



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2014

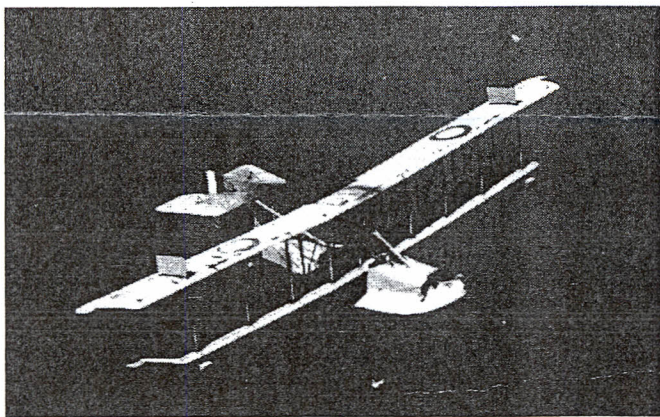
NEWSLETTER NO. 213

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U.S. NAVY AIR STATIONS, NOVA SCOTIA DURING THE GREAT WAR--By Jerome C. Jarnick (OTB)

When the United States entered the war in April 1917, the military was gravely concerned over German submarine attacks on allied ships in the North Atlantic. In June 1918, in anticipation of the war lasting another three years, Canada and the United States agreed to set up two naval air stations at Halifax and North Sydney in Nova Scotia. Canada would provide the locations and on-site buildings while the United States would provide all aircraft, military personnel, and pay all operating expenses. A refueling station was planned at Cape Broyle, sixty miles south of St. John's in Newfoundland, but was never developed. These U.S. Naval Air Stations, equipped with Curtiss HS-2L flying boats, were designed to provide an aerial reconnaissance capability that would detect German U-boats operating in the critical waters off Newfoundland and Canada.

In August 1918, Lt. Richard E. Byrd, USN established the U.S. Naval Air Station at Halifax at Baker's Point on the Dartmouth side of Halifax harbour. Byrd assumed command of the station and acted as



liaison officer between the American and the Canadian governments. He operated under the authority of the Senior British Naval Officer, Admiral W.O. Storry, RN, HMC Dockyard, Halifax. Crates containing the first two airplanes arrived in Halifax by train on August 17 and were barged across the harbour to the Dartmouth location. The planes were assembled and

[Cont'd.]

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and successfully test-flown with the first operational patrol flown on August 25.

First Lieutenant Robert Donohue of the U.S. Coast Guard was named commander of the station at North Sydney which was established at Kelly Beach. Donohue arrived at North Sydney on August 21, 1918. By October four HS-2L's had been transported to North Sydney by train and were operational and two additional arriving. Donohue found his first priority being convoy escort with anti-submarine patrol taking second place.

Shortly after the Armistice of November 11, 1918, the Americans withdrew from Nova Scotia with the Halifax base being transferred to the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service. At the end of the Second World War it became HMCS Shearwater and was later merged with RCAF Station Dartmouth. In 1968 it became CFB Shearwater.

In the CMMSG Newsletter #154 (March 2002, pp. 608-609), Colin Pomfret showed a postcard from John A. Lang, U.S. Naval Air Station, Halifax addressed to Brooklyn, New York franked with a 2¢ War Tax Admiral and postmarked Halifax, October 1918. The card was not censored.

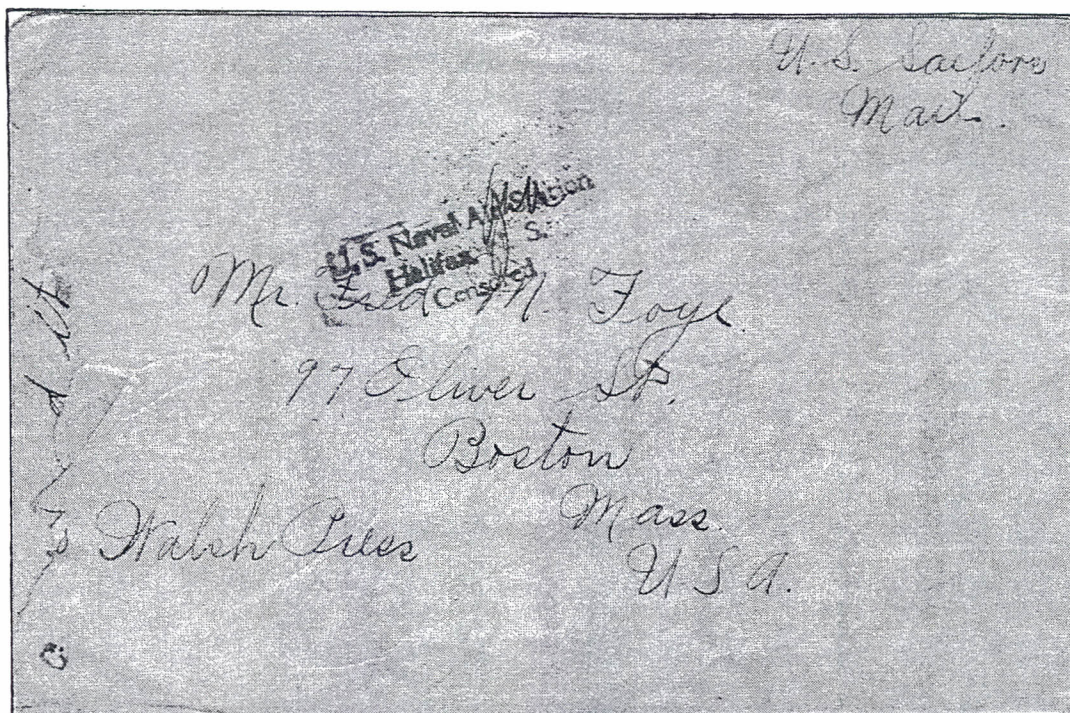


Photo courtesy of Ed Dubin

Shown above is a cover to Boston from a sailor stationed at the Halifax Air Station with a "U.S. Naval Air Station/Halifax N.S./Censored" marking. The letter, which bears the heading of "U.S. Naval Air Station, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada" is not dated, and states "The orders came quite unexpectedly...". The writer also states that "We all live in tents here..." and "This whole station is under quarantine at the present time". In lieu of a stamp, it bears the handwritten notation "U.S. Sailors/Mail" in the upper right corner. It shows no indication of ever entering either the Canadian or American postal systems. I suspect that

[Cont'd.]

this letter was carried from Halifax to Boston by an American naval ship where it entered the mails where it was conveyed to the addressee as a free-franked military letter from an overseas location.

A QUERY: AIRGRAPH CANCELS AND A NEW REPORT?--By Jim Miller

FROM: *Cpl John R. Kohn*
45N 3A 299 022
"T" Force, 7th Army
APO 758 96 PM N.Y.

CANADIAN OVERSEAS
 7 JUNE
 S.C.2.
 1945
 P.D.

Free
 ELECTION
 NO. 2

V-MAIL

TO:
Mr. Bob Kilgour,
Red Lake, Ontario.
Canada.

V-Mail service provides a most rapid means of communication. If addressed to a place where photographing service is not available the original letter will be dispatched by the most expeditious means.

INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Write the entire message plainly on the other side within marginal lines.
- (2) Print the name and address in the two spaces provided. Address of members of the Armed Forces should show full name, complete military or naval address, including grade or rank, serial number, unit to which assigned or attached and army post office in care of the appropriate postmaster or appropriate fleet post office.
- (3) Fold, seal, and deposit in any post office letter drop or street letter box.
- (4) Enclosures must not be placed in this envelope.
- (5) V-Mail letters may be sent free of postage by members of the Armed Forces. When sent by others postage must be prepaid at domestic rates (3c ordinary mail, 6c if domestic air mail service is desired when mailed in the U. S.)

ST 500 10-22143-4

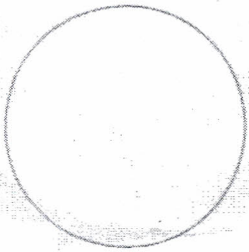
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I was wondering if any reports have come in about "Toronto, Ont./Air-graph 2" listed as Bailey & Toop #M20-31 (p. 688, Volume II)? I have an example in purple ink on the back of a V-Mail cover from a USA APO addressed to Red Lake, Ontario. The airgraph cancel is dated "JUN/16/1945."

For that matter, have any of the Airgraph cancels illustrated in B&T (pages 688-689) been discovered? I don't find them in Sayles Vol. II. [Thanks Jim. Members may know that many of these markings are noted in B&T as "*" or "proof book strike only" in the "Rarity Factor" column. Comments related to these markings' rarity are noted in Major E.R. Toop Collection of Canadian Military Postal History, Vol. I, Eds. C.R. McGuire and R.F. Narbonne (1996), p. 385. A cropped illustration of the contents is featured below.Ed.]

Print the complete address in plain letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided on the right. Use typewriter, dark ink, or dark pencil. Faint or small writing is not suitable for photographing.



[CENSOR'S STAMP]

TO: MR. BOB KILGOUR,
RED LAKE, ONTARIO
CANADA.

SEE INSTRUCTION NO. 2

FROM

CP. JOHN R. KOHR,
ASN 39 299 022
"T" FORCE 7th ARMY
APO 758 98PM N.Y.

(Sender's complete address above)

24 May 45

Dear Bob,

Maybe you're not even surprised to learn that I'm writing this from my own home of Madsen. So please give him my regards.

Best wishes also to Lady Jocelyne and to Billy. Someday I hope to meet you all again. How about coming down to my wedding at Ottawa?

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE
ADDRESS AT TOP?

REPLY BY
V---MAIL

HAVE YOU FILLED IN COMPLETE
ADDRESS AT TOP?

18

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1943 16-24143-5

REMEMBERING COLONEL GEORGE HARRY LAWRENCE, 1892-1981--By C.R. McGuire
(OTB, FRPSC)

While I have not met many people that have truly impressed me, Col. Harry Lawrence was certainly one of them. I hope after reading the reprint of an "In Memoriam" I published in the PHSC Journal #29 (March 1, 1982) you will understand why [following this article with the kind permission of the Journal's Editor Larry Goldberg.Ed.]. You will also see the importance of Col. Lawrence to Canada's civilian and military postal history. It was a great honour to have known him. May he rest in peace along with his comrades with whom he served in both the Great War and the Second World War.

My interviews and discussions with Col. Lawrence greatly increased my interest in Canada and Newfoundland's military postal history. They encouraged me to write on many of the varied facets of this fascinating aspect of our postal history that I have during the last thirty or so years. One example is the "Little Norway" story [1].

I was doing my ever-ongoing research on "C Force" for a six-part article updating my previous work, when I discovered Col. Lawrence had been involved in significant ways with Canada's Hong Kong Veterans and POW's (CHKV/POW); this once overlooked group of true Canadian heroes. Naturally, while with the Base Post Office, Col. Lawrence was involved with the mail, or lack of it, to and from the Force's members. But his particular concern was over three of "his boys": Sgt. Charles Clark, DCM, in charge of the CPC unit with Brigade H.Q. and his two Corporals, Lucien Brunet and Bill Overton.

I have had the good fortune to meet or speak on the phone with over 300 of these men and, as a group, they too are some of those with which I have been most impressed and have sincere admiration for the way they conducted themselves in battle, survived the hell of Japanese prison camps, and went on to fight another battle with the Government of Canada for justice. They finally received it in December 1998, when only less than 400 of the 1,500 that returned were still living. This settlement was realized through years of dedicated efforts of another real Canadian hero, the late Cliff Chadderton.

The latest of many articles I have published in numerous publications on "C Force" [2], began in the November-December 2012 Remembrance Month edition of the Wayback Times [WBT] and continued through to the September-October 2013 issue. The November-December 2013 edition featured another article on a related "C Force" subject. It pertained to the British People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) and the organization that awards the "Dickin Medal" (DM); the animal equivalent to the Victoria Cross. Gander, the Royal Rifles of Canada's Newfoundland dog mascot posthumously received the DM on October 27, 2000. The WBT series of articles may be seen on its website: www.waybacktimes.com. For more information on the CHKV/POW's see the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association's site: www.hkvca.ca.

[1] McGuire, C.R. "The Little Norway Story", STAMPEX '79 Catalogue. Toronto, 1979. (This article was updated several times and appeared in another five periodicals. I also published it privately as a booklet).

- [2] An article of interest to postal historians is C.R. McGuire's "The Postal History of Canada's World War II Hong Kong Field Force" in STAMPEX '82 Catalogue. Toronto, 1982. (This article was updated and published in several journals. The version in the Military Collectors' Club of Canada Journal was awarded the BNAPS "E.R. Toop Military Literature Award" for 2002). My eight-panel exhibit and case of related artifacts on the subject was awarded the PHSC's "E.R. Toop Best Military Postal History Award". [Members may also wish to view the related CMMSG NL#48 (March 31, 1982, p. 2).Ed.].

In Memoriam: Col. George Harry Lawrence, 1892-1981

by C. R. McGuire

It is with sincere regret that I report that Colonel Harry Lawrence passed away at Niederbipp, Switzerland on December 3, 1981 at the age of 89. Colonel Lawrence made a very significant contribution to the operation of the civil and military postal systems of Canada during the period from 1913 to 1957.

I first had the pleasure of meeting Colonel Lawrence at his home in Peterborough in 1977 just before he married Greta Bühler and moved to her home in Inkwil, Switzerland, when in accordance with Swiss law his name became Lawrence-Bühler. Previously, the Colonel and I had corresponded and spoken on the telephone over a number of months preparing for what became a three and one-half hour taped interview. These tapes are in the Research Library of the National Postal Museum, Ottawa. I intend eventually to publish a transcript of what is without doubt one of the most important and interesting oral history interviews I have conducted.

Harry Lawrence was born in Toronto on November 27, 1892. He and his only sister were raised by his mother, his father having died when Harry was a youngster. Although the family was quite poor, Mrs. Lawrence insisted that he complete high school before going to work. He attended Landsdowne Public School, and through very hard work completed his senior matriculation at Harvard Collegiate by his fifteenth birthday — quite a remarkable accomplishment.

After holding a variety of jobs, young Lawrence joined the staff of the Adelaide Street Post Office in 1913 as a mail sorter. When World War I began he volunteered for service, and was assigned to District Depot No. 2. There was a requirement for men with post office experience in the Postal Corps, and he soon requested a transfer. Mr. Lawrence worked with the Corps in Toronto and at Camps Niagara-on-the-Lake and Borden, Ontario and Sussex, New Brunswick. In September 1918 he was instructed to report to Ottawa to join the

force being organized for duty in Siberia. He was put in charge of the three-man postal corps which served with the philatelically-significant Siberian Expeditionary Force.

Following exciting wartime experiences and an eventful and unusual voyage back to Canada, Mr. Lawrence returned to the Toronto Post Office. He held a series of progressively more responsible positions with the Department in his home town and at Headquarters in Ottawa as Superintendent of Investigations. In 1953 he was appointed Postmaster of Toronto, Canada's largest post office. Thus, a suitable crowning achievement to a long record of dedicated service to Canada's Post Office filled his years before retirement in 1957. He and his first wife, Anne Beddes, moved to Bournemouth, England where they resided until returning to Peterborough, Ontario in 1975. Mrs. Lawrence passed away shortly thereafter.

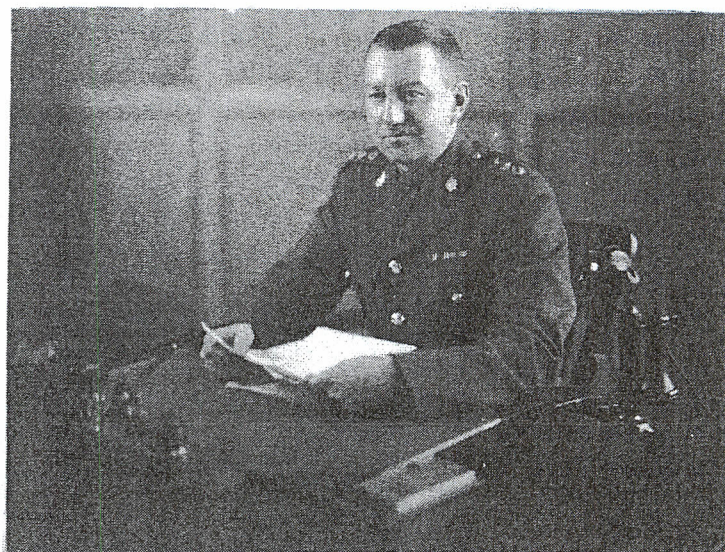
Two more of Colonel Lawrence's many assignments are of particular interest to Canadian postal historians. He was postmaster on the NASCOPIE, the Hudson's Bay Company's supply ship during its 1936 run through the Eastern Arctic. Upon the outbreak of war in 1939 he was called up (he had remained active in the Reserve between the two World Wars) and put in charge of the Base Post Office on Nicholas Street in Ottawa. On December 1, 1940 he was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned the task of assisting with the establishment and organization of a Postal Corps capable of accommodating the requirements of Canada's wartime forces. The effectiveness of his performance was recognized with accelerated advancement, as he was promoted to Captain on January 1, 1941, to Major a few months later on July 1 and to Lieutenant Colonel on July 1, 1942. While in Canada Colonel Lawrence was responsible for establishing field post offices in the continually-increasing number of RCAF and army training bases. He was also involved in the establishment of postal facilities at the first Camp Little Norway, the Norwegian wartime

training centre in Toronto.

He was posted overseas in December 1942 and assigned to Postal Corps Headquarters in London. In May 1943 he moved to Manchester and took charge of the overseas Base Post Office. After coordinating the relocation of that operation to better quarters in London, Colonel Lawrence became Assistant Director, Army Postal Services at Headquarters. Surviving the blitz and numerous trips to the war zones in Europe, Lawrence was made acting Colonel in October 1944 and promoted to full Colonel on Victoria Day, May 24, 1945.

Colonel Lawrence was repatriated to Canada and released from active duty on September 21, 1945. He continued service with the Reserves until August 1953. Colonel Lawrence always kept in touch with

his former associates. For example, he never missed attending the Postal Corps Veteran reunions held every four years in various cities across Canada. During his forty-four year career Colonel Lawrence held many important positions and was involved in numerous interesting and rewarding assignments. His responsibilities were such that he was instrumental in making many improvements in the postal system which benefited its overall operations. Colonel Lawrence told me he felt fortunate to have had such a career, which offered him a great deal of satisfaction. He in turn was a well-liked and respected gentleman who earned and deserves his place in Canada's postal history. May he rest in peace.



[Ron subsequently sent in the following additional information:

"The photo at left is of Lawrence taken in Omsk on March 15, 1919 after he opened the Canadian Postal Corps office there. The photo at right is of him as Lt. Colonel in the fall of 1942 at his desk in the Canadian Post-

al Corps Headquarters in Ottawa [a new image supplied similar to that in the original PHSC article.Ed.].

The following mourning card is in German so I have scanned the back with Mrs. Lawrence's note to me.

The following newspaper photo is Colonel Lawrence and his wife just after he arrived in Switzerland.

[Cont'd.]

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BAHNHOFSTRASSE 40

CH-4555 INKWI 12.1.22.

Dear Mrs. McGuire,

I thank you very much
for your letter of sympathy at my
husband's death.

It was a great comfort to me to know
that we were in your thoughts.

Yours sincerely

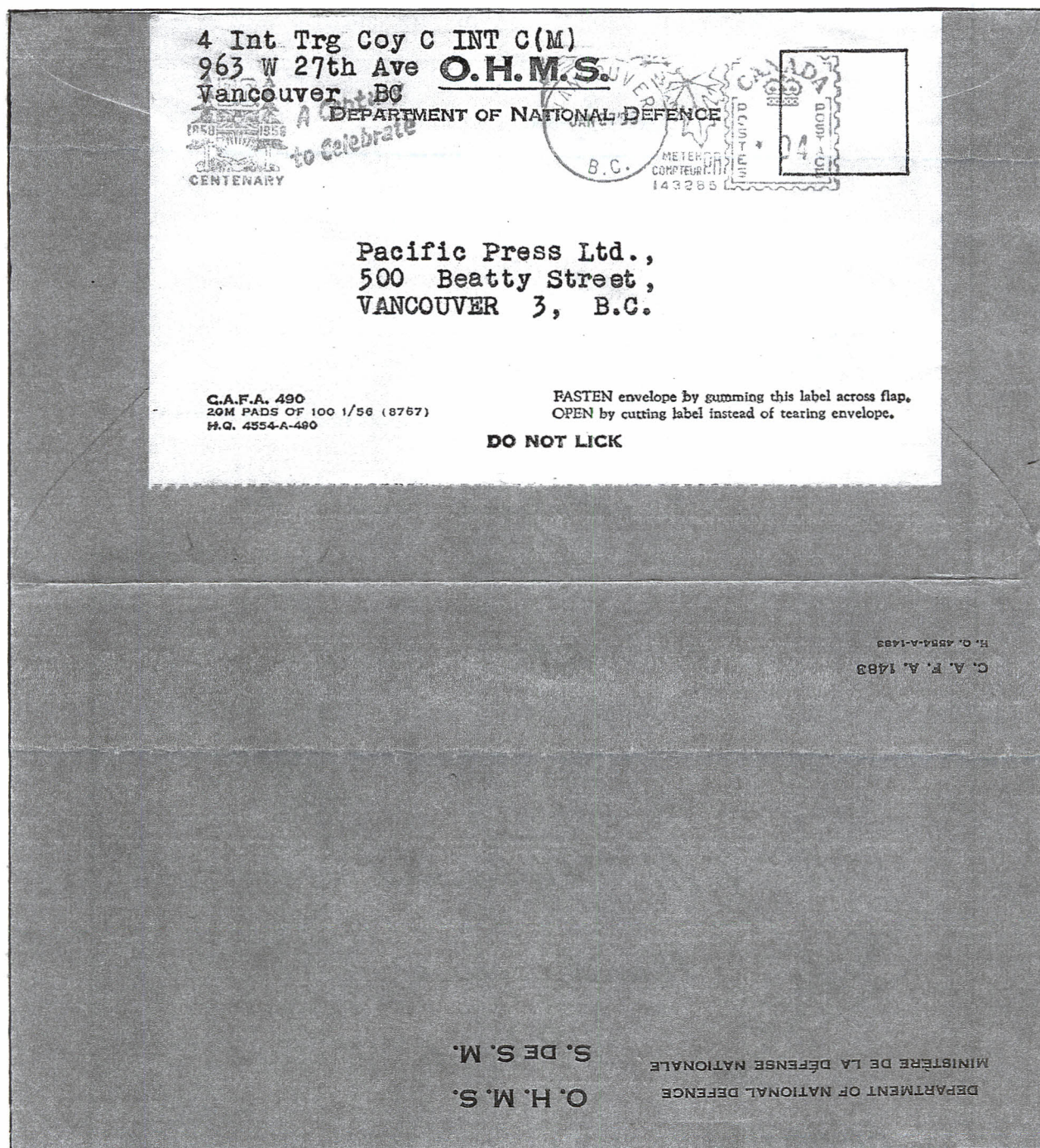
P.S. Many thanks for the copy of the newspaper article in the Sunday Star.
Yr. truly Clarence.



I had the privilege to know Colonel Lawrence and conduct a lengthy interview which covered his forty-four years of post office service, including over ten years with the Canadian Postal Corps. His Great War service began in 1914 at Camp Borden and ended with the Siberian Expeditionary Force in 1919. I would like to remember him and his service to Canada on the centennial of the beginning of that terrible war."]

QUERY: "4 INT TRG CO C INT" DESIGNATION?--By Bill Pekonen

Bill is curious about this unit. The cover is postmarked with a meter dated January 27, 1958. Any ideas? [Intelligence Training? Ed.]

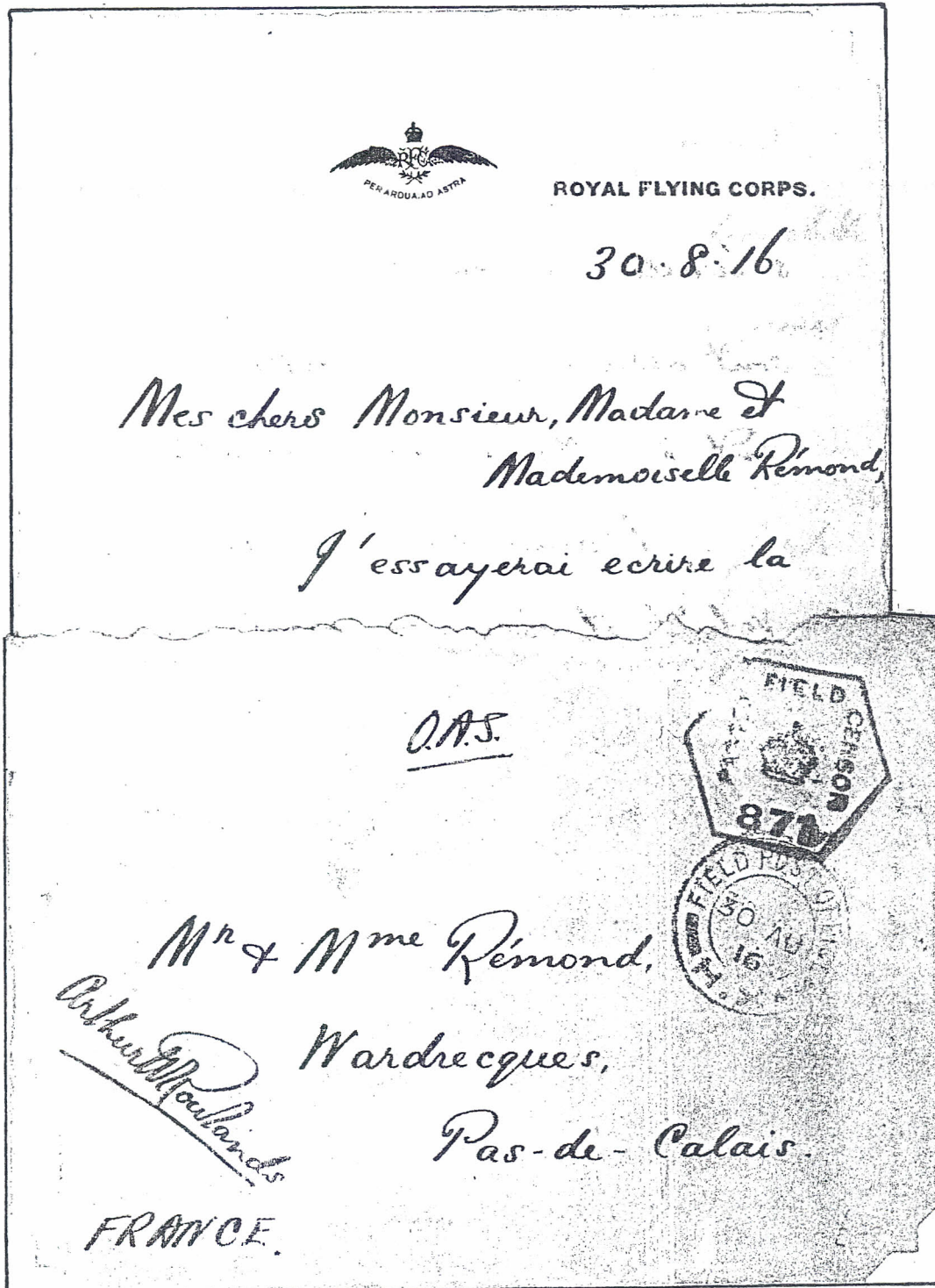


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TWO GREAT WAR AERIAL GEMS--By Colin Pomfret

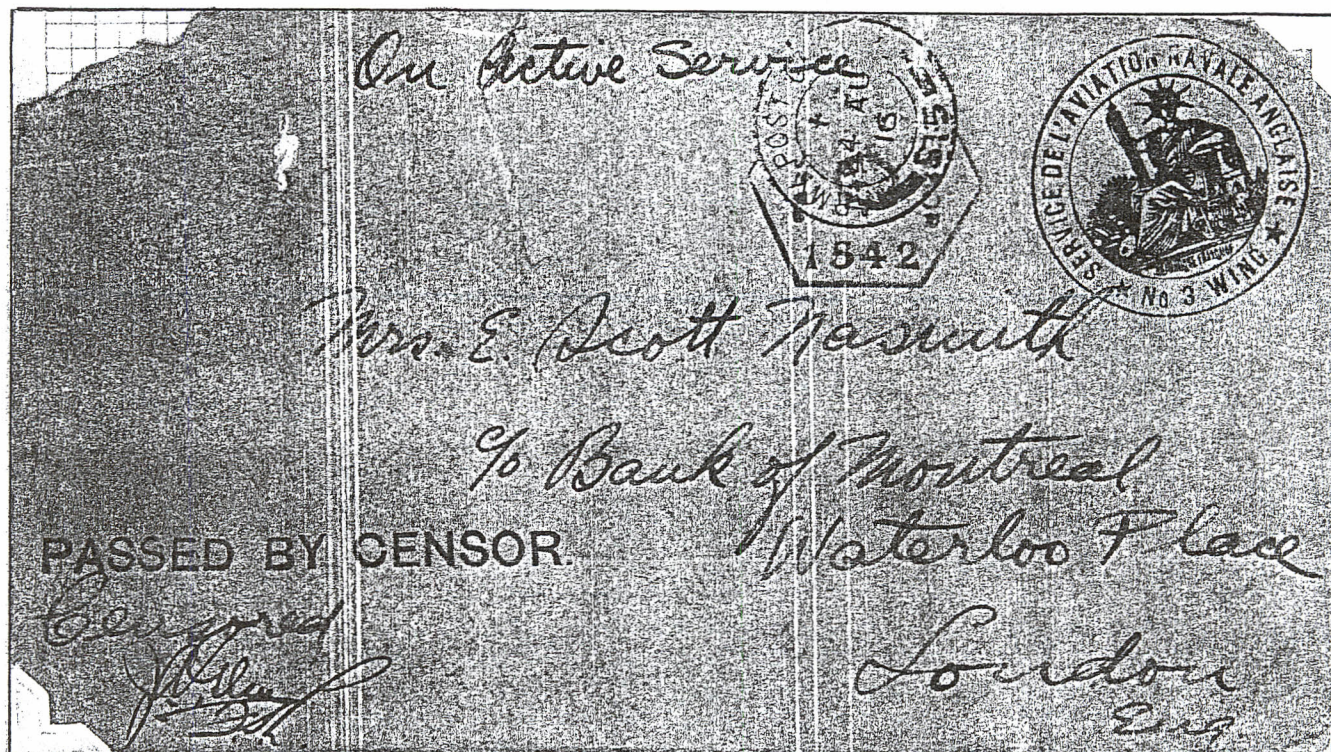
This cover from 5 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, while attached to Canadian Corps Headquarters, contains a letter to a French family thanking them for their kindness when the airman was billeted with them.

It bears the "Field Post Office/30 AU/16/H.X" Canadian Corps H.Q. and censor type 4/871.



[Cont'd.]

The following cover bears a "Service De L'Aviation Navale Anglaise/No 3 Wing", an "Army Post Office/24 AU/16/S.5" (Paris), and censor #1542. It was signed "J.A. Glenn" by Flight Lieutenant James Alphaeus Glenn, a native of Enderby, British Columbia.



It was from No.3 Wing, R.N.A.S. based at Leuxeuil in North-Eastern France and was involved in bombing industrial targets in Germany.

The enclosure is signed "G.R.S. Flemming" who was awarded his pilot's ticket from the Curtiss Aviation School on September 1, 1915.

Early in April 1917, the Naval Air Service decided to close the operation but later on April 14, decided to have one last raid in retaliation for the sinking of the hospital ship Asturias. It was on this raid that Flemming was shot down and killed.

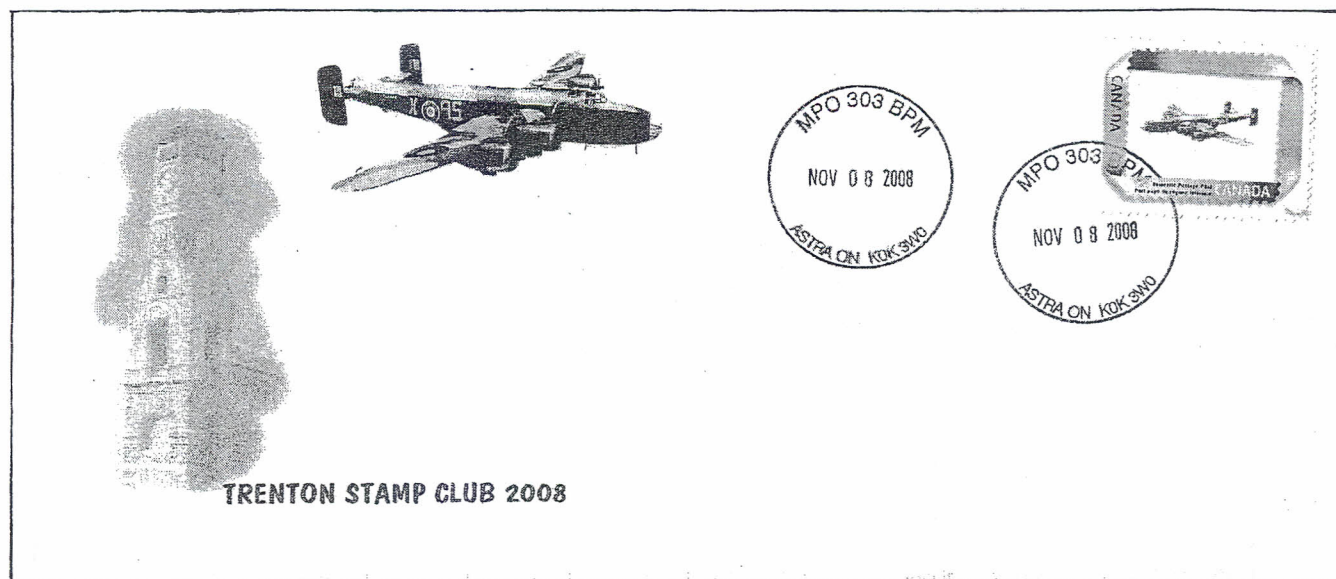
The raid was a great success and 5,500 lbs. of bombs on Freiburg caused much damage.

Prior to transferring to 3 Wing, Flemming was a ferry pilot taking planes from England to Paris.

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MPO 303 2008 TRENTON STAMP CLUB COMMEMORATIVE COVER--By A. David Hanes

[Dave sent along this attractive cover with a special related stamp ("Picture Postage") bonus! Ed.]



Dear Study Group Members:

Henk and I hope that spring has now sprung and everyone is enjoying a nice seasonal break from an exceptionally-long and tiresome winter! Here is another issue and thanks again to fellow members for their contributions. The cupboard is not bare but material is dangerously low so I would appreciate members' input if time allows. We may have to return to four issues and Canada Post's recent unprecedented postal increases are also something to consider. Continued good hunting and collecting!

SMALL ADS

Small ads from members are always welcome. Buy/Sell/Trade. Only Cdn. \$1 per insertion (or mint Cdn. postage @ face ok). Copy and payment to the Editor please.

WANTED: Camp Hughes, Sewell Camp, Camp Shilo postal history on covers and postcards. Buy, sell, trade. Contact: Darcy Hickson, R.R. #2, Box 24, Brandon, MB R7A 5Y2; (204) 725-0621; or hicksondj@mts.net (7/10)

WANTED: All covers/cards related to Great War Newfoundland; Canadian POW's IN Germany (WWI/WWII); Canadians in Gibraltar/Malta during WWII. Contact: The Editor or blueputtees@hotmail.com (2/5)
