



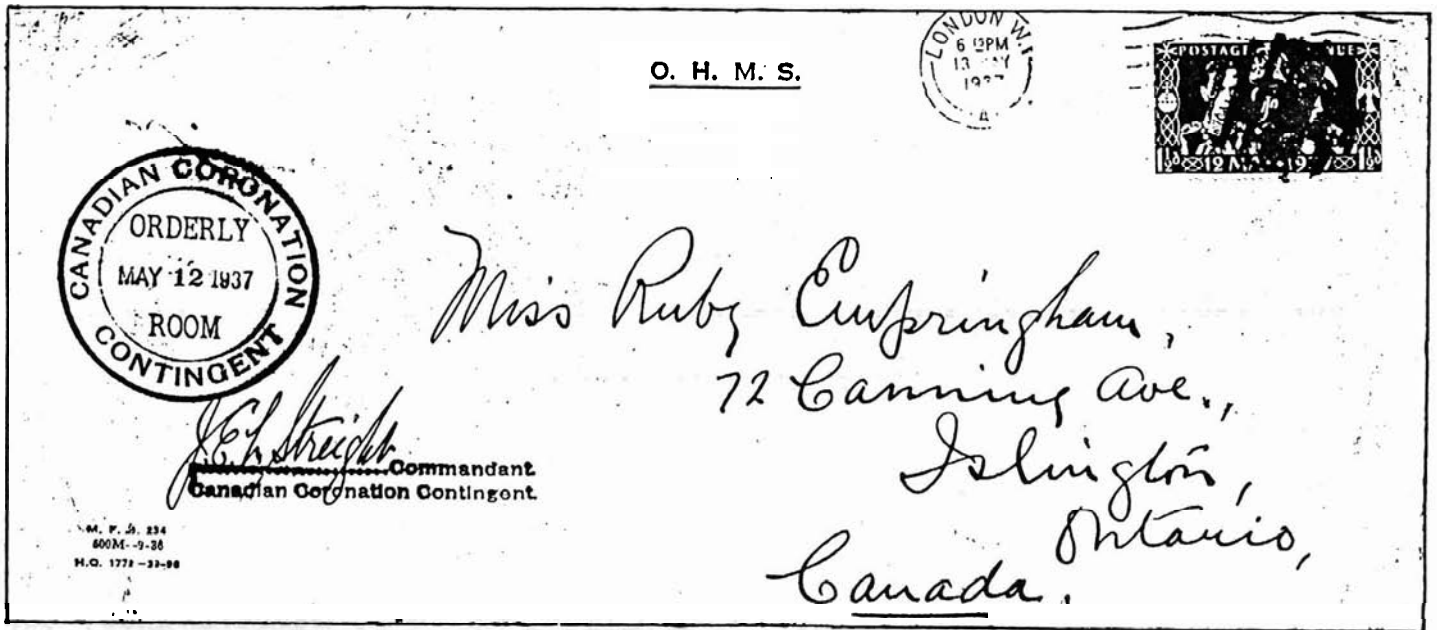
# Canadian Military Mail Study Group

## NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1999

NEWSLETTER NO. 139  
Page 391

CANADIAN 1937 CORONATION CONTINGENT--  
By Doug Sayles



[Reduced 78%]

I don't believe this marking has been reported in the Newsletter to date, and no reference available to me has the story. The Coronation referred to is that of King George VI. It appears that one or two representatives, mostly officers, from each Permanent Force Regiment were sent and I have culled a few names from regimental histories. The Contingent was honoured by being allowed to mount the guard at Buckingham Palace for one day. I suspect the O/R handstamp and officer's signature were required to qualify the letter for a concession rate of 1½d to Canada. Can any Newsletter readers confirm this or provide more details? [Although I cannot add to the question of the concessional rate, I can contribute some information regarding Col. Streight and his appearance in the Coronation procession from Westminster Abbey. The information is from the Official Souvenir Programme published by

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[Cont'd.]

CHAIRMAN/TREASURER: W.J. BAILEY, #5-8191 FRANCIS RD., RICHMOND, BC V6Y 1A5  
EDITOR: D. MARIO, BOX 342, SASKATOON, SK S7K 3L3

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Odhams Press Ltd., Long Acre, London, England. Ed Richardson wrote on the 1911 Canadian Coronation Contingent for King George V (Topics, Mar.-April 1984, #400.)Ed.]



The Officer Commanding the Contingent of the Commonwealth of Australia.  
 General Sir Harry G. Chauvel, G.C.M.G., K. C. B.  
 Staff Officer.  
 Aide-de-Camp.

The Contingent of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Officer Commanding the Contingent of the Dominion of Canada.  
 Colonel J. E. L. Straight, M.C., V.D.  
 Staff Officer.

The Contingent of the Dominion of Canada

The Band of the Royal Air Force.

The Officer Commanding the Royal Air Force Detachment.  
 Group-Captain A. H. Jackson.  
 Staff Officers.

The Royal Air Force Detachment.

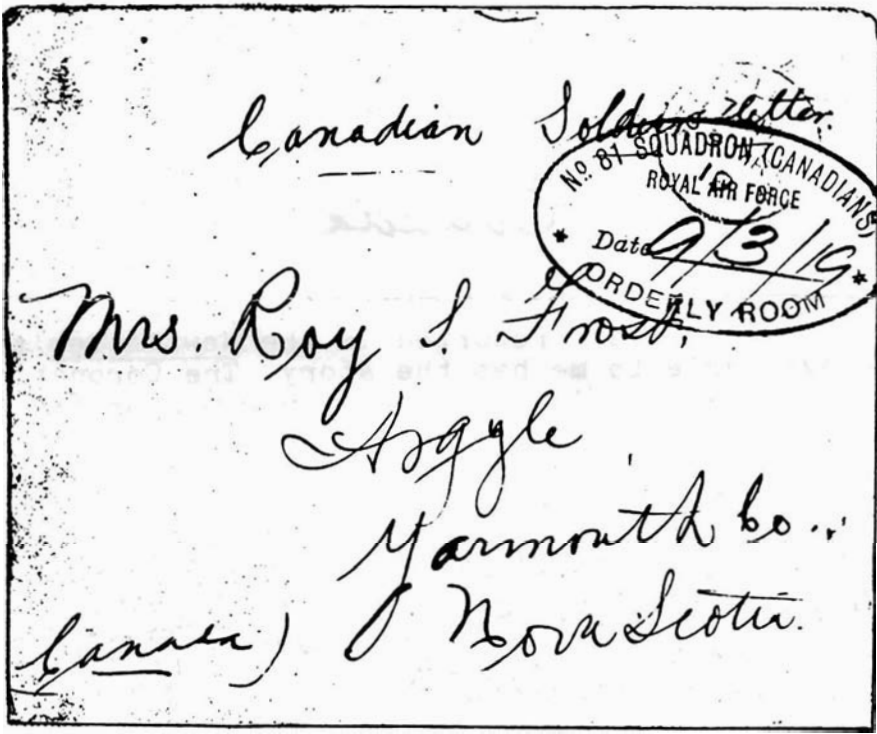
The General Officer Commanding the Indian Contingent.  
 General Sir Henry E. ap Rhys Pryce, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C. Gen.  
 Staff Officers.

The Indian Contingent:

The Officer Commanding, Officers Training Corps (Senior Division),  
 Colonel K. D. B. Murray, C.B., D.S.O.  
 Detachment, The Officers Training Corps.  
 Detachment, The King's Own Malta Regiment.  
 Detachment, The Bermuda Militia.  
 Detachment, The Royal Jersey Militia.  
 Detachment, The Royal Guernsey Militia.  
 Detachment, Territorial Army Nursing Service.  
 Detachment, Royal Army Chaplains' Department (Territorial Army).  
 Detachment, Engineer and Railway Staff Corps.

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NO.1 SQN., CANADIAN AIR FORCE--By A.D. Hanes



Dave sent in this very rare O/R marking from No.81 Squadron (Canadian), R.A.F. in England.

[In November 1918, as many members know, two all-Canadian Squadrons 1 and 2 were formed at Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire to create the C.A.F. These squadrons were disbanded in 1920.

Dave, along with Colin Pomfret, have sent in several copies of their Great War Canadian Air Force covers and these will be featured in upcoming issues. Ed.]

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Dear Fellow CMMSG Members: Spring is just around the corner so it's time for another Newsletter! A member has suggested a 12pp. NL permanently and if Canada Post obliges, I thought "why not"? It will be up to the membership, though, to keep me well-supplied with articles. YOU HAVE BEEN GREAT--KEEP IT UP!! I hope that you enjoy this issue.

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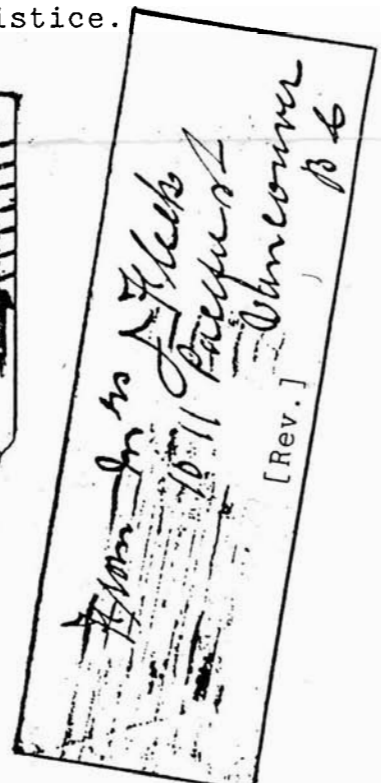
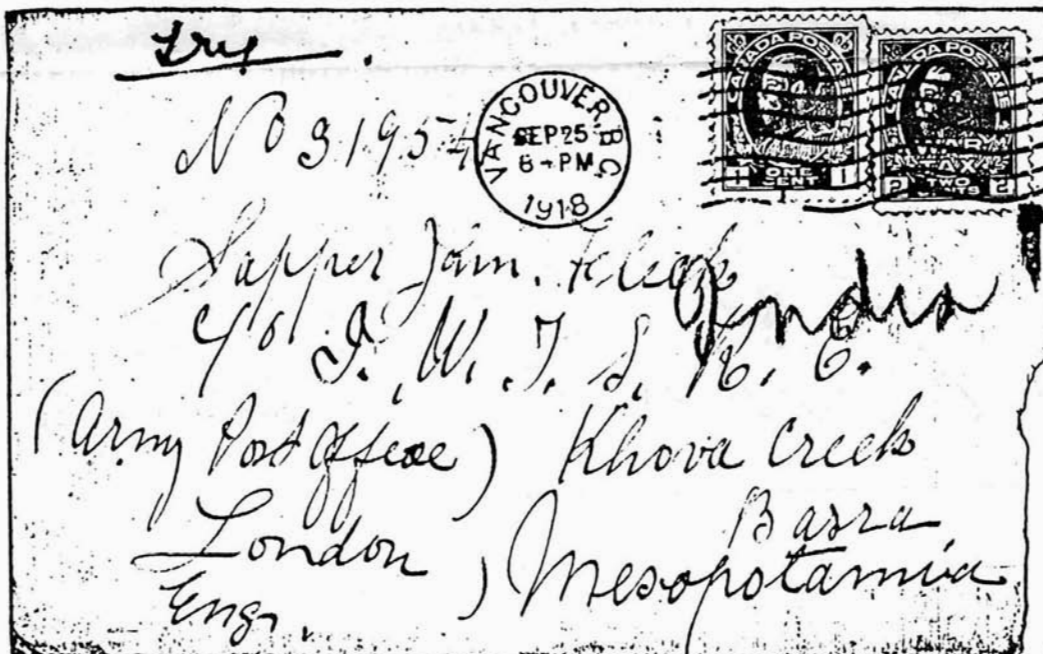
CANADIANS IN MESOPOTAMIA-  
THE FIRST WORLD WAR--By Robert Toombs

During the First World War British and Indian troops advanced from Basra on the Persian Gulf into the Turkish province of Mesopotamia (present day Iraq). By March 1917 they reached Baghdad. Transport in Mesopotamia relied on the rivers as had been done for centuries [as] local roads were very rudimentary and were generally impassable in the wet season. The Tigris-Euphrates river system was the principal line of advance and supply inland from the Persian Gulf for the British.

Riverboats were used to ferry men, food, supplies, and mail on this river system. As the British-Indian forces advanced and military involvement increased, additional craft and experienced rivermen were required. Boats were procured from various locations around the Empire, including England.

In September 1916 5 officers and 23 other ranks from the Canadian Pioneer Training Depot in Shorncliffe, England, were sent to join the Royal Engineer's Inland Waterways Transport Service in Mesopotamia. They were boatmen from the rivers and lakes of British Columbia, recruited in B.C. into the First Canadian Pioneer Details. Some of them remained in Mesopotamia until 1920 (1).

The illustrated envelope is from Mrs. J. Fleck, 1011 Pacific Street, Vancouver, B.C. to No. 319541 Sapper John Fleck, I.W.T.S.R.E. (Inland Waterways Transport Service, Royal Engineers) at Khova Creek, Basra, Mesopotamia via the Army Post Office, London, England. It is franked with three cents and postmarked departing from Vancouver on September 25, 1918. There are no receiving marks, save "Try" (in red ink) and "India" (in blue pencil). It is not known if Sapper Fleck was originally a member of the First Overseas Canadian Pioneer Detail from British Columbia mentioned above. British military archives confirm that he was a Royal Engineer Sapper and indicate that he was awarded the British and Victory Service Medals after the Armistice.



Page 394

On March 2, 1918, 210 hand-picked volunteers for the British Mission to the Caucasus (Dunsterforce) arrived in Basra, of whom 41 were from Canadian forces in Flanders. The senior officer was Lt. Col. John Warden of Vancouver. [Capt. W.W. Murray writing on the subject has noted]:

The Canadians left Basra for Baghdad around the middle of March (1918), the trip being made in a former London County Council steamboat. . . . [A] large percentage of the officers and crews of those river craft was made up of British Columbians. Reunions at Basra between these Inland Waterways Transport men and the Dunsterforce Canadians were numerous and entertaining. (2)

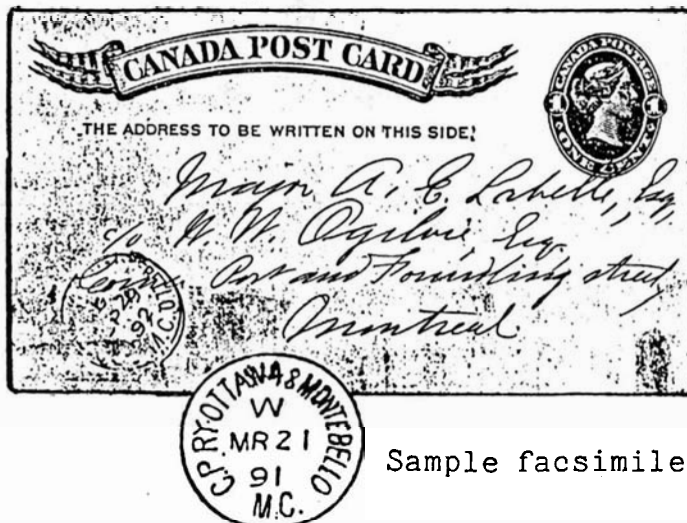
Lt. Col. Warden, while on medical leave for war wounds received in Flanders, raised his own Battalion, the 102nd Canadian, in Vancouver in 1916. He [subsequently] fought at Vimy in 1917. As second in command of Dunsterforce, he led the defence of Russian Baku against the Turks in early September 1918.

Immediately following the disbandment of Dunsterforce on September 22, 1918, he commanded the British contingent sent to Krasnovodsk. [He went] to assist the White Russians against the Red Russians, who were supported by freed Austrian and German ex-POW's based at Tashkent (3,4). After returning to Mesopotamia he was sent to Siberia, where he commanded the British Training Unit attached to the Russian Officers School at Vladivostok (1).

## References:

- (1) MacLaren, Roy. Canadians in Russia, 1918-1919. Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1976.
- (2) Murray, Captain W.W. "Canadians in Dunsterforce". Canadian Defence Quarterly. Vol. VIII (Oct. 1930-July 1931). Ottawa: Privately printed.
- (3) Toombs, Robert. "Early Allied Intervention Mail to South Russia, 1918". The Canadian Philatelist. Vol. XXXIV (No.2, March-April, 1993). Toronto: Philaprint, Inc., 1993.
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_ . "Letters to the Editor: A Correction". The Canadian Philatelist. Vol. XXXIV (No.4, July-Aug., 1993). Toronto: Philaprint, Inc., 1993.

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Sample facsimile #0-236

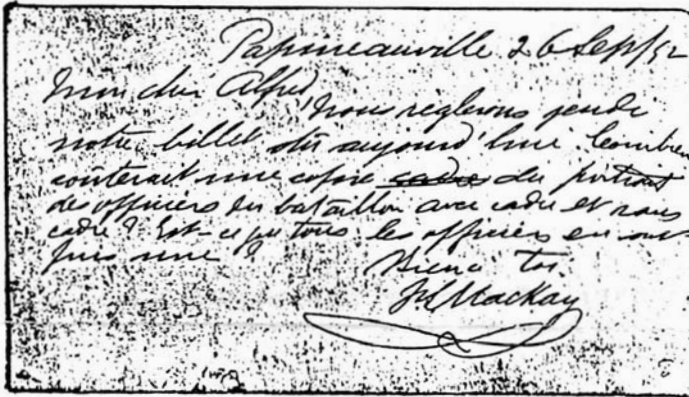
AN EARLY MILITIA-RELATED ITEM--  
By J.C. Campbell

Another link with Canada's early militia, this card was postmarked September 29, 1892 at Papineauville, Quebec. The writer was Captain Francis S. Mackay, O/C of the 7th Company of the 65th Battalion (the "Mount Royal Rifles") with headquarters in Montreal. The addressee was Major Alfred E. Labelle, Adjutant of the Battalion.

[Cont'd.]

The message is as follows:

Thursday we will settle our account (of today). How much would a copy of the portrait of the officers of the battalion cost with and without a frame? Have all the officers ordered one?



The 65th was organized on June 18, 1869.

Reference:

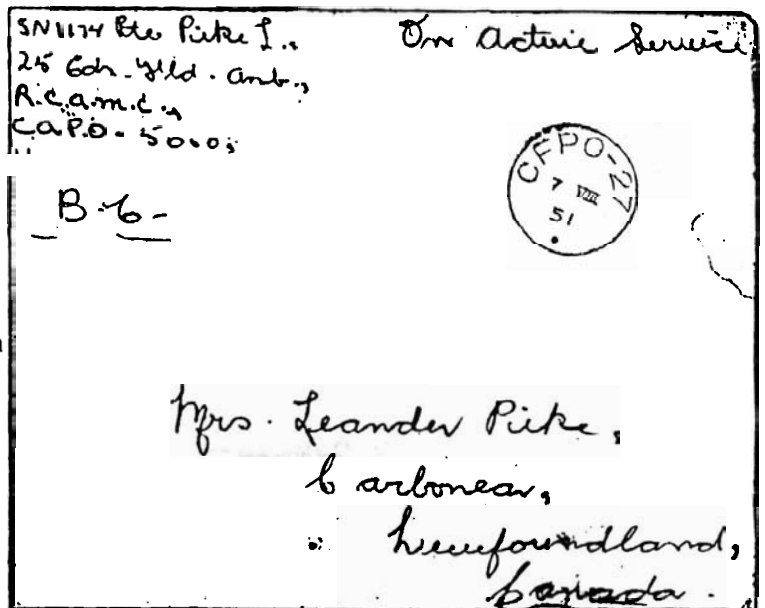
Canadian Almanac. Toronto: The Copp, Clarke Co., Ltd., 1890, 1900.

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A NEWFOUNDLANDER IN KOREA-1951—By D. Mario

Newfoundlanders have had a long and varied association with the military. This cover, bearing the CFPO-27 7 VIII 51 postmark from a member of the 25th Canadian Field Ambulance at Yongson, Korea is an example of their widespread contributions.

No. 25 C.F.A., Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, along with the 25th Brigade Group, left Seattle, Washington on April 19, 1951 for Korea. They arrived at Pusan on May 4 and within three weeks, No. 25 was engaged in active operations. The Field Ambulance provided initial first aid and organized the evacuation of casualties to nearby hospitals.



In April 1952 the first major rotation of Canadian troops occurred and the 25th Canadian Field Ambulance was replaced by the 37th C.F.A.

Reference:

Nicholson, Col.G.W.L. Seventy Years of Service: A History of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 1977.

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Members are reminded not to forget about the Postal History Society of Canada's E.R. "Ritch" Toop Award for military exhibits at the two national shows in Edmonton and at ORAPEX (deadline April 1). Why not "show the colours" for our military studies. Best of luck to all!

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COMMISSIONING OF H.M.C.S. VANCOUVER--By Wilf Whitehouse

Under sunny skies at Canada Place in Vancouver, B.C., H.M.C.S. Vancouver (the third ship of the name) was commissioned Monday August 23, 1993. She was the second of twelve "City" Class Patrol Frigates being built to modernize our navy.

The 1,000 invited guests included dignitaries, former members of the ships' companies of the previous two ships named Vancouver, and other naval veterans. H.M.C.S. Restigouche also attended and, I believe, she brought with her Vice-Admiral Cairns, Pacific Maritime Command, and perhaps the Naden band along for the ceremony.



HMCS VANCOUVER FFH 331

COMMISSIONING CEREMONY 23 AUGUST 1993

Fig. 1

It should be mentioned here that the bells from the two previous ships are on display in the City Hall at Vancouver. The city had a new bell cast and it was presented to the ship at the commissioning ceremony by the Mayor.

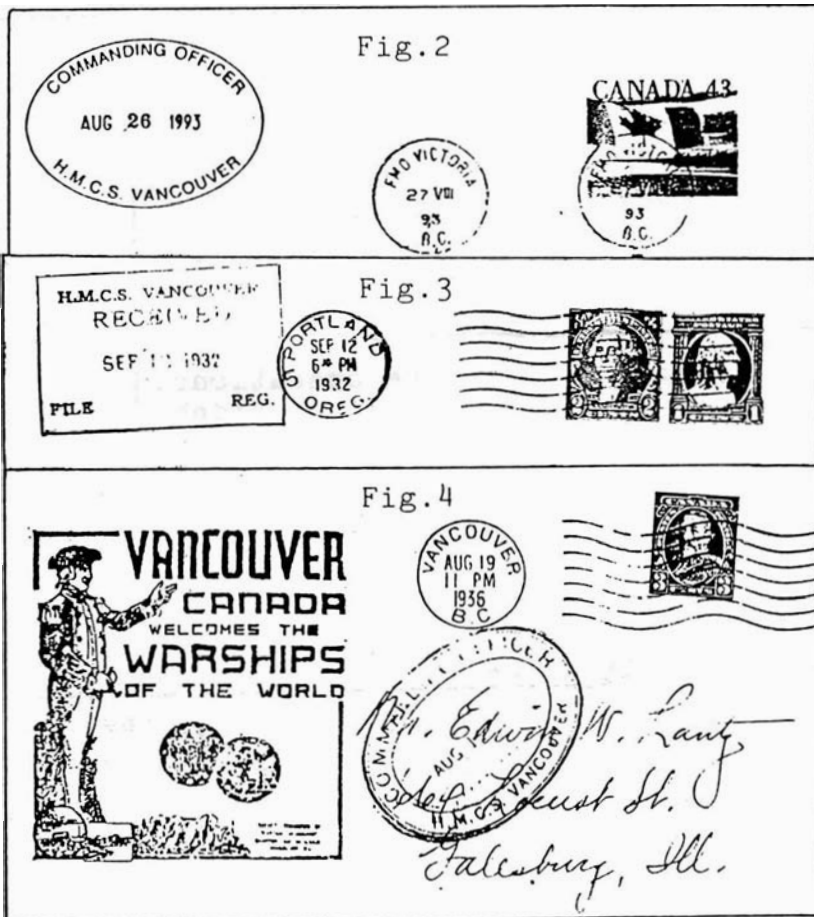
The ship carries pendant number 331, her motto is "Ever on Guard", and her badge is prominent on the cover of the Schedule of Events Booklet which is illustrated in Fig.1 at left (reduced).

A philatelic cover from the ship on her return to Esquimalt dated August 26, 1993 is illustrated below (Fig.2).

The first Vancouver was an "S" Class Destroyer

built during the First World War for the Royal Navy. She was placed on loan to Canada after an order was given to Thornycroft Ltd., Southampton, to build Saguenay and Skeena for the R.C.N. Vancouver (ex-Toreador) was commissioned into the R.C.N. in March 1928 and acted as a training ship for R.C.N.V.R personnel until paid off in November 1936 (Figs. 3, 4).

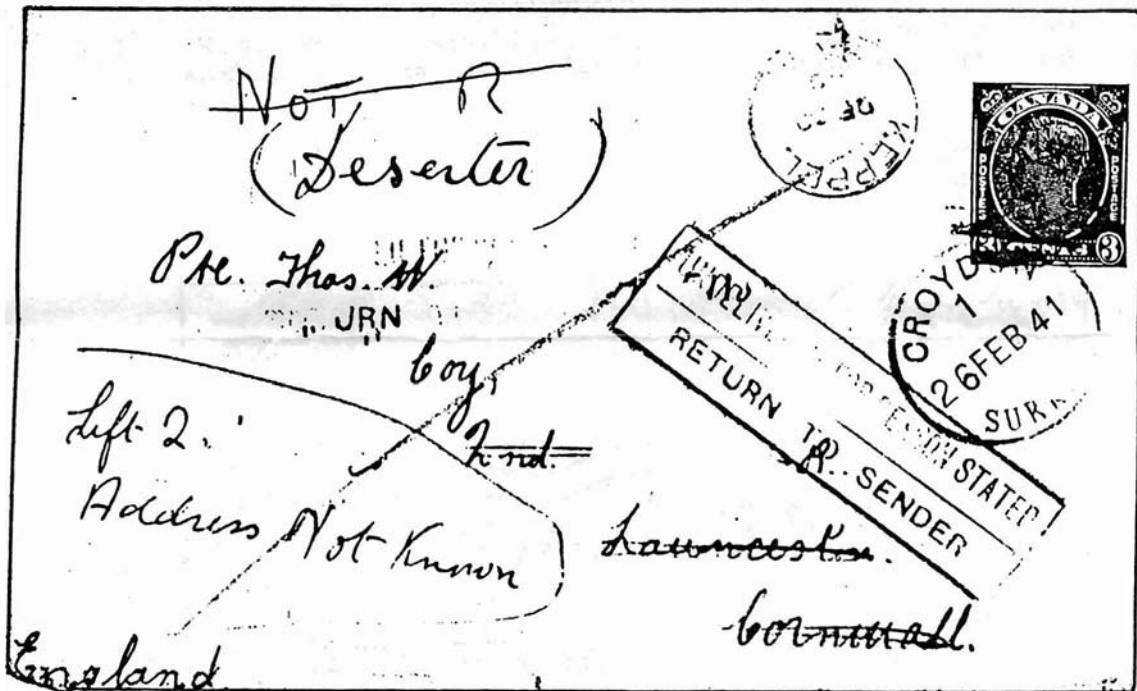
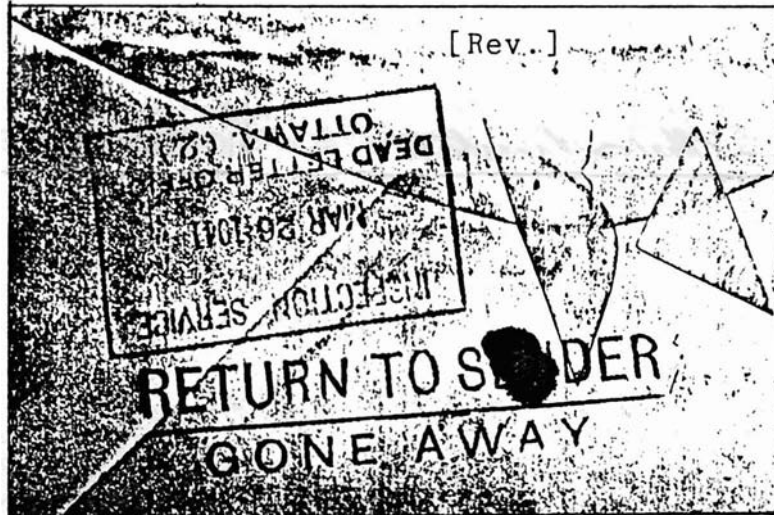
The second Vancouver was a "Flower" Class Corvette commissioned at Esquimalt in March 1942. After two tours of duty in Aleutian waters between August 1942 and May 1943, she was assigned to the East Coast in February 1944 where she remained on convoy escort duty until war's end.



AN APPROPRIATE HANDSTAMP?--By John Frith

This directional marking applied in England to a cover addressed to a Private who had "deserted" caught my "funny bone" and I thought I'd share it with the rest of the CMMSG members.

It is understood that a third line was later added to the marking on the reverse of the cover that read "FOR A LONG, LONG TIME"!!! [Although publishing this type of material may appear to some as being controversial, efforts have been made to "protect" the identity of the addressee. Ed.]



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NEWSLETTER INDEX: In 1991 the late E.R. "Ritch" Toop produced an Index for the Study Group from Issues 1-100. These will be available for \$5 for Canadian addresses and \$5US for U.S./international addressees. This includes the "Benchmark List" assigning whole page numbers. Work is progressing on an Index for #101+ but this won't be available for some time. Orders payable to "Dean Mario" please.

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CANADIAN-RELATED GREAT WAR NAVAL COVERS--By Colin Pomfret

Fig.1 is a cover to Ottawa from H.M. Motor Launch 202. It bears the London machine postmark "RECEIVED FROM HM SHIP/NO CHARGE TO BE RAISED" and is dated October 26, 1917. It was censored by A. Holt, a Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R. Over 500 Motor Launches were in service with the Royal Navy during the Great War, and the majority of them were built in Canada or the U.S.A.

Fig.1



This second cover (Fig.2) is also related to the Motor Launches and bears a London machine cancel dated February 28, 1917. It also bears the "CEN (ML) SOR" marking and is addressed to Canada. It was censored by H.E. Dowding, Sub.Lt., R.N.O.R. from the Motor Launch Base, Dover Command.

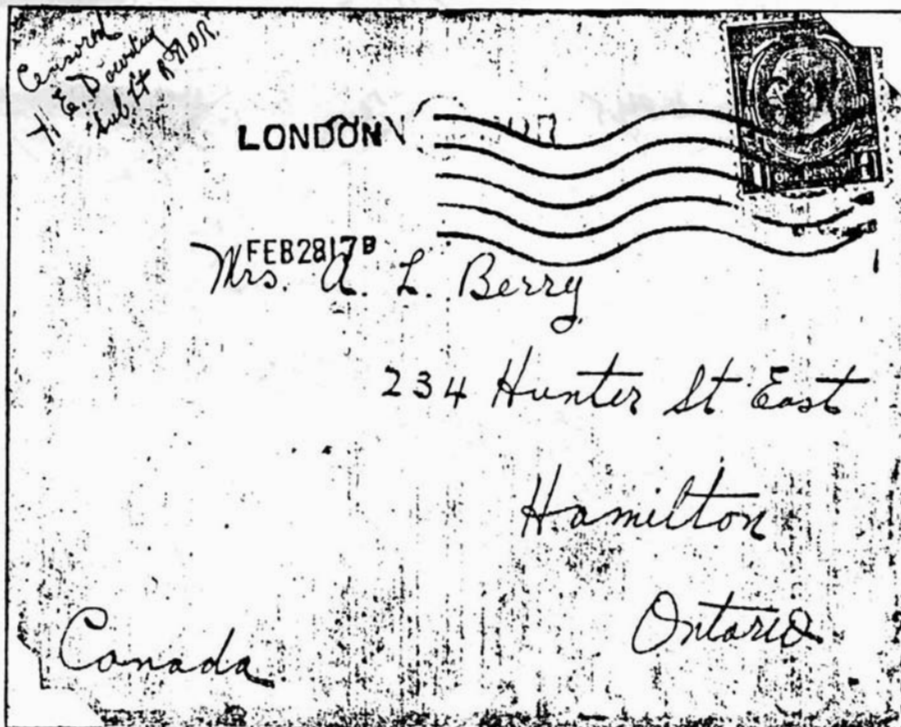


Fig.2



Finally, the third cover (Fig.3) is from H.M.S. Hearty and self-censored by Lt. John Leonard Foreman, a Canadian serving in the R.N.V.R. H.M.S. Hearty was a survey vessel attached to the Admiralty Survey Cruiser Squadron at this time in the North Sea. Note the "Recd. from H.M. Ship" etc. in manuscript in place of the normal rubber stamp. Dr. M. Gould tells me that this is probably unique.

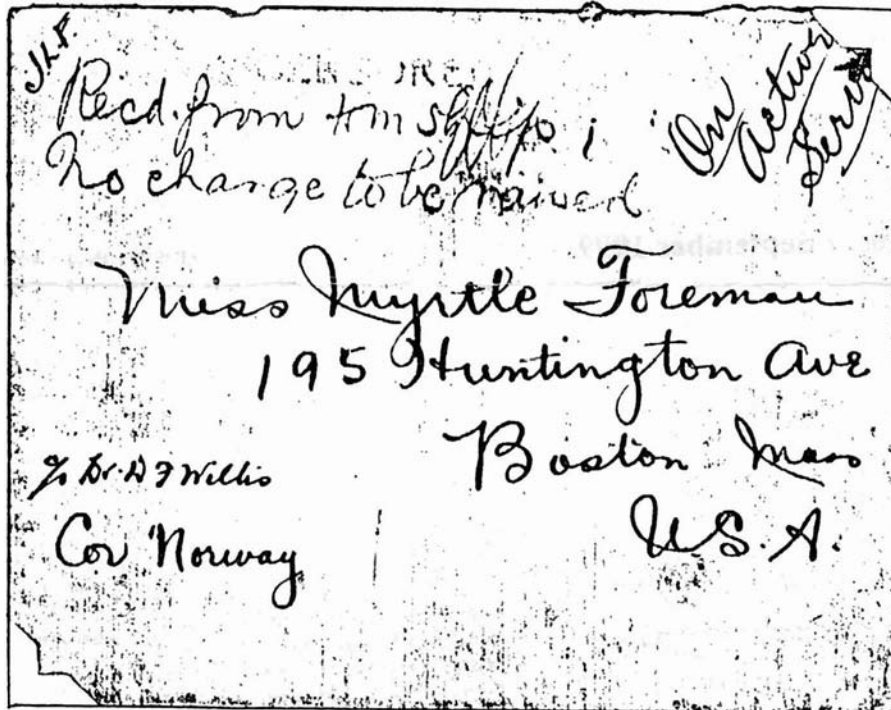
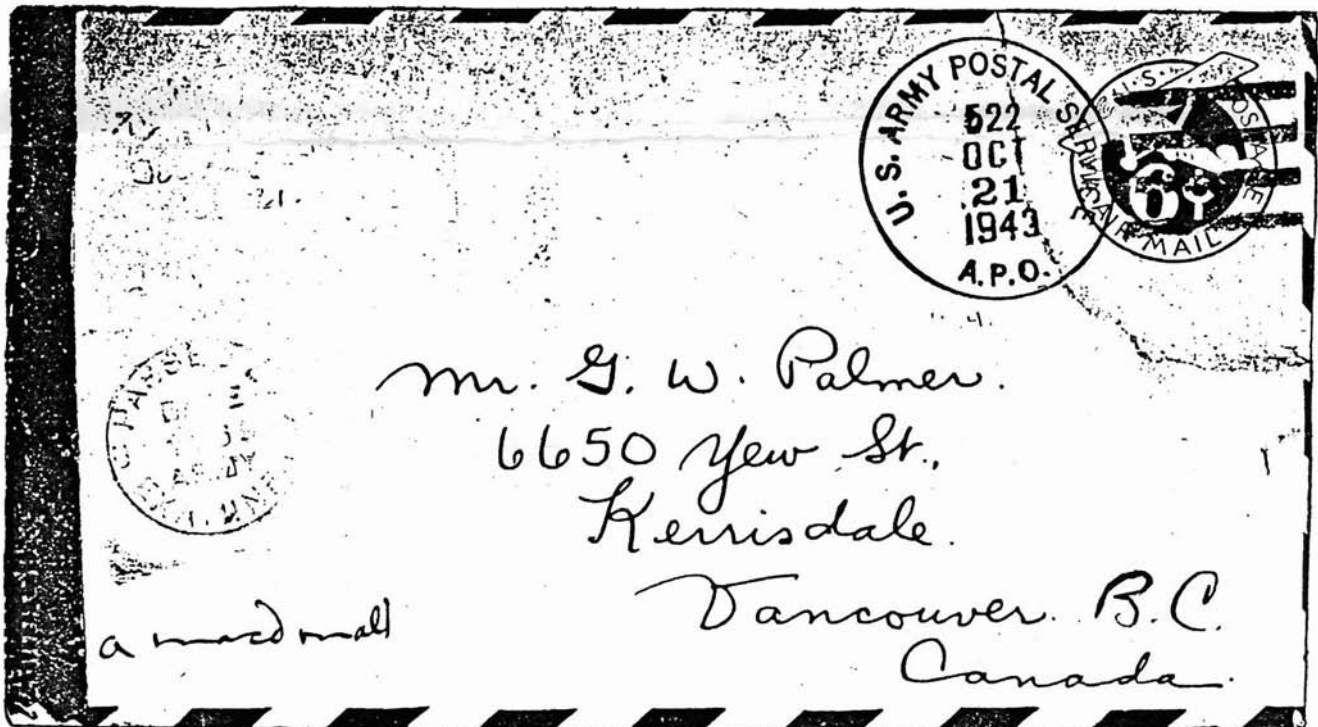


Fig.3

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THE R.C.A.F. IN TUNIS--By W.G. Robinson



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The preceding cover was mailed to Vancouver, B.C. by a Leading Aircraftsman of the R.C.A.F. from U.S. APO 522 on October 21, 1943. It bears the circular censor mark of U.S. Base Army Examiner 1169, and the signature of a censoring Officer.

U.S. APO 522 was located in Tunis from July 1943 to August 1944. The writer was probably attached to the British Mediterranean Air Forces.

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10-12 September 1999

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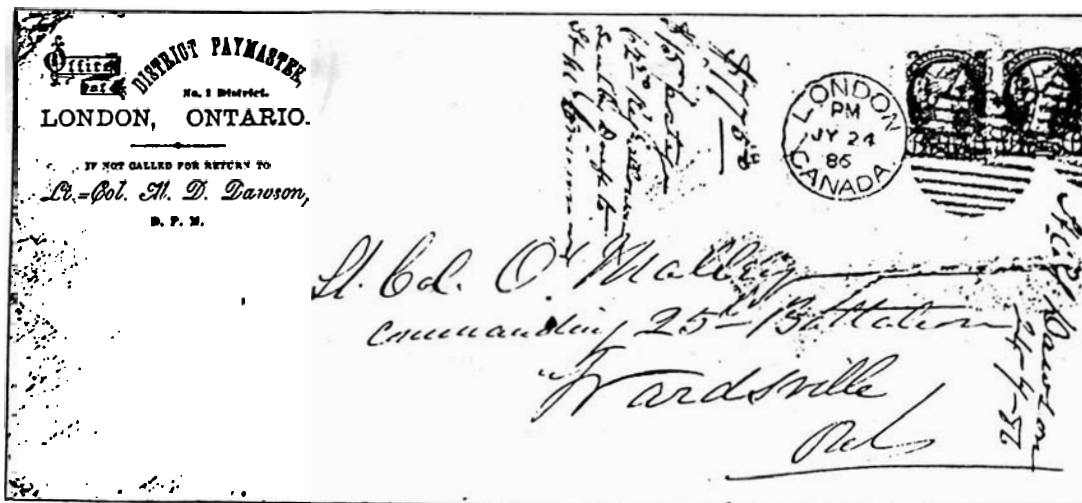
INFORMATION, RESERVATIONS, ENTRY FORMS FROM

Tony Brooks  
5452 North Pennsylvania Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46220 USA  
317-257-9461  
tonybrooks@aol.com

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### NO. 1 DISTRICT PAYMASTER-1886--By Colin Pomfret

Colin also sent a copy of the cover below [reduced 65%]. It's addressed to a familiar name to militia collectors, Lt.Col. O'Malley, at this time commanding the 25th Battalion. Note the 12¢ rate!



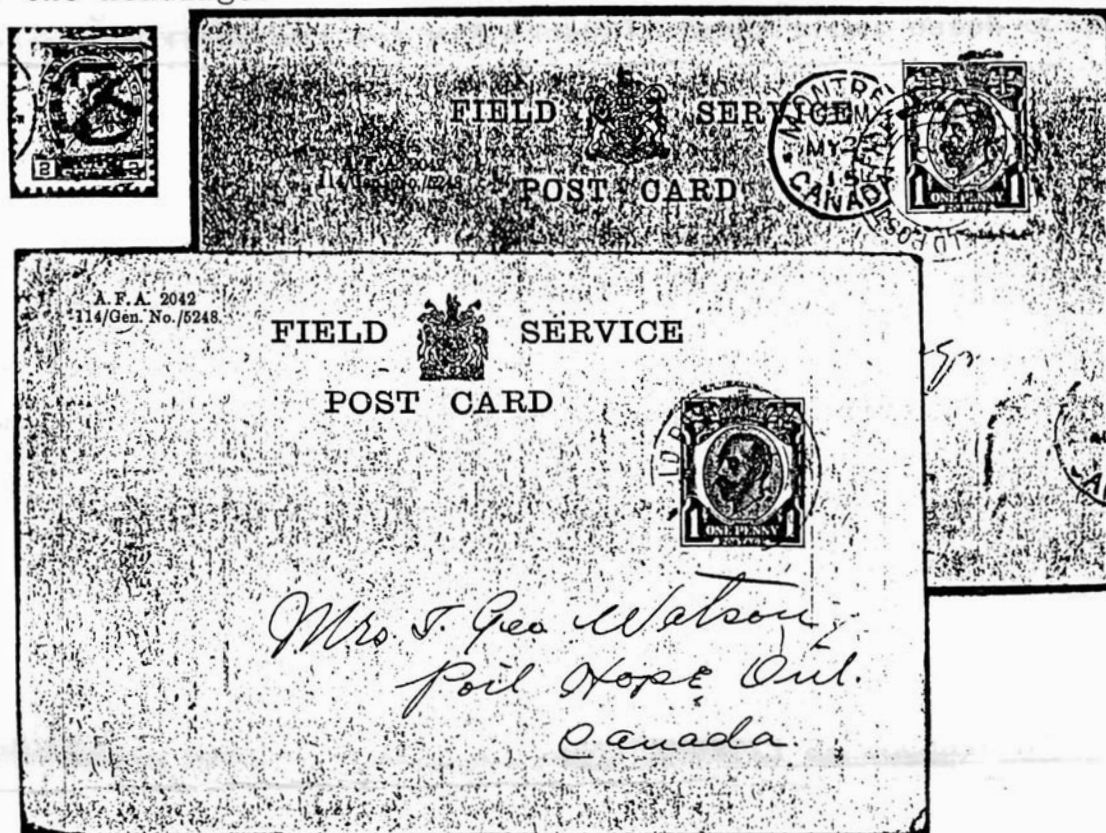
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FIELD SERVICE POST CARDS (GREAT WAR)--By J.C. Campbell

Canada was advised on August 4, 1914 that Great Britain was at war. To quote from History of the British Army Postal Service, Vol.II by E.B. Proud, page 10:

At the beginning of the War the only special stationery sold by the A.P.S. [Army Postal Service] was the Field Service [Post] Card. [T]wo printings were produced, one with the address side all in [r]ed [see top illustration] and one with only the stamp printed in [r]ed [see bottom illustration].

Note the several differences in positioning of the stamps in relation to the headings.



The top card was cancelled "Field Post Office T.X MY 9 15" and, subsequently, "Montreal MY 25" cancelling the Admiral stamp added there.

The bottom card was cancelled "Field Post Office ?. X 4 MR 15" and backstamped "Port Hope MR 17".

For further information on Field Service Post Cards see NL 55, pgs. 339-340. Can readers report examples of other varieties of cards from the period? Proud illustrates two examples: AFA204a and Army Form Z.54.



16 - 18 September 1999, Vernon, British Columbia

☰ ITALIAN P.O.W. ADDITION--By Kim Dodwell

Kim Dodwell writes: "Regarding John Daynes' most interesting cover on the front page of NL #138, p.381, it is probably most unlikely to have come from a captured U-boat crew member. The U-boats did have a few Italians as crew but very few, and how could he have got his P.O.W. number so soon after being captured? Captured U-boat crew were 'gold' for the intelligence, and would not have been allowed to write letters shortly after capture with only the RCN ship's censor. No, my guess is that he was one of a ship-load of Italian P.O.W.'s in transit from either Britain or from North Africa (Wavell's [General, later Earl, Sir Archibald Percival] victories over the Italians) via the Cape to Canada. [The ship] may have been torpedoed in the North Atlantic and survivors picked up by a Canadian warship with Rocco Russo among them". [Thanks Kim for the additional comments, all of which make perfect sense. Perhaps I got "carried away" with the recent "U-boat Week" television series on our Canadian History channel! Any other suggestions? Ed.]

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1,413 DAYS: IN THE WAKE OF A CANADIAN  
DEMS GUNNER--By William A. Cowling



Members might be interested in a new book (to me) by William Cowling. It is a 124-page publication which is a personal story (and a fine tribute) of the author's father, a Canadian "Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship" Gunner during the Second World War. Walter Stewart Cowling served on several merchant vessels through the war and this is his story, complete with personal documents (some in colour), photos, and maps detailing his various routes. The book tells a broad story about the role DEMS played in the war and much information is provided which members may find especially useful. The 8½ x 11" soft-cover book (ISBN 0-9699212-0-9) is still available from the author. Price is \$15 delivered in Canada (members outside of Canada should send a few extra dollars for postage) from W.A. Cowling, 84 Shawglen Way, S.W., Calgary, AB Canada T2Y 1Y9. [Ed.]

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A WARM WELCOME IS EXTENDED TO:

OWEN L. WHITE, BOX 860, STN. "K", TORONTO, ON M4P 2H2--Collects "Y" Force in Jamaica plus a few minor interests.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

J. BARRY DALE, 1160 MEADOWLANDS DR., APT.#4, NEPEAN, ON K2E 6J2

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SMALL ADS

One insertion of up to four lines for a "Loonie"! For our non-Canadian members, that's a Canadian dollar. Please send your ad with "real" money or mint (Canadian preferred) stamps to the Editor's attention.

WANTED: Newfoundland WWI covers/  
cards. Everything! The Editor.  
(2/2)

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Congratulations are extended to Kim Dodwell for his receiving the CPSGB's Founders Trophy for his work on WWII postal history!

WANTED: Dept. of Militia and/or National Defence, Director of Records covers, 1912-1955; RCAMC mail any period; covers from South Africa to Canada 1942-45 with rectangular free franking cachets. J.C. Johnson, 9604 Kalamalka Rd., Vernon, BC V1B 1L3.  
(2/5)

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