

This issue features an article by **Brian Stalker** titled, "The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861". The article originally appeared in "Maple Leaves", the journal of the CPSGB and we are grateful to editor Graham Searle for allowing us to share it here.

There is also a look at the history and cancellations of the Matapedia - Gaspé R.P.O. service, including a new hammer study for QC-125.

We are pleased to have new reports from **Mike Braconnier, Jack Brandt, Vince Chermishnok, Neil Cooper, Richard Cromwell, Hugo Deshayé, Jim Graham, Ross Gray, Murray Smith and Brian Stalker.**

Sean Weatherup, our Secretary-Treasurer, Newsletter Mailer, also submits his reports.



This registered cover addressed to Hawkesbury, Ontario, originated at Lexington, Virginia on February 10, 1941 and entered Canada at Niagara Falls, where it was put on board **ON-728.02**, TORONTO & NIAGARA FALLS / M.C. , 107, FE 11, 41. In Toronto, it was transferred to **ON-785**, TOR. & OTT. C.P.R. · R.P.O. / N^o 3 , 34, FE 11, 41 . At Ottawa, it was transferred to **QC-210**, MONT. & NORTH BAY R.P.O. / . / J. M. EDWARDS, 502, FE 12, 41.

This is only the **second report** and now the **ERD** for **QC-210**, which is hammer **QC-209.06** with the clerk name attached to the rim. Hammer QC-209.06 is only known used with the attachment. There is no Hawkesbury arrival stamp.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

Brian Stalker *FCPS, OTB*

Introductory Note: throughout this article Canadian Railway Postmarks are given listing numbers used by Ross Gray in his "Catalogue of Canadian Railway Cancellations" published by BNAPS.

1853: In The Beginning

In the early 1840s an ice-free outlet was sought for Montreal's winter trade and a rail link to Portland, Maine, was proposed. Two linked companies were incorporated in 1845 - the **St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad** (Canadian) would build a line to the international boundary, and the **Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad** (American) would build from the boundary to Portland. They connected at Island Pond, Vermont, a few miles south of the international border. Both lines were built to 5 ft 6 inch gauge.

Pending completion of a bridge over the St. Lawrence, Montreal's railhead was at Longueuil on the south bank and ferries were used to carry passengers, mail and goods across the river while navigation was open; sleighs were used during the winter.

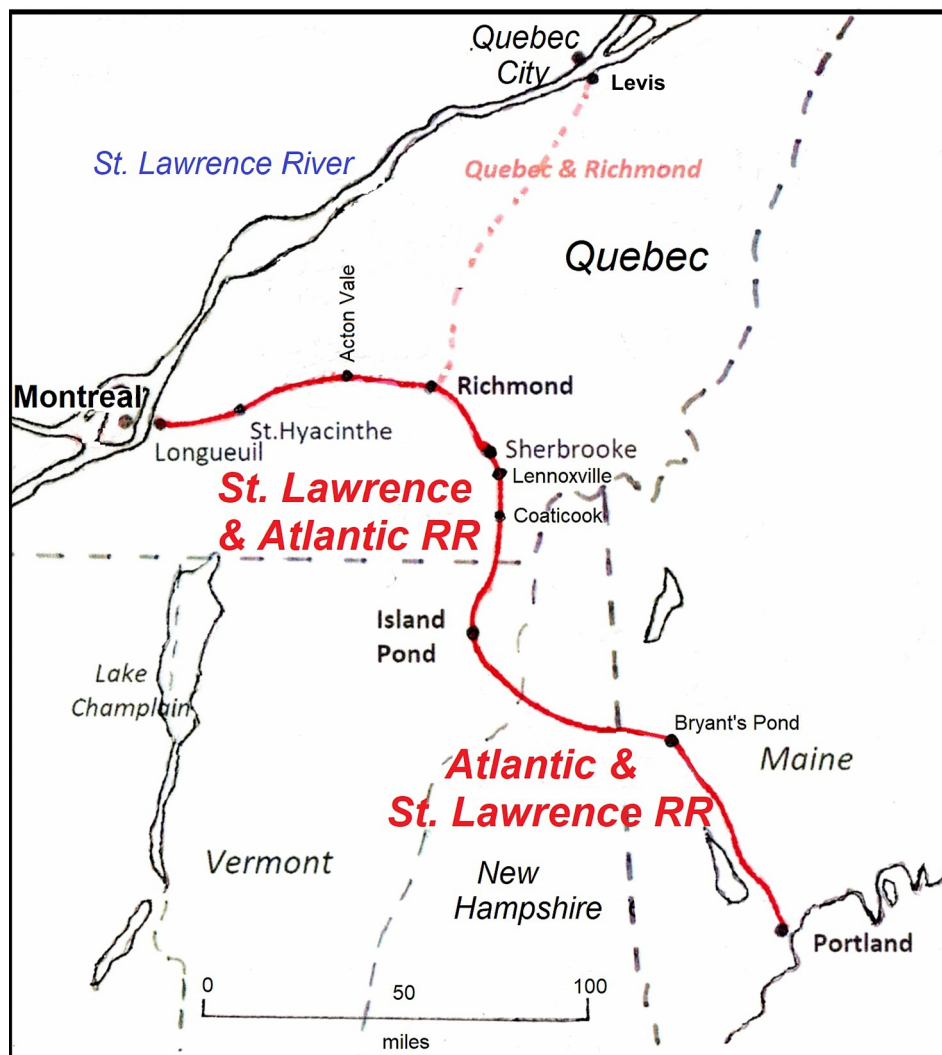


Figure 1: Route of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads between Montreal and Portland.

Although the Longueuil to St. Hyacinthe section opened in December 1848, the remaining 113 miles to Island Pond, completing the 292 mile link between Montreal and Portland, was not in operation until July 1853, by which time the **Grand Trunk Railway of Canada** (headquartered in London, England) had leased both lines for 999 years.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

MONTREAL TO PORTLAND



THE ST. LAWRENCE & ATLANTIC and the ATLANTIC & ST. LAWRENCE RAILWAYS being now completed and connected together at Island Pond, these Sections of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada will be open for public traffic on and after **Monday, the 18th July, instant.**

A DAILY MAIL TRAIN WILL
 Leave Montreal at 3, p.m.; arrive at Sherbrooke at 7:30, p.m.; leave Sherbrooke at 6:30, a.m.; arrive at Portland at 3, p.m.
 Leave Portland at 1:15, p.m.; arrive at Sherbrooke at 8:30, p.m.; leave Sherbrooke at 6:30, a.m.; arrive at Montreal at 11, a.m.

A DAILY EXPRESS TRAIN WILL
 Leave Montreal, at 7, a.m.; arrive at Island Pond at 12:30 Noon; arrive at Portland at 6:30, p.m.
 Leave Portland at 7, a.m.; arrive at Island Pond at 1, p.m. arrive at Montreal at 6:30, p.m.

Fare Between Montreal and Portland, SIX DOLLARS.
 Passengers by the Express Train from Montreal will reach Portland in time for the Steamer, landing at Boston early the following morning—Steamboat Fare, Portland to Boston 3s. 9d.
 Passengers by the Mail Train from Montreal will reach Portland in time to take the Boston Train at 3:30 p.m., arriving at Boston at 8, p.m.

Through Fare by Rail, Montreal to Boston, SEVEN DOLLARS.
 The Steamer *L'Aigle* plies to and from the Jacques Cartier Basin, in connection with all Passenger Trains.

C. WEBSTER,
Superintendent.
 Montreal, July 1853. 1047-4f

Figure 2: Timetable from 18th July 1853

the train to collect and sort mail in transit, manning the travelling railway post office (mail car). Mail conductors had been employed on the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario steamboats contracted to carry mail between Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto and Hamilton for some years so the 'Conductor' title continued that tradition.

On 12th August 1853 two date-stamps for use on the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad mail cars were ordered from John Francis of Clerkenwell, London, and pending their arrival a locally produced date-stamp was used:-



RY-169



Figure 3: Cover to Mrs Jasper Nicholls, probably from Lennoxville, via railroad to Montreal (OC 28 1853) en-route to Quebec (OCT 29 1853).

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

This temporary date-stamp is known in use from OC 22, 1853 to JA 28, 1854, generally in red ink. Fewer than ten strikes are recorded and at least six are on letters to Mrs Jasper Nicolls (nee Harriet Mary Mountain) who was the daughter of George Jehosaphat Mountain and known as the Lord Bishop of Montreal, Principal of McGill University and founder of Bishop's College in Lennoxville ⁽³⁾. To date, only a single date-stamp has been identified and it has been suggested that it might have been used at Montreal post office rather than on the two mail trains.

Correspondence⁽⁴⁾ dated Wednesday 10th August 1853 from E S Freer, Post Office Inspector in Montreal, informed the Hon James Morris, Postmaster General in Quebec that the existing mail conductor service between Montreal and Sherbrooke was to be supplemented by another between Sherbrooke and Island Pond. Furthermore that Mail Conductor Drysdale would be replaced by Mr Lapiseraye – *“Mr LaRocque and myself are of opinion that on a service so peculiar, which has to be performed at night, it will be absolutely necessary that for the first time he should be accompanied by Drysdale to afford him a practical insight into the routine, and this will therefore not leave the latter disposable for his new duties until Friday afternoon, by which time it is presumed an arrangement will be made with the Railroad Company for the Conductor and putting on the Post Office Cars, which Mr. Webster (Secretary to the St. Lawrence & Atlantic RR) informed me were ready.”*

Three aspects of the above are of note:-

- (i) The reference to the service being performed at night is perplexing since neither of the mail trains operated over-night (see below for running schedules, slightly but not materially, different to those effective from 18th July).
- (ii) It seems likely that Mr Lapiseraye is to replace Mr Drysdale on the Montreal – Sherbrooke run and Mr Drysdale is to work between Sherbrooke and Island Pond.
- (iii) The Canadian “Post Office Cars”, probably composite baggage / mail cars, the first to be seen on the North American continent, would be ready to commence service on Friday 12th August (it should be noted that although American railways carried mail, it was not until 1864 that sorting mail in transit began in the USA).

The letter of 10th August goes on to explain that both mail conductors were to be headquartered at Sherbrooke and that the schedule and stopping places for the **Daily Mail Train** in Canada were to be as follows:

Sherbrooke to Montreal and return calling at St. Hilaire, Richmond, St. Hyacinthe, Windsor Mills, Soraba and Acton Vale (192 miles distance to and from):-

Departing Sherbrooke at 6 am, arriving at Montreal at 10.30 am, and
Returning from Montreal at 3.20 pm to arrive at Sherbrooke at 8 pm.

Sherbrooke to Island Pond and return calling at Lennoxville, Coaticook, Waterville and Compton (94 miles distance to and from):-

Departing Sherbrooke at 6.30 am, arriving at Island Pond at 9 am, and
Returning from Island Pond at 6 pm to arrive at Sherbrooke at 8.30 pm.

Two weeks later, another letter⁽⁵⁾ dated 26th August from Postal Inspector Freer to the Postmaster General reported that he had *“been over the Montreal and Portland Railroad with the object of completing the arrangements within our own frontier, and securing a more regular exchange of mails between the two Cities ... the thro' mails from Montreal to Portland have been very irregular, and those coming this way have invariably taken two days, whilst one should have sufficed.”*

Freer goes on to explain the rationale for using the slower, stopping train for carrying mail within Canada but found that the American postal service was sending their northbound mail and the Canadian mail from Portland by the early morning Express and on *“reaching Island Pond at 12.45 pm – there delivering the Sherbrooke and Montreal Bags to our conductor, they remained in his possession until 7.30 pm, reaching Sherbrooke at 10 pm and Montreal next day at 10.30 am.”*

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

We do not know if the Canadian and American companies shared rolling stock and allowed continuity of running through Island Pond or were passengers, their baggage and mail bags transferred across platforms at Island Pond? Whatever, it seems likely that the Canadian Mail / baggage cars would have been decoupled there rather than continuing to Portland.

The obvious remedy to getting the mails to Montreal the same evening, was to carry them on the north-bound express leaving Island Pond at 1.15pm. Unfortunately the express train did not include a mail car or mail conductor, so arrangements were made for the express baggage master to take charge of the incoming mails *“on condition that the Baggage Master of the Train shall be remunerated for taking charge of the mails from Island Pond and carrying it up from the Steamer every evening to the Montreal office. I should propose, as there may be occasionally other Bags to bring in, an allowance of 1/3 per day, equal to 7/6 per week, be granted for this extra service – there being two Baggage Masters running alternate days on the Express trains, it will be 3/9 per week to each, with which allowance I think they will be satisfied.”*

The practice of having the Express Baggage Masters in charge of the incoming mails appears to have been adopted for several years and Canadian Post Office accounts for 1856 included:-

Wages for attending to the delivery of the Mail Bags by Express Train,
at the Offices between Longueuil and Island Pond during the year 1856:

C. Stewart	£3 0 0
V. St. Denis	£3 0 0
D. Turnbull	£3 0 0

Freer's letter of 26th August also makes mention of having "Receiving Boxes" (Pillar Boxes) at railway stations and the need for transporting the mail between the stations (Depots) and the local post offices – *“I had also requested that at each station Receiving Boxes with locks should be put up for letters to be taken out by the conductors. This accommodation not having been provided at some of the Depots, and at others imperfectly attended to, I must request authority to get proper ones made of a uniform shape all ready to be screwed up, on which the Department Pad Locks could be put.*

Several of the Post Offices along this Railroad being at some little distance from the Depot and the Company having no means for the conveyance of the Bags thereto, I would suggest it as necessary for the success of our postal Railroad operations, that a general authority should be extended to me to make the best terms practicable for the completion of these minor but indispensable arrangements. Sherbrooke, Lennoxville, Waterville, Compton Centre and Coaticook will all require special messengers between the Stations and the Post Offices, in the same manner as St. Hyacinthe, Richmond and Melbourne.

Freer was given authority to implement all of his proposals, thus integrating the use of railway mail cars within the general postal service in Canada and establishing a precedent which eventually led to the passing of **The Railway Postal Service Act** in 1863. The Railway Mail Service Branch grew to employ 1,385 railway mail clerks in 1950, after which road and air transportation rapidly gained momentum leading to the closure of the Railway Mail Service in 1971.

1854-61:

By February 1854 the two steel date-stamps ordered from John Francis of London, England, on 12th August 1853 had arrived. They were in concurrent use from February 1854 to August 1855, usually with indicium '1', but occasionally blank, and two strikes of RY-170.02 are known with indicium '2' in June 1855.

RY-170.01



RY-170.02

Minor punctuation differences differentiate the two hammers:-

RY-170.01 has a mid-height dot between 'ST · L' and a short dash 'C – R' whereas

RY-170.02 has no mid-height dot 'ST L' and a mid-height dot 'C · R'

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861



**Figure 4: Cover from Grand Falls N.H. to Granby, P.Q.,
via Railroad (RY-170.02) and St. Hyacinthe.**

Another cover to Mrs Nicholls shows the elusive indicium '2' on RY-170.02:-



**Figure 5: Cover to Mrs Jasper Nicholls, probably from Lennoxville,
via railroad to Montreal en-route to Quebec.**

By 1855 the term **Mail Conductor** was being phased out and replaced by that of **Railway Mail Clerk**. and we see the introduction of date-stamps and hand-stamps reflecting the **Grand Trunk Railway** ownership of both railroads. The following cover shows that some mail from Montreal for transit by train was pre-sorted into closed bags to be dropped off at their respective destinations, both in Canada and in America.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861
By Grand Trunk Railway



**Figure 6: MONTREAL PAID OC 3 1855, charged 6^D to private account
of Young, James & Company, to Bryant's Pond, Maine**

1855 saw the introduction of date-stamps with defined postal runs, in this case **Montreal & Island Pond**, with the railway company name, also with direction indicia and alphabetic letters (A, B, C, D for instance) – the latter possibly being associated with individual mail clerks.



QC-166.05



**Figure 7: Cover posted at railway station, collected by RPO mail clerk on “Down” train
between Montreal & Island Pond and dropped off at St. Hyacinthe for St. Césaire.**

During the period 1855-1861 there were five similar date-stamps for the Montreal & Island Pond GTR route with numbers 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 at the base. Generally mail went UP (north-bound) towards Montreal and DOWN (south-bound) towards Portland. Almost all RPO strikes were in black ink but blue ink is known early in 1857.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

On Feb. 14th 1861 the Post Office Department ordered a new date-stamp from D.G. Berri of London, England for the 'Montreal & Island Pond Section of the G.T.R. - besides moveable dates we require moveable (indicia?) down and up'. Unusually, this date-stamp did not have identifying letters and the earliest recorded date for this date-stamp is May 21st 1861 - it was in use for slightly under a year.



Figure 8: From Acton Vale, mid-way between St. Hyacinthe and Richmond on the GTR line, to Nashua, New Hampshire.

The Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railway.

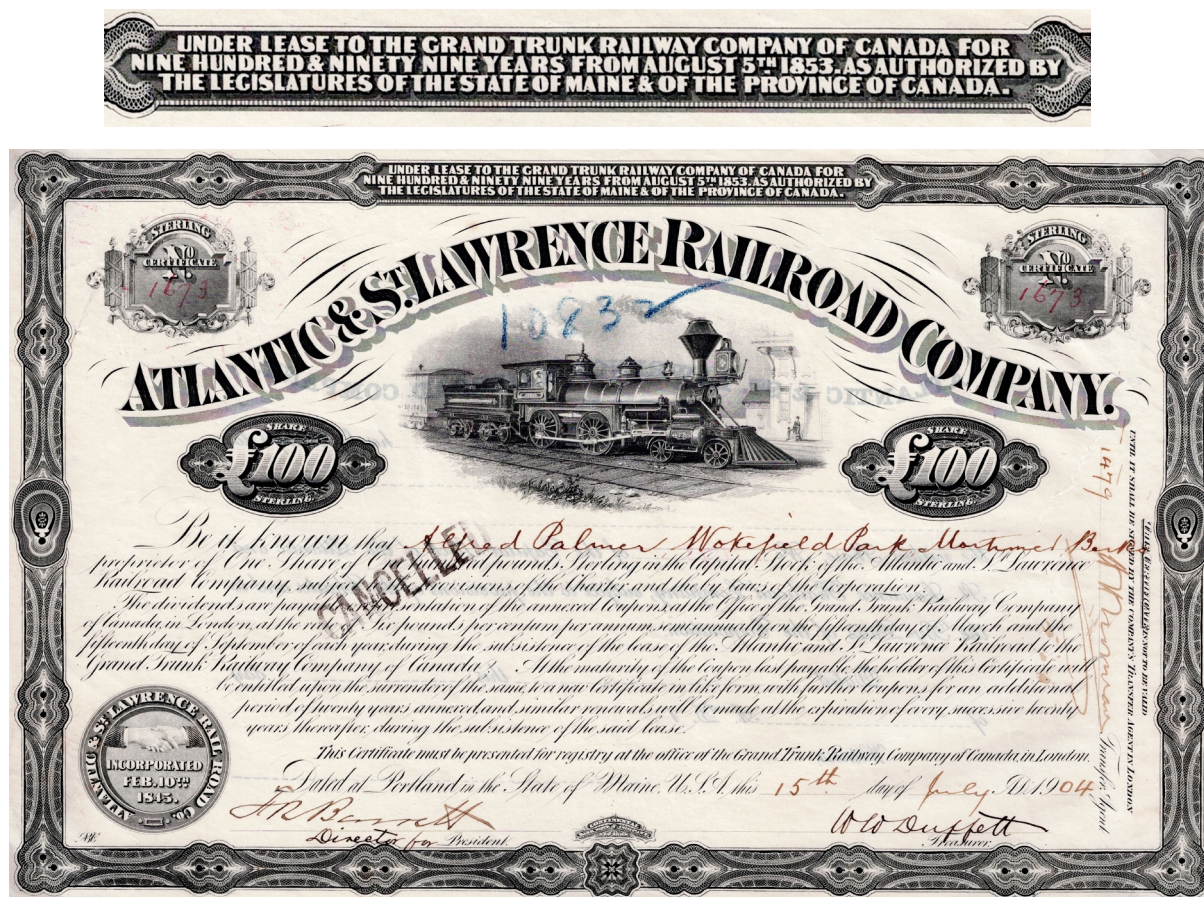
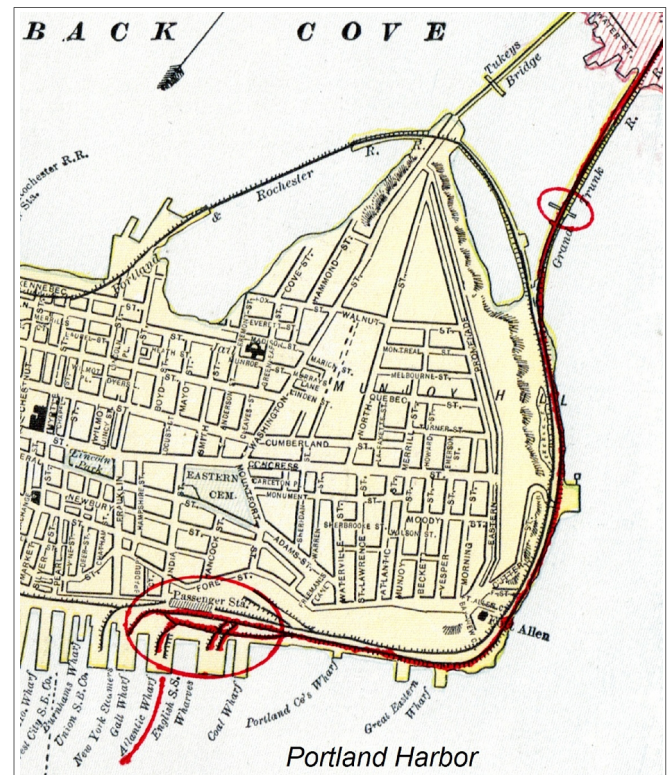


Figure 9: Share Certificate showing 999 year lease to the Grand Trunk Railway

Railroad History of Portland, Maine ⁽⁶⁾

In 1853 the Atlantic & St. Lawrence (A&SL) began operating from India Street, also on the waterfront, to Montreal.



An impressive wooden viaduct with a steel swing span was constructed to bridge Back Cove in Portland and India Street on the Portland peninsula.



The swing bridge operated until 1984 when it was damaged by fire.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

By the time the Grand Trunk opened a new terminal on its India Street site in 1903, Portland was down to two passenger stations: the B&M/MEC Portland Union Station on Saint John's Street, reconstructed in 1888, and the **Grand Trunk Terminal on the waterfront at India Street.**



Figure 12: Portland GTR Depot, 1903.

American Domestic Mail Carried by the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad.

The cover shown below, to Buckfield, Maine, contains a letter date-lined *Portland July 20 1856*.

It would have been carried from Portland to Lewiston Junction on the **Atlantic & St. Lawrence RR**, then transferred to the **Maine Central Railroad** to Buckfield.

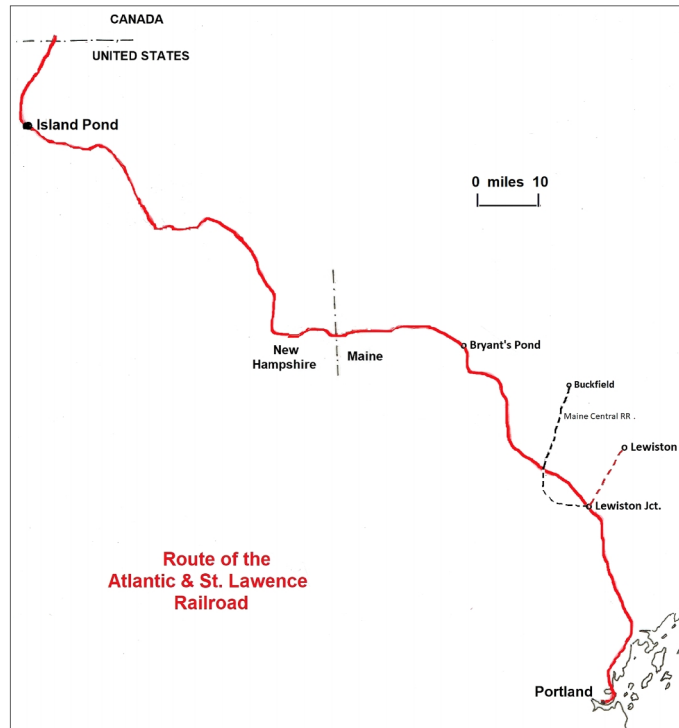
The letter is between two sisters detailing personal and family ailments and general chit-chat.

Since no travelling post offices then operated over American lines the "ATLANTIC & ST. LAWRENCE R.R." date-stamp must have been applied at Portland Post Office.



Figure 13: Portland to Buckfield, Maine by Atlantic & St. Lawrence and Maine Central Railroads.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861



Ticket to Ride from Bryant's Pond to Boston Via the Atlantic & St. Lawrence, Portland, Saco & Portsmouth, Boston & Maine or Eastern Railroads.

Bryant's Pond, also known as Lake Christopher, is a two mile long lake in the town of Woodstock, Oxford County, Maine. The Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad from Portland arrived in 1851 and attracted summer tourist traffic. Both front and back of the ticket show attractive railroad vignettes.

(Note that Figure 6 cover was addressed to Bryant's Pond)



Figure 14: Bryant's Pond to Boston Ticket.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

Transatlantic Mail by the Atlantic & St. Lawrence / St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroads.

The 1855 Allan Line Contract provided for a fortnightly mail service between Liverpool and Quebec during the summer and a monthly service between Liverpool and Portland, Maine, from mid-November to mid-April. The following two covers illustrate the “Via Portland” and Railroad winter service.

“per Steamer via Portland”



Figure 15: from Glasgow via Liverpool and Allan Line steamer “Indian” to Portland, Maine, then by Atlantic & St. Lawrence and St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroads to Montreal.

7½d Currency (6d Sterling) Transatlantic Packet letter rate applied on arrival in Montreal.

“Via Portland”



Figure 16: From Toronto to Glasgow in closed bag by Grand Trunk Railway to Montreal then by St. Lawrence & Atlantic and Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads to Portland, connecting with Allan Line steamer “Anglo Saxon” which departed Portland on January 28th.

12½¢ (6d Sterling) Transatlantic Packet rate.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

Portland to Montreal – next day delivery

After the teething problems of 1853, next-day-delivery between Portland and Montreal soon became the norm, summer and winter.



Figure 17: From Portland to Mr Edward Jones, Montreal – next day delivery.

Finally, we return to the Canadian end of the line and to Montreal in particular:-

The Victoria Tubular Bridge over the St. Lawrence – “*The Eighth Wonder of the World*”-an enduring legacy.

The Victoria Bridge, a 1.9 miles long tubular bridge designed by Robert Stephenson with 24 ice-breaking piers designed by Alexander Ross was built between mid-1854 and late 1859 by railway contractors Peto, Brassey & Betts at a cost of \$7 million. The tubular structure was built of prefabricated wrought-iron sections shipped from England and three thousand men worked on the 25 span structure, a minimum of 60 feet above the St. Lawrence River.



Figure 18: The Grand Trunk R.R. Victoria Bridge, Montreal, C.E.

**Considered to be the Most Gigantic Work of Science and Enterprise on the Habitable Globe:
Connecting East & West of the North American Continent
in One Uninterrupted Line of Railway**

By the 1890s the volume of traffic over the Victoria Bridge necessitated two tracks. The original piers remained in good condition so on May 4 1897 work commenced building a steel truss bridge around the tubes, providing double track and a cantilevered roadway on each side. On December 13 1898 the second track was completed and the original tubular sections were removed - total cost was \$2 million



Concluding Comments

Although almost insolvent in 1861, due in part to the cost of building the Victoria Bridge, the Grand Trunk Railway survived and prospered, taking over numerous smaller railway companies (particularly in Ontario). The St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad route, an integral part of the rail link between Montreal and Quebec, was also a major artery for passengers, goods and mail, carrying much of the transatlantic mail during winter months. In view of the significance of the Montreal & Island Pond RPO service it is curious that no date-stamps specific to that route are known between 1862 and 1885.

After sometimes fractious dispute over rates for carrying mail by rail, an Order in Council was passed on 12th August 1863 whereby the GTR received preferential tariffs of \$60 / mile pa for a daily mail express service each way between Toronto and Quebec, and between Richmond and the Boundary Line, also \$40 / mile pa for any second Passenger Train provided ‘*Such trains .. being supplied ... with traveling Post Offices, properly warmed and lighted, and comprising as nearly as may be, one third of a car, and exchanging Mails at the Way Stations at which the said trains ordinarily stop ... the above allowances to include free passage for such officers of the Post Office Department as the Postmaster General may from time to time require to accompany the Mails ...*’ No doubt, further funding was provided by the American authorities for mail carried between Portland and the International Boundary.

The St. Lawrence & Atlantic and the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroads 1853-1861

Further expansion of the GTR continued and between 1872 and 1885 the company re-gauged its system from 5 ft 6 inch to the standard 4 ft 8½ inch gauge. In the early 1900s, at the Government's behest, the GTR took the lead role in construction of the National Transcontinental and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways, together forming a second route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, competing with the Canadian Pacific Railway. That new enterprise failed to deliver the expected returns and in 1919 the GTR defaulted on loan payments to the federal government and was nationalised on March 7 1919.

Finally, on January 20, 1923, the Grand Trunk Railway's system of almost 8,000 miles in Canada and 1,164 miles in the United States was fully absorbed into the Canadian National Railways., along with its 999 year lease on the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad which remained a separate listed company.



Figure 20: Upper Banner Line from 1930 Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad Share Certificate.

Acknowledgements:

We are indebted to many members of the BNAPS Canadian R.P.O. Study Group, particularly to **Ross Gray** and **Peter McCarthy**, who have freely shared research and information on this topic and Canadian RPOs in general, both privately and in articles published in Study Group Newsletters.

Thanks also go to **Hugo Deshay** who has provided several items of ephemera included in this article.

References:

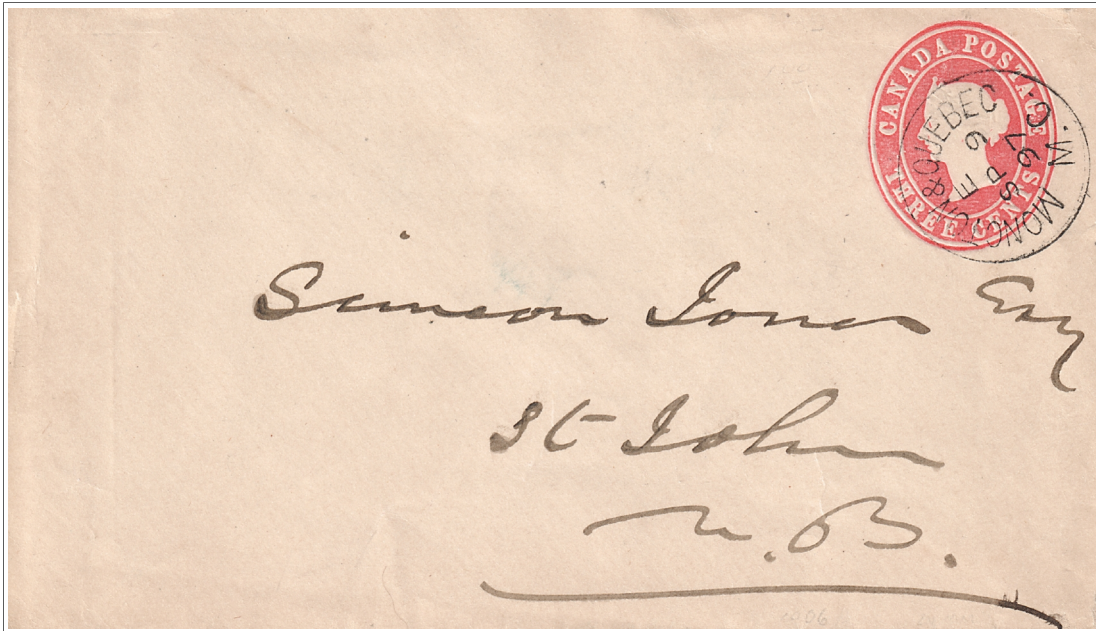
- (1) Canadian Mail by Rail 1836-1867, L.F. Gillam F.C.P.S. – Richard Printing Company, 1985.
- (2) Early Canadian Railway Post Offices – The St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad – Lionel F. Gillam, "Maple Leaves" #99 vol 11 no 3, Feb 1966 .
- (3) Article by Peter McCarthy, published in Newsletter #193 of the Canadian RPO Study Group (BNAPS), Vol 36 No 2, 2007.
- (4) Library & Archives Canada, ref number RG3 vol 1008, letter 331.
- (5) Library & Archives Canada, ref number RG3 vol 1008, letter 357.
- (6) Extracted from Wikipedia "Railroad History of Portland, Maine"



Ross Gray Collection

This stampless folded letter to Montreal is the latest reported example of **RY-169**, **ST LAWRENCE & ATLANTIC RAILROAD / POST OFFICE LETTER** , JA 28, 1854 , and the only known strike in black instead of red.

New Reports from Ross Gray



MT-257.04, MONCTON & QUEBEC / M.C. , E, SP 9, 97 , is a new **late date** for the hammer.



QC-310.02, MONT. & TORONTO / R.P.O. , 51, 24 V, 68 , is a new **late date** for the hammer.

An Interesting Observation

I was looking at the side by side illustrations for hammers **ON-211.022**, HARRISBURG & SOUTHAMPTON M.C. / N^o 2 and **ON-212**, HARRISBURG & SOUTHAMPTON M.C. and noted their very close similarity. When I superimposed one over the other, it became apparent that **ON-212** was hammer **ON-211.022** which had been modified by removing the “N^o 2” at the base. Further supporting my conclusion was that there was no mid-position large dot at the base of ON-212 as would have been usual.

I have no source information for the listed ERD of June ??, 1896 for ON-212, which makes that date suspect. The earliest verified date for ON-212 is January 7, 1898, from **Brian Stalker** and I am interested in any earlier date.



ON-211.022



ON-212

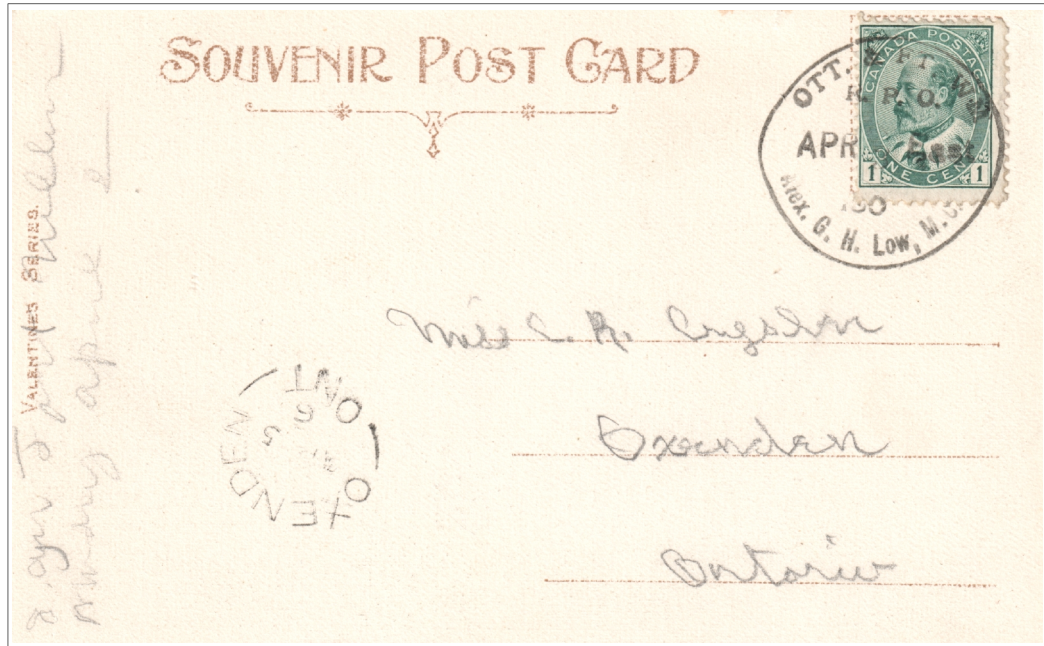


ON-211.022 + ON-212

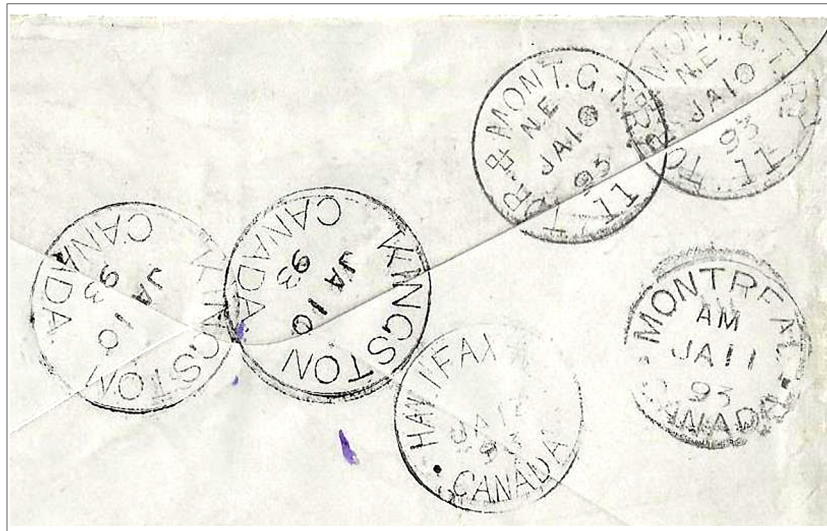
ON-370.03, TRAIN N^o / OTT. & DEPOT · H'B'R. R.P.O. , 59, SP 6, 16 , is the first report of **train 59** for the hammer.



New Reports from Ross Gray



The original discovery item for **ON-384** has resurfaced and allows us to correct the catalogue text to, **ON-384**, OTT. & FT. WM. / R.P.O. / Alex. G. H. Lowe, M.C. , APR 3 EAST, 190(6). I have been unable to identify the original reporter.



Used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Kingston to Halifax, is a new **early date** for hammer, **ON-716.11**, TOR. & MONT. G.T.R. / 11 , N.E., JA 10, 93.

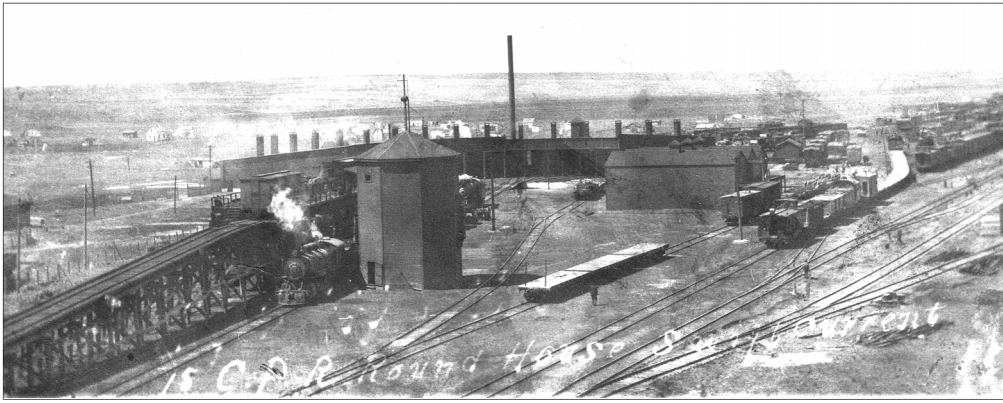


WT-340.03, M. HAT & NEL. R.P.O. / B.C. , E, MY 29, 10 ,
is a new **late date** for the hammer.

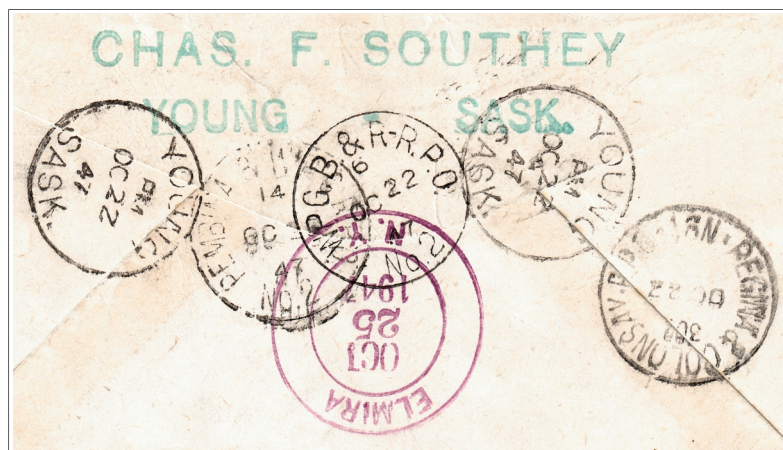
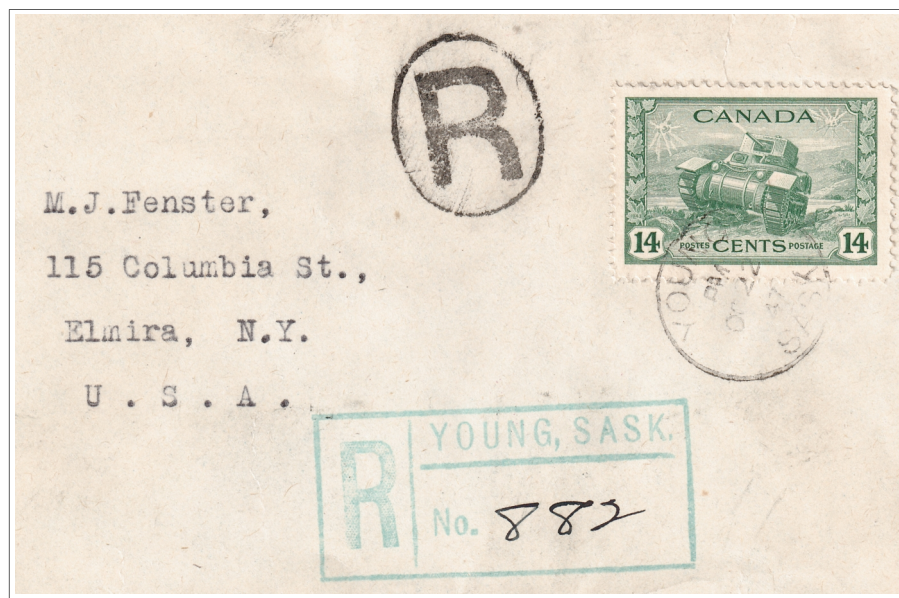
WT-619.05, REGINA & MELFORT R.P.O. / . , 328, 4 X, 55 ,
is a new **late date** for the hammer.



New Reports from Ross Gray



Used to cancel this real photo post card of the Swift Current CPR Round House, **WT-384**, MOOSE JAW & GALGARY · R.P.O. / N^o 7 , 14, OC 12, 16 , is a new **early date** for this hammer, which was proof struck on March 21, 1916.



This registered letter to Elmira, NY originated at Young, Saskatchewan on the afternoon of October 22, 1947. Young was located on the C.P.R. Regina-Colonsay line at mile 117.8 from Regina. The letter was transferred to southbound **WT-599.012**, REGINA & COLONSAY · R.P.O. / · N^o 1 · , 302, OC 22, 47 and on arrival in Regina to eastbound **WT-861.02**, WPG. B. & R - R.P.O. / No. 2 , 6, OC 22, 47. At Winnipeg it was put on board southbound **WT-555.02**, PEMBINA & W'P'G R.P.O. / No. 2 , 14, OC 23, 47. (This is a new **late date** for this rare hammer.) Arrival at Elmira was on October 25.

New Reports from Ross Gray



Found as a transit backstamp on a registered cover addressed to Seattle from Prince Albert is a **second date** and now the **LRD** for **WT-626.55**, REGINA & NO. BATT. / R.P.O. / W. F. ROBERTS , 6, JUL 19, (23), along with **WT-100**, CAL. & VAN. R.P.O. / B.C. , 3, JUL 20, 23 .

WT-964, WINNIPEG & RIVERS / R.P.O. No 2 , 11, 21, VI, 62 , used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Ottawa to Melville, is the first report of **train 11** for the hammer.



Found as transit backstamps on a registered, returned cover, from Prince Albert to Birch Hills, Saskatchewan **WT-975.011**, WINNIPEG & PRINCE ALBERT R.P.O. / No 1 , E, NO 25, 07, is a new **early date** for the hammer and **WT-975.011**, WINNIPEG & PRINCE ALBERT R.P.O. / No 1 , W, DE 28, 07 is the first report of a **W direction indicium** for the hammer.

Observed in a recent Ocean Park auction, **WT-975.02**, WINNIPEG & PRINCE ALBERT R.P.O. / No 2 , blank, JUL 11, 07 used as a transit backstamp on a returned registered cover from Prince Albert to Star City, SK, is a new **early date** and the first example of a **blank indicium**, for both the hammer and the listing.



New Reports from Ross Gray



This registered cover, addressed to Regina, originated at Elm Creek, Manitoba (mile 45.3), where it was transferred to **WT-969.02**, WINNIPEG & SOURIS R.P.O / N^o 2, 55, MR 11, 16 (*This is the first report of westbound **train 55** for this hammer*) and, at Souris, to **WT-773.02**, SOURIS & REGINA R.P.O / N^o 2, W, MR 11, 16 . It arrived in Regina the same day.

New Reports



Observed on Ebay, used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from New York to Port Colborne, **ON-92**, FT. ERIE & BRANTFORD / R.P.O. , 218, MR 26, 58 , is a new **late date**.

Murray Smith reports a new **early date** for hammer **WT-340.05**, M. HAT & NEL. R.P.O. / B.C. , E, JAN 29, 01



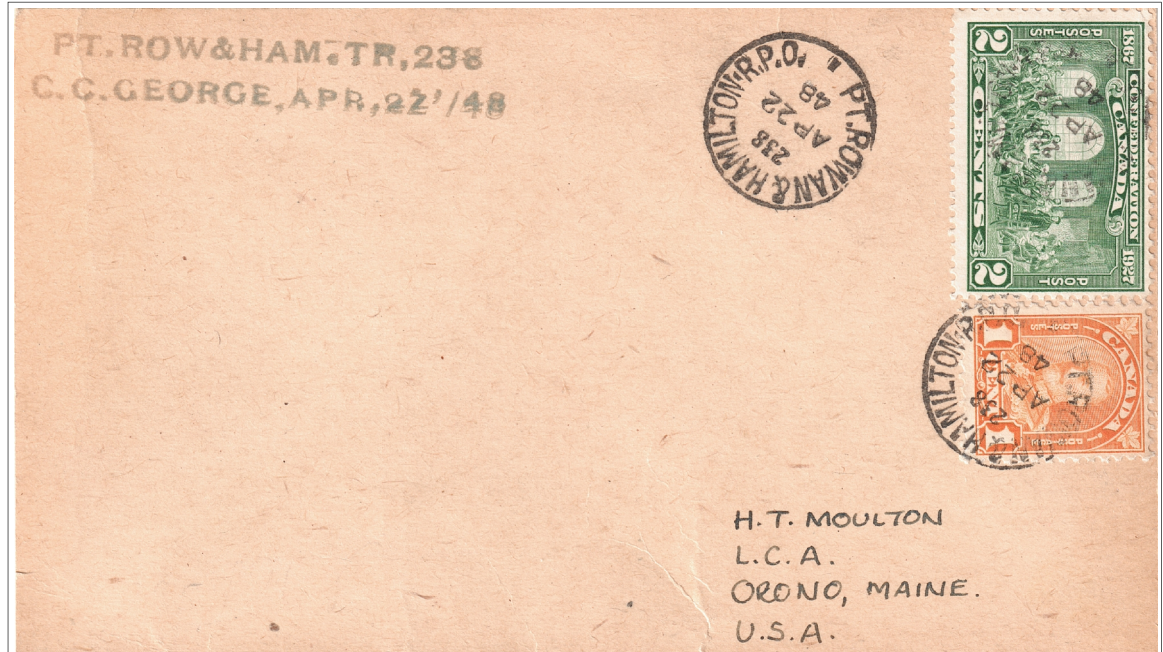
New Reports from Jack Brandt



MT-76.02, EDMUNSTON & R. DU L. / R.P.O. , 2, XI 29, 48 , found on an otherwise blank facing slip, corrects the catalogue by adding **train 2**. Since the early date precedes the proof date 1948/12/09, it is likely a clerk's error for 1948/12/29.

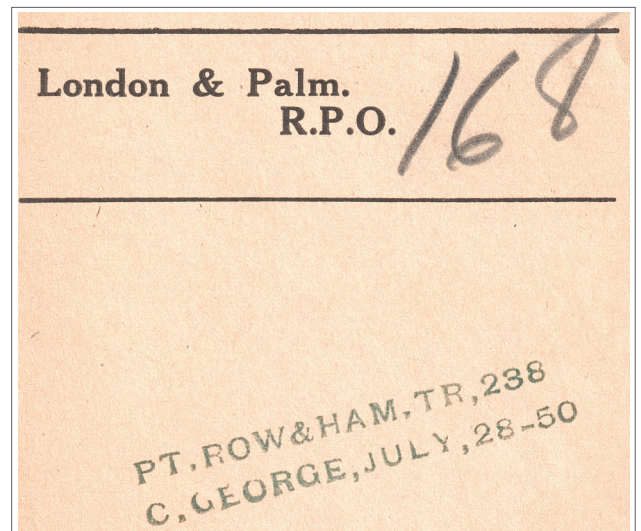


ON-36.01, BRANTFORD & GODERICH · R.P.O. / . , W, AU 2, 94, is a new **early date** for this hammer



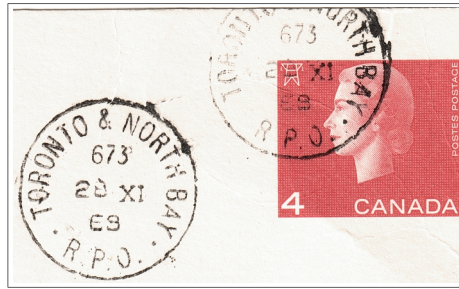
ON-482.01, PT. ROW & HAM. TR, 238 / C.C. GEORGE, APR, 22 / 48 , is a variation of ON-482 and new **early date** for the clerk handstamp.

ON-482.02, PT. ROW & HAM. TR, 238 / C. GEORGE, APR, 22 / 48 , is the original reported item of ON-482 and the **late date** for the clerk handstamp, which was made up by inserting individual rubber letters and numbers into a slotted wooden holder.



ON-795, TOR. PALM. & OWEN SOUND / T. A. WELLER, 174, FEB 8, 43, is the second report and new **early date**.

New Reports from Jack Brandt



Found as a favour cancellation on a post card addressed to Springfield, Missouri, **ON-747.01**, TORONTO & NORTH BAY / · R.P.O. · , 673, 20 XI, 69, is a new **late date** for both the hammer and the run. There are “**Last Run**” covers for trains 673 and 674 dated **October 25, 1969**, so this example may be a date error or after regular use dated.



WT-22.01, BRAN. BUL. & REG. R.P.O. / No. 1, 60 DE 19, 46, is a new **early date** for the hammer.

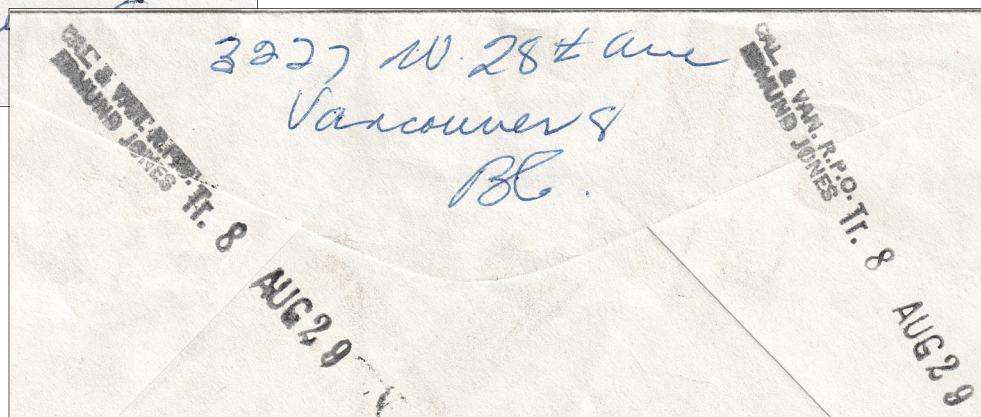
WT-22.03, BRAN. BUL. & REG. R.P.O. / No. 3, 59, SP 17, 55, is a new **late date** for the hammer.



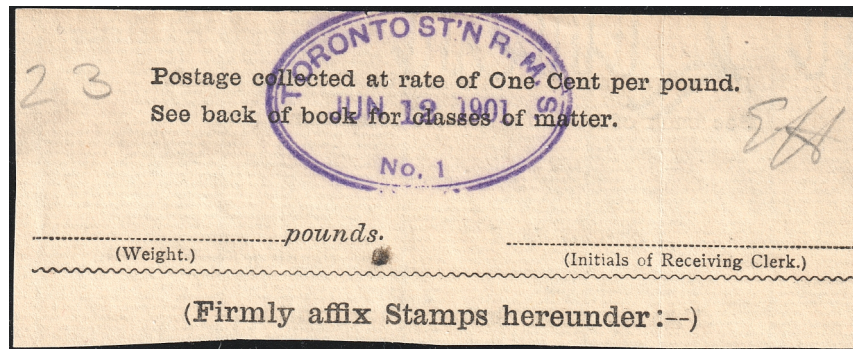
WT-36, BRAN. & LAN. P.R.O. / No. 2, 60, MY 1, 46, is a new **late date**.



WT-158, CAL. & VAN. R.P.O. / EDMOND JONES / Tr. 8, AUG 29, (59), on the back of a favour cover to Bill Topping, is a new **late date** and the first report of **train 8**.



New Reports from Jack Brandt



SN-58, TORONTO ST'N / No. 1, JUN 12, 1901, is a new **late date**.

New Reports from Mike Braconnier



ON-462, PT. COL. & MERRITON · R.P.O. / N^o 1, 132, MR 29, 27, is a new **late date**.

ON-550, TRAIN N^o / SUD. & SOO · R.P.O. , 27, AU 1, 27, is a new **late date** for the listing and just precedes its replacement by ON-553.



ON-714.01, TORONTO & MIDLAND · R.P.O. / N^o 1, 45, JUN 8, 17, is the first report of **train 45** for the hammer.

ON-740.15, TORONTO & NORTH BAY · R.P.O. / N^o 15, 44, DE 5, 18, is a new **early date** for the hammer and corrects the punctuation of the catalogue text (as well as that of ON-740.12)



WT-262.03, KAM. & N. BAT- R.P.O. / N^o 3, E, MR 12, 15, is a new **early date** for the hammer.

WT-883.01, WINNIPEG & HUMBOLDT · R.P.O. / N^o 1, 2, OC 20, 14, is a new **late date** for both the hammer and the listing.



WT-897.14, WINNIPEG & MOOSE JAW · R.P.O. / N^o 14, 3, NO 6, 39, is a new **late date** for the hammer.

SN-18.03, CAN. NAT'L. RY. STN. / · LONDON · ONT., 21, OC 11, 39, is the first report of **time mark 21** for this rare hammer.



Matapedia - Paspebiac - Port Daniel - Gaspe

The **Baie de Chaleurs Railway** was completed from Matapedia, located on the Intercolonial Railway between Levis and Campbellton, to Caplan, a distance of 79 miles, in 1893. The line was then sold to the **Atlantic & Lake Superior Railway**, which completed construction eastwards, a further 23 miles to Paspebiac, in 1898. Then, the line was temporarily taken over by the **Intercolonial Railway**. Construction was extended to Port Daniel in 1907. The line was purchased by the **Quebec Oriental Railway** in 1909. Construction continued to Grand River in 1910 and finally to Gaspe in 1912. In 1929, the railway was sold to **Canadian National Railways**.

The following R.P.O. runs were used on the line;

Matapedia & Paspebiac 1895-1908

QC-127,	MATAPEDIA & PASPEBIAC M.C. / QUE. DIVI.	E,W,N	1895/06/26-1907/11/07
QC-128,	MATAPEDIA & PASPEBIAC · R.P.O. / .	W,MY(<i>inverted</i>)	1898/12/28-1908/12/24

Paspebiac & Matapedia 1903-1912

QC-373,	PASPEBIAC & MATAPEDIA R.P.O. / .	E,W	1903/08/01-1912/05/27
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Matapedia & Gaspe 1908-1932

QC-125,	MATAPEDIA & GASPE · R.P.O. / .	E,W,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,11,12,35,36	1908/04/17*-1932/07/20
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The Ludlow/Robinson records indicate an early proof date of 1906/11/12 and an early use date of 1908/04/17 but I have found no evidence to support that data. The hammer study which follows shows the current verified information.

Port Daniel & Matapedia 1909-1912

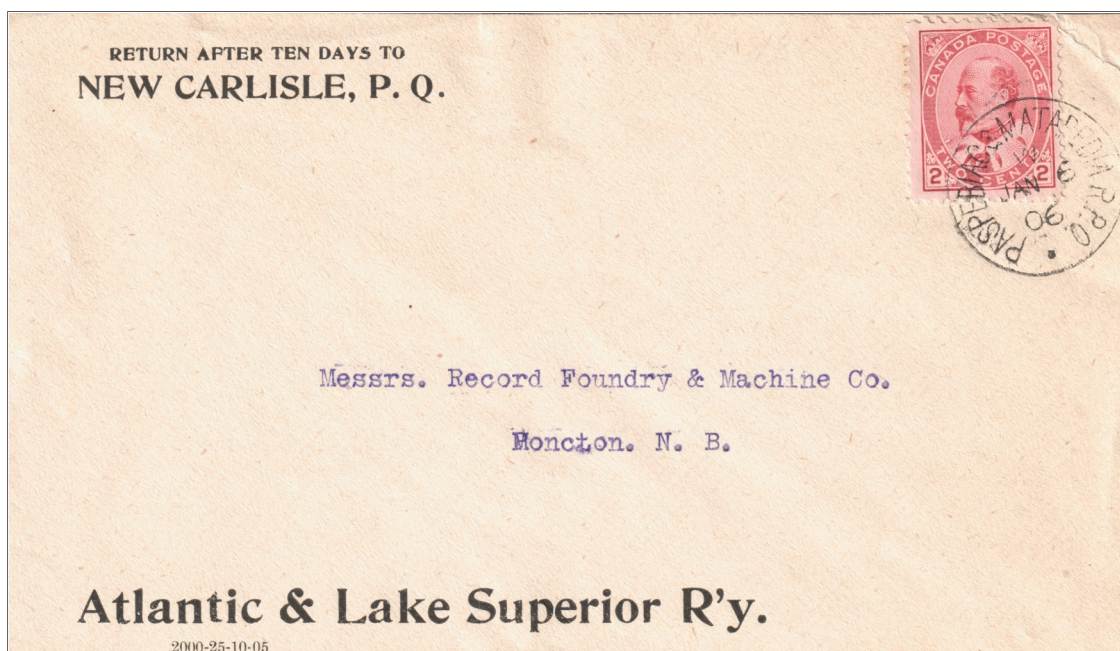
QC-375,	PORT DANIEL & MATAPEDIA R.P.O. / .	E,W,1	1909/03/18-1912/10/31
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Gaspe & Matapedia 1919-1931

QC-24.75,	TRAIN No. / Gaspe & Matapedia	2	1919/07/17
QC-25,	GASPE & MATAPEDIA · R.P.O. / .	W,1,17,22,35,36	1927/08/25-1931/10/13

Gaspe & Campbellton 1931-1966

QC-21,	GASPE & CAMP'TON / R.P.O.	35,36,101,102,201,202,245,246,blank	1931/10/26-1966/10/19
QC-23,	GASPE & CAMP / R.P.O.	35,36,101,102,201,202,245	1955/09/22-1966/12/20



QC-373, PASPEBIAC & MATAPEDIA R.P.O. / . , W, JAN 6, 06

QC-125 Hammer Study

a-----e-----c-----d-----b
MATAPEDIA & GASPE · R.P.O /
a-----

Hammer	a	b	c	d	e	ERD	LRD	Indicia
QC-125.01	7	13 ½	10	9 ¼	11 ¼	1913/07/??#	1931/08/15#	E*,E inverted#,W,1,2,3,7#,35#
QC-125.02	6 ¼	13 ¾	9 ¾	9 ¼	10 ¾	1913/08/18*	1931/05/25	W,1*,3*,5*,11#,35
QC-125.03	7	14 ¼	8 ¾	9 ½	11	1924/06/02#	1931/08/29*	1,2,4,5,6,7,35,36*
QC-125.04	4 ¼	13	11 ½+	10 ¾	11	1917/11/03#	1919/05/21#	W#
QC-125.05	5 ¼	13	11 ½	9 ¼	11 ½	unreported	unreported	
QC-125						1913/07/??#	1932/07/20	E,W,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,11,12,35,36

Brian Stalker * Jack Brandt #



QC-125.01



QC-125.02 proof



QC-125.03



QC-125.04 proof

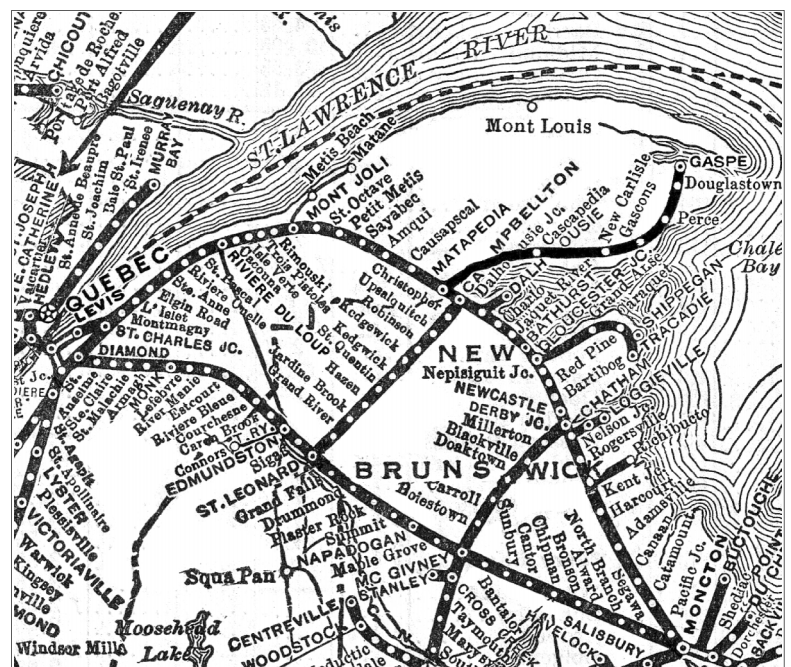


QC-125.05 proof

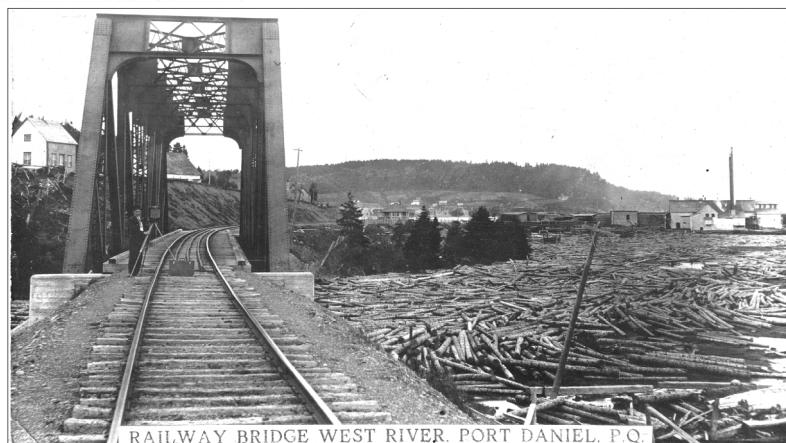
QC-125.01, QC-125.02, QC-125.03 proof date - 1912/11/06, QC-125.03, QC-125.04 - proof date - 1916/01/13

MATAPEDIA, NEW CARLISLE AND GASPE

36	Mls.	TABLE No. 38 (Atlantic Time)	35
A.M.		Matapedia Que	P.M.
10.35	0	30 31	6.25
11.15	5	Sellers	5.45
11.16	9	Broadlands	5.45
11.17	13	Cross Point	5.45
11.18	16	Oak Bay	5.45
11.19	22	Pointe a la Garde	5.45
11.20	27	Escuminac	5.10
11.21	36	Nouvelle	4.45
11.22	41	St. Omer	4.15
11.23	44	Carleton	3.55
11.24	53	Maria	3.30
11.25	61	Cascapedia	3.05
11.26	68	New Richmond	2.50
11.27	72	Black Capes	2.30
11.28	79	Caplin	2.10
11.29	84	St. Simeon	1.55
11.30	89	Bonaventure	1.25
11.31	98	Ar. New Carlisle Que. Ar.	1.05
11.32	98	Lv. New Carlisle Que. Ar.	1.05
11.33	102	Paspebiac	12.50
11.34	109	St. Godfroi	12.30
11.35	114	Marell	12.15
11.36	120	Port Daniel	11.55
11.37	126	Gascons	11.40
11.38	135	Newport	11.05
11.39	142	Chandler	10.45
11.40	146	St. Adelaide	10.30
11.41	152	Grand River	10.15
11.42	157	Little River East	9.50
11.43	160	Cape Cove	9.40
11.44	163	Perce	9.40
11.45	164	Old Bourget Mill	9.40
11.46	173	Corner of the Beach	9.05
11.47	177	Barachois	9.05
11.48	182	St. Georges	8.20
11.49	187	Brilliant Cove	8.20
11.50	195	Douglastown	8.00
11.51	202	Ar. Gaspe Que. Lv.	8.00
11.52	202		



CNRys Timetable - 1930



RAILWAY BRIDGE WEST RIVER. PORT DANIEL, P.Q.

New Reports



Jack Brandt shares this favour card addressed to H. T. Moulton, an R.P.O. clerk in Massachusetts, from an R.P.O. clerk., C. Dodd. The message on the back is as follows; “The trend here is toward the European system - viz - sorting done at the large mailing stations & movement by every available train. We also lead the world in the use of planes for 1st class mail.” signed, C. Dodd, clerk I/C.

The card is cancelled with **WT-59.022**, CAL. & CAMROSE · R.P.O. / N^o 2, 26, AP 2, 49 , a **new train number** and **early date** for **WT-1008**, CAL. DIVISION / L. E. JONES, Tr. 25, 1949.

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Submitted by Sean Weatherup

ANNOUNCEMENT

After careful consideration by the RPO Study Group executive, it has been moved and approved that we change the method of adding newsletters to the BNAPS website. Up until January, newsletters were posted on the website five years after publication. This has now been changed to post newsletters two years after publication. This decision was made following suggestions from study group members, BNAPS members, and the BNAPS webmaster. Upon consideration, two years was deemed a reasonable amount of time to pass before allowing non-members access to our studies while maintaining the integrity of our study group. This new policy is now in effect.

NOTE TO NEW MEMBERS: Past newsletters are easy to find on the BNAPS website. Just follow the links through “[Publications and Online Library](#)” to “[Study Group Newsletters](#)”. In the RPO link, the newsletters go back all the way to Volume 1 #1. Below the newsletter listing under “[Other Resources](#)”, you will also find two most helpful tools. Two indexes are there to aid in researching newsletters. The first was prepared by the late William (Bill) Robinson and covers the period of 1973 to 1999, Volumes 1 thru 27. The second has been prepared by Brian Stalker and Richard Cromwell and picks up where Bill left off, extending the index to 2021, Volumes 28 thru 49.

Treasurer's Report for 2023 as of December 31st - Submitted by Sean Weatherup

RPO Study Group Bank Account

2022 Year End Balance		1583.34
Incoming Monies 2023	+	425.82
	Sub-Total	2009.16
Expenditures 2023	-	603.89
2023 Year End Balance	=	1405.27

Notes

Incoming monies are noticeably down for 2023. This should be regarded as normal. When memberships were reformatted into being for the calendar year, many members paid up for partial years. As well many members renewed for periods of more than two years; i.e. I have had renewals for up to ten years, and a lot for three, four or five years! Most members are renewing for two years. Stipends are another factor in this report. Last year we received a stipend for 2021 and 2022. The stipend for 2023 has not come in as yet. As of January renewals are coming in steadily. There are currently eight renewals yet to come in. Despite rising printing costs (printer charges plus larger than normal newsletters), expenditures are down slightly mainly due to the fact that I had plenty of postage on hand. There will be expenses for that during 2024.

The balance above includes the amounts below held in the

William G. Robinson Award Fund

Details....

2022 Year End Balance		249.80
Expenses (Trophy)	-	22.49
Incoming Donations	+	37.82

2023 Year End Balance	Total	265.13
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Notes

As always donations are most welcome. As exhibitions have pretty much returned to normal we hope to see more RPO exhibits this coming year.

In Memoriam

It is with sadness I report the passing of long time study group member **Richard Parama**.

Observations

Membership is down by one this year. As we welcomed three new members, four are no longer with the group. We sadly lost one member, another has left due to health reasons, and one has resigned. A forth has not renewed and despite multiple attempts has not responded. The study group is steadily maintaining a membership of about 50 people. Over the past five years we have lost 18 members. During the same period there have been 16 new members join.

New Reports



Neil Cooper reports a new **early date** for **ON-787.01**, TOR. & OWEN · SOUND / M.C. , S, MY 28, 97 .



Vince Chermishnok reports the first example of a **W direction** for hammer **WT-340.03**.



Jim Graham, president of the Nova Scotia Stamp Club and co-editor of the BNAPS perfin study group newsletter, reports a new **early date** for hammer **WT-318.021**, MACLEOD & CALGARY R.P.O. / N^o 2 , S, JUN 10, 07. It appears as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Winnipeg to Okotoks, Alberta with a 2¢ and 5¢ Edward issue, perforated with the initials “O H N”, which stands for Osler Hammond and Nanton. Jim writes that they were agents for the Calgary and Edmonton Land Co. (*the cover's cornercard*), which in turn was created by the **Calgary & Edmonton Railway Company**, to sell and manage almost 9 million acres of land granted to it by the federal government for building the railway from Fort Macleod to Edmonton. The C.P.R. took the line over in 1902.



Richard Cromwell reports a second date and now the **ERD** for hammer, **WT-839.01**, WATROUS & WAINWRIGHT · R.P.O. / N^o 1 , W, OC 09, 17. This is also the first report of the “**W**” **direction** for this rare hammer.

Reported by **Hugo Deshaye**, **RY-210.03**, W. G. & B. R / _ N^o - 3 _ , SOUTH MY 21, 84 , used as a transit backstamp on a registered cover from Teviotdale, Ontario to Toronto, is a new **late date** for both the hammer and the listing.



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