



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2017

NEWSLETTER NO. 226
Page 1489

NO.2 CANADIAN HOSPITAL SHIP LETITIA AND P.O.W. EXCHANGE--By
Jon Johnson



Lient. Col. A. L. CORNISH, O.C. Hospital Unit
No. 2 CANADIAN HOSPITAL SHIP--"LETITIA."

Capt. G. K. BAILLIE

HALIFAX - NEW YORK - GIBRALTAR -
MARSEILLES

Saturday, 20th January, 1945

DONALDSON ATLANTIC LINE
DONALDSON SOUTH AMERICAN LINE
FAST PASSENGER and FREIGHT SERVICES
TO CANADA, U.S. and S. AMERICA

FIG.1. A souvenir card
produced on Letitia to
recognize her arrival
at Marseilles on Janu-
ary 20, 1945 to exchange
German P.O.W.'s

[Cont'd.]

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No.2 Canadian Hospital Ship Letitia went into service as a Canadian hospital ship in November 1944. She had a merchant marine crew of 210, medical staff of 198 Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, and capacity for 758 invalids. On her first voyage 745 invalids were delivered to Halifax on December 19, 1944.

On Janu . . . 3, 1945 Letitia delivered her second group of invalids to Halifax. She then sailed to New York where she picked up 547 German prisoners of war from U.S. forces at New York. This was the beginning of the sixth P.O.W. exchange between Britain and Germany and was primarily limited to sick and wounded P.O.W.'s. Letitia carried the German P.O.W.'s to Gibraltar. Upon confirmation of the exchange arrangements, she then delivered the German P.O.W.'s to Marseilles, France.

EARLY IN THE MORNING

by

H/Capt. W. R. NORTHRIDGE

Early in the morning when the dew is sparkling clear,
And the songbirds sing so sweetly with their voices loud
with cheer,
It is then that in my garden, I come face to face with Him,
And I know that He has brought me strength that cannot
fail to win.

So throughout the day so weary with its burdens and its care,
I send up to God my Father a beseeching, simple prayer :
"Help me meet the tasks before me! Help me all this day to see
Just what would You have me do, Lord, just what would
You have me be."

Then when sunset spreads her glory on a day that's been
well spent,
And I sit upon my porch at evening with the blessings He
has sent,
I'll remember my successes came because I met Him first,
In the early dewy morning when my heart for Him did thirst.

FIG.2. The reverse of FIG.1. A poem by H/Capt.
W.R. Northridge (Roman Catholic)

Letitia disembarked the German P.O.W.'s to trains, under Red Cross supervision, which took them via Geneva to the formal exchange at Kreuzlingen, Switzerland. The train then carried 718 allied P.O.W.'s

[Cont'd.]

to Letitia which she carried to England.

With the allied P.O.W.'s safely back in England, Letitia resumed her primary job of returning military invalids to Canada. HMCHS Letitia was the only one of Canada's eight hospital ships, in either the First or Second World War, involved in a P.O.W. exchange.



FIG.3. Airletter February 15, 1945 from H/Capt. Northridge, at sea, to his niece in Ireland while returning from Letitia's third visit to Halifax. The airletter is self-censored, then a "CENSORED" cachet was added. Postage was required as Ireland was a neutral country. Stamps were cancelled by a Dublin, Ireland censor cachet. The airletter was obtained twenty years ago and the souvenir card last month!

FROM:
(Sender's full name and address)
M. Captain W. NORTHIDGE.
No 2, Canadian Hosp Shi
LETITIA, E.T.U.
Halifax, N.S.

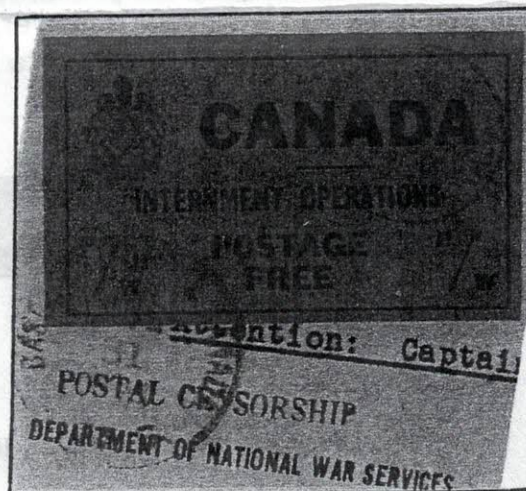
References:

Feasby, W.R. Official History of the Canadian Medical Services, 1939-1945. Vol.I (1956), p. 71.

Miller, D. Mercy Ships (2008), pp. 20-21.

INTERMENT OPERATIONS FRANKING LABEL, 1944--By A.D. Hanes

[Dave sent along this 1944 tied Internment Operations label (First Issue/Second Printing, ca. February 1941). The large rubber "BASE POST OFFICE CANADA/AUG/31/1944/I.M.S." (Sayles #F52/B&T #M9-136) Internment Mail Section device appears to be in carmine. A metal 1944 BASE A.P.O./CANADA CDS in black also appears upon the label.Ed.]



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REMEMBERING CANADA'S HONG KONG VETS

The labels appearing on this mailing are courtesy of member C. Ron McGuire, OTB, FRPSC who utilizes them to help "dress up" his mailings and commemorate the sacrifices of Canada's Hong Kong veterans. Ron has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans of Canada Association and the Association's "Memorial Wall". For these efforts he was made an honorary member in 2003 and the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2012. War Amps does amazing work and customized labels may be obtained by calling 1-800-250-3030 or viewing waramps.ca [Ed.]

Information Needed for Chapter 2: MILITIA CAMP and OTHER MILITIA POST OFFICES in CANADA 1909 – 1941

By Wayne Schnarr

I have completed a draft of Chapter 2 for Vol. 1 of the BNAPS Canadian Military Mail Markings catalogue series. In addition to reading books and countless hours searching the internet for information in post office and militia documents, I have just finished reviewing the 218 CMMSG newsletters on the BNAPS site. There is a tremendous amount of information but there are some gaps and anomalies.

- The open and close dates for the camps and their field post offices were often different; an occasional marking is seen dated after the post office has closed.
- Post office opening and closing dates from post office publications are not online for all years.
- For some camps, there are two post office open-periods during a year and a post office open-period may cover two years (such as Toronto Sub X).
- ERD and LRD are available for a few markings.
- I would like to be able to show all years for which any marking for a camp has been observed (evidence of post office activity). Some cover illustrations, along with the ERD and LRD dates, provide partial lists (see the table below - the year is shaded if a marking has been noted).

I have included the Sewell Camp section from this Chapter as an example of the format I have developed. For some camps, the number of reported cancels is low and the information is limited. However, I would be grateful for any information which will help make this catalog as complete and useful for collectors as possible. My email is gwschnarr@rogers.com.

SEWELL CAMP

Army Summer Camp

(first training session 1910; renamed Camp Hughes 1915-09)

NUMBER: M241

PROOFED: 1911-06-03

SIZE: 28 mm

RF: C

NOTE: ERD 1911-06-14; LRD 1915-10-29

B & T NUMBER: M3-48



[Cont'd.]

NUMBER: M242

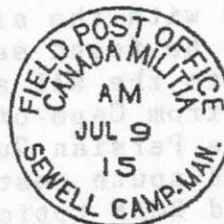
PROOFED: 1915-07-09

SIZE: 28 mm

RF: E

NOTE: Two examples are known on registered letters dated 1915-08.

B & T NUMBER: M3-49



NUMBER: M245

PROOFED: 1915-07

SIZE: 22 x 19 mm (repeat)

RF: E

NOTE:

B & T NUMBER: M3-51



Additional Notes and References

Year	Open	Close	Year	Open	Close	Year	Open	Close
1911	14-Jun	26-Jun	1912			1913	12-Jun	
1914			1915	15-Apr	29-Oct	1916		30-Jun

- The first camp ran from 21 June to 2 July, 1910. Militia Order #436 of 27 September, 1915 changed the name of the camp to Camp Hughes [information from C.D. Sayles, *Sewell Camp / Camp Hughes*: BNA TOPICS, Vol. 54, No. 2, 1997, p. 47 – 50). Post office records show that the Sewell Camp post office was open until 30 June, 1916 (probably just slow record keeping) and that the Camp Hughes one was open from 15 April to 3 November 1916.
- Sewell Camp militia markings up to 1941 in B & T which are either in Sayles Vol. 2 or not included in either Vol. 1 or Vol. 2 are listed in this table.

B & T Cat. No.	Sayles Vol. 2	Comment
M3-50	---	Proof book strike only; wax seal
M3-52	---	Proof book strike only; bank marking

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR: PART I, RCAF TRANS-OCEAN FLIGHTS--By Robert Toombs

The story of the Battle of the Atlantic is relatively well known in the Second World War. However the corresponding story of the Battle of the Indian Ocean (and other seas) is less so. The Battle of the Indian Ocean is chosen with focus on Canadian-related mails. In this regard, subject headings may be considered under general headings of the air force, the navy, the army, and special groups such as the Canadian Intelligence Corps and various P.O.W. related activities.

[Cont'd.]

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In the first instance, selected examples of mails to or from RCAF Canadians serving with the air forces in the Indian Ocean are presented. They may be found serving with the RCAF and, more likely, as RCAF attached to the RAF across the broad arc of the Indian Ocean. This arc extends from Cape of Good Hope, up the east coast of Africa to Aden and to the Persian Gulf, across India, Burma, Ceylon (SEAC HQ), to Malaya and south east to Perth in Western Australia. Some suggested selected RCAF topics are:

1. RCAF Trans-Ocean Flights

- RAF No. 209 Squadron (Kipevu, Tanganyika), No. 265 Squadron (Madagascar), RCAF No. 413 Squadron (Koggala, Ceylon)--flying boats--anti-submarine patrols, convoy escort.
- RAF No. 200 Squadron Liberator bombers--serving out of India and Burma--anti-submarine patrols, but mostly supplying and delivering guerilla parties into Japanese occupied Burma and Malaya.

2. RCAF Overland Supply Flights

- RAF No. 216 Squadron (Cairo--the fore-runner to RAF Transport Command, 216 Group, Cairo to Karachi), communications and supplies to the Persian Gulf Areas of Iraq and Iran.
- RCAF No. 435, 436 Squadrons in South East Asia--RAF Transport Command, DC-3 transport aircraft--jungle battle zone supply drops.
- RAF Transport Command (RAFTC), No. 45 Group, controlled from Dorval (Montreal)--the delivery of aircraft from factories in the USA and Canada flown to greater India.

3. RCAF Land-Based Radar Stations--India, Ceylon

- RCAF radar specialists, attached to the RAF radar group, at land-based stations throughout India and Ceylon. RCAF Canadians, numbering 6,000+ servicemen, constituted more than half of RAF radar group around the world.

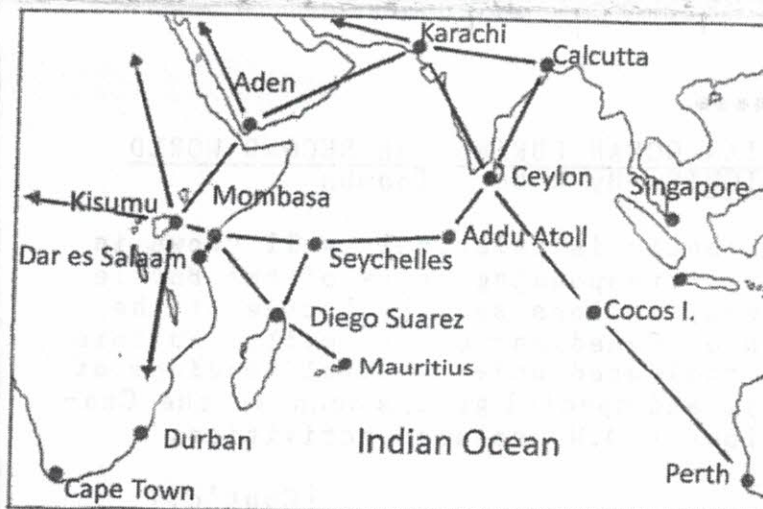


FIG.1. Indian Ocean Basin during the Second World War. Communication Flights--Land and Ocean-based. Dates of use vary.

[Cont'd.]

Captioned examples of selected military mail are initiated in this issue. Other examples may follow in the future as per interest. Readers are encouraged to dialogue on this Canadian context/Indian Ocean theme as selected examples are shown over time with queries, comments, and their own covers. There is so much that is unknown.

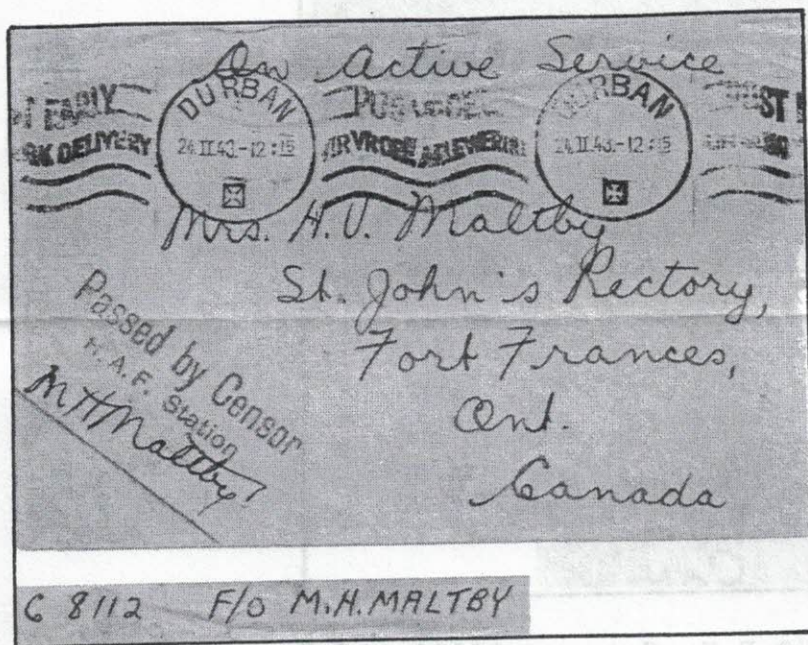


FIG.2.A post-free O.A.S. cover to Canada, postmarked February 24, 1943 at Durban, South Africa. Censor is Colley & Garrard Type R38. The sender is Canadian RCAF radar specialist F/O M.H. Maltby, C8112, seconded to RAF No. 265 Squadron, East Africa. This Catalina flying boat squadron was engaged in convoy escort and anti-submarine activities on the East African coast. At Durban Harbour, the flying boat control tower built during the war still stands to this day at the end of a row of waterfront restaurants (private communication with Joh Groenewald).

FIG.3. This Air Mail Letter Card (AMLC) to Canada is franked with 25 cents of a shilling (=3d.) and postmarked 7 XII 43 by E.A./A.P.O. 53 (CDS) at Diego Suarez, Madagascar. The accompanying censor mark is Colley & Garrard Type R11 (369), also at Diego Suarez.

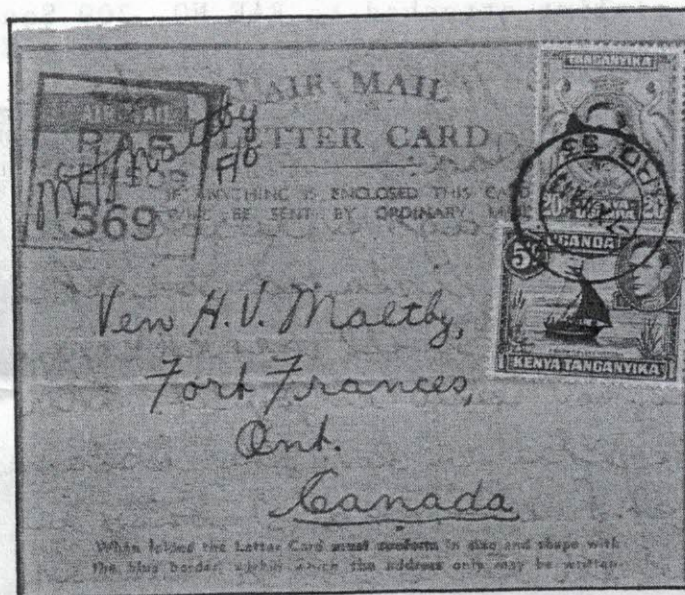


FIG.4 [which follows.Ed.]. Mail from Canada to F/O Maltby, with 265 Squadron, in East Africa. The letter bears an Egyptian censor mark. Posted in Canada on November 2, 1943 it likely transited the Mediterranean, newly opened, avoiding the longer via Durban route in October 1943.

[Cont'd.]

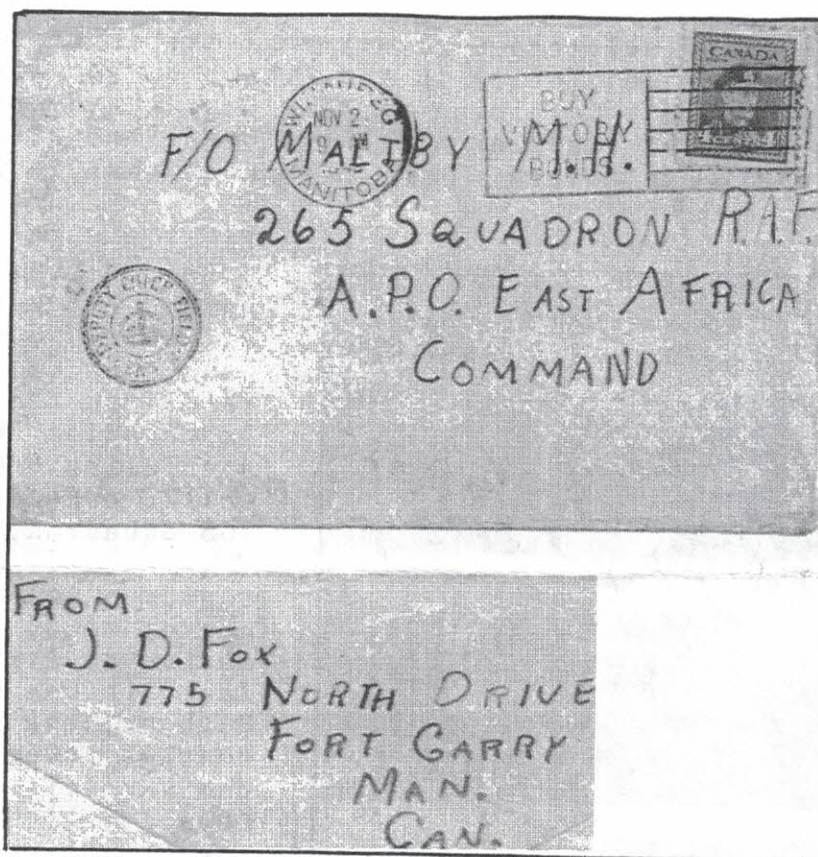
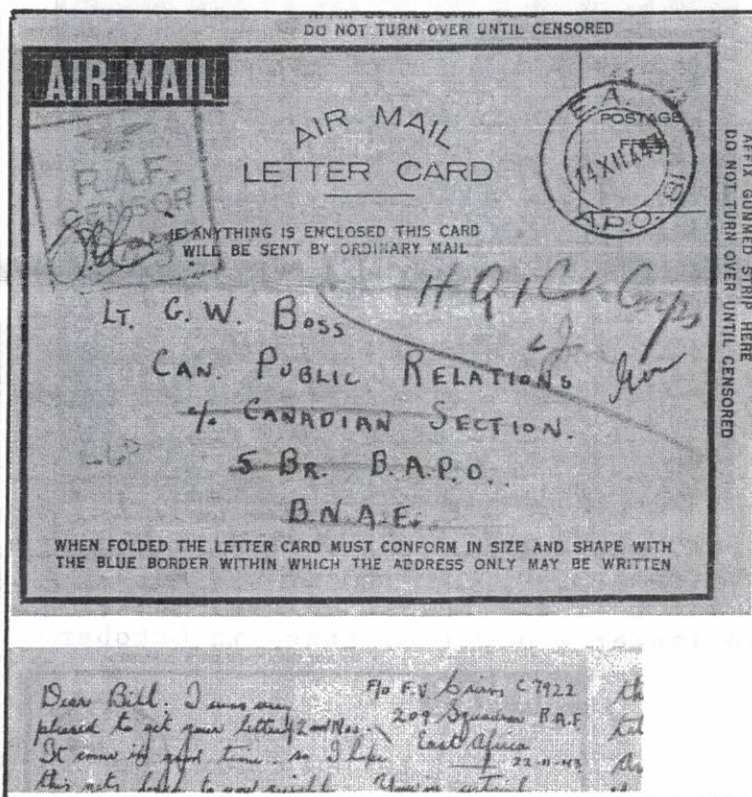


FIG.5. AMLC to Canada from F/O F.V. Cairns, C7922, RCAF radar specialist attached to RAF NO. 209 Squadron operating Catalina flying boats on anti-submarine patrol in East African waters (faint Colley & Garrard censor Type R11/979).



Postal marking is E.A./A.P.O. 81 (Port Reitz, Mombasa) dated 14 XII 43. It is postage free.

The AMLC is addressed to Lt. G.W. (Bill) Boss in Italy, with the 1st Canadian Corps, where he was a Public Relations Officer in charge of escorting journalists to the front lines. Subsequently Capt. Boss, as a war correspondent, was attached to the Canadian Press where he reported from the front lines on the liberation of the Netherlands. He later reported from the front lines in the Korean War

[...to be continued next issue. Ed.]

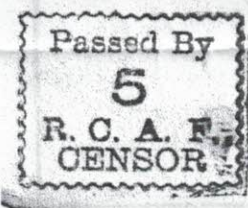



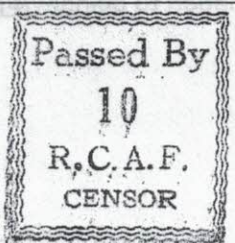
The Boxed Numbered RCAF WWII Censor Marks, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1942 – 1945 by Paul Binney

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Like many members of this study group, I have in my collection the common numbered RCAF censor markings used in Newfoundland and Labrador during the Second World War. It was not until I obtained a less common Censor 19 marking that I decided that these censor marks might benefit from a closer look, similar to my investigations of the Canadian Army Circular Censor marks used in Newfoundland and Labrador¹.

The markings in question are shown in table 1 with an initial classification. Measurements may vary ($\pm 1.5\text{mm}$ for box, $\pm 0.5\text{mm}$ for text) due to the manufacturing process (rubber casting). Obvious differences are the one, two, or three boxes surrounding the text, but variations in 2-box markings are found in the text font and size.

Table 1: Classification of the Boxed RCAF Censor Markings.

Type	Marking	Description	Censor Numbers
RCAfb1		Single wavy line box 31mm x 25mm ($\approx 1 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 1''$) Enclosed text Passed By / # / R.C.A.F. Censor in serif font (3.5mm height) with censor # in sans-serif font (5.4mm height)	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
RCAfb2i		Double wavy line box 30 x 30mm ($\approx 1 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 1 \frac{1}{4}''$) Enclosed text Passed By / # / R.C.A.F. Censor in serif font (3.3mm height) with censor # in bold sans-serif font (6.4mm height)	7, 8
RCAfb2ii		Double wavy line box 30 x 30mm ($\approx 1 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 1 \frac{1}{4}''$) Enclosed text Passed By / # / R.C.A.F. Censor in serif font (3.0mm height) with censor # in serif font (4.9mm height)	10, 12
RCAfb2iii		Double wavy line box 30 x 30mm ($\approx 1 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 1 \frac{1}{4}''$) Enclosed text Passed By / # / R.C.A.F. Censor in serif font (3.5mm height) with censor # in serif font (also 3.5mm height)	18, 19
RCAfb3		Triple wavy line box 30 x 30mm ($\approx 1 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 1 \frac{1}{4}''$) Mixed text. Passed By in serif font (3.6mm height), R.C.A.F. in serif font (2.9mm height) and Censor in serif font (2.5mm height). with censor # in serif font (4.6mm height)	10

[Cont'd.]

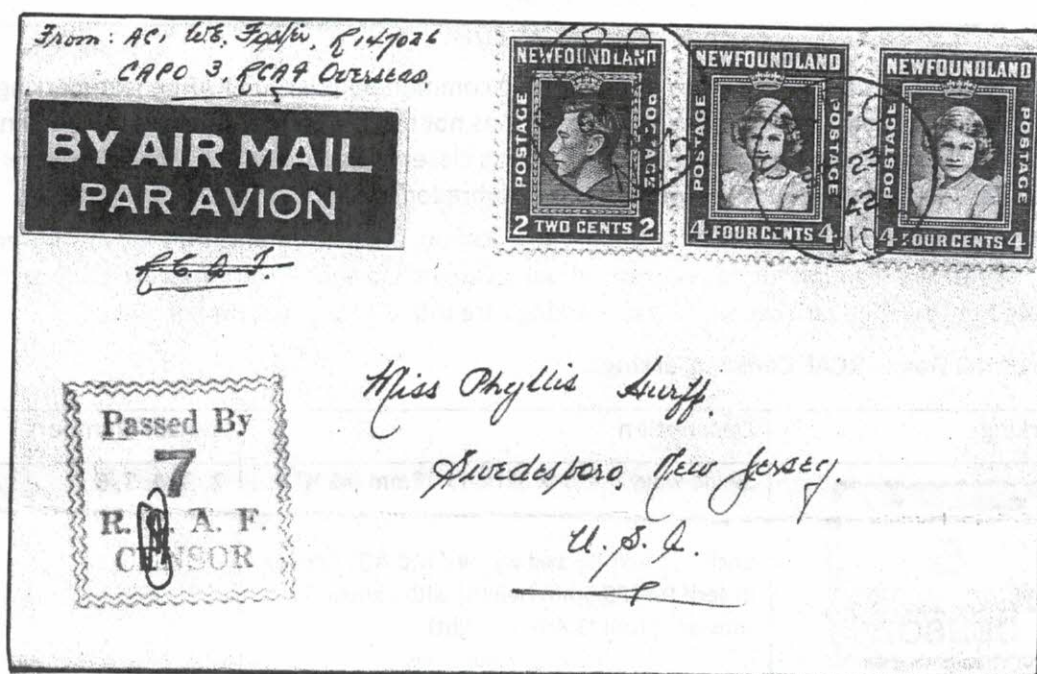


Figure 1: Cover from CAPO 3 (Botwood) to New Jersey. Censored by RCAF Censor 7 (type RCAFb2ii). Mailed on Sept 23, 1942.

RCAF Censor Marks 2 to 8 and 10 are fairly common and were mainly used at Headquarters in St John's and active airbases. They are usually found with associated CAPO postal markings that allow one to locate their origins (St. John's, Gander, Botwood or Torbay). A typical cover is shown in Figure 1. Within this series I have not seen examples of Censor # 1 or #9ⁱⁱ. Censor marks 11 to 19 are much less common, and in most cases unknown to the author. These marks apparently were issued to the many radar stations (Radio Units) located in Newfoundland and Labrador during WWII. The mail from these bases was sometimes handled through civil offices (Censor 12 markings on mail handled through Port aux Basques), but in other cases mail was handled through a nearby military base (eg. Censor 18 and 19 markings were on mail handled through CAPO 5, Torbay).

I would like to caution that many of the above statements are generalizations and suppositions based upon a limited data set (Table 2). I am appealing to members of the Military Mail Study Group for information that I can compile and publish to provide a more complete understanding of the distribution and use of these censor marks. Many questions remain to be answered. How many censor numbers were used by the RCAF? Where were they used, especially the lower # markings like 1 and 9? When were the 2 box markings placed in use if there are at least three styles, suggesting three periods of manufacture? Why was the 3 box marking issued at Goose Bay (CAPO 10) when the war was drawing to an end? Perhaps some of these questions do not have answers, but a concerted effort to compile all available information could advance the understanding of the manufacture and use of these censor marks.

I am soliciting Information, including type of marking, source of mail (CAPO #), date, and unit (if a radio unit or other designation). If it is more convenient, scans can also be sent. Please send all information to pbinney@persona.ca or if you use normal postal service, to

Paul Binney
1 Courtney Hill
Sudbury, Ontario
P3E 5W6

Table 2: Usage data for the boxed RCAF Censor marks in Newfoundland and Labrador, WWII. Type refers to classification in this article, EKD – earliest known date, LKD – latest known date, # is number of covers recorded

type	number	unit	EKD	LKD	CAPO/PO	#
Rules: bold, shaded, with surround for 3 or more covers from unit normal text for 1-2 covers from unit						
	1	unknown				-
RCAFB1	2	RCAF No. 1 Group	Jun/42	Jun/43	CAPO 1	5
	2	RCAF	Jan/43	Apr/45	CAPO 1	24
- others	2	RCAF Special #4	Jan/45		CAPO 1	1
RCAFB1	3	RCAF No. 1 Group	Apr/42	Nov/42	CAPO 1	2
	3	No. 37 Radio Unit, Brig Harbour	Nov/44		CAPO 1	1
	3	No. 37 Radio Unit, Brig Harbour	July/45		CAPO 10	1
RCAFB1	4	RCAF	Jul/42		CAPO 3	2
	4	RCAF No. 1 Group	Aug/42		CAPO 3	1
	4	RCAF No. 1 Group	Sep/42		CAPO 1	2
RCAFB1	5	RCAF	Apr/42	Sep/42	CAPO 1	4
	5	RCAF	Sep/42	May/45	CAPO 5	50
	5	RCAF, #14 Detachment	Apr/44		CAPO 5	1
RCAFB1	6	RCAF	Jun/42	Jun/44	CAPO 5	7
	6	RCAF, #14 Detachment, or #14 Radio Unit	Sep/44	May/45	CAPO 5	2
RCAFB2i	7	RCAF	Feb/42	May/44	CAPO 3	20
RCAFB2i	8	RCAF	Jan/43	Jun/44	CAPO 3	6
	9	unknown				-
RCAFB2ii	10	RCAF	Oct/43	Apr/45	CAPO 10	23
RCAFB3	10	RCAF	Apr/45	Nov/45	CAPO 10	5
	11	unknown				-
RCAFB2ii	12	HBCMU / #8 CMU detachment / #8 Radio Unit	May/43	Feb/45	Port aux Basques	3
	13	unknown				-
	14	unknown				-
	15	unknown				-
	16	unknown				-
	17	unknown				-
RCAFB2iii	18	Special #4, c/o CAPO 5	Apr/45		CAPO 5	1
RCAFB2iii	19	Allan's Island c/o CAPO 5	Apr/45		CAPO 5	1

ⁱ Paul Binney, Circular Army censor markings used by the Canadian Army in Newfoundland, WWII in BNA Topics, Volume 71, Number 2, April-June 2014, pp10-21

ⁱⁱ Also not noted in The RCAF in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1941-1946, Canadian Military Mail Study Group #59, Sept, 1984

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Dear Study Group Members: HAPPY NEW YEAR! Mike and I extend our very best wishes for the coming year. My thanks are extended to the various members who kindly sent in material to keep our newsletter functioning. You will note that Bob Toombs' article will be in two parts and I appreciate his willingness to allow this. I have tried to avoid "serializing" in the past but space here doesn't fully accommodate longer articles (authors, however, willing to have longer articles split over two or three issues are encouraged to send them along). Bob, Wayne Schnarr, and Paul Binney are all seeking input from members and they are encouraged to contact them to further their projects. Ron McGuire sent in some information he was able to provide for my previous "Christmas Day 1915 Greetings from France" (NL#225, pp. 1477-1478). Ron found a member of the 29th Infantry Battalion with the same initials noted on the card: #75611, Pte. Douglas Ramsey Honeyman. Thanks Ron! Our sincere condolences are extended to member John Cheramy on the passing of his wife Glenda. Correction: The recipients of the E.R. "Ritch" Toop Memorial Award received the "2015" annual award and not the "2016" as found on p. 1481, NL#225. The 2016 award will be presented at this year's BNAPEX in Calgary (plan now for September 1-3 at the downtown Hyatt Hotel). Sparks Auctions' Sale #23 (Jan.31-Feb.2) contained a wonderful collection related to Vimy Ridge and the Vimy Memorial in France. Many of the lots' estimates were greatly exceeded! Until next time, good collecting!

SMALL ADS

Looking for something? Have something for sale? Why not try our small ads? Buy/Sell/Trade. Still only \$1 per issue (Canadian stamps @ face ok). Copy and payment to the Editor please.

FOR SALE: Colin Pomfret's military mail collection. Single items or groupings. Please contact R.F. Narbonne, OTB, FRPSC, Greenwood Stamp Company, 136 Morphy St., Carleton Place, ON K7C 2B4; 1-613-257-5453; 1-800-247-5619 (Canada only) (2/2)

WANTED: 1920-1950 D.N.D. covers with postage stamps and "Director of Records" return address cachet. Prefer airmail, special delivery, and foreign usage for an exhibit. Contact Jon Johnson: jcjperfin@hotmail.com (2/5)

WANTED: Japanese Canadian Nisei volunteers and non-Japanese Canadians in WWII Intelligence Service Far East. Especially seeking Japanese Language School (S-20) drafts, interpreters, war crimes units etc. in South East Asia Command; Canadians associated with Nuremberg War Crimes Trials; Canadian POW's in Buchenwald/Colditz (Oflag IVC) and Stalag Luft III escapers; Canadians in Gibraltar/Malta; WWI Newfoundland. Contact the Editor at blueputtees@hotmail.com (3/5)

WANTED: Sewell Camp and Camp Hughes postal history. Roller cancellations, special delivery, and money order receipts sought. Anything considered. Darcy Hickson, R.R. #2, Box 24, Brandon, MB R7A 5Y2; (204) 724-2028; Darcy@hickson.ca (6/10)

WANTED: 1) Mail to and from RCAF No.124 and RCAF No.170 Squadrons serving in Canada during WWII; 2) Mail to and from RAF No.231 Squadron, sometimes at Dorval, QC, but flew outside Canada too during WWII. Purchase or trade. Please contact Bob Toombs at a1a92784@telus.net (second character is number "one") (4/4)
