

KENNETH V. ELLISON
R.R. #1, OYAMA
B.C. V0H 1W0

Very many thanks to all those sending in their dues promptly. At present there are six members still owing and if his newsletter has a BIG RED 'X' on it please do send your \$5 in now, otherwise this may be your last copy!

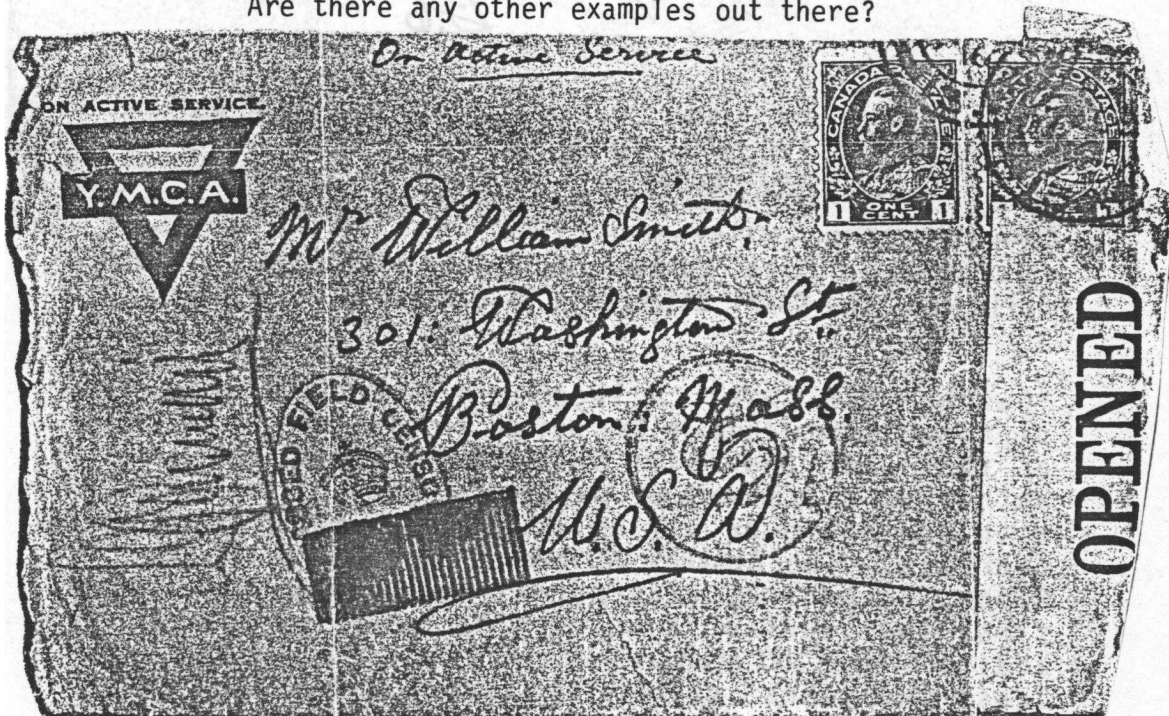
We have at this time 35 members and there are five complementary copies sent out each time. Several members of BNAPS have recently enquired about joining and there is one new member to report. We welcome Dr. J. Frank of 50 Cotswold Drive, Saxtonwold, Johannesburg 2196, South Africa. A recent letter from Dr. Frank tells of his spending an afternoon with our other South African member, John Wannerton.

Our finances are now in good order. Our main expense is in postage. For example, it costs about \$12 for each issue of the Newsletter. The printing cost, so far, is nil except for the paper thanks to our member from Salmon Arm, B.C. Perhaps a summary of the money situation would fit in here:

Balance at Jan 1, 1983		\$65.41
Dues received to date		\$160.00
Postage	\$62.39	
Paper	\$13.79	
Balance at Feb 29, 1984		\$149.23

A note has been sent to your editor with a request for info on this cover. It appears to be dated in 1916 and the FPO # is 13W. Note use of Canadian postage (from Canada?). The questions asked are:

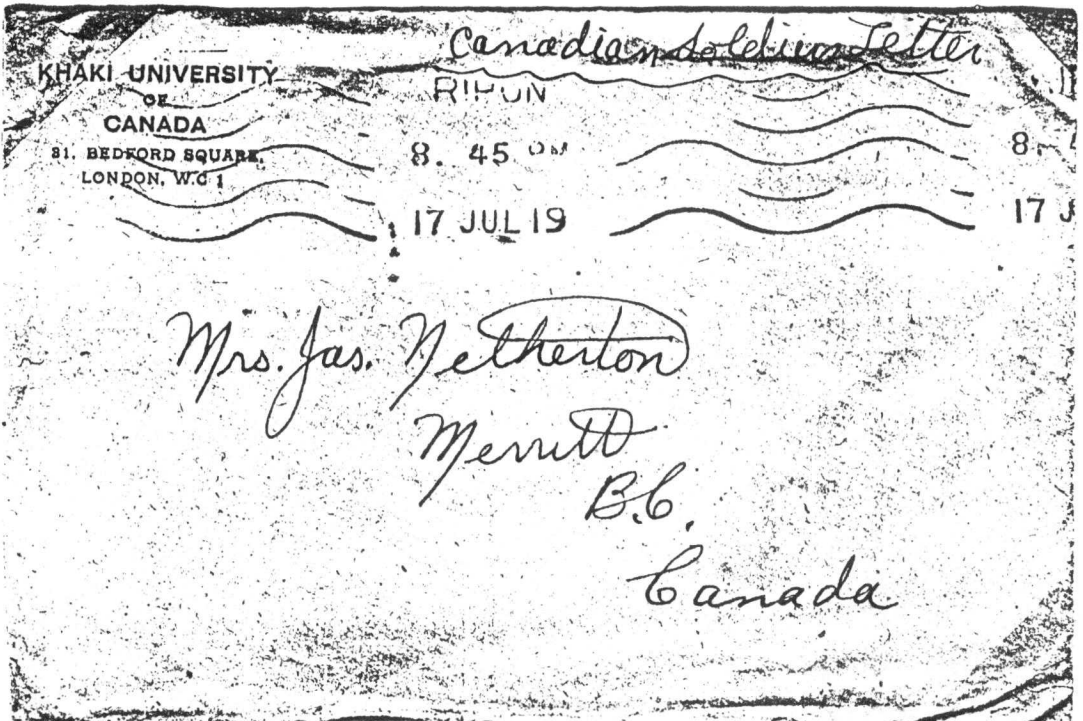
- What is the significance of the S ?
- Why is the Field Censor # obliterated?
- Are there any other examples out there?



Our main article this time is from Brian Plain and am sure it will be of interest to most as it deals with the RCAF in Ceylon in World War II and little has been written on the postal aspects of the Canadians there.

Some times there is too much space left over, but not this time!

"With military duties reduced to a minimum, efforts were made to provide opportunities for all to partake in sport. There was time also to begin preparing the men for their return to civil life. Education, in many cases interrupted by the war, received special attention. Battalions ran their own schools, finding teachers from their own ranks to instruct men in elementary subjects. In this they were helped by text-books prepared and printed under the auspices of the Khaki University. The Khaki University of Canada, which originated as a project of the National Committee of the Canadian Y.M.C.A., had begun to function in England and France in the autumn of 1917, but the German offensive of the following spring had halted the work in France."



'Canadian Soldiers Letter' of 17 July 1919 from the Central College of the Khaki University of Canada in Ripon, Yorks.

"During 1918 Khaki Colleges were established in fourteen different locations in the United Kingdom, and in September of that year the Khaki University of Canada was formally authorized as a branch of the General Staff of the O.M.F.C., with control over all existing educational organizations overseas. The Central College of the Khaki University, in Ripon, Yorkshire, offered matriculation courses and the first two years of a university arts course... . In addition some 300 graduate students and undergraduates of at least two years' university standing at home were sent to various universities in Great Britain. These were enrolled for the two academic terms commencing 1 October 1918 and 1 February 1919."

(From G.W.L. Nicholson: CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE 1914-19)

Early in 1942, it was realized that 222 Group, RAF, responsible for the defence of Ceylon, was totally unable to meet the demands of the job. Their resources were weighted towards fighter defence, and had neither reconnaissance nor long range strike capabilities. Their single craft capable of reconnaissance was a Catalina of 205 Squadron, RAF. As a result of this situation, the British Chiefs of Staff, on February 18 1942, allocated four Catalina aircraft from the British Coastal Command, and ordered them to Ceylon. It was further decided that these aircraft would be provided by transferring 413 Squadron, the only RCAF squadron flying the Catalina, from Scotland, to the new RAF base at Koggala, in southern Ceylon.

413 Squadron had been formed in July 1941 at RAF Station Stranraer, and in the fall of 1941 was transferred to its permanent base at Sullom Voe in the Shetland Islands. It was here that the order for transfer was received. They left for Ceylon on 18 March 1942, and required ten days for the trip which took them via Gibraltar, Cairo, Aboukir, Basra, Iraq, Karachi and finally Koggala on 28 March. Ground crew, spare parts and the remainder of the squadron embarked from England on the Dutch ship, Nieuw Holland, and arrived in Ceylon later.

The arrival of 413 Squadron gave the Canadian Forces an 'official' presence in Ceylon, however Canadian servicemen had been serving in Ceylon in various capacities since early in the war, their official presence masked by the RAF squadrons to which they were attached.

POSTAL DETAILS

The Canadian Postal Corps does not seem to have been involved in the mails to and from Ceylon, at least in the early phases of Canadian involvement in Asia, preferring, it seems, to allow Canadian service mail to be handled by the British system which was quite well developed. Therefore there are no cancellations that are specifically Canadian, rather, the markings are either the local domestic marks, or those of the RAF Postal Service. As one would expect, considering the rather long distances involved, most of the mail went by air. For airmail, Ceylon postage was required with the initial rate being 1 Rupee (33 cents Canadian), but in 1943, with the introduction of the Air Mail Letter Card (AMLC), the rate became 75 cents Ceylon, or 25 cents Canadian. Mail addressed to servicemen in Ceylon and sent by Armed Forces Air Letter went for the standard 10 cent rate.

Early mail travelled via England and bore routing instructions:

CEYLON-UK-CANADA

These letters were presumably carried by planes of the British Overseas Airway Corporation to England, and thence over the Atlantic. Later, a new route was developed that routed the mail:

CEYLON-LAGOS-USA-CANADA

This mail was carried over the new West Africa-USA route by Pan American Airways. An interesting side-light to this movement of mail was a circular single-ring marking stating:

CANADA AND USA ONLY (in three lines)

This marking was probably added by the RAF Base Post Office in Colombo to enable easier sorting at Lagos, the intermediate transfer point for the mail. Late in 1944 the Canadian Forces Post established a satellite office in Colombo. This office provided a directory service only, but did not carry on any financial services. As a result, purchase of stamps money orders, and registration had to be carried out at the RAF, or nearby civil offices.

(2)

ILLUSTRATIONS

- #1 Dated July 1944 and carries the RAFPOST/COLOMBO single ring dater 26mm in diameter. This is similar to marking #2 as listed for the forces in SE Asia by Guertin. There are no route markings on the cover, but there is a Guertin Type 29 RAF Censor marking. In addition the cover has an 'Examiner 2147' label and is officer signed. Two thick parallel sortation lines are also seen at the top of the cover.
- #2 An early cover dated September 11, 1942. The R.A.F. BASE P.O./CEYLON dated marking is 27mm in diameter. The censor mark is Guertin Type 24 (with high numbers recorded from Ceylon), and is again officer censored. The typed routing shows the BOAC route via England.
- #3 This is the only 'surface' rate cover that I have seen and as such has no postage. It has a lovely strike of the large 32mm double-ring RAF POST/COLOMBO marking that has also been reported by Guertin. It has a Type 29 censor mark and is officer signed. An added feature of this cover is that it is a Salvation Army Field Service item.
- #4 This undated cover shows another R.A.F. BASE P.O./CEYLON mark. This is similar in text but very different to that seen in cover #2. Here the date is absent, and the indicia slot is filled with parallel lines. A trace of a Guertin Type 30 censor mark is seen.
- #5 This Air Mail Letter Card shows several points about Ceylon mail.
- a-The Koggala 'Barred-8' that served to cancel mail in a mute fashion. (It is assumed that this was Koggala, but any information to the contrary would be appreciated.)
 - b-The postal rate for an AMLC is 75 cents Ceylon.
 - c-The routing is VIA/CEYLON-LAGOS-U.S.A. in script.
 - d-A Type 30 Censor marking (British).
 - e-A U.S. Censor marking that was obviously applied in New York on the way to Canada.
- #6 These two AMLC's both show the 75 cent rate to Canada. They both show the scripted routing on the PanAm flight to West Africa, but more importantly, they show the use of the CANADA/AND U.S.A./ONLY sortation marking.
- #8 This is the only registered cover that I have seen. It has a label R/R.A.F. BASE P.O./CEYLON with number 566 in the space below. The cancellation is similar to the one mentioned for cover #3 but with the inclusion of the word REGISTERED. The Type 29 censor mark is present and the cover is officer signed by G/Capt.D.S.Patterson, RCAF Staff Officer, HQ Air Command, SE Asia. The rate was 6 Rupees, 25 cents.

REFERENCES

- GUERTIN, H.E.: THE WARTIME MAILS AND STAMPS CANADA 1939-46;
Private printing, Toronto.
- MELNYK, T.W.: CANADIAN FLYING OPERATIONS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA 1941-45;
Ministry of Supply and Services Canada 1976, Ottawa.
- WEBB, Lt.Col.R.H.: THE R.C.A.F. IN SOUTH EAST ASIA 1942-45;
Canadian Philatelist, July-August 1964.
- KOSTENUK, S & GRIFFIN, J: RCAF SQUADRONS AND AIRCRAFT; 1977 Ottawa.
- Personal communications and loan of materials from:
K.V.Ellison, Oyama, BC John Frith, Sudbury, Ontario
Ken Pugh, Brandon, Man. Wm.Robinson, Vancouver, BC

356
(3)

EXAMINER 2147

51/9911. H.B.

Room 603 *Ham, Beach* *COLOMBO*



#1

BY AIR MAIL - PAR AVION

Miss G. Davis,
186 Davis St.,
Hamilton, Ont.,
Canada.

19th April 44



BY AIR MAIL

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

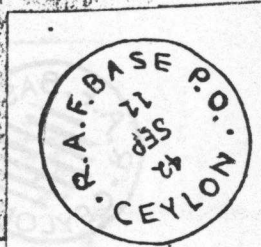
Miss Doodie Collett
3548 Vendome Avenue
Montreal
Quebec
Canada.



#2



Ceylon U.K. Canada.

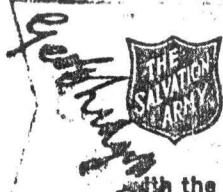


On Active Service



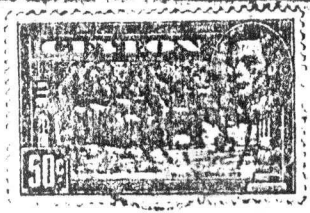
Mrs. J. H. Fortu
1519 Buller Ave,
New Westminster,
B.C.,
Canada.

#3



with the
Canadian Active Service Forces

On Active Service
By Air Mail



Miss Iris Fowler
919-1st Street West
Royal Beauty Salon
Calgary, Alberta
Canada

By Air Mail

#4

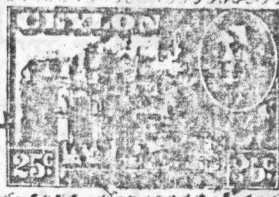


BY AIR MAIL

AIR MAIL
LETTER CARD

VIA
CEYLON
LAGOS
U.S.A.

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS
WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL



D 404020

TPR. J. R. McCALLUM

4876 GROSVENOR AVE.

MONTREAL, P.Q.

CANADA.

*N.B. Master
File*

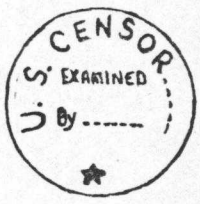


WHEN FOLDED THE LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE WITH
THE BLUE BORDER WITHIN WHICH THE ADDRESS ONLY MAY BE WRITTEN

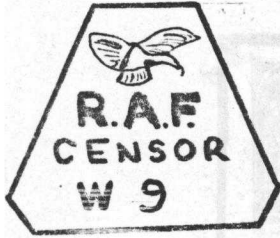


S↑

(Colombo?)

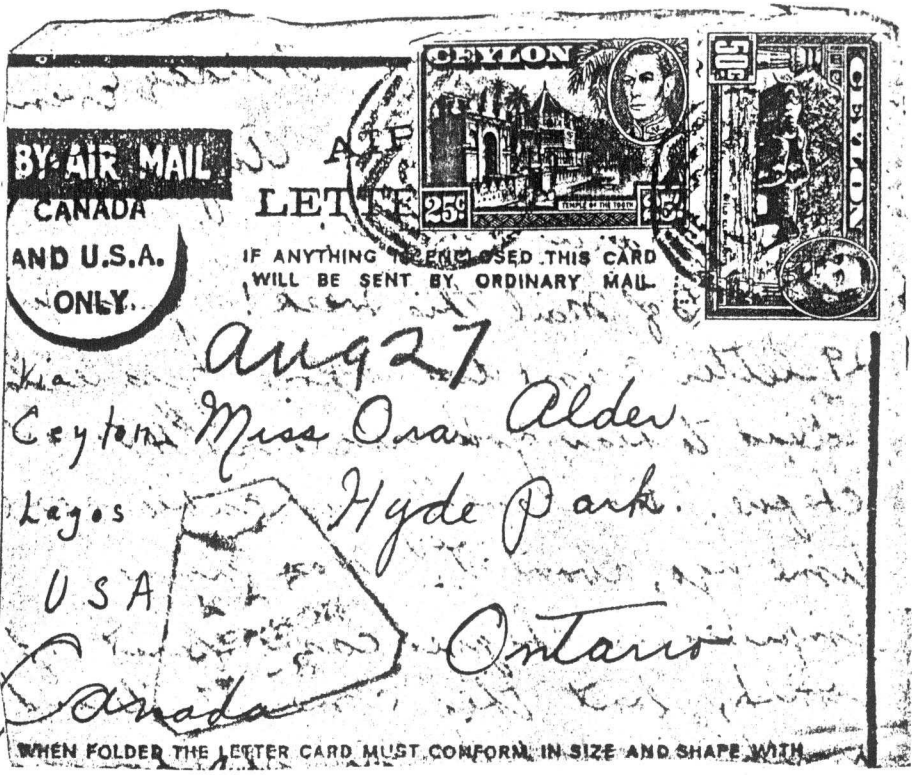


*See pg 4
H.L. 58*

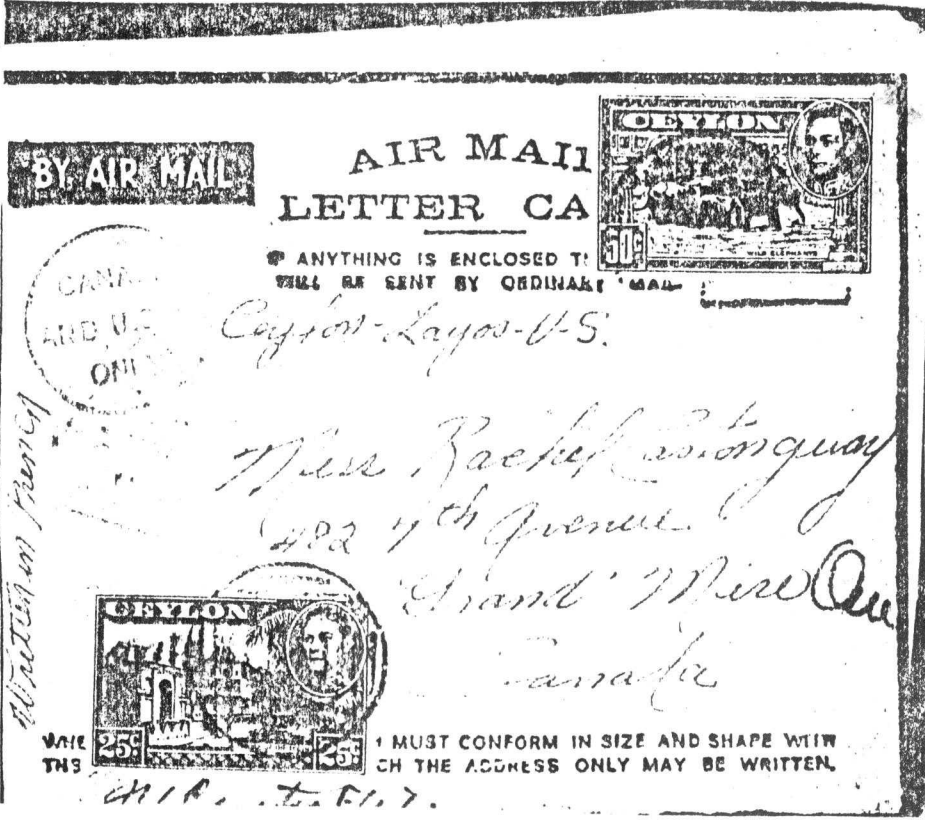


#5

*from:
File N.B. Master
(p. 5-10366
R.C.A.F.*

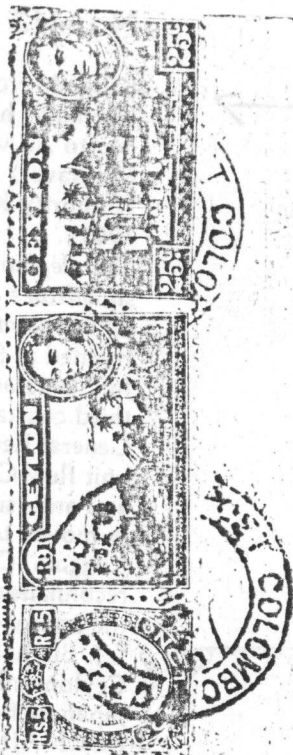


#6



#7

#8



OFF HIS MAJESTY

R
R.A.F. BASE P.O.
CEYLON
500

"REGISTERED"

Mr. D. STEWART PATTERSON

90 St. Boulevard Morgan

3462 PEELE ST

MONTREAL QUÉ

CANADA

6514
bolt

PAGE FROM -
KOSTENUK & GRIFFEN
RCAF SQUADRONS &
AIRCRAFT



COVER SIMILAR TO #4
- SURFACE MAIL.

No. 413 Squadron



Badge In front of a maple leaf an elephant's head affronte
Motto Ad vigilamus undis (We watch the waves)

Authority King George VI, October 1943

The elephant head represents the squadron's operations from Ceylon, while the motto suggests its functions.

Formed at Stranraer, Scotland on 1 July 1941 as the RCAF's eleventh — third coastal and first flying boat

General Reconnaissance — squadron formed overseas, the unit flew Catalina aircraft on north Atlantic reconnaissance and anti-submarine patrols. In March 1942, it was hurriedly moved to the Far East. As aircraft and crews arrived at Koggala, Ceylon, they were pressed into service making reconnaissance flights over the Indian Ocean to watch for the approach of a Japanese naval force. On 4 April, S/L L.J. Birchall, whose aircraft and crew had arrived in Ceylon only two days earlier, sighted and reported a large Japanese fleet 350 miles south of Ceylon. The Catalina (Mk.I AJ155 "A") was shot down by Japanese carrier aircraft, and S/L Birchall and the survivors of his crew were taken prisoner, but their warning had alerted Ceylon's defences and the Japanese attack was repulsed.¹ The squadron remained in Ceylon until early 1945,² was then returned to the United Kingdom for conversion to a Bomber unit, but was instead disbanded at Bournemouth, Hampshire on 23 February 1945.

Brief Chronology Formed at Stranraer, Scot. 1 Jul 41.

Disbanded at Bournemouth, Hants., Eng. 23 Feb 45.

Title or Nickname "Tusker"

Commanders

W/C V.H.A. McBratney (RAF) 1 Jul 41 - 18 Aug 41.

W/C R.G. Briese 19 Aug 41 - 22 Oct 41 KIA.

W/C J.D. Twigg 15 Nov 41 - 19 Mar 42.

W/C J.L. Plant 20 Mar 42 - 21 Oct 42.

W/C J.C. Scott, DSO 22 Oct 42 - 20 Jun 43.

W/C L.H. Randall, DFC 21 Jun 43 - 14 Sep 44.

W/C S.R. McMillan 15 Sep 44 - 18 Feb 45.

Higher Formations and Squadron Locations

Coastal Command:

No. 15 Group,
Stranraer, Scot. 1 Jul 41 - 30 Sep 41.

No. 18 Group,
Sullom Voe, Shetland 1 Oct 41 - 3 Mar 42.
En route to Ceylon 4 Mar 42 - 29 May 42.
(First 4 aircraft arrived 2-4 Apr 42)

South East Asia Command:

No. 222 Group,
Koggala, Ceylon 2 Apr 42 - 19 Jan 45.

Detachments at Addu Atoll, Seychelles Is., Indian Ocean
Mombasa, Kenya; Bahrein, Persian Gulf; Langebaan,
South Africa; Aden.

En route to England (minus aircraft) 21 Jan 45 - 20 Feb 45

Bomber Command:
No. 6 (RCAF) Group (on paper only),
Bournemouth, Hants. 21 Feb 45 - 23 Feb 45.

(Officially transferred to Bomber Command 18 Feb 45,
while still at sea, though "virtually non-existent" as a unit)

