in text by stamp impression are slanted as opposed to horizontal seen on earlier issues. "PRIVATE POST CARD." same as on previous issues. Illustration at left is of a boiler with text similar to #2) except: the floor segment is more irregular in outline with elongated projections extending up both side of the boiler, the indicator arrow on the gauge points to 12 o'clock, and the text "HOT WATER AND STEAM BOILERS." is now all capitalized.

4) On P23 (shown). Text by stamp impression is same as #3) as is "PRIVATE POST CARD." Illustration at left shows Safford "Florence" Radiator in box with rounded corners. Test above illustration reads "SAFFORD" and text below reads: "RADIATORS/ For Steam and Water." in thin, italicized, slanted letters.

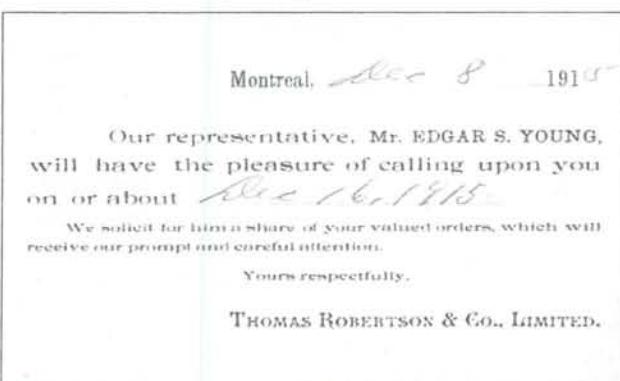


front of card #11

#6). Sirdar boiler is shown at left with text similar to #5). Distinctive of this type is boiler illustration which differs from earlier versions in that there is no gauge at upper right and floor segment is more "squarish" in outline, albeit with rounded corners.



front of card #9



reverse of card #9

5) On P23. Text by stamp impression same as #3). "PRIVATE POST CARD" on this and all remaining issues is no longer followed by a period. Illustration at left is of a circular lawn sprinkler labelled "THE NIAGARA". Text above sprinkler reads: "A FULL LINE OF/ LAWN SPRINKLERS." Text below illustration reads: "Hose and Hose/ Sundries in Stock.."

6) On P23 (shown). Text by stamp impression is now serifed and "THOMAS ROBERTSON" line is about 54-55 mm long. Illustration of a Sirdar boiler and accompanying text at left is much the same as on #3).

7) On P23 (shown). Text by stamp impression same as

8) On P28c (shown). Text by stamp impression same as #6). At left is grey piece of sheet metal on which is printed in red: "GORBAL'S"/ BEST BEST/ CALVANIZED/ SHEETS. Note that "galvanized" is spelled wrong with a "C" and that the "BEST BEST" line is separated from the "CALVANIZED" text line by a line of three dots.

9) On P28d (shown). Text by stamp impression same as #6). Illustration is of Sirdar boiler with accompanying text and very similar illustration to 3) except the indicator arrow on the gauge points to roughly one to two o'clock.

10) On P28c (shown). Text by stamp impression same as #6). Illustration is of Sirdar boiler with same illustration as #9). Text accompanying illustration is very similar to #9) including the fonts used and word spacing but text below illustration now reads: "HOT WATER OR/ STEAM BOILERS." instead of "HOT WATER AND/ STEAM BOILERS."

11) On P29c (shown). Text by stamp impression same as #6). "PRIVATE POST CARD" wording is unscripted and more compact than on all previous issues. Illustration of Sirdar boiler same as 10) as is the wording of the accompanying text save for the lack of a period after "BOILERS". The accompanying text font is also different, being more compact, solid and smaller.

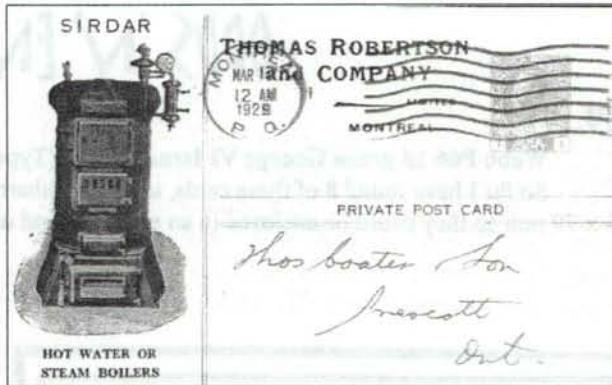
12) On P29a (shown). Same as #11) except on different Webb listed card and darker impression.

13) On P34. Same as #11) except on different Webb listed card and lighter impression such that gauge is hard to read.

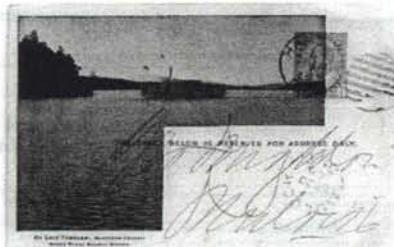
14) On P62 (shown). Same as #11) in terms of text by stamp and Private Post Card heading. Boxed illustration at left shows sink labelled below : "Standard"/ Plumbing Fixtures" in fancy serifed lettering.

Acknowledgements: I thank Dick Staeker for providing information on some cards in this series. The major source used on the history of the company is an elaborate 46 page hard cover booklet entitled: *100 Years of Constant Growth, The Story of Thomas Robertson & Company, Limited 1852-1952* published by the company to celebrate its centennial. Copies of this booklet are held in several university libraries including of course, McGill University in Montreal.

\*in fact, two other cards from the Horace Harrison collection, unfortunately not illustrated, were sold at a recent R. A. Lee auction which include a P18 picturing a "galvanized pipe and faucet" and a P23 showing a "bathroom sink" with appropriate accompanying text. I have not seen any other examples of these cards so can not document their exact style and how they compare to the other examples listed here. Given their date of use (1903-1904) I expect they will have the same basic design as all the cards shown here and that "THOMAS ROBERTSON/ and COMPANY/ LIMITED/ MONTREAL." and "PRIVATE POST CARD." will be printed the same as 1) and 2) on the list here. One also suspects there may be many other kinds of card used in the 1930s.



front of card #12



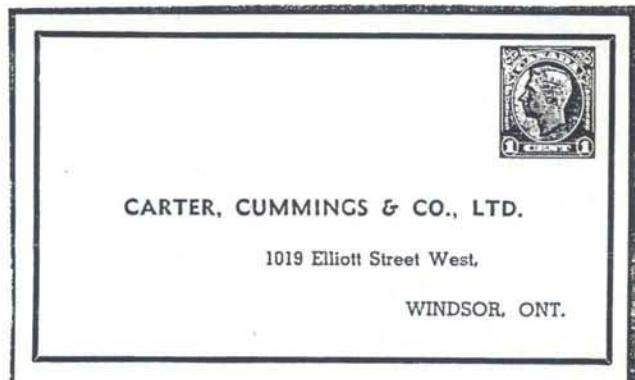
An interesting card sent in by member  
Gerald Wiley

# ODDS 'N' ENDS BY JOHN GRACE

#29.

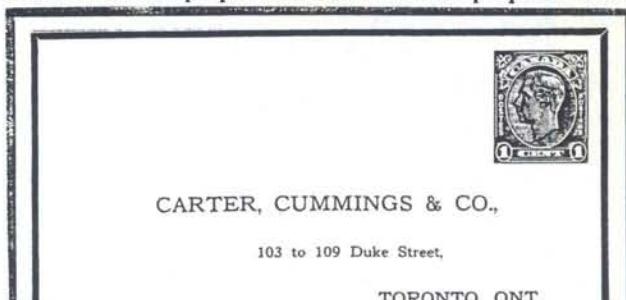
Webb P66 1¢ green George VI Issue (38/O), (Type 1), cut down to 133 x 79 mm.

So far I have found 8 of these cards, used by a pharmaceutical (?) firm. They were cut down to approximately 133 x 79 mm so they could be enclosed in an envelope and used by the recipient as a request form. Varied borders.



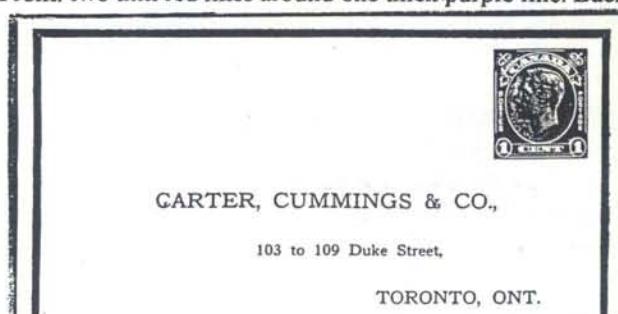
TD	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter.	
WARNING Do not sign or mail this card unless you are a fully registered Physician able to comply with regulations concerning the possession of narcotics. Please complete full name, address and date in ink.	
Name .....	
Address .....	
City .....	Prov. ....
Date .....	T 30

↑Front: one thick purple line. Back: two thin purple lines around one thick red line. TD ul and T 30 lr



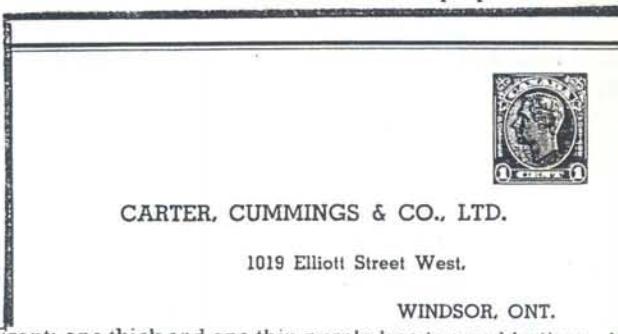
ALC	Date. July 11 <sup>th</sup> 1960
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter.	
(PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name.....	T. F. SWEET
Address.....	SWEET 1110
City.....	ONTARIO HOSPITAL
Prov. ....	WATERLOO

↑Front: two thin red lines around one thick purple line. Back: two thin purple lines around one thick red line. ALC ul



F.E.	Date.....
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter.	
(PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name.....	
Address.....	
City.....	
Province.....	

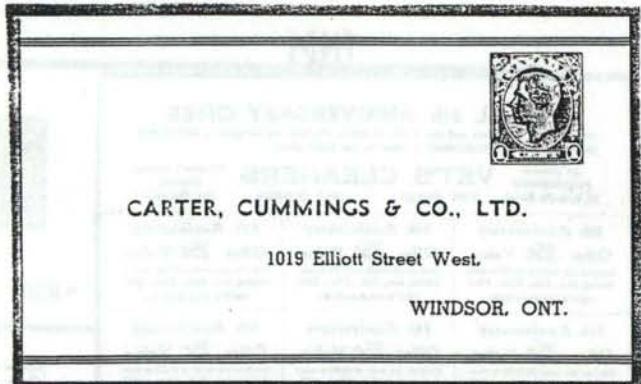
↑Front: two thin red lines around one thick purple line. Back: two thin purple lines around one thick red line. F.E. ul



N-CBS	Date.....
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter.	
(PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name.....	
Address.....	
City.....	
Province.....	

↑Front: one thick and one thin purple line top and bottom. Back: same. N-CBS ul

ODDS 'N' ENDS #29 (continued)



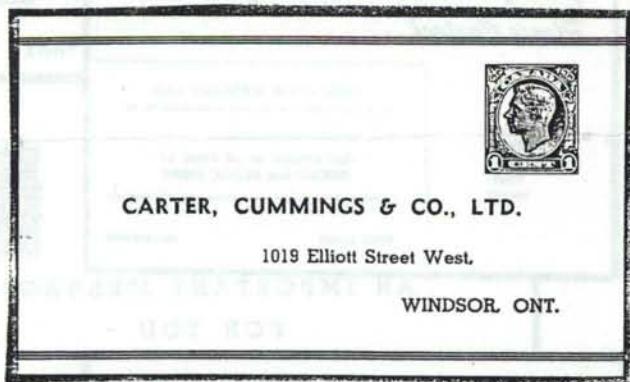
CARTER, CUMMINGS & CO., LTD.

1019 Elliott Street West.

WINDSOR, ONT.

I-oz	Date
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter. (PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name	
Address	
City	
Province	

↑Front: three thin purple lines above and below. Back: same. I-oz ul



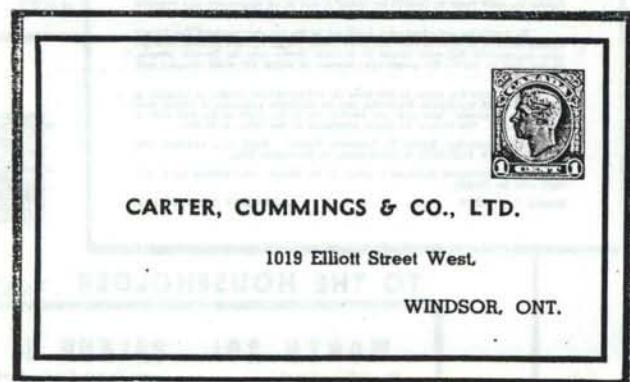
CARTER, CUMMINGS & CO., LTD.

1019 Elliott Street West.

WINDSOR, ONT.

I-ALC	Date
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter. (PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name	
Address	
City	
Province	

↑Front: three thin purple lines above and below. Back: same. I-ALC ul



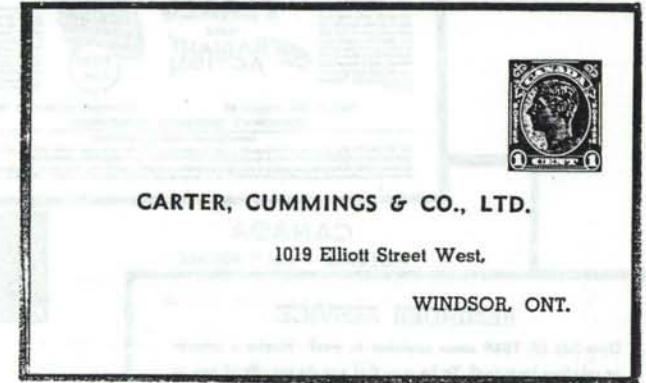
CARTER, CUMMINGS & CO., LTD.

1019 Elliott Street West.

WINDSOR, ONT.

CBS	Date
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter. (PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name	
Address	
City	
Province	

↑Front: one thick purple line. Back: two thin purple lines around one thick red line. CBS ul



CARTER, CUMMINGS & CO., LTD.

1019 Elliott Street West.

WINDSOR, ONT.

D-CBS	Date
Gentlemen:—	
You may send me specimens referred to in your letter. (PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)	
Name	
Address	
City	
Province	

↑Front: no box or lines. Back: red oblongs and hollow purple squares. D-CBS ul

# ODDS 'N' ENDS

BY JOHN GRACE  
ODDS

#30.

Webb P66 1¢ green George VI Issue (38/O) with private roulette dividing bottom half + of card into discount coupons for Vet's Cleaners, Windsor, ON. The two horizontal and two vertical roulettes create 6 25¢ discount coupons on orders of \$1.00 or more. Offer was valid from January to March 1951.

#31.

Webb P 109a 6¢ on 5¢ revalued Centennial Issue with a vertical and a horizontal roulette to make a detachable business card, measuring 90 x 55 mm. Used in British Columbia c. 1971.

#32.

Webb P66s 1¢ green George VI Issue (38/O) with *private* precancel of two medium bars that measure 21 x 8 mm. This is a householder mail item promoting Robert H. Saunders for Mayor, probably at the municipal election of January 1, 1945. Saunders became mayor of Toronto and later chairman of Ontario Hydro.

#33.

Another Webb P66s 1¢ green George VI Issue (38/O) with *private* precancel of two pairs of fine lines that measure 25 x 9½ mm. This is another householder item promoting Ivory Flakes (see Odds'n'Ends #21, #27, and #28 for other entries in the stationery soap opera). There is no indication of date of the offer, but it would be from the mid-forties. Private precancels disappeared in the late forties.

#34.

This is Webb P66w 1¢ green George VI Issue (38/O) with *private* precancel of two thin lines that measure 25 x 13½ mm advertising a reminder service. Used in 1948 in Montreal. Quite a bargain at a year for \$1.00 per 8 names and dates.

*Contributions, corrections and comments welcome.  
Contact me at e-mail: jandmgrace@sympatico.ca*

ENDS

## SPECIAL 5th ANNIVERSARY OFFER

We want our customers and also invite all others who have not yet tried our SUPERIOR METHOD OF DRY CLEANING to share in Our Celebration.

All Dresses  
FLEXFORMED  
for Sure-Fit Finish  
704 FELIX  
PH. 3-3434

Windsor's Fastest  
Growing  
Dry Cleaners



◀ #30

5th Anniversary  
Offer 25¢ Value

Good on any order of \$1.00 or more  
during Jan., Feb., Mar., 1951  
VET'S CLEANERS

5th Anniversary  
Offer 25¢ Value

Good on any order of \$1.00 or more  
during Jan., Feb., Mar., 1951  
VET'S CLEANERS

5th Anniversary  
Offer 25¢ Value

Good on any order of \$1.00 or more  
during Jan., Feb., Mar., 1951  
VET'S CLEANERS



◀ #31

## For Your Masonry Requirements

Please Contact . . .

PLEASE  
DETACH  
FOR  
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## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR YOU

Fellow Citizens:

For the first time in many years Toronto has a candidate for Mayor who has a definite and constructive program. We refer to Controller Robert H. Saunders. During his eight years in Council his record is one of an aggressive and capable representative who has consistently fought the interests of the people of Toronto.

He fought for and obtained a 2-mill cut in the tax rate successfully; fought against increases in price of milk and other foods; fought against undesired restaurants; fought successfully this year for a lower Hydro rate for Toronto people. During 1944 he moved 392 constructive motions of which 382 were adopted and put into effect.

For at least two years he has been the acknowledged leader in Council, a spokesman of all worthwhile legislation and an emphatic opponent of foolish and dangerous proposals. Last year you elected him to the head of the poll with a vote of 73,846. We believe he merits promotion to the office of Mayor.

Select Controller Robert H. Saunders Mayor. Read and consider his PROGRAM FOR TORONTO in newspapers of December 30th.

The undersigned represent a group of his friends who believe he is the right man for Mayor.

EDGAR T. ALBERTS A. KINGSLEY GRAHAM, E.C.

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## TO THE HOUSEHOLDER

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AU MARCHAND: Notre acheteur remplira ce coupon indiquant à notre éditeur votre nom, pourvu que vous et le client respectiez les termes de cette offre. (PAS VALIDE si le verso est imprimer.) Frazer & Gobin de Canada



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## REMINDER SERVICE

Does July 18, 1948 mean anything to you? Maybe a friend's or relatives birthday? To be sure that you do not offend any of your close friends or relatives, leave your worries with us. Just send us a list of names and dates of birthdays, anniversaries etc. and we will send you out a reminder a week before the event. Your cost for peace of mind is \$1.00 a year for eight names.

Send your cheque or postal note to:  
REMINDER SERVICE

1204 St. Antoine Street, Montreal

Tel. HARbour 4755

For each additional name, there is a service charge of Ten Cents.

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