

## Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin May 1941)

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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*Great Britain Censor Marks*



Issued monthly under the auspices of the War Cover Club. Subscription rate \$1.50 annually. Back Numbers, if available, 15¢ each. Advertising 10¢ a typewritten line per issue. Address all communications to Editor, GEORGE C. HAHN, 835 Williamson Building, Cleveland, Ohio.

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We had hopes of completing the reporting of items of Great Britain in this issue but more and more new items make their appearance that we were unable to list all the items of Great Britain and will be obliged to continue with Great Britain in the next bulletin. It seems an endless job and no sooner has one bulletin been published that we hear of additional items. Therefore, when the first preliminary listing has been completed, we will recapitulate the information already published plus additional information.

A new service for members of the War Cover Club has been added. In the June War Cover Philatelist you will find a list of Army Post Offices of the United States. Members, desirous of receiving covers from such Army as well as Navy Post Offices as established in the future may send self-addressed, unsealed 6-3/4 envelopes, franked with first class postage plus 1-cent in coin per cover to George C. Hahn, 835 Williamson Building, Cleveland, Ohio. No special requests can be honored and sender must assume all risks. These covers will be sent to newly established camp, forts, naval vessels, bases abroad etc.

The Sales Department of the War Cover Club is making excellent progress. Up to May 31, fifteen members are taking advantage of the Sales Department by buying and selling through the same. Sales so far have amounted to about \$40 and there are more than fifteen circuits in circulation. In order to continue with the Sales Department and make the same a paying proposition, it will be necessary that at least fifty members take advantage of this service. It is not necessary to agree to buy and sell from the Sales Department, but members who care to dispose of their duplicates may do so without also buying and members desiring to buy but having no duplicates to sell, may just buy. Further particulars from your editor.

Thanks to the splendid publicity given us by various philatelic magazines and particularly "Stamps", your editor has received many inquiries regarding the War Cover Club and he is pleased to state that more than 25 new members have joined our organization since the annual meeting in March. Considerable interest in war cover collecting exists and every member should make it his personal task to at least secure one new member. It is only through a large membership that we are able to render service to each other.

The publicity campaign as well as the voluminous correspondence conducted by your editor has been a heavy task and therefore he will appreciate all the possible help from the membership, however, until advised, please do not send in any additional items pertaining to countries which already have been listed. It also will be appreciated if only tracings with sepia ink be sent, preferably, separate tracings for each item, so that the same can be properly arranged. It is a most difficult job to keep track of the many items and I have been unable to even arrange my own collection so far due to the pressure of club activities. However, any errors located, should be reported promptly as well as any suggestions regarding future listings.

I also would like to call the attention of members to advertising in this Bulletin. The cost of preparing the same is rather heavy and advertising in the bulletin will help defray the expense. While the mailing list of the Bulletin at present is only about 100, you can reach through the same, collectors who are actively interested in war cover items and thereby will receive best results.

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CENSORED COVERS Wanted to purchase or exchange. EUGENE CAREY, Iron River National Bank Building. Iron River, Michigan. P.O. Box 527.

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Join the American Philatelic Society. Application blanks and further details from your editor. WAR COVER UNIT of the American Philatelic Society will soon be formed.

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The Post Office Department frowns on chain letters but if all members would form an endless chain to secure new members, the War Cover Club will soon be one of the main philatelic organizations. It already is the fastest growing organization of philately and offers its members a great deal for the small membership fees. Join now and bring in another member.

C A N A D A

WAR SLOGAN CANCELLATIONS. (Additional Information)

Back Canada's War Effort --  
Buy War Savings Certificates!



(WSC - 1)

Last summer, we began using an illustrated plate on our own mail to help publicize the slogan, "Buy War Savings Stamps and Certificates".

We received so many enquiries about this slogan plate that we designed three special "meter-ad" plates and made them available to all Postage meter users.



(WSC-2)

Right now this patriotic Postage Meter imprint is in greater demand than ever. We have accordingly increased the choice of designs to six, as illustrated on this letterhead.

The plates are priced at \$8.00 each. They fit into your meter machine beside the die which prints the date and postmark and are printed on out-going mail at the same time as the meter impression -- in the same operation.



(WSC-3)

Make your selection now and use the enclosed postage-paid card to place your order. We can make prompt shipment to enable you to cooperate in the current War Savings Drive.

Yours sincerely  
(Signed) K. C. Dalglish,  
Vice President

PS: The plates are easily removed and may be installed again without special instruction



(WSC-4)

(The above letter written on the stationery of  
CANADIAN POSTAGE METER AND MACHINES COMPANY, Ltd.  
181 King Street West, Toronto 2. )

(Supplied through the courtesy of member I.C. Morgan)



(WSC-5)



(WSC-6)

Please note the above are the latest classification numbers on Canadian war slogan cancellations. The following corrections on previously reported numbers will therefore be necessary:

Bulletin No. 3 Page 3a Correct WSC-2 to read WSC-3  
Correct WSC-3 to read WSC-2  
Correct WSC-4 to read WSC-7  
Correct WSC-5 to read WDC-8

Bulletin No. 2 Page 6 Correct WSC-2 to read WSC-3

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THE WAR COVER CLUB Membership in the War Cover Club offers many advantages. Free subscription to the War Cover Philatelist and to the War Cover Club Bulletin. Use of Sales Department. Contact with many other collectors interested in war items. Join now!

G R E A T   B R I T A I NMILITARY POST MARKS

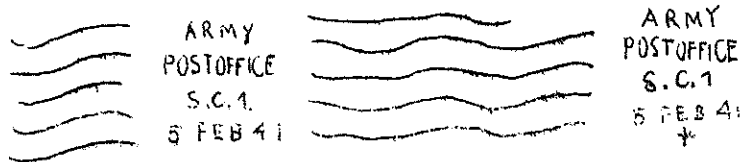
(MP-1)



(MP-2)



(MP-3)



(MP-4)

British Military Covers are described in detail in the December 1940 issue of THE WAR COVER PHILATELIST under an article by Col. Guy R. Crouch, M.C., T.D., which article was reprinted in the Philatelist by permission from THE PHILATELIST of October 1940. I believe the above article still is timely and informative and therefore we are again listing the same in this Bulletin.

"Now that the war is entering on a new phase, one can look back over the past year and trace the vicissitudes of the British Army Post Office in France and Flanders, in Norway, and now in Palestine and at home, from an examination of covers bearing the Field Post Office date stamps.

These have invariably taken the form of the usual double-ringed date stamp with two "obliterating bars" between (although they had no stamps to obliterate as a rule), and the number of the Field Post Office at the foot. Some Field Post Offices (probably those which were in fact stationary offices, in fixed positions at bases and elsewhere) appear to have had more than one date stamp in use simultaneously, as there are in many cases two distinct types of mark bearing the same office number. In one type the lettering FIELD POST OFFICE appears with considerable spaces between the words, while in the other type the spaces are so small that the words almost run into each other, thus FIELDPOST OFFICE. These types may conveniently be distinguished as the "spaced" type (MP-2) and the "close" type (MP-1) respectively.

Another point of interest is the peculiar figure "4" appearing in many of the date stamps with office numbers from 41 to 49 inclusive and 54. In those of the "spaced" type the figure "4" is serifed, whereas in the "close" type the figures are invariably sand-serif, as elsewhere throughout the series. -- (None of the covers which I have seen bear Col. Crouch's observations out. All of the numerals "4" in the date line as well as Post Office Number I have seen on covers are of the sans-serif type. Ed.)

At the time of writing (Fall of 1940 - Ed.) the Field Post Office Numbers below 150 so far recorded (those above 150 will be mentioned separately) are: No. 1 (used at Tsientisin, North China, from 1927 until the evacuation of August, 1940), 4 - 12, 14 - 33, 35 - 75, 77, 78, 80 - 82, 85 - 92, 104, 110 - 115, 121 - 124, 127, 130 and 132. --- (Delf Norona states that although No. 4 has been recorded, he has not seen it and neither have I. Delf Norona has some doubt whether it was in fact used in France. FPO's 1 to 4 have, since 1927, been in North China, and No. 1 was in constant use at Tsientisin until its evacuation by British Troops in August 1940. He suspects, therefore, that the series issued to the F.P.O's in France commenced with No. 5) --

Although I have seen it stated that all the numbers up to 100 have been collected by one specialist, I personally have my doubts, whether all these numbers have in fact been used during the present war (they were certainly used during 1914 - 1918, but the Great War impressions are of course easily distinguishable.)

G R E A T   B R I T A I N

MILITARY POSTMARKS

The numbers up to 69 or 70 were in use in France before the end of 1939, and the higher numbers came into use during the first four months of 1940. With few exceptions, none of these office numbers have been used since the Dunkirk evacuation, and many of the date stamps themselves, with other postal equipment, probably fell into the hands of the enemy, or were destroyed by bombs or shell-fire during the fateful days of May 1940.

With the exception of the Field Post Office numbers used in Norway and Palestine, as mentioned later, it would seem that the numbers between about 100 and 150 were used in offices serving the "Second B. E. F." before and during the "Battle of France" in June 1940. Some of the earlier numbers, however, used in Stationary offices south of the Somme, like Field Post Office 66, which was at Cherbourg, no doubt continued in use until the evacuation of Brittany took place on the collapse of France. Any of these, with dates in June, are worth watching for, as they will be of historic interest later on.

Of the numbers above 100, Field Post Office 115 was certainly in Norway during April and May, and possibly Nos. 110 to 114 also, but of the latter I cannot yet be sure. The Army Postal communications with the North Western Expeditionary Forces were slow and uncertain, and it seems difficult at present to say how many Field Post Offices were in fact established in Scandinavia during those weeks. It is to be hoped that, when the history of that expedition comes to be written, the postal aspect of it will not be overlooked.

There can be no military secret in the fact that Field Post Offices 121 - 123 are in Palestine, as these date stamps are found on Palestine stamps, and possibly Field Post Office 124 is there also. (Here it may be remarked that letters from the British Army in Egypt still have to bear the Egyptian "Army Post" stamps, and these are generally cancelled with "M.P.O." or "B.P.O." Egyptian date marks similar to those used before the war.)

For two months or so after the return of the B.E.F. to Britain, the only Field Post Offices which still continued to function were apparently those in Palestine and that in North China (F.P.O. 1), but in August, 1940, letters from members of the Home Forces commenced to arrive bearing Field Post Office date stamps cancelling the 2½d postage stamp, which the British Tommy then had to place on his letters home, after enjoying free postage for so many months (at least those who had served on the continent.) It seems that the Royal Engineers (Postal Section) then once again commenced to serve the army by setting up Field Post Offices in areas where large number of troops were stationed, probably in order both to help the civil post offices in coping with the resultant increase in traffic, and also to keep the Army Post Office organization in training with a view to future requirements. The number of the Field Post Offices attached to the Home Forces (including those stationed in Iceland and the Faroe Islands) appear at the time of writing to range between 224 and 422, as evidenced by the postage stamps cancelled at these offices.

Field Post Office 169 and 181 also are recorded, but these are in a different category which cannot be particularized at present.

In addition to the Field Post Office date stamps already described, three other distinct types of postmarks were used by the B.E.F. in France and Flanders. These were the Base Army Post Office marks, the machine cancellations, and the parcel post stamps.

Of the Base Army Post Office hand stamps, there are three types. All are of the double ring category, like the Field Post Office marks already described but reading BASE ARMY POST OFFICE, and differing from each other as follows:

(a) The earliest, and rarest, seems to have been used only in September 1939. (N.B. a specimen dated 9 DE 1939 has now turned up) and has "No. 1" at the foot between the two obliterating bars. This may be found either in black or violet ink. (MP-3)

(b) In October 1939, a new stamp was brought into use bearing a sans-serif "1" at the foot.

G R E A T   B R I T A I NMILITARY POST MARKS

(c) Later the number "1" appeared with serifs. These were used on letters emanating from or examined at the Base.

The machine cancellations were of the continuous type, with five wavy obliterating bars between the date stamps. They first came into use early in March, 1940, and two different marks were used. (MP-4). These have not been noted as having been used since the Dunkirk evacuation took place, and the machines may therefore have fallen into German hands. (Note that I have in my possession MP-4 Post Marks showing early 1941 dates. -Ed.)

The Army Post Office parcel cancellation is undated, with "ARMY"/POST OFFICE in two lines across the center of a circular stamp with the upper and lower portions of the circle filled in by vertical lines, in the same manner as in the parcel cancellations now used in civil post offices. This stamp seems to have been used, not only on parcels despatched by the troops in the field, but also at the Home Depot of the Army Post Office on various official labels, as well as on letters returned to the senders as undeliverable or those readdressed at the Home Depot. In the Field Post Offices black ink was generally used, but at the Home Depot the stamp seems often to have been impressed in violet ink.

The Home Depot of the Royal Engineers (Postal Station) is in effect the clearing house for all mail addressed to the Army in the field. Here a large staff of both military and civilian sorters was employed in dealing with the mails for the B.E.F., which were ever increasing in volume up to May 1940, as the the British Divisions in France, and later in Norway, were reinforced.

When the invasion of the Low Countries commenced on 10th of May, and the British Divisions advanced to meet the enemy, the Field Post Offices presumably moved forward with the formations to which they were attached, but no official account has yet been published as to their subsequent movements. Letters from the Army in Flanders from at least May 18 onwards, however, did not as a rule receive the Field Post Office date stamp, but seems to have been sent to the Home Depot bearing only the regimental censor's stamp.

Here the covers were impressed, sometimes on the front, sometimes on the back, with the "Home Depot --- R.E.P.S." date stamp, of the usual double ring type with obliterating bars between, and the number 19 at the foot between the bars. Other numbers may of course have been in use for this service, but No. 19 seems to have been the one in general use at the Home Depot. No. 18 has also been seen.

On the arrival of the troops from Dunkirk evacuation at the main points of dispersal and reorganization in this country (Great Britain), they were permitted for some days to write letters home free of postage, provided they were handed in to the Post Office through the Regimental Orderly Room. The few covers of this nature which have been seen by the writer bear the ordinary "Paid" stamp of the post town concerned, impressed in red ink, but without any amount of postage being shown in the stamp, which is therefore of the nature of an "Official paid" stamp.

This franking privilege was however soon withdrawn, and the members of the B.E.F. who had for many months been able to write to their wives, sweethearts and relatives post free, found that they had to start paying for the privilege again, as in civil life. Worse still, they found the inland rate increased from 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d to 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d per 2 ounces from May 1, 1940 by the second War Budget. An extra 6d per day was granted to the troops in August, however, partly to meet the additional cost of postage and tobacco.

During the period of reorganization and rearming of the Home Forces, June to August 1940, the civil post offices of the nearest post towns served the troops without any intervention by the Army Post Office, but in August letters from units stationed in various parts of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland commenced to arrive bearing Field Post Office date stamps like MP-1 with office numbers considerably higher than had hitherto been used, ranging between 224 and 399 as already mentioned. These of course can easily be identified by the fact that they bear ordinary British stamps and without any indications of having been passed or examined by the censor. At the time of writing it remains to be seen how far this practice will extend, and whether the Army Post Office will establish a complete system throughout the British isles or will only supplement the civil post offices where this becomes necessary owing to the concentration of troops in certain areas or the evacuation of the civil population. (I note that these high field post office numbers do not carry any stamps, contrary to Col. Crouch's observations--ED).

Another interesting article on British Military Mail, in so far as the Canadian Postal Corps overseas is concerned, will be found in "STAMPS" of May 24, 1941. This article was written by member Ian C. Morgan and contains a wealth of valuable information.

G R E A T   B R I T A I NMilitary Post MarksDescription of Types

M P - 1	Close spacing of words "FIELD POST OFFICE", looking almost like one word
M P - 2	Wide even spacing between words "FIELD POST OFFICE"
M P - 2a	Close spacing between words "FIELD POST" and wide spacing between words "POST OFFICE"
M P - 3	BASE ARMY POST OFFICE
M P - 4	Machine cancellation with five line killers.

CHECK LIST OF F. P. O'S.

<u>F.P.O. No.</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>Star or letter</u>	<u>Censor Number</u>
2	MP-1	A	2388
5	MP-1	A	787
11	MP-1	?	909
15	MP-2	A	335
22	MP-1	?	14
23	MP-2	?	410
30	MP-1	B	986
31	MP-2	-	195
39	MP-1	-	339
42	MP-1	-	1453 (Numeral not clear. F.P.O. 12?)
45	MP-1	-	799
49	MP-2	-	14
50	MP-1	-	176
56	MP-2	-	119
57	?	?	773
64	MP-1	-	977
70	MP-1	?	1271
247	MP-2	*	----
248	MP-2	*	----
304	MP-1	*	1216
306	MP-1	*	2460
307	MP-1	*	----
310	MP-2	--	----
312	MP-1	*	----
314	MP-1	*	----
432	MP-1	*	----
434	MP-2	*	----
435	MP-1	*	----
436	MP-1	*	----
452	MP-1	*	----
453	MP-1	* and without	----
465	MP-2a	* and without	----
471	MP-1	*	----
SC-1	MP-4	-	----

In addition to the above Field Post Office Numbers, member Ian C. Morgan reports:

3	MP-1	
115	MP-2	
200	MP-2	
308	MP-1	
311	MP-1	
313	MP-1	
455	MP-2a	
475	MP-1	
SS-7	MP-5	(Not illustrated)

The C. A. BULLETIN (C.A. stands for Collection Appeal) is issued every month or two and invariably lists War Covers. It takes but a postal card to receive the current issue, and subsequent ones as they appear. You will be glad you asked for it. Write to HERMAN HERST, JR. 116 Nassau Street, New York, N. Y.

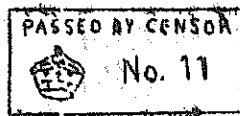
"STAMPS" carries many articles pertaining to war covers. Subscribe to this all-around philatelic magazine. Write the editor for subscription rate.

## GREAT BRITAIN

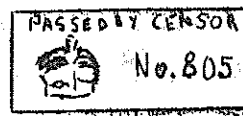
M. Hertzberg writes: "A most unusual cover, which just has reached me, is a pictorial marking, odd shaped, on British postage. It pictures a building, or castle, with the date below it; around the top appears the wording "CZECHOSLOVAKIAN ARMY POST OFFICE" and at the bottom the Czech equivalent "CEKOSLOVENSKA VOJENSKA POSTA"." Mr. Hertzberg states that he has never seen any cover of this type before and makes him wonder, whether the other armies in England have distinctive post marks. Has any one else seen such markings?"

P. E. Sperry inquires as to the meaning of "P. & C.B." on some of the British Censor labels. I am not certain but I presumed these initials stood for "Postal and Censorship Bureau". Does any one positively know whether this correct?

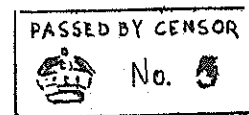
## MILITARY CENSOR MARKINGS



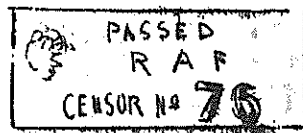
MC - 1



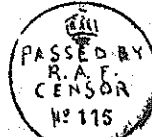
MC - 2



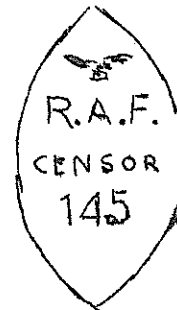
MC - 3



MC - 4



MC - 5



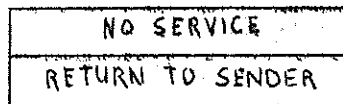
MC - 6



MC - 7

- MC - 1 Blue, Red, Purple impressions. (Small crown)  
 MC - 2 Similar to MC-2, but broader and higher crown. Blue, red, Purple  
 MC - 3 Different type of crown. Supposedly only found with Censor No. 5. Impression very clear denoting a new stamp. (Courtesy Norman Eyre in "American Philatelist".)  
 MC - 4 R. A. F. Censor Marking  
 MC - 5 R. A. F. Censor Marking. Courtesy Norman Eyre in American Philatelist)  
 MC - 6 Submitted by C. D. Brenner  
 MC - 7 Submitted by C. D. Brenner. There are two types of this stamp, one being somewhat larger than the other. Mr. Brenner states this type of censor marking has been found mostly with MP-4 cancellations.

## NO SERVICE MARKINGS



X - 1

X - 1 Used on mail addressed to enemy countries or countries to which no mail service exists. Hand stamp. Purple imprint.

Bulletin No. 7 will contain balance of Great Britain, such as internment covers, prisoner of war covers and naval covers, followed by description of Greece, Guadeloupe etc. Tracing of some of these censor markings and labels of countries after Great Britain to and including "H" for inclusion next bulletin will be welcome.