

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

This exhibit illustrates with postcards something we are all familiar with, the trouble with driving in traffic. It is a worldwide problem with many aspects, as seen on these pages.

Plan Of The Exhibit.

- 1: There is no new thing.
- 2: The wide open road.
- 3: The obstructed road.
- 4: Signage.
- 5: Parking.
- 6: The ideal.



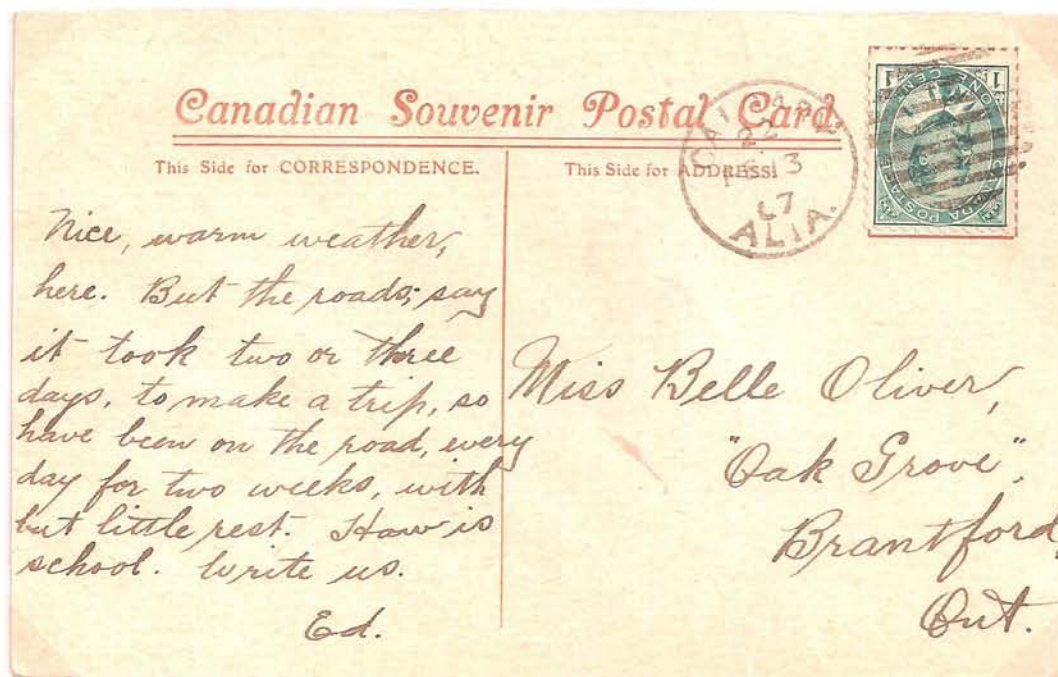
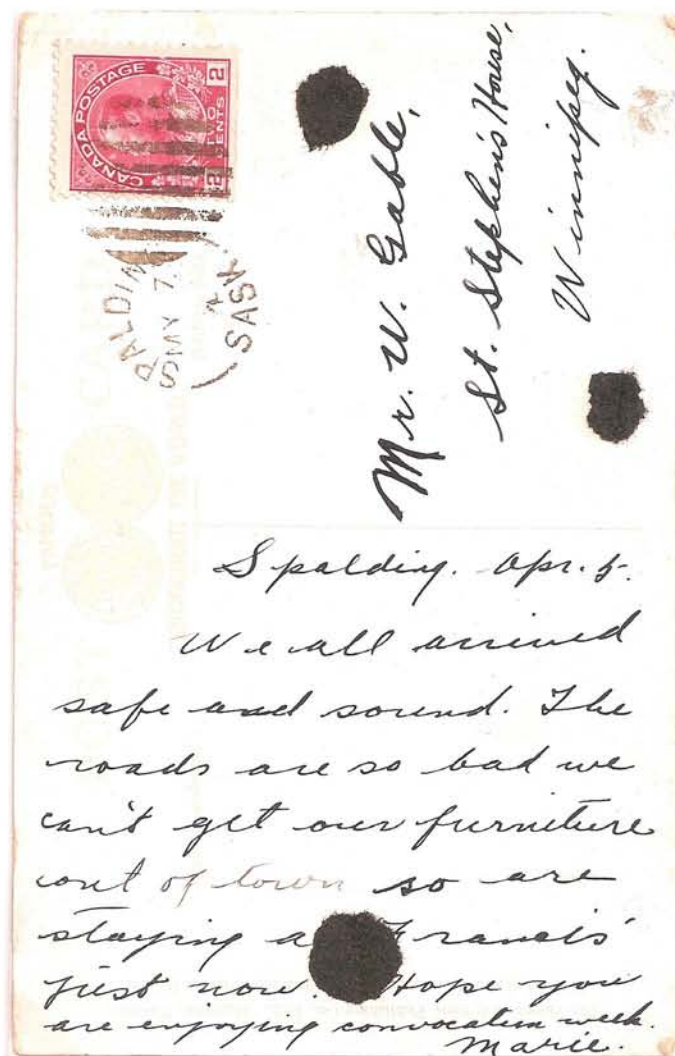
Amish traffic disruption depicted on a postcard produced in Marietta, Pennsylvania.

1.1: There Is No New Thing.

Within living memory, country roads were uniformly bad and long distance travel was not lightly undertaken. From the first decade of the 1900s are these two postcards.

At right: "We all arrived safe and sound. The roads are so bad we can't get our furniture out of town ..."

Below: "Nice warm weather here. But the roads; say it took two or three days to make a trip, so have been on the road every day for two weeks, with but little rest. ..."



1.2: There Is No New Thing.

Traffic jams are as old as cities. These two postcards illustrate life more than a century ago. The top postcard is postmarked 1910 from Syracuse, New York State, and the bottom card is dated 1911 from Boston, Massachusetts. It is doubtful their traffic flow has improved since then.



1.3: There Is No New Thing.

The pioneers had their traffic problems. The top postcard shows an ox train west of Pembina, Manitoba, circa 1874. Patience was a virtue when travelling across the prairies at walking speed.

The lower postcard depicts a scene on the Alaska Highway circa 1944. The Jeep driver was to be admired for his optimism, and faith in the ability of a four-wheel drive.



Historic Alaska Highway

2.1: The Wide Open Road.

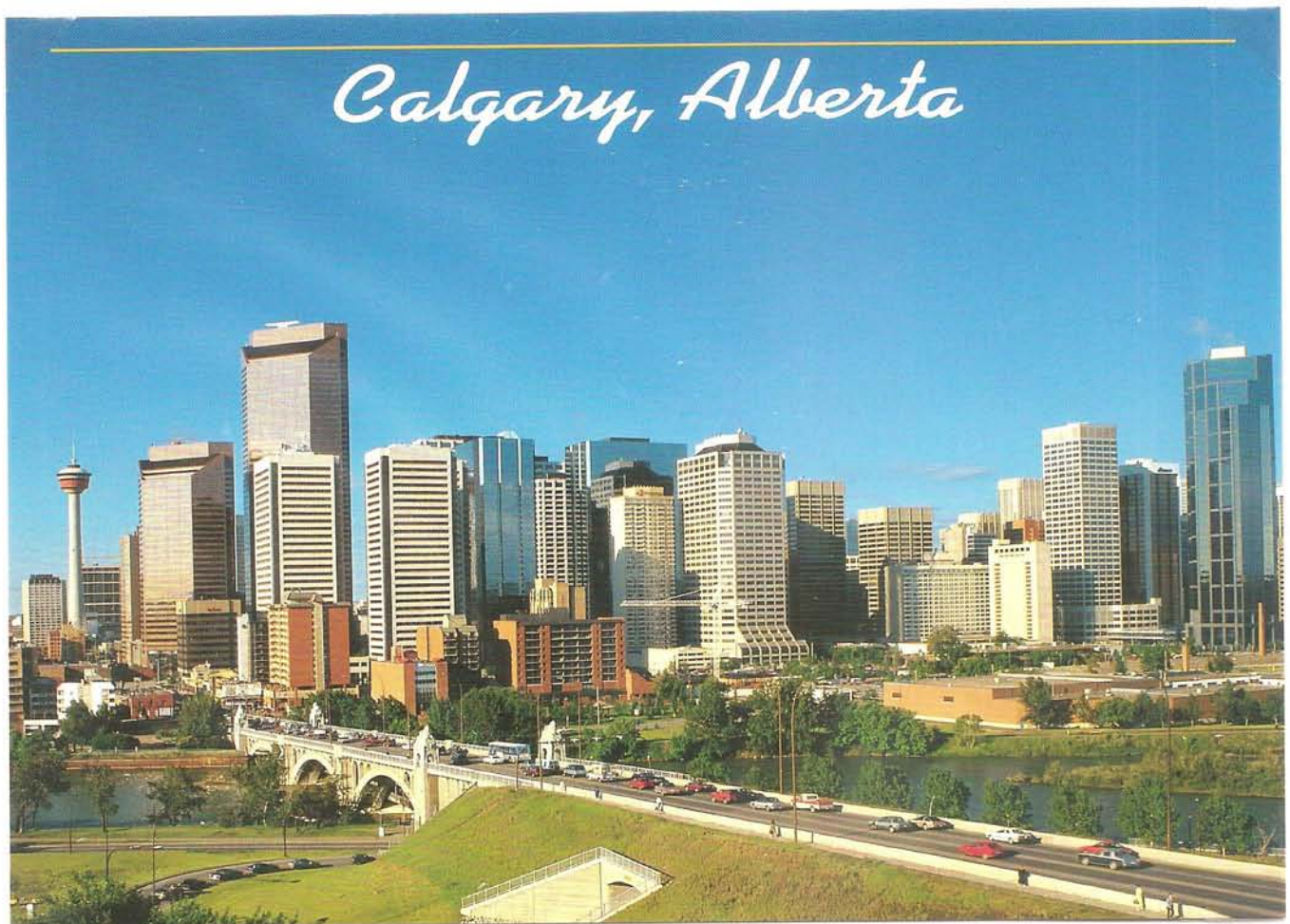
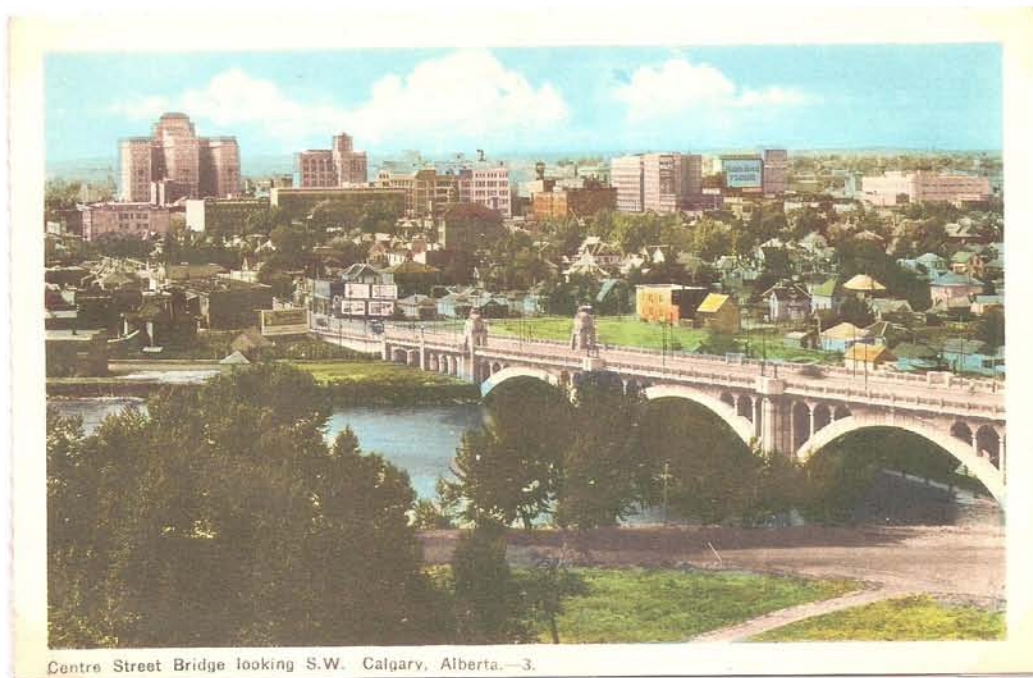
There were times and places when streets and main roads were free and clear. The top postcard is postmarked 1910 from Edmonton, Alberta. Residents of that city will not believe there was a time when pedestrians could stop and chat in the middle of Jasper Avenue.

The bottom postcard is postmarked 1968 but it was evidently old stock. Piston-engine passenger jets were long obsolete, the jive talk went out of fashion in the 1950s, and, most telling of all, the Los Angeles freeway traffic was flowing at highway speeds.



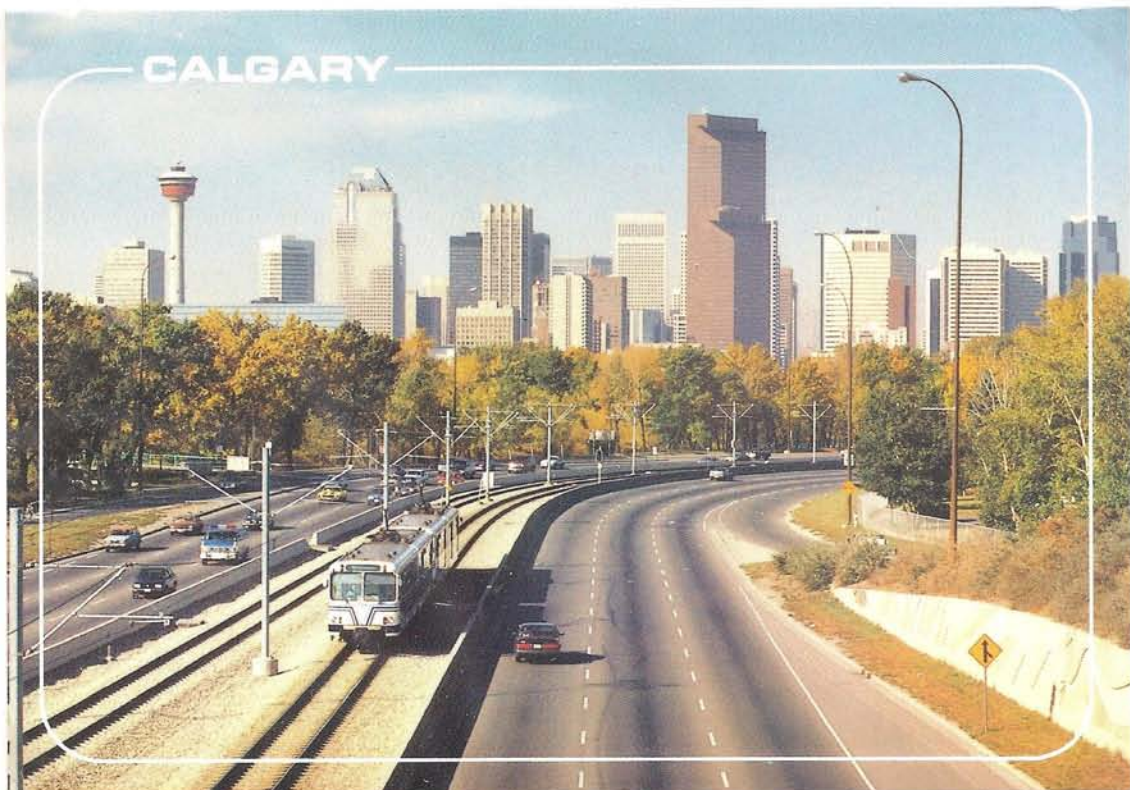
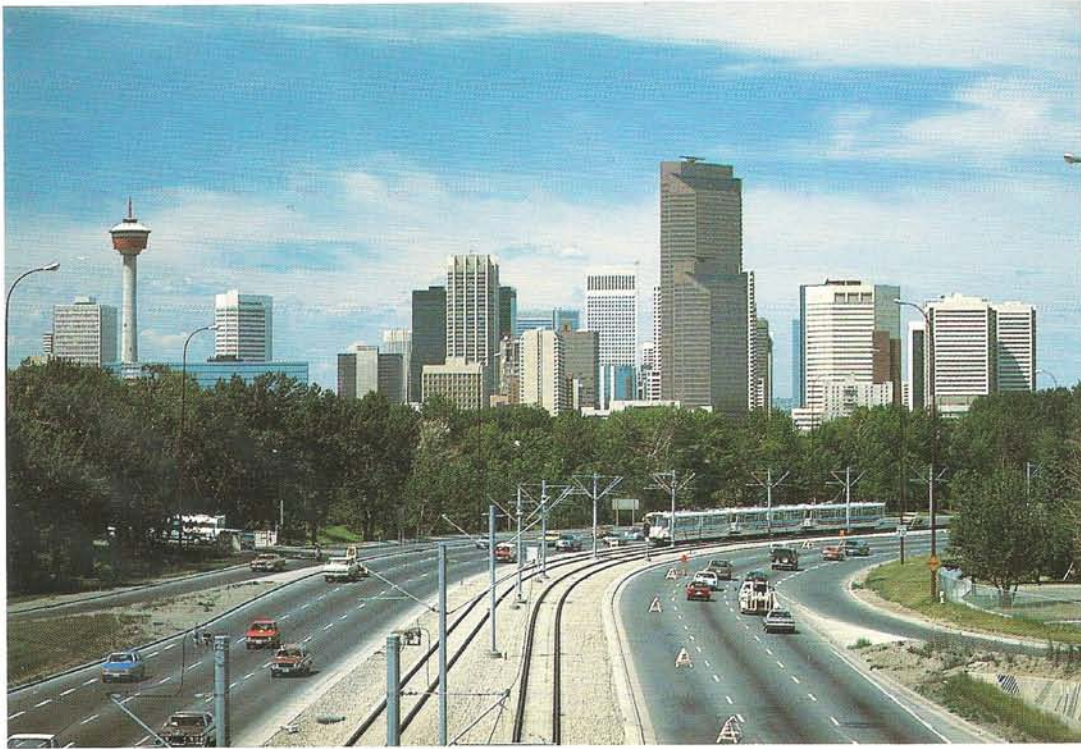
2.2: The Wide Open Road.

Undated postcards showing Centre Bridge, Calgary. The top one is circa the 1940s, with rapidly moving traffic. The bottom postcard, from the 1990s, depicts the modern scene of traffic backing up as it reaches Chinatown at the south end of the bridge.



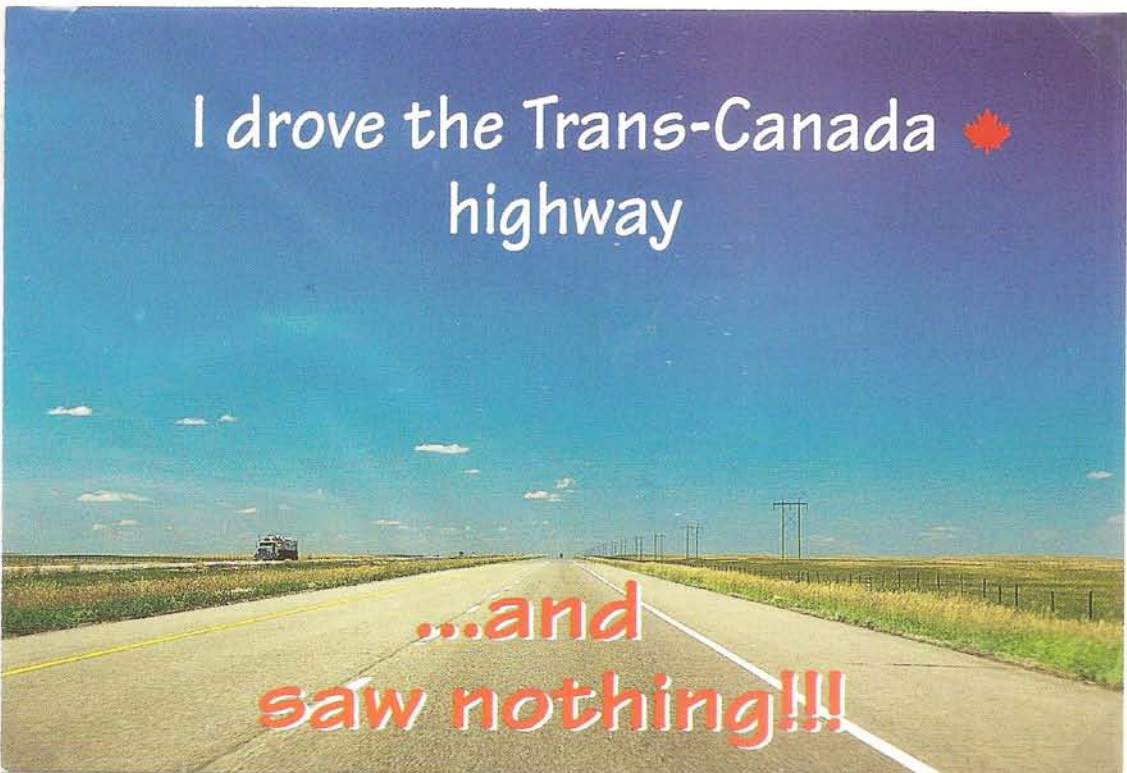
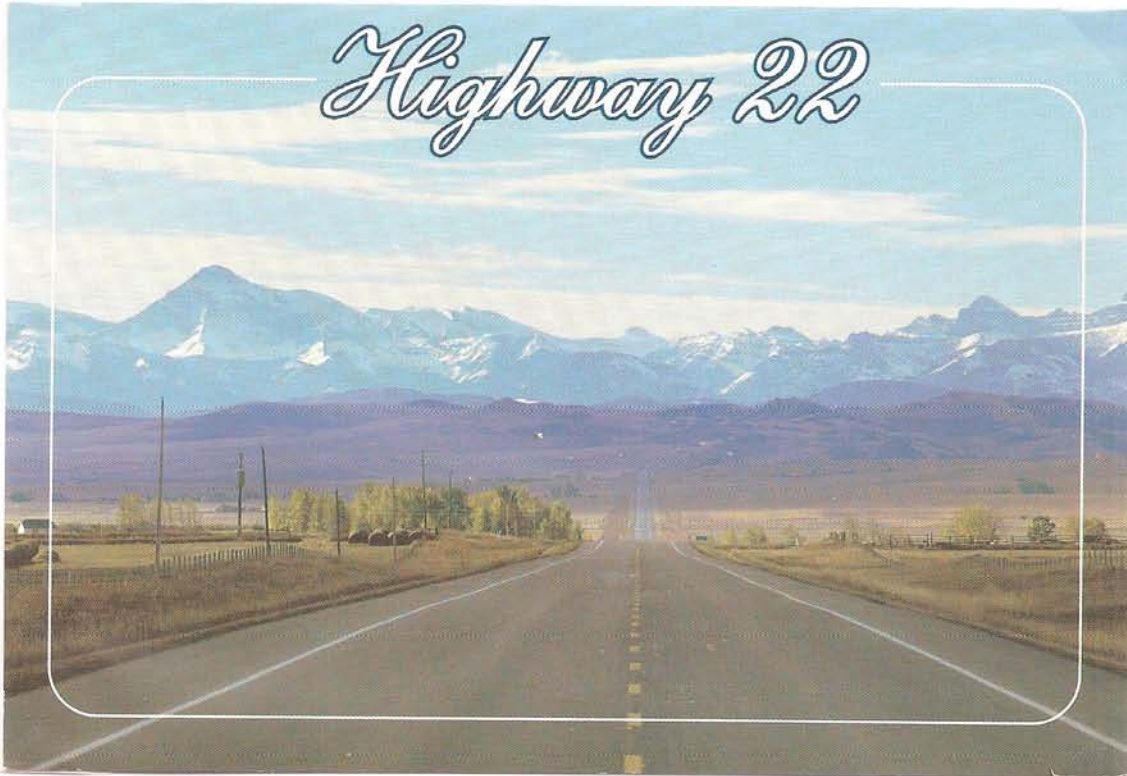
2.3: The Wide Open Road.

Two postcards from the late 1990s showing Memorial Drive NE in Calgary. Increasing traffic loads into the downtown core prompted the construction of the LRT rail lines to relieve the pressure on freeway.



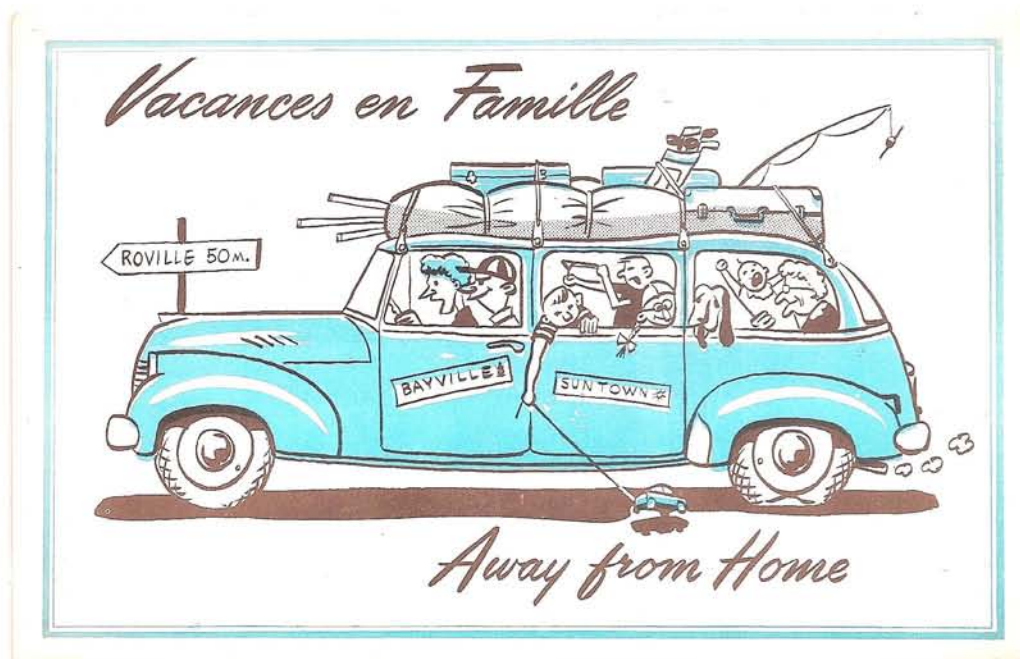
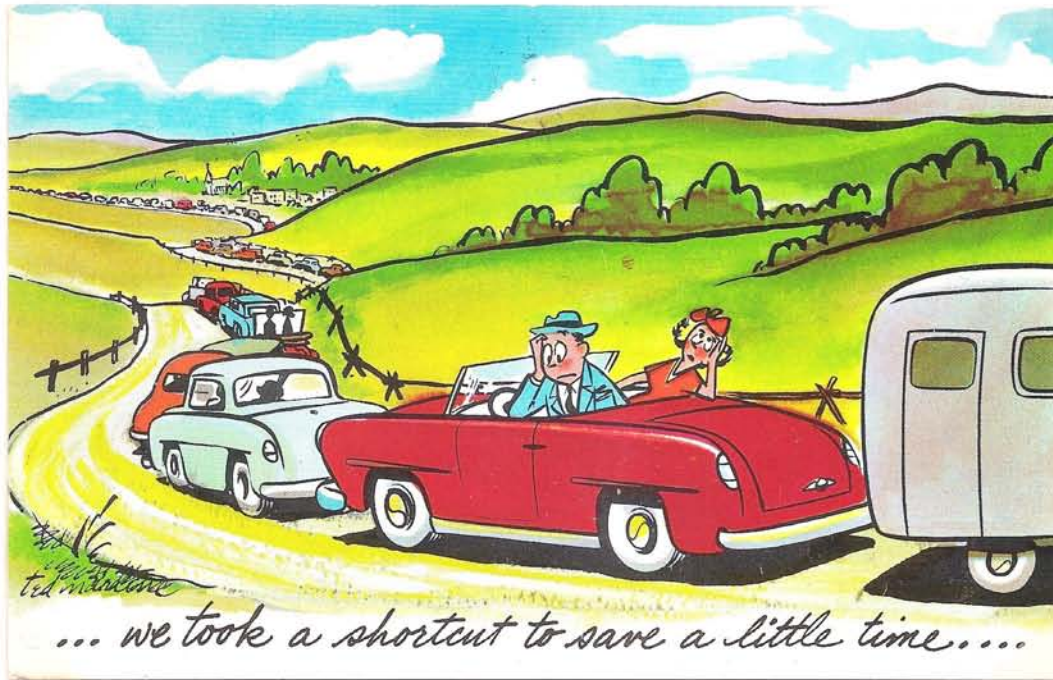
2.4: The Wide Open Road.

Open roads are a lost cause in the cities, but there is always the countryside.



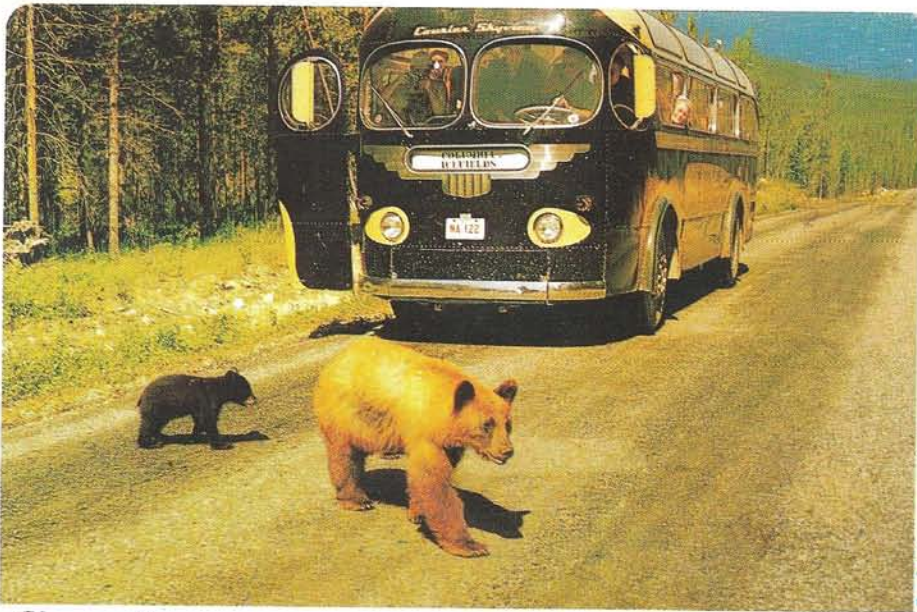
3.1: The Obstructed Road.

Except, of course, on weekends, when everyone drives out of the city looking for the wide open spaces.



3.2: The Obstructed Road.

And once you get to the park there are other traffic problems.



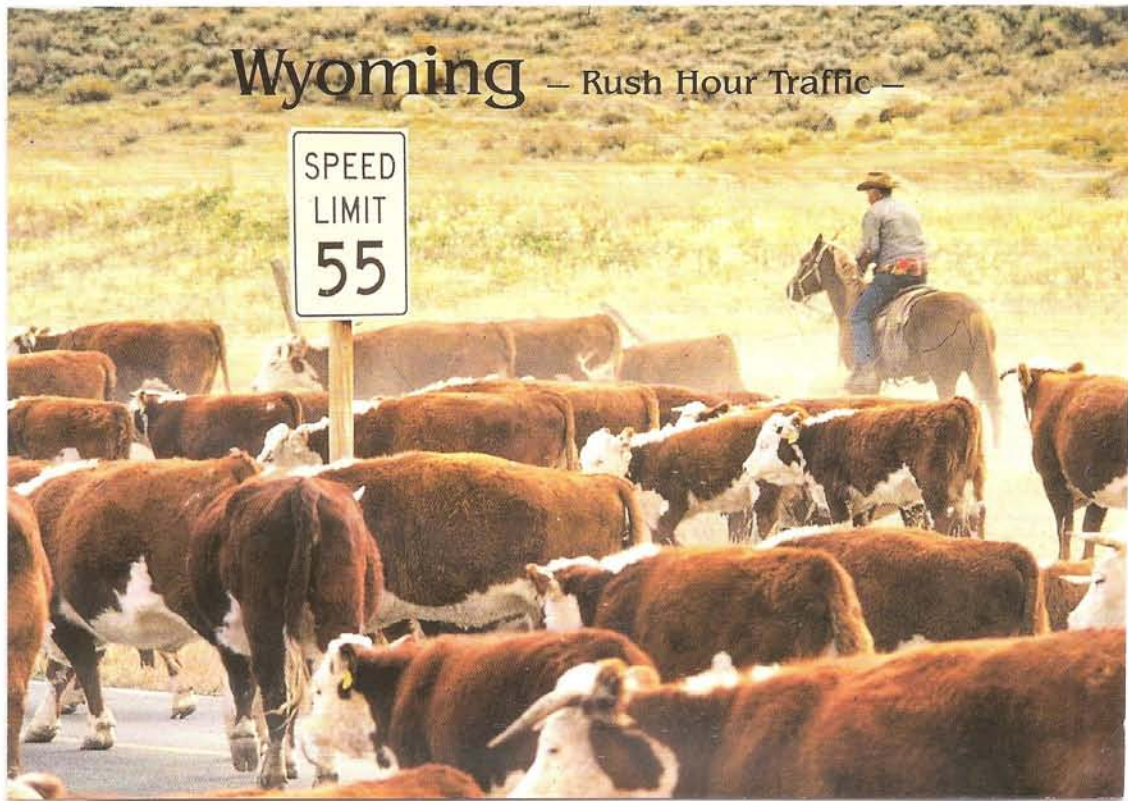
Traffic Stoppers

Sherry Rouse



3.3: The Obstructed Road.

Rural areas are not entirely free of traffic jams. The top postcard is from Cody, Wyoming, and the bottom postcard from John Day, Oregon.



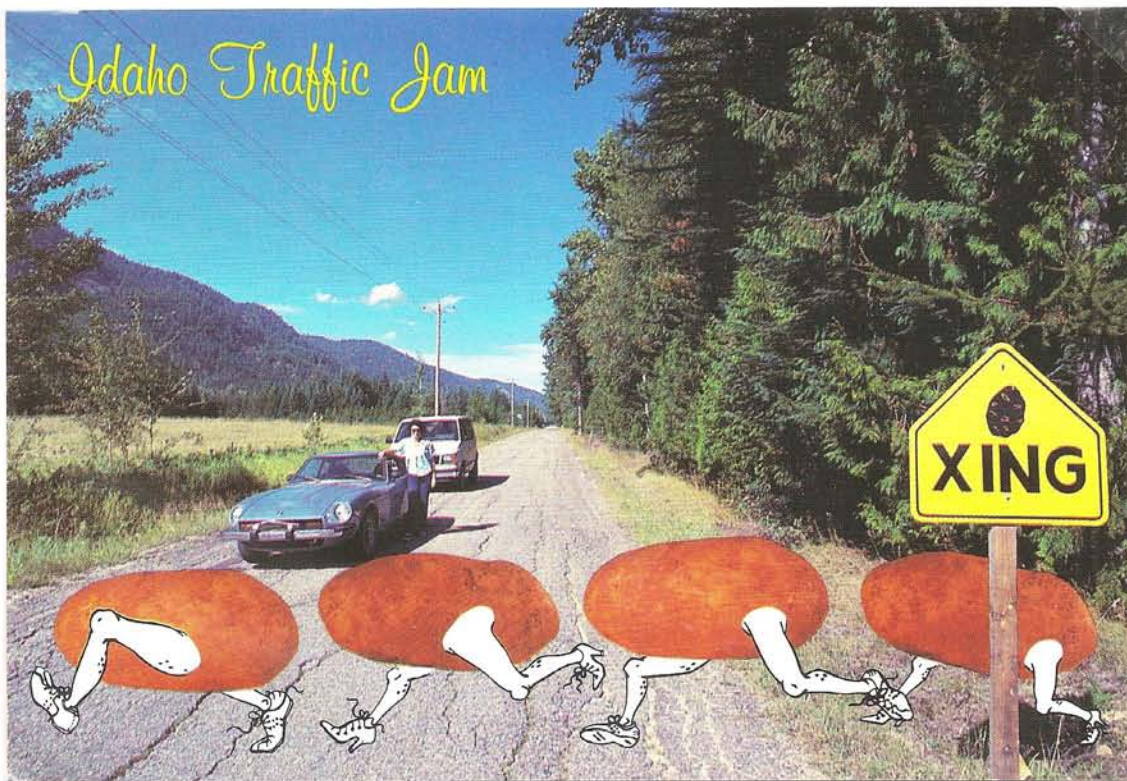
3.4: The Obstructed Road.

Some places have unusual traffic problems. The top postcard depicts Paris, France, in the 1990s. The bottom postcard is postmarked 1992 from Pahoa, Hawaii. That state's Highway Dept. has the toughest job in the world.



4.1: Signage.

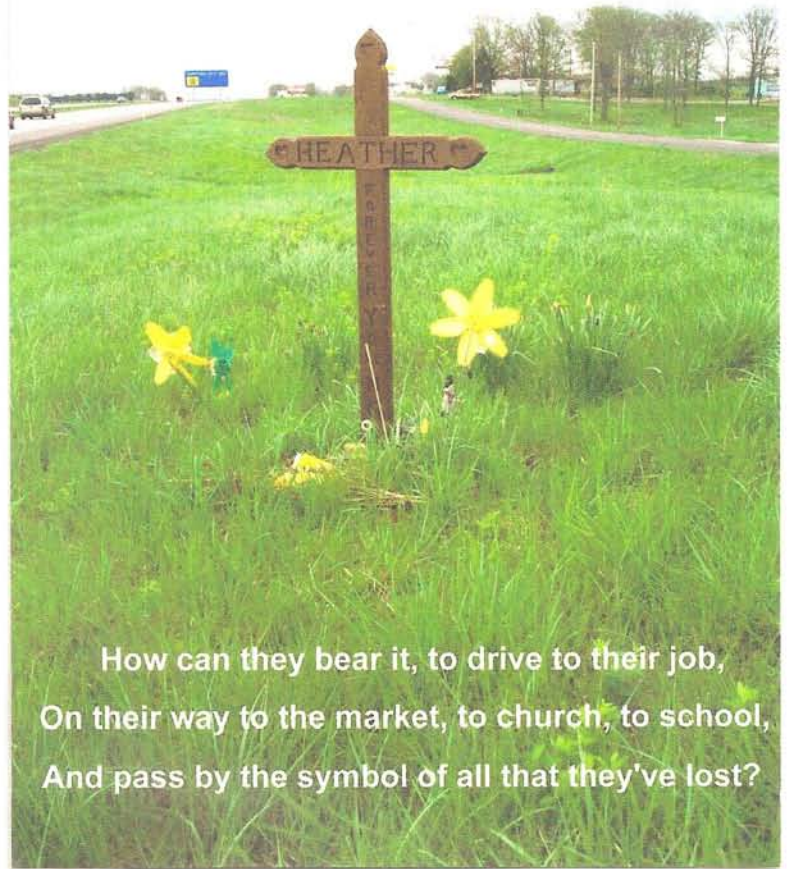
One has reason to doubt the veracity of the Idaho postcard. On the other hand, Killam, Alberta, has suffered jokes about its traffic signs since its founding.



4.2: Signage.

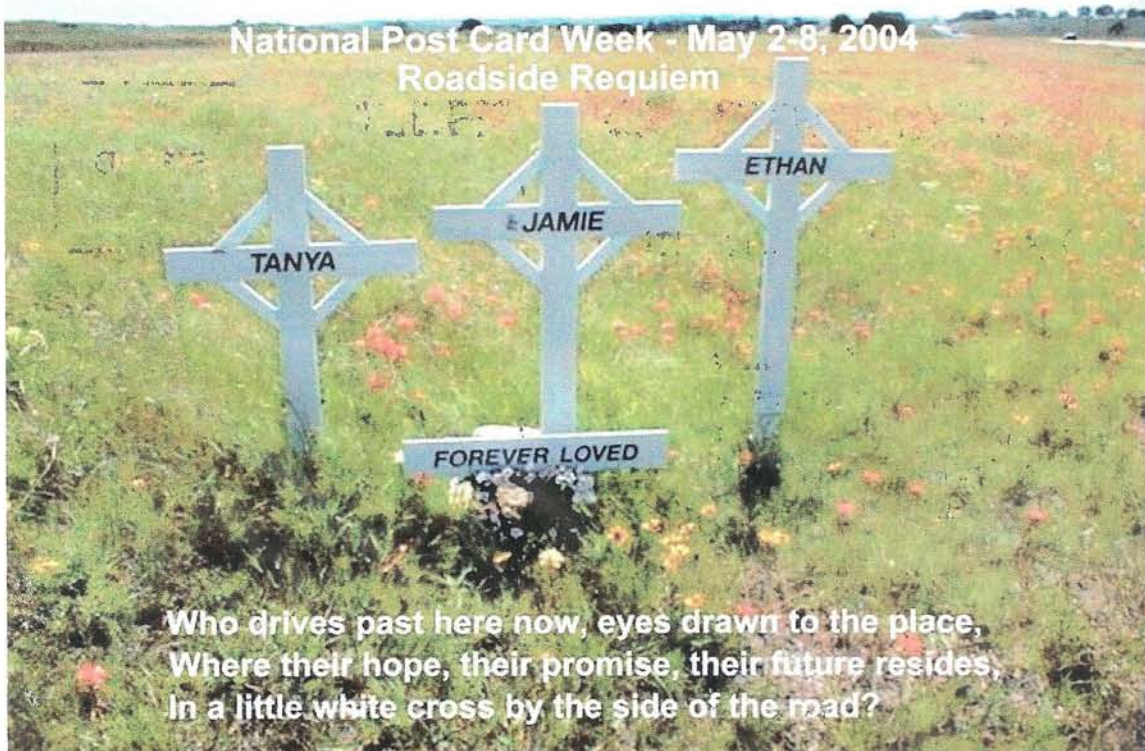
Roadside crosses are not uncommon reminders of the carnage on our highways. These are two examples of a lengthy series produced by Jane and Charles Jr Wright of Estes Park, Colorado. They took the photos in their travels around the USA.

National Post Card Week - May 1-7, 2005 Roadside Requiem



How can they bear it, to drive to their job,
On their way to the market, to church, to school,
And pass by the symbol of all that they've lost?

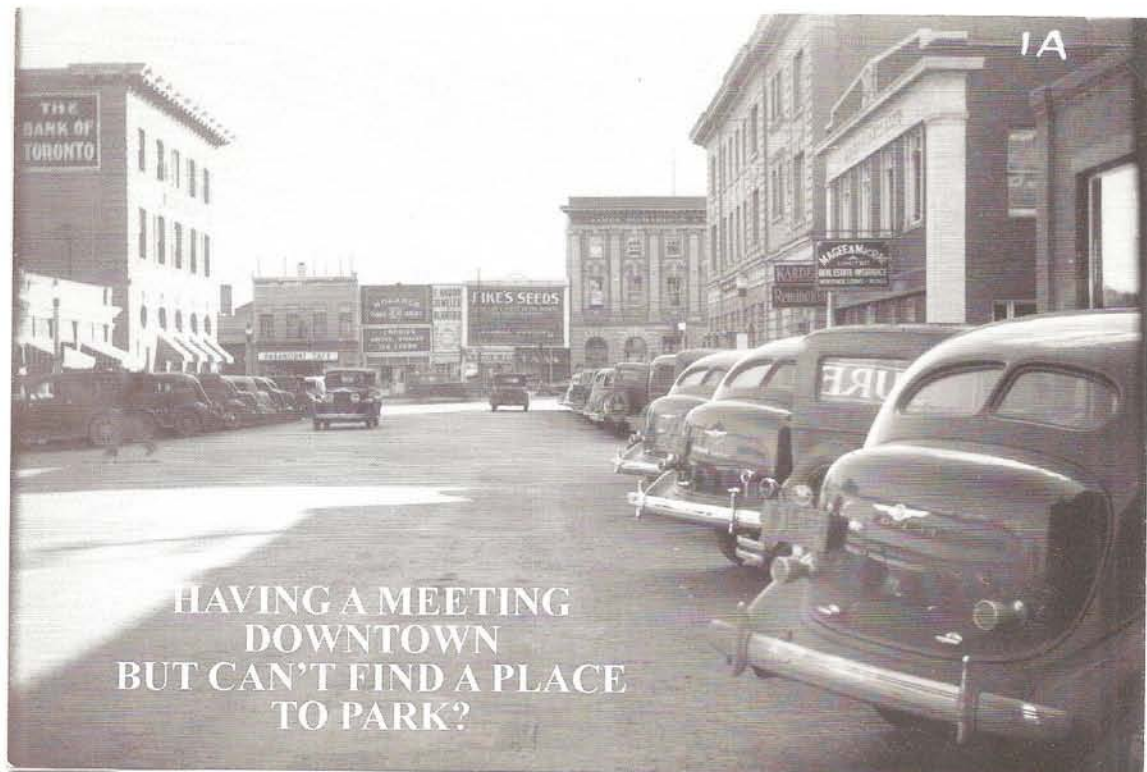
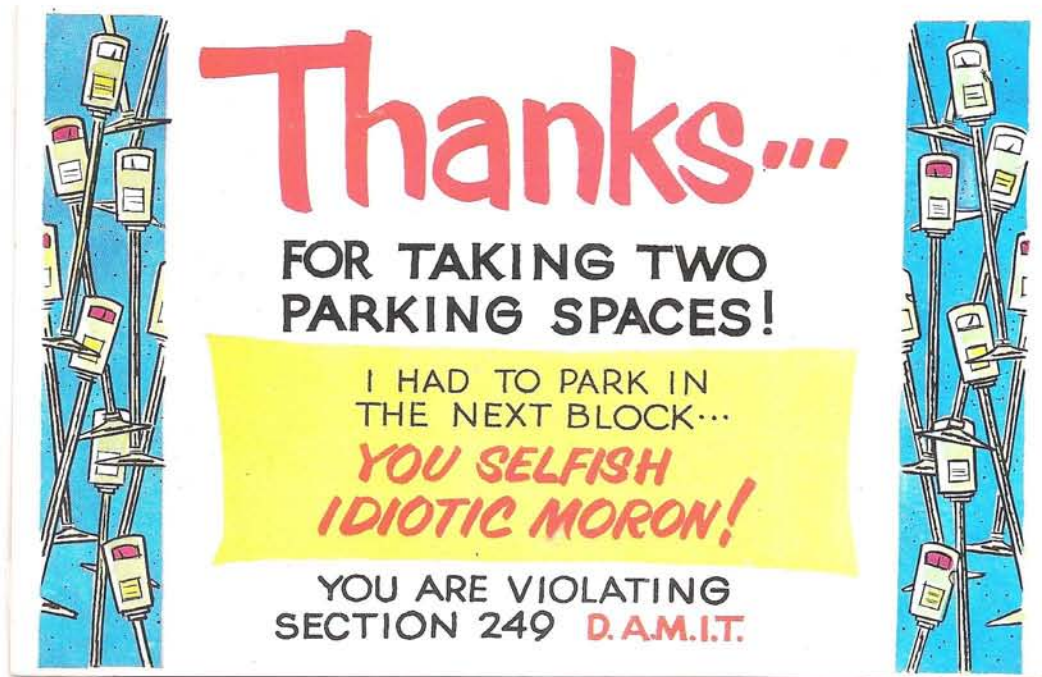
National Post Card Week - May 2-8, 2004 Roadside Requiem



Who drives past here now, eyes drawn to the place,
Where their hope, their promise, their future resides,
In a little white cross by the side of the road?

5.1: Parking.

Once arrived at your destination, there is the difficulty in finding a place to park. The top postcard is from Lakewood, Colorado, probably from the 1960s. The bottom postcard was published in the 1990s but shows that parking problems are no new thing.



6.1: The Ideal.

