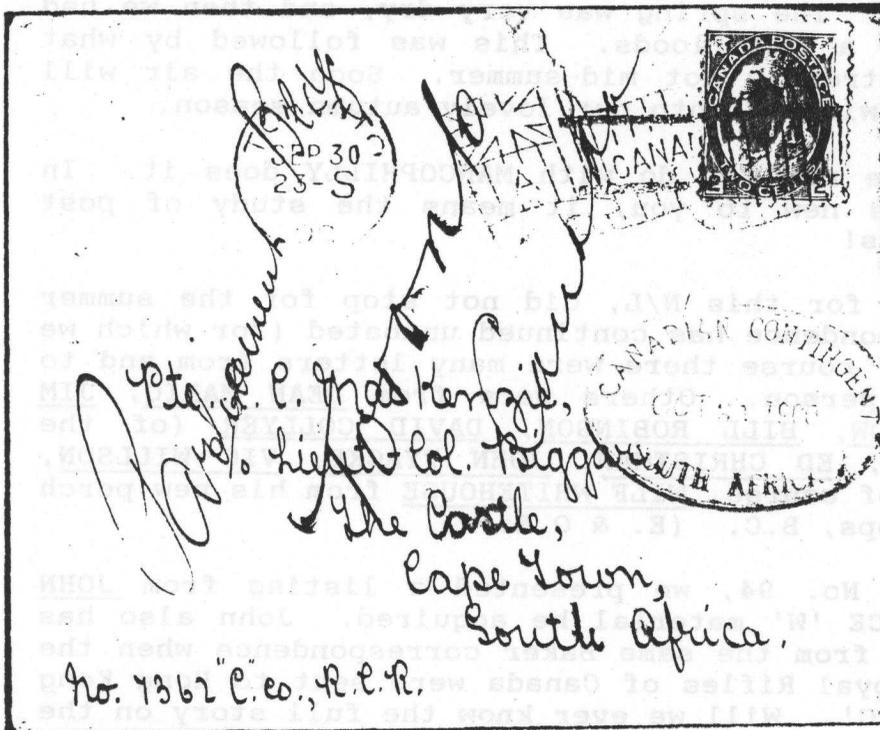




Canadian Military Mail Study Group

PAGE NO. 700

NEWSLETTER NO. 95
AUGUST 1990



A BOER WAR COVER by Ritch Toop.

The cover illustrated above represents an unusual usage of the CANADIAN CONTINGENT / SOUTH AFRICA oval marking during the South Africa Boer War. Postmarked at Toronto 30 September 1900 with a nice flag slogan, it was addressed to Pte L. C. MacKenzie, "C" Co. RCR, c/o LCol Biggar, Capetown, S.A.

"C" Co. RCR was recruited from the Toronto area. Pte MacKenzie left Quebec City 30 October 1899 for South Africa with the First Canadian Contingent aboard the S.S. Sardinian, arriving Capetown 29 November 1899.

MacKenzie was involved in various skirmishes between 9 December 1899 and 24 September 1900 when "C" Co. along with "D", "E", "F", "G" and "H" Co. left for Capetown where they boarded the S.S. Idaho 2 October 1900 for Canada, arriving Halifax 1 November 1900.

The cover is rather interesting because it was addressed to a Canadian member of the forces and also received the oval cachet dated 31 October 1900. While the oval cachet was customarily applied as a receiver or redirection marking on incoming mail to the troops. The manuscript "Parliament Bldgs / Toronto / Canada" likely would have been applied by the Postal Corps Detachment in South Africa because of MacKenzie's return to Canada. The reverse has a Toronto receiver of 26 November 1900.

AUGUST 1990

BACK TO THE 'GRIND'!

Although this is still August, summer is drawing to an end. In this area of the country it seems as though we have had our share of extremes. The spring was very dry, and then we had record rains, and a few floods. This was followed by what seemed like an extremely hot mid-summer. Soon the air will cool a bit and we will be into our lovely autumn season.

That does not have much to do with MARCOPHILLY does it. In case that word is new to you, it means the study of post marks, more or less!

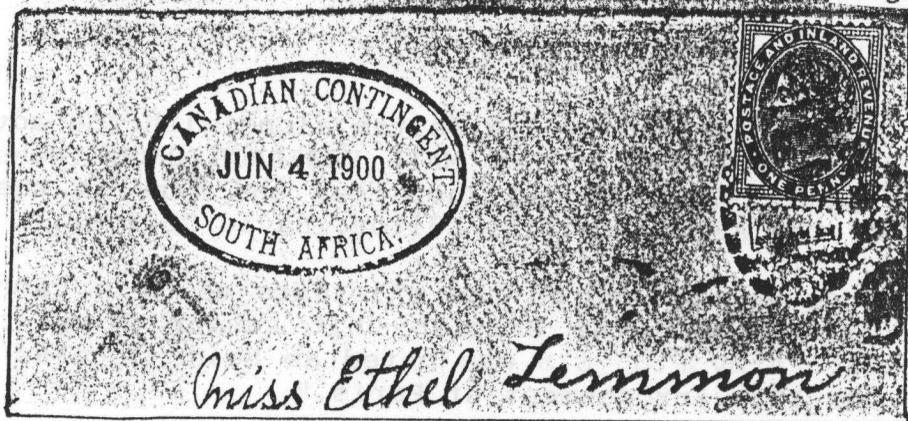
The editor's job, for this N/L, did not stop for the summer 'recess'. Correspondence has continued unabated (for which we are thankful). Of course there were many letters from and to RITCH, our Chair-person. Others were from DEAN MARIO, JIM FELTON, KEN BARLOW, BILL ROBINSON, DAVID COLLYER (of the Australian Group), ED CHRISTMAN, JOHN TYACKE, VIC WILLSON, MIKE STREET and, of course, WILF WHITEHOUSE from his new perch overlooking Kamloops, B.C. (E. & O.E.)

In the last N/L, No. 94, we presented a listing from JOHN TYACKE on the FORCE 'W' material he acquired. John also has some unique items from the same Baker correspondence when the brothers in the Royal Rifles of Canada were sent to Hong Kong as part of FORCE 'C'. Will we ever know the full story on the Canadian Military mails?

The BLACKOUT GROUP, as per letter from Ken Barlow, is working hard with no time off for the summer. Their member, BILL THORNE, had a nice page on the subject in the April 90 MAPLE LEAVES. A lot of input has come from KIM DODWELL who has recently acquired a nice collection of mainly East Coast blackouts. We are finally seeing the B/O subject coming together after just 50 years! There will be more on this in our 100th - watch for it!

Letter also from JOHN CAMPBELL, this Campbell from New Zealand, saying that he is doing research on Boer War patriotic and illustrated covers. He is interested in Canadian items as well as those from Australia, New Zealand, India and Great Britain, or any others. This was duly answered with all the info available here.

From JIM FELTON comes word of a book published in 1988 that might be of interest to some of our members. IN CLOUDS OF GLORY by James J. Hudson is the story of American airmen who flew with the British during the Great War. Most of these men got into the RFC/RAF via Canada and trained in Ontario (and Texas) with the Canadians. 272 pages, photos, maps and an extensive bibliography round out this book. It is priced at 26.95 (cloth) / 14.95 (paper) (US\$). One place you should be able to order this book, according to Jim, is WordsWorth Books and Co., 5823 Kavanaugh Blvd., Little Rock, Ark., 72207.



ANOTHER BOER WAR COVER

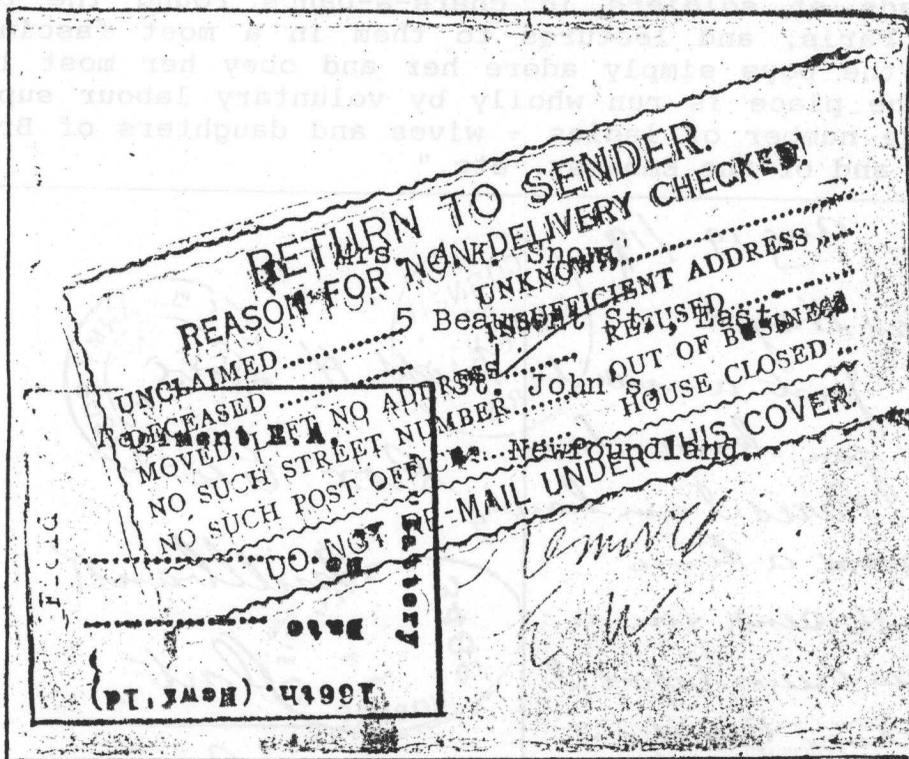
Information is wanted by CMMMSG member Dean Mario, P.O. Box 342, M.P.O., Saskatoon, Sask., S7K 3L3 on this Boer war item.

"The Contingent handstamp is in pink and has GB # 89 on the cover. I would like to know if any members have any covers in their collections which will give a bit more info as to the sender, or as to Miss Ethel Lemmon's address?"

166TH NEWFOUNDLAND FIELD REGIMENT (R.A.)

Another item from Dean Mario concerns this WW II cover for which further information is solicited.

"...this is a Newfoundland returned letter (MOVED, LEFT NO ADDRESS) and bears a magenta boxed strike of the 166th Newfoundland Field Regiment (R.A.) orderly room handstamp. It was addressed to Mrs. A. K. Snow, 5 Beaumont St. East, St. John's. Apparently SNOW was a common surname and at least nine so named persons enlisted in the Newfoundland forces during WW II. The cover may have been from a Francis Douglas Snow, Gnr., who died 12 April 1943." Can you add to this?



A CORNER OF BLIGHTY IN PARIS

This cover was provided by Jim Felton along with the advice to look in the AUSTRALIAN FORCES MAIL RESEARCH GROUP Newsletter of March/April 1990. We did just that and here is the story courtesy of the AFMRG, and its Editor, David Collyer.

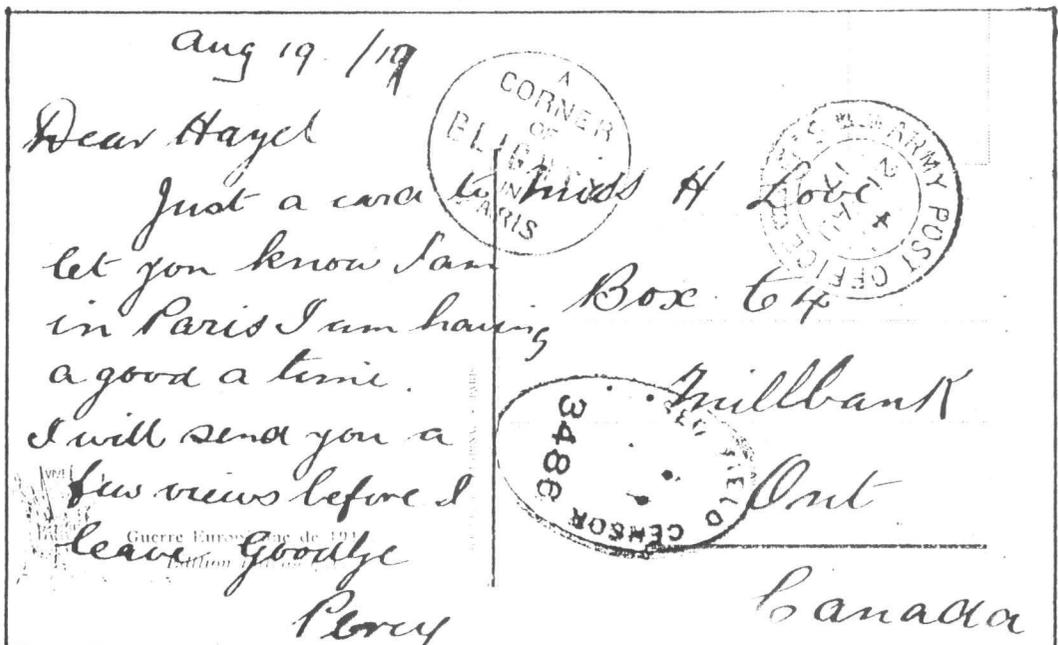
"Previous pieces have noted the existence of this cachet and its association with the British Unit censor stamp type 5, number 3486. Army P.O. S.5 was noted as being located at St. Cloud in the 16th Arrondissement of Paris."

The WAR LETTERS OF GENERAL MONASH, from F. M. Cutlack's work, gives the following on the A CORNER OF BLIGHTY marking from Paris in World War I.

Quote:

Menton,
18 March 1918.

This situation has been grappled with by a very fine woman, and an able body of ladies and gentlemen assisting her. Miss Butler is of mature years, and is, by profession, a public lecturer on historical and art subjects. She is also a fine organizer and business woman, and has a splendid personality which endears her to the troops, and a motherly way of handling them. She conceived the idea of opening in the Place de la Vendome in Paris a suite of rooms which she has called "A CORNER OF BLIGHTY IN FRANCE," organized on the basis of a free club for soldiers. Everything that a soldier can want when on leave (except actual sleeping accommodation, which is beyond the means of the committee) is here provided absolutely free of charge - meals, on a sumptuous scale, writing-rooms, games, music, concerts, and what is much the most important thing of all, good advice as to how best spend their time in Paris, where to go - and where not to go. Miss Butler herself daily takes loads of soldiers in charrs-a-bancs round the beauty spots of Paris, and lectures to them in a most fascinating way, and the boys simply adore her and obey her most implicitly. The place is run wholly by voluntary labour supplied by a large number of ladies - wives and daughters of British officers, and of the Embassy, etc."



UN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE GROUP (UNTAG) NAMIBIA

In April 1989 the Un Security Council approved the establishment of UNTAG in the territory of Namibia in South West Africa.

Its task was to supervise the territory's transition to nationhood by 1 April 1990. This included overseeing elections to choose a Constituent Assembly in November 1989 and also to supervise the gradual withdrawal of the South African Army from Namibia.

The 4700 member group from 21 countries included 250 Canadian soldiers, mostly administrators and signallers. As well, 100 Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers assisted in keeping law and order during the transition period.

CFPO 5004 was opened in Windhoek, Namibia 18 April 1989; UN free mail service was also authorized. Canadian mails were dispatched by commercial air from Windhoek, the capital, to Toronto, Canada, via Frankfurt, Germany.

The CFPO closed 10 January 1990 and the Canadian troops returned to Canada mid-January.

CFPO 5004

29 V 1989

990043

CFPO



29 V 1989

990043



FROM CANADA OFFICIAL POSTAL GUIDE

July 1917 Supplement

From our West Coast Correspondent.

INFORMATION FOR POSTMASTERS.

(1) Correspondence for Expeditionary Forces.—Letters, postal parcels and other mail matter for members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force should be addressed as follows:—

- (a) Regimental number.
- (b) Rank.
- (c) Name.
- (d) Squadron, Battery or Company.
- (e) Battalion, Regiment (or other unit), Staff appointment or Department.
- (f) Canadian Contingent.
- (g) British Expeditionary Force.
- (h) Army Post Office, London, England.

Unnecessary mention of higher formations, such as Brigades or Divisions, is strictly forbidden and causes delay.

CANADIAN-AMERICAN SPECIAL SERVICE FORCES IN WW II
by Dann Mayo

As the American Secretary and sometimes editor of the Civil Censorship Study Group, I have repeatedly hounded the silent members to get off their duffs and produce at least one-cover articles, on the theory that every collector of war-related covers must have covers with interesting stories to be told. Time constraints over the past several years have largely kept me from practicing what I preached, but the conjunction of a little bit of spare time, a strong sense of duty to contribute something other than my dues to the specialty societies which give so much more back to me, and the presence before me of an item that kept getting better and better each time I looked at it, has finally got me moving! (Ed. note: Please take heed of Dann's words above.)

When I picked it up, the Christmas Greetings V-mail shown above struck me as unusual in that it was addressed to Canada. On further examination, it turned out to be a real prize. First, the serial number of the sender shows that he was a member of the Canadian rather than the U.S. Army, notwithstanding the fact that he was serving in a US Army formation. Following the rest of the return address, the story becomes even more interesting.

The unit, the First Special Service Force, is referred to in THE SIMON AND SHUSTER ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WORLD WAR II (1978), p.516:

"Two other U.S. infantry units, although not part of the Rangers, nevertheless carried out unconventional warfare operations: the First Special Service Force, established on July 9, 1942,... was trained to operate behind enemy lines when snow covered Europe. It was made up of volunteers, such as lumberjacks, game wardens and professional skiers, who had skills applicable to this kind of work. It was an unusual unit in that about half its personnel came from Canada. The experiment in U.S.-Canadian cooperation worked well, and the unit performed very creditably in France."

Stanton, ORDER OF BATTLE U.S. ARMY, WORLD WAR II (Presidio Press, 1984), p. 191, lists the 1st SSF as a Brigade-size unit "composed of a service battalion and three small infantry regiments specially trained in airborne, amphibious, mountain, and winter commando tactics and drawn from elite volunteers." Its first overseas duty was in the Aleutians (Kiska, Segula Is., 25 July-late August, 1943). It saw fairly continuous action in Italy (as detailed on the V-mail) from late November 1943 through early June, 1944, invaded the French Iles d'Hyerès and took Grasse in August, 1944, and returned to fight in Italy during September, 1944. Stanton shows it as having participated in the Rhineland campaign, which is curious in that he has it on the Franco-Italian frontier on 30

November, and disbanded in France on 5 December 1944. (First SSF personnel--presumably from the US part of the force--show up again in the (US) 474th Inf.Regt. activated in France on 6 January 1945, which entered Germany in April and Norway in June, before returning to the US in October 1945.)

Thus, probably unwittingly, the V-mail above was something of a last hurrah for this, appropriately named, very special unit.

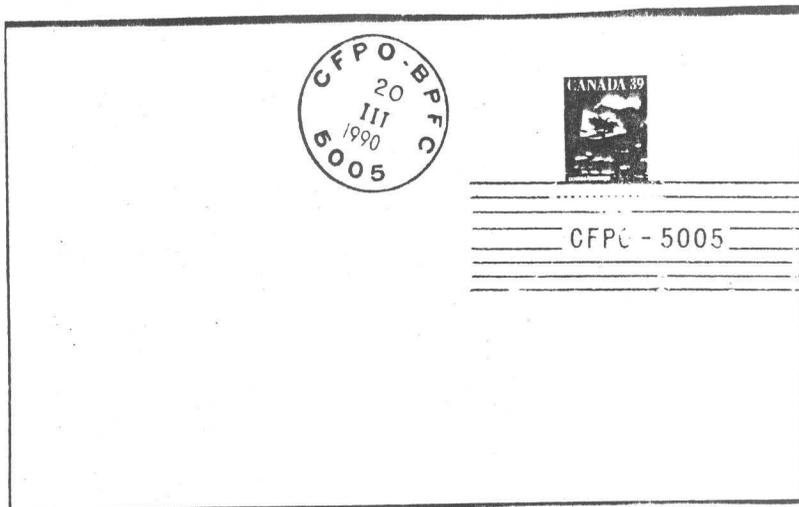
The final element of the return address, like an ugly baby to its mother, will probably be beautiful only in the eyes of postal history collectors. The sender gives his APO as 4994. As noted in Shaffer, GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS OF U.S. APO'S, 1941-1984 (War Cover Club, 1985) such high number APO's are usually temporarily assigned to a unit or even to individuals while in transit from the US to an overseas location, or to temporary formations assigned overseas. As also noted by Shaffer, and as is the case here, some of these high number APO's continued to be used for some time after arrival at the foreign destination. Shaffer records APO 4994 in the return address of a cover from a member of the 1st SSF cancelled APO 464 (then at Caserta, Italy) on 24 November 1943. In the V-mail above, sent approximately a year later, the same 'temporary' number is being used. This would suggest that, for security reasons or in recognition of the separate, highly specialized and potentially highly mobile nature of this formation, or both, it was decided not to give it a more standard number, but to allow it to keep its transit number for the duration.

Such is the type of story that can come from a cover, so let the rest of you try it while you are reminded of it! Toop's Index for our N/L's further directs us to page 513 for more on the FSSF. (Editors notes.)

From Staff Sgt. William H. Wilson
474th Inf. Regt. SSF
APO 4994
New York, NY
CHRISTMAS, 1944



UN OBSERVER GROUP CENTRAL AMERICA (ONUCA)



As a result of a cease-fire agreement between the US backed Contra Rebels and other forces in Central America, the United Nations authorized a mission to observe, verify, and monitor illegal cross-border movement of combatants and arms. The UN Mission is known by the Spanish acronym ONUCA.

A Canadian advance team was sent to Honduras/El Salvador in December 1989, followed by approximately 100 Canadian military members of 89 (LOH) Light Observation Helicopter Squadron early in January 1990.

United Nations "free" mail has not been authorized. CFPO 5005 was opened 13 February 1990 at Teguchigalpa, Honduras, and mail to and from Canada initially transported via Canadian Forces C130 aircraft. It is intended that commercial transport will eventually be utilized.

(11) Correspondence Posted by British, Dominion, Colonial and Allied soldiers serving in the Field and by Officers and men serving on His Majesty's Ships or Allied warships.—Correspondence from members of British, Dominion, Colonial and Allied Forces serving in the Field received in Canada without prepayment of postage may, on arrival at destination, be delivered without collection of postage charges.

Such correspondence may be recognized by the date stamp of a Field Post Office or other Army Post Office.

The same privilege will apply also to correspondence posted by Officers and men serving on His Majesty's Ships or Allied warships.

Correspondence received from H.M. Ships or H.M.C. Ships may generally be recognized by the stamped impression "Received from H.M. Ships" or "Received from H.M.C. Ships" or, by an Office date stamp impression including the words "H.M. Ships". In some cases the impression may read "Posted on H.M. Ships" or "Posted on H.M.C. Ships".

Correspondence from H.M.C. Ships, may be identified in certain instances by an impression of the "Passed by Censor" stamp and the signature of the Naval Officer by whom the letters were examined.

Note.—Canadian Troops now in England are not being considered as "In the Field" insofar as prepayment of postage is concerned, that is, full postage from England to Canada should be prepaid.

(16) Correspondence Posted by Officers and Men Serving on His Majesty's Ships.—Under present arrangements correspondence from officers and men serving on His Majesty's Ships may, on arrival in Canada, be delivered without collection of postage charges, in accordance with notice appearing in the February, 1940, Supplement to the Postal Guide.

Such correspondence handed over to this service from H.M. Ships on service afloat has hitherto been generally recognized by the stamp impression "Received from H.M. Ships".

The British Post Office Department have advised that dating from the 1st January, 1943, this impression has been replaced by a new stamp impression: "Post Office—Maritime Mail".

Such correspondence so endorsed is, of course, to continue to be delivered without the collection of postage charges.

FROM CANADA OFFICIAL POSTAL GUIDE
February 1940 Supplement - upper item
March 1943 Supplement - lower item
Contributed by our Ottawa Correspondent.

PRISONER OF WAR MAIL - FORCE 'C' HONG KONG by RITCH TOOP.

A great deal of mail sent to Canadian POW's in Japanese POW camps was never delivered; after liberation of the Hong Kong POW's all mail then found was returned to the sender.

This free POW cover to Gnr. Haslett, Camp No. 4 c/o Japanese Red Cross, Tokyo, was mailed from Hamilton, Ont., 4 Nov 1943, but was never delivered. It was eventually returned to sender as indicated by the handstamp RETURN TO SENDER FREE / BY ORDER OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL / RECOVERED FROM JAPANESE. The reverse shows the Base A.P.O., Ottawa Directory Service marking of 18 December 1945 and Ottawa, Ont., Dead Letter Office machine marking of 7 January 1946.

A letter from Canada Post HQ in Ottawa 15 October 1945 to the District Director, Vancouver, B.C. advised that an accumulation of approximately five tons of mail, consisting of both letters and parcels which were not delivered by the Japanese to Canadian Prisoners of War during the period 1942-1945, was being returned to Canada on HMCS PRINCE ROBERT which was expected to arrive Vancouver on or about 21 October.

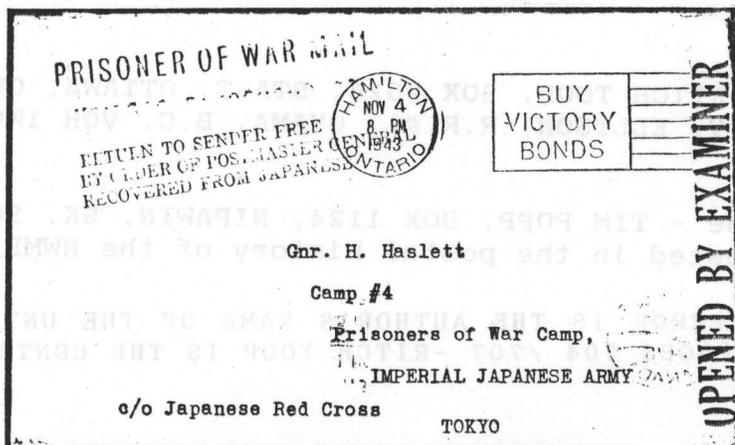
The letter further stated that this mail was to be returned direct to the senders from Vancouver, however, before return, each item was to be endorsed with a rubber stamp impression reading:

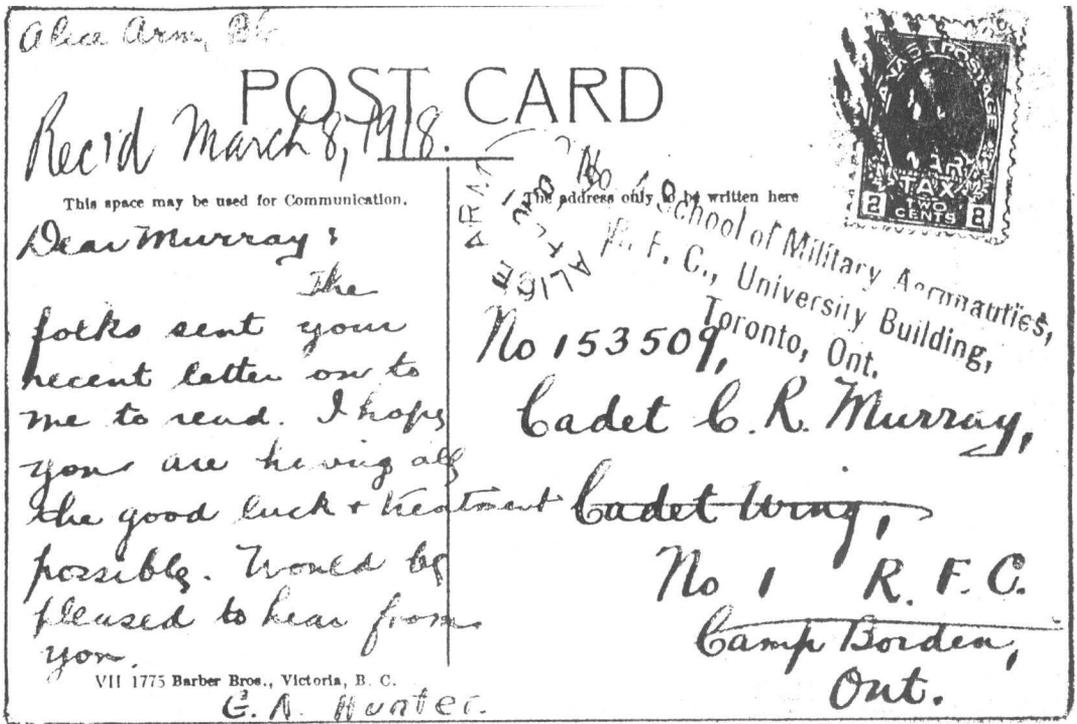
RETURN TO SENDER FREE
BY ORDER OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL
RECOVERED FROM JAPANESE.

Two rubber stamps were requisitioned, one in English and one in French. The French stamp was to be used on all mail bearing any indication that the senders were French.

It is unknown what proportion of the five tons represented parcels and how much was letter mail, nonetheless, this represents a huge quantity of mailable items denied delivery to the Canadians held captive by the Japanese.

So far I have seen only the English handstamp and wonder if anyone can report the French version?





AN RFC ITEM

A nice post card from the collection of Bill Robinson is shown here.

The card originated at Alice Arm which is located at the head of the arm of the same name on Observatory Inlet, north of Prince Rupert, B.C.

As noted, the card was addressed to the Cadet Wing at Camp Borden in Ontario. This wing was established on 27 February 1917 to both receive cadets and give them ground school training. An analogy in WW II was the manning depot and initial training school of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

From the first, a close association was formed between the Cadet Wing and the University of Toronto. At the school the cadets were introduced to drill and military discipline and taught such subjects as artillery observation, aircraft rigging and aero-engines. By 1 July 1917 the school became known as NO. 4 SCHOOL OF MILITARY AERONAUTICS which was where this cadet had been transferred. (The information here is from S. F. Wise's CANADIAN AIRMEN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR, pages 85-86)

MORE NEWS from Page 701.

YOUR OFFICERS:
CHAIRMAN -E. RITCH TOOP, BOX 9026, STA T, OTTAWA, ONT. K1G 3T8
EDITOR - KEN V. ELLISON, R.R.#1, OYAMA, B.C. VOH 1W0

NEW MEMBER:
Please welcome - TIM POPP, BOX 1124, NIPAWIN, SK. SOE 1E0
Tim is interested in the postal history of the NWMP/RCMP etc.

OMMITTED IN ERROR IS THE AUTHOR'S NAME OF THE UNTAG AND ONUC ARTICLES ON PAGES 704 /707 -RITCH TOOP IS THE CONTRIBUTOR!

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE - 100-

It is hoped that those committed to this project, and those waiting for another invitation, are well along with their articles. We have two very interesting ones on hand now and will soon be putting them into the computer for printing. DO NOT WAIT, get yours into Ritch, or the Editor, as soon as possible PLEASE.

Our Newsletter schedule is planned to be as follows for the next year:

- N/L # 95 - this one, is dated for August 1990.
- 96 - October 1990
- 97 - November-December 1990
- 98 - January 1991
- 99 - March 1991
- 100- September 1991 at BNAPEX

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