



In this issue, we look at the R.P.O.s established on the **Grand Trunk Pacific Railway** until its incorporation into the Canadian National Railways system.

The **Grand Trunk Pacific Railway**, a joint venture between the Grand Trunk Railway and the Government of Canada, began construction westward from Winnipeg in 1905. The first section was opened to Portage la Prairie on July 30, 1908. By October 1, 1908, it ran to Watrous. The first train entered Edmonton, Alberta on August 13, 1909 and regular service was operating between there and Winnipeg by June, 1910.

Construction between Edmonton and Prince Rupert proceeded from both directions with the "Last Spike" being driven one mile east of Fort Fraser, BC on April 7, 1914.

On March 7, 1919, the Grand Trunk Railway defaulted on the repayment of construction loans to the federal government and was nationalized. In 1923, the G.T.P. Ry was absorbed into the Canadian National Railways system.

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway - Main Line

Winnipeg (Mile 0) - Construction started 1905.

Portage La Prairie (Mile 54) - Traffic began July 30, 1908.

Rivers (Mile 142) - R.P.O. service established to Winnipeg in 1909.

Melville (Mile 279)

Watrous (Mile 408) - Reached by October, 1908

Young (Mile 422)

Saskatoon (Mile 467)

Biggar (Mile 527) - R.P.O. service to Rivers established in 1909.

Oban (Mile 539)

Wainwright (Mile 667) - R.P.O. service to Rivers replaced the Biggars-Rivers run in 1910.

Tofield (Mile 752)

Edmonton (Mile 793) - First train arrived August 13, 1909. Regular service in effect by June, 1910

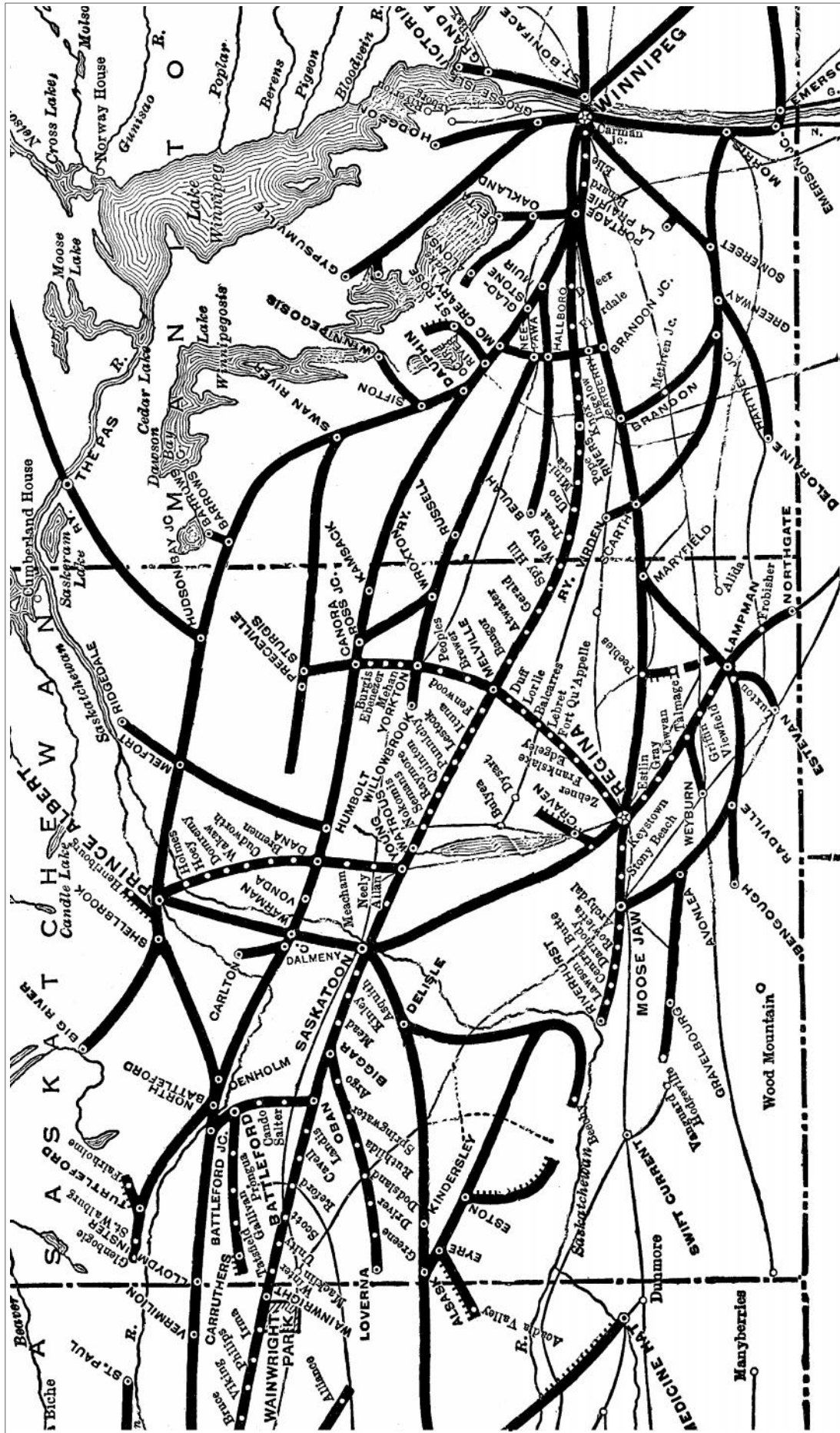
Jasper (Mile 1032)

Prince George (Mile 1286)

Fort Fraser (Mile 1380) - "Last Spike" driven 1 mile east of here on April 7, 1914

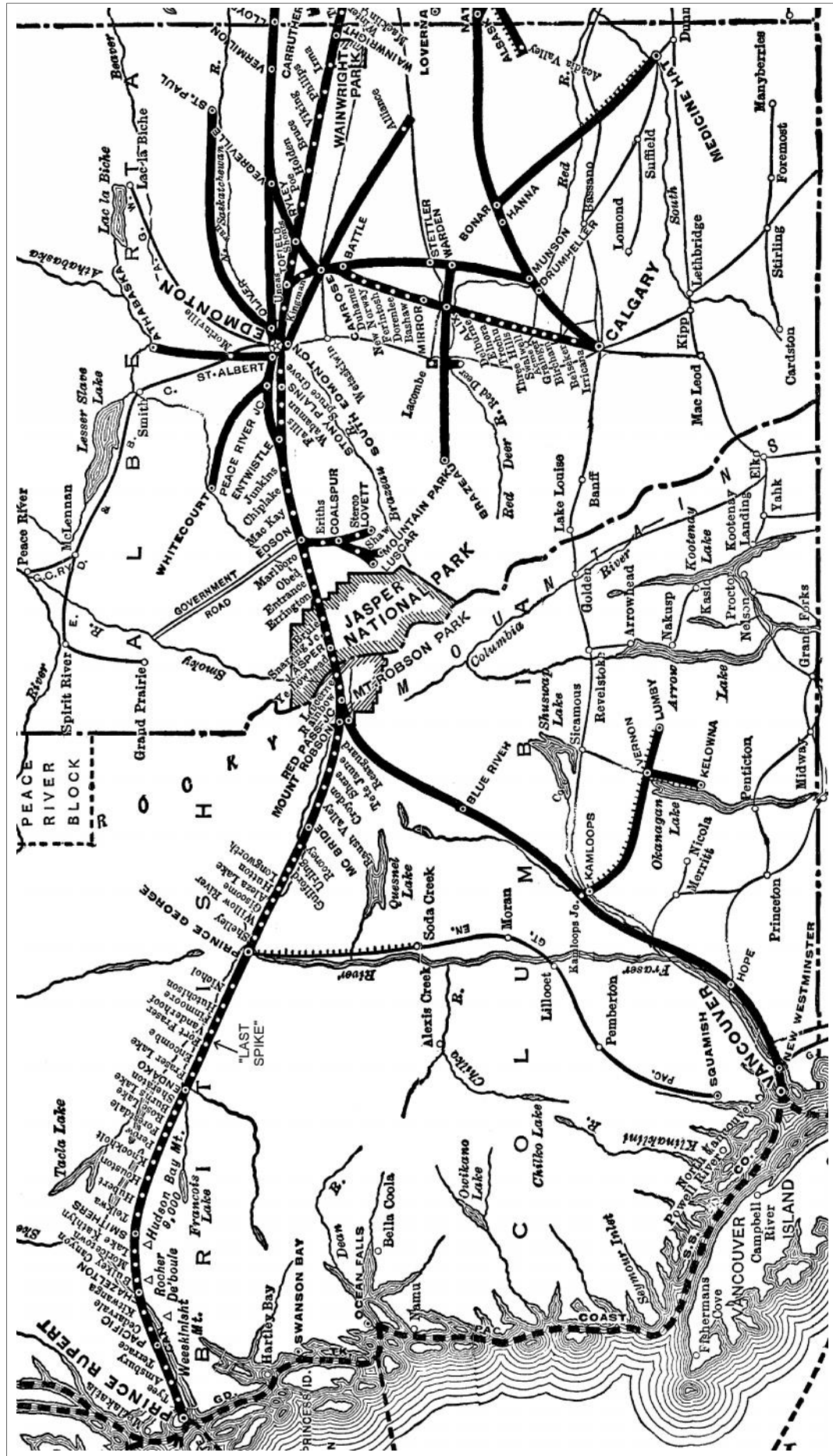
Prince Rupert (Mile 1753) - The first train from Winnipeg arrives on April 8, 1914.

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway



Map derived from 1924 Canadian National Railways Public Timetable showing the combined Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and Canadian Northern Railway lines.

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway



Map derived from 1924 Canadian National Railways Public Timetable showing the combined Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and Canadian Northern Railway lines.

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway

Winnipeg & Rivers



This post card from an R.P.O. clerk on the newly established run, has a year date error. Although there are no other cancellations present, the hammer was not proof struck until 1909.

Rivers & Biggar

The Rivers-Biggar run began at about the same time as the Winnipeg-Rivers service. It was quickly discontinued when the Rivers-Wainwright service started.

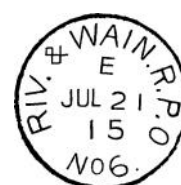


W-125T (2 hammers)
Proofed 1909/05/26
Period 1909 - 1910
Indicia E, W



Grand Trunk Pacific Railway

Rivers & Wainwright



W-128 (7 hammers)

Hammers 1, 2, 3, 4a, 5, proofed 1910/06/06

Hammer 6 proofed 1912/06/29

Hammer 4b proofed 1916/06/02

Period 1910 - 1918

G.T.P. West of Wainwright



RR-52 (2 hammers)

Proofed 1909/08/16

Period 1910 - 1919

Train number indicia 1, 2 only

Wainwright & Edmonton

Wain & Ed
Tr.2 Jan.8/14
R. J. Armstrong



W-167, a transit stamp, struck in blue, on a photo post card of the Bruce, Alberta station, addressed to Waterdown, Ontario, where it arrived on January 12.

W-167A, a transit backstamp, struck in blue, on an unregistered cover from Fairbault, Minnesota, addressed to Fort George, BC, where it arrived on May 29.

Rivers & Watrous



W-129 (3 hammers)

Proofed 1917/07/20

Period 1917 - 1928

Watrous & Wainwright



W-168 (3 hammers)

Proofed 1917/07/20

Period 1917 - 1919

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway

Rivers & Saskatoon



W-126 (1 hammer)

Proofed 1919/05/02

Period 1920 - 1961

After the G.T.P. era, W-127 (4 hammers), W-127E (2 hammers) and W-127I (4 hammers) came into use prior to the end of the run in 1966.

Saskatoon, Wainwright & Edmonton



W-146 (6 hammers)

Hammers 1,2,3a, 4 and 5 proofed 1919/03/29

Hammer 3b proofed 1954/04/23

Period 1919 - 1957



W-146A (5 hammers)

Proofed 1919/04/25

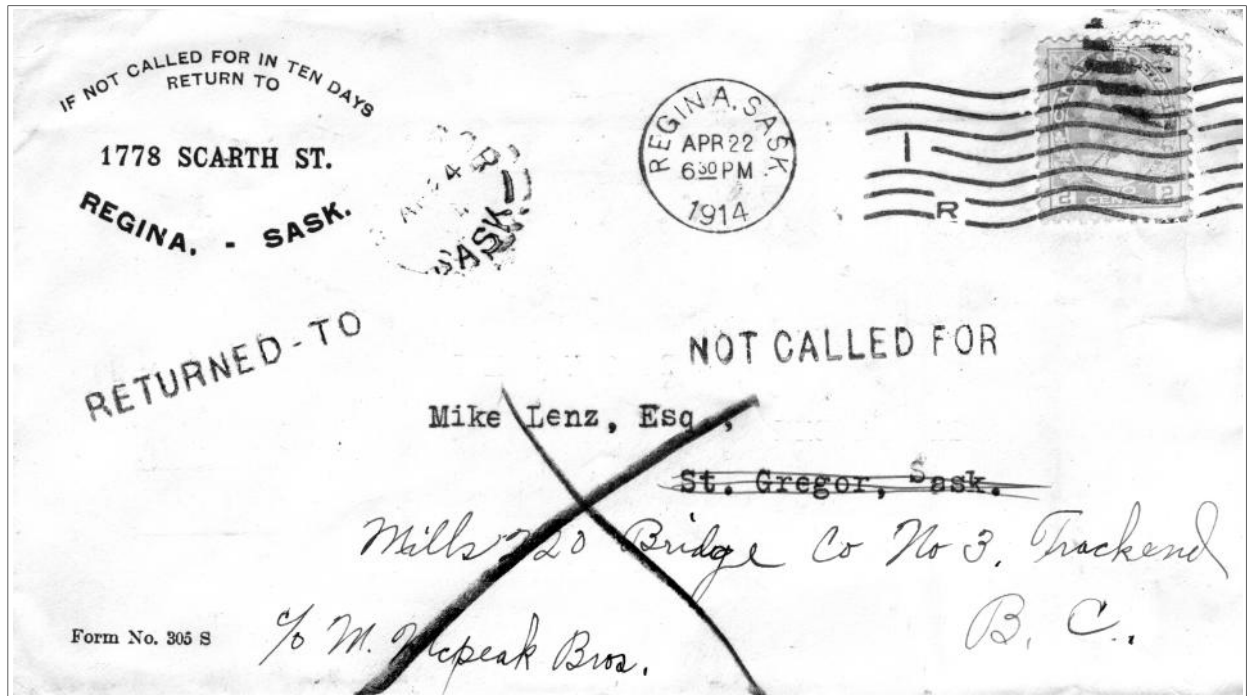
Period 1919 - 1920

Indicia W, 2



Grand Trunk Pacific Railway

As construction of the line was proceeding eastward from Prince Rupert and westward from Edmonton, two railway post offices were set up to serve the construction crews and emerging communities along the railway.



RR-42
Proof Date
unknown
Period
1912-1914



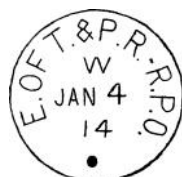
This cover from Regina to St. Gregor, Saskatchewan was redirected to a construction camp on the westward progressing railway. After two weeks, it had not been picked up by the addressee and was returned to Regina. The wording of the cancellation, the lack of direction indicia and the nature of this cover suggests that this mobile post office moved along with the construction crews but did not travel between terminals as a normal railway post office. The catalogue lists a direction indicium, "WEST". Anyone having an example of any indicium is requested to contact the editor.

E. OF T. & P. R. - R. P. O. / !

Hammer	Proof Date	ERD	LRD	Indicia	a	b	c	d	e
I	1912/09/19			W	8 1/2	7 1/4	11 1/4	9 1/2+	15 1/2
II	unknown			W	10	8 1/4	12 1/2	10 1/4	13 1/2
Listing		1913/04/17	1914/09/03	E, W	All chords are measured from the TOPS of the letters.				



Hammer I



Hammer II

RR-45

There are two hammers for this R.P.O., which apparently travelled between Prince Rupert and the end of the eastward construction of the railway.

Both **RR-42** and **RR-45** remained in use after April 7, 1914, probably to serve the crews which continued finishing work on the line after the "Last Spike".

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway

Edmonton & Edson

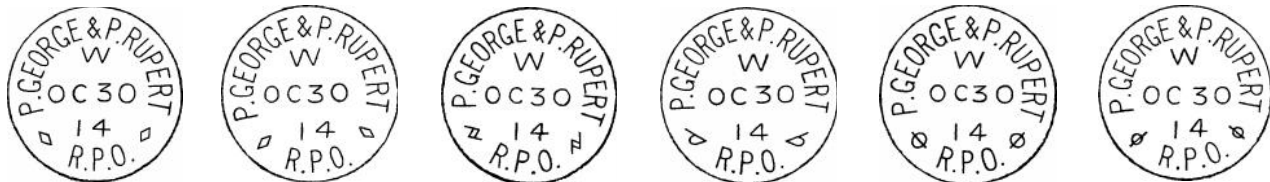


W-39 (3 hammers)
Hammers 1 and 2 proofed 1913/07/19
Hammer 3 proofed 1914/08/31

Period 1913 - 1921

The run was briefly revived in 1954 until 1955 using W-39A

Prince George & Prince Rupert



W-111 (6 hammers)

Proofed 1914/10/30

Period 1915 - 1955

Edmonton & Prince George



W-42 (4 hammers)

Hammers 1, 2 and 3a proofed 1915/06/20

Hammer 3b proofed 1937/07/09

Period 1915 - 1954

W-43 (6 hammers)

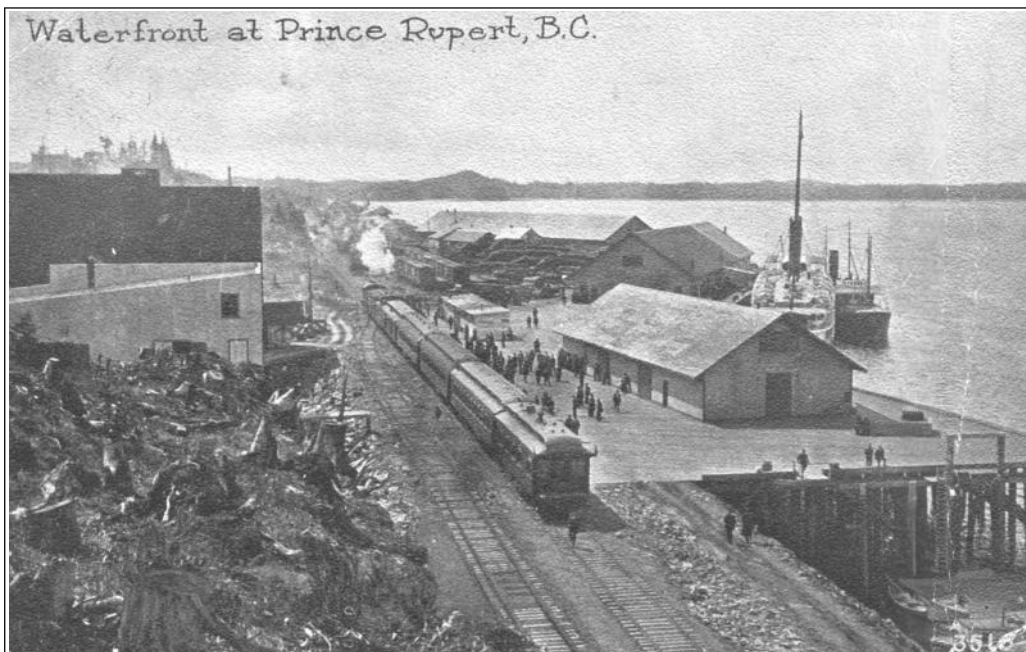
Hammer 2a proofed 1916/02/02, probably to replace W-42, hammer 2

Hammer 2b proofed 1943/09/15

Hammer 4 proofed 1938/07/15

Hammers 5, 6 and 7 proofed 1943/07/19

Period 1916 - 1954



Grand Trunk Pacific Railway - Branch Lines

Melville - Canora, 55 miles long, completed 1911

Melville - Regina, 98 miles long, completed 1911. R.P.O. service established 1913.

Regina - Moose Jaw, 40 miles long, completed 1911.

Oban - Battleford - Carruthers, 48 miles + 46 miles in length, completed 1912-1915

Biggar - Loverna, 104 miles long, completed 1913. R.P.O. service established in early 1920.

Bickerdike (*near Edson*) - Lovett, 58 miles long, completed 1913

Tofield - Calgary (*via Camrose*), 202 miles long, completed 1913

Moose Jaw - Mawer - Gilroy - Riverhurst, 47 miles + 20 miles + 6 miles in length, completed 1913-1916.

Regina - North Gate, 154 miles long, completed 1913

Young - Prince Albert, 111 miles long, completed 1917



*W-118 (1 hammer)
Proofed 1912/09/09
Period of use 1913 - 1921*



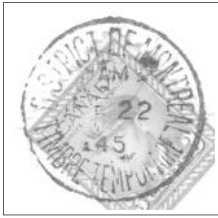
*W-1 (1 hammer)
Proofed 1919/06/19
Period 1920 - 1957*



*W-114 (2 hammers)
Proofed 1920/12/21
Period 1921 - 1931
Run revived in 1952 until 1959 using
W-114A, W-114B*

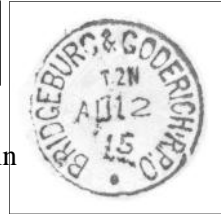
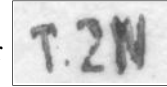


The Caboose

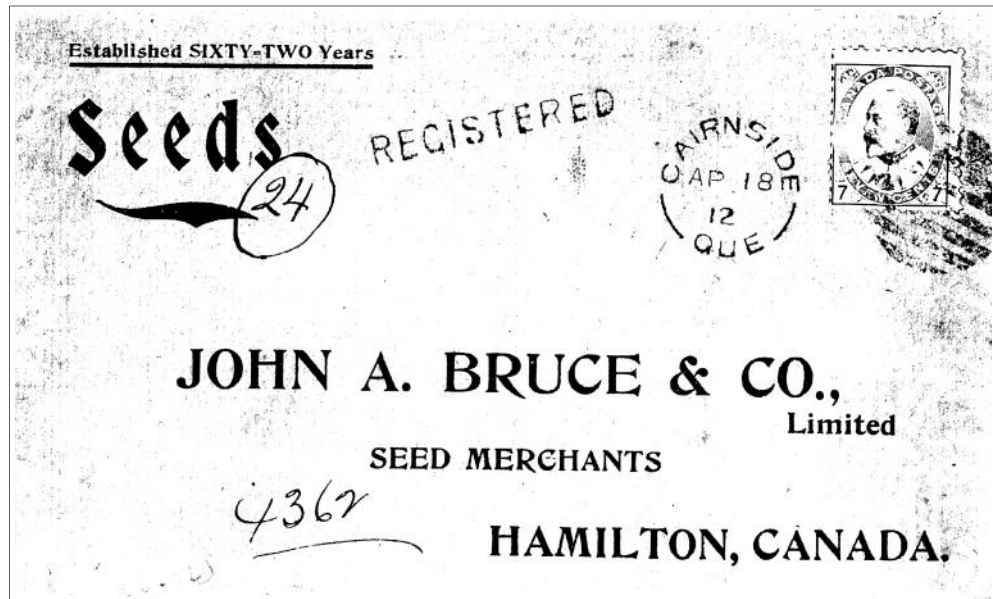


Doug Lingard reports an example of **E-42**, AM, FE 22, 45 on a postcard from Ste Adele En Haut, P.Q. Doug's strike does not have the side dots between the upper and lower text as indicated in the catalogue listing. Based on proof strikes of other emergency hammers, we believe that this is an earlier hammer of the listing. It appears that the side dots were first incorporated in hammers in 1932. Study group members are invited to examine their holdings for an example of an earlier hammer with the dots.

Your editor recently acquired a post card, which originated at Dunnville and was addressed to Paris, Ontario. It is cancelled with a clear strike of **O-34**. The direction indicium first appeared to be an unusual Train 2, North but under a glass was actually the normal Train 2, West. The catalogue lists "N" as a direction but I have never seen an example. Neither have I seen "WEST" in full. Study group members are invited to report any such examples.



Q-79 Hammer 1



Q-165 Hammer 4a

Les Belle sends us an indicia variety of **Q-165**, **hammer 4a**, that is weird. Les suggests that perhaps "the clerk consumed one or two many glasses of whisky before he went on duty".

Derailments

Thanks to **Betsy Gamble**, Serials Clerk at the American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA for bringing to our attention that the **May-June, 2004** newsletter was erroneously labelled as Whole No. 152 instead of **Whole No. 172**.

On page 1827 of the May-June, 2004 newsletter, the second paragraph should read , "Jim Felton reports O-361, hammer **1** with a new train #67....."

Secretary / Treasurer's Report from Chris Anstead

Annual Membership Dues for the Study Group year 2004-2005 are now owing by those members who have not prepaid. Cheques or money orders should be payable to **Chris Anstead, RR# 1, McDonald's Corners, ON, K0G 1M0**, for CAD\$10.00 in Canada, US\$9.00 for members in the U.S.A. or 7 pounds sterling for members in the U.K..

If the box is checked, your dues are now owing.



Newsletter Editor -

Ross Gray, 33 George Street East, Lindsay, ON, K9V 1W6

Phone 705 324-6020

e-mail oshrr@sympatico.ca

Secretary-Treasurer,

Chris Anstead, R.R. #1, McDonald's Corners, ON, K0G 1M0

Newsletter Mailer, Catalogue Editor -

e-mail acropolis@superaje.com