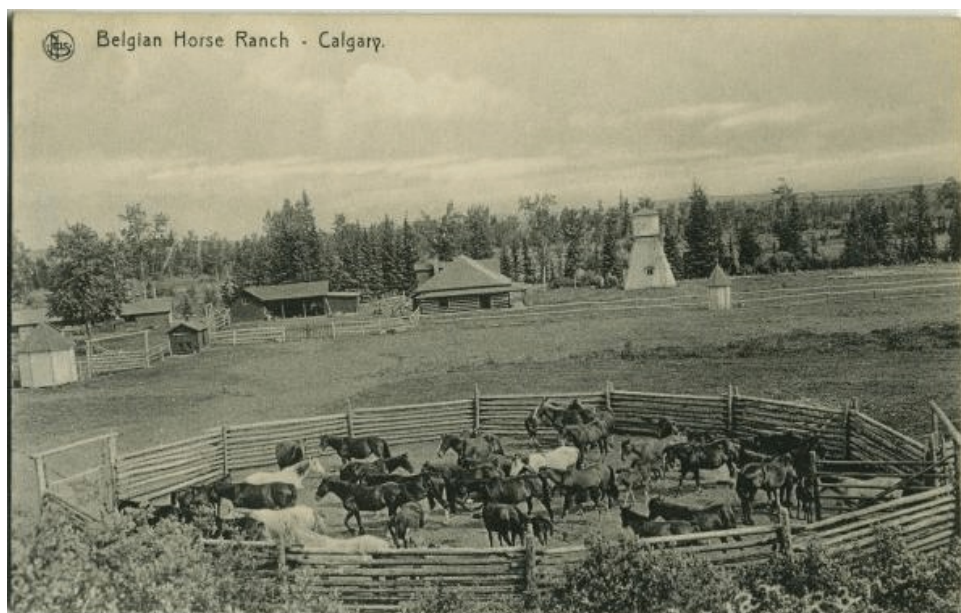


CALGARY PHILATELIST

Issue 111

December 2011



This real-photo postcard isn't just a horse topical, it shows one of Calgary's ranch house post offices, which existed in the days before good roads. Such post offices were in a corner of a kitchen or living room of a ranch house, in this case, the Pirmez Creek ranch. The ranch specialized in Belgian draft horses, used for pulling wagons and ploughs. See page 8 for more details.

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The CPS mailing address is Box 1478, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2L6. The Web site is: www.calgaryphilatelicsociety.com All articles as hard copy only, mailed to Box 6830, Calgary, T2P 2E7, or handed to Dale Speirs at meetings.

The CPS was founded in April 1922 by Dr. Edward George Mason. It is Chapter 66 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, Chapter 1360 of the American Philatelic Society, and Chapter 91 of the American Topical Association.

A cumulative subject index from issue #1 to date for the CALGARY PHILATELIST exists but because of its length is too long to be published in this bulletin. A copy can be had for free from the editorial address at Box 6830.

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CANADIAN STAMPS OF REMEMBRANCE: PART 2. MILITARY UNITS

by Gordon Demke

Tribute is paid to Canada's war dead, veterans and Armed Forces personnel through postage stamps. "Stamps of Remembrance" are another reminder of the sacrifice by fellow-Canadians so that we may enjoy freedom and peace. The following are Canadian stamps which I have identified as having "Remembrance" as their theme. All of the quotes are from the Canadian Postal Archives Database (historical notices) for the particular stamp or stamp series.



10 Nov. 1983. The Royal Canadian Regiment, The British Columbia Regiment (Sc 1007); & The Royal Winnipeg Rifles, The Royal Canadian Dragoons (Sc 1008), part of the Canadian Forces series of stamps. *"The year 1883 held great significance for Canada's armed forces. The Militia Act, passed that year, for the first time recognized the existence of a professional Canadian army. In addition, two regular units - The Royal Canadian Regiment and the Royal Canadian Dragoons - and two militia units, The Royal Winnipeg Rifles and The British Columbia Regiment - date back to 1883. . . . The stamps feature illustrations of the uniforms worn by the four regiments before the turn of the century."*



8 Sept. 1989. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Sc 1249) & Royal 22e Régiment (Sc 1250). Two sesquicentennial commemorative stamps [shown on next page] were issued to honour two Canadian infantry regiments celebrating their 75th anniversaries in 1989. *"Both regiments were formed in 1914 and both distinguished themselves during the First and Second World Wars and the Korean*

conflict." The stamps show *"the Royal 22e Régiment in the First World War going 'over the top' in France . . . [and] the PPCLI setting out on a night patrol in Korea."*



070404 20:36 KDA JDX 098 IIIIIIIIIII
 VIMY-Honour the Legacy IIIIIIIIIII
 Hommage au Patrimoine IIIIIIIIIII



11 Nov. 2000 (Sc 1876, 1877). The stamps honour two of Canada's most illustrious military regiments: Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) and Les Voltigeurs de Québec. In the Second World War, Lord Strathcona's Horse saw engagements at the Melfa River in Italy, and later in Holland. In the First World War, Les Voltigeurs contributed more than 500 volunteers and recruits for service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.





9 Nov. 1984 (Sc 1043). Air Force, from the Canadian Forces series of stamps. *“The names of 3,072 Royal Canadian Air Force members appear on the memorial [to Commonwealth air forces lost during World War II in the European Theatre], a tribute to the accomplishments of the RCAF and the price its members have paid for Canada’s freedom. . . . After a wide variety of postwar service, the RCAF merged with the Canadian Army and Navy in 1968 to form the unified Canadian Armed Forces. . . . The [stamp] design features pilots’ flying dress of three different periods: World War I, World War II, and the present.”*

8 Nov. 1985 (Sc 1075). The Navy, from the Canadian Forces series of stamps. *“The Royal Canadian Navy was formed in 1910, at the time of the Anglo-German naval arms race. The Canadian parliament looked to the new navy to help preserve ‘the security of commerce, the safety of the empire, and the peace of the world.’ . . . The [stamp] design features naval personnel from three time periods: a gunner’s mate from HMCS Niobe [the Royal Canadian Navy’s first warship]; a World War II officer in duffel coat; and an enlisted person in the new summer-white dress uniform.”*



4 Nov. 1998. HMCS Sackville (Sc 1762) and HMCS Shawinigan (Sc 1763), from the Naval Vessels series. The stamps [shown on the next page] were issued to commemorate *“the 75th anniversary of the Canadian Naval Reserve Canada’s Naval Reserve has provided Maritime Command, and the Royal Canadian Navy before it, with trained personnel for combat and naval support for three-quarters of a century. During the Second World War, reservists played a critical role, supplying the Canadian fleet with the majority of naval personnel; known as Canada’s ‘second navy’, reservists were trained but untested sailors recruited from every walk of civilian life.”*



29 April 2005 (Sc 2107). Battle of the Atlantic. *“The war at sea was the longest battle of the Second World War and, in the harsh waters of the North Atlantic, Canadians made a crucial contribution. The Allied war effort depended on convoys of supply ships that crossed these stormy seas, stalked by enemy submarines. Early in the war, the Royal Canadian Navy began sailing with the convoys to protect these vital supply ships. Outnumbered and ill equipped, our naval forces succeeded in keeping the sea*

lanes open, but at a high cost. By the war’s end, 22 Canadian naval ships had been lost, and more than 4,000 Canadians had died, including 2,000 RN, 750 RCAF and 1,650 Merchant Marines. Each year we remember their sacrifice on the Battle of the Atlantic Sunday, the first Sunday in May.”



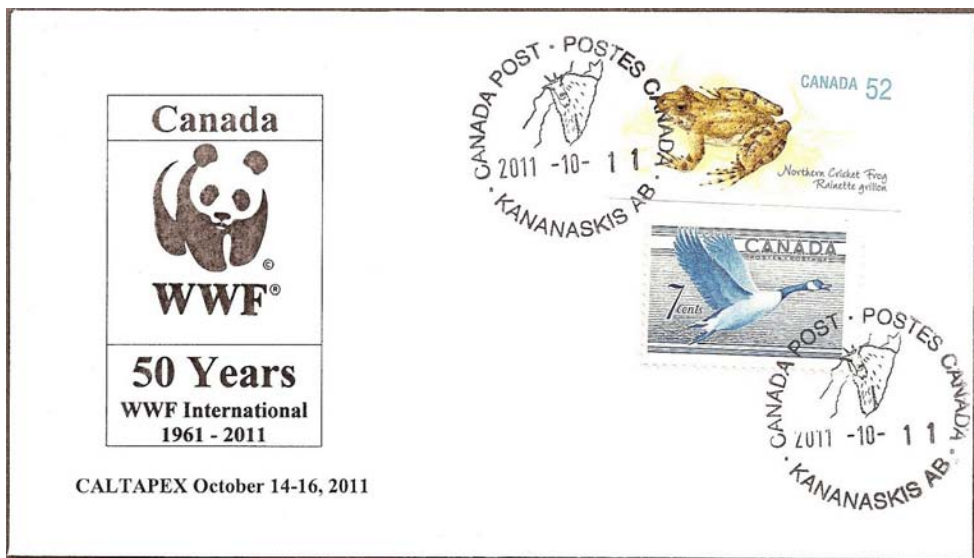
4 May 2010 (Sc 2384). Canadian Navy, 1910-2010. The stamps [shown on next page] depict HMCS Niobe, one of Canada’s first warships, and HMCS Halifax, a modern frigate. At the outbreak of World War I, the RCN had fewer than 350 sailors and two ill-equipped warships. By the end of World War II the navy numbered about 100,000 personnel and 365 warships.





[to be continued]

CALTAPEX 2011 SHOW COVER



THE RANCH HOUSE POST OFFICES OF CALGARY: DUE WEST

by Dale Speirs

It was not necessary to have an established village before the Canadian Post Office would allow a post office to be set up. The postal bureaucrats often let post offices to be set up in a house, usually just a roll-up desk or locked cabinet. This was because in the days before good gravel roads (and paved roads didn't exist even in most cities) it could take a day to travel the distance we now motor in ten minutes. Rural roads were seldom better than footpaths or wagon ruts that turned into long linear mud holes every time it rained. Calgary had a number of these post offices around it, many of which are now absorbed into the city or are rural delivery routes with cluster boxes.

This article discusses three ranch house post offices due west of Calgary that long ago vanished. The Elbow River post office was approximately where Lower Springbank and Westridge now are. Spring Bank, spelled as two words, was a post office next in line down the road where West Springbank now is. Both were north of the Elbow River, and have been or shortly will be annexed inside Calgary city limits. Pirmez Creek was on the south side of the river, roughly two-thirds of the way to Bragg Creek. It is today between the river and Highway 8, still some distance from the city. The three post offices were on the same mail route, which continued to Jumping Pound, another extinct ranch house post office out on today's Trans-Canada Highway but which is too far to consider as a Calgary post office.



Figure 1: Calgary as it was in 1914. "The Plateau" is what we know today as Signal Hill. "South Road From Morleyville" is approximately the Lower Springbank Road. Brickburn is now Edworthy Park and Shaganappi is the golf course..

Eventually the ranch house post offices faded away with the advent of gravel roads and rural delivery, and the route changed to terminate at Bragg Creek. In comparing the three ranch post offices, a look at their gross income for fiscal year ended March 31st, shows which was most viable [3].

Elbow River's post office gross income ranged from \$16.11 in fiscal year 1907 to \$35.64 in 1916, not much even for those days of uninflated gold-backed currency. Spring Bank's range for the same time period was \$30.68 to \$103.40. Pirmez Creek did \$146.53 in its first year in fiscal 1910, but dropped to \$57.75 the following year, and for most of its first decade was in the \$60 range give or take. Based on their relative incomes, it appears that the Elbow River post office was least necessary, which makes sense when you look at a map showing their locations.

Elbow River Post Office.

Charles Ostrom was the only postmaster for this post office [1], which opened on 1905-11-01 and closed on 1916-07-31. It was located in his kitchen and was contained in a massive desk custom built for him by a Spring Bank neighbour. The desk had rows of pigeon holes across the top, then the writing surface, then the usual lockable drawers for the stamps, registered mail, and cash. Next to the desk were racks for mail bags. Letters for the neighbours were sorted into the pigeon holes. A sign at the front gate of the farm announced the post office. During the tenure of the post office, there were a couple of large construction projects such as a water main and a power line. The workers were paid in cash in those days and sometimes a very substantial payroll was shipped into the post office, which caused no end of nervousness to the Ostrom family. In 1910 the farm was quarantined for three months due to smallpox, and as a result the post office was suspended. Residents had to go further to the Spring Bank post office [2].

Spring Bank Post Office.

A century ago, this area name was spelt as two words, not the single word as it is today. It opened 1891-01-01 with Wheeler Mickle as the postmaster. He also doubled as the mail courier to Jumping Pound further west. Originally Mickle lived in a log cabin, but eventually the family moved into a proper house, and the post office was set up in their dining room. In 1902, William Young bought the Mickle farm and took over as postmaster until the post office closed on 1921-06-30. He first operated it from the house, then set up a small store to take advantage of the traffic coming for their mail. There was a school near the Spring Bank post office, and the older children were entrusted to pick up the mail on their way home. There would often be a dozen horses tied to the rail in front of the post office as the kids queued for the mail [2].



Figure 2: Proof strike

Pirmez Creek Post Office.

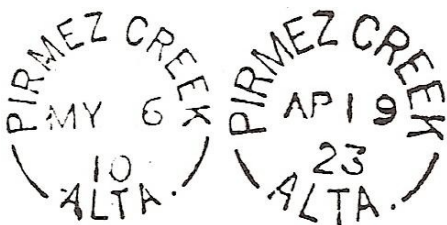


Figure 3: Proof strikes of Pirmez postmarks.

Raoul Pirmez was postmaster from 1910-05-01 to 1911-05-26. He was the Belgian Consul for Calgary, and the post office was a stud farm for purebred Belgian draft horses. After he left, the post office was taken over by Cecil M. Cohen, who ran it until 1915-03-05, having bought out Pirmez's horse breeding operation.

Meopham Gardner then took over the operation until 1944-01-22 when the post office closed [1]. The Gardner family is still remembered by Camp Gardner, the Scouts camp established just west of the ranch on the banks of the Elbow River. The Pirmez leg of the postal route was notorious for mud, muskeg, snow drifts, and just plain bad conditions [2].

Modern Day Postal Outlets.



The area of the ranch house post offices no longer has any postal outlets but as the population density builds up, one can expect the re-establishment of services. There is one retail outlet just on the eastern edge of the area, at 85 Street SW and 9 Avenue in a Shoppers Drug Mart.

Figure 4: Eastern Springbank

References.

- 1] Library and Archives Canada (downloaded 2011-06-11) Post offices and postmasters. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/post-offices>
- 2] various authors (1976) CHAPS AND CHINOOKS: A HISTORY WEST OF CALGARY. Published by Foothills Historical Society. Vol. 1, pages 133 to 137.
- 3] Canadian Post Office (19xx) Report of the Postmaster General. SESSIONAL PAPERS OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA, Appendices C and D

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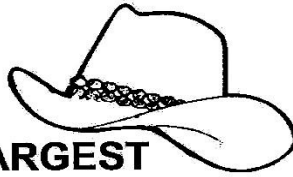
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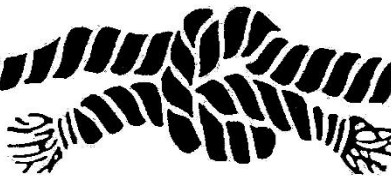
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NOTE TO INTERNET VIEWERS: Unless stated otherwise, telephone numbers are area code 403. Alberta is on Mountain Time. Any advertiser can be reached through the CPS e-mail at calphilso@shaw.ca, but please allow time for forwarding to offline members.

FOR SALE: Lightly used Lighthouse album binders with protective slipcases. \$20 for one, \$36 for two, five or more for \$15 each. Contact Peter Fleck at 590-1574 or peterfleck@telus.net

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WANTED: Canadian military covers and postcards with hospital ships (white with red crosses). Contact Jon Johnson at 253-8411 or jcjperfins@hotmail.com

WANTED: Tanna Tuva, especially covers. I used to have a few and now starting over. Phone Keith at (780)437-1787 (Edmonton)

WANTED: Owl stamps worldwide. Cash or trade. Call Pat at 238-3435.

TRADE: Need automotive work done on your car? Let's trade my labour for your stamps that I need. I am a licenced mechanic with 20+ years experience. Phone Doug Kollar at 547-3838.

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WANTED: Stamps and covers from China to 1949, People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. Special interest in overprints and bulk lots. Prefer postally used. Call Penny at 686-2662 or pkborrowman@yahoo.ca.

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MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

2011

November	16	Auction
December	7	Christmas social

2012

January	4	General meeting
	4	Deadline for February bulletin
	18	Auction
February	1	General meeting
	15	Auction
March	7	General meeting
	7	Deadline for April bulletin
	21	Auction
April	4	General meeting
	18	Auction
	22	90 th anniversary of the CPS
August 31 to September 2		BNAPEX 2012 CALTAPEX

MEETINGS and AUCTIONS are at the Kerby Centre, 2nd floor, 1133 - 7 Avenue SW, at 19h30. Auction lots should be in before 19h30 to allow bidder viewing.

CALGARY REGIONAL GROUP OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY meets second Wednesdays. For details about meeting places and times, contact Dave Bartlet at 829-3580.

CALGARY ASSOCIATION OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITORS meets fourth Wednesdays. For details, contact Jim Taylor at 238-3698.

BNAPEX 2012 CALTAPEX is at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Centre Street and 7 Avenue SW. For details, contact Jim Taylor at 238-3698.