

Canadian Military Mail Study Group

N A P
B S

N/L 103
JANUARY 1992

NEWS FLASH!

Page 21.

COMMENTS FROM THE CMMSG CHAIRMAN

Quite some time ago, our Editor, Ken Ellison, asked to be replaced. Shopping about for a replacement did not result in a flood of volunteers, nor were any nominations made at the annual meetings. All this has changed and I am happy to announce a new Editor has volunteered beginning with N/L #104. Ken has put N/L # 103 together and will be turning the reins over to Hendrik (Henk) Burgers.

As most of you are probably aware, Henk was Editor and Office Manager for a number of years for the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada until May 1991 when the RPSC office moved to Toronto. Henk operates his own multilingual translation business in Ottawa and is also active in a number of philatelic endeavors. I'm sure everyone will provide Henk with the same support as provided to the former editors, Colin Campbell for N/L 1 to 50 and Ken Ellison N/L 51 to 103. Your input and articles are solicited; please send your material to:

Hendrik Burgers, 11 Elm Street, Gloucester, Ontario, K1G 3N2.

The CMMSG has been blessed with two dedicated editors to date. What more can one say other than "thanks guys" you have done a terrific job. And to Ken, who deserves the "R and R", my special thanks for making my job as chairman so easy.

Ritch Toop

COMMENTS FROM A 'RETIRING' EDITOR!

Having been involved with this Study Group since its inception in 1973, and latterly as Editor, there will be a great, but not unfilled, void in my activities. This editing is a excellent learning experience and I suggest it to any of you who might have such an inclination.

Some editorial material is on hand and this will be going forward to Henk and Ritch soon. But, as you are well aware, more is always needed. Am hoping you readers will support Henk as you have me.

Special thanks go out to all those who have gone out of their way to provide material for 103 N/L's and an *ANTHOLOGY*. Some stalwarts need singling out for their great help but to do so would likely leave out other members also deserving of thanks. Anyway, let's get on with it and support Henk!

By the way, we understand that Henk and Ritch live only a few blocks away from each other in Ottawa so that should help their liaison on Study Group matters.

One 'final' word from the 'old' editor, and that is to thank Ritch for his great support over the last few years which made the job that much easier!

WELCOME HENK!

CANADIAN HOSPITAL SHIP S.S. PRINCE GEORGE

By Jon Johnson.

During World War I there were five hospital ships considered to be in Canadian service; the *ARAGUAYA*, *ESSIQUIBO*, *LLANDOVERY CASTLE*, *LETITIA* and *NEURALIA*. All of these hospital ships were used to transport the sick and wounded from England to Canada. It has taken some time to gather the pieces of information on the sixth hospital ship in Canadian service, probably due to its short period of service and being located on the West Coast of Canada.

The *S.S. PRINCE GEORGE*, owned by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, was brought to the West Coast in 1910. She served as coastal passenger ship running from Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle to the GTP western terminus at Prince Rupert. It was one of four GTP ships on the coast and had a length of 320 feet, a beam of 42 feet, a gross tonnage of 3,380 and had a service speed of 16 knots. A weekly round trip run was usually made on this route.

Shortly after the declaration of war the bond holders of the *PRINCE GEORGE* and the *PRINCE RUPERT* withdrew them from service pending the GTP obtaining war risk insurance. A contributor to this decision may have been the knowledge that two German cruisers, the *LEIPZIG* and the *NURNBERG*, were known to have been off the California coast and reported to be travelling northward.

The *PRINCE GEORGE* was requisitioned by the British Admiralty (RNCVR) as a hospital ship and was quickly converted in Esquimalt. The conversion consisted of painting the hull white with a green band around the main deck. The stacks were painted yellow with a red cross inside a white circle on the centre funnel. The carpets, curtains and trimmings were removed and cots were placed in the wide hallways. The elevator was adjusted to carry stretchers and an operating room was installed in the forward lower deck. Several doctors and a corps of nurses made up the medical staff. The ship remained under the command of its regular captain, Captain Donald, and with much of the original crew.

On 11 August 1914, the hospital ship *PRINCE GEORGE* sailed to meet and accompany the Canadian cruiser *RAINBOW* which was searching for the German cruisers. On 21 August, both the *RAINBOW* and the *PRINCE GEORGE* arrived in Prince Rupert. On the morning of 24 August the *PRINCE GEORGE* sailed independent of the *RAINBOW* which had sailed earlier. As a result of concerns about the safety of Allied warships, no further reports of sightings of the ships were published in the Prince Rupert newspaper.

In the 15 August Prince Rupert *Daily News* there is a report indicating that "Ottawa Authorities Think Hospital Ship Plan Not Good". A part of the argument was that a hospital ship in Canada may be impractical and considerably more expensive than the regular army hospital. This was partly in response to the Daughters of the Empire who nationally were raising funds for a hospital ship. The Prince Rupert and Port Essington chapters raised \$1,245.20 by 13 August 1914.

With the withdrawal of the *PRINCE GEORGE* and *PRINCE RUPERT* from passenger service, the two smaller ships, the *PRINCE ALBERT* and the *PRINCE JOHN* had been trying to cope with the GTP steamer traffic. In late August the *PRINCE ALBERT* struck a rock and was severely damaged which resulted in an even greater loss of local passenger service. On 18 September it was reported that the government would permit the return of the *PRINCE GEORGE* to the passenger service off the West Coast of B.C. With the apparent departure of the German cruisers there was no longer a government requirement for the ship. On 9 October 1914 the *PRINCE GEORGE* resumed its weekly service on the run. It is not known if the was repainted before going back on the run!

Again we wonder if there are any covers from the crew during this short period of the ship's service as a hospital ship. Even to find this postcard of the ship in hospital colours, and at Prince Rupert (22 or 23 August 1914 ?) is a feat in itself. (Several remarks here added by the Editor!)

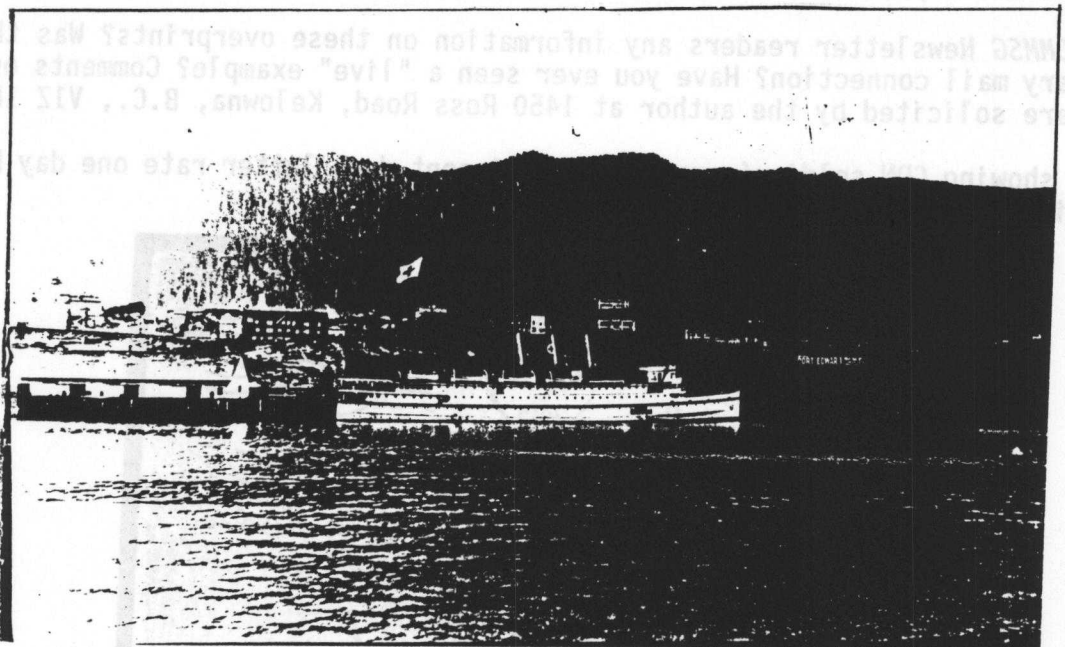
BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- THE NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA, Volume I (1952) By G.N.Tucker.
 THE H.W.McCURDY, MARINE HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST (1966), Gordon Newell
 HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR, MEDICAL SERVICES GENERAL HISTORY, Volume I, (1923),
 W.G.MacPherson.
 THE DAILY NEWS (of Prince Rupert, B.C.) August 1 - October 9, 1914.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

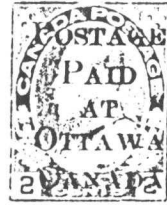
To Colin Campbell for assistance in recognizing the ship on the postcard, and where to start in tracking down the hospital service of the S.S.*PRINCE GEORGE*.

To The Maritime Museum of British Columbia Society, Victoria, B.C.



S.S.*PRINCE GEORGE* IN PRINCE RUPERT

POSTAGE PAID OVERPRINTS REVISITED



Overprinted Admiral Stamps-Scotts #106, variations.

By Colin Campbell.

What was their intended purpose? Could it have been to frank Canadian soldier's mail during World War I? See illustrations above. And, for that matter, why were stamps placed on soldier's *FREE* mail on its arrival in Canada?

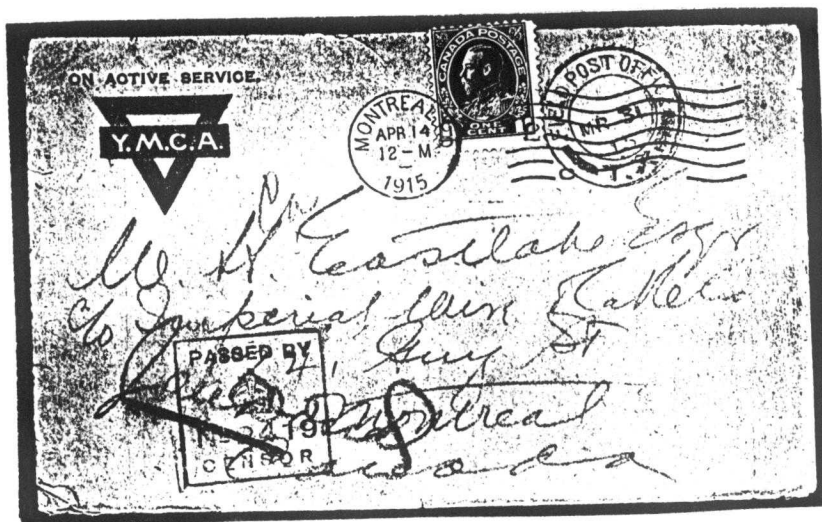
It was 37 years ago that a Canadian, G.R.Workman, broached the subject of these overprints in a *BNAPS TOPICS* of February 1955. First impressions then associated them with precancelled stamps.

The answer to the third question came from an article in *TOPICS* by the late F.W.L.Keene in February 1959 titled *WHY STAMPS ON "FREE" LETTERS?* In reply to the question B.J.Farrell, Director of Administration, P.O.D., Ottawa, wrote, quote: "The practice of placing postage stamps on letters from soldiers on active service was to ensure that unpaid, or possibly "rated up" mail, would be delivered to the addressee without collection of postage." He went on to say this practice was initiated on 8 October 1914 and ceased 27 July 1917. Stamps were affixed and cancelled prepaying delivery from exchange offices to destination. Some of these offices were: Halifax, Ottawa, Montreal, London, Hamilton, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

It was also learned that ordinary stamps on soldier's mail was not accountable between the Department of Militia and the Post Office Department.

Have *CMMSG* Newsletter readers any information on these overprints? Was there a military mail connection? Have you ever seen a "live" example? Comments on this item are solicited by the author at 1450 Ross Road, Kelowna, B.C., V1Z 1L6

Cover showing CDN soldier's mail franked 1 cent drop letter rate one day before addition of 1 cent WAR TAX.



ADVERTISING Buy Sell Trade etc.

WANTED: Royal Newfoundland Regiment: WW I & II Canadian Chaplain: and WW II Canadian Orderly Room markings on cover. Have some material for trade if interested. Dean Mario, Box 342, MPP, Saskatoon, Sask., S7K 3L3

CMMSG MILITARY ANTHOLOGY available in hard cover @ \$44.89 in Canada: in USA and O/S US\$40.00: Soft cover @ C\$32.05: USA & O/S US\$ 30.00: all postpaid. Order from Robt.A.Lee, #203-1139 Sutherland Ave., Kelowna, B.C., V1Y 5Y2

~~FOUR~~ ^{FIVE} responses so far to my advert re *Canadian Forestry Corps* - Great results! Covers, postcards wanted, especially WW I. Ken Ellison, Oyama, B.C., VOH 1W0

THREE SHIP POSTCARDS still wanted - see previous add in N/L 102. J.Colin Campbell, 1450 Ross Road, Kelowna, B.C., V1Z 1L6

NEWFOUNDLAND WANTED by Doug Hannan at 23-1950 Burtch Road, Kelowna, B.C., V1Y 4B2. Send me photocopies of any Nfld military items you would part with.

BNAPS NEEDS NEW MEMBERS Do your part and get a new member today!

BOLINGBROKES Did you ever fly a Bolingbroke aircraft, or work on one? The Boly Restoration Crew needs more members. For details please write Colin Campbell, address above.

TIMES HISTORY OF WW I A set of these books (weight about 100 pounds) is available (in Fort St. John, B.C.). Contact the Editor, Ken Ellison (address above) for contact with owner of same. Just think that these volumes would make a full library by themselves!!

FORMER CMMSG MEMBER PASSES

We regretfully pass along the word that a long time BNAPS member, and a sometime member of our Study Group, **David B. Crane** passed away on 29 November 1991 after a lengthy illness. Dave served for 25 years as the golf pro at the Kelowna Golf and Country Club. For many years he was involved in our hobby, and in fact, at the last BNAPS Convention Dave achieved the status of Emeritus Membership.

ALCAN HIGHWAY 1942 - 1992

Fifty years has elapsed since the *Alcan (Alaska) Highway* was built, mainly by the US Forces, to provide overland access to Alaska. It is recalled that the Japanese forces had gained a foothold in the Aleutian Islands and were threatening North America proper.

In honour of this occasion, communities on the Alaska Highway are staging events in its commemoration. Many of the towns, with post offices, have a special cancellation device in their office. A machine version has been noted from Fort St. John, B.C., as well as hand cancellers from Charlie Lake and Taylor, B.C. Charlie Lake has two different hand cancellers as one was damaged soon after being received. This is no wonder as the markers are huge - 77 mm long by 50 mm high! The post office name is appended along the bottom, but separate, in letters 4 mm high. We will try for an example here.

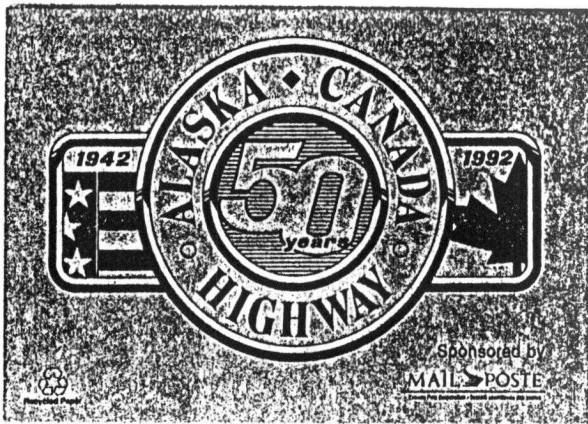
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ALASKA HIGHWAY 50th ANNIVERSARY Further Notes:

Communication in a day ago from Keith Spencer of Edmonton, and a leading 'lite' for the *Royal Show (RPSC)* to be held this 5,6,7 of June.

Since this is the Alaska Highway 50th, the Edmonton sponsors are thinking about putting out a series of special covers in commemoration, posted along the route by a re-enacting party (and who knows, led by Keith carrying the red ensign aloft!). Anyone interested in such a memento of the occasion, please contact Keith or your Editor (the new one, or the 'old' one, will see that your interest is passed on).

Do try to make the Royal in Edmonton (don't worry, the snow should be gone by June) as there are several special events taking place of interest to the military collector.



FIRBY SALE OF ED RICHARDSON MATERIAL

The auction sale of Ed Richardson's military material by *Chuck Firby*, our *BNAPS Vice Chairman*, appears to have been a success. By glancing over the Prices Realized one notes many interesting realizations. Unfortunately we don't have the space here, this time, to detail but a few items:

Lot No. 10, A Comox B.C. 1898 RN sailor's cover brought 1100.

19 & 20, Nile Expedition covers, 800 & 950.

28 & 29, Boer War, 900 & 850

71, En Route to Boer War 6500.

205, Farnham Militia cover, 350.

212, Trois Riviere Militia, 475.

256, Banff Internment censor, 375.

(book prices, +++)

These are just a few items. From reports received quite a few of our members picked up some items and most were happy with the prices they paid. One collector we know of acquired some nice Boer War material from this sale and we bet that this will now be a show winning exhibit!

In case some of you may be wondering, Chuck will be selling some more of Ed's material. For your information there will be: 28 Boer War lots, 15 Militia, 22 Internment WW I items, 3 RFC/RAF items, plus a hospital and a POW WW II lot. The date for the sale was not available at 'press time'.

REGIMENTAL HISTORIES AVAILABLE

Regimental histories are often a good auxiliary source of information for the postal historian. Four such are listed here and they are supposed to be available. We know the first listed is as we have just acquired it. This information supplied by Brigadier-General Patrick H.C. Carew, CD, retired (we think), in Kelowna, B.C., to whom we offer our thanks.

SINEWS OF STEEL by R.H. Roy has been reprinted and is the unit history of the British Columbia Dragoons. It is available for C\$37.50 postpaid from the B.C. Dragoons, Box 1105, Kelowna, B.C., V1Y 7P8.

DRAGOON by Brereton Greenhous is the Centennial History of the Royal Canadian Dragoons (1883-1983). It is available (approx. \$30.00 plus postage) from The Guild of the R.C.D./ c/o LCol. R.J. Hillier, CD, Worthington Barracks, CFB Petawawa, Petawawa, Ontario, K8H 2X3.

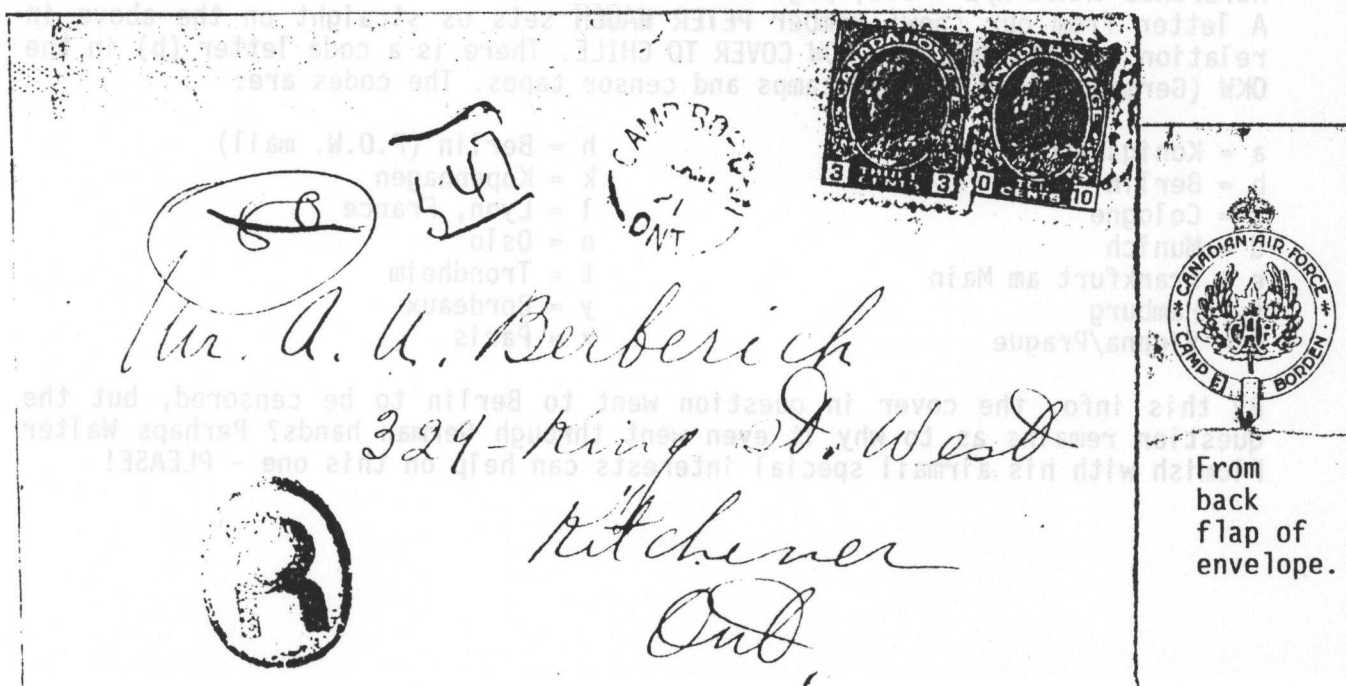
THE DUKES by Douglas Harker being the history of the B.C. Regiment (The Duke of Connaught's Own) 1883-1973. Write: The C.O., British Columbia Regiment (DCO), 4482 Crown Street,, Vancouver, B.C., V6S 2K5. Price unknown.

THE GATE, a history of the Fort Garry Horse, might be obtained from: The C.O., The Fort Garry Horse, 551 Machrary Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2W 1A8.

CANADIAN AIR FORCE

The short lived C.A.F. was formed in England during the last months of the Great War but was left in limbo by the Armistice in 1918. However, in the summer of 1919 the autonomous Air Board was formed and its first step towards creating a military air force was to establish a small non-permanent Canadian Air Force along 'militia' lines. After the formation of a unified Department of National Defence in 1922-23 the C.A.F. became the Royal Canadian Air Force. (From Douglas, The Creation of a National Air Force).

This 1921 cover belongs to Dave Hanes and, of course, it originated at Camp Borden on 6 January 1921. Besides being a nice registered cover with the Camp Borden split ring cancel, it has the logo of the C.A.F. from Camp Borden. This is another case of have you ever seen one of these C.A.F. covers - likely not!



FINANCIAL STATEMENT to 20 January 1992

Balance in the regular account this date		\$945.13
<i>ANTHOLOGY</i> account this date		
Cost of <i>ANTHOLOGY</i> and Index (complete)	2339.95	
Proceeds of sale to members		1291.89
Balance	(1048.06)	
Less balance in regular acct.		945.13
Deficit on books and regular account	(102.93)	

Accounts receivable 1 book @ 25.00.

Also on hand are 12 copies of book and Index which will be saleable when, as per our agreement with Rob't. A. Lee, his stock is sold out. By the way, the following members have not ordered their copies and are entitled to one for our price of C\$20 or US\$ 25: *Arnold, Alary, McCarthy, and Vanderburgh*. Send money soon if interested! If these four buy a book we will be ahead of the 'game'!

It was planned all along to use our regular account funds, which were in surplus, to subsidize the publication of the *ANTHOLOGY*.

As can be seen the CMMSG is again in need of **DUES**, and with this issue is going out the annual request for dues. As before they will be Canadian \$10.00/US \$9.00. And, as in the past there will be included with this N/L the usual colored slip if you are not already up to date on the dues. Thank you for your early response to this request!

Send dues to Ken V. Ellison, R.R. # 1, Oyama, B.C., V0H 1W0. Cheques, either Canadian, or US drawn are quite acceptable and do not incur any additional cashing expense. Again, thanks for your early response!

GERMAN POSTAL CENSOR OFFICES IN EUROPE, WW II

Reference CMMSG N/L # 102, page 16:

A letter from our 'new' member PETER WAUGH sets us straight on the above in relation to Bill Walton's POW COVER TO CHILE. There is a code letter (b) in the OKW (German) circular handstamps and censor tapes. The codes are:

a = Konigsberg	h = Berlin (P.O.W. mail)
b = Berlin	k = Kopenhagen
c = Cologne	l = Lyon, France
d = Munich	o = Oslo
e = Frankfurt am Main	t = Trondheim
f = Hamburg	y = Bordeaux
g = Vienna/Prague	x = Paris

By this info, the cover in question went to Berlin to be censored, but the question remains as to why it even went through German hands? Perhaps Walter Plomish with his airmail special interests can help on this one - PLEASE!

LETTERS RECEIVED

From PETER McCARTHY, *Study Group Centreline Editor*, comes a letter noting that the first part of his column in the Nov/Dec TOPICS somehow did not see print. Peter also enclosed a photo of a cover from O/S (Overseas) and a postcard from 'Somewhere in France' from a Corporal Ritchie who was with the 58th Broad Gauge Railway Operating Company.

From Nicholson, C.E.F. 1914-1919: April 1917 saw arrival in France of the first of three specialist Canadian railway operating companies (including the above, 58th). In March 1917 Lt.Col.J.W.Stewart, later Brigadier-General, established the administrative headquarters of the Canadian Railway Troops at GHQ British Armies in France, where it remained completely apart from the Cdn. Corps. In August a C.R.T. bridging company was formed for service in the Middle East. By the time of the Armistice the strength of the Corps, including 3364 railway troops in the UK, had risen to 19,328.

Here again, a specialist scope exists for the collecting of Cdn. Railway Troops postal history which seems akin to the type of material that your editor is looking for in the Cdn. Forestry Corps.

From DAVID COLLYER, in addition to his regular *AUSTRALIAN FORCES GROUP N/L*, there arrived a letter with compliments on the *ANTHOLOGY*. David notes further on the Field Service Postcards with the added Christmas/New Year notations as per our Page 14 of N/L 102. David is another of our readers who appreciates our Christmas Issue with the service Christmas cards!

Coincidentally, from HERB WILLIAMS comes a photo of a very nice Field Service Postcard showing the added manuscript "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" from FPO 59 on 17 December 1915 - even if it is British usage! Herb is one of our reliable correspondents who is often sending little tid-bits along for the Newsletter.

THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE LETTERS THAT COME IN - AND DON'T ALWAYS GET ANSWERED!

AIRMAIL COVERS FROM WORLD WAR II

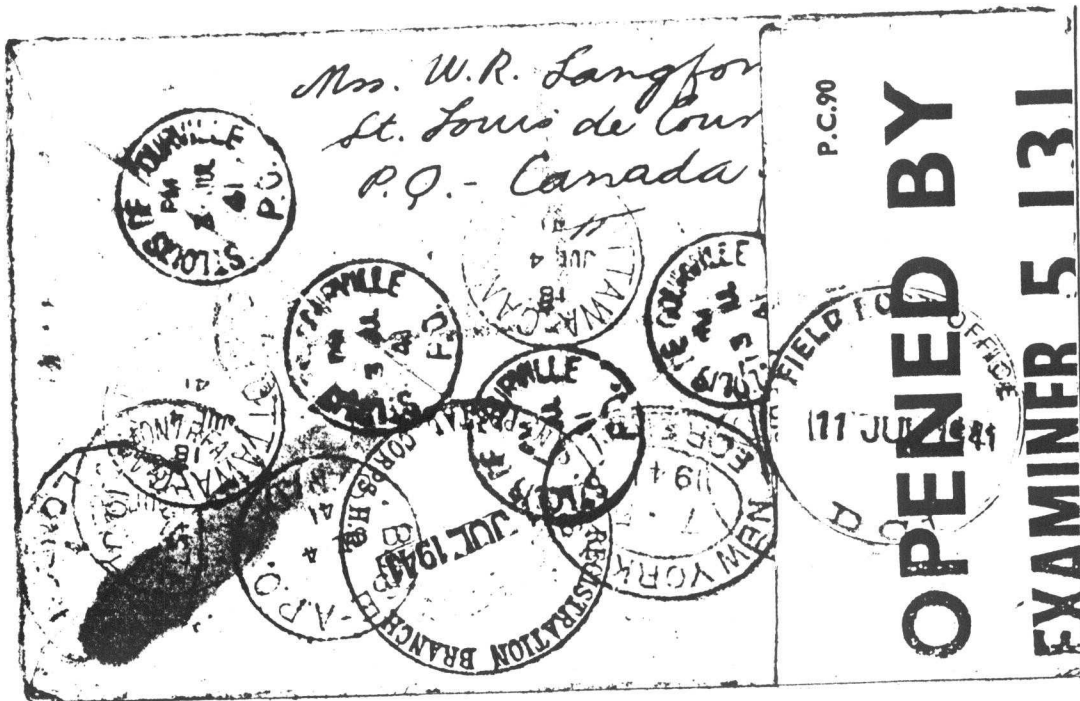
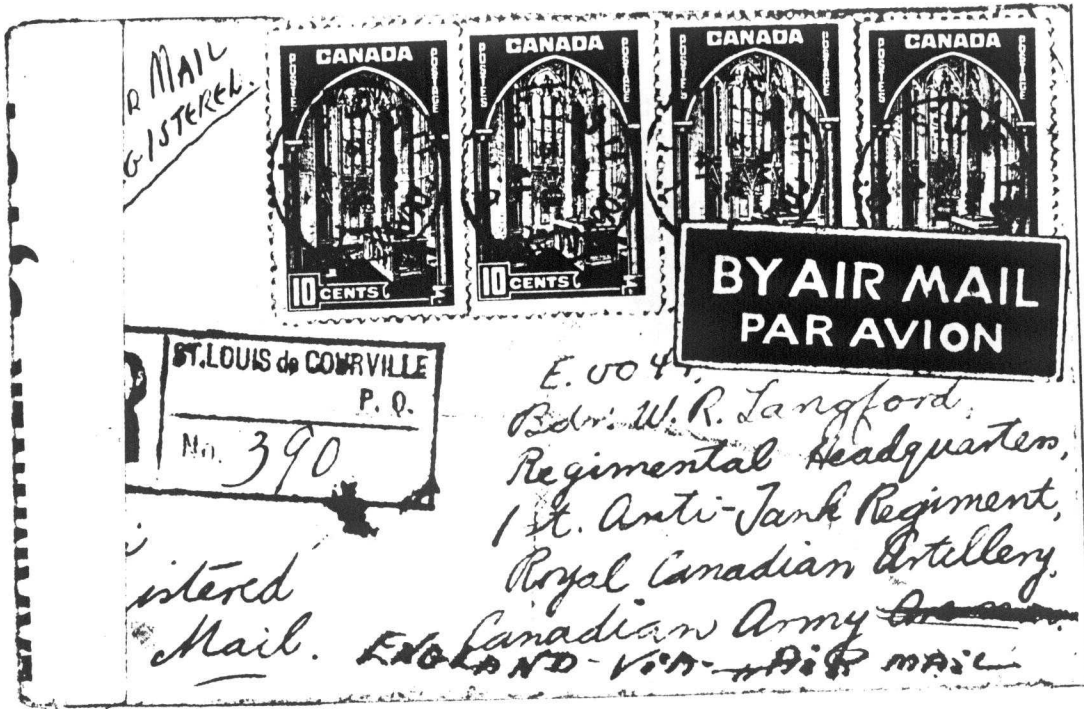
By Walter Plomish

The cover shown here is a registered airmail cover posted at St. Louis de Courville, P.Q., and bears four of the 1938 Memorial Chamber 'red' 10 cent stamps. It is dated 3 July 1941 and addressed to the C.A.O. in England. Shown is the 10 cent registration rate plus the 30 cent airmail rate.

The first 'stop' of the letter was 4 July at the Base A.P.O./Ottawa and it was in New York the next day, and London on the 10th. A day later it went through F.P.O. DC1 which is applied on top of a double censor label.

Most airmail letters in this period have a story to tell and this one, besides being pretty, follows the pattern.

Continued >>>>



THE LAST PAGE -- AT LAST!

Imagine that, a little space left on the *LAST PAGE!*

This N/L has cleaned up a few odds and ends, and bits and pieces. Hope that it is not too disjointed to the reader. Seems like there is a lack of illustrations too, but then that goes with Chairman's reports and financial statements!

Again *THANKS* to *ALL* who have helped with the *CMMSG* over the years. It could not have been done without you. Now let us *ALL* give our support to *HENK BURGERS* as we go into a new era!