

Canadian Stamp Issued to Honor a Farm Tractor?

by Stan Cronwall

Well did you ever? Shur –nuff . . . aye. Back in 1995, Canada Post issued a souvenir pane of 6 showing historic land vehicles which included a Canadian built farm tractor.

How come you say? Seems as though a Canadian farm equipment manufacturer was the first to introduce a LPTO system for farm tractors. (LPTO = Live Power Take-Off).

PTOs had been around for some time dating back to the late 1890's when one was initially cobbled together by a French farmer/mechanic and introduced commercially in the U.S. by International Harvester (IHC) on their farm tractors Model 8-16 in 1918. These worked directly off the tractor transmission to power pieces of equipment like balers, manure spreaders, mowers and pull-type combines. These early PTOs gave IHC a real advantage in the 1920's. Later, these were adapted for most farm tractor brands, as well as trucks.

PTOs were extremely dangerous and responsible for many injuries and even deaths. In 1997, the U.S. National Safety Council reported 6% of tractor PTO/LPTO injuries resulted in death.

A piece as small as a single thread caught up in a PTO was enough to cause serious injury or as in the case of ex-Detroit Tigers Major League Baseball pitcher Mark Fidrych death. In 2009 while working underneath his ten-wheeler construction truck, a piece of his clothing was caught in the truck's PTO and he was suffocated.

The Canadian equipment manufacturer that introduced the LPTO was Cockshutt Farm Equipment, Ltd. located in Brantford, Ontario. In order for a PTO to have power the tractor had to be "in gear" or moving. When the tractor slowed or stopped, so did the operation of the trailing piece of equipment

The advantage of the LPTO was that the tractor could slow down or even stop but the trailing piece of equipment could continue to operate. The Cockshutt Model 30 introduced in 1946 was the first production farm tractor to have the LPTO.



Canada Post honored the introduction of this Model fifty years later in 1995 with a 43-cent stamp (Scott 1552a) that was part of the souvenir pane. The actual Cockshutt Model 30 shown on the stamp was from 1950.



Stan Cronwall's collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S. Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WW II Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.