

Canadian Military Mail Study Group

NEWSLETTER

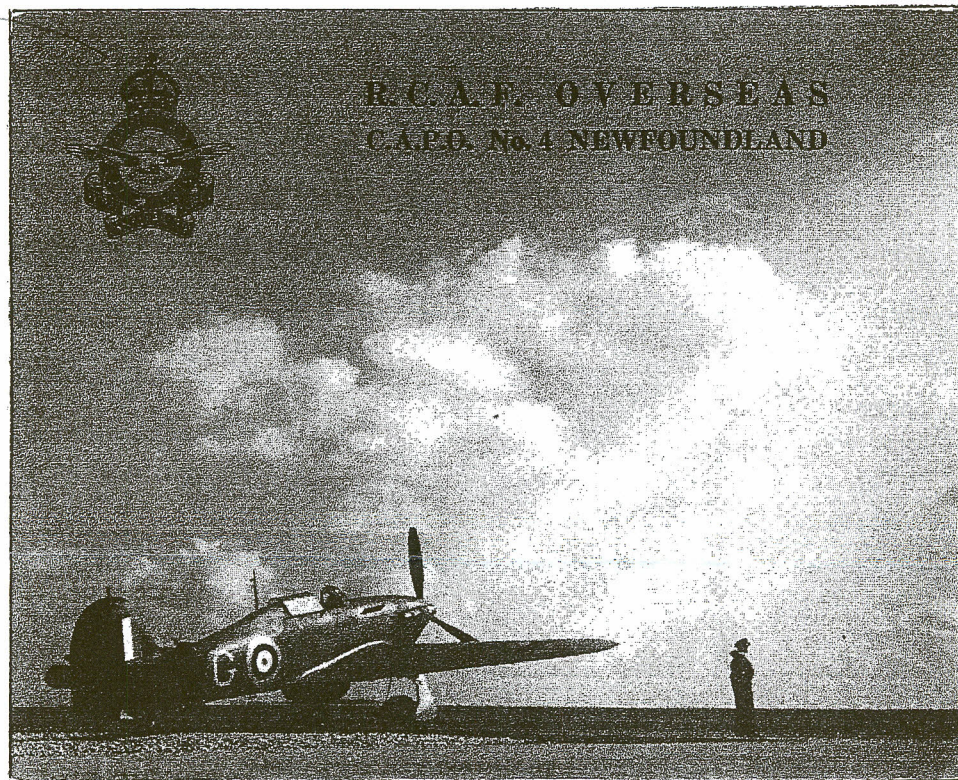
NOVEMBER 2014

NEWSLETTER NO. 216

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C.A.P.O. NO. 4 (GANDER) NEWFOUNDLAND CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Gander's strategic location offered the Royal Canadian Air Force an ideal location from which to operate. According to W.J. Bailey



and E.R. Toop's The Canadian Military Posts (Vol.II, Ed. E.B.

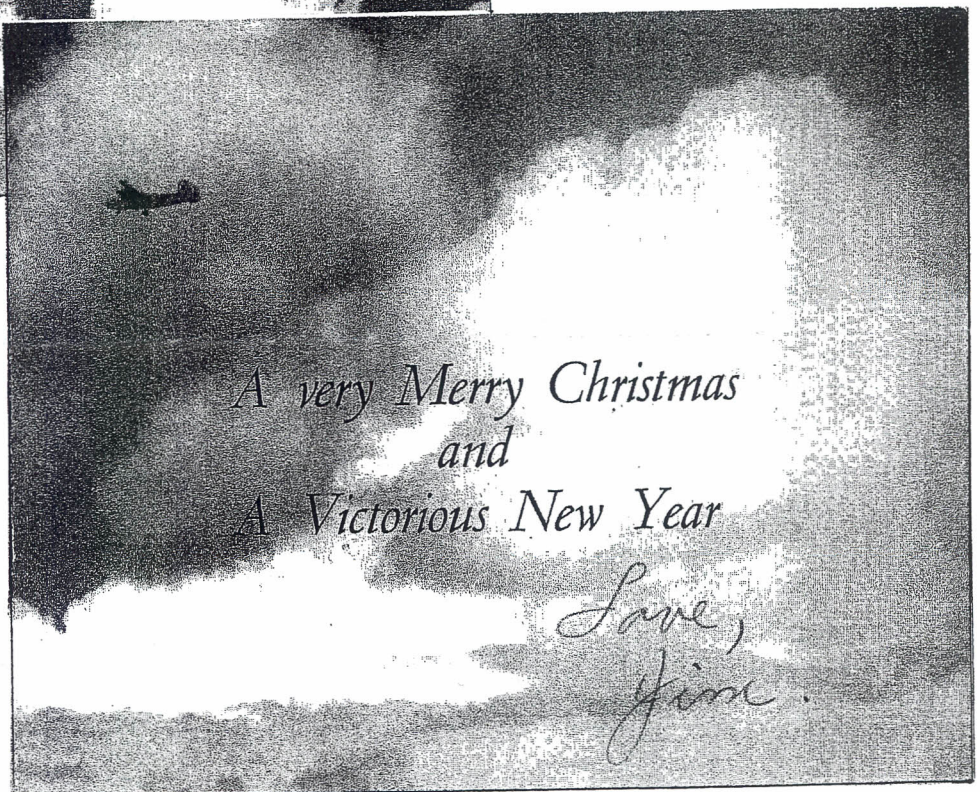
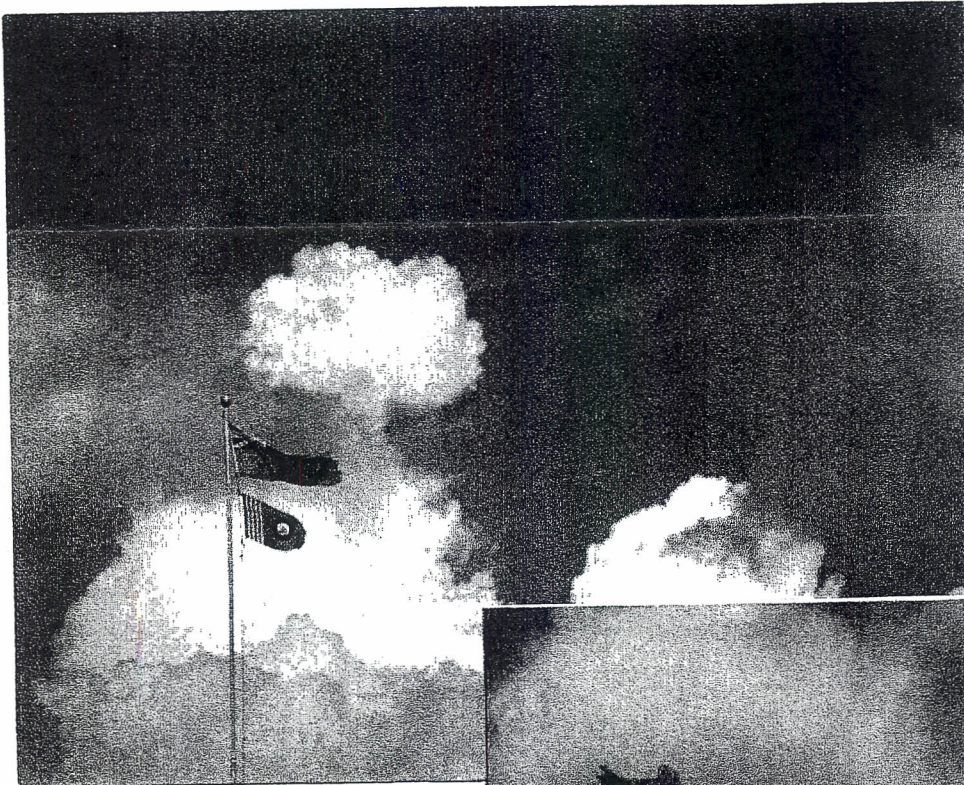
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Proud, p. 63), No. 10 Bomber Squadron, RCAF arrived at Gander on April 7, 1941, followed by Station H.Q. ten days later. Bomber reconnaissance and fighter squadrons were based at Gander from 1941 to 1945 (No.10 and No. 116 Bomber Squadrons; No. 126 and No. 127 Fighter Squadrons). Support units such as No.19 Sub-Repair Depot and No.19 Radio Detachment were also found at Gander.



WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Corporal Nathan Frank Cirillo, 24, a reservist with Hamilton's Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was cowardly gunned down while serving honour guard duty at Ottawa's National War Memorial on October 22, 2014. This act of terror had followed a few days after the murder of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, 53 in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. We honour them and all those who served and continue to serve our country.



Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's)

Spring Church Parade, May 8th, 1932

The Battalion will parade on Sunday, May 8th, 1932, at the Armouries at 10.15 a.m. sharp, for the purpose of attending Divine Service at the Central Presbyterian Church.

This is our first opportunity of attending Divine Service at the Church of our new Chaplain and the Commanding Officers especially request a large turnout of all ranks.

Dress—Service with medals.
Bands—Full dress.
Parade—Rain or Shine.

L. W. SHARP, Lt. and Adjt.
for O.C.A. & S.H. of C. (P.L.)

[I hope that members will allow my re-use of the above stationery card from NL #186 (August 2008, pp. 995-996).Ed.]

CANADIAN CORPS OF OVERSEAS FIREFIGHTERS' REGALIA--By C.R. (Ron) McGuire

Members will recall Ron's articles on the above (NL #208, March 2013, pp. 1273-1278 and NL #209, May 2013, p. 1292) and thought that these rare uniform items would be of interest.



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TORONTO AIRGRAPH 2 UPDATE--By R.F. (Hank) Narbonne

Jim Miller's first report of this marking in our NL #213 (March 2014,

Toronto, Ont.
MAY 10 1945
P.M.

V-Mail Service provides the most expeditious dispatch and reduces the weight of mail to and from personnel of our Armed Forces outside the Continental United States. When addressed to points where micro-film equipment is operated, a miniature photographic negative of the message will be made and sent by the most expeditious transportation available for reproduction and delivery. The original message will be destroyed after the reproduction has been delivered. Messages addressed to or from points where micro-film equipment is not operated will be transmitted in their original form by the most expeditious means available.

INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Write the entire message plainly on the other side within marginal lines.
- (2) PRINT the name and address in the two panels provided. Addresses to members of the Armed Forces should include rank or rating of the addressee, unit to which attached, and APO or Naval address.
- (3) Fold, seal, and deposit in any post office letter drop or street letter box.
- (4) ~~Enclosure~~ must not be placed in this envelope and a separate V-Mail letter must be sent if you desire to write more than one sheet.
- (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 air mail is desired).

POST OFFICE DEPT. PERMIT NO. 15

Miss ELEANOR O'MEARA
78 LYNDWOOD
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA
90 Wellington Road, W. 1st St.
W. 1st St., W. 1st St., W. 1st St.

PASSED BY NAVAL CENSOR

V-MAIL

Eumetall 214 USNK
Room # 1925, FPO
New York City

MAY 10 1945
10-00

No. 5
Instruction

pp. 1335-1336) has brought in Hank's earlier usage. You will recall

[Cont'd.]

Jim's example was dated June 16, 1945 (this one is dated May 10, 1944). Note on both items "V...- Mail" has been crossed out. [Is this significant to this marking's scarcity? Thanks Hank. Can our other members report others? Ed.]

A LETTER FROM VLADIVOSTOK,
FEBRUARY 1919--By Joe Smith

[Joe sent along a very interesting cover and letter from Sergeant J. Andrew Coombs, Siberian Expeditionary Force. Some of the light wording has been enhanced for clarity. Ed.]

Vladivostok, Feb. 23/19

Dear Folks:
The Alaskan mail arrived a couple of days ago and was more than delighted to hear from you. Things seem to be stagnant there as well as any place else. Hope you are going to move South this time.

Well, I thought Alaska was God-forsaken enough but I have to hand it to this country.

Besides our expedition seems to be very much in the nature of a wild goose chase. Nobody knows why or what for.

Well, I have been elected as laundryman and it is up to me to do the washing.

[Cont'd.]

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for 4 hospitals, 4000 troops & 150 officers & not get them all palled up. Each man has to get a bath & clean clothes every two weeks. Water is very scarce here and bad.

We have the old laundry that was used in the Russo-Jap War and have a steam bath and fumigator rigged up. Employ a bunch of Russian women.

Do not expect to be here long & sincerely hope not.

Everything is rotten filthy & disgusting. The pigs & dogs do all the scavenger work and considerable typhus is around.

I was wishing we could have run into Seward on our way over - it took us 21 days and

rotten accommodation
Hope to hear from you
again when the spring opens
things up
Regards to everybody
Sincerely
Andrew

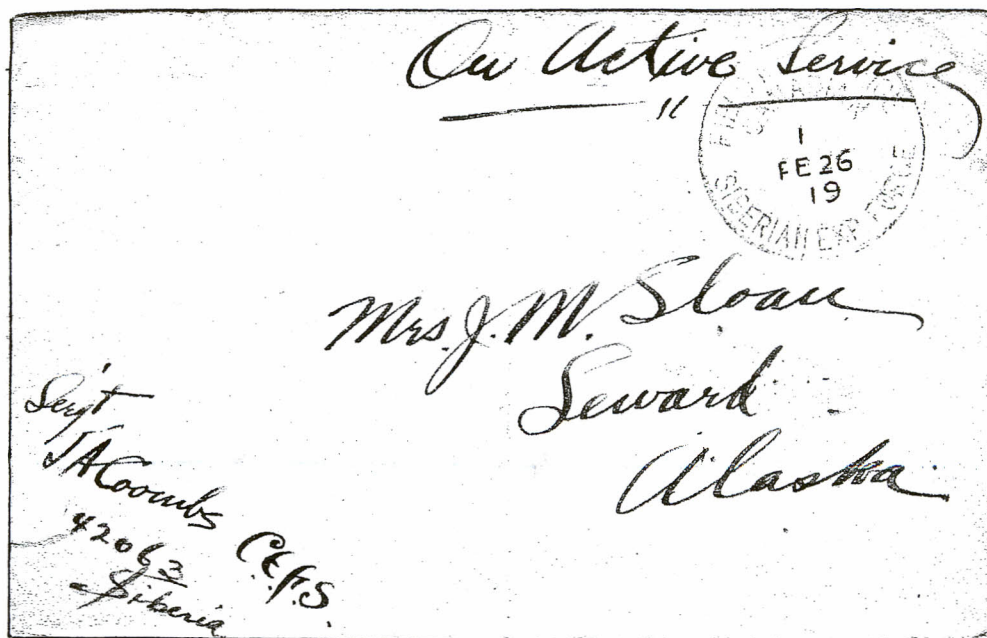
Serg't A. Coombs.

3042063 CEF.S.

Laundry #115.H.

Hadwinstok, Siberia

[Cont'd.]



MEMBER EXHIBITS & AWARDS

Hearty congratulations are extended to members who did well at various exhibitions in Canada and abroad! Some military exhibits include: ORAPEX 2014 (Ottawa), **J.M. POWELL**, Vermeil/E.R. "Ritch" Toop Best Military Postal History Award (PHSC), "Canadian Prisoners and Civilian Internees in Europe During the Great War"; **A.D. HANES**, Silver-Bronze, "Military Covers With a Story"; CPSGB Convention 2014 (Edinburgh, Scotland), **D. HOBDEN**, Competitive Exhibit* (*award unknown at time of printing), "War of 1812-North America"; BNAPEX 2014/BALPEX, **J.M. POWELL**, Gold/Sam Nickle Award Best Military Postal History, exhibit as above; **R. MAJORS**, Gold, "Canada/BNA Union & Confederate Postal Correspondence in the US Civil War Era (1857-1868)" (non-member); **C. LIVERMORE**, Non-competitive (Hon. Bronze), "Thanks For The Smokes"; **J.M. POWELL**, Notes Through Barbed Wire & **P. BINNEY**, "A Re-examination and Classification of the GPO Triangles on Naval Mail From HMCS Avalon, St. John's, Nfld.", E.R. "Ritch" Toop Award Best Military Postal History Literature (BNAPS).

GED TAYLOR SALE OF MILITARY POSTAL HISTORY

Word has arrived from Graham Searle, FCPS, Editor of Maple Leaves and CPSGB Auctioneer, that the long-anticipated sale of former member Ged Taylor's collection will have a closing date in late-January 2015. The web-based sale should be listed later this month or early next. Interested members should view the Society's website at www.canadianpsgb.org.uk for further details. Remember to denote "CMMSG" when bidding. Good luck and thanks to Graham, Peter High of the FPHS, and to Ged's family for their willingness to make Ged's treasures available to the collecting community.

Roland H. Webb and His Book

Gray Scrimgeour, Robert Toombs, and Brian Plain

The first, October 1973 issue of the *Canadian Military Mail Study Group Newsletter* [Number One, pages 1 and 2] featured news about a manuscript prepared by Lt. Col. R.H. Webb (1910–1970). Jim Kraemer—then Manager of the National Postal Museum (the NPM) in Ottawa—sent study group chairman Colin Campbell some questions raised by Ed Richardson, who was editing Webb's 1970 manuscript for publication by the NPM, about "missing information" in the Webb material at the NPM: some military covers were not seen and some typescript portions were incomplete or missing. The Chairman called for members to contact Richardson or himself with any help. The only published response seen came in *CMMSG Newsletter Number Five* (June 1974)—a short note about "Lt. Col. R.H. Webb's Handbook" saying that Ed Richardson had announced at the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada's Convention [Winnipeg, May 2–4, 1974] that the handbook would consist of about 450 pages and be in both English and French. Its expected publication date was announced as 1975. Then came *four decades* with no news at all about the book!

In 2012, Robert Toombs, Gray Scrimgeour, and Brian Plain visited the shop of Vancouver auctioneer Brian Grant Duff. In the shop, Brian Plain noted a copy of a 1970 typescript: *A Guide to Canadian Military Postal History, 1636-1967*, by Lieut. Col. Roland H. Webb. Bob gratefully purchased it, and the odyssey began. Gray and Bob started a search and made enquiries to see if the book had ever been published and—if not—what had happened to it. Searching found a listing in several online bibliographies; these turned out to be misleading. The book had not been published. Friends passed on word that Ed Richardson had not completed his job and that perhaps one or two of the NPM staff had attempted to continue, but the book had not been completed. Our online search found a listing of the Roland H. Webb Fonds at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa (Accession 1996-085/086). Contents: 2,500 military mail covers and research notes; provenance: Gift of Mrs. Ethel Webb.

Bob was determined to see the work done by Webb published. Gray said he would help. About this time, Bob contacted Roland Webb's son Ralph and explained our project. The Webb family had retained the original typescript of the book, and we were given a copy of it (December 2013) with their blessing and encouragement. It was identical to Bob's copy. The Webb's bequest to NPM included a promise from the Museum that the book would be published by the Museum. In mid-November 2013, Bob studied the extensive Webb file at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa. He compared his copy of the book to the copy viewed at LAC (it is the same), and photographed as many Webb Collection military mail covers as he could in the time available, to use for illustrations in the book. Starting in late November 2013, Gray did optical character recognition scanning of the typescript and then Bob and Gray edited the word-processed text files. With Brian's input as external peer reviewer and author of several sections and other's help with review and provision of substitutes for missing covers, we have completed the project.

[Cont'd.]

The book will be published this fall by the *Postal History Society of Canada (PHSC)* both as a bound printed version (for those placing orders for a limited printing) and shortly after as an electronic version (on the *PHSC* web site).

At last we can respond to the "missing information" questions raised in the first *Newsletter*. We have learned that after the Webb collection was sent to the NPM early in the 1970s, the Webb family in the 1980s found a very small stack of covers, which were subsequently sold. This lot may have included missing covers listed in the 1973 *CMMSG Newsletter*. Not all available covers at the LAC could be photographed, and there is also the possibility that some covers could reside in an NPM exhibit somewhere. In the 1970 typescript, seven chapters were missing; these were never written. Of these missing topics, censorship is now included as a chapter and a Canadian Forces Air Letters (AFALs) section appears as a newly-composed Appendix. We have compiled General Notes in an Introduction, listed Abbreviations, and prepared an Index. Each chapter has a list of Suggested Reading, with recent references. The book has been completed in a form that we believe presents Webb's wording and intentions, and provides a framework for future research:

Having worked with the manuscript for months, we have come to appreciate the insight and effort that went into its writing. During a decade when Webb served in Ottawa, he did research in the Archives there. He discovered much information to support his writing and collecting. His aim was to explain the operation of the *Canadian Postal Corps (CPC)*. His book describes how Canadian military mail was dispatched and delivered—from its beginning up to when he was writing. Examples are shown to support his discussion. If Webb's own covers were not available, we have supplied, or sought from friends, suitable illustrations.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Webb was the major collector of and writer about Canadian military postal history. From 1958 to 1963, he wrote a series of 13 articles in *Maple Leaves (Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain)*, he was awarded the Aiken Trophy for the best articles published in *Maple Leaves* 1960 (on MPOs). He wrote an equally-long and worthwhile series of articles in the *Canadian Philatelist*.

Roland H. Webb entered Royal Military College (Kingston) in his teens, and upon graduation in 1931, he entered the Militia and then the Canadian Army in 1933. He went Overseas in early 1940. He was present at Normandy on D-Day, in command of two artillery regiments, one of which was the 12th Field Regiment of the Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA). He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (D.S.O) for his military service in the invasion of Northwest France in 1944 (Figure 1).

In the early post war years, he commanded an artillery regiment at Petawawa, Ontario followed by command of Canadian Armed Forces Camp Shilo, in Manitoba. From 1951 until he retired to White Rock, B.C., in 1961 with his wife and three young children, he was Deputy Director of Administration at Army Headquarters in Ottawa. During this period, he also served with United Nations Forces in Egypt (Figure 2) and the Congo (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 1: *Lieut. Col. R.H. Webb, of the 12th Field Regiment, RCA, is seen here (kneeling), briefing his officers and men (reclining) in the field, probably September 1944, France. (Webb Family Photo Album, with permission).*

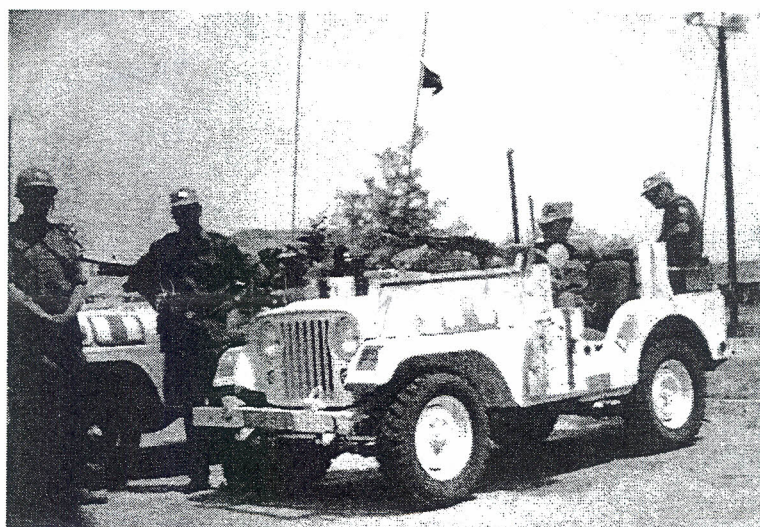


Figure 2: *On duty with the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in Egypt, sometime between late 1956 and 1960, likely early on. Lieut. Col. Webb, wearing UN headgear, is seen standing at the front wheel of the jeep, stopped in the desert, along the Egyptian-Israeli border. (Webb Family Photo Album, with permission).*



Figure 3: Newspaper clipping, Lieut. Col. Webb, at left, with Major A.P. Cote of the UN Advance Party, which prepared for the arrival of the main body of UN Peacekeepers to the Congo. (Webb Family newspaper clipping, Toronto Telegram, 27 August 1960).

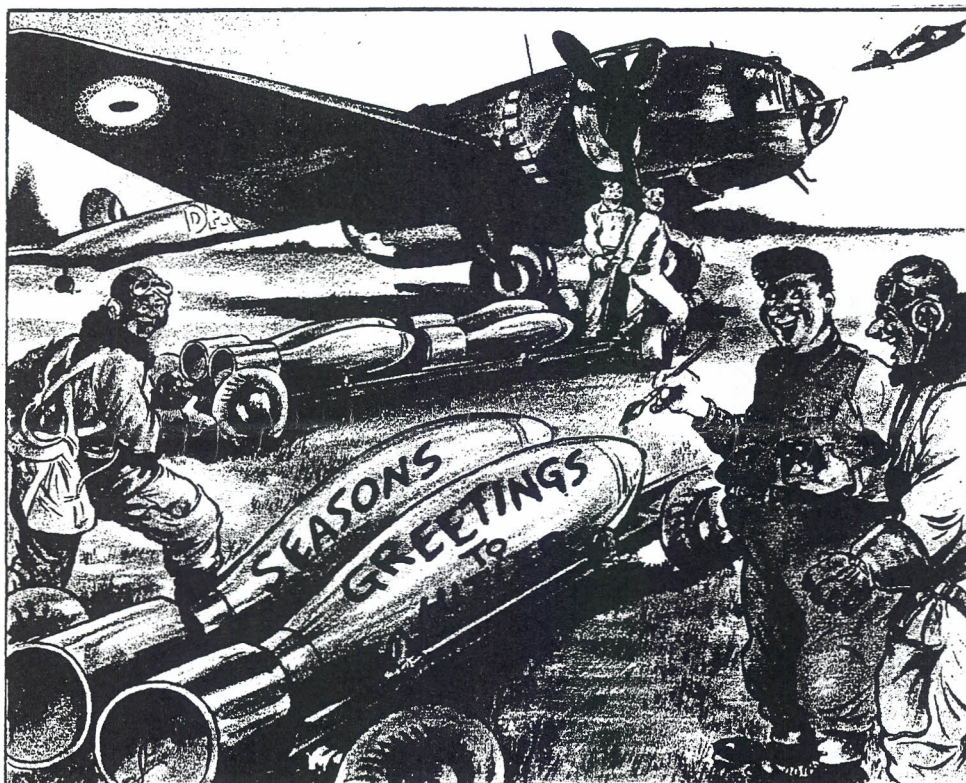


Figure 4: Lieut. Col. Webb, in the foreground, is seated in an RCAF Transport Squadron Northstar aircraft, en route home from Leopoldville's Njili Airport in the Congo, to the RCAF base at Trenton, Ontario, in August 1960. Canada's task with the UN Congo operation was to set up and manage the UN communications network there and provide regular, scheduled logistical air flights between Dorval Airport) and the UN Congo Headquarters at Leopoldville via Pisa, Italy. The Canadian UN mission in the Congo returned home in 1964.

[Thanks are due to the above for adding another welcome tome in the area of Canadian military postal history! Ed.]

Webb had collected stamps since he was nine, and in adult life started with stamps again, and then squared circle cancels. In the 1950s, he advanced into military mails (he had saved his military mails from WW II and UN Operations). He was Treasurer of the Ottawa Philatelic Society and exhibited his military postmarks at numerous shows.

Roland Webb passed away in White Rock, B.C. in December 1970 at the age of 60, working at his typewriter on his book. The 1970 typescript was in progress, and incomplete (as noted above). The 521-page book will soon be published—at last.

"BOMBS TO ADOLPH" SEASONS' GREETINGS! --By Robert Henderson

Bombs to Adolph!
But to You
Nothing but Good Wishes

Dear Study Group Members: It's that time of year again and Henk and I extend to all a very Merry Christmas, Seasons' Greetings, and the very best for 2015! A warm welcome is extended to **GEORGE VANDERBURGH** who recently joined our group. Our bank balance sits at \$801.18 prior to this issue's printing/mailing. We still will try to produce five newsletters per year so our next dues' request will come in January 2015. Thanks to Jon Johnson who chaired our Study Group meeting at BALPEX and his presentation went well. Members are encouraged to send along items of interest. Until 2015, best wishes!

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 (10/10)

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 (5/5)
