



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
 POSTAL HISTORY  
 RESEARCH GROUP

Volume 13 – Number 1

Whole number 49

April 2004

**LANGLEY FORT**

One of the problems of collecting postal history is that many covers of the 1920's have more interesting backs than fronts. Of the "Langley" post offices, of which there are well over a dozen, the "Langley Fort", particularly with an attractive corner card is one of the hardest to find. On the other hand the back of the cover is even more interesting in that it not only listed the winners of the Live Stock Exposition but also makes reference to the Foot-and-mouth epidemic of 1914-15.

**DEEP CREEK FARM LTD.**  
 CHAS. E. HOPE, MANAGER  
 LANGLEY FORT  
 B. C.



Breeders of Registered  
 Aberdeen Angus  
CATTLE  
 Poland China  
HOGS

Mr. Geo. S. Mayer,  
 PORT CLEMENTS, B.C..

The truly remarkable showing of Aberdeen-Angus at the great International Livestock Exposition, at Chicago, is ample proof that they are the best beef cattle. Read carefully the table of winnings shown below.

**The International Live Stock Exposition Steer Grand Championships**

Year	Single-Steer	Steer Herd	Carload	Carcass
1900	Aberdeen-Angus	*	Aberdeen-Angus	Short Horn
1901	Hereford	*	Hereford	Aberdeen-Angus
1902	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1903	Hereford-Angus	Hereford	Hereford	Aberdeen-Angus
1904	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1905	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1906	Hereford	S'horn Gallow.	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1907	Short Horn	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1908	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1909	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1910	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Short Horn	Aberdeen-Angus
1911	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1912	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1913	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1914†	Hereford-S'horn	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1917	Short Horn	Short Horn	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus
1918	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus	Hereford	Aberdeen-Angus
1919	Hereford	Short Horn	Aberdeen-Angus	Aberdeen-Angus

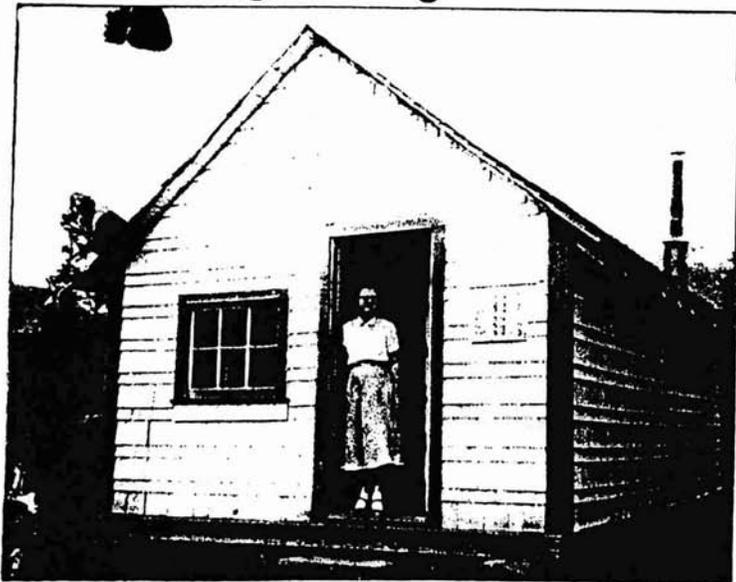
† Foot-and-mouth disease prevented shows in 1914 and 15.

\* No such class.

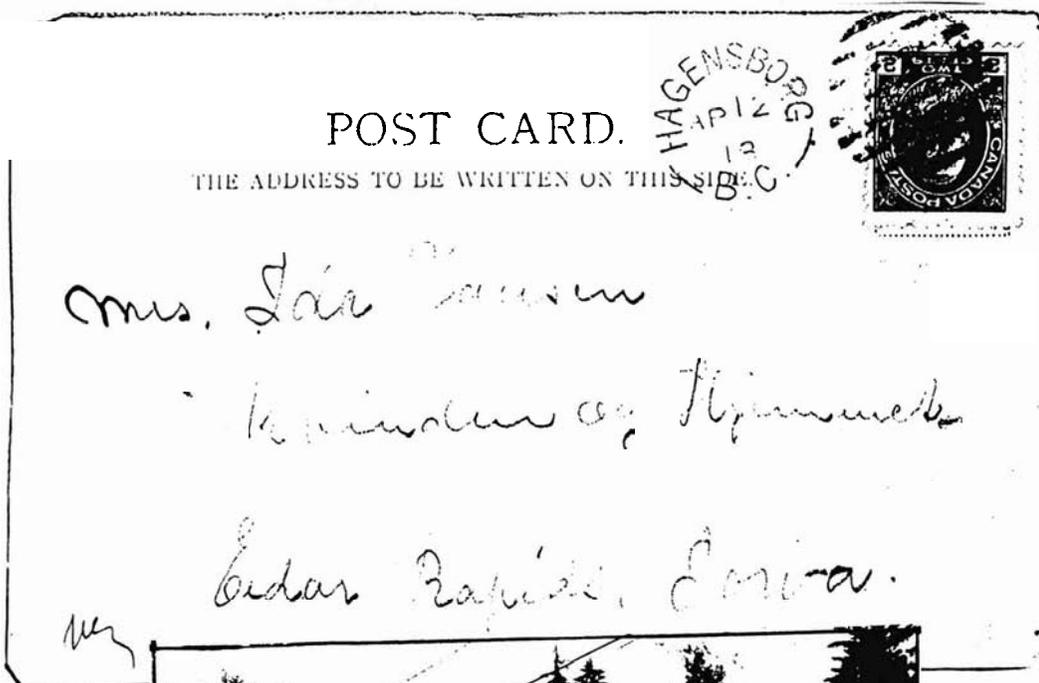
Grand Championships: Aberdeen-Angus, 54; Herefords, 7; Short Horns, 6; Crossbreds, 2; Mixed, 1.

# Old Hagensborg Post Office

Thanks to Peter Fralick



Elma Olsen, post mistress 1953-1956



Anna Ounpuu (nee Olsen -age 8).  
Currently the assitant post mistress.



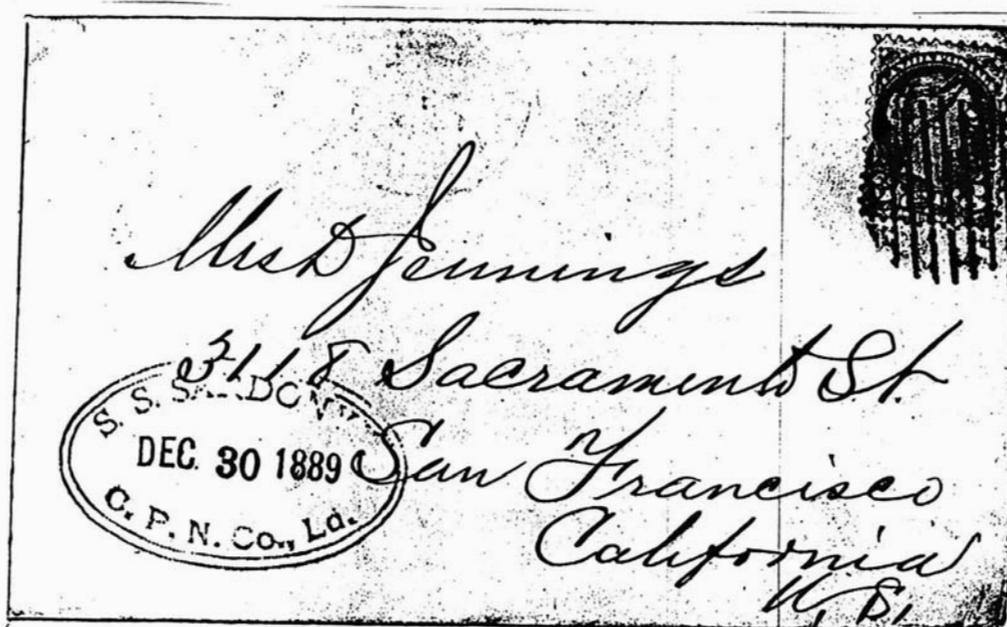
Hagensborg PO 1978

### BRITISH COLUMBIA SHIP "WAY MAIL"

The distribution and handling of mail by coastal steamers operating on the British Columbia coast has created much confusion among collectors. The recent publication of the article on "Questionable 'Paquebot' covers" (Maple Leaves, January 2001) showed that many collectors, including many authorities on paquebot mail, did not fully understand the post office position on mail posted on coastal ships operating in Canadian waters. In a letter dated April 14, 1958, Mr. R.F. Reid, Postmaster at Vancouver, states: "*Canadian mail bearing Canadian postage stamps was treated as way mail and bore the Post Office impression from the date stamp at the office of actual mailing*". In other words the letters mailed on board ships operating in coastal waters were treated in the same way as mail posted in railway station letter boxes. In the case of the railway way mail an R.P.O. hand stamp was used to cancel the mail while in the case of ship way mail the purser's date stamp was used for the same purpose.

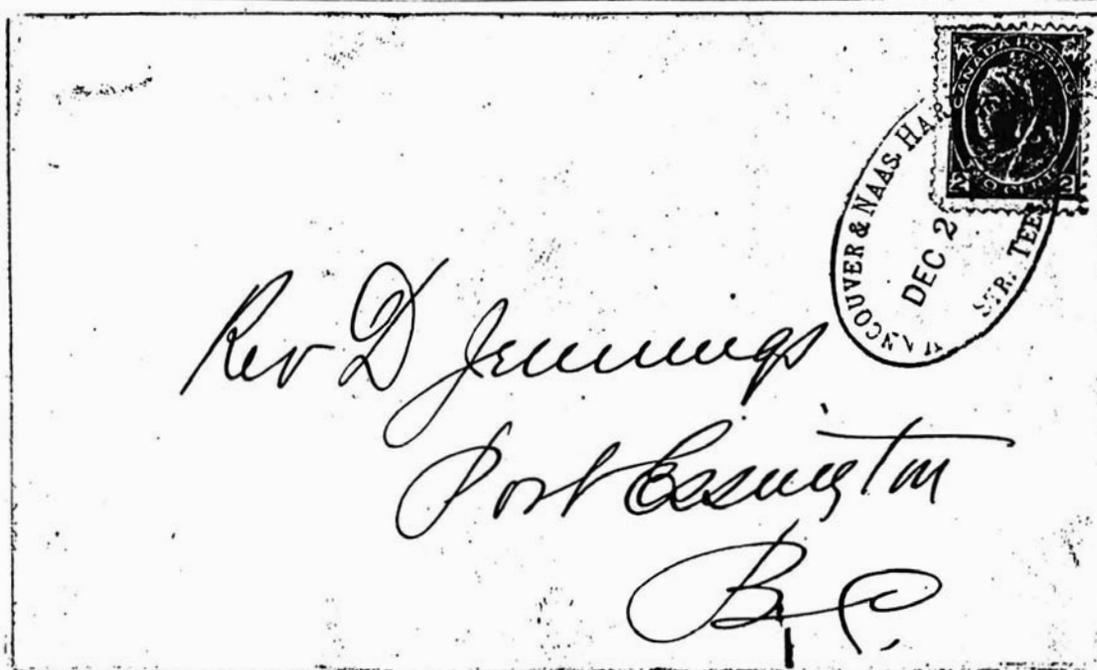
The acceptance of mail by pursers on ship carrying mail was required under the postal regulations in effect from the 1870's to the 1950's, which stated: "*Mail couriers are authorized and required to receive letters offered to them whilst on the road between one post office and another provided that when a letter is so offered the distance from the nearest post office exceeds one mile. Such letters are termed Way Letters, and should be prepaid by postage stamps.*"

During the Colonial period mail along the British Columbia coast was transported by ships of the Hudson's Bay Company or by Indian canoe and rarely showed the method of transport. Following Confederation in 1871 the Canadian Post Office became involved and issued mail contracts for the transportation of mail between the few post offices located along the coast. At the same time it was assumed that ship captains would accept mail at way points for delivery the nearest post office.



S.S. *Sardonyx* - probably mailed December 30, 1899 by Rev. D. Jennings at Port Simpson Mission. Earliest reported use October 21, 1889.

The Canadian Pacific Navigation Company was founded in 1883, but it was not until the founding of the Union Steamship Company of B.C., in 1889, that the marking of ship way mail with the pursers hand stamp began. In that year ship markings from both the *Sardonyx* and the *Princess Louise* are known. The exact reason for the marking of mail using the purser's hand stamp is not known but it is assumed it was to advertise the mail service in the hopes of obtaining a mail contract. The coastal population was increasing rapidly and the number of small settlements continued to expand and as a result the Canadian Post Office Department was forced to take action to provide mail service to these settlements scattered along the British Columbia coast. In 1901, the post office department supplied the first official RPO hand stamp, reading "VANCOUVER & NAAS HARB. R.P.O. / STR. TEES" and within the next few years a number of other coastal ships were designated as unofficial R.P.O.'s. The practice of designating some ships as traveling post offices continued until the late 1950's mainly on the Alaska and West Coast routes.



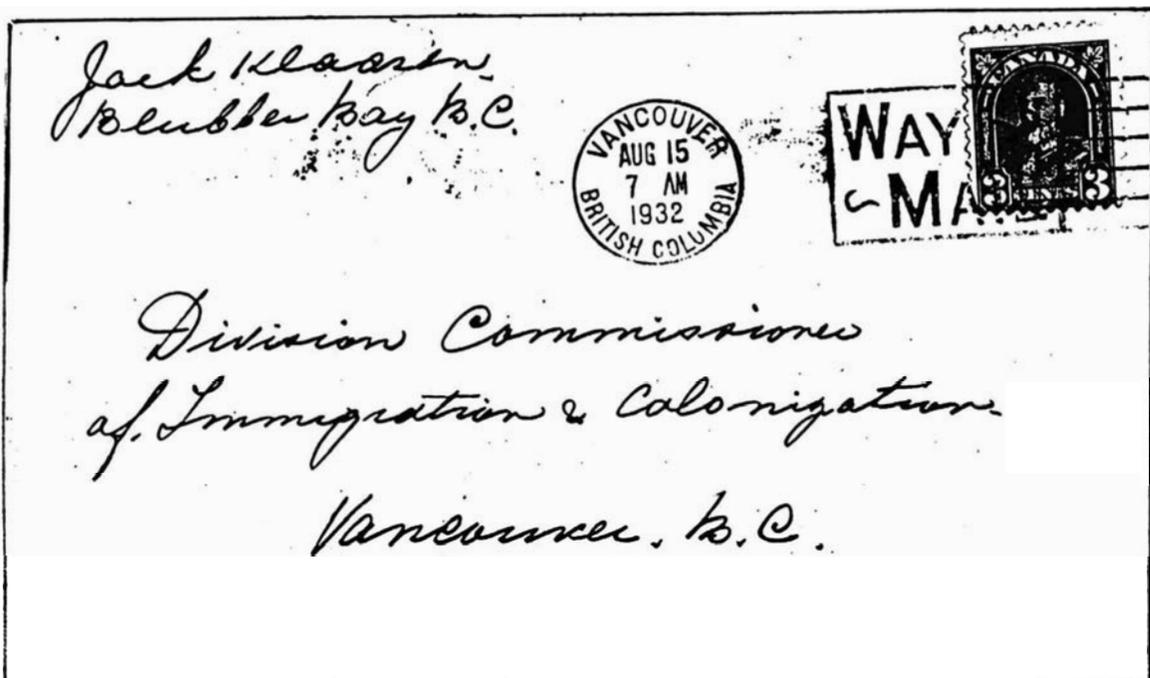
Vancouver & Naas Harbour R.P.O. / Dec 2, 1902 / *Str Tees*  
 Earliest reported use September 9, 1901.

In 1958, Dr. A. W. Perry wrote to the Post Office Department, the C.P.R., the C.N.R., and Union Steamships, requesting information on past and present practices of dealing with coastal way mail. Syd Tyson, Superintendent of the B.C. Coast Service of the C.P.R. in turn wrote to a number of active and retired Pursers asking how they had dealt with mail posted on the ship.

Retired Purser, C.F. Timms, replied - "When I joined the *Princess Beatrice* running to Skagway in the spring of 1907 we would never refuse to carry the odd letter if postage was on it and we would cancel them with the ordinary Purser's Rubber stamp and drop them into the nearest Post Office when we went to clear from Customs in Canadian Ports. If mail were from the south we would bring them through. They sometimes contained shipping documents covering our cargo so we could hardly refuse to handle them. It seemed to be more or less official and I don't think we were paid for it except under the usual mail contract if [it] applied to our particular ship on route. The same applied to the *Queen City* when I was Purser there in 1908 on the Rivers Inlet Route. ... These letters were just on the Northern Runs & probably on the West Coast."

Purser A.N. Taylor, explains the matter further when he states - "Cancelling stamps were authorized by the Post Office Inspector, the late E.M. Haynes and were used on all Northern and West Coast Routes, this included Vancouver-Skagway. The Post Office furnished Defiance Daters for Northern steamers and the West Coast steamers had proper metal stamps as used in the P.O. On the Alaska route we were allowed to accept both U.S. and Can. postage providing our stamp was on the letter. About 1930 this was stopped for some unknown reason ... From that time on we could only accept mail on board with Canadian Stamps, and no cancelling"

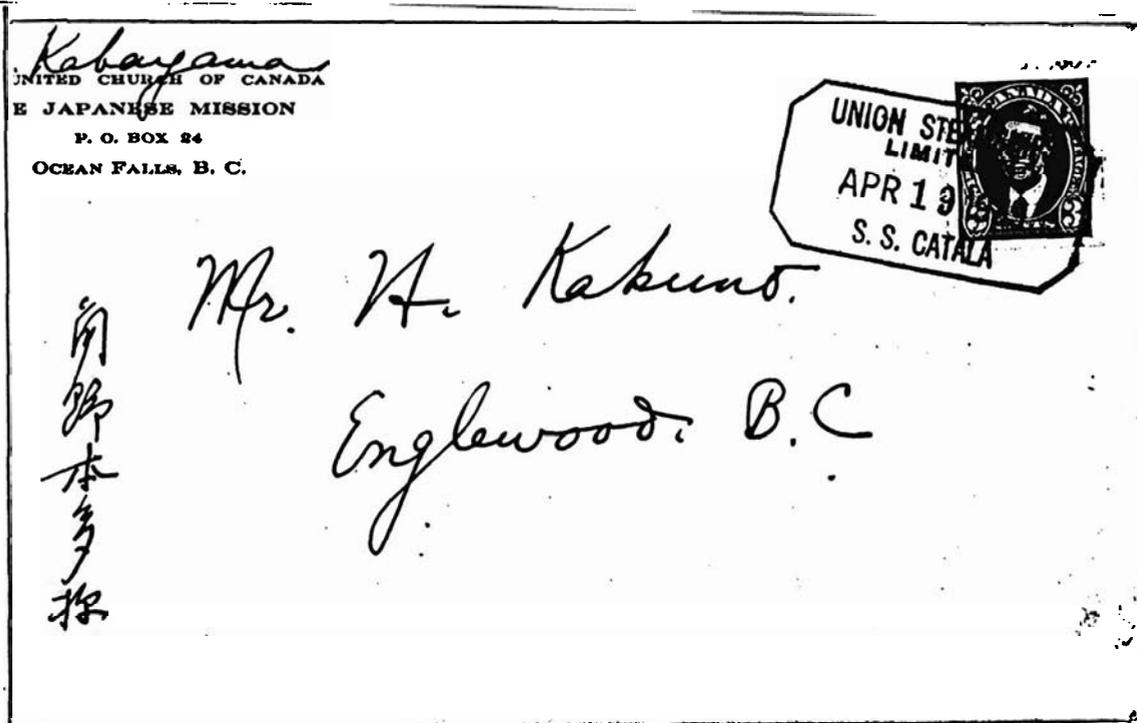
On the other hand Purser H.J. Beale gives slightly different view. He states - "However, we did handle waymail on our Alaska Route, on all passenger vessels in service. A mailbag was hung at [the] foot of [the] gangway at each port, and letters collected brought to [the] Purser's Office, where they were cancelled by [the] Asst. Purser with special cancellation stamp. The mail was then turned over to members of Deck Dept. acting as Mailman, who then delivered it to Postal Dept. at connecting ports, for point of delivery".



Vancouver "WAY MAIL" probably mailed at Blubber Bay on the northern end of Texada Island. Blubber Bay was served by the *Lady Evelyn* leaving Vancouver on Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday.

The probable reason for ending the cancelling of mail or board coastal ships was the introduction of rubber "WAY MAIL" hand stamps at the Vancouver post office in November 1929 and the installation of a "WAY MAIL" rapid cancelling machine in 1932. These markings appear to have been mainly used on mail from the south coast where Purser often picked up mail at non post office points as a convenience to coastal residents.

According to Mr. G.A. Rushton, of Union Steamships Limited, – *"In 1934, approximately, by special direction of the Postal Department, we ceased cancelling ships' on voyage mail and all letters picked up at any ports, where there was no Postmaster or office were delivered to the G.P.O. in a special Purser's sack. The ships' cancellation was, of course, only used for letters handed on board where there was no Post Office. It was also used on 'late mail' delivered to the ship's gangway, but this practice was discontinued at the same time."*



Letter mailed on the S.S. Catala at Ocean Falls on Wednesday, April 19, 1939 for delivery to Englewood on the return trip from Prince Rupert. The letter appears to have not entered the mail system. The S.S. Catala was relieving the S.S. Cardena on the Prince Rupert route.

The provision of way mail letter sacks and the change in post office policy may explain why genuine "way mail" from the Princess Adelaide is unknown as Purser Timms states – *"I remember however, that later in Arthur Graves time as Purser on the Adelaide on [the] Ocean Falls run that the P.O. supplied a way mail sack that was placed on the passenger gangway & sent to [the] Post office at terminals with the regular mails and recognized as official but I doubt if this was Ship Stamped."* Purser Timms then concludes, *"It [ship stamping] was never done on local runs except as a special favour of a deep sea shipping Co. with one eye closed."* On the other hand Purser D. Hardy, Purser on the Princess Elaine states, *"I have in the past cancelled interport mail on the northern runs, but in the case of the "cover collectors" requesting cancellations on local runs I would return them uncanceled."*

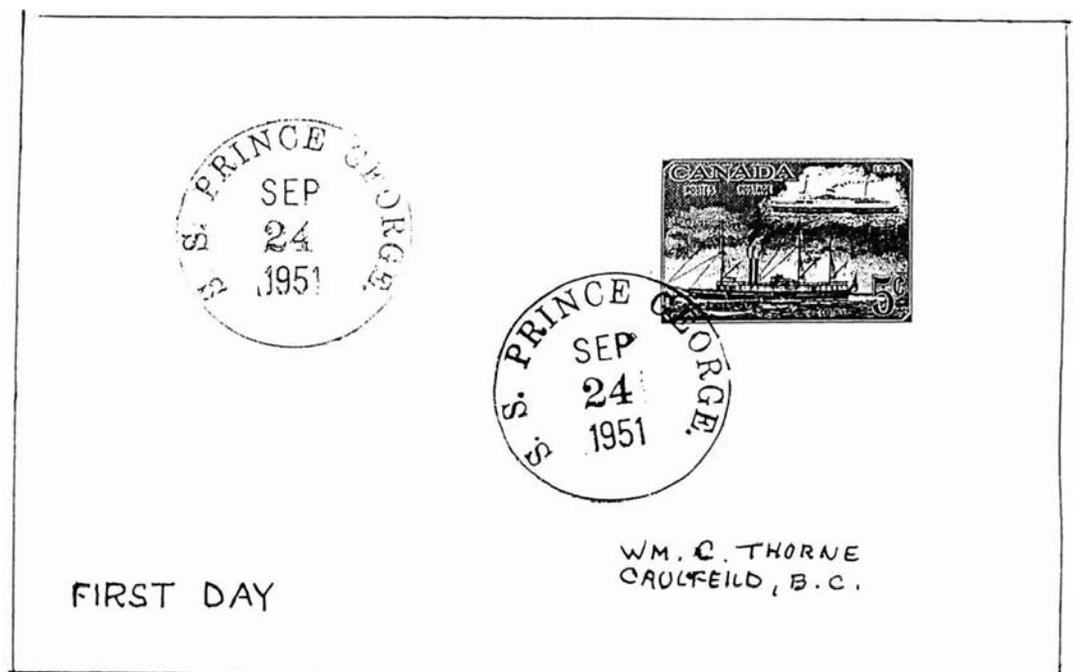
G.S. Towill, Public Relations Representative for the Canadian National Railways explains in some detail regarding the cancelling of mail on the S.S. *Prince George II* in the late 1950's when the ship was serving the tourist trade to Alaska. He states: "*I am now advised that in November, 1950, our Mail & Baggage Agent at that time requested postal authorities to supply two identifying stamps bearing the names S.S. "Prince Rupert" and S.S. "Prince George. So far as is known, the request was made mainly as a service for passengers aboard the vessels who wished to have their mail stamped with the names of the ships. There is also, of course, some thought that these stamps would provide some publicity for our ships. Evidently the original postal order for the use of such stamps or marking devices was to cancel postage stamps on mail posted aboard coastal vessels which was destined for delivery at a port where no post office or post master was located. In as much as our vessels, ... called at ports that has post office, it can be assumed the stamps were merely for show.*" He concludes: "*It appears the present procedure [1958] on the S.S. "Prince George" is to oblige passengers, so requesting, by means of stamping envelopes with our Purser's Office stamp which carries the name of the ship.*"

The official position was that, with the exception of ships designated R.P.O. or T.P.O., the practice of cancelling "way letters" with the pursers hand stamps ended in the early 1930's following the installation of "way mail" cancelling equipment at Vancouver. On the other hand, an examination of existing cover shows that the practice of hand stamping continued until the mid 1940's, mainly on mail originating at non-post office points. At the same time philatelically inspired Cancel to Order (CTO) covers were being produced by many collectors of ship markings or maritime mail cancellations, who were actively writing to pursers requesting them to service the covers with the ship hand stamp. In some cases it appears the purser obliged the collector by stamping the envelope well clear of the postage or in others placed the cover in another envelope with the result the envelope rarely passed through the regular mail and as a result carry no postal markings. The resulting "Cancel to Order" (CTO) covers often are much more attractive than the run of the mill "way mail" letters and are often priced by dealers well above their true value as CTO items.



Post Office Proof Strike  
NOV 6 1950

First day cover with  
S.S. Prince George  
stamp SEP 24 1951



**Cancellation appeal**

Last year, we received and began using our very own cancellation, not only bringing us closer to our community, but generating interest worldwide! Six months later, we continue to receive requests from such places as Ireland, Australia, Germany, Arizona, and Italy, to name a few. *Details* magazine customers sometimes actually cut out the cancellation and send it with their request! We have received more mileage from this stamp cancellation than we ever thought possible, and we are working with other small offices in our area to get their own cancellations before tourist season starts. Thanks to the Stamp and Philately group for their support and for the ease in developing the cancellation.

*Karen Knapp, lead hand, Merritt, B.C.*



SOUTHBANK POST OFFICE  
GENERAL DELIVERY  
SOUTHBANK BC V0J 2P0



PRINCE GEORGE POST OFFICE  
1323 - 5TH AVE  
PRINCE GEORGE BC V2L 3L0



**640468**

JUL 16 2003

B.C.

VOK 1B0



FILE FILE

# Belt of efficiency

By Suzanne Gagné

**WHEN THE VANCOUVER PARCEL** Distribution Centre (VPDC) team replaced manual labour with a system

of conveyor belts in the Publications and Admail toss area, they brought this unit into a new era of efficiency, with a drastically reduced cycle time and improved worker satisfaction and safety.

Until October 2003, staff lifted bags, bundles and containers weighing up to 20 kg from monotainers, carried them to other monotainers for a primary sort and repeated the process up to three times until the product was ready for dispatch to letter carrier depots and downstream offices.

"We decided to change this process because it was difficult and awkward for workers and we wanted to improve its efficiency," says Ritchie Wong, senior technologist.

Using input and suggestions from members of the VPDC Workplace Hazard Prevention Program, supervisors and staff from this area, Wong designed a six-belt system that reduced the cycle time from up to 24 hours to less than five minutes. "Delivery stations get the mail quicker, which all ties into our Admail strategy," says Wong. "We now meet and exceed our delivery standards."



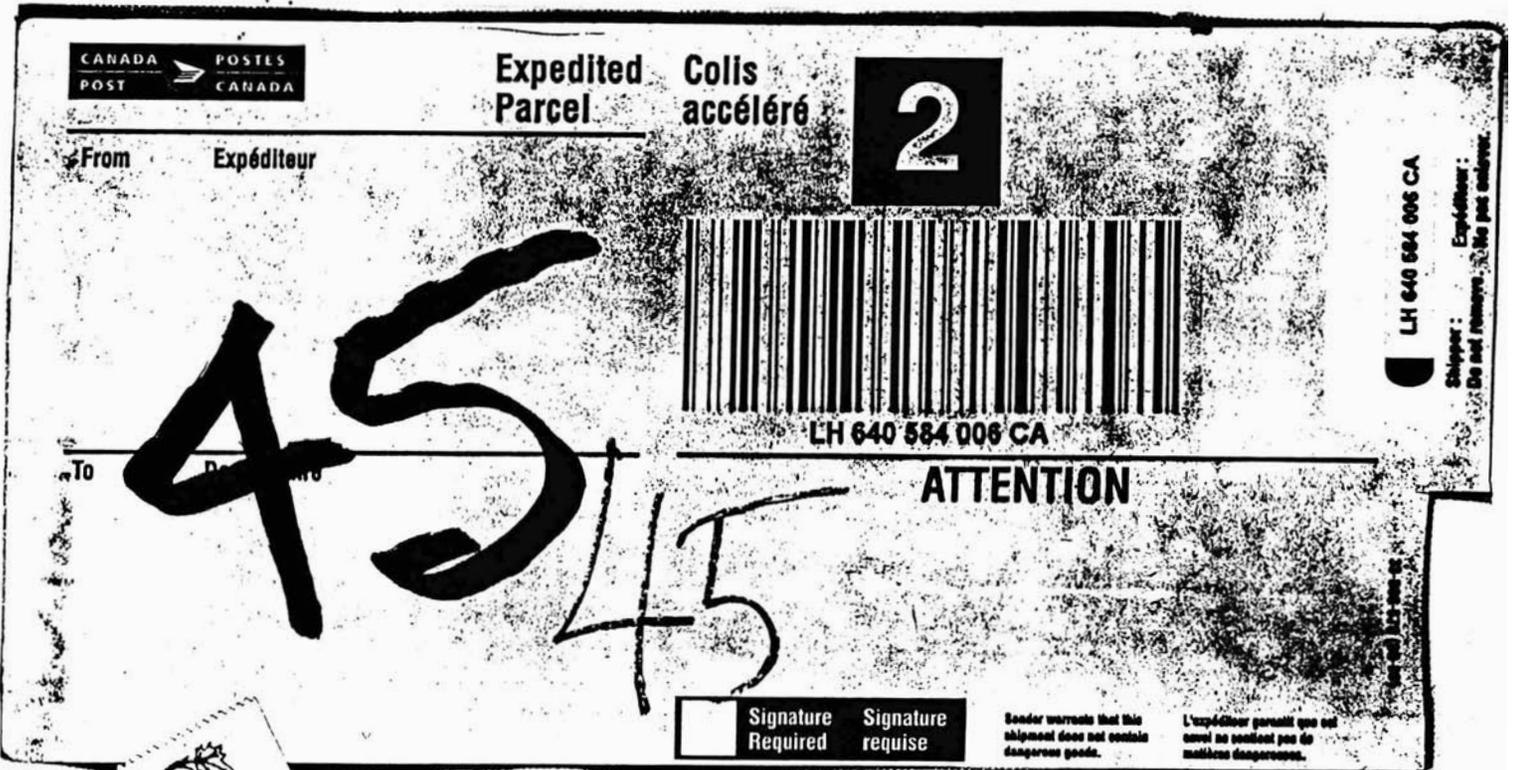
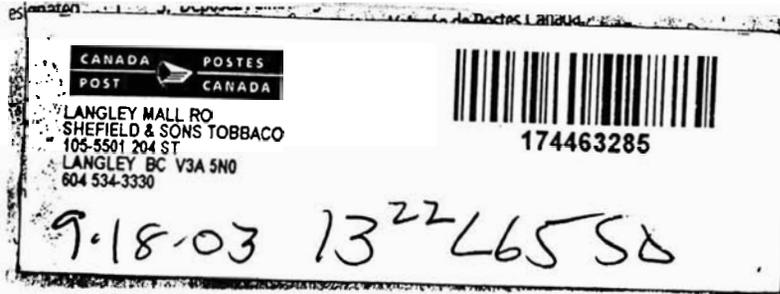
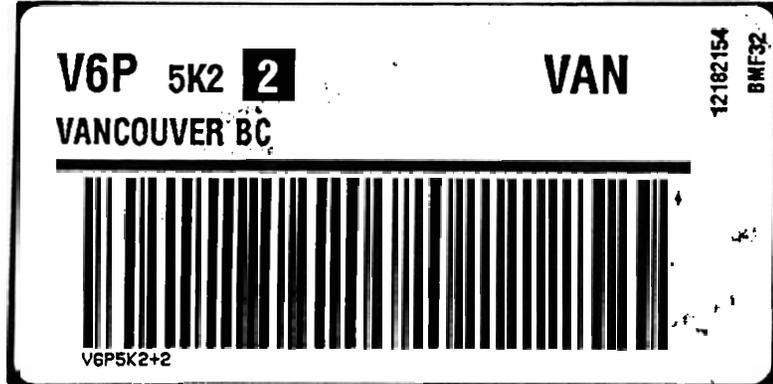
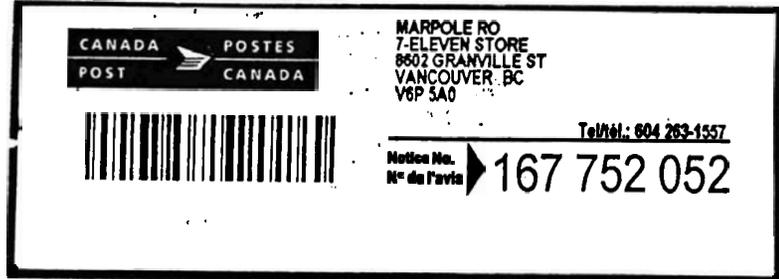
The new conveyor belt system in the Publications and Admail toss area of the Vancouver Parcel Distribution Centre is making life easier for employees.

Not only is the new system more efficient, it's also more ergonomic. For instance, monotainers are lifted by ergolifters to a suitable height, while belts and run-offs are designed to avoid excessive bending and lifting. In fact, this area was once considered to be the worst job at VPDC, and it's now considered the best!

"Some other belt systems are designed so that labels have to be read as the product is moving," says Carter, clerk, VPDC. "But this belt is employee driven. The change is a real improvement." ■

**BAR CODES -  
A NEW FIELD TO COLLECT**

As a result of the increased use of scanners by the post office a new field of collecting has emerged. Most collectors are familiar with the Xpresspost and Priority Courier bar code labels introduced some years ago to expedite the delivery of priority mail but with the introduction of the new ROSS equipment in most Franchises Postal Outlets, bar code labels are now used to identify mail waiting for pickup. At the same time many large scale mailers have installed bar code equipment similar to that used in the Vancouver Parcel Distribution Centre to speed of the delivery of parcel mail. The result is that a large number of new postal forms have appeared opening a relatively low cost field of study for beginning collectors with a limited pocket book.



**FINANCIAL REPORT 2003-2004**Revenue

Surplus previous year	709.50
Membership dues	242.50
Advanced dues	249.50
Sale of back issues	-
Grant from BNA	116.00
	<u>1315.50</u>

Expenses

Members News Letters*	462.50
89 x 4 @ \$1.25	
	<u>462.50</u>

Surplus	853.00
Less advanced dues	<u>247.50</u>
Net Surplus	605.50

## Note:

\* News Letters are now charged at \$1.25 per copy printed

The British Columbia Postal History News Letter is published quarterly in conjunction with the British North America Philatelic Society.

## Membership fees are;

\$8.00 for 1 year or  
\$15.00 for 2 years  
in Canadian or US dollars

Individual issues sell for  
\$2.00 post paid.

Dues are payable to the Editor  
Bill Topping 604-261-1508  
7430 Angus Drive  
Vancouver, BC, V6P 5K2

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**DUES -**

Dues notices have been included with this News Letter.

Dues are \$8.00 for one year or \$15.00 for two years.

If you received a dues notice please return the notice with a check made out to Bill Topping.

MARPOLE POSTAL OUTLET - RC 631671

New style of Wings dater

Note: wording at top smaller  
Vancouver in larger letters  
No postal code

