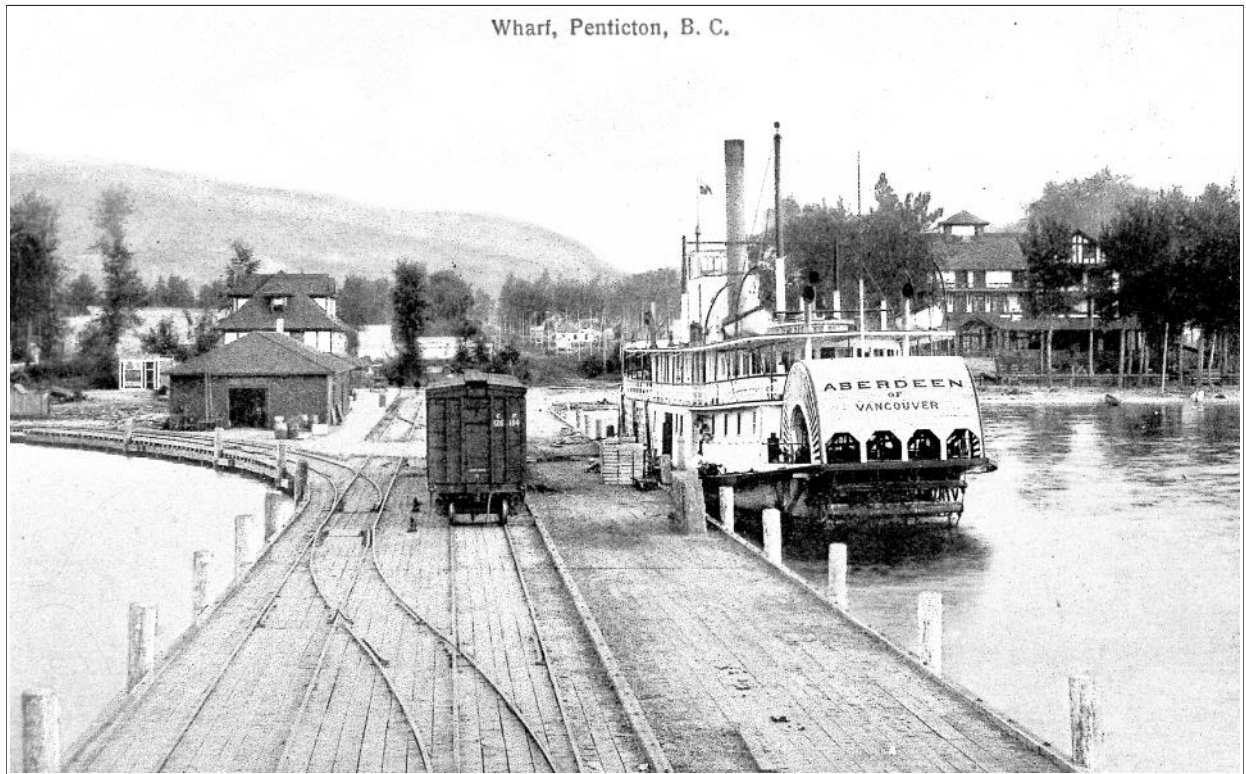


In this issue, we are pleased to present an article about mobile post office services in the southern interior of British Columbia. The article was specially written for the newsletter by R. F. Marriage, a retired R.P.O. clerk. We are very grateful to Mr. Marriage for this very interesting piece and thank our newest study group member, **Colin Campbell**, for his efforts in contacting Mr. Marriage.



Welcome aboard to new member, **J. Colin Campbell**, #303 - 1260 Raymer Avenue, Kelowna, BC, V1W 3S8, who has shared his research with us in the past. We look forward to additional contributions.

Colin Lewis has discovered a previously unknown cancellation from the Kingston & Pembroke Railway, used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Denbigh to Tamworth in 1887. Congratulations on a great find Colin and thank you for sharing it with us.

Brian Stalker contributes two more of his hammers studies. This time we look at listings **O-165** and **O-166**.

Bill Robinson writes that he has been experiencing heart problems since December 12 and has been in hospital intermittently. The cause may possibly be a leaking mitral valve and he is undergoing testing. His outside activities have been cut off and he does not expect to be able to travel until summer. I know that all of us wish Bill a complete and speedy recovery.

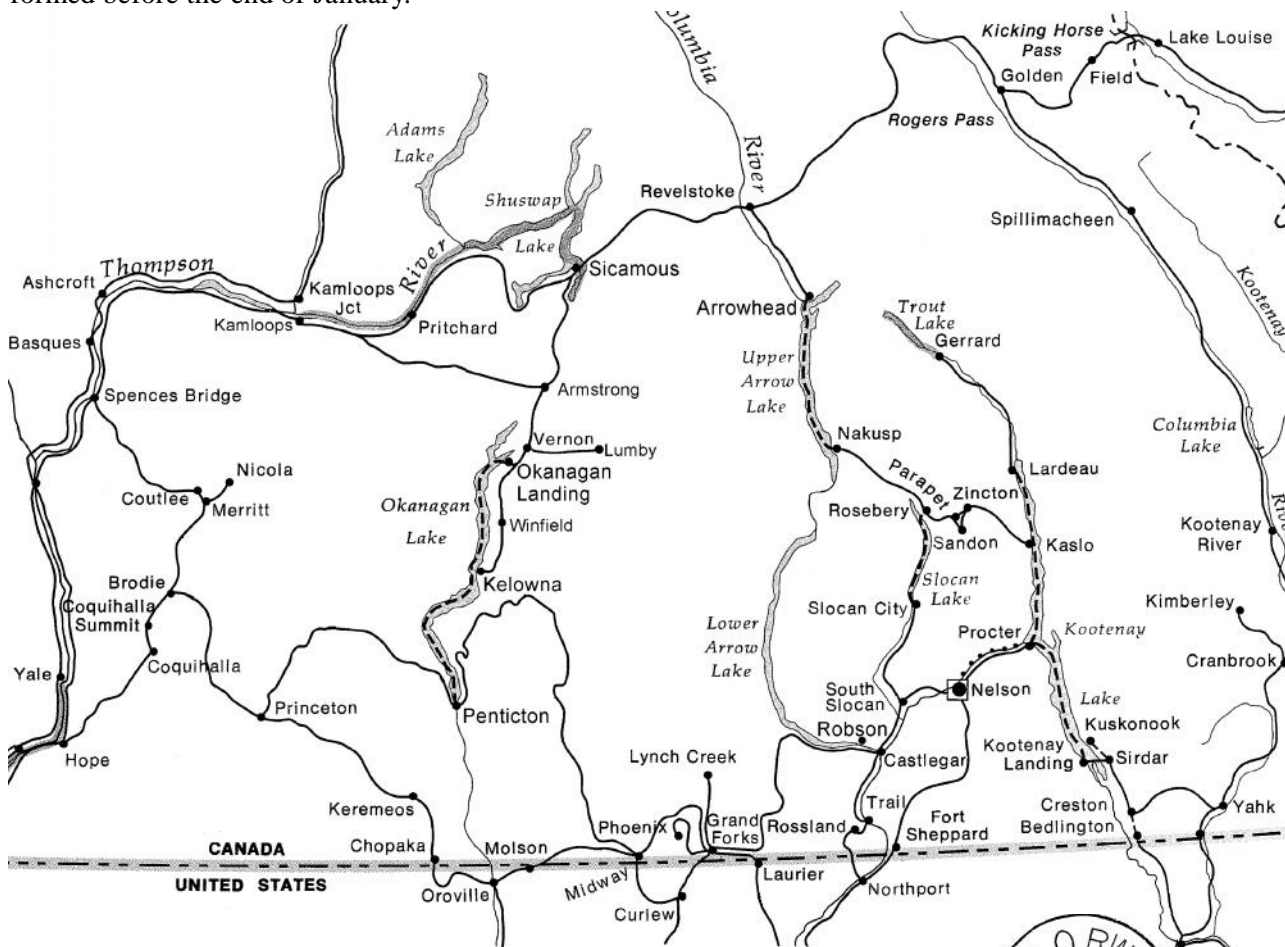
In 1980, Charles Cooper published his 158 page book, "Rails to the Lakes, The Story of the Hamilton & North Western Railway". The author decided to expand his research on the subject and the result is a 432 page book, "**Hamilton's Other Railway, 1853-2000, The Hamilton & North Western Railway in Retrospect**", with much more detail and many more photographs than the original work. Your editor was able to assist Mr. Cooper in adding 5 pages of R.P.O. illustrations and data. Information on obtaining a copy of the book is found on the last page of this newsletter.

TRAVELLING POST OFFICES ON BOATS - WHY?

by R.F. Marriage

Nature was not kind to southern British Columbia in pre-historic times. When the Cordilleran ice sheet retreated ten or twelve thousand years ago, it left the topography of the country pretty much as it is now, except for vegetation cover. The glaciers had gouged deep, narrow valleys, most of them aligned roughly north and south. It is not on record how inconvenient the aboriginal people found this to be but old trails indicate they did cope with the problem. But when impatient Europeans took over this part of the country and wanted to travel and trade east and west, the difficulties became obvious. High divides (passes), snowbound much of the year, required long detours, often of hundreds of miles. This problem was further aggravated in Canada, when the Oregon Treaty of 1846 fixed the boundary on the 49th parallel, although it was a few years before people on either side of the line paid much attention to it.

However, nature had provided some convenient routes of travel and trade which would cater to local and regional business for over half a century. The retreating glaciers had filled the valleys with water and while the steep shorelines made railway and wagon road construction difficult, steamboats provided a free right-of-way needing no maintenance except at landing points. Many ports of call did not even require a wharf. Shallow draft vessels simply nosed on to a beach to discharge and load freight and passengers. Only the occasional severe winter caused any trouble. Deep water cools very slowly and thick ice seldom formed before the end of January.



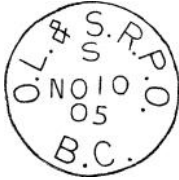
Soon after completion of the Shuswap & Okanagan Railway in 1892, the growth of settlement and business in the Okanagan Valley warranted use of a postal car to make up mail for local exchange on the line and for despatch south via the steamer "Aberdeen". In 1894, R.P.O. service was established between Sicamous and Okanagan Landing. At that time, the term "M.C." (Mail Clerk) was still in use to designate such an office.

RR-149
Proof Date - 1894/07/09
Period
1894/11/03 to 1901/04/23

TRAVELLING POST OFFICES ON BOATS - WHY?

by R.F. Marriage

In 1901, a new dater was issued reading Okanagan Landing & Sicamous R.P.O. As a matter of passing interest, the engines and other equipment on the S. & O. Railway were always lettered "Canadian Pacific". The parent company made a lease agreement in 1915 for 999 years with the S. & O., the signing secretary being the same for both companies.



W-102Y
Proof Dates - unknown
Period
1901 to 1913



W-102Z, Ornament # 174
Proof Date - 1909/07/19
Period
1909 to 1912



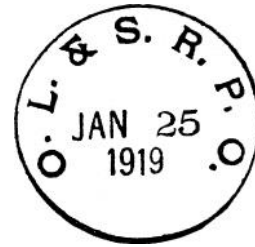
W-102X, Ornament # 172
Proof Date - 1913/02/02
Period
1913 to 1923



W-102W, Hammer I
Proof Date - 1915/08/25
Period
1915 to 1935

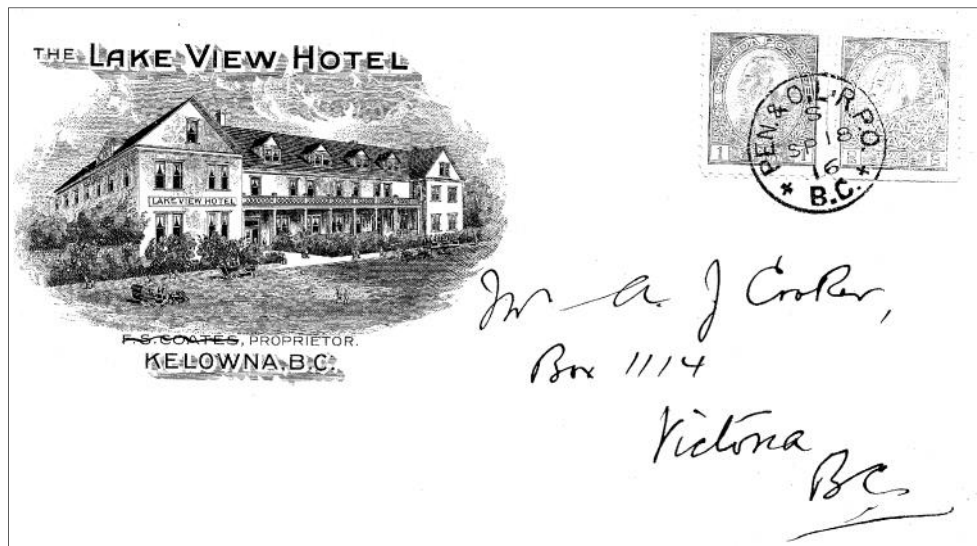


W-102W, Hammer II
Proof Date - 1924/09/25
Period
Unreported



W-102V
Proof Date - 1919/01/25
Period - 1922

Early in the 20th century, it was obvious that the closed mail service on the lake steamers was inadequate and Ottawa was urged to supply R.P.O. type service. In 1911, the "Aberdeen" and the "Okanagan" were fitted with mail rooms on their freight decks. The deckhands continued to exchange mails with side service couriers at each landing, as it was done at railway stations. Although it was a water service, the route was designated Penticton & Okanagan Landing R.P.O. Plans of the steamship "Sicamous", launched in 1914, included a mail room. The combined operation of the trains and boats, with resorting mails enroute, offered a quality of service, which has never been equalled. The highways of the day, although crude, forced the C.P.R. to withdraw the "Sicamous" from service, as she was incurring a loss of \$14,000 monthly, a large sum in 1934.



W-106b, Ornament #178

PEN. & O. L. - R. P. O. / + B. C. +

S, SP 18,

TRAVELLING POST OFFICES ON BOATS - WHY?

by R.F. Marriage



S-5
Proof Date - 1909/04/20
Period
1909 to 1910



W-106a, Ornament # 176
Proof Date - 1911/06/29
Period
1912 to 1915



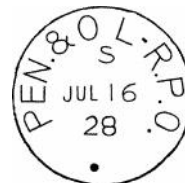
W-106b, Ornament # 178
Proof Date - 1911/06/29
Period
1916 to 1918



W-104, Hammer I
Proof Date - 1919/02/25
Period
1919 to 1923



W-104, Hammer II
Proof Date - 1923/10/03
Period
unreported



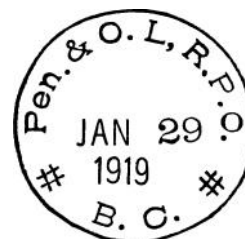
W-104, Hammer III
Proof Date - 1923/10/26
Period
1923 to 1935



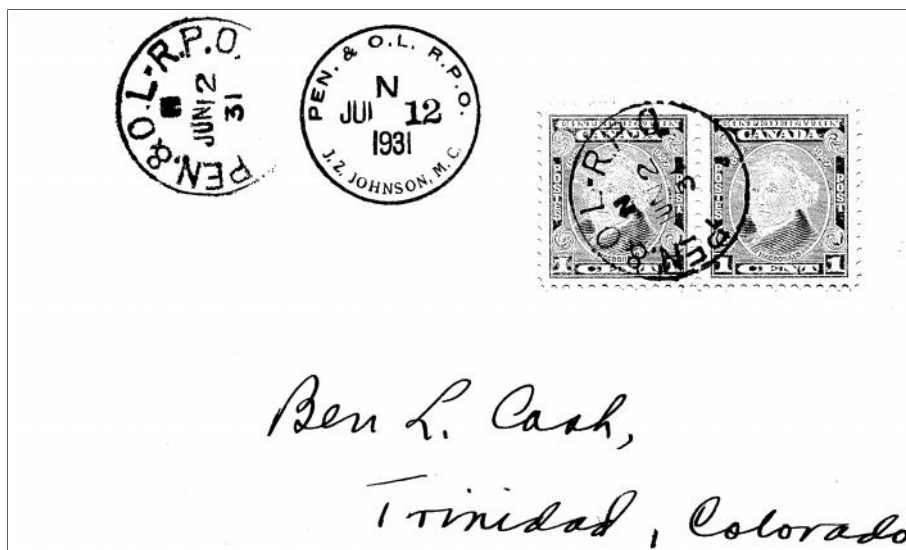
W-105, Hammer I
Proof Date - 1919/04/09
Period
1924 to 1927



W-105, Hammer II
Proof Date - 1928/04/06
Period
unreported



Unlisted
Proof Date - 1919/01/29
Period
unreported



W-104 (Hammer III) PEN. & O. L. - R. P. O. / . N, JUN 12, 31
W-104Z PEN. & O. L. R. P. O. / J. Z. JOHNSON, M. C. N, JUN 12,

TRAVELLING POST OFFICES ON BOATS - WHY?

by R.F. Marriage

Already holding running rights on the C.N.R., from Vernon to Kelowna, the C.P.R. extended its mixed passenger run to Kelowna and the new Kelowna & Sicamous R.P.O. was established the first week of January, 1935. D. Chapman Company had a contract to haul closed mails between Penticton and Kelowna and also served the intermediate offices.

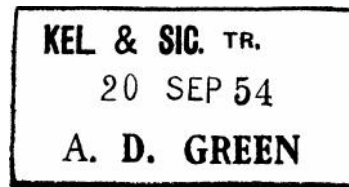
In the 1940's, the Kel. & Sic. R.P.O. was augmented by a baggage car service on the C.N.R., from Kamloops to Armstrong, Vernon, Winfield and Kelowna, southbound only.

In 1954, the Post Office cancelled its contracts with the railways and established highway services between Kamloops and Okanagan Valley points, hauling closed mails. The writer was employed on trains 708 and 707 the last day the car operated - September 30th 1954.

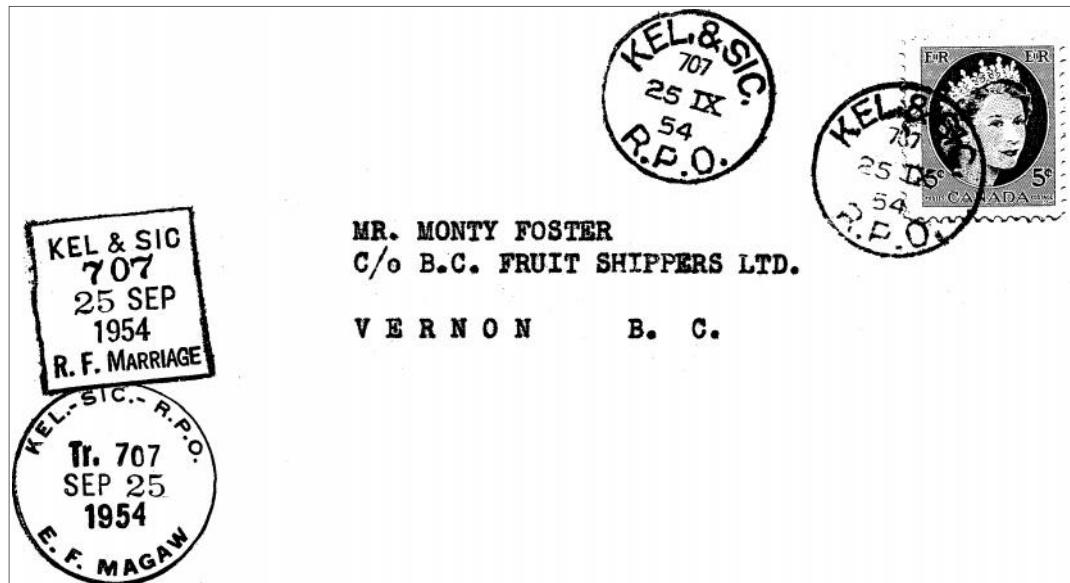


W-64
Proof Date - 1935/05/30
Period
1935 to 1949

W-64D
Proof Date - 1949/08/17
Period
1949 to 1954



W-64F
Period
1951 to 1954



W-64D KEL. & SIC. / R. P. O. 707, 25 IX, 54
W-64B KEL & SIC / R. F. MARRIAGE 707, 25 SEP, 1954
W-64G KEL. - SIC. - R. P. O. / E. F. MAGAW Tr. 707, SEP 25, 1954

Although the Kootenay mining towns did a lot of business in Spokane, customs and immigration procedures added complications. The Kettle Valley line was yet to be completed. Another R.P.O. established on a water route, operated between Robson and Arrowhead. It was inaugurated in 1912, when the parsimonious Post Office Department finally succumbed to political pressure. The improved service was long overdue. The route connected the busy Kootenay mining area with Revelstoke and the main line to Vancouver. This connection was important to government and stimulated work in other parts of Canada, especially on the west coast. The R. and A. R.P.O. was abolished in 1950.

O-165 Hammer Study from Brian Stalker

Although enjoying a long life-span (1900-50), this postmark is relatively uncommon. Three hammers can be identified by the fullness of the ampersand and the spacing.

LONDON & WINDSOR - R. P. O. / .



Hammer I



Hammer II



Hammer III

Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	&	a	Indicia
I	unknown	1900/09/02	1914/11/16	full	4 1/2	E, W
II	1910/05/12	1910/05/24	1915/05/05	thin	4	E, W
III	1916/05/29	1916/06/28	1950/02/19	medium	3 1/2	E, W, 10, 16

O-166 Hammer Study from Brian Stalker

Four proof strikes dated May 9, 87 appear to be from the same hammer, albeit one strike is badly distorted. Three hammers can be identified as follows:

LONDON & WINDSOR / RY P. O.



Hammer I



Hammer II

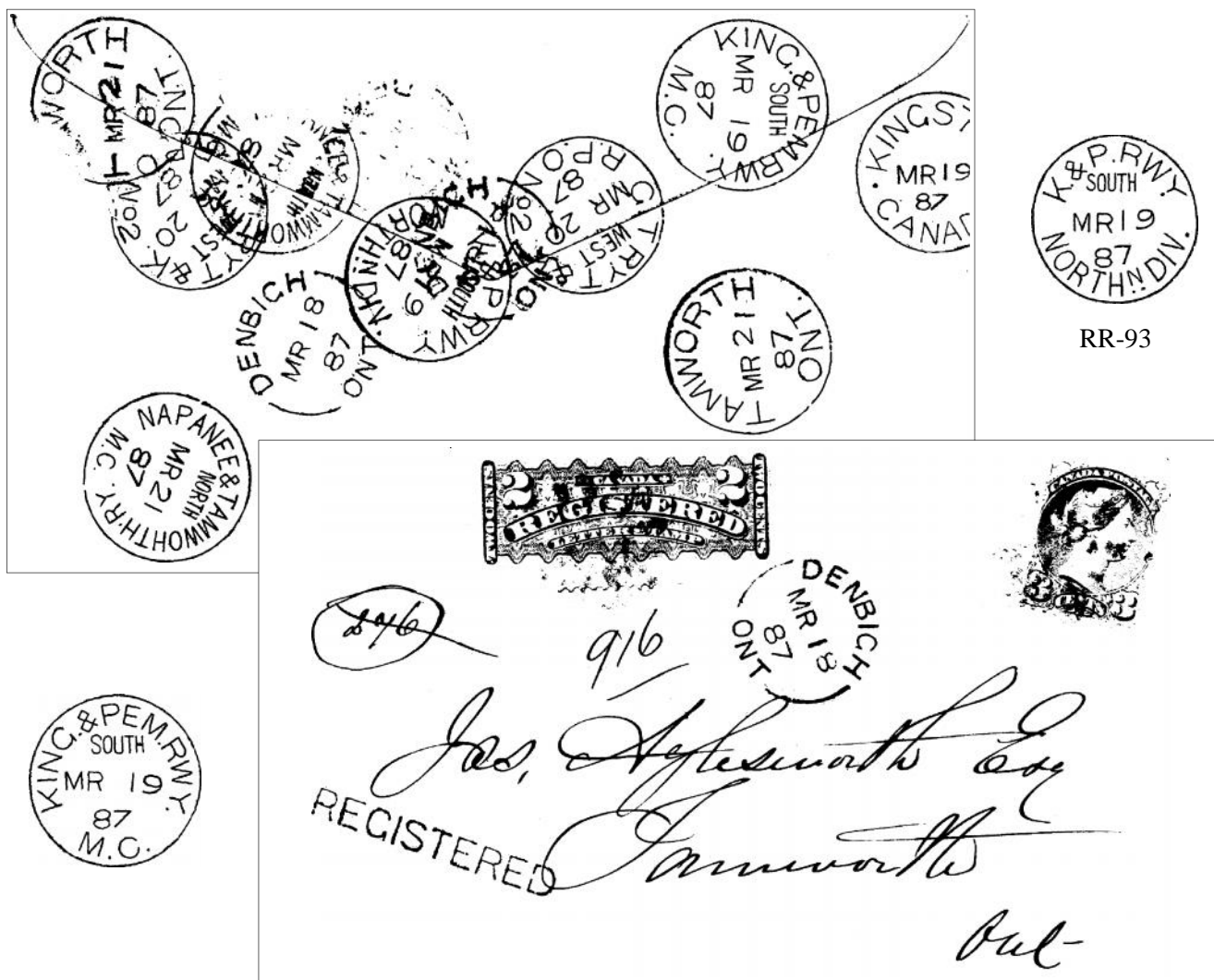


Hammer III

Hammer	I	II	III
a	4 1/2	4	3 1/2
b	1	1	1 1/2
c	7 -	7	7 1/2
RY P. O.	RY · P. O.	RY P. O.	RY . P. O.
Proof Date	1887/05/09	1887/05/09 ?	1887/05/09 ?
ERD	1897/11/12	1889/12/27	1887/06/27
LRD	1909/05/12	1895/06/27	1899/12/05
Indicia	E, W	E, W	E, W

Editor's Note: Catalogue listing O-166A is an error for O-166, Hammer I, in a very worn state. The "D" of "WINDSOR" has a somewhat rounded upper left corner, even in an unworn state, which led to it being mistaken for an "O".

A Kingston & Pembroke Ry. Discovery from Colin Lewis



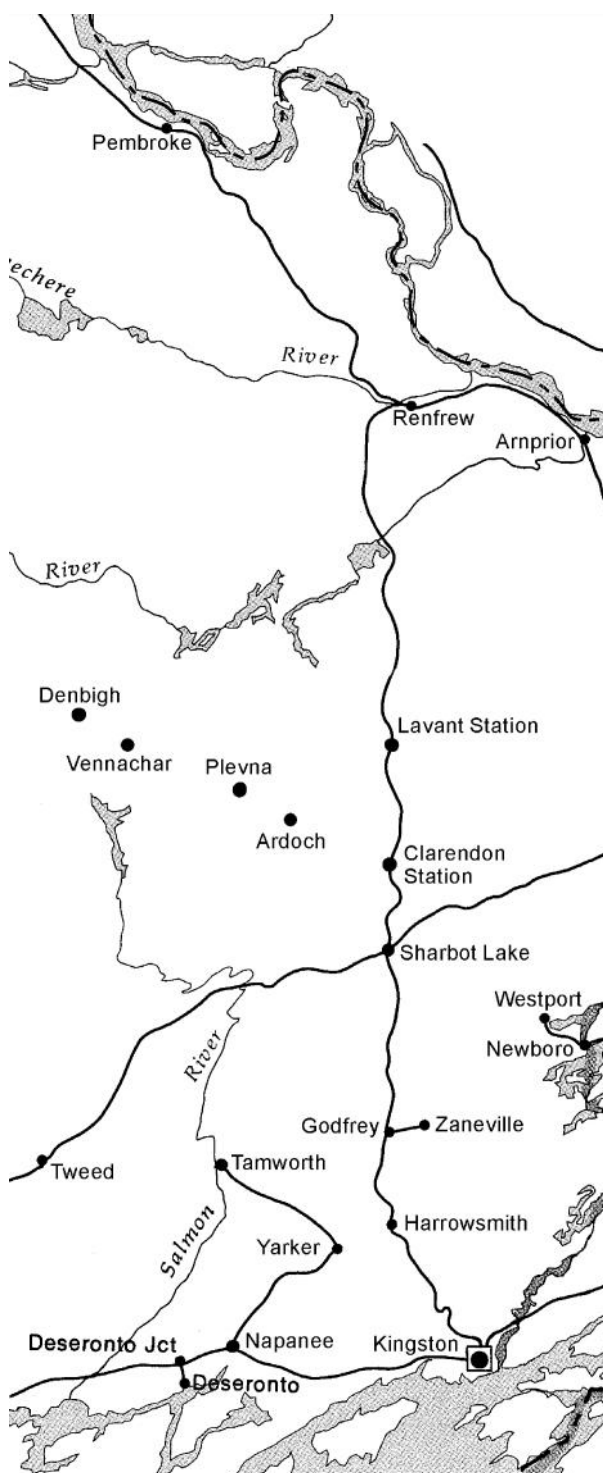
This registered cover originated at DENBIGH / ONT., MR 18, 87, {*Denbigh Township, Lennox & Addington County*}, on a Friday and travelled eastward by road, via Vennachar, to Plevna and from Plevna, via Ardoch, to Clarendon Station¹.

At Clarendon Station, on the Kingston & Pembroke Railway, it was transferred on board the south-bound mail car for Sharbot Lake and backstamped with **RR-93**. At Sharbot Lake, it was transferred aboard the southbound mail car for Kingston and backstamped with a hitherto unreported circular date stamp, reading KING. & PEM. R.W.Y. / M. C., SOUTH, MR 19, 87.

There is a KINGSTON / CANADA, MR 19, 87 arrival backstamp. At Kingston, the letter was put on board the westbound, Grand Trunk Railway, Toronto & Kingston R.P.O. and backstamped with **RR-59, Hammer II**. At Napanee, the cover was transferred to the northbound Napanee & Tamworth Railway mail car and backstamped with **O-175**. Arrival was at TAMWORTH / ONT., MR 21, 87.

¹ Chris Anstead has information from the Postal Archives, showing that Frank Chatson had the contract to carry the mail between Denbigh, Vennachar and Plevna twice a week, at an annual rate of \$325, until March 31, 1887 and William G. Crozier had the contract to carry the mail between Plevna, Ardoch and Clarendon Station, twice a week, at an annual rate of \$400, until March 31, 1887.

A Kingston & Pembroke Ry. Discovery from Colin Lewis



Railways circa 1887



O-125

Proof Date - 1879/11/18

ERD - 1879/12/06

LRD - 1883/06/01

Indicia - AM, PM, blank



RR-93

Proof Date - unknown

ERD - 1885/03/09

LRD - 1888/08/27

Indicia - NORTH, SOUTH



unlisted

Proof Date - unknown

ERD - 1887/03/19

LRD - 1887/03/19

Indicia - SOUTH



O-317

Proof Date - 1888/10/26

ERD - 1890/01/06

LRD - 1896/07/13

Indicia - N, S (backwards)



O-129

Proof Date - 1888/10/26²

ERD - 1888/12/26

LRD - 1911/06/05

Indicia - N, S,
S (backwards), blank

² Another similar hammer appeared in use about 1897. The proof date is unknown.

Colin's discovery of this previously unknown cancellation fills in a gap in the postal history of the railway. It was probably used on the southern section of the railway, between Kingston and Sharbot Lake, during the same period that RR-93 was being used on the northern section, between Sharbot Lake and Renfrew.

The Caboose



Colin Campbell reports a new early date, October 16, 1905 for **W-86, Hammer 9a**, as well as a previously unreported direction indicium, E, as seen in the proof strike. The strike is found on a picture post card addressed to Guelph, Ontario, where it arrived on October 19 and was re-directed to Toronto, arriving there at 10 PM, the same day. (See pages 1651-1652 for the W-85, W-86, W-87 and W-87H hammer study.)

Ross Gray reports a new early date, November 20, 1891, for **RR-26, Hammer II**. This cancellation is on a 3¢ Small Queen cover, which is addressed to Victoria, Carleton County, N.B. There is no receiving mark on the back.



Derailments

Your editor apologizes for his error in the **O-150** hammer study on page 1674. The proof date is obviously June 9, 1887, as Brian Stalker had shown in his original data, not July 9, 1887.

Also, the fourth paragraph on page 1668 should read, in part, ... Bill notes that he worked for J.R. Booth's grandson, J.R. Booth Coleman, when *Mr. Coleman* was superintendent ... etc.

Just Released Hamilton's Other Railway

by Charles Cooper

432 pages in 8 1/2" x 11" format - 390 black & white illustrations

The 19th century saw Toronto rapidly developing as the railway centre for the Province of Ontario, with tracks radiating out to the north, east and west. Hamilton saw this as a challenge to its position as an emerging industrial city. The arrival of the Great Western Railway in 1854 spurred promoters of the Hamilton and North Western to build a link with Lake Huron to the south, through a line to Port Dover. However, the real potential lay in developing the hinterlands to the north of the city. This the Hamilton & North Western did as it extended itself to the north, eventually reaching Collingwood on the shores of Georgian Bay.

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Order your copy today. Forward a cheque or International money order for \$88.76 Canadian funds, or \$62.00 US funds (postpaid, applicable taxes included), to **Bytown Railway Society, PO Box 141, Station A, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 8V1**.

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