



BRITISH COLUMBIA
POSTAL HISTORY
RESEARCH GROUP

Volume 17 Number 4

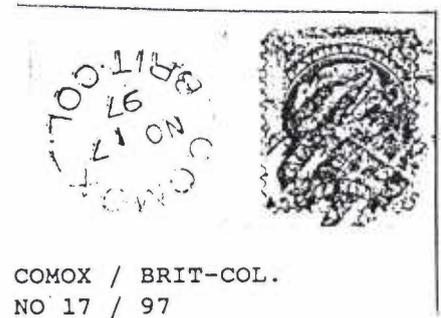
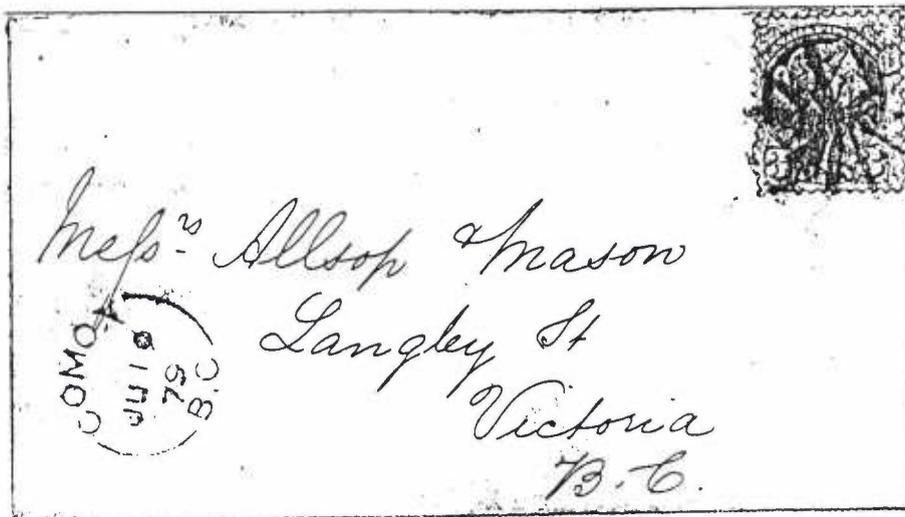
Whole number 68

December 2008

COMOX B. C. – Earliest reported date

A Colonial Post Office was established at Comox on June 22, 1868 as the most northerly post office on Vancouver Island with William Alexander as postmaster. It continued after Confederation with Alexander Rodell as postmaster and shortly after 1871 it replaced Nanaimo as the major coaling station on Vancouver Island. Most coal burning ships visited Comox on a regular basis and often picked up mail for Vancouver or Victoria and as a result early letters from Comox is relative scarce.

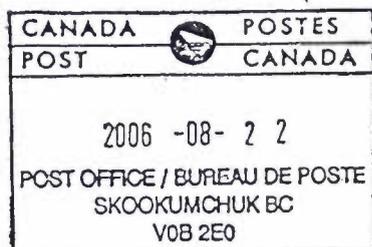
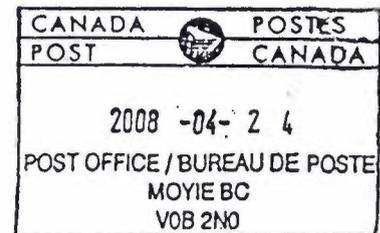
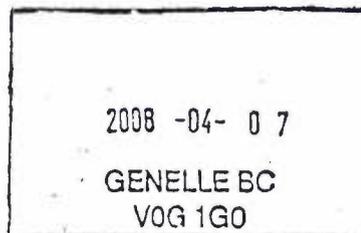
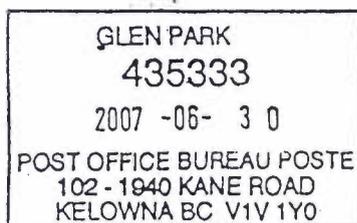
COMOX / JU 10 / 79 / B.C.



Thanks to the interest shown by many members I have accumulated a number of pages showing interesting covers related to items run in the News Letter. Rather than re-write the pages I have included some in this News Letter and since most of the pages speak for themselves I have refrained from making comments. Thanks again for the contributions.

RECENT EXCISIONS, by Andrew Scott

Rubber datestamps are easy to alter, it seems, and over the years we've seen a number of devices with bits cut out or excised. Errors (ie wrong province, RC# or postal code) were removed as a temporary expedient, and the datestamps continued in use until replacements arrived. This happened in BC with a few MOONs, and many older POCON devices have gone under the knife, including ones at Vernon, Richmond (several offices), Hartley Bay, Kitkatla, Fort Nelson, Smithers, 100 Mile House, Salmon Arm, Erickson, Quesnel, etc. Here are six recent examples.



Kelowna Glen Park datestamp originally had IDA on top line (noted use 2007-01-16 to 2007-04-07). Early recorded date (ERD) with IDA cut out: 2007-06-15.

Genelle was supposed to change to RC 102975. The old number was cut out but a new datestamp not delivered. Late recorded date (LRD) with old 072419 number: 2007-08-11. ERD with excision: 2008-03-04. Still in use as of June 2008.

Moyle changed RC# but new device late arriving. LRD for #102173: 2008-04-07. ERD for #103049: 2008-05-05. One excision reported: 2008-04-24.

Same thing with **Skookumchuck**. LRD for #101511: 2006-05-02. ERD for #102376: 2007-02-14. Excisions noted: 2006-08-02 to 2006-11-10. (RC# is now 102918.)

Same thing also with **Lantzville**, which excised two different datestamps. LRD for #643858: 2008-04-23. ERD for #103101: 2008-05-21. Excisions noted for "wing": 2008-05-05 to 2008-05-20. For regular datestamp: 2008-05-12 to 2008-05-15.

BRITISH COLUMBIA POST OFFICES 1871

Bill Topping

There are times when a simple question may not produce a simple answer. As part of another research project I asked the simple question, "How many coastal post offices were there in British Columbia at the time of Confederation in July 1871?" To answer this question I went to the Bible of British Columbia postal history, Deaville's, *The Colonial Postal Systems...*, and on page 148 he states that "Twenty-five Post Offices in active operation were turned over to the Post Office Department of Canada by the Colonial Government of British Columbia on 20th July, 1871." The transfer was overseen by Mr. Gilbert E. Griffin, of London, Ontario, the Post Office Inspector for the territory west of Hamilton, when he visited British Columbia in July 1871. Thus according to his information there were 25 post offices in British Columbia in July 1871.

Since I needed the names of the post offices I then turned to the chart on the next three pages of Deaville where a brief summary of each of the colonial post offices is provided. The chart shows that 21 post offices "continued" after Confederation and four had been "withdrawn" for a total of 25. I then turned to pages 153-54 where a table lists "the Post Offices in British Columbia established by the Dominion Government authorities at the time of the Chief Post Office Inspector's visit." The table lists 29 post offices as being established on July 1, 1871, and eight more being established later in the year. Thus, according to this list a total of 37 post offices had been established in British Columbia by December 1871.

Because of the discrepancy in these numbers I then turned to the Postmaster General's *List of Post Offices in Canada ... on the 1st July 1871,* "compiled from official records". It lists 33 post offices open in British Columbia, but since the Guide was published in July 1872 these would be the Colonial Post Offices and not those opened after Confederation. One interesting aside is that the 1871 Guide lists French Creek, located in the Kootenay Electrical District, as being open, but this is not listed in any other source.

I then checked the *Report of the Postmaster General for the year ending 30th June, 1872* and found that it listed 30 post offices in British Columbia "In operation on 1st July, 1871." On the other hand both the 1871 and 1872 Postal Guides fail to mention Okanagon and Okanagon Mission, both of which appear to have been open at the time, and Nicola Lake is not listed in the 1872 Guide.

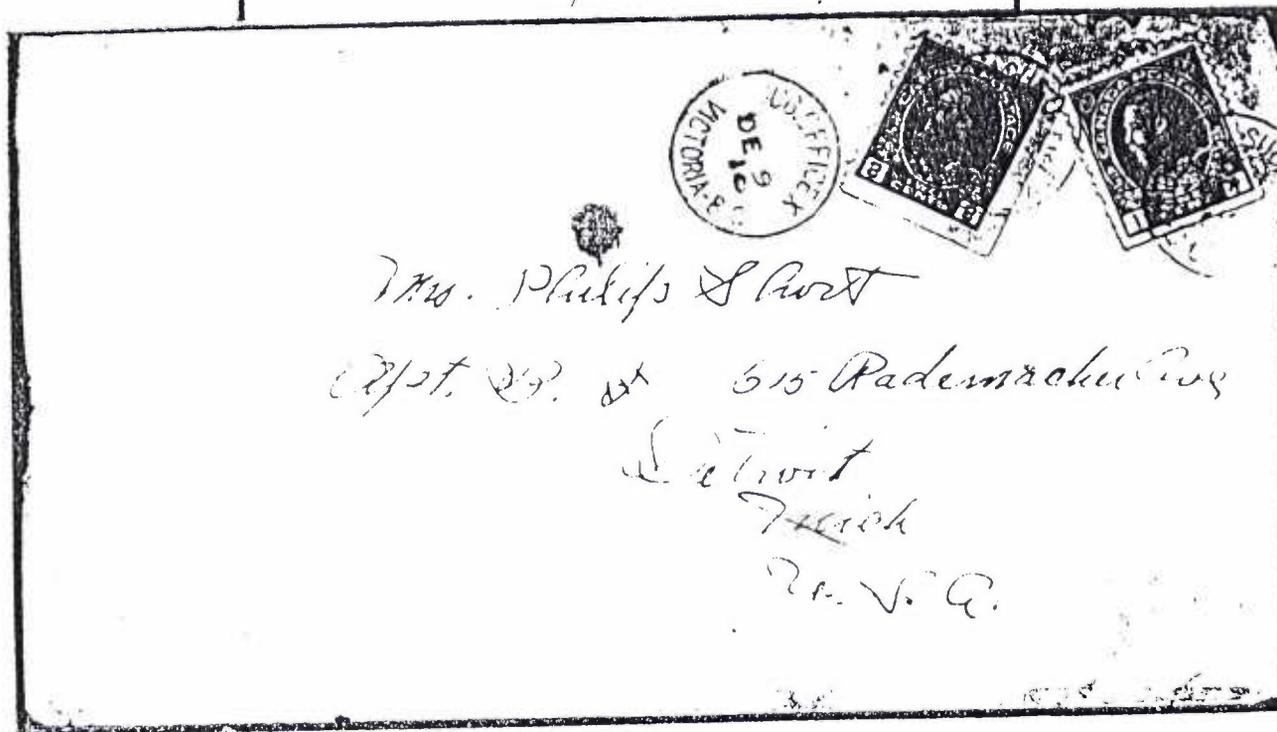
I also checked the *Canada Gazette*, the official source for post offices information as supplied by the Postmaster General on a monthly basis, which lists openings, closings, and changes of status on a monthly basis. Although this should be the most accurate source, it does not list any post office in British Columbia opening or closing before 1873, nor does it give a definitive listing of open offices at that time. Although official sources fail to list Cariboo, Chilliwack, Dunkeld, Pavillion, Skeena, and Sooke, it appears that these offices did open in 1872. The one problem is Cariboo, from which pre- and post-Confederation marking are known. It was probably initially called Williams Creek, then changed to Cariboo, and finally became Barkerville.

Although it is difficult to make a definitive statement as to how many post offices were actually established in British Columbia in 1871, it would appear that the 37 offices listed by Deaville is the most accurate assessment.

SUB OFFICE X / VICTORIA - B.C. - new late date - December 9, 1918
See Vol. 16 # 4 - p. 537-541
Thanks to Phillip J. Stager

2c LETTER RATE + 1c WAR TAX

Camp Willows
Victoria B.C.
Sun. Ev. Dec. 9th 1918



Cancelled: Sub.Office X, Victoria, B.C. December 9, 1918

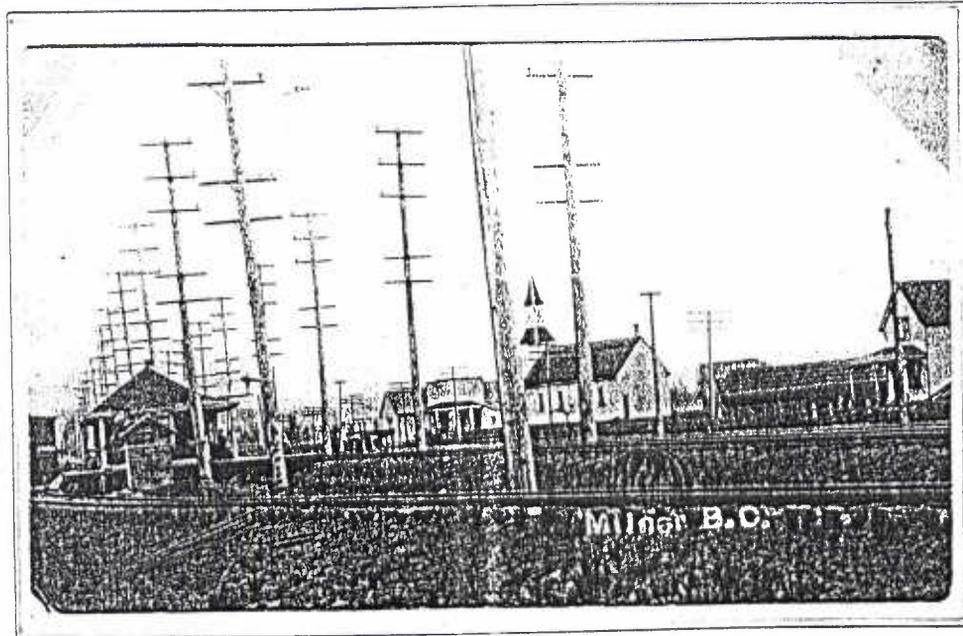
Sub.Office X served Camp Willow, staging base for the Canadian Siberia Expeditionary Force.

The 1c booklet single is Type BR6.

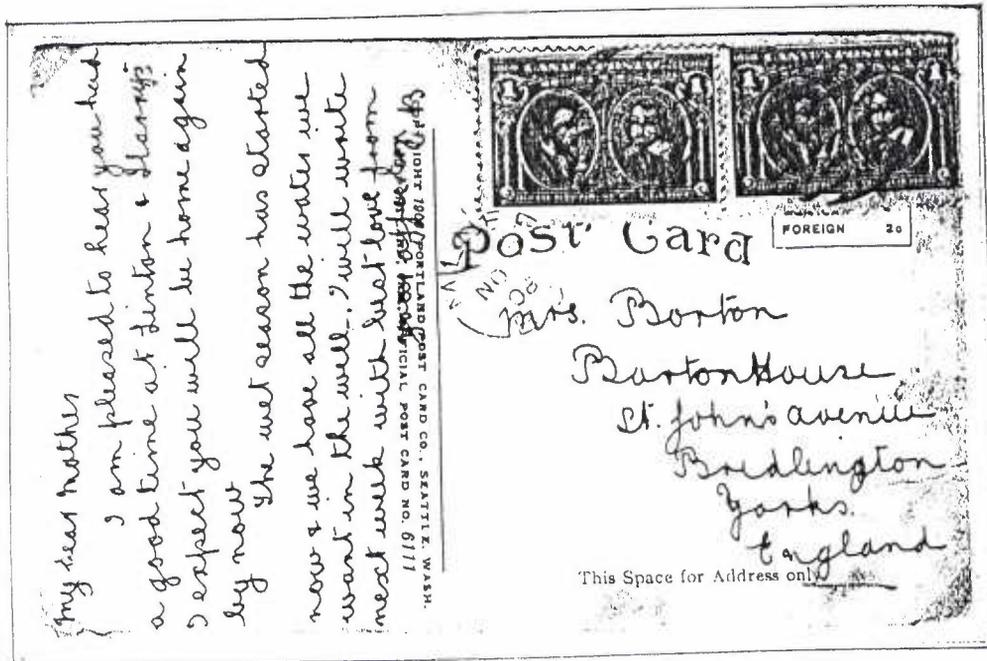
"... weather here is almost enough to drive a person insane...
... a lot of the boys deserting and going over to the States..."

Thanks to Alex Price

MILNER



Postcard view of British Columbia Electric Railway Station at Milner, B.C. Mile 19.45 Fraser Valley Subdivision ca 1912.



Milner, B.C No 7, 08 to England.
Milner postoffice opened 1908

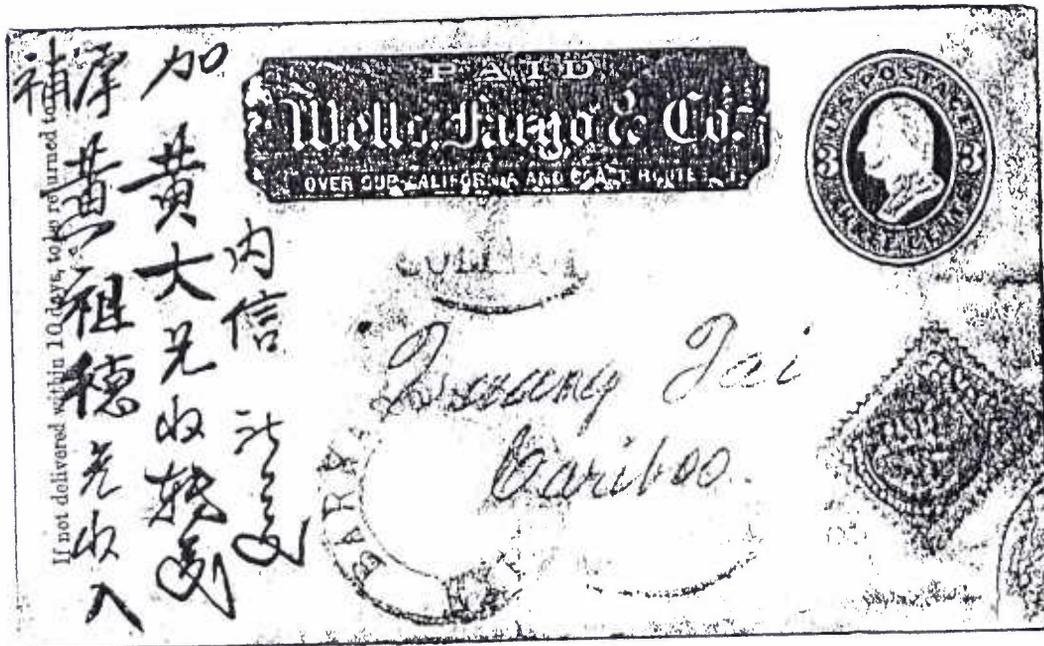
Thanks to Bob Forster

POST- CONFEDERATION USAGES

BRITISH COLUMBIA EXPRESS COMPANY



about 1885

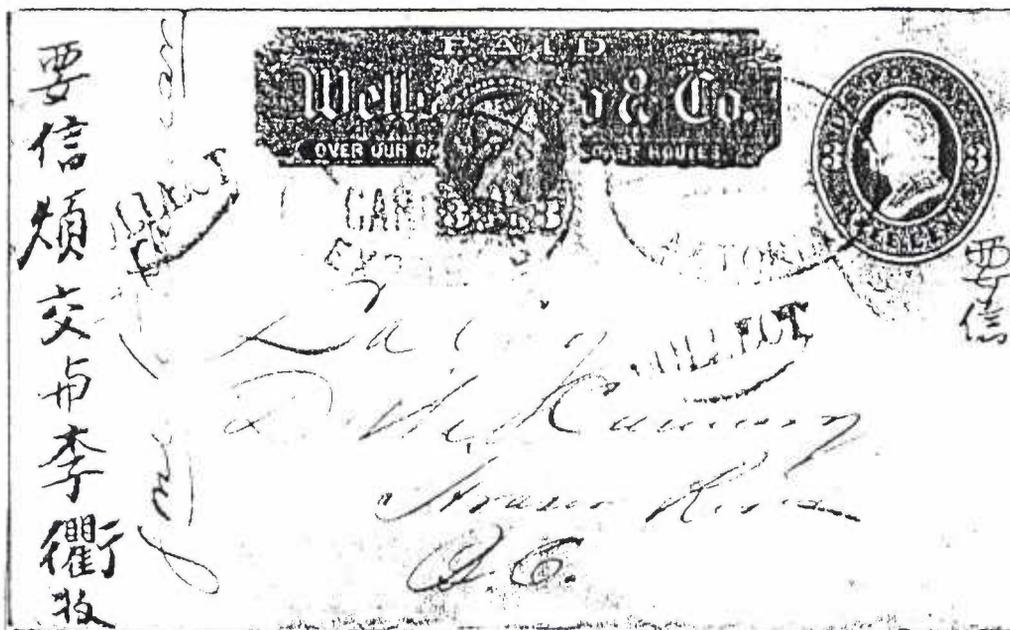


Two examples of the BARNARD'S EXPRESS double-circle. Bottom cover is an incoming Wells Fargo usage from San Francisco turned over to Barnard at Victoria where he added a 3 cent small queen to pay domestic postage as required by express statutes. Both about 1874.

Thanks to Bob Forster

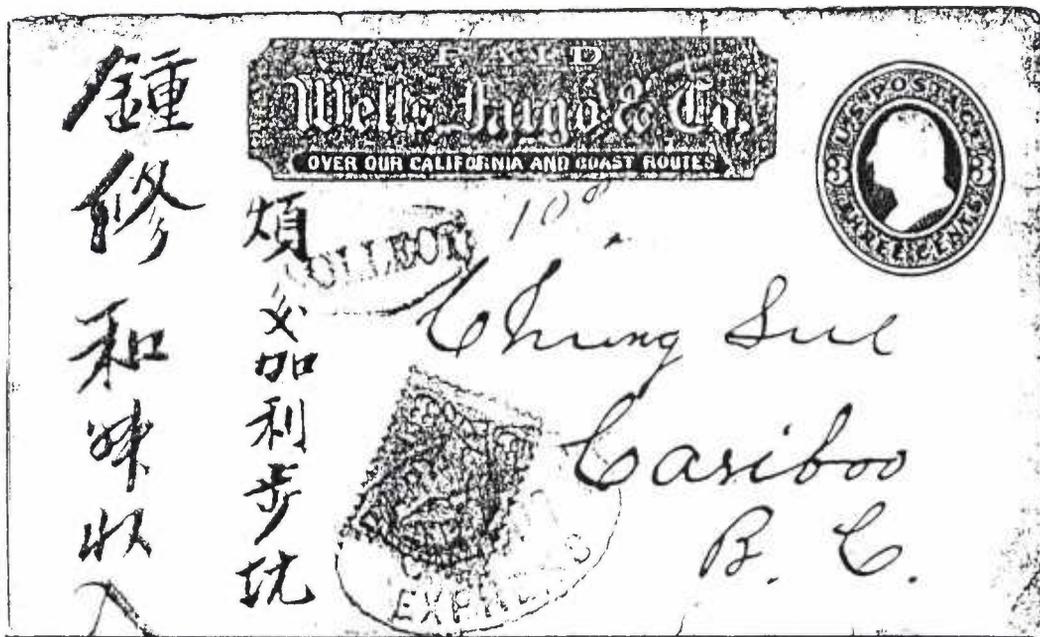
POST- CONFEDERATION USAGES

BARNARD'S BRITISH COLUMBIA EXPRESS



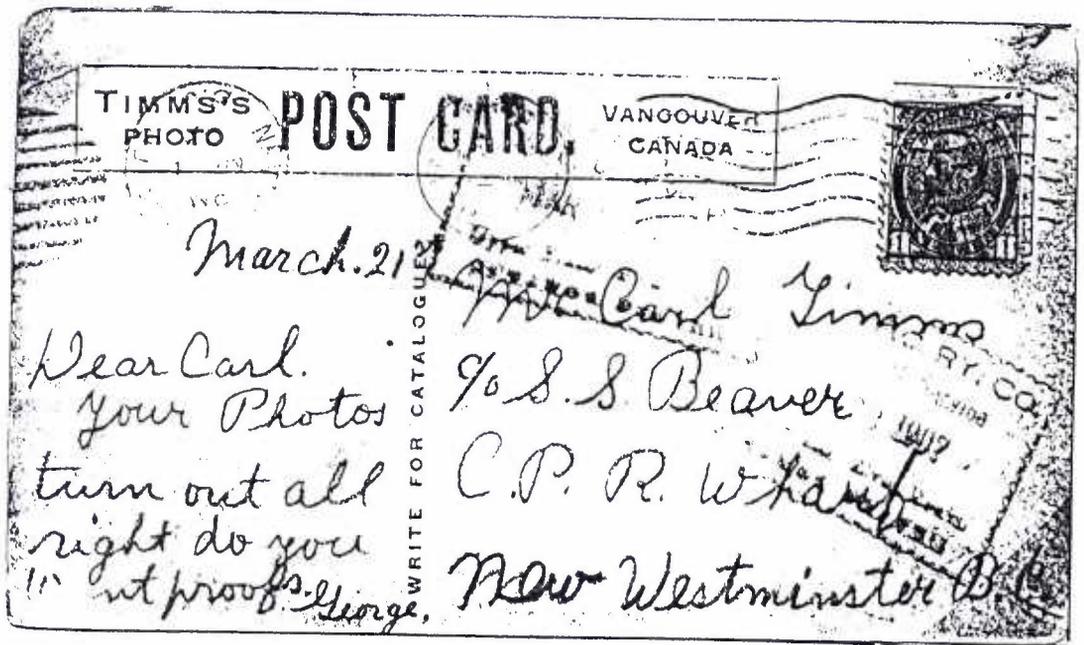
about 1874

Indistinct Wells Fargo Portland Or and Wells Fargo Astoria transit. Turned over to Barnard at Victoria who added 3 cent small queen canceled with oval Barnard's Cariboo Express. When addressee had "gone to Cassiar", Barnard took it there via Wrangel Alaska and the Stikine River.



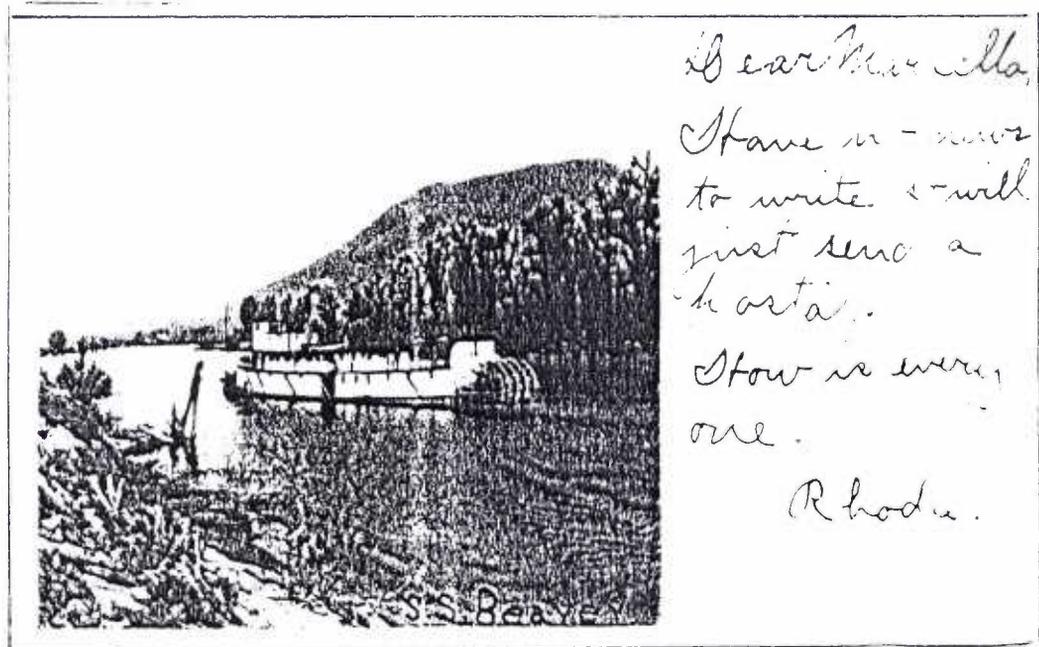
About 1875 Wells Fargo usage to Cariboo turned over to Barnard in Victoria who added 3 cent small queen and canceled it with oval Barnard's Cariboo Express. COLLECT in oval and 10c in manuscript – express charges had now dropped considerably.

Thanks to Tracy Cooper



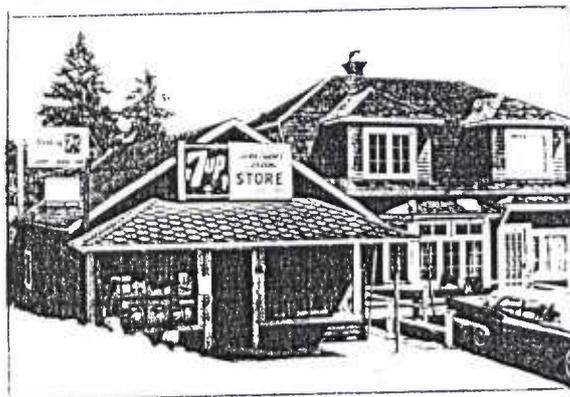
This card has the a copy of the unreported steamer cancel and was addressed to CARL TIMMS a nephew of the famous Philip Timms, photographer. The message is interesting "Dear Carl your photos turn out all right do you want proofs, George"

CAN. PAC. RY. CO.
B.C. Coast Service
MAR 22 1907
Upper Fraser River Route
STEAMER BEAVER



GRANTHAMS LANDING

PMG Authorized 6 March 1924
 Proof strike MR 12 / 24
 Established 1 April 1924
 Postmaster E.F. Little
 Accounting number 9289
 RC number 642827
 Closed April 25, 200



Granthams Landing Post Office 1965

Coast Reporter - May 2, 2008

GRANTHAM'S LANDING POST OFFICE

Goodbye to an era

Last Friday, the doors to the post office at Grantham's Landing closed, marking the end of an era for the area.

Linda Hooker worked at the post office for 13 years and became the post master in 2002. She said leaving is emotional for her.

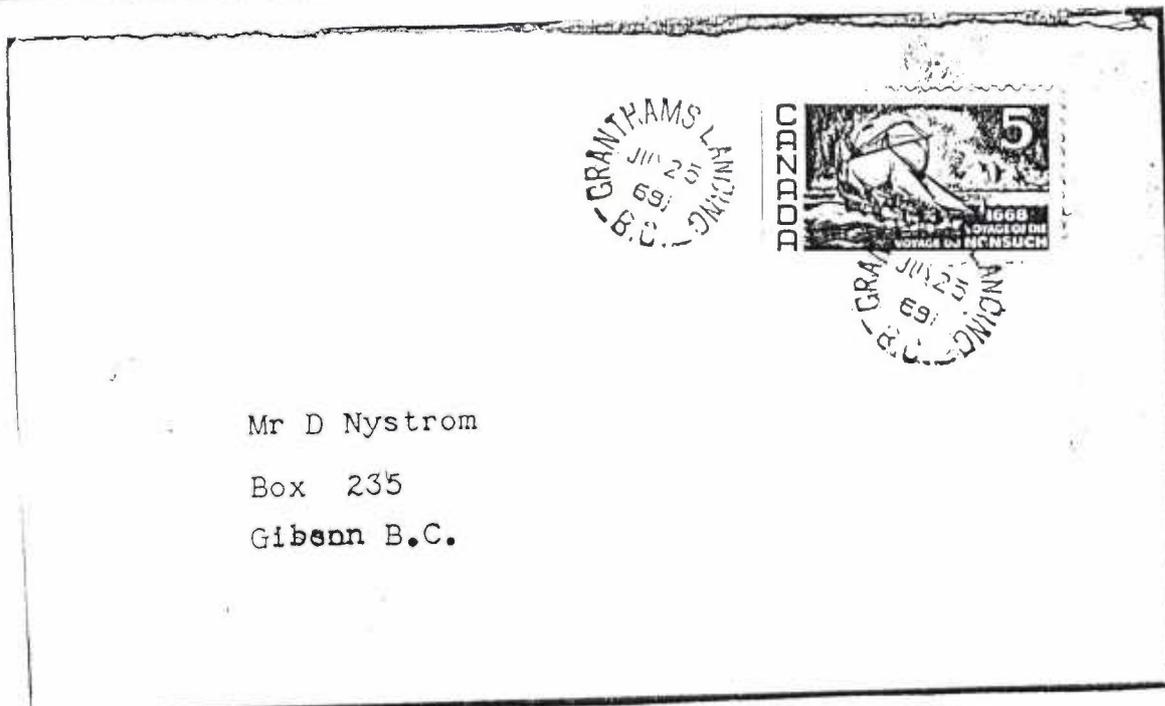
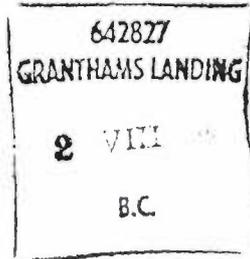
"It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve the community. It has been like a family and it is like leaving a family," said Hooker. However, as much as it saddens her,

she said it was time to move on. Hooker will now be working at the Roberts Creek post office. She said she knows that having the post office close down is "a momentous change for the community, for everyone."

A spokesperson for Canada Post said they tried to do what they could to keep the post office open, but with Hooker leaving, it simply wasn't possible. The spokesperson said the post office in Grantham's Landing would have closed

down in 2002, but that was forestalled when Hooker took the job as post master. Canada Post realizes the community is losing something known and familiar, but said she hopes the community will be well served with other nearby services. The spokesperson said while Canada Post is saddened at the closing of the Grantham's Landing office, they are happy Hooker will continue to be with the company since she is well liked and well respected and Roberts Creek is lucky to have her.

— Stephanie Douglas



Code of excellence

Contact – Fall 2008 page 18

By E. Lisa Moses

Canada's postal code is pushing 40, and has never looked better. Since its troubled birth in 1971, the system of letter-number-letter, number-letter-number provides 7.2 million possible combinations. With only 817,000 postal codes assigned today, this leaves room for years of growth.

Uncertain beginnings

By the 1970s, mail volumes had grown to more than four billion pieces of mail a year, of which 2.7 billion was first-class mail—all hand-sorted by plant workers who memorized huge amounts of information about letter carrier routes. Letter carriers then re-sorted their loads into the order of easiest delivery.

Known then as the Post Office Department, the organization realized that rapid growth required new approaches to efficiency after experimenting unsuccessfully with sorting technologies since the 1950s, when mail volumes were some three billion a year. Postal staff numbers were also rising rapidly—from 30,000 in 1957 to 44,000 in 1966. "The solution to increasing efficiency and controlling costs was to develop a smart postal code and automate mail sorting," says Gaetan Deschamps, lead, Postal Transformation.

"Automated sorting can only work with a postal code that can be machine-read," adds John Willis, a Canadian Museum of Civilization historian who specializes in postal communication. "But in those days of paper, new-fangled machines were viewed with suspicion and often seen as the enemy—both by staff and in some cases (the late 1950s, for example) by employers." When the postal code was piloted in Ottawa in

1971, post office employees and unions had concerns and called for a postal code boycott. The new system survived and was finally phased in across the country by the late 1970s.

Code talkers

A feasibility study in 1969 and Parliament's blessing in 1970 opened the doors to change. The Post Office Department created a coding and mechanization division to design the code and select the sorting machinery. The team included John Moody, J.G. "Gerry" Fultz, Lucien "Lou" Dumont and Cecil "Cec" Duthie, who travelled the world to analyze the effectiveness of various postal code systems. Some countries, such as the United States, used all-numeric postal codes while others such as the United Kingdom used alpha-numeric codes. Each system had strengths and weaknesses.

The team's legacy was designing what they considered the best postal code in the world, which allows real

BE RIGHT
WHEN YOU WRITE



A humorous advertisement encouraging consumers to use the newly-created postal code. (Courtesy of the Canadian Postal Museum.)

precision in identifying addresses. The first three characters of the code denote a region where mail is to be delivered; the last three the specific part of a mail delivery route.

"By leading Canada's postal service into total mechanization, the postal code became one of the most revolutionary changes in the country's postal history," says Deschamps. And it continues to prove its worth today, with annual volumes of some 14 billion pieces. ●

Behind the code

John "Jack" Moody, who passed away May 17, was one of the original team members who developed the Canadian postal code 40 years ago. He lived through the Great Depression, fought in the Second World War and travelled the world in search of the "ultimate postal code." After retiring, he continued to have lunch each month with the other members of the team who retired in Ottawa. They were a tight-knit group, proud of their contribution to the postal service, and they often bragged that it was the best postal code system in the world.

