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Dear Member:

420...New reference book - 1981

THE DIARY OF A P.B.O.*

* Poor Bloody Observer

Frank L. Shrive

Edited by Norman Shrive

A most interesting account, in diary form, of a Canadian who served in the Royal Air Force in North Russia with Elope Force. Illustrated - hard cover - Boston Mills Press.

F.L. Shrive served as an Aerodrome Control Officer at #10 Elementary Flying Training School, Pendleton Ontario during World War Two.

421...Canadian military duplex cancels - survey return - reference items 358 & 402



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St. Thomas MPO 101

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Trenton " 303

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| 2A | X | 3 | |
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Ottawa NPO 317

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| 2B | X | 6 | |
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RCAF Station/Centralia PQ

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| 2 | X | 3 | |
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Valcartier PQ MPO 501

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| 2A | X | 6 | |
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MPO 501 (Valcartier)
(Military Post Office)

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| 2B | X | 4 | |
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Moncton MPO 705

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| 2A | X | 4 | |
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Dartmouth " 602

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| 2A | X | 5 | |
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Shilo Man.

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| 2 | X | 2 | |
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Shearwater NS

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| 2 | X | 3 | |
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RCAF Station Centralia

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| 2 | X | 3 | |
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Shilo MPO 1001

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| 2A | X | 10 | |
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Rivers " 1006

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| 2A | X | 5 | |
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Souris " 1008

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| 2A | X | 5 | |
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Churchill " 1015

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| 2A | X | 5 | |
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Gimli RCAF Station

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| 2 | X | 3 | |
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Rivers Camp Man.

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| 2 | X | 6 | |
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Terrace MPO 1109

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| 2A | X | 7 | |
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F.M.O. Halifax

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R.C.A.F. Station

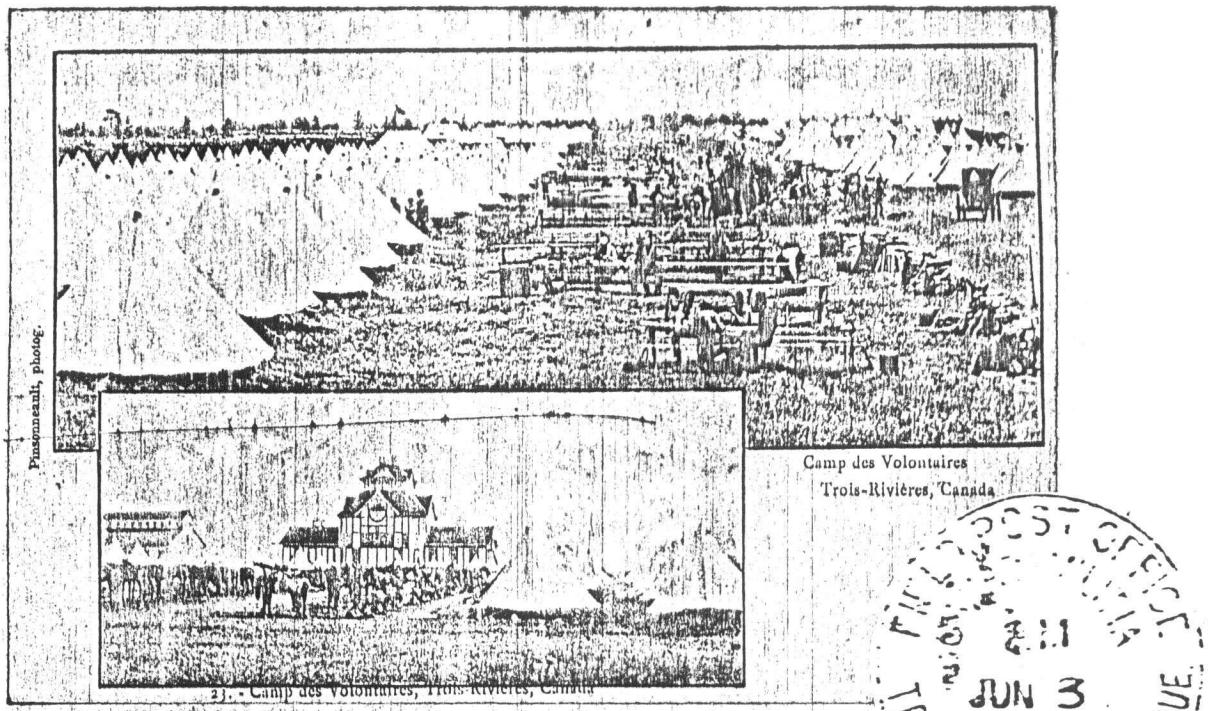
| | | | |
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Saskatoon Sask.

NOTE: We expect to supply a cumulative index with Newsletter #50 covering Newsletters 1 - 50.

422...Trois Rivierès - Canada Militia Camp and postmark

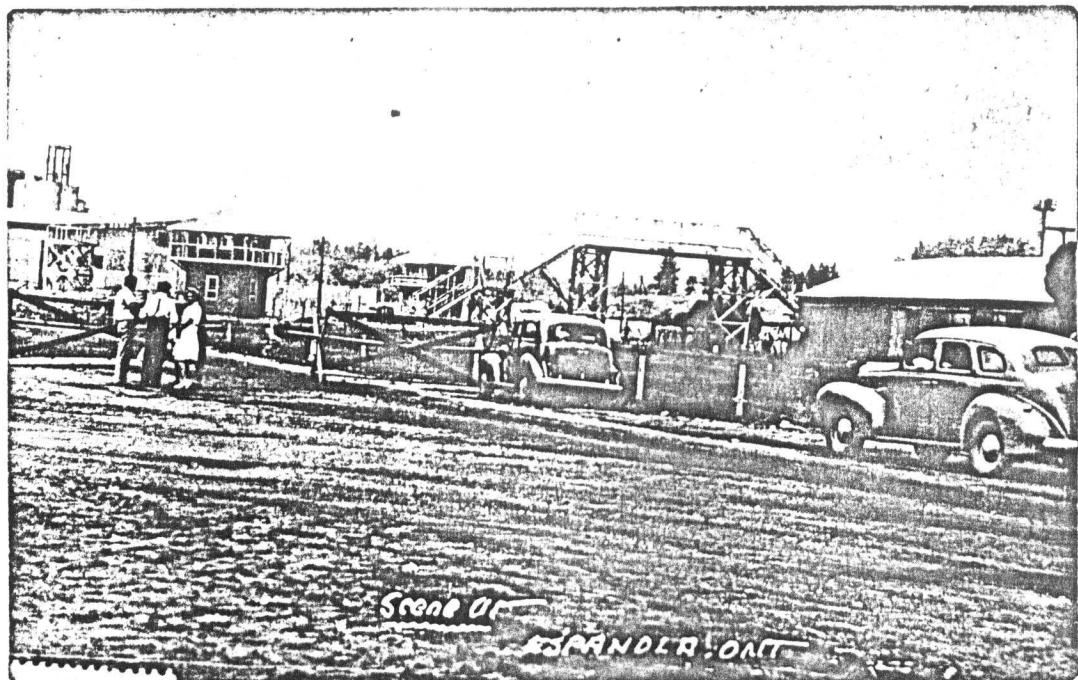
Here are photocopies of the Trois Rivierès proof strike dated Jun 3 11 and the camp site in Quebec. See NL 40, item 323, for details on the strike. The photocopy of the proof strike has been enlarged.



It is of interest to note that the Three Rivers Provisional Battalion of Infantry was formed March 24, 1871. In 1900 the designation was changed to 86th Three Rivers Regiment made up (in 1910) of 4 Companies with H.Q. at Three Rivers, Que.

423...P.O.W. Camp - Espanola, Ontario - WW2

We have Harry Machum, the hardworking librarian for the B.N.A.P.S., to thank for making this item available. LEGION Magazine very kindly gave permission to reprint their story, "Guests of the Government", featured in the



423...cont'd.

May 1978 issue.

*flies, mosquitoes and a harsh winter
made sure these PoWs remained*

by W.H. James

The thriving E.B. Eddy plant at Espanola in northern Ontario looks more like a fortress than a pulp mill, sitting high above the Spanish where the river makes its last fall before flowing smoothly off into Lake Huron.

The mill reminds one of an old *schloss* over the Rhine except that it is not stone but red brick with round towered battlements turned into smokestacks and strange noises coming from deep in the inner keep.

Until the mid-fifties the approach to the castle—I mean the mill—was over a single-lane bridge a hundred feet above the river. An approach easily defended by a couple of resolute men against a thousand.

Built as a sawmill by the Spanish River Lumber Co., it has seen as many economic ups and downs in 70 years as any other mill in Canada.

After a pulp mill was added, the firm became the Spanish River Pulp and Lumber Co., which was bought by Abitibi Power and Paper Co. in 1927. The plant—and the small company town of Espanola—closed down during the Depression and in 1943 it was bought by The Kalamazoo Vegetable Parchment Co., but it is the missing years from 1940 to 1943 that this story is all about.

On July 7, 1940, a detachment of the Ontario Regiment marched into the deserted mill and set up camp, cordoning off the adjacent streets and moving out the few residents still living in some of the unboarded houses.

With some civilian help from surrounding farms and the almost-empty town, the regiment was ready for the 882 German prisoners of war who arrived July 14. One wonders what the prisoners must have thought as they crossed the bridge and looked up the hill at the big *schloss* surrounded by

The cover is addressed to Camp E which was circled (in Canada) in blue crayon and 13 added. Can't account for the 13. The camp we believe was given the number, 21.

Guests Of The Government

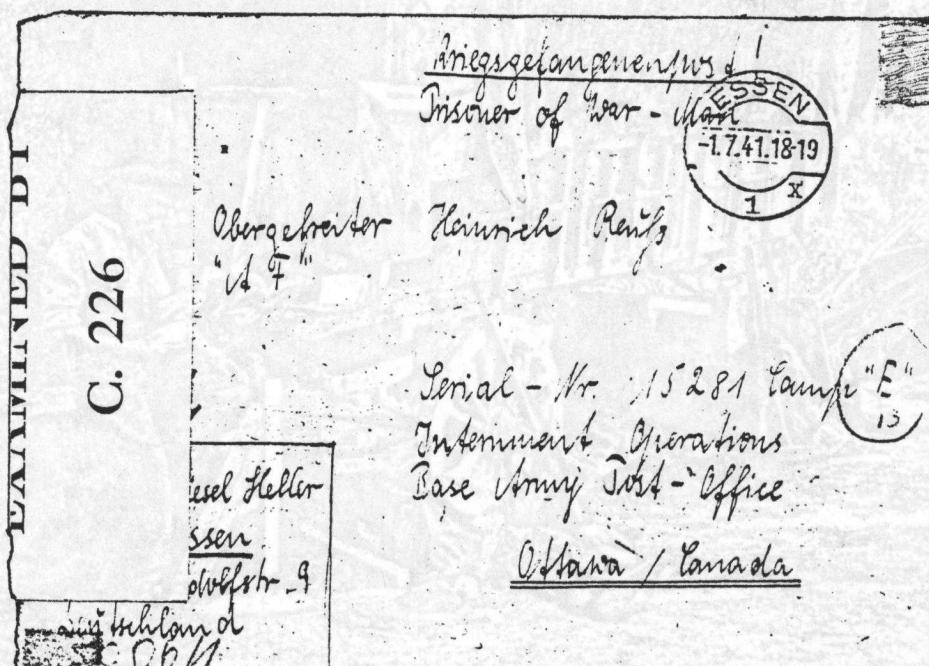
row upon row of barbed wire. There's something ironic about using a place that looked like a castle on the Rhine to house German prisoners.

Five hundred men from the Veterans Guard of Canada took over in August, 1940. No one in the first batch of prisoners was over 30 while most of the guards were tough old First World War veterans. The prisoner population rose to 1,500 at times and never fell below 1,000. With the exception of one Japanese internee, they were all NCOs and men of the German army, navy and air force.

One of the reasons why the Canadian *schloss* was chosen, of course, was its remoteness. Escape is always possible from any camp and a substantial number of the prisoners were ex-Luftwaffe who had navigational training, so the distance from the ocean was the big deterrent. Then there were the mosquitoes and black flies in the summer and the harsh winter.

As many as three tunnels were discovered in one day but whether many attempts were serious is not all that certain. One of the tunnels was found to be leading towards the beer cellar of the town's only hotel. Twice, two men escaped but all were rounded up within four days. There were no successful escapes and there is reason to suspect that some attempts were put on to enhance a prisoner's war record at home with a view to a possible promotion.

Most of the prisoners seemed content to stay put, and why wouldn't they? Their rations were better than those of the townsfolk and the meals were prepared by their own cooks. There were fairly frequent banquets when each man was issued two bottles of beer and they were paid regularly through



423...cont'd.

the Swiss Legion. They had Simpson's and Eaton's catalogues, 1,200 pairs of skates donated by the American Bund and civilian suits even though they were not allowed to wear them. When taken down to the river to swim in the summer, they would sing all the way there and back and they were good. Too good, according to some of the guards who occasionally had to chase a group of girls away. But then, all of our young men were away at war.

In October, 1942, a number of prisoners were shackled as a reprisal for the shackling of British and Canadian PoWs in Germany. At Dieppe the Germans had captured a directive that the hands of prisoners taken during the raid be tied to prevent the destruction of documents. The Germans then shackled their prisoners and the Canadians, in response to British requests, did the same here. Since the shackled prisoners were selected by their own camp leader

it was kept to a minimum and the practice was allowed to lapse that December. There were few other unpleasant incidents.

Of course, there must have been some frustration among the young men penned up together but it was handled well by the guards who on occasion had as much reason to feel as frustrated as the prisoners.

The tough old vets did not like the arrogance of some of the prisoners who were certain their country was going to win the war. A detailed scale map of the world still exists on the wall of one of the warehouses. Drawn with infuriating accuracy, it is dotted with Japanese flags emblematic of the rising fortunes of the Japanese in the early years of the war. There is even a story around that one such flag was painted over Pearl Harbor the day before the raid, but a day later would seem more likely because there were probably several radios in the camp, whether smuggled

in or bought there. Strangely enough, there are no iron crosses on the map.

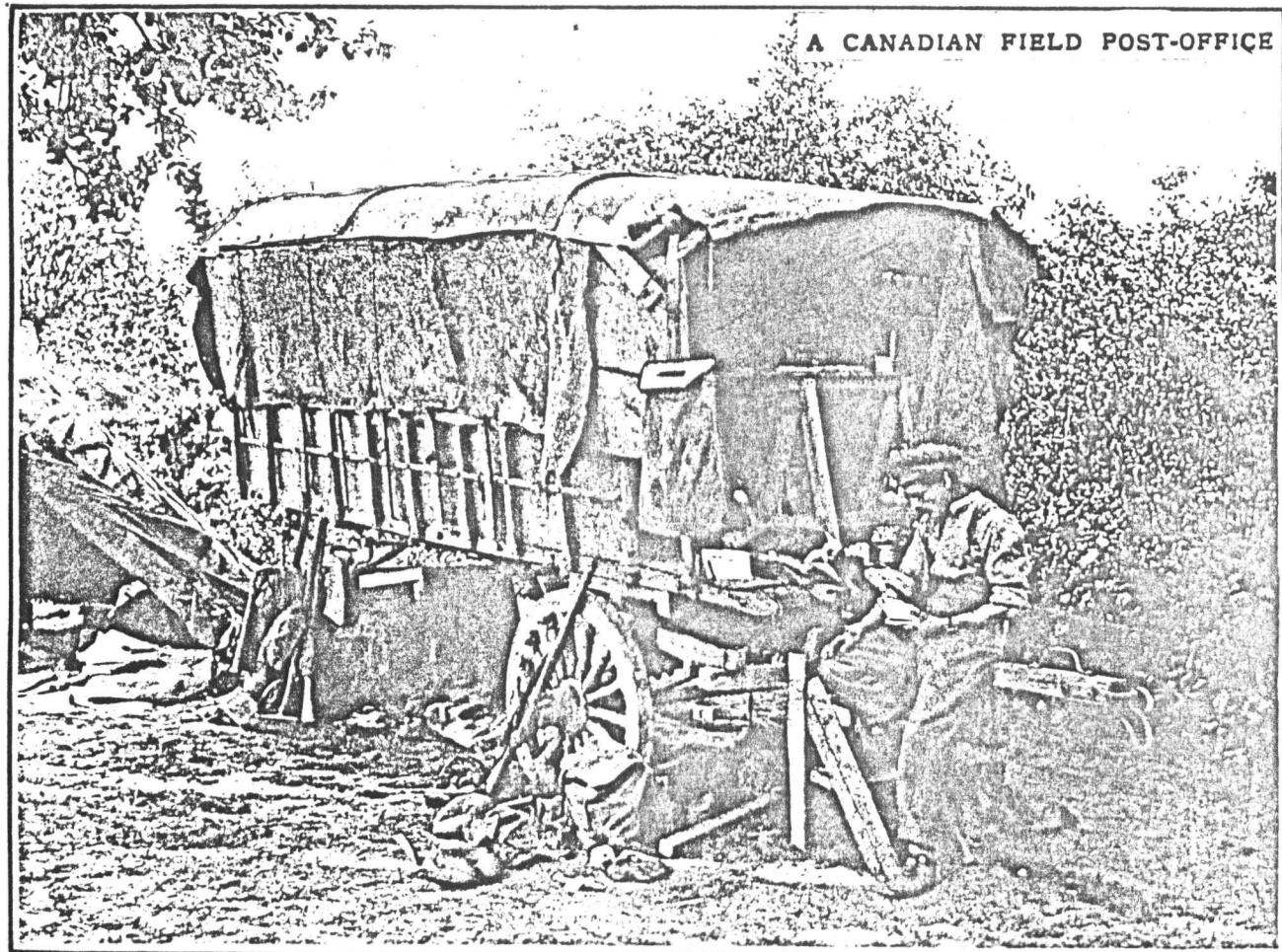
Transfer of the prisoners to Medicine Hat and Lethbridge, Alta., commenced in the spring of 1943. By July all of them had gone and in late fall the camp was closed down.

A Legion member who was 16 at the time recalled: "Us fellows didn't mind that camp being there you know. It brought a lot of work into the town. Not only that, when the camp was closed there wasn't a farmer for 50 miles 'round who wasn't hauling off barbed wire."

Many of the prisoners have returned to visit the camp and they always ask about the map. Perhaps some of them should have been asked if they would like to paint a few Union Jacks or the Stars and Stripes here and there, but that would be rubbing it in wouldn't it? □

424...A Canadian Field Post Office

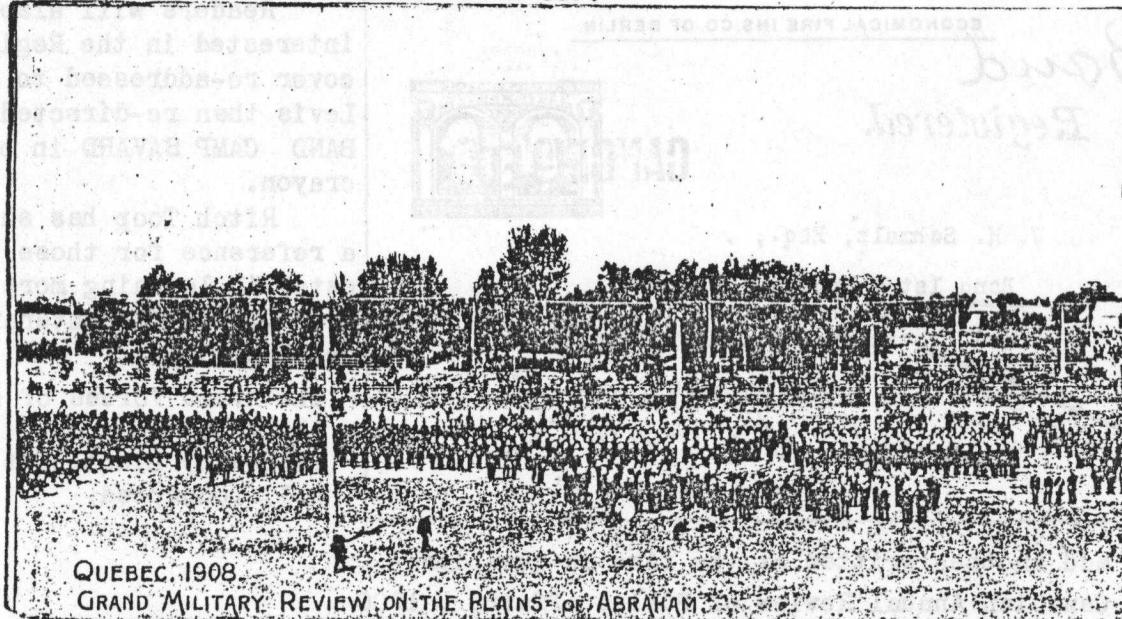
This picture is from the Canadian War Pictorial #1 published during the First World War and probably was taken "somewhere in France". Notice the rifle by the wheel and the mailbag hanging above it.



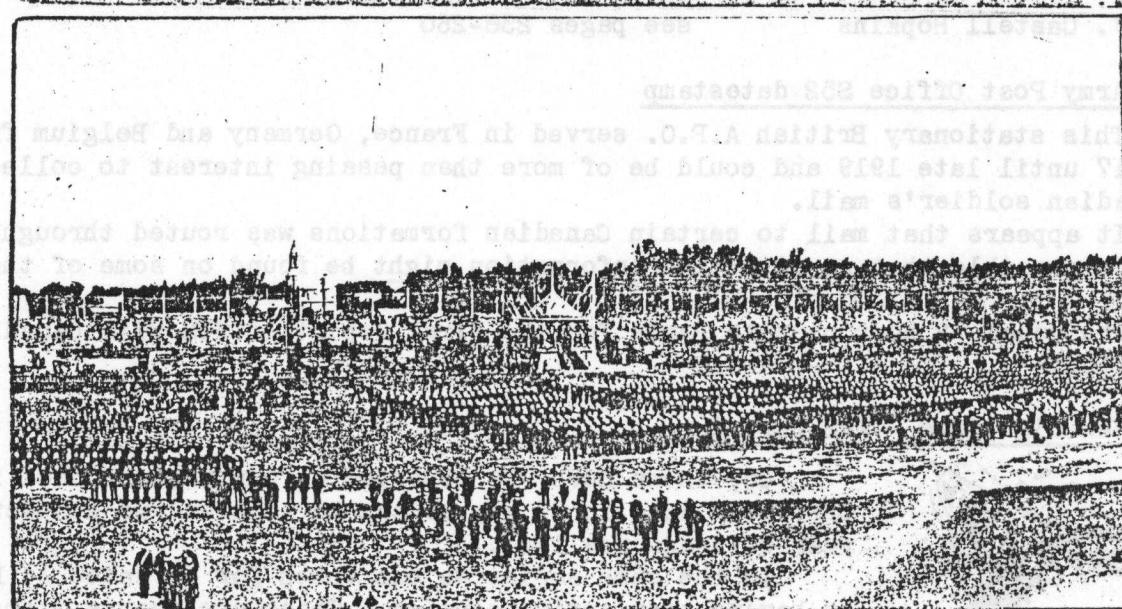
425...Grand Military Review - Quebec 1908

Dr. B.C. Plain recently aquired this historic folding type postcard and we've reduced it 60% for this Newsletter. Have identified the three panels which, in total, tie in with our item 389.

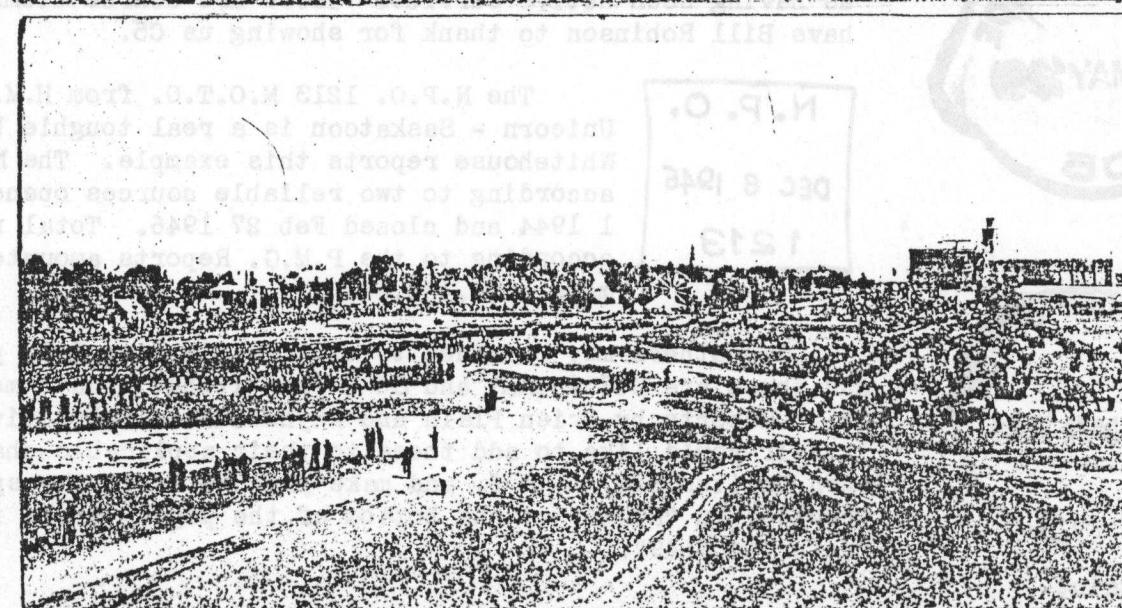
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425...cont'd.



Readers will also be interested in the Registered cover re-addressed to Point Levis then re-directed to BAND CAMP SAVARD in blue crayon.

Ritch Toop has supplied a reference for those interested in learning more on the 1908 Quebec Tercentenary celebrations:-

The Armed Forces of Canada 1867-1967
edited by Lieutenant Colonel D.J. Goodspeed.

We can add another written at the time in question:-

The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs - 1908
by J. Castell Hopkins see pages 238-260

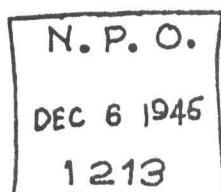
426...Army Post Office S52 datestamp

This stationary British A.P.O. served in France, Germany and Belgium from mid 1917 until late 1919 and could be of more than passing interest to collectors of Canadian soldier's mail.

It appears that mail to certain Canadian formations was routed through S52 so it is possible that re-direction information might be found on some of these covers.

The usual 72 hour pass to Paris for the first report of S52 with Canadian connection!

427...New sightings - WW2 period



C5, shown here, is reported on our request back in item 322. The date is 27 May as can be seen and we suspect the year of usage was 1941.

In the same series we can vouch for C1 dated 14 Feb 1941 as having seen active service. These are scarce items. We have Bill Robinson to thank for showing us C5.

The N.P.O. 1213 M.O.T.O. from H.M.C.S. Unicorn - Saskatoon is a real toughie but Wilf Whitehouse reports this example. The N.P.O. according to two reliable sources opened Dec 1 1944 and closed Feb 27 1946. Total revenue according to the P.M.G. Reports amounted to a meagre \$2,436.46.

Two others may be added to the list in item 325, page 8, and these are SC7 (34mm) and SC-9 (saw it but didn't measure it). Reports by Brian Plain and Wayne Curtis respectively.

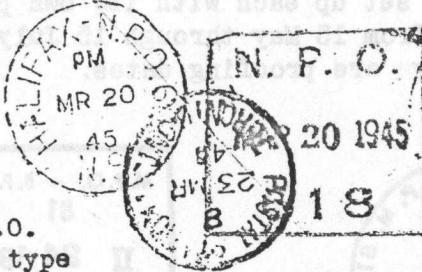
If you'd like to add these to their applicable charts turn to item 325, page 6, and make your notes in the space provided in "NOTES" at the bottom of the page. Write in, "refer to NL49".

427...cont'd.

(B. L. A.)

John Frith reports another FPO CA-2 but hammer 4 as shown. Again turn to item 325, page 7 and add it to the list.

Note the abbreviation (C.L.A.) which we suspect is unofficial.

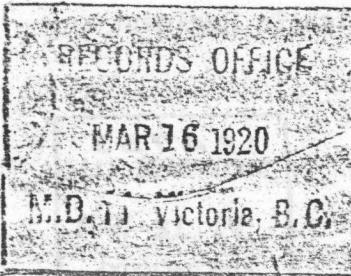


Further to item 48 of a 6B M.O.T.O. from N.P.O. John Frith. See also the type

This office opened April 16, 1943 and before closing February 27, 1946 had transacted \$11,364.35 worth of business. The R.C.N. were big spenders!

we have a second report 618, Halifax thanks to 1A c.d.s.

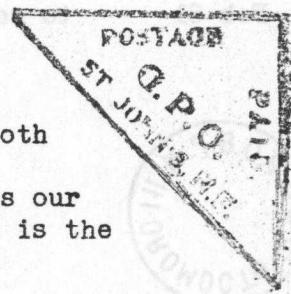
428...From opposite coasts of Canada



We couldn't find two items which originated farther apart than these!

The M.D.11 item, from an O.H.M.S. cover, is an associate of the scalloped edge marking shown in NL 48, item 413, both cities being in that M.D.

The St. John's N.F. triangle answers our question in NL 16, item 66. Brian Plain is the finder. No date of usage on the cover.



429...Canadians in North Russia - 1918-1920 - further to item 414

We are delighted to illustrate this fine cover from an Officer in the 16th Field Brigade, C.F.A. Our reference 6 from item 414 tells us that the Brigade, consisting of the 67th and 68th Batteries, left Dundee 20 September 1918 for Archangel. Brigade strength was 18 Officers and 469 other ranks.



F.P.O. P.B.44 was located at BAKARITSA directly south of Archangel.

The censor marking, CENSOR R.A. SCHOOL, is significant.

F.P.O. P.B.44 was one of six offices to be served by the Base Post Office at Archangel, Army Post Office P.B.2.

298

- 8 -

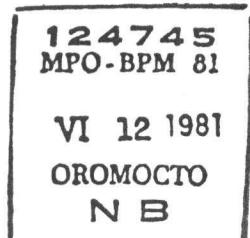
430...RENDEZ-VOUS 81 - C.F.B. Gagetown N.B.

Thanks to Ritch Toop for putting this item together.

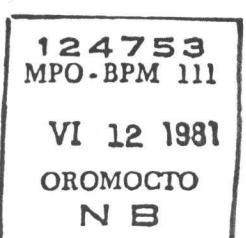
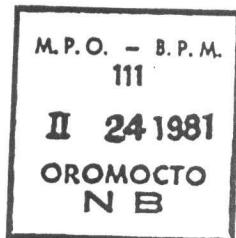
This Mobile Command military concentration/training exercise took place 1 June - 6 July 1981, 9000 plus troops being involved mainly from bases at Calgary, Petawawa, Valcartier, Kingston and Gagetown. St. Hubert provided most of the H.Q. personnel this being MCHQ. Elements of the US Army and Air Force also participated.

Four postal sections were set up each with its own postal markings and the offices were slated to be open from 15 May through 15 July 1981.

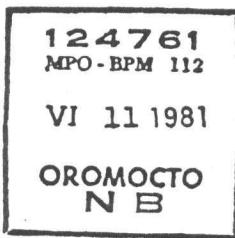
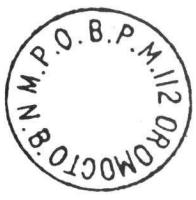
Where dates are shown they are proofing dates.



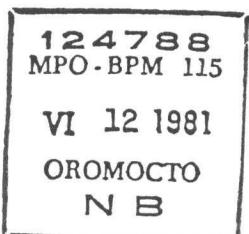
Feb 81 to serve the Divisional H.Q. and the Canadian Signals Regiment



Feb 81 to serve 1 Canadian Brigade Group



Feb 81 to serve Special Service Force



to serve 5e Group - Brigade du Canada

- 9 -

430...cont'd.



MPO 103 is permanently allocated to Oromocto but used at exercises only. During Rendez-vous 81 it was used by the Division Postal Unit Postal Regulating Section. This postmark (32mm) with its postal code may have been prepared specifically for the exercise. The small c.d.s. also served.



This postmark differs from the other 32mm marking for MPO 115 and in addition reads, OTOMOCTO NB.



Additional notes:

1000 sets of 5 covers were prepared for collectors and were available for \$3.00 postmarked June 1, 1981.

Not all postal markings which appear on mail from Oromocto appear in the National Postal Museum proof books.

The majority of the strikes on the covers were in blue ink.

431...Sandling Camp Folkestone - our item 407 refers

This is an intriguing topic with a number of fine details yet to be learned. The fact that these postmarks appear on Canadian Soldier's mail draws us into the discussion but we may have to stray a bit from the original question and in so doing our readers will be better able to help out. Two Grouper have the following to offer:

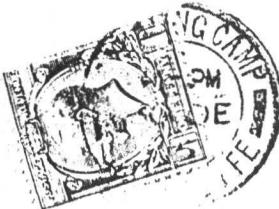


SHORNCLIFFE blank FOLKESTONE
"l" at base 13 AP 18
note missing "E"



SHORNCLIFFE blank FOLKESTONE
"l" at base 9 SP 17

431...cont'd.

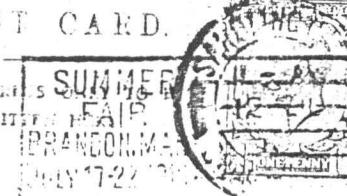


nil
photocopy

SANDLING CAMP
SHORNCLIFFE
20 MR 16

SANDLING CAMP
SHORNCLIFFE
30 DE 15

POST CARD.



SANDLING CAMP
SHORNCLIFFE
12 JU 16

432...FOR TRADE - reference book - No 7 (Queen's) Canadian General Hospital

As we finish this Newsletter (Aug 24) we believe the above still applies?

Wally L. Gutzman has the above book (65 pages) on this hospital which assembled in Kingston (WW1), proceeded to Cairo, and, following service there, was sent to France. Extensively written up, names etc. and 46 pictures. Something unique for your library.

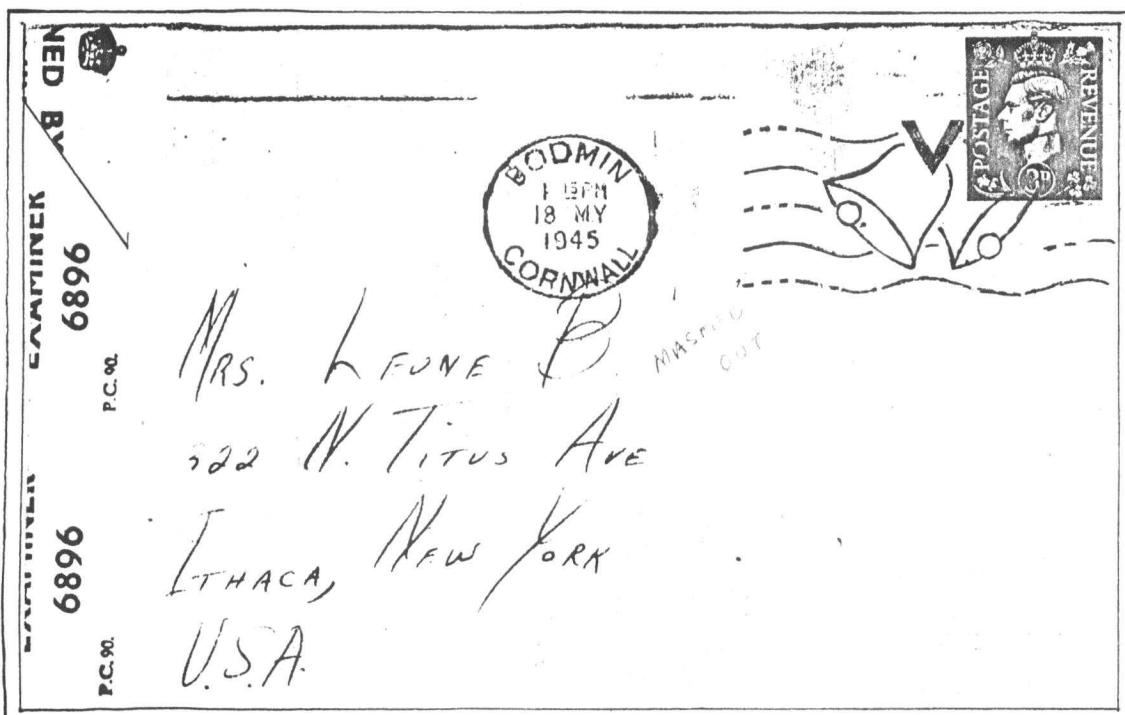
Also, Wally has a panoramic type photograph showing some hospital staff. Please write Wally direct at 272 Vinet Avenue, Dorval, P.Q. H9S 2M6.

433...VICTORY BELLS slogan machine cancel

Here is a collateral item for a World War Two collection which some readers may not have seen. The cover was mailed at a civil post office by an R.C.A.F. Officer whose name and address are on the back.

On May 7, 1945 the formal surrender of the German forces was signed at Rheims and May 8th was declared VE Day (Victory Europe).

This surely must have been one of the most popular slogan cancels ever used in Britain.



All for now.....Ken, Sid & Colin