



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

OUR
25th*
YEAR!

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1998

NEWSLETTER NO. 134
Page 333

HMCS "REGINA" ON U.N. SERVICE, PERSIAN GULF--By W. Whitehouse

H.M.C.S. Regina, under the command of Cmdr. Tyrone H.W. Pile, departed Esquimalt on February 21, 1997 to rendezvous with three U.S. destroyers and proceeded to the Persian (Arabian) Gulf. The U.S. ships involved were the U.S.S. Ingraham, Paul F. Foster, and Fitzgerald and together they were known as the Surface Action Group of PACMEF '97 (PACIFIC MIDDLE EAST FORCE). The air component aboard Regina was from 443 Maritime Helicopter Sqdn. The air crew had prepared a badge for this operation (FIG.1) and it was worn on the shoulder of their flight suit.



FIG.1

Badge Prepared By Air Crew

[Cont'd.]

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The Group arrived in Hong Kong on March 16 and because Regina was scheduled to be the last Canadian warship to visit the island prior to its return to China, a special memorial service and wreath laying ceremony was carried out at both cemeteries where WWII Canadian soldiers were buried.

Leaving Hong Kong on the 18th, the Group made calls at Singapore and Thailand before arriving at Mina Salman, Bahrain, in the Persian Gulf on April 8 (FIG.2).

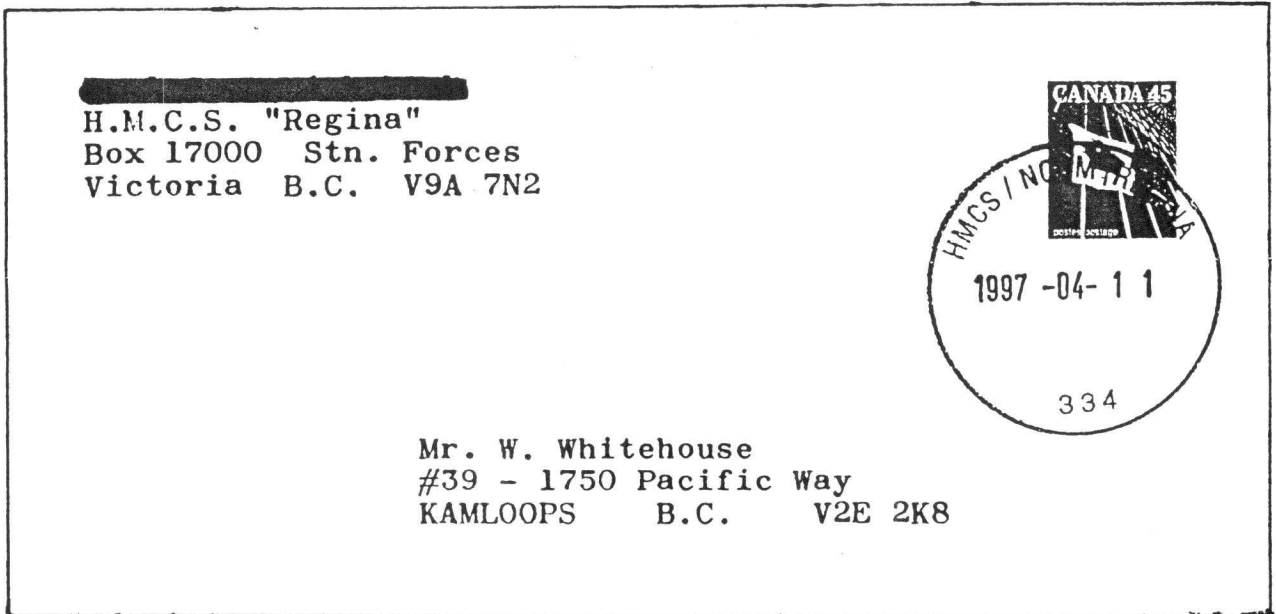


FIG.2

Three Days After Arrival in Persian Gulf

Regina commenced her first patrol of OPERATION PREVENTION '97 on April 12, joining other multi-national ships in support of the U.N. embargo against Iraq. Patrols were scheduled to last ten days with rest and maintenance carried out in friendly Arab ports in the Gulf.

Mail service to and from the ship while on patrol was provided twice a week by the U.S. The helicopter involved was apparently called the "Desert Duck". Mail was also received and despatched when in the various ports. Mail to and from Canada required from seven to twelve days.

The ship carried a Pitney-Bowes Type 28 postage meter for use on official mail. The town mark read "FMO VICTORIA/BC" with a boxed bilingual slogan "CANADIAN FORCES/BASE/ESQUIMALT/FMO VICTORIA B.C.".

The boarding and searching of suspect vessels was not the piece of cake that one might have imagined. In searching for smuggler vessels the U.N. ships had to dodge mines. At times Iranian patrol boats were frequently engaged in war games and continually darted in and around U.N. warships. The Iranians were suspected of helping smugglers to avoid the U.N. embargo and were capable of being belligerent.

Once the decision to board was made the boarding party, loaded down

[Cont'd.]

with equipment and firearms, entered their small inflatable boat in seas sometimes six feet high. Upon arrival at the merchant ship there was the long climb (perhaps thirty feet) up a rope ladder to the ship's deck and then the search began. With her deployment only half over, Regina had seized two ships and sent them for further investigation.

The ship was scheduled to sail for home via Australia and Hawaii and arrived at Esquimalt at the end of August 1997. [Wilf followed up with a newspaper article dated August 21, 1997 which helped to finish the adventure.Ed.]

HMCS Regina comes home from Iraq embargo mission

CFB ESQUIMALT (CP) — The HMCS Regina returned home Thursday from an "important" six-month mission helping enforce the United Nations trade embargo on Iraq.

Regina and its 225 sailors were part of an international task force inspecting vessels coming and going from Iraq. They were looking for ships breaking restrictions placed on that country after the 1991 Gulf War.

During the mission, Regina crew boarded 57 ships — almost half the 117 vessels searched by four interception ships during that time — revealing five violators.

"It was quite an important mission," Regina Cmdr. Tyrone Pile said from the ship as it approached B.C. on Wednesday.

During searches, a security team guarded by an armed helicopter would board the vessel. Carrying .50-calibre machine guns, they would ensure every sailor remained visible on deck.

"The biggest challenge is the unknown," said Pile. "Over there, you're always on your guard."

Once the boarded ship was secure, a team of up to 16 would examine the vessel's documentation, fuel containers and cargo.

Fred Higenell, chief petty officer second class, was in charge of security and search teams.

Although crews of boarded vessels were usually compliant, Hignell said his team was always prepared for the unexpected.

"At the beginning when we first went on, our awareness was quite heightened," he said. "As time went on, our awareness was lessened but still there because you never know what you will encounter."

a Silver-Bronze, Susan Sheffield a Silver-Bronze (1-frame) as well as a Bronze, and L.G. Clinton a Bronze. Well done everyone!

Members are reminded to attend the upcoming Calgary Regional BNAPS Meeting (and the Pacific N.W. Group) on April 24-26. Contact Jim Karr, Registration, at (403) 287-0897 in Calgary. Don't forget the upcoming PIPEX '98 in Vernon on May 8-10. Contact Jon Johnson at (250) 549-1836 in Vernon for more information.

A warm welcome is extended to the following new Group members:

SHIGEYUKI SHIROTORI, 2-5-13-401, Soshigaya, Setagaya-Ward, Tokyo, 157-0072 Japan: Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan/Korea, 1945-57; UNEF in Japan/Korea; Japanese-Canadian Relocation Camps, WWII;

DAVID KELLY, 4659 McLaughlin Dr., Courtenay, BC, V9N 6J2: WWI FPO's; First Contingent ships of convoy (postcards etc.);

ANTHONY GEE, 27 Edgedale Way, N.W., Calgary, AB, T3A 2P7: Interests ? (/89)

Dear Fellow CMMMSG Members: Now that spring is finally here (for most members), it must be time for another Newsletter! I hope members were fortunate to get the item/s they desired in our mail sale. Thanks again to the consignors, buyers, and Jon for another wonderful job!

Congratulations are in order for several members who were presented with awards at the Edmonton Spring National/Regional Show held recently on March 27-29. Although only two military exhibits were displayed, each was most interesting and well-done. Ken Ellison's "Force 'C': The Canadian Army in Hong Kong, 1941-1945" was presented with a Vermeil along with the PHSC's "E.R. 'Ritch' Toop Award" for the best military exhibit. Robert Toombs' exhibit, "The RCAF and the Indian Ocean Theatre, WWII" (1-frame) was awarded a Silver-Bronze. It showed a fascinating area for study and Bob is to be commended. Our Chairman, W.J. Bailey received a Vermeil, R. Bayes another Vermeil, Ken Ellison

HONG KONG SHAM SHUI PO P.O.W. CAMP

Mail for the P.O.W.'s was given out, if at all, by the whim of the captors. This cover received the usual treatment of censoring, in Canada as noted on the label, and in Japanese territory by the censor 'chop', this one being that of censor MORI.

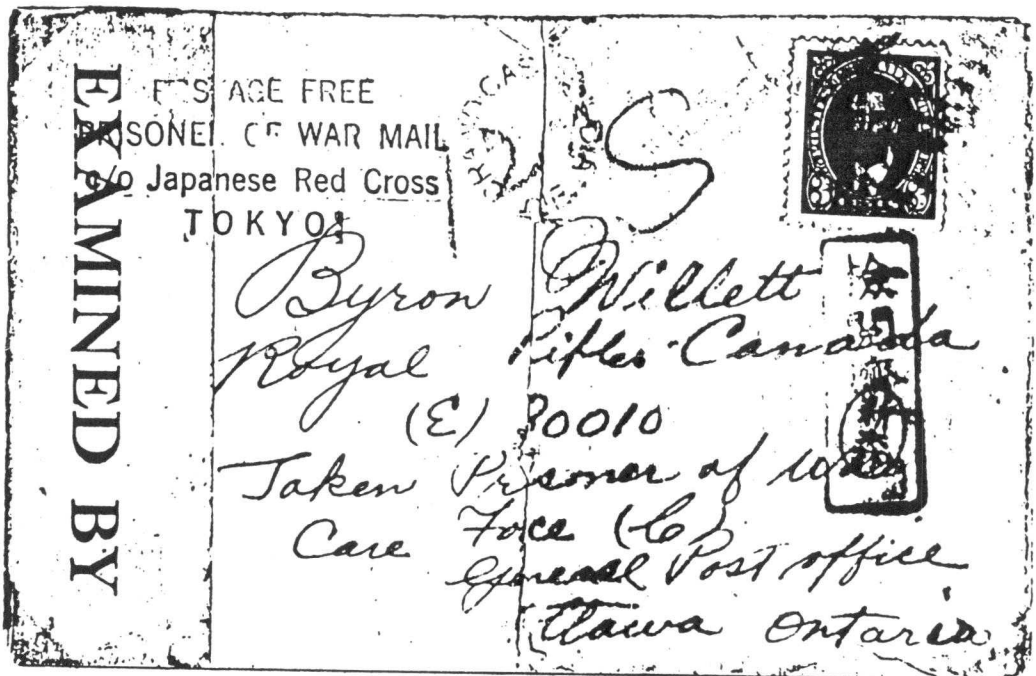
This letter of May 1942 was likely in transit for ten months. The red 'S' signified the Sham Shui Po Camp in Kowloon where some of the Royal Rifles were held prisoner. Postage was not necessary on this mail to P.O.W.'s.

Back markings:

CENSOR

DB/ C.10

Mrs David Willett
Grand Casapedia
Pro. Lu-
Box 42.



[Reproduced with the kind permission of Ken Ellison--from his "Force C" award-winning/superb exhibit. Ed.]

RCAF SQUADRON MARKINGS--By A.D. Hanes

When World War II began, the RCAF was represented at the British Air Ministry in London by a liaison officer and fifteen officers attending training courses. In the fall of 1939 senior RCAF officers were pressing for the formation of overseas units. In January 1941, an agreement between Canada and Britain stipulated that twenty-five RCAF Squadrons would be formed in the United Kingdom in the next eighteen months--not counting the three already overseas.

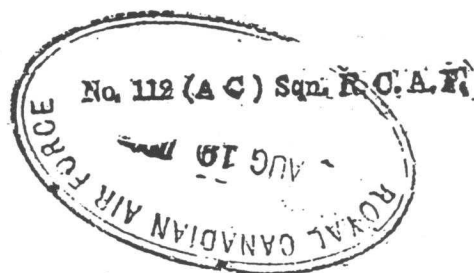
The first RCAF unit in England was No. 110 (Army Co-operation) Squadron which arrived in February 1940. It began training with the intention of going to France with the 1st Division. In June 1940 No. 112 (Army Co-operation) Squadron arrived for the same purpose. The fall of France and the cessation of land operations in Western Europe relegated both units to a long period of waiting and training. No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron arrived in England in June 1940. After a short but intensive training period, it was declared operational in time to take part in the closing stages of the Battle of Britain. In December 1940, in view of the pressing need for more fighter units, No. 112 became No. 2 (Fighter) Squadron.

Because of the large number of Dominion squadrons which were to be formed in the U.K. under RAF control, and to avoid the confusion with low-numbered RAF squadrons, the British Air Ministry assigned the numbers 400-445 to Canadian squadrons in the U.K. Accordingly, No. 110 Squadron became No. 400; No. 1 became No. 401; and No. 2 (formerly No. 112) became No. 402.

The first of the RCAF squadrons to be formed overseas was No. 403 (Fighter) Squadron on March 1, 1941. Seventeen more were formed in 1941, ten in 1942, four in 1943, and three in 1944. Additionally, six more were transferred from Canada complete with air and ground crews. The total number of RCAF squadrons that served overseas was forty-eight, of which fifteen were bomber, eleven day-fighter, three fighter-bomber, three fighter-reconnaissance, three night-fighter, one intruder, six coastal, three transport, and three Air Observation Posts.

Most of the lower numbered squadrons used Orderly Room, Central Registry, or Disciplinary Office markings on the back of personal correspondence dispatched from the squadrons. These markings came in various shapes and sizes with the common style being a double-lined oval, but straight-lines, circles, and rectangular boxes are known. Some squadrons used more than one style and/or type.

The following markings are known from the individual squadrons as shown:



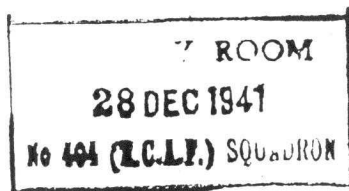
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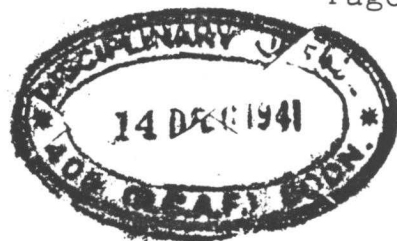
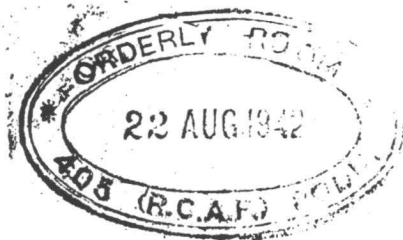
403 SQN (FIGHTER)
1 March 1941



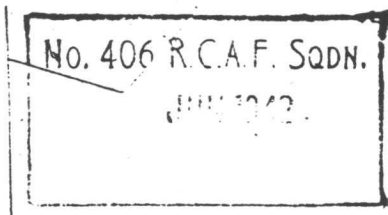
404 SQN (COASTAL)
15 April 1941



405 SQN (BOMBER)
23 April 1941

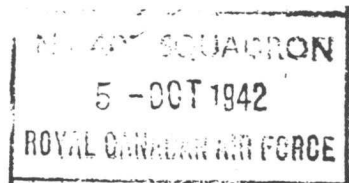
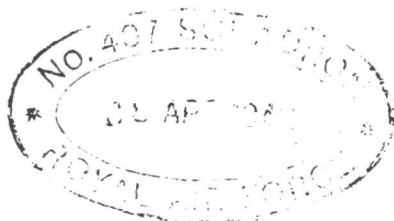


406 SQN (NIGHT
FIGHTER)
10 May 1941

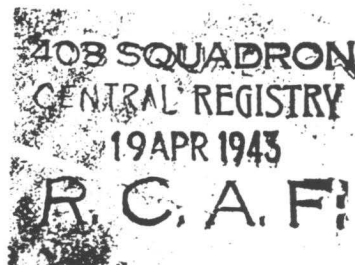
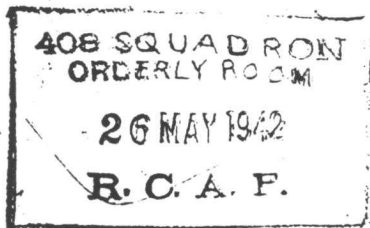


No. 406 Squadron R.C.A.F.

407 SQN (COASTAL)
8 May 1941



408 SQN (BOMBER)
24 June 1941



409 SQN (NIGHT
FIGHTER)
7 June 1941

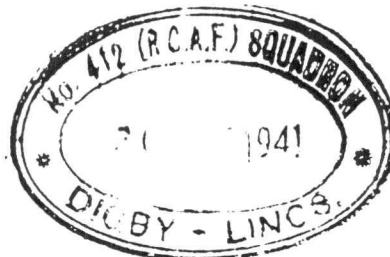


410 SQN (NIGHT
FIGHTER)
30 June 1941





411 SQN (FIGHTER)
16 June 1941



412 SQN (FIGHTER)
30 June 1941

NOT SEEN
SQN MOVED TO
CEYLON IN MARCH
1942

413 SQN (COASTAL)
1 July 1941



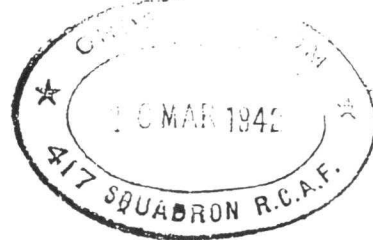
414 SQN (FIGHTER
RECONNAISSANCE)
13 August 1941



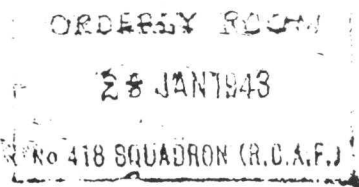
415 SQN (COASTAL)
20 August 1941



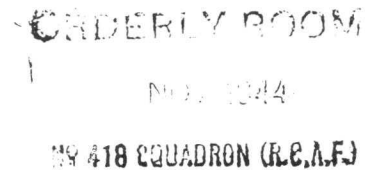
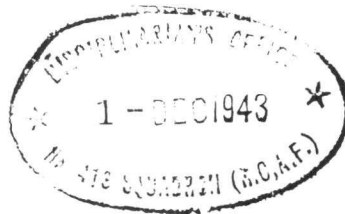
416 SQN (FIGHTER)
22 November 1941



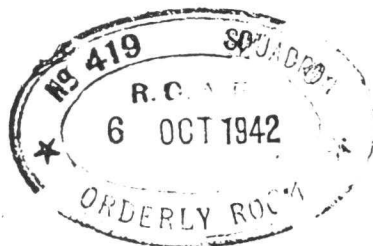
417 SQN (FIGHTER)
27 November 1941



418 SQN (INTRUDER)
15 November 1941



419 SQN (BOMBER)
15 December 1941





420 (R.C.A.F.) SQUADRON.



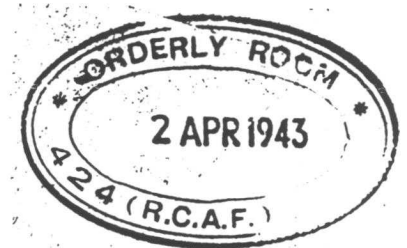
420 SQN (BOMBER)
19 December 1941

421 SQN (FIGHTER)
9 April 1942

422 SQN (COASTAL)
2 April 1942
(NOT SEEN)



423 SQN (COASTAL)
18 May 1942



424 SQN (BOMBER)
15 October 1942

425 SQN (BOMBER)
25 June 1942

ORDERLY RO
22 NOV 1942
425 (R.C.A.F.) Squ

425 (R.C.A.F.) SQUADRON



426 SQN (BOMBER)
15 October 1942



427 SQN (BOMBER)
7 November 1942

[Should members have other markings to add to Dave's study, copies of them would be welcomed for future publication. Ed.]

CANADIAN PUBLIC ARCHIVES HOLDINGS (cont'd.)

ISN=16216
 Dunne, Roger, 1917-1994
 LEVEL OF DESCRIPTION: Accession
 DAP ACCESSION NO. 1993-076 Roger Dunne collection

1944

1 postal cover

World War II military postal cover sent from Flight-Lieutenant R.F. Dunne, Royal Canadian Air Force Overseas to Mrs. C.P. Anjers, Beauport, Québec, bearing 1944 British Field Post Office No. 539 post mark.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Open. There are no access restrictions on these records. Status effective from 1988-04-01

USE RESTRICTIONS: Nil.

COPYRIGHT: Unknown

CREDIT: National Archives of Canada

Accession date: 1993-12-24

Internal transfer no.: MSS MG 30 E 44

Provenance: Transfer from Manuscript Division

LOCATION: C0084

Physician

Formerly in accession 1989-565. Previously acquired by the National Postal Museum as accession 1982-025

Canadian Postal Archives accession / Acquisition des Archives postales canadiennes

"SUNKEN U-BOATS"--From Ken Ellison

Ken sent in the item on the right from the February 2, 1922 edition of the Vernon News.

**FASCINATING STORY
OF SUNKEN U BOATS**

**Secrets From The Deep Are
Related by Commodore
Sir F. Young.**

London, Jan. 31.—A fascinating story of how sunken U-boats were made to yield up their secrets during the war was told at Portsmouth in a lecture for charities by Commodore Sir Frederick Young, R.N.R., the salvage engineer, who was the technical head of our naval salvage service in the war.

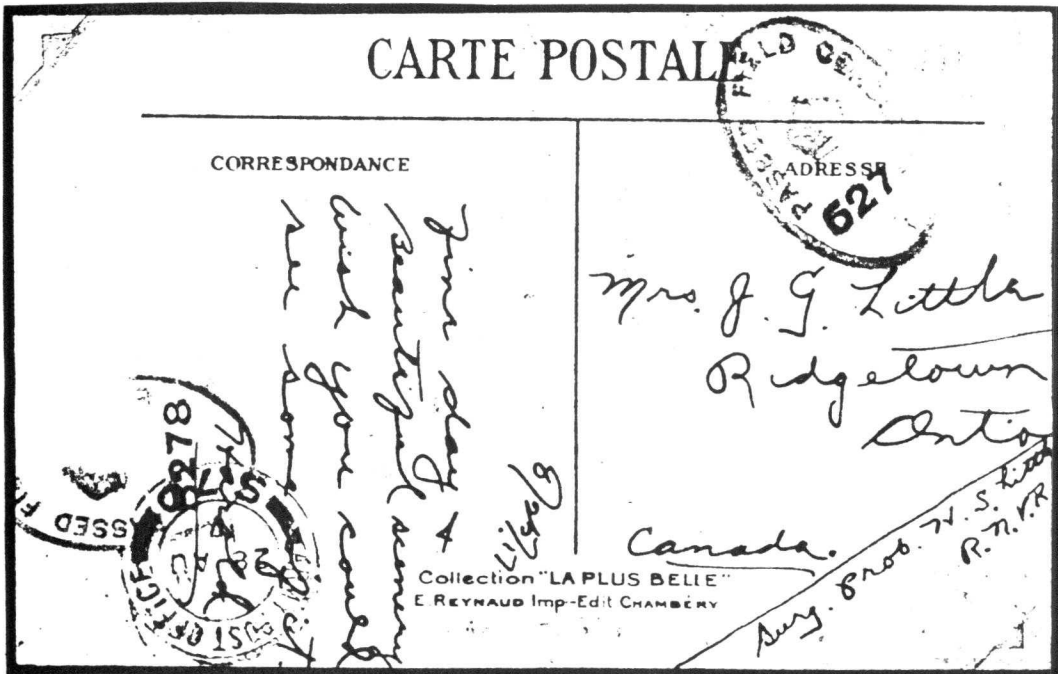
Each enemy submarine carried codes, operations, orders and other material of the utmost value to ourselves, which we got hold of by means of the most remarkable auxiliary to war intelligence service ever formed. This was composed of divers and other salvage workers selected from the admiralty salvage section, which dealt with salvage as a whole, and organized into a special branch.

Whenever an enemy submarine was sunk the salvage branch was told off to overhaul her. In very few cases was the boat raised. The divers used to go down to her as she lay, "cut their way" into her interior, and then search it thoroughly.

It was extremely dangerous, difficult and often gruesome work. It often had to be done at great depths, and the divers crawled about the sea floor in the inky darkness, performing their task as best they could. Much information that proved of the greatest value in combating the U-boat offensive was obtained. It was this submarine intelligence branch which also unearthed the secret of the German magnetic torpedo (although Sir Frederick Young did not tell his audience this) and thus let us into the secret of a grave new menace to our shipping.

**GREAT WAR R.N.V.R.--
By Colin Pomfret**

[This item on the left was sent from A.P.O. S.70 on August 18, 1917 from Faenza, Italy. It bears the Censor No.5/5278 and the signature of H.S. Little, R.N.V.R.]. Harold Smith Little was one of the 112 Canadian medical stu-



dents serving with the Royal Navy as Surgeon Probationers. At this time he was with H.M.S. Grasshopper, a "Beagle" Class Torpedo Boat Destroyer probably as part of the Otranto Barrage.

N.B. Our Mail Sale results will be included in the next issue! [Ed.]

CMMSG SURVEY RESULTS

Although we didn't receive 100%, many members responded with their main collecting interests and comments. This exercise may even encourage the friendly sharing of information, material, and etc.! Thank you to all of the respondents for their assistance (new members' interests will now be listed, when known, upon publication).

W.J. Bailey: Red Cross/Order of St. John; general military; Militia
 S. Bedwell: General military interests
 H. Burgers: Security MPO's; Y-Force; CEF/Militia, 1909-41
 J. Burnett: General WWII; P.O.W. WWII; RCN postal history
 J.C. Campbell: WWI (overseas); Scarcer specific items for writing up
 F. Chauvin: WWII (military, naval, "propaganda"/patriotics etc.)
 E. Christman: Cdn. WWII censored/military; P.O.W. cards/covers
 L.G. Clinton: Sask. WWII MPO's; Salvation Army Auxiliary Service
 J. Felton: WWI
 D. Hanes: RCAF/Provost Corps; Cdn. UN Peace Keepers; Post-War covers
 C. Hargreaves: Trans-Atlantic airmail '39-'45; airmail to/from Kingston, ON
 E.A. Harris: General military; WWII (main interest); Special Forces/areas
 G. Hill: Military posts between the wars; WWII; subsequent to WWII
 S. Luciuk: Internment Camp mail; Auxiliary/re-directional marks; Prairies
 I.W. MacKenzie: RCAF; P.E.I.; MPO 320/308, CAPO 5048/5049
 D. Mario: WWI Newfoundland; WWII Z-Force (Iceland); Force "W"; WWI Chaplains
 B. Pekonen: OHMS/re-use labels/covers
 W.R. Plomish: P.O.W. airmail usages; military airmail; RCN censor airmail
 W. Put: UN Forces/Observers; Korean War, 1950-55 period
 W.G. Robinson: Boer War; WWI Internment/censors; exotic WWI/Russia/Salonika
 P.R. Sanderson: WWII MPO's; RCAF
 G.H. Sawatzki: General military; Korea to present-day
 C.D. Sayles: Canadian Militia from 1904; Cdns. in foreign countries
 J.M. Smith: Boer War; Cdn. Siberia Exp. Force (C.S.E.F.)
 W.J. Veraat: WWI; WWII; CFPO's
 J. Wannerton: Boer War, 1899-1902; Siberian Contingent 1918-19; WWI & WWII
 W. Whitehouse: Royal Cdn. Navy; Cdn Armed Forces Airletters; meters
 D.H. Whiteley: WWI Russia Campaign; WWII FPO's/CAPO's; RCN '14-'18/'39-'45

[If members are not listed here, space will be provided in subsequent issues for the brief listing of collecting areas. Ed.]

SMALL ADS

WANTED: Buy/exchange UN Forces/Observer mail, including Korean War. Willem Put, Postbus 23175, 3001 KD Rotterdam, Netherlands. (0/0)

WANTED: MPO 1208 (N.Battleford), MPO 1210 (S.Current) on covers. L.G. Clinton, 1329 Elevator Rd., Saskatoon, SK, S7M 3X3. (0/0)

WANTED: WWI Newfoundland cards/covers. Everything! Photocopies: D. Mario, Box 342, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 3L3. (0/0)

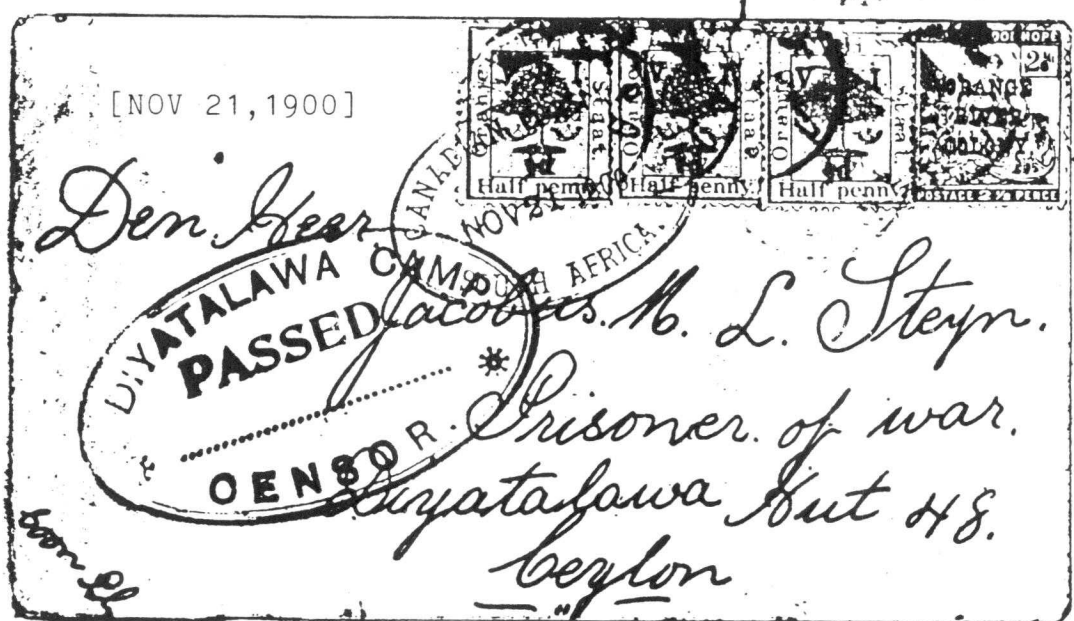
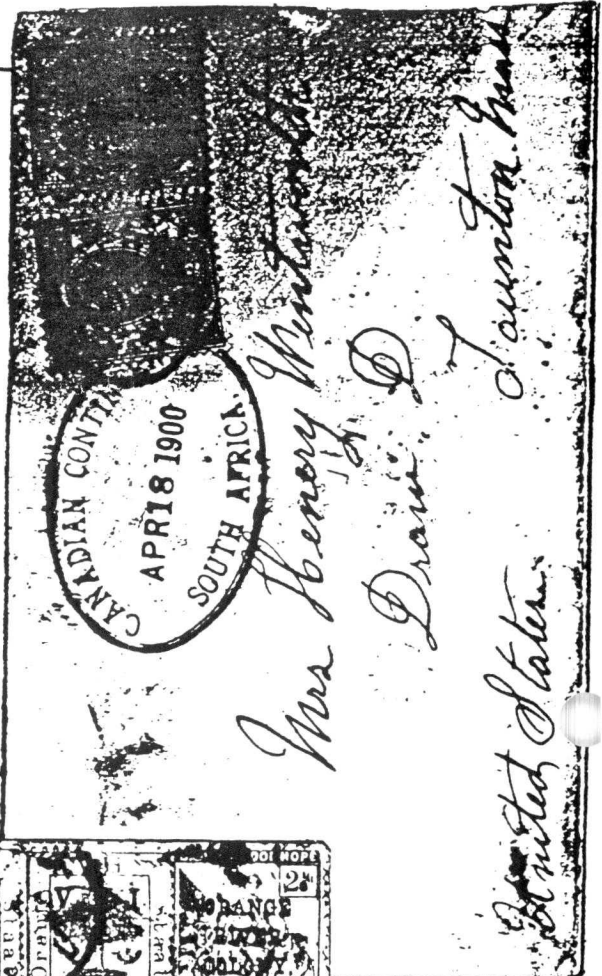
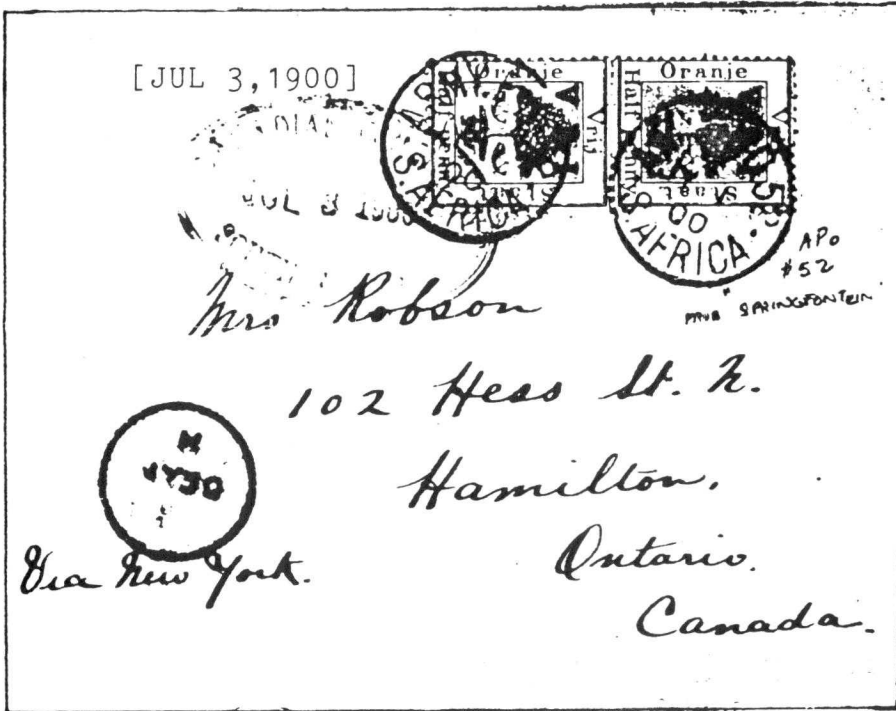
[Little response was received for our "Small Ads" freebie offer so we will suspend this service for the time being and perhaps restore it in the fall. Ed.]

In the May issue: Barriefield Camp; Canadian Nursing Sisters; International Commission for Supervision and Control and more! Have a happy Easter and a warm and sunny spring!

CANADIAN CONTINGENT, BOER WAR--Ex. Allan Steinhart*

The late Allan Steinhart left us quite a legacy both as a postal historian and as a dealer. Perhaps some of our members have the illustrated covers below which came from Allan's stock.

*Deceased



Werner Habrich, Peter-Hille Strasse 29, 12587 Berlin, Germany writes that he is interested in Canadian naval cachets/covers; military post vouchers; and stamps. He is willing to contact naval collectors for a possible exchange. Write first for details and terms. [Ed.]
