



The RPO Cowcatcher

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NEW CATALOGUE

At the time of writing, the new R.P.O. catalogue is almost three months old and distribution is well in process. First reaction has been great! Some 70 odd copies were made available at BNAPEX '82, and these were quickly taken up. At Virginia Beach, the R.P.O. Study Group took time for review and discussion, and their comments were nicely favorable. A most pleasant surprise was the decision of the judges to make three discretionary awards for literature; the late Hon. George Marler's *The Admiral Issue of Canada* received a gold medal, while Allan Steinhart's *The Postal History of the Postcard in Canada* and the new R.P.O. catalogue both received vermeil. Our own personal feelings aside, these literature awards appeared to meet general acclaim. In a specialist society such as BNAPS, literature is one of the keys to advanced study, and we think all of our authors merit this type of recognition.

Since publication, we have had numerous letters from our correspondents, and their kind comments are greatly appreciated. All have recognized the work, time and effort involved. Only one has queried the new rarity factor system, while most others are intriguingly challenged by the change.

NEW DATA

We are delighted to advise that the advent of the new catalogue has prompted a flood of new information. We already have over two dozen new listings. Seven other listings, previously 'no report', have now been confirmed. We have also detected about a dozen errors, mostly typographical, which we were glad to find before they surfaced via our readers. All data in these three categories will be reported as the first up-date in the next Cowcatcher Column.

In addition, over 40 confirmed new earliest or latest dates, about a dozen new direction marks and over 45 train numbers have been reported. At the R.P.O. Study Group meeting it

was agreed that these changes and additions are too voluminous and detailed to put in the limited space of the Cowcatcher and that they will be more appropriately reported in the R.P.O. Study Group Newsletter. Accordingly, if you are not now a member of the R.P.O. Study Group and if you wish to stay abreast of all current changes in the new catalogue, including changes in rarity factor due to extension of the years of the periods of use, we recommend joining the R.P.O. Study Group at your early convenience. Contact Dave McKain, 5 Meadowcrest, Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101. He will send you the particulars for joining and bring you up-to-date on current newsletters.

Additional information scheduled for upcoming newsletters includes a hammer analysis of the ten hammers of N-100, a complete and current list of the earliest and latest dates of all Maritime listings and hammers, as well as a separate list of the same type of data for Newfoundland. The R.P.O. Study Group is a must for all specialists in railway cancellations.

CONFIRMED TRACK



L.M. Ludlow

In the new catalogue, we listed N-98, ST. J. & P.A.B.R.P.O. /NEWF'D, as unconfirmed. We had previously seen several partial strikes purporting to be N-98—too partial for measure-

ment, however, so we reserved judgement on this listing because of the possibility that such were worn strikes of N-100, Hammer II, on which the rim had disappeared. During our recent trip to North America we were able to pick up the illustrated strike on cover dated 21 March 1940, which clearly demonstrates that N-98 does exist as a split ring Type 4J, in contrast to N-100, Type 17F, full outer ring. Accordingly, N-98 has been reinstated, temporarily dated 1940, with the R.F. to be advised. We hope that all those having strikes of N-98 will send copies so that we can complete our picture on this listing.

MORE CONFIRMATION



L. M. Ludlow

For some time, we have pondered entry Q-152, MONT. & THREE RIVERS RAILWAY / listed by Shaw as carried over from Jarrett (in which we can find no reference), an unconfirmed split ring Type 4 of some sort. Over ten years ago we discovered what appeared to be a split ring similar to Q-152A, MONT. & THREE RIV. Ry. / M. C. Because it was a light strike in pale violet and difficult to see we assumed it was just a faint Q-152A cancellation. Graham Noble has now reported a strong clear strike of the same cancellation in the same period, which definitely confirms this split ring variety. Illustrated is our original discovery, dated August 2, 1894 (photographed through a strong orange filter with overexposure to bring out the cancellation), and also Noble's report, dated September 27, 1894. Both are the same ham-

mer, confirmed by chordal measurement, and this hammer is different from the two hammers of Q-152A. Because we believe that Shaw picked up his Q-152 entry from a written reference rather than from an actual strike, we are changing Q-152A to read as follows: Q-152 MONT & THREE RIV. Ry. / M. C., Type 4H, W, 1894, R. F. 500*, Rptrs - 16, 136.



G. Noble

Currently known in less than a two month spread, it will be interesting to see if our readers can widen this 1894 time span. In passing, we would add the measurements of this new Q-152 are sufficiently close to Hammer II of Q-152A that the former could possibly have been created by recutting and re-engraving of the latter; however, we have Q-152A, Hammer II, dated June 1, 1894, with the outer ring clearly present. Since it could not have been eliminated by wear in only two months, only intentional removal of the outer ring could have created the new from the old. The final proof of two different hammers will be definitive if we can find Q-152 before June 1, 1894 or Q-152A, Hammer II, after August 2, 1894.

OUT OF PHASE

Don Wilson recently submitted a lovely strike of Q-296, SOREL & SUTTON Ry. M.C./, Type 9, struck in violet. He queried whether this listing was proper since his strike was dated August 30, 1893 with Direction "S", while our period of use for this listing was only 1880-1883, and with only the Direction NORTH. Measurement confirmed that Wilson's strike was indeed Q-296, ten years after our current