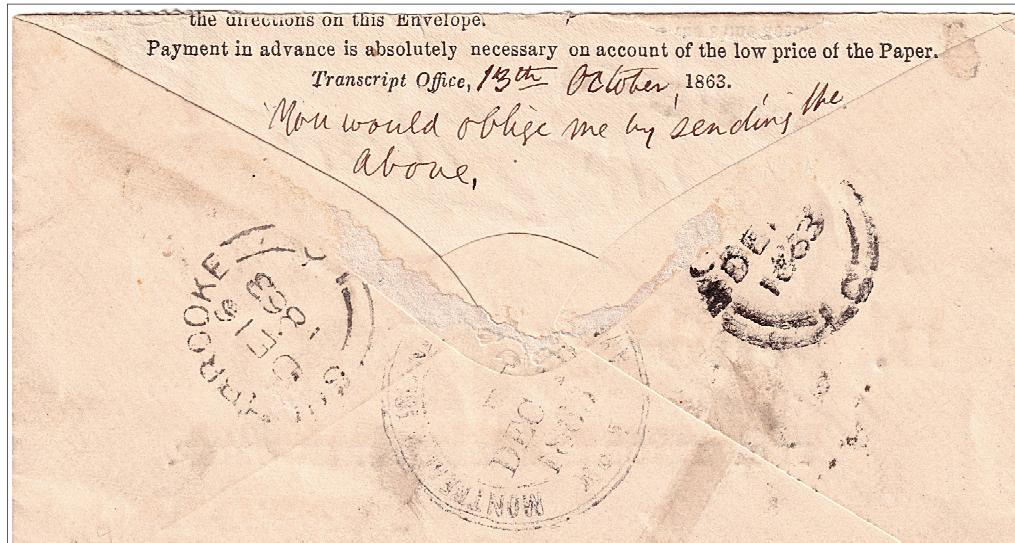
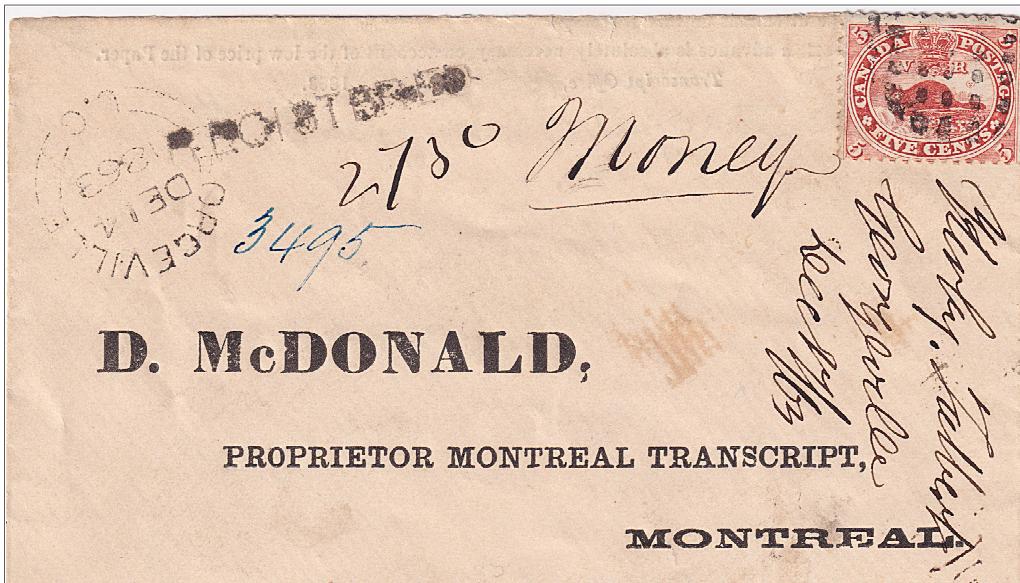


In this issue, we examine the change in railway routes for the **Montreal & North Bay R.P.O.** In addition, there is a look back at the 1979-1980 **Discovery Train** with the help of **Jim Miller** as well as a reprint of an article describing activities on board the last run of the **Halifax & Campbellton R.P.O.**

There are also new reports from **John Beddows, Ross Gray and Murray Smith**.

A New 1st Period Late Date for the Montreal & Island Pond R.P.O.



This registered cover originated at Georgeville, about 31 miles south west of Sherbrooke, on December 14, 1863. It travelled by road to Sherbrooke and arrived there on December 16, before being transferred to the westbound Montreal & Island Pond R.P.O. and was postmarked with a very worn **QC-168, MONTREAL & ISLAND POND G.T.R. WAY. / No. 7. , ? , UP, DEC 16, 1863.**

This is a new **late date** for this hammer and for the 1st period of R.P.O. service, (1855 to 1863) on the Montreal & Island Pond run. The 2nd period of R.P.O. service began in 1885 and ended in 1951. (It is very likely that trains carried closed bag mail in the interim period.)

A Change of Railway for the Montreal - North Bay R.P.O.

In 1926, the Montreal-North Bay R.P.O. over the **Canadian Pacific Railway** main line, began a run that ended in 1957, after 31 years. In 1965, a new Montreal-North Bay R.P.O. run began over **Canadian National Railways**, ending only 6 years later, in 1971.

Montreal & North Bay (via C.P.R.)

QC-209 MONT. & NORTH BAY · R.P.O. / . 1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10,17,18,502 1926/09/17-1957/04/27

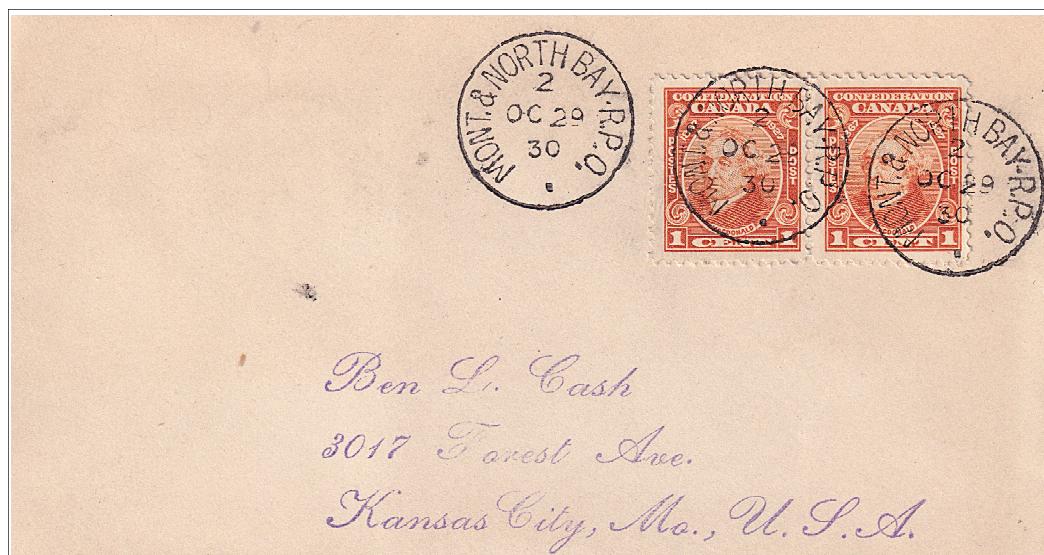
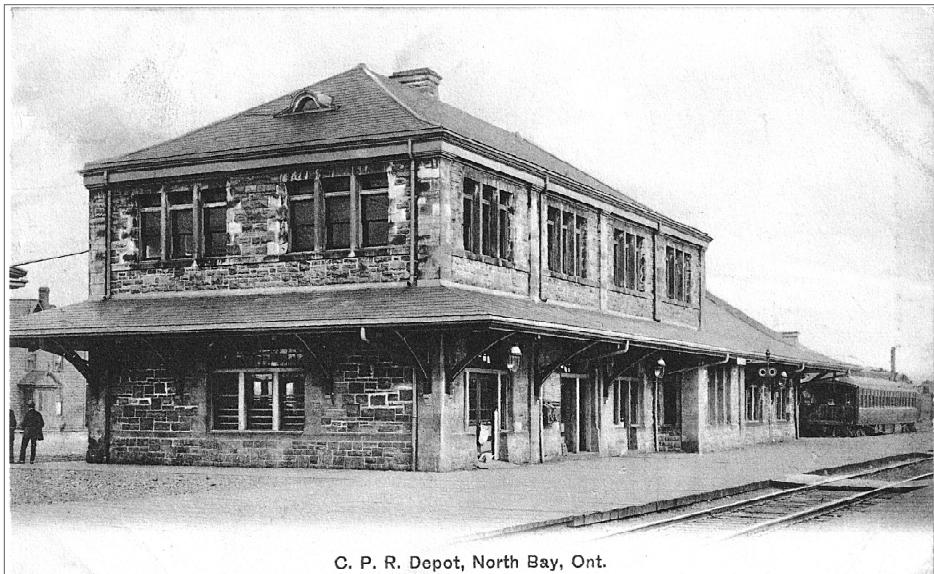
Montreal & North Bay (via C.N.Rys.)

QC-212 MONTREAL & NORTH BAY / . R.P.O. . 5,7,8,9,10,105,106 1965/07/29-1971/02/02

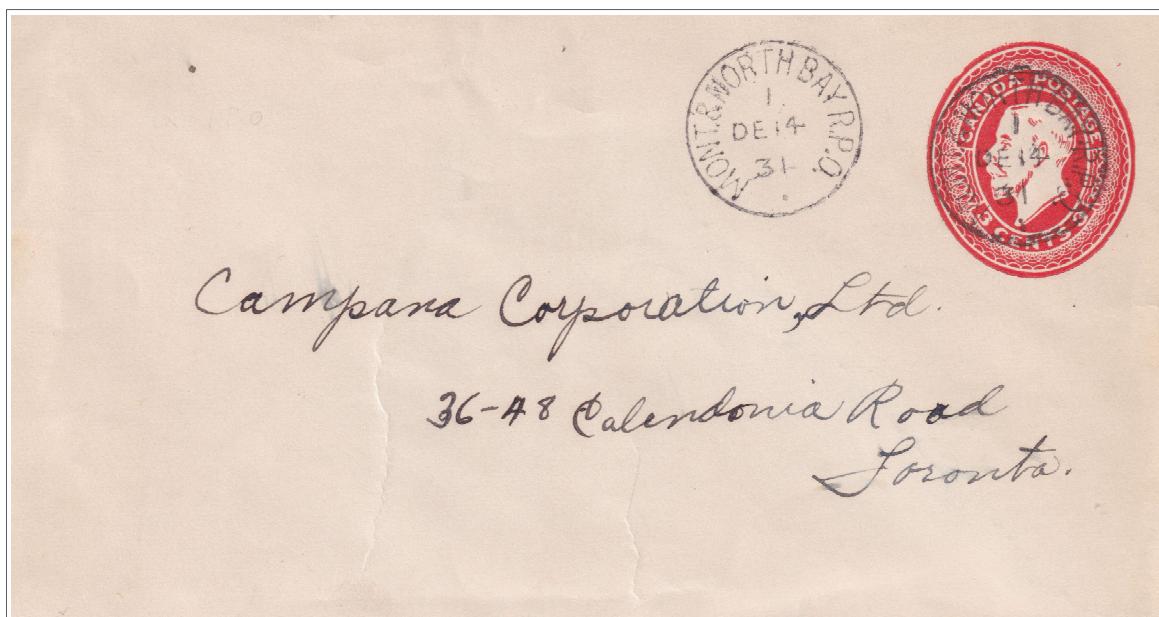
MONTREAL—OTTAWA—NORTH BAY																
WEST—READ DOWN				DOMINION Daily				DOMINION Daily				EAST—READ UP				
551 Sun.	557 Ex.Su.	555 Daily	1 Daily	7	3	9	Miles	TABLE 4	Altitude	8	4	10	2 Daily	556 Daily	558 Ex.Su.	550 Sun.
P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.				A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.
8.15	4.15	8.25	10.15	c 8.15	7.45	0.0		Eastern Time								
9.20	5.20	9.25	10.21	c 8.22	7.52	2.0		Lv. MONTREAL|| Windsor Stn Ar	109	9.20	10.15	7.00	**	**		
9.54	6.05	10.03	10.27	c 8.30	8.00	4.7		Westmount	152	9.12	10.07	6.52	**	**		
10.25	6.38	10.34	10.30	c 10.30	9.55	11.4		Montreal West	158	9.05	10.00	6.45	**	**		
11.15	7.35	11.25	11.45	c 10.45	10.10	14		Ar. OTTAWA, ONT.||	175	7.05	8.00	4.30	**	**		
11.29	8.00	11.50	11.50	c 12.20	11.13	14		Ar. OTTAWA, ONT.||	215	6.50	7.45	4.05	11.05	5.05	9.15	
11.50	8.30	12.15	12.45	c 12.45	11.44	16.6		Lv. CARLETON PLACE 47. 48. Ar	453	5.55	6.48	3.02	10.00	4.00	8.15	
						166.4		Ar. Arnprior 48.	300	5.20	6.15	2.32	9.18	3.18	7.30	
						170.6		Ar. Renfrew 41. 48.	418	4.46	5.25	2.00	8.42	2.48	6.55	
						179.4		Ar. PEMBROKE 48.	381	4.06	4.56	1.52	7.45	1.50	6.00	
						184.7		Lv. Petawawa 48.	467	3.48	4.25	12.52	7.25	1.30	5.45	
						199.4		Ar. CHALK RIVER|| 48.	522	3.30	4.25	12.35	7.05	1.10	5.25	
						219.4		Lv. CHALK RIVER Ar	522	h 3.20	4.10	12.20	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	
						241.2		Lv. Wylie	524	**	**	12.03	**	**	**	
						246.2		Bass Lake	591	**	**	11.54	**	**	**	
						256.2		Moor Lake	667	**	**	11.48	**	**	**	
						268.9		Stonecliffe	476	**	**	11.24	**	**	**	
						278.7		Bissett	559	**	**	11.05	**	**	**	
						291.7		Deux Rivières	520	**	**	10.42	**	**	**	
						302.4		Klock	529	**	**	10.26	**	**	**	
						312.9		Mattawa	563	h 1.21	2.13	10.05	**	**	**	
						325.1		Eau Claire	593	**	**	9.38	**	**	**	
						331.8		Rutherford	790	**	**	9.28	**	**	**	
						339.0		Bonfield	785	**	**	9.17	**	**	**	
						342.9		Nosbonsing	786	**	**	9.10	**	**	**	
						348.7		Corbeil	735	**	**	9.01	**	**	**	
						358.4		Ar. NORTH BAY|| 63.	662	h 2.15	1.10	8.45	**	**	**	



A Change of Railway for the Montreal - North Bay R.P.O.



QC-209.01, MONT. & NORTH BAY . R.P.O. / . , 2, OC 29, 30

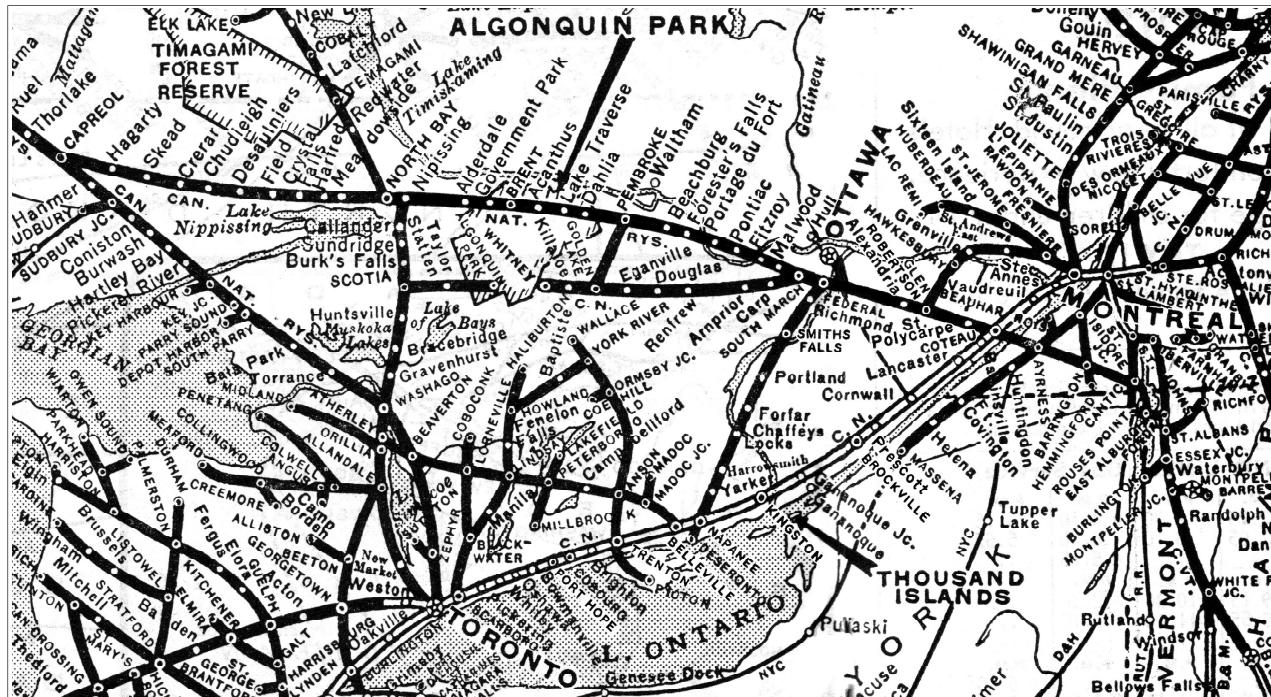


QC-209.09, MONT. & NORTH BAY . R.P.O. / . , 1, DE 14, 31

A Change of Railway for the Montreal - North Bay R.P.O.

MONTRÉAL — OTTAWA — CAPREOL					
Note E 9 Daily Quot.	Note E Super Continental I Daily Quot.	Miles from Montreal Milles de Montréal	Eastern Standard Time Heure normale de l'Est	Note E Super Continental 2 Daily Quot.	Note E Super Continental 10 Daily Quot.
P.M.	P.M.	(Queen Elizabeth Hotel) (Hôtel Reine Elizabeth) Montréal, Qué. (M)		P.M.	P.M.
10.20	4.00	0.0 Dp	Central Stn.—Gare Centrale Ar	3.15	10.30
10.45	4.25	11.8	Dorval (35)	2.48	10.03
..	..	22.3	Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue	..	..
..	..	25.9	Vaudreuil	..	..
..	..	39.3 Ar) (Dp)	Coteau (35)	..	..
..	..	43.2	St-Polycarpe	..	..
..	..	50.5	Sto-Justino, Qué.	..	..
..	..	54.9	Glen Robertson, Ont.	..	..
..	..	62.3	Alexandria (35)	..	..
..	..	69.0	Greenfield	..	..
..	..	73.7	Maxville	..	..
..	..	79.0	Moose Creek	..	..
..	..	86.8	Casselman	..	..
..	..	95.3	Limoges	..	..
..	..	100.1	Vars	..	..
..	..	106.3	Carlsbad Springs	..	..
12.30	6.10	117.6 Ar) (Dp)	Ottawa, Ont. (M) (35)	1.05	8.20
12.50	6.25	152.6 Dp) (Hôtel Château Laurier) Ar	Fitzroy, Ont.	12.50	8.05
..	..	166.9 Bristol, Qué.	..	..	..
..	..	178.2 Portage-du-Fort, Qué.	..	..	..
..	..	191.6 Beachburg, Ont.	..	..	..
2.40	8.01	207.2 Ar) Pembroke	..	10.55	6.00
3.55	8.02	242.2 Achray	Dp	..	..
4.40	9.40	259.9 Lake Traverse	..	9.50	..
4.50	9.50	270.3 Radian	..	..	..
..	..	272.7 Odenback	..	..	..
..	..	282.9 Ar) Brent	..	9.15	4.25
H4.56	..	286.9 Dp) (Ar) Government Park	..	9.05	4.15
H5.04	..	293.1 Daventry	..	..	..
5.25	..	304.6 Kiosk	..	..	..
6.10	11.10	344.3 Ar) (Dp) (V) (60) Note J	North Bay (V) (60)	7.40	2.55
6.35	11.10	376.6 Field	..	7.40	2.55
7.28	..	421.7 Ar) Capreol, Ont. (V) Note K Dp	(3)	5.45	1.15
9.00	..	..	..	..	..
A.M.	A.M.			A.M.	P.M.

C.N.R. Timetable April-October 1965



It is likely that the Montreal - North Bay R.P.O. operated beyond North Bay to Capreol to enable transfer of mails with the Toronto - Capreol R.P.O.

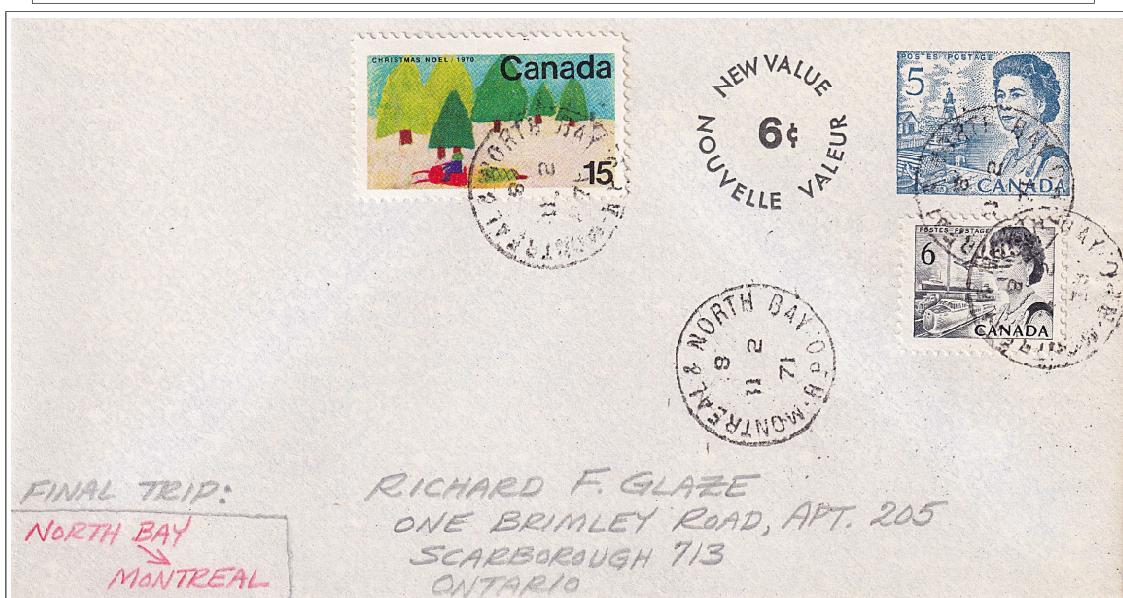
Toronto & Capreol (via C.N.Rys.)

ON-555

TORONTO & CAPREOL / R.P.O.

7,8,50,88,107,108,109 1965/07/22-1971/01/31

A Change of Railway for the Montreal - North Bay R.P.O.



QC-212.04, MONTREAL & NORTH BAY / R.P.O. . , 7, II 1, 71

QC-212.04, MONTREAL & NORTH BAY / R.P.O. . , 8, II 2, 71

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

In 1979 and 1980, the “Discovery Train” operated across Canada. Although philatelic cancellations were provided on board, this was not an operating R.P.O. However, it was railway related and I believe that its almost forgotten history deserves to be recorded.

Jim Miller wrote the following in the October, 1998 R.P.O. study group newsletter:

“In the Summer and Fall of 1979, the National Museums of Canada sponsored a 14 car railroad travelling display of the history and landscape of Canada, entitled ‘The Discovery Train’. Funding for the train came from 8 private companies and 9 of the 10 provinces (Quebec was apparently not a supporter). The train was purchased by the National Museums of Canada as the original American ‘Freedom Train’ representing the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial. The Discovery Train began a five year travel plan in July of 1978.

Pressure from various philatelic circles prompted Canada Post to provide a souvenir pictorial cancellation, which began usage at Banff on June 16, 1979. Different hammers were made for each of the major stops, and a hand-back cancellation service was provided. This cancellation service was not very formal, in fact visitors had no knowledge of its existence. The service was in a baggage car at the front of the train, and there was no signage or identification as to its whereabouts.

When I visited the train at its three day stopover at Kamloops, July 7 to 9, 1979, I was surprised that I had to ask for the location of the cancellation service. After having found the baggage car, there was no one in attendance. Some personnel searching led to a supplies and maintenance clerk, who among other more pressing tasks was given the duty of providing the cancellation service. He was not overly enthused at providing some favour strikes, and I recall him saying that the cancellation service was forced upon him, hence his lack of desire to serve the public. I asked if it was possible to obtain a complete set of the cancellations, for which the reply was negative. Oh well, I had my favour strikes for Kamloops.

That night I thought I’d try once more in the morning, recognizing that a complete set of Discovery Train cancels could be unique indeed if I could get lucky. One of the private funding companies was Labatts, which had a private car attached to the Discovery Train. I knocked, and met a fine gentleman who gave me a tour of the elaborate private car, and then invited me to join him for a cold one. Needless to say, I was a Labatts customer, while at the same time having in my pocket a bundle of self-addressed envelopes. When I explained my desire, he said yes, much to my surprise, and that he would mail me the set of covers when the tour was completed in early November. He did caution me that the set would not be complete, because he could not obtain cancellations for the places and times between Banff and Kamloops. I left elated, happy that a 90% set would be better than no set at all.

Months later, a package appeared in my mailbox with all of the covers I had left with the Labatts representative. And, much to my surprise, the set was complete, from Banff, June 16 to Ottawa, November 4! 87 different dates & towns! I had given him 100 15¢ revalued postal stationery #EN-104 envelopes, each self addressed. The spares were there too, postmarked from Ottawa. No letter was enclosed, but there was a one-page circular from Canada Post, identifying the cancellation service, and on the other side was the 1979 Discovery Train itinerary.

Some of the eastern Canada places and dates do not match up with the Canada Post itinerary, as follows:

I have ROBERVAL, QUE. dated Aug. 20 and 21; and CHICOUTIMI dated Aug. 22 to 25. Perhaps there was an error in the Canada Post itinerary list for Roberval and Chicoutimi.

The itinerary identifies TRURO, N.S. for Sept. 14-16, but these are missing. However, I have TRURO dated Oct. 8 to 11. There must have been a route change, with the train stopping at Truro on the return run.

ST. JOHN’S is listed for Sept. 27-29, but I have only Sept. 28 & 29. Perhaps the train was a day late?

ARGENTIA (misspelled Argentina on the Canada Post itinerary) is listed for Oct. 3 and 4, but I have no covers. However, CORNER BROOK, listed for Oct. 5 to 7, I have postmarked Oct. 3 & 4. Obviously another itinerary change occurred.

PORT AUX BASQUES is listed for Oct 8, but I have no cover. Instead I have TRURO, N.S. for four days, Oct. 8 to 11. This would make up for the missed stop at Truro in September.

STE FOY, QUE. is listed for Oct. 19 to 22, I have Oct. 18 to 22. The rest of the covers are as originally scheduled.”

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

"I guess the date & location differences herein identified can raise question as to whether or not I have a complete set, at least according to the original itinerary. **Perhaps some of the RPO study group members have interest in the Discovery Train, and can confirm or alter the above information.**

The Discovery Train was to travel for five years. I have one cover with a generic THE DISCOVERY TRAIN-LA DECOUVERTE/CANADA commemorative cancel dated 9 VIII 80, and beside it is a KINDERSLEY/SASK. 8 0/9 VIII CDS. Perhaps one cancellation device was issued for the entire 1980 run? Did cancellation service continue in later years?

Bill's note in the last RPO Newsletter about listing Discovery Train cancels made me bring out this long forgotten bunch of material. It was nice to remember back 17 years to that visit in the Labatts private car, and the cover set that arrived about six months later. I'll look forward to hearing of other experiences and stories about the Discovery Train's cancellations."



The generic postmark used at Kindersley, Saskatchewan on August 9, 1980.

When the editor contacted Jim to review this article, he added the following comments;

"When I found the Discovery Train in Kamloops, the train was at the CPR station, pointed west. The Labatts car was at the rear, or eastern end of the train. If the train was travelling east on the CPR, from the west coast towards Alberta, its direction is wrong upon arrival in Kamloops.

Kamloops is served by both CPR and CNR, on opposite sides of the Thompson River. However, if the train travelled east on the CNR, it would have had to back down the short spur that connects the two railroads, and upon arrival at the CPR depot in Kamloops, it would be facing west. Upon departure, the train would again have to back up to the spur line in order to reconnect with the mainline CNR to be able to continue traveling to Alberta. **It is interesting to note there is neither a Calgary or Edmonton stop on the train's itinerary.**"

"That short spur line I identified is about 3 miles long. It would be the only way this train was pointed west on the CPR tracks, yet its travel was eastward. Fooled me at the time!"

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

The following is the text of the notice and itinerary issued by Canada Post in 1979;

THE DISCOVERY TRAIN

"Canada Post has accepted a proposal to provide a souvenir pictorial cancellation on the Discovery Train, effective with the stop in Banff, Alberta from 16 to 18 June.

Unfortunately the proposal was received too late to provide the cancellation at the first several stops on this year's itinerary. Since the complete itinerary could not be accommodated, it was decided to offer the first cancellation at the first community the train visits after 15 June, the first day of issue of Canada Post's provincial and territorial flag miniature sheet. In this way, collectors can have the special flag stamps cancelled on board the Discovery Train at each community the train will visit on its cross-country tour from 16 June to 4 November.

In fourteen display cars, the Discovery Train leads you on an exciting half-hour journey through Canada's landscape and history. The displays contain over 1200 artifacts and specimens from museums across Canada, from prehistoric times to the present.

Collectors are advised to bring their own stamped envelopes as stamps may not be readily available for purchase at the train site. **The cancellation will be offered on a hand-back basis only to those persons visiting the Discovery Train.** No mail orders will be accepted, either by the Philatelic Mail Order Service in Ottawa or by the Postmasters of the various communities that the train will be visiting.

The basic design of the cancellation will remain constant; however, the name of the community and the date will change accordingly. All items receiving the special cancellation must bear a minimum of 15 cents Canadian postage, the third class letter rate."

1979 Discovery Train Itinerary

<u>Site</u>	<u>Publicized Dates</u>	<u>Verified Dates</u>
Banff, AB	Jun 16 - Jun 18	Jun 16 - Jun 18
Kelowna, BC	Jun 20 - Jun 22	Jun 20 - Jun 22
Victoria, BC	Jun 27 - Jun 29	Jun 27 - Jun 29
Port Alberni, BC	July 01 - July 02	July 01 - July 02
Nanaimo, BC	July 03 - July 04	July 03 - July 04
Kamloops, BC	July 07 - July 09	July 07 - July 09
Red Deer, AB	July 13 - July 15	July 13 - July 15
Swift Current, SK	July 18 - July 19	July 18 - July 19
Yorkton, SK	July 22 - July 23	July 22 - July 23
The Pas, MB	July 22 - July 23	July 22 - July 23
Churchill, MB	July 29 - July 30	July 29 - July 30
Thompson, MB	Aug 01 - Aug 02	Aug 01 - Aug 02
Dauphin, MB	Aug 04 - Aug 06	Aug 04 - Aug 06
Rouyn - Noranda, QC	Aug 16 - Aug 18	Aug 16 - Aug 18
Roberval, QC	Aug 20	Aug 20 - Aug 21
Chicoutimi, QC	Aug 21 - Aug 25	Aug 21 - Aug 25
Rimouski, QC	Aug 28 - Aug 30	Aug 28 - Aug 30
Campbellton, NB	Aug 31 - Sep 01	Aug 31 - Sep 01
Newcastle, NB	Sep 03 - Sep 04	Sep 03 - Sep 04
Charlottetown, PE	Sep 07 - Sep 11	Sep 07 - Sep 11
Truro, NS	Sep 14 - Sep 16	Oct 8 - Oct 11
Yarmouth, NS	Sep 19 - Sep 20	Sep 19 - Sep 20
Liverpool, NS	Sep 21 - Sep 22	Sep 21 - Sep 22
New Glasgow, NS	Sep 24 - Sep 25	Sep 24 - Sep 25
St. John's, NL	Sep 27 - Sep 29	Sep 28 - Sep 29
Botwood, NL	Sep 30 - Oct 01	Sep 30 - Oct 01
Argentia, NL	Oct 03 - Oct 04	No reported use
Corner Brook, NL	Oct 05 - Oct 07	Oct 05 - Oct 07
Port Aux Basques, NL	Oct 08	No reported use
Edmunston, NB	Oct 13 - Oct 15	Oct 13 - Oct 15
St. Foy, QC	Oct 19 - Oct 22	Oct 18 - Oct 22
Sherbrooke, QC	Oct 24 - Oct 27	Oct 24 - Oct 27
Ottawa, ON	Oct 30 - Nov 04	Oct 30 - Nov 04

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

The following is a transcription of a local Kamloops newspaper clipping:

“History is better than it ever was” by Bob Lee, Reporter, The News

The people who write the textbooks for Canadian school children could take a page out of the presentation being offered to **Kamloops** residents and tourists in the Discovery Train.

At least that was the response from one woman who experienced a half-hour immersion in Canada's natural, economic and political history at the \$7.5 million musuem on wheels.

“Fantastic, spine-tingling, call it what you want. But it was great. It's hard to believe that that was the same history I was taught way back in public school and high school,” a visitor from Alberta said.

Almost 3,000 people slid through the train's moving sidewalk on Saturday. An even larger number was expected Sunday and today, when the train officially chugs out of Kamloops at 10 p.m.

Funded by eight major companies and nine of Canada's 10 provinces, Quebec is not a supporter the train condenses 16,000 years into one half-hour extravaganza, complete with audio-visual tricks, electronic gadgetry and hundreds of historical objects.

Besides being free, visitors have not been inconvenienced by long line ups to enter the 14 car exhibit.

The germ of the idea for a cross-country moving museum; it's slated to ride the rails for five years goes back to 1967 and the success of the six-car Centennial Train.

The National Museums of Canada were able to buy what had served as the Freedom Train of the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial.

The purchase price was also low at \$636,000. (The rolling stock has an estimated worth of \$6 million.)

After raising more than \$2.3 million through help of the nine provinces, the train began its journey in July, 1978. Ottawa also hopes to raise \$4 million through the sale of souvenirs on the train.

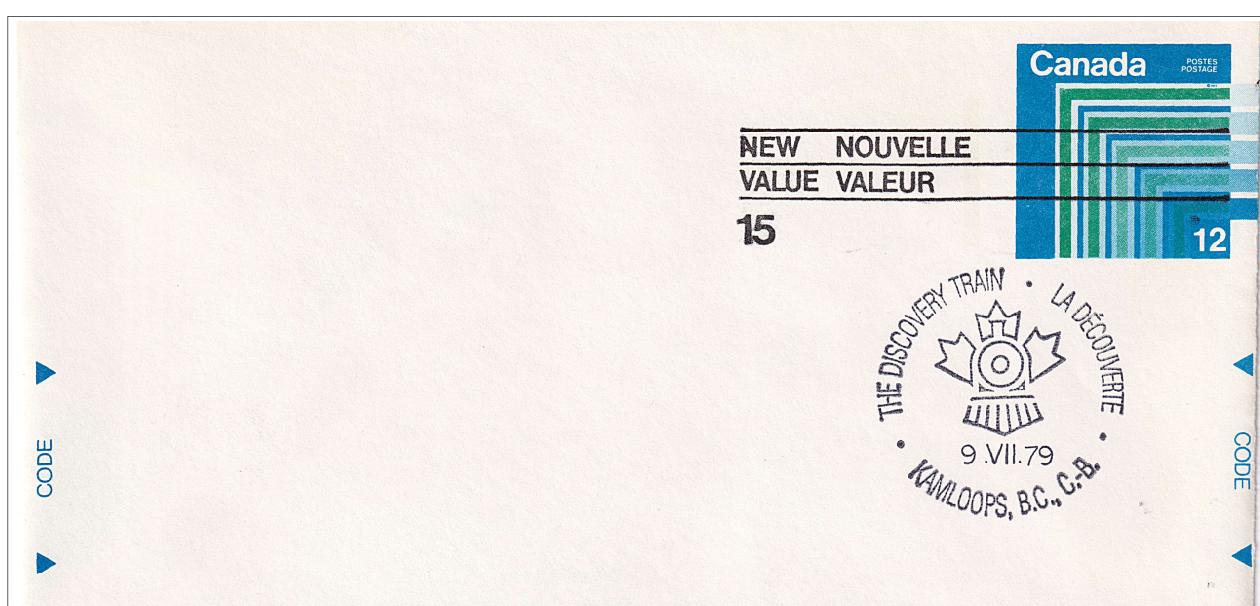
The display begins with a three-car study of Canada's diverse landforms, including the Rockies and a trunk portion of a Douglas Fir.

From there come the struggles of prehistoric man, the lives of the Indians and the Inuit, New France, British North America and a life-like Confederation scene with Sir John A. Macdonald and Georges-Etienne Cartier. (Through a process known as Animatronics, their lips move when they speak.)

The wave of immigrants in the late 1800's and early 1900's is next, followed by the pre-war industrial boom, the Great War of 1914-18, post-war expansion and the Great Depression.

The trip continues to the 1970's, capped off with an irreverent finale depicting a tuba powered by the exhalations of a circle of Ottawa bureaucrats.

After leaving Kamloops, the train moves onto Red Deer, Alberta.



THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

ALL ABOARD



the DISCOVERY TRAIN welcomes you

In fourteen display cars, the Discovery Train will lead you on an exciting half-hour journey through Canada's landscape and history.

The displays contain over 1,200 artifacts and specimens from museums across Canada; with these, you will travel from prehistory to the present. Let our moving sidewalk take you on a personal voyage of discovery — a unique Canadian experience.

The Discovery Train is only part of the Canadian adventure. Visit your local museums for other chapters of our story.

Mementoes of the Discovery Train and distinctive Canadian gifts are available in the souvenir kiosk and boutique car. The sale of these articles helps support the operation of the Train and is part of the merchandising programme of the National Museums of Canada.

Special thanks to the Government of Canada, the Provinces of Canada, Canadian National, CP Rail, General Motors of Canada Limited, The Great-West Life Assurance Company, Labatt Breweries of Canada Limited, The Royal Bank of Canada, The Devonian Foundation, The Richard Ivey Foundation and the Macdonald Stewart Foundation.

No food, pets, smoking or photography on the train.

National Museums
of Canada

Musées nationaux
du Canada

A hand out given to attendees on the train

THE 1979 DISCOVERY TRAIN

KINDERSLEY
AUGUST 9 & 10
12 TO 8 PM

LADIES & GENTLEMEN, BOYS & GIRLS
Welcome to the Greatest Country in the World!



Discovery Train

CAR #1
DISCOVER CANADA'S EAST COAST
A Sandy Beach, Seals, Lobsters on the ocean floor!

CAR #2
THE EASTERN WOODLANDS & GRASSLANDS
A Forest in Autumn, Snowstorms in the Arctic, Grasshoppers
AND THE AURORA BOREALIS!

CAR #3
CANADA'S WEST
The Alberta Badlands, The Rockies, The Great Rain Forest,
AND A TRIP BACK TO 14,000 BC!

CAR #4
PRE-HISTORIC MAN
The Development of Man from 14,000 to 5,000 BC

CAR #5
INDIANS & INUITS
Blackfoot & Buffalo, Fishing & Hunting with the Athabaskan

CAR #6
THE FRENCH IN CANADA
The Perils of Jacques Cartier, Exploration & The Fur Trade

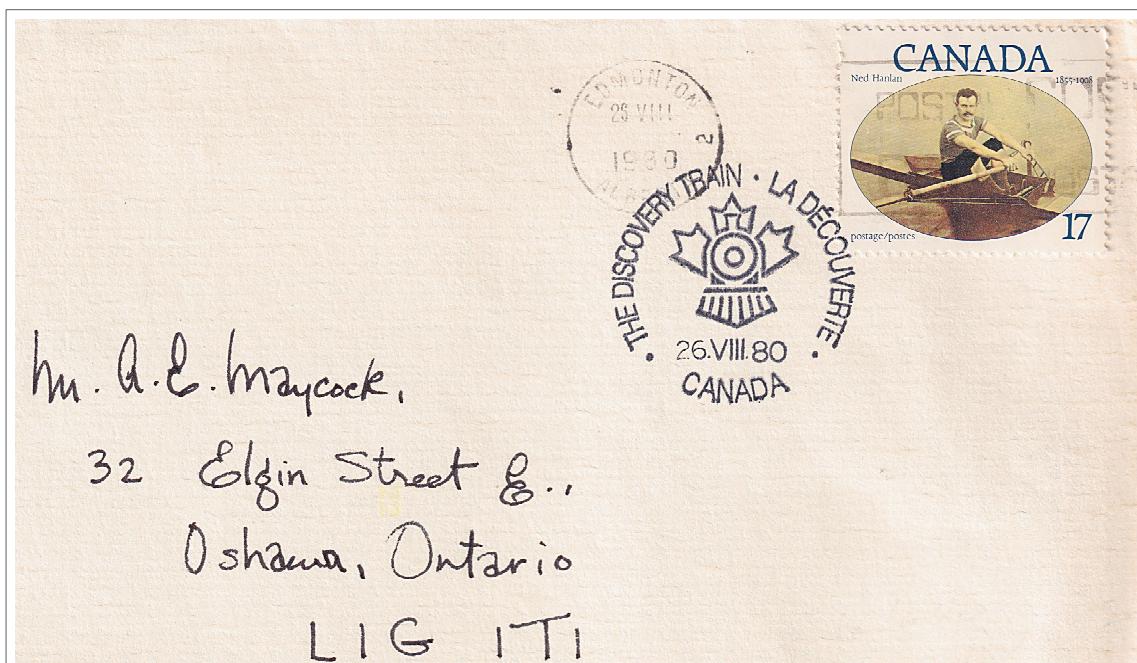
CAR #7
BRITISH NORTH AMERICA
Conflict! Conversation! Confederation!
THE CPR OPENS UP THE WEST!

CAR #8
IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE FROM EUROPE
Leaving from Hamburg! Arriving in Halifax! Homestead in Alberta!

A guide given to attendees on the train

1980 Discovery Train Itinerary

<u>Site</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Valleyfield, QC	May 07 – May 09
Matane, QC	May 13 – May 14
Bathurst, NB	May 17 – May 19
Amherst, NS	May 21 – May 23
Port Hastings, NS	May 25 - May 26
Port Aux Basques, NL	May 29 – May 31
Kentville, NS	Jun 04 – Jun 05
Grand Falls, NB	Jun 08 – Jun 09
Hamilton, ON	Jun 13 – Jun 18
Welland, ON	Jun 20 – Jun 23
Windsor, ON	Jun 26 – Jul 01
Sudbury, ON	Jul 04 – Jul 06
Kenora, ON	Jul 09 – Jul 10
Portage La Prairie, MB	Jul 19 – Jul 20
Swan River, MB	Aug 03 – Aug 07
Kindersley, SK	Aug 09 – Aug 10
North Battleford, SK	Aug 13 – Aug 15
Vegreville, AB	Aug 17 – Aug 19
Edmonton, AB	Aug 21 – Aug 26
Hinton, AB	Aug 29 – Aug 31
Port Coquitlam, BC	Sep 03 – Sep 07
Richmond, BC	Sep 10 – Sep 14
Penticton, BC	Sep 18 – Sep 21
Nelson, BC	Sep 24 – Sep 25
Lethbridge, AB	Sep 28 – Oct 01
Calgary, AB	Oct 03 – Oct 08
Brooks, AB	Oct 10 – Oct 11
Moose Jaw, SK	Oct 13 – Oct 17
Estevan, SK	Oct 19 – Oct 20
Ottawa, ON	Oct 25 – Nov 01



A cover cancelled with the generic postmark on the train at Edmonton and then posted to Oshawa.

The Last Run of the Halifax & Campbellton R.P.O.

R.I.P. H & C 12 by Mike Campbell

Campbellton, N.B., Jan. 29, 1971: It is mid-morning and cold. A small group watches silently as a train moves slowly out of the station, picking up speed gradually as it moves along the snow-encrusted track-bed.

For those watching from the platform, it means the passing of an era. The steady clanging of the bell atop the diesel locomotive rings out the death-knell of the last surviving Railway Post Office in Atlantic Canada, Halifax & Campbellton RPO, or H & C 12.

When the cars pull around the first turn in the tracks, one more unique service in Canadian postal history will have vanished into oblivion. The locomotive winds its way around the bend, followed by the baggage car and then the RPO. After that? Just cars.

Inside this rolling office, five men work in silence. They represent the last of a dying breed - the railway mail clerk - once as mysterious as he was glamorous, in his task of sorting the mails as he sped along the trails of winding iron tracks and swinging lanterns.

He is disappearing quietly and without fanfare into the pages of history, another victim of branch line abandonments, cutbacks in passenger train service and a swing to highway and air passage of the mails over the past two decades.

Gone is the railway mail clerk who inspired ballads and poems about his work. Few will remember the shouts from raucous revellers in saloons and taverns calling upon the piano player to play again the ballad of *The Great Mail Robbery*.

Gone is the occupation which once so intrigued young men that they studied it by correspondence, and gone is the way of life that Kipling once acknowledged when he wrote, "up, up through the night goes the over-land mail."

Gone too are the once-familiar sounds of railway companies of yesteryear - the Albert, the Intercolonial, the Canadian Pacific and the Temiscouata. RPOs were as much a part of these as the chugging locomotives themselves.

On the Albert Railway, the old A & S RPO was always to be found as the snake-like behemoth journeyed from Albert to Salisbury. The Intercolonial had five RPOs. These were: Moncton & Saint John RPO, Truro & Saint John RPO, Halifax & Saint John RPO, and Halifax & Campbellton RPO. Canadian Pacific had McAdam Junction & Edmundston RPO, Saint John & Vanceboro RPO and Saint John & Montreal RPO, while the Temiscouata carried the lone Connor & Riviere du Loup RPO on its tracks.

During an average one-way trip in the heyday of the H & C RPO, the mail handled would include 500 registered letters; 600 to 700 letter packages; bags of first class mail containing an average of 1,000 direct letter packages; and 250 to 300 bags of newspapers, magazines, circular mail and parcel post items. On some days the total number of bags handled would exceed 2,000.

At the turn of the century 232 cities, towns, villages, hamlets and settlements in New Brunswick alone were dependent upon Halifax & Campbellton RPO for their mails. How many today remember places like Cowan Creek, Ellenstown, Tingby, Pepere, Moorehouse or Milton Brae? They too have gone into the musty pages of history.

Today in New Brunswick, there are nine railway mail clerks operating on RPOs H & C 11 and H & C 12. Tomorrow there will be none. While the RPOs are doomed to extinction, one wonders at the future of the railway mail clerks who operated them.

For the present, as in the past, these men will be absorbed into the regular post offices.

Some, like **Merrit Chessier** of Tide Head and **Fred Quinn** of Campbellton have already found berths at the Campbellton Post Office. Others such as **Bill Cody**, Chief RMC in Campbellton, **William Dawson**, **Donald Upton**, **R. Bain McAllister**, all of Campbellton; **Oley Olscamp**, **Bob Garland**, and **Bob Quinn** of Saint John will be finding positions in various other post offices in the province according to their choice, with few exceptions.

When car 9733 returned the 376 miles to Campbellton at 1:50 a.m. on January 31, all railway post office services were terminated in Atlantic Canada.

This article is from a photo-copied clipping believed to have been printed in a Canada Post Office employee internal newsletter, "Communications '71", edited by Grant Johnston, in 1971.

The Last Run of the Halifax & Campbellton R.P.O.



MT-113.01, HALIFAX - CAMPBELLTON / R.P.O. , 12, JAN 29, 71



Interior of the Halifax & Campbellton RPO car en route from Campbellton to Moncton, NB. Canadian National Railways Train 12. L to R : J. A. Britten, R. A. Aitken (C/C), and V. G. Blois. Photo by Ed Maloney

New Reports



MT-96.01, HALIFAX & CAMPBELLTON · R.P.O / . , NO, MY 13, 08 , is the first report of an NO, November month slug being used as a north direction indicium for the hammer, listing and run. (Reported by **Ross Gray**)



John Beddows, after examining this example, noted that the **punctuation** of the catalogue text for hammer **QC-294.09**, MONT. & TOR. G. T. RY / 9 , NW, DE 10, 97 , was incorrect. Unlike the other contemporaneous hammers of the listing, the **“Y” is a full capital** and has no period after it.



Murray Smith reports a new **late date** for hammer **ON-282.02**, LONDON & WINDSOR / R.Y.P. O. , W AP 10, (9)6 .

WT-957.02, WINNIPEG & PRINCE ALBERT R.P.O. / NO 2 , S, JUN 17, 07 , is a new **early date** for both the hammer and the listing and the **first report of an S direction indicium**.

(Reported by **Ross Gray**)



Colourful Nicknames

Many railway post offices were given nicknames by the generations of clerks who worked on them.

Some were descriptive, such as the ‘Hellish, Slow & Wobbly’ (Halifax, Bridgewater & Yarmouth RPO). Or the ‘Judique Flyer’ (Port Hawkesbury to Inverness). Apparently, Judique was once a wild Cape Breton village along the line.

Others were sarcastic, such as the ‘Short Haul’ (Hudson’s Bay & Flin Flon RPO). A clerk could be away from home for up to three weeks on that run.

The Montreal & Brockville was the ‘Moccasin’ because Indians built that section of the railroad, while the Montreal & Toronto was the ‘Trunk’ because it was once owned by the Grand Trunk Railway.

‘Big & Love’ was the Biggar & Laverna, ‘Sask, Hard & Wet’ was the Saskatoon, Hardisty and Wetaskiwan, and the ‘Swede’ was the Saskatoon, Wainwright and Edmonton.

And there were many more, including the ‘Crow’, the ‘Q’, the ‘Drum’ and the ‘ICR’.

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