



Tottenham, Ontario, circa 1916

In the previous issue we looked at the cancellations which were used on the **Ontario, Simcoe & Huron Railroad** and its successor lines, the **Northern Railway** and branches and the **Northern & North Western Railway**, up to their absorption into the Grand Trunk Railway in 1888.

In this issue, we continue the study with an examination of the postmarks from the **Hamilton & Lake Erie Railway** and the **Hamilton & North Western Railway**, which became part of the **Northern & North Western Railway** system in 1881.

Robert Smith sends us information about a cover from his collection with a straight line marking. The cover was water damaged in the wreck of the International Limited, which occurred near Beachville, Ontario on April 26, 1937.

Brian Stalker has written a tribute to **Lionel F. Gillam**, providing us with a personal insight for those of us who were not privileged to have met Lionel.



The Newsletter of the Canadian R.P.O. Study Group (B.N.A.P.S.)

A Tribute to Lionel F. Gillam, F. C. P. S. - 1915 - 2004

I don't know when Lionel's interest in stamp collecting began but like most stamp collectors, he became attracted to a particular facet of the hobby. While serving in the Royal Air Force, his Squadron Leader gave him a few Canadian stamps which carried RPO postmarks, and that became his special subject... Canadian Railway Postmarks...not just the postmarks themselves, but the history behind them. History in the widest sense; political, social, geographic, industrial.

Lionel joined the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain in late 1951. Six months later he offered to start up and lead a Railway and Travelling Post Office Study Circle. Within a year he had submitted an article suggesting how an RPO collection might be written up. Further articles followed and the Study Circle membership grew to 24. The August 1956 issue of "Maple Leaves" announced ... 'Lionel is busy with a monumental history designed to embrace every known (Canadian) RPO' ...and February 1957 saw publication of 'Early Canadian Railway Post Offices, Part 1', a series that continued in 48 instalments until 1967. Those articles were published privately later that year under the title 'A History of Canadian RPOs' in a limited edition of 500 copies. It was awarded a Silver-Gilt medal and presented with Felicitations of the Jury at the British Philatelic Exhibition, and reprinted twice in paperback form. It remains a definitive reference book. When I spoke to Lionel recently, his only regret was that his failing health prevented him from updating it.

Further books followed: 'Canadian Mail By Rail 1836-1867' and 'Just a Few Lines'; both of them containing a wealth of well-researched historical information about people, places and events, spun into a fascinating narrative in Lionel's distinctive prose.

Lionel was editor of the CPS Journal, "Maple Leaves" from December 1963 until April 1984; 112 issues in total. After handing over the editorship he continued to submit articles, the closing four pages of a six-part article 'One Thing Leads to Another' appeared in the October 2004 issue.

In 1965 Lionel was made a Fellow of the CPS of GB, an honour not lightly given...the following words being part of the citation: '...he has devoted his time and energy to a task of formidable proportions...we can only hint at the extent of his commitments and can only marvel at his industry and devotion'. He was President of the CPS for the year 1971-72, and, in addition to his family and professional commitments, Lionel was an active member of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association and of the RPO Study Group of the British North America Philatelic Society who recently honoured him with The Order of the Beaver Lifetime Achievement Award.

I ventured into Lionel's domain almost 25 years ago. I marvel at the knowledge he was able to recall, without hesitation. Even in recent months when his physical faculties were failing, his mind was as alert as ever. From around 1990, we corresponded regularly, perhaps only two or three letters a year, but what letters! Such wit, such elegant phrases flowed, sometimes hand-written, sometimes typed on what he euphemistically called his trype-writer.

In closing, I choose a few lines from Lionel's valedictory editorial of April 1984, reporting on his 21 years as Editor of "Maple Leaves":

"I knew, or rather I thought that I knew, what I was letting myself in for...I was accustomed to the occupational hazards; the slings and arrows of outraged contributors who found a spelling mistake that I had overlooked in the proofs, who demanded instant publication of their work, who challenged my bizarre notions about the rules of punctuation... (I did not) know that along the way I would make so many good friends, many of whom I now know personally, and many, many more, literally scattered over the four corners of the globe, whom I only know from their kind and encouraging correspondence. They too I count as friends."

Brian T. Stalker

18 October, 2004

Hamilton & Lake Erie Railway

The Hamilton & Lake Erie Railway was a 31 mile long line completed between Hamilton and Jarvis in 1875. In 1878, it was extended a further 9 miles to Port Dover, on Lake Erie.

It had already amalgamated with the **Hamilton & North Western Railway** in 1875.



Proof Date - unknown
Period 1875 - 1878
Indicia
blank, NORTH, SOUTH

RR-81

HAM & LAKE - ERIE - R

SP 21, 7 (77)

The card was posted aboard the northbound train at Caledonia and arrived in Toronto the same day.

This registered cover, addressed to SENECA, ONT., originated at PORT ROWAN, C.W. JA 22, 77. It travelled by road, and possibly by eastbound G.W.Ry Air Line, in closed bag, to Jarvis, where it was transferred on board the Hamilton & Lake Erie Railway northbound train. At Hagersville, it was transferred to a Canada Southern Railway eastbound train, receiving the railway post office transit backstamps as shown. The faint Seneca receiving backstamp appears to be dated the same day.



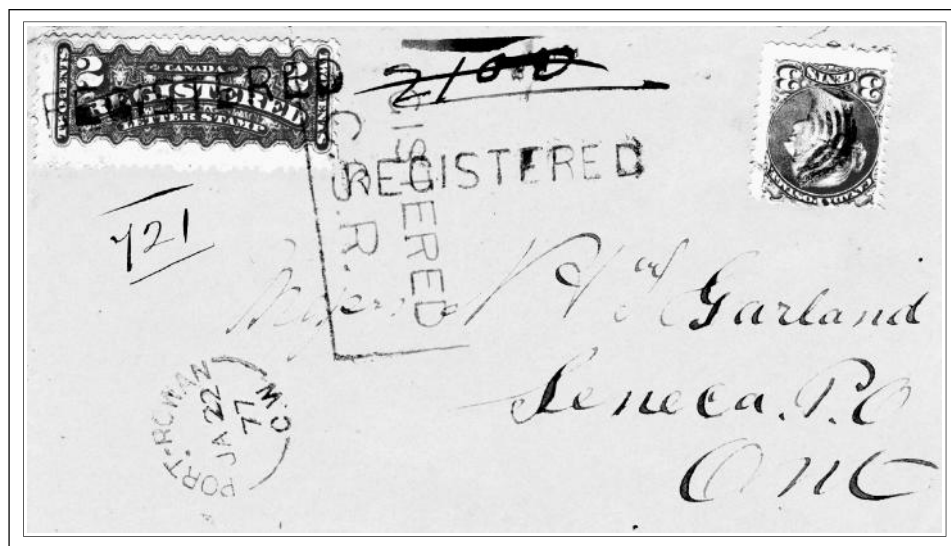
RR-81

Proof Date - unknown

Period 1875 - 1878

Indicia

blank, NORTH, SOUTH



REGISTERED
H & L.E.R.

RG-17

Proof Date - unknown

Period 1875 - 1878



RR-15

Proof Date - unknown

Period 1874 - 1886

Indicia - EAST, WEST

REGISTERED
C.S.R.

RG-4

Proof Date - unknown

Period 1875 - 1893

Hamilton & North Western Railway

The Hamilton & North Western Railway opened for traffic between Hamilton and Georgetown, a distance of 33 miles, in 1876. The following year, the line was extended a further 60 miles to Barrie. In 1879, a 42 mile branch, from Beeton to Collingwood, was opened. In 1881, the **Northern Railway** merged with the Hamilton & North Western Railway and the system began operation under the new name, the **Northern & North Western Railway**.



RR-82

RG-19

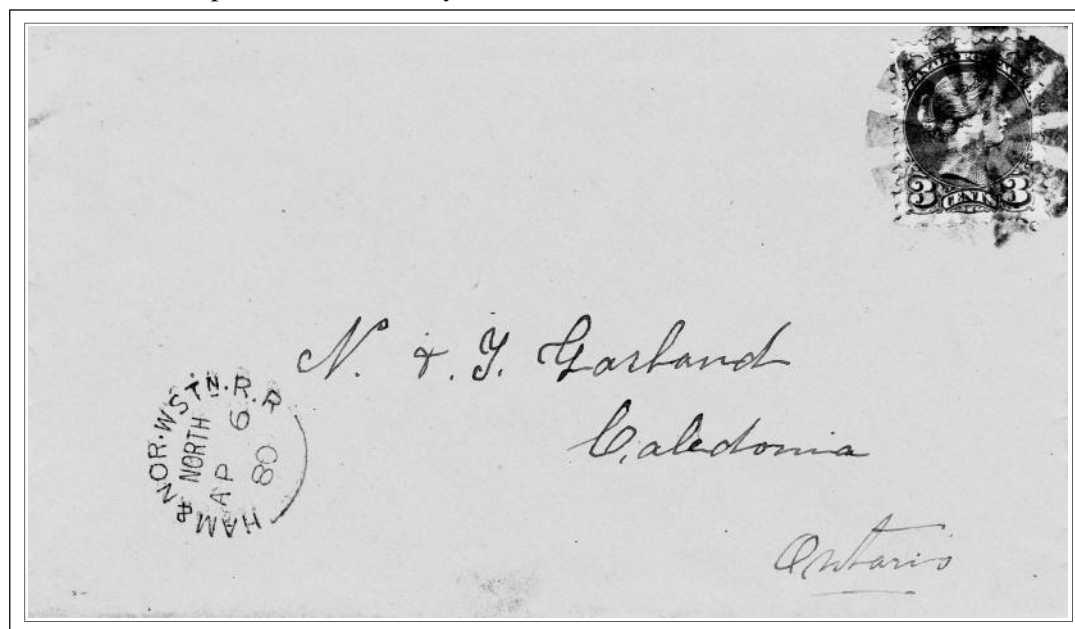
HAM & NOR - WSTN - R. R

SOUTH, DE 18, 79

REGISTERED / - H. & N. W. R. -

This registered cover originated in GARNET, ONT., DE 18, 79 (Walpole Township, Haldimand County) and arrived at SIMCOE, ONT., CANADA, DE 18, 79. The octagonally shaped RG-19, which appears as a transit backstamp, as usual, is known from August 18, 1878 until March 26, 1881. It is the only one of its type among railway post office postmarks. It is accompanied by the regular postmark of the line, RR-82.

Both of these postmarks were only used on the Hamilton-Port Dover section of the railway.



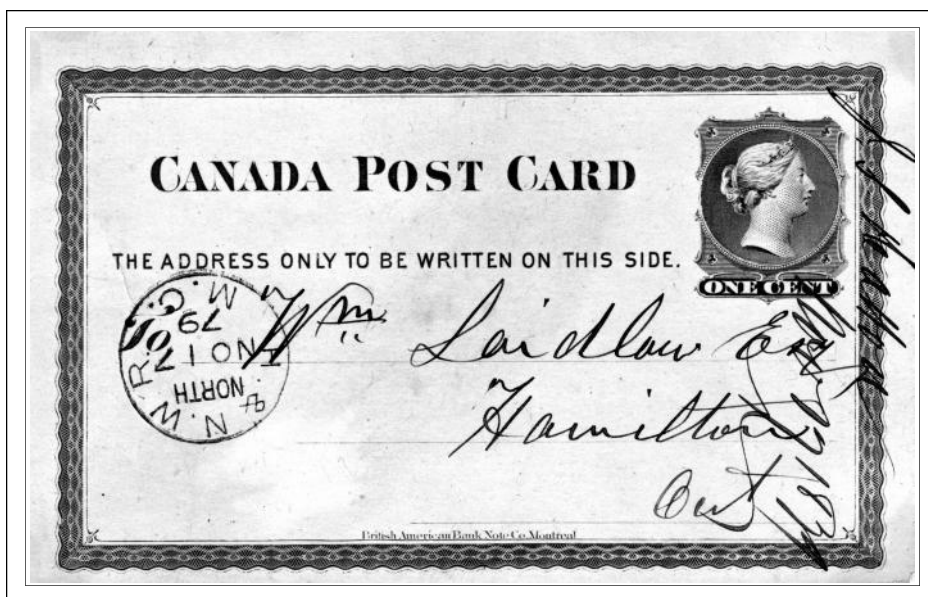
RR-82

HAM & NOR - WSTN - R. R

NORTH, AP 6, 79

The first postmark used on the southern division of this railway was proofed on April 2, 1878. The earliest recorded use is July 12, 1878. It remained in use for ten years, until 1888. The large segmented, circular "cork" obliterator probably was also applied by the railway post office clerk.

Hamilton & North Western Railway



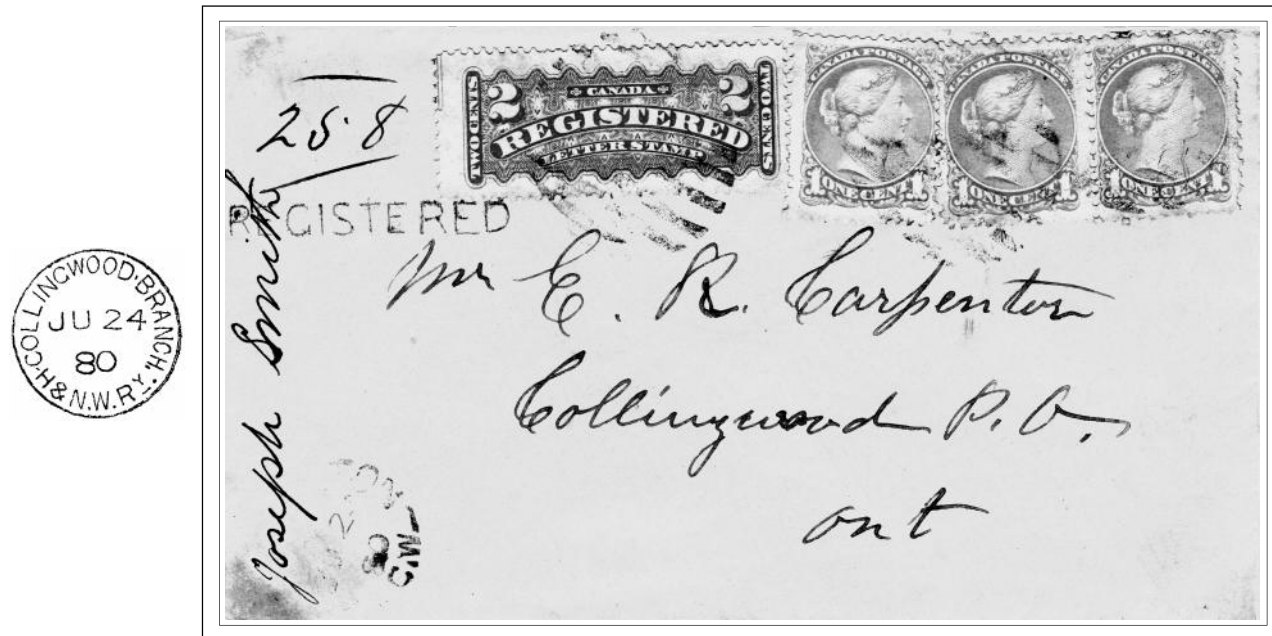
RR-83

H. & N. W. R. / M. C.

NORTH, NO 17, 79

This postmark was proof struck on April 2, 1878 and the example shown is the earliest recorded. It continued in use until 1892 and is known with either NORTH or SOUTH direction indicia. Apparently it was only used on the railway north of Hamilton.

Collingwood Branch



RR-85

- COLLINGWOOD - BRANCH.

/

H & N. W. RY.

JU 24, 80

The above registered cover originated at FLESHERTON, C.W., JU 23, 80, (*Artemesia Township, Grey County*) and received the postmark as a transit backstamp on its northward journey to COLLINGWOOD, ONT., where it arrived the same day. The proof records show an October 13, 1879 date. Recorded use is from 1879 until 1881; no direction or time indicia are known.

Hamilton & North Western Railway - Beeton Branch



RR-84 (Hammer I)

BEETON - BRANCH / H. & N. W. RY.

MY 28, 85

This postmark was proof struck, August 20, 1881 and has been reported used between 1885 and 1892. Early strikes have no direction, train number or time indicium, but a "2" train number indicium is known in 1890. A second, similar hammer was proof struck, May 9, 1883 but no examples are known used.



Not prepaid

The cover was posted on the H. & N. W. Railway, Beeton Branch railway post office car. The clerk noted that the letter had no postage, wrote "Not prepaid" in indelible pencil on the front and postmarked it. Since there was no return address, he forwarded it to the Dead Letter Office.

RETURNED - FOR
DEFICIENT POSTAGE

3



At the Dead Letter Office, the cover was marked with the straight-line marking, "RETURNED - FOR / DEFICIENT POSTAGE", a large "3" to denote that there was 3 cents postage due and it was backstamped, "DEAD LETTER OFFICE, CANADA, AM, MY 29, 1885".



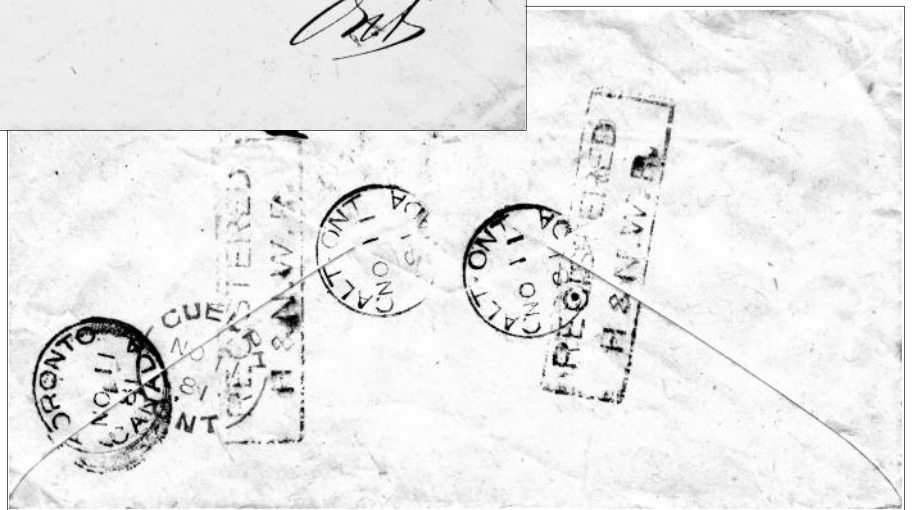
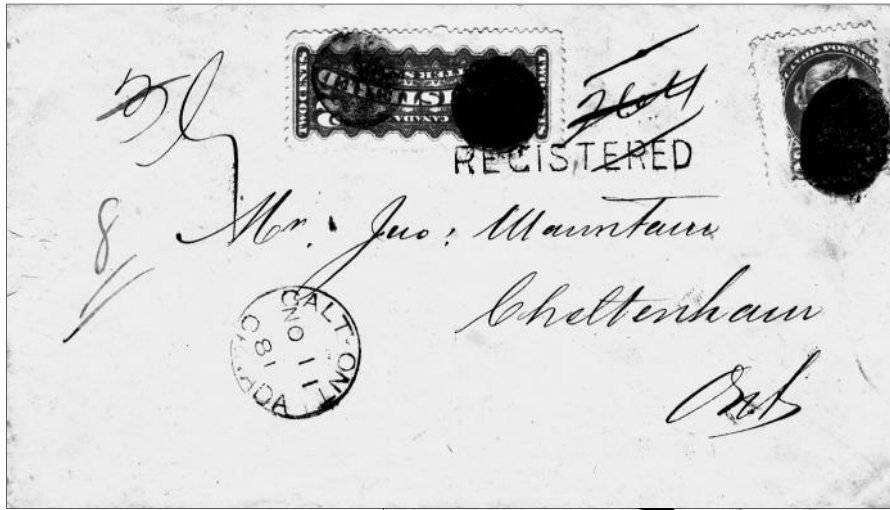
When the deficient postage was paid, a 3 cent stamp was applied over the "3" marking and cancelled with, "DEAD LETTER OFFICE, CANADA, AM, JU 1, 1885" and the letter was forwarded to the addressee.

RR-84 Hammer II
Proof Date - May 9, 1883
Period of Use - Unknown



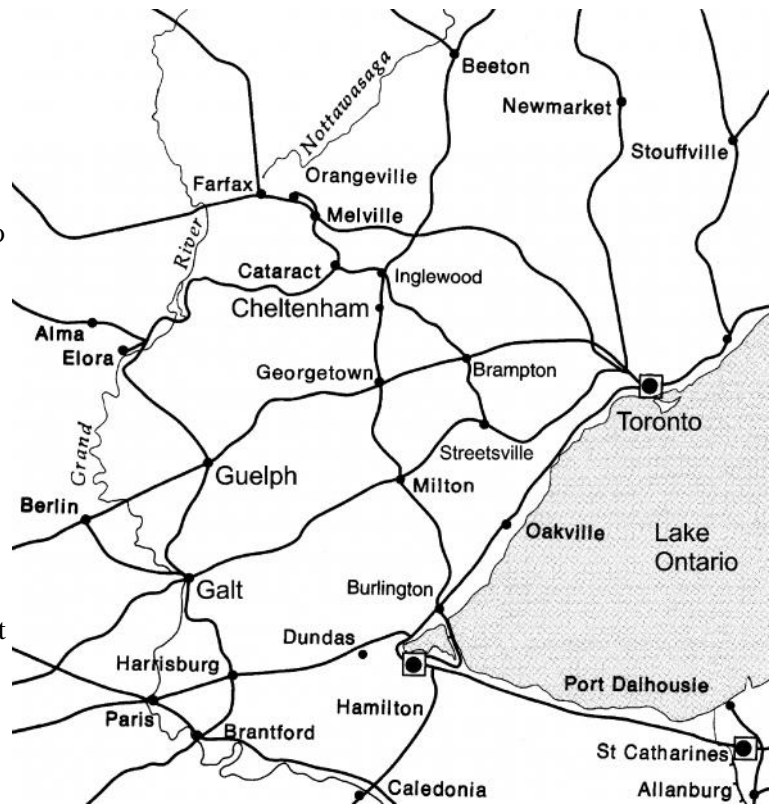
Hamilton & North Western Railway

North of Hamilton, a rectangular boxed registration postmark was used. Proof struck in April, 1879, only 3 examples have been reported between March 1, 1880 and January 18, 1882. The example shown and the January 18, 1882 date (*ex Harrison*) are not accompanied by a R.P.O. circular date stamp, which would give direction and date, as was the usual practice with this type of registration marking.

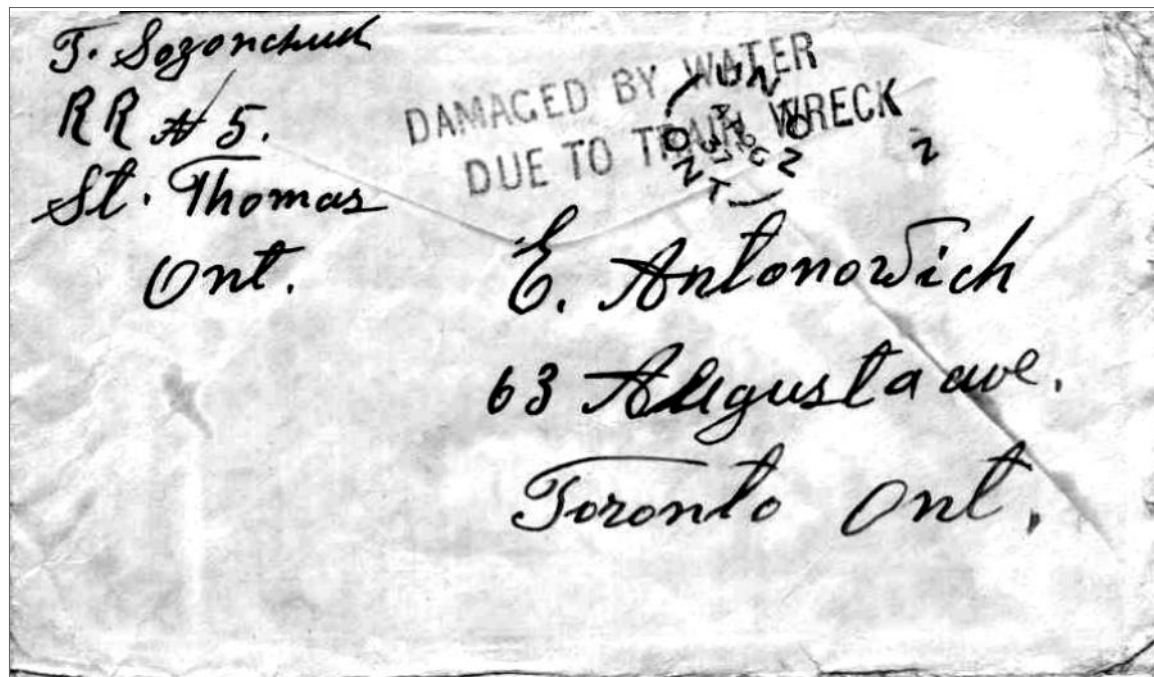
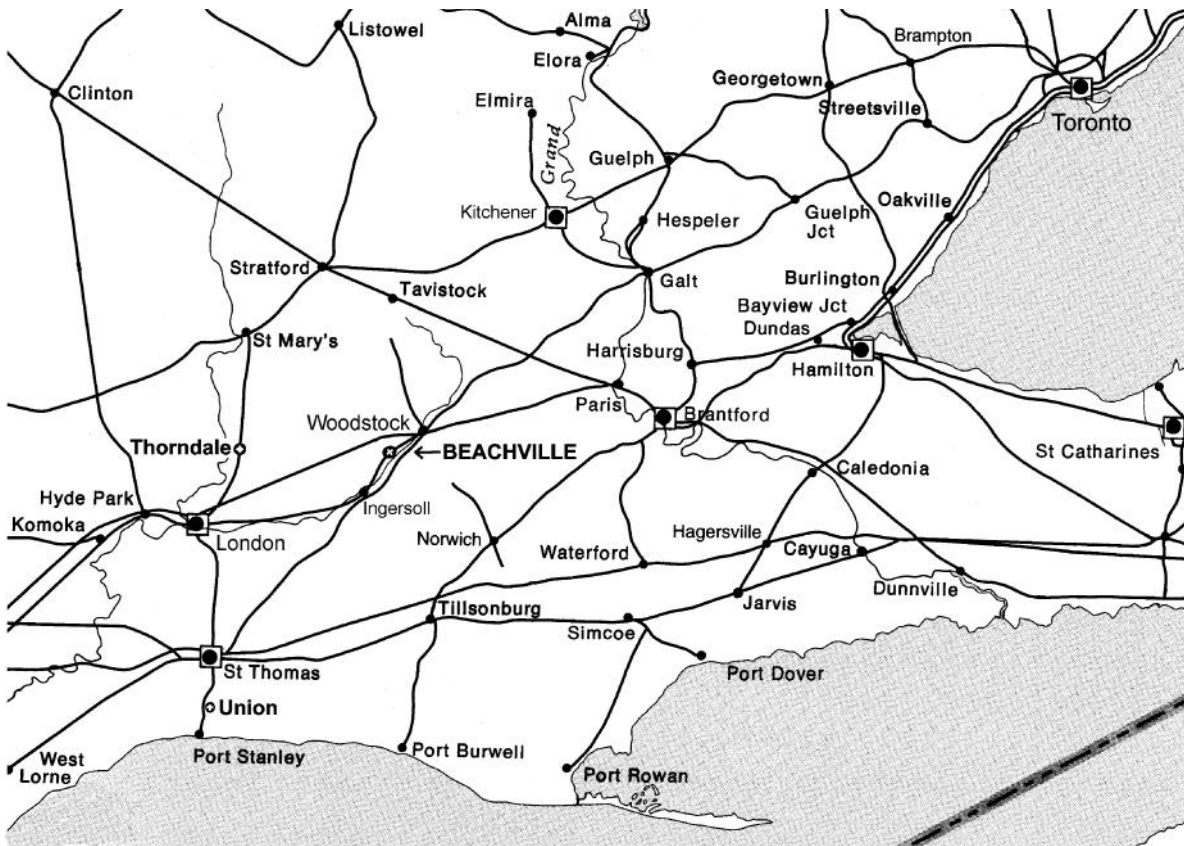


RG-18

The routing of this cover from GALT to Cheltenham, is uncertain. It is odd that it went to Toronto before reaching its Cheltenham destination. It probably travelled by rail, in closed bag to GUELPH, where it was transferred to an eastbound train to TORONTO. Likely, a transfer at Georgetown was missed and the letter returned on a westward train from Toronto to Georgetown and then was sent north to Cheltenham on the Hamilton & North Western line. There is no Cheltenham arrival backstamp to tell us when it ended the journey.



The Wreck of the International Limited



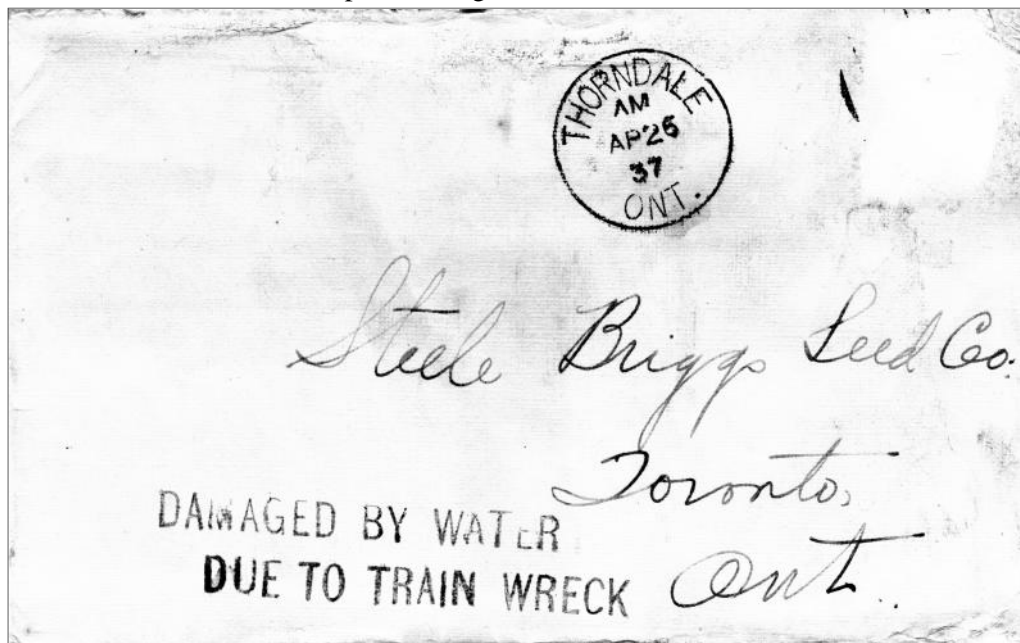
Robert Smith Collection

The cover is addressed to Toronto and shows the 18.5 mm UNION / ONT. split circle dated April 26, 1937. The stamp is missing and the blue colouring of the envelope's interior has soaked through to the outside. A blue rubber stamped, "DAMAGED BY WATER / DUE TO TRAIN WRECK", appears on the face. The mail route followed by this cover was over the London & Port Stanley Railway to London, then to Toronto via Canadian National Railways.

The Wreck of the International Limited

April 26 and 27, 1937 were notable for the torrential rains and flooding which occurred in Southern Ontario. C.N.R. train No. 6, the Chicago to Toronto "**International Limited**", was derailed at 12:52 PM, two miles west of Beachville, when the track beside the Thames River was undermined by flooding from a dam burst at Woodstock. The engine and three cars (including the mail car) left the track and three people were killed in this derailment.

The editor has a similar cover in his collection. It originated in Thorndale and came to London by a morning, westbound C.N.R. train from Toronto, via Stratford. Like the other cover, it shows evidence of having been water soaked and the stamp is missing.



Ross Gray Collection

The question remains as to where the damaged mail received the straight line marking. We might conclude that the mail bags remained intact but soaked and were sent to Toronto for processing.

Recommended Reading

A CENTURY OF TRAVEL ON THE ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY - Soft cover with sewn spine, 8½x11, 160 pages, 124 colour and 164 b&w photos by Douglas NW Smith. Price: \$39.95

This book traces the past century of passenger operations of the Ontario Northland from the shores of Lake Ontario to the tidewaters of James Bay through detailed text and over 100 colour and b&w photos. Separate chapters examine the history of the passenger trains on the Toronto-Cochrane/Timmins main line and the Moosonee branch, the self-propelled cars, the magnificent Northerns and classic FP7As, the wood, heavyweight steel and streamlined passenger cars, the railway post office service, meal service in the café and dining cars and station lunch rooms, the elegant stations at Cobalt, Haileybury, New Liskeard, Englehart, Matheson and Cochrane, the terminal arrangements at North Bay, the Nipissing Central interurban line, the highway buses, the marine operations on Lakes Nipissing and Temagami and at Moosonee, and even the plane operations under the norOntair banner.

Rosters of all the passenger cars and locomotives are included. The pictures were taken by some of Canada's best known rail photographers and most have not been published before. There are also train consists, schedules, maps and plans of stations and passenger cars.

THE OCEAN LIMITED: A Centennial Tribute - Soft cover, 8½x11, 112 pages, 45 colour and 110 b&w photos by Douglas NW Smith. Price: \$29.95

On July 3, 2004, celebrations marked 100 years of operation of the Ocean Limited between Montreal and Halifax. Over its existence, the train has been operated by the Intercolonial Railway, Canadian Government Railway, Canadian National Railway and VIA Rail Canada. It is the longest running name train in Canadian history and the second oldest name train on the North American continent.

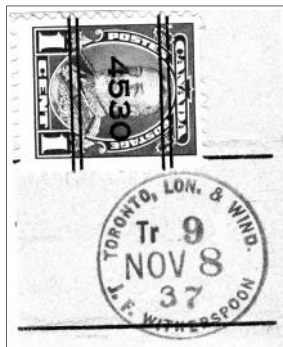
This book traces the history of the construction and passenger train operations over the CN Montreal-Halifax line from the 1850s to the present day. In addition to the Ocean Limited, the book also details the history and operations of the Quebec Express, the Maritime Express, the Acadian, Scotian, St Lawrence Special and Chaleur.

Special sections focus on the operation of Pullman cars on the Intercolonial, the first dining cars in the Maritimes, the first all-steel sleeping cars on a Canadian railway, the classic open platform observation cars, Railway Post Office cars, and major wrecks.

The book includes maps, schedules and many detailed consists of the trains from the 1920s to the present. B&W and colour illustrations have been supplied by many of Canada's leading railway photographers. The book is printed on heavy glossy paper for high quality photo reproductions.

Both volumes are available from Trackage Canada, P.O. Box 1369, Station B, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5R4 or www.tracksidecanada.on.ca

The Caboose

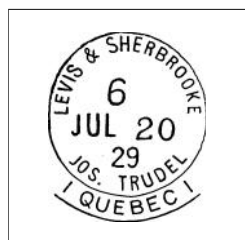


Peter McCarthy reports a new early date, November 8, 1937, and new westbound train number, 9 for listing **O-355T**. Harry Machum reported the only other example, which is dated January 13, 1949 and bears train number 18, an easterly movement.

Ross Gray submits this private clerk handstamp, found as a transit marking on the back of a registered cover which originated in Toronto and is addressed to Wiarton, Ontario. Struck in violet, the text is similar to

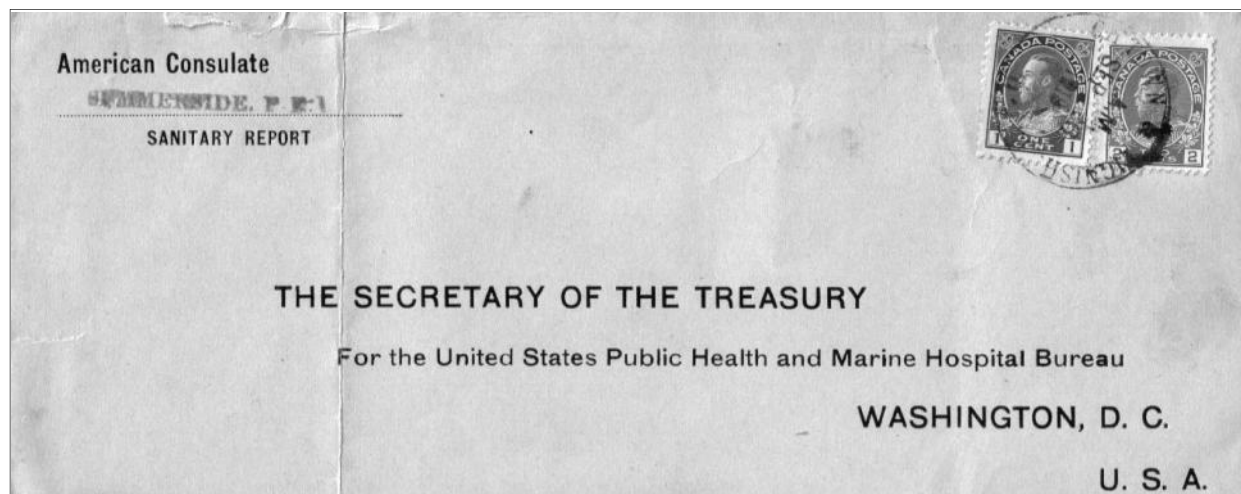
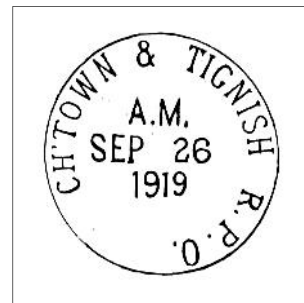


O-152A except that the text of the run of this example is entirely in upper case letters. In addition this new example is type 3E while O-152A is type 12A.



Q-52Cc has until now, only been reported used in 1912, with train numbers 2 or 5. Now **Ross Gray** has found an example used on July 20, 1929 with train 6. It is a transit backstamp struck in blue on a registered cover from Armstrong, Quebec to Chicago, Illinois. Q-7, train 35, dated the same day, is also present as a transit marking. The cover arrived in Montreal on July 21 and in Chicago on July 23.

Brian Stalker reports a previously unlisted Type 5 rubber cancellation from Prince Edward Island. Brian notes that this postmark was shown in G. D. Murray's "2000 postmarks of Prince Edward Island" which was published in 1996.



Secretary-Treasurer's Report from Chris Anstead

Scott Wiggins, 77 Hemingway Crescent., Unionville, Ontario, L3R 2S4 has joined the Study Group. Scott is interested in the early RPO markings found on stampless and Victorian covers. Welcome aboard!

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