

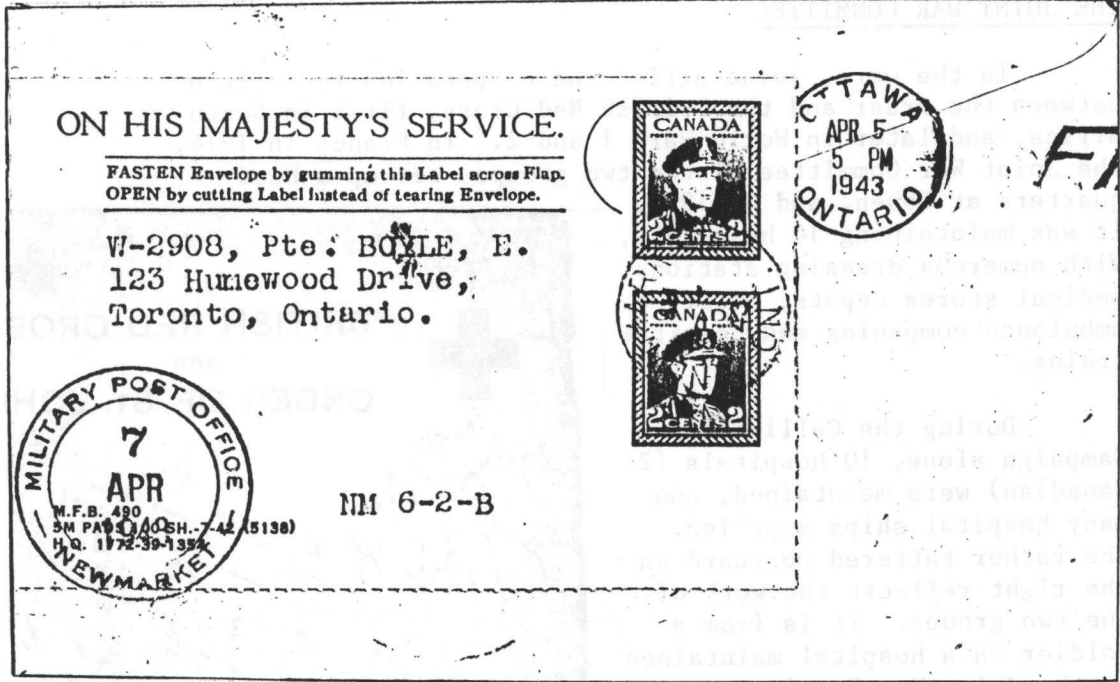
THIS MONTH'S EDITOR IS BILL BAILEY.

NEWSLETTER #80
MARCH 1988

Greetings all! I promised Ken Ellison that I would come up with a newsletter in the Spring, so here it is. My main topic is one of my favourite subjects, The Order of St. John, and I have been able to link some of it to Canada and the two World Wars. But first, some other news:

MILITARY POST OFFICE - NEWMARKET

Below is a photostat of a cover owned by Ted Proud that came to light when we were sorting out World War 2 postmarks for Vol. 2 of the Canadian Military Posts. It is probably an orderly room mark, but it's still interesting, and perhaps, unique?



THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN

My discussion here is only about the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, which sponsors the St. John Ambulance Association and the Brigade. I don't consider the older Sovereign Order or the Johanniterorden.

The Venerable order was revived in England in 1831. (It had been put down in 1540 by King Henry VIII after his falling-out with the Pope). It was given a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888 and, since that time, the King or Queen has been Sovereign Head of the Order. It was the Order that

sponsored the growth of the first aid movement in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The St. John Ambulance Association was founded in 1877 to teach first aid, and the St. John Ambulance Brigade in 1887 to provide first aid and nursing volunteer duties to the public in peace and war.



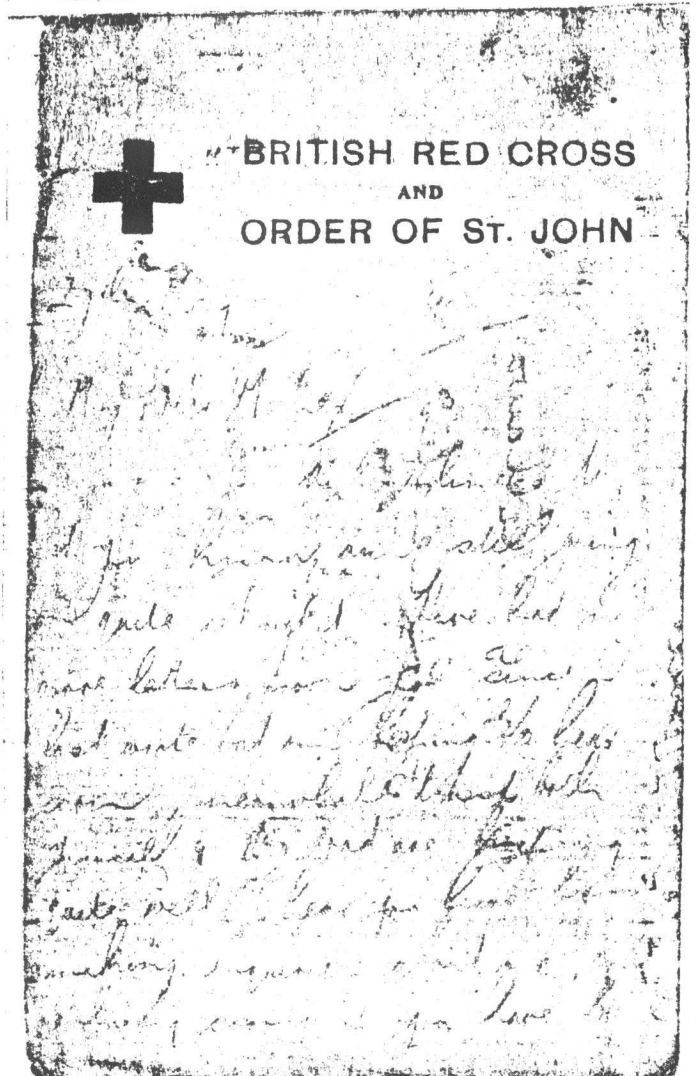
In Canada, the Association was started in 1833, and the first Ambulance Brigade Division was formed in London, Ontario, in 1909. By 1911, enough divisions were formed to establish a Canadian District of the Brigade Overseas. It was from these divisions that Canada obtained many of its ambulance drivers and nurses for duty during World War I

In England, Its Brigade units were first tested in the Boer War of 1889 - 1902. By the time the First World War started, it was ready to provide well-trained personnel to the medical services of the Navy and Army.

THE JOINT WAR COMMITTEE

In the wars, joint action and cooperation took place between the Order and the British Red Cross, first in South Africa, and later in World Wars 1 and 2. In France in 1914, The Joint War Committee of the two groups set up a Headquarters at Rouen, and by 1915, it was maintaining 14 hospitals, with numerous dressing stations, medical stores depots, motor ambulance companies and hospital trains.

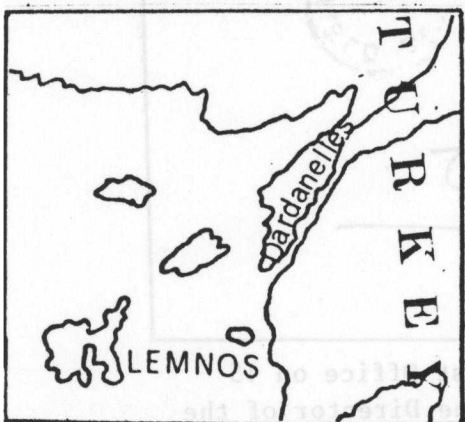
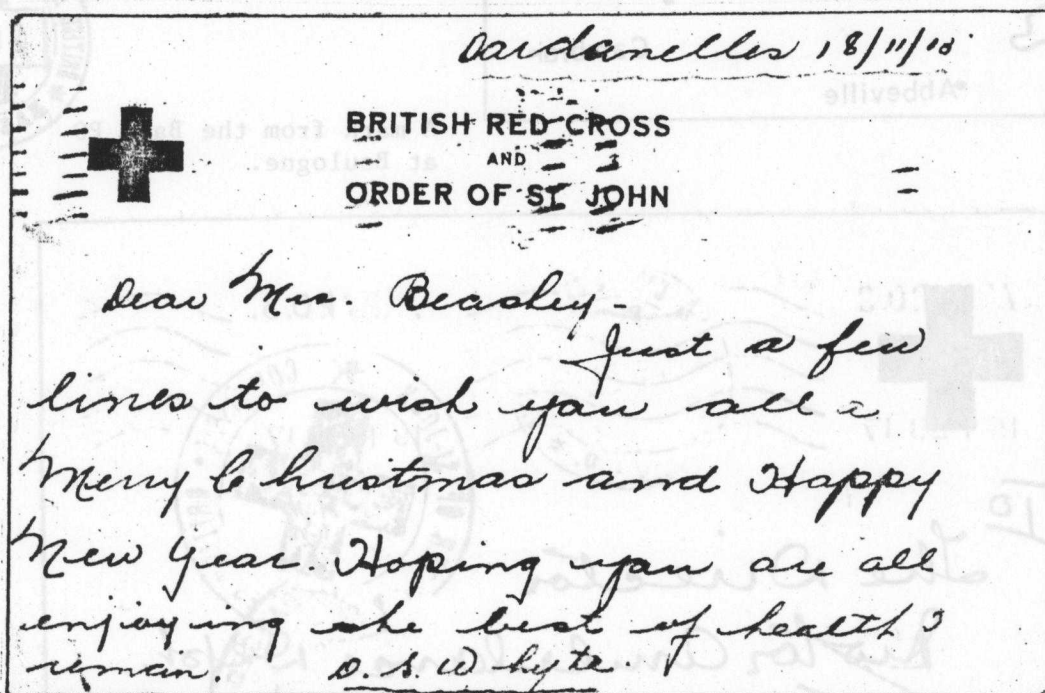
During the Gallipolli Campaign alone, 10 hospitals (2 Canadian) were maintained, and many hospital ships supplied. The rather tattered postcard on the right reflects the work of the two groups. It is from a soldier in a hospital maintained by the Joint War Committee near Salonika, Greece, during the war.



CANADIAN PARTICIPATION

In Canada, the task of organizing and training Nursing Voluntary Aid Detachments was assigned to St. John Ambulance, as most personnel for these VAD's (for service in Canada) and for the Army Medical Corps (for overseas service) would come from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Initially, nursing volunteers from the VAD's were not sent overseas, but by 1916, there was a need, and sixty St. John nursing division personnel were sent to England and France. by the end of 1917, the numbers had grown to 318 volunteers!. Besides serving in France, these St. John Ambulance nurses and ambulance attendants served in Italy, Greece and Egypt.

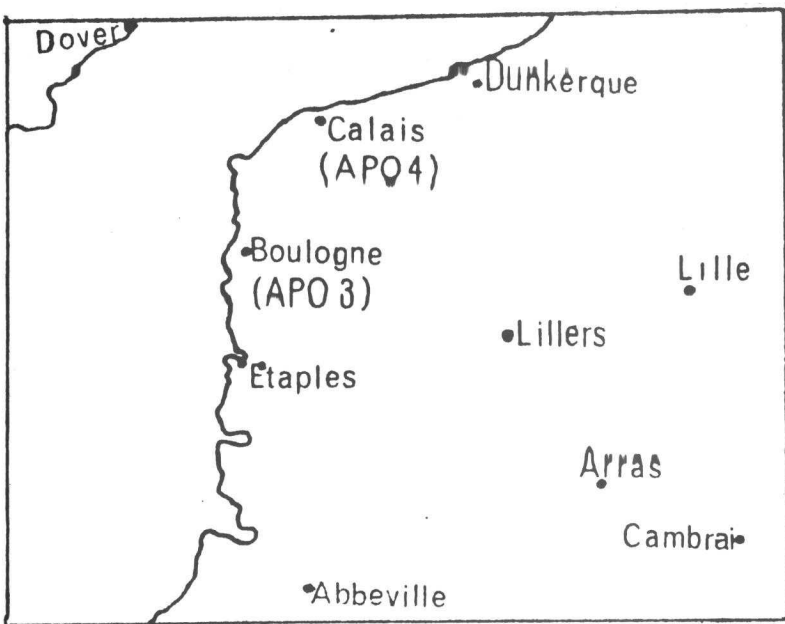
The cover below was written by a Canadian who was attached to one of the Field Hospitals that served the forces in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Dardanelles Operation 1915 - 17. Two Canadian Stationary Hospitals, Numbers 1 and 3, were set up at Lemnos from August 1915 to April 1916.



APO S26 is the despatching PO on the other side of the card. and this was the rest camp at Protiana on Lemnos.



In France, as well as the headquarters at Rouen, the Joint War Committee established a section at the Base Post Office at Boulogne, a channel port in France. As a result, some rare but interesting cachets and post marks can be found on some military covers. An example is below.



One of the HQ cachets from Rouen.



A mark from the Base PO at Boulogne.



From Boulogne (APO 3) and the Base Post Office on 15 February 1917. This cover is addressed to the Director of the Motor Ambulance Depot in London. As it has the larger cachet from the Headquarters of the Joint Commission in France, the letter was originally from Rouen and was routed through Boulogne.

It is interesting to note that the largest hospital in France, the huge Base Clearing Hospital at Etaples, was staffed from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. It started as a 520 bed hospital, but grew to 744 beds during the heavy fighting in the spring of 1918. Besides twenty medical officers, the staff included a Matron and assistant, 54 trained nursing sisters, 24 VAD members, and a Provisional Company of the RAMC, composed of 141 St. John Ambulance Brigade men. Many of the nursing sisters and VAD's were Canadian St. John members. Unfortunately, the hospital was bombed twice by the Germans, and many patients and some staff were killed or wounded.

An interesting card is depicted below from a Canadian nurse who was wounded during the fighting in France. The card is from the hospital at Etaples.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

Address Reply to H. G. Jarvis No. 47834
St. John Ambulance Brigade
 Section _____ Company _____ Battalion _____ Regt _____
C. Ward, ARMY POST OFFICE S 11.
 HOSPITAL. BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, FRANCE.
 30-10-16

Dear Belle

Just a line to tell you I have been wounded I am pleased to say I am going along alright and expect to be sent to England shortly hoping you are quite well and should like to hear from you remember me to all at home yours
 XXXXX Belle

POST CARD.

THE ADDRESS TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE

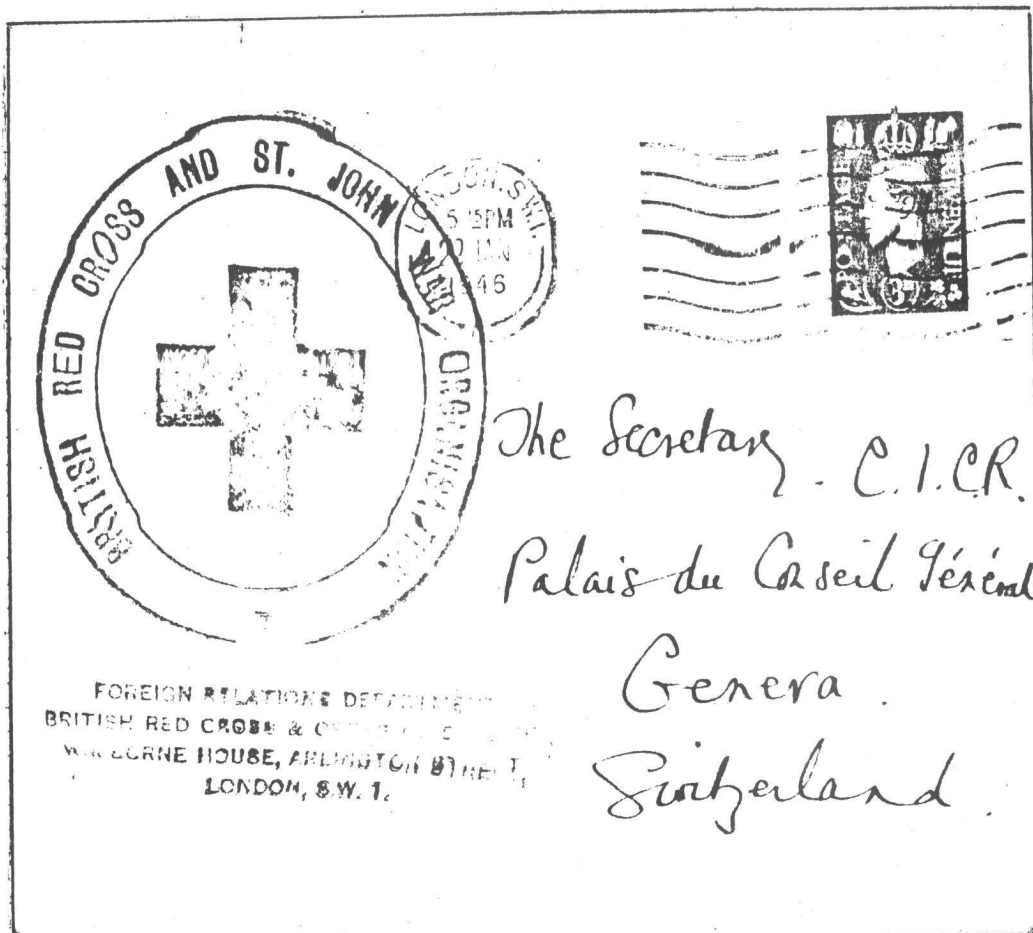
MONTREAL
 NOV 1 5-PM

Miss Belle
 Junior
 Ontario

CANADA POST
 3
 NO. 16
 CENSOR

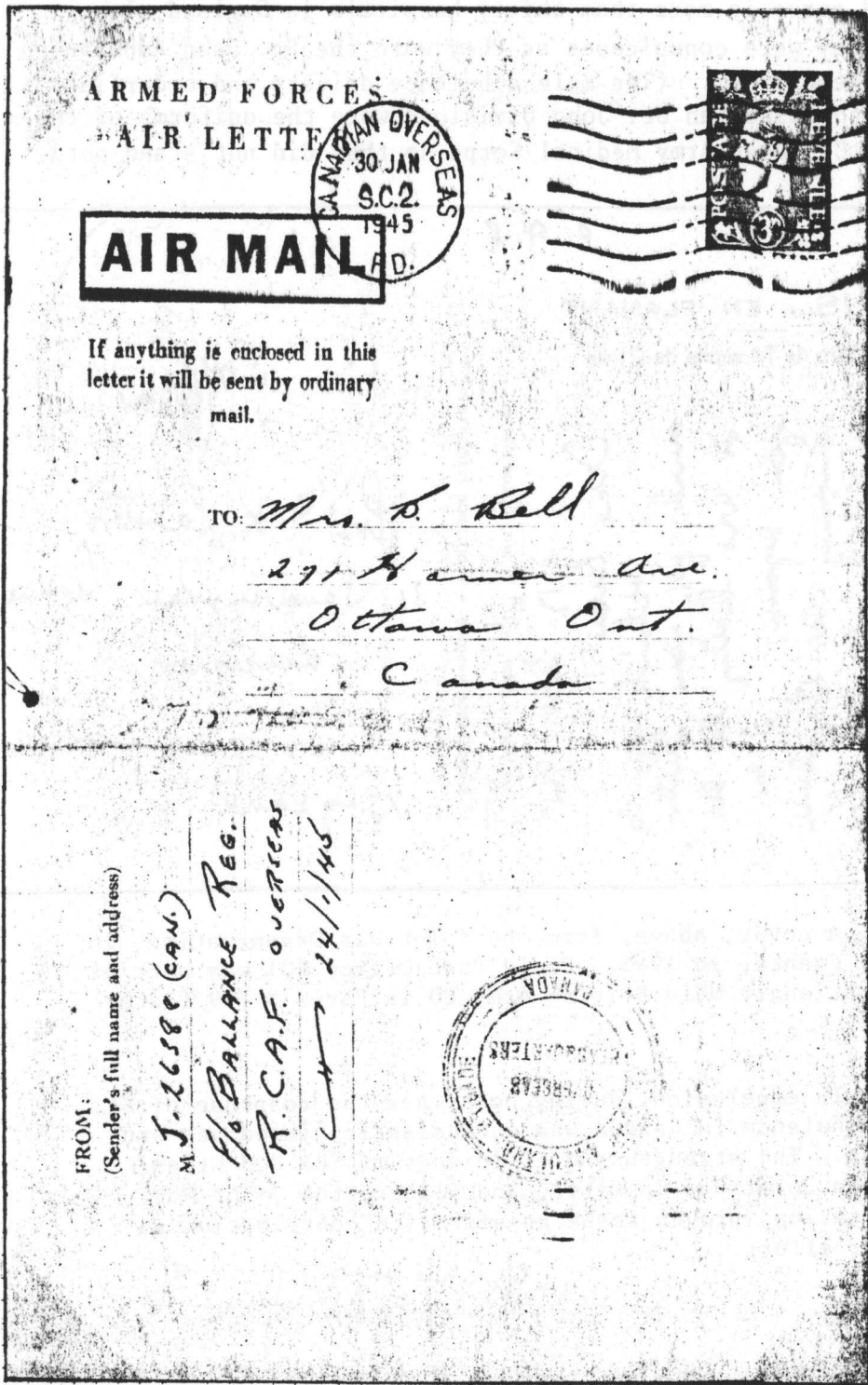
WORLD WAR 2

The Joint War Committee of the First World War was revived in the Second World War as the Joint War Organization, and it operated globally to save hundreds of lives. It was expanded to include a large department for tracing the missing and wounded, as well as its important hospital tasks. In addition to the above, a special Foreign Relations Department was set up in London to trace refugees and displaced persons. The cover below is from this department in Wimborne House, London.



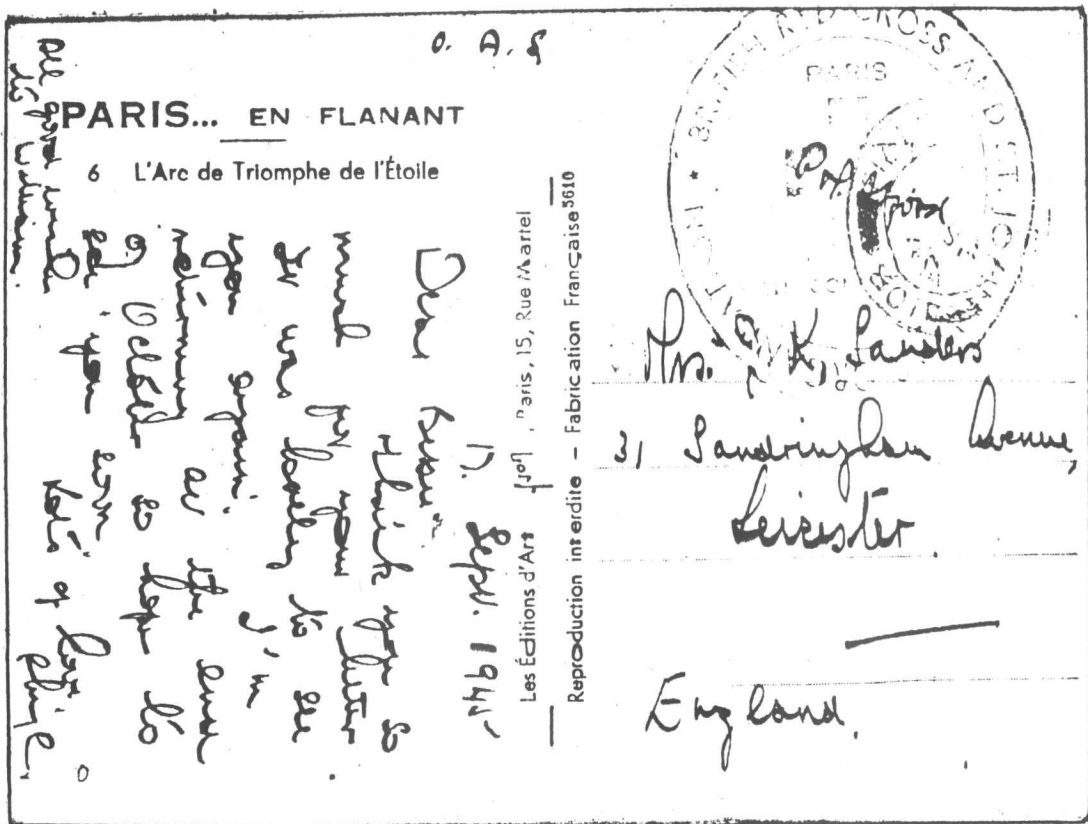
In Canada, a division of responsibilities was drawn up so that the Red Cross handled funds and materials and St. John would train in first aid and home nursing for Voluntary Aid Detachments for war service. In Canada, these VAD persons served in the military hospitals, but they were not used in Canadian military hospitals overseas. However, there was a call for assistance from the British and, from early 1944, 221 members of the nursing divisions in Canada would serve overseas in Britain, the continent of Europe, India, Burma and Malaya. They undertook duty in London's first aid posts, mobile units, cleansing stations, sick bays of air raid shelters; as ambulance drivers and in military hospitals!

In London, a Canadian St. John Headquarters was opened by the Canadian Lady Superintendent-in-Chief, Kathleen Gilmore, at 42 South Audley Street near Grosvenor Square.



The airmail above is from a wounded Canadian Airman from the British Hospital at Bangour, West Lothian. He mentions several Canadian St. John nurses at the hospital. Note the London Overseas Headquarters back stamp. . .

In England, the Canadian St. John nurses and VAD girls would serve in more than thirty hospitals in England alone, and they were conspicuous as they wore the St. John Ambulance Brigade uniform. (The male ambulance drivers and orderlies from the Canadian St. John Divisions wore the uniforms of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps so they did not stand out).



A cover, above, from the Joint War Organization, in Paris, France, in 1945. Field Post Office 801 was part of the stationary Main British Army PO in Paris S 719 (later S 720).

In conclusion, during both wars the response of St. John Ambulance in Canada was enthusiastic, immediate and lasting. The strength and efficiency of the Red Cross/ St. John Joint War Committee and, later, the Joint War Organization, proved to be an effective contribution to the war effort.

Yours ever,
Bill Baker!

H.M.C.DOCKYARD ESQUIMALT B.C. A page from Bill Robinson.

You will recall that in N/L No. 77 of December 1987 that we showed a cover from Esquimalt when it was under British Command. Herewith a companion cover used after the transfer of the base to the Royal Canadian Navy.

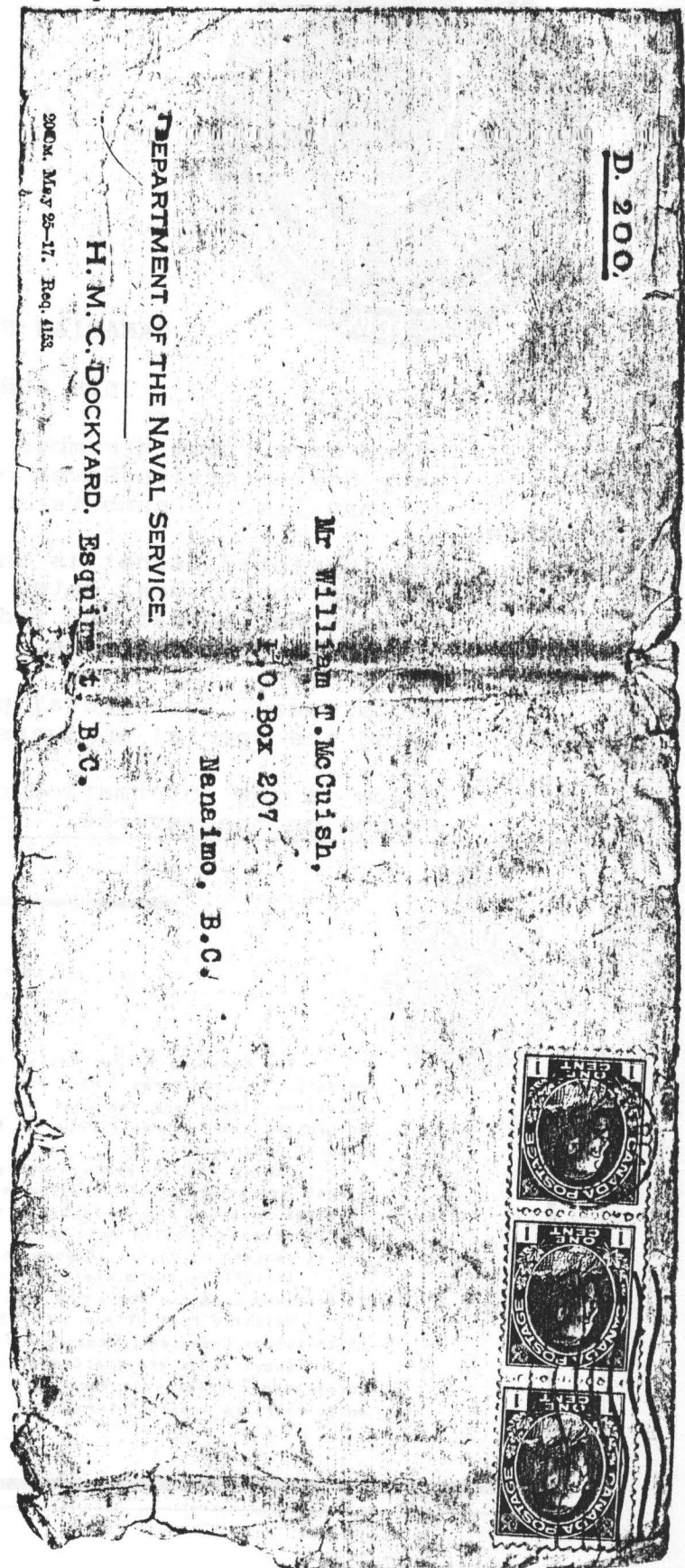
H.M.C.DOCKYARD - ESQUIMALT

On November 9, 1910, the former H.M.Dockyard properties at Esquimalt were transferred to the Canadian Government.

The conditions of the British Order-in-Council authorizing the transfer specified that the Canadian Government should maintain the facilities in useable condition, be responsible for fuel and stores, and allow the Royal Navy to use them. The transfer was officially announced in the "Canada Gazette" of January 30, 1912.

During World War I the Dockyard provided support to British, Australian, Japanese and Canadian naval ships in the eastern Pacific, and trained R.C.N.V.R. personnel.

This cover, mailed at Victoria on June 13, 1918, shows the official Department of Naval Service stationery used by both the Esquimalt and Halifax Dockyards.



75^e Anniversaire
75th Anniversary



CANADIAN FORCES POSTAL SERVICE

75TH ANNIVERSARY 09-05-86

Shown here, from a member of our group, is the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Cover of the C.F.P.S. This item was issued in very limited numbers and is believed scarce.

The imprinted cachet is in purple with gold outer and inner circles, horn, year dates and word line. Not showing here is the red Maple Leaf and red dots on each side separating the bilingual service names.

As is usual, the special postmark itself is in black just tying the special anniversary stamp to the cover.

Below is the information card that was enclosed, it being in French on the reverse.



CANADIAN FORCES POSTAL SERVICE
75TH ANNIVERSARY



The Canadian Forces Postal Service (CFPS), originally known as the Canadian Postal Corps, had its historic beginnings in the Northwest Rebellion (1885) and the Boer War (1900) although it was not officially authorized until 3 May 1911 as a formation of the Canadian Militia under General Order number 70.

During the 75 years history of the CFPS its members have served almost everywhere that Canadian military personnel have been stationed. This has included two world wars, the UN action in Korea, UN Peacekeeping and Observer duties in many parts of the world, with NATO Forces on land and at sea and of course at home in Canada.

In 1961 on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary HRH Queen Elizabeth II bestowed upon the Corps the title "Royal".

Military Post Office (MPO) 303, office number 314994, Astra Ontario which serves Canadian Forces Base Trenton was established 1 August 1975.

Shown above are the Canadian Postal Corps and Royal Canadian Postal Corps badges which were worn with distinction by its members. The Corps motto "Servire Armatis" translates to "We Serve the Forces".