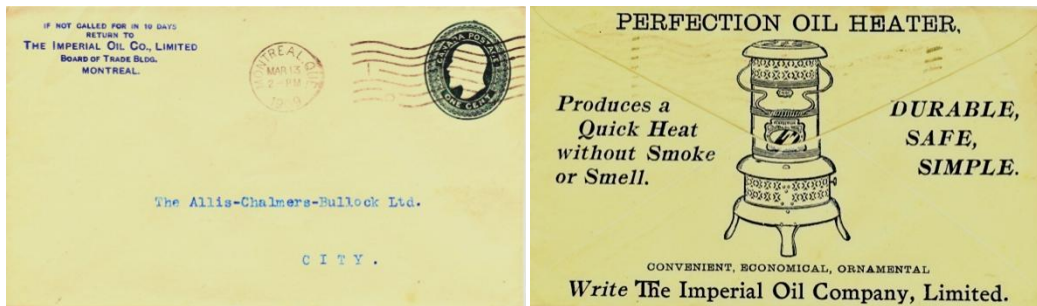


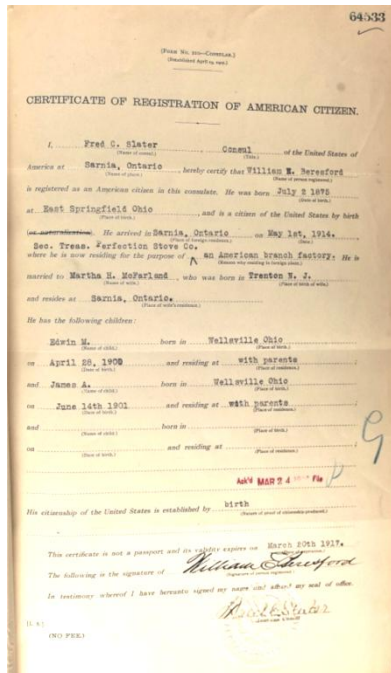
The Perfection Stove Company
 An American Branch Factory
 Sarnia, Ontario

By Lorne Barnes FCNRS

The first official mention regarding the intent to build a branch factory of the Cleveland Metal Products Company was September 3, 1913. The company produced the Perfection Stove and had previously marketed its stoves through the Montreal Branch of Imperial Oil. The company marketed its products through Standard Oil in the United States, so it only made sense to use Imperial Oil in Canada as Standard Oil was the parent company. The postal cover pictured below shows the Perfection was marketed as early as March 13, 1909 in Canada.



Mr. Ramsay, a representative of the Cleveland Metal Products Company was introduced to the Councillors of the Town of Sarnia at a meeting held on September 3, 1913, to discuss the possibility of a branch factory in Sarnia. Ramsay mentioned the Mueller Company had given his company valuable information and terms to purchase a portion of its property. The parcel of land was approximately nine to ten acres and situated on the south side of Clifford Street, extending west of the Christina Street intersection to the eastern rail allowance of the Pere Marquette Railway.



The terms of the stove company were simple, it would locate in Sarnia only if a sewer line was constructed and an adequate fresh water supply to meet the needs of the plant from the town's water works were also constructed. If these conditions could be met the company would begin construction as soon as possible to have the manufacturing capability by the spring of 1914.

The Town of Sarnia and the Perfection Stove Company Limited came to terms on September 8, 1913 and signed an agreement. The company purchased the land and began to construct a 14,000 square-foot facility. Above left is documentation of William Edwin Beresford stating his role as Secretary-Treasurer of the newly built Perfection Stove Company facility in Sarnia.

Beresford was not only the Secretary-Treasurer he was also the General Manager and overseer of the day-to-day business of the plant. Below is a letterhead showing his position as General Manager.



Sometime after opening the new facility the company issued a “good for one cup of coffee” token for the production facility cafeteria, pictured below.



Perfection/ Stove/ Co.
 904-I-A Good For/ One/ Cup Of Coffee A-R-25½



Mueller/ Sarnia/ Canada (counterstamped 1527) L.I.
 4 (Counterstamped 5301) B-R-29½

The information the Mueller Company would have passed on to the Perfection Stove Company would have been the deal struck with Alderman Joseph B. Dagan, a token issuer himself. The goal of Dagan was to reach a population of more than 10,000; this would enable Sarnia to have city status and collect more benefits from the province.

Dagan was elected mayor and took office in January 1914. He was the last mayor for the Town of Sarnia and the first mayor for the City of Sarnia. His goal had been realized with the opening of the Mueller Company and the positive view of Sarnia projected to the Perfection Stove Company. Between the two companies more than eight hundred jobs would be created, more than enough to gain Sarnia city status. This new standing as a city would attract more

companies to the City of Sarnia over the next forty years, creating thousands of jobs and prosperity for the rest of the 20th century.

Before Dagan, pictured below right, was involved in local politics he was a tailor in Sarnia, as well as a numismatist, belonging to the American Numismatic Association as member number 351.



J.B. Dagan/ A.N.A. 351/ Sarnia
 McColl 822 J.B. Dagan/ High Class/ Tailor/ Sarnia, Ont. A-R-28

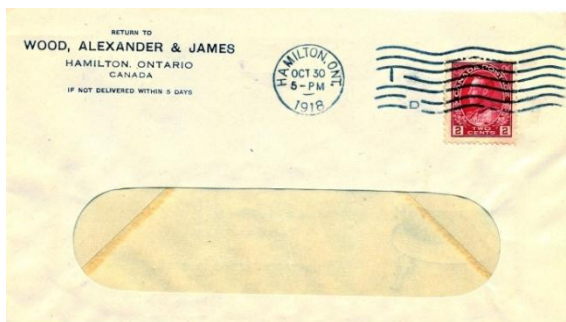
On February 23, 1914, the town council met. Mr. LeSueur proposed a motion on behalf of the Sarnia Street Railway company which was eager to extend its Christina Street line from its present southerly termination southward to Clifford Street and the Pere Marquette Railway tracks. The intention was to construct the line on the west side of Christina Street and north side of Clifford Street. Stating this would be a great convenience to the employees of the Mueller Company, Perfection Stove Company and Imperial Oil. The



Motion carried.

There was no difference that distinguished the Canadian from the American stoves as they both had a trade mark triangle placed on the front. The 1916 postal cover to the left shows the triangle just above the handle. This cover also shows the stoves were still being distributed by the Imperial Oil Company.

By 1918, the Perfection Stove Company was distributing its stoves in Ontario, as seen on the cover below. The company of Wood, Alexander & James was advertising the stoves on the back of its covers. The postal cover shows the plate below the handle states “Made in Canada”.





Above is the cover plate on the author's Perfection 525. Notice the "Made In Canada" left and right of rivets. Below right is a picture of the Perfection 525, circa 1915.



Above left is a 1920 pamphlet showing the stoves were made and distributed by the Perfection Stove Company of Sarnia, Ontario. By 1920, we now know the company had offices in Sarnia and Montreal, as well as warehouses in Sarnia, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal.

T. C. McCobb

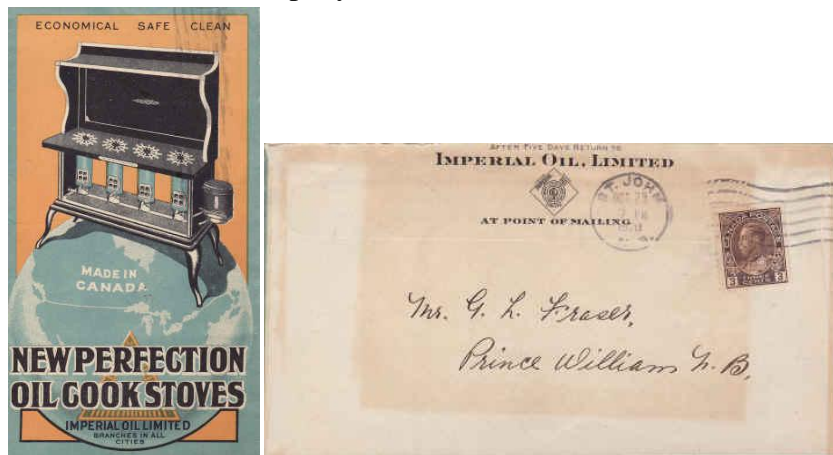


A 1922 deed of the Perfection Stove Company shows Thomas C. McCobb as Vice-President. According to an American passport application filed by Thomas C. Mc Cobb in February 1925, he was born in Pennsylvania and was an accountant for Imperial Oil in Toronto from August 1915 to August 1917, and Sarnia from August 1917 to the date he filed for an American passport in 1925. It appears Imperial Oil had much influence over the day-to-day affairs of the Perfection Stove Company. Thomas C. Mc Cobb is pictured to left.

Things were winding down for the Perfection Stove Company by 1925. The last listing in a Sarnia directory for the Perfection Stove Company is 1927. In 1926, its equipment was

auctioned off and in 1927 the John Goodison Thresher Company purchased the property on Clifford Street.

The 1930 USA census shows William Beresford living in Georgia, USA and still working for the Perfection Stove Company.



Pictured above is a 1920 Imperial Oil Limited cover posted from Saint John, NB. This cover shows Imperial Oil stating it had branches in all cities and was still marketing and distributing the Perfection Stove Company products in October 1920.



Pictured above is a 1911 Imperial Oil Co. Limited Wholesale Only cover from Montreal. This is a nice example of an advertising cover marketing the “Perfection” as the best oil stove on the market and giving the reasons why.

At this time I’m not able to ascertain if the Perfection Stove Company continued to maintain a warehouse or warehouses in Canada after the plant closure. In all likelihood Imperial Oil continued to market the stove in Canada after the Perfection Stove closed and sold its Canadian assets.

Sources:

ancestry.ca

Canada Census 1921

Lambton County Archives. Wyoming, Ontario

Sarnia Historical Society Web Page

USA Census 1910 - 1930

Vernon, Henry & Son. Various years 1916-1927. Vernon’s Sarnia and Point Edward Directories.

Various editions of the Sarnia Observer.
