



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

Happy New Year!

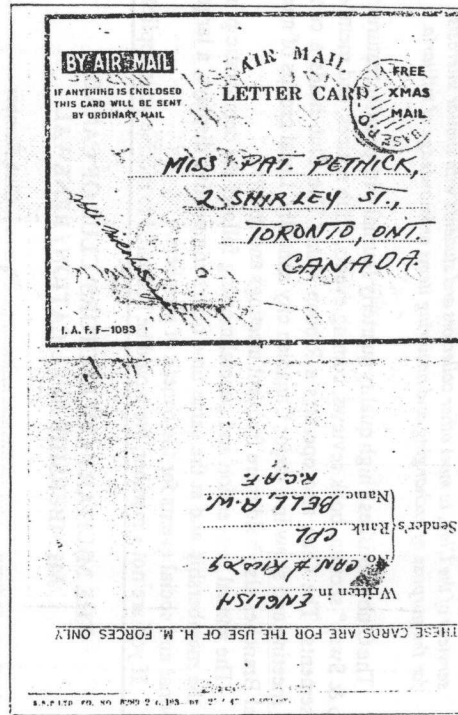
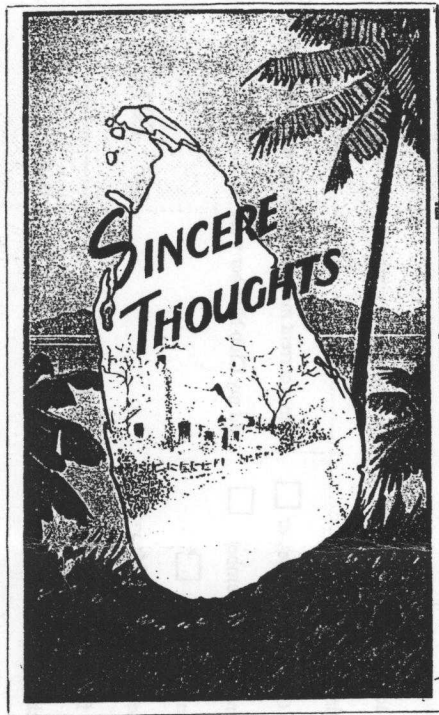
NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2003

NEWSLETTER NO. 158
Page 657

"SINCERE THOUGHTS" FROM THE RCAF, CEYLON--By J.C. Campbell

This illustrated Air Mail Letter Card bears a purple "CEYLON BASE P.O." but without a date, time etc. From the inscription at the base of the letter card is a date of 25-5-43 so it was prepared for Christmas 1943. Note the "FREE XMAS MAIL" which is in red ink at upper right. The illustration has been reduced to 50%.



The seasonal greeting was written by Corporal A.W. Bell, R.C.A.F., and from his regimental number (R100709), he must have enlisted fairly early in the war (perhaps in the Toronto area?). Although printed in 2,500,000 copies (as per the bottom of the card) for Forces everywhere, I wonder how many had the island of Ceylon illustrated? A reply from our R.C.A.F. specialist, A. Dave Hanes,

[Cont'd.]

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WILLIAM A. COLLECTOR 102, GTCB 04

noted that there was an R.C.A.F. Squadron in Ceylon (#413) based at Koggala; arriving March 1942 and departing for England in early 1945. So it is possible that Cpl. Bell was there with that outfit. Dave also remarked that these illustrated Air Mail Letter Cards are quite scarce; despite the numbers given free to servicemen. Dave noted that he has five different ones used from Ceylon but not this one previously shown.

THE M.C.C.C.--FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION

[Several members, your Editor included, have interests in militaria (other than military postal history) so the following membership information on the Military Collectors' Club of Canada is included. It is a very good group of like-minded collectors and the journal the Club issues is well done. Its annual convention will be held in Edmonton, Alberta in late August with two themes: the Club's 40th anniversary and the 50th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice.Ed.]

MILITARY COLLECTORS' CLUB of CANADA

The Military Collectors' Club of Canada (MCC of C) was founded in 1963 by a group of friends interested in the collection of militaria of all types. Since then, it has grown into an international organization of over 700 members. The object of the Club, taken from the bylaws is:

To enable collectors and students of militaria to utilize the common ground and services of the Club, to meet other collectors and students with similar interests for the purpose of exchanging and acquiring items or knowledge of militaria.

The Club publishes a high quality quarterly Journal with popular features: articles, a "Shop & Swap" section, book reviews, coming events, Club notices, and member dealer advertisements. The Club also operates a Ribbon Bank. The Club holds a convention, general meeting and show in a major Canadian city annually. Local groups of members in informal Branches also hold more frequent meetings and shows.

The annual convention and general meeting follows the democratic principle of rule by the membership and at the same time offers competitive displays, a large bourse, educational and social events for the benefit of members.

If you are not a member, we would be honoured to receive your application.

**THE MILITARY COLLECTORS' CLUB OF CANADA
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL**

Name Club Number

Address Postal Code

e-mail address:

Collecting interests:

I am a: Collector Dealer I am a current member renewing my membership:

I was previously a member and my Club Number was:

I am a new member

Proposed by: D. Mario No: 2014

Please find my cheque/money order enclosed for \$

Applicant's Signature Date

Date Received Sec-Treas.

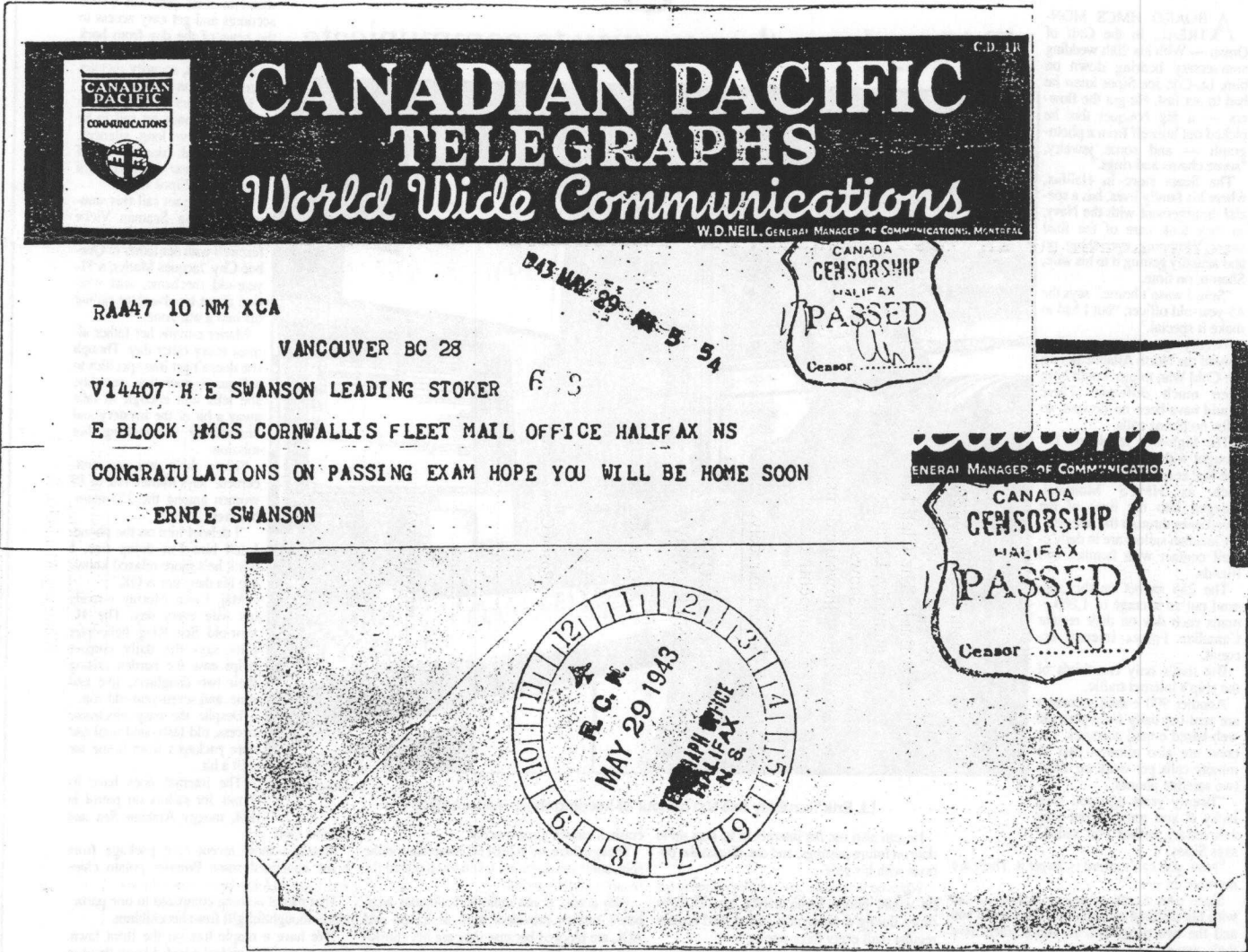
MCC of C subscription is \$C25. (Canada), \$US20. (USA), \$C30. (elsewhere) per calendar year. Two year subscriptions are \$C45. (Canada), \$US35. (USA), and \$C55. (elsewhere). Mail to John Zabarylo, Secretary-Treasurer, PO Box 64009, RPO Morse Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2K 4K2.

F.P.H.S. NEWS

Long-time Editor of the Forces Postal History Society's Newsletter and group member, Ben Ferguson, has relinquished his post for a well-deserved "respite"! John Daynes, 25A Mill Rd., Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex, UK CMO 8PZ--well known to most members--will assume his new duties in 2003. Congratulations are extended to Ben for a "job well done" on behalf of his fellow CMMSG members!

SECOND WORLD WAR TELEGRAPH CENSORSHIP--By Colin Pomfret

Here is an example [illustrated at 73% and full size.Ed.] of the first telegraph censorship I have seen from the Second World War. I have seen one from the Great War from India to Great Britain and censored in the U.K. The envelope in which the telegraph was contained shows the "clock" dater from the Halifax, N.S. Telegraph Office, Royal Canadian Navy.



WINGS FOR BRITAIN CARDS--A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The Editor of our "sister BNAPS" War Times group, Chris Miller, is now seeking information on the above Second World War cards. He notes in a recent issue of the group's newsletter:

"According to Guertin there were sixteen designs sold in 1942, thirty-two in 1943 and eight in 1944. These cards were sold to help the RCAF Benevolent Fund but I have never seen one. Make me happy and send me a photocopy or even happier offer me some for sale. If you have any information please share it with our members".

Can any of our members help out? Responses to Chris at 161 Upper Woodcote Rd., Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR, U.K. or Bill Pekonen, 201-7300 Moffatt Rd., Richmond, BC V6Y 1X8.

AN END TO MILITARY MAIL?: THE RCN AND THE INTERNET, 2003

B4 WORLD

The StarPhoenix

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Monday, January 6, 2003

By Mike Blanchfield
Southam News

You've got mail

□ Navy loves the new way to communicate

ABOARD HMCS MONTREAL, in the Gulf of Oman — With his 20th wedding anniversary bearing down on him, Lt.-Cdr. Joe Sipos knew he had to act fast. He got the flowers — a big bouquet that he picked out himself from a photograph — and some jewelry, "some chains and rings."

The Sears store in Halifax, where his family lives, has a special arrangement with the Navy, so they took care of the final steps: Wrapping everything up and actually getting it to his wife, Sharon, on time.

"Sure I wasn't home," says the 45-year-old officer, "but I had to make it special."

Twenty years ago, sailing around the North Atlantic during the Cold War, things would have been much different. There would have been no flowers, no gifts, no phone calls.

The high-tech revolution has brought with it a welcome side, one that keeps crew on warships, such as HMCS Montreal, plugged into the lives of the loved ones through the internet.

Canadian sailors are in daily e-mail contact with families and friends.

The 255 sailors on this ship send out an average of 1,800 e-mails each day on their regular Canadian Forces internet account.

But that's only two-thirds of the ship's internet traffic.

Another 900 e-mail messages are sent out daily from personal web-based e-mail accounts. The crew are also allowed two 15 minute calls per week on ship's two satellite phones.

"Twenty years ago you were lucky if you remembered your anniversary before you sailed," says Sipos.

"Now you can't afford to forget it. There are no more excuses."

Sipos uses e-mail to stay in regular contact with his children as well. His 15-year-old son and the two daughters, 10 and 6, each have their own e-mail accounts.

That means he gets first hand accounts of what happened in school, and the scores in their soccer games and the latest family banking information from his wife.

He can also use the internet to be kept up to date on future postings, and can discuss the options with his wife.

When he first broke into the Navy, Sipos says he would phone home maybe two or three times during a six-month period, and receive regular mail every three weeks.

Lt. Erik Tremblay, the combat systems engineer who oversees communications, says the crew has become so used to 24/7 internet access that when the server does occasionally

crash, it causes great concern.

Though there are at least 60 computers on the ship, some measures are taken to safeguard the security of the mission.

Web access is not unlimited. Popular web-based service providers such as Yahoo and AOL are blocked because they are not considered secure. The popular Hotmail is also off limits.

The crew is limited mainly to Canada.Com (the internet provider of CanWest Global,

which owns the Southam daily newspaper chain including The StarPhoenix), where crew can maintain their personal e-mail accounts and get easy access to the news of the day from back home and across the world.

Sometimes, security dictates internet access is cut.

Families are briefed before their loved ones set sail to be expect a few long silences. "They're told, 'don't worry if you don't hear from us for a few days,'" Sipos says.

Before she set sail this summer, Leading Seaman Vicky Marier, 31, had an emotional farewell with her father in Quebec City. Jacques Marier, a 51-year-old mechanic, was worried about his daughter sailing off into a war zone.

Marier e-mails her father almost every other day. Though she doesn't get into specifics to safeguard operation security, she tells him enough to take away a bit of the mystery and uncertainty surrounding her mission.

"Now, he's not as concerned," says Marier, one of 19 women among the 255-member crew.

"I debrief him on the phone. I tell him I'm doing fine. I think he's more relaxed knowing his daughter is OK."

Maj. Colin Murray e-mails his wife every day. The 41-year-old Sea King helicopter pilot says the daily contact helps ease the burden raising their two daughters, five and nine, and seven-year-old son.

Despite the easy electronic access, old-fashioned mail and care packages from home are still a hit.

The internet does have its limits for sailors on patrol in hot, muggy Arabian Sea and

—Southam Photo



Lt. Erik Tremblay has the honour of keeping the e-mail working

Persian Gulf.

Murray's most recent care package from home contained some Pringles potato chips and a pair of fake designer sunglasses.

That meant nothing compared to one particularly thoughtful gift from his children.

"We have a maple tree on the front lawn. Each of my kids picked a leaf. I hung them in my cabin," says Murray. "It reminded me of fall."

(OTTAWA CITIZEN)

MAIL DELIVERY AT RCAF STATIONS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR--By C.D. Sayles (c)2002

Introduction

RCAF covers from the Second World War are very collectible and are very popular with military postal history collectors. However, very little appears to have been written about the actual postal system which handled these covers. Fortunately the National Archives have a document which gives a detailed description of the postal system at RCAF Stations during the last half of the Second World War. It is entitled "Post Of-

[Cont'd.]

fications at RCAF Stations/Regulations and Instructions" and was issued by the Director of Postal Service, Canadian Postal Corps, on January 2, 1942. I will summarize the system for the delivery of incoming mail to addressees.

Basic Organization

Conduct of postal operations at RCAF Stations was divided between RCAF personnel and Canadian Postal Corps (CPC) personnel. The CPC staff (almost always one or more non-commissioned officers) were in overall charge and responsible for the delivery of all postal services; except the delivery of ordinary letter mail. Delivery of ordinary letter mail was done by RCAF personnel under the direct supervision of the CPC N.C.O. as described below.

General Delivery System Operated by RCAF Personnel

This system was limited to the delivery of ordinary letter mail through General Delivery wickets, and its redirection, if required. Station personnel had to call at the Post Office or Mail Room to pick up their ordinary letter mail at a wicket operated by RCAF personnel. The number of wickets varied with the population of the station. General Delivery mail was held for a variable period according to the circumstances:

- 7 days--for personnel about whom no information had been received;
- 14 days--for personnel whose arrival was expected;
- 21 days--for personnel at "Y" Depots and special personnel depots.

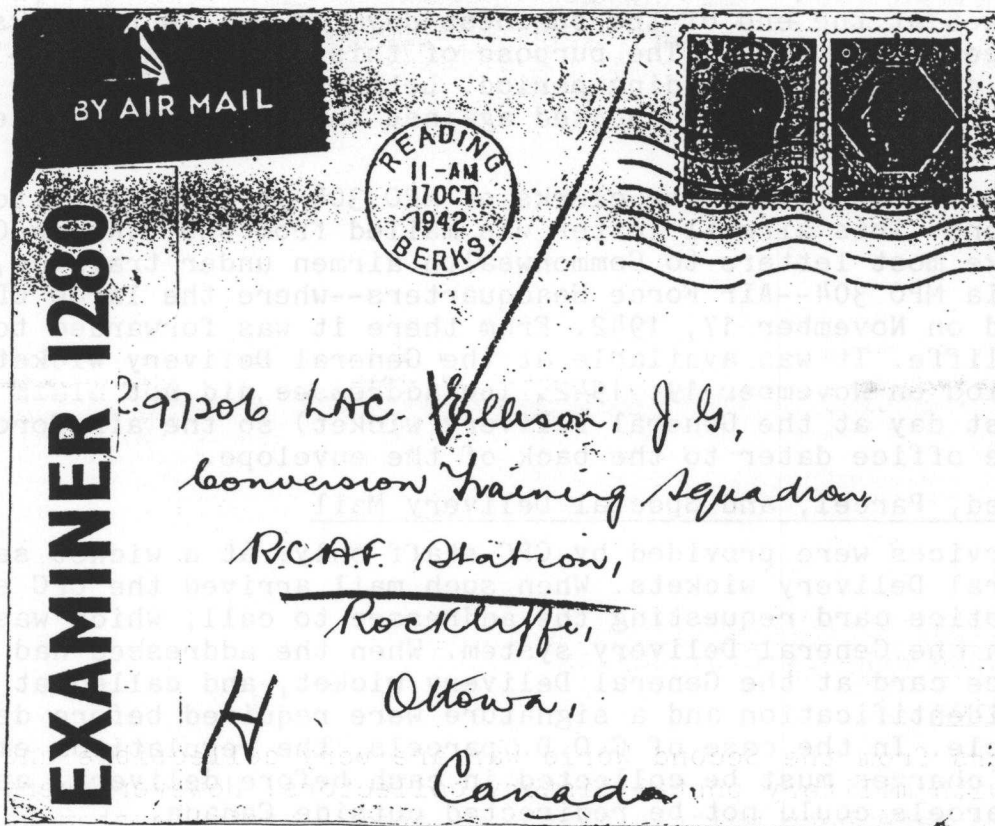


FIG. 1

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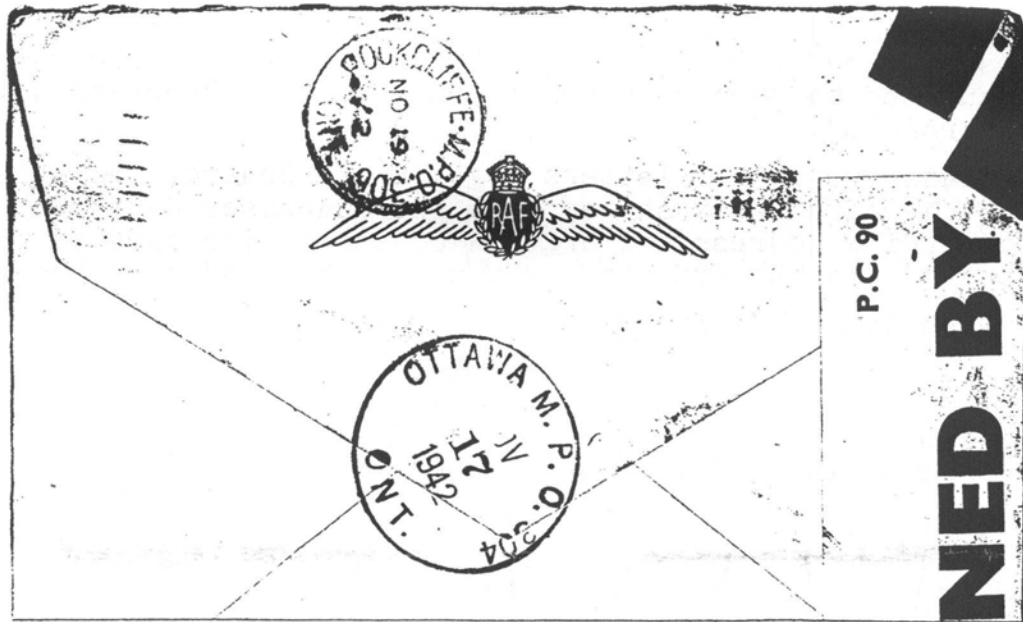


FIG. 1a

The basis for the retention period decision was a card index compiled by the RCAF personnel under the direction of the CPC staff. It contained a record of all personnel changes and transfers as recorded from the daily Station Routine Orders. If a letter remained unclaimed after the designated holding period, and could not be redirected, it was returned to the sender if known (otherwise to the District Dead Letter Office).

The regulations required that the first time a letter remained unclaimed at a wicket at the end of the business day, it was to be backstamped with the office dating stamp. The purpose of this of course was to establish the base date for the holding period. Letters remaining after the end of business for the day were checked against the card index to determine if redirection was required.

FIGS. 1 and 1a show that the clerks of MPO 306 at Rockcliffe followed the regulations. This airmail letter was mailed from the U.K. on October 17, 1942. Like most letters to Commonwealth airmen under training, it was routed via MPO 304--Air Force Headquarters--where the large CDS receiver was added on November 17, 1942. From there it was forwarded to MPO 306 at Rockcliffe. It was available at the General Delivery wicket during its open period on November 19, 1942. The addressee did not claim it that day (its first day at the General Delivery wicket) so the air force clerk applied the office dater to the back of the envelope.

Registered, Parcel, and Special Delivery Mail

These services were provided by CPC staff only, at a wicket separate from the General Delivery wickets. When such mail arrived the CPC staff prepared a notice card requesting the addressee to call, which was then placed in the General Delivery system. When the addressee had received his notice card at the General Delivery wicket, and called at the CPC wicket, identification and a signature were required before delivery of the article. In the case of C.O.D. parcels, the regulations emphasized that all charges must be collected in cash before delivery, and that C.O.D. parcels could not be redirected outside Canada.

Special Delivery letters really did get special handling. If they were unclaimed after the first period the wickets were open, and reference to the card index showed the addressee still on the Station, then the regu-

[Cont'd.]

lations required that "...the Station Headquarters should be contacted and requested to furnish a runner to effect delivery of the Special Delivery article".

If the daily review of letters left in the General Delivery wickets against the card index showed that the addressee had left the Station, the forwarding address was written on the notice card by the RCAF clerk, and returned to the CPC staff who would then redirect the article.

General Delivery at Trenton MPO 303

I think that the General Delivery system described above originated at Trenton, or at least was first tested there. FIGS.2 and 2a show the unique (for this period) General Delivery marking as used at Trenton MPO 303 in October of 1941.

FIG.2

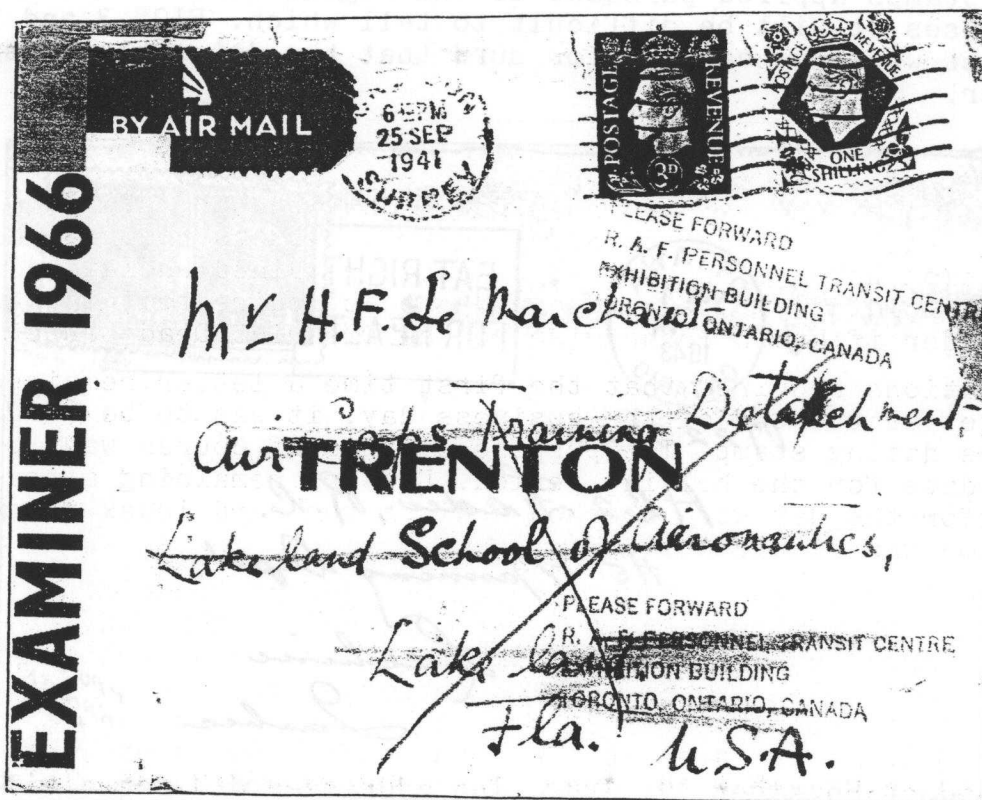
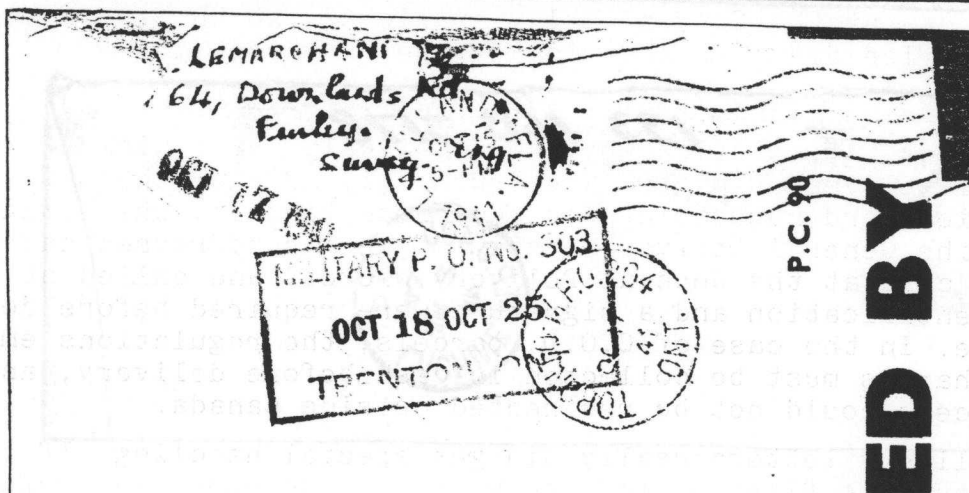


FIG. 2a



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The Bailey and Toop catalogue records that it was proofed in May 1941. It seems reasonable to speculate that the idea for the system described above arose during the spring of 1941, that it was decided to test it at Trenton, and that the unique Trenton MPO 303 General Delivery stamp was procured for that test.

MPO 303 continued to use this marking, rather than the office date stamp required by the regulations, for some time after January 1942. I have seen this unique Trenton marking used in March, July, August, and September of 1942.

Are They Receivers or General Delivery Marks?

Strikes of the receiving office date stamp on the back of the envelope are usually described as receiving marks. But at least some of them must be dater stamps applied pursuant to the regulations as outlined above. In many cases it will be difficult to tell which. FIGS. 3 and 3a illustrate a case where we can say for sure that the dater stamp is applied as a receiver.

FIG. 3

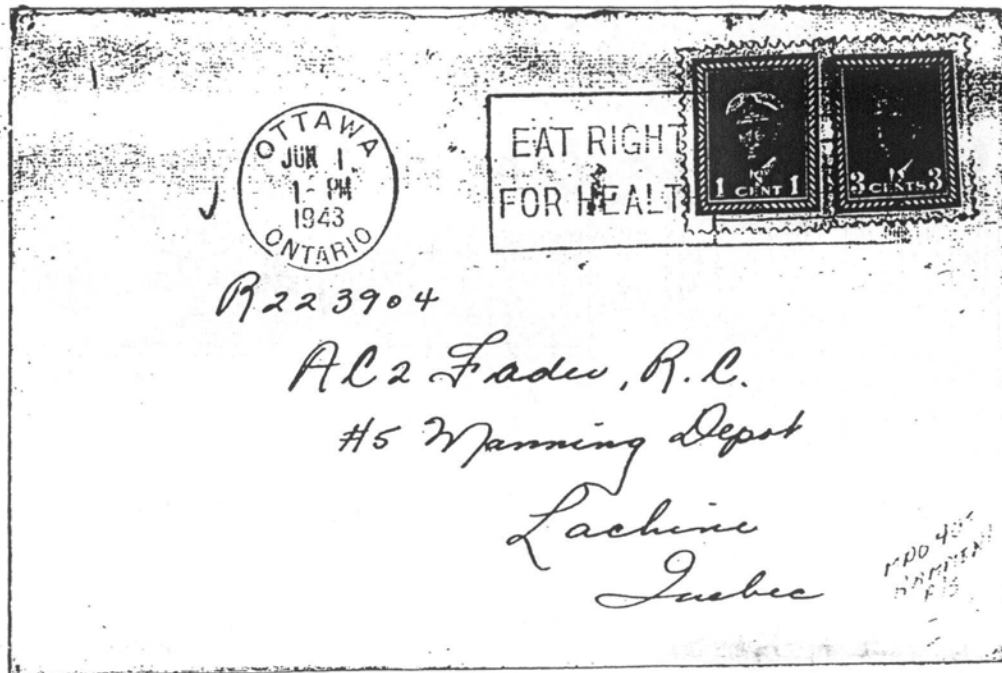
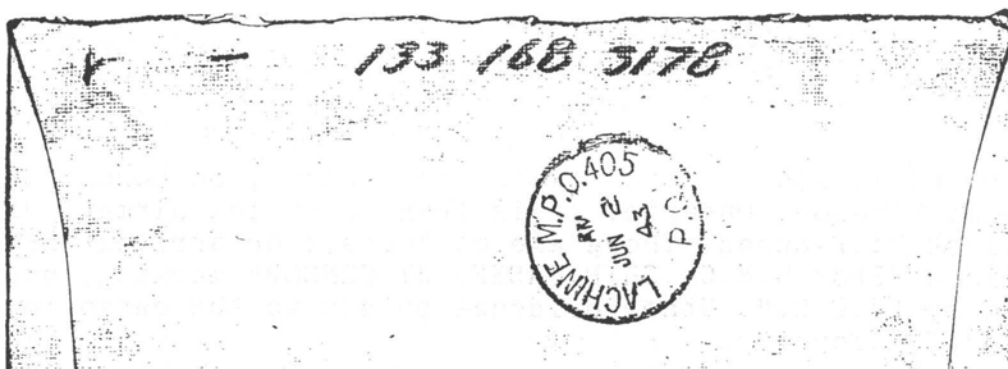


FIG. 3a



It was handled at the Ottawa civil post office at 1 PM on June 1, 1943. I do not think it would have been possible to have it at Lachine MPO 405 in time to be available at the wicket that day. Therefore the MPO 405 date stamp of AM/JUNE 2/43 must be a receiver.

Since most of the covers I have seen addressed to RCAF Stations do not have any date stamp on the back, I am left wondering why some letters had a receiver applied and most others did not. If you can shed some light on this question, please forward the details to the Editor.

H.M.C.S. HUSKY--By W.G. Robinson

Here is a cover from the armed yacht when she was stationed at Trinidad with the America and West Indies Station of the Royal Navy between December 1940, and September 1941.



This cover was mailed at Port of Spain, Trinidad, on March 14, 1941 and addressed to Windsor, Ontario. It is franked at the airmail rate of 26¢ for the first half-ounce. There are no transit or arrival markings. On the back is a "From H.M.C. SHIP PASSED BY CENSOR" marking, undated, and initialled by "J.C.C.". Other evidence points to the censoring officer being Lt. J.C. Cloutier.

DUES ARE DUE! DID YOU REMEMBER TO SEND W.J. BAILEY YOUR 2003 SUBSCRIPTION? THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE "RE-UPPED"!!!

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SOME EARLY MILITARY MAIL AT AUCTION

The following covers were part of the November 23, 2002 public auction sale conducted by Longley Auctions (the illustrations are courtesy of Bill Longley with thanks). FIG.1 is a cover to Surgeon Major Neilson of the Canadian Voyageur contingent and is dated in manuscript "1st Nov. 84". FIG.2 is an unusual 10¢ U.P.U. rated cover to a member of the Royal Artillery in Afghanistan dated 1880. FIGS. 3 and 4 are two covers at the 2¢ soldier rate. One is addressed to Major James Wayling, Qu'appelle, N.W.T. dated May 18, 1885, and the other is from the well-known Capt. Henry Hechler to his wife in Halifax. It was countersigned by James J. Bremner, Lt.Col. commanding the Halifax Battalion. These last two covers are, of course, from the North-West Rebellion and are always very desirable.

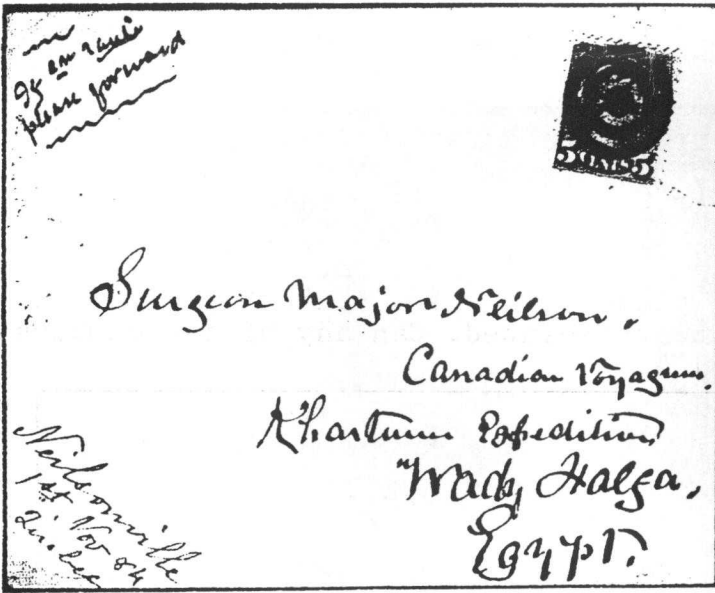


FIG. 1

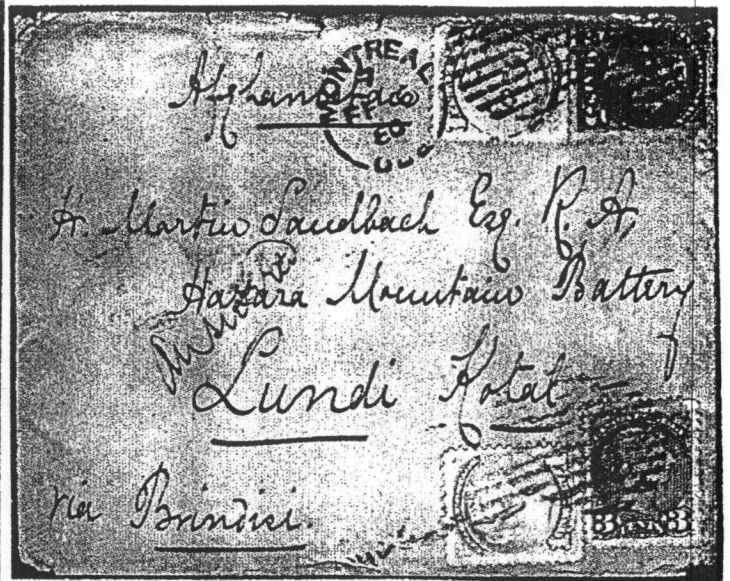


FIG. 2

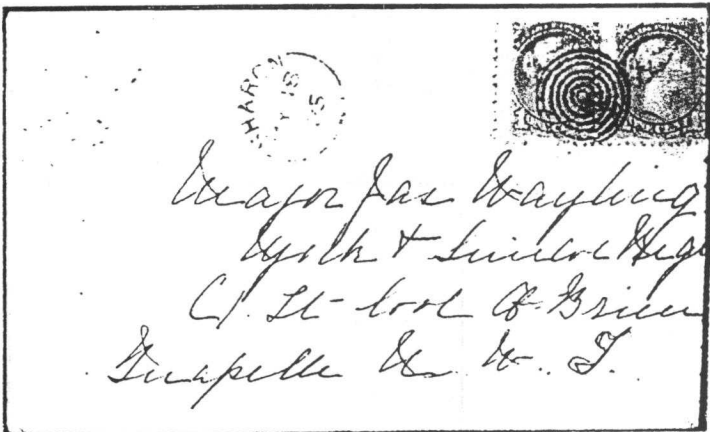


FIG. 3

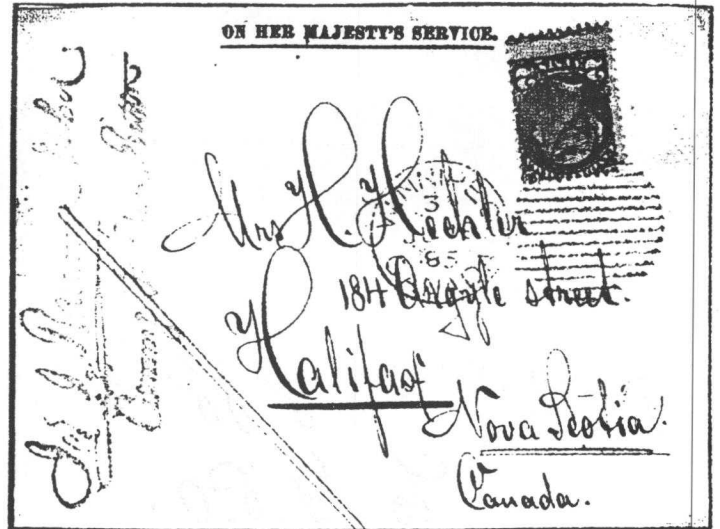


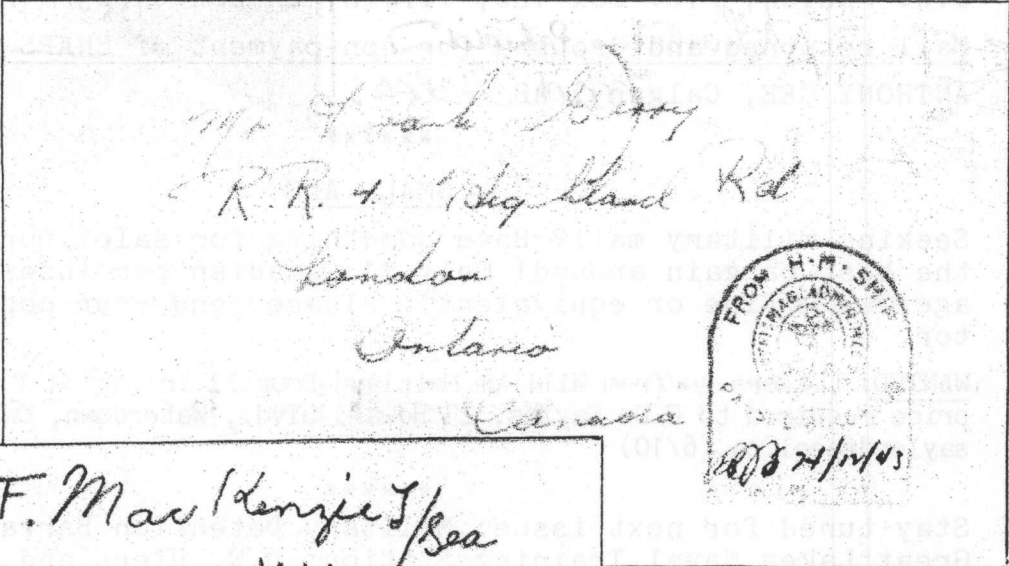
FIG. 4

HMS MONTGOMERY AND HMCS GIFFARD--By Alan Baker

I was interested in the article in the January 2002 edition of the Newsletter [NL 153, pp. 591-592] about HMS Montgomery. I imagine you have received more information on this subject but just in case, I will outline what I have been able to find out.

I have a copy of Warships of WWII published in the U.K. in 1964. It gives some information about HMS Montgomery. She was, indeed, one of the fifty "over-age" destroyers transferred from the U.S. Navy to the Royal Navy in September 1940. Her original name was USS Wickes, but was given the name "Montgomery" as part of the Town Class. She was launched in June 1918, and according to the book, was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy from 1942-1943. She was finally scrapped in March 1945. Janes Fighting Ships of WWII quotes the class as the "Montgomery Class". Her pennant number was G95. Unfortunately I have no details of her contribution to the war effort, but her sister ship HMS Campbeltown of course, is well known.

I should also be interested if any member has any information about HMCS Giffard, a modified Flower Class Corvette and previously named HMS Budleia. According to my book she was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy in 1944. I have a cover, however, with a notation on the reverse in pencil which states the R.C.N. name, although the date of the censorship is "24/12/43". If anyone has an idea of the circumstances which might explain this discrepancy, I should be pleased to know. [Thank you Alan for the above information which was most appreciated. Can any of our members shed some light on this puzzle? Ed.]



D.F. MacKenzie / Sea
 V17343
 of H.M.C.S. Giffard
 c/o G.P.O.
 London Ont

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Dear CMMSG Members:

Bill and I hope that all members had a pleasant holiday season. We'll also wish everyone a Happy New Year as well! Thanks are extended to members who contributed something to these pages and others are certainly encouraged to do the same--new reports, responses to questions, additional information etc. are all necessary for an interesting newsletter.

You'll find this issue once again filled with a variety of articles and it is hoped that a few of the articles are of some interest. If you never see your particular topic, why not send me an article for future printing? David Handelman, Editor of BNA Topics, can use articles too!

Some of our members have been having health troubles and we all extend our very best.

Looking for that special military book? Why not try the Friends of the Canadian War Museum's web site? Used military books are being sold to raise funds for that organization: www.friends-amis.org/internetsale.html and funds are used to support the activities of the War Museum.

Canada Post Corporation will issue a postage stamp commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Korean War's armistice in 2003. More details will be furnished in a future newsletter.

A warm welcome is extended to:

R.A. LEE, BNAPS President, #203-1139 Sutherland Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y5Y2

Address changes:

J.W. FELTON, P.O. Box 128, Tiffin, OH USA 44883-0128

Mail returned and dropped for non-payment of BNAPS dues:

ANTHONY GEE, Calgary, AB

SMALL ADS

Seeking military mail? Have something for sale? Our small ads are still the best bargain around! Only \$1 Canadian per insertion (Cdn. mint postage@face is fine or equivalent). Please send your copy/payment to the Editor.

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 (6/10)

Stay tuned for next issue: Military Detention Barracks at Camp Borden; Great Lakes Naval Training Station; D.W. Piers and much, much more!

Remember the upcoming national shows: Edmonton's Spring National, March 28-30; Ottawa's ORAPEX, May 3-4; the RPSC's ROYAL/ROYALE, May 30-June 1, Hanover, ON; and of course our own BNAPEX '03, September 25-27, London, ON--get those exhibits related to Canadian/BNA military postal history ready to go!!!

Did you know?: Canadian soldiers, sailors, airmen, and service women are buried in seventy-four countries? The Maple Leaf Legacy Project hopes to photograph every gravestone! Check out: www.mllp.demon.co.uk for info.
