



# Canadian Military Mail Study Group

OUR  
25<sup>th</sup>\*  
YEAR!

## NEWSLETTER

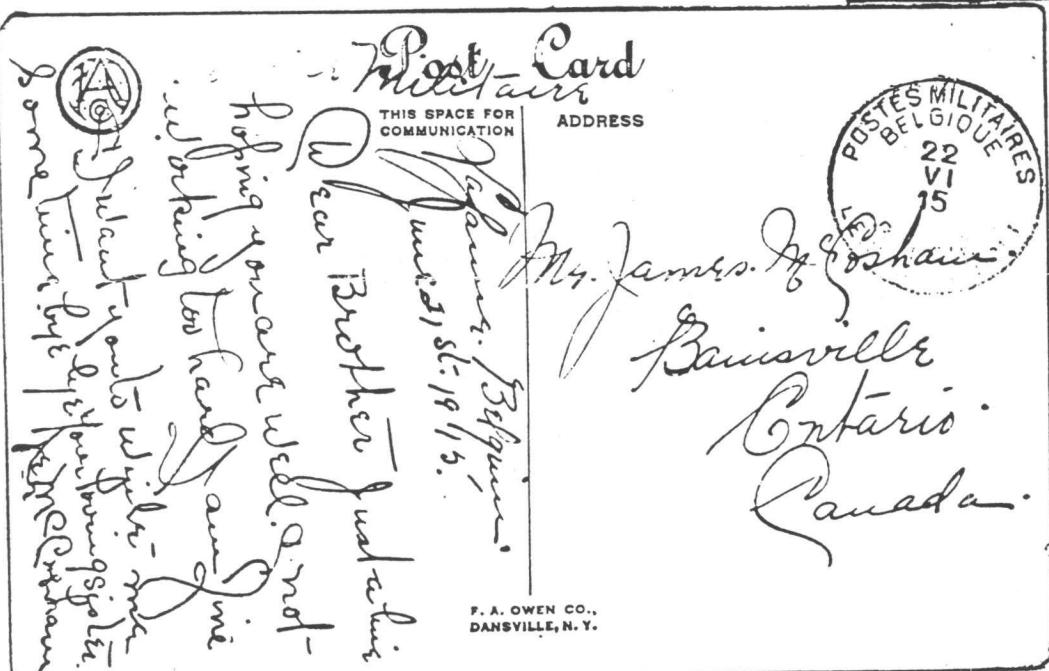
MAY 1998

NEWSLETTER NO. 135  
Page 345

### WWI CANADIAN NURSING SISTERS--By Jon Johnson

In April 1915 twenty-two Canadian nurses volunteered for six months' service at the L'Ocean Ambulance Hospital at La Panne, Belgium. There they joined staff from Great Britain, the United States, and Scandinavian countries. This postcard [right], written by N/S May to England dated May 25, 1915, describes working twelve-hour shifts and how she can hear the guns at the front.

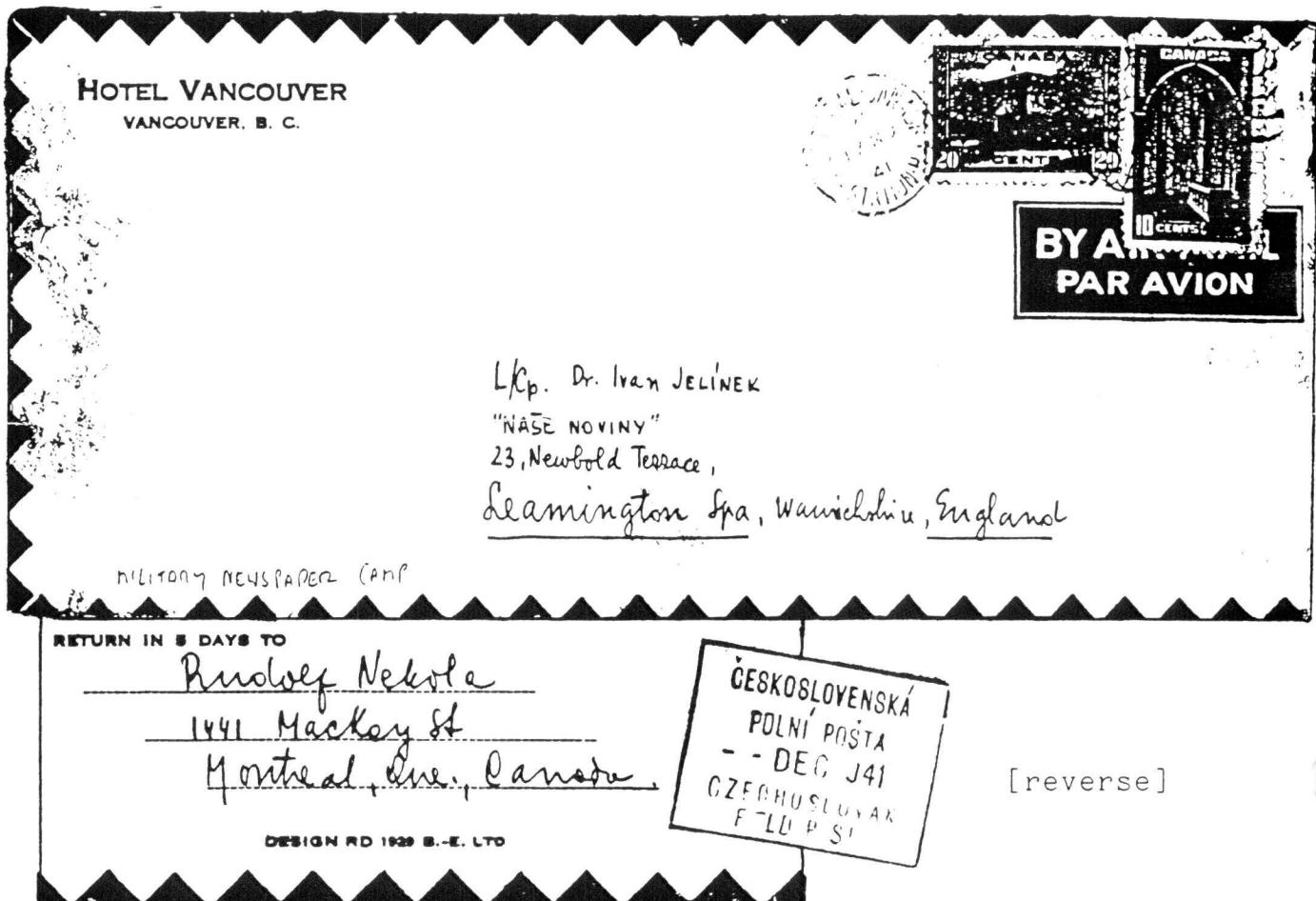
A postcard from N/S J.E. McCosham to her brother from La Panne, Belgium is dated June 21, 1915 [below].



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CHAIRMAN/TREASURER: W.J. BAILEY, #5-8191 FRANCIS RD., RICHMOND, BC V6Y 1A5  
EDITOR: D. MARIO, BOX 342, SASKATOON, SK S7K 3L3

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FREE CZECH FORCES--By David H. Whiteley

The above cover is a piece of Free Czech military airmail from Montreal to L/Cpl. Dr. Ivan Jelínek, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. Dated November 17, 1941, the letter was addressed to a Czech language military newspaper Náše Noviny. The cover bears a purple rectangular backstamp "ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ POLNÍ POŠTA / DEC 1941 / CZECHOSLOVAK / FELDPOST". I might add that at the same bourse that I obtained this piece I saw two or three other pieces from the same correspondence in different dealers' stock. [Many Czechs were also in the BCATP. Ed.]

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Dear Fellow CMMMSG Members:

I hope that everyone is enjoying the late spring. Lots for members this issue including a wrap-up of our Group's second Mail Sale. Jon has done a remarkable job once again, despite severe limits on his time because of PIPEX '98 and etc., and our thanks go out to him! I hope that buyers and sellers were pleased with the results and once again Bill and I wish to thank everyone for their support.

Word has come in from Douglas Lingard that no E.R. "Ritch" Toop Award (PHSC) was presented at ORAPEX '98. This is a prestigious one for Canadian military exhibits. A reminder of the Award will be printed in an upcoming issue so begin working on one in time for Edmonton in 1999!

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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SUPER-VISION AND CONTROL--By R. Toombs

These two items are associated with the I.C.S.C. from the early 1960's. FIG.1 was mailed from Saigon, South Vietnam, on 3-1-63 by local post to Canada. The reverse flap reads: "ZK 427 Maj. A.M. Potts/MCCD\* P.O. Box 220/Saigon/Vietnam".

FIG.2 was sent from Vientiane, Laos on 12 VI 61 by diplomatic pouch to Ottawa, and there was free franked "\$.00". The reverse reads: "Lt. Col. J.C. Allan/MCCD\* Box 389/Vientiane/Laos".

\*Military Component, Canadian Delegation

FIG.1

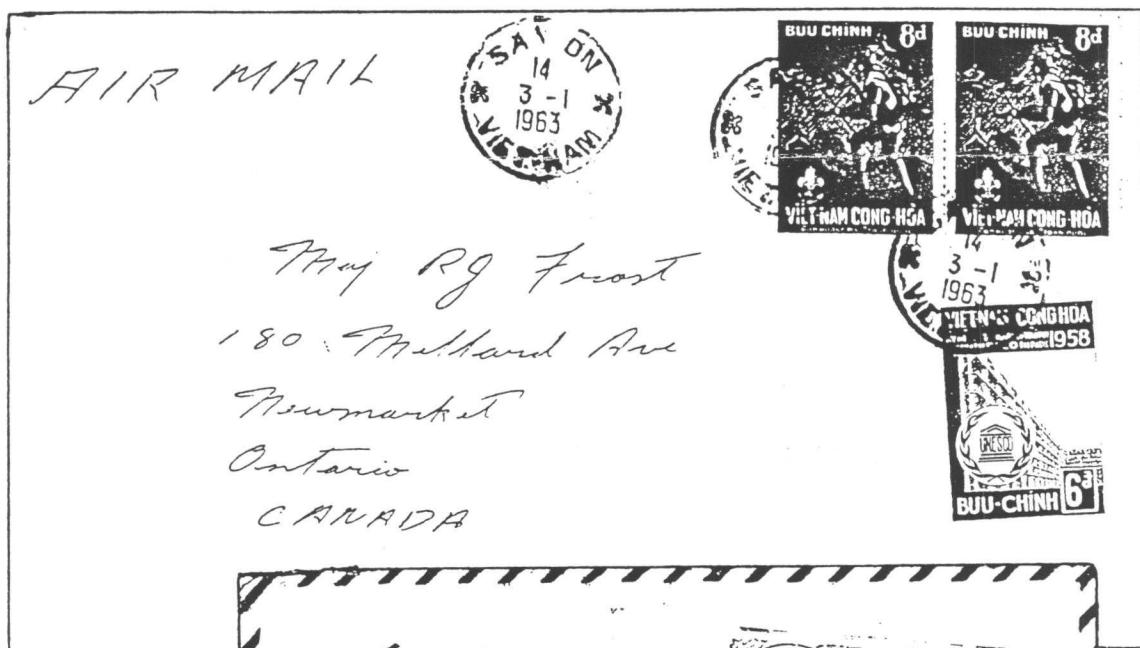
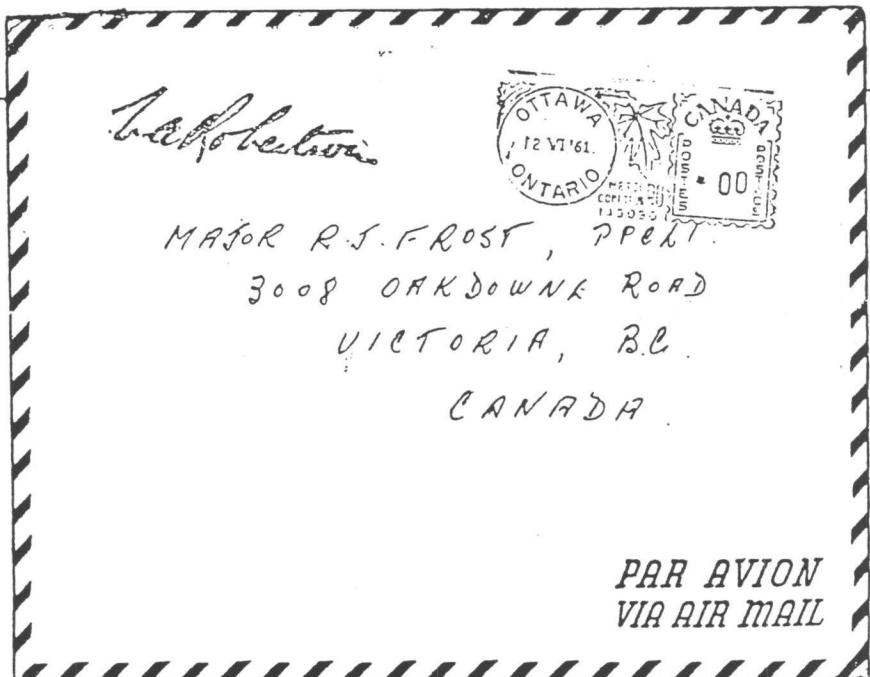


FIG.2



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### CANADIAN REINFORCEMENT UNITS IN FRANCE WWI--By John Frith

I was reading some back issues of the Newsletter and came across a question in No.70+ regarding the meaning of the initials "C.B.D." and "G.B.D.". The following is the explanation:

#### CANADIAN BASE DEPOTS (C.B.D.)

Canadian reinforcements had to pass through the British No.3 Base Depot at Harfleur (Le Havre) until September 27, 1915. This Depot was then absorbed into the Canadian Base Depot, and though staffed by Canadian personnel, remained under British control until 1917.

In May 1917 the C.B.D. was moved to Etaples. For greater efficiency in control and maintaining discipline, and because there was more accommodation, the Depot was reorganized into five independent depots: the Canadian General Base Depot (G.B.D.) to handle all except infantry reinforcements; and Nos. 1,2,3, and 4 Canadian Infantry Base Depots to reinforce their respective Canadian Infantry Divisions.

The establishment of the Canadian Corps Reinforcement Camp in June 1917 materially reduced the number of reinforcements held at the Base Depots. As a result it was possible, in April 1918, to amalgamate the Infantry Base Depots into a single Canadian Infantry Base Depot. The C.G.B.D. continued to deal with non-infantry reinforcements.

#### POST OFFICES AND CENSOR NUMBERS: HARFLEUR AND ETAPLES

##### (I) HARFLEUR

All mail from the Canadian Base Depot went through the British APO S12, and if censored bears the CM3/910 and CM4/1471 handstamps. There was a CM5 type used until May 1917 but at this time the number is uncertain.

##### (II) ETAPLES

The mail from all the depots went through the Canadian APO S22 and the censor numbers used are as follows:

CANADIAN GENERAL BASE DEPOT	CM5/not known	CM6/7049
" NO.1 INF "	CM5/5277 (FIG.1)	CM6/not known
" NO.2 "	CM5/not known	CM6/5146 (?)
" NO.3 "	CM5/5327	CM6/not known
" NO.4 "	CM5/not known	CM6/59

It should be noted that all of the censor numbers given above remain to be confirmed.

#### CANADIAN CORPS REINFORCEMENT CAMP (C.C.R.C.)\*

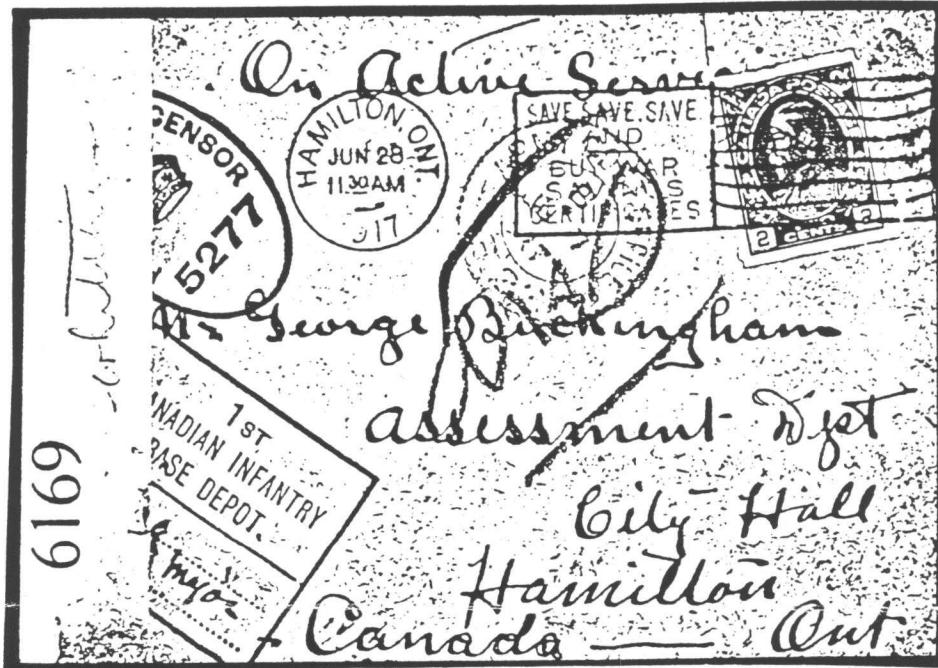
The summer of 1917 saw the establishment of the C.C.R.C. to hold near the front reinforcements to the extent of 100 per infantry battalion and 10% of all other arms. Originally located at Lilliers, it moved in June 1918 to Aubin St. Vaast, where the infantry establishment was greatly increased to ten officers and two hundred men per battalion.

[+November 1986, p. 6, whole number p.475]

[Cont'd.]

FIG. 1

NO. 1 Inf.  
Base Depot  
1917 with  
the cen-  
sor CM5/  
5277 type.



The composition of the C.C.R.C. was as follows:

Headquarters	Staging Camp	4 Divisional Wings
Machine Gun Wing	Engineers Wing	12 Brigade Training Companies
Garrison Artillery Depot	Canadian Field Artillery Pool	Depots for all of the other arms

\*C.C.R.C. replaced the Canadian Entrenching Group-Nos. 1 to 4 Entrenching Battalions. No information is available re. postal arrangements or censor numbers but all should have been allocated numbers.

#### POST OFFICES AND CENSOR NUMBERS

All mail from the C.C.R.C. went through Canadian APO S84 (FIG. 2).

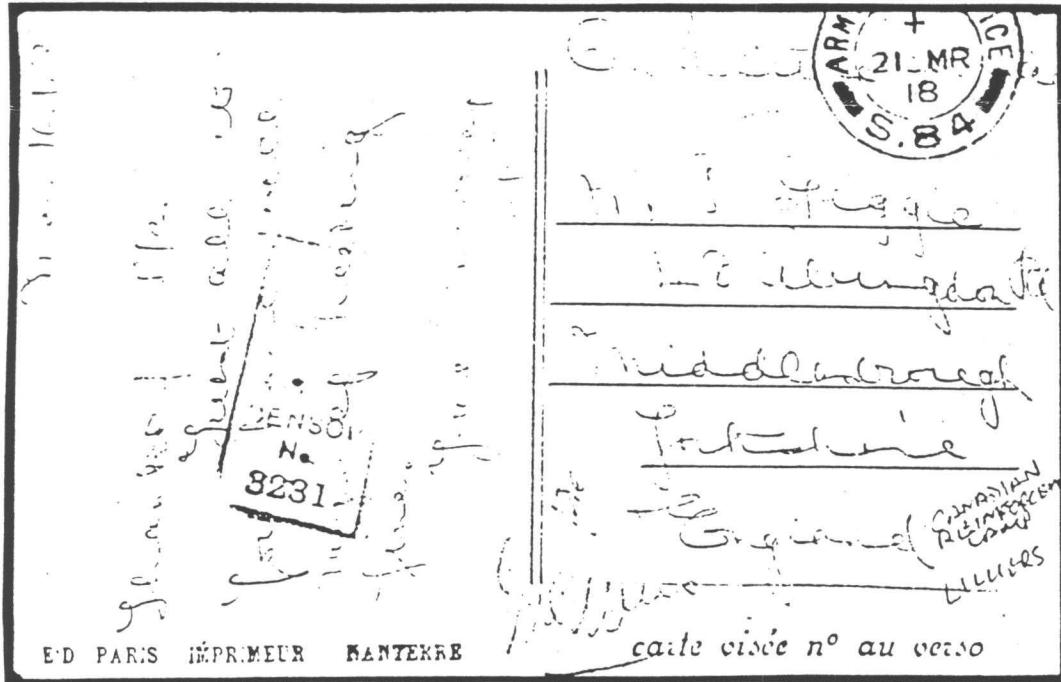


FIG. 2

APO S.84,  
C.C.R.C.

[Cont'd.]

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All of the Infantry, Machine Gun, and Engineer Wings, and the C.F.A. Pool should have had censor numbers allocated, but to date, none have been identified with any certainty.

All of the censor information has been derived from work done by your Study Group and we would appreciate confirmation of any of the numbers noted above, or any other censor information that the rest of the members could provide. Please write to the . . . [Editor who will update the information within a future Newsletter.]

#### REFERENCES

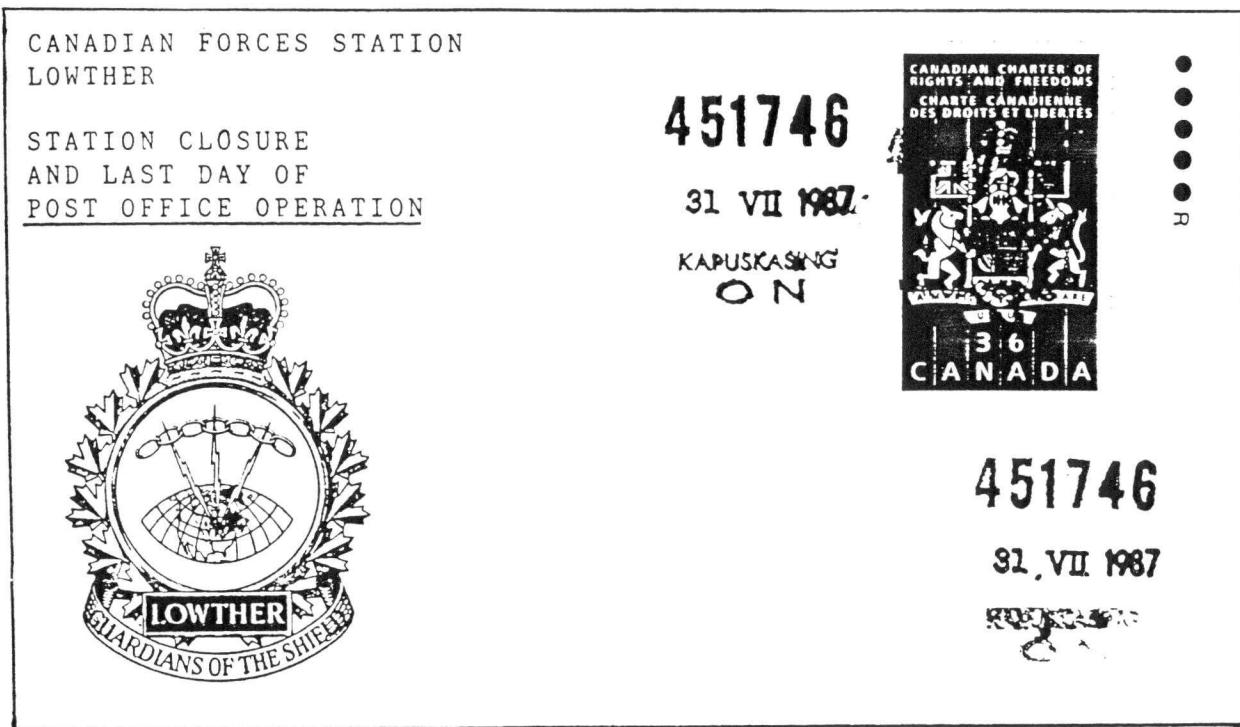
Bailey, W.J. and E.R. Toop. The Canadian Military Posts, Vol.I. E.B. Proud: London, 1984.

Nicholson, Col. G.W.L., CD. Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919. Queen's Printer: Ottawa, 1964.

Snell, Col. A.E., CMG, DSO, BA, MB. The C.A.M.C. With the Canadian Corps During the Last Hundred Days of the Great War. King's Printer: Ottawa, 1924.

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C.F.S. LOWTHER, LAST DAY-[Ed.]



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31.VII.1987

#### WORLD WAR II STUDY GROUP NEWS

Our "sister" BNAPS Study Group is now well on its way. Recently received in the mails was Vol.1, Issue 1, No.1 of War Times, the Group's publication. Chris Miller, its Editor, has done a wonderful job in producing an attractive, first-rate journal. Included are articles on: patriotic/propaganda labels; patriotic covers; Canadian Civil Censorship; and a plea for more information on the "Wings for Britain" letter cards from 1942-44. Bill Pekonen is Chairman/Sec.-Treas. and annual dues are \$10 in Canada/\$8 in the U.S./equivalent in Sterling. Bill can also forward information to Chris too. Contact Bill at #201-7300 Moffatt Road, Richmond, BC, V6Y 1X8 or phone (604) 270-8726/fax (604) 270-8709. [Ed.]

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# Lives Lived

C. ANTHONY LAW

*Artist, naval officer, wartime hero. Born Oct. 15, 1916, in London, England; died of cancer at his home at Williams Lake, Halifax, on Oct. 15, his 80th birthday.*

**L**AST May, the Art Gallery of St. Mary's University in Halifax mounted a retrospective exhibition of the works of Anthony Law and his wife, Jane Shaw, to celebrate "Sixty Years of Painting In Nature." A remarkable record for two artists, and Tony has left a great body of outstanding work on the walls of galleries and museums, in the official war artists' collection and (as he much preferred) in homes across Canada, indeed around the world.

The other side of Tony was Commander Anthony Law, whose 24-year naval career included the Distinguished Service Cross. Early in the Second World War he joined the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve and, apart from a stint as an official war artist, served exclusively in the tiny, high-speed motor torpedo boats — the famous "MTBs." We met after the war, and I could never somehow equate this soft-spoken, introspective man with the hero of those blazing, suicidal, point-blank battles.

When Tony was a teen-ager in Ottawa, Marius Barbeau, the folklorist and a family friend, took him to a Group of Seven exhibition. Inspired, he went on to study with Fred Varley, P. F. Brownell, Frank Hennessy and Henry Tudor-Hart. While studying at the École des Beaux Arts in Quebec, he met a young watercolourist from New Hampshire named Jane Shaw.

His first show, in 1937, when he was 21, was a major success. Then came war. On leave in 1942, Tony and Jane were married. They painted together on their Laurentians honeymoon and for another 50 richly productive years.

In 1944 he took command of the 29th Canadian MTB Flotilla of eight boats, formed in England for D-day. His second-in-command, Lieutenant C. A. (Bones) Burk, describes him this way: "Quiet, self-facing. A fine friend, a great binding spirit for the Flotilla." Able Seaman Tim Blaiklock, who manned the gun on Tony's foredeck, remembers a peaceful man: "But out there at night it seemed he'd put on another overcoat, did the things that make people heroes. We loved him...."

**TONY LAW RE-VISITED--**By W. Curtis

Members will recall the item and wonderful Christmas cards sent in by Wilf Whitehouse in our previous Christmas issue [No. 132, pp. 314-315]. Wayne kindly sent in the above from the October 16, 1996 issue of *The Globe and Mail* (obituary), and an interesting piece by Tony German (November 12, 1996). [Thanks Wayne for adding to the story. Ed.]

## MILITARIA '98

Members who collect other sorts of militaria are reminded of the militaria show to be held at the Mayfield Trade Centre, #16615-109th Ave., Edmonton, AB on August 1-2, 1998. Contact Allan Kerr (403) 424-5281 for more information.

They kept the invasion's eastern flank secure, wrought heavy losses on the enemy and, in the first two months after D-day, lost three boats, including Tony's, and suffered 37-per-cent casualties. He wrote the flotilla's story as soon as he got home, published in 1989 as *White Plumes Astern*. Read it and hear Tony himself — light-hearted, perceptive, lyrical with the artist's eye and profoundly moving over the death of so many friends.

Tony and I served together in 1946 in a training cruiser on the West Coast. He was the finest of shipmates, considerate of his men but never soft, riding serenely over the hurdles and rigidities of naval life. Later he commanded a frigate, maintenance ship and a destroyer, always painting. In the High Arctic, he realized a remarkable talent for snowscapes and ice. Many say he did his best work in the North.

After early retirement in 1966, he became artist-in-residence at St. Mary's University, helped to found its art gallery and served as its first curator. Leighton Davis, his successor as curator and painting companion over many years, says of him: "A very fine artist. In the landscape tradition of the Group of Seven, Tony could capture the scene in a few deft strokes, simplified to the essentials." He took a lead in founding the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia too. As sculptor Harold Pfeiffer says, "Tony really put Nova Scotia on Canada's artistic map."

The warmth of the Laws' welcome at Williams Lake, at their old schoolhouse near Lunenburg and aboard their sailing boat Cheemo is legendary. They loved children, though they had none of their own. Paul Price, now an ophthalmological surgeon, was 11 when Tony framed one of his sketches. Then they painted together for the next 30 years.

"Not just technique," Paul said to me. "Tony made me intimately aware of nature. He taught me a way of life.... His decisiveness. Those quick, sure brush strokes. Boldness. Like in thick fog and surf when he'd put Cheemo's wheel over, right into that slit of a channel to Cross Island."

So there was the answer to my old conundrum. Within that gentle, generous friend of 50 years lay the decisiveness and boldness that had made him the formidable fighting sea-officer that he was.

Paul, and many friends, supported Jane through the final days. Tony offered him a last gentle critique of an oil sketch, and gave him his paint box and brushes to keep. And he said, "I don't need a tombstone. It's all on the walls."

Tony German

*Commander Tony German is the author of *The Sea Is At Our Gates: The History of the Canadian Navy*.*



Anthony Law in June, 1944.

**LAW, Anthony C. Cdr. —** D.Sc., C.D., RCN (Ret'd), D.Lit. (Hon), October 15, 1916 to October 15, 1996. Son of Major A.A.S. Law (Toronto) and Maude Audette (Ottawa), predeceased by his brother Stuart Law and in 1995 by his Uncle Louis Audette Esq. Commander Law is mourned by his loving wife, the artist Jane (Shaw) Law and a niece, Moira Law in England and relatives both in Canada and England. Commander Law, "Tony" to his many friends was known and esteemed as an artist and as a naval officer. Born in London, England, he lived in Toronto and Quebec where he studied with noted Canadian artists including Brownell, Varley and Tudor-Hart and attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts where he met Jane. His first exhibition in Quebec in 1937 was a great success and shortly thereafter a painting was accepted by the Royal Canadian Academy. He served in the RCNVR 1940-1945 and commanded the 29th Canadian Motor Torpedo Boat Flotilla in the English Channel. He received the Distinguished Service Cross and was twice mentioned in dispatches. He was appointed official Naval War Artist in 1943 and also from 1945 to 1946. He later documented these experiences in his book, "White Plumes (Astern)". After the war he remained in the Navy until 1966 and had a distinguished career with commands on both coasts and lengthy service in the Arctic. An unusually interesting command was in HMCS Cape Scott with the Canadian Medical and Scientific Expedition to Easter Island in 1963-64. From 1973 to 1975 he was a governor of the Canadian Conference of the Arts and since 1968 was a board member of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and chairman from 1977 to 1979. He was appointed Artist-in-Residence at Saint Mary's University in 1967, where he established the Art Gallery and served until 1980. In 1981 he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by the Senate of Saint Mary's University. His paintings hang in galleries and museums across the country and in Canada House in London and numerous exhibitions have taken place including a major retrospective exhibition at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in 1989, and culminating in a joint exhibition with Jane Shaw at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery in May of 1996. His paintings depict his wide travels throughout the world. While he is known primarily as a landscape painter, he has also recorded history and human experience. Tony always made time to help young artists and also to entertain and instruct young children. He and Jane opened their home and yacht to these young people. Tony died peacefully at home after a long illness. A funeral service will be held at St. Augustine's Church, 290 Purcell's Cove Road, Halifax at 2:00 pm, Friday, October 18, 1996. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated.

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EARLY 1ST CANADIAN DIV. USE: RESPONSE--By J.C. Campbell



Colin quickly responded with the above regarding John Frith's query on early First Canadian Division usages (N/L 133, p. 329) and wrote:

"John's nice item would take all kinds of good luck to find. I can't beat him but can come close with the same Division. In the First there were: FPO DX (HQ 1 CAN.DIV.); FPO TX (1 DIV. TRAIN); FPO 1X (1 CAN. BDE.); FPO 2X (2 CAN. BDE.); FPO 3X (3 CAN. BDE.); and APO RX (RAILHEAD). John's date for FPO DX is certainly an early one. I can only come fairly close, and some of them are.... [illustrated above]:

FPO 2X-26 MR 15 (A)

FPO 2X-28 MR 15 (B)

FPO 1X-27 AP 15 (C)

APO RX-21 FE 15 (D)

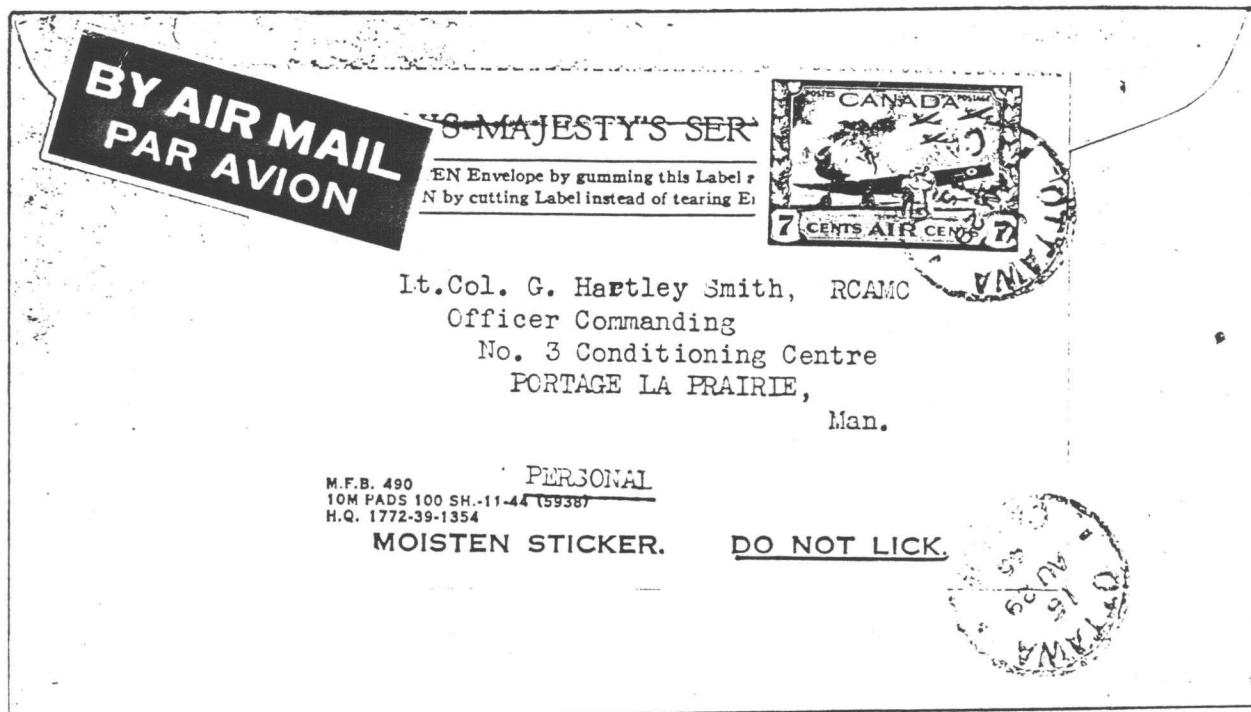
- (A) is dated about seven weeks after the Division's arrival in France;
- (B) is about five weeks after landing (card is in a pale blue colour);
- (C) is about eleven weeks after arrival; and
- (D) is perhaps the best one regarding ERD's, and is dated about two weeks after arrival in France.

I doubt that John's early date can be beaten but it will be fun to see what transpires.". [Can other members add any more dates? Ed.]

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CANADIAN CONDITIONING CENTRES--By J.C. Johnson

During WWII, within Canada, the Canadian Army operated five Conditioning Centres. They were located at: Sussex, N.B.; Huntingdon, P.Q.; Oakville, ON.; Portage La Prairie, MB.; and Harrison Hot Springs, B.C. The Conditioning Centres not only supplied ordinary post-hospitalization care but served as physical development centres for personnel who during training, especially basic training, revealed defects that could be remedied by sound physical training methods. They were also used to recondition personnel who had spent long periods in sedentary occupations. The Medical Officers at these centres were usually specialists in physical medicine and their assistants were physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and senior non-commissioned officers from combatant corps especially trained in physical training. [The cover below] is addressed to the O/C, #3 Conditioning Centre, Portage La Prairie.



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THE R.C.A.F. AIRMAIL CO.??--By C.D. Sayles

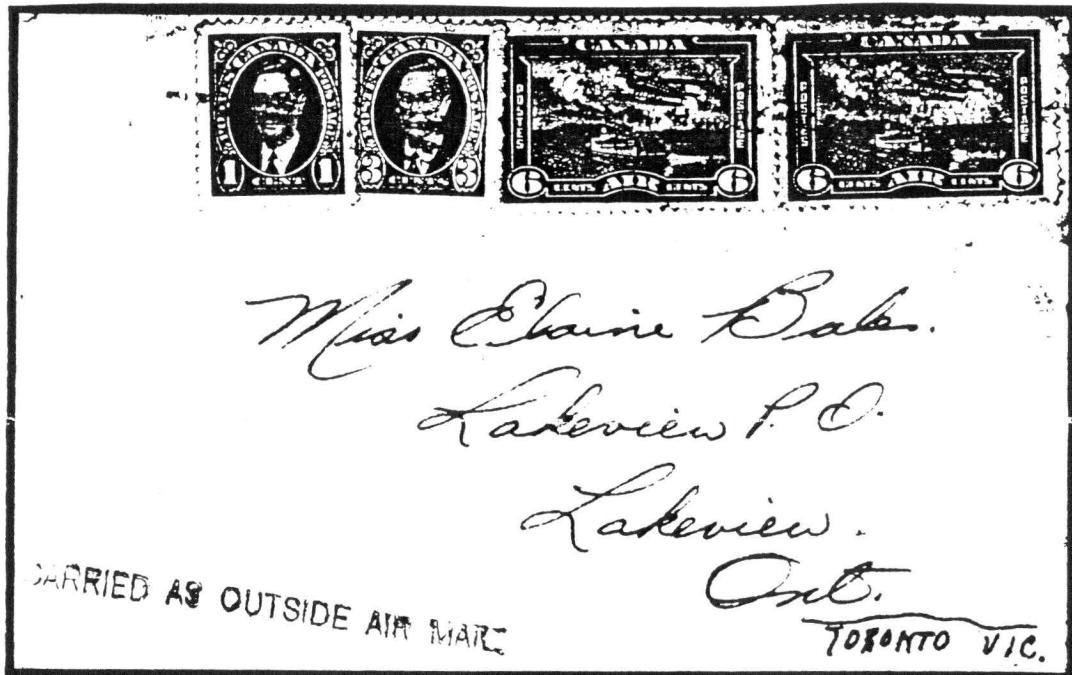
Can any of our members help with this recent find [illustrated opposite]? I bought it for the "CARRIED AS OUTSIDE AIRMAIL" handstamp which I have never seen before. The enclosure is from a member of the RCAF at Fingal to a girlfriend near Toronto. The letter is undated but contains this paragraph: "Well I want to catch the plane with this letter so will close". From the stamps I would guess that this is a 1941 or 1942 usage.

It would appear that it was possible to use flights by RCAF aircraft to move mail (at least to Toronto). It would [also] appear that this practice was blessed by the Post Office, which even had a handstamp to

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document mail carried this way. The sixteen cents rate is right for airmail S.D. but there are no markings to indicate either. If you know the story behind this cover, please contact me via Dean Mario.



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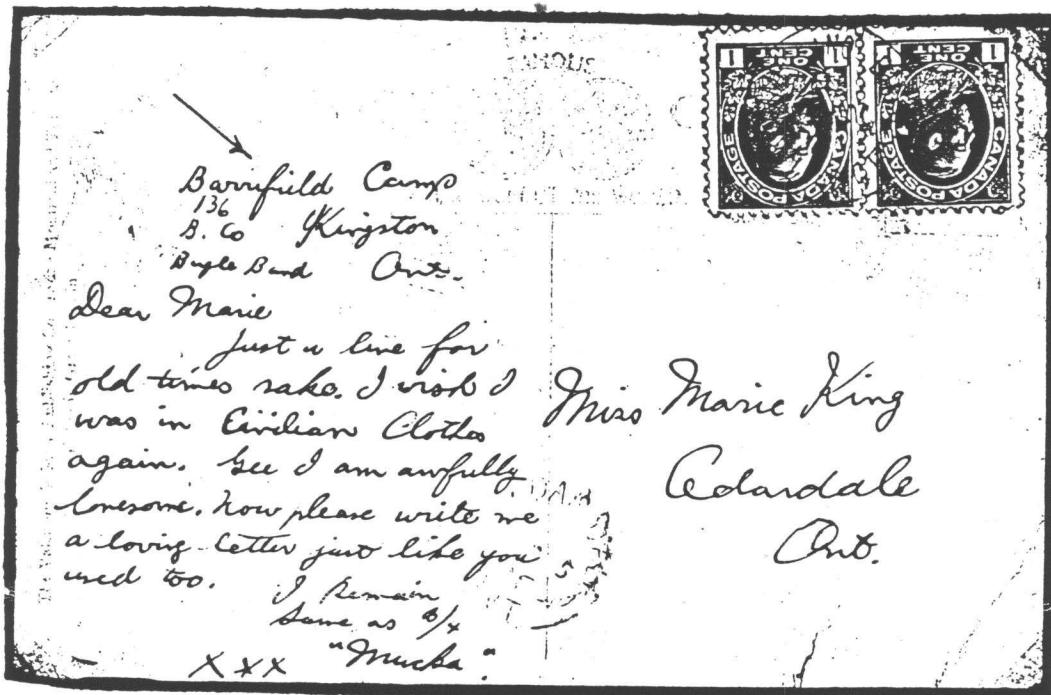
#### BARRIEFIELD MILITARY CAMP-23mm--By J.C. Campbell

Following the arrival of the Canadian 1st Contingent in England in October 1914, authorization was given by the Canadian Government for the enlistment of 50,000 additional men to serve overseas. Rather than using the few camps in Canada which were not equipped to handle large numbers of men, authority was given to prepare a number of camps spread across the Dominion. [By] February 1916 there were sixteen new and enlarged camps ready to accept recruits. Barriefield Camp at Kingston, Ont., while already established, was readied for the additional task. Barriefield was one of seven camps in Ontario [and] perhaps fourth in line based on the number of troops passing through.

Barriefield's first cancelling hammer, a Canada Militia-type proofed May 14, 1912, did not see service during World War One. The second device, a Military Camp-type (23mm), was proofed June 26, 1915 and saw very limited service. The third hammer, again a Canada Militia-type and possibly a re-proofed first hammer, was dated July 23, 1915 and ranks a distant fourth in usage based on the number of strikes recorded.

It is apparent that a number of the 23mm types were prepared for use in 1916 at the Ontario camps, however these all saw very little usage. The Canada Militia types and a variety of machine cancels were most commonly used at Camps Borden, Petawawa, Niagara, and London, Ontario. Why the 23mm hammers were almost entirely shunned has never been established [illustration on following page].

[Cont'd.]



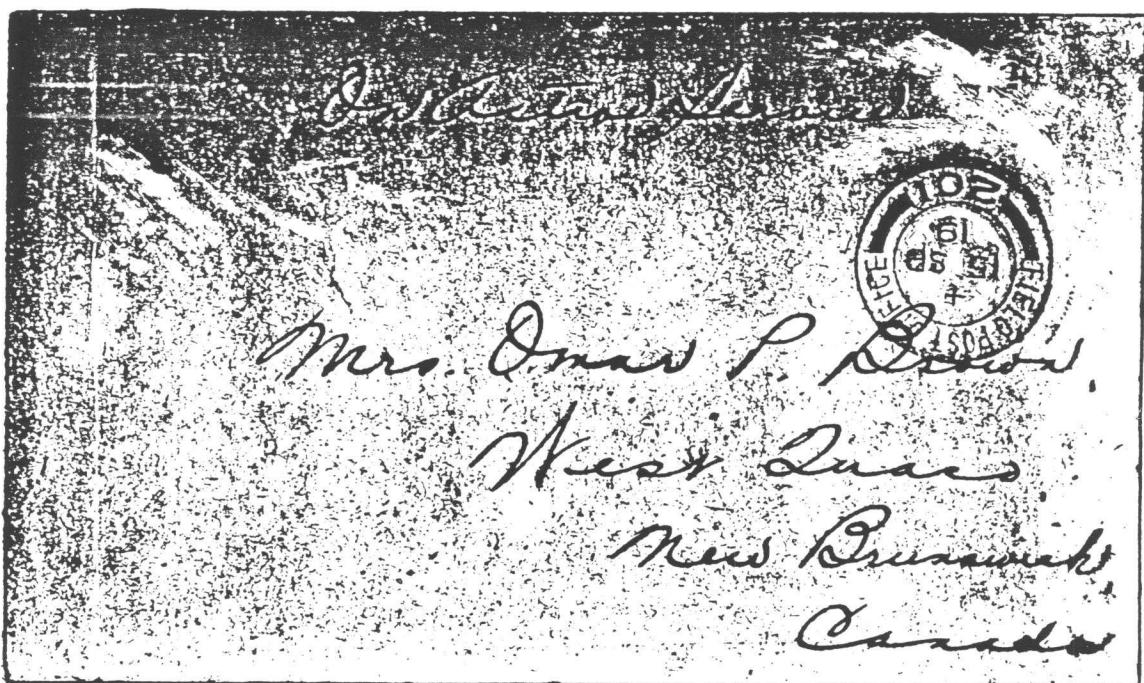
Facsimilies showing proof dates



The 23mm Barriefield Military Camp CDS  
June 3, 1916

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RUSSIAN INTERVENTION COVER TO CANADA



Members will be familiar with the "Mrs. Omar P. Brown" correspondence (see N/L #82, June 1988, p.8/whole p. 583) to Canada. The above cover from FPO 201 (Vladivostok) bears similar split-ring backstamps from St. Martin's, N.B. on OC 15/19, and West Quaco, N.B. on OC 16/19. [Ed.]

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## BNAPS Military Study Group Mail Sale #2

March 20, 1998 Prices Realized

1 15.00	28 nb	55 32.00	82 nb	109 15.00	136 nb	163 nb
2 nb	29 nb	56 11.00	83 5.00	110 6.50	137 nb	164 nb
3 nb	30 nb	57 10.00	84 11.00	111 5.50	138 29.00	165 nb
4 35.00	31 15.00	58 10.00	85 nb	112 5.00	139 nb	166 nb
5 nb	32 nb	59 10.00	86 nb	113 nb	140 nb	167 10.00
6 nb	33 nb	60 nb	87 7.00	114 nb	141 nb	168 nb
7 nb	34 nb	61 nb	88 nb	115 nb	142 nb	169 12.00
8 7.00	35 30.00	62 nb	89 8.00	116 10.00	143 nb	170 nb
9 8.00	36 nb	63 7.00	90 nb	117 7.00	144 nb	171 nb
10 65.00	37 nb	64 nb	91 16.00	118 12.00	145 nb	172 nb
11 nb	38 44.00	65 nb	92 5.00	119 10.00	146 12.00	173 13.00
12 nb	39 nb	66 6.50	93 5.00	120 15.00	147 nb	174 nb
13 nb	40 32.00	67 20.00	94 nb	121 nb	148 nb	175 nb
14 nb	41 nb	68 15.00	95 5.00	122 5.50	149 nb	176 nb
15 nb	42 nb	69 20.00	96 nb	123 nb	150 nb	177 nb
16 nb	43 nb	70 7.50	97 nb	124 nb	151 15.00	178 nb
17 15.00	44 nb	71 nb	98 nb	125 5.00	152 12.00	179 nb
18 nb	45 nb	72 nb	99 36.00	126 5.50	153 17.00	180 nb
19 nb	46 nb	73 10.00	100 42.00	127 5.50	154 13.00	181 nb
20 nb	47 5.00	74 6.00	101 18.00	128 nb	155 14.00	182 10.00
21 22.00	48 nb	75 nb	102 nb	129 5.50	156 nb	183 29.00
22 nb	49 nb	76 12.00	103 nb	130 5.00	157 5.50	184 nb
23 17.00	50 nb	77 7.50	104 nb	131 nb	158 10.00	185 13.00
24 nb	51 15.00	78 6.50	105 11.00	132 5.00	159 10.00	186 11.00
25 nb	52 nb	79 nb	106 11.00	133 11.00	160 nb	187 15.00
26 10.00	53 nb	80 7.50	107 10.00	134 11.00	161 nb	188 11.00
27 nb	54 nb	81 7.00	108 8.00	135 6.50	162 15.00	189 12.00
					190 10.00	
					191 13.00	

Our second sale resulted in a respectable 47% of lots sold. A high bid of \$65 secured lot 10, an early S.S. Megantic cover from the 48th Highlanders. Total sales were \$1201.50. A total of 90 lots sold. Thanks to all bidders, buyers, and consignors!

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A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBER:

ROBERT STENDEL, 1041 N. DEE RD., PARK RIDGE, IL USA 60068

Robert collects microfilmed WWII airgraphs.

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Don't forget about BNAPEX '98!

Orlando, Florida      **BNAPEX '98**  
 Thursday, Friday, Saturday  
 8, 9, & 10 October 1998

Bill and I want to extend our hopes that you have a safe and happy summer! Your next N/L will be out to you late August or early September. See you then!

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