



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

Best Wishes
for the Holidays
and Happiness throughout
the New Year

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2002

NEWSLETTER NO. 157
Page 645

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE R.C.A.F.--By A.D. Hanes

[Dave sent along this hand-drawn colourful envelope sent by Sgt. P.N. Mandas which, he notes, is a "real beautie". We agree, but unfortunately cannot show it in colour this time. The date appears to be December 8, 1945 but the FPO number is unclear. Ed.]

(CAN)R129712
SGT. MANDAS P.N.

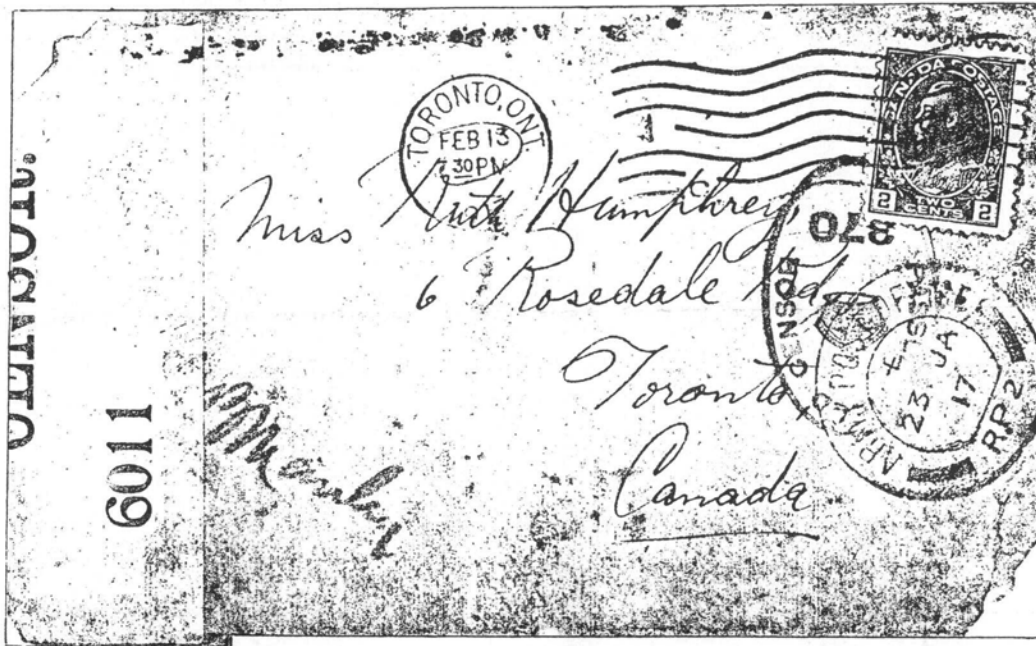


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SECOND CDN. DIV. RAILHEAD "HORSESHOE", 1917--By Colin Pomfret

[Colin sent in the cover below which is a scarce one. It shows the "APO RP 2" unusual "horseshoe" postmark dated January 23, 1917. The cover also bears Censor No.5/370. This new report (Proud; Bailey & Toop/1996 report "not seen") relates to the Second Canadian Division Supply Column.Ed.]



C.P.C. NO.3 EMERGENCY HAMMER: USAGE AT OTTAWA
BASE POST OFFICE--By C.D. Sayles (c) 2002

The Bailey & Toop Canadian Military Postal Markings notes that this emergency hammer was used at Sussex in June 1942; although it was proofed almost a year earlier in July of 1941. Where was it in the interim? The cover illustrated below provides a partial answer.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS ONLY
Heavy penalty for private use
to avoid payment of postage

O. H. M. S.

RETURN TO SENDER

N.C.O.
Canadian Postal Corps Detail,
Force "C",
Canadian Army Overseas.

BASE ARMY POST OFFICE
DEC 6 1941
CANADA

Advise your correspondents of your correct address

CANADA POST OFFICE

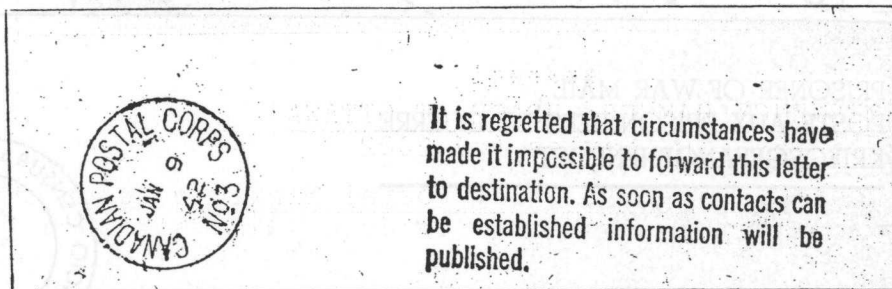
31-1,000,000-28-1-41



[Cont'd.]

The cover contains a memo from the Officer Commanding, Army Base Post Office to the NCO i/c, CPC Detail, Force "C". This was Sgt. Charles Clarke. Force "C" consisted of two battalions of infantry and had been in Hong Kong since November 16, 1941. The Base APO oval on the front indicates that the letter was mailed on December 6, 1941. As of December 2, the route for surface mail to Force "C" was via the Foreign Section of the Vancouver civil post office. Force "C" mail was sent there daily by train and held, in the expectation that this location would facilitate despatching at short notice via Vancouver or San Francisco, as ships became available. The letter likely arrived in Vancouver on December 8 or 9, 1941, by which time the Japanese attack had already isolated Hong Kong. So far as I know, there were no despatches of surface mail from Vancouver from Vancouver to Hong Kong between the outbreak of the Pacific War on December 7, 1941 and the surrender of the Commonwealth forces in Hong Kong on Christmas Day 1941.

We know that all parcel mail for Hong Kong, held in Vancouver, was returned to Ottawa in its original bags and repacked at the Base P.O. for return to senders with an explanatory letter from the Postmaster General. It is reasonable to assume that letter mail was similarly treated. Therefore it appears to me that the CPC No.3 hammer, which we see here, was applied at the Army Base P.O. in Ottawa as was the "It is regretted...." message and the "RETURN TO SENDER" handstamp. C.R. McGuire illustrates a similar cover with the same markings, with the CPC No.3 cancel dated January 10, 1942, in "The Postal History of Canada's World War II Hong Kong Field Force".



The case for Ottawa usage is buttressed by two other returned Force "C" covers in my collection that have the same "RETURN TO SENDER" handstamp on the front, and the identical "It is regretted...." handstamp on the reverse. However these covers bear the large Base P.O. Letter Sec. cancel, with dates of January 15 and March 6, rather than the CPC No.3 hammer. I do not know why the emergency hammer was used on these early January 1942 covers rather than the cancels that were used on later returned mail.

For reference an example of the CPC No.3 hammer used at Sussex (left), and one used at Ottawa (right; from the above cover), are shown. Both cancels have been cleaned up and enlarged. Clearly it is the same hammer in each case.



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AN RCAF P.O.W., ITALY 1943--By A.D. Hanes

Sgt. Fred Fox joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and was trained as a "W.A.G." (Wireless Air Gunner). He was shipped to England and was attached to #40 Sqn. R.A.F.; flying Wellington Bombers M.K.1's. He subsequently was posted to Malta and was bombing targets in North Africa.

Name Nom	Sgt. Fred Fox R65204 RCAF	
File No. Dossier N°		
	PARCEL RECEIVED COLIS REÇU	Date le 17/2/43
Signature	Sgt. Fred Fox RCAF R65204	
Address Adresse	Camp 29.59 P.M. 3300 S. Italy	
Sender's Name Expéditeur	(Many thanks)	



PRISONER OF WAR MAIL
POSTE AUX PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE
KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST

J. FRANK LOHNES,
LUNENBURG, N.S. CANADA.



POSTAGE FREE
FRANC DE PORT
GEBUHRENFREI

P-W-2-25,000-21-7-42

X 8671

In September 1941, Fox was shot down over North Africa and was taken prisoner by the Italians. He was placed in a prisoner of war camp but escaped and was on the loose for two to three months. He was re-captured and then placed in a second camp. He was then moved to yet another camp and escaped again!

Fox was still free when British and Canadian troops came up "The Boot" and surrendered to advancing Canadians. He was taken back to England and

[Cont'd.]

was later commissioned as an officer. His duties included public relations work and at the end of the war, Fox held the rank of Squadron Leader. He later returned to Canada at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

The P-W-2 card shows Fox's address as "Campo p.g. 59, P.M. 3300, Italy" which was located at Servigliano, Pecino (north-east of Rome).

HMCS NIAGARA AND TANKER MASTADON--By W.G. Robinson

HMCS Niagara was built as the U.S.S. Thatcher in 1919. The Destroyer was later commissioned in the Royal Canadian Navy on September 24, 1940. She was refitted at Devonport and was then employed on the Western Approaches to the United Kingdom and with the 25th Escort Group based at St. John's, Newfoundland. Her duties there included protection of the mid-ocean gap. Enclosed letters show these two covers, with censor markings dated February 7, 1941, and July 28, 1942, originated from Niagara.

WARMEST THOUGHTS
AND BEST WISHES
FOR A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY
AND A VERY
HAPPY NEW YEAR

From H. M. C. SHIP
RECEIVED FROM
BY H. M. SHIPS
Signature _____ Date _____

Miss. Edna Miller
30 Dundas St. E.
Toronto Ont.
Canada.

VIA AIR MAIL

From H. M. C. SHIP
PASSED
BY CENSOR
28-7-42

6 CENTS AIR CENTS 6

This Letter sent by AIR MAIL
Would appreciate reply by AIR MAIL

Mrs. H. J. Magraw
1514 Bellevue St.,
Seattle,
Wash.
U. S. A.

304

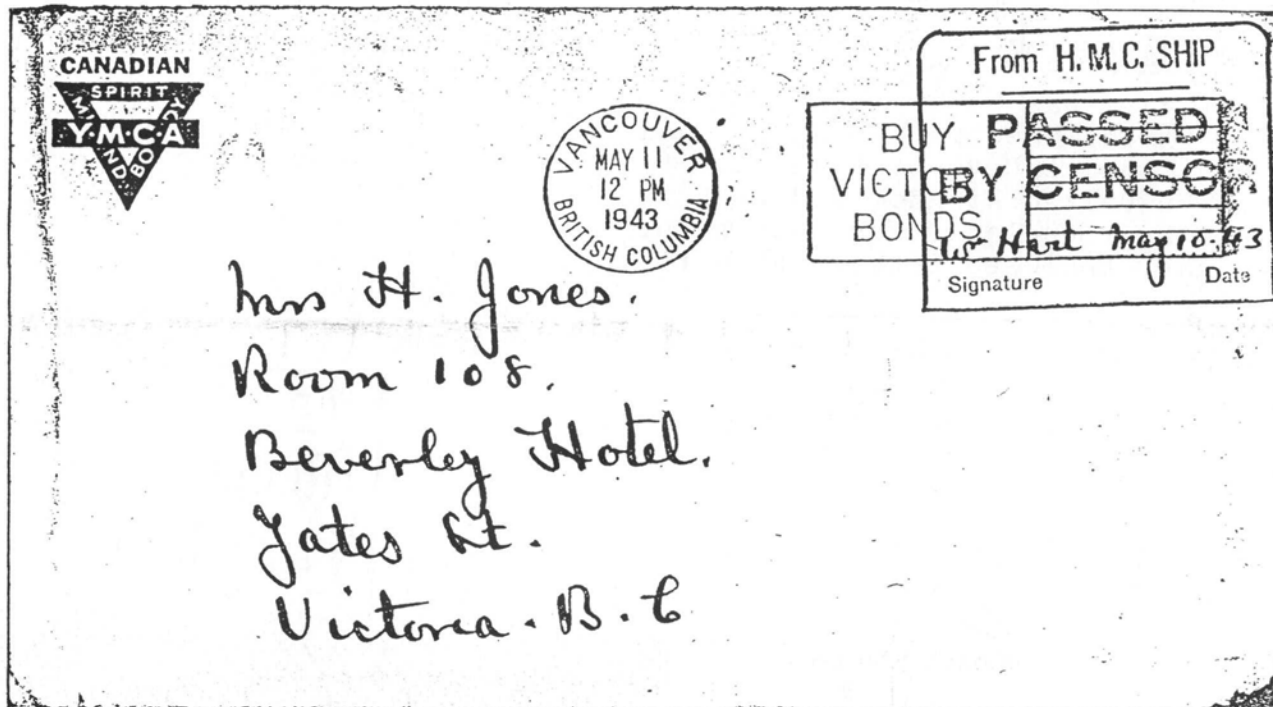
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Mastadon was built in 1910 at Greenock, Scotland as the Department of Public Works Dredge No.306. She was commissioned in the Canadian Navy on December 9, 1942 as a Fleet Auxiliary Tanker and was employed on the West Coast of Canada until she was paid off on March 12, 1946 and sold to Peru.



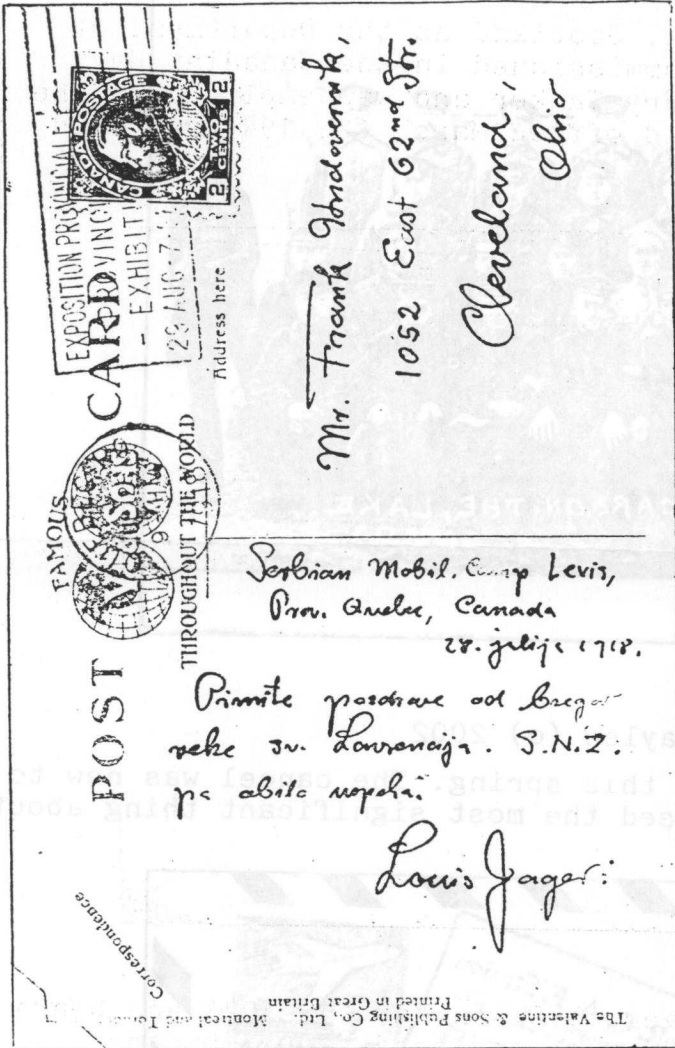
The above cover was mailed at Vancouver, B.C. on May 11, 1943 and bears a naval censor marking of May 10, 1943. The enclosed correspondence shows the origin as Mastadon. This ship, of 1,233 tons displacement, dimensions 210'x36.5'x14' had a speed of six knots. She carried a crew of five officers and thirty-seven ratings, and was armed with one 12 pr. and two 20mm cannons.

SERBIAN MOBILIZATION CAMP, LEVIS, 1918 AND POLES AT NIAGARA CAMP, 1918--By Colin Pomfret

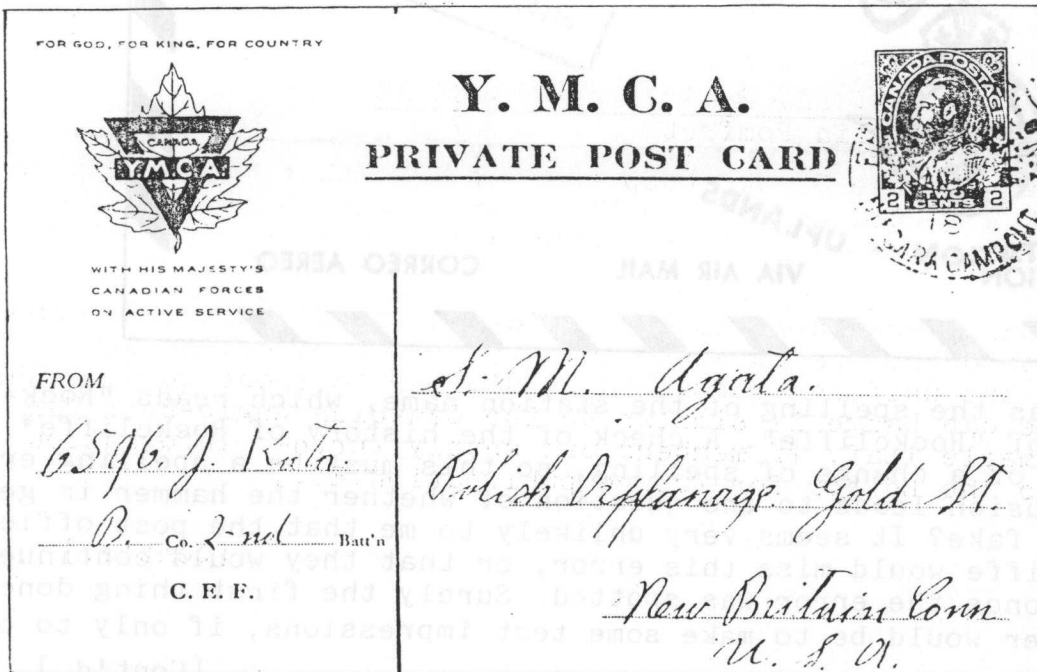
Most of the members of the Study Group already know that the Polish Army trained at Niagara Camp during the First World War, but I have no reference to the Serbs at Levis Camp. Perhaps some members can enlighten us.

I picked the postally-used card some years ago when BNAPEX was in Hamilton, and the photocard was obtained in 1995. Military collectors have informed me that the uniforms appear to be similar to those worn by the Russians, but the cap badge is similar to the Canadian Anglo-Boer War type [ie. large maple leaf. If members can supply further information please send it to the Editor for future publication.Ed.]

[Cont'd.]



Note the return address from Levis.
The card is dated July 28, 1918.

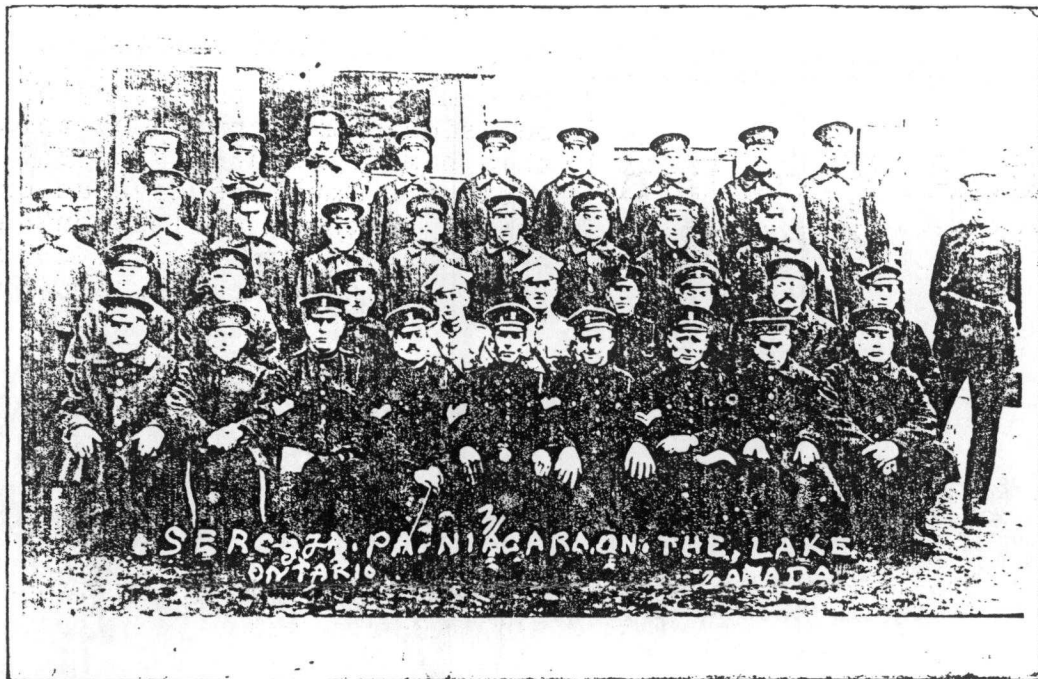


Shown at left is a
card used on Janu-
ary 14, 1918 from
Niagara Camp No.1.

Poles pose for a
photocard from the
Camp on the follow-
ing illustration.

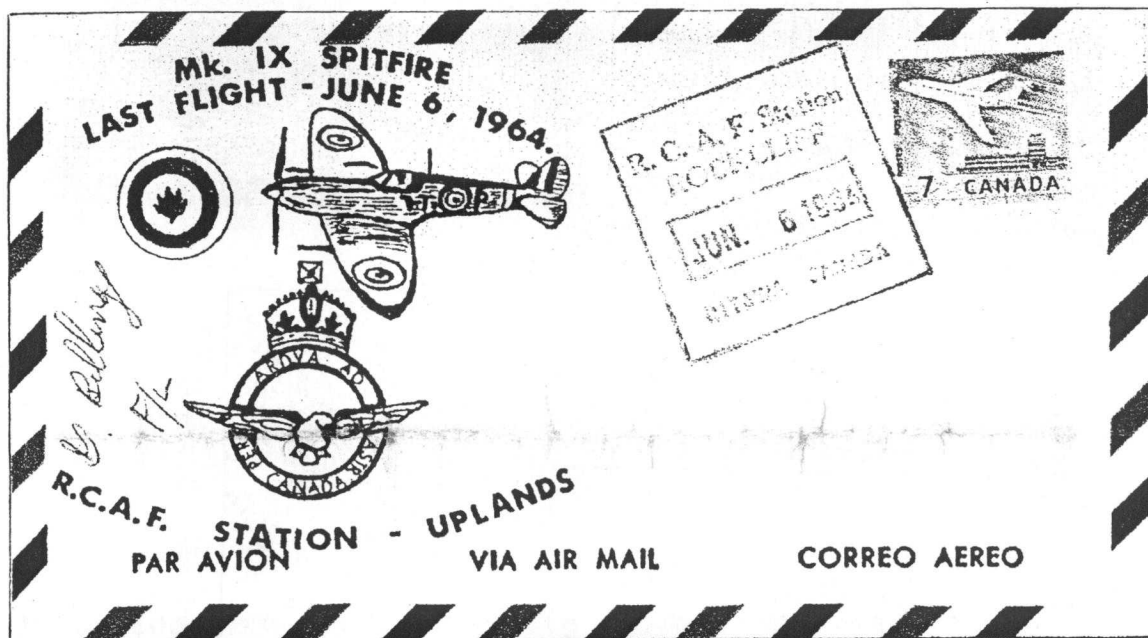


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RCAF STATION, "ROCKCLIFF"--By C.D. Sayles (c) 2002

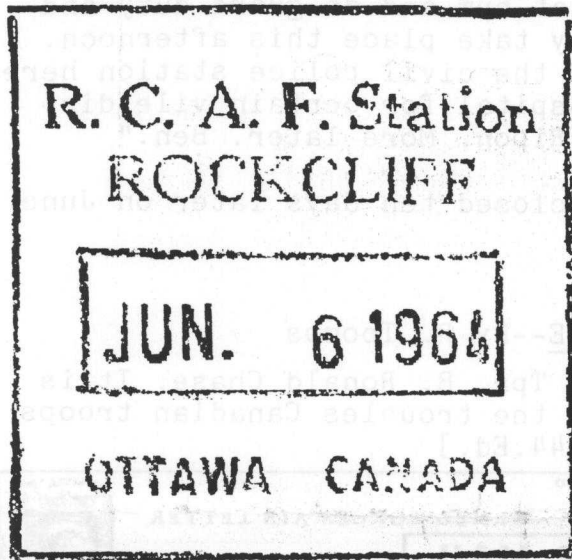
I spotted this cover at a local show this spring. The cancel was new to me so I bought it. At the time I missed the most significant thing about the cover.



What I missed was the spelling of the station name, which reads "Rock-cliff" instead of "Rockcliffe". A check of the history of Rockcliffe* made no mention of a change of spelling, so this must be a spelling error. This conclusion leads to the question of whether the hammer is genuine or is it a fake? It seems very unlikely to me that the post office staff at Rockcliffe would miss this error, or that they would continue to use the hammer once the error was spotted. Surely the first thing done with a new hammer would be to make some test impressions, if only to en-

[Cont'd.]

sure that what was ordered was, in fact, what was delivered.



Do members know the story of the special occasion commemorated by this cover? Was this hammer used only on the special occasion? Do members have an example of this device in their collection? Any light members can shed on this cover would be most welcome. Information, opinions, and comments to the Editor please.

*Stephen R. Payne, A History of the Rockcliffe Airport Site. National Aviation Museum, 1999. [Bailey & Toop (1996) record all miscellaneous strikes with an "e". Do members have anything to add? The device has a rotating date so one would think that it was genuinely issued. Perhaps the item arrived too late for a "correct" replacement.Ed.]

WOODCOTE PARK MILITARY CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL, EPSOM--
By Jon Johnson



The above postcard shows the kitchens from the Military Convalescent Hospital, Woodcote Park, Epsom. Fortunately for us censorship was not in place when this was posted on June 20, 1919 at Epsom. The text is fairly self-explanatory:

Woodcote Park, Epsom

"Dear Lillian

Here we are at Epsom, 16 miles S.W. of London, doing guard duty & other unpleasant duties, as the result of a serious & fatal riot here among the Canadian troops. On Tues. night there was another disgraceful riot over here, and this time at Epsom, in which many were severely injured and

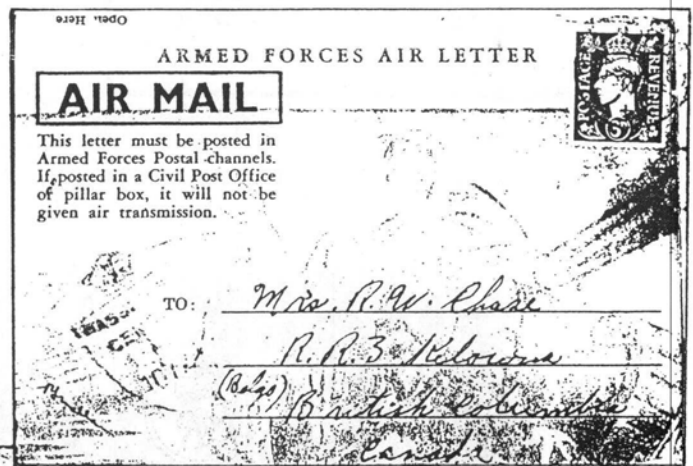
[Cont'd.]

one man killed--all acct. of a drunken row. So yesterday at 4pm the K.N.C. men got orders to hurry down here at 6pm and do guard duty and make a number of arrests which will likely take place this afternoon. The rioters stormed and destroyed part of the civil police station here. They were all patients of the military hospital for certain vile diseases. Don't know when we'll get back to Ripon. More later. Ben."

It may be of interest that Woodcote Park closed ten days later on June 30, 1919.

A 1944 A.F.A.L., 4TH CDN. ARMOURD BRIGADE--By R. Toombs

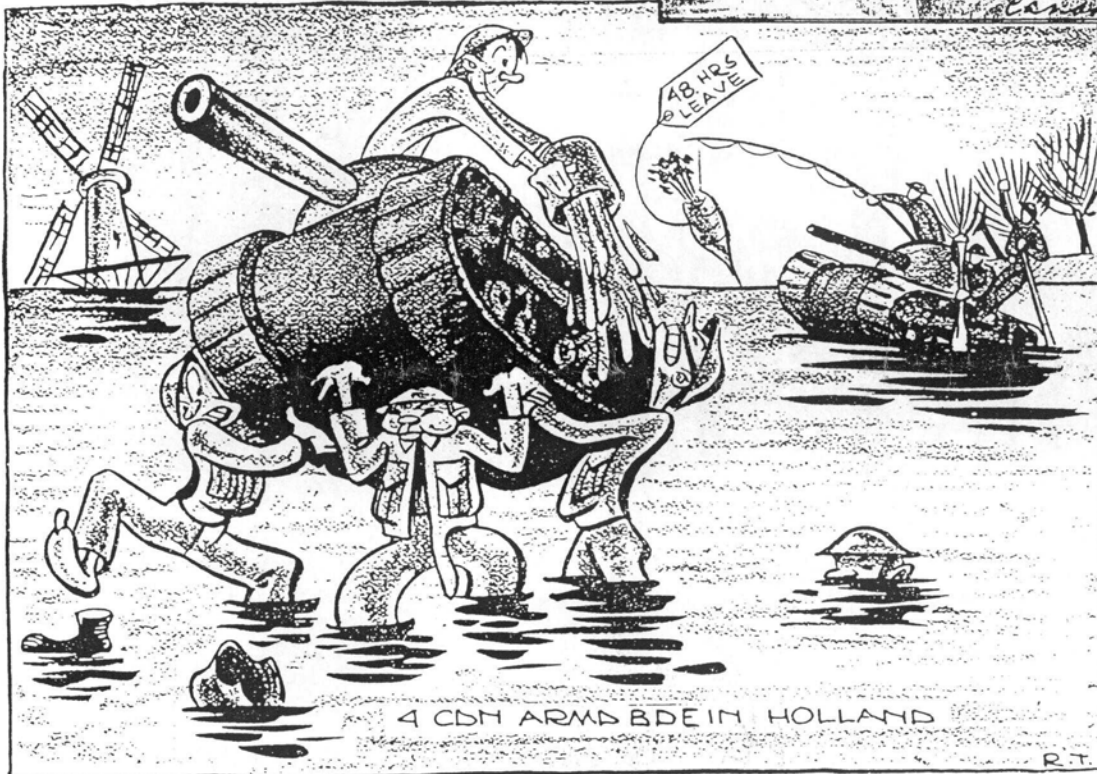
[Bob sent in this Air Letter from K38599, Tpr. B. Ronald Chase. It is dated December 12, 1944 and shows part of the troubles Canadian troops encountered in Holland at Christmastime '44.Ed.]



Dear Mr. Chase: and ...

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I think a lot have to ...

1955 CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE QUEEN

In this, Queen Elizabeth's Golden Jubilee, the cover below which presumably contained a Christmas card is most appropriate. It bears the various CAPO 5051 (London, UK), CAPO 5050 (Werl, Germany), and CFPO 44 (also Werl).



R London, S.W. 32
No 9382



Lt. Col. T.R. McCoy, C.D., and all Ranks,
1st Battalion,
Royal Canadian Regiment,
27 Canadian Infantry Brigade,
EUROPE.



Lt. McCoy



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Dear CMMSG Members:

It is once again time for our traditional "holiday" issue and Bill and I hope that the upcoming season is filled with joy for our members. Our thanks are extended to Joe Smith who conducted our study group meeting in Spokane at BNAPEX. Joe reported that seven members attended (my apologies if I miss anyone): J. Goben, M. Street, K. Ellison, D. Lingard, J. Smith, H. Burgers, and C. Livermore. Discussions included eBay purchases and the Siberian Expeditionary Force. Thank you Joe. Congratulations are also extended to Charles Livermore for his induction into the Order of The Beaver and to C. Douglas Sayles for receiving the 2001 E.R. "Ritch" Toop Military Literature Award. Well done! Congratulations are also extended to the following recent military exhibit award recipients:

- W.G. ROBINSON, "Prisoners of War and Internees, 1914-1920", (5 frames), Vermeil, PIPEX 2002 (group member)
- J. POWELL, "Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force 'D', 1916-1918" (1 frame), Silver, BNAPEX 2002 (non-member)

Members will already know of the sad passing of our BNAPS President Horace "El Supremo" Harrison in early October. Horace always had good things to say about our study group and he will be missed. Our best wishes are extended to his family. President-elect Robert A. Lee, familiar to most of us, will join our group as an ex-officio member and we all wish him the very best in his tenure.

A warm welcome is extended to our new members:

LEE DOWSLEY, 1673 Long Acre Dr., Victoria, BC V8N 2M9

ALAN BAKER, Barleytwist Cottage, 5 Dark Lane, Sunningwell, Abingdon, Oxon OX13 6RE, UK

Resignation received:

KEN BARLOW

Address changes:

HENK BURGERS, 2 Lower Canada Dr., R.R.#3, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON LOS 1J0

BEN FERGUSON, 4 Springfield Ct., Springfield Rd., London SW19 7AL, UK

ANTHONY GEE, 27 Edgebrook Pk., NW, Calgary, AB T3A 2P7

JIM LONGBOURNE, 971 Ambassador Ave., Victoria, BC V8X 3N3

****Please note that there is a dues notice included within this sending as funds are running a bit short. Payment by January 1, 2003 to W.J. Bailey would be appreciated. Thank you.

SMALL ADS

MILITARY COVERS FOR SALE: Check out our Website! All items are colour illustrated: WWW.CANADACOVERS.CA or write Jim Miller Ltd., Box 3005, M.P.P., Kamloops, BC V2C 6B7 (3/3)

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 (10/10)

WANTED: Letters to/from William Maitland-Dougall in period 1910-1917. Send photocopy/price required to C.D. Sayles, 25 Howard Blvd., Waterdown, ON LOR 2H4 or email: saylesd@aecl.ca (5/10)



TO ALL A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON FROM YOUR OFFICERS BILL AND DEAN!