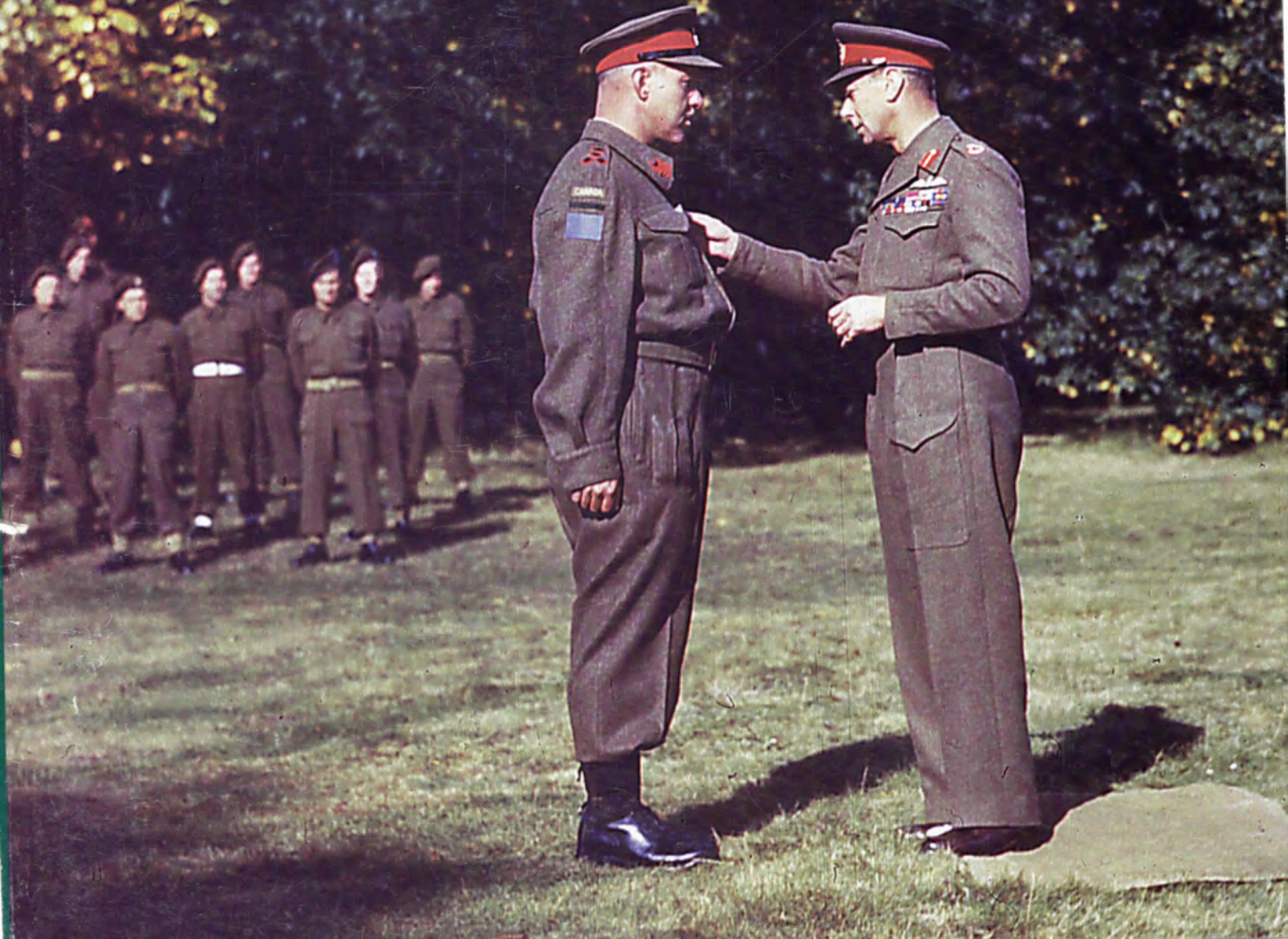




The Rifleman

The Journal of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

1997





PRIME MINISTER / PREMIER MINISTRE

In January 1998, Canada experienced one of its worst natural disasters as a terrible ice storm battered Eastern Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes. In its wake, entire communities were plunged into cold and darkness, leaving millions of Canadians vulnerable and unprotected from winter's harsh wrath.

As the severity of the disaster became known, and at the request of the provinces, a call was issued to the members of Canada's Forces, to come to the aid of local authorities overwhelmed by the storm's scope and severity. To that end, I am pleased to recognize the contribution of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, our country's oldest continuous serving infantry unit, to "Operation Recuperation"—the largest ever mobilization of the Canadian Forces in a disaster relief effort in Canada's history. Your performance, and indeed that of all Regular and Reserve personnel, was exemplary.

Canada's Forces were everywhere that help was required, from aiding hydro crews in restoring heat and light to beleaguered communities, to transporting those who needed medical assistance. Above all, you were a symbol of hope, comfort, and security to people whose lives had been turned upside down.

On behalf of all Canadians, especially the victims of the storm, thank you for your hard work and dedication. It was in keeping with the fine and distinguished tradition of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, and we are all very, very proud of you.

OTTAWA
March 1998

TORONTO

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Mayor

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A Message from Mayor Mel Lastman

On behalf of my colleagues on City Council, I am pleased to extend greetings to all the readers of The Rifleman, an annual magazine of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

The Queen's Own, a Toronto-based Regiment, is Canada's oldest continuously serving infantry unit, presently in its 137th year. Members of the Regiment have distinguished themselves in both World Wars and in peacekeeping missions with the United Nations. Currently, several members are serving in Bosnia. In Canada, members of the Queen's Own assisted during the Manitoba floods last year and this past January they were part of the effort to help during the recent ice storm in Ontario and Quebec.

I am delighted to offer my congratulations to the publishers of The Rifleman and I am honoured to have this opportunity to send my warmest regards to all the members of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

Cordially,

Mel Lastman
Mayor

Minister
of National Defence



Ministre
de la Défense nationale

OTTAWA, CANADA K1A 0K2

It gives me great pleasure to extend warm greetings to The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in this your 137th year.

The Queen's Own holds pride of place as one of Canada's oldest continuously serving infantry units. Throughout a long, distinguished history, the Regiment has served with professionalism, dedication and valour, and has done so consistently. And, over the past year, you have built on that outstanding legacy of achievement on peace support missions overseas and by assisting Canadians in Manitoba and in storm ravaged Central Canada. You have every reason to hold your heads high.

The key to effective service, such as that you provide, is endless training. It may not be as exciting as operations but, as you well know, it is a necessary step to combat readiness. I'd like to salute all members of the Queen's Own for devoting your summers, weekends and evenings to becoming skilled soldiers and valuable members of the Total Force.

Canada

And let me say a special word to the veterans of the Queen's Own who have served Canada in peace and war. As a country we have reaped the rewards for what you did for us; Thank you cannot begin to express what we owe you.

I would like to extend best wishes to all members of the Queen's Own regimental family, and, on behalf of all Canadians, thank you for your dedication and professionalism.

Arthur C. Aggleton



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Editorial

Capt Raziel Zisman, Int O

This editorial has been inspired by a person whom I never had the opportunity to meet, but whose legacy to the Regiment is important for a number of reasons. LCol J.G. Spragge, DSO, OBE, ED, who would later be promoted Brigadier, commanded the 1st Bn The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada from 16 April 1942 until 25 August 1944, when he was appointed commander of the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade.

From the earliest days of the conflict, he had helped prepare the Regiment for war, leading the QOR on D-Day and through the difficult months ahead. All veterans I have spoken to describe him as a great CO who developed a close bond with his men.

His leadership and compassion were tested at war. Between D-Day and August 25, 1944, when he was appointed commander of the 7th CIB, the Regiment suffered 640 casualties, including 209 fatalities. Although some of these casualties would have been replacement troops, LCol Spragge would have personally known the vast majority.

It was a heavy burden particularly when, as happened in Le Mesnil-Patry, attacks were ordered without permitting sufficient preparation with costly results (see page 32). Jock Spragge did his duty, with grace and forbearance, coping equally well with the enemy as with unforeseen raids on his scarce supply of Scotch (see page 46).

When I first saw the photo of LCol Spragge, looking at the camera, the above thoughts went through my mind. The honour of being decorated by the King is dampened by wartime experience. Command and leadership exact a heavy toll.

So what, you may ask. Well, a few years ago we had the Somalia affair. The connection is that LCol Spragge, and after him, LCol S.M. Lett, DSO, together with the officers and NCOs, led the Regiment at war and it was not always smooth sailing. The Unit Routine Orders report not only postings, transfers and strength increases but also strength decreases, casualties other than battle (often a code term for 'battle fatigue') and disciplinary matters. For example, on 9 Aug 44, the UROs report that punishments meted out by a Field General Court Martial, across all units in the theatre of operations, include penal servitude for rape, assault on and robbery from a civilian, cowardice in the face of the enemy, looting and theft from a civilian, desertion, disobeying a lawful command to go to a forward area, self-inflicted wounds, assault on a sentry, stealing rations (1 tin of cigarettes) and while a sentry being asleep at his post. The longest sentence was 5 years penal servitude.

On 24 Oct 44, we are informed that 6 soldiers, of which one was a QOR, were sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard

labour for self-inflicted wounds, following which they were to be "discharged with ignominy" from His Majesty's service. The very next day, the Adjt, Capt W.J. Weir, informs us in the UROs that two Rfn and a LCpl "are Absent Without Leave from the first flight of Privilege Leave to Brussels (sic). The Bn quota is hereby reduced 25% and will be further reduced or cut off, should there be delinquents any further." Those three sure didn't make any friends in the Bn. There are also several references to loss of vehicles. For example, on 11 Dec 44, Courts of Inquiry were detailed to inquire into the circumstances under which, first, the 5 cwt CM 4231433 was lost (B63910 CSM Martin CC was appointed member) and, second, the loss of the Norton motorcycle WD No C4605530 (Capt B Dunkelman was appointed president).

The lesson re all of the above is that leadership means dealing, not just with the annoying disruption of daily routine by the enemy, but also coping with the frailties of human nature. The QOR coped, took appropriate action, learned the required lessons and marched on.

Today, after the 1997 Manitoba flood and the ice storm in Ontario and Quebec a few weeks ago, the Army is once again in the news in a manner more in keeping with its tradition. The phrase "once a Queen's Own, always a Queen's Own" applied when Ken McLarty, a QOR veteran who served in Ben Dunkelman's "D" Coy, fighting in, among other places, at Mooshof in February of 1945, and who now resides in a remote area near Lanark, Eastern Ontario, wrote the QOR Association relating that following the ice storm he was "totally surprised to be offered assistance by a very pleasant Queen's Own rifleman who appeared at my front door. In truth it brought a tear to my eye to see the Big 2 badge." We report on the QOR's contribution on pages 25-26.



The official Army caption reads: Brig John G. Spragge, DSO, OBE, recently awarded the OBE by H.M. The King at an investiture somewhere on the Western Front (Passed for Publication, SHAEF Field Press Censor, 6 Nov 1944) (Photo above: DND 370035; Cover Photo: DND 370639)



LCol J.G. Spragge, centre, followed by two men of his communications group, marches with the Regiment towards a concentration area in Sussex during a 3 Cdn Div Manoeuvre (July 7-10, 1943) (Photo: DND 20992-R)

I do not know whether Charlie Martin ever found out what happened to the 5 cwt or whether Ben Dunkelman, or his successor as president of the Court of Inquiry, ever determined what happened to the Norton motorcycle (vehis traded for Calvados? - if anyone knows their whereabouts please contact the Adjt) but we are painfully aware that both Charlie and Ben are now gone, as is also the case with the other QOR veterans listed on the inside back cover.

Words cannot do justice to the contribution our veterans have made to the Country and to the Regiment. In the case of Ben Dunkelman and Charlie Martin, brought together by war, by Courts of Inquiry about missing vehicles, and by the heroism they both displayed in, among other places, the Balberger Wald, the words that come to mind is ordinary heroes: Both were modest heroes who loved people and hated war, but were never afraid of the duty war imposed upon them. Both were venerated by the men they served. Both returned to civilian life after a full war (in Ben Dunkelman's case, wars, as he also distinguished himself in Israel's War of Independence in 1948). They married wonderful brides, raised families and continued to contribute until the very end to their loved ones and to the nation. To a casual observer in the street, they looked like friendly grandfathers, which they were, but they also were, as we know, much more than that.

We are fortunate to have known them. Many others we never met. Rfn Maxwell Lyons who died of wounds in Sept 44 was a QOR volunteer from St John, N.B., who never got to see his daughter, Rita Mae, born after his arrival overseas. Capt H.G.W. Bean, MC, who performed heroic deeds in Le Mesnil-Patry, was killed by an enemy shell on Valentine's Day 1945 (p. 52).

Sgt Mark Shannon, in his tribute to Charlie Martin (p. 48) issued a challenge to our veterans to seek out our younger Riflemen in order to pass on to them their memories and experiences. One should extend the challenge to the serving Riflemen to also reach out while there is time, it is their privilege. Here are some whose stories should be known:

CQMS Jack Martin, who manned mortars at Le Mesnil-Patry and who, after helping defeat the enemy in WW2, returned to battle a few years ago, this time against historical inaccuracy, when he discovered that very few memorials were in place in Europe and, even worse, some of the existing ones were misleading with regards to the role played by the QOR. Now, thanks to his efforts and those of many others on both sides of the Atlantic, the QOR has impressive memorials in France and The Netherlands. (pp. 19-20).

If you live near the Barrie area, contact Rfn



June 6, 1944: QOR "B" Coy CSM Walter Wallis lies wounded by the beach, early afternoon of D-Day, in the shadow of the bunker. (Notice the gun barrel, 75mm, upper left) (DND Photo 93 515).

Honorary Colonel's Report

by BGen D.A. Pryer, CD

It is with pleasure I acknowledge the battalion's accomplishments in 1997 and express my congratulations to all ranks for their contributions to this result. Every major task was carried out effectively. This

included success in Central Area's Combat Readiness Evaluation, very high marks in the annual technical and administrative inspection, support from a guard of riflemen and the always-effective Band to the June rededication of the Bernières-sur-Mer memorial by a group of QOR veterans and members of the Regimental Association, support to the Canadian



BGen Pryer with Ted O'Halloran (left) on the balcony at the Maison de The QOR of C

Parachute Centre, and the work of our volunteers with the Manitoba Red River flood operation for three weeks in the spring.

My congratulations also to the 77 volunteers from the battalion who participated in the ice-storm relief operation in January '98 (Op Recuperation). For the first time in many years the Ontario militia worked in formed units and sub-units, contributing about 2,000 of the 5,000 troops working in Eastern Ontario (further details inside).

As the Regular Force downsizes due to financial constraints and becomes even more short of personnel for U.N. missions

abroad and disaster relief at home, it will be up to the militia to carry more of the load. We must also continue to be ready for more significant operations. Our effectiveness will become even more crucial to fulfilling

the missions of the Canadian Army, and the success of the unit in '97 is proof this can be done with militia leadership and good support from the regular force and the regimental family.

Many Queen's Own veterans, retired members, and members of the Regimental Association and other affiliated groups gave very freely of their time and resources in the past year. Thanks

to their help we are truly an effective regimental family in the finest tradition, and this behind-the-scenes work plays a big role in the strength of the unit.

Our thanks to LCol Dan Mitchell and his Canadian Parachute Centre in Trenton for their strong support of our parachutist tasking, which gives our soldiers the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities so effectively.

Finally, my thanks to the CO, LCol Tony Welsh, whose unsparing efforts have for another year been crucial. We will have to remain vigilant as always to the unit, but '98 has had strong start.

Frank Tascona, who as a stretcher-bearer on 27 Oct 44, was badly wounded but nevertheless attended to and rescued, while under heavy fire, an officer, a sergeant and two men, before collapsing from loss of blood. That earned him an immediate MM.

Or talk to our Honorary LCol, MGen H.C. Pitts, MC, CD, who as a young Lt with the 3d Bn PPCLI in Korea, led a volunteer 32-man special wiring party to rebuild 3600 yards of frontage, across old minefields on obvious enemy approaches, coming at times as close as 200 yards from known enemy positions. It was very hazardous duty, particularly so as the task could only be completed over two nights. On the first night out, two men were killed by a mine. The young officer retained complete control over the party and completed the tasks allotted.

Today, the Regiment continues to serve in a manner that honours the achievements of those who have preceded us. The varied articles in this issue of The Rifleman, covering past and present activities, reflect the strong connection between our past and the present, a connection reflected in the continuity of service to the nation by the

Regiment, as an infantry unit of the first order. On that basis, the articles in this issue are also a strong pointer to the future, a future where The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada will always be In Pace Paratus.



June 6, 1997: The other side of the seawall, fifty-three years later: The QOR's sacrifices are remembered.

Commanding Officer's Report

LCol A.R. Welsh, CD

I am very proud to report that 1997 proved to be a tremendous year for The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. As you may recall from my previous articles in this publication, the Reserves in Canada are currently moving through some difficult and uncertain times and The Queen's Own have been no exception. However, as time passes and the direction we are heading in becomes clear, I think that we find ourselves well positioned to take advantage of these uncertainties and carry on as one of the strongest units in Ontario.

In this article, I shall briefly review some of our recent accomplishments and discuss the way ahead.

The main focus for the training conducted in 1997 was to prepare the unit to take part in the new Combat Readiness Evaluation (CRE). This event saw all elements of 32 Canadian Brigade Group (ex-Toronto District) being evaluated in the field against the expected Battle Task Standards for the platoon in defence and withdrawal. At the time of writing, the specific evaluation results were not available but the early indications are that the unit did extremely well in all aspects and will place near the top of the Brigade. Special mention must be made of the efforts of Major Bruce McEachern. As the OC of 60th Company, Bruce not only successfully prepared the company for the evaluation but also placed first in the Brigade in the sub-unit commander evaluation. One other point of note is that the engineers re-learned a key lesson in the requirement for liaison with forward units prior to the execution of a Brigade obstacle plan. This lack of communication resulted in a rather scenic firefight, which caused several friendly casualties. It was a good experience for all.

One other inspection of sorts, which the unit underwent recently, was the annual Administrative Inspection held by the Brigade staff. This year, for the first time in many, the event was more of a "staff assistance visit" than a formal inspection. Last year, the unit stood 2nd out of 17 in the district. This year, although no official standing was assigned, the unit was said to have "improved over last year". This one line in a report sums up weeks of work on the part of the Deputy Commanding Officer (Major John Fotheringham), the Officer Commanding Victoria Company (Major Martin Delaney), the Chief Clerk (Sgt Nancy Boone) and entire full-time unit cadre and Victoria Company. Well done to all.

The CRE results are one of the components which the unit will be rated on over the next 8 months. The other aspects which will be looked at are the unit's ability to support taskings, our ability to control our budget and our ability to train and retain

soldiers. To date, the unit stands in good stead to pass this reporting period successfully.

This past year saw a continuation of our efforts to send members of the unit on as many different events as possible. This year's



LCol Welsh congratulates Sgt Nancy Boone, the recipient of the 1997 CO's Sword Award.
(Photo: Dan Halcrow)

effort, entitled Rambling Rifleman 97, saw the Band and a small Guard contingent supporting the efforts of the Regimental Association in the placing of new memorials on and around the D-Day landing beaches in France. More detail on these trips is contained in this publication. Suffice to say that my number one instruction to the Guard Commander, Captain Sandi Banerjee, was adhered to; this being to have fun. Special mention must also be made of the effort put forth by the Padre, Captain Craig Cameron, in his dogged determination to visit and chronicle the resting places of all the unit casualties during the Second World War. This is a true labour of love and will serve as an invaluable source of information for the Regiment in the future.

Another memorable event this year was the annual Men's Christmas Dinner. Along with the awarding of the usual trophies such as the CO's Sword Award (Sgt Nancy Boone), the Airborne Rifleman of the year (MCpl Kim), the Unit Fitness Award (Rfn Dias) and the Reg Walker Trophy (Sgt Frank Demaine), a new award was added to the roster. The British Airborne Forces Association (BAFA) presented, for the first time, an award for the Most Improved Rifleman (Cpl Behbahani). I would like to acknowledge and thank the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and BAFA for their continued support. Further, mention must be made of the outstanding efforts made by the PMC of the Junior Ranks Mess, Cpl

Winston Hewlin, for his organizational prowess in pulling off a very successful dinner.

One other inevitable aspect of life in the Reserves is the continuous turnover of personnel within the unit. This year, I was fortunate to welcome Captain Steve Tibbetts from the bowels of the Combat Training Centre HQ in Gagetown, New Brunswick. Steve brings with him an enthusiasm and background which will ensure that he is a true supporter to the unit. Also, I am extremely pleased to welcome Warrant Officer Perry Gresty to the unit as the Operations Warrant Officer. WO Gresty has already proved himself to be a resourceful individual with a real feel for the training and comfort of the troops. Also, Sergeant Judy Willan joined us last year from 25 (Toronto) Medical Company and Sergeant Jeff Syer joins the full-time staff from the RCR Battle School Toronto Detachment. The new arrivals, coupled with our existing full-time staff, serve to ensure that the unit is well taken care of during the week and always prepared for some first class training. Thank you all for your continued support.

One occurrence of the past year that we all could have definitely done without was the passing of Company Sergeant Major Charlie Martin. Over the years, Charlie has been a great support to the members of the unit and has served as somewhat of a roll model for it's junior members. I always enjoyed my time with Charlie and I always learned from him. For many, he seemed to embody the drive and accomplishments of the Regiment in the past and served as a bridge from those days of adventure into our own. Charlie will be missed by all who knew him.

One final comment on our current operations is the recent departure of seven members of the unit on Operation PALLADIUM, Canada's contingent in the former Yugoslavia. Six of these members (Captain Adam Saunders, Corporal Suurd, Riflemen Harrison, Simpson, Ioanni and Morgan) are to serve with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment. The final member, Captain Rick Cunningham, has been placed with the contingent headquarters group. I wish all an effective deployment and a safe return.

Now for the year to come. With our successful completion of the CRE, we are now allowed to shift the focus of our training towards some less rigid and more challenging guidelines. Some specific directions that I have given for the weekend training that we will undergo are as follows:

1. Each event will include a Mobility problem of some kind. This could include a mode of transportation (skis, helicopters, etc.) or a difficult piece of terrain.

2. Each will include a navigation problem

that must be handled at the lowest level.

3. Each must include a live-fire aspect.

4. Each must require some problem solving at the lowest possible level.

With each of these stipulations in mind, I am confident that we will have a thrilling training year that will push all to the hilt. The culmination of this training will see two, 9-person contingents deploying overseas to visit with our most recent affiliated organization, The Brigade of Gurkhas. Details on the training events will be announced early in March.

For the remainder of the unit, we will be deploying to Exercise STEADFAST WARRIOR 98 in CFB Petawawa in August of this year. This exercise will include a 9-day patrolling school for the infantry and, as it will be co-ordinated by the Queen's Own, will be one of the best training events in recent years.

In summary, I trust that you will enjoy this magazine. As usual, it represents a herculean effort on the part of all involved, most notably including the editor, Captain Raziel Zisman. I am looking forward to the year ahead with great anticipation but I am compelled to remind all that there remains uncertainty for the Reserves in the future. The only way through this is to remain forever, IN PACE PARATUS



Ex Jungle Fever, June 1997: Live fire in a wooded area using pop-up targets.

Editor's Acknowledgment

This edition of The Rifleman would not have been possible without the superb support from all contributors and from the many who worked diligently in vital preparation tasks. We thank the assistant editors, Maj John Fotheringham, CD, and Maj Peter Lomasney, CD, for their most valuable contribution, 2Lt David Vandevenne for chasing recalcitrant authors (a thankless task undertaken by the Editor in previous years!) and Sgt Art Gay for his dedication to QOR veterans. We are most grateful to all of them. A special word of thanks to Sgt Nancy Boone and the staff at the QOR BOR, and to LCol A.R. Campbell, CD, and the staff at Colour Tech for their invaluable assistance. Finally, the Editor wishes to thank the Honorary Colonel, BGen D.A. Pryer, CD, and the CO, LCol A.R. Welsh, CD, for their confidence and patience. We've tried to avoid errors and purge all typos. The Editor assumes responsibility for any that remain.

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Regimental Sergeant Major's Report

by CWO A.L. Sarossy, CD

I was reading some of the articles produced by the Lessons Learned branch of the CF and started to reminisce about some of the things I have witnessed over the years.

The year was 1973, with Canadian troops and aircraft stationed in Lahr and Baden Baden, Germany, participating in NATO exercises. In that summer and fall, a militia contingent of 120 soldiers augmented 3rd Mechanized Commando in Baden Baden. That 120 was just about one third of the effective strength of the Bn, and if you only counted rifles in sections, the percentage was even higher. 3rd Mech



The RSM (left) congratulates MWO Scott Patterson on his promotion. (Photo: Don Halcrow)

Cdo was a unique organization since the entire Bn wore maroon berets and airborne insignias, but only about 10% of them were jump qualified and they all rode around in M113s. As young, impressionable amateurs, they showed us just how to be creative in their genuine role as members of NATO.

The role of the brigade was constantly emphasized and stressed with expressions like "we are the first line of defense", "this is the real thing" and "we have to be ready at a moment's notice". We did our indoctrination training and then joined the professionals. In the PI room, kit was everywhere, packs, webbing, water cans and other stuff or stuffing as I learned later on. We were given a kit list and told to have our kit packed and ready at all times which, of course, we did. Later on we saw that other packs in the PI were filled with partially inflated air mattresses and target balloons. The best pack belonged to the PI WO, which was nicely squared off with sharp corners and flat sides and pockets. He took great care in rigging his pack with coat hanger wire to hold its full shape.

We also found out that many of the tops of steel helmets were cut off. Oddly enough, CE cut the tops off with a blow torch without the slightest hesitation. Once in the carriers, the highest priority was to remove the standard bench seats

and replace them with custom made boxes that we thought were for the storage of various vital supplies. As it turned out, these strange compartments were more in

the area of personal comfort than military stores. I was told not to bring too much beer with me for the exercise, as it was considered too bulky and was available in every town. Liquor was OK, but no mix. There too, the CQ would supply the necessary condiments.

You may have gathered by this trip down memory lane that you are in a different army today. One of the points I would like to make is on drinking in the field. The events I

have described above were very real and I considered them silly at the time and still do today. I have heard a fair amount of grumbling about not being able to drink in the field and although I may not agree totally with the policy, I do agree with the overall concept.

A lot of problems have not occurred with this policy and I have not noticed any detrimental effects. The argument that we should be treated like adults may be valid but perhaps higher ups consider this as treating us like soldiers instead. Party when the exercise or operation is done? Whatever the intent, part of soldiering is following orders. However, I am willing to discuss the topic over a cool one in the mess.

I greatly enjoyed this year's Queen's Cup. To the best of my recollection, this was the only occasion where we won the tug-of-war. Just to offer a wee bit of advice, the only thing required is a bit more teamwork.

Congratulations to the Ice Age Warriors. The Montreal Olympics in 1976 was the last time the Militia was called out in such numbers. I dare say someone at the time probably said the next time we call out the Militia will be when hell freezes over...

Camp this year will be a Queen's Own Rifles affair, our show exclusively, hard and fast. Be there. In Pace Paratus.

60th Company - Year in Review

Maj B.G. McEachern, CD

1 Sep - 31 Dec 96: Capt John Fotheringham (OC 60th Coy) traded positions with Maj Bruce McEachern (DCO) on 1 Sep 96. Capt Adam Saunders (Coy 2IC) and MWO John Wilmot (CSM) moved to Gurkha Coy (recruit trg) at the same time, and their 60th Coy posns were assumed by Lt Adam Harmes and WO Scott Patterson. The outgoing officers and NCOs are to be congratulated for a job well done in the previous two years.

1 Pl (37 troops) was commanded by Lt Ryan Sword until civilian work commitments forced him to hand over to Lt Chris Morrison in late October. Sgt Cecil Parris was platoon 2IC as well as a section commander, and the other section commanders were Sgt Frank Demaine & MCpl Steve Wolfe. The section 2IC's were Cpl Lee Harrison, Cpl Wen Gin, and Cpl Morgan Illsley.

2 Pl (38 troops) was led by Lt Wil Beardmore. His 2IC was Sgt Donovan O'Halloran, and the section commanders were Sgt Doug Halero, MCpl Kevin Shaidle, and Cpl Dave Harmes. The section 2IC's were Cpl Desmond Morgan, Cpl Thane Gamble, and Cpl Inasio Kim.

Warrior Training: Sep and Oct focused on the Warrior programme for the fourth year in a row (basic refresher tests, now called Individual Battle Task Standards). The tests are mandatory and now nationwide, but fairly basic. They lost their novelty some time ago for serving soldiers, and in past years have taken a lot of training time.

Our Regular Force cadre (Capt Mike Attrux and WO Owen, PPCLI) got the tests out of the way fast in two innovative weekends. Half the company completed the programme on Ex Rusty Sword (Sep 13 - 15, Borden) by doing the dry tests concurrently with the rifle shoot, finished in the late evening. The 13 km march was conducted the next day.

The rest of the company did Warrior training on Ex Polished Sword (Oct 11/12) - a 24 hour special. An 'all-nighter' at the Armoury got through the dry refresher tests from 2000 hrs Friday until 0500 hrs Saturday, followed by hot breakfast and onto the bus for Borden at 0615 hrs. The rifle shoot was conducted the rest of the day, with a return to Moss Park and dismissal at 2045 hrs.

It was a worthwhile experiment, but some soldiers naturally looked a bit shaky by the end of the day after 36 hours without sleep, except what they got on the bus.

The 13 km march was conducted on a Wed evening (Oct 30th) on the Martin Goodman trail on the waterfront, from HMCS York to the Humber River and back (marching order, with ruck and weapon). As usual, the blustery weather looked worse

than it was, and every company soldier made it much faster than the 2 hr 25 min limit.

The Warrior training qualification now lasts two years, so refresher training will



Maj McEachern congratulates Rfn Bonscer on his receiving his perfect attendance award during the Men's Christmas Dinner
(Photo Credit: Don Halerow)

only come up again in the fall of 1998 for these soldiers.

Rece Patrols: The company moved into refresher training on recee patrols in Nov, culminating in Ex Musket Skirmish (22 - 24 Nov 96, Borden). Each recee det conducted two patrols on a cold weekend with plenty of snow underfoot, under the leadership of Sgt Todd Holmes, Sgt Doug Halero, Sgt Donovan O'Halloran, Sgt Bill Paton, MCpl Kevin Shaidle, and MCpl Steve Wolfe. The enemy force was supplied by Vics Coy, BHQ, and cadet volunteers.

The patrols were dropped off at various locations around the perimeter of CFB Borden on Friday night, and then started their approaches. The patrol commanders used Night Vision Goggles borrowed from the RCR in Petawawa to good effect, and some tried the engineers' two-man inflatable boats. Those who didn't know the 'two-man' part is theoretical soon discovered it when they ended up in the icy water.

MCpl Steve Wolfe didn't let the lack of a boat stop him from taking his patrol across a 'little' stream, with a jury-rigged log bridge. He fell in anyway, but didn't seem to mind as much as his much shorter 2IC (Cpl Wen Gin). Cpl Gin was a good sport as always, which is more than I can say for Range Control when they heard about patrols hopping over fences to get into the base!

Lt Wil Beardmore was also the company's full-time staff officer during the year. He was pretty happy he could rent a commercial truck when there weren't enough army trucks, and decided a bright red,

uncamouflaged 4 x 4 would be perfect to lead the company buses in serious motoring to Borden on Friday night. Unfortunately, his plan was frustrated by one of the most timid bus drivers we've seen -- it can't be much fun to drive a decent truck at 80 km/h all the way to Borden.

It was Sgt Holmes' last exercise with the Queen's Own before he and Sgt Doug Hutcheon joined the Regular Force infantry. They and their professionalism and talents are missed by the unit.

JANUS training: Four officers, including Capt Kevin Sheedy, Lt Chris Morrison, and Lt Wil Beardmore, attended CFB Kingston for a weekend to train with the Governor General's Horse Guards on the JANUS computer simulator (Nov 29 - Dec 1st). We laid out a fully mechanized company defensive position on the computer as part of an armour-heavy battle group. Then we got to watch a Fantasian Motor Rifle Division come at us. The DS found the solution unconventional, but just as effective as the others.

Promotions and awards: By Christmas, a number of company pers had been promoted, including:

Lt Harmes	to Capt
WO Patterson	to MWO
MCpl Laloggia	to Sgt
MCpl Wolfe	to Sgt

Cpl Wen Gin, Rfn Mike Bowers, and Rfn Darren Kiervin received awards at the Christmas Dinner on December 11th for perfect attendance at training since they joined the company.

1 Jan - 30 Jun 97: The company consolidated into one very large platoon (67 pers) in January due to a shortage of officers and NCOs. Lt Wil Beardmore led the platoon with the assistance of his 2IC, Sgt Bill Paton. Sgt Parris served as assistant platoon 2IC where needed.

The section commanders were Sgt Frank Demaine, Sgt Steve Wolfe, and Sgt Tom Fabry. The section 2ICs alternated amongst Cpl Lee Harrison, Cpl Thane Gamble, Cpl Stafford Simpson, Cpl Inasio Kim, Cpl Dave Harmes, and Rfn Mike Bowers.

These changes helped to consolidate our leadership resources, but we continued to be challenged by the lack of NCOs in the unit.

Winter indoc (17 - 19 Jan): Ex Cold Steel was diverted from Meaford to CWO (Ret'd) Josh Figa's farm in Goodwood, north of Toronto, when a snowstorm spooked the regular force in Meaford into closing the training area, less than 12 hours before we were due to arrive.

Standard tent group routine was combined with hide occupation drills and construction of improvised shelters. MWO Patterson, Sgt Parris, and Sgt Wolfe were the only NCOs

able to attend.

Capt Sheedy and Rfn Bowers claim they were too hot the night they spent in their improvised igloo (luckily for us Mr. Figa is much more accommodating about destruction of trees for improvised shelters than some Range Control pers I know on army bases). He also didn't mind serving as contact man for recovery when the LSVW wouldn't start in the minus 25 degree temperature early on Sunday morning.

Paintball night: We had a good night with a visit to Sgt Splatter's Paintball facility in Toronto on Wednesday night, 4 February. The old warehouse with log cabins inside has lots of room for houseclearing drills, which we practised. Then half the soldiers attacked the other half with paintball guns.

While it was a hastily organized attack without any practice, it was a surprise to see some of the attacking sections let themselves get pinned down by defending fire. But it was a reminder of the lessons from our WW II vets: those who let themselves get pinned down suffered more casualties than those who kept their momentum and used drills to move forward as fast as possible.

Fighting patrols: We then moved into fighting patrols, culminating in an evaluation in May. This was more than refresher training, since the new QL3 infantry grads didn't know everything about fighting patrols, and everyone needed a lot of practice on SOPs.

Ex Long Night (Feb 21 - 23, Meaford) was a practice raid, based on Wednesday night workups. Unlike 60th Company's rainy 'winter' exercise the previous February, this one was cold and there was lots of snow, although there was water under the icy crust in many places.

Capt Kevin Sheedy and Lt Beardmore haven't yet sorted out whether or not Sheedy's enemy were really in the wrong set of ruins on Sunday at 0500 hrs, but it seemed to work out. Capt Adam Saunders joined our enemy force, and sorted out two sorry looking 48th Highlander privates who must have ticked off their CSM in a very big way -- he sent them a tent with no baseplate.

Ex Ghost Walk (March 21 - 23, Borden) was a range shoot to zero the weapons and confirm weapons handling drills. The weather made it our third consecutive winter exercise: bright, sunny, and snow everywhere. It made for some cold feet in combat boots.

The night shoot of the machine guns was spectacular, and we threw grenades on Sunday morning, the first time in some years they have been available during the training year.

Rappelling night (Wednesday, 26 March): The troops got to rappel from the roof of Moss Park Armoury.

Ex Winged Dagger (April 18 - 20, Meaford) was a live-fire raid. It also turned out to be our fourth winter exercise: over four inches of snow arrived in a slow but steady snowfall for almost 24 hrs, starting

Saturday morning. Sgt Paton was the pl 2IC, and the other NCOs were Sgt Demaine, Sgt Fabry, and MCpl Kohler. Cpls in attendance were Gamble, Gin, Green, Harmes, Harrison, Illsley, Morgan, Pinter, & Vulakovich. The section fire and movement practice on Saturday morning was an eye-opener. It was successful, but some soldiers were clearly nervous about combining live rounds with movement, and were not as effective as they could have been in their use of ground and weapons handling.

Mr. Beardmore had to interrupt his orders to warm the patrol up with a jog around the hide. By the time his orders were finished, the ground model was completely covered in snow, apart from the lines marking the northings and eastings.

Range Control NCOs must be bred specially, because the Meaford ones were just as difficult as our Borden friends. Without coming to see our position, they decided to halt the exercise on Sunday morning just before the attack was to go in, because of the fog.

After I sorted this out, we proceeded with the raid, but the support base had to be moved forward (and then moved back after it fired), which reduced the realism of the



Ex Jungle Fever (6 - 8 Jun 97, Meaford): Our new Unit Training Assistant from the PPCLI (WO Perry Gresty), who arranged a 'drive-by' C9 (machine-gun) shooting of pop-up targets from a moving Grizzly carrier.

exercise and took a lot of time. We won't be attempting any weather-dependent exercises in Meaford in April for a long time!

As a result of our observations on that weekend, we are going to incorporate live-fire training into every weekend exercise whenever possible.

Many thanks are owed to the BHQ, Vics Coy, and Gurkha Coy personnel who helped us as safety staff, particularly Capt Dave Clarkson (Range Safety Officer), Capt Sandi Banerjee (Asst RSO), Capt John Fotheringham, Capt Al Champion, Lt Larry Hicks, the RSM (CWO Sarossy), WO Gerry Senetchko, Sgt O'Halloran, Sgt Shannon, & MCpl Shaidle.

Manitoba flood: Several soldiers in the company, including Cpl Mark Akong and Rfn Zbigniew Klakowicz, participated in the flood prevention & rescue operation mounted by the PPCLI in Manitoba's Red River valley in April & May.

Stalking in Don Valley Parkway (Wednesday evening, 7 May): Another popular event was this force-on-force stalking ex on a beautiful May evening. Some sections picketed sites in the parkway while others tried to get to them. Sgt Frank Demaine and Sgt Tom Fabry both brought their sections in successfully without detection, and managed to startle Lt Beardmore in the process.

Ex Eagles Nest (23 - 25 May 97, Meaford): This assessment ex was the culmination of the year's patrol training, planned very effectively by Capt Rick Cunningham (Ops O), with assistance from the Meaford police, the Area Intelligence Company, and assorted enemy personnel. Cpl Winston Hewlin's sigs section again provided superlative comms.

Lt Beardmore led the raid, and he and Sgt Paton were assessed by Regular Force Warrant Officers from the RCR in Petawawa. Other NCOs in attendance were Sgt Fabry, Sgt Laloggia, Sgt Parris, Sgt Chris Thomson, Sgt Wolfe, & MCpl Kohler. Cpls in attendance were Blanco, Bowman, Green, Harrison, Illsley, Lawlor, Pinter, & Vulakovich.

For once it didn't snow, but we did have rain. Led (deceived?) by the Int Company's guide, the patrol descended the escarpment down a very steep, overgrown, and slippery valley that proved to be one of the more difficult approaches we have used in some time.

The raid was evaluated by the Reg Force NCOs as effective, with Mr. Beardmore's battle procedure and orders particularly effective. All participants in the exercise are to be congratulated, particularly the soldiers who lugged back the enemy biological weapon (a foot-locker full of bricks).

The patrol and the work-up training were difficult. But the patrol members have the satisfaction of knowing they came together as a good team with excellent SOPs, good patrol skills, and the ability to succeed with a mission in tough conditions.

Ex Jungle Fever (6 - 8 Jun 97, Meaford) concluded the year's training with the CO's jungle-lane ex. 'Jungle lane' refers to live fire in the woods with pop-up targets. This was well conducted with the assistance of our new Unit Training Assistant from the PPCLI (WO Perry Gresty), who arranged a 'drive-by' C9 (machine-gun) shooting of pop-up targets from a moving Grizzly carrier.

We also fired the service rifle (C7) and pistol. Cpl Jason Green won the prize for the best individual score on the weekend. The soldiers also got to throw a fake satchel charge at a Grizzly after it drove over their trench. We finished off with a smoker in the bivouac site. Meaford doesn't often authorize militia units to have a fire or beer in the field, but they have actually been very good to us (despite my comments about Range Control).

Stand-down was June 18th, when the CO

Victoria Company 1997 Report

2Lt E. Burke

promoted Rfn Ian Howard, Darren Kiervin, and George Vacek to Cpl. We ended the training year with about 60 effective personnel in the company, after releases and transfers to Vics Coy of several support pers (Cpls Mike Chisholm, Inasio Kim, and Valentine Udobi).

Summer: Lt Beardmore left us on May 27th to take his free-fall parachutist course at the Canadian Parachute Centre in Trenton, and then to work as an admin officer with the Sky Hawks Parachute Team for the next twelve months. He is to be congratulated for a job well done this year, despite shortages of NCOs.

Cpl Dave Harmes and Cpl Inasio Kim successfully completed the Junior Leaders Course in the summer, a long and tough assignment. Cpl Harmes placed second on his course.

No summer camp was conducted, given the higher priority of the upcoming October readiness evaluation.

1 Sep - 31 Dec 97: CSM Scott Patterson was transferred to BHQ to serve as Drill Sergeant-Major, although the wily WO Gresty soon had him brainwashed into calling himself QMSI (as they do in the Patricias). MWO John Wilmot returned as CSM.

Lt Karl Haupt returned to 60th Coy from Ops to take command of 1 Pl (45 pers), and WO Phil ten Kortenaar graciously postponed his annual fall/winter absence to do the platoon 2IC's job until November.

The section commanders were Sgt Frank Demaine, Sgt Mark Shannon, and Sgt Al Couture (finally liberated from recruit training). Cpl Dave Harmes took charge of the Wpns Det.

Capt Adam Harmes stepped down from company 2IC to command 2 Pl for the evaluation phase, with Lt Derek Poteralski as his understudy (just completed the RESO Phase 2 Infantry course). Sgt Donovan O'Halloran was appointed platoon 2IC -- I didn't think it wise to put a man of such few words with Lt Haupt, who has the same tendency, and paired each of them off with someone more voluble.

The section commanders were Sgt Tom Fabry, Sgt Jeff Syer (also liberated from recruit training at long last), and Sgt Justin Thorn (temporarily lent to us from his recruiting duties by Gurkha Company). Cpl Kim started out with the Wpns Det, but handed over to Cpl Currie due to Kim's long-planned wedding in early October.

The Combat Readiness Evaluation was the unit's top priority in Sep & Oct, focused on defensive ops at the platoon level. Three training weekends were required prior to the evaluation.

Ex Bold Start (5 - 7 Sep 97, Borden) had the soldiers do some innovative shooting under the tutelage of Capt Steve Tibbetts, our new Regular Force officer from the RCR in Gagetown, and a very experienced marksman.

Continues on Page 41

This year was a particularly successful training year for Victoria Coy, the Regt's CSS Coy. Thanks to the efforts of the OC, Maj Delaney, the 2ic, Capt Banerjee, all those in Vics Coy and the support of the Vics veterans, it was an interesting and productive year.

New to Vics is Capt Tremblay from the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment in Kingston. He was recently appointed the Tpt, Sigs, and Maint officer. 2Lt Burke successfully completed her RESO Phase 1 & 2 officer training at Borden and is now the QM. MWO Kelly, the RQMS, successfully completed his QL7 in the spring. MCpl Alexander remains as the Coy armourer.

Cpl Kim has had a busy summer completing ISCC, and an even busier fall getting married! Cpl Ioanni is away this year on a UN tour. The Fin Sect remains unchanged this year. Cpl Hewlin remains as Tpt NCO and MWO Kelly remains as RQMS, once again breaking in a new QM! Unfortunately, 2Lt Perrault is no longer with the unit, opting to hang up his beret.

Vics Coy is fortunate to have WO ten Kortenaar as CSM. Cpl Pindar remains as the Coy driver, Cpl Tsang as the vehicle tech, and Cpl Chan and Cpl Kizito as the Fin clerks. The Sigs detachment consists of Cpl Chisholm, Cpl Green, and Cpl Udobi. Pte Chien is now the Coy Med A.

Vics Coy has had a busy fall supporting 60th Coy in their preparatory exercises and range weekends for the CRE. Vics Coy has been conducting Training days, which include lectures, PT, and the Coy smoker.

Last spring seven Vics Coy troops, along with many other QOR troops, went to both France and England. The trip started in England to represent the Regiment at the D-Day commemoration and went on to work with our allied units in England. After that, the troops proceeded to France where they provided a guard of honour for the unveiling of several Queen's Own Rifles of Canada war memorials in the Normandy region.

The Fin Sect is breaking in a new pay system. The RPSR, Revised Pay System for Reserves, is essentially a new computer program that allows for much of the paperwork to be entered

directly into the computer. There is also a change in the new ID cards, which are similar to the new driver's license. These are not available yet at the unit level, but are for the troops going on UN tours.

Clothing stores is expecting the new pattern combats that will look similar to the new cam covers on the helmets within a year. Vics Coy has been



A man of many talents: Victoria Coy CSM PJ ten Kortenaar in close contact with the CO, all for a good cause (and laugh) at the Rambling Rifleman auction in May. (Photo Credit: J. Figa)

intently focusing on their primary objective, which is supporting 60th Coy in any way possible for the Combat Readiness Evaluation. Immediately after that the Coy will be working up to the Annual Technical Inspection, for which preparations are already underway. Never a dull moment in Vics Coy, as soon as the ATI is finished the Coy will immediately shift their focus on supporting the QL2/QL3 course this winter.

Under the new tasked element organization, the QOR is to have 2 infantry platoons and a Coy HQ. Under this proposed reorganization there will be a redistribution of equipment from the brigade command pool, which will mean changes in the QM.

Best of luck to all Vics Coy troops tasked out. Congratulations to all those recently promoted and may this training period be as successful, if not more, than last year's.

In Pace Paratus

The Regimental Band and Bugles Operation Rambling Rifleman '97

(Operation Busby)
by WO (ret'd) Al Tweten

PLANNING: Can we do it?

About a year ago, the thought of a trip to England and France appealed to members of the Band & Bugles. The idea was certainly attractive, however, it immediately raised a number of questions that would require answers. Could we raise the funds? Could enough people get the necessary time off work or school? Would there be enough things to do in England once there? How would we accommodate everyone?

Rather than dwell on the negatives, in Queen's Own tradition, we tackled the problem and immediately set forth on establishing our goals and working towards achieving them. Of course, the biggest obstacle was raising the money required. The airfare alone for 40+ people meant an expenditure of at least \$25,000.

The first order of business was to determine exactly when to do the trip. Our Association was planning a return to the shores of Normandy to honour our war-dead and it seemed appropriate to include a trip across the English Channel to support their efforts. With D-Day +53 in mind, we then had to decide if we wanted to be in England before or after the Sixth of June. Some preliminary contacts, with the help of Mike King, a friend of the Regiment, indicated that he could arrange events where we could perform in England prior to France and the decision was made.

FUND RAISING: \$\$\$ Required

We knew that there would be no public funding for our trip so work began to raise over \$60,000 that we knew would be needed. All the paid engagements that we did were put into a common fund, donations were solicited and different events, such as a silent auction, were conducted. The pot began to grow! Members of the Band who could afford it agreed to contribute a set sum of money and those who could not afford it were looked after as well.

PREPARATIONS: What to do?

Now that the problem of having enough money was going to be resolved, the next order of business was to determine what would we do once there?

The Director of Music of the Minden Band of the Queen's Division, Capt Rob Meldrum, was in Canada scouting out the possibility of having his band perform in Canada. They indicated that they would be pleased to host us and perform with us sometime during the trip. Their hospitality could be returned when they visited Canada.

We agreed to perform in a small village in the north-east of England by the name of Walsingham - a sleepy village that would more than triple in size during their annual

religious festival. Accommodations would be in the converted RAF Station of Swanton-Morley - now home of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers.

While being hosted by the Minden Band we would spend two days at the Suffolk Country Fair - an agricultural exhibition that draws people from the north-east area of the country. We would also have the pleasure of performing a "pre-ceremony" show for the graduating basic training class at Basingborne.

Bulford, near Salisbury Plain, would be the site of a memorial service to honour the fallen from 1 Can Para. This was a training base during WWII and was the jumping off point for them on their D-Day Landings 53 years ago. We were pleased to be able to agree to assist them not only with the march-past afterwards.

So that we could also enjoy being tourists, trips to Kneller Hall and the Royal Marine School of Music were considered.

Planning for France proved to be the easiest part of the trip for a number of reasons. We would be supporting our Association, we would be visiting places we had been to in 1994 and we were somewhat familiar with the surrounding countryside.

THE JOURNEY: Let's go...

One would think that it would be a simple matter to buy 43 seats on an aircraft and just leave. Not true! Some of our members chose to leave early, enjoy a vacation with family members or friends and join us in England. Others chose to leave on a different date after the engagements. When these details were worked out, it meant that we could leave.

Two days before our trip found us in the bandroom packing. Uniforms were put into garment boxes, instruments were secured, barrack boxes were filled with the necessary items for deployment and everyone was briefed on the details of our trip.

The afternoon of our departure meant a work party assembling at Moss Park to load vehicles with the items packed on Wednesday. Then it was off to the airport with special dispensation into the security area to directly tag and load luggage into containers reserved for the Queen's Own. That evening, people arrived, were checked in and assembled in the Departure Lounge. WO Ted O'Halloran caused us a little worry due to transportation problems but arrived in time.



Merville Battery, Normandy, 7 June 1997: 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion veterans, together with British 6th Para veterans and members of the QOR of C Regimental Band and Bugles parade past German bunkers, one of several ceremonies commemorating the anniversary of the Liberation of Normandy.

After an uneventful trip, we arrived at Gatwick to be met by Mike King and Colour Sgt Richard Langley-Smith. As one trombone case came down the chute, we had visions of significant damage to the instrument when we saw the case, but fate smiled on us and the instrument was intact. The trip to Swanton-Morley was a chance to catch up on the time change and enjoy some of the English countryside. The one item worth noting was the prices on the



The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Association presented an inscribed shield to the QOR Band in the QOR of C Sergeants' Mess on 25 April, 1997. 1 Can Para members with the Director of Music, Lt Rita Arendz, are Bob Firlotte, Jan de Vries, 1st Can Para Assoc President, Bill Talbot and Cliff Oates.

Motorways Cafes! First time visitors to Europe certainly learned about exchange on their money and the cost differences from home. \$16,000 for food that would be \$7.00 here had some people contemplating a diet!

One pleasant surprise to one of our members was learning that the 9th/12th Royal Lancers were resident at this base. Upon checking the history of the 9th Royal Lancers, WO (ret'd) Al Tweten learned that this was the Regiment his Great-great grandfather commanded in 1857!

OUR PERFORMANCES : We strut our stuff...

Rehearsals were done, afternoon and evening drill practices were history and it was time to perform. We arrived in Walsingham to set up on the grounds of a medieval monastery. After the delayed spring time in Canada, we were most amazed at the incredible green of the monastery grounds. The short march from the grounds, into the village and back to the grounds was punctuated by MCpl Jim Donaldson's attack on a defenceless camera tripod. As we left Swanton-Morley, we were indeed surprised when it came time to pay for rations & quarters. The Queen's Own Rifles must have made a good impression because the bill required no conversion. £0.00 equalled \$0.00! It was soon time to board the bus and make our way to Oakington Barracks where we would make our home for the next seven days. The Minden Band of the Queen's Division was just finishing rehearsal when

we arrived and we received our initial briefing from Capt Meldrum. After lunch it was off to the Base Gymnasium where the Band was invited to listen to a rehearsal of the full Minden Band. We then played a number or two for them and then we combined to produce a sound that would be heard in front of Buckingham Palace!

We still felt that our fancy drill routine needed some refinement, consequently, extra time was spent on the grass outside the barracks. This paid dividends when we performed two days later at the Suffolk County Fair in the Show Ring. Most of the two days spent here were marching to different locations within the fair and performing short "stand-up" concerts. The second day of our stay there gave us a chance to do our fancy drill routine. Even the best laid plans can sometimes go astray but the routine was rescued! (people who were there will know what that means!).

The Minden Band were scheduled to participate in the graduation parade of the latest recruits in the British Army. We were fortunate enough to be able to provide the pre-parade show to many parents and friends assembled there. The weather was perfect, the stands were full of people and our routine was the best we had ever done. It was somewhat nerve-wracking being in front of a British audience - after all, they invented the phrase Pomp & Circumstance, but we pulled it off!

During our time at Oakington Barracks with the Minden Band, memories were formed and new friendships forged. We sincerely hope that we shall get the opportunity to host the Minden Band should they ever touch the shores of North America.

As we mentioned earlier, we were to

support the veterans of 1 Can Para as they placed a memorial plaque in the church at Bulford. It was a stirring service and even more of an honour when we played for the march-past of these gallant heroes of 53 years ago. The highlight was being inspected by the last surviving Field Marshal in Britain.

One item that drove home the importance of security was a bomb scare that was in progress when we arrived. We felt safe when we arrived. We felt safe when we learned that the Royal Green Jackets were on duty and providing security during the day.

Being this close to Stonehenge presented us with a photo-op and a chance to play tourist. We were able to gain special permission and have a Band photograph taken with the stones of the ancient Druids in the background.

Now that our English commitments were finished, it was time to make our way into London and visit the Mecca of military music - Kneller Hall. This magnificent school is a veritable history book. The museum contains items that particularly interest military musicians including the actual bugle used at the Charge of the Light Brigade. Not only did we enjoy a personal tour hosted by the curator, but we got to listen to the students, augmented by the Band of the Irish Guards, as they prepared for their summer series of concerts. That evening allowed many of the Band and Bugles to visit London itself. Some went to a musical, some enjoyed the leisure of the local area and a lucky few got to see the unannounced full dress-rehearsal of the Retreat Ceremony. A real treat even though it was delayed by yet another bomb threat.

It was now time to move south as we



The QOR of C Regimental Band and Bugles parade through Bernières-sur-Mer on 6 June 1997.

motored to the Royal Naval Base at Portsmouth - home of HMS Victory and the Royal Marine School of Music. This provided us with a private recital by some of the students as well as an opportunity to rehearse with them that evening. Of particular interest to us was seeing Capt Rolie White's (Director of Music of the 48th Highlanders Military Band) name emblazoned on the list of school graduates. A tour through the entire school also gave us an insight to this most famous of British military bands.

It was now time to board the ferry and make our way to France. An eventful Channel crossing soon found us changing our thinking from pounds and pence to francs and how much is that in dollars? It was a very late hour when we finally located our billets at the University of Caen. For the first time in 12 days, people would have their own room - free from the resonant epiglottises of some of our more resounding Band & Bugle members!

We had the 5th of June free and were able to tour around Caen as well as prepare for our ceremonies on the 6th of June. For members who had been there in 1994, it was an opportunity to renew friendships with some of our French friends and it was a chance for the newer members to see some of the countryside that our veterans saw 53 years ago under some very different circumstances.

On the morning of the Sixth, we played at the dedication of our new memorial on the pill-box on the beach at Bernières-sur-Mer and then moved up the beach to that most famous of landmarks - The Big House, as it was known by the soldiers of 1944, but on the 6th of June 1997, it was officially renamed La Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Our D-Day Veteran WO Ted O'Halloran spoke to many of us about what it was like that morning 53 years ago. It was also very special to him as he had the opportunity to pass on the stories to his grandson who was touring with us.

A Book of Remembrance, produced by our padre, Capt Cameron was dedicated at the local church and then we proceeded to the Canadian cemetery at Beny-L-Col. A moving service was conducted at this final resting place of so many of our comrades. Another name that is included in our battle honours is the village of Le Mesnil-Patry. A visit to this place of infamy in our Regimental History was a must and a moving service was held with our own CSM Charlie Martin (deceased) speaking on behalf of the veterans. The Regiment was further honoured as the village presented us with a painting of the Canadian memorial.

The timetable in France was much easier to bear than the one in England as we

performed on a one day work, one day free cycle. Some of the Band was able to visit Mont-St-Michel, some revisited Caen, one hearty soul even took a day trip to Paris.

Anisy, as most people know, was the objective of this Regiment on the 6th of June, 1944. We were also quartered here during our visit to commemorate D-Day + 50 so it was like returning home for many of us. A service was held at their memorial and then we returned to the community centre - site of our billet in 1994 - to provide the citizens with a concert. We've heard that it never rains on the Queen's Own and this adage held true to form again. BUT, only by minutes. As we finished the concert and packed our kit away, the heavens opened and it poured. The village hosted us with an excellent lunch and gifts were exchanged with the village as well as one special family to the Band. Claude & Annie Cuequernelle helped us with the university accommodations in Caen, met us at 0100 hrs when we arrived, drove us around and hosted a few of us in their home during our free time. We were able to give them a beautiful print which they immediately hung in the entrance to their home for all of their future visitors to see.

Only one or two engagements followed and it was time to make our way to Paris to climb on the aircraft for the trip home.

We were able to convince the agents at Charles de Gaulle Airport that we had special permission for overweight luggage up to 700 kg. Unknowingly, we had a lot more than that and some delicate negotiations took place as we had visions of paying \$5/kg on our extra 500 kg!! The staff at Air Transat were most generous and we were able to get on board with moments to spare for the return home.

THANKS: It's Over..

A trip of this magnitude does not just happen. Each and every member of the Regiment Band & Bugles gave up a lot of their time with extra rehearsals, time away from their family, using their vacation for the benefit of the Regiment and, of course, money from their own pocket to make it occur.

During our fund-raising, it looked like we might be a little short and the generosity of two individuals of our Regimental Senate ensured that we would be able to go. Although we would like to acknowledge them, we will respect their privacy and just say a very sincere THANK YOU for believing in us. We are also proud to announce that we have already paid back this substantial loan which should keep our credit rating in good standing!

The enormous amount of work by our Director of Music, Lt Rita Arendz and our Bugle Major, MWO Fred Haire, must also be acknowledged. Without their work, it is doubtful that this could have happened. Thank you both.

Your Regimental Band and Bugles continue to serve, often at a moment's notice, but we do so with pride. We also wish you to know that of the 40 personnel that we can parade, only eight are serving members. Without these volunteers we would not have the tradition that has existed since the Regiment's inception in 1860 - 137.5 years ago.

We are asking you to support your Regimental Band & Bugles, acknowledge the work that they do, the pride that they have and the honour that they bring to the Regiment.

IN PACE PARATUS



Honouring Canadian sacrifices: From left to right, Lt Rita Arendz, Capt Harry McCabe, WO Ted O'Halloran, MWO Scott Patterson, Bugler Gus Amodeo and MWO Fred Haire in front of the Bulford Garrison Church on 1 June 1997.

Regimental Padre's Report for 1997

Capt Craig Cameron

The past year has been an eventful one in the life of The Queen's Own and for myself as your Padre. One of the major highlights was participation in Ex Rambling Rifleman II, from 25 May to 11 June. During this trip overseas, I visited approximately 25 cemeteries in England and France where QOR members who died in WWI and II are buried. Sixty riflemen who joined the Regiment in the Great War died while serving in England with different Canadian units and are buried in British cemeteries.

In order to honour their memory I visited the following cemeteries: Aldershot (Hants), Brookwood (Surrey), Bramshott (Wilts), Brighton (Sussex), Bulford (Wilts), Cliveden, (Bucks), Epsom (Surrey), Lenham (Kent), Seaford (Sussex), Shorncliffe (Kent, near Folkestone), Swanscombe (Kent), six in Greater London, and three church cemeteries. I photographed and videotaped about 50 graves in England including 15 WWII Riflemen who died in England during training or in hospital of war wounds. These riflemen are buried in the beautiful military cemetery at Brookwood in Surrey, southwest of London. The latter category includes RSM Gordon Alexander, who died after leaving the Regiment in 1943, and Capt Robert Stewart, who was wounded in Germany on 28 March 1944 and died in England on 2 June 1945.

In most cases, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission looks after the grave sites. In several places, however, the burials were done by the family in a non-military cemetery and the markers have suffered the effects of time and weather. In one case, CSM George Mote, DCM, of 'B' Coy, 3rd Infantry Battalion, his grave marker at Highgate Cemetery, London, has been vandalized and is in need of serious repair.

In France I was able to visit a large WWI cemetery at Etaples (on the

coast south of Boulogne) where there was a major hospital and training area. Twenty riflemen are buried in this location. I also visited the major WWII Canadian cemeteries at Calais, Beny-sur-mer, Bretteville-sur-Laize and the British War Cemetery at Bayeux. In addition to laying memorials flags and paying my respects, I photographed and videotaped all the graves of QOR riflemen in these four cemeteries. Cpls. Louis Kizito and Alex Chan willingly volunteered to assist me in this project and helped speed up the process significantly.



The Padre at the Place des Canadiens in Le Mesnil-Patry. (Photo courtesy Capt C. Cameron)

While in Normandy I also participated in the parades that were held at Bernières-sur-Mer. A personal highlight was being able to lead a service of remembrance to our war dead at the Cross of Sacrifice in Beny-sur-mer Cemetery on the morning of 6 June. In addition to new memorials at the beach in Bernières, we also placed a "Book of Remembrance" for WWII in the churches of Bernières-sur-Mer, Le Mesnil-Patry, Giberville, Anisy and Anguerny. The "Book" is a catalogue of QOR riflemen killed in WWII listed by cemetery. It is also indexed by name to assist people in finding a particular grave. It is likely that several volumes will be placed in Holland in the near future.

As the compiler and editor of the "Book", it was gratifying to see the

finished product placed in these French communities.

Also in the early spring, I was able to assist in organizing the Black Net Dinner, which was held on 5 April at the Marine Museum (CNE grounds).

As part of my pastoral duties this year, I conducted four funerals for members of The Queen's Own regimental family. We extend our heart-felt condolences to those who have lost loved ones this year; in particular, to our current Honorary Colonel BGen Don Pryer on the loss of his wife, Gail (her funeral was held at St. Paul's on 8 Feb); to Mrs. Beverlee Bamlett on the loss of her husband, MWO Bruce Bamlett (the funeral was held at St. Paul's on 24 March with many members of the Regiment in attendance); to WO Gerry Senetchko on the loss of his mother Anne (a memorial service was held in the Sergeants' Mess on 25 March); to retired RCR WO Bruce Richardson on the loss of his good friend, Bud Abenstein, a Korean War vet and fellow member of Canadian Airborne Forces Association-CAFA (the service was held on 2 April at Kane Funeral Home).

I was also privileged to be able to perform the wedding ceremonies and share the joy of three couples who united in marriage in 1997; Rfn Coogan Wilson and his bride, Riconda; Marlene Martin (daughter of Jack and Amy) to Raymond Batt; and Cpl Inasio Kim and his bride, Lorena. Our very best wishes for their futures together.



Direct line from the Borden Butts to eternity!
(Photo courtesy Capt C. Cameron)

1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Association

by Jan de Vries

With the passing years one might expect things to slow down a little. May I give a bit of advice? "Do not retire." When you do, you are apt to wonder when you found the time to make a living.

Our Association is well advanced with our plans for a 5 day National Reunion in Kingston on June 3rd to 7th, 1998. Verbal response has been strong and we can anticipate at least 200 members to attend. CFB Kingston, CPC Trenton, and the Sky Hawks are assisting in making it a reunion to remember.

After enjoying the QOR Band Concert at St. Paul's on April 25th, the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion veterans presented an inscribed Parachute Battalion shield to the Band at Moss Park Armoury. This was in appreciation of their excellent entertainment and ongoing support.

The 16 day pilgrimage to Europe this past June was successful in almost every respect. The unveiling of our Battalion plaque on June 1st in the Garrison Church in Bulford, England, was exceptional. Our small group of 11 veterans and 5 family members was honoured by the presence of over one hundred British veterans from 8th and 9th Battalion, 224 Ambulance, and RE's all from the WWII 6th Airborne Division.

Many serving and retired Officers also attended the service. It was an honour, to have Field Marshal, Sir

Roland Gibbs, GCB CBE DSO MC, assist Col John Boileau of the Office of the Canadian High Commission, in the unveiling of our plaque. Following the service all veterans formed up under the guidance of a British Parachute Regiment WO1 and performed a smart march past for Field Marshal Gibbs and Col Boileau to take the salute. The ceremonies finished with a luncheon held in the Officer's Mess. The result of a suggestion by LCol A.R. Welsh that the Queen's Own Rifles Band support our ceremony while they were in England raised the whole level of the event.

The Band, under the Direction of Lt. Rita Arendz and Bugle Major Fred Haire, performed superbly throughout the service in the church and for the march past that followed. To add a little nostalgia to the end of a marvellous day, our small group drove to the site of Carter Barracks where the Battalion was quartered and trained for the eventual D Day. All the buildings are gone, but, the parade square is as it was 54 years ago. What else could the veterans do but form up and march on the parade square once again - probably the last time that pavement will feel the feet of these men who last marched on it 52 years ago.

An overnight ferry brought the group to Caen, our base for the next seven days. En route to Caen, a small service was held in Gonnevill-sur-Mer at a

stele dedicated to 8 men from one stick who were killed in action there. During the next 7 days our group attended many services at Cairns of the 8th and 9th Battalions as well as at the Airborne Cross in Ranville Cemetery where 2000 airborne soldiers are buried. A large service was held at the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Cairn at LeMesnil de Bavent cross roads where the battalion did much of their fighting. To the surprise of Brig. James Hill, DSO MC, a second cairn was unveiled in this location naming the small parkette 'Brig. Hill Square' in honour of his leadership of the 3rd Brigade 6th British Airborne Division. Our group unveiled 2 more bronze plaques in memory of the Battalion; one each at Varville and Robehomme, both Battalion objectives during WWII. At each service our group was supported by their British comrades, local citizens, and the Mayors. We are most grateful to QOR Buglers, Gus and Joe Amodeo, and Drummer, Bob Charman, who gave up their free day to join us at a special service held at a former German bunker, known as the Merville Battery. "Thank you, Gus, Joe, and Bob, for a beautiful Last Post and Reveille."

An early start on June 8th was intended to ensure that the group arrived in time to support the QOR at their service in Anisy. Police blocking the roads for Marathon runners dictated otherwise. Three times our coach was turned back; the result - 15 minutes late for the QOR service. At least, we were able to march from the cairn to the community hall where BGen. Don Pryer CD invited us to join them for a splendid luncheon arranged by the Mayor and which allowed time for socialising and taking photos.

Next it was a 2 day stop in Rochefort, Belgium, to tour battle areas and hold a service at a monument where our Battalion plaque was placed last year. Again the group was treated veterans were given the Freedom of the City. The final leg of our pilgrimage included the Maas area, Groesbeek, and Holten, in Holland, and a tour of the Rhine Drop Zone in Germany. During a short stop at the Maas we discussed wartime experiences and following lunch with some local citizens conducted a short service at our Battalion plaque. We



Anisy, 8 June 1997: QOR and 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Veterans.

Airborne Report

Maj J.M. Fotheringham, CD OC QOR Para Coy

visited Groesbeck and Holten cemeteries to honour and remember our fallen. At Holten, our group presented an inscribed shield to the van Dam family who are responsible for placing over 2000 candles on graves of Canadian soldiers every Christmas, and were guests of Mayor Verhoeven at a delicious lunch in the City Hall. We were fortunate to have Herr Nitrowski, a local historian, as our guide at the Rhine DZ. Here the veterans pointed out where they landed and where the German machine gun that killed Battalion CO, LCol Jeff Nicklin, OBE, was dug in.

On August 9th three other members and myself, representing our Association, were most pleased to accept an invitation from Canadian Parachute Centre CO, LCol D. Mitchell



Anisy, 8 June 1997: QOR and 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Veterans lead the QOR Guard on a parade from the QOR cairn to the Anisy Community Hall.

to pin the wings on a platoon of recently qualified cadet Paras at the Connaught Ranges in Nepean near Ottawa. In all, about 200 top cadets from across Canada were on parade and performed a very professional march past and parade square manoeuvre.

Many were presented awards by MGen Wheatly, who had taken the salute earlier. The day's ceremonies included a drop by LCol Mitchell and 8 members of the Sky Hawks team and ended with a luncheon.

An enjoyable Mini Reunion in Summerside PEI in July, and winning the Veterans' section for marching at the CNE Warriors Day Parade were among several other events of the summer.

Sad to say, attending funerals of our comrades is becoming more commonplace today. We certainly are most grateful to have some cheerful QOR functions in which to join.

Airborne!

In 1982, The Queen's Own Rifles were tasked to provide a jump platoon (later a Company(-)) to augment 3 Commando of the Canadian Airborne Regiment. Other reserve jump platoons were provided by The Royal Westminster Regiment, The Loyal Edmonton Regiment and le Regiment de Saguenay. Fifteen years later, the QOR is the sole reserve parachute unit, now officially tasked by LFC to support the Canadian Parachute Centre in Trenton.

Over 15 Queen's Own successfully completed the Basic Parachutist Course in Trenton in 1997, including the long-overdue Sgt Jeff Syer. Lt Wil Beardmore has been posted to the Canadian Forces Parachute Team as their Administrative Officer, and is the third QOR to serve with the Skyhawks and only the second to complete the Military Freefall course.

Sgt Don O'Halloran exercised his Parachute Instructor training in December while teaching that month's serial of the Basic Para Course. CPC was so happy with his performance that they have asked him back for another six months in 1998.

We welcome our new USO, WO Perry Gresty, PPCLI, who brings his 2 Commando experience and a superior attitude to get things done. As our full-time liaison with CPC and for jump-related taskings, we will be looking to WO Gresty to keep the day-to-day running of our parachute tasking in top shape.

We'd like to thank Major Tony Balacevicius and his RCR Para Company in Petawawa for their strong support over the past few years. Major Balacevicius has been posted out, and presented the Queen's Own with a framed, limited edition print of the Para Company jumping onto DZ Anzio. We wish new OC Major Dan Jakubiec well - the Para Company is now

preparing for the next rotation to Bosnia, and will not be jumping again until their return in late 1998.

We continue to enjoy our strong ties with 1 Can Para, CAFA and the First Special Service Force associations.

In December, 1 Can Para again presented the Reginald A. Walker Award to "the soldier who most exemplifies the spirit and physical fitness required of members of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada". This year's recipient is Sgt Frank Demaine.

The British Airborne Forces Association also donated a trophy this year, to be presented annually to the most improved rifleman. This year's recipient was Cpl Mandy Behbahani.

In addition to the Basic Para courses, we hope to qualify two Jump Masters in 1998 to allow us to continue our in-house parachuting capabilities, and conduct a QOR jump exercise, possibly making use of American resources. Our Airborne tasking over the past 15 years has provided the QOR with fit, motivated and more experienced soldiers than most other reserve units, and we will continue to give strong support to CPC and the Para Coy for many years to come.

Airborne riflemen who are not already members of CAFA (Canadian Airborne

Forces Association) should join. The Association is a national organization of current and retired jumpers, reserve and regular. In addition to regular meetings at Moss Park Armoury, members receive the CAFA journal "The Maroon Beret", and help to support the continuation of airborne forces and the Airborne Spirit in Canada. Membership is \$35 per year (\$20 national, \$15 Toronto Branch dues), and applications are available from the BOR. AIRBORNE!



MCpl I. Kim receives the Airborne Rifleman of the Year Award from Maj J.M. Fotheringham during the 1997 QOR Men's Christmas Dinner. (photo credit: Don Halcrow)



Sgt Frank Demaine receiving the 1997 Reginald A. Walker Award from Jan de Vries. (photo credit: Don Halcrow)

Address on the unveiling of a plaque to the memory of The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion at Bulford Garrison Church on Sunday 1 June 1997

by Brigadier S J L Hill DSO MC (Commander of 3 Parachute Brigade 1943/45)

We have gathered here in this lovely church on a sunny Sunday morning in June 1997, firstly, to praise Almighty God. Secondly, to honour the memory of the men of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion who served as an integral part of the 3rd Parachute Brigade and 6th Airborne Division in the Second World War from 1943-45. They were stationed at Carter Barracks, Bulford and the people of Bulford took them into their homes and their hearts.

I therefore thank Padre Collins, his parishioners and the parishioners of Bulford Parish Church for their support and co-operation now and also for the great kindness and compassion their forebears showed to our Canadians in those days now far away and long ago. I want to thank those veterans of the 3rd Parachute Brigade and 6th Airborne Division who, as brothers in arms, fought alongside the Canadians and have come from far afield to pay their tribute today. Also, the other service men and veterans who have rallied to grace this special Canadian occasion with their presence.

Thank you all. For us it is, indeed a family affair.

I will now tell you something about the men and the glory of their spirit that is represented by a small brass plaque, shortly to be unveiled on the wall of your church. May its light shine for many a long day.

I recollect the pride I felt in May 1943 when I was summoned by my Divisional

Commander, General Richard Gale, to be told I would take the one and only Canadian Parachute Battalion, then on the high seas, into my Brigade which was stationed here.

I could not help feeling in those far off days that I had been entrusted with - and had a great responsibility - for a magnificent body of fighting men, who were Canada's answer to Winston Churchill's stirring call in August 1940 for a great parachute force. The 9 Canadian Provinces-the Yukon, Newfoundland and the North West Territories, spanning together a distance of some 3,500 miles, were represented amongst their number, as were 156 French Canadian and 49 Canadian Indians. They were young, with an average age approaching 22 - they were drawn from all walks of life:- ranching, farming, mining, railroading, logging, trapping, commerce, industry, fishing - you name it.

Their adjutant's name was a byword in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as shortly before joining the Battalion he had "got his man in the Arctic", thus following a great tradition.

They were a great band of brothers, all volunteers, drawn together by one desire to fight for freedom and destroy the tyranny of Hitler and all his evil ways.

Their baptism of fire came at night in the early hours of D-Day when they were required to capture the Brigade Dropping Zone, destroy the enemy command post on its edge, then, assisted by their section of

the 3rd Parachute Squadron Royal Engineers, to blow up two bridges-one at Varaville and the other, over the River Dives at Robehome, and thence take and hold the key Le Mesnil Crossroads on the ridge which overlooked the valley. During fighting which lasted some 8 days, the Brigade casualties amounted to some 1,250 killed, wounded or missing. The Canadians bore their full share. The break out over the River Dives, spearheaded by the Canadians and the advance to the River Seine where our Division was the first to arrive followed.

Then came Christmas 1944 and the battle of the Ardennes, fought in freezing fog. The 6th Airborne Division was recalled at 48 hours' notice from Christmas leave and transported to the point of the German break through, caused by Von Rundstedt's last final fling to break the Allied Line which was doggedly closing on his western defences. The German advance was brought to an icy standstill and they were driven back on their own frozen tracks. An important battle was won. This was followed by our vigil on the banks of the river Maas in Holland in January 1945. These events came and went.

On 24 March 1945 the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, by now very experienced and highly trained, participated to the full in the great and most successful Airborne operation in history when Allied Airborne Corps, comprising the 6th British and 17th American Airborne Division breached the German defences across the Rhine at Wesel.

On this occasion we can well imagine the astonishment of the onlookers in fields below as the greatest air armada ever assembled droned relentlessly overhead in the direction of the enemy: 540 American Dakota aircraft flying in tight formation, carried the 12 parachute battalions into action-in 1,300 gliders towed by their tug aircraft and stacked above the Paras, the air landing brigades and divisional troops rode into battle - 2,740 parachute and glider aircraft in all.

On that day we participated in another great battle and victory which was to mark the "beginning of the end". Before the sun set on that lovely March afternoon some 1,400 men of the British 6th Airborne had been carried off the field, either dead or wounded. The Canadians lost their very fine Commanding Officer, Lt Col Jeff Nicklin, killed in the first few minutes and they won their first Victoria Cross.



Bugle Major Fred Haire, CD, and the Director of Music, Lt Rita Arendz, salute as Field Marshal, Sir Roland Gibbs, GCB CBE DSO MC, assisted by Col John Boileau of the Office of the Canadian High Commission, reviews the QOR Band march-past at Bulford Garrison Church, June 1, 1997.

QOR Soldiers go on UN duty in former Yugoslavia

Then followed a fighting trek on our flat feet across 275 miles of Germany when we more than kept pace with the Armoured Division on our flank which ended with our lead battalion, the Canadians, entering the town of Wismar on the Baltic Sea 3 hours ahead of the Russians, as Sir Winston Churchill had personally demanded.



Merville Battery, Normandy, 7 June 1997: Brigadier James Hill, DSO, MC, in conversation with QOR Buglers (L. to R.) Sgt Gus Amodeo, Sgt Bob Charman and Rfn Joe Amodeo.

So ends the story of one of the truly great fighting battalions of the Second World War. Unique because they were segregated from their fellow countrymen and fully integrated as proud members of the 3rd Parachute Brigade and British 6th Airborne Division. All eyes were naturally upon them and what splendid ambassadors for Canada they proved to be, both in the United Kingdom and on the field of battle where their spirit and valour was the admiration of us all.

They were the first to return home in the Queen Mary to the acclaim of their country in June 1945, bearing four great battle honours and many decorations won on the battle field, including the Victoria Cross.

However, the price for freedom had to be paid and, as the High Commissioner's representative accompanied by the Field Marshal proceeds to unveil the plaque, I would ask you all to think of the 128 men who never returned - the 294 who were carried off the field of battle wounded - the 84 who suffered in German Prisoners of War Camps. Over 500 men from 650 of that one and only Canadian Parachute Battalion who had marched into Bulford Camp with great elan two years before. That was the price the men of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and their families paid for freedom.

We who are left, supported by our following generation 54 years on, honour and pay our humble tribute to our Canadians and we thank Almighty God that such men from so far away came to stand in our midst and share our burden in those momentous days now far away and long ago. Amen

Over the past years several QOR of C soldiers have completed U.N. tours of duty in the former Yugoslavia. The latest contingent is now on duty. Capt Adam Saunders updates us on their preparation for the mission:

Reserve members from 32 Brigade, and specifically The Queen's Own Rifles have finally been invited to participate in an operational tour. Those of us waiting for positions to open have been on deck since 1994 when 1 RCR went to the former Yugoslavia under a United Nations mandate. This time members of the Regiment are going overseas with 1 RCR to assist in ensuring compliance with the military aspects contained within the Dayton Accord, to enforce the continuance of the cessation of hostilities and to facilitate the freedom of movement of refugees, displaced persons and the local populace, all under a NATO mandate. We will not be wearing UN blue berets and cap badges, but our own berets and cap badges.



Once we, the augmentees, had completed all of our screening and documentation in Toronto we were sent off to CFB Petawawa to link up with 1 RCR to commence training and selection.

1 RCR approached training and selection with professionalism and vigour. We hit the ground running and found the intro to mech warfare instantaneous and demanding. Phase 1 training was essentially training for war at the platoon, company, combat team and finally battle group levels.

As of the time of the writing of this article we are engaged in Phase 2 training which consists of OOTW (Operations Other Than War Training). This training covers topics such as Cultural Awareness, Language Training, VIP Protection, Search and Cordon, Detainee Handling, Law of War, Low Level Negotiation training and much more. As we are now in the middle of Phase 2 we have 3 more weeks to complete all of the prescribed training prior to

embarking on our pre-deployment and X-mas leave. Yes, we will be on leave for the month of December, and begin to deploy overseas around the 5th of January 1998. We will return from our tour in late June or early July 1997.

Our mailing address, once overseas will be:

Rank, Name, Initial, Service Number
Platoon, Company, 1 RCR,
Op Palladium
PO Box 5003 Stn Forces
Belleville, ON K8N 5W6

And here are the names:

C79 209 200	Capt Saunders A.
B50 498 242	Capt Cunningham R.
B83 808 717	Cpl Suurd C.
B80 207 954	Rfn Morgan D.
R37 943 739	Rfn Ioanni M.
V68 103 253	Rfn Harrison L.
B12 255 052	Rfn Simpson S.

All of the members of the Regiment who have been entrusted to represent The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, as augmentees with the 1 RCR Battle Group for Operation Palladium, are extremely proud and grateful to be allowed the opportunity to serve our global community and to represent all of those who have gone before. I have complete faith that each and every one of us participating in this deployment will strive to ensure a high level of professionalism and dedication to the mission.

We send all the best to our friends and loved ones, and graciously acknowledge their support and the sacrifices that they have made in order that we are able to experience the unique and rewarding opportunity put before us.



Capt Adam Saunders with Pte Marina Ioanni in Bosnia (above left) and with Czech officers in their camp at Stari Majdan on Jan 27
(Photos forwarded by Capt Saunders via satellite link).

The 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Arthur Gay, QOR 18 Platoon "D" Company '44, Normandy

April 9, 1997 marked the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Only 6 WWI Veterans were able to attend this important Anniversary.

In order that this Anniversary will be perpetually remembered, the Department of Veterans Affairs arranged to invite several WWII veterans. The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada was one of the 32 Units with Vimy Ridge Battle Honours. Each Unit was to nominate one veteran who served overseas during WWII.

It was an honour and a privilege for me to be nominated to represent The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Thanks to the Honorary Colonel and the QOR Association.

Apr. 4th Arrived in Ottawa at Lord Elgin Hotel.

Apr. 5th Historical briefing and visit to the Canadian War Museum. Then at night, a reception at Rideau Hall hosted by the Governor General Romeo Leblanc. After going through the reception line, we had refreshments.

Apr. 6th Departed by air from Ottawa for overseas.

Apr. 7th Arrived in Paris, then a bus ride up to Lille and the Hotel Mercure.

Apr. 8th A briefing was held after breakfast. In the afternoon we took a tour of the Vimy Memorial and Park including a walk through the many underground tunnels wearing casual clothes.

Apr. 9th The actual anniversary date of the Battle of Vimy Ridge April 9, 1917. It was a very hot afternoon when we arrived back for the Major Ceremony at the Vimy Memorial. This time everyone was properly dressed (Medals, etc.) along with many dignitaries, army units with three Bands and thousands of visitors. A long ceremony started with several speeches and finally the wreath laying ceremony with beautiful flowers and wreaths in honour of the thousands that gave their lives here 80 years ago. The WWII Veterans marched to the foot of the Memorial placing their Units wreaths three at a time. It was a very solemn occasion. After the ceremony we attended a reception hosted by the Government of Canada where the drinks were very much appreciated.

Apr. 10th We attended a ceremony at the Newfoundland Beaumont-Hamel

Memorial. A tour of this area was arranged and the Historians pointed out the errors of the higher ranks which caused thousands to be killed. The monument was beautifully constructed with large rocks with a large moose on the top (made of metal). This monument is in memory of the 1st Newfoundland Regiment in the Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916.

Apr. 11th A very busy day with visits including a ceremony at the Canadian Memorial in memory of the Canadian Corps and the Battle of Passchendaele October 1917. Then on to the St. Julien Memorial in memory of the heroic stand of the 1st Canadian Division in the first gas attack at Ypres in 1915. Then at night, we joined the Sunset Ceremony at the famous Menin Gate. Thousands of names of Canadians and allied forces are shown in side this shrine. This service was very well done and I will remember it forever.

Apr. 12th Day off for shopping in Lille and having a few cold ones.

Apr. 13th A morning Church Service was conducted by the three Chaplains. In the afternoon we departed for Paris and then the flight to Canada arriving back at the Lord Elgin Hotel, Ottawa for over night.

Apr. 14th Departed for home towns.

Personnel from the Department of Veterans Affairs handled this trip in a professional manner. The transportation

and accommodations were very well arranged. We were well attended to by Doctors, Nurses, DVA Historians, elected Officials, Chaplains and, yes, the Press.

And last but not the least we had a fine group of young people who represented the Youth of Canada. Every Province was well represented with 6 boys and 6 girls and we were proud of them. I know their parents and schools will feel the same. This group of 12 were chosen from 3200 applications. The Ontario representative was a very lovely young lady, Lauren Nicholson from Burlington.

In closing, I would like to say that it was impossible to see all the beautiful Canadian Monuments. But we did visit a huge British Monument second only to Vimy Ridge.

Every Canadian should pay a visit to these Memorials where thousands and thousands paid the supreme sacrifice.

After hearing of the casualties at these and other memorials, I realized why my four uncles who returned home never wanted us kids to know.

For your information the 6 WWI Veterans are Harry Boyce (Regina), Gordon Boyd (Fredericton), Fred Evans (St. John), Harold Lidstone (Coleman PEI), Cyril Martin (Calgary), and Tom Spear (Calgary). Two were just under 100, one was 100 and three were over 100.



Rfn Arthur Gay represented the QOR of C at the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Art can be seen above facing the camera wearing sun-glasses (it was a bright Spring day!) (Photo courtesy: Robert Bennett)

An eyewitness account: The Queen's Own Rifles in WWI

by Harold Smith

Harold Smith (7 April, 1894 - 17 December 1982) was a WWI QOR veteran who contributed to Veterans' Review, a collection of short stories by the veterans of the Sunnybrook Medical Centre. Capt Bruce Barbeau, R Regt C, forwarded us the story. We are most grateful for his thoughtful gesture. Here follow excerpts from Rfn Smith's World War I Diary which began the day of enlistment, August 14, 1914 in The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, 3rd Battalion:

I enlisted on August 14, 1914 and a week later was at Valcartier, Quebec. It was a desolate spot, no houses, few trees but shrubbery a-plenty. There we had to pitch our bell tents with no boards to sleep on, just plain Mother Earth with the shrubbery to make it a little softer! We were issued a rubber sheet to lie on, one blanket to cover us and our packsack for a pillow. Of course, we had to get toughened up with a route march and to get used to our rifles which were Ross Rifles - some rifle! We sure looked like Cox's Army, some in uniform, others in civilian clothes with straw hats and some with no hats at all. We were finally outfitted just before sailing on October 3, 1914 on the SS Tunisian. (I spent the trip altering uniforms for the boys.)

We landed at Plymouth on October 14, and the 33,000 soldiers marched through town to the railway station. Everything in orders was Destination Unknown, but when we detrained, (I believe it was at Amesbury), we marched to Salisbury Plains. What an acreage of land! Up hill and down dale. And again we had to put up tents, but this time we had floor boards on which to rest our weary bones. We sure needed them, for when it rained on Salisbury Plains it did come down; sometimes the mud was ankle deep.

At Salisbury, our training was intensified. The troops did their formations and skirmishes. We in Transport learned how to saddle for the officers and for the pack horses, which each carried about 2,000 rounds of ammunition; and how to pack the wagons with rations and ammunition and cover them with tarpaulins. At the same time, the Third Canadian Battalion, Toronto Regiment, was being made up of the 2nd QOR of Canada, the Governor-General's Body Guard and some from the Grenadier Guards. These things occupied us for about three months. Then we were listed as ready to take off for France. At

Amesbury Station we boarded a train - destination unknown - and on February 9, 1915, we started a trip across the Channel, landing at St. Nazaire. Here we took a 48-mile train trip to Merris, which was our first campsite in France. It was a small town about 15 miles from Armentieres. Now we knew we were in the war for we heard gunfire in the neighbourhood. Our training was intensified, the emphasis being on speed, so that we could be on the move with very little notice.

Our little town consisted of rows of houses, stores, estaminets and halls. Among them one where we liked to go each morning for 'coffee break' to get coffee and rum. And, of course, there were mademoiselles - the ones made famous in the popular wartime song. We were initiated into trench warfare by an Imperial Division holding the line before Armentieres, and then our Battalion went into the trenches for the first time on its



Silent Homage: Passchendaele (Photo: Editor)

own. By April we were in Ypres area when the Germans launched the first gas attack on the French.

It was the worst sight I ever saw. Men, women and children, as well as French soldiers, gasping and choking and struggling to get away from the thick, yellow mist that permeated everything.

With the French line thus broken we were ordered up to the attack about 7:30 p.m. near St. Julien. Three of us on transport, along with our horses and 6,000 rounds of ammunition, became separated and lost. We attached ourselves to a British Unit, but in time it moved off and we three were left stranded around and were about ready to give in to hunger when we came across a pile of abandoned material, among which we found two dixie boilers loaded with stew cut up ready to cook. And cook it and eat it we did, in double quick time. It was April 25th when we finally rejoined our battalion transport. Our battalion was the last to withdraw and we left that sector for the south. This, the battalion's first real battle, is known as the Second Battle of Ypres and the Canadian part in it as St. Julien or Lankmarck.

During June, July, August and the early part of September the battalion continued its regular trench routine, spending time in the Messenes sector, being relieved every eight days. Then I had my first furlough to England, leaving Bailleul on September 9th and returning on the 16th. It was my first trip to London since 1907 and I enjoyed the free days with relatives in London, Plymouth, St. Melons and Skipton.

In November, LCol Rennie left the battalion to take command of the Fourth Infantry Brigade and our command was left to Major W.D. Allen who was made LCol, D.S.O.

Christmas, my first in France, was spent in a barn near Ypres and it was surprising but we spent a very enjoyable day. The Germans started off February with a gas attack and captured our first line of trenches, but were driven back with a stiff counter-attack. We were in this, the Dranoutre sector, until February 15th when I was checked into hospital at Bailleul with lumbago. The hospital was a former old monastery building, with insufficient heat and cold flagstone stages. Fighting shifted to the International Section just south of Hill 60 and north of St. Eloi. My brother was killed in action on this front, where the 3rd Battalion did trench work for two months.

On June 11, 1916, the 3rd Battalion went into the trenches opposite Mount Sorel under the command of LCol Allen and on June 13th, in heavy rain, captured this formidable position and was relieved after heavy losses. The part played by the 3rd in capturing this strategic position at Mount Sorel was the subject of special mention by the Corps Commander. The battalion was then moved back to the 'Connaught Lines' and I was sent to hospital with a slight sunstroke. Discharged from the hospital, I had some difficulty (my French was practically nil and I kept bumping into French troops) in locating my battalion which had been moved on to Tournehem prior to going into the Somme. It was here, in 1916, we had an inspection by Sir Arthur Currie and were discouraged by his reply to one of the men, who asked when the first contingent boys were going home to Canada. There had been rumours that the soldiers who had been in from the start of 1914 and 1915 at the Second Battle of Ypres were going home. The answer Sir Arthur gave was, "When you beat the Hun, that's when you go home".

Instead of starting for Canada, we moved ever closer to the 'hot' spots in the Somme section, where we embarked on three strenuous tours near Courcellette. The British were attacking on the Somme sector. The Germans were starting attacks on Verdun (held by the French), gaining very little ground but sustaining big losses. They gave up the attack on or about September 7, 1916. We moved to Lovicogne for a well deserved rest. This was in a district of small towns and we attempted to have some social life. When our day's chores were done, we cleaned up as best we could and went into the nearest town if we had any money. Or even without money on the chance we'd get acquainted with a Frenchman, as some of them took pity on us and invited us to their homes. Sometimes we were lucky and sometimes not, but we had fun in a lot of these places for the Salvation Army and Y.M.C.A. were there and we could get free coffee and biscuits. Sometimes we even made a dance in the French estaminets.

After this rest we started moving again. We seemed to be a moving unit, always going into sections where the fighting was heaviest, a kind of decoy to make the enemy think we had lots of reinforcements. In early October, we were in Warlsy in the front line and along with other battalions went over the top and continued on, taking the objectives. The towns through which we passed were pretty well devastated, though some French citizens still lived there. Following the October 8th operation, the 1st Division was transferred to the Vimy Ridge Sector where the transport stayed out in the open until December.

Vimy was a great target for the German artillery fire, as they were stationed on the eastern plains with a clear view of the Ridge. There was a chalk pit at Vimy,

which could shelter two or three hundred men. By the way, the dugouts the enemy had here were fantastic, some of them sixty feet deep with a lot of furniture (even pianos) which they had commandeered out of surrounding villages. They even had pumps in the trenches to clear out the water seepage. The battalion made a successful raid on the German lines and brought back a machine gun to prove it. Late October we started to move again and the battalion went into billets at a place south of Bouay where we had our second Christmas dinner on French soil. An occasion made especially memorable as our turkey, plum pudding and beer were served by the officers and sergeants.

The rest of the winter passed routinely, the battalion doing regular trench duty and the transport taking up the rations every night. In March the battalion was into another training session before moving up again to famed Vimy Ridge where, at dawn on April 9, 1917, the battalion went over the top and the offensive was a huge success. We advanced about seven miles. This advance and the consolation of our positions was commanded by LCol Rogers of the 3rd Battalion. A mile beyond Arleux was the entrenched village of Fresnoy and its capture was assigned to the First Brigade under command of Major Mason.

In June we again went into front line trenches and as usual, the Transport was set up in the rear. This was trench warfare and the advances had to be well studied and planned before a move could be made. Our transport was forever practising for speed and more speed. At this time, the Germans brought down one of our observation balloons and also used a new silent type shell to attack our Transport, killing some of our horses. This shell, nicknamed Silent Lizzie, made a six-foot

hole in which we buried the animals. Fortunately when this shell landed, most of the Transport were away watering the horses. At this time I also saw one of our aeroplanes crash on coming back from a trip over the German lines.

During August and September, the battalion was doing valuable work around Hill 70, but mostly reorganizing and getting replacements for the casualties we had suffered. The battalion was in the front nineteen days in September. In October, we moved into relief trench work, then back to reserve, then further back for a rest and then, at the end of October, we and the Canadian Corps marched north to take part in the Third Battle of Ypres. We were stationed in Flanders-Passchendaele, which was a desolate spot. There were shell holes galore from one to five feet deep and the stench of the place was terrible. Duck walks had been placed everywhere - if you lost your footing you got a free bath in dirty, muddy water. In December came orders to move to the attack. LCol Rogers was in charge of the Third Battalion which was made up of B Company and half of A Company, while C Company and the other half of A Company supported D Company, commanded by Major Mason. Major Crawford was in all this fighting and also Corporal Barron who won the Victoria Cross for his part. In this attack, half of A Company lost all its officers and Company Sergeant Major Williams took charge and led them through this ordeal. This was our fourth Christmas in France.

To welcome the New Year, 1918, we moved into the Lens Sector and went into the trenches at St. Emile, just north of Lens. The Transport was stationed at or near St. Pierre and then at La Brebes, about six miles away. There we stayed until the great offensive in March.



In February 1997, Sgt Anita Selby participated in Ex "Adventure Express" in Norway, as a battle staff augmentee to the HQ, Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land). Being the sole female in her indoor encampment, she resorted to special measures to ensure a degree of privacy, as depicted above. Her superior performance during this historic first operational evaluation of NATO's Land Reaction Force earned her a Certificate of Appreciation from US MGen H.A. Kievenaar, Jr., Commander AMF(L). She regrets not having completed the para course as she could have earned several (NATO had 16 members at the time) sets of wings during the EX! (Photo: Sgt A. Selby)

The Memorial Honouring Canadian Soldiers at Carpiquet Airport



Another example of Franco-Canadian friendship. (The QOR thanks the Mayor, Council and citizens of Carpiquet for their kind note and for forwarding us the photograph.)

The QOR's WWII Memorials: An Update

by CQMS Jack Martin

It began back in 1969 on our first organized trip to Europe. One could not help to notice the lack of QOR memorials even though we had paid dearly in human sacrifices. Other Regiments has erected memorials along Normandy's Juno Beach for the plaques on the bunker at Bernières-sur-Mer.

Travelling across Europe, we finally discovered one memorial (by the French people of LaCapelle) and, on a later tour, at Sneek by the Dutch. In Deventer, Holland, we had a tough time trying to convince the town officials that The Queen's Own had taken part in the attack. It was the only time in WW II that the three Rifle Regiments of the 3rd Div had fought in the same battle.

I made a silent vow that we would endeavour to spread the name of the Queen's Own throughout the many battle sites and, as Bernières-sur-Mer had already been attended to, I turned to the second Battle Honour, "Le Mesnil-Patry". We obtained permission from the hamlet to erect a memorial. What did I know about memorials? Absolutely nothing. The mayor of Le Mesnil-Patry passed it back to me so, with my limited

architectural ability, I went to work in it. My idea of the memorials was to have them in both languages where possible so after writing up a suggested English version, it was necessary to send it to France for the French version. (This was done by a good friend Bob Bennett, a

that it should have all the names of those QOR's who lost their lives during the Second World War. The chosen site was in Wons. It was indeed an honour for me to unveil the monument and to see the huge Regimental crest on top of the Memorial. Replicas of the plaques adorn

the wall of the Moss Park Armoury outside the Bn Orderly Room and which I also had the honour of unveiling. We now also have a large Regimental crest on a stainless steel background and it is mounted on top of the stonework attached to the bunker at Bernières-sur-Mer attesting to the fact that it was The Queen's Own who landed first, despite the inscription on another Regiment's memorial which



June 6, 1997: The QOR memorial at Bernières-sur-Mer. (Photo: BGen Pryer)

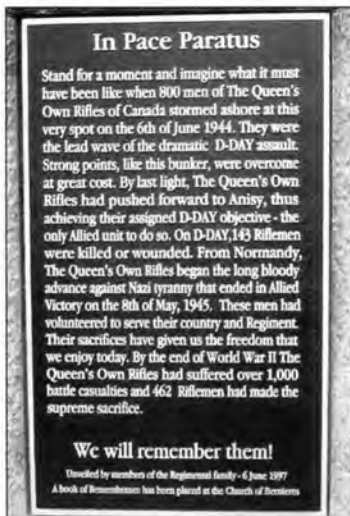
proclaims them to have come ashore at 0700 hrs.

Canadian professor, residing in Caen, teaching English at the Caen university.) Then I had to design the background for the plaques and draw up plans in metric. I was fortunate indeed that one of the council members (now mayor of Le Mesnil-Patry) was in the stonemason business and proposed the footings, type of stone, etc. Well, you know the rest. Here we asked for donations and the response was Ellie Dalton. Boy! did the residents ever cherish having their own Monument! Prior to this they had to travel to some other town to pay their respects and in Normandy, they are forever conscious of the sacrifices made by Canadians.

Finally, there are two other QOR plaques commemorating the presence of the Regiment. One is a bronze plaque of the hat badge on a Sherman tank belonging to the Fort Garry Horse at Courseilles and an exact replica on the plaque at Doorn, Holland.

Next, we decided on a Memorial for Anisy (The farthest point inland on "D-Day" by any Allied unit) then a plaque was asked for by the little town of Anguerny. The plaque at Anguerny was unveiled by Col Al Nickson. The Anisy memorial was also unveiled by Col Nickson and during the unveiling, 50 doves (they couldn't find enough doves so they used pigeons) were released and Rolph Jackson received another "D-Day" wound 50 years after the first one!

The next one was for Holland and it was left to the Dutch people to designate the spot for it. Charlie and I both agreed



The text of the plaque at Bernières-sur-Mer.



The QOR of C Memorial Plaque at Anguerny

Memorial Ceremony in Giberville, France for H. H. "Buck" Hawkins

by Jean-Michel Piquion

A Memorial Ceremony was held on 8 June 1997 at Giberville, Normandy, in Memory of Rifleman Harry H. "Buck" Hawkins and Members of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada:

We have met here today to honour the memory of Riflemen of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, and in particular, to pay our respects to the memory of Rifleman Harry Henry "Buck" Hawkins, killed during the liberation of our village.

On the 18th of July 1944, during the course of "Operation Atlantic", the QOR of C was given the mission of taking and holding our town.

Along with other units of the Canadian 8th Infantry Brigade, The Queen's Own conquered the eastern parts of the Caen suburbs, including the industrial site of Colombelles. The Regiment progressed toward the centre of Giberville, where they suffered their first losses.

After having passed through the centre of the town and as a result of a misunderstanding of their orders, 9 Platoon of A Company tried to advance toward the railway station but was repulsed by a violent German counter-attack. The enemy, vastly superior in numbers was about to outflank them and

their only recourse was to withdraw and call for artillery support.

It was in this threatening situation that Rfn Hawkins decided to remain as a rearguard to cover the remainder of the platoon as they withdrew. Three other men stayed with Hawkins to help cover their comrade: Jackie Bland, Jimmy Young and Steve de Blois. They succeeded in their objective but as they got up to leave, short of ammunition, Buck Hawkins was hit by a burst of German MG fire and fell mortally wounded. A few minutes later an artillery barrage fell which halted the German attack and the Canadians were able to complete the liberation of our village.

Harry "Buck" Hawkins was at age 39, a family man having a wife and children at home in Toronto and far older than most of his fellow riflemen, few of whom were over 25. One of his daughters, Helen McGregor, is here with us today to pay homage to her father's memory; we are honoured by her presence and that of her daughter, Buck's granddaughter, Linda.

According to his comrades in arms, Buck Hawkins was a brave and courageous soldier, a natural leader with an uncanny battle sense. He refused several promotions on the ground that he did not want the responsibility of ordering young riflemen to their death.

Although the fight to liberate Giberville took less than a day, the date 18 July 1944 was written in blood for our liberators. The Queen's Own Rifles took 94 casualties, 23 of which were fatal.

Buck Hawkins will remain for us the symbol of the sacrifice made by the 22 other riflemen who died freeing Giberville. We are not seeking to revive feelings of hatred and bitterness toward our former enemy; rather, we wish to preserve the memory of the sacrifice made by Canadians of The Queen's Own Rifles for our generation and those to come. We do not want to forget the cost of freedom and we also want to prevent the return of tyranny and war.

Long live Peace and Franco-Canadian Friendship



Mrs. Helen McGregor, daughter of QOR Rifleman Harry H. "Buck" Hawkins, KIA on 18 July 44, stands in front of the sign denoting the newly-named "rue Harry Hawkins" in Giberville, France.

The QOR Kit Shop Stock & Price List

Duty and taxes are included in the prices. Please send all orders to The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Kit Shop, 130 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1R9.

Enclose cheque or money order payable to "QOR Kit Shop" and add \$5.00 to cover postage and handling.

TIES

Regimental Ties	12.
Regimental Ties Silk	38.
Green - QOR Insignia	20.
Regimental Bow Tie	8.

T-SHIRTS & SWEAT SHIRTS

QOR T-Shirts	12.
QOR Sweat Shirts	23.

QOR Airborne/Rifleman

T-Shirt - Maroon	12.
Sweat Shirts - Maroon	23.

CRESTS & BADGES

Blazer Crests - QOR	20.
Windbreaker Crests QOR	8.

JEWELLERY

QOR Ladies Brooches (on order)	?
QOR Wrist Watches (on order)	?
QOR Tie Tack	6.
QOR Lapel Pins	Silver Colour 4.
	QOR Colours 6.
	Bugle Band 6.

BOOKS (Hard Cover)

Cdns A Bat'n at War (Whitised)	25.
(Queen's Own Rifles)	
WWII Book of Remembrance	40.

REGIMENTAL WALL PLAQUES

QOR Battle Honours 12X9	30.
Hand Painted U.K. 7X6	52.

OTHER REGULAR ITEMS

Regt'l Ice Buckets (Drum)	55.
Belts - QOR Insignia	20.
Baseball Caps- QOR	10.
(Regular & Summer)	

Whistle Cords

-Officers & Senior NCO's	15.
-Whistle Cords - OR's	10.

Coffee Mugs

Regimental Decals - Stickers	2.
Desk Flags	6.

MISC. ITEMS

D-Day Landing Print	25.
Same, signed by Orville Fisher	150.
Regt'l Band - CD's	15.
Regt'l Band - Cassette	10.
Note Cards - per Doz.	9.
Xmas Cards - per Doz.	9.
Army Bags (Shoulder)	7.
Small Rifles - Black Metal	4.
Deck of Cards	10.

BOOKS (Soft Cover)

Battle Diary (CSM C.C. Martin)	15.
Valour on Juno Beach (T.R. Fowler)	15.
Valour - Vict. Camp. (T.R. Fowler)	15.

QOR Association Annual Report

by CWO (ret) Brian Budden, CD, Association President

I would like to start by paying tribute to our QOR Veterans who passed on this year, especially Charlie Martin and Ben Dunkelmann:

They shall not grow old
As we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them
Nor the years condemn
At the going down of the Sun
And in the morning
We will remember them

1997 has been very eventful. However, all activities and events within the Association and Regimental family were completed and I commend the Executive and Directors of the Association for all their help and assistance in making this a very successful year. These are the highlights:

Normandy Tour, 4-12 June, 1997

This year's tour proceeded on schedule, with no problems as far as I know, and came to be thanks to the hard work and careful planning assistance in Canada from members of the Association, the Regiment, the Regimental Band and Bugles and the QOR Trust Fund, and with the excellent collaboration and support from our Normandy friends, Bob and Mary Bennett from Authie and the Alexandre's from Le Mesnil-Patry. The group included over 40 QOR members, including families, plus the Guard from the Regiment and a 40-strong Regimental Band and Bugles!

The highlights of the trip were the rededication of the QOR memorial plaques on the pillbox at Bernières-sur-Mer seawall and at the Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles, the famous house on the beach and, in Giberville, the naming of a street in memory of Buck Hawkins. Of course, we add to this list the marvellous hospitality extended to us by the Normandy villages we visited. A special thanks to our Trafalgar crew, driver Luke and tour-guide Kevin, who did such a superb job throughout this trip.

The meeting on June 5th with the Mayor of Bernières-sur-Mer, Monsieur Tenet, went off very well. His assistance and that of many other townspeople is greatly appreciated. We have been particularly touched by the kindness of

the the owners of the Maison de Queen's Own Rifles, the Hoffer family, who fully supported the idea of renaming their home.

The parade on June 6th, involving the laying of the wreaths and the last post, was very emotional. The unveiling of the plaques at the Maison de Queen's Own Rifles by D-Day veterans added to the occasion. After the parade we proceeded to the Church at Bernières-sur-Mer where a copy of the Book of Remembrance, compiled by our Regimental Padre, Capt Craig Cameron, was presented. Following this event, we enjoyed a reception at the townhall. After the reception we proceeded to the Beny-sur-mer Cemetery to pay our respects to our fallen comrades.

The ceremonies continued at Le Mesnil-Patry, where we held a parade and were hosted by the citizens, with the Mayor, Roger Alexandre, acting as host. All D-Day veterans were presented with a diploma by the Chairman of the Juno Committee, Monsieur Bernard Nourry. At the reception following the parade, all members received souvenir ceramic bottles of Calvados from Le Mesnil-Patry. As the day came to an end we were all content, but quite exhausted, as we boarded our bus and headed back to the Holiday Inn in Caen. We were all happy that June 7 was a free day.

On June 8th, we gathered ourselves up and proceeded to Anisy, the QOR's objective on D-Day. After the ceremony,

we all gathered at the famous Community Centre, an event which brought back memories of 1994 for some of us. I would like to compliment the Mayor, Monsieur Armand, for an excellent reception and the presentation of the mirrored maple leaf ornament that is now displayed in our showcase. One should mention that during the service, members of the 1st Canadian Parachute Association met up with us and joined us at the reception, adding to the spirit of comradeship.

In the afternoon, we proceeded to Giberville for the street dedication in memory of Buck Hawkins, a ceremony made poignant by the presence of his daughter, Helen McGregor, who was accompanied by her husband Ron and their daughter. Of course, we were again treated to the generous hospitality of the locals, under the able leadership of Mayor Romy, and the reception at the townhall was much appreciated.

On June 10th, we paraded at Anguerny. The children of the village had placed flowers and Canadian flags by the memorial and the citizenry was out in force. I would like to thank Doug Hester for playing the Last Post, as the Band had returned home. Mayor Rivoalen, on behalf of all the citizens of Anguerny, then invited us to a wonderful reception which left us all in very good spirits.

On our way back to our home base in Caen, we all felt the strong bond between



At the 1997 QOR Men's Christmas Dinner, we have from L to R, Rob Grieve, Andy McNaughton, MWO Scott Patterson and CWO (ret) Brian Budden.

the people of Normandy and the QOR veterans. This 1997 Tour of Normandy was a very memorable experience and I know that members of the Regimental family will visit again.

This is a good moment for me to express my gratitude to Charlie Martin for all the guidance in arranging this tour. We will never forget his comments at all the memorial events. Charlie, God-bless.

Warrior's Day Parade, August 16, 1997.

I'm very pleased to announce that we stood 2nd this year for the Goodyear Remembrance Trophy for the

Unit/Marching (21 or more members). I would like to thank all members who were on the parade and also special guests such as Monsieur Roger Alexandre, the Mayor of Le Mesnil-Patry, and his Canadian host, Montrealer David Gayner.

I was able to attend the Awards dinner on September 26 with veteran Frank Pearce, in which we were presented a plaque.

I saw it very fitting that this year the 1st Cdn Para Assoc came 1st, the QOR of C came 2nd and the British Airborne Assoc came 3rd! We all sat together for dinner and enjoyed the camaraderie.

Association Shoot, September 13, 1997.

The Association Annual Shoot at CFB Borden was a complete success thanks to the excellent work of Rob Grieve and his staff, despite the numerous rumours that the shoot was off, then on, etc. I would like to thank the Regiment for its assistance in securing the range and supplying the staff, RSO Capt Banerjee, WO Senechtko and MWO Haire.

This year we used the Lee Enfield Mk4s in the competition, on loan from the Streetsville Cadet Corps, to whose CO Peter Marshall we say thanks. The results from the shoot were: 1st - Bob Dunk; 2nd - Jamie Cockford; 3rd - John Bennett.

For the winning team we had 2 teams tied for 1st place: Team #1: Steve Budden, May Hooley, Jamie Cockford and Bob Dunk and Team #2: Brian Budden, Scott Patterson, Frank Pearce and Andy McNaughton.



Ernie Martin (Jack Martin's brother) presented, in Sept 1997, a QOR "D-Day" picture to the Lake of Bays Mayor Tom Pinckard for their new Township office. Mr. Martin senior and five of his sons have served in the QOR of C!

Under Rob's careful eye we also had a barbecue which went very well. At the conclusion of the shoot, everyone enjoyed a get together at the Rod & Gun Club, where old stories were told while enjoying a few bubbles.

In closing, I look forward to seeing more Association members on our forthcoming Regimental functions. Again, thank you for your support during 1997. In Pace Paratus.

The Maple Leaf Rifle Club: "An Organization Limited to Good Fellows"

by CWO Brian Budden, CD

I have been asked the question, and I know that other members of the Maple Leaf Rifle Club have also been asked, what is the Club all about? Well, here follows a brief history:

The Maple Leaf Rifle Club was formed almost 86 years ago, in 1912. Membership is restricted to active or retired members of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. In addition, the rules stipulate that the membership of the club shall be limited to twenty-eight members.

How did the figure of twenty-eight members come about? In those long gone days, the QOR of C had 28 Companies. The best shot from each Company was selected to be a member of the Maple Leaf Rifle Club.

The primary purpose of the Club is to provide, at the very least, an annual venue for the members to meet and practice some friendly target practice. By doing so, in a spirit of friendly rivalry, members get an opportunity to refresh and enliven the feelings of "Good Fellowship" which were generated while serving in the Regiment. Following the target practice, the members proceed to a fine dining experience organized by the High Cockalorum, who is assisted by all to ensure that the day is a full success.

To become a member, you must first be invited as a guest by an active Club member and continue to attend until a position becomes available.

The management of the Club is in the hands of the Executive, which is determined at each annual meeting. The 1997-98 Executive comprises: President, Gerry Senetchko; Vice-President, Brian Budden; Secretary, John Strathy and Treasurer, Moore Jackson. The High Cockalorum is Erik Simundson and Rocco Polsinelli is the Past President.

Regimentally Yours, In Pace Paratus.



The Regimental Remembrance Day Church Parade, November 9, 1997

It's All In Your Head

Major John Fotheringham, CD

This fall, having just turned 40, I thought that I'd better do something to prove that I wasn't over the hill, yet. Instead of buying a Corvette or getting a hair transplant, I decided to run the 13-mile half-marathon event of the annual



Sgt Mark Shannon carrying the QOR Airborne flag at the Corporate Challenge, May 1997.

Canadian International Marathon in Toronto with members of the Queen's Own Running Team.

I'd completed several "two-by-ten" mile marches over the past twelve years as an airborne rifleman, but I'd never run 13-miles straight, and certainly nothing even close in the past year. On a chilly but sunny October Sunday, I lined up at Mel Lastman Square in North York with Sgt Mark Shannon, Cpl Wen Gin and Rfn Sarah Gilmour to start the run.

The first ten miles went fairly well, and I was ahead of my modest target finish time, but the last three miles were painful. Despite drinking at each water stop, I was very dehydrated and light-headed at the finish, and missed my target by three minutes. It took me about an hour of eating oranges and guzzling water to get my head back to normal, and it took another two days before I could walk properly. I was, however, very pleased with myself.

Two days later, I received a letter from Doug Hester, a QOR D-Day veteran and Bugler, whom readers will recall plays the Last Post and Reveille along with Herb Goldring every November 11 near his home in Florida. Doug, who knew that I was running the race, included pictures of himself running the London, England Marathon, dressed in a Queen's Own t-shirt and beret, in honour of those who died on D-Day. He completed that 26-mile run in just over four hours at 55 years of age! He improved upon his time in the Twin Cities (Minnesota) Marathon in 1986 at 64 years old. Suddenly, my accomplishment doesn't mean as much.

Doug's letter served to remind me that fitness is a state of mind. I see our Queen's Own veterans and veterans of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion still very active, all of them over 70 years of age. And yet, I see some serving members (twenty-five to forty years their junior), and certainly members of other units, using age as an excuse for decreasing performance and increasing waistlines.

These days, especially in light of the increased dependence on the Reserves to augment the Regulars on UN missions, and as we strive to score top marks on our Reserve "Report Card", it is essential that every member of the Queen's Own



Doug Hester at the Twin Cities Marathon, 1986: 64 years old @ 3:52:59 Hours!!!

keeps himself/herself in top physical condition. Fitness is one of the reasons that the Queen's Own have always outperformed the other units in the Brigade in the field, and age is no excuse for letting yourself get flabby.

I look forward to dramatically improving my time next year on the half-marathon, and hope to see a lot more riflemen running with us. Perhaps Doug Hester will come up from Florida and show us how it's done!



The QOR Racing Team: From L. to R. we have Maj J.M. Fotheringham, former QOR Lt Dave Saunders, Sgt M. Shannon and Cpl W. Gin at the Toronto International Half Marathon.

Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

by Capt Raziel Zisman, Int O

This is a touchy subject. Sort of bad news, good news. First, the bad news: Despite generous offers and/or dire threats, the missing Orville Fisher painting depicting The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada on D-Day is still AWOL. Perhaps the following good news will warm up the trail.

In 1997, the famous QOR 'House on the Beach' became the "Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada" at Bernières-sur-Mer, Normandy. The first time QOR D-Day veterans became aware of the Maison was probably at the

time they were shown the very detailed (and TOP SECRET) beach model of Bernières-sur-Mer at the QOR encampment in Southern England in late May 1944.

The thousands of visitors that come to this historic site every year will now depart knowing what our veterans achieved that day, and at what cost.

During the D+50 trip, the Honorary Colonel, BGen D. Pryer, CD, the then CO LCol S.D. Brand, CD and Capt R. Zisman, Int O, approached the Hoffer family (Mme Nicole and sons Olivier

and Nicolas), owners of the eastern half of the property (it is a semi-detached) and they were very receptive to the idea.

Three years later, thanks to the efforts of BGen Pryer, LCol S.D. Brand, the Hoffer family, Monsieur René Tenet (Mayor of Bernières-sur-Mer), Bob Bennett and many others, the QOR now have, again, their beach-house!



The QOR lead the D-Day Assault: The famous QOR 'House on the Beach', hit by allied suppressive fire, is seen on the left in the painting by Orville Fisher, a Canadian War Artist. And, photo below, QOR's pose in front of the house late on D-Day (Photo by Lt Frank L. Duberville, DND-33779)



June 6, 1997 : Official function at the Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Hervé Hoffer addresses the audience with Bob Bennett (l) and BGen Pryer, LCol S.D. Brand (r) (Photo courtesy BGen Pryer)



The text of the plaque in front of the house (above) and the sign affixed to the house (below)

Operation Recuperation

by Major B. McEachern, CD

The worst ice storm in living memory in early January, 1998 triggered massive power failures throughout eastern Ontario and western Québec and the largest peacetime callout of armed forces troops in Canadian history. A total of 77 Queen's Own volunteers participated in assisting civil authorities at some point in the period 9 - 21 January on Class "C" Reserve Service (filling Regular Force posns).



Ready to move on short notice: Sgt Bill Paton gives a final briefing to a QOR section prior to departure from Moss Park Armoury. Rfn O. Uhalov is to his right. (Photo: 2Lt Townshend-Carter)

An unusual weather pattern had caused several days of freezing rain to fall from January 6th - 9th. The resulting ice buildup of 6 cm and more caused scores of main transmission towers, tens of thousands of wooden power poles, and hundreds of km of power lines to collapse under the weight of ice. In many cases trees weighed down with ice took ten or more power poles down at a time, causing power outages for 2 - 3 weeks in many areas.

At its height, over 3 million people were without power. Many in rural areas lacked heat, light, and water, and were unable to get out of long laneways blocked by ice-laden trees. The largest number of people affected were in Québec, but rural areas of eastern Ontario were also hard hit, with the elderly



Wishing we had some choppers! On their way to help in Alfred, Ont., we have, seated L to R: MCpl Lockhart, Sgt J. Thorn, Rfn K. Delaney, Rfn D. Morris, Rfn R. Denny, Rfn J. Behan and Cpl J. Chin-Leung. (Photo: Lt Hicks)

and sick at greatest risk e.g. hypothermia and dehydration.

Militia soldiers assisted in unblocking obstructed roads and laneways, calling on residents in a comprehensive door-to-door check, delivering water and firewood, delivering township newsletters, and notifying civil authorities of follow-up required from health authorities, police, clergymen, etc. Coy & Pl HQ's also provided liaison, advice, and assistance to Township emergency response committees, and a connection with similar county committees. Info gathered by militia companies also assisted their assigned Bn/Regt HQ in assessing areas of greatest need for deployment of other troops.

Potentially serious health problems were averted thanks to the assistance of the troops, and a number of soldiers reported they definitely prevented some lives being lost. They were also instrumental in easing the discomfort of many people, and providing assurance to the residents they had not been forgotten.

Lanark Coy: 2 Canadian Mech Bde Gp in Petawawa was responsible for Ontario's 'Sector North', consisting of the Ottawa Valley and nearby areas (Prescott, Russell, Ottawa-Carleton, & Lanark counties). Most of the regular force soldiers were fully deployed in Ottawa and environs, leaving the rural areas unaided. A fanout on Thursday, January 8th identified a significant number of volunteers from the Toronto area able to help for at least 5 days, and the word to go came at 1900 hrs the following evening.

A Friday night is a poor time to find the average reserve soldier at home, but a company of 220 soldiers from all Toronto units was quickly assembled by 32 (Toronto) Cdn Bde Gp overnight at the former CFB Toronto in Downsview, including 30 from The Queen's Own. It departed at 1030 hrs on Saturday, January 10th. Detached to under command of the 2nd Royal Canadian Horse Artillery of Petawawa, whose main body was in the west half of Ottawa-Carleton, the company was deployed in Lanark Highlands Township in the northwest part of Lanark County. It is a large cottage area with about 7,000 residents in winter.

The company was commanded by Maj Bruce McEachern, with MWO Ken Kominek serving as CSM. Lt Derek Poteralski commanded one of the coy's 5 platoons, deployed to McDonald's Corners with two QOR sections. His 2IC was Sgt Jeff Syer. The sect comds were Sgt Bill Paton and Sgt Doug Halero, later replaced by Sgt Tom Fabry and Sgt Mark Shannon when the former had to return home. MCpl Inasio Kim and Cpl Mike Chisholm delivered water to thirsty residents, and Cpl

Winston Hewlin, our indefatigable Unit Support NCO, served as pl dvr/signaller.

Maj Erik Simundson assumed comd of the coy when Maj McEachern had to return to work in Toronto mid-way through the ten-day deployment of this coy. Capt Sandi Banerjee served as Liaison Officer with the Lanark Highlands Township Council for 5 days, and Capt Al Champion worked as a coy duty officer, assisted by 2Lt Ian Townshend-Carter.



At the Command Centre: Maj Bruce McEachern with MWO Ken Kominek (with beret) and, to his left, MCpl Inasio Kim. Sgt April Shobridge from 709 (Toronto) Communications Regiment is on the far left. (Photo: 2Lt Townshend-Carter)

WO Perry Gresty and Sgt Frank Demaine worked with other platoons for the latter half of the deployment. Among the Cpls who served were Mandy Behbahani, Gordon Harse, Walter Lawlor, David Sherbanowski, Andrew Walti, and Coogan Wilson.

Most of the coy returned home under Maj Simundson's comd on Monday, January 19th, with 10 soldiers left as rear party until Wednesday, Jan 21st.

Brockville Coy: Ontario's 'Sector South', controlled by CFB Kingston, consisted of



Next time I am bringing the convertible! Cpl M.W. Chisholm barely squeezing through at MacDonald's Corner, Ont. (Photo: Cpl Chisholm)

Operation Recuperation, 16-19 Jan 1998

by Lt L. Hicks, CD



Finally, some Army choppers! Hard at work we have, L to R, Rfn R. Candelario, Rfn J. Behan and Rfn J. Varley. (Photo: Lt Hicks)

the counties along the St. Lawrence River (Frontenac, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry). 32 (Toronto) Cdn Bde Gp assembled and dispatched another militia coy from Jan 11th to 19th, this one to Brockville under comd of the Brockville Rifles. The coy deployed to several townships in Leeds County, north of Gananoque. Our Adjutant, Capt Steve Tibbetts, served as Coy 2IC until he brought the rear party back on Jan 21st.

The Queen's Own contributed five soldiers to 1 Pl, deployed in Leeds & Lansdowne Twp, including Capt Adam Harnes (pl comd), MCpl Dave Harnes (a sect 2IC), and Cpls Ian Howard and Gregory Pindar. MWO Scott Patterson assisted BHQ.

Hawkesbury Coy: A third coy was assembled in Toronto for the weekend Jan 16th - 18th for those who could only serve on a weekend basis. Lt Larry Hicks and MWO Fred Haire took a platoon, which deployed to Hawkesbury on the Ottawa River, east of Ottawa.

Other NCO's who helped out were Sgts Donovan O'Halloran, Cecil Parris, and Justin Thorn, and MCpls Paul Alexander and Brett Lockhart. The corporals attending were Mark Akong, John Blakeley, Jason Chin-Leung, and Jason Green.

Rear Link: Throughout all of this, a rear link in the Bn Orderly Room in Moss Park Armoury worked every day into the late hours to provide crucial admin support, for which we thank Sgt Nancy Boone, assisted by Sgts Justin Thorn and Judy Willan.

The Queen's Own can be justifiably proud of the contribution made by so many on such short notice. As Torontonians, we can also take note of the endurance, fortitude, and unflinching politeness and good manners of the rural people affected by the disaster. Their constant concern for us and our comfort, despite their own needs, was a sign of the old-fashioned Canadian courtesy which we hopefully show others despite the pressures of living in a big city.

On the 16th of January 1998, twenty four members of the regiment deployed in the third phase of Operation Recuperation. On short notice, three platoons were raised in 32 Brigade to join members already deployed to storm ravaged areas in eastern Ontario. Our platoon was truly composite in nature, commanded by our Finance Officer, Lieutenant Hicks. The second in command was our Bugle Major, Master Warrant Officer Haire and the section commanders were Sergeants Parris, Thorn and O'Halloran. The remaining platoon members consisted of riflemen, troopers, sappers and privates.

No one knew where we were going or exactly what we were going to do when we got there, but we were highly mobile and our platoon leaders had over sixty five years of service between them. We were up for any task and phrases like "probable mission" and "likely scenario" didn't bother us. Mostly, we just wanted to get out there and do what we joined up for.

We left for Ottawa at midnight and arrived around 0800 hours. As usual, the convoy arrived several hours behind the buses only to find that the soldiers had been sent back down the highway toward Montreal. The platoon finally got back together at 1400 hours in the town of Hawkesbury on Highway 17. Once we received our mission, we departed (fled) the brigade area and got on with the job.

We were assigned to provide relief to the small towns of Van Kleek Hill and Alfred. Sergeant O'Halloran took his

section into Van Kleek Hill and collected, cut and distributed fire wood for the community. The rest deployed to Alfred and assisted 2CER, Ontario Hydro and the Ministry of Natural Resources in road clearing, wood cutting and checking out people in isolated areas without power. At night, we conducted mobile security patrols to deter the break ins and numerous thefts that had been taking place.



QOR personnel clearing debris in Van Kleek Hill. (Photo: Lt. Hicks)

logs and was treated at the local hospital. We kidded him about being the first Queen's Own soldier since Korea to be injured on an actual operation.

The re-deployment to Toronto was hindered by a blizzard, a minor accident and two broken down vehicles. The last troops finally left the armoury at 1000 hours on the 19th. Some went straight to their civilian jobs.

Although it was a short deployment, our soldiers made a positive impression on the citizens of eastern Ontario that will last a long time. If they didn't know that we had a militia in this province, they certainly know now. One of the best memories we have of this deployment are children waving at the convoys of army trucks, drivers honking at us on the highway and people coming over to talk to us during our halts. We discovered that winning hearts and minds is just as important as accomplishing the assigned task.

In Pace Paratus



Specialists in "Disaster" Relief: Cpl Winston Hewlin & the rest of c/s "22" proudly proclaim their newly acquired capabilities. (Photo: Cpl M.W. Chisholm)

The Korean War Wall of Remembrance

by MGen H.C. Pitts, MC, CD.

The Korean War Wall of Remembrance, commemorating 516 Canadians who died as a result of service During the War or the Peacekeeping period which followed, was dedicated in Brampton on 27 July, 1997. The event included a three day reunion of veterans from across Canada and marked the 44th Anniversary of the Ceasefire.

The project, both during construction and the actual dedication, was supported in significant ways by The Queen's Own Rifles. A significant monetary contribution was made by the Trust towards the funding needed to undertake the project. The Regimental Band and Bugles participated in the Dedication ceremony, the Tattoo during the Reunion and provided dance and other music during the weekend festivities. Pastor T.M.C. Marsaw, a Korea Peacekeeping veteran and former Commanding Officer of the First Battalion officiated at the Dedication. The QOR's Honorary

Lieutenant-Colonel, MGen H.C Pitts, MC, CD, also a veteran and a former CO, was the coordinator of the event.

There are six members of The Queen's Own commemorated by individual

of death and age. Each heavy bronze plaque is a replica of the grave markers in the United Nations Cemetery in Pusan, Korea and Yokohama, Japan.

This unique memorial is the only one of its kind in Canada that contains the names of all casualties of a War (as listed in the Book of Remembrance in the Memorial Chamber, Peace Tower, Parliament Building, Ottawa) in one place.

The central feature of the Wall lists all the units and ships that Canada committed to the theatre of operations during the period 1950-1956 as well as the insignia of the U.N., Korea Veterans Association, 25th Brigade and the Commonwealth Division. It is flanked by a

poem by Jack LaChance (a Korea veteran) and an extract from Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen". The Memorial is located in Meadowvale Cemetery, at the junction of Chingacousy Road and Ray Lawson Boulevard, in southwest Brampton.



plaques on the Wall. They are Lt N.M. Anderson, Cpl N.P. Ferland, Maj P.E. Gower, Sgt G.W. Koch, Rfn G.P. Reid and Lt M.C. Vipond.

All plaques contain the name, regimental number, rank, regiment, a date

The Scarborough Rifles (2881 Cadet Corps)

by Capt A.D. Wilson, CD

Fifteen Cadets attended Camps of various durations during the Summer. On September 15, Senior Cadets travelled to CFB Trenton for a three day visit to the Canadian Parachute Centre and to the Search & Rescue facilities for career development purposes.

Similar visits are planned to the Canadian Forces School of Intelligence and Security, and to the School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering at CFB Borden.

The Skill-at-Arms Competition took



Turning the Page of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in the Warriors Chapel at Canterbury Cathedral (Photo Courtesy Capt. Wilson)

place in September and we placed well. In November, Cadets commenced training for the Battalion Competition.

Several weekend exercises are planned for the Winter months.

As usual we are gaining new members and losing some. We welcomed 15 new recruits this year. Former cadet MWO Jason Bridge became a member of the RCR in Oct 97. We wish him all the best.

I had the honour of attending the 1st Bn The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's Royal Hampshire's) presentation of the Colours by the Queen of Denmark at Howe Barracks, Canterbury, on 30 June 1997 and also had the honour of Turning the Page of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in the Warriors Chapel at Canterbury Cathedral on Canada Day.

The CO of 5 PWRR, his staff and his family were excellent hosts. Thank you. They were unable to send any soldiers here this Summer due to "The Budget" but the lines of communication are open and hopefully we can carry out exchanges in the future.

We hope to take Cadets to the Infantry

Training Regiment, Catterick, Yorkshire in '98 or '99, budgets permitting.

This will be my last letter as CO of the Scarborough Rifles and I would like to thank the Cadet Staff and the Regiment for all their support over the years.

"Celer et Audax"



Presentation of the 1st PWRR Colours by the Queen of Denmark at Howe Barracks, Canterbury, June 1997

(Photo: Cpl M Heselden PWRR 01227-818055)

Trip Diary: Op Rambling Rifleman '97

by Capt. S. Banerjee

29 May 97: Arrive PIA, first SNAFU. Large framed D-Day trace map is far too large to carry on, thus will have to be added to checked luggage. Except for one thing, (second SNAFU) the large wardrobe box is already overweight. While trying to deal with this issue we discover that ALL of us are double the allowed weight limit, due to our need to bring two sets of combats and DEU, plus Regimental Blazer and tourist clothes for the trip. If we eat the French equivalent of Mac & Cheese for the trip then we can afford the several hundred dollars of excess baggage charges. Fortunately the airline, Canada 3000, took pity on us and accepted our reasons. While Sgts Fabry and Paton stood watch, the rest of us stuff our combats into the already accepted and weighed DEU wardrobe. Crisis one averted. Off to the duty free!

30 May 97: We arrive in London. Murphy's Law has struck again. Gatwick has experienced a freak power outage. Our escort from the British Army couldn't be issued a security pass and wasn't allowed to meet us at the plane. No plan ever survives contact with administrators. The power failure has taken all the computers off line, as well as the baggage system. UK Immigration is in a foul mood. Cpl Ioanni proudly states that she is member of the CF on exchange with UK Forces. Oops. We manage to talk our way thru without having to produce the travel orders, which are, of course, safely stored with our delayed luggage.

Finally link up with our escorts and drivers, taken to our transportation. (Note for After Action Report: what the British call buses we call mini vans). Grateful to have any sort of transport at all, we climb in amongst our kit and head off. Our host offers us the local version of box lunches. The troops look at the can of no name cola, the Mars bar, a 'meat' pie the size of a tart and an apple the size of a Canadian walnut. Mac & Cheese is starting to look appealing.

Pit stop to refuel (us, not the buses). Troops purchase copious quantities of local beverages. Some of them also buy food. Sets the tone for the rest of the trip. Our host and minder for the rest of the trip is CSgt Richard Langley-

Stevens. Dick is no stranger to the QOR, having watched the us conduct a live-fire platoon raid in Meaford, despite ten foot visibility and wet snow & hail. Spring in Ontario...

After four roadside stops, the QOR Guard arrives at the TA Centre in Norwich, home of A Coy, 6th Bn, The Royal Anglian Regiment. Move into home for the next few days. Unlike our Armoury system, the TA Centre is a small base like complex, complete with it's own guesthouse, stables for vehicles, arsenal and stores. It has an Officers' Mess for dining in, a combined mess for socializing, small Parade Square and the usual assortment of classrooms, showers, offices and storage space. The Mess Steward, who also happens to be the grounds keeper, lives on base and provides security when the troops are not on site. We are given a tour, told not to speak to strangers with Irish accents and briefed on their security protocols and gate codes. We are definitely not in Canada anymore.

Our hosts assume that we will wish to turn in after our extremely long trip. Without hesitation we head for the local pub. This also sets the tone for the rest of the trip. Cpl Behbahani is politely asked by the local constabulary to stop placing Regimental stickers on town signs. Unlike Toronto, the local police have hidden cameras with light intensification gear all over the downtown area. Fortunately, the local pubs, bus stops, washrooms, stores and

shop windows are not as well covered.

31 May: Our hosts decide that we need to be broken in gently after our long trip. We don't have the heart to explain that the symptoms for jet lag and hangovers appear similar. We are taken for a tour of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, the adjoining Aviation Museum (with its prototype Concord) and the Royal Anglian Regiments Museum. MCpl Kolher decides to augment the existing Northern Ireland Display. Using his head, he creates quite a mess. Sgt. Paton accompanies the victim to hospital. I try to find the number for CDLS London. The damage amounts to £800.00! No more Mac & Cheese.

01 June 97: It seems we have established quite a reputation for ourselves. Over dinner with the CO of 6 Royal Anglian the incident at the museum is brought up. The prevalence of QOR stickers in town also seems to have caught his eye. Good thing he has a sense of humour.

02 June 97: Reports of the encounter with the Spice Girls and the subsequent discussions in the concert hall seems to have made it back to our hosts. Cpls Ioanni and Behbahani have gotten used to driving on the wrong side of the road now. Sgt. Fabry's need for local news updates are being addressed as we speak. The Mess steward has several



quality English news papers /journals/ tabloids brought in for him every breakfast. The Star and The Sun are not quite like what we have at home.

03 June 97: After a whirlwind tour of London, we all make it back to Norwich. We've toured Cambridge and the surrounding countryside, visited the local castle, and generally ensured that the locals knew the colonists were visiting. OC A Coy states that he is sad that we are leaving but secretly he seems relieved that the local cops haven't noticed the stickers on the back of their car lights. Guess they seldom look back there.

04 June 97: Scenic trip all the way south to Portsmouth, cross the channel and onto Caen. Lack of recce slows us down, but we finally link up with the Band at the University of Caen. This road trip somewhat more subdued than the last one, but everything is relative. Like all good Riflemen, the members of the Guard quickly recce the Channel Ferry: duty free, gift shop, restaurant, ships bar. CSgt Langley-Stevens arranges for a tour of the bridge. We leave with a better understanding of what it might have been like for our comrades 53 years ago, and with a few less stickers.

We move into the International Students residence; across the field is the regular campus housing. Rooms are small and scary by Canadian standards, but we're happy to be off the bus.

05 June 97: What the French call breakfast is a joke. We subsist on bread (well, croissants) and bowls of tea and coffee. We begin to believe that 'meat' is an endangered species in France. It turns out that we are in the wrong mess and get moved into a lesser facility. Even mac and cheese costs a fortune here. Locals seemed to have noticed our presence: not sure if it was our uniforms or the sudden arrival of a bunch of very friendly strangers speaking very poor French. Link up with head shed for a recce of the beach and pde route. Presence of stickers en route answers my previous question.

06 June 97: Our big day! With Regimental Band & Bugles, Guard, Association and Vets, we are an impressive sight. We march down Rue des Queen's Own Rifles to the pillbox,

where we pay our respects during the dedication to a new, impressive plaque and map with a trace of the QOR during the invasion and following liberation of Europe. We march down the beach to La Maison de The Queen's Own Rifles, where another monument dedicating (half) the house to the Regiment and its achievements. From there it was on to the Church up the hill, a quick reception then to Beny-sur-Mer. We wanted to pay our respects as a Regimental family before the official ceremony. This also gives the troops a chance to take a look around. Next we are off to Le Mesnil-Patry for another pde, then off to an official dinner, then back to the University. The Guard members volunteer to return to Beny-sur-Mer to represent Canada during the official remembrance service. A very long day but very memorable.

07 June 97: We get a chance to visit our friends from the 1994 visit. As usual, the welcome is warm and genuine, and we reminisce about the 50th Anniversary trip. Off day for pers to tour the region, including Bayou, Caen, Anisy and the beach.

08 June 97: Pdes in Anisy and Giberville. We dedicate Rue de Buck Hawkins and the Band performs in Anisy, at the site of our old quarters, to thank the locals for their hospitality in 1994. The famous Capt McCabe signs several autographs as the Band sells CDs. Met the mayor and several friends. Several of the Guard are invited back for dinner. Upon arrival we find QOR memorabilia everywhere, from paintings to flags to records (wow,

somebody appreciated those things).

09 June 97: We bid adieu to our hosts and thank them with our remaining stickers. While the Band departs for the airport we head for Paris!

11 June 97: Yes, I know we skipped several days, but if you were with us on the trip, you'd find this appropriate. Our 48 hours of leave prove to be the perfect cap on an excellent trip. Loaded with souvenirs, we head back to the coast. Our last road trip!

12 June 97: Overnight ferry crossing was uneventful, back on the bus for a mad dash to Gatwick. Fortunately for us, the same sad story that worked at Pearson works in the UK. By pooling our resources, we manage to buy several six packs of Boddingtons, and other assorted beverages for the flight back. We say goodbye to our bus driver and CSgt Langley-Stevens, host /navigator /tour guide/ nurse maid.

13 June 97: Back where we started. Except the alcohol, most of which was consumed and some of which is on its way back to the UK. It seems that we were expected to carry off the plane what we carried on the plane. The mound of duffel bags and green kit persuades Canada Customs that we really are Military troops and before we know it, we are back in front on the Canada 3000 desks. All pers present and accounted for, just like the CO ordered: all happier than when we had left!



The QOR Rambling Riflemen, in England (photo left) and on Ceremonial Guard duty in Anisy, France (above).

The Toronto Company of Highland Rifles

The following is an extract from The 48th Highlanders of Toronto by Alexander Fraser, M.A. published in 1900. It was forwarded to us by Lloyd Tucker, Sgt (ret'd) 48th Highlanders of Canada, to whom we are most grateful for this glimpse at what might have been!

Among the things around which military memories linger in Toronto is the Company of Highland Rifles, at one time attached to The Queen's Own Rifles. The veterans of today delight, as veterans only do, in reminiscences of the time when they served in its ranks, and to them it is a source of regret that no adequate account of it has been preserved.

Within the scope of this work only a brief notice is permissible; yet, as a company in which the Highland idea of soldiering was enthusiastically upheld and exemplified, a short sketch is obviously in place in this volume.

The company was raised on the 18th of September, 1856, those chiefly instrumental in its organization being: A.M. Smith, at one time in the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders; A.T. Fulton, merchant; John Gardner, at one time in the 71st Highland Light Infantry; Robert Sutherland and Mr. R. H. Ramsay. The first officers were: A. M. Smith, captain; A. T. Fulton, Lieutenant; John Gardner, Ensign; Francis McMannus Russell, Surgeon. It was then known as No. 3 Independent Volunteer Rifle Co. of Toronto.

When the independent companies were formed into No. 2 Battalion Queen's Own Rifles, the Highland Company was designated No. 4 (Highland). At that time Captain A. M. Smith was appointed Major in The Queen's Own Rifles, and his place was taken in the captaincy of the highland Company by Lieutenant Fulton, Ensign Gardner becoming Lieutenant, and John Sheddon, Ensign. this was in May, 1860. Captain Fulton is said by Mr. Chadwick to have been "a splendid drill, and aided by the natural steadiness of the Highlanders, soon obtained a reputation for his company which they ever afterwards maintained." In 1863 Captain Fulton retired, and Lieutenant John Gardner was, on the 21st August of that year, appointed to the command of the company, with R.H. Ramsay as Lieutenant, and Donald Gibson as

Ensign. In 1866 Captain Gardner retired from active command and was succeeded by Lieutenant Ramsay as Captain, with Ensign Gibson as Lieutenant, and Mr. Henry Scott as Ensign. These were the officers of the company at the time of its dissolution.

Although No.4 of The Queen's Own Rifles, at first, the company was, being dressed in the kilt, always placed on the left of the line of the parade, and for this reason the number was changed from 4 to 10, the latter number being the one by which it is familiar to the survivors of those connected with it.

In 1866 Captain Gardner was associated with Captain Ramsay in the Fenian Raid expedition, and commanded at Ridgeway. It is related with pride how the Highland Rifles was the last to retire from the field. Mr. Matheson, druggist, Toronto, acted as company bugler that day, and when the "retreat" was sounded he did not interpret it as a retire call. Someone from the ranks called out to Captain Gardner that he had heard a retire call. That officer was enraged at the idea and shouted back: "If you say it again I'll cut you down with my sword. It's a charge. Are you ready?" Pouches were examined and those who had three or more cartridges left had to share one or more of them with those who had only one or none. The ammunition was nearly all spent. These are said to have been Captain Gardner's orders: "We are now to charge. Steady men! Go forward at the double, keeping steady as if on

parade. You know how to do it, you've done it often at drill. Keep steady as you march on, but cheer for all you're worth." The company advanced about twenty paces at the double when an officer rode up and shouted "Halt! where are you going with these men, sir? Can't you see the line has retired?" The order was then given: "The shortest way to the reserve," and the company retired. Among those wounded were John Whyte and Forbes McHardy.

The company lay at Stratford for some weeks, and there a photograph was taken of the company, with its officers in front, which is a much cherished relic in many homes now scattered over Canada and the United States, for members of the Highland Rifles have followed Fortune wherever her smile beckoned.

On the 1st of October, 1868, the company disbanded because the Government refused to grant an allowance in lieu of the ordinary uniform; or perhaps it would be more correct to say that for the sake of uniformity the military authorities insisted upon the company adopting the same uniform as the other companies of the regiment wore, and as the Highlanders were not permitted to wear the kilt, they declined re-enrollment under the Militia Act of 1868, and so became extinct.

The members continued to meet at their old rendezvous, and not having now the bond of military duty to keep them together, the idea occurred to some of



What might have been: QOR D-Day veteran Col H.C.F. Elliot, CD, on recruitment duty for the 2nd Bn Clan Elliot! (Photo courtesy Mrs. Elliot)

them that they should form themselves into a Scottish society. About that time the old Highland Society of Toronto was less active than usual, and an amalgamation was brought about between it and the members of the Highland company, the combined body being named the "Caledonian Society of Toronto," including Highlander and Lowlander, under the Gaelic name "Caledinia," usually derived from "Coille daoine," "Woodlanders." It is interesting to note that the society thus formed, should, twenty-three years afterwards, in 1891, have retained so lively a recollection of the experiences associated with the old Highland Rifles as to be among the most enthusiastic promoters and generous donors of the 48th Highlanders at the period of its organization.

The interesting list of the original members is as follows: the officers as already mentioned; Quarter-master-Sergeant George Ocil, Col-Sergeant Robert Sutherland, Sergeants Robert Morrison and James Gray, Corporals Robert Jeffrey and Wm. Ramsay, Piper Donald MacRae, Bugler Wm. Wallace, Privates Archie McFarlane, Wm. Bansley, Alexander Barrie, Henry Braid, John Calver, William Cos, Nicholas Cumming, Andrew Fleming, Peter Gardner, George Gilchrist, William Goldie, George Gratton, Alexander Gray, Allan Walker, Walter Wilson, Daniel Rose, James Mowatt, John Atchison, Neil Johnston, Wm. G. Kemp, Alexander Moodie, Malcolm Morrison, Joseph McGeorge, Wm. McGeorge, Alistair MacDonald, Thomas MacIntosh, Duncan MacKinnon, Alistair M. Oliphant, Henry McLeod, Robert H. Ramsay, Adam Reid, David Ross, Alexander Thorburn, George Wills, James Wilson, and Sam. Hutcheson.

The uniform was the same as that of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders, with the exception of the feather bonnet - the glengarry being worn - and the tunic, which was of green material with red facings.

Another Highland company which was connected with The Queen's Own Rifles, Toronto, was "F" or No. 6 company of Whitby. It was incorporated with The Queen's Own on the formation of the latter in 1860. It does not appear to have ever paraded with the regiment although not gazetted out until November, 1862. It is now No. 1 Company of the 34th Regiment.

QOR Airborne Coin



Queen's Own para-qualified personnel are familiar with the Airborne Coin carried by members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment. The coin, which was presented to Cdn AB Regt members upon completion of the Airborne Indoctrination Course, was to be carried at all times. If a soldier challenged another to present his coin, and it was not available, drinks were owed. It is rare to find a former member of the Airborne Regiment without his coin. Just ask Cpl Hewlin to show you his (it'll cost you a drink).

Cpl Wilson has designed and is producing a Queen's Own Airborne Coin, to be available to those jumpers who have served in the QOR Airborne Platoon/Company at any time since its inception in 1982. The issue of these coins will be strictly controlled and numbered, and issued with the soldier's name and course serial engraved in the reverse.

Numbers will be allocated according to date of jump course, i.e. the earlier jump courses get the lower numbers. Orders will be accepted until 30 May 1998, at which time numbers will be allocated and the coins produced. To order, send your name, address, date of jump course and service with the Queen's Own airborne element, and cheque for \$50.00 to: Cpl C. Wilson c/o the BOR.



Between Strawberry and Raspberry:

An Examination of the Action fought at Le Mesnil-Patry on June 11, 1944

by M.R. McNorgan

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LE MESNIL-PATRY

The action at Le Mesnil-Patry was a minor affair in the course of the Normandy campaign. A combined armour/infantry assault was turned back when the lead tank squadron and infantry company were virtually wiped out attempting to secure this tiny French hamlet. On the strategic plane it held no significance. The Allies were firmly ashore in France and the opportunity for a German counter-attack to drive them back into the sea had passed. At the operational level, Le Mesnil-Patry marked the end of the first phase of the Normandy campaign for the Canadians, for the object of this action had been to secure one of the original D-Day objectives. When it, and associated attacks failed, the Allied land force commander, General BL Montgomery, was forced to re-assess his options and develop a new approach. It is at the tactical level that this action holds the most interest. Unfortunately, much of that interest lies in the fact that it proved to be an object lesson in how not to mount a combined arms attack.

A battle honour was awarded to the two Ontario Regiments involved, London's 1st Hussars and Toronto's Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. The battle honour does not commemorate a victory but rather an honourable defeat. Honourable is the appropriate term, for the Canadian soldiers who fought here were courageous, skillful and well led. The blame for what happened does not lie with them. Little is known about the action for the very reason that the numbers committed were so low and the casualty returns were so high. The survivors saw only their own small portion of the battle, and most of the leaders on the field were killed. It has thus been necessary to piece the story together from various sources to try to reach an understanding of what happened on that day.

Most writers mentioning the battle pass over it quickly. Note is usually made of its being the last major action fought by the Canadians in June. If looked at more closely, disapproving comment is frequently made of the fact that the attack was conducted with the infantry riding on the tanks, and that there was no supporting artillery fire. The reason for these fundamental errors is less frequently noted,

the lack of time for planning and preparation. This shortcoming, the most serious of all, had nothing to do with the troops involved. This was a failing at the higher levels of command.

THE BACKGROUND

On Tuesday morning, the 6th of June 1944, soldiers of the American, British, and Canadian armies stormed ashore in Normandy across five beach-heads. The



The Calvary at Le Mesnil-Patry, looking East towards Norrey-en-Bessin, where a farm building is visible (on the left). Calvaries are monuments commonly found in Normandy. It is depicted on the map on the next page at GRID 909704. (Photo : Editor)

two landing sites on the Allied right flank were American. The three on the left flank, from east to west, were utilized by 3rd (British), 3rd (Canadian) and 50th (British) Infantry Divisions. Each of these three divisions was supported by armour, in the case of the Canadians, by the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade (2CAB).

The intent of the D-Day planners was to have the infantry consolidate the beach-head while the armoured brigades penetrated the German defenses to seize important terrain features. After helping the infantry secure the beach-head, and if resistance proved weak, the next D-Day objective for 2CAB was to be the town of Evrecy, southeast of Caen and some fifteen miles from the sea. The fight on the beaches did not go exactly as planned. Although the initial stubborn defenses were overcome, the Canadian formations did not press inland as fast or as far as they could have. Had they done so, Le Mesnil-Patry may never have occurred.

In Le Mesnil-Patry itself the war arrived on 7 June. The German garrison troops from the 716th Infantry Division had pulled out that morning. Later several Canadian

trucks arrived at the Bunel family home, 'La Ferme de la Chateau', on the village's north-western side. The Canadian engineers dismounted and began to unload their cargo of mines. Soldiers of the 2nd battalion, 26th Panzergrenadier Regiment, 12th SS Panzer Division arrived on the scene, chasing off the Canadians but capturing their trucks and mines. The Chateau then became the Panzergrenadier battalion headquarters. These new German troops conscripted the villagers to dig an anti-tank ditch across the fields to the west of the Chateau and fire-trenches to cover the ditch. Most villagers also put their new found skills to private use and took the precaution of digging slit trenches for themselves beside their homes.

Although the city of Caen was to have fallen on D-Day, it would remain in German hands for over a month. The principal German forces in the Caen area, after the landings, were two German armoured divisions. In the east, 12th SS (Hitlerjugend) Panzer Division which included 12th SS Panzer Regiment, composed of two battalions (the 1st Battalion equipped with the Mark V 'Panther' and the 2nd Battalion equipped with the older Mark IV), as well as 25th and 26th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiments each of three battalions. Other divisional troops included an artillery battalion, a reconnaissance battalion, an anti-tank battalion and a pioneer [engineer] battalion. Just arriving on the left flank of 12th SS was the similarly constituted Panzer Lehr Division, raised from training establishments, Lehr meaning 'demonstration'.

The right forward of the two leading brigades in 3rd Canadian Infantry Division (3CID) was the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade (7CIB) from western Canada. In front of 7CIB, more or less in line from north to south, lay the Norman villages of Colombiers-sur-Seulles, Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse, Norrey-en-Bessin and Le Mesnil-Patry. It had been intended that the Caen-Bayeux railway line, running east-west between the villages of Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse and Norrey-en-Bessin, be reached on D-Day itself. That goal was only to be realized the following day when The Regina Rifles Regiment occupied Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse and placed their 'C' Company forward in Norrey-en-Bessin. The prairie unit had to fight to retain

possession of both villages during fierce counter-attacks from the 1st Battalion 12th SS Panzer Regiment on the night of 8-9 June. Altogether 22 German Panther tanks entered Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse, one of them being knocked out in front of the Regina's battalion headquarters. To solidify their hold, the battalion placed 65 anti-tank mines on the approaches to their positions between Norrey and Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse.

The Regina's neighbours to the west were not as fortunate. The Germans broke into the village of Putot-en-Bessin which was defended by The Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Approximately 35 Canadians were taken prisoner. Putot-en-Bessin was later counterattacked by 7CIB's reserve battalion, The Canadian Scottish, and retaken. In the meantime the prisoners had been removed to Le Mesnil-Patry where they were placed in a farm yard under close guard. A short time later they were marched out of the village to a field and machine-gunned in cold blood.

The next day, 10 June, the 3CID Intelligence summary optimistically noted that a British advance on the right of 3CID "has probably caused the withdrawal of armour from our front. This coupled with the first evidence of enemy running and his general tactics during the day would seem to indicate that he is more likely to continue his running and attempt to deny ground to us than to launch a strong counter attack." Note the phrase 'enemy running'!

During the advance from the beaches a salient had formed between 3CID's forward brigades along the valley of the River Mue, near the village of Rots. Accordingly, 2CAB was instructed to plan for an operation on Sunday, 11 June to clear the valley. Once the salient was secure, the next day 2CAB would direct its attention to a drive on Cheux, the area of its original D-Day objective.

Later on 10 June, General Sir Miles Dempsey, the commander of 2nd British Army, under which the Canadian formations were serving, held a conference with his corps commanders to discuss an operation designed to capture Caen in a pincer movement. The left arm of the pincer was 51st (Highland) Division to the east of the Canadians, the right arm was 7th (British) Armoured Division to their west. The immediate neighbours of 7CIB, 50th (British) Division would advance on the flank of 7th Armoured Division. This attack would take place on the 11th. The Canadians' Cheux operation was discussed at this meeting and its value as an adjunct to the British operations was considered. At the end of his meeting Dempsey ordered the Canadian operation moved forward by 24 hours so that it would conform with the attack to be made by 69th (British) Brigade

on the Canadians right flank. This order would take 15 hours in reaching its ultimate recipients.

THE PREPARATIONS

The 10th Canadian Armoured Regiment (10CAR), better known as The Fort Garry Horse (FGH) from Winnipeg, had been ordered to clear the Mue valley. Starting at 10:00 hours on the 11th, 'A' Squadron would support 46 Royal Marine Commando in this task. The remainder of the regiment



would be resting for an operation scheduled for the 12th. That task, the advance on Cheux, would be undertaken by the 6th Canadian Armoured Regiment (6CAR), otherwise known as the 1st Hussars. The Hussars would have under command two companies of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada (QOR).

The 1st Hussars had been the hardest hit Canadian armoured regiment during the landings, suffering 43 personnel casualties, 20 of them fatal. Their heavy tank losses had resulted in the two D-Day assault squadrons, 'A' and 'B', being temporarily amalgamated, 'A' Squadron contributing



A tough road ahead: Members of "A" Coy with a Nazi flag sometime on June 11, 1944. The news of the battle would not have reached them yet. The photograph, without any explanation save for the date written on the back, was mailed home to Toronto by Rfn Charlie M. Bloomfield (2nd row, middle) (Photo courtesy: Dorothy Bloomfield)

nine tanks and 'B' Squadron four to the common pool. As a stop gap measure an FGH officer, Captain Cyril Tweedale, had brought forward seven FGH tanks and crews from the brigade reserve to reinforce the Hussars on the 8th. Tweedale himself was allocated to Major D'Arcy Marks' 'C'

Squadron. On the 10th the unit received 20 new tanks and many replacement crewmen. The CO, the only Great War veteran in the regiment, was Lieutenant-Colonel Ray Colwell. Colwell reorganized the unit, reforming 'B' Squadron under the command of an aggressive, young RMC graduate, Captain Harry Harrison, previously the 2i/c of 'C' Squadron. 'B' Squadron received 12 of the new tanks bringing their total number up to 21. [Five troops of three tanks each plus a squadron headquarters of six.] In an effort to ensure that each crew had at least some experienced members the crew rosters were shuffled. This was not a matter of concern because the regiment had been promised 24 hours in which to make preparations and rest the exhausted veterans who had carried on without a substantial break since the landings. Among the replacements were three lieutenants joining the regiment for the first time, one of whom, Lieutenant Jamie Martin, 7/11 Hussars, was seconded from 2CAB's own Headquarters (HQ) Squadron.

At 21:00 hours on the 10th, Brigadier Wyman convened a planning conference with his COs to discuss the forthcoming operations. These two attacks, Mue Valley and Cheux, would be the first the brigade had conducted on its own, as up until this point all of 2CAB's activities had been in support of infantry operations. Lieutenant-Colonel Colwell did not return to his regiment's harbour until 04:00 hours when he brought news of the operation, the advance on Cheux, planned for Monday the 12th. The regiment had moved that Saturday night and Trooper AO Dodds, Captain Harrison's new operator, noted that "most of us had had only an hours sleep." A short time later, at 07:30 hours, orders were received at 2CAB headquarters to advance the timing of the Cheux operation. The attack would take place a day earlier than planned. The change in plan was passed to the Hussars by 08:00 hours and frenzied preparations began. It was only five hours to the start time designated for the attack. The records do not say whether Brigadier Wyman posed any objections to conducting 2CAB's first two operations simultaneously.

During the D-Day landings, the QOR of the 8th Canadian Infantry Brigade (8CIB) had been the hardest hit Canadian infantry unit. The battalion had incurred 143 casualties, 61 of them fatal. One company, 'D', had been landed on the wrong beach, and had encountered very little opposition. By the time the company rejoined the battalion, the beach-head had been secured with 'D' Company still at close to 100 per cent strength. On the 11th the QOR was enjoying a relatively quiet day of cleaning up and digging slit trenches in their newly occupied battalion area at Neuf-Mer, when

disquieting rumours started to circulate about an impending attack. The orders for the battalion were not received until 11:00 hours, then, like the Hussars, their unit bivouac became a scene of organized mayhem.

PLANNING

Brigadier Wyman held his Orders Group at his headquarters in Bray at 11:00 hours. Two QOR companies, 'D' and 'A', would accompany the 1st Hussars as the lead assault element. The remaining two rifle companies would be with the FGH's 'B' and 'C' squadrons in the second wave. In reserve was the third regiment of 2CAB, The Sherbrooke Fusiliers (27CAR). The Hussar order of march would be 'B', 'C', 'Regimental HQ', and 'A'. To get to the objective, the village of Norrey would be bypassed. Then, the village of Le Mesnil-Patry would be secured by 'B' Squadron of the Hussars and 'D' Company of the Queen's Own, supported by the Hussars' 'C' Squadron on their right flank. Once that was accomplished, 'D' Company would be joined by the QOR's Mortar and Anti-tank Platoons. The Hussars remaining squadrons, along with 'A' Company QOR, would then pass by Le Mesnil-Patry and continue on to occupy the final objective, the high feature south of Cheux. With that feature secured, 'D' Company and the supporting arms would move forward to join 'A' Company on the objective. The remaining two companies would then come forward to establish a battalion battle position, termed a 'battalion fortress', on the objective, along with the supporting armour.

Norrey-en-Bessin was given the radio codename Strawberry, Le Mesnil-Patry was Raspberry. Immediately upon receiving warning of the new time of the attack the QOR CO, Lieutenant-Colonel Jock Spragge, sent his mortar platoon commander, Lieutenant Ben Dunkelmann, forward to begin fire planning. Dunkelmann met with his counter-part from the Regina Rifles and together they developed their plan.

At 11:30 hours Lieutenant-Colonel Don Mingay, 3CID's GSO I, [senior operations officer] arrived in person at 2CAB headquarters with a message from General Keller. The message stated that it was "imperative the attack be mounted at the earliest possible moment." The reason why commander 3CID felt it necessary to put this extra pressure on the armoured brigade has not been explained.

The CO 1st Hussars issued his orders at 12:15 hours. Both 3CID and 2CAB informed all units that the operation was due to start at 13:00, less than an hour away. Needless to say there was insufficient time to prepare for such an undertaking and the

13:00 timing was not met, in fact at 13:00 hours the Regina Rifles informed the CO of the QOR that the supporting fire was still being tied up and asked him to visit their headquarters.

The FGH did not have the same pressures of time imposed on them. They were thus able to visit the Regina Rifles positions with their QOR counterparts to view the ground to be covered and to arrange the details of fire support and the passage of lines.

THE ADVANCE

Due to the time constraints the information passed on by Colonels Colwell and Spragge never reached the troops. The outline plan and the direction of advance was given to the troop leaders and platoon commanders, but that was all. The QOR riflemen marched the short distance south, from Neuf-Mer to Bray, and mounted the tanks for the move forward. 'D' Company



Canadian Shermans moving into position for an attack south of Caen. A similar scene would have taken place at Le Mesnil-Patry (Photo DND ZK 877/1)

was on board 'B' Squadron's vehicles. Having infantry ride on tanks was, and still is, a recognized technique for getting both organizations forward together. It is never used in contact with the enemy however, because the tanks cannot fire their guns nor traverse their turrets with infantry on them. For the infantry's part a tank in action is an unattractive place to be as it draws fire. As well, the infantryman cannot use his rifle with any sort of accuracy sitting on a continuously moving platform. At the start of the operation these matters were of less concern than getting to the start line as quickly as possible, but even that normally straight forward operation was fraught with difficulty. Trooper Dodds, the operator in Captain Harrison's tank, noted "There was much delay during which the air was jammed by someone asking for Sun-ray sic [radio codename for the commander] Capt Harrison who was out of his tank where we halted to take on the inf[antry]. One other tank continuously asked to be re-netted, he had time to net a dozen sets by that time so

I finally told him to 'lock up and shut up'." This confusion with the radios was indicative of the pressures of time as all sets should have been netted before leaving harbour. Netting a 19 set was a lengthy and laborious process during which the control station would transmit a netting call for the out stations to calibrate onto. If a station did not calibrate correctly the process would have to be repeated. Naturally, lengthy or repeated netting calls gave any enemy forces listening in ample warning of what frequency was being used.

The 'C' Squadron departure was held up when Lieutenant Bill McCormick of 2nd Troop found a leaking fuel line in his tank and exchanged vehicles with his troop corporal. A gap of a few hundred yards opened up between the lead squadrons as 'B' roared off into the distance.

While approaching the front lines, the Hussars found that the ground between Bretteville-l'Orueilleuse to Norrey-en-Bessin had been previously mined by The Regina Rifles and that they would be forced to stay on the road. Indeed, at 13:20 hours a frantic message went from 2CAB to 3CID asking if there were mines laid in this area. That basic information had not been passed on, a display of poor coordination by the staffs involved, possibly a result of fatigue. The oversight caused the start line [departure point for an attack] to be changed, from the east-west Caen-Bayeux railway line, to a north-south track lying west of Norrey. A change of direction for the attack of 90 degrees.

The mines forced the Hussars to go through Norrey, instead of around it as planned. The dusty road to the village was bordered on the left with a dense growth of trees and on the right by thick Norman bocage shrub. The village itself had been well knocked about by shell fire, with the gaunt remains of the church steeple rising from the centre of the ruins. The narrowness of the streets meant the tanks had to proceed in single file. Near the centre of the village a 90 degree right turn was required just short of the church, but the confined space meant that each tank in turn had to back and fill to negotiate the corner, further delaying the attack. Throughout the entire approach march an Hussar officer maintained a running commentary on the regimental radio net so that RHQ could track their progress. One crew commander, Sergeant Leo Gariepy, of 'B' Squadron, grew tired of the non-stop travelogue and switched off his radio that was on the RHQ net. That action left him with only the set on the squadron net.

While the Hussars were advancing, the radio monitoring service of 12th SS Panzer Division (Hitlerjugend) had not been idle. On June 9th a knocked out Canadian tank near Authie had been found to contain copies of Canadian wireless procedures and

codes. These were now used to monitor the Hussars radio traffic. Learning that an attack was underway, the Germans prepared to shell and mortar Norrey-en-Bessin. 'B' Squadron had cleared the village and 'C' was arriving when the shelling started. Then, Lieutenant-Colonel Colwell's tank ran over a Canadian mine, left at the side of the road, and lost a track. This mishap impeded the forward movement of RHQ and 'A' Squadron. Sitting in the co-drivers seat of Colwell's tank was the Hussars Intelligence Officer (IO) Lieutenant Don Miller. Still suffering concussion from the effects of the explosion, Miller was sent back to 2CAB with instructions to report to the Brigade staff. He paused on his journey to destroy the maps and codes in his possession. (Later an officer and NCO would re-enter Norrey, while it was still being shelled, to recover these same maps and notes from the CO's tank. That evening, the Hussars reconnaissance troop would go back on the same fruitless errand.) Meanwhile Colwell was on foot, in the midst of the shelling, trying to sort out the traffic jam in the village. Colwell pulled the remainder of the regiment out of the village and back up the road toward Bretteville to where they could support the tanks that had gotten through.

When 'B' Squadron broke out of the confines of the village, hatches were closed, and the troops deployed into the box formation normally used for movement across open country. Squadron Headquarters and 5th Troop were in the centre. Leading were 1st Troop left and 2nd right. Bringing up the rear were 3rd Troop left and 4th right. The Company had one platoon with the central troop and the other two with the troops bringing up the rear. Company and Squadron HQs were co-located.

The attackers were now across the start line, a north-south track on the western edge of Norrey. The infantry were still mounted on the tanks. The approach march had been in a southerly direction. The turn in the centre of Norrey had caused the direction of advance to face west. The unsuspecting Canadians were now driving into a pocket of enemy positions. On their right, north, lay Panzergrenadier companies 5 and 6 of the 2nd Battalion 26th SS. To the front, west, its 7 Company in the Chateau du Mesnil-Patry, and behind, farther back in the village, the battalion headquarters. To their left, south, were more dug-in Germans, 3 and 2 companies of SS-Panzerpionier-bataillon 12, the divisional engineer unit. Farther away, several kilometres to the south-west of Le Mesnil-Patry, was Sturmbannführer [Major] Karl-

Heinz Prinz's 2nd Panzer Battalion, 12th SS. Prinz, who was about to win the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross, had with him two tank companies, numbers 5 and 6, commanded respectively by Untersturmführer (Second Lieutenant) Willi Kandler and Hauptsturmführer (Captain) Ludwig Ruckdeschel. Both companies were equipped with the 75mm Panzer Mark IV.

'B' SQUADRON - THE ATTACK

Lieutenant Dunkelmann, who had expected the assault force to stop and be briefed on the fire support arrangements, ran over to meet the advancing tanks, then



Tanks are comfortable to ride on when parked. The photo above depicts a 'short' Sherman, with some QOR's perched atop, during training for the crossing of the Rhine. Cpl Joe Oggy is leaning out of the Commander's cupola. The others are not identified. For the troops at Le Mesnil-Patry it was no joy ride. (Photo: QOR Museum/J. Oggy)

stood by the road, angry and dumbfounded as the squadron swept past him. Of course, he would not have been advised of the last minute change of start line, and if arrangements had been made to meet at the start line he was likely at the wrong place.

The new start line, on the west side of Norrey, was being held by 13 Platoon, 'C' Company, The Regina Rifles. It was crossed at 14:37 hours, seventeen minutes after the revised start time of 14:20 hours.

'B' Squadron's right hand lead troop, 2nd, continued to follow the main road toward Le Mesnil-Patry, while the others swung left into a large wheat field, estimated to encompass five acres, with the grain standing about three feet high. Unencumbered with infantry passengers, the two lead troops were able to employ speculative fire on likely enemy positions. Corporal Jim Simpson of 2nd Troop: "We fired on any unnatural hedges or buildings as we moved up the road to the right-hand side of the wheat field...I noticed a German motorcycle standing on the road; this seemed rather odd, so we laced the hedges with machine gun fire but received no answering fire." Sergeant Gariepy later described his progress through the wheat field, scanning the ground ahead of the tank for signs of mines, only to find himself

looking into the youthful faces of panzergrenadiers. The first contact report came at 14:52 hours and the struggle in the wheat field was joined. The action had lasted for 15 long minutes when the Hussars reported to 2CAB that they were being held up midway between Strawberry and Raspberry. At that point 'B' Squadron surged forward in a lunge for the village.

The fact that the 'B' squadron vehicles ended up in two distinct locations, may mean that the Hussar plan called for half of the squadron, 2nd and 4th Troops under Battle Captain Dick Wildgoose, to enter the village, while the remainder, under Harrison, outflanked the village to the south.

The German plan was a basic one which had served them well in north Africa. Separate the tanks from the infantry, then destroy each element separately. The panzergrenadiers were dug into the centre of the field where they would be safe from Allied artillery. They would hold their fire until the armour had passed them, then take on the following Canadian infantry. Finding the Canadian infanteers on the tanks came as a surprise. After some slight hesitation they engaged the infantry and armour together. The tanks stayed to fight it out and the panzergrenadiers took a terrible beating as a result. The German anti-tank guns, held in depth behind Le Mesnil-Patry, stayed put waiting for the Canadian armour to come forward.

Sergeant Gariepy described the scene; "We proceeded about 1,500 yards from town [Norrey-en-Bessin] and deployed as arranged, covering infantry. Small arms resistance was tremendous, enemy infantry in great numbers were lying in fields on centre of advance. We were doing good work of annihilation when the order to hurry on came over set." Meanwhile in Trooper Dodds' tank "... Capt Harrison gave orders to speed up the attack. I could hear Jerry machine guns going, from the wireless messages no one could locate it. Our own tank fired H[igh] E[xplosive] and co-ax [a machine-gun aligned with the main gun] at some haystacks and other points - hedges etc."

With the order to hurry up the attack, some 'B' Squadron tanks left the infantry behind and drove for the village. Not having been given more than the most elemental information they had no idea of the plan of attack. As they approached the village they topped a small rise in the ground, presenting easy targets for the waiting German anti-tank guns. Many Shermans were hit, but several tanks and some QOR entered the eastern end of the village. Smoke was now fired by the Hussars in an effort to screen their movements from the German artillery

and mortar observers. Then, at 15:55 hours the Hussars announced the village was taken. Within minutes Captain Wildgoose spotted a German armoured counter-attack coming in, Sturmabannführer Prinz's 2nd Panzer Battalion. Number 6 Company roared through Le Mesnil-Patry while 5 Company went around its northern side to take 'B' Squadron in the right flank.

While the Canadian tanks and infantry were together, firing into the wheat in an effort to locate well concealed enemy positions, the officer commanding 'D' Company, Major Neil Gordon, attempted to coordinate tank supporting fire for the infantry in order to advance but was frustrated by poor radio communications. The problems with the radios were later attributed to the effects from salt water exposure during the landings. Gordon was then shot through the face. In spite of his serious wound he persisted in his attempts to coordinate with the armour. Corporal Jim Simpson, of 2nd Troop 'B' Squadron, watched as Gordon tried to communicate with Simpson's troop leader, Lieutenant Martin, the 7/11th Hussar who had joined the night before. When Martin leaned out of the commanders hatch to speak he was shot in the head, his body falling back inside the turret. Martin's crew became upset and the tank left, retracing its route back to Norrey. Major Gordon was felled with a bullet in his left leg. As he lay in the field, his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Bob Fleming of 18 Platoon, came over to offer first aid. Gordon told him to take command of the company, but unknown to Gordon, as Fleming left to carry out his orders, he was killed. The company now had no leader. Harrison's order to speed up the attack led to some tanks surging ahead in an effort to reach the village, leaving the infantry on their own in the field. In spite of this one QOR officer did reach Le Mesnil-Patry, Lieutenant George Bean of 17 Platoon, accompanied by Sergeant Sammy Scrutton and seven riflemen.

'B' SQUADRON - THE ORCHARD

Those tanks on 'B' Squadron's left flank which had surged ahead, including Harrison's, found themselves in a large orchard which was part of a farm on the south-eastern corner of Le Mesnil-Patry. Occupying the orchard was 3 Company of the pioneer battalion, backed up by the battalion's reconnaissance platoon. One soldier in this depth position was Pioneer Horst Lutgens. Lutgens who would win the Iron Cross 2nd class this day, was sitting in

his trench writing a letter home when 'B' Squadron suddenly arrived. Pioneer Lutgens; "...the Canadians were on top of us. All of a sudden I became quite calm and I worked myself into a fury. I wondered what my comrades up in front were up to: had they been killed or had they allowed themselves to be rolled over? I crawled on my belly back to my foxhole and grabbed the first Panzerfaust [a shoulder fired anti-



The Canadian attack as would have been seen by some of the enemy: Looking north, the Calvary at Le Mesnil-Patry is clearly visible, with a Norrey farm building on the right. The Canadians would have been advancing from right to left across German gunsights. (Photo; Editor)

tank weapon] - I had three of them in my foxhole. I got it ready and looked for my first victim. There it was, a Sherman, large and powerful. Its turret was pointed at the battalion command post. Its gun was firing round after round."

Trooper Dodds; "...we moved into an orchard. The enemy inf[antry] were apparently quite thick here. ...We fired HE into dugouts at times having to back the tank up to get sufficient depression for the 75 gun. We ran out of HE in the turret twice and the Capt ordered us to 'let him have an A[rmour] P[iercing round] down dugouts."

Pioneer Lutgens; "Now there were more tanks: one, two, three, four, five Shermans could be seen in the blue haze of cordite-laden air...I aimed the weapon again, and the bomb roared out. I did not see the impact because a covering tank had spotted me and taken me under fire. I heard the detonation and then ran furiously in a zig-zag pattern and jumped into my foxhole."

Trooper Dodds; "We moved ahead a few hundred feet as near as I could tell, I was kneeling on the flooring re-arranging the ammo when the tank was struck. The drivers hatch was knocked off and the 75 knocked out, the breech etc, shook violently and went skyward, Sgt Johnstone [the gunner] said 'bail out' the Capt gave one hesitant look skywards and then both were gone."

There were soon six destroyed Canadian tanks in the orchard including those of Harrison and his 2i/c, Captain John Smuck. Three Mark IVs from 8 Company 2nd

Battalion 12th SS Panzer Regiment had counter-attacked. The commander of 8 Company, Obersturmführer [Lieutenant] Hans Siegel, had been proceeding to an awards ceremony when he encountered Prinz south-west of the village. Prinz told him that the commander of 26th SS Panzergrenadier Regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Mohnke, had requested tank support to counter an armour/infantry attack against Le Mesnil-Patry. Siegel was directed to clarify the situation and clear it up if necessary. He departed, taking with him only three of his company's Mark IVs. A company at full strength contained 22 tanks, but few German companies were at full strength, having been attrited by Allied airpower during their journey to the battlefield. The three German tanks approached the southern edge of the orchard and here Siegel encountered Harrison.

Untersturmführer [Second Lieutenant] Jeran of 8 Company: The enemy was still obscured by a hedge. When the hedge ended abruptly and the lead panzer fortuitously found himself among our infantry, several Shermans could be seen in dangerous proximity...Enemy tanks on the left at 9 o'clock - 200 - engage!...Within a good minute four or five Shermans were on fire. Only the one farthest to the left, which had worked itself in to a range of 100 metres, caused the Commander to break into a sweat. It had just been noticed as it was training its turret on us. 'Enemy tank on the far left at 10 o'clock - 100! And now barrel trained on barrel, muzzle on muzzle, until they had each other in their cross-hairs for a further instant. -- then an explosion, a flame from the breach of the gun, the cartridge falls into the bag, the opponent blows up!

After destroying six tanks in the orchard, Siegel continued on to the edge of the orchard followed by counter-attacking pioneers. He engaged two more Shermans at a range of 1,200 metres stopping both. Siegel now gave orders to the other two tanks to adopt an echelon left formation and accompany him forward into the wheatfield. The far edge of the field was 1,600 metres away as 8 Company drove north. They had, however, presented themselves as perfect side-on targets to the 'C' Squadron tanks positioned north of Norrey. After a few rounds from 'C' Squadron, Siegel ordered a right turn and halt. A duel began which was won with a shot from a 17 pounder Sherman commanded by Sergeant Arthur Boyle of 'C' Squadron. One of Boyle's rounds went through the right front of the Mark IV,



To our knowledge, there are no photos of the QOR mortars in action. However, we have photos of the QOR Mortar PI Bren Gun Carrier on exercises in Pippingford Park, Sussex, 20 Feb 1942. The caption reads "When the call comes through for mortar fire, a mortar carrier races up to a selected point and the crew scrambles into action. In 60 seconds of break neck action the mortar is set up and its first bomb fired (Photo DND 619-3 R)

killing the radio operator and setting fire to the tank. Siegel and the remainder of his crew bailed out. The other two tanks of 8 Company, commanded by Jeran and Private Konnte, were also destroyed. Siegel, who walked out of the field escorting a Canadian corporal he had captured, would later be awarded the Knight's Cross for gallantry.

'B' SQUADRON - THE VILLAGE

At the eastern end of the village Lieutenant Bean, QOR, was wounded in the leg. Still under fire, his party reached the edge of the built up area. Here Bean turned to his men and said, "Let's go in and take it ourselves" He then led them up a sunken road into the village. Coming out of the cover of the sunken road, the men occupied a large crater while Bean went forward to contact two Canadian tanks. While advancing he was hit again, this time in the back. Then, while returning to his men he was hit a third time and knocked to the ground about 50 yards from the crater. Bean motioned to Sergeant Scrutton to take command. Scrutton decided it was time to withdraw as they appeared to be the only infantry in the enemy position. Corporal A. Jackson commandeered one of the tanks, placing Bean on board. The group then turned toward Norrey. They incurred more casualties on the way from the intense close range fire of enemy machine-guns and grenades. Of the initial group of nine, two were killed, two were wounded, and one was missing. The remainder were unharmed. The citation for Scrutton's Distinguished Conduct Medal notes that he "showed no regard whatsoever for his personal safety and accounted for and killed 12 to 15 Germans." Bean's initiative and courage would result in the award of a Military Cross.

Sergeant Garipey: When reaching town my brownings [machine-guns] went out of action and the only small arm I could bring

on enemy was Sten gun. When in town my power traverse and wireless and remote firing control failed so I ordered my driver through the Loader-Op[erator] to reverse and rally... I noticed the back of my tank on fire. I ordered my [driver] to speed up but it got so I had to abandon it.

As he and his crew walked back, they were passed by Corporal Simpson. Out of ammunition, except for some AP, and with the power traverse unserviceable, Simpson had decided to turn back. His would be one of only two 'B' Squadron tanks to return with an intact crew. Before leaving the field he stopped to pick up a load of QOR wounded whom he delivered to Norrey.

The next German counter-attack, this one led by Prinz, came at 16:15 hours. For 15 minutes the battle steadily went in the Germans favour. The QOR in the wheat field, left without tank support, could not overcome their dug-in foe. The tanks in Le Mesnil-Patry, without the close-in protection of infantry, were easy prey for



QOR mortar crew in an Ex in the South of England on 21 April 44. L to R: Rfn Murdoch J. Campbell (who would later be twice WIA); Rfn N.W. Weatherston and Rfn T.N. Massie (WIA 19 Jul 44). All three came from Toronto. (Photo DND 32321-R)

the anti-tank guns. The lack of time to prepare and the failure to brief those involved had led to the most basic rules of operations being ignored. The price for this neglect was being paid in blood.

'C' SQUADRON

The first sign of trouble that 'C' Squadron encountered, was a commanderless 'B' Squadron tank being driven back to Norrey, as they arrived at the village. On the far side of Norrey, 'C' deployed with 4th troop left, 2nd Troop centre and 1st Troop right. Then they stopped. Looking forward, the 'C' Squadron crew commanders were staring at a field of burning Shermans. But, there were no enemy forces visible, nothing to shoot at. Over the radio the squadron commander, Major D'Arcy Marks, ordered the advance to continue, but 'C' Squadron remained put, frozen at the ugly sight in front of them. The commander again ordered an advance but nothing happened. Marks was a strong contrast with Harrison

his former second-in-command. A decade older, with a militia background, he lacked the drive of his younger officers and he also lacked their easy rapport with the troops. However, he had the maturity of experience and realized another tack would be needed to get his squadron moving. He changed his tone and asked for volunteers to advance. That broke the spell and the three leading troops deployed in a rough line and moved forward. Out in the field, Lieutenant McCormick of 2nd Troop was angered to see German infantrymen sitting by their trenches calmly watching 'C' Squadron come on, as though they were spectators at a sporting event. As the advance continued, 'C' Squadron opened fire.

The 'C' Squadron battle was progressing satisfactorily, the squadron chewing its way through Panzergrenadier Companies 5 and 6 of the 2nd Battalion 26th SS, when it started to take fire from the right flank. All stations had recently been warned about the British operation taking place to the west, and the assumption was made that the fire was from the British 50th Division. Messages flashed back to 2CAB, then to 3CID, then to Corps asking the British to stop firing on the Canadians. Major D'Arcy Marks, ordered the Allied recognition signals to be displayed and then dismounted to personally brief all of his crew commanders. The fire did not stop and Marks was given permission to fire back. Even so he was unable to stop Prinz's advance, Sherman after Sherman was being hit.

Meanwhile 'C' Squadron had lost communications with RHQ and the squadron 2i/c, Captain Gerry Stoner, was sent back into Norrey-en-Bessin to re-establish contact. Picking his way through Norrey on foot, Stoner passed the tank of the very frustrated Forward Observation Officer (FOO), Captain Charles Rivaz of the 12th Field Regiment RCA. Rivaz was



[Same Ex as carrier photo] The official caption reads "Sixty seconds after the Bren carrier has slithered to a halt at the selected position, the mortar is in place and the first bomb is on its way towards the objective, with (L. to R.) Drv Fred Fowler, of Pickering, Ont; Rfm. A. Murphy and F. Morris, both of Toronto and Rfm. John Farrell of New York City, working smoothly together to keep the weapon firing. [Ed Note: Morris was WIA 1 Apr 45; Murphy was WIA, date unknown, and Farrell, an American volunteer, was KIA on 19 July 44] (Photo DND 619-5 R)

trying, without success, to get on the artillery radio net. When Stoner and Colwell met, Stoner was given an RHQ scout car and dispatched back to Brigade headquarters. He was instructed to brief Brigade on the situation to date, both to obtain artillery support and to have the Fort Garry Horse squadrons hurried forward to support the Hussars.

Lieutenant Ben Dunkelman, the QOR mortar Platoon commander, had started the campaign with three sections (two mortars to a section). Number 1 had been knocked out on D-Day. Number 3 was located in Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse and Number 2 had taken up a position in a Norrey farmyard, protected by an eight foot high fieldstone wall. The crews of 2 Section could hear the sounds of battle to their left front, but could not see much for themselves. Dunkelman though had observed four prominent haystacks in the field. He ordered them engaged, noting that they burned in a peculiar manner, "like a big black ball." He considered them to be camouflaged pill boxes or tanks. The NCO who directed this fire was Sergeant Lewis Warner of the QOR Mortar Platoon. Warner, who would eventually (1945) receive an American Bronze Star Medal for his work, went forward of the Regina's positions under heavy fire to establish his observation post. Lorne 'Red' Pettit of Number 2 section described the action back at the fire base:

Off to our right, about 50-60 yards away, an AP shell (armour-piercing) burst through the wall tearing a large chunk out of it. Then we could hear shrapnel and small-arms fire hitting the wall in front of us. The order came for us to range in on a target with HE (high explosive) and then came an order for smoke bombs.

Lieutenant 'Rip' Gordon of 1st Troop 'C' Squadron turned back toward the village, likely to bring back wounded. Gordon had the well earned reputation of being someone who would attempt almost any stunt with a Sherman. In turning about again he managed to roll his Sherman at the end of the narrow laneway leading out of Norrey. The marks of a Sherman's tracks are still visible on the wall of the building on the north-eastern end of this lane called the Rue de la Vergée, the site of Gordon's mishap. Back in the wheat field, Lieutenant McCormick's tank took a round through the right rear, that killed two of the crew and severely wounded the young officer in the legs. He somehow managed to dismount and was lying dazed in the field when two of his men appeared and helped to drag him back toward Norrey while mortar rounds burst around them. McCormick would be hit again, by a rifle round, before eventually reaching the shelter of a Regina Rifles slit trench.

In the midst of 'C' Squadron's fight

Captain Tweedale saw one Sherman, from his FGH detachment, whose turret was swinging around in 360 degree circles. Its commander, Sergeant Hussen, had been knocked unconscious.

With the better part of two squadrons lost, and fearing a German counter-attack in strength, Lieutenant-Colonel Colwell ordered 'B' and 'C' Squadrons to pull back. 'C' Squadron acknowledged, there was no reply from 'B'. Sergeant Gariepy, in the village, later admitted that he might have received the message, had his set on the



The grave of CSM John Forbes, captured during the battle on June 11 and murdered on that date by the 12th SS, while a POW, at a farm in Le Mesnil-Patry.

RHQ net not been turned off. Most survivors now turned back. Major Marks personally covered the withdrawal of his squadron to Norrey. Captain Tweedale; "Major Marks and I found our tanks to be the only ones left, so we laid smoke and retired but the road was blocked by an over turned tank [Gordon's]; with [Trooper DT] Briggs' skill as a driver, however, we did a skid turn on a dead cow, plowed through several walls in the village and got out."

'Red' Pettit of Number 2 Section, QOR Mortar Platoon: Just after firing a few smoke bombs, off to our right, about 25 feet away, a Sherman tank from the 1st Hussars, burst through the wall scattering stones and mortar all over the place. A few feet to the tank's right and we would have been crushed and mashed like potatoes. However we continued to fire the 'smoke' bombs until our smoke ammo was exhausted.

Over the radio Brigadier Wyman ordered Colwell to hold his ground so that reinforcements could be sent up. Colwell did not receive the message. He was now located 1,000 yards north of Norrey-en-Bessin with nine tanks, the remains of 'C' Squadron that he had retrieved from Norrey. As he had feared, the enemy shelling of Norrey had brought down more buildings and totally blocked the road. The withdrawing 'C' Squadron tanks had been instructed to knock down walls to find an

alternate exit. One did so, immediately falling into a basement. The FOO could have been used to cover the withdrawal to Norrey, but unfortunately Captain Rivaz was dead. The only supporting fire the Canadians now had came from Lieutenant Dunkelman's mortars. 'Red' Pettit of Number 2 Section described what happened when the order to leave arrived:

After loading the mortars back on the carriers, we found that because of the huge mounds of stone etc. from the damaged wall, it was impossible to turn the carriers around so we had to withdraw up the narrow road in reverse. When we reached the main road, pandemonium was at its highest. All vehicles trying to withdraw at the same time. A Canadian Provost was standing in the cross-roads directing traffic when he was hit by shrapnel. Corporal Gordie Sullivan jumped off of our lead carrier, dragged the Provost to the side of the road and took over the job of directing traffic. Sadly he too was killed.

Major Frank White, the Hussar's regimental second-in-command, arranged 1st Troop 'A' Squadron and the surviving 'C' Squadron tanks, along the Caen-Bayeux railway line as a blocking force and awaited the onslaught.

Wyman too feared a counter-attack. He called all of his commanding officers to an Orders Group at his headquarters and informed 3CID that "considerable numbers of enemy tanks are moving north-east from Le Mesnil-Patry." In 7CIB there was a clearer view of events. They informed 3CID that the tanks moving north-east from Le Mesnil-Patry were Canadian, not enemy. One half hour after Wyman's call for the COs to gather, Colwell arrived at 2CAB headquarters to report in person.

THE AFTERMATH

The road through the orchard was bordered with a high stone wall on its north side and a thick hedge on its south. Between these barriers lay a line of disabled tanks. There was no room for the tanks to maneuver and they had been easily picked off by Siegel's gunners. The Canadian crewmen who had survived to evacuate their vehicles gathered in small groups to discuss their next move. A few sought to go on fighting with the weapons they had rescued from the tanks. Others looked for a means of escape back to their own lines, while still others were pre-occupied with their wounds or those of their comrades. Trooper Dodds elected to go down the road to the east, passing by many other crews as he did so. When Germans appeared in his path, he dove into the hedge. In the hedge the moans of wounded Germans and Canadians could be clearly heard. Other voices could be heard as well, German voices calling out 'Kamerad' and

'Englander'. Answers to these calls were met with rifle shots. Pioneer Lutgens saw a wounded Canadian captain [Harrison?] being escorted to the rear. Obersturmführer Siegel brought in a Canadian corporal, and other prisoners were being rounded up and escorted back. But in the orchard cold-blooded murder was occurring. Eye-witness statements can account for seven deliberate acts of murder of unarmed Canadians. Based on the lop sided killed-to-wounded ratio, it can be assumed that many more took place, for which there were no witnesses. Crewmen who had last been seen dismounted and unarmed were later found dead in the road.

Word of the deliberate killings got back to the Canadian units and led to a blood feud with the 12th SS Division that did not cease until that formation was annihilated at Falaise in August. Only 300 men and 10 tanks survived Falaise. Sturmbannführer Prinz was among those killed in action. The other winner of the Knight's Cross, Hans Siegel, survived the war although he lost an arm during the 12th SS Division's last battle, in Hungary, in the spring of 1945.

By contrast, in Norrey, those that had escaped the carnage in the village and the grain field were gathered in by Number 3 Section, 14 Canadian Field Ambulance, RCAMC. As dusk fell, ambulances were driven out of Norrey-en-Bessin flying Red Cross flags. Orderlies carrying stretchers jumped out, the flag bearers kept waving their banners, and for about a half hour wounded and dead were searched out and gathered, as if this were a peace time exercise. Not a single shot disturbed these events.

Among those saved was Major Gordon, carried off the field with many of his men on the rear deck of an Hussar tank.

The evening was a somber one for the Queen's Own and the Hussars. Only eleven unwounded men of 'D' Company initially came back from the wheat field, although others turned up later. Just four of 'B' Squadron's tanks came back. Only two, those of Corporal Jim Simpson and Sergeant Harry Gristey had full crews. Just before the action was joined, Gristey had been ordered back by the Squadron second-in-command when his tank lost a motor. Returning to Norrey, he was met by 'C' Squadron who 'borrowed' his co-driver and gunner. The co-driver, Trooper Bob Lafraniere, would be killed fighting with 'C' Squadron. When Gristey returned to the battlefield, now mounted on a 17 pounder 'Firefly', 'B' Squadron had ceased to exist. The other two returning tanks, those of Lieutenants Bruce Deans and Jamie Martin, had lost their crew commanders. Corporal Simpson and his crew helped to pull the dead officers from the turrets and replenish the ammunition so the tanks could go back into action.

To man these four vehicles 'B' Squadron had two sergeants, one corporal and a handful of troopers. Because the squadron had been so recently reorganized there was confusion as to who was missing. The only complete nominal role was in the pocket of the 2i/c, Captain Smuck. John Smuck's body was one of those lying in the orchard. The unpleasant job of searching for, and identifying the dead fell primarily to the two padres, Honorary Captain Currie Creelman of the Hussars and Honorary Captain J.C. Clough of The Queen's Own.



Sgt T.C. (Tommy) McLaughlin was one of seven POW's captured at Le Mesnil-Patry on June 11 and murdered by the 12th SS on June 17 in Mouen.

In some cases the bodies were indistinguishable from one another, simply a mass of cooked flesh welded together in the great heat; we had to sift through this for identity tags.

THE ACCOUNTING

The day had cost the Hussars 45 fatal casualties. The list included 7 officers, 6 NCOs and 32 men. Of these at least 7 were murdered and 6 others were listed as missing. They still remain unaccounted for. In addition, 1 officer and 1 NCO were wounded, 1 officer and 2 men were prisoners of war. A total of 37 tanks were destroyed [34 of the 75mm marks and 3 of the 17 pounders, another 13 tanks were damaged but repairable]. The QOR losses were 1 officer and 53 men killed and 1 man died of wounds; 3 officers, 30 men wounded and 11 men prisoners of war of whom 6 were murdered. Total QOR losses for the day were 98 out of a 'D' company strength of 120 all ranks. Total Canadian losses for the day were 148.

The defenders reported that 2nd Battalion 26th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment had 2 officers, 1 NCO and 15 men killed; 6 NCOs and 26 men wounded and 1 man missing. The Pioneer Battalion lost 1 officer, 1 NCO and 27 men killed; 1 officer (the Medical

Officer), 3 NCOs and 45 men wounded, along with 5 men missing. Prinz's 2nd Battalion 12th Panzer Regiment lost 1 man killed, 7 wounded, 1 officer and 4 men missing. Total German casualties 189. Three panzers had been knocked out, one of which was later returned to action.

Most of the murders appear to have occurred in the orchard, the position of 3 Company of the Pioneer Battalion. The situation, with regard to the murder of prisoners in 2nd Battalion 26 Panzergrenadier Regiment, was more ambiguous. Following the attack on Putot-en-Bessin against the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, about 35 prisoners had been taken. The Regimental commander, Standartenführer [Colonel] Wilhelm Mohnke, ordered them shot. The Battalion commander, Sturmbannführer [Major] Bernhard Siebken, protested. The prisoners were shot anyway, apparently without Siebken's knowledge. On hearing the news Siebken telephoned the divisional commander, Brigadeführer [Major-General] Fritz Witt, to complain about Mohnke's actions and orders. Witt issued a divisional instruction to the effect that the rules of the Geneva Convention were to be respected. He also took steps to have Mohnke relieved of command. Shortly thereafter Witt's headquarters was hit by naval gun fire and he was killed. Mohnke continued to have prisoners shot, including those captured on 11 June. Some of these prisoners were later found buried near the 2nd Battalion's First Aid Post which was located in the Le Mesnil-Patry farmhouse of Madame Germaine Saint-Martin. There were four bodies here, those of Sergeant-Major John Forbes of the QOR and Troopers Arnold Bowes, Gilbert Scriven and Kenneth Pedlar of the Hussars. In 1945, a Canadian Army pathologist autopsied the bodies and determined that Pedlar had most likely died of severe wounds suffered when his tank burned. The others had all been shot. [On June 17, 1944 in the rear headquarters of SS Panzerpionier-battalion 12].

At the 1945 war crimes trial the following statement was presented by the prosecutor:

1. At about 1800 hours 17 June 1944, seven Canadian Prisoners of War under German escort, were brought to the residence of M. Alexis Stilliere, Mayor of the village, in Mouen [due south of Norrey], Calvados, Normandy, which village was then occupied by troops of the Tross (A Echelon) of 12 SS Pionier Bn., 12 SS Pz Div (HJ). These prisoners appeared to be in a very exhausted condition.

2. Shortly after their arrival the prisoners were interrogated by a German officer or warrant officer who examined their papers. They remained in a shed at the back of the Mayor's house until about 2200 hours when the seven Canadian prisoners, under the

escort of fourteen fully equipped, armed and helmeted German soldiers, were seen marching through the village. They were taken to a rather secluded field on the outskirts of the village where they were lined up and shot dead just at dusk.

3. About 0900 hours 18 June 1944, four French civilians under orders of German soldiers, dug a grave under a large tree in the same field where the seven Canadians had been shot the previous evening. The grave being sufficient for seven bodies."

The Canadians were Sergeant Tom McLaughlin, Corporal Etsel Cook, and Riflemen Paul Bullock, John Campbell, Ernest Cranfield and Gerald Willett of The Queen's Own Rifles and Trooper Clayton Perry of the 1st Hussars. The Pioneer Battalion was commanded at the time by Sturmbannfuhrer [Major]

Siegfried Muller who had been quoted by one of his company commanders as having informed the unit officers that the Allies were not taking prisoners.

Most of the killings, those in the orchard, appear to have been done by Muller's Pioneer Battalion, although some were undoubtedly committed by the 2nd Battalion. Yet it was in the 2nd Battalion's area that the temporary truce was observed to search for wounded on the evening of June 11th. Siebken, of the 2nd battalion, was hanged as a war criminal in 1949. Muller, of the Pioneers, was never tried, and Mohnke, who also massacred British prisoners in France in 1940 and American prisoners in Belgium in 1944, as well as ordering and overseeing the shooting of Canadians in Normandy, is still a free man and living in Germany today.

COMMENTARY

The action at Le Mesnil-Patry should not have turned out as it did. The original plan to clear the Mue Valley on the 11th and then seize the high ground at Cheux was feasible. The reason the programme failed was because 2CAB had tried to do too much too quickly. The idea to advance the plans for the Cheux operation by 24 hours came from the Army commander, General Sir Miles Dempsey. He wanted the Canadian attack to parallel one carried out by the British 69th Brigade on the Canadian's right flank. As the British Official History states, the orders did not reach the Canadians in time. Exactly where and how the orders got off track has not been explained, although Lieutenant-Colonel Don Mingay, The 3CID GSO I noted; "At that point in the invasion - things were very fluid and communications between army and division

left something to be desired, in fact the army B[rigadier] G[eneral] S[taff] and I were hardly on speaking terms. He thought 'those bloody colonials don't know what is going on', usually because he didn't make much effort to keep us informed."



The QOR/1H Memorial at Le Mesnil-Patry. (Photo: Editor)

Two operations at once was one too many for 2CAB's debut in independent operations, but neither Keller nor Wyman, apparently, offered any protest. Major Neil Gordon, interviewed in hospital by an Army Historical Officer, stated that both of the unit COs did object and were over ruled. The failures to give the assault elements adequate time to plan and brief their people and to prepare a fire plan speak for themselves. They could only have possibly been justified if the enemy had been completely routed, which they most definitely had not, contrary to 3CID's optimistic intelligence report. Experienced and conscientious commanders would have realized that troops cannot react that quickly, particularly troops that had gone a week without adequate rest. Major Gordon, lying in his hospital bed, estimated that a



properly organized attack would not have been possible before 18:00 hours. This is where Brigadier Wyman must be faulted.

He did not, apparently, insist on having more time for his troops to prepare, nor did he, apparently, see fit to personally follow the progress of the attack, although he had originally planned to do so.

The success that 'B' Squadron enjoyed against the Panzergrenadiers was due to their having obtained tactical surprise. Because 'B' Squadron had advanced so quickly, they missed the shelling in Norrey and caught the enemy unawares. Nevertheless, tactical surprise was not enough to overcome the disadvantages of nil reconnaissance and planning. Had Harrison been permitted the necessary time for these it is most unlikely he would have found himself in the cul-de-sac in the orchard that proved so deadly. The question of the aim of the action still remains unanswered. Was the aim to merely occupy an undefended

locality at Le Mesnil-Patry or was it to attack and capture the enemy position? Many veterans, both officers and men, stated that they had not expected any opposition. If this is so, they were not psychologically prepared for what they encountered. This certainly goes some way toward explaining the state of shock in 'C' Squadron when they arrived at the wheatfield, and it also explains the actions of 'B' Squadron in charging head first into the enemy positions in what at first glance appears to have been a reckless manner.

Harrison's decision to leave the infantry and attack the village was not unjustified. Although infantry/tank familiarization training had been conducted back in the UK, close co-operation between the arms was not the matter of routine that it would later become. It is possible that Harrison considered it to be his first duty to occupy the village and to position himself for any counter-attack rather than to stay in the wheatfield. That communication between infantry and armour was anything but simple can be witnessed by the fates of Major Gordon and Lieutenant Martin.

The following day, the commander of 1 British Corps (Lieutenant-General John Crocker), told the battered survivors that their sacrifice at Le Mesnil-Patry had disrupted a German counter-attack and saved the beach-head. There is no evidence that this was the case, although McKee, in his book Caen: Anvil of Victory, makes the point that the action at Le Mesnil-Patry caused the Germans to stop the forward deployment of Panzer Lehr in order to better protect the weak junction point of that formation and the 12th SS Division. The German's strongest armoured counter-attack had been launched on the 9th, and that had been defeated. They now could

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only try to hold on and launch limited local counter-attacks where conditions were favourable, as they were at Le Mesnil-Patry that afternoon.

The Canadians were not alone in making suicidal charges in Normandy. The following day the British 7th Armoured Division (the right arm of the pincer) attempted to take the village of Villers Bocage. The lead British regiment lost 20 Cromwell tanks, in a matter of minutes, to five defending German Mark VI 'Tiger' tanks. The accompanying infantry company was also wiped out. Although the British were forced back, their supporting artillery was able to prevent the Germans from exploiting their temporary advantage.

The attack by 69 (British) Brigade, that the Canadians were to be coordinated with, makes an interesting comparison. The orders from 50 Division were given at 07:30 hours. Brigade orders were issued at 10:00 hours, with H-Hour set for 14:30 hours. These are almost the same timings to be found in the Canadian experience. It is likely though that 69 Brigade had had 24 additional hours of warning and preparation time. Even so, British casualties were heavy, German casualties were negligible.

Le Mesnil-Patry, and other actions like it, led to the introduction of tank telephones later in the campaign. This device, attached to the rear of the tank, allowed an infantryman to shelter behind the vehicle while speaking directly with the crew commander, even if his hatch were closed. These actions also led to a somewhat belated instruction from 21 Army Group dated 30 September 1944. This document directed higher formations, ie brigade and division, to avoid arbitrarily assigning H-Hours and then not leaving adequate time for squadron and company level planning. These developments were the positive legacy of Le Mesnil-Patry.

... I have described Le Mesnil-Patry as a minor affair. The term is a subjective one. Le Mesnil-Patry did not change the course of the war, however, it was anything but a minor affair to those who were there. That fact is obvious when discussing the killed, the wounded and the murdered. It is not so obvious when discussing those who survived, yet had to deal with the trauma of losing so many close friends and comrades. Some who survived, like Harrison, were according to his many friends, never quite the same afterwards.

Both the Hussars and the QOR were close-knit units, with a superb degree of comradeship among all ranks. That comradeship is still very much in evidence fifty years after the events I have described. It has been a privilege to be party to it.

Concurrently, the platoon commanders conducted a TEWT of defensive operations with their NCOs. The OC was in Meaford with the CO for a Bde TEWT.

The biv site in Borden was a tad swampy, and things got wetter when the company marched out of the training area to the buses through a ford that was a bit deep for some of our shorter soldiers.

Ex Hold Fast (19 - 21 Sep, Borden): Both platoons practised battle procedure, siting, occupation drills, erection of wire obstacles, and defensive routine at the section and platoon level. He who forgot to bring the single-strand cattle wire will remain nameless -- our 'model' catwire fence was held together with minetape, and looked like it!

OC's evaluation 26 - 28 Sep: The OC successfully completed assessment by a Regular Force infantry Major in a light infantry company defensive TEWT in Meaford this weekend (Phase 1 of the evaluation).

3 - 5 Oct 97: 1 Pl was assigned to work as part of the Toronto Scottish company for the evaluation, while 2 Pl worked with the 48th Highlander company. They spent this weekend working with their respective companies in Meaford, and practised all remaining details of defensive battle procedure, occupation, routine, and conduct of the defensive battle.

Combat Readiness Evaluation (24 - 26 Oct 97, Meaford) (Phase 2 CRE): Both platoons filled all their positions -- although we employed Cpls in most MCpl positions due to a shortage of MCpls -- and the soldiers showed up ready for war in cold weather. Thanks are due to Vics Coy for outfitting the troops with winter equipment at the last minute when the thermometer plunged prematurely -- no other unit was as well equipped.

All our officers and NCOs were assessed as effective, and both platoons passed with flying colours even though 2 Pl shot a friendly engineer party which had set off a trip-flare. No one spent the night in a trench, however, because each trench had several inches of water thanks to the rain. For the first time in memory, we had comfortable coach buses to transport us to and from Meaford, instead of school buses, and a steak barbecue afterwards, all thanks to WO Perry Gresty.

Reorganization: The unit priority shifted to recruit training on 1 Nov, and we lost some of our NCOs to other tasks. Sgt Mark Shannon took over as 2IC of 1 Pl from WO ten Kortenaar, and Sgt Thomson took over Shannon's section. Cpl Harnes was transferred to Gurkha Company for recruit training, with a well-deserved promotion to MCpl effective 1 Jan 98.

MCpl Shaidle took over 2 Section of 2 Platoon from Sgt Syer, who has become our full-time NCO. Cpl Currie took 3 Section, 2

Platoon from Sgt Thorn, who returned to his recruiting duties.

Ex Rapid Fire (21 - 23 Nov, Meaford) was the first weekend in the next phase of training. We are conducting 'adventure training' until June, after which the company will start the cycle again with offensive ops in the fall of '98. This weekend was a short gun camp. Every soldier got to fire the C6 GPMG in the light (direct) role (no sustained fire kit), and then threw grenades. The trained machine gunners laid the C6s in the SF role for a night demo, which resulted in a spectacular show of force.

The Queen's Cup (Wednesday, 26 Nov): We lost this inter-unit competition for the second year in a row to The Queen's York Rangers (Armoured Recce) by three points out of 330. We won the tug of war -- which was last year's problem event -- but are hopeless at volleyball. The floor hockey team under Cpl Howard did a particularly good job, despite going down to defeat 1 - 0. No volleyball when we run the Cup two years from now!

Rfn Kim lost most of a front tooth when he got the floor hockey ball in the face, and Rfn Sparks nearly had his ribcage crushed trying to get his trailer past the Rangers in the first chariot race (lanes wide enough Sgt Shannon?), but both of them were in good spirits despite spending most of the evening in the emergency ward at St. Michael's Hospital.

Promotions and awards: By Christmas, the following promotions had been made:

Rfn Jason Chien-Leung	to Cpl
Rfn Zbigniew Klakowicz	to Cpl
Rfn Robert Morton	to Cpl
Rfn Coogan Wilson	to Cpl

Rfn Bonscer was the only soldier with perfect attendance since he joined the company (including his time on the parachutist course), and he was recognized for this at the Christmas Dinner on December 10th.

All of those who participated in the Combat Readiness Evaluation were presented with a certificate.

We are now stood down until January for the Christmas break, standing at 87 all ranks with the influx of QL 3 infantry grads in September. We wish Cpl Klakowicz the best as he joins the Regular Force (PPCLI).

Thanks to all of those who have contributed to the company in the past year and a half, particularly the soldiers, NCOs, and officers on Class A (part-time) service throughout the unit who have given so freely of their time when the unit has needed them. This applies to those going through training, and the volunteers from outside the company who have helped us in support or enemy roles. Special additional thanks are owed to MWO Scott Patterson, who made himself available to help out on many occasions.

Learning the Lessons: From the PIAT to the Eryx

by Capt R. Zisman, Int O

Visiting a US Naval Air Station a few years ago, one noted painted on a hangar wall the motto "Right First Time". There is much to be said for such a motto in a business such as ours where we train with instruments that deliver lethal force for situations where the other side has done the same.

Much of the training we receive today is based upon the lessons from previous incidents. Here are some examples from history:

In the early days of the SAS, David Stirling, the visionary British officer who founded the unit, was jumpmaster during their first training jump in North Africa. He despatched the first two men, who were jumping without reserves, before he realized that their static lines had not been hooked up. Cancelling the remaining jumps and ordering the others back to base, he hooked his line up and jumped. The SAS did not repeat that error.

During the Battle for Sicily in July of 1943, the RCR's DCO, Major Billy Pope, eager for action, fired upon a German Panzer with a PIAT (the British equivalent to the bazooka: Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank). The round failed to explode. He reloaded the clumsy weapon and fired. Once more, the round failed to explode. The Germans were not amused by the impertinence. The turret swivelled and he was killed by machine gun fire. Although the official Canadian war history, when relating the incident indicates in a footnote

was a squirt of the flammable oil. It was fortunate that the soaked Germans, quickly calculating the odds that at least one of the Canadians carried matches, chose to surrender. Earlier that day, another QOR with a 'lifebuoy' was less fortunate as the enemy's fire zeroed on his flamethrower's



The WWII PIAT (Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank): Pte Edmund Arsenault, West Nova Scotia Rifle Company, in slit trench in firing position, Ortona area, Italy, 10 Jan '44.

(Photo by A. M. Sturton, PA153181)

fuel container with predictable results.

A few weeks later, at Carpiquet airport, a QOR soldier attempted to break open a door using the butt of his rifle. The gun went off and killed the platoon sergeant who was standing immediately behind.

The point to the above stories is that you do not want to be remembered as the person who contributed, through misfortune, to future variants of this article.

meters of earthworks. This is a great weapon system provided it is properly used by a well-trained soldier.

Although it has a small launch signature, Eryx can easily attract the unwanted attention of an observant enemy as it is a relatively slow-flying wire-guided missile which requires operator guidance until the target is hit (4.3 seconds to max range; a proficient Main Battle Tank crew acquires a target and fires its main gun in under 2 seconds even while on the move!)

Although still heavy for an infantryman, the increased lethal efficiency of the weapon is crudely demonstrated when we compare it to the PIAT whose launcher weighed 14.5 kilograms and its projectile about 1.14 kg. The Eryx's firing post weighs 5 kg while the missile weighs 13.3 kg. A much higher percentage of the weight carried is deliverable! However, one of the likely problems is that the missile round is heavier, making it more difficult to handle the system which may lead to missiles being accidentally damaged.

One possible danger from training with the Eryx is the fact that it is possible to fire it from a room due to its soft launch characteristic. A soldier switching from the Eryx to the Carl Gustav had better remember that the CG does indeed have a back blast!

Because the training we receive is limited, especially when compared to that received in armies where the enemy threat is imminent and exposure to action more likely, it becomes imperative for us to get the most out of all training opportunities.

The Canadian Armed Forces have recognized the importance of learning from experience. The Army Lessons Learned Centre (ALLC) is dedicated to ensuring that crucial information flows down to those who need it.

To this end they gather information not just from Canadian experience but from that of our NATO allies and from field operations. Information is distributed by a variety of means including CDs, such as the recently released Information Warehouse (LLIW/DDLR) version 4.0 (see CD-cover reprinted below) which encompasses the equivalent of 370,000 pages of text and graphics comprising the largest collection of military information on CD in the world.



The Eryx in flight during Canadian cold weather trials: The warhead has a double charge designed to defeat reactive armour (Photo: Aerospatiale)

that PIAT rounds had a tendency to fail when hitting the target at an angle, the truth is that Major Pope did hit the tank dead on, twice, but had forgotten to arm the PIAT warheads (see S. Galloway's "Bravely Into Battle", Stoddart 1988 at p. 139).

On D-Day, the QOR of C's B Coy, under Maj C.O. Dalton landed in front of a concrete strongpoint and suffered heavy casualties. Some QORs carried on their backs 'lifebuoy' flamethrowers and a soldier carrying one of these approached the bunker. When he pressed the trigger, the igniter did not work and all the enemy got

New weapons systems are prime candidates for the 'let's make history' type of incident. Hopefully those who are in charge of weapons acquisition will have been thorough in the evaluation of potential weaknesses and operational pitfalls.

In the near future, all Canadian infantry units will receive the Eryx SRAAW(H). The specifications of this weapon are impressive, especially if we compare them with those of the M72 or the Carl Gustav. The Eryx has a range between 50 and 600 meters. It can penetrate 900 mm of armour, 2.5 meters of reinforced concrete or 5

The Royal Green Jackets

Here follows an edited version of the RGJ Newsletter kindly forwarded to us by LCol I.G. Elliott (Retd), Assistant Regimental Secretary. The RGJ fields four Battalions and some of their activities during 1997 are outlined below:

1RGJ: The Bn started the year with a number of exercises that included diving in Scotland, parascending in Wales and skiing in Germany. Support weapons cadres were carried out in March which included live firing in Otterburn and Castlemartin. In April, the recce for Ex GRAND PRIX visited Kenya and ATDs were carried by out by the rifle companies. The Brigade FTX took place at the end of June, starting with an air insertion from Hullavington to SPTA, a defensive phase on SPTA and then redeployment to Marchwood for a loading trial of the LMBG. recovery with the Brigade FTX was followed by SAXON driving training support for 1 STAFFORDS and Ex RED SHANK for CATC(G). In October, the Bn supported Ex GLOBE TROT, provided two honour guards for the Freedom of Winchester parade and deployed on Ex GRAND PRIX. Ex GRAND PRIX ran through November with recovery in early December. Some excellent training was achieved, despite appalling weather conditions, however the tragic accident of Rfn Blackledge whilst crossing a river in Kathendini cast a shadow over the whole exercise.

Projected Activities for 1998: The Bn deploys to Canada on Ex POND JUMP WEST I in June and July with Block leave in August. Northern Ireland training starts in November with the Commanders' Cadre and Unit presentation, followed by a Bn FTX and a mini JNCO Cadre.

2RGJ started 1997 with the unit move from Holywood to Alanbrooke Barracks in Paderborn. B Coy Gp (including a section

each of Mortars and MILAN) was the first to move and start on the conversion training to the Armd Inf role. Grouped with the 1RTR BG for the year's training. B Coy deployed to Grafenwohr for simulation training and live firing and then to Poland for their dry training exercise prior to going to Canada with 1RTR for Ex MEDICINE MAN 2. One month behind them, R Coy were attached (with the remainder of Mortars and anti-tanks) to the QDG BG. They also practised on the simulators at Grafenwohr, but conducted live firing and dry training at Bergen-Hohne before deploying to Canada in June. The Bn deployed later in the year to Poland for Ex ULAN EAGLE were it acquitted itself very well, earning the plaudits of the Armd Inf world for its successful performance after a conversion package of only 23 weeks. As the first opportunity that the Bn had had to exercise together, it also served to cement the whole year's training and was the culminating point of the conversion to Armoured Infantry.

The rest of the year has been taken up with individual cadres in preparation for the deployment next year to Bosnia. The CO's recce in the closing stages of the year has shown that 2RGJ will be deploying with all three Rifle Companies in the AI role.

4(V) RGJ: 1997 has been an excellent training year starting with the deployment of 75 Riflemen to Belize on Ex NATIVE TRAIL. This was a joint initiative with 10 Para and the HAC and arose because the Regular Army could not meet the commitment due to operational reasons. We ran 3 two week jungle training packages and apart from providing arduous and challenging training in a very alien environment, it also attracted a great deal of good PR for the Bn and the Reserve

Forces.

Camp was split this year with the majority going to Leek and STANTA. Leek comprise 4 days adventure training in the Peak District and low level field training, and STANTA was mainly field training followed by a Bn exercise. A Company then provided the nucleus for 120 Riflemen to go to France in September where they were exercised on the French training area at La Cortine.

Other training highlights have been a survival weekend run by the 21 SAS and Ex CAPITAL GUARD, the LDSIT annual FTX. On the adventure training side of life we ran two sailing expeditions in the Solent and sent 12 Riflemen to Crete to follow the route taken by the KRRC in 1941. We also took 35 Riflemen on a Battlefield tour of Gommecourt where the London TA Battalions fought so gallantly in 1916.

5(V) RGJ: The Bn was declared operationally effective on 1 Apr 1997. Since that date, one more member of the Bn has gone to Bosnia, bringing the total personnel who have volunteered to serve with the Regular Army to 6 during FY 96/97. Additionally, a further 12 have been on short term attachments to the Regular Army, including two Buglers who have been on attachment with our affiliated ship, HMS Somerset.

Adventurous Training: A 14 man team from the Bn went to the French Pyrenees for 10 days in March with the aim of conducting a high level traverse above the snow line along the Franco Spanish border. The team comprised mainly novices for whom this year was to be their first experience of winter mountaineering. The team encountered unusually severe conditions necessitating the use of full winter equipment for six days.

The Royal Gurkha Rifles

Much has happened this past year. Following the Government's announcement of plans to restructure the Army and with the handing back of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China (30th June 1997), necessitating the withdraw of the military garrison, the size of the Brigade of Gurkhas has been reduced.



On 1st July 1994 the four Gurkha Rifle Regiments, 2 GR, 6 GR, 7 GR and 10 GR reformed into a large regiment titled the Royal Gurkha Rifles (RGR).

Initially the regiment consisted of three battalions; however on the withdrawal of 1 RGR from Hong Kong to the UK 3 RGR was disbanded in November 1996. 2 RGR is currently stationed in Brunei. The regiment provides three reinforcement companies to 1 Royal Scots, 1st Battalion The Princess of Wales Regiment and 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment.

They also have two demonstration companies, at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and Infantry Training

Centre Wales.

We mourn the untimely passing of a LCol Guy Pearson who was a great friend of our Regiment (see obituary on page 48).



The Royal Gurkha Rifles, above, and The Band and Pipes of the RGR, left, march through Brecon in 1997.

Major Benjamin Dunkelman, DSO

1913-1997

Ben Dunkelman died on June 11, 1997, the 53rd Anniversary of the battle of Le Mesnil-Patry, where he played an important role. A big and gentle man, he was also a Renaissance man in the full sense of the word. He was a soldier who distinguished himself in two wars. He was a cultured man, an art connoisseur and restaurateur; who as Churchill did late in his life, applied his talent to painting. As a businessman he had been President of Tip Top Tailors, the family firm, and later operated a renowned art gallery, several restaurants and was also involved in the development of significant commercial real estate projects such as the Constellation Hotel and the Cloverdale Mall.

An amateur sailor, he attempted to join the Royal Canadian Navy in September of 1939 but was rejected, being told that he was "over-qualified" to be an ordinary seaman and that the quotas for officers were full. As he found out later through a friend, the truth was that, at that time, the Navy did not welcome Jewish officers. The Navy's loss was our gain. He joined as a Rifleman in 1940, was promoted to officer and eventually became one of the very few members of the Regiment who would survive the fighting from D-Day until the end of WW2 in May of 1945.

This gentle-man was, reluctantly, a fierce and fearless warrior. Witness his citation for the award of the Distinguished Service Order, signed by the full chain of command including Field Marshal Montgomery: "Captain (Acting Major) Benjamin DUNKELMAN was Company Commander of "D" Company, 1 Bn The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada on 5 March 1945. On that date this battalion was given the task of clearing the BALBERGER WALD, EAST of the NORTH SOUTH ROAD and SOUTH of the grid line 39. "D" Company, under the command of Acting Major DUNKELMAN had the task of clearing the SOUTHERN edges of the woods. Upon crossing the road which was the start line, the forward two platoons of "D" Company were immediately pinned down by intense machine gun and "bazooka" fire from the area of the edge of the clearing from 052382. The casualties suffered by these platoons were heavy, and due to the nature of the ground and the intense fire of the enemy, our troops were unable to press forward. Acting Major DUNKELMAN picked up a PIAT gun, whose crew had been killed and successfully silenced two of the enemy machine guns, then, rushing forward, led the remaining platoon into the attack upon the enemy positions.

Acting Major DUNKELMAN personally killed ten of the enemy with his pistol and

with his bare hands, all the time shouting to his men to press forward and to the enemy to "come out and fight". As a result of this gallant action and display of fearlessness, in the face of withering enemy fire, the platoon pressed home the attack and drove the enemy out of this area of the wood. "D" Company was then able to proceed and fight onto their final objective.



One-pip wonders ready for duty! Pictured above we have 2nd Lieutenants B. Dunkelman, on the left, and H.C.F. Elliot. Dunkelman, although no bantam-weight, was as agile as any (Photo courtesy Mrs. Dunkelman)

The display of leadership, the coolness under fire, and the fighting qualities shown by Acting Major DUNKELMAN, struck fear into the heart of the enemy, and those that could, fled from the scene of the action.

This gallant action on the part of Acting Major DUNKELMAN was directly responsible for "D" Company successfully taking their objective, and the clearing of the final objective by the battalion".

Following his return to Canada with the Regiment on December 17, 1945, Ben Dunkelman returned to civilian life. In 1948 he was drawn to the Middle East and volunteered to fight with the vastly outnumbered Israeli forces who faced five Arab armies. His leadership qualities were once again manifested. On July of 1948 he was promoted to Brigadier and given command of the 7th Armoured Brigade. On the basis of his exploits, he was called "the saviour of western Galilee" by David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister.

In the midst of the war, he met and married Yael Lisfhitz, who survives him together with daughters Rose Carpenter, Daphna Dunkelman; Deenah Mollin and Lorna Halfon; sons David and Jonathan and eight grandchildren. The Regiment mourns the loss of a friend and heroic leader.

In his autobiography, *Dual Allegiance*, published in 1976 with a forward by the late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, Ben Dunkelman narrated his wartime experiences, from which we extract, with permission, the following:

From D-Day to Le Mesnil-Patry:

At 1730, D Company, under the command of Major Neil Gordon, took the battalion's final objective—the village of Anisy, seven miles inland. With the occupation of Anisy, The Queen's Own had attained all its D-day objectives. To my knowledge, it was one of the few assault units of the invasion force to do so; at the same time, the Americans were still pinned down on their beachheads on our right flank, while the British achieved only limited success. In clearing the beaches, our battalion did an exceptionally thorough job, as Chester Wilnot testifies in *The Struggle for Europe*: "So fast did The Queen's Own move...when the Regiment de la Chaudiere landed fifteen minutes later, the only fire on the beach was coming from snipers." The battalion had fulfilled all its tasks—but the price had been a heavy one. My platoon was lucky that day, which was a happy omen for the future.

The only injury was suffered by my batman, Francis, and ironically it was not caused by enemy action: he was hit in the kidneys by a clod of earth flung up when we used explosives to dig out mortar positions. I wanted to have him evacuated, but he refused to go. He was in great pain, however, and since I had inadvertently caused his injury with the explosives, I had to make amends: instead of Francis digging the slit-trench we shared, I had to do it myself. Francis was a fine figure of a man. A full-blooded Huron Indian, the son of a chief, he was tall, with piercing black eyes, bronze skin, and big black moustache. His scalp was shaven, with only a narrow scalp-lock left in the centre...

Our exposed position that night was an unusual one for the mortar platoon. Normally the mortars would be sited in as safe a position as possible, preferably in a gully about five hundred yards behind the lines, with telephonic connections to the observation posts forward which controlled their fire. In the present exposed position, the mortars had to be well dug in and concealed. This required an enormous hole; hence the blasting which had produced Francis' injury. The rough craters formed by the blasting then had to be laboriously cleaned out with pick and shovel and the six mortar carriers concealed nearby.

Meanwhile, since we were with the foremost troops, expecting a counter-attack at any moment, an all-round defensive position had been planned and the men had to dig their own personal slit-trenches. Only former soldiers know how much time foot soldiers on active service spend digging. Perhaps my other readers might

care, as an experiment, to try digging a five-foot-deep hole in the garden with a friend, making it six feet long by two feet wide. To make the experiment more realistic, they should use a pick and shovel they have carried around all day and select hard, rocky ground. And, as you dig, bear in mind that this was normally a minor part of the day's work, something you did at the end of a hard day's fighting, which often included digging as many as ten or twelve shallower versions as you moved forward or changed positions. That was the case with me on D-Day, and I found the job exhausting. Then, still caked with dust, I took turns all night with Francis in peering out into the darkness for signs of the enemy. That first night ashore was not a l t o g e t h e r uneventful. Jock Spragge, our battalion commander, had turned in when he was wakened and anxiously informed that German paratroopers had landed near by. "If you can't handle them, let me know!" said he, and promptly went back to sleep. The paratroopers didn't come near us.

As for me, Major Al Nickson, the commander of C Company, put my platoon on stand-to, and forgot to stand us down. When dawn came, I went over to his trench and found him fast asleep. I woke him up and pointed out his oversight, in somewhat aggrieved tones. He regarded it as a hell of a joke; I didn't think so at the time.

We were repaid next day for the discomforts of that sleepless night when a Frenchwoman—right up in the front line—defied our shouts to stay under cover, and ran to her home, whence she returned some time later to present us with a delicious dish of rabbit she'd just cooked up. This was typical of the welcome we got from the French civilians, who turned out everywhere to cheer us, even while battles were in progress and bullets and shells were whizzing all around. The Allied command had warned them to stay inside, as much to protect us from disguised Germans as to ensure their safety. When "cleaning out" a village, we had orders to shoot at anything that moved, and, of course, when enemy were known to be around we did just that. But we held our fire when entering the populated areas. I have heard other

disillusioned accounts of the ungrateful way in which the French treated their liberators. But my own experience was that they would go to great lengths to express their gratitude to us. Later, while we were under heavy bombardment outside Calais, one man, with a fine sense of occasion, sprinted through the bursting shells to bring us a cobweb trailing bottle of the finest champagne I've ever tasted.

We remained in the front line for five days, and then, on the morning of June 11, were ordered to pull back to a rear rest area. This was welcome news: after the ordeal of the crossing, and five days in combat with little more than a few hours' sleep each

forces with mine.

We set up our OP in a farmhouse, ahead of the Regina Rifles positions, where we were under enemy observation and sporadic sniping; one bullet went through the window at forehead height at the precise moment that I was bending down to consult my map, an event which interfered with my concentration. After preparing the fire plan I ran back to meet our attacking forces at the start line to co-ordinate our fire with their assault. Our attack was to be a joint tanks and infantry affair, the infantry consisting of our D Company, under Neil Gordon, one of the best officers we ever had. As I stood waiting at the start line

something occurred which made it clear that this assault was getting completely out of our control.

The tanks—a squadron of 1st Hussars—came thundering up to the start line with infantrymen of D Company clinging on—and then, to my amazement, instead of halting to work out the final details and permit the infantry to dismount, they proceeded to charge through the start line, without even slowing down. At first I assumed that the tank commander had

crossed the start line by mistake and would return to begin the attack properly, with the infantry on foot; but as the seconds ticked away and the column continued to advance over the hill it began to look as if he had never heard of the word "co-ordinate"! We were ready to lay down fire from our two mortar platoons, as well as from two regiments of artillery—and here he was, charging at the enemy unsupported. Effective supporting fire was out of the question now, because we didn't know the precise advance route, and were afraid of hitting our own men. They were on their own.

The assault force ran straight into a German Panzer division, "Tigers" equipped with 88 mm cannon, which completely outgunned our Shermans. In their contemptuous manner, the Germans used to refer to the Sherman as "the Ronson lighter"—as they said, one spark and it lights up. Certainly, within a few moments of that foolhardy charge across the start line, many of the tanks had been hit and were ablaze in the cornfields.

I ran ahead to see if I could work out



Amersfoort, Holland, May 1945: Major Ben Dunkelman, DSO, is standing second from left. The CO, LCol S.M. Lett, DSO, is standing in the middle with Maj H.E. Dalton, DSO to his left. In the front row we have (l to r) Maj S Biggs and Maj P.C. Rea. (Photo courtesy Mrs. Dunkelman).

night, we were exhausted.

As we drove along, we were in good spirits, eagerly looking forward to our rest. We should have known better—and in time, as our bad luck held, we became more sceptical about promised rests and leave. When we reached the rear area, and were about to dismount from the carriers, the order came through to turn around and head straight back to the front: there was a German counter attack in the offing! It was a great disappointment to forfeit our long-awaited rest, but there was nothing else to do. We turned the carriers around, and back we went. Our command was hurriedly preparing a combined armour infantry assault to forestall the German counter-attack, and as soon as I arrived back at the front, I was ordered out into no-man's-land on reconnaissance.

Together with the artillery's forward observation officers (FOOs), I was to set up a forward observation post and a fire plan to support the assault. By happy chance, I ran into an old friend, now serving as mortar officer in the Regina Rifles, who proposed that his mortar platoon combine

where our attack was going and met Neil Gordon returning, his face swathed in heavy bandages, after being shot through both cheeks. He was unable to speak, though it was unclear whether this was caused by his injury or his sorrow—most of D Company, a fine body of men, had been lost in the first few terrible moments of the attack.

Although our attack was a failure, we gave the enemy some thing to think about; indeed, I have never witnessed a battle of this intensity, before or since. Much of the damage was done by one of our lieutenants, George Bean, who despite being wounded twice in the initial assault gathered together Sergeant Scrutton and a little force with seven riflemen and two tanks. With them he succeeded in breaking right through the enemy lines, and entering the village of Le Mesnil-Patry, where for a time they wreaked havoc among the astonished enemy forces. When Bean was wounded again, Sergeant Scrutton gathered the little band of survivors together and they made good their withdrawal. George Bean was awarded the Military Cross and Sergeant Scrutton the Distinguished Conduct Medal for their roles in this heroic action.

Although I hadn't been given the opportunity to co-ordinate a fire plan with the assault, I gave what covering fire I could with my mortars. Noticing some haystacks which I suspected of concealing Panzers, I set the hay ablaze with phosphorus bombs, and the eruptions from the haystacks as the tank crews desperately baled out showed that my hunch had been correct. Now, as I witnessed the sorry debacle of our retreat, I ordered the mortars to step up their fire, to cover the retreat and block any German attempts at pursuit.

An Indian scout of the Regina Rifles was with us in the OP, scanning the country ahead. Suddenly he stiffened and pointed out a German helmet in the cornfield. Although he'd spotted it with his own eyes, unaided, I had trouble finding it with my binoculars, since it was a full fifteen hundred yards away.

Yes, there was indeed a German helmet visible there—perhaps there might be a few others around. Calling up the mortars on the field telephone, I ordered a few rounds dropped there. The bombs landed, with startling results. Hundreds of German infantrymen rose to their feet and began running in all direction. That single helmet had given away a large concentration of enemy infantry, massing for the attack. This was my opportunity: I called in every available mortar, and within seconds there were hundreds of bombs in the air. It was a mixture of high explosive with phosphorus incendiary shells, and the effect must have been devastating. Within a few minutes, that unit no longer constituted a fighting

force—it had been blown sky-high. Our mortar fire had completely disorganized the German counter-attack, and the enemy had suffered enormous casualties in the course of the attack. In fact this sector gave us no further trouble, and on June 16–17 Le Mesnil-Patry was occupied without a shot being fired. The British found fourteen knocked-out German tanks and over two thousand German dead in the fields and ditches.

But at the time we were unaware of the full extent of the damage we had inflicted, and I was concerned with getting the mortar crews to cease firing and prepare to withdraw. As my carrier drove through a narrow village street, we came under heavy fire; the Panzers were trying to inflict further casualties on our retreating tanks. Our Shermans floundered and churned, trying to get out of the line of fire, and we, too, did our best to get away. Suddenly, there was an explosion above my head as an 88 shell hit the side of a building close by. I found myself being blasted right out of the carrier, and when I hit the ground my uniform burst into flames. As it burned, I lay there helpless: I was paralysed from the waist downwards. I looked up, seeking help. To my amazement, my eyes encountered the fixed stares of my men, who sat there stunned by the blast, too dazed to come to my aid. To make matters worse, my helmet had been lifted right off by the explosion, and then pulled back by the strap, giving me a stunning blow on the head. Incredible as it may sound, the thought that flashed through my mind at that moment was: "If I live through this, I'll never wear a helmet again!" (I haven't.) All this must have taken no longer than a split second. I pulled myself together and managed to get my arms working enough to beat out the flames before they did any serious damage. As I was doing so, I saw someone else near me, lying on the ground, ablaze. I was still paralysed and there was nothing I could do for him: I just watched, helpless and horrified, as he burned and burned.... Finally, my body began to function again, and I pulled myself to my feet. It was a terrible scene, with the badly mutilated bodies of the dead and wounded all around, and it took us a long time to sort things out.

When we had a chance to catch our breath, it became clear that we had halted a determined German thrust which committed some of their elite SS units to a desperate attempt to push us back onto the beaches. Our attack may have been costly to us (D Company lost over 100 of their 135-man complement) but, as General Guy Simonds later noted, the action "put a Panzer division on the skids". But I knew that we could have attained a far greater success if the supporting arms had been

properly co-ordinated. It is my firm opinion that we would have done much better if the armour had been under the command of the infantry—instead of vice versa. A few days later, I was sent out on patrol to try to find some of our men who had been missing since the battle of June 11. We had no idea what had happened to them, or why this patrol should be an unforgettable one. I soon found out. The Nazi heroes of the 12th Panzer Division (Hitler Jugend) had lined them up in a wheatfield and machine-gunned them in cold blood. They lay now where they had fallen, among the crushed and bloodied wheat stalks.

My men and I had the dubious privilege of being the first Canadians in our division to discover just how the Germans planned to fight this war. I know that some outrage has been caused among the Canadian public by the publication of books such as *Six War Years* in which Canadian soldiers state that, on occasion, they killed German prisoners. Some readers seem to have been unable to believe such a thing could possibly be done by "our boys". Perhaps I can make a useful contribution to the debate by noting that after that day in the wheatfield surprisingly few prisoners from the Hitler Youth or other SS divisions were taken. But that was in the future.

On the scene of the massacre there was nothing I could do but take off our men's dog tags — a task I shall never forget as long as I live, since every one of the murdered men was a personal friend...

After I told my grim story to Colonel Spragge, he was called away, and he left me sitting in his dug-out. I was in pretty bad shape, after a week of constant action, with scarcely any time to rest. On top of that, I was still shocked and heart-sickened by the atrocity I had just discovered.

The reeking dog tags of my murdered friends were in my pocket as a reminder—if I needed one. While I was sitting there, dazed and exhausted, I was joined by the Colonel of the 1st Hussars, who with D Company had taken such a beating on June 11. He, too, was in a foul mood. As we sat there, commiserating with one another, we happened to notice my Colonel's bottle of Scotch. Like everyone else, he had been allowed to bring in one solitary bottle on D-day, so it was a prized possession. Trying to overcome our depression, we began to take swigs of the Scotch. The liquor combined with my state of total exhaustion to put me right out, so that when Colonel Spragge got back, he found me under the table, dead to the world. He got Francis, my batman, to lug me to a safe trench, which happened to be inside a shed. When I woke up the next morning, I found myself in pitch darkness, without the faintest idea of where I was or how I'd got there. It was a frightening experience. As for Jock Spragge, he bore

me no grudge for my ruthless treatment of his Scotch. He was a great commanding officer. He looked after us well in England, and then, after D-day, he did his best to bring us through alive.

[Editor's Note: We now move forward to the Winter of 1945. Fierce fighting took place on German soil and Dog Company, commanded by Maj Dunkelmann, was in the thick of it. One of its members, Aubrey Cosens, posthumously earned the Victoria Cross at Mooshof. Despite the losses, the Regiment had to continue the advance]

The Balberger Wald:

There were now dozens of dead and wounded in 16 and 17 Platoons, which, to all intents and purposes, had ceased to exist as fighting formations. With enemy fire still raining down, there wasn't much we could do, except hang on, aided by John Hancock's 18 Platoon and a few supporting tanks, and hope that the enemy counter-attacks would stop.

That was exactly what happened. First the shelling stopped, and then a couple of my men brought in six prisoners. Our ordeal was over, and we were in control of the objective. After Cosens's heroism had broken the enemy counter-attacks, we had won the position by the simple expedient of just sweating it out. But the price was dreadful.

At the end of that gruesome day, there were only 36 fighting men left in my company, out of the 115 who had crossed the start line. I was the only officer to come through unwounded, along with only one NCO.

Now B Company arrived and moved up ahead of us, taking their objective, Wimmershof, without encountering opposition. We, too, now moved forward to Wimmershof, where, deadly tired, we took over a farmhouse, occupying the cellar. It's not difficult to fit an entire company into one cellar when the "company" consists of no more than thirty-six combat troops. My men dragged down a bed for me, and I collapsed on it. The others lay down on the floor all around.

I was exhausted: sick in body, and even sicker in spirit. Never in my life, either before or since, have I found a body of men who were closer or dearer to me than the young soldiers of D Company. They had put their trust in me, and I had always done my best to justify that trust. For all my exhaustion, I did not sleep well that night. We were in a sorry state after Mooshof. I was the only officer and I had almost no NCOs. We'd taken terrible punishment, the men were in urgent need of rest, and the company urgently needed to be reinforced and reorganized. It seemed unthinkable that we'd be sent into action in our present state.

But at orders the following day, the commanding officer announced that the battalion, including D Company, was to move forward to clear the Hochwald. I was astounded. I told him that I had thirty-six combat soldiers, with one NCO and no officers, and that the company was unfit for action. He nodded sympathetically, but there was no change in the orders; he told me to follow behind the other companies, and help in any way we could. I can scarcely remember what happened during the next couple of days. I was scarcely lucid: my fever was raging, and I was exhausted, physically and mentally. But I



Fifty years after clearing the Hochwald: On February 26, 1995, Major Dunkelmann, the OC of "D" Coy during the attack on Mooshof, was a guest of honour at the official opening of Cosens Hall at CFTA Meaford. He revisited old times with RSM Harry Fox, MBE, above right. RSM Fox saw plenty of action in Italy (Photo: Editor).

can piece together the day's events to give a fairly accurate account. As the battalion moved off through the Balberger Wald and on into the Hochwald, my company was following B Company, which in turn was following some tanks. Suddenly, there were explosions ahead, followed by shouts and screams. One of the tanks had hit a Teller mine, which blew off a track, leaving it immobilized. At the same time, B Company's scouts entered the minefield. Several of them stepped on 'shoe-mines', which blew their feet off. One of the crew of the disabled tank jumped out, and he, too, trod on a mine. The wounded men were lying on the ground, rolling about in uncontrollable agony, biting at the dirt in an attempt to muffle their screams. But of course the screams welled up and rang out again and again as their buddies desperately tried to get morphine into them to dull the pain. I went ahead to see what was happening, and why the advance had halted. Unnerved by the mines, neither the tanks nor B Company were prepared to move on. I ordered the tank commander to advance and blaze a trail for us; he had little to lose—at the very worst, a mine might blow a tank's tracks. He refused to take orders from me, claiming that his tanks were not under the command of our

battalion, but merely "in support", which left him under no obligation to obey the orders of our officers. I contacted my battalion commander, who backed my view, but the tank officer still refused to budge. Our commanding officer contacted the tank officer's superior—to no avail. The dispute was long and bitter; at one point, I drew my pistol and threatened to shoot the tank commander unless he went ahead, but he had his own brand of courage and refused to be swayed by the threat.

I consulted with our Colonel again. It was getting late, our advance was being held up, throwing the timing of the whole assault out; the situation was critical. Almost inevitably, the Colonel's answer was: "I leave it up to you to find a way out." As the tanks still refused to advance and B Company was too unnerved to make the move, that left me with only one option: I would have to take the lead, with my mauled remnant of a company. It seemed very unjust, but there was nothing else to be done. I would have been within my rights if I had insisted on calling for engineers to clear the mines, but that would waste precious time, and we couldn't afford the delay. I got the men of D Company together, and told them we would be going into the lead. My men had followed the lengthy dispute, and they completely understood the situation. They probably resented it as much as I did, but they accepted the responsibility without a murmur. And the constant screams of the men who had blundered into the minefield and been crippled for life were grim reminders of just how rotten the responsibility was. We were going to approach this as carefully as possible—we knew how much was at stake.

We put our heads together. Who had an idea? I always asked my men for their suggestions; it may not be standard procedure for other officers, but it surely is effective. I threw out the questions: if you were planting a minefield in a wood, how would you do it? It must be quite difficult, they said, with the tree roots getting in the way. I seized on this eagerly. Quite right! No one would go to the trouble of planting a mine underneath a root. And where were a lot of roots? Of course—near the tree trunks! That was it. We moved off under the eyes of the column. We began to advance through the forest, leaping from tree to tree, taking care to land right beside the tree and cling to its trunk. It wasn't as difficult as it sounds, for the trees were close together. It must have looked damned odd, like a strange version of a ballet, but the stratagem worked. After a tense and fearful hour, we were through the minefield, without any further mishap...

(Editor's Note: In the text, Ben Dunkelmann, without further elaboration, modestly stated that "[f]or my part in the Hochwald action I was awarded the Distinguished Service Order".)

CSM Charles Cromwell Martin, D.C.M., M.M.

1918-1997

After a lifetime of service to country, community, family and the Regiment, Charlie Martin died, at the age of 78, on October 13, 1997.

Charlie Martin was born in Wales and came to Canada with his family in 1928. The outbreak of war in 1939 presented Charlie and his generation with an unsought but significant challenge; to end Nazi tyranny and oppression in Europe. Charlie heard of the mobilization of The Queen's Own in June, 1940, and volunteered for overseas service. He became Rifleman Martin B 63919. During training at Camp Borden and service in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, Charlie showed the intelligence and resourcefulness that would eventually lead to his attaining the rank of WO II (Company Sergeant-Major). He excelled in all his courses and qualified as a first-class marksman. After two years of training in England, Charlie was promoted to sergeant and met his bride-to-be, Vi, while both were stationed near one another in Sussex. They were married 30 October, 1943.

Charlie was promoted to CSM of A Coy in February, 1944 and was in one of first-wave assault boats on Juno Beach, at Bernières-sur-mer, on D-Day, 6 June

1944. Although wounded on four separate occasions in the course of the next eight months, Charlie remained in combat and playing a pivotal role in the company and the Regiment generally.

In November of 1944 he was awarded the Military Medal. The citation reads, in part, "[h]is utter disregard for personal safety has upon many occasions been the means of saving lives of many of his men, while his leadership ability has been the means for the success of many actions undertaken by "A" Coy during the past five months."

On March 4, 1945, Charlie Martin earned the Distinguished Conduct Medal Medal for his leadership and courage in the Balberger Wald, Germany. The citation, endorsed by the full chain of command, including Field Marshal Montgomery, reads in part:

"CSM MARTIN of "A" Company, picked up a Bren gun and made his way under intense enemy fire to the right flank of the company. Upon reaching the right flank, CSM MARTIN personally led the attack of his men in a daring charge at the enemy. Firing the Bren Gun from the hip and constantly urging the men on, B63919 Charles Cromwell MARTIN inspired the men to great heights. The enemy were completely

routed and left behind 26 dead and 47 prisoners. CSM MARTIN personally accounted for 11 enemy dead.

This magnificent example of courage, coolness in action, ability to inspire men and devotion duty on the part of CSM MARTIN was mainly responsible for the success of "A" Company, 1st Bn The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, in this attack"

Charlie continued to provide fine leadership until he

was seriously wounded near the town of Sneek, in northern Holland on April 16, 1945. Miraculously, he recovered from his wounds and was sent home to Canada to be joined later by his war bride, Vi. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife of 54 years, Vi, sons Stuart and Richard, six grandchildren and friends almost without number. He was a truly remarkable man and rifleman and will be sorely missed by them and all members of the regimental family. Among the many tributes to him, three are reprinted in this issue of The Rifleman, reflecting appreciations from within the Regiment and from also from Canadian society at large.

Sgt Mark Shannon's tribute to Company Sergeant Major Charles Cromwell Martin is a reflection of the bond between Riflemen, those who served and those who are currently serving. It was delivered at the Regimental Remembrance Day Service on November 9, 1997:

Charlie Martin was first, last and always a Rifleman of The Queen's Own.

I, like many in the Queen's Own, consider Charlie to be one of my heroes. What does it take to be a Military hero? Some would say that a person would have to perform some single, selfless, heroic act, like fellow Queen's Own and Victoria Cross winner Sgt Aubrey Cosens, in order to be considered a hero. I feel that that is only one of many ways to become a hero. Charlie is a hero of mine because of all the little things he has done throughout his life. He, like a lot of our veterans present today, are heroes to us because they were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, they were willing to fight and possible die so that their fellow Canadians could enjoy freedom. They volunteered to place the welfare of their fellow man above and ahead of their own welfare.

I have many vivid memories of Charlie. Some of the memories that I will always cherish about Charlie are:

- How he liked to talk about his love for Canada and for all Canadians.

- How he liked to tell us how proud he would be to serve with any of today's Riflemen. When Charlie talked like this, it was like you were receiving a fathers praise and blessing for a job well done.



CSM C.C. Martin is shown above (middle), on 20 June 1944, with Lt E.M. Peto (l) from the 16th Fld Coy RCE and Rfn N.E. Lindenau (r) of A Coy, QOR of C. The official photo-caption reads, using language that no combat soldier would use, "planning where to lay a minefield in order to trap any venturesome Nazi" The long barrel of Charlie's trusted revolver is visible under his left elbow. (Photo by Lt Duberville; DND 35303)

Tribute to a Gentle Warrior

- Whenever Charlie talked to you he would lean on his cane with one hand, or hook it over his arm, and with his free hand he would grab onto your arm lock his gaze upon you and talk to you with 100% of his attention.

- Charlie always attempted to describe his wartime experiences as an observer of his fellow Riflemen. He did this quite vividly in both his book "Battle Diary" and through the CBC video of the same name. It was not in Charlie's nature to talk about his own accomplishments as he was too humble for that.

- I will always remember Charlie's speech at the regimental Christmas dinner a few years ago when he talked about the day he won his Military Medal. He talked about how he was humbled into carrying the Bren gun during a counter attack as his friend could not as he had just lost his hand during the attack. Charlie stated that "he did not wear his medals for himself, he wore them for the men who served with him".

Charlie understood intimately the horrors of war but instead of dwelling on the negatives he always stressed the positive side of belonging to a small tight group of motivated riflemen.

All of us here belong to the Regimental family and if it could be said that our family had a grandfather then that would have to have been Charlie. But Charlie is gone now. Gone but not forgotten for we are all better for having known him.

It is appropriate that we hold this memorial service on our regimental remembrance day for there is so much we need to remember in order that it does not happen again.

In closing I want to issue a challenge to our veterans to seek out our younger riflemen in order to pass on to them your memories and experiences of your time at war. The benefits of this exchange are two fold:

1. It will make our regimental history come to life for each and every member of our regimental family and it will make our history more personal at the individual level and

2. It will help join our generation of veterans and our current generation of riflemen together and make our regimental family ties stronger.

I am going to miss Charlie. He was one of the kindest, gentlest, humble and personable men I have ever met. He is definitely one of my heroes and I will always remember him.

At a service for Charlie Martin at Moss Park Armoury, Barney Danson delivered a moving eulogy, excerpts of which were published in The Toronto Star on November 14, 1997:

Charlie Martin was a gentle warrior. He certainly was not a spectator in life. He was not reluctant to get involved in those things he considered important. He was a doer.

A man of great personal courage who personified the Canadian infantryman and was a role model for all riflemen. While trained to kill, he was not a killer. Indeed, civilized men like Charlie take no joy in destroying others, even in defence of the very civilization which tragically took us to war.

The numbers of us who marched out of the old University Ave. armouries together is shrinking . . . as are those who joined us later.

Our commanders, Colonels Harry Mackendrick, Jock Spragge, Steve Lett, and so many of those who served under these legendary C.O.s are long, or some recently, gone.

We now meet mostly to say our farewells to precious friends, true brothers in arms, proudly wearing our medals and mostly to remember those who also earned them, but never lived to wear them. Those to whom Charlie warmly and nostalgically referred to as forever young. For that is the way he

and we will always remember them . . . they never became veterans.

Indeed Charlie expended enormous time and energy, perhaps ultimately fatal energy, making certain that our regiment and our dead were properly memorialized on the battlefields of northwest Europe, the last occasion being at the D-day beach at Bernières-sur-mer this past June 6. He is known and honoured in Europe as are few other Canadians.

I am sure that each of us has our own personal roll of honour. Those who were closest to us and whose names we whisper during the moments of silence on each occasion of remembrance, and perhaps other very private times when our minds drift back to happier times; perhaps when out for a walk, or drifting off to sleep when our wives might wonder what prompted what we thought was a private sob and a quiet tear. This may embarrass us a bit, but we need never be ashamed of showing our genuine grief and the love shared by very young men who trained together, raised hell together; prayed together and bitched together at the sometimes ridiculous antics of our superior officers and the distant higher commands, not to mention the politicians.

And we old sweats who still survive, particularly as we realize that we are not immortal and our days too are numbered, like salmon returning to the



Charlie Martin's smile illuminates a story, in the company of Andy McNaughton (middle), Capt Adam Saunders and a Bren gun.

stream in which they were hatched, return to the Regiment we have learned to love...clinging closer together than we have in the intervening years to share our memories and renew our deep attachment to one another, particularly as we pay our respects to Charlie Martin, one of our greatest, who touched all of our lives and brought great credit to us and the Queen's Own.

Actually, I knew two Charlie Martins. The first, a young rifleman and NCO who was exuberant, a little devil-may-care, and full of youthful zest and laughter. Fun to be with, and, if memory serves me right, engaged in that greatest of floating crap games on the troopship Strathmore in the largest troop convoy ever to cross the Atlantic. It was enriched by a contingent of highly paid American construction specialists en route to Ireland to build airports prior to the U.S. entry into the war. Charlie, like all good red-blooded Canadians, was anxious to relieve the Americans of their excess cash. I'm not sure how Charlie made out, but I know that I lost my treasured Colt revolver.

The second Charlie Martin was the one we knew in most recent years. Mature, serious and responsible, in sharp contrast to the happy-go-lucky, grinning young Charlie. But still fun, still courageous and universally respected. A devoutly religious man who carried his faith deep in his heart rather than on his sleeve. He manifested his faith by the way he lived, the things he did, and his relationships with others. He was colour-blind when it came to people. He didn't care what you were. It was how you were that mattered to Charlie.

Fortunately Charlie's legacy is passed on, not only to his sons Stuart and Rick and their families, but to the youth of our country and the

generations that follow them through his fine book *Battle Diary* and its TV film version, as well as Anthony Wilson-Smith's eloquent and deeply moving tribute to Charlie in a recent Maclean's article.

I know that Vi is deeply moved by the torrent of letters which have poured in

and their wonderful family. Vi has been a great soldier both in and out of uniform, but a special strength during this past year and a bit, when I believe Charlie knew he did not have long to go.

It was only a week or two before Charlie entered his last illness that he



CSM Charlie Martin, DCM, MM is joined by the late MWO Bruce Bamlett, CD, at Bernières-sur-Mer on June 6, 1994 during ceremonies commemorating the 50th Anniversary of D-Day.

took me on of our regular visits to David Giffen, now 97, one of the oldest to enlist at 40 and who is likely to outlast us all. (Perhaps that's because he remained a bachelor). Charlie was waxing eloquently about his family when I reminded him that were both married 54 years ago.

Without being racist, we both agreed that we were either lucky or smart to have chosen beautiful English girls. This may not have gone down well with all the broken hearts we caused in Canada, but we were two very lucky soldiers.

Charlie was a moderate, if not a temperance man; he enjoyed a good time in the company of his friends, their families and friends and just about anybody who

from right across Canada and so many parts of the world. One of these was from the Chief of the Gibson Iroquois Watai Reserve at Bala. Charlie, in his retirement, helped them establish a successful cranberry operation. Herman Stock, one of Charlie's men lost in Normandy, had come from Bala. This was typical of Charlie and I am sure that there are other such stories about which we may never know. His is an incredibly wonderful Canadian story.

A war hero of the utmost bravery and incredible personal leadership skills, who had cause to rest on his laurels but moved on to an amazingly rich and productive private and peaceful life. Our special prayers are not only for Charlie, but for his loving war bride Vi

also enjoyed a spirited time. That's why it's not surprising that Vi has invited us all to share our happiness in memory of Charlie, at the end of this service.

It is a regimental maxim that "Once in the Queen's Own, always in the Queen's Own." Charles Cromwell Martin, DCM, MM, recipient of the Canada Medal and a nominee to the Order Of Canada, will always remain a brilliant legend in the annals of this great Regiment. Each of us is a better person because our lives were touched by him.

Peace Charlie. God bless.

We honour your life, your courage, your love, and your memory, and mourn, in our own special way, with Vi and your grieving family.

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Backstage



Anthony Wilson-Smith

The loss of a Canadian war hero

Darkness was falling on June 6, 1994, at the military cemetery at Beny-sur-Mer, France, and most of the crowd assembled for the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Second World War D-Day landing had returned to their hotels. A handful of veterans and their families remained—and, in the middle of them, Jean Chrétien stood, shaking hands with each. Whenever the inevitable request for photographs came up, the Prime Minister turned the tables. "This is your day," he said. "Give me the honor of taking your pictures." Later, retired sergeant major Charlie Martin, a lifelong Progressive Conservative, joked that Chrétien's gracious behavior "almost made me sorry that I didn't vote for him." But, he added with a smile, "Not quite."

By then, Charlie Martin was 75 years old, and in a life of uncommon grace and bravery, that was as close as he came to regrettable behavior. A war hero, churchgoer, father of two sons and husband of half a century to his war bride wife, Vi, one of his rare boasts about himself was: "I like to think that I always live up to my responsibilities." And so he did, in so many ways, right up to the end last week at age 79 after a short illness. In June, despite a bad heart and other signs of failing health, he travelled again to Normandy to place a memorial at the site where his Queen's Own Rifles regiment landed during the war. While there, he met a young Canadian who listened to Charlie's commemorative speech, and, overcome with emotion, asked for more information about the Canadians' effort. That greatly pleased Martin, whose mission in recent years was to ensure that Canada's youth learn more about "our war, and the consequences of all wars."

Back home, Martin prepared meticulously for his death. He left instructions that he should not be left on life support pointlessly, and planned and paid for his funeral in advance. The two days of visitation at the funeral parlor near the couple's Mississauga, Ont., home, followed by two memorial ceremonies, came off with military precision, and attendance from all those former regimental mates still in good enough health to attend. "Charlie," said his former commanding officer, then-Capt. Dick Medland, who read the eulogy, "never left a thing to chance or anyone else if he could help it."

That included his determination to educate succeeding generations about war. After years of silence, in the early 1990s he co-wrote a book about his experiences entitled *Battle Diary* that sold about 7,000 copies—a best-seller by Canadian standards. It led, in turn, to a television documentary and a *Maclean's* cover story when he allowed a writer to accompany him to Normandy in 1994. That inspired the publication of *Canada at War*, a newly released hard-cover compilation of articles from *Maclean's* archives that chronicle the

extraordinary efforts of the country's fighting forces. In each case, when Charlie was asked about his own efforts, he invariably politely and firmly turned the focus towards others.

For years, although Charlie made a point to stay in touch with other veterans, he otherwise did not discuss his war efforts. He worked for the Ontario government on agricultural projects, specializing in advising native reserves—and was made an honorary blood brother by the Fort William Indian Band. He served on his local school board, did fund-raising for the hospital, and was a church warden and Sunday school superintendent. Based on his peacetime efforts alone, fellow veteran Lawrence Hanson nominated him for the Order of Canada. Said Barney Danson, a former federal cabinet

minister who lost an eye while serving in the Queen's Own: "Charlie was a true gentle warrior. He saw enough combat to understand how horrible it really is."

In other countries that make more of their military history, Martin's life—and passing—would have earned much more attention. The holder of two of Canada's highest awards for bravery in combat—the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Military Medal—he fought with almost unimaginable heroism on a daily basis for almost 10 months before he was finally severely wounded. Once, under heavy fire, the five-foot, seven-inch Martin half-carried a six foot, 200-lb. wounded comrade back to their own lines—while he, in turn, pulled along a prisoner. On another occasion, he spent more than 18 hours lying in a concealed trench less than 150 metres from a German gun emplacement holding down his company's advance. Then, he and a partner destroyed the emplacement, and spent

three more hours huddling under the bombardment that their attack provoked. Martin's commanding officer, then-Maj. J. Neal Gordon, called him "the finest fighting man I have ever known." And relatively lucky: with an official strength of 800 men, in slightly less than a year, the Queen's Own lost 453 men with more than 1,000 wounded.

At the memorial service last week, trumpeters played the *Last Post, Reveille*, and someone recited an excerpt of the work by British poet Laurence Binyon (1869-1943) that promises fallen veterans that "at the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them." On the drive home, Barney Danson reflected to a friend that *Last Post*, the twice yearly veterans' obituary section in *Legion Magazine*, now runs as large as 40 pages. Again, for the last time, Charlie Martin brought together the diminishing band of Queen's Own veterans to commemorate the past, and ponder the days left to them. On a daily basis, a nation is losing a generation that includes many of its greatest heroes. They go in peace, and that is their greatest legacy.

With grace and bravery, Charlie Martin epitomized the extraordinary contribution of the nation's fighting forces

Ronald A. With

1907-1996



He was born in London, England in 1907 and raised in Australia where, during the depression and unable to find work, he tramped the Australian Outback alone, chopping wood, herding sheep, tending grape arbours and taking any odd jobs to be had, for food and place to sleep--other than a bill-abong (river bank).

Later he emigrated to Canada and went to Toronto where his older brother, Ken, lived. When war started Ron joined The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada as a private, training in Sussex, N.B. He proceeded overseas with the Regiment, and was selected to attend O.C.T.U. in England where he received his Commission. He was returned to Canada in 1942 as an instructor at O.C.T.U. in Brockville.

In 1944 Ron volunteered to join "Canloan" (Canadian officers 'On Loan' to British Regiments whose officers' ranks had been depleted in combat) and was returned to Sussex, N.B. At his request he was sent back to England where he was selected to join the 4th Dorsets Regiment. He was twice badly wounded while with them, once by phosphorous burns to his legs and later by stepping on an anti-personnel mine at night. He spent many weeks in Bradford Royal Infirmary, and thence returned to Canada and discharged.

He worked in Toronto for the Ontario Government from which he took early retirement to settle in Victoria, B.C. with his wife Molly. He worked with the B.C. government as an illustrator doing detailed and intricate drawings of native B.C. plants for botanical books.

Ron passed away on Oct. 13, 1996. He was a fair and loving husband and a devoted father to his two adopted sons, Peter of Oakville, Ontario and William of Calgary. There was always a twinkle in his eye, and he had a naughty sense of humour which no doubt helped him to compose various limericks about some of B.C.'s town and cities. Also, he had a great love of all animals. In addition to his wife and his two sons, he is survived by his youngest brother, Bryan, in Nelson, B.C., and several grandchildren.

Homage to Capt H.G.W. Bean, M.C.

On June 11, during the battle of Le Mesnil-Patry, the then Lt George Bean, "despite being wounded twice in the initial assault, gathered together Sergeant Scrutton and a little force with seven riflemen and two tanks. With them he succeeded in breaking right through the enemy lines, and entering the village of Le Mesnil-Patry, where for a time they wreaked havoc among the astonished enemy forces. When Bean was wounded again, Sergeant Scrutton gathered



the little band of survivors together and they made good their withdrawal. George Bean was awarded the M.C. and Sergeant Scrutton the D.C.M. for their roles in this heroic action." * Capt H.G.W. Bean, MC was killed by an enemy

shell in the early morning of Valentine's Day, 1945. He was 23 years old. With his death, Canada lost a young man with outstanding promise. Across the English Channel, the tragic news shattered a young woman's dreams. We pay tribute to heroism and enduring love.

* From Ben Dunkelman's "Dual Allegiance"

To a QOR who did not return
by Patsy Lewis

I'll tell you a story of days of yore
When you and your comrades arrived on our shore
To fight for Old England and help win the war
And a Maple Leaf proudly on my breast I wore.

When we fell in love our whole world filled with joy
But I lost you in battle, my own darling boy.
You died in the first flush of glorious youth
Fighting for Freedom, Honour and Truth.

Half a century later I stand by your grave
Still loving and mourning the bravest of brave-
But they told me that sorrow would fade with the years,
So why am I sad, and my eyes prone to tears
That well up unbidden from somewhere inside
And the heart that was broken, still silently cries.

You sleep with your comrades far from your home
Having paid with your life for the plot you now own.
But alone and forgotten you never will be,
You live on forever in sweet Normandy.

Though hardened like iron and trained to kill
Your love and compassion and tenderness still
Fill me with wonder - there's none can compare
To a Queen's Own Rifleman of Canada fair.

LCol Guy Pearson

1949-1997

I was shocked to hear of the untimely passing of LCol Guy Pearson, 7th Gurkha Rifles. Guy Pearson was a long standing friend of The Queen's Own. I first met Guy in 1982 when he was posted to Staff College in Toronto and had been offered privileges of the Officer's Mess.

A more friendly, supportive and hospitable officer I cannot remember having met in all my years of service. Guy always promoted the alliance with the Gurkha Bde and in fact was the Gurkha officer who presented the Kukri to the Colour Sergeant of the Skirmishers during their memorable trip to Winchester in 1984. The following are excerpts from a tribute to Guy Pearson by LCol T.G. Blackford which have been kindly forwarded to us by the Brigade of Gurkhas:

"Guy was born on 21st December 1949. He went to the RMA Sandhurst and was commissioned into the 7th D.E.O. Gurkha Rifles on 4th August 1972. His early days in the regiment were not easy. I suppose the easiest way of describing his behaviour and demeanour in those early days was that of

a maverick. He thought he had a calling to save the Regiment and, who knows, probably the Army, from itself and tended to go about things in a manner which did not always endear himself to his fellow officers and frankly astonished the Gurkhas.



He never lost his zest for life or his abiding love of sport, be it Athletics, Hockey, Rugby, Swimming or Sailing. He excelled at all.

As his military career developed and Guy's obvious qualities became apparent his future was shaped accordingly. He was Adjutant in 1979. Guy served in Northern Ireland, Germany, Belize, Canada (where he attended Staff College), Hong Kong, Brunei, Nepal and the UK. He was an

officer of high professional and intellectual talent and was considered by some to have one of the best military minds of his generation."

The Brigade of Gurkhas and the Regiment are the poorer for the loss of this fine officer and gentleman.

Major E.R. Simundson, CD
OC Gurkha Coy.

DURING THE PAST MONTHS, THE FOLLOWING
MEMBERS OF THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES PASSED AWAY

“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”

AUSTIN, George T.	LESLIE, James Ashton (Jim)
BELLAMY, Norman T.	KENNEDY, Clifford C.
BRUNTON, Lorne Wilson	MARTIN, Charles Cromwell
BULMER, James Roy	MAXTED, M.
BURNABY, F.H.	MCCREADIE, M.E.
BUTT, Raymond James	MCLARDY, J.
CHAPMAN, Wilfred Herbert (Hy)	MCLEOD, Doug
CHARD, Gary D.	MCMANNERS, Ashton
CLARK, Alexander	MCNEILL, Malcolm
CURTIS, J. Frank	MITCHELL, R.H.
DART, Thomas Albert	MOORE, Frank
DICKSON, James (Jimmy)	MORRIS, C.R.
DROUILLARD, Gary	OSTROM, L.G.
DUNKELMAN, Benjamin (Ben)	REHILL, C.M.
FITCHETT, Irving S.	REVEL, William
FOX, Roy	ROACH, Gordon
FREEMAN, Robert C.	ROURKE, Francis
FRENCH, Ernest	ROWELL, Charles Fred
GALES, Richard H..	SALMON, Hugh P.
GORDON, R.C. (Terry)	SHEPHERD, William Alfred
HEATH, Frank Edward	SLENO, Stewart Allan
HENNESSY, Dean E.	SMITH, Nelson K.
HUMPHRIES, Harold	STANYER, Walter H.
HUNTER, Harold	STEWART, Robert A.
IRVINE, Alexander Muir (Alex)	TYNDALL, Charles
JEFFREY, George	WOODCOCK, Roland
LEENEY, Maurice	WRIGHT, Charles H.



(Photo Credit Jack Martin)

**The Queen's Own Rifles Memorial
Wons, Holland**