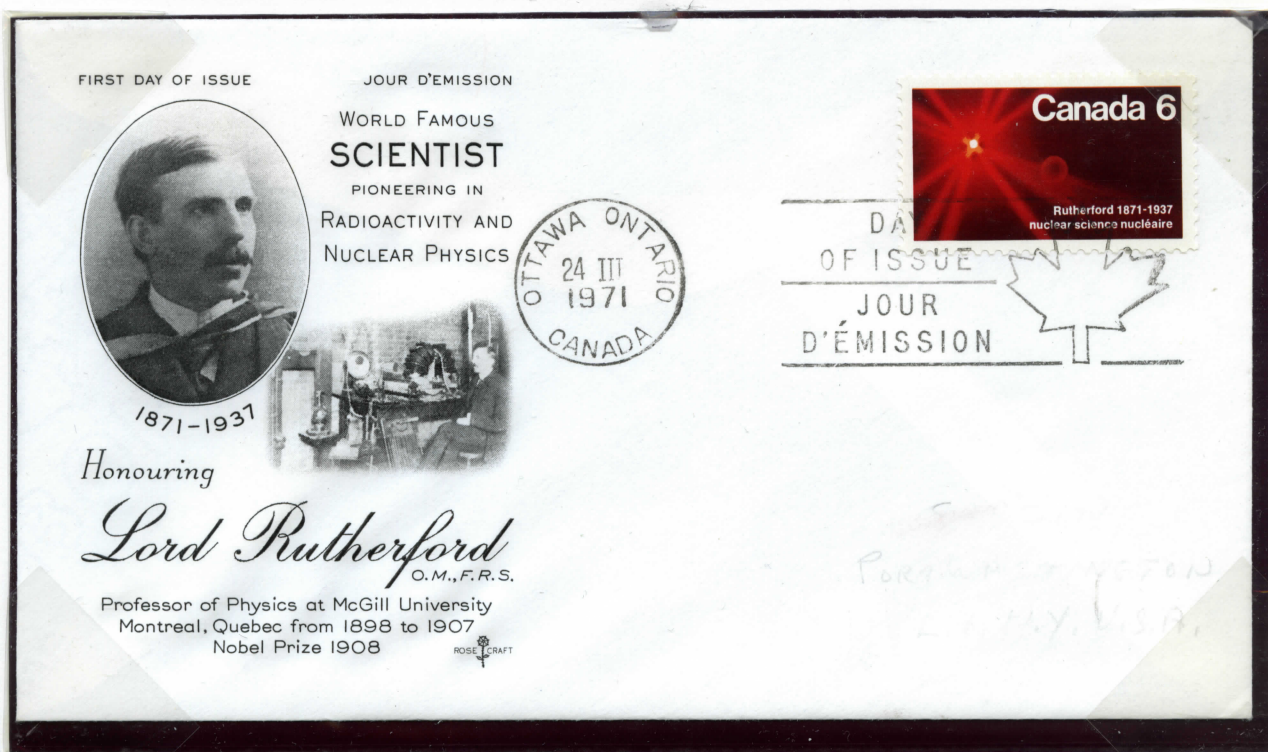




THE HISTORY OF THE ATOMIC ERA, RADIOLOGY, AND ATOMIC ENERGY IN PHILATELY



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Thus far the atomic concept had been presented only as a working theory, without any proof that atoms do exist. The last decade of the 19th century heralded a long chain of discoveries, greatly modifying and sometimes refuting the old ideas concerning the properties of matter. Within three years three great discoveries were made, destined not only to alter the atomic theory, but to revolutionize the whole of science and establish the pathways it follows today.

In England a brilliant group of scientists, headed by Sir J. J. Thompson and including C.T.R. Wilson, and in Canada, Sir Ernest Rutherford (1871-1937), was engaged in promoting entirely new concepts of nuclear physics. In 1906 Sir E. Rutherford, a native of New Zealand, presented his structural concept of the nuclear atom, identifying alpha particles as positively charged particles in atoms; for this work he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1908.

▶ Canterbury University College courtyard in Christchurch - entrance to Rutherford Laboratory.