

# THE BNA PERFORATOR

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## Editor's Post:

¶ Last month I reported that our Study Group membership has 3 of the original members on the mailing list. This turned out not be true as after the newsletter distribution we learned that Neil (Lee) Dowsley has passed away last August. Our condolences to his family. We have one new member and welcome Enrico Volenti to the Study Group.

¶ This month I have three requests for assistance to pass along

- Rob Lund is looking for Scott 445, the Alouette II commemorative issue of 1965, perforated with C42 (CNR Toronto) and/or C46 (CNR Vancouver). Contact Rob at [rob.lunn.fton@gmail.com](mailto:rob.lunn.fton@gmail.com)
- Sean Keane is looking for Irish perfins, GB perfins used in Ireland, Irish Commercial Overprints and Irish Telegraph cancels. Also interested in exchanges. Sean can be reached at [s.keane7@gmail.com](mailto:s.keane7@gmail.com)
- I noticed in the latest issue of BNA Topics that Kerry Bryant is looking to acquire all manner of P18 and P19 perfins. You can contact Kerry at [kerrybryant@myaccess.ca](mailto:kerrybryant@myaccess.ca).
- Finally, yours truly is looking for large format stamps, and/or horizontal multiples of definitives with

incomplete C29 punches. My contact information is below.

¶ Printing and stationary costs for this issue were \$12.32 and the mailing costs were the usual \$13.62 (6 Canadian at \$1.30, one to the UDA @\$1.92 and in International at \$2.71. I had the \$2.71 in donated postage which reduced the final total cost to \$22.04

¶ And as always we are looking for newsletter contributions and/or suggestions on topics you would like to see covered. Do not feel obligated to create a fully crafted article; there is lots of help available to get it to the finish line.



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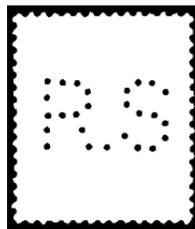
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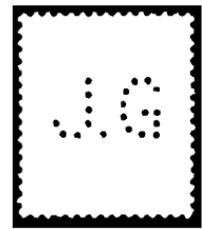
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# MISMATCHED COVERS 3

## MONTREAL ROLLING MILLS COMPANY

Jim Graham



Figure 1: A drawing of MRMC's very extensive works on the Lachine Canal in 1900 taken from the Company's letterhead.<sup>1</sup>

In May 1868, wholesale hardware dealers Morland & Watson founded the Montreal Rolling Mills Company Limited. This new company financed the purchase of the old Mansfield Holland nail factory in order to merge it with the saw and ax factory of Morland & Watson which had been founded in the 1850s. With the help of William Molson, president of the Molson bank, and of Peter Redpath, son of the sugar magnate, they succeeded in raising a share capital of \$200,000.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the long economic depression that began in 1873, the Montreal Rolling Mills continued to expand its activities. The workers produced nails, screws, bolts, saws, axes, pipes, horse-shoes, railway track and a variety of items for agriculture, transportation and construction.<sup>3</sup>

In 1910, the merger of five major steel firms (Montreal Rolling Mills Co., Hamilton Steel and Iron Company, Canada Screw Company, Canada Bolt and Nut Co., and Dominion Wire Manufacturing Co.), created the Steel Company of Canada.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 2: MR/MC pattern in use 1910-1951

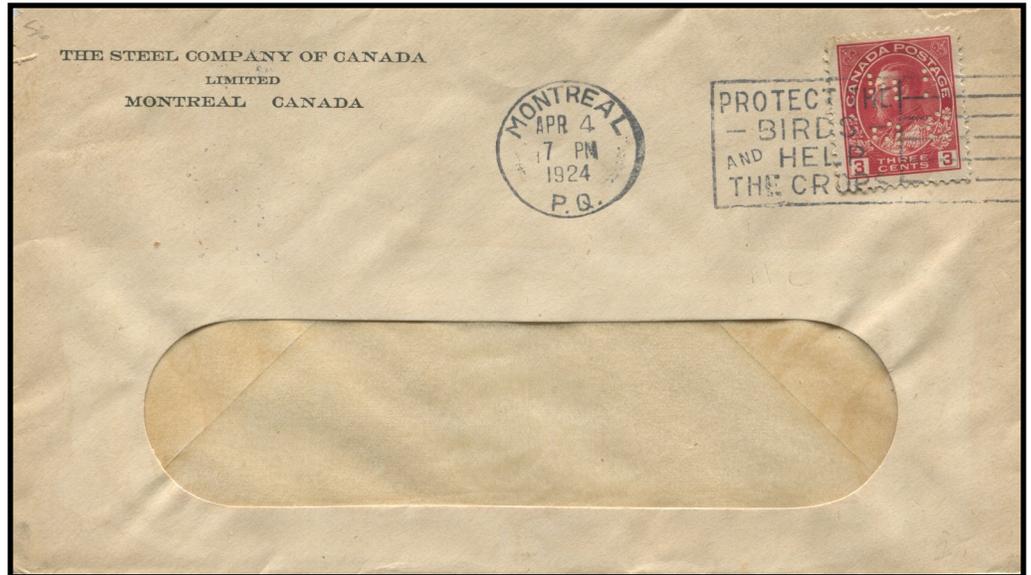


Figure 3: SC/C pattern in use 1911-1964

Both MRMC and the Steel Company of Canada were early users of private perforated postage (Figures 2 and 3).



**Figure 4:** Enhanced and enlarged colourless image of the MR/MC 3¢ carmine Admiral perfin on the cover in Figure 5. Almost half of the pattern holes are missing.

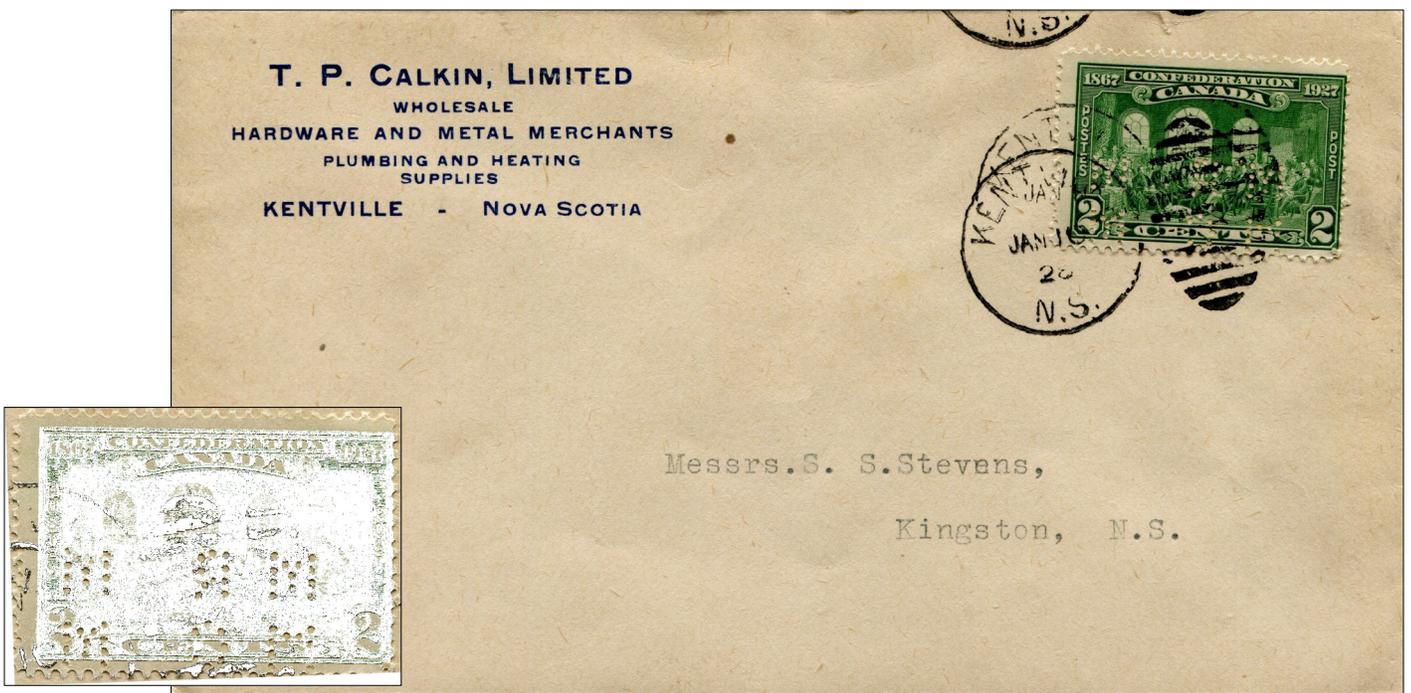


**Figure 5:** A 3¢ carmine Admiral with a MR/MC perfin paying the forward letter rate to an unknown destination on a Steel Company of Canada corner card window envelop. The slogan cancel "PROTECT THE BIRDS AND HELP THE CROPS" is Coutts P-700 a cancel used in Montreal only in the Spring of 1923 and 1924<sup>5</sup>.

Given the corporate history of the Montreal Rolling Mills and Steel Company of Canada, the cover in Figure 5 is neither surprising nor a "mismatched" cover—there is a clear and direct connection between the two companies.

The following covers however tell another story. The covers have commonalities; firstly, they have MR/MC perfins; secondly, the corner cards clearly identify that the senders are wholesale merchants for the types of products manufactured by MRMC and thirdly, the recipients of the contents of this correspondence were themselves businesses and not private individuals

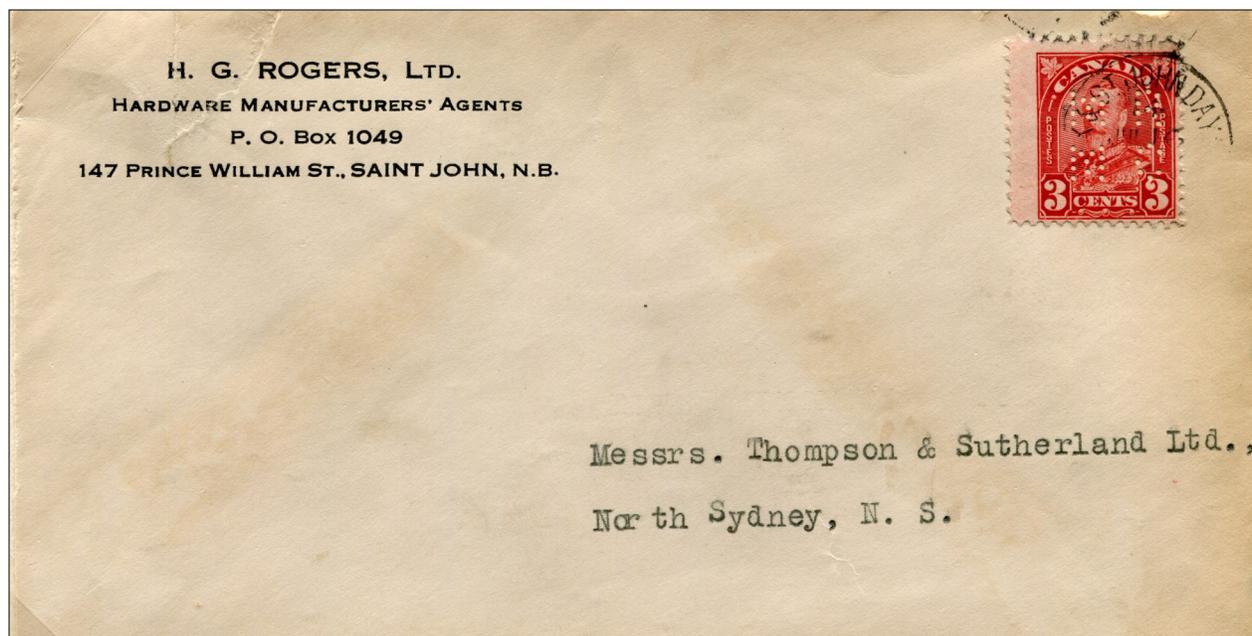
**Figure 6 (Below):** Corner card cover of T.P. Calkin, Limited<sup>6</sup> of Kentville Nova Scotia posted January 28th, 1928 addresses Messrs S.S. Stevens<sup>7</sup> in Kingston NS. The 2¢ Confederation Issue paying the forward letter rate is Perforated MR/MC.



**Figure 7:** A colorless image of the 3¢ Confederation more clearly showing the MR/MC perforation. There are very few missing holes.



**Figure 8:** A 2¢ George V Scroll issue paying the forward letter rate from Saint John New Brunswick to the North Kingston Company<sup>8</sup> in Kingston Nova Scotia, July 26, 1929. The cover identifies the sender, H. G. Rogers Ltd<sup>9</sup> as agents for “hardware manufactures” which was MRMC’s core business. The slogan cancel “BUY A DOMINION GOVERNMENT ANNUITY ASK POSTMASTER FOR BOOKLET” is Coutts B-0630 in use from 1926 to 1930.<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 9:** A second HG Rogers cover with an MRMC perfin paying the 3¢ forward letter rate from Saint John New Brunswick to Thompson & Sutherland Ltd.<sup>11</sup> in North Sydney Nova Scotia, . The cancel date is July 16 but the year is not visible. It would be at least 1932 or later as the 3¢ Arch was issued on July 13th 1931<sup>12</sup>.

Discussion: I think these MR/MC covers are in fact uses sanctioned by the Montreal Rolling Mill Company, if not by its parent, the Steel Company of Canada. Fewer stamps probably went through postal system uncancelled in the late 1920's and early 1930's than do today. To think these stamps were received un-cancelled, soaked of the envelop and reused is really not probable. They are also from business (MRMC) to business (H. G. Rogers Ltd. and T. P. Calkin Ltd.) to businesses (Thompson and Sutherland, North Kingston Co. and S.S. Stevens Ltd.) and not for personal use.

It is possible that MR/MC made a regular prac-

tice of forwarding a self-addressed pre-stamped envelopes along with invoices for shipped products to make it easier to mail the cheque in return. But if that were the case, why soak the stamp off and use it for another purpose. Finally, if this was a regular Montreal Rolling Mills practice, could we not anticipate seeing similar covers to these examples?

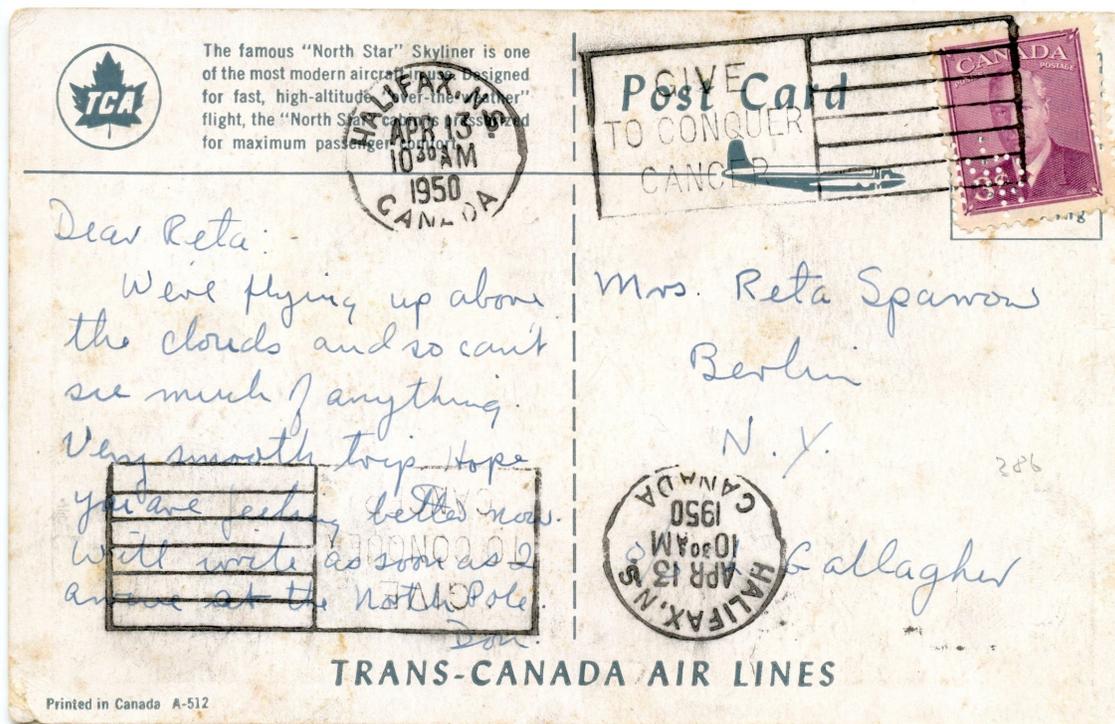
Its my opinion that the most probable explanations is that the stamps came as mint stamps and were part of a promotion for a new product. I would love to hear yours.

#### Footnotes and References:

1. [https://www.vieux.montreal.qc.ca/inventaire/fiches/fiche\\_gro.php?id=139](https://www.vieux.montreal.qc.ca/inventaire/fiches/fiche_gro.php?id=139)
2. Library and Archives Canada Blog <https://thediscoverblog.com/2017/02/03/expansion-of-the-montreal-rolling-mills-co/>
3. Ibid.
4. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stelco>
5. Postal Slogans of Canada: C. Coutts Ed. <https://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/postmarks.php>
6. From a modest general store started by Benjamin Calkin on Kentville Nova Scotia's Main street in 1847, T.P. Calkin Ltd eventually expanded into Halifax, the South Shore and down the Annapolis Valley as far as Bridgetown. Before it was sold to Summers, the Company had become one of the largest and most successful hardware and building supplies dealers in Nova Scotia. <https://edwingcoleman.com/>
7. Messers S. S. Stevens: From personal knowledge Stevens was a hardware store and building supply dealer. Its premises were nestled between the Dominion Atlantic Railway line and Highway 1 in the village of Kingston in heart of the Annapolis Valley.
8. North Kingston Company: I could find nothing about this company in the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks or anywhere else.
9. H. G. Rogers Ltd. The only reference I could find for H. G. Rogers was in Volume 18 of the Directory of Iron and Steel Works of the United States and Canada, (1916), where it is listed as the "selling agent" for the Jones Manufacturing Co. of Gananoque Ontario which manufactured steel products. <http://books.google.ca>
10. Postal Slogans of Canada: C. Coutts Ed. <https://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/postmarks.php>
11. Thompson & Sutherland Co. Ltd: The company was founded in North Sydney in 1872 and manufactured furnaces and heaters, coal and wood burning stoves, kitchen ranges, power boilers, hot water boilers, hot air furnaces, cast iron heaters, iron castings, tinware, wheelbarrows and soil pipe. The Company had wholesale and retail outlets for hardware, building and construction materials and contractors across Cape Breton, Northern Nova scotia and Halifax. Like T.P. Calkin the Company was sold in the 1970's. <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/cape-breton/post/20181015/281638191170539>
12. Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps (2015). Editor D. Robin Harris

# COMPLIMENTARY CPR AND CNR PERFINNED POSTAGE FOR AIRLINE PASSENGER MAIL FROM 1950 to 1960.

Russell D. Sampson



**Figure 1:** Back of a complimentary TCA postcard. This Canadian National Railway perfin (C29) is on a common 3-cent rose-violet King George VI 'POSTES-POSTAGE' (Scott 286). This perfin was produced in Montreal and was in use from 1929 to 1966. The Halifax slogan cancellation (Coutts G-0190) "GIVE TO CONQUER CANCER", was employed in 43 post offices around Canada from 1946 to 1968 and was used in Halifax intermittently between 1946 and 1957<sup>7</sup>. There appears to be no obvious indication of who printed the postcards.

## INTRODUCTION

The enormous breadth and width of the corporate activity for both the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian National Railway is mirrored in the wide-ranging usage of their perfins. In my perfin collection, I have covers from their railways, their steamships, their hotels, their telegraph services, their cargo services, their land settlement services, their financial services, their radio services, their war services and ... from their pioneering airlines.

Here are three attractive and interesting examples of the later and some tantalizing evidence that passengers onboard their flights – for a time in the 1950's and early 1960's – could receive complimentary postcards and lettercards provided by the airlines and could then be mailed with complimentary CNR or CPR perfinned postage. Thus, this investigation provides evidence for a new subset of perfinned mail – *complimentary airline passenger mail*.



**Figure 2:** The front of the 1950 TCA postcard showing the interior of their four-engine pressurized flagship the Canadair North Star. Note the primitive and now deemed unsafe, overhead luggage shelf.

## C29 (CNR MONTREAL) ON 1950 TRANS-CANADA AIRLINES POSTCARDS

These attractive postcards appear to have been compliments of Trans-Canada Air Lines (TCA) to their passengers (see Figure 1 and 2). A “poor-person’s X-ray” [1], of the stamps reveals printed instructions underneath the postage which reads; “NO STAMP NECESSARY Hand to Flight Attendant or any TCA office for Mailing” (see Figure 3). This suggests that the postage was applied by TCA staff and did not accompany the complimentary postcards.

In this case, the airline-supplied postage stamp is a 3-cent rose-violet King George VI “POSTES POSTAGE” issued in 1949 (Scott 286) and perforated with the C29 perfin “CNR” [2]. The C29 perforating machine is believed to have been housed at the Montreal office of the Canadian National Railway. This very common perfin has been found on Canadian and US postage between 1929 and 1966 but is not often found on TCA postcards.

The fledgling airline industry in the early post-war era appeared to have been undergoing a high degree of evolution and instability as evidenced by the frequent editions of their published timetables and by such printed caveats as “[routes] subject to government approval” [3]. Therefore, ascribing a specific flight to these postcards from their meager evidence could be problematic. Nonetheless, it is fascinating to try.

The dater hub reads HALIFAX N.S. CANADA APR 13 10<sup>30</sup> AM 1950 – a Thursday. Considering the card is addressed to Berlin, New York (between Albany, NY and Pittsfield, MA), if one assumes the passengers originated from the State of New York, then one would think their TCA route would most likely have been from New York City to Halifax, via Montreal [3]. However, Berlin, NY is actually closer to Boston than New York City and since there is little supporting evidence contained in the postcard their exact flight(s) may remain a mystery.

The second TCA postcard is a little easier to decipher (Figures 4, 5, and 6 ). The Halifax postmark reads: JUL 25 / 2<sup>30</sup> PM / 1951 which was a Wednesday. Braintree, MA is a suburb of Boston, and the message suggests the passengers were sent-off by mutual acquaintances. This further suggests they flew from Boston onboard either flight 380, 382 or 384 which went daily from Boston to Halifax.



Figure 3: A “Poor person’s X-ray” of the stamps showing the C29 perfin at position 1 and is a “non-overlap minus double perfin” [2]. Also note the franking instructions under the stamp which read “NO STAMP NECESSARY Hand to Flight Attendant of any TCA office for Mailing”.

However, the evidence clearly suggests that it was likely 384 since the message states “*Having a grand trip will be in Halifax at 3:30*” (see Figure 4). The May 1, 1950 TCA timetable (Figure 7) states that flight 384 from Boston is scheduled to leave at 11:35 AM and arrive in Halifax at 3:30 PM [3]. Since the time of the postmark is 2:30 PM, one would assume the postcard was cancelled on Tuesday July 24, the day following the flight’s arrival in Halifax.

Trans-Canada Air Lines adopted the sleeker, faster and just better Lockheed Constellation in 1953 [4] and to commemorate they printed new postcards of their new flagship. Sadly, from the examination of unposted samples of this postcard on eBay it appears these postcards also marked the end of the era of free TCA perfined postage. On the back of these newer postcards a simpler and less generous directive was printed: “STAMP HERE / TIMBRA ICI”.



**Figure 4:** The back of the second complimentary TCA postcard with two C29 perfins on a 1-cent and 2-cent KG VI "POSTES-POSTAGE" (Scott 284, 285). Postmark is a Coutts U-0190 slogan cancel "USE POST OFFICE MONEY ORDERS". This common slogan was used in 68 post offices between 1931 and 1956 with its employment at the Halifax post office occurring intermittently throughout this period<sup>7</sup>.

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**Figure 5:** Front of 1951 TCA postcard showing their flagship aircraft even though the postcard was likely onboard the Douglas DC-3. From eBay searches there appears to be no official TCA postcards depicting their DC-3 fleet.



**Figure 6:** Poor person's X-ray [1] of the perfin on the 1951 TCA postcard. The perfin on the 1-cent Scott 284 is position 1 and appears complete while the perfin on the 2-cent Scott 285 appears to be a "non-overlap double minus" [2]. The printed directive underneath the second stamp is identical to that on the 1950 TCA postcard.

### C36 (CPR, VANCOUVER) ON 1960 CANADIAN PACIFIC AIRLINES LETTERCARD

These two great companies always seemed to be locked in a ferocious battle of copy-catting. If CPR had an airline, so must CNR, and so if Trans-Canada Air Lines offered complimentary postcards and postage on their flight, then it appears so must Canadian Pacific Air Lines (see Figure 8). However, it appears that Canadian Pacific may have been a little latter in their perfined promotions.

This specimen is actually not a postcard but a lettercard. Its folding and adhesive design allows the sender to conceal their messages – a privilege that the postal authorities charged extra. Additional evidence can be found in the 5-cent franking (Scott 341) instead of the 1960 postcard rate of 4-cents. Finally, a "poor-person's X-ray" (see Figure 9) of the stamp reveals printed instructions underneath which clearly states: "LETTER RATE".

The simple handwritten note on the inside reads: *"Edmonton Hello there. Just got out for a change. Very nice so far. Love Doll"*

The lettercard is postmarked from Edmonton Terminal "A" and is dated May 16, 1960, which is a Monday. It has gone through the machine canceller twice since it was first inserted the wrong way receiving a time-stamp of 7 PM. A postal worker must have noticed this anomaly and about two hours later (time stamped 9 PM) it was sent through the same machine again, this time cancelling the postage correctly.

Considering the address (Victoria, BC) and the subject of the lettercard's illustration (Canadian Pacific Britannia aircraft) the most likely origins of this attractive lettercard is from a passenger aboard one of the flagships of Canadian Pacific Air Lines; the Bristol Model 314 Britannia turboprop aircraft. Only six of the 314 variants were built, all for the fledgling Canadian Pacific Airlines<sup>5</sup>. Their "Empress" nickname was most likely derived from the company's famous CPR passenger steamships. These airliners departed from Vancouver at 11:00 AM PST on Fridays (Flight 352) and Sundays (Flight 302), and arrived in Edmonton at 2:00 PM MST the same day. Once in Edmonton there was a one-hour stop-over before continuing to Amsterdam using a great-circle "Polar" route<sup>3</sup> (see Figure 10).

Maritime, New York and Trans-Atlantic & Services		380	384	28	332	20	382
Montreal.....Lv	EST	...	...	12.00	12.15	12.05	...
New York.....Ar	"	9.40	...	...	2.00	...	...
Boston.....Lv	EST	8.30	11.35	...	...	...	1.30
Saint John.....Lv	AST	12.00	...	...	...	...	5.00
Yarmouth.....Lv	"	...	...	...	...	...	6.00
Moncton.....Lv	"	...	...	3.50	...	4.00	...
Halifax.....Ar	"	1.10	3.30	4.45	...	4.55	7.05
Halifax.....Lv	"	1.25	...	5.00	...	5.10	...
Sydney.....Ar	"	2.45	...	6.20	...	6.30	...
Sydney.....Lv	AST	...	...	6.35	...	6.45	...

**Figure 7:** The "Eastbound" section of a May 1, 1950 TCA timetable [3] showing the daily flights from Boston to Halifax highlighted in blue by the author. For clarity, the relevant sections of the timetable have been cut and pasted together. The most probable route for the 1951 postcard is flight 384. Flight numbers appear at the top of each column. The timetable times are read downwards with "Lv" meaning "Leaving" and "Ar" "Arriving". Time zones are indicated in the first boxed column, bold times are PM. Red arrows indicate connecting flights. The red square indicates that Halifax to Sydney service will be suspended after May 1. The red "h" and "c" indicates "hot" and "cold" meal service. The red "dagger" below flight number 384 indicates service only between June 1 and September 30. The red maple leaf indicates Canadair North Star aircraft while all others are Douglas DC-3



**Figure 8:** The front of Canadian Pacific Air Lines lettercard showing a position 1 of the common (RF=H) C36 perfin (CPR, Vancouver) on a 5-cent QE II Wilding (Scott 341). This perfin has been found on stamps from 1913 to 1968 [2]. Both machine cancels are the Coutts R-0700 slogans [7]. The printing company of the lettercard is not indicated.



**Figure 10:** Poor person's X-ray [1] of lettercard showing the perfin pattern is a "non-overlap minus double perfin" [2]. The printed directive beneath the stamp reads "Letter Rate" which is appropriate for a lettercard.

From this airline timetable, plus the "Edmonton" heading of the message, and finally the postmark, it certainly appears that the Vancouver passengers briefly deplaned in Edmonton. The statement "*Just got out for a change. Very nice so far.*" further suggests that they may have been allowed to stretch her legs in the terminal and thus, could have posted the letter there or asked the staff to do so, before re-boarding the plane to continue on to Amsterdam. I have done this too and successfully posted letters and postcards from the airport terminals from such exotic stop-overs as Baker Lake, Nunavut. Considering the cancellation date and time on the lettercard, it is possible that "Doll" could have been onboard either the Saturday or the Monday flight from Vancouver. My slogan collection has an example of this Edmonton Terminal "A" slogan postmarked on Sunday May 15, 1960 at 6 PM (i.e., the day before the perfinned lettercard was postmarked), so it is obvious that if the lettercard was picked up by the post office on the Friday (i.e., the day of arrival for flight 352) it would have been sorted and cancelled Friday, Saturday or Sunday – but it was not. Therefore, the most likely scenario is that "Doll" was onboard flight 302 (arriving Edmonton on Sunday) briefly deplaned, and either posted the lettercard in the airport terminal or had the staff post it for her. It was then likely collected on Monday and processed by the Post Office on Monday evening.

	FLIGHT NO.	352	302
	EQUIPMENT	☐	☐
	CLASS OF SERVICE	Y.	L.F.Y.
AMSTERDAM	Ar.	SAT. 12.55	MON. 12.55
MONTREAL	Ar.		
TORONTO	Lv. Ar.		
WINNIPEG	Lv. Ar.		
EDMONTON	Lv. Ar.	DB 15.00 14.00	DB 15.00 14.00
VANCOUVER	Lv.	N 11.00 FRI.	N 11.00 L.F.Y.

**Figure 11:** A cropped scan of the intercontinental section of the Canadian Pacific timetable [3]. The most likely flight for the lettercard was flight 302 that landed in Edmonton on a Sunday. This timetable is read upwards and all times are on a 24-hour clock. The abbreviations "Y" is for economy class, "T" for tourist class, "F" for first class and "L" for a soon to premier "Loungeair" Class (first class with reclining seats). The boxed circle under the flight number indicates the Britannia "jet-prop" airliner. The letters B, N, and D indicate breakfast, lunch and dinner. The word "POLAR" indicates a great-circle route from Edmonton to Amsterdam. Great circle routes are the shortest distance between two points on a globe. This route can be estimated by stretching a string upon a globe of the Earth with one end of the string at Edmonton and the other at Amsterdam and takes the airliner significantly north of the Arctic Circle over Baffin Island, Greenland and Iceland.

ficce collected on Monday evening.

Today, the Edmonton International Airport is south of the city near the town of Leduc and did not open until November 15, 1960 [6] – a half-year after the flight responsible for this letter-card. Therefore, the flight in question must have landed at the old Edmonton City Centre Airport just a couple miles north of downtown Edmonton. The Terminal "A" postal sorting plant on the dater hub, was also in downtown

Edmonton, attached to the CNR rail terminal. It was there, on the evening of Monday May 16, 1960 the lettercard received its wonderful slogan cancel – twice (see Notes).

Considering the evidence, it appears likely that “Doll” obtained the Canadian Pacific Air Lines lettercard during the flight and the C36 perfined postage was either provided to the passengers or applied by the airline’s staff. One piece of evidence for the later hypothesis are complimentary airline postcards and lettercards of this era that have non-perfined stamps. This suggests that the passenger obtained the complimentary postcard, but not the postage and mailed the postcards themselves after the flight. I have two examples of these non-perfined postcards or lettercards – one TCA and one Canadian Pacific – that show clear evidence in their message that the writer was very recently onboard a flight. Data-mining on eBay further supports this conjecture. One unused TCA postcard on eBay (c. 1948) had the following printed directive on the postcard; “IF Handed to Flight Attendant or any TCA office for Mailing, No Stamp Necessary”. The semantics of this directive clearly supports the hypothesis that the perfined postage would have been kept by TCA staff. However, no such corroborat-

ing evidence was found for how the Canadian Pacific Air Lines handled their perfined postage but it is not unreasonable to assume it was the same as TCA.

## CONCLUSIONS

The evidence clearly suggests that during the early 1950’s TCA postcards were made available to passengers onboard their aircraft along with the promise of complimentary postage. The same service appears to have been offered in the early 1960’s for passengers onboard Canadian Pacific Air Lines. Evidence suggests that the perfined stamps from TCA were not given directly to passengers but affixed by airline staff. Further examples of these perfined postcards are needed to better establish the date-range of the complimentary perfined postage. In more than 20-years of collecting I have only seen three of these, so they appear to be quite scarce which may further suggest that their effectiveness as a complimentary service from the airlines was rather limited.

Nonetheless, it is hoped that the above specimens and their analysis shall provide the perfin collector with yet another fascinating and picturesque collectable from the CNR and CPR – *complimentary airline passenger mail*.

## NOTES

I also collect and study Canadian slogan cancels, something that has greatly aided my perfin studies by helping determine the postmark’s time and location for off-cover perfins. One of the most extensive parts of my slogan collection is from Edmonton and especially those produced during the “Terminal A” era which spanned almost 10-years between early April of 1951 and mid-December of 1961. The specimen on this lettercard is the relatively uncommon and desirable Coutts R-0700 “ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY 50TH ANNIVERSARY 1910-1960” [7]. Of the over 600 Edmonton Terminal A slogan specimens in my collection, I have only eight of the R-0700 as they were used during the relatively short period between mid-May and the beginning of June of 1960.

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