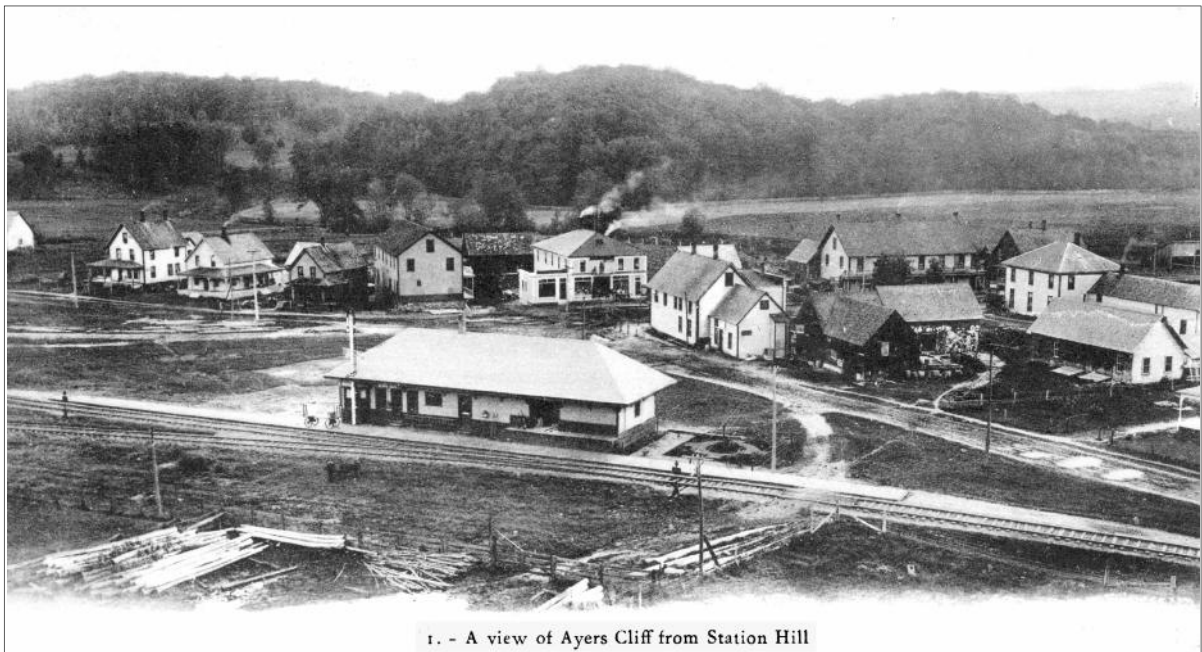


B. & M. Ry. Station—Beebe Junction, Que.

Boston & Maine Railroad Station at Beebe Junction, Quebec circa 1910

In this issue, we look at the R.P.O. service on two railways in south eastern Quebec, the **Massawippi Valley Railway** and the **Hereford Railway** and the relationship between the two and the **Quebec Central Railway**.

Thanks to Brian Stalker, we are able to update our study of the **St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad** and **Ontario, Simcoe & Huron Railroad** postmarks from the previous issue.

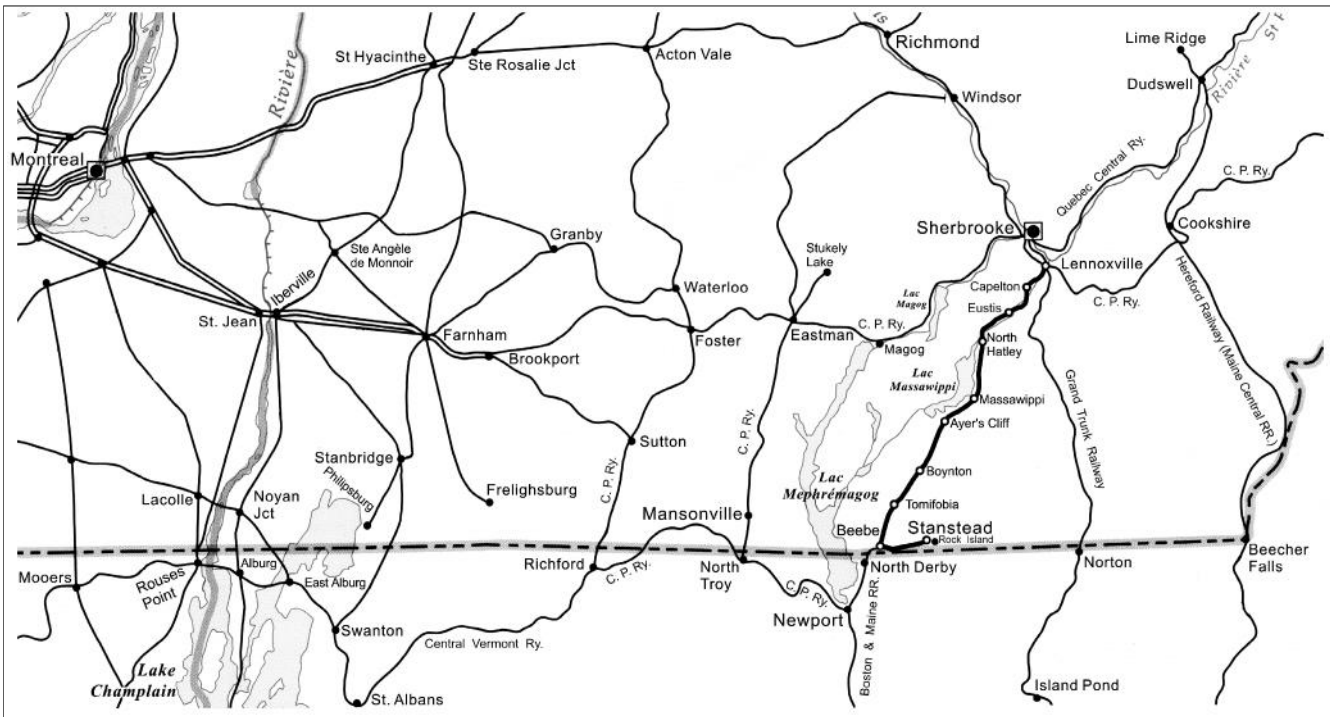


1. - A view of Ayers Cliff from Station Hill

Boston & Maine Railroad Station at Ayer's Cliff, Quebec circa 1910

Massawippi Valley Railway

The **Massawippi Valley Railway** opened for traffic on July 1, 1870. It ran from Lennoxville, located on the Montreal-Island Pond line of the Grand Trunk Railway, to Beebe and Stanstead. At Beebe, it connected with the Connecticut & Passumpsic Rivers Railroad, which leased the Massawippi Valley Railway, immediately after completion. In 1887, the leases for both lines were assumed by the **Boston & Maine Railroad**.



Massawippi Railway and other Railways in Southern Quebec circa 1917

Two similar hammers of the first postmark for the Massawippi Railway were proof struck on August 2, 1886.

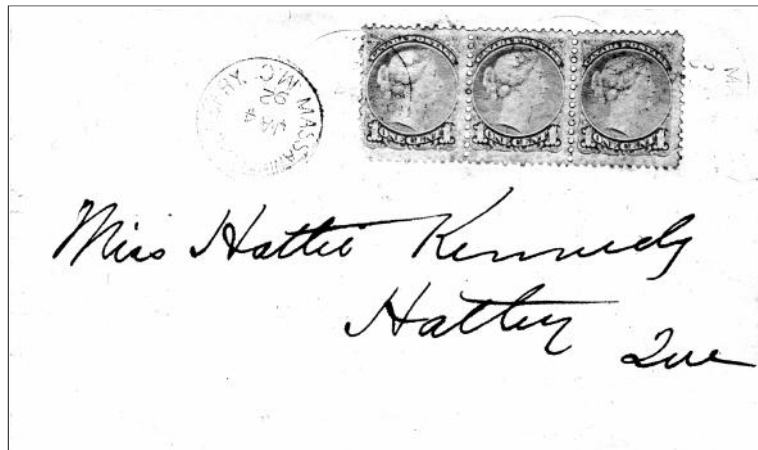
*RR-101, Hammer I
Proof - 1886/08/02
Only date - 1892/01/04
Indicia - blank*



*RR-101, Hammer II
Proof - 1886/08/02
No reported use*



RR-101, Hammer I



The HATLEY, QUE. receiving backstamp is dated January 23, 92, suggesting that the day portion of the R.P.O. cancellation may be incorrect.

Boston & Maine Railroad - Sherbrooke & Stanstead

The next two cancellations for the R.P.O. service on the "line", named Sherbrooke as the northern terminal of the run, indicating that running rights had been obtained over the **Grand Trunk Railway** between Lennoxville and Sherbrooke.

Q-290
 Proof - 1892/10/19
 ERD - 1896/01/18
 LRD - 1911/03/14
 Indicia - N, NO, S



Q-301
 Proof - 1911/03/18
 ERD - 1911/04/07
 LRD - 1917/05/14
 Indicia - N, S

.....

This registered cover originated at Boston on July 21, 1909 and was addressed to Griffin, Quebec, which is located just north of Beebe Junction. It arrived in Montreal on July 23. It travelled on the south-bound R.P.O. from Sherbrooke and the clerk backstamped it in red with his private handstamp. The Griffin receiving cancellation is date July 24.



Q-295
 ERD - 1909/07/24
 LRD - 1909/09/02
 Indicium - S



The use of this recently discovered clerk handstamp found as a transit backstamp is described in detail on page 2002

.....

The **Quebec Central Railway** had relied on the **Hereford Railway**, operated by the **Maine Central Railroad**, to connect with American railways. This connection was lost on October 31, 1925, when the Hereford Railway ceased operation. The Quebec Central regained an American connection by leasing the Massawippi Railway on June 1, 1926.

This postmark was used during both **Boston & Maine Railroad** and **Quebec Central Railway** operation of the line. Even though hammer I was badly worn by the end of its use, the second hammer never replaced it.

Q-293, Hammer I
 Proof - unknown
 ERD - 1918/06/10
 LRD - 1929/06/17
 Indicia - N, NO, S, 59



Q-293, Hammer II
 Proof - 1922/09/29
 No reported use

Boston & Maine Railroad - Quebec Central Railway Sherbrooke & Stanstead

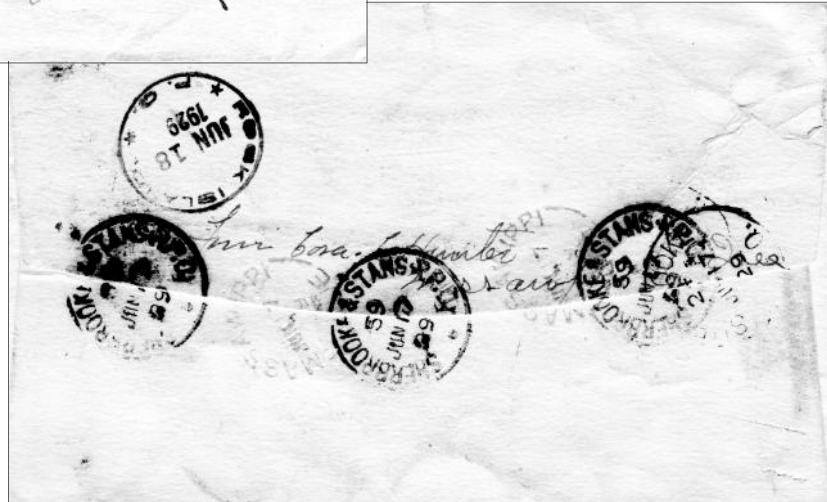
This registered cover originated at Massawippi, Quebec on June 17, 1929. It was transferred to the northbound Sherbrooke & Stanstead R.P.O. on train 59, the same day and was received at Sherbrooke, with a transit backstamp dated June 17. The following day, it probably travelled south on the R.P.O. in a closed bag, to Rock Island, Quebec, where it was backstamped on arrival.



Here we have the latest reported use of Q-293. Later the same year, the run was extended further south to Newport and Q-178 was placed in use.



Q-293, Hammer I



Quebec Central Railway - Newport & Sherbrooke

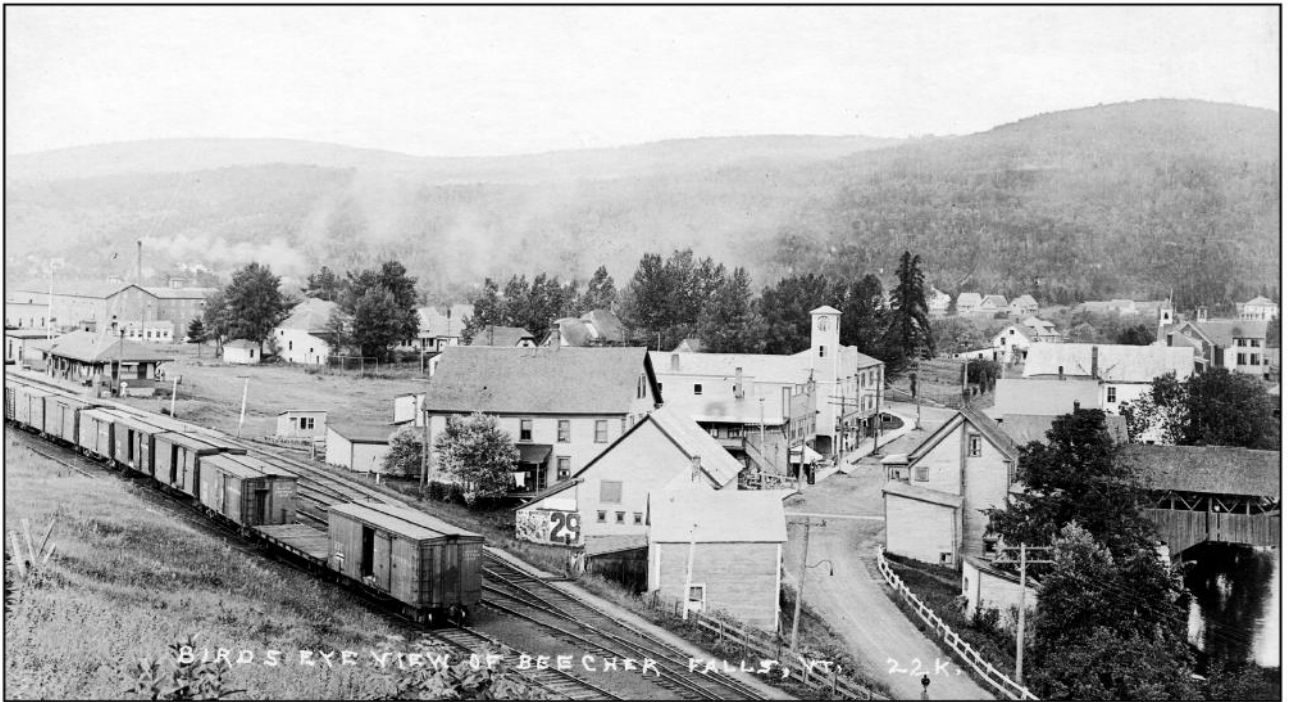
On June 1, 1926, the **Quebec Central Railway** leased the lines between Lennoxville, Quebec and Newport, Vermont, from the **Boston & Maine Railroad** and obtained running rights over 2.6 miles of **Canadian National Railways** track between Sherbrooke & Lennoxville, in order to connect with the rest of the Q.C.Ry. (*The Quebec Central Railway had been leased by the **Canadian Pacific Railway** on January 1, 1913, for 99 years. Operations of the two railways remained separate however.*) The C.P.Ry. purchased the Mississippi Valley Railway in 1946 and leased it back to the Quebec Central Railway.

The extended R.P.O. run, with Newport, Vermont replacing Stanstead, Quebec as the southern terminal, began in 1929 and ended in 1941.



Q-178
 Proof - 1929/11/09
 ERD - 1929/11/22
 LRD - 1941/02/20
 Indicia - blank, 1, 6, 44, 51, 59

Hereford Railway



Beecher Falls, Vermont circa 1915, showing the station on the left.

Railway History

The **Hereford Railway** was chartered in 1887, to build from Beecher Falls, Vermont to a junction with the **Quebec Central Railway** in Dudswell Township, Quebec, in order to tap the forest resources of Eaton, Clifton and Hereford Townships. It would also provide the Quebec Central with another link to the American railway system through the Upper Coos Railroad, which had its terminus at Beecher Falls. The 49 mile long line was opened for traffic between Dudswell Junction on the Q.C.Ry. and Beecher Falls in 1889.

In 1888, the Dominion Lime Company built a 4.2 mile long railway connection between its quarries and kilns at Lime Ridge in Dudswell Township and the Quebec Central Railway line at Dudswell Junction.

The **Maine Central Railroad** leased both the Hereford Railway and the Dominion Lime spur in 1890. The natural resources along the line were rapidly depleted, resulting in the Maine Central abandoning service on October 31, 1925.

Railway Post Offices

It is likely that closed bag mail was carried on the railway from early in its history. On April 23, 1908 the first railway post office postmark to be used on the railway was proof struck. It read, "BEECHERS FALLS & DUDSWELL JNC. R.P.O. / .". Although the Beecher Falls, Vermont terminal name was misspelled with an added "S", the hammer was used from 1908 until 1918, with "E" or "W" direction indicator slugs, in spite of the the line running north and south.

On April 26, 1918, a new railway post office postmark was proof struck for an extended run from the northern terminal of the line, Lime Ridge, Quebec. It read, "BEECHERS FALLS & LIME RIDGE R.P.O. / .", again misspelling Beecher Falls. The proof strike shows an "AM" indicium, which is not known to have been used. Again "E" and "W" direction indicia were used, possibly the slugs from the first postmark. This cancellation lasted until the end of service in 1925.

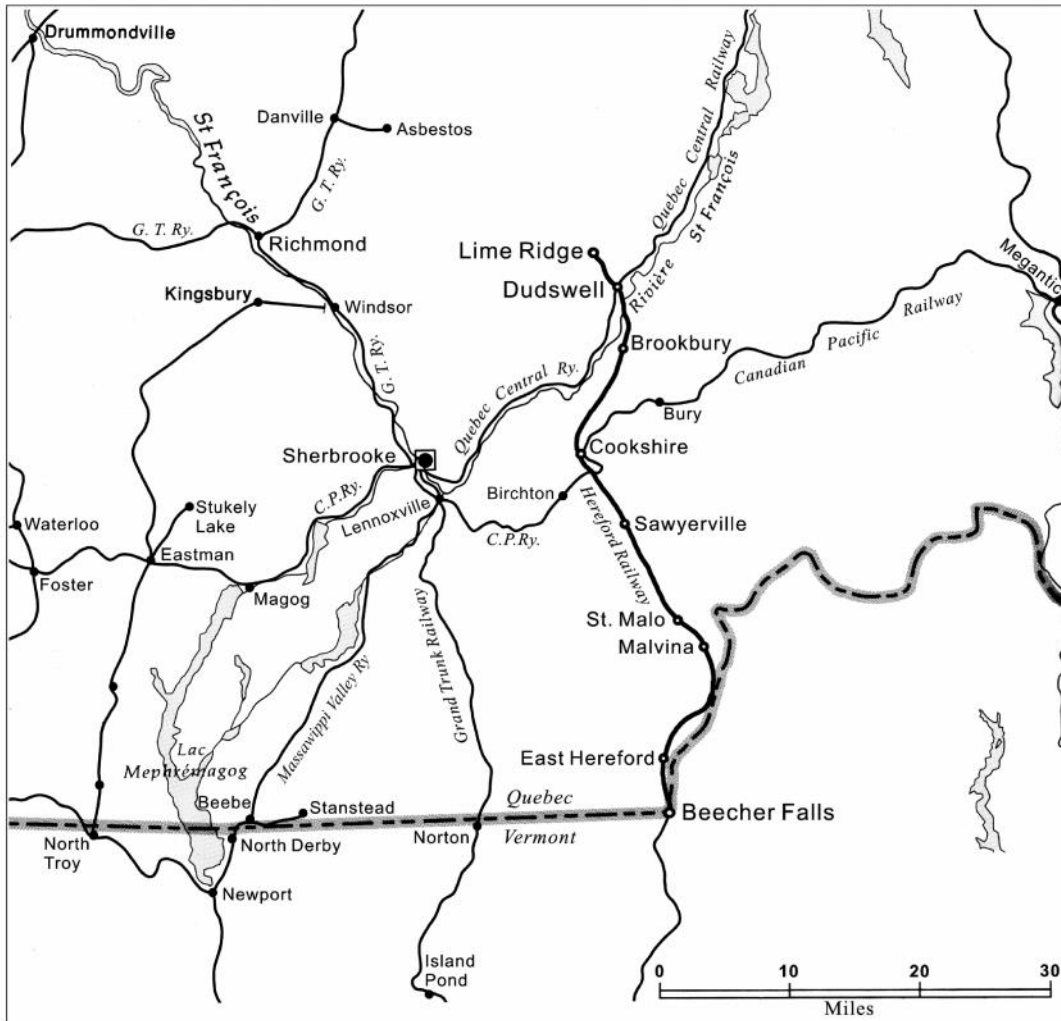


Q-9
Proof - 1908/04/23
ERD - 1908/06/03
LRD - 1918/05/14
Indicia - E, W

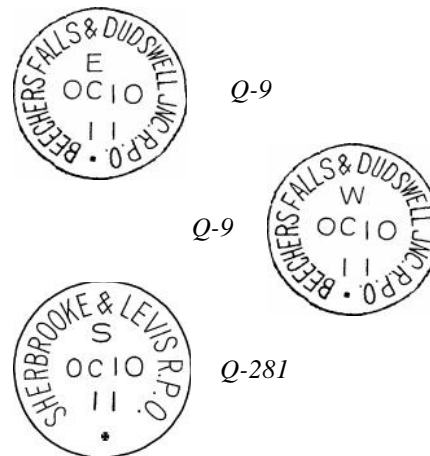
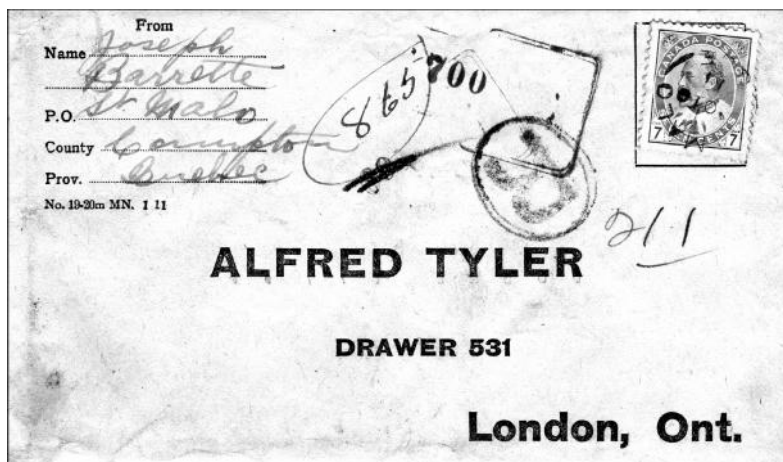


Q-10
Proof - 1918/04/26
ERD - 1918/08/06
LRD - 1925/04/25*
Indicia - E, W
(*C. Anstead)

Hereford Railway - Beecher Falls & Dudswell Junction

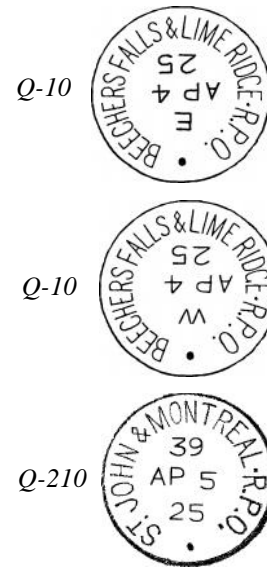


Map showing the Hereford Railway and other area railways in 1917



This registered cover originated at St. Malo, Quebec on October 10, 1911, where it was transferred on board the southbound Dudswell Junction to Beecher Falls train and was backstamped, BEECHERS FALLS & DUDSWELL JNC. R.P.O. / . (direction indicator "E"). It returned on the northbound run the same day and was cancelled by the R.P.O. clerk again (direction indicator "W"). At Dudswell Junction, where the Hereford Railway met the Quebec Central Railway, the letter was transferred to the southbound SHERBROOKE & LEVIS R.P.O. / . and backstamped, before being put into a bag for Montreal. At Sherbrooke, this bag was probably put on a westbound C.P.Ry. mail car. The Montreal transit stamp is dated October 11, at 10 AM and the London receiving stamp is dated October 12 at 1 PM.

Hereford Railway - Beecher Falls & Lime Ridge



This registered cover addressed to Birchtou, Quebec, originated at St. Malo, Quebec on Saturday, April 4, 1925 and was transferred on board the R.P.O. car of the southbound train to Beecher Falls, Vermont. The mail clerk backstamped it with his hammer reading, BEECHERS FALLS & LIME RIDGE R.P.O. / ., (*direction indicator "E"*). The letter remained on the mail car until it returned north and the clerk again backstamped the cover, having replaced the direction slug with "W". At Cookshire, where the Hereford Railway crossed the Canadian Pacific Railway main line between Megantic and Sherbrooke, the cover was sent to the post office and was backstamped, April 4. On Sunday, it was transferred to westbound C.P.Ry. train #39 and backstamped on the the St. John & Montreal R.P.O.. Birchtou was the next station, less than 5 miles west of Cookshire and with so little time, the clerks worked quickly to sort and dispatch the letter at Birchtou. The Birchtou receiving backstamp is dated (Monday) April 6.



Dudswell Junction, Quebec circa 1915

Hammer Study Updates

St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad



Brian Stalker reports this example of **RR-142, hammer I** dated JY 21, 1855, 1. It is now the **LRD** for the hammer.

RR-142, Hmr I

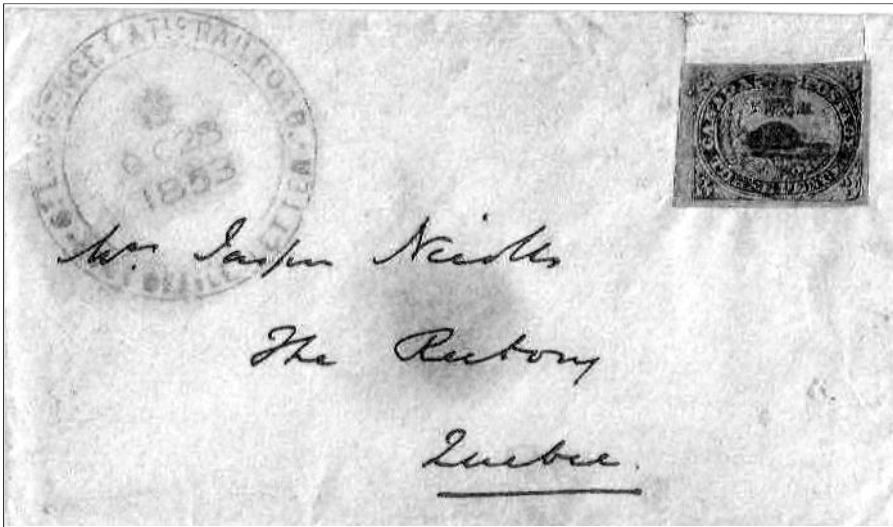


RR-142, Hmr II



RR-142, Hmr II

Brian reports an example of **RR-142, hammer II** dated JU 27, 1855, 1, with the short “L” in ATLANTIC. It is now the **LRD** for the hammer. He also reports the **ERD** for **hammer II**, dated JU 26, 1854, 1, noting that the “L” in ATLANTIC was full height at that time.



Brian also shares his **RR-143** cover from the Nicolls correspondence, dated October 28, 1853. He notes that the stamp has been cut out and re-inserted and may not belong.

Ontario Simcoe & Huron Railroad

Brian Stalker reports that he has a single line, partial date of **JY 1** for **RR-114, Hammer I**, ONTARIO SIMCOE & HURON RAILROAD. Unfortunately there is no indication of the year date on the “PAID 6” cover to the U.S.A.

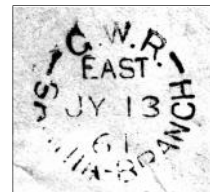
Brian also has **RR-114, Hammer II** with a two line date of **SP / 10 (1857)** on a cover which has other cancellations which show a year date.

New Reports



Ross Gray reports a new late date for **hammer VI** of **RR-80**, on a post card addressed to Centre East Pubnico, Yarmouth County. The August 9, 1928 date replaces the previous LRD of December 17, 1926.

The first report of direction indicium **EAST** for **hammer II** of **RR-75**, G.W.R. / SARNIA-BRANCH, EAST, JY 13, 61 (See page 1929) is found as a transit stamp on a stampless cover from Wyoming, C.W. to St. Catharines, Ontario



A new early date for **hammer III** of **MA-57**, CONNERS & RIVIERE DU LOUP-R.P.O. / . , 2, 3 DE, 19, is reported used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Edmunston, NB to Chicago, where it arrived on December 6.

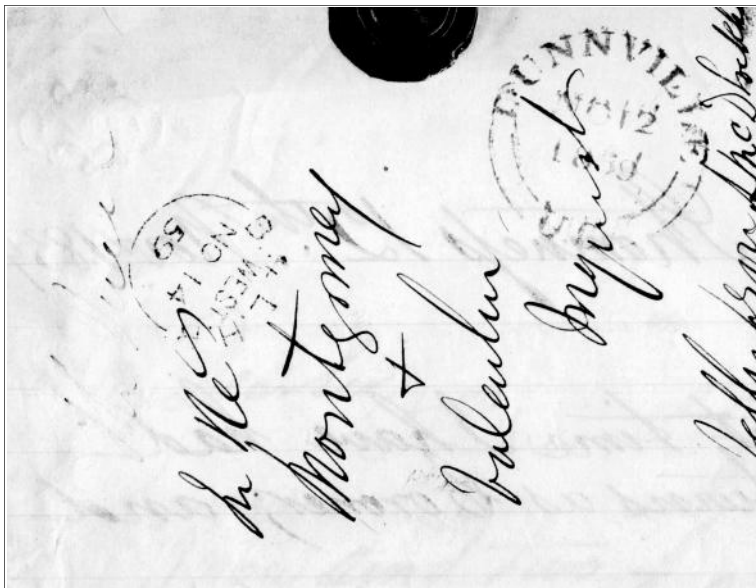
New Reports



Ross Gray reports this new **early date** for **MA-249**, TRURO & PICTOU R.R. / = , EAST, DE 5, 73 on this 3¢ Small Queen cover to Sydney, C.B. The Sydney receiving backstamp is dated December 8.



Ross also found this strike of **MA-23**, **hammer VIII**, CAMP & LEVIS EXPRESS R.P.O. / . , 20, JU 17, 18, on a cover to Riviere du Loup. The previously unreported train number indicator is 20, although the normal train numbers during this time were 199 and 200. It is likely that the clerk misplaced his 200 slug and substituted the 20.



We are grateful to **Bob Livingstone** for sharing this new **early date** for **RR-5**, B. L. H. & R , WEST, NO 14 , 59. The postmark is on half of a folded document along with a Dunnville postmark and appears to be **hammer I**. There are no proof records for this listing but three hammers were ordered from Berri on September 9, 1859.

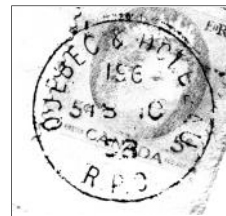


Ross Gray has found a new **early date** for **W-74C**, MED. HAT & NELSON R.P.O. / P. C. MORRISON, M.C., Tr. 513 AUG 10, '13, as a violet transit backstamp on a registered cover from Edmonton to San Jose, California.

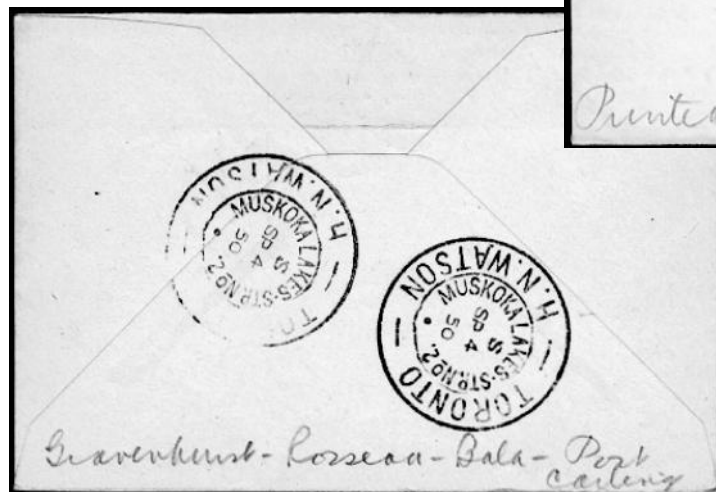
New Reports



Ross Gray reports the first example of **hammer I** (see page 2001) of **Q-203B** QUEBEC & DOLBEAU / R.P.O., 196, 19 XI, 58 on a cover from St. Felicien, Quebec to Toronto. This hammer was proof struck on October 6, 1958.



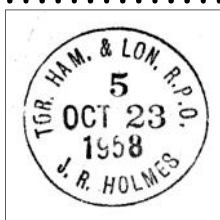
Ross also found this example of **hammer II** of **Q-203B** on the same correspondence, dated November 18, 1958 on train 196. This is a **new early date** for both the listing and the hammer.



Observed in a recent mail sale catalogue, is this interesting, previously unreported variety of listing **S-245, hammer 2** on a philatelic cover. The postal clerk has attached a hub with his name, **H. N. Watson**, to the steel cancellation hammer and



backstamped the cover. This clerk is known to have done the same thing, probably intended for only facing slip use, when he worked on the Port Hope & Toronto R.P.O. in 1946. It is shown in this illustration of **O-294A** from Chris Anstead's collection, which is on a small piece from an envelope or facing slip.



Doug Lingard reports this new late date for **O-350Cb**, TOR. HAM. & LON. R.P.O. / J. R. HOLMES, struck in black on a facing slip. The previous LRD was 1957/10/19. The ERD is 1945/12/13. Only train 5 is known.

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 -	Phone 613 268-2008 e-mail acropolis@superaje.com