

The Georgian Courier

THE GREY, BRUCE, DUFFERIN & SIMCOE POSTAL HISTORY STUDY GROUP

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[REF. 257]

The OWEN SOUND Transportation Co.

Bruce Graham

Owen Sound harbour became a functioning port in 1844 when a wharf was built out into the bay. Vessels had to stay outside the inner harbour as it was blocked by a shifting bar of sand. In 1861 a channel was dredged across the bar and the harbour was opened once and for all. A triangular basin was dug south of the bar to allow the largest steamers to turn around.

Two small shipping lines that eventually merged operated on Georgian Bay and Lake Superior out of Owen Sound. In the early 1900s two wooden propellers, *S.S. Manitou* and *S.S. Caribou*, were built for the Dominion Transportation Company, a Canadian subsidiary of the Booth Fisheries Corporation of Chicago. They carried supplies to many of the fishing villages on the Bay and Lake Superior and carried their fish to the nearest rail lines to be shipped to market in



Five Days Mackinac Cruise \$35, Meals & Berth Included

A Vacation voyage on the Steamship "Manitoulin"—via Georgian Bay, North Channel, St. Mary's River to Mackinac, a viewing enroute a panorama or ever changing scenery is a vacation that will rest you and build you up. It will give you new life and energy.

It's a vacation trip of genuine interest, of new scenes, of enjoyment, of real educational benefit.

It's a vacation you can spend just as you please. If you prefer to relax and lounge you can do so to the accompaniment of bracing lake breezes. If you crave "something doing" all the time you will find it in the many delightful social activities aboard the ship.

M. S. NORMAC
 O. LONG—Master
 E. ROBINSON—Chief Engineer
 K. McKAY—Purser

Owen Sound Transportation Co., Limited

OWEN SOUND, ONTARIO

This is a vacation that combines the joys of many different kinds at a price that most anyone can well afford. There are the thrills at the exquisite beauties of the islands of the Georgian Bay, the quaint, interesting villages of the Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. The great procession of traffic on the St. Mary's River and at Sault Ste. Marie, and the trip ashore on fashionable and attractive Mackinac Island.

When you come aboard the Str. "Manitoulin" you can look for real comfort and meals of culinary perfection, prepared by expert chefs.

S. S. MANITOULIN
 NORMAN McKAY—Master
 WM. OWENS — Chief Engineer
 M. McKAY—Purser

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the United States. In the 1930s they carried cattle by water from Manitoulin Island to Owen Sound.

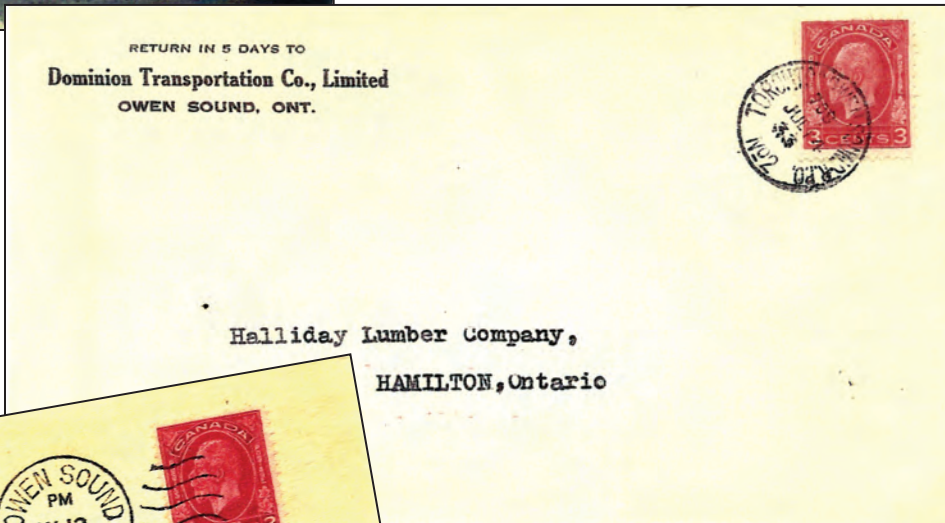
A competing line was formed at Owen Sound known as the Owen Sound Transportation Co. in 1925. They bought the *S.S. Manitou* and later the *S.S. Manasoo*. Competition was fierce between these two lines, and in 1936



The Harbour, Owen Sound, Ont., Canada

The ship in the right foreground is the S.S. Caribou, owned by the Dominion Transportation Company. Post card is a V&S (106,592) production.

An advertising corner card for the Dominion Transportation Co. Limited, dated July 14, 1933. A Toronto & Owen Sound R.P.O. No. 2 (O.393) cancelled the 3¢ stamp.



A philatelic cover with a handstamp for the DOMINION TRANSPORTAT'N Co., struck in blue, was applied by the ship's purser. It may be a boat marking, purser handstamp, or even a trip identification, while not an official postal marking, it provides additional interest to a steamboat collection. The cover was postmarked at Owen Sound on August 12, 1932.



The 144 ft S.S. Caribou was built for the Dominion Transportation Company in 1904. COURTESY OF THE Owen Sound Marine Rail Museum.



ultimately led to the pooling of their ships into one line – the Owen Sound Transportation Company.

The Owen Sound Company in the 1930s established a ferry service between Tobermory and Manitoulin Island. The M.S. Normac and later the S.S. Caribou were placed on this run. They carried a diverse cargo of freight and cars.

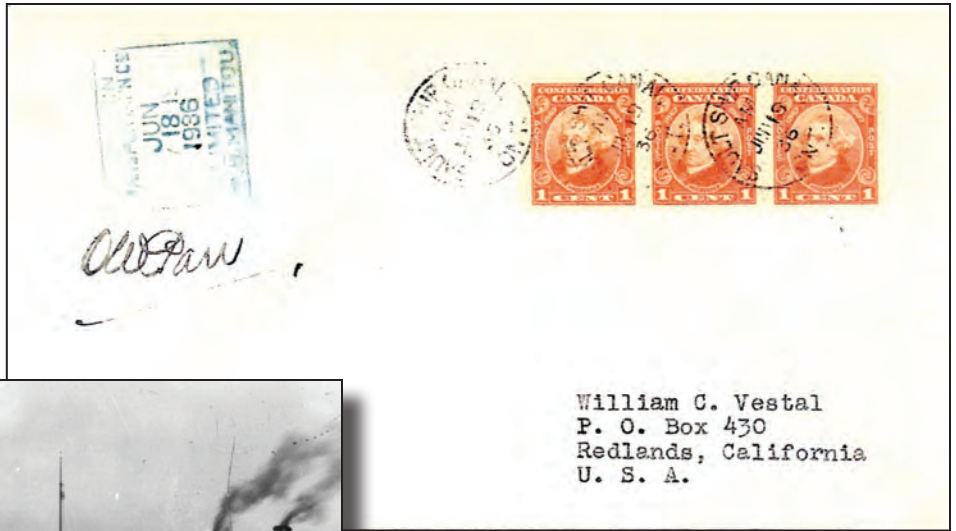
With the increase of automobile traffic the S.S. Norisle, which had a capacity of up to 50 automobiles and 250 passengers, was added to the fleet and placed on the Manitoulin Island ferry service, alternating with the M.S. Normac.

Built in 1950, the S.S. Norgoma was placed on the

North Shore run. In 1953 she was placed on the Manitoulin ferry run. The company ended the North Shore Channel service in that year leaving many of the little ports of Georgian Bay without steamer service.

[cont'd on page 602]

A philatelic cover with a DOMINION / TRANSPORTAT'N Co. / JUN / 18 / 1936 / LIMITED / S.S. MANITOU handstamp struck in blue and signed by the ship's purser. The cover was cancelled by a Sault Ship Canal full circle cds and dated AM / JUN 19 / 36.



The S.S. Manitou was built in Goderich in 1904 and served with the Dominion Transportation Co. until 1941. COURTESY OF Owen Sound Marine Rail Museum.



William C. Vestal
P. O. Box 430
Redlands, California
U. S. A.

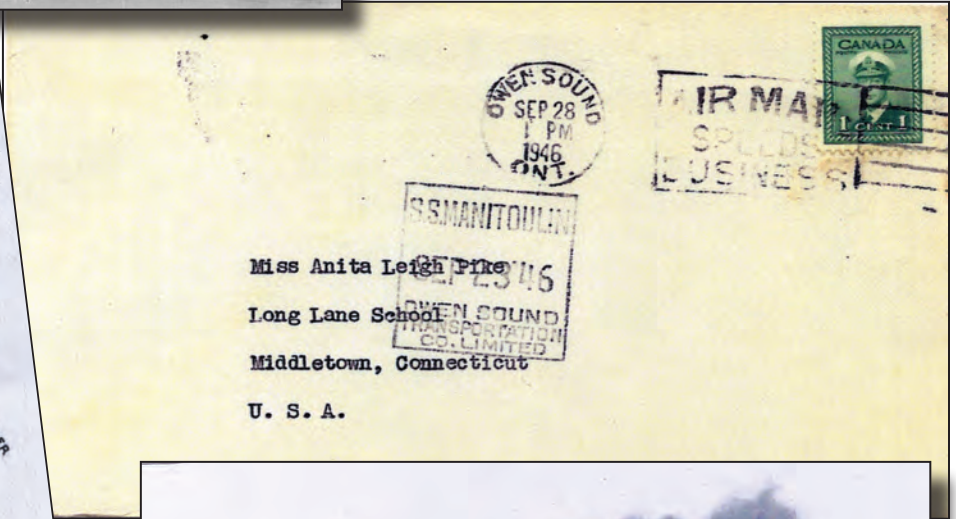
A philatelic cover with an S.S. MANITOU LIN / SEP 23 '46 / OWEN SOUND / TRANSPORTATION / CO. LIMITED handstamp struck in black. An Owen Sound postal slogan machine cancel dated September 28, 1946 cancelled the 1¢ George VI stamp.

The Shortest Route to Manitoulin and the North Shore
 M.S. NORMAC
 S.S. MANITOU
...TOBERMORY... to SOUTH BAY MOUTH FERRY SERVICE
 SAVE MILES OF MOTOR TRAVEL
 ARRIVE RESTED and REFRESHED

1937 SCHEDULE

Cut the time and cost of going to Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. Ferry on the comfortable M.S. NORMAC or S.S. MANITOU from Tobermory to South Bay—comfortable cabins—and excellent accommodation for cars.

Owen Sound Transportation Company, Limited
 OWEN SOUND - - ONTARIO



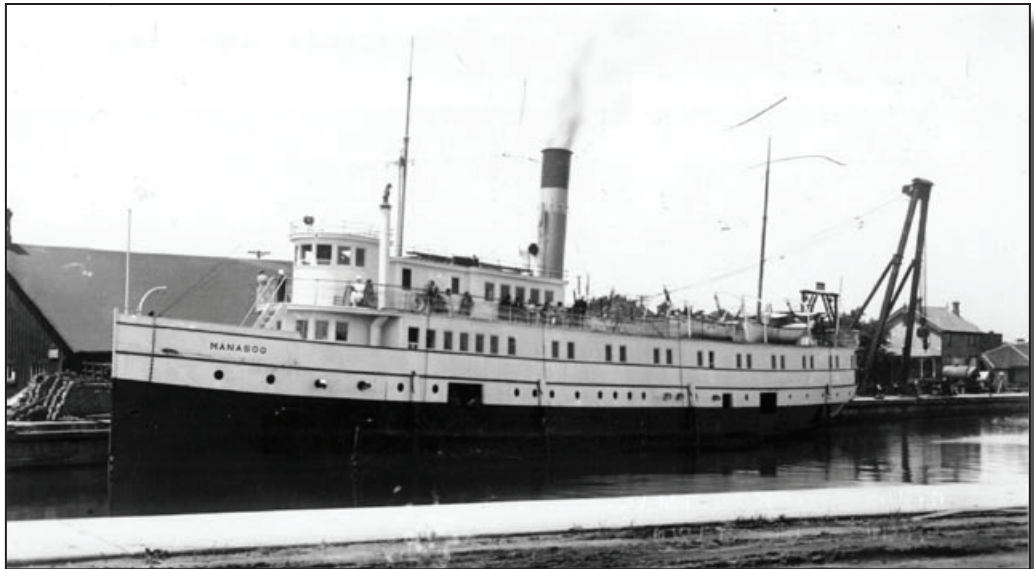
Miss Anita Leigh Pike
Long Lane School
Middletown, Connecticut
U. S. A.



The S.S. Manitoulin became part of the fleet in 1926 and operated on the north shore between Owen Sound, Manitoulin Island, and Sault Ste. Marie. She carried supplies to the fishing villages on Georgian Bay and the north shore. She carried 200 tons of cargo, accommodated 100 overnight passengers, and served full course meals in her dining room. She was retired at the end of the 1949 season.

In 1928 the Owen Sound Company added another vessel, renamed S.S. Manasoo. Among the cargoes carried were cattle being taken to market from Manitoulin Island. On September 14, 1928, the Manasoo cleared Manitowaning with 116 head of cattle aboard. During the night there was a vicious storm. The motion of the boat caused the cattle to move so far to one side that the vessel rolled over and sank. Sixteen people were lost.

COURTESY OF L. Baus Collection / Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center



1939 SCHEDULE

A brochure and timetable advertising the merits of a cruise on one of the company's trips.



Modern Steel Cruising Steamship "Manitoulin."

SCHEDULE OF FARES

Owen Sound, Manitoulin Ports, Sault Ste. Marie and Mackinac.
Fares Include Meals and Berth.

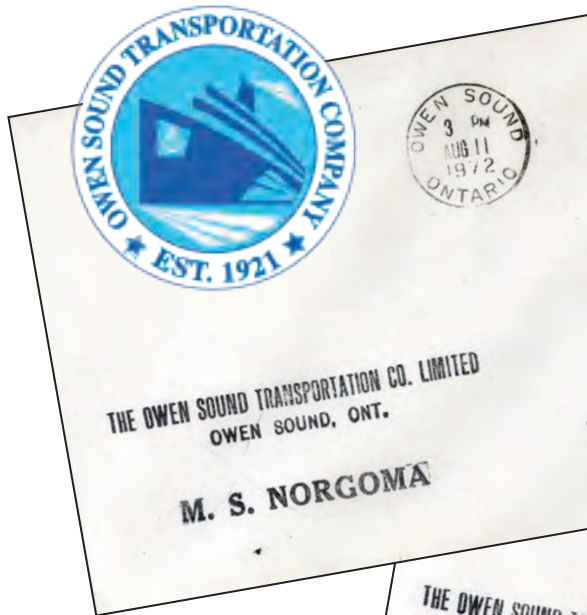
Owen Sound To	One Way	Return Trip
Killarney	\$ 7.25	\$13.40
Manitowaning	8.30	15.40
Little Current	8.85	16.50
Kagawong	10.10	18.80
Gore Bay	11.65	21.70
Blind River	13.05
Thessalon	14.70	27.30
Bruce Mines	16.05
Hilton	16.15	30.10
Richards' Landing	16.55	30.80
Sault Ste. Marie	18.10	33.60
Mackinac Island	24.80	35.00
Sault Ste. Marie To	One Way	Return Trip
Mackinac Island	\$7.00	\$13.00
Richards' Landing	1.95	3.70
Hilton	2.55	4.70
Thessalon	3.65	6.80
Blind River	Does not call	East Bound
Gore Bay	7.10	13.20
Kagawong	8.60	15.90
Little Current	9.30	17.30
Manitowaning	10.70	19.90
Killarney	11.25	20.90
Owen Sound	18.10	33.60

Week-End Trip from Owen Sound to Little Current, on Steamer Manitoulin. Return Fare \$10.00, including meals and berth.

Children, from 5 to 12 years, half fare. Children, under 5, Transportation Free. Meals Extra.

A historical record of the OSTC ferries:

- [a] M.S. Normac, 1931-1949
- [b] S.S. Norisle, 1947-1975
- [c] M.S. Norgoma, 1946-1974
- [d] M.S. Chi-Cheemaun, 1974-



Pictorial Souvenir History of Tobermory to Manitoulin Island Ferries.



M.S. "Norgoma" and M.S. "Chi-Cheemaun"
 Ferry Service between Tobermory, Bruce Peninsula and South
 Bay Mouth, Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada.
 "Chi-Cheemaun" was commissioned into service Sept. 29, 1974.
 Ojibway Indian Translation "Big Canoe"
 Capacity 113 automobiles and 800 passengers.
 Accommodates travel trailers, mobile homes, trucks & busses.
 15658-D
 Pub. by Thomson Tourist Promotions, Dresden, Ont.

The canteen on board of the ships sold post cards and provided rubber stamps to endorse the mail, as well as a mail box for mail to be forwarded to the official postal service via the Tobermory post office. Shown here are several examples of the rubber stamps in use.

Having been built in Spain in 1974 where she served in a number of roles, the M.S. Nindawayma was purchased in 1989 to work alongside the M.S. Chi-Cheemaun. She was decommissioned in 1992 due to unsatisfactory performance. Her full history may be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MV_Manx_Viking



[cont'd from page 598]

However, local passenger, freight service and the increase in automobile traffic kept the ferry service from Tobermory and South Baymouth in operation.

Traffic continued to increase on the ferry run. The Ontario Government, through its Crown Corporation (O.N.T.C.), purchased the Owen Sound Transportation Company in 1974 and commissioned a new vessel to replace the old ferries. The *M.S. Chi-Cheemaun* (Big Canoe) was placed on the run and is still in operation today. ☒



During the late 1980s and right into the mid-1990s, Canada Post operated a franchise (#010340) on board the *M.S. Chi-Cheemaun*. Latest recorded date was June 28, 1994. It should be noted that mail still received, upon asking, various ship markings. These remained with the canteen after the franchise was shut down. The pictorial stamp at left has been seen as late as September 23, 2000.

RESOURCES

The late James E. Kraemer wrote an article for the *G.B.D.&S. Newsletter*, No. 29-30 (November 2002 / January 2003) on "Ferry Mail Service Tobermory-Manitoulin Island that thoroughly covers postal service 1989-1994. I encourage you to read this article to complete this study.

- Wikipedia – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen_Sound_Transportation_Company_Limited
- *Georgian Bay: An Illustrated History*, James P. Barry. Boston Mills Press.
- Owen Sound Transportation Co. website <http://www.ontarioferries.com/ostc/english/history.html>
- Marine Rail Museum, Owen Sound.

Please note that the years of service vary somewhat between different sources. Dates used here come from the company's website.

Dundalk / MAYBURNE

the Railway did not stop here!

George Power

The area around Dundalk was first surveyed in 1848 when the Toronto-Sydenham Road (now Hwy. 10) dissected Melancthon Township from the southeast to the northwest. On either side of the road 50-acre lots were opened for settlement. Lots were given three-digit numbers and this is still reflected in the numbering of township roads in the present day.

Some settlers formed a nucleus at the junction of the Toronto-Sydenham Road and Sideroad 230 (the Dundalk Road). At that point lands east of the Toronto-Sydenham Road were in Melancthon Township, and west of the road were in Proton Township. Both townships in the 1850s were part of Grey County which had been created out of parts of Simcoe and Wellington Counties in 1852. Melancthon remained part of Grey County until the creation of Dufferin in 1881. However, it should be noted that by the mid-1870s the process of creating Dufferin had started.

The settlement at the junction of the Toronto-Sydenham Road and the Dundalk Road became the first Dundalk. The settlement grew and by 1857 had a population of 100.

A non-accounting post office was opened December 1, 1856 with Elisa B. Grey Sr. appointed as postmaster. The office was located between Sideroad 240 and Robins Hotel. Postmaster Grey served until June 1866 at which time he became disqualified due to lack of residency status.

James Mulholland was appointed as the next postmaster on July 1, 1866. Considering that there was no railway service, the mail came to Dundalk via stagecoach, which operated twice a week (Mondays and Thursdays) out of Orangeville. Mr. Mulholland died April 15, 1870.

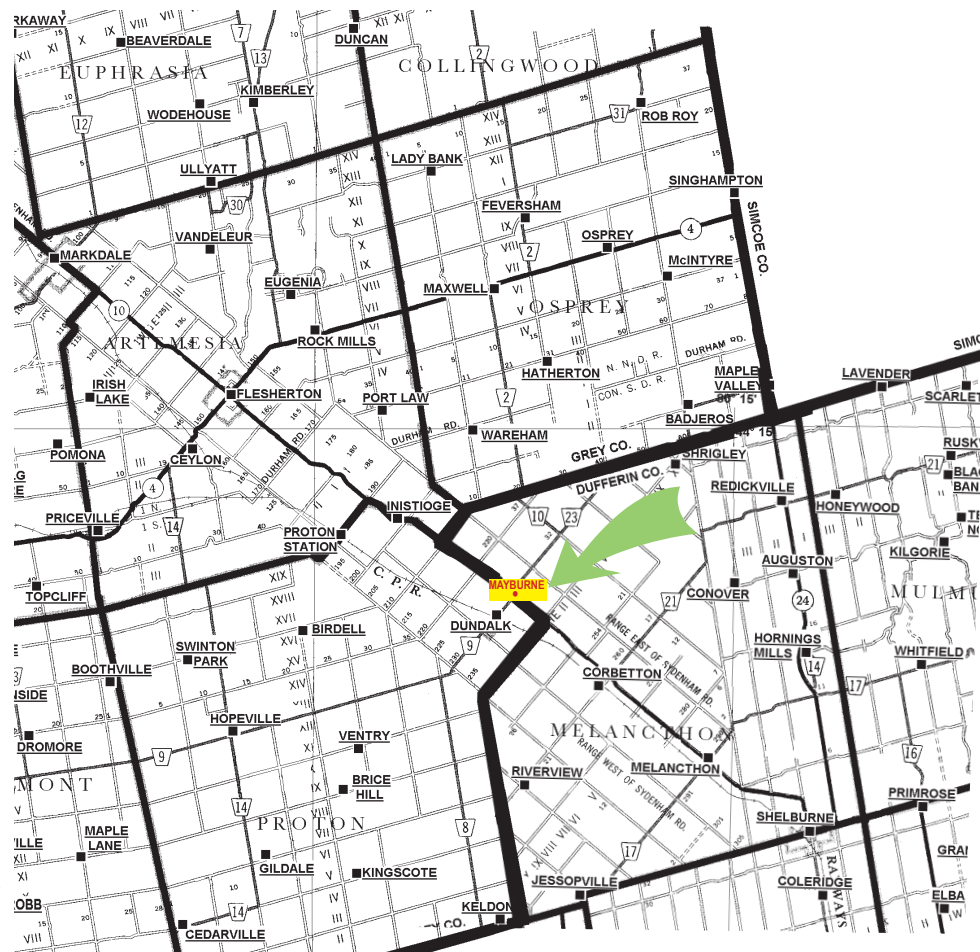
James May became the third and last postmaster at Dundalk (1). He assumed

the role on July 1, 1870. At this time the post office was moved to his premises, the Dundalk Hotel which was located at McDowell's Corners (intersection of the Toronto-Sydenham Road and Sideroad 230). James May had bought the hotel from Claudius Ekins. He served until 1877 at which time he was dismissed.

On September 1, 1874 the name of the post office was changed to Mayburne so as to not create a conflict with the new Dundalk Station post office one mile west of Mayburne. The chosen name obviously reflects the name of the postmaster.

In its short life the post office at Dundalk made use of a 25-mm type B2x postmark (manuscript date) for most of its life. This postmark was ordered from Berri December 6, 1856, and, since the post office opened December 1, 1856, a manuscript "postmark" was most likely used in the early days of the post office.

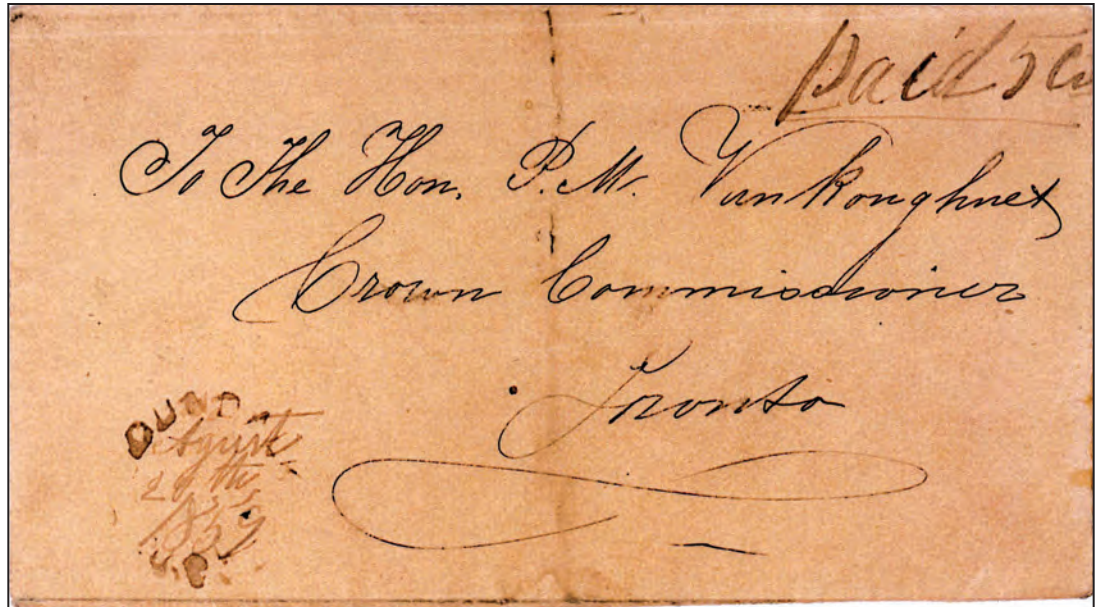
A 21-mm type A1 (arcs measuring 9.0 and 9.5 mm) was introduced in 1872 and is reported used as late as



The original Dundalk settlement, renamed Mayburne, was at the junction of the Toronto-Sydenham Road and Sideroad 230. The settlement was at the very northwest corner of Melancthon Township.

**DUNDALK U.C /
August 20th 1859**

The datestamp was ordered from Berri December 6, 1856, and was never equipped with typeset dates. In small post offices the postmaster was expected to manuscript date all mail. The letter shown here is the earliest reported piece of mail from Dundalk. This letter was charged at 5¢, the prepaid letter rate for a ½ oz. domestic letter.



**DUNDALK U.C /
Jan 25 / 72**

This is the latest reported example of the 25-mm Berri manuscript hand-stamp, type B2x.

1875. There is no recorded proofstrike for either postmark.

Mayburne is more of a mystery. There are no recorded proof strikes, nor have any covers or cards been discovered, showing any kind of Mayburne postmark.

In 1869 the population was still at 100, but by 1873 it had dropped to 30. Hard times had fallen on the settlement. It seems that when the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway was assembling land for its right-of-way for its line to Owen Sound, the local farmers, specifically John McDowell, was asking more than the railway was will-

ing to pay. The railway chose a route that would bypass the settlement to the west. The railway was completed in late 1874 at which time it reached Owen Sound.

Mayburne post office closed July 31, 1877. Dundalk Station had been operating for almost three years, and since mail was now routed via the railway, rather than stagecoach, there was little reason to keep Mayburne open.

Four years later, in January 1881, Melancton Township became a part of the new Dufferin County. The relocated Dundalk, however, was in Proton Township which was part of Grey County. Although the original Dundalk, now Mayburne settlement, was located in what became Dufferin, the post office never lived to see that day. ☒

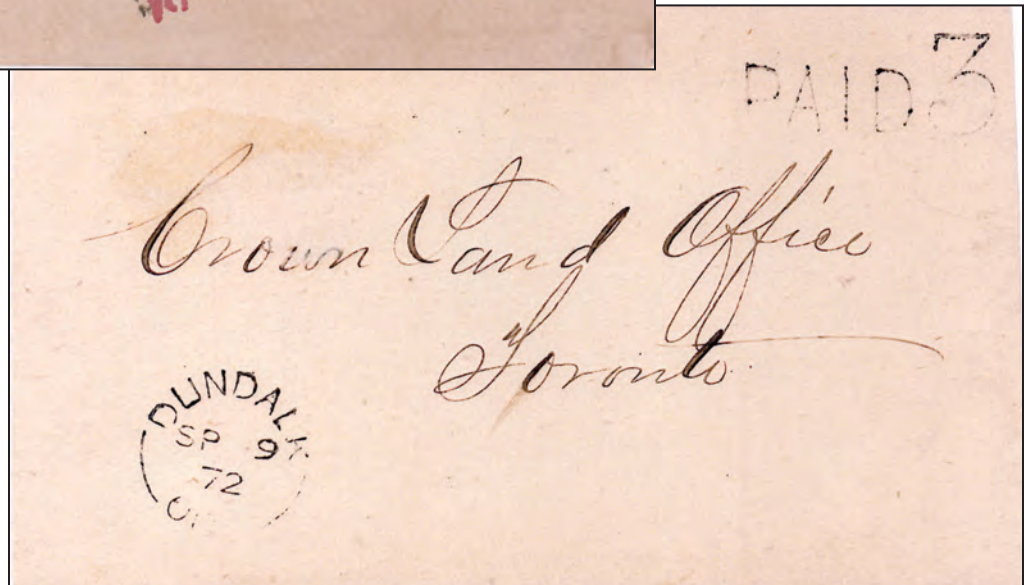


**DUNDALK ONT /
AU 4 / 72**

This registered letter to the Honourable Commissioner of Crown Lands at Toronto was datestamped with the new 21.0-mm broken circle handstamp. Provincial designation was now ONT and the handstamp was equipped with typeset dates.

**DUNDALK ONT /
SP 9 / 72**

This letter was prepaid at the current 3¢ rate for a letter weighing ½ oz.



DUNDALK ONT / FE 20 / 74

Registration fee in 1874 was 2¢ in addition to the 3¢ postage for a ½ oz. prepaid letter. At this time registered mail was franked with stamps whereas first class domestic mail was hand-stamped with the correct rate.

Dundalk Station

DUNDALK

the Railway did stop here!

Gus Knierim

The 1850s was the decade when the county opened up to settlers. The Toronto-Sydenham road was surveyed in 1848 and a path to Owen Sound was the first sign of progress. A rough road, then graveled was opened up by the mid-1850s.

Due to a lack of financing the railroads did not develop in this part of the province until the 1870s, and so it was that the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway reached Owen Sound by late 1874.

A year earlier it had reached an area about a mile west of the village of Dundalk. Local farmers, especially John McDowell, were demanding a pretty high price for their land to be used as a corridor for the new railway, a price that the railway refused to pay. R. J. Doyle, who owned land to the west of the village was not as demanding and allowed the railway to pass through his lands without any cost.

Little did he realize that his action would create many changes in the very near future.

The railway proceeded to build a station stop, where its tracks crossed the Dundalk Road, and called it

Dundalk Station. Although a mile west of the settlement of Dundalk it served the hamlet of 100 well. The original Dundalk was sitting on the township line of Melancthon and Proton Townships; the new settlement at Dundalk Station was in Proton Township. Travel to and from Orangeville was now considerably faster by train than by using the Toronto-Sydenham Road.

Mail, too, was now routed via the railway, and a post office was set up at Dundalk Station on April 1, 1874. John J. Middleton was appointed postmaster of the non-accounting office which he served until 1885 when he left the place. Thomas Hanbury succeeded him and was appointed April 1, 1885.

In the meantime, the original village of Dundalk, one mile east, had been renamed Mayburne on September 1, 1874 to avoid any kind of conflict.

Dundalk Station grew rapidly as a community, as the population relocated from the original Dundalk (Mayburne). The post office at Mayburne was closed July 31, 1877, all postal functions now being served at Dundalk Station.

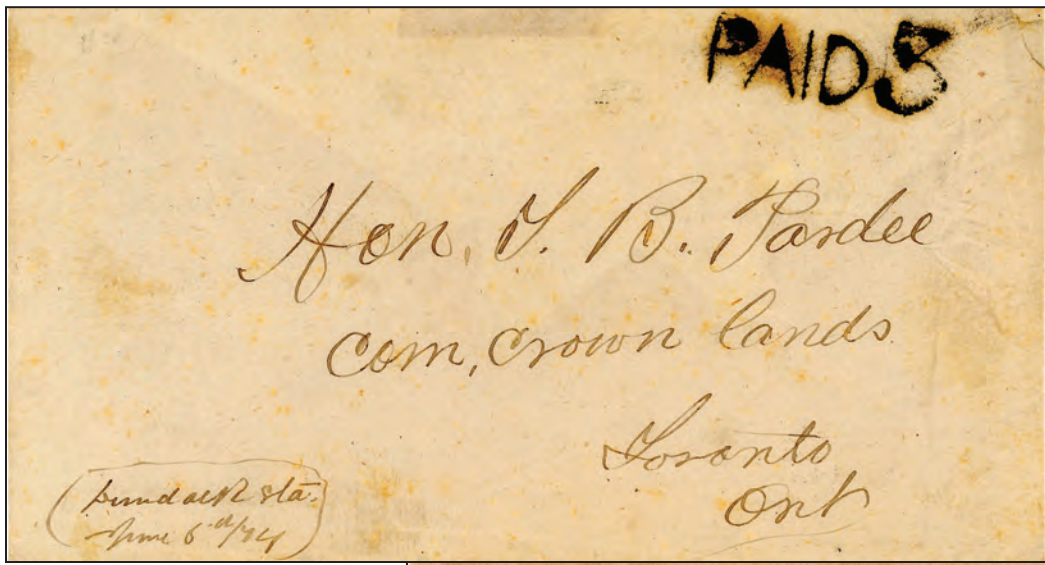
Dundalk Station post office was opened in a bit of a rush as no equipment, such as cancellers, were available. Mail at first, and until mid to late summer was manuscript dated. A type A1 (20.0-mm diameter with arcs measuring 3.0 and 2.5 mm) came into service in the latter part of 1874 and is reported used between December 19, 1874 and January 27, 1881. A 22.0-mm type A1 (arcs 3.5



Dundalk Station on the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway was opened in 1873. This line, which was purchased by Canadian Pacific Railway was opened to Owen Sound in 1874.

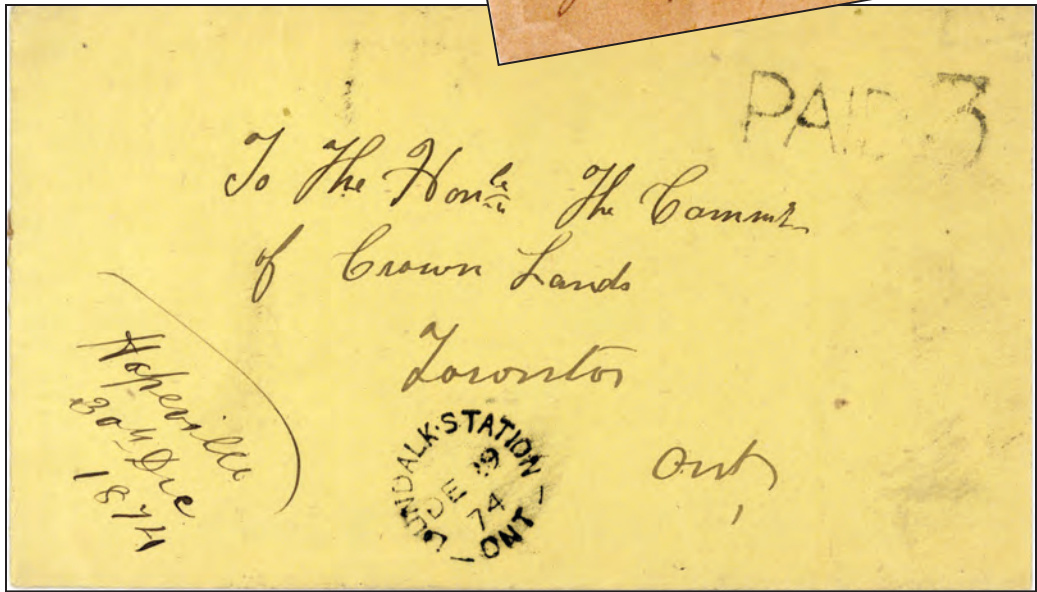
A much later rendition of the activity at the station was created in a mural to be seen in Dundalk today by artist Allan C. Hilgendorf whose works adorn many Ontario municipalities.





Dundalk Station / April 6 / 74
 Dundalk Station was opened April 1, 1874, to take advantage of the service provided by the new T.G. & B. railway. Proper datestamps were not available until later in 1874, necessitating the manuscript dating of all mail.

Dundalk Station / June 15 / 74
 We do not know when the practice of manuscript dating stopped at Dundalk Station. This example is the latest known piece of mail.



**DUNDALK-STATION / ONT
 DE 19 / 74**
 This prepaid letter was posted at Hopeville, where it received a manuscript marking (no datestamp available) on the 30th of Dec 1874. It received a transit marking at Dundalk Station on December 29 on its way to Toronto. One of those postmasters did not pay attention to the calendar ... time moved slowly in those early pioneer days. This is an early example of the 20.0-mm type A1 (arcs 3.0 and 2.5 mm) dater.

and 3.0 mm) was proofed and brought into service on September 2, 1881. It is reported used between January 16, 1882 and October 18, 1884.
 Dundalk Station's name was officially shortened November 1, 1885 to just Dundalk since there was no longer a conflict with the original Dundalk.

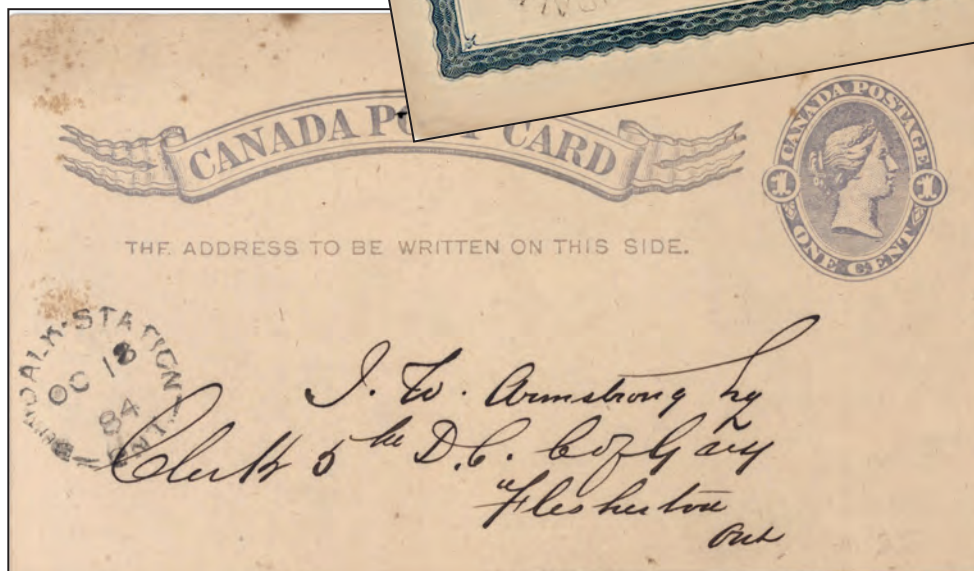
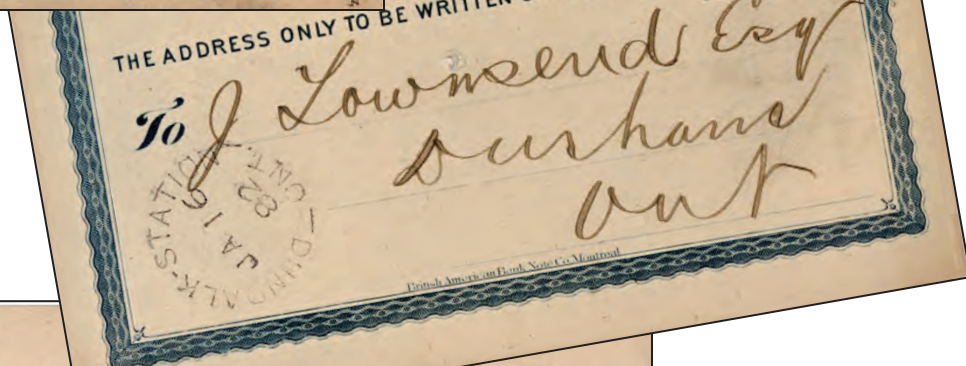
To reflect this name change a new postmark was created. It is reported used between 1889 and 1896. It would be of interest to actually see what happened after the name change in November 1885, but we will leave that for another day, instead focusing here on Dundalk Station. ☒



DUNDALK-STATION / ONT / AP 27 / 80
A 1¢ post card mailed to H. Hale, Esq.,
Counsellor-at-Law, Clinton P.O., Ontario, it is post-
marked with the first type A1 dater.

On September 2, 1881 a new 22.0-mm type A1
was proofed with 3.5 and 3.0 mm arcs.
Shown here is the earliest
reported example.

PROOF STRIKE
22.0-mm
(arcs 3.5 and 3.0 mm)
Type A1
proofed SP 2 / 81



DUNDALK-STATION / ONT / QC 18 / 84

Latest reported example
of the second Type A1
datestamp. Dundalk
Station was renamed
Dundalk on November
1, 1885.

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We offer three categories of Membership: [1] **Electronic Membership** costs \$7 per year (4 issues). An electronic pdf version of the newsletter in full colour (no printed copy) will be emailed to members; [2] **Regular Membership** costs \$15.00 per year (4 issues). Members will received a printed black & white newsletter in the mail; [3] **Premium membership** costs \$20.00 per year (4 issues). Members will received a laser-printed full-colour newsletter in the mail. Current membership rates are based on production and mailing costs.

Cheques should be made payable to the editor J. (Gus) Knierim. We can also accept PayPal using the email address. Please add \$1.00 to defray PayPal charges. Thank you!

J. Knierim, Kitchener, ON N2H 1V6

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