

G.T.R. Station, Hamilton, Ontario

In this issue, we look at R.P.O. service between Hamilton and Toronto, from its beginning in 1856, to its end in 1918. I was inspired to write the article while starting to prepare **Brian Stalker's** hammer study of listing **O-346**.

We also present another of **Brian Stalker's** hammer studies, this one for listing **O-181**, as well as updates from study group members, for several of Brian's earlier hammer studies.

Brian is progressing well on his **Newfie Hammer Analysis** and has now distributed the first section draft, covering listings N-1 through N-19, with thanks to **Kevin O'Reilly** for providing information on the Labrador hammers. Additional participants are welcome to join in this effort and can contact Brian by mail or by phone at 44-(0)1580-752224 or by e-mail at [freda.brian@virgin.net](mailto:freda.brian@virgin.net). He hopes to circulate the next section (N-20 to N-38A) in April.

**Mr. Robert F. Marriage** has added some further information to his article, which appeared in the January-February newsletter, about T.P.O.s in the southern British Columbia interior.

**Mike Street**, a past president of BNAPS, has reported a previously unknown London & Wingham R.P.O. private clerk handstamp. Mike also has come up with a new early date, 1925/03/07, for listing **O-294Bb**, PT. HOPE & TOR, R. P. O. / B. McMILLAN. His example has the same train number, 93, as the latest reported date, April 16, 1928. Mike's copy is a transit backstamp on a cover from Ottawa to Omemee, Ontario.

Your editor was fortunate to discover an example of one of the large Type 5 rubber handstamps, which was previously only known by its proof strike. It is a remarkable coincidence, that the discovery was made at a show held in North Bay, because the handstamp was used on the North Bay & Cochrane R.P.O. It is a transit backstamp on a cover from Alberta to Latchford, Ontario, which could not be delivered and was returned to Alberta, somehow returning to North Bay, 83 years later.

**Bill Robinson** has had heart surgery and after a time in hospital, is now home, where he continues to recuperate. I know that you all join me in wishing Bill a complete and speedy recovery.

Our Secretary-Treasurer, Chris Anstead, advises that study group member, **Alfred N. Peatman** has moved to 2104 Hadow Drive, Edmonton, AB, T6R 3B1.

## Additional Comments About T.P.O.'s in the B.C. Interior

In the previous newsletter, we were treated to an article written by Robert F. Marriage, a retired R.P.O. clerk, now living in Kelowna, BC. Mr. Marriage has commented as follows;

I was delighted to receive a copy of your latest newsletter reproducing my article about the R.P.O.s, that cruised the inland waters of southern B.C., in the golden years of the railroad age. I had the privilege of a few working trips on the Robson & Arrowhead R.P.O., shortly before its demise at the end of 1950. I enjoyed particularly the various illustrations accompanying my article.

The picture of the Penticton wharf (*Page 1678*) was taken from the top of a box car, before the Aberdeen (wooden hull) was scrapped in 1916 and after the completion of the Incola Hotel (behind the trees to the right) and the Kettle Valley offices and station building on the left, behind the freight shed, in 1912. The tracks in the foreground led to the car barge apron. In the thirties, the wharf was gradually replaced by rock fill and the barge slip remained in service, until barge traffic was eliminated in 1972, having served its purpose since 1908.

J. Z. Johnson (*See page 1681*) came to B.C. from the Moose Jaw Postal District. One day in December 1934, he was taken sick going south. A doctor was called to the wharf at Kelowna and wanted to put him in the hospital but he begged to be allowed get home to Penticton. Captain Weeks helped him work the way offices and tie out the dispatches and he made it. He died in the Penticton hospital a few days later.

I joined the R.M.S. at Calgary, in August 1949 and learned a short time later, by way of Ottawa's distribution correction lists, of the elimination of the Lindsay & Haliburton R.P.O. Little did we realize, that the R.M.S. was headed for oblivion. A scant sixteen years later, there was nothing left west of Winnipeg and by 1971, everything else was gone. One could see that the end was inevitable.

It is gratifying to know that people are interested in the R.M.S., when many don't know that such a service ever existed and I hope you will carry on research in this fascinating field. Good luck to you.

**Bill Topping** advises that your editor omitted including steel hammer listing **S-201** from Mr. Marriage's article and supplied a copy for illustration. **Chris Anstead** further points out that **S-143a** CANADIAN PACIFIC RY. / S.S. LINE / STEAMER / ABERDEEN, type 1J, 1905-1954, operating on Lake Okanagan and **S-147** CAN. PAC. RY. / Lake Steamers / PROCTOR, type 1L, 1904, operating on Lake Kootenay might have been included.

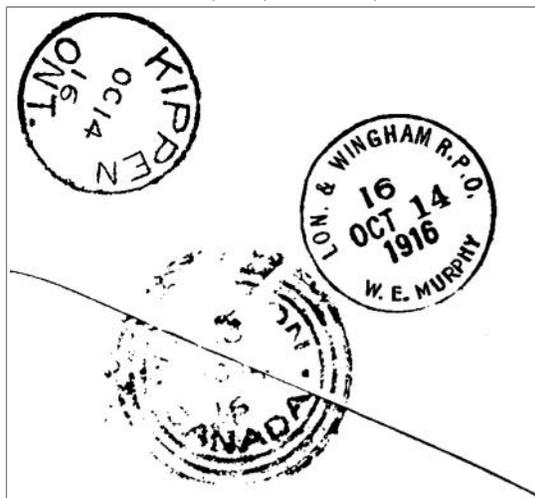
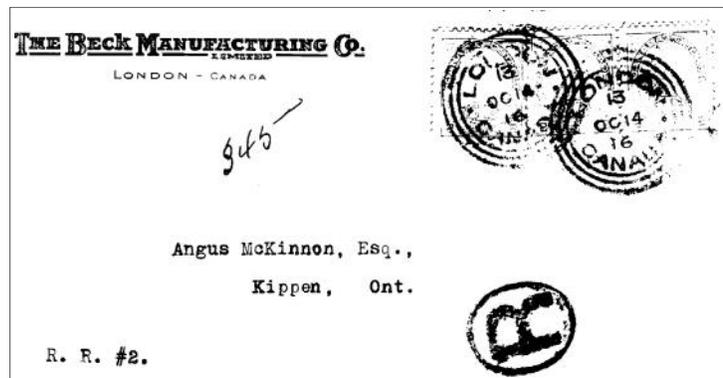


S-201  
Proof Date - unknown  
Period  
1901 to 1902

Bill also writes that **Thurlow Fraser** sent a note about the last runs of another R.P.O. in southern British Columbia. The last runs of the **Nelson-Midway R.P.O.** were September 29, 1957, eastbound train number 68 and September 30, 1957, westbound train number 67.

### A New London & Wingham Private Clerk Handstamp

**Mike Street**, a friend of the study group, has reported this previously unlisted private clerk handstamp used as a blue transit marking on the back of a registered cover originating in London and addressed to Kippen, Ontario. It reads LON. & WINGHAM R. P. O. / W. E. MURPHY, 16, OCT 14, 1916. Kippen was located on the London-Clinton-Wingham G.T.Ry line.

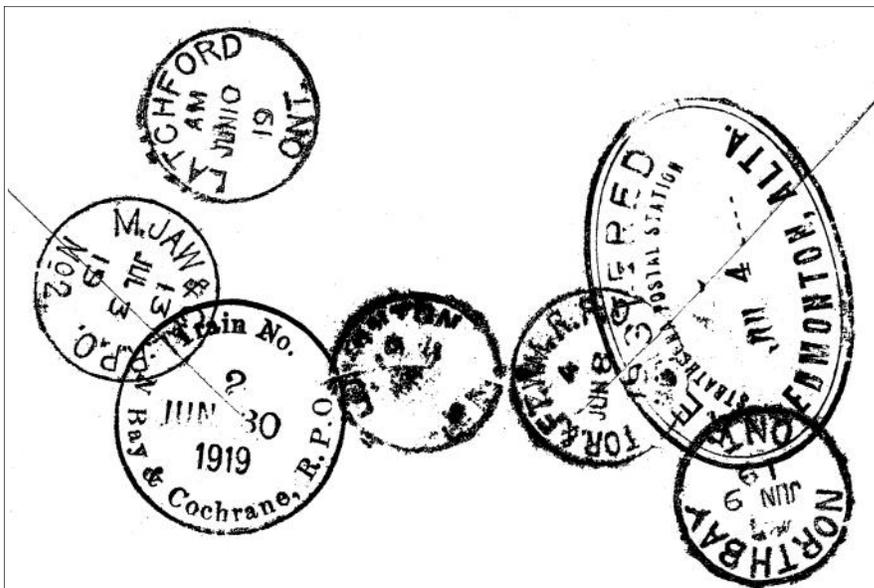
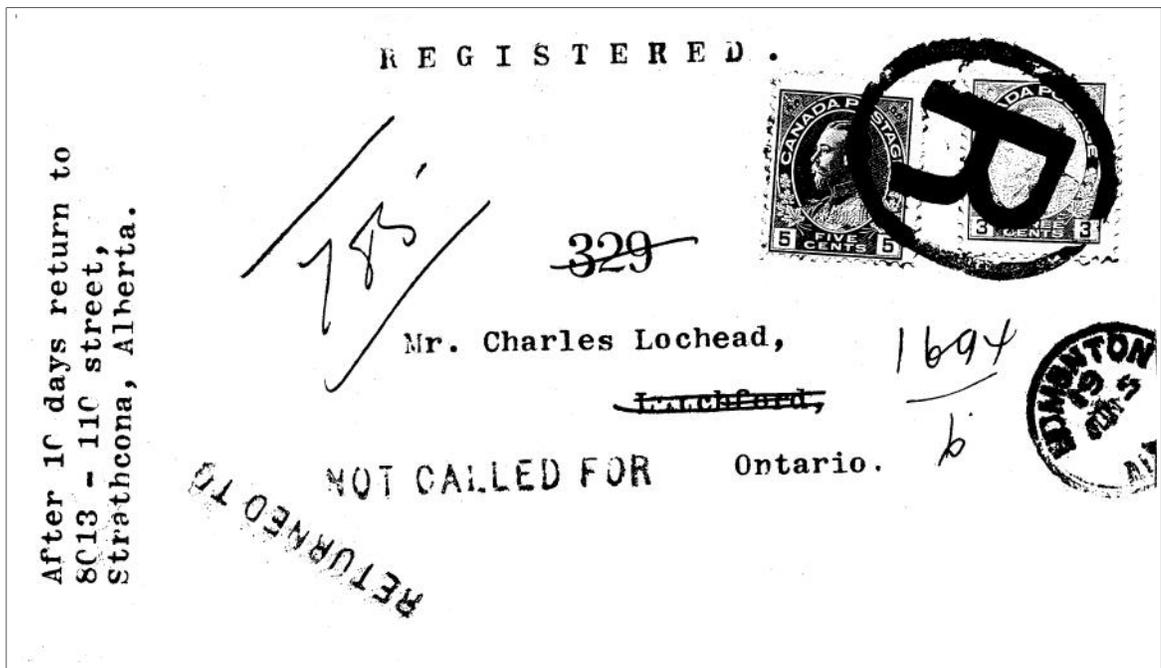


## Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway

This year is the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway, renamed the Ontario Northland Railway in 1946. Railway mail service operated over sections of the line for 58 years, from 1906 until 1964. With this discovery, we can add an additional listing to the group of postmarks, which were used.

The registered cover originated at Edmonton, Alberta on June 5, 1919 and travelled in a closed bag, eastward by rail, via Winnipeg, to Fort William, Ontario, where it was transferred aboard the eastbound Toronto & Fort William R.P.O., C.P.Ry. train #4, on June 8. The following day, it arrived in North Bay, where it was then placed in a sealed bag for the northward trip, by rail to Latchford. After arrival at its destination on the morning of June 10, it was not picked up by the addressee.

Twenty days later, the Latchford postal clerk applied two straight line markings, "NOT CALLED FOR" and "RETURNED TO". On June 30, it was then put on board the southbound North Bay & Cochrane R.P.O., where the mail clerk applied the large rubber handstamp, which was intended for use on facing slips and other internal post office forms. Travelling in a sealed bag, the letter arrived in Moose Jaw, where it was put on the westbound Moose Jaw & Calgary R.P.O., C.P.Ry. train #13, on July 3 and was placed in a closed bag for Edmonton, reaching there the following day.

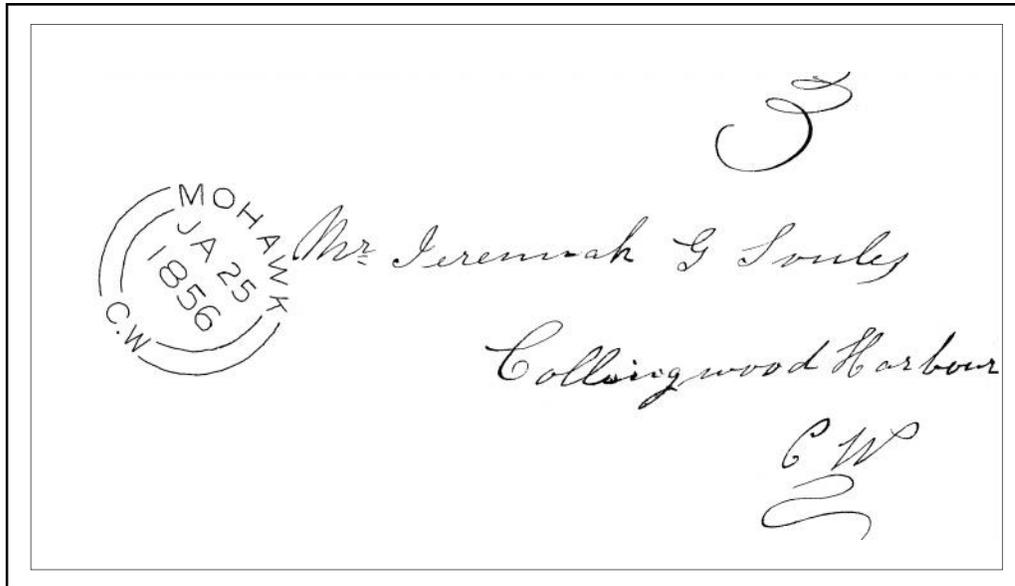


There are two proof strikes dated February 22 and February 27, 1919 in the records. Due to the flexible and variable nature of rubber hammers, no attempt at hammer differentiation has been made.

The strike of **W-87, hammer 2c** is a new early date for the hammer and train 13 is new for the hammer. (See pages 1651-2)

# GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY Hamilton & Toronto

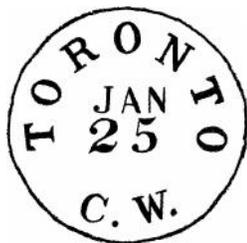
The Great Western Railway completed construction of a 39 mile branch from Hamilton to Toronto on December 3, 1855. The first postmark used on this line is known from January 25, 1856 until September 7, 1859. The only train indicium is C; both UP and DOWN direction indicia were used, although UP is reported as a manuscript correction only.



O-115 HAM. & TOR. R. WAY. P. O. / CONDUCTOR No. 1. C, DOWN, JAN 25, 1856



This cover originated at MOHAWK, C.W. JAN 25, 1856 (*Brant County, Brantford Township, 1823-1922, later Mount Pleasant*) and is addressed to Collingwood Harbour, C.W. The railway post office marking is used as a transit marking on the back of the cover.

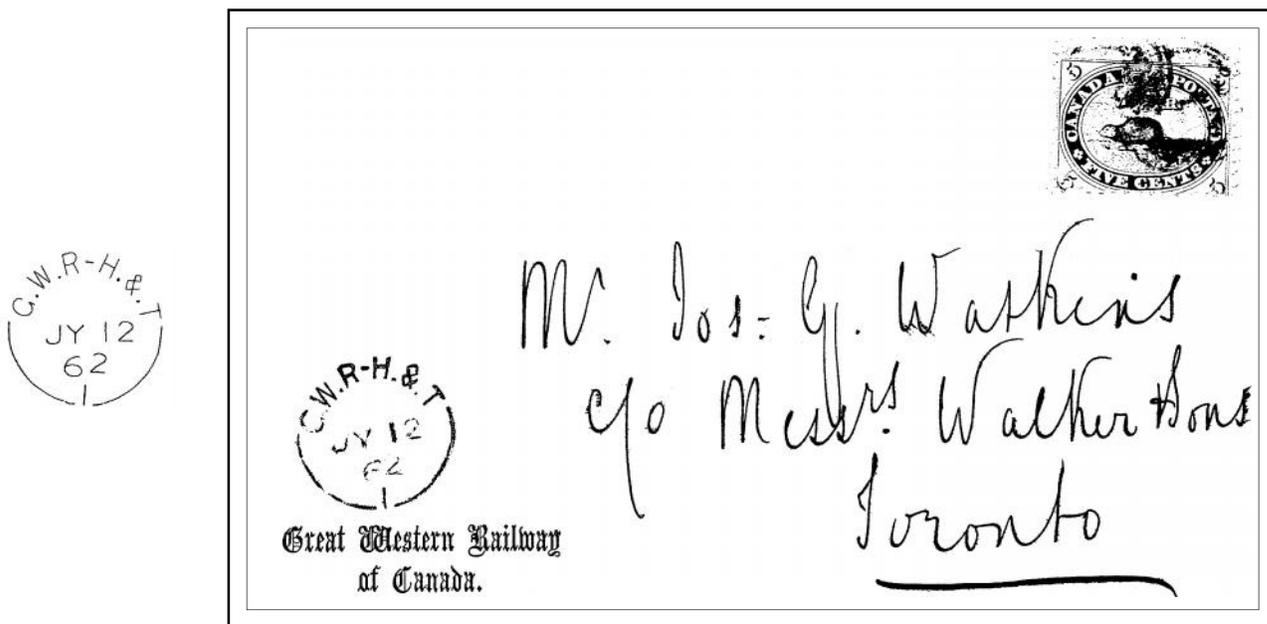


There is also a Toronto transit backstamp as well as another illegible transit marking, probably Hamilton, both dated January 25. The letter likely travelled from Toronto to Collingwood on the Ontario, Simcoe & Huron Railroad.



## GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY Hamilton & Toronto

On July 12, 1860, two new cancellation hammers, differentiated by a simple number "1" or "2" at their bases, were ordered from Berri and were brought into use later the same year.



RR-72                      G. W. R - H. & T   /   1                      JY 12, 62

This company stationery envelope arrived in Toronto the same day, as confirmed by the receiving backstamp.



RR-72                      G. W. R - H. & T   /   2                      EAST, MY 26, 63

The TORONTO, C.W. receiving backstamp is dated the same day.

Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	Indicia
1	unknown	1862/07/12	1870/12/23	EAST, blank
2	unknown	1860/12/27	1874/09/29	EAST, WEST, blank

## GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY Hamilton & Toronto

The pair of cancellations, listed as RR-72, were replaced by a new group of postmarks in 1875 or earlier. Catalogued as **RR-86**, the three hammers of these postmarks are differentiated by the numbers at their bases.



Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	Indicia
1	unknown	1877/10/01	1888/08/11	EAST, WEST, blank
2	unknown	1877/03/02	1881/07/05	EAST, WEST
3	unknown	1875/09/23	1889/09/03	WEST, blank

In 1875, a registered circular date stamp appeared in use. It is catalogued as **RG-20**. The example illustrated here is the latest reported date, October 18, 1876, with the year date numerals reversed. The earliest known date is September 22, 1875. No direction or time indicia were used.



On October 16, 1876, a second registration cancellation for the run was proof struck. Listed as **RG-21**, it is reported used between April 7, 1877 and November 2, 1881.

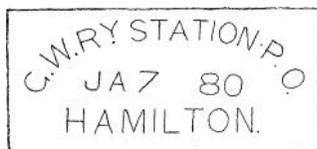
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There were also postmarks being used at the Hamilton station, beginning in 1867. This office existed to sort and direct mail to and from the many railway post offices which either passed through the station or originated and terminated there. Like similar transfer offices in Toronto and London, no registration or other counter service was provided to the public.



DD-12

Proof Date - unknown  
Period - 1867 to 1879



DD-14

Proof Date - 1879/11/31  
Period - 1879 to 1881



DD-16

Proof Date - 1881/04/20  
Period - 1881 to 1890

In 1884, the Great Western Railway amalgamated with the Grand Trunk Railway and the former company's name began to fade from use.

DD-18

Proof Date - 1891/01/03  
Period - 1891 to 1926



DD-19

Proof Date - unknown  
Period - 1909 to 1912

## GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY Hamilton & Toronto

The first new postmarks which appeared after the Grand Trunk Railway assumed control of the line were proof struck in 1889.

There are five hammers of **O-346**, readily identifiable by the number at their bases. Only Hammer 3, by far the longest lived of the set, has been reported with train number indicia.



Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	Indicia
1	1889/10/21	1889/11/01	1901/07/26	W, blank
2	1889/10/21	1889/11/06	1892/10/14	E, W
3	1889/10/21	1893/05/22	1918/07/16	E, W, 5, 12, 83, 89, 92
4	1889/12/02	1891/02/03	1892/05/27	E
5	1890/02/25	1897/02/22	1909/06/10	W



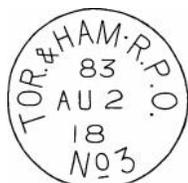
There is no recorded proof strike for the sole hammer of listing **O-344**. The earliest reported date of use is November 9, 1896; the latest date is October 5, 1906. The only direction indicator is W.

Was this hammer intended to replace hammer 3 of O-346?

Ted Woodward first reported **O-346Z** and his discovery is the only recorded example to date. This light, partial strike, with inverted direction indicium, is on a Montreal view post card, addressed to Concord, N.H. There is a Hamilton machine transit cancellation on the card, also dated October 31, 1905, at 5 PM. There is no Concord receiving mark.

It is curious that no other examples have been found, because there is a thickening of the letters, indicating significant wear from fairly heavy use. Such use may have been mainly on internal forms instead of mail.

Was this hammer a replacement for Hammer 1 of O-346?



**O-347** was proof struck on August 2, 1918 but no use has been reported.

We speculate that it was intended to replace O-346, Hammer 3 but was not required, because the short R.P.O. run between Toronto and Hamilton was discontinued the same year, having existed 62 years.

## O-181 Hammer Study from Brian Stalker

Reported in use from 1898 until 1911, two hammers of this postmark can be identified. Train numbers are not known on this postmark, only direction indicia, "E" and "W".

# NIAG'A · FALLS & LONDON · RY · P. O.

— a —



Hammer I



Hammer II

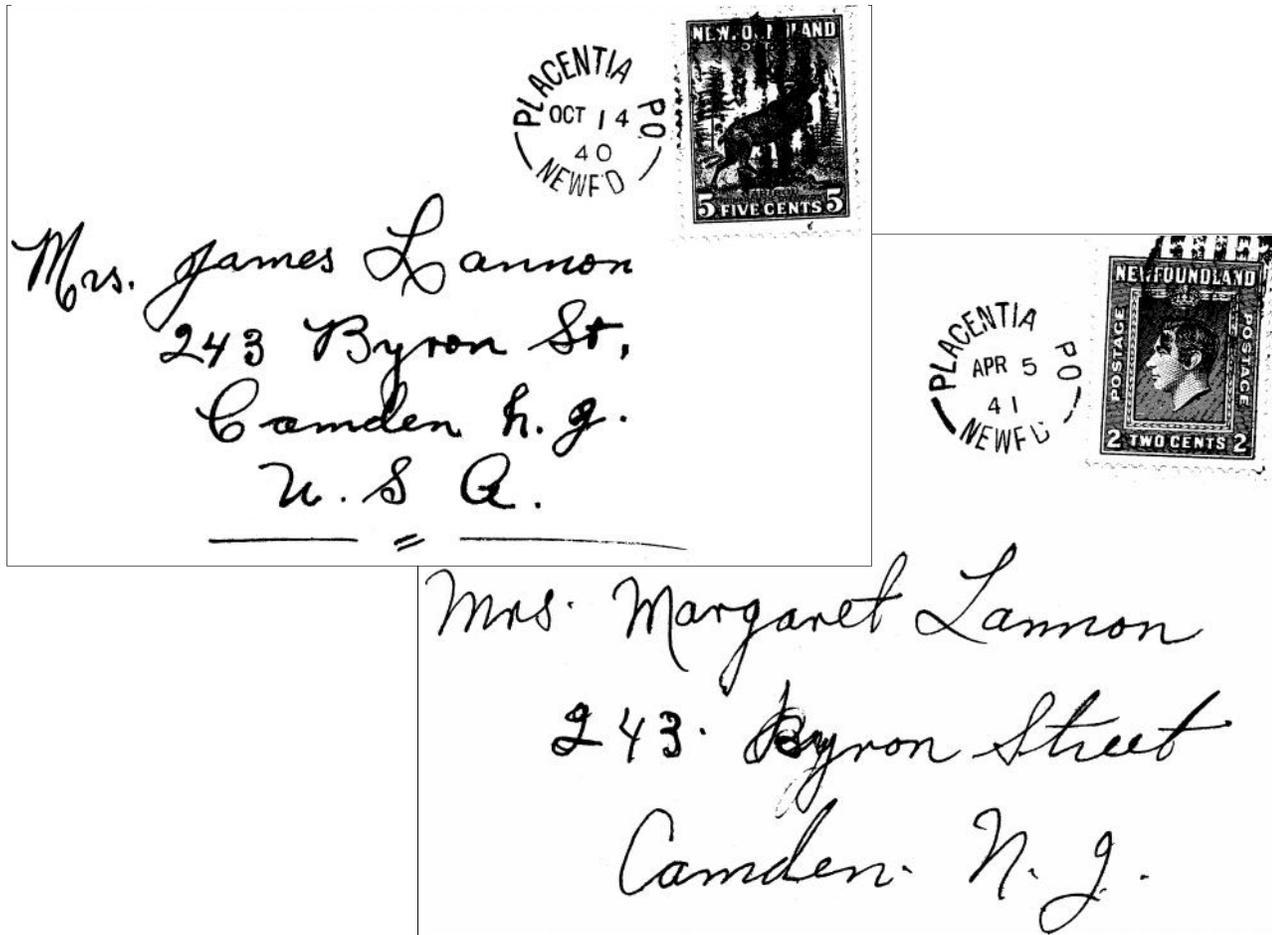
Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	Indicia	a
I	unknown	1898/08/24	1905/10/17	E, W	1
II	unknown	1898/11/22	1908/03/08	E, W	1 1/2

### Editor's Note

The earliest reported date for the listing is 1898/06/29 and the latest reported date is 1911/01/25.

An example of Hammer II, dated January 8, 1900, on a post card to Paris, uses a "19" year indicator instead of the more common "00".

## A Recycled R.P.O. from Newfoundland

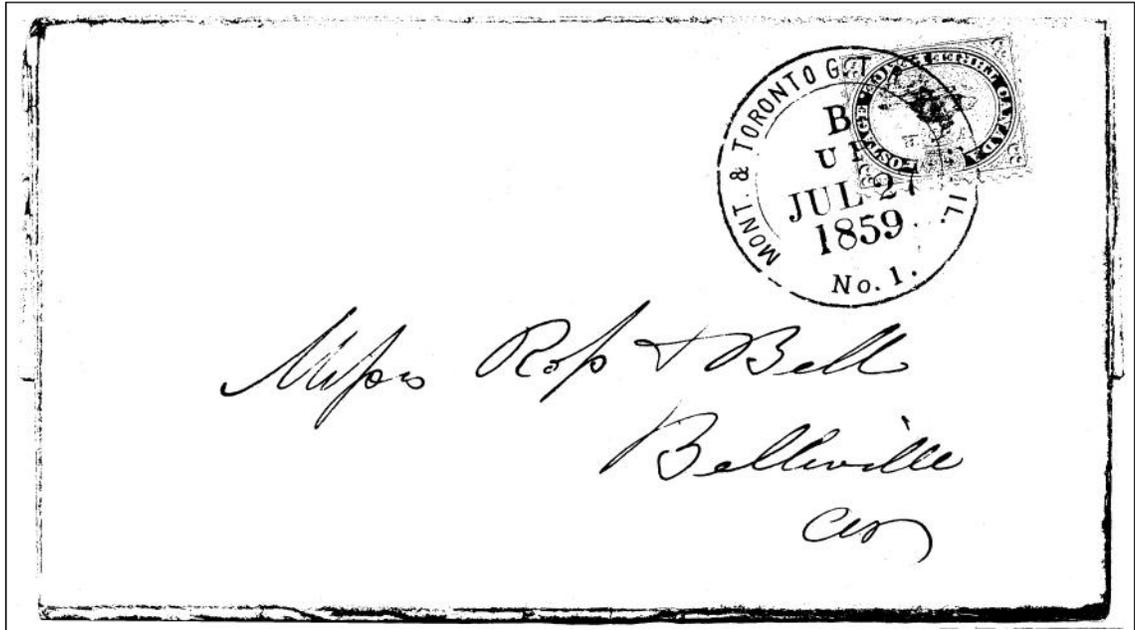


Listing N-74, PLACENTIA R.P.O. / NEWF'D is known to have been used from 1924 until 1934. Sometime after retirement as a R.P.O. postmark, it was modified by removing the "R" and used as a town cancellation for Placentia, as shown by these two covers. The written return address on the earlier cover is Placentia. There are no other postmarks on either of the covers.

# GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY

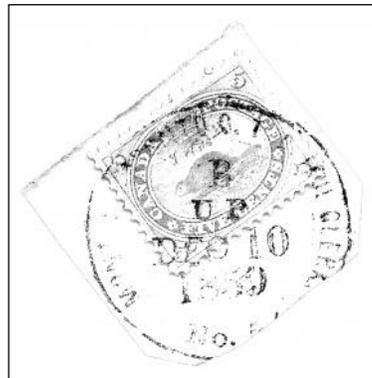
## Montreal & Toronto

Montreal & Toronto postmarks are extremely rare during this early era, probably because of the very long time which it took trains to complete the full route during these pioneer times.



**Q-161 MONT. & TORONTO G. T. R. WAY MAIL. / No. 1. B, UP JUL 27, 1859**

This 3d “1858-59 perforated pence issue” cover from Napanee to Belleville, C.W. has one of two reported examples of the postmark. The date of the receiving backstamp is illegible. The illustration is a retouched, electronically scanned image of the cancellation. The precise punctuation and wording, “WAY MAIL”, as well as the numeral “1” are uncertain.



**Q-161A MONT. & TORONTO G. T. R. MAIL CLERK / No. 5. B, UP DEC 10, 1859**

This strike on piece, originally reported by **Ted Bowen**, is the only confirmed copy of the cancellation.



**Peter McCarthy** reported this partial strike on cover. After various attempts at scanning and superimposing the three images, I could not conclude whether Peter's October 7, 1859 cancellation is an later example of Q-161 or an earlier example of Q-161A.

## The Caboose

**Warren Bosch** reports a new early date, 1898/07/23 for **O-55, Hammer II**, replacing the former ERD of 1898/11/15. (See page 1660, September-October, 2001 newsletter.)

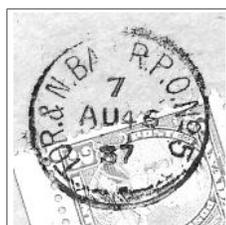
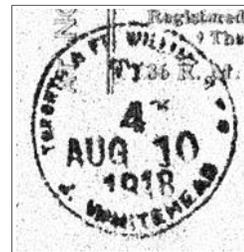
**Jim Felton** reports a new late date, 1898/03/21 for **O-150, Hammer III**, replacing the former LRD of 1898/02/02. (See page 1674, November-December 2001 newsletter.)

**John Watson** reports a new late date, 1915/01/20 for **O-165, Hammer I**, replacing the former LRD of 1914/11/16. (See page 1684, January-February newsletter.)

**John Watson** also reports a new late date, 1909/12/18 for **O-166, Hammer I**, replacing the former LRD of 1909/05/12. (See page 1684, January-February newsletter.)

**Jim Felton** also reports a new late date, 1895/11/06, for **O-166, Hammer II**, replacing the former LRD of 1895/06/27. (See page 1684, January-February newsletter.) Jim sent enlarged copies of his two late examples of O-166, Hammer II on 3<sup>c</sup> Small Queens, W, OC 9, 5 and E, NO 6, 5, which are of extra interest because of the unusual single digit year dates.

**Brian Stalker** found this previously unreported private clerk handstamp, struck in green, on an internal post office acknowledgement form, 36 R.M.S. 75000-3-1-18, which was directed to the Superintendent Railway Mail Service, North Bay, Ont. It reads, TORONTO & FT. WILLIAM R.P.O. / J. WHITEHEAD, Tr, 4, AUG 10, 1918.



On a trimmed cover to Toronto, we find this interesting error. At first it appeared to be a previously unreported train #7 for **O-385, Hammer 5**. Closer examination reveals that the clerk reversed the slugs for the train number, 46, and the day of the month, 7.

Another probable train number error, "34", is found on the same hammer, dated November 4 of the following year. There are no reports of train 34 or even train 43, for the Toronto-North Bay run. This example is on a cover from Barrie to Tillsonburg.



In the May-June, 2001 edition of the newsletter (page 1644), we examined the use of Emergency listing **E-1, Hammer 5**. This substitute cancellation is known used between August 31 and September 29, 1959, on trains 5 and 6 to replace one of the normal Toronto-Sudbury hammers of O-414.

I recently found a new example, on piece, with train number indicium **4**, dated September 29, 1959.

We note that there were a couple of references to, "U.S. Narrow Gauge Mail Routes and Postal Markings", in the November 21, 2001 and January 28, 2002 editions of Linn's Stamp News, in a regular column "Postal History" by Richard B. Graham. This book was compiled by veteran study group member, **Jim Felton** and was recently published by the Mobile Post Office Society, Box 21, Holmdel, NJ, 07733-0021 and is available from them.

Colin Campbell has a signed copy of Barrie Sanford's book about the Kettle Valley Railway, "McCullough's Wonder" for sale. The price is \$10.00 plus postage.

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