



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

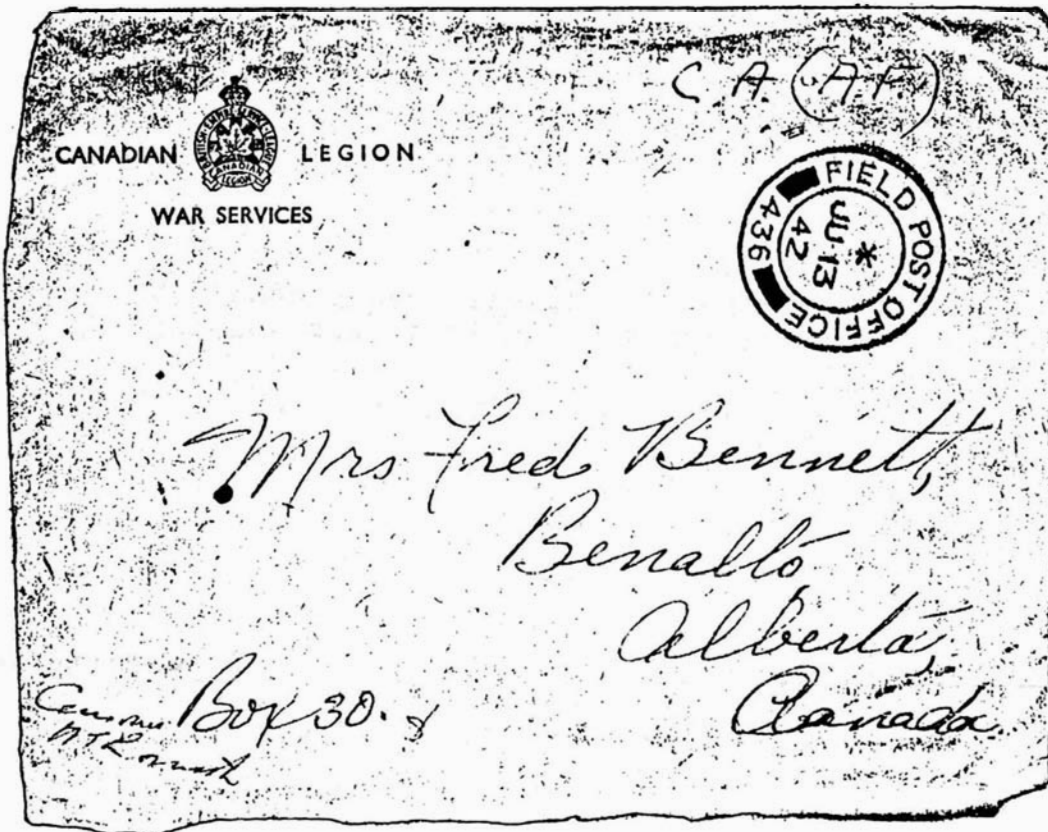


NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2000

NEWSLETTER NO. 143
Page 439

NEW "RULES & REG'S" FOR CORRESPONDENCE?--By Ken Ellison



The above cover and following letter contained within is quite curious and perhaps there is something of importance here. The first two paragraphs are the key and pertain to the numbering, rather than dating, letters from the sender. It seems odd to have to number letters when the orderly room stamp and the FPO are dated! I've seen lots of letters numbered but I've never noticed

[Cont'd.]

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

CANADIAN  LEGION

WAR SERVICES

Letter No 1.

1942

My dear Margie:
 Good morning, wife, and how are you to-
 day. "But, if you say, 'what day?'" seeing
 I've put no date on my letter.
 Well - new rules & regulations
 necessitate our numbering, rather than
 dating our letters from now on.

whether they were dated. This is the first "Letter No.1" so the order must have come out just before this letter was written. The orderly room marking on the reverse denotes "14th Army Tank Battalion/(The Calgary Regiment)/JUN 13 1942" while in East Sussex, U.K. It was received in Benalto, Alberta on July 16, 1942. Any thoughts?

Dear Fellow CMMSG Members:

Bill and I hope that everyone's holiday season went well and that your year 2000 has been going a-ok so far! Best wishes are extended to all for the coming months ahead.

You will see a few cosmetic changes in this issue. Once all of the bugs are worked out and adjustments made, we'll be on our way.

This issue is a bit tardy and I apologize. January was a bit hectic and with some family health problems, seemed to go faster than I had planned. I do hope to keep our schedule timely--keep those fillers and articles coming please!

You'll find some very interesting items contained herein. The wide-range of articles and research done by members is especially enjoyable. The "big issue" for Korea is coming along nicely and my thanks go to everyone who has submitted items. There's still time should you wish to send something in.

Henk Burgers has come forward to work on an updated index and our thanks are extended to him. Look for this in the coming months and I expect that it will provide members with a handy reference tool.

Our 2000 nominal roll is also enclosed. Although we did lose a few members we've still managed to maintain a sizeable group.

Members who exhibit military mail should be reminded that the PHSC's "E.R. 'Ritch' Toop Award" is still presented and time is short for entries in Edmonton and Ottawa. Telephone Dr. John Powell at (780) 435-7006 (Edmonton Spring National/Regional) or the R.A. Stamp Club at (613) 733-5100 (ORAPEX) for more information. Good luck!

A warm welcome is extended to: DR. G.J. RAYMOND, "Bali-Hai", Box 228, Sugar Land, TX 77487-0228, U.S.A.!

A C.A.M.C. NURSING SISTER IN RUSSIA--By Jon Johnson

Nursing Sister Edith Tilley Hegan [R.R.C.*] joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps on February 4, 1915. Her first overseas position was at #2 Canadian General Hospital, Le Treport, France, then at #1 Casualty Clearing Station. On May 15, 1916, two months after her 35th birthday, she was transferred to the Anglo-Russian Hospital in St. Petersburg, Russia. The trip itself took the better part of a month as she had to travel via Archangel. The assignment to Russia was planned for six months although, based on her return to England on May 5, 1917, she was probably there for about eight months.

The Anglo-Russian Hospital was a gift from the British people to Russia for wounded Russian soldiers. It was located in the Dmiitri Palace on Nevshy Prospekt. Lady Sybil Gray, daughter of a former Governor General of Canada, was in charge. The staff included twenty nursing sisters and ten V.A.D.'s [Voluntary Aid Detachment personnel]. Four C.A.M.C. nursing sisters served at the hospital; each serving for about six months.

N/S Hegan described in her diary that "Russian troops had been shooting people with machine guns in the streets outside the hospital on February 24th and 28th". This cover has a London, England transit mark of 6 MR/17. Her letter, addressed to her mother, was written a few weeks prior to the start of the Russian Revolution.



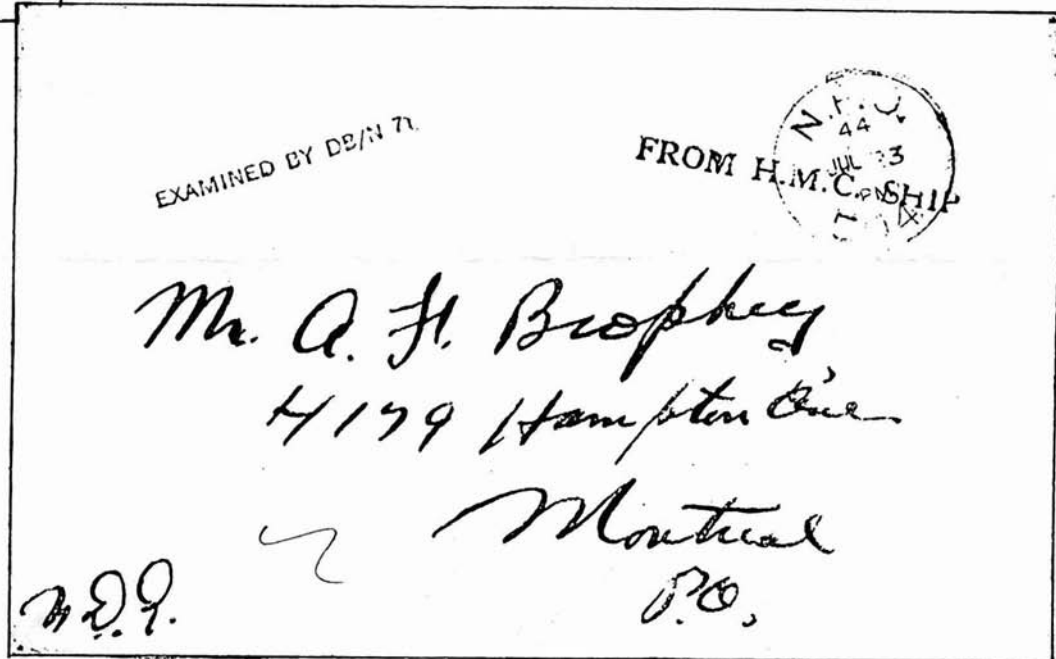
The direct translation of the hospital cachet from Russian is "Consisting Under ? Patronage Ladyship Imperialist Anglo-Russian Hospital/ Name Queen British Alexandra in St. Petersburg". The Empress of Russia was also Alexandra so the "British" was added to avoid confusion. The British military nursing service was entitled the "Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service" which is also significant.

[*Received the Royal Red Cross decoration, London Gazette, 20/07/18 at #11 C.G.H., Shorncliffe. Members of the CPSCB will recognize this cover from David Whiteley's "The British Missions To Russia, 1918-20: The Canadian Experience," Maple Leaves, 70, Oct. 1998, p. 352. Ed.]

Page 442

N.P.O. 504--By J.C. Campbell

H.M.C.M.L. 095
Halifax
N.S.



This Second World War cover was postmarked "N.P.O./44/JUL 23/PM 504" which was the Navy post office at H.M.C.S. Fort Ramsay, Quebec on the Gaspé coast. The office was opened May 12, 1944 and closed August 20, 1945. The two straightline markings were applied in red ink.

Fort Ramsay was officially commissioned May 1, 1942 and served as a base of operations for Gulf Escort Force whose task was sea-going security patrols, rescue, inspections, etc. in the St. Lawrence River and the Gulf.

The inscription shown at upper left is found on the underflap and appears to read "H.M.C.M.L. 095/Halifax/N.S.". Quite a number of Fair-mile motor launches formed the backbone of defence at this Navy base. Their displacement was 79 tons and full speed was 20 knots. Power was twin 630 hp Hall-Scott diesels.

Some twenty-eight ships were torpedoed in this area including merchant and Navy ships. The first two were merchant ships and were lost on May 11-12, 1942. The last was HMCS Esquimalt, a minesweeper lost April 16, 1945.

References:

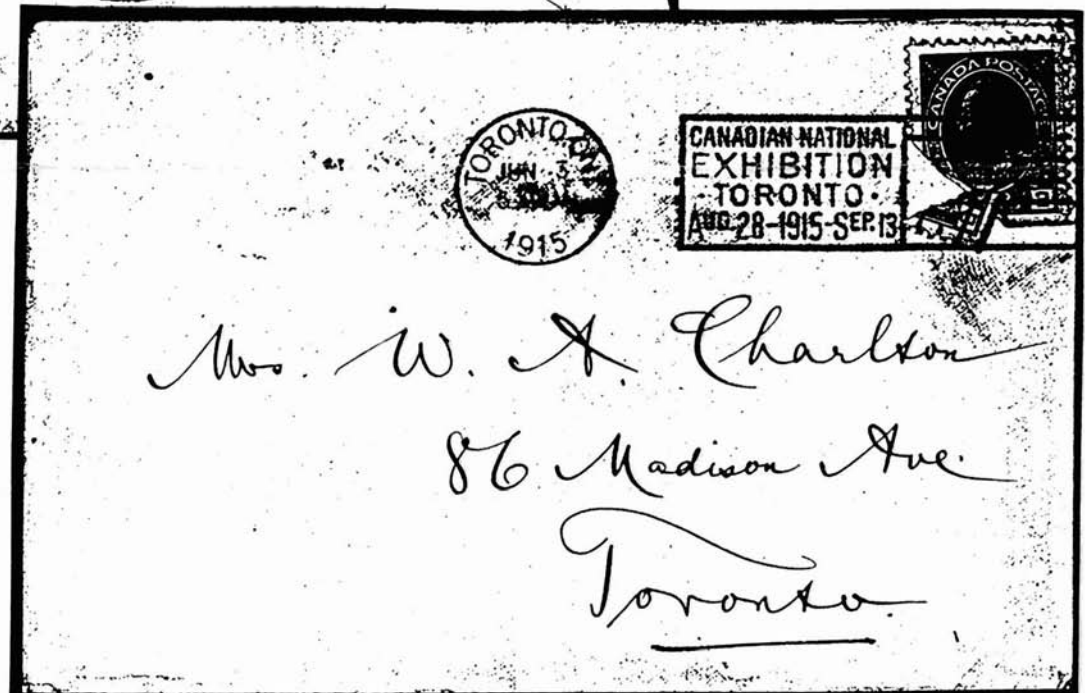
Essex, James W. Victory in the St. Lawrence. Erin, Ont.: Boston Mills Press, 1984.

Tucker, G.N. The Naval Service of Canada. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952.

TORONTO INTERNMENT CAMP-FIRST REPORT--By Doug Sayles

The latest Bailey & Toop catalogue indicates that this internment camp operated from December 14, 1914 to October 2, 1916 at Stanley Barracks in Toronto, but does not list or illustrate the hammer. I cannot find any reference to this hammer in past issues of the Newsletter, so I believe that this is the first report of this hammer.

We know that internment camps were established in Toronto and Montreal (and perhaps other cities such as Brandon?) primarily as holding and transit camps until a final destination for the internees was selected and established. The Toronto Camp was located at Stanley Barracks, adjacent to the Exhibition Grounds and the C.E.F. camp located there (perhaps an important consideration in choosing the Barracks' location). Those interned were mostly unnaturalized immigrants from Germany and Austria-Hungary. It appears that many of the internees were illiterate or, at best, semi-literate so it is no surprise that there are few surviving letters.



Page 444

P.O.W. CAMP 20, GRAVENHURST, ONTARIO--By Susan Sheffield

Susan has been doing a great deal of research on the above Second World War P.O.W. Camp. She sent in a copy of the report about the Camp by the Red Cross in 1941, an interesting photograph showing part of the Camp's perimeter, and a partial listing of some of the camps in Canada.

**Missions du
Comité International**

*Visites de camps de prisonniers de guerre au Canada,
faites par M.E.-L. Maag,*

CAMP n° 20, 6 octobre 1941

Le jour de la visite du délégué du Comité international, trois voitures de l'armée arrivèrent au camp; elles étaient chargées de colis et d'uniformes allemands que la Croix-Rouge allemande avait adressés à l'homme de confiance. Ces colis — il y en avait plusieurs centaines — étaient destinés aux hommes de l'armée de l'air et de terre.

Ni le commandant du camp, ni l'homme de confiance n'eurent aucune plainte à formuler au sujet des prisonniers.

Les lettres mettent de quarante à cent jours pour arriver d'Allemagne, et les colis cinquante jours en moyenne. L'homme de confiance exprima sa reconnaissance et celle des hommes dont il a la responsabilité, pour le grand nombre de dons que son camp a reçus de la Croix-Rouge allemande.

Le délégué signale le fait que le camp n° 20 est renommé pour sa ménagerie et il indique que le jardin zoologique a été enrichi d'un deuxième ourson, de deux rats, sans compter des singes, lapins, écureuils et d'autres animaux.

Pour les prisonniers eux-mêmes, leur état général de santé doit être considéré comme excellent.

— 40 —

"Visits to Prisoner of War Camps in Canada by M.E.-L. Maag, ...

The day the delegate of the International Committee visited, three army trucks arrived in camp; they were full of packages and German uniforms which the German Red Cross had sent to the 'trustee'*. These packages--there were several hundred--were for members of the army and the air force.

Neither the camp commander, nor the 'trustee'* had any complaints concerning the prisoners.

Letters take 40 to 100 days to arrive from Germany, and packages 50 days on average. The 'trustee'* expressed his gratitude, and that of the men who were his responsibility, for the large number of gifts (donations) that his camp had received from the German Red Cross.

The delegate notes that Camp 20 is famous for its zoo, and that the zoo had recently added a second bear cub, two baby rats, without mentioning the monkeys, rabbits, squirrels, and other animals.

As for the prisoners themselves, their general state of health must be considered as excellent". [*The translator noted that "homme de confiance" had a particular meaning in these texts; referring to the "head" of all of the prisoners chosen by the camp commander, elected by the prisoners, or the highest-ranking officer. "Trustee" has been chosen for the English translation here. Ed.]

Source:

Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its Activities During the Second World War (September 1, 1939-June 30, 1947). Vol. II. No. 2A. Geneva: International Red Cross, May 1948.

[Cont'd.]

"Barbed wire fence entanglements are run across the beach at Gravenhurst Internment Camp"

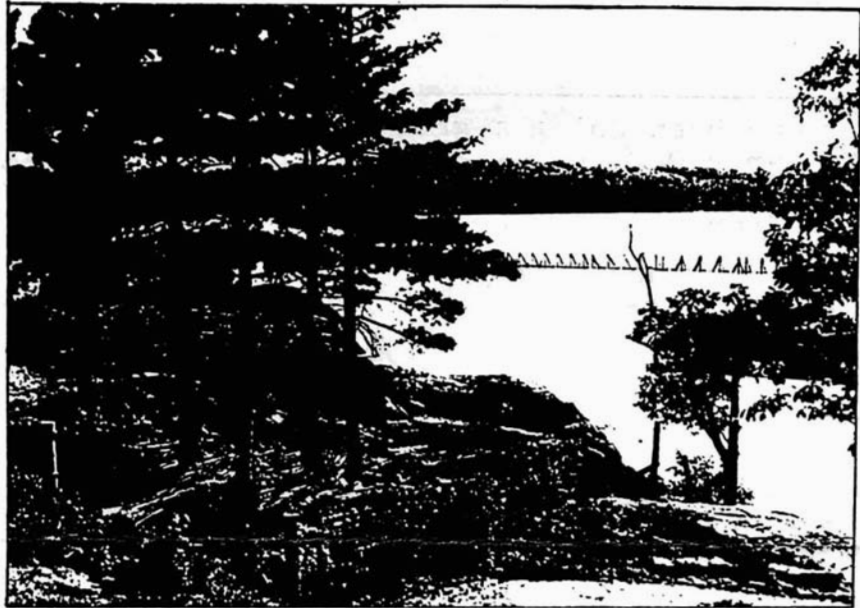


Photo Credit: Public Information—Passed By Censor WRI-126,
photograph from Office of Director of Public Information

A partial listing of internment camps in Canada showing the P.O.W. Camp located at Gravenhurst, Ontario from 1940 to 1946:

LIST OF INTERNMENT CAMPS IN CANADA

<u>No. or Letter</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Type of PW</u>	<u>Opened</u>	<u>Closed</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
10	Chatham, Ont.	Tents	325	EMS and Internees	15 May 1944	1 Nov. 1944	Base Camp for Farming Operations
10	Chatham, Ont. and Fingal, Ont.	Barracks	325	Officers & ORs Internees and RMS	3 June 1945	14 Nov. 1946	Base Camp for Farming Operations
C/20	Gravenhurst, Ont.	Sanatorium	400	Officers and ORs	July 1940	11 June 1946	Closed
E/21	Espanola, Ont.	Factory	1200	ORs	16 July 1940	24 Aug. 1943	Used as Repot. Assembly Centre from May - Aug. 1943 Closed Aug. 1943.
M/22	Mimico (New Toronto Ontario)	Barracks	550	EMS and Internees	19 July 1940	1 May 1944	Closed
C/23	Monteith, Ont.	Barracks	1800	EMS and Internees	16 July 1940	Nov. 1941	
23	Monteith, Ont.	Barracks	4000	Officers ORs	29 Nov. 1941	May 1944	
23	Monteith, Ont.	Barracks	4000	EMS and Internees	May 1944	Jan. 1946	
23	Monteith, Ont.	Barracks	4000	Officers ORs EMS	Jan. 1946	Dec. 1946	
30	Bonmanville, Ont.	School	750	Officers and ORs	Nov. 1941	12 April 1945	Closed
F/31	Kingston, Ont.	Fort	600	Officers and ORs	1 July 1940	20 Nov. 1941	
31	Kingston, Ont.	Fort	600	EMS and Internees	23 Nov. 1941	16 Nov. 1943	Closed
H/32	Hull, Quebec	Jail	100	Internees and EMS (Can. Resp.)	20 Aug. 1941		

Page 446

A CANADIAN INTERNEE IN SWITZERLAND--By Colin Pomfret

The above cover, dated August 1, 1918, is from a Pte. Ching, 27th Battalion, C.E.F. interned in Switzerland in an exchange with German P.O. W.'s.

Chateau D'Oex is seen on a picture post card ca. 1966

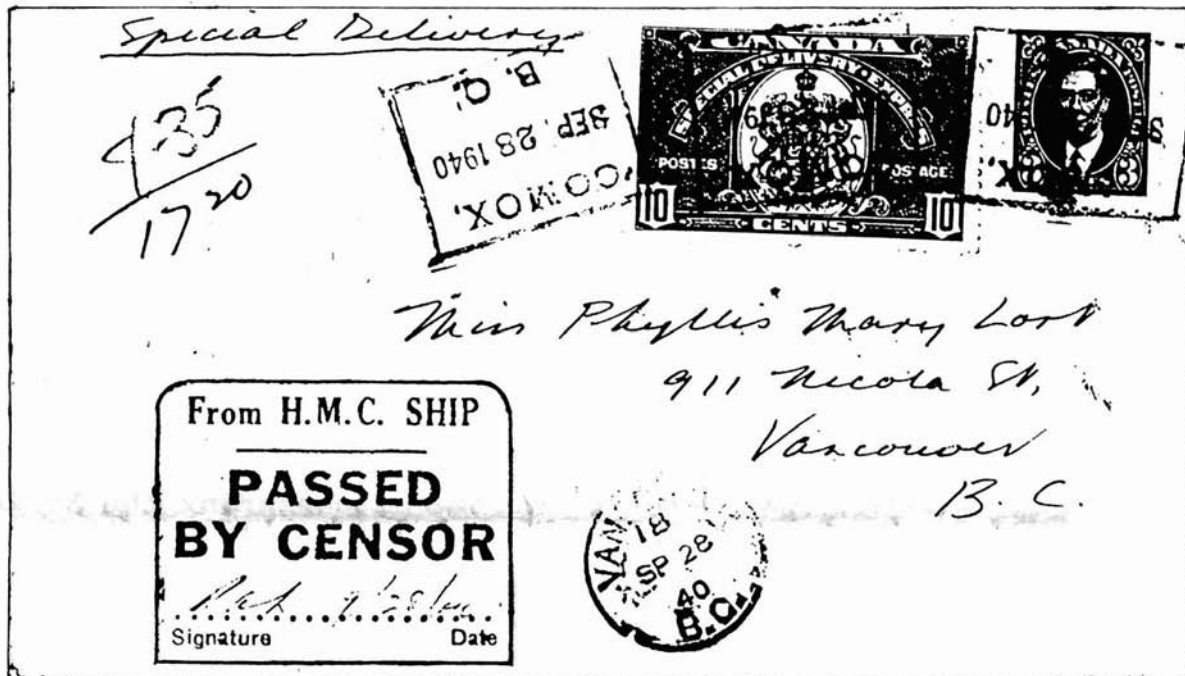
BC MPO/NPO SECOND WORLD WAR-UPDATE

Members Ken Barlow and Wilf Whitehouse have kindly sent in their updates to the listing printed in Newsletter #141, pp. 425-26. Thank you very much for the new information!

<u>MPO/NPO</u>	<u>*EARLY</u>	<u>*LATE</u>	<u>CANCELS</u>
MPO 1101		05 01 46	
MPO 1107	02 08 44		
MPO 1110	10 08 43		
NPO 1114	24 11 44		
NPO 1115		26 09 45	B, S
NPO 1117		07 10 45	ON METER
MPO 1120	01 08 44		
MPO 1121		12 12 45	
MPO 1122		11 09 45	
MPO 1124		31 10 45	

*D/M/Y

THE R.C.N. AT COMOX, B.C. 1940--By Wilf Whitehouse



The Royal Canadian Navy commissioned an establishment at Comox Spit, in Comox, British Columbia in August 1940, teaching seamanship and small arms training. HMCS Naden, the shore establishment at Esquimalt, was apparently getting overcrowded and thus some people under training had to be moved out.

The R.C.N. had no post office of their own and it made use of the local post office at Comox. As far as I know, the navy continued to use the local post office as long as it remained at Comox.

[Cont'd.]

Page 448

Note that the preceding cover was censored on September 28, 1940, was received at the post office the same day, and even arrived at Vancouver the same day--amazing by today's standards!

I have a note to the effect that Bill Robinson has an OHMS cover dated in July of 1940, which could only have been used by the advance party of R.C.N. personnel preparing the base for the trainees. I understand that it also contains the same MOTO [Money Order Town Office] as the above.

NORWAY-NEW YORK VIA CANADA COVER-EPILOGUE--By Kim Dodwell

Kim has also written in about John Wannerton's cover from NL #141, p. 415:

"...I have a similar cover and it is possible that they are not rare. Germany's invasion of Norway in early 1941 had left homeless a large number of Norwegian merchant ships. Many of these, including two whaling fleets, ended up in Halifax, N.S. The potential amount of mail to and from these brave, unfortunate sailors and their homeland was considerable. My guess is that the Norwegian Seamen's Church at 33 First Place, Brooklyn was an 'undercover address' used for forwarding mail. If this is so, such mail arriving at the Church would have been forwarded to the Canadian censors for processing in ambulance envelopes, or perhaps sealed bags. After censorship the covers would have again been sent off in their ambulance envelopes to the Norwegian seamen's headquarters in Halifax for distribution. This arrangement could account for the Canadian censor label on the cover routed Norway-Germany-New York. The presence of Canadian censor labels on covers from Occupied Europe to P.O. Box 252, Grand Central Annex, New York (an acknowledged undercover address) may be analogous.

The P.O. Box 252 arrangement came to an end with the U.S.A.'s entry into the war and, if my guess that the Norwegian Seamen's Church was also an 'undercover address', then this too would have ceased as such in December 1941.

According to my copy of John Tyacke's useful work on Canadian civil censors, C.36 was used by an Ottawa-based censor, but my cover of six months later was censored by C.115, which was a Halifax number. Maybe they changed the arrangements for handling and censoring the Norwegian mail; Halifax seems the more logical place for the job...."

[Thanks Kim. This will bring to a close members' wonderful additions to John's cover. Further information can be sent to John directly. Did you ever think your cover would get so much attention John? Ed.]

SMALL ADS

WANTED: Correspondence to/from Wm., Mrs. W., or Hamish Maitland-Dougall. Please send photocopy/price to Doug Sayles, 25 Howard Rd., Waterdown, ON LOR 2H4 (2/5)

WANTED: Homing pigeon military mail (Signal Corps)--yes, homing pigeons! Details to the Editor please. (2/2)

T.E. ALMOND, 2 F
 APS RESEARCH LIE
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 CAMERON MCPHERSON, 8
 CHRISTOPHER MILLER,
 CAVERSHAM, READING
 JAMES E. MILLER, BOX
 R.F. NARBONNE, 216 M
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 KEVIN O'REILLY, BOX
 EVERETT L. PARKER, H
 *W.S. PAWLUK, BOX 603
 BILL PEKONEN, #201-7
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 COLIN POMFRET, R.R.#
 WILLEM PUT, POSTBUS
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 DAVID SALOVEY, 34 HI
 P.R. SANDERSON, BOX
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 S. SHIOTORI, 2-5-13-
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