

Three nineteenth century covers

Charles Verge

TWO of the items shown here are early date cancels, and the remaining one involves a rather unusual method of mailing a photograph. Figure 1 shows a strike of the CITY OF OTTAWA. C. W. large circle (which soon degenerated into a changeling) with indicium C at the top. The earliest recorded strike of this hammer is dated 6 October 1857, but with indicium B; the one shown here may be the earliest recorded C example.



Figure 1. City of Ottawa circle with C indicium (19 October 1857)

With return address (on reverse), the Ottawa Citizen. Sent free to Government office (possible within ten days of opening or closing of Provincial Parliament).

Figure 2 illustrates the earliest known OTTAWA-CITY U.C broken circle cancel. Dated 8 October 1858, it precedes by almost four months the previously known early date (5 February 1859).

Figures 3a & b show a large photograph with an address and stamp on re-

Keywords & phrases: photograph, electrician

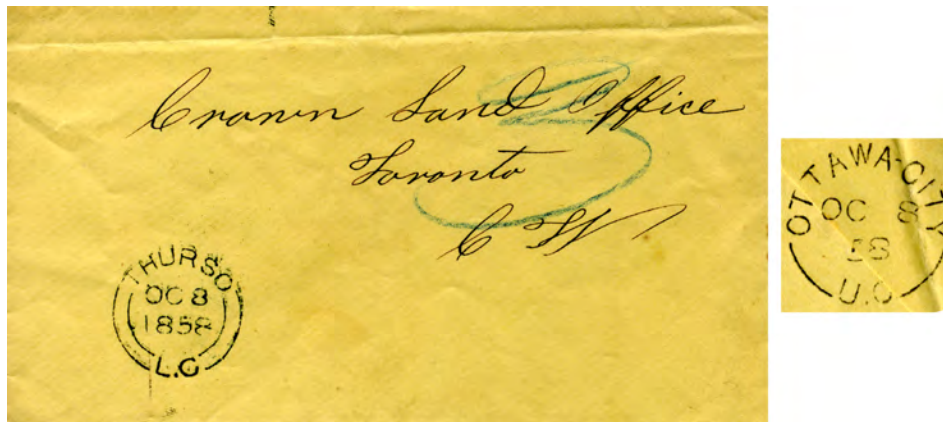


Figure 2. Earliest reported OTTAWA-CITY U.C broken circle (8 October 1858)
On reverse of cover (3d domestic postage collect from Thurso—near Ottawa—to Toronto). Shown disproportionately large.

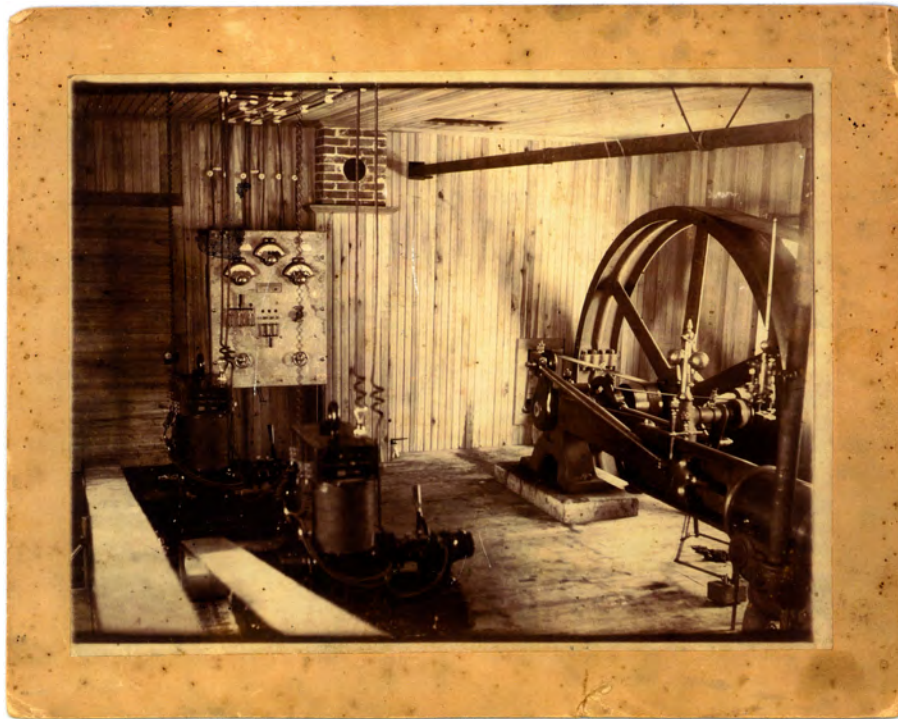


Figure 3a. Photo of Bothwell electrical works (1899)
Mailed with address and stamp on other side (Figure 3b).

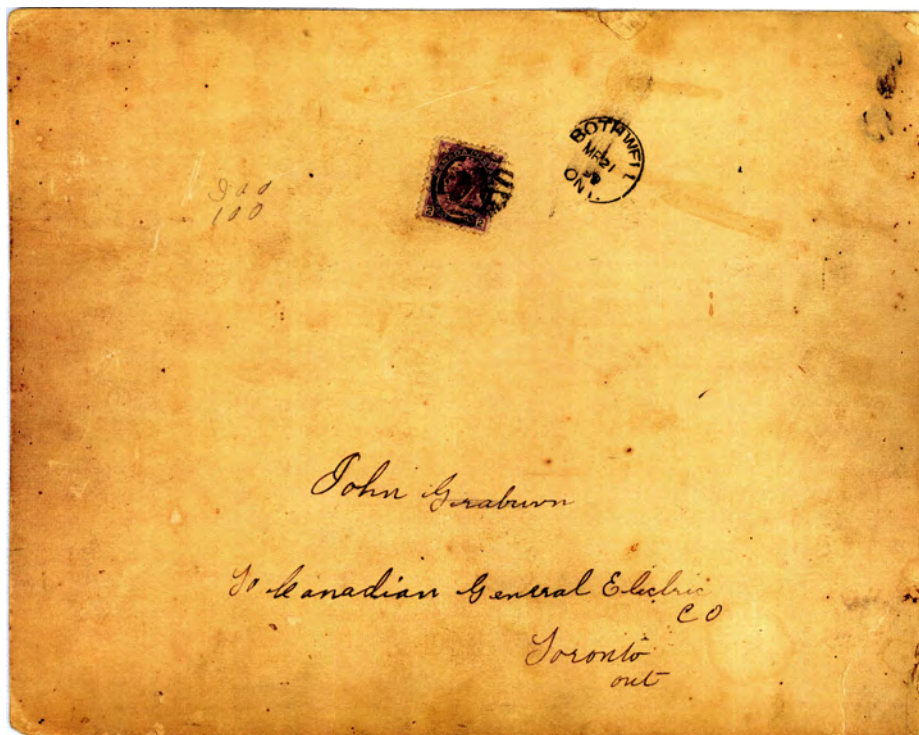


Figure 3b. Reverse of photograph (1899)

Paying first class rate. From the relative size of the stamp, we can tell that the photograph was quite large.

verse. Pictured is an electric works installed in Bothwell (ON) around 1899. The item was mailed from Bothwell to the parent company, the Canadian General Electric Company (CGE), in Toronto on 21 March 1899. It is unusual in that it was mailed as is, *without a wrapper*, at the 2¢ per ounce (first class) rate (effective 1 January 1899). It could have been sent at the printed matter rate (1¢ for the first four ounces).

The photograph is owned by my wife. It was taken under the orders of her grandfather, Francis O'Connor. He was one of Ontario's first electricians—he also wired the clock at Toronto City Hall. He apparently supervised the installation of this electric works in Bothwell for CGE.

CGE was incorporated in Canada in 1892 through a merger of the Edison Electric Light Company and the Thomson-Houston Electric Light Company of Canada. During 1892–1900, CGE operated out of Peterborough, where 500 employees manufactured generators, transformers, motors, wire and cable, and lamps.