

**Railway Post Offices Postmarks Used in Southern  
Manitoba**

*a postal history exhibit*

**by**

**Robert K. Lane**

## **Railway Post Offices Postmarks Used in Southern Manitoba**

In 1881, the Post Office began operating Railway Post Office (RPO) cars in Manitoba. In all, until the early 1970s, 48 different (RPO) listings and 116 hammers were used in the region south of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) main line in Manitoba.

RPOs on the CPR main line are exhibited separately, as are the RPOs used north of the CPR main line in Manitoba.

This exhibit provides examples of all 48 listings, within the context of their historical development. Basic data for all 116 hammers is also included. The examples are presented by railway company, then by “lines”, which are ordered chronologically. This is possible because the post office did not shift any of the specific hammers from one railway company to another. The two railway companies were the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian Northern Railway (later, Canadian National Railway) and their predecessors.

The exhibit is presented as follows:

### **Canadian Pacific Railway:**

- The Pembina Line - from 1881
- The Deloraine Line – from 1885
- The Glenboro Line – from 1888
- The Estevan Line – from 1892
- The Gretna Line – from 1892

### **Canadian Northern Railway/Canadian National Railway:**

- Winnipeg-Brandon Line (Winnipeg-Regina Line) – from 1892
- Winnipeg-Virden Line – from 1907
- Winnipeg- Emerson and Winnipeg-Pembina Lines – from 1915
- The Ontario Connection: Ft. Frances Line (from 1907) and the CNR main line (from 1938)

Items of special interest and high rarity factors are highlighted in red. Although rates are described, illustrating one of several collecting interests that can be studied in the covers and cards of RPO collections, the main focus is on the history of the RPOs.

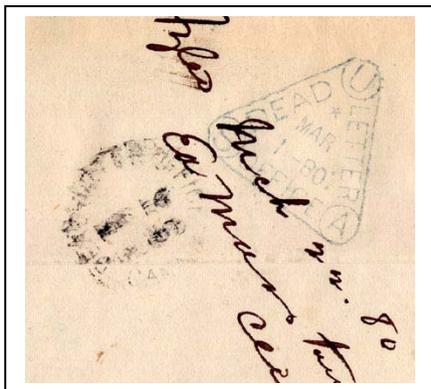
The Emerson Section  
of the Canadian Pacific  
Railway ; Pre-RPO

While plans were being made to complete the Canadian Pacific Railway, Donald Smith and partners built the **St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway (SPMM)** up to the Minnesota-Manitoba border. The first railway line in Manitoba, the so-called **Emerson Section** (later taken over by the C.P.R.), between Pembina, N.D. and Selkirk, was built to meet the SPMM line in the U.S.A. in January 1879.

Before RPOs were introduced in **1881**, mail was shipped aboard baggage cars between St. Vincent, Minn. and Winnipeg.

RATE: 3c plus 5c RLS registration

[ Cover embossed "Selkirk County Court" sent by registered mail (8 cents) to Brainerd, Minnesota. Marked with Winnipeg split-circle **JA 8 1880**; St. Vincent transit mark JAN 9 1880; UNCLAIMED at Brainerd; Brainerd octagonal FEB 24 1880; b/s USA DEAD LETTER OFFICE and DEAD LETTER OFFICE CANADA (Ottawa). ]



Scan of the b/s markings (reduced to 80%).



CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

The Emerson Section (the Pembina Line)

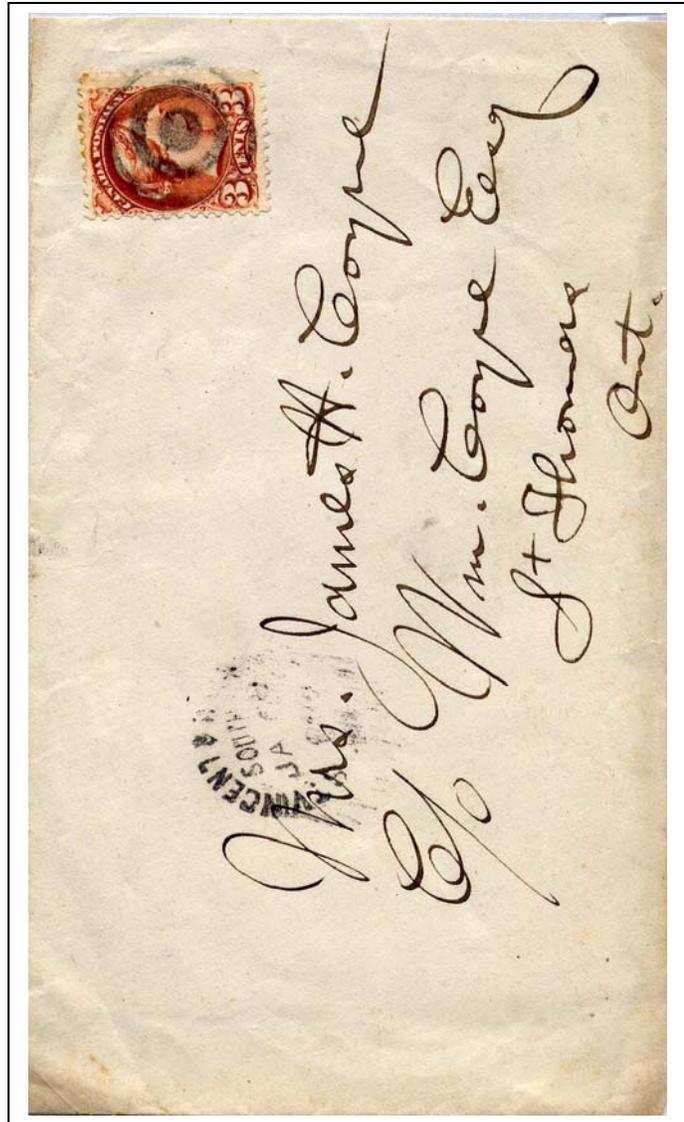


1884 map of Red River Valley, showing the Emerson Section on the east side of the river, and the Gretna line on the west.

The first RPO service in Manitoba used the ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG hammers between 1881 and 1886, on the Emerson Section (also called the Pembina Line). Two configurations (W-134 and W-134A) were issued.

No Canadian RPO hammers were in use on this CPR line between 1886 and 1908. The Canadian Northern Railway line to ND, leased from the Northern Pacific Railway, began RPO service in 1905.

There was no apparent Canadian RPO service at all to the Manitoba border for two years, when service began (1889) on the CPR line to Gretna, Man., which linked to the Great Northern Railway at Neche, ND (treated later). Service on the first CPR line on the east side resumed in 1908 with W-6.



R.F. = 500

W-134 ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG / P.C. – (JA 20 1882) to James Coyne of St. Thomas, Ontario, grandfather of the later Governor of the Bank of Canada. B/s Windsor and St. Thomas.

This split-ring postmark is an example of the first RPO used in Western Canada.

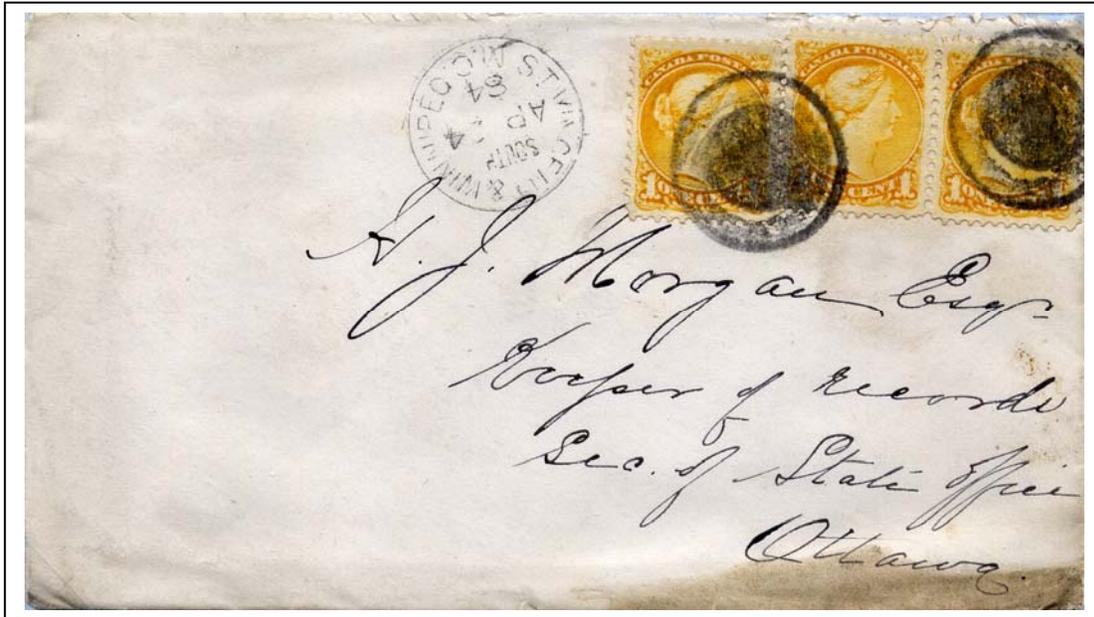
The Canadian Pacific Railway

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-134	NIPB	Aug 18, 1881	March 4, 1883
W-134A (1)	July 12, 1882	Aug 23, 1882	Oct 24, 1884
W-134A (2)	NIPB	March 20, 1883	May 9, 1883
W-134A (3)	Aug 5, 1883	March 5, 1884	Aug 5, 1884

W-134: ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG / P.C.

W-134A: ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG / M.C.

The second of the ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG listings:



[ W-134A (1882-1886) (R.F. = 425); ST. VINCENT & WINNIPEG / M.C., AP 24, 1884, SOUTH; the earliest RPO cancellations used a dater and a killer ]

Cover to Henry Morgan, Chief Clerk in the Department of the Secretary of State.

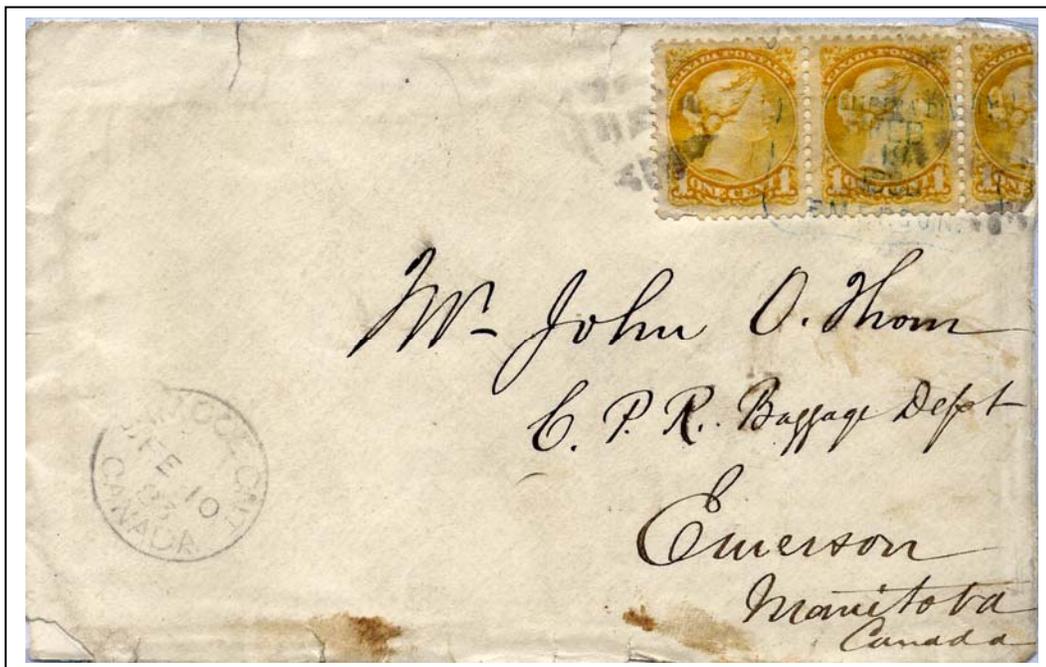
RATE: 3c domestic letter rate.

On the east side of the Red River, RPO services were broken until 1908. The CPR completed a line on the west side, to Gretna. The RPO W-185 WINNIPEG & GRETNA M.C. / No. was the first on this line.

year	CPR-east side	CPR-west side
1881	W-134	
1882	W-134A	
1883	LRD, W-134	
1886	LRD, W-134A	
1887-8	none	none
1889	none	W-185
1904	none	W-53
1905	none	W-53
1908	W-6	W-53

There is a lack of continuity in RPO services between Winnipeg and the USA along the Red River. The CPR main line from Winnipeg to eastern Canada became the faster route and the flood turned. Secondly, the new need for RPO cars on the main line could have required those used on this line.

Interesting marking: Ticket Stamp



Cover to **C.P.R. Baggage Dept., Emerson, Man.** from Simcoe, Ont. (FE 10 83), with Brantford (FE 10 83) and Windsor (FE 12 83) transit marks and Emerson receiver on the back. Stamps were also struck with an **UNLISTED TICKET STAMP** summarized below, repeated twice on the back. This usage of a ticket stamp was not authorized.

**CANADIAN  
PACIFIC RY**

**PEMBINA DIV.  
FEB  
19  
1883  
EMERSON.**

The Canadian Pacific Railway

The "Boundary Line" RPOs

Two RPO listings, totaling four hammers, were the only other RPOs used on the CPR line on the east side of the Red River.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-6 (1)	NIPB	March 5, 1908	July 29, 1919
W-6 (2)	NIPB	Nov 19, 1920	Dec 12, 1928
W-5 (1)	March 3, 1944	May 4, 1944	May 3, 1965
W-5 (2)	Apr 23, 1930	Oct 29, 1930	Aug 17, 1943

W-6: B.L. & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / No.

W-5: BDRY LINE & WPG. R.P.O. / No.



W-6: B.L. & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / No., JUN 30, 1908 (first year of reported use), N, hammer #1  
 Cancelled on the RPO, receiver at Niverville.  
 RATE: 1c domestic post card rate.

The Canadian Pacific Railway

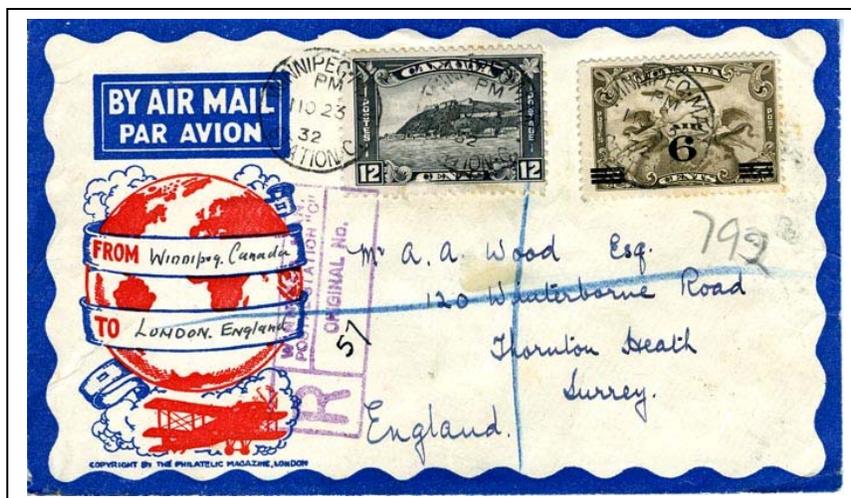


Image (75%) of the front of the cover described below.



[W-5: BDRY LINE & WPG. R.P.O. / No., NO 23 32, train 110, hammer # 2]  
 Registered air mail cover from Winnipeg Station C, to England via New York.  
 RATE: 10c registry, plus 8c air mail; the 8c air mail rate to the USA began Aug. 1, 1932.  
 Possibly philatelic in origin but the RPO is not philatelic.

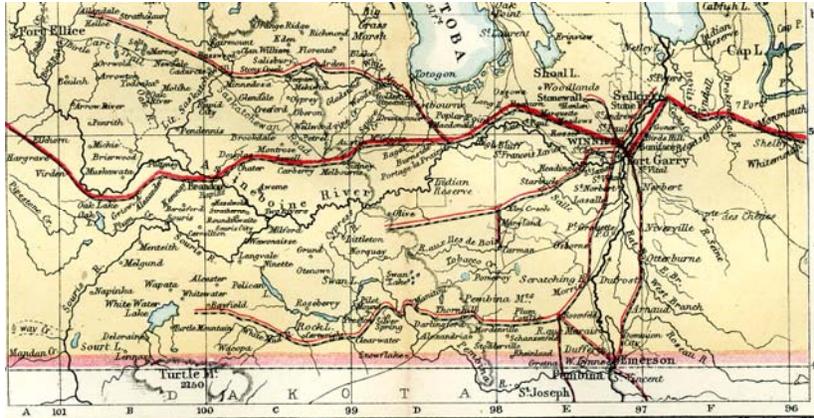
The use of the term "Boundary Line" or an abbreviation of it, in RPOs, also occurred at this time in the United States. At the Manitoba border, these examples were used:

- B. LINE & ST. PAUL / R.P.O. St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway
- B.L. GLENWOOD & ST. PAUL / R.P.O. Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste Marie Railway
- B. LINE & GD. FORKS / R.P.O. Great Northern Railway

# The Canadian Pacific Railway

## West of the Red River

In 1884, the CPR leased the lines of the Manitoba South-Western Colonization Railway and developed two strong lines westward that spanned the province.



1887 map of the CPR lines in Manitoba, showing the beginnings of the two E-W lines south of the main line. These two lines became homes to two of the three Canadian squared circle RPOs:

### The GLENBORO Line: Winnipeg-Glenboro-Souris-Regina



W-150: SOURIS & WINNIPEG M.C.,  
LEFT: proof ; RIGHT: MY 29 00, EAST, hammer #2

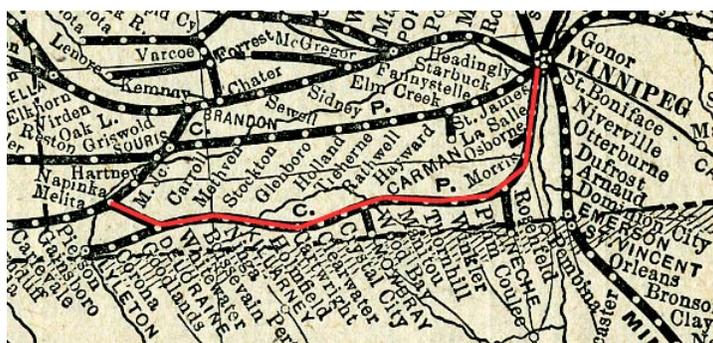
### The DELORAINE Line: Winnipeg-Deloraine-Napinka



W-94: NAPINKA & WINNIPEG M.C.,  
LEFT: proof ; RIGHT: DE 30 99, E, hammer #1 (on map stamp)

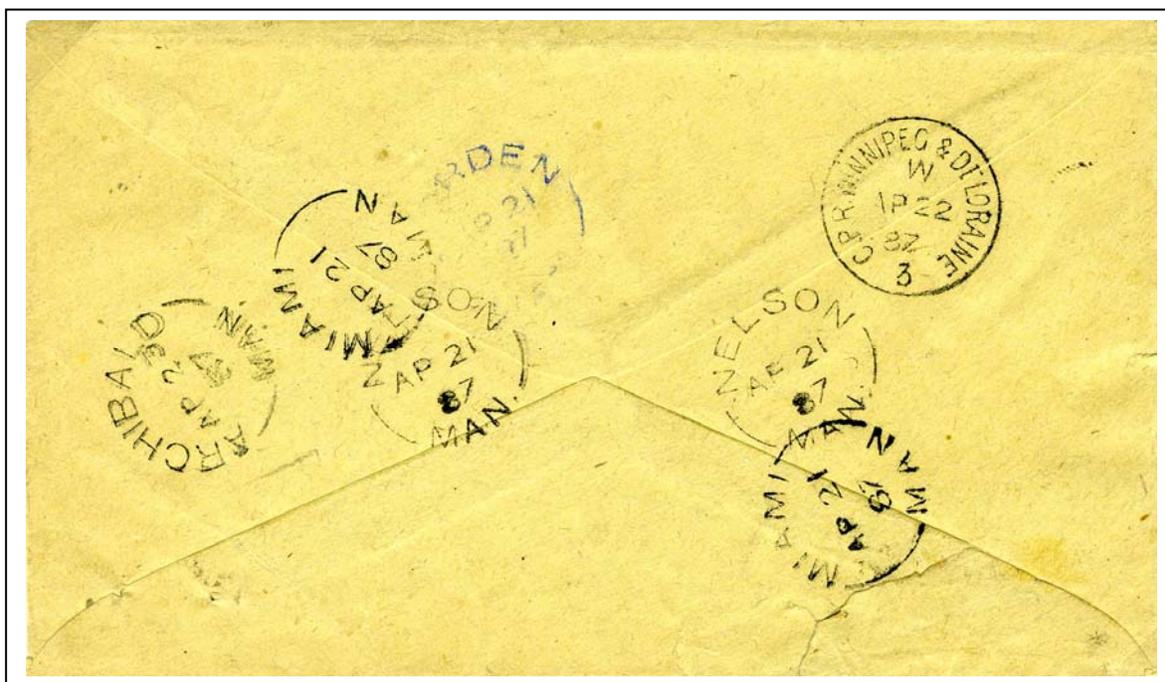
## The Canadian Pacific Railway

### The "Deloraine" Line



	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-190T	NIPB	March 5, 1885	July 17, 1886
W-178 (1)	Jan 9, 1887	Oct 9, 1888	Aug 21, 1891
W-178 (2)	Jan 9, 1887	Feb 2, 1887	Jan 14, 1891
W-178 (3)	Jan 9, 1887	April 22, 1887	Sep 26, 1892
W-94 (1)	Jan 16, 1894	Jan 26, 1894	Jan 7, 1907
W-94 (2)	Jan 16, 1894	Feb 2, 1894	June 12, 1907

W-190T: WINNIPEG & MANITOU M.C. / #  
W-178: C.P.R. WINNIPEG & DELORAINE / No.  
W-94: NAPINKA & WINNIPEG M.C.

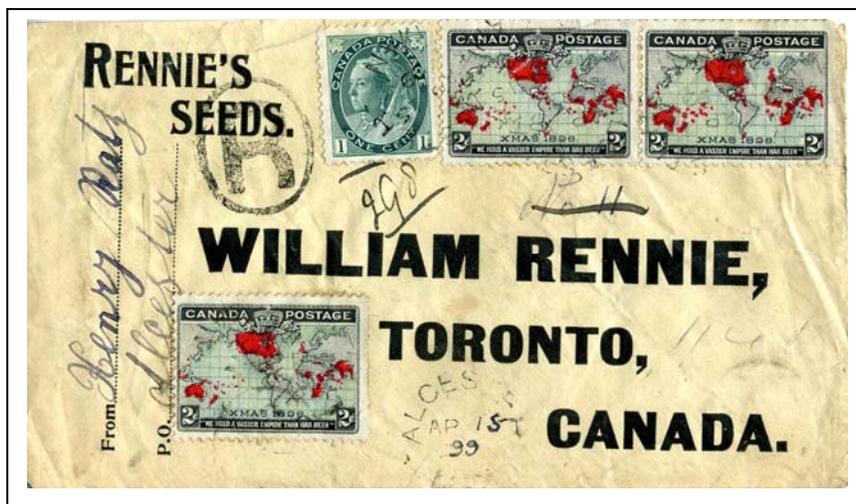


W-178: C.P.R. WINNIPEG & DELORAINE / No., AP 22 87 (ERD for hammer), W, hammer 3;  
Registered at Miami, MB, addressed to Manitou; transit marks Nelson (1882-1908), Morden, W-178;  
Archibald receiver. Archibald (1879-1889) became Manitou in 1889. RATE: 3c plus 2c registry.

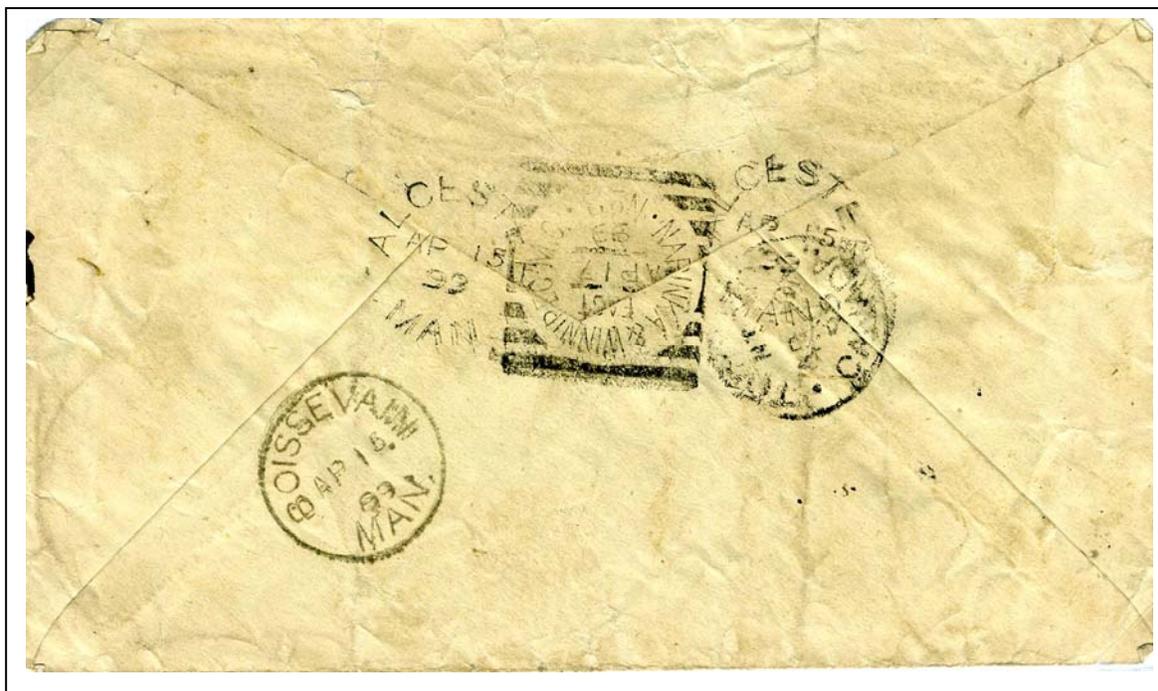


W-94: NAPINKA & WINNIPEG M.C., FE 24 02 (reversed "4"), WEST, hammer #1; registered mail free, in Ottawa; transit W-94; Pilot Mound receiver.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



Scan (at 75%) of the front of the cover described below.



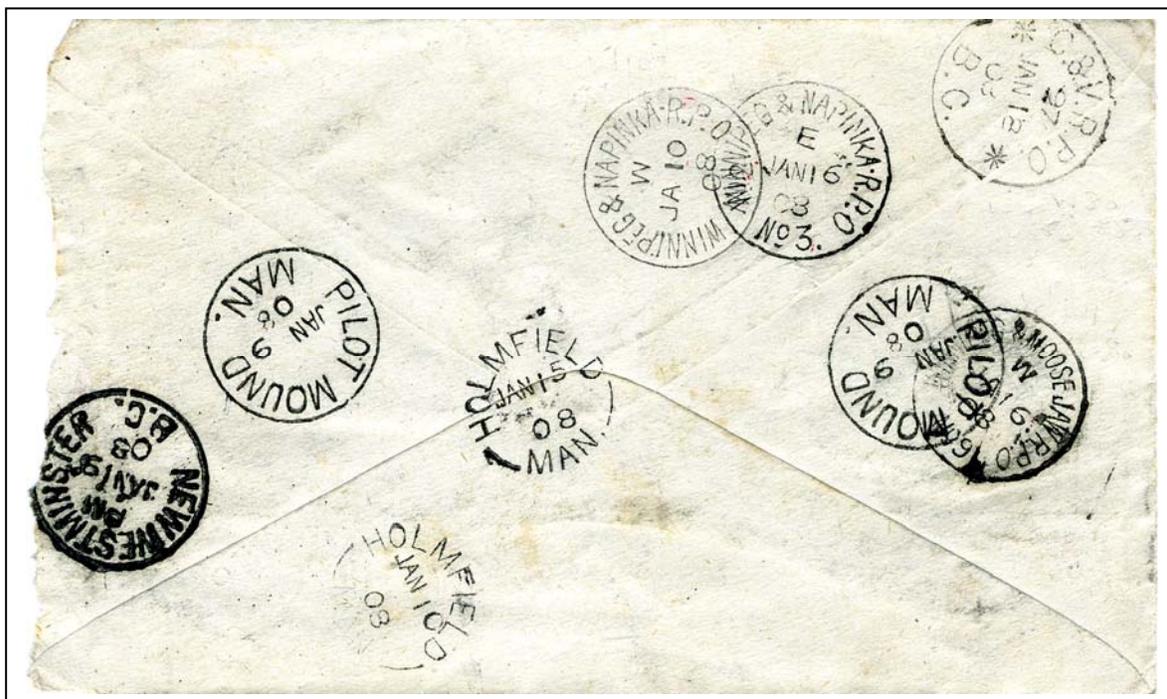
W-94: NAPINKA & WINNIPEG M.C., AP 17 99 **EAST**, hammer #2;  
registered in Alcester, MB (1884-1907); transit Boissevain, W-94; Toronto receiver.  
RATE: 7c registration paid with three map stamps and one cent leaf.

The Canadian Pacific Railway

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-197 (1)	NIPB	Sept 6, 1907	May 13, 1924
W-197 (2a)	NIPB	Sept 29, 1908	Feb 26, 1909
W-197 (2b)	Mar 9, 1909	Oct 25, 1909	Aug 11, 1920
W-197 (3a)	NIPB	Aug 26, 1907	Dec ?, 1917
W-197 (3b)	Dec 3, 1923	May 31, 1924	May 31, 1924
W-198 (4)	Dec 29, 1921	July 3, 1923	July 1, 1924

W-197: WINNIPEG & NAPINKA R.P.O.

W-198: WINNIPEG & NAPINKA R.P.O. No. /.



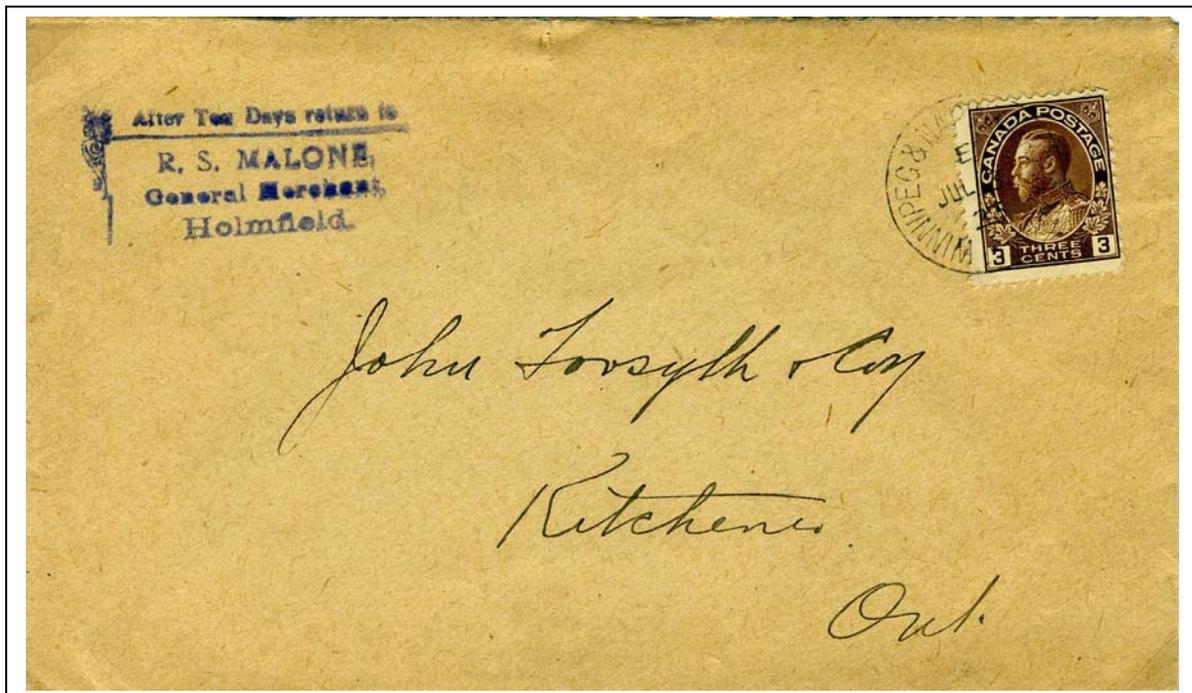
**BOTH DIRECTIONS:**

W-197: WINNIPEG & NAPINKA R.P.O., JA 10 08 (ERD for hammer), **W**, hammer #2; and JA 16 08, **E**, hammer #3; registered at Pilot Mound to Marringhurst, MB; transit mark from W-197; Holmfield receiver; forwarded to New Westminister from Holmfield; transit marks W-197, W-196 (WINNIPEG & MOOSE JAW RPO), and C & V RPO; New Westminister receiver. RATE: 7c domestic registration.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



**Curious example.** W-197: WINNIPEG & NAPINKA R.P.O., OC 5 15, train 122, hammer #3; it appears that the RPO crew cancelled the 3c letter rate but did not cancel the Special Delivery stamp; then (perhaps in Winnipeg) a clerk cancelled with an available stamp: **PLEASE RETURN THIS COVER TO THE POSTMASTER.** That hand-stamp was perhaps available to mark inbound foreign mail with insufficient postage that ultimately had to be reported by the postmaster.

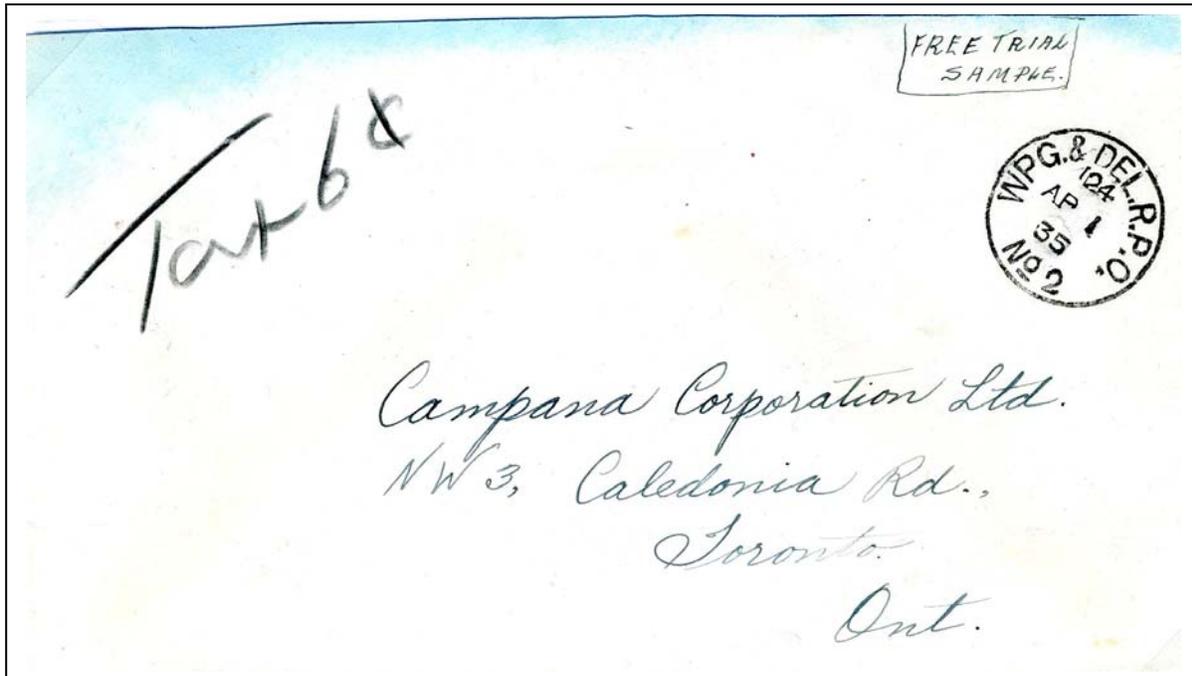


W-198: WINNIPEG & NAPINKA R.P.O. No. /., **RF=405**, JUL 3 23, E, hammer #4; commercial cover from Holmfield to Kitchener. **RATE: 3c domestic letter rate.**

The Canadian Pacific Railway

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-179 (1)	Sept 23, 1925	Apr 2, 1928	Apr 12, 1950
W-179 (2a)	Sept 23, 1925	June 2, 1927	Sept 4, 1937
W-179 (2b)	Feb 25, 1938	Mar 13, 1946	Nov 8, 1956
W-179 (4)	Sept 23, 1925	May 7, 1927	Dec 12, 1942
W-179A	NIPB	Nov 8, 1955	May 29, 1956
W-179C (4)	Mar 13, 1945	June 11, 1945	July 10, 1957
W-179 (1)	Sept 23, 1925	Apr 2, 1928	Apr 12, 1950
W-179 (2a)	Sept 23, 1925	June 2, 1927	Sept 4, 1937
W-179 (2b)	Feb 25, 1938	Mar 13, 1946	Nov 8, 1956
W-179 (4)	Sept 23, 1925	May 7, 1927	Dec 12, 1942
W-179A	NIPB	Nov 8, 1955	May 29, 1956
W-179C (4)	Mar 13, 1945	June 11, 1945	July 10, 1957

W-179: WPG. & DEL. R.P.O. / No.  
W-179A: WPG. & DEL. R.P.O. / .  
W-179C: WPG. & DEL R.P.O. No. / .

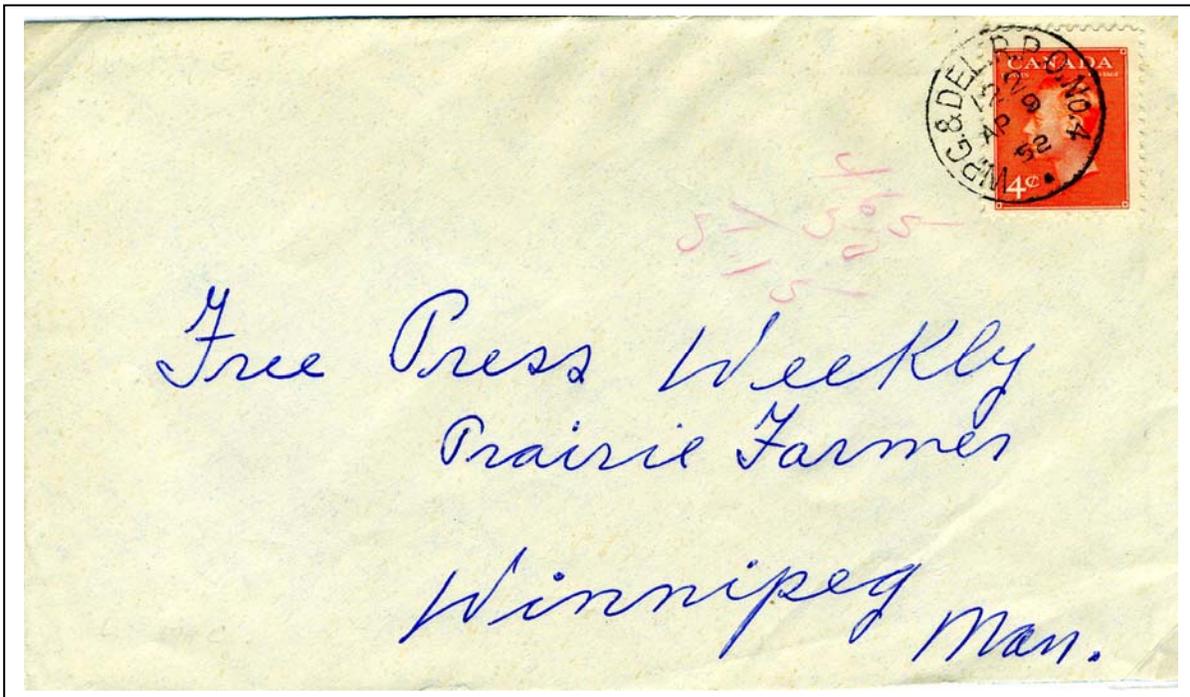


W-179: WPG. & DEL. R.P.O. / No., AP 1 35, train 124, hammer #2; "Campana" cover mailed without postage on the excuse of "free trial sample". Postage due (tax) 6 cents.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



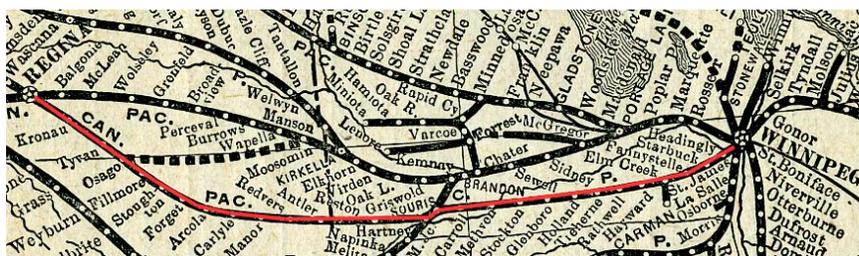
W-179A: WPG. & DEL. R.P.O. / ., 8 XI 55, train 124;  
the scarcest of all the southern Manitoba RPOs (RF=500)  
registered Morden to Winnipeg. RATE: 30c domestic registration for indemnity \$25-\$50.



W-179C: WPG. & DEL R.P.O. No. / ., AP 9 52, train 122, hammer #4. RATE: 4c domestic letter rate.

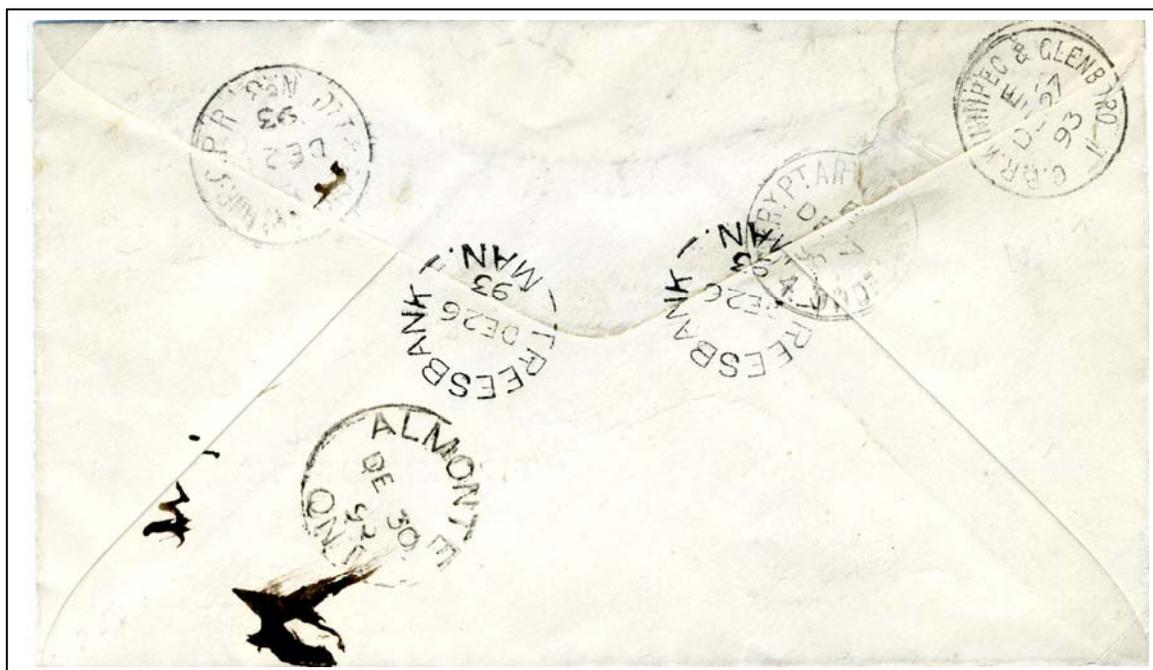
## The Canadian Pacific Railway

### The "Glenboro" Line



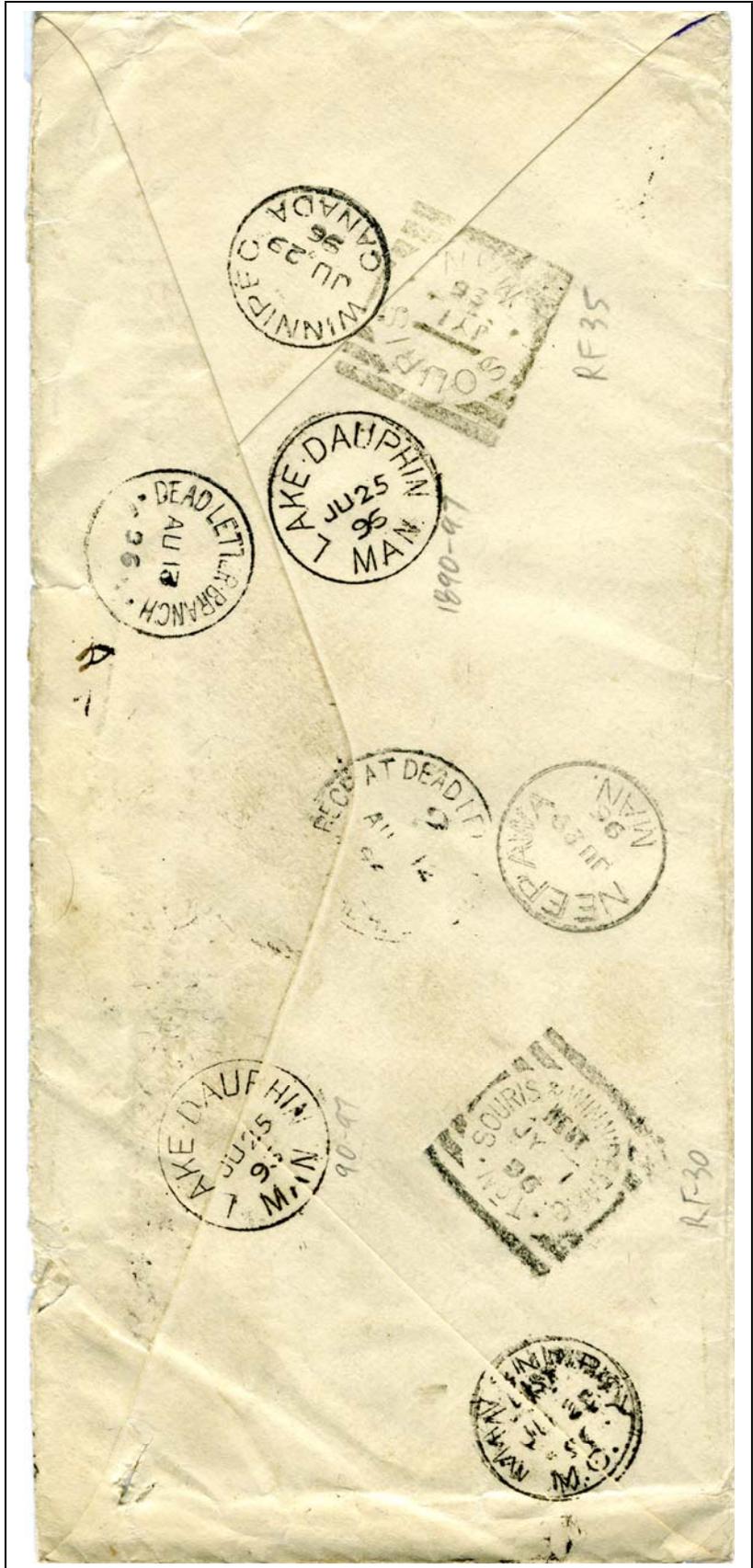
	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-184	Jan 9, 1887	July 7, 1888	Feb 14, 1899
W-150 (1)	Jan 16, 1894	May 7, 1894	Feb 5, 1912
W-150 (2)	Jan 16, 1894	June 21, 1895	Sept 16, 1908
W-204 (1a)	Nov 6, 1908	May 25, 1931	Dec 18, 1938
W-204 (1b)	Apr. 16, 1912	Aug 5, 1912	June 28, 1918
W-204 (2)	Nov 6, 1908	Dec 15, 1908	Dec 15, 1923
W-205 (1)	June 24, 1939	Nov 14, 1939	Jan 16, 1942
W-205 (2)	Sept 25, 1926	Mar 11, 1933	Apr 21, 1939

W-184: C.P.R. WINNIPEG & GLENBORO / # W-204: WINNIPEG & SOURIS / No.  
 W-150: SOURIS & WINNIPEG M.C., W-205: WP'G & SOURIS R.P.O.



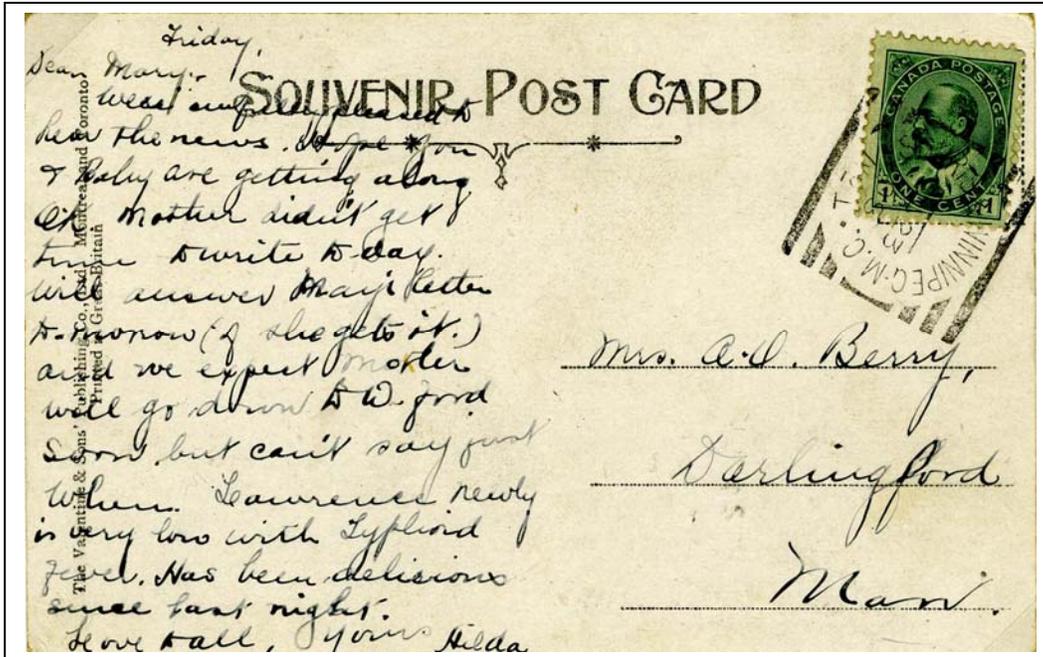
W-184: C.P.R. WINNIPEG & GLENBORO, DE 27 93, E, hammer #1;  
 Registered cover from Treesbank to Almonte, ON, with transit marks from O-280 and O-257.  
 RATE: 8c domestic registration.

The Canadian Pacific Railway

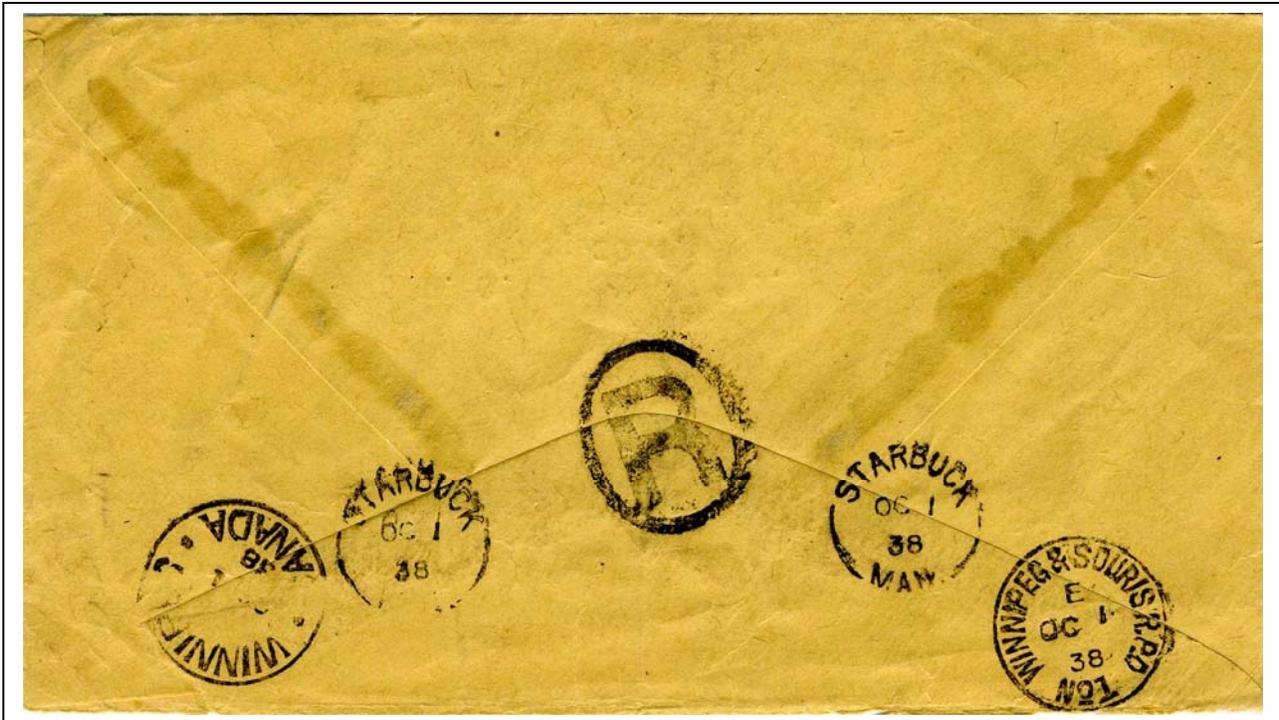


**W-150: SOURIS & WINNIPEG M.C., JY 1 96, WEST (also very scarce), hammer #1; Back of registered cover from Lake Dauphin (1890-1897) to Souris and returned (NOT CALLED FOR ), includes MAN. N.W. Ry M.C., Neepawa And Winnipeg transit marks, Souris squared circle receiver, DEAD LETTER BRANCH receiver.**

The Canadian Pacific Railway



W-150: SOURIS & WINNIPEG M.C., OC 23 08, **direction omitted** (very scarce), hammer #1; postcard to Darlingford. RATE: 1c domestic postcard rate.

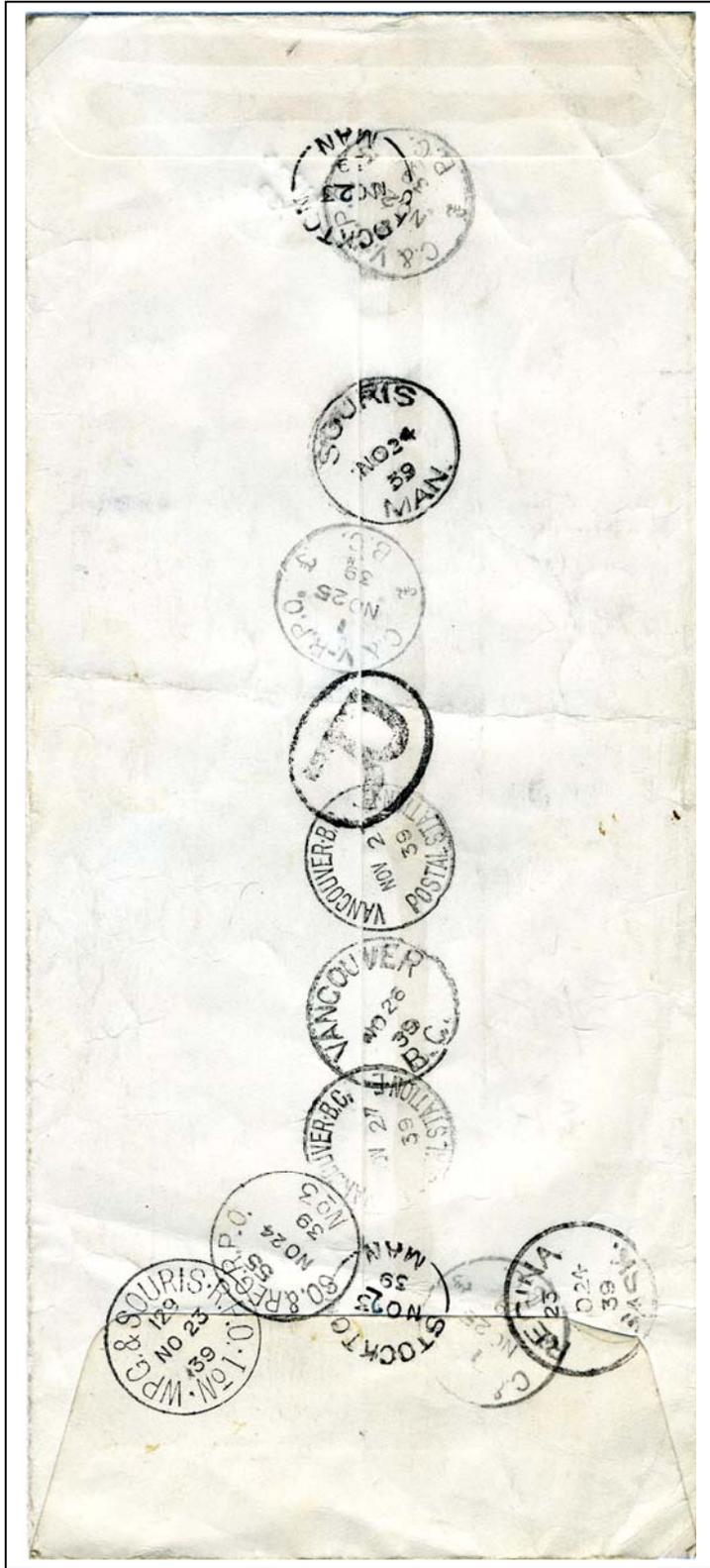


W-204: WINNIPEG & SOURIS / No., OC 1 38, E, hammer #1; late example, registered cover from Starbuck, MB to Winnipeg. RATE: 13c domestic registration.

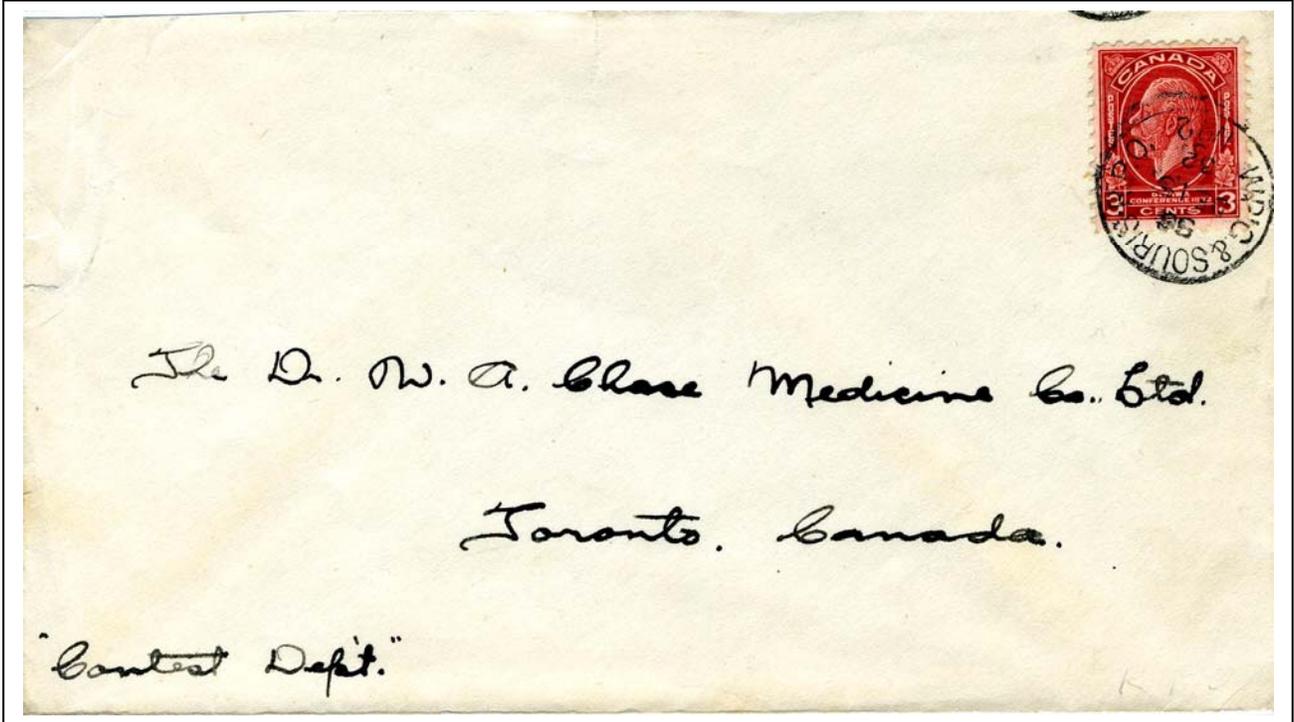
The Canadian Pacific Railway

W-205: WPG &  
SOURIS R.P.O. was  
issued in 2 hammers,  
each showing  
different  
punctuation.  
WPG & SOURIS  
R.P.O., hammer #1  
WPG & SOURIS  
R.P.O., hammer #2

W-205 WPG &  
SOURIS R.P.O., NO  
23 39, Train 129,  
hammer #1;  
registered from  
Stockton, MB, to  
Vancouver; other  
transit marks at  
Souris, SO. & REG  
RPO, Regina, C&V-  
RPO, Vancouver;  
and Vancouver  
Station E receiver.  
RATE: 13c domestic  
registration.



The Canadian Pacific Railway



W-205 WP'G & SOURIS R.P.O., DE 13 32, train 56, hammer #2 (showing the apostrophe).  
Cover eastbound to Toronto. RATE: 3c domestic letter rate

The CPR developed this line westward from Souris to Regina; reaching Regina in 1904.  
In 1908, a line was completed from Reston on this line to Wolseley on the CPR main line.

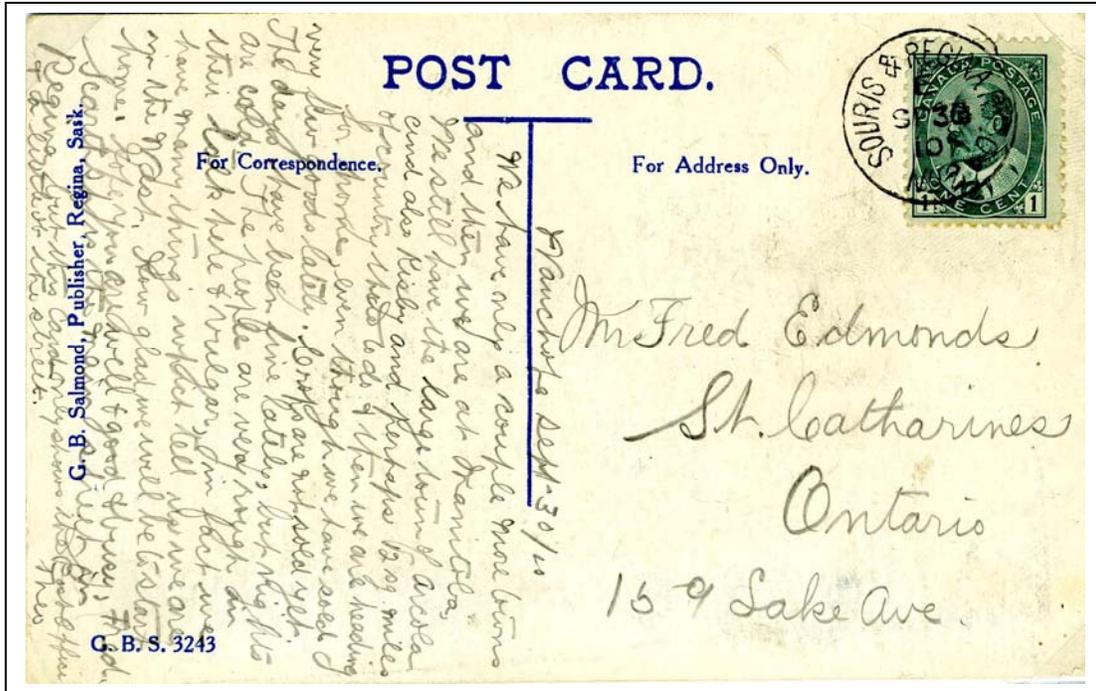
	Proof date	ERD	LRD
W-149 (1a)	NIPB	July 9, 1907	Dec 23, 1924
W-149 (1b)	June 15, 1929	Jan 3, 1933	Sept 28, 1943
W-149 (2a)	NIPB	Nov 26, 1907	Dec 21, 1912
W-149 (2b)	April 15, 1927	Nov 10, 1927	July 9, 1938
W-149 (3)	NIPB	March 27, 1907	March 31, 1927
W-125 (1a)	Oct 29, 1908	None reported	
W-125 (1b)	July 16, 1911	July 1, 1915	June 16, 1919
W-125 (1c)	Dec 15, 1923	May 28, 1924	March 8, 1948
W-125 (2)	July 22, 1911	None reported	
W-148 (3)	May 2, 1930	Dec 15, 1930	Sept 24, 1941
W-205A (1)	Oct 15, 1946	Nov 14, 1946	Apr 23, 1957
W-205A (2a)	Oct 15, 1946	Oct 28, 1946	July 23, 1954
W-205A (2b)	March 15, 1955	March 31, 1955	Sept 28, 1955
W-205A (3)	Oct 15, 1946	Dec 27, 1946	Dec 13, 1955
W-205A (4)	Oct 15, 1946	June 5, 1947	Oct 26, 1956

W-149: SOURIS & REGINA R.P.O. / No.

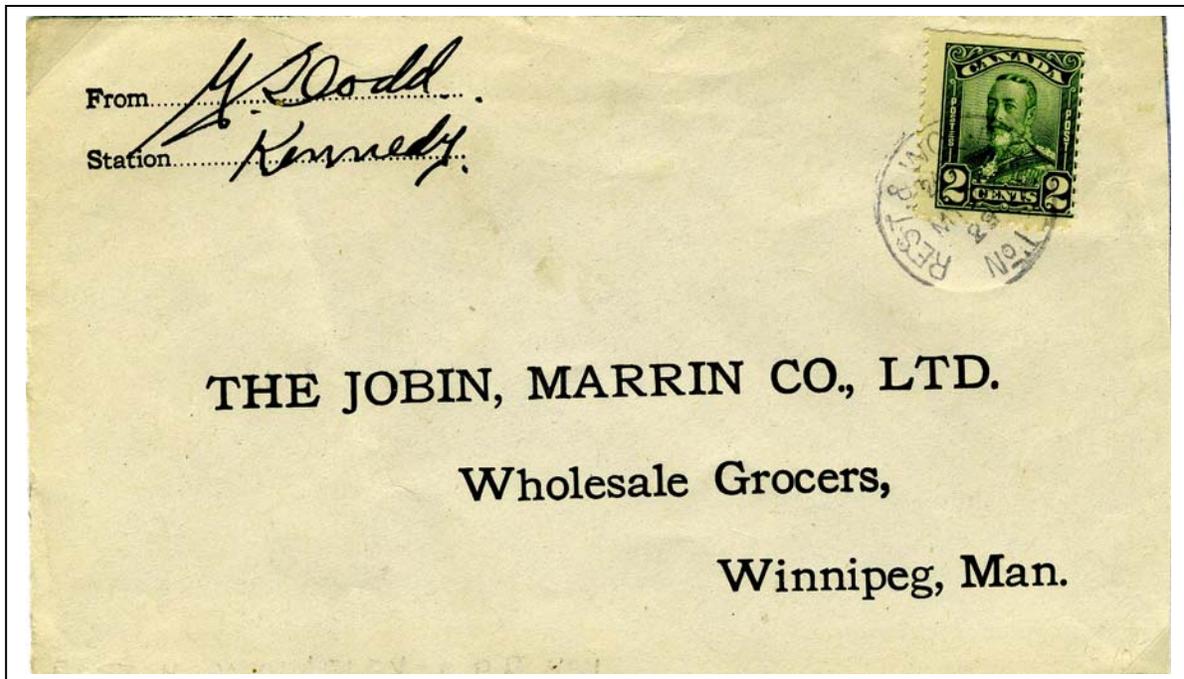
W-125: REST. & WOL. R.P.O. /No.

W-148: SO. & REG. R.P.O / No.

W-205A: WPG. S. & REG. R.P.O. / No.

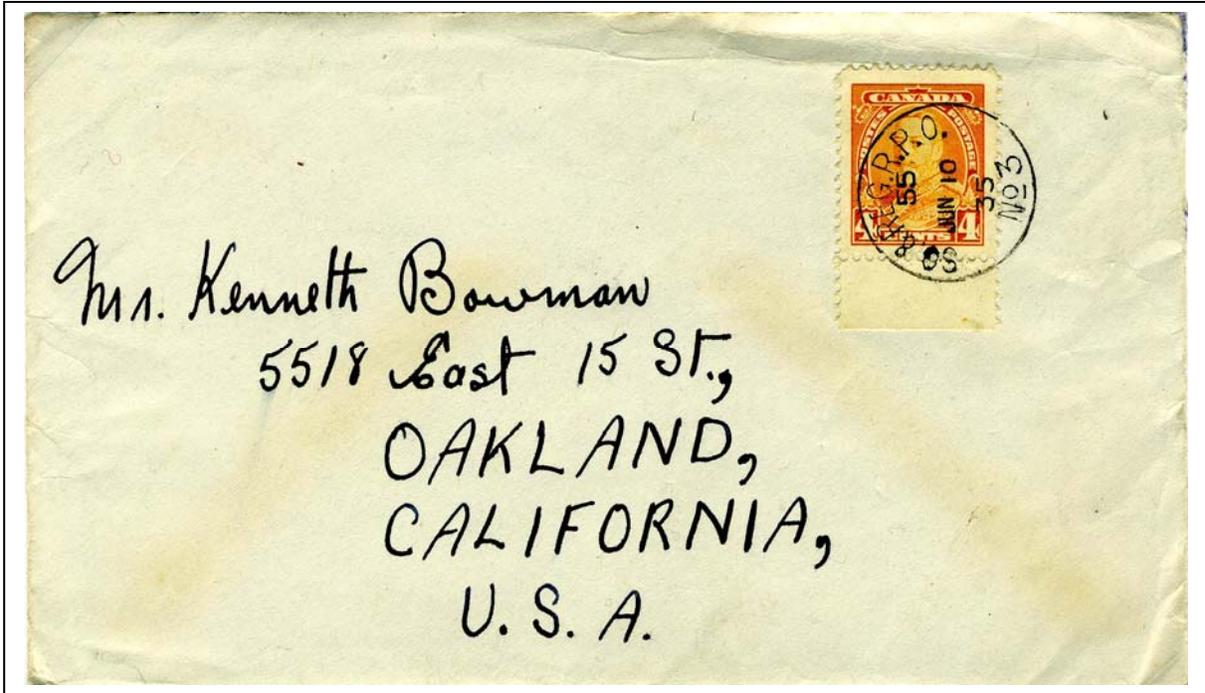


W-149: SOURIS & REGINA R.P.O. / No., SP 30 10, E, hammer #2; postcard written en route this line, west of Arcola; RATE: 1c domestic postcard rate.

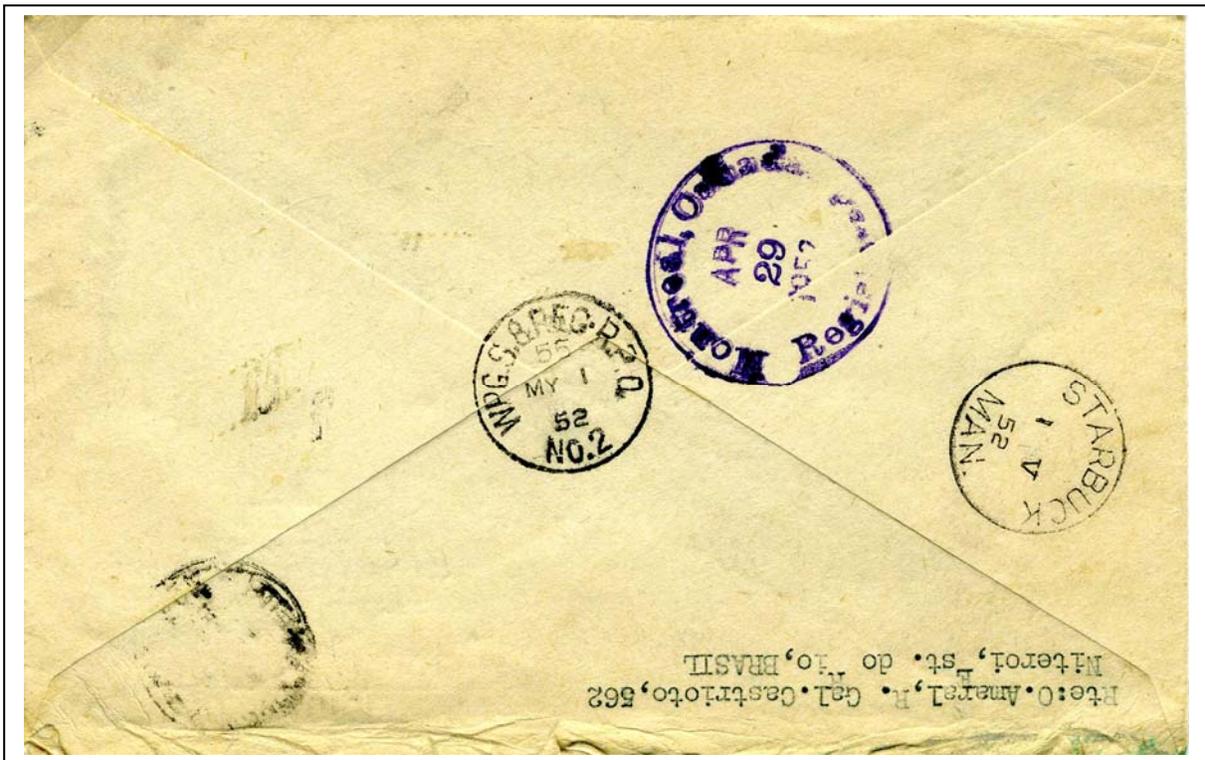


W-125: REST. & WOL. R.P.O. /No., MY 20 29, train 249, hammer #1c. Commercial cover from Kennedy, SK, (midway on this line) to Winnipeg. This was the train locally called "The Peanut". RATE: 2c domestic letter rate.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



W-148: SO. & REG. R.P.O / No., JUN 10 35, train 55, hammer #3;  
Cover to USA. RATE: overpaid the 3c letter rate to the USA.

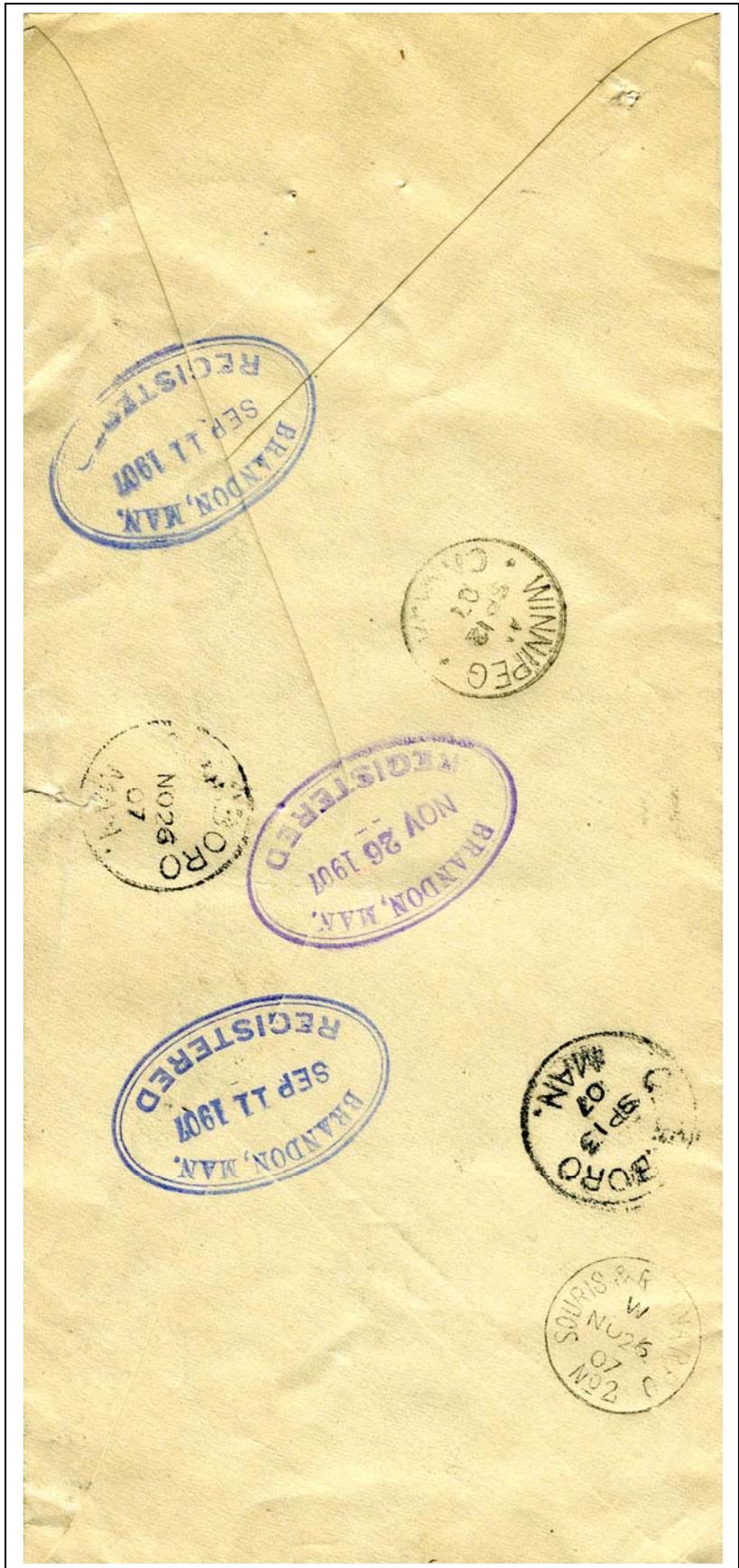


W-205A: WPG. S. & REG. R.P.O. / No., MY 1 52, train 55, hammer #2;  
registered letter (by sea) from Brazil to Starbuck, Man.

The Canadian Pacific Railway

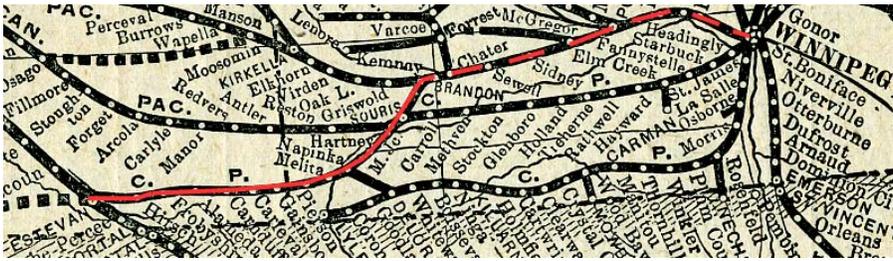
When the Winnipeg-Souris-Regina RPO run was divided into the two sections, the meeting trains were scheduled to meet at Methven, east of Souris (see map). This meant that the Souris-Regina RPO operated east of Souris for part of the run. If the west-bound train ran late, it seems that the RPO crews arranged to have the trains meet even farther east of Methven. This is one of two covers that demonstrate this.

Registered Brandon Sep 11, 1907 (to Glenboro);  
Winnipeg transit Sep 12;  
Glenboro receiver Sep 13;  
Returned from Glenboro Nov 26;  
**W-149, Souris-Regina, westbound to Souris, Nov 25;**  
Brandon receiver Nov 26



# The Canadian Pacific Railway

## The "Estevan Line"

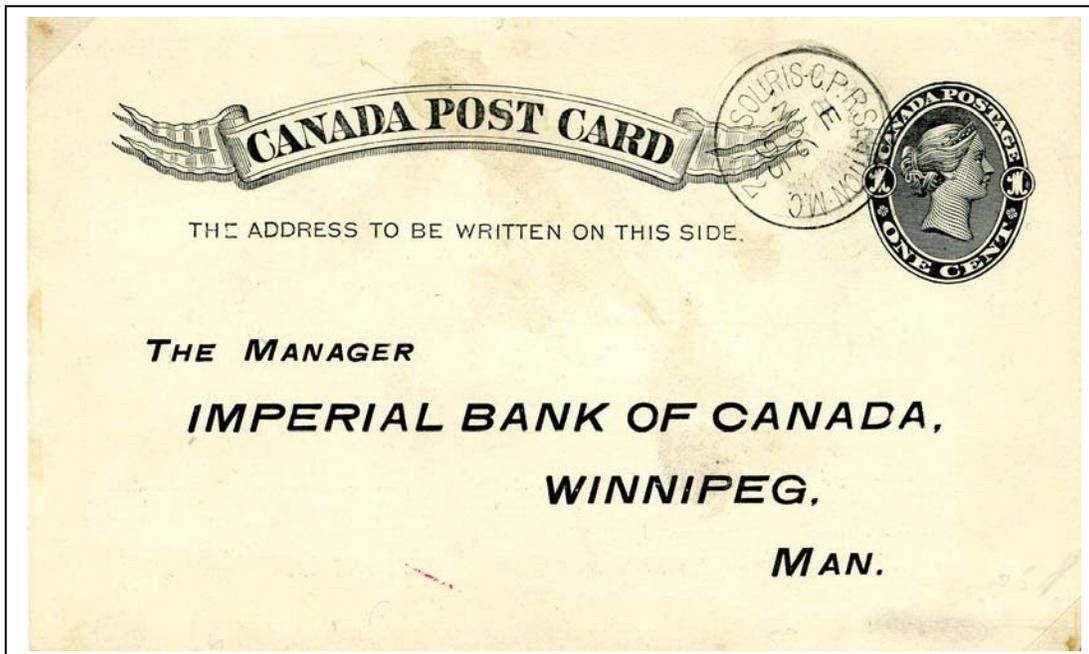


STATIONS.	Dist. from Brandon, Miles.	No. of Miles.	See Brochure Section
Brandon	0	11 25/64	}
Kemnay	8.2	12 00	
Beresford	8.7	12 35	}
Souris	157.0	13 30/64	
Pipestone Junction	7.1	14 30	}
Menteth	2.5	14 45	
Water Tank	3.0	15 00	}
Hartney	8.0	15 15	
Lauder	8.0	15 55	}
Napinka	8.0	16 35/64	
Melita	14.2	17 20/64	}
Pierson	8.2	18 55	
Gainsborough	8.2	19 25	}
Carleton	2.0	19 55	
Carleton	2.0	20 25	}
Oxbow	17.6	21 30/64	
Alameda	7.5	21 30/64	}
Frobyshire	2.7	270.5	
Hirsch	7.9	278.4	}
Bienfait	10.2	288.6	
Estevan	8.5	297.1	}

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
RR-150	Dec 6, 1892	Dec 26, 1892	Oct 13, 1908
RR-151	Aug 15, 1892	Sept 9, 1892	Nov 5, 1903

RR-150, SOURIS C.P.R. SECTION M.C. / No.2  
 RR-151, SOURIS (C.P.R.) SECTION / M.C.

Until recently, the Souris Section RPOs were thought to have been used on the "Glenboro" line. The timetable labeled "The Souris Section", however, leads to the proposal that they were used on the Brandon-Napinka-Estevan line. Subsequent examinations of covers confirm the proposal.



RR-150, SOURIS C.P.R. SECTION M.C. / No.2, NO 6 96, E, hammer #2; postcard from Oxbow (see timetable) to Winnipeg. RATE: 1c domestic postcard rate.

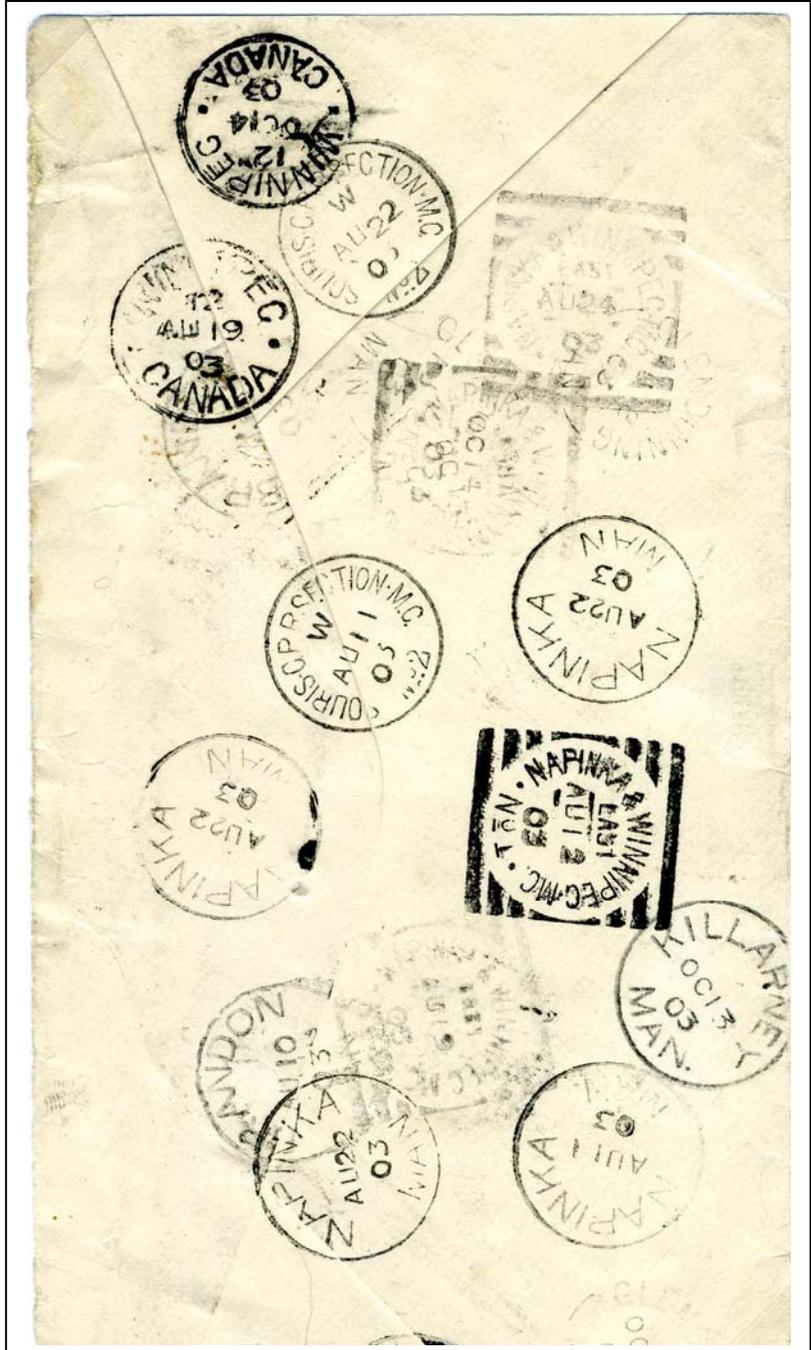
RR-150, SOURIS C.P.R.  
SECTION M.C. / No.2; AU 11  
03, W; and AU 22 03, W.  
Much traveled cover **confirms  
the proposed route**: back of  
registered cover Brandon to  
Glendinning (near Killarney);  
not called for so sent to  
Winnipeg; returned to  
Glendinning via Brandon and  
Napinka. Forwarded again to  
Winnipeg. [4 examples of W-  
49]

Brandon AU 10  
**RR-150 AU 11 W**  
Napinka AU 11  
W-49 AU 12 EAST

Glendinning AU 18  
W-49 AU 19 EAST  
Winnipeg AU 19

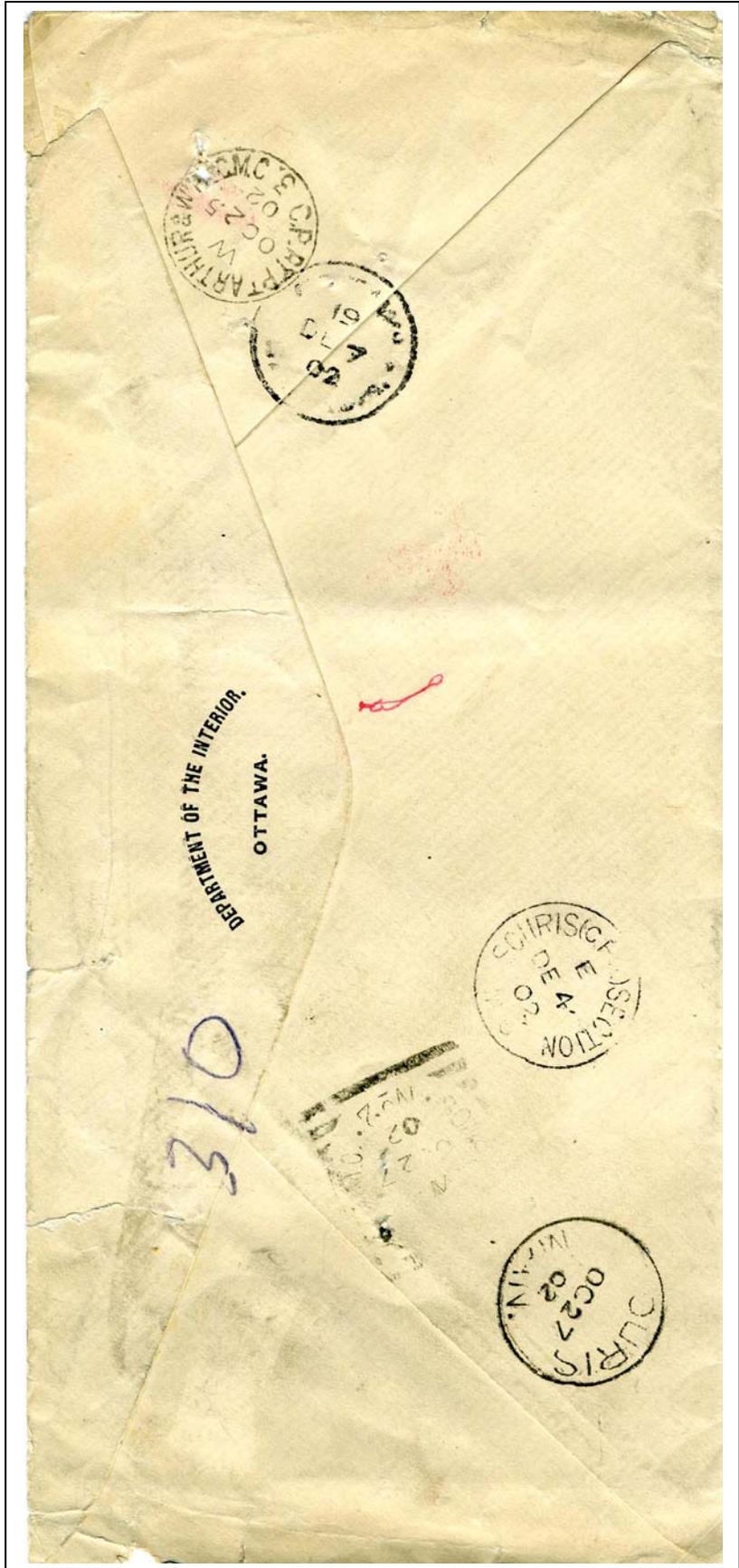
**RR-150 AU 22 W**  
Napinka AU 22  
W-49 AU 24 EAST

Killarney OC 13  
W-49 OC 14 EAST  
Winnipeg OC 14



RR-151, SOURIS (C.P.R.)  
SECTION / M.C., DE 4 02,  
E.

Registered cover Ottawa  
(OHMS) OC 24 02 to  
Souris; transit marks (O-  
280, C.P.Ry PT. ARTHUR &  
W'PEG M.C., OC 25, W #3),  
W-150, SOURIS &  
WINNIPEG M.C., OC 27, W;  
Souris receiver OC 27;  
returned from Souris via  
Brandon, transit marks  
RR-151, W-191, W'P'G & M.  
JAW R.P.O., DE 5, E,  
hammer 2a.



The Canadian Pacific Railway

In 1908, the Souris Section hammers were replaced by the Winnipeg-Estevan RPO.  
This run is characterized by its divisions into sections.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-182A (1)	NIPB	May 23, 1908	June 19, 1909
W-182A (2)	NIPB	March 14, 1906	Jan 13, 1908
W-182A (3)	NIPB	Feb 26, 1906	Dec 6, 1907
W-7 (1)	NIPB	Apr 20, 1904	Sept 18, 1906
W-7 (2)	NIPB	Apr 2, 1904	Sept 4, 1907
W-8 (1a)	Oct 13, 1909	Nov 8, 1909	July 1, 1924
W-8 (1b)	May 5, 1927	Mar 28, 1931	Oct 13, 1957
W-8 (2a)	Oct 13, 1909	Mar 28, 1910	June 24, 1924
W-8 (2b)	Jan 2, 1925	May 27, 1925	Mar 31, 1927
W-8 (2c)	Mar 9, 1928	May 26, 1931	May 21, 1957
W-9 (3)	May 2, 1930	Aug 17, 1932	Sept 26, 1957

W-182A: WINNIPEG & ESTEVAN R.P.O. / No.  
W-7: BRANDON & ALAMEDA R.P.O. / No.  
W-8: BRANDON & ESTEVAN R.P.O. / No.  
W-9: BR. & EST. R.P.O. / No.

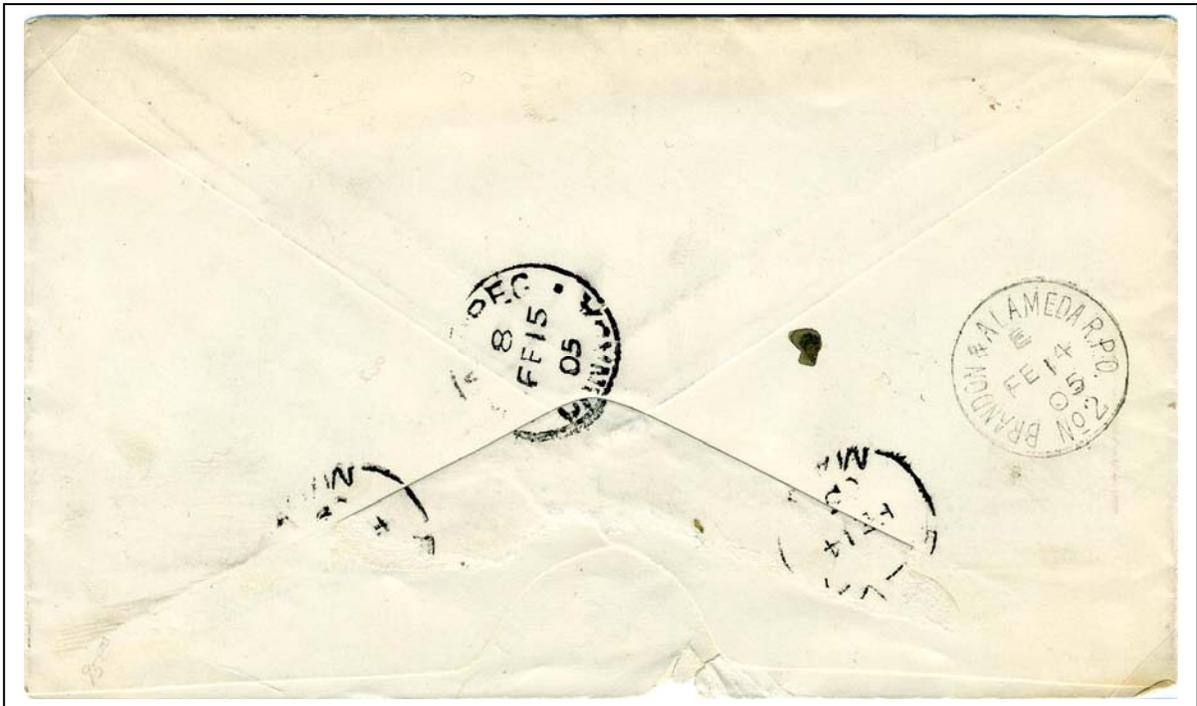


W-182A: WINNIPEG & ESTEVAN R.P.O. / No., **RF=355**, JY 1 08, E, hammer #1;  
souvenir postcard album from Oxbow to Mass., USA; RATE: 1c postcard rate to the USA.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



Scan (at 75%) of front of the cover described below.



W-7: BRANDON & ALAMEDA R.P.O. / No., **RF=475**, FE 14 05, E, hammer #2; registered cover to Court of King's Bench, Winnipeg from Elva, MB.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



W-8: BRANDON & ESTEVAN R.P.O. / No., NO 28 28, train 138, hammer #2;  
commercial cover from Estevan hotel to Winnipeg. RATE: 2c domestic letter rate.



W-9: BR. & EST. R.P.O. / No., FE 2 54, train 137, hammer #3;  
postal stationery written in Alameda, sent to Montreal. RATE: 3c domestic card rate.

# The Canadian Pacific Railway

## The Gretna Line

As soon as the CPR completed its line to the USA border from Winnipeg, on the west side of the Red River, RPO services began.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-185 (1)	Dec 7, 1888	Aug 15, 1892	March 1, 1901
W-185 (2)	Dec 7, 1888	Aug 16, 1890	June 15, 1902
W-53 (1)	June 2, 1904	Oct 25, 1904	May 22, 1916
W-53 (2)	NIPB	Feb 5, 1908	Feb 22, 1916

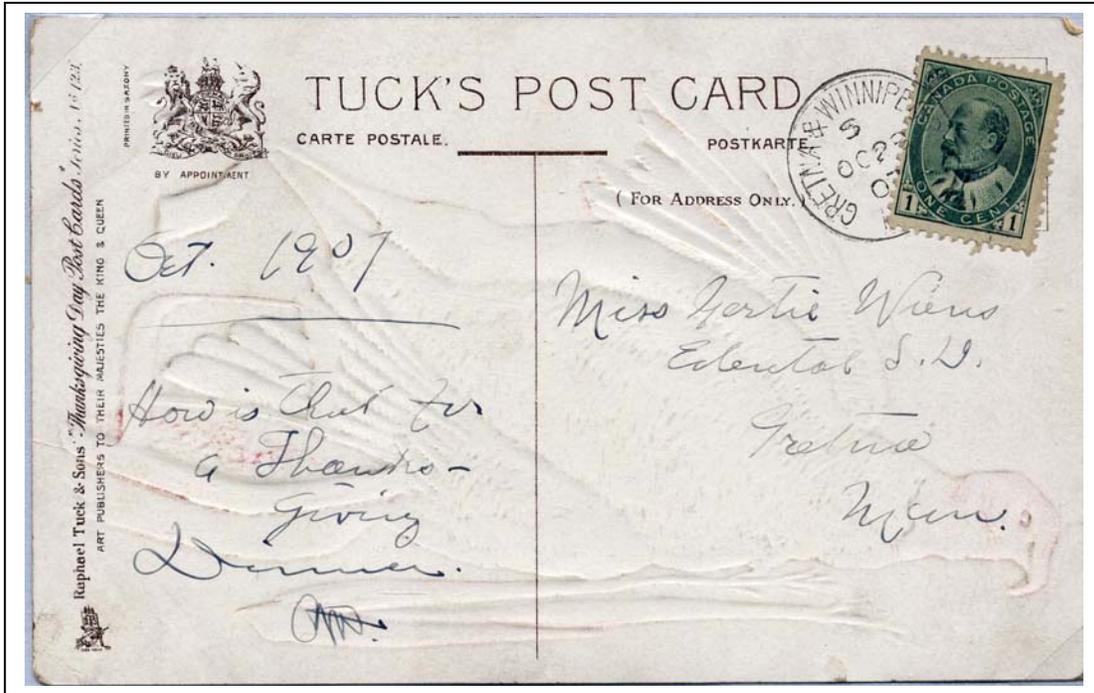
W-185: WINNIPEG & GRETNA M.C. / No.

W-53: GRETNA & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / No.



W-185: WINNIPEG & GRETNA M.C. / No., JA 24 98, S, hammer #1;  
Commercial corner cover from the famous Ashdown Hardware, to New York.  
RATE: 3c letter rate to USA.

The Canadian Pacific Railway



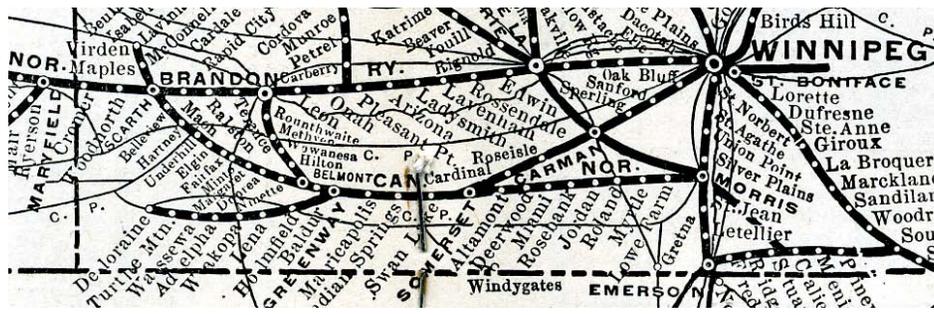
W-53: GREтна & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / No. RF=280, OC 28 07, S, hammer #1; Postcard to Gretna. RATE: 1c domestic post card rate. Early use.



W-53: GREтна & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / No. RF=280, FE 22 16, train 23, hammer #1; registered cover Regina to Winnipeg, re-directed to St. Paul and returned via W-53 RPO car to Winnipeg, then Regina. RATE: 8c registration to USA. Much traveled and worn. Late use.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

The Canadian Northern Railway



In 1899, the Canadian Northern Railway was formed from several small railways in the Winnipeg area, including the Manitoba & South Eastern Railway. In the region of this review (southern Manitoba), the first components of the CNoR resulted from the lease of the Northern Pacific & Manitoba Railway, constructed by the Northern Pacific Railway (NPR) of the USA. The NPR had built a line to Winnipeg from Emerson and a line from Morris to Brandon. These lines carried Canadian RPO cars both before and after the CNoR lease.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-174 (1)	Nov 9, 1891	June 30, 1892	Jan 5, 1905
W-174A (1)	NIPB	Dec 26, 1901	Aug 24, 1903
W-174A (2)	NIPB	July 2, 1904	Dec 11, 1905

W-174: NOR. PAC. Ry M.C. W'PEG & BRANDON / No.  
 W-174A: C.N.R. W'PEG & BRANDON / No.



W-174: NOR. PAC. Ry M.C. W'PEG & BRANDON / No. JU 30 92 (ERD), E, hammer #1;  
 Registered Greenway, MB, to Winnipeg. Carried on The Northern Pacific Railway.  
 RATE: 5c RLS plus 3c.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

Until recently, it was thought that the RPOs operating between Winnipeg and Brandon, and between Winnipeg and Virden used the Winnipeg-Morris-Somerset route.

However, it was noted that the CNoR completed a line Winnipeg-Carman-Somerset. Examination of train numbers and sources of mail show that the RPO runs used that route from an early date. This date is not yet precisely known but it seems possible that W-174 continued to be used on the "Morris" line NPR at the same time that W-174A was used on CnoR on the "Carman" line.

W-174A was removed from this run when the CnoR direct line to Brandon was completed in 1905. It is not known if it was ever used on that direct line.



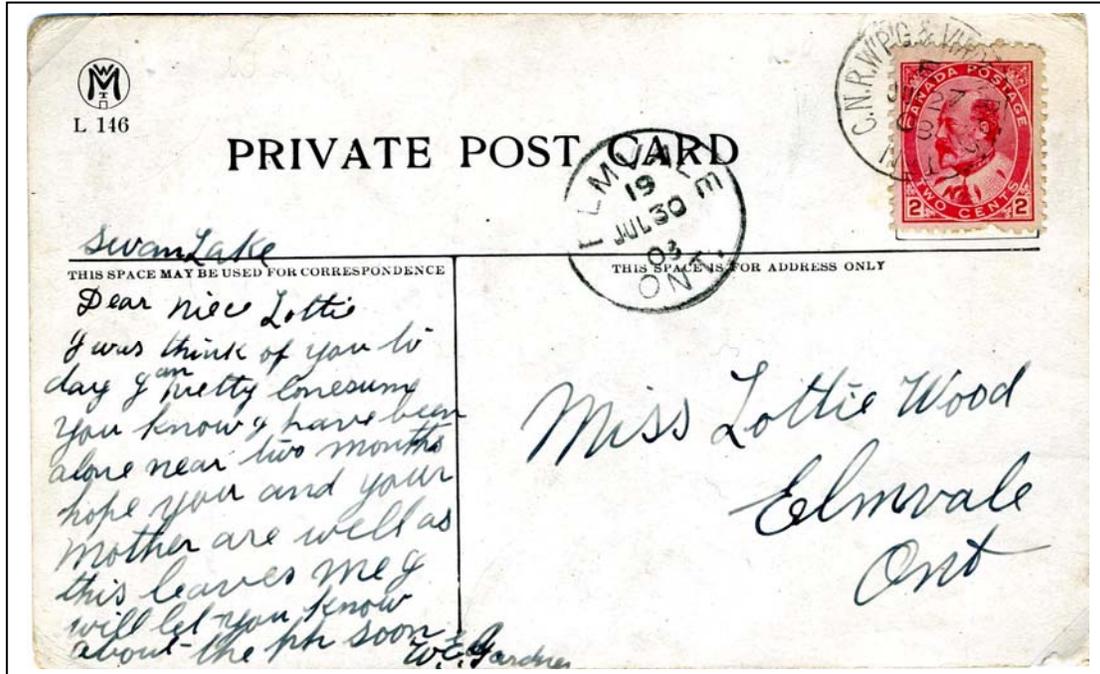
W-174A: C.N.R. W'PEG & BRANDON / No., RF=310, AU 26 02, E, hammer #1, postal stationery to Toronto; carried aboard the Canadian Northern Railway, probably on the "Carman" line.  
RATE: 2c domestic letter rate.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

When the CnoR main line was completed Winnipeg to Brandon (described later) and the southern line was completed to Virden, the RPOs on the "Carman" line ran to Virden.

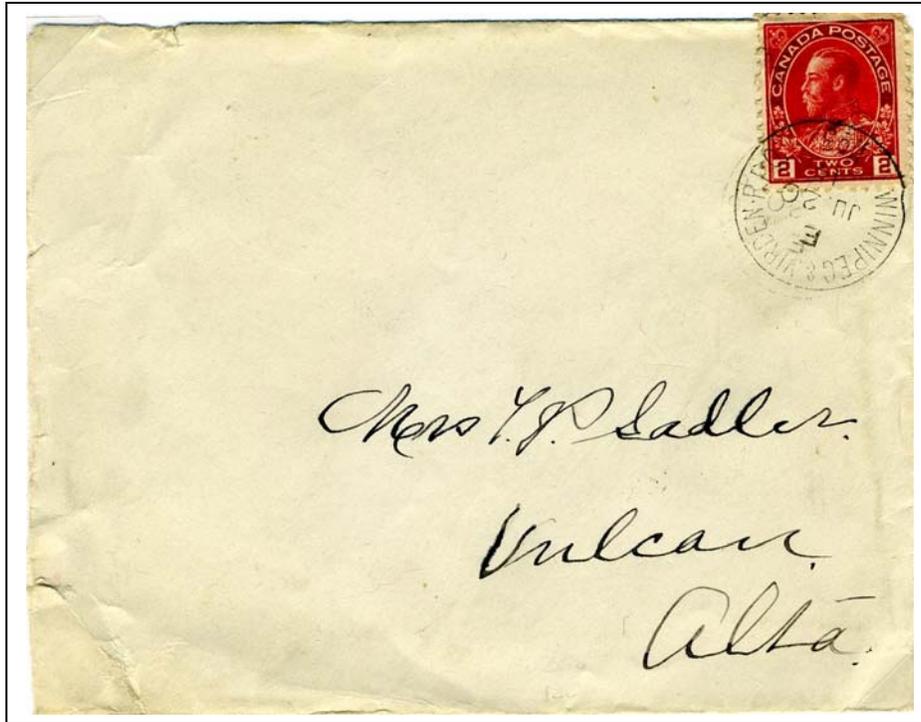
	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-210 (1)	NIPB	Mar 27, 1907	Feb 21, 1917
W-210 (2)	NIPB	Nov 29, 1907	Apr 12, 1916
W-208 (1)	Oct 29, 1923	March 26, 1924	March 26, 1924
W-208 (3)	Oct 20, 1911	Apr 5, 1912	Oct 7, 1924
W-209A (2)	NIPB	Sept 21, 1923	March 27, 1925
W-186 (1)	Sept 20, 1925	Dec 29, 1927	Sept 11, 1936
W-186 (2)	Sept 20, 1925	Feb 18, 1929	Mar 7, 1931
W-186 (3)	Sept 20, 1925	Jan 10, 1934	Mar 11, 1938
W-209 (1)	Apr 14, 1938	Dec ?, 1938	Aug 30, 1957
W-209 (2)	Apr 14, 1938	Aug 2, 1954	Sept 24, 1955

W-210: C.N.R. W'P'G & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No.  
 W-208: WINNIPEG & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No.  
 W-209A: W'PG & VIRDEN R.P.O. No. / .  
 W-186: WPG. & HAR. R.P.O. / No.  
 W-209: WPG. & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No.

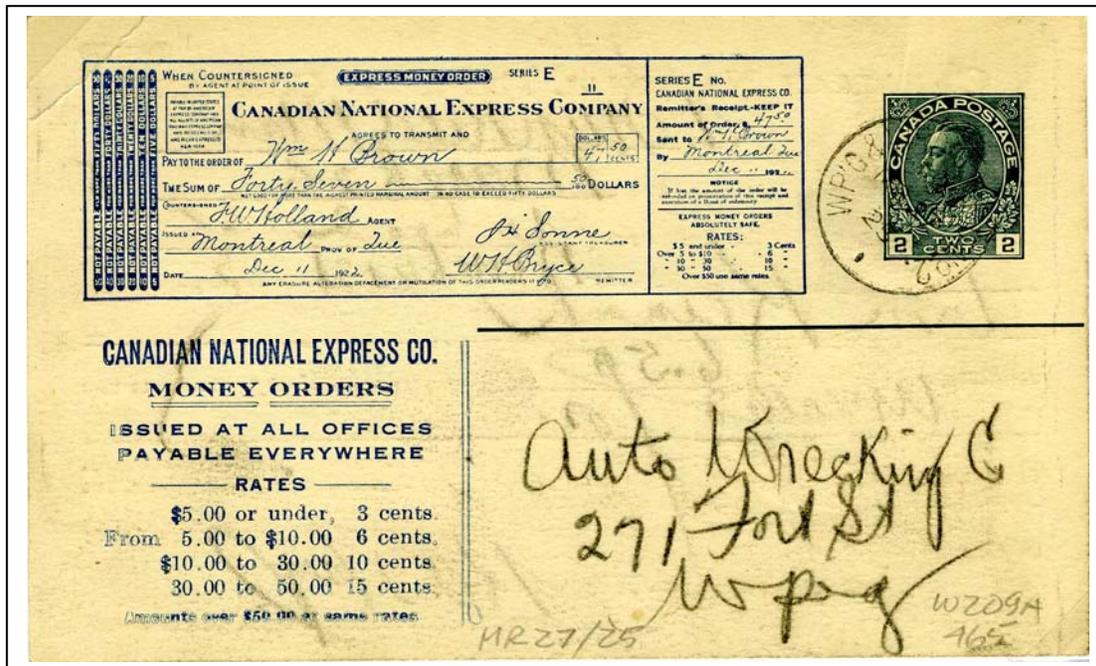


W-210: C.N.R. W'P'G & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No., JU 27 03, E, hammer #1, post card written at Swan Lake, to Elmvale, ON. RATE: over-paid by 1c the 1c domestic postcard rate.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

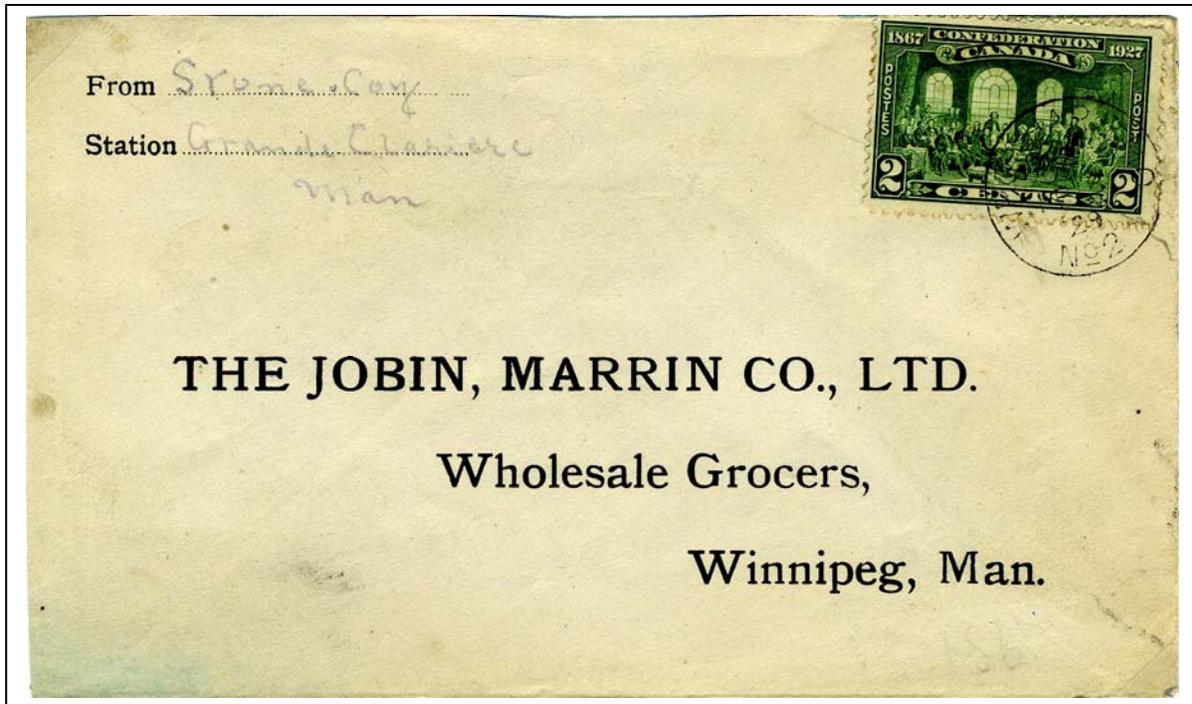


W-208: WINNIPEG & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No., JU 20 14, E, hammer #3; to Vulcan, AB. RATE: 2c domestic letter rate.

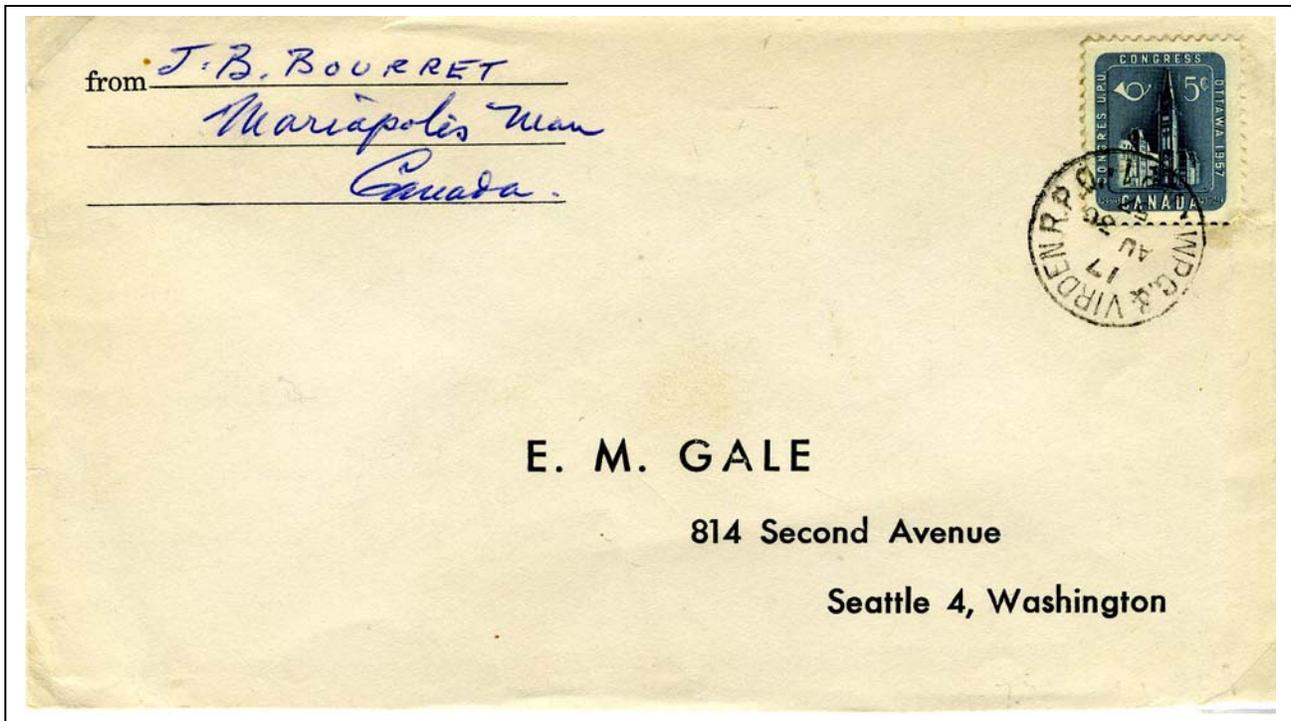


W-209A: WP'G & VIRDEN R.P.O. No. / ., **RF=465**, MR 27 25 (LRD), train 2, hammer #2 (the only hammer). Commercial stationery of Canadian National Express Co., Brunkild to Winnipeg. RATE: 2c domestic postcard rate.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway



W-186: WPG. & HAR. R.P.O. / No., FE 18 29, train 12, hammer #2. Commercial cover return-addressed at Grand Clariere, to Winnipeg. RATE: 2c domestic letter rate. For about 13 years, the Winnipeg-Virden RPO was short-stopped at Hartney. This has not been explained.



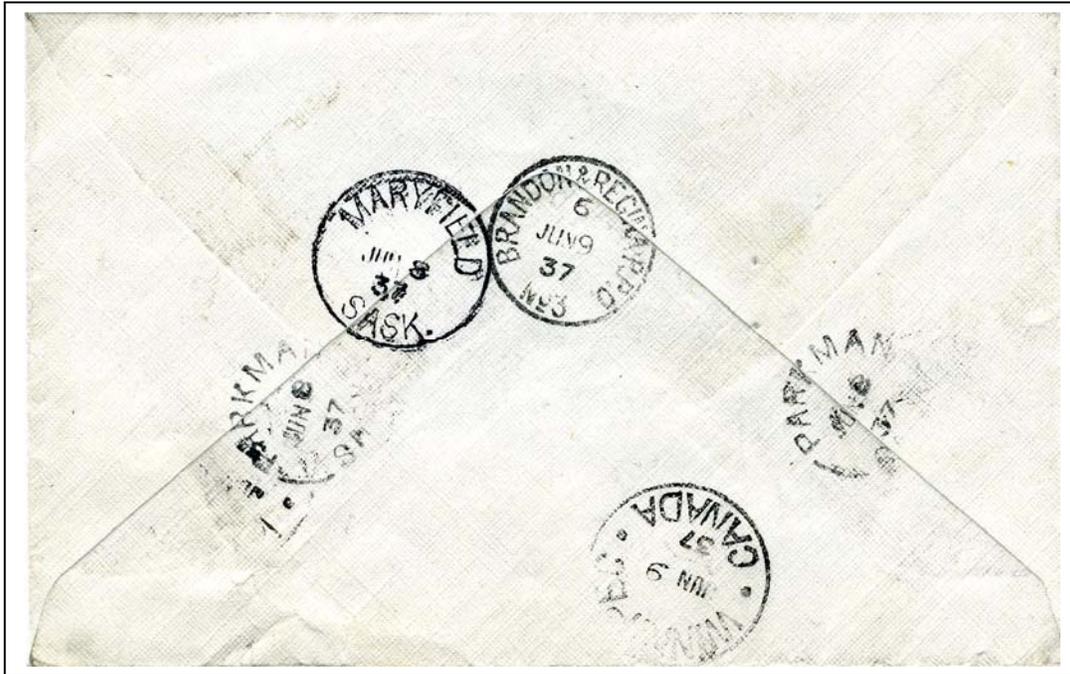
W-209: WPG. & VIRDEN R.P.O. / No., AU 30 57 (LRD), train 17, hammer #1; letter showing return at Mariapolis, to Seattle. RATE: 5c surface mail rate to USA.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

The Canadian Northern direct line Winnipeg-Brandon-Regina was used for a succession of RPOs. In 1919, the Canadian National Railway began operating this line.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-12 (1)	Jan 9, 1912	Jan 9, 1915	March 5, 1937
W-12 (2)	Jan 9, 1912	Apr 20, 1912	Aug 24, 1937
W-12 (3)	May 23, 1912	Dec 20, 1924	Dec 20, 1945
W-175 (1a)	July 6, 1920	Oct 1, 1922	July 4, 1943
W-175 (1b)	March 3, 1944	June 13, 1944	Apr 15, 1945
W-175 (2)	July 6, 1920	Nov 27, 1926?	Nov 6, 1946
W-176 (1)	Nov 2, 1944	Nov 24, 1954	Apr 29, 1962
W-176 (2)	Nov 2, 1944	July 30, 1947	July 11, 1959
W-176 (3)	Nov 2, 1944	May 8, 1947	June 17, 1959
W-176 (4)	Nov 2, 1944	May 3, 1947	Sept 12, 1960
W-176 (5)	Nov 2, 1944	Nov 12, 1946	Nov 15, 1962

W-12: BRANDON & REGINA R.P.O. / No.  
W-175: WPG. & BRANDON R.P.O. / No.  
W-176: WPG. B. & R. R.P.O. / No.

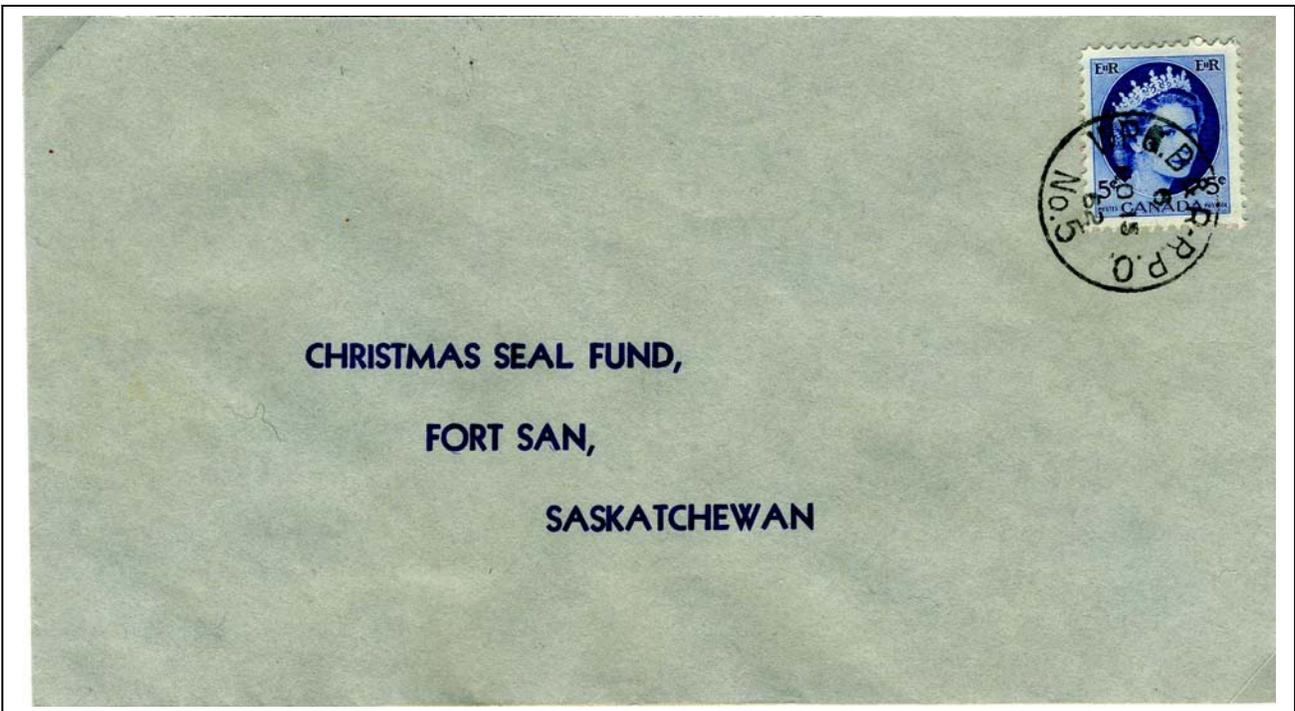


W-12: BRANDON & REGINA R.P.O. / No., JUN 9 37, train 6, hammer #3;  
Registered at Parkman, SK to Winnipeg; transit mark at Maryfield, SK.  
RATE: 13c domestic registration.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

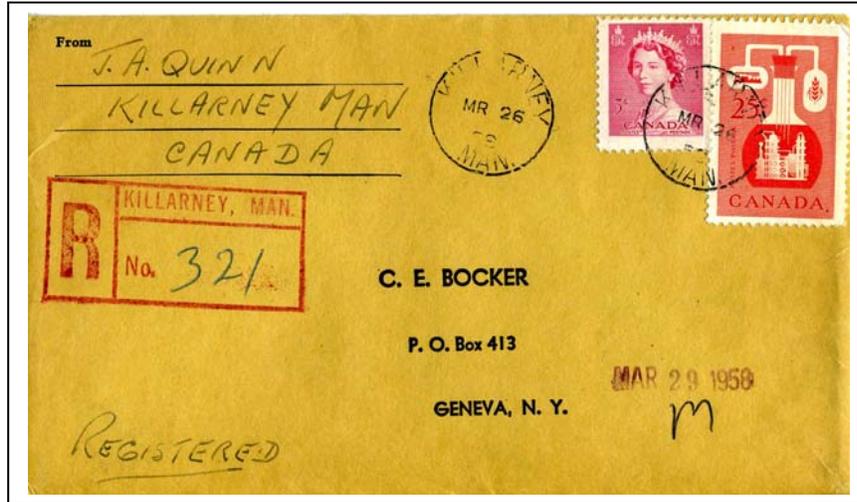


W-175: WPG. & BRANDON R.P.O. / No., NO 17 39, train 5, hammer #2; and NO 29 39, train 5, hammer #2. Registered at Winnipeg NO 17, transit mark W-175, Lavenham receiver NO 17; returned (refused) from Lavenham NO 29, transit marks W-175, Brandon NO 30, Winnipeg receiver NO 30.

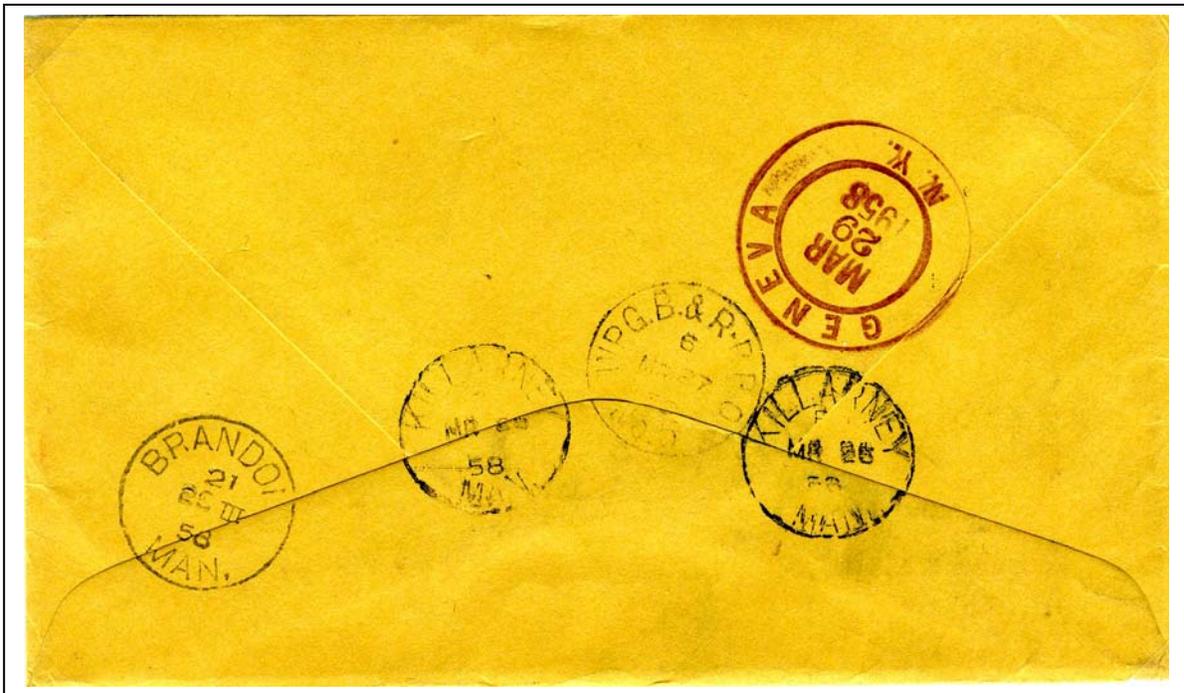


W-176: WPG. B. & R. R.P.O. / No., NO 15 62 (LRD), train 6, hammer #5; cover from Maryfield to Fort San, SK. RATE: 5c domestic letter rate.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway



Scan (at 75%) of the front of the cover below.



W-176: WPG. B. & R. R.P.O. / No., MR 27 58, train 6, hammer #5.

The LRD of RPO on the Killarney (Deloraine) line of the CPR was in 1957.

This 1958 registered mail from Killarney MR 26, therefore, was sent via a CNR line to Virden, then via W-176 (MR 27) to Brandon (MR 28); then by air from Winnipeg to Geneva, NY (MR 29).

RATE: to the USA, air mail rate of 7c, registry fee 20c; thus overpaid by 1c.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

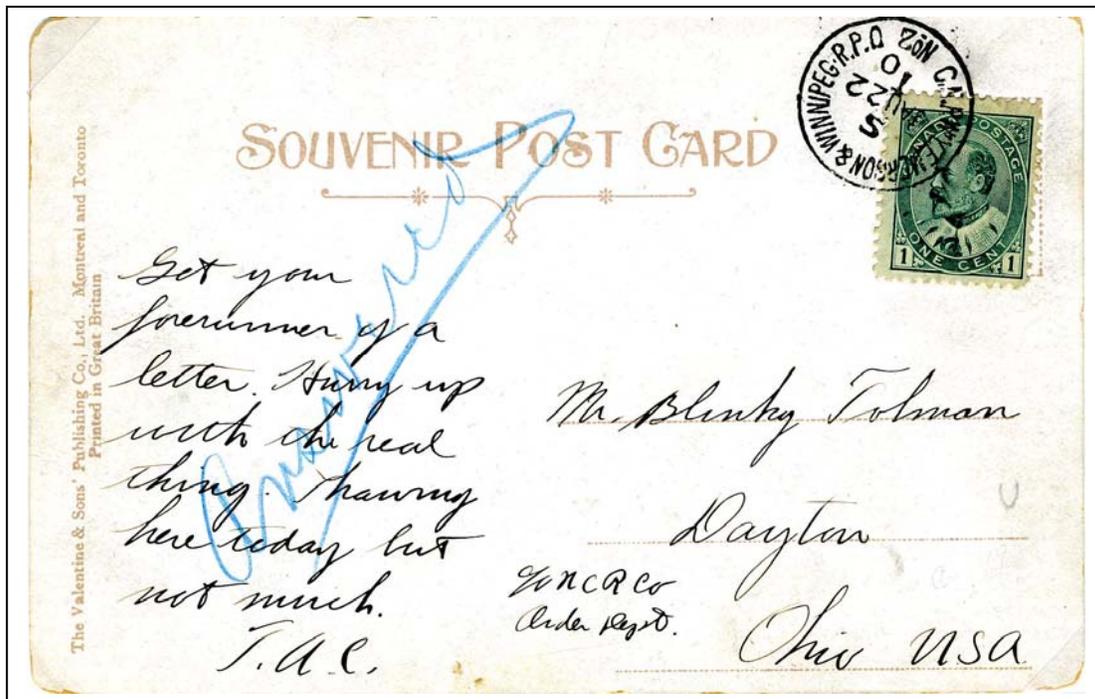
Using the line originally built by the NPR, the CNoR began carrying RPO cars between Emerson and Winnipeg in 1906.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-49 (1)	NIPB	July 20, 1915	July 9, 1917
W-49 (2)	NIPB	June 20, 1906	Jan 20, 1923
W-51	March 16, 1923	Nov 15, 1927	June 6, 1941
W-51A	May 25, 1965	July 1, 1965	Nov 17, 1967

W-49: C.N.RW'Y EMERSON & WINNIPEG R.P.O.

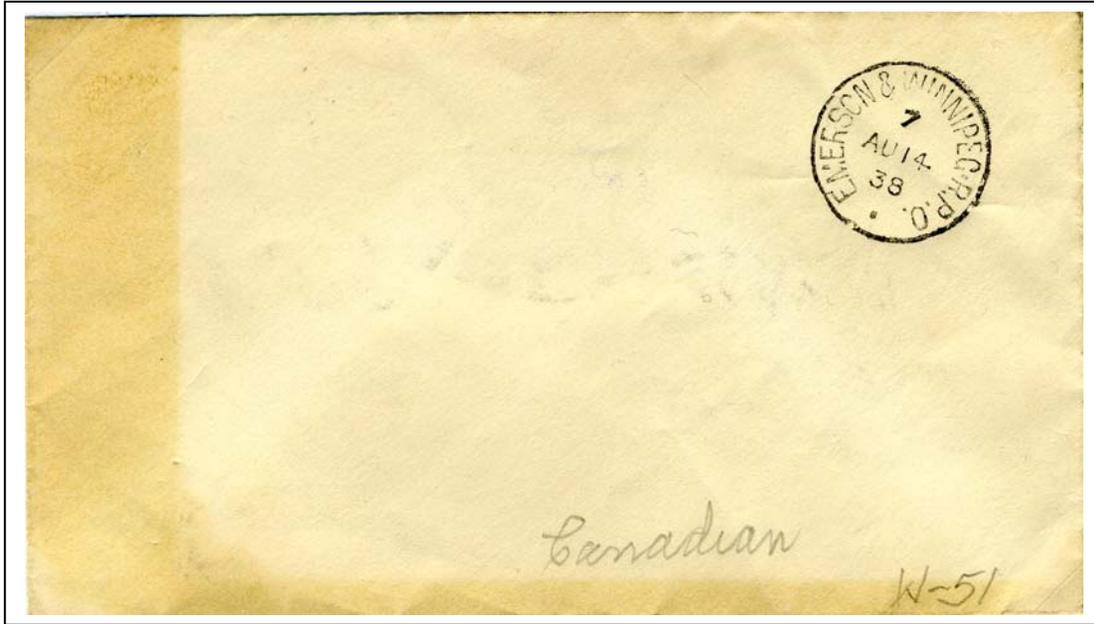
W-51: EMERSON & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / .

W-51A: EMERSON & WINNIPEG / R.P.O.

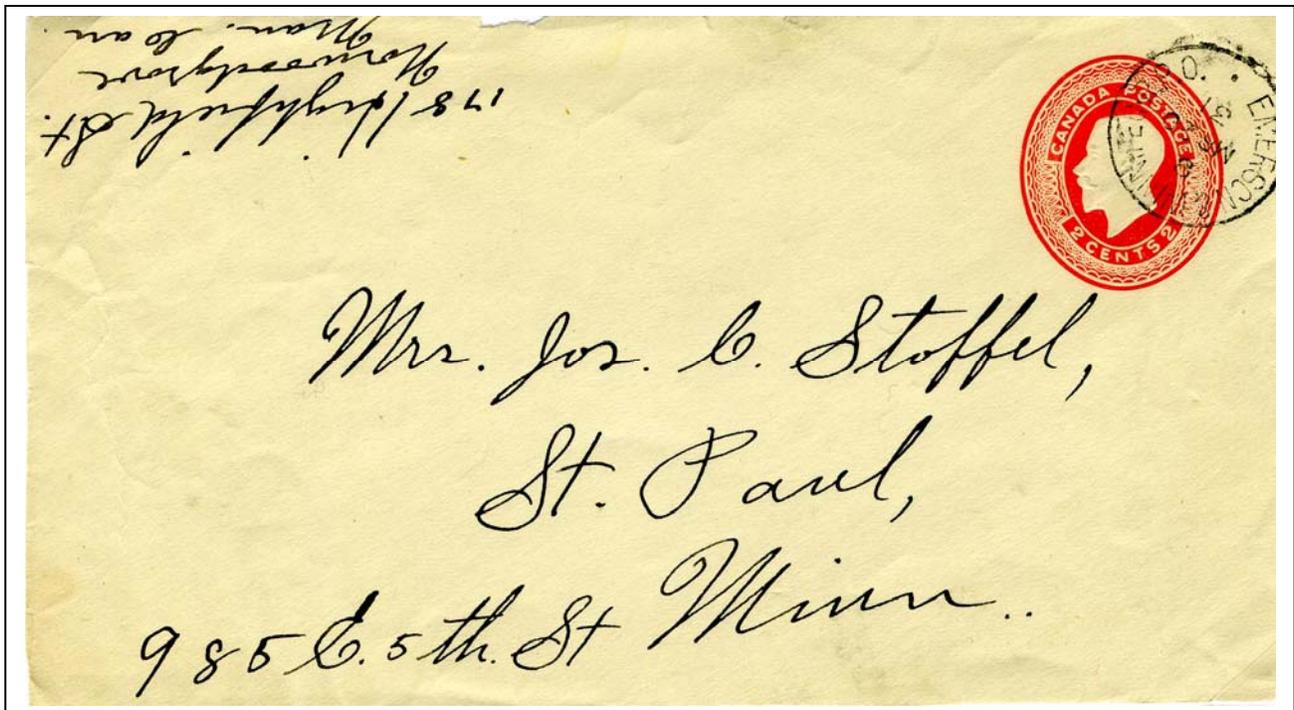


W-49: C.N.RW'Y EMERSON & WINNIPEG R.P.O., JAN 22 10, S, hammer #2; postcard to the USA. RATE: 1c postcard rate to the USA. :

The Canadian Northern/National Railway



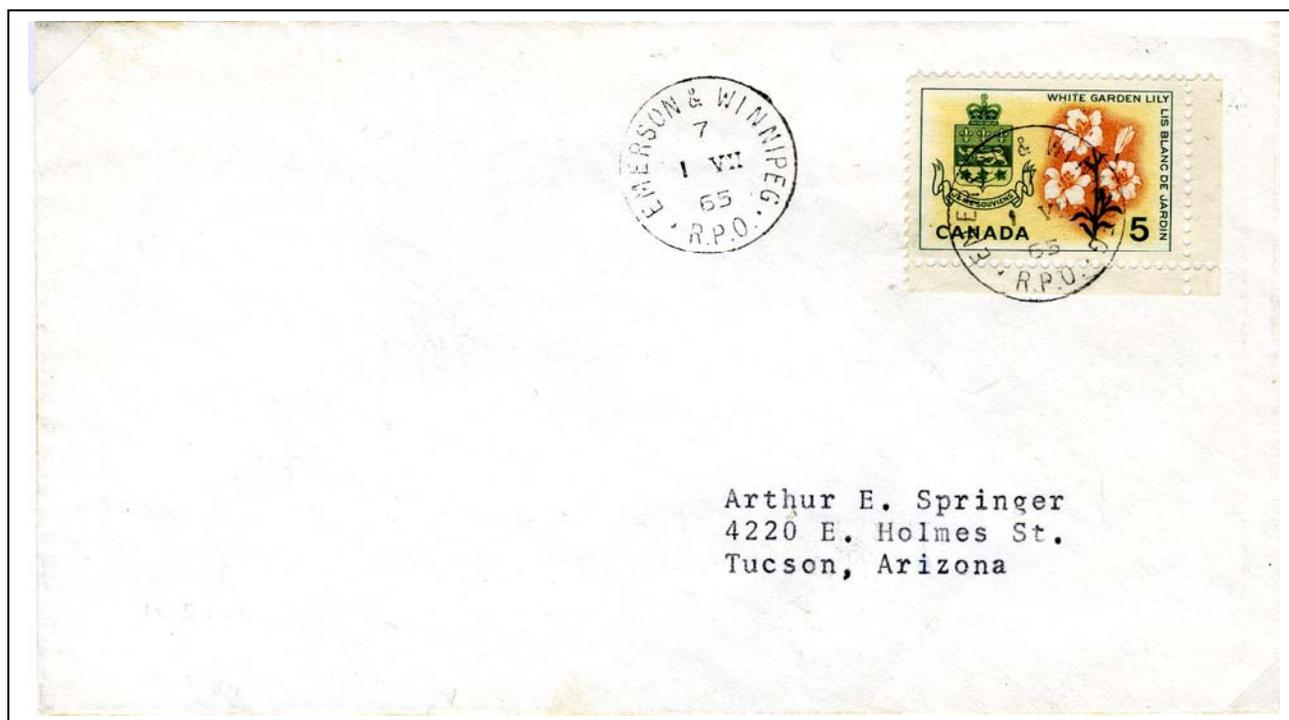
W-51: EMERSON & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / ., AU 14 38, train 7.  
RPO postmarks are often found in "philatelic" circumstances.  
This curious example is clearly a "favour" and was not even addressed and posted.



W-51: EMERSON & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / ., MR 20 31, train 8.  
Front of postal stationery from Norwoodgrove, MB to the USA. RATE: 2c letter rate to USA.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

The unusual circumstance of an RPO that has only been reported with “philatelic” examples.



**W-51A: EMERSON & WINNIPEG / R.P.O. (ERD) (RF=365) I VII 65, train 7.**  
This is a “philatelic” example of this very scarce RPO.  
There are **no** reported examples that are not philatelic.

## The Canadian Northern/National Railway

During this same period, Canadian RPO operations were also carried out between Pembina and Winnipeg, on trains of the Northern Pacific Railway.

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
W-103A (1a)	Dec 5, 1912	May 24, 1919	Nov 29, 1927
W-103B (1)	May 9, 1942	Oct 18, 1949	Nov 25, 1950

W-103A: PEM. & WIN. R.P.O. No. / N.P.R.

W-103B: PEMBINA & W'P'G R.P.O.



NO 29 24,  
Train 13,  
hammer #1



NO 5 25,  
Train 13,  
hammer #1

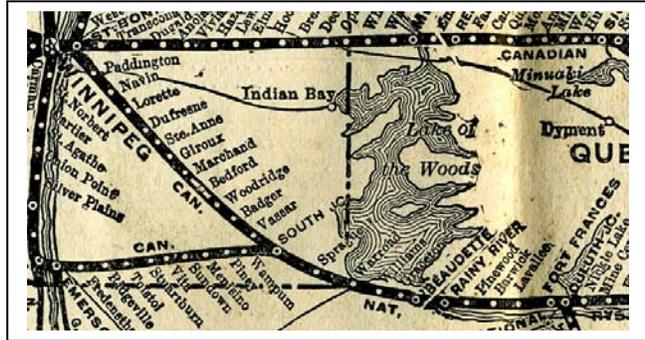
W-103A: PEM. & WIN. R.P.O. No. / N.P.R.

This RPO is the only one on this line that illustrates the origin of the line with the Northern Pacific Railway.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

The "Ontario Connection"

The Canadian Northern Railway established two strong linkages between Manitoba and eastern Canada. First, in 1901, a line was completed to Ft. Frances, Ontario, via Warroad, Minnesota. This line was also associated with the Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific Rwy, which operated between Warroad and Duluth, via Ft. Frances. The CNoR became owners of the latter railway. Warroad also provided a connection with the Gt. Northern Rwy, running south and west to Fargo, ND.



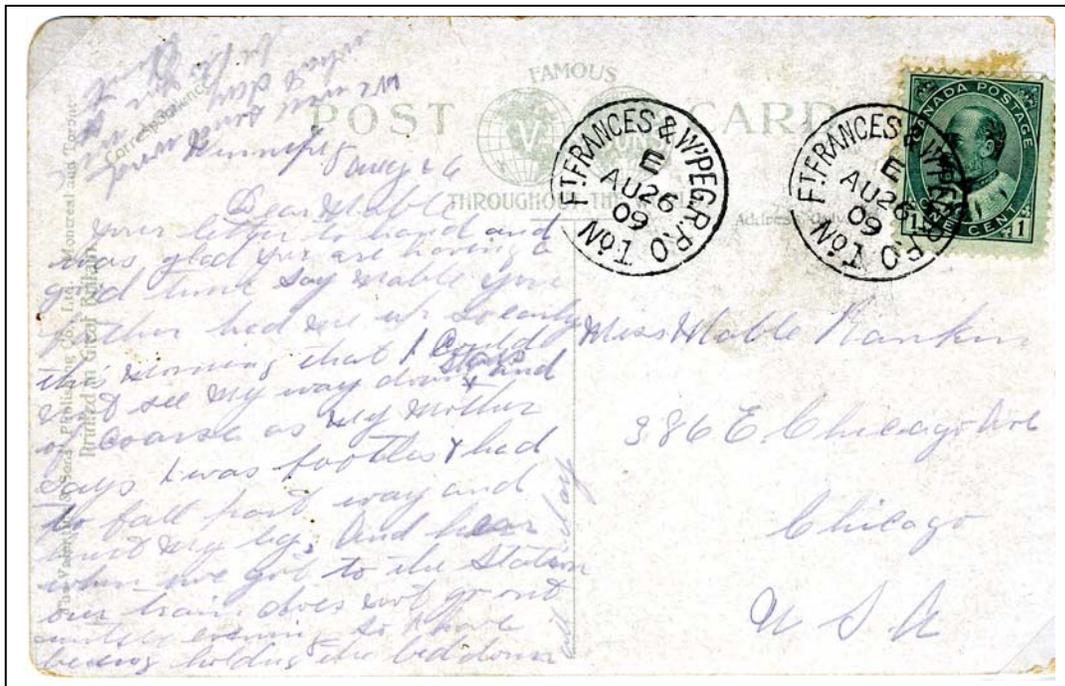
The Winnipeg-Warroad-Ft. Frances Line

	PROOF	ERD	LRD
O-71 (1a)	Nov 9, 1907	May 2, 1908	Apr 17, 1916
O-71 (2a)	Nov 9, 1907	Mar 19, 1908	Aug 10, 1923
O-71 (3a)	Nov 9, 1907	Mar 17, 1908	Jan 4, 1926
O-71 (1b)	Feb 26, 1919	Jan 4 1924	Dec 30, 1933
O-71 (3b)	Apr 15, 1926	Mar 12, 1928	Apr 18, 1961
O-71B	undated	Sept 13, 1937	Dec 20, 1945
O-72 (1)	June 25, 1935	Aug 18, 1935	June 24, 1958
O-72 (2)	Dec 6, 1929	Feb 5, 1930	July 31, 1958
O-72 (4)	NIPB	Apr 14, 1924	Nov 22, 1947

O-71: FT. FRANCES & W'PEG R.P.O. / No.

O-71B: From Ft. Fran. & Wpg. Tr. ....

O-72: FT. FR. & WPG R.P.O. / No.



O-71: FT. FRANCES & W'PEG R.P.O. / No., AU 26 09, E, hammer #1; postcard written in Winnipeg, to Chicago. RATE: 1c postcard rate to the USA.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

Combinations of Canadian and US RPOs are rarely found. This example illustrates three RPOs :

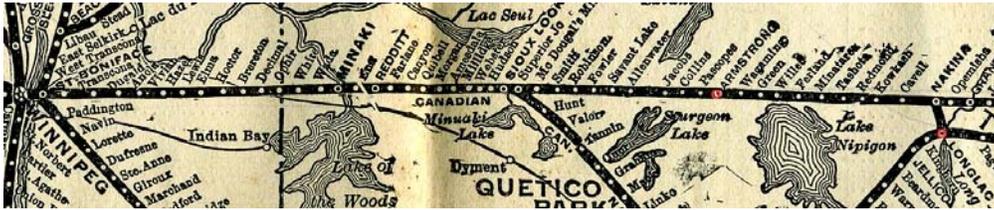
FT. FRANCES & W'PEG R.P.O. / No. [ O-71 ]  
From Ft. Fran. & Wpg. Tr - - - - [ O-71B ]  
WARROAD & DULUTH / R.P.O.



Cover registered [R #.1] aboard the CNoR line between Winnipeg and Ft. Frances, destined to Detroit, showing the **FT. FRANCES & W'PEG R.P.O. / No.**, SP 13 37, Train # 20, hammer # 3; as well as the **From Ft. Fran. & Wpg. Tr -**, [ **ERD, only 3 examples reported** ], Train # 20. On the USA side, it shows the **WARROAD & DULUTH / R.P.O.**, SP 14 1937 transit mark, en route to Detroit. (ex-Harrison). **RATE:** paid double the 3c letter rate plus 10c registry fees.

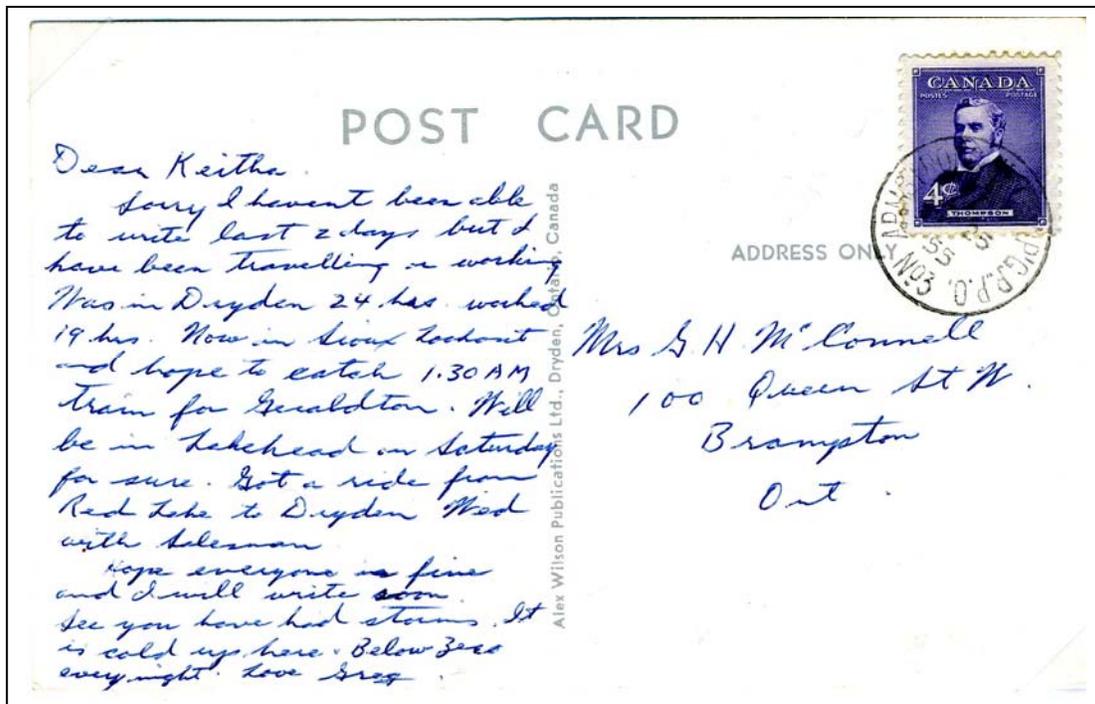
## The Canadian Northern/National Railway

East of Winnipeg, on the “main line”, an RPO was introduced on the Canadian National in the early 1940s (O-8, Armstrong Station (ON)-Winnipeg). Later, in 1965, O-138, Longlac(ON)-Winnipeg was established on the CNR, replacing the Ft. William-Winnipeg RPO that had operated on the CPR.



	PROOF	ERD	LRD
O-8 (1)	July 30, 1938	Jan 6, 1939	Aug 1, 1954
O-8 (2)	July 30, 1938	Dec 15, 1938	July 29, 1954
O-8 (3)	July 30, 1938	Oct 15, 1952	Mar 2, 1955
O-8 (4)	July 30, 1938	Nov 13, 1938	Oct 20, 1952
O-138	May 19, 1965	June 29, 1965	Feb 2, 1971

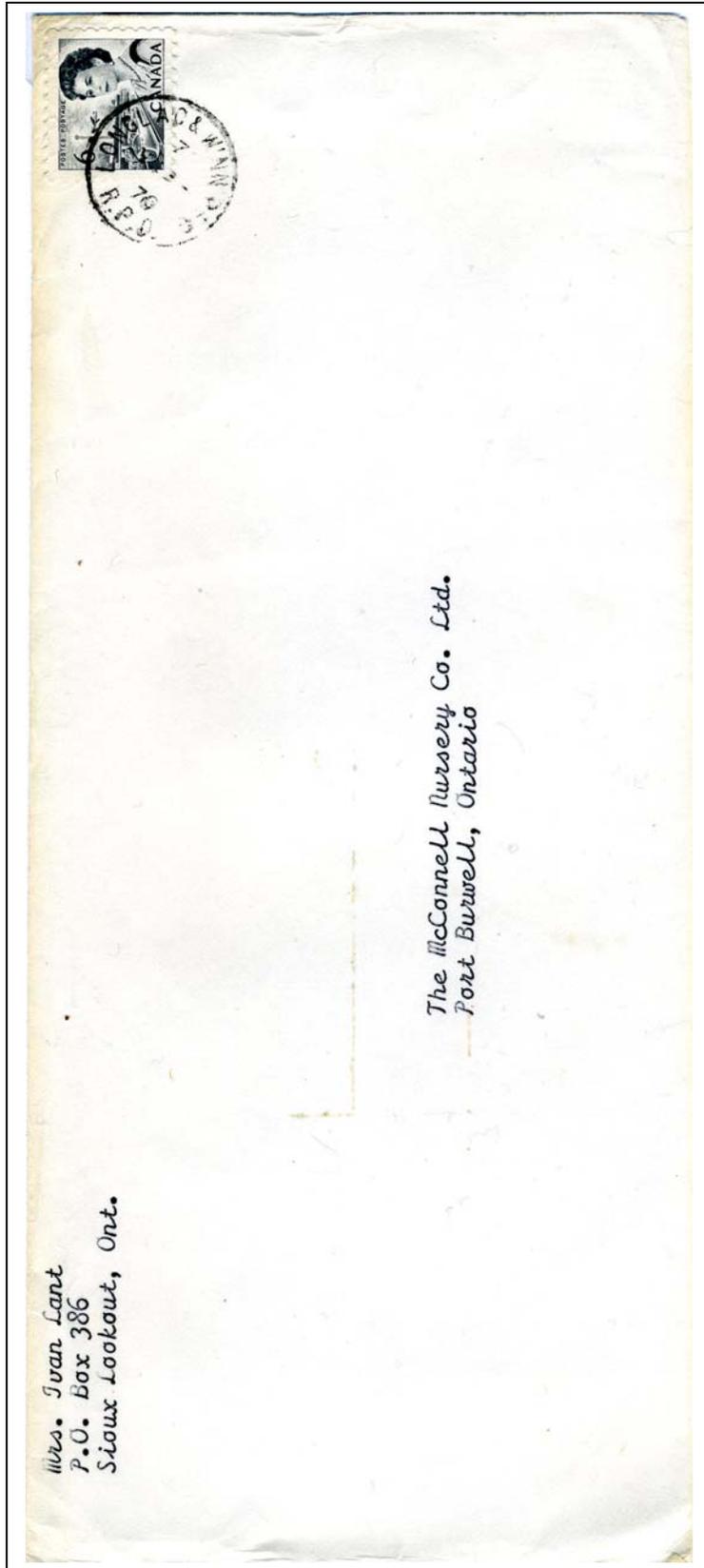
O-8: ARMSTRONG STN & WP'G R.P.O. / No.  
O-138: LONGLAC & WINNIPEG / R.P.O.



O-8: ARMSTRONG STN & WP'G R.P.O. / No., FE 25 55, hammer #3.  
Post card showing Dryden, ON, to Brampton. RATE: 4c domestic postcard rate.

The Canadian Northern/National Railway

O-138: LONGLAC &  
WINNIPEG / R.P.O.,  
VII 31 70, train 7;  
cover from Sioux  
Lookout, ON, to Port  
Burwell, ON. RATE:  
6C domestic letter  
rate.



The Canadian Northern/National Railway

O-138 is known for its several clerk stamps, which are rarely reported:

O-138A: Longlac & Winnipeg / Wm. C. Kenyon (RF=445)

O-138B: Long. & Wpg. R.P.O. / A Janssens (RF=460)

O-138D: LONGLAC & WINNIPEG R.P.O. / H.S.BJARNASON (RF=500)

O-138E: LONG. & WPG. R.P.O. / J.F.PIERI (RF=475)

These examples are found on "facing slips". Train numbers and dates are included.

