

# The Roberval Hotel

by Fernand Bélanger

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The Roberval Hotel was a magnificent summer resort built on the shores of Lac St-Jean at the end of the last century (see Fig. 1). It was situated about a mile and a half south of the town of Roberval, on a line of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company. Being thus easily accessible by railroad the hotel rapidly became a fashionable summer resort for tourists venturing into the Lac St-Jean area.

As was then the custom in the grand tourist hotels, a summer post office (open from June to September) was established on the premises on August 1, 1896. The first postmaster, in office until 1898, was Timothy Kenna; he was followed by Harry Beemer in the years from 1900 to 1908. The mail was carried back and forth between the hotel and the station, a distance of 200 yards, by H. G. Beemer from 1896 to 1905 and by H. B. Locke from then to 1908. They did the carrying twelve times a week for a salary of ten dollars for the season,

according to the Annual Reports of the Postmaster General for the years from 1896 to 1908.

The broken circle postmark shown in Fig. 2 seems to have been the only one used during the life of the office. It is not to be found in the Pritchard and Andrews proof impression books, as the hammer would have been made during the "missing proofs" period. However, a proof stike of a second hammer is to be found there, dated August 6, 1908. It is unlikely that this hammer was ever used, as the Roberval Hotel was completely destroyed by fire on July 31, a week before it was proofed.

The following quotation was translated from Le Soleil dated Saturday, August 1, 1908:  
"Roberval, Que., July 31, 1908

— A great fire occurred today. The magnificent Roberval Hotel, which was one of the most beautiful attractions of our town, has been reduced to ashes. The fire started around noon on the roof of the kitchen, and an hour later everything was destroyed. It represents a loss of \$75,000."

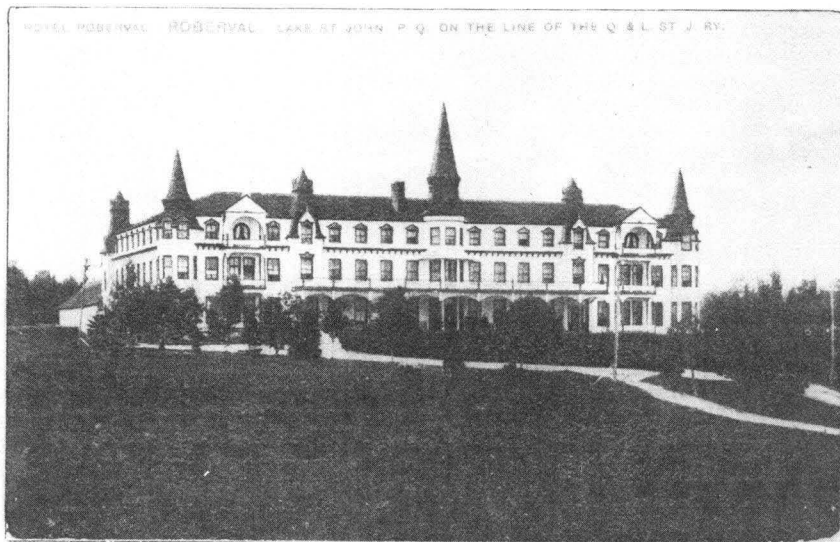


Fig. 1

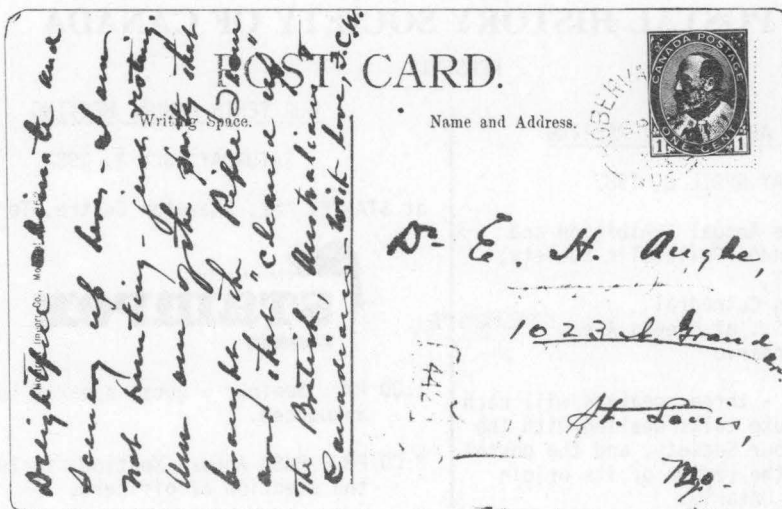
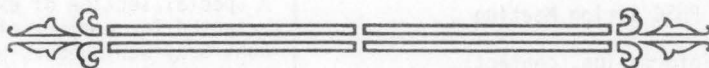



Fig. 2





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