

Continued from page 1....

So, all of you out there please let me have an article, or an item, such as the one herein on Valcartier Camp. Please do not send just a photo-copy, but include a story line with it. In this way we may be able to hang in there until the next convention where surely a new editor will show up.

Please think about the above, and thank you to those of you who have contributed thus far, and also to those who have expressed appreciation for these humble efforts.

MILITARY AUCTION

We mentioned this previously in N.L.62. The time for action has come even though some of the details must still be worked out. Philip Wolf (636 Woodbine Boulevard, SW, Calgary, Alberta, T2W 4W4) has volunteered to look after the sale with the help of Ed Harris. Please advise Philip what you would have to put in and its approximate value, but DO NOT send material to him at this time. Ideal would be a total of 100 items, each with a minimum estimated value of \$5. This would be a mail sale, or it could even be mail and public if held at BNAPEX 86 (with appropriate permission) during the seminar time.

Some suggested rules for the sale from Philip:

- 1) Members can place a reserve on a lot, but unsold lots would be subject to a charge each of \$1.
- 2) Minimum estimated value of lots to be \$5.
- 3) Commission to be 10% with profits to the Study Group.
- 4) Bidding increments to be one dollar i.e.\$1, \$2, \$5, \$11 etc.
- 5) Lots will be sold at one bid above second highest bid. Time will be of the essence in tie bids.
- 6) Bids to opened only on day of auction by committee assembled.
- 7) Auctions to be about 100 items with 10 items per member.
- 8) Donations for the Study Group auction gratefully accepted.
- 9) Successful buyers to pay postage and registration costs.

Please send all comments and suggestions to Philip Wolf. More in the next Newsletter in January.

RECEIVED FROM H.M.SHIPS

Our most reliable writer, Wilf Whitehouse, has come up with an update on his previous article in N.L. #28. Since many of you have joined since that time and will not have the original it was thought that a complete re-write would be best. Hope you find it useful.

BLACKOUTS OF WWII

Several people have commented on their desire to see this area of study brought up to date with a comprehensive article covering the whole operation in Canada. If you can contribute, please get in touch with Peter Eggett of 207 Lafferty Avenue, Windsor, Ontario, N9J 1K2 and get things rolling.

We are at the end of another year, and seeing a little fresh snow on top of the local mountains suggests that we should add the very best for the coming Holiday Season to all our readers.

W. Whitehouse

Reference is made to the article on this subject distributed with NL #28 in 1978. With the receipt of additional material which has provided new information together with some amendments which were considered necessary, it was felt best to re-write the whole article rather than cause confusion with amendments and changes.

It is widely believed that the arrival cancellation "RECEIVED FROM/H.M. SHIPS" indicates that the cover has passed through a Post Office at a British Port. Few realize that this marking was also used at the Halifax Post Office during WWII and is found on covers originating in ships of the Royal Canadian Navy.

When war broke out in September 1939, the Royal Navy found it necessary to despatch units of the West Indies fleet to Halifax to act as escorts for convoys bound for England. Because the chief threat to the merchant ships at this time was the surface raider (the "Pocket Battleships" Graf Spee and Deutschland were already in the Atlantic when war was declared) the Royal Navy was forced to use Cruisers and even Battleships on occasion as convoy escorts.

For security reasons, the Royal Navy was concerned about Halifax postmarks appearing on mail from the large numbers of R.N. and Merchant Navy personnel operating out of the port and no doubt suggested to Canadian authorities that this mail should be handled in the same manner as in England. Generally speaking, all naval mail received at a British port in 1939/40, was for security purposes routed through either London or Edinburgh with Liverpool suggested by some as the third sorting centre. Here the mail passed through an electric cancelling machine which applied the slogan "Received From/H.M. Ships", this cancel not only disguised the port of arrival, but ensured free passage for the letter to its destination. (Fig. 1)

In view of the above it is not surprising that a cancellation similar to that used in England made its appearance on naval mail passing through the Halifax Post Office very early in 1940. There is no doubt the origin of the design was British, but whether the marking was supplied by them or manufactured locally is not known. The Halifax arrival cancel was a rubber handstamp generally struck in violet and is easily distinguishable from the machine type used in England. The marking was never intended for use on mail originating in ships of the Royal Canadian Navy, indeed the majority of R.C.N. mail of the period does not contain this marking, however when bags of mail from both navies arrived simultaneously at the Halifax Post Office from the Fleet Mail Office, the arrival marking was applied to all the mail including that from the R.C.N. It should be mentioned here that the majority of the Royal Navy mail addressed to England did not pass through the Halifax Post Office, but rather was placed aboard R.N. ships proceeding to England as convoy escorts.

There are 4 known varieties, overall measurements are as follows -

46 X 18mm - (Fig. 2)

48 X 19mm - (Fig. 3)

51 X 20mm - (Fig. 4)

55 X 20mm - (Fig. 5)

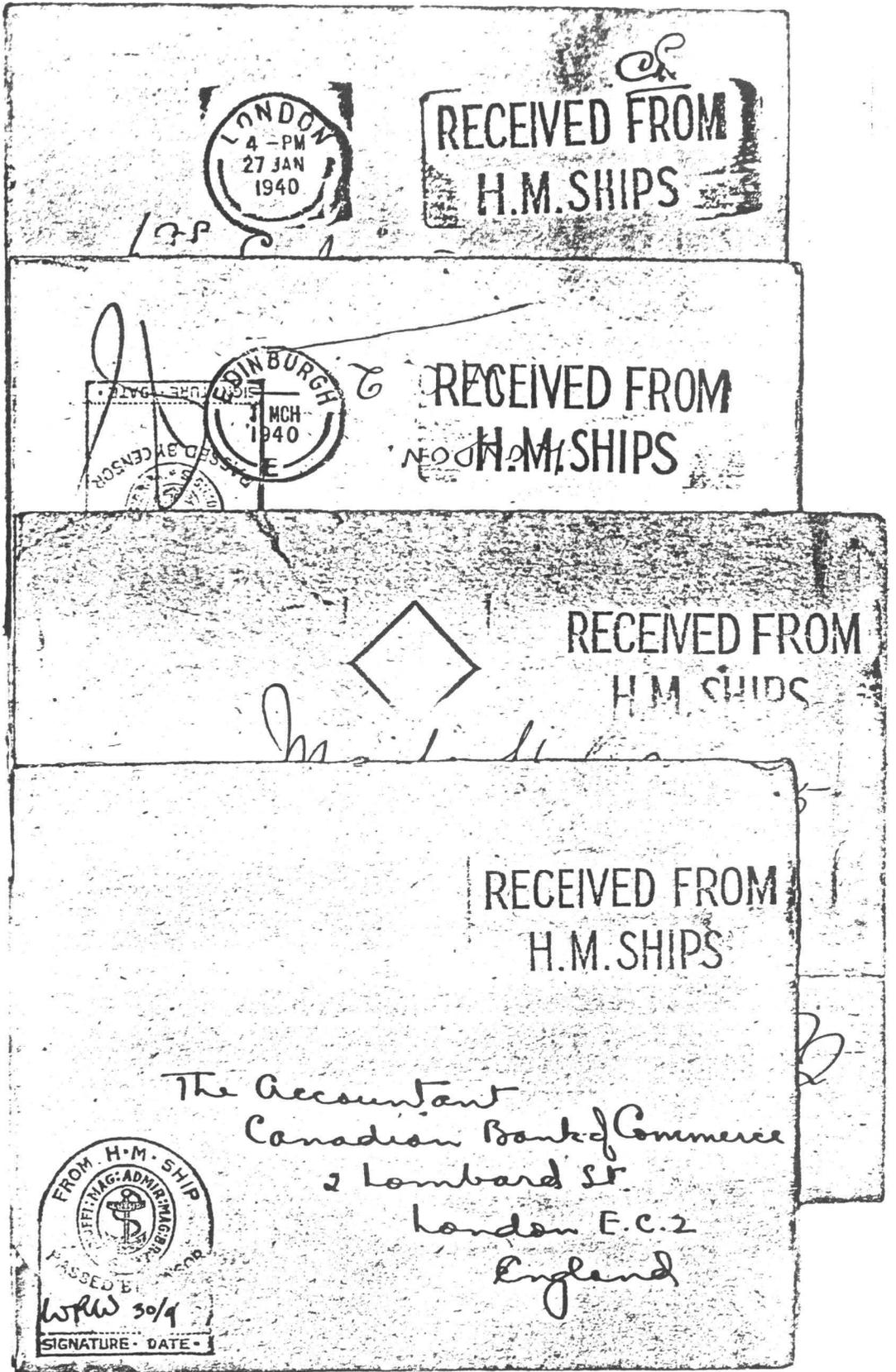


Fig. 1

Early in 1940, possibly April, the townmark was removed from the cancellation in favor of the "diamond" which was seldom used, generally speaking the slogan appeared alone.

PASSED BY *[Signature]*

CENSOR.

RECEIVED FROM
H. M. SHIPS

Fig. 2
46 X 18mm
March 1940

M. D. McCallum, Esq.
70 Dept. of Research and Development

RECEIVED FROM
H. M. SHIPS

Fig. 3
48 X 19mm
August 1940

From H.M.C. SHIP
PASSED
BY CENSOR
[Signature]
Date Aug 26/40

Mrs. + Mrs. T. J. Nagraw,
1514 Bellevue St.,
Seattle,
Wash.

RECEIVED FROM
H. M. SHIPS

Fig. 4
51 X 20mm
December 1940

Mrs. B. Thayer.
2112 Claremont Ave.
Montreal, Quebec.

apl. 21.

From H.M.C. SHIP
PASSED
BY CENSOR
[Signature]
Date 19/12/40

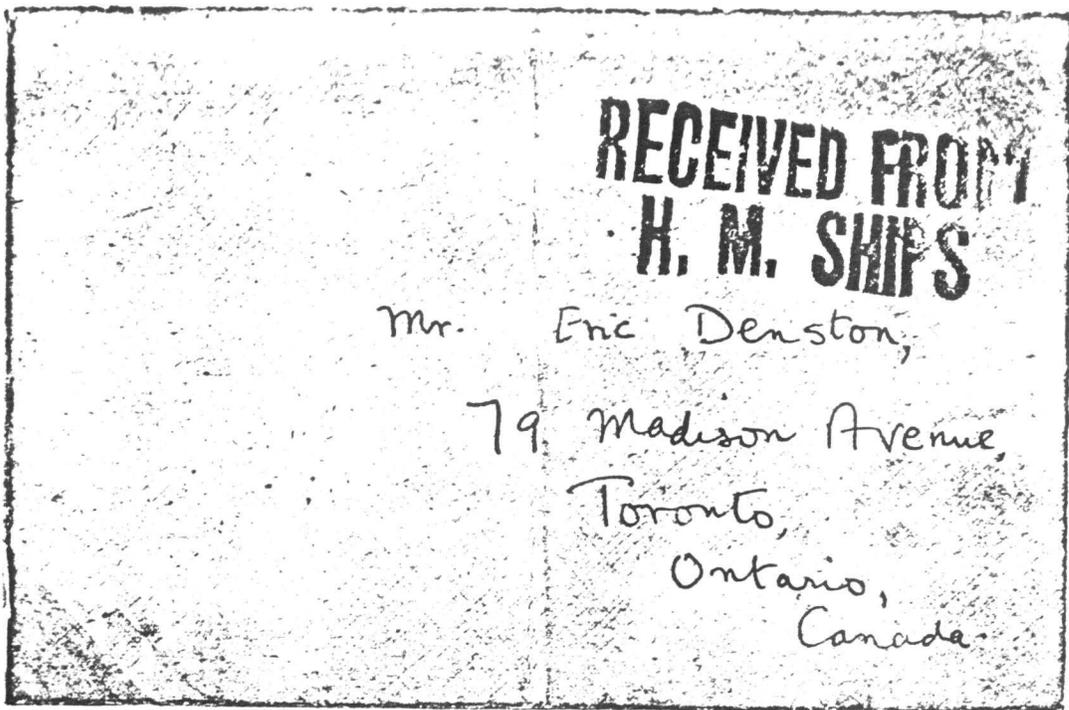


Fig. 5 - 55 X 20mm

- R.N. tombstone on reverse dated April 1940

Early in 1941, with the threat of the surface raider in the Atlantic coming to an end, in fact it ended in May with the sinking of the "Bismark", the Royal Navy withdrew their naval forces from Canada. With their departure the use of the British style arrival cancellation was no longer required.

As mentioned in the 1978 article, the arrival cancellation illustrated in Fig. 5, returned to use in 1943, but the reason was not known. However, covers on hand now indicate that -

- (a) - No Royal Navy mail was involved.
- (b) - All covers are used postage free, indicating use from ships or a Shore Establishment overseas.
- (c) - All covers are censored using one of the following straight line censor marks -
"EXAMINED BY DB/N 10", 45, 128 or 129

(b) and (c) are not compatible of course, the cover requires additional information to Canadian Post Offices in order that the letter continues its journey postage free.

The covers on hand lead me to believe that in January 1943, when the authorities were distributing the new style single and double line censor markings (see NL #21 item 104) they issued the single line type to "Avalon" in Newfoundland as was being done to all shore establishments in Canada. There was no thought given apparently to the fact that the straight line "EXAMINED BY DB/N... would not provide the postage free privilege accorded to personnel serving in an overseas shore establishment.

The obvious solution to the "Avalon" problem was as we know the use of the double line censor marking -

FROM H.M.C. SHIP

EXAMINED BY DB/N 500 to 512 inclusive,

with the earliest use recorded as February 1943. So, for a short time before and after this date, whenever the single line censor markings from Newfoundland, or ship mail turned in uncensored to "Stadacona" from ships proceeding to sea unexpectedly, the Fleet Mail Office arranged with the Halifax Post Office for use of the marking "Received From/H.M. Ships" (Fig. 6)

Later, Fleet Mail Offices would apply the marking "FROM H.M. C. SHIP" to any such mail that arrived at their offices.

There remains a minor point to be reconciled, that of the dates of use of "Received From/H.M. Ships" in RED and in VIOLET ink during 1943. At the moment, the only dated covers on hand are March/April 1943 in violet and it appears that covers struck in violet are the more common.

Should any of the members be able to complete our knowledge of the 1943 useage by providing details and dates of use, the editor and the members would be very appreciative.

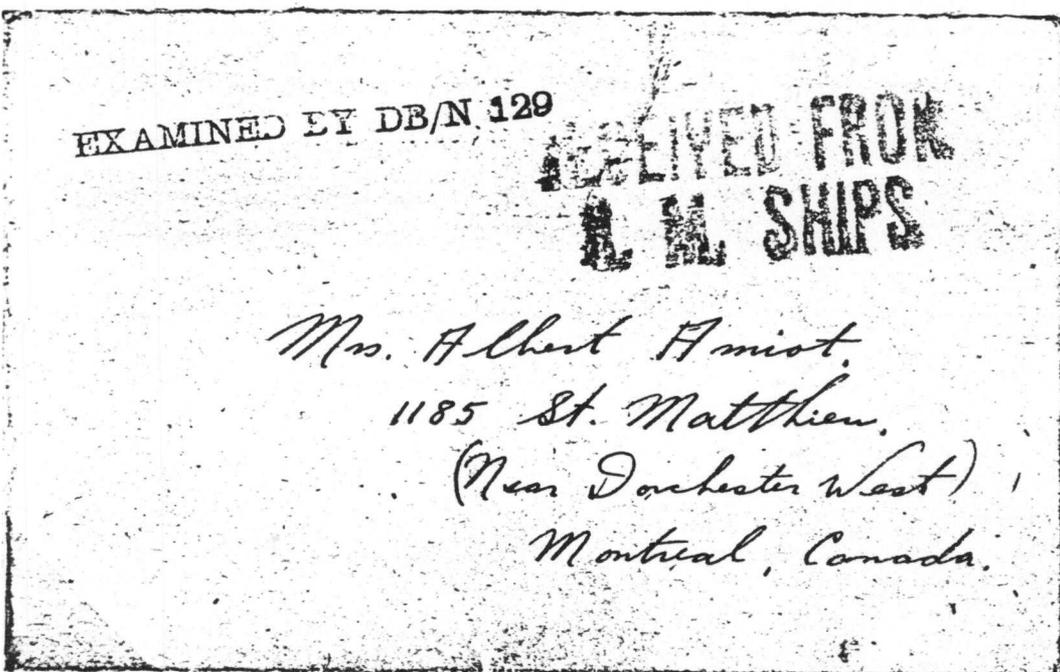


Fig. 6

DB/N 129 has not been identified as to location.

