

by charles j.g. verge

Neilson and the Khartoum Relief Expedition, 1884–85

I am fascinated by the little-known areas of Canadian history and, over the years, have written on the philately of some of these. This column is a major reworking of a previous article with much new historical information, new philatelic discoveries, and additional illustrations. It also puts more emphasis on Surgeon-Major Neilson, whose correspondence is the basis of the philately of the Canadian Voyageurs Expedition to the Nile and who largely has been overlooked in previous articles.

Since the 1950s, Canada's participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions is well known, as is the country's involvement in the Boer War, the two World Wars, and the Korean Conflict. I thought it might be interesting to write about the first overseas war or mission in which Canada was officially involved. By that I mean an action outside the North American continent supported in some way by the Canadian government. In addition, I hoped there would be some suitable postal history

Mail To & From the Canadian Voyageurs

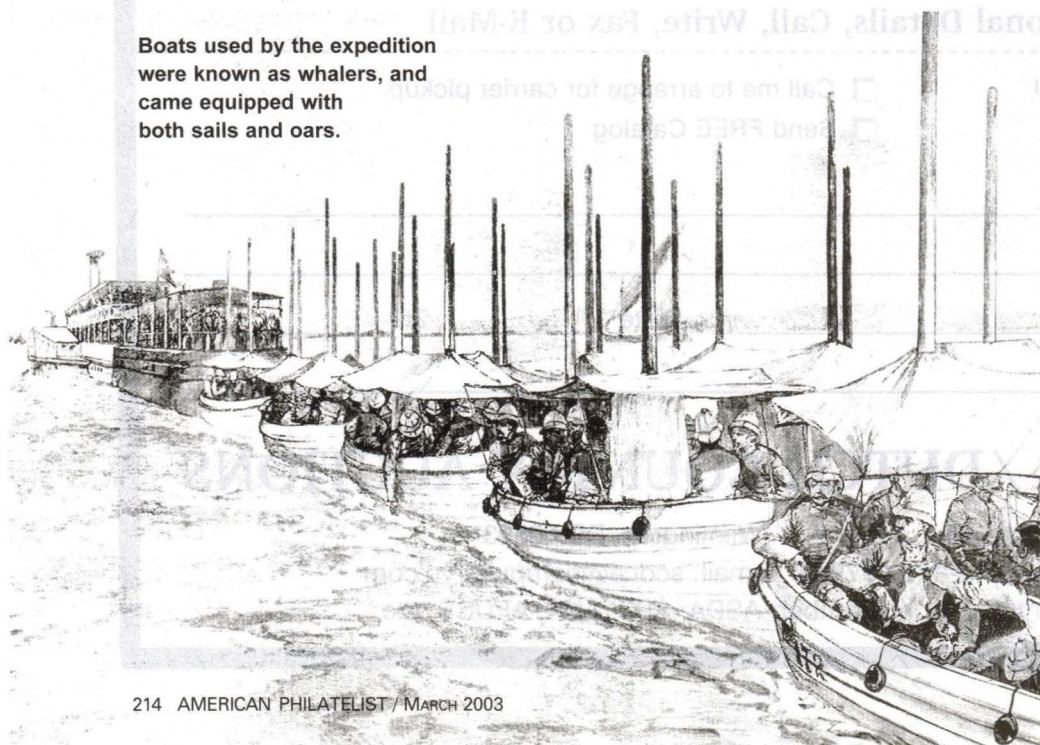
involved. I found what I was looking for in the mid-1880s in Africa: the Canadian Voyageurs Expedition to the Nile.

In 1884 the British government finally decided to undertake a mission to crush the Mahdi of Sudan who had been in open rebellion against the Egyptian authorities since 1881.¹ The British leader of this military expedition, Major-General Charles George "Chinese" Gordon (1833–1885), and the government of Prime Minister William Gladstone felt that this was the only way for the British to avoid getting embroiled even further in Egypt. The Mahdi proved to be wilier than Gordon, successfully capturing key towns, encircling Gordon and cutting him off. The British decided to relieve General Gordon at Khartoum

and sent Adjutant-General Garnet Joseph Wolseley (1833–1913; later to become a Baron and a Viscount, a British Field Marshall and Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, 1895–99) to lead the British Relief Expedition team. (As an aside, Wolseley was Gilbert and Sullivan's model for the role of the "modern major-general" in their operetta *The Pirates of Penzance*.)

For this Expedition to succeed, supplies, ammunition and men had to reach their destination either by traveling 1,750 miles up the Nile by boat or by forced march through the desert. Although the many cataracts and rapids on the Nile made the task difficult, Wolseley chose the boat route. Wolseley had a fair amount of colonial military experience, having served in many parts of the Empire. In 1870 he was involved in the Red River Expedition in Manitoba at the time of Louis Riel's first rebellion. He had commanded an expedition that marched 1200 miles to the Red River Settlement. It was there that he first encountered the *voyageurs*, men who had much experience on the Canadian rivers since they were involved in the lumber trade; while some of the older ones had been active in the fur trade.² Wolseley asked the British Government to telegraph the Marquess of Lansdowne, Canada's governor-general, to request that he send a contingent of these men when it became evident to Wolseley that he was losing too many supplies on the river Nile due to the poor boatmanship of the Egyptians and Sudanese.³ According to Ken Gray in his article "Voyageurs on the Nile" (*The Ottawa Citizen*, January 3, 2001), the Canadian Government, led by its Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, helped in the recruitment but "refused to call the effort a military expedition and didn't want to get formally tied into a British War."

Boats used by the expedition were known as whalers, and came equipped with both sails and oars.





Voyageurs who made up the expedition force.

In his telegram, the Colonial Secretary requested 300 voyageurs and offered them \$40 a month⁴ for six months (\$75 for foremen/wheelmen), a suit of work clothes,⁵ free travel, and rations. In the end, according to the official records, 399 voyageurs were recruited and 380 made the trip.⁶ Depending on who you read, the number of voyageurs involved can be confusing. Some philatelic authors (J.H.E. Gilbert and Ed Richardson) refer to 376 and 377, without indicating the source of their numbers. Official correspondence at the time gives a different number as well. Lord Melgund (later to be Earl of Minto and a Governor General of Canada) wrote to Sir John A. Macdonald on September 23, 1884, saying that 383 men were recruited but fifteen did not show.⁷ Included in these numbers were seven officers and eighteen wheelmen, who also were known as foremen.

The contingent was a mixed bag of nationalities with a preponderance of French Canadians (93), native Indians (77), and Scots and English (36). It is known that at least three of the recruits were U.S. citizens. The voyageurs came from different parts of the country, including Winnipeg (92),⁸ Peterborough (15), Ottawa (172), Montreal (56 — mostly from the Caughnawaga Indian Reservation), Sherbrooke (6), Trois-Rivières (41), and the Maritimes (1). The men retained their civilian sta-

tus, although they operated under Army orders and were commanded by Canadian military officers.

They sailed from Montreal on the S.S. *Ocean King* on September 14, 1884, stopped in Sydney, Nova Scotia, and Gibraltar for refueling, and arrived in Egypt on October 17. Their first months in Africa were uneventful and they spent the time learning how to use the boats made in England and Scotland. These were similar to the boats used on whaling ships and were, in fact, known as whalers. They were equipped with both sails and twelve oars and were thirty-two-feet long. One of the wheelmen, Captain Louis Jackson, wrote:

The day's experience decided my opinion about the boats. Many of my men had been portaging on the Ottawa for different lumber

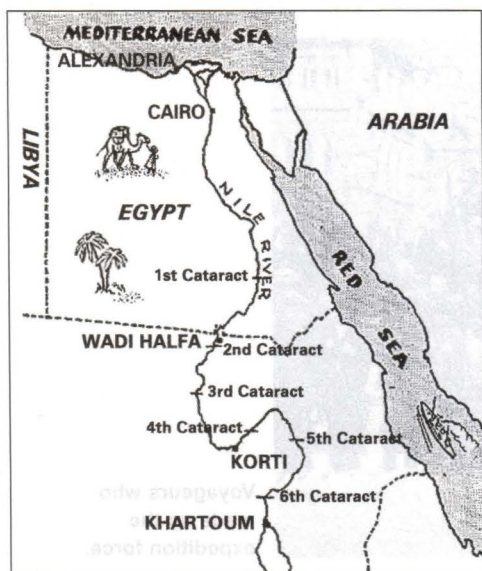
firms and all agreed with me, that whilst the Nile river boats would have been of no use on the Ottawa, they could not be improved upon for the Nile service on account of the nature of the river.⁹

On the way to Khartoum most of the 800 boats were carried by rail to Assuit, then shipped as cargo on the Nile to the first cataract, and finally floated up the Nile to Wadi Halfa, the expedition's staging point.

By January 1885, the voyageurs' six-month contract had run out and most of them returned home. Some of the returning troops remained in Ireland when the ship stopped there on its way to Halifax and, in the end, only 260 voyageurs traveled the last leg of the trip home to Canada. Before they were allowed to leave the Sudan, however, the volunteers were asked to remain and eventually 89 men decided to extend their stay. They had their salaries increased to \$60 a month and were given a new set of clothes. Along with the rest of the troops they reached Khartoum (on January 28) too late to relieve the besieged forces — Khartoum had been taken and Gordon killed fifty-six hours earlier — but they were present at the defeat of the Mahdi's troops.



The four wheelmen from Manitoba were (from the left) Captains William Robinson, J. Weber, R.A. Russell, and John S. Seeger (the latter three were U.S. citizens).



Wadi Halfa, the expedition's staging point.

However, it was after the battle that their most important role was performed. Their great skills were needed to run the rapids on the upper Nile. In early April 1885 it was decided that the services of the voyageurs were no longer needed. Like their colleagues, they were given tours of Cairo before boarding a ship to England. Unfortunately, a smallpox epidemic broke out in their ranks and two of them died in London. This outbreak prevented the remainder from being reviewed by Queen Victoria, who wanted to thank them personally for their work for the Empire. All told, sixteen voyageurs perished in the expedition.¹⁰

The Canadian voyageurs had been extremely successful at the tasks assigned to them. They received many tokens of appreciation from the pleased

British government including the earlier guided tours of Cairo and the pyramids. In 1886 all the men and officers received two decorations: the Egypt Campaign medal and the Khedive Star. In addition, 43 men and one officer, from the 89 who stayed on for additional service, were awarded the Kirebkan clasp to add to their Campaign medal. This was a surprising award since, as unarmed combatants, the voyageurs had not taken part in the fighting at Kirebkan. The Canadian Government also recognized their efforts by raising a cairn with a plaque dedicated to the "superb rivermen" on the banks of the Ottawa River. This was the river where most of these men had plied their trade.

A good proportion of the men in the expedition likely were illiterate and this could explain why there is so little surviving correspondence. What little there is would most likely have followed the mail routes of the time: from Canada to England by packet ship and then on to Egypt by ship. Once there, it probably was handled by forwarding agents in Alexandria (e.g., R. J. Moss & Co.) or Cairo and passed on to the voyageurs, the mail traveling on the same route as the rations. The voyageurs, because they manned the Nile riverboats, may have carried the mail themselves at one point; however, there is no record of their doing so. However, the possible illiteracy of many of the men does not completely explain the lack of material in collectors' or museum hands. Indeed, Ed Richardson in his article "Canada's Voyageurs Contingent On the Nile — 1884–1885" (*BNA Topics*, March–April 1983, pp.

40–47), mentions the names of two boatmen who were far from illiterate: Alexander McLaurin, a boatmen foreman, was the *Ottawa Free Press* correspondent, while William Robinson, a wheelman who operated the steamers pulling the whalers, later became a prominent businessman and banker in Winnipeg.

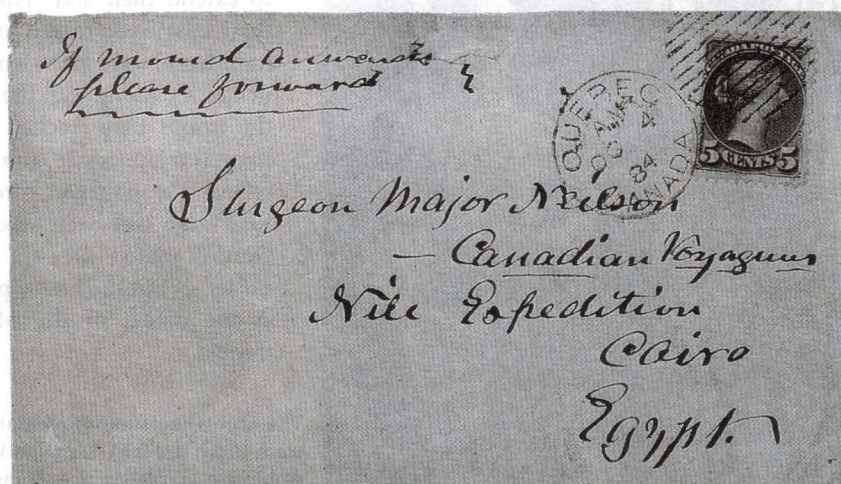
Another wheelman who could write was Louis Jackson, a native of Caughnawaga, an Indian reservation near Montreal. On his return from the expedition he wrote a book, published in 1885, in which he gave an account of the role of the North American native in the Expedition. In his book he noted that the *Ottawa Free Press* reported that he had drowned, when in fact it was a bowman, Louis Capitaine (drowned October 30, 1884, near Simneh). Captain Jackson is not the only voyageur to indicate that the Canadian Voyageurs Contingent received newspapers from home with the mail. Sergeant Gaston P. Labat (1848–1903) of the "B" Battery of the Canadian Rifles Regiment wrote another account, entitled *Les Voyageurs Canadiens à l'Expédition du Soudan ou Quatre-vingt dix jours avec les Crocodiles* (L. J. Demers et Frère, Québec, 1886). Labat, in fact, is considered a minor author in nineteenth century French-Canadian literature.

It is my view that some one-third of the voyageurs were able to write, and therefore I believe there should be a lot more material available to collectors. Perhaps it is simply a field that it is yet to be discovered.

Lt.-Colonel Frederick Charles Denison, leader of the Expedition,¹¹ records in his diary that he received mail at least six times and sent mail out once.¹² Some of these letters can be found in the Denison papers in the National Archives of Canada, albeit without their envelopes. In one of the letters to his wife he wrote:

I have entirely run out of stamps and cannot get more so will have to chance it going through all right to you. I have been keeping them for your letters, and have sent several of John's without, as I am pretty sure they will go all right to him.¹³

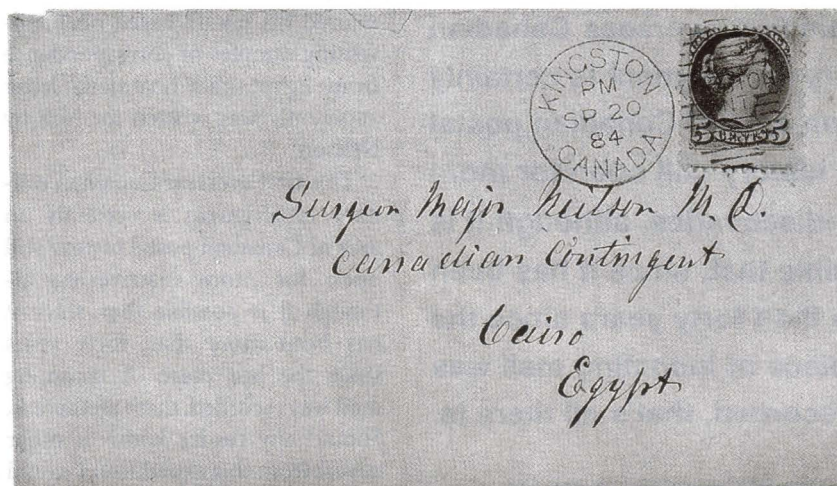
In another letter to his wife, Denison tells her "I sent you a post card a little



At one time the earliest known cover related to the expedition was dated October 4, 1884.

while ago by mail that was just leaving.”¹⁴

All the existing covers to Egypt, however, were sent to one man, Surgeon-Major John Louis Hubert Neilson.¹⁵ His wife, who then lived in Quebec City, sent at least three of the eighteen recorded covers to him. Hubert Neilson, a Red River veteran, was at the time a member of “B” Battery of the Canadian Artillery Regiment and was appointed medical officer of the Contingent. He received his appointment after directly approaching the Governor General, Lord Lansdowne. Neilson’s regimental sergeant, Gaston Labat, was able to join the Expedition because of the personal recommendations of Neilson and the Minister of Militia, as non-commissioned officers were not part of the Imperial Government’s recruitment program. Neilson kept a diary of his trip to the Sudan as he had done when on the Red River Expedition.¹⁶ The diary is hard to read because of the small scrawl used by Neilson and the blue pencil he frequently used. Therefore the full diary has not been read for this article. The frontispiece to his Sudan diary reads “Surgeon-Major J. L. Hubert Neilson, M.D., C.A., ‘Canadian Voyageurs’ Gordon Relief Expeditionary Force, Sept. 1884.” A few of the entries I was able to decipher mentioned mail. For example he reports receiving mail for the first time on October 21, 1884, from “Willie, Father, George Hayter and a Miss R.” The January 10, 1885, entry partly reads: “write to Willie and postal to Normy (?)” The next day his entry reads: “Mail arrived. Letter from Willie 10th Dec. Xmas from father, Normy (?) & Fred with letter & several papers.” Neilson was also the Gordon Relief Expedition’s correspondent for the *Toronto Star* and the *Nouvelliste* of Trois-Rivières. In his diary he keeps track of all of his reports to both newspapers and the length, in pages, of the letters he sends them. His first report to the *Star* was sent on September 22 and that to the *Nouvelliste* on November 4. Surgeon-Major Neilson stayed with the 89 re-engaged voyageurs and returned to Canada with them. He later went on to become the first Director-General of Medical Services for the Canadian militia.



The earliest known cover related to the Voyageurs Expedition is dated September 20, 1884.

J.H.E. Gilbert prepared the first record of the surviving covers and postcards sent to and from the voyageurs for a paper he read before the Royal Philatelic Society, London, on April 12, 1962. This was subsequently published as a two-part article in *The London Philatelist* (Vol. 71, October 1962, pp. 159–63, and November 1962, pp. 186–90). In it Gilbert indicates that twelve covers have been identified and recorded. Members of the expedition mailed four of these to Canada and eight were sent from Canada to Egypt. Subsequent to Gilbert’s report, five more covers had been found when I wrote my June 1999 article “Canadian Voyageurs and the 1884–85 Khartoum Relief Expedition” in *Scott Stamp Monthly*. Two of these were also reported by Richard Stock in “The Canadian Contingent of Voyageurs, Sudan 1884–85” in *The Camel Post* (No. 61, Spring 2000). Stock also mentioned a September 24, 1884, cover that was for

sale at Christies on February 28, 1996 (Lot 456). This was at the time the earliest recorded cover as it had been mailed ten days before Gilbert’s earliest (October 4). Since then another cover is now the earliest. It is dated September 20, 1884 and was sold in Jim A Hennok’s December 16, 2000 sale (Lot 546).

An intensive review of the existing literature and auction catalogues has allowed me to update Gilbert and Stock’s record of the Nile Expedition covers. The results of this study can be found in the accompanying table. I have listed the covers in order of date of mailing and have given them a unique number. I also have provided, for reference purposes, the numbers given by Gilbert and Stock to the covers they listed. I can attest to having seen illustrations or the originals of sixteen of the twenty-two covers listed (#1, 3–7, 9, 11–16, 18–19, and 21). In addition, I respect the research and authorship of Ed Richardson and have no doubt that he could prove the existence of the covers he mentioned (#8, 10, 17, 20, and 22) when he wrote his article. This leaves only cover #2 for which I could find no visual proof.

There are now eighteen recorded covers to Neilson, compared to the eight recorded by Gilbert in 1962. Only one cover to Neilson was underpaid, bearing a 3-cent Small Queen (Scott 37) rather than the 5 cents that paid the UPU rate for letters overseas weighing less than ½ ounce. The other



One of only three known postal cards sent from Egypt.

This first overseas Canadian military involvement is certainly an area of Canadian postal history still open for more discoveries, although it is possible that, since it has been more than forty years since the last piece of incoming mail was recorded, that's all there is.

area of interest is that those covers originating in Neilsonville all have manuscript postmarks. This is not surprising as the post office only opened on October 1, 1884. The proof books do not record any hammer for this post office. This does not mean it did not have one, it just means there is no record of one. So the first date of a canceling device for Neilsonville is unknown, but the office had a split ring canceling device by December 23, 1884, when the last recorded letter to Neilson was posted. Before the hammer became available, mail was taken to the main post office in Quebec City and canceled there. The Neilsonville post office was situated close to the Quebec Bridge near Beauport and changed its name to Le-Pont-de-Quebec on January 1, 1920.

No new covers sent from Egypt have been discovered since 1962. This is quite remarkable since many of the boatmen and officers must have written home. Only three postal cards and a letter are recorded. Fred C. Denison sent one of the Egyptian postal cards as Christmas card to his sister, Mrs. Delamere. Only one boatman's letter has survived. It has been recorded for years in the philatelic literature as coming from a C. Nofallum and was sent to a Winnipeg lawyer, Henry Nason. There is no such name as "Nofallum" in the roster of Canadian Voyageurs; however, there are several McCallums. A thorough examination of the cover shows that it came from a voyageur named N. McCallum from Winnipeg who re-engaged after the first six months.¹⁷ Was he illiterate or had he

injured his hand? Based on handwriting samples of correspondence from Egypt, this boatman's letter apparently was written for him by Neilson.

This first overseas Canadian military involvement is certainly an area of Canadian postal history still open for more discoveries, although it is possible that, since it has been more than forty years since the last piece of incoming mail was recorded, that's all there is. Should any reader know of other covers from this expedition I would like to be notified. I also would like to hear of any visual proof of the postal card to Mrs. Mackenzie (#2).

Endnotes

1. The British considered the Mahdi, whose full name was Mohammed Ahmed al-Mahdi, an Arab nationalist and Muslim religious zealot.
2. The name "voyageurs" attached to these men was somewhat of a misnomer since few had been involved in the fur trade. They were mostly raftsmen skilled at riding rafts and logs down very rough rivers.
3. The Colonial Secretary's telegram is dated August 20, 1884.
4. Although most writers on this subject agree that the pay offer was \$40 a week, some others disagree. One of these is George Pendleton, who indicated that the salary was \$5 a day in his article "Voyageurs on the Nile" in the September 1942 issue of *The Beaver*.
5. Alan Rogers in "Ottawa to Khartoum: The Lost Battle" (*The Citizen*, September 23, 1984) says that the men "were given outfits of dark grey jacket, trousers and felt hat. They were also issued one jersey, one pair of drawers, two pairs of socks, a pair of moccasins, a flannel belt, a towel, a tump line and a canvas kit bag. They were to be issued pith helmets and boots when they reached Egypt."
6. The difference between the number of recruited voyageurs and the number who actually sailed may be accounted for by the fact that some did not show up when the ship left Montreal while three others defected when the ship stopped at Sydney, Nova Scotia, to take on coal. One of the deserters was replaced by an on-site recruit.
7. National Archives of Canada. Macdonald Papers, Vol. 84.
8. The men recruited in Winnipeg were not all expert voyageurs. They included lawyers, teachers, and other men seeking adventure.
9. Capt. Louis Jackson, *Our Caughnawagas in Egypt* (W. Drysdale and Co., 1885), page 27.
10. Of the sixteen, not all died in Africa. One fell

ill and died on the S.S. *Ocean King* while making the Atlantic crossing at the start of the expedition. Six drowned on the Nile River, two were killed falling from a train, and seven died from disease including the only officer to die on the expedition, Lt.-Col. William N. Kennedy.

11. Lt.-Col. Frederick Charles Denison (1846–1896), second son of Colonel George Taylor Denison, was educated at Upper Canada College and Osgoode Hall. He was called to the bar in 1870. Lieutenant 2nd Administrative Battalion Niagara Frontier, 1865; Cornet, Governor General's Body Guard for Upper Canada, 1865; served Fenian Raid, 1866; Lieutenant, 1868; Captain, 1872; Major (Canadian Militia), 1876; Lt.-Col. (Canadian Militia), 1884. Orderly Officer to Col. Wolseley, Red River Expedition, 1870; Commanding Officer Governor General's Body Guard for Ontario, 1872–76; Commanding Officer Voyageurs, 1884–85. Commanded Canadian Bisley Team, 1893. Conservative Member of Parliament for Toronto West 1887–96. Author *Historical Record of the Governor General's Body Guard and Its Standing Orders* (Toronto, 1876). Married 1874, Julia Abigail Macklem. Died April 15, 1896.

12. Denison records in his diary that he received mail on October 27 and November 2, 19, 20, 1884; January 4 and March 29, 1885. The original of the diary is housed at the Toronto Public Library.

13. Toronto Public Library, Denison Papers, Camp Hamdah (Hamdals?), January 25, 1885.

14. Toronto Public Library, Denison Papers, Bivouac near Dulhe Island, February 6, 1885.

15. Col. John Louis Hubert Neilson (1845–1925) was a doctor and surgeon. Grandson of John Neilson, owner of *The Quebec Gazette*. Born in Quebec City, educated at St. Mary's College, Montreal and Laval Universities, and The Royal Victoria Army Medical School. Served as surgeon with the 2nd Quebec Battalion of Riflemen in the Red River Expedition, 1870–71. Appointed surgeon in newly-formed Permanent Force Artillery, 1871. Red Cross Surgeon in the Russo-Turkish War, 1878. Medical Officer for The Royal Military College and the Kingston Garrison, 1880–97. Medical Officer for the Canadian Voyageurs Expedition, 1884. First Director General of Canadian Militia Medical Services, 1898 until his retirement in June 1903. He was also an amateur historian, having published *The Royal Canadian Voltigeurs (1794–1802)* (Lovell, Montreal, 1895), and translating and editing *Jacques Viger, Reminiscences of the War of 1812* (New Printing Co., Kingston, 1895).

16. Both diaries are found in the National Archives of Canada, MG29, E37 (File 1).

17. There is no age given for this N. McCallum. There are two other McCallums listed: Alex from Ottawa (age 26) and William (age 22).

Record of Mail Related to the Canadian Voyageurs in the Sudan, 1884–85

Gilbert ¹ No.	Verge No.	Stock ² No.	Date	To	From	Remarks
1	1	1	Nov 22, 1884	Mrs. J.M. Delamere, Toronto ³	Capt. E.E.A. Denison ⁴	postcard
2	2	2	Nov 22, 1884	Mrs. Mackenzie, Toronto ⁵	Capt. E.E.A. Denison	postcard
3	3	3	Dec 12, 1884	Mrs. J.M. Delamere, Toronto	Lt. Col. F.C. Denison ⁶	postcard
4	4	4	Nov 13, 1885	Henry Nason	N. McCallum	Originally recorded as from N. Nofallum. Written by Surgeon Major Hubert Neilson.
				To	Remarks	
—	5	—	Sep 20, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Kingston duplex. The newly discovered earliest cover related to the Expedition.	
—	6	15	Sep 24, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Quebec duplex.	
5	7	5	Oct 4, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Quebec City. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital and received Jan 6, 1885.	
—	8	—	Oct 4, 1884	—	Quebec City. Recorded by Richardson. ⁷	
6 ⁸	9	6	Oct 31, 1884	H. Neilson, Esq.	Montreal duplex. The only underfranked letter (3 cents instead of 5 cents), it received postage due stamps in both Cairo and Wadi Halfa.	
—	10	—	Oct 1884	—	Winnipeg. Recorded by Richardson.	
7	11	7	Nov 1, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Manuscript Neilsonville. Richardson records as being from Quebec City. Mail from Neilsonville at the time was canceled in Quebec City.	
8	12	8	Nov 7, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Kingston duplex.	
9	13	9	Nov 21, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Quebec duplex. Received Jan 10, 1885.	
12 ⁹	14	12 & 14	Nov 27, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Kingston duplex. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital and received Jan 6, 1885. Gilbert did not date this cover, and Stock has copied the Gilbert entry (#12) and has, I believe, duplicated this entry as #14 in his list.	
—	15	13	Nov 27, 1884	Dr. H. Neilson	Manuscript Neilsonville. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital.	
10	16	10	Dec 2, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Quebec City. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital.	
—	17	—	Dec 2, 1884	—	St. John, New Brunswick(?). Recorded by Richardson.	
11	18	11	Dec 4, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Quebec City. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital.	
—	19	—	Dec 4, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Kingston duplex. Forwarded to Tangour Hospital and received January 6, 1885.	
—	20	—	Dec 11, 1884	—	Kingston. Recorded by Richardson as owning it.	
—	21	—	Dec 23, 1884	Surgeon Major Neilson	Manuscript Neilsonville. Forwarded to Korti or Khartoum. Only 5-cent UPU cover made up with 2-cent and 3-cent Small Queens.	
—	22	—	unknown	—	Kingston. Recorded by Richardson.	

1. J.H.E. Gilbert, "1884–1885 Campaign. The Canadian Voyageurs' Contingent in the Gordon Relief Expedition," *The London Philatelist* 41, no. 839 (November 1962): 186–90.

2. Richard Stock, "The Canadian Contingent of Voyageurs, Sudan 1884–85," *Camel Post* 61 (Spring 2000): 28–39.

3. The addressee, Mrs. Joseph Martin Leslie Delamere, is Elizabeth Mary Denison, a sister to both Capt. Egerton Denison and Lt. Col. Fred C. Denison.

4. Captain Egerton Edmond Augustus Denison (1861–1886). Youngest son of Col. George T. Denison and brother of the Commanding Officer. Appointed Lieutenant in the Militia component of the Staffordshire Regiment, 1881; Captain, 1884. Refused appointment in Canada as officer of the Canadian Voyageurs Contingent. Went to Egypt at his own expense and was appointed there. Subsequently held a military appointment in The Gold Coast. Was invalided home to Canada and died onboard the SS *Vancouver* en route, July 8, 1886.

5. The addressee is unknown and not a member of the extended Denison family.

6. Denison's diary entry for that date reads, "writing all day."

7. Ed. Richardson, "Canada's Voyageur Contingent on the Nile, 1884–1885," *BNA Topics* (March–April 1983): 40–46.

8. Gilbert and Stock do not record a "day" for this cover.

9. Gilbert and Stock do not record a date for this cover, although it is clearly readable and Gilbert identifies the November 27 date as being a hammer number.