The Townships Sun

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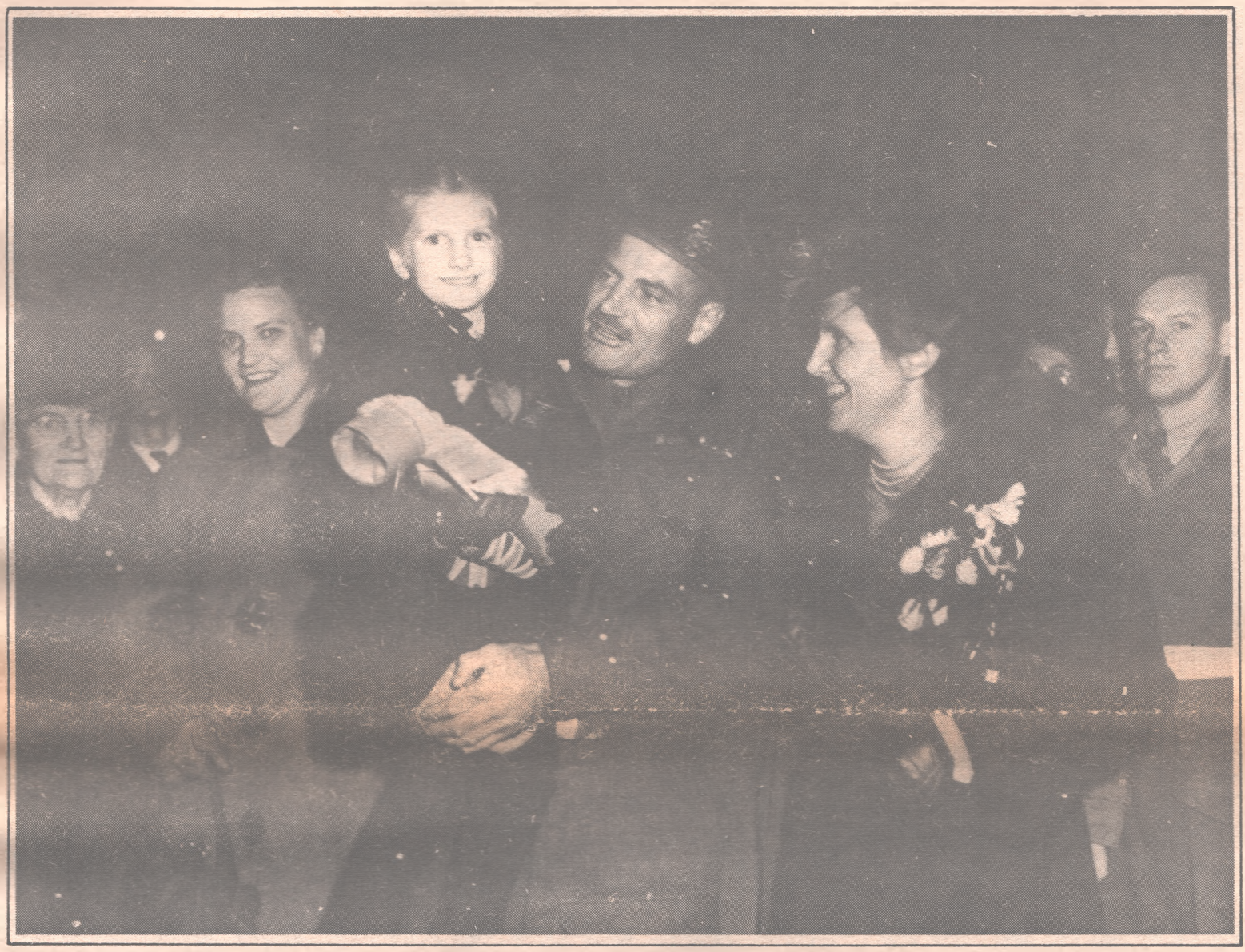
November, 1976



LEST WE FORGET

Special Remembrance Day Issue

War in a
Rear-view Mirror-
the Literature of War
by Ronald Sutherland

The Heroes of Hong Kong
by Bernard Epps

Interviews

and more

Homecoming, 1945, Everett Denison back from Hong Kong P.O.W., his mother, sister, daughter, wife and a guard.

Lest We Forget

First wounded picked up in France- June 6, 1944

These are words we often hear and yet the war experience is already 30 years behind most of us, more than a lifetime for young people. We cannot remember what we have never heard - it is not only the facts and figures that should be remembered, but the personal experiences, and those have not been often heard.

But why be concerned with it all? War is best forgotten, some might protest. But the personal war experience for those at home and abroad is still important. The war left its effect, an unforgettable one on their lives and on those of their children.

We want to reveal what people experienced, and perhaps in doing so to better understand what people are capable of, in war times, in times of crisis - what life is like under severe and trying conditions.

We learned about this **and** more, talking to veterans, other folks, all over the Townships. We found out that many people wanted to talk about and share their war experiences. We heard stories that had never been told before, still vivid to the teller, but silenced over the years. Some would say they remembered nothing of war, it was so long ago, and then it would come back: we would laugh with them, listen to them soberly, and then there were times when we shared their suffering with tears... a beloved brother killed, a tale of death in a veteran's diary. -

This could not leave us unaffected. We feel warm that so many people contacted us at random, opened their hearts. We feel closer yet to the people of the Townships, to all people - it is somehow encouraging that people can go through such experiences and that life goes on, at least for those who survived.

For those of us who did the interviews which follow, the intensity of war, its good and bad moments, have become part of our lives. We were not born then, but the front lines, the blitzing of England seem not too far removed. We can see now London with the eery high altitude balloons floating overhead, the bombed-out buildings below and the city residents bravely going about their lives, or on the continent, the comradery of uncertainty found among those fighting. The Hong Kong veterans - has any group of people endured more?

The Townships, food scarce, young men gone to war, work still going on at the factories and farms.

And what then is war besides these images?

How did those involved feel about it? Most, that it had to happen, the war had to happen, everything had to happen. Whether it should have to is another matter. It is hard to accept the individual suffering, that it had to happen too.

We cannot and should not go on too much here. These interviews speak for themselves. We do not hold this to be a complete picture of the war, which is comprised of countless seemingly random happenings. And we did not seek out only heroes to tell their story. We apologize here for those we missed who excelled in bravery - each person in the war, at home or in the forces, becomes heroic in a way, dealing with whatever fortune threw in their path.

Our Apologies

And so, our apologies to the people we missed. We started out on this issue with no idea of how it would turn out. We had lists of hundreds of names of people to interview, all over the Townships. We wanted to interview some from each community, from each Legion Branch, about many different aspects of their memories from the war years. But the job was too big for us, and so countless people who could have been interviewed were left aside. Time, money and energy simply ran out on us. It was a big war.

We would like to continue collecting the memories of the people of the Townships- if only to put on file or donate to Townships historical archives. So feel free to write to us, Box 420, Waterville, P.Q., telling us the stories we missed- your stories. Whether on the home front or at war, your memories are as important as anyone else's in the collective history of our community.

TOWNSHIPS SUN 819—837—2864

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Mobilization on the Home Front

Industry and Labour go to War

by Leslie Roberts

from Canada's War in the Air published in 1942

To an aircraft industry with growing pains, centred in plants from coast to coast, from Amherst, Nova Scotia, in the east to Vancouver on the Pacific, with its swelling production of Elementary Trainers, Advanced Trainers, Fighters and Bombers, land machines and waterborne craft, the whole structure of Canadian commerce contributes in a great outpouring of raw materials, component parts and Bits and Pieces. But this is not the sum of the record of the contribution of lathe and bench. Canadian industry and Canadian workers have united, behind them the men of science and the men of management, to bring forth from an industrial structure in no wise created for such tasks the innumerable thousands of parts which, when added together, become Fighter, Bomber or Trainer. They have made the tools. They have equipped the aerodromes. They have supplied Canada's fighting airmen with virtually their every need.

Let us look around and see some of the things which have been done...

In a little town in southern Quebec a small metal works stood before the war beside a C.P.R. branch-line siding. From it came a few oil-burners, a fistful of household metal gadgets of one sort and another. Each Saturday a handful of village families drew the pay envelopes, the contents of which supported a large part of the community. Today the metal-working plant is a roaring hive of industry, acting as a main feeder for another and much larger establishment which stands in a clearing in the woods, midway between Waterloo and an adjacent hamlet. The new plant represents a strange appearance to uninformed passerby. It is a town of hutments, raised high above the snowline and the stumps, its cabins separated from one another by distances not far short of city-block lengths. Specific safety factors dictated the mode of construction of this hurriedly built town between towns. Should something unexpectedly go bang in one of these hutments, the chance is extremely good that the explosion would not extend beyond the walls within which it happened, the fire can be localised, that no great loss of life or limb would ensue. For these villagers of two years ago - men and women who toiled around farmsteads, who guided the plow, who milked the cow and fed the chickens - today are expert in the production of the pyrotechnics of warfare. Because of the jobs they are doing in their strange new plant and in the pre-war metal-works 'down street' strange warlike events are happening in the far-flung corners of Christendom...

So did the people of one small Canadian town join their country's war-in-the-air under their pre-war boss, Macdonald of the metal works, to support the lads of the town who had left to fight at sea, on land or in the air, by tackling on of the real danger jobs of industrial front warfare. Strange work for a farmer's lass? Yes. But what is happening between Waterloo and its neighbour-village is a story which can be told today of a hundred, of five hundred, Canadian villages and towns between these two oceans, not in terms of pyrotechnics for this is an operation **sans pareil**, but in the production of ten thousand things essential to the air war.

All the lights were on

I was working in World War I for the government telephone in Saskatchewan and in the Naval School. Just at the tail end of it, because I was just a teenager then. In the Second War, the government called me, they wanted me to go in the Air Force, because I had a commercial license to fly. But I was working for Southern Canada Power and they wouldn't let me go. They said if I went they would arrange to have me discharged and they would bring me back. They figured the work I was doing for the power company was essential to the war effort.

We started the rural electrification here during the war. There weren't enough people to run the farms, so they decided to provide electricity to make the farms work easier. We had about ten men around here wiring houses. We electrified Moe's River, St. Edwidge, and filled in between the towns.

But we couldn't install any electric meters. The bearings for the meters were made in Germany, so of course we couldn't get any. We put in power with no meters and just charged a flat rate. You could drive through the country at night and see everything all lighted up, even the barns. After the war we started putting meters in, all the lights went out.

There was a lot of good times in spite of the bad times. The golf course in Waterville - we ran that through the war with ten members. The members would work for free to maintain it. We had a lot of fun doing it.

And for the town - in the council, if we had a project to do for the town, different ones would work on it and not expect to get paid. Today they won't do that.

Gerry Miltimore
Compton (formerly of Waterville)

Friends for life

I was in the Service Corps. I wasn't overseas. I was stuck here, with the troop trains and prisoners of war. And the war brides coming back, they didn't drive me crazy, but they made my hair white.

One thing that is important, in the war I made friends that I kept for life. That's really something. Some come all the way from Vancouver to visit us. You look at some of these boys you used to know when they were kids. You see the fat bellies and the bald heads on them, you don't believe it's the same people.

There are a lot of them dying off now. They're not sick very long before they die. Most of them just seem to get tired, and they just quit. They don't hold on at all. The worst thing for an old man is the rocking chair. You sit in the thing and you just never get out of it. I have one but I don't use it. I'll be 71 in December and I keep active. There are very few of them keep as active as I do.

Leslie Jordan
Cowansville

Civilian support: The Rand

There was a year when I worked at Canadian Ingersol Rand. I was time-keeping. They employed girls on the machines, you see. When these girls first came in, the majority of them were French, some of them were very nice but some of them were just impossible. There was one, she wasn't so young, I never heard a man use such language as she did. There were two old men still working at the Rand. They'd been there a long time. They're both dead now. They resented these women coming in. You see the men were all joining up and the women were hired for the jobs.

Name withheld
Lennoxville

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Townships Life During the War

The Car Line

Many lines of business were rationed during the war, particularly the car line. You had to have coupons to buy everything. Gas and tires were rationed. Customers had to have a government permit to buy a tire. You had to have a job or position that showed you needed a car on the road. For war effort you could get all the permits you needed, but not for pleasure. It was also difficult to get materials such as copper and brass. They were being used to make shells or something for the war. Just like now, they didn't want the public to spend a lot of gasoline for nothing. They were always enticing you to buy victory bonds. 'Give your money to the government.'

Automobile Dealership
Sutton

A lot of will power

My husband was overseas from 1939 until the end of the war. Since he returned he has been going back and forth to the hospital. He has had ulcers and then when we were living on the farm he took a severe stroke. He was young to have such a bad stroke but they blamed it on the war. Anyway he came out of it with a lot of will power but life wasn't that easy.

Mrs. Wells Bishop
Sawyerville

People of the Townships

A war makes work. When the war started, that finished the depression.

We had to do all we could with raising food and we sure listened to the war news on the radio everyday. It was Winston Churchill's speeches: we thought he was a wonderful man for the times. He was.

An older couple
Lennoxville

Glad to eat

I farmed in Sawyerville. Things was hard. Don't you remember? Could get a man for nothing. Today you can't get a man. In them days there was two men come to my place about twelve o'clock at night and they wanted to know if they could stay all night and I asked my wife and she said, 'If you're not lousy.' So we made up a bed on the floor for them and they stayed there for two years. And I never paid them a cent. They worked for me for nothing. Was glad to eat - it was something to eat. There was plenty of work but no money. A poor man was a damn poor man. We used to go to the grist mill and buy a ton of bran - ninety cents a bag. Pretty cheap stuff. Today its six or seven dollars. It was hard times.

John Jones
Sawyerville

Lining up with lard pails to get soup

We were living in Sherbrooke and things were rationed. Sugar, butter and meat were rationed. Couldn't get as much of it as you wanted. We were probably allowed a half a pound of butter between the whole family. We had two children at that time and we'd save the butter for them and we'd put bacon fat on our toast in the morning so the children could have the butter. You couldn't get safety pins, even for diapers. If you bought underpants they didn't have any elastic - they had buttons and of course if you were walking along the street and your buttons popped, you lost your pants.

Before the war broke out there weren't any jobs and of course people didn't have unemployment insurance. I think things were actually tougher before the war because there just wasn't any work to be had. I know my husband was out of work for quite a while. He'd walk the soles right off his shoes and there just wasn't any work. It was terrible. I know things were so rough that in the fall when there was no money coming in and he couldn't find a job we were living on turnips and potatoes from the garden. That's all we had. We'd have boiled potatoes and turnips for dinner and we'd fry up what was left over for supper. It was really tough. It didn't pick up till the war started. Then the jobs picked up because there was war work to do. They had to make all the machinery. There was some work for the women, but mostly for the men.

After the war was all over a lot of men had a hard time finding work again. The unemployment was very noticeable. You could see people walking up Marquette Hill to a soup kitchen up there. I think it was a French church who was giving out soup. There was no such thing as welfare or any other help. That was the only help there was. I'd see these people all lining up with lard pails to take soup home to their families. People did have it very hard. It was a couple of years before things got back to normal after the war. Funny how you forget about all these things - especially when you're up till late last night babysitting.

We didn't have to see any of the fighting. All we had was the shortages of the things we needed. I didn't notice so much before when I was living at home with my Dad but after I got married I really noticed. My father was a veteran from the first world war and he had his pension coming in every month so things at home weren't so tough. But after I got married it was really rough.

Mrs. O. Harden
Waterville

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High times in Sherbrooke

During the war I worked in the office at Sherbrooke Pneumatic Tool. I was on accounts payable. I worked there until V.E. Day. After the war they cut down to practically a skeleton crew and just closed up and the older employees who had come from the Rand originally went back to the Rand. They were making shells. Eighty percent was female labour, three shifts. There was a lot of work available and the wages were extremely good. They were always good. What we need right now is another war. Things are always booming. Could we start one maybe? You attack me and I'll attack you and we'll get our friends behind us and then everybody wants to get in the act. We were rationed - we had to have coupons for tea and coffee, sugar and butter, our supply was very limited but there was a lot of black market goods available. The connections were through friends.

It was very difficult to buy nylon stockings, we practically wore them only on Sundays to protect them. The U.S.A. didn't have as much trouble with nylon stockings as we did so we'd go across the line and put them in our bras. They must have thought that Canadian women were the bustiest women they had seen. There was a black market for everything that was scarce if you were willing to pay the price. Liquor was rationed. You were allowed so much per month. Most people saved all their coupons and stocked up for Christmas. Beer was not rationed but it was very scarce also. If you were friendly to your neighbourhood grocer he would sell beer to his good customers. There was plenty of clothing. There was a shortage of men.

My husband couldn't join the Air Force because his eyesight was poor, the Navy and Army also refused him. Towards the end of the war he got a call. Then his company, he worked for Southern Canada Power, said if something could prove it would take him two years to learn a certain job that a person could stay on their job. Southern Canada lowered the boom and said he was much too valuable so that fell apart and he never did see any action.

There was a great shortage in Sherbrooke with housing. We had a training school at Windsor for the Air Force. They sent the British pilots over here to be trained. Then we had a large military camp here up in the location of the University of Sherbrooke. There was soldiers billeted at the Sherbrooke fair grounds but normally they came in from Saskatchewan and here and there they were due for embarkation.

There was something very funny. You get a laugh out of people. The young men unmarried were called up first and there was so many of these cowards that were single, figured that if they got married they were home free. One Sunday here in Sherbrooke it was really ridiculous, these marriages going on. If a fellow knew a girl for two days he'd get married so he was protected. At least they thought so. At the Cathedral one Sunday it was like Macy's basement sale, coming in, coming out, about eighty percent of those marriages never lasted. Various jewelery stores were open all day Sunday to supply wedding rings.

This is what I thought was the funniest part of the war. The government did an about face and started calling up the young married men so they got married for absolutely nothing. A friend of mine and I parked our car outside the Bishop's Palace and watched the comings and goings. Those doors were opening and closing all day and well into the night. It got so the jewellers didn't have any more wedding rings so I don't know what they used, a piece of wire for a wedding ring or something. On Monday morning half the girls that were working were wearing a wedding ring.

I can't say we suffered too bad in Sherbrooke because money was rolling in. Merchants could sell anything because there was a shortage of everything. They didn't even have to advertise. If you knew somebody who worked in the store they would reach under the counter and sell you a couple of pair of nylons, even children's stockings were hard to come by. My daughter was small at the time and I had an awful time to get her stockings. Rents were terribly scarce for the simple reason the military men from Windsor were mostly living in Sherbrooke. The ones that were from military camp that were married did not have to live on the premises and they were renting apartments. No landlord would rent to anyone with children and we were in the market for an apartment at the time - the minute you said you had a small child they would say, sorry, no kids. They could get a fantastic price and not have children.

We also had a prisoner of war camp here near the Lennoxville road and the German prisoners used to come down to the St. Francis river and swim and everything. You used to see the prisoners come down and pick up the groceries for the camp at the A&P store and they all had a great big orange moon on the back of their jackets which indentified them as prisoners. A lot of people from Sherbrooke used to go over and entertain them. I believe they were German merchant marines that were prisoners there and a lot of them had good technical knowledge about many things. They repaired lighters and lamps, all things like that. We here in Sherbrooke never looked down on them - tough luck, they got caught, they were prisoners of war, but they were never treated bad, in fact they were darn well off. When it was time to ship them back a lot of them didn't want to go. Some actually stayed. Some were highly educated boys. They liked it here.

They even had dances, girls could come in for the dances. They didn't suffer any hardships. They weren't treated like our boys in the prisoner of war camps in Germany, we were less barbaric. Of course we weren't following Hitler.

None of us suffered any hardships because wages were so good. A lot of people were able to save quite a bit of money. At that time the girls in munitions were making, I think, around sixteen bucks a day. That was damn good money back then.

I remember V.E. Day when I was working at Pneumatic Tool. We kept our radios on and they said the war is over and what anyone was doing they just dropped. We were dancing and hugging in the streets and everything else so they closed up for the rest of the day. Everybody went out and celebrated. The police closed off Wellington Street and there was street dancing. I never saw so many drunks in my life. That evening our plant nurse had been hoarding her liquor for the end of the war when her husband came home from overseas. My husband and I had an invitation to go over to her apartment for the evening and drink so we went over there about 6 o'clock. She had a huge living room but she didn't have enough furniture so we're all sitting on the floor knocking back the booze. The door bell rings, she opens the door and there is the local parish priest from St. Patrick's church. She didn't bat an eyelash and invited him in, 'Would you care to join us?' He sat on the floor, he didn't have a drink, but he enjoyed himself thoroughly seeing the rest of us make asses of ourselves. Then we all got together with our husbands and we all went down and danced until the wee hours of the morning.

We never had any disaster. I don't think any of the prisoners of war tried to escape. The wildest bunch we ever had here was a regiment from Saskatchewan, I think they got more girls in Sherbrooke pregnant than any of the other camps did in three years. There were a lot of coloured fellows in this Saskatchewan regiment - it was amazing how many coloured babies turned up. But they were wild! They would go down the street on Saturday night and they would turn any tavern upside down and of course the M.P.'s were a little scared because they were big - six feet, six feet two and M.P.'s seemed to get lost about that time.

There were a lot of war songs and war programmes on the radio. One which I remember was called 'L for Lankey', which was a story on the fellows flying the Lancaster bombers and there was a different story on every week. One song was extensively played called 'Lily Marlane' originally sung by Marlene Dietrich in Germany and then translated into English. A band that came to Sherbrooke - the best known orchestra known at that time throughout Canada - was Mart Kenney and his band. That was the most exciting band that came to Sherbrooke. Guest bands came to the White House, a dance hall here. Cab Calloway, his band came. He was **the** thing. The Dorsey Brothers came - we had the best entertainment.

There was a blackout in Sherbrooke every night at midnight. The store windows and all the street lights would go out. We were on Daylight Saving Time all the time to save power. If you didn't get home by midnight, tough luck, because you had no lights on the street. I went to the hairdressers one time. It was just after midnight and I came out of her place - total darkness. I was living up on Wellington North, and I thought to myself, my God, how am I ever going to get home. I saw a man coming along with a flashlight. It was the local constable out on the beat, so I had him walk me home to my door. There was nobody afoot on the street after midnight, unless you carried a lantern.

During the war years, the style in ladies clothing, the shoes and everything, were all exactly the same style as today. If I had them now I could wear them - the web shoes, the high platforms, those were the styles from the 30's and 40'S. I could kick myself for having thrown them all away.

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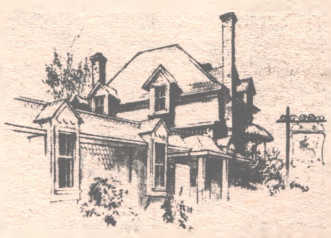

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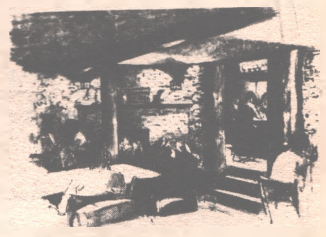

World War I

A Gun and a Six Horse Team

It was a tough one. I was in France in 1914, two days before a shot was fired. The Germans were prepared before we were. They were lying waiting for us in France. Half the time we didn't know where they were.

Sometimes you'd get plenty to eat and the next time you'd get nothing. The road would get blowed up and the rations couldn't get through and oh times were horrible. Rations were brought up on pack saddles.

We finished up in the Balkans, in the Greek interior. I fired the shot, well I think it was our gun, that killed Mussolini and Hitler. They were hiding in a dugout with two or three more officers.

We were generally two miles behind the front line. The guns were ranged. Ours could fire six miles. I handled all the guns in action from the sixteen pound to the sixty pound ones. One night I went galloping through the front line with a gun and six horse team to drive them back. They had to fall back.

We were fighting against Bulgars, Germans, Italians and Greeks. The Russians you couldn't trust - we didn't know what they were doing. They were just sitting waiting to see what was going to happen.

Army Gunner
World War One
Sutton

4700 casualties out of 5400

I was one of the first to enlist in the fifth Canadian Mounted Rifles in Sherbrooke in February, 1915, and I am one of the few remaining members. I think there are seven of us left now. We had an association of the C.M.R.'s that met in Sherbrooke every fall on the third Saturday of September until about two years ago, then our members got too small, so we disbanded. But we still have a small group that meets. I think this year there were eight of us.

I was in the trenches in Belgium in the fall of 1915. Lots of mud and lice and rats. I was there until the end of 1916, then I went back to England to get my commission. Then in 1917 I was with the field artillery in France, until the end of the war and then I went into the army of occupation.

Any man who goes through a war and says he isn't frightened is crazy. He's lying. I didn't think about getting killed, though, it doesn't do you any good. If you're going to get it, you're going to get it. That's Presbyterian pre-destination, although I'm an Anglican.

I remember Christmas communion, taken in a barn just behind the lines in 1915, by Padre Scott. We had already had some casualities. And by the next Christmas, we had a lot of casualities.

There were some very alarming times - June 2, 1916, I'll never forget that morning. It was the Battle of Sanctuary Wood. It was the heaviest bombardment that we had ever encountered. Most of our casualities were from shells. They were coming in on us fifty shells per minute, sometimes more. We went into that battle 700 strong, and after the battle there were 186 of us. A lot of our men from Bishop's University died that day.

We had a lot of casualities in the fifth C.M.R.'s. There were 700 of us went over in 1915, and as men were killed, they replaced them with new recruits. By the end of the war, 5,400 men had passed through our battalion. Of those 5,400, there were 4,700 casualities.

Bishop Robert Waterman
Lennoxville

The Things that Matter

Scene: Loos, during the September offensive Colonel Fritz-Shrapnel receives the following message from 'G.HQ' - 'Please let us know, as soon as possible, the number of tins of raspberry jam issued to you last Friday.'

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One man's story of Two World Wars

In the second World War they sent me down for a month's course at Immigration in Quebec City. The troops that were sent to Hong Kong were stationed there. A fellow on the last truck that day, as they were setting out for Vancouver, said to me, 'Come on along.' I said, 'No thanks.' But I didn't know what was in the wind anymore than anyone else did, so I was glad I didn't go with them.

I was in the services for both wars, oh yes. There was a saying going around that if there was a third World War the only force we could join would be the Salvation Army!

I was born in 1900 and was sixteen when I joined up. The recruiting office was on the corner of King and Wellington in Sherbrooke. There was a candy store where the bank is now. Just below that, over a Chinese laundry, was the recruiting office. Of course, I was under age and I put down on the paper when I was born, but I told the recruiting officer that I was 18 because I

wanted to join up. He laughed at me. He said, 'You can't join up, you're not 18.' I said, 'Sure I'm 18.' So he started to fill out the papers. He said, 'You go up to the exhibition ground, where the battalion is, and see the doctor.'

The platoons of the 117th Eastern Townships Battalion were scattered throughout Quebec. When the exhibition grounds in Sherbrooke were fixed up, sleeping quarters and a mess for the men to eat in, the platoons were brought into Sherbrooke. Training was done there before they moved to Val Cartier Camp.

Well, I went to see the doctor who said I couldn't join because I had varicose veins. I didn't know what that was. He said, 'They're in your legs. If you have them you can't do any long walking. In war time you do a lot of walking.' I went to see my own doctor. He said, 'If you really want to join up go to the Sherbrooke Hospital and I'll operate tomorrow morning.' After the operation, he said, 'You've lost a lot of blood, you can't join up now.' So I worked for a couple of weeks at the C.P. Railway, then I went to my foreman and told him I wanted to join. He laughed in my face too. I wrote to Captain G.E. Smith in Val Cartier (the battalion had moved from Sherbrooke). He wrote back that it was okay and that I was to meet him. When we arrived in Val Cartier everything was packed up and ready to go. I was at Val Cartier camp two days before we went overseas, on the boat 'Empress of Britian'.

We landed in England at Bramshott camp and stayed there about two months before we moved to Seaford camp. We walked from Seaford camp on a Sunday and passed through Brighton and on to another camp called Happy Valley, the Shoreham-by-the-Sea, where we lost our 117th name, changing to the 23rd Reserve Battalion.

In the meantime, they were taking men from the Battalion and sending them to France. When we arrived at the Shoreham camp, all the young fellows were asked to step out, about 20 of us. We were going on a machine gun course. We got off the train and onto the platform where a Sargeant was to greet us. He took one look at us and said, 'I want men, not boys.' We stayed on the platform until the next train came in and were sent back.

Three days later they did the same thing; asked those to step out who wanted to take a signalling course.

Three of us, who used to chum together, took this signalling course. As it happened, we were all on the list of men being sent to France and we were sent to the 24th Battalion, the Victoria Rifles of Canada. I was there for six or seven months, in the front line, back in the reserve line and to what they call the Horse line where everything was to do with the equipment of the men; first aid, guns and the wires, electronic devices I used as a signaller. We had a little box telephone affair we used to put over our ears. We had learned morse code and sophmore - the flags, and the heliograph, a light signalling device from the reflection of the sun.

The first night I was in the front line, the changes were always made in the dark, a shell came over and caught on the telephone wires strung along the trench. It exploded and went in different directions. Then I had to take the wire and follow it down the trench to meet the other fellow and we attached the wires.

The next morning when I looked around I saw we weren't very far from the Germans. A field was between us called No Man's Land. They used to send out raiding parties at night. The men blackened their faces and they'd crawl along, cut their way through barbed wire, get into German trenches and maybe capture one or two and bring them back.

We used to hold the line about ten days, then be relieved by another battalion. Then we'd go out to the horse lines for recreation - basketball or football.

The food wasn't first class, we used to get a little jar of jam that would be divided amongst eight and a loaf of bread divided amongst four and sometimes pork. The best part was that the pork used to be sent up in sacks, all gritty-gritty. And the bully beef in tin cans. We used to try to cook it. Each man in the front lines would cook his own and try to get up some tea at night.

We could never travel in the day because the enemy had big balloons and could watch all that was going on in the rear. We even had an observation plane come over one time. A German plane came over, just like a pigeon would float, looking down at us. There were two men. One put a Lewis machine gun on his shoulder and the other fellow pulled the trigger. You could see the trace of bullets going up underneath the plane, but it must have been reinforced because he just sailed along like a hawk. He didn't do any damage but he was trying to find out what was going on in the rear lines. They wouldn't bomb us in the front line. They used to send some awful big shells - rum jars - just like a big crock or stone jar. They looked like rum jars.

At sixteen years old I didn't realize it, just didn't realize it. I used to belong to the Sherbrooke High School Cadets, but there was nothing serious about it. When you get into the army, you don't realize it, you still have that same feeling. Everybody thought it would be all over in six or seven months. But then they start teaching you bayonette fighting, gas drills and target-hitting. You know that things are beginning to get serious.

One day the commanding officer wanted to see me. He asked me if I would like to go back to England. I didn't care. He said, 'Well, you're going back to England tomorrow.'

The funny part of it was, on the way back I had to stop at Etaples, pass through the Regimental Depot group there, and that was when the Germans bombed all those hospitals. I was sleeping comfortably in the bell tents. When I got up in the morning there wasn't a soul in the tent. After a while they came back and said, 'Why didn't you go with us? Didn't you hear the German bombers last night?' I hadn't. Wounded soldiers and nurses had been killed right there. The next night I heard the German bombers coming and I went with the fellows too. We stayed until the bombing was all over. The next day I went back to England, to the Young Soldiers Battalion. It was a special battalion - they were all under age. This was at Bramshott, where I had first been.

Well, in a little while they sent the whole battalion from Bramshott up to Rhyll in Wales and it was only about a month before Armistice was signed: they put us on a boat and sent us back to Canada.

World War II

It was quiet when I got back. I worked for the railway until 1932, when the crash came down in the United States. I was one of the men laid off. I was unemployed for three years, then I worked for Dominion Textile. The second World War started and I didn't want to go. I had met with an accident at the plant, was on compensation and my wife said, 'I'm not going to let you go back to the plant, you've had three accidents already.' So ironically I said, 'Well I'm joining up.' and I did.

I was sent to Isle of Malingne, in the St. John's area, for about ten months doing guard duty. Then I had an invitation to join up with the works programme which was at Newington Camp here in Sherbrooke, where the German prisoners were. I was there about three years in the woodworking department, where we made tables and crates for ordinance. I had 52 prisoners working with me.

I would certainly say the second World War was more devastating than the first, especially in Germany and England. I understand that our bombers went over there with a vengence when they found out the Germans were bombing London. They went over to Germany with everything they could think of. I don't know what the next war will be like. Russia's just biding their time.

The reunions come to an end...

The 117th was the only Eastern Townships Battalion to leave Canada. The 5th C.M.R. had an argument about that. They left Canada too, but not as a battalion. Mounted Rifles they called them - infantry.

This was a message from our President to the reunion members - 'We are indeed a poor and sickly company and yet we shall, with God's help, work to the end and then rest in Peace.' The secretary, Ed Kingsley, put that on there. Well, we were getting smaller and smaller at our reunions, until there was just the two of us as active members, myself as secretary and Neil Creller from Stanbridge East, as the president. This past summer we talked about old times and went to the services on August 14 at St. Peter's Church in Sherbrooke. That's where our regimental flag-in hanging. We had about $57.00 dollars in the fund which we handed over to the church to help defray the expenses for the cleaning of the flag. The minister, Reverend Franklin, welcomed, at the pulpit, the members of the 117th on the occasion of this last gathering in remembrance. August 14th marks the 60th anniversary of the Eastern Townships Battalion 117th. The members now include Dick Weston, Huntingville, Fred West, Drummondville, Edward Knowles, Spooner Pond, Fred Evans, Bishopton, Charlie Smith and a few more.

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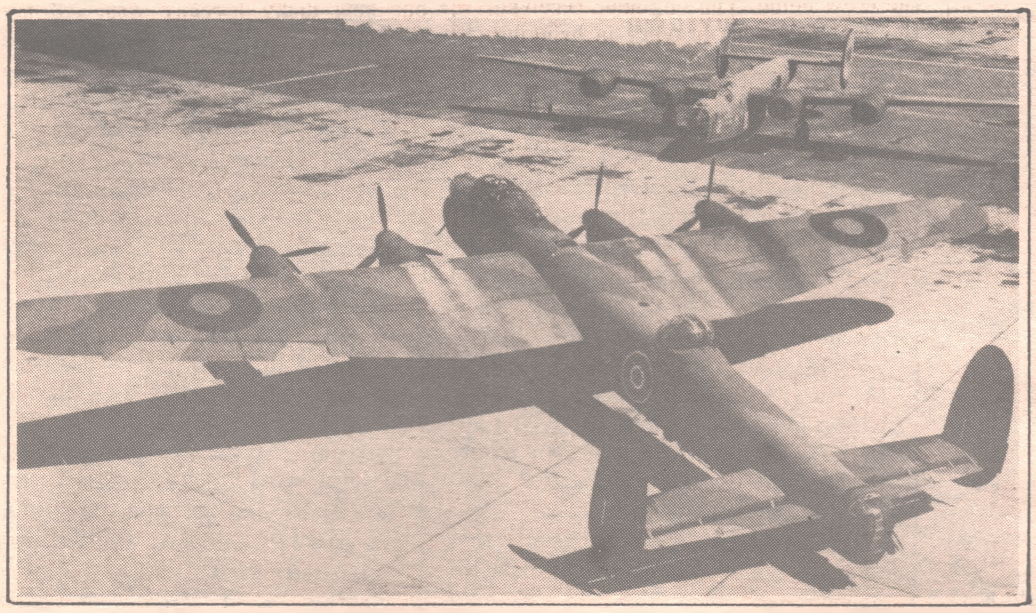


Lancaster Bomber

W.A. Bradley and buddy-

Graduation Class, Mt. Joli. Only 4 returned from War.

The Thrills, the Scares and the Drama of one Canadian Overseas

by W.A. Bradley, Huntingville

It was the year 1939; Canada was picking up after the depression years. Everyone seemed happy. I was a welder at the Union Screen Plate in Lennoxville.

Suddenly we found ourselves at War, as we, Canada, joined England in a war against Germany and their leader Hitler.

Most of my buddies were joining up. All my friends that I used to play hockey with and other sports were departing for England. My mind was made up- Join them!

I had wanted to be a pilot because I had always been interested in flying, but I was twenty-eight years old- although I had tested well, the recruiter said that statistics showed my reflexes would not be as good as those in the 18-25 years. He told me I should be a navigator, but I told him I wanted to be a gunner. I said, 'If you're driving along Ste. Catherines Street in Montreal in a car, one fellow's driving and if you can't drive would you rather be reading a map or sitting in the back seat waiting and watching for something to happen?' So, he said he saw my point, and I became a rear gunner.

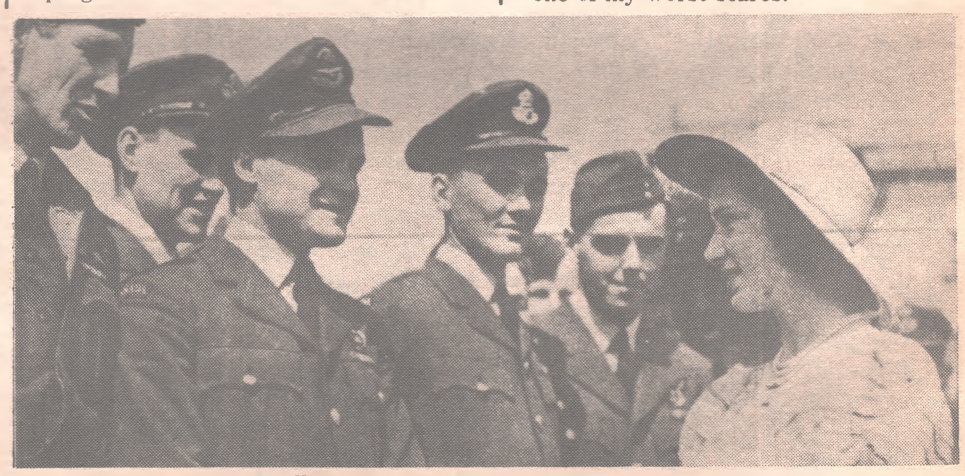
As a Rear Gunner

Soon after enlisting in the Air Force, I found myself overseas. To my suprise I was posted to a Royal Air Force Squadron, Special Duty, 115 Squadron. My skipper was already a Squadron Leader- he had been flying the Sunderland Flying boats in Peacetime. So he really knew the ropes. I felt very happy and secure to serve as his rear gunner.

Our first mission over enemy territory was known as a 'Nickel Raid'- no bombs, just leaflets to be dropped over enemy occupied Paris, France to let the French people know what we were doing in the way of our war effort and progress.

We were then flying the two motored Wellington Bomber, quite a kite in those early days. In fact, it was in one of these Wimpys, as they were affectionately called, that I got one of my biggest scares. We were returned from a gunnery exercise over the Irish seas, we were flying over Wales when our skipper informed the engineer to turn on our reserve gas tank. He sure did, but he turned off the one we were using first, leaving us with no gas for about one minute. We were at 10,000 feet, both of our motors stopped and we dropped 6,000 feet before he got the reserve tank on and the motors restarted. In the meanwhile I sat praying helplessly in the rear turret as the turret was operated by the port motor, now stopped.

We levelled off in a valley with mountains of Wales on both sides and gently began our climb over them. It was then that we all took turns lecturing the engineer on the proper procedure in changing tanks- by the way, he turned out to be our best engineer. That was one of my worst scares.



W.A. Bradley

My greatest thrill was meeting Princess Margaret who visited our Squadron and talked personally with many of us. I thought when I was looking at her (there in the photo), there's the kind of girl I'd like to take out! And she said to us, 'Seeing all you fellows there smiling in uniform makes me wish I was a boy!'

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We soon left the Wellingtons and transferred to the Sterling Bomber or Flying Box Car as they were called. Little did we realize that they were to be used to lay mines in Bordeaux Harbour, France where the Germans had a submarine base. These were laid late at night in the dark, flying at 800 feet over the harbour and gently pushing them out the door to float down by parachute. There they would be nestling in the water in hopes that the German subs would hit them going in or coming out of the harbour.

Some time later we transferred to the King of Bombers, the 4-motored Rolls Royce Lancaster bomber which carried a pay load of 20,000 lb. or approx. 9 tons. We often carried one 12,000 lb. cookie or Block Buster which several 1000 lb. cannisters of incendiary fire bombs at the same time.

We bombed Hamburg, Berlin, Cologne, Dusseldorf from 20,000 feet and the railway yards of occupied French towns, Nancy, Rouen and Paris.

We were getting along fine. Luck followed us the whole way. There was the time we were coming in late at night after a bombing raid. After landing we had to walk down to the hangar to be interrogated as to what we had seen, so that it would be of help to the next ones that went out. The Americans were picked up in jeeps, like Kings, but we belonged to an English squadron and had to walk. Three planes landed after us- it might take a few minutes, in fact, before the entire squadron landed. Then we saw behind the next a German plane which had followed it in from the continent. The plane landed and then the German opened fire on it when it was helpless there. The plane, about 200 yards from us, burst into flames and came right towards us. We went out of the way, best we could, and the plane went over into a field in flames. I looked to see if the gun turret was there, but I couldn't see it. It could have been us just as well as them.

I had my tour of mission just about completed when things began to happen. We were sent on a special raid to Karlsruhe, Southern Germany to bomb a very important ball bearing factory. We were briefed that it would be a very long trip and that in order to go straight there and back without any dog leg. We would have to fly over the Swiss Alps, 19,000 feet.

April 17, 1944

I shall never forget that trip. It was April 17th, 1944. We bombed the factory and were returning from our mission. Coming over the Alps and into France it was a beautiful moonlit night - 2:30 in the morning when we were jumped by three Folke Wolfe 190's and one Messersmith. One 190 dove below us and came up out of the dark. Our first inkling that he was under us in the dark below was tracers coming from his guns. I immediately fired back at the direction of the tracer bullets. Then it happened. We both hit each other at the same time. His plane exploded and at the very same moment I received eleven bullets in one leg. The bombaimer was wounded and the wireless operator had one bullet in the flesh of his leg. The other German planes were reluctant to come any closer after seeing one of their planes go down in flames. I wasn't even sure that there was anyone flying our plane. I was cut off from the others by intercom, but I could see that the gunner from the German plane had parachuted out and was falling faster than we were so we were still being piloted. We managed to limp back across the channel to England. We landed at Margate near Dover as we did not have enough gas to get back to our own base.

Our crew got a month's leave. The skipper received the D.F.C. for bringing the crew home. The engineer received the D.F.M. for his bravery in bringing me a portable booth of oxygen. Mine had been shot away leaving a big hole for him to pass over in order to get to me.

The bombaimer and myself remained in hospital. The crew regrouped with a new bombaimer and a new rear gunner and went back on operations. This was three months before the invasion of France started. It was on June 12 that we got word in the hospital from the Red Cross that our crew had got a direct hit by Ack! Ack! and all were killed over France. This was the saddest moment of my stay in England.

I spent a year in hospital in England. I had lost my knee cap and my leg was broken in four places. During that time I got over one million units of penicillin to combat infection in my body.

Once Queen Wilhemina of Holland came to visit our hospital. There was a Dutch pilot there who had escaped through the underground to fight with the Dutch Air Force in England and had then been wounded. She came into the wards, handing out sprigs of the national flower as she went. She would go quickly by those injured on bicycles, but if you had been wounded in the war she would stop and chat. There was this one Australian there who had broken his neck in a practice jump from a Lancaster - his parachute had caught and he had landed on his head in the sand, 20 feet below. So when the Queen came around she said, 'And what happened to you, my boy?' He answered, 'I broke my neck in a jump.' 'Oh, you brave boy!' she said and made a lot of fuss over him. He never let on when it had happened - takes an Aussie to do that!

View of Bradley's kneecap shattered by flying shrapnel and bullets on April 17, 1944

The first three months I was in hospital I had a hard time, but the other nine months weren't so bad. It took considerable time before I was able to walk and return to Canada, where I spent another year in the hospital.

When arriving back in Canada I found out how lucky I really was. All my friends that had joined the Air Force with me - many had not returned. Some of these were my nearest neighbour, Gordon Waite, hurricane fighter pilot missing in the African Campaign, Henry Trenhomme, Karl Hunting, Wendall Fairbrother, two Paige boys from the Spring Road that worked with me at the Screen Plate, Lennoxville and Don Bozer missing while flying a Wellington bomber. The last of these boys I was to see was Bill Cristian who had comleted a tour. He had personally shot up and sank a German destroyer with rockets from his Beaufighter. He came back to Canada for a month's leave. He received the D.F.C. for his efforts against the destroyer. He then returned to start his second tour. A tour, incidentally, is thirty trips over enemy territory.

It was then that I met him. Our Lancaster, on returning from a raid over Cologne, was diverted north due to a heavy fog that had moved over southern England and our base. When we landed in Scotland we found ourselves on a Canadian squadron of which Bill Cristian was a part of. While there, Bill and I had a night on the town in Preswick.

After returning to our own base I was wounded, two weeks later, and entered into the hospital in England. It was while in hospital that I learned that Bill Cristian was shot down over the North Sea. His rocket-firing Beaufighter was jumped by six FW 190's and he did not have a chance.

All these events now flash back through my mind. This all happened over 31 years ago. I think how lucky I was - since then I have married and raised three children and have lived a happy life - something these boys were unable to do.

I think I can speak for them all, in saying they went to war for the Eastern Townships, for Quebec and most of all for their beloved Canada, of which Quebec is a part. My only hope is that Quebec will remain in Canada for all these boys' sacrifices.

'Lest We Forget.' - A special mention for my own deceased crew:

Deceased - Sgd-Ldr M. Shadforth D.-F.C. Pilot, English.
Deceased - PO R. Blaine D.F.M. Engineer, Welsh.
Deceased - PO D. Weir. Wireless Operator, Scotch.
Deceased - PO R. Sharpe. Mid-upper Gunner, English.
Deceased - PO B. Murphy. Navigator, English.

Living - FO R. Baker. Bombaimer, English.
Living - PO W. Al Bradley. C.G.M., Canadian.
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Across the ocean with a baby

I was living in a place called Hollywood, outside of Birmingham, an industrial place which they bombed heavily. One night I had gone in to see a movie with a friend and the movie house was bombed, although we got out. It was too bad outside to make it home so I went to my friend's for the night. My parents were worried when I didn't go home. The next day my brother went to the movie house and couldn't find us, finally they went to the church to see the list of casualities because they feared I might be on it. And I was late to work that day. When I finally got there the boss told me I had better go home and tell them I was alright.

I had wanted to be a dispatcher. I had a motorcycle my brother had given to me and I thought it would be good fun to go around on my motorcycle delivering messages, but they didn't need any girl dispatchers. I joined up with the A.T.S., the Auxilliary Territorial Service. I worked underground and spotted the planes. We would have one night on and one night off. At night sometimes the siren would ring when there was a plane

sighted and we would hop out as quick as we could and get dressed. Sometimes your shoe would be on the wrong foot. It was exciting. But then when the pilotless planes came over, they had buzz bombs, and that kind of thing, no one knew what to make of them. I remember our major; while we were there watching disappeared, and no one knew where he was. He came back up with his respirator on. We hadn't any. No one knew what the planes held, but we wouldn't have been in bad shape if we had needed ours! After that, we weren't needed anymore because they couldn't use the guns anymore. I was transferred to a payroll office where the girls who had been there all the war were jealous of us, I guess.

I met Stuart in Southam at a dance. We made a date to meet the next day but because of an infected thumb I couldn't make it, I had to go to the hospital and have it lanced. I sent a friend there to tell him I couldn't make it, because he seemed like a nice boy. He was. But we found each other after that!

Most of what went on between us was letters and when he was back on leave we would see each other. In 1945 we got married. Late in 1946 I joined Stuart in Sherbrooke. I had our first daughter, Sonya, with me. He had never seen her and she was four months old. They wouldn't let you come over by ship until the babies were over three months, it was too hard. I remember that on the ship I was holding the baby of one woman who was getting sick, vomiting - so I was holding two and then I got sick watching her! It was hard. And the time the porthole blew open and the water poured in. The babies were in small hammocks beside the mother's berths, and they were floating in the water.

It was hard to leave England and see it fade away. And I felt miles away when my brother died. When I said goodbye to him I never dreamed I wouldn't see him again but then a few years later he died during a polio epidemic. I brought two of the girls back later and then we went three years ago. We visited Southam, the pub where we used to go. But it has been good here. Everyone was kind to the war brides.

Mrs. Joyce Smith
Stanstead

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We were kind to the children

I was an artillery gunner - I arrived about a month after D-Day. You could see all the gunfire there - it wasn't a good introduction. Our first job was to replace the gunners, and also to pick up the dead.

You don't think much about the bad things, but I was upset when my friend from Sutton, same age as me, we'd been friends for years, got killed. He and I had sent our watches back from England to the Townships for safekeeping before we went to France. His watch arrived, mine didn't, but I came back. Funny, eh? There was no insurance in those days, probably my watch didn't make it past the Post office in England!

We pushed forward there in France. Sometimes there would be a large drive, and we would be moving all night, driving a wedge into enemy territory. We wouldn't know where we were going but we'd follow the signals given us.

I remember one night we were going through a town and no one was left. There was this old woman standing by the road, an old woman, the last one in the town. You wonder why she didn't leave, what she was doing there. It was strange. I don't know why, but that's one thing that really struck me, it must have been the day. I remember that clear.

And then there was the night that the hams fell through the chimney. We was in Holland then. It was cold and in the basement of this house we were in we found a chimney. We got together odd bits of wood, staircases, chairs, whatever we could find. We started this fire and started to sit in front of it, sleep, and then suddenly, splat, this ham lands down there in the fire. The rope which had been holding it there broke and there it was. The chimney had been to smoke the meat, or maybe hide it. Was that good!

Irish stew and kidney pie. I got tired of eating out of cans, I can't stand them now. We would have to eat them cold sometimes. Once we found a garden. I gathered turnips, potatoes, onions and made a large stew. It tasted good! Now I probably wouldn't think so, but then it was the best thing we had tasted.

It was a sad thing when we were in Holland and Germany and we'd be eating our rations, jam and white bread. The children had never seen them before. The Canadians were known as wicked fighters, but they were kind to the children. We would give the kids jam and white bread. It was really sad.

In Germany we weren't supposed to fraternize with the enemy, and the children in the beginning would hide from us. Who knows what they'd been hearing about us at home or school. But even they would get friendly.

War's a terrible thing for children. Then I didn't have children but now I understand better how it must have been. We have a lovely family, four girls and four grandchildren. We've been lucky. We haven't had much money but it's been good, I mean, a nice home, job, children, that's what life is about isn't it?

Stuart Smith
Stanstead

Life went on

I was working in London at the time of the War in a factory, we made flares and things like that. Some days I couldn't make it to work, but life went on. We tried to make it there. People were so brave during the war. Hitler said he'd get us to our knees, but he never did. People just held their heads up.

I remember that after a bombing, people would be out on the street, walking along, like it was any day. It was like they didn't see that buildings, some of them were just rubble, you know. People's homes were bombed.

I lived with my family in a school, they would move you there when your home was bombed. You'd have a room there and then they'd find you another place to live.

We didn't have good food, it went to the forces, and we were proud to be helping them. The rationing was really bad - if someone wanted to come for dinner, well, they'd just have to bring their own food! People didn't do too much entertaining then, but life went on. I usually went to work unless the bombing had been too bad. The worst was the buzzbombs, you couldn't tell where they were going to land. But we made it through.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bell
Ayer's Cliff

They don't like us much, do they?

When the War started I found myself in a position similiar to that I held in civilian life where I was in advertising, director of public relations in Ottawa. We were in charge of the recruiting effort and were very successful.

For some months I was Guy Gibson's personal administrator - we flew all over Canada to encourage the war effort. Seventy-five percent of the time it was a pep-up speech to the boys at the training camps to get them so they would be eager to go overseas and knock some planes down. The other part of the time it was addressing banquets and the like. Then the speech would be the same, only at the end people would be encouraged to buy war bonds!

I was then transferred to London when our job was over. Going over to Europe then was an experience. There were 17,000 people on the boat. Most people imagine that a boat filled up in an orderly way, that it would take a couple of hours, marching in straight lines into it. On my boat we were fourteen to a cabin meant for two. Eating was in shifts and my times were 5 a.m. and 5 p.m., but some had 12 p.m. and 12 midnight. In the morning we would get five gallons of warm water with which we all had to shave and we figured that each one of us had so many dippers full and ten minutes apiece. It still took then over two hours to get shaved and washed. There wasn't much room on board to do anything. You would see men in the hallways playing cribbage or gin rummy. We had to wear our life jackets around all the time. When we were outside on the decks for inspection I used to think that the ship would get unbalanced until I remembered that there were just as many on the other side of the deck!

I was stationed at RAF headquarters near London and by the end of the war I found myself wing commander and one of the eight directors there. We had 101 things to do. We organized transport of materials and troops, we served as a liaison between the airministry and the press. The press would get angry with us - they knew we had the answers to their questions, but we couldn't answer them. It was a matter of deciding what we could tell them, so that the folks back home would know what was happening, but the enemy wouldn't learn anything to help them. Sometimes I had to tell a journalist who wouldn't stop asking a question, 'Well, old boy, you wouldn't want to lose one of our men, would you?' That would usually stop them!

It was a very exciting time to be in England. Once we were sleeping in the back of a truck. A plane was coming over and it was shooting rounds at us. We had to dash out underneath the truck. In fact, I ruined a new outfit in the mud, and I couldn't help thinking, 'You know, they don't like us much, do they?'

I remember June 13, 1944 as the beginning of the doodle bugs. I was shaving in my billet and I was half-way through when I heard a plane going over. I rushed outside and saw a plane going over the trees and down with a large explosion. I went back in and finished shaving, then went to work. The tube wasn't running across the river that day so I walked, as I sometimes did. Then I saw another of those large explosions - then we learned that the pilotless planes had begun to fly over.

Then August 4 at 7:02 p.m., you don't forget the time, I was in a train hit by a bomb. The tendons in my hand and elbow were severed, but seventeen ended in the morgue. I went to Kensington Hospital and while I was out with penothal, a bomb landed in the hospital courtyard. Imagine when I awoke to find all the windows broken and the clean, neat hospital in disarray! A bomb hit the building we were working in. The part that was bombed was bricked off, then the building had a u-shape to it. We had cotton on the windows which had all been broken, not glass, after that.

The worst part about the bombing was that you couldn't do anything about it. Great admiration should be given to all those people who in non-combat duties kept on going, those in the factories, in maintenance and in supplies.

To show you how it was, one fellow, an air force friend, was on leave in London and we stopped by for drinks in a pub. The bombs were going off nearby, but we didn't do anything, we decided to take our chances. You know that's what we did every day. Then we went to a restaurant to see if they might have a black market egg or something to eat, and the building across the street was hit. Afterwards we said goodnight and he went to his hotel and I to my billet. The next morning when I was on duty, he called and said, 'You can have your blankety-blank London. I used to like it here, but I'm going back - I can't take any more of this!'

I tell this to illustrate that in some way those in the front lines had it easier than those who couldn't fight back. It is one thing to be behind an artillery gun and shooting, maybe cursing a bit at the enemy. It is another to sit late at night and wonder where the bomb would hit, because you couldn't tell. The V-2's flew four times faster than sound and you could only know where they hit after they dropped, then you would hear the whine after the explosion, backwards. So when one hit, you knew you were alright. The attitude you develop then is different than brave or courageous, it's more fatalistic like, well, here I am, after the explosion.

Daily there would be those who went home to find their home had been bombed or those who went home one night and didn't return to work the day afterwards. Yes, the non-combat people had it in many ways tougher and yet they went on. There would hardly be a day when there weren't bus detours, and yet salvage crews did an amazingly quick job. There might be rubble, fifteen or twenty feet high, bricks, shrapnel, bodies, but it would be cleaned up in no time.

After the war, I had to stay a few months longer to make sure everyone and everything got home. I don't usually talk about the war now, unless it's to reminisce about the good times. I had two brothers who also fought, and my wife, she was in the Red Cross in Italy, and France. Her brother was a P.O.W. for three years in Germany. He was captured in Dieppe and the only thing he ever said about it was that it had been 'Hot'!

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Air Minister Power Speaks, 1941

I saw the boys. I was impressed by their morale, their gaity, their brave comradeship, their sportsmanship and their keenness to get at their job. There are many of them, and there will be many times more - how many I am not permitted to say. I can give no figures, no statistics, I do not need to, because their deeds are written across the blazing skies of Africa, Europe and Asia; they are being seared into the minds of the people of Germany and are being written gloriously into the pages of the history of Canada and the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, they are being written, also, on the hearts of the afflicted parents of those who became casualities. There is little I can say to alleviate their grief, and I can promise no relief except this, that those who say the Canadian people cannot take it, do not know whereof they speak. May I say that in communications received from the afflicted parents there is a note of pride, of nobility, of patience and of strength. For the moment it is these individuals who feel the blow. It will only be after this accursed conflict has been liquidated and we have attempted to take stock of our national assets, when we shall require in our post-war struggle for existence in a new world all the strength of will and brain inherent in our national character, that the Canadian people will be aware of the grievous blow and of the sacrifice which it has suffered through being deprived of the most noble, the most brilliant and the most able young men of this generation.

It was a real waste

It was thirty years ago. It's hard to think about. I don't really remember too much. I was a P.O.W. in Italy and Austria for eight months. There weren't too much that were captured then, we were pushing up into Germany then. It was chance I got captured. I was supposed to go for leave to Rome then but instead I traded with someone else and was going to save my leave for Christmas, so I went out that time. But I wasn't too afraid because I always felt someone was looking out for me, telling me when to watch out.

We were caught in Italy on a rec mission - we would go ahead of the troops. Then we found ourselves surrounded. It was about nine at night and by three we were out of ammunition and had to give up. In the morning they would have sent someone in but by then it was too late. We were in Italy, then we were moved by train to Austria, Spittle.

We went there by train. We would travel at night and by day we'd stop. We saw planes flying overhead but they didn't hit us. Someone must've known we was in there, because the day after we were in the camp the train was bombed at the station.

We had it better than the fellows at Hong Kong. At least we had medical care. I lost 38 pounds there and I'm not a large man. They would never give you enough food. Packages would come from the Red Cross but you'd have to go back each day for a little. They didn't want you to get a lot, maybe you'd try to escape.

One thing I remember seeing was at the camp there in Austria. The Alps were all around. We saw American planes come over in formation. Then one fell behind and the motor was having trouble. Soon the crew bailed out and you could see all the parachutes there against the mountain. It was beautiful. They got all the crew and we saw them but they were taken away. Ours was a hospital P.O.W., not a labour camp like some.

Some didn't make it through even so. I remember there was one young lad near me whose leg was infected and after two days they came and took him away. He didn't come back. No anesthetic was used in the operations. I had a shrapnel wound that was fixed.

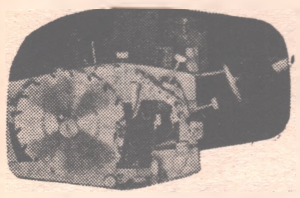
I was eight months a P.O.W. We couldn't send letters or get messages. After six weeks you were allowed to give them a message which might be read over the radio. A lady in Scotland heard mine and wrote my mother a letter. I never saw the lady but some of my buddies did. I've tried writing to her but the letters come back unknown - she must have moved.

Text of the letter:

Dear Mrs. Blake,

Just a short note to say I was listening to a German radio station last night as they very often read out prisoner's names. So I heard your son's name and number, also a short message he sent to you, so here it is. He is a P.O.W.

GENERAL SHARPENING



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Trooper Kenneth Blake
No. D144573

Darling Mother,

Am slightly wounded, and a P.O.W. Don't worry. Doing well. Inform rest of folks. Will send my address when possible. Keep smiling and take care of yourself.

Love,
Ken

Dear Mrs. Blake,

Please don't be offended at me writing this letter to you. I have a brother who has been a P.O.W. since St. Valery nearly five years ago, but thank God, his camp was liberated by the Russians two weeks ago. As a mother I know how anxious you are, but my children, a boy of nine, and a girl five and a half years, are not the age of war, but as I said, as a mother I know your feelings, my dear. Pray hard and keep your chin up.

I know that this has been a terrible war for every mother. I trust and pray to God your dear son will be home to you. If he had been seriously wounded, my dear, I just couldn't have written to you, but we will have to be thankful for small mercies. Probably you will have had the official word from the war office before this letter reaches you, but if not, I know just what it will mean to you, my dear.

I have a very warm heart towards Canadians as my husband and I were in Windsor, Ontario before we came home here to be married and I've left some grand friends there. If you have any friends, boys or girls, in the forces here, please give them my address and they are very welcome to whatever I can give them. I know what it means to be away in a strange country far from home. Well, my dear, I feel I'm writing to you as if I've known you a lifetime and can speak this way to you.

Please let me know if you receive this letter alright as it is difficult to pick up the addresses properly. Well, good-night my dear, and try not to worry too much. I'll pray for you and him.

I remain, your Scotch friend,

Mrs. A. Lawson
Kircaldy, Fife, Scotland

Denziel Blake, my brother, was struck by a large shell fragment which hit the top of his left shoulder and tore downward across the back of the waistline. In addition his back was peppered with small fragments...

'...after the release from the service, he returned to his old job, but the shock had been too much for him... he had a serious condition of the heart, left lung and shoulder...'

That was my brother. He died two years after he come back home. He was hit by some shrapnel from an Allied bomb that hit a truck he was near. He and his buddy dived into the trench and he was on top of his buddy. The piece went right through him and killed his buddy underneath. It was a real waste.

Kenneth Blake
Ayer's Cliff

Power, Money, Control

I wonder when and if we ever look at things as they are or were. Let's start in 1914. When the government declared war, they said for Peace and Freedom. As I see it Power and Money. They sent our men, boys and nurses over there: some came back crippled for life, some not at all. Some that were promised their jobs back when they came home found nothing. And broken homes. Then the depression - the Government set up soup kitchens to feed some and there was no work. You could buy a farm for what you would have to pay as a down payment now. It took the people thirty years to build a country fit to live in. Then World War II. For peace and freedom? Again power and control. And we have a depression now as I see it. No soup kitchens, but welfare and union-ized labor.

Kenneth MacPherson
Ayer's Cliff

Wars to End Wars

We have fought two World Wars to end wars, and yet during the years since 1946 we have fought countless wars in various parts of the world. You wonder under those circumstances whether that wished for, desirable end will ever be attained.

Name withheld
Sherbrooke

War Babies

What are the lasting effects? Oh, there are countless things as a result of the war. Oh, the explosion of the population, the generation called the war babies. There were babies after the war. There were babies all the time. But that generation existed from 1946 on, didn't it? It was an explosion to a degree, yes. People started to have babies when the war ended, and actually in the war-ravaged countries there was an explosion in the population as a result of the soldiers having been there and having left. So there were count-less, ah, call it illigitimate children because they, ah, loved and left. Right?

Name withheld
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The deepest things are in common

I was born in Indonesia before the war. My father was a clergyman. The Japanese invaded and occupied Indonesia. They came and took my father away.

It was just before Christmas, I guess in 1941. I was just a young child. I remember it well. I had broken some Christmas decorations, and my father spanked me for it. That evening after supper, the Japanese soldiers came and arrested my father.

I remember going to the prison camp to visit him. My mother took me. I took a bag of candies to give to my father. I missed him very much. I gave him the candies and my mother led me away. I remember looking back, and my father had opened the bag of candies and was sharing them with the other prisoners. I was very mad. I had brought the candies as a gift for him, and I didn't think he should give them away like that.

My parents were very strongly religious. My mother took care of us through the war. My brother, my sister, aunts, uncles - it was the traditional Chinese extended family.

I missed my father very much. I remember how he used to preach the sermon, how he would stand at the door of the church and say good-bye to each person, one by one.

Everytime we passed the Japanese military guards, we had to bow deeply and say hello. We kids used to bow and say to them 'Drop dead' in Dutch so they wouldn't understand. We thought this was very funny and very daring. In kindergarten, we had to sing the Japanese national anthem in front of the Japanese flag every morning. I can still sing the Japanese anthem and say Hello and Good morning and things like that in Japanese.

We were very hungry and the best way to get food was to go to the Japanese military camps and dig food out of their garbage cans. It sounds horrible now, but as kids, it was sort of fun. We were very hungry, and if you found something to eat in the garbage, it was quite a discovery.

My mother put us to bed at night and made us say our prayers. She would have us pray, 'If it is Thy will, oh Lord, please let Daddy come home.' That sentence affected me very much.

We went to church as usual, but there would be Japanese soldiers in the church to make sure that nothing was said against the occupation, during the sermon or whatever. It was weird, worshipping in our own church, under the guns of soldiers.

The Japanese soldiers were brutal - no that's not the word, yes it is the word, for part of it. It was a strict law and order thing during the occupation.

One day a street pedlar was going down the street on his bicycle, and I just happened to be there. He was loaded down with things on his bicycle, and I guess he was late for market or something. Instead of stopping in front of the Japanese soldiers, getting off his bicycle and bowing, as you were supposed to, he just kept on going. So the Japanese guards shot him dead, they just shot him like that.

If there was a thief in the marketplace - and there were lots, because everyone was hungry, the Japanese soldiers would take out a sword and cut his fingers off, right there in the street. I saw this happen.

I went to the prison camp again with my mother, I guess she wanted to talk to the commandant about getting my father released. My father was in that prison camp for three or four years. We were escorted into this room where the commandant was, and he ordered that a glass of milk be given to me. I was maybe five or six years old. This was an incredible thing - a glass of milk - we never saw milk in those days - it was the biggest luxury. I reached out to the glass of milk and was just about to drink it, when I noticed there was a fly swimming in the milk. I must have shown some small reaction to that, because the commandant ordered one of his guards to bring me another glass of milk. The soldier took the glass away from me, and he just poured the glass of milk down the sink and got me another one. I was completely stunned, I couldn't imagine that anyone would ever pour a glass of milk down the drain. I was completely shocked.

In 1945, as the war was ending, they let my father out of prison for one day. I think it was his birthday. Then he had to go back to prison, but it looked like the war was ending. The Allies were closing in. The Japanese had a lot of community leaders in prison, and now I guess they didn't know what to do with them. Before they had been arrested, my father had been organising some kind of community self-defence. He had this theory that the Japanese were moving towards attacking Australia, that Australia was their real objective and they wouldn't stay in Indonesia very long. He was organising some kind of community self-defence, a kind of unity to face up to the chaos that might lie ahead. But it wasn't really a resistance movement as such, that he was part of . He was sort of a community leader, and that is why they arrested him.

As the Allies were closing in, the Japanese began to execute a lot of the prisoners. My father had a friend in the prison, who told us a lot of stories about the prison after it was all over. When a prisoner received notice that he was going to be executed, there were real traumas, terrible experiences. Some men would bang their heads against cement walls. But my father, they say, took it very calmly.

He asked this man to take care of his wife and children if he never got out alive.

Then they took my father out and they executed him. They beheaded him. They cut off his head with a sword.

Mommy had us praying every night at our beds, 'If it is Thy will. oh Lord, let Daddy come home.' But Daddy never came home.

My father was knighted by the Dutch government, after the war. His grave is outside of Djakarta, a military grave, bodies of Allied soldiers, I think, with individual little crosses with names on them. Then in the middle of the graveyard is a big monument. You can walk inside and there is a hole with a thin layer of sand covering it, with the bones inside. Some of the religious sects there dig the bones out to use in their ceremonies. It is a mass grave with all the bones under a layer of sand. There is a list of names and my father's name is on the list. That's supposed to be where he is buried.

My mother helped us through with her strength. In my child-like mind, I

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thought that if our prayers had not been answered, it was because God had a reason for it. 'If it be Thy will, oh Lord'... well, it wasn't His will.

The man my father had spoken to in prison, to take care of his wife and children, he came after the war to deliver this message to my mother. He told us about my father's last wishes. My father wanted him to take care of us. Pretty soon I saw this man dating my mother, and then he married her. He became my step-father. I never really got along with him.

I missed my father very much. I was very jealous of the other children who could walk around with their fathers. I would look at the things that had belonged to my father, like his books, and by the time I was thirteen, I was reading his theology books.

But even after 1945, there was still a lot of trouble in Indonesia. The Dutch tried to move back in to take over their colony again, and the Indonesian nationalists who had been fighting the resistance against the Japanese started to fight against the Dutch. They wanted a revolution, they wanted independence.

We went out to the country to visit grandma, in a village. The whole traditional Chinese extended family was there - aunts, uncles, kids, grandmas. There were soldiers attacking the house, nationalists. The men were upstairs with double-barrelled shotguns shooting out of the windows. The women were in a room downstairs, having a prayer meeting. Us kids were sitting around, feeling scared, listening to the shooting. The attackers didn't succeed. I remember it was because there was a fire burning all around the house, and the attacking soldiers couldn't get through the fire.

At one time the military police came to a house we were in and they said they had seen two soldiers on the roof of our house. We were very surprised, it seemed unlikely. But they came in and searched everywhere, in the closets and all, looking for weapons I think. They went into a bedroom where my aunt was making the bed. They lifted up one corner of the mattress, but there was nothing under it. After they left the room, my aunt straightened out the mattress. In doing this she lifted the other corner of the mattress - and there was a double-barrelled shotgun hidden there. She fainted right away.

At grandma's place one day us kids were out playing in the yard. My uncle was there, holding one of the little girls in his arms. This strange man came up to my uncle - it turned out he was an officer of the nationalist revolutionary group. He handed my uncle a piece of paper, which was a demand for gasoline. My uncle just took the piece of paper, read it and then threw it on the ground. The officer shot him right there, in the yard, with us kids around. My mother said, those who live by the sword will die by the sword, and I remember that vividly. You can see how I got to be a pacifist.

In 1949, the nationalists became independent from Holland. I was going to school, and up to that time, the classes had been entirely in Dutch. Then from one day to the next, the classes were all in Indonesian. Now my family was of Chinese ancestry, but we had been living in Indonesia for five generations. We didn't even speak Chinese, but we retained our Chinese ethnic traditions. We celebrated the Chinese New Year, we had the strong family ties of the traditional Chinese family and so on. The government, the schools, and business were all in Dutch. My birth certificate was Dutch, I was a Dutch citizen. We spoke Indonesian only to other kids in the streets - it was the language of the people, but the official language was Dutch. I never really felt any nationalism towards Indonesia as a country. We celebrated the coronation of Queen Juliana, we studied Dutch history in school. Civilization was European civilization, the Indonesians were looked down on. We Chinese were middle class, between the Dutch rulers and the Indonesians. We looked down on the Indonesians to some extent, it was a kind of racism that was a legacy of colonialism. But the Chinese never really knew where they fitted in all of this, they never were really at home.

We had segregated schools - there were schools for whites only. We used to fight with the Dutch kids. I can remember we had some really interesting fights with them. Those blond haired kids, we called them 'cheese heads'. Oh Lord!

Then a decree went out from the Indonesian government. They said that all the Chinese living in Indonesia had two choices: either we could become Indonesians, or they would ship us back to Communist China. 'Back' to China - we had never been to China, we didn't speak any Chinese, we had been in Indonesia for five generations, but we were still Dutch citizens with Chinese names. Some of the Chinese went to Holland, but many were shipped to China. The American papers said it was indiscrimination. But my family chose to stay in Indonesia, because after all, my step-father was a member of parliament, in the Christian Party, until that party was made illegal after the coup d'etat.

The Indonesian government also encouraged - 'encourage' is the word they used - all the Chinese to change their names to Indonesian names. No more Chinese names. My father was a Choa, spelled Tjoa by the Dutch, and my step-father was a Lee, spelled Lie by the Dutch. My step-father chose a common name in West Java - Surjadinata. Some people chose their names right out of the telephone book. I decided to change my name to Surjadin ata too, to maintain some kind of unity in the family. I was in the States studying at the time, and I needed a new visa, but I had all kinds of trouble with my passport. They said I was in the country illegally, they tried to deport me. I was very upset. I wrote to the U.S. Senators - Jerry Ford among them, for help. There is no rhyme or reason to the way governments do things sometimes. I had no passport at all for a long time. I was a Dutch citizen of Chinese extraction, born in Indonesia, I had been made an Indonesian citizen to avoid being sent to China, where I had never been, and I had my name changed to an Indonesian name because they didn't want Chinese names anymore in Indonesia, and now I was applying to stay in the United States. Now here in Quebec, I am trying to adjust to Bill 22, I am slowly learning French. And of course I can still sing the Japanese national anthem.

There was a coup d'etat in Indonesia in 1965. There were huge massacres, and a lot of people were put in prison, just under suspicion of being opposed to the dictatorship. Today there are still 100,000 political prisoners in Indonesia, in prison camps since 1965, without real trials. I stayed in the United States and became an American citizen.

I am a product of the war. It affected my outlook. When I became an American citizen, I took the pledge of allegiance, but I struck out the part about bearing arms. I would not promise to join the army.

I am not a dogmatic pacifist. I would fight for a just cause, but only after really informing myself on what that cause is. I consider this to be a Christian attitude.

When the trouble with the war in Vietnam started, I was really affected by it. When I saw it on television, it sent me right back to the feeling I had as a child in the war. I saw G.I.'s burning huts, they looked an awful lot like the Japanese soldiers burning huts in Indonesia. The civilian deaths, the massacres. I looked at that, and I said, 'That is wrong, that is wrong, that is wrong.' I checked out the war, I read about it, I studied the Geneva convention and how there had been no elections in South Vietnam, how the U.S. was supporting a dictatorship there. I heard prominent Americans say 'This is an illegal war, an immoral war, an insane war.'

I was opposed to the war in Vietnam, but because I was an Asian myself, some Americans saw me as an enemy.

I was preaching in the States and one Sunday I talked about the war in a sermon. I talked about the Christian dilemma when faced with war. Jesus said turn the other cheek and things like that, and in the early days of Christianity, Christians did not fight in wars. Then Christianity became the official religion. Christians were no longer the persecuted group, they were part of the ruling group. So the church fathers, back in the days of St. Augustine, kept examining the problem of war. They came up with the theory of the just war, that a Christian could participate in a war if it was a just war. So I said in church, regardless of whether you are for or against the American participation in the Vietnam war, you should, as a Christian, look at the ethical question of whether or not this is a just war. Are the Americans supporting a just cause, are they being careful to avoid killing innocent people, do the means justify the hoped-for end?

Well, the next Sunday, the entire congregation walked out on me during the church service, except for five ladies who stood there embarrassed and didn't know what to do. They apologized all over the place. That was then the end of my preaching in the United States, that Sunday. I got hate letters and threats.

The war affects you in funny ways. I can't stand in a line. As a child I had to stand in bread lines for hours and hours. Now I can't stand in any line, even at a spring fair or to go to a movie. I just can't do it.

People have asked me, do I hate the Japanese? To me war is non-rational, and in non-rational situations, people do horrible things to other people. On the way over from Indonesia, we had a stop-over in Japan, in Yokohama. I went into a store and when the owner of the store learned that I was Indonesian, he invited me home to dinner. He told me that he had been in the military police in the Japanese Army in Indonesia during the war. He knew places in Indonesia that I knew and as he spoke I got the impression that he had been a guard in the same prison where my father had been executed. But he told me of his own struggle as a soldier, being conscripted into the army by the Japanese government, being put in a uniform and shipped away from home, doing things that really went against his conscience as a human being. In our short conversation we really developed a strong relationship with each other, we felt for each other.

I don't hate the Japanese, today. It should be possible to accentuate what people have in common, rather than to accentuate the conflicts. People have much more in common that in conflict, and the deepest things are in common.

Rev. Max B. Surjadinata,
United Church Clergyman
Waterville

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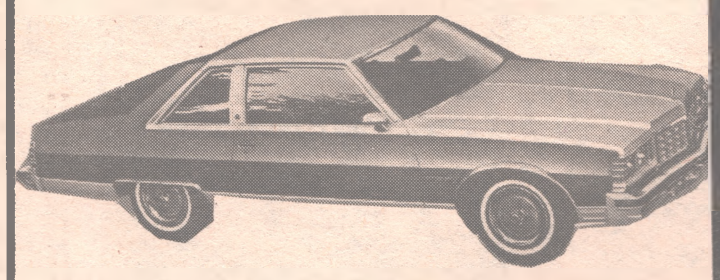

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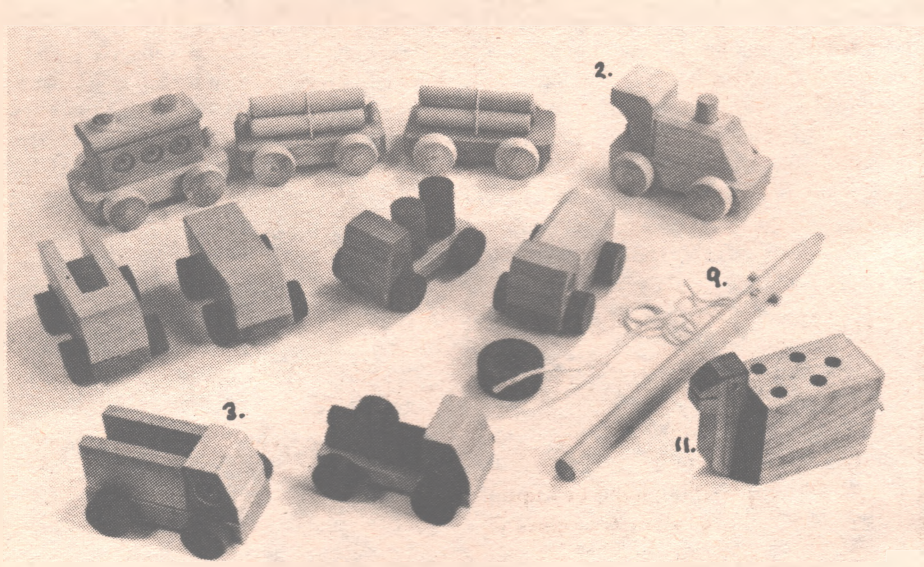

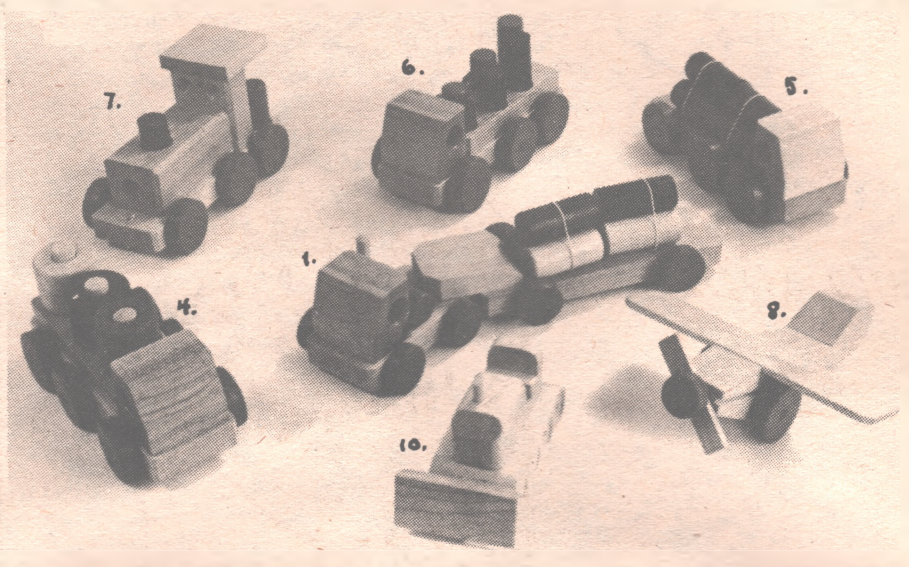

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Mr Stacey in the first decades of Queen Victoria's reign saw the Great Exhibition and was involved in the fire at the Tower, in which the Crown Jewels were almost lost. George, who met nearly every disaster that could befall an inexperienced farmer, overcame most of them by his unfailing resilience and courage: with his wife and family he suffered at first acute poverty and near starvation in the the severe winters. He witnessed the sad flood of Irish immigrants and the political troubles of Upper and Lower Canada; his news of the arrival of the railway and its effects will be a revelation to modern readers, likewise his observation of the rapid development of a great nation.

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Lennoxville 24
Volume I

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Lennoxville Volume I includes a brief history of the early settlement and the beginnings of the municipality, as well as the development of churches and educational. Commerce, industry, cultural and recreational activities are recorded. Articles on the Street Railway and the Post Office, notes on Military Units, the Jefferson Davis Story, Fire of 1874. Personal glimpses are found from memoires and the occasional document is included, especially in connection with the medical profession.

Residents of Lennoxville, past and present, and many others who spent their student days in the area wiill find something of interest in its pages.

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Let Us Grow

Please don't glorify War. As a Vietnam veteran, I feel somewhat qualified to speak. But I hope to communicate a spreading feeling of peace. Let us understand.

I was in the US Army (drafted), I refused to be an enemy. I was placed in the stockade for two months, and 38 days of that were solitary confinement. I was released to serve out my time in medic training. I was honorably discharged in 1967.

Wars are not necessary. We wait to destroy ourselves when we hate. We can share the earth in peace!

Albert Einstein called Nationalism an infantile disease.

We don't have to separate ourselves from a sense of unity with all living creatures, Trees too. Is that why we are destroying the only planet that we know of that supports **our** form of life? Are we foolish? Can you begin to look into your nature?

Rest in Peace.

A Person
Sawyerville area

Peacetime army, a lazy life

I got over in April, 1944. I went as a reinforcement for the Royal Canadian Artillery. We came into France June 30th, my birthday. I was in action for about nine months.

We supported the infantry. We fired to help the enemy keep their heads down when the infantry advanced. In field artillery, you're not face to face with the enemy - you fire at them, hoping you'll hit them. We had a good gun crew, a good gang, a little shorthanded most of the time. At night we'd take turns. We would have a fire program, 11 or 12 o'clock at night we'd fire at a certain angle, to harrass them, then we'd fire another round. Sometimes we'd be day and night firing.

We went all the way into Germany, but I don't remember crossing the Rhine. I was asleep in the vehicle. After VE Day we moved back into Holland as occupation troops. Our regiment spent seven days in the city of Ghent, Belgium, as guests of the city because we'd liberated it. We lived in private homes - we didn't eat with them because food was scarce, we had our own kitchen. They were nice people. They spoke French so we could speak to them. We got along well with them.

After the end of the War, fellas came home by point system, so many years, so many points. I had visions of staying over there for months, so when they asked for volunteers for the Pacific, I said, 'I'll go'. Automatically you got a thirty day leave and then it was on to the States for training.

But I lost my brother. He was killed in a jeep accident the same day I got on the boat in Southampton in England to come home. They hit a tree. I didn't know about it until I got home. He was buried in Holland. His wife went back, but I didn't.

I stayed in the army until December, then I went right to the militia and I spent 22 years in the militia. There are times that I think I would have liked to stay in the army, but I didn't. That's the first thing they asked you when you went for your discharge. 'You want to stay in?' 'No, I want to get out! 'Course active army and peacetime army aren't the same thing. Peacetime army, it's a good life, but a lazy one.

Harold Flanders
Magog

The greatest feeling in the world- to be shot at and missed

Two of us left home one fine spring morning and headed for a small Basic Training Camp, within a few hours we were in uniform, the fast medical, a uniform that didn't fit, an oath - 'I do swear' etc. and it was all over. We were told we would start training the next day. Sure enough, at 7 a.m. we were washing dishes in the Officers' kitchen, at 10 p.m. we finally finished. We decided officers only ate or drank. That day we must have qualified at washing and wiping as we were never given that job again.

Canada- 1941

During this year most of our training seemed to be for defensive action and the instructors had a favourite quote - 'If you've got to go, take one with you'. I started the year as a Corporal, ended as a Sgt.

In December when Japan jumped in, most of my boyhood friends were in Hong Kong including one of my brothers. The low point of the war for me was being home on Christmas day to hear a voice on the radio announce the fall of Hong Kong and that Canadian casualities were said to be heavy - my brother died in a P.O.W. camp.

1942

This was not a good year for us, one Asian country after another fell to Japs, the British in North Africa had a bad time until October, the Americans and Russians were in trouble and to us that civilian suit seemed a long way in the future. The high point for those of us still in Canada would be a weekend at home and a Saturday night at a place in Brookbury, Batley's pavillion. This is one event that one corner of Compton County will fondly remember and it made Monday morning back in the barracks easier to face.

Another memory of that year was the troop trains, crowded, hot, slow and very tiresome. I seemed to be on too many of them and still by the year's end I was back in Quebec.

1943

Things started off at an increased tempo, several of us were sent to an Officer Training center, graduated, were posted to other camps for a short while, alerted for overseas, given a short home leave and then moved near Halifax.

The Allies had cleaned up North Africa, were pushing the Japs back into Asian Canadians were making a name for themselves in Italy and now we were training for offensive action. The instructors had a new quote, 'Your duty is not to die for your country, but to help the enemy die for his'.

1944

A fast moving year. I started it in Halifax and ended it on the German border.

As our ship left Halifax I was on deck watching the hills fade out of sight, a gloomy voice at my elbow said, 'Take a good lood at it, soldier, you'll never see it again.' In a way he was right - I came back by New York.

France - summer of 1944 - memories of heat, insects, hunger and thirst, dust and danger. It was a condition hard to imagine. the Germans in front of us were afraid of a big breakout and put their best armour and infantry to hold us. Our casualities were high, theirs were higher. The smell of death was in the air and at all times there was a feeling it would never end.

Suddenly the Germans seemed to crack, those not trapped in the Falaise pocket took off East. We were now battle-tested soldiers, liberators of northern France. City after city fell to us, in each one we were met by huge crowds. Men, women and children

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nearly did us in with their wild welcome, rather an embarrasing situation for a farm boy from a small village in Compton County.

We finally stopped in Antwerp, almost out of gas, short on ammunition and ready for a rest. I was allotted to a fairly quiet section out front on the north edge of the city. We could walk about 100 yards from our battle positions and take a street car to the center of Antwerp where no one would realize there was a war on. Stores, bars, clubs etc. were all open, an unbelievable sight after Normandy. One night I witnessed a round-up of women that had been too friendly to the Germans - they were brought to the centre of the city where they had their heads shaved in public. From Antwerp we could take a train to Brussels, a city not touched by war and one big hotel run for Canadians only. This was an unreal situation, soon to end.

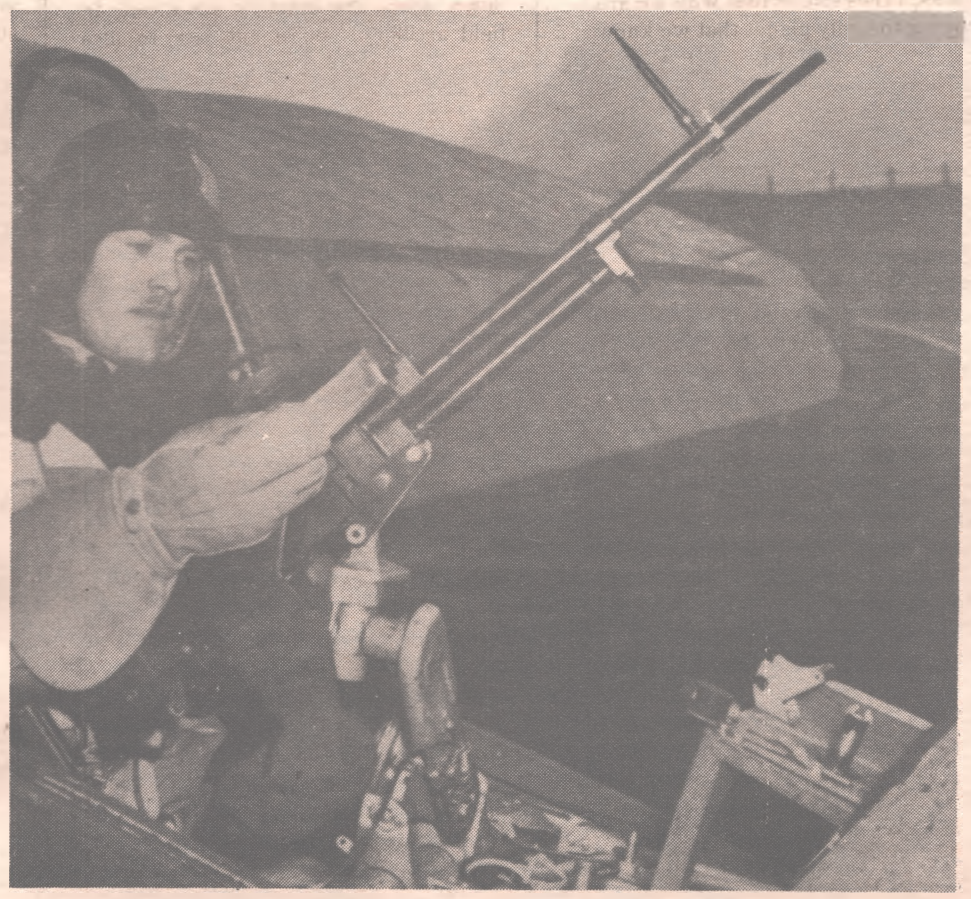
We attacked north into Holland, our first night in Holland was bitter cold, we were dug in on sand dunes so if a shell hit near, the slit trench caved in, not one minute sleep that night. A few days later our company cut the German escape route from South Beveland. A Toronto newspaper headlined - 100,000 Germans cut off by 100 Toronto men, not quite true, there were only 30 to 40,000 Germans. We were less than 100 and possibly 20 of them from Toronto! We saw that paper weeks later. One of my men said if he'd have known that he would have taken off! In this position, which we held for four days before relief came, amazing things happened.

The first night one of my N.C.O.'s spotted a German patrol of ten to twelve men. He attacked them alone and before we ran to help he had killed a few, captured two and we could hear the rest running.

The second night we were being shelled heavily. Just when things were at their worst my platoon Sgt, a fine tenor, cooly and casually sang 'Indian Summer'.

The fourth night I took one man with me to scout around and saw three Germans on top of a dike just a few feet ahead of us. I had a small machine gun (Sten) so I told the other chap to stay put, I took off the safety, moved up close to them and pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. I removed the clip, put in a new one, sneaked up to about 30 feet and pulled the trigger again. Instead of a burst only one shot went, the surprised Germans took off down the other side of the dike. I took the Sten by the barrel and threw it after them, when the gun landed it fired about 20 rounds all by itself but we didn't wait. With only two pistols we weren't looking for a fight nor were the Germans, as we could hear them running through a field of sugar beets.

The battle for South Beveland ended on Halloween night when our regiment, all by itself, surrounded, attacked and captured the last German strong point. During that attack I kept thinking of the



tricks we used to pull on that date back in Compton County.

By this time we were sure that we were the best regiment of all time. Our support artillery, 4th field was outstanding. They gave us firepower on call, not only when we wanted it but where we wanted it and often when we were under heavy attack and badly outnumbered their 25 pounders saved us. No troops could stand an artillery 'Stonk' the way 4th field poured it on. Of course other soldiers were convinced their regiments were the best and this feeling made a strong army.

By mid-December we were on the German border waiting for the next and final attack. I was given orders to take 25 men forward very close to the enemy line, observe and report any activity etc. As we moved up at dusk, Dec. 23, I hardly dreamed that exactly two years later, almost to the minute, I would be starting off on my honeymoon!

This was a Christmas to remember, there we were in a few wrecked houses under the nose of the enemy. Christmas Eve was cold, near zero with about three inches of fresh snow and a bright full moon. Our best meal of the day, cold bully beef and tea, strangely enough we didn't feel badly about it. The Germans near us were quietly singing Christmas carols and later, as a propaganda move, they played Christmas music over a loudspeaker and politely asked us to surrender. No takers. Every Christmas since then my mind goes back to that night. We were relieved Christmas night and on the 27th we had Christmas dinner - turkey, French wine and some terrible German cigars.

In February of 1945 we were ready to start the last big battle of the war. The Germans decided to fight west of the Rhine and that was a decision that cost them 390,000 men. A General opened his briefing by saying, 'This will be a story to tell your children and grand-children - and mightily bored they'll be.' How true!

The guns of our 2nd infantry division thundered, their shells screamed over our heads and tore the enemy defences up. The first prisoners we took were nearly out of their minds. For about three weeks we fought troops of the 6th Parachute Army, 2nd and 12th S.S. Divisions and other units of the regular Wehrmacht. Then we stood on the Rhine.

Soon we were over the river and the Canadian army, now joined by the 1st and 5th divisions up from Italy, turned north and west into Holland. We reached the North Sea, then turned east into Germany again. We were moving very fast and only one thing could stop us. On May 3 we were told that all German troops in our sector would surrender at 8 a.m., 4th of May. I told my men and there was very little reaction. After all these months we had won and we were alive, so on a desolate wet night, what is there to say? A few miles out of Bremerhaven the regiment finally stopped.

That civilian suit was near, Batley's Pond was just around the corner.

Soon we were home, the uniform off, the fast medical over and only memories remain. I remember that soldier and I am also proud to say that I served in the Infantry and I also know, better than most, why the Infantry is called world-wide 'The Queen of Battles.'

Outstanding memories have to include the humour of men in pain or in great danger. One night on fighting patrol a Corporal was hit. I asked him where and he said, 'I haven't looked yet but I think I have a spare belly button.' He did.

The Sgt. whose feet hurt, so he put on a pair of German jack boots, they squeaked so that for months he was known as Squeaky.

Two of us in a jeep, a bullet grazed the driver's ear and he said, 'About three inches left and I would miss the rest of this war.'

One of my men found and consumed a fair amount of liquor in a so-called rest area. When I finally found him he was telling our brigade commander how to run the war!

A soldier telling me, 'I'm going to be proud to say I was in the infantry.' As he moved off a big shell hit near him and when he got up, unhurt, he called back, 'I hope I'm going to say it.'

A patrol came back, no prisoners but half a dozen hens. The Corporal explained, 'We didn't see any Jerries but these birds looked unfriendly.'

And so it went, wise-cracks that mean nothing if you weren't part of it. Also remembered is the huge flights of bombers in the winter sky leaving thousands of vapour trails, the fighter escort flying a lazy S pattern all around them. The Typhoons of 2nd Tactical Air Command, diving straight on targets through heavy fire to aim and fire their rockets - possibly the most dangerous job in the Air Force.

To lie in the Hochwald, tune in our big nineteen set and hear Foster Hewitt at play-off time. To be so hungry you dreamed of bread and butter, to be so tired you could sleep on your feet with an interested look on your face, to curse outside and cry inside when one of your comrades was killed. In all that time, ten months, I can't tell if I ever hit a German. When I shot at one he went down, when one shot at me, I went down, possible score of O-O. The greatest feeling in the world is to be shot at - and missed!

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We had a pretty normal life

Dot Huff was a child of six in Britain when the war started. 'I can remember the day it started. We lived right by the beach, and that was the last time we got on the beach. They put big rolls of barbed wire all the way along. People wonder why I never learned to swim. All the children were shipped inland about a year after the war started. I hated it. We stayed away only about six weeks but it seemed like a long time. They put you in homes with other people.

I can remember when the war first started there was nothing to stop the planes from coming over and dropping bombs and we used to hear them go over on their way to London. I saw them fighting in the sky - a real British spitfire fighting with a German plane. They were real small planes and they used to come quite low. I remember one day in the market a German came over and you could even see him sitting in the plane - he was so low - with a machine gun and he went the length of the market. But we were taught always to hit the ground. We got under the stairs as the stairs were always left standing if a building got knocked down. A lot of people dug holes underground. I wouldn't go underground. I remember spending one night at the neighbour's shelter and I couldn't stand it. Being the smallest I always had to get in first.

I had a brother in the navy who was a prisoner of war for three and one half years in Germany. His boat got blown up near Norway and he swam to Norway thinking it was Sweden, a neutral country. He was captured by the Germans. He was one of the first ones to come home. I was the first one to see him when he came home. I remember opening the door, I had remembered him as a sailor and he was standing there in an old army uniform. That's what they gave him to wear. I hadn't seen him for four years.

Towards the end of the war the government supplied us with big steel shelters, like a table. We used to eat off of it. Every home had one. They had unmanned rockets then, coming over from Germany. My mother and some other women, wearing helmets and whistles, used to patrol the streets at night looking for incendiary bombs, as they would just start fires. We all had gas masks too. Everything was blackout. At night you couldn't let any light show whatsoever. Everything was pitch black. I've wondered how a lot of us ever made it through the whole thing. It's a frightening experience. All bombing.

One Sunday there was a bad air raid. My sister and I were out in the country walking and the siren went. I don't know what happened - I went unconscious and when I woke up I was at the bottom of the hill. My arm hurt so they took me to the hospital and found out the shoulder blade was all smashed. The next Sunday, it always seemed like the worst raids were on Sunday, there was a terrible raid and we all had to get under our beds, for two or three hours. They sent every child home - it was such a bad time. I remember the doctor standing in the doorway and his operating gown was just blood from one end to the other. Lots of confusion with all the wounded.

Everything was rationed. Everything. I can't see how we lived with all the rationing, but we were never hungry. One egg a week per person. When it got bad even potatoes and bread were rationed. If you bought flour you couldn't buy bread.'

Larry was seven years old and living on a farm in the Townships. He says rationing wasn't quite as bad over here. 'If we got short they'd separate some cream and make some butter. There was plenty of sugar on blackmarket, for those who knew about it. Gasoline was rationed but as farmers we could have all we wanted. Then they considered farmers important - people who could feed the world.

Over here it was a pretty rare thing to see an airplane. They still weren't common yet. Once in a while one would come over and the teacher would let us go out and watch. That was just the beginning of seeing airplanes.' Dot says, 'On D-Day the sky was just full of airplanes. We knew something was going on but at least they were going the other way. Another thing was that we never missed the nine o'clock news at night. My father had to listen to see what was going on. It always started off with Big Ben chiming. If Churchill spoke, well, then everything stopped. I don't know how we would have got along without him. He was what held the country together.

Larry remembers, 'There was a chap come here checking cattle, this was just after the war. He said they had been driving home in a jeep and they had seen this nice pair of boots sticking up, so they stopped to take the boots and underneath there were a pair of feet, still warm. They undug him and found out it was his brother. He was still alive.

That's when farming come to life around here. Everything sold good then. You could get almost any price for anything. Maple syrup for instance - the government had to put a ceiling on it as there was such a big market because sugar was rationed. I would believe the ceiling was about five dollars a gallon, but there's a way around everything. What the farmers did then was pull a little tree from the woods and sell someone the tree and give them a gallon of syrup. They didn't sell the syrup, they sold the trees, for eight dollars or whatever.

Those that had farms had an exemption from the war, so the farms could still operate. Farmers could get an exemption for their son. Like I said, farming was considered important then. We had a pretty normal life. There was a way of getting around anything. And living on a farm we'd grow our own vegetables - it was good to be a farmer. When the boys come back they had to give them their old job back. That was the law.'

Dot said, 'It was the bombs that was the hardest in England. All the holiday places, they were flattened right to the ground. The big stores were all hit at different times. My father was a builder but all he did during the war was clean up. They used to find fingers and pieces of people. But in a way I'm sure we lived a pretty normal life. I went to school. Sometimes we had to run into the shelters though. Windows were always breaking.

Things were still rationed in England in 1952. Especially candy. Canned fruit took a long time coming through. There were still mines in the water on the way over from Australia, so the boats couldn't get through. It took quite a while before everything got back to normal.'

Dot and Larry Huff
Compton

Bombs and Roses

I was kept busy writing to relatives. I had English relatives right in the war. My Aunt Kate was living at the time. She was a widow in her seventies, living in Leicester, and all she thought of was her rose garden. Her flower bed was beautiful, she always had a green thumb, and she had a bomb shelter at the foot of her garden. But she wouldn't go into the bomb shelter. In the letter she was so mad at the Germans because they'd dropped a bomb in her rose garden. Blew the whole back of her house out but that wasn't important. To think that the Jerries had the nerve to drop a bomb in her rose garden! But if she had been in the bomb shelter that night she would've been killed because it took the shelter right out.

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Trigonometry and Microphones

I was in a special branch of the artillery - the survey branch. Now we didn't have artillery ourselves, we used highly specialized techniques to locate enemy artillery with a view to identifying its precise location so that it could be knocked out. A high degree of accuracy was called for, using surveyors' techniques, accurate mapping and trigonometry.

One method was sound ranging. You would spread out microphones at different places over a broad front, and when the enemy guns fired, the sound would reach the different microphones at a fraction of a second different times. By knowing the speed of sound, and the exact location of your microphones, the source of the sound could be deduced.

Another method was flash spotting. If you could spot the flash of an enemy gun firing, spot it from three different locations at the same time, you could take line bearing on its origin, using trigonometry to figure out where it originated.

You had to have a very accurate knowledge of surveying and mapping to know precisely where your own instruments were located. Then, once you had located the position of an enemy gun, you could use mathematics to calculate the exact range at which your own guns should fire to knock out the enemy.

I never actually got to take part in the fighting, I joined right at the outbreak of the war. I was in the militia before the war. After a year of the war I was transferred to Britain, and I trained there for three years. Then they sent me back to Canada, and I spent the rest of the war working at National Defence Headquarters, mostly in Ottawa.

This was the active branch of the Dept. of National Defence, that mobilized units and provided for equipment from clothing to weapons, and how to get the equipment delivered to the active units.

We also worked on the development of new types of weapons and techniques, experimenting and testing. We did a lot of cold weather tests - what kind of lubricating oil, carburators, oil for airplanes, would stand up to sub-zero temperatures. The effect of cold on the speed of a burning fuse, the rapidity with which you could fire artillery in cold weather, the design of tanks, the equipment to be issued to tank crews, and so on.

A vast amount of important information was made available in the war years, which was used in the post war period, and still is to this day, for instance, in Canadian military manoeuvres in the tundra up north.

No war is a good thing. It was forced upon us by the agressive action taken by other countries and it had to be seen through to its conclusion. The war had no good effect except the prevention of evil. I think it is clear that if Hitler had obtained his objective of conquering the world, we would be in a sorry state.

War helped me as an individual in some ways. It pointed out the necessity of being able to make quick decisions based on the information at hand, and going ahead on the basis of a quick analysis of what was necessary to be done. Projected into civil life, it was rather helpful. Nothing waits for anyone. You've got to get going. Decide something and go ahead and do it.

There is a feeling among people that the war was a lot of fun. During the war, there were entertainers putting on shows for them, and there was a lot of humour among the troops and the population. But this was just a distraction from the gloomy and horrible business of war. You can't just remember the horrors, or it would lead to a pall of gloom over the lives of everyone who was in it for the rest of their lives. If people hadn't kept up their sense of humour, war would have been intolerable. But the humour and the entertainment was just a distraction, not the main theme.

Leslie Ogilvie
Georgeville

Like a well-rehearsed play

It's been a long time, thirty years. I was in the engineering department on the Prince X. We had had training on the West Coast here and then a short period on commercial ships. Then we went out.

My experiences started when we took the offensive. We were on our ship during the invasion where we carried assault barges. In the initial assault we were two or three miles off. Then when it was safe we went in closer and picked up the first wounded.

We also picked up the batallions that attacked Greece - we took in some British troops to try and run the Germans out, then we took the Greek government and then about a month later the Communists tried to take over so Churchill had to send in troops again. We spent a lot of time running back and forth in the Mediterranean. It was down there that we hit a mine near Piraeus, but luckily it didn't hit the magazine.

Some of it was unpleasant but you can get just so scared. There was the disipline so that you did things automatically. For instance, we would be up three, four days running without sleep. We had to stick to a time schedule in boarding and disembarking the assault troops like a well-rehearsed play. We just kept doing, kept doing it , kept doing it. There was great monotony. It would get so monotonous that you'd look forward to whatever might call for some action. To do something. We might be twenty days at sea.

I was in England where I had a chance to see my brother. He was killed in Caen. It's a terrible waste. My mother was pretty upset as there was just the two of us.

There wasn't much between being here and not being here. If you didn't get hit, everything was fine. For us there was not a great risk compared to the merchant navy, ammunition ships.

We had it pretty good. We used to walk around the decks. It was beautiful at sea, in the tropics. We used to sleep on deck sometimes. It would get hot, about 120 in the engine room.

Sometimes we'd go swimming. We had these very strange life jackets, that wrapped around you with heavy cork protection. There was a little skull cap with a light on it - this is so if you survived some kind of sinking they could spot you, this light would flash on and off. Most of us could swim, but some used them when we went swimming if they couldn't, one lad tried out his - the upper deck of our ship was about 25 feet and we ran and jumped off. We had the landing craft out circling around to make sure you didn't get pulled away from the ship by the current. This one guy seemed to be drowning with his jacket on. Finally they took him seriously and dragged him out. Turned out we'd had a work party on board ship in Italy and they'd done some work welding with a torch on the bulkhead on the other side of the lifejackets - it had burned a hole through in this life jacket, so the water had gone in. Everyone then looked over their life jacket!!

Altogether I was over there about two years. I didn't see my daughter during that time. She sort of grew up when I was in the service. At that age they grow quickly. I think my experience was good, though at the time I mightn't have seen that.

Howard Wells
Stanstead

Fifty percent made it through

I participated in the invasion, D-Day, June 6.

My job was in the tanks. I drove them. You couldn't see where you were going, you just had a little slit. You got directions from the fella on top with a gun. He would tell you where to go, left or right, straight ahead. We didn't get much news of what was happening. Sometimes I got a newspaper and then I'd read it, but mostly we just kept on going.

We went across France and right into Germany. We ended up in Frankfurt in North of Germany. Only fifty percent of my regiment made it through. I remember getting out of my tank once, it was in this orchard, we'd had a rough time and I saw that fifteen or sixteen tanks had been blown up. That made you feel lucky, that it wasn't you, but sad for the others.

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Ninety-five percent of the time was okay

I was with the artillery. Most of the time I spent in England, and the time in Dieppe we were on the boat and ready to go over, but then they cancelled it. We were in England training. We trained here too, then we went over there. We were on guard duty on the coast when we did go into France. We landed there early in the morning and I can remember some of the fellas were all excited about it and this pioneer sargent who was on the beach, jumped out of a hole and started to holler and throw sand at them to duck because there were still snipers around.

We never lost anyone, just one vehicle. We got to bed the first night, they were hitting all around us. Say you were on leave in London, you thought twice about things, you didn't go out really brave, because you never knew.

We used to go on reconnaissance as a surveyor. We were preparing positions for guns. There was a few bad places during the big push when we were ahead of the infantry.

There was only twice that I know of that we really struck anything that really shook. When it came to mortar bombs, or artillery shells, you could hear them coming, you got so you could tell pretty near where they were coming. 'Cause I used to see the boys in there and bet as to where the shell was going to land. And we weren't betting to a general area, they were betting so many feet from the fence post or something like that. Land mines, well that was a different matter. You couldn't say. Twice we ran into some and lost a few personnel. A jeep went up ten feet in the air and we were right behind them. One dispatch writer, he got blown, bike and all right over into a ditch, near the canal. It was quite stagnant water, so when he come out of there we wouldn't have him ride with us because he stank so much. He was just mad. Sometimes some of these things would happen and you wouldn't take them like you were scared: you were mad because they had happened. You hadn't thought of them or anything.

You were supposed to be twenty years before you went overseas but we had one fella with us that was a machine gunner and two days after VE Day he had his 20th birthday and he'd been overseas four years and something.

All that we did in the war had to be done. You realized it had to be done so you didn't think too much. It was a case of either them or you. You never knew if you hit anybody. One infantry guy said they used to fire so many thousands of rounds and they never knew if they hit anybody at all, some of them. You did your work. There was a lot of firing going on. I can remember one position, there was an awful lot of ammunition used, but what damage it does, I don't know. We didn't know if anybody was killed. There was the odd body we had to pick up and bury, but other than that...

Then we stayed for six months as occupation troops in the northwestern part of Germany, a nice section of the country. We were in a small town with a lake where we could get all the swimming we wanted. They used to take us out on manoeuvre to keep us busy because there was nothing else to do. Anything came up, we talked to the major, who spoke English. A lot of the people there spoke English. I was gone altogether five years and I was married in Scotland while I was there.

When I came back it was strange when you walk into the town and into the restaurant and you recognize only one person in the restaurant out of thirty. The other ones all recognize you. You didn't recognize them. Near the end of the war at times fellas would come and speak to us and we'd have to stop and think who they were when we left, they was just young kids, but they were coming over there for occupation forces. I started work here a short time after I came back so I was alright but some came back and even though they had jobs, they couldn't settle down to it because it wasn't the same. A lot of them changed a lot. The army did some fellas an awful lot of good, and some fellas a lot of bad. It was a different type of an atmosphere altogether. Some couldn't take it. I know two fellas were about three years before they could settle down. They jumped from here and there. Course that's what a lot of them are doing today, not much difference, I guess.

We had some sixty German prisoners of war that were over here and who stayed. There was one group which started a chocolate business here. They're none here now. They come to Waterville because the accomodations were here at the time. When they were here we used to sit down and there was three of them that talked perfect English. We'd talk and compare and find out things, the surprising part of it was that one of the fellas, he was right in the area where two of the fellas were picked up. His unit had picked them up, but he didn't know.

From my war years there was more of good memories than anything else. I always said that of all the times I was over there maybe five percent of the time you wished you weren't. The other ninty-five percent of the time there was always something that was interesting and fun, because we did see a lot of the country.

K. Spafford
Postmaster
Waterville

Not bad for a Limey girl

I was fifteen years old when the war started. I remember it well. The third of September at 11 am., 1939. I remember going out into the street with my mother. I was living in Manchester, England at the time and all the neighbours came out, and of course all the women were crying and bewailing the fact that war had been declared but then we consoled ourselves with the idea that the German planes would never be able to get over the Pennines! This is a chain of mountains which separates Lancashire and Yorkshire. We thought they were huge mountains, but later in the war they turned out to be very small.

The first time I heard the air raid siren I jumped out of bed and onto a drawing pin (thumb tack) and spent the rest of the night with it in my foot. I was more concerned about the pin in my foot than I was about the air raid.

The Christmas of 41 was rather rough. We had quite a lot of bombing in the Manchester-Liverpool area at that time. I was at a friend's house just before Christmas and the air raid sirens went and we went into the shelter. They had a garden and the government built what we called Anderson shelters in the garden. These were halfway in the ground and made of corrugated iron. The women were installed in this shelter and the men went on air raid patrol. All of a sudden we heard the whistling of a bomb. It dropped and suddenly the shelter was up in the air and we landed back on the ground again, but we couldn't get out because the shelter landed against the door. We had to wait until we were dug out. When we got out - it was on Sunday - because we had all been sitting down to tea when the siren went and we were all dressed up in our Sunday best. When we came out of the shelter we just looked at one another and started to laugh because we were black from head to toe with the soot from the little stove in the shelter. The bomb had got the house on the back of the garden and people were killed there. My friend lost half of her house.

That's when I decided I was going to join up. I was no longer going to sit and wait for it coming, I wanted something in my hands. In March, 1942 I joined The ATS against the wishes of my parents. It's the Women's Auxilliary Territorial Service.

I was assigned to a heavy ack-ack battery in the Royal Artillery. I was in for three and a half years. I was a height finder on the height and range machine and I also worked on the radar. Plotting we called it. This goes on underneath the command post where you have these machines that plot the course of the enemy planes.

It was pretty hectic. I remember one incident where I was in action in Aberdeen and we were all set to fire and somebody realized that one of our own guns was trained on the command post. It hadn't been given the elevation, but it had been loaded. That stopped all action.

It makes me laugh about Women's Liberation today. We did as much as the men did. I remember digging trenches for sewers. Or they'd show us a pile of stones in one corner and tell us to move it to another corner, just to keep us busy.

We did guard duty fourteen hours a day and we weren't allowed to use guns although we had been trained to use them. We went on guard duty with a little rubber truncheon stuck up our sleeve. When the men came on at ten o'clock to replace us, they were able to have the guns. The women couldn't have the guns - it wasn't ladylike. We also had to do twenty-four hour kitchen fatigue, I remember one time forty miles north of Inverness, it was amongst our duties to peel the vegetables. The first time the Canadians saw us doing that, they thought we were on 'jankers'. This was

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what we called 'having done something wrong', and they thought we were on a charge. But really it was part of our duty.

We used to go along the railway lines with potato sacks and pick up the bits of coal that had been dropped by the trains. When the conductors of the train found out we were doing it, they were kind enough to shovel it off for us. We needed it to make fires. It was a cold damp winter up there in Scotland in 1943. We were living twenty to a hut, and the dampness and condensation was so bad we could just get hold of our blankets and wring the water out of them.

I met my husband while I was in action up around Newcastle. I visited there recently, and my old command post is still there in the middle of a field of nothing. There was a lot of Canadians stationed up there. I met him at a dance in the village. At the time I wasn't too keen on Canadians. The first group that landed in England were rather rough and ready. I remember quite a few fights taking place. They were a bit unruly. We were warned by our mothers not to get to close to the Canadians. Anyway, I married one.

When we were on twenty-four hour duty, as soon as the siren went, we had to drop everything and run to the command post. In Aberdeen one night we had three false alarms. This meant jumping out of bed and throwing a greatcoat over your pyjamas and running to action. On the fourth alarm, we took our time and got dressed properly, thinking it was another false alarm. As we strolled up our officers were absolutely shrieking at the tops of their voices, 'Come on! Hurry up. Hurry up!' It was a real raid.

During a raid there wasn't much time to be afraid. There was too much to do and think about that it was only when it was over that you realized what might have happened. I was lucky that I was stationed outside of London. The girls in ack-ack batteries in London must have had it pretty bad because a lot of them were bombed and a lot killed on the site. I was away from that kind of area.

We kept on training all the time to keep us on our toes. It more or less becomes automatic. Someone gave the orders and you just jumped. As soon as you heard the siren, you knew what to do.

Periodically we had training sessions for three weeks. There was one in the south of Scotland and we hated the place because all we had to eat was rotten fish and haddock. Rotten fish. That really stands out in memory. To practice firing, an R.A.F. plane would fly over towing a sleeve - a long piece of material - and we were supposed to shoot at the sleeve. One day we were a bit off in firing and we came close to hitting the R.A.F. plane. That night some of my girlfriends and I were in the pub and there was a group of R.A.F. boys there. All of a sudden we got a jist of their conversation and they were swearing away about those stupid ack-ackers who had come close to shooting down one of their planes. We were amongst the group who had been doing the firing. We only told them that just as we were leaving. We were afraid of what they might do.

My battery was credited with shooting down one enemy plane, plus another probable. You can't give credit to one person - it's all team work. The men depended on the information that the girls gave them for the actual firing.

VE Day was absolutely wonderful. I went AWOL. I was already married and had suspicions I was expecting so I applied to go for an examination and it was while I was at home in Manchester for the examination when they announced the end of war in Europe. I should have gone back to duty. But I turned to my mother and said I was here with you when the war broke out and I'm going to be here when it finishes. So I stayed home twenty-four hours. We went out and celebrated. The bells were ringing and there were crowds of people all singing and dancing and kissing everybody. The pubs were all full and the music was going. It was a wonderful sensation.

I tried to return to my base but the train kept getting held up by people on the tracks. I didn't mind what they did. The war was over.

I was also pregnant. I landed in Canada on VJ Day. When we got to Halifax we were told that we couldn't take a tour of the town because the Canadian Navy boys had whooped it up in Halifax the night before and apparently did some damage. There were 150 war brides on the ship, including about 75 Newfoundlanders with their wives and even children.

My first reaction to Canada was that it was like Scotland - the coastline. But it was bewildering. The distances, I thought we'd never get to Quebec. On the train from Quebec towards the Townships, there was another war bride on her way to Tomifobia. I never saw her again. I finally got to East Angus.

The night I arrived I saw these crowds and crowds of people at the station and I thought 'my goodness, what's going on?' My husband was there waiting for me with all his family and people out of curiousity to see what his war bride looked like. It was Thursday evening and on the way to his parents' place we passed the bandstand at East Angus and the band was playing. I started to laugh. My husband's family wondered. They are French Canadian and there was the language barrier. I didn't speak any French and they didn't speak any English. I had to explain to my husband to tell them that when I was leaving England, my mother tried to cheer me up by telling me that when I got to East Angus they'd have the whole town out to greet me, with the red carpet and the band playing. It made me think of that. But it was a Thursday night and the band always played on Thursday nights in East Angus.

The war had a big effect on my life. I don't know the teenage years as they are when a war isn't going on. My teenage years were trying to struggle through alive, making sure I was going to make it through until it finished. The war decided a lot for me but I'm still here. I had to have an operation because I have some loss of hearing in the inner ear, because of the noise of the guns.

My first thing in East Angus was to learn French. It was really a mixed marriage - different language, different religion, different nationality. I became Catholic. I had six children - one boy and five girls, and nine grandchildren so far. Doing my bit to populate this big country.

Not bad for a Limey girl, eh?

Mrs. Joan Lagueux
East Angus

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My number on it

I was in a tank moving towards Germany. One day I was sitting beside the tank on the ground, just getting some sun or eating or resting or something, when this German airplane flies over and drops a bomb. Funny thing about those bombs, sometimes you could actually see them falling towards you. Well I'm sitting there and this bomb falls right nearby. There was shrapnel and sand and dirt flying all over the place.

Well this big piece of shrapnel from the bomb landed on the ground right between my legs. I looked at it - it was part of the casing from the bomb - and there was a number on it. I looked at the number - it was the same as my army number. Just a coincidence, you know, but you can really say that that bomb had my number on it.

(a second-hand story)
heard in Waterville

Doing all sorts of jobs

I was a radar mechanic during the war. I enlisted in the beginning. We moved around, after training, a lot, here and there, in England and along the front lines, repairing radar. It was like working with TV. We also had to know how to operate the radar. In England we would be working with the radar girls there and we would take over the radar when they took a break or we were shot. It was helpful to know how they worked so you could repair them right.

I never used the skills I learned for the War afterwards. Not too long after I came back I began to work in the Post Office and I've been postmaster since then.

It was a funny thing about the war, people would be doing all sorts of jobs, nothing like they had done before. Your cook might have been a truck driver and your truck driver might have been a cook before the war. At a party we had, the truck driver was in there making pastry, and we had one radar man who had been a professor before the war. He learned how to speak Dutch in three months when we were there. They would try to teach you the language, and it ended up you would learn four or five words in three or four different languages!

But I can't say that I regret going there, although five years was a long time. I forget that it was that long, I could've spent my time in another way, but it had to be spent, in any case.

There are some things I won't forget, like crossing the Rhine - there were barges lined up end on end. It's as wide there as the St. Lawrence near Quebec City. It was quite a sight.

Ted Middleton
Stanstead

Almost court martialed

If you look back in old issues of the Montreal Star, you will find my picture with a story about how I put eight million people underground in London by setting off an accidental air raid alert.

I was flying a Martinet Mark III and I was supposed to fly down the south coast and then back up to the Midlands. But I got lost and found myself over London. I flew up the Thames at a very low altitude. My plane looked something like a German one, so they wanted to shoot it down. They set off an air raid alert in London and everyone ran for the shelters. I shouldn't have been there, in other words.

I followed the railway tracks to get back to the base and I ran out of gas. I coasted in to a safe landing, with a dead stick, out of gas. When I landed they said, 'You didn't have enough gas to fly that long.' I said, 'Well, I haven't been on the ground.' The C.O. said, 'Where have you been?' I said, 'I was over London.'

The C.O. said there had been an air raid alert because of me flying over London and that I would be court-martialed for it. But the C.O. had to go into London to visit his wife, and he said he would take care of me when he came back. But just by chance, he never came back. He was replaced by a new C.O., and the new guy knew nothing of what I had done. So I never got court-martialed.

Fred Gilman
Bedford

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It was the making of me

It was the beginning of a much better life than I might have lived had I never participated. I came out of nowhere and became somebody through the whole deal. I could have been left by the wayside and amounted to nothing. It was almost equivalent to a university education, for a boy who was a drop-out at the beginning. I was a sheet metal worker with the R.C.A.F., helped patch up the airplanes, on North Atlantic duty.

I was a young country boy born on a farm, frightened to death of anything that looked military, but I came through and I enjoyed every bit of it. I have no hard feelings against any of it, as a matter of fact I think it was the beginning of the making of me. I bought a piece of land under the war veterans land act, and you should see my place today.

It was the making of me. I went with the mobile recruiting unit in the province of Nova Scotia. I went to all of sixteen countries and this was a tremendous experience. I was only in my early twenties. I learned a lot in those community halls and town halls where we set up the mobile unit. I met all kinds of people - fishermen, miners, farmers. It was a tremendous experience. I learned a great deal from it.

Charles Bockus
Stanbridge East

Almelo Canteen, Holland, 1945

He never did get over it

My brother-in-law didn't talk about it much. He married my sister in Holland, then we emigrated. He was stationed in Almelo in the north-east part of the country. He was the head of the canteen. He was one of the first ones to be going over there. He joined in 1939 and was a volunteer. He didn't wait to be drafted. He was there all the five years and belonged to the Sherbrooke Fusilliers.

He didn't speak too much about it, just this one night. He used to tell about how they used to drive these tanks around. And they were sometimes told to volunteer. He would never volunteer, because he said it was always a hopeless situation. There was no sense in it at all. Usually the ones who did volunteer never came back. They shouldn't even have asked for volunteers, it was terrible to watch them get killed.

What bothered him most of all was when the other tanks were hit. To have to sit there and watch his buddies burn to death. He never hardly talked about himself, just about the other fellows.

The other thing he always hated very much was to have to find the bodies, and go through the pockets for identification, you know. And one time he had an order to do that. He dreaded it. There was one fellow and he just went to pick the leg up and place it and he ended up with a leg in his hand. It had blown off his body but was inside and there was no way of his knowing and he said he just couldn't go any further. That was the end of that.

Just this one night he was reminiscing, when we first came here - do you remember this, do you remember that, but that's the only time I ever heard it.

He was a shell-shock victim. He was very bad and never did get over it. Anything would upset him. In Holland after the seige they had been fighting for three days and three nights without sleep. There was, between the fighting, a lull and the tension was so bad the next thing, he said, everything blanked out. He can't remember nothing. He woke up in an army hospital. He'd been there for three days and never knew it. He didn't black out, he just blanked out. He doesn't remember what happened those three days at all. They told him he was a shell-shock victim.

He came back to his farm on Brown's Hill and my sister joined him later. Even after the war, when there was a celebration in our city the fireworks went off, he just went out of his skin and he didn't know what he was doing.

Irwin Vachon

He was a fine man, he's dead now. He died nine years ago in a car accident. He was still young.

I was going to school during the war. Before the Canadians, the Germans were there. It wasn't too funny. It's hard on children because you don't know why. They try to explain that there are two countries fighting, but why? Off and on I went to school. They kept taking the schools for headquarters and sleeping quarters and they would go out and have them fumigated. We'd have school maybe another half a year and then it would be the same thing again.

I had one brother and when he was fifteen he went underground. My mother wasn't going to let him go to the labour camp in Germany because it was terrible. They came back searching for him now and then, which wasn't very easy because we had a house full of underground people. My father was a night watchman, he didn't know, because if they should catch him he wouldn't be able to say anything. It wasn't exciting. The pictures make it look full of colour, but it wasn't.

We were happy to see the Canadians, but we didn't know they were Canadians - we didn't know such a place as Canada existed. We all thought they were the English people, and we were calling, 'The Tommies are coming.', and they said, 'We're not Tommies, we're Canadians.'

Mrs. Maurice Dezan
Massawippi

No choice

You want to know about my war experience. Well, I'll tell you, I fought and I fought and I fought, but they made me join up anyway.

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Rolling out the barrel

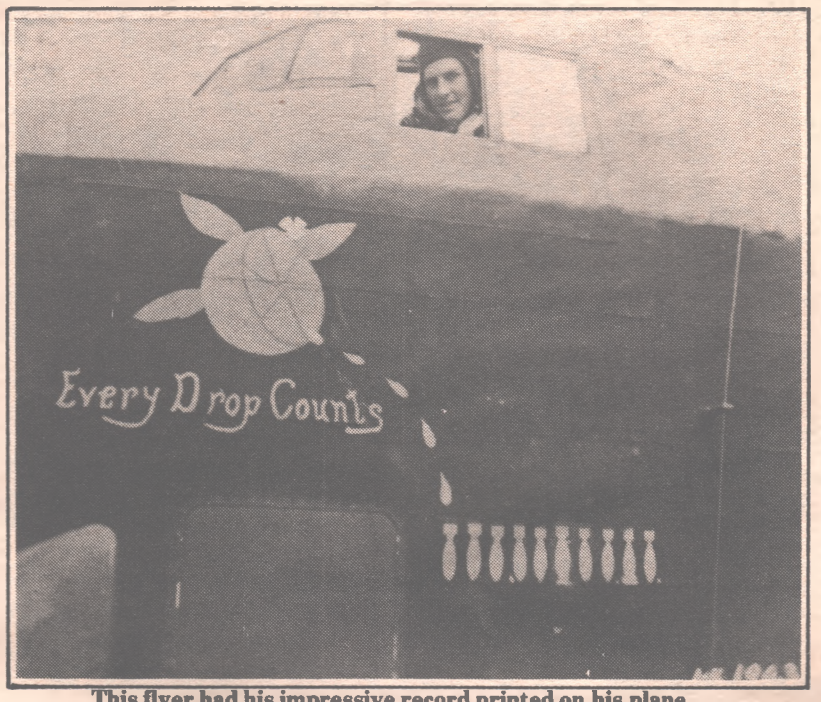
I was five years in the air force and spent three and one half of those years on the ground crew in Yorkshire, England. There might have been a few hundred men on the whole aerodrome. Some men worked on guns, some on bombs and I kept the engines built up. There was plenty of work to do because we used to fly a lot of planes. We had to load them up with bombs and then every certain number of flying hours, we'd have to do a check on the engines. Sometimes we'd change it - we didn't fool around.

About fourteen of us lived in this billet, like a shack or ising hut. We burned coal to keep it warm. When our coal pile got kind of small we used to go out at night and bring it in from the officer's hut. They ran out of coal before we did. When we finally ran out of coal we burned oil from the aircraft engines - from each oil change there was thirty gallons. Four engines was 120 gallons of oil. One day the officers came in checking the billets and one said, 'Oh, it's nice and warm in here. What are you burning?' We said we were burning oil. He says, 'Trust you Canadians to think of something like that. It's warmer in here than it is in ours.'

A big keg of beer is strong in my memories. Around Christmas time we were in Southampton and at 10:30 the pubs closed. We were feeling pretty good and wanted more to drink so we went around knocking on pub doors. There was about ten of us. One back door was open so we went in and found a thirty-six gallon barrel of beer on the floor. We rolled it right out onto the street, up a hill and in and out of ditches on the four miles back to camp. It was pouring rain and our uniforms weren't very dressed up when we got back to camp. There were a lot of spectators around when we come to tap the barrel. That was quite a good time. Afterwards we used the barrel for wood for the stove.

We had a lot of fun and good times living in England, but we had to make them ourselves. Our Canadian squadron, Number 405, had about the best record for servicability of any squadron.

Bert Mosher
Coaticook



This flyer had his impressive record printed on his plane, 8 planes downed and 2 enemy subs.

Machinist at work: Bert Mosher, hammer in hand, prepares to fix wrecked plane!

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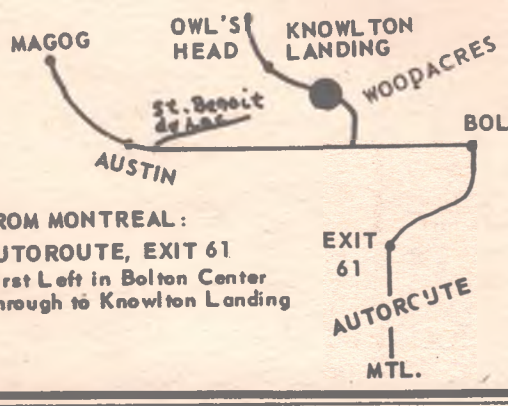

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I do not wish to discuss it. Better left alone. There are more lies than truth. No man in his right mind would discuss that part of his life. Let the dead rest in peace.

Just let's say I was one of the fortunate ones but I have scars to show for it. Just let's say the time spent in defence of your country remains a blank, but very vivid, you never forget.

Just let's say I am sorry I can't give you any information. I will tell you one thing, if you had been there, you would never forget it. Okay, I'm sorry I can't help you. I hope you understand.

Name withheld

Sabotage, death march, escape

I was a foot soldier with the Black Watch. I was injured and taken prisoner in a so-called battle. At five in the morning we attacked, somewhere around nine o'clock I was hit by something. A mortar explosion I guess. I was unconscious and I woke up at about one in the afternoon. I was laying in a field with a whole bunch of other people, with the difference that I was alive. Most of them were dead. A few hours later the place was overrun by the Germans and I was taken prisoner. I was injured in the legs, hands, and so on. They took me to a hospital in Paris and then to a prison camp.

I was quite well treated. Never beaten or anything like that. It was not quite like Hogan's Heroes, but along that principle. Of course there was a lack of food. There was no meat and a small portion of bread everyday. We ate mostly soup made from potato peelings. Lots of water, all we wanted.

I was forced to work in a coal mine for a while. I worked seven days a week, twelve hours a day. Then they put me to work in a machine shop. They found out from my service book that I had been a machinist before the war.

We did some sabotage, to sort of slow down the German war effort a bit. These other prisoners were working on the railway lines. They would smuggle the spikes to me in the machine shop. These were the spikes they used to hold the rails in place. I would take the spikes and cut them off so that they were only three inches long. Then I would smuggle them out again, and the guys would use these short spikes to hold the rails down. A train would come along, the rails would spread and the train would derail.

Other prisoners were working in a sugar beet factory. I would smuggle them three or four inch nails. They would put the nails into the raw sugar beets. The beets went through these machines to cut them up and take sugar out. When the knives in the machines hit the nails, of course the knives would break and the machine would break down. That would slow the place down for a while. We did different things like that. We did our best to do a bit of sabotage.

In the machine shop I would get news about how the war was going. We were always confident that our side was going to win. We knew that the Allies were moving in on both sides. It gave us confidence. We never felt that we were going to be there indefinitely. In fact we were surprised that we stayed there as long as we did. No way they were going to keep us there forever.

Then they put us on the Death March. The Allies were closing in from both sides, and it says in the Geneva Convention that prisoners of war must be kept as far away from the front lines of action as possible. So they took us out of the prison camp and started marching us away from the front lines. We marched for six weeks.

At first we were marching in the day, but the American planes were flying over, and they would shoot at anything that moved. So the German guards decided that we would have to march at night. In the daytime they would put us in barns and sheds until dark, and then we would start marching again. We would march to get away from the American lines, and then we would get too close to the Russian lines, so we would have to turn around and march in the other direction. We marched east, west, north and south - all in circles practically - for six weeks. We lost a lot of weight - not much to eat. We would practically march and sleep at the same time. Of course our army training had prepared us for that. The German guards were elderly, too old to fight, or missing a hand or something. We were the young people, they were old, like our father's generation. They weren't too bad with us. They realized that the war was ending and we would soon be on the other side of the guns, so they saw no point in antagonizing us. Of course sometimes you would get a bad one, but that's the same in any group.

Anyway, all this marching around in circles for six weeks, there was no sense in that. Me and this Australian guy, we said to heck with this. One night, marching in the dark, we just wandered off in another direction of our own. That was my escape - no cutting through barbed wire or anything like that, we just wandered off in the dark.

We still had our prisoner of war clothing on and we were very hungry. This was in part of Czeckoslovakia, occupied by the Germans. We just went up to houses and started knocking on doors, hoping we wouldn't get turned out. The people were very, very friendly to us. They seemed to be more on our side than on the German side. The Czech families took us in and fed us, and gave us civilian clothing, and we lived with them like part of the family.

Then the Czech underground took us over and they provided us with everything we needed. We just stayed around like that until the end of the war.

Oh yeah, if I'd have been caught, I would have been shot. Walking around in civilian clothing, they catch you, you're a dead man. I didn't worry about it then. I might now, but I'm older. I didn't look at it that way. It was an adventure. Better than being in prison camp or marching randomly around Lower Silesia.

We had no big trouble with the language. The Australian I was with, Smokey Hibbins, he was a fighter pilot who had been shot down in 1942 over Crete. So he had had time to learn a lot of German. I spoke French and a bit of German, and we had English. The Czekoslovakia we were in had been controlled by the Germans for a long time, so a lot of people spoke German there. And it's amazing what you can do with your hands - sign language. We got along alright.

After the war I stayed around for a few weeks to act as an interpreter for the American forces. Then I got shipped home. I wrote to Smokey at the address he had given me, but I never got an answer. That was the end of that.

War gave me a lot of experience. I matured at an earlier age than a lot of people would. I think it was a good experience, except for the prisoner part. But the army life is very good. I think for the younger generation, if they had a couple of years of it, it would do them a world of good, rather than doing whatever it is they are doing. It's quite an experience - the discipline is there. I think it's more educational than detrimental, that's for sure. I would go in it again, unless I was told that I was going to be a prisoner of war again.

George Barron
Magog

War accountant in the band

I was a clerk accountant and was finally commissioned and became an accountant officer. Why did I join the air force? I suppose I thought it was the thing to do. I was single, I had no ties, and my country was at war. I was going to do my bit. There was nothing to hold me back here. I had no responsibilities to wife, family or anything else, and I thought it was the thing I should do for my country.

The economics - how should I consider that? I was going into a job which paid $1.30 a day. Compared to civilian pay that was pretty small. I suppose my wage scale at the mill had been probably 80 or 90 dollars a week, plus playing in the band. I gave that up for $1.30 a day. I had my living besides,yes. I had that at home, and my car too. But we were fighting to stop a group who wanted to take over and dominate the rest of the world.

I arrived at Manning Depot in Toronto. Well, the first day I was there, the dance band rehearsed in the Tanbark - that's the Horse Palace at the C.N. Exibition grounds. So I went over there during noon hour and listened to the band rehearse. When they finished the rehearsal and everybody was going back to work, I didn't have any parade, so I went up to the stand. The pianist was still working on some arrangements and there was an alto sax lying on top of the piano. I went up and started to talk to him. His name was Frank Hammon . I asked him whose horn it was. He said, 'It belongs to the band. Do you play one of those things?' and I said, 'I do a bit, ya.'

'Try it.'

So I took the horn down and tried to blow on it, and he said, 'What do you want to play?'

'I don't care. Anything. One of the old standards. It doesn't make any difference.'

He said, 'What key do you like?'

'I don't care, you play, I'll hang on.' So we started a session of our own there.

He said, 'What squadron are you in?'

'Recruit squadron.'

'You were, you are now in Headquarter's squadron. Come on down to the orderly room and I'll make the switch.'

So I went down to the head orderly room and made the switch, and I was taken out of the Recruit squadron and put into Headquarters squadron. The difference was that I didn't have to go out on parades. I was still getting the same training as everybody else was getting at Manning Depot; all your drills and all that sort of stuff. But I didn't have to go out with the Recruit squadron anymore. My parade time was taken up by playing in the band.

I went home on the train, picked up my car and a couple of horns, and drove back to Toronto. I went right into the band then. Played lead sax with the band all that summer. We were on the air through the two weeks of Canadian National Exibition. We broadcast every afternoon. We were on stage at the C.N.E. and most of that summer we had gone out playing all over the country, for dances, country clubs and pavilions, and played for the public, sure. Paid for by the air force as part of their recruiting programme. It was advertised as the RCAF band, No. I Manning Depot.

That's what we did all summer long. I missed about five drafts to take my course in accounts because they wanted me to stay at least until the C.N.E. was over, so as soon as the exibition was over I got my posting up at St. Thomas to take my course. That wasn't until October.

The War's Over!

I happened to be in air force headquarters when VE Day was declared. We knew how the war had been going and we had been expecting this surrender at any moment. We were just waiting for it from day to day over a period of three or four days. Finally the news came to us the afternoon of the day that the surrender took place in Europe. We were notified officially, of course, that the war was over. There was Victory in Europe on this day.

There was terrific celebration, of course, and in London there was really terrific celebration. It meant an awful lot to those people because they were right in it all the time ever since 1939. So they were certainly dancing in the streets.

There was great celebration. You couldn't move through Picadilly Square, you just couldn't move. The pressure of humanity - you could've dropped a sixpence on the street and it wouldn't have reached the pavement for ten minutes. It was an absolute crush of humanity, just swaying back and forth, hooting and hollering and cheering and singing. No, there was no chance for any speakers that day. It was just humanity letting themselves loose, and they let themselves loose. It was just an absolute crush of humanity. I had my glasses broken. The straps on the sleeves of my trench coat were both pulled off and my tunic was split open, just trying to get down the tube.

There were flags in the air. There was everything in the air that a person could throw in the air. It was absolute bedlam. Imagine those people who for six years had had air attacks, bombing raids, fires, everything under the sun, 24 hours a day. And when it was all over, they just had to let loose.

Well, I stayed in England a year after the war ended, VE Day, because air force headquarters in London administered the whole RCAF activity in the European theatre of war. Well, not only European, it went to the Middle East. Gradually, we started to close all these units. I was in accounts and we had to account for everything there was, all the equipment that was used by the RCAF, everything but that in the Far East. We had to account for even the cups and saucers in the Sargent's Mess. All the paperwork came back to headquarters in London. All these people, after they closed their units, went to a repat depot and were sent home. I stayed until the end, until the last thing had been done. Cab Calloway, he was Flight Lieutenant Calloway, called 'Cab' after the musician, stayed over there with 13 men, a unit of 14 people and their last job was to clean out the officers' bank accounts. Now, some of these fellows could never be traced, they were missing in action. But it was all closed out before I came home at the end of June. I reached Repat Manning Depot in Lachine. I got a discharge. I was sent home. Even though I was discharged according to the people at Lachine, at air force headquarters, I was still on strength. So I came home for a month's leave and at the end of the month's leave I was posted again and had to go to Trenton, then up to Clinton, Ontario. I stayed on to close out Clinton, then came back to be married. Yes, we decided to get married during that month's leave. I'd been writing to her, sure, of course, all the time I'd been overseas. I asked her to marry me before I left. She said no. She said it wouldn't be fair. She said if we felt the same way when I came back, we'd see. She went her own way here, and I went my own way there and when I came home, it was just a couple of days before we were engaged.

Carl Griffith
North Hatley

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Gentlemen, you have lived through a war

I was in the artillery in the war, fifth armoured division. I served in Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, all the big battles along the way. I was an officer, a captain.

I joined up early in the war. It seemed to be the patriotic thing to do at that time. I joined the cadets and then ended up overseas. I fought the battles on the Hitler line, the attack on Rome, right up to the Adriatic Sea. Then the final battles in France, to the end of the war in Holland.

I was wounded in Italy. We were attacking the Hitler line in the northern part of Italy, actually it was just opposite the Rubicon River. Alexander crossed the Rubicon, but I didn't. We were being shelled and an enemy artillery shell landed about ten feet away from me. It hit me in the neck and broke my jaw. They put me in the hospital for three months and then three days after they let me out, I was back at the front.

Not long after I was wounded, an embarrassing incident happened to me. I was walking along between two rows of guns, down the path to have dinner, when suddenly the artillery started firing. It was our own guns firing, right beside me, but I dived into the ditch. The guys all laughed at me, saying don't you know the difference between our guns and the enemy any more?

Another time, I was in Rome on leave, and I was walking through a tunnel with another Canadian officer. Now the Italian cars at that time were charcoal powered, and they back-fired a lot. A car drove up behind us and backfired, and both of us dived into the gutter. Two brave and finely dressed Canadian officers spread in the gutter, for fear of a car. It shows you what your reactions are after you have been on the front lines for a while.

The Canadian Army was a professional army, well trained, doing a job that they knew how to do. I remember the comradeship very well.

My function as an artillery officer was looking after a battery of self-propelled guns, eight guns, two troops of four, and 155 men.

You always remember the happy things and forget the unpleasant things. Action in snow and rain and mud, with people shooting at you, it wasn't very pleasant.

One of the most vivid impressions that was left on me was when I lost a tank. It was below Rome, we were on our way up Highway 5 to Rome. We were being shelled by batteries of enemy artillery, I, as an observation officer, had to locate this battery so that we could neutralize it and our tanks could advance. I approached this farm. They all had conical haystacks over there in Italy. The German tanks would hollow out the centre of a haystack and back a tank into it. So from a distance you could see only a haystack and not a tank. So we came around a bend in the road and there was a German tank in the haystack. I saw the gun, but we couldn't back up out of the way quick enough and we took a shell right in the centre of our tank. I was blown out of the hatch, and the four other occupants of my tank were killed. That was unpleasant. Those four guys were part of my crew. We had been together for two and a half years. It would take too long for me to tell you all the unpleasant things.

That kind of thing had a personal effect on you, but at the same time, they would give you another crew and another tank, and you still got a job to do. If you let it bother you, well, they would ship you home as a psycho.

The young re-inforcements coming in, some of them cracked under the strain. Some could and some couldn't. If you were being shelled, it was very unpleasant, very frightening, very unsettling. You had to get used to it, you had to forget about it almost as soon as it happened. It's pretty hard to explain these things, you have to live through it to know.

I don't think about the war much except when I meet someone else who was in it. There were a lot of unpleasant things that you forget - being shelled, pinned down, you can't do much about it. Saw a jeep pull out with a couple of friends in it and BOOM there's no more jeep - hit a land mine.

The Germans had Moaning Minnies - it was mortar, and when it went through the air, it moaned. It was a cannister with a couple of hundred small grenades in it that exploded on contact. One of these went down the turret of one of the tanks in my group. Five men in it, were just splattered all over the walls of the tank. Not a very pleasant memory.

We lost one of our own dispatch riders. We were driving tanks cross country in Italy, at night, raining, mud, and he had a motorcycle and we had all these tracked vehicles. His duty was to follow rear of the squadron, but somehow he got between two tanks, and we never did find him. Apparently the tanks ran over him. We found pieces of the motorcycle buried in the mud. There's a lot of those stories.

We were billeted in Cumines, Belgium for eight weeks waiting to be re-equipped to join the battle in Holland. Now those people in that town took us over like we were their lost sons. They had waited four years under the occupation, and they were all prepared to celebrate their liberation and welcome their liberators. But they were liberated by a British group, who were in a hurry to go further up the line. The British drove through the town at 30 m.p.h. with just a wave and didn't stop. Then we moved in and stayed for eight weeks. We benefitted by that, because we were the first liberators who stayed there. A big celebration, a fantastic time, they adopted the whole regiment.

It was very pleasant in Holland. The Canadians liberated that whole country, and the people there adopted us with open arms. It was one of the few places where a good majority of the people spoke English. In Belgium and France I was the only officer in the whole regiment who could speak French.

The proverbial question the Dutch always asked us was, 'When are you going to fight and fight the Russians?' We said, 'We are all volunteers, we are not professional soldiers, and as soon as this war is over we are going back home. We have no urge to do any more fighting.'

But the war was an experience, for anyone who lived through it, that if you had the chance to do it again, you probably would. There are very few times in a lifetime that you can do something like that. It's an experience that you don't hope for, and I wouldn't wish it on anyone, but it's an experience that you gain a lot out of.

People say, you missed five or six years of your life. I say, no, it was an experience that most people can't get. Not a pleasant experience.

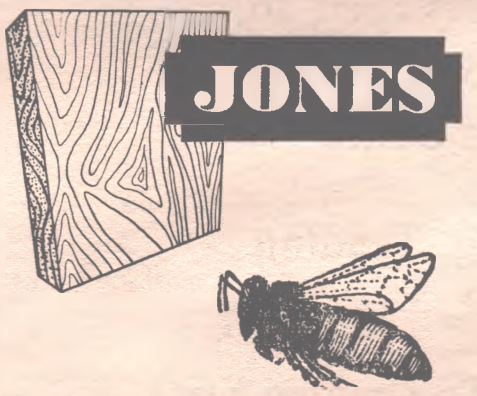
You mature quickly. You react to a situation a lot more quickly than other people would. You have to make a decision, you make it quickly, you don't ponder over whether it is yes or no. You gotta do something, you do it. The most pleasant part of the whole war was the end of it.

There is an order in artillery, when you have to stop firing at one gun position and move to another position, it's called 'Cease firing'. You pack up your guns and move to another position and start firing again.

But the order given at an end of a war is 'Cease fire'. When you're in action in artillery you're always hoping to hear that last order come over the radio. 'Cease fire.' It means the war's over.

When the Cease fire order came in Holland, we had a big celebration, and the general got up and spoke and I found that his words were very appropriate. He finished by saying, 'Gentlemen, you have lived through a war.'

Harry Blain
Sherbrooke



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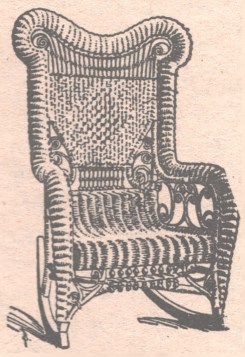

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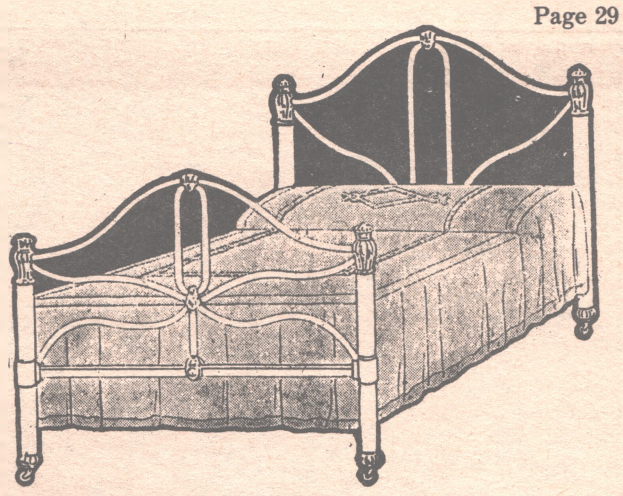

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CHRISTMAS SALES

Christmas Craft Sale from 10 a.m., Nov. 13 to 7 p.m., Nov. 14 at Brome Lake County Inn, Knowlton, Quebec (Autoroute Exit 52). Fifty Artisans. Free admission. Smorgasbord 6-10 p.m. Info. - 243-6353 or 539-3569.

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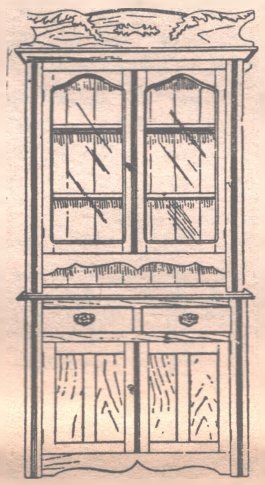

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War in a Rear view Mirror

by Ronald Sutherland

The Naked and the Dead, Bridge Over the River Kwai, From Here to Eternity, Catch 22– these are the novels which, I suppose, with a little prodding from the movie industry, are most likely to come to mind when one thinks about literature and the Second World War. No Canadian author has ever achieved notable fame as a war novelist; yet Canada has in fact produced a number of excellent war novels in both English and French. It is fitting, therefore, to have a look at war in the Canadian novelists' rearview mirror.

The effects of war are recorded in different ways. Part of the story is told by statistics. The number of dead and wounded in a battle, the amount of proerty destroyed, the ships sunk, the plans shot down, the tonnage of bombs dropped- figures can stagger the imagination. The larger statistics--6,000,000 Jews exterminated, 24,133 ships lost at sea, 15,300,000 soldiers killed and wounded, 42,022 Canadian servicemen lost on active service– these statistics can stun the mind to the point of incomprehension. The larger the number, the vaguer it must be and the more removed from understandable reality. And that is where the writers come in.

The function of a good war writer is to bring us back to the grim reality in terms we can grasp, in ways that we can feel. Instead of strategy and numbers, he examines the effects of war on the individual, on the human being who, willingly or unwillingly, has been drawn into one of the most intense and traumatic experiences possible in life. And the writer's function takes on added importance today, considering that in general two generations of Canadians have not known that experience.

The Canadian who performed the function, performed it well. Among them is Lionel Shapiro, who wrote three books: **The Sealed Verdict**, **Torch for a Dark Journey** and **the Sixth of June**. Hugh Garner described six days on a Canadian corvette in **Storm Below**. Ralph Aled probed the whole question of propoganda and truth in his **Homemade Banners**, and Norman Levine's **The Angled Road** is about an airman trying to understand himself. In his comic novel **Turvey**, Earle Birney looked at the funny side of war, but did not escape the tragic. Jean-Jules Richard's **Neuf Jours de haine** deals with the bitter transformation war can produce on the personality, while William Allister's **A Handful of Rice** is a shattering and unflattering account of Canadians in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp in Malaya, an experience which the author and a few others captured at Hong Kong somehow managed to live through.

Perhaps the best of Canadian war novels, in fact ranking with the best of all war novels, are Colin McDougall's **Execution** and Jean Vaillancourt's **Les Canadiens errants**. In these books the whole spectrum of emotions caused by war is dramatically presented.

The effects of the pressure of war and killing, of course, vary from one individual to another, and these variations are duly and often sensitively registered in the war novels. At the same time, reading these books, one sees that there are certain common patterns of behaviour. The first common effect, for instance, is excitement, exhilaration. It would appear that war can appeal to man's desire for adventure and romance. Here is Colin McDougall, in **Execution**, describing the reaction of a Canadian soldier landing in Sicily:

'Weapons cradled in their arms, Lieutenant Adam and his force moved steadily through the parkland. Their steps were cushioned on pine needles. It was quiet in this forest world; noise from outside, like the far-off clatter of machine-gun fire, sounded muffled and remote. Birds sang from the branches overhead.

Adam's step was sure and alert. His whole being was concentrated on the purpose ahead, but today his mind was so brilliantly quick and alive that not even this hugely important first attack was sufficient to contain it. His mind clamoured with the wonder and excitement of all that had happened since the assault last night... John Adam thought of himself as a solid, practical person, not given to fanciful flights, but he found mad grandeur in the concept that cities would be made funeral pyres to accomplish the invaders' purpose. This was a night when irresistibly wild poetry rode at sea.'

It is probably true that a lot of young Canadians entered the war innocently, convinced that they were on God's side and that He was on theirs. Thus they could find 'mad gradeur' in watching a city burn, even though they understood people were burning too. Like the bombardier who presses a button to release a ton of explosives, they were at a comfortable distance. **Execution** goes on to describe a padre's reaction to the first events of battle:

'But next he saw John Adam, his friend, standing with his captured charger, surrounded by his victory-flushed men, and admiration swelled inside him to the exclusion of everything else. The affair became something exhilarating...They were here on God's errand, and they were doing men's work. These were exciting times, and he was glad to be living them.'

Unfortunately, the gladness, the romance, the initial excitement and exhilaration of war do not last long. They soon give way to the realization of the seriousness of affairs, of the fact that war is not a game but a matter of life and death, and of life constantly in the face of death. In **The Sixth of June**, a black date for the Canadian forces, Lionel Shapiro captures the essence of the sobering realization:

'It was as though the light breeze weaving in off the Channel had been whispering ominously. The atmosphere on the docks was heavy with foreboding.

Medical officers, nursing sisters, and orderlies stood about in small silent groups in the warming sun outside the three huge tents of the casuality clearing station which had been set up during the night. Senior officers, some with red tabs on their lapels and wearing handsome glengarries, peered out to sea from the edge of the landing stage. The townfolk were lined along the sea wall, their faces scrubbed and solemn as on a churchgoing day. Even the children frolicking in the streets behind the sea wall seemed to understand they must not laugh or shout...

A Canadian brigadier, tall and slim and crisply handsome, shaded his eyes as he looked out to sea. 'The battle is still enganged,' he said curtly, 'heavily engaged.' He walked a piece down the landing stage in a clear manoeuvre to avoid further inquiry... Two jeep-loads of war correspondents and photographers roared in, looked about, and roared away, but not before they had left a rumor in their wake that the first news would soon break on the wireless. By the time it came, almost everyone in the dock area had converged on the signals shed.

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'The Prime Minister has just informed the House of Commons,' and immaculate BBC voice announced, 'that shortly before dawn this morning a strong Canadian force, joined by small elements of British troops and escorted by ships of the Royal Navy, drove onto the French coast in the vicinity of Dieppe.'

Dieppe - a small coastal town on the Channel which had hitherto meant nothing to the average Canadian - the name still rings with tragedy and bitterness. Who was responsible for the senseless slaughter? Why were young men from across the nation sent to make their way up open beaches against machine-gun fire from concrete pillboxes? Were those in command still brilliant to the tops of their boots, as Churchill is said to have remarked of General Douglas Haig in the First World War? Is it true that rawboned Canadian troops, restless, bored and eager for action, were terrorizing the English communities where their training camps were located, and that Churchill himself decided to teach them a lesson? If so, some lesson.

But whatever the case, after the exhilaration, then the realization of seriousness, it is only a matter of time until the war produces the effect of crushing disillusionment. The traditional values, the hallowed notions of courage, goodness, justice, decency and mercy are shattered as flesh and bones are shattered indiscriminately by exploding shells. Now the predominant factor is the basic urge to survive. The war novels illustrate that men confronted with brutality are invariably reduced to performing the same kind of brutality. War can cause a man to discover the bestiality within himself, something which may have remained hidden under normal circumstances of a reasonably tranquil and conventional life, the office, the commuter train, the Christmas party. In McDougall's **Execution**, the brutality begins when Canadian soldiers, on orders from headquarters, must shoot two innocent and confused Italians who have been more or less adopted as mascots of the unit. When a German prisoner spits in the face of Lanthier, one of the characters in Vaillancourt's novel **Les Canadiens errants**, he reacts as follows:

'Ah, mon enfant-de-chienne!' he hissed. He had grabbed his Sten by the strap, breaking a branch off a tree as he swung it through the air. He smashed it into the face of his insulter, knocking him to the ground. Lanthier pointed the barrel at the man's chest and pressed the trigger until the clip was empty. The German's body quivered, then for a few moments went through a hideous convulsion, twisting like a worm. Finally it lay still.'

Once he has been reduced to brutality, a man can lose all faith in himself and in the human race. He can become a killing machine, like many of the characters described in Canadian war novels. The way back to the human race then becomes extremely difficult, impossible for some. A temporary solution to the problem is simply to become an automaton following orders, asking no questions and seeking no understanding of the meaning of it all. In fact, life itself must be treated as meaningless. At this stage, even the desire to live can flicker out. William Allister, in his **A Handful of Rice**, provides precise illustration:

'The column of struggling prisoners halted. They were divided in groups. Along with a dozen others, Tony was herded against a wall. A machine-gun was placed before them and, in sign language, they were motioned to say their prayers. Tony's dulled brain accepted the act as normal. They would be shot. They would be changed from the living to the dead. It would be right and good. His pain would end. His thirst, his fatigue, his fear of death, his questions, all the horror, would end. He would rest.

Someone was praying in French beside him, loudly, without inhibition, a chant whose rhythm was broken by harsh barking sobs. Some wept softly in animal pain. Others merely gazed before them with relaxed, mindless patience. Tony's hysteria, his nausea, were long past.

He was too tired, too tired to think. He could hardly remember his name or how he came to be here. Must end it, end it, was his only pale desire.'

Like Dostoyevski, William Allister knew - he had seen the pale horse with the pale rider. At the lowest ebb, then, life is stripped of its meaning and is not worth hanging onto. All the old values, the values learned at home, at school and in church in a faraway and long-ago Canada, do not make any sense any more, except to provide something to do while waiting to be shot. In a brilliant and moving episode, Colin McDougall dramatizes the depth of nothingness a man can reach, and how some, the lucky ones, can find their way back up. John Adam, McDougall's protagonist, picks up a young Italian girl who is keeping her family from starvation by the only means possible - prostitution:

'He had her in her own bedroom that afternoon, in half darkness with the shutters closed, while her parents and brothers sat gravely in other rooms of the apartment... There had even been a formal offer of wine; and that - for a blazing moment - sent Adam blindly, furiously mad with anger...' The daughter of the house represented the family's capital: they sent her out to earn the food they must eat... But Adam's anger cooled. What the hell, he thought, much worse things than this happen in wartime... He declined the offer of wine and followed Elena into her room... She spoke more English than he did Italian, but now:

'Te amo,' Elena said. 'I love you.'

Adam ignored this. Unresisted, his hand voyaged up and down her trembling body.

'Say it,' she said, half moaning, half tearful. 'Say Io te amo.'

'Go to hell,' said Adam, going on with what he was doing. He felt her sobbing under his hands. Then Adam looked into her eyes; he saw the magnitude of her shame, and suddenly he understood... She wanted to pretend that he was the man who might, under other, better circumstances, have been her lover.

'Elena,' he said. He spoke softly; it was the first time he had used her name. 'Elena. All right. All right then - Io te amo.'

It was pretence, but he had given her something; and oddly, he felt better at once, as though he had also given something to himself.'

McDougall's character John Adam learns that even at its worst, under conditions of war which deprave and degrade human beings, life can still be bearable if one retains a thread of compassion for others and a trace of human dignity. In a war the individual can be reduced to the lowest level of existence, but within himself he has the power to lift himself up again.

Then comes the final stage of the war's effect on people - readjustment to ordinary civilian life when the fighting is all over. Some soldiers, as can be seen in Vaillancourt's **Les Canadiens errants**, will never be able to readjust. They have seen too much. They have psychologically crippled. Others have been crippled in different ways, as Earle Birney's **Turvey** in a passage which slips from comedy to tragedy, poignantly illustrates:

'Nor does the bombardier smile when he is lifted into a stretcher and carried out to the town of his mother and his wife. And this is rather unsporting of him, for he could laugh, and at least he might say goodbye to all his mates. The doctors have said that he could be walking about and enjoying life if he would only snap out of himself, and they are hoping a few weeks of psychiatric care in a hospital near home will make him right, or almost right. For the only things missing about the bombardier are his testicles.'

But despite the ravages of war, life must go on. When the war has ended, the fortunate ones come home, never to be quite the same perhaps, but having no choice but to carry on as best they can. To begin with at least, there is the pleasant feeling of relief, the joy of reunion, the parade of victory. Hugh MacLennan, in his novel **Two Solitudes**, tells about the homecoming:

'... They were returning to what they thought was good because it had been familiar. When their ships drew in to Halifax, they smelled their country before it rose to them over the horizon, and their nostrils dilated to the odour of balsam blown out to sea from the evergreen forests that cover most of Nova Scotia like a shaggy hide... They paraded through the city, and on the reviewing stand on Sherbrooke Street generals with red tabs and red officer-faces and politicians with grey faces and silk hats saluted them... They marched through Montreal, and the pipers played them along with **The Blue Bonnets** and **The Hundred Pipers**, and before the French-Canadian regiment the band played **Sambre et Meuse**.

The women were the ones you noticed in the crowd, for the day was more theirs than the troops. You could see the tight, grey faces of the ones whose men were not there, and you could also see an unusually naked expression in the others. These strained for the sight of a single man, eyes leaping to the familiar face when it marched into view while in a private agony each woman hoped to find it the same, still lovable, able to be magnetized back to the cage again from what it had seen and where it had been, from the horror and the hunting and the Champs Elysées and Regent Street, to the suburban house and the tenement, the groceries, doctor's bills, insurance premiums, pay cheques, slippers before the fire and three square meals a day.'

Hugh MacLennan thus brings us back to the gladness, completing the circle. And together, as I have tried to let the books themselves illustrate, Canadian war novels cover all the segments of the circle. They provide a total and powerful expression of war - its thrills, its horrors, its glory, its boredom, its madness, and ironically, its momentary periods of profound peace.

photo by Roseann Hutchinson

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The Heroes of Hong Kong

by Bernard Epps

Garrison Duty

In the early years of World War II many young men of the Eastern Townships, both French and English, joined the Royal Rifles headquartered in Quebec.

The Royal Rifles was an old and honourable battalion. It was formed in 1862 from six independent companies and won battle honours in the South African War and again in World War I at Ypres, Festubert, Mount Sorrel, the Somme, Arras and Amiens. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the battalion was placed on active duty once more, mobilized in May of 1940 and sent to garrison duty in Newfoundland. In October, 1941, the Royal Rifles embarked for further garrison duty in Hong Kong where, within a month of landing, it was completely and utterly destroyed.

Lest we forget - this Remembrance Day - this is their story once again.

Those who had joined to help smash 'the Hun' could not help but be disappointed at being sent so far from war. The fighting, that autumn, was raging in North Africa and on the sea-roads of the Atlantic. The Japanese, while rather an unpleasant lot, were far from dangerous because they had been involved in a war with China for four long years and were skirmishing with Russia on the borders of Manchukuo and Outer Mongolia. Britain, the United States and Holland were enforcing an embargo to cut off all oil supplies but Japan's earlier alliance with Germany had been all but destroyed by Hitler's non-agression pact with Russia. In this autumn of 1941, then, General Tojo was busily negotiating with the United States to have the oil embargo lifted.

Britain requested two battalions to reinforce the four Commonwealth battalions already stationed in Hong Kong but this was purely a precautionary measure. The Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Quebec Royal Rifles were selected and thus went from garrison duty in Newfoundland to garrison duty in Hong Kong half a world away.

They embarked from Vancouver on October 27th, 1941, aboard a converted passenger liner, the Awatea, and steamed leisurely across the Pacific. On the 16th of November they landed in Hong Kong and were introduced to the complex of military barracks at Sham Shui Po on Kowloon Peninsula. The First Middlesex had been there for three years and were enjoying every minute of it.

It was a fine place to be - particularly after the cold bareness of Newfoundland. Everything was dirt-cheap. The beer was cold and the girls were warm. Many of the old hands even had **amahs** - Chinese house servants - to do their laundry and cook their meals and make their beds. The streets were teaming with rickshas, exotic spices, antique porcelains, silks and jade. There was golf, good restaurants, horse-racing and the bars of Wan Chai were the 'World of Suzie Wong' - and Betsy Hoo, Totty Chen, Maisie Fong, Lucy Sen. These nineteen hundred and fifty-six raw Canadians, said the First Middlesex, were in for the time of their lives.

Hong Kong is a crowded complex of some 240 islands with Kowloon and Victoria as the principal cities facing each other across a mile of water. Britain had wrested Hong Kong Island from China in 1841 - a hundred years before - to protect the Empire's interest in the opium trade. The Kowloon Peninsula was added to the colony in 1860 and the New Territories leased for 99 years beginning in 1898. There were three hundred and ninety-eight square miles in all the colony - about the size of Montreal and Laval together.

For three splendid weeks the Canadians never had it so good, but on December 8th sixty thousand veteran Japanese troops burst screaming out of China and fell ferociously on the garrison.

Pearl Harbour had been attacked the day before and landings were simultaneously taking place in Malaya but nobody yet quite understood the suddeness of Japan's entry into all-out war. The code-word for the attack on the American fleet in Hawaii had been 'Tora! Tora! Tora!' Against the unsuspecting Commonwealth garrison in Hong Kong it was 'Hana-Saku! Hana-Saku!' 'Flowers abloom! Flowers abloom!'

The red and fiery flowers of war!

The Battle

Thirty-six Japanese fighter-bombers attacked the Kai Tak airstrip and destroyed the ancient five-plane airforce on the ground in minutes. Thereafter they were free to bomb and strafe at will. They fully intended to overrun the colony and destroy the puny garrison in two or three days.

Three Commonweath battalions and sixteen guns remained on Kowloon Peninsula to delay the advance as long as possible while munition dumps were blown and harbour installations destroyed or dismantled. The rest were hastily withdrawn to Hong Kong Island - the Canadians among them - and prepared to dig in and make a stand. The Royal Rifles were poorly trained as yet and ill-equipped. Their vehicles had still to arrive from Vancouver and they had mortars that had never once been fired due to lack of ammunition.

The units of Kowloon fought bravely for three full days but were beaten steadily back with appalling losses. On December 11th, under cover of night, they made the dangerous crossing to Hong Kong Island and brought with them hair-raising tales of atrocities and horror.

To the Governor, Sir Mark Young, and to the defenders, Winston Churchill wired this message the following morning;

'We are all watching day by day and hour by hour your stubborn defence of the port and fortress of Hong Kong...All ours hearts are with you in your ordeal. Every day of your resistance brings nearer our certain final victory!'

The Japanese set up their batteries and systematically pounded the island while bombing and strafing the defenders from the air. Men and supplies poured into the colony from China to aid the assault while the Allies had not the slightest hope of relief or reinforcement. They were on the wrong side of the world. They were in a hopelessly untenable position, yet when the Japanese attempted to cross the strait on December 15th, they were ruthlessly beaten back by the Royal Rifles and their mates. When they demanded surrender on December 17th, they were as ruthlessly rejected. The following day they crossed the water in force and could not be stopped.

Churchill wired the Governor again.

'There must be no thought of surrender. Every part of the island must be fought and the enemy resisted with the utmost stubborness. The enemy should be compelled to expend the utmost life and equipment. There must be vigourous fighting in the inner defences and, if need be, from house to house. Every day that you are able to maintain your resistance you help the Allied cause all over the world.'

The situation was hopeless yet these orders were obeyed to the letter. The Royal Rifles was strung out along a fifteen mile line from Lye Mun Passage to the Stanley Peninsula and fighting everywhere. C Company was sent to defend Sai Wan Hill. They drove the enemy off the slopes but could not keep the crest, and the battle see-sawed back and forth until they were ordered to withdraw. Other Rifles held 1700 foot high Mount Parker until they were driven off with heavy casualities. They were driven remorselessly southward toward Stanley.

Three times the Japanese demanded surrender. Three times they were rejected. More and more troops poured onto the island with more and more supplies yet still they had to battle the defenders for every inch of ground.

And among these stubborn defenders was the Canadian private who complained he'd had only 30 days training.

'I learned how to salute,' he said. 'I learned how to turn right, turn left, but I never fired a shot before I got here!'

And the corporal who taught one man how to load and fire behind battalion headquarters only to see him killed before he had a chance to use this new-found knowledge.

And a British sergeant who found men hurling hand-grenades without knowing enough to pull the pin.

'Wot you tryin' to do? he screamed at them in sheer frustration. 'It 'im in the 'ead with it?'

And yet they fought. And yet they held.

A machine-gun crew fired their weapon until the water boiled in the cooling-jacket and then carefully dismantled the thing and threw the pieces into the sea before retreating.

Brigadier-General J.K. Lawson, another Canadian, reported that his headquarters was overrun and that hand-to-hand combat was taking place all around him. 'I'm going outside to fight it now,' he concluded and immediately did so, blazing away with a revolver in each hand until he was killed.

Food and water were cut off. Ammunition was running out. They hadn't a dog's chance and knew it. They were driven back to Stanley where they took up positions in the prision and in the old fort and still they fought back. They even managed an occasional counter-attack and won a few hand-to-hand battles.

The Japanese had thought to overrun the colony and destroy all resistance in two or three days yet it took them seventeen-and-a-half days of hard and costly fighting before the defenders finally gave up.

On Christmas Day, at 3:15 in the afternoon, General Maltby reluctantly ordered the surviving heroes to lay down their arms and surrender.

Exhausted soldiers were rounded up and herded into Stanley barracks. The wounded were dispatched with bayonets.

On Boxing Day they were ordered to bury their dead and they found not less than one-quarter of the garrison had been killed - three thousand men - including two-hundred and ninety Canadians.

Prison

The barrack complex at Sham Shui Po was turned into a prison camp but there was little left of the comfortable place the First Middlesex had enjoyed for three years. Japanese soldiers and Chinese looters had taken furniture, fittings, even the windows and doors.

The Royal Rifles arrived in April of 1942 and were crowded into North Point Camp. This was a collection of raw wooden huts once used to house Chinese deserters but the Japanese had stabled their horses there. It was full of rotting manure, dead horses, flies, garbage, rats, filth and disease. Fifty men died in the first three months of that garbage strewn misery.

The camp commandant was a fat and porcine Colonel Tokunaga - immediately christened 'The White Pig' by the British. Since he spoke no English, he employed an interpreter named Nimori Genichirio who had spent twenty years in Ohio and was addicted to slang. 'Hot-diggity-do!' he'd cry when something delighted him. 'Oh, baby!' The prisoners named him 'Panama Pete'.

Captain Saito, the camp medical

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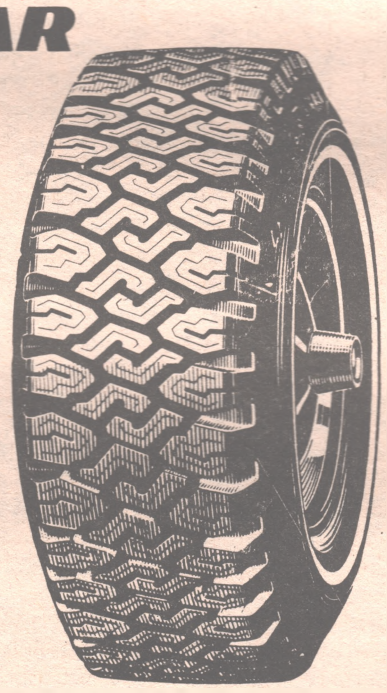

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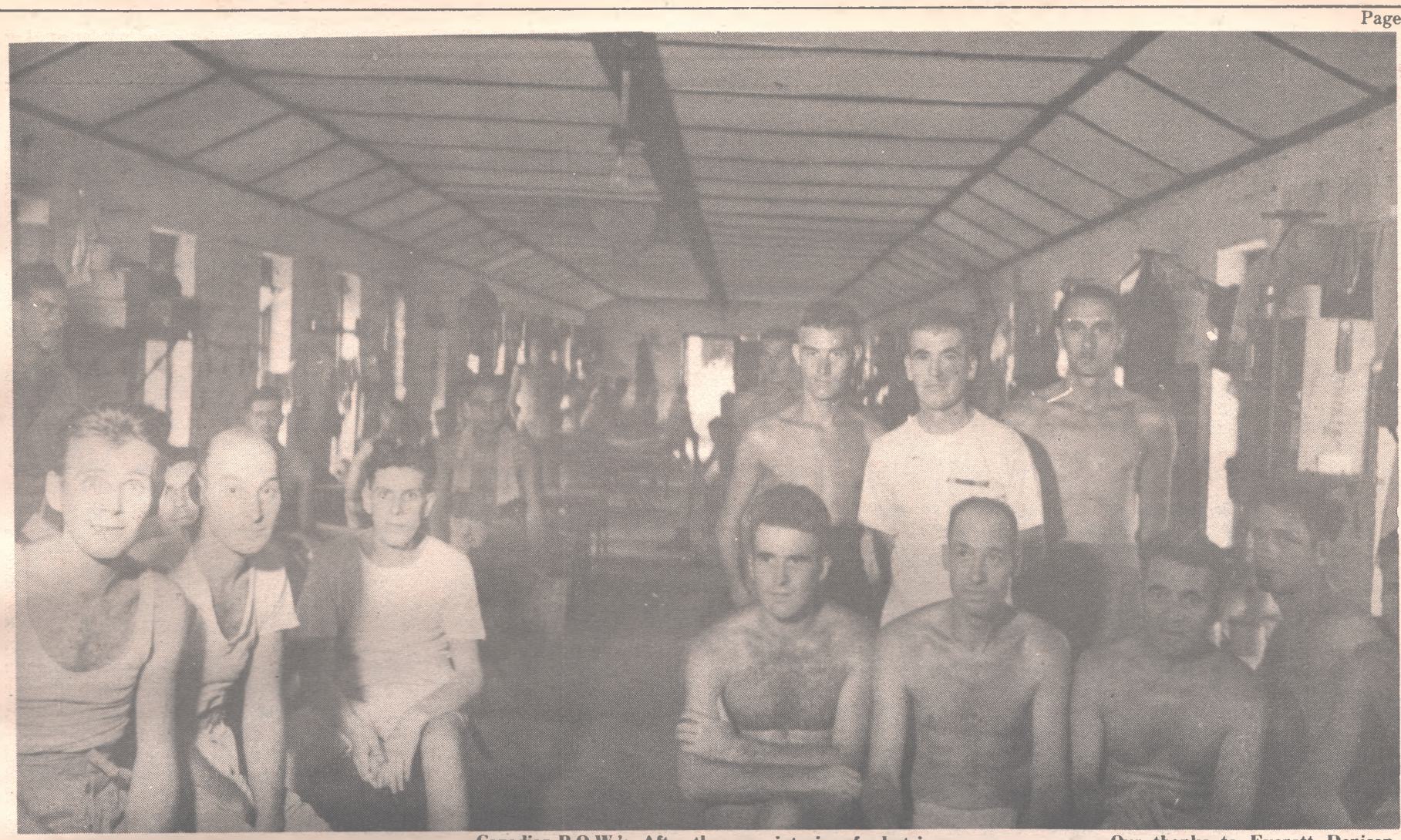

Canadian P.O.W.'s. After the war - interior of a hut in Sham Shui Po Camp No. 5 Kowloon, China.

Our thanks to Everett Denison who loaned to us many of the rare and interesting photos of the Hong Kong experience which appear in this section.

officer, wanted nothing at all to do with the filthy prisoners and their own doctors had little or no supplies. Anaesthetic was sometimes administered with cotton batten soaked in chloroform and held in a perforated tin can. Operations were performed with a common razor blade. Captain Bush of the Royal Canadian Medical Corps did what he could but fought a losing battle against a rising tide of disease - malaria, beri beri, pellagra, amoebic and bacillic dysentry, diptheria, colitis, tuberculosis, enteritis and a painful condition they christened 'Hong Kong Hot-Foot.' Oh, but there were so many ways to die.

Breakfast was rice and boiled vegetables. Supper was boiled vegetables and rice. Of lunch there was none. The rice was often crawling with insects and the 'veg.' was mostly carrot or potato tops or just plain grass. Once in a while they got a bit of ancient fish or a little peanut oil and occasionally a sympathetic Chinese would toss a sort of small doughnut over the fence. The prisoners named this a 'Dysentry Bun' for its remarkable laxative properties and yet they fought over each such offering with mad desperation.

A truck drove into camp one day with twenty pigs aboard destined for the kitchen of the guards. The motor stalled, the tailboard fell open and the solitary guard was bowled over by all that escaping pork. By the time he had fully recovered his senses, there wasn't a live pig in camp. By the time the search was organized, there were only a few well gnawed knuckles about.

A Labrador Retriever strayed inside the wire but did not wander far. It was pronounced by the lucky gourmets to be filling but a trifle oversweet.

A Dachshund met the same fate and reminded everyone of sausage. Rats were a little too tough but cats, everyone said, were delicious.

Most of the prisoners went bare-footed or wore crude wooden clogs. Some wore nothing but a **fanduchi** - a sort of diaper generally rigged out with a quick release mechanism. Bedbugs and lice were prolific and general. Cigarettes were the accepted currency and these a very strong Japanese brand named Kooas.

The Canadians were worked as coolies - hauling baskets of earth to rebuild Kai Tak Airstrip or preparing and tending a gigantic vegetable garden for Colonel Tokunaga and his senior officers. Sometimes they worked until midnight in the monsoon rains.

Senior British Officers were housed in a separate barracks on Argyle Street in order to keep the men leaderless and more pliable. An Englishman among them admired all things Japanese. He learned their language, adopted their dress, mimicked their customs, collaborated to the fullest until Colonel Tokunaga placed him in charge of all the officers. There wasn't a man more hated in all the colony - not even The White Pig himself. At war's end, this man was charged with treason and sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison.

Morning **tenko** - roll call.

The prisoners shuffled listlessly outside to line up in the scorching sun. They counted off in Japanese - Ichi! Nee! San! Se! Go! Sti! - and then often were kept at attention for hours while awaiting the pleasure of Colonel Tokunaga. All were ill. Many collapsed. When he finally strutted up - glistening with good health, sleek with fine food - it was often only to regale them through Panama Pete with endless speeches on the glory of the Rising Sun or to issue new regulations to compound their misery.

He ordered every man to bow when meeting a Japanese soldier of any rank. Colonel 'Monkey' Stewart of the First Middlesex - a ram-rod Englishman of the old school with a clipped moustache and a silver-tipped cane - informed him haughtily that 'Only butlers and waiters bowed!'

Tokunaga insisted on his decree on pain by beatings with bamboo sticks or rifle butts. Demonstrations were provided on the proper degree of humility and respect and the men were forced to practise until they had it right.

But the prisoners could take just so much humiliation and no more. The crisp Japanese bow, worked on so carefully, soon evolved into something they called 'The Great Panda Salute' which was little more than a slight nod and a vague wave of the hand.

Colonel Tokunaga next insisted that all prisoners sign a declaration not to attempt escape. The men promptly signed and as promptly began making plans.

But it was a fearful long swim to Vancouver. A good deal of China was crawling with Japanese and these Westerners had neither the language nor the features to allow them to melt into the general population. Yet some, against these overwhelming odds, made the attempt and a few, incredibly, succeeded.

Jan Marsman, a Dutchman, walked out of camp one day in Chinese dress, made contact with the underground and joined the guerillas on the mainland. He even survived to write a book on his experiences.

Benjamin Proulx, a Canadian stockbroker, escaped through the sewers with two Dutch Naval officers. They managed to hire a sampan and eventually swam the last three miles to territory controlled by Chiang Kai Chek.

Charlie Salter dyed his hair black and walked out with the Portugese Red Cross. Private Russel of the First Middlesex climbed over the wire and ran off for a two day honeymoon with one of the girls from Wan Chai. He returned to camp with two black eyes, a broken rib and three missing teeth.

Three Canadians were captured trying to steal a boat. They were thoroughly beaten, dragged back to camp and thrown into solitary confinement for twenty days. On the twenty-first day they were dragged blinking into the sunlight and these walking skeletons were then handed shovels, ordered to dig their own graves and shot.

Four Winnipeg Grenadiers were caught attempting escape and were mercilessly tortured and extensively interrogated by Panama Pete. Somehow they survived the experience and lived to testify at the War Crimes Trial.

During 1943, prisoners were transferred to Japan where they could more easily be contained and made useful. Colonel Tokunaga informed them, through Panama Pete, that; 'His August Majesty, the Emperor, has saved your miserable lives. In return, you must work for the benefit of the South-East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.'

And so they were sent to forced labour in the mines or to unloading coalships and loading boxcars. Two hundred and sixty-seven Canadians died under forced labour.

After nearly four years of imprisonment, the Americans dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the war was over. Japan surrendered and the prison guards ran away.

Between October 1946 and February 1947, a War Crimes Court in Hong Kong heard evidence from the survivors against Colonel Tokunaga and Captain Saito. The testimony was overwhelming. Both men were sentenced to be hanged. Subsequently, these sentences were committed to life and twenty years imprisonment respectively.

There are heroes of Hong Kong who live among us yet. There are others who still lie out there in Sai Wan Bay War Cemetery and there are many - too many - 'who have no memorial'.

A Hong Kong Experience

Corporal Henderson, Nov. 1940, before going to Newfoundland.

It gets a little monotonous when you live on rice and greens for four years. You try to remember the funny things because if you remember the bad things you'd go out of your head. You know the war nowadays is kind of unpopular with the younger generations. They really felt we wasted our time. The causes of the war might have been more understood: probably the cause that made Germany start was legitimate. But they happened to take their leader, Hitler. He was a mad man really. You read back that after the first war, when Germany lost, the political leaders were so hard on people with the reparations they had to make to pay back for what the Kaiser did. There was terrible depression, as you can see the chaos today. They were looking for a leader. They had freedom but they were in terrible chaos and then Hitler came to power and they saw Hitler as a leader, and from then on it was foolish. When I was a prisoner in Japan four years we couldn't believe that the Germans had done such a thing, murdered 15 million Jews. We just couldn't believe it. We could believe it of the Japanese because the Japanese didn't believe in the Geneva Convention. They believed in the defeat of the Bushida Code which is that when you die in battle you automatically go to heaven, and anybody that surrenders is worse than a criminal, and this is the way that they treated us. We were young, I was 22. I could see that if Hitler dominated the world what it would be like. It would be that freedom was really gone.

Japan was known as an ally during the first world war (but then they made the axis with Germany). They more or less just sent us to Hong Kong. I myself thought it was just a bluff because we didn't have a hope. Hong Kong was written off but it was a booster to send these million troops there, just to better the morale. The British Intelligence was very bad; they never thought the Japanese would attack. The Japanese were only 20 miles away from us.

We were in Hong Kong three weeks when the Dec 8 started, but we were expecting it. We got there on Nov. 16 and of course the hostilities broke out on the 8th. The week before the 8th, I remember particularily, it was a Sunday morning and a Lieutenant from Richmond came to me and said, 'I want you to take so many men and go to the island which was across the harbour.' I took our men and went to the island and into our positions. The following Sunday we were sitting at the harbour, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and I had a terrible feeling. I saw all the ships leaving and they were going just as fast as they could. We were sitting there wondering, 'There is something wrong. There is something going on.' That night the orders came through for the rest of the garrisons to man positions and be ready. In the morning I had to go from where I was, Dagular, to a place called Sheko, with all my rations and in the morning when I went down, I was on a truck, there were all our fellows with guns and I said, 'What's going on?', and he said, 'We're at war with Japan, listen.' You could hear them bombing the barracks. We were in position. They bombed our barracks and they killed some civilians. They came into Pearl Harbour the same day. How is it the Americans didn't know they were coming? This is something I couldn't understand.

When I came into Hong Kong I had just been married. I was born in Scotland and my family came to Canada in 1930. I had five brothers and they all went into the war and they all came back. We came from Scotstown. I had one brother in New Zealand who joined the New Zealand army and one brother in the British Navy and the others were all in the Canadian army. I was the youngest. My oldest brother was in Crete when the Germans took it the first time. Another brother, who was in Scotland, engineer in the Navy, never came to Canada until he was in the Mediterranean and was on the aircraft carrier. This is how the British were set in their ways: they were on watch, they had radar and they saw a German torpedo plane. They were watching him coming, but it was time to change the watch, so everybody changed watch. While they were doing this the plane came in and let a torpedo go. My brother said, 'Normally it wouldn't have bothered, because it hit the boiler room, but it hit several boilers so it disabled the ship.' He said, 'We put into Malta and the ship was too large. As soon as the Germans knew they had crippled our aircraft carrier, they were right after us. So during the night we switched places with another aircraft carrier and went to Gibraltar.' The Germans never found them. Gibraltar didn't have a dock large enough for them to handle so they came across the Atlantic at 8 knots an hour to Newport. That was where the ship was repaired. My brother got a leave to come to Toronto to see my mother, who had moved after we had all left home. He hadn't seen her since 1930.

I was going to school in Scotstown. We went to school to play hockey more than anything else in those days. I always said I had to marry the teacher to get out of school. Jean was teaching grade four and I was in grade eleven. I was married on September 12. I had six days to get married and it took me three days travelling time. I had to come from Val Cartier, catch a bus to Sherbrooke, and go to Waterloo. We arranged it so we'd be married in the evening. Since I was in battle dress she didn't want to wear a white dress. So she just wore another dress and I got married. We went back to Quebec City for our honey moon. I didn't have time, so we spent one weekend in Quebec City, then came back to Sherbrooke. The bus terminal was down where the Premier theatre was. I got on one bus and back to Val Cartier and she went on the other bus back to Waterloo, and that was our honeymoon.

They sent us to St. John, New Brunswick by mistake and they lost us. They wanted us to go to Hong Kong but they lost us. We were in St. John for 2 weeks when I was sent back to Val Cartier, to get geared up to go to the far east. Colonel Denison on Moulton Hill was my Captain. He gave me an embarkation leave and said, 'Now remember if you miss this draft you're liable to two years in a penitentiary.' So I made the draft and got four. On the way home, three days doesn't give you much time, I was with another chap from Sherbrooke, and between Quebec and Sherbrooke, we had an accident. The car rolled over. I was sitting in the back seat with another couple of fellows. I went out the open window, it was a 1938 Ford. I thought my hip was broken, so when we got back I saw a doctor. I stripped down. He saw the bruises and said, 'What happened to you?' I said, 'Well I was in an accident about six weeks ago but it is much better now.' He said, 'Okay I'll let you go.'

I remember packing our gear. We had to carry everything we owned on our backs. We marched from Val Cartier to the station, about a mile and a half, and got on the train. Someone said, 'Do you know where you are going?' We didn't know where we were going because it was secret. Only when we were half way across the prairies did they say we were going to Hong Kong and some of the guys were mad. We didn't want to spend our lives in Hong Kong. So we got on a ship in Vancouver called the Awatea. This was a mail ship and it was running between New Zealand and Australia but for some reason it was in Vancouver. They took over the cabins and hung up hammocks and mounted all kinds of anti-aircraft guns on it. The thing was top heavy. When we saw what we were going to get to eat we nearly went off the ship. It was mutton and tripe, this is what the Australians liked.

It was terrifically hot. The ship rolled a lot because it was top heavy and some fellows were sick. We had to help out with cleaning the decks and things like that. I had the job of holy stoning the deck. I had a crew of men. We put sand and water on the deck and pushed this huge stone, a heavy, big rock across and the deck comes up white. Everybody was getting sympathy. It was such a rotten job. We had to get up at 4 in the morning and quit before the rest got up but we did nothing while the rest lugged stores all day long.

We put into port at Honolulu, seeing a huge tower with Dole pineapple juice on it. The Americans were so lulled into their senses - this beautiful harbour is just an emerald green. They had a huge power boat with two sailors patrolling the harbour. Girls came down to the dock in grass skirts. 'Remember nobody knows who we are, we may be Australians or we may be New Zealanders.' And with that they'd throw Canadian money to the girls! Everybody thought there was no action. We were only allowed to stay there about 24 hours. We took off and as we were coming through the Phillipines they said again, 'We're in territory that may be a little unfriendly.' We were so hot in Manilla when we picked up two British destroyers. I remember reading the message - Japanese patrol vessels sighted. Nothing to worry about.'

When we came into Hong Kong an aircraft came out to meet us. It was a relic, like from the first world war. Is this our air defence? They were so low you could almost shake hands with the gunner. We got off the ship at Hong Kong, and they marched us in. The British gave us a lecture telling about the Japanese. They were destructive up at the border and we had never seen them. We didn't know what they looked like. They had driven all these refugees out of China and they were all in Hong Kong. Almost one or two million refugees.

The barrack life - we were used to doing our own work. A Britisher came

over the first night when we were ready to go to bed, the mosquito nets were supposed to go down at 5 o'clock because the mosquitoes carry you away, and he got after us because we were carrying our own coal. He said, 'You lose face. The Chinese coolies do everything. They clean barracks, made your bed, made sure the mosquito net was down and this sort of thing.' We paid these people hardly anything but this is what they said to pay them. We gave them cigarettes and a tip. It got so they wouldn't do anything for us, they just laughed at us because we were half-way decent. They actually got demoralized ~~by this.~~ They dug the trenches for the telephone lines so the coolies knew where all our telephones were. All the defences were made on the harbour because they never expected an attack over land because the Japanese were

Pre-War Hong Kong

only 20 miles away and a half mile across. There was the fifth column, which is actually the underground, and people like that. The Japanese soldier is probably the best in the world. They are brutal but fanatical.

Officially, they said the Japanese had landed on the island on December 8, they hit a reserve company that was next to the mainland and they were only supposed to come on if we couldn't hold them off. They started to fight. We could hardly believe this was happening. I did most of my fighting in Repulse Bay. We didn't know the island as well as the Japanese did. They had better maps.

Wells Bishop was a marvellous soldier. He had a dog he got in Newfoundland that would march in our parades in Quebec City. We called him Sargeant Gander, he was very gentle and friendly. When he got to China he just went out of his head when he saw a Chinese man. When the Japanese landed on the beach he would bite them and that's how he got killed in action.

We had just moved and I told Sargeant Heath about this parcel of men on the island and that I was going up on top of the hill to signal back to my headquarters. We were up there when it got dark. This was just before the war started. I did my signalling. There were two or three men with me and we thought we'd take a shortcut down to where our group was. We got kind of tangled up and lost and the first thing we knew we came into some barbed wire. We made quite a clatter getting over this and then all of a sudden we were surrounded by British men. 'Where are you going, mate?' We could hear the globes clicking in the rifles and so we said, 'We're Canadians and we've lost our way.' 'Come in and have a cup of tea.' But they still kept their rifles on us. So we had tea and hardtack and this Sargeant Heath was there. I got to be quite friendly with him, he went down to Repulse Bay with us.

I remember saying, 'We have got to move up. The Japanese have landed on the island and we have to take this position and meet them.' I had some men on the hill: 'We'll come back in later.' - just obeying orders really. So we started up the line. That was my first shock of seeing wounded and dead men. It's hard to describe the sight. There were two brigades, east and west, and the Japanese just sliced through the island. We were trying to head them off. They had tanks, some on foot, some cavalry and they were well trained. As we went into this Repulse Bay, they were bringing out the dead ones and as we passed we'd whisper to each other, 'Who's he?'

We went down into the Repulse Bay hotel. I remember running about 200 yards. We got over to that hotel, then we were cut off. There were still civilians in the hotel. They were supposed to have sent all the civilians to Australia. It was grim. We couldn't see any way out. There was no navy. Pearl Harbour had been devastated. We had one gun boat and one destroyer, and the three or four aircraft the Japanese got at first, so we had no aircraft. So there was absolutely no aircover when we were going down there. There was a Japanese plane circling, watching us.

The island is ten square miles. The ladies in the hotel were marvelous. We had no water, the Japanese had cut off the water supply, so we were drinking the water out of the radiators and they were making tea. There was an underground passage between the garage and the hotel. I was in a three room suite on the second floor, a bedroom, a sitting room and a bathroom. The mountains came right down to the hotel; it was cut right into the mountain. The plaster had come down where the bullets had hit. We would lay on the floor and you could look up the hill. I had one man sitting back in an easy chair with binoculars which we captured from the Japanese. I was lying on the floor, and what we had to do, because we were very low on ammunition, was the guy in the chair would spot the position of the Japanese and I would creep up to the window, fire and flop back down again. Suddenly a woman was in the doorway of the room. We pulled her down. She could have gotten her head blown off. She said, 'My dog, I'm looking for some water for my dog.' We were drinking water out of the pipes and she was looking for water for her dog. This dog was barking so I crawled over on the floor and I told her I would look for some water for the dog. I found some water and went back into the room where the dog was and she said, 'If he bothers you by barking, shoot him. You Canadians are doing so much for us.' I wouldn't shoot, I won't even go hunting today. I just couldn't bring myself to shoot and I've often wondered what happened to that dog.

Actually I wondered you know, I wondered, because this girl spotted where we were, because that night the Japs got on the roof of the hotel and they came into that room. We were up there in the daytime and came downstairs at night. They got into the hotel through the window, they captured a Vickors gun and they were walking down the hallway and opening doors. This Sargeant Heath, he always said, 'Wheres me blokes?' - he had two other men with him and he went upstairs, came around the corner and fired a gun at them and the Japs ran into the room. British are good soldiers, a lot of people would say, because they were good soldiers. We thought a lot of them, we had good respect for them.

We fought it out for a couple of days and we had to try to make our way back. The Japanese were mortaring us and they were getting ready to attack our hotel so we got orders to get out. We couldn't go at all in the daytime, everytime we went out we got clobbered. The first party ~~started~~ down the road and the Japs immediately opened fire on them. They didn't panic. One fellow was carrying a tripod on his back and he slapped that down. They opened up and drove the Japanese back up the hill and were on their way.

As we cut into the mountains the Japs were all around us. I put my shoes around my neck and I put two pairs of socks on and I had a gun. We started out at ten o'clock. We had to go through the Japanese lines and get through and back on our own. They told us, now don't lose sight of the man in front of you because if you do... We had no guides leading us back, we weren't taking the road, we were going to cut right over the mountain. The man in front of me was a British airforce pilot. He had no aircraft so he was fighting. He stopped. I said, 'What's the matter?' He said, 'I lost the man in front of me.' And here we are somewhere in the middle of the Japanese lines and we were sneaking through. It was black. I didn't know where we were going. 'Well, how did you do a thing like that? You walked along and suddenly you dropped your hold.' He had been pretty well beat up, was pretty well fatigued, and couldn't keep hold. The things you have to do are hard. I said, 'You go behind the line, go to the last man and if you don't keep up...' We started on again and this fellow started to whistle. He had lost us. We had to do something, here we are trying to sneak through. Anyway we got him back. I don't know what stroke of luck it was, but the trail made a horse-shoe and I went straight and down through a gulley. Just as I got to the top of the gulley, there was the last man he had lost. I followed him in. We got into Stanley, that was on the 23rd or 24th of December. So we had just got in in the morning when they said, 'You have to get out, the Japanese have broken into the village of Stanley.'

The Japanese were two football fields away, and they were dive-bombing the barracks. You could hear their mortars whistling through the air. And I remember hearing a Chinese flute, those notes were weird.

Finally we went back in for a rest. This had been 7 days we had no sleep you know, you'd sleep when you could. When I got back into Stanley there was a garage there and I put my head on a steel rail and I slept like a baby just on cement.

We started back out of Stanley that night. The Japanese had captured the hospital. They killed some of the nurses. I was going down the road with another group of men and you could see these shells coming right at you. The ones that hit you, you don't see. There was a kind of a garage cut into the hill and a space just about five feet behind it, so we ran in. What we didn't know is

June 7, 1943, in P.O.W. camp.

that it was full of gasoline and the Japs saw it and they saw us run in there. I remember the only scar I got at all was I cut my finger on a broken window. We got out of there.

We went down the road and there was a station for pumping water and a telephone just hanging, but it was still operating, so I called for an ambulance because these men were coming back up the road in pretty bad shape. I remember this Scotchman saying, 'You might as well shoot us now because when they see us in the morning they're sure going to kill us all.'

The first thing that we knew the war was over; the white flag was flying. We were actually fighting after the surrender. In some of the documents they say that this is why the Japanese were so brutal in the hospital.

They moved us into a camp called North Point, it was right on the harbour in Hong Kong and had been used for a Chinese refugee camp. It was on that shore line that the Japanese invaded. Some of the buildings were practically demolished. It was built for 300, and they put 2,000 of us in there. The Chinese had been packed, even then.

The biggest problem we had there was cleanliness and sanitation. There were so many dead bodies in the harbour, and the only way we could find them was by the odour. It was so dirty, the plumbing was gone, the toilets were plugged, so we had to really set to and get this place cleaned up. We had a program that everybody had to kill so many flies a day. We eventually got the camp clean. We still had our rations, but what we should have done was divided it and said to each man, 'This has got to last you.' But the Japanese came in and took it all.

I remember the first meal. They brought in a big bag of rice and half a pig They boiled up this rice and they threw this half pig in. This was going to be my supper! I was a finicky eater. How am I ever going to eat this pig with bristles thrown in with it? That was just the start because I said four years later, 'If I could have had a piece of that pig.' Anyway we got it down.

Then the rumours started. People who believed a rumour would get all discouraged. I remember this chap , they had stories you were on the list to go and he'd write a letter to his mother but then, when the rumour fell through, he'd lose hope. You have to have a will to live.

The diptheria epidemic started. The British were dying on the mainland, eleven a day. Our sargeant had had it, and I had to replace him. So I had to sleep in his bed. One of the acting

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DECISION DETERMINATION

DANAHER

Kevin Danaher, U.N. candidate for Ordord in the present provincial political campaign, is a respected citizen of St-Élie d'Orford where he owns a farm and lives with his wife and three children.

Already, at 37 years of age, Kevin has accumulated a remarkable experience in numerous fields.

Tremendously active, his Master's degree in Educational Counselling (Psychology) serves him well as a member of the Quebec Corporation of Counsellors. He sat two years on the Administrative Council of the Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers.

He was one of the five chief negotiators for the first professional contract between the Quebec government and the French and English speaking psychologists and Counsellors.

As a High School and University student, his undeniable qualitites of leadership rewarded him with the presidency of his classes and various associations including that of the High School itself. His versatility is evidenced by the many individual and group awards he received in Public Speaking contests and the many individual and group athletic awards he won throughout his student career.

Kevin Danaher also worked as a pharmaceutical representative for two years calling on doctors and pharmacists.

His oratorical wards helped him work as a part-time radio announcer while teaching High School.

More recently he was largely responsible in forming the Association for the preservation of small slaughter houses and is now member of its executive. He was evidently instrumental in keeping the small slaughter houses open in the province.

Fluent in both French and Englis, Mr. Danaher's calling to provincial politics is directly linked to this unflinching desire to see all the people of Quebec communicate once again and, together, solve problems that can be solved.

The people who know him, and there are many, will testify to his genuine sincerity to help individuals and groups of every echelon in society.

Kevin Danaher wants to go to Quebec, wants to work hard to improve social, agricultural, industrial and other working conditions and incentives. We want you to give him the opportunity to do it.

union nationale

WHY AM I RUNNING AS THE U.N. CANDIDATE IN ORFORD COUNTY?

Because people feel frustrated and powerless when:

The direction and quality of their lives is being decided **for** them and not **by** them.
Government is too far removed from the individual to be really concerned.

But I am convinced that with good leadership we can still make the individual count in the making of government policies.

IN EDUCATION
By ensuring that every parent has the right to choose the school his child will attend.

IN BUSINESS
By ensuring that every small businessman can preserve that business and expect to realize a reasonable profit. (abattoirs, tourism)

IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR
By ensuring that every group has an effective means of redressing wrongs without having to resort to strike measures.

IN GOVERNMENT
By ensuring that every citizen has an elected representative who is available, willing to listened and understand the needs of the people he represents.

Help me fight for YOUR interests by voting

DANAHER

in ORFORD COUNTY

For questions or assistance in my campaign
Call 843-6971 in Magog
Office headquarter

This ad was authorized by François Bachand, 412 18 Ave. Magog, official agent for Kevin Danaher, U.N. Candidate in Orford.

sargeant's duties was to take the sick parade and this day I went in at the end of the line. I had a sore throat - a catch in my throat, and that was diptheria.

We were sent over to the building where all the diptheria cases were. I was one of the fortunate ones. The epidemic got quite bad and had started to get out of hand, so the Japanese got a serum and I got some. The windows in that building were gone and they were covered over with tin and these poor kids were lying there choking to death. There wasn't a thing the doctor could do. There were about 20 that actually had no serum and made it. I know one guy from Drummondville who's sight is gone and whose heart and sense of balance are bad. It effects you one way or another.

While I had diptheria, it was around Christmas 1942 and I was drafted to work in Japan. They loaded us last on the boat so we went down into the hold of the ship. When I left Hong Kong it was 91 degrees. I had been in Japan about 3 weeks before they sent us to work in a ship yard. There was snow on the ground. There were 500 of us in the camp. Out of the 500 they would allow us to keep eight who were sick. Everybody was in pretty bad shape. I came into a fever, and I was one of the eight who they kept. Our own doctor was still looking after us, but the Japs wanted us to report to the Japanese doctor. I had stood out in the cold waiting to see this Japanese doctor when they told me to go back, he wasn't seeing any more. I laid down on the bed and at one o'clock they told us the doctor was seeing people again. When I tried to get up I couldn't. A pain hit me and I couldn't get my breath. I got up and managed to get into the building and sat down. We were in there about fifteen minutes and the Japs said, 'Get out. We don't want to see any more beri-beri cases.' That was what they were checking for. I thought if I go out I'm dead. I stayed. The captain said, 'You can go now.' I said, 'I can't breathe.' So he called the Jap over and he was trying to tell him I had pneumonia. The Jap let me stay in camp. They had no hospital, no medicine. All I had was my cantine with hot water and some aspirin. It was two and a half years before I could take a deep breath. I was in camp for 3 or 4 weeks. Then I went back to work.

We had to climb 80 feet into the air on these ships. I weighed 101 pounds. Before I had weighed 140. Sargeant Major Magdenell made me go on sick parade because I was in such poor condition. Our doctor gave me some of his rations. If you couldn't work they sent you to what you call a hospital camp. It wasn't a working camp but you had very little to eat. The fact that I went to that camp got me out of the ship yard. I was in that camp five months. One of the treatments for beri-beri was t strip you down, put little balls of lint in the small of your back and set fire to it, it would burn right into your back. This was a pretty bad camp, a lot of fellows died and they cremated all the people.

I got out of that camp and went back to work. I was back on my feet and I felt ı had made it fending any real disaster.

Twenty pairs of boots filtered through the American Red Cross. Finally they brought out the boots. The people who had boots had to take them off and give them to the people who didn't have any. They also brought in shoes that were made out of awning canvas and had cardboard soles. They looked like something a clown would wear. They said they were going to have a riveting contest and see how many rivets we could drive in a day. We kept on working in that yard, steel got shorter and we were getting news. We never saw any planes but we'd hear all this jazz about it.

In November 1944 I remember I was working in the ship yard, and the air raid siren went off. We didn't know what was happening. We came up on deck and we could see the Japs running. One of the boys yelled, 'Uncle Sam is up there.' We could see this B29, the first plane that I had seen. He was a path finder, then the raid started. Eventually it got so that we couldn't work at all. At ten o'clock that night when the siren went off again we stayed in little dug-out shelters in the camp. That air raid lasted until three o'clock in the morning. We didn't go back to work for three days. But half way through the raid they made us get up and move the rations out of the building, because they thought the rations were going to catch fire. We were in a suburb of Tokyo. You could hear the people screaming in the houses. The Americans were using fire balls. I counted 12 B29's shot down. I think there were 500 planes. They would come in at about 400 or 500 feet, you could see them in the cockpits. Some planes burst into fire and would try to head out to sea to be picked up. The raids kept coming and coming. I had the mumps during these air raids.

Christmas was coming. We got the usual diet of rice soup and greens and we used to hang onto the light bulbs for warmth. The men working in rigging stole canvas and another man working in the paint shop stole paint, and they stole wire and candles. There was a man who could paint and he painted Christmas scenes on the canvas. We made imitation fireplaces. Did this all in one night. We also had tablecloths. Men started to cry when they saw how we had transformed these barracks into a beautiful Christmas scene.

Then the crunch came; the Japs came in to take the roll call. 'What is this?' They marched back out and we thought, 'Will they start the beatings standing in the rain?' They came back in about an hour and they had a camera. Then it came out in the paper, 'See how well treated the prisoners are.' All they said was to put it all back when we were finished. That Christmas was really something to remember. I had come down with tropical fever and I was quite delirious with that.

We got bombed out of Tokyo. We had an interpreter who spoke English with an Oxford accent. He hated us. He would interpret wrongly so we would get in trouble. He said, 'You are going to a new camp and I believe they have hot springs there.' The camp was a coal mine and the hot springs were down in the mine.

The Japanese wouldn't let you keep a diary. If they caught you it was just too bad. When I switched camps they made us strip off completely and they searched us and picked up my diary, but somehow they just gave it back to me. We weren't allowed any news but we smuggled in a British newspaper and read it and took down notes. One time the man who was supposed to be watching, wasn't. I was reading and I looked up and there was a Jap standing there. He asked me what it was and I told him that it was the names of the men who were sick tomorrow. He looked but he couldn't read it. If he had brought an interpreter we would have been dead. Magdenell was as white as a sheet.

They sent us to work in this coal mine. It was 2000 metres down. I was on the rock face which is a level above the coal face. The mine was forever shifting. I was picking at the ceiling and you'd get to a point when you thought it would all fall down, and you'd run and it would fall down. I was underground May, June and July. They made you shovel as many cars as possible until you couldn't shovel any more. Then they'd fix your quota.

We were digging into this hill and we came across what looked like a tomb with some old bones and pottery and I had just gotten over diptheria, and all I could think of was not to get the plague.

The only time I ever got a severe beating was in this camp. There were prisoners who were a mixture of Japanese and Dutch, Javanese. They were in a bad way too. They said to us, 'You're lucky, your wives and children are safe at home. Ours are in Java', which was occupied by the Japanese.

They had to issue us mine hats. These Javanese had been in that camp before and had older equipment. Since we were working on the surface we didn't really need a cap with a light. This Javanese said to the Japanese sargent that his bracket was broken on his hat and he wanted a new one: the sargent came down the line and took my hat and gave me his hat. The reason he picked me, I think, was because I have blue eyes- the Japanese didn't like blue eyes.

So we started to the mine and the Dutchman handed my hat back and he said, 'I didn't want to take your hat.' So I put the hat back on. When we came back into camp that night the same guard was standing there. He didn't say anything but the Dutchman went back and said something about his hat again. So the Jap said, 'What did you do with the hat I gave you?' He said, 'He took it back.'

Well, that was disobedience of the Japanese order. So whoever is in charge doesn't have to answer to the colonel, he's in charge. So I had gone to my hut and I heard an awful roar calling my number. Here was this Jap, I knew enough Japanese to understand what he was saying, but I couldn't tell him that the guy didn't want it so he started to swing at me. I knew they go kind of crazy if they get you down so I tried to swing with the blows and finally he quit.

When we were lining up for the roll call a Dutch officer came over and said he was sorry. I told him to get away from me. Four years I kept out of trouble- my jaw would crack for six months after that.

In July 1945 we were working out on this dump and they gave us a half an hour to break for lunch. We could see all these people walking into town, they were all dressed up. The man would be walking and the wife three paces behind him. They hadn't called us back to work. 'I wonder what's going on,' I thought, 'It must be a ration day.' The Japanese said, 'You're going back to camp.' We had to stop by the mine on the way back. There were girls working in the lamp shop and they were crying. Whenever they were crying it was good news for us.

The next day they got us up again to go back to the coal dump. They used to make us go a certain way, but today, they made us go a different way. The old man who was in charge yelled at us but with no heart in it, so we just sat down and didn't do anything. They brought us back to camp.

The Emperor had agreed to surrender because the Amercans had used a terrible, cruel, inhumane weapon, the bomb they had dropped on Hiroshima. So all these guards had just taken off and disappeared.

We were actually in worse shape after the war was over because we had nothing to eat. There was nothing in the camp. I remember one morning I got up and I wasn't feeling well. The Japanese had had a duck and no one could kill it. It was about four o'clock in the morning and I heard the duck. It had laid an egg, I picked that egg up and threw it in hot water. It was partially cooked, but I ate it. It was the first egg I'd had in four years.

When the war was over, our organization was back together and I was Corporal again in charge of so many men. We started to go scrounging around town to see if we could find some food somewhere. We heard this roar and three planes came in off the aircraft carriers and they were circling and we didn't know it but there was another camp about 3 miles away from us. We had to put up signs, P.O.W. They came over the camp and this fighter plane dipped and I saw the pilot with his thumb up. He threw out a box of Lucky Strikes from the cockpit and a bunch of pin-ups, and a note that said, 'We'll be back later.'

Then they started dropping bread and stuff that they picked up off the carriers. Then they got a program with the B29 coming in with rations, cocoa and condensed milk in big drums and clothing. They gave us instructions to get a train.

We were about 135 miles north of Tokyo. We got on this train and they brought us down into Yokohama. There were American bands there. We thought they would shove us off in quarantine, but we got off the train and the band was playing. They gave us a good bath and de-licing, we were fairly clean anyways.

I remember an American intelligence officer said, 'I don't want to hear about the good Japanese, I just want to hear about the bad ones.'

The Americans were good to us. They got us on a truck and they put one girl beside each soldier and this one soldier said, 'Do you speak English?' and she said, 'I shore do.'

Then they were going to fly us to San Francisco. The typhoons started so they flew us as far as Guam, farther away than ever from home. Then they put us on board a ship. I left Guam, I think, September 11. We went back through Pearl Harbour, landed at San Francisco, came up the coast to Seattle and then took a boat to Victoria, Vancouver Island. The way we were welcomed back you would think we had won the Battle of the Bulge. A little girl put a bunch of flowers in my hand. When you'd go through the cities, kids would come up and ask you for your autograph.

I came back and met Jean in Montreal on October 11, 1945. Suddenly it was a long, long time. The thing that struck me the most was how beautiful the Eastern Townships is. Hawaii was spectacular, and down through the

Sierra's beautiful, but when you come back and see the Townships! And to be free!

Freedom is something you have to cherish. Freedom is something you can't abuse. We gave up our freedom when we went in the army. We give it up because we believe in protecting freedom. This is where some of the young people are abusing their freedom. If it gets chaotic, someone like Hitler is going to step in.

This sense of being caged in, all the beatings, all the starvation, all the trouble in the war, the danger, was nothing to the fact that you were a prisoner and you couldn't do what you wanted to do.

When we came back there was a concentration camp in East Sherbrooke for the German soldiers. They had some of the First World War veterans who were more or less guards there and they used to have parties on Friday night. The East Germans were still here; they hadn't sent them back home. We were invited to a party and I don't know whether this particular sargent was trying to impress on me how well treated the Germans were compared to us, but the Germans were playing in the orchestra and they were also waiting on the tables. The Canadian sargent, he started ordering this German waiter around and I said to Jean, 'Let's get out of here.' When I went out I said to the German, 'I know just how you feel. I was a prisoner for four years and the way that man talked to you, I can't stand it.'

I remember a funny story. I could have gone to college for six years because I had six years service, but I decided since I was married, I had better get a job. So I took my trade as a machinist at the Rand. One of the machines I had to go to was a finishing grinder. There was this big French chap working on the machine; I was just an apprentice. I knew after I was there 5 minutes that this fellow didn't know what he was doing. We had more wrecked pieces flying out of the machine. He said to me, 'Are you nervous?' I said, 'No, but I'm getting that way.' And he said, 'Well, you know the reason I'm getting off this job is I've been behind the wire.' So I knew he wasn't in Japan and I said, 'Where were you in Germany?' He said, 'No, I was guarding these Germans up in East Sherbrooke.' I never told him where I had been.

That terrific beating I got in Japan, of course when the war was over, I looked for that guy. I was thin but in good shape. The guy had disappeared. So when I came to the Rand I was a bundle of nerves, I just wanted to get started, but I couldn't, my nerves were so bad. One day someone wanted to see me in personnel, and I really thought, this is it, I can't do the job anymore. I went down and an Army officer was standing there and he pulled out an album, 'Can you identify this photograph?' The first man on there was this guy Suzuki who beat me up. So Gen. Kay took the statement down. I guess they picked him up.

Our regiment was formed from the Quebec Royal Rifles. They took officers from the 7th and 11th Hussars. A lot of the officers were from the Price Brothers Corporation and General Price told me this story himself: The company lawyer was a way over age. He went to Brig. Price and said, 'Can you get me into the unit?' He said, 'We can't accept you Cecil, you're way too old.' He was in his fifties almost, but he got in as paymaster. He was a most gentlemanly man. I needed an advancement of $50.00 on my pay and he said, 'What do you need it for?' I said, 'I'm getting married,' and he said, 'I guess you'll need it', so he gave it to me. He went to Hong Kong with us. But as soon as that man got to Hong Kong he didn't bother with that. payroll, he grabbed a Tommy gun and was up in the hills. This is so ridiculous! The Japs had landed on the island and they were cutting us in two. Brig. Price was down on the road and from the Brigade headquarters a colonel by the name of O'Hennessey came by and said, 'Where is your paymaster?' Brig. Price then answered, 'He's up in the hills.' 'Do you know he hasn't sent his pay sheets into Ottawa?' And Price said to him, 'Do you realize that we are about to be cut in two, that he might not even see tomorrow?' He said, 'That doesn't matter. He hasn't sent his pay sheets to Ottawa. I have to go back and report this.' Price told him, 'You stay here. Your headquarters will have been overrun by that time.' O'Hennessey went back. Our brigade headquarters was immediately wiped out. Cecil Thompson was up in the hills fighting when I was in Repulse Bay. When we were out of ammunition he ran a truck down to us. He was a very quiet spoken man. Price told Thompson, 'I'm going to talk to the Japanese because you don't belong here, you're too old.' He said, 'If you do that, I'll never talk to you again.' So he stuck it out and he just died here a short time ago.

When my husband used to talk about his experiences he'd have the worst nightmares and now he's been talking for how long!

There was an excursion going back to Hong Kong on the 25th anniversary of our wedding and also of Hong Kong. I had sort of mixed feelings about going back, but my wife didn't want to go at all. Well, I had a dream that we had gone, and when we got there, the same things started all over again. We stayed home.

The Hong Kong veterans are a very close knit association. During World War II regiments left Sherbrooke and other places and went overseas, but the Hong Kong regiments stayed as a group, stayed together all the way through. When we came back home, we were the smallest of any group but the most successful as far as trying to get pension for our men. We had more war-blinded (not by shells but from malnutrition). The government eventually got a dollar a day for every day we were in prison camp which wasn't too hot, but it was something. We got a fairly reasonable pension, most of us are at least 50% pension. I don't feel that the Liberal government at that time did us any disservice. When you signed on that dotted line you took your chances.

We are a very close knit group and help each other. Only we had that unique experience together.

Walter Henderson
Sherbrooke

VOTE FOR FOSTER WIGHTMAN

IN BROME-MISSISQUOI

To the Electors of Brome-Missisquoi in Order to Acquaint You with my Reasons for Presenting Myself as your Independent Candidate in this Election.

I, like yourselves, am "fed up" with **all** of the provincial parties of the day and the belchings of their leaders.

Bourassa claims that this election was brought about by the language and education problem, and the action of the labor unions. But I believe that it was a trick to steal another four year mandate while the opposition was looking the other way, an act which I liken to the "sneak" attack on Pearl Harbor.

On the first question of language and education, my present situation brings to mind an old saying that I read about years ago, and always stuck in my mind: "By your voice you will be known, by your actions you will be judged." I am of the sixth generation of Wightmans in the County of Missisquoi (1780). I was born in Bedford where I have lived most of my life; in my earliest recollection, most of my playmates were French-Canadian from whom I learned French, and they in turn learned English from me, and to this day those who are still living are my best friends. In later years when I decided to marry, I chose a French Canadian girl to be the mother of my children, a choice that I never regretted for the forty-eight years and six days we were married. She gave me eleven children of whom I am thankful, and justly proud. We talked French in our house in their early years, then we sent them to French school for the first six years of their lives, "voluntarily, I might add", then to English school, making them all completely bilingual. Three chose French mates, I have over forty grandchildren, all of whom are bilingual, and five of those who are married chose french mates. I have fourteen great-grandchildren, and to the youngest I **have** to talk French. It is a wonderful and contented feeling to love and be loved by such a "mixed up" and happy family. Let this be a shiny example of the "bonne entente" that could and should prevail in this County, Province and Country.

To take a quote from the Bible: "A house divided cannot stand." I am to say the least discontent with the speech and actions of most pro-French and pro-English public men and women who only agitate the problems that exist at this time, instead of working together to strengthen the "bonne entente" that will hold this Country together.

On the second issue, of labor, let it be known that I always was and still am a very strong believer in unionised labor, which raised the working class from serfdom to the **semi-independent** class of today. **But** I cannot support the actions of the present Rabble Rousing or communist inspired leaders of the day. Workers should always be strong but considerate at the same time. You cannot expect a company that is struggling along to keep you employed to pay the same wages as another company which is flourishing and expanding, or you will soon be unemployed. Our labor unions and their members must be shown that their increasing demands will lead to the impoverishment of Quebec.

Compulsory legislation, in education and in labor, seems to be the only thing the present government can think of — a situation that has no place in any free and democratic society.

In closing, the only comment I can make is to repeat the last words of Jesus Christ before the crucifixion: "Forgive them, O Lord, they know not what they do".

Foster Wightman

FOSTER WIGHTMAN

Published and paid for by Leonard McTeer, official agent for Foster Wightman.

need a hand?

All initiatives designed to promote the social and cultural life of official language minority groups, as you may know, come within the concern of the Secretary of State.

But you may not know that, through its Official Language Minority Groups Directorate, the Secretary of State will provide, free of charge, the assistance of resource persons who will collaborate in implementing projects designed to improve community development. Our advisers help in the formulation of projects, explain how government programs work, coordinate your initiatives to avoid duplication and act as pilots to guide the projects through administrative hurdles. There are more than 40 officers throughout Canada, and this does not include the specialists they may recruit and assign to your project if you need them.

Keep in mind that we are interested in all your projects, whether social or cultural, and that our specialists can help you in achieving your goals.

Need a hand? This is our purpose and our raison d'être. Call us!

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Secretary of State **Secrétariat d'État**

J. Hugh Faulkner
Minister

J. Hugh Faulkner
Ministre

Prisoner of War Camp Japan.

BILL 22

AND THE CHILDREN OF QUEBEC

Quebec's language legislation permits the Minister of Education to dictate the language of instruction for most of the children in the province without regard to the judgement of the locally elected board, the wishes of the parents who elected them and most importantly, the best interests of the children. Language costs are administered by the Department of Education, not the local school or school board. Any child not already fluent in English will be educated in French.

Non English immigrant families are most seriously affected by this discriminatory and oppressive law. While they may be Canadian citizens, they have been deprived (under Bill 22) of any right of choice in the language of education for their children. Surely a fundamental guarantee of their adopted citizenship.

French and English, under Federal law and the Canadian constitution, are both official languages. In Quebec, English has lost its official status. In education, it has become a special privilege, available only where, when and to whom the Ministry of Education deems appropriate.

The Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards believes that Bill 22 must be withdrawn or amended. It believes the bill to be unconstitutional as well as antisocial, oppressive and discriminatory. The continuing legal action against the bill needs public financial support. We ask all individuals, associations and industries who share our conviction to contribute to:

THE SPECIAL ACTION FUND
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This advertisement is sponsored by the Lennoxville District School Board

L-Colonel Jack Porter refuses to sign, North Point Camp

Evidence given by Lance Corporal Jack Porter concerning his refusal to sign the affidavit promising not to attempt to escape and his subsequent treatment by the Japanese.*

On May 23, 1942, a Muster parade was called at 1600 hours at which Colonel Tokunaga, in charge of prisoner of war camps, Hong Kong gave the order that all prisoners of all ranks must sign a purported affidavit that they would not attempt to escape while prisoners of war of the Imperial Japanese army. He stated that anyone who refused to sign would be disobeying a Japanese army order and consequently would be guilty of mutiny and subject to punishment under Japanese military law. I refused to sign the affidavit on principle and was taken away from North Point Camp by the Japanese authorities.

I was taken to the headquarters of the camp commandant, Lieut. Wada, and they asked me the reason why I would not sign. I told them that under British military law a prisoner of war if he had a chance to escape had to take that chance and they told me they did not believe in international laws. They told me we came under the Imperial Japanese army rules and that we were their prisoners of war and had to abide by what they said. I told them I could not agree to that as I was still a British subject and although a prisoner of war, I had nothing to do with the Imperial Japanese army. They asked me and practically begged me to sign. Second Lieut. Kochi tried for an hour and told me I was too good a man to be put away for something like this. He said, 'I know what you are going to go through if you don't sign.'

Then they gave me my supper, two lots of beef stew, two lots of rice with sugar, tea with sugar in it, and cigarettes. At ten o'clock they gave me tea again with sugar in it and sweet biscuits and put a silver cigarette case in front of me full of cigarettes and told me to help myself.

At 10:30 they got me into a car and brought me down to the Guard Commander's house where I spent the night in the little kitchen in the yard under lock and key with a sentry on the outside. I was not allowed to take any kit with me, not even my tunic, and they gave me no blankets or bedding of any sort. They gave me a packet of cigarettes when leaving the camp Commandant's house but I was not allowed to

smoke.

My breakfast consisted of a 'ball' of rice and a bit of cucumber, nothing to drink. I ate that and sat down on the tile floor. The sentry tried to make me stand but I do not know for what reason. He opened his breach and shoved a round up the breach and put his rifle through the window. I told him to go ahead and shoot. The sentry then called the guard Commander, who tried the same thing. This was around about 10:30 in the morning.

About this time they came with a car from camp headquarters and took me down to the Star ferry. We sat in the car waiting for the prisoners coming from Sham Shui Po. Six of them came with a guard of six Japanese and an officer. We lined up at the Star ferry and paraded through the street to the court house.

At the court house we were put in an ante-room, not allowed to smoke. The Japanese guard had left us by this time and we were now in charge of three Indian police. We were called in before a high ranking Japanese officer. He asked me why I did not want to sign and I told him the same story. He then asked me, 'What are you, a volunteer?' I said, 'No, a Canadian.' He said, 'Did you volunteer for this war?' and I said, 'Yes.' He asked me my age and I told him my right age. He told me I was a very brave man and said he wished he only had an army like that. I said I was not doing it because I was brave but that I was doing it for my King, and the interpreter then slapped my face hard. The officer said something to the interpreter in Japanese and I judged that he was censoring the interpreter for having slapped me. I was then told that we would be sent to Stanley prison and the matter would come up in front of the Japanese authorities there as to the form of punishment. I went back to the ante-room and the Indian police got a rope and tied the seven of us together by the wrists and put us in the police van and took us to Stanley prison.

When we got to the prison we were untied, undressed and our pockets turned out by the prison wardens in front of a Japanese officer. The officer made a physical examination then took us individually by the hair of the head and dragged us each to a separate cell. Our shorts were then thrown into the cell, which was the only clothing given back to us. There was a wooden bed and one blanket in the cell.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we were put into the cells. They left us alone until supper came about 5:30, which consisted of a very small portion of poor grade rice and a small cup of something that looked like senna tea. They placed the food outside the cell door and opened the door about six inches for us to reach through and get food. They collected the basin and cup after 15 minutes. I could not eat the rice or drink the tea on account of it's maggotty and filthy condition.

We were told that we could not lie down until nine o'clock but must kneel up on the bed facing the wall. At nine o'clock the Japanese officer came in and told us we could go to sleep. I laid down on the bed and tried to get to sleep. At 12 o'clock they came and woke me up and asked me if I wanted to sign. I said, 'No.' The Japanese officer then slapped me across the face and told me to get to sleep. About every hour after that I was awakened by the prison warden and asked the same question and upon giving the same answer I was either slapped across the face or hit on other parts of the body with a rubber truncheon. This continued until daylight when I was told to fold my blankets and kneel up on the bed facing the wall. At seven o'clock in the morning I was allowed to wash my hands and face, without soap. I was also given back my shirt. I had to continue kneeling on the bed from then until 9 o'clock at night except when eating or using the toilet. A constant watch was kept and if I relaxed I was hit about the body with a rubber truncheon. At eleven o'clock the only meal of the day was brought in, which consisted of bad rice and bitter tea. For sanitary facilities an enamel bowl was provided in the cell and emptied by me once every 24 hours when I went to wash. This procedure continued night and day until the 30th of May.

On May 31st food and water were stopped and until I finally signed on the 4th of June, I received no more food or drink, although the punishment above described continued.

Several of my fellow prisoners were suffering from dysentry and on the 5th of June their sufferings became so acute that it was decided amongst us that we should sign, thinking that we would get food after signing, but we did not get any until eleven o'clock on the morning of June 5th. We signed the form about two o'clock in the afternoon of June 4th.

During this whole period no toilet paper was supplied and in the cells occupied by those with dysentry the mess was frightful.

We were released on June 6th and had to sign again at the court house in Victoria. I was returned to my unit at North Point camp about two o'clock in the afternoon of June 6th. Since my return I have been suffering from diarrhea, beri-beri and general weakness.

Atrocities at St. Stephen's Hospital

H-Captain James Barnett, R.C.C.S.

H-Captain Barnett, chaplain of the Royal Rifles of Canada, was present at St. Stephen's Hospital and a witness to the atrocities committed by the Japanese December 25, 1941. Some of the victims were members of the Regiment. The following excerpt is taken from evidence presented by H-Captain Barnett at the International War Crimes Trial for the Far East.*

On December 25th, 1941, at 0600 hours, the Japanese troops entered St. Stephen's Hospital. On the first floor, where I was, there were approximately one hundred patients and seven nurses. I saw five unknown Japanese soldiers bayonet intentionally about fifteen or twenty wounded soldiers in bed. Rfm. B. Sweet was one of them. I think that Sweet lost his arm through it, but I am not sure. (Sweet did lose his arm through this. I saw him last summer and checked on it.)

All the patients who could walk, the staff of the hospital, and myself, were herded together and put in a store room. We were left there for about an hour, and then we were moved to a smaller room. The nurses, who were with me until that time, were separated from me. I saw one of the nurses, Mrs. Buxton, hit on the head with a steel helmut, slapped in the face and kicked by a Japanese soldier, without any reason. Then about ninety men were placed in my room. We were so tightly packed that we could not sit down together. We remained in that room from 0700 hours until 1600 hours. We were not given anything to eat. There were no sanitary arrangements. We had about eighty wounded soldiers who had to lie down in turn as best they could.

During that morning a Japanese soldier came into my room, and made us put up our hands. He then stole my watch and ring and some money. I do not know the names of those who were my neighbours.

Later on another unknown Japanese soldier came to the door with a sack of .303 bullets and started to throw them in our faces. Afterwards another unknown soldier came in and took out Rfm. E.J. Henderson, a patient in the hospital. Immediately after we heard screams coming from the corridor close to the room. I believe the screams came from Henderson. A little while later another Japanese soldier came into the room and took out Rfm. MacKay. We heard more screams, which I believe came from MacKay.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon another Japanese soldier came into the room and ordered us all out. He told us through sign language that the war was over.

On the 26th of December 1941 in the morning a Japanese N.C.O. or officer told me that I could move around. I immediately began a tour of the hospital to see what damage had been done and what casualities there were. I noticed that a number of our Allied men, I would say approximately seventy, had been bayoneted in bed and were dead. Others were seriously wounded (bayonet wounds), but I can not say how many. I can definitely say that the patients who were bayoneted in bed were not armed, nor yet were there any armed troops in the hospital. The hospital staff was unarmed. During my inspection I discovered bodies of MacKay and Henderson. One of them was in the corridor, the other on the steps near the main exit. Both bodies were badly mutilated...

I next saw four of the nurses coming towards me. They were in a dreadful state. They had had a very bad night as they had been assaulted by the Japanese soldiers...

I began to organize burial parties, but the Japanese forced me to cremate the bodies. I cremated about 170 bodies, some from the hospital and some from the battlefield. I remember that the bodies of MacKay and Henderson were cremated and there is no doubt in my mind that they were dead when they were carried to the fire because their bodies were cold.

Most identity discs were missing from the bodies I discovered. As far as possible I made a list of the dead bodies of soldiers being carried away to be cremated, but the Japanese soldiers took this list away from me at noon and forbid me to make a new one...

One nurse told me a Japanese had told her that all people in the hospital were to be killed to revenge the death of his brother who had been killed on the battle field. The surrender of Hong Kong saved us...

*From the materials loaned by H-Captain James Barnett.

Stanstead Frontier Branch No. 5 (Quebec)
Royal Canadian Legion

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LEGION

invites you to a service
of Remembrance at the Cenotaph
in Rock Island at 2.30 p.m.
and reminds veterans of
the annual dinner for veterans at
the Legion Home at 6.00 p.m.
the same day.
Anyone wishing to contribute
to the Poppy Campaign
can contact the chairman,
Mr. James Wilson

Canadian Graves in Hong Kong [marked by small white stones]

One prisoner's diary

From the diary of Delbert William, of the Magdelan Islands, Quebec. When he left for Hong Kong he weighed 171 pounds at 6 feet tall.

The following is excerpted from his diary which has survived:

Dec. 24, 1941
Never done anything in the morning. Only eat once, not much to eat. But ain't feeling very good. Spent a very unhappy Xmas eve and a very hungry one.

Dec. 25, 1941
Xmas morning and not even yet a smoke. Never had our breakfast until 0.100 P.M. Nearly starved. Heavy firing right alongside of us. Had rice and greens for supper. Just tea for dinner. Pretty hungry.

Jan. 15, 1942
Burt, Jim and I planning to go to Harbour base if we ever get home again.

Feb. 15, 1942
B. Had rice, sweet milk, piece of bread, butter.
D. Had rice, stew and black tea.
S. Had spoonful rice, and sweet milk and tea.

Apr. 25, 1942
Got weighed today. Weighed 140 pounds.

Apr. 26, 1942

B. Had dry rice, one bun and butter.
D. Had two buns and black tea.
S. Had stew and one very good bun.

June 4, 1942
B. Had dry rice, and black tea.
D. Had fried potatoes and cucumbers.
S. Had rice, and watery stew.

Aug. 6, 1942
B. Had rice, sugar and one bun.
D. Had two buns and butter.
S. Had rice soup and two small buns.

Sept. 20, 1942
B. Had rice, sweet sauce and one bun.
D. Had four buns, went out working.
S. Had rice, fish, greens and one bun.

Oct. 2, 1942
B. Had rice, and fish.
D. Had rice, greens and a piece of bun.
S. Had rice, greens, sugar and bread.

Oct. 4, 1942
B. Had rice, and Sugar and a slice of B.
D. Had rice, greens and a slice of bread.
S. Had greens and a piece of bread.

Oct. 5, 1942
B. Never eat anything
D. all day couldn't
S. swallow

Oct. 6, 1942 Delbert William died.

Hong Kong Side Street Scene

Men were dying all the time

I was first stationed in an internment camp in Quebec City with the Canadian Provost Corp. The German Jews there were treated well. It was a secret then, but I guess it isn't anymore, that at one time we were supposed to have had the grand-son of the old Kaiser of Germany there. The conditions were quite good there and food was amongst the best. Then we heard that we were being sent to the tropics. We weren't too enthused. It took a month to get over there and when we landed we were really glad to stretch our legs. Three weeks after we got there the Japanese attacked us.

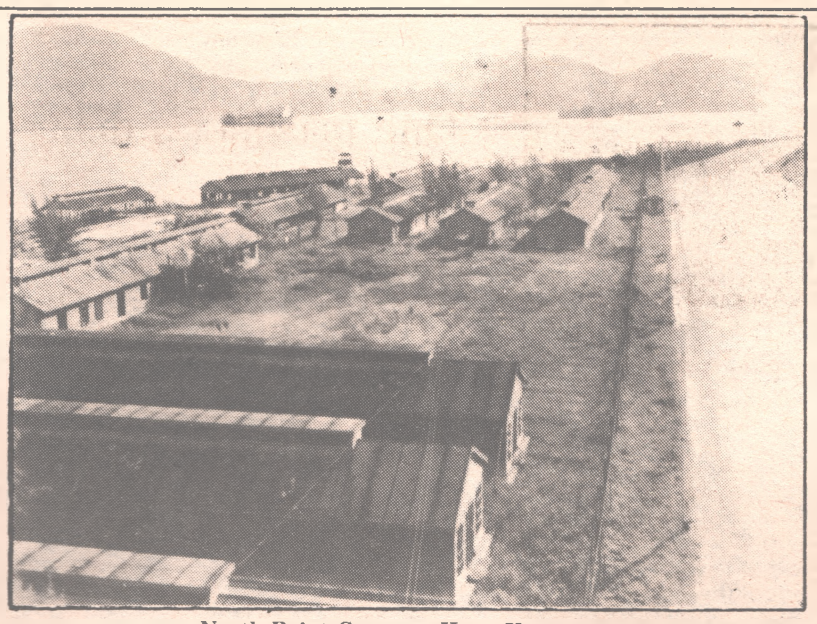
We weren't at all prepared and our gunnery wasn't as good as the Japanese guns. We fought seventeen straight days, until we had our backs to the Stanley Penninsula. Our orders to surrender were unable to reach us as communication lines were completely broken. Then there was a group of officers with the white flag of surrender. I remember suddenly feeling the stillness and silence. The Japanese took us to North Point Camp, which they used to use as stables.

Conditions were terrible and disease soon set in. We were allowed to use our own stores at first but then we went to Oriental standards. Men were dying all the time - about twenty-five percent. The Red Cross were great in sending us supplies although most of them didn't reach us as the Japanese took them.

We were taken to Sham Shui Po Camp where it was the blood and sweat of all of the Allied prisoners that built the airport you'll see there today. Some of our men were sent over to work in Japan, where conditions were even worse. Most of the officers stayed on the island where I remained (Mr. Hurd was a Captain).

The strangest situation developed when the Japanese finally surrendered. They began saluting to us. By then so many of our men were sick. It was the disease that gets the men, sure we were hungry, but your body is so weakened that many diseases set in - malaria, typhoid, pneumonia. It took months and months to slowly regain health after the war was over. Some never did - many died after they returned. The rest of us still get together every year and there is a warm feeling amongst us.

Lionel Hurd
Sawyerville



North Point Camp on Hong Kong Island - the Chinese mainland across the harbour.

War Diary

Captain E.L. Hurd, E.D. (of Sawyerville)

Captain E.L. Hurd, Quartermaster of the Royal Rifles, kept a very informative diary of camp life. The following selections are from the North Point experience and are chosen to illustrate life at North Point and some of the difficulties faced by the Canadians in this camp.*

March 2, 1942.
Sgt. Major Kerrigan...was very successful in moving a building into camp in pieces. Much argument was in progress as to whom was to occupy it. Our men are very crowded. The cooks rightfully demanded a portion of it, as soon the weather would become so hot no one could sleep in the kitchen. Received an issue of eggs, 33 percent rotten and horrible to eat.

March 3, 1942.
Weather foggy and unsettled. Another issue of eggs worse than before. Several reports of men infected with vermin.

March 4, 1942.
Work progressing on improving kitchen roof. All stoves and homemade oven working very satisfactory. Weather cool and overcast. Much alarm felt over lack of proper food. Major Parker feeling ill... Built concrete trough today improving washing conditions.

March 7, 1942.
Weather cloudy and cool with rain. All people interned are to be in huts after 2030 hours. By order of Japs. Finished tin roof on kitchen today. Pioneers have shop all closed in.

March 10, 1942.
The Japs confiscated all flashlights, cameras, batteries, tools, etc.

March 11, 1942.
The Jap O.C. of Prisoners visited the camp today. He did not appreciate the reception given him. He did not enter the prison hospital, or visit our doctors. Evidently he did not wish to become aware of the awful conditions in our hospital.

March 13, 1942.
Weather partly cloudy. Sunshine for two hours. Japs censored all books, even approved **Menace of Japan.**

March 15, 1942.
Camp inspected by Guard Commander. He seemed quite pleased, as we gave him plenty of salutes.

March 15, 1942.
Rain in the morning. This is a great day for rumors. First there is a truce in the Phillipines. Then the Americans have landed in Japan and the Japs have sued for peace... Then last we are all going to be freed tomorrow.

March 16, 1942.
The rumors of previous day all fell flat.

March 24, 1942.
Work has progressed favorably to improve mens' boots.

March 26, 1942.
Men are in a bad state of mentality. Becoming very suspicious of the distribution and handling of rations. In fact threaten to mutiny. They are becoming very touchy and there are altogether too many troublemakers.

March 28, 1942.
The Court of Inquiry has had several witnesses up today. No reasonable complaints have come to light. Today the Jap Guard was changed. Last night one of the Jap sentries got drunk and went into the H.Q. Coy Hut leaving his rifle in the corner and went to sleep... He was severely slapped by his Corporal. The new guards are very cocky. I witnessed them beat up a Chinese lad for a very minor offense.

March 31, 1942.
Much alarm felt about Supply Officer not being able to get yeast or baking powder... the Officers are as unreasonable as the men over the distribution of the rations. I often wonder how many of my brother officers believe that I am fair in making my distributions.

April 10, 1942.
Nothing unusual to quote except that there is a large amount of trading articles for cigarettes.

April 15, 1942.
Japs commence to electrify the wire and make the barriers more formidable.

April 30, 1942.
Our regimental barbershop in good shape. Getting well organized. There is scarcely a beard left.

May 3, 1942.
Very heavy rainfall today... The Japs are very good at hill fighting, and their tactics for warfare here were good. By my impression of their administrative ability I think that it is very slack. They have no idea or care how prisoners should be treated.

May 8, 1942.
...yesterday the men behaved very badly in our ration store. Nearly became a brawl.

May 14, 1942.
Nothing except heavy tropical rains. Farmers start working on plot in front of camp. A Chinese civilian beaten to death here for walking on the wrong side of the street.

May 21, 1942.
We hear the Jap Col. Tokunaga wants us to sign an affidavit that we will not attempt to escape.

May 22, 1942.
Nothing new except our food is bad - especially mouldy flour.

May 23, 1942.
Today Col. Tokunaga held a meeting of our senior officers. He advised us that it was an order to sign and if we refused the camp would be punished. The only alternative to please him was to do so. But an oath sworn under compulsion is not legally or morally binding to white men.

May 26, 1942.
Japs cut our flour and rice 25 percent less. I guess they are punishing us for our hesitation in not signing willingly.

May 30, 1942.
Of all things for sale! A Toronto street car ticket brought 3 cigarettes for exchange.

May 31, 1942.
The temperature was 96 inside today.

June 8, 1942.
Ate no food today. Believe starvation is the only treatment.

June 16, 1942.
Have been ill most of the time. 103 men went to work on the airport.

July 1, 1942.
Plans for a celebration went amiss for Dominion Day due to rain in the afternoon and some of the sports had to be cancelled. The weather cleared enough to hold the minstrel show which was excellent.

July 3, 1942.
Col. Tokunaga visited us today with the Red Cross officials. It did not amount to much as complaints were not heard.

July 25, 1942.
Went out on working party to airport. Met Rev. Strong after he had a burial service. Much illness reported at Sham Shui Po.

July 26, 1942.
Sunday - Winnipeg Grenadiers took out 400 men today on working party. Japs seem in haste to complete the runway... Men's hopes seem shattered regarding repatriation.

August 14, 1942.
...our men are suffering for lack of meat. The hospital is full and men are falling sick every day. I fear that unless conditions are improved many of our lads will never live to see Canada again.

August 19, 1942.
The men are very ill, many of them due to poor food. My weight is 140 lbs., about 20 lbs. under my usual weight. If we don't get more proteins I fear deaths will occur... The officers of each Regiment will raise 500 Yen per month to buy extra food for our men in need.

August 20, 1942.
Today the following men of the camp escaped.
Sgt. Payne (W.G.)
L-Cpl. Berzinski (R.C.O.C.)
Pte. Adams (W.G.)
Pte. Ellis (W.G.)
Much excitment in camp.

August 21-25, 1942.
Men have been divided into five men parties, and they have been warned that if any one of the party escapes the others will be punished.

August 29, 1942.
The Jap guard had the idea that more

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prisoners escaped. Kept us out all night counting the prisoners.

August 30, 1942.
Have caught more cold after the soaking received last night.

September 1-6, 1942.
Feel ill. Food getting low and many men sick. Rfms. Antilla, Firch and Pomeroy died at Bowen Road. The medical stores are not sufficient to take care of the sick and very little effort seems to be made to help us.

September 7, 1942.
Captain Thompson admitted to Bowen Road ill with fever. Cpl. Southgate went blind last night due to lack of proper food.

September 9, 1942.
We had another search of camp... About 1000 men in camp have to wear masks for prevention of sore throats, etc.

September 26, 1942.
Moved from North Point to Sham Shui Po in Kowloon. Many of the men found it difficult to walk. I had just recovered again from fever.

October 3, 1942.
My foot and ankle still sore. Blood is such poor condition that healing is very slow.

October 4, 1942.
We are losing men every day due to lack of medical supplies and protein foods. We have an average of a funeral a day and many as four a day in camp.There is no anti-toxin or serum for preventing diphtheria.

October 6-10, 1942.
Nothing new except the hospitals are filling up with dysentry cases and diphtheria. Also 75 to 100 men are found to be carriers and are put in isolation.

October 11, 1942. –
I was in command of his burial party. The funeral service was held in the R.C. Chapel Sham Shui Po Camp under Capt. (Rev. Father) Green of the Royal Chaplain Services. Rfn. Dubois was buried with four other Canadians in Soldiers Cemetery at Argyle St. Last Post and Reveille were sounded at the Chapel. The L-Cpls. Steven and Smith were buried at the same time.

October 12-23, 1942.
All sorts of rumors as to Allied activity outside. During this period the Japanese convoy bound from Hong Kong to Japan carrying British Prisoners of War was attacked by Allied submarines resulting in loss of probably several hundred lives. (ED. Note: 1,500 prisoners died in the sunken ship. Japs closed hatches so prisoners couldn't get out.)
E30015 Rfn. Pelletier died today at dysentry hospital, Sham Shui Po prison, after being ill for several days. I was in command of the burial party. Capt. Green officiated at the funeral. Last Post was sounded at grave.

October 23, 1942.
Working parties are very heavy. Men being forced to work that are not fit to be out of bed. No amount of pleading will alter the Japs brutal treatment.

October 25, 1942.
Allied planes raided docks in Hong Kong today. The men are in good spirits. The Japs had blackout in camp and the guards are very nervous. The raid was about 1430 hours. Ten months to day and hour of the surrender.

October 26, 1942.
Allied planes again raided Kowloon and Hong Kong at 0145 hours. Believed to hit Whitfield Barracks.

October 27, 1942.
Nothing unusual. Guards very nervous and always shouting.

October 28, 1942.
Allied planes raided at 1100 hours. And bombed boat in harbour successfully. This was witnessed by our men who were working on the airport.

November 1-29, 1942.
During this time I have been laid up with a tropical ulcer - a huge open sore on my right leg. For two weeks I kept hot compresses on it. This brought out the infection. Capt. Banfill our M.O. started treating me with a salve... We are receiving more Red Cross food - canned beef, tea, sugar, m.&v. We received a small issue daily of some of these articles.

December 1-21, 1942.
We have had excellent weather all this time. The food is better due to the issue of the Red Cross supplies. I have gained a lot. All the tropical ulcers have healed except one. We were visited by two Red Cross representatives... he was very displeased with conditions in the hospital. Major Atkinson (British M.O.) and Capt. Norris were beaten by Jap interpreter because two medical orderlies were late on parade.

December 24, 1942.
We attended Christmas service and Holy Communion at midnight. Our Canadian government sent each of us Yen 10 which was greatly appreciated by the troops.

December 25, 1942.
The hall was decorated nicely with Christmas trees and usual decorations. Our dinner way was m.&v. pudding and sauce. Feel full.

January 11, 1943.
Evidently a draft is about to depart for Japan or elsewhere. Over 300 R.R.C. and 200 W.G. were selected. Nothing done about officers.

January 13, 1943.
...About 100 letters arrived from Canada today... It is quite evident that no casuality list had been received in Canada by May 1, 1943.

January 19, 1943.
This morning 664 Canadians (of which 376 were R.R.C.) sailed from Hong Kong probably for Japan. My sore leg is all healed but the ankle muscles are lame. I find it difficult to get around without a cane.

February 27, 1943.
Since this last month our men received Yen 16, and we all got another Red Cross parcel. The fuel shortage in this colony is becoming very grave. The wood used here now is local and looks as if it might be shade trees cut in town... the rumors are we will all be taken to Japan...

March 5, 1943.
Was slapped at 2300 hours by a Jap sentry at the latrine.

March 18, 1943.
The Japs are putting electric fences around a smaller area of the camp.

March 28, 1943.
160 letters arrived in camp from Canada for the R.R.C., most of them were 10 months old...

March 30, 1943.
130 letters arrived... I was unfortunate again.

April 4, 1943.
Received a letter from Mother mailed on May 8, 1942. (11 mos. old.)

April 25, 1943.
Today is Easter Sunday. Had Holy Communion at 0930 hours. For the past month have had stomach trouble. Had my head shaved today.

April 30, 1943.
I am preparing to give a talk on mining in Canada...

May 31, 1943.
Received a letter today from my wife. The first direct communication from her since my arrival in the Far East. It took nearly 13 months for this letter to reach me. It takes the Japanese so long to censor mail that I doubt if we'll get all our mail.

June 20, 1943.
I am suffering again with a sore in my mouth... The Japanese treatment of their Prisoners of War is a blot on their pages of war history. I recall the prompt action we had to take while I was with the Dept. of Internment operations in Canada. The mail was delivered within one day after arrival... If it had not been for the Red Cross most of us would be dead by this time.

June 25, 1943.
This is one and a half years of prison life today. My weight is 128 lbs.

June 26, 1943.
Three years ago today I joined the C.A.S.F. I hope that I will not be three years in prison. My mouth is very sore today. All the top lip is cankerous. After this war I never want any contact with the Japanese. The indifferent attitude they take! Since our imprisonment over 100 Canadians died due mostly to bad food and lack of medical stores.

June 29, 1943.
Today we were visited by the Swiss counsel. He asked why our men were sleeping on the cement floor. The Jap officer told him the beds were out being cleaned. The lying son of a bitch did not say they were so full of bed bugs the men couldn't sleep at night, and for two months the men have preferred the cement floor to vermin infested communal Japanese beds!

July 1, 1943.
Huck O'Neil put on a splendid three act drama called 'Here Comes Charlie' to celebrate Dominion Day. The cast was chiefly Canadian officers. For the past few months different personnel have given monthly wonderful entertainments in plays, music, etc. Sonny Castro of H.K.V.D.C. is a marvel at impersonating a girl.

July 8, 1943.
Camp officials for the past days are looking in attics etc. for heaters etc. They are always so suspicious.

July 13, 1943.
I sold my wristwatch for Yen 145 today.

July 27, 1943.
Six bombers (Allied) accompanied by at least as many fighters came up the harbour. They dropped bombs and hit Stone Cutters Island half mile in front of our camp. Had total blackout tonight. Ten months had passed since our last raid on Hong Kong.

July 29, 1943.
The Americans again raided the harbour. Naval dock yards and oil tanks were bombed. The raid lasted 15 minutes.

August 15, 1943.
A draft left this morning. They were put on a small freighter 100 ft. long by 30 ft. beam width... 162 R.R.C.... I hope the boys are better fed. The crowded condition in the hold of a freighter is not good in this climate.

August 16, 1943.
Due to insufficient Vitamin B I have been in a bad way with ulcers and pellagra. For three days it has been agony to swallow... since I sold my watch I have been able to buy a few tins bully beef at Yen 7.50 each. I hope to be able to keep up 3 oz. of Bully a day. If we had not received Red Cross food I fear very few would be on our feet today - besides scores would have died.

August 21, 1943.
My mouth is improving - the scales here show my weight as 121 lbs. Major Bishop, Capt. Thompson, Capt. Delougherey and I have pooled our resources and formed a Mess of our own.

August 30, 1943.
No wood in camp. There is grave scarcity as per H.K. news. The food issued - greens, rice, flour for one bun a day and a tiny amount of fish which is issued one day at a time to a hut, about once in ten days one gets a decent meal of fish.

September 2, 1943.
Major MacAulay is messing with us. We had another air raid. The oil tanks were hit near Sham Shui Po and smoke could be seen all afternoon from here.

September 7, 1943.
No wood coming in today. Getting very scarce. We burn dried grass to make tea.

November-December, 1943.
What a sight to look out of our quarters and watch China go by - the Coolies pulling their rickshaws. Since the Americans destroyed the oil tanks fewer automobiles are on the streets. Probably only army or government officials are permitted to use them.
For six weeks now I have been working in the prison garden. It is good for me. I like it not only for the physical exercise but it takes one away from the communal atmosphere that prevails. It is surprising what little trouble there has been where life is trying by being with the same persons continually.
For the months of August and September my pay was raised from Y62.50 to Y95.50. October pay was dropped to Y75.50 due to a new regulation... food prices are very high. Last year a 12 oz. tin of canned beef cost Y2. Today it is Y8.50. Our mess pools Y60 per officer per month - we are able to live but do not have enough to keep away hunger.
Today Nov. 25, 1943, makes 23 months we have been prisoners. It is a long time and I hope we will not have more than a year of it. We can't understand why our progress is so slow.

At night after I go to bed my mind goes back to my home... Dear little Jimmy toddling at my side and Freddie happily perched on my back. Jimmy tried to show me around. He could only say a few words. By the time I see them again I will likely find them in school. From what information I have I must have been a prisoner nine months before they knew at home I was alive.

My brother prisoners are planning Christmas. A Christmas in prison makes me feel sad. This will be the third.

Today finds us at the end of 1943. The war I believe cannot finish in less than 18 months.

The food question is still serious. All our Japanese rations (rice, green vegetables, etc.) are cooked in the camp kitchen.

ROSS BELLAM

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Nearly everyone either directly or indirectly receives food in parcels from friends outside. Prisoners are allowed to collect chips and build small fires outside and do individual cooking. Father Deloughery and Major MacAulay each have a contact outside for a parcel. We each (MacAulay, Bishop, Thompson, Price, Deloughery and myself) contribute money into our little mess so that Y40 per month is sent to each of these two parties, who deliver these parcels to the Japanese H.Q. each Monday. We have done well by this arrangement which is our only way of getting fresh fruit and vegetables. From the canteen we are able to get bully beef (Y8.50), canned beans (Y1.10), soya bean milk powder at Y4.85 per lb. and sometimes eggs which now cost 90 Yen each.

The local Red Cross official visited the camp a few days ago. He had not been here for about six months. His visits are only a formality. No one is permitted to go near him.

Our garden is not doing too badly. We get considerable swiss chard, yams and will soon have some lettuce. There are over 1000 tomato plants set out which we hope will give us a treat providing they are not all stolen. The poultry farm run by the prisoners gives a few eggs a day for the hospital.

Our big problem is wood for fuel. The day before yesterday only one meal was cooked in the kitchen. If wood does not come in today there will be only one today also. Have had no tea for two days. This ends 1943. Future???

January 13, 1944.
All personnel have to write an essay (200-250 words) on the Battle of Hong Kong for the Japanese. Our rice ration has been increased by 18 oz. We are still getting a little bread, but expect it will soon play out. Food is very expensive. Lard is Y14.50 a lb. Cigarettes are 30 Sen a package of ten. Matches are 40 Sen a small box.

February 3, 1944.
Wood is very difficult to get. We are short often and have to miss a meal.

March 1, 1944.
Received a letter from my wife and six snap shots of my little boys. Nothing I have received since taken a P.O.W. could please me even more even if the letter is 16 months old.

Skit in P.O.W. camp

March 6, 1944.
Captain Thomson, Deloughery and myself moved today to Hut 4. This was a bad blow to our mess as it will leave only three of us to mess together now. Blackout tonight. Received a letter from Mary and a photo of Freddie, posted Nov. 2, 1942. This is the first letter where she mentions having received a letter from me. I am very pleased to have these snaps of my children. They look so well and so well looked after. All letters going to Stanley have been stopped, also for the time being, all cooking on small fires. This war is dragging along into our third year of captivity.

March 13, 1944.
Picked 19 lbs. of tomatoes today. Total to date - 60 lbs.

March 16, 1944.
Tonight 'Journey's End is being produced by local camp talent. Camp life is greatly improved when shows and concerts are permitted. In Sham Shui Po as well as here there have been some excellent entertainments put on by the camp. We have received orders that all gardens inside the camp must be moved.

March 28, 1944.
A splendid play was staged here last week by camp personnel... It was a marvelous piece of work, considering there is so little to do with.

I should make a comment on camp workshops which function with a limited number of tools and material, but keep us together. Major Mertha, R.A. is the master cobbler. Capt. Trapman and Lieut. Potts run a camp laundry. Major Wells Bishop slaves away as messing officer and for the last few months, has improved cooking and administration of the kitchen. Major Tom MacAulay is in charge of the canteen.

March 30, 1944.
A few days ago all gardens inside camp were moved to outside camp by order of Japanese camp commandant. The weather for the last few days has been rainy and cool. Considerable rehearsals are going on in preparation for coming shows.

April 27, 1944.
Our monthly show was staged by camp personnel tonight. 'Whistling Death' was a great success. It is marvelous what the camp artists can produce. The stage arrangements were a wonder.

May 9, 1944.
Your birthday Freddie - many happy returns for your four years. It seems a long time since I first saw you. Maybe next year I will be home to celebrate your fifth.

May 11, 1944.
200 of us moved from Argyle Street to Sham Shui Po today.

At Argyle Street camp the Japanese became very suspicious and made frequent searches for documents and other records. Captain Hurd buried his diary in a discarded roofing tar can and continued his entries on pieces of scrap paper at Sham Shui Po. Upon release from Sham Shui Po camp he was able to recover the diary which was undamaged. The following entries are the ones taken from the scrap paper and cover the period from May 3, 1944 to September 1, 1945 at Sham Shui Po camp.

June 8, 1944.
The camp activities for us are that 40 or 50 officers go out daily to improve the road and graves at our cemetery.

July 18, 1944.
Ralph Godwin escaped today.

July 19, 1944.
The newspapers have been suspended.

July 20, 1944.
No canteen and outside parcels allowed.

September 23, 1944.
Lt. Colonel Price celebrates his 20th wedding aniversary today by treating the boys to cigarettes.

October 16, 1944.
Heavy air raid on Kowloon today. The heaviest we have witnessed yet. A fire struck inside the compound wounding Lieut. Eardly in the legs and Lieut. DaSilva in the hand. Probably 30 to 40 planes took part in the raid.

December 25, 1944.
Major Bishop has been the chef for our Christmas dinner. We pooled our scanty food stocks and had bully beef, pudding, candy. The dinner was in Major Bishop's hut. Very disappointed in not receiving a Red Cross parcel.

January 16, 1945.
Air battle over harbour all day. Can see smoke from damages done on various installations.

February 9, 1945.
The Roman Catholic Bishop of Hong Kong visited the camp today. Father Deloughery was barely allowed to speak to him.

February 19, 1945.
Having trouble with my heart due to low standard of food. My pulse two weeks ago was 110, last week 86, today 74.

August 11, 1945.
It is being told to the working parties that Japan negotiated for peace. There is a great deal of doubt in our minds.

August 14, 1945.
Sentries tell certain people that Japan has sued for peace. The new atomic bomb has brought havoc on Japanese cities.

August 16, 1945.
We know officially the war is over! Japanese camp O.C. asked if it is true. Lt. Colonel White demands that camp Japanese sentries be withdrawn.

August 17, 1945.
Japanese sentries disappeared from around camp. Col. Tokunaga informs us we are still P.O.W.'s

August 18, 1945.
We have access to 'go-downs' outside - better food comes in. Seven American planes flew over camp and we caught pamphlets they dropped. Lieut. General Wedermer tells us the end is near. We are to remain in our areas. Several civilians visit their relatives, at the gate. Communications between all prisoner and civilian internment camps. Radios have been sent into camp. News starting to come in from Manilla.

August 19, 1945.
Radio has been working several hours. Friendly civilians sending food into camp.

August 21, 1945.
We don't expect a relieving force in for ten days.

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Many ex-servicemen do get government pensions but many others, although handicapped do not. However, no pension can provide for eventualitites such as fire, a long illness on the part of the bread winner or other medical expenses.

75% of all Service Bureau cases involve people who are not Legion Members. Throughout the Legion in some 1800 branches, in ten provincial commands and in Ottawa there is a chain of service officers whose job it is to assist any ex-serviceman or dependant with pension problems. The provincial and national offices not only provide advice but act on behalf of the individual. Every year they make thousands of representations to the federal government on behalf of "clients". There is no charge for this service which is available to anybody who can qualify for such assistance.

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We suggest that you give according to the dictates of your conscience. You might remember that the cost of all the things the poppy fund provides is much higher today than it used to be. Therefore, it takes more to do the same job.

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August 23, 1945.
The camp is very uneasy awaiting the arrival of the Allies to relieve us. We get the highlights of the current news twice a day.

August 26, 1945.
B.B.C. Radio broadcast that food was dropped in Hong Kong P.O.W. camps - untrue...

August 28, 1945.
News that Canadian Red Cross ship is landing food in Hong Kong. The news is wrong so far as all the food is local.

August 29, 1945.
Planes flew over camp at mid-day and dropped medical supplies, a few cigarettes and messages to the Japanese. The party visits Stanley... and saw three destroyers, two other craft off Stanley today. The morale of the camp is high tonight!

August 30, 1945.
The fleet entered Hong Kong Harbour this morning and the Canadian 'Prince Robert' tied up at Holt's wharf. This ship escorted us from Vancouver to Hong Kong in 1941. Imagine the thrill of being entertained aboard her today by her officers! This is the first time in three years and nine months we are free!

September 1, 1945.
Japanese were ordered off Hong Kong Island and have concentrated at Gun Club Hill, Kowloon. Fred Royal, Chris D'Almada, Da Silva and I went for a swim. We met a Jap officer who grabbed our hands and said, to our utter amazement, 'Glad Great Britain beat Japan.'

*From the diary loaned by Captain E.L. Hurd, E.D.

Aug. 30, 1945. R.C.N. Photo by Petty Officer Hawer, R.C.N.V.R. PR. 453 Immediate Release. Canadian Cruiser, H.M.C.S. 'Prince Robert', at Kowloon, China: The only ship in the British task force that relieved Hong Kong to proceed to the Kowloon side of the harbour was the Canadian anti-aircraft cruiser H.M.C.S. Prince Robert. Her job was to land troops and secure the dockyard area.

One of the first to reach Sham Shui Po P.O.W. camp when H.M.C.S. Prince Robert put in at Kowloon was Cdr. Peter MacRitchie, R.C.N.V.R. [above]. He was asked to autograph a diary and is shown fulfilling the request in one of the Canadian barracks.

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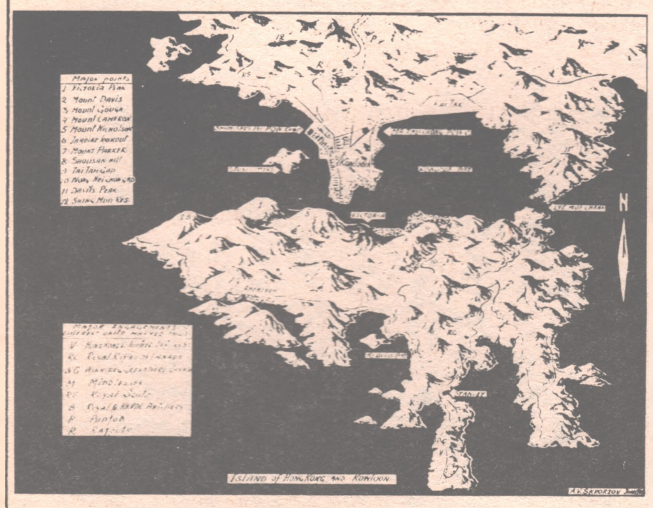
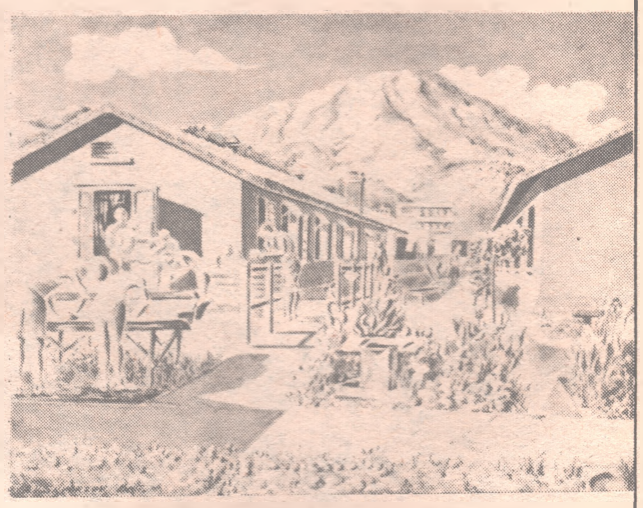
Sketches of Prisoner of War Camp Life in Hong Kong



These drawings by Lieutenant Alexander V. Skvorzov of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps were drawn in the Japanese Prisoner of War Camps for officers in Hong Kong, and truthfully represent the actual conditions under which the prisoners lived for over three and a half years.
Signed by:
John H. Price Lt. Col., Royal Rifles of Canada
S.E.H.E. White Lt. Col., The Royal Scots
Rominaeco Lt. Col., H.K.V.D.C.
on the 15th of August, 1945. P.O.W. camp Sham Shui Po, Hong Kong

left: Island of Hong Kong and Kowloon.

right: Huts - Sham Shui Po camp. Life in a P.O.W. camp controlled by the Japanese was reduced to an almost primitive existence. 'Fandochi' became the most popular garment and a craving for food the most exciting emotion.



left: Argyle Street Officers' camp. The above huts were erected by the Hong Kong Government as temporary quarters for the Chinese soldiers who, having crossed the British border during the Sino Japanese war in 1939, were interned by the British authorities. For a year and a half these huts were used as an Officers' P.O.W. camp. Triple barbed wire, electric circuit fences and flood lamps were erected by the Japanese to prevent escape.

right: Interior of Huts - Sham Shui Po camp. Bed-bugs were everywhere: in beds, stools, chairs, clothing, headgear, etc. One couldn't sit peacefully on a stool or sleep quietly in one's bed. Hot water and insect powder were not allowed for de-bugging. Some experimented with bed-bug traps, with dubin and lime, but without success. The best remedy was to acquire immunity.

left: Interior of a Hut - Argyle camp. Seen above is a hut for 42 prisoners. Nothing was provided by the Japanese and the prisoners had to make everything for themselves, from cooking utensils to an operating table. Their tools were scraps of glass and saws from old knife blades, bed-legs for hammers etc., and their materials bits of plank, asbestos sheeting, gunny sacks, barbed wire all scrounged when on fatigues outside the camp.

right: Wire Guarding Water Front, Sham Shui Po camp. The prisoner seen at right is wearing only Japanese 'garment' distributed free to prisoners, a 'fandochi'. Prisoners wore these to save their decent pair of shorts or trousers for muster parades and other times when the Japanese insisted on proper dress.

left: The Exercise Ground - Argyle Street camp. Four times around the huts was about one mile. This walk was the only exercise for 600 officers during a year and a half.

right: Kitchen - Sham Shui Po camp. For forty-four months a prisoner was forced to live on a rice diet approximately equal to half of what a Chinese servant would normally eat. Pellagra and beri-beri, with their attendant physical degeneration swept through the camp. Of all the Red Cross food parcels sent to Hong Kong not one prisoner received more than seven in 44 months of captivity.

Sketches of Prisoner of War Camp Life in Hong Kong

by Lieut. A.V. Skvorzov, H.K.V.D.C.

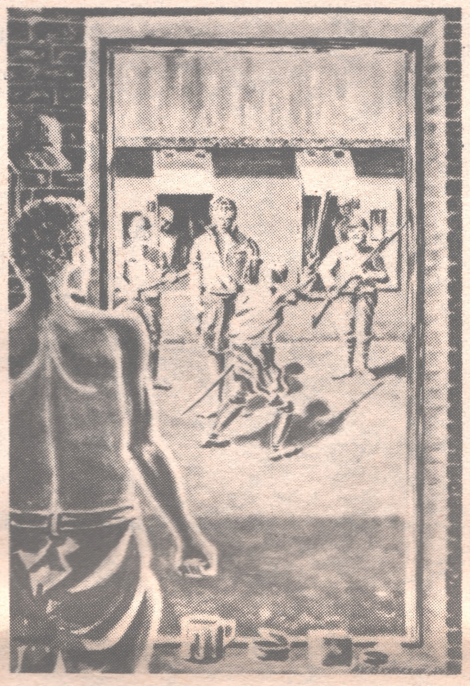
December 25, 1941 - August 30, 1945
copyright, 1948, by A.V. Skvorzov, M.I. Struct.E.
35 Kadoorie Avenue, Hong Kong.

left: A Talk in a Hut - Sham Shui Po camp. To fight depression and keep minds occupied, talks were given in the huts. Capt. R. Egal was one who held the chair for many evenings; he is shown giving one of a series of talks known as 'Saigon Again'.

right: Night Count in a Hut - Sham Shui Po. The Japanese sentry is seen counting the prisoners at night. After an escape, the Japanese made each prisoner responsible for a group of his friends. Also every night one prisoner in the hut had to check and report numbers present, sometimes as often as ten times a night.

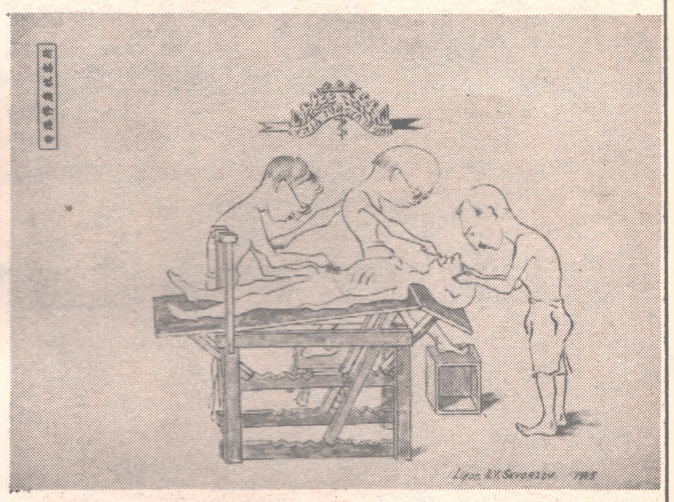
left: On Waterfront - Sham Shui Po camp. Despondent and without much hope of survival, many prisoners before retiring to their huts used to sit on concrete blocks watching the sunset.

right: Typical Japanese Treatment of Prisoners - Sham Shui Po. Depicted is an officer being struck with a heavy stick by a Japanese NCO.



left: Officers Return to their huts Sham Shui Po. Starved and ill-clothed, British officers return to their huts after the day's work. In spite of the feeling of dejection shown by these men, within a few moments of returning to their huts their sense of humour would find something to laugh and talk about.

right: Operating Table - Sham Shui Po camp. In a primitive operating theatre, British Army Doctors fought to save lives. Their instruments were razor blades and knives; their drugs salt and peanut oil. Even those were precious and zealously guarded. The Japanese had taken over enormous supplies of the medical stores which they used only for their own soldiery. Later, by bribing sentries, essential drugs were secured in minute quantities. To obtain the money for this men sold to the sentries all they had including gold teeth. The picture shows Captains Strahan, Johnson and Evans at work.



left: Roll Call - Sham Shui Po. For 44 months the prisoners of war were counted twice a day and several times each night.

right: The Union Jack Flies Again - Sham Shui Po camp. On the 11th of August, 1945, rumours of Japan's surrender began to filter through into the Prisoner's camp. The Japanese Camp Administration withheld all information until the 17th of August. The following day all the prisoners assembled on the parade ground and singing 'God Save the King' hoisted the Union Jack for the first time since capitulation. The prisoners were not allowed to leave the camp until the 30th of August, 1945.

Royal Rifles of Canadian Officers, Sussex N.B., 1940

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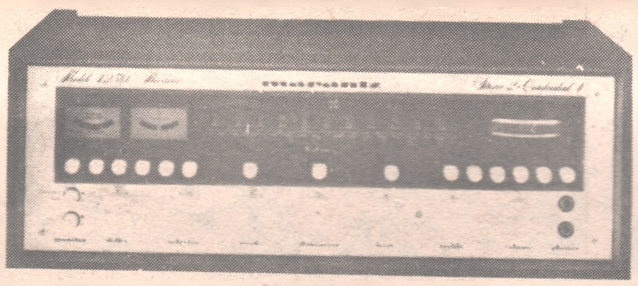

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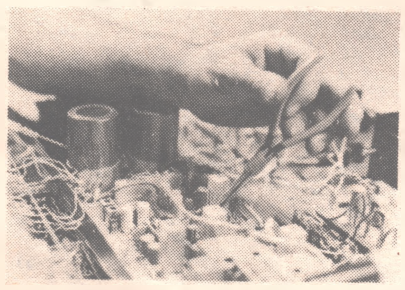

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Underground Activities in a Prisoner of War Camp

Brigader General John H. Price, O.B.E., M.C., E.D., Georgeville

In November 1942, I was a patient at Bowen Road Hospital, having been sent there in July for acute stomach trouble resulting in dysentry, beri-beri, and enteritis. It was a habit of the Japanese to clear out hospitals periodically, in order to make place for new patients.

I had been ordered to the Canadians at Sham Shui Po camp, although doctors' reports stated that I was not well enough to make the trip. As it happened, the move away from Bowen Road Hospital proved very beneficial to me. My health improved at once, and everyday I became stronger and more able to do things.

I was accompanied on the journey across the harbour to Kowloon, which we did by launch, by several officers and men of different nationalities, among them Don Philip of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, and Huidekoper of a submarine crew of the Royal Netherlands Navy, who, with his men had been attached to the Royal Rifles of Canada during their stay in prison camp.

This submarine crew had joined us in the spring of 1942 at North Point camp. Their submarine had been attacked and finally sunk off Khofa Baru, the Malay States. For some reason, they had been brought to Hong Kong, and when we had been moved to Sham Shui Po on the mainland, they were attached to the Canadians for rations and discipline, and remained with us until they were sent to Japan, minus Huidekoper, who stayed in Hong Kong until the end.

Guard house P.O.W. camp, Japan.

The crew of the submarine consisted partly of Dutch petty officers and partly of Javanese ratings. They proved to be a most industrious and ingenious group. When we were short of soap, they extracted lye from the wood ashes of the cookhouse fires, and set up a laundry which quickly became very prosperous, and allowed them to secure such limited luxuries as cigarettes, tinned food, and eggs etc. which were available to those with cash.

They also constructed a radio which they hid under the floor of their hut. Eventually, it was discovered. Huidekoper was held responsible, although he knew nothing about it, and was brutally beaten up in the presence of his men.

It was difficult, at certain times, to control this submarine crew, but after I had a talk with their senior petty officer, they became more amenable, and on the whole, they fitted in well, and became very friendly with the Canadians.

To return to our journey from Bowen Road Hospital to Sham Shui Po, we three officers, Don Philip, Huidekoper and I, were informed that we were not to remain at Sham Shui Po, but were to proceed to Argyle St. camp for officers only. We immediately protested to the interpreter, a Japanese named Nomuri, that we should be left with our own people at Sham Shui Po, but Nomuri, true to the Japanese practice of never admitting mistakes, and thus losing face, said that these were his orders; therefore, we were sent to Argyle St. On arrival there, and continuously thereafter, I made representations to General Maltby, General Officer Commanding China Command, that he request our transfer back to Sham Shui Po where our troops were. The General made repeated appeals to Lieutenant Tanaka, then chief of staff to Colonel Tokunaga, Japanese officer in charge of all prisoner of war camps, Hong Kong, and was assured that action would eventually be taken to move us.

After having been at Argyle Street for a month or thereabouts, we began to receive news which, by its detailed nature, seemed to indicate that definite sources of information were being tapped. Instead of vague rumor, we heard reports containing what seemed to be fact, and which held a ring of reality.

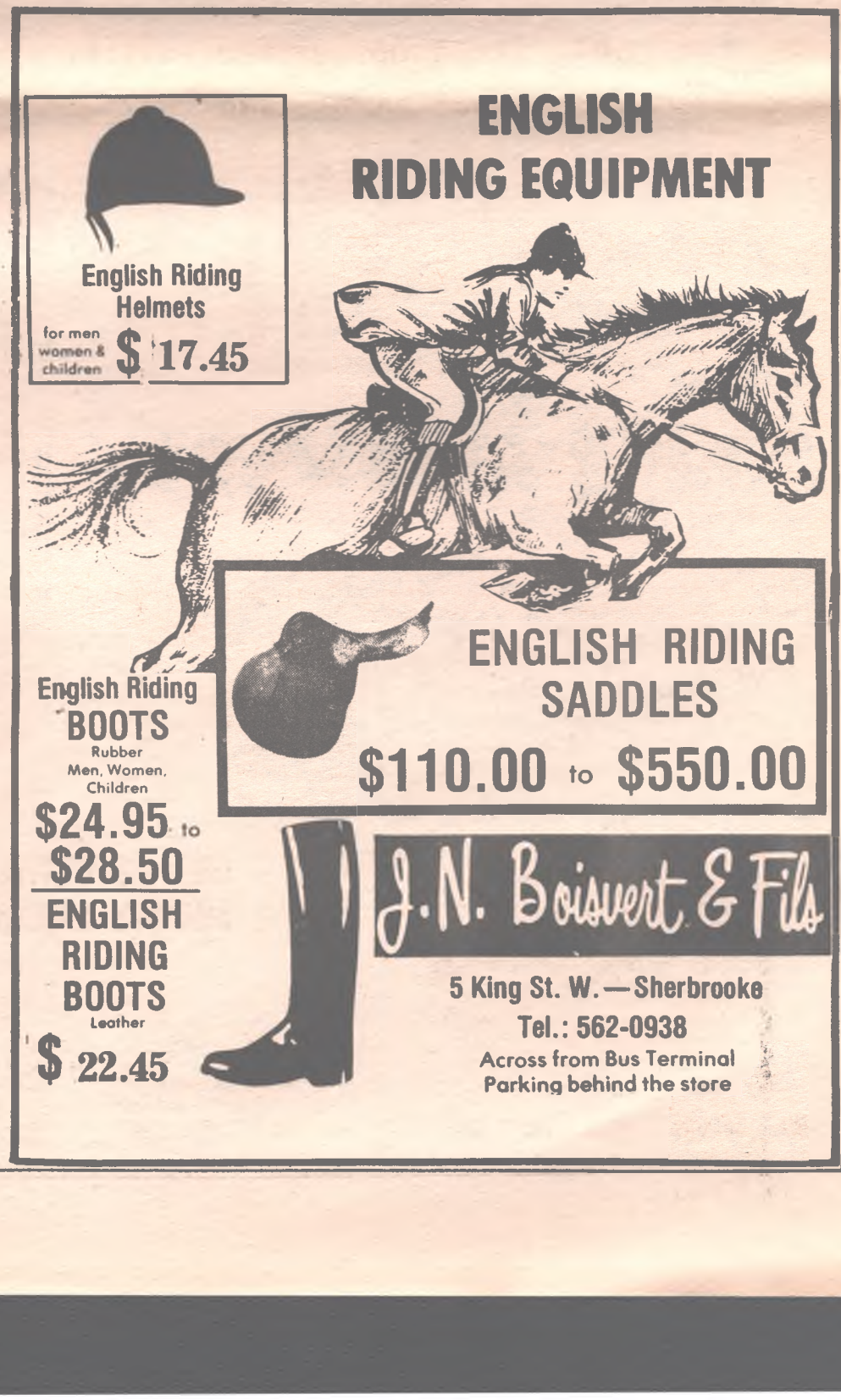
Naturally, I had no idea how these reports were being passed along, but it did not surprise me when Colonel Newnham, Chief of Staff of China Command, an inmate of Argyle St. camp, sent for me at the end of January, 1943 when my transfer to Sham Shui Po seemed at last imminent and asked me if I would take certain verbal messages to Sham Shui Po. He asked me also if I would consent to carry, and deliver, a packet which he would give me later on. While we were discussing this, Huidekoper made a sketch of a section of road just outside the wire which stretched around the camp, and designated a certain stone under which messages might be hidden.

During this interview, Huidekoper and I were not encouraged to ask questions. The Colonel merely told us that he was in touch with Sham Shui Po, and that an exchange of messages had been going on effectively for some time, carried by Chinese drivers of ration lorries.

Before I left, I naturally agreed to carry out the request made to me. The Colonel went to great pains to stress the dangers of the task, and how not only my own life but the lives of many others would be jeopardized if messages contained in any packages I carried were to fall into Japanese hands. He hinted at contacts with our own intelligence officers, and how terribly important it was that no slip-up take place. I must confess that, at the time, I felt that he was over-dramatizing what appeared to be a simple smuggling operation. I had moved between different camps many times, and successfully smuggled contraband articles under the noses of Japanese searchers who were never very intelligent in their methods. Later, however, I was to appreciate the hazards involved in this game, and was glad that, at the time, I was not aware of the exact character of the 'hot brick' I would be carrying, which, as I later discovered, was a packet to be delivered to Captain Douglas Forde of the 2nd Royal Scots, when I received my transfer to Sham Shui Po camp.

I well remember the day the transfer came through. It was on a Sunday in February, 1943. The night before, I had made my one and only appearance in a camp show, and had created a sensation by singing 'Allouette'. My messmates, Ronnie Lamb, and 'Bouncer' Wilson, (both Colonels in Royal Engineers), and I somehow managed to get a hold of a tin of bully beef, which, as the chef of the mess, I had used to concoct a 'specialité'. It consisted of the bully beef and chopped up chrysanthemum leaves, and some yams, coated on top with soya bean curd. This mixture, baked in a slow oven for three hours or so, tasted better than caviar to starving prisoners, and deserved better than the name I gave it, 'Corned beef hash au gratin!'

The day of my transfer, I had prepared this succulent dish after breakfast, and



had taken it to the bakehouse, where the head baker, a friend of mine in the Hong Kong R.N.V.R. promised to do the necessary cooking, although he was somewhat dubious as to the amount of time necessary before it seemed 'done'. I went back to my quarters with anticipation.

At eleven o'clock however, Lieutenant Tanaka rode into the main camp gate in a lorry, and after idly wondering why he had come, imagine my excitement when I was told that Don Philip, Huidekoper, and I must be ready in half an hour for transfer to Sham Shui Po. In the first flush of ensuing activity, I forgot the 'specialité' cooking in the bakehouse oven, but when I remembered it, my excitement turned to despair at the thought of losing this long looked-forward-to feast, which, to a starving man, seemed almost desperately important. However, my messmates very adroitly extracted the half-cooked dish from the oven, and I had my share of it, eating with one hand, and packing my few belongings with the other. During the preparation for departure, I was guarded by two Japanese soldiers who prodded me continually, telling me to hurry; but I was not going to be cheated out of my share of the 'specialité' and took an hour to get ready.

General Maltby and several officers came to say goodbye, and in the general confusion, Colonel Newnham expertly inserted a small package into my cap. He did this right under the noses of the sentries. Finally we three climbed into the lorry, heavily guarded and convoyed by Tanaka. As we left the main gate, the whole camp turned out, and as we drove away we could hear the strains of 'Allouette'. Never was an artist paid greater tribute!

As we drove through the streets of Kowloon, I found it interesting to contrast the present state of the city with what I remembered of it before the war. Business seemed to be at a standstill, and the Chinese crowds were pitifully small, in comparison with the teeming population of peacetime. Obviously the Chinese had been moved away, or had perished.

On arrival at Sham Shui Po, four miles away, we were searched by interpreter Innouye, called the 'Kamloops Kid', because he had been born and had lived in that town in British Columbia for many years before the war. His experience of Canadian life must have soured him, because he seemed to have a particular hatred for all Canadians and was extremely brutal to them at times. As I expected, however, he found nothing suspicious, although for a moment, the message concealed in my cap seemed to burn a hole in it.

It was thrilling to see my friends again. It had been more than seven months since we had left for Argyle St. and there were many changes. Many of the men had been sent to Japan, and many were dead. Malnutrition and disease had taken a heavy toll. Dysentry, all kinds of stomach troubles and disorders, and an epidemic of diphtheria allied to an almost total lack of drugs and antitoxins, had caused a heavy death toll, and incapacitated many others. In fact, most of the inmates of the camp were by now very ill from all varieties of deficiency diseases, such as beri-beri, pellagra, and a painful affliction we called 'electric feet'. One exception to the general state of debility, was my adjutant, that stalwart, valiant officer, Captain Bill LeBoutillier, ('Boots') who somehow had been able to keep his health and spirits at a high point. We went to my quarters, and in private I have him the packet (from my cap), which turned out to be tooth-powder!

I asked Bill to deliver this to Captain Forde. I told him that I did not know what was contained in the tooth-powder, but that I could guarantee that the

Commander McChritchie presenting cigarettes: note the boys in the background wearing 'gee' strings' called Fanduchi.

package had not been tampered with. I further said that if Captain Forde cared to talk to me, I would be happy to do so.

Soon after this, LeBoutillier came to tell me that Forde would like to see me and discuss the message contained in the packet. I never met Forde, and was delighted to find a young, fair Scotsman, sturdy, serious, careful in his talk, and of the most pleasing personality. I judged him to be a man of strong character and with resourcefulness, determination, and courage.

Never was first judgement more correct! Doug Forde proved to be a man with all the qualities I saw first, and in addition, he possessed a modesty which complemented his other sterling traits. In writing of Forde, I find it difficult to say enough, or to express what I felt about him. There could not be found a better comrade, a finer gentleman, or a more patriotic Britisher.

He came to the point at once, and asked me if I would like to join in with his group, who had felt the lack of a senior officer from whom they could seek advice as to their activities, which dealt with underground work, of an extremely dangerous order. In reply, I said that I would be very interested to hear more about it, but warned that if I should become one of them, it would be necessary for me to control activities in my capacity of a senior officer. To this he was quite agreeable.

The general set-up was as follows:

Working parties from Sham Shui Po, which included Chinese speaking mem-

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were weak and enfeebled. All this had to be taken into account in forming our plan for a mass escape.

The plan centered around our knowledge that whenever an air raid warning was sounded, our guards were doubled around the wire fence that surrounded the camp, and that no surplus troops were available in the immediate neighbourhood. This we had found out from our own observations, and from information sent us from our contacts outside.

We believed, therefore, that under these conditions, we might be able to muster 300 men fit enough to fight, if necessary, if they could be armed by some means devised by our friends at Waichow. We then took steps to organize the Canadian troops into groups of ten, each group under an officer. We gave these men no information other than that Hong Kong might be attacked by the Allies at any time, and that it was our duty to prepare ourselves to help our own side if an attack should occur. These men were to be armed with bits of iron or wood or whatever could be found in camp.

We suggested to Waichow that an air raid should be made on Hong Kong at dusk, and further proposed the stationing of a thousand or so Chinese guerillas in the ruined houses around the perimeter of the camp. At the time, we were unaware that our reliable Chinese guerillas existed only in our imaginations.

The rest of the plan consisted of killing the Japanese guards when they appeared after the air raid warning, blowing a hole in the wire, getting our organized group of men and officers out, when they would be properly armed by the attacking party. We would then be guided, we hoped, to safety, but be ready to fight to overcome any resistance we might encounter on the way. We expected to lose fifty percent of these men, but this seemed worthwhile, because our chances of getting out alive seemed to become slimmer with every passing day. We figured that no harm would come to those we would leave behind in the hospital, because the operation would be construed by the Japanese as a liberation, rather than as an escape; and the Japanese usually become cooperative following each sign of possible defeat by the Allies.

The plan, of course, was never carried out. Meanwhile, however, we carried on the other methods of underground activity, and felt satisfied that we saved many lives in this way. All went merrily until one day, without warning, the Japanese stopped all Chinese-speaking men from going out on the ration parties, which convinced us that they suspected something, and we felt that very soon they would change the entire ration party personnel to stop any possible leakage.

In spite of the fact that the guards began renewed and more careful search of the men of all ration parties, we still continued our communication with the outside, through the novel but effective method of writing messages in invisible ink on toilet paper only, which the Japanese never removed. As practically everyone in camp at this time suffered acutely from dysentry, there was a real and practical necessity to carry toilet paper on our persons at all times, a necessity which even the Japanese had to admit.

Royal Rifles of Canada, Officers - Rescued at Hong Kong, Sept., 1945.

One day Forde came to me and told me that a substitute for driver Farrell must be found, as he had been eliminated from the ration party, after resourcefully passing on messages for many months. He was now on the next draft for Japan. Forde suggested that I nominate a Canadian as substitute. He felt the Japanese would be less likely to suspect a Canadian, as our men had not been long enough in Hong Kong before the war to make any contacts. The method of its results had become so important to us, especially in the bringing in of drugs which the Japanese failed to supply, that we decided we must do everything we could to continue with it.

I therefore selected Sargeant Routledge, Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, for this extremely dangerous assignment. Routledge was a young fellow of above average intelligence. He had a strong physique, pleasing personality, and was of staunch character. I sent for him and explained the importance of continuing our communications with the outside. I made it clear that I would think no less of him if he declined to take the risk. I told him that if he were caught, he would probably be badly tortured and killed. Without hesitation, he accepted, was put immediately on the ration party, and for some time carried out his duties most effectively.

On July 1st, 1943, during a softball game between the Canadians and the Portuguese prisoners in camp, I was sitting watching the game when I noticed Tatuda and two sentries coming in through the main gate of the camp. They disappeared from view down one of the lanes between the row of huts. The game was a good one, as the Portuguese play softball well, and in spite of debility, the men on both sides seemed to be enjoying this brief respite. After a while, I saw Tatuda and the sentries coming back into the yard and walking towards the main gate. With them, was Sargeant Routledge. In the distance, I saw them go unobtrusively out of the main gate, Routledge marching between the sentries.

Realizing that our key man had been caught, I remained helplessly watching the game, waiting for developments. These were not long in following. An hour later, Tatuda came back through the gate and took away Flight Lieutenant Gray and Sargeant Hardy. This made it certain that our work had been discovered. I sought out Doug Forde as soon as I could, and found that Routledge had had the presence of mind to convey a message to him before being taken.

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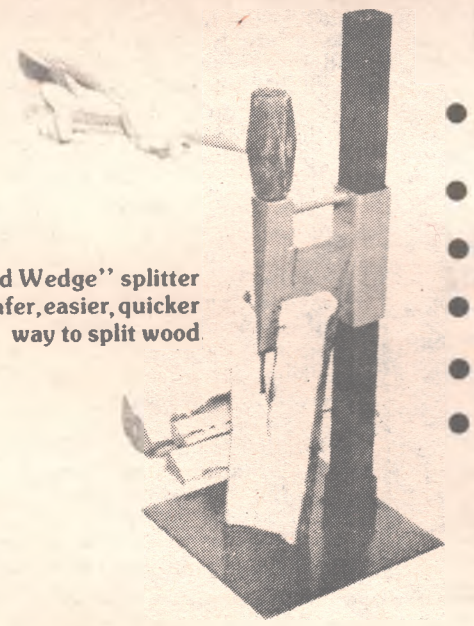

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were weak and enfeebled. All this had to be taken into account in forming our plan for a mass escape.

The plan centered around our knowledge that whenever an air raid warning was sounded, our guards were doubled around the wire fence that surrounded the camp, and that no surplus troops were available in the immediate neighbourhood. This we had found out from our own observations, and from information sent us from our contacts outside.

We believed, therefore, that under these conditions, we might be able to muster 300 men fit enough to fight, if necessary, if they could be armed by some means devised by our friends at Waichow. We then took steps to organize the Canadian troops into groups of ten, each group under an officer. We gave these men no information other than that Hong Kong might be attacked by the Allies at any time, and that it was our duty to prepare ourselves to help our own side if an attack should occur. These men were to be armed with bits of iron or wood or whatever could be found in camp.

We suggested to Waichow that an air raid should be made on Hong Kong at dusk, and further proposed the stationing of a thousand or so Chinese guerillas in the ruined houses around the perimeter of the camp. At the time, we were unaware that our reliable Chinese guerillas existed only in our imaginations.

The rest of the plan consisted of killing the Japanese guards when they appeared after the air raid warning, blowing a hole in the wire, getting our organized group of men and officers out, when they would be properly armed by the attacking party. We would then be guided, we hoped, to safety, but be ready to fight to overcome any resistance we might encounter on the way. We expected to lose fifty percent of these men, but this seemed worthwhile, because our chances of getting out alive seemed to become slimmer with every passing day. We figured that no harm would come to those we would leave behind in the hospital, because the operation would be construed by the Japanese as a liberation, rather than as an escape; and the Japanese usually become cooperative following each sign of possible defeat by the Allies.

The plan, of course, was never carried out. Meanwhile, however, we carried on the other methods of underground activity, and felt satisfied that we saved many lives in this way. All went merrily until one day, without warning, the Japanese stopped all Chinese-speaking men from going out on the ration parties, which convinced us that they suspected something, and we felt that very soon they would change the entire ration party personnel to stop any possible leakage.

In spite of the fact that the guards began renewed and more careful search of the men of all ration parties, we still continued our communication with the outside, through the novel but effective method of writing messages in invisible ink on toilet paper only, which the Japanese never removed. As practically everyone in camp at this time suffered acutely from dysentry, there was a real and practical necessity to carry toilet paper on our persons at all times, a necessity which even the Japanese had to admit.

Royal Rifles of Canada, Officers - Rescued at Hong Kong, Sept., 1945.

One day Forde came to me and told me that a substitute for driver Farrell must be found, as he had been eliminated from the ration party, after resourcefully passing on messages for many months. He was now on the next draft for Japan. Forde suggested that I nominate a Canadian as substitute. He felt the Japanese would be less likely to suspect a Canadian, as our men had not been long enough in Hong Kong before the war to make any contacts. The method of its results had become so important to us, especially in the bringing in of drugs which the Japanese failed to supply, that we decided we must do everything we could to continue with it.

I therefore selected Sargeant Routledge, Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, for this extremely dangerous assignment. Routledge was a young fellow of above average intelligence. He had a strong physique, pleasing personality, and was of staunch character. I sent for him and explained the importance of continuing our communications with the outside. I made it clear that I would think no less of him if he declined to take the risk. I told him that if he were caught, he would probably be badly tortured and killed.

Without hesitation, he accepted, was put immediately on the ration party, and for some time carried out his duties most effectively.

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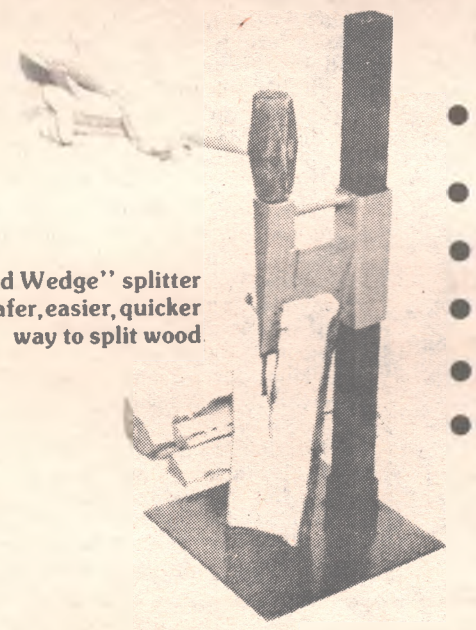

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ham, of Argyle St. Camp had been executed, together with Forde and Gray. Until liberation, however, I did not find out what really happened.

Quite naturally, those of us who were left at Sham Shui Po after Routledge, Forde and Gray had been taken away, were greatly worried as to what mistake, or mistakes, had been made to bring about such a tragic result. We were therefore relieved and happy to find later, that the mistake had been made at Argyle St. and not at Sham Shui Po, although the nature of this slip-up was not revealed. Colonel Newnham had been arrested first, at Argyle St. together with others in that camp, after which the Japanese naturally became suspicious of Sham Shui Po also. It was an old Glengarry cap, given him by his greatest friend, a man in the Royal Scots, that betrayed Routledge. He always wore it, even on the ration parties; and a lorry driver was thus able to identify him quite easily that day of the softball game at Sham Shui Po Camp.

The story of these officers' capture and death is one of the greatest heroism, an epic of loyalty and courage, which, earned them, posthumously, the highest decoration their country can give, the George Cross, for acts of bravery committed out of battle. The story was told to me by Flight Sargeant Hardy and Sargeant Routledge, who, until June 1945, had been first imprisoned at Stanley jail and later moved to a Chinese prison at Canton.

On August 17th, 1945, when we took over our camp from the Japanese, we immediately demanded to know the whereabouts of all officers and men who had been arrested and taken away. We ordered the return of Hardy and Routledge to Hong Kong from Canton, and they arrived within a few days, alive, but in shocking physical condition. It was these two N.C.O.'s who told me the complete story of the torture and execution of Colonel Newnham, Captain Grey and Captain Forde.

When Routledge, in his Glengarry cap, had been taken away from Sham Shui Po during that softball game on July 1st he was told that he had been identified by a Chinese lorry driver who had been caught delivering one of our messages. After being badly beaten and tortured, this man had finally agreed to identify his contacts at Sham Shui Po camp. It was because of this man, that after taking Routledge, they returned for Hardy, and finally Grey, because it was known that he was Hardy's officer. Later, in one of the captured papers, the name of Forde was mentioned, and he was also taken.

All these officers, Flight Sargeant Hardy, and Sargeant Routledge, were subjected to hideous beatings and torture, including the notorious 'water cure', which consists of tying a piece of cloth over nose and mouth, and dropping water slowly on it. This results in a gradual filling of the lungs with water, leading to slow and agonizing suffocation.

In spite of this, these men, officers and N.C.O.'s steadfastly refused to name any of their associates, although names were mentioned, including my own. At the court martial, all were accused and convicted of espionage; but the officers, Forde, and Gray, testified that their N.C.O.'s had acted under their orders, which undoubtedly saved their lives. They were merely sentenced to fifteen years in prison. The court was composed of high ranking Japanese officers, and it is a sad commentary on their sense of chivalry that they allowed, without comment, and in their presence, an interpreter to cut Colonel Newnham's face to ribbons with a bamboo switch when he refused to incriminate any of his comrades. Doug Forde and Dolby Gray were executed by a firing squad at Cheko Wan.

None of us, their comrades, who shared so many experiences with them, can ever forget their bravery and fortitude under torture of the worst kind. We owe our lives to them. Technically, they were not guilty of espionage, but were merely engaged in the humanitarian enterprise of securing relief for dying men, a service which the Japanese should, by all the rules of war and humanity, have obtained for the prisoners of war in their hands.

From the practical point of view, the information sent, and received, from camps in this way, could be of little or no value in the conduct of the war, and served only to bolster the morale of despairing prisoners, and to bring a little comfort to sick and dying men.

At no time did we engage in direct espionage. We had been asked to give information about Japanese shipping and planes, but this we refused to do, partly because we were not in a favourable position to observe such activities, and partly because we did not care to endanger the lives of those who had the task of contacting the agents. If we had given this information as requested, it would then have constituted an act of espionage.

It is pleasant to record that the gallantry and devotion to duty of Hardy, Routledge, and Farrell, did not go unrewarded. Hardy and Routledge, were awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the highest reward possible for other ranks outside of the Victoria Cross, for bravery under fire, and Farrell was given the Military Medal for his outstanding contribution to this dangerous undertaking.

Picture of Hong Kong by Canadian Navy when they came to rescue, Sept. 1945. Deserted Street. Japanese had driven Chinese out.

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The Politics of a War Sacrifice

Hong Kong, The Townships and the Politicians

'The naked truth is still taboo, wherever it can be seen.'
Robert Zimmerman, West Hibbing

The Townships boys who went to Hong Kong have suffered more mistreatment than most of us in our worst nightmares. They were mistreated in the manner in which they were sent into battle, they were brutally mistreated by the Japanese, they were mistreated by the Canadian government when they came home.

The story of the Hong Kong tragedy is an important part of the story of the people of the Townships. In the Bury and Sawyerville area alone, some 50 men signed up and were shipped to Hong Kong. Of the Canadians who went through the Hong Kong ordeal, a large number were chosen from the Townships. Forty percent of them died in battle or in the concentration camps. Many others died young after the war, and the survivors suffer life-long ill-effects. All over the Townships there are Hong Kong widows, Hong Kong orphans, and Hong Kong veterans. They are people you meet in the street, they are your neighbours.

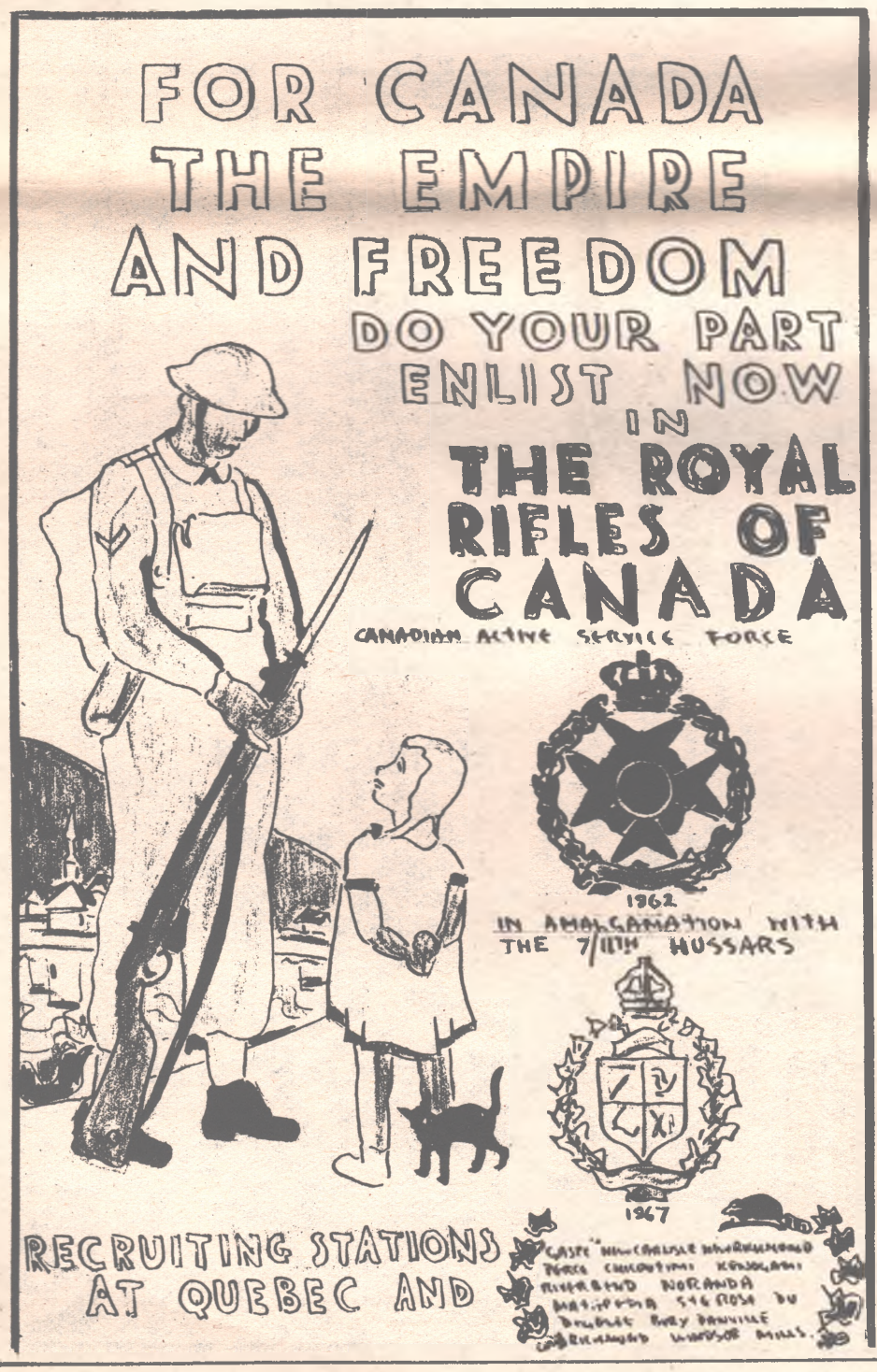
Their story is an important part of the collective memory of the people of the Townships. The Townships Sun would like to be able to give you an accurate account of the reasons behind the sacrifice of Townships blood at Hong Kong. But it is against the law of Canada - it is a federal offence punishable by imprisonment - to read or print the secret federal government documents relating to the story of Hong Kong.

The 2,228 pages of typewritten evidence, and other exhibits relating to the Hong Kong tragedy, have been kept secret by the Canadian government for three decades, and the evidence will not be released until sometime around 1995, when the government expects that all the Hong Kong veterans will be dead and there will be no one around any more to ask questions or provide contrary evidence.

So all I can do is speculate and give an opinion, which may be right or wrong. If I had the facts, I would give them to you, but the facts are illegal, so I will give you an opinion, an interpretation, and quotations from the books and documents which the Canadian government has not made illegal.

'The decision to send Canadian troops to Hong Kong was a political decision.'
Maurice Pope, Soldiers Politicians, P. 173

There are military battles, in which men lay down their lives for a military cause, to defend their country or way of life or belief. And there are political battles, in which civilian politicians call the shots for political reasons.



Military battles are planned by military men to achieve military objectives. You size up the enemy, and decide at what place, at what time, and with what forces to meet the enemy. The aim is to be able to win the battle, or to damage the enemy as much as possible.

Political battles are planned by politicians for political objectives - to win support for the government, and what the government is trying to do: to sway the population in a certain direction, to make an impact on diplomatic levels towards other countries.

A military leader plans for a battle in a military way; a politician thinks of the political aims and may totally ignore the military consequences.

Two Canadian battalions were sent to Hong Kong at the request of Britain. But the decision was not based on military considerations, it was based on political considerations. The British themselves did not believe that Hong Kong could be defended.

Twenty years before Britian asked Canada to send men to Hong Kong, the British military establishment had already decided that they should gradually withdraw their forces from Hong Kong to the safer port of Singapore.

'Hong Kong could not be defended against any serious attack. It is too far from reinforcement, too close to Japanese bases in Formosa. The island would be difficult to defend if attacked from the mainland. British forces at Hong Kong should be gradually shifted to Singapore.'

British Imperial
Defence committee, 1921

'Hong Kong is to be classified as 'an important though not vital outpost to be defended as long as possible.'

British Military Policy, 1930

'Hong Kong could not be relieved nor could it expect to withstand a prolonged siege.'

Kirby, Official British War Historian, The War Against Japan, P. 34

'By 1939, the Japanese occupied all the territory around Hong Kong and had captured an island to the south. Thus an effective wedge was driven between Hong Kong and the hope of any reinforcement in case of attack.'

Kirby, P. 19

There were 1,800,000 people living on the island and fifty percent of the drinking water had to be brought from the mainland, which was easily cut off by the Japanese. 'It became only a matter of time before the island defenders would have to capitulate due to lack of water.'

Robert Brooke, Factors Affecting the Defence of Hong Kong

The British military believed that Hong Kong could not be defended, and was not militarily important. They knew that if the Japanese attacked, the island garrison would have no hope of surviving and could not be reinforced.

They expected a Japanese attack to occur. The Japanese had conquered most of the Chinese land around Hong Kong, they held Formosa and Hainon. They had a quarter of a million troops moving forward, and Hong Kong was right in the middle of their path.

The military leaders advised that Hong Kong couldn't be defended, but there were political reasons for hanging on to it.

'The port of Hong Kong is of little value, because even if it held against a Japanese attack, it would be neutralized by the Japanese Air Force from Formosa. But to reduce the Hong Kong garrison at this point would **discourage the Chinese** in their resistance against Japan.

British Chiefs of Staff, 1937
(Editor's Note: The emphasis in dark letters is ours.)

'In July of 1938, the British Chiefs of Staff wrote off Hong Kong as a bad risk. The sole military criteria for holding on was to deny the harbour to Japan and **to prevent a loss of prestige in the Orient.**'

Brooke, Factors Affecting the Defence of Hong Kong

'We had many confidential lectures, but one sticks in my mind above all others, for it had bearing on what was to happen to me later, although, at that time, I had no inkling of it. British Major-General Dewing had just returned from Singapore where he was Chief of Staff. He described the situation in the Far East. How only about 400 planes were available for the Far East, including India, the Scarcity of naval forces, arms and armies, of **the probable imminent threat of Japanese aggression** and the strategic considerations involved in a possible war. He pointed out the difficulties in defending Hong Kong and how militarily, **Hong Kong had no strategic value** in Empire defence, having in mind the lack of forces to defend it.

Brig. Gen. John H. Price,
Georgeville Hong Kong veteran

For two decades before the Canadians went to Hong Kong the British were shifting their military forces away from Hong Kong to Singapore. A year before Hong Kong was attacked, some women and children were evacuated from the island. The British intelligence agents told Canadian officers, several days before the attack, that the Japanese were going to attack. The Townships boys on the boat towards Hong Kong were told that they might have to fight their way off the ship.

Charles Brady, Hong Kong vet., Otterburn Heights.
(In other words, a Japanese attack was expected.)

In October, 1940, Major-General Grasett of Hong Kong requested reinforcements, because the island defences would not be able to hold off a Japanese attack. The British Chiefs of Staff refused, saying that it would be impossible to hold the colony in the event of an attack, so why waste more troops?

October, 1940, Sir Geoffrey Northcote, Governor of Hong Kong, requested that all troops be removed from the colony and moved to safety, because they could not defend the colony in the event of an attack. The British government refused, saying that to abandon the colony would have bad political repercussions on Britain's relationships with China, Japan and the United States.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed. In January, 1941 (less than a year before the Townships boys were sent to Hong Kong) Churchill wrote: 'This is all wrong. If the Japanese go to war with us there is not the slightest chance of holding Hong Kong or relieving it. It is most unwise to increase the loss we shall suffer there. Instead of increasing the garrison it ought to be reduced to a symbolical scale. We must avoid frittering away our resources on untenable positions. Whether there are two or six battalions at Hong Kong will make no difference... I wish we had fewer troops there, but any move would be noticable and dangerous.'

Winston Churchill,
The Grand Alliance, P. 177

Less than a year later, Churchill authorized a telegram asking Canada to send two battalions to Hong Kong. This was a 'symbolical scale' since 'whether there are two or six battalions will make no difference' to the 'loss we shall suffer there'. Two battalions would not be too much to lose in 'frittering away our resources on untenable positions'.

This does not mean that Churchill's decision to send Canadians to Hong Kong was a cynical political plot. It was war-time, and the most appalling decisions had to be made, with the most unpredictable results. There were times, at night, when Churchill sank into his big chair and wept for the decisions he had to make, for the desperate decisions to send men to die in hopeless battles.

Churchill was living on the outer edges of despair. It was Britian's 'darkest hour'. France had fallen, the Nazis had most of Europe under control. London was being bombed, the Allies were being beaten in North Africa, Japan was sweeping through China, Britain stood alone. A Nazi invasion of Britain was expected from day to day. Commonwealth forces were so hard up for weapons that soldiers were being trained with wooden sticks that they pretended were guns.

Britain was losing the war, it's back to the wall, and Churchill felt that the end of democracy, the end of free civilization was at hand, and Hitler's promised thousand year Reich would enslave the world.

Britain needed help. First of all, the loyalty and determination of Britain's colonies and former colonies had to be assured. The people in the Commonweath countries had to feel that this was their war, not just Britain's war.

The British knew there was a war on because bombs were falling on their houses. But to somebody living out in Sawyerville or Australia, places like Germany and Japan seemed far away, just a place on the map in a vaguely remembered high school Geography course.

The solidarity of the Empire war effort was maintained, in part, by mixing the Commonwealth battalions together. One for all, all for one. Aussies and New Zealanders fought side by side with the British in North Africa, and the implication was, if Australia and New Zealand were attacked by Japan, the British would fight side by side with them. In Hong Kong troops from Canada, Britain and India fought side by side.

In Britain, when bombs fell and people were killed, the population realized the urgency of the situation, and they were fighting mad, willing to make the necessary sacrifices to beat this cruel enemy.

In far away Canada and Australia, there was no war. But when Aussie boys fell in North Africa, or when Canucks were massacred at Hong Kong, the reality of the war was brought home to their countries. The people would say, 'Hey, those fascist s.o.b.'s are killing our boys.' and they would be fighting mad, and willing to make the necessary sacrifices.

Up until Hong Kong, not a single Canadian company of land soldiers had fought in a battle, although the war had been going on for two years. Hong Kong put the Canadian Army in the war, and stirred a greater willingness to fight among the Canadian public.

Moreover, Churchill could not abandon Hong Kong without a symbolic fight-to-the-finish. Britain would lose face in the Orient if they turned tail and fled. In his telegram asking for Canadian troops, Churchill mentioned the need to 'reassure Chiang Kai Shek of our intentions'.

Chiang Kai Shek and the Chinese were fighting a losing war of attrition against the Japanese, and if Churchill abandoned Hong Kong without a fight, the Chinese would be discouraged, they might lose hope. Britain's will to fight had to be shown.

The Japanese were promising to drive the white man out of Asia, and if Hong Kong were to be abandoned without glorious resistance, Japan would be encouraged. They would use it in their propaganda - they would say to India, Pakistan and Malayasia and New Zealand and Australia; 'You see, the British won't defend you.' Some Asian countries might surrender outright, some might even join Japan, the obvious winner.

And after centuries of British colonialism and world domination, it would be unthinkable for Britain to abandon a colony without a fight. But since Hong Kong could not be defended, it would have to be a symbolic resistance, a sacrifice.

Get the U.S. in the War

But Britain could not win the war alone, even with Commonwealth help. Churchill felt that democracy could be saved only if the manpower and industrial production of the United States were thrown into the war. So the problem for Churchill became: how to get the U.S. into the war against Germany? The war had been going on since 1939, and late in 1941, the U.S. was still at peace.

British agents in the U.S. lobbied congressmen and newspapers to build support for the war, but the U.S. was still going through an isolationist period. After World War One, in which the U.S. suffered heavy casualities in Europe, the American public had said, 'No more foreign wars.' In 1941, Congressmen were still standing up in Congress and saying, 'Let the Europeans fight their own wars, this war has nothing to do with us, Germany has not attacked us.'

Churchill met with Roosevelt several times, and Roosevelt agreed, that to save freedom in the world, the U.S. would have to join the war. But he did not have the political strength to do it; the American public was not fighting mad; the American public might not back him up if he simply declared war on Germany on Churchill's advice.

But Churchill and Roosevelt had a tacit agreement, that if Japan attacked the British in the Pacific, the U.S. would join the war, and the U.S. would not only join the war against Japan, but against Germany as well. This was what Churchill needed, U.S. help against Germany.

The Japanese armies were sweeping through Asia and moving south. Hong Kong was an obvious target, right in the path of the Japanese expansion. And if Hong Kong fell, the next move south would be to the Philippines. And the Philippines was a U.S. colony, protected by U.S. armed forces. If the British were attacked in Asia, the next to be attacked would be U.S. bases.

If British troops at Hong Kong were being massacred by the Japanese, and with the Japanese moving ever closer to the U.S. bases in the Pacific, Roosevelt would have the political strength needed to join the war. And if Canadian troops were attacked within a few hundred miles of the U.S. colony of the Philippines, the impact would be even greater.

If there had been no attack on Pearl Harbour, the attack on Hong Kong might have been enough to draw the U.S. into the war. But as it happened, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour almost simultaneously with the attack on Hong Kong, thus solving for Britain the problem of getting the U.S. into the war. After the attack by the Japanese, Roosevelt declared war on Germany as well, and Britain no longer stood alone.

Two Battalions Wanted

The British knew that Hong Kong could not be defended, that a Japanese attack was highly possible, and that any defence of Hong Kong would be a hopeless, symbolic sacrifice.

But they told the Canadian government just the opposite.

British Maj.-Gen. Grasett travelled to Ottawa and persuaded the Canadian

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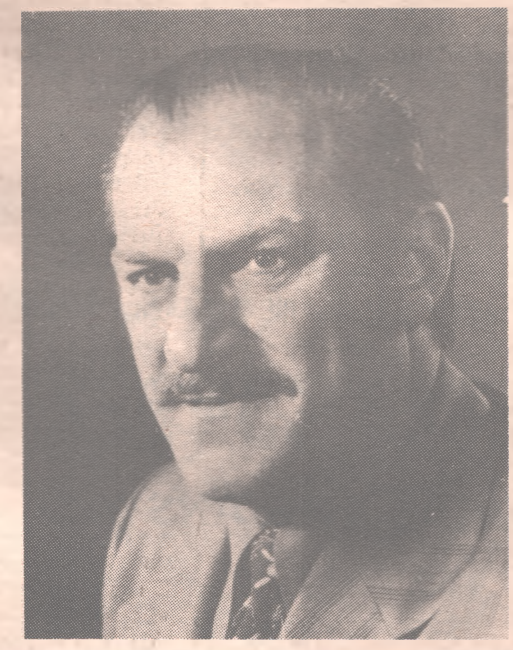

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Chief of Staff, General Crearar, that 'an addition of two battalions at Hong Kong would render the garrison strong enough to withstand an extensive period of siege.' (Duff Report, p. 14)

Crearar later testified before the Duff Commission to the effect that the enthusiasm of Grasett over the defence of Hong Kong had been a major factor in getting him to agree to send Canadian troops there.

The British apparently did not warn Canada about the hopelessness of defending Hong Kong. But little matter, because the decision in Ottawa to accept Britain's request was a political decision that did not take military factors into consideration.

Political Decision In Ottawa

In Ottawa, the decision to accept Britian's request was made by Prime Minister Mackenzie King and a few advisers.

'The decision was made the same day the telegram was received from England.'

Maurice Pope, Soldiers and Politicians, P. 173

Later Mackenzie King tried to shift the blame for the decision onto the shoulders of his Minister of Defence, C.G. Power, who had apparently been eager to send the Royal Rifles, because his son was part of the battalion. King said, 'I recall taking the stand at that time that this was unnecessary... but encountered the usual opposition where one seeks to exercise due restraint with government departments... put the blame where it ought to be, on those responsible for taking men overseas, who should not have gone.'

It is interesting that King admitted the boys should not have gone. But about his own opposition to the plan, he is a liar.

Col. C.P. Stacey, one of the few people who has had access to Ottawa's secret files on the Hong Kong tragedy, states categorically in his book, 'Arms, Men and Government', on page 42, that King did not oppose sending the two battalions... the decision was unanimous.

The politicians in Ottawa knew nothing of the military aspects of the situation, or of the risks involved, and they did not bother to find out.

'A military appreciation of the situation in the Orient and the existing forces in Hong Kong was not called for by the members of the war committee or by the Canadian General Staff.'

Maltby Report, P. 702

Why did Ottawa so hastily accept Britain's request?

Canada had long been closely attached to Britian, and the colonial mentality was strong in Ottawa in this time of crisis, Britain asked them to send men to Hong Kong, so they did, no questions asked.

Canadian Defence Minister Power said, 'We had certain unallotted battalions which could be spared, and I did not see any reason why they should not have them.' (Duff Report, P. 15) He said he 'thought it was the only thing to do.'

The idea that if Hong Kong were attacked, the U.S. would join the war, was also considered.

'I had very definitely in my mind, that if Japan did come into the war, the United States would be in too.'

Ralston, National Defence, Duff Report, P. 15

But there were political problems at home too. When the war started, there was a rush of men to join up. But then recruitment had fallen off.

The war had been on for two years, and the Canadian Army had not fought in a single battle. The Aussies and New Zealanders in North Africa were getting all the headlines. The Canadian Army had been sitting in the English rain for two years. The Canadian public was discontent with this, and men were not eager to sign up for an army that did nothing.

The Canadian troops were frustrated and angry, and there was trouble in some of the camps. Mackenzie King went out to talk to the troops, and it is a matter of record, that on two or three occasions, the Canadian soldiers loudly booed him.

There was a need for action, for drama, for a battle, or at least an expedition to an exotic place like Hong Kong.

Moreover, there was an undercurrent of political disunity about the war in Canada. The vocal U.S. isolationist movement against fighting overseas was heard across the border. A number of English Canadians saw no urgent compulsion to join up.

And in Quebec, there was an active and organised movement saying, 'Why should we die for England?' The unity of Confederation was a bit shaky, the conscription issue was on the horizon, and King almost lost an election because of it.

The Canadian Army had to be sent out to do something dramatic, and to promote political unity at home, it should be a symbolic French-English action.

The Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles were chosen to go, and here are reasons given at the time:

... 'It is most desirable that one unit come from Western Canada and the other from Eastern Canada...'

...'In the case of the Royal Rifles, there is the fact that this battalion, while nominally English-speaking, is actually drawn from a region overwhelmingly French-speaking in character and contains an important proportion of Canadians of French descent.'

Duff Report, P. 19-20

Churchill had said that the defence of Hong Kong would be symbolic, and Ottawa was thinking on the same lines. They chose two symbolic battalions - one from the West and one from Quebec, Confederation united, marching to war.

The British wanted English-speaking troops to fit under British command in Hong Kong. But Ottawa wanted one of the battalions to be from Quebec, to stir up enthusiasm and the fighting spirit in the province where the war was least popular. So how to get a Quebec battalion that could speak English? From the Eastern Townships. The Quebec Royal Rifles were majority English, minority bilingual French, and they came from a heavily French area.

And so, whether by design or by circumstance, the symbolic sacrifice was underway.

Consequences

Because it was a political decision made without consideration of military factors, the Townships boys never had a fighting chance. They were in no way prepared or equipped to face the enemy.

For training purposes, the Royal Rifles were given one 2 inch mortar but no live hand grenades, no anti-tank guns. One Thompson machine gun per company. Ammunition for the mortars was lacking. (Duff Report, P. 27)

Fifty-four of the Royal Rifles had not completed the 16 weeks training. This was contrary to defence department orders that stated that no man who had not completed training was to be sent overseas. (Hon. J.L. Ralston, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Jan. 21, 1942)

Just before they were shipped to Hong Kong, the Townships men were given all kinds of equipment 'they had never seen before.' (J.H. Price, The Royal Rifles in Newfoundland, P. 6)

There were '... a great many with very little training..' (Price, P. 2)

They were not told where they were being shipped to. They thought they were going somewhere to complete their training, since some of them had never fired a rifle (although some were well-trained).

As they boarded the troop train to Vancouver, 'We were the envy of Canada. As we left our families on the station platform that morning we thought we were going to some pleasant place for additional training and a good time. Little did anyone dream what our fate was to be and that we were not to see our families again for four long and tragic years. (Price, P. 6)

They were being shipped to the other side of the world, to an island that could not be defended. They were landed right on the doorstep of a large aggressive Japanese army that had just recently conquered all the land and islands around Hong Kong. There were 250,000 Japanese in the area, facing 10,000 Allies. The Townships boys didn't have a chance.

And so too many of them died and suffered. The battalion had 212 vehicles, including Universal Troop Carriers, but these did not arrive in time to be loaded on the ships at Vancouver. Instead of waiting, the soldiers were shipped off to Hong Kong with no means of transportation to use once they got there.

The vehicles were loaded onto an American ship, to be delivered with all possible speed to our boys in Hong Kong. Incredibly, the American ship set sail from Vancouver, and instead of speeding to Hong Kong, took a leisurely and indirect route around the Pacific, and finally docked at Manila in the Philippines. (Stacey, The Canadian Army, Canada, Britian and the Pacific, P. 449)

By this time, the Battle of Hong Kong had been going on for four days, and it was to last another 13 days. There was still time for the ship to get there, and God knows the Canadians needed those vehicles. The Townships lads were marching on foot to and from battle, over hilly terrain, to face an enemy equipped with trucks, armoured cars, and tanks.

They had to fight it out on foot, day and night, with no transport, so that 'men and officers were falling anytime they weren't in motion and whenever a unit halted for a minute or so individuals had to be kicked awake.' (Regimental Diary, Dec. 24, 1941)

But the ship did not move from Manila. The 212 vehicles were unloaded at Manila and given to the U.S. armed forces there. (Stacey, P. 449)

Britain was supposed to provide mortar ammunition for the Canadians in Hong Kong. But the British had long since been reducing their strength in Hong Kong, so there was very little left for the Canadians to fight with when they arrived.

There was no ammunition at all for the two inch mortars, until the second week of the battle, at which point ammunition was handed out on the battlefield, virtually hand to hand, there being no transport or even pack mules to carry the supplies. (Maltby Report, P. 702)

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The British gave the Canadians ammunition for the three inch mortars, but only 70 rounds for each battalion. This had to be used for practice as well as war. In any case, 70 rounds of ammunition per battalion was enough for five minutes of firing. It would have to be a short war.

The Townships boys faced enemy tanks, but they had no anti-tank rifles.

The air force on the island consisted of five ancient airplanes. The anti-aircraft batteries at the airport consisted of four outdated machine guns that were placed so they could not aim high in the sky. The troops arriving in Hong Kong were shocked. 'Had I known this I would have made a point of taking my catapult with me,' said Commander Sullivan. (Carew, The Fall of Hong Kong, P. 51)

Most of the British naval forces had been withdrawn from the island, except for a few old and small boats. On the day of the Japanese attack, the British hastily withdrew two destroyers from the colony. As Churchill had said, 'It is most unwise to increase the loss we shall suffer there.'

The inland artillery on the island was old and obsolete. Most of the weapons were placed on the seaward side of the island, facing the ocean. The Royal Rifles were also ordered to position themselves along the seaward side. The Canadian officers were incredulous, because it was obvious that any attack would come from the other side, the Canadians would be attacked from behind. The gun emplacements were facing the wrong way, and because they were embedded in concrete, they could not be swung around to face the enemy.

'It appeared evident that the attack would not come from the sea but from the Japanese forces, posed within easy striking distance of the northern mainland boundary of the colony.'

Regimental War Diary

'The military capability of the colony hardly appeared able to deal with an attack of any magnitude from either direction.'

Lt.Col. Wells Bishop, Sawyerville

Within three days of arriving in Hong Kong, the Canadian officers realized that they were in a ridiculous situation, militarily, and they urgently cabled for additional infantry, artillery and other forces. (Stacey, P. 443-444)

'It is submitted that this request, coming so quickly after their arrival, is a strong indication that the Canadian officers were not impressed by the array of forces in the colony.'

Garneau, P. 60

But of course no reinforcements would be forthcoming. The nearest British air base was 1500 miles away.

When the Canadians landed in Hong Kong, a British officer gave them the following briefing:

'There are only 5,000 poorly equipped Japanese troops whose fighting qualities are very much in doubt. They have little artillery and their gunnery standards are poor... their aircraft are obsolete and the pilots to a man, are short-sighted... obviously useless for dive bombing.'

The truth about the Japanese fighting ability was just the opposite.

'They are the bravest people I have ever met. In our armies, any of them, nearly every Japanese would have had a Victoria Cross. It is the fashion to dismiss their courage as fanaticism but this only begs the question. They believed in something and they were willing to die for it. What else is bravery? They pressed home their attacks when no other troops would have done so, when all hope of success was gone... The Japanese simply came on, using all their skill and rage, until they were stopped by death. In defence they held their ground with a furious tenacity that never faltered. They had to be killed, company by company, squad by squad, man by man, to the last... By 1944 the number of Japanese captured unwounded in all theatres of war, probably did not exceed one hundred...

For the rest, they wrote beautiful poems in their diaries, and practised bayonet work on their prisoners. Frugal and bestial, barbarous and brave, artistic and brutal, they were the enemy, and we now set about, in all seriousness, the task of killing every one of them.' (Masters, The Road Past Mandala)

The Japanese had been preparing for their attack on Hong Kong before the Canadians arrived. British intelligence reported at least a few days in advance that the attack was to take place.

The Japanese were well-prepared. They knew the names of all the high officers in Hong Kong. In the Battle, 'Almost every dead Japanese officer was found to have on his person a lithograph reproduction of the British battle maps giving exact details of the defence installations and organisation. (Maltby Report, P. 701)

The Canadians were unprepared. They did not even have any communications equipment, so by the time a message was delivered, it was too late.

(Brigadier F.T. Atkinson)

During the battle, 'the Canadians became increasingly reluctant to use the telephone to give orders for troop movements, as it inevitably resulted in accurate shelling of the route. The lines were obviously being tapped.' (Stacey)

Brigadier Atkinson called island headquarters, and a Japanese-speaking broken English answered the phone.

The telephone lines were soon knocked out by shelling anyway, so the Canadian units could not communicate with each other.

They never had a chance.

Under British Command

The Canadians were told that all decisions, including small matters, be directed to the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. (Stacey). But there was no adequate communications system to do this.

Instead, the Canadians were under the direct orders of Brigadier Wallis, British military commander. From the very beginning, there was tension and dispute between the British commander and the Canadian officers in Hong Kong.

'It was extrememly unfortunate that the Canadians were placed under the brigade command of an apparently inept British officer. (Garneau, P. 132) The obviously faulty tactics of Brigadier Wallis cost the Royal Rifles a high number of needless casualties.

At a time when the Canadians had little ammunition left, even for small arms, with 60,000 crack Japanese troops having captured most of the island, with the Japanese Navy offshore, with the Japanese Air Force bombing and strafing at will, with Japanese artillery and tanks all around, with the Canadian troops exhausted, and a quarter of them fallen in action, Brigadier Wallis was still ordered the Canadians on suicidal attack missions, World War One style.

'The conflict between Brigadier Wallis and the Canadians erupted into open hostility... the Canadians were ordered to secure positions that common sense dictated were untenable.'

Garneau, P. 119

Lt. Col. Home protested to Wallis that the Canadian lives were being unnecessarily wasted. If they were all going to be killed, at least they should be killed having the full advantage of fighting from superior defensive positions rather than charging into enemy machine guns.

Lt. Col. Home confronted Wallis and laid his life-time military career on the line. In a bitter argument, he insisted that the Canadian battalions be relieved from their front line positions and be allowed to take up the best available defensive positions 'otherwise he would not be responsible for what happened.' (Kirby, P. 142)

Yet Wallis ordered the exhausted Canadian troops to make another hopeless, suicidal attack. The Canadian officers 'protested against such an attack in daylight as most likely being unproductive of any results but additional Canadian casualties.' But Wallis insisted, the attack was made, and the Canadian company was all but wiped out.

Another order from Wallis sent a Canadian company walking down a road, in daylight, in full view of Japanese heavy artillery. They were badly hit.

A sample telephone conversation between Brigadier Wallis and Wells Bishop, of Sawyerville, during the battle: Wallis: 'There is no such thing as the enemy being in Fort Sai Wan. There are Canadians in the fort.'
Bishop: 'I am in command of the Canadians in this area and there have never been any Canadians inside the fort. I have not been permitted to look in the place myself.'
Wallis: 'I have definite information that there are friendly troops in the fort.'
Bishop: 'They don't act friendly. We are being raked by automatic fire from there at this moment.'

At a late point in the battle, a group of Canadian soldiers were under siege in Stanley barracks, surrounded by Japanese troops. The Canadian soldiers went upstairs into the officers mess and began firing out of the windows with a Vickers machine gun and two other automatic guns. A British Lieut. Col. telephoned Wells Bishop and, in anger, ordered him to remove his soldiers from the officers' mess, saying, 'I have a definite order from Brigadier Wallis that no soldiers will be allowed in the officers' mess.' It was not proper, you see, for common foot soldiers to be in a room reserved for the officers, even if they were surrounded by the Japanese army and had no other windows to shoot out of. Needless to say, Wells Bishop ignored this assinine order. (Garneau)

Even when the end came and the final Allied troops were ordered by high command to surrender, Brigadier Wallis found the news of the surrender hard to believe, and in his view the surrender was 'completely unwarranted by the local situation.' (Kirby, P. 145)

And so the Townships boys fought and died in a hopeless military situation. Militarily, it was folly; politically, a shame.

Hong Kong has come to be rightly regarded as one of the major mistakes of the British and Canadian governments in World War II.'

Garneau, P. 135

'The decision to reinforce the colony was one of the tragic blunders of the war. The colony had no strategic importance and the few extra days of resistance which were gained by the presence of the two Canadian battalions could not and did not have any effect on the course of the events. The dispatch of these reinforcements proved to be a lamentable waste of valuable forces.'

Kirby, The War Against Japan, P. 150

The 'valuable forces' that were 'lamentably wasted' were people such as Sgt. Goodenough, from Bury, who,

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although twice wounded and with the rest of the gun crew killed, kept firing the gun and drove off an attack of enemy forces in superior number. Sgt. Goodenough died two years later in a Japanese concentration camp. He was sixteen years old at the time of the battle. The tragedy is in those terms. The men at the top shipped them out, untrained and unequipped, to a hopeless military situation, to defend a colony that the politicians themselves did not believe could be defended, was not worth defending.

It was not the military men who feel down on the job, it was the politicians. They made a political decision to send a symbolic expedition, then they covered up their mistake by keeping the documents secret. They afforded themselves a lot more protection than they gave to the Townships boys they sent to Hong Kong.

Prison

And still the ordeal continued. Four years in a Japanese concentration camp. It was hell.

There is no suffering quite like the suffering of a prisoner. Other sufferings may be worse, or more intense, or harder to endure, but the suffering of a prisoner has a special ring to it.

Being in a concentration camp has very few advantages to it. It is not a healthy place for your body, mind or emotions. Beaten, starved, tortured, worked as slaves. Random executions. The Townships boys in the Japanese prison camps have known the worst sufferings, witnessed the most appalling horrors. They were driven as far as human beings can be driven to the outer edges of despair.

All freedom gone, the years passed by, the loved ones far away in some distant place called Canada, just a dream-like name on a dimly remembered map. The hours pound against the walls after four years, it is hard to even remember normal life.

The daily routine, the shabby clothes, the beatings, the humiliations, the desperate struggle to keep alive a spark of life against the waves of black despair.

'On roll call one night, a man said, 'To hell with this, I am giving up, I am not going to fight anymore.' The chap went to bed and in the morning his buddies found him dead.' (R.E. McGuib)

The emotional deprivation, the guards rarely let letters from loved ones get through. The worry, the fear, the anxiety, the uncertainty, pacing the floor, keep walking, keep walking, don't give up. Waking every morning, on a cement floor, to hunger. The body degenerates and weakens, skin and bones, walking skeletons; some went blind from lack of vitamins.

The alienation. To what depths of brutal cruelty can human beings sink? The Japanese who tortured the prisoners, when on leave, went home lovingly to their wives and children, drank beer, wrote poetry, and practiced the religion of their choice.

On the job as prison guards, they starved and beat and worked to death and tortured their victims. They try to strip away your humanity, treat you like you don't belong to the human race. Crush your spirit, shatter your hope, try to break you down into a simpering, weeping, crawling, groveling, agonised lump of pain, fear and despair. They treat you like an enemy piece of meat, they try to make you feel that, as a person, you don't matter at all. You are just a housefly that they can squash or pull the wings off of if they want to; it is their choice; you count for nothing in their eyes. The Townships boys learned just how cruel human beings can be.

The fact that they survived at all is one of the great stories of the human spirit. They endured, the fanned the faint spark of hope, they clung to their humanity. They helped and encouraged each other, they shared friendship, courage, companionship. Though starving, they shared their rations with the weaker ones. In the middle of hell, they talked and made jokes and told stories and drew pictures and made gourmet meals out of stray cats. They are survivors, of the highest order. They have seen both sides of the coin.

'In the twin hell of action and imprisonment, we were able to discover the heights and depths of the human soul.'

William Allister,
The Canadians at War, P. 125

'If there is to be any meaning from the episode it must certainly be that survival is possible even under conditions that would normally be deemed impossible. While it is not difficult to defeat an army, it is difficult to defeat a man...the Royal Rifles did give meaning to an otherwise tragic incident...they returned home with their pride intact.'

Garneau, P. 225

Freedom

And then the war ended. At least one Townships Hong Kong vet, working at slave labour near Hiroshima, saw the cloud from the atomic bomb.

And then freedom at last. Release. exhilaration, wild-eyed shock and joy and hysteria. To get home, to get home, to be in the arms of loved ones again, the look of a child, a gentle touch on the hand, warm eyes with no fear, a sunset after supper, the old maple tree on the front lawn, a little house with a garden and flower boxes. heaven at last. Some prisoners, on being released, let out a cry similar to a baby at birth.

But they were in bad shape.

'You ought to have seen the boys when we got the first bread...even the tough U.S. Marines cried when they watched the boys eat it.'

CQMS Standish

'It was an interesting experience, though heartbreaking, to learn that the elderly emaciated gentleman before your eyes was a boy in his twenties.'

Doctor treating Hong Kong survivors, 1945

The scars remained. Wounds slow to heal, eye-sight damaged, a limp, constant, daily pain for some. Almost all Hong Kong vets suffered vitaminosis, organic disease of the central nervous system caused by years of vitamin deficiency. The after-effects of diptheria and other diseases: many Hong Kong vets died young after the war.

And the demons that haunt the mind. The nightmares, the cold sweat, the flash-backs, the lingering sorrow, remembering the face of a guard, waking by night to unreality. For some, the anxiety lasted for years, the worry, the strain, the stress, black depression, getting upset over small things. So difficult to re-integrate into society after such an ordeal. For others, the drive to make up for lost time, the determination to live and live and live to life's fullest.

For all, a deeper wisdom of life, from first-hand experience of hell and heaven, brutality and love. For many, a desire to help others.

Many could not work when they returned to the Townships, they were in such bad shape. The years of stress and the bad health made it hard for some to re-adapt. But surely the Canadian government would help them out?

Neglect

'For those who survived such a ghastly ordeal
Today are still suffering a scar that won't heal
Those four years in hell have yet to be met
By a government who sent us, should not soon forget
In remembering the plight of the sad Hong Kong vet.

Hong Kong Veterans' Association booklet, 1970

But the government did forget.

When our Hong Kong boys, the sixty percent who were still alive, came marching home, they were, in many cases, physically wrecked and mentally unprepared to be thrown out into society.

On returning, these emaciated men were examined by Canadian government doctors. In some cases, the doctors gave them a choice: Look, sign this document saying you are in good health, and we will let you go home. If you don't sign, we will put you in hospital, and then you won't go home until God knows when.'

For these men who had just spent four years in prison camp, the idea of being held in hospital sounded like further imprisonment. They eagerly wanted to go home.

So, under this kind of threat, Hong Kong vets, emaciated and sick, signed documents saying they were in good health. Without knowing it, they were absolving the Canadian government of responsibility for them. Twenty years later, when some of these men tried to collect disability pensions because of life-long suffering caused by their Hong Kong experience, the Canadian government waved these documents in their faces, saying, 'You signed this in 1945 saying you were in good health at the end of the war, so go get lost.'

When they returned from prison camps, some signed these documents, and were given a train ticket home. Several of them died in the cold train stations on the way from Vancouver.

There was no rehabilitation program for them, little health care, little financial support. Some were given pensions of ten or twenty dollars a month.

Many Townships Hong Kong vets tried to work in factories, or cutting wood in the forest, but were unable to keep it up because of their weakened condition. They were reduced to poverty, and some of these brave men who had suffered so much for their country and struggled so long to maintain their dignity, were reduced to the humiliation of begging for welfare.

Some, here in the Townships, were fired from their jobs because disabilities prevented them from lifting heavy weights.

Many Hong Kong vets died young after the war, and in some cases, for their widows and children, there was no pension, no pension at all. Was there to be no end to the suffering inflicted on these people?

If a Hong Kong veteran was suffering 48 percent disability and then died, his widow would get a meagre pension. If he was under 47 percent disability and then died, there was no pension, and his family was thrown into destitution, some with two or three children. And of course, only the government doctors could decide what the hell it means to be 48 percent disabled. Rarely has a group of people been so shamefully mistreated.

Hong Kong Veterans Association

And so the Hong Kong vets would have to join together to fight again.

They fought and suffered and died and survived together, and among them, there is a strong and rare spirit of comradeship and solidarity. And when they saw that Hong Kong vets and widows were being neglected and suffering injustice, they decided to set things right.

They bombarded all members of Parliament with letters, sometimes three or four a week. They submitted briefs and documents and made endless trips to the Pension Board and the government. They lobbied and pressured for what should have been given to them outright.

They collected money among themselves to pay the expenses of this battle, which went on for years and years. They took time off work and lost wages to make trips to Ottawa, and even to New York.

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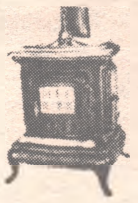

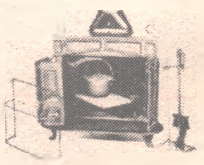

Charles Brady, of Otterburn Heights, led the battle. He collected whole filing cabinets full of information, and like his comrades, worked endless hours free of charge to help his fellow men.

And still the government pushed them aside. Government-paid doctors and lawyers dismissed the Hong Kong vets claims to justice. And so the veterans had to go and find their own experts, with no help from the government. They travelled to New York, where the doctors provided them with medical proof to back their claims.

But after every election, and everytime the members of the Pension Commission changed, they had to start all over again, informing and persuading the new members that Canada should pay its debts to the Hong Kong vets. Endless committee meetings, letters, briefs and hearings.

How discouraging, how humiliating, to have to fight and petition for simple justice. In one case, the government gave them 48 hours to produce a certain document, and Charlie Brady had to fly to New York to get it.

At one time, the Hong Kong vets were awarded a dollar a day for the time they spent in concentration camp, to pay them for the forced labour they did - but this money was a gift from the Japanese government, not the Canadian government. And even in that case, the Canadian government withheld the funds for a while, so the Hong Kong vets virtually had to sue to get their dollar a day.

The government could afford to wait, as more and more Hong Kong vets died, and their widows were left with nothing. The Canadian government preferred to forget Hong Kong altogether, to pretend that it had never happened.

Finally, on March 30, 1971, twenty-six years late, the Hong Kong vets won half a loaf. The government agreed to bring the pensions of those below fifty percent disability up to the fifty percent level. And all Hong Kong widows who were not receiving pensions were granted this basic right. It was to help the widows that the veterans agreed to accept half a loaf.

And then they went back to work, campaigning for the full loaf. Finally, on April 2, 1976, thirty-five years after they were sent to prison camp, Bill C-92 was passed in Ottawa. Charlie Brady calls it 'the moon shot'.

This new law meant that Hong Kong vets above fifty percent disability would all go to 100 percent, and those who had been below fifty percent would have fifty percent added on. (Someone who had been at thirty percent pension before 1971 would go to eighty percent.)

As a result, 84 percent of the 1,100 remaining Hong Kong survivors now receive 100 percent pension, which means five or six hundred dollars a month.

The Hong Kong vets are satisfied with that. Charlie Brady attended the final meeting of the Veterans Affairs committee when the Bill was accepted and he says, 'It was a beautiful meeting to attend - to witness the government's okay. It was a long thirty year struggle!'

So that's the end of the political story of the Hong Kong vets - not quite the end - the Hong Kong vets are trying to get a book published about their story, but so far the government has delayed its publication. The Townships Sun thinks the book should be published. We hereby offer the Hong Kong vets free ads to raise money by selling advance orders for copies. Heck, The Sun could typeset it for you, at cost. It would sell 2,000 copies, easily, first press run. And I think you should add more personal stories at the end, and something about the battle for pensions. Also, ask the Canada Council or Secretary of State to buy one copy to send free to all the libraries in Canada. They have a program for that. Give it a bit of marketing and all. You guys know how to do it. Don't let the government slow you down in publishing it.

So that's the end of the political story - not quite - the government is going to release the **true** story in 1995. (The documents are held secret for fifty years to give everyone concerned time to die off.)

So that's the end of the political story of Hong Kong and the Townships. Hold in mind that the slant of the above article is just the personal opinion of one of the many people who occasionally takes time off from normal life to write for The Sun.

Lots of people, including Hong Kong vets, may disagree with this article.

And politics is only one side of the story - there's the military story, the human story. Looking back at an historical event like that, we see cause-effect sequences, but remember in the chaos of way, almost anything can look like a cause-effect sequence. In World War Two almost anything could and did happen, for almost any reason at all. Possibly the tragedy of Hong Kong was just a series of coincidences, or just a big foul-up.

Apologies now, to the Hong Kong vets. Most of the material for this section comes from Garneau's account of the Royal Rifles, and Hong Kong vets have been very generous in giving us access to their books and clippings and memories and quotes. We have taken great liberty in publishing so much of it here, and I know of two or three Hong Kong vets who are going to be a bit upset about this. The political angle of this last article may also displease some. But we were so moved by the story of the Hong Kong vets that we felt it our duty to tell the people of the Townships all we could about it. We said, 'Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead,'. I'm sure the boys at Argyle Street have had the same attitude.

And to our readers: When somebody says, '**Lest We Forget**', remember.

-Hong Kong Veteran, 1945

Famous Quotes about the Next War

Sometimes you've only just been born, when some king starts having dreams of you.

'Young men are the most renewable resource this country has.' (U.S. General, talking about Vietnam war deaths.)

The violence on television is bad mainly because it makes violence look too easy to stomach. On TV. men die like little toy soldiers falling over; in real violence, men die like animals.

There will always be men, like Hitler, Julius Caesar, Stalin or Alexander the Great, who stand up on street corners and say, 'Hey, let's repress minorities, carry guns, shoot foreigners, steal land and capture other countries.' If there is ever to be peace on Earth, there has to come a time when everybody laughs and walks away, and says, 'That guy is nuts.'

What if Julius Caesar had stood alone? What if Hitler had spoken to empty auditoriums? What if they called a war and nobody went?

But that day is still far off. We have peace here in the Townships - this sure must be one of the most peaceful places in the world. But Lebanon, Angola, Ireland, Ethopia: in many places, there is blood in the streets, 100,000 political prisoners in Indonesia. God knows how many in the Soviet Union.

Severe censorship of the press is routine in most countries, most of the countries in the world are dictatorships. thirty countries use torture as a routine method of asking people questions, three-quarters of the world's people don't get enough food to eat, ten million a year die of malnutrition and hunger-related diseases in India, and the world spends several billion dollars a day producing weapons of death. There is a treaty of war between Arabs and Israelis, between Chinese and Russians and between blacks and whites in Africa.

War is a common human activity. Man has always been having wars, since the cavemen bopped each other on the heads with sticks.

If a tribe became numerically or technologically superior, they would use this strength to attack their weaker neighbours and expand their territory, to have a larger food-hunting area. They could also steal everything, rape the women, capture slaves to do all the work, and proclaim themselves to be the most powerful tribe this side of the mountain. There are many advantages to taking over the world.

And in the world today, there are men who would like to enslave as many people as they can. I want peace, but do they? If Canada were to be invaded by one of those Hitler-types, we would fight again. We want peace, but can we get it?

They say that deer are peaceful and wolves are vicious, but if the deer could hunt with rifles, they would shoot all the wolves, with glee and determination. Mother nature is like that, kill or be killed, fight for food, struggle for enough territory to get food. Out of a million frogs eggs, only a few survive to become frogs. A mouse pays no attention to a dead mouse - sniff at it and walk on, feeling no remorse. It's in millions of years of chromosomes and heritage. Kill or be killed, attack the weaker ones, surprise attacks in the night, no remorse for the dead enemy. The Romans fed prisoners to the lions. The distance between human beings is built right in by nature.

It had better change, somehow, because now we've got the A-bomb, and soon most countries in the world will have one. Wipe out all life on earth. After all the good times we've had on this planet, one man, pushing one button, to start one war, could end it all.

Wars of liberation, wars of oppression, wars for power and land, wars out of hunger, wars of race, wars of revenge, wars for wealth, wars to conquer the world, wars of religion, and then the war to end all wars, the nuclear war.

In W.W.I, the Canadian and German soldiers, on Christmas Day, came out of their trenches, exchanged chocolate and cigarettes, played music, and played football games. The next day, they were shooting at each other again.

The same eyes that show fear and hate could show love, the same hands that kill could help, oceans of tears and above all suffering could be avoided if the human race could unfold its love stop treating each other like objects. Jesus Christ had things to say about that, but it seems the human race is still far from being up to it.

Most of them are starving and most of them live under dictatorship and most of them are either wolves or deer, the weak and the strong, the hunter and the hunted, exchanging roles. Millions of them are carrying guns. Peace in our time? Not likely. It would certainly set a precedent, for people not to have wars. In the whole history of the human race, peace has never been given a chance. I want to stay out of wars, but there are four billion other people in the world and some of them always start pulling triggers.

I'm sitting here thinking about the distances between people and how hard it is to have peace and brotherly love in a world of teeming billions, a world of hunger and aggression that is cold to its victims, a world in which money talks and might makes right. Any one of a thousand things could lead to war.

But what will lead to peace? About four billion people, including me and you, had better figure that out someday soon.

IT'S TIME TO GET
SERIOUS

WHO IS FERNAND GRENIER?

- COMPETENT ADMINISTRATOR
- A STRONG LEADER
- BORN AND RAISED IN THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS
- MARRIED TO A SCOTTISH GIRL FROM SHERBROOKE MARINA FERGUSON
- FERNAND GRENIER IS 46 YEARS OLD HE AND MARINA HAVE 2 CHILDREN ERIC AND FERNAND JR. WHO LIVE IN LAC MÉGANTIC

Fernand Grenier feels that it is time to get SERIOUS

- SERIOUS about the ECONOMIC situation.
- SERIOUS about strikes in the private and public sectors
- SERIOUS ABOUT BILL 22

Fernand Grenier is a serious man and deserves your support because he is the only candidate in Mégantic-Compton able to understand your problems.

Fernand Grenier feels very strongly about the heritage of our community built on a close relationship between French and English people.

Fernand Grenier wants to preserve that tradition of mutual under standing and trust between Francophones and Anglophones, for the future of his children and his family, for the future of your children and your family.

BILL 22 affects this principle and Fernand Grenier will fight against it when elected.

In Mégantic Compton On November the 15th VOTE BIRON VOTE FERNAND GRENIER

UN

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