

NEWSLETTER # 79
FEBRUARY 1988

c/o
KENNETH V. ELLISON
R.R. #1, OYAMA
B.C. V0H 1W8

DUES

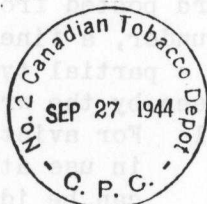
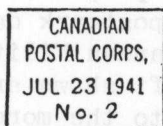
We hope that you are not overwhelmed with another newsletter so soon. There is material at hand that should be sent out. Bill Bailey says he will have a whole issue, hopefully out by mid-March. Ritch Toop advises he will have a N/L for the end of April. Things are looking good! We may need help licking stamps!

Thank you for sending in the dues - and encouraging notes too. One more chance will be given for those not yet paid up - above red mark will be current to date of this mailing. Please disregard this appeal if your cheque is in the mail.

In this issue we have two short articles on HMCS CRUSADER. There is some overlapping here, but did not feel it 'serious' enough to bother the reader. Here also in Part II of Colin's Camp Borden, and this is followed by POST PAIDS as used by the RCN/RCNVR in the Caribbean.

Member Jack Davis, Box 1839, Peterborough, Ont., K9J 7X6 advises that he has a surplus of FORCES/AIR LETTER with code 5 A.M.S. (12/63) gray with red printing, all mint. Any member wishing one gratis, please send Jack a stamped, addressed envelope wide enough to take the 100 mm. wide air letter. Thanks to Jack for the offer!

ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM THE NEW
BOOK



BOOK REVIEW CANADIAN MILITARY POST OFFICES TO 1986

Bailey and Toop have been busy again! Another long awaited handbook for the Canadian Military collector has finally arrived. Bill Bailey and Ritch Toop, both members of this Study Group, have combined their talents and we have a new and up to date version of Bailey's 1978 blue book.

This 100 page publication put out by UNITRADE of Toronto is more properly, as the sub title says, a handbook and a checklist. It is along the lines of Bailey's 1978 CANADIAN MILITARY POSTMARKS but much easier to use and more comprehensive.

The contents are divided into 20 chapters and each deals with a phase of our military postal history. A few examples are noted. Canada Militia deals with that type of marking during its period of use. We are happy to note dates of opening and closing for these and all markings! Another chapter noted is that of the CAPO's/CFPO's from the 1950 era. This should be appreciated by many as it seems, at least to this editor, that there is increasing interest in Post WW II markings. In an appendix there is a complete checklist which will be useful to the Canadian military collector.

The great parts about this new book - the clarity of its information, the layout, the opening and closing dates - make it well worth having. Don't expect comprehensive narrative here as CANADIAN MILITARY POST OFFICES TO 1986 is designed as a checklist-handbook.

There was no listing of price with the book, but we have been able to contact our local dealer, Bob Lee, Box 937, Vernon, B.C. V1T 6M8, who gives his price as Can.\$15.42 or US\$12.74 and this is postpaid. Other dealers likely have it too.

Reference Newsletter #75, page 8. Please make corrections as follows:
 Top left...for 10 read 12...second paragraph...for See 10 read See 12.

In Part 1 of this article we listed the postmarks which were used at Camp Borden on the mail which soldiers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were sending out of the camp. This took us through to the end of the First World War. A most important event took place, however, in 1917 and Part 2 begins with that story.

CAMP BORDEN AND ITS MILITARY POSTMARKS 1916 - 1940

Part 2

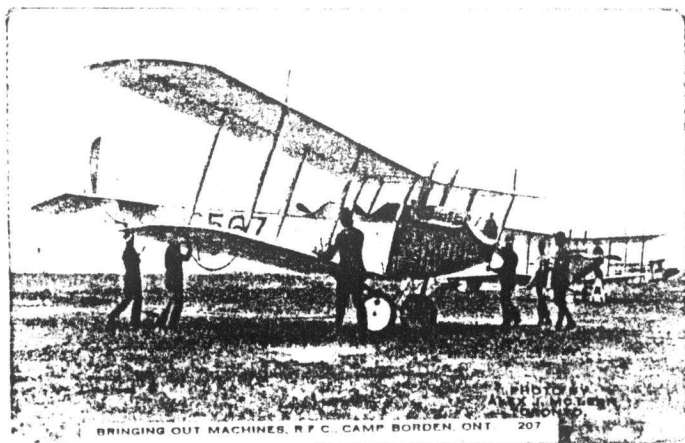
by Colin Campbell

Events in France in 1916 made it clear that the Royal Flying Corps was desperately in need of more squadrons for active duty. These would be required early in 1917. It was decided that Canada could provide the materials, space and the manpower, so in January 1917 Lt. Col. C.G. Hoare arrived in Canada to get this training started. One thousand acres of land adjoining the C.E.F. camp at Borden was allocated for an aerodrome and construction of buildings began immediately. Flying training began in late March, early April as cadets began to arrive from England and recruiting started in Canada. The Royal Flying Corps formally took over the camp on May 2, 1917.

The military mail collector's interest in the foregoing is to find a cover or post card posted from the RFC camp during its two year life. Such an item is shown hereunder, a fine view of activity in preparation for the day's flying. The card bears a partial type 4 Canada Militia postmark dated AU 18 17. An RFC cover has been seen by the writer with a type 3 Canada Militia cancel dated OC 30 18.

- NOTE 1: For aviation buffs the aircraft shown are JN-4As of which 48 were in use at Borden in addition to the more numerous JN-4s. The 4As can be identified by their disc wheels and vertically aimed exhaust stacks. They were built in Buffalo, N.Y.
- 2: The Royal Naval Air Service and the R.F.C. joined on April 1, 1918 to become the Royal Air Force.
- 3: A number of excellent reference books are obtainable which will provide the entire story of the RFCs stay in Canada. One is... CANADIAN AIRMEN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR by S.F. Wise (1980).

The air training scheme was pretty well dismantled by the end of 1918 and, according to one reference, the FPO at Borden closed January 6, 1919.

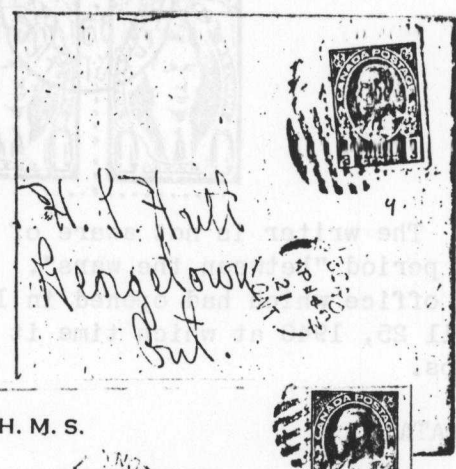
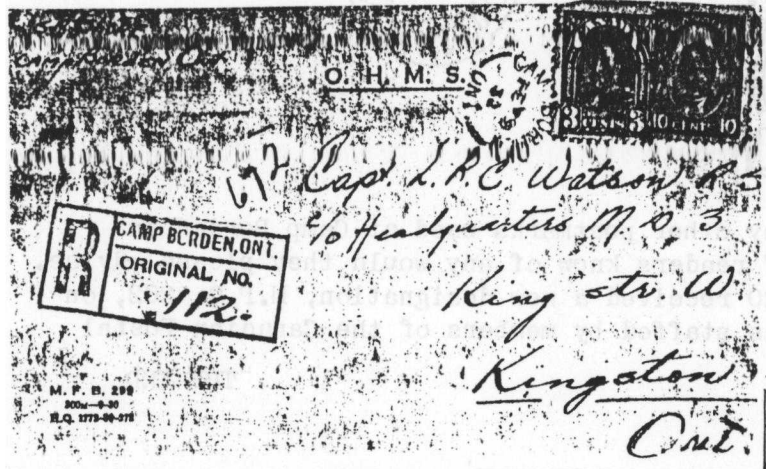


BRINGING OUT MACHINES, R.F.C. CAMP BORDEN ONT 207

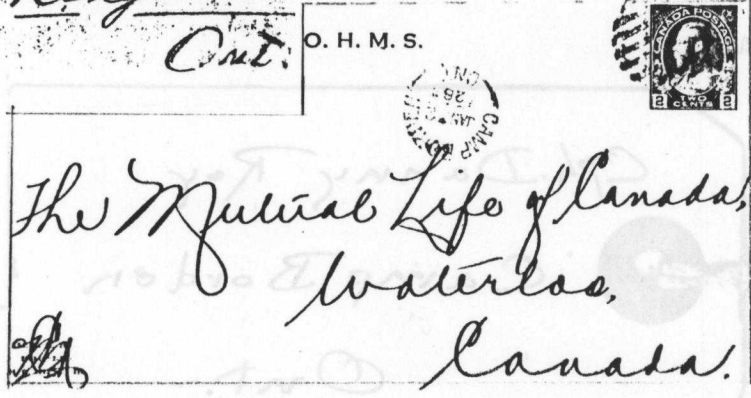


In July 1920 the air training facilities at Camp Borden were taken over by the Canadian Air Force and a post office was opened December 21, 1920. It would appear from the post office record card that Capt. F.J. Mawdesley assumed responsibility for the office September 22, 1922. The Commanding Officer of the camp, for part of the year was Air Marshall G.O. Johnson, C.E., M.C., C.D.

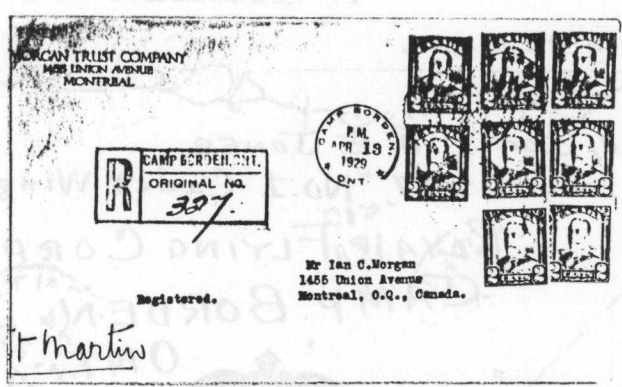
Possibly the first postal cancelling hammer to appear after the war was the broken circle Camp Borden with proofing date November 16, 1920. The cancels illustrated are dated AP 14, 21 and JAN 2, 28. This type of cancel is quite common. Another cover dated FE 9, 32 shows the cancel and an "R" box.



Courtesy - Dave Hanes

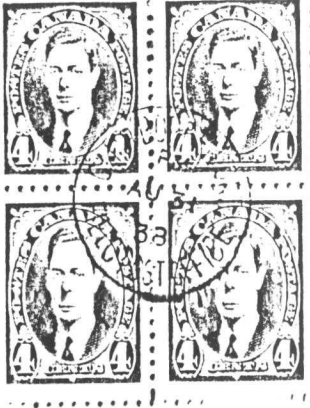


A second postal marking, likely made of rubber, is illustrated and is unique with its stars at 5 and 7 o'clock positions. A recent issue of the PHSC Journal in an article by R.F. Narbonne suggests this type of cancel was intended for use on money orders and registration receipts and that proofing is traced to 1928. Our illustration shows its use on a registered letter and four other examples are known to the writer where stamps are cancelled. Readers are alerted to this rather scarce postmark and requested to report other usage. It measures about 23mm.



Courtesy - Ritch Toop

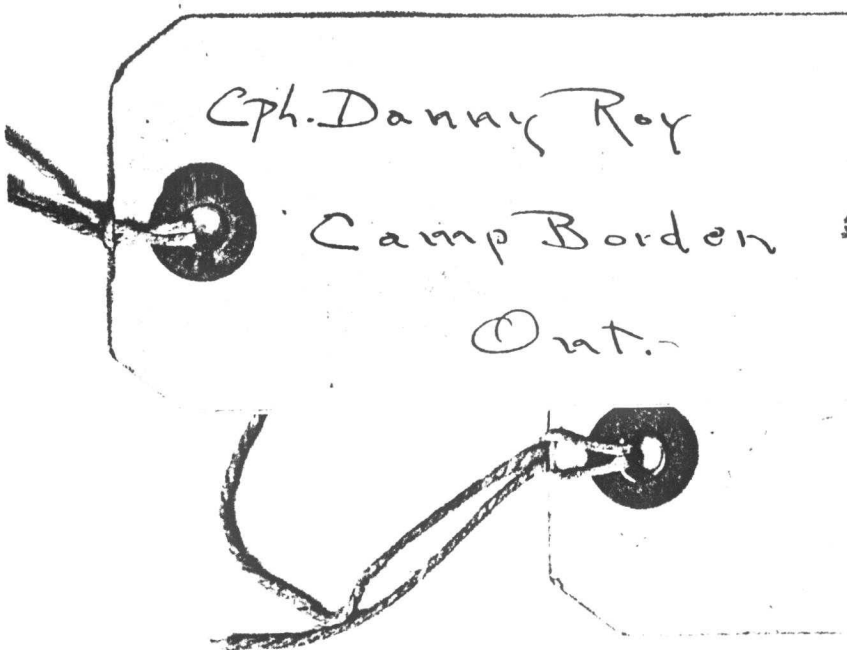
A third postmark is known and an example dated AU 31, 38 is shown. The proofing date is unknown at this time. Note absence of dots in sketch at 3 and 9 o'clock positions unlike a very similar cancel proofed in 1940.



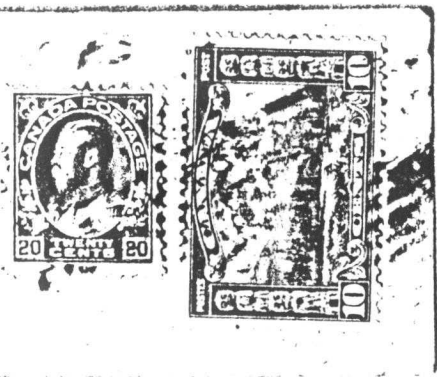
The writer is not aware of any other postmarks used at Camp Borden in the period "between the wars". If readers know of any would they please advise. The office which had opened in 1920 received a new designation, M.P.O. 202, on April 25, 1940 at which time it was staffed by members of the Canadian Postal Corps.

THE END

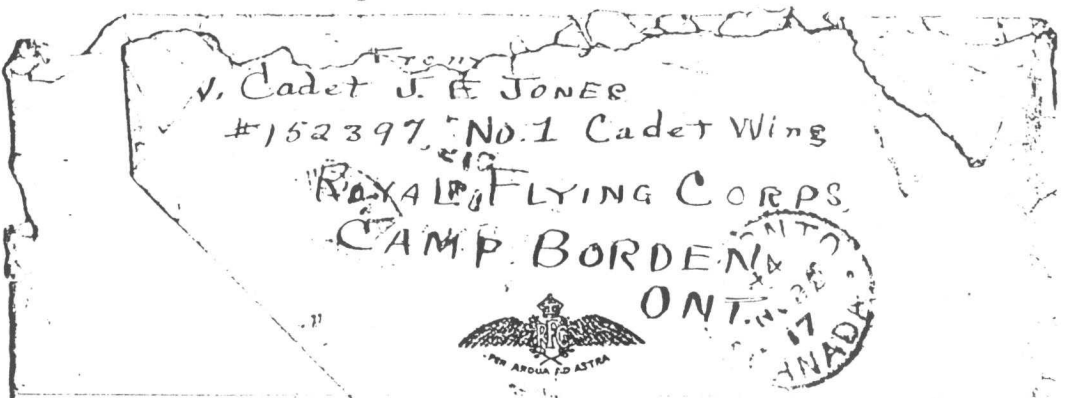
ERRATA:



To the camp..possibly 1929-30..at that time a 5 pound parcel could be mailed over 20 miles in the same province for 30¢...parcel tag shown.

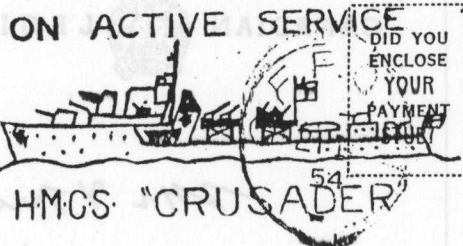


From the camp...



A typical return address from a cadet in training.

Courtesy - John Frith



The Canada Life Assurance Company

330 University Avenue

TORONTO 1, Ont.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE H.M.C.S. CRUSADER

The cover shown here is very interesting, probably quite rare, and could use a little explanation. As can be noted (at least on the original) the handstamp "ON ACTIVE SERVICE / ship / H.M.C.S. CRUSADER" was applied in blue ink. As was then the rule in a war zone, no postage was needed as the handstamp ON ACTIVE SERVICE denoted a serviceman's letter.

Next, note the circular rubber stamp "ROYAL CANADIAN / date / NAVY MAIL" at the left of the envelope. This is dated APR. 18 1954 and would have been the marking assigned to the Crusader. For further information on these markings, please refer back in these Newsletters to Number 15 item 60 and Number 16 item 67. Further information is noted in Number 28 item 178 for the series used after unification of the Services. It is noted here that the marking on this cover has no identifying number as had those mentioned in the above Newsletters. This is an early version and was to be applied to all navy ship mail when away from home port. About 1954-1955 a number began to appear in the handstamp and these early types were withdrawn from use. No record is noted of the Crusader ever having a numbered type marking.

At the upper right is to be seen the C.F.P.O. 27 (at Seoul) circular dater stamp (dated 21 IV / 54) which was used in the Korean War. At this date H.M.C.S. Crusader was on her second tour of duty off Korea. The first tour was between June 1952 and June 1953 during the war, while the second tour followed the armistice, from November 1953 to August 1954.

A brief note about H.M.C.S. Crusader follows. She was a 'C' Class destroyer built for the Royal Navy and completed just after the end of World War II. This ship, along with sister ship Crescent, was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy and arrived at Esquimalt in January 1946 where she was put into reserve. She was later re-activated and carried out two tours of duty in the Korean theatre from 1953 to 1954. After this the ship returned to a training role until being paid off at Halifax on January 15, 1960, and sold for scrap in 1963.

Page by Jack Davis and Editor. Cover courtesy Jack Davis.



ON ACTIVE SERVICE



H.M.C.S. CRUSADER

*Mr & Mrs D B Slater
816 A 4th Street
Medicine Hat Alberta*

APR

THE R.C.N. IN KOREA 1950 - 55

By Wilf Whitehouse.

Jack Davis submits a very interesting and scarce cover used from H.M.C.S. Crusader in April 1954 during her second tour of duty in Korean waters.

In order to qualify for the FREE MAIL privilege provided to those serving in a war zone, ship's personnel were instructed to write ON ACTIVE SERVICE on the face of their envelopes and this practice continued throughout the war. In late 1952, or early 1953, all RCN ships were issued with a round rubber cachet ROYAL CANADIAN/current date/NAVY MAIL which was to be applied to mail leaving the ship when absent from her home port. However, as all ships were not serving in Korea, this marking alone was not sufficient for postal authorities in recognizing legitimate FREE MAIL. After the Korean war, a number began appearing in this cachet and the early type without a number was withdrawn from use. (N.L. #15 item 60, and #16 item 67).

Jack Davis' cover is shown overleaf and described there. Another example from Crusader, also dated 1954, comes from Bill Robinson. The wording is the same in this cachet as in Jack's but the size is much larger and the color of the mark is orange. There is a C.F.P.O. 31 (Tokyo) cancellation of 8 May 1954 on this cover.

The appearance of two different types (and obviously different manufacturers) of these ON ACTIVE SERVICE handstamps, from the same ship, in the same time period and in different colored ink, leads to the conclusion that these stamps were in the hands of an individual, or perhaps a mess, rather than being the property of the ship. Unfortunately there is not enough mail from Crusader during her Korean service to be definite about this.

Other interesting examples exist. From IROQUOIS during her second tour a boxed ON ACTIVE/SERVICE from one individuals correspondence is known. Strangest of all perhaps is a cover belonging to Bill Robinson which originated in SIOUX enroute to Korea for her first tour in 1950. Here the ship was using a WW II censor marking FROM H.M.C. SHIP/EXAMINED BY 824 which appears to be from a block of these censor markings never issued to ships during WW II by H.M.C. Dockyard, Esquimalt.



POST OFFICE
MARITIME MAIL
POSTAGE PAID

2.

NOTES ON SOME POST PAID MARKINGS OF WORLD WAR II
By W.D.W. and Editor.

This subject may have been dealt with in part in some previous Newsletters but herewith we are pulling together five examples which have come to hand. You will recall that these markings from Newfoundland (the Postage Paid triangles) were well dealt with previously.

All the covers pictured here were sent by RCNVR/RCN personnel. Should you be able to add to the information on these items a note would be appreciated! Have we missed anything?

- 1) POST PAID, double oval marking. This was used at Bermuda and likely at Hamilton (Bermuda). Bermuda was home base for a group of Motor Launches in 1944. PROVIDER, a mother ship, also went there early in 1944.
- 2) POST OFFICE/MARITIME MAIL/POSTAGE PAID, straight line marking. This is again from Bermuda and possibly used at St. Georges (confirmation needed). It is possible that Hamilton had two different Postage Paid handstamps, but unlikely.
- 3) POSTAGE PAID, straight line. This was used from Jamaica and was likely from the naval base H.M.S. Morgan in Kingston. Why an RCNVR officer was stationed there is a mystery, but they were often found in strange places!
- 4) POSTAGE PAID, double boxed. This marking was used on a cover from a RCNVR Lieut. on board H.M.S. Claudia, a corvette. The censor marking gives a date of 14/10/41. F.M.O. 259 as noted on the return address was probably at the shore establishment H.M.S. Goshawk at Piarco, Trinidad.
- 5) MARITIME MAIL/POSTAGE PAID, straight line marking. This marking is identified as Trinidad by the IE prefix on the censor label. Date is presumed to be 1944. No other info is available.

SEE ALSO Forces Postal History Society # 164 of Nov-1980.

Article by Allan Brown
POSTAGE PAID MARKS ON NAVAL AIRMAIL 1939-45.

It is surprising that one sees so few of these POSTAGE PAID markings from Bermuda and the West Indies considering that so many RCN personnel were in that area during the war. In the early years it was the destroyer patrols, then the escort groups of corvettes in the 1942's on the oil tanker runs that put many Canadians there. There was also the large number of West Coast built ships which came around through the Panama Canal and passed through the West Indies. In spite of this activity where has all the mail gone from these servicemen?

6

BY AIR MAIL

POSTAGE PAID

Mr. & Mrs. P. R. Grand,
26 Point Glen Cres.,
Toronto, Ont.

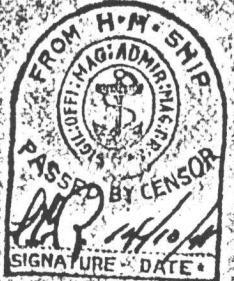
3.



Via Air Mail

26

POSTAGE PAID



R. R. McIntosh, Esq.,
% General Goods Limited,
372 Bay Street,

prio,

MARITIME MAIL
POSTAGE PAID

26 Oct

IE / 8040

Miss Freda Countrey
22 South St
Glace Bay
Ns. Canada

VIA AIR

5.

Military Mail Marks Milestone

by Bill Fairbairn

"The mail's in!"

The effect of those three words on fighting troops simply can't be overstated. "I don't think any historian would object to saying that the mail was worth an extra battalion," says Bill McAndrew, a historian with National Defence who has studied troop morale.

During the 1870 Red River Rebellion canoes took letters up river to isolated posts, troops fighting Louis Riel in 1885 received mail from riders, and during the Boer War it went by steamship to the Cape, then by covered wagon. On May 3, 1911, a general order authorized the formation of the Canadian Postal Corps within the militia.

This month our military posties celebrate their 75th anniversary with a Canada Post stamp and cover, as well as their own cover available through Canadian Forces Postal Unit, Trenton.

In its first year the corps had a base post office in Toronto commanded by Maj. George Ross, with detachments in London, Ont., Kingston, Ont., Montreal, Quebec City, Halifax, Winnipeg and Calgary. The detachments operated field offices at militia summer camps in Goderich, Ont., Farnham, Que., Sussex, N.B. and Sewell, Man. The organization paid off when WW I broke out.

"I don't think any of my mail went astray," says 95-year-old John Drew, a sergeant major with the Victoria Rifles. "The letters and parcels were more important than the rations. We received socks and mitts and home-made cookies and cakes that we shared with fellows who had none. We never took the mail for granted. You can imagine what it was like to get a parcel or letter in the rain and filth of the Somme."

In WW II the corps was more mobile. Capt. Charles Goulet, Hull, Que., landed at Normandy on D+2 to help organize a postal service for Canadian troops. He recalls trying to locate a 3rd Div. unit with a faulty map reference: "I stopped my jeep at a crossroads to ask a military policeman for directions. He said I was on the right track but that if I went any farther I had better learn German."

Still, delays occurred, and wartime Postmaster General William Mulock explained why: "Canadian forces proceeding to the Mediterranean had mail delivered up to the point the last convoy boat left port in Britain, and after departure all mail to the Mediterranean was frozen for security reasons until the official announcement of the invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943."

He added that transit time from Montreal to Britain was 30 days for parcels, 20 for surface letters and six for airmail envelopes.

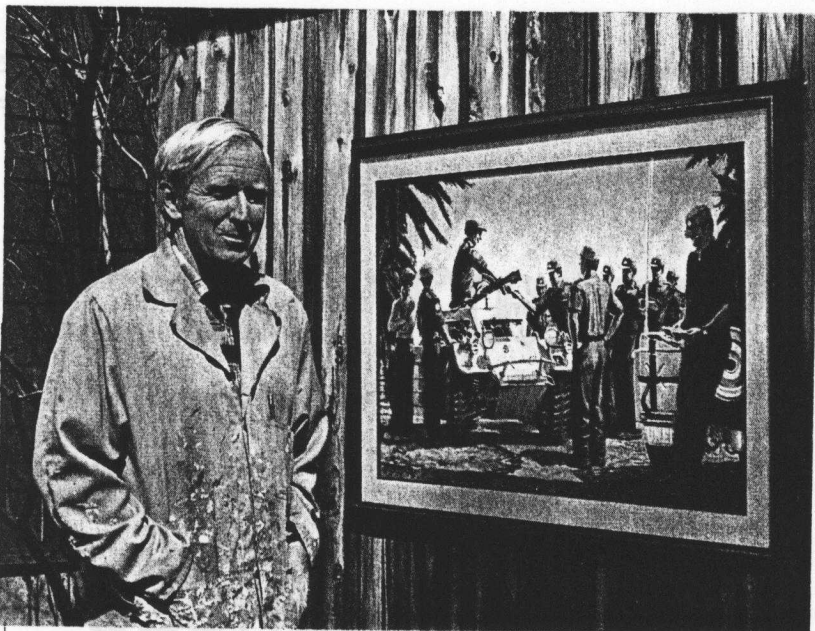
Halfway through the war the corps expanded to serve the air force and navy, and destinations like Ceylon and Kiska.

Another change was the introduction in 1943 of RCAF planes to ensure the safe delivery of letters to Europe. Until then the mail was susceptible to German attacks on convoys containing mail-ships.

Few know that Allied mail-ship crews were among the heroes of the Battle of the Atlantic. Wartime security kept sinkings secret to avoid troop demoralization. The names of ships that went down were docketed and forgotten. But Jim Kraemer, a former curator of the National Postal Museum in Ottawa, has dug into files in Canada, Britain and Germany to uncover the truth.

Most interesting is one of the first mail-ship casualties—the SS Beaverford, a 10,000-ton cargo steamer built in 1928 for Canadian Pacific. On Nov. 5, 1940, a 38-ship convoy including the Beaverford was engaged in the Denmark Strait by the German pocket battleship Admiral Scheer. After sinking the armed merchant cruiser HMS Jervis Bay in a 22-minute fight, the Scheer breached the convoy. That much is well known. What isn't is that the Beaverford fought the Scheer for five hours, allowing the remaining 36 ships to scatter. She was finally hit mid-ships and sunk, taking 2,600 bags of mail to the bottom. The Scheer sank another four ships before cruising away. The Jervis Bay was immortalized by a Legion branch in Saint John, N.B., the Beaverford forgotten.

Other casualties uncovered by Mr. Kraemer include the mail-ships: Beaverbrae, Beaverdale, Ixion, Fort Richpouse, Vancouver Island, Lady Hawkins, Maurienne, Sama Nicoya, Lady Drake, Domerail, Mosfruit, Donald Stewart, Caribou, Winnipeg, Bic Island, Bivran, Ombilin, Empire Sailor, Emile Francqui, Newton Ash, Aegus, M-790, T-1 and T-2.



Don Connolly, Aylmer, Que., depicted Canadians of the UN force in Gaza receiving mail in his painting destined for the Canadian War Museum.

PHOTO: BILL FAIRBAIRN/STAMP: CP



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A page showing the cover used to commemorate the CFPS's 75th will follow in a later N/L.

"I could find no records on T-2," says Mr. Kraemer. "They sound almost like torpedo-boats. All I know is that they carried mail."

Despite German successes though, Mulock reckoned that only about three per cent of the mail was lost. During the fiscal year 1944-45, the total delivered was: letters, 65,475,000; parcels, 34,709,000; tobacco parcels, 3,339,000; newspapers, 1,487,000.

Much of that tobacco came from the Legion's Buckshee Fund. Organized by a number of WW I veterans and given the blessing of Dominion President Alex Walker, the fund shipped more than 62 million cigarettes to WW II troops.

Legion deliveries of smokes avoided the problem caused by some Canadians who included matches in their overseas packages. In June, 1943, an amendment to the Post Office Act made mailing inflammables punishable by up to \$100 or three months imprisonment.

Liquid contraband was often passed off to postal officials as bubble bath or mailed inside loaves of bread. Another ruse was to place a sponge inside the neck of a bottle to inhibit telltale gurgling. Edwin Spencer, Saint John, recalls rats getting into mail bags in Italy. They devoured half a loaf of bread in one bag, leaving a quart of Canadian rye exposed.

"I called in the man whose parcel it was and he really looked troubled. I quickly put his mind to rest and told him it was no problem, I just wanted to make sure he got it. He thanked me and left in such a hurry that he forgot to offer me a drink."

By the end of WW II the corps numbered 5,080 all ranks in more than 160 units—compared to 346 at 37 units in 1918. Nineteen were killed.

Disbanded in 1946 and reactivated Nov. 1, 1951, the service was renamed the Royal Canadian Postal Corps in 1961 and throughout that decade it served our forces in various outposts.

Col. Robert Auchterlonie, director of what has been the Canadian Forces Postal Service since 1976, remembers what it meant to receive mail while with the United Nations force that helped put down a rebellion in Katanga, a province of the Congo (Zaire) in 1962: "It was the only contact with family and familiar surroundings, and for the soldiers it was bloody important."

From the Equator he was posted to icy Fort Churchill, Man., where contact was just as important.

"Yes, Canada's postal service is ready to go anywhere," he says.

This year military posties organized offices in Norway for NATO exercises and in the Egyptian Sinai, where 133 members of 408 Tactical Helicopter Sqdn. are part of the Multinational Force and Observers.

The 200 clerks are spread thin in a dozen military post offices in Canada and others in West Germany, Holland, Belgium, Britain, Cyprus and Syria.

Deputy Director Maj. Gordon McDermid says: "Mail has this tremendous sustaining effect. Yet most people don't know us. Many take us for granted. That may be their greatest form of flattery."

During 1985, 165,000 bags of mail—1.6 million kg—were forwarded by the system, including 25,000 bags of National Defence mail.

Capt. Leo MacNeil, head of operations and finance, sees the future in electronic terms: "Today, through Canada Post, we have Intelpost and Envoy Post, with photo transmission and computers sending out whole

messages. Even Telex is going the way of the dinosaur as the age of electronic mail takes hold."

Yet CWO Murray Salter, a 34-year veteran, says: "Strangely we have come full circle. There isn't sufficient room on service aircraft for all the mail today, so some is reverting to mail-ship."

From The Vernon (B.C.) News, 14 January 1915.



Military Horses WANTED

RIDING HORSES

AGE, 5 to 9 YEARS HEIGHT, 15 to 15-3 HANDS
WEIGHT, 1000 to 1150 POUNDS

ARTILLERY HORSES

AGE, 5 to 9 YEARS HEIGHT, 15 to 15-3 HANDS
WEIGHT, 1100 to 1300 POUNDS

COLOURS

Bays, Browns, Blacks, Chestnuts, Blue Roans, Red Roans.
NO LIGHT GREYS OR WHITES

REQUIREMENTS

All horses must be in good condition, sound, of good conformation, free from blemishes or vice, and broken to harness or saddle.

LT. COL. A. D. McRAE,
Chief Remount Commissioner

The above is a copy of Posters as exhibited by the Remount Commission and will be circulated when received. In the mean time those persons having horses for sale are requested to communicate at once with the undersigned. It is expected that the purchasing Commission will be at Vernon, between the 15th and 31st.

J. DILLON, Secretary,
Vernon Board of Trade.