

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Sep 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
972 Sherman Avenue
Bronx 56, New York

VOL. VI

SEPTEMBER 1951

WHOLE NO. 11

Greetings and Salutations! It is nice to welcome you back to the philatelic fold after what I hope has been a very pleasant summer for all.

Apparently the philatelic press has not been idle for I have seen many fine articles of interest to war cover collectors; to wit: In The Philatelic Magazine, issue of August 31, 1951, by N. Snowden, an article called "A Second Boer War Miscellany." In The Philatelic Journal of Great Britain, January-March, 1951, notes on Field Post Offices in Korea 1950-51 by H.B.R. Clarke. WCC Member, E. Jagger, has contributed many articles for Stamp Collecting, one of the leading British publications, the latest appearing in the issue of April 6, 1951, with many more to appear in subsequent issues. He mentions, by the way, that his interests are Military Postmarks and Campaign Covers of all countries and all periods.

Also appearing in the British West Indian Philatelist, issue of March 1951, is a very interesting article by Chas. M. Gildart on United States used in Jamaica, explaining postal arrangements of the Marines (who are always there first), the Navy and the Army. If anyone is interested, they might contact E. F. Aguilar, editor, P.O. Box 406, Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.

WCC member J. A. Firebrace of England is anxious to contact those who have covers and information on British Empire war covers, 1939-51, from Egypt, Sudan, Palestine, Iraq, Persia and ex-Italian Empire. We hope that Mr. Firebrace will be able to accumulate some material which should be of interest to many of our WCC members.

Capt. H. J. Vacura is to be congratulated on his recent new assignment to the Liaison Section, Salzburg Military Post. We hope to have some interesting notes on WW-II German postal history in the near future.

Your Sec'y and editor have received letters from WCC member Jesse B. Thomas, now purser on board the SS OMAR E. CHAPMAN, nearing the Azores with a load of grain bound for India, the cover being mailed at Gibraltar and stamped with the PAQUEBOT cancel. Our best wishes, Jesse, Good Luck and pleasant voyage, forsooth!

Our congratulations and best wishes also go to WCC member Rowland Gill, recently assigned to Hdqtrs., U.S.M.C. at Washington.

MORE UN - APOs in JAPAN AND KOREA

CANADA CAPO 5000 & 5001
ENGLAND BAPO 3 - 4 & 5
FRANCE FAPO 5200 & 5201

INDIA IAPO 5600
SO. AFRICA SAPO 5300 & 5301

TAPO 5401 listed in the June Bulletin as used by the Turkish Forces, may have been used earlier by Thailand (Siamose Bn.) which we are advised are now using TAPO 5400.

U.S. - APOs in Korea mid '51, 7-8-20-24-25-51-59-60-64-67-70-71-72-76-201-248-264-301-358-468-612-707-709-901 & Br. 1-902-909-970-971-973.

U.S. MARINES

Marine

First Division #12867 with units 1-8, #2 being the commonest and having two types, one with U.S. NAVY at the top, with Br. and unit at bottom. The other has only unit at the bottom with the rest of the legend at the top.

First Marine Air Wing (MAW) and units use #14009 with units 1 - 3 .

Third Marine Brigade (Prov.) #14030

Training & Replacement Commd, Camp Pendleton, Calif. #14016 with units 1-8, also known to have basic number in an M cancel.

8th Engineer Bn. uses #14025.

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NEW MEMBERS

- 315 GOERTH, Leo F. % Postman's Knock, Box 6, Zone 7, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Air Mail Stationery.
- 316 BANKS, Sam E. 2529 Honeysuckle Ave., Fort Worth, Texas.
U.S.-APOs, British Army & FPOs from Egypt, Palestine &
Trans-Jordan, WW-I & II. Also Civilian Censored.
- 317 BURRELL, Mrs. H.P. Seagate Road, Noroton, Conn.
Specialty - All Korean APOs.
- 318 BENNETTS, L. C. 29 Rose St., Bendigo, Victoria, Australia.
War & Civilian covers from New Guinea & nearby islands.
- 319 LANGER, F. New Stamp Shop, 508 Hornby, Cor. Pender, Vancouver, B.C., Can.
- 320 BARTLETT, G.W. 34 Edgewood Rd., Glen Ridge, N. J. Censored Covers.

REINSTATED

- 264 STROUSE, Earl H. (Not active at present time)

Perhaps it is due to the summer lull, that some WCC members have been lax in sending in their dues. This will be the last Bulletin sent to WCC members who have not paid up their dues. You don't really want this to happen for we have such interesting and timely material to run in the coming issues of the BULLETIN.

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Hope you were successful in obtaining material from the Sept. 17th auction. Some fine material was included. The November 5th sale should also prove of interest, consisting of material from the collection of WCC member A. W. Motz. Here's your opportunity to fill in on many of the APOs and miscellaneous items offered.

If you have material to dispose of, why not get on the circuit list. Price and send to M. R. Baggett, 1615 No. McDowell St., Charlotte 6, N.C.

THE NORTH RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, 1918-1919
(continued from preceding bulletin)

The following British base (army) post offices and field post offices are all that are known at the present writing.

PB 1 - BPO 1; Murmansk
PB 2 - BPO 2, Archangel
PB 11 - Soroka (M)
PB 13 -
PB 14 -
PB 15 - Kem (M)
PB 22 - Kandalaksha (M)
PB 33 - Petchenga (M), served by trawler
PB 44 - Bakharitza (A)
PB 55 - Beresniki (A)
PB 65 -
PB 66 - Obozerskaya (A)
PB 77 - Emetskoe (A)
PB 88 - Kem, later Medveya Gora (M)
PB 99 - Kola (M)

The familiar double-ring British military postmarks were the only ones used (Figs. 1,2). Col. Crouch has offered the writer the very plausible suggestion that the letters "PB" found in these postmarks stand for "Polar Bear", the nickname of the expedition.

Once the British military postal system was established in this area, all mail of all the Allied troops was supposed to pass through it. Before this system was functioning mail seems to have come out on any boat available. Even after the system was set up there is mail that bears no evidence of having passed through it. Other letters from the last months of 1918 were taken to London in British ships where they received the well-known maritime postmark "Received HMS". Some mail is said to have come out in consular pouch. A few letters may have passed through the Russian civilian post office. We have heard of one of these, but have not seen it. A few early covers bear Russian stamps, which were probably used in ignorance or in hope, since they were not required. It is possible that some mail was transported across Russian territory by airplane, though there is no record of any such early air mail. One lot of mail passed through a fire somewhere. We have seen a cover badly charred on the edges. This could have happened, of course, after it reached the United States.

The U. S. Army had a base post office in Archangel, but it seems to have been used only as a collecting and distributing office. There is every indication that the outgoing mail which it collected was sent over to the British base post office for forwarding.

What internal postal arrangements, if any, were established by the other Allied contingents is not known. The few Canadian covers seen are indistinguishable from those from British troops. The only Italian cover seen bears a Russian stamp which is cancelled by a large red official office stamp. This is a double-ring, 38 mm in diameter, with the Italian coat-of-arms in the center. Between the two rings is the inscription: "Corpo di spedizione Russia settentrionale - Comando", showing that the letter probably came from Italian headquarters. The

THE NORTH RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, 1918-1919
(continued from the preceding page)

example seen was not clear enough to copy. It can be said with certainty that there must exist French covers with similar official hand stamps, as all French headquarters had such stamps at the time. It is also almost equally certain that Italian and French covers exist bearing a postmark or other evidence of having passed through British hands.

We now come to censor marks. These have importance because in some cases they are the only means of identifying the cover as coming from North Russia. A few covers bear the British crown censor mark (Fig. 6) which was used extensively elsewhere during the war. It is not believed this was used after the arrival of the British postal units. These seem to have brought with them two types of specially prepared censor stamps. One is a small oval containing an "X" followed by a numeral (Fig. 3). The other is also a small oval containing the letters "PE/C" followed by a numeral (Fig. 4). Does the "PE" stand for "Polar Expedition"? Since both these censor stamps are found on covers from the same F.P.O. or A.P.O. it is difficult to distinguish between them, but we believe that the first mentioned is the base censor stamp. The British censor label is illustrated (Fig. 9).

Most American mail was censored before being handed over to the British who usually censored it again, so that the majority of American covers seen have two censor stamps. Some U. S. units brought with them and used the eagle-in-double-circle type of censor stamp used by the A. E. F. in France. The U. S. base post office also did some censoring and employed the type of base censor stamp used in France (Fig. 5). Several other types of U. S. censor stamps are illustrated in Figs. 7, 10, 15. The Y.M.C.A. censor stamp is especially interesting, as it is the only one known to the writer to have been used in any war or any war area. It was probably unofficial.

Among the most interesting and desirable covers from this expedition are those bearing the imprint of one of the so-called special services organizations. Of these the Y.M.C.A. was the most widely represented in North Russia. Representatives of this organization landed with the U. S. troops and immediately began to function. Their number was considerably increased later. The British soon sent a contingent of Y.M.C.A. men. They and the Americans combined forces to form the Allied Y.M.C.A. which did excellent work with the troops at the front and at the bases. Some Y.M.C.A. stationery of the type used in camps in the U. S. was either taken or sent to North Russia. It had the familiar triangle in the upper left corner. Much scarcer are the rather handsome envelopes issued by the Allied Y.M.C.A. (Fig. 11). These probably arrived too late to be widely used. The Y.M.C.A. inscription on the cover illustrated in Fig. 9 is a blue rubber stamp used by Y.M.C.A. personnel and appears on the front of the cover also.

The most interesting cover we have seen from North Russia is from a Y.M.C.A. secretary in Archangel. The envelope bears the corner card of the Y.M.C.A. in Concord, N.H., and must have been taken to Russia by the sender. It was post-marked at A.P.O. 2. In addition it has on its face the red British crown censor mark (Fig. 6), the Y.M.C.A. censor stamp (Fig. 7) in purple, the Army and Navy Y.M.C.A. hand stamp (Fig. 12) in purple, and in the upper right hand corner the very small purple rubber stamp reading "On active service/with the A.E.F. in Russia/no stamps available" (Fig. 8). The latter must have been used in ignorance, as no stamps were required. This cover may be unique.

THE NORTH RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, 1918-1919
(continued from preceding page)

The Red Cross did extensive work among the civilian population, but it is also said to have worked among the American soldiers, supplying them with various comforts, including stationery. We have yet to see any Red Cross covers from up there.

Just one cover has been seen bearing the inscription in the upper left corner in blue: "N. Russia/Army & Navy/N.A.C.B./Canteen Board". If any other British organizations were represented in this area, we do not know of them. The Salvation Army is said not to have worked in Russia.

Attention is called to the heading of a letter sheet supplied to Canadian troops (Fig. 14). A type of envelope to match must also have been issued, but we have not seen it.

The writer has examined approximately sixty-five covers from members of various contingents composing the military forces in North Russia. About the same number of covers is known to be in the collection formed by Mr. Delf Norona, but the present owner has refused repeated requests for permission to examine them. Veterans of the expedition also have preserved their personal correspondence along with a number of covers. It is certain therefore that more covers, which may give new information, will eventually come into the hands of collectors, but it is equally certain that the total number of covers available to collectors will never be large. It may be added that most covers that have survived are not in good condition because they are made of cheap and unsubstantial paper ill suited for the rough handling they received. The American and Canadian societies of veterans of the expedition, the so-called Polar Bear Associations, might well be able to supply information about the functioning of the postal system, the location of post offices, and so on, but repeated letters to officers of these associations have elicited no reply.

In preparing this paper the author has had the generous cooperation of the following persons to whom he wishes to express his grateful appreciation: Mario Colaiezzi, Col. Guy Crouch, E. G. Cummings, Maxwell Halpern, Mervyn Hertzberg, A. H. Hurlburt, H. H. Mead, William Montgomery, Rev. H. K. Robinson, W. K. Russell, H. M. Sanford, and A. J. Tripp who made the photographs for some of the illustrations.

THE NORTH RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, 1918-1919



15.

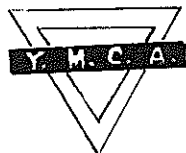


3.



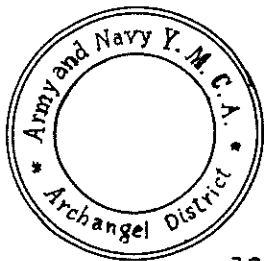
4.

ALLIED



NORTH RUSSIAN
EXPEDITIONARY
FORCES.

11.



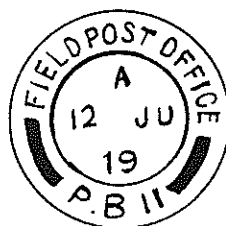
12.



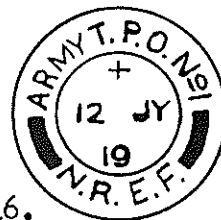
13.



1.



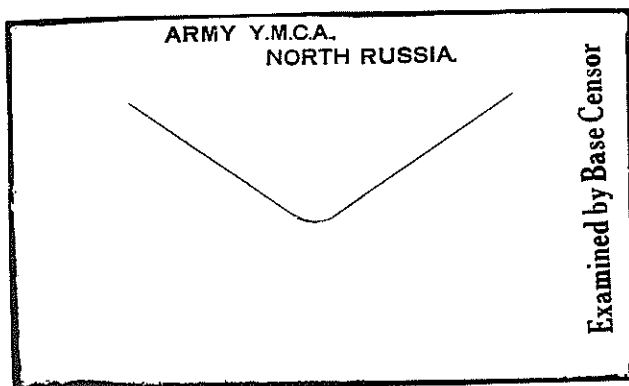
2.



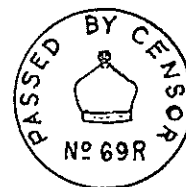
16.

EXAMINED BY
L 12

5.



9.



6.

Censored by

Y.M.C.A.

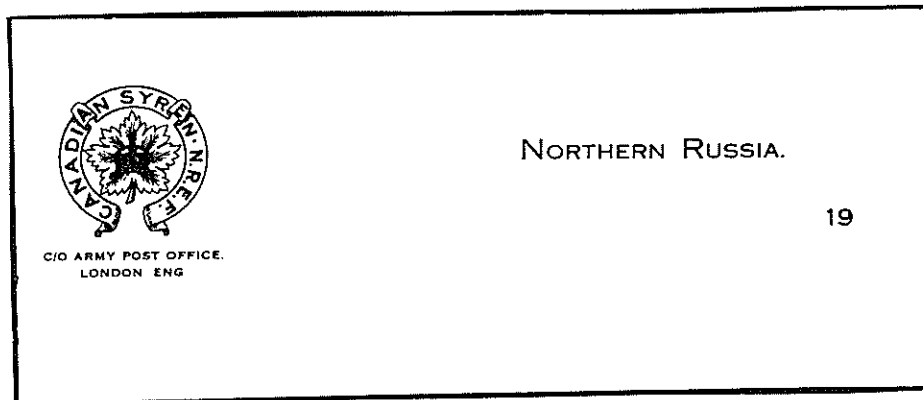
7.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE
WITH A. E. F. IN RUSSIA
NO STAMPS AVAILABLE.

8.

INTELLIGENCE
G. H. Q. Northern
Russia Exp. Force
Passed by Censor

10.



14.

POSTMAN'S KNOCK
SPECIALISTS IN WORLD POSTAL HISTORY

May we suggest that you register your specialty with us...it is the best way to add items to your collection through occasional selections of material for your inspection.

Summerset House Cincinnati 7, Ohio

WAR COVER CLUB FALL MEETING

: Meeting to be held at offices of Scott
: Publications, Inc., 1 West 47th St.,
: New York City, from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.
: on Saturday, November 3rd. Plan to be
: present. Working on plans for special
: guest speaker. More anon. Hope to
: see as many as possible at this meet-
: ing. Why not bring along just a few
: pages of your latest acquisitions? I'm
: sure we'd all like to see what the other
: members are doing!

I have seen a cover postmarked with FIELD POST OFFICE 791 which I believe emanates from Hanover, Germany. Any more data on this?

Lt. Col. Con C. Minick, WCC member #306, has quite a number of "map" envelopes, produced by the Army Map Service, U.S. Engineers, and are portions of maps of Europe, even India and the Pacific Areas. They make an interesting addition to one's collection of War Cover material. Have a couple on hand, which I'll give to the two best letters on "Why I Like to Read the WAR COVER CLUB BULLETIN."

A new major error cancel has been noted, "PORTAL" in place of Postal. This was noted on a cover shown by WCC member H.C. Sanford, reading "Army-Air Force Portal Service, Feb 8 1951, 929 A.P.O."

In Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News, of August 10, 1951, there is a paragraph on Censored Covers, World War II, censorship marks in use in French Equatorial Africa, Everell E. Keys, 14742 Center Ave., Harvey, Illinois, advised that he had received two World War II covers which have the "Commission F" postal control mark. Both are postmarked Fort Archambault, dated 1943 and 1944. One is a soldier's stampless cover, the other a personal or business letter. Mr. Keys would appreciate hearing from any collector who has any covers from French Equatorial Africa with the "Commission D" postal control mark. Never heard of these. Do any members have such items in their collection?

Had a letter from Miss Eva Gray recently sending on for inspection an interesting item which I'd like to mention. It is an Italian prisoner of war card dated January 29, 1918, and found in an abandoned home in Germany. How it got back to Germany after having been addressed to Italy, only to be found by a WW-II G.I., would make a most fascinating tale I am sure.

I understand from James Russell, who is gathering all data on Korea postal markings, that the 7th B.P.O. has a new machine cancel which reads "ARMY-AIR FORCE POSTAL SERVICE." Please keep him advised as to any new items so that we can run an up-to-date list shortly.

Change of address - Richard M. Major, WCC #270, to 3006 - 16th Road So.,
Arlington, Va.

REMEMBER THE DATE - FALL MEETING ON SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3rd. Hope as many members as possible will plan to get together on that date!

J.G.K.