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THE R.P.O. NEWSLETTER

OF THE CANADIAN R.P.O. STUDY GROUP (B.N.A.P.S.)

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Volume 27 - No.1

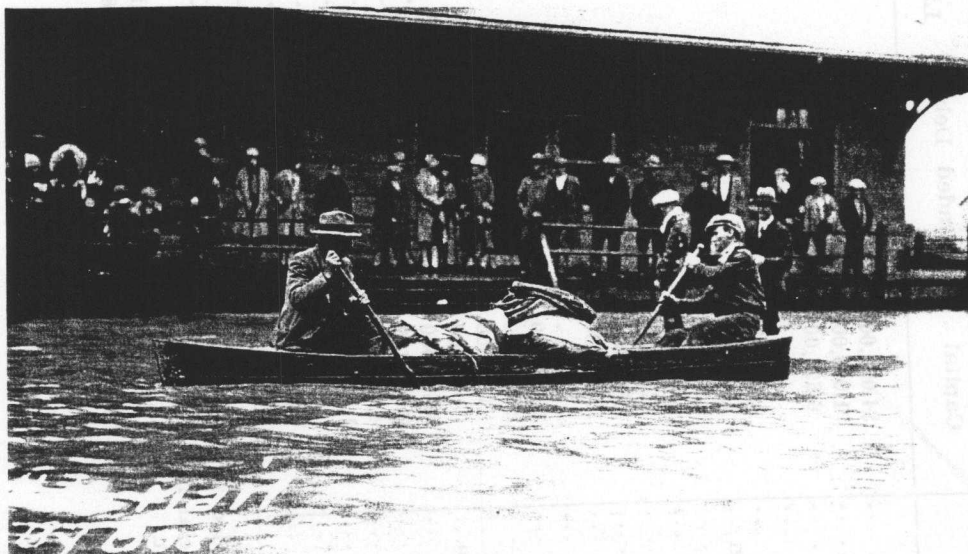
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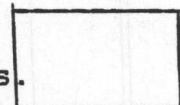
BNAPEX '98 - The annual meeting at Orlando is now history, and I hope it was the usual success. Our Study Group was scheduled for a meeting late on Friday afternoon, October 8, with Ken Ellison speaking on B.C.Coast Steamers, and John McCrea on Cross-Border R.P.Os - but I don't have a report yet - having just returned from ILSAPEX '98 in South Africa.

H.M.MAIL BY BOAT - A card submitted by John Cheramy showing mail being delivered by boat at the C.P.Railway station in High River, Alberta - an aptly named town about 20 miles south of Calgary on the MacLeod and Calgary run. Thanks, John.



CONTENTS - This issue has an article on the 1979 Discovery Train by Jim Miller. The philatelic covers prepared for this tour, and for that in 1980 are scarce. Reports of what members have would be appreciated. We also have contributions by Don Wilson on the Newfoundland Railway, and some items from Lionel Gillam, Jerry Carr and Horace Harrison. We hope you enjoy them.

1998-99 ANNUAL DUES - I hate to mention these, but our year ends at the BNAPEX Annual Meeting. If there is a check mark in the box to the right, you owe 1998-99 dues. Please remit \$10 CAD in Canada, \$9 U.S. in U.S.A., and 5 pounds sterling for U.K.addresses. Canadian, U.S. or Sterling Cheques to W.G.Robinson, or bank notes accepted with thanks.



RAILWAY STATISTICS.

Capital stock, funded debt, etc., of railways operating in British Columbia.

	Capital	Funded Debt	Total Liabilities	Cost of Road	Gov't. Aid
British Columbia Southern	\$4,000,000	\$ 967,500	\$7,385,294	\$7,213,092	† 88,800
Columbia and Kootenay	1,000,000	1,277,500	.....	.....	† 88,800
Columbia and Western	6,691,000	5,691,000	.....	7,087,459	† 88,800
Kootenay and Arrowhead	.....	.....	.....	887,226	.....
Nakusp and Slocan	1,680,674	647,074	.....	765,100	† 1,068,674
Nicola, Kamloops and Similkameen	1,620,000	.....	.....	1,452,786	† 110,590
Shuswap and Okanagan	2,052,723	1,139,523	.....	1,250,000	† 163,200
Vancouver and Lulu Island	1,000,000	28,000	.....	317,743	.....
Esquimalt and Nanaimo	3,250,000	.....	.....	3,656,823	† 750,000
Kettle River Valley	1,500,000	140,000	.....	.....	† 97,777
Bedlington and Nelson	1,000,000	720,000	.....	.....	.....
Kaslo and Slocan	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Kootenay Ry. and Navigation Co.	2,500,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Morrissey, Fernie and Michel	2,000,000	.....	1,220,500	.....	.....
Victoria and Sidney	500,000	300,000	716,923	458,000	§ 238,453
Victoria Terminal Ry. and Ferry Co.	50,000	.....	72,574	72,574	.....
White Pass and Yukon	8,500,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
British Yukon	2,934,119	1,719,810	.....	.....	.....
Crow's Nest Southern	4,180,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Nelson and Fort Sheppard	1,500,000	1,293,000	.....	.....	.....
New Westminster Southern	600,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Red Mountain Railway	190,600	217,000	.....	.....	.....

Note—Kaslo and Slocan included in Kootenay Railway and Navigation Co. Has provincial grant of 254,000 acres.

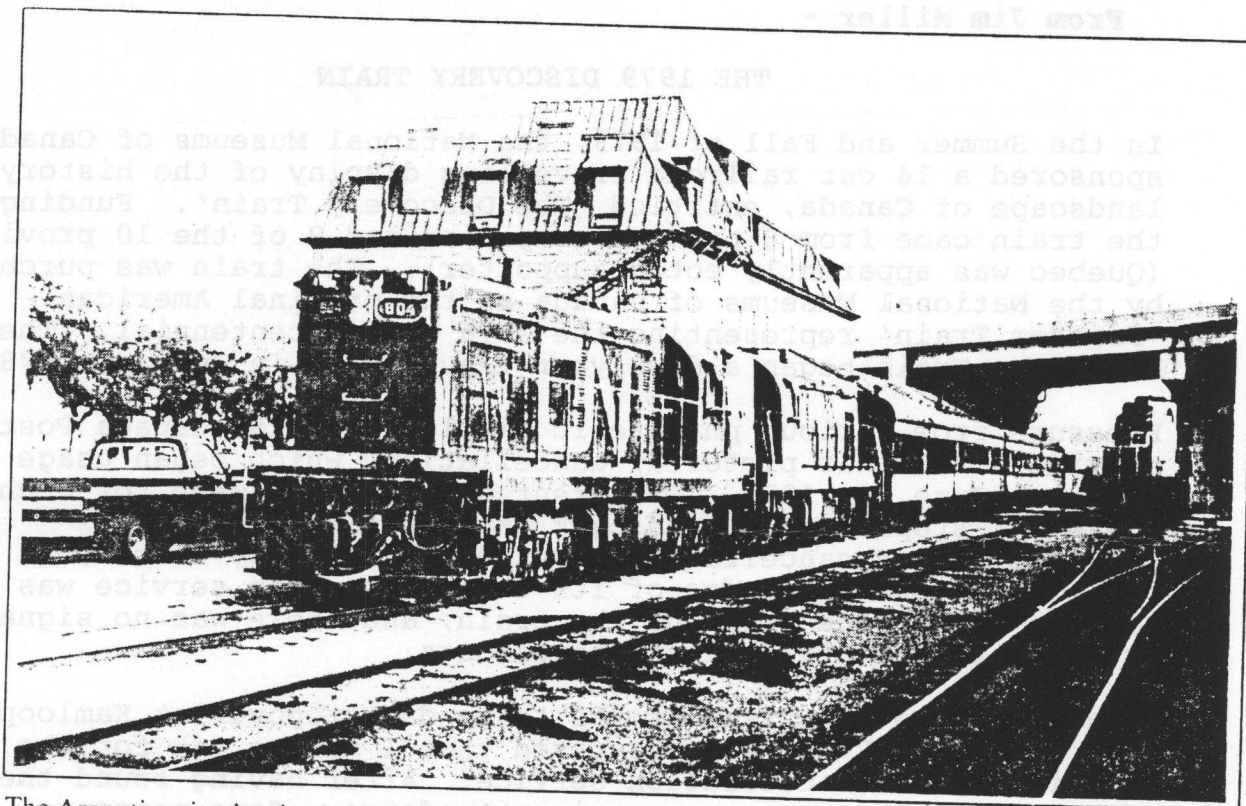
* Dominion cash subsidy; provincial land grant 10,240 acres per mile.

† Provincial guarantee of interest.

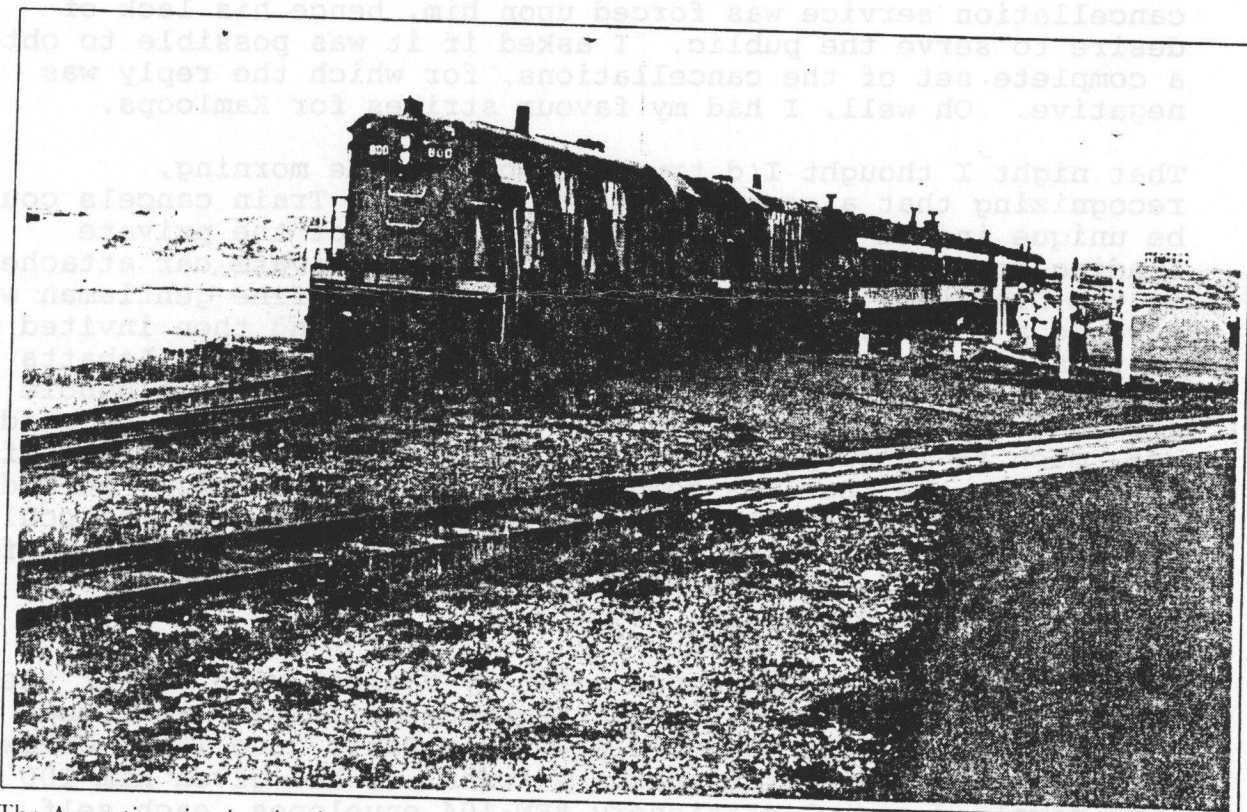
‡ Provincial land grant 1,900,000.

§ Provincial subsidy \$95,000; municipal \$143,453.

¶ Provincial land grant 10,240 per mlle.



The Argentia mixed train about ready to depart St. John's for the last time on September 19, 1984, ending approximately 96 years of service to the town of Placentia and Argentia. The head-end power for the last run was a pair of 875 horse power G.M. diesels no's. 800 and 804. Photo by Richard Forest



The Argentia mixed train about ready to depart Argentia for the last time on September 19, 1984, ending approximately 96 years of faithful service to the towns of Placentia and Argentia. The head end power for the last run was a pair of 875 horse power G.M. diesels no's. 800 and 804. Photo by Richard Forest

From Jim Miller -

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

In the Summer and Fall of 1979, the National Museums of Canada sponsored a 14 car railroad travelling display of the history and landscape of Canada, entitled 'The Discovery Train'. Funding for the train came from 8 private companies and 9 of the 10 provinces (Quebec was apparently not a supporter). The train was purchased by the National Museums of Canada as the original American 'Freedom Train' representing the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial. The Discovery Train began a five year travel plan in July of 1978.

Pressure from various philatelic circles prompted Canada Post to provide a souvenir pictorial cancellation, which began usage at Banff on June 16, 1979. Different hammers were made for each of the major stops, and a hand-back cancellation service was provided. This cancellation service was not very formal, in fact visitors had no knowledge of its existence. The service was in a baggage car at the front of the train, and there was no signage or identification as to its whereabouts.

When I visited the train at its three day stopover at Kamloops July 7 to 9, 1979, I was surprised that I had to ask for the location of the cancellation service. After having found the baggage car, there was no one in attendance. Some personnel searching led to a supplies and maintenance clerk, who among other more pressing tasks was given the duty of providing the cancellation service. He was not overly enthused at providing some favour strikes, and I recall him saying that the cancellation service was forced upon him, hence his lack of desire to serve the public. I asked if it was possible to obtain a complete set of the cancellations, for which the reply was negative. Oh well, I had my favour strikes for Kamloops.

That night I thought I'd try once more in the morning, recognizing that a complete set of Discovery Train cancels could be unique indeed if I could get lucky. One of the private funding companies was Labatts, which had a private car attached to the Discovery Train. I knocked, and met a fine gentleman who gave me a tour of the elaborate private car, and then invited me to join him for a cold one. Needless to say, I was a Labatts customer, while at the same time having in my pocket a bundle of self-addressed envelopes. When I explained my desire, he said yes, much to my surprise, and that he would mail me the set of covers when the tour was completed in early November. He did caution me that the set would not be complete, because he could not obtain cancellations for the places and times between Banff and Kamloops. I left elated, happy that a 90% set would be better than no set at all.

Months later, a package appeared in my mailbox with all of the covers I had left with the Labatts representative. And, much to my surprise, the set was complete, from Banff June 16 to Ottawa November 4! 87 different dates & towns! I had given him 100 15c. revalued postal stationery #EN-104 envelopes, each self

addressed. The spares were there too, postmarked from Ottawa. No letter was enclosed, but there was a one-page circular from Canada Post identifying the cancellation service, and on the other side was the 1979 Discovery Train itinerary.

Some of the eastern Canada places and dates do not match up with the Canada Post itinerary, as follows:

I have ROBERVAL, QUE. dated Aug. 20 and 21; and CHICOUTIMI dated Aug. 22 to 25. Perhaps there was an error in the Canada Post itinerary list for Roberval and Chicoutimi.

The itinerary identifies TRURO, N.S. for Sept. 14-16, but these are missing. However, I have TRURO dated Oct. 8 to 11. There must have been an route change, with the train stopping at Truro on the return run.

ST. JOHN'S is listed for Sept. 27-29, but I have only Sept. 28 & 29. Perhaps the train was a day late?

ARGENTIA (misspelled Argentina on the Canada Post itinerary)) is listed for Oct. 3 and 4, but I have no covers. However, CORNER BROOK, listed for Oct. 5 to 7, I have postmarked Oct. 3 & 4. Obviously another itinerary change occurred.

PORT AUX BASQUES is listed for Oct 8, but I have no cover. Instead I have TRURO, N.S. for four days, Oct. 8 to 11. This would make up for the missed stop at Truro in September.

STE FOY, QUE. is listed for Oct. 19 to 22, I have Oct. 18 to 22.

The rest of the covers are as originally scheduled.

I guess the date & location differences herein identified can raise question as to whether or not I have a complete set, at least according to the original itinerary. Perhaps some of the RPO study group members have interest in the Discovery Train, and can confirm or alter the above information.

The Discovery Train was to travel for five years. I have one cover with a generic THE DISCOVERY TRAIN-LA DECOUVERTE/CANADA commemorative cancel dated 9 VIII 80, and beside it is a KINDERSLEY/SASK. 80/9 VIII CDS. Perhaps one cancellation device was issued for the entire 1980 run? Did cancellation service continue in later years?

Bill's note in the last RPO Newsletter about listing Discovery Train cancels made me bring out this long forgotten bunch of material. It was nice to remember back 17 years to that visit in the Labatts private car, and the cover set that arrived about six months later. I'll look forward to hearing of other experiences and stories about the Discovery Train's cancellations.

Jim Miller



THE DISCOVERY TRAIN

Canada Post has accepted a proposal to provide a souvenir pictorial cancellation on the Discovery Train, effective with the stop in Banff, Alberta from 16 to 18 June.

Unfortunately the proposal was received too late to provide the cancellation at the first several stops on this year's itinerary. Since the complete itinerary could not be accommodated, it was decided to offer the first cancellation at the first community the train visits after 15 June, the first day of issue of Canada Post's provincial and territorial flag miniature sheet. In this way, collectors can have the special flag stamps cancelled on board the Discovery Train at each community the train will visit on its cross-country tour from 16 June to 4 November.

In fourteen display cars, the Discovery Train leads you on an exciting half-hour journey through Canada's landscape and history. The displays contain over 1200 artifacts and specimens from museums across Canada, from prehistoric times to the present.

Collectors are advised to bring their own stamped envelopes as stamps may not be readily available for purchase at the train site. The cancellation will be offered on a hand-back basis only to those persons visiting the Discovery Train. No mail orders will be accepted, either by the Philatelic Mail Order Service in Ottawa or by the Postmasters of the various communities that the train will be visiting.

The basic design of the cancellation will remain constant; however, the name of the community and the date will change accordingly. All items receiving the special cancellation must bear a minimum of 15 cents Canadian postage, the third class letter rate.

LE TRAIN DE LA DECOUVERTE

Les Postes canadiennes ont accepté de fournir une oblitération-souvenir dans le Train de la Découverte, et ce à compter de l'arrêt du 16 au 18 juin, à Banff en Alberta.

La demande a malheureusement été reçue trop tard pour fournir l'oblitération-souvenir lors des premières étapes de l'itinéraire de cette année. Comme il s'avérait impossible d'offrir ce service pour tout le parcours, il a été convenu qu'on offrirait une première oblitération à la première localité où s'arrêterait le train après le 15 juin, premier jour d'émission du feuillet miniature des Postes canadiennes représentant les drapeaux des 10 provinces et des territoires du Yukon et du Nord-Ouest. Ainsi, les collectionneurs pourront faire oblitérer les timbres spéciaux sur les drapeaux dans le Train de la Découverte, à chaque endroit où le train s'arrêtera durant sa tournée du Canada du 16 juin au 4 novembre.

Pendant 30 minutes, les 14 wagons du Train de la Découverte nous font vivre un voyage fascinant à travers l'histoire et les paysages du Canada. Plus de 1,200 objets et spécimens prêtés par des musées de tout le Canada, retraçant notre histoire depuis les temps préhistoriques, composent l'exposition.

Les collectionneurs seraient bien avisés d'apporter des enveloppes déjà affranchies car il est possible qu'ils ne puissent se procurer de timbres-poste dans le Train de la Découverte. Les plis seront oblitérés et remis immédiatement aux personnes qui visiteront le Train de la Découverte seulement. Aucune commande postale ne sera acceptée, ni par le Service philatélique à Ottawa, ni par les maîtres de poste des diverses localités où s'arrêtera le train.

Le dessin de l'oblitération ne variera pas. Toutefois, le nom du lieu et la date changeront dans chaque cas. Tout article soumis pour oblitération devra porter un affranchissement d'au moins 15 c., soit le tarif de la troisième classe.

1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN ITINERARY/ ITINERAIRE DU TRAIN DE LA DECOUVERTE

<u>SITE/LIEU</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Banff, Alberta	June 16-18 juin
Kelowna, B.C./C.-B.	June 20-22 juin
Victoria, B.C./C.-B.	June 27-29 juin
Port Alberni, B.C./C.-B.	July 01-02 juil.
Nanaimo, B.C./C.-B.	July 03-04 juil.
Kamloops, B.C./C.-B.	July 07-09 juil.
Red Deer, Alberta	July 13-15 juil.
Swift Current, Saskatchewan	July 18-19 juil.
Yorkton, Saskatchewan	July 22-23 juil.
The Pas, Manitoba	July 25-26 juil.
Churchill, Manitoba	July 29-30 juil.
Thompson, Manitoba	Aug. 01-02 août
Dauphin, Manitoba	Aug. 04-06 août
Rouyn-Noranda, Québec	Aug. 16-18 août
Roberval, Québec	Aug. 20 août
Chicoutimi, Québec	Aug. 21-25 août
Rimouski, Québec	Aug. 28-30 août
Campbellton, N.B./N.-B.	Aug. 31-Sept. 01/31 août-01 sept.
Newcastle, N.B./N.-B.	Sept. 03-04 sept.
Charlottetown, P.E.I./I.-P.-E.	Sept. 07-11 sept.
Truro, N.S./N.-E.	Sept. 14-16 sept.
Yarmouth, N.S./N.-E.	Sept. 19-20 sept.
Liverpool, N.S./N.-E.	Sept. 21-22 sept.
New Glasgow, N.S./N.-E.	Sept. 24-25 sept.
St. John's, Nfld./T.-N.	Sept. 27-29 sept.
Botwood, Nfld./T.-N.	Sept. 30-Oct. 01/30 sept.-01 oct.
Argentina, Nfld./T.-N.	Oct. 03-04 oct.
Corner Brook, Nfld./T.-N.	Oct. 05-07 oct.
Port aux Basques, Nfld./T.-N.	Oct. 08 oct.
Edmundston, N.B./N.-B.	Oct. 13-15 oct.
St. Foy, Québec	Oct. 19-22 oct.
Sherbrooke, Québec	Oct. 24-27 oct.
Ottawa, Ontario	Oct. 30-Nov. 04/30 oct.-04 nov.



regarding the Deletion of W-20A - see Page 10 of NL 137 -



L. F. GILLAM
66 EAST BAWTRY ROAD
ROTHERHAM
S. YORKS. S60 4BU
ENGLAND



17th July, 1998

Dear Ross,

I have naturally read your comments on the supposed "error" in the Calgary & Edmonton R.P.O. strike with considerable interest. As I think that I have already stated (probably in Maple Leaves) the cover bearing the postmark lay long in my collection before I really looked at it and noticed the missing "D". This was one of the many covers sent to me by "Bunny" Sonne, a long time member of the C.P.S. of G.B. (and probably B.N.A.P.S.) "Bunny" was a former C.P.R. official based in Winnipeg and for a number of years following his retirement he spent his time motor-ing throughout Canada, literally from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and visiting the many hundreds, if not thousands of towns and cities that for him had been previously just places on the huge map. This was in the early fifties when, as you will know, the Railway Mail Service in Canada was at its peak ^{when} with even little branch lines, now long since abandoned, still had a railway post office service (usually housed in a compartment of the baggage car.) Knowing my interest in R.P.O.'s (gleaned from M.L.) he went to considerable trouble (and that is an understatement) to stop off at railway stations and leave a letter with the agent with a request for it to be mailed to me on the next available train. Sometimes he enclosed a letter telling me of his transcontinental itinerary, where he had been, what he had seen, where he was bound for next etc. Now when I tell you that to him I was a complete stranger, not even linked by a common interest but merely a friendly correspondent who (unlike him) had fallen in love with Canadian railway postmarks, it says much for his character. That he went to such trouble for my sake left an indelible impression upon me, one that will always remain outstanding. As editor of Maple Leave I made, and still have, many kind friends in Canada, not least of all you, of course. But neither you nor they will be offended when I say that "Bunny" holds a special place in my memory for he has long since left us, and my only regret is that I never (because of domestic circumstances) had a chance of meeting him personally. No doubt that as a former "railway man" (and one I believe to be of high ranking) he gained an entrée with station agents (we would call them stationmasters) that would otherwise be more difficult, if not impossible. But none of this detracts one iota from this (but not the first) tribute I have paid to him. When, after some years I really looked (that is practised what I have for so long preached) and spotted the missing "D", I naturally thought of a similar omission (in MA 157). What is more I deceived myself in so far as the distance between the "C" and "N" and the "5" and "O" at the base of the strike appeared to be equal, that is centralised. The clerk's No.5 also

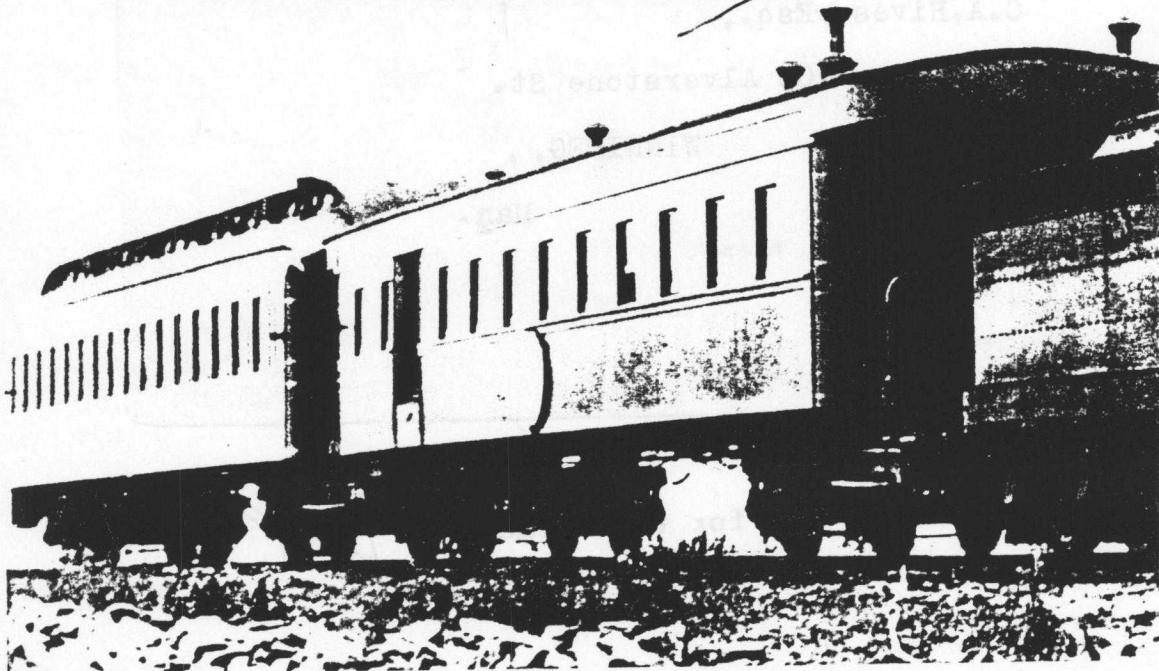
Lionel Gillam (Continued)

fitted neatly under the year date 53. This for me was sufficient for my complete self-deception. Of course I noticed the "doubling" of the outer right ring of the postmark; but this did not concern me. It happened often enough in a jolting, jerking, swaying mail car; the hammer just "jumped" a little after the first strike. I doubt if any collection of K.R.mks. does not have some examples of this "phenomenon". All in all this sounds like an exculpation, or rather self-exculpation, especially when I say that I do not have your ability, nor the facilities, for doing your kind of detective work! Let me add one "tear jerker": "My eyes are dim, I cannot see, I have not brought my specs with me." Nor are my "specs" much use to me now. I am now listed as partially-sighted, my right eye suffering from retinal deterioration. After 63 years of motor-ing I am now no longer permitted to drive and have a free bus pass! Now many millions of words have I read and thousands written I leave you to ponder upon. Now many thousands of miles have rolled away under my front wheels in G.B. and for six years in the K.A.R. in foreign parts, not excluding from Caen to the Danish frontier at Flensburg, with many diversions, no calculator can tell.

Perhaps my oculist is right; it is time I gave my eyes (or rather "eye" a rest, a long rest.)

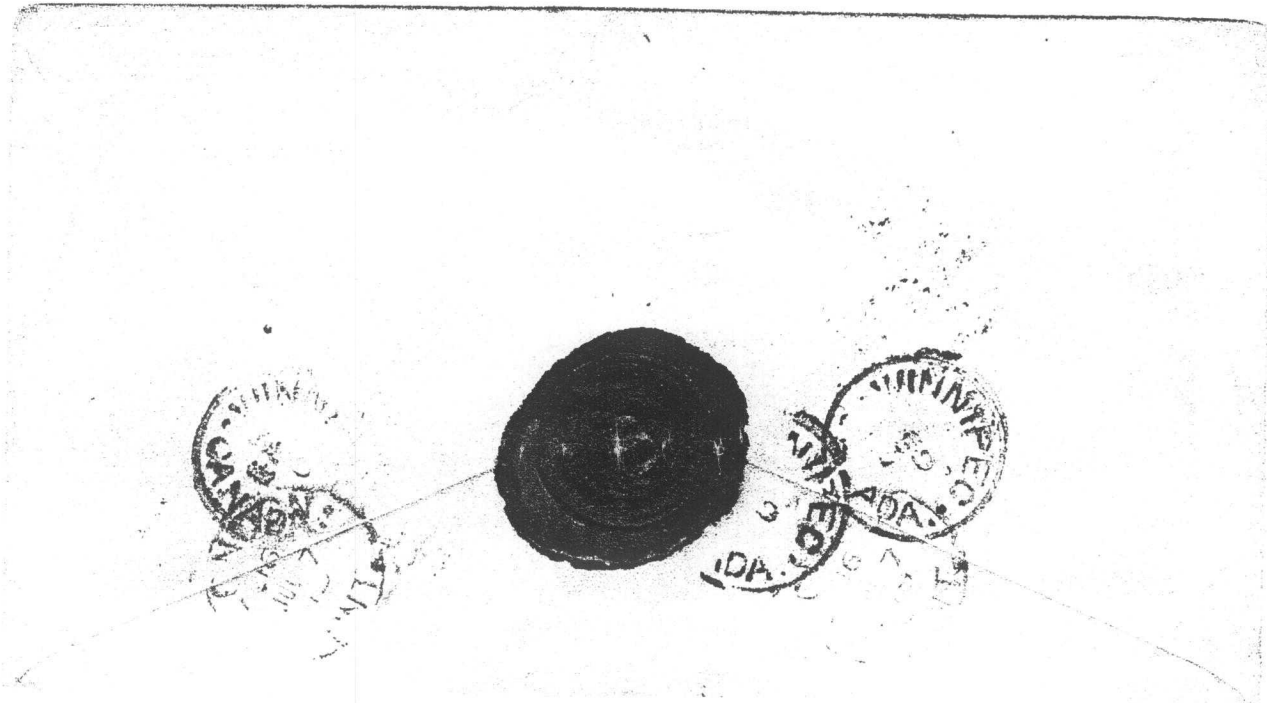
R.S. The World Cup (you have surely heard of it) is over. "Don't cry for me Argentina," as the England team might say. And don't you cry for me either!

*Is are
Lionel*



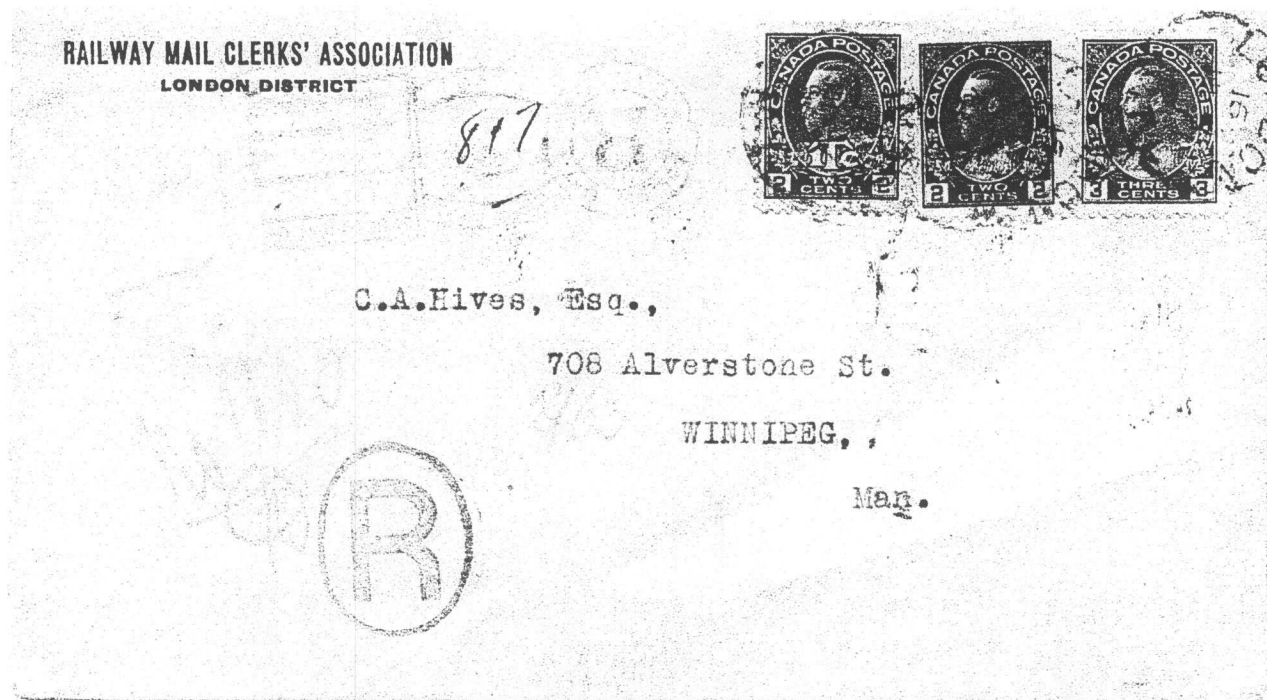
The arrival of the first Intercolonial train in Dalhousie New Brunswick.

From Horace Harrison - Back and front of cover -



Wax seal reads "SUP'T. R'W'Y. M'L. SERVICE / LONDON, ONT."

Note Corner Card -



W.G. Robinson
5830 Cartier St.
Vancouver, B.C.
V6M 3A7

That's all for this time.

Bill