

## Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Jun 1951)

Back issues of the Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin' are now available. The issues available span the period from 1937 to 2022. The MPHS is a non-profit organization for philatelists and stamp collectors interested in the collecting and studying of the postal aspects of all wars and military actions of all countries, including soldiers' campaign covers, naval mail, occupation and internment covers, patriotics, propaganda, V-mail, censorship and similar related material.

You are encouraged to join the MPHS to realize the additional benefits of membership. See: <http://militaryphs.org/membership>

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WAR COVER CLUB BULLETIN

Edited by Jean G. Koor  
c/o Scott Publications, Inc.

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Vol. VI

JUNE 1951

Whole No. 10

Greetings, my poor, neglected readers - here I am, late again, but contrite and full of promises for the future. Am I forgiven? Hope so!

Now may I boast and brag about our April meeting? It was the unre-served opinion of everyone present that this was the most important, the most successful, the most interesting of all meetings to date. Our guest speaker, a past master at this gentle art, held the interest of everyone throughout the talk; having been in Korea for several years, he acquired a marvelous lot of material, as well as much information not available to the public in general. Many, many thanks, Mr. Heath, Cum Sin Dah! (My apologies if not correct!) We hope we may have the pleasure again.

It was decided that we retain the present name of War Cover Club as more appropriate to our aims.

In order to increase funds in the Treasury, it was favorably voted that ads of the membership be run in the Bulletin, the rate being fifty cents for 2-inch space. Send your ad and remittance to the Secretary.

If you haven't remitted for Dues, please send your check now. 1951-1952 Membership Dues \$1.50.

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WCC members who are interested in AEF (WW-I) covers, will be glad to know that the original copy of the last map, showing locations of the Allied and German Forces, has been photographed. Such maps were revised daily and printed at the GHQ-AEF, the last being issued on Armistice Day, November 11, 1918.

The map also shows the Allied Offensive from July 15 to Armistice Day and the location of all combat units of all armies.

A glossy 8x10 print can be obtained from your Sec'y, postage paid, by sending 25¢ in 1¢, 2¢ or 3¢ stamps.

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Military and Naval Insignia

Do any members collect or know of anyone collecting military and naval insignia? WCC member Rowland P. Gill, 1310 - 16th Street N. W., Washington 6, D. C., has recently uncovered a large lot of good ones in new condition which he is helping to dispose of. Price list of such items, including rare items, at "give-away" prices, available on request.

Such items would surely dress up a special collection or in themselves make up a marvelous collection.

\* \* \* \* \*

James White, of Strathrye, Qualicum Beach, Vancouver Is., B. C., Canada, is interested in exchanging war covers such as British APOs, Polish Army cancels of G.B. stamps in England, and misc. war covers from other countries, for war medals, Army, Navy & AF insignias (patches).

## POSTMARKS OF UNITED NATIONS FORCES IN KOREA

By C. D. Brenner

In the following list we give all the postmarks reported to date, including those mentioned in the January BULLETIN.

U.S. Army Postal Service: 2, 3, 7, 24, 25, 27?, 59, 201, 248, 301, 328, 468, 709, 908?, 1,000?. Several of these numbers may be located in Japan.

Army-Air Force Postal Service: 8, 15, 25, 32, 67, 72, 331, 468, 707, 901, 909, 925, 929, 970. An error has been discovered in this type of hand stamp, the word POSTAL reading PORTAL. It has been reported used by numbers 909, 925, 929. The Army-Air Force type of postmark is gradually replacing the Army Postal Service type in all theaters of operations.

First U.S. Marine Division: U.S. Navy - 12867 Br., Units 1 - 7; 14009 Br., Units 1 - 7. (It is uncertain whether the latter number is assigned exclusively to the Marine Division.)

Australian Forces: 8 B.P.O.; F.P.O. 452 (discontinued), 495, 496.

British Forces: F.P.O. 376, 406, 707, 734, 790.

Canadian Forces: C.F.P.O. 25, 26.

New Zealand Forces: N.Z.F.P.O. 444.

A cover from the Royal Marines bears stamps cancelled with a rubber stamp which is thought not to be a postmark.

One Greek cover seen bears what appears to be a military postmark, but it is not clear enough to decipher.

None of the other United Nations contingents has its own postal facilities. However, many contingents, if not all, have been assigned a postal number to facilitate distribution of mail to them. These numbers, so far as known, are: Ethiopians - E.A.P.O. 6100; Greeks - G.A.P.O. 5800; Dutch - N.A.P.O. 5100; Philipinos - P.A.P.O. 6000; Turks - T.A.P.O. 5401.

Some interesting types of postal stationery are being used by some of the troops. The U. S. forces have been using both a white letter sheet and a post card each of which bears the legend: UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL SERVICES. A rather handsome air mail letter sheet has also been in use and should be of special interest to collectors of air letter sheets. It is of grayish paper with a red, white, and blue border. On the back is the U. S. shield in colors.

The Netherlands forces are using a special envelope bearing the emblem of the United Nations and other markings.

The Swedish Red Cross Field Hospital Unit uses a neat rectangular boxed rubber stamped corner card on its envelopes.

Please communicate additions and corrections to the editor.

## THE NORTH RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, 1918-1919

By C. D. Brenner

Among the scarcest and most sought-after war covers are those from the expedition to North Russia, 1918-19. About the only information on this campaign readily available to collectors is to be found in brief articles in the War Cover Philatelist for January, 1939, in the Philatelic Adviser for the same date, and in H. M. Sanford's The Mail of the A.E.F., 1940. Some supplementary information is now at hand. The postal history of the expedition is not yet complete, it very probably never will be complete, but there may be some who will profit from it such as it is at present. Very fortunately a history of the U. S. naval participation in the expedition was compiled a few years ago from official sources. For this reason we shall divide this article into several sections. The first will be concerned with the preliminary operations and with the campaign of the land forces. The second will be devoted to the U. S. naval participation. The third will consider the postal history of the military elements of the expedition.

The political and diplomatic background of this completely futile campaign need not concern us here. Of interest to collectors are certain places and dates associated with the expedition, the identity of participating troops and naval units, and the postal arrangements.

### I. Preliminary Operations and the Campaign on Land.

In February-March, 1918, small British naval detachments were landed at Murmansk to guard the terminus of the British-Russian submarine cable and to protect that port against a possible German-Finnish attack. In April a British cruiser landed 150 Royal Marines there, followed a few weeks later by a party of sailors from a French cruiser. These early forces were commanded by Rear Admiral Kemp of the Royal Navy. About this time the Allies decided to send a joint expedition to North Russia and selected British Major General F. C. Poole to act as its commander in chief. It was hoped that this expedition could effect a juncture with the large Czech army left stranded in Siberia after the collapse of the Russian military effort and open up a new eastern front to prevent the Germans from withdrawing all their troops to the west. On May 25, 1918, the USS Olympia took aboard in the Orkneys General Poole and his staff. Two days later it landed them at Murmansk. (Another account states that General Poole reached Murmansk on May 24th.) Major General Maynard of the British Army, who was appointed to command the Murmansk area, sailed from Newcastle on June 18th with about 600 troops and landed at Murmansk on June 23rd. These were the first of a considerable number of British troops to be sent to this sector. On July 26th, they were joined by a battalion of French colonial infantry. A battalion of Italian troops, with a company of ski-troops, arrived on September 3rd.

In the middle of the summer the decision was made to send U. S. troops to participate in the expedition. For this purpose certain units of the 85th Infantry Division, which was on its way to France, were diverted and landed in England. These units were the 339th Infantry Regiment, one battalion of the 310th Engineers, the 337th Ambulance Company, and the 337th Field Hospital. The 339th Infantry was composed mostly of conscripted men from Wisconsin and Michigan. At Stoney Castle Camp these troops were equipped, and very well too, to meet the rigorous conditions of life near the Arctic Circle.

In the meantime, on August 2nd, General Poole had landed at Archangel with 550 British and French troops and a few U. S. Marines. Archangel became the headquarters of a separate sector under command of

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General Poole, later under General Ironside. On August 25th, the U. S. troops reequipped in England embarked at New Castle-on-Tyne in three British troop ships. In the same convoy another ship carried Italian troops as far as Murmansk. The American troops reached Archangel on September 4th and were debarked the next day. Some of them were deployed in the Archangel area, some were sent into the interior in rather small detachments where they saw a good deal of active fighting, as the campaign soon developed into an undeclared war with the Bolsheviks. Colonel George W. Stewart was in command of these troops.

According to an official British report of January 2, 1919, General Maynard commanding the Murmansk Sector had 6832 British, 731 French, 1254 Italian, 1220 Serbian, 4441 Russian troops. The same report gives General Ironside at Archangel 6293 British, 1606 French, 5203 American, 2715 Russian Troops. The 38th Canadian Field Artillery is probably counted with the British.

In the spring of 1919, the British landed two brigades at Archangel, each consisting of 4,000 mixed regulars and volunteers, to relieve their weary troops.

The Murmansk Sector was a separate campaign. As soon as possible troops were rushed south along the railroad running from that port to Petrograd. They occupied a considerable stretch of this railroad and the principal task of troops in this sector was to protect this section of this line of communication and supply. So much difficulty was experienced in operating this railroad with Russian personnel that the British commander asked for aid. To this end the U. S. cruisers Galveston and Chester arrived at Murmansk early in April with the 167th and 168th Railway Engineer Companies of the U. S. Army Transportation Corps. (Authorities give varying dates for the arrival of these troops: April 1, 8, and 9.) They soon had the railroad functioning in excellent fashion, but they were withdrawn the latter part of July.

This same spring of 1919 the futility of the Russian campaign had become obvious and the military situation of the Allied forces was rapidly deteriorating. It was determined to withdraw the U. S. forces as soon as practicable. Brig. Gen. W. P. Richardson was sent to take command of all U. S. troops in Russia. He arrived at the same time as the railway engineers. His task was to arrange and supervise the withdrawal of the American forces. Some of the same ships that brought the two British brigades mentioned above took away the major part of the U. S. troops. On June 3rd, more than 1800 officers and men of the 339th Infantry sailed on the transport Czar and 323 miscellaneous troops on the hospital ship Kalyan. They were landed in Brest, France, and repatriated from there. On the 15th and 16th of the same month the ships Menominee and Porto took off most of the remaining infantry troops. On the 25th the Quilpne took a few of the headquarters staff, and on the 28th the Steigerwald sailed with over 700 men of the 310th Engineers. A small headquarters staff under General Richardson remained in Archangel until September 23rd. The British evacuated Archangel on the 27th. The exact date in July on which the railway engineers left Murmansk has not been ascertained.

The part which the British forces played in this campaign has been told at length and from various points of view in three or four books. So far as is known no one has troubled to try to record the history of any of the other Allied forces except the Americans. Many of us would welcome more information about the small Canadian units involved. From scattered references a few facts about them have emerged. On the Murmansk front there was a unit of about 50 Canadians which was nicknamed the "Malmoot Company" because its chief function seems to have been to

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drive dog sleds loaded with supplies to troops who could not otherwise be reached during the winter. In the Archangel Sector there was a battery of the 38th Canadian Field Artillery. There also appear to have been a few Canadian engineers and a few flyers with the small RAF force ~~operating in this area.~~ All sources are full of praise for the efforts of all these Canadians except the flyers who were involved in some difficulties about which there is a difference of opinion.

## II. Naval Participation.

The British Navy began patrolling the route to Archangel early in the war, as this was the only port of any consequence through which European Russia could receive supplies. After the landing of the military expedition the British ships in North Russian waters became quite numerous. It was during the war that the town and port of Murmansk were built and the railroad run from there down to Petrograd, as this harbor was open all winter, which was not true of Archangel. Since mail from personnel of British naval vessels bears no indication of its origin, covers from North Russia at this time can be identified only from the enclosed letters. No covers have been seen from the several French warships that participated in the expedition, but ordinarily they would give no indication of place of origin unless it was indicated in manuscript by the sender.

Collectors of U. S. naval covers have given little attention to such covers from ships in North Russian waters at this time. This fact may be attributed to the scarcity of these covers and to the little information about them that has been available. Fortunately it is now possible to give fairly complete information in regard to the ships. Perhaps this will aid in turning up more covers. In 1943, the Navy Department in Washington published a special study entitled U. S. Naval Forces in Northern Russia (Archangel and Murmansk), by Dr. Henry P. Beers. This study is based on official records. The following information has been drawn from it, supplemented from other sources.

Mention has already been made that the USS Olympia reached Murmansk on May 27, 1918, with Gen. Poole and his staff on board. On June 9th, 100 officers and sailors were landed. They placed the town under martial law and proceeded to search it for Bolsheviks and for concealed arms and ammunition. This naval force occupied the town until British troops arrived the latter part of the month. The Olympia remained here until she took Rear Admiral Scully to Archangel at the end of October. She left that port for Invergorden, Scotland, on November 19th, with U. S. Ambassador Francis on board. Some twenty covers from this ship during her stay in North Russia are in the hands of collectors, all of them from one correspondence. They bear the ship postmark with the words FOREIGN/SERVICE between the killer bars. They can be identified only by the date or the enclosed letters. The writer has a cover with no postmark but bearing the censor stamp of the Olympia and the word "Murmansk" written across one corner. It also picked up a British civilian censor label somewhere. It was probably taken to England on a British ship and put into the mail there. It may or may not be from a member of the crew of the Olympia.

The only other U. S. naval vessel known to have a North Russia postal history is the Des Moines. She arrived in Murmansk on May 13, 1919, and was made the U. S. flagship. About May 20th she proceeded to Archangel. She left North Russia on September 14th. A few covers from this ship are known dated in June, 1919, and with the words ARCHANGEL/RUSSIA in the killer bars. The writer has one dated May 23, 1919, with YUKANSKI/RUSSIA in the killer bars.

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Other U. S. naval vessels officially listed as having been in North Russia during this period are as follows:

Yankton. Reached Murmansk February 8, 1919. Was at Alexandrovsk from March 18 to April 4. Left for England on July 9th.

Galveston. Arrived Murmansk April 8, 1919.

Chester. Arrived Murmansk April 8, 1919. Sailed for England April 13th.

Sacramento. Arrived Murmansk May 22, 1919. Arrived Archangel June 5th. Left Russian waters July 13th.

Eagles 1 & 3. Reached Murmansk a few days after the Sacramento. Departed end of July.

Eagle 2. Arrived Murmansk June 11, 1919. Departed end of July.

Subchasers 95, 256, 354. Arrived Archangel about June 18, 1919. Left for England July 9th.

USS Anuva and West Gambo, cargo vessels with navy crews, arrived Archangel October 12, 1918. Departed November 10th.

As stated above, no covers are known from any of these ships except the Olympia and the Des Moines. The above data may help to identify others. However, most of these ships made comparatively short stays in North Russia and it is probable that most, if not all, of them dispatched no mail while up there, but carried their mail out with them. In any case, the Navy and its mail should not be forgotten when considering the postal history of the North Russia Expedition.

### III. Postal History of the Military Elements

The information that has been assembled about the postal history of the military elements participating in the North Russia Expedition comes from a number of sources: from an article by Col. Guy Crouch in the Philatelic Adviser for January 1939, and from correspondence with that esteemed authority; from various histories of the Expedition, from consultation with some of the men who took part in it; and from the examination of a considerable number of covers.

All the postal facilities established for this expedition seem to have been British. On September 28, 1918, a Royal Engineers postal section arrived in Murmansk and established B.P.O. 1. Within a few days it had set up B.P.O. 2 in Archangel. With only 3 officers and 16 men, it was impractical at first to open any FPOs. On November 25, 1918, 40 men arrived to reinforce the postal sections at the two bases. Before the end of the month, 8 FPOs were established. Others were opened later or old offices were given new numbers when they moved, as 13 FPO numbers have been seen in postmarks. In October 1918, a Russian mail car was found in good condition and was converted into Army Traveling P. O. No. 1. It started operation November 4, 1918, and made a weekly run from Murmansk to Soroka and back. One example of the T.P.O. postmark used on this train has been found. It is dated 7/12/19. Its present location is unknown. Later a second T.P.O. was established over this same route. No details about it are known nor have any postmarks used by it been seen. Postmarks from these traveling post offices must be considered among the great rarities in their field, ranking them with those used on the railroad maintained by the A.E.F. in France during World War I, of which only one example is known.

(To be concluded)

It is our understanding that APO #81 is being used in Iceland.

David M. Cates sends an attractive sample cachet to be released from the Philadelphia Naval Base, July 3rd. Quantity is limited. He will do his best to fill orders at 6 for \$1, (stamped and mailed on July 3); not addressed or stamped, 6 for 50¢. Get in touch with Mr. Cates at Commissary Store, Bldg. 29, Naval Base, Phila. 12, Pa.

WCC member Arthur W. Motz is seriously considering the disposal of his collection of specialized APOs and related war material. If anyone is interested in its purchase intact or in sections, I'd suggest he get in touch with Mr. Motz immediately, as he may decide to dispose of it via auction later on. Write him at 1231 Grotto St., Pittsburgh 6, Pa.

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Financial Statement 1950-51  
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Receipts-			
Members dues, Auctions & Publications	\$326.68		
Bank Bal. as of May 8, 1950	<u>231.33</u>		\$558.01
Expenses-			
Printing, Postage & Advtg.			<u>489.56</u>
Bank Bal. as of April 30, 1951			\$ 68.45

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MEMBERSHIP - NEW (N) & CHANGE OF ADDRESSES (CA)

N	312	HAMMER, Helmut	Weberstrasse 82, Frankfurt-on-Main 16, Germany Specialty German Military, all wars.
CA	296	GILL, Rowland P.	Change house number to 1310.
	181	HURDIS, Mrs.E.C.	109 Smithfield Rd., Providence, R. I. U.S. & foreign censored; APO-Naval & Pats. (Deleted by printer in January issue)
	136	LEACH, Rev. Floyd S.	82 Highland Ave., Rowayton, Conn. All wars. (Corrected address)
CA	72	STRINGHAM, O. L.	36 Berkley St., Johnson City, N. Y. All censored.
	220	WETTACH, G. H.	243 N. 19th St., East Orange, N. J. General, Specialty WW-II. (Rec'd too late for January issue)
CA	3	HALPERN, Maxwell	684 Martha St., Elmont, N. Y. A.E.F. covers only.
	292	KANAGA, C. W.	Kansas City, Kans. (Resigned)
	222	HILL, Norman	Rotherham, Engl. (Resigned)
N	313	LETKEMANN, S.A.V.	Box 6267, Fitzsimons Army Hosp., Denver 8, Colo. (patient) P/W covers of all wars.
CA	200	COLE, A. C.	4589 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio
N	314	WALTERS, C. T.	Loombah, Cumnock, N.S.W., Australia Specialty - have requested information.

GOODBYE NOW - HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER

BE BACK IN THE FALL.