



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

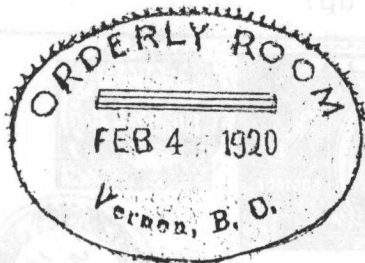
NEWSLETTER NO. 92
JANUARY 1990

NEWS OF THE DAY

There was great response to the Army Christmas Cards in the last N/L. Thanks to those who sent photocopies of some they had. John Wannerton came up with a nice 1912 card from the Canadian Cadet Corps of M.D. No. 11 who were on the way home after their tour of Australia and New Zealand. Many thanks also to Dave Hanes who even sent along a nice RFC/RAF Christmas card, probably 1918, from Camp Rathbun but of a different pattern than shown in the December TOPICS article.

There was word in November 1989 of Canadian involvement in a UN Peacekeeping Force in Central America. Probably that was cancelled due to another flare-up of fighting. A recent news report gave this editor the thought there may be some Canadian Peacekeepers there?

VERNON INTERNMENT CAMP



This Orderly Room marking was 'found' on the back of a cover belonging to Bill Topping of Vancouver. A brief description is in order as it may not produce very well. The mark is a 33 by 47 mm. scalloped-edge oval. Underneath the Orderly Room is INTERNMENT CAMP where we have boxed the area as it won't reproduce here. Anyone seen this one before? Thanks Bill!

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE - 100!

Please remember that our 100th Newsletter is planned for September 1991 and the BNAPEX at Vancouver. Ritch has contacted some members and has confirmation of their articles for the Special Edition. If there are any others not yet asked who would like to contribute to this great issue please contact Ritch, or the Editor as soon as possible.

Ideally articles will be about 5 pages including text and pictures. This is not hard and fast as several pages to more than five can be accommodated. Before charging ahead in your enthusiasm, please have your article topic approved by Ritch, or ask him for suggestions. A tentative date for all articles to be in is by Christmas 1990, THIS YEAR! Do let us hear from you.

YOUR OFFICERS.

E. RITCH TOOP, BOX 9026, OTTAWA, ONT., K1G 3T8 (Chairman)
KEN V. ELLISON, R.R. # 1, OYAMA, B.C., VOH 1W0 (Editor)

INDEX

Four copies of the Index covering Nos. 1 to 87 are on hand and will be sent out to the first four members who send in \$2.00 cash or mint Can stamps! This Index production has turned a small profit which is now in the general funds. Thanks go to Ritch Toop for doing the work, and thanks to those buying the Index!

DUES

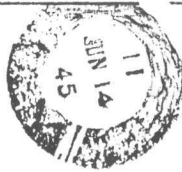
It is DUES time again! Our Annual Meeting at Hamilton endorsed this call. Since many members have pre-paid we will attach a BLUE slip for those who need to make their regular contribution.

BLACKOUTS

Due to the great interest in the Blackout Cancels of WW II, we have reprinted three letters from the Archives in Ottawa that John Tyacke sent along. They help to give some background to the subject.

The Blackout 'Study Group' in Vancouver that is working on this topic is starting to make great progress and we look forward to the 'definitive' story. If interested in this subject, please write to Ken Barlow, 1055 Ottawa Ave., West Vancouver, B.C., V7S 2J2. By the way this Group is having a meeting at the BNAPS PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGIONAL GROUP gathering at Chilliwack, B.C. on March 9 to 11 and you are welcome to show up!

SAVOY HOTEL
P.O. BOX 544
PRINCE RUPERT, B.C.



BLACKOUT CANCELS...WORLD WAR II

by John Tyacke

I have noticed that there is considerable interest at the moment in these cancels, and I thought that their origin might be of interest to the Study Group. This is well covered in two letters in the files of the Chief Postal Censor (Civilian Mail), in the Archives in Ottawa. The letters speak for themselves but I would only add that the merchant seamen's mail was almost as sensitive as that of the Forces. This was because of the secrecy surrounding all convoy operations, and the necessity to protect all details. Mail from Norwegian and Greek seamen in particular was very carefully handled, as their countries and loved ones were in enemy hands, and the possibility existed of pressure on them to supply information.

6/Z

C18,3- PAGE 672.

CONFIDENTIAL

File No. CAN. 18,350

P. T. Coolican, Esq.,
 Assistant Deputy
 Postmaster General,
 Post Office Department,
 O T T A W A.

Copy for CAN. 18,350-2 ✓

Dear Mr. Coolican:-

Please refer to your communication of the 17th ultimo, in which you requested to be advised under what circumstances and to what extent arrangements were made for the elimination of the place name in date stamping mail posted in Canada.

I have gone into this question thoroughly and will endeavour to give you a resume of the action taken in this respect and will deal with the question under three headings, viz. Navy, Army and Air Force, as this question does not involve civilian mail.

Navy - Under date of August 20, 1940, the Acting Deputy Minister, Department of National Defence Naval Service, in a communication addressed to the Deputy Postmaster General, requested that no local Post Office stamp be placed on letters mailed by personnel of H.M.C. Ships at Quebec, as such stamps disclosed the presence of H.M.C. Ships at Quebec on a definite date. The communication referred to was transferred to this office for attention, and the District Director at Quebec was instructed accordingly.

Under date of August 31, 1940, a further communication was received from the Acting Deputy Minister, Naval Service, drawing attention to the fact that the same situation existing at Quebec would involve all other Ports in Canada where H.M.C. Ships called, and a general circular was suggested by the Acting Deputy Minister. Enquiry disclosed that a similar letter had been received from the Naval Service by the Director, Administrative Services, and that a circular was being issued by the latter, consequently, no action was taken by the Postal Censorship in this connection.

On December 8, 1940, the Director, Naval Intelligence, requested this office to delete the postmarking on mail matter which might disclose shipping information, and that this applied specially to letters mailed by Merchant Seamen while their ships were in Canadian Ports. No instructions were issued in this connection, but steps were taken to delete such information.

On July 23, 1942, the Director, Naval Intelligence, requested that letters mailed by Merchant Seamen and personnel of Allied ships at Canadian Ports, be treated the same as letters mailed by Naval personnel, and that the stamps be cancelled in such a manner that the canceller would not indicate the office of origin of the letter. It was suggested to the Director of Naval Intelligence, in reply to this letter, that any representations in this respect should be addressed to the Post Office Department.

Army - ~~On March 5th last,~~ the Director of Military Operations and Intelligence advised this office that letters written by personnel of the Canadian Army attached to units in defence areas and which disclosed the location of the unit, should not be permitted to go forward to points outside of Canada until after the information identifying the location of the unit is deleted, and that such personnel should use as their address "in c/o Base Post Office, Ottawa", and that this should be given by Censorship as the amended address. The necessary action was taken to comply with these instructions, insofar as Postal Censorship is concerned, but no instructions were issued to either District Directors or Postmasters, and the Director, Military Operations and Intelligence was advised that the question of cancelling the postage stamps on letters originating in defence areas in such a manner that the date stamp or canceller would not disclose the location of a military unit in such an area, was a matter coming under the jurisdiction of the Post Office Department, and that if so desired, he could make the necessary representations to the Post Office Department.

Air - On December 28, 1941, the Royal Canadian Air Force advised that letters from members of their units located in Western and Eastern Air Commands, should not indicate the address of the unit, and that incorrect addresses should be amended to "in c/o Air Force Headquarters, Ottawa".

On January 23, 1942, we were advised by the R.C.A.F. that Air Force personnel could use their permanent home address in Canada as a return address for their mail, and that Air Force Routine Order would be issued in this respect.

On March 9th and May 12th, 1942, we were requested by the R.C.A.F. to delete the postmarks on letters addressed to points outside of Canada, if they originated in either the Eastern or Western Commands and if the postmarks identified the place where the letter was posted. In view of the foregoing, the R.C.A.F. was informed that the question of cancelling the postage stamps on mail matter and the date stamps on letters in such a manner that the Post Office canceller or date stamp would not disclose the office of origin, was a matter for consideration by the Post Office Department.

No further information has been received by this office from the Naval Service, Army Intelligence, or Royal Canadian Air Force on this subject. It has been observed, however, that the date stamps of certain military Post Offices merely indicate the number of the M.P.O. and the date of posting, without information as to the name of the place where the Post Office is located.

Under existing procedure, information contained in, or on the cover of, letters which would disclose the location of (a) ships (b) Army units in defence areas (c) R.C.A.F. units in Western or Eastern Commands, is deleted from mail matter in Censorship.

Yours truly,

F. E. Jolliffe,
Chief Postal Censor.



CANADA

Department of National Defence

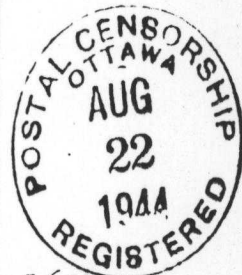
Naval Service

Ottawa, Canada.

Your File: CAN.14,400

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

August 19th, 1944.



Dear Mr. Jolliffe:

Reference is made to your letter of August 16th enclosing copy of a communication from Mr. N. D. Leeper, Vancouver, B.C., concerning date stamps on mail from the west coast area.

These blank date stamps were introduced by the Post Office Department on representations from this Department, first in the east coast area, and later when the value of this procedure became apparent, in certain west coast ports. The main reason for requesting this procedure, as you will recall, was to eliminate the practice whereby a ship could be identified with a certain port on a certain date due to the fact that the name of the port appeared on the cancellation stamp. Until late 1942 the place name was deleted by hand in censorship offices from a large number of letters from Naval personnel and merchant seamen; the number of hours spent making these deletions was considerable and in addition we had proof that a large percentage of Naval and merchant seamen letters were not receiving this treatment. I think you will agree that the introduction of blank cancellation stamps has been of great assistance to your staff and I can assure you that from a security point of view its value is unquestionable.

Mail using meter cancellations never involves a ship's name and there was, therefore, no reason for changing this type of cancellation.

No question has arisen of a change in the present practice and from the point of view of Naval security I consider it essential that blank cancellation stamps be used in all Canadian ports of any importance until the end of the war.

Yours very truly,

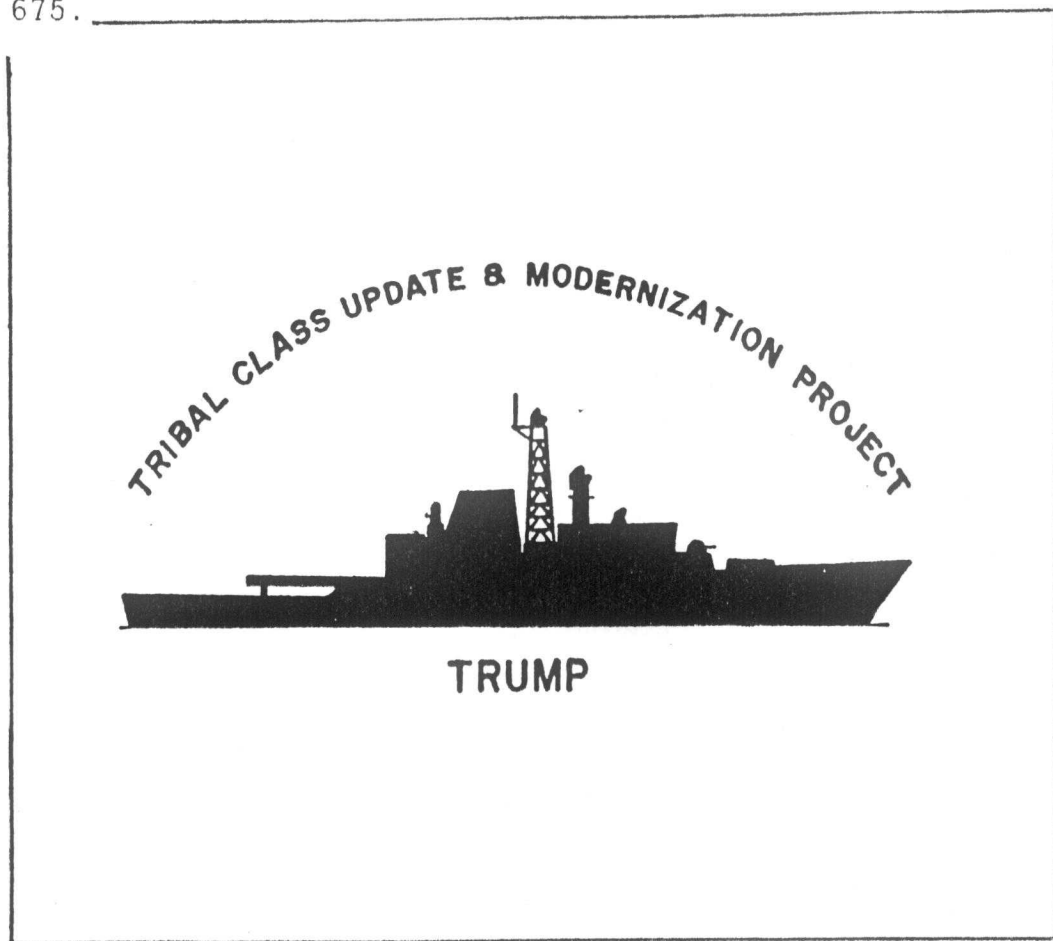
C.H. Little

(C.H. LITTLE)

A/Commander (S.B.), R.C.N.V.R.,
Director of Naval Intelligence.

F.E. Jolliffe, Esq., M.B.E.,
Chief Postal Censor,
No. 8 Government Building,
Carling Avenue

AUG 28 1944



The above 1987 or 1988 Christmas card is blue with black printing and was sent to me by Maurice Hampson of Edmonton. It is unidentified as to which ship the card originated, but is signed by a Chief Petty Officer.

Knowing that the "Tribal" class was undergoing a mid-life refit it seemed only necessary to learn which ship was in drydock at Christmas time and what the word TRUMP under the ship silhouette meant.

I took the card with me on a holiday to Vancouver Island. At H.M.C. Dockyard, Esquimalt, I found the answer to TRUMP lay in the wording in the semi-circle over the silhouette and that these refits are referred to in the service as Trumping the Tribals.

I learned that these are not ordinary ship refits, the ships are being completely rebuilt from the engines up to the radar and armaments over an 18 month period. The "Tribal" role is being changed from ASW (Antisubmarine warfare) to AAW (Anti-air warfare) and will on completion be capable of protecting both herself and other ships in the group from air attack.

H.M.C.S. "Algonquin" was the first ship into the program at Davie Shipyard in October 1987, while "Iroquois" entered the same yard in October 1988. I gather that naval personnel are not living aboard during the refit, thus the conclusion must be drawn that the card did not originate aboard a ship, but from a naval person still attached to a ship but under training on new equipment or armaments ashore, or involved with the refit in some capacity.

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE, GENÈVE

AGENCE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

PAGE 676.



Franc de port

Canadian Branch
British Red Cross
14 Cockspur Street
London S.W.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

The following comes from Dean Mario and may help your understanding of some of the happenings in World War I.

"This notification card was typical of those sent from Red Cross Headquarters, Geneva, during the First World War. And although not a true Canadian military item, it is interesting because it was addressed to the Canadian Branch of the British Red Cross in London. Members are no doubt aware that the Red Cross acted as clearing house for information, as well as the relief organization for the sick, wounded and prisoners of war.

This item deals with a hospitalized prisoner, by the name of Hill, who apparently was in the Field Hospital at Staden, Belgium (north of Passchendaele). Hill was probably from the Royal Canadian Regiment / 7th Battalion or the 7th Field Battery, First Canadian Division which were both in active service at the time. Unfortunately his Christian name was not mentioned."

The service of our agency is free of charge. Money however to help carrying on our work is always thankfully received.

Geneva (Switzerland), date of P.O. cancellation.

At present, we are not able to communicate to you any precise indication concerning the person you are in search of. However we might point out to you that on the German lists of the

7th of June

there is.

Name: Hill

Christian name: (none mentioned)

Incorporation: 7th Canadian

Reported: Field Coy H. H. A. R. Staden

Lacking sufficient information, we are unable to undertake the necessary verification. For this purpose, kindly apply to the English military Authorities.

You may also write to the prisoner in question to the above address, in order to make sure of his identity. Direct interchange of letters between prisoners and their families is now allowed.

Please refer to P.A. 2418.

International Committee of the Red Cross. Prisoners of War Agency.

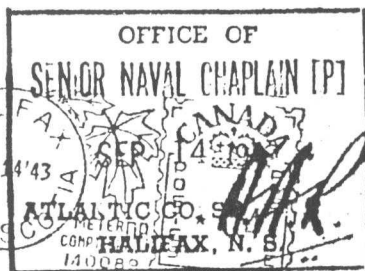
CHAPLAIN'S 'ORDERLY ROOM STAMP'

From Dean Mario, another bit of history.

Not often seen is a chaplain's handstamp. The one shown here is in blue (navy?) and was presumably initialled (in red) by the sender, or a clerk in the Chaplain Office. The [P] denotes, obviously, that it was from the Protestant Office. If such was the case, has anyone seen a Catholic marking [C]?

O. H. M. S.

S. DE S. M.



HOPITAL CANADIEN

SAINT-CLOUD (S.-&-O.)

3 JUL 1916



NO. 4 / NO. 8 CANADIAN HOSPITAL, SAINT CLOUD, 1916

From Dean Mario comes a report on the above and some 20 post cards of the Canadian Hospital at Saint Cloud.

"This series of real photo and sepia-tone post cards were all sent to Canada from the No. 8 Canadian General Hospital (No. 4 Canadian Stationary Hospital, September 1915 to July 1916.) These cards were published in France by R. Guilleminot, Paris, in 1916 and were obviously sent under cover to Montreal. An interesting fact about these cards is they were handstamped on the reverse with the hospital dater in purple, as shown above:
HOPITAL CANADIEN / SAINT CLOUD (S.-&-O.)"

Illustrated here is only one of the group and Dean says the owner of the cards, Ken Mayhew, 68 Pine Glen Crescent, Nepean, Ontario, K2G 0G8, would part with them. Thanks for this item go to Ken Mayhew, and Dean, for allowing us to know of the cards.

MILITIA POINT NOVA SCOTIA POST OFFICE

from Colin Campbell

A recent article in a Postal History Society of Canada Journal by Carl Munden, Dartmouth, N.S. provided the spark for this brief story.

The word MILITIA brings instant response from members of the Canadian Military Mail Study Group (it did for me!) so a cancel, bearing the title MILITIA POINT, N.S., resulted in the acquisition of the card illustrated, and some historical data was brought to light.

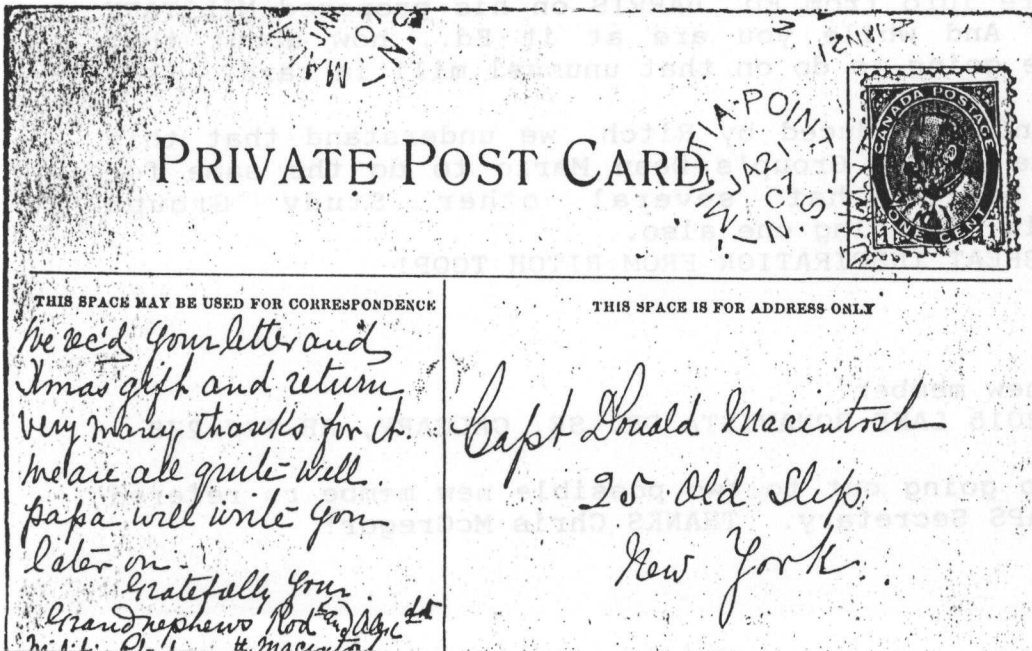
Munden states that the origin of the name MILITIA POINT cannot be found in official journals. He records, however, that the older folk in the area, and the local historian Mr. McKenzie of Christmas Island, say that the area, in Inverness County on Cape Breton Island, was used for training the militia during the 19th Century at the time of the Fenian Raids in the 1866-1871 period.

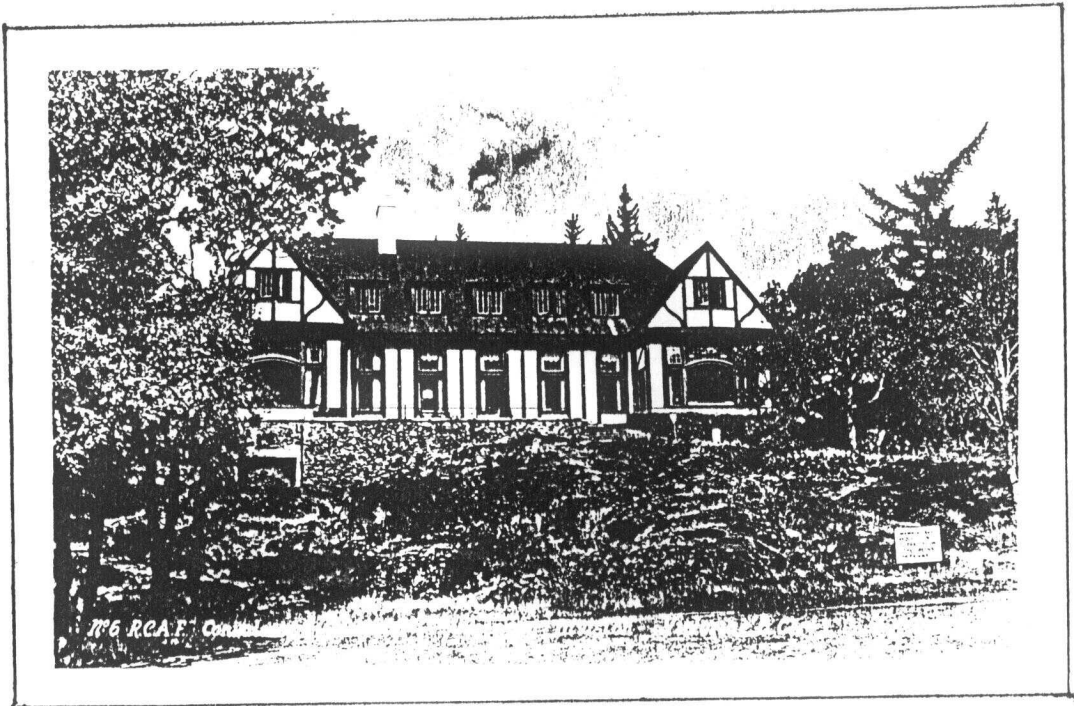
Records show that the 94th Victoria Battalion of Infantry (Argyle Highlanders), with headquarters at Baddeck, was organized October 13, 1871 with companies, at various times over the years, at Baddeck, Middle River, Grand Narrows, Forks Bridge, Nyanza, Iona, Inverness, etc. It is important to note that much of the training took place on Militia Island, not at Militia Point. See map inset. The island is, and was, uninhabited with location at 45/50N 60/56W.

The post office was located at Militia Point and was designated as rural. In Inverness County at 45/51N 60/57W, it opened June 1, 1896 and closed February 14, 1948. There were four postmasters over its 52 year life.

A brief check of all Gazetteers of Canada failed to show any other use of the word MILITIA as a name. A close second was MILITARY POINT in Alberta at 53/28N 112/58W.

top arrow: Militia Point post office
bottom arrow: Militia Island





One of a number of Convalescent Hospitals operated in Canada by the R.C.A.F. The medical reconditioning programme carried out in comfortable surroundings and homelike atmosphere is designed to facilitate the planned recovery of Air Force personnel.

NO. 6 R.C.A.F. CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL, VICTORIA, B.C.

Dave Hanes sends along a photocopy of a post card he picked up at BNAPEX in Hamilton. Note the wording on the back of the card as reproduced here.

Dave asks if anyone has any information on this card, or any of the other suggested cards in the series. He presumes this hospital is similar to Camp Hill Hospital which was set up in Halifax after World War I and is still in operation. Also note that, if it can not be read, the illustrated hospital's address is COLWOOD DIVISION, VICTORIA, B.C.

The next issue of the N/L is planned for March and WE NEED MORE ARTICLES AND ONE PAGERS BEFORE WE 'GO TO PRESS!'

We also need more info from ED. HARRIS on his proposed MILITARY SALES CIRCUIT. And while you are at it Ed., how about that article you were going to do on that unusual militia card?

Regarding the Index produced by Ritch, we understand that this has inspired the Newfie Group's Dean Mario to do the same for them. Have heard that several other Study Groups are interested in producing one also.

GREAT INSPIRATION FROM RITCH TOOP!

NEW MEMBER

Please welcome new member:

JAMES R. HILL, 2015 LAKE BONAVISTA DR. SE, CALGARY, AB T2J 2Z8

This N/L is also going out to two possible new members referred to us by the BNAPS Secretary. THANKS Chris McGregor!