

-Synopsis-

Railway Post Office Markings

Used in the beginning of the operation of the Railway post Office (R.P.O.) in 1853 on the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway that ran between Montreal and Island Pond, Vermont and the Quebec & Richmond Railway. Both railways were absorbed by the Grand Trunk Railway shortly after completion. However, the postal authorities continued to use the original cancelling devices between Montreal and Island Pond until June of 1855.

The whole purpose of this railway was to create a fast route to the Atlantic Ocean. Although the Grand Trunk continued on to Portland, Maine this exhibit deals with markings to Island Pond and between Quebec and Richmond in the Grand Trunk era only.

The first cover seen is an example of the first marking used by the newly formed R.P.O. It reads S^T LAWRENCE & AT^LC RAILROAD / ·POST OFFICE· The device was used between October 22, 1853 and January 28, 1854 and used in an interim basis while waiting for cancelling devices ordered from John Francis of Clerkenwell. Eight examples are known and accounted for. It is suspected two hammers were made but the known markings are not clear enough to do a hammer study. However, seven of the eight markings addressed to Quebec are in red ink. The latest known example inbound to Montreal is in black ink. It must be brought to your attention that mail was not processed on the trains at that time. All outbound and inbound mail was processed in Montreal.

The next page will show two examples of the device ordered from John Francis of Clerkenwell. Two hammers were made and are illustrated. The first example is a wrapper bearing the earliest date for hammer two. There are two identical examples of this wrapper known. The second cover on the page also bears a hammer two marking but also shows that mail was by this time being processed aboard the train. Another interesting cover on the fifth page indicates the importance of the construction of Victoria Bridge across the St. Lawrence River and what it meant to the speed in which mail was delivered. With regards to postal history, this tells a very interesting story.

The Quebec and Richmond line section has two great pages of note. The first would be the page with two covers with the marking QUEBEC & RICHMOND R.W. LETTER / EAST. The first cover is ex Harry Lussy. It remained unseen for many years due to the fact Mr. Lussey was a collector of telegraph covers and this marking is on a Montreal Telegraph cover. It is illustrated on page 84 of T.P.G. Shaw's 1963 catalogue titled Handbook and Catalogue of Canadian Transportation Postmarks. Although this R.P.O. post mark was in use from December 5, 1854 to July 17, 1855, very few covers if any will be found with a winter postmark due to snow and the shutting down of the line from January to the end of March.

The second great page is a marking on a blue report sheet with a Grand Trunk Railway heading explaining the receipt of a broken bag of silver from the Arthabaska and Three Rivers postal clerk. It is the only such sheet with that R.P.O. marking seen by this exhibitor

The exhibit is made up of some of the most powerful material known within these two lines in the Grand Trunk era between 1853 and 1923. There are early and late periods of use, only known

markings and very scarce material. The very scarce and unique material is triple outlined in red while the earliest and latest dates are outlined in single red.

Hopefully you will find some enjoyment from this exhibit.

References;

The Handbook and Catalogue of Canadian Transportation postmarks

T.P.G. Shaw

Catalogue of Canadian Railway Cancellations and Related Railway postmarks including
Selected Waterway Postmarks

Prepared and Edited by Ross Gray

On Track: The Railway Mail Service in Canada

Susan McLeod O'Reilly

Railway Post office Study Group Newsletters

Edited by; Wm. G. Robinson and Ross Gray.

This exhibitor also had more than thirty- one years experience as a brakeman/Conductor on passenger and freight service between Montreal and Island Pond and Montreal and Toronto

Canadian Railway Post office Markings

Used in the operation of the Railway Post office between Montreal and Island Pond, Vermont and Quebec & Richmond.

The purpose of this exhibit is to show the development of the railway post office from its beginning on October 22, 1853 on the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway and the Quebec & Richmond Railway. The exhibit also emphasizes the effect the railways and the railway post office had in the handling of mail and the difference it made in the social and economical development of the country.

In 1843 the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway was formed to build a rail line from Montreal, Lower Canada (*Quebec*) to Island Pond, Vermont where it connected with its America counterpart the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railway creating a fast link to the ice free ocean port of Portland, Maine. Construction began in 1847 and was completed July 11, 1853. The Railway post Office began operations October 22, 1853.

Specific postmark devices were made for this new service indicating the name of the railway, St. Lawrence & Atlantic. The Grand trunk assumed control of this and the Quebec & Richmond Railway shortly after the postal marking devices were ordered. The devices were used until such time new devices using initial and terminating depots were made and delivered.

Page 1	Title page, Table of contents and map
Page 2	St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway markings
Page 4	Montreal & Island Pond markings
Page 9	Island Pond & Montreal markings
Page 11	Quebec & Richmond Markings
Page 16	Montreal & Quebec marking

