



Canadian Military Mail Study Group



No. 104

April 1992

Page 31

From the (new) Editor

I am somewhat at a loss as to how to start this. Now I know that the old saying "this is a hard act to follow" certainly is very true. Trying to fill Ken's shoes is going to be difficult for me, so I hope that you will have some patience (at least initially) with your new scribe (although I'll try to avoid using any more old chestnuts, platitudes and hackneyed phrases!).

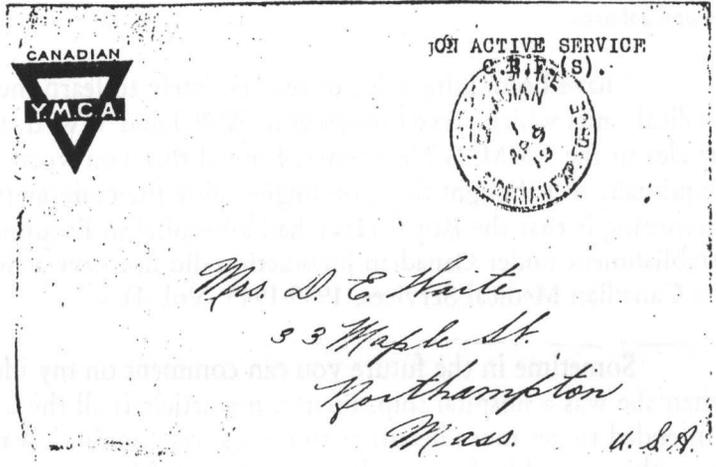
I can only hope that my tenure as the CMMSG newsletter editor will be as productive and succesful as Ken's has been.

Everything, including bank account contents and other materials, made it safely across the country. Thank you for all your letters of welcome and support. I trust that you will forgive me if I do not answer everyone individually.

About support: I will try to send an acknowledgement to all contributors of articles and fillers for our Newsletter. No guarantee as to which issue your article or "find" will be published in, but believe, it will be used eventually! Keep those cards and letters coming!

This first attempt will be a bit of a miscellany. Some information about previous articles, some new covers, a book review, "adlets", etc. I hope it is to your taste.

Henk Burgers



Coming in Future Issues:

More from the 1917 Canada Official Postal Guide, a listing of the Canadian and British FPOs serving the Canadian units during WW II, a series of photographs showing the Canadian Postal Corps on the job around the world and much, much more!

The Canadian Military Mail Study Group Newsletter is the publication of the Canadian Military Mail Study Group of the British North America Philatelic Society.

In this Issue:

More on Canadian Hospital Ships – Jon Johnson	32
Canadians in Cairo – J. Colin Campbell	32
A German "Feldpost" Letterform – Herb Williams	34
A Well-travelled Cover –	35
Book Review: The Sea at Your Gates – Ken Ellison	36

Updates

Recent CFPO Covers – Dave Hanes	37
POW Cover to Chile – Walter Plomish	38
Postage Paid at Ottawa – J. Colin Cambell	40
Small Ads	40

More on Canadian Hospital Ships

By Jon Johnson

I have been doing a lot of reading lately to learn more about the number of Canadian medical units which served overseas in WW I and WW II. In the course of that reading, based on articles in the CMMSG Newsletter, I noted that you wrote quite a few articles that had to do with Esquimalt, so I thought that you might enjoy the comments on the postcard enclosed. What I find interesting is that the Royal Navy had a hospital in Esquimalt in 1903, yet in 1939 the same establishment under Canadian jurisdiction did not have a single bed (Page 329, Official History of the Canadian Medical Services, 1939-1945, Vol. 1).

Sometime in the future you can comment on my ideas as to the SS PRINCE GEORGE when she was a hospital ship. Firstly, my article is all the information that I have found out so far. I intended to get more details as to the conversion, both ways, and her staffing. I just figured that those things could take several years to locate if I ever manage to track them down. The dates and times of the passenger sailings are directly out of the newspaper. I believe that the postcard photo was taken 23 or 24 August as the ship is flying a red cross flag on the aft mast. The flag would not be there after the ship had returned to passenger service. I suspect that the ship was repainted prior to its return to passenger service. Why, the first conversion was done in less than six days. War was declared on 5 August and the converted ship sailed on 11 Aug. On the other hand, I suspect that the PRINCE GEORGE sailed directly from Prince Rupert to Esquimalt on 24 August. As she was back in Prince Rupert as a passenger ship on 8 October, there is a period of over five weeks unaccounted for. During this time she could have been repainted. Also, I imagine that the GTP would want the ship back in the same condition (colour) as when they gave her to the RNCVR.

This is all conjecture at this time, but I will be trying to clarify each of these points in future inquiries.

Canadians in Cairo

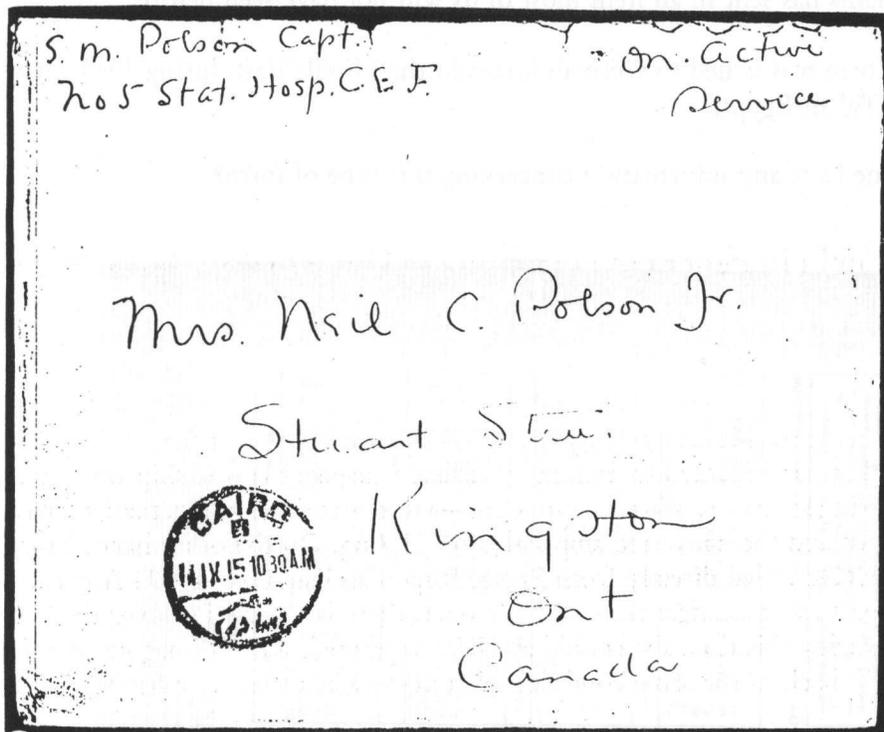
#5 Canadian Stationary Hospital

From J.C. Campbell

Early in 1915, Canada was called upon to provide hospital facilities in the Eastern Mediterranean to care for the huge number of Allied casualties resulting from the confrontation with the Turks at Gallipoli. All casualties had to be evacuated.

In August, three 400-bed stationary hospitals were dispatched aboard the hospital ship ASTURIAS of British registry. These were No. 1, previously in France, No. 3 recently arrived from London, Ontario and No. 5 (Queen's University) from Shorncliffe. Upon arrival at Alexandria, No. 5 was sent up the Nile Valley to Cairo where a cavalry barracks was to serve as a hospital. Matron

Bertha Willoughby, who had travelled from Canada with the First Contingent, was placed in charge. On the 26th of January 1916 the hospital was redesignated No. 7 Canadian General Hospital, but remained at Cairo until 10 April when it was shipped to Le Treport, France. Here, a 1040 bed hospital was set up, but in October this was moved to Etaples where it remained until May 1919.



The cover illustrated above was postmarked exactly one month after No. 5 Stationary Hospital arrived in Cairo. It is addressed to Kingston, Ontario where No. 5 was originally recruited.

No. 5 (Queen's University) Stationary Hospital served at Shorncliffe from 15-06-07 to 15-08-01 and at Cairo from 15-08-14 to 16-01-26. It was then redesignated No. 7 General Hospital and remained in Cairo until 16-04-10, from where it moved to Le Treport, France and subsequently to Etaples (See MacPhail, page 297)

Please pay attention, this is a filler

Editor's Address

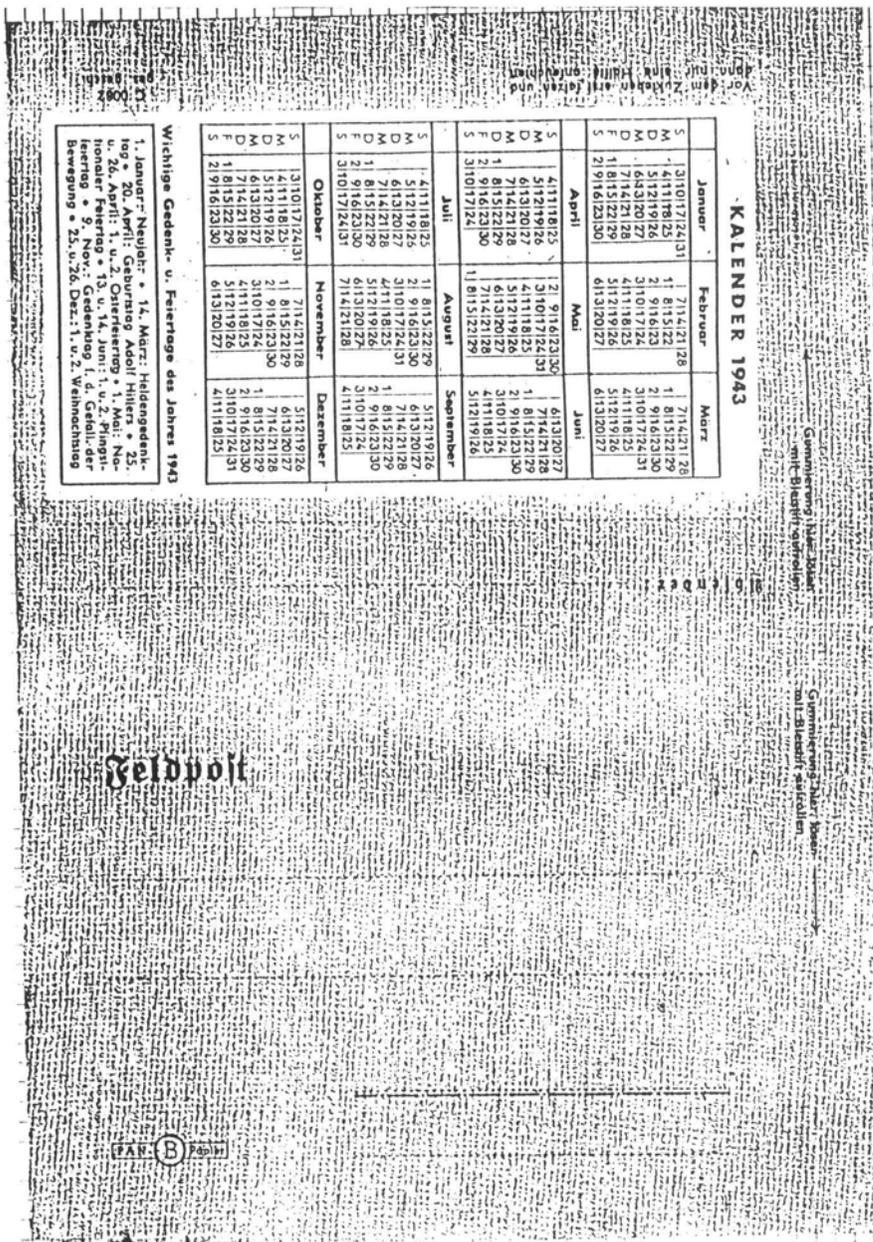
Please send all articles, material, dues payments, good wishes or brickbats to:
Henk Burgers
c/o HBA Ltd.
2660 Southvale Crescent, Suite 301
Ottawa, ON K1B 4W5

A German "Feldpost" Letterform

Herb Williams has sent in an item most of us will not have seen before.

This letterform was issued to German forces in the Middle East during 1943. It was taken from a German POW in Egypt.

Does anyone have any information concerning this type of form?



The Sea at Your Gates

By Ken Ellison

The above is the title of a book by Commander Tony German and was published in 1990. (Our local library call number is 359, if that helps you)

We are quoting a short passage here in that it might "inspire" some of us to look for covers pertaining to the RCNAS, or Canadians in the RNAS in WW I.

"A USN-RCN-RN xxx in Washington in April, 1918, had put things together and Borden had belatedly agreed. Canada built air stations at North Sydney and Eastern Passage, south of Dartmouth. The U.S. Naval Reserve Flying Corps brought six Curtiss Flying boats to each station, all under command of Lieutenant Richard E. Byrd, UNS. Dirigibles were ordered. Kite balloons went aloft from ships with submarine lookouts. Naval air was in business under a very capable man — Byrd became famous as the Antarctic explorer...

At the same time, Canada's first air force, the **Royal Canadian Naval Air Service** was begun. The Royal Air Force lent an officer to command. Flight training of eighty cadets and 1,000 airmen began with the USN in Boston. A few cadets and some sailors went to England to train as airship coxswains. Within a month, though, the war was over and none of them saw action. The USN gave Canada the aircraft, equipment, and spares.

Canadians had flocked to the Royal Naval Air Service from the beginning of the war, the brilliant Raymond Collishaw among them. John Barron of the old Canada cadets was the first Canadian to qualify as an RNAS pilot. He flew airships, was mentioned in dispatches for an attack on U-boat, and was decorated by Italy for commanding the naval air group at Taranto. Only seven U-boats were actually sunk by British air/sea co-operation in the war. Five of them were by Canadian Pilots. The only U-boat killed solely by a British aircraft was hit by Canadian Sub-Lieutenants N.A. Magor and C.E.S. Lusk in September 1917, flying an American Curtiss flying boat. Here was a fine pool of experienced naval aviators for the Canadian Service, but they could not be spared in 1918. With peacetime, however, the people and the planes were all discharged. At the same time, the Canadians serving in the RAF, who had formed a Canadian Air Force overseas, were also discharged."

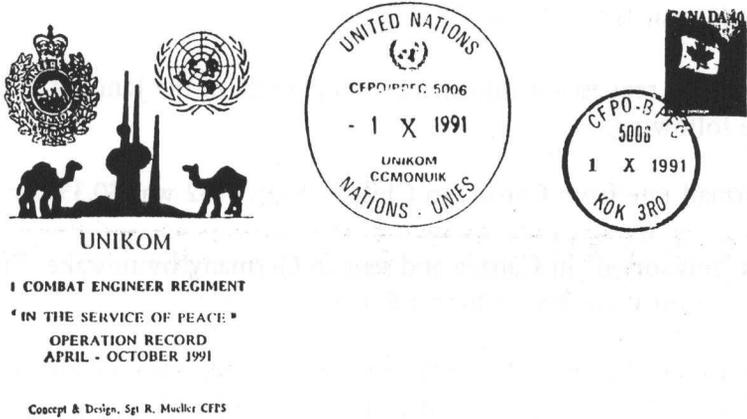
This book makes excellent and easy reading and is recommended to all members of the CMMSG, even if RCN postal history is not your speciality.

Reminder

Don't forget the CMMSG Seminar during the BNAPS Convention in St. Charles (Chicago), Illinois from September 10 - 12, 1992.

Recent CFPO Covers

As a long-time Sapper, I couldn't resist including a cover with the engineer badge on it. It is courtesy of Dave Hanes.



The smaller CFPO 5006 cover is a private issue by the Postal Corps Sergeant at the CFPO. I understand 500 copies were made. The engineer badge is in mauve, the UN crest, "UNIKOM" and "In the Service of Peace" in a grey/blue — the rest is in black. The UN cancel is in a purple/blue. A nice cover!

The two large covers shown reduced below are fairly well self-explanatory, they are in colour with the Operation Friction cachet in yellow/sand and blue colour. The upper (flag) cover shows all the flags in original colour and is very attractive. I understand 1000 of each cover was produced with a large majority of them picked up by the Canadian troops in the Gulf theatre.



POW Cover to Chile

From Walter Plomish

See: Page 16, CMMSG Newsletter, No. 102, "A P.O.W. Cover to Chile"; and Page 28, January 1992 CMMSG Newsletter.

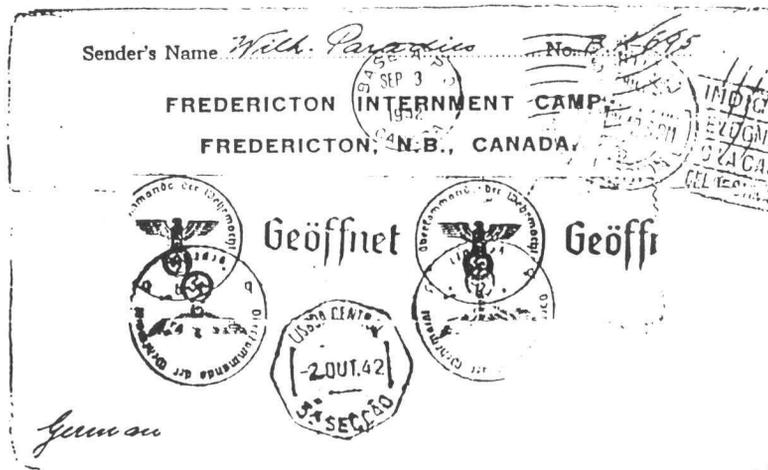
In responding to the request for information on page 28 of the January 1992 CMMSG Newsletter, I offer the following:

1. The correct airmail rate from Canada to Chile in Sept. 1942 was \$0.35 per 1/4 oz.
2. The letter was "mis-sorted" in Canada and sent to Germany by mistake. Enclosed are documents for National Archives Ottawa Record Group 3.

These records cite similar cases of P.O.W. and Internee Mail from Canada to South America mis-sorted and routed through Germany to Chile, and censored by German Postal Authorities.

This should clear up this mystery, however, if anyone has a different view, I would be glad to hear it. If not, this should close this matter to Bill's satisfaction.

The cover was flown on the transatlantic Northern Airmail Route from Canada to Gr. Britain after being mis-sorted September 3, 1942 at Base A.P.O. Canada (Ottawa). Upon arrival in Great Britain, the cover was handstamped O.A.T. in oval "Onward Air Transmission" and flown to Lisbon, Portugal. Lisbon was the exchange point with the Germans for P.O.W. and internee mail as Portugal was neutral. The cover was then flown to Berlin for censorship by German Postal authorities. At Berlin, the German Censor hammers were applied with the code-name "b" for Berlin.



The error must have then been discovered and the letter was returned to Lisbon for transmission by sea mail to Trinidad. The cover was then forwarded to its proper destination in Santiago, Chile, as evidenced by the backstamp November 1942. Do any other Canadian Military Mail Study Group members have any more of these mis-sorted covers to South America via Germany? If you do, please let us know. (Walter enclosed another cover with OKW censor strikes, this one to Uruguay. Unfortunately, it could not be reproduced.)

The Saga of the Missent POW Mail Continues

Unfortunately, a few (very few) things became a little mixed-up during and since their transfer from Ken to me. As a result, I do not know who sent in the two items following, but since they tie in with the Chile POW story, I'll include them anyway. If you want proper credit, you'll have to write me again. Sorry!

"COPY OF MEMORANDUM FROM MILITARY ADVISER, TRINIDAD, FOR MR. ELMSLIE.

Memorandum on Mis-sorts of P.W. Mail resulting in its examination by enemy censorship.

Eleven P.W. letters from German P.W.s or Internees in Canada, destined for various S. American countries, and between July and September, 1942, have passed through Trinidad censorship in sea-mail batch no. 1285, all bearing both the Canadian and German censorship marks.

Mail from Italian P.W.s in British camps destined to addressees in South America countries, has similarly been examined by the Italians as well as the British and Dominion camp censors. The following are the figures of such letters so far examined in Trinidad from sea-mail batch no. 1285 (CABO DE HORNS):-

5 letters from camps in India, dates between July and August 1942; one dated 2nd August 1942 has also passed through the German censorship.

9 letters from camps in U.K. dated between July and September 1942.

6 letters from camps in S. Africa dated between May and September 1942.

7 letters from camps in the Middle East dated between August and Oct. 1942.

1 letter from a camp in Australia dated June 1942.

With the exception of one P.W. card from Canada, which did not bear German censorship marks, these figures cover all mail from German and Italian P.W.s so far examined in batch 1285."

Another letter to help us clarify the issue. This one is from the Postal Services Department, GPO, London to the Deputy Postmaster General in Ottawa)

"April, 1943

Sir,

With reference to the letter sent to you on the 8th March regarding the apparent mis-circulation via Germany of some items of correspondence from German prisoners of war and internees in Canada addressed to South America countries, I am directed by the Postmaster General to say that further instances of similar errors in circulation have been reported by the Trinidad Censorship authorities and a photostat copy of one of the letters - an air mail letter from a German prisoner of war addressed to Uruguay on which air postage of 30 cents was paid and which when noticed at Trinidad bore a German Censorship mark - is enclosed for your information."

Small Ads

The Newsletter will accept small ads from members. One insertion of up to four lines for a Loonie! (For our overseas friends, that's a Canadian dollar) Send your ad with real money or mint (Canadian preferred) stamps.

TRADE: MILITARY History-hard cover-140 pages-SIXTH CANADIAN FIELD COMPANY (R.C.E.)-1939-1945-for similar First World War.

J.C. Campbell, 1450 Ross Road, Kelowna, BC V1Z 1L6.

FOR SALE: MILITARY MAIL ANTHOLOGY. Hard Cover - \$44.89 in Canada; US\$40.00 for USA and overseas; Soft Cover - \$32.05 in Canada; US\$30.00 for USA and overseas; Post Paid. Order from:

Robt. A. Lee, #203-1139 Sutherland Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 5Y2.

WANTED: Royal Newfoundland Regiment: WW I and II Canadian Chaplain; WW II Canadian Orderly Room markings on cover. Have some material for trade if interested.

Dean Mario, Box 342, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3L3.

ONE response to my "add" re CANADIAN FORESTRY CORPS. Covers, postcards wanted, especially WW I. Send photocopies.

Ken Ellison, R.R. # 1, Oyama, BC V0H 1W0.

NEWFOUNDLAND WANTED: Covers to and from Newfoundland servicemen, all periods. Civil and Military censorship covers concerning Nfld. also desired. Send photocopies, even if you do not want to trade the material.

Doug Hannan, 23 - 1950 Burtch Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 4B2.

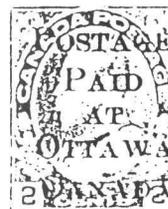
THREE SHIP POSTCARDS WANTED, but photocopies in any case. CPR's *MONMOUTH* (built 1900); Donaldson's *LAKONIA* (built 1899); Atlantic Transport's *MANITOU* (built 1898). Any postcard will do, but prefer WW I period.

J. Colin Campbell, 1450 Ross Road, Kelowna, BC V1Z 1L6.

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Postage Paid at Ottawa

Some update notes from J.C. Campbell



Dr. J.A Pearce (Dominion Astrophysical Observatory), Victoria reports selling K. Bileski for \$100.00 cash a POSTAGE PAID AT OTTAWA on #106.

Alfred Stanley Deauville, Postal Inspector, confirms precancel prepared with a view of having similar ones for the major cities of Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton and Winnipeg, but the project was abandoned.

A Provisional was prepared and issued at Ottawa in 1916 to be used on soldier's mail.

Two more of the above group of stamps are owned by Floyd Scovel, ex Ross Workman collection.

This is an extremely scarce group of stamps virtually unknown to most collectors, so any scrap of information should prove of interest.