

# Canadian Military Mail Study Group

## NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2012

NEWSLETTER NO. 205

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### THE CIRCULAR ARMY CENSORSHIP MARKINGS; SECOND WORLD WAR, NEWFOUNDLAND--By Paul Binney

In early December 1940, the first circular censor markings were introduced for army units at the Newfoundland military bases. The 28mm single-or-double-ring enclosing circles contained the common phrase "Passed by Military Censor No.##". In the centre of the circle are text and lines for "Initials\_\_\_\_" and "Date\_\_\_\_". The two basic types of markings are shown in Figures 1 and 2.



Figure 1: Single ring  
censor marking

These circular censor markings remained in use throughout the war by all army units located on the island of Newfoundland. Locations included: CAPO #1 (St. John's); CAPO #2 (Gander); CAPO #3 (Botwood); and CAPO #5 (Torbay). CAPO #4 was a post office serving R.C.A.F. personnel at Gander and CAPO #10 at Goose Bay, Labrador had a varied and unique set of markings not common to the rest of the Newfoundland bases.



Figure 2: Double ring  
censor marking

I have begun to compile information on the distribution of these markings throughout the war. As such, this article is really an appeal for data from our membership. Most collectors of Canadian Second World War mail have at least a few of these markings in their collection, but I suspect that none of us have enough material to tell the whole story of the distribution and use of these markings. To date I have information from the late John Frith, the late Doug Sayles, Colin Pomfret, my own covers, [the Editor's! Ed.], and some data from dealers' stocks; a total of 185+ covers.

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Some preliminary observations include:

- The lowest censor number is "1" used by the Lincoln and Welland Regiment in 1942, and the highest appears to be "100" used by the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps in 1944.
- The markings were made of vulcanized rubber; possibly using metal "masters" to create the moulds for casting. For the initial twelve censor marks, the pattern of manufacture appears to be batches of three. Censors #1, #2, and #3 are double-ring markings, then #4, #5, and #6 are single-ring markings, and so forth up to censor #12. This suggests that two metal masters existed: one for single-ring, and the other for double-ring markings. It is also possible that the masters were attached in groups of three such that three castings could be made simultaneously to speed production.
- The colour used in the markings was merely a factor of what was available at the moment. Red appears most common, followed by purple, black, blue, and green. The same censor mark can be seen from the same location with a variety of coloured inks.
- Some markings stayed in one location and were used by a variety of military units as they "moved through" during their tour of duty. An example is Censor #2, used by the Royal Rifles of Canada to August 1941, then the Sherbrooke Fusiliers during September 1941. All of this use was at St. John's.
- Other markings moved about with a unit as H.Q. staff were posted to St. John's, then the regiment was moved to Newfoundland, and finally H.Q. staff moved back to St. John's to complete the paperwork for their tour of duty in Newfoundland. An example is Censor #4, commencing in St. John's (CAPO #1) in April 1941, moving to Gander (CAPO #2) in September 1941, then finally relocating back to St. John's in April 1942.
- Most regiments had several censor markings, suggesting that for "field units" each officer responsible for censorship had their own marking. While other units (for example, Coast Artillery batteries) tended to have a single marking used throughout the war. At Headquarters in St. John's, some markings appear to be for "common use" among all army personnel of officer rank.
- Some censor numbers appear to be common in the early years of the war, and then "disappear" later in the war. Other numbers don't appear until the latter part of the war. These discontinuities would suggest the normal loss/replacement cycle as many regiments came and left the island.

To further this study I would appreciate receiving scans of any relevant covers that members would have in their collections. If sending scans is not possible, then the following information would be of use: **military unit, date mailed, location mailed (CAPO #), censor number, and if the censor marking is a single-or-double-ring.** Please send all information to [pbinney@persona.ca](mailto:pbinney@persona.ca) or if you use normal postal service

[Cont'd.]



to: Paul Binney, 1 Courtney Hill, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 5W6.

Of particular importance are the military unit and the date of use. I am trying to document the assignment of the markings to individual military units, and then track the usage by location and date. This should provide a "time-line" showing when, where, and by whom each marking was used throughout the war.

When sufficient information is received, I will provide a more complete article for the newsletter with usage information. Thank you for your assistance. [If members can assist Paul with his project it would benefit this relatively "unknown" story of these interesting censor devices. A copy of this article will be sent to Bob Dyer, OTB, Editor of the Newfie Newsletter to help expand Paul's study. Ed.]

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FLEET MAIL OFFICER, NO. 82, HALIFAX--By David Collyer

The 3/11d rate from Australia to Canada via FAM 19 between Auckland and San Francisco is uncommon. It would be appreciated if someone could come up with information about Fleet Mail Officer, No.82, Halifax.



Pan American Airways operated FAM (Foreign Airmail) 19 between the west coast of the United States initially using San Francisco and then using Los Angeles as the terminus with Mechanics Bay in Auckland, New Zealand from July 1940 to December 7, 1941. TEAL (Tasman Empire Airways Limited; later Air New Zealand) operated a service between Auckland and Sydney that connected with the PAA service.

This cover is franked at 3/11d for the airmail from Australia to New

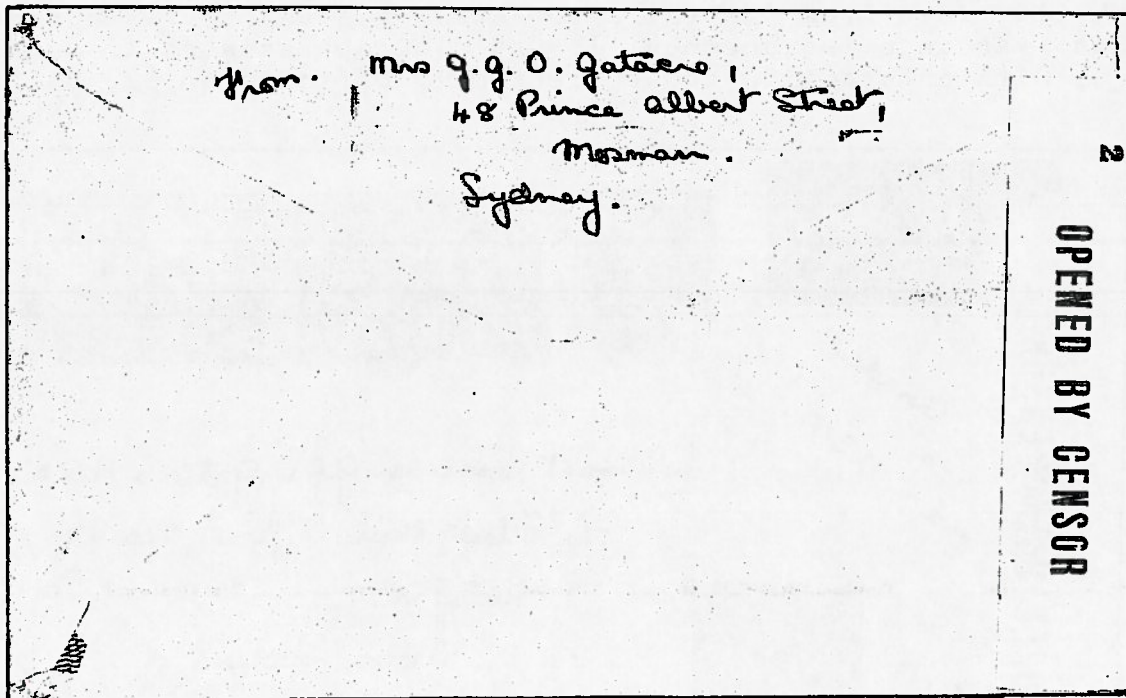
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Zealand, from New Zealand to the U.S.A., and by air within the U.S.A. and Canada. The date on the postmark is not readable, however there are other indicators that may give a date range. The cover is endorsed in pen in the top-left corner "Australia-Canada/Via/New Zealand and USA".

The machine postmark shows that the cover was posted at the G.P.O. Sydney. At that time there were special posting slots on the Colonnade facing Martin Place for specific types of mail. This item could have been posted either with the "Foreign Mail" or the "Airmail". The return address is Mossman on the north side of Sydney Harbour where the G.P.O. was on the corner of George Street and Martin Place in the city.

The cover has a pre-printed airmail label showing that it came from commercially produced stock. As the item was addressed overseas and to a serving member of the defence forces it was inspected by the Civil Censor. "S.69" is one of the first series of censor handstamps used in Sydney; "S" denoting Sydney. The censor tape shows the code number "2" to indicate the 2nd Military District for which Sydney was the headquarters.



Lieutenant Commander G.G.O. (Galfrey George Ormond) Gatacre was born at Kingaroy, Queensland in 1907. He passed the entrance examination for the Royal Australian Naval (RAN) College at Jervis Bay in 1920 and undertook training from 1921-1924. In 1926, after service in the R.A.N., Gatacre transferred to the Royal Navy where he served until the end of 1941. Gatacre became a Lieutenant Commander in England in 1937 where he served as Navigation Officer on a range of Royal Navy ships.

Gatacre married Wendy Palmer in 1933, and their first child Roddy was born in 1935. The Gatacre's were in the Portsmouth area at the outbreak of war in September 1939. Mrs. Gatacre returned to Australia around June 1940.

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In July 1940, Gatacre was appointed Navigation Officer to HMS Nelson and subsequently to HMS Rodney, where he served until January 1942. During this time HMS Rodney saw service with the Home Fleet, the North Sea, and the Atlantic, where she made visits to Halifax and Boston. Gatacre was involved in the search for the German Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, and the search and destruction of the Bismark. Gatacre returned to Australia, sailing on the SS Ceramic; a voyage that took twelve weeks. From mid-1942 Gatacre served on HMAS Australia in the Pacific.

The cover was written...probably in 1941....The cachet "California/Clipper" was applied to mail to be carried on the PAA FAM 19 service from Auckland to San Francisco. Before boarding the aircraft for the journey across the Tasman, the contents of the item were inspected....Australian mail for this service departed Sydney on the TEAL service to Auckland where it connected with the fortnightly PAA service to San Francisco. As the recipient was on duty in the Atlantic, it is not known when he received the letter.

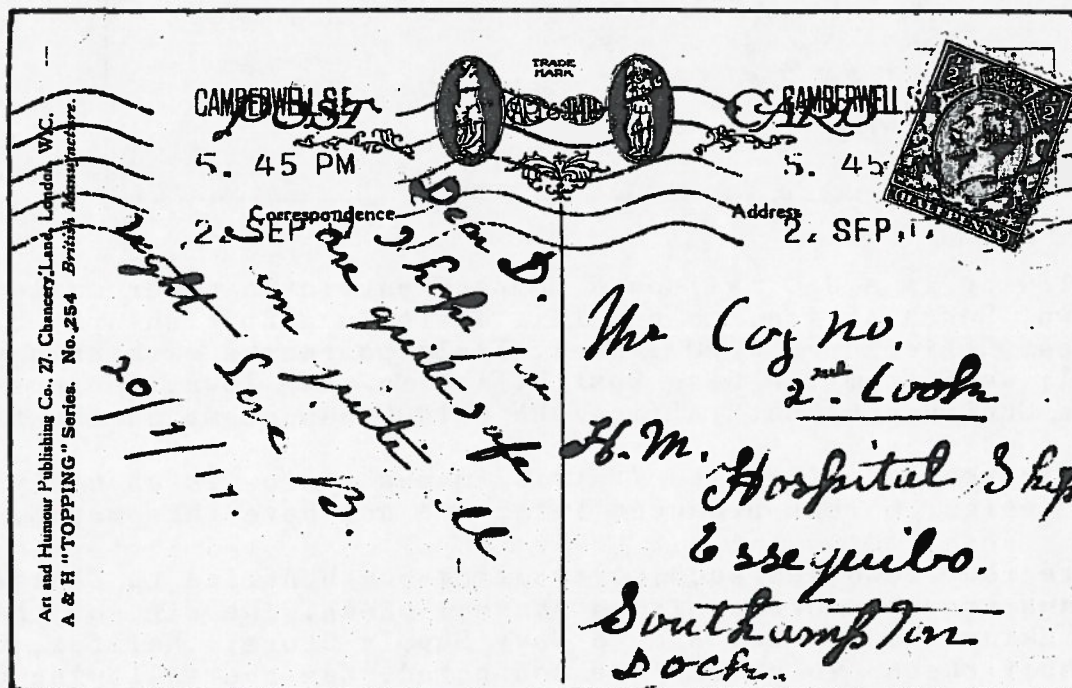
### Bibliography

Gatacre, G.G.O. A Naval Career Reports of Proceedings, 1921-1964. Manly, N.S.W.: Nautical Press, 1982.

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### H.M. HOSPITAL SHIP ESSEQUIBO, SOUTHAMPTON DOCK--By Colin Pomfret

Here is a card from Camberwell, S.E. dated September 22, 1917 to "2nd Cook" aboard H.M.H.S. Essequibo, Southampton Dock; a Canadian ship at this time.



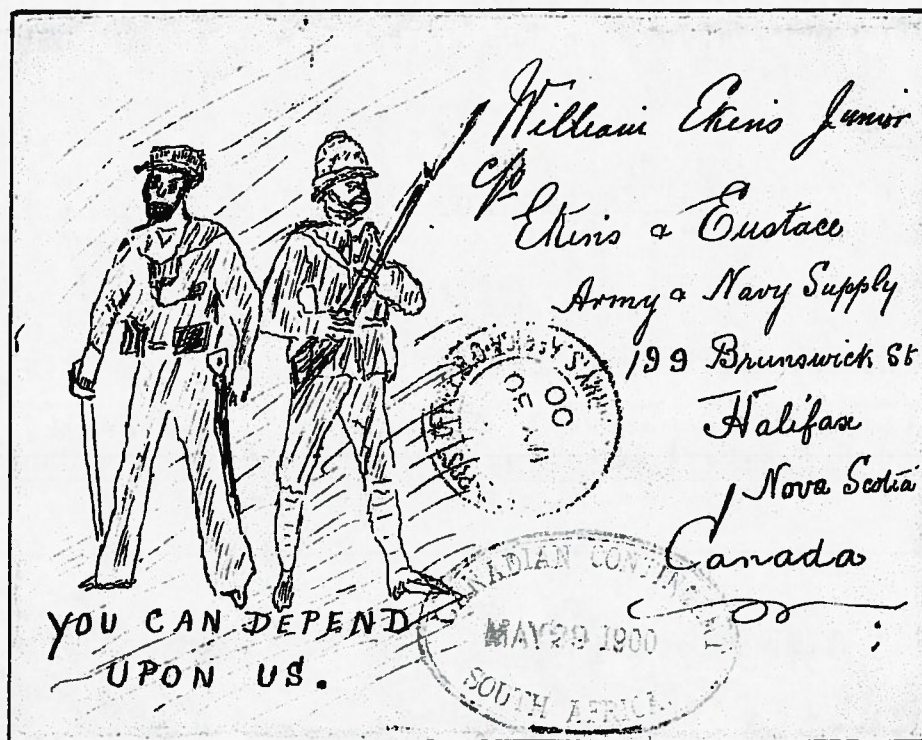
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HAND-DRAWN BOER WAR PATRIOTICS--By Hal Kellett

This cover has a homemade drawing of a Canadian soldier and what looks like a Boer commando with the words "YOU CAN DEPEND UPON US" written below. The cover is addressed to Halifax, Nova Scotia and has a British Army S. Africa Field Post Office cancel dated May 30, 1900. The post office number is not discernable. There is a Canadian Contingent/South Africa/MAY 29 1900 handstamp on the front.

The cover was sent by Sgt. J.D.F. Eustace of the Second Contingent, 63rd Rifles, of Halifax. They left Halifax on February 21, 1900 and arrived in Cape Town March 21, 1900.



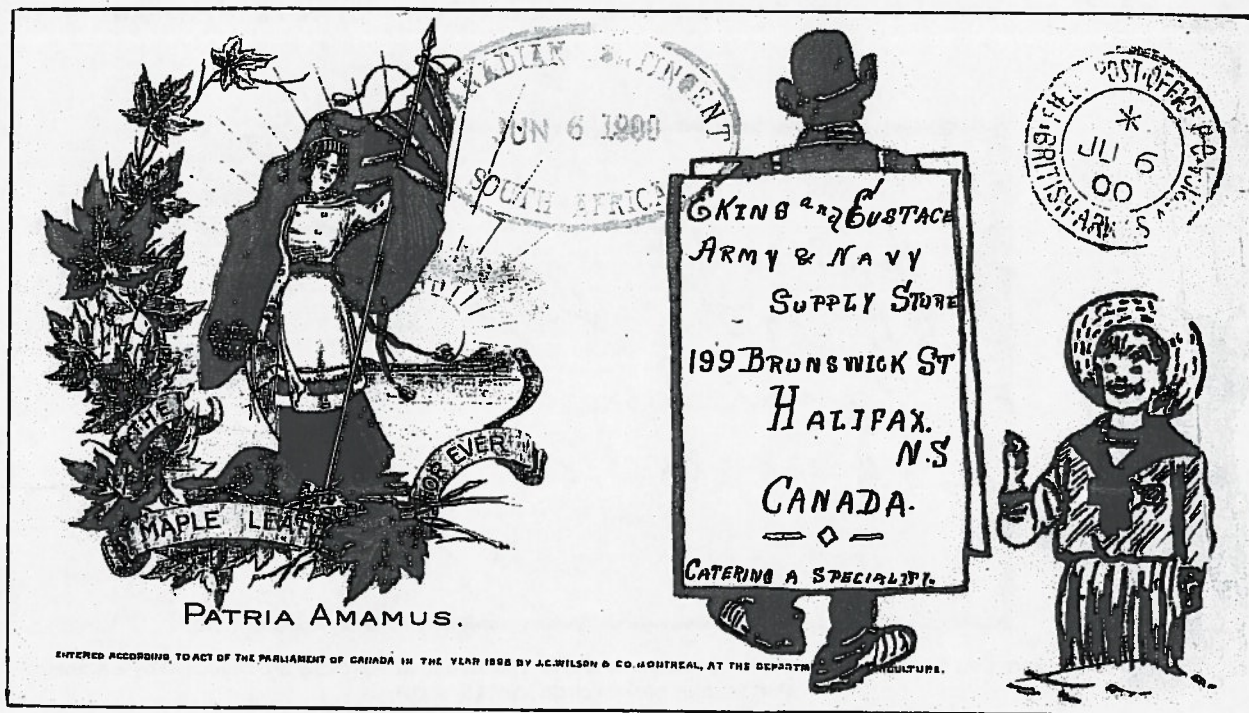
The following is a J.C. Wilson & Company patriotic cover mailed from Cape Town, South Africa, to Halifax. There is a British Army S. Africa Field Post Office/\*JU 6/00 cancel. Field postmarks with an asterisk generally were from the Base Post Office in Cape Town. There is a red Canadian Contingent/South Africa/JUN 6 1900 handstamp on the front.

The "Maple Leaf" design with "Patria Amamus" below is an early example of this design. Covers produced later did not have this motto.

There are four recorded such covers from South Africa to Canada. The hand-drawn artwork makes this an unusual piece. The sign on the man states "Ekins and Eustace Army & Navy Supply Store...Halifax, N.S.". [Presumably these two covers are connected. Was the following cover also depicting Master William Ekins, Junior, the addressee of the cover above? Have other members seen similar pen-and-ink patriotics? Ed.]

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SAULT STE. MARIE GUARD-1918--By Henk Burgers

These two covers were (re-) discovered recently in my First World War accumulation of "things to sort". The first one is addressed to Pte. Arthur Hughes, Canall (sic) Guards, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. While I was able to find out a fair bit about the force guarding the Welland Canal during the two wars, I have been unable so far to get any detailed information about the Sault Ste. Marie Guard.

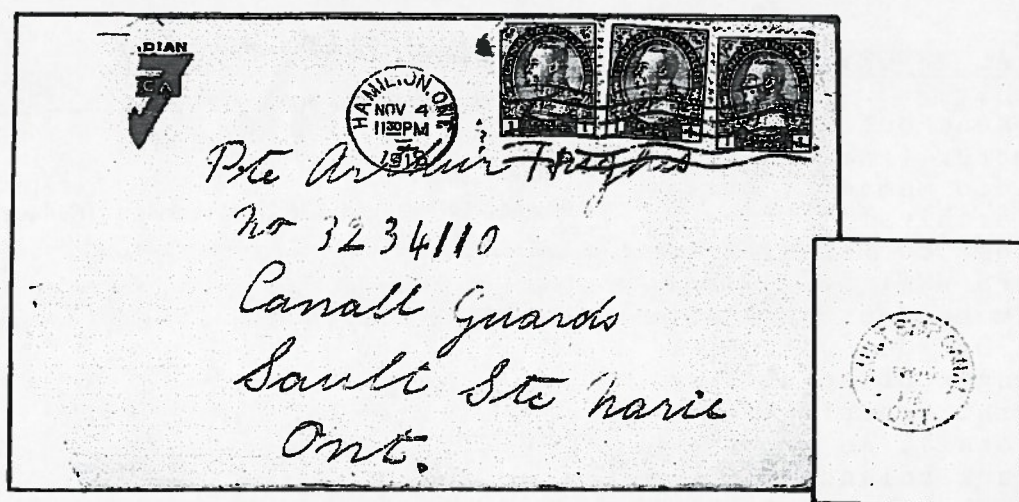


Figure 1. Somewhat tatty cover from Hamilton with 3x 1c Admirals cancelled by NOV 4/1918 Hamilton machine cancel to Pte with the Sault Canal Guard.

Figure 2. CDS arrival marking of Sault Ship Canal on the reverse of the above cover.

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A second cover (Figure 3) was sent from Port Stanley to the same private.

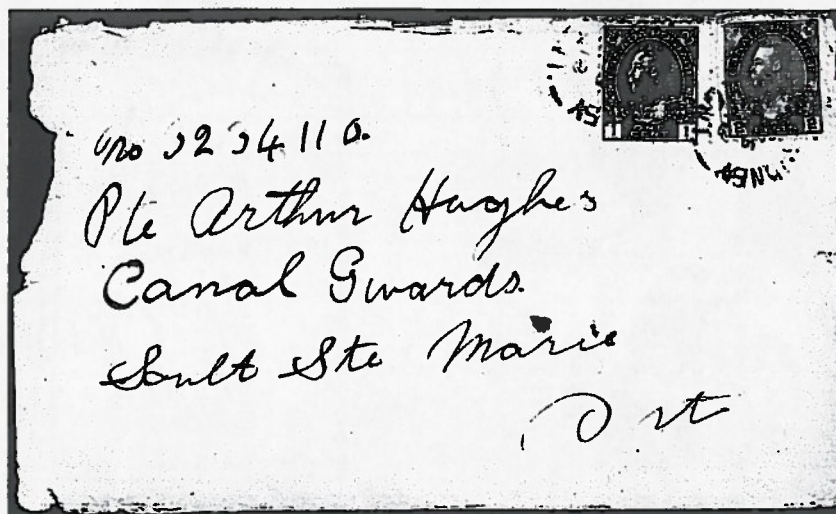


Figure 3. Cover from Port Stanley to Pte with the Sault Canal Guard. The 1c and 2c Admirals are cancelled by 2 strikes of the Port Stanley broken circle NOV 18/1918.

There is a lot of correspondence available in the National Archives [1], but none of it is yet accessible online, so it will have to wait until my next trip to Ottawa.

### References

[1] Library and Archives Canada, RG 24-C-8.

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### CMMSG FINANCIAL REPORT

We currently send out 64 copies of the newsletter (including BNAPS ex-officio members; publicity copies; archival/library copies; exchange copies with the FPHS/CCSG/BNAPS WWII S.G.). Our usual approximate cost per issue is between \$120-\$130 (with some occasional usages of below-face postage and kind contributions lowers this total). As of July 3, 2012 our bank balance was \$519.81. At right is our breakdown of Issue No. 204 (plus extra costs for envelopes). We will need to have another call for dues late 2012/early 2013 to keep us afloat. Ed.

CMMSG NL #204 (May 2012)

--Copies \$58.44  
--Postage \$45.89 (incl. \$38.14 at reduced 70% face postage)

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\$104.33

--Envelopes \$10.95

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\$115.28

Previous bank balance \$635.09  
Less above - \$115.28

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Current cash on hand \$519.81

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NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

Charles J. LaBlonde has notified us about his two new books which might interest members. Post D-Day Swiss Mail To/From Great Britain and the Americas is a full-colour, 134-page, perfect bound research-based study on the effects of the Allied invasion on the Swiss postal system. Data is included from Canadian archival sources. Order from Charles at 15091 Ridgfield Lane, Colorado Springs, CO USA 80921-3554. Prices (including postage) are USA \$25; Canada \$28; Rest of World \$38 (US funds). He has also published his ten-frame gold medal exhibit on The Censorship of World War II Danish Mail: A Primer, which includes in/outbound Danish mail; Red Cross; and Refugee Camp sections as well. Prices (including postage): USA \$20; Canada \$23; Rest of World \$35 (US funds). It's a b/w version, 160-page, spiral bound analysis. A full colour version is available but contact the author for more details.

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1942 POSTAL & TELEGRAPH CENSORSHIP: A FOLLOW-UP--By Graham Mark

[In a follow-up email from Graham Mark, Hon. Librarian/Treasurer of the Civil Censorship Study Group, he was able to provide more details on the item from Ron McGuire's interesting P.C. 72 form (NL#204, May 2012, pp. 1231-1235). Graham writes:

"In Ron McGuire's article on pp. 1231-35, 'I.R.B.' was the Information and Records Branch of the Postal Censorship. The Form P.C. 72 is known to us but this example is a different print from the one shown in our U.K. handbook. Very likely that is because this example was used at Liverpool where the one illustrated in our handbook was used in London.

There is no telling from the form what happened to the letter, but on the basis that the form and letter are still together, then the letter must have been detained and filed with the Form P.C. 72. When the censorship was being wound-up this item must have 'escaped' for if the item had been released back to the postal system in late-1945, it seems most unlikely the Form P.C. 72 would have been sent to the addressees.

Re. 'MI 12': to quote from the official History of the Postal and Telegraphic Censorship Department, 1938-1946:

958. When responsibility for postal and telegraph censorship was transferred from the War Office to the Ministry of Information in 1940, it was considered necessary to create an organisation to provide liaison between the War Office and Censorship. This organisation took the form of a new section (M.I. 12) of the Directorate of Military Intelligence, War Office. Its main functions were (a) to act as military advisors on matters of security and intelligence; (b) to distribute military material derived from Censorship to the appropriate War Office branches and sections; (c) to refer to the War Office breaches of military security as disclosed by censorship."

Thank you Graham for helping to "fill in some of the holes" of a most-

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interesting story and censorship "artifact". Ed.]

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**\*\*\*BNAPEX/CALTAPEX 2012, CALGARY, ALBERTA-CMMSG STUDY GROUP MEETING\*\*\***

A Study Group meeting has been called for the upcoming BNAPEX in Calgary. Members are invited to attend on Saturday, September 1, 2012 at 1300 HRS (1:00 PM). The room number will be assigned. Topping the agenda will include the election of a new Study Group Chairman.

At the time of publication, I don't know if any programme is planned but members are invited to bring something for "show and tell", ask a question, inform members of their new projects, discuss what they would like to see/propose ideas for the future direction of our group etc. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend but should the membership accept my staying on as Editor/Treasurer, I wish to stay on in these positions (at least for awhile yet). Articles are always needed too! Thank you.

**CALL FOR DUES:** Our last call for dues was back in January 2011 so our two-year membership term will soon be upon us. Arguably our dues are still one of the best bargains today! Despite the fact that both printing and postage rates have increased, I believe that we can still hold our rates the same as last time: \$20.00Cdn. for our Canadian members and \$20.00US for our American and International members (currently the C\$ is trading at par, so the Canadian equivalent is acceptable). I've asked Henk if he could collect dues for the ease and convenience of members attending the meeting. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

For those members unable to attend, this is the "first call" for dues and members can please make out their payments to me "Dean Mario" rather than to the "CMMSG" as the bank will not cash them! I can cash US Dollar and Sterling cheques for members' convenience.

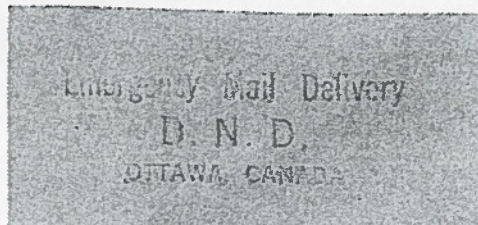
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**1968 EMERGENCY MAIL DELIVERY/D.N.D./OTTAWA, CANADA: INFORMATION PLEASE--**  
By C.A. Stillions

This rather large cover, it measures 293 mm wide by 128 mm high, was found in a dealer's junk box by one of my local club members who gave it to me with the question "What is it"? My limited research has turned up little.

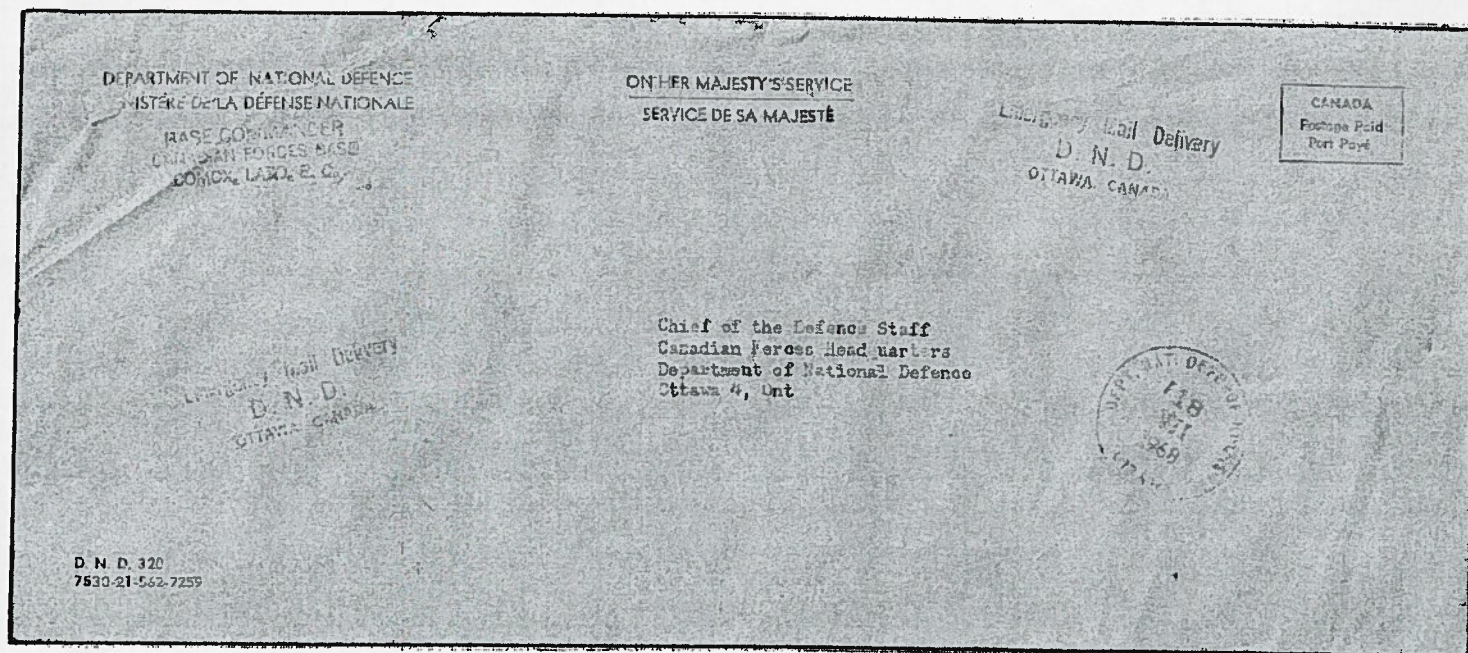
An Internet search turned up one similar cover, a smaller one used within Ottawa and also with a July 1968 date. Both covers were used during the postal strike of 1968. So it must be a strike cover, but what was the purpose of the "Emergency Mail Delivery/D.N.D./OTTAWA, CANADA"? Was this strictly a military service and how did it work?

[Enlarged for detail. Ed.]



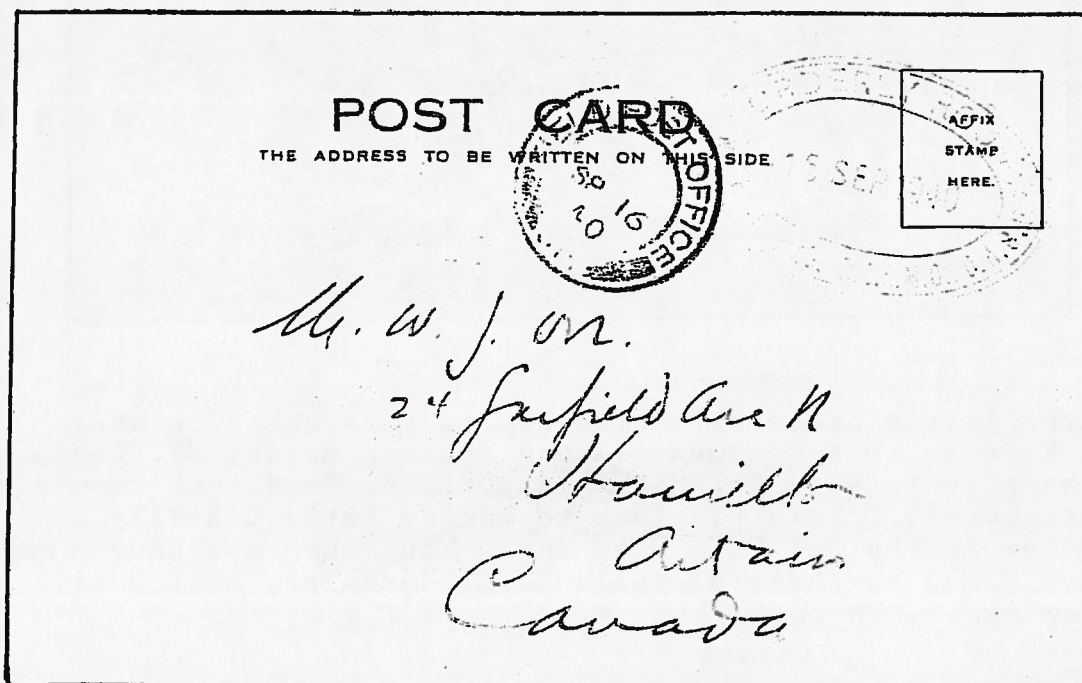
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[These brown kraft D.N.D. covers are always difficult to reproduce in black and white but I will provide a few details if they do not copy well. The cover has a rubber return address marking: "BASE COMMANDER/CANADIAN FORCES BASE/COMOX, LAZO, B.C." and is addressed to the "Chief of the Defence Staff, Canadian Forces Headquarters, Department of National Defence, Ottawa 4, Ont." It also has a large CDS receiver of "DEPT. NAT. DEFENCE ?/OTTAWA/18/VII/1968". I suspect, as does Clarence, that this was primarily a military service for important and sensitive mail within the Department. Presumably the mails would have travelled in closed bags from base to base or base to headquarters. Can members confirm and supply more examples or specific information? Ed.]

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NO. 5 CANADIAN  
FIELD AMBULANCE,  
1940--By Jon John-  
son

Here is a postcard from No.5 C.F.A., R.C.A.M.C. with an oval orderly room marking. The back of the card is blank, and the writer mentions that only blank postcards can be sent at this time (September 15, 1940).

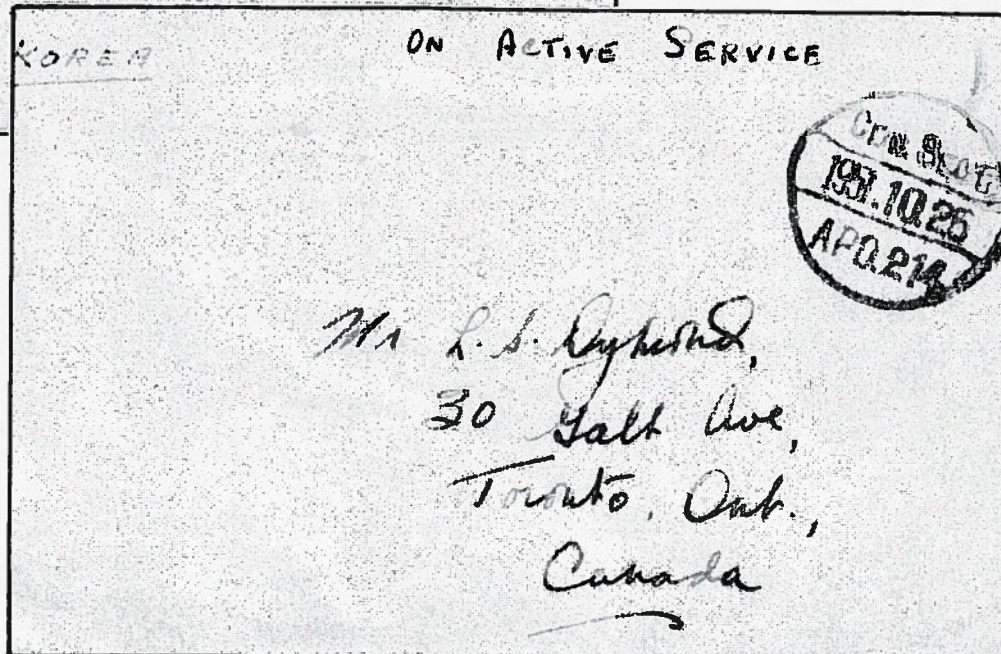
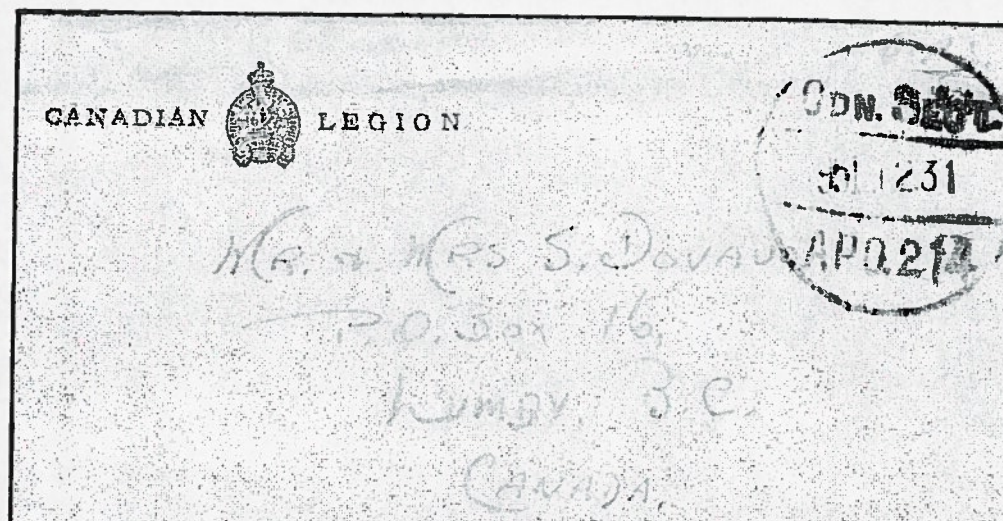
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KOREA: CDN. SECT. APO 214--By A.D. Hanes

[Dave sent in two different examples of these interesting markings connected with the Australian APO 214 used in Korea. Both were used in 1951. For more on these see NL#146 (Special "Korean War Issue", Aug. 2000, pp. 483-484, Sayles); NL#190 (May 2009, pp. 1039/1049, Street); and NL#191 (Aug. 2009, pp. 1059-1060, Lingard). Ed.]



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Dear CMMSG Members: Little space this time thanks to members' contributions. Thanks! Welcome to new member Vernon Von der Heydt, St. Louis, MO. Please see the note related to BNAPEX on p. 1246. Good luck to all exhibitors and attendees. Congratulations to member Kevin O'Reilly on being named a Fellow in the R.P.S.C. Henk and I hope that you have super "Dog Days of Summer" and a wonderful fall. Until November, keep well! A "first call" for dues with membership form is included.

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