



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

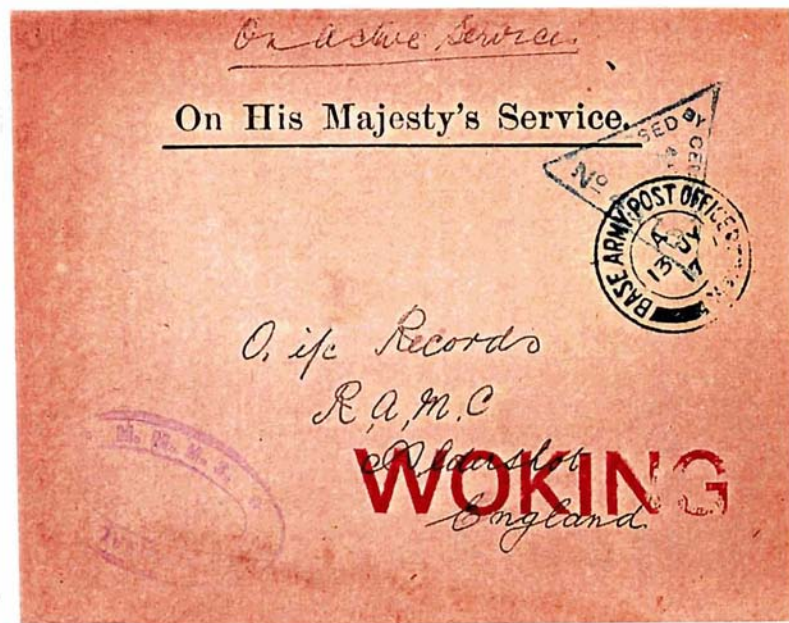


NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2001

NEWSLETTER NO. 148
Page 525

H.M.H.S. LLANDOVERY CASTLE: ON ACTIVE SERVICE--By J.C. Campbell



Built by Barclay Curle & Co. Glasgow, Llandoverly Castle was completed in January 1914 for the Union-Castle Line of London. Her gross tonnage was 11,423. She was to sail in the London-East Africa service and accommodated 429 in three classes.

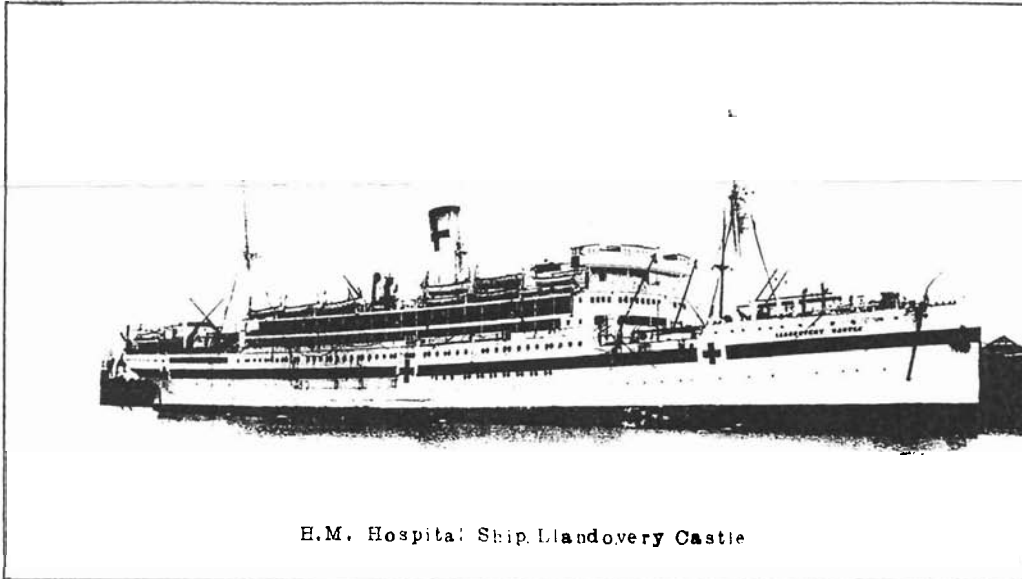
From December 1915 until July 1916, Llandoverly Castle served the British Forces as a trooper. Our story, however, begins January 12, 1917 when she sailed from Southampton as a hospital ship (622 beds) for Salonika, Greece, with a stopover at Malta. Upon reaching Salonika on January 23, she disembarked 56 nursing sisters and took on 627 sick and wounded officers and men, along with four nursing sisters. Leaving Salonika, the ship reached Malta on March 1, where disembarkation was completed by 8:16 p.m.

[Cont'd.]

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This general pattern continued for two more voyages, ie. Salonika to Malta and return which finally was completed on April 16, 1917. On this date the ship anchored at Salonika and became a floating hospital; both for patients and nursing staff on board and for medical staff serving in the hospitals on shore for a period of four months.



H.M. Hospital Ship Llandovery Castle

The Llandovery Castle

During this period, on July 13, the cover previously illustrated in colour was posted at Base Army Post Office X. The ship's oval marking (in mauve) and censor stamp number 4516 (in green) were applied on board. This mail would have gone out on the next available ship. Because the "O i/c Records" Office at Aldershot, England had been moved to Woking during late July, the "Woking" redirection handstamp was applied in red ink. It should be noted that hospital ships were not authorized to carry mail at any time.

The fourth voyage for Llandovery Castle began on August 12, 1917 and took her to Alexandria, Egypt, where 50 tons of deceased officers' baggage was taken on board, along with 22 officers and 325 other ranks for passage to England. The ship reached Grand Harbour, Valletta, Malta on August 27, where 15 officers and 152 sick and wounded other ranks were embarked. Leaving Malta the following day, the ship reached Avonmouth, England on September 6 where disembarkation was completed.

Immediately following the duties outlined above, Llandovery Castle was chartered out to the Canadian Government as a hospital ship. It is believed that she completed one voyage to Canada during the period from September 7 to October 15 carrying sick and wounded soldiers. It is probable that she replaced H.M.H.S. Letitia which ran aground and was lost near Halifax, Nova Scotia on August 1, 1917 with no loss of life. From mid-October, Llandovery Castle completed four voyages to Canada returning, in all, 3,223 patients to their homeland.

On Llandovery Castle's return voyage which commenced June 20, 1918

[Cont'd.]

from Halifax to Liverpool, under the command of Captain E.A. Sylvester, she was torpedoed 114 miles west of Fastnet Rock, Ireland. She sank within ten minutes. Of the 258 crew and medical staff aboard, including 14 Canadian nursing sisters, many escaped the sinking. However the submarine (German U-86, commanded by Lt. Patzig) shelled the lifeboats. At dawn on June 28, only 24 ship's crew and Canadian Army Medical Corps personnel had survived, including Captain Sylvester. All of the 14 nursing sisters perished.

Each issue of Orders will be issued consecutively throughout the year. A fresh issue is to be commenced with the first issue in each year.

Army Form O. 1810
All Arms.

Unit H.M.H.S. "G1026"
DAILY ORDERS.

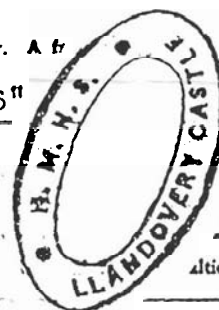
No. 57

Date 16-5-18.

N.B.—The Sub. No. of Order and Subject are to be shown in columns 1 and 2, thus:—1.—Courts Martial.

Station

Regimental No., Rank and Name.	Sqn., Batty. or Co.	Station
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alties, etc., and Date.

The ship's handstamp



NURSING SISTER MINNIE FOLLETTE.
Drowned at sea, *Llandoverly Castle*, June 27, 1918.



NURSING SISTER PEARL FRASER.
Drowned at sea, *Llandoverly Castle*, June 27, 1918.

Two of the N/Sisters who perished



A "pre-sinking" cover from N/Sister Minnie Katherine Gallaher while at #1 Cdn. General Hospital, Etaples, France. She perished twenty-six months after posting this letter.

REFERENCES:

- War Diary. Army Form C2118-R.P.O. England, 1917.
Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War. M.S. Hunt, 1920.
The Medical Services. Macphail, 1925.
Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919. Nicholson, 1964.
Hospital Ships and Ambulance Trains. Plumridge, 1975.
 Personal Correspondence: A. Mears, P. High, F. Daniel, J. Johnson

[N.B. A similar article appeared in the CPSGB's journal Maple Leaves (Vol. XXIII (10), 250, October 1994) and permission has been kindly granted from its Hon. Editor, David Sessions for its reprinting. Ed.]

good wishes
for the new year!

It's time to think ahead to
BNAPEX 2001
at the
Crowne Plaza Hotel in
downtown Ottawa!

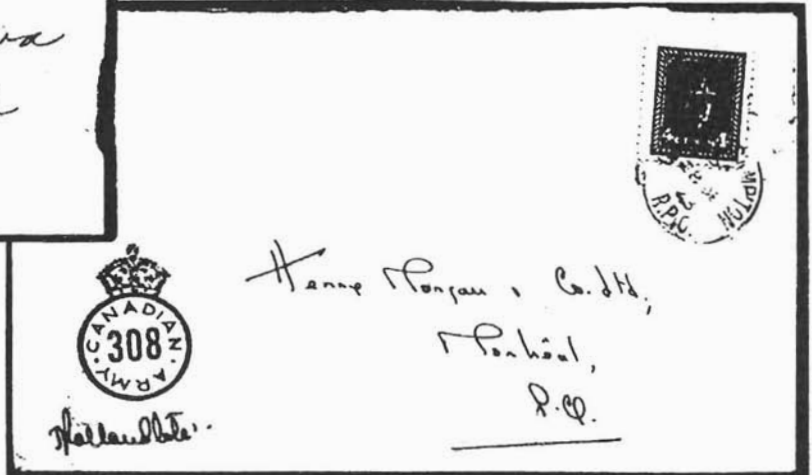
THE SMALL "CROWN OVER CIRCLE" CENSOR UPDATE--By J.D. Hannan

The CMMSG Newsletter No. 131 (August 1997) provided an update of this censor marking. I am submitting multiple changes to further update this with the items below.

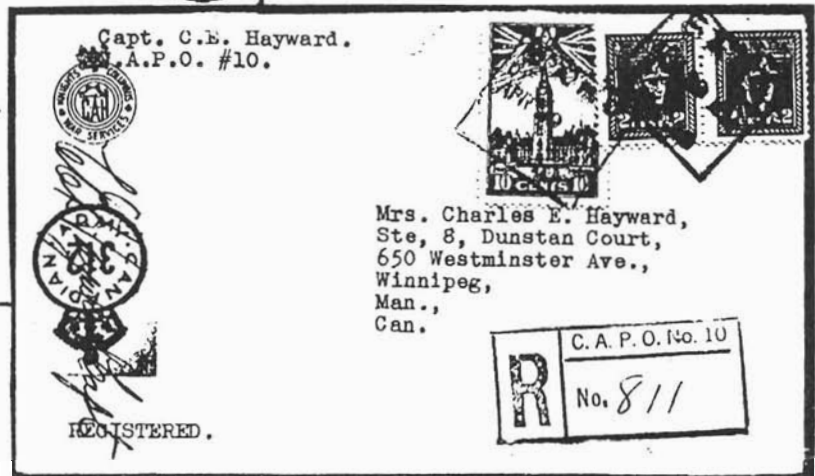
CENSOR 307--This is a late date of June 8, 1944. I also have dates of March 13 and May 24, 1944.



CENSOR 308--Dated December 22, 1943 and cancelled with Q-16 RPO ("GASPE & CAMP TON/R.P.O."). This is the same routing as the cover illustrated from John Frith and is a late date.

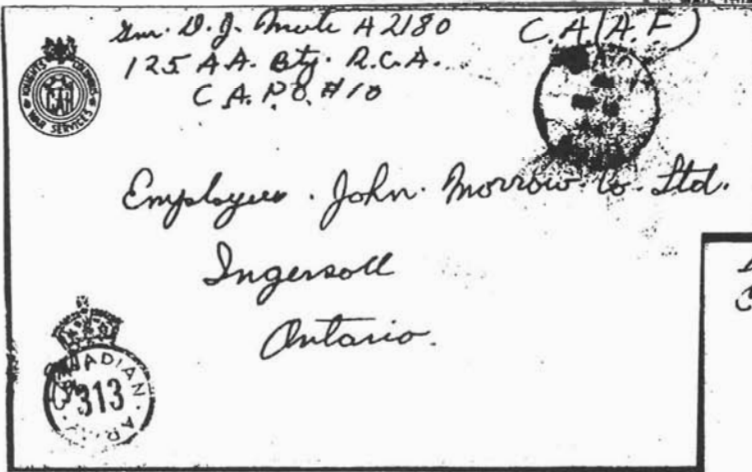
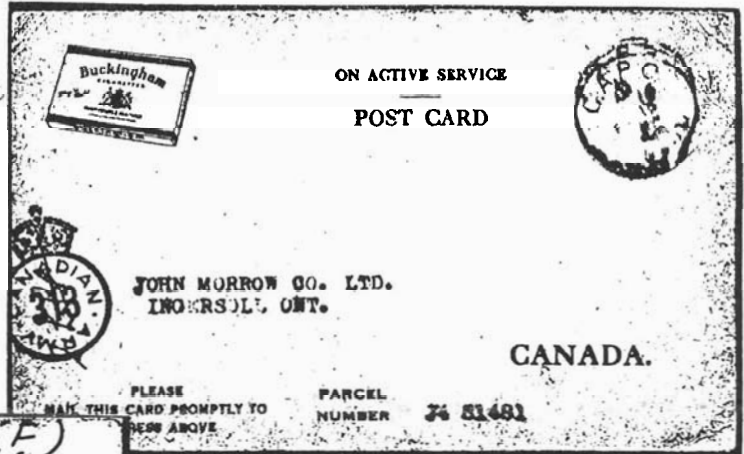


CENSOR 312--This cover dated February 19, 1944 is an early date. The registered usage is dated April 29, 1944 and is a late date. I also have an April 22, 1944.

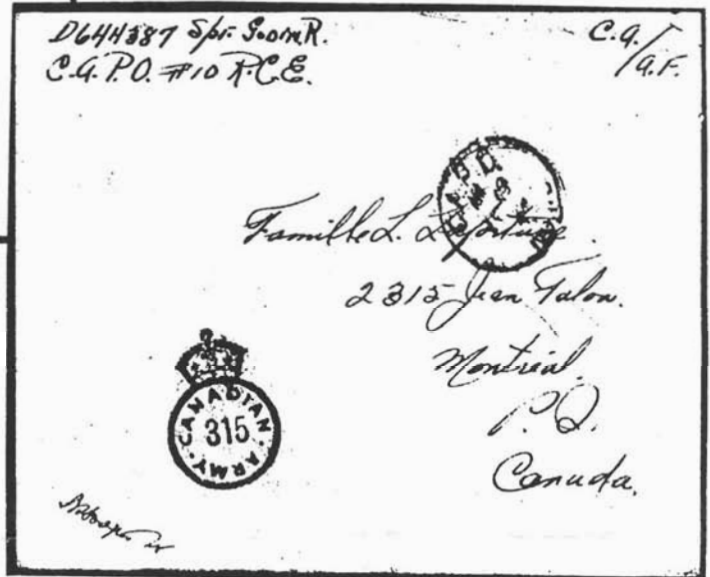


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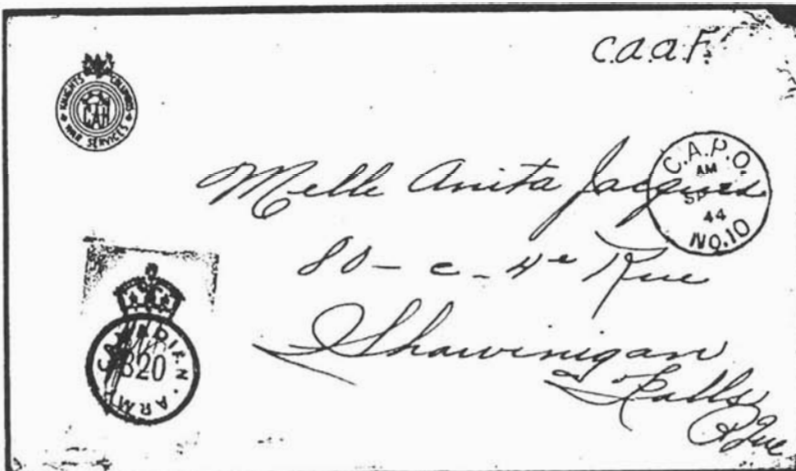
CENSOR 313--This February 16, 1944 post card is a new report and is early. The March 18, 1944 date is late and a new report as well.



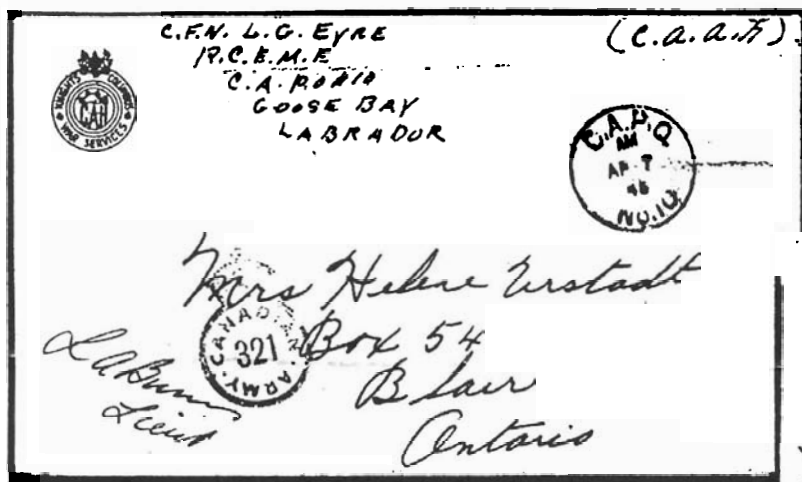
CENSOR 315--This example is a new report dated February 19, 1944.



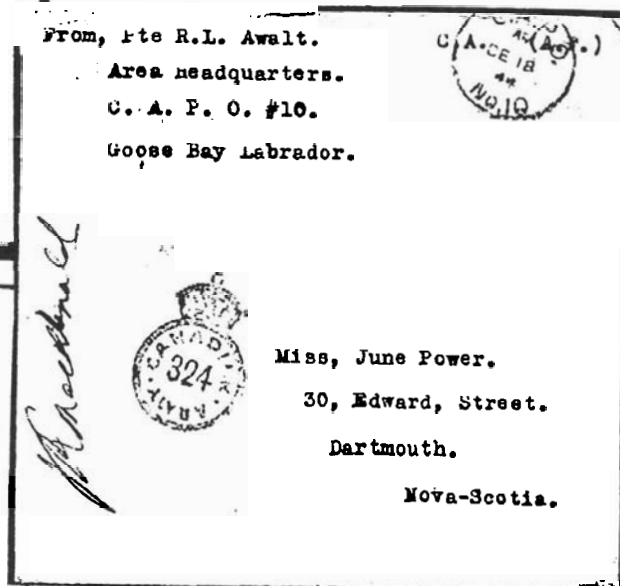
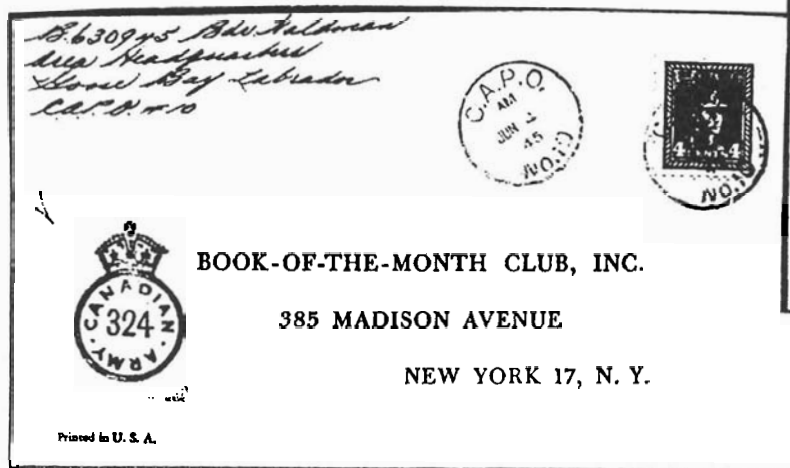
CENSOR 320-- This September 2, 1944 is an early date. I also have a November 4, 1944 example.



CENSOR 321--The April 7, 1945 example [illustrated on the following page] is a late date.



CENSOR 324--This December 18, 1944 cover shows an early date and the June 4, 1945 is a late date. I also have March 2 and March 11, 1945.



I also can provide reports of other numbers I have seen:

CENSOR 317--John Frith mentions this one. Allan Steinhart sold me a cover with this number at the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada show in Vernon several years ago as being from Goose Bay, Labrador. Something did not "look right" about its origin so I showed it to John. We decided it was from "Y Force" in Jamaica. I returned it to Allan and got a refund.

CENSOR 310--I sold one to John Frith at the 1999 BNAPEX Convention in Vernon who subsequently resold it to one of our members. It was within the dates listed.

CENSOR 322--John Frith mentions having handled one. I have not seen one of these.

KUDOS: In your Editor's haste last time I neglected to include the following award winners at the 2000 Edmonton Spring National Show: Steven Luciuk obtained a Vermeil for his exhibit "Canada and the Korean War", and Robert Toombs and Dean Mario were awarded Silver medals for their "A Century of Canadians in Africa: Matabeleland to Bangui" and "Allied Forces in Iceland, 1940-46" respectively. Congratulations are also extended to Bob for his Gold medal/PHSC Ribbon/Certificate at VAN-PEX 2000 & to Bill Robinson for his Gold Medal for his P.O.W. study.

RCAF/RAF INDIA COMMAND "UPDATE"--By Robert Toombs

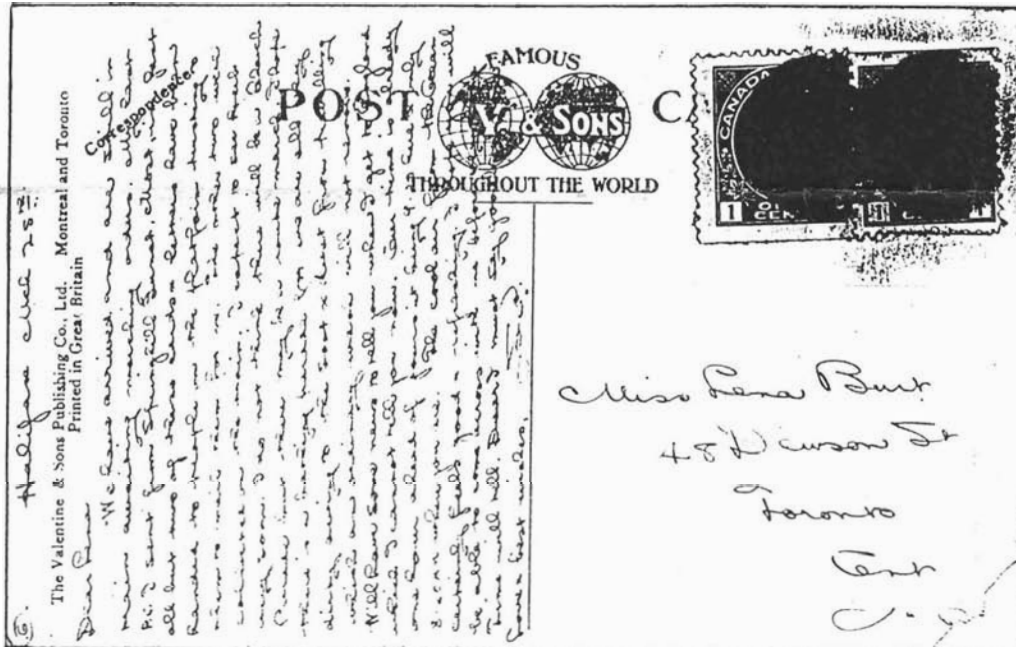
It is always nice to see a \$1.00 airmail cover to the RCAF in greater India (NL #141, August '99, p. 417). In 1943 there were distinct groups of RCAF servicemen in the ICBC (India, Ceylon, Burma, and China) Theatre during the Second World War. They were: RCAF 413 Squadron (Perth, Australia to Langebaan, Cape of Good Hope), RCAF aircrew attached to the RAF, and RCAF radar mechanics attached to the RAF. RCAF Transport Squadrons 435 and 436 came to India in late 1944.

The RCAF radar mechanics were posted to fixed and mobile ground stations, to airborne radar with squadrons as well as to maintenance depots and to training centres. RCAF radar mechanic Corporal de Macedo [the addressee on Walter Plomish's cover], was at that time (in 1943) posted to Air Ministry Experimental Station (A.M.E.S.) #590. The "AMES" seen on cover addresses in the ICBC Theatre is the British acronym for top secret radar stations here and elsewhere in the Second World War. AMES 590, located 110 air miles southwest of Calcutta at Balasore, was a fixed ground station which featured a 184-foot high radar tower. More than 700 RCAF radar mechanics served in the ICBC Theatre.

CANADIAN GREAT WAR "SECURITY CANCELS"--By Colin Pomfret

[Colin sent in several security cancels/obliterator examples on picture postcards. Several are from Halifax. Examples include full corks, grid bars, bullseyes, and cork or rubber crosses. The O.A.S. Postal Card on the following page is from H.M.T. Olympic. Ed.]

"Halifax"



[Cont'd.]

Correspondence

FAMOUS POST CARD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

April 10/18

Address here

Two CENTS

Miss Coroll Godwin
Aldershot
Canada

*Hiello. Dot.
This is Sunday
we are on board
ship. We went on
about 10. and
and
tables. They are
now serving afternoon
We have
everything. Write again Red*

Address Only

Canada CARD.

Two CENTS

Miss Lila Smith,
Pitson Road,
Oshawa,
Ont

April 7/18

Dear Lila:-

We are now within
30 miles of Balfay and we
just getting out of Red. I don't
know what kind of country we
passed through, the night but
yesterday the scenery was grand
there was a lot of very high hills
or mountains covered with trees.
Just before we returned Saturday night
we pulled into Toronto and we
got out of the train and went for
a march through the Loan. C.C.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

Postal Card.

The Address only to be written on this side.

Two CENTS

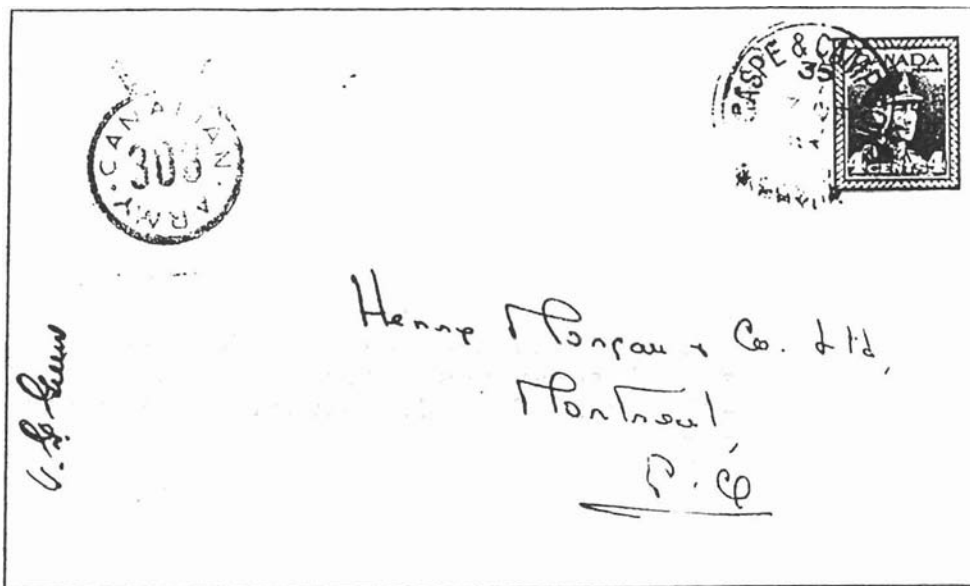
Miss George M. Holt
Boeabie Cove,
Oshawa, Co. O. B.

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THE SMALL "CROWN OVER CIRCLE" CENSOR 308: A NEW PERSPECTIVE--By C.D. Sayles

I very much doubt that this censor stamp was applied at CAPO 10 in Goose Bay. I think it may be a previously unreported usage at Gaspé, probably from a member of the 105th Coastal Battery (RCA).

[This cover from the CMMMSG NL No.131, August 1997, p. 306 bears a] stamp cancelled with the Gaspé and Campbellton R.P.O. This train travelled from Gaspé to Campbellton, where it met the "Ocean Limited Edition" heading for Montreal. It is thus the logical route for a letter from Gaspé to Montreal to follow. We know that the Gaspé (Fort Ramsay) Military Post Office did not open until May 12, 1944, so the use of a civilian post office is entirely consistent with the normal practice of the period.



Could the censored letter have been conveyed from Goose Bay to Gaspé and mailed there? This seems very unlikely for two reasons. Firstly, the normal practice of the period was for letters to be delivered unsealed to the censor who would do his job, seal the letter, and deliver it direct to the postal service ie. the process was designed to ensure that a letter, once censored, could not find its way back into the sender's hands for alteration or private transmission. Secondly, Gaspé was a seasonal base, which accommodated seaplanes and a few small convoy escort ships. Both air and sea operations ceased when the Gulf of St. Lawrence iced up and navigation stopped. This was normally early in December. However in 1943, the RCAF detachment was withdrawn on October 31. So even if the censored letter escaped the MPO's clutches in Goose Bay, there was no obvious way for it to travel to Gaspé after freeze-up. Gaspé was protected by the 105th Coastal Battery (RCA), and this is the only complete Army unit in the area at this time. There could also have been Army detachments and sub-units, but I have found no record of these.

This cover is the earliest usage of the small "Crown over Circle" censor stamp that I am aware of, and in fact is the only 1943 usage reported [now there is Doug Hannan's example. Ed.]. This becomes sig-

[Cont'd.]

nificant when we look at the censor's signature--V.G. Greene, and the address--Morgan's department store. Vincent Greene and Ian Morgan were both well-known philatelists; and Ian Morgan formed a major Canadian military collection. I think it is likely that this cover is philatelically-inspired. Even so, it may be an example of a previously-unknown site of army censoring in the Maritimes.

REFERENCES

Canadian Railway Guide and Gazeteer, August 1942.

Douglas, Official History (RCAF), Vol. II.

Essex, J. Victory in the St. Lawrence.

Stacey, C.P. Official History (Army), Vol. I.

[Members will recall the 1942 Gaspé & Campbellton R.P.O. Q-16 on a cover from a nursing sister in J.C. Campbell's article in NL 145 (May 2000), pp. 463-64. It too was addressed to "Morgan & Co., Montreal". I know that Vinnie Greene was involved in recruiting in the Second World War but I don't know which regiment he was connected with. Can members shed more light? Ed.]

RCAF STN. ST. HUBERT: A NEW MARKING?--By A.D. Hanes

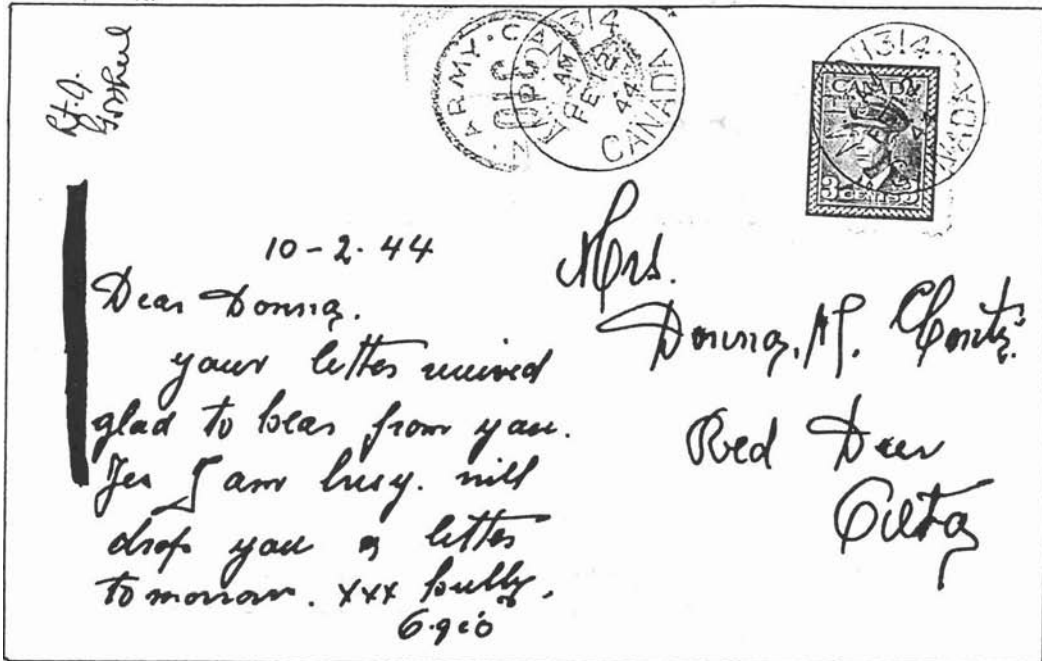
This item below is a new report. RCAF Station St. Hubert was "civilianized" or renamed to "Cite-de-Jacques Cartier Sub. 24" on October 29, 1962. This cover was registered and dated on October 29, 1964. Note the registered box--"R.C.A.F. Stn./ST. HUBERT"--which has been added to the normal registered box! It's the first and only such marking I've ever seen like this. Did the practice exist at the other RCAF Stations in Quebec?

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE NATIONALE		ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE SERVICE DE SA MAJESTÉ	
Return to: Commanding Officer RCAF Station St. Hubert P.Q.		DEC 64	
R.C.A.F. Stn. ST - HUBERT	R	Cité-de- Jacques-Cartier, P.Q.	Commanding Officer 11 Technical Services Unit 2585 Bates Road Montreal PQ
		No. 1195	
		REGISTERED MAIL	
		DND728 AFP86(IDENT) d/9Dec64	
DND 318 7530-21-562-7257		REGISTERED MAIL	

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THE "SMALL CROWN OVER CIRCLE" CENSOR 310--By Steven Luciuk

Unlike the usual design for Military Post Office circular postmarks, "M.P.O. 1314/CANADA" does not identify a specific location. This office (23-12-43 to 31-05-44) was in Edmonton and served the Mountain Warfare School established in Jasper National Park, just a few hours west of the city.



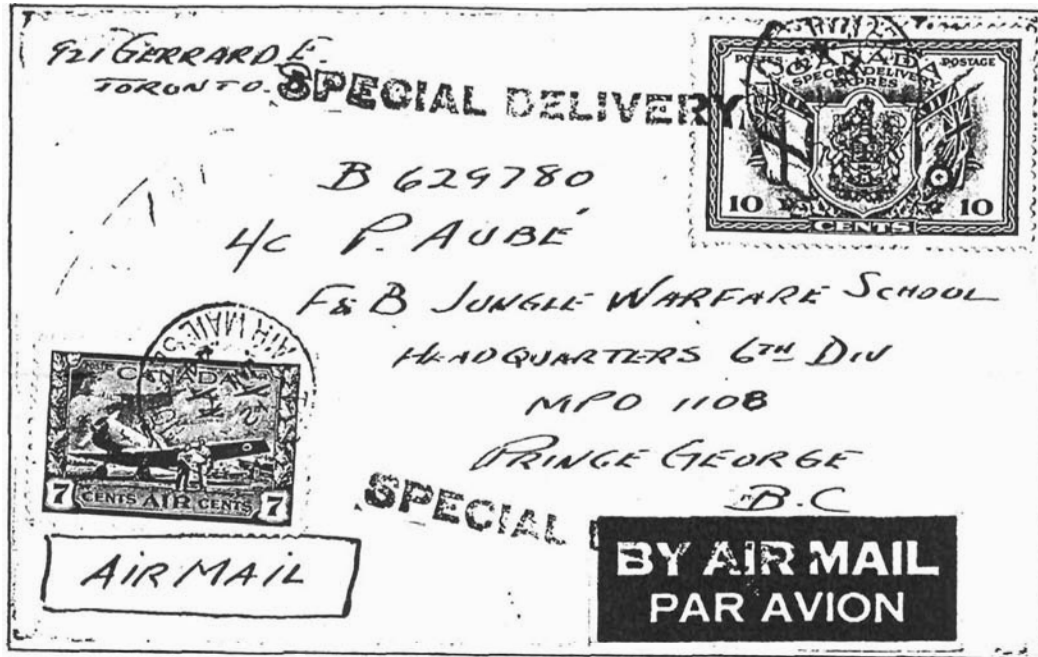
The scarce "Canadian Army 310" Crown over Circle censor's marking was one of several numbered in the 300 series. Most were used in Labrador, Newfoundland. At the time, Newfoundland had not joined with Canada so number "310" was the only use of the censor's handstamp design within Canada [see another "310" connected with MPO 1314 in NL#131, p. 308 as well as in NL#113, p. 129. Ed.].

This postcard, photographed and copyrighted by J.A. Weiss, is dated February 12, 1944, and has added interest because of a thorough censoring done by an officer. His marker carefully covered words printed just before "Canada", thereby emphasizing the school's high security status. A similar postcard owned by the writer shows that the obliterated words were "Jasper National Park".

JUNGLE WARFARE SCHOOL, 1944--By C.D. Sayles

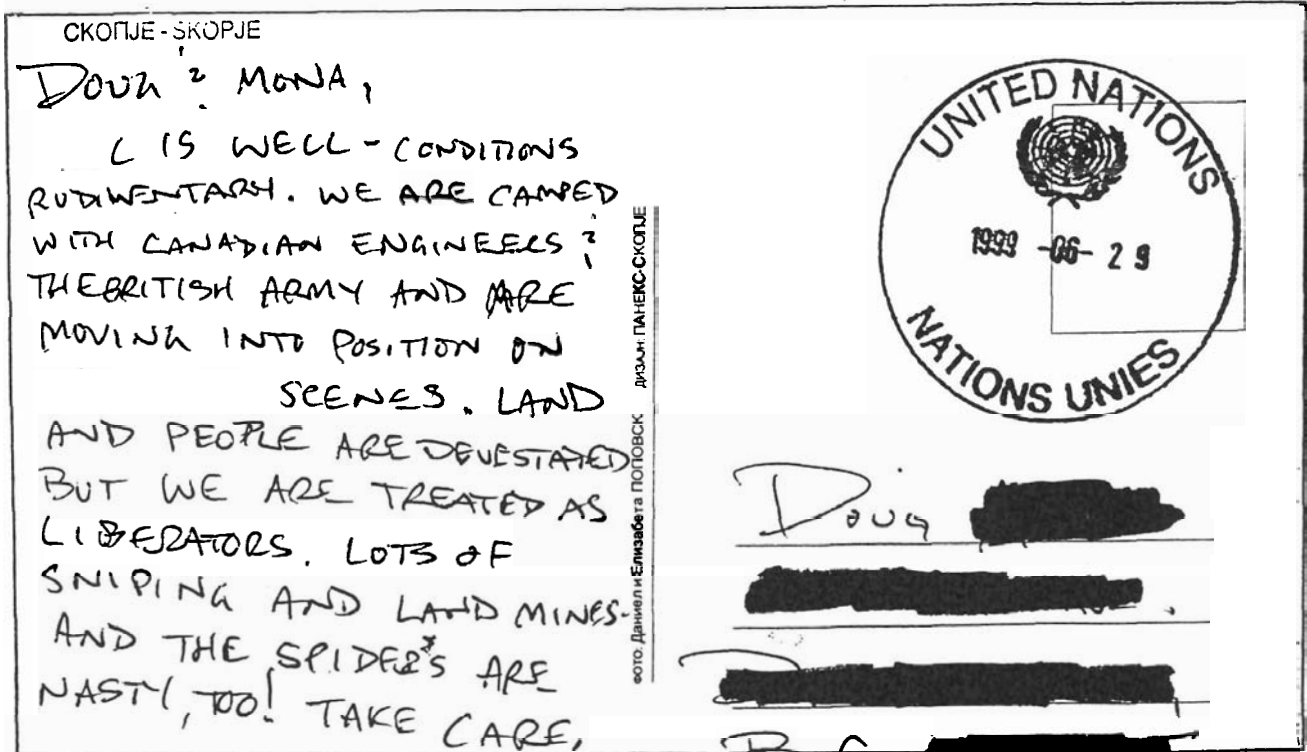
Look at the address on the following illustration of a special delivery cover [dated January 7, 1944]: "F & B Jungle Warfare School". I can find nothing about this school--is there a member who can provide the details? The existence of this school is doubly interesting in that the government in January 1944 had not yet decided to participate in the ground war in the Pacific. [Can members shed some light on the following cover? Ed.]

[Cont'd.]



THE R.C.M.P. IN KOSOVO 1999--By Wilf Whitehouse

I cannot recall seeing this U.N. postmark before as it relates to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's presence in Skopje, Kosovo. In any event it may be our first from the Force. Members will note that the R.C.M.P. is housed with the Canadian Engineers and British Army, thus we have a bit of confusion as to who is running the post office and using the U.N. postmark/cachet.



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Dear CMMSG Members:

Bill and I would like to wish you all the very best for the upcoming New Year (where did 2000 go?). Those of you who have sent in your membership dues: a hearty "thank you" is extended! Slower respondents are forgiven and this reminder will avail themselves of an opportunity to still send Bill the nominal dues required. No further issues will be forthcoming unfortunately, if no monies are sent in. A red "X" here will denote if dues are due!

The upcoming year looks promising. We will continue to issue five newsletters-at least! This one will have an extra page but we're pushing it! I hope that you enjoy the colour illustrations within this issue and the one tried in the Korean issue. Good clear photocopies are always useful (or better scans) when sending in articles. I haven't heard from many of you yet and please remember that it is your group and if you wish to send something in, please do so. Regular contributors are also thanked!

Don't forget to think about exhibiting this year and remember that the Edmonton Spring National and ORAPEX, just naming two, are "military-exhibit friendly" with the PHSC's E.R. "Ritch" Toop Award at each. Also note that BNAPEX 2001 has a Toop Award and the host group in Ottawa is working on an excellent convention. Attend if you can! That's all for now so take care this year and good hunting for that special cover/card!

SMALL ADS

Looking for something? Have something for sale? Our small ads are the best bargain around! Only \$1 Canadian per insertion (Cdn. mint stamps @ face is fine or equivalent). Copy and payment to the Editor please. Who knows, you may find that elusive cover you've always wanted!

FOR SALE VIA THE INTERNET: Worldwide covers (strong in war covers). Searchable text lists plus every lot scanned. VISA/Mastercard welcome. Contact L.D. Mayo at: <http://www.mayoph.com> [note change. Ed.] (2/7)

FOR SALE: Canadian military and civil censored covers. I can supply priced photocopies or scans via the Internet at no obligation. John Frith, Sudbury Stamps, Box 286, Copper Cliff, ON POM 1N0 or email: johnfrith.sudburystamps@sympatico.ca (1/10)

HELP WANTED: To increase philatelic content of display class exhibit I'm seeking used postcards of any hospital ships addressed to Canada. Replies rewarded. Jon Johnson, 9604 Kalamalka Rd., Vernon, BC V1B 1L3 or: jon@okribbons.com (1/1)

FOR SALE: War Diary of Internment Camp No.135 (Wainwright, AB), January '45-June '46 (photocopy/card cover/cirlox bound). Single copy @ \$16 + postage; Bailey/Toop Canadian Military Posts, Vol.II (1920-46), 1985, h/c, near fine condition @ \$35 + postage. Contact the Editor please.(1/1)

THE LAST WORD!

I have been reminded that members should consider sending interesting and well-illustrated items of varying lengths to David Handelman, Editor of Topics. The journal is for everyone and all subjects (including military ones) and non-members of the CMMSG might enjoy your work too. Please think about it and help "spread the message"! Your Editor.
