

Sewell Camp Field Post Office 1915

Purpose and Scope:

This one-frame postal history exhibit studies the planning and operation of a Field Post Office (FPO) operating for 7 months at Sewell, Manitoba, Canada in 1915. Official operating dates of Sewell Camp are recorded as 22 May - 2 Nov.

Background:

Situated around the Sewell C.P.R. train station, Sewell Camp assembled 10,900 soldiers for basic training and advanced study in trench warfare, machine gunnery and field artillery. Mail service was an important component of the military operation.



Sewell Camp FPO 1915

Treatment:

In loose chronological order, the exhibit starts with a brief history of the Sewell FPO. Cartography and covers put the Post Office within its surroundings, and administrative functions like staffing, mail collection and delivery are identified. Analysis and deployment of hammers, postal rates and frankings, registered and redirected mail reflect daily operations. A name change to Camp Hughes is explored, leading to a new hammer discovery. The exhibit concludes with a summary of mail volume and postal revenue for 1915.

Challenge:

15 years of study has identified collecting challenges:

- Military orders issued for encampment, harvest leave or deployment impacted mail volume. The few MY, AU or NOV postmarks seen mirror the movement of battalions in and out of Sewell Camp.
- A new Sewell Camp hammer arrived in July but is seldom seen, with only two recorded usages.
- Sewell Camp FPO was renamed Camp Hughes on 27 September: a 35 day window to proof Camp Hughes hammers and issue post marks before the official close of the training season on 2 November.

Exhibit Plan

Title Page: EKU in 1915

1. Preparation pp. 2-4

2. Settling In pp. 5-7

3. Summertime pp. 8-10

4. Sewell Camp to Camp Hughes pp. 11-12

5. Off to War pp. 13-16

Personal research is denoted with a red dot ●

Special items are mounted **within a red frame**.

References:

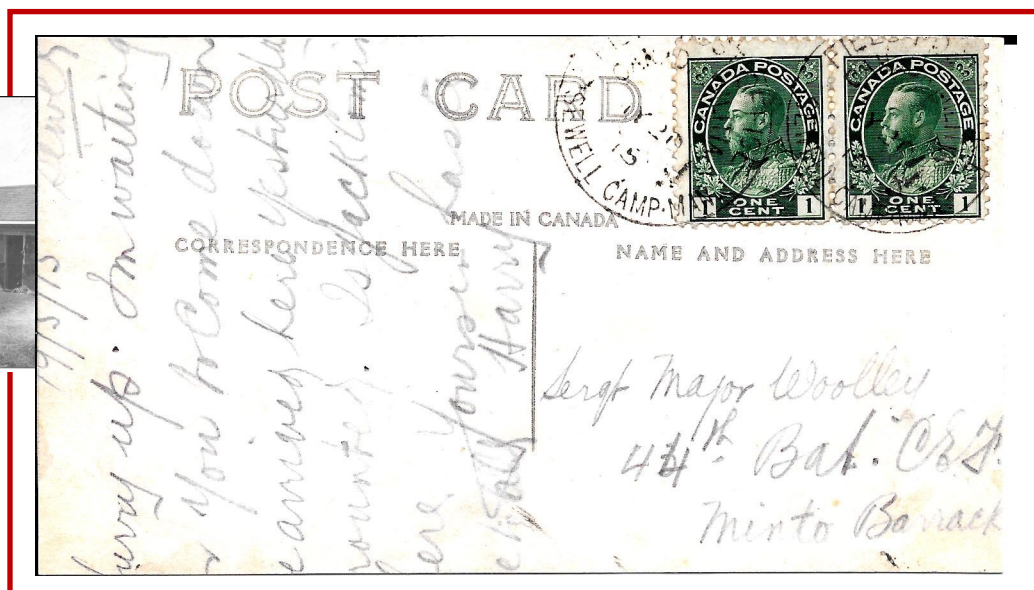
The Official Commandants Report: Sewell Camp 1915. *Library and Archives Canada*

Sewell Camp/Camp Hughes C. Douglas Sayles *BNA Topics APR-MAY-JUN 1997 p.47* **Link:**



Picture side: scan at 50%

Mounted soldiers in front of stable. Location and publisher unknown.



MY 20 1915 SEWELL CAMP MAN. EKU of hammer 1 in 1915, tying 2 x 1¢ Admiral stamps. (Post card rate) 2 days before the official start of the training season. Postcard trimmed.

Dateline of 19 May, sent to Sgt. Woolley, 44th Battalion, Minto Barracks, Winnipeg.