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THE R.P.O.NEWSLETTER

Page 1568

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

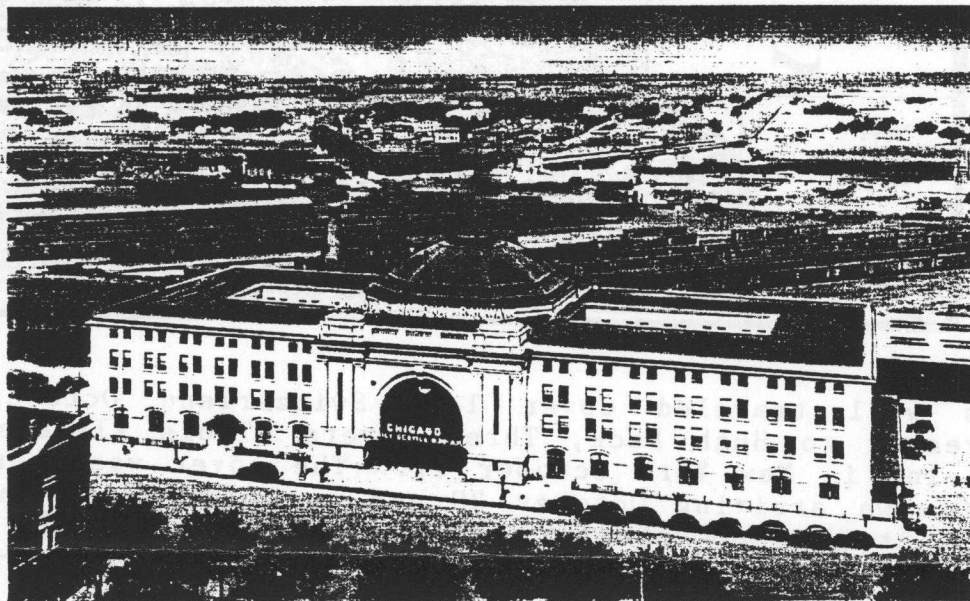
Volume 28 - No.4

Whole No.147

March 2000

MEMBERSHIP - We recently heard of the death in August, 1999 of H.Geoffrey Walburn, FRPSC, of Kelowna, B.C. Geoff was a very young 97 years, and was busy forming new collections up to the time of his death. He was noted for his research work into Canadian pre-cancelled stamps and postal stationery, and at one time he had one of the finest collections of British Columbia postal marks. He was made a Fellow of the RPSC in 1998 and was honoured by the Fellows of the Order of the Beaver in the same year for his life-time dedication to Canadian philately. He was a long-time member of the R.P.O.Study Group, and his contributions will be sadly missed.

9:-THE UNION STATION. WINNIPEG. MANITOBA.



44851

Union Station, Winnipeg, Manitoba from member John Watson

INDEX TO THE CANADIAN R.P.O.NEWSLETTER - 1973 TO 1999 - We have received several congratulatory comments regarding the Index covering Volumes 1 to 27 which you all received last fall. Thank you very much. Two errors have surfaced so far - hopefully not the first of many. Please check Page 25. The entry shown as O-188 on Page 538 should be Q-188 - QUE.& CAMPBELLTON EXPRESS, and it should be moved to the correct sequence near the top of that page. On the same page, the volume and issue numbers were transposed for O-355J - TOR.LON.& SAR./ R.P.O. They should read v.25-4. The page numbers are correct.

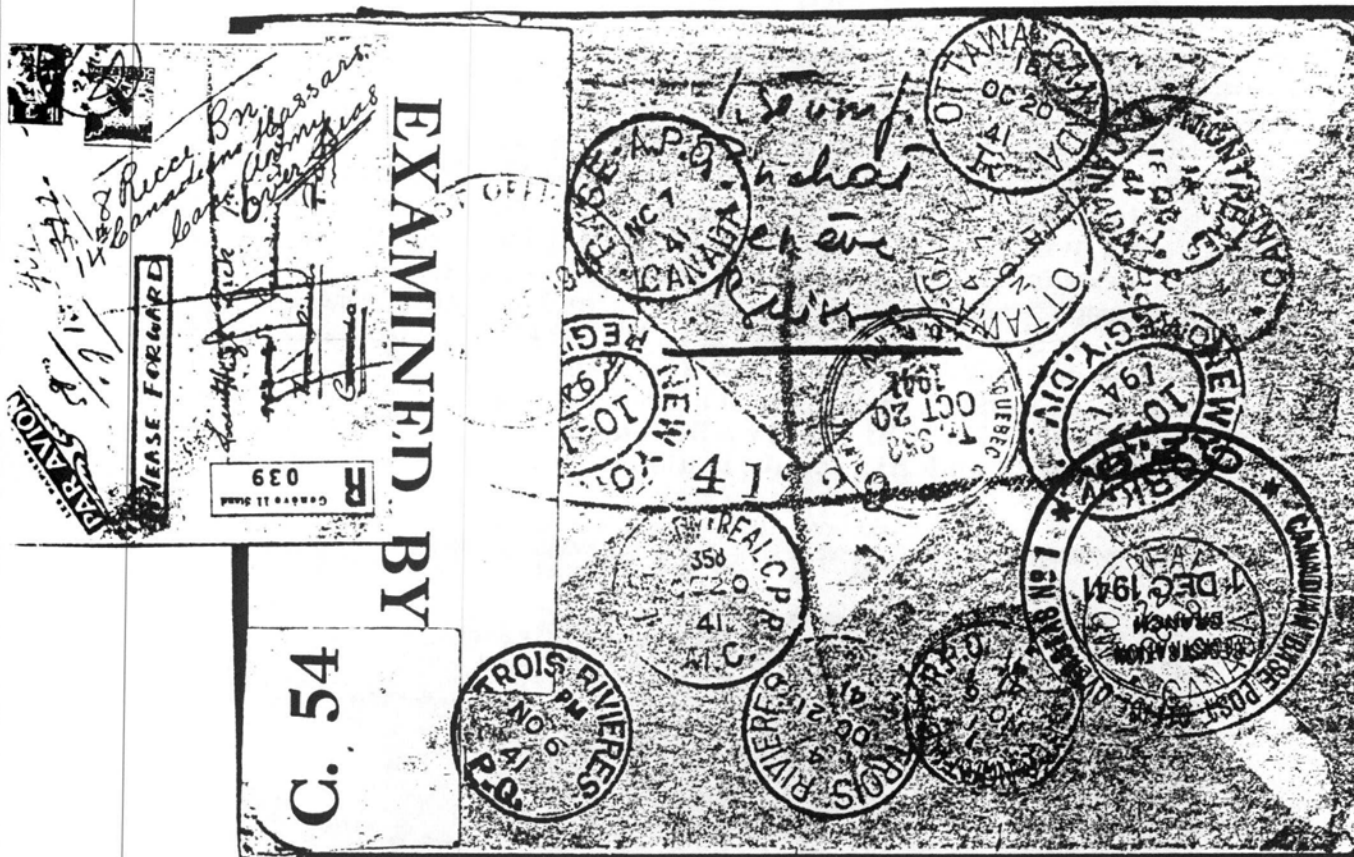
ANNUAL DUES FOR 1999-2000 - are now due and payable. Cash or cheque payable to W.G.Robinson for \$ 10 CAD in Canada, \$ 9 US for American members, and 5 pounds sterling from the UK. This is the last notice.

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PAID

From Peter McCarthy's Collection - Early date for Q-218A -

QUEBEC & MONTREAL R.P.O. / J.O.B. ROY

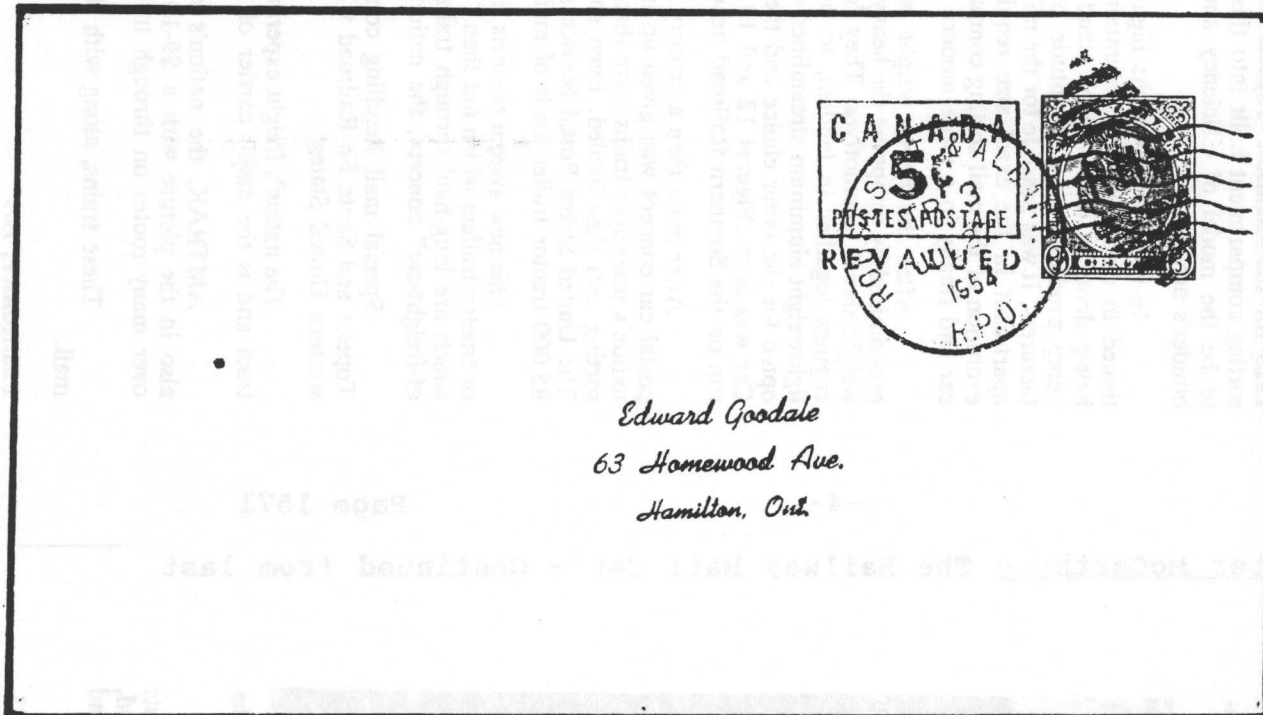


This well traveled cover left Switzerland October 2, 1941 addressed to Hugh Peck, Three Rivers (Trois Rivières), Quebec arriving in New York October 17. The cover was then forwarded to Ottawa arriving October 20 and on to Montreal the same day where it was put aboard C.P.R. train 358, **QUEBEC & MONTREAL C.P.R. / M.C.** A further clerk stamp was added - **QUEBEC & MONTREAL R.P.O. / J.O.B. ROY TRAIN 358 OCT 20, 1941.** This represents a new early period of use for this cancellation. The previous known period of use being 1944. The cover finally arrived October 21. Meanwhile Mr. Peck had received a commission in the army and his rank of Lieut. was added to his name including his new address - 8th Reconnaissance Battalion, Canadian Hussars, Overseas. The cover was then date stamped Trois Rivières, NO 6, 1941, Montreal on the same date and put aboard train No. 1 where it received the R.P.O. strike **MONTREAL & NORTH BAY R.P.O. /** arriving in Ottawa the following day and received by Base - A.P.O. on Nov. 7th. From there the cover was forwarded to Canadian Base Post Office Overseas arriving Dec. 1 and then on to Field Post Office DC2 where it is presumed Lieut. Peck finally received his letter on December 2, 1941 two months to the day after having been posted.

From Peter McCarthy's Collection - Late date for Q-264 -

ROUSES Pt. & ALBANY / R.P.O.
R.M.S. DUPLEX

The catalogue listed period of use is between 1903 and 1939



TR 3 JUL 27 1954

This American R.P.O. cancellation is not rare in itself. It's use on Canadian mail however is uncommon. This favour cover addressed to Hamilton, received its marking from the R.P.O. operating on the north bound Delaware & Hudson Railway train number 3 to Montreal. From Rouses Point number 3 would have travelled over the Napierville Jct. Rwy. line to Adirondak Junction on the south shore of Montreal where it connected with the C.P.R. and on to Windsor Station arriving around 8:00 P.M. in the evening. July 27, 1954 represents a very late known period of use.

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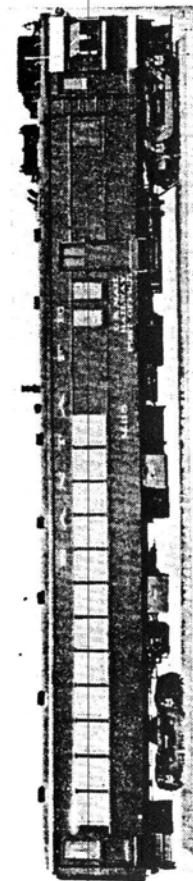


Figure 7. This is the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe's M115 diesel-electric combination coach, baggage and mail car of 1929.

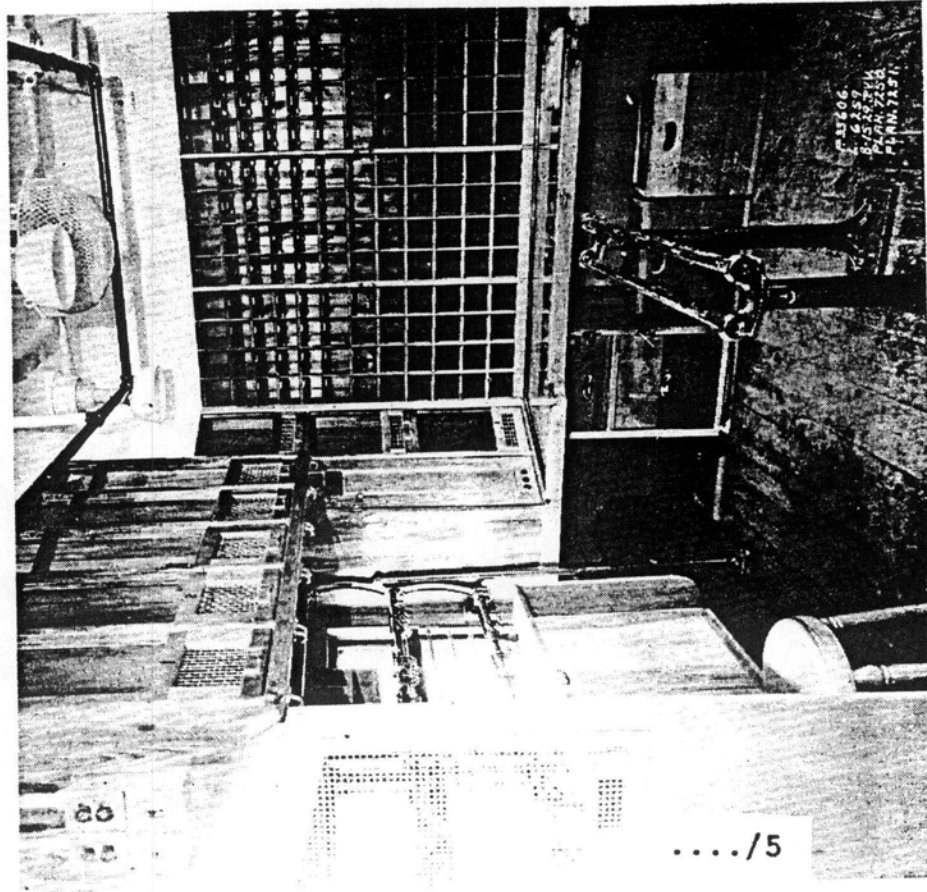


Figure 8. The small but efficient mail sorting compartment built into the Doodle Bug M115.

commenced before the Civil War in an effort to reduce operating costs for lightly patronized trains. These first one-car trains were steam powered, then gasoline or gas-electric. Next came diesel and diesel-electric, and finally experimentation reached the gas-turbine level of propulsion.

At one time in the 1930s there were more than 5,000 of these self-propelled one and two-car trains plying the rails of Class One and Short Line railroads in this country. Of this number, most delivered the mails as a secondary, and sometimes primary, function. Figure 7 shows car M115, a typical diesel-electric Railway Post Office/Coach/Baggage combination one-car train built by the Pullman Car Co. in August 1929 for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. The small mail sorting compartment built into this car is shown in Figure 8. It appears to be the model of efficiency and exhibits a high state of the coach builder's art.

In the late 1930s, the high density, heavily trafficked routes continued to carry and sort mountains of mail, only now the sorting was being done in heavyweight standard steel postal cars. The cars were being produced in a multitude of sizes by many different car manufacturers. It was possible for the railroads to order a car with a mail sorting apartment in the exact size required. Figures 9, 10 and 11 show the evolution of the mail sorting compartment in an 1898 car, then in a 1911 car and finally in a more modern 1926 car.

After the heavy weight steel car period, the railroads again economized by scrapping the heavy steam locomotives and going to lighter weight diesel locomotives. They found they could run five or six diesel engines together in tandem, to pull the heavyweight cars, or purchase lightweight aluminum streamlined equipment and use fewer engines. They opted for the latter choice and the aluminum streamlined Railway Postal Car was born. Figures 12 and 13 show the epitome of the RPO Car as run on the Southern Railroad near the end of the Railway Mail Service.

After more than a century of sorting the mail enroute, the railway postal car concept was given up in October of 1968, when many of the nation's passenger trains were discontinued and along with them the mail sorting cars they hauled. Even so, things are not as bad as they seem. The United States Postal Service still utilizes the railroads to move over 95,000 tractor trailer loads of mail each year.

This new system presorts the mail, preloads it in special containers or tractor trailers which are then "piggy-backed" on special "Unit Trains" which are long-haul through trains. Based on the "piggy-back" or "top-of-freight-car" concept, the nation's railroads still carry the mails.

Special mail handling contracts have been let to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad which handles much of the mail for the western United States.

The nation's freight experiment, CONRAIL, now holds a mail contract and is the major carrier of mail in the eastern United States.

AMTRAK, the nation's experiment in passenger railroading is also in the picture with a \$9-10 million mail contract. It carries mail over many routes on through trains to insure fast service.

These trains, along with the airlines, handle today's mountain of mail.

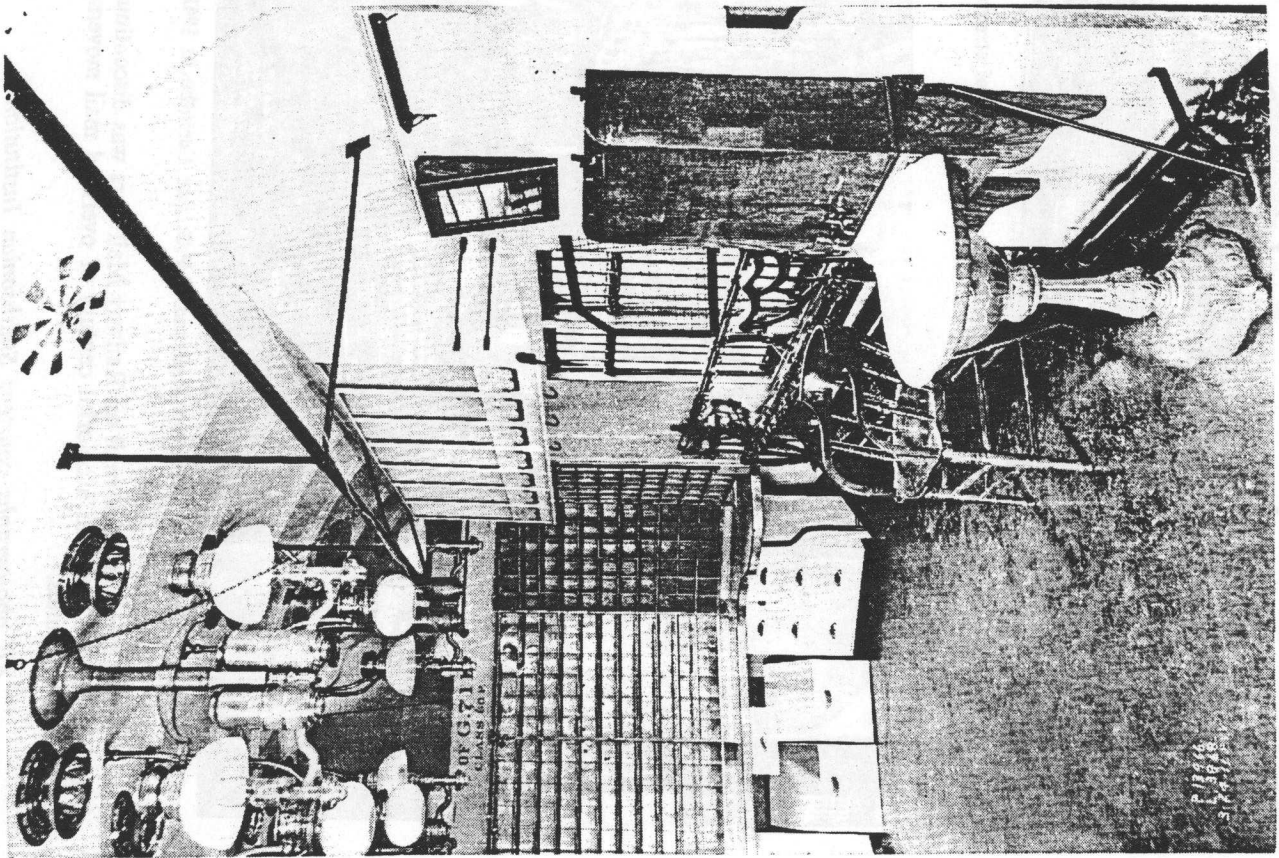


Figure 10. This is Central of Georgia R.P.O. No. 711 built by the Pullman Co. in 1911.

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The Railway Mail Car - (Continued) -

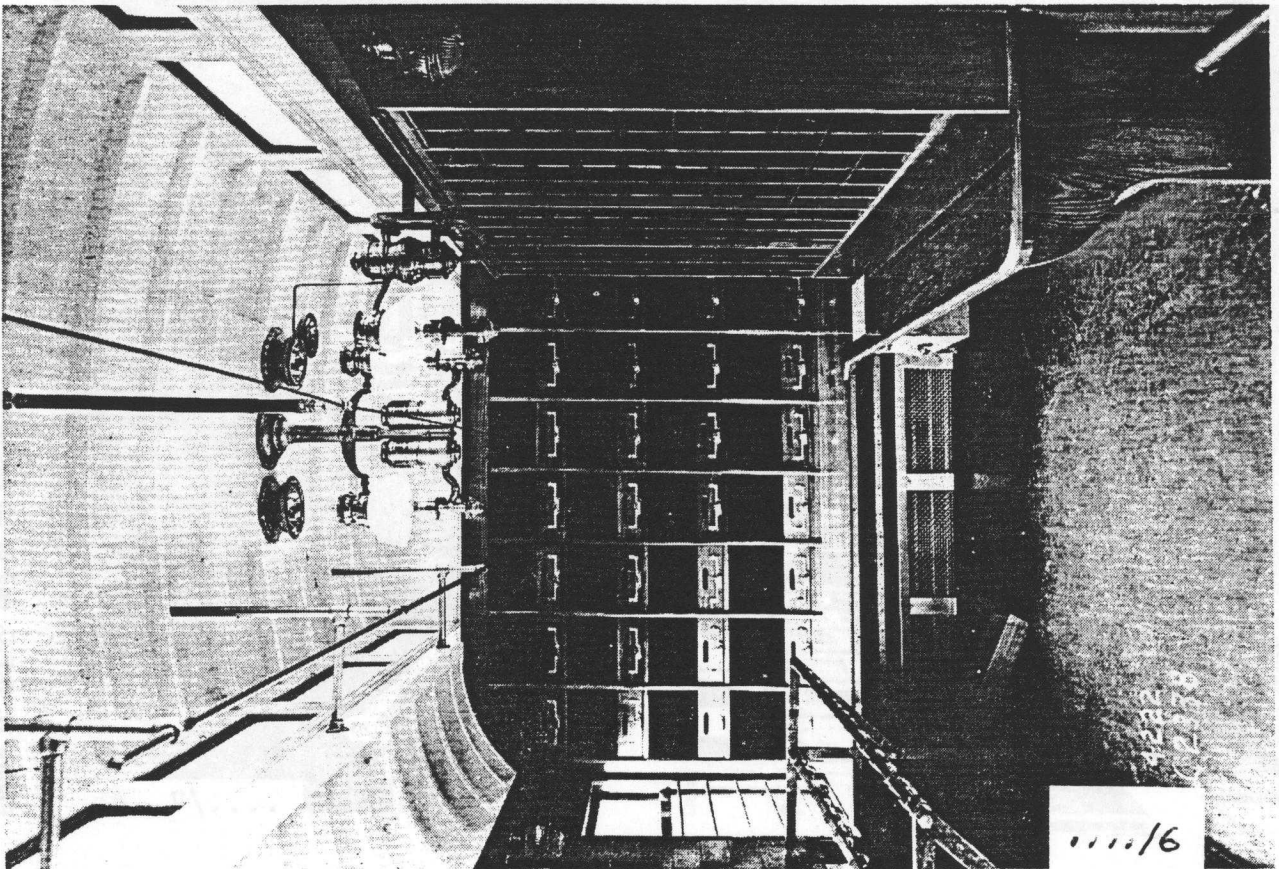


Figure 9. Interior of a New York & Ottawa Railroad mail car built by the Pullman Co. in 1898.

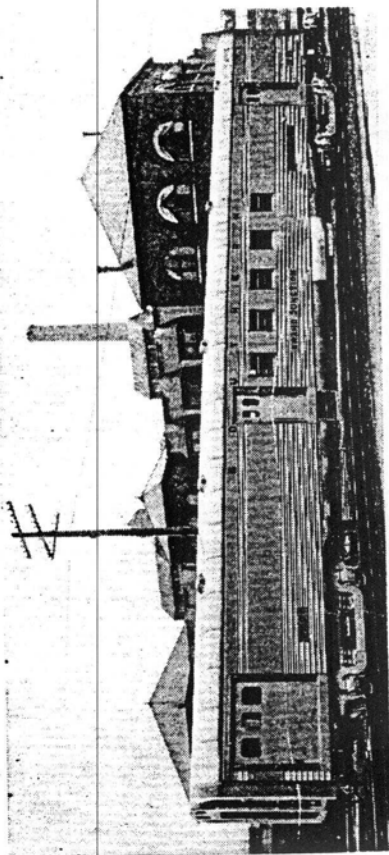


Figure 12. Southern R.P.O.-express car Grand Junction, an example of streamlined light weight aluminum construction.

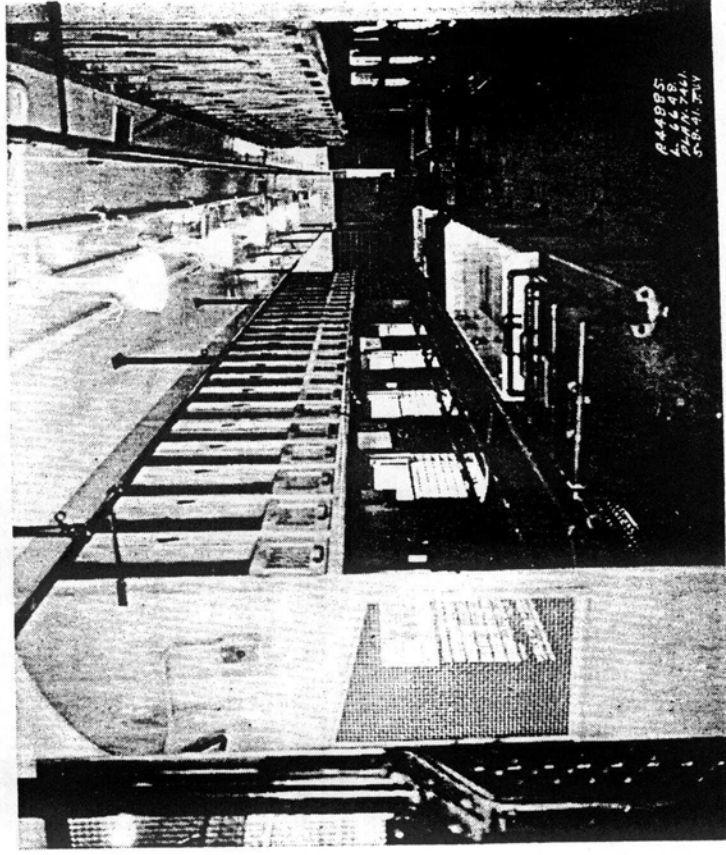


Figure 13. Interior of the Southern Railroad R.P.O. car Corlinthe in 1941.

When the sorting of mail on Railway Mail Cars was discontinued, it truly spelled a finish to a colorful century of overland mail movement in the United States.

All photographs courtesy Smithsonian Institution.

FEBRUARY, 1979

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The Railway Mail Car - (Concluded).

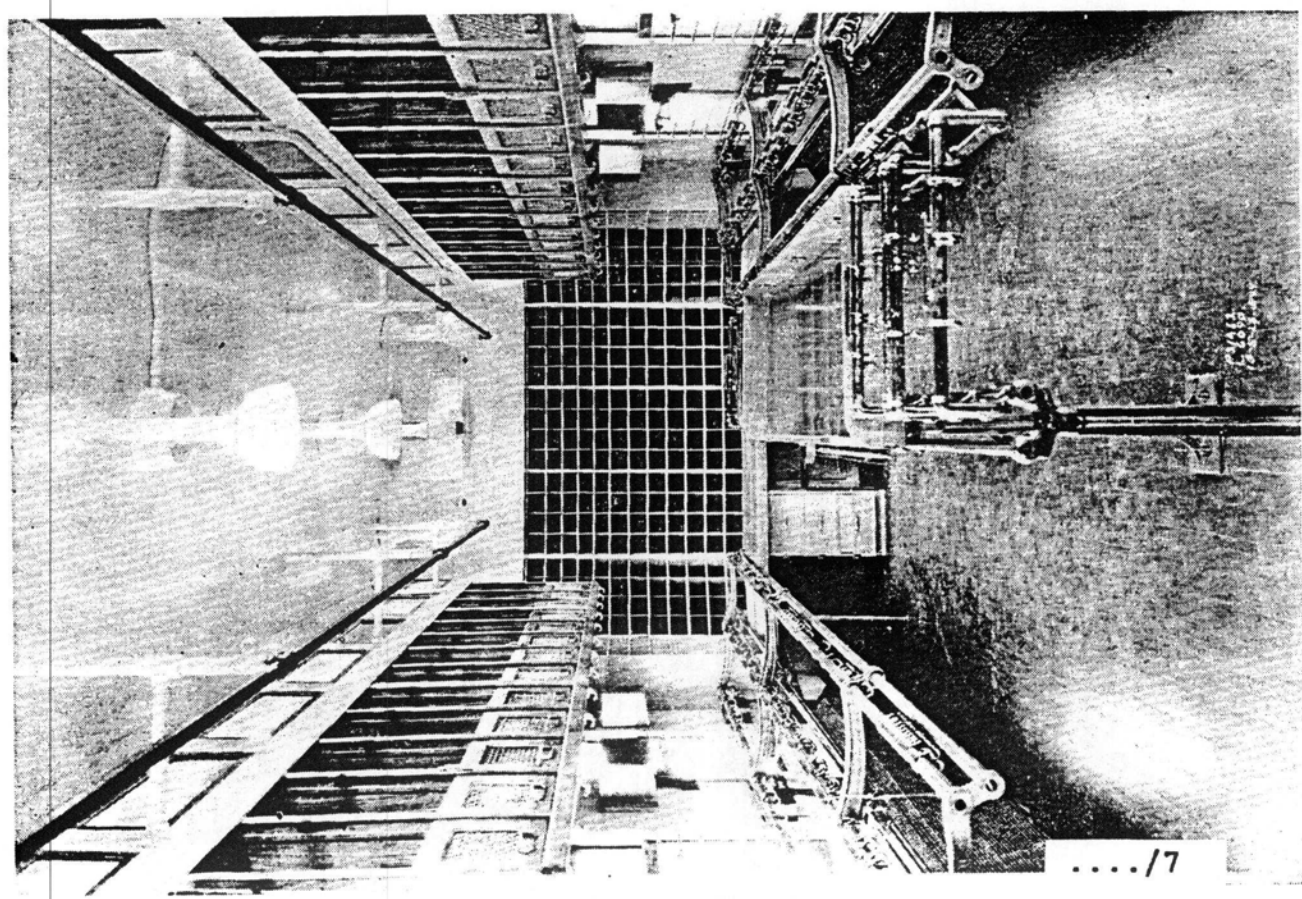


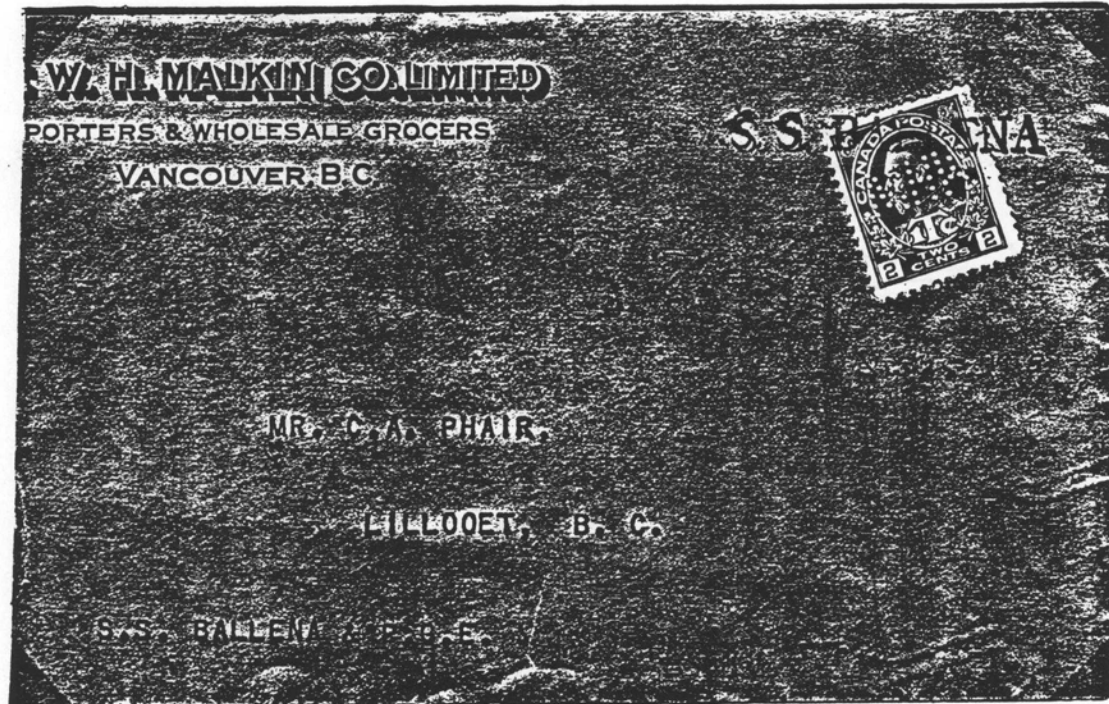
Figure 11. R.P.O. end of an Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe mail-baggage car built in 1927.

S.P.A. JOURNAL

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From Ken Ellison's Collection - S-207 with W.H.M.Perfin -

BRITISH COLUMBIA SHIP MARKINGS

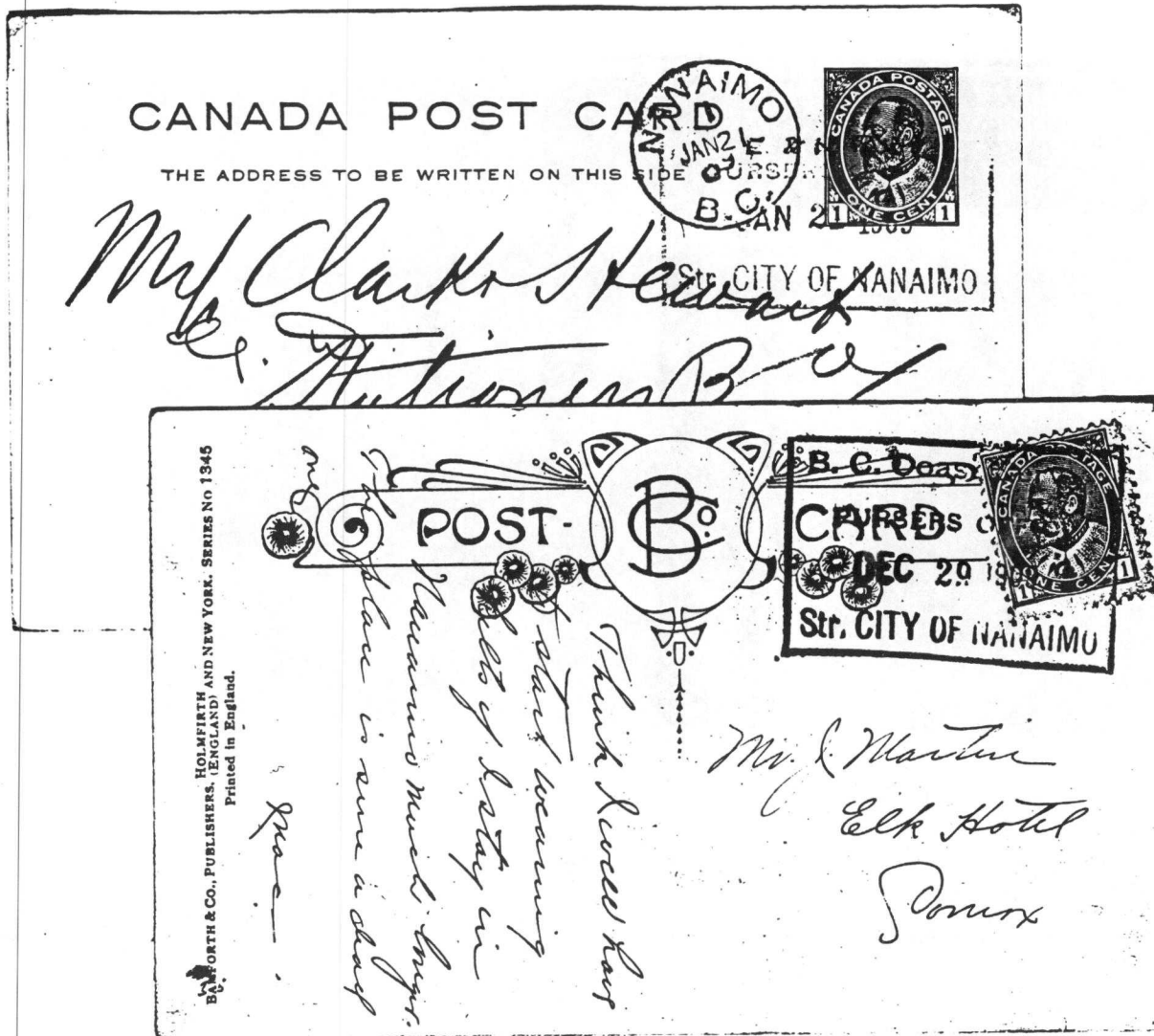


S.S. BALLENA

This vessel was formerly the Joan and was owned by the E & N Railway, and in 1905 by the CPR, and in 1914 by the Terminal Steam Navigation Company of Capt. J.A.Cates who named her the Ballena. She was to have been sold to Union Steamships but burnt at the dock in 1920 before the sale was completed. Built 1892 at Victoria. Length 177 feet, 821 tons.

From Ken Ellison's Collection - S-161 (with E. & N.R.WY.) and S-162
with E. & N.R.WY. deleted.

BRITISH COLUMBIA SHIP MARKINGS



S.S. CITY OF NANAIMO

The City of Nanaimo began service in 1892 for Capt. Wm Rogers' Mainline and Nanaimo Navigation Company. In 1896 she was transferred to the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, and in 1905 this company was bought by the CPR. The City was again sold in 1912 to Terminal and named the Bowena. From 1920 to 1926 she was with Union who renamed her the Cheam. Built 1891 at Vancouver. Length 159 feet, 761 tons

Title Page of the R.P.O. Study Group Single Frame Exhibit at BNAPEX '99, Vernon, B.C., September 1999.

RAILWAY MAIL THROUGH VERNON, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1893 TO 1954

This non-competitive single-frame exhibit has been prepared by the Railway Post Office Study Group of B.N.A.P.S. for the Annual Convention of the British North America Philatelic Society at Vernon, 16 to 18 September, 1999.



GENERAL VIEW OF VERNON, B. C.

A Hand-Coloured Photo Card by Gowan, Sutton Co. Ltd.

The Shuswap & Okanagan Railway Co. (S. & O. Rwy.) was chartered in 1886 to build from the C.P.R. Main Line at Sicamous, on Shuswap Lake, south through Vernon to the north end of Okanagan Lake, at Okanagan Landing. This line was completed in 1893, was leased by the C.P.R., and commenced to carry mail in 1894. Railway Post Office markings inscribed S. & O. Rwy. M.C. / B.C., as shown on Page 2, were used from 1894 to 1901.

Markings changed to reflect the termini - Okanagan Landing, and Sicamous - were later used. O.L. & S. R.P.O. / B.C. from 1901 to 1913, and O.L. & S. R.P.O. from 1915 to 1935. These are shown on Page 3. Two hammers with ornaments - "Pounds Sterling", and "Pounds Sterling with minus signs" were used from 1913 to 1923, and 1909 to 1912 respectively, as shown on Pages 4 and 5.

In 1934 the track was extended south to Kelowna, on Okanagan Lake. Hammers inscribed KEL. & SIC. R.P.O. were used from 1935 to 1949, and KEL. & SIC. / R.P.O. from 1949 until the end of railway mail service in 1954. Examples are shown on Page 6. This service operated directly through Vernon. The line from Vernon to Okanagan Landing was then used only for local freight. Several Railway Mail Clerks had personal hammers during this period. Examples are shown from A.D. Green, J.O. Mackie, E.F. Magaw, R.F. Marriage, C.W. Sabourin, E.R. Spence, R.W. Wakelin, J.J.W. Willington, and H.A. Wobick on pages 7 to 15. Finale - a Kelowna & Kamloops highway marking on Page 16.

The Shuswap & Okanagan Railway - from the R.P.O. Study Group Single Frame Exhibit at BNAPEX '99 -

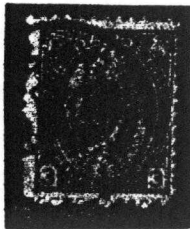
C.P.R. B.C. RAILWAY POST OFFICES

SHUSWAP & OKANAGAN RAILWAY

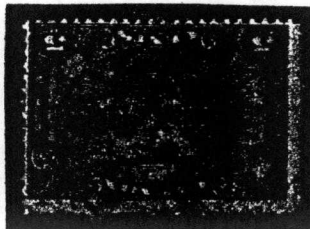
This line, connecting the C.P.R. Main Line at Sicamous to the Okanagan Lake steamers at Okanagan Landing, was leased to the C.P.R. on completion in 1893, and later purchased by them.

The railway was extended south to Kelowna in 1935, when lake steamer service was ended.

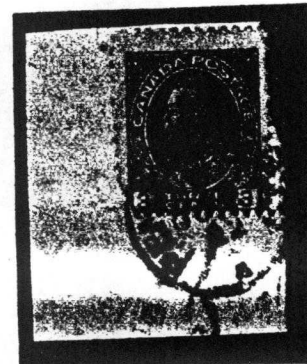
Markings of the S. & O. Railway were used by the Railway Mail service from 1893 to 1901, Okanagan Landing & Sicamous R.P.O. from 1901 to 1955, and Kelowna & Sicamous R.P.O. from 1935 to 1954. The lake steamers used the Penticton & Okanagan Landing R.P.O. markings from 1912 to 1935, and some named steamer markings are known. Examples are shown below.



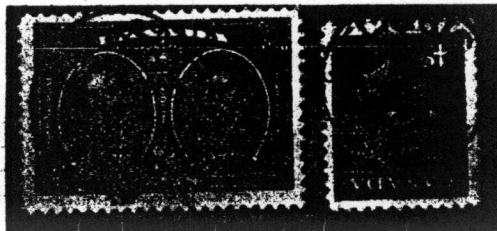
S. & O. Rwy.



O.L. & S.



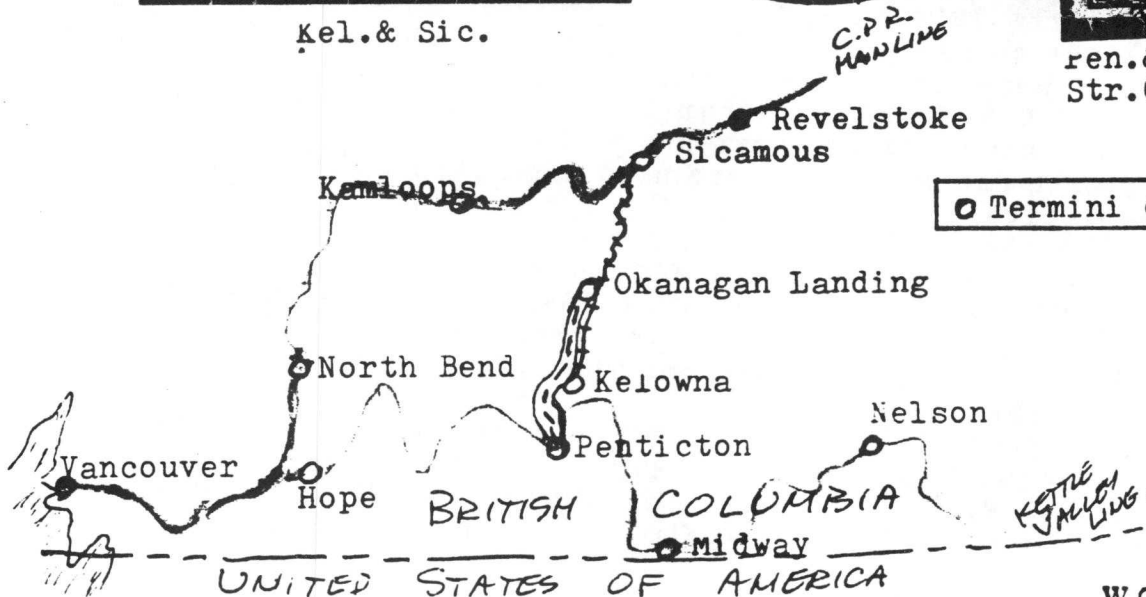
Pen. & O.L.



Kel. & Sic.



Pen. & O.L. Str. Okanagan



That's all for this time.

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