

THE FALCON

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This publication is issued under the authority of Lt. Col. K. C. B. Corbett, C.D., Commanding Officer of The 48th Highlanders of Canada. The contents of this publication have been edited and approved by Hon./Major R. K. Cameron, Padre of The 48th Highlanders of Canada.

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Dedication of The Regimental Memorial Museum.

On Sunday, February 8 at 3 p.m. a large audience assembled in The Memorial Hall, 519 Church Street to witness the dedication and official opening of the new Memorial Museum. The first part of the ceremony was held in the auditorium where Lt. Col. Corbett, C.D., Commanding Officer of The 48th Highlanders and H/Major Stewart B. East, M.B.E., M.C., spoke concerning the purpose and value of the museum. From there the audience went downstairs and stood in the hall and on the stairway for the actual dedication of the museum which is on the left of the main doorway. Lt. Col. M. E. George, C.D., chairman of The Museum Committee handed over to the care and keeping of the Regiment as a memorial to those who gave their lives in The 48th in World Wars I and II. This responsibility was accepted on behalf of The Regiment and The Old Comrades' Association by Col. K. R. Marshall, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., who spoke briefly and effectively. The prayer of dedication was given by the regimental Padre, H/Major Ross K. Cameron.

The Museum is an exceedingly well-done piece of work. The Committee, under Lt. Col. Georeg, deserves the sincere thanks of the Regiment for its skillfull and careful work of organizing and arranging. Following are its members: Mr. James Brannan, Major H. F. Brown, M.C., Drum Major W. P. Elms, Mr. George Eyles, Major A. S. LeMesurier, Major Alex Sinclair, V.D. Every man in the Regiment should see it and consider thoughtfully the meaning in terms of courage and service the many exhibits and trophies. Every recruit should be given careful instruction in the value and significance of these symbols and facts of our regimental history.

The following statement by The Committee was made at the time of the dedication:

"The Regimental Museum Committee wishes to take this opportunity of thanking those people whose donations of items pertaining to the Regiment have been instrumental in making this Museum possible. Also our thanks to the 48th Highlanders Association for the donation of the former Memorial Room and the necessary assistance in purchasing the display cases.

The Committee has not been able to display all the articles, pictures and documents that have been donated. However it is the intention of the Committee to rotate displays from time to time and thereby eventually displaying material that is not on view today.

For the continued success of the Regimental Memorial Museum the Committee is dependent on donations of material from 48th Highlanders, their families and friends of the Regiment. In particular the Committee would be interested in receiving the medals of former 48th Highlanders who have passed on.

Anyone wishing to make a donation of material for the Museum are requested to contact Lt. Colonel M. E. George or any member of the Committee, c/o 48th Highlanders Memorial Hall."

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"Unless A Man Has Loyalties....."

Canada's former soldiers, sailors and airmen not only have the right to lend their voices and all their influence against the new, noisy campaign of the Anglophobes and other separatists, they also have an obligation to their long cherished loyalties.

When a man took the oath of allegiance required by military service in war, his flag and his King became the symbols for which he risked and fought. Forever after, his loyalty to his symbols remained strong within him. He would feel a traitor to deny them. And because he offered his life for his country if need be, his sense of citizenship is as great as his pride of race and country.

There is full justification for their claim, if veterans wish to make it, that they have a greater right than any other Canadian group to demand that the country they served in war should honour their loyalties. They have proven that their citizenship is far more than words.

A warrior's service in war and the symbols of his loyalty, are also inextricably knit into a veteran's self-respect. They are the core of it. Canada's ex-servicemen would be quick to agree that loyalty is not their exclusive right, but this is why they have more reason than most to know that unless a man has loyalties, he is nothing, and that this also holds for nations.

* * * * *

GENTLEMEN - THE TARTAN !

Here's to it;
The fighting sheen of it;
The yellow, the green of it;
The white, the blue of it;
The dark, the red of it;
Every thread of it;
The fair have sighed for it;
The brave have died for it;
Free men fought for it;
Honour the name of it;
Drink to the fame of it

—THE TARTAN !

Colonel of The Regiment

(Since the 48th was in camp last summer with the R.C.R. this is of double interest to us.)

General Charles Foulkes, CB, CBE, DSO, CD, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff, has been appointed as Colonel of the Regiment, The Royal Canadian Regiment.

A wartime commander of the 1st Canadian Corps overseas, and later Chief of the General Staff, General Foulkes was commissioned in The Royal Canadian Regiment in 1926. He has served as Chairman, Chiefs of Staff, since February 1951.

The appointment of Colonel fo the Regiment is new to the Canadian Army, having been instituted in August last year. At that time six senior officers were given similar appointments with armoured and infantry regiments of the Regular Army. General Foulkes is the first officer to hold such an appointment with the RGR.

The regiment comprises two battalions, the 1st Battalion at Ipperwash, Ont., and the 2nd Battalion at London, Ont. The Regimental Depot is also at London.

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The Future Unknown -

"What I mean is," explained the insurance salesman to a bewildered rural prospect, "how would your wife carry on if you should die?"

"Well," answered the farmer reasonably, "I don't reckon that's any concern of mine --as long as she behaves herself while I'm alive."

* * * * *

The Sergeants' Mess

With the return to routine parades on January 30th we leave behind us the New Year's Day observances, with their usual customs and traditions that are ours, and with which most of us are familiar. During the month of January there was the usual Ladies Night held on the 17th., followed by the Mixed Shoot that is open to the Sergeants and their Ladies. It has been noted that during the shooting there is a practise known as a Balloon Shoot, and as balloons can only be up so high, barn doors are suggested.

The highlight of the month of January was the visit, on the 24th of the Sergeants Mess of the 1st Battalion R.C.R. headed by WO 1 Fred Lewis. This visit was arranged in appreciation of their hospitality shown to us at Camp Ipperwash in June, 1958. The visit covered two days the 24th and 25th. They arrived at 1700 hours and were welcomed individually by every member of the Mess who attended 100 per cent. Dinner followed at 1930 hours, a total of 85 sitting down. A pleasant surprise was the "Ode to the Haggis" given by Sgt. J. Eden, who gave the address commendably well. The crowning point during the dinner was achieved when R.S.M. (W O 1) Montgomery on behalf of the 48th Sgt. Mess presented to the 1st Battalion R.C.R. Sgts. Mess a dress sword to be worn by the R.S.M. on all ceremonial occasions.

R.S.M. (W.O. 1) Lewis briefly and suitably replied thanking the Mess, as did also the P.M.C. of the R.C.R. Mess. Entertainment followed the dinner, the lions share provided by our Pipe Band, to whom we are grateful. Not an incident marred the proceedings, and the visitors departed in the wee small hours to accomodation provided for them. A word of thanks goes to our compassionate military friends who provided the accomodation.

On Sunday morning our visitors, again carried on where they left off, and after lunch departed for Camp Ipperwash, their profuse thanks still ringing in our ears.

This is the first time a Regular Army Unit and a Reserve Force Unit have met formally and informally, and is worth recording in the annals of history.

Since the last issue of the Falcon, Sgt. J. Garven has joined our ranks, and the following members of the Pipe Band have also been promoted to Sergeant, Tucker, Worth, Taylor and MacKay.

Recently, the following were made L/Sgts., Tonks, Turner and White.

On Tuesday 10th February the Officers and Sergeants met to compete for the Lt./Col. Don MacKenzie Trophy. Again the Sergeants proved the better shots, but all ranks drank to the memory of the Officer, out of the Trophy his name bears. This was an excellent dinner, and the meat was provided by W.O. 2, C.S.M. Kelly, who, while hunting last Fall managed to shoot a deer.

Saturday the 21st February was another Ladies Night. A Box Social properly auctioned by Sgt. Howey Martin was the evening's bright spot, and provided an excellent change in the programme.

The Pipes and Drums Annual Ball is to be held at the Royal York on Sat., March 14th, 1959, and all ranks are requested to support it.

The Regimental Ball sponsored by the Sgts. Mess is to be held on Friday, 10th April, and it is requested that all ranks attend this function too. Plans are well under way and tickets are available from any member of the Sgts. Mess.

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Officers' Mess

Having had such wonderful hospitality shown to them at Camp Ipperwash last summer by the officers of the Royal Canadian Regiment, the officers of this Regiment returned their hospitality in November last. During the week-end they were here a visit was paid to the last game of the football season when Toronto was once again well and truly beaten, this time by Montreal.

New Year was welcomed in the traditional manner when, after a visit to the Sergeants' Mess, calls were made on the other messes in the city. Everyone we think without exception, voted Captain Keeling's 1959 brew of Atholl Brose the best ever!

The MacKenzie Shoot against the Sergeants was held in February and we regret to report, the Officers were beaten by the Sergeants by a "narrow" margin. However in view of the increasing interest in shooting, the Sergeants had better look to their laurels from 1960 on.

In the past three months we have been very pleased to see both old and new faces visiting the Mess and recently we were pleased to entertain Cadet Officers from Trinity College School, Upper Canada College and Appleby College.

Congratulations are in order to:

BIRTHS: Major and Mrs. Haldenby on the birth of a daughter.
Major and Mrs. Potts on the birth of a son.
Captain and Mrs. Whiteacre on the birth of a daughter.
Lt. and Mrs. Fraser on the birth of a son.

PROMOTIONS:

Captain Ross Cameron on his promotion to Major.
Lt. Binnie on his promotion to Captain.
Lt. McFarlane on his promotion to Captain.
2/Lt. Johnston on his promotion to Lieutenant.

Errors and Omissions Excepted!

As there have been so many births and promotions the past months, the writer is having great difficulty in keeping track. He does, however, apologize for any errors or omissions.

* * * * *

A Great Mystery

"Robert", said the wife, "where did all those empty bottles in the cellar come from?"

"I don't know, my dear, I never bought an empty bottle in my life."

Too Much to Ask

"A fine time to come in," stormed a wife to her spouse as he stumbled in at 4 a.m. "I want an explanation, and I want the truth."

"Make up your mind, dear -- you can't have both."

* * * * *

"A" Company Blethers

Well, lads, another year ahead of us again, let us make it a bang-up one for recruiting. You'll be thinking I'm always mentioning recruiting. Well, we sure do need recruits we've lost three men so far this year and we have the "Trooping the Colour" coming up shortly, so let's put our thinking caps on and suggest joining up to some of your friends. We also have - "MacGregor Shoot" coming up soon, too. By the way, do you all know who Archie MacGregor was? Well, Capt. A. MacGregor was once the O.C. of "A" Coy during the first World War. He was killed in action and since the war Able Coy has been having a Shoot in his honour. Have you (new members particularly) ever wondered who the gentleman is in the picture beside the door in the Coy room? Well, that is Archie MacGregor. So when the day is decided upon to have the shoot we expect a darn good turn-out from "A" Coy.

We have had a few promotions in our midst recently. Congrats to Capt. Whiteacre, Cpl. Henry and Cpl. Winter.

Well, I guess this is all for now. Oh! did ye here this ane? Twa auld geezers, (Protestants they were) were travelling on the Bloor Street tram, Yin says tae the ither "when I retire I'm gaun tae flit doon tae Azizona; the temperature is aboot 75 degrees an' there's only five per cent Catholics there".

"Na," says the ither "I'm guan tae flit tae California the temperature is aboot 85 degrees an' there's only twa per cent Catholics there." Hearing this an auld nun sitting behind them chirps up "Why dinna ye baith go tae Hell there's nae Catholics there."

* * * * *

Point of Agreement - At the recent Miss America contest, the fair representatives of the states of New Hampshire and Alabama met in the dressing room. "We might as well face it," sighed the miss from New England. "Men are all alike." The Alabama beauty smiled her agreement, and murmured, "Men are all Ah like too."

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"B" Company News

The training for 1959 is in full swing, with "B" Company still handling the recruit training, and Sgt. Martin looking after the documentation of recruits. Capt. MacFarlane, Coy. 2 I/C is conducting the Regiment's Jr. N.C.O. Course.

The depletion of our ranks over the holidays, resulted from Pte's Tomlin and Wellman joining the regular army. Also Pte. Hands left the Company, after being accepted by the R.C.M.P. He is now at the Rockcliffe Barracks, Ottawa, Ontario. We are sorry to lose these men, who have been with the 48th Highlanders since the 1957 summer Recruit Course. We wish them every success in their new courses and training.

We are glad to have Sgt. "Rocky" Andrews back on parade again this past Fall and Winter, after being sidelined for so long.

A "highlight" of the month of January was the Father and Son Banquet held at the 48th Highlanders Club on January 19 for the personnel of "B" Coy. We were honoured in having Lt. Col. Corbett as our guest for the dinner. This dinner was arranged by the Company Commander, Major LeMesurier and was greatly enjoyed by all ranks and by the fathers who were present. Entertainment was provided by the men themselves and a surprising amount of hidden talent was uncovered from within the company...an accordionist (Pte. Stenoff) and a flutist (Pte. Veskoja) to name only two. Ptes. Bertatti and Patterson acted as M.C.'s for the programme. A "Kingston Trio" was made up of Pte. Mancel and L/Cpls. Langcaster and Sainsbury. Another feature of the evening was a visit to the Regimental Museum, which was really something to see and well worth re-visiting.

With a "Trooping of The Colour" for Her Majesty, The Queen, coming up on June 29 preparations in the way of training are already in full swing. Recruits are slowly coming in but a great many more are needed and needed now!

New men in the company are Ptes. Hagar (Ex-RCOC), Key (Ex- Air Cadets), Campbell, Greig and McCumber (from the 1958 Summer Course), Livingston, Gunter, Lapere (Ex-48th) and Ex-Sgt. Gaston (Ex-48th) and to brother, Jack (Ex-Irish Regt.).

We've just filled up another rack with new F.N.(CI) rifles, men; let's get the personnel down here to use them.

Congratulations to Capt. MacFarlane on his recent promotion to the rank of Captain. If company personnel have been reading orders lately they will have noticed the Padre's promotion to Hon./Major, congratulations sir!

All you baseball players get in shape for the game against the Officers on pay night and from the non-players, let's have some support from the sidelines.

Once more, --- recruits, recruits, recruits, get them down here and into uniform -- now!!!

* * * * *

Charlie Chatter

Since we last appeared in print, the usual number of changes have taken place in our Coy. We regret losing Capt. Binnie, one of the best, our 2 I/C since last September and who has done a first class job in keeping the "paper warfare" under control. However, with the Queen's visit always in our minds it was decided that Capt. Binnie's administrative talents should be used for the benefit of The Regiment as a whole and so he was posted to the Bn. Orderly Room. We wish him well.

In his place we welcome as our 2 I/C Major David Vass of The Royal Montreal Regiment. Major Vass will be residing in Toronto for a year or two and during that time he will be attached to us - he has even "consented" to wear a kilt! We also welcome Sgt. Eden from D Coy to the fold, and believe his experience will be a definite asset in the months to come.

We congratulate Sgt. Tonks on his well-earned promotion, and we are confident that his long experience in "C" Coy plus his natural leadership tendencies which he has displayed over the last five years will make him an invaluable senior NCO.

We have lost old soldiers L/Cpl. Bowmore, Ptes., Carr, Turpin, Wand, Willinsky owing mostly to pressure of business or other concerns, and we regret seeing them go. Most of them say they will be back to Troop the Colour with us, and we shall look forward to having them with us then. Good luck!

Recruiting has been proceeding apace, and we are pleased to welcome back to "C" Company, Pte. Ed Broughton, and Pte. Butryn, together with new recruits LeBlanc Wilson, and Bill Birnie. Pte's LeBlanc and Wilson are both World War II veterans and Pte. Bill Birnie is the brother of Jr. N.C.O. Course candidate, Pte. Andy Birnie.

#7 Platoon News

The year is underway once more, all the party going and festivities are over and its back to soldiering for most #7 Pl. members. We've had a few changes, lost a couple, gained a couple. A big welcome back to C Coy for Ed Broughton who has been posted to #7 Pl. We're all happy to see Cpl. Tonks get a well-deserved promotion to Sgt. Congratulations to him for his hard work.

#7 Platoon is producing a great deal of N.C.O. material in L/Cpl. Rands, Ptes. Birnie, Conway, Matthews and Stringer, all of whom are on the Jr. N.C.O. Course, and who we are counting on not to let us down, and prove which Coy is the best by finishing top of the course!

Drill is starting to improve as we work back into the groove. We are confident that Platoon and Coy strength will start to grow by leaps and bounds as there is a "Hot" Contest on for recruiting. Top prize is a NEW TAILORED TO MEASURE HONEST TO GOODNESS BRAND SPANKING NEW SET OF BLUES! Our aim naturally is the best guard on the Troop which is insured by the go-go-go power of "C" Coy.

Anybody reading this article and desires to be in a top flight platoon and Coy are welcomed to our group with enthusiasm.

#8 Platoon News

#8 Pl. which is the "recruit" platoon of "C" Coy would like to welcome a new man to the Coy, Sgt. Eden, from "D" Coy. We feel that Sgt. Eden will help immensely in all phases of our training and we're glad to have him aboard.

Our goal in #8 Platoon this year is to have every man now in the platoon promoted to the advanced platoon by Christmas, 1959. We also know that there is no reason why this cannot be done.

Now comes the time for a little "Back Patting". Anyone who was at our Christmas Party will have to agree that it was the largest party the 48th have seen in quite awhile. We did not set any limit as to how many people could come, but for our next party we will sell just a specified number of tickets. This is because it is nearly as bad having too many guests, as it is to have too few!

We're always hearing how well the platoon is "coming along", however, we mean this sincerely. We have noticed a definite improvement in dress and deportment - even Pte. Stork (when he's in uniform) has fairly gleamed on parade. When four members of the platoon (no names - no pack drill) learn what is meant by "By the right" and "By the left" we will have made a really great stride forward. Anyway it's rolling now, let's keep it that way!

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No Telephone? Sandy joined a golf club and was told by the professional that if his name was on his golf-balls and they were lost, they would be returned to him when found.

"Good" said the Scot, "put my name on this ball."

The pro did so.

"Would you also put M.D. after it?" said the new member. "I'm a doctor."

The pro obeyed.

"There's just one more thing," went on the Scot. "Can ye squeeze on 'Hours 10 to 3' as well?"

Support Company Highlights

Since our last report Support Coy has participated in the Honour Guard at the Royal Winter Fair, enjoyed an active week-end at Meaford sponsored the Annual Al Turner Memorial Shoot at Winona and relaxed at our Annual Dinner Dance.

The Meaford Shoot was a particular success, the Anti-Tank Gun, MG and Mortars were demonstrated and fired by all personnel. The meals were excellent and food plentiful and Collingwood was most hospitable, especially to those with P.O.M.C.

The Al Turner Memorial Shoot was held at Winona on December 6, 1958. It was a very cold, blustery week-end but enjoyed thoroughly by all. The full credit going to Sgt. Gillam and his Committee. The weather chilled everyone to the bone but the brisk rundown ensured good appetites and warmth for a short period. Our thanks to the Service Corps for their gigantic turkey dinner. The Coy marksmen were Maj. Lowndes, 2/Lt. Green, and our new social committee president, Cpl. Gilmore.

Our annual dinner dance was held on the 13th February of this year in the canteen.

The Committee under L/Cpl. Manson did a great job too bad the champagne ran out!

The following men have been promoted in the Coy.

Cpl. Turner to L/Sgt.; Cpl. White to L/Sgt.; L/Cpl. Gilmore to Cpl.; Pte. Mortenson to L/Cpl.; Pte. Stanley to L/Cpl. and Pte. Mellier to L/Cpl.

Welcome back Cpl. Brooks and Pte. Harry Dixon who have been active force for the last three years. Cpl. Turner transferred to "D" Coy and Cpl. Appleton formerly of "D" Coy is now with the MC Pl.

The following men are actively engaged in the Jr. N.C.O.s Course, and from what we hear are finding it rather strenuous.

Ptes. Anderson, Bissel, Chambers, Gray, Zepper, Leslie, Rose, Stanley, Turner, Williams, Young, and Cpls. Brooks and Rankine.

We trust they will not only pass but stand up at the top of the class.

The Coy has been working hard to be chosen as a Guard for the Presentation Ceremony in June. Naturally, as the best Coy in the Bn., it is expected by all that we will again be to the right of the line, however, everyone in the Coy will have to work very hard to maintain this position and standard.

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Shooting

No notes have been written on this subject for some considerable time, there is a fair amount of ground to cover.

Let us mention first that, after a lapse of several years, the Regiment once again entered two teams in the Ontario Rifle Association Meet which was held at Camp Borden last fall. To the surprise of no one - in the Regiment--both teams did exceptionally well; the "A" team being placed first out of all the Militia teams competing and fifth in the whole shoot. Considering there was a field of over thirty teams, this was no mean feat. (Apart from the fact that a certain Sergeant Major, with moustache bristling, was overheard saying "Any Support Company member of the team who does not score 98 out of 100 will be liquidated", no undue "persuasion to shoot was necessary.

The two teams consisted of Major Lowndes, O/C Brown, C.S.M. Jones, Cpl. Snow, Cpl. Turner, T.S.M., Cpl. Turner, W.B., Cpl. Gilmour, L/Cpl. Rands, Pte. Tomlin and Piper Scott.

In the small bore field, the Rifle Association is going great guns every week-end and anyone in the Regiment who is interested in firing will be made very welcome in spite of the increasing lack of boys.

In getting back to the large bore, it is again hoped to send at least two teams to the O.R.A. Shoot but to make sure of winning the whole shoot outright this year, we must have practice, practice and more practice. It is hoped that we will be able to go to Winona at least two Saturday mornings every month from April on. More than practice, however, we need shots, so will anyone who is interested please contact O/C J. A. Brown who will give you all details of where, when, how, etc.

What Would You Do?

1. You are on patrol with a party of 38 Lord Strathcona's near Standerton, South Africa on July 5th, 1900. Your group comes into contact with an enemy force of 80 becomes heavily engaged at close quarters. The order to retire is given and after retreating several hundred yards you look back and notice that a trooper has had his mount shot from under him and is lying on the ground. What would you do?

2. You are a platoon sergeant with the 1st BN, Queens Own which is launching an attack on Mooshof, Holland, in 1945. Your platoon objectives are enemy strongpoints in three farmhouses. With two tanks, your platoon attacks the houses but you are twice beaten back, suffering very heavy casualties and platoon commander killed. There are only four survivors beside yourself and the positions must be taken. What would you do?

Answers:

1. Here is what Sergeant Richardson did. Even though his own horse was wounded, he rode back under a heavy cross-fire to within 300 yards of the enemy and picked up the trooper who had been wounded in two places. With the man lying across the front of the weak mount, they galloped back to safety. For this act of heroism the Sergeant was awarded the Victoria Cross.

2. Would you have done as Sgt. Aubrey Cosens did? He at once assumed Command of the platoon and placing the 4 surviving members of the platoon in a position to cover him he dashed across open ground under heavy mortar and shell fire to the one remaining tank. He took up an exposed position on the front of the turret and directed its fire. After beating off further enemy counter attacks Sgt. Cosens ordered the tank to attack the farm buildings while the 4 men followed in close support. The tank rammed the first building and Cosens entered it alone and killed several defenders and took the rest prisoner. Single-handed he then entered the second and third buildings and personally killed or captured all the occupants although under intense machine gun and small arms fire. A few minutes later Sgt. Cosens was shot through the head by an enemy sniper and he died almost instantly. Through these heroic efforts Sgt. Cosens undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his comrades. He was awarded the V.C. posthumously.

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A Directory of The Old Comrades' Association:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|
| President - J. (Jim) Lawrie | HO 6 5503 | Secretary - W.B.(Wally)Moore | HO 5-2032 |
| I.P.P. - W. K. (Bill) Ross | HU 1-0514 | Treasurer - George Lovegrove | LE 5-0543 |
| Vice-Pres.- J.(Jim) Brannan | HU 3-7911 | Marshal - M. J. Tracy | AM 1-4711 |

Executive Members:-

- | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Dickie Boyle | John Coulson | Ken Craig | Art Johnson | Sam Leake | Joe McPhail |
| Bob Nicholson | | | | | |

Representative to Army Benevolent Fund:

- Jim Brannan - HU 3-7911

House Committee:-

- Joe McPhail - WA 1-3629 2 i/c Ken Craig

Sick Committee:-

- Sam Leake - HO 5-8483

Membership Committee:-

- John Coulson -PA 7-5323 2 i/c Art Johnson

Entertainment Committee:-

- Dickie Boyle AM 7-7763 2 i/c Hugo Goldberg

Sports Committee:-

- Bob Nicholson HO 3-4647

Club Manager - Commissioner of Oaths & Affidavits

Mr. Harry Shepherd WA 2-4876

Assistant Manager - Mr. Howard Anderson

General Meetings - Second Thursday of each month except June, July and August.

"PATRONIZE YOUR CLUB"

The following ladies will be conducting the affairs of your Ladies Auxiliary this year:-

President	- Barbara Noyes	I.P.P.	- Dorothy Shepherd
Vice	- June Wood	Sec.	- Helen Munro
Treas.	- Mrs. O. Sutherland		
Exec.	- May Shepherdly, Thelma DuSomme, Margaret Hobson, Rena Wilson, Ethel Willcocks, Gert Willcocks and Evelyn Stillwell.		

An Important Announcement of The I.O.D.E.

A busary has been set up by the 48th Chapter of The I.O.D.E. - to assist in a child's education. If any member of the Club or Regiment qualifies please give your name to the manager or contact Mrs. Whiteacre of the I.O.D.E.

The Man At Shrapnel Corner -- from The Veterans' Advocate for December, 1958.

One of the strange ways of fighting men is their proclivity to start living in the past, the moment the guns are stilled. The troops of the 1st Canadian Division did not realize this would be a permanent habit for the rest of their lives, as they marched through the picturesque Ardennes country in early December, 1918. They were refighting old battles at every halt; it helped them control their frustration. Instead of going home at war's end they were marching east, into Germany.

The Highlanders crossed the Belgian-German border, went over the Rhine on the Cologne Bridge to the lifting lilt of "The Campbells are Coming", and were settled into the monotony of all garrison troops well before Christmas.

Perhaps it was because it was Christmas Eve that the conjecture arose to unprecedented heights in their German billets about The Man at Shrapnel Corner. It was an old controversy in the battalion. It had its birth on a particularly evil night in the Ypres Salient.

Was it a spirit, was it just a man -- was it Christ -- who had appeared at Shrapnel Corner to usher them safely through?

"M-m-m-myth!" stuttered an unrepentant Sassenach, for the hundredth time since that strange episode of June, 1916.

"You don't ken for sure" protested Serjeant Angus Campbell, a strange thing for him to say, for he used to scorn any hint that there was something supernatural about it, let alone a Christlike manifestation.

"M-m-m-myth!" insisted The Stutterer from long habit. He was the 2-i.c.

"I don't know", said Colonel Scott, who also had been there.

Sassenach and Scotch Presbyterian, atheist and agnostic, Roman Catholic and Jew --all the believers and unbelievers of the Battalion--had discussed it around a hundred dugout braziers. It had entered their conversation persistently. All down their long war road--the Somme, Lens, Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, Passchaendale (when they went up the Lille Gates road out of Ypres to take another look at Shrapnel Corner), Amiens, Canal du Nord, and on to Mons -- the controversy had recurred again and again.

The Man at Shrapnel Corner always went with them -- in their talk and in their minds.

Here is a flash-back of the manner of it. . .

The roads lead out of Ypres spoke-wise. There is one cobbled way which leaves the old Flemish city via the Lille Gate, and which soon comes to Shrapnel Corner. It leads on to St. Eloy and Lille, but the Highlanders were only interested in one deadly stretch of it, the area which includes the corner where a road starts up to Transport Farm and then turns toward Zillebeke. Beyond Transport Farm lies the Railway Cut, Maple Copse, Mont Sorrel, Hill 60 (metres above the sea), and the rest of the blood-marked battle names around the protruding loop of the Ypres Salient.

As No. 1 Company of the Highlanders came across country to Shrapnel Corner by following the narrow-gauge track from Dickebusch way, they knew from previous rough Salient nights that there was no way of escaping the dangerous Corner; its gauntlet had to be run. There was always a Red Cap on duty, perhaps the dirtiest job the Military Police were given during the war.

There was a hold-up tonight, and they went to ground, nervously sniffing the sharp stench of cordite from the last salvo of heavies.

They heard the M.P. acridly explaining to an expostulating driver: "Nah, it's not t' save yer dommed carcass that I'm holdin' yu' here...I wants t' play bloody marbles with yu'...you ! !..... !"

Wandering in the backlines of the Salient seemed to produce hard language. The Highlanders had heard unseen men swearing brilliantly and fearfully in the night, and a few regimental characters considered the exhaustion, frustration, hazards and labours of life in the Ypres Salient had made them so proficient as profane tongue-strafters that they had no equals in the Army. They certainly had not heard the equal of Red Cap Murphy. They later said they learned six entirely new expressions, before the M.P. had taken a breath. It was hard on honest infantrymen who had thought their vocabulary of revilings was full.

Red Cap Murphy had done traffic duty at this most dangerous route out of Ypres through many long weary weeks, when horses, mules and men were impatient and restless and the evenings anxious. A mild man would have been useless. The road out of the Lille Gate was a cobbled highway to be shunned, and one that man and beast wished to get behind them swiftly. Few of them wanted to obey a hold-up order, which was probably only avoiding a congestion, and to keep the night traffic rolling.

It was the M.P.'s duty to try to outguess the senders of the screaming nine-point-tvos which were wont to end their hurtling rush dead on the corner, with a shattering crash, a cloud of acrid fumes and a clatter of falling cobbles, mud, men, and, often mule - or horse-flesh.

Fritz was a methodical gunner and at night could be depended upon to send over his packages with nearly exact intervals between. This helped mightily. The police had today stopped all movement on the road during daylight, for that bit of cobble was timed to a nicety and under the eyes of Hill 60 O. Pips.

Tonight the traffic could not pick up speed; the shells were coming with a quicker regularity. Everything was backed up--shell limber ration transports, files of carrying parties, and infantry going up to relieve units in the front-line.

Some infantrymen were trying to skirt the Corner, by heading toward the line from Woodcote Farm and Bedford House, but the Highlanders had to take the Corner. The extra mileage would exhaust them; they were loaded with U-frames, and corrugated iron for trench repairs. They soon knew they should have been packing Mills and ammunition for the Lewis gunners, not supplies for the engineers.

It looked like a long, nervous wait; a single limber or a single section were all that was going through at a time.

It had been a bad week, and during the afternoon the enemy had smashed into the C.M.Rs. The Germans holding the line about Hill 60 had suddenly surprised with a strong local attack in the neighbourhood of Sanctuary Wood. The Highlanders had been trying all evening to piece together the garbled accounts coming back with the stragglers and wounded. No one seemed to know how far the German had penetrated, but all knew that it was no ordinary flurry for the roads about Ypres had been under a veritable storm of fire from the moment it darkened in the later afternoon. The Germans were trying to catch reinforcements and supplies coming up.

Waves of quivering orange light flooded the night horizon over Hill 60, deepening now and then to a livid, viciously pulsing red. The roll of gun-fire around the whole Loop of Hate was more intense than the Highlanders had ever known it to be.

As the Highlanders still waited in the ditches, they were entertained by the prolonged exchange of pleasantries between the Red Cap and the artillery driver, who had sneered about Murphy's bomb-proof job, his dubious parentage, and had passed other blasphemous insults in the shell-resonant night. Murphy retorted with pithy sentences regarding any dommed son-of-a she dog who would play nurse-maid to a pair of lousy flea-bitten mules and still call himself a sojer.

He let the driver through, and 200 feet up disaster caught the two shell-limbers and left them in a shambled clutter of dead men and mules and smashed vehicles. The debris blocked the road. Sgt. Jock MacAllister led out a section of his platoon of Highlanders to clear it, and the numbing screams of another salvo of 5.9s ended their crescendo on top of them.

Then a vertiable holocaust of fire fell on the Corner. This was not mere back-line harassing fire. It was obliteration.

Capt. Tom Scott still swore at the end of the war that on no occasion had he experienced such a concentration of fire. Only his No. 1 Company was trapped under it, but within minutes the survivors of the first smashing inferno knew only a miracle would get them out of the stricken area unless by some luck the shelling was called off by German command. They did not dare stand upright, or move into the open, even to race to the rear.

There was one unexpected lull, for a moment or two, but not long enough to try to help the wounded, or count the killed. They heard the rising moan of another wave of huge shells, destruction bent. They came roaring--spattered into the road, dead centre, in spurting splashes of crimson light. Red Cap Murphy's bellow was stilled forever; his helmet, with a red mess in the basin of it, went spinning into the ditch beside Capt. Scott. A shell hit behind the Captain and killed three Highlanders. One was his batman. A second, a newly arrived subaltern, was his brother.

A shell-shocked Highland sergeant went running up the road in great pounding strides, screaming. He fell over a man crawling on the road -- and then went headlong into the pain-crazed heels of a mule, lashing agony.

The obliterating fire went on and on. It spread, encompassing the whole congested area of blocked night traffic. In swift successive crashes they hurtled in, and through the flashes the shocked Highlanders glimpsed a driverless limber, high on the off-bank of the built-up ditch, struggling over. Another with the driver still aboard, but dead and slowly falling, was taking to the fields at the left and careening off at a tangent.

They saw these things, but were not aware of it until long afterwards. For now the miracle happende.

They saw a figure in the heart of the shambles, with his arm raised in supplication, or entreaty--or was it protest? They were not sure. Capt. Scott later said in confidence to the Chaplain that the figure's arm was making a peremptory gesture of command.

He seemed to be defying death--a vague, straight figure, etched against the livid walls of the war-night. He was at the exact spot where Red Cap Murphy always stood. He was not directing traffic; there was none; it was smashed and scattered. More than one Highlander later vowed he was directing the shells.

They had suddenly stopped. All around them the night sky continued to be shot with lurid splashes of light, and there was no pause in the deep-toned roar of the concentrated German guns. But no shell now fell on Shrapnel Corner.

In the strange, aching silence, the moans of wounded, the jabber of a shell-shocked man, the whimpering cries of a dying horse that were like the sounds a terror-stricken child makes, could be heard with sudden, sharp loudness.

In the awful weariness that follows strain, a handful of Highlanders gratefully saw field ambulance men arriving. They got to their feet, and then stumbled slowly back to Scottish Lines. They were shocked men, oddly silent.

One man swore the figure at the crossing with upraised, commanding arm was shrouded in a spirit-like vapour--which may only have been swirling smoke from the shell-bursts, or the wraiths of mist that always rise at night in these Flemish lowlands. But the man shortly left the Highlanders for a mental hospital, so his evidence was inconclusive.

Before the Highlanders realized it was happening, The Man at Shrapnel Corner had taken on the importance of the story about the Angels of Mons, which has been variously attributed to night mists, battle smoke, and figments of the imaginations of men under great strain. The jeers of rivals in the estaminets of Reninghelst, Vlamertinge, Ypres and the other Belgian back-line towns, were hard to bear. ("The bloody Highlanders had the wind-up so high they saw ghosts.") They were in danger of being permanently dubbed the Shell-Shocked Scots after Sgt. Jock MacAllister gave his verdict. He had survived the dash to clear the road of debris just before the intense bombardment came down on Shrapnel Corner. Born in Scotland, he was a Roman Catholic, who had made a habit of ducking both the R.C. Padre and his confessional. His great pal in the Battalion was Angus Campbell, who came from a family of what he called "Black Presbyterian." (He had read the entire Bible by the time he was nine.) Angus taxed Jock about the Man at Shrapnel Corner.

Jock said just one simple word: "Christ."

"Ye're daft," snorted Angus in deep disgust.

"Besides, yon's blasphemy,"

Jock refused to argue, which enraged Angus, who dubbed him Spook MacAllister.

But it was noticeable that Angus stopped baiting Jock when he suddenly became the most devout R.C. in the Canadian Corps. (Jock was killed at Passchaendale, and Angus was badly wounded trying to drag him out of the mud to the Plank Road. It was just up the road from Shrapnel Corner.)

Capt. Scott was neither religious nor superstitious, but in the following days, as the episode was discussed more and more he took to withdrawing more and more from conversation about it. He said this:

"A man was there. I saw him. He seemed to be immune. The shelling stopped--strangely and suddenly. That's all I know," he told the Colonel, whom he was one day to succeed.

"Just a damned dream," was the R.S.M.'s decree.

"Hysteria," decided the M.O.

"A b-b-bloody m-m-myth!" exclaimed "The Stutterer," who was then the Transport officer.

Capt. Scott said slowly: "I don't know..."

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