



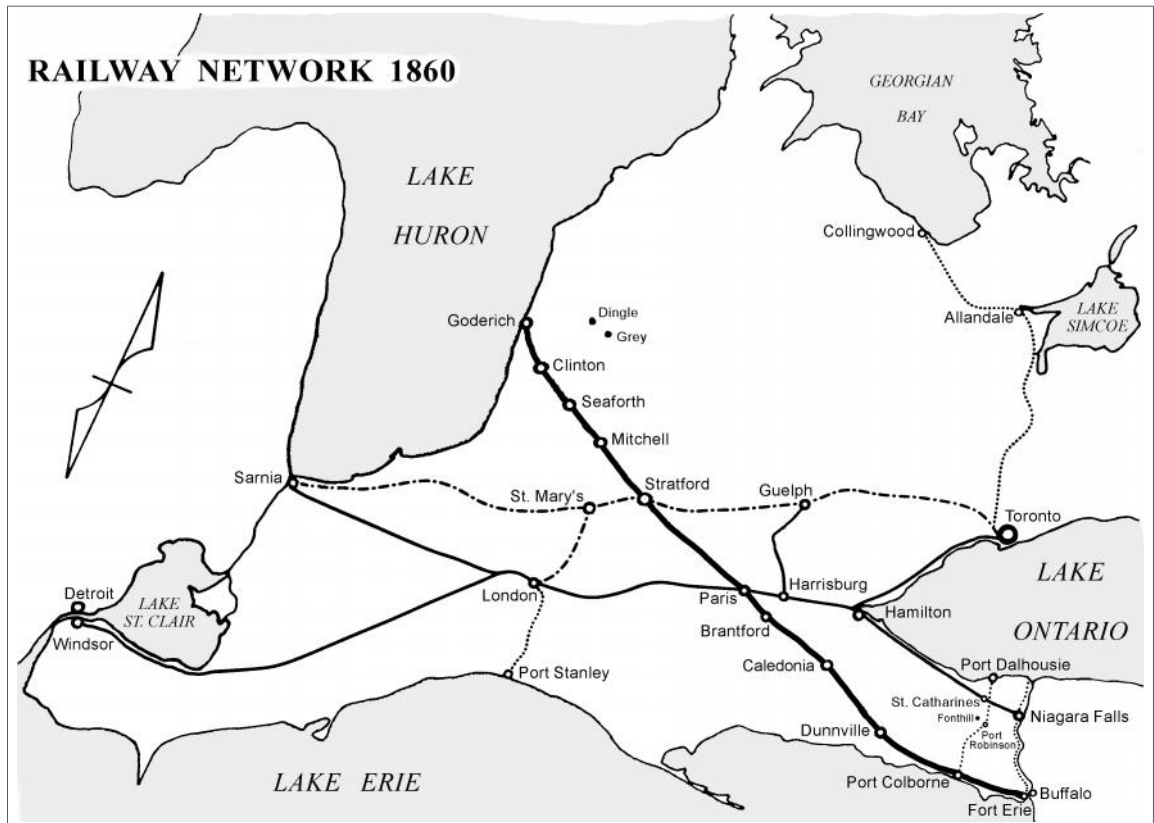
G.T.Ry. Station

Caledonia, Ontario

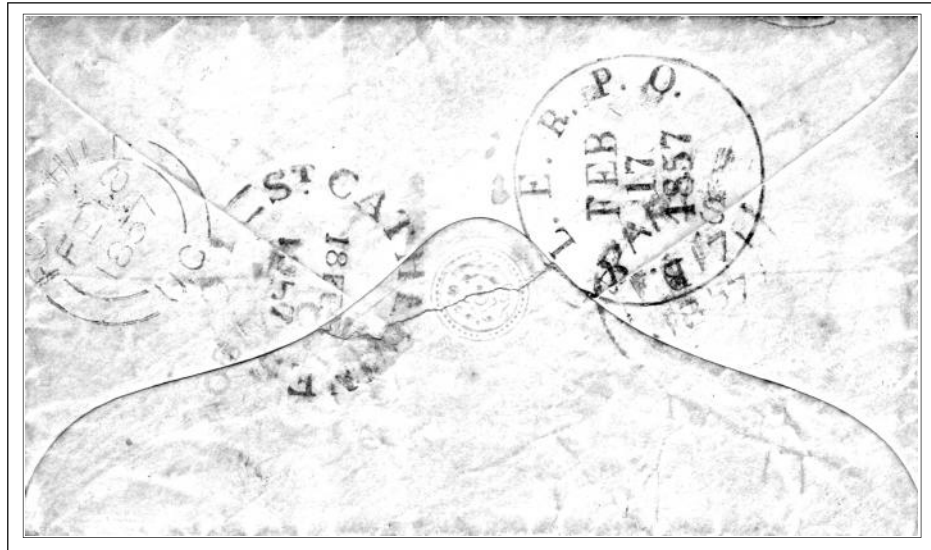
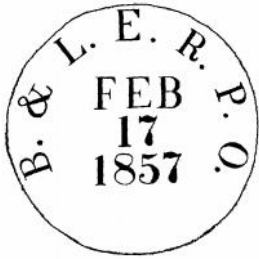
In this issue, we examine the postmarks used on one of the earliest railways built in the present day province of Ontario.

By 1856, the Buffalo, Brantford & Goderich Railway had completed 83 miles of track between Fort Erie and Paris but the infrastructure was in poor condition and the company bankrupt. It was reorganized as the **Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway** the same year and by 1859, the Paris-Stratford section was completed. Due to continuing financial difficulties, arrangements were made with the **Grand Trunk Railway** to permit joint operations of traffic between Detroit and Buffalo via Stratford.

The Buffalo & Lake Huron was purchased by the Grand Trunk Railway in February, 1870. The bridge across the Niagara River, between Buffalo and Fort Erie was completed in 1873, replacing the ferry service. In 1923, the 160 mile line became part of **Canadian National Railways**.



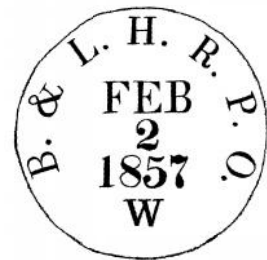
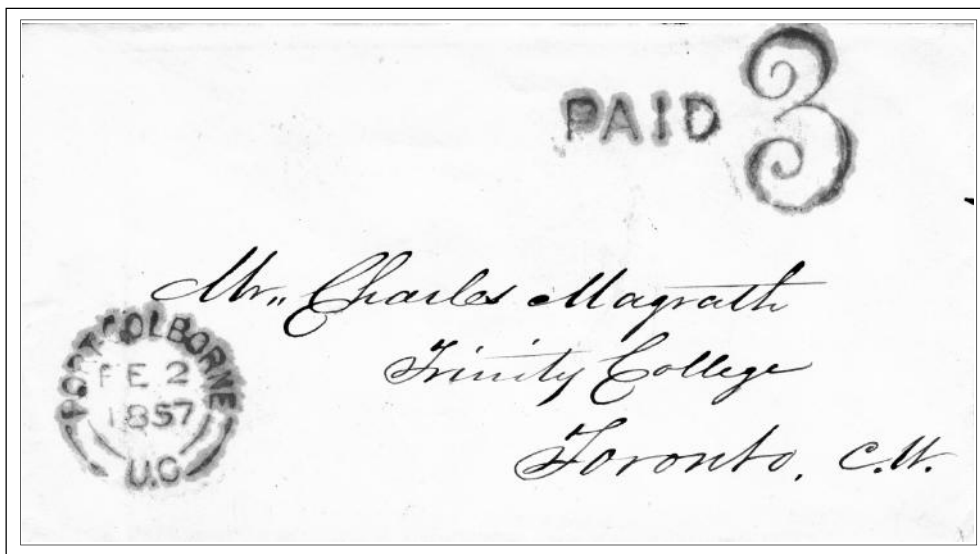
## Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway



RR-7 (Hammer I)

**B. & L. E. R. P. O. FEB, 17, 1857**

One of two hammers for the listing of the railway's earliest postmark had an obvious error, i.e. an "E" instead of a "H". This earliest example for the hammer, is found as a transit backstamp on a U.S. cover originating at GOWANDA, N.Y., located just to the south-west of Buffalo. It is addressed to Pelham, C.W. (in Welland County, became Fonthill in 1856). The transit backstamps show that it arrived in FORT ERIE on February 17, where it was posted aboard the B. & L. H. railway post office and then travelled well past its destination to PARIS. Here, it was probably transferred to the Great Western Railway for routing to ST. CATHARINES, arriving there the following day. It then went to PORT ROBINSON and arrived in Fonthill, February 18.



RR-7 (Hammer II)

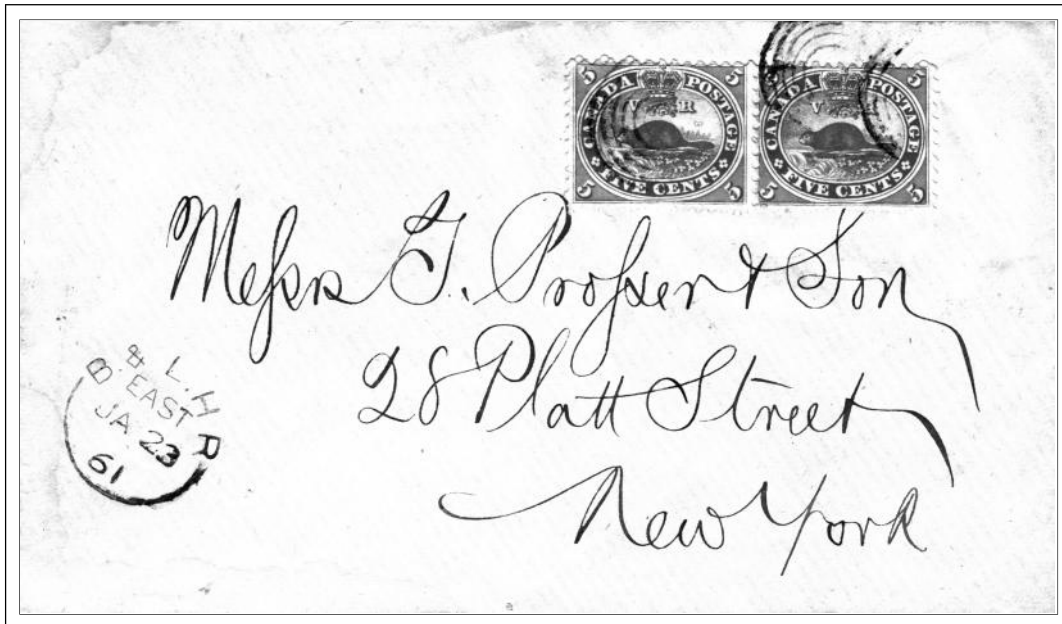
**B. & L. H. R. P. O. FEB, 2, 1857, W**

The earliest example of the listing, and of the second and correctly made hammer, appears as a transit backstamp on a cover from PORT COLBORNE to TORONTO. There is an indistinct transit backstamp which is probably PARIS, in addition to the TORONTO arrival marking, with an unclear date.

There are 3 other reports of this very rare and short-lived railway marking; they all have an illegible "E" or "H", making hammer differentiation difficult. The latest date for the listing is April 18, 1857.

## Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway

Three examples of the second type of postmark used on the B. & L. H. Railway are shown next. It was long lived, extending over a twenty-five year period from 1860 until 1885. At least six hammers have been identified. Both EAST and WEST direction indicia are known.

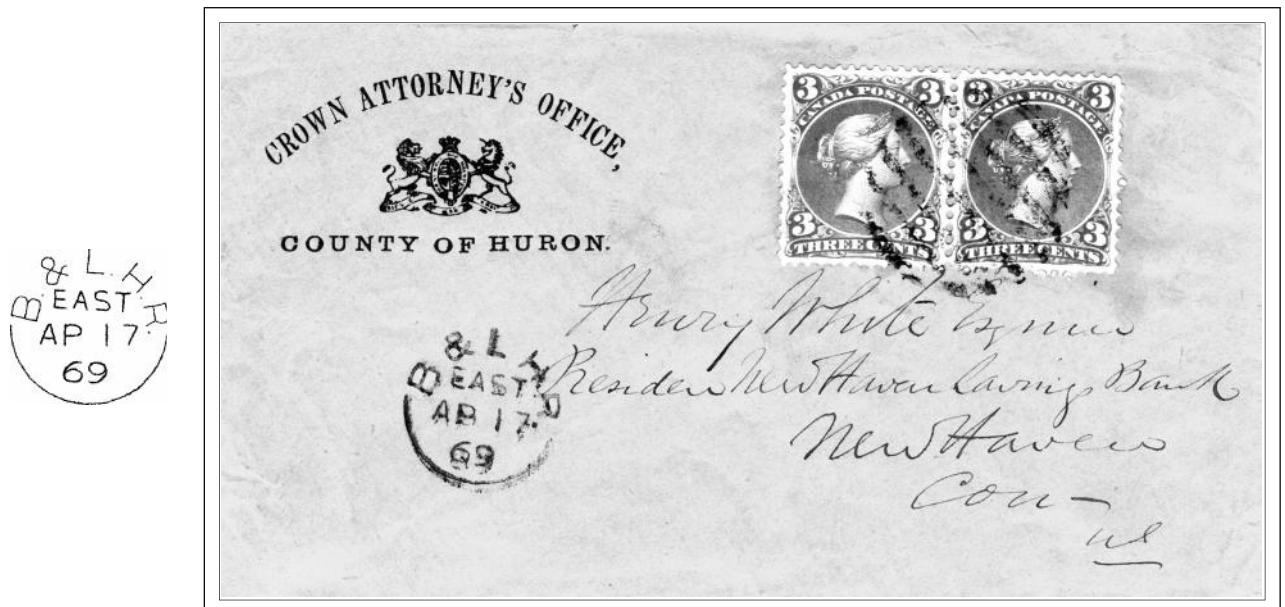


RR-5

B. & L. H. R.

EAST, JA 23, 61

There are no other transit or arrival postmarks on this 10c rated cover to the U.S.A..



RR-5

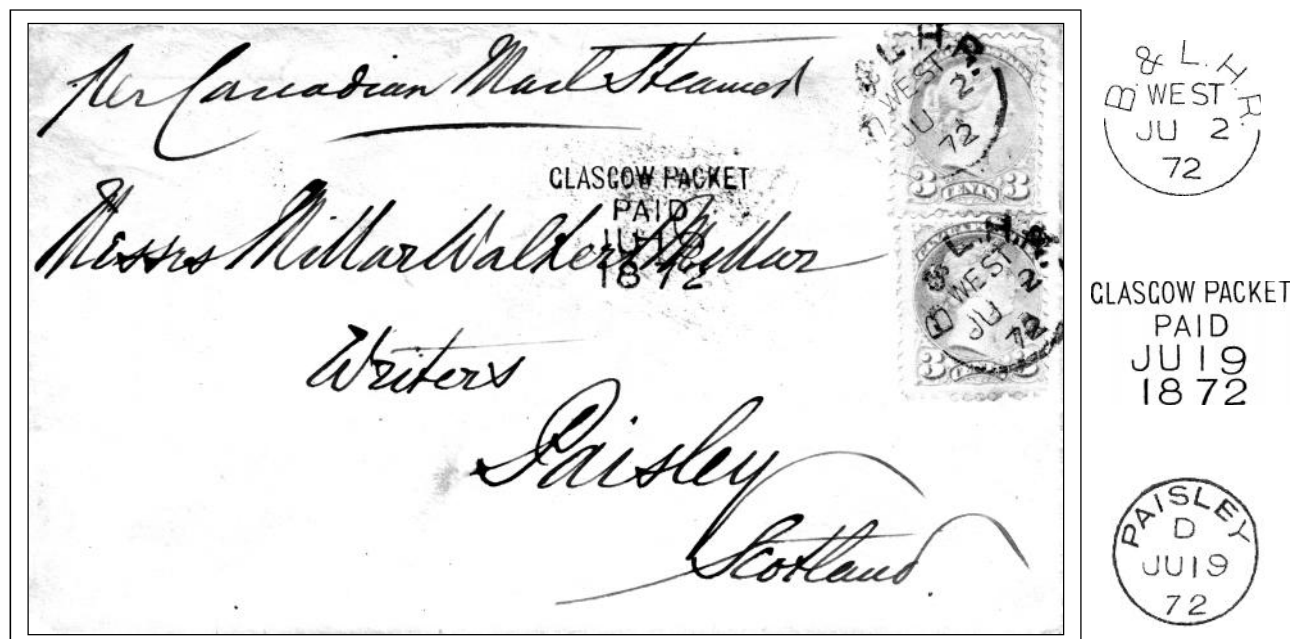
B. & L. H. R.

EAST, AP 17, 69

There are no other transit or arrival postmarks on this 6c rated cover to the U.S.A..

The following example on the next page shows an originating cancellation on a trans-Atlantic cover to Scotland. A transit stamp, GLASGOW PACKET, PAID, JU 19, 1872 appears on the front, while a PAISLEY, D, JU 19, 72, arrival backstamp confirms a 17 day long trip.

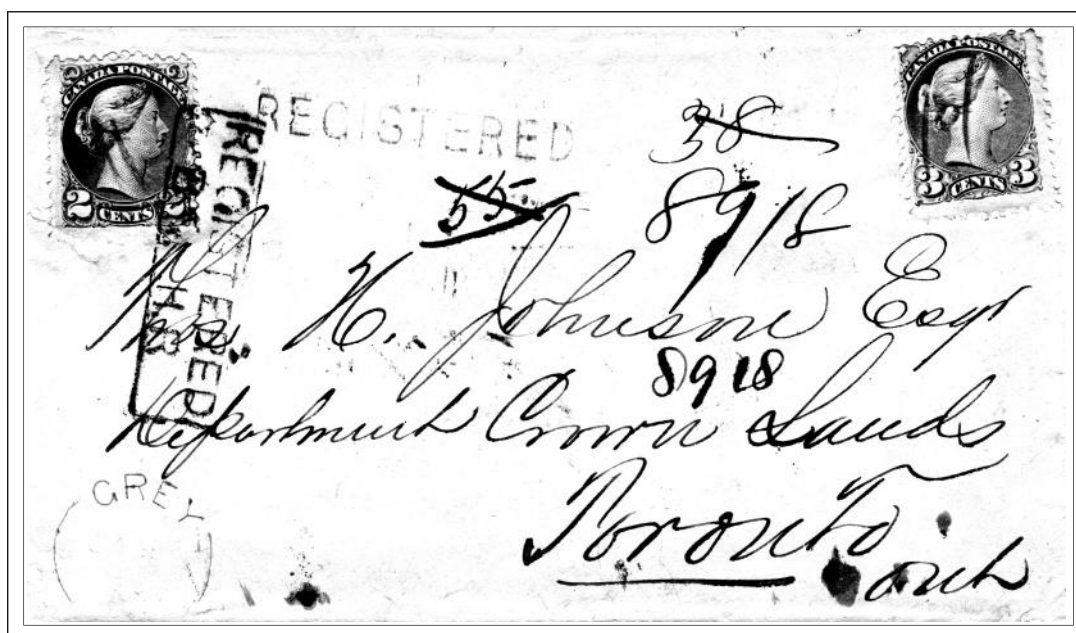
# Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway



RR-5

B. & L. H. R.

WEST, JU 2, 72



RR-8

B. & L. H. R. R.

EAST, JA 8, 73

RG-1, Hammer I

REGISTERED / B. & L. H. R

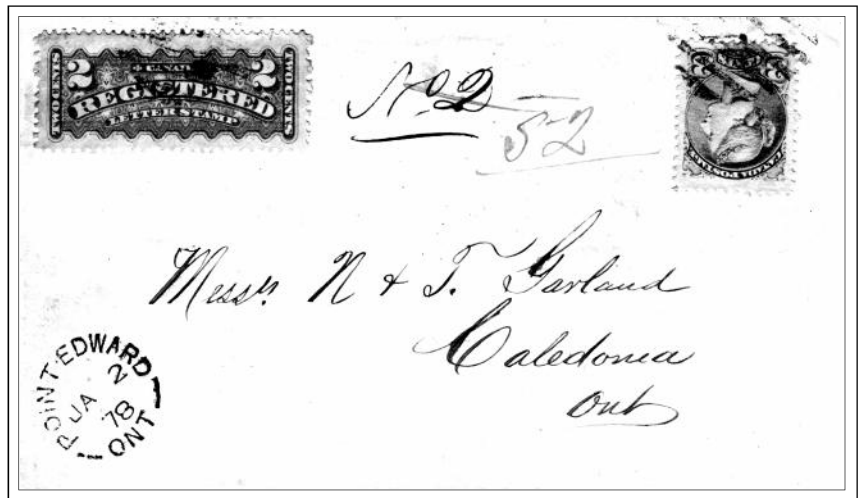


This rectangular registration postmark, the first of three registration cancellations used on the line, appears as a transit marking, both front and back, on a registered cover originating at GREY, C.W. (Grey Township, Huron County, later Cranbrook). There is a DINGLE, C.W. JA 7, 78 (Grey Township, Huron County, earlier Ainleyville, later Brussels) and a B. & L. H. R. R., EAST, JA 8, 73, transit backstamp. There is no Toronto arrival marking. An additional railway circular date stamp usually appears in conjunction with the registration marking to provide date and direction.

Hammer I of RG-1 is known from June 21, 1869 until April 26, 1875 and RR-8 is reported between 1870 and 1875, with either EAST or WEST direction indicia.

## Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway

The second hammer of listing RG-1 is found as a transit backstamp on a cover which originated at Point Edward, where it was transferred to the eastbound Grand Trunk Railway, Sarnia Branch train and received a rectangular transit postmark but, uncharacteristically, no G.T.Ry circular date stamp to indicate the date and direction. It was probably transferred to the eastbound Buffalo & Lake Huron train at Stratford and received both B. & L. H. Ry cancellations. Hammer II of RG-1 is recorded between October 2, 1875 and April 8, 1878.



RG-9  
RG-1, Hammer II  
RR-4

REGISTERED / G. T. R. S. B  
REGISTERED / B. & L. H. R  
B & L. H EAST, JA 2, 78

The third and last registration postmark used on the line was proof struck in July, 1878. The ERD is August 5, 1878 and the LRD is January 16, 1888. The cover shown here is a very exceptional because it originated on the R.P.O. The "2" registration number is written in violet, indelible pencil.



RG-2  
RR-4

REGISTERED / • B. & L. H. R •  
B & L. H WEST, AU 11, 83

There is a CLINTON, ONT, AU 11, 83 receiving backstamp. The "104" registration number assigned at Clinton is written in ink.

# Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway

Two later postmarks used on the line are shown here. In both cases, these devices were made well after the Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway had been taken over by the **Grand Trunk Railway** but were lettered for the former company.



B &amp; L. H

EAST, DE 3, 80

This postmark is known from 1875 until 1886 with either a WEST or EAST direction indicium. A HAMILTON, CANADA, DE 3, 80 receiving backstamp indicates same day arrival. A segmented “cork” obliterator cancels the stamp and probably was applied by the R.P.O. clerk.

B. & L. H. R Y

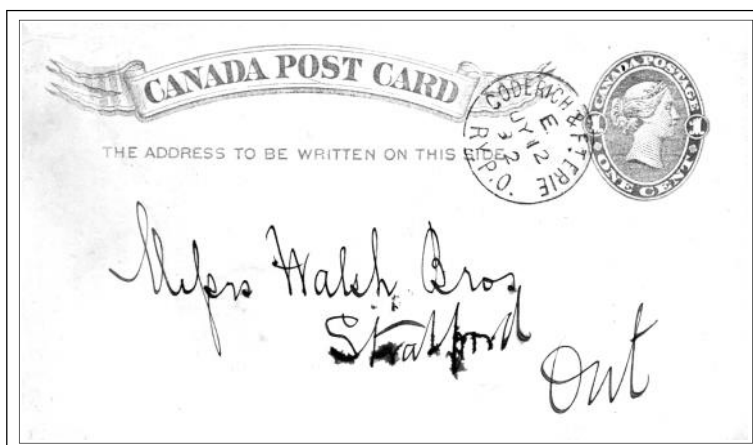
EAST, DE 31, 81

There are no transit or receiving backstamps present. The large segmented, circular “cork” obliterator was probably applied by the R.P.O. clerk.

Four hammers were proofed on April 6, 1879. Use is recorded from 1879 until December 14, 1886 with either an EAST or WEST direction indicium.

## Grand Trunk Railway - Goderich & Fort Erie

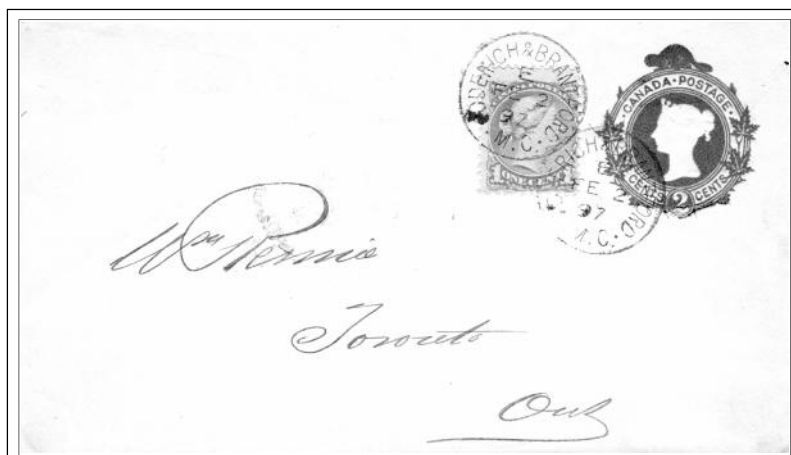
The use of the original B. & L. H. Ry. identification finally disappeared when on May 9, 1887, a new postmark ( *possibly 4 hammers* ) was proof struck, stating the two terminals of the run. It remained in use until 1894, when the run was split into two runs at Brantford.



O-81 GODERICH & FI - ERIE / R.Y. P. O. E., JY 12, 92

The arrival backstamp is STRATFORD / ONT. A, JY 12, 92.

## Grand Trunk Railway - Goderich & Brantford



The first cancellation for this shorter run was proof struck on June 9, 1894, along with a similar postmark for the Brantford-Fort Erie run. They both remained in use from that year, until 1898, using E or W direction indicators.



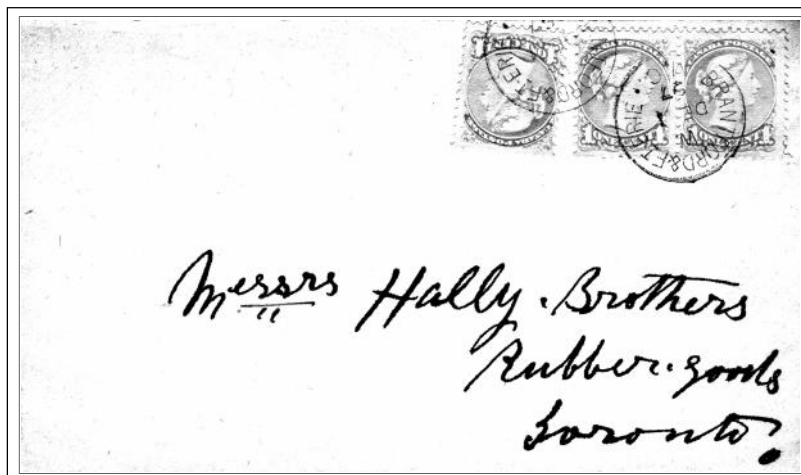
O-80 GODERICH & BRANTFORD / . M. C. . E, FE 2, 97

The receiving backstamp is TORONTO / ONT. 18, FE 2, 97.

## Grand Trunk Railway - Brantford & Fort Erie



O-28  
Proof Struck (2 hammers)  
1894/06/09  
Period 1894-1898  
Indicia E, W



O-28 BRANTFORD & FI - ERIE / . M. C. . W, DE 1, 97

The Toronto receiving backstamp is also dated December 1.

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

Page 1874



## Grand Trunk Railway - Fort Erie & Brantford

The replacement postmark for the Brantford & Fort Erie run in 1898, reversed the terminal names.



O-65

Proof Date unknown

Period 1898-1901

Indicia E, W

## Grand Trunk Railway - Brantford & Goderich

Two hammers of a second cancellation for the run, this time with the terminal names reversed, replaced the first cancellation in 1898. The postmark remained in use until 1906, using E and W direction indicators. No proof strike is recorded for either hammer.



O-29, Hammer I



O-29, Hammer II

BUFFALO AND GODERICH											
		3	1	Miles	STATIONS		2	4			
		Exp.	Exp.				Exp.	Exp.			
		P.M.	A.M.	LEAVE		ARRIVE	P.M.	P.M.			
		+ 5 02	+ 7 00	3.95	{ Buffalo, Exchange St. }		+ 1 00	+ 9 00			
		+ 5 15	+ 7 10	0.00	{ Black Rock..... }		12 45	8 45			
		+ 5 22	+ 7 20	1.08	{ Bridgeburg..... }		12 35	8 40			
		+ 5 25	+ 7 25	1.95	{ Fort Erie (B. & G. Stn.) }		12 30	8 35			
		+ 5 34	+ 7 32	6.62	{ Rosehill..... }		12 20	8 28			
		+ 5 37	+ 7 35	7.62	{ Windmill Point..... }		12 18	8 24			
		+ 5 42	+ 7 40	10.12	{ Ridgeway..... }		12 13	8 20			
		+ 5 46	+ 7 44	12.25	{ Point Abino..... }		12 09	8 15			
		+ 5 50	+ 7 47	14.07	{ Sherks..... }		12 06	8 12			
		+ 5 57	+ 7 52	18.21	{ Lorraine..... }		11 58	8 03			
		6 00	7 57	19.93	{ Pt. Colborne } lve	arr	11 55	8 00			
		+ 6 10	+ 8 06	26.02	{ Wainfleet..... }		11 44	7 45			
		+ 6 18	+ 8 15	30.60	{ Lowbanks..... }		11 35	7 35			
		+ 6 23	+ 8 21	33.02	{ Stromness..... }		11 30	7 29			
		6 38	8 32	38.83	{ Dunnville..... }		11 20	7 18			
		6 55	8 44	46.29	{ Canfield Junc..... }		11 05	7 03			
		+ 9 30	+ 1 05	122.53	{ St. Thomas } lve	arr	+ 6 35	+ 3 15			
		7 00	8 47	47.08	{ Canfield..... }		11 02	7 00			
		+ 7 09	+ 8 55	51.90	{ Cook's..... }		10 53	6 50			
		+ 7 11	+ 8 57	53.30	{ York..... }		10 50	6 48			
		7 25	9 10	59.58	{ Caledonia..... }		10 40	6 40			
		+ 8 10	+ 9 55	75.83	{ Hamilton A. } lve	arr	+ 9 00	+ 5 50			
		7 34	9 20	66.07	{ Middleport..... }		10 28	6 22			
		7 38	9 25	68.51	{ Onondaga..... }		10 24	6 16			
		+ 7 45	+ 9 31	73.18	{ Cainsville..... }		10 16	6 07			
		7 55	9 40	76.43	{ Brantford } lve	arr	10 10	6 01			
		8 15	9 55	84.23	{ Paris } lve	arr	9 55	5 47			
		8 15	10 10	84.23	{ Hamilton A. } lve	arr	9 40	5 40			
		+ 6 55	+ 8 45	112.84	{ Richwood..... }		+ 9 25	+ 5 28			
		3 05	8 25	10 20	{ Drumbo..... }		9 20	5 23			
		3 35	8 32	10 28	{ Bright..... }		9 10	5 10			
		4 05	8 42	10 40	{ Tavistock (B. & G. Stn.) }		8 55	4 55			
		4 55	8 58	10 58	{ Tavistock Junc..... }		8 52	4 50			
		5 00	9 00	11 00	{ Stratford..... }		+ 8 40	+ 4 40			
		+ 5 30	+ 9 15	111.15	{ Stratford } lve	arr	+ 8 40	+ 4 40			
		P.M.	P.M.	A.M.	ARRIVE	LEAVE	A.M.	P.M.			
		73	43	3	STATIONS		2	4			
		WayFt	Mixed	Exp.			Exp.	Exp.			
		A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	LEAVE	ARRIVE	P.M.	P.M.			
		+ 1 00	+ 5 25	+ 8 30	{ Toronto (See pp. 4 and 5) }		+ 12 10	+ 7 40			
		+ 5 50	+ 4 30	+ 9 30	{ Stratford A. } lve	arr	+ 8 35	+ 4 00			
		6 15	4 45	9 40	{ Sebringville..... }		8 26	3 49			
		7 20	5 20	9 53	{ Mitchell..... }		8 12	3 32			
		8 08	5 40	10 02	{ Dublin..... }		8 03	3 23			
		+ 5 46	+ 4 26	10 24	{ St. Columban..... }		7 59	3 17			
		9 20	6 15	10 13	{ Seaforth..... }		7 53	3 11			
		9 50	6 50	10 27	{ Clinton } lve	arr	7 38	2 55			
		10 15	7 05	10 27	{ Clinton Jct..... }		7 36	2 53			
		10 20	7 08	10 29	{ Holmesville..... }		7 30	2 47			
		10 30	7 18	10 35	{ Goderich..... }		+ 7 15	+ 2 30			
		+ 11 00	+ 7 40	+ 10 50	{ Goderich } lve	arr	+ 7 15	+ 2 30			
		A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	ARRIVE	LEAVE	A.M.	P.M.			

G.T.R. Public Timetable - 1902

Until 1873, rail traffic between

Fort Erie and Buffalo was conveyed across the Niagara River by ferry.

When the International Bridge was completed, the railway was re-routed to that location and a community grew there, with a post office called International Bridge, being established in 1877. In 1895, the post office name was changed to **Bridgeburg**.

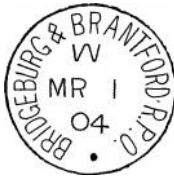
In 1931, the Town of Bridgeburg annexed the Town of Fort Erie and the post office for the expanded community, used the Fort Erie name.

The first R.P.O. cancellation to use the Bridgeburg name instead of Fort Erie appeared in 1901.



## G. T. Ry. - C. N. Rys. - Bridgeburg & Brantford

Use of the first cancellation specifying the eastern terminal of the run as Bridgeburg instead of Fort Erie, is reported from 1901 until 1904. The run was reinstated in 1931 and in 1932, the run designation became Fort Erie North & Brantford, followed by Fort Erie & Brantford, in 1950.



O-30

*Proof Date - unknown*  
*Period - 1901-1904*  
*Indicia - E, W*



O-31

*Proof Date - 1931/09/26*  
*Period - 1931*  
*Indicia - 2, 219*



O-68

*Proof Date - unknown*  
*Period - 1932-1949*  
*Indicia - E, 2, 218, 219*



O-66

*Proof Date - 1950/03/01*  
*Period - 1950-1958*  
*Indicia - PM, 20, 218, 219*

## G. T. Ry. - C. N. Rys. - Bridgeburg & Goderich

The first cancellation for the full run, using the name Bridgeburg, instead of Fort Erie, is reported from 1903 until 1926. Direction indicia E and W were used until 1906, followed by train number / direction indicia T1E, T1W, T2E and T2W afterwards. Occasionally train number indicia 34, 37 and 219 were also used. No proof strikes are known for the cancellation until 1911, although a number of hammers were used.



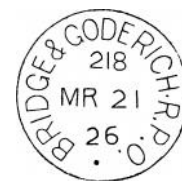
O-34

*Proof Date - 1911/01/21*  
*Period - 1903-1926*  
*Indicia - E, W, T1E, T1W, T2E, T2W*  
*34, 37, 219, N?, WEST?*



O-35

*Proof Date - 1921/02/21*  
*Period - 1921-1925*  
*Indicia - T1E, T2W, 219, N?*



O-36

*Proof Date - 1926/03/21*  
*Period - 1926-1931*  
*Indicia - 2, 28, 37, 218, 219, 220*

## C. N. Rys. - Bridgeburg & London



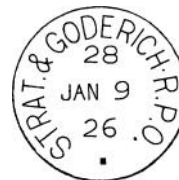
O-36A

*Proof Date - 1931/06/27*  
*Period - 1931*  
*Indicia - 219*

Apparently, this short lived run operated between Bridgeburg and London via Brantford and/or via Stratford.

## G. T. Ry. - C. N. Rys. - Stratford & Goderich

Another short lived run operated for less than a year. However, an extended run operating over the Toronto-Stratford former G. T. Ry. line and the former B. & L. H. Ry line between Stratford and Goderich lasted 38 years and used many hammers.



O-321

*Proof Date - 1926/01/09*  
*Period - 1926*  
*Indicia - 28, 33, 34, 36*



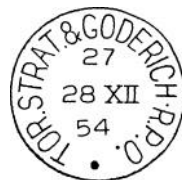
O-410

*Proof Date - 1918/11/02*  
*Period - 1918-1926*  
*Indicia - 22, 29, 36, 220*



O-411

*Proof Dates - 1926/05/15, 1951/02/13*  
*Period - 1926-1956*  
*Indicia - PM, 19, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 50, 220, 634, 635, 636*



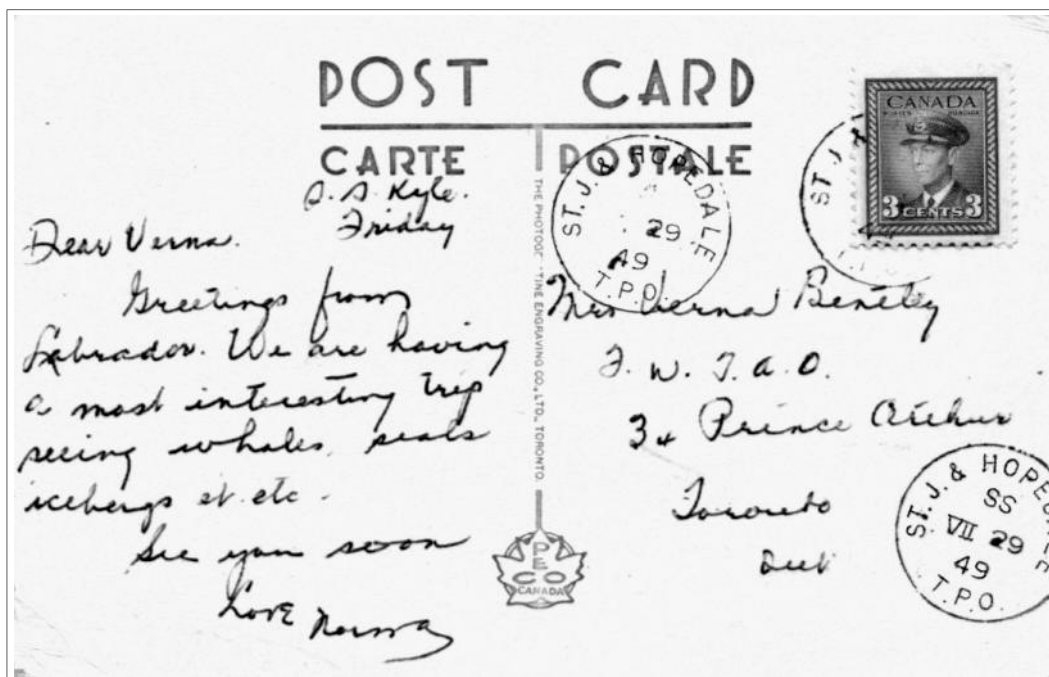
O-412

*Proof Dates - 1931/06/27, 1951/06/13*  
*Period - 1931-1956*  
*Indicia - 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 635*



## The Caboose

**Brian Stalker** has indicated that he will publish an updated list of all new Newfoundland and Labrador reports in the newsletter, in a few months time. In the meantime, we have a few new items to show here.



**Kevin O'Reilly** reports a new early date, July 29, 1949, for **N-93**, on a post card mailed on the S.S. Kyle. The hammer was proof struck only 20 days earlier, on July 9, 1949.



**Ross Gray** found this nice example for **hammer II** of listing **N-54** on a Valentine's card addressed to Carbonear. It is a new **early date** for the hammer and the listing.

Ross also has this great strike of **N-106, hammer B-V** which appears on a favour cover addressed to Goose Bay, Labrador. It is the first report of **train 4** for the hammer.



A third discovery from Ross is a transit backstamp on the back of a registered cover from Flat Bay, Newfoundland to Toronto. This is a new late date for **hammer A-II** of **N-106**.

## Secretary-Treasurer's Report from Chris Anstead

**James O'Connor**, 1373 Woodbine Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4C 4G4 joins our group. Welcome aboard!

**Wayne R. Curtis** has moved to 1187 Queen's Avenue, Oakville, ON, L6H 2B7.

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