

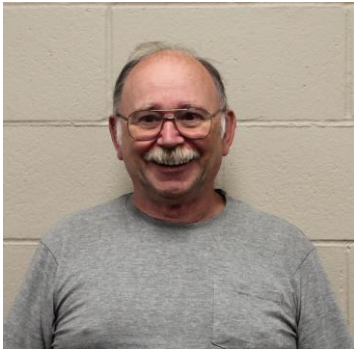
# Stamps on the Bay

The Voice of The  
Owen Sound Stamp Club  
**Meeting Cancelled due to  
Health Safety**  
Volume 1 Edition 4, May 2020



## From the President

Hello everyone, to the Snow Birds on their return from their winter vacation land, a hearty welcome back. I would like to wish each and everyone to be as healthy and safe as possible. Our May meeting is CANCELLED, due to the Covid-19 virus.



Have you ever chatted on the phone with someone and they struck a nerve about what happened years ago? Well Phil called, and I asked him about his request at the end of last months newsletter concerning a letter he had received from a little settlement outside of Elmwood called Louise. Keep reading this newsletter to find the answer, but that started the old brain to start working. It was about the old steam engines that once rolled up and down the tracks. As a young lad growing up in Chatsworth, I can remember those big beautiful engines huffing and puffing up and down the tracks. With dad being the Post Master for the village of Chatsworth, he had to get a Rural Router to go and pick up the Royal Mail (as it was called back then) from the Railroad station just east of the Post Office on one of the back streets of the village. Mr. Bill Cameron had a horse that he would take and pick up the Royal Mail for the Post Office. This mail was for the area around Chatsworth, including places outside of the town like Desboro, Williamsford and Walters Falls as well as the five rural routes out of the village.

As a young lad I was so thrilled to go and help him receive the Royal Mail from the Mail Car. A couple of times when I was around 10 years old he let me take the old mare back to the Railroad Station all by myself. I was so proud to drive the mare and pick up the Royal Mail. The train engineer got to know me as well and as I was leaving he scared the s\_\_t out of me when he

blew the whistle, the funny part was that the mare did not take off on me.

In winter, when the train was approaching Arnoit, they would blow the whistle. While living in Chatsworth, if you could hear the whistle, we knew the temperature was down below zero.

Remember you have your stamps to fall back on to keep your mind at ease, and help pass the time away, while you are staying at home. Stay safe and healthy!

John C. Lemon  
President OSSC.

## From the Editor Phil Visser

Another edition is on the press. Again the pandemic has cancelled our regular meeting, but producing a newsletter doesn't stop. Hopefully it is interesting and can fill a few minutes of your day.

We begin the newsletter with Randy Rogers's regular guide to the **Useful Links** on the OSSC website. I hope you are taking the time to explore another avenue to our hobby. He even mentions our usual desire to fill the holes in our collections, never mind that we have the other 99% of the stamps shown. This collector's blog is an interesting approach to collecting stamps.

With fingers on the keyboard, comes another story about Owen Sound philately. There are also a few short articles about miscellaneous things that popped up since the last newsletter.

Here is the teaser scan:





**Useful Links:**  
**Big Blue 1840-1940**  
By Randy Rogers



The first of the General Reference Links on our club web site is [Big Blue 1840-1940](#). The link takes you to a very interesting stamp collecting blog. The author, a world-wide collector, started this blog in 2011 with the idea of completely filling a Scott's International Part 1 album and documenting his journey.

Scott's International Part 1 is a world-wide "reference" album that provides 35,000 spaces for stamps from 1840-1940. There were approximately 65,000 stamps issued during that time frame, so the spaces are generally limited to the more affordable varieties. This can be bothersome for some world-wide collectors who like to have spaces for all of their stamps. Still 35,000 stamps is a lot of stamps if you wanted to collect just what there are spaces for in the album. This album is affectionately referred to as "Big Blue".

As stamp collectors, many of us tend to be "completists". This might be fine perhaps for a several country specialty collection but, for the whole world it would be financially impossible for most collectors. For comprehensive world-wide albums the author chose Bill Steiner's [Stamp Albums](#) pdf pages. These can be printed out and one can choose the year cut-off for any given country. These album pages are collectively referred to as "Deep Blue".

Personally I have my world-wide collection housed in several Harris Citation binders with stamps on the original "reference" collection pages and added Steiner pages to provide spaces for stamps omitted from the reference pages. My "reference" pages stop somewhere around 1980 so more recent stamps are placed on Steiner pages.

There is lots of great information on the blog with a country index on the left side so you can easily find material referencing your country of interest. The author has developed check lists for filling 'Big Blue' and scanned images of his completed collection are available for viewing.

The current (May 1, 2020) blog post is titled **China "Junk" Issues of 1913, 1915, & 1923: The Differences**.

*"A is for Aden and Z is for Zanzibar... Now what is between? For the world wide classical era philatelist and stamp collector, a country specific philatelic*

*survey is offered by the blog author, Jim Jackson, with two albums: **Big Blue**, aka Scott International Part 1 (checklists available), and **Deep Blue**, aka William Steiner's Stamp Album Web PDF pages. In addition, "Bud" offers commentary and a look at his completely filled Big Blue. Interested? So into the Blues..."*<sup>1</sup>

Why not take a moment to check out the blog and, if you find it interesting, you can even subscribe...it's free!

Credits:

<sup>1</sup> <http://bigblue1840-1940.blogspot.com/>

**Development of Owen Sound**  
**By Phil Visser**

In the previous article a letter showed two types of cancels that reflect Owen Sound philatelic history. That letter was mailed from Louise to Owen Sound. On the front is an unidentified cork cancel, but the back stamp showed a Railway Post Office cancellation that brought the letter to the Owen Sound business it was addressed to. One of the reasons Owen Sound developed into the city it is today is through the transportation network that reached this place.

Railway Post Office cancellations that have appeared on mail to and from Owen Sound is the subject of this month's story. Reference material is essential to share with the reader which supports the remainder of this article. Thanks to L.F. Gillam FCPS who compiled the book **A History of Canadian RPO's** that contains the following two rough charts of rail routes from other centres to Owen Sound.

The first rail connection to Owen Sound was the *Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway* which eventually reached the town in 1873. Several challenges had to be overcome, with financing the greatest hurdle. The cost of building the railway was concerned with the width of the rails, the number of rivers to build bridges across, swampland, and the changes in elevation. A few companies started but it finally was finished only to run into financing cost problems when revenues did not cover expenses. Eventually this railroad wound up in the operation of Canadian Pacific (CP Rail).

Competition is always a way to provide the best service and price for a consumer. This also applies to railroads. Although the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway was the first to reach Owen Sound, it was the only transportation provider to southern Ontario for some twenty years before competition arrived in the form of the *Grand Trunk, Georgian Bay, & Lake Erie* which merged into the Grand Trunk Railway who completed the spur line from Park Head through Shallow Lake and on to Owen Sound in 1894.

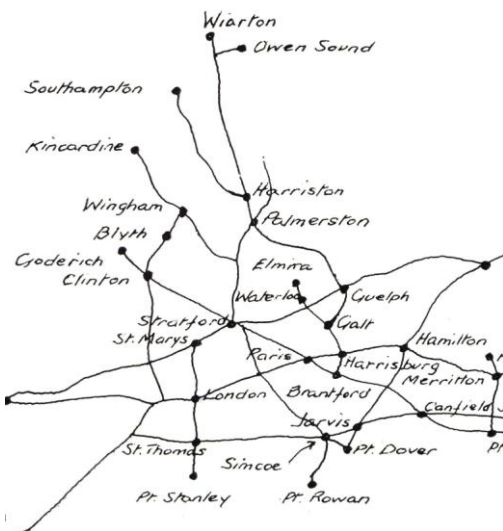
(Reference Charles' Cooper's Railway Pages <https://railwaypages.com/grey-and-bruce-counties>). Eventually the Grand Trunk Railway changed name to Canadian National Railroad.

Without some knowledge of geography you might miss the fact that both railroads serviced the different sides of the Owen Sound Harbour. The CPR built on the east side of the harbour while the CNR arrived on the west side of the harbour. With its early arrival, the CPR built up the east side of the harbour and served as a gateway to western Canada through its rail-ship-rail system moving passengers and freight both to and from the western districts (now provinces). Reference has been made previously about the SS Manitoba (in 2017, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Owen Sound) because this ship was a vital link between southern Ontario and Fort William (present day Thunder Bay).

With rail service came also the delivery of mail by rail. On the first page of this newsletter is a cancel showing the RPO of the *Barrie & Meaford M.C.* Mail travelled overland to Meaford and then was transported by railroad to various destinations in Ontario. In the June 2019 edition of the newsletter Jim Molineaux wrote an article about the special mail cars attached to the trains. As mentioned above, I have referenced Gillam's book on RPO's. The scan beside here is a part of Plate L from Gillam's book, of which I scanned the section of the CPR rail system in southern Ontario. The Plate does not show all the intermediate stations along the route, only the main centres along the route.



A second scan shows the routes through which the CNR followed to reach Grey and Bruce counties. The many routes come about as a result of amalgamations of various smaller railroad companies under the umbrella that has become known today as the CNR. The section of rail to Wiarton was opened in 1882 but the small spur line to Owen Sound was delayed for another decade.



Chris Tillcock has been very helpful in loaning me some of his rail cancel collection to scan and add to this story as well as information from the book *Catalogue of Canadian Railway Cancellations* by Lewis M Ludlow FRPSL. Since the Toronto & Owen Sound Railway was the first operating line to this city, let's begin with cancels associated with this route. The book lists five different Toronto & Owen Sound RPO's. The attached scan shows a clear cancellation of the Toronto & Owen Sound RPO No. 3 dated from 1908. Variations on the theme can be Tor. & Owen Sound RPO, followed by Tor. & Owen Sound M.C. Train # 706 and 708. All of these different styles would comprise a page or two of an exhibit should sufficient material be accumulated for an exhibit.



Figure 1 C Tillcock Collection



With a monopoly on transportation to Owen Sound, the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway did suffer difficulty as the crop cycles affected revenue. These alternating good crops, bad crop cycles ultimately led to the absorption of the T G & B Railway into the Canadian Pacific (CP) sphere. The prime reason for the Canadian Pacific Railway was the building of the transcontinental railway to join British Columbia to the eastern provinces of Canada. Once this massive infrastructure had been finished, CP recognized that it had little presence in the developed parts of Canada, and so purchased smaller rail companies that were either suffering economically, bankrupt or just bought outright because a rail company fit the overall coverage the CP was looking for. At one time there was a plan to build a rail line from Meaford to Owen Sound, but with the arrival of the T G & B Railway in 1873, this section of the line was never built. The proposed line would have been part of the Grand Trunk Railway, and it would have connected Collingwood to Owen Sound. This line did reach Meaford in 1872. Gillam's book suggested that

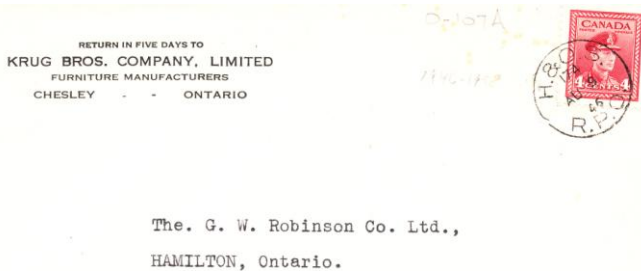
there was a cancel of Meaford & Owen Sound, but then, near the end of the book states that the Meaford & Owen Sound cancel was probably a poor strike of the Stratford & Owen Sound cancel. Ludlow does not mention the Meaford & Owen Sound cancel at all.

With the Grand Trunk Railway, a host of new mail coach cancels came into existence. The first shown here is the London & Owen Sound, Train 170. Note the double strike and the different qualities of each



strike. Imagine trying to deliver a steady strike on a rail car that is swaying back and forth in an inconsistent pattern. A Guelph & Owen Sound Train 172 cancel follows. Based on the train numbers, this one is also of the Grand Trunk/CN system.

Two further cancels are shown giving examples of the Hamilton & Owen Sound cancels. The first illustrated is the H & O S RPO Train # 174. Note the break in the circle on the south west edge of the circle. Chris

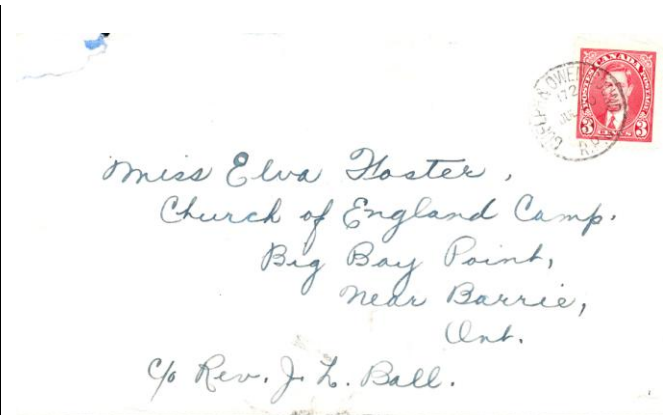


**Figure 2 C. Tillcock collection**

mentioned that there are ten different cancels on the Hamilton to Owen Sound run, probably because the cancelling hammers wear out due to a heavier strike needed to ensure the cancel is legible. A second type of the Hamilton rail cancel is this one illustrated. It shows the "Ham & O' Sound RPO, again with train number 174. Based on the train numbering system, it is probably a cancel from the CN mail coach



A final cancel concerning this fair city is the Guelph & Owen Sound cancel. The letter below is a clear strike from this rail route. Ludlow only lists one type of cancel for this route so this route was probably not long lived. It would be the mail clerks on the mail cars that would order and use the various cancel hammers used on the mail passing through the coach.



Ludlow also lists three other cancels that have escaped our combined RPO collections. The first one that is missing is the "Toronto Guelph Owen Sound cancel. It seems that this cancel is the predecessor of the Guelph Owen Sound cancel. Another cancel on the search list is the Toronto, Palmerston & O.S. cancel. If you have ever driven through Palmerston, there is a very large rail marshalling yard. This is where the trains would divide the boxcars into the correct final destination. The Grand Trunk and CN systems had feeder lines to Kincardine, Southampton Wiarton with many smaller communities along the way offering service.

Like all things, life changes and so with the advent of the modern highway system and private motor vehicles, rail service declined due to competition from trucks and the highways. It is the same competition between ships and trains. While it is cheaper to send goods via a ship, the trains can move faster. This concept is also what has killed the mail coach system, trucks are faster and more direct than trains.

Should anyone be interested, a visit to the BNAPS website introduces a newer version of railway cancellations than that published by Ludlow in the 1982. This book is called "Catalogue of Canadian Railway Cancellations & related Railway Postmarks including Selected Waterway Postmarks". This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and is authored by Ross Gray. It was published in 2015. It is possible that there are more railway cancellations "out there" than what are published in this latest edition. It seems every time someone publishes a reference book, new information becomes available. I have seen a number of books which indicate that each new edition is updated with more material that has been dusted off and brought into the public realm.

This article concludes the series on Owen Sound Postal History. I hope it has been informative and maybe has even stimulated the collecting juices. Happy hunting and a reminder that sharing is the best thing a philatelist can do to keep this hobby alive and relevant.

**Answer Received!**

Last months story on cork cancels asked when the Post Office operated in Louise, ON? Thanks to John Cortan, an answer has been received. The Post Office operated from Louise between November 1, 1881 and January 31, 1925.

**Show and Tell**

By Phil Visser

While sorting through accumulations of stamps I came across this “stamp.”



I noted that the stamp was marked with Euros, so it was easy to say it came from Europe. However, when I saw “Friend Post” in English, my initial thought was that it was a private mail company from the U.K. Not being satisfied with a guess, a Google search brought to light some interesting pieces of information.

It is indeed a private mailing service, but from Italy! Warning notices were issued by users of this service to say that they had not received their mail (about 70% do). It seems that the difficulty is finding a Post Office in Italy. The tourist shops sell these stickers and then advise people to put them in a rickety looking container. Those that did receive their mail, but after a long wait, while those who didn’t trust the rickety looking box and put them in the Italian Post boxes never received their letters. One final complaint was that the mailing price was more than that charged by the Italian Post Office.

With the large number of private mail services popping up in the world, is there every going to be a philatelic collectable market for these stickers? Another factor is that the adhesive used cannot be dissolved in water, and I didn’t try to remove it with Bestine. Maybe when I get really bored!

**The Tale of Three Letters**

By Phil Visser

At the end of April, I received three letters on the same day, all mailed from Denmark. Here are the scans of those envelopes:



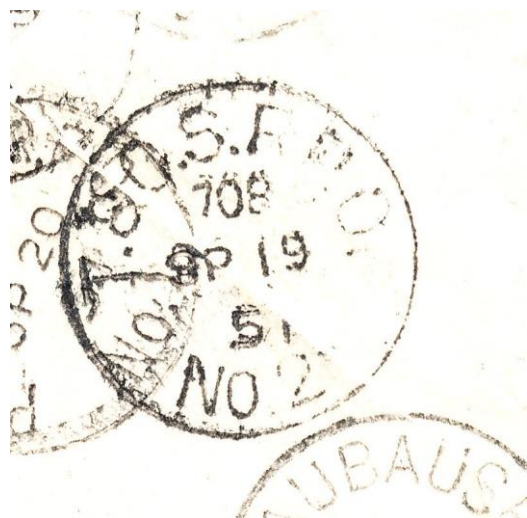
Letter 1 featured stamps issued in 2020 and was duly cancelled. The mailing date is April 14<sup>th</sup>. Now the next letter:



Letter 2 featured stamps issued from the 1980’s and 90’s. The letter passed through the cancelling machine upside down, so the cancel is at the bottom. The mailing date was April 15<sup>th</sup>. Now here is the last scan:



This letter is adorned with stamps issued in the 1970’s and 80’s. No visible cancellation at all!



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If you are connected to the internet, now would be a time to visit the web page of the club. Randy has now written us four articles about websites connected to our web page and using some of these links may help you in sorting and organizing a collection. One of the thankless things of being in the executive or actively involved with its operation is the silence of feedback. What is useful for members? Please share experiences.

**Soapbox**

I ended the article last month with a question about where is Poulett Street. Here is a picture that you may recognize as part of the sidewalk intersections in the downtown region.



I received one correct answer to this question. Thank you Chris Tillcock for being observant! For the other members, this street is now known as 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue East.

