

THE CANADIAN MILITARY MAIL STUDY GROUP

LAST CALL FOR DUES OF: \$5. PAID \_\_\_\_\_ UNPAID \_\_\_\_\_

NEWSLETTER #56  
JANUARY 1984

GREETINGS OF THE NEW YEAR! May you uncover a 'new' find of correspondence from North Russia, Siberia, Hong Kong, or anywhere else of a military nature. Just heard the story of a member of our group who found a big, or was it huge, box under the tree on Christmas morning. After much 'to do' going through many boxes and wrappings inside each other, all the while muttering to himself (I understand), he comes to a small envelope just as he was ready to give up. The 'chase' was well worth the inconvenience for inside this envelope was another envelope. Guess what, just what most of us always wanted-- a lovely CAMP LEASIDE. Unfortunately this did not happen to your Editor!

Back to reality, and we note that, personally, not much has turned up for some time now. This appears not to be the case for Dr. Robert C. Smith of Ottawa, a vice-president of the Postal History Society of Canada. His excellent article in the current journal of that society (No. 36) puts a new light on the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Siberia 1918-19. He explains, with newly found covers and tables, many points that have been missing all these years. You should read it.

We do not suppose that many, or any, of you have an interest in the military postal history of the Falkland Islands but a new reference has recently been published in England that would appear to be a 'must' if this field is yours. John A. Daynes of the Forces Postal History Society (25a Mill Road, Burnham on Crouch, Essex, CMO 8PZ) is the author of THE FORCES POSTAL HISTORY OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS AND THE TASK FORCE. The review of this at hand says the cost is 8.75 Pounds (inc.p.& p.). Just thought that someone might be interested.

This Newsletters special article deals with the Veterans Guard of Canada in WW II and is by Jack Davis. You may recall his article in Canadian Stamp News last summer where he has a regular column on items of interest to a group such as this. We asked Jack for a more comprehensive article on the subject and this is the result. There also has been some input by Bill Robinson.

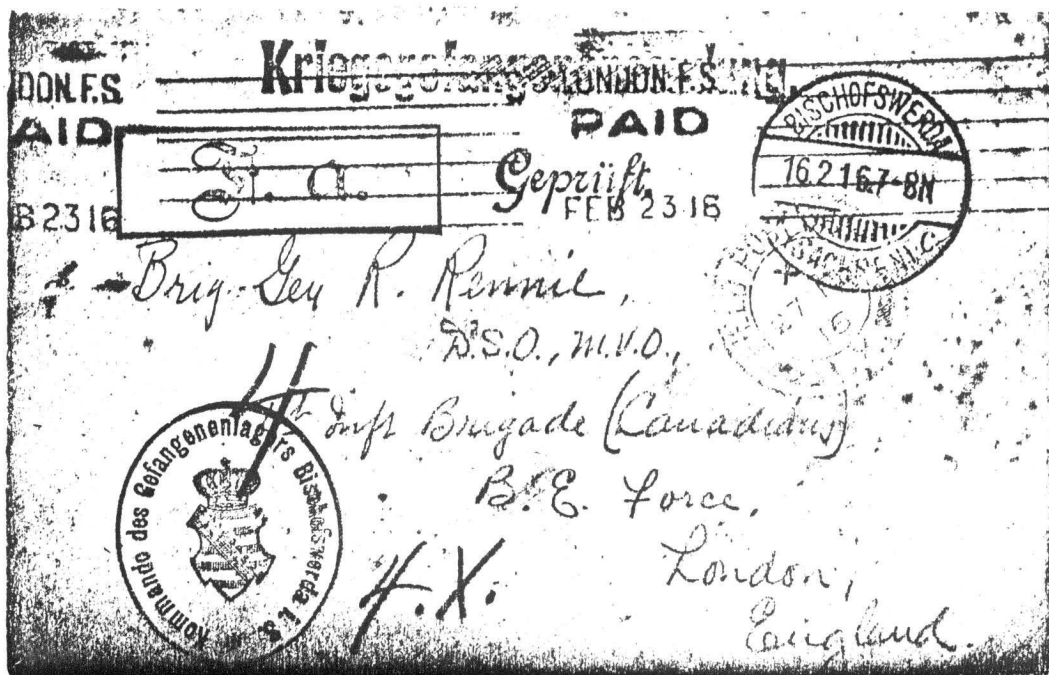


This lovely YMCA Post Card was given to me last night. As you can see there is a near perfect militia cancel from Camp Hughes, Manitoba which is Colin's hammer number 1. Just a pretty item!

Future issues of the Newsletter will hopefully have articles on the Canadians in Newfoundland and Labrador in World War II. This is a most interesting study as there are many variations and unexplained happenings. Along this line of thought, it has just crossed our mind that it would be nice to have a comprehensive article on the contribution of Newfoundland's sailors, soldiers, and airmen to the cause in both World Wars. This should be of interest to us as Newfoundland became Canada's 10th province in March of 1949. How about doing this one Clarence?

This item deals with a nice cover from Bill Robinson. It is from a P.O.W. held by the Germans. The write up is Bill's.

"This cover was mailed to Brigadier General R.Rennie from the camp at Bischofswerda, Saxony. It bears the c.d.s. of February 16, 1916, the seal of the camp, censor marking and boxed "F.a." in carmine. A machine marking in red shows transit through London on February 23, 1916, and Field Post Office IX date stamp shows arrival at the 1st Canadian Bde. HQ on February 27. There it was readdressed to the Fourth Brigade.



Brigadier General Rennie had taken the Third (Toronto) Battalion of the First Division overseas, and was later promoted. This cover is from one of his original Company Commanders, Captain J.E.L. Streight, who was taken prisoner at Ypres on April 24, 1915, when two companies of the Third Battalion were cut off by the German advance.

The Canadian Official History states - "The few unwounded Canadians fought on. Finally they were overpowered and taken prisoner. Of the right company which had moved into the line less than 36 hours before only 43 could walk, nearly every one of these was wounded and two were totally blind."

# THE VETERANS GUARD OF CANADA

By Jack Davis

Early in 1940 suggestions were made to the Canadian government to utilize the skills and experience of the veterans from the First World War. It was claimed that in doing so younger able-bodied men could be released from instructional and security duties within Canada for service overseas.

Ottawa heeded the advice and on May 27, 1940 announced that a Veterans Home Guard was being formed. The name was later changed to the Veterans Guard of Canada. An age limit (50) was established as was the fact that the unit was to be used for instructional and internal security purposes. A strength of 12 companies, each consisting of 250 men, was established. It was announced also that reserve companies would be formed.

By March 1941 the Veterans Guard had increased in size to 29 active companies with a total strength of 206 officers and 6360 other ranks. Of this total 98 officers and 2848 other ranks were employed in guarding prisoner of war and internment camps. The balance were used to guard vulnerable points in Canada and for instructional duties.

Reserve companies were formed as planned and totalled 43. These had a total strength of 183 officers and 3765 other ranks.

The strength of the Veterans Guard peaked in June 1943 with a total of 451 officers and 9806 other ranks. This included 37 companies plus 17 internment camp staffs in Canada plus the following overseas -

Number 1 General Duty Company with seven officers and 231 other ranks serving in the United Kingdom at the Canadian Military Headquarters in London.

Number 33 Company with six officers and 151 other ranks in the Bahamas. The Veterans Guard was here from June 1942 until September 1943 and at that time was known as N Force.

Number 34 Company in British Guiana with two officers and 36 other ranks. All of the other ranks were non-commissioned officers and were employed to beef up security on ships carrying bauxite. They were here from June 1942 to January 1945.

Number 42 Company served at St. John's, Newfoundland and company strength was three officers and 80 other ranks. This was part of the W Force here and they served here from 23 January 1943 to 15 May 1944.

From March 1944 to April 1945 four ship loads of mules were taken from New York to Karachi, India by Canadian Army units. Three of these shipments were "conducted" by Veterans Guard of Canada parties. In all, 179 Canadians made the trip to India escorting about 1600 mules. Information as to what companies these men were drawn from is not known at this time of writing.

All of the above points to the possibilities of forming a specialized collection of military mail material based on the duties and activities of this 'home guard' unit. More information is needed and it is hoped that the above information and that which follows will lead to more input.

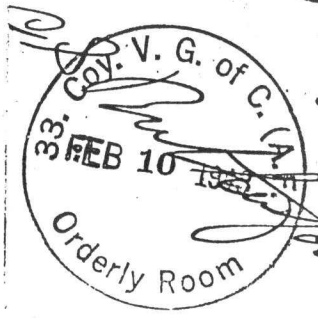
To conclude this general outline it is worth noting that five officers and 19 other ranks served at the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa but no number was assigned to this group. On duty at the Royal Military College in Kingston were four other ranks under the command of one officer. They were probably stationed there for instructional duties.

COVER OF FEBRUARY 10 1943 FROM A MEMBER OF THE VETERANS GUARD OF CANADA WHO WAS SERVING WITH 'N' FORCE IN THE BAHAMAS. SHOWN IS THE ORDERLY ROOM STAMP OF 33 COMPANY AND CENSORING IS BY LT. C.S. RUTHERFORD, V.C., M.C., M.M.

Miss Jella Wright

Swiss Lookout  
Ontario

Canada



RETURN TO:  
Box 92  
WHITEWOOD, SASK.



Pte. Mc Cormick N. D. L32632,  
18 Coy. 2 Platoon,

V.G.O.C. Ozada Camp.

Ozada,  
Alberta.

COVER ADDRESSED TO MEMBER OF THE VETERANS GUARD OF CANADA WHO WAS ON DUTY AT THE OZADA P.O.W. CAMP NEAR SEEBEE, ALBERTA.

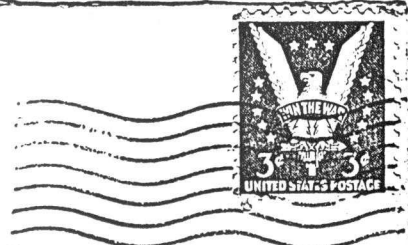
## THE VETERANS GUARD OF CANADA TROOP DISTRIBUTION

MILITARY DISTRICT	COMPANY NUMBER	OFFICERS	OTHER RANKS	TOTAL STRENGTH
1	8	9	228	237
2	40	9	190	
	35	8	219	
	7	9	244	
	9	8	228	
	10	8	203	
	2	8	217	
	20 Internment Camp Staff	5	46	
	21	3	57	
	22	5	45	
	23	9	131	1652
3	4	9	244	
	32	2	150	
	11	9	204	
	Internment Camp Staff	9	70	
	Internment Camp Staff	5	34	
	Internment Camp Staff	2	20	
	Petawawa No. 5 Company	9	217	
	Internment Camp Staff (Petawawa)	5	43	1030
4	12	9	208	
	13	10	194	
	14	9	240	
	15	9	215	
	Internment Camp Staff (Ile Aux Noix)	5	41	
	Internment Camp Staff (Farnham)	5	39	
	Internment Camp Staff (Newington)	6	57	
	Internment Camp Staff (Sherbrooke)	5	39	
	Internment Camp Staff (Cove Fields)	3	32	1126
5	16	10	222	
	19	9	234	475
6	20	10	244	
	21	4	109	367
7	39	9	299	
	18	9	236	
	21	5	122	
	Internment Camp Staff (Fredericton)	5	43	658

MILITARY DISTRICT	COMPANY NUMBER	OFFICERS	OTHER RANKS	TOTAL
10	6	10	238	
	3	9	235	
	Internment Camp (Angler)	3	41	
	Internment Camp (Neys)	4	45	585
PACIFIC COMMAND				
11	38	9	226	
	31	9	218	
	36	9	234	
	29	9	226	940
12	28	11	234	245
13	26	10	232	
	27	9	229	
	25	10	222	
	22	9	237	
	37	9	229	
	30	9	234	
	23	9	234	
	130 Internment Camp	4	41	
	132 Internment Camp	16	270	
	133 Internment Camp	16	366	2395

(Information compiled 1950...More information needed!)

Pres Esther & Hofford  
Lehighton Pa  
V.F.W. Aux 256



B14363 Pvt Gordon E. Woodrow, ~~MA~~  
"1 Platoon" 6 Active Coy. V.G. of C.  
Veterans Guard. of Canada,  
Gravenhurst  
Ont.

COVER ADDRESSED TO A MEMBER OF THE VETERANS GUARD OF CANADA WHO WAS STATIONED AT GRAVENHURST, FEBRUARY 1943.

**EXAMINER 6591**

*B. N. A. F*



*B 35649*

*pts. L. S. Nicol*

*No. 2. B Coy. Vets Gu.  
Current Home tank  
Post address ~~London~~ out  
Canada*

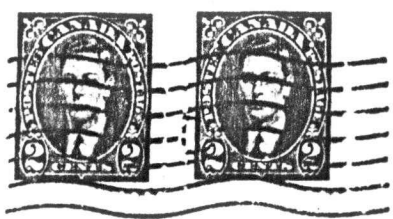
P.C. 90

**OPENED BY**

*Emma Law  
1911 K*



Front and back of cover from Field Post Office 564 and dated in 1941. It was sent to Private Nicol who was with No. 2 Company, Veterans Guard of Canada. This could even have been posted by a member of No. 1 General Duty Company at Canadian Military Headquarters in London, England.



Lieutenant H.E. Ruwald,  
No. 5 Company,  
Veterans Guard of Canada,  
Canadian Army (Active),  
Internment Camp,  
Petawawa, Ontario.

Top: Just a neat cover addressed to a member of No. 5 Company of the Veterans Guard of Canada.

Bottom: Front and reverse of cover from the Veterans Guard of Canada, No. 34 Company, that was stationed in British Guiana from June 1942 to January 1945. Note especially the censor marking, a crowned circle with number 301.

Sgt. F.P. Nicholls  
B16051

ON. Active  
Service  
CANADIAN LEGION  
WAR SERVICES  
AIR MAIL



MRS. J. WALSH  
35 McCamus Ave.  
Kirkland Lake  
ONTARIO.  
CANADA.





A Canadian Casualty Assembly Centre postal marking - WW1

Quite recently we have been informed of a scarce postmark used by Canadians at Folkestone, Kent during the First World War. On looking back at Newsletter 47, item 402, it was apparent the listing, which included the newly reported postmark and Registered oval markings on the same page, needed amending. This has been done and, in addition, includes the few reports received since item 402 was written. These are shown by an "x".

Here is the postmark referred to above dated 3 MY 16 together with an official strike made just before the hammer was despatched to the o/c Canadian P.O. Shorncliffe Camp on 11 April 1916 for use at the C.C.A.C. Also shown is the oval Registered stamp despatched on the same date. Additionally a single ring stamp was sent which bore the abbreviation D.L.S. (Dead Letter Service, or Section?) in its design. No illustration is available nor is an example on a cover known to the writer.

From Sir Andrew Macphail's book, "The Medical Services" published in 1925 details are found of the Centre established at Folkestone February 13, 1916. Here, soldiers, discharged from convalescent hospitals were cared for, "hardened" is another term used, before rejoining their units or returning to civil life if no longer capable of military service.

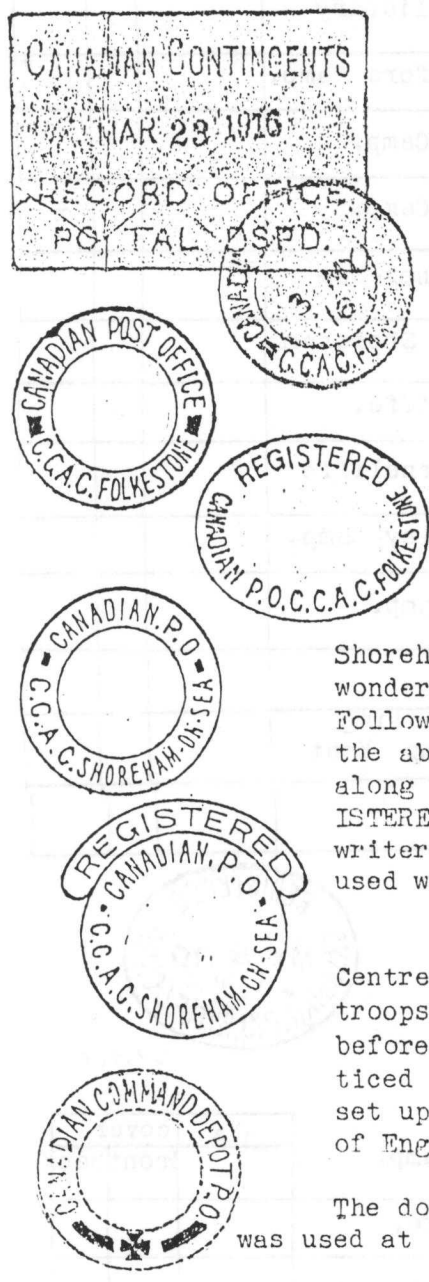
In October the Assembly Centre was removed to Shoreham, Sussex and in November to Hastings. Is it any wonder that postmarks from these locations are hard to find? Following the move to Shoreham a double ring cancellor bearing the abbreviation C.C.A.C. was prepared and is illustrated here along with the unique hooded (curved portion above ring) REGISTERED handstamp. Examples of these also are unknown to this writer. We have not seen any record, or examples, of postmarks used while the C.C.A.C. was at Hastings.

On February 27, 1917 the Canadian Casualty Assembly Centre at Hastings became #1 Canadian Command Depot and housed troops from the Shorncliffe area. The role was the same as before where physical training and military skills were practiced to prepare soldiers for further service. #2 C.C.D. was set up at Bramshott, Hampshire and #3 for troops in other parts of England. Up to 5000 soldiers could be accomodated at each.

The double ring postmark with Maltese cross shown here likely was used at one of the depots listed above.

Further information on this interesting group of cancellations is solicited. Can any reader provide the official meaning for the abbreviation D.L.S? Hopefully our guess is not too far off track.

This article has just been handed in by Colin Campbell. Please address all correspondence on this matter to him at 1450 Ross Road, Kelowna, B.C., V1Z 1L6. Sorry I had to copy the survey return on the back of the article, but hope you will photocopy it for your results when you mail them to Colin.



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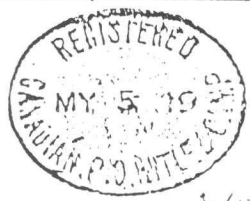


NOTE

Double Ring type - - CANADIAN is common to all

	on stamp	cover		stamp	cover
Base P.O. Bramshott Camp.		frontback		Field P.O. St Martins Plain S. Shorncliffe	frontback
P.O. Bramshott Camp. Hants.				Base P.O. Salisbury	
Base P.O. Brighton.				Field P.O. Salisbury Camp.	
P.O. Brighton.				Base P.O. Seaford Camp.	
P.O. C.D.D. Buxton.				P.O. Seaford Camp.	
P.O. Coombe Down Bath.				P.O. Seaford Camp. Sussex.	x
F.C. Crowborough Camp. Sussex.				P.O. C.D.D. Shoreham -on-Sea.	
Base P.O. Dibgate Camp.				F.O. C.C.A.C. Shoreham -on-Sea.	
P.O. Dibgate Camp.				Base. Shorncliffe.	
Post Office C.C.A.C. Folkestone			x	Base P.O. Shorncliffe Camp.	
P.O. Hastings.				Base P.O. Witley Camp.	
POST Office Otterpool Camp. Kent.				P.O. Witley Camp.	
P.O. Otterpool Camp.				Field P.O. 1	
Command Depot P.O.				Field P.O. Sandling Camp Kent	
Field P.O. REG.					

SURVEY RETURN and ADDITIONS - Further to Item 402 of NEWSLETTER 47



NOTE

WITLEY

REGISTERED oval type - - REGISTERED/CANADIAN is common to all

	date	cover		date	cover
P.O. Bramshott Camp.	3.10.16	frontback		P.O. Seaford Camp. Sussex.	frontback
P.O. Bath.				P.O. Shorncliffe.	
P.O. Crowborough Camp. Sussex.				P.O. Witley Camp.	
P.O. Otterpool Camp.				P.O. C.D.D. Shoreham -on-Sea.	
F.P.O. Sandling Camp.	6.9.16		x	F.P.O. St Martins Plain	
P.O. C.C.A.C. Folkestone				Base. P.O. 1.E.	
REGISTERED CANADIAN P.O. * C.C.A.C. SHOREHAM-ON-SEA					

\* hooded type