



# The RPO Cowcatcher

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In the last two months, reports of new data have pyramided as the new catalogue has moved into wider circulation. We currently have over 40 new listings, plus another 15 that have moved from 'Only Proof Known' or 'No Report' to 'Confirmed' status. Additionally, we have about 90 new earliest and latest dates, and probably an equal number of new direction marks/train numbers. In our last Cowcatcher, we indicated that we would be giving a run-down on the new listings in this column. With the flow continuing unabated, we have decided to hold off on this until at least the summer of this year, by which time we should have most of the immediate changes reported and well in hand. This will give everyone time to finish a complete check of their R.P.O. collections against the new catalogue, and allow the updated information to be published in this first annex. It should be noted that this annex will be published only on an annual basis, or even less frequently depending on the new information available. As previously indicated, new listings will be published in TOPICS, while new dates, train numbers, and direction marks will appear in the R.P.O. Study Group Newsletter.

## NEW TRACK

Just about the time that you think you have seen everything under the sun, the sun rises from a new horizon and discloses a brand new piece of turf. Clerk Alph Gingras has been known for almost 20 years for two very rare cancellations, Q-187A and Q-246, and I would have bet a fair amount of yen that nothing more would surface for this particular gentleman. I would have lost the bet. With an assist from Horace Harrison, Jim Lehr has come up with a third Gingras cancellation, which we have listed as follows: Q-230C QUE. & RICHMOND / ALPH GINGRAS / M.C.Q.D., Type 10, EAST, no date, RF500\*, Reporter 137. The strike (April 26, 1???) has no year, and is on a 3¢ red cut square (Boggs PS-2). We are guessing that it is somewhere in the 1891-



Jim Lehr

1897 period. Congratulations, Jim, on this old and rare new listing.

## MORE NEW TRACK



Bill Robinson

Just before leaving for Virginia Beach and BNAPEX '82, we received from Bill Robinson

a new Newfoundland strike which has now been listed as follows: N-38T LABRADOR NORTH / NEWF'D, Type 4J, 1891 - 1896, R.F. 500, Reporters 151, 199. Although Robinson's strike does not have the full year, backstamps on the cover confirm 1891. When we got to Virginia Beach, we checked this strike with Bob Pratt, and he was able to show us a second confirming strike dated September 9, 1896. Thus we have two known examples of this rare new listing.

#### AND STILL MORE NEW TRACK

Allan Steinhart stopped collecting R.P.O.s long before most of us ever started, and his discoveries of rare and unusual R.P.O.s are legend. Although he is no longer specializing in this area, Steinhart is still unearthing extraordinary railways. His latest has been listed as follows: W-211C WPG. & YORKTON R.P.O. / D. W. WATSON / WINNIPEG, Type 21K, Train 53, November 23, 1925, R.F. 500\*, Reporter 107. We have photographed this singular strike and hope that it will reproduce for publication.



Allan Steinhart

The specific piece is a registered bank label from Bank of Canada, Ottawa to Bank of Canada, Edmonton franked by ten \$1.00 Admirals plus 1¢, 5¢, 10¢ and 50¢ Admirals, for a total of \$10.66 postage, all of which are cancelled by nine OTTAWA CANADA / R circular strikes. At some point short of Edmonton, the new clerk strike was superimposed. This is the first Type 21K that we have seen on stamp, Q-165A,

the only other known Type 21K—also discovered by Steinhart—is a facing slip strike.

#### A LOOK AT OLD TRACK



Lew Ludlow

We wonder how many of our readers have ever seen W-0, AGASSIZ & VANCOUVER / R.P.O., Type 17H, illustrated herewith? This elusive listing was reported to Shaw by Whitehead back in the 1950's. Today, at least 25 years later, we believe that less than a half dozen strikes exist. The life of this route must have been incredibly short, and traffic equally sparse. Our current spread is confined to the month of August 1933, with the earliest known on August 11 and the latest 19 days later, on August 30. (This should send some of our bird dogs back for a second look at their used Medallions.) Perhaps some of our Western specialists can clue us in on why this routing up the Fraser River to Agassiz should be so scarce.

#### ENGINEERING COMMENT

Over the years we have done a complete analysis of all the listings and hammers of both the Maritimes and Newfoundland Sections; in the process, we have developed a system of hammer identification based on 'chordal measurement'. For steel engraved hammers, this system is based on measurement of straight line chords between given points of lettering across the inner portion of the circular cancellation. Some of our specialists have become singularly adept at duplicating measurements given in our chordal charts. Others, however, have written to say that they cannot reproduce our results. In our investigation of the latter, invariably their efforts have fallen short because