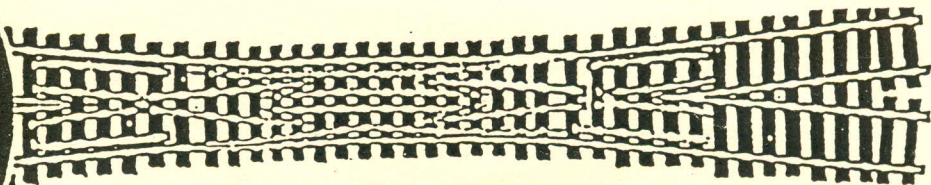
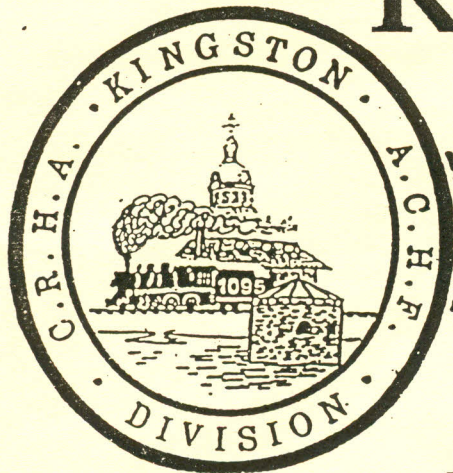


KINGSTON RAIL

EASTERN ONTARIO'S RAIL MAGAZINE



ISSUE 70 - NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 1997

KINGSTON DIVISION OF THE
CANADIAN RAILROAD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

THE PHILATELIC COLUMN

by Hugues Bonin.

"GENERIC" RAILWAY STAMPS



Through its history, Canada has issued several stamps showing a generic railway subject, or having some close links to Canadian railways. The first stamp of this month's column belongs to the second category. The stamp is the very first Canadian stamp, the famous "three-penny beaver" stamp issued on 23 April 1851. Its designer is Sir Sandford Fleming who was closely involved with the construction of four Canadian railways, including the Intercolonial Railway in Eastern Québec and the Maritimes, and, later, the Canadian Pacific Railway. He is also the inventor of the standard time concept. Canada had issued a stamp honouring Sir Sandford which was the subject of a past article within the "Philatelic Column".

The three pence stamp was issued in three varieties between 1851 and 1859, having Scott's catalog numbers 1, 4 and 12. The 1851 (No.1) stamp was red and was printed on imperforate, laid paper. Stamp No. 4, more common, was also imperforated and of red colour, but was printed on wave paper. As for stamp No. 12, its colour was more a rose shade and the stamp had perforation 12. In 1859, Canada adopted the decimal system for its currency and the "beaver" stamp was reissued in vermilion colour as a 5¢ stamp (Scott No. 15). This stamp remained in use until 1868 and is, up to this day, relatively inexpensive to add to a stamp collection.

The red three pence beaver stamp was reissued much later as a stamp depicting a stamp as part of a series honouring "Canada 82 International Philatelic Youth Exhibition 1982", which was the first International Philatelic Youth Exhibition held outside Europe. It was held in the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds in Toronto, 20-24 May 1982. At first, two stamps of the series were emitted on 11 March 1982, one 30¢ stamp showing in full colour the three pence beaver stamp and a 35¢ stamp depicting the 1935 10¢ Royal Canadian Mounted Police stamp. On 20 May 1982, three more stamps were issued; a 30¢ stamp with the 1908 Champlain's "Partement pour l'Ouest" 15¢ stamp, a 35¢ stamp showing the 1928 10¢ "Mount Hurd" stamp, and a 60¢ stamp

with the famous 1929 50¢ "Bluenose" stamp. In addition, on that same day, a souvenir sheet including all five stamps was issued in 2,000,000 copies, with the single 30¢ beaver stamp issued in 21,000,000 copies.

The second "generic" stamp was a 20¢ special delivery orange stamp issued in 1927. It was given Scott No. E3. The stamp shows various means of transportation used to carry the mail: pony express, a dog sleigh, a steam train, an ocean liner and two biplanes. Cars and trucks are interestingly absent here. All of these are gathered in front of a Rocky Mountains landscape, viewed through an ornate gothic arch. The stamp displays the word "Confederation" above the arch as it was issued as part of a series of stamps to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Canadian confederation.

The exact model of the steam locomotive is impossible to identify since a plume of steam hides the wheels, but the general shape and size suggest, at first glance, a Canadian National Class U-1 4-8-2 Mountain-type steamer or even a Canadian Pacific Class I-1a 4-8-2 Mountain (#2900-2902), or a CPR Class K-1a 4-8-4 Northern (#3100-3101), or a Class P-2a 2-8-2 Mikado (#5300s) or even a Class T-1a 2-10-4 Selkirk (#5900s). However, the CPR Northern and Selkirk classes have to be excluded since they were not yet built at the time of the stamp, as they were introduced in 1928 and 1929 respectively. An obvious choice for the locomotive shown on the stamp would have been Canadian National's Class U-2a 4-8-4 Northern #6100 which was outshopped in 1927 by the Canadian Locomotive Company in Kingston, Ontario, wearing a class name plate with the word "Confederation" on it. However, the locomotive shown on the stamp does not have the 6100's big Elesco feedwater heater above the front of the smokebox.

Another stamp of the 1927 "Confederation" series, the blue 12¢ stamp (Scott No. 145) has a narrow link with railways. It represents a map of Canada showing in dark blue the territory in 1867 and, in lighter blue, the territory in 1927. On the Western part, the two main

transcontinental railways are clearly indicated.

In the same vein, the then-colony of Newfoundland had its railway (The Newfoundland Railway) line indicated on a map of the Island on a 2¢ rose carmine stamp issued in 1908 (Scott No. 86). In 1910, Newfoundland issued a series of stamps depicting various industries of the colony. The 10¢ stamp, in violet-black, showed the paper mill at Grand Falls. A good magnifier would reveal some railway tracks and a few freight cars at the mill site. This stamp was first issued with a perforation 12 using lithography in 1910, then, in 1911, it was reissued using an engraved printing process and with a perforation 14 (Scott numbers 95 and 101, respectively).

In 1929, another series of Canadian stamps was issued with Canadian scenes at the theme. This is the series which had the first stamp showing the Quebec Bridge (12¢ stamp), however, the 20¢ stamp of this series also had a railway connection. The dark carmine stamp shows a harvesting scene (with a horse-drawn harvester) at the foot of the Rockies. This scene is completed with a view of a steam-hauled passenger train heading toward the mountains, with a heavyweight observation car (with open rear platform) at the rear end of the train. This scene was the same than for a proposed olive green 20¢ stamp that would have been issued in 1914 to commemorate the centennial of the birth of Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George Étienne Cartier. The outbreak of World War I unfortunately cancelled this series.

The next "generic" stamp was issued on 17 October 1979 as part of a series of three Christmas stamps depicting ancient toys. The 15¢ stamp (for unsealed Christmas cards, Canadian destinations) was printed in 109,500,000 copies and featured a reddish wooden toy steam locomotive and a car which could be the tender, on a medium blue background.

The next year represented the 75th anniversary of the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. On 27 August 1980, two 17¢ stamps were issued in 22,000,000 copies each, showing typical aerial views

of each province, taken from aerial photographs by George Hunter. In the Alberta scene of a small village, one could only guess the presence of a railway line serving the cluster of grain elevators. However, the Saskatchewan scene is essentially a view of three large wooden grain elevators with several grain boxcars on the rail spurs waiting to be loaded with grain or to be picked up by the next local train.

The early 1980's saw the beginning of commemorating Canada Day with series of stamps issued right before 1 July. In 1982, twelve paintings were used for the 30¢ stamps honouring all ten provinces and the two territories. The stamp honouring the Province of Québec showed a painting of a Montréal winter scene with three streetcars in sight. This stamp was dealt with in an earlier "Philatelic Column". Another stamp in this series depicts Alberta with a painting of a prairie scene with a small town in the background, partly hidden by two grain elevators, with a string of box cars waiting to be loaded with grain, as some of the box cars have their doors open. The painting was named "Prairie Town- Early Morning", by Illingworth Kerr, and may be seen at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary.

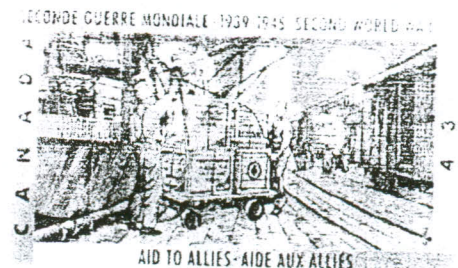
Three stamps with generic railway equipment were issued more recently. On 8 November 1993, two of the four stamps commemorating World War II's 1943 operations had some rail connections. Scott No. 1503 was a 43¢ green stamp entitled "Aid to Allies" and shows a harbour scene complemented by railway tracks and part of a wooden outside-braced box car. The other stamp (Scott No. 1506) was also a 43¢ stamp, in brown, entitled "Italian Campaign" and shows a group of infantry soldiers in combat gear running away along a railway track.

The third stamp was part of a series of five 45¢ stamps on comic strips. The stamp shows Superman flying above a speeding steam-hauled crack passenger train. It was issued on 2 October 1995 and has Scott No. 1579. The streamlined steam locomotive does not resemble any of the fully streamlined Canadian steamers (Canadian National Class U-4a 4-8-4 Northern, Canadian Pacific Classes F-1a and F-2a 4-4-4 Jubilee, Classes H-1c,d,e Royal Hudson and Classes T-1b,c Selkirk, or even Ontario Northland's 4-6-2 Pacific #700). It is rather reminiscent of New York Central's 4-6-4 Hudson "Commodore Vanderbilt" or one of Baltimore and Ohio's shrouded 4-6-2 Pacifics used on the "Cincinnati" passenger trains.

Superman was created by Toronto-born Joe Shuster and Cleveland's Jerry Siegel who made several comic strips with this hero for several years before they caught on. After a launch in the June 1938 issue of "Action Comics", the strip really became a hit at its third issue. The hero was first called "Man of Steel", but became "Superman" in July 1939.

Finally, this column cannot pass the case of the never-issued stamp on the Victoria Bridge of 1914. This stamp was part of the Macdonald-Cartier birth centennial series that was cancelled by the outbreak of World War I. This series was to have been issued late in 1914 and several of the stamps had already dies engraved and proofs printed either in black or, in some cases, using the colours foreseen for the stamps. The colour scheduled for the 10¢ stamp of the series was brown-violet and the stamp was to have shown a view of the tubular Victoria Bridge in Montréal, taken from a 1860 lithograph by John Weale. Under the picture were the inscriptions in French "Le Pont Victoria" and "Centenaire de Cartier". Unlike the 20¢ stamp of the series (the harvest scene), the engraving of the 10¢ Victoria Bridge stamp was never reused. There are only a few surviving proofs which are very rare and valuable.

Acknowledgements: Some of the information of this month's Column is taken from an excellent article by Mr Fred Angus, "Railway Subjects on Canadian Stamps", published in Issue No. 456 (Jan.-Feb. 1997) of "Canadian Rail".



Other 'Generic' stamps on page 14.