

CANADIAN MILITARY MAIL STUDY GROUP

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EDITOR

Number 59
September 1984

GREETINGS to all who have made it to BNAPEX 1984 in San Francisco, where this newsletter will be distributed. It has been an 'unusual' summer weatherwise and very dry postal history wise! Perhaps with the coming fall, and this show, things will improve.

SOUTH AFRICAN CENSOR MARKS. Our last Newsletter had an article on the Canadian Nurses in South Africa in World War II. Therein a question was asked about the significance of the letters A, B, C etc. on the rubber stamped Coat of Arms used by the Censor. We have the answer in a letter from our friend Allan Brown of the Forces Postal History Society to whom our thanks go. Quote "According to a list published many years ago in a book called WORLD WAR II PHILATELY OF SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA by the late J. H. Harvey Pirie, these letters were used as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| at Capetown Letters used | A, E, M, P, and R |
| at Johannesburg | B |
| at Durban | C |
| at Windhoek (SWA) | D |
| at Pretoria | F |
| at Bloemfontein | G |
| at De Aar | H |
| at Port Elizabeth | J |
| at East London | K |
| at George | L |
| at Pietermaritzburg | N |
| at Kimberley | O |



An example, to refresh your memory, is photocopied above.

THE R.C.A.F. IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR 1941 to 1946. The 'Article of the Month' so to speak, concerns the above subject. It is intended only as an outline as to dates, places, and you may also find the table of units involved to be of interest. An attempt has been made to list the censor and postal markings that were used by the R.C.A.F. while in this theatre. There will follow in future Newsletters: Force W, the Canadian Army in Newfoundland, 1940-46, The Canadian Army in Labrador, 1942-46, and, The Royal Canadian Navy in Newfoundland during WW II.

Overleaf there is a one pager by Brian Plain with a little more information on a World War I activity in Hamilton, Ontario. More items of a one or two page nature such as this would be most welcome.

Happy hunting at BNAPEX 1984 !!!

NEW MEMBER. Just arrived in the mail is an application from Dr. Kenneth S. Mackenzie of 78, Prince Edward Avenue, Pte. Clair, Quebec, H9R 4C7 to whom we extend a warm welcome!

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R.A.F. ARMAMENT SCHOOL
HAMILTON

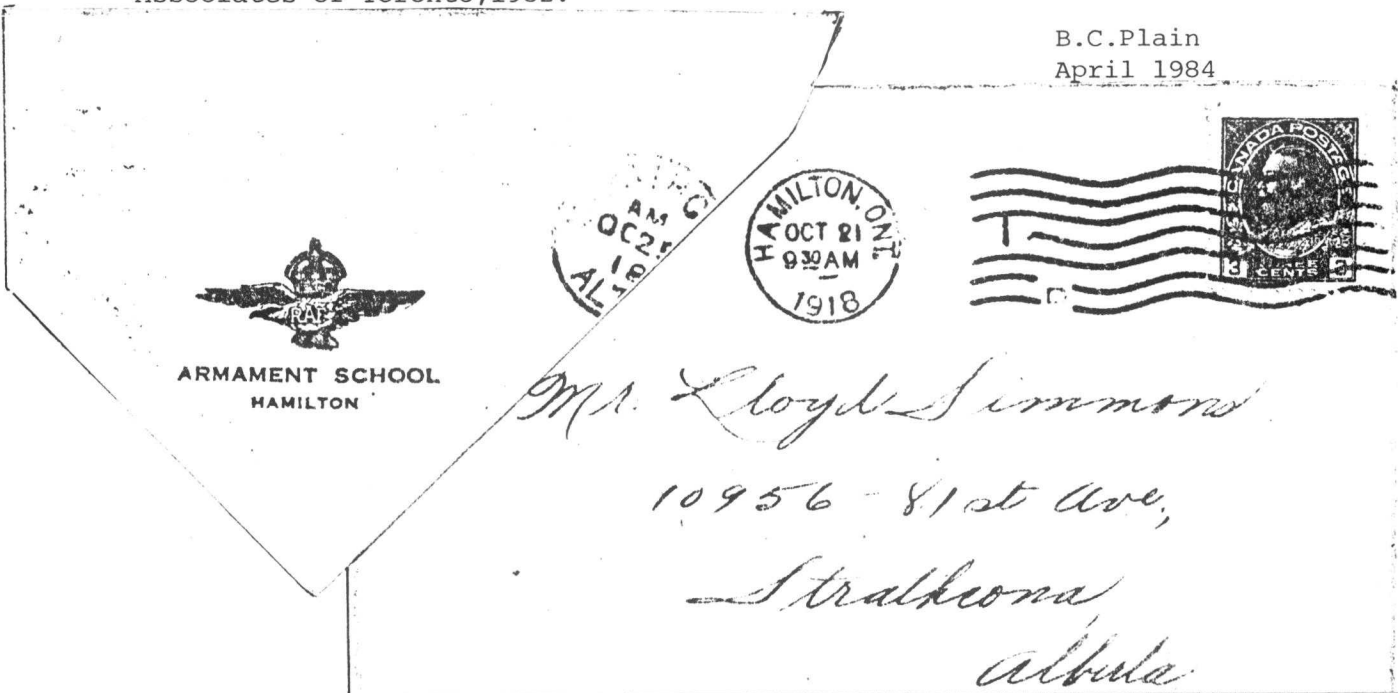
In a cover lot, recently acquired, I found an item that was undoubtedly connected to the early days of military training and aviation in Canada. The R.A.F. insignia on the flap was a definite clue, but the ARMAMENT SCHOOL HAMILTON notation on the back flap was a bit of a mystery. Research has now provided the answer and confirmed the military link.

On April 1, 1918, the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service joined together as one service, and became the Royal Air Force. By the time of this unification, pilot training had been well established in Ontario, mainly at Camp Borden and at several smaller facilities near Toronto. Coincident with the unification of the flying services, a new training facility was established at Beamsville, on March 21, 1918. Due to changing directions in the War, and the need for more specialized training, additional facilities were needed, as the existing camps were inadequate and could not meet the demands placed upon them. One such special facility was the R.A.F. Armament School. This school was established at Hamilton in May of 1918. The training done there closely resembled that done at the School of Aerial Fighting at Beamsville, but differed in that there was no actual flying done except in specially made airplanes that never left the ground. Here, the students learned about machine guns and the different armament that they would be required to use while actually flying a fighting aircraft. This preflight training enabled the cadet to proceed directly to flying upon his arrival at Beamsville, and enabled much of the ground training to be dropped from the Beamsville schedule.

On Monday, November 11, 1918, the War ended, and abruptly, so did flight and pre-flight training at Beamsville and Hamilton. In January 1919, an auction sale was held in Hamilton, and equipment from both Hamilton and Beamsville was sold, with the unsold remainder being transferred to Camp Leaside, near Toronto.

The cover shown in this case has a very clear RAF insignia on the reverse flap. As well, a Strathcona Alta. receiver's mark is seen dated AM/OC 25/18. The cover is cancelled with the International machine current at the time, Type G dater, Obliterator type 1.

Ref: CHAJKOWSKY, William E.: ROYAL FLYING CORPS, Borden to Texas to Beamsville; The Boston Mills Press, 1979
SESSIONS, David F.: THE EARLY RAPID CANCELLING MACHINES OF CANADA: Unitrade Associates of Toronto, 1982.



THE R.C.A.F. IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
1941 - 46

In 1939 Newfoundland was a colony of Great Britain. Canada asked and received permission in the early days of the war for the Royal Canadian Air Force to fly over Newfoundland and to use their airport facilities. The early summer of 1940 saw the war situation worsening in Europe and it was agreed at this time that Canada would base a flight of bomber-reconnaissance aircraft and a flight of fighters at Newfoundland Airport at Gander.

Sometime later, on 7 April 1941, No. 10 Bomber Squadron arrived at Gander and so started the buildup of the R.C.A.F. in Newfoundland. The last units of this force left on 1 April 1946.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS

Early R.C.A.F. mail was treated in a similar manner to that of Force "W", that is, the Canadian Army in Newfoundland. All the early mail was censored on the base and then put into the civil mails where it usually got the Gander killer marking. These letters are undated unless they happened to get the Gander town marking, or received a transit or other dating stamp along the way. This situation continued at Gander until the Canadian Army Post Office (C.A.P.O.) No. 2 was established on 1 September 1941.

Canadian Army Post Offices (C.A.P.O.'s) were established in Newfoundland and Labrador as follows:

C.A.P.O. No. 1	at St. John's	from 1 Sep 41 to 31 Jan 46
No. 2	Gander	1 Sep 41 to 27 June 42
No. 3	Botwood	1 Sep 41 to 18 Feb 45
No. 4	Gander	10 Aug 42 to 20 Nov 45
No. 5	Torbay	26 Sep 42 to 30 Nov 45
No. 10	Goose Bay, Lab.	2 Jul 42 to 31 Jan 46

However, the R.C.A.F. did not arrive at these stations until later, except for Gander, as noted in the enclosed unit distribution list and repeated here for convenience.:

R.C.A.F.	at St. John's	from 23 Jun 41 to 31 Jun 45
	Gander	7 Apr 41 to
	Botwood	15 Apr 42 to
	Gander	7 Apr 41 to
	Torbay	13 Dec 41 to 1 Apr 46
	Goose Bay, Lab.	29 Aug 41 to 30 Sep 45

C.A.P.O. No. 2 at Gander was, until establishment of C.A.P.O. No. 4 on 10 August 1942 used by both the R.C.A.F. and the Canadian Army. On the opening of No. 4 and thereafter the R.C.A.F. used this C.A.P.O. exclusively. Examples may be found to contradict this, but they are likely few.

All airforce and army mails in Newfoundland prior to 1 September 1941 required Newfoundland stamps but on establishment of the C.A.P.O.'s, first class letters were free and only required postage if sent airmail, or were registered. In Labrador the same held true except that Canadian postage had to be used. C.A.P.O. No. 5 hammer differed from the other hammers by having a line under the 'o' of No. The regular C.D.S. hammer was used at all post offices but C.A.P.O. No. 10 had a duplex as well. The usual MOTO and registered markings were also issued.

GANDER C.A.P.O. Nos. 2 and 4

With the arrival of the R.C.A.F. here on 7 April 1941 a need for censoring occurred. Their first censor marking, the rectangular boxed "PASSED / R.C.A.F. / CENSOR" (Cover no. 1) was used only at Gander and seems to have been replaced in September 1941 by the second type, the straight line "PASSED BY R.C.A.F. / CENSOR" (2). This, in turn, was used at C.A.P.O. No. 4 until the end of censorship in March 1945.

ST. JOHN'S C.A.P.O. No. 1

Early (1941-42) C.A.P.O. cancelled mail from St. John's No. 1 Group Headquarters used the civil handstamp (3). This was followed soon after in the spring of 1942 by the rectangular, with single wavy line, "Passed By / 5 / R.C.A.F. / CENSOR" (4). Numbers noted used here were 2, 4, and 5. This style was used to the end of censorship.

BOTWOOD C.A.P.O. No. 3

The first censor markings from here were the same as used at C.A.P.O. No. 1, (4) with the number 4 noted. A similar mark with double lines (5) is noted from August 1942 to the end of censoring and the only 'clerk' numbers seen are the "7" and "8"

TORBAY C.A.P.O. No. 5

As the R.C.A.F. was at Torbay before the C.A.P.O. No. 5 opened, mails likely went through the C.A.P.O. No. 1 at St. John's. On the opening of No. 5 in September 1942 and until the end of censorship in the spring of 1945 the hammer noted as (4) with the numbers 5 and 6 thereon was used. A double wavy lined number "19" (5) appears in April of 1945 at the end of censoring.

GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR C.A.P.O. No. 10

Mail from Goose Bay between the first R.C.A.F. arrival on 29 August 1941 until C.A.P.O. No. 10 opening on 2 July 1942 has not been noted, or recognized as such. This early mail was carried by Canso flying boats out of Moncton, New Brunswick. After the opening of the C.A.P.O. there is much mail surviving. Nearly all covers, in lieu of Canadian postage, had the straight line stamp "R.C.A.F. / ON ACTIVE SERVICE". This would appear to confirm the free frank allowed, but had nothing to do with censorship.

The early C.A.P.O. No. 10 covers have a marking (6) with crown and "PASSED / DC6", a civil censor mark. In 1943 the double wavy lined rectangle (7) with a "10" was used to the end of censoring. A similar style with three wavy lines and the number "10" shows up in 1945 just before censorship was withdrawn.

As noted in the unit list appended hereto, there were small detachments of radio operators stationed at different places in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mail from these units can be seen with local civil postmarks, or they may have been taken to a regular C.A.P.O. Censoring was carried out by the officer of the unit who applied a handstamp and his initials, or used his initials or signature. Recognizable mail from these separate units is hard to find! (See page 8).

Allan Island	No. 40 Radio Detachment	1/11/44 - 20/10/45
Botwood	Station Headquarters	15/4/42 -
	No. 116 Squadron (BR)	1/8/42 - 13/11/42
	No. 116 Squadron (BR)	12/6/43 - 19/11/43
Cape Bauld	No. 30 Radio Detachment	26/9/42 - 31/10/44
Cape Spear	No. 42 Radio Detachment	1/1/45 - 3/7/45
Elliston	No. 43 Radio Detachment	1/12/44 - 8/12/45
Fogo Island	No. 44 Radio Detachment	11/11/44 - 12/11/45
Gander	Station Headquarters	17/4/41 -
	No. 10 Squadron (BR)	7/4/41 - 11/6/45
	No. 116 Squadron (BR)	19/11/43 - 8/6/44
	No. 126 Squadron (F)	1/8/43 - 1/7/44
	No. 127 Squadron (F)	20/8/42 - 1/8/43
	No. 19 Sub-Repair Depot	1/12/42 - 15/7/44
	No. 19 Radio Detachment	30/10/42 - 31/8/45
Port aux Basques	No. 32 Radio Detachment	21/4/43 - 31/7/45
St. Brides	No. 41 Radio Detachment	1/11/44 - 30/9/45
St. John's	No. 1 Group Headquarters	23/6/41 - 31/6/45
Torbay	Station Headquarters	13/12/41 - 1/4/46
	No. 5 Squadron (BR)	24/4/43 - 2/8/44
	No. 10 Squadron (BR)	11/6/45 - 15/8/45
	No. 11 Squadron (BR)	26/10/43 - 18/6/44
	No. 113 Squadron (BR)	21/6/44 - 10/8/44
	No. 125 Squadron	9/6/42 - 25/6/43
	No. 128 Squadron (F)	26/6/43 - 15/3/44
	No. 145 Squadron (BR)	1/6/42 - 30/10/43
	No. 160 Squadron (BR)	1/8/44 - 31/5/45
	No. 14 Radio Detachment	1/9/43 - 31/10/45
	No. 17 Radio Detachment	1/9/43 - 31/12/44
	No. 5 Communication Flight	5/1/44 - 15/9/44
	No. 2 Radio Wave Prop. Unit	1/5/45 - 31/3/46
	No. 20 Sub-Equipment Depot	1/11/43 - 30/4/45
	No. 1 Composite Squadron	23/4/42 - 30/6/45
Cape Ray (Lab.)	No. 77 Radio Detachment	
Brig Harbour, Labrador	No. 37 Radio Detachment	7/10/43 - 16/10/45
Goose Bay (Lab.)	No. 129 Squadron (F)	9/4/43 - 1/12/43
	No. 130 Squadron (F)	20/10/43 - 1/4/44
	No. 29 Radio Detachment	20/7/43 - 30/9/45
	RCAF Det. and Station	29/8/41 -
Spotted Island	No. 36 Radio Detachment	22/11/43 - 6/11/44



L.A.C. Coohon J.A. R. 66664
M.P.O. ~~#505~~ #14 S.F.T.S.
~~Trenton,~~ Allmer
Ont. Ont.
Canada.

Front and Reverse

Cover No. 1

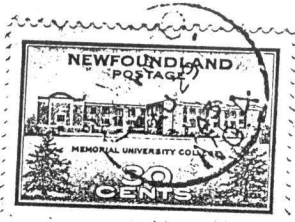
PASSED
 R.C.A.F.
ab.2
 CENSOR

RECEIVED JUN 16 JUN 21
 TRENTON, ONT.

TRENTON-M.P.O. JUN 17 1941

Register

267



U.A.P.O.
 AU 29
 1 41

R C. A. P. O. 4
 No. 4276

BY AIR MAIL - PAR AVION

Cover No. 2

Mrs Fraser Tees
1162 Grosvenor Ave
Winnipeg Man.

PASSED BY R.C.A.F.
 CENSOR

Canada



R.C.A.F.



The Brownsville Patriotic Society
% Mrs. E. Barnhardt
Brownsville
Ontario
Canada

PASSED BY R.C.A.F.
CENSOR

Cover No. 2



NAME	
UNIT	
NO.	

R.C.A.F.



SERVING WITH CANADIAN FORCES

Mrs Freda Grady
7214-105A St
Edmonton
Alberta
Canada.

PASSED BY
CENSOR

Cover No. 3

FROM W. H. Kidd D.S.
W30917 C.A.P.O.#1
Wld. Overseas

Cover No. 4

MR. LEIGH BOWELL
% The Montreal Star Co
Montreal
Que.
Canada.



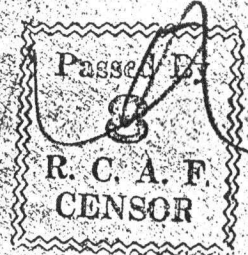
IDLE GOSSIP SINKS SHIPS
Passed By
R.C.A.F.
CENSOR



RCAF



*Mr. J. W. Mallach
Dorset Essex
London
Ontario
Canada*



Cover No. 5

*181569.
W. Amos and W.P.
Rest. Subway Blvd.
C.A.P.O. 900 5
owned.*



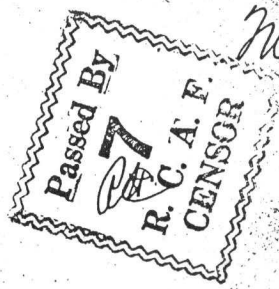
C.A.P.O. No. 5

BY AIR MAIL—PAR AVION

*Confederation Life Association
Toronto Ont.*



AIRMAIL



*Mrs Arthur Watters,
c/o Fred Babb,
Lagus. Maine.
U.S.A.*

Cover No. 5

R108143 Cpl Gray F.M.
R.C.A.F. Labrador



Mr. Legh Powell ACTIVE SERVICE
c/o Montreal Daily Star
St. James St.
Montreal,
P. Q.

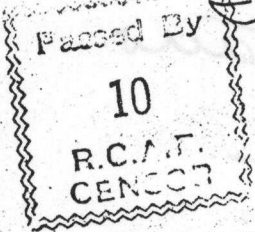


From
R169314 LAC Marsh S.D.
C.A.P.O. #10
R.C.A.F.



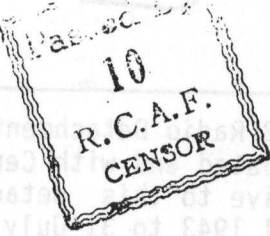
Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Roy

R165379
LAC. ROBSON W.F.,
R.C.A.F. STATION,
C.A.P.O. #10,
GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR.



Cover No. 7

The Doubleday One Dollar Book Club,
105 Bond Street,
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada.



L.A.C. Inbel, G. E. (R-174009)
No. 32 Radio Unit, R.C.A.F.,
Port aux Basques,
Newfoundland.

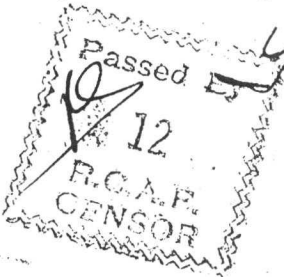


The Literary Guild in Canada,
105 Bond St.,
Toronto, 2,
Canada.

22016 Col Anderson W.A.
No 32 Detach RCAF
Port aux Basques
NFLD



Tombey Bay Col Ocean Book Club.
105 Bond Street
Toronto, Ontario
Canada



Covers from No. 32 Radio Detachment at Port aux Basques Newfoundland. Undated and with Censor mark No. 12 which was likely exclusive to this detachment. Radio unit was here from 21 April 1943 to 31 July 1945