

*Official History of the Canadian Army  
in the Second World War*

*Volume I*

**SIX YEARS OF WAR**

*The Army in Canada, Britain  
and the Pacific*





CANADIAN TANKS IN SUSSEX

From a watercolour by Major W. A. Ogilvie, M.B.E.  
Ram II tanks of the Headquarters Squadron of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division training  
in Ashdown Forest, September 1942.



## **NOTE**

In the writing of this volume the author has been given full access to Relevant official documents in possession of the department of National Defence; but the inferences drawn and the opinions expressed are those of the author himself, and the Department is in no way responsible for his reading or presentation of the facts as stated.

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN ARMY  
IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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Volume I

**SIX YEARS OF WAR**

THE ARMY IN CANADA, BRITAIN  
AND THE PACIFIC

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## PREFACE

THIS is the first volume of the Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War. The second, dealing with the campaign in Italy, will appear very shortly. The third, dealing with the campaign in NorthWest Europe, is in preparation. A subsequent volume will deal with Canadian military policy in the broad sense. This history is more detailed, and based on more thorough research, than was possible in the case of the single-volume Official Historical Summary, The Canadian Army 1939-1945, which was published in 1948.

The present volume is concerned with a variety of subjects. It deals in outline with military events in Canada throughout the war; in somewhat greater detail with the history of the Army in the United Kingdom, including the raiding operations based on that country; and with the Army's part in the war against Japan. An attempt has been made to apportion the space allotted to the various topics in accordance with their interest and significance. The active operations-notably those at Dieppe and Hong Kong, both of which were important and controversial-have been given more attention than any other matters. Questions of organization and administration at home and abroad, which are certainly important and could well form the matter of several volumes, have been more briefly dealt with; the author has aimed at summarizing the essentials while omitting the detail. Throughout, he has tried to write mainly for the general reader rather than for the soldier and the military student. He hopes that these experts will find the book useful; but information on the more specialized subjects, including the detail of the activities of the technical arms and the services, must be sought in technical monographs. As was stated in the preliminary Official Historical Summary, the main object of the present history is "to tell the Canadian citizen what his army accomplished in the last war, and to provide him, perhaps, with the means of forming an intelligent judgement on military issues that may confront him in the future".

It has been considered essential to document the book in detail, but since many readers will seldom need to consult the references these have been collected at the back and printed in small type to save space. It may be noted that many of the documents referred to are still "classified", and the fact that they are cited does not necessarily imply that they are available for public examination. In spite of this it has been thought best to give the references, since a documented narrative carries more weight than an undocumented one even when all the sources cannot be produced; and many of the classified documents cited will presumably become available to students in due course.

## PREFACE

In the interest of security, certain cipher telegrams have been paraphrased without altering the sense. It is not the practice of the United Kingdom to cite unpublished papers in official histories. Such British documents are accordingly referred to in this study merely by the phrase "United Kingdom records". This method is used at the request of the United Kingdom authorities.

Officers and men are invariably designated in the text by the ranks they held at the time of the events described. It has not been considered necessary to append decorations to personal names in the text. In the Index all individuals are referred to by their "final" ranks and decorations, i.e. those as of the date of compilation.

The author wishes to acknowledge the liberality with which he has been treated in the matter of access to records. He has had unrestricted access to documents in the hands of the Government of Canada. In this respect, he acknowledges special debts to the Privy Council Office and the Department of External Affairs. In addition, many individuals have generously opened private records to him. The kindness of Mrs. Mackenzie has enabled him to make use of the papers of the late Senator Ian Mackenzie, Minister of National Defence 1935-39. General A. G. L. McNaughton has deposited his voluminous papers with the Historical Section for free use in connection with this history; and General H. D. G. Crerar has permitted the Section the fullest access to his private files. Mr. C. G. Power has kindly lent documents from among his own papers. The literary executors of the late Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King have been very cooperative.

It is out of the question to make full acknowledgement here to the many organizations and individuals who have given generous assistance. In London the Historical Branch of the Cabinet Office has accorded us constant and indispensable aid, and we have had much help also from the Air Historical Branch of the Air Ministry and the Historical Section of the Admiralty. We have had helpful exchanges with official historians in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and India and Pakistan. We owe a great debt to the Office of the Chief of Military History and to the Captured Records Section in the United States Department of the Army. In Canada there is a special obligation to the Director of War Service Records, Department of Veterans Affairs, whose office provided many of the Canadian Army statistics included in this volume. Finally, the author is most grateful to the innumerable participants in the events described who have read the volume in draft, in whole or in part, and have given him the benefit of their comments.

It is quite impossible to thank all the personnel, past and present, of the Canadian Army's Historical Section who have contributed directly or indirectly to the production of this book. Lt.-Col. G. W. L. Nicholson, Deputy Director, and Lt.-Col. C. J. Lynn-Grant, Executive Officer, have helped at

## PREFACE

every point. Chapters VI, VII, VIII, XIII, XV and XVI were originally drafted by other members of the Section and subsequently revised by the writer; in this respect he is obliged to Captain J. B. Conacher, Major J. C. Newlands and Mr. J. M. Hitsman. All other chapters he drafted himself; and he takes full responsibility for the entire volume as now presented. Captain Bond's maps speak for themselves. Captain L. R. Cameron has acted as research assistant to the author and has made an invaluable contribution. Mr. A. G. Steiger has given equally important help in connection with German documents. Lastly, Q.M.S. (W.O.2) M. R. Lemay, a friend and colleague in the wartime Historical Section overseas which laid the foundations for this work, has typed the numerous successive drafts with great efficiency and cheerfulness.

Readers who discover errors or important omissions in this volume are asked to communicate with the author.

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**PART ONE**

**Organization, Training and Home Defence  
in Canada**



## CHAPTER I

### THE CANADIAN MILITIA ON THE EVE OF WAR

(See Maps 1, 2 and 3)

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#### The Canadian Tradition

CANADA is an unmilitary community. Warlike her people have often been forced to be; military they have never been.

Repeatedly, during the French regime, Canadians took up arms in defence of their country. Twice during Canada's early history as a British colony her people joined with British forces in defending the soil against attack by the neighbouring nation. On many occasions in later times there was danger of renewed war with the United States. Later still, when a happy evolution had put an end to such apprehensions, Canada's increasing involvement in world politics led her to take a minor part in the South African War of 1899-1902 and a much larger share in the World War of 1914-18. None of these episodes proved sufficient to convince Canadians that there was a close connection between their nation's welfare and the state of her military preparations. Fortunately for the country, there were always some people in it who interested themselves in such matters and sought to maintain a degree of active military spirit; but they were always a small minority.

For generations, Canadian governments and parliaments, and certainly also the public at large, appeared to be convinced that it was time enough to begin preparing for war after war had broken out. It would be easy to demonstrate the country's traditional dislike of peacetime armaments and unwillingness to spend money upon them, and to give examples of how on many occasions the sudden appearance of a crisis led ministers and legislators to take, hurriedly and belatedly, the military measures for which in more peaceful moments they had seen no need. But it is not necessary to labour the point; nor need we here attempt to account fully for the country's unmilitary outlook, which has certainly been due in great part to the happy accident of a political and geographical situation that, placed formidable barriers, in the shape of distance, ocean spaces and the power of great friendly nations, between Canada and potential aggressors. It is enough to say that not until the years following the Second World War did the Canadian people

and their government show themselves ready to spend, in time of peace, money enough to maintain national armaments commensurate in any degree with the position claimed by Canada in the world.

It is a remarkable fact that the First World War, which affected Canadian development so fundamentally in so many ways, had almost no long-term influence upon the country's military policy. In that war, the most important episode in Canadian history until its time, 628,000 Canadians served and 60,000 lost their lives.<sup>1</sup> Canada intervened on a large scale on European battlefields, and her troops were recognized as being among the most formidable on the Western Front. Nevertheless, when the emergency was over the country reverted lightly and confidently to her earlier traditions, and reduced her armed forces to a level of insignificance almost as low as that of 1913.

There is no point in going into details here. Only a few illustrations need be given. The report of the Department of National Defence for the year ending 31 March 1924 calculated that Canada's expenditure on defence, per head of population, was \$1.46, by comparison with \$3.30 for Australia, \$6.51 for the United States, \$23.04 for Great Britain and \$24.66 for France. The total expenditure upon Militia services (including all land forces) in that year was only \$10,920,000.<sup>2</sup> Seven years later it had risen scarcely at all. The expenditures upon Naval and Air services were smaller than those for the land service, and the grand total for the Department of National Defence for Militia, Naval, Air and other services amounted in 1930-31 to about \$23,700,000, of which just over \$11 million was for the Militia. Even this small provision was severely reduced in succeeding years as a result of the economic depression, and the total actual disbursements of the Department for the year 1932-33 sank to \$14,145,361.<sup>3</sup> With this sum Canada, a country of more than ten million people, was supposedly maintaining a Navy, an Army (then called the Militia) and an Air Force. How utterly inadequate these forces were for any practical purpose can be imagined.

A word will be said here about the Militia only. After the First World War a very inflated paper organization for the land forces of Canada had been set up, apparently on the recommendation of the "Otter Committee" appointed in 1919. It provided theoretically for 11 divisions and four cavalry divisions. The Committee appears to have postulated this organization upon a war on Canadian soil, but recognized that in a war fought abroad the largest expeditionary force Canada could produce would be six divisions and one cavalry division.\* The peace establishments of the units actually authorized amounted to more than 140,000 men. (To organize the whole 15

\*This Committee, appointed for the special purpose of reporting on means of perpetuating the traditions of Canadian Expeditionary Force units in the post-war Militia, was originally composed of Major-General Sir William Otter, Major-General Sir Archibald Macdonell, Brigadier-General E. A. Cruikshank, and Brigadier-General A. G. L. McNaughton.<sup>4</sup> In practice, it consisted of the first and last of these plus Major-General Sir E. W. B. Morrison. The Com-

divisions, with necessary additional units, at least 300,000 all ranks would have been required, but-wisely-no attempt was made to provide them.)<sup>6</sup> The actual strength, under the conditions imposed by financial limitations, bore no relationship to these figures. Lack of funds restricted training and prevented the acquisition of new equipment. This, combined with the widespread pacifist feeling of those days, made the Non-Permanent Active Militia (the volunteer citizen force, roughly equivalent to the Territorial Army in Great Britain or the National Guard in the United States) unpopular. Recruiting was difficult; and even where a unit could recruit to full strength, it could not draw training pay for more than a fraction of its numbers. All that could be done in these circumstances was to seek to train a nucleus of leaders and specialists. That the N.P.A.M. continued to exist as a basis for the land defence of Canada was due to the public spirit of its officers and men, to many of whom membership in the force meant an actual financial loss. On 30 June 1931 its enrolled strength was 51,287 officers and other ranks as against a peace establishment of 134,843. As for the tiny regular army, the Permanent Active Militia, its peace establishment was 6925 all ranks, but its actual strength on 31 March 1931 was only 3688.<sup>7</sup>

### The Approach of the Crisis

Such was the state of things in Canada when, just as the world depression was at its worst, the international situation began to go to pieces at an alarming rate. In 1931 the Japanese seized Manchuria from China and defied the League of Nations. In 1933 Adolf Hitler possessed himself of supreme power in Germany and set about re-arming the Reich and re-making the map of Europe. The impotence of the League as an instrument for the preservation of peace became more and more patent, and the frightened democracies showed no disposition to run risks in the interest of making the League system effective. As the horizon steadily darkened, those charged with advising the Canadian Government on matters of defence became increasingly apprehensive.

As we have noted, the depression had led to an economy campaign which further reduced the already attenuated provision made for the fighting services. Expenditure upon them in 1932-33 was the lowest since 1913. During the next three years, however, the depression may be said to have paid a limited dividend to the Canadian forces, for under the Unemployment Relief and Public Works Construction Acts considerable sums were expended

mittee made no general report and apparently put on paper no full" statement of its views on the proper organization of the Militia at large; but a table<sup>5</sup> attached to a memorandum by Brig.-Gen. McNaughton (undated but evidently of 1919) confirms that its calculations were founded upon a force of 11 infantry divisions with divisional troops, and four cavalry divisions with divisional troops, plus Corps and Army Troops.

on projects of military importance, including barracks, armouries and air stations. The project which the Chief of the General Staff (Major-General A. G. L. McNaughton)\* considered most significant was a beginning on a new Dominion Arsenal plant at Valcartier, Quebec, where respectable progress was made during the depression years. These measures somewhat improved the material, bricks-and-mortar basis of Canadian defence; little, however, was done for the forces themselves.

In January, 1935 the main estimates for the militia and air forces for 1935-36 were tabled in the House of Commons. The amounts proposed were "substantially less" than those originally submitted to the Government and supplementary estimates were essential if the deficiencies were to be corrected. The Chief of the General Staff (who at this time was in Canada "also Chief of the Air Staff in fact if not in name")<sup>8</sup> now prepared for the Government's information a memorandum entitled *The Defence of Canada* in which he reviewed the existing position, the dangers and the needs.<sup>9</sup> After giving the statistics of strength and expenditures since 1919, he dealt with the question of equipment in the following terms:

As regards reserves of equipment and ammunition, the matter is shortly disposed of. Except as regards rifles and rifle ammunition, partial stocks of which were inherited from the Great War—there are none.

As regards equipment, the situation is almost equally serious, and to exemplify it I select a few items from the long lists of deficiencies on file at National Defence Headquarters:

- (i) There is not a single modern anti-aircraft gun of any sort in Canada.
- (ii) The stocks of field gun ammunition on hand represent 90 minutes' fire at normal rates for the field guns inherited from the Great War and which are now obsolescent.
- (iii) The coast defence armament is obsolescent and, in some cases, defective in that a number of the major guns are not expected to be able to fire more than a dozen or so rounds. To keep some defence value in these guns, which are situated on the Pacific coast, we have not dared for some years to indulge in any practice firing.
- (iv) About the only article of which stocks are held is harness, and this is practically useless. The composition of a modern land force will include very little horsed transport... .
- (v) There are only 25 aircraft of service type in Canada, all of which are obsolescent except for training purposes; of these, 15 were purchased before 1931 and are practically worn out. The remaining 10 were procured in 1934 from the Air Ministry at a nominal valuation; they are old army cooperation machines obtained so that some training with aircraft of military type might be carried out.  
Not a single machine is of a type fit to employ in active operations.
- (vi) Not one service air bomb is held in Canada.

McNaughton went on to point out that the funds provided by Parliament in past years had been "barely sufficient to keep the mechanism of defence

\*Appointed C.G.S. 1 January 1929.

in being." Apart from essential overhead, it had been possible to provide only for "the training of a minimum cadre, composed of officers, non-commissioned officers and specialists." Equipment had not been added to, save for a very few items; on the contrary, reserves had been used up to satisfy current requirements. The memorandum proceeded:

Until a few years ago this parlous state of affairs was to some extent tolerable, owing to the knowledge that in the United Kingdom preparations for defence were based on the assumption "that at any given date there would be no major war for ten years" and that, in consequence, the Chiefs of Staff of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force were relieved of responsibility for lack of preparation in the event of a major war arising within that period.

In 1933, after a comprehensive review of the international situation, this assumption was cancelled\* and the Chiefs of Staff in the United Kingdom resumed their responsibility for advising the Government as to the nature and extent of the defence preparations which, in the light of their information, they considered to be necessary.

The ten-year assumption was never formally applied to Canada, but in point of fact ever since 1919, Departmental estimates have been prepared on this basis, and in those which I have submitted annually since 1929 to provide for the Land and Air Forces, nothing beyond that which was immediately necessary to the maintenance and training of cadre forces was contemplated.

The C.G.S. recalled that the draft estimates which he had submitted for the fiscal year 1934-35 had been based on his appreciation that "the most urgent requirements were in respect to Air Defence"; Parliament had voted, as a result, an increase for the Air Force of \$525,000 over the previous year's provision, the estimates for the land forces showing little change. In preparing draft estimates for 1935-36, he had followed the same policy of "placing emphasis on the urgent need for the development of the Air Force", and had asked, by comparison with the previous year's estimates, additional sums of \$1,927,604 for the R.C.A.F. and of \$1,512,634 for the Militia, which would provide for modest increases in numbers of men trained and some small improvements in equipment, including the provision of "one section of anti-aircraft guns for training."

Supplementary Estimates for 1935-36 were duly brought down, and provided \$1,651,000 for militia services and \$1,302,900 for aviation, in addition to \$145,000 for naval services. The final total of actual expenditure for all purposes, including the three fighting services, by the Department of National Defence for the fiscal year 1935-36 was \$27,378,541.<sup>11</sup>

### The New Defence Programme and its Problems

The general election of 14 October 1935 resulted in the replacement of the Conservative government of Mr. R. B. (later Viscount) Bennett by a

\*General Lord Ismay has stated that the "Ten Years Rule" was in fact abandoned as early as March 1932.<sup>10</sup>

Liberal administration headed by Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King. It fell to this new government not only to preside over the final stage of defence planning preceding the outbreak of the Second World War, but also to lead the nation in that war.

The new Minister of National Defence, Mr. Ian A. Mackenzie, called for accounts of the state of the armed services. Major-General E. C. Ashton, who had become Chief of the General Staff when General McNaughton was seconded to the presidency of the National Research Council on 1 June 1935, submitted on 12 November a report upon the land and air forces.<sup>12</sup> This was based largely upon McNaughton's memorandum, to which Ashton called attention. He pointed out that while the Supplementary Estimates had led to some slight improvement since that report was made, the position had nevertheless become "still more acute" in view of events abroad. War had now broken out between Italy and Ethiopia, and the attempt of the League of Nations to check the aggressor had brought Great Britain within measurable distance of war with Italy. Much of Ashton's statement concerning the equipment situation derived from McNaughton's, but certain additional details which he gave may well be quoted:

*Mechanical Transport*

Beyond the purchase of a few mechanical tractors for the guns of the artillery , batteries of the Permanent Force, no provision has been made for the supply of mechanical transport for war purposes. We possess no tanks or service armoured cars. No tractors suitable to haul heavy and field artillery are wholly manufactured in Canada though certain companies partly manufacture a light 6-wheeled vehicle adaptable for field artillery.

*Anti-Gas Defence*

A few respirators, sufficient for the supply of a limited number to the Permanent Force, are held for training. None is available for mobilization...

*Steel Helmets*

The stocks of steel helmets are sufficient only for the supply of one division.

*Existing Manufacturing Facilities*

At the present no facilities whatsoever exist for the production of rifles, machine guns and artillery weapons in Canada. The existing Dominion Arsenal at Quebec is equipped only for the production of rifle ammunition and a limited amount for field guns.

No aero engines of any kind are manufactured in Canada at the present time.

To develop an aero-engine industry to the point of production will take two years.

Between 1935 and 1939 the Government made a degree of progress in remedying the situation thus outlined, a situation once characterized by Mr. Mackenzie in a letter to the Prime Minister as "a most astonishing and atrocious condition".<sup>13</sup> It approached the problem, however, with a circumspection which doubtless reflected the difficulties arising out of the Ethiopian War. The election campaign of 1935, during which the two major parties both declared their intention of doing everything possible to prevent Canada's becoming involved in this conflict, had demonstrated the extreme unwilling-



ness of the Canadian public to face the possibility of another war; and however loudly the military situation might cry out for action-and the cry, as we have seen, could scarcely have been louder-it was evidently feared that any programme of rearmament might be exposed to misinterpretation and misrepresentation, at home as well as abroad.\* During its first year in office the new Government moved cautiously. The Defence Department's total expenditure for the fiscal year 1936-37 was actually slightly less than for the previous one, although it must be noted that there were very considerable increases in the normal provision for the three armed services; the over-all reduction resulted from the cessation of the Special Unemployment Relief programme. In particular, the main estimates for the R.C.A.F. (totalling \$4,130,000) were exactly one million dollars larger than those for 1935-36.<sup>14</sup>

The Government offered the public an earnest of its intention to give serious attention to defence problems by forming in August 1936 a Canadian Defence Committee (subsequently referred to as the Defence Committee of the Cabinet), composed of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice, Finance and National Defence.<sup>15</sup> The formation of some such body, distantly analogous to the Committee of Imperial Defence in the United Kingdom, had been suggested at intervals since 1911, and had been recommended more than once by General Ashton.<sup>16</sup> The Defence Committee actually met only a few times before the outbreak of war; its chief practical function seems to have been to bring the Ministers and the Chiefs of Staff together for the discussion of proposed defence estimates. The Chiefs of Staff had had their own Committee (copied from British practice) since June 1927.<sup>17</sup> Called at first the "Joint Staff Committee", its name was changed to "Chiefs of Staff Committee" in January 1939, after the Senior Air Officer, who had always been a member of it, was given the title "Chief of the Air Staff".<sup>18</sup>

Ashton also pressed for the institution under the Defence Committee of a group of sub-committees and a secretariat (again copied from the Committee of Imperial Defence).<sup>19</sup> In April 1937 approval was given for this in principle, but only -on 15 March 1938 did an order in council set up interdepartmental sub-committees on Treatment of Aliens and Alien Property; Censorship (a committee on this subject had in fact existed since 1936, if not earlier) ;<sup>20</sup> Treatment of Ships and Aircraft; Air Raid Precautions; Emergency Legislation; and Defence Co-ordination. Most, though not all, of these committees set to work at early dates, and made useful contributions to pre-war planning and the preparation of the War Book<sup>21</sup> (see below, page 33). As we shall see, a Navy, Army and Air Supply Committee, with various sub-committees, had been set up in 1936.<sup>22</sup> The central organization for the coordination of defence was thus gradually improving.

\*See the Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons, 19 February 1937.

During 1936 most careful consideration was given to the preparation of the estimates for 1937-38, which represent the real beginning of the Government's modest re-armament programme. On 26 August the Defence Committee appears to have met the military heads of the three services in the Prime Minister's office, and the officers explained their requirements.<sup>23</sup> Subsequently, on 5 September, the Joint Staff Committee, composed at this time of Commodore P. W. Nelles, Major-General Ashton, and Air Commodore G. M. Croil,\* submitted a document entitled "An Appreciation of the Defence Problems Confronting Canada, with Recommendations for the Development of the Armed Forces".<sup>24</sup> This dwelt upon the increasingly precarious international situation. "The possibility of a major world war is becoming more apparent", remarked the three officers presciently. "Indeed, the realization is growing in many minds that the cessation of hostilities in 1918 was but an armistice." They noted both the German situation and that in the Far East, and observed that both concerned Canada, "no matter how reluctant that concern may be." Of the two, they wrote, the European situation contained the more serious implications. They considered it quite possible that circumstances might again arise demanding the dispatch of Canadian forces overseas; they also called attention to the possibility of Canada's being obliged to defend her neutrality in a conflict in the Pacific. The tasks of the Canadian forces were thus defined:

"(a) The direct defence of Canada is the major responsibility of its armed forces.

"(b) The indirect defence of Canada by co-operation with other Empire forces in a war overseas is a secondary responsibility of this country, though possibly one requiring much greater ultimate effort."

The heads of the services proceeded to point out those extremely serious deficiencies in the Canadian armed forces which have been noted above, and submitted their recommendations for remedial measures. So far as the Militia was concerned, they observed that there was a requirement for modernizing the Esquimalt defences and improving the seaward defences of Halifax. Antiaircraft defence measures were also essential. As for the Militia at large, they pointed out that the reorganization already effected called for smaller forces but that these should be up-to-date. "The necessary armament, equipment and supplies to enable one-third of this future force to mobilize without delay, on a war footing, and concentrate in any part of Canada is considered essential." Subsequently General Ashton gave a still more specific account of the minimum Militia requirements for the defence of Canada: two divisions, equipped to modern standards. "No Chief of the General Staff could be expected to undertake to safeguard the integrity of our coasts with any smaller force."<sup>25</sup>

\*Colonel H. D. G. Crerar, as Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, 1935-38, was Secretary of the Committee and drafted most of its memoranda.

On 8 September the Minister of National Defence sent the Joint Staff Committee's memorandum to the Prime Minister, along with the financial calculations of the three services and the draft estimates for the year 1937-38 which they had submitted to him.<sup>26</sup> These calculations had been made on the basis of a five-year plan for development, the total cost of which was estimated at \$199,351,333; or roughly \$40,000,000 per year. Of this grand total the Militia's share was calculated as \$98,872,075, the Navy's as \$25,815,500 and that of the Air Force \$74,663,758. These figures, however, did not include the usual standing vote for Militia Services, which would add \$11 or \$12 million more per year. The total estimate for the first year, which the Joint Staff Committee envisaged as the most expensive under this project, was the main difficulty; it would amount to roughly \$65 million. "Frankly", wrote Mr. Mackenzie, "I do not think we can get that amount approved without difficulty. I think, however, we can justify an amount of \$50,000,000. a year for the first year; \$45,000,000. for the second, and \$40,000,000. for the third year with approximately an annual vote of \$40,000,000. subsequent to that date." He called attention to the expanded defence programmes which had been adopted by other Commonwealth countries.

On 16 November, presumably in accordance with a suggestion from Mr. King, Mr. Mackenzie circulated the papers to his Cabinet colleagues.<sup>27</sup> He again observed that the really difficult problem was the immediate requirements for the first year of the five-year plan. The estimated cost for the first year for all three services, he wrote, "amounts to the staggering figure of \$53,838,942, with an additional \$12,000,000 for the ordinary Militia estimates, or a total of \$66,000,000." This was the figure which had been submitted in the previous September, but the detailed estimates which the Chiefs of Staff had now requested actually amounted to \$69,315,005.42. These estimates were divided into "main" and "special" categories, the former covering the normal expenditures of the services, the latter making provision for the large capital expenditures required to modernize them and fit them for war.

Reviewing the services' demands in detail, the Minister indicated to his colleagues certain points where it appeared to him that reductions might be made. He suggested total possible reductions in the R.C.A.F. special estimate (which totalled \$12,649,411) amounting to \$2,400,483. The Navy's modest special estimate of \$4,269,040, he felt, could not be reduced. As for the Militia, it might be possible to eliminate from the provision for miscellaneous supplies the sum of \$1,300,000, which would have provided clothing and accoutrements, steel helmets, and tents, blankets, and camp and barrack equipment. He also suggested that the provision for armament might be reduced by \$810,000, including \$500,000 intended to provide Bren guns. The recommendations for Engineer Services and Works were divided into

List "A", which provided for coast defences and other facilities considered necessary, and List "B", which consisted of items of lower priority, chiefly armouries. The Minister made the obvious suggestion that List "B" (which totalled \$6,227,820) might usefully be dispensed with. His suggestions concerning List "A" (the total of which was \$5,057,150) should perhaps be quoted:

... If it is not decided to undertake government manufacture of munitions on a large scale, but to leave mass production to Canadian industry, which in time of emergency would undoubtedly be the case, the item for \$600,000 (Ammunition Group, Dominion Arsenal, Valcartier, or in the vicinity of Quebec City), might be deferred. It is really impossible not to proceed with the development of our main permanent training camps, such as, Valcartier, Barriefield, Dundurn, Shilo and Calgary.

There might also be some question as to the necessity of proceeding immediately with fortifications on the Atlantic Coast for which the following items are included:

Halifax, N.S.	
Reconstruction of emplacements	\$300,000
Atlantic Coast	
Coast Fortifications	900,000
Halifax, N.S.	
Improvements, Joint Services	
Magazines	100,000

If it is not decided to proceed with the Ammunition Group and the Atlantic Coast defences, a reduction of \$1,690,000 could be made.

In closing it may be said that everything asked for is required, but I also find it very difficult to recommend that the entire amounts requested should be submitted to Parliament during the coming Session. Should Council fix an amount to which the Estimates of my Department should be reduced, I would immediately have worked out by the technical advisers of the Department, some other order of priority.

There is no record of the consideration of this matter by the Cabinet; but it is clear that Mr. Mackenzie's colleagues shared his feeling that the figures submitted by the services were "staggering", and were prepared to go further than he in reducing them. Had the tentative reductions suggested by him been applied, the estimates for the Department of National Defence for 1937-38 would have totalled \$56,886,702. The actual total of the Main Estimates as finally presented to Parliament was \$34,091,873.42. Including Supplementary Estimates, the final total for the year was \$36,194,839.63, of which \$18,703,636 was for Militia Services. Many items which the Joint Staff Committee had recommended for inclusion in the 1937-38 estimates were deferred for years to come. Work began on a considerable scale on the West Coast defences during 1937-38, but nothing of importance was done on the Atlantic coast until 1939. Action for the provision of Bren guns, recommended in 1936, was not taken until 1938. As is noted below, the Ammunition Group of the Arsenal was never proceeded with. The grants

made for general stores were so limited that, as will be seen in due time, the force mobilized in 1939 was short of the simplest necessities for a long period..

The Government decided upon a definite order of priority as between the three services and the various tasks. Precisely when this decision was taken is not clear, but it was at least adumbrated in Mr. Mackenzie's memorandum of November 1936 quoted above, which suggests the desirability of dealing with the question in the order, Air Services first, Navy second and Militia third. This may possibly have been suggested by the Prime Minister, as it is not in Mackenzie's letter to him of 8 September. The priority finally arrived at was stated by Mr. Mackenzie in the House of Commons on 26 April, 1939, in the following terms:

1. Fortification of Pacific Coast prior to Atlantic Coast.
2. Development of the air force in priority to navy and, so far as possible, the navy in priority to the militia.
3. Reorganization and re-equipping the militia as soon as our resources permit us to do so.

The relegation of the Militia to what was at least theoretically a tertiary position was something new in Canadian defence policy. But while the land service now received a smaller proportion than before of the total appropriations, those appropriations were sufficiently increased to ensure that it at least received sums materially larger than those for earlier years. As for the decision to give immediate priority to the Air Force, it will be remembered that in 1933-35 General McNaughton had declared that the most urgent task was to repair the deficiencies in the country's air defence (above, page 7).

The general pattern of the Government's programme, and its annual progress, may best be traced in a simplified tabulation of the appropriations made during the six fiscal years preceding the outbreak of war.

PRE-WAR APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF  
NATIONAL DEFENCE\*  
(in \$000's)<sup>28</sup>

Fiscal Year	Militia Services	Naval Services	Air Services	Other Services	Total
1934-35	8,882	2,222	2,262	13,356	26,724
1935-36	10,651	2,395	4,302	12,762	30,112
1936-37	12,018	4,853	6,809	6,304	29,986
1937-38	18,703	4,485	11,752	1,253	36,194
1938-39	16,727	6,639	11,686	1,292	36,345
1939-40	21,397	8,800	29,733	4,730	64,666

\*Appropriations made in the last two years of the Bennett administration have been included, both for purposes of comparison and to illustrate the upward trend noticeable in those years. "Other Services" include various non-military and miscellaneous appropriations; also those for unemployment, relief projects (many, though not all, of which had military significance) and (in 1939-40) provision made for retirement of capital expenditure. The figures for 1939-40 are appropriations made before the outbreak of war.

Many considerations hedged the Government in. The country's economic life had not recovered from the depression; unemployment was still widespread and the public accounts still showed a regular annual deficit. In these circumstances, large expenditures for defence, traditionally unpopular in Canada, were likely to meet considerable criticism. At the same time there were political difficulties. As we have said, pacifist feeling was strong, the public naturally shrank from the idea of another destructive war, and there was no general realization of the fact—now so clear in retrospect—that the best hope of avoiding such a war lay in the democracies' being strong. There was constant public debate over the question of the position which Canada could and should take in the event of another world conflict, and in the light of the various attitudes which emerged there was considerable apprehension as to the effect of such a crisis on the unity of the country. These circumstances inevitably left their mark upon both the scale and the nature of the Government's defence programme. In particular, they led the Government to avoid any appearance whatever of preparing for action overseas.

In a private address to members of his party in Parliament on 20 January 1937,<sup>29</sup> the Prime Minister gave an indication of the considerations which controlled the ministry's defence policy. He spoke of the destructive forces at work in Europe and the Orient, and of the "disruptive influences" visible within Canada and the consequent paramount duty "to be united in regard to policy and to recognize that the unity of Canada comes first and foremost". He mentioned the importance of preserving the unity of the Commonwealth also; and he went on to point out that Canada, though a rich country, was at the moment "practically defenceless", with no one to guard its doors. He proceeded:

We are not concerned with aggression. We are concerned with the defence of Canada. . The possibility of conflict with the United States is eliminated from our mind. There is nothing here for an expeditionary force—only for the defence of Canada against those who might wantonly assail us or violate our neutrality. The defence of our shores and the preservation of our neutrality—these are the two cardinal principles of our policy.

You read what Meighen said in the Senate yesterday, that the amount in the estimates was not enough, that we were concerned with the defence of the Empire as a whole; that the first line of our defence was the Empire's boundaries. We cannot accept that. But we can put our own house in order [so] that we shall not be a burden on anyone else—neither a burden on the States nor a burden on England. Meighen would do so much more—at least so he says—and Woodsworth would do nothing at all. The safe policy is the middle course between these two views—the safe policy is a rational policy of domestic defence.

Let us therefore be not afraid. Too many are governed by fear in the days in which we live. Let us first of all have a complete understanding of our own policy—and then fearing neither of the extremists—let us pursue our moderate way. Let us be united on a sane policy of defence: let us explain that policy to our people and let us above all strive at all times to keep Canada united.



Statements along these lines were made to Parliament a few weeks later by the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence.<sup>30</sup>

In May 1937 the Government's policies were further crystallized-though not publicly-in a statement by the Minister of National Defence to the Imperial Conference then meeting in London.<sup>31</sup> It was a frank exposition of the ministry's views, accompanied by an account of the divided state of Canadian public opinion on "the questions of neutrality, foreign policy and defence". Mr. Mackenzie described the defence priorities which had been established:

In general, may I make it very definite . . . that we attach the first importance to Air development and to attaining our objective of 11 permanent and 12 non-permanent squadrons.

Next in order we place the increasing of our modest Naval force from four to six destroyers-with four out of the six stationed on the Pacific. And lastly, we plan to have two out of our six divisions completely equipped, thoroughly modernized and mechanized, and ready for service immediately in any part of Canada.

In all our plans and preparations we are paying particular attention to the Pacific Coast...

Mr. Mackenzie ended by presenting to the Conference the following "conclusions":

"1. Canadian public opinion supports the present defence policy of the Government of Canada.

"2. Canadian public opinion will not, under present conditions, support any larger appropriations than those voted this year by Parliament.

"3. Canadian public opinion is definitely opposed to extraneous commitments but is prepared to support a National defence policy for the protection of our coasts and the focal areas of our trade routes...

### The New Programme Develops, 1937-1939

In the light of the second of these conclusions, it is not surprising that the influence of financial considerations, so evident at the inception of the programme, continued to be important as it developed. As indicated by the Minister, the estimates for 1937-38 were taken as a norm; and the service authorities were informed that "for three years the Defence Estimates would probably not be increased over those of 1937/38". Accordingly, plans were made for development based on a total of roughly \$18,000,000 for the Militia for each year 1938-39, 1939-40 and 1940-41.<sup>32</sup> In September 1937, however, instructions were received to reduce the estimates for 1938-39, which had been prepared on this basis, "by a total sum of \$2,326,889". The money thus taken from the Militia was given to the Navy.<sup>33</sup> Economy continued to be an important object of the Government. On 12 January 1938 the Prime Minister wrote to all his colleagues in the Cabinet<sup>34</sup> reminding them

of the recent deficits and emphasizing the importance of achieving a surplus and if possible some reduction in taxation before the next appeal to the electorate. He begged them if possible to cooperate in bringing the country's expenditures for 1938-39 within a total of \$500 million-necessitating "a reduction of seventy million dollars on estimates for the ensuing year, as thus far presented". This was presumably the origin of the second reduction in the defence estimates which is recorded as imposed this year. The main Militia estimates now fell to \$15,880,635; even with Supplementaries included, the final total was only \$16,727,000.<sup>35</sup>

The Chief of the General Staff understood that this deficiency of approximately two million dollars (by comparison with 1937-38) would be made good the next year. On 31 May 1938 he submitted provisional Militia estimates for 1939-40 amounting to a total of \$22,779,943.<sup>36</sup> These, along with those of the other services, were considered at a meeting of the Defence Council\* on 1 June. The total sum exceeded the amount voted for 1938-39 by \$14,515,160. The Minister asked the heads of the services to reconsider the estimates; they did so, but reported that in their opinion the programmes which had been approved could not be implemented at less expenditure.<sup>37</sup> On 22 July the Joint Staff Committee submitted a new "Review of Canada's Position with Respect to Defence",<sup>38</sup> surveying developments since 1936. This paper noted that the European situation had become much worse during this period, the German navy had grown powerful, and the East Coast defences accordingly had acquired increased importance. The concluding summary may be quoted:

15. Since we last reported collectively on the requirements of Canadian defence [5 September 1936] some progress has been made towards the implementation of the programme then recommended. The Naval objective of six destroyers then aimed at will shortly be attained. Despite unforeseen delays in the procurement of essential armament for the land forces we have made headway, by using existing equipment, in strengthening the fixed defences of the Pacific Coast. The Air Force has been substantially increased as to personnel, and a beginning has been made in development of air bases and the arming of units with service aircraft.

The above programme, however, has, generally speaking, and in particular with respect to the Militia and Air Services, been undertaken very much on a "long-term" basis.

In the meantime the international situation has continued to deteriorate, and has developed in such a way as to shift the centre of gravity of danger from the Pacific to the Atlantic Coast. We have felt it necessary to revise our estimate of the forms and scales of attack to which Eastern coastal and inland centres may be subject, and to include therein bombardment by fast armoured ships mounting heavy guns, and air attack on centres as far from the coast as Toronto.

16. In these circumstances, while we are fully aware of the difficulties in the way of obtaining larger appropriations, we feel that we would be remiss in our

\*The Defence Council was composed of the Minister of National Defence, the Deputy Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the Chief of the Naval Staff, and the Senior Air Officer, with the heads of Branches at Militia Headquarters and the Judge Advocate General as associate members.

responsibilities to you if we did not state that a long-term expenditure on the gradual improvement of our defences has, we believe, little relation to the actual problem of the security of this country. In our view the situation strongly indicates that immediate speed, rather than present economy, requires to be taken as the governing factor in the execution of our plans.

The Committee's specific recommendations with respect to the Militia service were as follows:

"(i) Immediate provision of essential coast and anti-aircraft defence armament and equipment.

"(ii) Completion of the Interim Plan\* on both coasts without delay.

"(iii) Further and determined action to complete the equipment of two divisions."

In September the crisis over Czechoslovakia brought the world to the brink of war and administered a severe shock to the country. On 14 November the Cabinet Defence Committee met the Chiefs of Staff, and the latter presented their recommendations for expenditure during 1939-40. It is recorded that the total increase contemplated in these recommendations, by comparison with the appropriations for the current year, was approximately \$37 million. This would have raised the total appropriation for the Department of National Defence to roughly \$73 million. The Militia estimates submitted had risen to \$26,451,783.<sup>39</sup> Subsequently they were further increased to \$28,657,795.<sup>40</sup>

Although the Government was prepared to go some distance in expanding and improving the forces at this time, it was not ready to go so far as this, and in particular it was not ready to spend so much on the land forces. The Militia now suffered for its low status in the official priority. On 17 December the Militia authorities received through the Deputy Minister of National Defence verbal instructions to make a drastic cut of \$7,882,195, which brought the Militia estimates down to \$20,775,600.<sup>41</sup> This produced a very strong protest from the Military Members of the Defence Council (the heads of branches at Militia Headquarters), as it involved eliminating, among other things, the proposed beginning on East Coast defences, important purchases of armament, ammunition and stores (including boots and clothing), a small increase (159 all ranks) which had been proposed for the Permanent Force, and other items. The C.G.S. wrote: "The Military Members . . . are of the opinion that the Militia, both N.P.A.M. and P.F., will not be able to meet requirements in a crisis unless it receives more generous treatment in the coming estimates."<sup>42</sup> The protest brought no increase in the main estimates. It is clear that the Cabinet had fixed an arbitrary total, for the actual over-all estimates for the Department of National Defence as submitted to Parliament amounted to exactly \$60,000,000.<sup>42</sup>†

\*See below, page 28.

†This is apart from \$3,477,175 included for the retirement of moneys borrowed for capital expenditure.

The Cabinet Defence Committee again met the Chiefs of Staff on 30 January, 1939, and although the business done is not recorded it was probably concerned with recommendations for Supplementary Estimates. In due course, Militia Supplementaries amounting to \$622,000 were brought down, making limited provision for the first stage of the East Coast defences—\$145,000 for engineering works and \$53,625 for armament—and for boots for the Non-Permanent Active Militia. Even including these, however, the pre-war appropriations for Militia services for the fiscal year 1939-40 were still materially less than the sum requested in May 1938. Reference to the table on page 13 will make it clear that the R.C.A.F. was the chief beneficiary of the increased generosity of this period.

### The Reorganization of the Militia

Having surveyed the new defence programme generally, we may now cum to more detailed consideration of the Militia aspects of it.

In matters of organization there were important changes in these years. On 19 November 1938 the Chief of the General Staff ceased to be responsible for the Royal Canadian Air Force. The designation of the Senior Air Officer, Royal Canadian Air Force, was subsequently changed to Chief of the Air Staff, and this officer thereafter possessed the same independence as the Chiefs of the General and Naval Staffs, becoming "directly responsible to the Minister of National Defence." The Canadian situation was thus largely assimilated to that in the United Kingdom. The change was a natural consequence of the high priority accorded the Air Force in the Government's new defence programme.<sup>43</sup>

The land forces themselves underwent an extensive and salutary reorganization. It had long been recognized that the organization of the Non-Permanent Active Militia did not make sense. In discussions preceding the Disarmament Conference of 1932, General McNaughton recommended that Canadian calculations for the future should be based upon reducing the theoretical 11 divisions and four cavalry divisions to six divisions and one cavalry division, with the necessary proportion of corps and army troops. He pointed out that, apart from being absurdly inflated, the existing organization was unbalanced; it contained an excess of infantry and cavalry units, but lacked any due and proper proportion of artillery and other ancillary units and services, and these could not be organized without a further increase of nearly 100,000 in the peace establishment. McNaughton's recommendations were accepted as a basis for the guidance of the Canadian delegation to the Disarmament Conference. When in 1933 it became necessary to submit detailed calculations to the Conference, the recommendations were

reconsidered, and (with no substantial change with respect to land forces) accepted by a special Cabinet Committee. They were accordingly transmitted to Geneva.<sup>44</sup>

Although a new basis for the Militia had thus been approved in principle, and the Defence Associations representing the various arms of the Non-Permanent Active Militia were consulted during 1933-34 and concurred in its desirability, reorganization in accordance with it was postponed until 1936. On 5 June of that year, following the passing of the departmental estimates, ministerial authority was received to proceed with it without further delay. By the end of the following December it was virtually complete.<sup>45</sup> The nature of the reorganization can be only broadly sketched here. The reorganized force contained only 20 cavalry regiments as compared with 35 before; moreover, four of the 20 were armoured car units and two others were mechanized. There had been 135 infantry and machine-gun battalions; these now declined in number to 91. Six of the 91, moreover, were to be tank battalions. (These were the first tank units organized in Canada; but an Armoured Corps had not yet been set up; and, of course, they had no tanks.) On the other hand, the Artillery was largely increased (the number of field batteries rising from 67 to 110) and the Engineer arm was also much expanded. The Militia now began to assume the appearance of a balanced army.<sup>46</sup>

As a result of the reorganization, the land forces of Canada in 1938 had an authorized peace establishment (as distinct from an actual strength) of 90,576 all rank, distributed as shown in the following table.<sup>47</sup>

Arm of Service	Permanent Active Militia		Non-Permanent Active Militia	
	Personnel	Horses	Personnel	Horses
Staff and General List	71	-	-	-
Cavalry	444	373	8 141	4 840
Artillery Field	389	-	9 976	-
Artillery Medium	57	-	2 155	-
Artillery Heavy and Anti-Aircraft	307	4	1 924	-
Engineers	296	-	4 860	-
Signals	477	-	4 008	-
Officers' Training Corps	-	-	4 553	-
Infantry	997	77	42 721	-
Army Service Corps	300	-	1 535	-
Other Services*	990	-	6 435	4
Totals	4,268	354	86,308	4,844

No formations higher than brigades actually existed. In the course of this reorganization the horse virtually disappeared from the establishment, except in the cavalry, where he got a reprieve which proved to be very short.

\*Medical; Dental (N.P.A.M. only); Ordnance; Veterinary; Pay (P.F. only); Postal (N.P.A.M. only); Corps of Military Staff Clerks (P.F. only).

## The Problem of Supply

The progress of re-armament was very materially retarded by the supply difficulties which General Ashton had indicated in 1935 (above, page 8). Canada had no armament industry. Even during the First World War, when she produced vast quantities of shells, she had made no weapons except Ross rifles, and her facilities had not improved since that time. Her traditional source of supply was the United Kingdom; but both public and private factories there were now fully occupied in producing the weapons required by Britain's own re-armament programme, and equipment could not be had merely by appropriating funds and placing orders. (At the same time, the continued relative smallness of appropriations limited the orders that could be placed.) Whether ordered from Britain, or from Canadian plants which had never made weapons before and were sure to require years for preparation, war material in quantities was certainly not going to be available to the Canadian forces for a long time to come. Thanks to these facts, the progress made before September 1939 towards re-equipping the Militia was very limited.

Of the considerable amount of equipment ordered from England, Canada received before the outbreak of war quantities so small as to afford only very slight facilities for training, and none at all for arming troops on mobilization. Two light tanks (the Militia's first tanks) came in from the United Kingdom in 1938; and 14 more arrived in the summer of 1939 just before war broke out. In other categories the quantities of modern equipment available were equally ludicrous. In the spring of 1939, five 3-inch mortars had arrived (at this time, every infantry battalion was supposed to possess two such mortars). When war broke out, Canada had 29 Bren guns (the units were armed with the obsolete Lewis of 1914-18) and 23 anti-tank rifles.<sup>48</sup> There were four modern anti-aircraft guns in the country,\* as against 116 calculated to be required.<sup>49</sup> There were also four 2-pounder anti-tank guns; 32 more had been ordered in 1938-39 and were expected to arrive in 1940-41.<sup>50</sup>

The possibility of producing armaments in Canada had been extensively canvassed at the Department of National Defence for many years, but with, on the whole, very little result. Sir Frederick Borden, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Minister of Militia, had recommended to the Colonial Conference of 1907 that each Dominion establish its own gun and small arms factories; and in 1917 the Imperial War Conference had suggested the development of capacity for production of "naval and military material, munitions and supplies, in all important parts of the Empire ... where the facilities do not presently exist".<sup>51</sup> The undesirability of relying entirely upon British sources of

\*Even these were 3-inch, an already obsolescent pattern. See also Chapter V, below.



ammunitions and weapons was frequently urged in Canada. In 1930, for instance, a General Staff memorandum<sup>52</sup> remarked:

The factories of Great Britain barely suffice for her own peace requirements and, in consequence, deliveries of ammunition are sometimes delayed as much as three years from date of ordering. The same applies to guns. It is safe to say that if the Government ordered two Anti-Aircraft guns now, delivery would not be effected for at least two years.

As noted above, this situation grew even worse when Britain began to re-arm in the middle thirties.

In July 1929, shortly after General McNaughton became Chief of the General Staff, a military committee was appointed to consider plans for a new Dominion Arsenal. The existing arsenal, occupying cramped quarters at Quebec, was, as already mentioned, equipped to produce only small arms ammunition and limited quantities of field artillery shells. The committee's terms of reference required it to produce a plan for an arsenal capable of manufacturing small arms ammunition to the amount of five million rounds annually, and gun ammunition up to and including 6-inch; while in addition locations were to be selected and reserved for a rifle-factory and a factory for manufacturing guns and carriages up to 4-inch calibre. The idea was to use a site at Little River, near Quebec City, which had been bought during the late war to permit of expanding the Arsenal. Some additional adjoining property was required, and the C.G.S. pressed for it to be purchased. In a memorandum<sup>53</sup> addressed to the Minister of National Defence (Colonel J. L. Ralston)\* on 12 May 1930, he wrote in part as follows:

It is my considered opinion that the provision of the proper facilities for initiating the manufacture of guns, small arms and ammunition in Canada should no longer be delayed, and I recommend that authority be obtained to include, in the Supplementary Votes of this Department, the following item:—

Quebec Arsenal: purchase of additional land required and construction, \$200,000.00.

I regard it as in the highest degree important that the policy initiated by Sir Frederick Borden in 1907, that Canada should be self contained in the provision of munitions, should now be implemented.

The sum requested was not provided, however. The depression was already coming on.

As it seemed impossible to obtain the additional land required for it, the Arsenal Committee recommended that the Little River scheme be abandoned and the arsenal placed at Valcartier, P.Q., where the 1st Canadian Division had been concentrated in 1914 and ample land was available in the possession of the Department. General McNaughton now urged that provision for beginning construction be made in the estimates for 1931-32; but again this was not done. Not until the 1933-34 estimates was an

\*Colonel Ralston was Minister of National Defence in Mr. King's second administration, 1926-1930. He held the same portfolio during the greater part of the Second World War.

appropriation made for work at Valcartier, and this was only \$10,000, barely enough for survey and planning.<sup>54</sup> As we have already seen (above, page 6), it proved possible to make some progress with the scheme as an Unemployment Relief project. The only unit of the proposed establishment executed, nevertheless, was the Filling Group. This part of the Dominion Arsenal finally moved from Cove Fields, Quebec, to Valcartier in the late summer of 1938. No provision for the proposed Ammunition Group or gun or small arms factories had been made. Steps had, however, been taken to increase the output of the Quebec Arsenal; its staff was enlarged and its equipment improved, while the old wartime branch at Lindsay, Ontario, was reopened.<sup>55</sup> The position with respect to ammunition production was thus somewhat bettered.

The total cost of the whole arsenal scheme as recommended by General McNaughton was estimated at between \$30,000,000 and \$35,000,000, and the Minister of National Defence said in 1938 that it was financial considerations that had prevented the Department from proceeding with it.<sup>56</sup> The sum was very large by pre-war standards, but it was of course altogether dwarfed by those spent after the outbreak of war to expand manufacturing facilities. In 1944 it was recorded that the Canadian Government had spent about \$130,000,000 in constructing plants for the production of ammunition, bombs and mines-in addition to expenditures by private capital; while another \$130,000,000 had been invested by the Crown in the gun and small arms industry.<sup>57</sup> Thus the first years of war were spent in developing, slowly and at great expense, an industry whose nucleus, at least, could have been in existence in 1939. Had Canadian governments accepted the recommendations of their military advisers, which three successive administrations felt themselves unable to entertain, the Canadian land forces in the Second World War could have been armed with modern weapons from the outset. As it was, they made do for many months with the equipment of 1918.

It should be noted that in September 1937 General Ashton reviewed the whole matter for the information of the Minister of National Defence.<sup>58</sup> He pointed out how very little had yet been accomplished towards supplying the numerous equipment deficiencies catalogued in 1935, the basic reasons being the smallness of appropriations and the difficulty of obtaining deliveries from England. He concluded that, in the light of the desperate international situation, it was out of the question simply to wait until Britain could meet Canada's needs. He had no objection in principle to buying equipment from the United States, at least equipment not used with a field army; but he pointed out that existing U.S. neutrality legislation would automatically cut off supplies from that source in the event of war. The only effective course of action, he suggested, was "the setting up in this country of an armament

industry designed to diminish our dependence on external sources of supply". He proceeded:

In considering this course... it is not for a moment suggested that it lies within the limits of practical politics to solve the sum total of the supply difficulties with which we are confronted. It is not suggested, for instance, that it would be reasonable to undertake the manufacture of heavy guns and armour piercing ammunition such as are for the most part required for coastal defence. With regard to these there does not appear to be any course open to us other than to place our orders in the United Kingdom as early as possible and then to do everything which lies in the Government's power to expedite delivery. On the other hand, it is considered to be within the technical ability of Canadian industry to undertake the manufacture of a wide range of the munitions this country now purchases abroad, including the production of the lighter guns and carriages of a calibre up to approximately 4 inches. This calibre comprises field, anti-tank and certain types of anti-aircraft artillery. The practical limitation to the adoption of this policy is not technical. It lies rather in the high cost per unit which would be inevitable should the industry be dependent for its contracts on the requirements of this Department alone. The solution lies in the placing of parallel, and probably much larger, orders by the United Kingdom.

Ashton recalled that at the Imperial Conference earlier in the year the United Kingdom representatives had mentioned the possibility of assisting the Dominions by placing arms orders in those countries for British requirements.

In this particular paper the C.G.S. did not come to grips with the question of whether the manufacture which he recommended in Canada should be by government factories or private industry. He did, however, call attention to the example of Australia, and shortly presented a memorandum<sup>59</sup> describing that country's policy, which was founded mainly on the principle of government manufacture. In 1936 Ashton had recommended a similar policy for Canada. The Deputy Minister (Major-General L. R. LaFleche) had thought this undesirable on grounds of excessive capital cost "both in money and in time".<sup>60</sup> Mr. Mackenzie referred the question to the Prime Minister.<sup>61</sup> "The Chief of the General Staff", he wrote, "believes that our policy should be to have a Government factory both in regard to munitions and also in regard to small arms, but to cooperate with industry as far as possible." Mackenzie suggested that a meeting of the Defence Committee might be called to consider the matter; but no record has been found of the Committee's dealing with it until 14 November 1938, when Ashton strongly urged the erection of a gun factory, estimating the cost at \$2,750,000.<sup>62</sup> At a later meeting of the Committee, on 30 January 1939, his successor, Major-General T. V. Anderson,\* was asked whether it might not be possible to utilize "idle workshops, such as railway shops";<sup>63</sup> and investigation of this suggestion followed, indicating that it might serve to reduce the capital outlay.<sup>64</sup> An item of \$20,000 was included in the supplementary estimates for 1939-40 for preliminary surveys and plans for a gun factory. By this time,

\*Appointed Chief of the General Staff as of 21 November 1938.

however, the possibility had arisen of the War Office placing an order for 25-pounders with a private company in Canada.<sup>65</sup>

There was never, it appears, a firm formal decision on the general point of policy. But the Government was clearly reluctant to embark upon a programme of multiplying publicly-owned factories. It preferred a policy of reliance upon private industry combined with rigid limitation of profits, a point on which public opinion at this period was very sensitive. With such limitation in view, the Government appointed in March 1937 an "Interdepartmental Committee on Profit Control"; this action, the Minister of National Defence believed, would be "a very popular move".<sup>66</sup> After the Bren gun controversy the following year, the Government introduced, and Parliament passed, legislation setting up an independent Defence Purchasing Board and limiting profits to five per cent per annum\* of the average amount of capital employed in the performance of the contract.<sup>67</sup>

To organize production in Canada through the medium of private industry was itself not easy. No firms were "tooled up" to produce war material and this meant, at best, a long delay. In certain cases there was another difficulty. In accordance with the practice accepted by a long succession of Imperial Conferences, the Canadian forces used equipment of standard British type. The designs of some of this equipment were the property of private British firms, and the latter were sometimes disposed to make unacceptable conditions. In 1936-37, for instance, it was proposed to manufacture in Canada "light dragons" (artillery towing vehicles). The British company which owned the design was prepared to permit production in Canada under licence, but this licence was to be "restricted to manufacture in Canada and supply to the Canadian Government for military purposes only".<sup>68</sup> This ruled out any possibility of production in Canada for the War Office or for other Commonwealth governments. As Canada's own requirements in dragons were relatively small, it would not have been economically sound to start production on these terms.

The possibility of private firms in Canada manufacturing military equipment for the British Government was frequently discussed in these pre-war years, and there was talk in this connection of the Canadian Government acting, in some degree, as an agent for the United Kingdom. Late in 1936, the War Office suggested that consideration might be given to a plan by which the Department of National Defence would take responsibility for investigating the standing and facilities of Canadian manufacturers on behalf of the United Kingdom.<sup>69</sup> At the Imperial Conference in 1937 the Canadian Government made it clear that while they would welcome any orders given to Canadian industry by another government, and would be willing to afford

\*This limitation proved to be the first Canadian casualty of the Second World War. It was abrogated by order in council (P.C. 2709) on 15 September 1939.

such information as might be available on the status of firms, they were unwilling to take any responsibility for the negotiation of contracts between Canadian firms and other governments.<sup>70</sup> This reluctance was presumably related to the Government's policy of avoiding any sort of commitment to action in a future crisis. Actually, relatively few orders were placed in Canada by the British Government before the outbreak of war, and it is doubtful whether the volume would have been very much larger had the Canadian authorities been prepared to play a more active part in the negotiation of contracts.\* The most significant order from the War Office was probably one for 100 25-pounder field guns, obtained a few weeks before war began by Mr. E. Simard of Marine Industries Limited, Sorel, P.Q. The Department of National Defence had been consulted in this matter, but the contract was placed with Mr. Simard before a recommendation could be offered.<sup>72</sup>

On the whole, remarkably few items of equipment were produced in Canada for the Canadian forces before war came. An exception was antigas respirators, but even here there were initial difficulties and for some time, apparently for reasons of secrecy, important components had to be obtained from the United Kingdom. The annual report of the Department of National Defence for 1938-39 noted, however, "arrangements have been made for the development of production of the Container which hitherto has been imported from England". Coast-defence and anti-aircraft searchlights were ordered in 1939, but none was received before the outbreak, except a few lights of commercial type which had been hastily purchased at the time of Munich. Production of signal equipment was in the main still in the exploratory stage, although 133 Canadian-made wireless sets were delivered during 1937-38.<sup>73</sup> For the production of mechanical transport Canada, with her well-developed automobile industry, was much better situated. Military vehicles, however, were not the same as civilian ones; and for some years various manufacturers had been cooperating with the Department in experimentation looking to the development of specialized types.<sup>74</sup> The Minister of National Defence reported to Parliament on 26 April 1939 that 122 vehicles had actually been delivered-for an army whose immediate requirements on mobilization would amount to many thousands.

Light machine-guns of modern type were a special need; and in this instance active steps were taken to initiate manufacture in Canada. On 31 March 1938 the Department of National Defence signed a contract with the John Inglis Company Limited of Toronto for the production of 7000 Bren

\*In the summer of 1939 the Canadian Manufacturers Association, with government encouragement, sent a mission to Britain to study the possibility of Canadian firms supplying British defence needs. The mission was accompanied by General McNaughton, President of the National Research Council. It returned to Canada about the time of the outbreak of war.<sup>71</sup>

guns. In accordance with the plan mentioned by General Ashton in 1937, the firm obtained from the British War Office a concurrent order for 5000 guns, which was calculated to produce a saving to the Canadian Government of \$1,300,000 as compared with the cost of making Canada's 7000 guns alone. The two governments were to share the cost of tooling the plant for production, the machinery becoming the property of the Canadian Government. This contract was the largest and most significant single step towards the re-armament of the Canadian land forces taken before the outbreak of war, and represents the only important progress made towards the goal of acquiring the armament of two divisions. It shortly became an object of criticism, and the whole transaction was investigated by a Royal Commission.<sup>75</sup> The affair is scarcely within the scope of this history. The main complaint against the contract was the absence of competitive bids by other companies. From the strictly military point of view, however, the only serious objection that can be urged against it (once one has accepted the principle of production by private industry) is the fact that it was made in 1938 rather than in 1937 or 1936. The contract was duly carried out, the production of guns beginning in March 1940, when they were very badly needed. In the autumn of that year, when under war conditions the prospective production of guns had risen to figures never contemplated in 1938, a new contract was made.<sup>76</sup> During the war the plant established on the basis of the 1938 contract actually produced for Canada and Canada's allies 186,802\* Bren guns.<sup>78</sup>

Although comparatively little was done towards the actual development of manufacturing facilities in Canada before the outbreak of war, a comprehensive attempt was made for the first time to collect and collate information concerning the country's industrial war potential. A Survey of Industry was undertaken during the fiscal year 1936-37, and some 1600 industrial plants had been surveyed by the spring of 1939. This work was carried on by the Navy, Army and Air Supply Committee, formed in September 1936 under the chairmanship of the Master General of the Ordnance.<sup>79</sup>

### The Coast-Defence Programme

In the programme as a whole, during these pre-war years, much emphasis was laid upon coast defence; and as it was considered in the beginning that the most serious existing threat was in the Pacific, the west coast, as already noted, was given priority. (Officers who were concerned point out that in the

\*This figure would seem to refer only to .303-inch guns. The Bren was also produced in 7.92-mm. calibre, and 28,908 guns of this type had been made by 31 August 1944.<sup>77</sup>

existing sensitive state of public opinion it was much easier to get support for measures on the Pacific than on the Atlantic.)<sup>80</sup> There were in Canada only two important fortified positions, the naval bases of Halifax on the east coast and Esquimalt on the west. At Esquimalt there was particular need for major alterations in the existing defences. As it was considered that there was no Canadian with sufficient experience in coast defence available to advise, the War Office was asked to provide an expert, and this officer, Major B. D. C. Treatt, R.A., arrived in Canada in October 1936. In company with Canadian officers, Treatt visited not only Esquimalt but also Vancouver and the northern coast of British Columbia, and subsequently the Maritime Provinces. He submitted full reports before returning to England in December. These were reviewed by a sub-committee of the Canadian Joint Staff Committee, the review being completed by the autumn of 1937. Treatt's recommendations, though not followed in all respects, formed the basis of firm plans for fortifying the two coasts.<sup>81</sup>

The broad principle on which the alterations at Halifax and Esquimalt were based was that of increasing the main armament and pushing it farther out from the vital points so as to lengthen the range of the defences. A general modernization of equipment was required. At the same time, plans were made for protecting other places of importance on both coasts. Only an outline of the plans and the action taken upon them will be given here.

It was out of the question, of course, to fortify every small port or coastal town. To have tied up men, armament and money in such tasks would have been to play the game of our potential enemies. When, in the spring of 1939, representations were received that defences should be provided at Liverpool, N.S., the Chief of the General Staff (General Anderson) gave the sensible answer:<sup>82</sup>

... the contemplated distribution and role of our sea and air forces in war will provide a greater degree of protection to such towns as Liverpool than would be obtained by scattering fixed defences all along the coast, even if such a course were financially possible.

The places where fixed defences were justified were those ports (particularly potential convoy assembly points) whose wartime functions would make them important enemy objectives, and the bases of the naval forces which provided, along with the air force, the long-range mobile defence of the coastal areas. Even at these points there were common-sense limits to the amount of preparation required. "Defence Scheme No. 3" (see below, page 30), as revised in 1938, contained careful estimates of the "forms and scales of attack" to which, in the circumstances of that time, the various Canadian coastal ports might be considered exposed. There is again no need to go into details; but it may be noted that the heaviest attacks which it was considered any port had to apprehend

were as follows: by sea, a bombardment raid by one capital ship; by land, attack by raiding parties of up to 250 all ranks landed from naval vessels (it was considered that no port was exposed to the risk of a landing in force aimed at the capture of the defended area); by air, attack by one airship or a maximum of twelve ship-based aircraft.<sup>83</sup> That these estimates were not over-optimistic under the conditions of the day was amply demonstrated by the almost total immunity of Canadian soil during the six-year war which followed.

As soon as active planning began, it was found that action was impeded by the supply difficulties already noted; for guns, mountings and fire-control equipment could be obtained from the United Kingdom only after the lapse of years. No new coast-defence guns actually arrived from England before the outbreak of war, although three worn 9.2-inch barrels which had been sent thither for relining were received back in October 1938. As a result of these difficulties, it was considered necessary to adopt an Interim Plan, under which, pending delivery of new guns, the armament actually available in Canada would be used to the best advantage to provide some measure of immediate defence. The Interim Plan was approved by the Minister of National Defence in December 1937, and the redistribution of armament was undertaken in the following March. Several reserve guns in the hands of the Navy were handed over to the Militia for coast-defence purposes. Some guns were moved from British Columbia to Nova Scotia, and a larger number from Halifax to British Columbia; two were also moved from Quebec to Halifax.<sup>84</sup>

By 1939 the situation on the Pacific coast had improved considerably. The most important works carried out had been in the Esquimalt fortress area, where about \$1,000,000 had been expended, by the spring of that year, on a new battery on Albert Head (a site recommended for a battery long before Treatt's time) and other defences were being constructed or improved. Sites had been acquired in the Prince Rupert area, and one battery was under construction. At Vancouver one battery for the "close defence" of the city and harbour had been completed and another was under way; a battery was also in readiness on Yorke Island, covering the northern approach to Vancouver through Johnstone Strait. There was some further progress before the outbreak of war.<sup>85</sup>

On the Atlantic coast nothing of any importance had been done when the war crisis of September 1938 alarmed the country. (The Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, Colonel Crerar, had pointed out a year before that, failing "a change in financial policy", there would be no votes for engineering works there before 1940-41.)<sup>86</sup> The 1938 crisis, however, led to a sudden access of interest in this coast; the Chief of the General Staff wrote on 9 September that it had assumed a "priority position";<sup>87</sup> and in the absence of an appropriation some expenditures were made under



authority of a special Governor-General's Warrant. This Warrant was cancelled when the immediate crisis subsided, but a little progress had already been made on various projects, including defences for Saint John, N.B., and Sydney, N.S.<sup>88</sup>

The provision for the East Coast defences included in the Supplementary Estimates for 1939-40, passed in the spring of 1939, covered work at Saint John intended to provide some interim security at that important point. This came too late to have any appreciable effect before war broke out. Militia Headquarters, however, had taken the precaution of preparing a scheme for completing the Interim Plan of coast defence, on both coasts, on a temporary basis in an emergency. Under this scheme those guns not yet permanently mounted would be emplaced on concrete platforms, adjacent to the unfinished permanent emplacements. These platforms could be completed in a matter of weeks, and the guns were already on or near the sites. On 19 August 1939 the Minister of National Defence was asked to approve putting this emergency plan into effect. He passed the recommendation on to the Prime Minister. As we shall see, the Cabinet approved the necessary emergency expenditure, and by the end of August guns were actually being mounted on the temporary platforms.<sup>89</sup>

### Defence Schemes and Mobilization Planning

During the years following the First World War, the Canadian General Staff gave considerable attention to preparing defence schemes to provide a basis for action in the various types of major military emergency that then seemed possible. Broadly speaking, it may be said that these fell into two main categories: "direct defence", i.e., the actual defence of Canadian soil against invasion, and "indirect defence", in which Canada might require to send an expeditionary force overseas to act in conjunction with the forces of other countries of the Commonwealth, or allied states, against a common enemy. In either case, plans were required for the mobilization, concentration and operations of large militia forces. As early as 1921 it had been decided to prepare three\* different Defence Schemes.<sup>90</sup>

The Canadian planners could see, in the circumstances of the early 1920s, only two countries which could possibly present any direct menace to Canadian soil. These were the United States and Japan. As we have already suggested, in an earlier day the defence of Canada had meant defence

\*In 1931 work began on a fourth scheme, dealing with "The Despatch of a Canadian Contingent to take part in a Minor Empire Crisis". This scheme was circulated in draft in 1936, but seems never to have been carried further. Two alternative forces were proposed in this draft—a Cavalry Brigade Group and an Infantry Brigade Group.<sup>91</sup>

against the United States, pure and simple; but steady improvement in Anglo-American and Canadian-American relations had relegated conflict with that country to the realm of the highly improbable. Nevertheless, some people felt that this contingency could not be entirely overlooked; and a plan of defence against the United States, known as "Defence Scheme No. 1", was prepared and circulated to Military Districts under "Very Secret" cover, beginning in April 1921. Work on it continued in a somewhat desultory fashion until 1926. After that year no attempt was made to keep it up to date, and in fact it was never reduced to final form.<sup>32</sup> In 1931 General McNaughton, who had now become C.G.S., observed, "the direct defence of Canada against invasion by the United States is a problem which in the last ten years has become increasingly susceptible to political solution but quite incapable of being satisfactorily answered by Empire military action".<sup>93</sup>

Defence against Japan was dealt with in "Defence Scheme No. 2". Some work was done on this plan during the years immediately following the First World War, but it was never developed in any great detail. It was subsequently revised, during the 1930s, in the form of a tri-service outline plan for the maintenance of Canadian neutrality in the event of a war between the United States and Japan. This was completed in 1938.<sup>94</sup>

The plan on which most attention ultimately centred, and the one under which action was taken in 1939, was "Defence Scheme No. 3". This was designed in the first instance to provide against the emergency of a major war in which the immediate threat to Canadian territory would be limited, but circumstances would probably dictate intervention overseas. Defence Scheme No. 3 did not receive a great deal of consideration until 1927, but in 1931 it was circulated in draft to District Officers Commanding, and in January 1932, after some revision, it was submitted to the Minister of National Defence in Mr. Bennett's government (Colonel D. M. Sutherland) and by him approved.<sup>95</sup> No actual complete copy of this 1932 scheme, unfortunately, appears to have survived; but we know that "the main emphasis of the Scheme was laid on the organization of a Canadian Field Force for eventual despatch overseas".<sup>96</sup>

Defence Scheme No. 3 was revised in 1937, a period at which, in the light of changing international conditions and governmental policies, the direct defence of Canada was bulking increasingly large. In the revised Scheme increased attention was given to local defence and internal security, and the body formerly envisaged as a purely expeditionary force was redesignated "the Mobile Force". Its functions were defined in the Scheme<sup>97</sup> as follows:

The primary object governing the mobilizing of the Mobile Force is to employ it, in whole or in part, against enemy landings on Canadian territory, should a situation develop whereby there will be danger that such landings cannot be rapidly dealt with by forces locally and immediately available. The Scheme will

also serve as a means of providing a field force for employment, with other Empire forces, overseas, should this be the decision of the Canadian Government in the light of conditions then existing.

Actually, the expeditionary role, though officially secondary to that of local defence, was far more likely to be the one the force would play in a major emergency; and most people concerned with the scheme doubtless knew it. It could be argued that there was some inconsistency between the declared "primary object" of the force—defence against invasion—and the fact that one of the scheme's appendices (above, page 28) notes that no Canadian port is considered to be in danger of large-scale landing attack. The form of words was immaterial; what mattered was that plans should be ready for every probable emergency. The revised Defence Scheme provided for various general arrangements in the event of an expeditionary force being dispatched, including movement to embarkation ports and the establishment overseas of a Canadian intermediate base and a Canadian headquarters.

On 15 March 1937 the Chief of the General Staff (General Ashton) sent the draft of the revised Scheme to the Minister of National Defence, accompanied by an explanatory memorandum tracing the Scheme's history. Two days later Mr. Mackenzie returned the draft with the following handwritten note:<sup>98</sup>

I have carefully read the revised draft of Defence Scheme No. 3. I am glad to observe that the dominant motif of the plan is the Defence of Canada and Internal Security; but I realize that whereas Government policy is at the moment concerned with the defence of Canada and the protection of Canadian neutrality it is the duty of the staff to prepare for every possible contingency. I therefore approve the plan in principle and detail. It seems to me to have been carefully considered in scope and in detail.

The revised Scheme was now finalized and was circulated secretly to the Military Districts on 22 January 1938.<sup>99</sup>

The Otter Committee of 1919 (above, page 4) had apparently suggested that the largest force that Canada might be able to maintain overseas in a future war would be six divisions and one cavalry division, plus ancillary troops. In the event of a "minor crisis" overseas it was considered that a force of one division, one mounted brigade and the necessary ancillary troops would be adequate. Defence Scheme No. 3, as approved in 1932, provided for the mobilization of a field force (known as Contingent "A") to consist of a corps headquarters, two divisions and one cavalry division, plus a quota of corps, army and lines of communication troops, with the necessary base units in Canada and overseas. Although no detailed plans were made for the expansion of this force, the possibility was anticipated that it would in due course include four more divisions and additional ancillary troops. In other words, it would become the force contemplated in 1919—a force somewhat larger than that which Canada finally placed in the field overseas in 1939-45.

The Mobile Force provided in the 1937 revision of the Defence Scheme was Contingent "A" under another name, and it had the same basic composition. As the international situation worsened, the Scheme continued to receive attention, and numerous amendments were issued in the course of 1939. It is of interest that the cavalry division was dropped from the Mobile Force only in the spring of that year, when, as a General Staff memorandum put it, it had become reasonably certain that if the Canadian Government decided to intervene abroad the theatre of operations would be Europe and the enemy Germany. In these circumstances, it was remarked, there would be little scope for horsed cavalry; nor would such a division be necessary if the Mobile Force were retained for the direct defence of Canada.<sup>100</sup>

The composition of the Mobile Force was drawn up in detail, units, commanders and staff officers being designated, and was amended and revised in these details annually, mainly on the basis of nominations from the Military Districts. The force was divided into two sections, Force "A" and Force "B", each consisting of one infantry division plus part of the cavalry division and a proportion of the ancillary troops. These were to mobilize simultaneously, but in view of the shortage of accommodation and transport only Force "A" would be concentrated in the first instance; Force "B" would begin to concentrate only after Force "A" had moved to an area of operations in Canada, or to an overseas base. The designations Force "A" and Force "B", and the division into these two sections, were dropped by an amendment issued in July 1939, when the original scheme for using only one concentration camp was abandoned in favour of using several.<sup>101</sup>

Separate provision was made for forces to man the coast defences and guard "vulnerable points" in Canada. As in the case of the Mobile Force, units for this purpose were nominated annually by District Officers Com- 1, manding, "List One" being the units intended for coastal garrison duty and "List Two" those designated for the protection of vulnerable points. Two "stages of preparation" were envisaged. In the "Precautionary Stage", when a serious danger of war had arisen, the coast defences would be manned and vulnerable points guarded, and it was anticipated that the units of Lists One and Two would be called out for the purpose. The "War Stage" would begin upon a decision by the Government "that measures of defence applicable to a state of war should be put into effect", even though war might not have been actually declared. The War Stage might be initiated without the Precautionary Stage having been ordered. Both stages would be put into effect by "short pre-arranged telegrams" to the Districts, which were included in the Defence Scheme. Since mobilization of the Mobile Force might become necessary at any stage, a third telegram was provided for this purpose.

The situation in the summer of 1939, then, was that complete plans existed for the mobilization of a Mobile Force of two divisions and ancillary troops, and of special forces for local defence and internal security duties. The composition of these forces had been determined in advance, and nothing was required to launch the mobilization of them except the dispatch of a telegraph message.

The Defence Scheme was not the only plan put on paper in anticipation of the crisis. Many departments of government besides National Defence would have special tasks to perform when and if war came, and it was necessary to allot and prescribe these in advance. On 14 March 1938, accordingly, a Standing Inter-Departmental Committee on Defence Co-ordination was formed by order-in-council, with the Deputy Minister of National Defence (Major-General L. R. LaFleche) as Chairman and Colonel M. A. Pope as Secretary; fifteen Departments, and in addition the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, were represented upon it. The ultimate result of its work was a War Book, completed in provisional form in May 1939, which defined in some detail the immediate action which the various departments would be required to take on the outbreak of war.<sup>102</sup>

Early in 1938, moreover, a committee of officers began work on a special "Militia Service War Book" designed to define more fully the steps to be taken by the various branches of the Staff. This book never progressed beyond the stage of a somewhat tentative draft, and it appears to have had no influence on the measures taken in September 1939.<sup>103</sup> The Government book, on the other hand, was very valuable. On 8 September 1939 Colonel Pope wrote, "It was pretty well on this Book that defence action has been taken during the last ten days".<sup>104</sup>

### The Last Days of Peace

As the situation in Europe grew worse, the tempo of Canadian preparation quickened somewhat. This was particularly the case after the "Munich Crisis" of September 1938. The total defence appropriations for the fiscal year 1938-39 had been \$36,345,000, and the provision for the militia services that year was nearly \$2 million less than the year before. The funds provided for the Department of National Defence, before the outbreak of war, for the fiscal year 1939-40 amounted to \$64,666,874.<sup>105</sup> This was, as we have already shown, considerably less than the Chiefs of Staff had asked for; but it was by far the largest defence appropriation which had ever been passed by the Canadian Parliament in time of peace. It came too late to have much influence before war began. Only \$13,712,000 of the appropriation had been spent by 1 September 1939.<sup>106</sup>

The measures taken during the past five years had materially improved the general condition of the Canadian land forces, but had produced no important increase in their actual size. The Permanent Force, which we have seen less than 3700 strong in 1931, had risen only to 4261 all ranks at 31 July 1939.<sup>107</sup> None of its three infantry units was at anything approaching war strength, and one of them (the Royal 22e Regiment) could have mustered a maximum of only 184 all ranks, in March 1939, as against even a peace establishment of 773. There was a slight further increase in the force's strength before the actual outbreak of war, the result of last-minute authority to recruit given after the provision of emergency funds on 24 August. The professional full-time force was of course the most expensive element in the Militia. Only two new permanent units were actually organized during the period of preparation: in 1936 the Canadian Tank School (redesignated in 1938 the Canadian Armoured Fighting Vehicles School) and in 1937 an anti-aircraft battery (numbered the 4th) of the Royal Canadian Artillery. Both reflected the attempt which was being made, under adverse conditions of finance and supply, to modernize the forces. At the same time, the units were somewhat better trained. In the summer of 1938, for the first time in many years, the greater part of the Permanent Force was concentrated for a short period of collective field manoeuvres, held at Camp Borden. During the final phase of this, R.C.A.F. participation lent a note of realism and the force taking part was enlarged by two battalions of the Non-Permanent Active Militia from Toronto.<sup>108</sup>

The Non-Permanent Active Militia had not increased in strength to any material extent. On 31 December 1938 the number enrolled was 51,418 all ranks-almost exactly what it had been in 1931, and somewhat more than half the existing peace establishment. The force's standard of training had, however, been raised as the result of increased financial provision in recent years. The number of militiamen reported as trained for the fiscal year 1934-35 was 5120 officers and 34,055 other ranks. The equivalent figures for the fiscal year 1938-39 were 5272 and 41,249. Although the basic general period of training for which pay could be drawn was increased only from 10 to 11 days, there was also an increase in the numbers permitted to train, and the period was considerably lengthened for certain units, notably for coast artillery, who were allowed 21 days. The most striking evidence of improvement, however, was the increase in the amount of camp training, the most realistic and valuable form. In 1934-35 only 2062 officers and 10,721 other ranks trained in camp. For 1938-39 these figures rose to 3479 officers and 25,624 other ranks. There was also a large increase in attendance at schools of instruction. The Militia constituted a considerable pool of basically trained officers and N.C.Os. The Militia Staff Course and

Advanced Militia Staff Course had allowed an important number of citizen officers to qualify in staff duties.<sup>109</sup>

When war broke out in 1939, Canada had no troops ready for immediate action, except for local coastal defence against very small raids. The tiny Permanent Force did not constitute a striking force capable either of counterattack against a major raid or of expeditionary action. The Non-Permanent Active Militia, with its limited strength, obsolescent equipment and rudimentary training, was incapable of immediate effective action of any sort against a formidable enemy. The two forces together constituted a useful and indeed essential foundation upon which, over a period of months, an army could be built. They offered, however, no means for rapid intervention in an overseas theatre of operations.

### The General State of Preparation, 1939

Enough has been said to indicate that much had been done to improve the state of the Canadian Militia before war came, and to indicate at the same time that the preparations were utterly inadequate by comparison with the scale of the coming emergency.

The task of commentary upon pre-war defence policies is a difficult one. Hindsight, proverbially, is better than foresight, and the historian must eschew the unhistorical approach which would criticize the policies of 1935-39 merely in the light of the events of 1939-45. In particular, he must not fail to keep before him the nature of the Canadian "climate of opinion" in the prewar years, which until a short time before the actual outbreak was certainly hostile, in general, to large military preparations. At the same time, if the nation is to profit by experience, it is his responsibility to consider the influence of what was done, or left undone, in the days before the war, upon the events of the war itself.

In mere justice to Mr. King's pre-war administration, it must be said that it did more for Canadian security than any other peacetime ministry in the country's history before 1939. Its approach to the problem was comprehensive and workmanlike, if unduly deliberate; and although it disbursed money sparingly it nevertheless spent more on the nation's defences than had been spent by any earlier administration except during the actual years of the First World War. In September 1939, Canada was, on balance, better prepared for war than she had been in August 1914. Viewing the programme in terms of the experience of six years of conflict, however, we see the inadequacy of judgement based merely upon Canadian historical standards. These standards had no real relationship to the scale of the approaching crisis. The preparations made by Canada before the outbreak

were so small that she was unable to make any really large contribution to the sum of the Allied military effort for years after war broke out. Because so little had been done to set up an armament industry, the peak of Canadian war production was not reached until 1943.\* Sound plans had been made, and military forces were organized, when the crisis came, with considerable speed and efficiency; but, thanks to the inadequacy of the existing supply arrangements, these forces were armed almost entirely with the weapons of 1918, and many months passed before they could be fully re-armed on modern lines. At the same time, the limited number of thoroughly trained officers and soldiers available inevitably slowed down the process of preparing the force for battle.

The difficulties and delays were due in some degree to conditions over which the Canadian authorities had little control. This is true, up to a point, of the supply situation. Nevertheless, had the public and Parliament been willing to spend more money in good time, even this difficulty could have been largely overcome. Had the Government carried out the scheme for an expanded Dominion Arsenal capable of producing guns and small arms, which was recommended as early as 1930, it would have paid a great national dividend in 1939 and 1940. Even in the period immediately before the outbreak of war, when appropriations were larger than they had been earlier, financial considerations were a constant drag upon progress. As late as 12 June 1939, the Quartermaster-General's Branch at Ottawa advised the District Officer Commanding Military District No. 11 that "owing to lack of sufficient funds it has been found necessary to curtail the proposed programme for this year's work on the Esquimalt-Victoria Coast Defences".<sup>111</sup> And these defences were one portion of the programme which had received relatively generous financial treatment.

As we have noted, the Government had given the Air Force the first priority among the services, and had placed the Militia last. Nevertheless, as the table on page 13 shows, it was only in the spring of 1939 that R.C.A.F. appropriations first surpassed those for the Militia in size. At that moment they made a great leap ahead; the Air Force was given far more than twice as much money as the year before, and over \$8 million more than the Militia. During 1938 and 1939, it is made clear above, the Militia's requests for financial support received short shrift. In the light of later events, the soldiers' demands appear decidedly modest; but they were far from fully met. No exception can be taken to the sums given the Air Force, but the decided discrimination against the land forces which had now appeared was not justified by the facts of the time. These facts were not as clear in 1939, however,

\*A vivid illustration of the truth of a remark of Sir Winston Churchill: "Munition production on a nation-wide plan is a four-years' task. The first year yields nothing; the second very little; the third a lot, and the fourth a flood".<sup>110</sup>



as they are to us today. As late as March of that year, the leaders of both Government and Opposition in the House of Commons had declared their belief that in another war there would be no need for a large expeditionary force from Canada.<sup>112</sup> In so far as the prevailing attitude towards the Militia was dictated by such views, it was unrealistic. War had no sooner come than the need for an expeditionary force began to manifest itself.

It had been difficult for Canadian citizens and legislators, accustomed for generations to a situation in which Canada was able to make virtually no military preparations and to pay no penalty for this neglect, to raise their mental sights to meet the new situation which was now arising. They adjusted themselves to the needs of defence in the modern world very slowly, too slowly for the country's safety. As late as January 1938, a good example of this was afforded by a member of the "Interdepartmental Committee on the Control of Profits on Government Armament Contracts" which was then considering the proposed Bren gun contract:

It was suggested by one of the members that he thought Canada was in no immediate danger of being destroyed through, say, six months' delay. The only country that might now attack us would be Japan, and she is pretty busy at present, so that the sense of immediate danger is not real. The same member asked if the speed element was so vital that we cannot consider contracts in the course of the next few months, and contended that he would not be uncomfortable in this matter for a year.<sup>113</sup>

Had this complacent individual's views carried the day, we should have begun to get Canadian Bren guns in 1941 instead of in 1940. Who he was, or what department he represented, is not recorded; but it cannot be doubted that his views would have been echoed, at that time, by a considerable proportion of the population of Canada. It was fortunate for the country that there were some people at least, in the armed services and the Government, who had a livelier sense of the dangers of the situation and the nature of the measures required to meet it.

## CHAPTER II

### **THE OUTBREAK OF WAR AND THE MOBILIZATION OF THE ACTIVE SERVICE FORCE, 1939**

(See Map 3)

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#### The Approach of War

**I**N March of 1939, in defiance of the agreements made in the previous autumn when he had declared that he wanted no Czechs within his boundaries, Hitler occupied the whole of Czechoslovakia and extinguished the Czech state. German pressure upon Poland followed immediately. The British Government, now fully undeceived as to the nature of Hitler's policy, proceeded, in conjunction with France, to promise full support to Poland in the event of aggression. The Prime Minister (Mr. Neville Chamberlain) announced on 26 April that Britain, for the first time in her history, was to have compulsory military service in a time of peace.

In the course of the summer the German-Polish situation steadily deteriorated. The position of Russia having become a matter of the deepest importance to the western powers, France and Britain sent military missions to Moscow to initiate staff conversations which might be preliminary to the conclusion of a political agreement. These missions reached Moscow on 11 August, but the conversations led nowhere. On 21 August the announcement that Russia and Germany would shortly sign a non-aggression pact burst on the world with stunning effect. The track was now clear for Hitler.

The United Kingdom had kept the Canadian Government fully informed of the development of the crisis. On 22 August, after attending a meeting at the Dominions Office, the Canadian High Commissioner in London (Mr. Vincent Massey) reported to Ottawa that all evidence available at the Foreign Office pointed to a very critical period between 25 and 28 August during which a German attack upon Poland might take place. He added that, while no general mobilization was as yet to be ordered in the United Kingdom, very wide military precautions were being taken.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of

State for the Dominions informed the Canadian Government separately that the British Cabinet had decided to institute certain measures prescribed in the Precautionary Stage of the War Book, though this Stage was not yet to be formally instituted. The measures included calling up additional naval reserves, all squadrons of the Auxiliary Air Force and key parties of coastdefence and anti-aircraft units.<sup>2</sup> From France came reports of similar action.<sup>3</sup> On 24 August the British Parliament re-assembled and Mr. Chamberlain told the House of Commons, "We find ourselves confronted with the imminent peril of war".

As the summer wore on and tension grew, additional measures of preparation had quietly been taken in Canada. In particular, a survey was made of the accommodation which would be required in the event of mobilization of the Mobile Force. All Military Districts made some preparations to lease or expropriate buildings in accordance with plans laid down by the Quartermaster General.<sup>4</sup> On 24 June an instruction to District Officers Commanding<sup>5</sup> advised them that, whereas it had previously been intended that the Mobile Force when called out would be concentrated in a single "Field Force Concentration Camp", this procedure was not practicable for an early mobilization; for in a war with Germany it was desirable to concentrate the force in Eastern Canada, and there was no single camp there capable of accommodating the whole of it (even under summer conditions) and at the same time affording facilities for useful training. It was accordingly ordered that the Force would be concentrated initially "by Arms of the Service"<sup>6</sup> in six camps across Canada (Valcartier, P.Q.; Petawawa, Ont.; Camp Borden, Ont.; Shilo, Man.; Dundurn, Sask.; and Barriefield, Ont.) At the same time, the period allowed for unit mobilization prior to concentration was extended from seven to 21 days. As time passed and it began to appear that mobilization might take place in autumn weather, the arrangements had to be revised a second time, and a letter was sent to the Districts on 21 August,<sup>7</sup> informing them that if mobilization occurred late in the year the Mobile Force would not be concentrated in camps; instead, units would be accommodated in the same areas in which they were mobilized, under arrangements made by the Districts. This change was necessitated by the fact that there was neither time nor money to construct winter accommodation at the camps.

During the summer further attention was given to selecting staffs for the formations of the Mobile Force. A circular letter sent out on 1 August<sup>8</sup> listed tentatively the officers of the Permanent and Non-Permanent forces to be employed in headquarters of the Field Force; this list, replacing the previous one appended to Defence Scheme No. 3, contained the names of 19 future general officers of the war period, of whom only three had at this

time attained the rank of Brigadier. Commanders were not designated for either the Corps or the Divisions. The Brigadier General Staff of the Corps was to be Brigadier H. D. G. Crerar.

### "Adopt Precautionary Stage Against Germany"

For some time past, estimates had been in preparation for the immediate expenditures which would require to be authorized by special means in the event of a state of emergency arising while Parliament was not sitting. The warnings received on and after 22 August clearly indicated that the emergency had arrived. The draft Militia estimates were approved by the Military Members of the Defence Council on the evening of 23 August, and by the Minister of National Defence, after discussion and amendment, on the 24th. On the same day the Cabinet gave its sanction, an expenditure of \$8,918,930, for which no appropriation existed, being authorized by Governor-General's Warrant.\* Of this sum \$7,500,000 was for the Air Force (for purchase of aircraft, spares and accessories) and only \$946,930 for the Militia. The Militia allotment was concerned in great part with the completion of the Interim Plan of coast defence on an emergency basis, and the procurement of essential stores. The two largest single items however were \$511,000 to finance increasing the strength of the Permanent Force by 77 officers and 731 other ranks (a measure which would have been more useful if taken earlier) and \$100,000 to provide forms required for "documentation" of recruits on mobilization."

On 25 August the Prime Minister, Mr. King, announced that the Government had been engaged in formulating the policy to be presented in the event of Parliament having to be summoned, and added that "all possible precautionary measures" were being taken to meet "whatever eventuality may arise". One of the steps taken at this time was cancelling the leave of the Permanent Force.<sup>11</sup>

It was now necessary to consider partial mobilization and the institution of the Precautionary Stage. The Government was naturally reluctant to take, while there was still hope of peace being preserved, any steps that might require Parliament to be summoned; but it was advised that action could be taken under Section 63 of the Militia Act† without its being necessary to call Parliament. On 25 August, accordingly, the Military Members dis

\*The order in council (P.C. 2389) is dated the following day (25 August), on which it was approved by the Governor General. However, the Military Districts were informed on the 24th that authority had been obtained for expenditures required to implement the Interim Plan.<sup>9</sup>

†"The Militia or any part thereof, or any officer or man thereof, may be called out for any military purpose other than drill or training, at such times and in such manner as is prescribed." A regulation pursuant to this Section was made by order in council (P.C. 2396 of 26 August 1939).

cussed the question of measures for immediate security, and that evening the Chief of the General Staff (General Anderson) presented to the Minister of National Defence a request for authority to introduce the Precautionary Stage. The Cabinet approved this action the same night; and at 11:15 p.m. the Department of National Defence dispatched to Military Districts warning telegrams<sup>12</sup> calling out the units selected for the guarding of vulnerable points:

Reference Defence Scheme Number Three. Adopt Precautionary Stage against Germany. List Two called out under Section 63 Militia Act. Personnel comprising units of List Two will not for present be compelled to respond under authority of this Section but will be called out on a voluntary basis. No proceedings will be instituted against any officer or man failing to respond. Reference HQS 3498 FD 41 dated 29 April 1939 execute arrangements for protection of armouries.

C.G.S.

The sentences concerning the strictly voluntary nature of the service were not in the telegram as included in the Defence Scheme. They were presumably added because troops called out under Section 63 were not technically "on active service". Coastal Districts received in addition instructions to call out "List One", the force required to man the coast defences, less certain specified units.<sup>13</sup>

The action taken was promulgated in General Order No. 124, which called out "on service" 99 units of the Non-Permanent Active Militia, in whole or in part. The number of units affected was subsequently increased to 106. The force thus called out on a voluntary basis amounted to roughly 10,000 men. On 26 August another authority for emergency expenditure (amounting to \$1,453,000) was obtained to cover the cost.<sup>14</sup> The citizen soldiers' response to the order was excellent. By 2 p.m. on 27 August all Military Districts had reported that guards had been placed at most of the vulnerable points for which they were responsible. These included the more important canals and railway bridges, and R.C.A.F. hangars. At the same time, all coast defences were reported manned in accordance with the Defence Scheme.<sup>15</sup> There was in general no trouble in carrying out these tasks on a voluntary basis, although a minor difficulty was reported from Toronto, where apparently some men "were anxious to get back to more remunerative employment".<sup>16</sup>

Under the authority given on 24 August, the Engineers were working hard to carry out the emergency coast defence plan. To strengthen the East Coast, the 4th Anti-Aircraft Battery (Permanent Force) R.C.A., which had already been recalled from Petawawa Camp to its normal station at Kingston, was ordered to move to Halifax at once. It left Kingston at midnight 26-27 August.<sup>17</sup> This unit was equipped with the only effective anti-aircraft guns in Canada.

The Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force were also moving units into the Atlantic coastal area. Two of the four destroyers

based on the Pacific coast sailed from Vancouver for Halifax on 31 August.<sup>18</sup> R.C.A.F. units had begun moving to war stations on the 26th, and within a few days three squadrons from the interior had reached airfields on the Atlantic coast (where only one had previously been stationed), and another had taken post at St. Hubert, near Montreal.<sup>19</sup> So far as the strength and equipment of the Canadian forces allowed, the gates were guarded.

### War in Europe: The Mobile Force is Mobilized

Hitler did not assail Poland between 25 and 28 August as had been feared, although we now know that the attack had actually been fixed for the 26th. He accepted a postponement, apparently in the hope of "eliminating British intervention"; but the delay was very short.<sup>20</sup> In the early hours of 1 September, without the decent formality of a declaration of war, German divisions rolled across the Polish frontier and the German air force began bombing Polish aerodromes and communications.

This news led the Canadian Government to order mobilization. On 1 September Council, meeting at nine o'clock in the morning, rapidly agreed upon a series of important orders in council. One, pursuant to the provisions of the War Measures Act, declared the existence of a state of "apprehended war" as of and from 25 August; a second advised a proclamation summoning Parliament to meet on 7 September; and a third provided for "the organization forthwith of a Canadian Active Service Force".<sup>21</sup> Under this authority, steps were at once taken to embody the Mobile Force provided for in Defence Scheme No. 3. The machine was started by a pencilled note<sup>22</sup> from the Minister of National Defence to his Military Secretary, received at 11:05 a.m.:

Col Scott.

You can ask C.G.S. to take immediate action under Sect. 64 for Active Service in Canada.

IAM

At 12.35 p.m. on 1 September the Adjutant General, acting in accordance with the plans so long prepared, dispatched to all Districts the "mobilization telegram".<sup>23</sup>

Reference Defence Scheme Number Three Mobilize entire Mobile Force.\*

The District Officers Commanding immediately put into effect the District mobilization schemes which were in readiness, and notified the Commanding Officers of the militia units concerned.

\*The telegrams to coastal districts ordered also the mobilization of List One. A separate telegram advised that the entire mobilized force (Mobile Force, Lists One and Two, District Headquarters and Permanent Force units) was being placed on active service under Section 64 of the Militia Act. Under the statute, this action necessitated calling Parliament.

At this time, although the guns were firing on the Continent, Great Britain had not declared war. As for Canada, not only had she not yet declared war, but her Government had repeatedly stated that such action would not be taken without consultation with Parliament. There can have been little real doubt in any mind about what Parliament would do when it assembled; but even in the event of a declaration of war, the question of the forms of Canadian participation still remained open. The Government was evidently anxious to avoid any imputation that it had pre-judged the case, and with this in view decided to alter the designation of the force mobilized for active service. The events of 1 September were thus described in a personal diary kept by Major E. G. Weeks, the Assistant Director of Organization in the Adjutant-General's Branch.<sup>24</sup>

Gov. decided to place Militia on active service in Canada (Mobile Force). Although all submissions to Council were ready and all plans made, we were horrified to hear the Cabinet decided at the last minute to change the name of the Mobile Force from "Canadian Field Force" to "Canadian Active Service Force". The result being many changes, torn up stencils, and \$65,000 worth of Mobilization forms almost useless. Very hectic day-but we managed to get the General Order 135/1939 issued and in the mail to all Districts.

General Order No. 135 announced that the Governor in Council had "authorized the organization of a Canadian Active Service Force" and had "named as Corps of the Active Militia" and "placed on active service in Canada" certain specified units. The accompanying schedules listed nearly 300 individual units and formation headquarters, including the headquarters of "1st Corps C.A.S.F.", the whole of the 1st and 2nd Divisions, C.A.S.F., and quotas of Corps, Army and Lines of Communication troops. In addition, this Order incorporated in the C.A.S.F. the units and details of the Non-Permanent Active Militia which had been called out under General Order No. 124 to guard vulnerable points and man coast defences. Some additions were now made to the original list. The N.P.A.M. soldiers on duty were attested into the C.A.S.F., except for those not wishing to enlist, who were released in due course.

A word may be said here upon the composition of the force thus mobilized. It had been carefully worked out in advance so as to give, as far as possible, proportional representation on a population basis to every part of the country. Thus the three infantry brigades of the 1st Division were arranged territorially: the 1st being composed of units from Ontario, the 2nd of western units and the 3rd of units from Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. In the 2nd Division, similarly, the 4th was an Ontario brigade, the 5th (as originally mobilized) was made up of units from Quebec, and the 6th was entirely western. Subsequently, as noted below, the composition of the 5th and 6th Brigades was somewhat altered.

The position of the Permanent Force units requires some explanation. Defence Scheme No. 3 as approved in 1937 had placed them in Force "B", i.e., the portion of the Mobile Force which would be last to concentrate or (in the events of troops being sent) to go overseas. It was explained that the efficient mobilization, concentration and training of the Mobile Force would "require a maximum effort on the part of the comparatively few professional soldiers available in Canada". In other words, Permanent Force personnel would be so urgently required as staff officers and instructors that it would not be practicable to use the Permanent Force units as such in Force "A". Early in 1939, however, a General Staff memorandum suggested that it was not inconceivable that in case of war the Government might decide to mobilize only a portion of the Mobile Force, "say one complete division and ancillary troops". In such an event, if the Permanent Force units had been left in Force "B", they might not reach the theatre of war for a long period. "It is unnecessary to enlarge", the memorandum proceeded, "on the detrimental effect which such a contingency would have on the Permanent Force." It recommended that the P.F. units included in the scheme for the 2nd Division (i.e., part of Force "B") should be transferred to the 1st, and that those included as Corps Troops in Force "B" should be transferred to the Corps Troops of Force "A". This was done, and so the 1st Division as actually mobilized in September included one Permanent Force battalion in each of its three infantry brigades, while the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery became one of its artillery "brigades" (subsequently reorganized as "regiments"). The two Permanent Force cavalry regiments were not mobilized initially.<sup>25</sup>

One other question touching the composition of the force is worthy of notice. An intention, entertained during the planning period, of forming a complete French-speaking infantry brigade, was never realized.

Until July of 1939, the Mobile Force planned for mobilization under Defence Scheme No. 3 contained three French-language infantry battalions (including the Royal 22e Regiment, a Permanent Force unit), all in the 5th Infantry Brigade. Now, however, as a result of the decision just described, the Royal 22e was moved to the 1st Division and a fourth French-speaking battalion was designated, being substituted for a Western Ontario unit. The letter to the Districts announcing the revision<sup>26</sup> remarked,

This brings the total number of French-speaking infantry units in the force up to four, of which one is in the 1st Division and three are in the 2nd. Provided both divisions are mobilized these can be formed into a complete French-speaking brigade.

At this time, it should be noted, the plan was that each brigade would comprise three infantry battalions and a machine-gun battalion. The C.G.S. in June 1939 used the proposal for a French-speaking brigade as an argument



for the mobilization of the whole Mobile Force, and not merely of one division, in case war came:

We are particularly anxious ... that one of the infantry brigades initially mobilized should be predominantly French speaking, with a French speaking commander and staff. This would be quite impossible if only one division were mobilized.<sup>27</sup>

As we have seen, both divisions were actually mobilized, with the Royal 22e in the 1st Division and the other three French-speaking battalions in the 2nd—all in the 5th Brigade, which included Le Regiment de la Chaudiere as machine-gun battalion and was completed by an English-speaking Quebec battalion, the 1st Battalion of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada. To create the French-speaking brigade would thus have required merely to exchange the Royal 22e with the Black Watch. However, this was not done—or apparently even suggested—at this time; and it may be conjectured that the reason was the fact that it was so soon decided that the 1st Division was to go overseas, while the role of the 2nd remained for some time a matter of speculation. To have removed the Royal 22e Regiment from the 1st Division would thus not merely have condemned a Permanent Force unit to what might be an inactive role, but would have deprived French Canada of all formal infantry representation in the division likely to be first to see action.

If it is permissible to anticipate, we may note here the later development of this question. When the headquarters of the 5th Brigade was organized—which was not until May 1940—a French-speaking officer (Brigadier P. E. Leclerc) was appointed to command it and the authorities in Ottawa held to the intention of making it a fully French brigade with a French-speaking staff. One of its French battalions—Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal—was, however, sent to Iceland, and when the Brigade arrived in the United Kingdom in the summer of 1940 The Calgary Highlanders (from the 6th Brigade) were temporarily attached to it to replace this unit. Further exploration of the scheme for a French-speaking brigade revealed a most serious obstacle: an existing shortage of qualified French-speaking officers for command and staff appointments. Brigadier Leclerc now suggested that the scheme for a French brigade be abandoned, and the existing temporary organization of the 5th Brigade made permanent. The Divisional Commander, General Odium, urged that this be done, writing to General McNaughton that this plan "would give French and English speaking Canadians wider contacts. Men from the prairie would be working daily with French speaking Canadians from Quebec. The result would be a contribution of great national value to the future life of the Dominion."<sup>28</sup> A General McNaughton concurred, and after further discussion and some demur National Defence Headquarters also agreed (19 November 1940).<sup>29</sup> The Calgary Highlanders remained in the 5th Brigade and Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal in due time joined the 6th.

## Canada Goes to War

On 3 September—their final representations to Hitler having failed to check the attack on Poland—Britain and France proceeded to honour their undertaking to that country, and declared war on Germany. In Canada, later the same day, the Chief of the General Staff, as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, inquired whether the Government would now approve instituting the "War Stage", remarking, "For most effective military defence it is highly desirable that Coast Defence Commanders should no longer be tied down." The matter was evidently discussed by the Cabinet, and the Minister of National Defence thereafter gave instructions to the Chiefs of Staff concerning an altered version of the War Telegram provided in the Defence Scheme.\* As a result the following telegram was dispatched at 12:50 p.m. on 3 September to the District Officers Commanding the Districts concerned with coast defence:

Take all necessary defence measures which would be required in a state of war. Utmost secrecy of contents to be observed. Contents to be divulged to minimum number of officers.<sup>31</sup>

We have already noted the Government's evident determination to meet Parliament uncommitted, in the strictest accordance with its pledges. This continued to be apparent after mobilization. On 29 August the Chiefs of Staff had submitted to the Minister of National Defence a memorandum on "Canada's National Effort (Armed Forces) in the Early Stages of a Major War".<sup>32</sup> This document, which outlined for the guidance of the Cabinet the forms which effort in the impending crisis "might take", pointed out that, whatever uncertainty had existed earlier, there was now no doubt of the intention of Britain to dispatch "a major Expeditionary Force" to the help of France. It concluded with the following summary of proposed Canadian army effort:

The Army's contribution would take the form of the immediate raising of an Army Corps of two divisions and ancillary troops (roughly 60,000 men) in accordance with the Militia Service plan and its despatch abroad as soon as arrangements can be made, in co-operation with the British Government, to transport it and to make good such deficiencies in its war equipment as cannot be supplied from Canadian sources.

On 5 September the Cabinet Defence Committee, with the Prime Minister in the chair, met the Chiefs of Staff and discussed this paper and the measures which had been taken. The Chiefs of Staff pointed out that the forces being

\*General Pope, then Director of Military Operations and Intelligence and Secretary of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, recalls that Mr. Mackenzie summoned him to the Privy Council Office to receive these instructions. "On his telling me that we were to take all necessary defence measures which would be required in a state of war and to fire on any blinking German that came within reach of our guns, but that we were not at war, I exclaimed, 'You are certainly trying to have it both ways', and Ian, chuckling, replied, 'Of course we are' ".<sup>30</sup>

mobilized and the equipment asked for were essential for the defence of Canadian territory, and it was indicated that if the Mobile Force were in due course sent overseas other units would have to be called out to provide for the security of Canada.

The Government at this time was thinking in terms of a "moderate" effort. Apparently after a cabinet meeting this same day, instructions<sup>33</sup> were sent to the Chiefs of Staff governing the preparation of estimates for the period ending 31 January 1940:

Estimates should be held down to very moderate level.

The proposed large concentrations in training camps should be abandoned (for instance the Health Department have advised that it would be improper to keep troops at Petawawa during the winter months).\*

Programmes for the construction of huts should, therefore, not be included in these estimates.

It has been reported to members of the government that some purchases of lumber have been made at Edmonton and Calgary without authority and unauthorized newspaper items appeared today with regard to purchases of large quantities of lumber for Petawawa. Attention is directed to the fact that the Defence Purchasing Board has to be consulted.

The Minister desires that there be no stimulation to recruiting at the present time as it is probable that more men are now available than can be conveniently handled.

The Militia estimates submitted under these instructions ultimately amounted to \$59,520,754. They were based upon a reduction of the planned strength of the Mobile Force from 60,000 to 40,000, and the C.G.S. pointed out that the sum proposed would not "render the troops mobile nor provide necessary accommodation in training camps".<sup>35</sup>

We may note here two basic contrasts between the procedure followed in mobilizing the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1914 and that used in mobilizing the Canadian Active Service Force in 1939.

In 1914 a mobilization scheme existed for a force similar to that actually mobilized in August of that year. This scheme, however, was not used. On the contrary, the then Minister of Militia cancelled on 31 July 1914 the mobilization plan which had existed since 1911, and substituted a system of improvisation, conducted by Militia Headquarters through direct communication with the individual units and with little or no participation by the Military District staffs.<sup>36</sup> This was not a procedure calculated to enhance efficiency, although thanks to the boundless energy of the Minister and the enthusiasm of the units and the population at large it produced better results

\*It seems strange that such advice should come from the Department of Pensions and National Health rather than from the Militia medical service. It will be recalled that it had been decided in August that there would be no concentration if mobilization took place late in the season (above, page 39). Definite orders that there would be no concentrations were sent out on 6 September.<sup>34</sup> In the event, one corps concentration was carried out: Signal units were collected at Barriefield.

than might have been anticipated. Nevertheless, the system followed in 1939 -to abide by plans carefully laid in advance for such a contingency-was a much better one.

Secondly, it may be noted that whereas in 1914 the Expeditionary Force was composed in the main of new units-numbered C.E.F. battalions-raised through the agency of Militia regiments but not possessing any direct connection with them, the units of the Active Service Force of 1939 were units of the Canadian Militia, wearing the badges and the titles of regiments long familiar to the public in their districts, and inheriting traditions and esprit de corps which were a part of Canadian history. It is true that in a strictly legal view the units of the Active Service Force were new units having no direct connection with those bearing the same names in the Permanent or Non-Permanent Active Militia; in law, for instance, the 48th Highlanders of Canada, C.A.S.F., was not connected with the 48th Highlanders of Canada, N.P.A.M. But whatever the law might say there was a close connection in every other respect, and this was recognized by the public, the regiments and the Army at large. The units of the Active Service Force were regarded as being what, for most practical purposes, they were: service battalions of their militia regiments.

Before passing on to discuss the problems of mobilization as they presented themselves to the Districts and the units, it is convenient to take note of the further development of the situation at Ottawa and events following the meeting of Parliament.

The Houses met, in accordance with the summons, on 7 September, and the Government let it be known that the adoption of the Address in reply from the Speech from the Throne would be considered as approving the Government's policy of "immediate participation in the war". On 8 September the Prime Minister told the House of Commons in general terms what had been done already for the defence and security of Canada, which was, he remarked, Canada's "primary task and responsibility". As to measures to be taken in cooperation with the United Kingdom, Mr. King stated that the Government was in consultation with that of Britain and that more information was required before firm decisions could be made. "The question of an expeditionary force or units for service overseas", he said, "is particularly one of wide reaching significance which will require the fullest examination." The debate ended on the evening of 9 September, the Address being adopted without a division. Only four members had spoken against the Government's policy of declaring war. The following day, accordingly, the King gave his approval to a proclamation declaring that a state of war with the German Reich existed in Canada as of and from that date. The proclamation was published in a special issue of the Canada Gazette the

same day. Thus Canada, for the second time in a generation, went to war with Germany. She had been formally neutral for one week after the declaration of war by Britain.

Although, in the light of all that had taken place and the measures already in effect, it might have seemed that to send the War Telegram was now almost a work of supererogation, it was duly dispatched by the Chief of the General Staff on 10 September:

District Officers Commanding,  
All Military Districts.

G.S. 201 Reference Defence Scheme Number Three  
War has broken out with Germany.<sup>37</sup>

Parliament was prorogued on 13 September, but before the short session ended the members had made some financial provision for prosecuting the war for the remainder of the financial year (i.e., to 31 March 1940). The War Appropriation Act which was passed was for the modest sum of \$100 million; this included \$16,454,120 already authorized by Governor-General's Warrants. The Acting Minister of Finance (Mr. J. L. Ilesley) had explained to the Commons that "approximately \$50,000,000" of the year's regular defence appropriations remained unspent. This would be available in addition to the new appropriation. Mr. Ilesley explained,<sup>38</sup> "The cost of a war effort by Canada does not lend itself to precise calculations in advance", and added, "Therefore the financial process must take a form permitting financial decisions to be made as need arises, and not by settling now a fixed plan which must be rigidly observed, irrespective of what the necessities may involve."

### Mobilizing the Units of the Active Service Force

The Military District staffs, knowing what units were slated for mobilization under Defence Scheme No. 3, had made their own preparations accordingly. One consisted of drafting mobilization orders for the units, and these were issued as soon as the Mobilization Telegram arrived at the District Headquarters. They dealt with such matters as the establishment\* upon which the unit was to mobilize, the place of mobilization and the accommodation to be used, procedure to be followed in recruiting (which was laid down in a document, issued by National Defence Headquarters on 15 May 1939, entitled "Recruiting Memorandum No. 1"), arrangements to be made for messing, etc. Commanding Officers were referred to the pamphlet Mobilization Instructions for the Canadian Militia, which had been printed

\*An establishment is "the authorized composition of a unit" expressed in numbers and ranks of personnel and numbers and types of weapons and transport.

in 1937. Units were allotted blocks of regimental numbers to be allocated to their recruits. On this basis the mobilizing regiments proceeded to make their arrangements.

In some cases, the first step taken was to parade the Non-Permanent Active Militia unit, advise its members of mobilization, and call for volunteers. Thus we find one urban infantry regiment (one of the relatively few units whose war diaries give a fairly adequate record of this phase) setting down the fact that on 2 September it held a mobilization parade and called for volunteers for its Active Service Force battalion. It recorded that 30 officers and 251 other ranks were on parade, and that 29 officers and 156 other ranks declared their willingness to serve. This was probably a fairly representative as well as a very creditable showing. It may be noted that since the battalion was mobilizing to a war establishment, including "first reinforcements", of 26 officers and 774 other ranks, the majority of the men obviously had to be obtained by enlistment from the general public. This was the case very generally, for as a result of conditions in the years preceding 1939 the strength of all N.P.A.M. units was far below that required for war establishment. Moreover, a proportion of the officers and other ranks of these units were of an age or medical category unsuitable for active service. This particular battalion was at full strength as early as 19 September.

In spite of the circumstances described, the actual contribution of personnel made by the peacetime forces was very large. The fact is that almost half of the 58,337 men and women who joined the Active Service Force in September 1939 were then serving or had served earlier either in the Permanent Force or the Non-Permanent Active Militia-4986 in the former and 24,089 in the latter. A total of 1252 had seen service in the forces of the United Kingdom or foreign countries.<sup>39</sup>

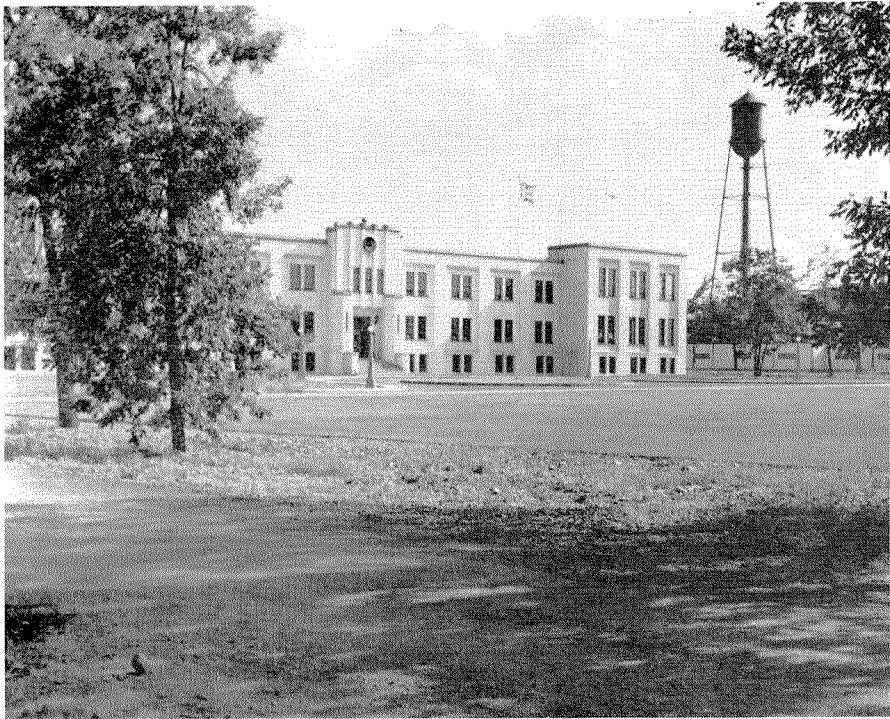
The proportion of the N.P.A.M. strength which volunteered for the C.A.S.F. varied very widely between units, and the records are incomplete. The unit recorded as containing "the highest percentage of peacetime personnel" of any inspected by General McNaughton in the autumn of 1939 was the 9th Field Ambulance, Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, in Montreal; no less than 89 per cent of its N.P.A.M. personnel had been enlisted and found fit for service.<sup>40</sup> But even where the numerical proportion was much smaller the N.P.A.M. contribution was very important. The war diaries make it clear that the Militia provided practically all the commissioned officers and (at least equally significant) the warrant officers, for the units mobilized in 1939. Of the other ranks, only a minority normally came directly from the Militia. Even so, the N.P.A.M. endowed each mobilized unit with an invaluable nucleus of partially-trained non-commissioned officers and soldiers, who were tremendously useful in getting the machinery of



*Photograph Courtesy National Film Board*

#### COAST DEFENCE IN CANADA—BRITISH COLUMBIA

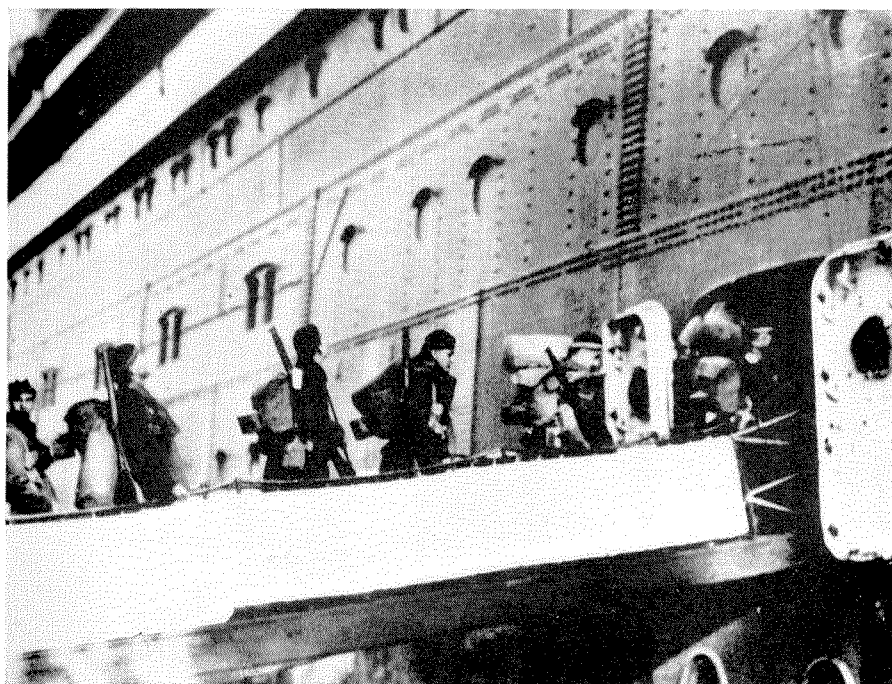
A 9.2-inch gun (with a 6-pounder sub-calibre gun mounted upon it for practice purposes) at Albert Head Battery, Esquimalt, B.C. This battery was constructed under the coast-defence programme undertaken in 1937.



*Photo by Col. W. T. Laurie, Courtesy Director of Signals*

#### VIMY BARRACKS, BARRIEFIELD, ONTARIO

This was one of the pre-war military stations constructed as unemployment relief projects. The photograph, taken in 1938, shows the Administration and Training Building which was taken over by the Canadian Signal Training Centre in August 1937. During the war R.C. Signals personnel and regimental signallers were trained here.



#### THE 1st DIVISION GOES OVERSEAS

Soldiers of the First Flight going aboard a transport at Halifax, December 1939.



#### THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE IN LONDON, APRIL 1940

This photograph taken at Canadian Military Headquarters shows, from left to right, Lt.-Col. E. L. M. Burns, Maj.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, Maj.-Gen. W. H. P. Elkins (Master General of the Ordnance), Hon. Norman McL. Rogers, Maj.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, Lt.-Col. G. R. Turner and Lt.-Col. A. E. Walford.



mobilization going, in providing a framework for the unit and in setting up a solid connection between the Militia regiment and the service battalion which served to maintain the integrity of regimental spirit and traditions. The men enlisted from the general public were thus received into an existing family and made to feel themselves sharers in the inheritance of an honourable name.

It would be difficult, indeed, to over-estimate the debt of the wartime Army to the Non-Permanent Active Militia. It provided the foundation upon which the great new structure was built. It produced, to no small extent, the leaders who built and developed that structure. And it gave the Army a group of personnel, officers and men, who continued to play dominant parts in it even when the great majority of the Army's members had come to be volunteers of no militia experience recruited from civil life. It is a notable fact that, at the end of hostilities with Germany in 1945, three of Canada's five fighting divisions were commanded by citizen soldiers who in 1939 had been captains or majors in the Non-Permanent Active Militia. And if further evidence of the Militia's contribution is required, one might rehearse the list of those who won the Commonwealth's highest awards for gallantry. Of the ten Victoria Crosses won by the Army during this Second World War, six were awarded to former members of the Active Militia—five from the Non-Permanent Active Militia and one from the Permanent Force. Of the three Canadian soldiers who won the George Cross, two had served in the Non-Permanent Active Militia.\* These facts suggest that the pre-war citizen force made to the wartime service a contribution remarkable for quality even more than quantity.

A word must be said also of the little Permanent Force, which played in 1939 and throughout the war a part out of all proportion to its size. On 31 March 1939 the "P.F." had on its strength just 455 officers.<sup>41</sup> The events of the next six years were to prove that the average quality of these officers was very high—extraordinarily high, when one considers how limited, on the whole, were the attractions of a military career in pre-war Canada. Other things being equal, a man who has devoted his life to the study of military affairs should be a more useful soldier than an amateur; and it was fortunate that the country had a few professionals available in the crisis. In 1914 a British regular officer was appointed to command the 1st Canadian Division; the Canadian Corps was not commanded by a Canadian until 1917; and throughout the First World War the first-grade staff appointments in the

\*Victoria Cross: Lt.-Col. C. C. I. Merritt (Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, N.P.A.M.); Major P. Triquet (Royal 22e Regiment, P.T.); Major J. K. Mahony (Westminster Regiment (M.G.), N.P.A.M.); Major D. V. Currie (12th Divisional Signals, and subsequently King's Own Rifles of Canada (M.G.), N.P.A.M.); Major F. A. Tilston (Essex Scottish, N.P.A.M.); C.S.M. J. R. Osborn (Winnipeg Grenadiers (M.G.), N.P.A.M.).

George Cross: Lieut. J. M. S. Patton (Queen's University Contingent, C.O.T.C., N.P.A.M.) and Corporal James Hendry (Algonquin Regiment, N.P.A.M.).

Corps were, with few if any exceptions, held by officers of the British Regular Army. In 1939 Canada had her own regular soldiers for such tasks. As the war progressed and the non-professionals gained practical experience, and particularly after the Army got into large-scale action, the distinction between the two groups became more and more blurred and the P.F. officer became somewhat less important; but the Army could not have done without him in the early years, and he-and the other ranks of the Permanent Force also-continued to make a great contribution to the end.

Two special features stand out in the exiguous unit records of the mobilization period: the anxiety of the "old soldiers" of 1914-18 to serve once more, and the extent to which the high medical standards in effect at this time resulted in rejections among these and other would-be recruits. In Montreal the war diary of the Canadian Black Watch<sup>42</sup> gives us a glimpse of conditions during these hectic early days:

Many of the Regiment's originals unfortunately failed to pass the medical examination for various reasons, chief amongst these being "over age". These men, mainly veterans of the Great War 1914-1918, will be sadly missed as the accumulation of knowledge gathered over a period of years with the Regiment would have been an invaluable asset during the Battalion's preliminary training.... Amongst the first rush of recruits were many ex-members of the Regiment and a remarkable number of ex-Service men... .

The actual number of veterans of the Canadian Expeditionary Force of 1914-18 recorded as attested into the Active Service Force during September 1939 was 4206; of these, 836 were officers, including five nursing sisters.<sup>43</sup> The number would doubtless have been much higher but for the medical standards and the age limit.

Many men, it is clear, were also rejected for possessing too many dependents. Recruiting Memorandum No. 1 contained the following provision:

In carrying out enlistments, men without dependents are preferable; married men with four or more dependents should not be enlisted.

This vague instruction was interpreted in some places, notably in Montreal, as a prohibition against enlisting married men. Le Regiment de Maisonneuve, for instance, recorded that orders had been received to take only bachelors, and that married applicants ("ils sont legions") had to be refused. Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal also refused married men, and the Canadian Black Watch recorded that, at one stage at any rate, they were accepting "single men only of good bearing and education".<sup>44</sup> This matter was discussed by the Defence Council on 14 September, and the Minister ruled that dependents' allowance should be paid in respect of a maximum of three dependents (wife and two children), and that men enlisted with more than this number should be given the option of accepting the restriction or being discharged.\*

\*At this time the rate of dependents' allowance for men below the rank of Warrant Officer Class I was \$60 per month for a wife and \$12 per month for each child. It may be noted that the basic pay of a private was \$1.30 per day.

This limitation, which had in fact been included in Recruiting Memorandum No. 1, remained in effect until November 1941, when it was relaxed to permit payments for a third and fourth child for soldiers of ranks below Warrant Officer Class I. In January 1943 it was further relaxed; all ranks could then draw dependents' allowance for up to six dependent children, and a dependent father or mother in addition.<sup>45</sup>

### The Response of the Country

It is time to turn to the statistics of enlistment as they presented themselves at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. On 6 September, five days after the mobilization order went out, the strength of the Active Service Force was reported as 22,878, more than half of it accounted for by the units manning coast and anti-aircraft defences or guarding vulnerable points. On 24 September the total had grown to 56,534, of whom 38,986 were in the Mobile Force.\* On 30 September it had risen further, being reported as 61,497.<sup>46</sup> Corrected statistics for the whole month of September, prepared later, show a total of 58,337 men and women actually taken into the Active Service Force (55,255 enlistments for general service, 3001 appointments to commissions, 81 appointments of nursing sisters).<sup>47</sup> It was, as might be expected, by far the largest single month for enlistments of the whole war. And when one remembers in addition the great (but unrecorded) numbers of volunteers who came forward only to be rejected because of age, medical unfitness or other reasons, and whose offers find no reflection in the figures just quoted, it is apparent how strongly the spirit of service and sacrifice was moving in the country at this moment. The mood and approach, it is true, were very different from those of 1914, when, we are told, "The strains of 'Rule Britannia' rang through Canada from ocean to ocean".<sup>48</sup> A message<sup>49</sup> from Military District No. 13 (with Headquarters at Calgary) strikes the keynote of 1939 in one of the areas where the response was readiest:

Recruiting at all stations MD 13 exceeding expectations. Best type of men offering their services in numbers that tax capacity of medical boards. Units will have no difficulty in recruiting to strength well within time limit. Complete absence of jingoism or war excitement. Men volunteering doing so with full realization of their responsibility.

On 14 September the Chief of the General Staff told the Defence Council that recruiting was proceeding satisfactorily apart from minor troubles. The strength of the C.A.S.F. at that date was just over 39,000 men, of whom

\*This includes District Depots and Internment Camp staffs, not included in the figures for 6 September. Headquarters staffs and some detachments were not included until the end of the month.

22,500 were in the Mobile Force. The Adjutant General stated that there were at this time "more men enlisted than there had been in the same period in 1914", which was certainly true.<sup>50</sup> On 26 September General Anderson reported to the Chiefs of Staff Committee that there were some 56,000 men under arms, but that the infantry "was not coming along as well as might be desired".<sup>51</sup>

There was inevitably considerable variation between the results obtained by different units and in different regions of the country. Some units filled their establishments very rapidly; for example, by 12 September the 48th Highlanders of Canada (in Toronto) and The Edmonton Regiment had both passed the 500 mark; and The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada (Vancouver) and The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (M.G.) completed recruiting by 22 September and 30 September respectively.<sup>52</sup> The two medium batteries mobilizing in Prince Edward Island were both full by 24 September, when recruiting in such units was ordered suspended.<sup>53</sup> Some units had more difficulty; among these were certain Permanent Force regiments. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was still about 200 under establishment at the end of September, and the strength of the Royal 22e Regiment was only 338 all ranks.<sup>54</sup> Notes prepared by the C.G.S. for presentation to the Defence Council on 24 October (when general recruiting had long been suspended) review the situation at that time in the infantry units of the . two divisions:

In regard to the Brigades of the 1st Division, with the exception of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment in the 1st Infantry Brigade which is 39 short, the Brigade is up to Establishment, 2 units being each 19 in excess of Establishment.

The 2nd Infantry Brigade is practically up to Establishment, the Saskatoon Light Infantry being 13 under Establishment and the P.P.C.L.I. 24 deficient. The situation in the 3rd Infantry Brigade is still not good. The Royal 22e Regiment is 235 under Establishment, the West Nova Scotia Regiment 204, the Carleton and York Regiment 181 and the Royal Montreal Regiment 21.

In respect to the 2nd Division, the 4th Infantry Brigade is up to Establishment except for a few personnel in the case of 3 of the units.

Of the 5th Infantry Brigade, 3 units are still under Establishment, the Black Watch 41, Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal 103 and Le Regiment de la Chaudiere 381.

In the 6th Infantry Brigade, the Calgary Highlanders have completed to Establishment but the South Saskatchewan Regiment is deficient 360. The other two units, the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and the Winnipeg Grenadiers, are short 10 and 23 respectively.

General McNaughton's inspection report written at the end of October mentions that the deficiency in both the Carleton and York and the West Nova Scotia Regiments was due not to shortage of recruits, but to accommodation and clothing difficulties which made it impracticable to recruit to full strength.

To afford a general view of the situation in the country, we append a table showing the strength of the Active Service Force by Military Districts, as it was reported on 30 September.

STRENGTH OF THE CANADIAN ACTIVE SERVICE FORCE<sup>55</sup>  
30 September 1939

Military District	Authorized Strength (Mobile Force Only) Headquarters		Actual Strength	Actual Strength	Actual Strength
	As	of	1 (Mobile)	(Other Units)	(Total)
M.D. 1	London, Ont.	5,794	4,735	267	5,002
M.D. 2	Toronto, Ont.	12,199	9,401	1,917	11,318
M.D. 3	Kingston, Ont.	5,959	4,273	1,109	5,382
M.D. 4	Montreal, P.Q.	11,000	6,019	1,784	7,803
M.D. 5	Quebec, P.Q.	3,239	1,506	908	2,414
M.D. 6	Halifax, N.S.	1,614	1,226	5,824	7,050
M.D. 7	Saint John, N.B.	1,512	1,239	2,340	3,579
M.D. 10	Winnipeg, Man.	5,084	4,027	549	4,576
M.D. 11	Victoria, B.C.	2,588	1,880	4,806	6,686
M.D. 12	Regina, Sask.	4,647	2,166	317	2,483
M.D. 13	Calgary, Alta.	4,196	4,068	418	4,486
Miscellaneous, unallotted to Districts-				-	-
N.D.H.Q.	Ottawa, Oat.	-	-	718	718
Total	-	60,709	40,540	20,957	61,497

NOTE: The disparity between the authorized strength of the Mobile Force on 1 September and its actual strength on 30 September might be taken to indicate a serious deficiency in recruits. In fact, however, recruiting had been suspended during the month in a large number of units. As some of these had taken on considerable numbers of men before recruiting was stopped, it is not possible to give a reliable total for authorized strength for 30 September. It also proved impossible to provide totals of authorized strength for "Other Units"; in certain cases, no establishments are to be found. If all the units authorized on 1 September had been recruited to full establishment, the total strength of the Active Service Force would have been "not far short of 80,000 men".<sup>56</sup>

"Other Units" include Coast Defence and Anti-Aircraft troops (drawn from the coastal Districts); District and National Defence Headquarters staffs and Corps detachments of the Permanent Force; District Depots, and Armoury and Internment Camp guards; and guards on Vulnerable Points. Strengths of existing Training Centres and the Royal Military College, however, are not included. Of the "Miscellaneous" total, 2566 is the authorized strength of six units (two anti-tank regiments, two anti-tank batteries and two searchlight batteries) whose mobilization was suspended. The remaining 321 is the authorized strength of the various formation headquarters; actual strength figures for these, so far as they existed, are not available.

The figures of actual strength are those reported to National Defence Headquarters at the time. The total is larger by about 4200 than the adjusted enlistment figures prepared after the war. These show enlistments as 58,337 and discharges as 1096, leaving a balance of 57,241 all ranks at 30 September. The disparity may be accounted for, *in part at least*, by the possible inclusion in the contemporary figures of Non-Permanent personnel still serving in Coast Defence or Anti-Aircraft units or guarding vulnerable points.

This table indicates that there were two provinces where recruiting was sluggish at this period. One was Saskatchewan, where Military District No. 12 had reported on 12 September, "Recruiting very slow." The other was Quebec. With respect to the French-speaking province, however, it is well to add that the war diaries of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal and Le Regiment de Maisonneuve testify that in both these regiments the personnel of the pre-war

Non-Permanent Active Militia unit volunteered for service *en masse* or virtually so, and the latter regiment was fully up to strength by 29 September. Military District No. 4 (Montreal) reported on 10 September that Frenchspeaking units had had more applications for enlistment than English-speaking ones, but medical rejections had been higher in the former. The reasons suggested for the difficulties in Saskatchewan were the very large foreign-born population there and the effect of the harvest season in a predominantly rural province.<sup>57</sup>

For every unit, mobilization was a time of many difficulties, of which the problem of attracting recruits was normally one of the least. The worst were those concerning accommodation, clothing and equipment.

Accommodation for the newly mobilized units was very difficult to find, in spite of the measures taken before the outbreak of war. Much use was made of available public buildings, particularly exhibition buildings; and notwithstanding the Government's initial reluctance the construction of hutments began very soon in many places. Nevertheless, some units simply could not house their recruits, and in certain cases in the larger cities the latter continued to live in their own homes for many weeks, merely reporting for daily parades. This procedure necessarily had a decidedly adverse effect upon discipline and upon the progress of training.

The clothing situation caused serious complaints, which continued for some months. Stocks of clothing available in militia stores were small and of obsolete pattern. Orders for the new-pattern "battledress" were placed only after the outbreak of war, and some weeks passed before it began to become available for issue. The story of this particular item may be outlined here, merely as an example.

The adoption of battledress in the British Army was authorized by a "War Office Periodical Letter" dated 31 March 1939.<sup>58</sup> Samples of the new clothing did not reach Canada until July, but on the 13th of that month the Dress and Clothing Committee, Militia Service, recommended that Canada adopt it. A query by the Master General of the Ordnance as to its suitability for summer training seems to have caused some delay, and the M.G.O. submitted the recommendation to the Military Members of the Defence Council only on 29 August. By this time one Canadian manufacturer had already been asked to make a sample suit, so that any manufacturing difficulties might be discovered at once. On 1 September the Chief of the General Staff concurred in the adoption of battledress, and on the following day the Minister of National Defence likewise approved.<sup>59</sup> Stocks of cloth sufficient for some 20,000 suits were then on hand, having been purchased under an appropriation made in the main Estimates in the spring of 1939. By the time of Canada's declaration of war contract demands for 100,000

suits had been prepared by the Department of National Defence. These were passed to the Defence Purchasing Board on 16 September.<sup>60</sup> Tenders were invited by the Board on 23 September, and on 2 October orders were placed with five companies for quantities worth \$194,600. Cloth, apart from that on hand, had to be manufactured and dyed; it was made to National Research Council specifications. Production now went forward rapidly, and the first consignments of battledress were shipped to the Districts the last week in October.<sup>61</sup> Canadian battledress proved to be of excellent quality.

The situation with respect to boots was particularly difficult; the supply on hand was relatively small,\* and the recruits' civilian footwear fell to pieces rapidly. District Officers Commanding were authorized on 21 September to make local purchases of such boots as were to be had.<sup>63</sup> The war diary of The Royal Regiment of Canada records that on 25 September the Commanding Officer was constrained to accept with gratitude the offer of a public-spirited Toronto lady to provide 130 pairs of boots and socks for his men. Supplies of blankets, socks and underwear were similarly inadequate, and these shortages also produced many complaints before they were remedied.

One quotation from a unit diary (that of The Carleton and York Regiment for 9 September) will serve to illustrate the problem:

By this time the shortage of blankets, beds, uniforms and boots began to assume a serious aspect. No palliasses whatever were available; approximately half of the men had no beds or cots; blankets were issued while they lasted at two per man, and many men who had no blankets at all were issued with two greatcoats. Only sixty-six pairs of boots could be secured and there was a great shortage of uniforms and caps. Many men who were reporting in with inferior footwear and light cheap clothing had to be excused from training parades. There was a great deal of suffering from colds and sore feet.

These shortages were inevitable in the circumstances of 1939. They could have been avoided, but only by the expenditure, during preceding years, of far larger sums of money than those which had been provided for the Militia by Parliament.

The impossibility of providing the men who were volunteering with even the simplest necessities certainly helped to produce at early dates a series of decisions to suspend recruiting in units of certain categories. As early as 2 September, indeed, District Officers Commanding were advised of 31 miscellaneous units whose mobilization might be deferred at their discretion. Four days later mobilization of these units was postponed "until further notice". On the same day (6 September) consideration was given to postponing the

\*There were 54,468 pairs in store early in 1939; but 10,091 pairs were issued to the Non-Permanent Active Militia in the summer before mobilization. The first specific provision ever made for boots for the N.P.A.M. was that in the Supplementary Estimates passed in the spring of 1939, and as a result of some argument over specifications the order did not go to the Defence Purchasing Board until 24 August.<sup>62</sup>

mobilization of 47 more units which, thanks to the abandonment of the scheme for concentration camps, were not yet urgently required. The Minister of National Defence decided that this should be done in units which had not yet commenced recruiting; those which had commenced were to continue. As a result, recruiting was deferred in nine more units; the total was now 40, involving 7362 all ranks.<sup>64</sup> The Adjutant General would have preferred to postpone recruiting in a still longer list, pointing out that many of the ancillary units would be merely "a fifth wheel to the coach throughout the winter months, unless the Mobile Force is to be used as such sooner than appears likely at present".<sup>65</sup> The matter was again discussed with the Minister, and on 11 September recruiting was suspended in 30 more ancillary units, the great majority of which had begun taking on men. By this date, then, recruiting had been stopped in 70 units, with a total establishment of over 15,000 all ranks.<sup>66</sup>

On 22 September mobilization was further slowed down when telegrams were sent to the coastal Military Districts suspending recruiting for rifle and machine-gun battalions engaged on coast-defence duties. On 24 September an order went out deferring immediately all recruiting except for infantry and machine-gun units of the 1st and 2nd Divisions. On 11 October a further telegram put a stop to recruiting in the infantry and machine-gun units of the 2nd Division.<sup>67</sup> These suspensions were evidently the result, in great part, of the equipment situation and the existing uncertainty concerning the future employment of the force apart from the 1st Division. As noted below, however (page 70), economy was also a motive. The suspension of recruiting was necessary if technical units as requested by the United Kingdom were to be provided without exceeding the expenditures which had been approved.

### The Decision to Send Troops Overseas

When the mobilization orders were issued on 1 September (on which date, it may be recalled once more, Canada was not at war) the use to be made of the Mobile Force had of course not yet been decided, and decisions emerged only after consultation with the British Government and consideration in Ottawa.

It is evident, that, in accordance with its policy of avoiding any measure which could be interpreted as a commitment to any special line of action in a future emergency, the Canadian Government had hitherto engaged in no discussions with the Government of the United Kingdom concerning the military measures which would be desirable if war came and Canada was involved. Now, on 3 September, the day on which the British Government



declared war, an exploratory query was dispatched to London. This telegram,<sup>68</sup> sent on a "Prime-Minister-to-Prime-Minister" basis, is of such importance that it should be printed here in full:

1. As you are aware the Canadian Parliament will meet on Thursday of this week.
2. In view of the announcement which you made this morning, indicating that in spite of your unceasing and persistent efforts for peace, the action and attitude of the German Government had resulted in a state of war developing between the United Kingdom and Germany, the Canadian Government, in addition to the defence and precautionary measures which it is taking under the War Measures Act and other administrative powers, will recommend to Parliament further action. The measures to be proposed are now under consideration.
3. As regards military activities our primary task will naturally be the defence of Canada, which under present circumstances is a more pressing and urgent undertaking than it was in the last war. We are also considering to what extent we could undertake as necessity required and our means permitted action in the Western Atlantic region, particularly in Newfoundland and the West Indies. As to further military cooperation we should be glad to receive your appreciation of the probable theatre and character of main British and allied military operations, in order that we may consider the policy to be adopted by Canada.
4. We should also like to have your Government's present appreciation of the nature and extent of British and allied requirements as regards supplies and particularly the relative urgency of the needs for various commodities which Canadian producers could furnish. As regards munitions the despatch of the British Mission now on its way and the consultations which have already taken place should make it possible to reach prompt conclusions on detailed arrangements. Presumably the negotiations which have been taking place in the United Kingdom for the purchase of war materials and food stuffs will be completed and developed. The Canadian Government is considering what general measures of economic organization and control will be required in this country.

Three days later, on 6 September, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs replied, expressing gratitude for the message and outlining the general needs of the situation.<sup>69</sup> He pointed out that there would be a large requirement for Canadian dollars and that any steps which might assist in "the financing of desired purchases" would be most helpful. With respect to strictly military assistance, his telegram said:

As regards further military cooperation, our appreciation of the probable theatre of war and the character of main British and Allied military operations will be communicated separately as soon as possible.

Generally, so far as immediate steps are concerned, provision of naval vessels and facilities and of air force personnel would be of most assistance, and in particular at present time supply of any pilots and aircraft crews available is a capital requirement. As regards land forces, policy here is to avoid a rush of volunteers such as occurred in the last war and to expand by means of a controlled intake. The chief requirement is for certain technical personnel.

On the same day (6 September), the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Ottawa (Sir Gerald Campbell) handed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs a memorandum<sup>70</sup> describing the specific measures which the United Kingdom Government had had in mind in framing the foregoing

telegram. It was definite and detailed, and dealt separately with the Navy, Army and Air Force. Only the section relating to the Army need be quoted:

15. While it was hoped that Canada would exert her full national effort as in last war, even to the extent of the eventual despatch of an expeditionary force, it is realised that no statement of policy on these lines is likely to be possible at the

moment. Would it be possible however, to consider as an immediate programme

(a) the despatch of a small Canadian unit which would take its place alongside the United Kingdom troops.

(b) the provision of technical units, particularly signal, royal engineers, ordnance, medical, transportation (particularly railway construction and operating) units for attachment to United Kingdom formation

(c) technical personnel for enlistment in United Kingdom units, particularly fitters, electricians, mechanics, instrument mechanics, alternatively motor transport drivers, and officers with similar qualifications.

The British Government had thus indicated that it hoped for a large Canadian effort on land; it asked for some sort of token force at an early date; and in addition it asked for technical ancillary units, and technical personnel for enlistment in British units. At the same time it had carefully refrained from urging large immediate measures and had given some impression that the organization of considerable land forces was scarcely a matter of urgency. On this basis the Canadian authorities proceeded to conduct their own discussions.

On 8 September the Canadian General Staff submitted observations on the British memorandum.<sup>71</sup> Suggesting that this indicated serious concern on the part of the British Government "over their ability to provide the manpower to maintain the war on land while meeting their commitments at sea and in the air", it went on to remark that the mobilized Mobile Force could be dispatched abroad without endangering the security of Canada, and could leave within three months, though necessarily with limited equipment. Equipment and training would have to be completed overseas. It mentioned that the ancillary troops of the Mobile Force included units of all the types mentioned in the British request for technical troops. If it was desired to send a token force, it could be drawn from the Mobile Force and sent abroad in less than three months; but technical units, whether sent singly or as components of an expeditionary force, could not be ready to leave Canada until after about the same period. As for permitting technical personnel to enlist in the United Kingdom forces, this, it was pointed out, was "difficult to reconcile with a possible decision to despatch an appreciable number of technical units overseas".

The matter was now up to the Cabinet. During the next few days, while Ministers discussed the matter, Ottawa buzzed with rumours, accurate and inaccurate. On 11 September the Minister of National Defence referred in the House of Commons to the possibility of using the Mobile Force overseas; and by 16 September decisions had been taken. On that day the three

Chiefs of Staff met a Cabinet Committee and received the Government's instructions. There appears to be no formal record of this meeting, but the gist of the instructions as they affected the Militia was thus summarized by the Chief of the General Staff in a memorandum<sup>72</sup> sent to the Minister of National Defence later the same day:

- "(a) that the despatch of a large expeditionary force as referred to in para. 15 of the despatch from the United Kingdom Government forwarded under cover of Sir Gerald Campbell's letter of the 6th instant, would not be considered at the present time, and
- "(b) that the Canadian unit referred to in para. 15(a) which would take its place alongside the United Kingdom troops, would be a division."

On this basis the C.G.S. made detailed recommendations.<sup>73</sup> He suggested that Canada "offer to send and maintain one division" (the essential decision on this point, it would seem, had already been taken), and further recommended that she offer to send such technical units as the British Government might ask for, "with the proviso that they shall remain Canadian units and return to Canadian control, should they be required for a Canadian Expeditionary Force, should it be later decided to send one". His advice was that individuals "be not sent over to enlist into United Kingdom units".

General Anderson's long-term recommendations for the effort of Canadian land forces ran as follows:

It is recommended that Canada should aim at having in the field ultimately a force consisting of a Canadian Corps of not less than two divisions and ancillary troops, it being considered that only in this way will it be possible to satisfy the demands of the numbers desiring to serve and in view of the fact that the manpower of Canada could maintain as much as six divisions, a cavalry division and ancillary troops. As time goes on it might be found desirable to send one or more further divisions to join the Canadian Corps of two divisions. This, however, would depend upon developments.

... It will, of course, be necessary to maintain a continual flow of reinforcements for any units sent abroad, entailing the establishing of training centres at home and, in order to replace casualties quickly, reinforcement units abroad.

... It will also be necessary to maintain an effective force in Canada to meet any eventuality that may arise. At present we are mobilizing, as such a force, a Corps of two divisions and ancillary troops. As units are sent abroad it is considered that they should be drawn from this mobilized force and replaced in Canada by calling out and training further Non-Permanent Active Militia units which have not yet been ordered to mobilize. It is not considered, however, that it will be necessary to replace, at present at least, any of the ancillary units sent abroad.

The Chief of the General Staff went on to consider the question of the training and despatch of the expeditionary division. Training in winter in Canada could not go beyond an elementary stage, while for more advanced training complete equipment was essential, and this, we have already seen, was not available there. Production of equipment in Canada would be a long task, and immediate supplies must come from British sources. "In view of the above wrote the C.G.S., "it is considered that the Division should

proceed abroad as soon as the United Kingdom can equip it. . . . After receiving their full equipment in England, troops will require training with it from a month to three months before proceeding to a theatre of war." As for the technical units, since these were for attachment to British formations they should go forward as soon after they were ready as the War Office should require. Anderson remarked, "It would appear reasonable that Canada limit her commitments in respect to these units so as to exclude cost of equipping them, at least until such time as they come under Canadian Corps Command in the field".

The C.G.S.'s general comments on the equipment problem are of interest:

Speaking generally, the only equipment available at present for a unit being despatched overseas is personal equipment and rifles. Our other equipment, including guns, is mostly obsolete or obsolescent and would be required in this country for training purposes. All equipment required has to be obtained from manufacturers in Canada or the United Kingdom. The United States is not a suitable source of supply unless the equipment were specially made to War Office specifications, as otherwise difficulties would arise in respect to maintenance in the field. The United States as a source of supply is, therefore, not contemplated.

It is impossible to say just what equipment will be supplied from Canada. It will probably be found desirable for Canada to concentrate on certain lines while the United Kingdom is concentrating on the others. This is a matter for arrangement between the two countries which, it is presumed, will be looked into by the Department of Munitions and Supply.\*

It is also impossible to say at the moment just when any particular equipment will be available and, in consequence, just when the funds to pay for it will be required. Some of the major items of equipment, such as field guns, anti-tank guns, tanks, etc., will for some time to come have to be supplied from the United Kingdom as the time necessary for production in Canada will probably be not less than a year and a half.

New equipment will also be required for training in Canada, for which funds have not been provided, amounting to \$10,800,00.

On the same day Anderson dispatched a telegram to Colonel G. P. Loggie, who since 1937 had been on duty at Canada House, London, as Ordnance representative for the Department of National Defence, advising him that consideration was being given to sending a token force of one division, the date of departure to depend upon availability of modern equipment in England.<sup>74</sup> Loggie was instructed to consult the War Office immediately and report by cable when such equipment might be expected. Before he could reply, the Canadian Government, on 19 September, announced that it had decided "to organize and train a division to be available as an expeditionary force, if and when required". A second division would be "kept under arms as a further measure of preparedness". "Pending the organization of these two divisions", further recruiting would be deferred.<sup>75</sup>

\*This Department replaced the War Supply Board, which had itself replaced the Defence Purchasing Board. Though authorized by an Act assented to on 13 September 1939, the Department came into existence only on 9 April 1940, by virtue of Order in Council P.C. 1435 of that date.

On 20 September the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (General Sir Edmund Ironside) cabled General Anderson<sup>76</sup> expressing appreciation of the Canadian offer, stating that he would "welcome Canadian troops at an early date" and suggesting that the division concentrate in England and complete its training there. He gave the assurance that "Canadian units will not go into action with a lesser scale of equipment than British Divisions" and added that a War Office committee had been formed under the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff, with Colonel Loggie and Lt.-Col. E. L. M. Burns (another Canadian officer then in England) as members, to study accommodation, equipment and training facilities for the Canadian troops. Loggie cabled the following day,<sup>77</sup> mentioning that the War Office contemplated including the Canadian division in a "contingent" to be sent overseas (i.e. to the Continent) in about six months. At the same time he wrote by air mail<sup>78</sup> reporting in detail the result of his conversations with the War Office. The letter ran in part:

The proposal to send Canadian troops overseas was warmly welcomed by all concerned and we were assured that everything possible would be done to ensure that they reach the front as early as their state of training warranted. You are no doubt aware that the allies are faced with a serious situation in the Western theatre and that the need for additional divisions is acute. From the strategical, political and moral points of view, there is every reason to expedite the despatch of Canadian troops to this country and subsequently to France. It was made clear that the reputation Canadians earned in the last war has not been forgotten, and that, except for regulars and one or two territorial divisions, there are no troops whom the C. in C. would rather have with him.

The decision to send a force overseas involved changing the basis on which men had so far been enlisted into the Active Service Force. The Minister of National Defence had explained to the House of Commons on 11 September that under the Militia Act (Section 68) no man could be required to serve in the field continuously for a longer period than one year, unless he had volunteered to serve for a longer period or "for the war". He suggested that if a decision were made to use part of the Active Service Force overseas the men might be "reenlisted for overseas service". The statement issued on 19 September confirmed that this would be done, the men of both divisions being re-attested on a basis of volunteering for service in Canada or elsewhere for the duration of the war. Orders were shortly sent out that the whole of the Active Service Force was to be re-attested in this way.<sup>79</sup>

Very few men took advantage of the opportunity to leave the service which the new order afforded. The war diary of The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment for 30 September describes the order's reception in that unit. It was probably typical of many:

During the afternoon parade at Picton the terms of the "Supplementary Declaration", Form M.F.M. 2(x) were read and explained to Picton Coys., and they were told that they might have a short time in which to discuss these terms and deliberate over them. However one strong voice called out: "I don't need

any time on mine! Bring on the declaration! I'm all set to sign!" This was the signal for quite an outburst of enthusiasm, and there was a period of shouting and cheering. The upshot was that when the Coys. were called upon to sign for overseas service "D" Coy. turned out to a man, but five members of "C" Coy. refused to sign and were heartily booed as a result.

In all, only five officers\* and 532 other ranks of the C.A.S.F. declined to re-attest and were struck off the strength, "services no longer required".<sup>80</sup>

On 20 September, the Chief of the General Staff wrote to the Minister of National Defence as follows:<sup>81</sup>

Now that it has been decided to prepare a division for despatch overseas, and with a view to maintaining generally Provincial representation in accordance with population, I recommend that the composition of the first Division to proceed abroad be the units called out and mobilizing as units of First Division C.A.S.F.

This having been approved, the appointment of a commander and the organization of divisional headquarters followed. C.A.S.F. Routine Order No. 69 (18 October 1939) announced the appointment of Major-General A. G. L. McNaughton as "Inspector-General of Units of the 1st Canadian Division", effective 5 October. It was not practicable for him to exercise command over units scattered all across Canada, but it was intended that he should be appointed General Officer Commanding before the Division went overseas, and this was done by Routine Order No. 180 (2 December 1939) with effect 17 October. General McNaughton, who, as already noted, had relinquished the appointment of Chief of the General Staff in 1935 on accepting the appointment of President of the National Research Council, thus returned to active military duty and assumed the most significant Canadian field command. On 25 October, following a fortnight devoted to problems of organization, he left for a rapid inspection tour of the units, which took him from Charlottetown to Esquimalt. His reports written as a result of this tour deal at length with the problems of accommodation and supply, which were still a serious embarrassment, though the situation was now much better than it had been.<sup>82</sup>

### The Technical Troops for Britain

The question of the technical units requested by the British Government on 6 September had stood over until a decision was made on sending a Canadian token force. On 24 September the Chief of the General Staff sent a memorandum to the Minister of National Defence on this matter.<sup>83</sup> He pointed out that the estimates recently approved provided for a definite number of personnel and a definite expenditure, and if the estimate was not to be exceeded any technical units offered to the United Kingdom would

\*Two of these officers had never been formally on the strength of the CAST., but had been attached to C.A.S.F. units pending qualification.

have to come from within these limits. General Anderson considered it practicable to provide units as required without exceeding the estimates, but suggested that Canada should attach certain conditions to any offer, namely:

- "(a) the units shall remain intact as Canadian units.
- "(b) that Canada will assume responsibility for the pay and allowances of the personnel, for the cost of their subsistence, for their initial issue of clothing and for their transportation to the United Kingdom.
- "(c) that the United Kingdom will assume responsibility for equipping the units and for maintenance of their clothing and equipment so long as the units are not under Canadian higher command.
- "(d) that if Canada should at a later stage decide to increase her forces in the field, all or any of the units provided will be made available for return, upon request, to higher Canadian command.
- "(e) should any units be returned to higher Canadian Command as referred to in sub-para. (d) above, Canada will assume the cost of maintenance of equipment from that time and the assumption of the cost of equipment then in use will be subject to mutual arrangements."

On 29 September a telegram<sup>84</sup> was sent to the Dominions Office in London informing the British Government that Canada was willing to send technical units "to a total of from 5000 to 6000 all ranks", to be selected from a list which was supplied. This included Medical, Signals, Engineers, Army Service Corps and Ordnance units, all drawn from among the ancillary units already mobilizing. The telegram specified the conditions which Anderson had suggested. On 7 October the Dominions Office replied<sup>85</sup> expressing thanks and inquiring whether Canada could provide forestry companies and certain special railway troops.

This request raised difficulties, as no such units had been mobilized and there was no provision for them in the financial estimate (\$188 million) which was supposedly to carry the Canadian military effort until 1 September 1940.<sup>86</sup> On 20 October, the British Government was informed that the Canadian authorities preferred not to undertake to raise forestry or railway troops, pending the outcome of negotiations which were in progress in connection with the proposed British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.<sup>87</sup> That scheme was at the moment the centre of the Canadian Government's interest, and it was clear that it would cost a great deal of money and absorb a high proportion of the national energies.\* Five days later the British Government submitted the list of ancillary units which it required, accepting the proposed conditions under which the United Kingdom would be "responsible for issue

\*The idea of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan was broached in a message from Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. King, called by the former "a special personal appeal", on 26 September. On the 28th the question was considered at a meeting of the Emergency Council (a sub-committee of Council), with the Chiefs of Staff present. The same day Mr. King cabled to the British Prime Minister, "I can say at once that our Government fully agree that Canadian cooperation in this field would be particularly appropriate and probably the most effective in the military sphere which Canada could furnish. We would therefore be prepared to accept the scheme in principle."<sup>88</sup>

and maintenance of unit equipment and for maintenance of personal equipment until units are absorbed into Canadian higher formation, when the unit equipment will be taken over by the Canadian Government at agreed valuation". The British list slightly exceeded the maximum of 6000 troops indicated by the Canadian Government, and in consequence the Canadian authorities suggested some deletions.<sup>89</sup>

At this point the scheme for sending a Canadian division to the United Kingdom introduced complications. With one division going overseas shortly, and the possibility presenting itself that a second would go in due course and a Canadian Corps be formed, the question arose of revising the list of technical "non-divisional" troops so that these might fit into a Canadian higher formation. Brigadier H. D. G. Crerar, who had now arrived in London to represent National Defence Headquarters, called this point to the attention both of the War Office and of the Department of National Defence. Quite apart from the question of a Canadian Corps, he suggested, it was desirable that the Canadian non-divisional units should form a suitable component of the British Corps to which the Canadian division might be assigned.<sup>90</sup>

On 6 November the matter was discussed in Ottawa at a meeting in the Minister's office. General McNaughton represented the desirability of ensuring that his division should be well supported by Canadian ancillary troops and that the Canadian force as a whole should be "a balanced one". He suggested particularly that it was desirable to provide artillery units.<sup>91</sup> As a result of these suggestions, and of further consideration by the Army Council in London "in the light of Brigadier Crerar's recommendations", the British list was revised. The new list, as sent to Canada on 18 November, included one regiment of medium artillery and one army field regiment.\* In the meantime, there had been further discussions with General McNaughton in Ottawa and the result was ultimate agreement upon a list of ancillary units including one medium regiment and *two* army field regiments.<sup>92</sup>

The question of the command and administration of these units had also come under discussion, and the C.G.S. pointed out to General McNaughton that if they were considered as under his command the financial agreement with the United Kingdom might be so interpreted as to require Canada to assume the cost of equipping them-for which funds had not been provided.<sup>93</sup> McNaughton replied.<sup>94</sup>

...I must frankly say I do not concur that the units referred to do not come within the inspectional duties which have been assigned to me. The change in composition of the ancillary troops was made at my request so that requirements

\*A regiment of field artillery normally under the control of an army headquarters but available for release to a lower formation in accordance with the demands of operations. It was identical in establishment with a normal divisional regiment.



for essential arms and services for the 1st Division might be available. The whole purpose of the re-arrangement would be defeated if these units were not under the orders of the General Officer Commanding, 1st Canadian Division.

As a result of these discussions, the Canadian Government expressed the hope that the War Office would agree that the Canadian ancillary units would "normally" be employed with the 1st Canadian Division; it added that while employment of these units in the field would be a matter for the headquarters of the corps in which the 1st Canadian Division was serving, it was felt that "channel of authority for training and for administration of personnel including such matters as all questions relating to commissions, promotions, appointments, transfers, exchanges, recalls and demands for officers should pass through G.O.C. First Canadian Division to Canadian Government". The same telegram referred to the agreement by which the War Office assumed financial responsibility for equipment, and remarked, "In view of very heavy financial commitments already assumed and now receiving consideration by Canada under air training scheme it remains necessary to reiterate this condition." It was further suggested that, with Canadian factories tooling up to make the mechanical transport required by the 1st Division, and in the light of the advantages of all Canadian units having vehicles of uniform pattern, it might be desirable for the War Office to order transport for the ancillary troops in Canada.<sup>95</sup> On 6 December Canadian Military Headquarters replied, "War Office agree Canadian ancillary units will normally be employed same corps as division and that administrative matters as listed should pass through G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division".<sup>96</sup> This did not, however, imply confirmation of the financial arrangement under the new conditions. C.M.H.Q. had suggested to the High Commissioner that it would be appropriate that he take up this policy question with the British authorities, and this was done. A difference of opinion now appeared between the two governments.<sup>97</sup>

The whole question of the ancillary troops had in fact, now been placed upon a different basis from that originally contemplated. The list of units had been greatly altered as the result of Canadian representations; and whereas the original assumption had been that these units might serve apart from other Canadian troops, a definite link had now been established between them and the 1st Canadian Division. (They sailed from Halifax, it may be noted, only in the Third Flight, which disembarked in Britain on 8-9 February 1940; and they never served in a British corps.) It is not surprising, in these circumstances, that the implementation of the financial arrangement concerning them produced some controversy. Apologizing once more for anticipating later events, we may outline this matter here.

The Canadian authorities, considering the original agreement still operative, took the view that the United Kingdom should pay for unit equipment

for these troops until such time as they came under a Canadian Corps organized as such. This was the Canadian interpretation of the phrase "higher Canadian command", but the War Office argued (as General Anderson had indeed anticipated) that the arrangement by which the administration of these units was confided to General McNaughton had the effect of placing them under such command and so of relieving the United Kingdom of further responsibility for them. There was long and tedious discussion, and the matter was actually not finally adjusted until the summer of 1940, when the Canadian Government agreed to take over full financial responsibility for the Canadian non-divisional troops, effective 1 September of that year and irrespective of the actual date on which a Canadian Corps might be formed.<sup>98</sup> The argument had by then used up far more time and paper than the issue was worth. It might have been avoided by pre-war consultation between Canada and the United Kingdom concerning the form of assistance which would be most useful to the latter. The improvisations undertaken to meet the unexpected British request of 6 September 1939 certainly contributed to producing an unnecessary controversy. The affair also reflected the importance attached to financial considerations in the days of what became known as the "phony war"-the period of deceptive calm which followed the rapid German conquest of Poland. Under the conditions created by the desperate strategic crisis which arose in the summer of 1940, such matters were to, appear much less important.

#### Paying for the Military Effort, 1939

It will be recalled that Parliament during the brief session of September 1939 provided \$100 million to cover defence expenditures up to 31 March 1940. Shortly after the session ended, further estimates were completed covering anticipated expenditures for the first year of hostilities, that is, until 1 September 1940. The estimate for this entire year amounted to \$314 million for the three armed services, of which \$188 million was for the Militia. This was to be provided by the unexpended balance of the defence vote passed in the first session of 1939, plus the war appropriation made in September, plus a further vote to be asked of Parliament at the next session. These arrangements were outlined by the new Minister of Finance (Colonel J. L. Ralston) in a letter written to the Minister of National Defence on 21 September.<sup>99</sup> On 20 October the Acting Deputy Ministers of National Defence wrote the Chiefs of Staff indicating an amendment to the policy laid down in Ralston's letter.<sup>100</sup> It had now been decided to "set aside a general reserve to provide for unforeseen contingencies"; moreover, the expenses of

ensorship and internment camps were to be found from the Militia Service allotment. The amended division of funds was as follows:

Naval Services .....	\$35,888,000
Militia Services, Internment Operations and Censors .....	168,654,000
Air Services .....	77,158,000
Departmental Administration.....	900,000
General Reserve .....	31,400,000
	<hr/>
	\$314,000,000

On 28 October the Chief of the General Staff advised the Deputy Ministers that the Military Members of the Defence Council, having previously estimated the minimum requirements of the Militia Service at \$188 million, did not consider themselves able to reduce this sum to \$168,654,000. Each item in the list had now been reduced by a percentage to produce the revised figure, but the C.G.S. wrote, "I wish to make it quite clear, however, that we expect that at least the whole of the \$188,000,000 will be required to see the Military Service through to 31-8-40, and that therefore the \$19,346,000 now being withheld to go into the general reserve of the Department of National Defence will have to be held available for return to the Military Service".<sup>101</sup> In the revised Military Service Vote, reduced as stated, which the Chief of the General Staff now submitted, the largest items were \$74,831,000 for Pay and Allowances, \$17,466,000 for Clothing and Miscellaneous Stores, and \$17,632,000 for Armament Stores.

The influence of financial scruples is written large in the records of this period. In the United Kingdom, "financial limitations" had essentially ceased to affect the defence programme by the time of the outbreak of war;<sup>102</sup> but in Canada they were very powerful until Dunkirk. The need for the strictest economy was repeatedly emphasized. On 18. September the Associate Acting Deputy Ministers, K. S. Maclachlan (Naval and Air) and H. DesRosiers (Militia) \* sent to the Minister of National Defence a memorandum<sup>103</sup> commenting upon the estimates submitted by the service chiefs in the following terms:

The recommendations of the Chiefs of Staffs have been carefully reviewed. The Estimates given in connection with such recommendations have been prepared with all the care possible, taking into consideration the very short time at the disposal of the Staff.

The figures clearly demonstrate the shocking expense entailed in modern warfare, and the close relationship between the combatant and civilian efforts. The Staff personnel of all three services clearly understand the vital importance of using whatever funds are available with the utmost economy and efficiency.

The letter, mentioned above<sup>104</sup> which the Minister of Finance wrote to his colleague of National Defence on 21 September, affords further evidence of

\*Appointed by P.C. 2588 of 9 September. General LaFlèche went on sick leave at this time.

the power of financial considerations at this moment. After stating the sums which were to be available, Colonel Ralston wrote (the italics have been supplied):

As I say, the above figures are given so that you can proceed rapidly and with assurance from the financial point of view. At the same time, I know it will be kept in mind that, in Canada's war effort, economic and financial power appears to be regarded, at the moment, by the United Kingdom as even outranking manpower in importance, and you will realize too that, even in this first year, we shall have to call on Canadians for very much more in the way of financial and economic burdens and sacrifice than indicated by the imposing figures given above. Therefore, we ought, I think, to keep in mind that these figures are *the limits within which expenditures can be made*, and while I am the last to be "cheese paring" in connection with a matter of such vital importance, I am sure that you and your officers will do their utmost to see that, even within these limits, every economy which is possible, consistent with the appropriate celerity and effectiveness, is provided for.

Even more striking is the comment of General Anderson, in a memorandum to the Minister dated 28 November,<sup>105</sup> concerning the means adopted for financing Canada's share of the cost of the ancillary troops for Britain:

You will recall that under instructions of the Committee of the Cabinet, the proposed expenditures for the Military Service to see us through to 1st September, 1940, had to be reduced and that the amount of funds finally authorized was based upon the despatch overseas of one bare division. Later, by postponement of recruiting savings were effected which permitted of the Government offering, within the funds authorized, certain technical units for service in British formations, but under an agreement that Canada would not equip them with unit equipment or maintain their equipment....

The war, it is clear, was, at this stage, being fought on a limited budget. The expenditures which the Government had approved were indeed "imposing" by comparison with the pre-war appropriations. They were less imposing by the standards of the existing emergency as seen from the vantage-point of our knowledge of later history. Before September of 1940 arrived, these painful calculations ("the limits within which expenditures can be made") were to be blown into thin air by tremendous events in Europe.

The Mobile Force planned under Defence Scheme No. 3 consisted of an Army Corps of two divisions with ancillary troops. On 29 August 1939 the Chiefs of Staff referred to this specifically in their memorandum on Canada's national effort (above, page 46). The Force was duly mobilized, as we have seen, but not as an Army Corps. Although the list of units scheduled for mobilization in General Order 135 included the headquarters of "1st Corps C.A.S.F.", no such headquarters was actually organized at this time, and indeed the headquarters even of the 2nd Division was not set up until early in 1940. Presumably as a result of the Government's decision notified to the Chiefs of Staff on 16 September, the Corps element of the C.A.S.F. faded away; the force to go overseas immediately was to be only one division plus ancillary troops, and further development was a matter for

future decision.\* In the event, as we shall see, a Canadian Corps did not come into actual existence until 25 December 1940.

About the time when the final decision was made to send the 1st Division overseas, the Ministry was reorganized. Mr. Ian Mackenzie, who had been Minister of National Defence during the period of preparation and the first days of mobilization, now assumed the portfolio of Pensions and National Health (19 September). On the same date, Mr. Norman McLeod Rogers, formerly Minister of Labour, became Minister of National Defence. He was to preside over the affairs of the Department until his tragic death in an aircraft accident in June 1940. For the moment one minister continued to be responsible for the administration of all three armed services.

\*"It has become necessary to abandon all idea, for the time being at least, of forming a Corps Staff' (C.G.S. to Director of Signals, 10 Oct 39)<sup>106</sup> When C.A.S.F. Routine Order No. 22 was drafted on 19 September 1939, it contained a reference to the training of Corps Headquarters; this had been eliminated from the order by the time it was published on 27 September.<sup>107</sup>

## CHAPTER III

### THE EXPANSION OF THE ARMY, 1939-1943

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THE preceding chapters dealt at some length with planning and preparation in Canada before 1939, and with the action taken immediately following the outbreak of war. The first weeks of hostilities have a special interest for both the general reader and the military planner. It seems unnecessary, however, to deal with subsequent happenings in such detail. Accordingly, we shall try to present an authentic outline, rather than a complete account, of the long and jerky process by which the two divisions mobilized in September 1939 evolved into an overseas Army of two corps.

The present chapter deals primarily with policy as it developed in Canada. The problems encountered by the Canadian Army in Britain are described later in this volume.

#### The Completion of the 2nd Division

The mobilization of the units of the 1st and 2nd Divisions has already been described, and we have noted that at an early date the decision was taken to send the 1st Division overseas and to keep the 2nd, for the present, under arms in Canada.

Having been brought up to strength, and provided with equipment to the limited extent which Canadian resources then permitted, the 1st Division duly moved to the United Kingdom, sailing from Halifax in two "flights" on 10 and 22 December 1939.\* The third flight, comprising, for the most part, the ancillary units which had been the subject of special negotiations with the British Government, sailed on 30 January 1940.

The units of the 2nd Division in Canada had plenty of troubles during this winter of 1939-40. As we have seen, all recruiting for them had been suspended in October, when some were still short a good many men. No concentration of the Division had been possible, and practically all the regiments remained in the home areas where they had been mobilized. The

\*On the First Flight, see below, page 189.

accommodation situation was such that it was necessary for many, for a considerable time, to place their men "on subsistence", i.e., to pay them a cash allowance to enable them to provide themselves with lodging and meals. This, as already noted, was inevitably detrimental to the progress of discipline and training. At the same time, the shortage (and indeed, in many items, the total deficiency) of modern equipment made realistic training extremely difficult. Add to this the effect of the Canadian winter climate, and the fact that neither divisional nor brigade headquarters had yet been organized, and it is not surprising that the state of the 2nd Division units during these "phony war" days was not ideal.<sup>1</sup>

This was a period of inactivity in Europe. Poland had been quickly overrun in September 1939. On the Western Front, there had been no action of any importance; the combatants lay in their elaborate fortifications, watching each other and awaiting events. In France, on the Belgian border, a small British Expeditionary Force commanded by General Lord Gort had taken its place beside the French and was gradually being built up. No bombs had yet fallen on the United Kingdom. As one looks back upon this winter little sense of urgency seems apparent in France, Britain or Canada.

Nevertheless, those in positions to know viewed the immediate future with deep anxiety. On 7 November Brigadier Crerar cabled the Chief of the General Staff from London pointing out the superiority of the German forces in the West on the ground and in the air, and reporting apprehension at the War Office as to the result of major attacks there next spring. "If the Allied forces, by reason of these circumstances", he wrote, "are defeated before next summer, it matters little as to long-term Allied plans for military superiority a year or more from now". Among these long-term schemes, the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan had an important place; but Crerar noted, "It is very necessary to remember that more immediate and most important object is to secure our military position during period required to build up all forces to decisive superiority". His cable ended, "At War Office conferences question of despatch of second Canadian division has been raised several times".<sup>2</sup>

The first indication of the 2nd Division's future employment was given in the Canadian House of Commons on 25 January 1940, during the one-day session in which the dissolution of Parliament was announced. The Prime Minister then stated that a second division would be sent overseas "as soon as may be possible". The evidence indicates that this announcement was made primarily with a view to preventing any question of the further dispatch of troops from becoming a political issue during the election campaign then pending. No decisions had been taken on a long-term programme for the Canadian Army Overseas; and accordingly no elucidation of the announcement was sent to the Canadian authorities in England.

For them, however, it raised important questions. If a second division was to arrive at an early date, the formation of a Canadian Corps was a natural and probable development. In the absence of further information, General McNaughton proceeded to explore the possible implications of this in a conference with the War Office on 9 February. It had been understood that the 1st Canadian Division would in due course be incorporated in the 4th British Corps, which was to go to France in the summer.<sup>3</sup> Now, however, it was suggested that to do this would merely be to dislocate that corps when the Canadian Corps was formed; and it was agreed that instead it would be proper, in the meantime, to employ the 1st Division and the Canadian ancillary troops together as a self-contained formation directly under General Headquarters, B.E.F. General McNaughton reported the results of the discussion to Ottawa, mentioning that some 8000 additional ancillary troops would be necessary to complete a two-division Corps.<sup>4</sup>

The War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet discussed the matter on 12 February. As a result a telegram was sent to Canada House emphasizing that the Government had not authorized the formation of a Canadian Corps and that discussions with the War Office should proceed only on the basis of offers and commitments already expressly made. Mr. Massey and General McNaughton were told that, barring some unforeseen emergency, conversations concerning "any additional undertaking to War Office" should await the election of a new Parliament, when the Canadian Government would be in a position to have direct discussions with the British Government on a long-range programme of cooperation in all phases of the war effort.<sup>5</sup>

The Government's concern over the apparent tendency of its generals to anticipate events was based, in part at least, on financial considerations. On 22 February a further telegram to Canada House, sent following a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on War Finance and Supply, called attention to the extent of Canadian war expenditures. These already amounted to \$375 million; while estimates of war expenses for the fiscal year ending 31 March 1941 totalled some \$500 million, and the undertaking to send the 2nd Canadian Division to England, and certain other measures, meant further increases, to roughly \$560 million. The telegram remarked, "Obviously it would be nothing but a disservice to the task we have in mind and to our Allies for us to attempt to undertake something beyond our capacity".<sup>6</sup> Soon afterwards McNaughton was told that the Government did not concur in his recommendation that the 1st Division and ancillary units should constitute a self-contained formation directly under G.H.Q., but considered it advisable to "adhere to original proposal under which First Canadian Division would be employed on arrival at front as part of a British Corps".<sup>7</sup>



The Canadian officers and officials in England urged that this decision be reconsidered, Mr. Massey fully supporting General McNaughton in his argument that many difficulties of jurisdiction and organization would be obviated by accepting the tentative arrangement which had been made with the War Office.<sup>8</sup> The election campaign made it difficult for Ministers to give proper attention to the matter. On 26 March, however, the general election took place and the Government was sustained. Thereafter, with its position secure and its members again assembled in Ottawa, it was able to give more adequate consideration to military policy. On 5 April, following discussion by both the War Committee and the full Cabinet, Massey was notified that McNaughton's proposal for organizing the Canadian forces in England as a G.H.Q. reserve had been accepted, "provided a mutually satisfactory agreement can be reached with United Kingdom with respect to financial implications of this proposed arrangement".<sup>9</sup>

In the meantime, recruiting for the 2nd Division had been resumed. On 18 February, orders had gone out permitting the resumption of enlistments for tradesmen and specialists; and on 18 March general recruiting for the Division's units was authorized.<sup>10</sup> Its total strength rose from 13,829 all ranks on 2 March to 17,635 all ranks on 22 June.<sup>11</sup> During the interim, it may be noted, the war establishment of an infantry (rifle) battalion had been increased by 133 men.

Divisional and brigade headquarters had not yet been organized, but this was now done. The command of the Division was given to Colonel (Honorary Brigadier-General) V. W. Odium, who though not a soldier by profession had fought in the South African War and commanded an infantry brigade in the First World War. In 1939 he was Honorary Colonel of the Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment). He was promoted Major General and (following the precedent set in the case of General McNaughton) appointed Inspector General of the units of the 2nd Division with effect from 6 April. Soon afterwards he was gazetted as G.O.C. 2nd Canadian Division.<sup>12</sup> The divisional headquarters was organized in Ottawa at the end of May, and about the same time the three brigade headquarters were set up—the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade at Camp Borden, Ontario, the 5th at Valcartier Camp, Quebec, and the 6th at Shilo Camp, Manitoba. Simultaneously the units moved to these camps.<sup>13</sup> Thus at last concentrated in brigades, they were now able to undertake really effective training for the first time. Due to the adverse conditions already described, their progress so far had been slow; indeed, General Odium, after a tour of inspection, wrote to the Minister of National Defence on 4 July, perhaps with some exaggeration, that they were "no further advanced than they should have been in two months of effective training".<sup>14</sup> They had actually been mobilized for ten.

There was considerable discussion as to when the Division should go overseas. General McNaughton, anxious that it should reach England as soon as possible, recommended that it arrive there about 15 April.<sup>15</sup> The Canadian Government, however, preferred to postpone its departure, and at the end of February the High Commissioner in London was told that subject to agreement with the British authorities it would probably be sent about 1 July. This would allow a month's training in camps in Canada before embarkation. The idea was that after three months' further training in England with the equipment which it was hoped would be available there, the Division would be able to go "to the Front" in France about 1 November.<sup>16</sup> Like many others, however, these forecasts were voided by events on the Continent in May and June.

The Minister of National Defence (Mr. Rogers) visited England and France from 18 April to 9 May, and one of the matters he discussed in London was the formation of a Canadian Corps. On 26 April, in a conference with four British Ministers (the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Dominions Secretary, the Minister of Supply, and the Secretary of State for War), he said that he had authority to open discussion on this question. He added that so far as the Canadian Government was concerned "the primary factor was one of finance", and inquired whether it might be possible for the United Kingdom to provide, "for an interim period", the additional ancillary troops required to complete a Corps of two divisions. The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Oliver Stanley) agreed to this, provided that the commitment would cover only a specified period. In answer to an inquiry from Mr. Rogers, the four British Ministers assured him that it was "definitely the wish of the British Cabinet that a Canadian Corps should be formed"; and when he asked further whether the British ancillary units which might be attached to a Canadian Corps would "continue to be a British financial responsibility", some indication was given that this would be the case, on the understanding that the troops would be required only for a short time.<sup>17</sup>

#### The Summer Crisis of 1940: Formation of the 3rd and 4th Divisions

On 9 April 1940 the calm of the "phony war" was shattered by the German attack on Norway and Denmark; and the Norwegian campaign which followed was a severe blow to Allied confidence. The Western Front, however, remained quiet for another month. Then, on 10 May, the German forces were let loose upon neutral Belgium and the Netherlands. Within a few days it was clear that the Allies were faced with another disaster, and

the events which followed in France and Flanders had an immediate and drastic effect upon Canadian military policy.

On the afternoon of 10 May the War Committee of the Cabinet held an emergency meeting to review the situation and consider the methods by which Canada might give further assistance to the common cause in cooperation with the United Kingdom. Later that day a telegram was sent to London outlining the decisions taken. Leaving aside the naval and air measures proposed, it is enough to note that the Government now stated that it would be prepared to arrange to dispatch the 2nd Division to England during June and July instead of in July and August as planned. At the same time, in response to a request just received from London, it authorized sending a Canadian infantry battalion to Jamaica to replace a British unit which was going to Curacao. The British Government was invited to offer suggestions for other measures.<sup>18</sup>

The emergency soon produced a decision to expand the existing Active Service Force very considerably. On 17 May the War Committee met again. The country was now in the atmosphere of crisis induced by Allied reverses in France and the Low Countries during the past week. The Dutch Army had already surrendered. The Germans had smashed through the French front at Sedan; and the British and French armies on the Allied left, thus threatened with encirclement, were falling back from the positions in Belgium to which they had advanced following the German invasion. The Minister of National Defence reported to the Committee on the visit to the United Kingdom and France from which he had just returned, describing the impression of German mechanical superiority and Allied complacency which he had gathered in the days immediately before the attack.

Some thought had already been given to the possible formation of a third division of the C.A.S.F. As early as 13 September 1939 the Director of Military Operations and Intelligence had suggested to the Chief of the General Staff a tentative composition for such a division.<sup>19</sup> On 2 February 1940 General Anderson had pointed out to the Minister of National Defence the importance of "a home reserve". If the 2nd Division were sent overseas as announced by the Prime Minister, and the ancillary troops required for a two-division corps went too, only about 4200 mobilized ancillary troops would remain in Canada, and the C.G.S. therefore recommended that "upon departure of the 2nd Canadian Division overseas, a 3rd Canadian Division should be raised for duty in Canada".<sup>20</sup>

The War Committee at the meeting of 17 May considered raising this 3rd Division and also, as an alternative, forming a Canadian Corps. With Mr. Rogers' report of his discussions in England before it, it decided to do both. The financial scruples and questions of "capacity" that had seemed so

important a few weeks before had suddenly passed into the background; for the Allied cause and the very existence of the Commonwealth were now hanging in the balance.\* On 20 May the Prime Minister announced the decisions in the House of Commons. A Canadian Corps, he said, would be formed in the field, to consist of the two existing divisions and the necessary corps troops, this involving sending several thousand more men overseas. Mr. King added, "We shall undertake the raising of a third division, to be available for such service as may be required in Canada or overseas."

These measures had anticipated by only a narrow margin a request from the British Government. On 18 May Lord Caldecote, Secretary of State for the Dominions, wrote to Mr. Massey in reply to the Canadian ministers' invitation to make suggestions.<sup>22</sup> He placed in the forefront the possibility of Canada's undertaking to provide and maintain a garrison for Iceland (where British marines had landed on 10 May); and he observed that accelerating the dispatch of the 2nd Division would be "a great help and encouragement" and that everything would be done to find shipping to make this possible. His letter proceeded:

The Army Council would next wish to suggest that detailed consideration should be given as soon as practicable to the formation of a Canadian Corps. ... The provision of the necessary Corps, Army and G.H.Q. troops would then become a matter of great urgency. . . . We should also like to suggest that the Canadian Government would wish to consider the desirability of completing the Canadian Corps, if and when that formation comes into existence, to the normal standard of three divisions. If so, it would no doubt be necessary to make arrangements at once for the formation of a third Canadian division which, it is needless to say, would prove of great military assistance and encouragement in prosecuting our common task.

Lord Caldecote also inquired whether Canada could provide a second battalion for the West Indies, and raised again the question of forestry and transportation units.

The decision to form the Corps and raise the 3rd Division had been taken the day before this letter was sent. The Division's future role, however, remained unsettled. The Department of External Affairs cabled to Massey, "For the present it is not contemplated that the Third Division should be included in the Canadian Corps."<sup>23</sup> This was not of immediate importance, for it would be months before the Division was ready for employment of any kind. What mattered was that the organization of another fighting formation was going forward. There was some delay before selection of the infantry units for the 3rd Division was complete (choosing regiments in such a way as to give appropriate representation to the various sections of the

\*As noted above (page 74), in February war expenditures for 1940-41 were estimated at \$560 million, a figure which was regarded with considerable alarm. The actual ultimate total was approximately \$778 million.<sup>21</sup>

country was always a ticklish matter),\* but the organization of the Division was well under way by the end of May.<sup>25</sup> And even before the administrative arrangements for raising it were complete, a further enlargement of the Active Service Force had been decided upon.

On 22 May the War Committee considered Lord Caldecote's suggestions, which had been examined by the Department of National Defence in the meantime. It decided that an infantry brigade would be provided for duty in Iceland (the intention at this moment being that it would be formed from among the units mobilizing for the 3rd Division); that a second infantry battalion would be found for the West Indies and could embark at an early date; that forestry units would be organized and dispatched at once, and that it be agreed in principle that transportation units would be provided, inquiry being made as to what type were most urgently required.<sup>26</sup> The military situation in France was going from bad to worse. On 25 May a personal message from London for the Prime Minister concluded, "Position of B.E.F. is now one of utmost gravity".<sup>27</sup> On the 27th the Dunkirk evacuation began (but only about 5000 men were taken off the French shore that day). Before the House of Commons assembled in Ottawa in the afternoon, the members of the Government met and agreed upon additional steps that should now be taken; and the House was told that in addition to the 3rd Division and the corps troops it was intended to recruit other units, including all the nine rifle battalions of a fourth infantry division.<sup>28</sup> Four days before, in response to suggestions that more use be made of veterans in domestic security duties, it had been announced that a Veterans Home Guard (later redesignated the Veterans Guard of Canada) was being formed. It was to consist in the first instance of twelve companies of 250 men each.<sup>29</sup> The intention to form reserve companies of veterans as well was included in the announcement of the 27th.

The Canadian public had been profoundly moved by the crisis. For a time it appeared that almost the whole of the British Expeditionary Force would be lost; indeed, on 29 May Canadian Military Headquarters cabled, undoubtedly on the strength of information from the War Office, "In spite of their own magnificent resistance and the maximum effort of Navy and Air Force, it must be accepted that the bulk of force now comprising the B.E.F. will not reach shores of the United Kingdom."<sup>30</sup> The Dunkirk deliverance -the successful evacuation of 338,000 British and Allied soldiers-followed;

\*The last regiment selected was The Royal Winnipeg Rifles, which was mobilized as a 4th Division unit; its transfer to the 3rd Division was authorized by the Minister on 1 August 1940.<sup>24</sup> The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (M.G.) and Le Regiment de la Chaudiere (Mit.), two machine-gun units mobilized in September 1939 but not required for the 1st or 2nd Divisions under the new organization which allowed only one machine-gun battalion per division, were incorporated in the 3rd Division, Le Regiment de la Chaudiere being converted to an infantry (rifle) battalion.

but the spectres of the imminent collapse of France and the probable invasion of England by the victorious enemy arose at once. The heavens, it seemed, were falling; and in the emergency the manhood of Canada came forward generously, eager to share the honour and the peril of the moment with the men of the 1st Division, standing in the front line in the United Kingdom. There was no difficulty in filling the ranks of the 3rd and 4th Divisions. The summer months of 1940 brought a flood of recruits second only to that of the previous September. Since the new units began recruiting in the last days of May, enlistments for that month amounted only to 6909; but in June there were 29,319 and in July 29,171. Including officer and nursing sister appointments, a total of 85,102 men and women joined the Canadian Active Service Force during the four months of May, June, July and August.<sup>31</sup>

It is convenient to mention here the completion of the 3rd Division. The formation of the divisional headquarters and those of the infantry brigades and of the artillery, engineers, signals and R.C.A.S.C. were authorized by a General Order dated 5 September 1940. The Division's first commander was Major-General E. W. Sansom, lately Deputy Adjutant General at C.M.H.Q., who returned to Canada for the purpose and was appointed as of 26 October.<sup>32</sup> The Division was to be concentrated in the Maritime Provinces, where a big new camp was being built at Debert, N.S. (near Truro) and the existing camp at Sussex, N.B., was being enlarged. The units began moving into these areas in the autumn of 1940.<sup>33</sup> This arrangement was considered desirable for two main reasons: it would provide a degree of concentration which would facilitate effective training, and at the same time the Division could form the operational reserve for the newly-formed Atlantic Command (see below, page 163).

There was considerable delay before the organization of the 4th Division was completed. All the infantry battalions had been mobilized during the summer, but the three infantry brigade headquarters were not formed until the following winter (December 1940-February 1941);<sup>34</sup> and the divisional headquarters was set up still later. The recruitment of the balance of the Division was authorized by the War Committee of the Cabinet on 9 May 1941, by which time the 3rd Division's departure for the United Kingdom was imminent. On 10 June the 4th Division's headquarters was finally formed, with the appointment of Major-General L. F. Page as General Officer Commanding.<sup>35</sup>

The new Divisions' units were not the only ones raised in the hectic summer of 1940. On 15 July the Minister authorized the mobilization of eight additional infantry rifle battalions for local security purposes.<sup>36</sup> Another (The Royal Rifles of Canada) had been mobilized independently late in June.<sup>37</sup> In addition, five motorcycle regiments had been authorized early in July-one to operate with each brigade group of the 3rd Division on the East

Coast, one for the West Coast and one for the Niagara district. One of these regiments was a composite unit provided by the two Permanent Force cavalry regiments, The Royal Canadian Dragoons and Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians).<sup>38</sup>

The expansion of the armed forces led to new arrangements for their administration. An amendment to the Department of National Defence Act which received the Royal Assent on 22 May provided for the appointment of a Minister of National Defence for Air, and Mr. C. G. Power assumed the post. Another amendment, of 12 July, provided for a Minister of National Defence for Naval Services; Mr. Angus L. Macdonald was appointed to this charge.<sup>39</sup> Provision was made for an Associate Minister of National Defence "entitled to exercise all the powers of the Minister of National Defence", and Mr. Power combined this appointment with that of Air Minister. Although, technically, separate departments of government were not set up to control the naval and air services, in effect this is what took place. Following Mr. Rogers' death on 10 June, Colonel J. L. Ralston was appointed Minister of National Defence (5 July) and administered the Army. In matters affecting the air or naval service and another service, the powers of the Minister of National Defence were exercisable "in consultation with" the Air or Naval Ministers or both, as the case might be. The statute of 12 July 1940 further provided for the powers of one service minister to be exercisable in his absence by another; thus, if the Minister of National Defence and Associate Minister were absent, the Naval Minister would administer the whole Department, and if he too was absent this authority passed to the Air Minister. Thus the ministers became familiar with their colleagues' functions and duties, with resultant advantages to the public service.<sup>40</sup>

It is evident that the powers and authority of the respective Ministers were never clearly defined. In other circumstances this might have been awkward, but in practice the excellent personal relations between the service ministers obviated any difficulty. Mr. Power writes, "The three were bound together by ties of intimate friendship and on the part of Macdonald and Power particularly had such admiration and respect for Col. Ralston that they had no difficulty whatsoever in granting him the primacy over both, and by consent if not by law he was looked upon by all as the senior Minister."<sup>41</sup>

Colonel Ralston, however, was not a coordinating Minister of Defence as that term was understood in the United Kingdom, where Mr. Churchill combined this office with that of Prime Minister. In Canada the formal coordination of the armed forces on the political level was effected through the Defence Council, which was reorganized by an order in council of 13 September 1940 to consist of the Minister of National Defence as Chairman,

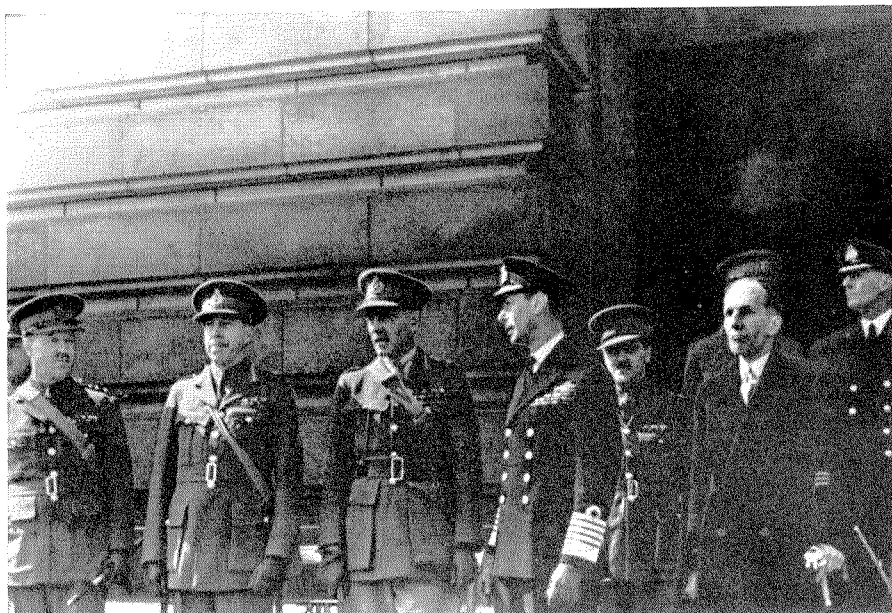
the Associate Minister and the Ministers for Naval Services and Air as Vice-Chairmen, and the three Chiefs of Staff and the Deputy Ministers for the three services as Members. This was an effective organ of inter-service coordination.<sup>42</sup> High military policy, on the other hand, was in general the province of the War Committee of the Cabinet, presided over by the Prime Minister. The three service ministers were members of this committee, along with other senior members of the Government.

Following the reorganization of the Defence Council, an "Army Committee", soon redesignated "Army Council", was established by the Minister of National Defence to advise him on Army policy and matters of administration and procedure affecting more than one branch of the staff. This was composed of the Minister as Chairman, the Chief of the General Staff and the heads of the other staff branches, and the Deputy Minister for the Army.<sup>43</sup>

One other measure taken during 1940's summer crisis has yet to be noted. On 17 June—the day on which Marshal Petain asked Hitler for an armistice—the War Committee agreed that a bill should be drafted providing for the general mobilization of human and material resources. The measure was introduced in the House of Commons next day, and received the Royal Assent on 21 June as the National Resources Mobilization Act.<sup>44</sup> It was a brief, highly-generalized statute which had the effect of authorizing the Governor in Council to make orders or regulations "requiring persons to place themselves, their services and their property at the disposal of His Majesty in the right of Canada, as may be deemed necessary or expedient for securing the public safety, the defence of Canada, the maintenance of public order, or the efficient prosecution of the war, or for maintaining supplies or services essential to the life of the community". It may have been based to some extent upon the United Kingdom's Emergency Powers Act, 1940, assented to on the previous 22 May.<sup>45</sup> The powers which the Canadian act conferred upon government were subject to only one reservation: they might not be exercised "for the purpose of requiring persons to serve in the military, naval or air forces outside of Canada and the territorial waters thereof". It thus authorized compulsory military service, but (in accordance with the Government's pledges) limited it to home defence. The act's administration, and its consequences in national manpower policy, are dealt with in Chapter IV.

After Dunkirk the question of equipment for the defence of the British Isles and the further prosecution of the war was one of desperate urgency. Although the bulk of the British Expeditionary Force had reached England safely, it had brought back practically nothing except "personal weapons"; heavy equipment could not be withdrawn. Vast stores of reserve supplies and equipment which had been accumulated on the Continent had been





#### CANADIANS AT THE PALACE

H.M. King George VI, with the High Commissioner for Canada and senior Canadian officers, watches the Royal 22e Régiment relieve the Welsh Guards at Buckingham Palace, 17 April 1940. From left to right are Brigadier the Hon. P. J. Montague, Maj.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, Maj.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, H.M. the King, Lt.-Col. A. E. Walford, and Hon. Vincent Massey.



#### BASIC TRAINING IN CANADA

Recruits on an obstacle course at Canadian Army (Basic) Training Centre No. 54, Montmagny, P.Q., June 1944.



*Photograph courtesy Major-General F. F. Worthington*

#### RENAULT TANKS ARRIVING FROM THE UNITED STATES, OCTOBER 1940

One topic dealt with in Canadian-American staff conversations held in Washington in July 1940 was the possibility of Canada's obtaining military supplies from the United States. After the Ogdensburg meeting between Mr. King and President Roosevelt in August the United States agreed to sell to Canada certain equipment including 250 obsolete and surplus light tanks. Canadian officers considered that in the absence of modern equipment these tanks, the U.S. version of the French 1917 model Renault two-man tank, would be useful for teaching driving and maintenance. The first shipment, 56 tanks, arrived on 4 October 1940. The photograph shows a shipment of 97 arriving at Camp Borden on 9 October.

lost to the enemy, or destroyed to prevent them from falling into his hands. Even rifles and small arms ammunition were very badly needed. In these circumstances, Canada was asked to give what assistance she could from her reserves. Unfortunately, a country which for many years had spent as little money as Canada upon its defence forces could have little in the way of reserves to send; but such material as existed and could be spared was shipped, only enough being kept back to meet the essential needs of training.

France as well as Britain was asking for equipment by the beginning of June, but there was little that Canada could do. A total of 75,000 Ross .303 rifles\* had by now been dispatched to the United Kingdom.<sup>46</sup> The War Committee was told on 3 June that 60 million rounds of small arms ammunition had been sent thither in answer to earlier appeals. Of this total, 25 million had been shipped in the early winter of 1939-40, and about 34,600,000 in four releases during May.<sup>47</sup> Only one million rounds remained in Canada's general reserve, and rifle practice had had to be curtailed. Accordingly, the Committee, with what regret can be imagined, had to tell the governments of Britain and France that no more rifles or ammunition could be spared. After equipping the Active Service Force units already organized, the remaining stores were in fact inadequate to provide training equipment for the Non-Permanent Active Militia.

### Canadian Troops for Iceland

The sending of Canadian troops to Iceland, and their subsequent withdrawal thence, occasioned much cabling and discussion, which can only be briefly summarized here.

The original British suggestion, contained in Lord Caldecote's letter of 18 May 1940 (above, page 78), was that Canada should garrison Iceland with troops other than those required for her field force. In answer to inquiries from Ottawa, Canadian Military Headquarters reported on 26 May that the War Office considered that the island required for defence four battalions in all, one of which might be a machine-gun battalion. The British authorities were anxious that the troops should arrive as soon as possible; a particularly urgent requirement was one infantry battalion needed at once to reinforce a British infantry brigade already in Iceland.<sup>48</sup> This somewhat altered the picture, and led to the abandonment of the scheme for using 3rd Division units, since these were just being formed. The only battalions in Canada in condition for immediate dispatch were those of the 2nd Division. It was decided accordingly to send one of these (The Royal Regiment of Canada); and the

\*To replace these, Canada in August purchased from the United States 80,000 Enfield .300 rifles with five million rounds of ammunition.

Chief of the General Staff obtained confirming authority for the assumption by Canada of the responsibility of providing and maintaining the garrison of Iceland, and for the dispatch of the Royal Regiment at the earliest possible moment.<sup>49</sup> Brigadier L. F. Page was appointed to command the Canadian force for Iceland, which became known as "Z" Force.

The situation was now changing again. The disaster in North-West Europe led the United Kingdom Government to the conclusion that further measures for Iceland's security should be taken without delay, and on 6 June the Canadian High Commissioner in London reported that they would now be most grateful if Canada would agree to take responsibility for its defence on an increased scale. It was considered that in addition to the brigade already in the island there would be required two rifle battalions, one machinegun battalion, six flying boats, one heavy anti-aircraft battery, additional coast defences and some ancillary troops; furthermore, another infantry battalion would probably be required in the winter. The United Kingdom Government observed that, if Canada could undertake this whole commitment, they would themselves be prepared to provide the second battalion for the West Indies which she had agreed to send.<sup>50</sup>

Canadian planning now proceeded on this new basis, and the intention again was to use units of the 3rd Division; but on 14 June a request was made to accelerate the movement. This meant that the 2nd Division must be drawn upon once more.<sup>51</sup> On 20 June the High Commissioner's office reported that the British Government had gone still further, suggesting that the whole of the 2nd Division, less such units as would not be required for garrison duty, should go to Iceland. This, it was indicated, would probably release the British brigade there for the defence of the United Kingdom itself. It was further pointed out that the arrangement need not be permanent; the 2nd Division might in due course be relieved in Iceland by the 3rd, and could then move to England for incorporation in a Canadian Corps.<sup>52</sup>

This request caused some anxiety in Ottawa, one reason being conditions in the Pacific (where the Japanese were exerting pressure designed to turn Britain's European embarrassments to their own advantage) \* and Canada's undefended situation if the 2nd Division were withdrawn at an early date. Moreover, the Division's advance parties had already gone to England in accordance with the earlier arrangement, and its vehicles had largely been shipped thither. The Chief of the General Staff considered that unless the United Kingdom thought sending the 2nd Division to Iceland a matter of immediate and paramount importance, the balance of it should stay in Canada until the 3rd and 4th Divisions were sufficiently trained to meet, at

\*On 18 July the British Government found itself obliged to agree to suspend, for the present, the transit of war material and certain other goods to China over the Burma Road. The road was re-opened three months later.

least, any internal security problem such as might be occasioned by the large Japanese population in British Columbia. The Canadian Government communicated with London along these lines, remarking in passing, "we feel that Canadian public opinion would not readily be reconciled to our forces being permanently in garrison abroad".<sup>53</sup>

As late as 8 July, however, the High Commissioner in London was reporting continued very earnest representations by the "United Kingdom Government" in favour of sending the whole of the 2nd Division to Iceland.<sup>54</sup> On the 11th the Canadian Government replied at length, stating that it "very much" desired that the Division should be concentrated in the United Kingdom, not sent to Iceland or broken up between the two places. It suggested that the United Kingdom should itself relieve the Canadian battalions which were in Iceland or on the way thither, so that the 2nd Division could shortly be assembled in England and the Canadian Corps formed there, "while the force in Iceland would be a homogeneous division of the United Kingdom forces".<sup>55</sup>

This proposal was immediately accepted by the United Kingdom authorities, whose change of front was reported by the High Commissioner on 13 July.<sup>56</sup> The reason, it is now clear, was a sudden intervention by the British Prime Minister. On 6 July Mr. Churchill, along with Mr. Eden (who had become Secretary of State for War) and General Ironside (C.-in-C. Home Forces), had visited the 1st Canadian Division south of London and seen a demonstration by the 2nd Brigade. On the 7th he sent a minute<sup>57</sup> to Mr. Eden:

You shared my astonishment yesterday at the statement made to us by General McNaughton that the whole of the 2d Canadian Division was destined for Iceland. It would surely be a very great mistake to allow these fine troops to be employed in so distant a theatre. Apparently the first three battalions have already gone there. No one was told anything about this. We require two Canadian divisions to work as a corps as soon as possible....

From now on, planning continued on the basis which the Canadian Government had suggested.\* Thus it turned out that Canadian units stayed in Iceland only a few months. Brigadier Page with part of his brigade headquarters and The Royal Regiment of Canada reached Reykjavik on 16 June 1940.<sup>59</sup> The remainder of "Z" Force, comprising Les Fusiliers MontRoyal, The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (M.G.), an infantry brigade signal section and details, arrived on 9 July.<sup>60</sup> The Camerons, who had been allotted to the 3rd Division, spent the winter on the island, but the remainder of the Force, including Page and his headquarters, sailed for England on 31 October and rejoined the main body of the 2nd Canadian Division at Aldershot on 4 November.<sup>61</sup>

\*General McNaughton noted on 6 July that he had suggested to the Secretary of State for War during their interview that the proper solution was "to induce U.S.A. to occupy the island".<sup>58</sup> American occupation was, in fact, the ultimate solution.

It may be noted here that the Divisional Headquarters, with a good part of the Division, had arrived in the Clyde in the Sixth Flight on 1 August. The Division's last two infantry battalions, however, did not reach the United Kingdom until Christmas Day 1940, when they landed from the Eighth Flight.<sup>62</sup>

The responsibilities undertaken by Canada in Newfoundland and the West Indies in the summer of 1940 are described in Chapter V.

### The Formation of the Canadian Corps

At this point a word must be said concerning the implementation of the decision taken on 17 May 1940 to form a Canadian Corps overseas.

It was delayed for seven months. One obvious reason was the slowness in concentrating the 2nd Division in England, due in part to the Iceland venture and in part to the Government's reluctance to move the whole of the Division overseas until the training of the 3rd and 4th Divisions' units was well advanced. In accordance with this latter policy, the 6th Brigade was kept in Canada; the War Committee was told on 9 July that it would be held at Shilo to deal with any emergencies which might arise on the Pacific Coast. It was two of its battalions which arrived in England only on 25 December—the day the Corps was finally formed.

There were also certain matters of detail to be worked out before the Corps could come into existence. As an anti-invasion measure the 1st Canadian Division and the Canadian ancillary troops in England were incorporated in July into a new British corps, which General McNaughton was appointed to command. The activities of this 7th Corps belong properly to the story of the Canadians in Britain, and an account of them is given in Chapter IX. The prospective change-over from the 7th to a Canadian Corps, however, involved some questions of Anglo-Canadian policy, for many of the Corps Troops of the existing formation were British, and some of them would have to stay in the Canadian Corps until Canada could provide units of the same type. The financial basis for this arrangement was the subject of discussions with the War Office which reflected the effect of the long controversy over responsibility for equipping the Canadian ancillary troops (above, page 67). The War Office would have liked Canada to consent to maintain British units temporarily remaining with the Canadian Corps in the same manner in which the British had maintained the Canadian non-divisional troops. The ultimate agreement, reached in conferences in which the new Minister of National Defence (Colonel Ralston) took part while in England late in 1940, was however founded on the general principle that each government would take responsibility for all charges in

respect of its own units.<sup>63</sup> This had the very great advantage of simplicity and obviated accounting difficulties.

The advent of winter had lifted, for the moment, the threat of German invasion of Britain against which the 7th Corps had been formed. The 7th Corps could accordingly be dispensed with; and the administrative questions involved in organizing a Canadian Corps having been settled, that formation could now be set up. Mr. King announced its advent on Christmas Eve; and at one minute past midnight this successor to the famous force of 1915-18 came into official existence, with Lieut.-General McNaughton as General Officer Commanding.<sup>64</sup>

### The Army Programme for 1941

Major-General T. V. Anderson, who had carried the heavy burden of the office of Chief of the General Staff since November 1938, was in July 1940 appointed Inspector General of the Military Forces in Central Canada, and Major-General H. D. G. Crerar, \* whose nine months in London had given him valuable experience of the broad problems of the prosecution of the war, was on General McNaughton's recommendation brought back to Ottawa and appointed C.G.S. with effect from 22 July.<sup>65</sup>

On the 26th Crerar attended a meeting of the War Committee and presented his estimate of the existing military situation. A German attempt at invading the United Kingdom was possible at any moment. Crerar reviewed the various developments which might take place, emphasizing the point that Canada's chief concern, in existing circumstances, was the British Isles; they were her best defensive line, and it was in her interest to give every possible assistance in maintaining it against Hitler. This was strategically sounder than building up a great apparatus of local defence within Canada.† With reference to the desirability of sending further troops to England, he said that there would be no object in sending more divisions overseas until the equipment situation had improved. In his view, however, Canada ought to send additional troops to strengthen the British Isles just as soon as there was a reasonable prospect of being able to complete their equipment by the time their training period was over.

Crerar's first great task was to prepare a formal appreciation of the situation and a Canadian Army Programme to meet it. In September he submitted his detailed proposals to the Minister of National Defence.<sup>66</sup> The best information available from the War Office, he wrote, indicated that the

\*Brigadier Crerar was promoted Major General effective 15 January 1940.

†On Crerar's recommendations for home defence measures at this time, see below, Chapter V.

British strategy in 1941 "must be one of attrition", looking forward (somewhat optimistically, it must be said!) to passing to the offensive with all possible strength "in all spheres and all theatres" in the spring of 1942. The enemy's most probable action during the winter of 1940-41 was an attack on Egypt from Libya, possibly coupled with offensives through Spain or the Balkans, or against Morocco. An attempt at invading the British Isles was unlikely between October and April. Such were the basic strategic conditions. Crerar summed up his Army Programme to meet them in the following terms

A Canadian Corps of three Divisions should be completed [in the United Kingdom] by the early spring of 1941, and should be joined by an Armoured Brigade Group as soon as possible thereafter.

While the date the 4th Division will be required overseas cannot as yet be determined, we should be prepared for its despatch in the latter part of 1941.

Subsequent additions to the Canadian Forces overseas should be armoured forces rather than Infantry.

Provision should be made for replacing the 3rd and 4th Divisions, and the Armoured Brigade Group by equivalent forces for home defence.

The unmobilized portion of the N.P.A.M. will become the Reserve units and formations of the Canadian Army, with as their principal functions, the holding of partially trained personnel and the completion of their individual training.<sup>67</sup>

This programme's most striking feature was its emphasis upon armoured formations, a reflection of the experience of the short campaign in France and Belgium. An enlarged foundation for armoured development in Canada had been laid before it was formally submitted. As we have seen (above, pages 19 and 34), a small beginning had been made before the outbreak of war, when a few tank units were organized and an Armoured Fighting Vehicles School was set up. Now, on 13 August 1940, the Minister of National Defence approved a recommendation of the C.G.S. for instituting a Canadian Armoured Corps and organizing the country's first armoured formation—the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade—which might later expand into a full armoured division.<sup>68</sup> The Brigade actually came into existence at Camp Borden in October, Colonel F. F. Worthington, the commander of the Armoured Fighting Vehicles Training Centre, being appointed to the command.<sup>69</sup>

This programme was a plan for 1941, and General Crerar made no attempt to forecast precisely what the size or shape of the Canadian Army Overseas might be when it had reached its full development. However, he gave an indication of the direction of his thought in a memorandum to the Minister dated 3 September.<sup>70</sup> The great object for the British Empire, this memorandum says, is "to raise land and air forces until our total power is sufficient to over-balance that of Germany, which is attenuated by the necessity of garrisoning conquered countries and diminished by the effect



of our blockade". At the moment Canada's efforts in this direction were limited by shortages of equipment; at some future time they might perhaps be limited by the numbers that could be raised by voluntary enlistment to serve overseas. "While it is impossible to calculate exactly, due to the many imponderables affecting the problem, it is estimated that on the voluntary enlistment basis, from five to seven divisions, of which one or more should be armoured, might well be the largest force this country could maintain overseas throughout a war of several years duration". Crerar's plan specifically contemplated a total of four infantry divisions overseas; he also made it clear that the armoured brigade group which he proposed to send should be built up into an armoured division in due course; and he recommended that the units of a brigade group of a second armoured division should be selected at once, for future mobilization. The basic procedure was to keep the equivalent of two infantry divisions and an armoured brigade available for home defence, replacing formations sent overseas by new ones mobilized at home.<sup>71</sup> He referred to the desirability of forming very shortly a fifth and subsequently a sixth infantry division; his memorandum of 3 September suggested that both of these might be largely filled with trainees called up for compulsory service under the National Resources Mobilization Act, but a later one (24 September) mentioned the possibility that one "might be completed on a purely C.A.S.F. basis". Adding the whole together, his plan may be said to have foreshadowed an overseas army of six or seven divisions, two of them armoured, all composed of volunteers; and two divisions for home defence, largely composed of N.R.M.A. men.

In one of his submissions,<sup>72</sup> the C.G.S. referred to the possibility "at present envisioned" that an army tank brigade (of "infantry" tanks-see below, page 90) might be raised and sent overseas during 1941. He remarked, however, that in some influential quarters in the British Army the opinion was held that infantry tank units should be eliminated.

One special point in the Crerar plan remains to be noticed. "The scale on which formations are to be raised," he wrote, "and the general reorganization of the military forces, suggests that the time has come to abandon the title 'Militia'. We have a Royal Canadian *Navy* and a Royal Canadian *Air Force* and it would seem logical, and in accord with common speech that we should have a Canadian Army."<sup>73</sup> No one objected, and an order in council of 19 November<sup>74</sup> provided, "The Military Forces of Canada shall henceforth be designated and described as 'The Canadian Army' ". Units embodied for continuous service were to be designated "Active" and all others (i.e. those of the former Non-Permanent Active Militia) as "Reserve". A time-honoured term thus passed out of wartime use, and one more appropriate to the conditions of the moment took its place.

### The Modification and Approval of the 1941 Programme

At the end of November 1940 Colonel Ralston and General Crerar went to England for an extended visit. As a result of their conferences overseas the Army Programme for 1941 was somewhat modified.

On 17 December Colonel Ralston met Mr. Eden, and was told that the War Office "would like the Canadian Government to provide an armoured division as soon as possible, to be equipped with M.3 tanks ordered by the U.K. in the U.S.A." Some administrative difficulties were seen in having an unattached armoured brigade arrive in advance of the rest of the Division. The War Office considered the provision of an army tank brigade by Canada, to be equipped from Canadian resources, "desirable, but not so desirable as the division".<sup>75</sup> On 2 January 1941 there was a further conference with Captain David Margesson, who had now succeeded Eden as Secretary of State for War. The War Office again urged that the personnel of an armoured division would be a very important contribution. It was explained that the British authorities were faced with the necessity of finding nine such divisions. This was evidently the result of the initiative of Mr. Churchill, who had written to his Cabinet colleagues on 15 October, "At present we are aiming at five armoured divisions, and armoured brigades equivalent to three more. This is not enough. We cannot hope to compete with the enemy in numbers of men, and must therefore rely upon an exceptional proportion of armoured fighting vehicles. Ten armoured divisions is the target to aim for to the end of 1941...."<sup>76</sup>

Canada was being asked to provide one of the new divisions. Margesson summed up the British desires in these terms:<sup>77</sup>

- "(a) The War Office are particularly anxious that the personnel of a complete Canadian Armoured division should be formed ready for despatch to the United Kingdom by the early Autumn of 1941. They anticipate that equipment from British orders (either U.S.A. or U.K.) would be available to equip the division, which would thus be completely trained and available for employment during the first quarter of 1942.
- "(b) If in addition to the above, and without slowing up its formation, a Canadian Army Tank Brigade, for inclusion in the Canadian Corps, could also be raised, equipped with Mark III Tanks now being made in Canada, and despatched to the United Kingdom in the Summer of 1941, this would be most welcome to the War Office. For this purpose the United Kingdom Government were entirely agreeable to Canada having priority on Canadian production of Mark III tanks and to assist if necessary by provision of I tanks\* from United Kingdom production."

\*Infantry tanks, heavier and slower than the cruisers with which armoured divisions were equipped. The Mark III infantry tank was later called the Valentine.

Colonel Ralston inquired about further infantry formations; and the British representatives made it clear that for the moment these were considered less important than armour.<sup>78</sup>

General Macready [Assistant Chief of the Imperial General Staff] said that so far as can be foreseen at present, it was not considered necessary or desirable that a 4th Canadian Infantry division should be sent to England during 1941, but the War Office would be glad if the possibility of its despatch by the Summer of 1942 could be borne in mind.

The minutes of this meeting conclude, "There was general agreement that if Canada could provide three infantry divisions, with the necessary Corps troops and A.A. units, an Armoured division and an Army Tank Brigade by the end of 1941, it would be a most valuable and whole-hearted contribution to the Empire war effort."<sup>79</sup>

Ralston promised to place the views of the War Office before the Canadian Government. Three days later he did so by cable,<sup>80</sup> recommending changes in the Army Programme along the lines of the British requests. He now suggested that Canada send overseas successively, during 1941, the remaining Corps Troops for the existing two-division Corps; the 3rd Division and its complement of Corps Troops; an army tank brigade; and a complete armoured division. The dispatch of the 4th Division could be postponed until, probably, the summer of 1942.

The Cabinet War Committee considered this telegram on 8 January 1941. In view of the large expenditures involved, and the desirability of dealing with the programmes of the Navy and the Air Force simultaneously, it was agreed to defer decision until the Minister's return. Colonel Ralston arrived back in Ottawa on 24 January, and reported to the Committee the same day. He said that an early attempt at invading the British Isles was still regarded as the enemy's most likely move, and added that he had not realized before visiting the United Kingdom how great was the present need for men. The British authorities were greatly embarrassed by the necessity of providing simultaneously for the protection of Britain, the security of the Middle East, and the war industries. Ralston reported that it was important to provide an army tank brigade, and observed that a Canadian Corps of three divisions, this brigade and ancillary troops would represent useful immediate assistance for the defence of Britain during 1941.

The programme was carefully reviewed by the War Committee, and its essential features (particularly the formation of the army tank brigade, and the organization and dispatch overseas in due course of the armoured division) were approved on 28 January.\* General Crerar wrote to General McNaughton subsequently in a personal letter, "I must give  
full

\*The authority for the armoured division had been granted in principle, it appears, on 13 August 1940, although the record is rather obscure. Ralston's cable of 5 January 1941 refers to the division as "already authorized".

credit to the Minister who backed the Programme 100% and needed to use fairly strong arguments with some of his colleagues".<sup>81</sup>

The implementation of the programme now went forward. The existing armoured brigade was not directly converted into an army tank brigade, but two of its three regiments (The Ontario Regiment and The Three Rivers Regiment) were turned into army tank battalions and transferred to the new formation, and its commander, Brigadier Worthington, was also transferred. The 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade was formally organized in February 1941. Its third battalion (The Calgary Regiment) joined it at Camp Borden in March. The Brigade trained there until it went overseas in the following June.<sup>82</sup> It had been given priority over the 3rd Division, but the latter was sent to the United Kingdom later in the summer, the greater part of it arriving at the end of July. It was virtually complete in England early in September.<sup>83</sup> Various units of Corps Troops, etc., were arriving (or being formed in Britain) throughout the period. It was possible, as we shall see, for the whole Canadian Corps, now consisting of the three infantry divisions, the army tank brigade and large numbers of ancillary troops, to be concentrated in Sussex before the end of 1941.

The 1st Armoured Brigade continued to exist as a formation of the armoured division which was now raised and which was designated, in the beginning, the 1st Canadian Armoured Division. Divisional Headquarters was formed at Camp Borden in March. Major-General E. W. Sansom was appointed to the command, being succeeded at the 3rd Division by Major-General C. B. Price.<sup>84</sup> Two experienced tank officers, Lt.-Cols. E. L. Fanshawe and J. R. Farrington, were lent by the British Army to take the appointments of G.S.O. 1 and A.A. & Q.M.G.,\* respectively, during the period of mobilization.<sup>85</sup> The two Permanent Force cavalry regiments were both included in the Division's original order of battle, The Royal Canadian Dragoons as the 1st Armoured Car Regiment and Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) as the 2nd Armoured Regiment. At this time the organization of an armoured division comprehended two armoured brigades (each consisting of three armoured regiments and a motor battalion of infantry) and a "support group" including one field regiment, one light anti-aircraft regiment and one anti-tank regiment of artillery and an infantry battalion.

To hasten the mobilization of the 1st Army Tank Brigade and the 1st Armoured Division, the 4th Division was "robbed" of units and men. The 17th Field Regiment R.C.A. had already been withdrawn from it for incorporation in the 1st Armoured Brigade Group, and now became part of the Armoured Division. The 4th Division's anti-tank unit (the 4th Anti-Tank

\*The two senior staff appointments at a divisional headquarters. The General Staff Officer, First Grade, headed the General Staff Branch (concerned with operations, intelligence and training) and coordinated the divisional staff generally; the Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General headed the administrative branches of the staff.

Regiment R.C.A.) was similarly transferred, and the Armoured Division's light anti-aircraft regiment (the 5th) was formed by converting 4th Division field batteries. Medical, Engineer, and Provost units of the 4th Division were transferred to the new brigade and division, and Signals, Ordnance and Army Service Corps personnel were moved over wholesale. The Armoured Division's infantry and armour came mainly from units already mobilized. The armoured regiments of its 2nd Armoured Brigade were provided by converting three of the motorcycle regiments formed during the summer of 1940.<sup>96</sup>

Utilizing 4th Division units for the Armoured Division was not merely a means of speeding the organization of the latter; it also served as an economy measure. The size of the proposed budget for 1941-42 had caused alarm at the Department of Finance, and on 28 January the Cabinet War Committee agreed that the service departments and the Department of Munitions and Supply should so adjust their programmes as to reduce their total requirements from \$1500 million to \$1300 million. In these circumstances General Crerar, taking into account General Wavell's recent successes in the Middle East, felt that it was safe both to take 4th Division men and units for the Armoured Division and to delay reconstituting the 4th Division until later in the financial year, as well as deleting provision which had been proposed for mobilizing a fifth infantry division and taking preliminary steps towards mobilizing a sixth. It was only in May 1941 (after disasters had befallen the Allied cause in Africa and Greece) that reconstitution of the 4th Division was ordered and Crerar asked for authority to mobilize another infantry division for home defence.<sup>87</sup>

In July 1941 the 1st Armoured Division was redesignated the "5th Canadian (Armoured) Division".<sup>88</sup> (This designation was never officially altered afterwards; but the simpler form "5th Canadian Armoured Division" soon came into common use.) The Division moved overseas, as planned, that autumn, its main flight (Convoy T.C. 15) reaching the United Kingdom on 22 November. This convoy, which included the divisional headquarters, was the largest single troop movement from Canada up to that time,\* totalling nearly 14,000 all ranks.<sup>90</sup> As a result of the build-up during 1941, the strength of the Canadian Army Overseas at the end of the calendar year was 124,472 all ranks.<sup>91</sup>

### The Development of the Army Programme for 1942

During 1941 and the early part of 1942 there was much official discussion, at home and in England, of the further expansion of the Canadian

\*The largest of the war was "A.T. 56", of July 1943;<sup>89</sup> see below, page 190.

overseas army. It was increasingly clear that the arrangements now to be made would represent, to all intents and purposes, the final stage.

On 11 August 1941 General Crerar, writing confidentially from Ottawa to General McNaughton,<sup>92</sup> said that a programme was being prepared but that he proposed to submit it to the Government as tentative only, subject to discussion with the Corps Commander and the War Office. He anticipated that the Minister and himself would have to take another trip to the United Kingdom in the autumn to discuss the matter. In the meantime, he presented some thoughts for McNaughton's consideration:

To commence with, our departmental studies of man-power available do not indicate that numbers will be a restrictive factor for some time yet in respect to an expansion of the Canadian Army. Perhaps the A.G. has already spoken to you on this subject, but, if not, I might say that our departmental appreciation indicates that man-power is available to maintain a Canadian Army of eight Divisions, of which two will be in Canada, for a war period of over six years from now. An Inter-departmental Committee on Man-Power has now been formed and is considering the calculations submitted by this and other departments such as Labour and Munitions and Supply. It may be that the results of this Committee's considerations will be somewhat at variance from the estimates we have separately reached. On the other hand, our own calculations certainly do not suffer from optimism and I believe that the numbers for the Army are there, without interfering with essential industry and other home activities, providing the Government takes the steps required to get those numbers into the Services.

All the above leads me to the conclusion that, providing the Government are prepared to face up to the financial and other strain, we should be able to reinforce the Corps during 1942 with not only the 4th Division but another Armoured Division as well. This would result in too large a Corps, but have you ever considered the pros and cons of a Canadian Army comprising 2 Corps each of 2 Divisions and an Armoured Division? I fully admit that this is a pretty ambitious proposal because the necessary increase in Corps, etc., troops will be fairly heavy. At the same time, I do not think that the picture is an impossible one.

Crerar explained that these suggestions had not yet been put before the Minister "even in a tentative way". McNaughton did not reply directly to this letter, explaining later that he had put off doing so as the result of understanding that an official "proposition for 1942" might be expected shortly.<sup>93</sup>

It is worth noting that Colonel Ralston had mentioned to the War Committee on 29 July the fact that the Adjutant-General's survey of manpower had suggested that there was manpower available in Canada to permit of the mobilization of eight divisions—six overseas and two for home defence—and their maintenance for a period of five years from the end of December 1942. This meeting of the War Committee accepted Crerar's proposal to mobilize a new infantry division, numbered the 6th, for home defence (see below, page 166). It was further agreed that Canada should maintain overseas four divisions, plus the army tank brigade, with two divisions at home. Beyond this, no commitments were authorized for the present.

In September Crerar put his tentative plan before the Minister.<sup>94</sup> It was important, he wrote, that plans for the army should be "such as can be

implemented with our present system of voluntary enlistment for overseas service"; it was also essential that Canada should provide "the maximum force overseas that it is possible to organize and maintain". Having given thought to the various possibilities (including a suggestion received from the Corps Commander through his chief administrative officer, Brigadier G. R. Turner, that the best way to create Canadian armoured formations was by the conversion of infantry units already in the United Kingdom),<sup>95</sup> Crerar suggested for preliminary consideration "the following Canadian Army Programme for 1941-42":

"(a) Conversion of the 4th Canadian Division to an armoured division for service overseas.

"(b) Eventual formation overseas of a Canadian Armoured Corps of two divisions.

"(c) Creation of a Canadian Army Headquarters overseas to command and administer the Canadian Corps of three Divisions and the Canadian Armoured Corps of two Armoured Divisions."

Final consideration of this programme would have to be postponed until after the discussions overseas.

Ralston and Crerar arrived in the United Kingdom on 13 October 1941. This visit gave the Minister ample opportunities for conversations with the British authorities and General McNaughton.<sup>96</sup> On 6 November, following his return to Ottawa, Ralston reported to the War Committee that the Secretary of State of War (Captain Margesson) had told him that another armoured division from Canada would be a most helpful contribution. What was in mind, Ralston remarked, was converting the existing 4th Division; however, no commitment to do this had been made. He mentioned that it might be desirable to set up a new command, apart from the Corps, to include the Lines of Communication troops, now numbering some 30,000; but he seems to have made no specific mention of an army headquarters, and any discussions on this subject which may have taken place overseas between him, McNaughton and Crerar appear to have gone unrecorded. In a cable<sup>97</sup> sent on 14 November, General McNaughton, in addition to providing a long list of the ancillary troops which were required, mentioned that a second army tank brigade and a second armoured division would be "most useful further additions" to the force overseas. This cable also contained no reference to an army headquarters.

On 18 November General Crerar submitted to the Minister a definite Army Programme "for the balance of this year and for 1942".<sup>98</sup> The army headquarters element was omitted. The chief items were the organization for service overseas, first, of nineteen Corps and Army units, with a total strength of 378 officers and 3893 other ranks, already authorized but not yet provided; secondly, of twenty-five additional Corps and Army units now required, with a total strength of 172 officers and 3136 other ranks; and

finally, of an armoured division (to be formed by converting the 4th Division), an army tank brigade, and the Corps and Army units required to support and serve these new formations, amounting to thirty-nine units with a total strength of 255 officers and 6011 other ranks. The C.G.S. remarked, "Provision of these units will permit the constitution of a Canadian Armoured Corps of two armoured divisions." He added that he saw "no military factors in the present strategic situation" that would warrant the mobilization of an additional division for home defence, but this might become necessary if conditions changed for the worse.

Before this programme was finally approved, it underwent alterations which included the reinstatement of the army headquarters mentioned in Crerar's early draft. On Christmas Day 1941 General McNaughton had a conference on organization matters with General Sir Bernard Paget, who had now been appointed C.-in-C. Home Forces. Crerar, who had given up the appointment of C.G.S. and was to command the Canadian Corps in an acting capacity while McNaughton was on leave,\* was also present. To a query by Paget on higher organization, McNaughton replied that he "would prefer an Army H.Q. with two Corps". Next day McNaughton cabled the Minister of National Defence as follows:<sup>99</sup>

In our discussions yesterday General Paget C.-in-C. Home Forces reiterated views previously expressed to me by his predecessor Brooke now C.I.G.S. that on account of the size of Canadian Forces in the United Kingdom we should now provide an Army Headquarters. It is my view that implementation of Army Programme which I discussed with you on your visit and which is given in some detail in my GS 2512 dated 14th November 1941 will require the formation of a second corps headquarters and some small additions to ancillary units.

Ralston replied: "This involves a somewhat imposing expansion in overhead and did not understand that it had been advocated by you. Understood you proposed to put forward recommendations for increases of Corps staff to permit of more attention being paid to L. of C. and Ancillary units. It was in Crerar's recommendation for Army Programme that the possibility of this expansion was indicated as a possible corollary if another armoured division was approved and if and when it was sent to the U.K." He went on to suggest that it might be well not to discuss the matter with the War Office until it had been explored in Ottawa during a visit which the Corps Commander was shortly to make to Canada.<sup>100</sup>

Before McNaughton left for Canada, he had received a personal note<sup>101</sup> from the new Chief of the Imperial General Staff saying that he would welcome a chance of discussing the future Canadian organization. General Brooke wrote:

The force seems to me to be growing too big to be handled by one Corps Commander.

\*McNaughton had been on sick leave since 14 November. Major-General G. R. Pearkes commanded the Corps until Crerar's arrival.



I feel that you require a Force or Army Headquarters which will take over the running of all the rear services, workshops, base organization, etc., and thus free the Corps Commander's hands for the job of commanding & training the fighting formations. That in itself is a full time job!

This was rather less than enthusiastic support for the formation of an operational Army Headquarters. It was, however, full recognition of the fact that some change in higher organization was required.

The War Committee examined the Army Programme for 1942 carefully. During this consideration, the war situation was fundamentally altered by the sudden attack by Japan (7 December 1941), which immediately brought the United States into the conflict. This may have had some influence on the final decision. The Labour Supply Investigation Committee, which appears to be the Inter-Departmental Committee referred to in General Crerar's letter to General McNaughton of 11 August, had made its report on 16 October. It expressed the opinion that "609,000 men between the ages of 17 and 40 years in August, 1941, are *potentially* available for the armed forces"; but it added with great emphasis, "these 609,000 men will be available only if the most drastic measures are adopted".<sup>102</sup> The Government's commitments against compulsory overseas service were of course still in effect. At a meeting of the War Committee on 3 December the new Chief of the General Staff (Lieut.-General Kenneth Stuart) said in reply to questions that in his opinion the programme could be carried out on the voluntary basis, and that he considered that the number of reinforcements in sight would be adequate under foreseeable circumstances. He also said that the programme represented the visible ceiling of army expansion; it would make possible an excellent, well-balanced and adequate contribution by the Canadian Army in the European theatre.

Before the programme was approved, the Canadian Government was able to obtain the advice of Mr. Churchill, who said that armoured divisions were the highest form of army requirement, and that another from Canada would certainly be most welcome. The programme was in fact authorized before General McNaughton arrived in Canada. Along with those for the Navy and the Air Force, it was approved by the full Cabinet on 6 January 1942. On 26 January, while McNaughton was on the ocean, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons that "a Canadian army of two army corps" would be created overseas during 1942.

It will be noted that during these discussions in Ottawa the current manpower anxieties had given General Crerar's idea of a six-division overseas Army its quietus. It was now quite clear that not more than five divisions would be authorized.

## First Canadian Army Comes Into Existence

The basic decisions on the Army Programme having been reached before his arrival, General McNaughton was able to devote himself while in Ottawa to discussing broad policies and various points of detail. On 6 March he attended a meeting of the War Committee and spoke of the problems of the overseas army. He said that the relationship of the Army Commander to the Department of National Defence had been settled satisfactorily, the general principle being that the former should have direct and adequate authority in the details of administration of the Canadian Army Overseas, subject to control by the Government where principles were involved. The Minister of National Defence had agreed that this degree of freedom was necessary. Canadian Military Headquarters in the United Kingdom, McNaughton observed, had two primary sets of responsibilities-as a forward echelon of the Department of National Defence and as an agent of the Army Commander. He said that after the completion of the new programme the Canadian Army Overseas would constitute a self-contained, well-balanced force, suitable for its present role in the defence of the United Kingdom, and for future employment on the Continent. He stated that the 1942 programme represented in his opinion the upper limit of the force which Canada could deploy and maintain in a war of long duration; no major, increase would or should be made beyond it.

The Army Commander emphasized the importance of the security of the British Isles. The enemy, he said, was continuing invasion preparations, and invasion of those islands was still the most dangerous of all contingencies. In these circumstances, the first and most important task for the Canadian Army continued to be the defence of the United Kingdom; its secondary role was that of eventual operations upon the Continent. At this period, the Canadian Government, as a result of the Japanese successes in Asia, was being pressed for increased defences in British Columbia (below, page 170). McNaughton expressed the opinion that under existing conditions the Japanese could attempt no serious attack upon Canada; the present probable limit of their enterprises was nuisance raids. Canada's best general policy, he suggested, was to concentrate upon the protection of the United Kingdom; to increase war production to the limit; and to find some method of bringing Canadian engineering skill and methods to bear upon the design and development of weapons.

During a visit to Washington on 8-11 March, General McNaughton had conversations with President Roosevelt and various American military officers. In these he expressed the same opinions which he had submitted to the Canadian Government, emphasizing the importance of the security of

the United Kingdom and the likelihood that the war would ultimately be won by an offensive launched from that country "across the narrow seas".<sup>103</sup> He returned to England late in March to carry out the programme which had been approved. Authority for the formation of Army Headquarters and units to work in affiliation with it had been given by the War Committee on 11 March. In consequence, Headquarters First Canadian Army came into existence on Easter Monday, 6 April 1942, with McNaughton as G.O.C.-in-C. Crerar retained command of the Canadian Corps, which now became the 1st Canadian Corps.

The development of the new Army was to proceed by stages. The first phase would be the formation of a nucleus staff and a beginning on mobilizing the several units required to work with Army Headquarters (Army Signals, etc.) In the second phase, Army Headquarters would be gradually completed to about half its final establishment—this being achieved, it was anticipated, by about the middle of June 1942—and the related ancillary units would be brought up to strength as required. The third phase was thus outlined:<sup>104</sup>

H.Q. 2 Cdn Corps would be organized on an establishment which is to be provided for the purpose to be completed about 1 Jul 42. On the completion of this H.Q. it would be exchanged with H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps in an operational role and the latter brought out of the Order of Battle and reorganized also on the lower establishment.

It proved impossible in practice to carry out this programme as planned, particularly with respect to the new Corps Headquarters. The main difficulty here was the shortage of trained staff officers.<sup>105</sup> Headquarters 2nd Canadian Corps was not actually set up until 14 January 1943, some six months later than originally planned. Major-General E. W. Sansom was promoted Lieut. General and appointed to command the Corps, being succeeded at the 5th Canadian Armoured Division by Major-General C. R. S. Stein.<sup>106</sup>

During the early months of 1942, the complicated process of converting the 4th Infantry Division into the 4th Armoured Division was going forward in Canada. Brigadier Worthington became a Major-General and was appointed to the command. His task was somewhat eased by improvements in the equipment situation; Canadian "Ram" tanks were now coming off the production line, and thus the units were able to train in Canada with the equipment which, in the first instance, they would use overseas. The Division moved across the Atlantic in the late summer and early autumn of 1942, the two main convoys reaching the Clyde on 31 August and 6 October. The last units arrived in the *Queen Elizabeth* on 4 November.<sup>107</sup> The 2nd Army Tank Brigade was organized in Canada in January 1942 (its headquarters being provided by redesignating that of the 11th Infantry Brigade, a 4th Division formation now no longer required),<sup>108</sup> but it did not go overseas until the summer of 1943.

### The Final Composition of the Field Force

During 1942, there was intense discussion of the composition of the Canadian Army Overseas. The problem was extraordinarily complicated, and can be considered here only in its broadest aspects.

The increasing stringency of the manpower situation was a basic factor, the more so as the limits of Canadian capacity had not yet been defined. In June 1942 General McNaughton asked N.D.H.Q. to fix the total establishment which might be used as a basis for planning the field army,<sup>109</sup> but this information could not be provided at once. After his conferences with Ralston and Stuart in October, he recorded that it had become apparent that there were still "difficulties in reaching a conclusion as to the proper balance between allocations to War Industry and between the Sea, Land and Air Forces", but that it was hoped that these things could be clarified in December.<sup>110</sup> Apart from manpower, other complicating factors were the chronic shortage of shipping for moving troops from Canada to England; certain important alterations in organization which were in progress, or under discussion, within the British Army; and the unsettled state of planning for future operations, which compelled the Canadian staffs to allow for the possibility of the Army having to take part in major battles on the Continent, at some uncertain date in 1943, before the limited shipping available could bring the whole of the authorized force in from Canada.

The fundamental problem was that of providing the great number of ancillary units (Army, G.H.Q. and L. of C. Troops) required for the support of a modern army in the field. These actually represented a larger manpower commitment than the fighting formations. It was considered that the overall strength of troops in a theatre of war could be calculated on a rough basis of 40,000 all ranks per infantry division, 35,000 per armoured division and 5000 per army tank brigade. (The actual strengths of these formations themselves were, respectively, approximately 18,000, 15,000 and 3500 all ranks.) On 19 January 1942 the Director of Staff Duties, War Office (Major-General D. G. Watson) pointed out that Canadian planning for ancillary troops so far fell considerably short of this standard.<sup>111</sup> The question of what ancillary troops Canada could and should provide was the main one grappled with by the Canadian Army Planning Committee which General McNaughton set up in the summer. By August there had emerged what was known as the "Third Proposal" for the composition of the Canadian Army Overseas. The only formations included were the three infantry divisions, two armoured divisions and two army tank brigades already authorized, but it allowed for ancillary units which would have raised the total establishment of the field force and units in England to 209,920 all ranks, apart from reinforcements.<sup>112</sup> This represented at least an approximation

to a self-contained Canadian Army, though the total suggested for the field force (178,091 all ranks) was still short of the standard indicated by General Watson, which would have called for 200,000.\*

By the late autumn it was clear that the "Third Proposal" was beyond attainment. On 15 November the Chief of the General Staff cabled McNaughton, ". . . without waiting to end of year we have to accept the conclusion that it is not feasible to plan for a composition of the First Canadian Army such that it could operate wholly independently with all Canadian Base L. of C. and Army troops which after all would seem to be envisaging the ideal".<sup>114</sup> At the same time the shipping situation remained bad, the allotment being based on a monthly movement overseas of only 5000 Canadian troops. Stuart's cable went on:

Based upon above considerations I have recommended and A.G. [Adjutant General] agrees that our objective as to the strength of the First Canadian Army overseas should be limited first to presently authorized formed and forming units overseas. Second to presently authorized units designated for overseas service formed or forming in Canada. Third to personnel for establishment increases . . . Fourth to units that we might be able to make available directly or by conversion from home defence formations. Fifth reinforcements at proposed new battle casualty rate.

Ten days later, in answer to a request from McNaughton for specific figures on available manpower, Stuart calculated that it should be possible, assuming that shipping space could be found, to send 64,000 men to England during the first eight months of 1943. Thereafter it was hoped to maintain the flow at "about 5000 per month", which it was estimated would be required for reinforcement purposes when the Army went into action.<sup>115</sup>

On receiving the cable of 15 November, McNaughton replied accepting the situation and remarking, "Under these circumstances I recognize . . . that it may not be possible to operate as a Cdn Army". He proposed, he said, to place the situation before the Chief of the Imperial General Staff "and obtain his views as to the best form our contribution can take".<sup>116</sup> A few days later he reported<sup>117</sup> the result of his consultations:

Late Thursday 19 Nov 42 I had long talks with C.I.G.S. and D.M.O.† in respect to plans for employment Cdn Army. I want you to know that in accordance policy enunciated your CGS 615 dated 15 Nov 42 I made it clear at the start that I was only concerned with making the best contribution possible to winning the war and that I was prepared to recommend the abandoning of the possibility of operating as an army if it were more advantageous to supply individual formations to separate theatres or to break up divisions if this were the proper and best solution.

It is very definitely General Brooke's opinion that the project for a Cdn Army should be maintained and he hoped that our 2nd Army Tk Bde would be sent over in due course ...

\*General Brooke told General McNaughton on 19 November 1942 that he considered the quota of 40,000 per infantry division and 35,000 per armoured division "altogether too generous under the conditions in which an attack on the Continent would be contemplated"<sup>113</sup>

†Director of Military Operations, War Office (Major-General J. N. Kennedy).

These conversations reflected the uncertain state of Allied operational planning at this period. Apart from Operation "Tonic" \_ (the occupation of the Canary Islands), the possible enterprises envisaged were "largescale raids of limited scope and duration" upon the German submarine bases in the Bay of Biscay in the spring of 1943, while it was considered that by August the Canadians should be ready "to go on the continent in strength" if circumstances warranted, playing their part in securing and holding a permanent bridgehead of limited depth. By October they should be "ready to operate as a Cdn Army on the continent with all essential rearward services". No other possible operations were mentioned at this time.

On this basis McNaughton, in consultation with the C.G.S. in Ottawa and the various branches of the War Office, proceeded to work out a programme. On 21 December he reported<sup>118</sup> that the War Office had undertaken to contribute "up to 9000 [men] per Division as a permanent commitment to complete our rearward services and more if necessary until our own quota is fully available". On 28 December he stated the priorities in which he proposed to use the manpower available, and added that he now intended as far as possible to organize the Army on British war establishments. (While Canadian establishments had in general been based upon British models, they had not followed them in detail.) This would facilitate incorporating Canadian corps or divisions in a British force if necessary.<sup>119</sup>

At this time the organization of armoured divisions was being materially altered. The War Office had decided to abandon that based on two armoured brigades and a support group in favour of a single armoured brigade, an infantry brigade, and two field regiments of artillery; and General McNaughton advised conforming to this change. This involved disbanding one armoured brigade from each of the two Canadian armoured divisions, and although three of the armoured regiments of these brigades were needed for other tasks in the new organization three others were left surplus. More infantry and artillery would be required. McNaughton desired to utilize the surplus armour to form a third army tank brigade, and in his cable of 21 December he wrote, "As a long term objective I propose that Cdn Army should comprise two corps with three Infantry Divs (three Inf Bdes), two Armd Divs (one Inf and one Armd Bde) and three Army Tank Bdes."<sup>120</sup> This objective, however, was never attained. The Chief of the General Staff queried the suggestion of a third tank brigade, in view of a current shortage of Armoured Corps reinforcements.<sup>121</sup> General McNaughton replied that completing this formation was a matter for later discussion; the extra armoured regiments would be made available for reinforcement purposes unless and until adequate reinforcements were in sight.<sup>122</sup> As it turned out, by

March 1943 it was apparent that the formation of the third tank brigade would not be practicable, and in any case experience in Exercise "Spartan" (below, pages 249-51) convinced the Army Commander that two such brigades would be enough.<sup>123</sup>

On 6 January 1943 General Stuart sent to the Minister his final submission<sup>124</sup> for the Army Programme for 1943, which was based on McNaughton's recommendations. Its main elements, apart from the reorganization of the overseas divisions on British establishments, were the dispatch overseas of two infantry battalions, already mobilized, to complete the reorganization of the armoured divisions; the completion of "Basic Corps Troops, already authorized" by sending forward units in existence in Canada; the conversion of one of the surplus armoured regiments to a "tank delivery regiment" (whose function was to provide armoured units with replacement tanks and crews fit for immediate action) and the retention of two armoured car regiments as Army Troops; and the organization of the headquarters of the third army tank brigade to administer the three surplus armoured regiments "which are to be considered as a potential reinforcement reserve". The programme also included:

*In principle only*, the provision of such units as may be required by the Army Commander, together with their proper proportion of reinforcements, to complete the overseas programme, to a total of 18,369, being the unencumbered balance of the 64,000 proposed to be despatched abroad [see above, page 101] . ; the foregoing additions to include such changes in establishments or reorganizations as may be required abroad.

The provision overseas of a pool of reinforcements based on 3 months (casualties) at the intense rates, and the provision of one additional month's reinforcements in Canada at the same rate.

This programme had the effect of fixing for the army overseas a "manpower ceiling" of approximately 226,000 men.<sup>125</sup> This covered all existing establishments, including the base units in England, plus the reinforcements calculated as required for three months' fighting at the "intense" rate of activity. In addition, an undertaking was made, as already forecast, to send forward 5000 men per month from Canada as replacements for casualties subsequent to 1 September 1943.

The programme was approved by the War Committee on 6 January, the same day on which it was submitted in its final form, subject to review if it was found to conflict with the manpower or financial requirements of the Navy or Air Force. On 11 March, following further discussions with General McNaughton and minor modifications, the Committee approved a figure of 232,100 as the manpower ceiling for the Canadian Army Overseas to 1 September 1943.

\*The ceiling was subsequently raised to include the 1st Parachute Battalion and its quota of reinforcements. In August 1944 a final adjustment to cover the 1st Special Service Battalion and some minor units fixed the total at 234,500 all ranks.<sup>126</sup>

The 2nd Army Tank Brigade arrived in the United Kingdom from Canada in June 1943. A 3rd Army Tank Brigade had been formed overseas on a temporary basis, out of the surplus armoured regiments, in January 1943. As both brigades could not be retained, and the units which had been overseas longest were reported as the most efficient, those from Canada, and the brigade headquarters which had come with them, were in due course disbanded; but since the authorized army tank brigade was designated by order in council as the 2nd, this number was used for the formation which continued to exist and which fought in the North-West Europe campaign.<sup>127</sup> In June 1943 the decision was taken to reorganize the Canadian army tank brigades as independent armoured brigades. The reason given was the desirability of being able to "replace" them in the armoured divisions if required<sup>128</sup> (presumably, in the event of a return to the older establishment of armoured divisions, on a basis of two armoured brigades, or if temporary operational conditions called for such an arrangement). The brigades, however, remained without an important part of the armoured brigade in an armoured division—the motor battalion of infantry.

The addition of one special unit to the Canadian Army Overseas may be noted here. On 1 July 1942 the Cabinet War Committee approved the organization of a Canadian Parachute Battalion. Its purpose as explained at this time was primarily one of home defence: to provide means for recapturing aerodromes or reinforcing remote localities. A number of officers and other ranks were returned from overseas during the late summer to join the battalion, which subsequently moved to the United States for four months' parachute training at Fort Benning, Georgia.<sup>129</sup> By the time this was completed, the battalion no longer seemed required in Canada, and on 7 April 1943 the War Committee authorized incorporating it in a new British airborne division being formed in the United Kingdom. It arrived in Britain on 28 July, and shortly moved to Salisbury Plain, where it joined the 6th Airborne Division and became a unit of the 3rd Parachute Brigade.<sup>130</sup> A small Canadian element was added to the Division's headquarters to look after administrative matters for the battalion. The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion fought with the 6th Airborne Division through the North-West Europe campaign.

### The First Special Service Force

Another special unit must be mentioned. This is the 1st Canadian Special Service Battalion, the Canadian component of the First Special Service Force, a unique international organization whose personnel was drawn partly from the Canadian and partly from the United States Army.



Early in 1942 Allied strategists were considering a highly novel scheme known as Operation "Plough" (originated apparently by an Englishman named Geoffrey Pyke) which had caught the imagination of both Mr. Churchill and Lord Louis Mountbatten. It envisioned operations with special vehicles, sent in by air, to be conducted during the winter of 1942-43 in the snow-covered areas of Europe, the objectives being the Romanian oilfields and hydro-electric plants in Northern Italy and Norway. The scheme's realization involved raising a special force and developing special equipment; and it had sufficient appeal to British and American leaders to lead them to put both matters in hand.<sup>131</sup> In Canada the Department of Munitions and Supply was asked to develop a snowmobile, and did produce an effective vehicle, the "Penguin", which, with modifications, has since given good service in the Army's Arctic exercises. United States agencies on their side, with help from the National Research Council in Ottawa and from other Allied countries, developed a vehicle which, under the name of "Weasel", later did well in many theatres. In its amphibious form (M 29 C) it was familiar to the Canadian Army.<sup>132</sup>

The original scheme for the raiding force contemplated a unit composed of Canadians, Americans and Norwegians. It soon became clear that no Norwegians except a few instructors would be available. On 26 June 1942, however, the Canadian Prime Minister approved Canadian participation (possibly because of the extreme secrecy of the project, it does not appear to have been put before the Cabinet War Committee at this stage), and on 14 July the Minister of National Defence authorized the movement of 47 officers and 650 other ranks to the United States in connection with the project.<sup>133</sup> For security reasons, the Canadian part of the force was designated "2nd Canadian Parachute Battalion" until May 1943, when the name was changed to "1st Canadian Special Service Battalion". The senior Canadian officer was Lt.-Col. J. G. McQueen, who was brought back from the army overseas to take the appointment; the junior officers were chiefly recent graduates of the Officers Training Centre at Brockville; while the other ranks were selected from among men in Canada volunteering for duty as paratroopers.<sup>134</sup>

The First Special Service Force consisted of a Combat Force of three small "regiments" (two battalions each) and a Base Echelon or Service Battalion. Canada provided no men for the latter except a paymaster and two N.C.Os. Under the original "table of organization" the strength of the Combat Force would have been 108 officers and 1167 other ranks, and Canada's contribution would have been half of it.<sup>135</sup> However, "The regiments' enlisted strength was later raised by 50 per cent",<sup>136</sup> and since the Canadian quota was not increased in proportion the Canadian component usually amounted to a little more than one-third of the Combat Force and

about one-quarter of the Force as a whole.<sup>137</sup> The American element thus predominated. Canadians liked to think of the Force as a Canadian-American venture on a basis of equal partnership. A press release issued by the U.S. Secretary of War on 6 August 1942, which included the phrase "the first time in history that Canadian troops have served as part of a United States Army unit",<sup>138</sup> aroused some feeling in Ottawa but perhaps was not entirely at variance with practical facts. The Minister of National Defence had contemplated the Force's wearing "a uniform of its own", neither Canadian nor American;<sup>139</sup> in practice, it wore U.S. uniform with special badges, and the Minister, rather reluctantly, authorized Canadians to wear U.S. badges of rank.<sup>140</sup>

The Commander of the First Special Service Force was Colonel Robert T. Frederick, U.S.A.\* Lt.-Col. McQueen acted as his executive officer until injured in a parachute jump; Lt.-Col. D. D. Williamson then became Canadian senior officer, though he did not succeed McQueen as executive officer. The initial arrangement was that two of the three regiments were commanded by Americans with Canadian "executives", and the third by a Canadian with an American "executive".<sup>141</sup> Canadian and American soldiers of all ranks were distributed throughout the regiments, not segregated in separate units. Thus the "1st Canadian Special Service Battalion" was never a tactical unit; this was simply a convenient administrative label for the Canadian part of the Force.

The First Special Service Force was organized at Fort William Henry Harrison, Helena, Montana, in the summer of 1942. Parachute training began at once; then came ground tactics and, as cold weather came on, winter warfare training under Norwegian instructors. Already, however, Operation "Plough" had been cancelled, as a result of, among other things, Norwegian doubts; the possibility of attacking the objectives in Norway in a much simpler manner with small airborne parties; and the natural reluctance of the R.A.F. to divert a huge number of aircraft from the bombing of Germany.<sup>142</sup> However, the American military authorities wished to keep the Force in existence with a view to its employment in the Mediterranean area, and requested Canadian concurrence.<sup>143</sup> The Cabinet War Committee agreed on 18 November.

The story of the First Special Service Force in action is outlined elsewhere in this history.† After undergoing amphibious training, it took part in the abortive expedition to Kiska in August 1943. Thereafter it was moved to Italy, and beginning in November was engaged in hard mountain fighting on the approaches to Cassino. Early in 1944 it was put into the Anzio

\*Succeeded (24 June 1944) by Colonel Edwin A. Walker, U.S.A., who commanded until the Force was disbanded.

†Below page 501 and see Volume *Two The Canadians in Italy*

bridgehead and saw further bitter action there, being rewarded by taking part in the liberation of Rome. In August of the same year the Force fought in a commando role in the landings on the south coast of France, and subsequently covered the Allies' right flank along the Franco-Italian boundary. In December it was disbanded. It had had a splendid fighting record, the result of a magnificent regimental spirit. Canadians and Americans had taken equal pride in their unique organization, and had served together in a comradeship which had no place for international jealousies.

Something must be said here of the administration of the Canadian battalion and the peculiar problems which it raised.

The division of costs between Canada and the United States was on the following basis.<sup>144</sup> Canada was responsible for pensions, pay and allowances of Canadian personnel, including Canadian parachute pay of \$2.00 per day for officers and 75 cents per day for other ranks; for repayment to the United States in U.S. funds of the cost of rations for the Canadians; and for exchange on Canadian funds to cover the men's pay. The United States was responsible for quarters and equipment; clothing, except items issued to Canadians by the Canadian Government; all transportation costs with the exception of the original transportation of Canadian personnel to Helena; and hospital, medical and dental services except any rendered Canadians after return to Canada as unfit for service. The American authorities were thus allowed to bear a considerable portion of the cost of the Canadian part of the Force—not a very satisfactory arrangement.

The Canadian soldiers of the Force were paid at Canadian rates, which were lower than those of the U.S. Army. The authority, obtained in October 1942, for parachute pay for all ranks, did not entirely meet the case, as the Americans of the Force had already been receiving parachute pay at a higher rate - \$50 per month for "enlisted men". The Canadian battalion's war diary, recording the grant of parachute pay, noted, "We now have Canadian staff sergeants drawing less money than the American privates under them." Calculations made at Ottawa, which allowed for the fact that the Americans paid income tax and the Canadians did not, indicate that this was only a slight exaggeration: on this basis a Canadian staff sergeant got \$99 per month and an American private \$93. A Canadian private got \$63. These rates are all for unmarried men.<sup>145</sup> Colonel Frederick urged that the Canadian Government pay its troops in the Force at American rates.<sup>146</sup> The C.G.S. had already recommended this, but the proposal had been rejected, on the ground that it would be improper to discriminate between the men of the Special Service Force and other Canadian soldiers.<sup>147</sup> The inequality of pay continued throughout the existence of the Force.

Awards for gallantry also caused difficulty after the Force got into action. The Canadians of the Force resented the fact that, although they

were eligible for U.S. awards, no machinery existed by which they could receive decorations from their own country. The first four British Commonwealth awards were promulgated only in November 1944, when the unit was about to be disbanded. By that time 43 U.S. gallantry awards had been made to Canadians in the Force.<sup>148</sup>

Special provision was of course required for the enforcement of discipline. It was agreed in the beginning that Canadian members of the Force would be subject to Canadian military law and would be disciplined by Canadian officers for offences under the Army Act.<sup>149</sup> A Canadian order in council<sup>150</sup> gave every Canadian officer of the Force the legal powers of a detachment commander (subject to the authority of the senior Canadian officer). It also provided that American members of the Force should "for the purposes of command only (but not discipline and/or punishment)" be deemed to be members of the Canadian forces of equivalent rank-an interesting device. Serious military offences by Canadians were dealt with by Field General Courts-Martial composed of Canadian officers and convened by the Commanding Officer of the Canadian battalion as provided in the Army Act.<sup>151</sup> This system seems to have worked smoothly.

### Organization of the Canadian Army Overseas at its Peak

By midsummer of 1943, when the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade left the United Kingdom for Sicily to engage in the first protracted campaign in which a formation of the Army participated in this war, the Canadian Army Overseas may be said to have reached its full development. Thereafter, it was subject only to minor alterations resulting from those changes in war organization which are always taking place as the result of experience, and the necessary special adjustments resulting from the division of the force during 1943 between the United Kingdom and the Mediterranean theatre.

The "fighting" portion of the force consisted, as has been made clear, of two armoured divisions, three infantry divisions, and two independent armoured brigades, plus two "army groups" of artillery. An Army Headquarters and two Corps Headquarters existed to direct the force in the field.

In addition to the fighting formations, the Canadian Army Overseas contained, as the reader will have gathered, a very large number of Corps, Army, G.H.Q., L. of C. and Base units. The War Office had, we have seen, agreed to provide, for the support of the First Canadian Army, rearward units amounting to 9000 men for each division. Nevertheless, the number of ancillary units provided by Canada herself was very large indeed. For the sake of simplicity and convenience, let us merely outline the situation as it

existed at the end of hostilities in Europe in May 1945, when the 1st Corps had returned from Italy and the whole Canadian field army was reunited in North-West Europe. At this time the "authorized" composition of the Canadian Army Overseas represented a total personnel of 217,371 all ranks. This figure was exclusive of the holding of reinforcements, which was included, as already noted, in the manpower ceiling. Of this total establishment, 25,786 all ranks were in units, or "increments" to units, organized on a "temporary" basis, and of these 9567 were in North-West Europe. Apart from this, the total establishment of the Canadian component of the 21st Army Group in North-West Europe amounted to 160,850 all ranks. Canada of course provided all her own Corps Troops, which totalled at this time 7875 all ranks for each of the two Corps. First Canadian Army Troops provided by Canada numbered 28,350 all ranks, while G.H.Q. and L. of C. Troops and Base Units amounted to 24,287 more. In addition, various special units in North-West Europe accounted for 644 all ranks.<sup>152</sup>

In the United Kingdom, the establishment of the various Canadian units amounted in May 1945 to 30,735 all ranks on a permanent basis, plus a total of 16,219 all ranks (including the staffs of schools and reinforcement units) organized on a "temporary" basis.<sup>153</sup> Of the total authorized establishment of the Canadian Army Overseas at this period, only approximately 44 per cent (a total of 97,546) was accounted for by the strength of the fighting formations—the five divisions, the two armoured brigades and the artillery units of the two army groups R.C.A. If reinforcement holdings were added to the establishment figures, the percentage would be still lower. Even within the formations, of course, a considerable number of men were employed on purely administrative tasks. All this does not mean that Canadian use of manpower was necessarily improvident; it merely emphasizes that in war as waged by the Western Allies in 1939-45 more manpower went to supporting and maintaining the fighting formations than was used by those formations themselves. To maintain 100 men in contact with the enemy and provide them with what they needed to fight and win, considerably more than 100 other men had to work in the rear areas of the theatre of operations, and many more again were required at the home base.

## CHAPTER IV

### RECRUITING AND TRAINING IN CANADA

(See Map 3)

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#### Making an Army in an Unmilitary Society

WHEN a community accustomed, as pre-war Canada was, to maintain only the tiniest regular military forces, is suddenly plunged into war and finds itself obliged to raise large bodies of troops, it confronts one of the greatest problems that can face a modern nation. It must obtain the services of great numbers of its citizens (most of whom will have no military experience), satisfy itself that they are suitable for the business in hand, and turn them into soldiers. This entails training long enough and thorough enough to produce a standard of efficiency that will enable them to meet the enemy and beat him.

Volumes could be written on this process of recruiting and training, which is clearly a subject of exceptional importance; but space limits the treatment which we can give it here. The present chapter, accordingly, attempts to give only an outline of the process as it developed in Canada.

#### Reliance Upon Voluntary Service

When Canada went to war in 1939, and for a considerable time thereafter, there was no question of adopting a policy of conscription for military service, either at home or abroad. The Government relied upon voluntary patriotism and public spirit to fill the ranks of its armed forces, and in the first period of the war this reliance was not in vain. The general question of voluntary service and compulsion will be explored in more detail in a later section of this History, but an attempt must be made here to deal briefly with the background of the question, as it particularly affected the Army.

The reasons for the unquestioning acceptance of the voluntary principle in 1939 (an acceptance which might seem the more surprising in view of the fact that Great Britain had resorted to conscription even before the war

broke out) are not far to seek. They are to be found in Canadian experience in the First World War and particularly in the social and political consequences of the conscription measure which was passed in 1917 to keep up the strength of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. That measure produced a grave threat to the unity of the nation; it temporarily isolated the Frenchspeaking Province of Quebec, whose people were in general strongly opposed to the conscription policy, and it introduced into Canadian politics an element of bitterness which every political leader recognized as dangerous in the extreme. This issue more than any other, perhaps, dominated the thinking of Canadian parties as they faced the growing threat of war in the years before 1939. The formula which, it would appear, both major parties had reached by the spring of 1939 was that the maintenance of national unity required participation in the war against Hitlerism which seemed impending -but participation on the basis of repudiating conscription for overseas service. Pledges against such conscription were made by both Government and Opposition leaders in March 1939,<sup>1</sup> and from that moment it was clear, if it had not been before, that if war came any forces which Canada might send abroad would have to be raised on a purely voluntary basis, in the first instance if not for the duration.

This seemed the more practicable in the light of theories which were popular in the months preceding the outbreak of war. The pledges made against overseas conscription were closely accompanied, as mentioned earlier, by declarations of belief that large expeditionary forces were unlikely to be required in any new war. The Prime Minister said in the House of Commons on 30 March 1939, "One strategic fact is clear: the days of great expeditionary forces of infantry crossing the oceans are not likely to recur. Two years ago, I expressed in this House the view that it was extremely doubtful if any of the British Dominions would ever send another expeditionary force to Europe." On the same day, the Leader of the Opposition, Dr. R. J. Manion, expressed similar opinions.<sup>2</sup> As we have seen (above, page 13), the Government's pre-war defence policy placed the air force in first priority, the navy second and the land forces last. This may be taken as representing its conception of the nature of Canadian effort in another war, and it was doubtless particularly acceptable on both sides of the House of Commons in that such a policy seemed to promise less serious pressure on manpower than one based upon "great expeditionary forces of infantry".

These opinions had been encouraged by the policies of the United Kingdom, which in 1937-38 seem to have been dominated by the idea of a limitedliability war. A British official document of 1937 assumed that the country's plans would be based "on what may be termed a war of limited liability, i.e. for example, that there will be no such expansion of the Army, and consequently of military supply, as occurred in the last war". In line with these

theories, there had been, a United Kingdom official historian points out, "a strong temptation to neglect the Army and to concentrate the main effort of rearmament on the naval and air arms, particularly the latter"; and the temptation was not resisted.<sup>3</sup> The parallel with Canadian policy is obvious. By the spring of 1939, however, the British Government had abandoned the limited-liability concept. In March of that year it engaged itself to France to "prepare an army of thirty-two divisions and have it ready for service wherever it was needed before the end of the first twelve months of war".<sup>4</sup> Thus the idea of an expeditionary army again assumed, belatedly, an important place in British military planning. No similar development took place in Canada, however, before the outbreak of war.

Another factor, probably less important in practice, made conscription seem unnecessary in Canada in 1939. The country had not fully recovered from the depression which had begun a decade before, and there was still a great deal of unemployment. Estimates of the number of unemployed at the outbreak of war run as high as 600,000, and the Federal Government at this time was still making large contributions to unemployment relief.<sup>5</sup> In contrast with the situation in the United Kingdom, a very small part of the country's working force was engaged in munition production, and this continued to be the case for months after war began. In these circumstances, it would have been hard to convince the country that there was any immediate need for conscription in 1939. The demand for it, and the adoption of it, came only later, when circumstances had greatly altered.

### Recruiting in the Early Days, 1939-1941

The problem of finding men had two aspects: that of filling the ranks of the mobilizing units in the first place, and that of subsequently providing "reinforcements" (replacements to fill the gaps that would be made by battle losses or natural wastage). Both were provided for in the plans made before the outbreak of war, and the procedure to be followed was broadly outlined in the pamphlet *Mobilization Instructions for the Canadian Militia, 1937*.

Recruiting for mobilizing units was the responsibility of each unit's own Commanding Officer. On getting the order to mobilize, the unit made its own arrangements, opening its recruiting office and setting up its medical board or boards for the examination of recruits. The composition of these boards, which were frequently made up partly of medical officers and partly of civilian doctors, was prescribed in advance. In examining recruits the boards were guided by another pamphlet, *Physical Standards and Instructions for the Medical Examination of Recruits for the Naval, Military and Air Services, 1938*. This gave detailed instructions for examination and classification. Without going into details, it may be noted that Category "A"



("Fit for general service") was defined as "Men perfectly fit, mentally and physically, for all active service conditions of actual warfare in any climate, who are able to march, can see to shoot, and hear well". This category was required for enlistment in all units of the Mobile Force, except that Category "B" men could be accepted for units employed on the lines of communication, or in any unit for "sedentary work" or if they were "skilled tradesmen employed at their trades". The minimum age for enlistment was 18 years, the maximum 45. Chest measurement was to be at least 34 inches, although youths between 18 and 19 years of age with minimum chest measurement of 32 inches might be attested if their general physical condition was good and there was "reasonable chance of developing under training". The minimum height, as laid down in the 1938 pamphlet, was five feet four inches; but for horse and field artillerymen it was five feet six, and for "garrison, heavy and siege" gunners five feet seven inches.

The provision of reinforcements was a responsibility of the Military Districts, under the supervision of the Adjutant-General's Branch at N.D.H.Q.; and the *Mobilization Instructions* provided that a recruiting organization would be prepared to function "as from the seventh day of mobilization" in every District. It was to consist of a District Recruiting Officer with as many assistants as might be required. As a general rule, Depots, those of cavalry and infantry units as well as the District Depot which was to be set up in each Military District to serve other arms and services, were to act as recruiting centres for their respective localities.

Detailed instructions for recruiting units on mobilization were contained in "Recruiting Memorandum No.1", dated 15 May 1939, which was distributed to all officers commanding Non-Permanent Active Militia units. It provided both for action during the Precautionary Stage and that required on mobilization. It pointed out that in the latter case a "duration-of-the-war" engagement for General Service would be required of all individuals volunteering, as under Section 68 of the Militia Act no officer or soldier of the N.P.A.M. could be required to serve in the field continuously for a period exceeding 18 months. To be eligible for enlistment, in addition to being physically fit and within the age limits, men had to be British subjects and "of good character". Apart from certain obviously disqualified classes, persons in the following categories were not to be enlisted: graduates of universities or colleges "in the medical, engineering or other scientific or technical professions"; graduates or qualified ex-cadets of the Royal Military College of Canada; ex-cadets of the Canadian Officers Training Corps in possession of certificates of qualification; and "Bankers and chartered or other Accountants".<sup>6</sup> The clear intention was to ensure that men with special qualifications for service as officers or specialists should not be wasted through uncontrolled enlistment in the ranks. This was one of the earliest attempts to provide against unscientific use of manpower. We have already noted the vague

provisions made concerning the enlistment of men with "dependents", which were interpreted in some areas to prevent the enlistment of married men.

Procedure for enlisting reinforcements was prescribed in "Recruiting Memorandum No. 2", which was likewise dated 15 May 1939. This document noted that the recruiting organization for reinforcements required to be flexible, since it was uncertain whether the mobilized force would or would not go to a theatre of operations outside Canada; if it did go abroad, the wastage, and the number of reinforcements required, would naturally be much higher than if it remained at home. Each District Officer Commanding was made responsible for obtaining the quotas of recruits required to reinforce the units mobilized in his District. It was assumed that reinforcements for cavalry and infantry units would be provided by enlistment at the regimental depots and subsequent dispatch direct to the unit as long as the latter was in Canada. In the case of technical arms, enlistment would be through the District Depots.

The system for enlisting reinforcements prescribed in pre-war planning was not uniformly followed in practice. Some of the mobilized cavalry and infantry units organized proper depots; some maintained a depot organization of sorts within the Active Service Force unit; and some organized no depots at all. In July 1940 all regimental depots were swept away by a General Order,<sup>7</sup> and thereafter recruiting reinforcements for all arms was the business of the District Depots.

The general course of recruiting in September 1939 is outlined in Chapter II, where it is noted that broadly speaking there was no difficulty in getting the men, although the intake was much slower in some parts of the country than in others. At this early period there was certainly no manpower shortage, and the suspension of recruiting led to some would-be recruits being turned away during the autumn and winter months. Recruiting, however, never did cease quite entirely, although the number of men attested sank to 2049 in December 1939, the lowest month's figure of the war.<sup>8</sup> (See Appendix "B"). When training centres were being opened in January to train reinforcements for the units overseas, authority was given for enlistments to fill the quotas where C.A.S.F. men were not available in sufficient numbers.<sup>9</sup> Attestations rose to 6412 that month.<sup>10</sup>

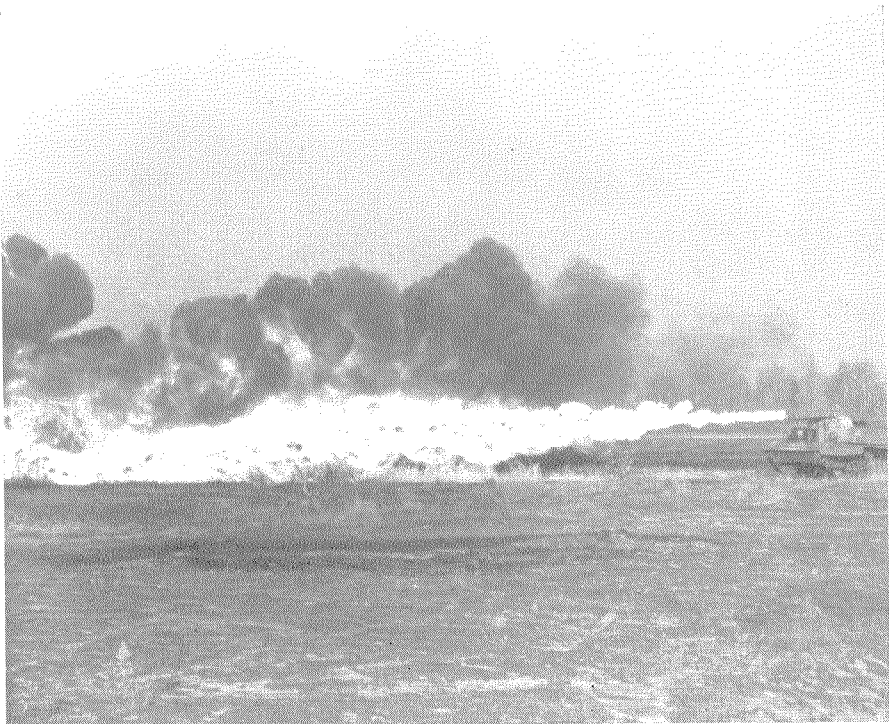
The long process of lowering the qualifications for enlistment began at a very early date. The first reduction of medical standards came as early as 14 September 1939, when a Routine Order<sup>11</sup> introduced new categories ("AV", "BV" and "CV") to indicate defects of vision corrected by glasses. Individuals with such defects were made eligible for enlistment, though not in units of the Mobile Force. In June 1940 another Routine Order<sup>12</sup> lowered the general physical requirements for recruits. Men of a minimum height of five feet, a minimum weight of 120 pounds and a minimum chest measurement of 32 inches were now declared acceptable. The reasons for this change



*Photograph Courtesy National Film Board*

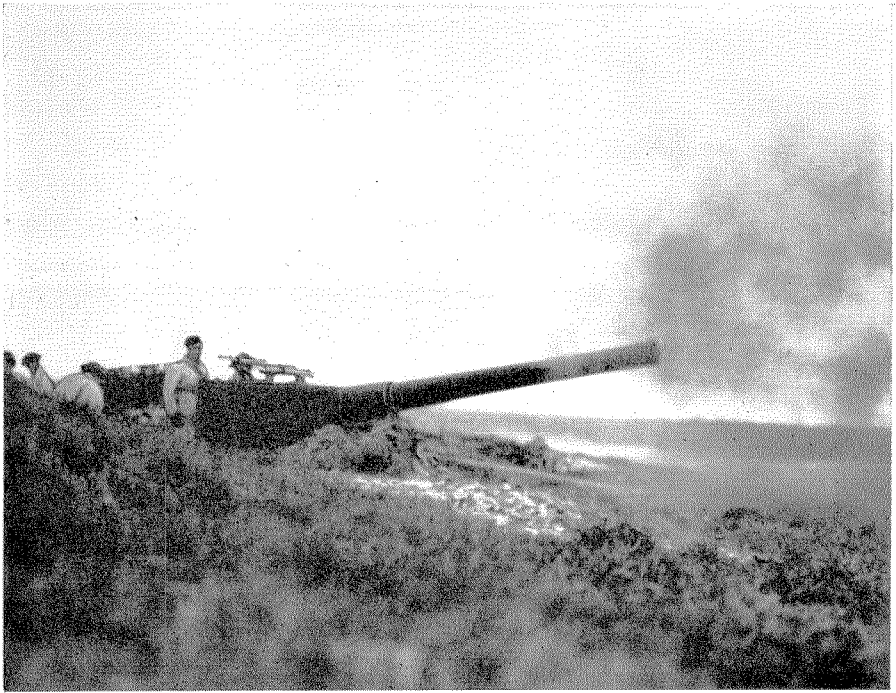
#### COMBINED OPERATIONS TRAINING IN CANADA

Assault training at the Combined Operations School, Courtenay, B.C., January 1944.



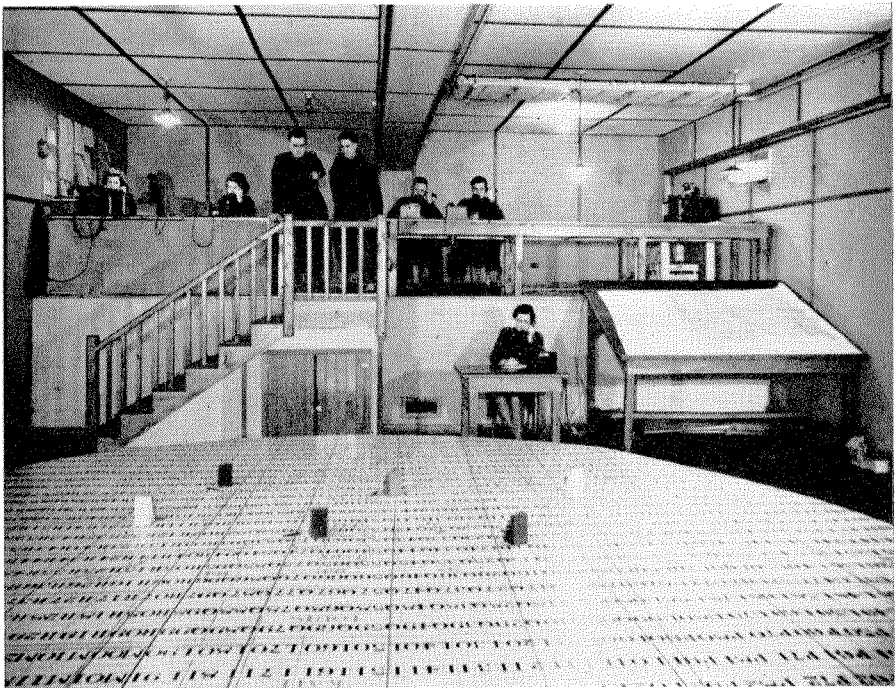
#### FLAME-THROWING DEMONSTRATION, VALCARTIER

A carrier-mounted flame-thrower at A13 Canadian Infantry Training Centre, Valcartier Camp, P.Q., October 1944.



COAST DEFENCE IN CANADA—NOVA SCOTIA

A 6-inch gun engaged in practice firing at Sandwich Battery, Halifax, N.S.



A GUN OPERATIONS ROOM, SAINT JOHN DEFENCES, NEW BRUNSWICK

This photograph taken in March 1943 shows officers and men of the Royal Canadian Artillery and members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps assisting in controlling the anti-aircraft defences of Saint John.

are not now available,\* but it may be assumed that it was considered necessary, the light of experience, if the large requirements in men for the new ions then being raised were to be met. It may be noted that a change - the opposite direction had taken place in November 1939, when the minimum age for enlistment was raised from 18 to 19 years.<sup>13</sup> The requirement at recruits should be British subjects was abandoned on 13 December 1939, when orders were issued permitting the enlistment of aliens, other than enemy, who had been resident in Canada on 1 September 1939.<sup>14</sup> This residence qualification was dropped in its turn in October 1940.<sup>15</sup> American citizens who wanted to fight Hitler could now enlist in the Canadian forces without perjuring themselves.

### The Beginnings of Manpower Scarcity, 1941-1942

We have seen already the consequences of the European events of the spring and summer of 1940: the raising of new divisions in Canada, and a great rush of recruits to the colours. There was a large increase in the strength of the mobilized force (from 76,678 all ranks on 31 March 1940 to 177,810 on 29 December 1940);<sup>16</sup> from now on, quite apart from the requirements of new units, there was a constant demand for reinforcements to fill the gaps caused by natural wastage.

It was in the early months of 1941 that some difficulty began to be encountered in obtaining the men required for the enlarged Active Force. Recruits were appearing in fair numbers (there were 5863 General Service enlistments in January)<sup>17</sup> but not in numbers equal to the requirements of the new Army Programme; and the Navy and Air Force were competing actively for the available men. The combined requirements for the three services for 1941 were estimated at as many as 130,000 recruits; and the Adjutant General and his "opposite numbers" in the other services consulted together and recommended co-ordinated action.<sup>18</sup> On 8 April the Ministers for the three services made a joint broadcast on the needs; the total now mentioned as required was 116,000-72,000 ("probably 6,000 men . . . each month") for the Army, 35,000 for the Air Force, and 9,000 for the Navy.<sup>19</sup>

On 11 May Colonel Ralston opened what he called "Canada's first recruiting campaign" † with another broadcast;<sup>20</sup> he asked for "about 32,000 men for the Canadian Army in the next two months", emphasizing the increase in requirements caused by the new measures taken after the disasters in North Africa and Greece (see above, page 93).  
The campaign's

\*The file concerned, along with a good many others, was unfortunately destroyed as a result of a cloudburst in Ottawa on 6 July 1947.

†It was not, of course, the first appeal. General Crerar, for instance, had made a definite call on behalf of the Minister in a broadcast on 22 July 1940.

first results were disappointing, but it gradually gathered momentum and in the end the objective was attained with something to spare. On 16 July Ralston announced that up to 14 July 33,500 volunteers had been "actually enlisted for service". All told, about 48,000 men had sought to join the Army, but the balance- a rather alarming proportion-had had to be rejected for medical reasons. During the same period the R.C.A.F. had enlisted "more than 12,000" and the R.C.N. "about 3500", "bringing the grand total up to about 60,000 who actually volunteered to serve".<sup>21</sup>

From this time onward, recruiting methods were under constant study and new expedients were constantly being devised to encourage men to come forward. On 28 July 1941 a Directorate of Recruiting, on a civilian basis, was set up in the Adjutant-General's Branch at National Defence Headquarters. A French-speaking Associate Director was appointed, primarily to control activities in the Province of Quebec. Subsequently the Directorate was reorganized on a military basis as the Directorate of Army Recruiting. It planned and coordinated recruiting campaigns with the assistance of a "National Campaign Committee", including representatives of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board, the Wartime Information Board, and the advertising agencies of Canada, as well as of the Directorate of Public Relations (Army). This Committee held its first meeting on 5 May 1941.<sup>22</sup>

This organization at Ottawa was supplemented by local organizations in the Military Districts. Each District had its District Recruiting Officer with a staff to carry on the actual business of recruiting. They were assisted by Civilian Recruiting Advisers and committees, composed of public-spirited citizens, who gave much time to the work.<sup>23</sup> In November 1942 District Recruiting Companies were formed. Each consisted of three elements: a Central Recruiting Station, normally functioning at the District Depot; Recruiting Sub-Stations, which were set up in the larger centres in the District; and a Mobile Recruiting Unit which toured the more sparsely settled areas.<sup>24</sup>

During 1942 many publicity devices were used to keep the need for recruits before the public. One was the "Army Train", a 15-car railway train containing displays of arms, clothing and equipment, which toured Canada from coast to coast, beginning in February, and was "visited by more than 800,000 people".<sup>25</sup> Another was "Army Week", first tried during the week beginning 29 June 1942. During this week, Training Centres were opened to public inspection, parades and demonstrations were held, and everything possible was done to focus attention on the Army. Still another expedient was the "Army Show", which provided entertainment for the troops while at the same time serving recruiting purposes. It began its work

in December 1942, and reached a large audience through broadcasting as well as more directly in its cross-country tours.<sup>26</sup>

All this activity produced satisfactory results in 1942; evidently there was still a considerable pool of manpower in the country which could be tapped by such methods. During 1942, in fact, more men and women were enlisted into the Canadian Army than in any other year of the war, the total of General Service enlistments rising to 130,438, including 7463 C.W.A.C. This does not include officer appointments, but does include men called up for compulsory service under the National Resources Mobilization Act who chose to "go active". At no time during 1942 was there such a rush to enlist as had taken place in September 1939 or in June and July of 1940, but a steady high average was maintained throughout the year and in nine of the twelve months enlistments numbered more than 10,000.<sup>27</sup>

This could not be expected to go on indefinitely. There was certain to be a limit to the manpower obtainable by voluntary methods, and the situation took a turn for the worse early in 1943. Except for November 1944, the last month in which General Service enlistments exceeded 10,000 was January of 1943, when 11,492 male soldiers were attested. In February the figure fell to 8633, and there was a steady decline for several months thereafter. The total male enlistments for 1943 amounted to 69,202, little more than half of those for 1942.<sup>28</sup> As major action by the Canadian Army started only in July 1943, it is evident that a serious decline in voluntary recruiting appeared six months before heavy battle casualties began. The clear fact is that the manpower accessible through voluntary methods had been largely exhausted during the long static period. The combination of this with continuing heavy casualties and a miscalculation of probable losses as between different arms of the service was to produce a serious crisis late in 1944.

We have referred several times to the extent of normal "wastage". Discharges were numerous from the beginning. By 30 September 1941, when Canada had been at war for two years and the Army had seen virtually no action, there had been 40,718 discharges, mainly on medical grounds.<sup>29</sup> The proportion varied between different parts of the country. By July 1943, when the Army's first large-scale campaign began, 90,061 of the men and women enrolled for general service had been discharged (3467 deaths, of which only 1348 had been caused by enemy action; 59,100 medically unfit; 5269 unapprehended deserters; and 22,225 for various other reasons, e.g. release to one of the other armed services, or misconduct or inefficiency).<sup>30</sup> In addition to those discharged the Army had lost, up to 30 June 1943, another 3461 men who had become prisoners of war (mainly at Dieppe and Hong Kong).<sup>31</sup> Total wastage at that date was thus 93,355 all ranks. This

compared with a total of 531,551 all ranks attested for general service; of these, 13,445 were members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps, and 1857 were Nursing Sisters.<sup>32</sup> Considering only the grand totals, the Army in forty-six months of war had lost more than 17 per cent of the people it had recruited; and it had not yet been seriously in action.

### The National Resources Mobilization Act: Compulsory Service for Home Defence

When the National Resources Mobilization-Act was passed in June 1940 (above, page 82) a new element was introduced into the recruiting situation. Overseas service remained on a purely voluntary basis, but conscription for service in Canada was now the law of the land. This dualism was a complicating factor for the rest of the war. We must now examine the Act's results and the manner in which it was administered.

The first measure required to make it effective was a National Registration. This was held on 19-21 August 1940, all persons, male and female, who had reached the age of sixteen, being required to register.<sup>33</sup> By affording full information concerning men of military age, it provided the basis for a system of compulsory service. The National Registration was supervised, and the National Resources Mobilization Act administered in the first instance, by a new department of government, that of National War Services. The decision to set up this Department, taken by the Cabinet War Committee on 17 June 1940, was implemented by the Department of National War Services Act,<sup>34</sup> assented to on 12 July. The first Minister was Mr. J. G. Gardiner.

The procedure for making men available for training was defined in "National War Service Regulations, 1940 (Recruits)".<sup>35</sup> Under these Canada was divided into thirteen Administrative Divisions, corresponding to the eleven Military Districts save that Prince Edward Island, and that portion of Ontario adjacent to Manitoba and included in Military District No. 10, were constituted as separate Divisions. For each Division a National War Services Board of three members was set up. The chairman was a Judge of a Superior or other Court of the Province in which the larger part of the division was situated; the other members were representative citizens of the district. The Boards' main function was to hear applications for postponement made by men called out for training, and decide whether postponement orders should be granted. The decision of the majority of a board was final.

In each Administrative Division a Divisional Registrar was appointed. These officials had the immediate tasks of preparing, from the results of the National Registration, lists of single men within the age-group 21 to 24. They



listed separately men engaged in seasonal occupations; those who were students of colleges or universities; those who had some form of military qualification or experience in the armed services; and the remainder of the group. The Government had decided to call out in the first instance only men of the ages of 21 to 24 who were unmarried, or widowers without children. These men were to be subjected to training for 30 days only.\* This was formally announced by a proclamation published in the *Canada Gazette* on 13 September 1940. On 16 September the Minister of National Defence made upon the Minister of National War Services the first requisition, for 29,750 men required for military training for a period of thirty days beginning on 9 October.<sup>37</sup>

The Divisional Registrars proceeded to call out the men required, selecting them, in accordance with the Regulations, "so far as is practicable . . . from the younger men of the age class . . . at the same time endeavouring to call out men proportionately from all parts of the Division". There were special arrangements covering university students or men in seasonal occupations; employers of labour were allowed to submit plans for calling out their *employees*, over a twelve-month period, in the manner least likely to inconvenience their businesses; and the National War Services Boards were authorized to grant indefinite postponements to Mennonites and Doukhobors (who occupied special positions under the terms of orders in council of 1873 and 1898) or to conscientious objectors, although all such persons were declared "compellable to do non-combatant duty".

The young men selected were required to submit themselves for medical examination to one of the duly-appointed examining physicians in their districts, and, if found fit, to report to an indicated training centre. Severe penalties were provided for failure to comply. Under the "Militia (Special) Regulations, 1940",<sup>38</sup> all men reporting for training and passing the supplementary medical examination given at the training centres became members of the Non-Permanent Active Militia, and each was taken on the strength of an appropriate N.P.A.M. unit. During their training these "draftees" were paid at N.P.A.M. rates, somewhat lower than those of the Active Service Force.

On 9 October 27,599 men reported at the thirty-nine "N.P.A.M. Training Centres"<sup>39</sup> which had been set up across Canada to receive them. Over 2000 failed to pass the second medical examination; the rest were given thirty days' intensive elementary training and sent home again. A second large group reported on 22 November, and a third on 10 January 1941. Taking the three together, 89,126 men reported, 7248 were rejected and 81,878 were trained.<sup>40</sup> These were the only groups dealt with under the 30-day plan.

\*This decision had been reached by 30 July. General Crerar points out that the primary reason for the limited period was the extreme shortage of modern weapons at this moment; there were simply no means of giving more than 30 days' effective training.<sup>36</sup>

### The Extension of Compulsory Service

The compulsory service programme had received critical attention in General Crerar's project for the Army Programme for 1941, presented to the Minister of National Defence in September 1940 (above, pages 87-89). His first memorandum<sup>41</sup> made proposals synopsized as follows:

Besides the C.A.S.F. overseas and the C.A.S.F. for home defence, we have a scheme for giving all young men thirty days continuous training, and authority to train non-permanent active militia thirty days in the year...

The present war has shown that man-power armies cannot resist the German mechanized land and air forces . . . our forces may be relatively small but must be highly trained.

Individual training requires 4 months; collective training a further 6 months continuously, thus the programme contemplated under the National Resources Mobilization Scheme, and the N.P.A.M. Training Scheme, will be inadequate. We don't need the number of men for which those schemes cater, but we require longer and more thorough training for a smaller number of men.

We should assert the principle and put it into practice, that men may be compelled to serve for the defence of Canada in this hemisphere. . . .

Specifically, Crerar recommended extending the N.R.M.A. training period to four months, so that every enrollee might complete his individual training. Thereafter the trained men might be posted to home defence formations, or placed on the rolls of reserve units until required. In accordance with the Government's declared policy, the overseas army would continue to be exclusively an army of volunteers; but the forces maintained for home defence would, under this scheme, become increasingly an army of conscripts.

The War Committee, at its meeting of 31 October, approved the four-month training plan, and following further discussion confirmed this decision on 4 December. A detailed programme for carrying the scheme into effect was approved by the Committee on 28 January 1941 and subsequently promulgated in "Reserve Army (Special) Regulations, 1941".<sup>42</sup> These provided:

Upon ... becoming a member of the Active Militia each "R. Recruit"\* shall forthwith undergo training for a period of four months, or for such other period as the Minister of Defence may from time to time prescribe, unless in the meantime he is required for service or duty. Thereafter, so long as he remains a member of the Active Militia he shall be liable to perform such training, service or duty, but only within Canada and the territorial waters thereof, as the Minister of Defence may from time to time require.<sup>43</sup>

The men called up were now to be paid at the same rates, and be eligible for the same Dependents' Allowance, as those volunteering for general service. An "R. Recruit" who was "employed in a key post in the armament industry" might be released, by authority and at the discretion of the District Officer Commanding, at the end of two months' training, on application of his employer.<sup>44</sup>

\*The term adopted to describe a man called out for training under the N.R.M.A. Men enlisting for general service were known as "A. Recruits".

It was an essential part of the new scheme that General Service recruits and N.R.M.A. men should train together, going through the same syllabus in the same camps.<sup>45</sup> The training centres which had been set up to train C.A.S.F. reinforcements and those which had been serving the N.R.M.A. programme were now combined into one system. Every recruit would now go in the first place to a Basic Training Centre where he would get two months' elementary "common-to-all-arms" training before passing on to an Advanced Training Centre for two months' more "special-to-arm" training in the work of his own arm of the service (Infantry, Artillery, Signals, etc. ) The division of training centres into these two categories was not necessarily an ideal arrangement; it was adopted because it was the only means of getting the four-months training scheme going quickly. There was a temporary shortage of trained instructors in special-to-arm subjects, and some of the "N.P.A.M. Training Centres" did not have enough ground available for special-to-arm training.<sup>46</sup> The new system began to function on 20 March 1941, when the first four-month group of N.R.M.A. trainees (4840 21-yearolds) reported to the training centres. Thereafter a group of comparable size was normally called up every month.<sup>47</sup>

The next step soon followed. General Crerar, we have seen, favoured using N.R.M.A. trainees for home defence. In April he asked the Adjutant General to give immediate consideration to making such use of the 21-yearolds then in training centres, at the end of their four-month period. Point was given to this requirement by existing shortages in active units-the same situation which helped to produce the first Army recruiting campaign, referred to above. On 23 April Colonel Ralston sought and received from the War Committee authority to post General Service soldiers from coast-defence units to overseas formations and replace them with men called up under the N.R.M.A. At a press conference on 26 April, and subsequently in the House of Commons two days later, he announced that as the men undergoing four months' training completed their course they would be detailed to units doing coast defence duty in Canada, "thereby enabling the men in the coastal defence units in Canada to go overseas".<sup>48</sup> The trainees who had finished their training and been posted to home-defence units were known as "Members (H.D.) of the Canadian Army". This awkward label was subsequently dropped, and N.R.M.A. trainees and men performing compulsory duty in Canada were alike called "N.R.M.A. soldiers".<sup>49</sup>

Another natural advance was made in July, when an order was issued authorizing recalling to duty for the duration of the war the men called out earlier for 30 days' training.<sup>50</sup> Beginning that month, these men were called out in succession, in groups of 1000 or more, to complete their training and subsequently do duty in Canada.<sup>51</sup>

With the increase in the training period, and still more following the decision to retain N.R.M.A. men on permanent duty, the question of post-

ponements or exemptions became much more urgent than when the training period was 30 days only. Special sittings of National War Services Boards were held in the Advanced Training Centres to enable trainees of the first group undergoing four months' training (who of course had not known when called up that they would be required for permanent duty) to apply for postponement of that duty.<sup>52</sup> No exemptions from service under the N.R.M.A. were granted at any time, except in the cases of certain limited occupational groups, e.g., judges, clergymen, police officers, members of fire brigades, and officers of penitentiaries, asylums, etc. Postponements, however, were permitted in many cases, the chief grounds being the importance of the individual to war industry or to farm production. Under new arrangements introduced in July 1941, applications for postponement were not heard until after the individual had been medically examined and, if found fit, enrolled in the Army by the officer known as the "Representative of the D.O.C." If granted postponement, he was given leave of absence without pay for the period specified.<sup>53</sup>

The N.R.M.A. programme did more than provide men to fill the ranks of home-defence units and thereby release General Service soldiers to go overseas. It also provided, as an important by-product, large numbers of General Service recruits. Many men, when called up for training and faced with the prospect of indefinite military service in Canada, preferred to volunteer for general service and become available as reinforcements for the Canadian Army Overseas. Such enlistments began in the spring of 1941, and in all 7868 N.R.M.A. men "went active" that year. In 1942 the figure rose to 18,273, but in 1943 there was a very marked decline, to 6561.<sup>54</sup> This was part of the general recruiting recession of that year.

#### Changes in the N.R.M.A. and its Administration, 1942-1943

As the war had proceeded, pressure for a policy of general conscription had gradually grown, and the demand became more insistent after the attack by Japan in December 1941. The Government now sought release from its commitments against compulsory overseas service. The Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament on 22 January 1942 announced the intention of holding a plebiscite for this purpose. The voting took place on 27 April, the question presented being, "Are you in favour of releasing the Government from any obligation arising out of any past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service?" The result was a decisive "Yes". The overall vote, service and civilian combined, was 2,945,514 "Yes" (or about 64 per cent) as against 1,643,006 "No". The

voters of Quebec, however, maintained their traditional position on the issue, and this was the only province where a majority (993,663 as against 376,188) voted against release. Of the service voters in Canada, 84 per cent voted "Yes"; the overseas service vote was 72 per cent "Yes".<sup>55</sup>

In May the Government introduced a bill to amend the National Resources Mobilization Act by deleting the proviso limiting compulsory service to Canada and Canadian waters. The amending act<sup>56</sup> received the Royal Assent on 1 August. The Government now possessed full powers to institute general conscription when and if it thought fit to do so. In practice it held these powers in reserve until November 1944, when drafted men were sent to Europe for the first time. In the interim, however, a succession of orders in council gradually widened the scope of employment of N.R.M.A. men within the North American zone. This process began even before the amending act was passed, when an order in council of 15 May authorized sending N.R.M.A. men of two battalions to the United States to guard prisoners of war in transit.<sup>57</sup> On 4 September 1942, authority was given for employing draftees in three specified anti-aircraft units in Alaska.<sup>58</sup> Ten days later the Government authorized using them in specific units in Newfoundland (including Labrador) ;<sup>59</sup> and in November the dispatch of N.R.M.A. personnel of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion to the United States for training was approved.<sup>60</sup> On 18 June 1943 another order, passed to cover the enterprise against Kiska, provided for using N.R.M.A. men in "the Territory of Alaska (including the Aleutian Islands and other United States islands adjacent thereto)". The Kiska project might have produced very heavy fighting.<sup>61</sup> On 11 August 1943 a generalized order<sup>62</sup> authorized employment in any Active unit serving in Newfoundland (including Labrador), Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, British Guiana, Alaska and the United States; on 31 August this was extended to men not on the strength of Active units.<sup>63</sup> Thus the way was opened for releasing considerable numbers of General Service soldiers for service overseas. There was no further change until November 1944, when a serious shortage in infantry reinforcements for the overseas army led the government to authorize sending N.R.M.A. soldiers in Europe.

In the autumn of 1942 the decision was taken to transfer the administration of the compulsory service programme under the N.R.M.A. from the Department of National War Services to the Department of Labour. It was felt that the control of civilian labour and the calling -up of men for military service could be most effectively coordinated if placed under the same department. The new arrangement was authorized by order in council of 26 September 1942<sup>64</sup> and became effective on 1 December. Thereafter requisitions for personnel to be called up for training and duty were addressed by the Department of National Defence to the Department of Labour.

Certain topics connected with manpower administration have been left for treatment in a subsequent volume. These include inter-service aspects of the question, and particularly competition between the services for recruits, and the measures taken to alleviate it. The various steps taken to ensure the most economical use of manpower, including the institution of a personnel selection organization, are likewise left aside. In general, the final stages of the army manpower question, when it assumed the proportions of a crisis and became a national problem of the most serious nature, seem most appropriately dealt with in a volume devoted to the larger aspects of policy.

### The Canadian Women's Army Corps

The year 1941 witnessed the inauguration of a women's corps of the Canadian Army. This was a product both of the manpower stringency which was beginning to appear at this period, and of the urgent desire of Canadian women to wear official uniform and play a direct part in the armed services.

There was no official women's corps in the Canadian military forces during the First World War, although women served with them in Canada and Britain in various civilian capacities. In 1918 consideration was given to forming a "Canadian Women's Army Auxiliary Corps", and in September 1918 the Militia Council actually approved this in principle.<sup>65</sup> The war was then nearly over, however, and no action was taken. The only Canadian women who served in army uniform in 1914-18 were the nursing sisters of the Army Medical Corps.

The organization of women's auxiliary corps for the armed services in Great Britain began before the outbreak of war in 1939, the Auxiliary Territorial Service being authorized in September 1938, the month of the Munich crisis. Partly perhaps as a result of this British example, Canadian women began forming unofficial and voluntary organizations from this time onward. These multiplied after the outbreak of war and existed in every part of the country. Some of these "corps", all of which originated in a public-spirited desire to aid actively in the war effort, sought official recognition and status; but as the official\_ employment of women came under more serious discussion, the Government's view was that it was better to set up entirely new organizations, which could not be objects of jealousy or competition among the voluntary groups.<sup>66</sup>

The formation of a women's corps of the Army was discussed at National Defence Headquarters from the summer of 1940,<sup>67</sup> but there was no action until the following year. On 14 February 1941 the Adjutant General (Major-General B. W. Browne) recommended to the Minister of National Defence the formation of a "Canadian Women's (Army) Service".

Except

for tradesmen, he wrote, there was no existing shortage of manpower, but the time was at hand when it would be necessary to utilize the services of women to replace soldiers "to a much greater extent than at present".<sup>68</sup> In April the Navy, Army and Air Force discussed the question jointly, but neither Navy nor Air Force thought employing women necessary at the time, nor did the Army feel that it was urgent. The opinion was expressed, however, that it would be desirable for each of the three services to control entirely any women's service which might be formed to work with it.<sup>69</sup> There had been some suggestion that a women's service might be formed under the Department of National War Services, which would supply women to the armed forces, or perhaps to other departments, as they might be required. The forces had no objection to accepting personnel from National War Services, but wished also to be able to enlist directly any women considered particularly suitable.

The matter became more urgent when it was suggested that the British Air Ministry might employ members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in R.A.F. schools in Canada, and the Associate Deputy Minister of National War Services, Mr. Justice T. C. Davis, was asked to investigate. His report, rendered to the War Committee on 8 May, recommended that the Defence Departments should create either "one Women's Auxiliary Force" or a separate force for each service.<sup>70</sup> On 13 May the War Committee decided that the Department of National War Services should undertake, in collaboration with the defence departments, the provision of "female auxiliary personnel" required by the armed services. Subsequently, however, it was decided that the services should organize women's corps of their own, although for a time National War Services carried on the recruiting. Detailed planning for the Army was undertaken by the Adjutant-General's Branch late in June.<sup>71</sup> The Government's decision to enlist women volunteers for the armed forces and form a Canadian Women's Army Corps was announced on 27 June, 1941,<sup>72</sup> and on 30 July the War Committee approved Colonel Ralston's specific proposals for the establishment of the Corps. Recruiting began in September, and 1256 women had been appointed or enlisted in the Corps by 31 December.<sup>73</sup> Many recruits came from the unofficial organizations.

In the first instance, the Corps was not part of the Army and not subject to military law. Accordingly, instead of using military terms for officers' ranks, designations similar to those of the Auxiliary Territorial Service in the United Kingdom were used; the equivalent of "Lieutenant" was "Subaltern", and of "Lieutenant Colonel", "Chief Commander". Badges of rank were also different from those of the Army, arrangements of maple leaves and beavers being used instead of the familiar crowns and stars.<sup>74</sup> In 1942, however, the status of the C.W.A.C. was materially changed. The fact that the Corps had not been part of the Army had caused many administrative

difficulties, particularly in connection with consideration of post-discharge benefits. Accordingly, by order in council of 13 March 1942<sup>75</sup> the Canadian Women's Army Corps was named as a Corps of the Active Militia, and came under military law, with effect from 1 March. C.W.A.C. officers now assumed Army ranks and badges of rank.

Throughout the war the C.W.A.C. was paid at rates lower than those of male soldiers. The original rates, which were supposed to approximate those of the Civil Service, gave a Volunteer (Private) 90 cents per day on enlistment as compared with \$1.30 for a male recruit, while a Chief Commander received \$6.70 (the regimental pay of a Lieutenant Colonel in the army was \$10.00 per day). In 1943, however, the C.W.A.C. rates of pay were increased to 80 per cent of those of other corps of the Army.<sup>76</sup>

The "administration" of C.W.A.C. personnel was necessarily somewhat complicated. Although the great majority of the women of the Corps were employed in non-C.W.A.C. units, it was desirable that their discipline and personal problems should be dealt with by female officers. In the first instance, all C.W.A.C. personnel were kept on the strength of C.W.A.C. companies, which were responsible for them in all respects except employment. This system proved unsatisfactory, one of the disadvantages being that women were shown on the strength returns of both C.W.A.C. companies and employing units, thus giving a false overall strength. Matters of discipline and promotion were complicated by the dual authority. In August 1943, accordingly, a different policy was introduced.<sup>77</sup> All C.W.A.C. officers and other ranks employed with other than C.W.A.C. units were now taken off the strengths of their C.W.A.C. companies and placed on those of the employing units. The only women remaining on the strength of C.W.A.C. companies were their own administrative staffs, newly-enlisted personnel, etc. It should be noted, however, that upon being thus enrolled by their employing units, C.W.A.C. "other ranks" were "attached back" to a C.W.A.C. company for administration, including pay and discipline and, where applicable, quarters and rations. In urban centres where male soldiers employed at static headquarters were usually placed "on subsistence" and allowed to find their own quarters, C.W.A.C. personnel were normally accommodated in barracks.

The military duties undertaken by the C.W.A.C. were various, increasingly so as the war proceeded. Many were clerical, and large numbers of C.W.A.C. women were ultimately employed at National Defence Headquarters, in spite of initial doubts on the part of the Civil Service Commission.<sup>78</sup> Other forms of employment ranged from service in the Army Show, whose concert parties entertained our troops in Britain and the theatres of war, to duty as junior staff officers replacing male officers at static headquarters. There were laundry workers, cooks, drivers, switchboard operators, cipher operators, dental assistants, postal sorters, and many other



"trades". In 1942, following some experimentation in Pacific Command, the Army Council authorized the employment of C.W.A.C. women in gun operations rooms, etc., in connection with anti-aircraft defence.<sup>79</sup> Although the vast majority of C.W.A.C. women served only in Canada, a detachment was sent to Washington, D.C., and in November 1942 a first C.W.A.C. draft arrived in the United Kingdom. Subsequently the C.W.A.C. served overseas in considerable numbers,\* not only in Britain but at the Canadian administrative headquarters in the two main theatres of operations, Italy and North-West Europe.<sup>80</sup>

All told, 21,624 women served in the Canadian Women's Army Corps during the war. At the end of hostilities in Europe in May 1945, the Corps' strength was 636 officers and 13,326 other ranks.<sup>81</sup> Although its formation had been undertaken belatedly and not without some misgivings, it had proved a triumphantly successful experiment. Without the C.W.A.C., Canada's manpower problem would have been considerably more difficult of solution. The C.W.A.C. in itself, however, was far from representing a complete answer to that problem; for the Corps' strength at the time of the German surrender was only 2.8 per cent of the total strength of the Army.

### The Selection of Officers for the Army

Much could be written on the problem of finding the very large number of new officers required by the Canadian Army during the war, and few topics are more important. However, the policies followed can be only summarized in this place.

The Mobilization Instructions in effect in 1939 provided that mobilizing units might find officers from their own Active Lists or Corps Reserves, or from the Reserve of Officers. Other expedients authorized were transfer from other units; appointment of graduates or ex-cadets of the Royal Military College, or members and former members of the Canadian Officers Training Corps possessing certificates of qualification; and promotion from the ranks.<sup>82</sup> In September 1939 some C.A.S.F. units wished to have unqualified officers posted to them. It was recommended that in such cases the candidate should first be commissioned in the Non-Permanent Active Militia, and be posted to the C.A.S.F. only after qualifying for commissioned rank in the N.P.A.M. or on being sent to an Officers Wing of a Training Centre. It was admitted that exceptions might have to be made in the case of units with inadequate or non-existent peace establishments, such as those of the Ordnance and Provost Corps. The Chief of the General Staff accepted these recommendations.<sup>83</sup>

\*See below, Chap. VI.

It follows that in the first instance the Canadian Active Service Force was officered almost entirely by men who already held commissions in 1939. In general, the active lists of the Militia units which were ordered to mobilize provided the officers who were needed. Beyond these, there were numerous officers on the corps or general reserves who were willing and anxious to serve; and in spite of the instructions which had been issued limiting the enlistment of university graduates, etc., there was much good officer material available in the ranks of the mobilizing units, both among the peacetime personnel and the new recruits.

We may note in passing that in 1939 Canadian units were mobilized on United Kingdom war establishments which substituted Warrant Officers Class III ("platoon sergeant majors") for a proportion of lieutenants—a total of eleven platoon commanders in the case of an infantry battalion.—This scheme of making a junior warrant officer do a commissioned officer's work proved to have nothing to commend it in practice, and both the British and Canadian armies abandoned it in 1940.<sup>84</sup>

One source of well-qualified officers, few in number, however, was the Royal Military College of Canada, at Kingston, which had conducted cadet training of officers for the Canadian military forces, on a four-year-course basis, since 1876. At the outbreak of war there were 200 cadets at the College. The policy then decided upon was that the first class, i.e., the fourth-year men, would be offered commissions and would leave the College immediately; the second class would remain there until the Christmas "break," when they too would be offered commissions. The third and fourth classes would stay at the College until the end of the school year, and would then be considered qualified as officers. This policy was carried out with respect to the first and second classes, but a subsequent change resulted in only one class graduating in June 1940. The fourth class, which had entered the College in September 1939, did not graduate until June 1941. In addition, 100 new cadets were admitted in September 1940. These, however, were the last to enter during the war. They graduated in the summer of 1942, and the College, as a cadet college, was then closed for the duration of the war.<sup>85</sup> A four-year course to produce subaltern officers, though it paid large dividends for a peacetime regular army, was not an economic or practical arrangement in wartime.

The decision to close R.M.C. was related to other far-reaching decisions on the supply of officers. As we have seen, there was no shortage, but rather a surplus, of officers in the early months of the war;\* but as soon as

\*The present writer's own experience may illustrate this. In 1939 he was a member of the Reserve of Officers and living in the United States. In the first week of September he offered his services to Headquarters Military District No. 2 and was politely advised that he would be informed when he was required. Subsequent inquiries met with similar responses until October 1940, when some hope of employment was held out. By that time, however, the writer had got into the C.A.S.F. by another route.

the Army began to expand in earnest in the summer of 1940, the question of officer supply became more urgent. In August, Brigadier Stuart, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, made the suggestion that the time had come "when all commissions should be granted only through the ranks".<sup>86</sup> The stages by which this policy evolved thereafter are not clear, but on 15 November 1940 Colonel Ralston announced in the House of Commons the broad lines on which it was intended to proceed. He said that measures were to be taken to ensure "more uniformity" and a higher "standard of officer qualification":

Included in these measures is the decision that for the future every candidate for a commission in the Canadian Army must first pass through the ranks....This system has been based on a study of the experiences of the last war and on the present practice in the British Army.

Regulations for putting the new policy into effect were not approved until March 1941. It was then decided that it would apply both to the Active and Reserve Armies. The time to be spent in the ranks was laid down as four months for Active units, and approximately one year (or the 30-day annual training period) for Reserve units. Exceptions were to be made in the cases of certain specialists, primarily those having technical university degrees or other specialized training suitable for appointment to the Engineers, Judge Advocate General's Branch, the Pay or Ordnance Corps or the Chaplain Service.<sup>87</sup> About the same time that this policy was approved, two Officers Training Centres were set up to train the men selected under it, and the production of reinforcement officers on a large scale began (see below, page 138).

The selection of men from the ranks for officer training was a matter requiring careful handling. The British authorities, who probably had in proportion to the size of their army a rather smaller pool of "potential officer material" available than Canada, gave much attention to the problem, and their experience influenced Canadian policy. It was necessary to set up some machinery for "screening" candidates and selecting those most likely to succeed. In Britain, as early as the autumn of 1940, a selection committee of senior Canadian officers was set up to interview candidates for commissions recommended by unit and formation commanders and select those to go to the Canadian Officer Cadet Training Unit.<sup>88</sup> This unit had been opened at Bordon, Hants (near Aldershot) in August.<sup>89</sup> In Canada itself, where the problem was larger, policy crystallized more slowly.

Certain basic principles had been laid down by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Rogers) in a memorandum to the C.G.S. dated 3 October 1939.<sup>90</sup> He had decided, he said, that the granting of commissions and promotions should be "determined by the proper service authorities on the basis of merit alone," and he would make "no personal recommendations" on these matters. Men in the ranks were "entitled to feel that merit will

open a clear path of promotion to commissioned rank which would not be the case if commissions were granted on the basis of personal or political influence." Applications for commissions were to be made, in the first instance, to unit Commanding Officers or District Officers Commanding, and any "use of outside influence" was to be "regarded as an admission on the part of the applicant that the case is not good on its merits". In directing in this memorandum that there was to be "no political or personal bias of any kind" the Minister took, perhaps, too little account of the imperfections of humanity. It would have been strange if, in the granting of over 40,000 commissions, there were no cases where the "political or personal" influence of individuals played some part. Nevertheless, it is the present writer's belief that in general the principles laid down by Mr. Rogers were strictly followed, and that the wartime record of the Army in this respect is a proper matter for satisfaction.

On 27 March 1940 a Routine Order laid down the procedure to be followed in Canada in appointing officers from among men serving in the ranks. It was simple and traditional: selection by the soldier's Commanding Officer and approval by "higher authority", followed by the grant of a temporary commission, which would be forfeited if the individual failed to qualify "on attendance at an appropriate training centre". The educational standard required was that prescribed in *King's Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Militia, 1939* - to have passed a provincial matriculation examination or its equivalent.<sup>91</sup> With the adoption of the new policy of commissioning from the ranks, something more seemed to be required. Nevertheless, the arrangements for selection authorized in the summer of 1941 differed from the earlier ones in only one important respect: units were now instructed to set up unit selection boards, headed by the Commanding Officer, which would forward recommendations to the district or formation commander concerned. Very careful consideration of candidates' qualities was enjoined. It was now provided that men from the ranks going to Officers Training Centres would no longer be commissioned at this stage, but would have the status of "Cadets". Specialists who by virtue of professional or other qualifications were exempt from service in the ranks would be granted commissions before going to the Centres.<sup>92</sup>

Late in 1942 there was a considerable advance in policy. An "Officers Selection, Promotion, Reclassification and Disposal Board" was set up at N.D.H.Q. under the chairmanship of Brigadier Howard Kennedy,<sup>93</sup> and the whole system was reorganized under its direction. It was now decided that any soldier might be permitted to apply for a commission, and that a careful review should be made of men already serving with a view to discovering "officer material".<sup>94</sup> Moreover, two Officer Selection and Appraisal Centres (one at Three Rivers, P.Q., for Eastern Canada, and one at Chilliwack, B.C., for Western Canada) were set up and began functioning in the spring and

summer of 1943. At these Centres, Officer Selection and Appraisal Boards were established (two at Three Rivers, one at Chilliwack). They were described as "impartial Boards composed of senior officers of all Corps, together with Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Educational Officers, presided over by Brigadiers with long experience in selecting and training officers".<sup>95</sup> At the Centres candidates were put through a series of tests lasting one week, designed to show their fitness or otherwise for commissioning; they were then interviewed by one of the Boards, with the results of the tests before it, and a final decision made as to whether they should be sent to an Officers Training Centre. The normal period of service in the ranks required before recommendation for commissioning was now fixed at five months. Every recruit entering the Army was to pass through a Reception Centre where he would be interviewed by an Army Examiner (i.e., a Personnel Selection Officer), given a "general classification" test ("M" test) and appraised as to his possible fitness for commissioning.\* Thereafter, men considered potential officers would be watched and reported on as their training proceeded, and those who made good would be sent in due course to a Selection and Appraisal Centre.<sup>98</sup>

This uniform and "scientific" system of officer selection was introduced very late, at a time when the former shortage of officers was about to be transformed into a surplus. The result was that it functioned at full capacity for only a short time. In September 1943 the Selection and Appraisal Board and Centre at Chilliwack were closed, and the similar facilities at Three Rivers moved to the Officers Training Centre at Brockville. There they continued to operate, "on a greatly reduced scale", until June 1945.<sup>99</sup>

In spite of the decision taken in 1940, a considerable number of officers continued to be "directly" commissioned throughout the war. All told, 42,613 commissions were granted in the wartime Active Army (to the end of June 1946). Of these, 22,339 were direct, and 20,274 were from the ranks. The direct ones of course included all those Permanent Force and Non-Permanent Active Militia officers who were appointed from the Active and Reserve lists at the beginning of the war or later. Many of these officers had served in the ranks at earlier stages of their careers, and the overall figures just quoted therefore require some qualification. Between 1 April 1941 (when the policy of commissioning from the ranks may be said to have become effective) and the end of the war, 19,322 officers were appointed from the ranks of the Active Army and 10,929 direct commissions were

\*The Directorate of Personnel Selection had been formed at Ottawa on 18 September 1941. Officers were stationed at Basic Training Centres and District Depots thereafter to assist in ensuring that recruits were allocated to the duty for which they were best suited.<sup>96</sup>

Reception Centres, one per Military District, and normally located at the District Depot, were set up by an order of 3 December 1942.<sup>97</sup> Their function was to provide uniform facilities for the medical examination of recruits and the other formalities involved in "inducting" men into the Army.

granted.<sup>100</sup> In other words, during this period nearly two-thirds of the Army's officer vacancies were filled by men who had served in the ranks. The direct commissions are accounted for by the exceptions for specialists permitted under the 1940 policy, and by the fact that officers of Reserve units mobilized into the Active Force were given direct Active commissions subject to qualification. It must be realized further that many of these latter officers had had service in the ranks in the Reserve Army; this indeed was itself a result of the 1940 policy, which provided that Reserve as well as Active Officers should be appointed from the ranks. Statistics are not available for the number of Reserve Army officers appointed to the Active Army who had served in the Reserve ranks, but it must have been very considerable.

### The Training Process in Canada

We pass on now to consider the process of training the soldier. This has become longer and more complicated in proportion as warfare has become more scientific. A modern army contains great numbers of specialists, some of whom may be able to make use of skills acquired in civil life, but many of whom, on the contrary, must be taught from the ground up. This is not limited to the technical arms. The soldier in an infantry rifle company in 1939-45 required to understand and be able to use a wide variety of complicated weapons and equipment, mastery of which could be acquired only by long and careful instruction.

As in the case of recruiting, the present topic falls into two sections: the training of the units which were mobilized as such; and the training of the individuals subsequently enlisted as reinforcements to fill future gaps in those units' ranks.

### The Training of Mobilized Units

The training of a newly-mobilized unit of the Active Army was the responsibility of the unit's own Commanding Officer. He was assumed to be capable of supervising, under the direction and with the assistance of higher authority, a training programme adequate to fit a completely raw recruit for action, or to bring up to the same standard a soldier who had already had some degree of training.

Unit commanders were not of course left entirely to their own devices and resources. Training policy was prescribed in the first instance by National Defence Headquarters. The earliest general instructions for the Canadian Active Service Force were issued on 27 September 1939, in a Routine Order<sup>101</sup> which laid down in very general terms the principles on

which training was to proceed. It provided, among other matters, that, until divisions were concentrated as such, District Officers Commanding were responsible for the training of units quartered in their respective Districts; and it was their particular responsibility to arrange courses for training regimental instructors. In some cases at least, non-commissioned officers of the Permanent Force were attached to newly-mobilized C.A.S.F. units as instructors; and from early dates selected personnel from the units were dispatched, as indicated above, to take specialist courses arranged by the District or otherwise. The officers or non-commissioned officers attending these courses were then able to return to their units as qualified instructors, passing on to the personnel of the unit at large the knowledge they had obtained.

As already indicated, the training was conceived in two stages: individual and collective. The first stage was designed to teach the soldier discipline and the handling of his own weapons and equipment; in the second he learned to work as part of a team in the business of tactical manoeuvre.

### The Organization of Training Centres

The training of reinforcements was a different problem, and clearly required a special organization. The probable need for training units or training centres had of course been recognized before the war, and a certain amount of planning had been done. The Director of Military Training and Staff Duties recommended in August 1939 that plans be made for training centres for the various arms and branches of the service, and locations were suggested.<sup>102</sup>

When war came, and the decision was made to send troops abroad, the formation of centres to train reinforcements became a matter of urgency. Arrangements were made for fourteen training centres across the country. Five of these were for infantry (rifle) and two for infantry (machine-gun) units; the other arms and services had one centre each. Three were Permanent Force establishments which had existed before the war and had already given good wartime service: the Canadian Armoured Fighting Vehicles Training Centre, Camp Borden, which had been given this new title in September 1939; the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps Training Centre, also at Borden, which had existed since 1938, and the Canadian Signal Training Centre, Barriefield, Ontario, which had been set up in 1936.<sup>103</sup> The fourteen centres duly received their first quotas of reinforcements for training on 15 January 1940, except that the Engineer Training Centre at Halifax and the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps Training Centre at Ottawa did not open until the next month. At the end of February, 5465 reinforcements of all ranks were being instructed in the C.A.S.F. training

centres, whose staffs then totalled 2564 all ranks.<sup>104</sup> In May 1940 the number of C.A.S.F. training centres was increased with the organization of two Small Arms Training Centres, one at Connaught Camp, Ottawa, and the other at Sarcee Camp, Alberta.<sup>105</sup>

When compulsory training began under the National Resources Mobilization Act, "N.P.A.M. Training Centres" were set up to receive the 30-day trainees. These were manned by staffs found in great part from Corps Reserves and the Reserve of Officers, or from N.P.A.M. units. The staffs, although not in the first instance forming part of the Canadian Active Service Force, were, unlike the trainees at this period, paid at C.A.S.F. rates. Of the thirty-nine N.P.A.M. Training Centres, 21 were four-company centres, while four were three-company and nine were two-company centres, and five had one company only.<sup>106</sup> As already noted, they began their work on 9 October, and it was reported that they did it well. A visiting officer wrote, "The training carried out in the centres ... was of a surprisingly high standard".<sup>107</sup>

After the decision to extend the compulsory training period to four months and consolidate the training of the General Service recruits and the N.R.M.A. men (above, page 120), the original C.A.S.F. Training Centres, together with eight of the former N.P.A.M. Training Centres (which had lately been renamed Canadian Army (Reserve) Training Centres), became Advanced Training Centres, with the function of giving "special-to-arm" training to both "A" and "R" recruits. Most of the remainder of the Reserve centres now became Basic Training Centres, in which elementary training common to all arms was given (see above, page 121).<sup>108</sup> By the autumn of 1941 there were 27 Basic Training Centres and 32 Advanced Training Centres operating. The latter included two teaching coast-defence and anti-aircraft artillery work and the two Small Arms Training Centres, as well as two Officers Training Centres and several establishments engaged in special or trades training.<sup>109</sup>

### Training Developments in 1942-1944

The early weeks of 1942 brought increased demands for reinforcements, to complete the First Canadian Army and the divisions being mobilized for home defence. A considerable increase in training centre capacity was now authorized, existing establishments being enlarged and new ones set up;<sup>110</sup> the number of basic training centres, which had grown to 28, was increased to 40.\* (Two of the new ones were Educational Basic Training Centres,

\*For this multiplication, which appears to have been uneconomic, there was no sound military reason. Major-General H. F. G. Letson, then Adjutant General, remarks that there was some pressure to "train the boys close to home". The Army would have preferred the opposite policy.<sup>111</sup>



where illiterate or semi-literate recruits could be given elementary education sufficient to enable them to be useful soldiers.) Once the immediate need had been met, however, the new organization proved larger than the normal reinforcement stream required. At 31 May 1943 "the total capacity of basic and advanced training centres was more than 78,000 all ranks at one time".<sup>112</sup>

As early as 6 November 1942 the Army Council had agreed that the linking of basic and advanced training centres on a corps basis would lessen the administrative burden and increase efficiency.<sup>113</sup> However, it proved impossible to introduce this new "Link Training Plan" until 5 August 1943. Under it, all corps except the Infantry, the Armoured Corps (less reconnaissance units) and the Medical Corps carried out both basic and advanced training at Corps Training Centres. In the cases of those three corps, certain basic training centres were linked to specific corps training centres in the same parts of the country. All men destined as reinforcements for a single corps were sent from their District Depot to a common training centre and remained together during the whole of their training, both basic and advanced, with resulting advantage to *esprit de corps*. \* A by-product of the new scheme (and of the "completion of capital commitments for the Army Overseas" and the decline in recruiting) was the closing of 13 basic training centres and reductions in the size of others.<sup>115</sup>

In the autumn of 1943 correspondence with Canadian Military Headquarters, London, underlined the need for better coordination of training between Canada and overseas, and reflected dissatisfaction in the overseas army with the state of training of the reinforcements arriving from Canada.<sup>116</sup> Training syllabi were altered accordingly, and it was felt that the introduction of the Link Training Plan would raise the standards materially.<sup>117</sup> A special measure taken at this period was the establishment at Debent in October of No. 1 Training Brigade Group. This formation, composed of training units of all the arms except the Armoured Corps and Signals (but not all the services), had the task of giving a final four-week course to reinforcements before they were sent overseas. This served to review and check their individual training and introduce them to elementary collective training up to battalion or equivalent level. At the end of their time in the Brigade Group, reinforcements went to a Transit Camp to await embarkation.<sup>118</sup>

Hereafter there were few changes in the organization of training in Canada. For the rest of the war, "the flow of reinforcements continued to be from Reception Centres to Basic Training Centres to Corps Training Centres to Training Brigade Group or Transit Camp and thence overseas".<sup>119</sup> But the infantry reinforcement crisis which began to manifest itself in the late summer of 1944, when it became apparent that official casu

\*During 1943 the arrangement in effect since 1939 by which a recruit enlisted into a specific corps was abrogated, and all enlistments thereafter were for general service in the first instance. Recruits were then allotted to corps by the Army Examiner at the Reception Centre.<sup>114</sup>

alty estimates had been too low for infantry and too high for other arms, necessitated rapid adjustments of training-centre capacities. The re-mustering and re-training of reinforcements of other corps as infantry was the great need. It was met by converting one Medical Corps and two Armoured Corps centres into Infantry Basic Training Centres, devoting all the facilities of one Corps Training Centre to the conversion and refresher training of noncommissioned officers being prepared for dispatch overseas, and utilizing the infantry portion of the Training Brigade Group for the concentration of other ranks for the same purposes. One Army Service Corps and three Artillery training centres were closed, certain other corps centres were reduced, and all Reconnaissance, Army Service Corps and Medical training was concentrated at Camp Borden. In addition to increasing infantry facilities, these measures permitted considerable manpower economies in Canada.<sup>120</sup>

### Special Training Establishments and Trades Training

The natural tendency, under modern conditions, is for specialized training establishments to multiply, and this tendency appeared very clearly in Canada. Special training centres and schools were very numerous. For, example, the Canadian School of Army Administration, located successively at St. Johns, P.Q., Esterel, P.Q. and Kemptville, Ont., provided an Administrative Staff Course (the word "Staff" was later dropped from the designation) as well as courses for Quartermasters and Quartermaster-Sergeants and Clerks.<sup>121</sup> A Battle Drill School was set up at Vernon, B.C., and subsequently became the Canadian School of Infantry.<sup>122</sup> The Canadian School of Artillery (later redesignated "Canadian Artillery School") was opened at Petawawa in July 1942.<sup>123</sup> The Canadian Driving and Maintenance School, at Woodstock, Ont., gave courses in Advanced Driving and Maintenance for both wheeled and tracked vehicles, and a Commanding Officers' short mechanical transport course.<sup>124</sup> The Canadian Chemical Warfare School was set up at Suffield, Alta.,<sup>125</sup> and a Combined Operations School at Courtenay, B.C.<sup>126</sup> A complete list of training centres and establishments as they existed in the summer of 1943 will be found in Appendix "D".

Active efforts were made, increasingly as time passed, to maintain effective liaison with the Army Overseas in order to ensure high standards and realistic syllabi in training establishments in Canada. With this in view, instructors from overseas were brought back to Canada for tours of duty at training centres and schools. When in September 1943 the Commandant of the Canadian Training School in England (Colonel T. E. D'O. Snow) made a tour of establishments in Canada, he laid great emphasis upon such contacts, remarking, "The only live, worthwhile liaison is personal liaison".<sup>127</sup>

Since the army of 1939-45 was, as we have already indicated, to a great extent an army of specialists and technicians, "containing over 30 per cent tradesmen",<sup>128</sup> trades training was of the greatest importance from the beginning. The topic is enormous, but space permits only a few words. As the war went on, very large measures were found necessary to provide trained tradesmen. Trades training policy at N.D.H.Q. was handled by a special section of the Directorate of Military Training until April 1942, when a separate Directorate of Trades Training was set up.<sup>129</sup> Considerable use was made of civil facilities, including Youth Training Centres and Technical and Vocational Schools, and many tradesmen were trained in the two latter under what was called the War Emergency Training Plan.\* The Army itself, however, was obliged to undertake trades training on an important scale. On 10 December 1940 the Cabinet War Committee authorized setting up the Canadian Army Trades School. This large school, originally planned for Barriefield, Ont., but finally opened in May 1941 at Hamilton, Ont., was designed to instruct 2000 soldiers at one time in a great variety of trades, including those of welder, electrician, carpenter, driver mechanic, bricklayer, blacksmith, clerk, armourer, equipment repairer, fitter, machinist, cook, coppersmith, motor mechanic and instrument mechanic. By the end of 1944, over 15,000 soldiers (including many C.W.A.C. personnel) had successfully completed training at the C.A.T.S.<sup>130</sup> In the spring of 1942, Vocational Training Schools were set up, one in each Military District. Their original function was the administration of soldiers training in civilian schools, but subsequently they themselves conducted trades training courses. Special arrangements were made for enlisting youths 17 and 18 years of age for trades training; they were enlisted in a Canadian Technical Training Corps and carried on the strength of these Vocational Training Schools.<sup>131</sup> Other trades schools conducted by the Army are listed in Appendix "D".

### Training the C.W.A.C.

Training the Canadian Women's Army Corps had two aspects: giving the recruits a modicum of military training, and teaching them trades. Many, of course, had trades training (e.g., as stenographers) before enlistment, and some had acquired some military knowledge in the voluntary organizations. In the earliest days of the Corps, training was organized locally under direction of District Officers Commanding,<sup>132</sup> but in February 1942 the first C.W.A.C. training centre opened at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, P.Q. After a preliminary course for officers and N.C.Os. it began a regular series of four

\*This was developed from the youth training plan set up by the Department of Labour in the depression days before the war.

week courses on military subjects for officers and other ranks. Two other C.W.A.C. basic training centres were set up later in the year, and thereafter the one at Ste. Anne was given over to advanced and officer training.<sup>133</sup>

Trades training for the C.W.A.C. passed through a similar evolution, beginning with training under District arrangements and progressing by the autumn of 1942 to courses organized on a national scale by N.D.H.Q. Courses for cooks, drivers and stenographers were the greatest immediate need. Some of these were held at the C.W.A.C. training centres, some at other establishments. As time passed, many C.W.A.C. women went as students to the various trade schools established for the instruction of male soldiers, and, as in the case of male soldiers, much use was made of technical and vocational schools and other civilian facilities.<sup>134</sup>

### The Training of Officers

The proper training of new officers was of fundamental importance. As already explained, many of these reinforcement officers were found in the ranks of the Active Army, but they could not be commissioned without passing through a process of training to give them the special knowledge an officer requires, training which would at the same time serve as a final "screening" process to determine their fitness for commissions.

The Canadian Army Overseas, we have seen, had its own Officer Cadet Training Unit as early as August 1940. In Canada the training of young officers was placed upon a centralized and systematic basis in the spring of 1941, when two Officers Training Centres were opened, at Brockville, Ont., for Eastern Canada and at Gordon Head, near Victoria, B.C., for Western Canada. The syllabus at these Centres included four weeks spent on basic subjects common to all arms, six weeks devoted to elementary subjects special to the cadet's arm, and a two-week course in platoon tactics, designed to ensure that every officer would be able to take command of men performing duties in an area defence scheme. Candidates qualifying in this syllabus were granted commissions as 2nd Lieutenants and then went to Advanced Training Centres of their own arms for a further course qualifying them as Lieutenants. In some but not all cases, the final stage of a new officer's training was a period spent as an instructor at a Basic Training Centre and subsequently at an Advanced Training Centre, after which he was posted, either overseas as a reinforcement officer or to a unit in Canada.<sup>135</sup>

Early in 1942, a decision was taken to dissolve the Canadian O.C.T.U. in the United Kingdom (except for the short five-weeks "basic" course) and send overseas candidates back to Canada for training at Brockville or Gordon Head. This policy was subsequently modified, and most overseas candidates for the technical arms continued to be trained in England.<sup>136</sup>

During

1942

the formation of home-defence divisions created a need for more officers and the training programme was expanded, by enlarging the Brockville and Gordon Head centres and establishing a temporary one at Three Rivers, P.Q. This increased the total accommodation to 2600 candidates.<sup>137</sup> As a result, an ample and indeed over-abundant supply of reinforcement officers was soon available.\* In August 1943 the Adjutant General (General Letson) estimated that there would be a surplus of 2000 by the end of April 1944.<sup>138</sup> The centre at Gordon Head was now closed; after September 1943 all officer training was concentrated at Brockville.<sup>139</sup>

Special arrangements were made to fit French-speaking Canadians for Active Army commissions. Early in 1942 pre-O.C.T.U. courses for specially selected French-speaking candidates were instituted at No. 44 Basic Training Centre, St. Jerome, P.Q. Candidates completing one of these were sent on to the Officers Training Centre at Brockville, where a special French Wing had been organized.<sup>140</sup> To assist in the training of French-speaking personnel generally, a large programme of translating military manuals and pamphlets was undertaken.<sup>141</sup>

In peacetime the contingents of the Canadian Officers Training Corps established at various universities had provided many officers for the NonPermanent Active Militia. The C.O.T.C. continued to serve on a large scale in wartime, and was particularly useful in giving a measure of military training to university students who were completing their education in subjects important to officers in the technical arms. It was desirable for such men to complete their academic courses before joining the Active Force. The policy which gradually took shape was that of enabling students to complete in the C.O.T.C. courses of military training covering the same syllabus as at Basic Training Centres. This was done during their first and second years, while students in the third and fourth years had a syllabus designed to prepare them for entrance to an Officers Training Centre. Some students trained at Officers Training Centres in the summer months. The net result was to produce considerable numbers of university graduates technically fitted for commissions in the specialized arms and having enough military training to enable them to complete their qualification for commissions in short order.<sup>142</sup>

In the autumn of 1942 an experiment was tried at the University of Toronto when "No. 1 Canadian Army University Course" was inaugurated. The plan was to provide a special one-year course specializing in mathematics and engineering subjects but including some basic military training (not given by the C.O.T.C.) Students attending, if not already serving, were enlisted in the Army as privates. The object was to produce potential officers for the technical corps. Those completing the course were, however, required

\*A by-product of this situation was the lending of 673 Canadian junior officers to the British Army under the "Canloan" scheme early in 1944. Many of these officers served with distinction in British units in the North-West Europe campaign.

to go through basic and advanced training centres in the normal way and there was no undertaking that they would be selected for officer training. During the academic year 1943-44 a second course was held, at Toronto and eleven other universities, with a total of 1270 students. By this time, however, the shortage of officers in the technical corps had been overcome, and graduates of the course were allowed to appear before Officers Selection and Appraisal Boards only on the understanding that they were prepared, if accepted, to take commissions in the Infantry.<sup>143</sup>

The higher training of officers was largely concentrated at the Royal Military College, Kingston. The normal work of the College, we have seen, was increasingly suspended from the outbreak of war. The buildings were used, however, for special instructional purposes, and a considerable variety of courses were held there.

The problem of Staff training was serious and urgent. Many pre-war Permanent Force officers had qualified at the Staff Colleges at Camberley, England, or Quetta, India, and many officers of the Non-Permanent Active Militia had passed the Militia Staff Course. Nevertheless, there was a shortage of trained staff officers from the beginning, and a serious shortage from the moment when the Army really began to expand. Although the Canadian forces were allotted vacancies in British schools, these were quite inadequate to the need. Accordingly, arrangements were made to conduct one Canadian Junior War Staff Course in the United Kingdom beginning in January 1941 (see below, page 237). All later Canadian staff courses were conducted in Canada, at Kingston, the second Junior War Staff Course commencing there in July 1941.<sup>144</sup>

The graduation of the last class of cadets from R.M.C. in June 1942 made possible some expansion of staff training activities there. The Junior War Staff Course was enlarged and late in 1942 its designation was changed to "Canadian War Staff Course", since its syllabus corresponded with that of the Intermediate Staff Course at Camberley. Early in 1943 this Camberley course was reorganized into two wings, one to train officers for Grade II appointments in field formations, and one to provide Grade II staff officers for headquarters other than field formations. (A Grade II staff officer is normally of the rank of major.) The Canadian War Staff Course was reorganized along similar lines in the autumn of 1943. The Intermediate Wing was later termed "A" Wing. The first Junior (later "B") Wing course, designed to provide staff officers for static headquarters in Canada, began in October 1943.<sup>145</sup> By 1944 the staff officer problem, like that of the supply of junior regimental officers, had been largely solved.

Apart from the staff courses, other advanced courses for officers were held at R.M.C. A Senior Officers' Course and a Company Commanders' Course were conducted until the summer of 1943, when they were fused

into a Field Officers' Course. This was itself discontinued to make room for the Canadian Civil Affairs Staff Course, inaugurated in December 1943. R.M.C. was also the scene of various more specialized training activities, including Intelligence courses for officers and other ranks, and courses in Field Security.<sup>146</sup>

### The Royal Canadian Army Cadets

Since Victorian times the Army had been represented in the schools of Canada by cadet corps which gave elementary military training and served to introduce the schoolboy to the idea of serving his country as a citizen soldier. This movement expanded and became more active during the war. His Majesty the King lent it countenance in 1942 by granting the title Royal Canadian Army Cadets and consenting to become Colonel-in-Chief. The Army Cadets were the responsibility of a special directorate at National Defence Headquarters, formed in October 1942 (an earlier "Directorate of Physical Training and Cadet Services" had been abolished in 1933). The new Directorate superintended a training programme which included drill, army organization, weapon training, fieldcraft, map reading, signalling, aircraft recognition, etc. The Cadets were divided into Senior and Junior divisions. Their strength at 31 March, 1943 was 95,291; two years later it was 113,827. In the later years of the war, over 9000 senior cadets annually attended summer camps. It was reported in 1945 that at least 54,546 cadets and former cadets had enlisted in the three services or the merchant marine.<sup>147</sup>

### The History of Private Jones

The foregoing outline of the process of recruiting and training has been purely impersonal. How did the system work in actual human terms? Let us trace the record of one individual citizen-soldier who went through the army mill. For the sake of completeness, and as a matter of interest, the story is extended overseas and down to the moment when the soldier was finally discharged after the war. Although some material not wholly relevant to the present chapter is thus included, it may be worth while to record these matters as a concrete example of the system of "personnel administration" within the Canadian Army. The account which follows is based on the service documents of an actual soldier. We shall call him Private Jones, though that was not his name.

Mr. Jones was in civil life a resident of a town of medium size in Nova Scotia. At the time when he decided to volunteer, in the autumn

of 1942, he had had no military training and no connection with the armed forces. He approached the branch recruiting office of Military District No. 6 in his town, and on 11 November 1942 he was medically examined and placed in Category "A". On 16 November he signed his attestation papers, was sworn in as Private Jones of the Active Army and was taken on the strength of No. 6 District Depot, Halifax. He remained there until 4 December, attending clothing and equipment parades. On 5 December he was posted to No. 60 (Basic) Training Centre at Yarmouth, where he received the usual inoculations and began his training. He stayed there nine and a half weeks instead of the normal eight. The probable explanation is the bad weather which hampered training that winter.<sup>148</sup> While at the Centre he qualified in all the elementary subjects: drill, physical training, first aid, marching, small arms training (exclusive of bayonet fighting), gas training, fieldcraft, map reading and "fundamental"\* training. In addition, he fired the rifle range course and was rated as an above-average shot. On completing his course he received a good report.

On 10 February 1943, Private Jones was posted to A-14 Advanced Infantry (Rifle) Training Centre at Aldershot, N.S., for a further step in his military education. Here he received approximately nine weeks of advanced training, including the following subjects: physical training, marching, "fundamental" training, bayonet fighting, judging distance, digging and wiring, field training, and sub-machine gun. He passed as average in drill, mapreading, anti-aircraft training, grenade and pistol, and successfully passed his "tests of elementary training" with the rifle, light machine-gun and 2-inch mortar. There is no record of range courses except a further one with the rifle, in which he was classified as a second-class shot. He had a short elementary course on the 3-inch mortar and passed as qualified. Private Jones's advanced infantry training ended on 13 April 1943.

Probably because of special aptitude, he had been selected as a signaller, and on 14 April he went to the Canadian Signal Training Centre at Barriefield, Ont., to take the infantry signaller's course. His training there was interrupted by two periods in Kingston Military Hospital with pneumonia. On 6 May he received an increase in pay from \$1.30 to \$1.40 per day effective from 16 March, the date of his completion of four months' service, and on 16 May he was granted \$1.50 per day, the current rate of pay for private soldiers of six months' service. On 1 October he graduated from Barriefield a qualified infantry signaller.

\*The "Standard Syllabus for Basic, Training, 1942" defines the objects of this as (a) to establish in the recruit "a fundamental knowledge of his own personal responsibilities in regard to conduct, health and personal administrative efficiency"; (b) to broaden his "knowledge of conditions of service in the Army"; (c) to give him "a basic knowledge of democratic Government" and of the responsibilities of a citizen; (d) to give him "a general picture of the war situation as it develops".



So far, Private Jones appears to have had no regimental affiliation. The Canadian Infantry Corps had been formed in September 1942, and it may be presumed that he was a member of this Corps only, although undoubtedly earmarked as a reinforcement for a Maritime infantry battalion. After a year of training in Canada, Jones was now ready to move overseas. He was given 14 days' furlough, and was then posted to a "reinforcement serial" and embarked at Halifax on 24 November. On 2 December he landed in the United Kingdom and went to No. 1 Canadian Signals Reinforcement Unit, at Cove, Hants, near Aldershot. This was the normal procedure for infantry signaller reinforcements; all such men were posted to No. 1 C.S.R.U., where they received specialist training until required by their field units.

Private Jones's stay in the United Kingdom, however, was comparatively short. On 31 January 1944 he was posted to No. 7 Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit (which held reinforcements for the Maritime infantry battalions), was immediately "placed on draft" and sailed for Italy on 19 February. The 1st Canadian Infantry Division had suffered heavy casualties in the fighting around Ortona in December, and many reinforcements had been required to bring it up to strength. Jones was now being sent out, with other men, to fill the depleted pool of reinforcements held for the Division in the theatre of operations.

Landing in Italy on 3 March 1944, he went to the 1st Battalion of No. 1 Canadian Base Reinforcement Depot, in the Canadian base area at Avellino, not far from Naples. Here he was listed as a reinforcement for The Carleton and York Regiment. At this period the 1st Division's front was static, and there was no immediate demand for large numbers of reinforcements. Private Jones accordingly remained at Avellino until 8 May, when he was posted directly to the Carleton and York. He appears to have joined the unit the same day; it was then at Montesarchio, only 40 or 50 miles from Avellino. He thus finally joined a field unit approximately a year and a half after his enlistment in the Army, and became a soldier of the 1st Division just three days before the beginning of the Liri Valley offensive.

In the great assault on the Adolf Hitler Line on 23 May, in which his battalion tore the first hole in the enemy defences, Private Jones seems to have suffered a minor flesh wound, but he remained on duty and was never formally reported a casualty. He was less fortunate during the rest period after the offensive, when like many other Canadians in Italy he caught infectious hepatitis (jaundice). He was sent to No. 15 Canadian General Hospital at Caserta on 10 July, and then on 24 July to No. 1 Canadian Convalescent Depot at Mercatello, where he stayed until discharged on 16 August. In accordance with normal procedure, he was sent back to the 1st Battalion of No. 1 Base Reinforcement Depot at Avellino, and immediately posted thence to the 4th Battalion (then at Monsano), whose function it was to hold a pool of reinforcements ready in the forward area. On

15 September he returned to The Carleton and York Regiment, which was then engaged in the desperate fighting south of Rimini. With it he served through the successive bitter actions of the autumn and winter on the Savio, Lamone and Senio rivers. On 1 December he received trades pay as a regimental signaller for the first time; this may indicate that he only now became a regular member of the Signals platoon. Although unscathed in action, he again fell ill at the end of January and was admitted to No. 3 Canadian General Hospital at Misano, with pyrexia ("short term fever"). He was later transferred to No. 1 Canadian General Hospital at lesi and discharged on 13 February. The same day he went to the 4th Battalion, No. 1 C.B.R.D., and the next was back with his regiment.

Private Jones left Italy with the Carleton and York on 17 March 1945, landing in the south of France on the 20th. He served through the 1st Division's short campaign in Western Holland and was still with his unit at the end of hostilities in Europe. On the day of the cease-fire (5 May) he went on leave to the United Kingdom; and July saw him on the first leg of his journey homeward. A Nova Scotian serving in a New Brunswick regiment, on 18 July he was transferred to The West Nova Scotia Regiment for return to Canada. With this regiment he arrived on 10 September at No. 8 Canadian Repatriation Depot in the United Kingdom. After a further period of leave in England, he embarked with the West Novas and landed at Halifax on 1 October. He was sent to No. 6 District Depot, where he had begun his military career, for disembarkation leave and discharge.

On 16 November 1945 he received his honourable discharge, having served in the Canadian Army three years to a day. Throughout this period his military character was excellent and there were no entries on his conduct sheet. He had qualified for five campaign stars and medals—the 1939-45 Star, the Italy Star, the France and Germany Star, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, and the British War Medal. (Unlike many Canadians who had joined the Army earlier, he did not serve in the United Kingdom long enough to get the Defence Medal.) \* He thus reverted to the status of a civilian, doubtless with no marked reluctance, but doubtless also with considerable sense of satisfaction in duty done. Private Jones was now Mr. Jones once more; but it is unlikely that he will soon forget the part he played in some of Canada's hardest battles, or the days when he wore the King's uniform in the ranks of the Carleton and York.

\*The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal was instituted in 1943 and is normally awarded on the basis of eighteen months' completed voluntary service; the clasp recognizes a period of a minimum of 60 days served outside of Canada. The Defence Medal, instituted to commemorate certain non-operational and civil defence service, was awarded to members of the Canadian forces who served six months in the United Kingdom (a "non-operational area . . . subject to air attack or closely threatened").<sup>149</sup>

## CHAPTER V

### DEFENDING THE SOIL OF CANADA, 1939-1945

(See Maps 1, 2 and 3)

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#### The Nature of the Problem

**M**ANY people assumed, during the years before 1939, that in the event of another war Canada would be in greater direct danger than in 1914-18. Even after war began, this assumption continued to be influential. As we have seen, on 3 September 1939 the Prime Minister, sending his first formal cable to Mr. Chamberlain concerning military cooperation, remarked that the primary task for the Canadian Government would naturally be the defence of Canada, "which under present circumstances is a more pressing and urgent undertaking than it was in the last war".\*

Nevertheless, no real menace to Canadian soil developed at any time during the war. There was no invasion; there were no landings from the sea or bombings by aircraft, nor is there any evidence that the Germans or Japanese ever seriously considered such enterprises. It is true that Canada was in peril, and the peril was deadly; but it never took the form of an imminent threat to her territory. This was due to fortunate geographical accidents, and the possession of powerful allies, which made it possible to conduct the war on the further side of great bodies of water; and Canada's main contributions to winning it took the form of active help to those allies in distant theatres. Had the joint Allied effort there failed-in particular, had the Germans overrun the United Kingdom as well as the rest of North-West Europe-the direct danger to Canada would have become infinitely greater. As it was, Canadians, for the second time in the century, were able to defend their interests on foreign soil and defeat their enemies before they came to Canada. No more serious immediate threat to Canada's own shores developed than a few shells from a Japanese submarine, some ineffective bomb-carrying balloons, and sporadic operations by German U-boats in her coastal waters.

\*This chapter deals only with the Army's share in home defence. For the work of the Navy and Air Force, readers are referred to the histories of those services. Inter-service aspects will be dealt with in the subsequent volume dealing with military policy, as will also the question of cooperation with the United States. On defence measures immediately before the outbreak of war, see Chapter II, above.

All this, as usual, was not so clear at the time as it is in retrospect. To strike a balance between home defence and action abroad was not entirely easy for the Canadian Government. Not only was it impossible to forecast the course the war might take, but the Cabinet also had to consider popular fears and pressures which were not necessarily closely related to the actual facts. Thus in the months after Pearl Harbor it was subjected, as we shall see, to strong demands for increased defences in British Columbia, and to some extent was obliged to yield to them. Large numbers of men and large quantities of material were thus immobilized on the Pacific Coast. An excited public opinion, in pressing for such exaggerated precautions against menaces which were almost entirely imaginary, was of course simply playing Hitler's game. In so far as such pressure resulted in keeping at home men and weapons that could have been used in the theatres where the war was decided, it was an advantage to our enemies.

### Early Measures for the Defence of Canada

The plans made before 1939 for the defence of Canadian soil are described in Chapter I. They provided for more and stronger coast-defence batteries, and we have seen that much progress had been made before war broke out, although the measures taken had been largely confined to the Pacific Coast. In addition, Defence Scheme No. 3 provided for the mobilization in emergency of considerable forces to man the defences and otherwise provide for the security of coastal areas.

On the night of 25 August 1939, as already related (above, page 41), the Government called out on a voluntary basis the units of the Non-Permanent Active Militia required for the coast defences and the protection of "vulnerable points". The batteries at Victoria-Esquimalt, Vancouver, Yorke Island and Prince Rupert were manned on the west coast, while on the Atlantic similar action was taken at Halifax, Saint John, N.B., Sydney-Canso, and Quebec. The job was done swiftly and efficiently so far as the limited strength of the N.P.A.M. units permitted. Thus at Halifax the 1st (Halifax) Coast Brigade R.C.A. paraded at 2:30 p.m. on 26 August with a strength of 202 all ranks; and its war diary records that, with the help of the local Permanent Force gunners and the 3rd (New Brunswick) Coast Brigade R.C.A., who were doing their annual training at Sandwich Battery, "the forts were manned and ready for action by 1830 hrs [6:30 p.m.]". At Esquimalt on the same day 226 all ranks of the 5th (British Columbia) Coast Brigade R.C.A. and attached units manned the new and old batteries.<sup>1</sup>

The improved defences in British Columbia included two new "counter-bombardment" batteries\* in the Esquimalt area (at Albert Head and Mary Hill, mounting 9.2-inch and 6-inch guns respectively) which had already been armed. The guns, however, were on old mountings permitting an elevation of only 15 degrees, and not until 1943-44 were modern mountings allowing more adequate elevation and range received and installed. At Vancouver, the new batteries (on Point Grey; in Stanley Park; and on the north side of the First Narrows of Burrard Inlet) were ready, or nearly ready, for action on an emergency basis, though at Point Grey the action might not have been very effective. (The guns there, just mounted under the emergency scheme, still had the automatic sights originally provided for them on a much lower battery position at Halifax, and these were useless at Point Grey; while an alternative method of laying the guns was nullified when visibility was poor.) The Yorke Island guns were also "in action". The Vancouver and Yorke Island defences were manned by the 15th (Vancouver) Coast Brigade R.C.A.<sup>2</sup> At Prince Rupert, where the 102nd (North British Columbia) Heavy Battery R.C.A. was on duty, the two new batteries had not been armed when the crisis came, but this was quickly done and guns of three different calibres had been test-fired here before the end of September.<sup>3</sup>

On the east coast, Halifax of course had its old batteries, which were in serviceable condition, although here too the mountings were low-angle. Some new anti-motor-torpedo-boat positions were set up on an emergency basis. At Sydney and the Strait of Canso the 16th Coast Brigade R.C.A. manned guns mounted in accordance with the emergency plan lately authorized; there had previously been no active batteries here. At both places guns were progressively placed in action during September.<sup>4</sup> At Saint John, where the 3rd (New Brunswick) Coast Brigade was doing duty, there had similarly been no armament before the emergency, but by Canada's declaration of war on 10 September two 6-inch guns of 1896 vintage (originally part of the armament of H.M.C.S. *Niobe*) had been mounted in one battery, and other positions were armed later in the month, though only with field guns.<sup>5</sup> At Quebec, a position unlikely to be assailed by sea under modern conditions, the 59th Heavy Battery R.C.A. manned the elderly weapons of Fort Martiniere, commanding the St. Lawrence below the city, and the 94th Field Battery had guns in position covering the examination anchorage near St. Vallier somewhat lower down.<sup>6</sup>

\*One can distinguish four roles for coast-defence batteries. Counter-bombardment batteries, the heaviest type, were for dealing with enemy battleships or cruisers at long range. Closedefence batteries were for defending harbours at shorter ranges. Examination batteries were for supporting the naval examination service for incoming shipping. Anti-motor-torpedo-boat batteries were composed of light quick-firers for defending harbours against raiding M.T.Bs., and were often mounted to cover the boom defences of harbour-mouths. Sometimes a battery had more than one role.

Such was the coast artillery picture. Had an attack materialized during the first weeks of war, the defences' efficiency would scarcely have been high; many of the gun positions were temporary, the equipment was outdated, the units were low in strength and incompletely trained. Yet the guns and crews were there and ready to fire. Surveying what had been accomplished since the Government authorized emergency action on 24 August, one must account it a not unimpressive performance.

Inadequate as the fixed gun defences were, they were in far better condition than the anti-aircraft defences, which were very nearly non-existent. As we have seen, the only efficient anti-aircraft guns in Canada (four 3-inch 20-cwt. pieces, already obsolescent) were sent to Halifax during the precautionary period. The only other A.A. guns in the country were eight 13-pounders, obsolete since 1920, for which a total of 307 rounds of ammunition was available, and two 4-inch naval guns which were useless since there was no fire-control equipment for them. In the early stages of the war, with Japan still neutral, the Atlantic ports naturally got priority; and it is the fact that until Pearl Harbor the Pacific coast's anti-aircraft defences consisted of two of the ancient 13-pounders—with no ammunition.<sup>7</sup> Since the United Kingdom's own defences were still far from complete, it was next to impossible to obtain equipment from there; however, in November 1939, assisted perhaps by the fact that there had as yet been no air attacks on Britain, the Canadian authorities in London obtained the release of four modern 3.7-inch guns. These reached Canada early in January and were very properly allotted to Halifax, whose importance (and vulnerability) as a convoy assembly point needed no emphasis.<sup>8</sup> No further A.A. guns were received for use in Canada for two years, until November and December 1941, when two more 3.7s arrived<sup>9</sup> and 40-millimetre Bofors guns began to come out of Canadian factories.

In view of the almost total lack of equipment, certain anti-aircraft and searchlight batteries were intentionally omitted from the list of units called out voluntarily on 25 August. Nevertheless, through a misunderstanding, when mobilization began on 1 September several anti-aircraft units for which there was no equipment were ordered to mobilize. Subsequently the personnel of such units were absorbed into other C.A.S.F. units in their respective Districts.<sup>10</sup> For some time the men of the 2nd Anti-Aircraft Battery, having no equipment of their own, manned the coast-defence guns at Fort Macaulay, Esquimalt.<sup>11</sup>

The artillery were of course not the only troops on coast-defence duty. Infantry was also required, and on each coast several battalions were called out for this purpose. Their functions were to support the artillery garrisons of defended ports, to furnish small mobile reserves, to guard certain "vulnerable points" and in general to provide as might be required for internal security. In September 1939 four infantry battalions were mobilized for

such duties on the Pacific coast,\* and eight in the Maritime Provinces.<sup>13</sup> The battalions mobilized on establishments smaller than those for the Mobile Force, and recruiting was suspended before they reached full strength. The result was that during the winter they had too few men for their tasks. In the early summer of 1940 the infantry battalions on duty in British Columbia averaged only about 300 all ranks. Troops of all arms on coast-defence and anti-aircraft duty in Canada on 1 June totalled 9100 all ranks, in addition to 1732 guarding vulnerable points.<sup>14</sup>

### The Guarding of "Vulnerable Points"

A word must be said on the problem of the protection of "vulnerable points". The question of responsibility in this matter was a difficult one. The principle laid down before the outbreak of war was that the Dominion Government would take responsibility for protecting the following: defence establishments; certain vital and essential spots along the railways and canals; and some other points such as oil depots, drydocks, grain elevators at the Head of the Lakes, cable landing-places, wireless stations, and the Niagara hydro-electric plants. The point was made that, in general, Dominion protection could not be provided for every establishment which might conceivably become a target of attack or sabotage; "except where other arrangements have been specifically made, the authority responsible for protection in time of peace must continue responsible in time of war".<sup>15</sup> The local police authorities, and the owners of factories, etc., were not to be permitted to avoid responsibility.

With respect to those points which were acknowledged as Dominion charges, the question arose of the division of function between the armed forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Before war began arrangements for this division had been made, and lists of Department of National Defence and R.C.M.P. responsibilities had been mutually agreed upon.<sup>16</sup> The military forces naturally assumed wider obligations on the coasts, where enemy landings were possible, but the Mounted Police in general carried the heaviest responsibilities in inland districts, where the danger was limited to that from saboteurs. The R.C.M.P. planned to enlist special constables to handle the tasks assigned to it, which could usually be carried out by men whose age and medical category would render them unfit for active service. It was agreed in August 1939 that the Police would not be required to take over all the proposed responsibilities until its protective

\*A fifth did guard duty on an N.P.A.M. basis until November, when it was relieved by the Mounted Police. It may be noted that after becoming Chief of the General Staff in 1940 General Crerar sought and received authority to move units required for duty in Canada from one part of the country to another at his discretion. One of the arguments used was the contribution such moves would make to the education of young soldiers as Canadians. This particularly appealed to the Prime Minister.<sup>12</sup>

organization had been completed. This was not yet the case when war broke out, and therefore, as a temporary measure, the Department of National Defence in September assumed the protection of all vulnerable points which were considered Federal obligations. From the first week of October onward the transfer from the Militia to the Police was gradually carried out.<sup>17</sup> A certain number of C.A.S.F. personnel who had been employed on guard duty were now no longer required, and under the provisions of a routine order<sup>18</sup> published on 11 October these men were given the alternatives of discharge from the service, reversion to Non-Permanent Active Militia status or continued service in another unit of the C.A.S.F., if they could meet the required physical standards.

There was, as might have been expected, a good deal of correspondence with provincial and municipal authorities and private firms and individuals concerning the protection of vulnerable, or supposedly vulnerable, points. The Dominion Government was pressed to widen its own responsibilities in this respect. The matter was reconsidered during October 1939, and as a result the principle was re-affirmed that protection against sabotage was primarily a police rather than an army function, and one in which local authorities properly had large responsibilities.<sup>19</sup> The Dominion Government continued to maintain that there were definite limits to its own obligations and declined to extend them to cover the protection of all establishments and communities against menaces which, the result showed, had little real existence.

In spite of all these qualifications, the Army had considerable responsibilities for guarding vulnerable points. In August 1940 the situation was as follows. There were no commitments whatever in Military Districts Nos. 1 (Headquarters, London, Ont.), 4 (Montreal), 12 (Regina, Sask.) and 13 (Calgary, Alta.) In Military District No. 7 (Saint John, N.B.), only 15 all ranks were employed on guard duty, and in No. 10 (Winnipeg) only 47. There was however a large commitment in Military District No. 2 (Toronto), where two battalions of the 13th Infantry Brigade were protecting the hydroelectric installations in the Niagara Peninsula and the Welland Canal locks, and a considerable one in No. 3 (Kingston, Ont.) where 237 all ranks were employed, including 152 guarding public buildings in Ottawa. In Military District No. 5 (Quebec, P.Q.), 307 all ranks were on duty, divided between eight different points, among which the Dominion Arsenal establishments at Quebec and Valcartier, and the Aluminum Company of Canada plants and power units at Arvida and Isle Maligne on the Upper Saguenay, were prominent. In Military District No. 6 (Halifax, N.S.), there were 234 all ranks, including 100 guarding the Joint Services Magazine at Bedford Basin and 70 at the oil depot at Imperoyal, both in the Halifax harbour area. In Military District No. 11 (Victoria, B.C.) 516 all ranks were employed, of whom 105 were guarding the drydock at Prince Rupert, while 74 all ranks



were allotted to each of three R.C.A.F. stations.<sup>20</sup> This survey includes only troops allotted to definite local tasks. There were in addition infantry battalions in an "internal security role", i.e. available to support the civil power or act in any other manner required by circumstances. In October there were five such battalions, stationed at Sherbrooke, P.Q.; Ottawa; Chatham, Ont.; Fort William, Ont.; and Edmonton, Alta. Furthermore, the 13th Brigade's third battalion was considered available for the same role in the Toronto-Hamilton area.<sup>21</sup>

Another task, which grew much larger during 1940, was guarding internment and prisoner of war camps. From the beginning of the war, guards were required for the camps in which enemy aliens and other persons considered dangerous were interned. After the disaster in France in 1940, when a German attempt at invading Britain seemed likely, the British Government asked Canada to accept custody of 4000 internees and 3000 prisoners of war, whose presence in the United Kingdom might be dangerous in the event of invasion. On 10 June 1940 the War Committee of the Cabinet agreed. Subsequently the numbers increased until at the peak, in October 1944, Canada was holding for the United Kingdom 34,193 prisoners, of whom 254 were civilian internees. Canada held 853 other prisoners on her own responsibility. A total of 5524 all ranks of the Army were employed at this time as staff and guards. A Directorate of Prisoners of War had been set up at the beginning of 1943 to supervise the work.<sup>22</sup> Guarding the camps was at first the responsibility of the Canadian Provost Corps, but in May 1941 full responsibility for them was transferred to the Veterans Guard of Canada.<sup>23</sup>

It may be noted here that the Veterans Guard had greatly expanded since its inception in May 1940. By March 1941 there were 29 active companies with a total strength of 206 officers and 6360 other ranks. Of these, 98 officers and 2848 other ranks were guarding internment camps, the balance of the personnel being employed in guarding vulnerable points and training. There were in addition 43 reserve companies with a total strength of 183 officers and 3765 other ranks.<sup>24</sup> The Guard reached its peak of strength in June of 1943, when its Active strength was 451 officers and 9806 other ranks. This included one company in the United Kingdom—the General Duty Company at C.M.H.Q.—and one each in the Bahamas, British Guiana and Newfoundland, in addition to 37 companies and 17 internment camp staffs in Canada.<sup>25</sup>

#### The Development of Fixed Defences, 1939-1944

The emergency measures taken in August and September 1939 to strengthen the coast defences were only the beginning. Succeeding years

witnessed a steady improvement and by 1943-44 the fortifications were in a highly efficient state. It is convenient at this point to summarize this development.

The first aim, naturally, was to complete the Interim Plan of coast defence. We have seen the arrangements made in August 1939 to do this on an emergency basis. It was now necessary to substitute permanent emplacements for the temporary gun platforms then constructed. This was done in short order. On 15 February 1940 the Chief of the General Staff reported to the Defence Council that the Interim Plan had been "completely implemented".<sup>26</sup>

It still remained to carry out the Ultimate Plan, drawn up, not on the basis of the armament that was available, but that which was desirable and necessary. As modern guns and mountings began to arrive (chiefly from the United Kingdom) it was possible to make progress with this final stage; but because the equipment came so slowly the progress was equally slow. The Ultimate Plan—considerably altered by this time—could not be said to be complete until early in 1945. Long before this, as early as the autumn of 1943 in fact, the garrisons of the coast defences were being reduced as a result of Allied victories beyond the seas.

Dealing first with the Atlantic coast, we find naturally that large and energetic measures were required during 1939-40 to make up for the effects of the pre-war policy which had granted such heavy priority to the Pacific. Measures which under ideal conditions would have been carried out as a part of peacetime preparation now had to be put into effect under the threat of attack.

The ancient fortress of Halifax continued to receive much attention. Permanent anti-motor-torpedo-boat batteries gradually replaced the temporary ones, and in addition work began in the summer of 1940 on a new 9.2-inch battery near Devils Island, a position farther to seaward than any so far occupied. About the end of the year construction began on a 6-inch battery at Chebucto Head, on the opposite side of the harbour.<sup>27</sup> The completion of these batteries was slowed by delays in delivery of armament from the United Kingdom. Canada had ordered in 1936 three high-angle mountings for heavy guns which were intended for Esquimalt.<sup>28</sup> After war began it was decided to divert them to Halifax. In November 1939 the British Government found itself faced with the need for assisting South Africa in providing a heavy battery for Cape Town (to replace a monitor, previously stationed there, which now had to be withdrawn). Canada agreed to give up one of her mountings for this purpose, on the understanding that it would be replaced as soon as practicable. Subsequently the Admiralty asked that the replacement should be postponed until after provision had been made for the defences of Freetown (Sierra Leone) and Trinidad. Canada again agreed. Then, in July 1940, Mr. Churchill cabled



# ATLANTIC COAST DEFENCES

## SHOWING LOCATIONS OF CANADIAN COAST ARTILLERY BATTERIES AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCES



LEGEND

- Fortress
- Defended Port
- Other Defended Places
- Main Railways

NOTE: All places where artillery was used in a coast artillery role indicated by outlining name thus: **QUEBEC**  
 Total number of battery sites occupied at any time during period 1939-45 is indicated.

A.A. DEFENCES INDICATED BY A CROSS DRAWN THROUGH SYMBOL



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Mr. King begging that, in view of the great importance of Freetown to the vital Cape of Good Hope sea-route, Canada should agree to the diversion thither of the two heavy mountings for Halifax, then nearly ready for shipping. On the advice of the Chief of the General Staff (General Crerar), Mr. King accepted this suggestion, it being understood that two others would be made available in November and January.<sup>29</sup> However, there was further delay, caused this time by bomb damage to the English factory concerned; the first mounting was not received until the summer of 1941.<sup>30</sup> Devils Battery was partially in action "at restricted ranges" in January 1942,<sup>31</sup> and its last gun was placed in action in the following March.<sup>32</sup> Chebucto Battery was reported ready for action with all its guns in August 1943.<sup>33</sup>

Second only to Halifax in importance was Sydney, where no less than eight different battery positions were armed during the war. The activity here was closely related to the fact that Sydney shared with Halifax the heavy responsibilities of a convoy assembly point. The batteries were progressively improved and strengthened throughout the war. One 6-inch battery, Lingan, was reported in action in June 1941, although its role was temporarily limited to close defence pending the installation of more adequate range-finding equipment. A still more formidable site, Oxford Battery (9.2-inch guns), was not completed until the war was almost over, the last gun for this position being received from the United Kingdom only in November 1944.<sup>34</sup> Saint John, N.B., as a major port required respectable defences. Four different positions were armed here, the most important, the Mispec counter-bombardment battery, being "practically completed" with its guns mounted by 30 June 1940.<sup>35</sup> This rapid result had been achieved as a consequence of the availability of 7.5-inch guns for immediate delivery from the United Kingdom. The one remaining item of the original Ultimate Plan was the two small batteries, each armed with two 4-inch guns, covering the northern and southern entrances of the Strait of Canso. These were gradually developed from temporary positions into permanent ones.<sup>36</sup>

The pre-war plans had not contemplated providing defences at any East Coast points except Halifax, Sydney, the Strait of Canso, Saint John and Quebec. However, after the collapse of France in the summer of 1940, which had the incidental but important effect of greatly increasing the apprehensions of the United States with respect to the Atlantic coastal area, the programme was expanded. The Third Recommendation of the Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence,\* adopted at its Ottawa meeting

\*The creation of the Board was agreed upon between Mr. King and President Roosevelt at their meeting at Ogdensburg, N.Y., on 17-18 August 1940. The Board's work will be dealt with in a later volume. On its inception, see William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation* (New York, 1952), 702 ff. Its activities are described in the present writer's "The Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945" (*International Journal*, Spring 1954).



of 27 August 1940, advised the "early completion" of both underwater defences and harbour defences, not only at Halifax and Sydney, but also at Gaspé and Shelburne. The United States helped by selling to Canada armament, heavy if not of the latest type. Surveys were promptly undertaken, and in August 1941 it was reported that at both Shelburne and Gaspé 10-inch U.S. counter-bombardment guns had been mounted and manned and were "awaiting range-finding equipment and gun stores".<sup>37</sup> At Shelburne four different positions were armed in the course of the war to protect the harbour. At Gaspé there were three, all placed in action in the summer of 1941. The only other new position armed on the east coast of Canada proper (as Canada existed in 1939-45) was Louisburg, N.S., where in 1943 two 18-pounder field guns with searchlights were temporarily emplaced to offer some protection to the port.<sup>38</sup>

It remains, however, to note the defences provided by Canada in the territory of Newfoundland. Guns for a battery at Bell Island in Conception Bay were made available in the summer of 1940 (below, page 178). Newfoundland, of course, acquired increased importance in American as well as Canadian eyes as a result of the French collapse, and the Second Recommendation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (Ottawa, 26 August 1940) expressed the strong opinion that the island was inadequately defended and the security of Canada and the United States "thereby endangered". One of the measures recommended was "completing, as early as practicable, and not later than the spring of 1941, the installation of appropriate defences for the port of St. John's, Newfoundland, for Botwood, and for other points as required". Canada took prompt action along these lines, the United States assisting by providing equipment. However, the work could not be finished by the spring of 1941. In August of that year it was reported that the batteries at Botwood and St. John's, for both of which 10-inch guns were being purchased from the United States, would be "completed during the coming fall".<sup>39</sup> Canada built and manned three batteries at St. John's, the 10-inch one in advance for counter-bombardment and two covering the harbour mouth. There were two sites at Botwood, and an additional small position at Lewisporte. The picture of Canadian coastdefence installations on Newfoundland territory is completed by a small battery placed in action in June 1942 at Rigolet, on the approaches to Goose Bay in Labrador.<sup>40</sup>

Coast-defence searchlights were almost as important as coast-defence guns. Fortunately, they were relatively easy to produce in Canada. In October 1940 it was reported that all the new searchlights required by the Ultimate Plan for Halifax, Sydney, Canso and Saint John had been delivered and installation was far advanced. New lights were then being delivered to the Pacific coast at the rate of four or five per week.<sup>41</sup>

It is apparent that the gun defences of the Canadian Atlantic coastal area, very limited in 1939, were vastly improved and extended before 1945. During the war, no less than thirteen areas on the east coast (including Newfoundland) were defended with coast artillery in some degree; and counting certain positions which were abandoned during hostilities, a total of 45 individual sites were armed with guns. These figures do not include anti-aircraft sites. When the Ultimate Plan, as extended in 1940, had been completed, the artillery defences of the Atlantic coast were on a very adequate scale.

Turning back to the Pacific coast, we find that, thanks to what had been done before the war, rather less needed to be done here during hostilities; nevertheless, the defences were materially extended. Apart from entirely new measures, the completion of the Ultimate Plan as originally conceived was itself a considerable task. Cooperation with the United States was particularly important in the area of Juan de Fuca Strait, where the Canadian defences were coordinated with the heavy batteries on the American shore. Information on the defences here was exchanged between the two countries as early as January 1938.

In the war's early days the manner in which the old low-angle mountings limited the range of the counter-bombardment armament of the Esquimalt-Victoria fortress caused some anxiety, which extended to the United States; and a meeting of Canadian and U.S. officers at Victoria on 21-22 October 1940 discussed the desirability of making better arrangements to cover Juan de Fuca Strait with fire.<sup>42</sup> A meeting of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in January 1941 was told that the United States was prepared to lend to Canada either four 8-inch railway guns or eight 155-millimetre guns for strengthening the defences in this area. There was some discussion of placing armament at the west end of the Strait, but it was decided that it was sufficient to emplace two of the 8-inch guns at Christopher Point, at the south-eastern angle of Vancouver Island, as a temporary measure pending the arrival of high-angle mountings for the Esquimalt guns. This was done, and the installation of the guns on temporary concrete platforms, with crews and ammunition available, was reported complete three days before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, although range-finding equipment was not yet installed. These guns effectively controlled the Strait.<sup>43</sup> As already noted, the change-over of the Albert Head and Mary Hill batteries to high-angle mountings, which greatly increased their range, was carried out during 1943-44. The final stage in these installations' development was not reached until late in 1944. The anti-motor-torpedo-boat batteries for this area reached completion at the same period. It was reported in August 1944 that all the guns and mountings ordered from the United Kingdom for batteries of this type on both coasts had now been received.<sup>44</sup>

In the Vancouver area, activity was mainly directed to completing the pre-war Ultimate Plan. The guns on Point Grey were mounted in their permanent emplacements in the autumn of 1940.<sup>45</sup> The 6-inch pieces at Stanley Park were exchanged in 1942 with the 4.7s at Yorke Island. In October 1941 an 18-pounder was mounted on Point Atkinson, serving in what was known as a "bring-to" role, in conjunction with the Naval Examination Service. Another small and very rudimentary battery was set up in October 1939, when two field guns were mounted near Steveston to stop unauthorized ships going up the Fraser River to New Westminster.<sup>46</sup> All told, and not counting Yorke Island, five sites were occupied in the Vancouver-Fraser River sector.

The only other area on the Pacific coast which was defended with heavy coast artillery was that of Prince Rupert. This community was important as being the only ocean port in northern British Columbia and the terminus of a transcontinental railway line, and it had a special significance for the United States, in relation to Alaska. Seven battery sites were occupied here, including three which had formed part of the pre-war Ultimate Plan. One of these, Barrett Battery, armed with 6-inch guns, although in action from the beginning, received its final armament only in the spring of 1944.<sup>47</sup> The others were armed with light quick-firing guns, except that two of the four 8-inch guns lent by the United States (see above) were placed in action here on their own railway mountings.<sup>48</sup>

There were fewer significant ports on the west coast of Canada than on the Atlantic, and for geographical reasons those that did exist were somewhat easier to defend with coast artillery than was the case in the Maritime Provinces. There was, accordingly, considerably less expansion of the gun defence programme during the war period than was the case on the Atlantic. Only four main areas were defended with coast artillery (Esquimalt-Victoria, Vancouver-Fraser River, Yorke Island and Prince Rupert), and in all 23 individual battery sites were armed. These figures do not allow for the light defences installed at four advanced R.C.A.F. stations in 1942.\*

As we have already seen, the Pacific coast began to receive its allotment of up-to-date coast-defence searchlights (which totalled 34) in the autumn of 1940. Deliveries were complete by the following February.<sup>49</sup> Modern fire-control equipment for the gun batteries came to hand more gradually; on both coasts it built up in efficiency and completeness throughout the war, as the supply position improved and technical progress continued. The National Research Council gave constant advice and assistance in this matter. The prototype "CDX" radar set for controlling coast-defence fire was first operationally tested in the Halifax area in March 1943, although a set intended primarily to reveal the approach of vessels was in action there as

\*In a few cases, both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, batteries were moved from one site to another. In such cases both sites have been counted.



early as 1941. At the end of hostilities technical apparatus for the control of fire, both by visual methods and by radar, had been provided and installed at all the principal sites.<sup>50</sup>

On neither coast of Canada did a coast-defence gun fire a single shot in anger during the war. It should not, however, be assumed from this that the guns were useless. An enemy usually prefers to go where defences are *not*, and the purpose of coast artillery was as much to discourage attack as to defend specific targets if an attack took place.

### The Development of Anti-Aircraft Defences

We have noticed the ludicrous inadequacy of Canadian anti-aircraft defences in 1939, and the shortage of equipment which made any important improvement impossible for a long time after war began. It remains to survey the improvements which did take place later.

It has been made clear that early in 1941 there were in Canada still only eight efficient anti-aircraft guns, and that all of these were doing duty in protecting the port of Halifax and the great assembly of shipping normally found there. At this time alarm was felt for the security of the Aluminum Company of Canada's plant at Arvida, P.Q. The Chiefs of Staff observed on 3 March that the Commonwealth's aircraft industry was "now about 90:70 dependent on this Plant for the supply of aluminum ingots", and that air attack upon this "tempting bottleneck in the Empire's war effort" was a distinct possibility. They recommended that four A.A. guns should be transferred to Arvida from Halifax.<sup>51</sup> It was pointed out that at the latter place there were always in harbour a considerable number of vessels with anti-aircraft armament.\* The War Committee approved the transfer on 12 March. On 21 April the Prime Minister told the Committee that during his recent visit to the United States he had ascertained that there was no present possibility of obtaining additional anti-aircraft guns from the United States, which was itself very short of guns. The Americans did, however, make a useful contribution at this time in the shape of .5-inch anti-aircraft machine-guns, of which 16 were loaned for use in Newfoundland, while 12 more were purchased and divided equally between Halifax, Saint John and Arvida.<sup>53</sup> These guns were manned by artillerymen.

The four 3-inch guns were duly withdrawn from Halifax and two of them were disposed at Isle Maligne and two at Arvida, the latter also receiving four of the .5-inch machine guns. These dispositions were completed in

\*In April the Rear Admiral Third Battle Squadron (R.N.) placed the A.A. armament of H.M.S. *Forth*, lying in a berth at Halifax, under the tactical control of the Fortress Commander. Telephone communications were established between the ship and the fortress gun operations room<sup>s2</sup>

June; the 14th Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A. placed its guns in action at Arvida on the 12th of that month.<sup>54</sup> The remaining guns at Halifax were re-deployed to cover the area to the best advantage. As equipment began to come to hand from Canadian factories, the Arvida area was more completely protected. The plan was to provide for it a total of 12 3.7-inch guns and 16 Bofors. By the autumn of 1942 this programme had been completed, except that the four 3-inch guns remained there in place of four of the proposed 3.7s.<sup>55</sup>

One other inland area deserves attention. This was Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, which owed its importance to the American and Canadian canals connecting Lake Superior and Lake Huron, which carry far more traffic than those of Panama and Suez combined. There was some possibility, however remote, that they might become a target for long-range air attack, perhaps launched from ships that might penetrate into Hudson Bay; and the Permanent Joint Board on Defence discussed the matter on 20 January 1941. The Board's Thirteenth Recommendation, adopted that day, advised that each government should "constitute a single authority to be responsible for the safety of navigation through these waters", these authorities to be clothed with the necessary powers and required to cooperate with each other. In June 1941 there were local discussions at Sault Ste. Marie between Canadian and American officers, and it became apparent that the latter feared sabotage by disaffected elements as well as a possible "sacrifice attack by parachute troops ... from the North". The Americans had large plans for the military protection of the canals. So far, the Canadian canal had been guarded by the R.C.M.P., which had 23 men on duty.<sup>56</sup>

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence further examined the matter at its meeting of 20 January 1942, at which it was agreed that precautions at Sault Ste. Marie should be reviewed. As a result, the question of anti-aircraft protection was carefully considered, and the 26th meeting of the P.J.B.D. (25-26 February 1942) was told that the United States intended to augment its forces in the area with an anti-aircraft regiment (less one gun battalion), a squadron of pursuit aircraft, and barrage balloons. The Board's Twenty-fifth Recommendation, passed at this meeting, was to the effect that the R.C.A.F. should undertake further study of the danger to the Sault Ste. Marie area, and the Canadian Army assign a four-gun heavy anti-aircraft battery to protect the Canadian locks. It was recommended that the United States Army lend the necessary guns if Canada could not provide them, and that the Canadian battery should come under the operational command of the Commanding General of the United States Military District of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. The battery was formed at once and sent to Halifax for training. The Cabinet War Committee was told on 26 March that while the Canadian Chiefs of staff felt the risk at the



# PACIFIC COAST DEFENCES

## SHOWING LOCATIONS OF CANADIAN COAST ARTILLERY BATTERIES AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCES

- Fortress ..... 
- Other Defended Places ..... 
- Main Railways ..... 

A.A. DEFENCES INDICATED BY A CROSS DRAWN THROUGH SYMBOL

NOTE: All places where artillery was used in a coast artillery role indicated by outlining name thus: **YORKE I.** Total number of battery sites occupied at any time during period 1939-45 is indicated. Alliford Bay, Bella Bella, Coal Harbour and Ucluelet were protected for a time by 75-mm. guns in a coast-defence role.



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Sault was relatively slight, the concern of the U.S. Army (arising from the importance of the locks to war industry) was appreciated.

Before the Canadian battery was ready, gunsites protecting the canals on the Canadian side were set up and manned by United States artillery in April 1942.<sup>57</sup> That autumn the United States, with Canadian permission, established radar units in Northern Ontario to cover Sault Ste. Marie; the 671st Signal Air Warning Reporting Company had its headquarters at Kapuskasing and subordinate stations at Armstrong, Nakina, Hearst, and Cochrane.<sup>58</sup> The R.C.A.F. had already set up the Central Canada Aircraft Detection Corps, which utilized the staffs of fire towers and other facilities in the area for the same purpose. In August 1942 the 40th Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A. had arrived at the Sault and took over a gunsite from American troops, manning U.S. guns in the first instance.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, nearly 1000 American soldiers continued to be employed on Canadian soil in the area.<sup>60</sup> During 1943 the opinion seems to have gained ground that the forces here were unnecessarily large. The Canadian battery was removed at the end of the navigation season, and shortly afterwards the United States troops were withdrawn from Canada and the anti-aircraft equipment guarding the canals was sent elsewhere.<sup>61</sup>

To return to the coastal areas, the problem of increasing their anti-aircraft defences was entirely one of equipment. In 1940 it had been decided to manufacture both 3.7-inch and 40-mm. guns in Canada, and beginning on 28 June the Department of National Defence placed "contract demands" that summer for 200 of the former and 112 of the latter. These orders were later increased.<sup>62</sup> Predictors to control the fire of both types of weapon were made in the United States.\* As for radar fire-control equipment, the first two sets, ordered from the War Office in October 1939, were delivered in Canada in August 1940. Manufacture was then undertaken in Canada. The first sets were made by the National Research Council laboratories, which achieved production in ten months; thereafter manufacture was turned over to Research Enterprises Limited, a Crown company. In January 1941, 40 "GL Mk IIIC" sets were ordered for use in Canada, and 11 more were ordered a year later.<sup>64</sup> However, no operational set was installed on a Canadian gunsite until November 1942, when one arrived at Arvida.<sup>65</sup> Searchlights were also required, but changing doctrine concerning such equipment held up action. By the autumn of 1941 it had been decided that a total of 80 anti-aircraft lights were required in Canada; at this time there were on hand only 37 modern and five obsolescent ones, all on the Atlantic Coast.<sup>66</sup>

Inevitably, there was a long wait for the guns ordered in Canada. The first 3.7-inch gun from Canadian production was not delivered until the end

\*The ultimate Canadian production of complete guns for all accounts, Canadian and other, amounted to 1735 3.7-inch and 4352 Bofors, plus much larger numbers of separate barrels.<sup>63</sup>

of March 1942, difficulties in the manufacture of the mounting being responsible for the delay. The first three 40-mm. Bofors guns were reported received during the week ending 13 December 1941-the week of Pearl Harbor.<sup>67</sup>

The plan for the anti-aircraft defence of the Atlantic Coast, as it stood in May 1942, provided for fourteen defended areas (including Arvida); the largest being Halifax, which was estimated to require 28 3.7-inch guns and 16 Bofors. All told, at this period, the estimate was that this coast needed 112 heavy guns and 114 light ones. This included armament for six areas in Newfoundland territory, among them the airports at Gander and at Goose Bay in Labrador. Twelve more light guns were allotted to protection of coast-defence batteries.<sup>68</sup> This plan was somewhat modified later. The peak of the Atlantic and interior defences was reached in September 1943, when all guns allotted under the amended ultimate scale of defence were reported ready for action: 108 heavy and 138 Bofors guns. There were also 36 mobile Bofors.<sup>69</sup> This includes Sault Ste. Marie as well as Arvida. At this time not all the batteries were fully trained, nor was fire-control equipment quite complete.

On the Pacific Coast, to which of course priority was given after Pearl Harbor, there was rapid development from that time onward. The ultimate scale for this coast, as the plan stood in May 1942, called for 48 3.7s and 78 Bofors, plus 14 more Bofors for the coast-defence batteries. At this time there were only eight 3.7s and 12 Bofors actually in British Columbia.<sup>70</sup> By November 1943 there were 56 3.7-inch and 142 Bofors guns (including 36 mobile ones) on the coast. Fourteen heavy anti-aircraft sites were manned, six in the area centred on Vancouver, three each at Prince Rupert and Victoria-Esquamalt, and two at the aerodrome at Patricia Bay.<sup>71</sup>

### The Security of the Atlantic Coast After Dunkirk

So far we have been considering the development of static defences, which it was convenient to treat as an independent subject. It is now time to deal with the mobile military defences and relate them to the changing course of the war.

That there was no German activity in Canadian waters during the first two years of the war was due to Adolf Hitler's desire to avoid trouble with the United States. In a conference on 23 February 1940, Admiral Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy, recommended that two submarines be sent to operate off Halifax with mines and torpedoes. He had "cleared" the project with the Foreign Office; but Hitler refused his consent "in view of the psychological effect on the U.S.A." The Admiral was disgusted.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, Hitler's decision was a sound one from the German

point of view. Nothing could have been better calculated to excite American public opinion than a sudden burst of submarine activity in North American waters in the midst of the "phony war". As it was, submarines stayed away from those waters until after Pearl Harbor, and the German surface raiders also kept their distance, although they made several thrusts against Halifax convoys in mid-Atlantic. The *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* sank five ships some 500 miles east of Newfoundland in February 1941 and 16 ships in the same general area in March.<sup>73</sup>

We have already mentioned that an early consequence of the Allied disaster in North-West Europe in the spring of 1940 was decisions taken during May to reinforce the Canadian troops in England and dispatch other units to the West Indies and Iceland. As the situation overseas went from bad to worse, the Canadian Government became increasingly anxious for the security of Canadian soil. A meeting of the Cabinet War Committee on 29 May canvassed the extent to which contributions to the defence of Britain had left Canada undefended (on 23 May the Committee had agreed to send overseas four destroyers of the Royal Canadian Navy, the entire force actually available at that moment; and the R.C.A.F.'s only effective fighter squadron was also under orders for the United Kingdom). At this period there was talk of forming a Ministry of Home Defence, and appointing a Commander-in-Chief of Home Forces. These particular steps were not taken; but many emergency measures were put into effect during the summer for the security of Canada and particularly of the Maritime Provinces.

On 14 June, the day on which Paris fell to the Germans, the War Committee discussed the crisis at length, noting that it was necessary to consider the possibility of having to provide bases in Canada for the British Fleet, in case things got still worse. The Chiefs of Staff were accordingly instructed to prepare a full report on the defensive situation on the Atlantic Coast, with special reference to the question of naval bases. The Chiefs referred this requirement to their Joint Planning Sub-Committee, composed of senior staff officers of the three services; and this body shortly produced a first draft of a new "Chiefs of Staff Committee Plan for the Defence of Canada".<sup>74</sup> This proposed, broadly speaking, the following measures: developing the defences of the east and west coasts and of the interior to the extent that the resources of the country permitted; organizing a large mobile force capable of rapidly reinforcing either coast and resisting attacks from the north; steps for maintaining internal security and providing against sabotage; and arrangements for the cooperation of the United States. In connection with this last point, the draft emphasized that American assistance was essential if Canada was to be defended against a first-class power. For such cooperation to be effective, the United States forces would require operational facilities over and above those needed by the Canadian forces, and with this in view it was very desirable that staff conversations between the Canadian

and American services should be undertaken immediately.\* On the special question of naval bases on the Atlantic coast, to be available for British and United States forces cooperating in the defence of Canada, the draft proposed that new bases should be set up without delay at Gaspé and Shelburne, plus an advanced base in Newfoundland. The Sub-Committee suggested that the Army's main role in defence, apart from developing the static defences of the east coast, should be the provision of the Mobile Force, which should be on as large a scale as the manpower and equipment situations permitted. A force of two divisions, plus a considerable number of ancillary units including five motorcycle regiments, was recommended.

This draft plan was submitted to the Minister of National Defence on 9 July,<sup>75</sup> but was subsequently considerably altered. General Crerar, who became Chief of the General Staff on 22 July, offered comments on the scheme to the Minister the following day.<sup>76</sup> He considered that a large mobile force would be "both a wasteful and also an inadequate answer to our problem"; what was required was adequate defences and garrisons at those points against which the enemy might throw a raiding force, and in rear of these defences a mobile reserve equivalent to three brigade groups available for rapid counter-attacks. Crerar had refused to allow the threatening situation abroad to throw him into a state of panic. "With a very considerable portion of the British fleet and possibly of the British Air Force based on Canada", he wrote, "I maintain that there is still no probability of an attempt by Germany to invade this country for a period of months if not indeed of years." He discounted any possibility of Japanese or Russian attack on the west coast "under present or prospective world conditions"; the military organization of the east coast was "the really urgent matter" so far as home defence was concerned. As noted in an earlier chapter, Crerar emphasized that everything else was subordinate in importance to strengthening Canada's first line of defence—the British Isles.

The new Minister of National Defence (Colonel Ralston) was evidently impressed by these recommendations, and immediately authorized the organization of the three brigade groups which the C.G.S. had indicated as required for a reserve for the Maritime Provinces.<sup>77</sup> These would be found from the 3rd Division, whose formation had been approved on 17 May. The draft "Chiefs of Staff Committee Plan for the Defence of Canada" was revised in August along the lines advised by General Crerar.<sup>78</sup> The duties of the Mobile Reserve were defined to be to provide means of reinforcing coastal garrisons, dealing with enemy attacks in coastal areas not at present garrisoned, and ensuring the maintenance of internal security. The Mobile Reserve was to consist, for the present, of the 3rd Division, which, less one

\*The Americans were not less anxious for this than the Canadians, and after preliminary discussions staff conversations took place in Washington in July. This matter will be dealt with in a later volume.



brigade group, would be concentrated in the Truro area. The remaining brigade group would be at Sussex, N.B. As we have already seen, the units began to move into these areas that autumn.

Crerar's memorandum to the Minister written on 23 July<sup>79</sup> also recommended important changes in command arrangements. Concerning the command of Army forces in the coastal areas, as referred to in the draft plan, he wrote:

I do not concur in the proposal that operational command of these forces can remain under the District Officer Commanding. I consider that a Command Headquarters (Operational) with adequate staff should be established in the Maritimes with operational control over those Army forces earmarked for the defence of the Maritime Provinces, including the Gulf of St. Lawrence area and Newfoundland, and that following this a similar Command Headquarters (Operational) should be established in British Columbia. The function of the several District Headquarters in the Eastern area and of the one in M.D. 11 under the conditions which Canada now faces should be restricted to administration and to the command and training of those troops not actually allotted to Command Headquarters for operational purposes. It should be noted, incidentally, that such organization would fit in with the Operational Zones established by the

#### Royal Canadian Air Force.

This recommendation also was approved by the Minister in principle on the following day,<sup>80</sup> and action followed immediately. On 1 August Major-General W. H. P. Elkins, formerly Master General of the Ordnance, was appointed G.O.C.-in-C. Atlantic Command with headquarters at Halifax. The Command thus set up comprised the whole of Military Districts Nos. 6 and 7 (that is to say, the Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island), and those portions of Military District No. 5 lying east of "a line drawn between Cape Chidley (Hudson Strait) and the mouth of the Saguenay River and extending southerly from the St. Lawrence along the Temiscouata Railway from Riviere du Loup to Edmundston, New Brunswick." It also included Newfoundland and Labrador.<sup>81</sup> The responsibilities of the G.O.C.-in-C. were defined as requiring him to:

- "1. Represent the Army as regards all operational matters which affect all three Services in the Atlantic Command and in the closest co-operation with the equivalent commanders of the R.C.N. and R.C.A.F. in that area.
2. Control all mobile forces which may be placed under his command for operational purposes in the defence of the Atlantic Area.
3. Exercise operational control through Fortress Commanders, etc., over all units comprising the garrisons of all fortresses, defended ports and defended areas in the Atlantic Command.
4. Be responsible for internal security measures and protection of such vulnerable points in the Atlantic Command as are defined by policy as military responsibilities.
5. Be responsible for the training of the units and formations under his command."<sup>82</sup>

The G.O.C. Mobile Reserve (who for the moment was the G.O.C. 3rd Canadian Division) was under the command of the G.O.C.-in-C. for all operational matters. The District Officers Commanding Military Districts Nos. 5, 6 and 7 were responsible for the training, administration and main-

tenance of all units, etc., in their Districts, other than those under the operational control of the G.O.C.-in-C. Atlantic Command; and for the maintenance of all units and formations in their Districts, including those under such operational control. The D.O.C. Military District No. 6 was made responsible for the administration and maintenance of Canadian Army forces in Newfoundland.<sup>83</sup>

So far as relations between the services were concerned, it was provided that in the coastal areas "Command of the Navy, Army and Air Force will be exercised by a joint system of command", under which the commanders would have "a collective as well as an individual responsibility for the success of the enterprise as a whole". A joint operations room was to be maintained on each coast.<sup>84</sup> Joint Service Committees, composed of the senior officers of the three services in the area, already existed on both coasts. Headquarters of the Eastern Air Command of the R.C.A.F. and those of the R.C.N. for the Atlantic Coast were already established at Halifax, and coordination was thus comparatively easily arranged.

As the spring of 1941 approached, the Cabinet War Committee was still anxious about the east coast. In February the Chiefs of Staff made a new appreciation<sup>85</sup> which emphasized once more the fact that any attempt at the invasion of Canada "by actual or potential hostile Powers" was not to be feared "so long as the defence of the British Isles successfully continues." On the other hand, the Chiefs pointed out that it must now be becoming clear to Hitler "that no consideration on his part can deter the United States from pursuing a course aimed at his eventual overwhelming defeat". In these circumstances, every day increased the chances of "tip-and-run" sea and air raids against the east coast; and it was pointed out that, while existing Army preparations were sufficient to provide against enemy landings, "we continue to find ourselves inadequately furnished with Naval and Air forces, and with anti-aircraft guns and equipment, to ensure that raids by hostile naval or air forces against ports, the shipping in them, and other important objectives, are met with adequate resistance". The conclusion was that an increase of naval and air forces on the east coast of Canada was necessary, and that the only source of such forces in existing circumstances was the active cooperation of the United States (with which, of course, Canada was now engaged in joint planning through the Permanent Joint Board on Defence). This appreciation was discussed by the Chiefs of Staff with the War Committee on 26 February, and the former pointed out that under existing conditions, with Britain still inadequately armed and under the threat of invasion, it would not be reasonable to expect reinforcements from the United Kingdom. It was agreed, however, that the defensive position of Canada as seen by the Chiefs of Staff should be communicated to the British Government.

Mr. King accordingly, on 2 March, sent to Mr. Churchill two cables<sup>86</sup> giving the text of the appreciation and making the point that since the outbreak of war the Canadian Government, on the Chiefs' advice, had "consistently followed a policy of sending all possible aid to the United Kingdom, despite the fact that this has necessarily involved the weakening of Canada's own defences". Giving details of the inadequacy of the naval and air forces available in the Atlantic coastal area, Mr. King remarked that the situation had been causing the War Committee "a good deal of concern". He added:

We have, from the beginning, realized the serious implications in regard to home defence of sending you every possible assistance, naval, military and air. Our Chiefs of Staff believe the policy followed has been wise and justified by results. At the same time we cannot be unmindful of our direct responsibility for the defence of Canadian shores, and of the effect upon the common effort and Canadian morale should our coast and harbours be attacked and our defences prove inadequate to an emergency. In particular the importance of adequate protection for the convoy assembly port of Halifax and strategic approaches thereto cannot be too strongly emphasized. We should be very glad to have your views on the situation and to learn whether, having in mind the requirements of various theatres of war, it will be possible to strengthen those features of our home defence position which Chiefs of Staff's analysis has shown to be inadequate.

The nature of Mr. Churchill's reply,<sup>87</sup> sent on 24 March, might have been anticipated. The enemy, he wrote, was making "an extreme effort both at sea and in the air" against British trade; more bombing of the British Isles had to be provided against; and "a large scale attempt at invasion" was still a likely contingency. The United Kingdom authorities thought tip-and-run raids on the Canadian eastern seaboard unlikely; enemy raiders were more likely to attack the shipping routes in the western Atlantic. In these circumstances, said Mr. Churchill, "The position is bluntly that we have not all the equipment that would enable us to give complete protection on both sides of the Atlantic, and the question is therefore how can we make best use of material we have, having regard to what the enemy is trying to do and probabilities as to his future course of action. . . . If we were to divert any substantial part of our forces from their present area of operations to cover wider areas where there is admittedly some risk of enemy action, we should only imperil the whole and play into his hands."

### The Security of the Pacific Coast After Pearl Harbor

The problem which faced the Canadian Government and Chiefs of Staff in their own sphere was similar to Mr. Churchill's. There was not enough equipment—not nearly enough—to afford complete protection to all parts of Canada, and as long as Japan remained neutral and the Pacific Ocean remained in some degree true to its name, it was obviously necessary to give priority to the Atlantic coastal area. It was the easier to do so in that the Pacific Coast, having itself received a comparable priority for some years

before the outbreak of war, was already moderately well defended. All this changed abruptly on 7 December 1941 when the Japanese launched their tremendous attack. During the months that followed, although the German menace to the Atlantic Coast had not diminished-indeed, it grew more serious, as the U-boats now for the first time appeared in North American waters-the security of British Columbia became the first domestic concern of the national government.

The west coast had not, of course, been wholly neglected since September 1939. On the contrary, it had received all the consideration which shortage of equipment permitted. The Government's anxieties concerning the attitude of Japan in the summer of 1940 have been noted, as has the retention of the 6th Brigade at Shill as a precautionary measure (see above, page 86). As we have also seen, General Crerar in July 1940 had recommended setting up a Pacific Command as well as one on the Atlantic. This was done in the following October, when Major-General R. O. Alexander was appointed G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command. His command comprised the whole of Military Districts Nos. 11 and 13-that is, the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta, the Yukon Territory and the District of Mackenzie. General Alexander assumed operational command throughout this area, but while retaining full responsibility for administrative *policy* he delegated his authority in administrative matters to the District Officers Commanding.<sup>88</sup> (In the first instance, General Alexander was appointed to perform the duties of D.O.C. Military District No. 11 as well as those of G.O.C.-in-C. The two appointments were separated for a time in 1942, but after June of that year no D.O.C. was appointed.)

Since the beginning of the war, the three main defended areas in British Columbia had been organized as separate subordinate commands. The Victoria-Esquimalt fortress, the Vancouver area (including Yorke Island), and the Prince Rupert area were all under specific defence commanders. Upon taking command on the Pacific Coast, General Alexander recommended that, with a view to providing a mobile reserve, an infantry brigade group (less artillery) should be stationed in the Nanaimo area of Vancouver Island.<sup>89</sup> This arrangement was carried out in February 1941, when the headquarters of the 10th Infantry Brigade was set up at Nanaimo.<sup>90</sup> This brigade moved east in the following May, and its place at Nanaimo was taken by the 13th, an independent brigade formerly stationed in the Niagara Peninsula.<sup>91</sup> In July 1941 the Cabinet War Committee (as noted in Chapter III) authorized the formation of the three brigade groups of the 6th Division for home defence purposes;\* the 13th Brigade was now incorporated in this division and remained in its position of readiness at Nanaimo. The other

\*In this connection, reference was made to an understanding with the United States that Canada would maintain a general reserve of not less than two divisions. This understanding, often mentioned,<sup>92</sup> was apparently never reduced to the shape of a formal agreement.

two brigades were to be concentrated in the Niagara Peninsula and at Valcartier; the 15th Brigade, at the latter station, would be considered a potential reserve for Pacific Command. As for the Maritimes, their security was provided for by the 4th Division, which moved into Debert and Sussex when the 3rd went overseas.<sup>93</sup>

On 18 November 1941, when the Allied governments had begun to worry seriously about Japanese intentions, the Chief of the General Staff (General Crerar) reported to the Minister of National Defence that the dispositions which had been made on the west coast were, with certain exceptions, "adequate for the purpose of meeting the anticipated forms and scales of attack" in the event of war with Japan.<sup>94</sup> The exceptions were the absence of anti-aircraft units, for which there was still no equipment, and the fact that four platoons of the Veterans Guard of Canada, required for the protection of certain R.C.A.F. stations, had not yet been provided. These platoons had however been authorized and organization was being pushed. One other deficiency was the inadequacy of the coast artillery defences to deal with long-range bombardment, the guns being still on low-angle mountings.

At this time a very considerable force was already deployed on the Coast. An infantry battalion of the Active Force was stationed in each of the three main defended areas mentioned above: Victoria-Esquimalt, Vancouver-New Westminster, and Prince Rupert. The Prince Rupert battalion had a company detached at the R.C.A.F. station at Alliford Bay in the Queen Charlotte Islands. The 13th Infantry Brigade with its own three battalions remained at Nanaimo as a general reserve for Pacific Command; and platoons of the Veterans Guard were on duty at the R.C.A.F. stations at Ucluelet (two, to be increased to four), Coal Harbour (two, to be increased to three), and Bella Bella (one, to be increased to two).<sup>95</sup>

General Crerar's memorandum continued:

While the present dispositions are considered adequate to meet any situation that might arise, it must be anticipated that on the outbreak of war strong pressure may be brought upon the Government to increase the Active forces in British Columbia. In that event, it might become necessary to move additional troops from Eastern Canada to the Pacific Coast.

It was to appear in due course that this was a very accurate appreciation.

On the evening of Sunday, 7 December 1941, the Chiefs of Staff met with the War Committee to discuss the new situation created by the Japanese attack which had taken place that day. Canada had already declared war on Japan. Crerar reported again that he considered Army dispositions on the Pacific Coast reasonably satisfactory except for the absence of anti-aircraft artillery. Everything possible to provide against air attack was done immediately. When the War Committee met again on 10 December it was reported that R.C.A.F. strength on the coast was being built up and some anti-aircraft guns were being sent to British Columbia. The

point was made that it would be playing into the enemy's hands to shift a disproportionate amount of force from east to west; in particular, there was mention of the importance of anti-aircraft protection at Halifax and at Newfoundland Airport. The Vice Chief of the General Staff (Major-General Stuart) was able to report however that the guns being dispatched were the first three Bofors coming direct from the factory, and the four A.A. Machine-guns from Arvida. Subsequently, early in January, two 3.7-inch guns, manned by a section of No. 1 Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A. from Halifax, were also sent from eastern Canada. These appear to have been the two guns lately received from England (see above, page 148), which had been used for training purposes. Six anti-aircraft searchlights, previously destined for the east coast, were diverted to Esquimalt in December.<sup>96</sup>

Within a few weeks of Pearl Harbor, everything that circumstances permitted had been done to strengthen the anti-aircraft defences of the Pacific Coast. It was little enough. At Esquimalt were two Bofors guns protecting the naval dockyard and the great drydock; the third Bofors was at the R.C.A.F. station at Patricia Bay, where also were the two 3.7s. At Patricia Bay too the machine-guns and crews from Arvida were kept until late in February, when two more Bofors arrived there and the machine-guns were released—two to the Sea Island air station near Vancouver, the others to Esquimalt.<sup>97</sup> It was an unimpressive array, and it was lucky that the enemy attempted nothing against the Pacific Coast in these early weeks, for it offered targets worthy of his attention. On 25 February 1942 the diary of the 2nd Anti-Aircraft Battery at Esquimalt recorded that the liner Queen Elizabeth had entered the drydock, and remarked, "\$80,000,000 more in property for us to protect with our two guns." The period of worst anxiety ended with the arrival on the Coast, in April 1942, of the first 3.7-inch guns from Canadian production.<sup>98</sup> From this time the situation steadily improved (see above, page 160).

While doing what it could to strengthen British Columbia's anti-aircraft defences, National Defence Headquarters was also moving more troops into the province. On 12 December the 18th (Manitoba) Reconnaissance Battalion,\* then at Camp Borden, was ordered to Vancouver Island, and arrived there on the 19th. It was placed under Headquarters Victoria and Esquimalt Fortress as a local mobile reserve.<sup>99</sup> Simultaneously, in accordance with orders issued earlier, three field batteries of artillery were moved from stations on the Prairies to New Westminster and organized into the 21st Field Regiment R.C.A. It moved to Nanaimo in March.<sup>100</sup> A field company of Engineers for the 13th Brigade was concentrated at North Vancouver early in January,<sup>101</sup> and a field ambulance was moved from Edmonton to Nanaimo.<sup>102</sup> The 13th Brigade was thus provided with  
artillery, engineers

\*Later the 18th Armoured Car Regiment (12th Manitoba Dragoons).

and services to enable it to function as an independent brigade group. At the same time, steps were taken to protect the advanced R.C.A.F. bases on the coast. Orders had been issued on 3 December to prepare to move the required Veterans Guard platoons on short notice—two to Ucluelet, one to Coal Harbour<sup>103</sup>—and this was done between 11 and 15 December, Alliford Bay being reinforced simultaneously.<sup>104</sup> In the absence of Bofors guns, Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Bella Bella and subsequently Coal Harbour were strengthened by the provision at each of a "Special Section" of two 75-mm. field guns (one at Coal Harbour) manned by crews provided from the Artillery Training Centres at Brandon and Shilo.<sup>105</sup>

The first days of the war with Japan were anxious ones on the Pacific Coast, and the air buzzed with remarkable and alarming rumours (one of the best was the report, received on 11 December from the United States Army at Seattle, that the "main Japanese fleet" was "154 miles west of San Francisco ... headed north-east").<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, General Alexander was able to report to Ottawa on 12 December, "The emergency has caused a very noticeable uplift in the morale of the troops and the civilian population while remaining calm have become considerably more war minded."<sup>107</sup> The civilians, however, became less calm as time passed; and many of them were afraid of the large Japanese population of British Columbia. Alexander reported on 30 December that this situation was "assuming a serious aspect". "Letters are being written continually to the press," he wrote, "and I am being bombarded by individuals, both calm and hysterical, demanding that something should be done." The G.O.C.-in-C. felt that there was definite danger of "inter-racial riots and bloodshed." He had made preliminary arrangements for the use of troops in certain areas ("for the protection of the Japanese against those who wish to do them violence") if this proved necessary. He recommended removing the Japanese from the coast.<sup>108</sup> A policy of partial evacuation was announced on 14 January, and on 26 February the evacuation was made general.<sup>109</sup>

Fanned by the agitation about the Japanese population, anxiety in British Columbia grew steadily. The Japanese armies were sweeping forth resistlessly in Asia, one Allied stronghold after another falling before them. Hong Kong surrendered on Christmas Day; British forces failed to check the invader at any point in Malaya for more than a moment, and Singapore, with a great force of troops, was lost on 15 February; in the Philippines, General MacArthur's forces continued to fight on in Bataan, but it was clear that there could be only one end. By February public opinion on Canada's Pacific coast was in a state approaching panic.

British Columbia's representatives in Parliament were now bringing heavy pressure upon the Government. On 9 February a government member speaking in the House of Commons urged the Ministry to see that the coast

was "supplied with everything with which it is possible to supply it-with guns and tanks, and not with a company of men, but with divisions of men."<sup>110</sup> The Province's representative in the Cabinet took a similar, line. The day before Singapore fell Mr. Ian Mackenzie (Minister of Pensions and National Health, and a former Minister of National Defence) wrote to the Prime Minister:<sup>111</sup>

I am receiving repeated representations from British Columbia in regard to our Pacific Coast defences. I feel, not being a member of the War Committee, I am not exactly sufficiently conversant with what is transpiring, although the Ministers separately have been very courteous in giving me the necessary information....

My definite impressions are, after having information in regard to what has been done, that the preparations on the Pacific Coast are entirely inadequate....

I feel, in regard to the military situation, that we should have at least two mobile divisions on the Pacific Coast....

It is my considered judgment, after the events of the last few days, that we should not send any more troops overseas until we have adequate defence for our own coast.

I feel that as the Minister from British Columbia I must share some of this responsibility in a very definite way and that is why I am troubling you with this personal letter.

Feeling continued to mount all along the Pacific Coast of North America. On 23 February a Japanese submarine fired a score of shells "in the general direction" of an oil refinery near Ellwood, California.<sup>112</sup> On the 25th took place the "Battle of Los Angeles", when the anti-aircraft defences of that area fired 1440 rounds against Japanese raiders which appear to have existed only in the defenders' imagination.<sup>113</sup> There were no such actual incidents in British Columbia, but the same feverish anxiety existed there, and a section of the press, far from trying to exercise a steadying influence, did the opposite. From 13 to 16 March the Vancouver *Sun* published a series of articles entitled "The Derelict Defense", which complained that the General Staff was devoting far too much energy and thought to intervention in Europe, and not nearly enough to the defence of the west coast. The writer remarked, "Our present defense is based on the assumption that we must surrender, and might as well do it first, rather than last."\*

On 16 March Premier Hart of British Columbia discussed the situation with the senior officers of the three services in his province. General Alexander pointed out to him the undesirability of piling up troops and weapons, in numbers exceeding those required to meet any probable scale of attack, in areas like British Columbia which were not directly threatened,

\*This quotation is from the article of 14 March. This and other passages were deleted from later editions by the Press Censor, who had not seen the original one. The damage done to public morale by articles such as this needed no demonstration. Legal action was taken against the newspaper by the Crown. It pleaded guilty to a charge under Section 16, Defence of Canada Regulations (other charges being withdrawn) and was fined \$300. On 23 April the *Sun* published an editorial on the fine, claiming that its criticisms, by inducing the Government to provide more defences, had "actually damaged the enemy". This, however well meant, would seem to be difficult to justify. Accumulating men and equipment uselessly on the B.C. coast could give the enemy nothing but satisfaction.<sup>114</sup>



and explained that the risk of minor "nuisance" attacks was one that must be accepted. The Premier replied that he appreciated these facts, but the people of the province were alarmed and were "obsessed with the necessity of the adequate protection of British Columbia from any possible eventuality and until this can be assured did not appreciate the necessity of sending weapons and equipment abroad".<sup>115</sup> Alexander faced an unpleasant situation. On 19 March he reported to Ottawa, "The morale of the public in British Columbia is undoubtedly at a very low ebb", adding that "the wildest statements and rumours" were in circulation.<sup>116</sup>

All this pressure had its due effect. It may be recalled that in November 1941 General Crerar, in his final submission concerning the 1942 Army Programme, had noted that while there was no factor in the existing situation warranting the mobilization of an additional division, if conditions changed for the worse he might be obliged to recommend the completion of the 6th Division and the mobilization of the brigade groups of a 7th (see above, page 96). By February 1942 it had been decided that this action was necessary,<sup>117</sup> and on 16 March the new Chief of the General Staff (Lieut. General Stuart) formally recommended it to the Minister.<sup>118</sup> On 18 March this great expansion of the Army was approved by the War Committee, which at the same time authorized a very large increase in the Home War Establishment of the R.C.A.F., estimated to cost \$206 million. (The actual strength of the R.C.A.F. in Canada increased during 1942 from 16 squadrons to 36.)<sup>119</sup> The Committee was told that General McNaughton, in conversation with the Prime Minister, had recognized the need of measures to allay public apprehension and favoured a large mobile force on the West Coast. Even this action, however, was now considered inadequate, and a project for mobilizing still another home defence division suddenly emerged. On 20 March the C.G.S., remarking that the Combined Chiefs of Staff had recently revised their estimate of scales of attack on the Pacific Coast to include the possibility of a raid by an enemy force of up to two brigades, recommended the completion of the 7th Division and formation of the brigade groups of an 8th.<sup>120</sup> The War Committee approved this the same evening. That the expenditure on the armed services for the fiscal year 1942-43 was nearly double that for 1941-42 was due in no small part to the excitement in British Columbia.

The measures we have described were not the whole story. On 7 March authority had been given for mobilizing five unbrigaded infantry battalions to be used for airport defences in British Columbia and as local reserves at Vancouver, Kamloops and Terrace.<sup>121</sup> In addition, on 17 February the Cabinet had approved the mobilization of anti-aircraft units (four batteries, six troops and five sections) "to cover all anti-aircraft equipment likely to be available to Pacific Command in 1942", as well as similar provision for Atlantic Command. In April most of these units were converted into batteries of double or treble the size originally planned, and at the same time the

formation of three additional batteries and one more troop was authorized. Again Atlantic Command was similarly treated.<sup>122</sup>

As early as 11 March, even before the mobilization of the new divisions had been authorized, a decision had been taken to dispose three brigade groups in Pacific Command, against the possibility of raids on an increased scale;<sup>123</sup> and in the course of the spring troops moved west until at the end of May there were 13 infantry battalions in the Command. Six more arrived in June. The original plan was to use the 6th Division on the Atlantic Coast, where it would replace the 4th when the latter went overseas; but almost immediately this arrangement was changed, and the 7th Division was sent to Debert and Sussex as general reserve for the Atlantic Command. The 6th and two brigade groups of the 8th were now to be general reserve for Pacific Command and Western Canada. The 8th's third brigade group would go to Valcartier as mobile reserve for Eastern Canada.<sup>124</sup> On 17 June 1942, in the midst of a further flurry of excitement in British Columbia resulting from the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands, the War Committee authorized the completion of the order of battle of the 8th Division. When the two new divisional headquarters were formed, the 6th Division (commanded by Major-General A. E. Potts) took responsibility for Vancouver Island, with its headquarters at Esquimalt. The northern section of British Columbia-north of a line running from Bella Bella on the coast inland by way of Chilko Lake to Ashcroft, west of Kamloops, and on along the main line of the Canadian National Railways to the Alberta border west of Jasper -was the responsibility of Major-General H. N. Ganong, G.O.C. 8th Division, with headquarters at Prince George. He was responsible for the Queen Charlotte Islands and the U.S. aerodrome at Annette Island, but not for the R.C.A.F. aerodrome at Bella Bella.<sup>125</sup> (The 7th Division was commanded by Major-General P. E. Leclerc, with headquarters at Debert.) All three divisional commanders had formerly commanded brigades overseas.

The March excitement produced a change in command arrangements on both coasts. The matter had been discussed by the War Committee on 18 and 20 February, the Chiefs of Staff being present on the latter occasion. The Chiefs argued that the existing arrangements-coordination through a Joint Service Committee on each coast—amounted in fact to unified command and that cooperation was preferable to complete unification. However, they produced on 10 March a new formula under which the senior member of the Joint Service Committee on each coast would be designated Commander-in-Chief of the defences on that coast, and would exercise, in emergency, strategic direction of the other two services as well as tactical command of his own. This arrangement the War Committee approved on 18 March.\* Under it General Alexander became Commander-in-Chief, West Coast Defences.<sup>126</sup>

\*This matter will be dealt with in greater detail in a later volume.

The Aleutian flurry began late in May of 1942. The United States naval authorities received information that the Japanese were planning a thrust at Midway Island combined with a secondary operation against the Aleutians.<sup>127</sup> This information was in General Alexander's hands by 20 May and he passed it on to his senior commanders, pointing out that the enemy might attempt something against Prince Rupert.<sup>128</sup> In the last days of the month the developing threat caused alarm in Ottawa, and on 30 May the Chief of the General Staff, Lieut.-General Stuart, arrived on the Pacific Coast to take personal control.<sup>129</sup> Throughout the summer Stuart combined the appointment of C.G.S. with that of G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command.<sup>130</sup> General Alexander was appointed Inspector General for Central Canada with effect from 1 July. Major-General G. R. Pearkes, V.C. (who had commanded the 1st Division overseas since July 1940) was subsequently brought back to become G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command, and took over on 2 September.

The Japanese occupied the two Aleutian islands of Kiska and Attu on 6 and 7 June, and when this became known it inevitably caused further anxiety in British Columbia. This was heightened when on 20 June enemy shells fell upon Canadian soil for the only time in either World War. Japanese sources indicate that as part of the Midway-Aleutian operations two submarines, 1-25 and 1-26, had been stationed off Seattle for reconnaissance purposes but were subsequently ordered to move to the Aleutian area. During this move they seized the opportunity of spreading alarm and despondency on the Pacific Coast; 1-25 shelled Fort Stevens, Oregon, and 1-26 the isolated wireless station and lighthouse at Estevan Point, Vancouver Island. The shelling at Estevan was very ineffective, causing no casualties and virtually no damage.<sup>131</sup>

As we shall see (below, page 493), the enemy's Aleutian enterprise was not the beginning of an offensive move against the American continent. He had no plan for an invasion of the mainland. The situation was pretty clear at the time to the U.S. Army Commander in Alaska, Major-General Simon B. Buckner, who said of the possibility of a Japanese invasion of the United States by way of Alaska, "They might make it, but it would be their grandchildren who finally got there; and by then they would all be American citizens anyway!"<sup>132</sup> But ordinary Americans and Canadians did not have Buckner's professional knowledge and cool military judgement, and the new Japanese activity produced widespread alarm.

This emergency caused efforts to accelerate the large defence measures already under way in the Pacific, and led to a reinforcement of the Prince Rupert area. We have already noted that orders were given at this time to complete the organization of the 8th Division. The approach of the crisis had occasioned an extension of R.C.A.F. activities into Alaska, which led in turn to the presence of some Canadian Army units there. Two R.C.A.F. squadrons were stationed at the American airfield on Annette Island in the

southern tip of the Alaska panhandle, a position of great importance to the defence of Prince Rupert; and General Stuart arranged to send Canadian anti-aircraft gunners to protect the field. The first detachment arrived on 1 June.<sup>133</sup> At the same time the anti-aircraft defences of Prince Rupert were further strengthened by dispatching six Bofors guns from the Artillery Training Centre at Petawawa; Victoria got six others, from Debert.<sup>134</sup> Shortly afterwards mobile defence for the line of the Canadian National Railways along the Skeena between Terrace and Prince Rupert was provided in the form of an armoured train. The train, mounting two 75-mm. guns, four Bofors and two searchlights, had accommodation for artillerymen to man the guns plus an infantry company. It made its first trip between Terrace and Prince Rupert on 29 July, and during the rest of the summer it covered the 90 miles between the two places almost every day.<sup>135</sup>

Another measure of local defence, authorized during the February excitement, was the organization of the auxiliary corps subsequently named the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers. This force soon grew to a strength of 14,000 men,\* with 115 companies organized from the Queen Charlotte Islands to the American border.<sup>137</sup> The fundamental idea behind it was to utilize the local knowledge of fishermen, trappers, farmers and other residents of the coastal region, who would provide information for the regular forces and report subversive activities or sabotage, in addition to resisting minor enemy' attacks. Training was limited to preparations for these tasks; there was, special emphasis on rifle practice, usually carried out on ranges constructed by the men themselves. The P.C.M.R. wore khaki denim uniforms with a distinctive arm-band. Had there been any active operations on the coast, this force would certainly have played a useful part.

The most northerly post occupied by the Canadian Army during the war on a long-term basis was Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. The aerodrome here was an important link in the Northwest Staging Route, which had been developed to provide the United States with an airway to Alaska.<sup>138</sup> An aerodrome defence platoon was sent to protect it in the autumn of 1942. In the early summer of 1943 an anti-aircraft battery with Bofors guns was sent in. Both units were withdrawn in August of the same year after the Japanese had been driven from the Aleutians.<sup>139</sup>

### Home Defence at its Peak

The numerical strength of Pacific Command reached its peak in the spring and early summer of 1943; on 12 June, 34,316 all ranks of the Active

\*Its peak strength (31 August 1943) was 14,849 all ranks.<sup>136</sup>

Army\* were stationed within its boundaries.<sup>140</sup> Headquarters Pacific Command was located at Vancouver, having moved from Esquimalt on 30 November 1942. The Command was organized in four main subordinate areas, as follows. The Vancouver Island area was commanded by the G.O.C. 6th Canadian Division, who in March had under his command the 13th Infantry Brigade at Nanaimo and the 18th Infantry Brigade at Port Alberni, while the troops of the Victoria-Esquimalt fortress, including three infantry battalions and a reconnaissance regiment, provided, with the fixed defences, rather more than the equivalent of a third brigade group. The Northern British Columbia area was commanded by the G.O.C. 8th Division, who had the 14th Infantry Brigade at Terrace and the 16th Infantry Brigade at Prince George, in addition to the Prince Rupert Defences, which included two infantry battalions. The third area was Vancouver Defences, which had two infantry battalions under command in addition to its artillery units. The fourth subordinate command was the Command reserve, consisting of the 19th Infantry Brigade, at Vernon. This location, well back in the interior, with good communications both north and south, would allow the brigade to move rapidly to any threatened point on the coast. All told, there were 21 infantry battalions in the Command. One of these, the 3rd Battalion, Regina Rifle Regiment, became during the summer the 2nd Airfield Defence Battalion and absorbed the Aerodrome Defence Companies protecting the various R.C.A.F. stations.<sup>141</sup>

The Atlantic Command reached its peak strength at about the same period, on 17 April 1943, when the number of troops in the Command was 24,784 all ranks.<sup>142</sup> Its operational strength consisted largely of the 7th Division, whose headquarters was still at Debert. With it at that station were the 15th and 20th Infantry Brigade Groups. At Sussex, N.B., was the 17th Infantry Brigade Group. The G.O.C. 7th Canadian Division had no fortress or defended port garrison under his command; his formation's role was purely that of mobile reserve. In all, there were 18 infantry battalions in Atlantic Command in April 1943 (not including two which were being prepared for dispatch overseas) : ten (counting a machine-gun battalion) were in the order of battle of the 7th Division, three were included in the garrisons of fortresses or other defended areas, and five (including one in process of relief) were in Newfoundland and Labrador.<sup>143</sup> An Airfield Defence Battalion was subsequently organized on this coast also.

At Valcartier, P.Q., outside the boundaries of Atlantic Command, was the 21st Infantry Brigade Group, originally formed as part of the 8th Division. Its strength on 17th April 1943 was 3668 all ranks.<sup>144</sup> This brigade

\*This is the highest total shown in any Army Weekly Progress Report; but Pacific Command's own Weekly Strength Return for 27 March, obviously compiled on a different basis and including certain attached personnel, gives a total of 37,800 all ranks.

group was under the District Officer Commanding Military District No. 5, and was available as a reserve for the Atlantic Command and for Eastern Canada generally.\*

### Security Measures Against the Submarine Menace in the Lower St. Lawrence

We have already noted that there was no enemy submarine activity in Canadian waters until after Pearl Harbor. Thereafter, however, the Germans launched an offensive along the Atlantic Coast. The attack began in the second week of January 1942, off New England, and in the spring it was extended to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the lower river. The first sinkings here took place on the night of 12-13 May, and there was further enemy activity beginning in July. During the whole shipping season of 1942, a total of 23 ships were torpedoed and 22 were sunk in the Strait of Belle Isle, the Gulf and the river.<sup>145</sup> Inevitably, the population of the adjacent shores was alarmed and this occasioned certain protective measures on the part of the Army as well as the other services.

On 16 May, on orders of Headquarters Atlantic Command, one infantry company moved into the defended port of Gaspé to supplement the artillery garrison; this precaution seems to have been ordered just before the first sinkings.<sup>146</sup> After them, General Elkins visited the Gaspé area and reported that he was satisfied with the naval and air dispositions which had been or were being made. However, he arranged for a small reconnaissance detachment from the 4th Division to stand by to move to Mont Joli for patrol duty, should the situation deteriorate.<sup>147</sup> This move actually took place after the sinkings in July, a motor platoon from The Lake Superior Regiment being used to patrol between Bic and Cap Chat. At the same time a platoon of the Gaspé garrison was used for a similar motorized patrol along the more easterly section of the coast.<sup>148</sup>

What the local population would most have liked was to have large numbers of Active Army troops deployed along the coast as protection against raids by or from submarines. However, to have allowed a mere threat by one or two U-boats to tie up thousands of soldiers in this manner would have been very poor policy. National Defence Headquarters accordingly made it clear that static protection for the communities along the lower St. Lawrence should be provided by the citizens themselves through the medium of the Reserve Army.<sup>149</sup> An intensive recruiting campaign for the Reserve Army in the Gaspé Peninsula was launched in September 1942, and with the cooperation of the clergy and other local leaders good

\*Units in Canada and adjacent areas in April 1943 are listed in Appendix "E".

progress was made. By 18 November Brigadier G. P. Vanier, D.O.C. Military District No. 5, was able to report that some 1500 recruits had been enrolled in four supernumerary companies of the local reserve infantry unit, the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion, the Fusiliers du St. Laurent. As a result, authority was granted to organize these four companies into an additional reserve battalion (the 3rd) of this regiment, and 1000 rifles and 200 Sten guns were provided for it. Special teams of Active Army instructors trained the companies during the winter months.<sup>150</sup>

By February 1943 the strength of the 2nd Battalion of the Fusiliers du St. Laurent was over 1000 all ranks, and that of the 3rd over 1600. By the autumn the 2nd Battalion's strength stood at 38 officers and 1213 other ranks, and the 3rd's had risen to 49 officers and 1877 other ranks. The 3rd Battalion was redesignated in 1944 Le Regiment de Gaspé-Bonaventure. These battalions must have been by far the largest in the Canadian Army. Each had 15 full-time telephonists to man telephones at detachments where there were no civil telephone facilities. Wireless was also used. During the 1943 shipping season and the rest of the war they made a useful contribution to the maintenance of security and of public confidence in the lower St. Lawrence area. In particular, they manned road-blocks on the roads adjacent to the river, and enforced the "dimout" regulations upon motorists using these roads. Both battalions were trained for coast watching and local defence roles.<sup>151</sup>

Needless to say, these Army measures were of secondary importance in protecting the lower St. Lawrence against submarines. The best security was provided by the highly mobile units of the Navy and the Air Force. Measures taken on an inter-service basis for the protection of this region will be dealt with in a later volume. It may be noted here that there were no enemy attacks against shipping in the river and Gulf in 1943. There was a small revival of activity in the autumn of 1944, when three ships were torpedoed, though only one was lost. The Reserve Army units continued their protective activities along the Gaspe shore until after the end of hostilities in Europe.<sup>152</sup>

### The Japanese Balloon Enterprise

One ingenious but ineffective Japanese project deserves brief notice: the attempt to strike at the United States and Canada with free unmanned balloons.

This campaign began in November 1944 and ended about 20 April 1945. The balloons were made of mulberry bark paper (in a few cases, of rubberized silk) and were filled with hydrogen. They carried a bomb-load varying between 25 and 65 pounds, frequently consisting of one high-explosive and

four incendiary bombs, which were released by automatic devices. They were sent off from the Kanto district of the island of Honshu, the Japanese relying on the prevailing winds over the Pacific to carry them to North America. Their calculations were not entirely unsound. Of some 9300 balloons believed to have been released, approximately 300 are known to have reached North America, and 90 of these came to Canada. Doubtless some landed in wild country and were never reported. Balloons came as far east in Canada as Manitoba, "incidents" being reported in that province at Trout Lake, Southern Indian Lake and Nelson House.

This strange scheme with its aim of blind random destruction did no harm whatever in Canada. In the United States it killed a woman and five children, all in one incident near Bly, Oregon, in May 1945, when a balloon was found and tampered with. Such were the results of a plan on which the Japanese expended much money and energy. It had been feared that they might use the balloons as agents of chemical or biological warfare; but apparently no such attempts were made.<sup>153</sup>

Such counter-measures as could be taken were carefully organized. The spotting and reporting of balloons was arranged for. Army bomb-disposal squads transported by the R.C.A.F. had the task of dealing with unexploded bombs when found, and the Army's Directorate of Military Operations and Planning, Ottawa, was made responsible for coordinating anti-balloon measures as between the various police, service and research authorities concerned.<sup>154</sup> The Air Force was responsible for destroying balloons in flight; and there are three authenticated instances of such destruction by R.C.A.F. aircraft.<sup>155</sup>

### The Canadian Army in Newfoundland

In 1939 the island of Newfoundland was not a part of Canada, nor was it to become such for a decade. Nevertheless, the significance of Newfoundland for Canadian security needed no emphasis. Military cooperation between the two communities was clearly of the first importance. It is true that there was no effective joint planning before the actual crisis; but cooperation began even before the Canadian declaration of war and continued throughout the conflict. In the first week of September 1939 Canada asked and received permission for R.C.A.F. aircraft to fly over Newfoundland and use the colony's airport facilities.<sup>156</sup> Shortly thereafter steps were taken to provide the Newfoundland Government with arms and equipment, some on loan, some on repayment. The items shipped included rifles, Lewis guns and small-arms ammunition.<sup>157</sup> In the spring of 1940 Canada agreed to provide two coast-defence guns to protect Bell Island in Conception Bay,

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H.Q. 7TH CON DIV FEB 1943

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H.Q. ATLANTIC COMMAND



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important source of iron ore. In June a Canadian engineer officer went to Newfoundland to supervise the construction of the Bell Island battery.<sup>158</sup>

The disasters in Europe in the early summer emphasized the importance of Newfoundland, and on 14 June the Canadian Chiefs of Staff Committee recommended that one flight of bomber-reconnaissance aircraft be stationed at Newfoundland Airport at Gander\* (to be reinforced by one flight of fighters when suitable aircraft became available), and that an infantry battalion with detachments of other arms be dispatched for ground protection as soon as possible. The Newfoundland Government's consent was sought and obtained and action taken at once.<sup>159</sup> The 2nd Division, as already noted, was the only source of trained troops at this moment, and the unit selected was the 1st Battalion of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada. It landed at Botwood on 22 June, and assumed the task of defending Newfoundland Airport and the Botwood seaplane base. It remained in Newfoundland, however, only until August, when it was relieved by The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, a 3rd Division unit, and returned to Canada for embarkation for England.<sup>160</sup> As things turned out, the forces sent to Newfoundland in June 1940 were but the vanguard of larger bodies, and Canadian troops garrisoned the island throughout the war.

In August 1940 a Canadian delegation headed by the Air Minister (Mr. C. G. Power) visited Newfoundland and made an agreement<sup>161</sup> with its government under which Canada took wide responsibilities for the defence of the neighbour island, and the Newfoundland forces were placed under Canadian command. In accordance with this agreement, Newfoundland was included within the Atlantic Command when the latter was set up in the same month. Under the new command arrangements authorized in March 1942 (above, page 172), Newfoundland became in effect "a sub-command of the East Coast", organized in the same manner as the coast at large; that is to say, the senior Canadian service officer in Newfoundland functioned as "Commanding Newfoundland Defences" and exercised "strategic direction" over all three services under "the general direction of the Commander-in-Chief, East Coast Defences".<sup>162</sup> United States bases had been set up in the island as part of the Anglo-American arrangement announced in August 1940. The first U.S. troops arrived in January 1941, and the force was increased in April. One of the responsibilities of the Canadian commanders in Newfoundland, accordingly, was cooperation with the American forces. This will be dealt with in a later volume.

The Canadian Government, and particularly the Prime Minister, attached the greatest importance to Newfoundland and to the protection of Canada's

\*This great establishment was built before the war by the Newfoundland Government in cooperation with the British Air Ministry. It was in use for experimental flying as early as 1937.

permanent interests there. Accordingly, large and increasing Canadian forces were stationed on Newfoundland territory as the war progressed and enemy activity in North American waters increased. We have already noted the measures taken to develop the island's coast and anti-aircraft defences. Strong forces of artillery and ancillary troops were required for this duty, and in addition infantry was needed for security against possible raids. The Canadian Army force in Newfoundland ("W" Force) reached its peak of strength on 15 December 1943, when it was 5692 all ranks.\* It had been a major-general's command since 25 December 1941, when Major-General L. F. Page† took over the command of "Combined Newfoundland and Canadian Military Forces in Newfoundland".<sup>163</sup>

At the time of its greatest expansion "W" Force included the following major units: two infantry battalions (with headquarters at St. John's and Botwood), plus two companies of the 1st Airfield Defence Battalion (Le Regiment de Chateauguay) and one of the Veterans Guard; two anti-aircraft regiments R.C.A. (with headquarters at St. John's and Gander) and three coast batteries R.C.A. (at St. John's, Botwood and Lewisporte); a fortress company R.C.E. and a company of Atlantic Command Signals; and the numerous administrative and service units required to maintain the force.<sup>164</sup> The active component of Newfoundland's own forces was called until March 1943 the "Newfoundland Militia". In that month Newfoundland acts were passed changing the name of the active force to "Newfoundland Regiment" and applying the term "Newfoundland Militia" to the former Auxiliary Militia or Home Guard.<sup>165</sup> The Newfoundland Regiment assumed various local protective functions and in addition manned the Bell Island battery.<sup>166</sup> Its strength on 15 December 1943 was 26 officers and 543 other ranks.<sup>167</sup> The activities of Newfoundland units overseas are described in Appendix "I".

Canadian soldiers were also stationed on Newfoundland territory in Labrador. In the autumn of 1941 work began here on a tremendous new trans-Atlantic airport at Goose Bay. In the following summer a Canadian infantry battalion (The New Brunswick Rangers) and other troops were sent there for protection, and the Goose Bay garrison became a permanent Canadian responsibility. On 13 March 1943 it amounted to 1300 all ranks, and included both coast and anti-aircraft artillerymen in considerable numbers.<sup>168</sup> It was under the operational control of the G.O.C.-in-C. Atlantic Command, but was under the District Officer Commanding Military District No. 6 for administration.<sup>169</sup>

\*This is from a strength return submitted by "W" Force itself. Figures for this date compiled at Ottawa are considerably higher; they may have included certain attached personnel and troops in transit.

†Commanders in Newfoundland are listed in Appendix "F".

### Canadian Troops in the West Indies and the Caribbean

We have mentioned in Chapter III the suggestion of the British Government in May 1940 that Canadian troops should be sent to the West Indies, and the Canadian Government's assent. As a result of these arrangements, The Winnipeg Grenadiers sailed from Halifax in two flights on 24 May and 13 June 1940. One company of the battalion was sent to Bermuda, where it relieved a company of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, while the main body went to Jamaica. The Bermuda detachment stayed there only until 27 August, when it was relieved in its turn by British troops and embarked for Jamaica to join the main body.<sup>170</sup> We have also seen that the Canadian Government was asked, and agreed, to send a second infantry battalion to the West Indies. This arrangement, however, was not carried out; the British authorities suggested that if Canada would undertake larger responsibilities in Iceland the United Kingdom would find the additional troops required for the West Indies (above, page 84). It would appear that the proposal to send a second unit was dropped at this time and not revived. One Canadian infantry battalion, however, remained in Jamaica until the end of the war.\*

Late in 1941 the British Government again asked Canada to provide a company for Bermuda. On 7 January 1942 the Cabinet War Committee agreed to send thither a company of the battalion in Jamaica. On further consideration, however, this was not considered desirable. On 4 September the War Committee approved sending troops from the mainland, and a company of The Pictou Highlanders arrived in Bermuda on 12 November.<sup>171</sup> With appropriate reliefs, "B" Force, as it was known, remained there until after the end of hostilities.

In April 1942 the United Kingdom asked that Canada give further assistance by providing a company for Nassau in the Bahamas, so that a British company on duty there might rejoin its battalion in the United Kingdom. Protection was particularly important at this point as a member of the Royal Family, H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor, was Governor of the Bahamas. The War Committee agreed on 9 April to provide the troops. A new company of the Veterans Guard of Canada (No. 33) was organized for the purpose and arrived at Nassau in June. This was "N" Force. The Veterans were relieved in the autumn of 1943 by a company of The Pictou Highlanders. The Canadian garrison left Nassau only in the spring of 1946, simultaneously with the relief of the troops in Jamaica and Bermuda.<sup>172</sup>

\*No attempt is made here to describe the defences of the Caribbean area generally. Large United States army and air forces were stationed there, in great part as a result of the leasing from Britain of bases in Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Antigua and British Guiana.

In March 1942 there was some anxiety for the ships carrying bauxite to Canadian aluminium plants from the mines in British Guiana; it was feared that they might be sabotaged in the Demerara River between the mines and the sea. A local coloured guard was provided for their security, but the British Government now inquired whether Canada could send white N.C.Os. to stiffen this force. On 22 May the Cabinet War Committee approved the mobilization of No. 34 Company of the Veterans Guard for this purpose. The company (which except for its officers was entirely composed of N.C.Os.) reached Georgetown in June. Thereafter they performed the routine of directing the coloured detachments guarding the ships while the latter lay in the river or moved up or down it. The ships were filthy and the weather sweltering; the duty in general was unpleasant in the extreme. As the war situation improved, the withdrawal of the detachment became practicable, and it returned to Canada in January 1945.<sup>173</sup>

### The Role of the Reserve Army

Only a word can be said here of the part played by the Reserve Army (formerly the Non-Permanent Active Militia) in maintaining the security of Canada.

During the first period of mobilization the N.P.A.M. made a useful contribution by providing details to guard vulnerable points until the Mounted Police could take over. Thereafter there was increasing emphasis upon the force's function of producing reinforcements for the Active Army. Second (Reserve) battalions of mobilized units were organized and it was hoped that they would provide a good many recruits for their Active battalions. After the outbreak of war with Japan in December 1941, more attention was directed to the Reserve Army's functions in connection with home defence. On 31 December a directive<sup>174</sup> was issued affecting both its composition and its role. Eight Reserve Brigade Groups were to be organized across the country and given accelerated training for the defence of Canada. A more detailed instruction issued in February 1942<sup>175</sup> provided that there would be one Brigade Group in each of the eleven Military Districts. The total number finally organized was twelve,<sup>176</sup> as Military District No. 6 (Nova Scotia) had two. These Reserve Brigade Groups (numbered from 31 to 42) had full-time commanders and staffs. As the equipment situation improved, they were given weapons and transport on an increasing scale. As for personnel, the new policy required that future enlistments would be restricted to men not eligible for the Active Force—i.e., those between 17 and 19 years of age or over 35; those granted or entitled to postponement of compulsory service; those between 19 and 35 with a medical category lower than "B"; and personnel of the Canadian Officers Training Corps in all categories, until their graduation.<sup>177</sup>

To ensure proper direction and coordination of the Reserve Army programme, the office of Director General of the Reserve Army was instituted at this same period. Major-General B. W. Browne, formerly Adjutant General, was the first Director General, and was later succeeded by Major-General F. R. Phelan.<sup>178</sup>

The Reserve Army continued to produce a proportion of recruits for the Active force by training young men of pre-enlistment age. Its function in the direct defence of Canada, as defined in the latter part of the war, was threefold:-to support the civil authorities if required; to constitute a trained reserve ready to support the Active forces available for the defence of the country, if the military situation should deteriorate; and to form a basis for expansion of the Active Army in case of need.<sup>179</sup> We have already seen, in the case of the Fusiliers du St. Laurent along the lower St. Lawrence, an instance of the practical and useful contribution which the Reserve Army could and did make to the security of a threatened area.

The Reserve Army was larger during this war than the Non-Permanent Active Militia had ever been in peacetime. It actually reached its peak of numbers in the week ending 7 December 1940. Its strength at that date was 111,579 all ranks, not counting 13,604 30-day N.R.M.A. men carried "supernumerary to establishment", or 28,299 others who were undergoing training. The great strength in 1940 was certainly due in part to the patriotic impulses of that moment. Undoubtedly, however, it also owed something to the fact that men enrolled in the Non-Permanent Active Militia at the time of the National Registration were exempt from the 30-day compulsory training under the National Resources Mobilization Act unless the Department of National Defence reported that they had not received equivalent training. Many men preferred service with a local militia unit to thirty days in a training centre. The strength of the force decreased after December 1940 until February 1942, when it was 69,660 all ranks plus 63,299 N.R.M.A. men. It climbed again thereafter until it reached a total of 105,000 all ranks (plus 5313 "Non-Effectives") in June 1943. Then, as the war situation improved and the danger lessened, it gradually fell off until at 30 April 1945 it was 82,163.<sup>180</sup>

#### Disbandment of the Home Defence Divisions, 1943-1944

The three home defence divisions, the 6th, 7th and 8th, were never complete in all arms and services. They did not need to be, for they were designed to operate within the framework of a static organization already existing. This meant that the services of the Commands and Military Districts were available to assist them; it also meant that the artillery of the fixed defences,

and other permanent installations, could support them in operations. Thus their establishments were never as complete as those of field divisions. Nor were the establishments ever quite full. On 17 April 1943, the 7th Division was deficient 97 officers and 3738 other ranks; the 6th and 8th Divisions were short approximately 1200 and 1100 all ranks respectively.<sup>181</sup>

These three divisions had been composed in great part of men called up for compulsory home-defence service under the National Resources Mobilization Act. Thus on 10 April 1943 the "other rank" strength of the Active Army in Canada, in its major components, was as follows:<sup>182</sup>

Formation	Total Strength	N.R.M.A. Strength
6th Division.....	11,4628	8,165
7th Division.....	10,782	7,058
8th Division.....	8,069	5,401
Units on Garrison Duty .....	31,989	17,342

It will be seen that, although a very high proportion of the troops on homedefence duty were N.R.M.A. men, the formations and units thus employed also absorbed many General Service volunteers. Nevertheless, age or medical category made a considerable proportion of the latter ineligible for overseas service.

In the course of 1943 the threat to Canada's shores, never really very great, receded further. The summer saw the expulsion of the Japanese from the Aleutian Islands (below, Chapter XV; while on the other coast the submarine threat, serious in the early months of 1942, had also become considerably less important. This situation permitted, and common sense dictated, a reduction in the number of men tied up in protective duties in Canada. As early as 13 May the Cabinet War Committee approved a prospective reduction in home war establishments, to take effect on 1 September, which would involve disbanding "five or six" infantry battalions in Canada. On 30 August the Chief of the General Staff reported that "substantial reductions" in the forces on both coasts were now practicable, and he recommended the disbandment of the 7th and 8th Divisions, plus reductions in coast and anti-aircraft defences and other economies. The total cut in establishment was 20,873 all ranks. It would be carried out by transferring volunteers of suitable age and category to the "reinforcement stream"; Home Defence men of suitable age and category for overseas service would be transferred to other units in Canada, in order to release General Service personnel (for overseas duty) and lower category personnel (for return to civilian occupations).<sup>183</sup> Since operational troops in Canada were so far below authorized establishments, the actual reduction in strength would be about 14,000. These proposals were approved by the War Committee on 31 August.

On 13 September the Minister of National Defence announced the decision, explaining that the plan was to disband the 7th and 8th Divisions completely



and the 6th Division in part. Three brigade groups were to be retained, "each capable of operating independently", and to be "administered and trained under a modified Divisional Headquarters." The formation of the Training Brigade Group in Eastern Canada (see above, page 135) was announced at the same time.<sup>184</sup>

This announcement's timing was bad, as it coincided with a setback at Salerno and the United States Congress was debating a bill to draft fathers of children; and the press release, though long, had not made explanations particularly desirable for American consumption. Perhaps through fear of domestic misunderstandings, the important point that disbanding the divisions would release men for employment abroad was not clearly made, although the continuing need for General Service recruits was emphasized. The result was considerable criticism in the United States, where it was made to appear that Canada was simply taking advantage of a favourable turn in the war to disband a considerable proportion of her army and send thousands of her soldiers home.<sup>185</sup> A supplementary release, issued on 14 September,<sup>186</sup> explained that the changes meant no modification of the Army's overseas programme, and that "every man of category suitable for operational duties" would be retained; but it is doubtful if this undid the damage.

Under the new arrangement the reorganized 6th Division was to consist of three brigade groups, each of four (not three) battalions. The model was the American organization used in the Aleutian campaign, and the 13th Infantry Brigade Group, then at Kiska (see below, Chapter XV), was to be one of the three. Divisional headquarters moved from Esquimalt to Prince George in October. Its primary purpose was now defined as coordinating the training and administration of the three brigade groups, which themselves were directly under Headquarters Pacific Command but dealt with Headquarters 6th Division in matters of training and local administration. The new organization was designed to permit the use of one or more of the brigade groups in "further operations against the Japanese in the North Pacific Area" in cooperation with United States forces,<sup>187</sup> but these operations never came to pass (below, page 507).

There were more changes in the 6th Division in 1944. The 13th Brigade returned from Kiska in January. In May, it was sent overseas, its units completed with General Service men. An energetic but only partially successful effort had been made to prevail upon N.R.M.A. personnel of the battalions to "go Active" on the basis of their units going overseas as such. In the United Kingdom it was converted into a training brigade.<sup>188</sup> In August, the Division was reorganized on a basis of three infantry brigades, each of three battalions, a new 16th Brigade being formed to replace the 13th.<sup>189</sup>

In the autumn came the "reinforcement crisis". On 16 November the Chief of the General Staff (Lieut.-General J. C. Murchie) informed the Minister that, having reviewed the matter in the light of the urgent need to

free fit men for overseas, he now recommended reorganizing the 6th Division as one infantry brigade group and two infantry brigades. The divisional headquarters would be disbanded. The Cabinet approved these proposals on 21 November, and the divisional headquarters ceased to exist on 2 December.<sup>190</sup> The circumstances, however, were now changing very rapidly. The Government's decision of 22 November to send 16,000 N.R.M.A. soldiers overseas altered the whole situation. The units in which these men, long regarded as a potential reserve for the overseas army, were serving, were now no longer required from this point of view, and any menace to Canadian territory had ceased to exist. Under the new policy, there was no reason why the units that had composed the Division (less men not physically fit) should not be sent overseas as units, and this was done. The disbanded Division and unbrigaded infantry battalions provided two brigade headquarters, nine infantry battalions and a reconnaissance regiment from Western Canada, and four infantry battalions from Eastern Canada, to go overseas. In the United Kingdom they were broken up and the personnel used as reinforcements. Only eight infantry battalions were now retained for duty in Canada, Newfoundland and the West Indies.<sup>191</sup>

At the same time when the 7th and 8th Divisions were disbanded, very large reductions were made in coast and anti-aircraft defences.\* At the beginning of October 1943 certain coast-defence batteries were "placed in maintenance" and at others crews were reduced so that only a proportion of the guns were manned.<sup>192</sup> Simultaneously various static anti-aircraft units were "relieved of their operational role", among them that at Arvida. This was only the beginning of a long process which went forward steadily through 1944. By the end of that year of victories the great structure of coast and anti-aircraft defence built up in the earlier part of the war had been largely dismantled.<sup>193</sup> Thus, for example, it was decided in the autumn that all coast artillery in Newfoundland, and the infantry garrisons at Botwood and Lewisporte, would be withdrawn permanently from their operational roles "on freeze-up".<sup>194</sup>

During November of 1944 authority was also given for the disbandment of Headquarters Atlantic Command, and the Military Districts in the Maritime Provinces resumed their normal functions, with Newfoundland retained as a separate command similar to a District. This was carried into effect on 14-15 December.<sup>195</sup> Headquarters Pacific Command continued to exist somewhat longer; it was "redesignated" as Headquarters Military District No. 11 only on 23 January 1946, when the Army's peacetime Western Command came into existence.<sup>196</sup>

\*These Canadian reductions of 1943 proceeded *pari passu* with similar measures in the United States.

## **PART TWO**

### **The Army in Britain 1939-1945**

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE GROWTH OF THE ARMY OVERSEAS AND ORGANIZATION IN BRITAIN

(See Sketch 1 )

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THE gradual evolution of Canadian military policy, and the expansion of the Army Overseas which it produced, have been dealt with in Chapter III. The present chapter considers the actual process of getting the troops across the ocean and the organization of the Army in the United Kingdom. It is also convenient at this point to examine the roles of certain special corps such as the Canadian Forestry Corps and the Canadian Women's Army Corps.

#### Moving the Troops to Britain

The movement of Canadian soldiers to Britain began in earnest on 10 December 1939, when convoy T.C.1, comprising the *Aquitania*, *Duchess of Bedford*, *Empress of Australia*, *Empress of Britain*, and *Monarch of Bermuda*, carried 7449 officers and men of the 1st Division out of Halifax harbour. From 4 November 1939 to 8 May 1945 some 368,000 men and women of the Canadian Army crossed the North Atlantic in more than 300 ship sailings,\* all but one of which arrived safely in the United Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> About one hundred different ships were used in this great undertaking, from the stately *Queen Elizabeth*, carrying 14,000 men in one crossing, to unknown little cargo vessels, such as the *Olaf Fostenes* with her quota of eight soldier passengers. The vast majority of Canadian troops, however, were carried in fast passenger ships, some of them old-timers on the North Atlantic run, but others bearing exotic names from distant oceans. In all, some sixty-five liners carried Canadian soldiers at one time or another. The *Pasteur* made thirteen crossings with large Canadian drafts, the *Andes* eleven, the *Empress*

\*See table, page 191. In addition, 1363 persons were appointed or enlisted in the United Kingdom. There were also some arrivals by air (about 444 between 12 October 1941 and 8 May 1945); but most of these air travellers were only visitors. On the other hand, there were perhaps 2000 duplications, caused by individuals returning to Canada and then going to Britain a second time.

of *Scotland* nine, the *Queen Elizabeth*, the *Aquitania*, and the *Mauretania* six each, and the *Duchess of York*, the *Letitia*, and the *Batory* five each.

There were no armadas of the sort familiar in the First World War when the first Canadian contingent of over 30,000 troops was carried in a great convoy of 31 transports.<sup>2</sup> The normal practice until the late autumn of 1942 was to send the large troopships in small fast convoys, but thereafter they sailed singly and unescorted, relying on their speed for protection. In the earlier period some 30 separate convoys, ranging from two to eight ships, crossed the Atlantic with Canadian troops, while from November 1942 to the end of the war there were about 70 separate troop sailings. Besides the regular troop sailings, escorted and unescorted, which carried the great bulk of the Canadian troops, there were also a large number of so-called "berth sailings", small parties sailing in merchant convoys or on liners that were not troopships. In all some 5669 soldiers were carried in 95 separate sailings of this type. Thirty-nine different ships carried Canadian troops as berth passengers, of which the four most frequently used were the *Bayano* (twelve crossings), the *Duchess of Richmond* (ten), the *Cavina* (seven), and the *Beaverhill* (six).

Overall statistics are difficult to establish, since many ships were shared with the other services and some with the United States forces (indeed in a few cases Canadian troops formed only a very small fraction of the total personnel on board) ; but with this reservation the accompanying table<sup>3</sup> will give some indication of the magnitude of the operation. The largest troop convoy was T.C. 15, consisting of eight ships carrying 14,023 all ranks, mostly of the 5th Armoured Division, which arrived in the United Kingdom on 22 November 1941, but this figure was surpassed in July 1943, when the *Queen Elizabeth* crossed with 14,313 Canadian soldiers aboard.<sup>5</sup>

The annual totals in the table suggest a regular flow of troops in conformity with Canadian policy regarding the disposition of the country's forces. From month to month, however, there were wide oscillations in the numbers dispatched and during the whole period the amount of shipping space available was a paramount consideration in the "build-up" of the Canadian Army Overseas. Priorities had to be worked out between the three services and, beginning in 1942, with the American forces. Anticipated sailings were, of course, made known months ahead of time, but in a war being fought across the seven seas of the world numerous changes were inevitable. Operations in the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian and Pacific Oceans were constantly competing for ships with the flow of soldiers and airmen across the Atlantic to Europe.

With the beginning of the movement of American forces on a large scale and the abolition of the troop convoy system the Canadian problem became more complicated. National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa, which had no control over shipping, was forced to hold large numbers of troops ready

## GROWTH OF THE CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS 1939-1945

year	ARRIVALS IN THE UNITED			ACTUAL STRENGTH OF CANADIAN					
	Ships	Troops	Remarks	Date	Male	Officers		Total	Other F
						N/S	CWA		Male
1939	15	15,908	Advance party CMHO: 1st T.C. 1 & 2.	30 Nov	34	-	-	34	48
				31 Dec	692	-	-	692	15,219
1940	57	42,999	2nd Division ancillary troops: Convoys T.C. 3-8 and 1889 troops	30 Jun	1,514	130	-	1,644	25,735
				31 Dec	3,099	228	-	3,327	53,332
1941	72	70,416	3rd and 5th Divisions: 1st Army ancillary troops; reinforcements; Convoys T.C.	30 Jun	3,653	322	-	3,975	63,052
				31 Dec	6,837	384	-	7,221	117,251
1942	36	63,497	4th Division: ancillary troops: Convoys N.A. 1-16.	30 Jun	7,939	576	-	8,515	139,000
				31 Dec	10,000	764	22	10,786	165,960
1943	43	79,564	2nd Army Tank Brigade: ancillary reinforcements; all single sailings	30 Jun	12,671	766	24	13,461	189,800
				31 Dec	15,588	1,212	52	16,852	224,820
1944	59	64,764	13th Infantry Brigade: ancillary reinforcements; single sailings.	30 Jun	18,259	1,887	72	20,218	234,440
				31 Dec	18,115	2,028	85	20,228	249,230
1945	18	31,115	14th and 15th Infantry Brigades: reinforcements up to 8 May; single sailings. Does not	31 Mar	18,654	2,031	70	20,755	265,510
				8 May (WE Day)	18,277	2,041	68	20,386	259,938
Total	300	368,266							

\*Figures for 1943, 1944 and 1945 arrivals include 16 Hospital Ship sailings, which carried 1769 medical troops. The total of ships includes 95 berth sailings. Although the number of troops arriving in the UK from Iceland is included in the TROOPS column, the number of ships involved is not included in the SHIPS column. There were ten such sailings in 1940 and eight in 1941. Except for two sailings in Oct 1940 and one in Apr 1941 most of these ships carried only small parties of Canadian personnel proceeding on courses, for medical treatment, etc.

†The discrepancy of three between the total of arrivals in 1939 and the strength on 31 December 1939 is due to the latter including three officers who *were* already in the United Kingdom and two other ranks who were enlisted there; while two other ranks died during 1939.

‡The peak strength of the Canadian Army Overseas was reached during March, 1945.

for draft on short notice in order to take advantage of the various "offers" that were made via the British Army Staff in Washington. These offers were often vague as to sailing date and subject to constant change as to amount of space available. In the case of one ship there were at least eight changes in the few weeks between its first announcement and its sailing, ranging from an original offer of space for 2500 air force men to the final allocation of 140 R.C.A.F. and 130 Canadian Army personnel.<sup>6</sup> In December 1942 Canadian troops were promised priority with monthly accommodation for 10,000, yet in January and February of 1943 Canadian Army drafts totalled less than 3000<sup>7</sup> for the two months. The situation greatly improved in July and August of that year, however, with the result that by the autumn the Canadian Army's overseas programme was virtually complete and, as already indicated, it was then able to reduce its demands to a monthly flow of 5000 reinforcements. Shipping space was a less serious problem thereafter. Thus the so-called period of waiting, which many Canadian troops had to endure in England, was only just sufficient for building up the force that fought in the last two years of the war. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington could have found the necessary shipping if it had been considered necessary to give Canadian Army movement a really high priority at an earlier time.

Most of the Canadian Army troop crossings were made from "an eastern Canadian port" which the public correctly identified as Halifax; but at least two ships\* sailed from Sydney with small Army drafts on board. The 1st and 2nd Divisions came directly to Halifax from various parts of Canada and immediately went on board ship. A Rest Camp established in the Immigration Building, Halifax, in 1939, accommodated only 500 men. The 3rd Division, however, and subsequently the 4th, were concentrated at Debert, N.S., and Sussex, N.B., where they trained prior to embarkation. As the flow of reinforcements developed, transit camps were opened at Debert and Windsor, N.S., which held drafts in readiness until the necessary shipping was available.<sup>9</sup>

When in the autumn of 1942 it was decided to stop sending troopships in convoy and the great Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary were included among the unescorted troop carriers, Canada was forced to send some of her contingents via New York. The Canadian Government strongly protested this innovation because of the lack of Canadian embarkation facilities at New York and the extra costs involved.<sup>10</sup> British authorities at first demurred to the suggestion that the Queens might sail from Halifax, both because of doubts about facilities there and because of the docking space that would be lost to cargo shipping; while the Admiralty felt that to call at Halifax after sailing from New York would entail too great an increase in risk.<sup>11</sup> In the end the Queens were not used to carry Canadian troops to the extent

\*The *Beaverhill*, 6 October 1944, and the *Erria*, 11 November 1944.<sup>8</sup>



anticipated and in three cases they did make trips from Halifax. Nevertheless, from the winter of 1942-43 a proportion of Canadian troop sailings were from New York.

By peacetime standards, the ships were always crowded, but some time elapsed before the fullest possible use was made of the space available. Thus in 1939 the 1st Division crossed in relative luxury with the *Aquitania*, which later took more than 7500 troops, carrying 2638, and the *Andes*, with a later capacity of about 5000, carrying only 1358.<sup>12</sup> As a result, in the early crossings it was possible to keep the men occupied with an organized programme of physical training, marches, military lectures and sports.<sup>13</sup> As the demands on shipping became more pressing, however, the transports were shorn of their peacetime trappings and almost every available nook filled with sleeping accommodation; swimming pools, most of the public lounges and even parts of the holds were turned into giant dormitories, while staterooms designed for two or three passengers were filled with bunks for ten or fifteen. Conditions in the holds were such that many men preferred to bring their blankets on deck; later, however, all access to the open decks was cut off during blackout hours. With the great increase in numbers it became necessary to reduce the meals to two a day. The men ate in relays and waited their turn, standing much of their time in long queues.<sup>14</sup> Under such conditions organized activities ceased to be a feature of the Atlantic crossing. Fortunately, in most cases the voyage was short.

In the first three years the troop convoys normally left Halifax under the escort of Canadian destroyers while a British battleship accompanied them across the open Atlantic as "ocean escort". Destroyers based in the United Kingdom met them at the edge of the danger zone around the British Isles, but on at least one occasion the rendezvous was missed and the transports arrived in port unescorted.<sup>15</sup> The single sailings in the later years were unescorted by surface craft, but air cover was provided in the danger areas at either end of the voyage. In November 1941 a precedent was created when T.C. 15, carrying part of the 5th Division, was escorted halfway across the Atlantic by United States warships, although the Americans were not yet in the war.<sup>16</sup>

Not a single Canadian troopship was lost in the Atlantic. One small vessel carrying a Canadian Army draft of 105 all ranks as "berth" passengers was lost by enemy action. The *Nerissa*, a vessel of 5000 tons built for the Newfoundland service, sailed from Halifax on 21 April 1941, with less than 200 passengers including, besides the army draft, several naval and R.A.F. men. Although her speed was only 13 to 14 knots she sailed alone and unescorted, except for a Coastal Command aircraft which gave cover in the daylight hours of the last two days. On the evening of 30 April, about 80 miles off the coast of Donegal, the ship was struck by two or perhaps three torpedoes and sank within a few minutes. Thirteen officers and 60 other

ranks of the Canadian Army were lost, 33 of whom were members of the Corps of Military Staff Clerks.<sup>17</sup> This was the only occasion in the Second World War on which Canadian soldiers were lost in the Atlantic by enemy action; similar losses in the First World War amounted to 133.<sup>18</sup>

In the first years of the war most of the troopships went into the Clyde, but as time passed an increasing number ended their voyages at Liverpool. In all, almost two-thirds docked on the Clyde (mostly at Greenock and Gourock, but some in Glasgow itself), while one-third went to Liverpool; the few remaining ships were divided between Avonmouth and Southampton. Small drafts travelling in other ships arrived at a wide variety of ports, including London, Manchester, Cardiff, Newcastle, Leith, Belfast, Oban, Barry (South Wales), and Methil (Firth of Forth).<sup>19</sup>

Since ship sailings and shipping routes were subject to frequent and sudden changes, Canadian Military Headquarters, London, was often uncertain until almost the last minute of the exact places and times of arrival. The actual movement of the troops from port to billeting area was a British responsibility, but Movement Control, C.M.H.Q., maintained liaison with the War Office and sent an officer to the port of entry whenever a Canadian troopship arrived.<sup>20</sup> Most Canadian troops arriving in Britain went first to the Aldershot area, where the main Canadian base installations gradually developed. Over a period of more than five years the Canadian Army built up in the south of England a large and complicated structure, which was the basis of its operations in Europe. The overall growth of the overseas force is shown by the table on page 191.<sup>21</sup>

It will be readily seen that the organization and control of these large numbers of troops presented formidable problems.

### Canadian Military Headquarters

Even during the planning period before 1939 it was clear that a Canadian military headquarters in the United Kingdom, separate from the fighting formations that were gradually concentrated there, was an essential requirement (see above, page 31). Apart from all other aspects, it seemed vital to the maintenance of Canadian autonomy. In 1942 senior staff officers of the Canadian Army Overseas summed up the matter in these terms:<sup>22</sup>

Experience in the last war showed the necessity for retaining control of our administration. It is unnecessary to argue this principle, which is based on inherent characteristics strong in the minds of all Canadians, and formally expressed as a guide to our existence in the Statute of Westminster. Fundamentally this is a basic reason for the provision of machinery required effectively to conduct our own military business.

Long before the Statute of Westminster, indeed, the Canadian Government had insisted on the administrative control of its own troops when they arrived in Britain in the First World War. From 1914 to 1916 Sir Sam Hughes,

then Minister of Militia, had used the device of a "special representative" overseas in the person of Major-General J. W. Carson. In October 1916 the Canadian Government appointed a Minister, Overseas Military Forces of Canada, with a headquarters in London, which soon became "a miniature War Office" with "an ample establishment of officers".<sup>23</sup> Such a solution, which must have greatly reduced the reference of matters of policy to Canada, was not attempted in the Second World War. Mr. T. A. Crerar, who as a senior member of the Canadian Cabinet led a mission to the United Kingdom in 1939, made this very clear in a telegram to Mr. Mackenzie King when he said, "Anything resembling Argyll House Organization in last war should be wholly avoided".<sup>24</sup> Presumably Mr. King's government, which throughout the war opposed setting up an Imperial War Cabinet, did not consider that a Minister separated from the rest of the Cabinet could have any more powers than the High Commissioner or the senior military commander.\*

Since 1937, we have seen (above, page 62), there had been a military officer (Colonel G. P. Loggie) on the staff of the Canadian High Commissioner in London, but with the outbreak of war the volume of military business at Canada House increased so greatly that new arrangements had to be quickly made. On 26 September 1939 the Minister of National Defence authorized a Canadian Military Headquarters overseas with Brigadier H. D. G. Crerar as Brigadier General Staff, Colonel the Hon. P. J. Montague as Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General, and Lt.-Col. E. L. M. Burns as General Staff Officer First Grade (G.S.O. 1).<sup>25</sup>

The responsibilities of this new headquarters were subsequently defined as follows:<sup>26</sup>

- "(a) To prepare for the arrival, quartering and general administration of Canadian Active Service Force units or formations despatched from Canada; to arrange for the completion of their equipment, and the provision of training facilities for them.
- "(b) To requisition the War Office for equipment required by Canadian divisional and non divisional troops, and to carry out the financial accounting in connection therewith.
- "(c) To arrange for quartering, maintenance and hospitalisation of Canadian troops in U.K. and for the financial accounting in connection therewith. "(d) To maintain close liaison with the War Office and with the G.O.C. Canadian Forces in the theatre of operations (or in the United Kingdom when separate command is specified).
- "(e) To command and administer Canadian formations and units in the United Kingdom and at the base in the theatre of operations, as may be specifically detailed.
- "(f) To furnish the High Commissioner for Canada with information on military questions as necessary."

\*Inquiries indicate that neither the files of the Department of External Affairs nor Mr. King's private files reveal what was behind the declaration that the Argyll House precedent should not be repeated. The decision was quite consistent with Mr. King's ideas of cabinet government, but it may be that Mr. Crerar's message was simply based on the recommendations of his namesake and military adviser Brigadier Crerar, who was opposed to the Argyll House plan on military grounds. (See page 213 below.)

In addition C.M.H.Q. was to be responsible for Canadian establishments on the lines of communication-thus relieving the Canadian G.O.C. in the field of the task of attending to administration far in the rear-and for serving as the link between Canadian formations in the field and the Department of National Defence at Ottawa.

Brigadier Crerar arrived in England at the end of October and went to Canada House, where Lt.-Col. Burns, who had been in England at the outbreak of the war, was already at work.<sup>27</sup> Sharing one office they formed the small nucleus of a headquarters that was destined to grow with mushroom rapidity. At the outset, however, the Canadian Government was unwilling to approve Crerar's recommendation that the new establishment should be redesignated "Canadian Army Staff" and modelled on the organization of National Defence Headquarters in Canada.<sup>28</sup>

The advance party of C.M.H.Q., consisting of Colonel Montague, eight other officers and 14 other ranks, sailed from Montreal in the *Antonia* on 4 November 1939. On 16 November they reported for duty at Canada House.<sup>29</sup> In the meantime Mr. Massey and Brigadier Crerar had arranged, with the somewhat reluctant concurrence of their government, to rent the second floor of the substantial Sun Life Building, next door to Canada House on Cockspur Street.<sup>30</sup> During the course of the war, by degrees, almost the whole of this building was taken over, as were other buildings in the vicinity. In December 1939 arrangements were made to house the Pay, Treasury and Records branches of the Headquarters in a large and gloomy "Government Building" on Bromyard Avenue in Acton.<sup>31</sup> It was thought that this western suburb would be relatively safe from air attack, but as events turned out this was one of the few buildings housing Canadian offices in the London area to suffer a direct hit.\*

With the decision to send larger Canadian forces to England and the acceptance of the principle that the Canadians would be responsible for their own training, the expansion of Canadian Military Headquarters became inevitable. Moreover, it soon became clear that the Senior Officer should be free from the details of administration in order that he might devote his full attention to questions of policy, liaison and general supervision. Consequently, after much communication with Canada, a reorganization was completed by the early summer of 1940.<sup>33</sup>

Briefly, the new organization established three separate Branches under the Senior Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters (which office had recently been raised to a major-general's appointment) : the General Staff Branch, the Adjutant-General's Branch, and the Quartermaster-General's Branch.<sup>34</sup> In accordance with normal British and Canadian staff practice, the first

\*The incident happened on the night of 20-21 February 1944. It caused only minor damage to the Canadian offices, which were at the other end of the building from the wing that was hit.<sup>32</sup>

named was responsible for matters relating to operations, intelligence, staff duties (mainly war organization), training and public relations; the second, for organization (reinforcements, statistics, appointments and promotions, etc.), personal services (ceremonial, discipline, records, C.A.S.F. Overseas Routine Orders), medical services and pay services; and the third, for supplies and transport (accommodation, movement control, postal matters, rations, printing and stationery), ordnance services, assembly of Canadian vehicles in the United Kingdom, and purchasing. Simultaneously the size of the staffs was increased. Early in July Major-General Crerar was recalled to Canada, where he became Chief of the General Staff, and was replaced as Senior Officer at C.M.H.Q. by Brigadier Montague, who was promoted Major General. General Montague (who was in civil life a Justice of the Court of King's Bench in Manitoba) also held the appointment of Deputy Judge Advocate General.

The resources of the new headquarters were soon fully extended. In particular, the establishment of Canadian hospitals, the maintenance of Canadian motor transport, and the general administration that would not have been required had the Canadian field force gone to France, imposed a heavy burden upon the Quartermaster-General's branch. At the same time, the concentration of Canadian troops in the south of England brought in its wake an increasing number of courts martial and civilian claims for damages, which similarly burdened the office of the D.J.A.G. Moreover the heavy air attacks on London beginning on 7 September 1940 put what was supposed to be a base headquarters into the front line, with resultant extra strain on the staff.<sup>35</sup>

The main lines along which Canadian Military Headquarters was to develop were well defined by the summer of 1940, although numerous adjustments were made thereafter. As the overseas force grew, C.M.H.Q.'s establishment grew likewise. On 31 December 1939 its staff numbered 87 persons—23 officers, 28 other ranks, and 36 civilians. A year later the strength had increased to 124 officers, 518 other ranks and 258 civilians, a total of 900, which included some personnel outside London. By the end of 1942 the total was 3215, while by 30 April 1945 the figures were 616 officers (including 24 C.W.A.C.), 2712 other ranks (including 511 C.W.A.C.), and 745 civilians, making a total of 4073.<sup>36</sup> This expansion, which was typical of almost all higher headquarters as the war progressed,\* caused some alarm, and in February 1944 the Chief of Staff issued orders that the establishment was to be kept under constant review and reduced wherever possible. In the following June he advised C.M.H.Q. and all units under its command that except on his specific instructions no more increases in

\*On 25 April 1945, 5687 persons (all ranks and civilians) were employed in the Army branches of N.D.H.Q., Ottawa. In addition, 2226 were carried on the strength of miscellaneous units in the Ottawa area closely associated with one or more of the branches.

establishments would be approved unless compensating decreases were made at the same time.<sup>37</sup>

Early in 1943 a Special War Establishment Committee in recommending certain increases in the establishment of C.M.H.Q. appeared to accept the assumption that the work of the Headquarters increased "in direct ratio to the number of troops in the country".<sup>38</sup> One critic of the committee's report, however, argued that there was no automatic relationship of the sort postulated and that in fact the headquarters' responsibilities had increased at a faster rate because of "the enormous number of added functions" that had been tacked on since 1940 and because of "the higher standard of service" that was required. "Speaking generally," he observed, "the trend has been for this Headquarters to shoulder all items of administration that can properly be taken off H.Q. of field formations."<sup>39</sup> The latter point will be considered in more detail below.

The amount of paper passing through the Central Registry illustrates the expansion of the work of C.M.H.Q. The average daily number of pieces of incoming mail increased from 165 in 1940 to 1500 in 1944, while the number of files in Central Registry increased from 2,000 to 200,000 in the same period.<sup>40</sup> Physically the headquarters had spread into six main buildings, while small detachments were located at many other places both inside and outside of London.<sup>41</sup>

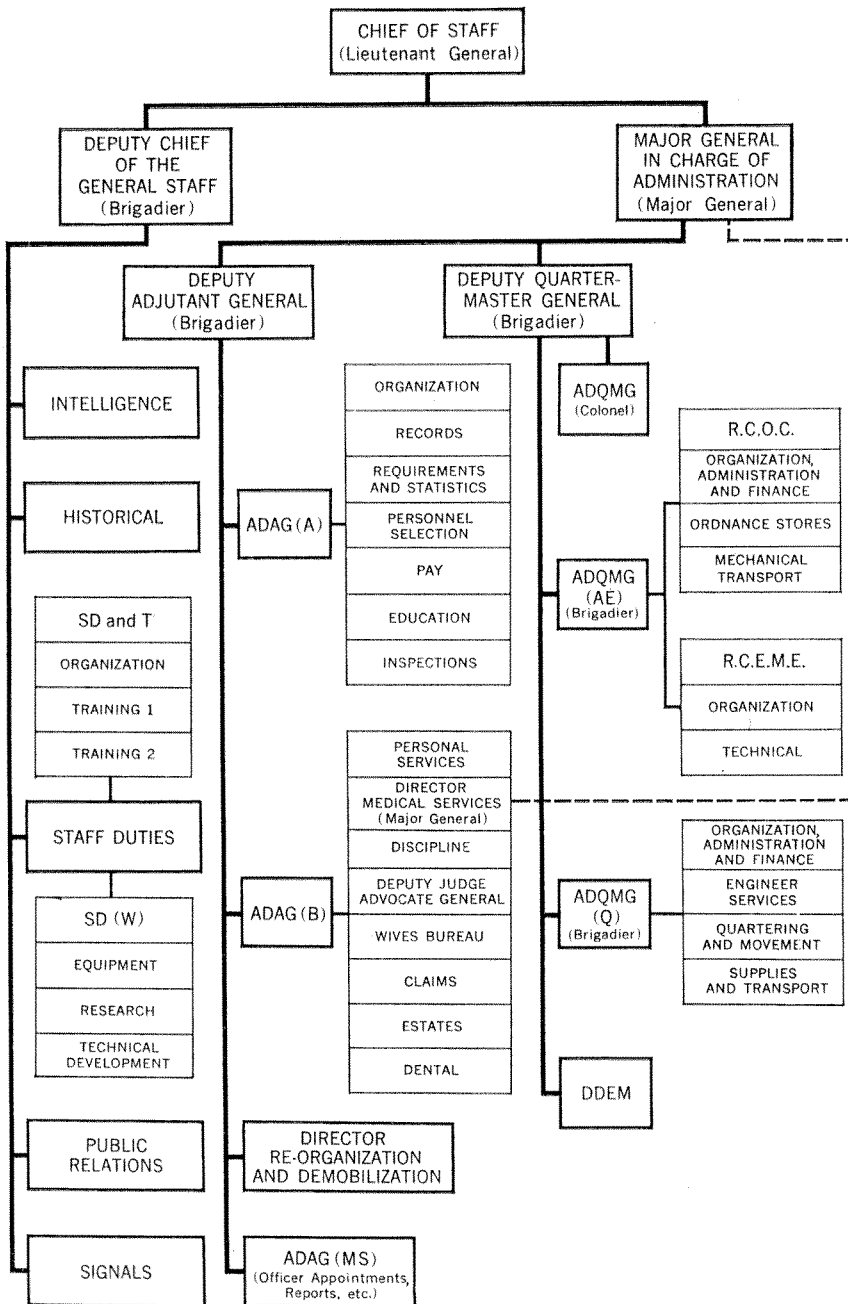
### Organization of C.M.H.Q., 1945

The complex organization of Canadian Military Headquarters in its final form can best be visualized by reference to the organization chart printed herewith.<sup>42</sup> The Senior Officer was replaced in December 1943, we shall see, by a Chief of Staff. The latter, a lieutenant general, was relieved of much detail by the appointment of a Major General in Charge of Administration, who had general supervision of the "A" and "Q" branches. The Brigadier General Staff became a Deputy Chief of the General Staff, directly responsible to the Chief of Staff.<sup>43</sup>

In the last days of the war in Europe, the General Staff Branch, with an establishment of 85 officers and 90 other ranks, comprised four main sections -Military Intelligence, Staff Duties (which included Training), Historical, and Public Relations.<sup>44</sup> After the formation of the First Canadian Army there was no "Operations" section at C.M.H.Q and the Intelligence Section's functions were limited to liaison with the War Office (chiefly designed to keep N.D.H.Q. and the Chief of Staff informed on military operations) and local security. The Historical and Public Relations sections had their own special duties.

C.M.H.Q.                      Signals,                      under                      General                      Staff

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON  
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supervision, had the task of handling the heavy signals traffic that passed in and out of the headquarters.

Thus the main functions of the General Staff at C.M.H.Q. were Staff Duties and Training, which entailed the employment of 57 officers. In the words of an official memorandum, "Staff Duties at CMHQ involve principally the determination, in proper relation to First Cdn Army, of the organization, establishment, and equipment of the Cdn Army Overseas, and the policy of mobilization of our resources to meet this requirement..."<sup>45</sup> This involved decisions regarding the types of units needed and their establishments, decisions regarding the movement of troops and equipment and the mobilization of units in the United Kingdom, the determination of what sorts of equipment were required and on what scale, and finally "the determination of rates of wastage and scales of reserves of personnel and equipment."<sup>46</sup> Owing to the tremendous technical developments of modern warfare a separate and highly specialized section (Staff Duties-Weapons) was built up to deal with the particular problems of technical equipment. Another part of the Staff Duties organization was responsible for sending training information back to Canada and for the training of the many troops under the command of C.M.H.Q. in England. It will also be noted that the functions of Staff Duties are very closely related to those of the administrative branches. Briefly the distinction may be made that "the General Staff is responsible for defining what is required by the Army. and the A.G. and Q.M.G. Branches are then responsible for taking executive action."<sup>47</sup>

The Adjutant-General's Branch, consisting of 208 officers and 415 other ranks under a Deputy Adjutant General with the rank of brigadier, fell into two main divisions, Organization and Personal Services, each under an Assistant Deputy Adjutant General. Personal Services relating to officers, however, were dealt with by a separate Military Secretary section, also under an A.D.A.G.; and towards the end of the war a Director of Reorganization and Demobilization was appointed,\* who was directly responsible to the D.A.C. The Organization division under the A.D.A.G.(A) was itself divided into seven main and 26 sub-sections, dealing with organizational matters proper (formation, mobilization and disbandment of units, provision and despatch of reinforcements, etc.), records (a very large section with eight sub-sections), requirements and statistics, personnel selection, pay, education and inspections. The pay arrangements of the Canadian Army Overseas were centralized in a large section under a Chief Paymaster with the rank of brigadier, who had direct access to the Deputy Adjutant General.

Personal Services under the A.D.A.G.(B) was a much larger division, consisting of 153 officers and 289 other ranks, divided into eight main and 39 sub-sections. Matters dealing with Army personnel generally, such as

\*The appointment of Col. D. K. Tow with the acting rank of brigadier was made on 8 September 1944 by the Chief of Staff C.M.H.Q., with the approval of the C.G.S. at N.D.H.Q.<sup>48</sup>



promotions, enlistments, discharges, prisoners of war, welfare, and Chaplain and Auxiliary Services, were grouped together in a large section known as A.A.G. (Pers), but a separate directorate, the Canadian Wives Bureau, had been formed to deal with the complex problem of sending servicemen's wives and children to Canada. Four sections dealt with legal matters: A.A.G. (Discipline) being responsible for disciplinary matters in general, including the administration of the Provost Corps and the holding of courts of inquiry; A.A.G. (Claims) dealing with the numerous civilian claims for damages that inevitably resulted from the presence of a large Canadian force in a small area of south-eastern England; an Estates section, which looked after the disposal of estates of deceased personnel; and the Judge Advocate-General's Section, which dealt with courts martial, legal relationships with Allied forces, and other legal matters. The last-named section was headed by a Deputy Judge Advocate General, since General Montague remained Judge Advocate General for the Canadian Army Overseas.\* A few weeks before the end of the war in Europe, however, the Office of the Judge Advocate General was separated from the Adjutant-General's Branch and its head given the title of Vice Judge Advocate General with the rank of brigadier.<sup>50</sup>

Medical and Dental services were also included in A.D.A.G.(B)'s division of the Adjutant-General's Branch, but the Director of Medical Services, himself a major general (Major-General R. M. Luton), had direct access to the Major General in Charge of Administration.

The Quartermaster-General's Branch, consisting of 138 officers and 389 other ranks, under a Deputy Quartermaster General with the rank of brigadier, was divided into two main parts, Arms and Equipment, and Q.M.G. Services, each under an A.D.Q.M.G., also a brigadier. The Arms and Equipment division consisted of R.C.O.C. and R.C.E.M.E. services. The former was divided into three main sections, the Organization, Administration and Financial Section, the Ordnance Stores Section and the Mechanical Transport Section. The Ordnance Stores Section was in turn divided into sub-sections dealing with warlike stores, clothing and general stores, war equipment tables, and Canadian Army Requirements, most of which were broken down into further sub-divisions. The R.C.E.M.E. services fell into two main sections, one dealing with organization and the other with technical matters, each having numerous subdivisions. There was also a civilian Director of Design, Equipment and Mechanization (originally known as Technical Adviser, Mechanical Transport) with a civilian staff, which worked within the framework of the

\*The reasons why General Montague retained this appointment until the end of the war were thus stated by the D.J.A.G. at C.M.H.Q. in a letter to General Montague:<sup>49</sup> " ... the large body of Cdn troops overseas warrants no less than a Judge of the Bench of Canada as the guardian of its legal interests. . . . I think it most significant that in five years there has been no case that I recall where a commander, a court or an accused did not accept your decision as final. . . . In this connection, I venture to add that our Senior Commanders would probably not be prepared to accept as conclusive an opinion on the law from anyone other than yourself."

Q.M.G. branch and also served the Department of Munitions and Supply.<sup>51</sup>

While the organization of Canadian Military Headquarters outlined in the foregoing pages remained in effect until the end of the war, it should be noted that in 1944 consideration was given to a radical reorganization on the "one-stag" principle followed by the United States Army and most European countries. The proposal was first made by Major-General E. L. M. Burns, then commanding the 2nd Canadian Division, in a memorandum, dated 10 January 1944,<sup>52</sup> which suggested a reorganization throughout the Army but beginning with C.M.H.Q. and N.D.H.Q. He claimed that the British staff system had never been planned logically, but that rather it was "the result of evolution and compromise". In consequence there were anomalies and overlapping, particularly with regard to the Staff Duties section of the General Staff. He criticized the preeminence of the General Staff in the field of policy and recommended that the staff as a whole should be reorganized into five branches or divisions-Intelligence, Operations, Personnel, Maintenance and Movement, and Equipment-with necessary changes in nomenclature. The old Staff Duties section dealing with organization would be absorbed into the new Personnel branch (the equivalent of the old "A" Branch) and the Staff Duties-Weapons section would become part of the new Maintenance and Movement branch (the equivalent of the old "Q" Branch). The whole system would be coordinated by a Chief of Staff.

These ideas found favour with some senior officers and the matter came to a head a few months later when Major-General J. V. Young, Master General of the Ordnance, arrived with several staff officers from N.D.H.Q. to discuss the organization of Research and Development in the Canadian Army. General Stuart, suggesting that this might involve a drastic reorganization of the whole staff system, became interested and directed his staff to explore Burns' suggestion.<sup>53</sup>

General Burns' original memorandum was circulated at C.M.H.Q. and at Army Headquarters<sup>54</sup> and was the subject of much discussion at both. An outline plan submitted by the D.C.G.S. at C.M.H.Q. was considered by the heads of the other branches,<sup>55</sup> and the whole matter was gone into with the War Office, where similar changes were being considered. On his return to Canada General Young reported that there was general agreement among the senior officers consulted on the need for radical staff reorganization. He then submitted proposals for an organization along the lines proposed by Burns, writing:<sup>56</sup>

It is the considered recommendation of C of S at CMHQ that the appended proposal be urgently considered by higher authority in this Department, and that the reorganization so envisaged be implemented in Canada at the earliest feasible date and without waiting until the conclusion of hostilities. C of S at CMHQ is proposing to initiate a similar reorganization of his own staff almost immediately, subject to the concurrence of the Minister.

In September General Stuart wrote to the Department of National Defence urging early consideration of these proposals,<sup>57</sup> but shortly thereafter, following the departure of Colonel Ralston from the Government, Stuart ceased to be Chief of Staff and the matter lapsed. Appropriately enough, the last item on the file is a memorandum of 2 December 1944 from General Burns in which he suggested that General Young's project had gone too far. He proceeded to make other proposals for a considerably modified version of the reorganization. No further action appears to have been taken. C.M.H.Q., like the rest of the Army, continued to be organized on the British staff system, which throughout the war gave service generally considered pretty satisfactory.

### Canadian Reinforcement Units and Other Units Under C.M.H.Q. Command

Canadian Military Headquarters had under its command in the United Kingdom towards the end of hostilities with Germany numerous miscellaneous units, whose *establishments* (not including the reinforcements held in the reinforcement units, but including temporary units or "increments") totalled 34,777 all ranks.<sup>58</sup>

The most important group were the Reinforcement Units, the organization of which underwent six major revisions in the course of the war. Originally known as Holding Units, they were first organized in the summer of 1940 in two groups.<sup>59</sup> Although they were primarily reinforcement pools it was found from the outset that they had to undertake the task of training the drafts arriving from Canada.<sup>60</sup> This and the great growth of the Canadian overseas army were among the causes of the various changes; the reorganization of the army in 1943 to conform with British war establishments was another factor. The principle of affiliation of Infantry Holding Units with field units was also a matter of discussion and experimentation.

They were originally organized on a territorial basis, but in 1941 this was replaced by a divisional one; that is, each infantry division had its own Infantry Holding Unit.<sup>61</sup> In 1943, however, the divisional principle was abandoned and the territorial one revived.<sup>62</sup> Thus for example all reinforcements for western Canadian infantry units of any division would

\*The organization of C.M.H.Q. may be compared with that of the Army branches at N.D.H.Q., Ottawa, a chart of which appears as Appendix "J".

†On 30 November 1944 the actual *strength* in Britain was 73,006 all ranks. Of these only 25,816 covered permanent establishment vacancies; 26,621 were reinforcements, 4568 were employed in the temporary units or "increments", while 16,001 listed as "non-effectives" (unfit personnel, personnel employed outside the United Kingdom, etc.) did not count against unit establishments. By 30 April 1945 the strength had risen to 94,569, of whom 39,380 were reinforcements.

come from the same reinforcement unit. The term "Reinforcement Unit" had been adopted because it was considered that the name "Holding Unit" was liable to have a bad psychological effect on the troops concerned.<sup>63</sup>

By the spring of 1944 the Canadian Reinforcement Units were organized in six groups<sup>64</sup> in the Bordon-Aldershot area under a Headquarters, C.R.U.\* "A" and "D" Groups embraced five Infantry Reinforcement Units and No. 1 Canadian General Reinforcement Unit, which served Intelligence, Medical, Dental, Provost, Educational, and Auxiliary Service units, as well as the Chaplain Service and the Pay Corps. "B" Group consisted of Engineer, Signals and Army Service Corps Reinforcement Units; "C" Group, one Ordnance and two Artillery Reinforcement Units; "E" Group, three Armoured Corps Reinforcement Units, and "F" Group miscellaneous static units. The decision made early in 1944 to hold some 19,000 reinforcements in the two theatres of war on the Continent had led to the elimination of "G" Group and the disbandment of one Artillery and two Infantry Reinforcement Units.<sup>65</sup>

Each Reinforcement Unit was organized in a headquarters, an instructional wing, an administrative wing and holding wings. The last named were subdivided into wing headquarters and training companies, etc. The whole system in England was designed to hold approximately 23,000 reinforcements at one time.<sup>66</sup>

Early in 1944, in order to stimulate the flow of infantry reinforcements, the policy of sending formed units overseas from Canada was adopted and the arrival of the 13th Infantry Brigade in the summer of that year led to another change in the organization of the Infantry reinforcement units. "A" and "D" Groups and the 13th Infantry Brigade were all disbanded and a new organization known as the 13th Canadian Infantry Training Brigade was formed. This consisted of four and subsequently five training regiments, each made up of one and subsequently two training battalions and one depot ' battalion. The latter was responsible for all administration in connection with the reception, holding and dispatch of drafts, while the training battalion carried out refresher and collective training up to company level.<sup>67</sup> In January 1945, preparatory to the arrival of the 14th and 15th Infantry Brigades, a 14th Canadian Infantry Training Brigade was also set up, consisting of four infantry training regiments, with the same distribution of depot and training battalions as in the 13th Brigade.<sup>68</sup>

The training done by the reinforcement units is mentioned in another chapter, but the operational role taken by them at one stage of the war may be mentioned here. When England was bracing herself to face invasion in the summer of 1940 the British command at Aldershot asked that the

\*Until October 1941 it was known as Headquarters Canadian Base Units. The successive officers in command were Brigadier L. F. Page, November 1940; Brigadier F. R. Phelan, July 1941; Major-General J. H. Roberts, April 1943; Major-General D. C. Spry, March 1945.

SKETCH I



Historical Section G.S

Canadian troops should participate in the local defence scheme. The Canadian military authorities naturally agreed and undertook to take the necessary legal action to place the holding units under the command of the senior British officer in the area should an emergency arise.<sup>69</sup> The task assigned to the Canadians was essentially local in character and consisted chiefly in providing mobile columns to combat parachutists, and special patrols and platoons for the defence of various barracks.<sup>70</sup> On two occasions subsequently during major exercises ("Tiger" and "Spartan") C.R.U. organized *ad hoc* forces to relieve Canadian field formations from their protective duties on the south coast and so enable them to take part.<sup>71</sup>

Apart from the reinforcement units there were a great variety of Canadian units in the United Kingdom. It may be sufficient to describe the situation as it existed in the last winter of the war.

Medical installations included at the end of November 1944 ten general hospitals with a total capacity of over 7000 beds: No. 4 General Hospital at Farnborough, No. 9 at Horsham, No. 11 at Taplow, No. 13 at Cuckfield, No. 17 at Crowthorne, No. 18 at Colchester, No. 19 at Birmingham, No. 22 at Bramshott, No. 23 at Watford, and No. 24 at Horley. The remaining twelve Canadian General Hospitals overseas were on the Continent at this time. There were also the Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery Hospital, a 2000-bed convalescent depot, one convalescent hospital (though two were authorized) and a number of miscellaneous units, the total authorized establishment being 1390 officers and 3413 other ranks.<sup>72</sup> Canadian Dental Corps units, serving the R.C.N. and R.C.A.F. as well as the Army, included seven Base Dental Companies and totalled 257 officers and 693 other ranks.<sup>73</sup>

The Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps establishment in the United Kingdom included 2804 personnel in static units, of whom the vast majority belonged to No. 1 Central Ordnance Depot.<sup>74</sup> Originally the Canadian Army Overseas had been largely dependent on the United Kingdom's Royal Army Ordnance Corps, but on the urgent recommendation of Generals McNaughton and Crerar the authorities in Canada agreed, after considerable discussion, to the principle of an R.C.O.C. system of supply. The result was the establishment early in 1942 of the Canadian Base Ordnance Depot, which was reorganized as Central Ordnance Depot in January 1944.<sup>75</sup>

The Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, an offshoot of the R.C.O.C., were set up early in 1944, in imitation of British organization, to undertake "the inspection, maintenance, and repair of electrical and mechanical equipment". R.C.E.M.E. units in Britain had an establishment of 3547 all ranks, chiefly in No. 1 Base Workshop (originally Base Ordnance Workshop).<sup>76</sup> The Canadian Army Overseas had found British repair facilities unable to cope with the amount of work to be done.

Consequently, on the recommendation of General McNaughton, and after a detailed investigation by a representative of the Master General of the Ordnance, the Canadian Government approved the establishment of a Canadian Base Workshop, which was especially recruited in Canada in the winter of 1941-42. Accommodation was built at Bordon, Hants, by the Royal Canadian Engineers and in May 1942 the unit took possession and immediately began work on a great backlog of repairs that had been piling up.<sup>77</sup>

Other C.M.H.Q. units in the last months of the war included three Artisan Works Companies (R.C.E.), a Printing Detachment (R.C.A.S.C.), two Provost Companies, a Detention Barracks, three Field Security Sections, a Postal Depot, a Tobacco Depot (which was also part of the Canadian Postal Corps), three General Pioneer Companies, two Kit Storage units, the Canadian Wives Bureau, six detachments of the Canadian Army Show (actually on the Continent), two bands, and various Public Relations, Auxiliary Services, Educational and other units.<sup>78</sup> As already noted, at the end of November 1944 about 4500 of the troops in the United Kingdom were on the strength of temporary units or "increments".\* These consisted mostly of increments to the Canadian Reinforcement Units and schools and other static establishments in the United Kingdom, and theoretically they were available for the reinforcement stream.<sup>79</sup>

### The Canadian Forestry Corps

A very specialized element of the Army in the United Kingdom was the Canadian Forestry Corps, which at its peak numbered nearly 7000 all ranks. Such a corps had existed and done important work in the United Kingdom and on the Continent during the First World War. In this matter history repeated itself in the Second.

We have already mentioned that the British Government proposed the provision of Canadian forestry units as early as October 1939, and that the decision to form the new Canadian Forestry Corps was taken in May 1940 after the recommendation had been renewed (see above, pages 65 and 79). At this time the United Kingdom suggested that 80 companies might ultimately be provided for service in Britain and France. The situation was soon materially altered by the French collapse, but there was still an urgent need for foresters in the United Kingdom, for with supplies from Scandinavia and Russia cut off a great gap existed between local supplies of lumber and essential requirements. An initial force of twenty companies was asked for, and it was pointed out late in June that the military

\*These were set up under authority of Telegram GSD 602. See page 217 below.

situation in Britain now made it important that these companies "should have received appropriate scale of military training before they arrive here".<sup>80</sup>

The required twenty companies, each about 200 strong, were accordingly mobilized and trained in Canada. The Corps was first commanded by Brigadier-General J. B. White, who had been in charge of timber operations in France in 1918.\* Under a financial agreement between the two Governments, modelled on the practice in the previous war, Canada was to bear the cost of pay, allowances and pensions of officers and men, all initial personal equipment, transport to and from the United Kingdom, and some minor matters, while the British Government paid for "all other services connected with equipment, work or maintenance" and certain others including medical services.<sup>81</sup> Canada provided and paid medical officers for the Forestry Corps, but the British authorities paid the cost of "hospitalization".<sup>82</sup>

An advance party arrived in Scotland in October 1940. This was followed two months later by the Corps Headquarters and No. 5 Forestry Company, and during the winter and spring by additional units; by May 1941 there were thirteen forestry companies overseas, organized in five "forestry districts" each of which had a small headquarters, and located in the counties of Inverness, Ross, Aberdeen, Nairn and Perth. The remaining seven companies had arrived by July. Under the pattern of operation which developed companies worked in two sections, one cutting "in the bush" and bringing out the timber, the other sawing it into lumber in the company mill, and both using mostly Canadian mechanical equipment. Each unit was a self-contained community, including men capable of turning their hands to almost any task; and the Corps performed in fact an endless variety of undertakings, from miscellaneous building to snow clearance on the Highland roads. A regular proportion of the units' time was devoted to military training, each company preparing for the defence of its area and cooperation with the troops of Scottish Command in the event of invasion.<sup>83</sup>

The control of the Canadian Forestry Corps naturally presented some unusual problems, since it was, essentially, a Canadian organization working for the British Government under a special agreement. None of these problems proved serious, however. The system of control may be briefly summarized as follows. Military administration was through Canadian channels, the Corps being under the orders of Canadian Military Headquarters, London. Timber operations were directed by the British authorities, through the Home Grown Timber Production Department of the Ministry of Supply, which arranged the areas where the Canadians were to work and the disposal of the product. Control of military operations of the C.F.C. was never surrendered by the Canadian authorities to the United Kingdom.<sup>84</sup> General McNaughton's view of the case was thus stated

in

May

\*When ill-health forced General White to relinquish the command in the autumn of 1943, he was succeeded by Colonel C. E. F. Jones.



1942: "It is agreed that the War Office is to direct the forestry operations performed by these Coys; but military operations are reserved for control by Canadian authorities... personnel of the Cdn Forestry Corps in the United Kingdom might, as an extreme measure, have to be used as reinforcements for field formations and units of First Cdn Army."<sup>85</sup> However, special arrangements were made to enable the Corps to act immediately under the orders of the G.O.C.-in-C. Scottish Command in an emergency,<sup>86</sup> although it was never formally placed "in combination" with the British troops under the Visiting Forces Act (see below, pages 255-6).

The United Kingdom authorities estimated that the timber output of each forestry company was "roughly equivalent to the timber carried by a ship of six thousand tons plying regularly from Canada under war-time conditions".<sup>87</sup> Naturally, therefore, they were anxious to get as many Canadian foresters as they could. In July 1941, in view of the "effect of the Battle of the Atlantic and the heavy demands for shipping for the Near East and other theatres of war", the British Government asked for twenty more Canadian forestry companies, to be provided if possible before the end of the year. Considering the other present and prospective claims upon Canadian manpower, this one had to be carefully examined; but on 9 October the War Committee of the Cabinet agreed to provide 1000 more Forestry personnel (equivalent to five companies) and on 23 January 1942 it approved five more companies, as a final contribution. The last of the ten new companies reached the United Kingdom in October 1942. The overseas strength of the Corps reached its peak in February 1943, when it was 220 officers and 6771 other ranks.<sup>88</sup>

Increasing manpower stringency produced in the spring of 1943 a proposal to contract the C.F.C. In any case, the Scottish timber stands were being depleted. During the summer several hundred men of the Corps suitable for other employment were posted to other overseas units; and in October ten companies, consisting of close to 2000 all ranks, were repatriated for forestry work in Canada.<sup>89</sup> By May 1944 the Corps' overseas strength was down to 4055 all ranks.<sup>90</sup>

The remaining twenty forestry companies continued to work overseas until the end of hostilities. Ten stayed in Scotland; the other ten were ultimately employed on the Continent, and their story will be outlined in the volume of this history dealing with the North-West Europe campaign. Canadian forestry operations in Scotland ended only in June 1945, and the Corps Headquarters there ceased to function on 1 September.<sup>91</sup> The production figures for four-and-a-half years of work in Scottish forests are impressive evidence of the value of the Corps' work; they are headed by 394,467,161 F.B.M. of sawn lumber, and production in other categories was in proportion.<sup>92</sup>

It should be noted that Newfoundland, like Canada, contributed foresters to work in the Scottish Highlands. The Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit was formed in November 1939 at the expense of the United Kingdom. It was a civilian organization whose members signed an engagement to serve for a stated period (at first, six months; later, the duration of the war). Its strength in December 1942 was 1497 men. Except for its non-military nature its operations were basically similar to those of its Canadian counterpart.<sup>93</sup>

### The Canadian Women's Army Corps Overseas

The organization of the Canadian Women's Army Corps has been described in Chapter IV, where it is mentioned that detachments of the Corps served overseas. Although these detachments were not large, their work merits brief separate notice here.

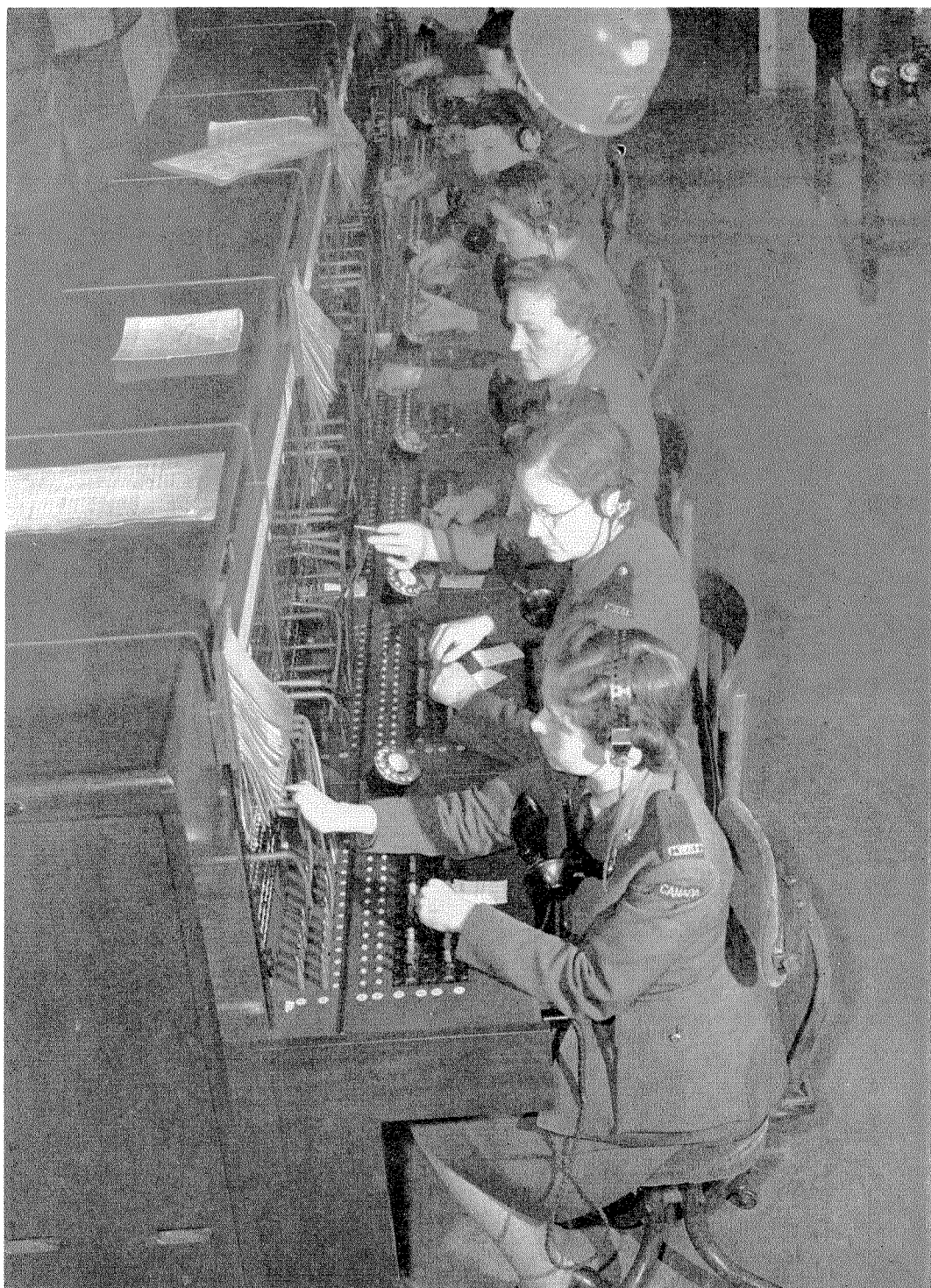
All told, 1984 all ranks of the C.W.A.C. served overseas in the European zone to 8 May 1945.<sup>94</sup> This includes 313 women-Canadians resident in Britain, or wives of Canadian servicemen-who were appointed or enlisted in the United Kingdom. Between 8 May 1945 and 31 October 1945, 988 more women arrived overseas, and nine more were enlisted, making a grand total of 2981.<sup>95</sup> The first draft arrived in Britain on 5 November 1942. By the end of 1943 there were three C.W.A.C. companies in London with their personnel attached for duty to various branches of C.M.H.Q., while a fourth served Headquarters, Canadian Reinforcement Units, in the Aldershot area. In addition, 173 women not organized as a company were serving in an Ordnance unit, No. 1 Static Base Laundry.<sup>96</sup> As in Canada, the usefulness of the Corps widened steadily as the war progressed, and its members took on an increasing variety of tasks. Its strength in the United Kingdom on 30 April 1945 was 62 officers and 1268 other ranks.<sup>97</sup>

Early in 1944 the employment of women in the rear areas of theatres of war came under consideration, and by mid-April it had been decided that this would be proper.<sup>98</sup> Almost all the earlier thinking in this connection seems to have been in terms of clerks, etc., for North-West Europe; but as it turned out the first C.W.A.C. women to enter a theatre of war were four girls of the Canadian Army Show, who went not to France, but to Italy, arriving there on 16 May 1944.<sup>99</sup> (On 6 June the diarist of the Westminster f Regiment recorded a brigade concert as "A huge success, largely due to the 11 efforts of four very charming CWACs".) However, not many C.W.A.C. personnel served in Italy; in January 1945 the total there was only one officer and 42 other ranks. Twenty-five of the latter were in the Army Show; all I, the rest were at "Canadian Section 1st Echelon, Allied Force Headquarters",



THE CANADIAN FORESTRY CORPS IN BRITAIN

Men of No. 5 Forestry Company bringing down a Scotch Pine near Blair Atholl, Scotland, May 1941.



THE CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS OVERSEAS

C.W.A.C. operators at work on the telephone switchboard at Canadian Military Headquarters, London, September 1943.

the Canadian static headquarters, then in Rome. A larger group, eight officers and 148 other ranks, were in North-West Europe. The great majority of these were at "2nd Echelon" ("the Deputy Adjutant-General's office at the Base"),\* then located at Alost, Belgium. A smaller number were at Canadian 1st Echelon, 21st Army Group, at Brussels, and a few were in other establishments.<sup>100</sup> C.W.A.C. women on the Continent were not organized in Companies.

More C.W.A.C. women would have been sent overseas had it not been that after the long static period so many men of low medical category were available there for non-combatant duties; to return these to Canada and replace them by women would have been uneconomical, particularly with respect to shipping space. However, after the German surrender women were sent abroad in increasing numbers for administrative duties, both from Canada to the United Kingdom and from the United Kingdom to the Continent. Now for the first time C.W.A.C. personnel were employed at Headquarters First Canadian Army (it would have been difficult to ensure adequate accommodation for them during active operations). At the end of August 1945, when the overseas strength of the C.W.A.C. had reached its peak, 1833 all ranks were serving in Britain and 450 in the Netherlands.<sup>101</sup>

\*Primarily a Canadian personnel records office for the theatre.

## CHAPTER VII

### COMMAND AND CONTROL OF CANADIAN FORCES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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#### Problems of Control

THE control of the military forces of Canada, a relatively small nation and only lately arrived at nationhood, in a world war in which she was a partner with great foreign powers as well as with her sister nations of the Commonwealth, naturally presented special problems.

In field operations, in which all other considerations are secondary to the defeat of the enemy, Canada inevitably surrendered a very large measure of operational control over her troops to the designated supreme Allied commanders in the theatres, and to the commanders of the higher formations in which her troops were serving. In "non-operational areas" no such surrenders were made. The "external relations" of the Canadian Army, in theatres of war and in the United Kingdom, are dealt with elsewhere in this history: in subsequent chapters of the present volume, in the volumes dealing with major campaigns, and in the volume dealing with the military policies of the country. The Army, however, also had problems of control within itself: it was necessary to define the division of responsibility as between the static headquarters and the field headquarters overseas, and between the two overseas headquarters and National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. These domestic questions are the matter of the present chapter.

#### Relationship Between C.M.H.Q. and Field Headquarters

From the outset it was important to establish clearly the relationship between Canadian Military Headquarters, London, and the senior Canadian field headquarters (originally Headquarters 1st Canadian Division and ultimately Headquarters First Canadian Army); and this of course affected the question of channels of communication between British and Canadian forces. The Senior Officer at C.M.H.Q. was obviously in a key position, because of his contacts with the War Office on the one hand and N.D.H.Q. on the other, but from the start General Crerar made it clear that he I

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recognized the preeminence of General McNaughton's command in the Canadian Army Overseas, and the vital necessity of close and friendly relations between C.M.H.Q. and the Canadian forces in the field. In a memorandum written shortly after his arrival in England,<sup>1</sup> he indicated that he was "being guided by recollections of the organization which was evolved during the period 1914-18":

In the last Great War, it was endeavoured to solve the problem by setting up an Overseas Ministry (O.M.F. of C.) and appointing a General Officer Commanding Canadian Forces in the British Isles\* as the Senior Military Officer of that Ministry with duties as indicated by his title. This arrangement proved to have grave disadvantages. Misunderstandings between the O.M.F. of C., with its large Staff organization under the General Officer Commanding, and the Canadian Corps in France occurred, and there was a regrettable lack of co-operation, tending even to competition, between the personnel of the Canadian Staffs and Forces in the British Isles, and those in France. Thus the O.M.F. of C. became more of a barrier than a link between the two vital centres of Canadian military effort, i.e. the Department of National Defence in Ottawa, and the Canadian Corps in France.

Crerar strongly advocated establishing the principle that "the General Officer Commanding the Canadian Forces in the theatre of war shall have the last word in recommendations to the Department of National Defence on all questions of organization, personnel, and particularly appointments to Command and Staff of the forces" in both England and the theatre. In practice, indeed, there was no doubt about the preeminence of General McNaughton's position; and in the course of time it was recognized that apart from his field command he acted in another capacity in which he became known as Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Army Overseas, a term which "grew into use by custom without becoming formally established by the issuance of any order".<sup>3</sup>

The precise scope of the authority of the Senior Officer at C.M.H.Q. was defined by Crerar in a second memorandum, of 26 February 1940<sup>4</sup> (an interpretation of McNaughton's instructions from the C.G.S., dated 9 December 1939), which McNaughton approved:

Canadian non-divisional troops, as detailed from time to time are under the command of the G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division for all purposes. On departure from the United Kingdom of the 1st Canadian Division, they will come under the command of the Senior Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters, who will also command Canadian reinforcement depots and all Canadian units in the United Kingdom other than those forming part of the 1st Canadian Division or subsequently attached thereto by direction of the Department of National Defence.

The channels of communication to be followed by Canadian commanders in the United Kingdom, and their relationship to the Canadian High Commissioner in London, likewise required definition. Crerar defined them as follows:

2. The control of the organization and administration of Canadian Forces overseas, both in Great Britain and in the theatre of operations, will be exercised by the Minister of National Defence. His instructions will be issued through the

\*The appointment of the senior military officer in the Ministry of Overseas Military Forces was actually Chief of the General Staff, O.M.F.C.<sup>2</sup>



Chief of the General Staff to Commanders in the Field and in the United Kingdom, the latter including Canadian Military Headquarters. The channel for communications on policy will be through the High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom, who will be advised in military matters by Canadian Military Headquarters as required.\* Similarly, on matters of policy, the channel of communication between the Minister of National Defence and the G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division is through the High Commissioner. To preserve coordination, it has been arranged that copies of all communications on Policy questions to and from the Minister of National Defence will be inter-changed between 1st Canadian Division and Canadian Military Headquarters.

3. The Department of National Defence will communicate with Canadian Military Headquarters direct on matters of detail. The G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division, and the Senior Officer Canadian Military Headquarters will maintain direct communication with each other on matters of mutual concern, and the former will transmit his observations and requirements to the Department of National Defence through Canadian Military Headquarters.

4. Canadian Military Headquarters will maintain close liaison with the War Office on behalf of the Department of National Defence and of the G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division.

A good start had thus been made in the delicate business of establishing the relationship that was to exist between C.M.H.Q. and the field commander. General Crerar's contribution, attested to by General McNaughton, is summed up in the following telegram of 9 July from the High Commissioner to the Prime Minister of Canada:<sup>6</sup>

On the conclusion of Crerar's duties as Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., London, McNaughton has stated to me that he feels under the deepest obligation to this Officer for the effective organization and set-up at Canadian Military Headquarters which relieved the G.O.C. of much detailed work otherwise necessary, thereby freeing time and attention for the particular business of organizing and training Canadian troops. Fortunately no sharp line of demarcation between the duties of G.O.C. and S.O., C.M.H.Q. was laid down and in consequence burden has been adjusted as circumstances required. In all matters Crerar has shown tact, discretion and has used good judgment. When, from time to time, as was inevitable, Division or C.M.H.Q. found themselves on wrong paths he was willing and anxious to re-assess position and correct it where necessary. McNaughton feels that Crerar returns to you with probably as good a knowledge of military position in Great Britain as anyone in London; that he has clear ideas of the requirements to be met in Canada both present and future and finally that if he is given sufficient authority he can make a contribution of the very greatest importance to the military administration of the Department.

After nine months in London Crerar was now brought back to Ottawa, where as we have seen he became Chief of the General Staff. It was of great advantage in the crucial formative period 1940-1941 to have a C.G.S. who had personal experience of the military situation in the United Kingdom and who was on good terms with the senior Canadian officers there. At the same time continuity was maintained at C.M.H.Q. with the appointment of Brigadier Montague as Senior Officer with the rank of major general. A year

\*The C.G.S. queried some details of this memorandum, and took particular exception to the word "advised", pointing out that his own memorandum limited the duty of C.M.H.Q. to giving *information* to the High Commissioner.<sup>5</sup> For a later definition of the functions of C.M.H.Q. (June 1940) see above, page 195.



and a half later, with the main job of organization completed in Canada, Crerar of his own choice gave up the senior appointment in the Canadian Army to take a field command overseas. He arrived back in the United Kingdom in December 1941 to command the 2nd Division, but owing to the extended illness of General McNaughton he immediately assumed acting command of the Canadian Corps.\* On his recovery McNaughton, after a visit to Canada, became G.O.C.-in-C. the newly-established First Canadian Army. Consequently General Crerar was confirmed in the command of the 1st Canadian Corps.<sup>7</sup> He had been succeeded as Chief of the General Staff by Lieut.-General Kenneth Stuart, formerly Vice Chief.

### Relationship Between N.D.H.Q. and the Army Overseas

As the months passed and the Canadian Army Overseas expanded, it inevitably began to develop a somewhat independent outlook of its own. That the soldiers overseas tended to acquire a healthy contempt for those still at home was perhaps of no great consequence, since it meant little more than pride in their own units and formations. (They did not stop to think that a large number of General Service men, who would greatly have preferred overseas postings, were obliged to serve in humdrum tasks in Canada.) More serious was the growing lack of intimacy between the Canadian Government and National Defence Headquarters on the one hand and the Canadian Army Overseas on the other. 'Even on the administrative side, despite the benefits of cable and telephone, the effort to bridge 3000 miles of ocean was fraught with difficulties. Geographical remoteness helped to produce different types of thinking on military problems and Canada's military leaders became increasingly aware of the necessity of closer liaison between the staffs "on the spot" and those in Ottawa.

One of Crerar's prime concerns as Chief of the General Staff was to maintain the soundest possible relationship with the Army overseas and his correspondence with McNaughton indicates that an intimate relationship continued to subsist between them. A quotation from a letter<sup>8</sup> which Crerar wrote to McNaughton on 6 January 1941 serves to illustrate this point and the problem generally:

As you and I know, there is nothing more important than to build up a sense of mutual trust and evidence of whole-hearted co-operation between the Department of National Defence in Ottawa and the Canadian Corps and Canadian Military Headquarters overseas. If these physically separated portions of the Canadian Army organization develop antagonisms towards one another, then national unity will suffer and with it our capacity and energy to wage war.

\*General McNaughton's temporary respite from the duties of Corps Commander did not affect his status as Senior Combatant Officer and he continued to transact a considerable amount of business in his sickroom.

2. Since my return to Ottawa in my present appointment I have utilized every opportunity to impress on those about me, and under me, that our main responsibility is to assist the Canadian Forces overseas in every way that lies in our

power... .

3. I am hoping that you particularly, and also Price [Montague], can convince your subordinate Commanders and staff that the situation I have described above is indeed developing, if it is not already in being. I can't imagine anything more to be deplored than a tendency towards division of the Canadian Army and its Headquarters into two "camps" on either side of the Atlantic; one "knocking" the efforts of the other in its endeavour successfully to get on with this business of waging war.

Crerar hoped to bring the two parts of the Army closer together by the exchange of staff officers, but McNaughton, not unnaturally, was worried about the effect of too many changes on the various staffs that he was building up. On 7 May 1941 Crerar gave the Ottawa point of view in a telegram<sup>9</sup> to General Montague:

Am sure you appreciate that my one ambition is to enable G.O.C. Cdn Corps and yourself to lean confidently and heavily on me which is reverse of what you suggest. It is essential to this purpose that from time to time well qualified Staff Officers with Overseas experience return to NDHQ in order that your difficulties may be constantly appreciated and steps taken to meet them. It is also important that similar gaff Offrs in Canada should be given occasional opportunity of filling appointments overseas.

Behind the problem of interchanging staff officers lay a more fundamental difference of opinion over the role of C.M.H.Q., which the C.G.S. regarded as a "forward extension of N.D.H.Q." Crerar developed his views further in another communication to Montague:<sup>10</sup>

I would reiterate that I feel the answer to this problem lies in acceptance of the idea that N.D.H.Q. and C.M.H.Q. are two echelons of a single entity. We want above all to prevent any cleavage and we want to get the best officers into command and staff vacancies no matter where these officers happen to be serving. That means constant interchange on the lines I have indicated. If we were separated by 30 miles instead of 3,000 the problem would, I feel, seem simple. But I do not think geographical distance should be allowed to affect the principle.

While General McNaughton agreed to the general principle of exchanging personnel he held different views regarding the role of C.M.H.Q. This affected the question of his own position and the extent of his authority, which, as he said, had never been clearly defined. He took advantage of Mr. Mackenzie King's visit to the United Kingdom in August and September of 1941 to broach the subject to him.\* The following is an extract from General McNaughton's memorandum<sup>11</sup> of the interview, which includes a summary of the points made in the form of a letter to the Prime Minister; this may have been handed to Mr. King during the interview, but this is not specifically stated:

I think ... that it would be well if my authority as Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Army in the U.K. should be clarified so that I will not constantly be worried particularly by minor questions of my jurisdiction. . . .

\*It was during this visit, while speaking to men assembled for a sports day at Aldershot on 23 August, that Mr. King was "booed" by some of his audience.

I believe that the Government of Canada now look to me to see that all matters relating to our Army in the U.K. are kept right and it follows that there must be no doubt in anyone's mind as to where the authority has been placed as regards the decision on policy. It being expected of course that in carrying out the details I would have the help and the assistance of the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q. and the Staff which has been set up there for these purposes.

Recently, there has been evident an increasing tendency on the part of the authorities in Ottawa to develop C.M.H.Q. as a forward Echelon of N.D.H.Q. rather than to regard it as a most important part of the lines of communication of the Canadian Corps to N.D.H.Q. and to the government of Canada in Ottawa and as the agent of the Commander in all relations with the War Office specifically.

McNaughton recorded that he had asked for "a clear statement that C.M.H.Q. was primarily a link in my communications to Canada and not a forward echelon of N.D.H.Q. in England, except in a few special matters where they might act as an agency for N.D.H.Q. with the War Office in matters not concerning the Cdn Corps or other Cdn Troops in the U.K." He also asked authority to fix establishments and to make promotions up to the rank of brigadier. "All of this," he said, "is not a request for a 'blank cheque'. It is a request for proper authority to implement established policies in consequential matters which can only be decided here for the reason that the information and experience is nowhere else available to Canada. The reason for this request is to enable decisions to be taken promptly on a vast variety of minor matters affecting detailed administration." Constant reference of such matters to Ottawa led to endless delay and to choking the channels of communication with vexatious detail when "our minds should be kept clear for more effective development of policies".

General McNaughton recorded that Mr. King expressed appreciation of his analysis and undertook to bring these matters before the Cabinet War Committee. He did so on 10 September, saying that the General felt the need of his authority being better defined. The point mainly dwelt upon in this connection, however, was another complaint made by McNaughton, relative to his authority to commit Canadian forces to operations outside the United Kingdom (see below, page 263). Six months later, in the course of discussions in Canada between Colonel Ralston and Generals McNaughton and Stuart, following the decision to form the First Canadian Army with McNaughton as its commander, agreement was reached as to the Army Commander's powers in modifying war establishments and in making appointments and promotions.\* In the latter regard he was to have power to make appointments and promotions up to the rank of colonel "to fill vacancies in War Establishments of all Staffs and Units in the U.K. under the control of Army Headquarters." He was also to be consulted "in respect to the appointment of the Senior Officer of C.M.H.Q. and of any officer detailed to carry out the duties of this office." Moreover it was agreed that

\*The substance of these decisions was given in telegram GSD 602 to C.M.H.Q. (23 March 1942),<sup>12</sup> which became the authority for using these powers.

"provisional appointments at C.M.H.Q. up to and including the rank of Colonel may, with the agreement of the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., be made by Army Headquarters subject to confirmation by N.D.H.Q."

The problem of sending staff officers from Canada to the United Kingdom was settled by an agreement that the C.G.S. might send such officers as he deemed suitable, for attachment either to C.M.H.Q. or Army Headquarters. Definite appointments for these officers were to be dealt with by the Selection Board established at C.M.H.Q. With respect to the modification of war establishments the Army Commander was given, with certain limitations, "authority to set up Provisional War Establishments to cover experimental and temporary organizations and special courses of instruction." Other powers in this respect were defined by an Order in Council<sup>13</sup> which gave him power (a) to amend existing Canadian war establishments by additions up to five per cent of the total strength in the case of units of 100 or more all ranks, or by adding not more than five other ranks in the case of smaller units, and (b) to amend establishments to conform with British amendments by additions up to 10 per cent of the total strength in the case of units of 100 or more all ranks and up to an increase of 10 all ranks in the case of smaller units. Authorization for these increases included "consequential changes" in equipment.\*

The formation of First Canadian Army also raised questions concerning C.M.H.Q.'s role after the Army Headquarters was set up. As a result of the discussions between Ralston, McNaughton and Stuart a division of responsibilities between the two headquarters was worked out in general terms. Army Headquarters, of course, assumed many responsibilities formerly exercised by Corps Headquarters. It was also to administer Line of Communication, Army and Base units, which had hitherto been looked after by C.M.H.Q., but, on the request of the Army Commander, it was agreed that C.M.H.Q. might continue to administer such units while the Army remained in the United Kingdom, and also those units that the Army might leave behind when it proceeded abroad. Significantly it was decided that C.M.H.Q. was to "continue to be the advanced echelon of N.D.H.Q." in

\*Previously, as indicated in the lengthy preamble to the Order, changes involving not more than five per cent of the cost of the existing establishment had been allowed "subject, however, to confirmation by the Minister of National Defence and to the final approval of the Governor-in-Council". Changes involving not more than 10 per cent increase in cost could "be put into effect on the authority of the Minister of National Defence, subject to the final approval of the Governor-in-Council." Experience showed that reserving all cases for the Minister's approval led to unnecessary delays, while tying the limitation to a percentage of the increase in cost was impracticable because of the difficulty in making firm financial estimates. Moreover, it was felt that "His Excellency in Council should not be encumbered" by such a flow of insignificant amendments for approval as had developed in the past year.

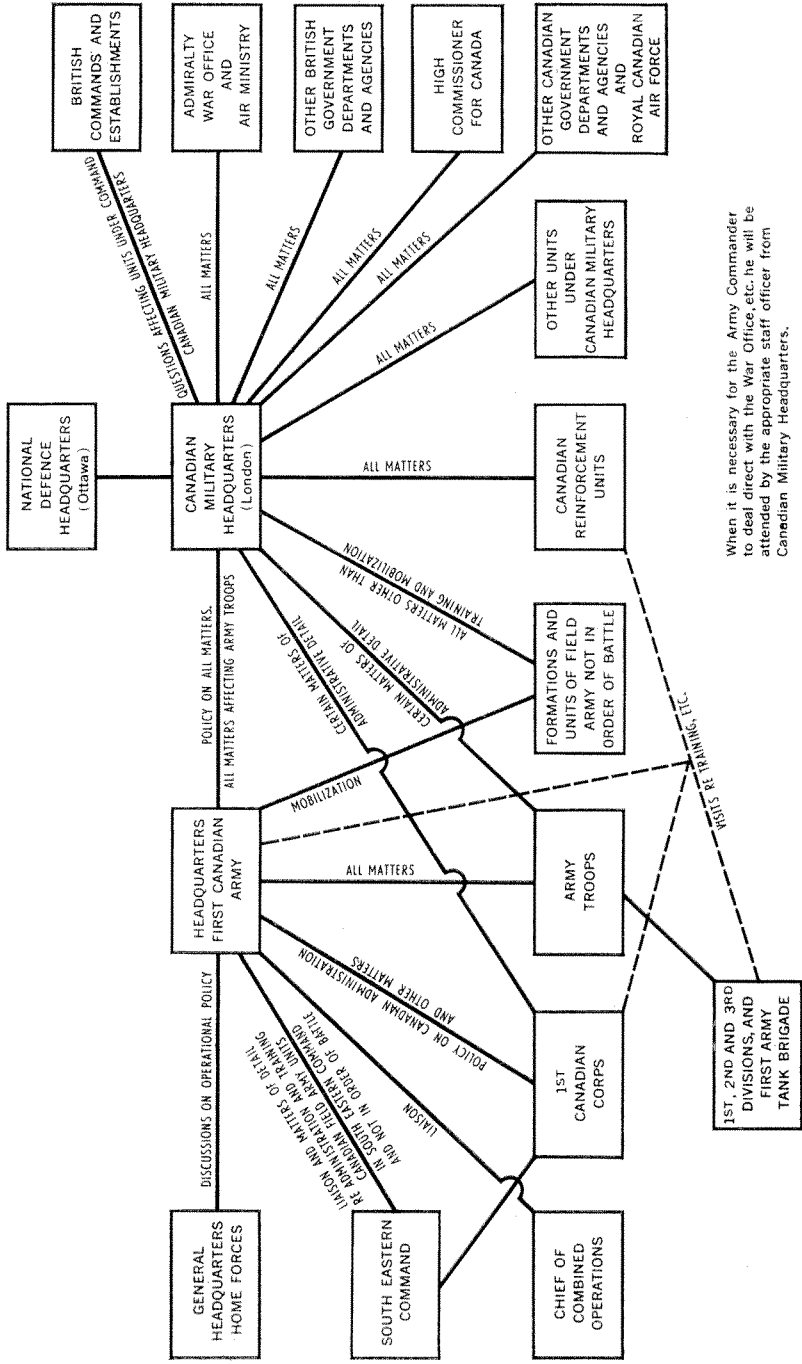
Additional powers regarding the modification of war establishments, along much the same lines as those indicated above, were granted the Army Commander by telegrams CGS 139, 6 March 1943, and CGS 149, 13 March 1943.<sup>14</sup>

which capacity it was to act as N.D.H.Q.'s agent with the War Office and, through the High Commissioner, with other Departments of the British Government.<sup>15</sup> Subsequently General McNaughton explained to the Director of Staff Duties at the War Office that it was desirable that on all matters of ordinary business C.M.H.Q. should continue to deal with the War Office only and that Headquarters First Canadian Army should communicate with G.H.Q. Home Forces only. However, when policy matters arose with the War Office that required his personal attention, he would, he said, attend at the War Office, "accompanied by the appropriate staff officers from C.M.H.Q."<sup>16</sup> On matters of detail, he proposed to deal directly with South Eastern Command.

On General McNaughton's instructions a committee, consisting of the D.A. & Q.M.G. at Army Headquarters and the heads of the three branches at C.M.H.Q., was formed to work out a more detailed allocation of duties between the two headquarters. It was recognized that should the Canadian Army operate in a theatre "independently from other formations" it would be necessary to reconstruct the Headquarters on a G.H.Q. basis and probably to appoint Commanders of the Line of Communication and the Base Sub Area. The more likely contingency, however, and the one which actually developed, was that "the Canadian Army would be under the operational control of a British or other Allied General Headquarters," which would look after all rearward services. This would and did necessitate the setting up of Canadian Sections 1st and 2nd Echelons at General (Army Group) Headquarters to handle Canadian business. It seemed preferable to leave the "detailed administration of Canadian L. of C. and Base Establishments" to the care of C.M.H.Q. It was further agreed that where it was deemed advisable matters of detailed administration involving all Canadian field formations should be routed directly to C.M.H.Q.<sup>17</sup> The accompanying chart, which was drawn up by the Committee, indicates the complexity of the channels of communication. At the same time a detailed table was prepared showing the actual allocation of duties as between C.M.H.Q. and Army Headquarters. Army Headquarters, as the staff of the Army Commander, who was also Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Army Overseas, was generally responsible for the formation of policy, liaison with G.H.Q. Home Forces (subsequently with 21st Army Group), and the training and subsequently the operations of its own units and formations. C.M.H.Q. was primarily concerned with the detailed application of policy in the administrative field, liaison with the War Office and other British governmental agencies, and the training of troops under its command, particularly the reinforcement units.<sup>18</sup>

Theoretically the formation of a Canadian Army Headquarters should have reduced the responsibilities and consequently the size of C.M.H.Q.

# CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION — CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS, 1942



When it is necessary for the Army Commander to deal direct with the War Office, etc., he will be attended by the appropriate staff officer from Canadian Military Headquarters.

Therefore the committee's final report<sup>19</sup> tackled this fundamental question of whether the functions of C.M.H.Q. might now be curtailed in the interests of efficiency and economy. The answer was in the negative. Matters of high policy, which always had to be discussed with the authorities in Canada, were the concern of the Army Commander as Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Army Overseas. In dealing with such matters of policy, the memorandum observed, "considerable explanation is usually required and it follows that the necessary staff must be available somewhere to study, appreciate and prepare the required submissions, and to preserve the record for posterity". The committee therefore came to the following conclusion:

The organization required to fulfil the above functions if added to Army Headquarters or other Headquarters exercising command over Canadian troops, would result in a most cumbersome unit, and undoubtedly would seriously affect the operational efficiency of the Headquarters concerned. It follows that such a staff must be separately established in the form of a static Headquarters equipped with complete facilities to enable it to perform its varied functions. It has been and still is the policy of the Army Commander to free all Operational Headquarters of unnecessary detail by unloading as many items as possible upon C.M.H.Q. Therefore, any reduction in the Establishment of the latter would appear to be a retrograde step if Army or Corps Headquarters were thereby caused to reassume duties now discarded.

Other factors were also to be considered. Although the "operational duties" of the General Staff at C.M.H.Q. were necessarily curtailed, increased business in connection with the allocation of equipment led to an expansion of the technical side of its responsibilities. Moreover the eventual withdrawal of the Army from the United Kingdom would require the setting up of new "intermediate" base units to look after the needs of Canadian troops remaining in the country. At the same time it appeared likely that it would be necessary to increase the strength of the reinforcement units, involving the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q. in the command, administration and training of some 60,000 troops. Consequently the committee came to the unanimous conclusion that "the time has not yet arrived when it would be in the public interest to effect any considerable reduction" in C.M.H.Q.'s establishment. On the contrary it was considered that certain increases asked for by the General Staff were fully justified "by the volume and importance of the work presently undertaken."

#### Changes and Reorganization, 1943-1944

By the autumn of 1943 the war was four years old, and Canada's original overseas force of one division had been transformed into a small but wellorganized and well-trained Army. In June one of its five divisions had been sent to the Mediterranean to take part in the Sicilian campaign. It was then considered likely that this division would return in time to join in the invasion

of France in 1944. In October, however, as the result of circumstances described in the volume of this History dealing with the Italian campaign, it was decided to build up a Canadian Corps in the Mediterranean theatre. Shortly afterwards, and partly as a result of disagreement with the Canadian Government on this issue, General McNaughton relinquished the command of the First Canadian Army.

In December 1943, when this took place, Lieut.-General Stuart, Chief of the General Staff, took command of the Army in an acting capacity and at the same time became Chief of Staff, Canadian Military Headquarters (a new appointment replacing that of Senior Officer).<sup>20</sup> Major-General Montague was appointed to the newly-created office of Major General in Charge of Administration, C.M.H.Q.\* This arrangement lasted until General Stuart was relieved in November, 1944, when General Montague became Chief of Staff and Major-General E. G. Weeks became M.G.A.<sup>21</sup>

For a time after the dispatch of the 1st Canadian Corps to Italy and General McNaughton's retirement, the future of the First Canadian Army seemed to hang in the balance. The decision, arrived at after consultation with the military authorities of the United Kingdom, was to keep the Army's headquarters in existence, to place British or Allied formations under its command for the coming campaign in North-West Europe to replace the Canadian divisions which had been sent to Italy, and to bring back General Crerar from the 1st Corps to become Army Commander. The survival of the First Canadian Army will be discussed in the forthcoming volume of this history on the North-West Europe campaign.

The changes consequent on McNaughton's departure inevitably caused some readjustments. The arrival of Stuart as Chief of Staff created an entirely new situation. Technically he had stepped down from the senior appointment in the Canadian Army but in a sense it might be said that the Chief of the General Staff had simply moved his office from Slater Street in Ottawa to Cockspur Street in London. His appointment to the new post had been made in order to meet a special crisis, but in recommending it to the Prime Minister Colonel Ralston also wrote, "as Chief Staff Officer at Canadian Military Headquarters he would take on . . . questions of policy and of 'G' [General Staff] matters particularly, which have been gradually gravitating to the Army Commander".<sup>22</sup> The War Committee approved the appointment on 21 December. Simultaneously the war was at last approaching its climax. The long preparations were almost completed and the final year of battle was about to begin in Europe. From this time on the staff in Canada would be chiefly concerned with administrative matters and

\*At the same time, under authority of P.C. 9701 of 20 December 1943, General Montague was formally given the title of Judge Advocate General Canadian Army Overseas. Previously he had been authorized to exercise "the powers, duties and functions of the Judge Advocate General".



consequently the office of C.G.S. would no longer be as important as it had been under Crerar and Stuart in the formative years. Indeed some months later Stuart and Crerar were to suggest that General Murchie, Stuart's successor as C.G.S., should be made Adjutant General, since they considered that was now "the most important military appointment at N.D.H.Q."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless this suggestion was not acted upon, and there were occasions when Murchie, who had previously been Stuart's V.C.G.S., made it clear that as C.G.S. he held the senior office.

One English newspaper made an acute comment on Stuart's appointment. On 29 December 1943 the *Manchester Guardian* observed: "General Stuart comes to England as Colonel Ralston's senior service lieutenant and thus will bring Canadian troops overseas under the direct control of the Minister." The underlying rivalry between National Defence Headquarters and Canadian Military Headquarters seemed to have been decided in favour of the former. The personal correspondence between the Minister and General Stuart indicates that they understood each other very well; yet even now the 3000 miles of ocean soon began to exert their influence.

General McNaughton's departure was followed by other command changes in the First Canadian Army preparatory to its participation in Operation "Overlord". A number of senior commanders were replaced. This problem was one of the most important facing General Stuart when he took over his new duties. On 5 January Stuart signalled to Crerar, then still in Italy, saying that he felt that General Simonds would have to replace General Sansom in command of the 2nd Corps and asking for Crerar's comments.<sup>24</sup> Since Ralston had previously told Stuart that he doubted the wisdom of "bringing Simonds to England and sending Burns out there" (he thought it might be more appropriate for the former to take command of the 1st Corps in Italy), the Minister felt that he should have been consulted about the change in plan before a wire was sent to Crerar. He wrote privately<sup>25</sup> to Stuart in frank but friendly terms:

Now that is all there is to that particular incident; but speaking generally, I would like it, particularly in matters on these high levels where questions are bound to be a mixture of policy and military consideration, if we could have an exchange of views and comments before the matter becomes "set" in a definite recommendation. We have been doing that for two years and I think we have both found it a pretty constructive course in reaching the ultimate decision as to the action to be taken. It doesn't affect your arriving at any recommendations you ultimately feel you should make, but it obviates later queries and explanations which are generally necessary when the recommendation comes out of the "blue".

I am sure you would be the first to say yourself that it is just good teamwork anyway, quite apart from any "drill", for us here to be kept up-to-date and even ahead of time if possible with information in which we would be interested. As a matter of fact, I believe that probably your sending me a copy of your wire to Crerar was with that very idea in mind, but as I have said, I think that a direct wire here for my comments before you sent the wire to Crerar would have been better. Please don't think for a moment that I question the regularity of your

ascertaining Crerar's views, without committing yourself in the matter, but your telegram to him seemed to go somewhat farther than that.

Now, having spelled it out, I shall just leave it to your sense of responsibility to us here to take the course in the light of what I have said which you think the circumstances call for. Of this you can be sure, that you never can err on the side of giving us too much or too early information.

You know without my saying it, I am sure, that at all times I want you and me to be completely en rapport, and I shall try to show that. We have recently gone through a pretty difficult time together, and, as I told you in London, I cannot express adequately the full measure of my appreciation of your counsel and help. That you have my fullest confidence is apparent from what I have asked you to do. I have no doubt of your complete co-operation or of your ability, and I think it is grand of you to carry on, handicapped temporarily as you have been by this unexpected ailment. I only hope devoutly that your health and strength will enable you to apply these qualities as wholeheartedly as I know you want to do it to the heavy and worrisome task we have assigned you.

With my warmest personal regards and heartfelt wishes for health and great success...

The relationship between the Minister and the Chief of Staff in London was not damaged by this incident, but differences between the staffs in Ottawa and London, specifically in regard to manpower requirements,\* continued to worry them. Towards the end of March Ralston wrote to Stuart,<sup>27</sup>

I am afraid that the telegrams that have passed within the last week or two have appeared more like those emanating from partisans on opposite sides than from co-workers in a common cause. I am not suggesting where the fault lies, because I don't know, but we are seeing to it here that no time is lost in getting to the bottom of it...

I feel myself that there is a tremendous waste of nervous energy and time and good talent in the discussion as to whose figures are right and endeavours to reconcile them.

Shortly afterwards Stuart sent a telegram to General Murchie in which he said that, having handed the Army command over to General Crerar, it was now possible for him "to look around and adjust certain matters that have been causing trouble."<sup>28</sup> Regarding relations with N.D.H.Q. he made the following observations:

I have already spoken to all senior staff officers at CMHQ on the NDHQ viewpoint in connection with such matters as reinforcements and equipment of CAO [Canadian Army Overseas]. I propose early next week to speak to all officers above rank major at CMHQ on this subject. I shall continue to watch this matter closely and am confident that satisfactory results will be obtained.

I must point out that there are two sides to this question. At CMHQ we are merely an advanced element of NDHQ. In the past CMHQ has not understood and has not been sufficiently sympathetic to the broad problems and repercussions other than military that face NDHQ. CMHQ has concentrated on a presentation of the administrative military problems confronting the CAO. In some cases

\*There was already some apprehension over the availability of infantry reinforcements, especially in the light of a sudden intimation from Headquarters 21st Army Group that infantry casualties in the initial phases of the coming invasion would probably be higher than those normally calculated for periods of "intense" action. General Stuart had in fact issued instructions on 14 March that no important communication on reinforcements was to be sent to N.D.H.Q. without being seen by himself.<sup>26</sup>

this presentation has been unnecessarily alarming. NDHQ on the other hand has I think tended to emphasize the broader aspects of the problem at issue. Both of these are perfectly natural developments and both are perhaps aggravated by the fact that the two parts of NDHQ are 3000 miles apart. The problem is not only to reconcile the figures involved but of greater importance to reconcile the two points of view. Representatives from NDHQ are now here and are engaged in the process of reconciling the figures involved and I am in the process of attempting to broaden the viewpoint of CMHQ in order to bring it as close as possible to that of NDHQ. I am confident of success at this end provided there is some give and take at both ends. CMHQ has at times been unnecessarily alarming in its presentation of alleged facts and I suggest that NDHQ has perhaps been unnecessarily violent [in] its unexpressed but implied reactions.

Six weeks later, Stuart reported to Ralston:

I feel that we are making considerable progress in respect to the C.M.H.Q. viewpoint, and in respect to the tendency to write alarmist cables. I feel that all are playing the game and are leaning over backwards to try and meet my wishes. I am not satisfied that we can win this battle in a day. I am, however, quite pleased with the progress we are making.

Ralston agreed: "I think", he wrote, "there has been a marked improvement in understanding between C.M.H.Q. and ourselves."<sup>29</sup>

At the same time the relationship between First Canadian Army and C.M.H.Q. required some redefinition. Although the office of Army Commander was still the senior appointment in the Canadian Army Overseas, the situation had changed considerably from the days of General McNaughton. The circumstances of Crerar's appointment, and Stuart's presence in the office of Chief of Staff at C.M.H.Q., meant that to a certain extent these two officers shared the duties formerly carried out by McNaughton as Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Army Overseas. The Minister expected this. He wrote to Stuart on 15 January 1944.<sup>30</sup>

I spoke to Montague just before leaving about some terms of reference for you as Chief of Staff, and for him. He was going to get together with you, examine the "Charter" of the Army and let me have your and his suggestions. Probably there may be some readjustments necessary:

- (a) between C.M.H.Q. and the Army which may have been found desirable as a result of experience;
- (b) To re-allocate functions at C.M.H.Q. on account of your advent;
- (c) to cover any matters of general policy or procedure which it might be advisable to specify.

Breadner [Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, R.C.A.F. Overseas] has written terms of reference. Yours would be pretty general, and while doing it I would like to indicate in them something to strengthen your hand, as well as mine, by some reference expressly recognizing our responsibilities to the Canadian people. There will quite probably be some debate in which the question of our attitude towards the views of the War Office may come up and an expression of our self-dependence even in co-operation would help to make our attitude clear. As a matter of fact, I am quite satisfied that those in authority today at the War Office understand and recognize our position thoroughly, and also that in Government itself there is a great change from the days of the Great War when Sir Robert Borden had to become very forthright in his communications with them.

Nothing further appears to have been done about drawing up terms of reference for General Stuart's appointment, but in various orders in council specific powers of his office were defined. Thus by P.C. 493 of 25 January 1944 certain administrative and disciplinary powers, particularly with regard to courts martial, were given to "the senior combatant officer of the Canadian Militia serving with those Military Forces of Canada which are controlled or administered by or through Canadian Military Headquarters in Great Britain,\* or, the Chief of Staff at Canadian Military Headquarters in Great Britain, or the Major-General in charge of Administration at Canadian Military Headquarters in Great Britain" in respect of "all the Military Forces of Canada which are controlled or administered by or through Canadian Military Headquarters". Similar powers were given separately to the acting commander of the First Canadian Army in respect of that formation only.<sup>31</sup> In a subsequent order in council dealing with the same matter the term "senior combatant officer" was dropped at General Stuart's suggestion<sup>32</sup> and the powers were simply given to "the General Officer of the Canadian Militia commanding 1st Canadian Army, the Chief of Staff and the Major General in charge of Administration at Canadian Military Headquarters in Great Britain."<sup>33</sup>

Quite apart from these considerations, the imminence of active operations greatly altered the picture. The case is clearly stated in a memorandum<sup>34</sup> prepared at C.M.H.Q. for the Chief of Staff:

It is abundantly clear that whereas in the past the Army Commander, in his capacity as Senior Combatant Officer, was primarily concerned with the organization, development and trg of the Canadian Army Overseas, he will now require to devote his whole effort to the function of comd during the planning and preparatory phases of forthcoming events and in the actual conduct of operations to follow. It follows, therefore, that he and his staff will wish to be freed of all possible detail in respect of routine administration which would otherwise constitute a serious burden upon his and their time and energies.

It was admitted that it would still be necessary to consult the Army Commander on more important matters of business such as senior appointments and major changes in organization, but it was suggested "that much time, energy and paper" might be saved if "his views and directions" were obtained in personal consultation by the Chief of Staff or the M.G.A. The memorandum continued: "it is suggested, however, that the time has come when C.M.H.Q. should in its several departments be regarded more as the advanced echelon of N.D.H.Q. than merely as a clearing house for military business between it and the Army Commander." It then made proposals as to how these adjustments might be effected.

\*This was to cover General Crerar, who was then commanding the Canadian forces in the Mediterranean area.

The Army Commander expressed general agreement with this memorandum, but took the occasion to reiterate his general views as to the relationships in question:<sup>35</sup>

Generally speaking, the proposed action, detailed in Para 11 of the memorandum, [is] in accordance with the views I have held, and frequently expressed in writing, since my appointment as Senior Officer, CMHQ, in November 1939. The proper conception of CMHQ is that it represents an "advanced echelon" of the Department of National Defence, established in London, so that departmental responsibilities concerning the Canadian Army Overseas can be effectively interpreted and implemented, functioning as a quite essential "link" between the Department, the GOC in C of the Canadian Army in the Field, and the War Office. CMHQ is also required to act, in many important ways, as a "rear echelon" of HQ First Cdn Army.

As I have previously stated, the difficulties in carrying out these several functions will not arise so long as the Department of National Defence and HQ First Cdn Army, each appreciate, with understanding, the role CMHQ is required to fill. In practice, this role can only be successfully carried out if the "attitude" of the Department of National Defence is to regard CMHQ as, primarily, the "rear echelon" of the Cdn Army in the Field and that of the latter is to consider CMHQ as the "forward echelon" of the Department of National Defence. It is when either of the two "principal parties" consider and act as if CMHQ was, primarily, its own adjunct that troubles arise. CMHQ, at all times, must regard itself as the vital and understanding link between the two "principal parties", and also [with] the War Office.

Specifically Crerar indicated that he would wish to be consulted on details of organizational changes only where they might be expected to have a definite bearing "on the operational function and tactical performance" of units or formations under his command. In the matter of appointments he considered his own approval required only for appointments of the rank of brigadier and above "*throughout the Canadian Army Overseas*" and first-grade staff appointments in formations under his own command. In effect by agreeing to the C.M.H.Q. proposals the Army Commander redelegated some of his powers to the Chief of Staff at C.M.H.Q., while his special powers to modify establishments were eventually transferred to the Chief of Staff by order in council. Stuart reported that Crerar fully agreed that difficulties in coordinating and allocating priorities in manpower and equipment made it undesirable that the commanders in either theatre should exercise "organizational authority". "Crerar freely acknowledges this function of Canmilitary," he wired Murchie, "and furthermore stresses inability Army H.Q. to deal with organizational matters of this nature due [to] complete preoccupation with operational comd and administration of field force."<sup>36</sup> At the same time Crerar considered himself fully responsible for all Canadian units in his own prospective theatre. He successfully resisted the suggestion that commanders of Canadian units or formations there not under his own operational command might exercise their emergency "right of reference" to the Canadian Government through the Chief of Staff at C.M.H.Q. rather than through himself.<sup>37</sup>

The special problems that arose in the control of the Canadian Army Overseas in 1940-44 were largely the product of an exceptional situation which no one had foreseen in 1939. The system of organization provided, with a static Canadian headquarters in London, had been based on the assumption that a Canadian field force would be operating on the Continent. As it turned out, however, the greater part of the field force remained in the United Kingdom for four and a half years, with its headquarters cheek-by-jowl with the London headquarters. In these circumstances the senior officer overseas (the commander of the field force) assumed, in the capacity of Senior Combatant Officer, Canadian Army Overseas, many responsibilities not directly connected with the actual work of training his army for action or directing it in operations.\* Only in 1944, when the invasion of North-West Europe was in immediate prospect, did a clearer division of responsibilities emerge. The Army Commander then concentrated exclusively upon preparing his Army for its task, leaving static administration, matters of policy and quasi-political questions to the Chief of Staff, C.M.H.Q.; he was, however, prepared to give the latter firm and decided guidance whenever such questions affected the Army's efficiency or welfare. That efficiency and that welfare were rightly regarded, throughout the war, as the primary object and concern of the whole organization, to which all else was subordinated. Throughout the war, also, the commander of the field army was the senior Canadian army officer overseas. Perhaps a more logical organization would have placed the senior officer at C.M.H.Q. A strong case could indeed be made for this arrangement; but decisions in such matters will always be subject to control by contemporary circumstances, among which the seniority and personal qualifications of the available officers will be particularly influential.

As for the relationship between National Defence Headquarters and C.M.H.Q., the question whether the latter was best described as a "forward echelon of N.D.H.Q." or a part of the lines of communication of First Canadian Army seems largely academic. As General Crerar indicated, it

\*In 1941 a staff officer at N.D.H.Q. suggested that the senior officer in the United Kingdom "should be called the G.O.C.-in-C. Canadian Army in the U.K." and "should function as the S.O. [Senior Officer], C.M.H.Q. now does". Commenting on this to the C.G.S., Brigadier M.A. Pope (A.C.G.S.) wrote:<sup>38</sup>

While I agree that the S.O., C.M.H.Q., should normally be the senior Canadian Army officer serving in the United Kingdom, I do not think that it would be wise to make any change because of the quite abnormal position in which the Canadian Army overseas now finds itself.

Our organization in the U.K. was based on the premise that the Corps would be serving in a theatre of operations beyond the United Kingdom.... The position of Canadian Military Headquarters and the Canadian Corps in the U.K. is therefore an anomalous one, but with goodwill and understanding our present machinery set up for a quite different situation has been made to work, and is working... .

was in fact both. Problems similar to those we have described will arise, in some degree, whenever a nation is obliged to set up a large military establishment thousands of miles from its own shores; there will always be a tendency for the home and the distant establishments to grow apart. This tendency became marked in the Second World War as a result of the long static period. Such tendencies require to be combatted by careful definition of channels of communication and echelons of authority, in the light of experience; but it is at least equally important to seek to ensure that the right personalities are in the right places; that personal liaison and exchange of officers are carried on constantly and on a liberal scale; and that all parties, everywhere, subordinate all other considerations to the military efficiency of the field army.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TRAINING THE ARMY OVERSEAS

(See Sketch 1)

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THE machinery for training the Army in Canada has already been described. The main training task there was preparing individual soldiers to carry out their duties when posted to field units. The collective training of units for battle was almost entirely conducted in the United Kingdom. To it we must now turn our attention. The story can be told only in outline.

#### The Beginning of Overseas Training

At a very early date the principle was established that the responsibility for supervising the training of the Canadian force overseas rested with the Canadian commander in Britain, and not with the military authorities of the United Kingdom. The instructions<sup>1</sup> handed to Major-General McNaughton before he sailed from Canada in December 1939 briefly indicated that "training and administration of personnel" were matters to be dealt with through Canadian channels. The question was raised in the following month when the British Army Council, designating the 1st Canadian Division as part of the "3rd Contingent" of the British Expeditionary Force, proceeded to state that the General Officer Commanding the 4th Corps would be "responsible direct to the War Office for the training of all the troops in the 3rd Contingent from the date of his appointment".<sup>2</sup> Canadian Military Headquarters, London, pointed out to the War Office that this was inconsistent with General McNaughton's instructions and with the existing legal status of the Canadian force in the United Kingdom, which was governed by the Visiting Forces Act;<sup>3</sup> the Canadians, under that act, were at the moment "serving together" with the British forces, but had not been placed "in combination" with them and were not under British command.\*

The matter was clarified on 15 March in a conference at the War Office with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (General Sir Edmund Ironside), who, it transpired, had not fully appreciated the legal position of the Canadian

\*See below, pages 255-6.



forces. On 21 March the Army Council issued to the C.-in-C. Home Forces and the Aldershot Command new orders<sup>4</sup> clearing up the question of the respective British and Canadian responsibilities

All arrangements in connection with movements, quartering, sanitation, passive air defence and the allocation of training facilities will be the responsibility of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Command in the United Kingdom [in which Canadian forces may be located]. Control in all matters relating to training policy, discipline and internal administration of the Canadian Forces is reserved for the appropriate Canadian Service Authorities.

Although Canadian control of training policy was thus vindicated, the Canadian commander, whose troops were to serve as part of a British force in the field and to use British equipment, inevitably shaped that policy in close general conformance with British practice; and the Canadians leaned heavily upon British training establishments and other facilities, to whose generous assistance throughout the war the Canadian Army owes a very heavy debt. This began to accumulate even before the arrival of the main body of the 1st Division. In November 1939 two groups of officers and non-commissioned officers, totalling 118 all ranks, reached England and began courses in British schools to fit them for duty as instructors in the Division when it arrived.<sup>5</sup>

At the time when the Division landed in Britain it had attained only the most elementary standard of training, having made a small beginning on the first stage—that of individual training. As we have seen (above, page 50), roughly 50 per cent of the men who joined the Canadian Active Service Force in September 1939 had no military training or experience whatever, while of the balance the majority had had only the limited training received by the pre-war Non-Permanent Active Militia. Thus there was much to do. General McNaughton discussed his programme with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff on 22 December, explaining that he proposed to devote the period down to 28 February to individual training; March would be used for unit collective training and April for formation training, i.e. exercises at brigade or divisional level. The C.I.G.S. said this would be satisfactory, as it was not expected that the Division would be required on the Continent "until early May"; and he told McNaughton that he had given orders that it should be given priority in supply of training equipment.<sup>6</sup> The 1st Division's "Training Instruction No. 1" was issued on 26 December,<sup>7</sup> and at the beginning of the second week in January 1940, with the units well settled in at Aldershot and disembarkation leave completed, work began in earnest.<sup>8</sup> A feature of the individual training thus undertaken was the divisional commander's insistence upon a high standard of musketry.<sup>9</sup> Since Bren guns (like many other items) were in very short supply, light machinegun instruction had to be given on the obsolescent Lewis.

Full advantage was taken of the courses offered by the British authorities. Under arrangements made by Canadian Military Headquarters, vacancies

were allotted to Canadians, as time passed, in artillery courses at Larkhill; engineer courses at Chatham; signal courses at Catterick; and anti-gas courses at Winterbourne Gunner and Tregantle. Instructors in physical training and platoon weapons were trained at Hythe; armourers at the Royal Army Ordnance Corps School at Portsmouth; armament artificers at Chilwell; mechanics at the Central Motor Institute in London; men for sanitary duties at the Army School of Hygiene, Mytchett (near Aldershot); men of the Provost Corps at the Corps of Military Police depot, Mytchett; and cooks at the Army School of Cookery, Aldershot. At the same time, selected N.C.Os. were attached to the Guards for courses as drill instructors.<sup>10</sup> Special arrangements were made for training tradesmen. The British Army had adopted a plan of training artificers and other specialists by having them work under supervision in civil workshops. During February, General McNaughton asked the War Office to arrange for vacancies for his troops in this scheme.<sup>11</sup> Every assistance was given and as a result Canadian tradesmen received training in a wide variety of civil firms.

Officer training got due attention. Divisional Headquarters prepared and directed a number of map and sand-table exercises followed by outdoor schemes, to demonstrate the fundamental principles of attack and defence.<sup>12</sup> Exercises for senior officers were arranged by the War Office.<sup>13</sup> Specialist officers were given opportunities to improve themselves; Ordnance officers, for instance, attended courses at the Military College of Science.<sup>14</sup> From time to time there were lectures and demonstrations. Among the former was a talk by the C.I.G.S. in April which touched on the implications of the German invasion of Norway, then just beginning.\* Provision of trained staff officers was a problem; there was only a small pool of Permanent Force officers having such qualifications, although these were reinforced by Non-Permanent Active Militia officers who had passed the Militia Staff Course. Arrangements were accordingly made, in due time, for Canadian candidates to attend the special war courses of the Staff College at Camberley.<sup>16</sup>

It soon became evident that it would be impossible to maintain the rate of progress required by Training Instruction No. 1. There were various reasons: ceremonial parades and the time required to prepare for them;<sup>17</sup> the unusually severe winter ("the coldest conditions since 1894"),<sup>18</sup> which necessitated conducting much of the instruction indoors;<sup>19</sup> and shortage of equipment, very acute in the beginning. Lack of transport was particularly felt.<sup>20</sup> Wet boots and clothing also caused wasted time (a second pair of boots and a second suit of battledress were not issued until February and March 1940).<sup>21</sup> Accordingly it was necessary to extend the period of

\*His appreciation proved over-optimistic, for he termed it "a strategical blunder by the enemy giving us our first opening".<sup>15</sup>

individual training from the end of February until the middle of March 1940.<sup>22</sup>

As soon as this period ended, General McNaughton began a very thorough inspection of all the units under his command. Beginning on 18 March, it was not completed until the end of April.<sup>23</sup> The G.O.C set out to gain first-hand knowledge of the degree of efficiency reached by the individual man. He selected men at random from the ranks to be examined in the various subjects in which they were supposed to be proficient. Equipment, stores, kitchens, messes and orderly rooms were all subjected to scrutiny. At the conclusion of his inspection, McNaughton expressed himself as generally satisfied that conditions were as good as could be expected.<sup>24</sup> He considered his troops ready to proceed with the next stage of training, but warned all units that individual training did not end with the individual training period, but continued progressively throughout the soldier's service.<sup>25</sup>

The second Training Instruction had been issued on 9 March and unit collective training had already begun before General McNaughton's inspection was completed.<sup>26</sup> This Instruction allotted the weeks between 18 March and 27 April to unit collective training; first by squadrons, batteries and companies, then by regiments and battalions. The various headquarters within the Division were to be exercised in their war functions during the same period. The G.O.C. laid special emphasis on mobility, which he interpreted in the widest sense "as including all those elements of quick decision, good organization and good discipline which enable a unit to move rapidly and without confusion at short notice."<sup>27</sup>

The troops welcomed the better weather and the more advanced training that came with spring. The Division now approached its tasks with new interest.<sup>28</sup> Beginning early in April, the infantry units each spent a 24-hour period in a model trench system that had been constructed at Pirbright. Here they practised the various activities, such as patrolling, raiding, standing-to and improving defences, which had been so important in the First World War, and which the dash of the German armoured columns across France was so soon to cast into the discard.<sup>29</sup> Shortage of transport still plagued the Canadians, but infantry units pooled their vehicles so that they could carry out mobile exercises in turn.<sup>30</sup>

The artillery regiments were equally busy. The army field regiments began to receive 18/25 pounders\* at this time; they had formerly had 18-pounders,<sup>32</sup> whereas the divisional field regiments had begun to receive 18/25 pounders in December 1939.<sup>33</sup> During the latter part of April and the beginning of May, the three divisional field regiments carried out

\*The new 25-pounder gun-howitzer did not come into the hands of the British Army before the outbreak of war, but in September 1939 a fair number of converted 18-pounders were already available.<sup>31</sup>

firing practice at Larkhill, the British field artillery school.<sup>34</sup> General McNaughton, himself a gunner officer of unusual technical attainments, required that all battery commanders become efficient in the use of "airburst ranging" as a normal method.<sup>35</sup> The other technical arms worked at their own specialties; the engineer companies, for instance, engaged in bridging practice during April and May.<sup>36</sup>

As the second phase of training advanced, events on the Continent suddenly began to interfere with progress. The German invasion of Norway broke in upon the training of the 2nd Infantry Brigade, a great part of which was mobilized and moved north in readiness to embark, although it was not actually employed (see below, pages 258-61). The fact that the 2nd Brigade had to "borrow" for this enterprise all 3-inch mortar stores held by the 1st<sup>37</sup> throws some light on the equipment situation. Towards the end of April the 1st Division's third Training Instruction<sup>38</sup> was issued, prescribing for the period of unit and formation collective training from 28 April to 5 June. Unit training was to continue; brigade schemes were planned in conjunction with British armoured and infantry formations; and it was hoped to obtain air force cooperation. Divisional exercises were to commence about 6 June. This programme was never completed. Like many others, it was deranged by developments in France and Flanders.

#### Training to Defeat Invasion, 1940-1941

The story of the feverish activity of the 1st Canadian Division and ancillary troops during the summer of 1940, in connection with the unsuccessful attempt to keep France in the war and the preparations to resist what seemed an imminent German invasion of Britain, is told in the succeeding chapter. These events marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of the Army Overseas. Instead of preparing to take part in a continental campaign, the Canadian field force now faced the probability of fighting its first battle in the English countryside. The Commonwealth, left without effective allies, was thrown back on the defensive; and for two and a half years Canadian training overseas was very largely directed to fitting the troops for the immediate task of defending Britain.

This was particularly true in the summer of 1940 itself. The deliberate programme planned in April went by the board. With the 1st Division organized in brigade groups to meet the imminent threat, training was necessarily conducted mainly at brigade group level. There was no opportunity for divisional exercises. Emphasis was laid upon the training of brigade and battalion groups in rapid movement by motor transport, and units practised night moves. On 18 August General McNaughton, now commanding the 7th Corps, reported to the Minister of National Defence that all battalions

had completed "dawn attack exercises" with armoured and air cooperation.<sup>39</sup> Earlier he had mentioned that No. 110 Squadron R.C.A.F. (which had arrived in England in February) was "cooperating in tactical exercises with all formations of 7 Corps".<sup>40</sup> Particular attention was given to cooperation of infantry with tanks. The 1st Division had been almost completed with its basic weapons and transport at the time of the June crisis when it was preparing to move to France; but technical equipment and special vehicles were still short.<sup>41</sup>

We have already mentioned the gradual concentration of the 2nd Canadian Division in the United Kingdom, beginning in the summer of 1940, and have made it clear that, through no fault of the Division itself, it was very incompletely trained at this time. One of the handicaps under which the 1st Division had had to labour was the inadequate supply of instructors. That division's headquarters accordingly recommended to Canadian Military Headquarters that representatives of the units and formations of the 2nd Division should be sent to the United Kingdom in time to complete courses at British schools before the Division's main body arrived.<sup>42</sup> This was done, these potential instructors reaching England in the Fourth and Fifth Flights in June and July, in advance of the bulk of their formation.<sup>43</sup> In spite of this foresight, many circumstances retarded the 2nd Division's progress. Particularly influential were the slowness of its concentration in the United Kingdom, covering the months from May to December, and the very great shortage of all military equipment after Dunkirk.

In September Major-General Odium issued his first Training Instruction.<sup>44</sup> This reveals that the level of training within the 2nd Division at this time was very uneven, and that considerable individual training had yet to be done. This was, of course, due in great part to the fact that such equipment as Bren guns and 25-pounders was not available in Canada. Odium directed, therefore, that individual training be completed and that in addition all units in his formation finish their own collective instruction by the end of December. Although the G.O.C. 2nd Canadian Division had been granted the right of independent command by the Canadian Government, he stated on 8 August that in certain matters, including training, he would seek Lieut.-General McNaughton's approval.<sup>45</sup> Thus training policy for all Canadian troops overseas remained in the hands of the senior Canadian officer in the United Kingdom. In these circumstances, the 2nd Division's training generally followed the course already outlined for the 1st Division, and there is little purpose in describing it except to mention certain special points.

In an endeavour to make certain that all sub-units down to platoon or equivalent level got practice in independent action, General Odium directed that every subaltern should take his men on an overnight "scheme" to any

location, except the London area, which was between 25 and 50 miles from his unit's area.<sup>46</sup> The artillery was severely handicapped by lack of guns,\* but by October the various batteries began going in turn to Larkhill for ten-day periods. Here, for the first time, they were able to handle the 25-pounder.<sup>48</sup> As this training period drew to a close, it was possible to conduct limited formation exercises. On 22 November, the complete division (less engineers) carried out a move by motor transport, and on 12 December the 4th Infantry Brigade conducted a twenty-four-hour scheme involving night driving through fog and rain.<sup>49</sup> Thus the 2nd Division was considered sufficiently ready for active employment to take its place in the Canadian Corps when that formation was set up on Christmas Day 1940.<sup>50</sup>

An important development during 1940 was the planning of a Canadian Training School overseas and the establishment of its officers' training component. As we have mentioned before, one of the weaknesses of the 1st Division and ancillary troops, on arrival in England, was the lack of trained and experienced instructors. We have also noted the arrangements made for the admission of Canadians to British schools. Since, however, the British were rapidly expanding their own army, it was not possible to allot an adequate number of such vacancies. For example, during the period January to April 1940 it was only possible to train regimental instructors in platoon weapons on the basis of one per platoon, while both Canadian and British authorities considered it advisable that at least one man per section should be so trained.<sup>51</sup> To overcome the difficulty, it was natural to consider forming a Canadian training establishment in the United Kingdom. A proposal to this effect was put before the then Minister of National Defence, Mr. Rogers, during his visit to England in April 1940. No immediate action was taken, but since the situation showed no improvement in May and June, and the arrival of 2nd Division units was making the matter more urgent, Canadian Military Headquarters in June prepared a tentative establishment for a training group, to consist of two wings with a possible third to take care of officer training.<sup>52</sup>

At this point officer training policy became the most urgent aspect. During Mr. Rogers' visit it had been agreed that while it was desirable that about 25 per cent of the officer reinforcements required overseas should come from the ranks of the units, only in exceptional cases- would commissions be granted to other ranks of the Canadian Army before it had been in

\*By 5 November 1940 the Division's three field regiments, which had been two months in England, had received a total of 28 guns as against an establishment of 72; and these guns were the obsolescent 75-mm. type. The first six 25-pounders were received during the week ending 1 February 1941, and the regiments were not complete with them until September 1941.<sup>47</sup>

†A few direct commissions were granted to soldiers with special technical qualifications, and some men with university degrees and former officers went to British Officer Cadet Training Units before August 1940. In all, about a dozen were commissioned in these ways.<sup>53</sup>

action.<sup>54</sup> This meant postponing setting up an officers' training unit until after the 1st Division had gone to France. However, the decision to replace Warrant Officers Class III by subaltern officers (above, page 128) altered the situation. This meant that more officers were needed; and many of the W.Os. III were officer material. Simultaneously came the collapse of France and the commitment of the Canadians to the defence of Britain. Headquarters 1st Division now suggested that the officers' wing of the proposed Training School be established at an early date.<sup>55</sup> Consideration was given to the possible advisability of using British schools and thus avoiding adding to the Canadian financial overhead. However, General McNaughton was "strongly of the opinion that all officer cadets for infantry and machine-gun battalions should be trained in Canadian schools",<sup>56</sup> and on 12 July 1940 National Defence Headquarters approved in principle the immediate formation of the officer cadet portion of a Canadian Training School.<sup>57</sup> Accordingly, the Cadet Wing began its first course on 5 August.<sup>58</sup> The general policy for training Canadian officer cadets was that all should take the basic portion, "common to all arms", at this Canadian Officer Cadet Training Unit. Infantry and machine-gun candidates remained there for the training special to their own arms. Candidates from other arms or services went on to British O.C.T.U.s. for this training.<sup>59</sup>

There was considerable delay before the other wings of the Training School began to function, as no suitable accommodation could be found for them.<sup>60</sup> The need for driving and maintenance instruction was so pressing, however, that arrangements were made for training a limited number of Canadians at the London Passenger Transport Board shops at Chiswick.<sup>61</sup> Officer training remained the sole activity of the Canadian Training School during the rest of 1940. Its later growth is dealt with below.

Steps were also taken to provide staff training for officers. General McNaughton proposed that a Junior Staff College be established, based on and near Corps Headquarters.<sup>62</sup> The Chief of the General Staff (General Crerar) questioned the suggestion, since there was a plan to institute a staff college in Canada. It was ultimately agreed that one course only would be conducted in England, and that future ones would take place in Canada.<sup>63</sup> On 2 January 1941 the Canadian Junior War Staff Course opened at Ford Manor, Lingfield, Surrey, with Lt.-Col. G. G. Simonds as Commandant. The majority of the instructors came from the Canadian force in the United Kingdom, but the War Office lent three British officers with recent battle experience.<sup>64</sup>

As the year 1940 drew to a close and the danger of invasion temporarily receded, the Canadian troops in Britain reverted to individual training. (This was forecast in an instruction issued as early as 27 September.)<sup>65</sup> Emphasis was placed on route marching, infantry units carrying out a march of twenty miles each week. The occupation of a sector of the Sussex coast by successive

brigade groups\* was a welcome change from training routine. The brigades also did exercises in cooperation with the 1st British Armoured Division and their staffs had indoor map exercises. There were still many equipment shortages, particularly in the 2nd Division. Canadian tank training overseas began with the arrival of members of the 1st Army Tank Brigade for British attachments and courses.<sup>66</sup>

With the opening of 1941 the stage was set for the large-scale exercises which had been impossible in 1940 but which were to be a feature of training for the next three years.

Throughout 1941 and the early part of 1942, all major exercises had one thing in common: the anti-invasion theme. Exercises "Fox", in February 1941, and "Dog", in March, were intended to practise the 1st and 2nd Divisions respectively, with Corps Troops, in a move by road transport to a concentration area, an advance to contact with a hostile force, and the issuing of orders for deployment and attack. In addition, the schemes gave the two divisions opportunities to familiarize themselves with areas likely to be battlefields in the event of a German attempt on England. "Fox" was staged immediately west of Dover, the action being directed against a theoretical enemy who had landed in the Dover peninsula. "Dog" was directed against German troops supposed to have got ashore farther west, in the South Downs area.

These exercises showed that neither division was as yet very efficient in acting as a formed body. The greatest faults appearing were lack of adequate traffic control and failure to get orders down to subordinates in time to be acted upon. Monumental traffic-jams occurred, and artillery could not get forward to support infantry attacks. General McNaughton remarked after "Fox" that the exercise had "shaken the complacency of everyone participating, from the Corps Commander to the lowest private soldier". He prescribed the remedies-primarily, "traffic-mindedness"-and left no doubt in any mind of the need for improvement.<sup>67</sup> Exercise "Hare", 9-11 April, which involved the 1st Division and Corps Troops, and the 2nd Division's Exercise "Benito", 16-19 April, indicated that improvement was in fact taking place.<sup>68</sup>

### Manoeuvres on the Grand Scale, 1941

The first exercise in which the Canadian Corps as a whole took part was "Waterloo", held by Headquarters South Eastern Command on 14-16 June 1941. This exercise, while based on much the same general idea as those previously described, was on a larger scale, involving about half the troops

\*Below, Chap. IX.



in the South Eastern Command. The main object was to practise 'the Canadian Corps and the 8th Armoured Division in a mobile counter-attack role. The 4th Corps also took part, and there was a "live enemy". "Waterloo" was staged in the central coastal region of Sussex and the countryside behind it, the operations being dominated by the splendid ridge of the South Downs. Very briefly, it assumed enemy parachute drops and glider landings on the northern face of the Downs, combined with seaborne landings on the coast. The "defending" forces developed an attack against the "German" positions on the Downs and were eventually held to have been successful in their attempts to drive the invaders back into the sea.<sup>69</sup>

From 29 September to 3 October 1941 very extensive army manoeuvres, known as Exercise "Bumper", were carried on north and west of London. The whole of the operational portion of the Canadian Corps, under General McNaughton's command, took part in this, probably the largest exercise ever staged in Great Britain. Two army headquarters, four corps, and twelve divisions (of which three were armoured) were involved, in addition to two army tank brigades and large numbers of ancillary troops. The forces engaged amounted to about a quarter of a million men.

As before, a basic object of the exercise was to practise the army in Great Britain in its anti-invasion role. The Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces (General Sir Alan Brooke) explained that it was intended to give commanders, including Army Commanders, the opportunity of handling large forces; it embodied the experiment of "picking up a whole Command" and using it as a striking force to destroy an enemy lodgement in England; but at the same time it served "to test the organization with a view to possible action across the Channel".<sup>70</sup> German landings in East Anglia were assumed to have been successful, and the forces of Southern Command, with some formations from G.H.Q. Reserve and South Eastern Command, having cleared up other landings on the south coast, were ordered to destroy the advancing enemy. The "British" forces were commanded by Lieut.-General H. R. L. G. Alexander, C.-in-C. Southern Command; the Germans were represented by the troops of Eastern Command, commanded by Lieut.-General L. Carr. The main action took place in the area of the Chiltern Hills, north-west of London. The weather was pleasant, though the nights were cool, and the troops on the whole enjoyed the experience.<sup>71</sup>

The exercise ended in the discomfiture of the "Germans", who were withdrawing rapidly when the operations ceased. Without attempting a detailed narrative, it is enough to outline the points made at the post-exercise conference. Among the satisfactory results was the obvious progress made in motorized movement, for despite the large numbers involved there was little congestion. The main criticisms concerned the positions of corps and army headquarters, which were considered to be too far back; the failure to pass information; and the continued use of the brigade-group system of

handling divisions. It was emphasized that all corps headquarters must be able to direct armoured divisions. There was no particular comment on the handling of the Canadian Corps, though its unit administration was praised; but the Chief Umpire (Lieut.-General B. L. Montgomery) criticized two divisions (the 2nd Canadian Division and the 6th British Armoured Division) for missing opportunities.<sup>72</sup>

### Improvements in Organization and Methods

During 1941 the Canadian Training School began work in earnest. We have seen that lack of accommodation had prevented the opening of any portion of it except No. 1 (Officer Cadet Training Unit) Wing in 1940. Now, on 1 May 1941, the Training School took over Havannah Barracks, Bordon. On 5 May No. 2 (Technical) Wing began a course for drivers at No. 1 Canadian Engineers Holding Unit.<sup>73</sup> By September all the wings were functioning. In addition to officer cadet training, No. 1 Wing conducted an infantry company commanders' school. No. 2 Wing, while concentrating on driving and maintenance, ran courses for unit anti-gas instructors and (for a time) regimental clerks. No. 3 (Weapons) Wing was giving training in the 3-inch mortar and platoon weapons by September, expanding later to include N.C.Os., Vickers medium machine-gun, snipers', assault and range-takers' courses.<sup>74</sup> On 1 October a new wing, No. 4 (Regimental Officers) was formed. This took over the functions of the company commanders' portion of No. 1 Wing and some of those of the Canadian Corps Junior Leaders School. No. 4 Wing was organized to give courses of six weeks' duration for ten company commanders and thirty platoon commanders at a time.<sup>75</sup> There was also an Administrative Wing.

The year 1941 saw the inception of a new and much more realistic type of training. This was known as "Battle Drill" and "Battle Drill Training". Battle Drill was the reduction of military tactics to bare essentials which were taught to a platoon as a team drill, with clear explanations regarding the objects to be achieved, the principles involved and the individual task of each member of the team. Battle Drill Training, on the other hand, was more comprehensive.<sup>76</sup> It comprised special physical training, fieldcraft, battle drill proper, battle discipline and "battle inoculation".\* Since there is some tendency to confuse battle drill training with "Commando" training, it should be noted that Battle Drill Training

\*Battle inoculation meant exposing the soldier in training to the sights and noises of battle. It involved the use of "live ammunition" both by the soldier himself and by the simulated enemy, represented by "reliable shots" who could place their bullets "realistically close to the troops" without causing serious danger.

was not a specialized form of assault training, but merely the normal prebattle type given to all Canadian or British infantrymen.

The seeds of battle drill training can perhaps be found in Military Training Pamphlet No. 33, *Training in Fieldcraft and Elementary Tactics*, published by the British War Office in March 1940. It attempted to prescribe more interesting methods of teaching "minor tactics", and to introduce the team idea into field exercises; there was, however, no provision for the use of live ammunition. From this beginning in 1940, individual battle training developed further during 1941. The Canadian Training School's syllabus for July, for instance, shows the following subjects being taught: assault over obstacles, unarmed combat, tank hunting and booby traps.<sup>77</sup> About this time the 47th (London) Division, commanded by Major-General J. E. Utterson-Kelso, began experimenting with a procedure which it termed battle drill, in which absolute physical fitness was essential. This factor, with the addition of the concepts of ruthlessness and battle inoculation, made the break from the older type of tactical training complete. Drills for movement in battle were taught: first on the parade square, and later in the field with live ammunition. Enemy fire was simulated by bullets from small arms aimed over the heads of the assaulting troops, while mortar fire and shelling were represented by thunderflashes, No. 69 grenades\* and buried, electrically-fired charges of gun-cotton.

The introduction of battle drill training into the Canadian Army began through the association of the 2nd Canadian Division with the 47th Division in the 4th British Corps during the summer of 1941. In September The Calgary Highlanders began a school in "battle procedure" for subalterns and senior N.C.Os., and in October they sent three officers to attend battle drill exercises at the 47th Division's school. On returning to their unit, these officers immediately set up a similar course of instruction, and each platoon of the battalion was put through it.<sup>78</sup> From this beginning, the battle drill idea spread to other units and formations in the Canadian Corps. In November the 1st Division sent two company commanders from most infantry units and one from the reconnaissance battalion to the 47th Division's Battle School.<sup>79</sup> By December all infantry units of the Corps were conducting their own battle drill training.<sup>80</sup>

Late in 1941 a small beginning was made with amphibious training. It was planned at this time to train one company per brigade and ultimately one company per battalion in the technique of raiding an enemy-held coast, using the South Eastern Command Assault Landing Craft School at Havant in Hampshire, where Canadian Corps units were already sending men for this purpose.<sup>81</sup> This was a result of the Corps' movement to the south coast in the autumn (below, page 297). Such developments as this helped to

\*A bakelite grenade designed to produce great blast effect and little or no fragmentation.

maintain interest in training among troops who had been overseas for two years and yet had seen no action.

This year saw the arrival in the United Kingdom of, successively, the 1st Army Tank Brigade, the 3rd Division, and the 5th Armoured Division. The circumstances under which these formations began their overseas training were different from those of earlier days. In particular, equipment became much easier to obtain in 1941 than it had been during 1939-40. The 1st Army Tank Brigade began to receive tanks on a training scale during July and by January 1942 had 157 Churchills and nearly its full establishment of other vehicles and equipment.<sup>82</sup> The 3rd Division had a similar experience; for example, it had received its full complement of 25-pounders by November 1941.<sup>83</sup> This division arrived in England in a relatively high state of efficiency; it had been in existence for over a year, and some of its units had been mobilized in 1939. The 5th Armoured Division had unfortunately to wait a long time for its cruiser tanks, only a few, of American type, being delivered before the end of the year. However, a large proportion of its other equipment, including guns, was readily available.<sup>84</sup> Thanks to these conditions, these formations were able to make rapid progress with training.

One difficult problem of 1941 was training the new anti-aircraft artillery units (below, Chap. IX). Throughout the year, 40-mm. Bofors guns, the weapon of light anti-aircraft regiments, were almost non-existent. During February and March a special unit was set up at Colchester to train Canadian A.A. gunners. Accommodation difficulties led to a decision to add anti-tank training, with the result that the Colchester establishment became known as Canadian Anti-Aircraft and Anti-Tank Group. It was commanded by Lt. Col. G. A. McCarter.<sup>85</sup> Subsequently Headquarters 1st Canadian Anti-Aircraft Brigade was formed at Colchester with McCarter (promoted Brigadier) in command, and took over direction of the activities there. But in March the Group possessed only eight Bofors guns with which to train eleven batteries.<sup>86</sup> As late as 31 January 1942, the Canadian Army Overseas as a whole had only 58 Bofors against an establishment of 280.<sup>87</sup> The situation was met, to a certain extent, by assigning the batteries from Colchester, as soon as they had been to practice camp, to temporary duty manning static anti-aircraft sites in the Air Defence of Great Britain, under the operational control of the British Anti-Aircraft Command and using equipment provided by it.<sup>88</sup> Subsequently the units returned to Colchester for mobile training before joining their field formations. This plan, however, depended on the availability of equipment and did not get under way until early in 1942.<sup>89</sup>

Only brief mention can be made of training at the Reinforcement Units.\* These units were originally set up to hold a pool of reinforcements, and their staffs were inadequate to deal with the training problems that arose. Brigadier Page, on taking over command of the Canadian Base Units in January

\*See above, Chap. VI.



#### TRAINING FOR THE DIEPPE RAID

A Churchill tank of "A" Squadron 14th Army Tank Regiment (The Calgary Regiment) uses a bombed house to demonstrate its powers during the training on the Isle of Wight, June 1942.



#### TRAINING IN ASSAULT LANDINGS

Canadian divisional troops embarking in personnel landing craft, October 1942, while undergoing training at the RCASC Battle School located at Cuckmere Haven.



#### BATTLE SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

Soldiers undergoing an obstacle course at the Battle Wing of the Canadian Training School, near Worthing, Sussex, June 1943



#### TRAINING BEFORE D DAY

Men of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders in an exercise with Sherman tanks of the 27th Canadian Armoured Regiment (The Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment) at Wepham Downs, Sussex, 14 April 1944.

1941, reported that the drafts arriving from Canada contained a proportion of "raw, or nearly raw recruits".<sup>90</sup> Consequently it was necessary to set up a syllabus of training and provide qualified instructors and a proper organization to carry it out. This was done during 1941 and a regular course of training became part of the normal routine at all Canadian Holding Units. During that year, however, equipment shortages interfered with progress as they did in field units.<sup>91</sup>

### Offensive Training, 1942-1943

The German invasion of Russia in the summer of 1941, followed by the entrance of the United States into the war at the end of the year, opened the prospect of offensive action against Germany and led naturally to a new emphasis on offensive training during 1942.

The introduction of battle drill inevitably required that individual training be renewed and intensified. Canadian Corps Training Instructions Nos. 5 and 6,<sup>92</sup> issued 21 November 1941 and 25 February 1942, prescribed a steady progression in training from the platoon level in December 1941 to divisional level by May 1942. In order to obtain as much realism as possible, exercises were to be two-sided wherever feasible.<sup>93</sup> Late in December 1941 General Crerar took over the command of the Corps and threw himself with great intensity into the work of training it to meet the new situation, prescribing policy in a succession of circular letters. The first of these, dated 14 January,<sup>94</sup> still spoke of preparation for the "invasion battle" in England as the Canadians' main responsibility; but by March he was defining the aim as "to train all ranks up to that stage of mental, physical and professional fitness needed to engage successfully in offensive battle against the Germans". He emphasized the need for the highest physical fitness, particularly on the part of infantrymen, since early operations on the Continent would see a drastically reduced scale of transport, with the consequence that the foot soldier would have to fight only with what he could carry.<sup>95</sup>

Exercises "Beaver III" and "Beaver IV" ("Beaver I" and "Beaver II" were exercises for headquarters staffs only) were planned to further this policy. Although these exercises were still "anti-invasion" in character, they were, at the same time, the first in which the Canadians participated on a large scale as an offensive force. "Beaver III" was carried out on 22-24 April under Corps direction by the 1st and 2nd Divisions with the former in the role of a German invasion force attacking the latter. "Beaver IV", on 10-13 May, saw the 2nd Division assuming the offensive role, while the defending force was supplied by the 3rd Division. This was the latter's first appearance in a Corps exercise. In "Beaver III" the landing was assumed to have been made in the Littlehampton-Worthing area; that in "Beaver IV"

was between Bexhill and Beachy Head. Both exercises involved the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade and details of Corps Troops. Special points emerging from them were the speed with which the 1st Division showed itself able to advance by march route, and the fact that the 3rd Division required further practice in traffic control. This is merely to say that this division was now going through the teething troubles that the 1st and 2nd had experienced during "Fox" and "Dog" early in 1941.<sup>96</sup>

Following closely after the "Beaver" exercises came a much larger one called "Tiger", conducted by South Eastern Command and lasting from 19 to 30 May. The Canadian Corps (now known as the 1st Canadian Corps), less the greater part of the 2nd Division and one battalion of the 1st Army Tank Brigade, took part under General Crerar.\* The 3rd British Division, less one brigade and with the 5th Canadian Infantry Brigade under command, replaced the 2nd Division in the Corps order of battle. In all, six divisions as well as large numbers of other troops took part. For the purposes of "Tiger", Kent and Sussex were assumed to be independent hostile countries, while lying adjacent was a powerful neutral state, Surrey, whose threats of intervention were utilized by the Director (Lieut.-General B. L. Montgomery, G.O.C.-in-C. South Eastern Command) to influence the course of operations -particularly in the direction of making the troops cover ground. General Crerar commanded the Sussex forces, which were weak in armour but strong in artillery and infantry and in the air. The Kent forces were under Lieut.-General J. A. H. Gammell, G.O.C. 12th Corps. The exercise was not planned on an anti-invasion basis; the two armies advanced to contact and fought an "encounter battle".

There is no space to detail the course of Exercise "Tiger". We can only mention its results. In his report<sup>97</sup> to the Chief of the General Staff in Ottawa, General McNaughton wrote:

Minister and War Cabinet will like to know that in the opinion of both General Montgomery and myself results reflect the satisfactory state of tactical training and endurance now reached by Canadian units and formations taking part. This Exercise was specially designed to test capabilities to the limit. It lasted eleven days in all during *which* some units marched on foot as much as 250 miles which is about the life of army boots on English roads. Much of this marching was tactical at forced pace. Transport was cut to minimum and troops lived hard under conditions approximating active service. Hardships and heavy tasks accepted by troops most cheerfully and though now very tired they have come through these strenuous tests with enhanced morale and confidence in themselves. Staff work, road discipline and supply arrangements were on the whole excellent. I was particularly pleased with Crerar's conduct of the operations of 1 Cdn Corps.

\*The 2nd Division's Headquarters and the 4th and 6th Brigades, together with the 14th Army Tank Battalion, had begun special training for the Dieppe operation and were, accordingly, not available for "Tiger". The Dieppe training is described in Chap. X of this volume.



The 1st Corps report for the final week observes, "After long marches throughout the course of the exercise, in the closing stages some infantry units marched as much as 38 miles in about 18 hours".<sup>98</sup> It is evident that the goals of Corps Training Instructions Nos. 5 and 6 had been largely achieved.<sup>99</sup>

Training in the 1st Canadian Corps for the remainder of the year was on a more detailed level. General Crerar, in a letter dated 4 June 1942,<sup>100</sup> laid down the programme for the summer months, ordering all commanders to take every advantage of the opportunity ("possibly a brief one") now presented for eliminating deficiencies. The emphasis was to be on individual weapon training, battle practice (field firing exercises with live ammunition, in areas on the South Downs acquired for the purpose),\* combined operations, and command and staff exercises. On these lines the Corps worked during the rest of 1942. Field firing exercises were carried out up to the brigade group level and even higher. On 3 August, for instance, the 3rd Infantry Brigade and the 14th Army Tank Battalion conducted a scheme near the battlefield of Lewes (1264), supported by three regiments of field artillery firing live shell over the troops' heads.<sup>101</sup>

There were some exceptions to the normal course of training during this period. The 3rd Division took part in the only divisional scheme, Exercise "Harold", held in July under the direction of the 12th British Corps, in which the Canadians simulated an invasion force attacking the 46th British Division.<sup>102</sup> The 2nd Canadian Division's two Dieppe brigades, the 4th and 6th, lost so many men in that operation that they had to return to individual and platoon training.<sup>103</sup> Finally, some small anti-invasion exercises, such as "Blackboy" in November, were conducted by the 1st Division. These were designed to keep the defence organization of the south coast efficient in order to deal with possible minor raids by the Germans.<sup>104</sup>

The 5th Canadian Armoured Division, whose arrival in the United Kingdom and difficulties in obtaining tanks have already been mentioned, was placed under Canadian Military Headquarters until such time as its training had progressed to the divisional collective stage. It finally came under command of the First Canadian Army on 25 June 1942. The arrival of tanks continued to be slow† until the end of the year, with the result that the armoured units' progress was considerably slower than that of the artillery and infantry. A divisional Training Instruction issued in September mentioned this fact and extended the period of troop and squadron training

\*General Crerar in this connection directed that all sensible safety precautions should be carefully enforced, but added, "the importance of practising actual fire support, with movement, is so great that legitimate risks must be run". Inevitably, such exercises occasionally caused casualties.

†By the middle of June only 112 tanks had been received; these were a mixed lot, including light tanks and obsolescent types, and only 34 of the new Ram I tanks which were now coming in from Canada.<sup>105</sup>

for the armoured regiments from 31 August to 31 December, at the same time directing artillery and infantry units to undertake more advanced collective instruction.<sup>106</sup> Training for commanders and staffs within the Division was carried on concurrently. There were wireless exercises without troops, on brigade and divisional levels, and one scheme in which all divisional troops and transport took part, the armoured regiments and infantry being represented by their respective headquarters and squadron or company rear communications wireless sets.<sup>107</sup>

To keep abreast of expanding needs, the Canadian Training School was enlarged during 1942. Early in the year, C.M.H.Q. took steps to organize a battle-drill wing, following a similar move by G.H.Q. Home Forces. This was known as No. 5 (Battle) Wing and began operation on 1 May at Rowlands Castle, Hampshire. In July, it was reorganized into Rifle, Carrier and Mortar Sub-Wings." A further change, due to increased emphasis on chemical warfare (including flame projection) was the transfer of this type of training from No. 2 (Technical) Wing to No. 6 (Chemical Warfare) Wing, formed for the purpose in December.<sup>109</sup> Thus the following wings were in operation at the end of the year: No. 1, still giving officer-cadet training;\* No. 2, anti-gas courses and driving and maintenance for officers, and both wheeled and tracked (carrier) instruction for N.C.Os.; No. 3 (Weapons) Wing, small arms courses generally, aircraft recognition, range-taking, and junior leaders' training for prospective N.C.Os.; No. 4 (Regimental Officers) Wing, six-week courses in tactics and administration for company and platoon commanders; and Nos. 5 and 6 as just described.<sup>111</sup>

The availability of more equipment during the year somewhat eased the problems of anti-aircraft training, with the result that the light anti-aircraft regiments for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th Divisions were able to complete their mobile training and join their formations.<sup>112</sup> The Canadian Army also undertook the instruction of radar operators. Some Canadians had previously been trained in this work, but after qualification had been employed with British units. On General McNaughton's initiative a radar unit, which he desired not to belong to any one arm of the service,<sup>113</sup> was formed in January 1942 as No. 1 Canadian Radio Location Unit. After its personnel had completed training at various establishments, it was concentrated and moved to Colchester; and at the end of 1942 men of this unit were manning Canadianmade radar sets at many points on the south coast. Early in 1943 the unit was disbanded to conform with British organization.<sup>114</sup> Late in 1942 the insufficiency of the vacancies available for Canadians

\*As the result of a decision to discontinue officer cadet training in the United Kingdom, Ottawa had informed C.M.H.Q. on 13 February that No. 1 Wing would cease operations after the courses then running had been completed. Later, however, General McNaughton obtained approval to re-open No. 1 Wing to provide a basic common-to-all-arms course for artillery, engineers, signals and ordnance cadets, who would then go on to British schools for their specialist training.<sup>110</sup>

at the Royal Artillery School at Larkhill led to the institution of No. I Canadian School of Artillery Overseas, which at first was part of "C" Group, Canadian Reinforcement Units. It was organized into wings: Field; Medium; Anti-Tank; Anti-Aircraft; and Survey. To save manpower and equipment, these were set up as adjuncts to existing Artillery Reinforcement Units. A nucleus of instructors was obtained by posting gunnery instructors from field and reinforcement units to the new school. At the same time Larkhill agreed to increase the number of Canadian vacancies for the same purpose. The school's first courses began on 3 January 1943. Later in the year it became an independent establishment and moved to Seaford, Sussex.<sup>115</sup>

The late summer and autumn of 1942 saw the arrival in the United Kingdom of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division. This division arrived overseas in a somewhat more advanced state of training than earlier armoured formations, mainly because a respectable number of tanks from Canadian production were now available in Canada for training use. Anticipating a delay in tank deliveries in England, arrangements were made to obtain universal carriers as substitutes. By October an initial issue of 255 carriers had been made, with the result that much useful training in troop and squadron tactics was possible.<sup>116</sup> In October, a divisional training instruction<sup>117</sup> laid down the state of training to be reached by 15 February 1943. Briefly, collective training was to reach squadron level, and headquarters of formations were to attain enough efficiency to enable them to handle their units by that date. Like the 5th, the 4th Division was under C.M.H.Q. command during its early days overseas. However, it passed under Headquarters First Canadian Army on 21 October 1942, when its training was still in a very early stage.

During 1942 arrangements were made for a considerable extension of combined operations training. This programme was related to the various operations under discussion for the Canadians at this period (below, pages 408-12). It was originally planned to begin on 27 November, but conditions at the Combined Training Centres necessitated a postponement to 16 December, at which time the 1st Infantry Brigade began its training at Inveraray.<sup>118</sup> This, then, was the only formation to go to Scotland in 1942. However, other combined training was carried out. In November and December the units of the 8th and 9th Infantry Brigades of the 3rd Division had three days each on infantry landing ships at Southampton.<sup>119</sup> During December 1942-February 1943 the 9th Brigade battalions went in turn to Dorlin, Scotland, where a limited number of naval craft were available.<sup>120</sup> A combined training programme for drivers of all arms was started in December. There was a large representation from the 1st Division and selections from the 2nd and 3rd.<sup>121</sup> Certain Corps and Army Troops, including engineers and army service corps, also took part in landing practice at the Scottish Combined Training Centres.<sup>122</sup> And Combined Operations

Planning Courses were held at the Combined Training Centre, Largs, for the staffs of both the 1st and 3rd Divisions during December 1942 and January 1943.<sup>123</sup>

By March of 1943 the two remaining brigades of the 1st Division had completed their tours at Inveraray.<sup>124</sup> Two squadrons of the 14th Army Tank Regiment, three companies of the Saskatoon Light Infantry and the 9th Field Ambulance also trained in Scotland during the same period.<sup>125</sup> After the decision in April to send the 1st Division and 1st Army Tank Brigade to take part in the attack on Sicily, these formations had a further tour of amphibious training in Scotland.

### Battle Experience in North Africa

The last important development of 1942 was the decision, after the Allied landings in North Africa in November, to send Canadian officers and N.C.Os. to serve three-month attachments to the First British Army in Tunisia. This resulted from the desire to provide battle experience for as many Canadians as possible before the main body of the army was committed to action. Except for the two Dieppe brigades, such experience had been denied to the Canadian troops in Great Britain. Arrangements were made with the War Office accordingly, and the first group, 78 officers and 63 other ranks, reached Algiers on 3 January 1943. Four more parties were sent; the final total was 201 officers and 147 other ranks.<sup>126</sup> These attachments took the form of employing the Canadians, as far as possible, in the jobs they were best qualified to fill; they went to appropriate units in the same way as British reinforcements. Thus, an armoured corps officer might find himself in charge of a squadron of tanks; an infantry captain commanded a rifle company; a sapper N.C.O. cleared mines and a staff officer did the work of an appropriate staff appointment.<sup>127</sup> That the service was very active is indicated by the fact that 25 of the Canadians became casualties, eight losing their lives.<sup>128</sup>

The value of this experiment is beyond question. Nothing can take the place of battle in the final moulding of the efficient soldier. A Canadian infantry officer wrote from North Africa, where he was attached to a battalion of the Buffs, "Our training in England since the introduction of battle drill has been pretty good but no scheme can approach the physical and mental discomfort of actual battle. If I am able to get across some ideas on my return it should make the initial impact of actual battle less severe on our troops."<sup>129</sup> It is only to be regretted that more Canadians could not have had the same opportunity. But the was, of course, a definite limit to the number of Canadians the First \*Army could take, and the campaign was not long. As it was, practically every major Canadian unit

had one or more of these North African men on its strength during the final period of preparation for battle, and their advice was most valuable.

Canadian senior officers also were able to improve their knowledge as a result of the Tunisian campaign. General Crerar flew out to Tripoli in February 1943 with a group of British generals and attended a very instructive study period conducted by General Montgomery at the headquarters of the victorious Eighth Army. In April Brigadier G. G. Simonds visited the same Army and watched the Wadi Akarit battle.<sup>130</sup> On returning to England he was appointed to command the 2nd Division in succession to General Roberts (who now took over the Canadian Reinforcement Units), only to be transferred almost immediately to the 1st following the death of General Salmon. A few weeks later his division was fighting as part of the Eighth Army in Sicily.

#### Exercise "Spartan", March 1943

The 1st Division's combined training prevented it from taking part in the very large exercise called "Spartan", which took place in March 1943 under the direction of G.H.Q. Home Forces. This exercise closely approached Exercise "Bumper" in size; ten divisions "fought" in it as against twelve in "Bumper". So far as the number of Canadians participating was concerned, "Spartan" was the largest exercise of the war.

The original plan was that in this exercise the Canadian army headquarters would control a force consisting of the 1st Canadian Corps; a British armoured corps including the 5th Canadian Armoured Division; one or two other British corps, and the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade.<sup>131</sup> However, on 15 January 1943 Headquarters 2nd Canadian Corps came into existence; and four days later General McNaughton agreed with G.H.Q. Home Forces that this corps would take part, with the 5th Canadian and Guards Armoured Divisions under command.<sup>132</sup> The sequel indicated that it was perhaps over-optimistic to put a brand-new formation into so important an exercise before its headquarters had a chance to acquire its complete transport and signals equipment, and at least to carry out a staff exercise and an exercise without troops. (Signal equipment of various types, much of it on loan from British formations, arrived at Corps Headquarters when it was already in the assembly area, just a couple of days before the actual exercise commenced.)<sup>133</sup> On the other hand, the training value of manoeuvres of this type, which happened so seldom, made "Spartan" an opportunity not to be missed. The unfortunate aspect of the matter was that a poor performance by any Army or Corps in such manoeuvres was likely to count heavily against its commander in the opinion of G.H.Q. Home Forces and the War Office.

In "Spartan", Headquarters First Canadian Army (styled for exercise purposes Headquarters Second Army) functioned for the first time in the field. General McNaughton commanded six divisions: the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions, under General Crerar's 1st Canadian Corps; the 5th Canadian and Guards Armoured Divisions, under General Sansom's 2nd Canadian Corps; and the 43rd and 53rd British Divisions, under the 12th British Corps (Lieut.-General M. G. N. Stopford). A Mobile Composite Group of nineteen R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. squadrons cooperated with McNaughton's army; this was the first test in the United Kingdom of a system of air support which had proved successful in North Africa. The "enemy" consisted of the forces of Eastern Command under Lieut.-General J. A. H. Gammell: the 8th and 11th British Corps, with another composite air group, also including R.C.A.F. squadrons, cooperating. In accordance with the offensive strategic thinking of the day, the Second Army was assumed to be breaking out of a bridgehead established by another army on the Continent (represented by the south coast of England). This was the role contemplated at this time for the First Canadian Army and that, indeed, which it finally played. General McNaughton described "Spartan" as "designed as a strict test of the physical condition and endurance of the troops, their proficiency in movement and tactics and of the ability of commanders and staffs to administer, handle and fight their formations and units".<sup>134</sup>

Only the highlights of the exercise can be given here. In the opening phase G.H.Q. Home Forces, which was directing the exercise, made things hard for the Second Army by allowing the "German" army to advance twenty-four hours before the time (first light on 5 March) previously notified to General McNaughton for the beginning of his operations. The "British" force was not permitted to move until the Germans had been on their way for some hours. This enabled Gammell's units to make contact with McNaughton's farther south than the latter had appreciated to be probable, and incidentally they were able to "demolish" a great number of bridges.

In spite of these initial disadvantages, General Crerar's well-trained Corps in the centre got forward rapidly and on 5 March smashed the "hinge" in the Reading area on which General Gammell had planned to pivot his defence. The 2nd Canadian Corps was held back until 7 March, when General McNaughton ordered it to make a wide enveloping sweep to the westward. The armoured divisions' progress, however, was disappointingly slow; there were bad traffic jams and petrol shortages; and for a time there was a complete breakdown in communications between Corps and Army Headquarters. This last was not surprising, since 2nd Canadian Corps Signals was neither fully equipped nor fully trained. It should moreover be remembered that this was the first occasion on which the whole of the 5th Division was actually exercised together as a formation. The Corps Commander regrouped the divisions on the night of 10-11 March with the two

armoured brigades under the Guards Division and the two infantry brigades under the 5th Division. General McNaughton at the time disapproved this regrouping and ordered it reversed. It was subsequently criticized by the C.-in-C. Home Forces.<sup>135</sup>

"Cease Fire" was signalled on the morning of 12 March, when General McNaughton's army had begun to overcome its handicaps and victory was in sight. Since 8 March, in the words of the C.-in-C., the situation had "swung steadily in favour of the British". General McNaughton's own comments on the exercise,<sup>136</sup> cabled to Ottawa the following day, may be quoted in part:

As you know our Army staff was new and partly set up ad hoc. Nevertheless by the conclusion of the exercise it was working smoothly and efficiently and our officers have proved their capacity. Our Engineers, Signals, Supply and Transport, Medical, Ordnance, REME [Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers] and other administrative services were most satisfactory and the officers and staffs in charge showed a capacity to organize, conduct and administer those matters which was very satisfactory indeed particularly as this was the first occasion in which we have ever had an opportunity to give them actual practice full scale....

One of the important matters of organization tested was the new composite group of the Royal Air Force. In this for the first time I see a possibility of providing the Army with the air support which it requires. . . .

### The Final Stages, 1943-1944

In April 1943 came the decision to send the 1st Division and 1st Army Tank Brigade to Sicily; and in July the 3rd Division was selected as an assault formation to take part in the first phase of the invasion of North-West Europe. The specialized training undertaken with these tasks in view will be dealt with in connection with those campaigns.

For the rest of the Canadian field army the period to the end of 1943 was characterized by intensification in all spheres of training. Individual instruction was interspersed with exercises on every level from battalion to corps. Particularly noteworthy were wireless schemes for the staffs of army, corps and divisions, infantry-tank cooperation practice, street fighting, night training,\* battle inoculation, range-firing for tanks and all branches of the artillery, and general training in supply, recovery and medical evacuation for the services.<sup>138</sup> The introduction of self-propelled artillery equipment and carrier flame-throwers required special instruction for drivers and operators.<sup>139</sup> Canadian officers who had served with the First British Army in North Africa or with the Canadian forces in Sicily and Italy passed on their experience of operations in the form of lectures.<sup>140</sup>

\*During the summer the Battle Wing of the Canadian Training School conducted a series of Night Fighting Courses for senior officers, designed to produce a diffusion of such training throughout the army. The courses aroused wide interest.<sup>137</sup>

During 1943 the training programme took the Canadian divisions into areas of England-notably Hampshire and East Anglia-of which they had hitherto seen little. The 2nd Division, it is true, spent most of the year in Sussex, mainly in exercising in the breakout battle from a bridgehead. The 5th Armoured Division moved to Norfolk in July and spent six weeks there engaged in a series of large-scale exercises. By October, when it left to join the 1st Division in the Mediterranean, the 5th had made much progress, but still had something to learn about armour in battle. The 4th Armoured Division, which had not been sufficiently advanced to take part in "Spartan", moved to Norfolk in September, after the 5th's departure thence. The following month it was exercised for the first time as a division with all arms and services functioning (Exercise "Grizzly II"); while in Exercise "Bridoon" in November it was pitted against the 9th British Armoured Division. The Headquarters of the 2nd Canadian Corps also worked in East Anglia; it directed "Grizzly II" and in September commanded the 61st British Infantry Division and the 1st Polish Armoured Division in a large exercise called "Link".<sup>141</sup>

In August and September Exercise "Harlequin" took the 2nd and 5th Divisions (and the 4th Division's armoured brigade) into Hampshire under the 1st Canadian Corps. This exercise was designed to test administrative arrangements for moving the force for the invasion of North-West Europe through concentration and assembly areas in England to embarkation points. At the same time it formed part of Operation "Starkey", a great deception scheme designed to make the Germans believe that we intended an invasion of the Pas de Calais. This ended on 8 September 1943 with an "amphibious feint" in the Channel, a certain number of troops being embarked in the hope -which was not realized- of bringing the German Air Force to large-scale action as at Dieppe.<sup>142</sup>

As 1944 opened, the First Canadian Army in the United Kingdom, reduced to one corps headquarters, three divisions and one armoured brigade,\* with ancillary troops, was making its final preparations for action. A directive<sup>143</sup> issued at this time defined the purpose of training during the period January-March 1944 as "to prepare and perfect all ranks individually to reach the highest standard". Unit commanders were reminded that this was "their last opportunity to make the men of their units fighting fit, and fit to fight": this period of individual training was accordingly not to be treated as if it were part of a normal training cycle. As spring advanced and D Day drew nearer, various specialized exercises were undertaken, although the days of full-scale divisional "schemes" were past. Training for the breakout from a bridgehead on the Continent dominated the programme of the 2nd Corps; particularly notable was the practice in assault crossings of tidal estuaries,

\*Of these, the 3rd Division and 2nd Armoured Brigade were under the 1st British Corps preparing for the assault.



carried out by the 2nd Division with elements of Corps and Army Troops on the River Trent in Yorkshire (Exercise "Kate", April-May) and by 4<sup>th</sup> Division infantry and engineers on the River Medway in Kent. This training was in fact designed to prepare the units for the task of attacking across the Lower Seine. Field firing exercises, some on a considerable scale, were still in progress during May; but before the month was over such activities had ended.<sup>144</sup> The Canadian formations in England had moved, or were moving, to their final positions, ready to play their parts in the tremendous drama that was impending.

Thus the long training process was over. What had been accomplished? A very great deal, but not everything. In 1948 Lieut.-General Charles Foulkes, looking back upon the process and its sequel, made remarks<sup>145</sup> which provide a commentary:

In the last war it took us four years to get ready ... When I took the Second Division into Northwest Europe it had had four years of hard training. We trained day and night and I thought it was just about as perfect a fighting machine as we could get. When we went into battle at Falaise and Caen we found that when we bumped into battle-experienced German troops we were no match for them. We would not have been successful had it not been for our air and artillery support. We had had four years of real, hard going and it took about two months to get that Division so shaken down that we were really a machine that could fight.

There is no doubt that training can do just so much and no more; there is no umpire and no instructor like the bullet. Other things being equal, in an encounter between an army with battle experience and one without it the former will win. The Canadians did well in Normandy; they would have done better had they not been fighting their first battle and learning as they fought.

Availing ourselves once more of the historian's precious privilege of hindsight, it is possible also to look back and say that the Canadian Army, though it got tremendous dividends from its long training period in England, still got rather less than it might have had. Time was lost in the early days through equipment shortages; and it was only gradually that the more realistic training methods which finally yielded such good results were evolved and adopted. It is the present writer's impression, however, that the Canadian Army also suffered from possessing a proportion of regimental officers whose attitude towards training was casual and haphazard rather than urgent and scientific: like the traditional amateur actor, they were cheerfully confident that it would "be all right on the night" without their having to exert themselves too much. No doubt these people exist in every army; but it is worth while to observe that in modern war the army that has fewest of them will have a very great advantage.

## CHAPTER IX

### **ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS, 1940**

(See Map 4 and Sketch 1)

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#### The Role and Problems of the Canadian Army Overseas

**T**HE tasks of the Canadian field army developed in a manner which no one foresaw at the outset; for no one foresaw the course of the war. Inevitably, Canadian thinking was largely dominated by the experience of 1914-18, the more so as the beginning of hostilities in 1939 found a British army again crossing the Channel to cooperate with the French forces on French soil. It seemed clear that the 1st Canadian Division, and such other Canadian formations as might follow it to Britain, would in due time go to France and serve with the British armies there.

This was not the course which events followed. In a lightning campaign in May and June 1940, the Germans smashed the French armies and drove the British from the Continent before more than a fraction of the available Canadian force had reached France and before any of it had got into action. Thereafter, the Canadians found themselves part of the garrison of the British citadel, a beleaguered garrison which nevertheless maintained an active defence and constantly directed sorties against the besiegers. This situation raised a whole series of unexpected problems.

As it turned out, the Canadian force—a volunteer army recruited in the expectation of early action—spent forty-two months in the United Kingdom, from the arrival of the 1st Division in 1939, before even a portion of it took part in a protracted campaign. During this period the Canadians had few active tasks, and only one major contact with the enemy—the Dieppe raid of 19 August 1942. These few tasks and operations, including the part which the Canadian force played in the protection of the United Kingdom, are the theme of this chapter and those that follow. Except for the Dieppe operation they are not treated in great detail.

#### Authority to Commit Canadian Forces to Operations

A topic of basic importance is the question of the extent of the authority possessed by the senior Canadian commander overseas to commit his force,

or portions of it, to operations without reference to his superiors in Ottawa. This involves a brief preliminary excursion into the constitutional background.

The legal relationship between the military forces of Canada and those of other countries of the Commonwealth was very largely governed by a group of statutes passed by the various Commonwealth parliaments half a dozen years before war broke out. Most important for our purposes are those enacted by the parliaments of Canada and of the United Kingdom, known as "The Visiting Forces (British Commonwealth) Acts, 1933". The content of the British and Canadian statutes is, for practical purposes, identical.

The most important sections of the Canadian statute<sup>1</sup> may be reproduced here:

- "6 (4) When a home force and another force\* to which this section applies are serving together, whether alone or not:—
- (a) any member of the other force shall be treated and shall have over members of the home force the like powers of command as if he were a member of the home force of relative rank; and
  - (b) if the forces are acting in combination, any officer of the other force appointed by His Majesty, or in accordance with regulations made by or by authority of His Majesty, to command the combined force, or any part thereof, shall be treated and shall have over members of the home force the like powers of command and punishment, and may be invested with the like authority to convene, and confirm the findings and sentences of, courts martial as if he were an officer of the home force of relative rank and holding the same command.
- (5) For the purposes of this section, forces shall be deemed to be serving together or acting in combination if and only if they are declared to be so serving or so acting by order of the Governor in Council; and the relative rank of members of the home forces and of the other forces shall be such as may be prescribed by regulations made by His Majesty."

It will be seen that the Act provides for *two* types of relationship: "serving together" and "acting in combination". Under the former, as interpreted by the lawyers, the forces are independent of each other. With the forces "in combination", however, command is unified and the commander of one force possesses correspondingly wide powers over the other. It may be noted at once that during the Second World War a considerable part, at least, of the Canadian force *in the United Kingdom* was normally "serving together" with the British, and not under the control of the War Office or of any British commander. However, when active operations became imminent, or when a Canadian formation was assigned a definite operational role in the defence of the United Kingdom, Canadian forces concerned were placed "in combination" with the British formations detailed for the task and thus passed under higher British command.

The interpretation and implementation of the Visiting Forces Act gave much employment to lawyers and many headaches to staff officers. At the

<sup>1</sup>In this statute, "home force" means a Canadian force; "other force" means one belonging to another Commonwealth country.

outbreak of war the Canadian Government appointed an inter-departmental committee to consider and report upon the legal and constitutional questions raised by the Act. This Committee made its report in October 1939.<sup>2</sup> On this basis, the Minister of National Defence recommended that an order-in-council be made placing the Canadian military forces in Great Britain in the position of "serving together" with those of the United Kingdom and stating that such forces would be "in combination" with those of the United Kingdom from the time of embarkation for, and while serving on, the continent of Europe. Such an order-in-council (P.C. 3391) was duly made on 2 November 1939.<sup>3</sup> In order to meet any situation which might demand a unified command within Britain, it provided that portions of the Canadian forces might be placed "in combination" by orders issued by Canadian service authorities designated for the purpose by the Minister of National Defence.\* Subsequently the Minister designated the G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division and the Senior Combatant Officer of Canadian Military Headquarters, London, as appropriate "Canadian Service Authorities" under P.C. 3391.

The memorandum of instructions entitled "Organization and Administration of Canadian Forces Overseas" which General McNaughton received before leaving Canada<sup>4</sup> did not define the relationship between the G.O.C. 1st Division and the British military authorities beyond providing, "All matters concerning military operations and discipline in the Field, being the direct responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in the theatre of operations, will be dealt with by the General Officer Commanding, Canadian Forces in the Field, through the Commander-in-Chief, whose powers in this regard are exercisable within the limitations laid down in the Visiting Forces Act. . . ." In the conditions of 1939, no further directive seemed necessary; but, as we have already shown, events were to develop in a manner which nobody foresaw.

During the winter of 1939-40 discussions with the War Office clarified the status of Canadian troops in Britain vis-a-vis the United Kingdom forces. As we have seen (above, page 231) these conversations resulted particularly in establishing the fact that training policy was to be controlled by the Canadian authorities.<sup>5</sup>

The first necessity for taking action under the Visiting Forces Act in an important operational emergency arose in connection with the Norwegian campaign.

\*"That, in respect of any Military and Air Forces of Canada serving in the United Kingdom, those parts thereof as may from time to time be detailed for that purpose by the appropriate Canadian Service Authorities as from time to time designated by the Minister of National Defence, shall act in combination with those Forces of the United Kingdom to which the same have been so detailed."

## The Proposal to Send Canadian Troops to Norway

What the First Lord of the Admiralty called a period of "strange and unnatural calm" came to a sudden and violent end on 9 April 1940 when the Germans invaded Norway and Denmark. The latter country was completely overrun at once, and in Norway the Germans, acting with the combination of unscrupulousness, energy and tactical skill which they were so often to display in this war, established themselves so firmly in twenty-four hours in Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger, Kristiansand and Narvik that they were not evicted from Norway until the general collapse of their European empire in 1945.

The British authorities were caught without either appropriate plans or adequate organized forces for the campaign thus thrust upon them. It is true that there had been a plan to intervene, through Norway, on behalf of Finland in the latter's war with Russia which ended in a Finnish surrender in March; it was also hoped to deny Swedish iron ore to the Germans. The decision to mine the inshore passages known as the "Norwegian Leads" (taken by the Anglo-French Supreme War Council on 28 March, as a result of the Germans' use of the Leads for moving ore to Germany from Narvik, and justified as a reprisal against German illegalities in the conduct of the maritime war)<sup>7</sup> had been accompanied by a decision to send British and French troops to Narvik, and to dispatch other forces to Stavanger, Bergen and Trondheim, to deny these places to the enemy. This was a precaution against the mining provoking German action, and the Allies did not intend actually to land troops in Norway until the Germans had violated Norwegian territory, or there was clear evidence of their intention to do so.<sup>8</sup> The forces for Stavanger and Bergen were embarked in cruisers at Rosyth on 7 April, but were hastily put ashore again on the following day when news arrived that the German fleet was out.<sup>9</sup> When it became clear that the Home Fleet and the Royal Air Force had not succeeded in interfering effectively with the German invasion of Norway, it was necessary to make new plans, although the small forces earmarked for the previous scheme were still available.

It may be noted here that during the Norwegian campaign the Germans captured documents revealing the state of British preparations before the invasion. They naturally made much of these for propaganda purposes.\* However, the Nazis had by this period established such a reputation for mendacity that very few people believed them even when they were telling

\*The present writer possesses a beautifully printed volume entitled *Britain's Designs on Norway: Documents Concerning the Anglo-French Policy of Extending the War*, published by the German Library of Information, New York, later in 1940. These include facsimiles of documents captured from the Headquarters of the 148th British Infantry Brigade, including an operation instruction dated 6 April.

part of the truth. In fact, of course, the German enterprise had been planned long before the Anglo-French operation took definite shape. The acquisition of bases in Norway was recommended to Hitler by Admiral Raeder as early as 10 October 1939. In December the Norwegian traitor Quisling came to Berlin and arrangements were made with him. On 16 February H.M.S. *Cossack* entered Norwegian waters to rescue British seamen from the German ship *Altmark*. Hitler issued his preliminary directive for the attack on Norway on 1 March. On 26 March he agreed to launch the operation ("*Weserübung*") "about the time of the new moon" (7 April), and the date was specifically fixed by another directive of 2 April.<sup>10</sup>

Faced with the need for forces to act in Norway, the War Office turned in due course to the Canadian military authorities in the United Kingdom. No approach was made to them, however, until 16 April, a week after the German operation began. In the meantime, the British had been developing plans for counter-action and taking the first steps. Two places in Norway commanded particular attention: Narvik, the ore port in the far north, and Trondheim in Central Norway, which had direct railway connection with Oslo and offered the hope of effectively supporting Norwegian resistance. By 10 April British plans had crystallized to the extent of a decision to take both Trondheim and Narvik. The Narvik expedition was launched first. It was a relatively simple matter to reassemble the force previously intended for action in Norway, and its first flight sailed from Britain on 12 April.<sup>11</sup>

The plan for the enterprise against Trondheim took shape rather more slowly, but it hardened (at least temporarily) during 13-16 April in the form of a triple operation: there were to be landings at Namsos, north of Trondheim, and at Aandalsnes to the south of it, followed by a frontal combined operation against Trondheim itself.<sup>12</sup> On 14 April, when the Chief of the Imperial General Staff issued his instructions to Major-General Carton de Wiart, who was to command at Namsos and eventually to command the Allied forces in Central Norway, the plan was still fluid, and there was no reference in the instruction either to an intended landing at Aandalsnes or to any use of Canadian troops.<sup>13</sup> By the night of 15-16 April, however, the Aandalsnes landing had been added and the plan for the direct attack on Trondheim further elaborated.<sup>14</sup> In this latter phase Canadian assistance was required.

At eleven o'clock in the morning of 16 April Major-General R. H. Dewing, Director of Military Operations in the War Office, came to C.M.H.Q. and placed before General Crerar an outline of the proposed operations, accompanied by a request that the Canadians, "in view of lack of other trained troops in the United Kingdom", might take part. The scheme is thus outlined in General Crerar's war diary:

The proposed operation is that Maj.-Gen. de Wiart's force, having landed at Namsos on 16th will advance south on Trondheim; heavy naval forces will enter the fjord and 2 battalions of Guards will land to capture the aerodrome; a subsidiary landing party is planned at Romsdals, to advance north along the railway on Trondheim. To neutralize the German-held forts commanding Trondheim fjord, it is planned to land several parties of infantry from destroyers, to take them in rear; 8 parties of about 100 infantry will be needed, the best type of personnel, and War Office suggests Canadians might furnish these parties. Leadership and initiative essential qualifications for their task.

General McNaughton at once came to C.M.H.Q. from Aldershot, and he and Crerar went to the War Office. They saw General Dewing, and McNaughton subsequently had an interview with the C.I.G.S. McNaughton had already received from the Deputy Judge Advocate General at C.M.H.Q. the advice that he had the legal authority to detail Canadian troops for such an operation, and accordingly he agreed to assist.<sup>15</sup> General Ironside said that "under the particular circumstances of the shortage of available troops" his acceptance was much appreciated. Detailed plans for the attack, it was explained, were still being worked out.<sup>16</sup> Since they did not necessarily involve landings at the forts, it is possible that the Canadians, if employed at all, might have been used for the main landings.

General McNaughton immediately set about organizing the force required. It was drawn from the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade; as the brigade commander, Brigadier G. R. Pearkes, V.C., was ill, the acting commander, Colonel E. W. Sansom, was appointed to command the party. Two of the brigade's battalions (Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and The Edmonton Regiment) were to take part; they were considered "the most advanced units in training"<sup>17</sup> in the Division, and had some Scandinavians in their ranks. The heavy administrative tasks of providing special winter clothing, etc., were at once undertaken; and General McNaughton issued, under authority of P.C. 3391, an "Order of Detail" placing Colonel Sansom's force "in combination" with the British force organized for operations in Norway.\* The Canadian contingent as finally organized was 1300 strong. It left Aldershot for Scotland on the evening of 18 April, being played to the station by the pipes of The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. The following evening it arrived at Dunfermline, and went into camp to await embarkation.<sup>19</sup>

The embarkation never took place, for the British War Cabinet and its military advisers had changed their plans. The process of change has been described by Sir Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and by the British official historian of the campaign. On 17 April the Trondheim plan as sketched above was described to the War Cabinet, and the Chiefs of Staff testified that they agreed with it and, while admitting that it was

\*This was Order of Detail No. 2. No. 1 supposedly dealt with teams of Canadian anti-aircraft Lewis gunners lent in March 1940 for the protection of North Sea trawlers, but it is questionable whether any formal order was finally issued in this connection.<sup>18</sup>

risky, considered the risks worth running. However, by the 19th, "a vehement and decisive change in the opinions of the Chiefs of Staff and of the Admiralty" had taken place:

This change was brought about, first, by increasing realisation of the magnitude of the naval stake in hazarding so many of our finest capital ships, and also by War Office arguments that even if the Fleet got in and got out again, the opposed landing of the troops in the face of the German air power would be perilous. On the other hand, the landings which were already being successfully carried out both north and south of Trondheim seemed to all these authorities to offer a far less dangerous solution. The Chiefs of Staff drew up a long paper opposing "Operation Hammer".

The Chiefs now recommended, in other words, that the frontal attack on Trondheim be abandoned, and that enveloping movements from the flanks, where we already had troops ashore at Namsos and Aandalsnes, be adopted instead. Although Churchill himself was "indignant" at the reversal, he supported the Prime Minister in accepting the Chiefs' recommendation.<sup>20</sup>

Essentially, it would seem, then, the Trondheim scheme had already been abandoned at the time when Colonel Sansom and his men arrived at Dunfermline. However, the possibility that they might be used elsewhere was now considered, and a paper written by Mr. Churchill on 19 April suggested that their destination, along with that of the French troops who were available, could "for today or tomorrow be left open", and that the Canadians in particular should be considered as reinforcements for the Narvik enterprise.<sup>21</sup> The following day a staff officer at the War Office told Lt.-Col. E. L. M. Bums of C.M.H.Q. that Sansom's force would "probably" be required for "an operation similar to that previously intended, in another area"; he would give no details. Later on the 20th General McNaughton had a conference with General Dewing and it was agreed that if further plans involving the use of Canadians were made, McNaughton would be fully informed so that he could satisfy himself concerning the project and ensure that the troops were properly equipped. Dewing remarked that if the Canadian Division, "now at the top of the list for completion of equipment", were not available for Norway if required, then the equipment would have to be diverted elsewhere.<sup>22</sup> However, no further scheme for the employment of the Division, in whole or in part, in Norway was ever actually presented. For a time Sansom's force remained in reserve at Dunfermline, but the units were back in their barracks at Aldershot on 26 April.<sup>23</sup>

Only two men of the 1st Canadian Division, Privates G. Hansen and A. Johannson, saw active service in Norway. They were soldiers of the Saskatoon Light Infantry (M.G.), who spoke Norwegian and were lent as interpreters to the 1st Battalion of the King's, Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, their own unit's allied regiment. They saw action in the neighbourhood of Dombaas with their adopted battalion, and withdrew with it through Aandalsnes in due course. (They recorded afterwards that the main language difficulty they had met was in understanding Yorkshire English.)<sup>24</sup>



The 1st Division had suffered the first of many disappointments. Whether the frontal attack on Trondheim could have succeeded, had it been attempted, there is no point in discussing here. It was clearly a perilous enterprise, and not least the Canadian share in it as first proposed. That the Canadian commander was prepared to commit his force to so desperate a venture is evidence that the long period in which the Canadians took no part in active operations was not the result of any reluctance to embark upon dangerous projects.

Little further space need be devoted to this "ramshackle" campaign. The Namsos and Aandsnes operations belied their early promise, and by the morning of 3 May the Allied forces had been withdrawn from both areas. At Narvik the attack developed slowly. The town was captured, but only on 28 May, when orders had already been issued for the evacuation of Norway. The last British and French troops left the country on 8 June.<sup>25</sup> A greater emergency had already arisen, and a greater reverse been suffered, in France and the Low Countries. The new crisis was faced by a new British Government. The Norwegian fiasco had brought down the Chamberlain cabinet, and Winston Churchill was now Prime Minister.

As we have seen, the situation on 16 April when Generals Crerar and McNaughton were consulted by the War Office admitted of no delay, and McNaughton, having been advised that it lay within his legal competence to do so, immediately agreed to permit troops to go to Norway. He did not refer the question to Ottawa—a procedure which would inevitably have entailed some loss of time. Only on the evening of 17 April was a telegram dispatched to the Minister of National Defence through Canada House advising of the action taken and the intention that the Canadian force should leave Aldershot the following evening.<sup>26</sup> The Canadian Government\* did not find this procedure satisfactory. A reply received in London on the morning of the 18th approved sending the force, but remarked, "It is considered however that such a commitment should not have been entered without prior reference to National Defence and approval of Canadian Government". A concurrent telegram from the Department of External Affairs to the High Commissioner in London said the same thing in more detail:

We would have expected that Canadian Government would have been informed by United Kingdom Government immediately participation referred to was required. . . . We feel that when consultation commenced intimation should have at once been given by yourself or G.O.C. to afford Canadian Government reasonable opportunity pass on a disposition of such importance to Canadian people as diversion of a portion personnel of present formation to a special Mission of this kind which is a radical departure pre-considered policy and plan.

\*At this moment, in the absence of Mr. King in the United States, Colonel Ralston (then Minister of Finance) was "executing the functions" of Prime Minister.

The High Commissioner (Mr. Vincent Massey) immediately replied explaining that the G.O.C. had fully satisfied himself that the military situation justified using Canadian forces and required that orders be given at once. He continued, "In discharge of his responsibility in this matter actions of G.O.C. were based on designation of Minister under authority P.C. 3391 dated 2nd November, 1939, which require that he should act as necessitated by Military exigency of moment." The authorities in Ottawa, however, were not mollified. A further telegram of 19 April remarked, "As I previously indicated, we consider any such proposal should have been made by Government of United Kingdom to Government of Canada. From your telegram it does not appear why immediately request was made by C.I.G.S. to G.O.C. advice was not given us to permit consideration pending receipt of observations and recommendation of G.O.C. arising from consultation with War Office. Action by Canadian service authority under paragraph III of P.C. 3391 in detailing forces to act in combination is not considered to relate to service beyond United Kingdom."<sup>27</sup>

Just at this time, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Norman Rogers) arrived in the United Kingdom on a visit arranged before the emergency arose. He discussed the question with General McNaughton, and a telegram which he sent to the Department of External Affairs on 22 April<sup>28</sup> indicates that he had come to the conclusion that there was force in the G.O.C.'s arguments. The effect of P.C. 3391, he wrote, was under consideration: "Will advise you later of any revision that appears to be necessary but wish to emphasize that there are dynamic features in present military situation which argue against too rigid limitation upon actions taken to meet possible emergencies."

The issue is too clear to require extended comment. On one side the G.O.C. saw primarily the exigencies of the military situation and the need for immediate action, circumstances which none could gainsay. On the other, the Canadian Government was determined that its forces should not be committed to a completely new enterprise without reference to itself. In this particular instance, the authorities in Ottawa were understandably nettled by the fact, which emerged during the discussion, that over thirty hours had passed after the first proposition was made before any information concerning it was sent to Canada. Such a delay never happened again.

It was plain, however, that military expediency required a more exact definition of the powers of the senior Canadian commander overseas in such matters, nor was it hard to see the desirability of his being given a larger discretion than that implied in this exchange of telegrams. The question was discussed in the Canadian House of Commons in the spring of 1941, and the Minister of National Defence, Colonel Ralston, committed himself to a definite statement that troops could not be moved out of the United Kingdom without the Government's consent. "There is no doubt whatever",

he said, "that the Canadian government was consulted about the Norway expedition, and it gave its express approval. I wish to say, just to clinch that, that the decision as to the employment of troops outside the United Kingdom is a matter for the Canadian government . . . the appropriate Canadian service authority [under the Visiting Forces Act] cannot authorize the embarkation of Canadian forces from the United Kingdom without the authority of the Minister of National Defence."<sup>29</sup> General McNaughton, who had felt deeply the censure upon him which he thought was implied in the cables about Norway, discussed this statement with Mr. King when the Prime Minister visited England later in the year. His memorandum of the conversations<sup>30</sup> indicates that he asked for a more liberal policy:

Question of restriction on use of troops. Ralston's statement in Commons which we felt had tied our hands. His attitude in the Norway affair. Conversation with Rogers. Warning that I would *not* accept censure, and that he should be very certain that he was right before he gave it.

On 10 September the Cabinet War Committee discussed the question. The remark was made that while troops could not be sent out of the United Kingdom on the sole authority of the Corps Commander under the law as it stood, it might be desirable to extend his authority to include operations based on the British Isles. As we shall see, this was the direction in which policy developed.

#### "Angel Move": The 1st Division and the Crisis in the Low Countries, May 1940

On 10 May 1940 another phase of the war began. That morning the German forces drove into Belgium and the Netherlands, two more weak and unoffending neutral states. This was the beginning of a campaign which in scarcely more than a month destroyed the Anglo-French alliance and placed Hitler in control of the coasts of Europe as far as the Pyrenees. These historic weeks passed without the Canadian troops in Britain being committed to the battle; but there were repeated proposals for sending them to France, and on one occasion a brigade actually crossed the Channel. These events we must now review.

In September 1939 a British Expeditionary Force commanded by General Lord Gort, V.C., was sent to France and took up positions on the Belgian border. Here it spent the winter, busily engaged in strengthening the inadequate defences of this frontier, along which the Maginot Line, which covered the Franco-German boundary, had never been extended. The British force was gradually built up until at the time of the German attack in May it amounted to ten divisions, plus three more, incomplete, which had been sent out "for labour duties and to continue training". It was organized in

three Corps. The plan had been to expand it by dispatching 'the 4th Corps from the United Kingdom "during the late summer". The 1st Canadian Division, which was training hard in England, was to form part of this Corps.<sup>31</sup> These arrangements, of course, were disrupted by the German blow.

During the winter, while the Allies were building up their forces with complacent deliberation, the Germans were preparing for a tremendous offensive in the spring. This operation, known by the code name "Gelb" (Yellow), originated in Hitler's "Directive No. 6 for the Conduct of the War", issued on 9 October 1939, which ordered preparations for an offensive "at the northern flank of the Western Front". Hitler desired to attack almost immediately, but was dissuaded. A succession of further instructions followed until 1 May, when orders were issued that a state of readiness should be maintained to enable the enterprise to be launched at any time on one day's notice.<sup>32</sup> The 10th brought the deluge.

The events which now took place are familiar and can be very rapidly summarized. The Belgians immediately called for help: and in accordance with what was known as Plan "D", made by the French command for use in such a contingency, the British and French forces on the frontier moved out of their fortified positions and went forward into Belgium, pivoting on the region of Sedan. The object was to occupy a position on the River Dyle, which it was considered would offer a shorter line of defence while at the same time protecting a large area of Belgium from the enemy. Whether or not this move was wise, disaster followed. The Germans struck with extraordinary speed and efficiency. The resistance of the Netherlands crumbled in a few days; the Dutch Army, with which the British and French had been able to make no effective contact, surrendered on 15 May, and the Queen and her Government took refuge in England. Simultaneously the whole Allied position in Belgium was imperilled by enemy penetration across the Meuse to the south. On 13-14 May the Germans broke through at Dinant and Sedan, creating a great bulge in the Allied line.\* On the 16th, accordingly, the B.E.F., and the First French Army on its right, were ordered to fall back to the Scheldt, and proceeded to do so. It proved impossible, however, to prevent the Allied forces being cut in two. The bulge south of Sedan became a break, and the German spearheads, tearing west across the communications of the Allied northern armies, reached the Channel coast in the Abbeville area on 20 May.<sup>33</sup>

During the next few days the Allies' hopes and plans centred upon severing the German corridor to the sea and renewing contact between the

\*The original German plan had been to make the main effort on the right, enveloping the Allies' northern flank-much the same scheme that had been used in 1914. This was abandoned in favour of a heavy punch in the Sedan area intended to lead to the isolation of the Northern armies. Generals Guderian, Blumentritt and Westphal all believe that the new plan originated with Manstein, Chief of Staff to Colonel-General von Rundstedt, commander of Army Group "A".

northern and southern armies. General Weygand, who replaced General Gamelin as Allied Commander-in-Chief on 20 May, proposed to stage an offensive along these lines, but it never materialized. On Thursday, 23 May, the position was roughly as follows. The Anglo-French forces cut off in the north and fighting with their backs to the sea were holding a line from Gravelines on the Channel coast inland to the vicinity of Denain, and thence north to around Menin (south-east of Ypres). From there to the Scheldt estuary it was prolonged by the Belgian Army. The situation as seen from England was obscure. Boulogne and Calais were immediately threatened by the German advance up the Channel coast from Abbeville; and it was not clear whether the land route between these places and Dunkirk remained open. It was obvious, that either the further operations or the withdrawal of the B.E.F. would depend upon the possession of one or more of these three ports. With the object of maintaining the B.E.F.'s essential communications, a British brigade group with tanks, commanded by Brigadier C. Nicholson, landed at Calais on 22-3 May. On the 22nd also two battalions of the Guards with some other troops were sent to Boulogne. This latter force, after considerable fighting with the advancing Germans, found the position untenable and was evacuated by destroyers on the night of 23-4 May.<sup>34</sup>

On the 23rd the 1st Canadian Division was drawn into the Allied calculations.\* Early in the morning General McNaughton was told that he was urgently needed at the War Office and that a brigade group of the Division should be prepared to move "as early as possible". A warning order was sent to the commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Armand A. Smith), and General McNaughton drove to London. He had an immediate conference with the C.I.G.S., General Crerar and several senior officers of the War Office also being present. General Ironside explained how the B.E.F.'s supply lines had been imperilled by the enemy advance, and said that he wished McNaughton to go to France "to re-establish the road and railway line through Hazebrouck and Armentieres as soon as possible". This was to be done by way of Calais, if possible; if not, then by way of Dunkirk. The C.I.G.S. added that McNaughton would be placed in command, of the troops in the area, including the brigade group then disembarking at Calais, and suggested that he might be reinforced by a mixed brigade from his own Division and such additional troops as were required. As communication with Lord Gort might be difficult if not impossible, McNaughton was to report directly to the C.I.G.S. The Canadian general

\*The episode which follows is recounted in some detail. This seems the more desirable as it is not mentioned either in the United Kingdom official history of the campaign or in Sir Winston Churchill's memoirs.

accepted the task and told Ironside that the 1st Brigade had been ordered to be ready to move by noon.<sup>35</sup>

After a further quick discussion of details, General McNaughton returned to Aldershot, issued his orders, and then drove to Dover, where the Brigade was to embark. There he conferred with the Vice Admiral commanding at the port (Sir Bertram Ramsay), Lieut.-General Sir Douglas Brownrigg, Adjutant General of the B.E.F., who had just arrived from Calais, and Major-General A. E. Percival, Assistant Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

From this conference there emerged two written instructions to McNaughton, both signed by Percival.<sup>36</sup> One followed the lines of the conference at the War Office that morning. The most essential parts of it ran as follows:

1. The communications between the B.E.F. now more or less in their old positions on the Franco-Belgian frontier and the ports of DUNQUERQUE [*sic*] and BOULOGNE have been cut . . .
3. It is important to re-establish the road and railway line through ST. OMER—HAZEBROUCK - ARMENTIERES as soon as possible.
4. You are appointed to command this operation.  
It should be carried out with the utmost possible speed and should be based mainly on CALAIS and DUNQUERQUE . . .
5. Comdr. at CALAIS, Brigadier Nicholson, has been instructed that his primary job is to get supplies forward to the B.E.F. That the best chance appears to be via DUNQUERQUE, and thence through YPRES. If enemy pressure necessitates, he is to move such of his troops as are mobile in the direction of DUNQUERQUE. Those which are not mobile are to remain where they are.
6. A mixed Brigade from the 1st Canadian Division is being prepared now.
7. If the ports will bear any more and you find you can take them a second Mixed Brigade of Canadians will be sent in the best way.
8. You should go provided to run a moving battle with liaison officers and a large proportion of motor cycles, as ordinary communications will not be able to be established at first owing to the amount of enemy mobile troops available.

This was the text of the other directive:

With reference to instructions already issued to you, you yourself with what staff you decide to take will carry out an immediate reconnaissance.

You should first proceed to CALAIS and review the situation there, then you should proceed to DUNQUERQUE and after seeing the situation there, you will report to the War Office as to whether you consider any useful purpose that [*sic*] can be served by landing a force in or near either CALAIS or DUNQUERQUE.

On your report coupled with the latest information available at the War Office at the time a decision will be taken as to whether the force can be despatched or not and if so So what port.

Both orders bore the same date and hour ("23 May 40, 2030 hrs"). In other words, General McNaughton was given a free choice between them. He could produce the first and take command in the Pas de Calais if he chose; on the other hand, if on arriving in the area he decided that the situation was not such that the original instructions remained valid, he could act on the second and simply report to the War Office.<sup>37</sup> Few officers have

had such wide discretion in so great a crisis. With the two sets of instructions in his pocket, McNaughton, accompanied by his G.S.O.1 (Lt.-Col. G. R. Turner), three junior staff officers, and ten men of No. 1 Canadian Provost Company,\* embarked in H.M. Destroyer *Verity* and sailed for Calais, which he reached half an hour before midnight.

At Calais he spent two hours, interviewing various officers, British and French, and gathering information. He did not see Nicholson, who was out going round his defences. Not much was known about the enemy. The British troops were holding a close perimeter and had had contact with the Germans at Sangatte, south-west of Calais. A road convoy, escorted by infantry and tanks, was about to set out for Dunkirk with supplies for the B.E.F. At 1:37 in the morning of 24 May the Canadian party sailed in H.M.S. *Verity* for Dunkirk. En route, the destroyer was several times attacked by enemy aircraft but arrived safely at 3:30.<sup>38</sup> In the meantime, General McNaughton had wirelessly to the War Office a report of what he had seen at Calais.<sup>39</sup> It remarked, "Most present garrison can be expected to do is hold perimeter in face of attack", and added that the troops were in good heart.†

At 4:45 a.m. General McNaughton sent through his staff at Dover a further report to the C.I.G.S., emphasizing the importance of Calais and expressing the opinion that the Canadians should be used "to strengthen the situation" there. Conferring with Brigadier R. H. R. Parminter, Lord Gort's Deputy Quartermaster General, who had been sent back to hasten supplies, McNaughton learned that the B.E.F. was threatened with an ammunition shortage. Dunkirk was weakly held, but two French divisions under General Fagalde had been ordered to take up positions safeguarding the port. Fagalde was being placed under the direction of Admiral Abrial, the "Amiral Nord", with whom McNaughton discussed the situation. Early in the morning Fagalde arrived and confirmed that these divisions were on the way. By this time it was known that the convoy from Calais had been turned back by enemy armour, only three tanks succeeding in breaking through. The road from Calais to Dunkirk was now closed. Information concerning enemy attacks continued to come in. There was pressure on the line of the River Aa, between Calais and Dunkirk, and Calais itself was being bombed and shelled. Shortly before ten o'clock McNaughton telephoned one of his staff at Dover and instructed him to seek permission from General Dewing for him to return to England to discuss the situation "with a responsible representative of the War Office", for there were aspects

\*This company, the 1st Division's military police unit, was raised in 1939 entirely from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. See Asst. Commissioner L. H. Nicholson, "Battle-dress Patrol" (*Royal Canadian Mounted Police Quarterly*, October 1946-January 1947).

†Brig. Nicholson was later told that he and his men must fight to a finish to keep pressure off the B.E.F. at Dunkirk, and they did so. Resistance in Calais ended late on 26 May.<sup>40</sup>

which could not be described over the telephone (see below, page 272). Before a decision could be obtained from Dewing, a senior staff officer of the War Office, Lt.-Col. A. H. Hornby, called General McNaughton in another connection and agreed that his return was desirable<sup>41</sup> General Crerar was with Hornby during this conversation.<sup>42</sup> McNaughton and his party left Dunkirk immediately in the *Verity*, and were back in Dover about one in the afternoon.

In the meantime, there had been great activity at Aldershot. The force to take part in what was known as "Angel Move" was to consist of a small divisional headquarters plus the units of the 1st Brigade (The Royal Canadian Regiment, The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment and the 48th Highlanders of Canada), two machine-gun battalions, two anti-tank batteries, the 3rd Field Regiment R.C.A., the 1st Field Company R.C.E., the 4th Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C., and some detachments.<sup>43</sup> The machine-gun battalions were not to go at once, and the field regiment, which was at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain, was to move through Southampton. The rest of the force was to sail in two flights from Dover, probably on the morning and afternoon of 24 May. Tremendous efforts were required to collect the necessary supplies, ammunition being a special problem.<sup>44</sup> In the early morning of 24 May the Canadian units began to arrive at Dover, and by eleven o'clock those of the first flight, including the Brigade Headquarters, the 48th Highlanders and the R.C.R., were embarked and ready to sail. However, as a result of General McNaughton's reconnaissance, they never sailed.

At Dover, the G.O.C. on his return from Dunkirk had found no "responsible representative of the War Office"; and after telephoning Dewing he drove to London. At 4:50 p.m. he reported to the C.I.G.S. at a meeting in the latter's office which was attended by the principal officers of the War Office as well as General Crerar and Lt.-Cols. Turner and Homby. It emerged that, with General Fagalde's two divisions in the Dunkirk area and two British divisions reported to be moving towards Aire and St. Omer, the small reinforcement represented by the Canadian brigade group would not contribute materially to improving the situation; on the other hand, if the French troops were not in a mood to fight, there seemed little point in throwing the Canadians into the midst of a mass of dispirited soldiers and civilian refugees. The unanimous conclusion of those present was that there was no purpose in sending the Canadian force to Dunkirk. McNaughton then accompanied General Ironside to a meeting of the Defence Ministers and Chiefs of Staff, which was attended by Mr. Churchill, Mr. A. V. Alexander, Mr. Eden, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound (First Sea Lord), Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall (Chief of the Air Staff), and others. McNaughton again reported what he had seen and heard. No final decision was taken, the Prime Minister stating that he



"wished General McNaughton to consider himself at two hours' notice for any eventuality".<sup>45</sup> However, it was impossible for the troops to remain embarked indefinitely, and they were ordered back to Aldershot. To the men at Dover, who had waited on board all day, the order was a bitter disappointment. "A very flat feeling for all of us who had been highly keyed up", recorded the diarist of Brigadier Smith's headquarters.<sup>46</sup>

The Canadian Government had been informed of the intended operation as soon as it was proposed.<sup>47</sup> An immediate reply came back: "We have been deeply moved by the momentous news contained in your telegram. We shall all look forward with deep anxiety but firm confidence to the part that will be taken by our Canadian men in the hard and vital task of the next few days."<sup>48</sup> The project that had occasioned this message was formally cancelled on 25 May,<sup>49</sup> but more was to be heard of it.

### The Dunkirk Evacuation

On the further side of the Channel, Lord Gort was anxious for reinforcements from England. His situation was becoming increasingly perilous; the Belgian Army on his left was weakening under the German onslaught, and he was obliged to think in terms of falling back upon the coast in the hope of being able to evacuate his army through Dunkirk. Early on 25 May he was informed of the decision not to send Canadians to that port.<sup>50</sup> He considered, however, that it would be useful to have "a nucleus of fresh and well trained troops on the bridgehead position", and (later on the 25th, it would seem) he asked the War Office to send him a Canadian brigade.<sup>51</sup> The War Office prepared to comply. At 1:50 a.m. on 26 May, Headquarters 1st Canadian Division was informed that the previous scheme had been revived, and that the same troops made ready a few days before would embark on the night of 26-7 May. Warning orders were issued to the units, and at about 10 a.m. Generals McNaughton and Crerar went to Whitehall to discuss the project with General Sir John Dill (who had returned from France in April to become V.C.I.G.S. and was now about to be appointed C.I.G.S.) and General Dewing. The records indicate that all four generals were in accord in the view that it was useless to send more troops across the Channel. McNaughton nevertheless made it clear that he was quite prepared to undertake the operation if it was decided upon, provided only that his artillery could be dispatched with the rest of the force (it had been indicated that the field guns would not arrive until at least twenty-four hours after the infantry).<sup>52</sup>

General Ironside and the Secretary of State for War subsequently joined in the discussion, and Mr. Eden showed "some perturbation"<sup>53</sup> at the doubts

which were being expressed about the operation, as the British War Cabinet, acting on the advice of the Chiefs of Staff, had decided on the previous evening that the Canadian brigade should go. McNaughton told Eden that his objection to the plan "was not based on any timidity but rather on a desire to get the best possible value for the effort made", and added that while the matter was being further considered he would make every effort to ensure that the brigade group could "go tonight complete with guns if the Prime Minister and War Cabinet decide that it should be sent". In the course of the discussion the British generals had referred more than once to the fact that the defence of Britain was now an essential consideration and that troops important to this object should not be thrown away for the sake of what Dewing is reported to have called "a gesture to help the B.E.F."<sup>54</sup>

Following this discussion, the C.I.G.S. showed McNaughton and Crerar the draft of a telegram to Lord Gort informing him that it was unlikely the Canadians would go; but the project was not cancelled until later in the day, when Mr. Churchill's concurrence was obtained.<sup>55</sup> Soon after noon the troops at Aldershot, who were busy preparing for the move, received word of this second cancellation. This time, however, the vehicles were left loaded and the 1st Brigade remained on eight hours' notice. This proved a wise precaution. Late in the afternoon Gort telegraphed Eden, strongly requesting that the Canadian brigade should go and be followed if possible by a second. "These troops are required urgently to assist withdrawal", he wrote. Some hours later he repeated his plea, stating that the Canadians were required "to enable offensive mobile operations to be undertaken on Belgian front by other troops in order to safeguard security of withdrawal".<sup>56</sup> Shortly after seven o'clock in the morning of the 27th General Dewing telephoned General McNaughton to the following effect (the elliptical manner of speech was adopted in case the conversation was overheard):<sup>57</sup>

Have had conversation with fellow on the other side [Gort]; he has made an appeal to be passed on. My recommendation is the same as yesterday, but no one should be far away as the matter will be considered by the higher ones about 1000 hrs. I have seen our new man [Dill] and his view is the same as yesterday. However, black coats may not accept and movement control has been warned.

The divisional staff and Brigadier Smith were advised, but nothing was said to the units. During the day General McNaughton and the staff drew up a revised composition for the proposed force. "It was agreed that it should be drastically reduced as regards Headquarters and certain arms, in view of the only result which it could reasonably achieve."<sup>58</sup> But military opinion at the War Office was now strongly against the scheme, and the "black coats" evidently agreed; for in the course of the afternoon Crerar was able to tell McNaughton by telephone, "The landing operation show is definitely off".<sup>59</sup> Thus was "Angel Move" finally relegated to limbo.

The Dunkirk evacuation was now under way. It had begun as early as 27 May, when about 5000 men took ship, but embarkation on a really large scale started only on the 29th. The Anglo-French situation had by then been still further endangered by the Belgian surrender, which took place on the morning of the 28th.\* In the end, in defiance of the very grim forecasts made in the beginning, some 338,000 British and Allied soldiers were successfully withdrawn; but their heavy equipment had to be left behind.<sup>60</sup> It was an all but disarmed Expeditionary Force that returned to England.

On 27 and 28 May Dewing and McNaughton exchanged letters which merit quotation at length.<sup>61</sup> Dewing's ran:

27 May, 1940.

My dear Andy,

I am afraid your Division, or a good portion of it, have spent a lot of time on fruitless preparations in connection with their proposed employment yesterday morning. . . . I hope there will be no further question of putting troops into Dunkirk, though even tonight the question has been re-opened by a message from Gort asking for support there.

I am absolutely convinced in my mind that to put fresh troops into Dunkirk now with little or no transport would be militarily quite wrong. The most they could do would be to hold the outskirts of the town. and that would not secure the port for Lord Gort. In fact, it would be throwing good material into a quicksand which is already on the way to engulfing far too much. I don't believe it would add anything to what we should save from the quicksand.

I think, too, there is the greatest importance, as well as the greatest difficulty, at the present time of seeing more than the drama that is immediately before our eyes. We must remember that we have got to win this war, first by defending England and giving the German a jolt when he attacks here; and next by building up a fresh Field Force out of the ruins of the old. Your Division and the 52nd may be vital to the first task, and with the 51st which is already in France will be the keystone on which the new Field Force will be built.

These are the reasons which have influenced me in throwing what little weight I have against the employment of your Division or any part of it in Dunkirk. The part you have been asked to play has been extraordinarily difficult. You went off on your first visit to Calais and Dunkirk full of fire and determination to use your troops to save the B.E.F. What you thought of it as a military proposition then I don't fully know, but you were absolutely determined to do thoroughly whatever might be asked of you. Today, I think you share a good many of my feelings of the unsoundness of committing fresh troops to Dunkirk. It was much more difficult for you to express that, because you naturally had the feeling that you might be giving the impression that you and the Canadian troops were not ready to undertake a desperate adventure. I can assure you that you did not give that impression. We all know you far too well for it to be possible for any of us to entertain that suspicion for one moment; and I only mention it because I think it was in your mind.

The opportunity to use the Division will come soon enough, but it must come in circumstances in which it can play a sound military role, as dashing as you like, but militarily practicable.

General McNaughton replied next day:

Aldershot, Hants, 28 May, 1940.

My dear Dick,

On my return from Chatham this evening, I have your letter of yesterday's date and I very deeply appreciate your friendly thought in telling me of your sympathetic

\*The Belgian garrison of Fort Pepinster, one of the forts of Liege, which had been resisting since 11 May, gave in only on the 29th.

understanding of the position in which I found myself in the difficult circumstances of the last few days. You have clearly penetrated to the motives and considerations which governed my actions and it is a great comfort to me to know that this is so.

I was all for Calais on the first night because I thought that from that flank we might, at the least, delay the close investment of Dunkerque and with British troops in effective occupation of the perimeter there was some certainty that our deployment could be effected in an orderly and proper manner.

As for Dunkerque, from the beginning I could not see our employment there as a practical operation of war. With our small force we could not go beyond the near perimeter. De Fagalde, under his mandate, from Weygand, was already in command with his 68th Division in movement and able to reach position much earlier than we. He, as a French general clearly in close sympathy with the Admiral du Nord and with all the local naval, military and air intelligence service at his disposal, was better placed than I, with no British troops on the spot and no staff with local knowledge, to exercise co-ordination. If I had attempted to do so and produced my instructions from Ironside, they might well have folded up!

When I heard from De Fagalde of his plan for the withdrawal of his 60th Division [in the Bruges area] leaving a gap on the left, I was very anxious thinking that it might result in a torrent of German Infantry behind our lines. a far more serious matter than the five armoured divisions said to be operating northward in our vicinity. It was to give this, in my view, vital information that I asked permission to return to Dever and later to the War Office.

As for taking the force the next day or the day after to Dunkerque, I could only see it as a gesture of no very great value and I thought it was the sort of thing the enemy would like, that is to draw some part of our not too ample reserves into the melee where they could be dealt with cheaply. For these reasons and others of like sort I could not enthuse over the project put before me.

After my visit to Macdougall of the Home Forces\* on the afternoon of 26 May and in the light of his explanation of the situation in the United Kingdom I knew that it would have been an act of utter folly to have sent us over and when, on the morning of 27 May, I heard from you that the project might again be on I determined to cut our force to a minimum so as not to divert any more men or resources from the defence of the United Kingdom than was absolutely necessary for the purpose of a gesture and if the War Cabinet had called on us my orders for a force, armed only with Small Arms and Anti-Tank guns and without field guns or transport, had been drafted; this force to be landed on the open beach from Dover so as to save time and perhaps avoid the dangers in the Channel from mines and air bombing.

However, thanks largely I think to the sound military judgment of yourself and of Dill this rather theatrical sacrifice was not required of us.

Our problem now is to beat Germany and to do this we must maintain at least a toe hold on this side of the Atlantic until great friendly forces can come. and I have faith they will come, to our assistance. The coast of the United Kingdom is the perimeter of the citadel which *must* be held. All else outside is now of secondary account. . . .

This correspondence provides the best commentary upon the events. And the outcome of the evacuation operation justified the generals' judgement. It is difficult to see how sending a Canadian brigade to Dunkirk could have contributed to bringing about a better result. It would, indeed, have introduced an unnecessary complication, would almost certainly have meant the loss of more equipment, and might well have meant the loss of more men.

\*Brigadier A. I. Macdougall, employed as Major General, General Staff, G.H.Q. Home Forces. It was during this interview that McNaughton suggested organizing his force in mobile groups and using it as a central reserve (see below).

## First Measures Against the Invasion Menace

From the time when the Germans broke into the Low Countries, increasing anxiety was felt for the safety of Britain herself. On 26 May, General McNaughton had produced the idea of organizing his division in nine mobile groups, each based on an infantry battalion, for action in the United Kingdom. He suggested that it might move to a central area (the Oxford region was mentioned) where it could be ready for immediate counter-attack against an enemy landing anywhere in southern England. This project was approved, though the area was changed. On 27 May orders were issued for the 1st Canadian Division to move to an assembly area in the district Kettering-Higham Ferrers-Northampton.<sup>62</sup>

Before the move took place, the Division and the Canadian ancillary troops were formed into a self-contained body known as "Canadian Force"; and on 29 May the new formation began the march to the Northampton area. It covered four nights, one brigade group moving each night in civilian buses hired for the purpose.<sup>63</sup> (In addition to the three infantry brigade groups, a "Canadian Force Reserve Group" had been formed from the ancillary artillery regiments and machine-gun battalions.) At Northampton, Canadian Force was in "G.H.Q. Reserve": that is, it was a reserve formation directly under G.H.Q. Home Forces. Its role was that of reinforcing the troops on the east coast between the north bank of the Thames and the south bank of the Humber in case of attack there. Each brigade was instructed to reconnoitre one sector of this front, and the routes leading to it. General McNaughton himself, and other officers of his headquarters, also made reconnaissance trips in the area where the Force might be required to operate.<sup>64</sup>

The people of Northampton and the other towns in the new area seemed delighted to see the Canadians, gave them a great reception and entertained them warmly during their stay.<sup>65</sup> The stay, however, was very short. It was terminated by further events on the Continent. The Dunkirk evacuation was completed on Tuesday, 4 June. The British Government at this moment was uncertain as to the Germans' next move. The situation was frankly stated by Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons on this same day: "We must expect another blow to be struck almost immediately at us or at France". Two days earlier, the Prime Minister had put his views on paper, for the benefit of the Chiefs of Staff. The memorandum<sup>66</sup> ran in part:

3. The B.E.F. in France must immediately be reconstituted, otherwise the French will not continue in the war. Even if Paris is lost, they must be adjured to continue a gigantic guerrilla. A scheme should be considered for a bridgehead and area of disembarkation in Brittany, where a large army can be developed. We must have plans worked out which will show the French that there is a way through if they will only be steadfast.
4. As soon as the B.E.F. is reconstituted for Home Defence, three divisions should be sent to join our two divisions south of the Somme, or wherever the

French left may be by then. It is for consideration whether the Canadian Division should not go at once...

I close with a general observation. As I have personally felt less afraid of a German attempt at invasion than of the piercing of the French line on the Somme or Aisne and the fall of Paris, I have naturally believed the Germans would choose the latter. . . . The next few days, before the B.E.F. or any substantial portion of it can be reorganised, must be considered as still critical.

On 4 June C.M.H.Q. telegraphed to Ottawa,<sup>67</sup>

It is now planned to move in near future certain divisions in the United Kingdom to France to join 51st Division at present Abbeville area and thus form the first corps of a reconstituted B.E.F. I am informed by decision taken yesterday it is not proposed immediately to utilize 1st Canadian Division for this purpose. Chiefs of Staff Committee views threat of enemy landings between the Thames and the Humber as definite and imminent and is not willing to release Canadian Force from important responsibilities now entrusted to it in this connection.

Speculation was ended, and the situation much altered, when on 5 June the Germans launched an offensive against General Weygand's line along the Somme and Aisne. On the 6th the War Office ordered Canadian Force back from Northampton to Aldershot. By the 8th the movement had been virtually completed, and that day Their Majesties the King and Queen visited the Division.<sup>68</sup> This honour was rightly interpreted as indicating that the units would shortly find themselves on the way to France.<sup>69</sup>

#### Forlorn Hope: The Second B.E.F., June 1940

On 29 May, when the Dunkirk evacuation was only beginning, Mr. Churchill had declared to the French Government his intention of building up "a new B.E.F."<sup>70</sup> It was now becoming a reality, although the hard facts of the situation reduced it to pitifully small proportions. Lieut.-General Sir Alan Brooke, who had been G.O.C. the 2nd Corps of the original British Expeditionary Force, was to command it until it could be further built up. The only British divisions in France after Dunkirk were the 51st (Highland) Division, which had been in the Saar region and had never joined Lord Gort, and the 1st Armoured Division, which had landed too late to make contact with him. These divisions were to be the foundation of the new B.E.F.; but before it could be formed the 51st was cut off in the Le Havre peninsula and the greater part of it was obliged to surrender on 12 June. The Armoured Division, which had been reduced in the beginning by the force sent to Calais, had suffered further in fighting on the Somme.<sup>71</sup>

Every division in England fit to move was now to be sent to France under General Brooke's command; but the grim fact was that for the moment there were only two such divisions. The 52nd (Lowland) Division had already been under orders to move; the move was now somewhat accelerated and began on 7 June.<sup>72</sup> The 1st Canadian Division was to

follow as soon as possible. The only other division which could be dispatched in the near future was the most forward of those evacuated from Dunkirk, the 3rd, commanded by Major-General B. L. Montgomery. It was warned on 8 June; but its movement could not begin until the 20th, and only one field regiment of artillery, and an anti-tank regiment less two batteries, would then be available to accompany it.<sup>73</sup> All the other Dunkirk divisions were still so short of equipment as to be incapable of taking part in an expeditionary movement for some time to come.

The generosity of Britain's action in sending her "only two formed divisions"<sup>74</sup> to support the French at this desperate moment has been recognized by General Weygand.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, there was a definite limit to the risks which the British Government was prepared to run for its ally. It would not throw into the cauldron the whole of the metropolitan fighter force of the R.A.F., on which Britain's safety depended. In the middle of May the Chief of the Air Staff supported Air Chief Marshal Dowding, A.O.C.-in-C. Fighter Command, in arguing that continuing to drain away the home defence force in attempts to save the situation in France would merely render the future successful defence of Britain impossible. Mr. Churchill resolved on 19 May that no more fighter squadrons would leave the country.<sup>76</sup>

The refusal to throw in all the resources of Fighter Command was deeply resented by the French. And in a purely military view the decision to commit every available Army division, while at the same time refusing the air support without which their operations could scarcely be effective, was a peculiar one. It emphasizes the fact, which indeed emerges clearly from Mr. Churchill's memoranda, that the formation of a new B.E.F. was a political rather than a military act; its object was to encourage the French and keep them in the war. It involved the likelihood of destruction for the divisions concerned, but the stakes were such that it cannot be said that it was wrong. At the same time, it seems clear in the light of later events that the British Government was wise to hold back the fighter squadrons. It seems unlikely that this force could in itself have turned the tide on the Continent; more probably, it would have been merely engulfed in the devouring quicksand. But it won the Battle of Britain later in the year and in doing so prevented the final loss of the war.

General Weygand has suggested that because there is doubt whether Hitler really intended to invade England, the argument from the Battle of Britain may be invalid.<sup>77</sup> It is difficult to agree with him. It is true that there is reason to think that Hitler never wholly committed his mind to the invasion project; but had the Luftwaffe won the Battle of Britain and obtained air superiority above the Channel, it is hard to believe that invasion would not have been attempted. It is even possible, though certainly not probable

that Britain might have been brought to ruin by the air weapon alone.\*

General Brooke received his orders on 10 June and sailed for France on the afternoon of the 12th.<sup>79</sup> There were officers at the War Office who never expected to see him again.<sup>80</sup>

The Canadian Government was being kept fully informed of developments affecting its forces in Britain. A telegram of 14 May had referred to the possibility of a movement "to theatre of operations" earlier than 15 June, a date which had been mentioned in earlier correspondence. With the concurrence of the Minister of National Defence, the C.G.S. informed General McNaughton on 15 May that this was approved "if you consider the circumstances warrant it". On 6 June Ottawa was advised of the orders which had been issued for the return of Canadian Force to Aldershot and the expectation that the Division would begin to move to France on 11 June. Later telegrams gave further details as these came to hand.<sup>81</sup> To clarify the legal position of the Canadian troops, McNaughton had executed a new Order of Detail under the Visiting Forces Act on 1 June.<sup>82</sup> This was the first such order in which the right to withdraw troops from combination was specifically included; it specified that the forces detailed in the Order would continue to act in combination with those of the United Kingdom "until I shall otherwise direct."

After "a period of intense activity" on the part of the administrative staffs of the 1st Division, preparations for the cross-Channel move were, for the most part, completed by 9 June. That day a divisional conference was held at which commanding officers were told the anticipated nature of the operations in France, and a telegram of "heartfelt good wishes" from the Prime Minister of Canada was read. On 11 June, there was another conference, dealing mainly with equipment. While it was in progress General Brooke arrived at Aldershot, accompanied by several members of his staff, and himself presided over the latter part of the meeting.<sup>83</sup> This visit gave General McNaughton an opportunity of discussing the forthcoming operations with the Corps Commander.

### The Role of the Second B.E.F.

It is not surprising that the plans for the operations of the Second B.E.F. are not clearly recorded, or that all concerned with executing them were not fully apprised of their nature. With the Anglo-French alliance rapidly falling asunder, and France herself tottering to ruin, it might have been surprising had it been otherwise. It is our task, however, to outline, as far as the

\*"The crux of the matter is air superiority. Once Germany had attained this, she might attempt to subjugate this country by air attack alone." (Paper by the British Chiefs of Staff, 26 May 1940).<sup>78</sup>



available records permit, the ideas which dominated the minds of those in control, and the nature of the Canadian share in the resulting plans.

The written instructions which General Brooke received from the Secretary of State for War were brief and general. He was simply informed that he was to command all British troops in France and to cooperate in the defeat of the enemy under the supreme command of General Weygand.<sup>84</sup>

It is necessary here to trace the history of one important project of this period: that for setting up what was called a "redoubt" (more accurately, a "reduit" or keep) in Brittany, upon which French forces could retreat, where the French Government might take refuge and continue to operate on French soil, and to which British assistance could be directed. It appears that this scheme was first discussed with General Weygand by the heads of the French Government on 29 and 30 May; and on 31 May the French Prime Minister (M. Paul Reynaud) gave Weygand written instructions to consider the possibility of forming "a national redoubt in the neighbourhood of a naval base, which would enable us to benefit from the freedom of the seas, and likewise to remain in close touch with our allies". This work, he said, should be laid out and provisioned like a fortress; it "might be situated in the Breton peninsula". Weygand had no faith in the scheme, but he gave instructions for work to begin at once with a good Corps Commander in charge.\* The plan was, he says, extended after consultation with the French Navy to cover not only Brittany but also the Cotentin peninsula, including the port of Cherbourg.<sup>86</sup> This extension made a dubious project still more impracticable. Published information does not indicate that the British Government was advised of it.

Weygand states<sup>87</sup> that the redoubt scheme was approved by Mr. Churchill at the meeting of the Anglo-French Supreme War Council on 31 May. It was doubtless discussed at this time, but it would seem that it was not mentioned during the Council's formal session.<sup>88</sup> As we have already seen, however, Churchill's memorandum sent to the British Chiefs of Staff two days later makes definite reference to the idea of a "bridgehead" in Brittany. On 11 June the Supreme War Council met again, at Briare. By this time, the Germans had broken through Weygand's line on the Somme and Aisne, and the situation was becoming desperate. Sir Winston Churchill has confirmed that at this meeting he agreed with Reynaud "to try to draw a kind of 'Torres Vedras line' across the foot of the Brittany peninsula".<sup>89</sup>

How far this idea was communicated to General Brooke before he embarked for France does not appear. The records of the conferences at

\*It appears nevertheless that when Reynaud on 13 June wrote Weygand emphasizing the importance of the "redoubt" scheme, the general replied (14 June) that on the 11th, when he drafted his order for general retreat, he had not known of the government's intention to set up a keep in Brittany.<sup>85</sup> Presumably he had regarded the earlier orders as merely precautionary.

Aldershot on 9 and 11 June give no details of the operational plans proposed to the Canadians; they were presumably not circulated for security reasons. Other evidence indicates, however, that Brooke had in mind, and described to General McNaughton, the Breton redoubt scheme or something very closely allied to it.

On 13 June, the day before McNaughton and his advanced headquarters left Aldershot, a draft operation instruction was prepared with a view to issue when the Division arrived in France. As things turned out, it was never issued; but it serves as a record of the roles of the B.E.F., and of the Canadian Division within it, as they were understood at McNaughton's headquarters after Brooke's visit.\* Its most important sections (omitting map references) ran as follows:

1. The political object of the reconstituted B.E.F. is to give moral support to the French Government by showing the determination of the British Empire to assist her ally with all available forces.
2. The military object of 1 Canadian Division is, in conjunction with other formations of 2 Corps, to threaten from the general line [ST.] NAZAIRE . . . RENNES . . . PONTORSON. . . the flank of a German advance towards LE MANS ... ANGERS ... NANTES ... and relieve pressure on the FRENCH Army by drawing GERMAN forces Westwards.
3. The coasts of the peninsula projecting westwards about 150 miles from the line [ST.] NAZAIRE - PONTORSON have deep water close to the shores and there are many good harbours. The average width from NORTH to SOUTH is about 70 miles. The flanks of a force operating in this area can be supported by the Navy. The country is hilly, intersected by many rivers and well wooded. From a study of the map it does not appear to be suited to the employment of large armoured formations. Apart from its extent, it is thus a favourable theatre for the operations visualized by the British forces available.
4. 2 Corps of the B.E.F. is to consist of the following formations:  
*52 Division. Landing at [ST.] NAZAIRE and assembling NORTH of the port.  
 1 Canadian Division and ancillary troops.  
 Landing at BREST ... and assembling N.E. of the port.  
 Remnants of 51 Division ...  
 Remnants of 1 Armoured Division ...  
 2 Corps Troops.*
5. It is the intention of the Corps Commander to concentrate the whole of 2 Corps in the area to the NORTH and SOUTH of RENNES as soon as formations are assembled.
6. Thus there are two divisions. part of a third, part of an armoured division and 2 Corps troops available for operations within the area defined above. A division may have to hold up to fifty miles of front ...

The movement instructions issued by the War Office for the Canadian Division<sup>91</sup> provided that motor transport, which was to move in advance, would embark at Falmouth and Plymouth; troops moving by rail would embark at Plymouth. Only a small proportion of drivers were allowed to go on the mechanical transport ships with their vehicles; the rest went

\*A copy of this draft, with covering letter dated 13 June, was sent to the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., for insertion at a future date in the Division's General Staff War Diary.<sup>90</sup> It is interesting to note that at this time, before starting for France, Divisional Headquarters completed its War Diaries to date and forwarded them to C.M.H.Q., along with divisional files not required for the operations in prospect. The 1st Canadian Division was, in effect, making its last will and testament, as it had good reason to do.

simultaneously on a "driver ship". The 1st Brigade, which had suffered so many disappointments in May, was to lead; and Brigadier Smith's first road parties left Aldershot on 8 June. The vehicles belonging to this brigade's three battalions and the 1st Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, as well as those of some administrative units, were loaded into ships which sailed for France on the 11th. It is recorded that at Plymouth all regimental control was lost "from the moment the vehicles reached the regulating point" at the port, and personnel and vehicles "became individual units in the hands of the Movement Control".<sup>92</sup>

### The 1st Brigade in France

As we have seen, it had been General McNaughton's understanding that his Division after landing at Brest would assemble north-east of that port. He had ordered Brigadier Smith to take command in the assembly area pending his own arrival. Smith was not told the precise area-the divisional headquarters had no information-but it was assumed that he would receive the necessary instructions upon arriving at Brest.<sup>93</sup> All these expectations were disappointed. The instructions, apparently originating in the War Office, which had been issued to Movement Control at Brest, were quite different from anything contemplated by McNaughton or Brooke. Headquarters Brest Garrison was informed on 6 June that the movement of the divisions arriving from England would be in accordance with Plan "W" -the same used for the movement of the original B.E.F. in 1939.<sup>94</sup> This involved using an assembly area about Laval and Le Mans, roughly 70 miles in advance of the line across the base of the Brittany peninsula which it had been suggested the Canadians were to hold. These unsuitable orders were put into effect in an equally inappropriate manner. When the ships carrying the 1st Brigade's transport docked at Brest on 12 and 13 June, Movement Control sent the vehicles off up-country in small parties as they were deposited on the dock. At a collecting point at Landivisiau the drivers were given route cards and mimeographed instructions and sent on in groups of ten vehicles, in some cases at least irrespective of units or of whether there were officers or N.C.Os. with the groups. (The war diary of the 1st Field Regiment, unlike several others, indicates that at Landivisiau vehicles were "sorted out into units" and an attempt was made to place "a senior N.C.O. or driver" (*sic*) in charge of each group.) As was to be expected, these conditions had an adverse effect on discipline, and there were some reports of drunkenness and reckless driving.<sup>95</sup>

The procedure with the rail parties was similar. Those of the 1st Field Regiment and the Supply Column R.C.A.S.C. landed at Brest on the 13th and were immediately sent forward by train to their destined assembly point,

Sable-sur-Sarthe, where they detrained on the morning of 14 June and made their way to their billets at Parce. The Brigade's main body, including its headquarters, embarked at Plymouth on 13 June and began to land at Brest early the following morning. Brigadier Smith had difficulty in obtaining orders, and when he received them found to his surprise that he was instructed to move to Sable. During the day the three infantry battalions and the brigade headquarters and attached units left Brest for this area in three trains. The first train carried the headquarters, the 48th Highlanders and the brigade anti-tank company.<sup>96</sup>

In the meantime, General Brooke had arrived in France and set up his rudimentary headquarters at Le Mans. Early on 14 June he met General Weygand, and together they subsequently discussed the situation with General Georges, Commander-in-Chief of the North-Eastern Theatre of Operations. Brooke in his subsequent report<sup>97</sup> stated that Weygand "spoke most frankly" and said that the French Army was no longer capable of organized resistance; it had broken up into four groups, considerable gaps existed between them, and coordinated action was no longer possible.\* "He then informed me", writes Brooke, "that, in accordance with a decision taken by the Allied Governments, Brittany was to be defended by holding a line across the peninsula in the vicinity of Rennes." This project, we have seen, must already have been familiar to Brooke. He says that both Weygand and Georges considered it impracticable for execution with the forces still available in the French leftward Army (the Tenth), even including the B.E.F. However, since the creation of the "redoubt" appeared to be the policy of their governments, the three generals signed a document<sup>99</sup> agreeing that with this scheme in view the British troops then disembarking (the rear echelons of the 52nd Division, the Canadian Division and the Corps Troops) would be concentrated at Rennes; while those fighting with the Tenth French Army (the Armoured Division, an improvised formation known as "Beauman Force", and part of the 52nd) would continue to serve under that Army but steps would be taken, so far as possible, to facilitate their future grouping with General Brooke's forces.

Returning to Le Mans, General Brooke communicated with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London. The latter said that he had no knowledge of the Brittany scheme but would consult the Prime Minister. Brooke recommended, in view of the state of the French Army, that further movement of British troops and material to France should be stopped and measures taken for evacuation. An hour later the C.I.G.S. telephoned "to say that the Prime Minister knew nothing of the Brittany plan", and that

\*Weygand's account does not indicate that he gave so grim an appreciation, and might indeed be taken as implying that he did not. Nevertheless, there is nothing improbable in Brooke's account. On Weygand's own showing, he had advised his government to sue for an armistice two days before.<sup>98</sup>

those elements of the B.E.F. not already under the orders of the Tenth French Army were to be evacuated.<sup>100</sup> As we have seen, Mr. Churchill certainly did know something of the Brittany plan, and the process by which his reply reached Brooke in this form remains obscure.

Brooke immediately issued orders for the withdrawal of those parts of the B.E.F. (including the Canadian Division) not fighting under French command. Withdrawing the troops actually incorporated in the Tenth Army was a more complicated business, particularly as Mr. Churchill was loath to authorize their evacuation in view of its possible effect upon relations with the French Government. On 15 June, indeed, he gave orders that no part of the 52nd Division was to be embarked; and only on the 17th, when the new Petain Government had already asked the Germans for an armistice, was final action taken to evacuate the British troops attached to the Tenth Army.<sup>101</sup>

At the time when the order reversing its movement was issued in the late afternoon of 14 June, the 1st Canadian Division was scattered over an enormous extent of territory (see Map 4). At least one unit was still at Northampton; many were in Aldershot, preparing to move; others were at Plymouth and Falmouth, embarked or preparing to embark; others again were at Brest or scattered along the roads between there and Le Mans; the 1st Field Regiment R.C.H.A. was, we have seen, at Parce in the assembly area; and the headquarters of the 1st Infantry Brigade, and its three battalions and some lesser units, were steaming towards that area in trains. It was simple to reverse the move of troops in England or on shipboard at Plymouth or Brest; but to extricate the units scattered across France was bound to be difficult.

The first Canadians to leave France were those who had landed at Brest during 14 June but had not yet entrained. These re-embarked in the course of the evening, and their ships, along with others whose troops had not landed, sailed for England the following morning.<sup>102</sup> In the assembly area about Sable, the road parties of various units, and the 1st Field Regiment, received the evacuation order in the early hours of 15 June; and Lt.-Col. J. H. Roberts, commanding the Field Regiment, got confirmation of it a few hours later from General Brooke himself, who had evacuated Le Mans that morning with his miniature staff and fell in with the Canadians on the road. The regiment drove back towards Brest, which the main party reached on the morning of 16 June. In accordance with orders from Headquarters Brest Garrison, transport vehicles were left outside the town (and later destroyed); the guns and trailers were taken to the congested east quay. No ships were available that day.<sup>103</sup>

Brooke's Chief of Staff (Major-General T. R. Eastwood) had issued instructions to Major-General P. de Fonblanque, a British officer who was G.O.C. Lines of Communication, that he would be responsible for the

evacuation. Transport and equipment which could not be loaded was to be made useless.<sup>104</sup> On 17 June Headquarters Brest Garrison issued to all units an order beginning, "The intention is to embark everyone today". Transport vehicles, it proceeded, were to be destroyed: "Only valuable vehicles and guns already notified to be retained for loading."<sup>105</sup>

Only, with difficulty were the guns of the R.C.H.A. saved from destruction. It would appear that General de Fonblanque\* and his staff were apprehensive lest attempts to save equipment might result in the loss of men. Lt.-Col. Roberts went to Garrison Headquarters and, in the words of his unit's diary, "fought hard for nearly two hours to save the guns". The order to destroy them was twice given and twice countermanded; and it is quite probable that they would finally have been destroyed had not the Garrison Commandant, Colonel W. B. Mackie, been an ex-cadet of the Royal Military College of Canada. Mackie spoke to de Fonblanque by telephone and obtained his reluctant acquiescence in embarking the guns. Roberts was told that he could load as many as he could get aboard by 4 p.m. It was then 2:15. By four he had loaded not only 24 field guns but in addition a dozen Bofors guns, seven predictors, three Bren carriers and several technical vehicles belonging to other units. The R.C.H.A.'s tractors and ammunition limbers had, however, to be abandoned.<sup>106</sup> According to its diary, the steamer *Bellerophon*, on which the guns were loaded, had "still had room enough to take everything that was on the docks". The three vessels carrying portions of the regiment sailed at 5:15 p.m. on 17 June, and docked the following morning at Plymouth and Falmouth. The loss of equipment sharpened the gunners' disgust at having had to scuttle without meeting the Germans. The R.C.H.A. diary commented tartly, "Although there was evidently no enemy within 200 miles, the withdrawal was conducted as a rout." †

The rail parties of the Canadian infantry left France before the artillery. The trains were duly turned back in the early hours of the 15th. That carrying The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment had reached Laval, that with The Royal Canadian Regiment a place "believed to have been Chateaubriant" (this is unlikely, as they had already passed through Laval, which is on a different line). These two trains were back in Brest that evening and the men upon them were re-embarked on a British steamer which sailed the next afternoon and made Plymouth on the 17th.<sup>107</sup>

Brigadier Smith's headquarters and the 48th Highlanders, on the leading train, had a more complicated experience. This train reached Sable, its

\*The strain under which this officer was working can be readily imagined. He died soon afterwards as a result of his exertions.

†It is a remarkable but incontestable fact that, although one of the R.C.H.A.'s guns had been damaged in a road accident en route to Parce and turned in to Ordnance, so that the regiment returned to Brest with only twenty-three 18/25 and 25-pounders, it brought its full complement of twenty-four back to England.

destination, before getting the reversal order. It was received from the mouth of a British Railway Traffic Officer, who was at first suspected of being a fifth columnist but identified himself satisfactorily.\* The train, not without some delay and some dispute with the engineer, was turned about and headed back towards Brest, with men of the 48th riding the locomotive as an emergency crew and others with tommy guns on the tender "to look after the recalcitrant engineer or any person trying to stop the train."<sup>109</sup> There were apprehensions of collision with a German armoured column. No such happening took place; but there was a mishap which might have been fatal. After leaving Rennes, it was noted that the train was passing through unfamiliar country. In fact, a mistake had been made in routing and it was on the way not to Brest but to St. Malo. By great good fortune, at that port there was a British steamer, the *Biarritz*. British troops of many regiments were already on board, but room was made for the Canadians. The overloaded vessel left harbour on the morning of the 16th and reached Southampton that afternoon.<sup>110</sup>

General McNaughton, who knew nothing of these happenings, was at Plymouth waiting to embark. His first intimation of the reversal of the Canadian movement came when he heard that Movement Control had ordered the Toronto Scottish Regiment, who were on shipboard, to go ashore. He then telephoned General Dewing, who said cryptically that the Canadians were needed now for "another battlefield". He could not say more over an open line, but McNaughton rightly surmised that the next operation was the defence of Britain.<sup>111</sup>

Only a word can be said of the evacuation of the rest of the B.E.F. The 52nd Division, part of which had got into action, and the remains of the Armoured Division were safely withdrawn through Brest and Cherbourg. At the latter place there was considerable German pressure (from Rommel's 7th Panzer Division); nevertheless, some vehicles and equipment, including 25 tanks, were embarked and saved for the defence of England.<sup>112</sup> When the last troopship left Cherbourg, "the Germans had penetrated to within three miles of the harbour".<sup>113</sup> There seems to have been less panic here than there was at Brest, where the enemy was much farther away. The commander of the Armoured Division records experiences at Brest similar to the Canadians': ". . . although vehicles and stores were on the quayside they had to be left behind—damaged or destroyed . . . In material losses were severe owing to the last-minute failure to provide-or to use-the necessary shipping at Brest".<sup>114</sup>

\*Lt.-Col. E. W. Haldenby of the 48th asked him his name. He replied that it was Oates. Haldenby then inquired whether he had ever had a relative whom he might have heard of. The officer thought this unlikely, but when pressed admitted that a member of his family had gone to the South Pole with Captain Scott. This was good enough, for it seemed unlikely that a German agent would know the story of the Captain Oates who sacrificed his life in the hope of saving Scott and his other companions.<sup>108</sup> Brigadier Smith accordingly decided to turn the train around.

## A Reckoning of Disappointment

On 20 June C.M.H.Q. advised anxious Ottawa that the latest report indicated "100 to 200 all ranks still not accounted for".<sup>115</sup> It was hoped that they would still turn up, and in fact the vast majority did so. When all returns were in, only six men were found to have been left behind. One N.C.O., Sergeant D. G. Hutt, R.C. Signals, had been mortally hurt in a motorcycle accident. Four other men were interned in France but subsequently succeeded in making their way to England; one of them, Sapper F. P. Hutchinson, 1st Field Company R.C.E., received for his escape the first Military Medal awarded to any Canadian during this war. One soldier of The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, Corporal R. J. Creighton, remained a prisoner of war until the end of hostilities.<sup>116</sup> In view of the conditions existing in France at the time, it is extraordinary that the loss was so small.

As already indicated, the story with respect to equipment and transport was less happy. The 1st Brigade's precious vehicles, most of them only lately issued, were destroyed by order in France, almost without exception. All told, 216 Canadian vehicles were lost. A sergeant of the Hastings and Prince Edward managed to embark his commanding officer's station wagon on a trawler, and twelve Bren carriers, including those loaded by the R.C.H.A., were also brought away. This was all.<sup>117</sup>

The chagrin and disappointment of the men of the Division can be imagined. Not least disgusted was the G.O.C., who took the view that the failure to concentrate the Division near Brest in accordance with his earlier understanding was a serious error, and that much equipment had been unnecessarily destroyed. His feelings were reflected in a signal<sup>118</sup> to National Defence Headquarters:

McNaughton specially emphasizes that no Canadian unit fell back until ordered so to do by competent military authority and that all repeat all equipment was brought back to Brest. The subsequent destruction was effected under direct orders given by British authorities at the port.

Again, the best commentary on the Canadian share in these abortive operations is contained in an exchange of personal letters.<sup>119</sup> General Sir John Dill had now become Chief of the Imperial General Staff. On 21 June he wrote to General McNaughton:

My dear Andy,

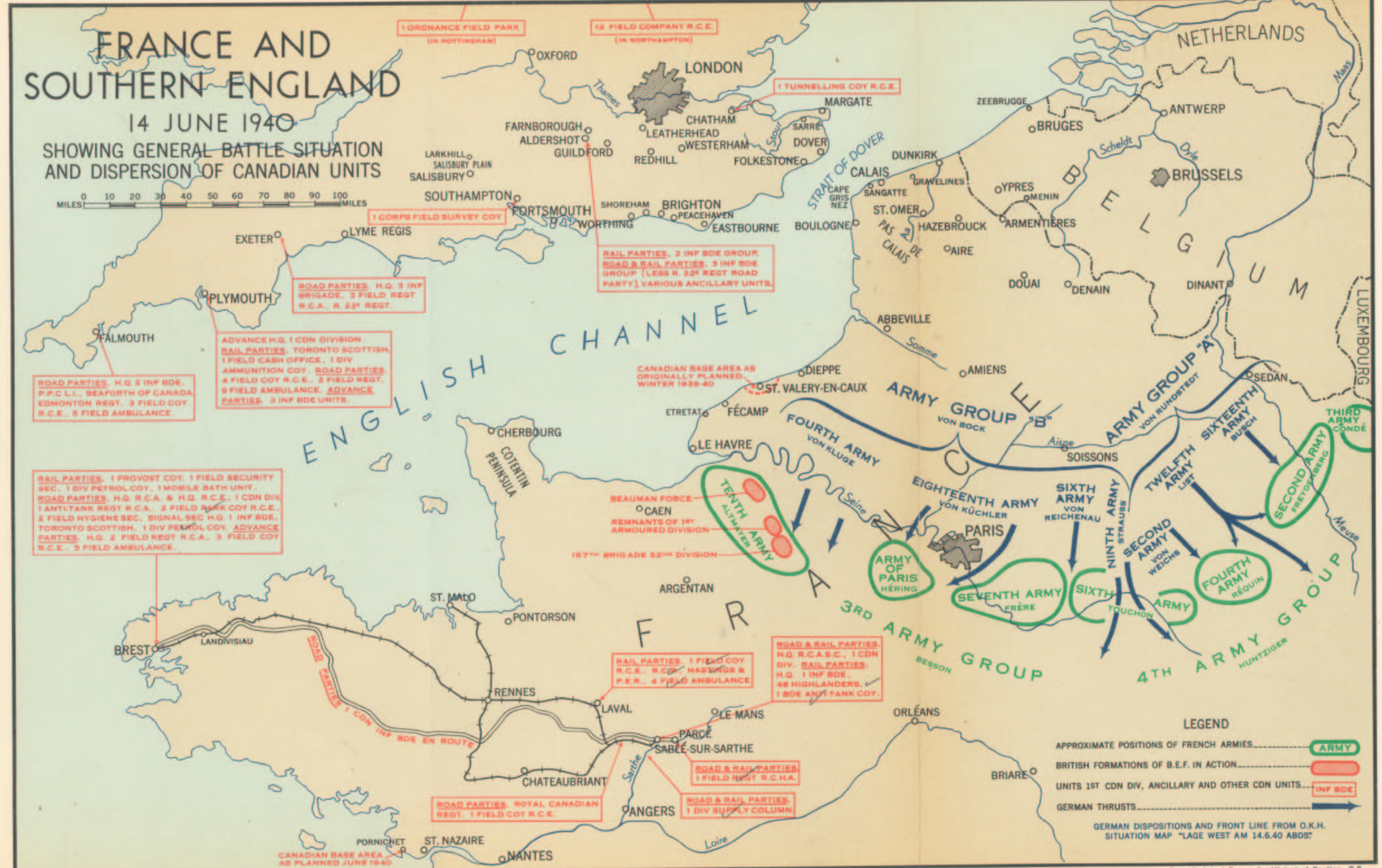
I cannot tell you how much I regret all the disappointments you have had. It was with many misgivings that I saw you start for France, and yet while there was a hope that the French Army might still succeed we felt that they ought to have the best the Empire could give. I do hope that you won't think that it was wrong of us. Then when it was quite clear that the French Army was ceasing to offer any effective resistance we came to the conclusion that it would be a crime to let you enter the cauldron. Even you and the Canadian Division could not have saved the situation.



# FRANCE AND SOUTHERN ENGLAND

## 14 JUNE 1940

### SHOWING GENERAL BATTLE SITUATION AND DISPERSION OF CANADIAN UNITS



ROAD PARTIES, H.Q. 2 INF BDE, P.P.C. L.L., SEAPORT OF CANADA, EDMONTON REGT., 3 FIELD COY R.C.E., 5 FIELD AMBULANCE.

ADVANCE H.Q. 1 CDN DIVISION, RAIL PARTIES, TORONTO SCOTTISH, 1 FIELD CASH OFFICE, 1 DIV AMMUNITION COY., ROAD PARTIES, 4 FIELD COY R.C.E., 2 FIELD REGT., 9 FIELD AMBULANCE, ADVANCE PARTIES, 3 INF BDE UNITS.

RAIL PARTIES, 1 PROVOST COY., 1 FIELD SECURITY SEC., 1 DIV PETROL COY., 1 MOBILE BATH UNIT, ROAD PARTIES, H.Q. R.C.A. & H.Q. R.C.E., 1 CDN DIV, 1 ANTI-TANK REGT R.C.A., 3 FIELD PARK COY R.C.E., 2 FIELD HYGIENE SEC., SIGNAL SEC H.Q. 1 INF BDE, TORONTO SCOTTISH, 1 DIV PETROL COY., ADVANCE PARTIES, H.Q. 2 FIELD REGT R.C.A., 3 FIELD COY R.C.E., 3 FIELD AMBULANCE.

ROAD PARTIES, H.Q. 3 INF BRIGADE, 3 FIELD REGT, R.C.A. R. 22<sup>ND</sup> REGT.

RAIL PARTIES, 2 INF BDE GROUP, ROAD & RAIL PARTIES, 3 INF BDE GROUP (LESS R. 22<sup>ND</sup> REGT ROAD PARTY), VARIOUS ANCILLARY UNITS.

1 CORONANCE FIELD PARK (IN NOTTINGHAM)

12 FIELD COMPANY R.C.E. (IN NORTHAMPTON)

1 TUNNELLING COY R.C.E.

1 CORPS FIELD SURVEY COY

CANADIAN BASE AREA AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED WINTER 1939-40

ROAD PARTIES, H.Q. 2 INF BDE, P.P.C. L.L., SEAPORT OF CANADA, EDMONTON REGT., 3 FIELD COY R.C.E., 5 FIELD AMBULANCE.

CANADIAN BASE AREA AS PLANNED JUNE 1940

ROAD PARTIES, ROYAL CANADIAN REGT., 1 FIELD COY R.C.E.

RAIL PARTIES, 1 FIELD COY R.C.E., R.C.P., HASSENGS & P.E.R., 4 FIELD AMBULANCE

ROAD & RAIL PARTIES, H.Q. R.C.A.S.C., 1 CDN DIV, RAIL PARTIES, H.Q. 1 INF BDE, 48 HIGHLANDERS, 1 BDE ANTI-TANK COY.

ROAD & RAIL PARTIES, 1 FIELD REGT R.C.A.

ROAD & RAIL PARTIES, 1 DIV SUPPLY COLUMN

**LEGEND**

- APPROXIMATE POSITIONS OF FRENCH ARMIES
- BRITISH FORMATIONS OF B.E.F. IN ACTION
- UNITS 1ST CDN DIV, ANCILLARY AND OTHER CDN UNITS
- GERMAN THRUSTS

GERMAN DISPOSITIONS AND FRONT LINE FROM O.K.H. SITUATION MAP "LAGE WEST AM 14.6.40 ABDS"



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It is all rather a sorry tale but I am sure in the circumstances you will realize what our difficulties were and will forgive us for all the inconvenience you have been caused.

Yours ever  
Jack Dill.

On 29 June McNaughton replied, in terms which reflect both his dissatisfaction with what had happened and the manner in which his eye was now fixed upon the tasks and perils of the immediate future:

. . . As regards our last essay to go to the help of France, the considerations in my mind at the time this operation was ordered from the War Office were the same as expressed in your note, namely that it was imperative that we should go. I was under no illusion as to the probable result but I was content that we should be used for that purpose provided we were given a chance to concentrate before going into battle and this, I was assured by Brooke would be arranged.

When the order for reversal was given, I was at Plymouth preparatory to sailing with our 1st Brigade Group ahead ... I then thought that our troops who had landed were close in to Brest and it was not until the next morning that I learned that Movement Control in France had ordered the road and rail parties forward apparently, as they arrived, to the Le Mans area . . .

Meanwhile we secured information, one way and another that all our units in the forward area had been reversed on Brest and in point of fact they all reached there complete with transport and guns less one *25-pr* (damaged en route forward and handed in to Ordnance) and the rail parties of the Headquarters of I Inf Bde and 48 Highrs which came back via St. Malo due to a mix-up in R.T.O. orders.

Eventually, as you know our men saved all our guns and some other supplies as well . . . , but we lost all our own transport which is very bitter medicine. However, we may well be thankful, as we are, to Providence, that all except a score of our men got back.

We are now squarely set for what I have long thought was the important task, the defence of those islands. Two out of three of our Brigade Groups and our reserve of Artillery, Engineers, Machine Gun Battalions, etc.. all on wheels, are poised to go in any direction and you and the C.-in-C. can count on a quick moving, hard hitting, determined force which will be prompt to execute your orders.

There are many lessons to be learned from our experience and sometime I hope we may go over them together but, meanwhile, we have other work to do and you can be sure that we stand with you with all our hearts.

### The Invasion Summer

The last desperate attempt to keep France in the war had failed. On 22 June the Franco-German armistice was signed, and Hitler now controlled the northern and western coasts of France. The south-eastern part of the country remained unoccupied for the moment, and was ruled by Marshal Petain's Government from Vichy; but the Germans could take over this remnant at any moment. The United States, though shaken, was still neutral. Britain and the Commonwealth were alone.

The situation seemed desperate, and many of Britain's friends abroad thought at this moment that she too would soon be compelled to capitulate. These gloomy prognostications were not justified by the event. Under the inspired leadership of Winston Churchill, the British people were

experiencing a national revival which compares with anything in their history. Tremendous efforts were made to reorganize the Dunkirk divisions and to place the rest of the army in condition to fight. A new citizen force, the Home Guard, sprang into existence to meet the threat of battalions dropped from the skies or landed on the beaches; and in the factories, from one end of the country to the other, the workers of Britain bent their backs, seven days a week, to the task of replacing the arms and equipment lost in France and providing those needed for vast new armies.

So far as the Army was concerned, it might have seemed that the situation on the day of the Franco-German armistice could not have been much worse. Equipment-or rather, lack of equipment-was the crux of it. The forces in the United Kingdom were "almost unarmed except for rifles"-and there was, indeed, a serious shortage even of them. "There were . . . hardly five hundred field guns of any sort and hardly two hundred medium or heavy tanks in the whole country".<sup>120</sup> It would be long before British factories could replace even the material left in France. Canadian industrial capacity, of which the British Government had been unwilling to make large use before Dunkirk, suddenly became important in British eyes;\* but many months-even years-would have to pass before the orders for equipment now belatedly placed could produce results. Canada, we have seen, was ready to send what help she could from her reserve stores, but because her pre-war forces and preparations had been so small, she had little to send. Thanks to their low state of preparedness, indeed, "None of the British Dominions", as Sir Winston Churchill bluntly phrases it, "could send decisive aid".<sup>121</sup> The United States had large reserves, and in the new state of mind which the crisis in Europe had produced the American government and people were quite willing to send these to Britain; but getting them there took time.

On 18 June, by which date nearly all British troops had been evacuated from France, there were in Great Britain and Northern Ireland a total of 28 field divisions plus 15 independent brigades of various sorts.<sup>122</sup> These rather imposing figures, however, give a misleading impression. Almost all of the divisions were either recovering from Dunkirk or still incompletely trained; and almost all were without heavy equipment. Of the British divisions, the most advanced were the 3rd, which as already noted had been re-equipped with a view to being sent back to France, and the 43rd; but even these cannot have been in very efficient condition. The strength of the 3rd on 6 June, following its return from Dunkirk, had been recorded as only 4500 men; and the 43rd was reported, at the same period,

as

"rather

\*"At the outset, Britain appeared to believe that there would be time to build her own munitions industry, without calling on North America in a large way. Within the last few weeks, Britain has been asking Canada for practically anything that can be supplied in the way of munitions and war materials." (Mr. C. D. Howe in the Canadian House of Commons, 30 July 1940.)

backward" in training and equipment.<sup>123</sup> The 52nd (Lowland) Division, we have seen, had got to France and had been withdrawn, but it had left a "considerable" part of its transport behind it.<sup>124</sup> It was accordingly not in condition to move and fight.

Under these conditions, the 1st Canadian Division was a most important factor in the calculations of the War Office. In point of both training and equipment—even though its training was not complete, and one of its three brigade groups was immobilized by the loss of its transport in France—it was the strongest element in a very weak fabric, and one of the very few divisions which could be considered fit for a task of mobile counter-attack. The "Second B.E.F." was hardly back in England, accordingly, before the Canadians were returned to the G.H.Q. Reserve role which they had occupied before the forlorn hope. "Canadian Force" came back into existence, and the organization in brigade and battalion groups, adopted at the time of the move to Northampton, was revived.<sup>125</sup> It was now imitated by the other divisions in Home Forces.<sup>126</sup>

As a result of discussions on 18 and 19 June, it was decided that Canadian Force should move to the vicinity of Oxford (the area suggested by General McNaughton some weeks before), where it would be "more centrally located for G.H.Q. Reserve" than at Aldershot.<sup>127</sup> The move began on 23 June, one group moving each day.<sup>128</sup> As before, a Reserve Group had been formed from the machine-gun battalions and the ancillary artillery units. The 1st Brigade, unable to move, remained at Aldershot waiting hopefully for new vehicles to replace those destroyed in France. It did not rejoin the Division until 16 July.<sup>129</sup>

On 25 June, General McNaughton reviewed the situation and the Canadian dispositions in a conference at his advanced headquarters at Shotover House outside Oxford. Some portions of the record<sup>130</sup> should be quoted.

The G.O.C. stated that we are a mobile reserve with a 360 degree front; and may have to operate anywhere in Great Britain from the South coast, to Scotland, or in Wales. We carry, together with the 4 Corps under Lieutenant-General Nosworthy a serious responsibility. The Cdn Force and two Tk Bns of the 4 Corps with some Lt Armd Units comprise the only mobile force immediately available in Great Britain. These will be reinforced shortly by the 43 Div ...

The G.O.C.... stated that, after discussion with various commanders he was of the opinion that it would be approximately ten days before the general situation regarding reserves improves. There are large numbers of troops in Great Britain but these are not yet organized in the reconstituted divisions. The degree of re-equipment is lamentably small . . .

McNaughton said that for training purposes it would be assumed that the enemy's attack plan would comprise, first, a main seaborne landing in the area of the Wash, with minor diversionary landings to the north and south, and an airborne landing in the Isle of Ely area; and secondly, a major airborne attack in the rear of the east coast defences. This latter

would be assumed as taking place in the area Birmingham-WolverhamptonShrewsbury-Ludlow. The role of Canadian Force would be to deal with this main airborne landing in the first instance and then move to the support of the troops on the coast opposing the seaborne landings.

Like the stay at Northampton, that in the Oxford area proved very short. On 26 June Lieut.-General Paget, Chief of the General Staff at G.H.Q. Home Forces, told McNaughton that the plans for the defence of the United Kingdom, and the Canadian role in them, had been somewhat revised. The intention now was to have north of the Thames one mobile Corps under Lieut.-General F. P. Nosworthy, to consist of the 2nd Armoured and 43rd Divisions. The mobile reserve south of the Thames was to consist of the 1st Armoured Division and the 1st Canadian Division, and Paget said the C.-in-C. Home Forces desired that General McNaughton should command this Corps.<sup>131</sup> Further discussions on this project followed, the proposed new Corps being sometimes referred to during them as a "Canadian Corps". While a more permanent arrangement was being worked out, it was provided temporarily that the Canadian and 1st Armoured Divisions' training would be coordinated, and that General McNaughton would take the Armoured Division under his operational command "as soon as the flag falls".<sup>132</sup> This was not a satisfactory arrangement, for only a fully organized Corps with its own staff and communications could meet the needs adequately. On 7 July, accordingly, the C.-in-C. Home Forces formally asked the War Office for authority to form a new Corps headquarters.<sup>133</sup> The Corps (to be called the 7th) would consist of the 1st Armoured and 1st Canadian Divisions, the "New Zealand Force"—two infantry brigades with some artillery, lately arrived in the United Kingdom—and selected ancillary troops. Home Forces stated that the C.-in-C. wished to utilize the services of Major-General McNaughton as commander, with the rank of Lieutenant General; "the staff to be selected both from Canadian and British resources".

The War Office concurring, the Canadian Government's views were requested, and on 11 July the Cabinet War Committee agreed to the United Kingdom suggestion. The 7th Corps came into existence on 21 July, its headquarters being located at Headley Court near Leatherhead, Surrey mansion which was long to be associated with the senior Canadian headquarters in the United Kingdom. Brigadier G. R. Pearkes, V.C., was promoted to the rank of Major General and succeeded General McNaughton as G.O.C. 1st Canadian Division.<sup>134</sup>

The Corps staff, as already indicated, was composed partly of British, partly of Canadian officers. The Operations section was entirely British and was headed by Brigadier M. C. Dempsey—later to command the Second Army in the campaign in North-West Europe—as Brigadier General Staff (Operations). Colonel G. R. Turner, who had been G.S.O.1 of the 1st Division, became Brigadier General Staff (Staff Duties), an appointment subsequently redesignated Brigadier General Staff (Canadian); he handled

questions of organization, particularly those of the Canadian part of the Corps. The senior administrative staff officer (the Deputy Adjutant and Quartermaster General) was also a British Army officer, Brigadier C. A. P. Murison, who was however a Canadian by birth. The Chief Engineer (Brigadier C. S. L. Hertzberg), the Chief Signal Officer (Colonel J. E. Genet) and the Commander Corps Royal Artillery (Brigadier J. C. Stewart) were all Canadians, who had held the equivalent appointments in the 1st Division.<sup>135</sup>

In accordance with their altered role of G.H.Q. Reserve south of the Thames, the Canadian brigade groups had been transferred from the Oxford area to a new position of readiness in Surrey, south of London. They began moving on 2 July and were soon established in an area which may be roughly defined as extending from Guildford on the west to Westerham, just over the Kent border, in the east.<sup>136</sup> This is the pleasant region of the North Downs, and the 1st Division were not sorry to have said a final good-bye to the Aldershot barracks, which were now available for occupation by the 2nd Division on its arrival from Canada. During the later summer months of 1940, while the shadow of impending invasion lay darkly across England, the formations of the 7th Corps, as we have already seen, were training busily to meet the attack. At the same time, reconnaissance trips were made over the routes the Corps might have to cover in its mobile counter-attack role, and Canadian officers, and not least the Corps Commander, were active in giving advice and assistance in preparing defences on the various "stop lines" designed to delay an enemy attempting to push inland from the beaches.<sup>137</sup>

We have space for only a few examples of the special tasks carried out by Canadian units at this period. Canadian Engineers constructed a model strongpoint in the village of Sarre, on the River Stour in Kent, during July and August.<sup>138</sup> Other sappers were employed in strengthening the old fortifications of Chatham, building new defences in the Dover area, and constructing anti-tank obstacles on the "G.H.Q. Line"\* along the North Downs.<sup>140</sup> Some very rapid roadmaking was done, notably the improvisation of a by-pass at Redhill to eliminate a bad bottleneck on the routes forward to Dover and Brighton.<sup>141</sup> One artillery project may be mentioned. Early in September General McNaughton, at the request of G.H.Q. Home Forces, organized two temporary units (known as "X" and "Y" Super-Heavy Batteries) to man four 9.2-inch guns on railway mountings for the defence of the Strait of Dover. After the worst invasion crisis was over, these units were disbanded and the guns taken over by British artillerymen.<sup>142</sup>

Important changes in organization and equipment were in progress. The lessons of the disastrous campaign in France had been analyzed by a War

\*Work on this line was stopped in August in favour of developing the defences farther forward.<sup>139</sup>

Office committee headed by General Sir William Bartholomew. Not all its recommendations need be quoted here, but among the needs emphasized were a more effective reconnaissance organization and more anti-aircraft guns in forward areas. This report was complete in draft by the end of July.<sup>143</sup> By this time the Canadian authorities had already taken independent action on the question of reconnaissance units. On General McNaughton's advice, N.D.H.Q. authorized forming for each infantry brigade a reconnaissance squadron designed to cover the front and flanks of mobile columns operating across the English countryside. The squadrons were equipped, as an interim measure, with three-man motorcycle combinations mounting Bren guns.<sup>144</sup> At a later stage, they were amalgamated into divisional reconnaissance battalions (subsequently termed regiments) in accordance with British organization. In the Canadian Army, however, such units were incorporated in the Armoured Corps, whereas in the British service they formed a distinct Reconnaissance Corps.

As a result of the Bartholomew report, a light anti-aircraft regiment of 48 Bofors guns was added to the organization of British infantry divisions. Canada followed suit, but for a long time the change was purely theoretical, simply because there was no equipment. The Canadians had no anti-aircraft artillery of their own during the Battle of Britain. On 20 August General McNaughton spoke of their "absolute lack" of light A.A. guns.<sup>145</sup> "We are dependent entirely on small arms fire for local protection against hostile aircraft," he wrote, "and already casualties are being experienced". (During August, in fact, at least three Canadian units claimed to have destroyed German aircraft with machine-gun fire—No. 1 Tunnelling Company and the 1st Pioneer Battalion R.C.E., and the 48th Highlanders of Canada.)<sup>146</sup> Although the organization of anti-aircraft units was pushed as rapidly as the equipment situation permitted, and many Canadian batteries manned Air Defence of Great Britain gunsites during 1941, the first Canadian light anti-aircraft regiment did not actually join the order of battle of the Canadian Corps until February 1942.<sup>147</sup>

### The Storm That Did Not Burst

Throughout the summer British intelligence and operations staffs were making appreciations of probable German intentions and developing plans for countering them with such means as they had. In the beginning Mr. Churchill and his military advisers took the view that the main danger was to the east coast.\* No great mass of shipping or of small craft had as

\*Professional opinion, naturally, was not unanimous. Lieut.-General Sir Guy Williams, G.O.C.-in-C. Eastern Command, said on 18 June that the south coast was the most likely place for enemy landings.<sup>148</sup>



yet appeared in the French ports. On 10 July the British Prime Minister observed that he found it hard to believe that the south coast was in serious peril at that time. He wrote: "The main danger is from the Dutch and German harbours, which bear principally upon the coast from Dover to the Wash". The Chiefs of Staff were in general agreement with him, although the actual distribution of troops reflected a somewhat heavier concentration towards the south coast than his assessment might have indicated.<sup>149</sup>

Early in August, however, the intelligence picture began to change. Air reconnaissance revealed a heavier movement of self-propelled barges and other vessels through the Strait of Dover into the French Channel ports. Other signs of preparation for a cross-Channel attack accumulated, one being the multiplication of long-range coastal batteries. As a result, the British dispositions were revised, the number of divisions in the coastal area north of the Thames being reduced while that on the south coast from Dover westward was correspondingly increased. The two mobile reserve Corps, the 4th and 7th, could of course be employed at fairly short notice in either sector.<sup>150</sup>

Simultaneously with the increased activity in the French ports came the beginning of the German air offensive which produced what has come to be known as the Battle of Britain.\* This, it seemed clear, was designed to clear the way for the invasion. It was "scheduled to begin on approximately August 5";<sup>152</sup> the date was later fixed as the 10th. An R.A.F. historian considers that the battle proper actually started on 12 August, when the Germans began a systematic assault on British coastal airfields and radar stations. Six days later, the attack was switched to the inland fighter aerodromes of south-eastern England; it was obvious that the enemy was determined to shoot the R.A.F. Fighter Command out of the air or destroy it on the ground. He failed. In the tremendous air battles fought in the clear skies over Kent during these brilliant summer days, the Germans sustained a series of great defeats.<sup>153</sup> Their losses, it is true, were not so large as the British thought at the time; but they were much heavier than the R.A.F.'s. During the whole period from 10 July to 31 October, the enemy, according to his records, lost 1733 aircraft destroyed,† whereas the R.A.F. lost 915 fighters.<sup>154</sup> And while Fighter Command battled him over the southern counties, Bomber Command was attending to the barge concentrations in the French Channel ports. There is reason to believe

\*The first bombs on the mainland of Britain had been dropped on 9 May. The first Canadian casualties by bombing were suffered by No. 2 Army Field Workshop R.C.O.C. at Aldershot on 6 July, three soldiers being killed and one officer and 28 other ranks injured.<sup>151</sup>

†The original British estimate was 2692. The Germans at the time admitted the loss of only 896. (The 10th of July is the date assigned by Air Chief Marshal Dowding for the beginning of the Battle of Britain. There was heavy air fighting in the Channel area from that time on.)

that the damage done by these attacks did much to discourage the German strategists.<sup>155</sup>

In their "position of readiness" in Surrey the Canadian battalions waited, watching the vapour-trails in the sky that marked the progress of the battle, and themselves expecting the call to action at any moment. During August reports poured in of increasing preparations visible across the Channel. On the 31st, a 7th Corps Intelligence Commentary reported "an advanced stage of land-preparedness for an expedition" and suggested that, while it was unlikely that invasion would be tried until air superiority had been achieved, the enemy might make the attempt during the first half of September.<sup>156</sup> And on the lovely afternoon of Saturday 7 September the German offensive entered a new phase. A great force of bombers and fighters fought its way up the Thames and made a most damaging daylight attack on London—the heaviest such attack the city suffered during the war. Tremendous fires were started along the river, and through the night relays of bombers, guided by the conflagration, continued to pound the capital.

By this time, it appeared that German preparations for invasion were so advanced that the attack might come at any moment, and the British Chiefs of Staff on this same 7 September agreed that the defending forces should now "stand by at immediate notice". As no arrangement had been made for an intermediate state of readiness, G.H.Q. Home Forces at 8 p.m. sent out to Eastern and Southern Commands the code word "Cromwell", signifying "invasion imminent". It went also to formations in the London area and to the 4th and 7th Corps. The coastal divisions went to action stations. That night and for days to come the Canadians, and in fact everyone in Britain, waited in excited suspense. In some places Home Guard commanders called out their men by ringing the church bells, and this produced stories that enemy parachutists were landing.<sup>157</sup> There was, indeed, a spate of alarms and rumours throughout the land. On 8 September the 7th Corps was placed on four hours' notice\* to move.<sup>158</sup>

Three days later Mr. Churchill told the country frankly<sup>159</sup> of the German preparations for "a heavy, full-scale invasion of this island". He said:

If this invasion is going to be tried at all, it does not seem that it can be long delayed. The weather may break at any time....

Therefore, we must regard the next week or so as a very important period in our history. It ranks with the days when the Spanish Armada was approaching the Channel, and Drake was finishing his game of bowls; or when Nelson stood between us and Napoleon's Grand Army at Boulogne. We have read all about this in the history books; but what is happening now is on a far greater scale and of far more consequence to the life and future of the world and its civilization than these brave old days of the past.

Every man and woman will therefore prepare himself to do his duty, whatever it may be, with special pride and care . . .

\*This situation lasted until 19 September, when the Corps reverted to eight hours' notice. There was another short spell of four hours' notice on 22-23 September. The termination of this may be said to represent the end of the crisis.

The pride and care were not lacking; but the invasion did not come. On 15 September the German Air Force made another great effort, and suffered another great reverse. The R.A.F. was still alive and kicking. It soon became apparent to the watchers in Whitehall that the immediate crisis was over. There were several days of bad weather; then, on 20 September, came news that German shipping was moving away from the Channel.<sup>160</sup> Thereafter, indications that the invasion scheme had been called off for the moment gradually multiplied.

We now have available a great mass of evidence from the enemy's side concerning his plans at this period. Much of the essence of this has already been published,<sup>161</sup> and there is no point in attempting more than a brief summary here.

It is clear that the prospect of a seaborne invasion of Britain was not altogether pleasant in Hitler's eyes. It is significant that his directives for the offensive against France and the Low Countries in the spring of 1940 make no reference to the possibility of this being followed by such an invasion; on the contrary, emphasis is laid upon the seizure of the French Channel coast in order to obtain bases for an offensive to be waged against the United Kingdom with *submarines, mines and aircraft*.<sup>162</sup> Although the documents afford no sure guidance on this point, certain references in them combine with the evidence of senior German officers to indicate that Hitler counted upon being able to frighten Britain into making an accommodation with him without proceeding to the desperate measure of invasion. This indeed is strongly indicated in the opening passage of the belated directive issued by the Fuhrer on 16 July for the planning of the invasion (Operation "Sea Lion") : "Since England, in spite of her militarily hopeless situation, shows no signs of coming to terms, I have decided to prepare a landing operation against England and, if necessary, to carry it out."<sup>163</sup> German officers have asserted that at the headquarters of Field-Marshal von Rundstedt, who was to command the enterprise, it was never taken very seriously;<sup>164</sup> and it seems a fair assumption that Hitler hoped and expected that the weight of his air assault, combined with Britain's isolation, would be sufficient to produce the result which he desired.

The German military plan when made envisaged an attack on England in that area which was the primary counter-attack responsibility of General McNaughton's Corps. The original idea was to land two armies (25 divisions) in the first instance, on the south coast between Margate and Portsmouth; the initial bridgeheads being established between Folkestone and Worthing. Thereafter the Germans counted on advancing northward and establishing themselves on the line of the North Downs as a base for further operations. There was a tentative proposal to put in a third army subsequently, on the coast about Lyme Regis. No attempt was made to plan the later phases, for the Germans assumed that the decisive encounter would take place before

the North Downs were reached, and later events would depend upon its outcome. Subsequently, as a result of pressure from the German navy, the plan was altered to provide for a smaller force and a narrower front (between Folkestone and Brighton), with an airborne landing on the North Downs north-west of Folkestone. The new version was evidently not to be put into practice except as a sequel to a complete victory in the air.

The scheme had raised serious controversies between the German generals and admirals, for the latter, with very inadequate forces at their disposal, viewed it with well-founded misgivings, and the former knew little of amphibious operations. Hitler showed himself most reluctant to make firm decisions. Only on 3 September was D Day for the operation finally fixed -at 21 September. A week before the latter date arrived, however, a decision was taken not to attack on that day, but to continue preparations. On 17 September Hitler postponed the operation indefinitely;\* and on 12 October a formal directive advised that it would not take place before the spring.<sup>165</sup>

### The Canadian Corps

When September passed without bringing the expected invasion, there was a growing sense of anti-climax among the Canadians in England. Once again their expectations of action had been disappointed, and the reversion to the dull routine of individual training underlined the frustration.

The monotony of the winter was somewhat relieved by an arrangement by which the Canadian infantry brigade groups in succession undertook, for three-week periods, the guarding of a coastal sector in Sussex. The sector selected was that from Shoreham on the west to Peacehaven on the east, including the city of Brighton.<sup>166</sup> The 3rd Brigade took over here late in October and was followed by the other brigades of the 1st Division and, in due course, by the 4th and 5th Brigades of the 2nd Division.<sup>167</sup> But, contrary to the Canadians' hopes, the enemy attempted no enterprises. All was quiet on the Channel coast that winter.

Something has already been said of the concentration of the 2nd Canadian Division in the United Kingdom.† After the arrival of the Sixth Flight of Canadian troops in the first week of September 1940, five of the Division's nine infantry, battalions were available. From the beginning, arrangements were made for using its units already present, in emergency, in a defensive

\*"The enemy Air Force is still by no means defeated; on the contrary it shows increasing activity.... The weather situation as a whole does not permit us to expect . . . calm weather lasting several days . . . *The Fuhrer therefore decides to postpone 'Sea Lion' indefinitely.*" (German Naval Staff War Diary, 17 September.)

†Above, Chap. III.

role in the Aldershot Command,<sup>168</sup> but on 7 September plans were laid for two brigade groups of the 2nd Division to move from Aldershot in event of invasion, to the support of the 7th Corps.<sup>169</sup> They served to replace the New Zealand brigades, which had just moved into Kent and passed under the command of the 12th Corps.<sup>170</sup>

Once the invasion menace had been lifted for the moment, and the 2nd Division was complete in the United Kingdom, it was practicable to dissolve the Anglo-Canadian 7th Corps and substitute a Canadian Corps. This, as we have seen, was done on Christmas Day. The Canadian Corps inherited the 7th's G.H.Q. Reserve role,<sup>171</sup> but the 1st Armoured Division passed from under its command on 1 January 1941.<sup>172</sup> For a time certain British staff officers remained at Corps Headquarters, and certain British units remained on the Corps Order of Battle; but both were replaced from Canadian sources as this became practicable. As the spring of 1941 approached, and renewed apprehension of invasion grew, the Canadian Corps was training actively for the battle that might lie ahead.

CHAPTER X  
**TASKS AND OPERATIONS, 1941-1942**  
(See Map 5 and Sketches 1 and 2)

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The Situation at the Beginning of 1941

THE advent of 1941 found the British Commonwealth still confronting Germany and Italy alone. The United States, Russia and Japan remained neutral, though all three of these great powers were to enter the war before the year was over. The only major active land theatre of war was that in North Africa, where in February the Germans began to intervene to support their Italian allies who had been so sorely smitten by General Wavell.

The winter's respite had enabled the armies in Britain to make good many of the equipment deficiencies that had existed after Dunkirk, and the country was now in far better condition than during the previous summer to resist an invasion. It was clear that a spring offensive by the Germans was to be expected, and it was quite possible that it would take the form of an attempt to cross the Channel. Throughout the winter the German bombing attacks upon the United Kingdom had continued with varying intensity. The Canadians in Britain shared the experience of the British people, and suffered some casualties at the hands of the Luftwaffe. For a time, Canadian Military Headquarters, London, was more directly under attack than any other part of the force: a situation which impressed veterans of the last war as a strange and not wholly unwelcome reversal of the course of nature. The months of April and May 1941 witnessed the heaviest individual attacks on London; but the damaging raid of 10 May proved to be the end of this phase.\*

The anticipated German offensive materialized in April in the form of an attack upon Yugoslavia and Greece; both countries were rapidly overrun,

\*The Canadian Army's heaviest losses in any single attack were those in the great raid on the night of 16-17 April, which caused 22 fatal casualties. The R.C.N. had one fatal casualty and the R.C.A.F. two in the same raid. It may be noted here that the Army's total casualties by enemy action in the United Kingdom throughout the war (including those caused by bombs, V-1 flying bombs and V-2 rockets) amounted to 420 all ranks. Fatal casualties numbered eight officers and 112 other ranks.<sup>1</sup> Some additional details will be found in *The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1944* ("The Canadian Army at War", No. 1: 2nd edition, Ottawa, 1946).

and in May the Germans delivered an airborne attack against the small and ill-equipped garrison of Crete, which was shortly forced to give up the island. But the enemy's great operation of the year had not yet begun. On 18 December 1940 Hitler had issued his first directive<sup>2</sup> for an attack on Soviet Russia; on 22 June he launched his forces upon that enterprise, which was to prove a main contributor to his own ruin. The tremendous campaign thus begun altered the aspect of affairs along the Channel. A German invasion of Britain was still possible, but as long as Russia continued to contain great German forces it was much less probable than before. (The British Chiefs of Staff recognized this fact in July and offered to send large reinforcements of tanks to the Middle East.)<sup>3</sup> So far the Canadian force in the United Kingdom had had a sense of being engaged in an important mission-securing the citadel of freedom against imminent peril. Now this sense was greatly lessened, and the force's future employment became a question for discussion, both official and popular. Nevertheless, the Canadian formations still had a very long period of garrison duty before them.

### The Corps Moves Into Sussex

Through the greater part of 1941 the Canadian Corps retained its role of G.H.Q. Reserve. In the autumn, however, it relinquished the task of mobile counter-attack and moved into a static position on the Sussex coast.

This move seems to have been first suggested by the C.-in-C. Home Forces, General Sir Alan Brooke, in a conversation with General McNaughton on 28 March. Brooke remarked that the Canadian force was growing so large that soon it would no longer be sound to keep it in G.H.Q. Reserve. McNaughton said he was prepared to cooperate, but expressed the hope "that in assuming the role of a static Corps, the claims of the Canadian Forces to form the spearhead of any offensive would not be forgotten."<sup>4</sup> The transfer was not carried out until the "invasion season" was over, that is, until the autumn was well advanced. In the meantime, however, the 2nd Canadian Division anticipated the general move by exchanging positions during July and part of August with the 55th British Division, which had been holding the beach defences in East Sussex. During this period the 55th Division was in Aldershot under the operational control of the Canadian Corps; the 2nd Division was under the operational control of the 4th Corps which was responsible for the Sussex coast.<sup>5</sup>

The movement of the Canadian Corps as a whole began in October, when the 2nd Division returned to the coastal sector; it remained under the 4th Corps until 17 November, when the Canadian Corps opened its headquarters in Sussex and took over the 4th Corps area. The Canadian move

was completed only in December, when the 3rd Canadian Division moved into Sussex from Aldershot and the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade also moved over from its former stations in the Hindhead area.<sup>6</sup> The new situation brought the Corps into even closer relations than before with the British Army and the British people. It now had under its command the British artillery and other units manning the fixed defences of the Sussex coast.<sup>7</sup> It was also brought into intimate and friendly contact with the Sussex Home Guard. A special British element was set up at Corps Headquarters to look after these new responsibilities.

As soon as the Corps moved into Sussex it began a drastic overhaul of the defence arrangements for the area. Its new role brought it under the operational direction of the G.O.C.-in-C. South Eastern Command, a new command, organized in February 1941,<sup>8</sup> which included the portion of England south of London and the Thames and as far west as the Hampshire border. This command was taken over, shortly after the Corps came under its direction,<sup>9</sup> by Lieut.-General B. L. Montgomery. This was part of a general change in senior British military appointments, under which Sir Alan Brooke became Chief of the Imperial General Staff in succession to Sir John Dill, and Lieut.-General Sir Bernard Paget, formerly at South Eastern Command, succeeded Brooke at G.H.Q. Home Forces. Montgomery's dynamic touch, felt throughout the Canadian Corps District from the beginning, was reflected in the new defence plans.

Montgomery sought to impress upon all under his command the importance of "offensive mentality".<sup>10</sup> The plans accordingly were labelled, not "Plans for the Defence of Sussex", but "Canadian Corps Plans to Defeat Invasion".<sup>11</sup> The scheme, developed during the winter under the direction of Lieut.-General H. D. G. Crerar, who took command of the Corps on 23 December, provided in detail for the security of the Corps area, which extended from the Hampshire border, just short of Portsmouth, on the right, to Fairlight Church, a couple of miles east of Hastings, on the left. It was assumed that a combined seaborne and airborne invasion was probable, and emphasis was laid upon providing against seizure of the South Downs by enemy airborne forces. This line of noble hills, lying close behind the beach defences held by the Corps, was the chief topographical feature (and one of the greatest charms) of Crerar's area of responsibility.

The plans so carefully elaborated were never tested in action. Far from attempting invasion, the enemy at no time directed even the smallest seaborne or airborne raid against the coasts of England. It was the Canadians' fate to spend many months guarding against a menace which, however real, never materialized in action. The Corps held the Sussex coast for



and a half without firing any shot in anger except at enemy aircraft.\* On 3 June 1943, at long last, its operational responsibilities, which of late had been largely limited to precautions against raids, were handed over to a British formation, the Sussex District.<sup>12</sup>

### Sappers at Gibraltar

Only two enterprises took Canadian troops out of the United Kingdom during 1941. One was a task connected with improving the defences of Gibraltar, the other an expedition to the Arctic archipelago of Spitsbergen. Neither brought contact with the enemy.

The entrance of Italy into the war in June 1940 greatly increased the importance of Gibraltar and called attention to the fact that its defences had of late been very largely neglected. Work started at once with a view both to immediate improvement of the defences and to providing on a long-term basis bombproof accommodation which would enable the garrison to withstand a siege of almost any length. On 23 October 1940 the Secretary of State for the Dominions wrote to the Canadian High Commissioner in London asking that part of No. 1 Tunnelling Company R.C.E., then in England, might be sent to work at Gibraltar.<sup>13</sup> Consideration was asked "as a matter of urgency" and the Canadian authorities acted accordingly. On 24 October the Cabinet War Committee in Ottawa gave its approval, subject to General McNaughton's concurrence. Accordingly, a "Special Detachment" of No. 1 Tunnelling Company, 100 strong and equipped with diamond drills, disembarked at the Rock on 26 November and was soon at work.<sup>14</sup> In December the War Office asked for more Canadian tunnellers for Gibraltar. McNaughton took the view that these should be provided by organizing a second tunnelling company, rather than by sending the remainder of No. 1 and thus depriving the Canadian force in England of all such special engineer assistance. This course was followed. No. 2 Tunnelling Company was formed in the United Kingdom and arrived at Gibraltar on 10 March 1941. It absorbed about half of the Special Detachment of No. 1, the remainder returning to England.<sup>15</sup>

\*The "blitz" of 1940-41 was over before Canadian anti-aircraft artillery units were organized (above, pages 242 and 290). By the time when enemy attacks were resumed on a limited scale early in 1944, the Canadian A.A. regiments still in the United Kingdom had been withdrawn from the Air Defence of Great Britain and were preparing for their task across the Channel. Since attacks during the interim period were small and sporadic, Canadian units gained official credit for only 16 successful engagements, the enemy aircraft being awarded as destroyed in eight. Some of these successes were shared with British units or between Canadian ones. In three cases, Canadian units other than artillery were given credit. There were probably some additional actual successes not officially recognized; in a few instances it is likely that no formal claim was made. The three cases mentioned on page 290 do not appear in the official list, nor do some others of 1940.

No. 2 Tunnelling Company remained at Gibraltar until December 1942.<sup>16</sup> In addition, a second Special Detachment of No. 1 Company was sent out in January 1942.<sup>17</sup> This Detachment worked on the new aerodrome which had been created since 1940 on the site of the garrison racecourse on the North Front, its task being to provide "fill" for extending the runway into the Bay of Algeiras. This was done by bringing down the screes on the face of the Rock, first by diamond drilling and blasting, subsequently by hydraulic methods.<sup>18</sup> The aerodrome was a vital project; without it, the Allied invasion of French North Africa, launched in November 1942, might not have been practicable.

The major tasks of No. 2 Tunnelling Company itself were the excavation in the heart of the Rock of a bombproof hospital ("Gort's Hospital") and a "through east and west tunnel providing direct covered access to the east side of the rock (Harley Street)".<sup>19</sup> This tunnel had side chambers for the hospital laundry, etc. The Canadians also worked on the more southerly of two large new magazines, and carried out a great variety of lesser tasks. During its stay at the fortress the Company "mined and removed approximately 140,000 tons of solid rock".<sup>20</sup> The Canadians shared the work at Gibraltar with three British tunnelling companies. The Rock under wartime conditions, with the greater part of the civilian population evacuated, was a confined and tiresome station. It grew increasingly unpopular with the Canadian sappers, and they were delighted when it became possible to return them to England late in 1942. But they derived great satisfaction from kind words<sup>21</sup> spoken on 1 December by the Governor, Lieut.-General F. N. Mason-MacFarlane:

On behalf of all of us I want to wish Godspeed and good luck to our Canadian Tunnellers, who are leaving us very shortly. They are the only Dominion troops we have had on the Rock, and like all our tunnelling units they have carved out a monument for themselves which will stand as long as the Rock remains. They have done a great job of work and we wish them all good fortune and good sound rock wherever they may go.

Financial arrangements covering the Canadian tunnellers' service at the fortress produced a tiresome controversy. Since the matter was represented as so urgent, a specific Anglo-Canadian agreement was not made before the first detachment was sent. The Canadian authorities later proposed that Canada pay all costs except those of any local medical arrangements and of transportation to Gibraltar; they also assumed that expendable stores and pneumatic equipment would be supplied by and chargeable to the United Kingdom. The War Office, however, was inclined to accept only the responsibility for pneumatic equipment. The cost of transportation was a bane of contention for some time. The Canadians took the view that since the Detachment had been removed from its normal duties, at the request of the United Kingdom Government, to carry out special work under

War Office control, its transportation to Gibraltar was properly a British responsibility. The War Office finally agreed, specifying however that this was not to be a precedent. When the question of sending the second Special Detachment of No. 1 Tunnelling Company arose late in 1941, the Canadian authorities suggested a clear definition of financial arrangements, on the basis of Canada's taking responsibility for all charges that would normally have been incurred had the Detachment remained with the Canadian forces in the United Kingdom, while the British Government would accept responsibilities for all additional charges, including transportation to and from Gibraltar. The War Office accepted these proposals without demur.<sup>22</sup>

### The Expedition to Spitsbergen

The Spitsbergen expedition undertaken in the summer of 1941 was a minor consequence of Russia's entrance into the war. This distant archipelago, lying only 600 miles from the North Pole, had been comparatively little affected by the conflict until this took place. Although Spitsbergen is Norwegian territory, Russia had large economic interests there, and about 2000 of the population of some 2800 were Russian miners. Spitsbergen is a coal-producing area, and it seemed desirable to deny its coal to Germany. It also possessed wireless stations which were providing German-controlled stations in Norway with weather information. At the same time, the possibility of German occupation of the islands constituted a threat to the convoy route from Britain over which supplies for Russia were now to pass in such important quantities.

Canadian participation in an expedition to Spitsbergen was first suggested by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in a conversation with General McNaughton on 25 July, during which Sir John Dill "offered" McNaughton the operation, and McNaughton "accepted" it. On 26 July representatives of both the Canadian Corps and C.M.H.Q. attended a meeting on the subject at the War Office.<sup>23</sup> The enterprise proposed at this time was considerably more ambitious than that finally carried out. It was suggested that Spitsbergen should be occupied by a force sufficient to protect a naval anchorage and refuelling base which it was proposed to establish there. Mr. Churchill had signalled M. Stalin on 20 July, advising him that Britain was sending forthwith "some cruisers and destroyers to Spitzbergen, whence they will be able to raid enemy shipping in concert with your naval forces".<sup>24</sup> The occupying force was to be withdrawn at the end of four months, before the winter freeze-up. The proposed Order of Battle for "111 Force", as it was called, which was placed before the meeting on 26 July, comprised an infantry

brigade (less one battalion), without transport, plus certain attached units. The suggestion was that the Canadian Corps should furnish the troops, except for some administrative units and a light anti-aircraft battery.<sup>25</sup>

It was agreed that the Corps would provide the required units, and that they should be the headquarters of the 2nd Infantry Brigade with its signal section; the 3rd Field Company R.C.E.; Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and The Edmonton Regiment;\* and in addition two 50-bed field hospitals (to be provided from the 5th Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.) and a detachment of a Field Cash Office, Royal Canadian Army Pay Corps. Subsequently, early in August, the War Office decided to add a field battery (eight 25-pounders) to the force originally proposed, and the one nominated was the 40th Field Battery R.C.A., a sub-unit of the 11th Army Field Regiment.<sup>26</sup>

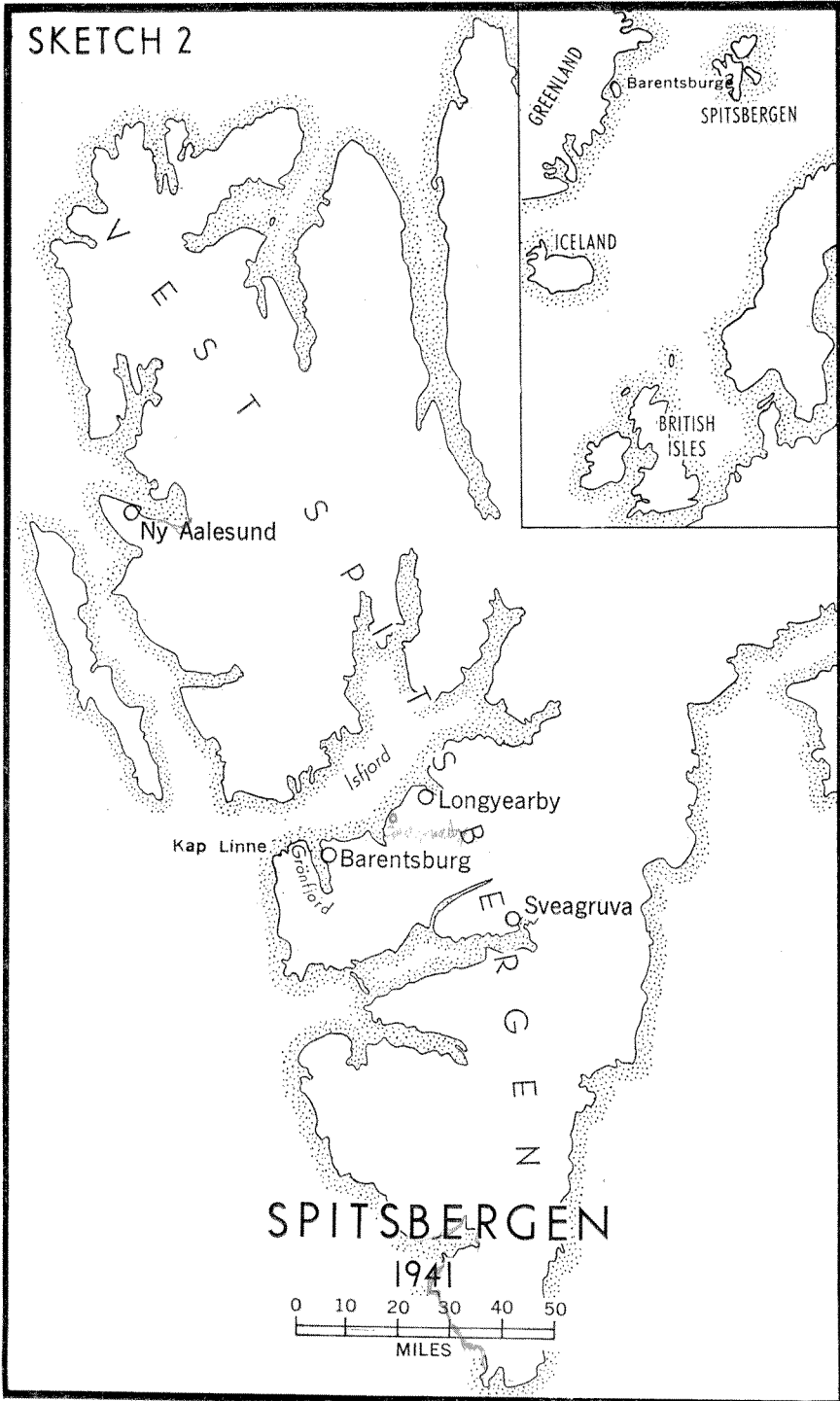
However, by this time doubts had begun to arise as to whether the expedition should take place in the form proposed. On 30 July the British Chiefs of Staff Committee decided that further information was necessary before definite orders were issued. In consequence, a naval force operating in the area was ordered to make a reconnaissance of Spitsbergen.<sup>27</sup> In the meantime, the arrangements already made were allowed to stand; the mobilization of the Canadian units proceeded, and was complete by the time specified in the original instructions (midnight 3-4 August).

On 6 August General McNaughton, accompanied by Brigadier A. E. Potts, commander of the 2nd Brigade, and Brigadier J. C. Murchie, Brigadier General Staff, C.M.H.Q., attended a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee at which the whole question was discussed. The meeting was told that the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet was, "on balance", opposed to carrying out the original scheme, and that Rear-Admiral Vian, the senior naval officer operating in the Spitsbergen area, had recommended that it be abandoned. It was suggested that Vian's observations indicated that he did not have a full appreciation of the object of the proposed expedition, and that a further opinion should be sought from him. The Chiefs of Staff decided that the expedition should not proceed until the Committee had heard further from Admiral Vian, but that the troops should move to their embarkation port and get some combined operations training pending a final decision.<sup>28</sup> During 5 and 6 August, accordingly, the Canadian units moved by rail from their stations in Surrey to Glasgow, where they boarded the transport *Empress of Canada*, which took them to the Combined Training Centre at Inveraray. Here some limited training (route marches, landings and boat work) was carried out during the next few days.<sup>29</sup>

On 11 August Brigadier Potts attended a further conference at the War Office; and it was indicated that if the expedition took place it would be on a

\*The units which had been disappointed by the cancellation of the Norway project in 1940.

SKETCH 2



reduced scale. The object would be mainly to disable the coal-mines, and a much smaller force than that first intended would be used.<sup>30</sup> The matter was finally settled only on 16 August, when General McNaughton, accompanied by Murchie and Potts, again attended a Chiefs of Staff meeting. It was agreed that the chief object was to ensure "that the Germans get no advantage out of Spitsbergen between now and March, 1942". The measures to be taken were thus defined:

The operation will include the following:—

- (a) The landing of a force for the destruction where necessary (or the removal where applicable) of:—
  - (i) Coal mining facilities.  
Stocks of free coal.  
Transit facilities between mines and wharves. Harbour facilities.
  - (ii) Wireless Stations.
  - (iii) Meteorological Stations wherever found.
- (b) The repatriation of all Russians to Archangel.
- (c) The removal to the United Kingdom of all Norwegians.

Directives for the naval and military commanders were agreed upon. They were informed that "Russian and Norwegian civil representatives of standing", and a Norwegian officer who had been nominated as Governor Designate of Spitsbergen, would accompany the expedition to assist in dealings with the population.<sup>31</sup>

The greater part of the force at Inveraray had already returned to Surrey, much disappointed. The total strength of the military force now left under Brigadier Potts' command for the expedition was 46 officers and 599 other ranks. This included a detachment of Norwegian infantry (3 officers and 22 other ranks) under Captain Aubert; 14 officers and 79 other ranks of the British Army, including 57 all ranks of the Royal Engineers; and 29 officers and 498 other ranks of the Canadian Army. The units most strongly represented were The Edmonton Regiment, whose detachment (one company plus one platoon) was commanded by Major W. G. Bury, and the 3rd Field Company R.C.E., commanded by Major Geoffrey Walsh. Also included now was a detachment of 84 all ranks of The Saskatoon Light Infantry (M.G.), in addition to the brigade headquarters with its Signals personnel and Medical and Pay detachments.<sup>32</sup>

In the early hours of 19 August Operation "Gauntlet" got under way. when the *Empress of Canada*, carrying the reduced force on its adventurous mission, steamed out of the Clyde. That evening she joined Admiral Vian's Force "A", consisting of the cruisers *Nigeria* and *Aurora* and the destroyers *Anthony*, *Antelope* and *Icarus*. The combined force went into Hvalfjord, Iceland, where it refuelled and Potts was able to confer with Vian. It sailed again on the evening of 21 August, and the following night the Canadian troops were told their destination for the first time.

On the evening of 24 August the squadron made rendezvous west of Spitsbergen with the oiler *Oligarch* and her escorting trawlers. Next morning it approached Spitsbergen. An aircraft reconnoitred the Isfjord (Ice Sound), the great inlet, leading into the interior of the island of Vest Spitsbergen, on which the most important settlements lie. No enemy activity was seen, and the ships closed in. At 4:30 a.m. *Icarus* landed a party of signallers at the wireless station at Kap Linne at the mouth of the fjord; they were cordially received by the Norwegian staff. The larger ships now steamed into the Isfjord and at 8:00 a.m. they entered the arm of it called Gronfjord (Green Bay) and anchored off the Russian mining village of Barentsburg. Brigadier Potts went ashore to discuss the proposed evacuation with the local Russian authorities, while military parties occupied the other Russian and Norwegian settlements along the Isfjord.<sup>33</sup>

The expedition's first great task was removing the Russian inhabitants of Spitsbergen to Archangel. The business of embarking the Russian community in the *Empress of Canada* gave the Canadian Army one of its very few contacts during this war with its Soviet allies. All evidence indicates that the general relationship between the Canadians and the Russians was thoroughly friendly, and the troops were almost embarrassed by the gifts which were pressed upon them. The official relationship was less uniformly satisfactory. Admiral Vian in his report observes, "The task of the command lay chiefly in the instillation of sweet reason". He records that the embarkation proceeded "somewhat in accordance with the plan", but was delayed by the insistence of the Russian Consul at Barentsburg on "heavy communal machinery and other stores" being brought away in addition to the people's personal belongings. The Admiral remarks, "This situation was met by Brigadier Potts, in his own way, without detriment, I believe, to the relations which should exist between Allies".<sup>34</sup>

The embarkation completed, the *Empress*, carrying the whole Russian population of Spitsbergen and their property, sailed for Archangel at midnight 26-7 August, escorted by the flagship *Nigeria* and the three destroyers. *Aurora* remained at Spitsbergen to protect the expedition and assist in the liquidation of the more remote Norwegian settlements. This was carried out during the next few days. While the *Empress* was away, the sappers undertook extensive demolitions at Spitsbergen. The great piles of coal at the mines were set alight, the estimate being that 450,000 tons were thus destroyed. Large quantities of fuel oil were poured into the sea or burned, and mining machinery at Barentsburg, Longyearby and other settlements was disabled or removed. During the operation the town of Barentsburg was largely destroyed by accidental fire, the cause of which could not be determined.<sup>35</sup>

On the evening of 1 September the *Empress of Canada* and her naval escort returned to Green Bay, having completed their mission to Archangel.

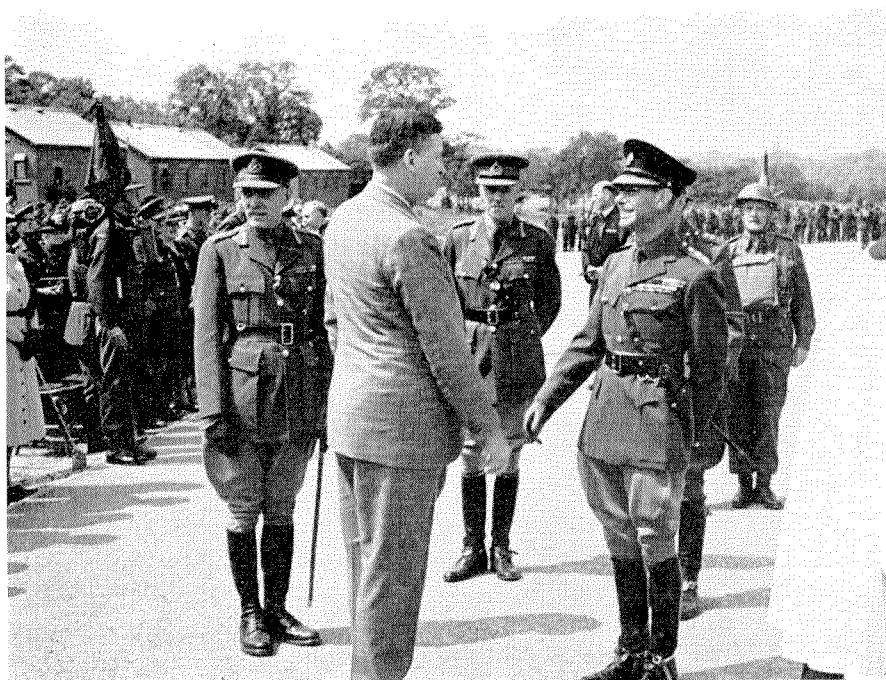
The following day the whole Norwegian population of the archipelago was taken on board. At 10:30 p.m. on 3 September, the cruisers and destroyers, with the *Empress of Canada*, sailed from Green Bay, leaving Spitsbergen empty of humanity.<sup>36</sup> The occupation had lasted ten days less a few hours. During that time, thanks to the "midnight sun", it had never been wholly dark. The troops had had to work very hard at embarking the people and their property, and at the job of demolition. The Signals detachment, with the help of the Norwegian staffs of the Spitsbergen wireless stations, had done especially valuable work. Normal transmissions of meteorological information were kept up to conceal from the Germans the fact that anything unusual was going on. The information sent out, however, was not wholly accurate. Fog was reported throughout the period when the *Empress* was present at Spitsbergen, the object being to discourage enemy air reconnaissance. The last signal was sent on the evening of 3 September, and the wireless stations were then put out of action.<sup>37</sup> The Germans were completely deceived. When Force "A" was well out to sea on its homeward voyage one of their stations was heard calling Spitsbergen "very strongly". The records of their army command in Norway suggest that it was only on 6 September that they received a report of fires at the Spitsbergen collieries. On 7 September this was confirmed by air reconnaissance.<sup>38</sup>

The cruisers parted company with the *Empress of Canada* on 6 September, bound for an enterprise against German naval vessels in Norwegian waters. This was successful, the gunnery training ship *Bremse* and other vessels being sunk.<sup>39</sup> All told, the Spitsbergen enterprise would seem to have been a satisfactory one from the naval point of view; for it had had another useful by-product, in the capture of three laden colliers which had been working for the Germans, one tug, two sealing vessels and a whaling vessel.<sup>40</sup>

The 800 Norwegians were not the only passengers brought to Britain by the *Empress*. She had embarked at Archangel 186 French officers and men, prisoners of war who had escaped from Germany to Russia and had been interned there until Russia entered the war.<sup>41</sup> They shared the hard work of the final days at Spitsbergen and their spirit greatly impressed the Canadians. The transport with her freight of many nationalities re-entered the Clyde on the night of 7-8 September. The following day most of the Canadians entrained for their stations in southern England.<sup>42</sup>

It would be easy to exaggerate the importance of Operation "Gauntlet". However, Brigadier Potts' force had carried out its limited mission with complete success. The enemy had not succeeded in interfering with it or even in discovering that it was in progress; and not a man had been lost from any cause. It had given a few Canadians an adventure and a taste of active employment, very salutary after the weary months of waiting. Sir John Dill wrote a generous note to General McNaughton: "The whole





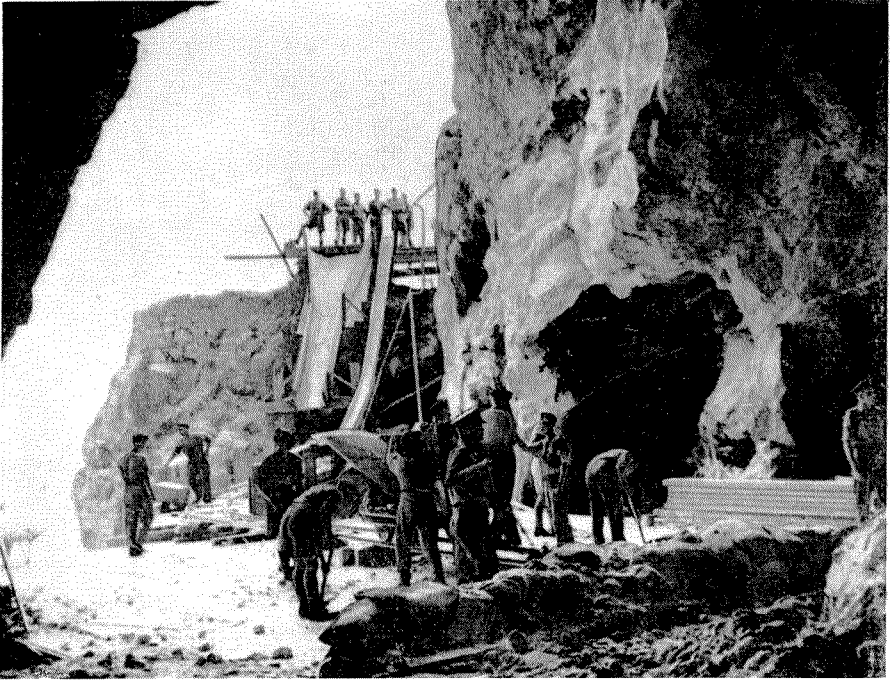
#### THE KING WITH CANADIAN TROOPS, JULY 1941

This photograph was taken on the occasion when H.M. King George VI presented colours to The Carleton and York Regiment and The Edmonton Regiment at the Guards Depot, Caterham, Surrey, on Dominion Day. Left to right in the foreground, Lt-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, Hon. Ian A. Mackenzie (Minister of Pensions and National Health and former Minister of National Defence), Maj-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., and the King.



#### CANADIANS PREPARING TO LEAVE FOR NORWAY, APRIL 1940

Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry on parade previous to leaving Aldershot for Scotland in the expectation of sailing to take part in the Norwegian campaign. Their embarkation was later cancelled.



CANADIAN ENGINEERS AT GIBRALTAR

R.C.E. tunnellers at work at Monkey's Cave, Gibraltar, October 1941.



ENGINEERS AT SPITSBERGEN

Men of the 3rd Field Company Royal Canadian Engineers engaged in setting fire to coal piles at Spitsbergen, 1941.

operation calls for nothing but praise, and I hear from all sides that your men were just grand."<sup>43</sup> In spite of these minor satisfactions, the reflection inevitably obtruded itself that Canada had now been at war for two years, and her troops had yet to meet the enemy.

Some later developments at Spitsbergen may be noted in passing. Both British and German parties visited the archipelago in the autumn of 1941, and the following summer a small Allied force, chiefly Norwegian, was installed there. In September 1943 the establishments were raided by a German naval force, but subsequently the garrison were reinforced and re-supplied, and the islands remained in Allied occupation.<sup>44</sup> The Canadian Army had no connection with these events.

### General McNaughton's Authority is Widened

We have described the discussion at the time of the Norwegian project of 1940 concerning General McNaughton's authority to commit detachments to minor operations without reference to Ottawa. British raiding operations increased during 1941, and there seemed to be a chance of Canadian troops taking part in such affairs. McNaughton spoke of this to Mr. C. G. Power, the Canadian Air Minister, when the latter visited the United Kingdom;\* and on 22 July he raised the question again in a discussion with Mr. Ian Mackenzie, Minister of Pensions and National Health. Speaking of the possibility of "operations of limited scope which depend for their success on the strictest secrecy", the general pointed out that considerations of time and security made it undesirable that special requests should have to be made to Canada every time for authority to take part. Mr. Mackenzie agreed to take the matter up with the Cabinet on his return to Ottawa,<sup>45</sup> but before he could do this the Spitsbergen project presented itself.

On 26 July General McNaughton cabled the Chief of the General Staff that the "special question" discussed with Messrs. Mackenzie and Power was now a practical issue; he added that as a result of those conversations he was arranging to cooperate with the War Office unless otherwise instructed. The Cabinet War Committee discussed the matter on 31 July, and McNaughton was informed that, assuming the project had been approved by the "United Kingdom Government War Committee" (i.e., the War Cabinet) the Government was prepared to leave the decision to his judgement. The C.G.S. signalled, "In arriving at decision you will no doubt have regard to question as to whether prospects of success are sufficient to warrant risks involved which include not only personnel but possible encouragement

\*Mr. Churchill's idea of a large raid on the Pas de Calais (see below, page 326) appears to have supplied the occasion for this conversation.

to enemy if results negative or worse".<sup>46</sup> Under this authority McNaughton sent Canadian troops to Spitsbergen.

Shortly afterwards the Corps Commander's powers were further widened. In October the Minister of National Defence, Colonel Ralston, then in the United Kingdom, cabled Mr. Power (who was administering the Department in his absence) that discussion with McNaughton indicated the need for generalizing the special authority given in the case of Spitsbergen "to cover future minor projects of similar and temporary nature". Ralston wrote:

Extreme need secrecy argues against prior submission each case of such plan to Governmental authority. Recommend War Committee of Cabinet now forward McNaughton general authority to act in such cases subject to his own judgment. He will notify Minister by most secret means in general terms prior to event where practicable.

The War Committee agreed on 29 October that it was proper that the Corps Commander should receive this authority.<sup>47</sup>

### Raiding Projects and the Raid on Hardelot

By this time the possibility of Canadian troops' sharing in cross-Channel raids against the Germans on the French coast—a natural development of the move into Sussex—was being actively discussed. Generals Paget and McNaughton had had a conversation on the subject on 6 September.<sup>48</sup> Thereafter small Canadian detachments were given combined operations training at Chichester Harbour. It was hoped that some minor raids could be mounted during the coming winter; but although there were specific plans for two such operations which were proposed for three successive suitable periods, they were cancelled each time because no landing craft were to be had.<sup>49</sup> On taking command of the Corps at the end of 1941, General Crerar was very anxious for raiding operations for his troops. On 5 February 1942 he wrote General Montgomery of the "great stimulus" the Corps would receive "if, in the near future, it succeeded in making a name for itself for its raiding activities".<sup>50</sup> Next month he pursued the matter with General Brooke and with the Adviser on Combined Operations (Commodore Lord Louis Mountbatten).<sup>51</sup> The latter arranged further combined training for Canadian troops; a large detachment from the 2nd Division trained in April, but contrary to the men's hopes they were not employed in an actual operation.<sup>52</sup>

One small operation, however, *was* carried out during April, and although it turned out to be merely another frustration, it deserves some notice here as the first occasion on which Canadian troops took part in such an enterprise, and the first during the Second World War when men of the Canadian Army came under the fire of German ground forces.



defences had incontinently fled no prisoners were taken.<sup>57</sup> For the Canadians the fiasco was still more complete; Ensor's men never even got ashore. The naval officer in charge of their group of craft fell ill on the morning of the 21st and was replaced by a young officer of less experience. It is also reported that the craft had defective compasses. The two assault craft carrying the Canadian party, and the support craft carrying the naval commander, failed to keep station properly and Ensor's boat became separated from the others. The craft searched for each other without success, and it appears that the navigators were not certain of their positions.\* In these circumstances landings could only have been made at random and it was out of the question to carry out the plan. While the craft were still searching, Lovat's recall rocket was seen. Wireless signals indicated that the Commando men had re-embarked, and the Canadians' craft now returned to Dover independently. It is doubtful whether the Germans had actually seen them, and although machine-gun fire had been directed towards them they suffered no casualties.<sup>59</sup>

It was one more disappointment to add to the long series. But not many months were to pass before Canadian forces were engaged in a much larger enterprise on the French shore, with Lord Lovat again associated with them.

### Allied Grand Strategy in 1942

June of 1941 saw the entrance of Russia into the war; December brought Pearl Harbor and the entrance of the United States. That same month, Mr. Churchill went to Washington and in a series of conferences (known as "Arcadia") with President Roosevelt and the British and American Chiefs of Staff,<sup>60</sup> set up the Anglo-American strategic machinery which was to play a great part in winning the war.

During these conferences, what was perhaps the most vital and fundamental strategic decision of the whole war was re-affirmed. On 27 March 1941 a specific "staff agreement" known as ABC-1<sup>61</sup> had been signed by British and American officers. Its basic concept was the determination *to beat the Germans first*. It was recognized that Germany was the predominant member of the Axis and that even in a "global" war the decisive theatre would be Europe and the Atlantic. This tremendous decision, to defeat Germany first, and deal with Japan afterwards, was thus taken long before either the United States or Japan became an actual belligerent. Subsequent events attest its soundness. Nevertheless, when Mr. Churchill

\*It would seem that one of the lessons of this small affair was the desirability of using more experienced naval personnel in such operations. The Rear Admiral in Charge of Landing Craft and Bases at Combined Operations Headquarters said in a minute on the reports of the the raid, "I see no excuse except incompetence for the L.S.C. [Landing Craft Support] missing the beach".<sup>58</sup>

went to Washington in December 1941 he was entertaining some anxiety lest, under the impact of the Japanese attack, the Americans might be disposed to alter this decision. No such tendency appeared. The basic concept of the war remained as it had been established earlier in 1941.<sup>62</sup>

An important result of the "Arcadia" meeting was the institution of *the Combined Chiefs of Staff*. There had been some previous discussion of the formation of an Allied Supreme War Council to conduct strategic planning on the highest level.<sup>63</sup> This now took shape as the Combined Chiefs. This formidable committee was composed of the Chiefs of Staff of the American armed forces (including, it should be noted, the Chief of the Army Air Forces), and "three high officers representing and acting under the general instructions of"<sup>64</sup> the British Chiefs of Staff. Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, himself a former Chief of the Imperial General Staff, played a vital part in this body on the British side.\* The Combined Chiefs had their permanent headquarters in Washington throughout the war. Their most important decisions were taken in a series of conferences, mostly held elsewhere, at which Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt were normally present and exercised decisive influence. It may be noted that neither China nor Russia was represented on the Combined Chiefs of Staff; nor was Canada, nor any other country of the British Commonwealth except the United Kingdom. The Combined Chiefs of Staff was a purely Anglo-American committee.

During the spring and summer of 1942, British and American statesmen and officers were vigorously discussing the strategy of the war against Germany, and after serious controversies further fundamental decisions were made.

The American strategic planners, and particularly the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General George C. Marshall, were certain from the beginning that the decisive measure would be a blow directed across the Channel from the British Isles; and they desired that this should be struck at the earliest possible moment. Churchill came to the "Arcadia" conference with a plan for an Anglo-American invasion of French North Africa; and we are told that "The President set great store" by such a scheme.<sup>65</sup> But the cross-Channel attack was the project for which leading American soldiers contended most strongly. On 10 March 1942, during his visit to Washington, General McNaughton had a conversation with Brigadier-General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had just been appointed Chief of the Operations Division of the War Department General Staff.

Eisenhower                      told                      him                      that                      "he                      had

\*Dill represented Mr. Churchill as Minister of Defence, and was therefore a fourth British member. Later Admiral William D. Leahy joined in a parallel capacity, as Chief of Staff to President Roosevelt. At the great strategic conferences the British Chiefs of Staff were normally present in person.

racked his mind to discover how we could present Germany with a second front, and that the more he thought it out the more firmly had he been driven to the conclusion that it would be possible to do so only by attacking Western Europe from the British Isles". McNaughton replied that there was no question but that "the war could only be ended by the defeat of Hitler and the only way of doing so was to attack him from the West". He had always been convinced, he said, "that an offensive would sooner or later have to be launched from the United Kingdom across the narrow seas"; and this view had been accepted by the Canadian Government the week before.<sup>66</sup> "Sooner or later": here was the immediate crux of the matter.

By 1 April the War Plans Division had a definite plan for the invasion of Northern France; and General Marshall sent the President a memorandum which presented forceful arguments for the selection of Western Europe "as the theatre in which to stage the first great offensive of the United Powers". This American plan looked forward to attempting the main operation in the spring of 1943, and conceived it as an attack across the Strait of Dover, the initial landing being made on the front from Etretat to Cape Gris Nez. The scheme also comprehended a more limited operation which might be attempted about 15 September 1942. This was a diversionary attack on the French coast, which would be justified only if the situation on the Russian front became desperate, or if the German situation in Western Europe became "critically weakened". But whether this took place or not, the plan proposed establishing "a preliminary active front this coming summer" by "constant raiding by small task forces at selected points along the entire accessible coastline held by the enemy".<sup>67</sup> On 4 April Marshall, accompanied by Harry Hopkins, then the President's most trusted civilian adviser, left for London to seek British concurrence in these plans.

Since 15 March, at least, the British themselves had been wrestling with the problem of diversionary operations in the West designed to assist the Russians in 1942. This project they called by the code name "Sledgehammer". The Chiefs of Staff considered the question repeatedly and on 21 March directed the C.-in-C. Home Forces, the A.O.C.-in-C. Fighter Command and the Chief of Combined Operations to plan operations designed to make Germany employ her air forces actively and continuously and to cause protracted air fighting in the West in an area advantageous to the Allies, in order to reduce German air support available for the Eastern Front as early as possible. The subsequent discussions turned on whether this could be achieved by air action alone; whether, if attacks by ground forces were needed, these should take the form of mere raids, or the establishment of a permanent bridgehead; and whether the best area for action was the Pas de Calais (where a much larger scale of air support was possible) or the Cherbourg peninsula (where the enemy defences were less formidable). No



very definite agreed solution was reached; but a report by the C.-in-C. Home Forces and his two colleagues dated 14 April expressed the opinion that, leaving aside the question of air action alone, "a series of medium-sized raids is the only practical solution".<sup>68</sup> They asked the Chiefs of Staff to endorse this policy and authorize the necessary priorities; and it seems clear that this was done (below, page 314).

During the conferences with Marshall and Hopkins the British representatives betrayed some doubt about the American schemes; the British, indeed, were for the moment in the unusual position of arguing the importance of the Japanese front against the American emphasis on Europe! Nevertheless, agreement was reached on basic principles for a frontal attack on the enemy in Northern France in 1943. There was considerable discussion of the scheme for an emergency landing, but nothing like a final commitment was made. The circumstances which might render it urgent in American eyes had not yet arisen. The whole situation was reviewed on the evening of 14 April, when the Americans met the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, and General Marshall put the American case, incidentally including a strong argument for "repeated Commando-type raids all along the coast" to harass the enemy and give experience to the Allied troops.<sup>69</sup> Three days later Churchill cabled to Roosevelt:<sup>70</sup>

The campaign of 1943 is straightforward, and we are starting joint plans and preparations at once. We may however feel compelled to act this year. Your plan visualised this, but put mid-September as the earliest date. Things may easily come to a head before then . . . Broadly speaking, our agreed programme is a crescendo of activity on the Continent, starting with an ever-increasing air offensive both by night and day and more frequent and large-scale raids, in which United States troops will take part.

A few weeks later Canada was given an account of the results of the conferences in a communication from Mr. Churchill to Mr. King<sup>71</sup> which described the conference and proceeded:

In consequence of these discussions it has been agreed that all preparations should be pushed ahead by the United States and ourselves for action in the following stages—

- (A) Conversion of the United Kingdom to an advance base for operations on the Western Front...
- (B) Development of preparations on a front from the Shetlands to the Bristol Channel.
- (C) Raiding operations to be undertaken in 1942 on the largest scale which equipment will permit on a front from North Norway to the Bay of Biscay.
- (D) Active air offensive to be continued and intensified with the object of inflicting the greatest possible wastage on German air force.
- (E) Reparation of plans to take advantage of any opportunity arising to capture in 1942 a bridgehead on the continent for an "emergency" offensive if such should become necessary.
- (F) Preparation of plans for large scale operations in the spring of 1943 to destroy the German forces in Western Europe.

The British Prime Minister mentioned that the British negotiators had emphasized that while it was important to engage as strong enemy air forces in the West as possible, "our operations in 1942 must be governed by the measure of success achieved by the Germans on the Russian front and we should have to pursue a more cautious policy as regards landing troops if the Germans were successful". On this point the American attitude was the exact opposite of the British.

On 18 April the British Chiefs of Staff approved a memorandum on "Operations on the Continent", implementing these Anglo-American decisions. The C.-in-C. Home Forces, the C.-in-C. Fighter Command and the Chief of Combined Operations were charged with working out plans for the "Sledgehammer" emergency scheme. On raiding, the memorandum contained the following direction:

We have already approved a policy of raids to be undertaken in the summer of 1942 on the largest scale that the available equipment will permit. These raids will be carried out on a front extending from the North of Norway to the Bay of Biscay and will be planned and launched by the C.C.O. in consultation with the C.-in-C., Home Forces.

The strategic situation during the summer of 1942 was very largely dominated by events on the Russian front. Although in the summer of 1941 "almost all responsible military opinion" had held that the Russian armies would shortly be smashed by the Germans,<sup>72</sup> Soviet resistance had continued and the greater part of the German land forces was tied down in the East. During the winter of 1941-42 the Germans had suffered severe reverses; but in May they again took the offensive and made large gains. The Russians from their first involvement in the war had demanded a "Second Front" (and, indeed, a Third Front-in the Arctic-also).<sup>73</sup> They now continued to urge their allies to invade in Western Europe, and there appeared in fact to be a definite danger of Russia's suffering defeats which would drive her out of the war. This would have been a catastrophe for the western powers; and this must be remembered in assessing the strategic discussions of that summer.\*

In May and June M. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, visited London and Washington. His main object, clearly, was to impel the British and American authorities into attempting an immediate landing in Western Europe. The British refused to commit themselves to such an enterprise. Mr. Churchill on 22 May represented strongly to Molotov the difficulties in the way, but explained that the British hoped to bring on air battles over the Continent which would force the Germans to withdraw air forces from the East.<sup>74</sup> In Washington Molotov seems to have received rather more

\*It is easy to forget the gigantic burden the Russians were carrying. A German return dated 9 December 1942 shows seven German divisions in Africa; 46 in France and the Low Countries; and 204 on the Eastern front.

encouragement, as was perhaps natural in the circumstances, but he was given no firm promise. On his return to London *en route* home, Churchill handed him an *aide-memoire* which stated that preparations were being made for a continental landing "in August or September 1942". It mentioned the shortage of landing craft, and proceeded:

Clearly, however, it would not further either the Russian cause or that of the Allies as a whole if, for the sake of action at any price, we embarked on some operation which ended in disaster and gave the enemy an opportunity for glorification at our discomfiture. It is impossible to say in advance whether the situation will be such as to make this operation feasible when the time comes. We can therefore give no promise in the matter, but, provided that it appears sound and sensible, we shall not hesitate to put our plans into effect.

On this same day (11 June) the White House in Washington and the Foreign Office in London issued communiques on the conferences with Molotov. Both included the statement that in the course of the conversations full understanding had been reached "with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942". It appears that Molotov drafted this himself while in Washington. Both Marshall and Hopkins urged that the date "1942" should be omitted, but the President, with a flash of the gay irresponsibility which he sometimes displayed, insisted that it should go in.<sup>75</sup> This considerably embarrassed Mr. Churchill when he visited Moscow later in the summer to inform Stalin that there would be no Second Front that year; but he could and did point to the phrase "We can therefore give no promise" in the British *aide-memoire*.

Early in this same month of June, Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten visited Washington and discussed the situation with General Marshall and other American officers and officials. He found many of them deeply desirous of an early invasion. On 9 June he dined with President Roosevelt, who mentioned to him the possibility of a "sacrifice" landing in 1942 intended to help the Russians. This is reported to have disturbed the British Prime Minister.<sup>76</sup> While Mountbatten was exploring in Washington, Churchill in London was clarifying and crystallizing British strategic thinking. A curious scheme for a large-scale raid which went by the name of "Imperator" (see below, page 324) was the occasion of his writing as follows on 8 June:

I would ask the Chiefs of Staff to consider the following two principles:

(a) No substantial landing in France unless we are going to stay; and (b) No substantial landing in France unless the Germans are demoralised by another failure against Russia. It follows from the above that we should not delay or impede the preparations for "Sledgehammer"\* for the sake of "Imperator"; secondly, that we should not attempt "Sledgehammer" unless the Germans are demoralised by ill-success against Russia; and, thirdly, that we should recognise

\*It seems evident that the code name "Sledgehammer", first used by the British for their own rather vague diversionary projects in March, had now become attached to the scheme for an emergency landing contained in the "Marshall Memorandum".

that, if Russia is in dire straits, it would not help her for us to come a hasty cropper on our own.

It would seem wise that all preparations should go forward for "Sledgehammer" on the largest scale possible at the dates mentioned, but that the launching of "Sledgehammer" should be dependent not on a Russian failure, but on a Russian success and consequent German demoralisation in the West.

On 11 June the War Cabinet accepted Mr. Churchill's "two principles", which were also heartily supported by the Chiefs of Staff.<sup>77</sup>

On 18 June Mr. Churchill arrived in the United States, accompanied by General Brooke. The Allied leaders now proceeded to discuss both the long-term and short-term plans for invasion of North-West Europe as well as possible operations in the Mediterranean. A letter presented by Churchill to the President expressed the gravest doubts about the emergency landing project.<sup>78</sup> At this point, the British in North Africa suffered serious reverses, Tobruk fell, and thereafter the talks were largely devoted to immediate measures for meeting the crisis in that theatre. When Churchill returned to England, it had apparently been agreed that preparations for a cross-Channel operation in 1943 should continue, along with planning for an emergency operation in 1942-and an alternative in case such an operation should prove impracticable in France or the Low Countries.<sup>79</sup> On 23 June, General Dwight D. Eisenhower flew to England with instructions to begin preparations for United States participation in operations across the Channel.<sup>80</sup>

At the end of the first week in July what the American Secretary of War called "a new and rather staggering crisis" arose in Washington, in the form of a cable from Churchill to Roosevelt<sup>81</sup> taking a strong line against the 1942 cross-Channel attack and reviving, instead, the proposal for invading North Africa. Although the British had never concealed their dislike of the "Sledgehammer" scheme, they had perhaps stated it so tactfully as to arouse unfounded expectations; and now that Churchill had decided that "the moment had come to bury 'Sledgehammer' ", and said so, Secretary Stimson and Marshall were both "very stirred up" and actually recommended threatening the British Government with a revocation of the basic decision to beat Germany before Japan. Marshall and Admiral King made a formal recommendation to this effect to the President. Stimson wrote in his diary, "As the British won't go through with what they agreed to, we will turn our back on them and take up the war with Japan". On later reflection, Stimson was "not altogether pleased" with his own part in this scheme; and his sober second thought seems more than justified. He writes, "Mr. Roosevelt was not really persuaded, and the bluff was never tried".<sup>82</sup> This is an understatement. Not only was the President not "persuaded"; he shortly went on record against the Japan scheme in most decided terms. At this crisis he showed cooler and surer strategic judgement than his highest professional advisers.

## Decision in July

General Marshall, Admiral King and Mr. Hopkins now took off for London (16 July) for what were in some respects the most momentous strategic discussions of the war. They carried a very remarkable memorandum of instructions signed by Mr. Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief.<sup>83</sup> It directed them to investigate "carefully" the possibility of executing "Sledgehammer". This operation, the President wrote, was "of such grave importance that every reason calls for accomplishment of it". He proceeded:

You should strongly urge immediate all-out preparations for it, that it be pushed with utmost vigor, and that it be executed whether or not Russian collapse becomes imminent. In the event Russian collapse becomes probable SLEDGEHAMMER becomes not merely advisable but imperative. The principal objective of SLEDGEHAMMER is the positive diversion of German Air Forces from the Russian Front.

In spite of this, the President was quite prepared for a decision against such an operation in 1942. The one point upon which he absolutely insisted was that United States ground and air forces must be in action against Germany *somewhere* in that year. Although the War Department had actually included in the draft of these instructions the threat to turn away to the Pacific, Roosevelt struck it out and wrote instead: "It is of the utmost importance that we appreciate that defeat of Japan does not defeat Germany and that American concentration against Japan this year or in 1943 increases the chance of complete German domination of Europe and Africa. On the other hand... Defeat of Germany means the defeat of Japan, probably without firing a shot or losing a life." Failing "Sledgehammer", the substitute theatres to be considered, the President indicated, were North Africa and the Middle East.

The discussions in London lasted for several days. The Americans pressed strongly for the emergency proposal for a Second Front in France in 1942. They are said to have argued that "the Russians' situation may become so desperate as to make even an unsuccessful attack worth while!"<sup>84</sup> The British would have none of it; and since at this time there were still only small American ground and air forces in the British Isles,\* and "Sledgehammer" if executed would have been largely a British and Canadian operation, their attitude was decisive. Finally, on 22 July, it was made quite clear that the British Prime Minister and his Chiefs of Staff would not cooperate in anything larger than raids against the Continent that year.<sup>86</sup>

As Roosevelt had foreseen, the question now became that of a substitute operation to provide a major enterprise against Germany in 1942. In the light of the earlier discussions, it is not surprising that the substitute was found

\*Two United States divisions had arrived in Northern Ireland. The Combined Commanders estimated at the end of July that three would be available for the "initial stage" of the operation.<sup>85</sup>

in an Anglo-American occupation of French North Africa (Operation "Torch"). Before Hopkins, Marshall and King returned to America on 27 July, the decision, though still formally dependent on the course of events in Russia, was virtually definite, and further discussion by the Combined Chiefs of Staff on 30 July did not alter it. That evening the President converted the tentative decision into a firm one.<sup>87</sup>

The fundamental strategic difference of opinion just described was not purely Anglo-American. It was between the British and some Americans; Marshall and Stimson were prominent among the latter group, but President Roosevelt was not a convinced member of it. It appears also that U.S. naval officers were less enthusiastic than the Army about an attack in France in 1942.<sup>88</sup> Stimson had recorded that the North African operation was "the President's great secret baby";<sup>89</sup> and the known Roosevelt predilection for this project had assisted the British negotiators in substituting it for the emergency landing in France, which they regarded as a foolhardy scheme.

It seems curious now that in 1942 some people thought the North African operation more perilous than "Sledgehammer". "Torch" was indeed a tremendous undertaking, involving as it did moving a large expeditionary force directly from the United States to conduct an assault landing on the other side of the Atlantic; this would certainly have been considered impracticable a few years before. Yet the opposition to be apprehended from the Vichy forces in Africa was of an altogether different order from that sure to be met from the Germans on the coast of France. In the light of later events, in the discussions of 1942 the advocates of a Mediterranean strategy were clearly right and those who plumped for an immediate enterprise in France were mistaken.

To begin with, there was in 1942 an extreme shortage of amphibious equipment and particularly landing craft. The "lift" for a really large-scale invasion simply did not exist, and the shortage was a major factor in the decision not to try even a more limited assault in Europe.\* Nor had we in 1942 established anything like complete control of the air above the Channel. To attempt to maintain a permanent bridgehead on the French coast would have meant committing every existing element of Allied air strength to a continuous battle against the Luftwaffe in which all the odds would have been in favour of the latter. (It may be recalled that we now know that in the Dieppe air battle we lost more than twice as many aircraft as the enemy.) In the summer of 1942, when the United States still had only small forces

\*The Combined Commanders estimated that on 15 October there would be available assault shipping and craft sufficient to lift two infantry brigade groups (one of two battalions only), with "a reduced scale of supporting arms", on assault scales; plus one infantry brigade group and three army tank battalions on light scales, and about three commandos. In addition, enough medium coasters were available to lift the transport of "about five" infantry brigade groups, and enough barges to lift that of half a brigade group-both on light scales.<sup>90</sup>

deployed in the United Kingdom and ready to take part, an assault might have produced a disaster which would have set our preparations for the fullscale attack back almost to where they were after Dunkirk; at best, it would have been a bottomless pit into which the resources needed for that attack would have been poured without result.

During these discussions in 1942 General Eisenhower fought hard for the idea of an invasion that year, although he fully recognized that it would be a very desperate venture. A member of his staff recorded on 22 July that the General said that that date, on which the decision against it was made, could well go down as "the blackest day in history". But in 1949 the former Supreme Commander, looking back across seven eventful years, was to write, "Later developments have convinced me that those who held the Sledgehammer operation to be unwise at the moment were correct in their evaluation of the problem."<sup>91</sup>

"Sledgehammer" was discussed in many places, and one of the officers who had a useful word to say about it was Major-General M. A. Pope, then serving in Washington as Military Representative of the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet. One of General Pope's tasks was to maintain contact with the Combined Chiefs of Staff and attempt to gather information for the War Committee on the course of planning which might affect Canadian forces overseas. On 1 May 1942 he reported to the C.G.S. in Ottawa on a discussion with Major-General R. H. Dewing, who has appeared in this narrative in other connections and had lately joined the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington. Pope referred to the "Sledgehammer" idea as it had reached him, and remarked that since it seemed to him completely unsound it had puzzled and disturbed him. He asked Dewing if he could tell him how the matter stood. He reported Dewing's reply as follows:<sup>92</sup>

6. Dewing began by saying that for some little time our U.S. friends had been advocating an offensive with a good deal of enthusiasm. The British were not less desirous of hitting back but, as I well knew, they had no intention of refusing to see the obstacles before them or, as he put it, of waving them aside even before they came to them. The business of going ashore on the other side of the Channel was a difficult one and they had no intention of being slap dash about it . . .

7. To his mind there were these three courses of action possible this season:

(a) To continue raiding on the St. Nazaire pattern, but on a larger scale, involving operations requiring the troops to hold the raided area up to one or two days

(b) To carry out an operation such as the capture of a beach-head in the event of things going badly in Russia and it being necessary at almost any cost to afford our Allies every possible relief, and

(c) To carry out an invasion should the enemy crumple up.

8. Courses (a) and (c) required no comment. He, however, could see no virtue in course (b). He entirely agreed with me that it would afford little real relief to the Russians and we worked out that it would require an expenditure of the order of 25 per cent. of our actual resources to achieve a diversion of possibly

less than 5 per cent. of the German forces on the Eastern Front. Again, in the circumstance of an impending Russian debacle, Britain would be thinking of her own defence against invasion rather than thinking of invading the continent. 9. Dewing thanked me for having brought the matter up for discussion between us, while I, on my part, thanked him for having reassured me that there was as yet no decision to undertake a hazardous and unprofitable operation.

Subsequently, Pope had a chance to speak his mind about the scheme on a somewhat higher level. On 7 May he "sat in with the British Chiefs of Staff" in Washington, along with Australian and New Zealand representatives, to discuss the British Mission's draft of a basic paper dealing with Allied strategy which had been under discussion for some time. Sir John Dill had called this meeting to give the Dominion representatives an opportunity to express their views. As Pope knew that the general contents of the paper were familiar and acceptable to his chiefs in Ottawa, he did not trouble to speak at length; but one paragraph of his report<sup>93</sup> is of interest:

... I took occasion to say that while I agreed with the paper as a whole, there was one point in it with regard to which it was highly desirable that the Canadian point of view should be made quite clear. This was the inference that in the event of things going badly with Russia this summer, it might be necessary to open a second front across the English Channel. I said that so far as I could see such an operation could only end with a loss of valuable formations and that this would jeopardize our being able to intervene successfully next year. "And also fail to do the slightest good", added the Field Marshal, who then went on to say that Mr. King had made this very point to him when in Washington some three weeks ago. It would, therefore, appear that if this operation is attempted this year, it will be over the dead bodies of the British C.O.S., and ours too, and that if and when the United States C.O.S. get down to details, they will realize not only the futility but the recklessness of the idea. Mr. Wrong has just told me that a very full report of the Prime Minister's meeting with the Pacific Council has just come down from Ottawa, a passage of which makes this point abundantly clear.

The Canadian Prime Minister had, indeed, made good use of the opportunity presented by the meeting of the Pacific War Council held in Washington on 15 April. This body, the Pacific Dominions had apparently hoped, would be an effective organ for the direction of operations; but the United States Chiefs of Staff did not attend it and its meetings became merely informal chats between heads of governments or their representatives, with little real effect upon the course of the Pacific war. In the present case, President Roosevelt presided and Dr. H. V. Evatt (Australian Minister for External Affairs) and Mr. Walter Nash (New Zealand Minister at Washington) were among those attending. During the discussion the President spoke, most confidentially, of the visit which Marshall and Hopkins were then paying to England; they were there, he said, "to urge the necessity for offensive action which would help to relieve the pressure on the Russians by creating another front". He spoke of the Canadian and other forces in Britain that were "raring to go".



Mr. King felt, in his own words,<sup>94</sup> that the President "was crowding the position pretty strongly"; and to avoid any possibility of its being assumed that he was "agreeing on Canada's part to an immediate attack on Germany" [*sic*], he thought it well to speak on the subject before the meeting broke up. He accordingly emphasized the importance of no attack being made before all factors had been carefully weighed; "there would have to be [the] strongest reasons for believing that the attack would be successful, as if it were not, there would be no saving of Britain thereafter, with the consequences that would flow therefrom". Mr. King's memorandum of the meeting proceeds:

The President said that we would have to be perfectly sure that we had superior air power and that he thought we had reached the point where that could be regarded as certain. I stated that what I was emphasizing particularly was the timing . . . There would have to be great certainty that no single important aspect could be left to chance.

When I had finished, there was no dissent on the part of anyone from what I had said . . .

Since it was intended that, in the event of "Sledgehammer" being attempted, Canada would have supplied a considerable part of the force—"one or two" divisions<sup>95</sup>—her political and military representatives had every right to express their views on this question. Mr. King had no military experience and did not often express a direct opinion on a purely military question. In this case his instinct and his common sense led him to a very sound conclusion.

A word may be said at this point about the progress of high-level strategic planning in England, and Canada's connection, or lack of connection, with it.

On 11 June 1942, during one of the rehearsals for the Dieppe operation, General Paget, the C.-in-C. Home Forces, discussed with General McNaughton the planning organization for the British "expeditionary force" being set up in the United Kingdom, which was to be under Paget's direction. It was intended that this force should have a permanent headquarters and a planning staff to plan future operations. Paget said that it was now intended to set up an Expeditionary Force Planning Staff Committee, and that this would be composed of himself as chairman, Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay (C.-in-C. Dover) as Naval representative, Air Chief Marshal Sir Sholto Douglas (C.-in-C. Fighter Command) as Air representative, Major-General Chaney (Commanding General, United States Forces in the United Kingdom) to represent the United States, and General McNaughton to represent Canada. McNaughton cabled the C.G.S. in Ottawa that he proposed to provide some staff officers for the planning staff, Paget having requested this. He added that as a result of these developments he hoped for the first time to be able to keep the C.G.S. informed of plans for future operations on the Continent.<sup>96</sup>

The body Paget described duly came into existence under the name of "the Combined Commanders"; it appears, indeed, that it was already in existence at the moment when he had this conversation with General McNaughton, for it seems to have held its first meeting on 15 May.<sup>97</sup> In one important respect, its organization differed from that forecast by Paget. McNaughton was never invited to become a member, and Canada had no part in it; it was entirely Anglo-American.\* The Combined Commanders, after Eisenhower's arrival, comprised General Paget, Air Chief Marshal Douglas, Admiral Ramsay and General Eisenhower. Lord Louis Mountbatten was associated with them.

The Combined Commanders worked out in some detail a series of plans for operations on the Continent, including variants of the "Sledgehammer" project. At the end of July they submitted to the British Chiefs of Staff specific proposals for an operation (itself designated "Sledgehammer") whose object was defined as follows: "In the event of a break in German morale this year, to seize and hold a bridgehead, which will include the port of Havre and at least 5 aerodromes, with a view to further operations". At the same time another variant of the "Sledgehammer" project was being developed under the name "Wetbob". This was a plan for an operation to gain a permanent foothold on the Continent in the Cherbourg area in the autumn of 1942. "Wetbob" was considered an alternative to the Havre scheme; it was not to be dependent on a crack in the enemy's morale, and was to be carried out in 1942 in case of urgent political necessity.<sup>98</sup> Both these projects were virtually obsolete by the time they were presented in this form; for the decision had already been taken not to attempt a major operation in France that year. During 1942 the Combined Commanders also developed plans for Operation "Roundup" (the code name by which the full-scale invasion of France was known at this time) on the basis of simultaneous or nearly simultaneous assaults in the Pas de Calais sector and on either side of the Seine Estuary, between Fecamp and Caen.<sup>99</sup>

Not only was there no Canadian participation in the Combined Commanders' planning, but it was a long time before General McNaughton received any information of the decision to undertake "Torch". On 3 August General Stuart, the Chief of the Canadian General Staff, who was then in London, went with McNaughton to the War Office and discussed the strategic situation and its implications with the Acting Chief of the Imperial General Staff. During this conversation no mention was made of the decision, then of course very recent, to go into North Africa;<sup>100</sup> and it appears that neither McNaughton nor any other Canadian authority got any information of this project, and its probable influence in the postponement

\*Its status was not entirely clear. The American association with it was apparently "informal". Nevertheless, General Eisenhower signed Combined Commanders papers on the same basis as the other members.

of Operation "Roundup", until September.\* He then pointed out to General Brooke the unsatisfactory state of things concerning the provision of information to the Canadian authorities on strategic planning. The best arrangement he was now able to arrive at was that he would visit the C.I.G.S. at intervals of two or three weeks. Brooke considered this the most convenient method for keeping him informed.<sup>101</sup>

The fact that no Canadian was told of the North African enterprise for so long seems a clear indication that the British Government was well pleased to have the Canadian formations remain in the United Kingdom, and had no desire to see them in action in Africa. No record has been found of the possibility of using the Canadians in Operation "Torch" being canvassed. At a much earlier date, in December 1940, a general Strategic Appreciation by the British Chiefs of Staff had stated that if the Germans attempted invasion the Canadian formations in the United Kingdom would play their part in the most important battle of the war, in which they might well "weigh the balance towards success", and that until the situation as regards invasion should become less threatening it was essential to retain them as part of the United Kingdom garrison.†

By 1942 invasion was no longer a serious threat, but the British authorities evidently had no desire to see the Canadians move. They had, in fact, a very definite reason for not caring to send them to Africa. During 1941 malicious criticism had represented the British as pursuing a policy of fighting the war with Dominion soldiers. "I have long feared the dangerous reactions on Australian and world opinion", wrote Mr. Churchill, "of our seeming to fight all our battles in the Middle East only with Dominion troops". He accordingly exerted himself actively to get additional *British* divisions from the United Kingdom into action in the Desert with a view to "freeing ourselves from the imputation, however unjust, of always using other people's troops and blood".<sup>102</sup> To have sent Canadian formations to Africa would have played into the hands of the hostile propagandists.

### Major Raiding Projects, 1942

We have seen that raiding operations on an increased scale were an important element in the Anglo-American strategic programme agreed upon

\*He told General Brooke on 17 September that he first heard of the change of Plans through a casual and incidental reference in a conversation with the C.-in-C. Home Forces. The date of this conversation does not appear.

†General Crerar, in his notes of a conversation with Sir John Dill at the War Office on 4 December 1940, records that in answer to a question as to whether there was any desire to use the Canadians in another theatre, such as the Middle East, the C.I.G.S. said that there were British divisions available and that there would be opportunities for employing the Canadians "nearer home". Crerar told him that he knew of no desire on the part of the Canadian Government to discourage the use of its forces "in any operations in which they could usefully play a part, no matter where the theatre might be" (H.Q.S. 8809, vol. 1).

in April 1942. During that year's campaigning season a whole succession of major raids were projected and some were mounted; but only one actually took place.

These projects cannot all be mentioned here; but the first, or one of the first, appears to have been "Blazing", a raid on Alderney in the Channel Islands, which was to have been carried out by some 2150 infantry and commando troops with supporting arms including tanks. The scheme was first discussed at Combined Operations Headquarters in March. The expedition was assembled in the Isle of Wight and some training done; but there were differences of opinion between the R.A.F. and military commanders and on 6 May the Chiefs of Staff decided against attempting the operation.<sup>103</sup> At this time the scheme for a raid on Dieppe was well advanced, and the Chief of Combined Operations submitted it to the Chiefs of Staff a week later.

Interest was not exclusively centred on the Dieppe project thereafter until it was finally carried out on 19 August. Another plan, the most bizarre of all the year's projects, had arisen out of the search conducted in March for a diversionary operation in the West designed to lead to the destruction of large numbers of enemy aircraft. This was "Imperator", whose projectors proposed, as Mr. Churchill rather acidly put it, "to land on the Continent a division and armoured units to raid as effectively as possible during two or three days, and then to re-embark as much as possible of the remnants of the force".<sup>104</sup> The inland objectives were never finally settled, but the form in which the operation was most widely discussed was that of an armoured raid on Paris. The raiding force would land at one port, send a detachment against Paris to destroy the German headquarters there, and then, it was hoped, withdraw through a different port. It is not surprising that the plan excited serious doubts on high military levels. On 8 June Mr. Churchill took aim at this extraordinary scheme and shot it down. On 11 June he recorded that "Imperator" had been cancelled as a result of his intervention, and that the Dieppe raid would take place shortly. On the previous evening he had handed the Soviet ambassador a paper outlining proposals for assisting Russia, which had included a statement that the policy of raids against selected points on the Continent would be continued as a means of preventing the Germans from transferring troops from the west to the east.<sup>105</sup>

Even after the raid on Dieppe had been attempted on 19 August, and had failed, at least one other major raid was projected by Combined Operations Headquarters. This was "Clawhammer", an attack on radar stations and other installations in the Cap de la Hague area of the Cherbourg peninsula, employing five commandos and parachute troops. It was discussed and elaborated in some detail during September; but it was considered "extremely hazardous and difficult"-the Dieppe experience had

doubtless had a dampening effect-and it appears that the Chiefs of Staff decided in mid-October that it should not be attempted.<sup>106</sup>

There were doubts in some minds concerning this programme of raids. On 25 July 1942 Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay sent to Lord Louis Mountbatten a draft memorandum which suggested that the Germans probably welcomed our raids as a means of showing up weaknesses in their defences. "If it is our intention at some future date to make an attack in force upon the enemy's coast", wrote Ramsay, "we are now doing, or proposing to do, our best to make that attack less likely to achieve success." Mountbatten replied that the Chiefs of Staff and War Cabinet had instructed him "to push on hard with large scale raids as part of the general decision come to by the Combined Chiefs", and added, "There are political reasons why I feel certain that they will not cancel them but I will explain all this at greater length when I come over and see you."<sup>107</sup> The "political reasons", it is fair to assume, related to the situation in Russia and perhaps also to the agreement with the United States concerning the raiding programme. At the time when this exchange of views took place, Mountbatten was supervising the final preparations for the only major raid that was actually carried out: the enterprise against Dieppe. We must now examine the origins of this raid in greater detail.

Its strategic background has already been made clear. There is no evidence that the Dieppe project itself was ever considered by the Combined Chiefs of Staff; but it formed a part of the tactical programme of Combined Operations Headquarters, which was itself framed in accordance with the Combined Chiefs' decision to mount a series of large raids. To see the Dieppe operation in proper perspective, it is essential to bear in mind the general strategic situation, and particularly the situation in Russia.

### The Origins of the Raid on Dieppe

The plan for a raid on the port of Dieppe originated at Combined Operations Headquarters, London, in April 1942, the month in which General Marshall and Harry Hopkins, elsewhere in London, were discussing strategy with Mr. Churchill.\* Lord Louis Mountbatten had been appointed Adviser on Combined Operations in the previous October. In March 1942, by Churchill's direction, he was given the title of Chief of Combined

\*The account of the Dieppe raid which follows has much in common with that in the present writer's *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary*, published in 1948. In a few cases, passages from the earlier book which seem suitable have been carried over verbatim. In general, however, more detail is given here than could be given in the one-volume *Summary*; certain topics for which there was no room in it are now included; and some new information has been incorporated.

Operations and promoted from Commodore to Vice Admiral. Combined Operations Headquarters had already been considerably expanded.<sup>108</sup>

This headquarters had two main functions: the organization of raiding operations to do immediate limited damage to the enemy, and the development of equipment and technique for amphibious operations generally and for the ultimate large-scale invasion of North-West Europe in particular. For many months it had been organizing "Commando" raids on an ascending scale of importance against the German-held coasts facing Britain. The attack on St. Nazaire on 28 March 1942, which achieved its main object, the destruction of the drydock gates, although a great part of the military force employed was lost, had been the largest enterprise yet attempted by C.O.H.Q.<sup>109</sup> It was hardly over before Mountbatten's staff were considering a still more ambitious one, the attack on Dieppe. This operation was planned to have an important bearing upon both the main functions of Combined Operations Headquarters.\*

Although the Dieppe raid is in general a very well documented operation, the documentation with reference to its *origins and objects—points* of special importance—is far from complete. In these matters the historian is obliged to rely to a considerable extent upon the memories and the verbal evidence of informed persons. The fact that "security" was of such great importance militated against complete records being kept. Almost the only written description of the larger objects of the Dieppe project which bears a date earlier than that of the raid itself is that included in Lord Louis Mountbatten's letter of 11/13 May 1942 to the Chiefs of Staff Committee asking approval for the Outline Plan. He wrote:

Apart from the military objective given in the outline plan, this operation will be of great value as training for Operation "SLEDGEHAMMER" or any other major operation as far as the actual assault is concerned. It will not, however, throw light on the maintenance problem over beaches.

It is clear nevertheless that the Dieppe project had, quite apart from its place in the Anglo-American raiding programme, a far closer relation to the future invasion of the Continent than any raid yet attempted. It would illuminate what was considered in 1942 the primary problem of an invasion operation: that of the immediate acquisition of a major port. It has been suggested that this was one reason for the fateful decision to include in the plan a frontal attack on the town; for it was feared that an attempt to "pinch out" a port

\*The idea of such an operation had long been in the air. As early as 23 June 1941 (the day after the German invasion of Russia) Mr. Churchill suggested to the Chiefs of Staff a large raid on the Pas de Calais—"something on the scale of twenty-five thousand to thirty thousand men—perhaps the Commandos plus one of the Canadian divisions".<sup>110</sup> In October 1941 the British Chiefs of Staff authorized a general policy of raids. On 7 November they directed that the question of mounting a large-scale raid, with one or two divisions, in the spring of 1942 should be considered. But it was reported that such a raid could not be launched before the autumn. On 13 February 1942, accordingly, they abandoned the project, merely directing that it should continue to be studied and that meanwhile a vigorous policy of small raids should be continued.

by landings on its flanks might produce delays which would give the enemy time to demolish the harbour, whereas if the place could be seized by a blow into the centre the problem would be solved.<sup>111</sup>

It was also considered important, before launching really large amphibious operations, that there should be a raid on a sufficient scale to afford a test of the new technique and material which had been developed. A fairly considerable assault fleet was being built up, and although Combined Operations Headquarters had had experience of small operations employing infantry landing ships and assault and mechanized landing craft, there were now available also tank landing craft which had not yet been under fire; and there had been no experience of what was involved in handling a fleet of all these types in action. There had in fact been no major assault landing\* since those at Gallipoli in 1915.<sup>112</sup>

The selection of the objective was, it is generally agreed, largely influenced by the question of air cover. Dieppe, some 67 miles from Newhaven in Sussex, was just within effective range of the fighter aircraft of 1942 when based on English aerodromes. The place is a resort town with a good though small harbour. It has historic associations with Canada going back to the days of the early navigators. The coast hereabouts consists mainly of unscalable cliffs. The only really large gap in the barrier is at Dieppe itself, where there is nearly a mile of beach between the commanding headlands east and west of the town; but there is a good beach at Pourville, where the River Scie flows into the Channel about two and a half miles west of Dieppe harbour, and a much narrower gap in the cliffs at Puys (called on the maps used in the operation Puits), a little over a mile east of it. Another possible landing beach was at Quiberville, at the mouth of the River Saane, eight miles west of Dieppe. Topography thus imposed several limitations upon any plan of attack.

The *Combined Report* on the operation prepared at Combined Operations Headquarters in October 1942 indicates that the question of an attack on Dieppe was first examined by the "Target Committee" of C.O.H.Q. "early in April, 1942".<sup>113</sup> It is stated that the first meeting to consider a definite plan took place on 3 April. This indicates that the raid was a purely British conception, but that (although the Americans had nothing to do with planning it) it almost immediately became an element in the programme agreed that month with Marshall and Hopkins (above, pages 313, 325). The earliest paper that appears to have been preserved concerning the planning† is the

\*The nearest thing to it was the landings in Madagascar on 5 May 1942. Tanks were landed on that occasion, but after the beach was secured, not from tank landing craft in the assault. No L.C.Ts. were present. There was little opposition to the actual landings.

†It may be noted that the *Combined Report* gives certain details concerning the planning of the operation not found in the planning documents preserved at C.O.H.Q., to which the present writer was kindly given access. These additional details were presumably added from memory after the operation, when the Report was being prepared. While they may well be authentic, it has seemed best to base the present account as far as possible upon the records actually kept during the planning, exiguous and incomplete though these are.

minutes of a meeting at C.O.H.Q. on 14 April which was attended by a representative of G.H.Q. Home Forces. At this meeting the Naval Adviser to C.O.H.Q., Captain J. Hughes-Hallett, R.N., "gave a brief outline of the plan for the operation" (the minutes unfortunately give no detail). Those present agreed "that the project was attractive and was worthwhile", and that the advisers to C.O.H.Q., along with a Home Forces representative, should examine it further.<sup>114</sup>

The recorded conclusions of another meeting, on 21 April,<sup>115</sup> indicate that by this date planning was fairly far advanced. The use of parachutists, gliders, and tanks, and the inclusion of a "direct assault" against the port of Dieppe, had already been agreed upon. Upon the development of the plan in detail, prior to this date, there is no strictly contemporary evidence. An unsigned account dated 14 September 1942 (that is, nearly a month after the operation and five months after the events described) states that two alternative outline plans had been produced.<sup>116</sup> One included a frontal attack on Dieppe combined with flank attacks on either side of the town at Puys and Pourville. The other was to rely entirely on flank attacks, putting in two battalions at Puys and two at Pourville, retaining a large floating reserve, and making no assault in front. Under this scheme the tanks would have landed at Quiberville.

The document of 14 September states that about 18 April there was a "verbal discussion (of which there is no written record)" to decide which of these plans should be adopted. Senior representatives of G.H.O. Home Forces were present, and it was generally agreed "that on balance there were advantages in taking the town by a frontal assault". This was the decision ultimately taken, although it is stated that naval officers (including Hughes-Hallett, who was not at this particular meeting), regarded the frontal attack as unduly hazardous. The reasons recorded in the document as influencing the final decision to attempt the frontal attack include the loss of time involved in distant flank landings, which "would make a surprise attack on the town more difficult to achieve". and the fact that tanks landed at Quiberville "would have to cross three factually two rivers" to reach the town. (This meant that the bridges would have to be seized in advance; and there could be no certainty that they would carry a Churchill tank.)

By 25 April an Outline Plan had been completed.<sup>117</sup> It provided for a frontal attack on the town of Dieppe, combined with flank attacks and preceded by a heavy air bombardment. Tanks were to be employed, being landed, in the first instance at least, only on the main beach in front of Dieppe. (The conclusions of the planning meeting of 21 April indicate that consideration had been given to landing a squadron at Pourville, but the idea had been abandoned as this beach seemed "to be more difficult than was supposed at first".) On 25 April a meeting at C.O.H.Q. discussed this Outline Plan. Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten was in the chair,



and among those present were Major-General J. C. Haydon (Vice Chief of Combined Operations), Major-General P. G. S. Gregson-Ellis (Deputy Chief of the General Staff, G.H.Q. Home Forces) and Air Vice-Marshal J. M. Robb (Deputy Chief of Combined Operations). Captain Hughes-Hallett explained the draft Outline Plan, "which, with minor amendments, was approved".<sup>118</sup>

So far, no Canadian officer had had anything to do with the planning, nor had any Canadian, the record indicates, even known that an attack on Dieppe was contemplated.\* On the morning of 30 April, however, General Montgomery visited General McNaughton at Headquarters First Canadian Army and broached the project to him. The troops required, he explained, were one infantry division to be selected from South Eastern Command. He had been "pressed to agree to" a composite British and Canadian force, but had replied that it was essential to maintain unity of command and that in his opinion the Canadian troops "were those best suited". G.H.Q. Home Forces had accepted this view, and General Crerar (G.O.C. 1st Canadian Corps, which was under Montgomery's operational command) had already been approached and had nominated the 2nd Canadian Division for the operation.<sup>120</sup>

These arrangements McNaughton confirmed, "subject to details of plans being satisfactory and receiving his approval". It was agreed that Montgomery should proceed with the preparation of plans and advise Major-General J. H. Roberts, G.O.C. 2nd Division, so that he might start work on planning with the Chief of Combined Operations.<sup>121</sup> On this same date, Headquarters 1st Canadian Corps issued "Training Instruction No. 9", which laid down a programme of combined operations training beginning with the 2nd Division and continuing with the 1st and 3rd in that order. This was simply security cover to prevent dangerous speculation about the training which the 2nd Division was now to undertake for Operation "Rutter", the name by which the Dieppe project was known at this stage.

There had been a feeling that the relationship between Home Forces and the Chief of Combined Operations in connection with raids required clarification; and on 5 May a new directive<sup>122</sup> was issued. This provided that if, after consultation with the C.C.O., the Commander-in-Chief Home Forces agreed that a raiding project should be given further study, he would decide upon the Command from which the troops were to be found, and would delegate responsibility for the operation to the G.O.C.-in-C. that Command. The latter could retain the responsibility himself or delegate it "not below a Divisional Commander". An outline plan would then be prepared by the combined planning staffs of Home Forces and C.O.H.Q.,

\*The story has been widely circulated that the Chief of Combined Operations made a plan based on flank attacks, and that "the Canadians" then altered it and insisted on a frontal attack.<sup>119</sup> This tale, it will be observed, is quite without foundation. See also below, page 395.

with participation by the Army, Corps or Divisional Commander nominated and his staff. Once the outline plan was approved by the Chiefs of Staff, Force Commanders for the three services would be appointed, and these with their staffs would work out the detailed plan.

### Planning and Training for the Raid

The opening paragraphs of the Dieppe Outline Plan, as approved on 25 April, ran as follows:<sup>123</sup>

#### *OBJECT*

1. Intelligence reports indicate that DIEPPE is not heavily defended and that the beaches in the vicinity are suitable for landing infantry, and A.F.Vs [Armoured Fighting Vehicles] at some. It is also reported that there are 40 invasion barges in the harbour.
2. It is therefore proposed to carry out a raid with the following objectives:—
  - (a) destroying enemy defences in the vicinity of DIEPPE
  - (b) destroying the aerodrome installations at ST. AUBIN
  - (c) destroying R.D.F. stations, power stations, dock and rail facilities and petrol dumps in the vicinity.
  - (d) removing invasion barges for our own use.
  - (e) removal of secret documents from the Divisional Headquarters at ARQUES.
  - (f) to capture prisoners.

#### *INTENTION*

3. A force of infantry, airborne troops and A.F.Vs will land in the area of DIEPPE to seize the town and vicinity. This area will be held during daylight while the tasks are carried out. The force will then re-embark.
4. The operation will be supported by fighter aircraft and bomber action.

The naval force employed was to comprise some six small destroyers of the "Hunt" class, a shallow-draught gunboat, seven infantry landing ships, and numerous small craft. The military forces were to be two infantry brigades with engineers, and "up to a battalion of Army tanks". The air forces assigned in the Outline Plan were "5 squadrons of support fighters, one squadron of fighter bombers and sufficient bombers to produce extensive bombardments on selected areas and targets"; the bomber requirement was calculated in more detail as "approximately 150 bomber sorties and 2 squadrons of low level bombers, excluding aircraft for airborne forces". Fighter cover would be provided from "one hour after the beginning of nautical twilight" throughout the daylight hours of the operation. The suggested provision of fighter squadrons is ludicrously small when compared with the number actually employed in the operation; either the planners made a curious miscalculation, or the figures stated are intended to indicate, not the total number of squadrons required, but the number required to be in action at any one time.

The plan provided for two infantry flank attacks, at Puits and Pourville, the force landing at the latter being the stronger and having the special task

of capturing the aerodrome. Simultaneously with these attacks, parachute troops would be dropped to attack the German divisional headquarters believed to exist at Arques and the coastal and anti-aircraft batteries in the area. The possible use of glider-borne troops was also envisaged. Half an hour after the flank attacks, the frontal attack would be put in at Dieppe itself by "up to 2 infantry battalions and up to 30 or their equivalent load Army tanks". One infantry battalion would be in "floating reserve", and the balance of the tank unit would be available, when required, to land either at Dieppe or "to the west" of it.

As for air preparation, the plan included a heavy bomber attack against "the town and the aerodrome" during the night preceding the raid, commencing at a time "most suitable to Bomber Command" and ceasing "not later than one hour before the beginning of nautical twilight". Between 30 and 50 minutes after the beginning of nautical twilight, there would be "low level bombing by Blenheims followed by Hurricane bombers", directed against the beach area and other selected areas in the vicinity. Amendments to the Outline Plan circulated on 15 May changed the objective of the heavy bomber attack to read simply "the dock area", and eliminated both the low-level bombing by Blenheims and the two squadrons of aircraft which had been intended for this task.<sup>124</sup>

The first task of the 2nd Canadian Division's General Staff was to make an "appreciation" of the Outline Plan as presented to it. This appreciation,<sup>125</sup> which was signed by the Division's G.S.O. 1 (Lt.-Col. C. C. Mann) and is not dated, remarks, "The question of the right point at which to land A.F.V. in this operation is the outstanding feature of the Plan", and the paper is largely concerned with this matter. Mann discussed the possibility of landing tanks at Quiberville, but decided that the effect of the river obstacles was to limit tank landings to the area between the rivers Scie and Arques. With reference to the Pourville beach, which was known to have "one exit (a one way track)" and might have another, the appreciation concluded that this might be useful as a landing place for later flights of tanks, but not for an initial landing. Of the plan for landing tanks on the main beach in front of Dieppe, it said in part:

Such a plan, on the face of it, is almost a fantastic conception of the place most suited to land a strong force of A.F.V. It is however, well worth evaluating with an unbiassed mind.

*Advantages.*

- (a) It, if successful, puts the A.F.V. in easy striking distance of the most appropriate objectives for their employment.
- (b) Surprise.
- (c) Could have a terrific moral effect on both Germans and French.
- (d) Would be most easily supported by infantry and R.E.
- (e) Control and information will be from front to rear, and difficulties of co-ordination to surmount obstacles, and deal with resistance would be the more easily met.

It was further argued that landing on the main beach would simplify the supply of ammunition for tanks and of engineer stores for the support of tanks and for demolition tasks; while the navy considered it best to re-embark the force at one place only. The proposed plan had "the advantage of simplicity", and it was the best choice in connection with withdrawal, as a rearguard action to cover re-embarkation would almost certainly be necessary.

It was recognized that it had disadvantages. It involved "attacking the enemy frontally", and "where penetration is obstructed and where engineer effort is required"; and the danger of failure to penetrate through Dieppe after the heavy air bombardment and its attendant damage was also noted. However, the appreciation observed that the known strength of the garrison at Dieppe was low (it mentioned two companies of infantry). The final section ran as follows:

*Conclusion.*

In spite of an initial adverse reaction to the proposal to land A.F.V. on DIEPPE front, it seems to have a reasonable prospect of success, and offers the best opportunity to exploit the characteristics of A.F.V. in this operation.

If A.F.V. were omitted from the operation it could be still very useful, but the likelihood of success in regard to the destruction of the aerodrome would be greatly reduced.

In regard to the withdrawal phase, a proportion of A.F.V. as part of the Rear-guard will materially strengthen the rear-guard at a time when enemy reinforcements may be deploying for counter-attack with the object of preventing our withdrawal.

I am in favour of adopting the outline plan.

The Canadian military authorities could, if they chose, have rejected the Outline Plan and allowed some British formation to undertake the operation. Those who have followed the story thus far, however, will realize how loath any Canadian officer, in 1942, would have been to reject any plan, proposed by competent authority, which promised action; they will realize, too, how violently resentful the ordinary Canadian soldier would have been had an enterprise like the Dieppe raid been carried out at this time without the participation of the Canadian force which had waited so long for battle. Such an event might have had most serious consequences for morale.

Lord Louis Mountbatten submitted the Outline Plan to the Chiefs of Staff Committee on, apparently, 13 May. The same day he advised the Military and Air Force Commanders that the Committee had approved their appointments and directives, and had accepted the Outline Plan as a basis for detailed planning.<sup>126</sup> General Roberts was to be Military Force Commander and Air Vice-Marshal T. L. Leigh-Mallory (Air Officer Commanding No. 11 Fighter Group) Air Force Commander. The Naval Force Commander, appointed subsequently, was Rear-Admiral H. T. Baillie-Grohman.

On the same day on which General Montgomery told him of the projected operation, General McNaughton cabled to the Chief of the

General Staff in Ottawa, referring to the permission given in October 1941 to commit Canadian troops to "minor" operations without special authority.\* This "Most Secret" personal cable said in part, "Plans are now being made which involve operations of type indicated but on a scale which cannot properly be classed as 'minor' ", and asked that McNaughton's authority be widened by deleting the word "minor" from the phrase "minor projects of a temporary nature". The War Committee of the Cabinet considered this on 1 May, and the Army Commander was informed that it had approved his proposal, subject to the same considerations (as to approval by the United Kingdom Government, and as to his being satisfied with the plans) which had been laid down when the Spitsbergen operation was in contemplation.<sup>127</sup> In the interest of secrecy, no information as to the time or place of the raid was requested by or sent to Canada; Brigadier J. E. Genet, Chief Signal Officer, First Canadian Army, made a trip to Ottawa at this time and carried a verbal message from General McNaughton to the C.G.S., but even this did not give these details.<sup>128</sup> On 15 May McNaughton sent a cable<sup>129</sup> giving a general indication of the size of the force involved and added:

Outline Plan has been approved by Chiefs of Staff Committee. I am satisfied (a) objective is worthwhile (b) land forces detailed are sufficient (c) sea and air forces adequate (d) arrangements for cooperation satisfactory. I have therefore accepted this outline plan and authorized detail planning to proceed.

On this same date McNaughton had sent to Lieutenant-General J. G. des R. Swayne, C.G.S. at G.H.Q. Home Forces, a "Most Secret and Personal" letter<sup>130</sup> confirming his acceptance of the arrangements for Canadian participation in the operation, but suggesting a somewhat different procedure in future:

1. I confirm that I accept the outline plan for Operation 'RUTTER' as approved by the Chiefs of Staff Committee.
2. I confirm that I authorize the Canadian Commander to proceed with detail planning.
3. It would be appreciated if you would obtain for me a copy of paper giving outline plan of this operation as approved by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, this paper to be held by you to my order, for reference as I may require, and in any event to be handed to me on completion of operation, for transmission by me to my Government.
4. I suggest that in future Combined operations involving Canadian troops, the outline plan should be placed before me before submission to the Chiefs of Staff Committee and that the Chiefs of Staff Paper should show that in giving their approval they take note of my acceptance; also that I should be included in the distribution list.

Canadian officers had already joined in the work of developing the Outline Plan into detailed orders; and instructions had been issued for

\*Above, page 308.

specialized training for the troops in the Isle of Wight. Headquarters 2nd Division arrived on 18 May, and the whole Canadian force was in the island by the 20<sup>th</sup>.<sup>131</sup> It consisted of the 4th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier Sherwood Lett and consisting of The Royal Regiment of Canada, The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and The Essex Scottish Regiment; the 6th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier W. W. Southam and consisting of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada and The South Saskatchewan Regiment; the 14th Canadian Army Tank Regiment (The Calgary Regiment), a unit of the 1st Army Tank Brigade; light anti-aircraft and field artillery detachments (to man captured guns); and considerable numbers of engineers, plus the necessary administrative units.

The units immediately began an intensive programme designed to harden the men and otherwise prepare them for the arduous work ahead. It included not only boat work but also assault courses, unarmed combat, speed marches, etc. Training on a battalion basis having gone as far as it could be carried in the time available, a large-scale combined exercise known by the code name "Yukon", which was in fact a dress rehearsal for the raid, was held on 11-12 June near Bridport, Dorset, on a stretch of coast resembling the Dieppe area. Generals Paget, McNaughton and Crerar watched the troops landing at dawn on 12 June.<sup>132</sup>

"Yukon" did not go well. Units were landed miles from the proper beaches, and the tank landing craft arrived over an hour late. Lord Louis Mountbatten was in the United States at the time; but on his return he decided that further rehearsal was essential and that no attempt should be made to carry out the operation during the favourable moon and tide period beginning 21 June, as had been intended.<sup>133</sup> The force remained in the Isle of Wight, and on 22-23 June another rehearsal ("Yukon II") was carried out at the same place as before, both Mountbatten and General Montgomery being present this time.

The results were much more satisfactory, but certain defects were still evident, particularly on the naval side. General McNaughton asked General Montgomery to take these matters up with the naval authorities, and General Paget wrote to him to the same effect.<sup>134</sup> Montgomery reported to Paget on 1 July that he had explored the question with the Chief of Combined Operations and the three Force Commanders and was satisfied that arrangements which had now been made\* would ensure better results on the points mentioned, which related particularly to lack of precision in time and place

\*These included the provision of three special radar vessels, and the presence of two officers with special knowledge of the Dieppe area of the French coast, who would "lead the flank parties in".

in landings, and to use of covering smoke. In the same letter Montgomery expressed his general views on the prospect, as follows:

2. I went over to the Isle of Wight yesterday and spent the whole day there. checking over the whole operation with Roberts, and with the Naval and R.A.F. Force Commanders.  
I am satisfied that the operation as planned is a possible one and has good prospects of success, given:
  - (a) Favourable weather.
  - (b) Average luck.
  - (c) That the Navy put us ashore roughly in the right places, and at the right times ...
3. In an operation of this sort I regard "confidence" as an essential ingredient for success.  
I am now satisfied that, throughout the Force, Commanders. Staffs. and Regimental Officers have confidence in the combined plan and in the successful outcome of the operation.  
I say "now", because there was a moment when certain senior officers began to waver about lack of confidence on the part of the troops-which statements were quite untrue. They really lacked confidence in themselves.  
You may be interested to see certain notes I gave to Roberts regarding training. I considered it necessary to add an extra para 9 to these notes. The matter has been firmly handled.  
The notes are attached.
4. Mountbatten, myself, and Leigh-Mallory will be together at 11 Fighter Group H.Q., during the whole operation.  
The Battle once begun can be influenced only by the use of air power, and that is therefore the best place for us ...  
P.S. The Canadians are 1st Class chaps; if anyone can pull it off, they will.

The "extra para 9", to which General Montgomery referred, developed the theme of "confidence in success", and the essentiality of "an infectious optimism which will permeate right down through the Force, down to the rank and file". The present writer has seen no other evidence on this question of "confidence" except General Crerar's letter, quoted in the succeeding paragraph, which indicates that the reason for the momentary doubts was the naval errors during the exercises.

The best possible assurances having been received that the weaknesses appearing in the rehearsals had been corrected, the senior Canadian officers gave their final approval. On 3 July General Crerar, having seen General Montgomery's letter quoted above, wrote General McNaughton, in part as follows:

2. I spent yesterday with Roberts. He and his Brigadiers expressed full confidence in being able to carry out their tasks-given a break in luck. There was previously some doubt as to the ability of the Navy to touch them down on the right beaches. That has now pretty well disappeared, although I told Roberts that 100% accuracy should never be expected in any human endeavour, and that some error might be expected, and should be then solved by rapid thinking and decision.
3. I agree that the plan is sound, and most carefully worked out. I should have no hesitation in tackling it, if in Roberts' place....

On the same day, McNaughton wrote to Paget, "I now have the reports of Comd 1 Cdn Corps and I am satisfied that all arrangements for Operation ["Rutter"] are in order and that this operation may now proceed."<sup>135</sup>

Although McNaughton and Crerar thus endorsed the "Rutter" plan, the reader will have noted that they had had nothing to do with making it. Montgomery had not delegated the responsibility for the military planning, but had kept it in his own hands. Neither McNaughton nor Crerar had a place in the "chain of command" for the operation, though they could and would certainly have intervened as representatives of Canadian authority had they thought the plan unsound.

### Changes in the Plan

While the Canadians were assembling and beginning their training in the Isle of Wight, detailed planning was proceeding in London, under the direction of Lord Louis Mountbatten, the three Force Commanders, and General Montgomery, who himself attended some of the planning meetings. During this phase the original Outline Plan was materially altered. The most important change was the elimination of the heavy air bombardment. This decision was taken by a meeting, presided over by General Montgomery, on 5 June. The portion of the minutes of this meeting<sup>136</sup> relating to the air plan runs as follows:

5. Air Vice Marshal Leigh-Mallory proposed and the meeting agreed that air bombing of the port itself during the night of the assault would not be the most profitable way of using the bombers, as a raid which was not over-powering, might only result in putting everyone on the alert. As an alternative he proposed bombing BOULOGNE with 70 aircraft with a view of creating a diversion there, and he proposed also the bombing of CRECY and ABBEVILLE aerodromes between 0230 and 0400 hours.\* It was emphasised that the movement of our aircraft in the vicinity of ABBEVILLE and CRECY would tend to occupy the R.D.F. organisation at DIEPPE and might put out of action, at least for some hours, two aerodromes which the enemy would wish to use during the day of the operation.

6. It was agreed that cannon fighters should attack the beach defences and the high ground on either side of DIEPPE, as the first flight of landing craft were coming in to land. It was also agreed that air action would be taken against

German Headquarters in ARQUES at 0440.

One factor in the discussion of bombing had been the inevitable casualties to the French population. This was not, however, a major element in the cancellation of the bombardment. It was the normal rule that targets in Occupied France could be bombed only when weather permitted a very high degree of accuracy (and this had prevented bombing in support of the St. Nazaire raid). The Chiefs of Staff had recommended to the Prime Minister on 19 May that this rule should be relaxed "so far as Combined Operations are concerned"; and on 30 May Mr. Churchill agreed to this limited relaxation.<sup>137</sup>

\*These proposed diversionary operations were not carried out on 18-19 August, although Abbeville aerodrome was bombed in the course of the raid.



The minutes of the meeting of 5 June make no reference to General Roberts' views on the air bombardment, but he has confirmed<sup>138</sup> that an important element in his acceptance of the Air Force Commander's recommendation for the elimination of it was his fear that this attack would so block the streets of Dieppe as to prevent the tanks landed on the beach from getting through to deliver their attack upon the aerodrome to the south. It will be recalled that this danger had been noticed in Lt.-Col. Mann's original appreciation of the Outline Plan.

The Detailed Military Plan for Operation "Rutter", a very long document, bore the date 20 June. A considerable number of amendments were subsequently issued.

Just at the time when Operation "Rutter" was in the final stages of preparation, its desirability was re-examined at a high level. Mr. Churchill, as we have seen, visited the United States for a few days in June. He returned home on the 26th, seriously concerned over the reverses in North Africa and particularly the loss of Tobruk.<sup>139</sup> On 30 June\* he held a small private conference at No. 10 Downing Street to seek opinions on the Dieppe project. The only persons present, according to the recollection of one of them, were the Prime Minister himself, General Brooke, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Captain Hughes-Hallett, and two officers of the staff of the Ministry of Defence, General Ismay and Brigadier Hollis. During the discussion Mr. Churchill showed some anxiety, and asked Mountbatten whether he could "guarantee success", to which Mountbatten naturally replied that he could not. Captain Hughes-Hallett had just spent some time training with The Cameron Highlanders of Canada in the guise of a private soldier ("Private Charles Hallett"), his object being to find out what combined training looked like to the soldiers. He was asked his opinion of the troops, and assured the Prime Minister that the men he had lately been with would "fight like hell".

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff is reported to have now intervened and stated in decided terms the view that the Dieppe operation was indispensable to the Allied offensive programme. He told Mr. Churchill that if it was ever intended to invade France it was essential to launch a preliminary operation on a divisional scale.<sup>140</sup> This opinion from the highest military authority presumably carried the day, and it was doubtless of this conference that Mr. Churchill was thinking when on 8 September 1942 he told the British House of Commons, "I, personally, regarded the Dieppe assault, to which I gave my sanction, as an indispensable preliminary to full-scale operations". The Dieppe plan might perhaps have been considered to contravene the principle agreed upon a few weeks earlier,

\*Sir Winston Churchill's memoirs might suggest that this happened at a later stage. Admiral Hughes-Hallett's diary, however, establishes the date. It is probably the only written record of the date of the meeting.

"No substantial landing in France unless we are going to stay" (above, page 315). However, the force involved was somewhat smaller than that proposed for "Imperator", the scheme which led to the enunciation of that principle.

We have noted above General Montgomery's intention of "watching" the operation, with Lord Louis Mountbatten and Air Vice-Marshal LeighMallory, from Headquarters No. 11 Fighter Group at Uxbridge. No Canadian was to be present, and when this came to his attention General McNaughton wrote to General Paget suggesting that "having regard to the particular Canadian responsibility in this matter and to maintain the proper channel of command to the Canadian units involved", General Crerar should be with the group of senior officers at Uxbridge. G.H.Q. Home Forces did not sympathize with this point of view, pointing out that Montgomery had retained direction of the operation himself and that Crerar accordingly would not be exercising active command.<sup>141</sup> The British military authorities, in other words, proposed to treat the question precisely as though the 2nd Division had been one of their own formations.

On 4 July General Crerar discussed the matter at length with General Montgomery, pointing out that it was a mistake to "treat the problem of command of Canadian troops as a simple military issue, capable of solution along strictly British channels of command". The fact that Crerar's troops had been placed under Montgomery's operational command did not imply, he argued, "that I could be divested of my responsibility through Lieut.General McNaughton to the Canadian Government in respect to the manner in which those troops were committed to actual operations". He left no doubt in Montgomery's mind that the Canadian force in England could not be regarded merely as part of the British Army; it was in a special constitutional position:

In order to illustrate this point in a general way I suggested that the position of C.-in-C., Home Forces, in respect to Lieut.-General McNaughton, and the Canadian Army in the U.K. was very similar to that occupied by Field Marshal Foch in relation to Field Marshal Haig and the B.E.F. in the last war.

These explanations convinced Montgomery of the importance of having some senior representation of the Canadian Army at the headquarters from which the operation was to be directed; he thanked Crerar for his frankness, and proceeded to invite both McNaughton and Crerar to join him at Uxbridge on the day of the operation.<sup>142</sup>

### The Cancellation of Operation "Rutter"

Amphibious raids, as we have noted, are governed by the moon and the tide, and there are only a few days in each month when conditions are



#### THE QUEEN INSPECTS A GUARD OF HONOUR

H.M. Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by Hon. J. L. Ralston, Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., and Lt.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, inspects a guard at Caterham, Surrey, during ceremonies held in connection with presentation of colours to the Saskatoon Light Infantry on 24 October 1941.



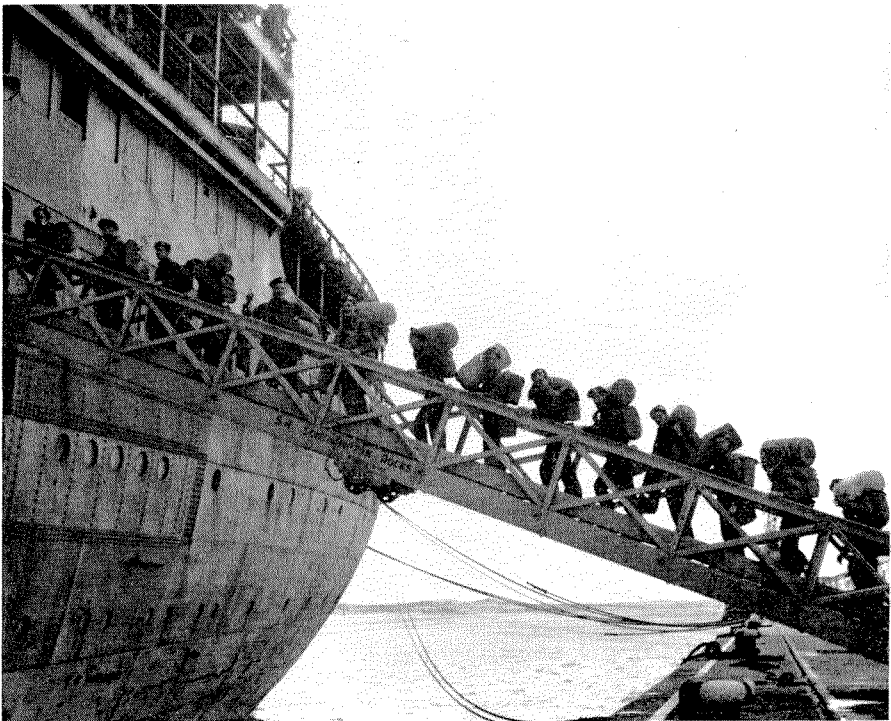
#### A VERY NEAR MISS AT C.M.H.Q., LONDON

The results of the explosion of a bomb which fell in Pall Mall East, just outside the back door of the Sun Life Building (then housing the overseas headquarters of both the Canadian Army and the R.C.A.F.) on 11 October 1940.



#### CABINET MINISTERS AT ARMY HEADQUARTERS

This photograph, taken at a church service at Headquarters First Canadian Army, 4 October 1942, shows in the foreground, from left to right, Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Munitions and Supply), Lt-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, Hon. J. L. Ralston (Minister of National Defence), Lt-Gen. Kenneth Stuart (Chief of the General Staff, Canada), and Maj.-Gen. Hon. P. J. Montague.



#### HOMEWARD BOUND AFTER SIX YEARS

The Royal 22e Régiment, 1st Canadian Infantry Division, left Canada on 9 December 1939. This photograph, taken on 23 September 1945 at Southampton, shows men of the regiment boarding the troopship *Nieuw Amsterdam* which carried them back to Canada.

suitable. Following the comparatively satisfactory results of Exercise "Yukon II", it was decided that Operation "Rutter" should take place, on 4 July or one of the days following. On 27 June General Roberts called a conference of all the officers of his raiding force and for the first time outlined the plan fully. Even now, however, the actual objective was not mentioned; and officers were warned that "other ranks are not to be informed until on board ship".<sup>143</sup> On 2 and 3 July the troops were embarked on the infantry landing ships which were to carry them across the Channel, and thereafter remained "sealed" on board. They were now told that what had hitherto been referred to as Exercise "Klondike I" was in fact to be an actual operation. General Roberts and Admiral Mountbatten visited the ships and spoke to the men. Every soldier was fully "briefed" on his detailed task.<sup>144</sup>

On 3 July the weather was unsuitable for launching the enterprise, and it was accordingly postponed for twenty-four hours. The next morning, conditions still being unfavourable, it was again put off. On the 5th, since the weather was too unsettled to permit the expedition to sail that night, and seemed likely to remain unsettled for the next 48 hours, a conference was held and the plan for the operation was considerably altered. It appeared that 8 July was the only possible date remaining; under the existing conditions, the raid, if carried out that day, would have lasted for two tides, and withdrawal would not have begun until five in the afternoon. A new element in the situation was a report that the German 10th Panzer Division, an important factor in our calculations, had moved closer to the coast and was now at Amiens, only about eight hours from Dieppe.\* The plan was accordingly revised, placing it on a one-tide basis, with the whole force re-embarking by 11:00 a.m.<sup>146</sup>

The concentration of shipping about the Isle of Wight had not escaped the enemy's notice. At 6:15 a.m. on 7 July four of his aircraft struck at vessels of the force lying in Yarmouth Roads near the west end of the Solent. Bombs hit two landing ships, *Princess Astrid* and *Princess Josephine Charlotte*, both carrying mainly men of The Royal Regiment of Canada. Fortunately "the bombs passed completely through the ships before exploding", and the regiment suffered only four minor casualties. This attack in itself was not enough to cause cancellation of the operation. The Royals were hastily landed and marched to another anchorage for embarkation in another vessel.<sup>147</sup> The naval experts, however, decided that the weather was still too bad to permit of attempting the operation on 8 July. It was accordingly cancelled. The bitterly disappointed soldiers left their ships and the force which had spent so long in the Isle of Wight was returned to the mainland and dispersed.

\*This report was accurate. The German situation map of 28 May shows this Division's headquarters at Soissons; that of 9 June shows it as having moved up to Amiens.<sup>145</sup>

As many thousands of men now knew that it had been intended to raid Dieppe, and once they left the ships it would no longer be possible to maintain complete secrecy, General Montgomery "recommended to the powers that be that the operation be off for all time". As it turned out, it was off for a week. Mountbatten had in fact recommended to the Chiefs of Staff on 6 July that if the raid did not take place on the date then proposed (presumably 8 July) the force should be disbanded and consideration given to mounting the operation again at a later date.<sup>148</sup>

### The Revival of the Operation

On the circumstances in which the project of the raid was revived about 14 July, and on the reasons for the revival, there is comparatively little written evidence. The account which follows is, accordingly, based in great part upon the recollections of officers who were closely concerned in the matter.

The cancellation of the Dieppe project had caused deep chagrin at Combined Operations Headquarters, and there is no doubt that it was the staff of C.O.H.Q. that was responsible for the revival.\* On the evening of the cancellation Capt. Hughes-Hallett spoke most strongly at a meeting of the C.O.H.Q. "Council and Advisers", going so far as to suggest an inquiry by some outside authority into the question of whether there was a defect in the method of planning and whether the recent cancellations of operations had been justified. On 10 July another meeting, presided over by Lord Louis Mountbatten, agreed "that an alternative 'Rutter' should be examined" and discussed with the security authorities.<sup>149</sup> The decision to revive the operation followed.

Apart from the fact that the cancellation had seriously disappointed the Canadian troops, there were other factors which made a major operation in the West expedient at this moment. The public in the Allied countries was calling loudly for action, and considerations of morale made it desirable to meet the demand so far as it was practicable to do so. At the same time, continuing German advances in Russia rendered it essential to give any diversionary aid possible to our Soviet allies. The writer has found no evidence that the Russian situation was actually a large direct factor in the decision to revive the Dieppe scheme (it was not likely to weigh particularly

\*" . . . the abandonment of these two raids [Alderney and Dieppe] was rightly felt to be tantamount to a defeat. That was why so much importance was attached to re-mounting and carrying out the Dieppe raid after all . not the least remarkable feature of the operation was the fact of its having been carried out at all, and this was due to the united determination of the Chief of Combined Operations and his subordinates to drive on, unless told otherwise by superior authority" (Rear-Admiral J. Hughes-Hallett, "The Mounting of Raids", *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, November 1950).

heavily at Combined Operations Headquarters, which worked mainly on the tactical level), but the news that a big distracting raid in the West was again in prospect was welcomed by the British Prime Minister, who shortly after the decision was taken found himself faced with the formidable task of informing Marshal Stalin that there was to be no immediate "second front". On 25 July, General McNaughton had a conversation with Lord Louis Mountbatten, during which the latter stated that the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet had approved the revived raid, now known as Operation "Jubilee". (It appears that the reference to the War Cabinet was a misunderstanding.) McNaughton's memorandum of the conversation<sup>150</sup> adds:

It appears that Stalin had cabled the Prime Minister asking what was being done to distract the Germans by raiding. The Prime Minister had been very pleased to be able to reply indicating action was in hand and in consequence he had approved the highest priority in preparation for J[ubilee].

What had actually happened was that on the evening of 23 July Mr. Churchill had received from the hands of the Soviet ambassador a telegram from Stalin, which is published in the Prime Minister's memoirs, complaining bitterly of the decision which had been taken to suspend Arctic convoys to Russia for the present, and once more demanding a second front in Europe in 1942. In the course of his conversation with M. Maisky the Prime Minister told him that heavy raids on the Continent would be carried out in the near future.

By this time, the reader will have noted, the decision had been taken to abandon Operation "Sledgehammer". However, the revival of the raid was not a result of that abandonment; the decision to revive it seems to have been firm at Combined Operations Headquarters by 14 July (there is a reference to the revival in General McNaughton's personal war diary under this date), and it was approved by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 20 July,\* whereas the final decision against "Sledgehammer" was not taken until 22 July, although the British authorities were undoubtedly certain in their 'own minds long before that day that the operation would not take place. Nevertheless, it seems clear that after that decision "Jubilee" served as at least a partial substitute for "Sledgehammer", and was welcomed in the highest circles accordingly. Whether it was also regarded as useful security cover for the North African enterprise, in that it would help to focus the enemy's attention on the coast of France during the period of preparation, remains conjectural; no documents bearing on this have been found.

In mid-July the Dieppe scheme was the best possibility for an early considerable operation, such as seemed desirable for so many reasons. It

\*The approval is implied in that given to the appointment of Hughes-Hallett as naval commander for "the next large-scale raiding operation". The absence of more specific approval in the record is probably the result of determination to take extreme security precautions in connection with the revived operation.

offered a ready-made plan and a force already trained. It was now subject, however, to serious objections on security grounds; for the possibility had to be accepted that, so many thousands of men having been ' fully briefed before the cancellation, the enemy might have got wind of our plan. It could only be revived, therefore, if we could be more than reasonably certain that information of the revival would not reach the Germans. A satisfactory formula was found by Hughes-Hallett.

With the military force trained as it was, he suggested, the raid could be re-mounted in such a way as to make it very difficult of detection in advance; for there was no need to concentrate the force beforehand. Instead, the various units could move direct from their stations to their ports of embarkation, and embark there on the same evening on which they were to sail. Moreover, whereas for "Rutter" all the units had been embarked in infantry landing ships, with the intention of transferring them to small craft some ten miles from the French coast, it was now suggested that three of them might make the whole cross-Channel journey in personnel landing craft. This permitted further dispersion; and for the actual operation Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal embarked at the small port of Shoreham in Sussex, and the Cameron Highlanders and No. 3 Commando at Newhaven. This new basis proved acceptable to all parties; and the selection of Hughes-Hallett himself as Naval Force Commander was approved by the Chiefs of Staff on 20 July (above, page 341).<sup>151</sup>

Although in essentials the actual attack plan was the same as before (it had to be if the operation was to be launched without long delay), there were some modifications. In particular, since the use of paratroops demanded ideal weather conditions and also required considerable time for briefing, it was decided to eliminate this element of the force, substituting Commando units, who would have the task of neutralizing the two formidable coastal batteries, one on either side of Dieppe, which if left alone would make it impossible for our ships to lie off the coast.

The "chain of command" was also different. We have seen that for "Rutter" the responsible military authority had been the G.O.C.-in-C. South Eastern Command, who had not delegated his control to any subordinate. The G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army had thus held only an undefined watching brief. General McNaughton now arranged that the revived operation would be placed on a different basis. On 16 July he discussed the question with the Chief of Combined Operations and General Roberts. His memorandum of this meeting<sup>152</sup> runs in part as follows:

. . . In reference to the military channel of command I said I would ask General Paget to agree to General Crerar being named as the responsible military officer to co-ordinate and if this were done I would arm him with appropriate authority as regards the use of Canadian troops.



I told Lord Louis Mountbatten that the detailed proposals for the Operation when prepared would be subject to my approval in the same way as C.-in-C. Home Forces and Chiefs of Staff Committee had approval for operations of British troops.

The following day General McNaughton had an interview with General Paget "and it was agreed that channel of command would run C.-in-C. Home Forces—Comd 1 Cdn Army—Comd 1 Cdn Corps—Comd 2 Cdn Div".<sup>153</sup> This placed the military command on an entirely new basis, with the G.O.C.-in-C. South Eastern Command (General Montgomery) playing no part.\* On 24 July Home Forces formally advised South Eastern Command that the C.-in-C. had made the Canadian Army Commander "the military officer responsible for the conduct of raiding operations to be carried out by troops under his command"; and on 27 July McNaughton wrote formally to Crerar, delegating to him, in accordance with the Home Forces letter of 5 May, the military responsibility for Operation "Jubilee".<sup>154</sup>

In the meantime, planning had been resumed. Lt.-Col. Mann had been promoted Brigadier and appointed Brigadier General Staff, 1st Canadian Corps, as of 13 July. General Roberts asked General Crerar to lend him so that he might continue the role which he had played in planning for "Rutter". Crerar agreed, and Mann accordingly devoted himself exclusively to "Jubilee" during the month that followed.<sup>155</sup> The Combined Plan for the operation was issued under date 31 July.

Certain points arising during the planning should be briefly noted. The broad lines of the revised plan were sketched in a well-recorded meeting of Force Commanders as early as 16 July.<sup>156</sup> This meeting thought it unlikely that airborne troops could be used "under the conditions of light that will prevail" and it was provisionally decided to abandon the idea of using them. At the same time it was agreed that briefing should be deferred "until the last possible moment, which should not be until the operation is definitely about to take place". Naval and military commanding officers would, however, "be warned in the strictest confidence that an emergency operation is being planned for August and may be ordered to take place at short notice". The Commando side of the operation was to be separately planned. The officers directing the two Commando landings were to report to General Roberts at an early date and be "responsible to him for their plans". The Commandos prepared separate operation orders; there is little reference to them in the Detailed Military Plan; and in the Order of Battle they were shown as "Under Command from Landing" only.

At this meeting on 16 July there was further discussion of the question of aerial bombardment. It was now proposed that the raid should take

\*Before the raid actually took place, General Montgomery had in fact left for Egypt to take command of the Eighth Army.

place during one of two periods (18-23 August and 1-7 September), and the minutes contain the following passage:

In neither period is the state of the moon satisfactory from the point of view of night bombing and Air Vice Marshal Leigh-Mallory stressed the fact that accurate bombing of the houses on the sea front could not possibly be guaranteed. If bombing is to be carried out at all, it should be timed to take place as late as possible, i.e. as close as possible to the time of landing. Alternatively, it was suggested that it might be better to dispense with the bombing, and to rely entirely on supporting fire from the destroyers. A final and definite decision on this point is still to be made.

As late as 17 August, according to the *Combined Report*, the question of bombing was reviewed by the Chief of Combined Operations and the Force Commanders. The decision was maintained, General Roberts accepting it because of the apprehension that the destruction caused by such an attack would make the passage of tanks through Dieppe difficult if not impossible. He wrote some months later:<sup>157</sup>

The original plan for bombing envisaged two or three minor bombing raids on Dieppe, prior to the operation. As these had not been carried out, it was felt that a large scale attack, probably inaccurately placed, would merely serve to place the enemy on the alert. This was a considerable factor.

At all stages it was insisted that bombing could only be carried out by night, and inaccuracy, rather than accuracy, was guaranteed.

The units taking part were informed of the revival of the operation only a few days before it took place, and even then knowledge was restricted to senior officers. By way of "security cover", orders were issued for exercises and demonstrations that would explain the preparations which were being made. On 10 August, Headquarters 2nd Division ordered a combined operations demonstration by the 14th Army Tank Regiment, which would afford a pretext for the steps being taken by this unit, including waterproofing its tanks. On 13 August Divisional Headquarters issued instructions for three movement exercises ("Ford I", "Ford II" and "Ford III"), which were to last "for a month commencing 15 Aug 42".<sup>158</sup> Actually, "Ford I" was simply the movement of the "Jubilee" units to the embarkation ports.

On 11 August General Crerar reported formally to General McNaughton. His letter concluded:

I have today gone over in detail the plans for the Exercise, as now agreed to by the Naval, Army and Air Force Commanders and am satisfied that the revisions made in respect to the previous exercise plans add rather than detract to the soundness of the plan as a whole. I am, therefore, of the opinion that, given an even break in luck and good navigation, the demonstration should prove successful.

On 14 August McNaughton went over the plans with Crerar and Roberts, and on the same day wrote to Crerar confirming that he was "satisfied with these plans and with the arrangements made in all respects" and finally sanctioning the participation of Canadian troops in the raid.<sup>159</sup>

The actual movement to the ports began on the evening of 16 August, when six troops of the Calgary Regiment's tanks began to move to Gosport, near Portsmouth, where they were to embark. The main body of tanks embarked at Newhaven, beginning to move thither on the evening of 17 August.<sup>160</sup> The meteorological forecast being satisfactory though not ideal, the final orders for the operation were issued on the morning of 18 August,<sup>161</sup> and that afternoon the infantry units moved by motor transport from their stations to the ports. So far, the rank and file had known nothing of what was planned; only after the troops had embarked on the infantry landing ships were they told that there was to be an actual raid. "Maps and air photographs\* were distributed to all ranks, and the details of the raid ... were explained to all personnel." The men of the units which were to cross the Channel in small craft were briefed in specially guarded buildings at the ports. The battalions were on "assault scales"—each approximately 500 strong. The transport and other surplus personnel, left behind at the normal stations, were under the impression that the main bodies were on "a two-day exercise".<sup>162</sup>

Counting Gosport separately from Portsmouth, the force embarked at five different ports. Six infantry landing ships sailed from Southampton and three from Portsmouth. Some tank landing craft sailed from Portsmouth and some from Newhaven, from which two of the three personnel landing craft (L.C.P.(L)) groups also sailed. The third L.C.P.(L) group sailed from Shoreham. The naval force was organized in thirteen groups,<sup>163</sup> sailing at varying speeds, and the Naval Force Commander had a difficult and complicated task. All told, his force amounted to 237 ships and landing craft, not including the 16 vessels of the 9th and 13th Minesweeping Flotillas, which were employed to clear the way through a German minefield which had lately been reported in mid-Channel.<sup>164</sup> No vessels larger than "Hunt" class destroyers (1000 tons, four 4-inch guns) were included; there were eight of these (*Calpe*, *Fernie*, *Brocklesby*, *Garth*, *Albrighton*, *Berkeley*, *Bleasdale*, and the Polish ship *Slazak*), in addition to the gunboat *Locust* and the sloop *Alresford*.

All told, the military force embarked amounted to approximately 6100 all ranks, of whom 4963 were Canadians and about 1075 were British.† There were some 50 all ranks from the 1st U.S. Ranger Battalion—dispersed among various units as observers—and 20 all ranks of No. 10 (Inter-Allied) Commando. Of these last, 15 were French, and five were anti-Nazi enemy nationals who could expect to be shot if captured.<sup>165</sup>

\*Capt. D. F. MacRae, in a narrative attached to the war diary of the Essex Scottish, states that these were new photographs, taken on 16 August.

†Canadian figures compiled at C.M.H.Q. in 1943, on basis of information supplied by Canadian Overseas Records Office and Canadian Section G.H.Q. Second Echelon. No exact figures for British units are available except for the Royal Marine "A" Commando (18 officers and 352 other ranks).

As the infantry landing ships had to sail before dark, they rigged disguises giving them the appearance of merchant vessels. The first ship to clear the gate of the Portsmouth defences was H.M.S. *Queen Emma*, carrying part of The Royal Regiment of Canada; she passed through at 9:25 p.m. The first tank landing craft left Newhaven harbour a few minutes later.<sup>166</sup> As darkness fell, the various groups of Captain Hughes-Hallett's force drew into formation and shaped their carefully pre-arranged courses towards Dieppe.

### The Plan of Operation "Jubilee"

At this point the plan for the raid should be described in greater detail than heretofore.<sup>167</sup>

As already indicated, it involved attacks at five different points on a front of roughly ten miles. At 4:50 a.m. (British Summer Time) four simultaneous surprise flank attacks were to go in.\* This hour was calculated as "the beginning of nautical twilight", the intention being that the craft would touch down while it was still dark enough to make it hard for any enemy gunners who might be on the alert to see their targets.

The flank attacks, from right to left, were as follows: upon the coastal battery near Varengeville ("Orange I" and "Orange II" Beaches) by No. 4 Commando, commanded by Lt.-Col. Lord Lovat; at Pourville ("Green" Beach) by The South Saskatchewan Regiment, commanded by Lt.-Col. C. C. I. Merritt; at Puys ("Blue" Beach) by The Royal Regiment of Canada, commanded by Lt.-Col. D. E. Catto; and upon the battery near Berneval ("Yellow I" and "Yellow II" Beaches) by No. 3 Commando, commanded by Lt.-Col. J. F. Durnford-Slater. The main attack was to go in on the long beach fronting the town of Dieppe itself half an hour later, i.e., at 5:20 a.m. The reasons for this delay were naval. Had the frontal and flank assaults been simultaneous, there would not have been sea-room for all the ships and craft involved; as it was, the concentration of assault landing craft on the main beaches was perhaps heavier than in any other amphibious operation of the war. Moreover, an earlier assault on the main beaches would have involved the infantry landing ships' leaving harbour half an hour earlier, and they would almost certainly have been sighted by the regular German evening air reconnaissance.<sup>168</sup>

The frontal attack was to be delivered on the right ("White" Beach) by The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, commanded by Lt.-Col. R. R. Labatt, and on the left ("Red" Beach) by The Essex Scottish Regiment, commanded by Lt.-Col. F. K. Jaspersen. The first nine tanks of the 14th Army Tank

\*All times in the narrative that follows, except in direct quotations from German documents, are B.S.T. (one hour in advance of Greenwich Time). The Germans were operating on the equivalent of British Double Summer Time, two hours in advance of Greenwich.

Regiment, commanded by Lt.-Col. J. G. Andrews, were to land simultaneously with the first wave of infantry.<sup>169</sup> General Roberts had as "floating reserve" one infantry battalion, Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, commanded by Lt. Col. D. Menard, and the Royal Marine "A" Commando, commanded by Lt.-Col. J. P. Phillipps. The Marines had the specific task of operating as a "cutting out party", which would enter the harbour in the gunboat *Locust* and six Fighting French "chasseurs". Its task was to "remove as many barges as possible in the time available, destroying the remainder and any other ships which it is not possible to remove". If all went well, Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal were to land as soon as the town had been captured. They had the special task of occupying an inner perimeter and would act as rearguard to cover the final withdrawal.<sup>170</sup>

Half an hour after the initial assault at Pourville (i.e., simultaneously with the frontal attack), The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, commanded by Lt.-Col. A. C. Gostling, were to land there, pass through The South Saskatchewan Regiment and advance to join up with the tanks moving inland from Dieppe and "capture and destroy the aerodrome" of St. Aubin. If time permitted, this battalion was to "exploit" to capture the German divisional headquarters which was mistakenly believed to exist at Arques-la-Bataille.

Very broadly, the scheme of the operation was to capture Dieppe and establish around it a perimeter within which extensive demolitions would be carried out by the Engineers, who were to destroy "the dry docks, swing bridges, harbour installations, rolling stock, power and gas works and any other suitable objective".<sup>171</sup> Outside the perimeter the Camerons and the tanks would operate against the aerodrome and the supposed divisional headquarters.

A far larger air force was employed than had been envisaged by the officers who made the Outline Plan. The air tasks were described in the Air Force Commander's later report under four headings: Fighter Cover, Close Support, Reconnaissance, and Strategic Bombing. *Fighter Cover* involved general protection for the expedition throughout the hours of daylight, but particularly during the two periods when attack from the air was most to be feared—those of the landing and withdrawal. *Close Support* involved bombing and low-flying fighter attack in direct support of the assault, occupation and withdrawal, as well as the use of smoke-laying aircraft to neutralize enemy defences both as pre-arranged and as requested by the Military Force Commander; while day bomber squadrons were to be employed both against pre-arranged targets and on request. *Reconnaissance* included tactical reconnaissance over the area of the raid (including enemy reinforcements' lines of approach) as well as reconnaissance directed against enemy submarines and surface vessels. As for *Strategic Bombing*, the

only enterprise under this head was an attack against the enemy's aerodrome of Abbeville-Drucat with a view to interfering with the operation of his fighters during the withdrawal.

All told, the air forces taking part amounted to 74 squadrons. This included 48 fighter squadrons for cover, three which made diversionary sweeps, and six for close support, as well as six squadrons of day bombers, two of Hurricane bombers, four army cooperation squadrons (for tactical reconnaissance), two intruder squadrons and three squadrons for laying smoke. The Royal Canadian Air Force provided six of the fighter squadrons and two army cooperation squadrons.\* There were also one New Zealand, five Polish, two Norwegian, two Czech, one French and one Belgian squadron.<sup>173</sup> The United States Army Air Forces provided three of the fighter squadrons, as well as the four Fortress bomber squadrons that attacked the Abbeville aerodrome.<sup>174</sup> All the rest were R.A.F.

The organization of command was as follows. Captain Hughes-Hallett, the Naval Force Commander, was in the headquarters ship, the destroyer *Calpe*; with him was General Roberts, the Military Force Commander. Air Vice-Marshal Leigh-Mallory remained at Headquarters No. 11 Fighter Group, Uxbridge (the best point for controlling his squadrons), but was represented in *Calpe* by a senior officer, Air Commodore A. T. Cole, R.A.A.F. In case *Calpe* should be destroyed or disabled, a duplicate headquarters was provided in the destroyer *Fernie*; in this ship the senior army officer was Brigadier Mann.<sup>175</sup> The two headquarters ships were provided with greatly augmented wireless facilities. Admiral Mountbatten and General Crerar were at Uxbridge. This, as already noted (above, page 335) was the only place from which the battle could be influenced once it had been joined; but in practice the influence that could be exerted from England was slight. General McNaughton, having delegated the military responsibility for the operation to Crerar, remained at his own headquarters during the day, but received constant reports.<sup>176</sup>

In each headquarters ship was a Fighter Controller. All outgoing close-support fighter sorties called the Controller in *Calpe* when approaching the enemy, and he was able to re-direct these sorties to any target which the situation demanded as the Military or Naval Force Commanders might request. The Air Force Commander reported that this method of control "worked admirably".<sup>177</sup>

\*Nos. 400, 401, 402, 403, 411, 412, 414 and 416 Squadrons. In addition, two aircraft of No. 418 Squadron took part.<sup>172</sup> This squadron is included in the overall total.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE RAID ON DIEPPE

19 AUGUST 1942

(See *Map 5 and Sketch 3*)

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#### German Defences in the West in 1942

**B**EFORE describing what happened at Dieppe on 19 August 1942, we should examine the general situation of the enemy on the French coast that summer, and describe his defences and dispositions at Dieppe itself.

When the Germans appeared on the Channel coast in 1940 they were flushed with victory and looking forward to an early conquest of or surrender by Britain. The British Commonwealth was in no condition to undertake any but the most minor enterprises against them. In these circumstances, their dispositions in France were primarily directed to preparations for offensive cross-Channel operations. During 1941, however, there was a gradual change in attitude, particularly after it became clear that the Russian campaign which began in June of that year was not to have an early end. More attention was now paid to the defence of the French coast, and special orders were issued in September and October.<sup>1</sup> The year's activity, however, was mainly concerned with constructing field works, and little concrete was poured.<sup>2</sup>

By December 1941 the German situation was still worse. The offensive in Russia had come to a standstill, and on 7 December the bombs of Pearl Harbor blew the United States into the war. On 14 December Keitel, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces High Command, issued a directive which specifically stated that the Arctic, North Sea and Atlantic coasts controlled by Germany were "ultimately to be built into a new West Wall". Immediate measures, however, were to be largely limited to digging field fortifications, permanent installations being built only at "the most threatened places". Norway was given the highest priority, with the Franco-Belgian coast second and the coasts of Holland and Jutland third.<sup>3</sup> As a result, there was considerable activity during the spring of 1942. And on 23 March Hitler signed his directive No. 40, which dealt with coastal defence problems.<sup>4</sup> It

emphasized the importance of unified command arrangements, constant vigilance and improved defences. About the same time Field-Marshal von Rundstedt was re-appointed Commander-in-Chief West and took full responsibility for the defence of the French coast.

As spring came on, the Germans became more and more worried about the possibility of raids, and the attack on St. Nazaire (28 March) rendered them particularly sensitive to reports of such enterprises; many raid rumours are recorded in German diaries of this period. But it was not only raids that they feared now. With American troops beginning to appear in the British Isles, and the campaign in Russia still going on, the initiative in the West had passed to the Allies; and Hitler and his generals were confronted with the possibility of their trying to open that Second Front which was already the subject of so much speculation. The notorious communiques issued after Molotov's visits to London and Washington in June (above, page 315) would probably have been enough in themselves to lead the Germans to take special measures. During the weeks following them, Hitler issued repeated orders enjoining precautions against a major landing in the West.

In March 1942 the German forces there had been at a very low ebb; it would seem indeed that at one moment the armour at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief West in France and the Low Countries was actually only one tank battalion (stationed in the Paris area).<sup>5</sup> The situation map of 12 March shows in the command one armoured division (the 23rd) but it is moving out. As the spring advanced the armoured forces in France were increased; and on 25 June Hitler directed that several of the most formidable formations in his armies were to "be retained in the West as a reserve until further notice". Those specified were the 6th, 7th and 10th Panzer Divisions, the S.S. Division "Das Reich", the 7th Flieger Division (the parachute division which had conducted the attack on Crete in May 1941) and the "Goring" Regiment, which was to be enlarged. "Adequate air forces" were also to be held available, and the navy was to keep a reserve of U-Boats ready for intervention "in the event of a sudden enemy operation".<sup>6</sup> On the following day (26 June) the Fuhrer, "in consequence of the gathering of small vessels on the south coast of England", ordered that the "Reich" Division, after reorganization, was to be transferred to the West immediately. He said further that, in the event of Russian resistance in future operations being less than was expected, he was considering transferring two other S.S. Divisions, "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler" and "Totenkopf" (Death's-head).<sup>7</sup>

On 9 July Hitler issued over his own signature a directive which reflected his acute concern for the western coasts.<sup>8</sup> It spoke of the impending necessity for Britain of "either staging a large-scale invasion with the object of opening a second front, or seeing Russia eliminated as a political and military factor". He referred to increasingly numerous reports from agents concerning impending enemy landings, and the "heavy concentration of  
vessels



along the southern coast of England"; note that the air attack on ships of the Dieppe force in the Solent (above, page 339) had taken place two days before. Among areas to be regarded as particularly threatened he listed, "In the first place, the Channel coast, the area between Dieppe and Le Havre, and Normandy, since these sectors can be reached by enemy fighter planes and also because they lie within range of a large portion of the ferrying vessels". In the light of this situation Hitler ordered the immediate transfer to the West of the available units of the "Reich" Division, without waiting to complete reorganization; the immediate transfer to the West of the Adolf Hitler Division; the rapid organization of the S.S. Corps Headquarters (Motorized) and its transfer to the West with a view to its taking command of all S.S. formations there; and the postponement for the present of the transfer of one infantry regiment to Denmark. The directive concluded:

In the event of an enemy landing I personally will proceed to the West and assume charge of operations from there.

These measures were promptly carried out. The German operational map for 24 July<sup>9</sup> shows the S.S. Corps Headquarters (Motorized), now re-christened Headquarters S.S. Panzer Corps, moving by rail to Nogent le Rotrou, while the "Adolf Hitler" and "Reich" Divisions are similarly moving into areas near Paris and Laval respectively.

By the time of the Dieppe raid, accordingly, the German army in the West had been greatly strengthened and was in a full state of alert, expecting at any moment what might be a major Allied enterprise. On 12 March there had been in France and the Low Countries only 25 normal and two "Ersatz" (reinforcement) divisions; there were now 33 normal and three Ersatz divisions.<sup>10</sup> In quality the alteration had been still more striking. The S.S. Panzer Corps with its two crack divisions was now in the West; and whereas in March, as we have seen, there had been practically no effective armour there, now three Panzer Divisions (the 6th, 7th and 10th) were in von Rundstedt's area. There had been a noticeable movement of formations closer to the coast; and the Pas de Calais had been particularly strongly reinforced.

During the first half of August Hitler issued still further orders on the defence of the French coast. It was now that he specifically ordered the construction of what came to be called the Atlantic Wall. On 2 August, at a Fuhrer conference attended by Keitel and senior engineer officers, he gave detailed instructions for a new system of coast defence. Notes on the conference<sup>11</sup> (which do not claim to be literal quotations) indicate that he spoke in part to the following effect:

Development work is very limited and scanty at present. A SOLID LINE WITH UNBROKEN FIRE MUST BE INSISTED ON AT ALL COSTS.... DURING THE WINTER, WITH FANATICAL ZEAL, A FORTRESS MUST BE BUILT WHICH WILL HOLD IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

The coast was to be developed "after the pattern of the West Wall", making all possible use of armour, and protecting personnel and weapons "in such a way that they cannot be destroyed by systematic bombardment and bombs." On 13 August Hitler further developed this theme in another conference,<sup>12</sup> dwelling on the importance of preventing at all costs "the opening of a second front" and emphasizing that Russia was still fighting and that "at critical moments the British might create difficulties". The essence of the matter was expressed in one sentence: "THEREFORE THE FUHRER HAS DECIDED TO BUILD AN IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS ALONG THE ATLANTIC AND THE CHANNEL COAST".

All things considered, circumstances were not particularly favourable to the success of a major raid on the French coast in August 1942.

### The Enemy in the Dieppe Area

The specific situation at Dieppe can be reviewed in detail on the basis of German documents. The highest German military authority in France was the Commander-in-Chief West, who from his headquarters at St. Germainen-Laye directed affairs from Groningen in Northern Holland to the Spanish border. Dieppe was in the sector controlled, under him, by the Fifteenth Army, with headquarters at Tourcoing; this Army was responsible for the coast from the Scheldt to Dives-sur-Mer near Caen. The Corps concerned with the Dieppe area was the 81st, whose headquarters was in the outskirts of Rouen. The Division responsible for Dieppe was the 302nd Infantry Division, commanded by Lieut.-General Conrad Haase. Its headquarters was not at Arques-la-Bataille as our intelligence indicated; it had formerly been there, but had moved on 27 April\* to Envermeu, six miles east.<sup>13</sup>

The 302nd Division's front ran from the mouth of the Somme almost to Veules-les-Roses, some miles west of Dieppe. It was thus roughly 50 miles, a very considerable frontage. However, it had been shortened when the German defences were reorganized earlier in the summer; it had formerly extended from the River Authie to St. Valery-en-Caux.<sup>14</sup> The 302nd Division, organized in Germany in November 1940, took over the Dieppe sector on 10 April 1941.<sup>15</sup> Full records of its work on the defences there are available in its war diary. It is interesting to note that one of its early orders on the subject, issued on 25 April 1941, assumes that -the ports of Le Treport and Dieppe "will not be attacked directly by the enemy" but will be assailed by means of "landing attempts at nearby points".<sup>16</sup>

\*It is curious that the situation maps prepared for the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces at Army Headquarters in Berlin (O.K.H.) still showed the division's headquarters as Arques-la-Bataille at the time of the raid. Any Allied agent relying on these or similar maps for information would have been misled.

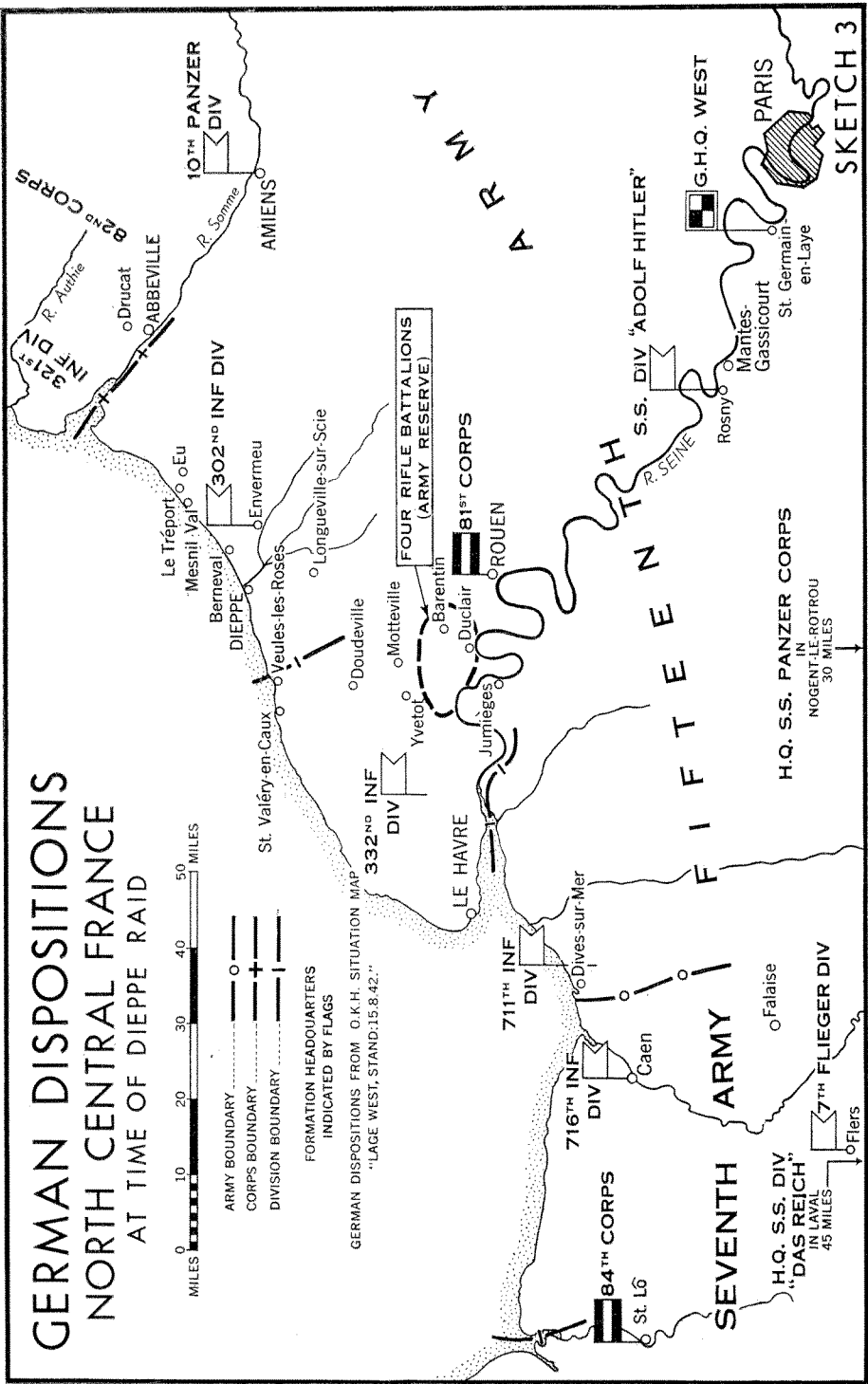
# GERMAN DISPOSITIONS NORTH CENTRAL FRANCE AT TIME OF DIEPPE RAID



- ARMY BOUNDARY ..... ○
- CORPS BOUNDARY ..... +
- DIVISION BOUNDARY ..... |

FORMATION HEADQUARTERS  
INDICATED BY FLAGS

GERMAN DISPOSITIONS FROM O.K.H. SITUATION MAP  
"LAGE WEST, STAND: 15.8.42."



SKETCH 3

Historical Section, G.S.

Serious fortification of the Dieppe area began in March 1942. On the 15th and 19th of the month the 302nd Division issued orders defining the various strongpoints to be developed in the area.<sup>17</sup> Construction of concrete defences now went forward actively. In addition the Division busied itself with demolitions designed to facilitate the defence of important areas. During June and July a certain number of houses adjacent to the beaches in the sector were blown up.<sup>18</sup> Before our raid took place part of the Dieppe Casino had also been demolished, but the Germans' supply of explosives was not equal to its complete destruction.<sup>19</sup>

Under orders issued on 9 June<sup>20</sup> the German defences in the area were organized as follows. The Berneval battery on the right formed an independent strongpoint (*Stützpunkt*). Dieppe itself was designated a "Defended Area" (*Verteidigungsbereich*),\* sub-divided into three sectors: Dieppe East, including Puys; Dieppe South; and Dieppe West, including the eastern portion of Pourville and the heights overlooking it. The Varengeville battery constituted another strongpoint, and in the Quiberville area there was a "Resistance Nest" (*Widerstandsnest*). The whole Dieppe Defended Area was girded on the land side with a continuous barbed wire obstacle. Puys and the heights east of Pourville were inside this, but Pourville village itself lay outside it.<sup>22</sup> A good many concrete pillboxes and other positions had been completed by the time the raid took place.

The sector was very strong in artillery. There were three coastal batteries in the area attacked: that at Varengeville with six 15-centimetre (5.9-inch) guns, that at Berneval with three 17-centimetre and four 105-millimetre guns, and one near Arques-la-Bataille with four 15-centimetre howitzers. A fourth battery at Mesnil Val, west of Le Treport, had four 15-centimetre guns which could fire on the Berneval area. There were also sixteen 10-centimetre field howitzers (the armament of one of the divisional artillery battalions) divided between four battery positions, two on either side of Dieppe and all but one within the wire barrier. In addition, eight French 75-millimetre guns were emplaced on the front of attack for beach defence.<sup>23</sup> (The 302nd Division had taken over 15 of these guns from the division it relieved on the coast.) Anti-aircraft guns were also fairly numerous in the Dieppe area. A location statement of 14 June 1942<sup>24</sup> shows one heavy battery of 75-millimetre French guns, one medium battery of 37-millimetre guns (plus one troop of 50-millimetre) and one light battery of 20-millimetre guns. There were no 88-millimetre guns. The main beach of Dieppe was defended by some nine small-calibre anti-tank guns, including one in a French tank concreted in near the West Mole and two mounted at the front corners of the Casino.<sup>25</sup>

\*On 8 July, however, due to the relatively small capacity of the port, which disqualified it as a major invasion objective, Dieppe was "downgraded" to the category "Group of Strongpoints" (*Stützpunktgruppe*).<sup>21</sup>

The German forces in the area were disposed as follows. The garrison of the Dieppe Group of Strongpoints was controlled by the headquarters of the 571st Infantry Regiment (equivalent to a British brigade), located on the West Headland at Dieppe. It consisted of two battalions of this regiment, with headquarters on the West and East Headlands respectively; a battalion of the 302nd Divisional Artillery, manning the four batteries already mentioned; the headquarters of the divisional engineer battalion, and two of its companies; and various minor units, including those of the Luftwaffe which manned the anti-aircraft guns.<sup>26</sup> The remaining battalion of the 571st Infantry Regiment was in Ouville-la-Riviere, south-west of Dieppe and outside the Group of Strongpoints, as regimental reserve.

The enemy had large reserves at hand. The 302nd Division's own reserve consisted of an infantry regiment two battalions strong, with its headquarters at Eu, near Le Treport. The Corps Reserve was another regiment whose headquarters was at Doudeville, south of St. Valery-en-Caux, and a tank company at Yvetot. In Army Reserve were four rifle battalions, lately placed in the area about Barentin, north-west of Rouen; an assault gun battalion at Motteville, east of Yvetot; and some motorized artillery between Duclair and Jumieges. We have already noted one element of the Army Group Reserve—the 10th Panzer Division at Amiens. The S.S. "Adolf Hitler" Division (not yet an armoured formation) was at Rosny, west of Mantes-Gassicourt, and the 7th Flieger Division near Flers, west of Falaise.<sup>27</sup>

Our troops who returned to England after the raid were in general convinced that the enemy had known in advance that it was going to happen and had strengthened Dieppe accordingly. Those who became prisoners were even more strongly of this opinion, having been told that the Germans had been "waiting for us" for days past. Our intelligence staffs, however, reported on the basis of information from prisoners and other available sources that the enemy had had no warning; and today, with his voluminous records at our disposal, we can say with complete certainty that he had no foreknowledge whatever of the raid. Throughout the war, indeed, the Germans' knowledge of what was going on in Britain was almost ludicrously slight and inaccurate.

The events before Dieppe are thus outlined in the report of the German Commander-in-Chief West, dated 3 September 1942.<sup>28</sup>

From the middle of June onwards, information accumulated at G.H.Q. West as the result of photographic and visual reconnaissance by the 3rd Air Fleet and reports from agents, of an *assembly of numerous small -landing craft on the South Coast of England.*

A further photographic reconnaissance, flown only at the end of July because of poor weather conditions, confirmed the assembly of vessels which had become still more numerous since the large number observed in June.

No further data—except from agents' reports of an English operation, which could not be checked—could be obtained up to 15 August. *In spite of this, G.H.Q. West appreciated the situation from the middle of June to be such that it had to reckon with the possibility of an enemy operation, even a major undertaking, at any moment, and at any point on its extensive coastal front.* The U-Boat strongpoints and defence sectors were therefore strengthened as much as possible, both by manpower and by construction (the landward fronts not being neglected), and the organization of the forces was repeatedly checked so that all reserves—local, divisional, corps, and army—would be ready for immediate employment...

On 15 August, a sudden change took place in the English wireless procedure which made our interception service much more difficult. Numerous flights toward the Channel Coast suggested the possibility that these were briefing flights, and frequently aircraft shot down were found to have American crews. No further change in the enemy picture appeared until 0450 hours on 19 August, not even as a result of the early reconnaissance of the 3rd Air Fleet.\*

The reports from "agents" vaguely referred to were evidently not considered particularly significant; and the references to "briefing flights" and changes in wireless procedure are somewhat discounted by later passages in this same report. At one point it states, "up to the commencement of battle action on the morning of 19 August enemy air operations by day or night had not pointed in any particular way to an impending landing attempt"; while with respect to wireless it adds, "interception of operational and training traffic in England presented no deviation from normal".<sup>29</sup> Rundstedt's statement that the first real warning of an impending operation came only with our encounter with a German convoy at 3:50 a.m. on 19 August could not be more definite. This and all the other documents now available indicate that the Germans' actual solid information was limited to the knowledge that during the summer landing craft in considerable numbers had been assembled on the south coast of England; and this, coupled with their general estimates of the strategic situation, led them to intensify their defensive measures along their whole front, including of course the Dieppe area.

Hitler's order of 9 July presumably led to very special precautions. Particular attention was of course paid to periods when moon and tide were favourable for landings. On 20 July the G.O.C.-in-C. Fifteenth Army issued an order<sup>30</sup> calling attention to three such periods: 27 July-3 August, 10-19 August, and 25 August-1 September. On 8 August, accordingly, the headquarters of the 302nd Division ordered a state of "threatening danger" (*drohende Gefahr*) for the ten nights from 10-11 to 19-20 August.<sup>31</sup> The enemy coastal garrisons were thus under a special alert at the moment of the raid.

On 10 August, at the outset of this period of alert, the commander of the Fifteenth Army sent out an order<sup>32</sup> beginning, "Various reports permit

\*Italics represent underlining in the original document. The time mentioned (3:50 a.m. S.S.T.) is that of the encounter with the German convoy.

the assumption that, because of the miserable position of the Russians, the Anglo-Americans will be forced to undertake something in the measurable future"; he told his troops that such an attack would be a grim business and urged them to do their duty. A month earlier, on 10 July, Headquarters 81st Corps had told the 302nd Division that the C.-in-C. West had ordered precautions because of the Russians' reverses and the fact that they were believed to be "again" demanding of the British Government the establishment of a Second Front. It added that there was no information of actual preparations for an attack, but that the Division was nevertheless to be brought up to full strength forthwith.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, its establishment was increased, to provide for manning additional weapons.<sup>34</sup> These decisions had considerable effect before the raid. The 302nd received two drafts of untrained reinforcements (1353 and 1150 men) on 20 July and 10-12 August respectively, and it had no personnel deficiencies on 19 August.<sup>35</sup> Other divisions on the coast were similarly reinforced.<sup>36</sup>

There were repeated alarms during the spring and early summer. There was a report, for instance, that a raid on Dieppe was planned for 6 April<sup>37</sup> (at a time when, it would seem, the raid was only beginning to be considered in London). On 3 July the Commander-in-Chief West issued an order declaring, "It is our historic task to prevent at all costs the creation of a 'Second Front' ". All commanders of strongpoints and defended areas were now to be sworn to defend their positions to the last.<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, on 6 July, in the presence of all officers down to the rank of captain, the commander of the Defended Area Dieppe was solemnly sworn to defend his charge to the death.<sup>39</sup>

It is interesting that the records of the 302nd Division for the weeks of August immediately preceding the raid are devoid of the references, so frequent earlier, to agents' reports of forthcoming landings.

### Our Information About the Enemy

Our own intelligence concerning the enemy's defences and dispositions was on the whole excellent. Thanks to our efficient air reconnaissance, there was not much we did not know about the defences of the Dieppe area. Field-Marshal von Rundstedt in fact later commented upon the high quality of our maps, and one of the lessons he drew was the importance of constructing dummy positions.<sup>40</sup> The 81st German Corps, however, truly observed that while our information on the defences 'was accurate, intelligence of types more difficult to obtain from air photographs was less complete: "There was a general lack of knowledge as to the location of regimental and battalion command posts".<sup>41</sup> Other information not easily available

from air reconnaissance was also lacking; notably, although our maps showed numerous pillboxes along the main Dieppe beach, there was no indication of their armament or of the presence of beach-defence or anti-tank guns. Fortunately, as we shall see, these anti-tank guns were too light to have much effect on Churchill tanks.

Our intelligence staffs made one curious error; luckily, it too had no influence on the operation. Our information before the raid was that the 302nd German Infantry Division had been relieved in the Dieppe area by the 110th, thought to be of higher category.<sup>42</sup> This was quite inaccurate, for the 110th Division was not in the West at all; indeed, it seems to have served on the Russian front throughout the war.<sup>43</sup> How this mistake came to be made remains a mystery. The other notable slip of our intelligence—the failure to observe the move of the 302nd Division's headquarters from Arques-la-Bataille to Envermeu—has been commented upon above.

### The Collision with the German Convoy

The senior officers concerned with Operation "Jubilee" had emphasized in their comments on the plan that all such operations are greatly at the mercy of fortune. "Jubilee" ran into bad luck at a very early stage, in the form of an accidental collision with enemy vessels about one hour before the first landings.

The report of the German Commander-in-Chief West tells us<sup>44</sup> that a German convoy bound for Dieppe sailed from Boulogne at 8:00 p.m. on 18 August. It consisted of five motor or motor sailing vessels protected by two submarine-chasers and a minesweeper. As this little group (which would certainly not have sailed if the Germans had known of our enterprise) moved slowly down the coast, its movements were reflected on radar screens in England. The Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth accordingly sent out two warning signals (at 1:27 and 2:44 a.m.) reporting the presence of small craft. These had no effect, although they were received by at least some of the vessels of our force. They are not mentioned by the Naval Force Commander in his report; and even had he received them it is not clear what action he could have taken without breaking wireless silence and thereby prejudicing the whole operation. It appears that the warnings were not heard by the destroyers *Brocklesby* and *Slazak*, which were acting as screening force to the eastward<sup>45</sup> In any case, at 3:47 a.m. Group 5, the most easterly group of our force, ran into the enemy convoy.

Group 5 consisted of some 23 personnel landing craft carrying No. 3 Commando, whose task it was to assault the Berneval battery. They were escorted by a steam gunboat, a motor launch and a flak landing craft. In



the violent little naval encounter which now took place, *Brocklesby* and *Slazak* played no part, their senior officer (the Polish commander of *Slazak*) believing that the gunfire came from the shore. The British escort vessels were seriously damaged.<sup>45</sup> One of the German submarine-chasers (No. 1404) became "a total loss".<sup>47</sup> But, more important, the craft carrying No. 3 Commando were completely scattered, some of them being damaged. The Berneval attack was thereby disrupted, and only seven of the landing craft landed their troops.

What was the effect of this unfortunate encounter upon the enterprise generally? It was widely assumed after the raid that it resulted in a complete "loss of surprise" which compromised the whole operation. Colour is lent to this by the report of the German 81st Corps, which says that as a result of the engagement "the entire coast defence system was alerted". There is a similar remark in the report of the C.-in-C. West.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, detailed analysis of the German documents, and collation of them with our own information, do not entirely support these statements.

The noise of the sea fight did cause immediate precautions at some places, at least, in the eastern part of the area to be attacked. In particular, the Luftwaffe men in charge of the radar equipment at Berneval manned their strongpoint within ten minutes of the fight beginning;<sup>49</sup> from that moment No. 3 Commando's attack had little chance of succeeding. No evidence has been found indicating when the defences at Puy were manned, though it seems possible that the Germans here were alerted at the same time. We do know, however, that the encounter had no practical effect in the central or western sectors. At Pourville our first wave of infantry landed without a shot being fired at them;\* and the 302nd Division's report indicates that in Dieppe itself the 571st Infantry Regiment did not actually order "action stations" (*Gefechtsbereitschaft*) until exactly 5:00 a.m., when it had already heard of the landing at Pourville a few minutes before. The Division ordered "action stations" one minute later.<sup>50</sup> It is important to note that at 4:45 a.m. the Commander Naval Group West expressed to G.H.Q. West the opinion that the affair was only a "customary attack on convoy". Destruction of wireless equipment had prevented the convoy escort from making any report.<sup>51</sup>

All in all, we seem forced to the conclusion that the convoy encounter did *not* result in a general loss of the element of surprise. It did seriously impair our chances of success in the eastern sector off which the fight took place. To this extent it had an effect upon the operation as a whole, though in the absence of evidence as to its particular influence on the garrison of Puy it is difficult to say precisely how important that effect was,

\*See below, page 369.

The landing at Puys did not actually take place until a few minutes after that at Pourville had led to a general alarm being given.

It is clear, of course, that there was great danger of surprise being completely compromised as a result of the convoy encounter, and the question has sometimes been asked, why was the operation not abandoned at this point? There were good and definite reasons.

The orders specified,<sup>52</sup> "If the operation has to be cancelled after the ships have sailed the decision must be made before 0300 hours [3:00 a.m.]." This was the time planned for the infantry landing ships concerned with the flank attacks to lower their landing craft, which would immediately start in towards the beaches.<sup>53</sup> In order to avoid the landing ships' being detected by the German radar (which in fact gave the enemy no warning whatever)<sup>54</sup> it was necessary to lower the craft some ten miles from the coast and allow almost two hours for the run-in. It was impossible to call off the operation at the time of the encounter with the convoy, which took place nearly an hour after the deadline fixed in the order, when the assault craft were well on their way to the beaches, and the infantry landing ships which had lowered them were already returning to England.

The planners, it is of special interest to note, had striven to provide against precisely the sort of misfortune which had now happened. The naval orders directed that wireless silence might be broken "By Senior Officer of Group 5 if by delays or casualties it is the opinion of the senior military officer that the success of the landing at YELLOW beach is seriously jeopardised".<sup>55</sup> But the Group Commander (Commander D. B. Wyburd) was quite unable to report, for in the fight his steam gunboat's wireless equipment was destroyed, and wireless traffic congestion foiled a subsequent attempt to signal from a motor launch. The consequence was that the Force Commanders in *Calpe*, although sight and sound had told them that there had been some contact with the enemy, received no actual account of the clash until about 6:00 a.m.,<sup>56</sup> when both-the flank attacks and the frontal attack had gone in. The whole episode was a remarkable example of how, in war, the most careful calculations may be upset.

### The Attack on the Berneval Battery

It is best to deal separately with the five different areas in which attacks were made, beginning with the extreme left, where our arrangements were disrupted as a result of the encounter with the convoy.

As we have seen, the craft carrying No. 3 Commando to Berneval were completely scattered. Most of them never reached the shore, and Lt.-Col. Durpford-Slater, after reporting to General Roberts on the headquarters

ship off Dieppe, returned to England without knowing that any of his men had landed.<sup>57</sup> In point of fact, however, seven of the 23 craft landed their troops. Thanks to these men's determination, the attack on the Berneval battery was far more effective than might have been expected in the circumstances.

Part of No. 3 Commando had been ordered to land on "Yellow I" beach, at Petit Berneval, east of the battery, and part on "Yellow II" beach to the west of it. Commander Wyburd's report indicates that, of the seven craft which touched down, six (five first and another later) landed their troops at "Yellow I" under covering fire from the motor launch (ML 346). The five craft touched down at 5:10 a.m., 20 minutes late.<sup>58</sup> The party landed here was unable to reach the battery which was the Commando's objective. Heavy opposition was encountered immediately after landing. Not only did the German defenders outnumber the small force put ashore, but they were soon reinforced by the equivalent of three more companies commanded by Major von Blucher, the commander of the 302nd Division's anti-tank and reconnaissance battalion. By about 10:00 a.m., after bitter fighting, this small portion of No. 3 Commando was overwhelmed. Perhaps 120 men had been landed at "Yellow I" beach. The Germans claim to have taken 82 prisoners here.<sup>59</sup>

The group landed at "Yellow II" had much better fortune, and its action shines like a star in the gloom which otherwise pervades the eastern flank beaches. Here a single craft, L.C.P.(L) 15, commanded by Lieut. H. T. Buckee, R.N.V.R., landed three officers and 17 other ranks of No. 3 Commando, the senior officer being Major Peter Young. Access inland from this beach was by a narrow gully. Undismayed by finding themselves alone on the French coast, and heartened by the fact that they had landed without being fired upon or apparently even observed, Young's tiny party climbed up the gully and with magnificent effrontery advanced against the Berneval battery. To take it was out of the question, but the Commando men got within 200 yards and sniped at it for about an hour and a half, preventing the guns from firing against our ships. (A German artillery report indicates that between 5:10 and 7:45 a.m. the battery fired no shots, except some over open sights at the snipers, which we know to have been ineffective.)<sup>60</sup> The battery was thus certainly neutralized for over two and a half hours; the actual period may well have been longer. Young and his men then withdrew without loss to the beach, where they were taken off by the same faithful craft that had put them ashore.<sup>61</sup> The D.S.Os. which both Major Young and Lieut. Buckee subsequently received were well earned, for few more daring feats of arms were performed during this war. The Naval Force Commander wrote in his report, "In my judgment this was perhaps the most outstanding incident of the operation."

### The Attack on the Varengeville Battery

On the extreme right or western flank of the operation, No. 4 Commando, commanded by Lt: Col. Lord Lovat, was completely successful in its attack on the battery near Varengeville. The good fortune of this Commando, the only military unit engaged in the operation to capture all its objectives, was in curious contrast with the ill-luck encountered by No. 3 on the opposite flank.

Lord Lovat's force amounted to some 252 all ranks, including a small party of United States Rangers. It was transported in the landing ship *Prince Albert* and put ashore in assault craft. The plan was to land on two beaches designated "Orange I" and "Orange II": the former a very narrow beach at Vasterival, immediately north of the battery, the latter the eastern section of the much longer beach near Quiberville. The plan was for one party, 88 strong and commanded by Major D. Mills-Roberts, to land at Vasterival and engage the battery in front with mortar fire, while the main body under Lord Lovat landed at Orange II, made a detour and attacked it from the rear.<sup>62</sup>

This plan was carried out exactly as written. Major Mills-Roberts' party reached the cliff-top successfully, advanced upon the battery, and fired on it with small arms and a 2-inch mortar. At or about 6:07 a.m. charges stacked beside the German guns ready for use blew up. The Commando attributes the explosion to a bomb from the mortar, but the German accounts blame fire from low-flying aircraft.<sup>63</sup> The battery never fired again.\* It was kept under fire until 6:20 a.m., when, in accordance with the plan, R.A.F. cannon fighters made a low-level attack upon it. Simultaneously, Lovat's main party, having landed and moved inland successfully, attacked it with the bayonet. After a short fierce fight the positions were cleared and the garrison cut to pieces. Captain P. A. Porteous particularly distinguished himself. Although painfully wounded, he took command of a troop which had lost its officers and led it in the final rush across open ground swept by machine-gun fire. Again wounded, he continued to lead his men until the battery was taken. He was awarded the Victoria Cross.<sup>64</sup>

Lord Lovat's force suffered about 45 casualties, including two officers and ten other ranks killed, but this loss purchased full success. The menace of the battery to our shipping off Dieppe was wholly removed, for its guns were blown up before the Commando withdrew according to plan about

\*The Commando account is probably accurate, as the Air Force Commander's report indicates no air action against the battery at this time. A report from the 81st Corps, logged by Headquarters C.-in-C. West at 9.03 a.m., to the effect that the battery was firing again with two guns, is quite unsupported by other evidence and is probably an error. The 81st Corps report includes in its list of German material lost six 150-mm. coast defence guns, i.e. the battery's full complement.

7:30 a.m. No. 4 Commando's action is a model of boldness and effective synchronization.

At 8:50 a.m. Lord Lovat reported to the headquarters ship and the Chief of Combined Operations. The signal to the latter ran: "Every one of gun crews finished with bayonet. OK by you?"<sup>65</sup> Actually, not quite the whole of the German unit had been liquidated, but it had suffered very heavily. Its strength is variously stated as from 93 to 112 men; its losses, which vary only slightly in different German accounts, were about 30 killed and 30 wounded<sup>66</sup> a proportion which reflects the use of the bayonet. Four prisoners were taken back to England.

### Disaster at Puy

The bad luck of No. 3 Commando on the extreme left extended to the Canadian unit closest to it: The Royal Regiment of Canada at Puy. The beach here, and the gully behind it in which the little resort village lay, were both extremely narrow and were commanded at very short range by lofty cliffs on either side. Success depended entirely upon surprise and upon the assault being made while it was dark enough to interfere with the aim of the German gunners. Neither of these conditions was achieved. The German garrison at Puy was only two platoons, one of the army and one of the Luftwaffe, plus some technical personnel;<sup>67</sup> nor does it appear to have been reinforced during the morning. In the circumstances, it was quite enough for the work in hand.

The Royal Regiment of Canada had attached to it three platoons of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, and detachments of the 3rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment and the 4th Field Regiment, R.C.A. The artillerymen were to assist in capturing enemy guns in the area and subsequently to man them. The Royals' general task is best described in the words of the *Combined Plan*:

The Royal Regiment of Canada at BLUE beach will secure the headland east of JUBILEE [Dieppe] and destroy local objectives consisting of machine gun posts, heavy and light flak installations and a 4 gun battery south and east of the town. The battalion will then come into reserve, and detach a company to protect an engineer demolition party operating in the gas works and power plant.

This task was of special importance, since if the East Headland was not cleared the numerous weapons there would be able to fire on the main beaches in front of Dieppe.

Although the Detailed Military Plan does not assist us, and none of the Canadian infantry units issued separate written orders, individuals in positions to know<sup>68</sup> state that the Royal Regiment was to land in three waves: the first to consist of three companies and an advance group of battalion

headquarters; the second, consisting of the remaining rifle company and the balance of the headquarters, to land ten minutes later; while the third, formed mainly of the attached platoons of the Black Watch, was to go in when signalled by the force already landed.

Unfortunately, the naval landing arrangements for Blue Beach went awry. No operation of war is harder than landing troops in darkness with precision as to time and place, and the danger of reckoning upon exactitude in such matters was well illustrated at Dieppe. The Royals were carried in the landing ships *Queen Emma* and *Princess Astrid*, while the Black Watch detachment was in the *Duke of Wellington*. (The last-named ship's landing craft flotilla was almost entirely manned by Canadian sailors, and a Canadian officer, Lieut. J. E. Koyl, R.C.N.V.R., took command of it after the Flotilla Officer was wounded.)<sup>69</sup> There was delay in forming up after the craft were lowered from the ships; this was mainly, apparently, the result of *Princess Astrid's* craft forming on a motor gunboat which, having got out of station, was mistaken for the one which was to lead them in.\* The Flotilla Officer of *Queen Emma* states that the delay made it necessary to proceed at a greater speed than had been intended, and as a result the two mechanized landing craft (L.C.M.) which formed part of this ship's flotilla, and were carrying 100 men each, could not keep up. Ultimately, according to this officer, these two L.C.Ms., with four assault craft which had been astern of them, landed as a second wave. In fact, one of the L.C.Ms. developed engine trouble and consequently touched down in due course quite alone.<sup>70</sup>

Thanks to these mischances, the first group of craft carrying the Royal Regiment struck the beach late. The situation is thus described in the record of a conference held on 13 September 1942 by the senior Canadian officers confined in Oflag VIIB, one of whom was Lt.-Col. Catto of the Royals:

Only part of three leading assault companies were landed in first wave and these were brought 35 minutes late by Navy. Remainder of companies finally reached beach nearly one hour late. Effect of darkness and smoke screen entirely lost.

*Princess Astrid's* Flotilla Officer states that touchdown was at 5:07 a.m., which would make it 17 minutes late. The time given by the Oflag VIIB conference is only one of many widely varying estimates made by Army officers and men. On a point of this sort it seems best to accept the naval evidence, the more so as that of the Germans agrees with it pretty closely: their 302nd Division gives the time of the first landing as 5:10. Whatever

\*Lt.-Col. Catto remembers a flare being dropped by an aircraft at this point. This is not mentioned by *Queen Emma's* Commanding Officer or in any other naval report. Certainly no warning reached the Germans at this time.

the exact time, the unit was certainly placed upon the beach so late as to make its task far more difficult than it would have been at 4:50.

The defenders of Blue Beach were fully on the alert. Fire was opened upon the leading craft while they were still well offshore; the *Princess Astrid* Flotilla Officer estimates that it began when they were "about 100 yards from the beach". He states that Major G. P. Scholfield, the senior officer of the Royals with the first wave, was slightly wounded before landing. All accounts agree, moreover, that as this wave touched down and the craft dropped their ramps machine-gun fire was greatly intensified and heavy casualties were suffered immediately. The Flotilla Officer says, "In several cases officers and men were wounded or killed on the ramp as they made to leave the boats."<sup>71</sup>

At the head of the Puys beach was a sea-wall ten or a dozen feet high, covered with heavy barbed wire. The wire's presence had not been detected before the operation, but Lt.-Col. Catto, suspecting it, had seen to it that the unit had "Bangalore torpedoes" for blowing paths through such obstacles.<sup>72</sup> Survivors of 'the Royal Regiment and enemy documents both testify that the German defence was concentrated upon the east cliff.<sup>73</sup> A brick house which stood here had in its front garden a concrete pillbox disguised as a summer-house, whose main slit had a murderous command of the beach and the sea-wall at very short range.<sup>74</sup> This "L.M.G. bunker" (which bore bullet-marks when examined in 1944) was probably responsible for a great number of the Royals' casualties on the beach. It and other positions enfiladed the sea-wall, and caused heavy losses among the men who ran forward from the boats to take shelter there.

Although several Bangalore torpedoes were exploded on the wall to cut the wire, very few men succeeded in passing through the gaps alive. The combination of the absence of surprise with the fact that the assault was made in much broader daylight than had been intended had been fatal to the Blue Beach attack. In the words of Capt. G. A. Browne, the artillery Forward Observation Officer attached to the battalion, "In five minutes time they were changed from an assaulting Battalion on the offensive to something less than two companies on the defensive being hammered by fire which they could not locate".<sup>75</sup>

The second group of craft seems to have landed some twenty minutes later than the first; Canadian and naval estimates of the time vary from 5:25 to 5:35 a.m.<sup>76</sup> Capt. Browne, who was in this group, has described<sup>77</sup> the bearing of the men during the approach and the landing; he and those with him had been intended to land with the first wave, and they did not realize that in fact other troops had gone in before them:

In spite of the steady approach to the beach under fire, the Royals in my ALC appeared cool and steady. It was their first experience under fire, and although I watched them closely, they gave no sign of alarm, although first light

was broadening into dawn, and the interior of the ALC was illuminated by the many flares from the beach and the flash of the Bostons' bombs. The quiet steady voice of Capt. [W.B.] Thomson, seated just behind me, held the troops up to a confident and offensive spirit, although shells were whizzing over the craft, and [they] could hear the steady whisper and crackle of S.A. [small arms] fire over the top of the ALC. At the instant of touchdown, small arms fire was striking the ALC, and here there was a not unnatural split-second hesitation in the bow in leaping out onto the beach. But only a split-second. The troops got out onto the beach as fast as [in] any of the SIMMER\* exercises, and got across the beach to the wall and under the cliff.

This second wave of assault, in the circumstances, could accomplish nothing; it simply added to the number of men sheltering on the beach and being pounded by the German machine-guns and mortars. The landing of the third wave proved equally useless. No signal having been received, and no information concerning the situation ashore being available, Lieut. Koyl, in charge of *Duke of Wellington's* flotilla, and Capt. R. C. Hicks, in command of the troops, jointly took the decision to land. At Hicks' request, the Black Watch company was put ashore under the cliff to the west of the sea-wall, where the main body of survivors of the earlier waves were gathered.<sup>78</sup> Virtually every man of the Black Watch who landed ultimately became a prisoner; one officer was killed.

The men on the beach were cheered by close and constant air support. Aircraft went in at cliff-top level to lay smoke, and in Colonel Catto's words, "The fighters came in again and again on the batteries while our show was on and later continued their close attacks while the withdrawal was taking place, and they undoubtedly affected quite seriously the fire from the east headland." Only one small party of the Royals is definitely known to have got off the beach.† This was not long after 6:00 a.m. The party, numbering about 20 officers and men, was led by Lt.-Col. Catto himself. They cut a path through the wire at the western end of the sea-wall, and the colonel led them up the cliff between bursts of machine-gun fire. They cleared two houses on the cliff-top, "resistance being met in the first only". The Germans now brought intense fire to bear upon the gap in the wire, and no more men got through it. The colonel's party moved westward above the beach in the hope of making contact with the Essex Scottish; but this battalion had never got off the beach in front of Dieppe. Catto's group lay up in a small wood until it was obvious that the men left on the Puy beach had been overwhelmed, that the landing force had withdrawn and that there was no hope of being taken off. At 4:20 p.m., after equipping a number of active unwounded men with "escape kits" and sending them off

\*The code name applied to the special training for the operation.

†Nevertheless, the report of the German 302nd Division, after mentioning what is evidently Catto's party, adds, "An additional 25 men, suffering losses, scrambled through the wire entanglements reinforced with mine charges; they are annihilated at 0815 hours [7:15 a.m. B.S.T.] by assault detachment of 23 (Heavy) Aircraft Reporting Company."



in the hope-which proved illusory-that some of them might get clear, the party surrendered.<sup>79</sup>

In the face of the German artillery fire (a troop of four howitzers in position only a few hundred yards south of Puy fired 550 rounds during the morning at craft offshore)<sup>80</sup> it was impossible to organize any systematic evacuation of the beach, although valiant attempts were made by the Navy. Analysis of the naval reports seems to indicate that the only craft which actually touched down on Blue Beach for the purpose of re-embarking troops was L.C.A. 209, commanded by Lieut. N. E. B. Ramsay, R.N.V.R. Many soldiers made a rush for it under heavy fire, and, overloaded and badly holed, it capsized not far offshore. Lieut. Ramsay was among the killed.<sup>81</sup> Several men clung to the bottom, and two of *Duke of Wellington's* landing craft, largely manned by Canadians, pushed in through a hail of missiles and rescued at least three of them, at the cost however of two or more sailors' lives.<sup>82</sup>

As was inevitable in the circumstances, it is difficult to build up from the naval reports a completely coherent picture of the attempts to evacuate the Royal Regiment. It is clear, however, that Lieut.-Commander H. W. Goulding, Senior Officer Blue Beach Landings, visited H.M.S. *Calpe* shortly after 7:00 a.m. He did not know what was happening on shore, but reported that the Royals had been duly landed. While he was in the headquarters ship a signal arrived, passed through H.M.S. *Garth*, operating off Blue Beach. This untimed message, apparently the only one from *Garth* to *Calpe* which has been preserved, reads: "From Blue Beach: Is there any possible chance of getting us off".<sup>83</sup> Goulding recorded that he was now ordered by the Naval Force Commander "to take an M.L. [motor launch] for close support and make an attempt to evacuate Blue Beach". This was done accordingly, but when Goulding approached the beach heavy fire opened and no craft reached the shore.<sup>84</sup> A signal, sent by him, was logged at 11:45 a.m.: "Could not see provision [?] Blue Beach owing to fog and heavy fires from cliff and White House. Nobody evacuated."<sup>85</sup> At least one further attempt was made, this time by four craft from *Princess Astrid*, whose Flotilla Officer reported that "Fire from the beach was still terrific", one craft was sunk, and "there was no sign of life on the beach".<sup>86</sup>

In point of fact, the remnants of The Royal Regiment of Canada on the Puy beach had probably surrendered a little before 8:30 a.m., rather more than three hours after the first landing. At 8:35 the 571st German Infantry Regiment informed its divisional headquarters, "Puy firmly in our hands; enemy has lost about 500 men prisoners and dead".<sup>87</sup>

Very few men of the Royals returned to England: all told, two officers and 65 men. Practically all of these were in one craft-that L.C.M. which,

as described above, had had engine trouble and touched down independently. It pulled back off the beach under murderous fire, only a few men having landed from it and many having been hit on board.<sup>88</sup>

The episode at Puys was the grimmest of the whole grim operation, and the Royal Regiment had more men killed than any other unit engaged. Along the fatal sea-wall the lads from Toronto lay in heaps.<sup>89</sup> The regiment's fatal casualties, including those who died of wounds and 18 who died from any cause while prisoners of war, amounted to 227 all ranks out of 554 embarked. And there is no doubt that the setback at Puys had a most adverse effect upon the raid as a whole, for, as we noted, failure to clear the East Headland was certain to make success in the centre much less likely. The Naval Force Commander reports, "There is little doubt that this was the chief cause of the failure of the Military Plan". It certainly had great influence.

Some indication has already been given of the inadequacy of the information concerning events at Blue Beach which reached the headquarters ship during the early stages. Indeed, this extended to the whole of the eastern beaches, for we have seen that the Force Commanders got no reliable account of what had happened to No. 3 Commando for more than two hours after its encounter with the German convoy. Information about Puys should have been better, for though the only wireless set working on the beach was that of Capt. Browne, the Forward Observation Officer, he was in communication with the destroyer *Garth* offshore. *Garth's* commander confirms that the ship was in touch with Browne from 5:41 to 7:47, "during which time he was held up at the foot of the cliff and most messages received concerned wounded and the fact that they were held up, which were passed to CALPE".<sup>90</sup> The tragic fact is, however, that none of the early messages reached the headquarters ship. The Intelligence Log maintained in *Calpe* notes at 5:50 a.m. that there is no word from the Royals; and the first definite statement recorded concerning Blue Beach is at 6:20 and is extremely inaccurate: "R. Regt C. not landed". Another version appears in the *Fernie* Intelligence Log at 6:25, "Impossible to land any troops on Blue Beach. From Navy". This is probably a garbled version of an untimed message recorded as received by the Naval Force Commander from the Puys naval beach station: "Impossible to land any more troops on Blue Beach". It presumably came from the Beachmaster, who had not succeeded in getting ashore. In any case, the Force Commanders were long left in the belief that the Royal Regiment had not been landed; and as a result of this General Roberts sent out to the Royals, at 6:40 a.m. or a little before, an order directing them to go to Red Beach to support the Essex Scottish.<sup>91</sup>

## The Fighting in the Pourville Area

The units landed on "Green Beach", at Pourville to the west of Dieppe, had better fortune, on the whole, than any other Canadian troops in the operation. Nevertheless, this success was only comparative, for they attained but few of their objectives.

The Pourville beach, though much longer than that at Puys, is still dominated by cliffs on both sides. Standing in the village of Pourville and looking east towards Dieppe, one faces a lofty and forbidding rampart, the eastern ridge of the valley of the Scie. This obstacle, strongly held by the Germans, proved insuperable on the morning of 19 August 1942.

The South Saskatchewan Regiment was carried across the Channel in the landing ships *Princess Beatrix* and *Invicta*. The trans-shipment to landing craft and the approach to the beach went without a hitch, and the craft touched down within a very few minutes of the time planned (4:50 a.m.); the two ships' Flotilla Officers agree in fixing the time at 4:52. A considerable measure of surprise was achieved. The naval reports indicate that there was no fire as the boats ran in, although it began very soon after the landing. One craft which touched down two minutes late on the extreme right flank was fired upon and the soldiers in it suffered casualties as they disembarked.<sup>92</sup> The whole unit landed as one wave. This was the earliest actual landing of troops in this operation, except perhaps for those of No. 4 Commando on the same flank; we have seen that both the eastern landings, though timed to take place simultaneously with that at Pourville, were considerably delayed.

One misfortune during the disembarkation, however, had considerable effect upon events. The River Scie flows into the Channel near the middle of the Pourville beach, and the intention had been to land the battalion *astride* the river, so that the companies operating against the objectives east of it could deliver their attacks without having to seek a crossing. Although there is no reference to this in the naval reports (indeed, the officers of the landing craft may have been unaware of the fact), accounts by officers and men with The South Saskatchewan Regiment<sup>93</sup> leave no doubt that in the semi-darkness the craft had not been able to strike the precise parts of the beach intended, and almost the whole of the battalion was actually landed *west* of the river. This meant that the companies having the vital task of seizing the high ground to the eastward had first to penetrate into the village and cross the river by the bridge carrying the main road towards Dieppe. The delay thus caused nullified the effect of the surprise that had been obtained, and was probably fatal.

"C" Company, operating to the west of Pourville, promptly occupied all its objectives, including positions on the hills immediately south-west of the village, and killed a good many Germans in the process. The companies

working to the eastward had no such success. "A" Company's objective was the radar station on the cliff-edge roughly a mile east of Pourville. "D" Company's was positions on the adjacent high ground to the southward, including Quatre Vents Farm and anti-aircraft guns nearby; it was expected that they would be helped by The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and a troop of tanks arriving from Dieppe. Before these two companies, having been landed west of the Scie, could get across the bridge and reach the heights, the enemy's posts there were manned and firing. The eastern part of the village, and the bridge, were completely dominated by them. Soon the bridge was carpeted with dead and wounded men and the advance of the South Saskatchewan came to a halt.

At this point, Lt.-Col. Merritt, having established his headquarters near the beach, came forward and took charge himself. Walking calmly into the storm of fire upon the bridge, waving his helmet and calling "Come on over-there's nothing to it", he carried party after party across by the force of his strong example. Other men forded or swam the river.<sup>94</sup> The Colonel then led a series of fierce uphill rushes which cleared several of the concrete positions commanding bridge and village.\* Nevertheless, in spite of his extraordinary energy and dauntless courage, and the best efforts of his men and of the Camerons who were shortly mingled with them, the posts on the summit, including the trench system of Quatre Vents Farm and the radar station, could not be taken. Apparently some of our men got within a short distance of the radar station, but it was heavily wired and defended and could not be dealt with without artillery support.<sup>95</sup> The enemy handled his mortars and machine-guns skilfully, and our thrusts were all beaten back. One party actually reached the edge of the Quatre Vents position and killed several Germans before being forced out.<sup>96</sup> Attempts to obtain artillery support from the destroyer *Albrighton* were nullified by the Forward Observation Officer's inability to observe and lack of knowledge of the exact positions of our own troops; he did indicate several targets, but was unable to spot the fall of the ship's shells.<sup>97</sup>

The Cameron Highlanders of Canada, who were to pass through the Pourville bridgehead and operate against the aerodrome in conjunction with the tanks from Dieppe, were landed about half an hour late. This was due in part at least to the wishes of Lt.-Col. Gostling, who, according to Commander H.V.P. McClintock, the naval officer in charge, "preferred to arrive late [rather] than early". The idea (a dubious one) apparently was to land ten minutes later than the plan provided; however, miscalculations of

\*The following information was logged by the 302nd German Division at 8.00 a.m. (7.00 a.m. British time): "At Pourville-East 4.7-cm. anti-tank gun position is overrun by enemy. Anti-tank gun unable to continue fire due to jamming of loophole, crew is killed. Enemy advances on height up to orderly room of 6th Company 571st Regiment, is held here. One beach-defence gun and one heavy machine-gun put out of commission."



THE SEA-WALL AT PUY, LOOKING EAST

This photograph taken in June 1945 shows the beach on which The Royal Regiment of Canada landed. The pillbox which was probably responsible for many of their casualties is visible immediately in front of the house on the east cliff. The lower pillboxes, just above the beach, are believed not to have existed in 1942.



POURVILLE FROM THE EAST, 1946

"Merritt's Bridge" is marked by its light colour. The houses on the sea-front were demolished by the Germans, some of them before the raid. The command possessed by the German positions on the east side of the Scie valley is evident.



#### THE MAIN BEACHES AT DIEPPE

A German photograph taken at low water, probably on the morning of 20 August 1942, the day after the raid. Three tank landing craft, as well as smaller craft and tanks, appear clearly. The building at the right is the Casino. Beyond it appear the two tall chimneys of the Tobacco Factory.



#### DIEPPE FROM THE WESTERN HEADLAND

This German photograph probably taken on the afternoon of the raid shows a tank landing craft (L.C.T. 5) still burning in front of the Casino, and fires burning in the town.

speed and course lengthened the delay, and the battalion touched down at 5:50 a.m.<sup>98</sup> During the approach, it was apparent that the South Saskatchewan had not succeeded in opening up their bridgehead in the manner expected; fighting was clearly in progress in the outskirts of Pourville, and shells were bursting in the water offshore. With the Camerons' pipers playing, the craft pushed on; all of them reached the beach and there were almost no casualties on board. As Lt.-Col. Gostling's own craft ran in, he was calling cheerfully to his men, identifying the types of fire that were coming down upon them. When the boat touched down, near the east end of Green Beach, he leaped on to the shingle and went forward to direct the cutting of wire. Fire immediately opened from a pillbox built into the headland on the left, apparently the one position closely covering the beach which the South Saskatchewan had not succeeded in clearing; and the Commanding Officer fell dead.<sup>99</sup> The second in command, Major A. T. Law, took over.

The battalion had been landed astride the Scie, and mainly as a result of this it became divided into two main sections. The larger, which had landed west of the river, consisted of "A" Company, two platoons of "B", and evidently the major part of all three platoons of "C". This main body under Major Law subsequently moved inland and effected the deepest penetration made by any portion of the force engaged that day. The rest of the battalion remained in the Pourville area and fought in parties of varying strength mingled with The South Saskatchewan Regiment.<sup>100</sup>

Pourville was under heavy mortar fire, and this, plus the lateness of the hour, made it desirable that the battalion should move inland as rapidly as possible. It was clear that although the original plan had provided for an advance up the east bank of the Scie and a rendezvous with the tanks from Dieppe at the Bois des Vertus, the South Saskatchewan had not made enough progress for this to be practicable. However, an alternative route, up the west bank, had been planned in case of need, and this Major Law now adopted.<sup>101</sup> He debouched from Pourville with his main body at a time which was not recorded.

At first the battalion followed the main road; then, coming under machinegun fire from the direction of Quatre Vents, it bore to the right to take advantage of the cover of the woods on the heights overlooking the Scie. It continued to be harassed by German snipers, and would seem to have advanced slowly. After penetrating roughly a mile and a half from Pourville, it moved left again towards the hamlet and bridges of Petit Appeville (Bas de Hautot). Here Law hoped to cross the river and make contact with the tanks.<sup>102</sup>

Looking down on the crossings from the high ground west of the village, Law saw enemy forces beyond the river, including what appeared to be a bicycle platoon (we now know that a German cyclist platoon had been sent

at 5:30 to reinforce the ridge near Quatre Vents Farm).<sup>103</sup> There was no sign of the Canadian tanks; none of them had, in fact, got beyond the Promenade at Dieppe. Law had no information beyond what he could see, and as time was getting short he resolved to abandon the attack against the planned objectives, and instead to cross the river and clear the Quatre Vents area. Orders to this effect were issued about nine o'clock. As the companies moved towards the road-bridge, there was contact with the enemy coming from two directions: a party moving south on the road from Pourville (probably a reconnaissance patrol of engineers which was operating in this area)<sup>104</sup> and forces moving up from the south on the west bank of the Scie. Casualties were inflicted on both. The Germans, however, were establishing an increasingly firm hold on the area about the crossings. At 6:10 a.m. their 571st Infantry Regiment had sent an order by dispatch rider to its 1st Battalion, the regimental reserve in Ouville, to move to the Hautot area for an attack against Pourville. This unit in the course of assembling ran into the Cameron (a report of this contact was received by the German divisional headquarters at 9:55 a.m. from a staff officer who had been sent to the battalion). Law saw a detachment of horse-drawn close-support guns arrive from the south, cross one of the Petit Appeville bridges and take up a position on the east side covering the crossings. This was doubtless the infantry gun platoon "in process of formation" which is known to have been stationed at Offranville as part of the regimental reserve.<sup>105</sup> Although its operations are not mentioned in the German documents, the 302nd Division's administrative report speaks of two 75-millimetre infantry guns being in action during the day.

The Camerons' 3-inch mortars having been knocked out in Pourville, they had no weapons capable of silencing these shielded guns at several hundred yards' range. At the same time, they were under machine-gun and sniper fire from the high ground overlooking the crossings. Major Law now decided that it was not practicable to fight his way across the river. About 9:30 a.m. he gave orders for withdrawal. Immediately afterwards he heard that his wireless set had intercepted a message from Headquarters 6th Brigade to The South Saskatchewan Regiment advising of the intention to evacuate from Green Beach and adding, "Get in touch with the Camerons". The message was understood as giving the time of evacuation as ten o'clock; thus a speedy retreat was essential. After sending a message telling the South Saskatchewan what he was doing, Law began his withdrawal by the route by which he had advanced. The unit retired under pressure. On the way it met a South Saskatchewan platoon which had been sent out to make contact with it, and the combined force re-entered Pourville just before ten.<sup>106</sup>

The penetration through Pourville was the most important effected during the day, and it was about this area that the Germans were most apprehensive.



The regiment in Corps Reserve was moved up in that direction and was about to attack when the operation came to an end.<sup>107</sup> Moreover, as we shall see, the Germans' intention was to employ the 10th Panzer Division in this area. There has been a tendency to criticize the Military Force Commander for not exploiting the advantage gained here; but the fact is that he knew nothing of the extent of the penetration. No reports about the Camerons' progress appear in the headquarters logs during the period when they were inland.\* All General Roberts knew was that they "had penetrated some distance inland and . . . were out of wireless touch".<sup>108</sup> In any case, by the time they reached Petit Appeville it was too late to begin exploiting, and the infantry reserves had been expended elsewhere.

The plan had envisaged evacuating all the troops, in the event of success, through the town of Dieppe. In the circumstances actually existing, however, The South Saskatchewan Regiment and the Camerons had to be taken off from the same beach at Pourville on which they had landed. This decision was made and orders given about 9:00 a.m. The time fixed was 11:00 a.m., the same as for the main beach. The boats arrived on schedule, but the South Saskatchewan and the Camerons lost heavily during the withdrawal. The enemy was able to bring fierce fire upon the beach from his lofty positions east of Pourville, and also from the high ground to the west, from which "C" Company of the South Saskatchewan had retired as the result of a misunderstanding (the order from the headquarters ship for the battalion to withdraw and re-embark was apparently passed on to this company and understood by it as an executive order from the Commanding Officer, although it was not so intended).<sup>109</sup> However, the landing craft came in through the storm of steel with self-sacrificing gallantry (one Cameron wrote afterwards, "The L.M.G. fire was wicked on the beach, but the Navy was right in there").<sup>110</sup> The naval reports indicate that probably 12 assault landing craft, one support craft and one *chasseur* took part in lifting troops from Green Beach. In this task at least four, and probably five assault craft were lost.<sup>111</sup> Several larger vessels gave fire support.

The enemy's troops, who showed little stomach for really close fighting, were kept at arm's length by a courageous rear guard commanded by Lt.-Col. Merritt. Throughout the day, Merritt had been in the forefront of the bitter struggle around Pourville, exposing himself recklessly and displaying an energy almost incredible ("It wasn't human, what he *did*", said an officer who was with him).<sup>112</sup> Thanks to Merritt's group, the greater part of both units was successfully re-embarked, though many of the men were wounded. The rear guard itself could not be brought off. It held out on the beach until ammunition was running low and there was no possibility of evacuation

\*The narrative in the Camerons' war diary states, "We were unable to contact Bde. H.Q. at any time during the advance inland and subsequent withdrawal, and it was not until approximately 1005 hrs when we returned to Pourville that this was accomplished."

or of doing further harm to the enemy. At 1:37 p.m. the 571st German Infantry Regiment reported, "Pourville firmly in our hands".<sup>113</sup> Lt.-Col. Merritt subsequently received the Victoria Cross.

The fatal casualties suffered by the Camerons and The South Saskatchewan Regiment were respectively six officers and 70 other ranks, and three officers and 81 other ranks.

### The Frontal Attack on Dieppe

The frontal attack on Dieppe was to be delivered by The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry on the right and the Essex Scottish on the left, with the nine leading tanks of the 14th Army Tank Regiment landing simultaneously with the first infantry. The assault was to be covered by the 4-inch guns of the destroyers and *Locust*; and close-support fighter aircraft were to attack the beaches, the buildings overlooking them and the gun positions on the West Headland "as the landing craft finally approach and the first troops step ashore on RED and WHITE beaches".<sup>114</sup> There was no hope of surprise here, for the flank landings were scheduled for half an hour earlier; and we have seen that the alarm was given in Dieppe, following the Pourville landing, 20 minutes before the main assault.

The R.H.L.I. and the Essex Scottish were carried across the Channel in the landing ships *Glengyle*, *Prince Leopold* and *Prince Charles*. The landing craft were lowered and made their approach without untoward incident,\* and the infantry units touched down on the long beach in front of Dieppe's Promenade-dedicated once to idleness and pleasure-at the exact time appointed or within a minute or two of it.

The naval orders called for intense direct bombardment by four destroyers and *Locust* from the time when the landing craft were one mile from the beach until they touched down. These were carried out, except that *Locust* did not participate; she had been unable to keep up during the passage.<sup>115</sup> The Air Force also played its part precisely as planned. Smoke was laid to screen the East Headland; and at 5:15 a.m. five squadrons of Hurricane fighters made a cannon attack upon the beach defences.<sup>116</sup> This was ending just as the Essex Scottish and The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry leaped from their assault craft and began to scramble through the wire obstacles towards the town. All witnesses<sup>117</sup> agree that the Hurricane attack

\*Lt. Col. Labatt states that shells fell near H.M.S. *Glengyle* while craft were being lowered; and, doubtless on the basis of his report, the conference of Commanding Officers at Oflag VIIB on 13 Sep 42 recorded that "infantry assault ships . . . came under fire by 0340 hours from shore batteries". But the German documents disprove this, and the report of *Glengyle's* Commanding Officer makes it clear that the firing was that resulting from Group 5's encounter with the German convoy. He writes, . heavy fire from guns of light calibre was observed (0350) bearing 130°-the direction of 'Yellow' landing-and a few 'overs' of no importance burst near the ship".

was excellently timed and most terrifying. It was planned to cease at 5:25, and its effect was of course purely temporary. Naval estimates of the time the first landing craft touched down vary from 5:20 to 5:23;<sup>118</sup> they may thus have been up to a couple of minutes late. If so, the troops were to this extent less able to profit by the air attack.

There was, however, a more serious error in timing. The three craft carrying the first nine tanks "approached from too far to the westward and were about 10 to 15 minutes late in touching down".<sup>119</sup> During this period, between the cessation of the naval and air bombardment and the tanks' arrival, there was no support for the infantry; and the enemy, recovering from the Hurricane attack, was able to sweep the beaches with fire. This happened so rapidly that our infantry were pinned down before they could get through the wire obstacles, climb the sea-wall and cross the broad Promenade into the town. In any opposed landing, the first minute or two after the craft touch down are of crucial importance; and it may be said that during that minute or two the Dieppe battle, on the main beaches, was lost. The impetus of the attack ebbed quickly away, and by the time the tanks arrived the psychological moment was past.

The enemy had been firing upon the landing craft as they approached the shore. Some reports suggest a temporary slackening at the moment of landing, possibly the result of the Hurricanes' blow, but it was followed immediately by an intensification of machine-gun and mortar fire.<sup>120</sup> Officers of the R.H.L.I. state that "D" Company, which was on the right closest to the West Headland, was almost wiped out immediately after landing.<sup>121</sup> It had, in fact, suffered heavily while still afloat. Two craft, both apparently carrying platoons of this company, were reported lost. A responsible naval officer<sup>122</sup> states that both were "heavily damaged during the approach but touched down; this seems likely, though an Army witness doubts whether they reached the beach".<sup>123</sup>

At the west end of the Promenade, in front of the town, stood the large isolated Casino. The Germans, we have seen, had begun to demolish it, but only the south-west wing had, been destroyed before the raid. The building, and pillboxes and gun emplacements near it, were occupied by the enemy, and clearing them took time and cost lives; but the R.H.L.I. shortly broke into the Casino and rounded up the snipers. "Nearly an hour was needed before all the enemy were either killed or taken prisoners."<sup>124</sup> In this work Lance-Sergeant G.A. Hickson, R.C.E., leading the survivors of a demolition party whose assigned task was the destruction of the telephone exchange, distinguished himself.<sup>125</sup> At 7:12 a.m. a report that the Casino had been "taken" was logged on the headquarters ship; this may indicate when the clearing process was completed.

The Casino constituted a sort of covered avenue between the beach and the Boulevard de Verdun, the street skirting the front of the town. Thanks largely to this fact, at least one party of the R.H.L.I. and another led by a Sapper sergeant were able to get into the town and remain there for some time.

The first party to enter seems to have been a group of about 14 men under Capt. A.C. Hill. This officer led it from the beach into and through the Casino at about six a.m., when our troops had entered the building but not yet cleared it. Covered by Bren gun fire, they ran across the open to the buildings on the front of the town and broke into one which let them into a theatre, through which in turn they got into the town. They circled through several streets, engaging enemy patrols and losing one man killed. Encountering increasingly heavy opposition, they fell back to the theatre, where they were joined by some other men of our force. About ten in the morning, when enemy infantry were seen converging on the theatre, the whole party retired to the Casino, only one man being hit during the rush across the open.<sup>126</sup>

At a fairly late hour in the morning Lance-Sergeant Hickson took a party of about 18 men into the town,\* profiting by the fire of one of our tanks which had stopped near the south-east corner of the Casino and had silenced some of the machine-guns in and around the lofty Castle on the West Headland. The party had trouble with snipers and cleared one house held by German infantry before withdrawing to the Casino towards noon.<sup>127</sup> Hickson was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

On the Essex Scottish beach there was no such feature as the Casino to facilitate infiltration. It was completely open and was commanded by both headlands as well as by the high buildings in front. We have mentioned the French tank dug in near the base of the west mole; and on the mole itself there was a pillbox mounting an anti-tank gun. These two positions remained in German hands throughout the operation, though the enemy records that the one on the mole "suffered a direct hit", possibly from naval fire.<sup>128</sup>

The only party of the Essex Scottish known to have got into the town was led by C. S. M. Cornelius Stapleton. Only a few minutes after the first landing, this stout Warrant Officer led a dozen or so men across the fire-swept Promenade into the buildings fronting the Boulevard de Verdun.†

\*A narrative written by Capt. W.D. Whitaker states that another party of the R.H.L.I., led by Lieut. L. C. Bell, also penetrated into the town. In the opinion of Lt. Col. Labatt, this is an error. Lieut. Bell himself was killed during the operation. The present writer however thinks it probable that another party got into Dieppe in the R.H.L.I. area. The German '302nd Division records at 7:45 the capture of a 'British assault detachment . . . near Dieppe city hall" (not far from the Casino); and a careful French observer, M. Georges Guibon, relates what seems to be the same incident.

†How fierce the fire was is indicated by the evidence of a soldier<sup>129</sup> who was one of a group who crossed the Promenade at this time and joined Stapleton in the buildings. He testified that of about nine men in his group only two reached the houses.

The party killed a number of enemy snipers in the buildings and subsequently penetrated through the streets to the harbour. It "accounted for a considerable number of enemy in transport and also enemy snipers"<sup>130</sup> before being overpowered; its action is doubtless reflected in a German report logged at 8:16 a.m., that the enemy had been thrown back "from the harbour station (100 metres from the beach)".<sup>131</sup> C. S. M. Stapleton got back to the beach and reported to Colonel Jasperson. In due course he received the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Capt. D. F. MacRae, the only officer to land with the Essex Scottish who returned to England after the operation, recorded two attempts to attack across the sea-wall, followed by a third "on a reduced scale". These took place very soon after the landing and were beaten back by heavy fire. His estimate was that between 30 and 40 per cent of the Essex Scottish had been killed or wounded by 5:45 a.m.<sup>132</sup> The estimate seems high, but it is clear that at an early stage the unit was, in MacRae's phrase, "unable to continue organized fighting" and was forced on to the defensive, using the line of the wall as a sort of fire-trench. "D" Company had had as one of its tasks the destruction of the Tobacco Factory, which was supposed to contain explosives. It fired grenades into the building, which from this or some other cause caught fire and burned fiercely.<sup>133</sup>

From the time when the first momentum of the assault was lost, the situation on the beach remained largely static. The men of the R.H.L.I. and the Essex found what cover they could and tried to return the fire of a largely invisible enemy who continued to pour down bullets, mortar-bombs and shells. Casualties mounted steadily. Among those who laboured to assist the wounded during that sombre morning, one was particularly conspicuous: Honorary Captain J. W. Foote, Chaplain of the Hamilton regiment. He worked ceaselessly at giving first aid, and repeatedly exposed himself to carry injured men to the aid post. At the withdrawal, he helped bear the wounded to the boats but disdained to embark himself, choosing rather to continue his work of mercy as a prisoner. At the end of the war he received the Victoria Cross—the first ever awarded to a Canadian chaplain.<sup>134</sup>

The Navy did its courageous utmost to assist the men on the beaches. The Naval Force Commander's account of the work of one flak craft (a converted L.C.T. mounting several anti-aircraft guns) may be quoted. "A brilliant feature of this assault was the support given by L.C.F.(L)2, who remained close in firing at all positions, for a very considerable time. She was straddled continually by enemy batteries and under heavy fire from close range weapons. One by one her guns were put out of action and finally she sank."<sup>135</sup>

## The Fortunes of the Tanks

It is well to consider separately the experience of the Calgary Regiment's tanks. The 14th Army Tank Regiment was the first unit of the Canadian Armoured Corps ever to go into action. This was, moreover, the Churchill tank's first battle, as well as the earliest test of tank landing craft under fire.

It has already been explained that the leading group of tanks, "Flight 1" (nine tanks, carried in three L.C.Ts.) was perhaps as much as a quarter of an hour late in landing. Of the three craft carrying this wave, two were lost; one remained on the beach, and another succeeded in withdrawing but evidently sank shortly afterwards. L.C.T. 2, which touched down near the east end of the beach, landed its three tanks, though only after some delay. All three are known to have crossed the sea-wall. The craft got off the beach successfully, intending to land the engineers who were on board farther to the right; but damage to the ramp by shellfire prevented its putting in again and these sappers never got ashore.<sup>136</sup> L.C.T. 1 landed its tanks, but only one got on to the Promenade. The craft itself sank in shallow water offshore; it appears in German photographs close to the base of the west mole. Unfortunately, the leading tank from L.C.T. 3 went off "in very deep water"<sup>137</sup> and was "drowned" and lost. The others landed successfully but did not get beyond the beach. This was the craft that was unable to withdraw.

Flight IA likewise consisted of three craft, each carrying three tanks. It was due to land at 5:35 a.m., which was approximately the time that Flight 1 actually did land. The naval reports indicate that Flight 1 A came in "shortly afterwards".<sup>138</sup> The fortunes of the three craft and their tanks may be briefly stated. L.C.T. 4 landed all its tanks, but none crossed the wall. This craft evidently sank after withdrawing from the beach. L.C.T. 5 on the other hand never got off the beach; German photographs show it directly in front of the Casino. All its tanks landed, but only one got over the wall. L.C.T. 6 likewise landed its tanks, and all three reached the Promenade. This craft survived the operation.

Flight 2, consisting of 12 tanks carried in four L.C.Ts., was due to land at 6:05 a.m., and it appears to have been on time.<sup>139</sup> The regimental headquarters troop was in L.C.T. 8. When this craft touched down the leading tank got ashore but "bellied" in the shingle and blocked the ramp. The craft pulled off and made another approach, but shellfire severed the cables so that its ramp fell and it touched down in perhaps eight feet of water. Lt.-Col. Andrews, receiving a signal from a sailor who doubtless thought that his tank could get off, drove off the craft, and the tank was almost entirely submerged. The young Commanding Officer and his crew got out, and it would seem that Colonel Andrews reached, or nearly reached the shore;

but he appears to have been shot down at the water's edge.<sup>140</sup> He was a most promising officer and an agreeable companion; many mourned him.

L.C.T. 8's third tank remained on board. L.C.T. 7 and L.C.T. 9 landed their tanks, and all of them crossed the wall. L.C.T. 10 likewise put all its tanks ashore but only one reached the Promenade. All four craft of this flight survived the landing, but L.C.T. 7 was lost during the withdrawal.\*

The remainder of the tank regiment (the whole of "A" Squadron and three troops of "C") was not landed.<sup>141</sup>

We have already given some hint of the action of the tanks ashore. It will be noted that the sea-wall did not present an especially serious obstacle. It has often been assumed that it was intended to blow holes in the wall to open a passage for the tanks; but the actual plan was to build timber-crib ramps to enable tanks to cross it in the central section, where it was highest. To give the tanks traction on the beach and assist them in climbing the low end sections of the wall, a track-laying device had been invented by which the leading tank on each craft would lay a path of "chespaling" in front of it.<sup>142</sup> In fact, no ramps were built, nor could they have been built under the conditions that existed. The Germans had had a mechanical excavator at work in front of the central section of the wall, and here it was quite impassable; but at either end it rose less than two feet above the shingle, and the tanks had little difficulty in crossing it at these points.<sup>143</sup>

A total of 29 tanks went off the landing craft; two were drowned, and of the 27 that landed 15 crossed the sea-wall. Major C. E. Page, the senior officer of the Calgary Regiment in Oflag VIIIB, held a conference of the unit's officers in that camp to decide this point. Collating all their information, they found that 13 tanks had certainly crossed the wall, but were uncertain concerning two others, which belonged to a troop commanded by Lieut. E. Bennett, who was in a different camp. Correspondence with Lieut. Bennett has since established that these two also crossed.<sup>144</sup> Some infantry officers have given much lower estimates of the number that reached the Promenade, but the evidence of the men who were in the tanks is conclusive. Incidentally, the report of the German 81st Corps states that eyewitnesses reported that "probably 16" tanks reached the Promenade. The Commander in-Chief West, it is true, states that only five got there; this appears to have been the actual number remaining there after the operation. The author of

\*The Naval Force Commander's despatch attributes the damage suffered by the L.C.Ts. in part to the long periods they remained on the beach "waiting for the miscellaneous troops that they were carrying in addition to the tanks, to disembark." Only two reports from individual L.C.Ts. are available. One (from L.C.T. 8) complains that after the second tank "landed" no effort was made to get the third off. The author (not the craft's commanding officer) evidently did not know of the second tank being drowned or have a clear picture of the circumstances, which are described above. The other report (from L.C.T. 6) states, "All the Infantry except thirty went ashore, and after waiting 15 minutes for the other thirty to go ashore, I came off the beach". In this case, "infantry" presumably means simply "men on foot". There were only 35 actual infantrymen in this craft.

this report presumably did not know that, as stated in the 81st Corps report, as well as in the evidence of the Calgary Regiment officers, many of the tanks that crossed the wall returned subsequently to the beach.

More formidable obstacles than the wall were the heavy concrete roadblocks barring the streets leading out of the Promenade into the town. To breach these with explosives was the engineers' business; but some of the demolition parties had not landed, others had had equipment destroyed, and others had suffered casualties. The officer in charge on White Beach, Lieut. W. A. Ewener, was badly wounded.<sup>145</sup> Those who could get within reach went forward gallantly, in spite of the deadly fire from the Castle and other flank positions. But none of the blocks was breached. Although some charges were actually placed on a block near the Casino, it appears that the means of detonating them were lacking; and a sharp-eyed French civilian saw one still there on the following day.<sup>146</sup> It was reported after the operation that three or four tanks had penetrated into the town; but none actually got farther than the Promenade.

Further progress being prevented by the road-blocks, almost all the tanks on the upper level returned after a time to the beach, and German propaganda pictures, and our own aerial photographs taken after the raid, led us to underestimate the number that had succeeded in crossing the wall. Information about the tanks' action was long very meagre, chiefly because only one man (Trooper G. Volk) who had been in a tank on shore returned to England.<sup>147</sup> Only when our first prisoners were repatriated (on medical grounds) in 1943 did the real facts begin to emerge.

Most of the tanks were sooner or later immobilized by damage or by bellying in the beach shingle. However, they continued firing, operating in effect as pillboxes, and effectively supporting the infantry, who speak in the warmest terms of the manner in which they were fought. The Calgary Regiment's chaplain, on an L.C.T. offshore, listened to the cool and steady voices that spoke over the tanks' radio telephones and reflected that it might have been a game of bridge.<sup>148</sup> The tank fire certainly contributed to the withdrawal of many infantrymen. The crews did not leave their vehicles until 12:25.<sup>149</sup> By this time evacuation had virtually ceased, and this is the explanation of why almost none of the tankmen returned to England. Thanks to the Churchills' staunchness, however, the regiment had very few fatal casualties: actually, two officers and 11 other ranks. The enemy's anti-tank guns were mainly 37-millimetre, against which the tanks' armour gave complete protection. About nine o'clock the Germans brought into action an anti-tank company armed with 75-millimetre guns; but the roadblocks prevented these from firing on the beach at close range.<sup>150</sup>



## The Landing of the Reserves

Something has already been said of the inadequacy of the information available to General Roberts about progress ashore. We have noted the false report to the effect that the Royal Regiment had not landed at Puys, which led him to send orders for that unit to come to Red Beach to support the Essex. This was about 6:40. About the same time, Roberts decided to land the main body of his floating reserve. This was done because, as he says in his report, "information received indicated that 'Red' Beach was sufficiently cleared" to permit such action to be properly taken. The "information received" was evidently a message entered in the *Fernie* intelligence log at 6:10: "Essex Scot across the beaches and in houses". This seems to have originated in a message from the Essex to the R.H.L.I. which is recorded elsewhere and which appears to describe the penetration made by C. S. M. Stapleton's little party: "12 of our men in the buildings. Have not heard from them for some time."<sup>151</sup> Reaching the Military Force Commander in the very exaggerated form which has been quoted, it led him to believe that the Essex had made a penetration suitable for exploitation, and he ordered Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, whose Commanding Officer came on board *Calpe* at 6:10, to land on Red Beach. At 7:00 a.m., accordingly, the unit went in in its 26 unarmoured personnel landing craft.<sup>152</sup>

The Germans observed this "major formation of approaching landing craft" and their artillery fired on it for ten minutes.<sup>153</sup> This was not all. In the words of the naval officer in charge (Lieut.-Commander J. H. Dathan), when the boats neared the beach "very heavy firing was opened . . . from buildings in front of the beach, machine guns which appeared to be on the boulevard, and from the top of the west cliff further heavy machine gun fire, mortar fire and grenades."<sup>154</sup> A considerable number of casualties were suffered before the craft touched down. But the Fusiliers were not discouraged. Capt. MacRae recalled later how the boats struck the beach at speed, and the dash with which the men rushed ashore and charged up the shingle.

Although General Roberts' intention had been that the unit should land on Red Beach, it was in fact landed along the whole extent of the main beaches, and a considerable part of it was put ashore on the narrow strip of shingle under the cliffs west of the town.<sup>155</sup> The men landed here could of course accomplish nothing. Of those farther east, some were active in and around the Casino, while others were pinned down on the beach along with the greater part of the R.H.L.I. and the Essex Scottish.<sup>156</sup> Various parties were reported to have got into the town, but none is attested by evidence except one including Sergeant P. Dubuc, which penetrated some distance, was captured, but subsequently overpowered its guard. Sergeant Dubuc succeeded in getting back to the beach.<sup>157</sup> Lt.-Col. Menard was

severely wounded immediately after landing, and suffered further wounds later; and in general the Fusiliers' losses were very heavy, their total fatal casualties being eight officers and 111 other ranks. Of the officers who actually landed, only two returned to England, and both were wounded.

After the commitment of the Fusiliers, General Roberts had still available as a reserve (apart from the unlanded tanks) the Royal Marine Commando. The original plan to use this unit as a cutting-out force against shipping in the harbour was of course impracticable, and Roberts now decided to utilize it too on the main beaches. Perhaps the General was unwise in persisting in reinforcing the beaches at this stage; yet deceptively encouraging intelligence was still being received. Shortly after eight a.m. he believed that the situation on White Beach was such that additional troops landed there might be able to penetrate through the town and circle round to clear the East Headland. The *Calpe* intelligence log contains at 8:17 the entry, "Have control of White Beach". It was about this time that General Roberts instructed the Marines to transfer to armoured landing craft and go in "and support the Essex Scottish through White beach . . . the object . . . being to pass around the West and South of the town, and attack the batteries on the Eastern cliff from the South".<sup>158</sup> Some of the remaining tanks were ordered to land in support, but this was cancelled ten minutes later, and the craft carrying the unlanded tanks were ordered back to England about nine o'clock.<sup>159</sup>

The information received had been false and the plan over-optimistic. The Marines, like the Fusiliers, met a most destructive fire as they approached the shore. When Lt.-Col. Phillipps realized the situation, he stood up in his own craft and signalled to the rest to retire into the shelter of the smokescreen offshore. His action doubtless saved many of his men from landing upon a beach where they could have accomplished nothing.\* The Commando's report states that of the seven craft in which the unit was embarked, only three actually reached the shore; the rest turned back or had already broken down. Phillipps fell mortally wounded after completing his signal.<sup>161</sup>

The Headquarters of the 4th and 6th Brigades were in tank landing craft, each divided into two groups in different craft. In the case of the 4th Brigade, neither group succeeded in landing. Brigadier Lett was in L.C.T. 8, which, as already noted, touched down twice and was heavily shelled. On the second occasion the Brigadier was badly wounded, and instructed Lt.-Col. Labatt of the R.H.L.I. to take over the Brigade. The order was received, but under the conditions existing on the beach Labatt could

\*The detail, frequently repeated, that Phillipps put on white gloves before making his signal, is not in the Commando's reports. An account by a Marine private who claims to have been in the Colonel's L.C.M. fully confirms the Commanding Officer's gallantry, but makes no mention of the signal,<sup>160</sup> The reports however are much better evidence.

exercise little control. On board the L.C.T., Brigadier Lett was still able to give orders as he lay on a stretcher.<sup>162</sup> Of the 6th Brigade's Headquarters the only officer to land was Brigadier Southam himself, who followed the tanks from L.C.T. 7 ashore. Although wounded, he was active on the beach throughout the operation, directing and encouraging the men. He kept in touch with Force Headquarters, reporting progress and giving guidance, through a wireless set in the scout car belonging to Major G. M. Rolfe, the senior signals officer who landed. This car was slightly to the west of the Tobacco Factory.<sup>163</sup>

As the morning progressed, an increasingly fierce battle developed in the air. The Luftwaffe's effort was slow in getting under way—one more indication that the Germans were surprised—but as the hours passed it threw more and more squadrons in. About ten a.m. it began to use bombers escorted by fighters,\* and in the end, the Air Force Commander believed, "all his [the enemy's] resources on the Western Front were in action". The war diary of the German Naval Operations Staff states, "According to data compiled by the Air Force, 945 German planes were sent into action over the Channel on 19 August". Despite the fact that our aircraft were frequently fired upon by our ships, whose gunners showed a "low standard of aircraft recognition", the R.A.F. gave most effective cover to the great assembly of shipping off Dieppe.<sup>164</sup> The only major vessel lost was the destroyer Berkeley, which "received a direct hit with a heavy bomb" about one o'clock and had to be sunk by British torpedoes. About the same moment, a fighter attack on Calpe's bridge caused a number of casualties. The Naval and Military Force Commanders were lucky enough to escape, but Air Commodore Cole was severely wounded.<sup>165</sup>

The air force, in addition to providing the large support programme which had been pre-arranged, and carrying out the special directions of the Fighter Controller in the headquarters ship, received and met many requests from the men on the beaches for special emergency missions. However, in such cases there was an inevitable time-lag of approximately an hour and a half between the request being made and the aircraft being over the target. To give one example, at 11:48 a.m. Brigadier Mann sent a message to Uxbridge passing on a request for bomber action against the East and West Headlands received from Brigadier Southam four minutes before. This was received at Uxbridge at 12:17 and orders for an attack on both headlands by Hurricane bombers and close support aircraft were issued at 12:43. The attacks were delivered at 1:30 p.m., after our troops ashore had surrendered. General Crerar recalls one case at Uxbridge in which Admiral Mountbatten asked him to intervene by requesting intensive bombing of the East Headland.

\*At 7:11 a.m. British time, nearly two-and-a-half hours after the first landings, the German 302nd Division logged the message, "Corps H.Q. advises that bomber aircraft will be committed to action".

But since the bombing could not take place for an hour and a half, since there was no telling what might happen in that period, and since General Roberts had not asked for such action, Crerar declined the request.<sup>166</sup>

### Withdrawal from the Main Beaches

By nine o'clock, it was evident that the landing of the reserves had been without effect. The enemy still held both headlands and was sweeping the beaches with fire. Since "the military situation was serious, and ... it was becoming steadily more difficult for ships and craft to close the beaches", Captain Hughes-Hallett advised General Roberts "that the withdrawal should take place with as little further delay as possible, and should be confined to personnel". He considered 10:30 a.m. the earliest practicable time, as it was necessary to warn the Air Force Commander and pass orders to the landing craft. This time was accordingly agreed upon, but shortly afterwards, at Roberts' request, it was changed to 11:00 a.m. The reasons for Roberts' suggestion were the fear that there might not be time to make contact with the Camerons, and advice from Air Commodore Cole that the extra half-hour would ensure more adequate air support for the withdrawal.<sup>167</sup>

At 10:30 the German fighter airfield of Abbeville-Drucat was attacked by Fortress bombers of the United States Army Air Force escorted by R.A.F. Spitfires. Of the 24 bombers comprising the four squadrons employed, 22 actually bombed. The bombing was reported to be very accurate, and the enemy was probably unable to use this aerodrome for about two hours during the critical stage of the withdrawal.<sup>168</sup> The arrangements for the withdrawal had largely to be improvised. The original intention, had the raid gone according to plan, was to take most of the troops off the beaches in tank landing craft. In the conditions actually existing, however, it was out of the question to send these large and vulnerable vessels in, and assault landing craft (small bullet-proof boats capable of carrying about a platoon of infantry apiece) had to be used.<sup>169</sup> These circumstances increase the credit due the Navy for an evacuation carried out under conditions probably without parallel in the history of warfare.

At eleven o'clock the landing craft began to go in, covered by naval fire and R.A.F. fighters; the fighter force over Dieppe had now been increased from three squadrons to six, and sometimes was as high as nine.<sup>170</sup> "The wind was onshore and slightly from the west, and an effective screen of smoke prevented the landing craft from being fired upon until they were close inshore.<sup>171</sup> The Germans on the clifftops continued to pour down shells and bullets, taking toll of boats and men alike.

On the Essex Scottish beach, not many craft came in, and of those that did a very high proportion (six out of eight mentioned in a report from

H.M.S. *Prince Charles*)<sup>172</sup> were lost.\* The 'craft from H.M.S. *Prince Leopold* were intended for Red Beach but actually went in by mistake to Green Beach (Pourville), where they did very useful work. This undoubtedly reduced materially the number of craft available to evacuate the Essex Scottish, but naval records indicate that one of these boats did get to Red Beach later.<sup>174</sup> It appears also that enemy air attacks contributed in some degree to scattering and disorganizing the landing craft. Commander H. V. P. McClintock, the Boat Pool Officer, describes such an attack and its effect; it evidently helped to bring him to the conclusion that further evacuation from Blue, White and Red beaches was not practicable. At about 12:20 he signalled the Naval Force Commander's Chief of Staff to this effect. General Roberts, however, "asked that a further effort should be made", and Captain Hughes-Hallett, although apprehensive that this might merely mean "greater losses to troops already embarked", decided to give McClintock discretion in the matter. He accordingly replied, "If no further evacuation possible withdraw"; but as received by McClintock the signal read, "No further evacuation possible, withdraw". Since, however, he was already convinced that there was no point in persisting, this error in transmission had no actual influence on events.<sup>175</sup>

The Force Commanders were unwilling to leave the area while any hope remained of bringing off men still on shore. At 12:48 *Calpe* went close to the beach, with a landing craft on either bow, and shelled the breakwaters, "on which machine gun posts were reported to be preventing the troops on Red Beach from reaching the water". Other destroyers had previously gone close in to assist; H.M.S. *Brocklesby* reported that she had actually grounded by the stern for a moment as she turned away.<sup>176</sup> Captain Hughes-Hallett was taking counsel with the shallow-draught gunboat *Locust*, whose people might have better knowledge of the state of things on the beaches, when about ten minutes past one a signal was received from Brigadier Southam's rudimentary headquarters, "Our people here have surrendered".<sup>177</sup>

Thanks to the boundless skill and courage of the Navy and particularly of the crews of the landing craft, a considerable proportion of the force that had landed was successfully brought away. Of the 4963 Canadians who embarked for the operation, 2211 returned to England. Of these, however, it seems likely that nearly 1000 had never landed. Analysis suggests that only between 350 and 400 men were evacuated from the main beaches in front of the town (see Appendix "11"). The larger vessels

\*The report of the Commanding Officers' conference at Oflag VIIB states, "No naval craft came in to evacuate this battalion". In 1952 Colonel Jasperson was still of this opinion, but Colonel MacRae "had the impression that the navy did make attempts". MacRae himself, however, got off with the aid of a small wooden rowboat full of wounded, which he, swimming, pushed for two miles, when he and his party were picked up.<sup>173</sup>

were full of casualties during the return voyage; the little destroyer *Calpe* brought back 278 wounded soldiers.<sup>178</sup>

By two p.m. the operation was over. At 1:58 the German artillery finally fell silent. Its meticulous returns indicate that it had fired 7458 rounds during the battle, not counting anti-tank and anti-aircraft shell.<sup>179</sup> About 2:10 the last craft was reported three miles from the French coast.<sup>180</sup> General Roberts had already sent by pigeon to Headquarters 1st Canadian Corps a message<sup>181</sup> summing up the grim record of the battle:

Very heavy casualties in men and ships. Did everything possible to get men off but in order to get any home had to come to sad decision to abandon remainder. This was joint decision by Force Commanders. Obviously operation completely lacked surprise.

Fighter cover was maintained over the force throughout the homeward voyage, and enemy air attacks did no serious damage to the ships. "The coastal craft and landing craft reached Newhaven without further incident, and the destroyers and H.M.S. *Locust* berthed alongside at Portsmouth shortly after midnight."<sup>182</sup> The protection of the flotillas in the final phase had crowned the work of the air forces, which throughout the operation had been beyond praise; General Roberts' word for it was "magnificent".<sup>183</sup>

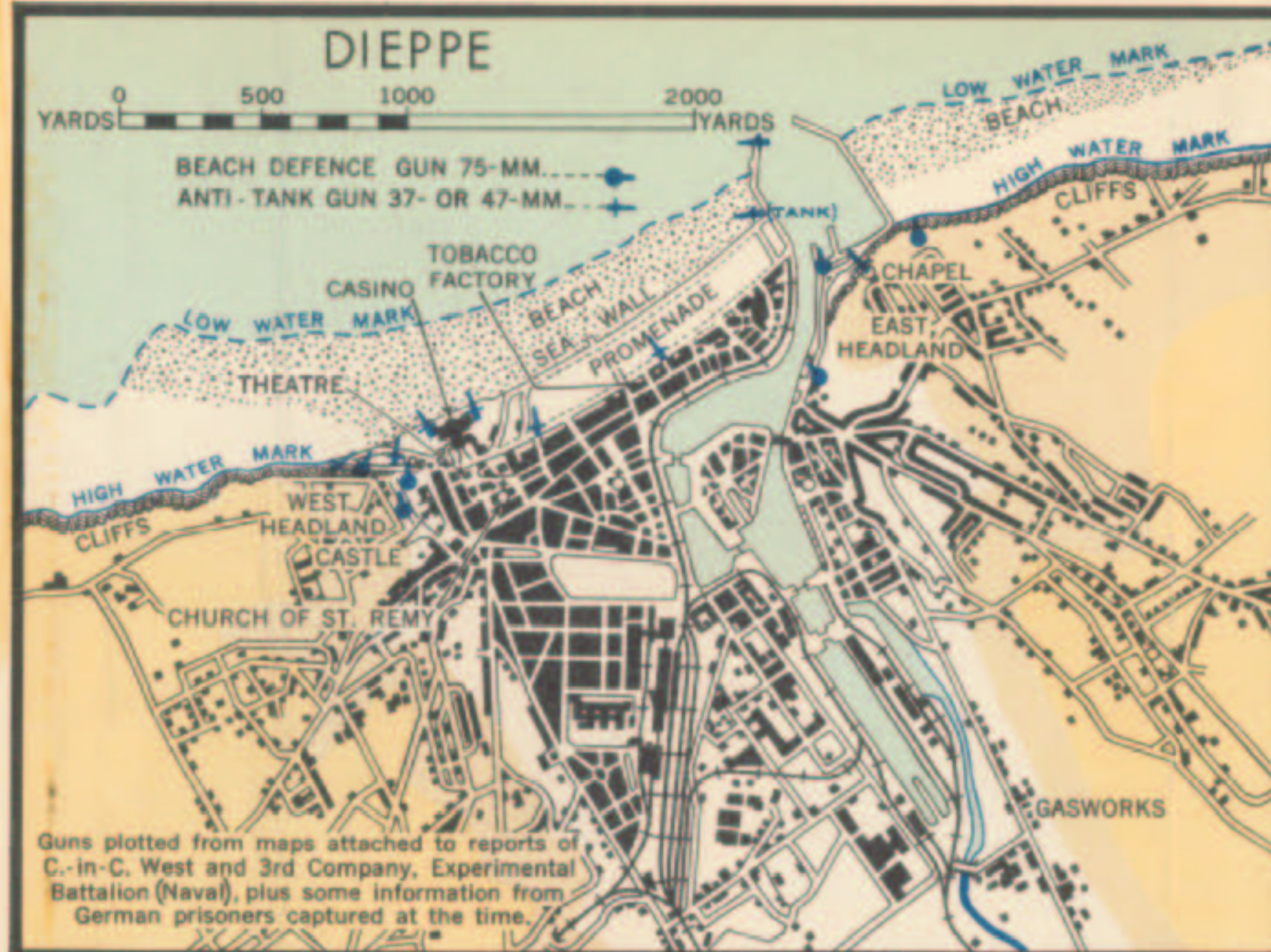
So ended the brave and bitter day. Under the shaded dockside lights in the English ports, tired and grimy men drank strong tea and told their tales, and the ambulance trains filled and drew slowly out. Back on the Dieppe beaches the Germans were still collecting Canadian wounded, and the Canadian dead in their hundreds lay yet where they had fallen. On both sides of the Channel staff officers were already beginning to scan the record and assess the lessons of the raid; and beyond the Atlantic, in innumerable communities across Canada, people waited in painful anxiety for news of friends in the overseas army-that army which, after three years of war, had just fought its first battle.



# THE DIEPPE OPERATION

## 19 AUGUST 1942

MILES 1 0 1 2 3



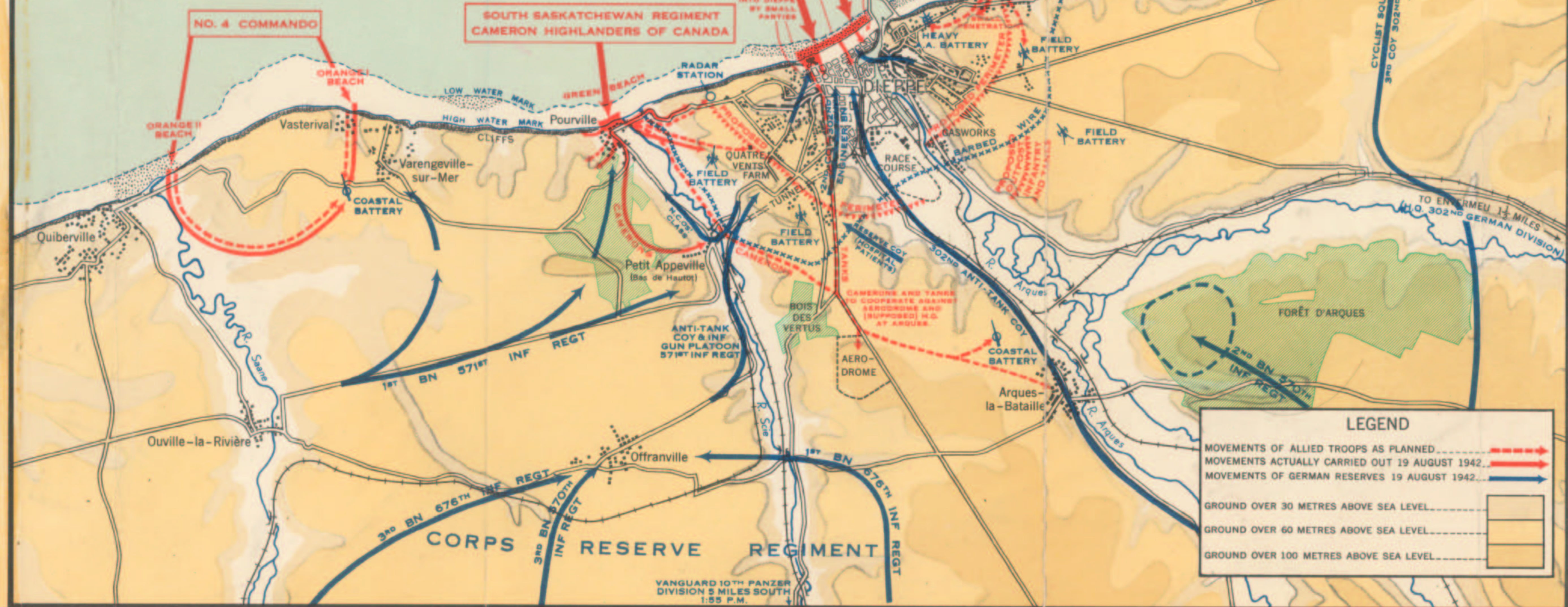
ROYAL HAMILTON LIGHT INFANTRY  
ESSEX SCOTTISH FUSILIERS MONT-ROYAL  
ROYAL MARINE "A" COMMANDO  
14<sup>TH</sup> CANADIAN ARMY TANK REGT. (CALGARY REGT.)

ROYAL REGIMENT OF CANADA

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN REGIMENT  
CAMERON HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA

NO. 4 COMMANDO

NO. 3 COMMANDO



**LEGEND**

MOVEMENTS OF ALLIED TROOPS AS PLANNED ..... (dashed red arrow)

MOVEMENTS ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT 19 AUGUST 1942 ..... (solid red arrow)

MOVEMENTS OF GERMAN RESERVES 19 AUGUST 1942 ..... (solid blue arrow)

GROUND OVER 30 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL ..... (light tan box)

GROUND OVER 60 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL ..... (medium tan box)

GROUND OVER 100 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL ..... (dark tan box)

VANGUARD 10<sup>TH</sup> PANZER DIVISION 5 MILES SOUTH 1:55 P.M.



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## CHAPTER XII

### DIEPPE: LOSSES, COMMENTS AND AFTERMATH

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#### Allied Losses at Dieppe

THE casualties suffered by the Canadian military force in the Dieppe raid were extremely heavy. In all categories they totalled 3367 all ranks. No fewer than 1946 Canadian officers and men became prisoners of war, at least 568 of them wounded. At Dieppe, from a force of roughly 5000 men engaged for only nine hours, the Canadian Army lost more prisoners than in the whole eleven months of the later campaign in North-West Europe, or the twenty months during which Canadians fought in Italy. Sadder still was the loss in killed. As now computed, the total of 'fatal casualties was 56 officers and 851 other ranks; these include seven officers and 65 other ranks who died in captivity, chiefly from wounds received in the operation.<sup>1</sup> Of the seven major Canadian units engaged, only one (Les Fusiliers MontRoyal) brought its commanding officer back to England-and he, as we have seen, was badly wounded. Little was left of the 4th Brigade, not much more of the 6th. Months of hard work were required before the 2nd Division became again the fine formation that had assaulted the beaches.

The detailed casualties of the Canadian force are listed in the accompanying table (page 389).

According to figures now available, British Army casualties amounted to 18 officers and 157 other ranks, of whom two officers and 12 other ranks were killed, and 11 officers and 117 other ranks were missing or prisoner's.\* The Royal Marines' total casualties were seven officers and 93 other ranks. Of these, four officers and 27 other ranks lost their lives, including those listed as "missing, presumed killed" and as died in captivity.<sup>2</sup>

The Navy too lost heavily. In ships, its chief losses were one destroyer and five tank landing craft; but it also left behind it, on the Dieppe beaches or under the adjacent waters, 28 lesser landing craft, of which 17 were L.C.As. In this last category, over 28 per cent of the craft, engaged were lost. This reflects both the desperate conditions under which the assault and the

\*These were the best figures the War Office was able to furnish in October 1950. Many of the missing must in fact have been killed.

withdrawal were conducted, and the high courage with which the crews of these little boats did their work. There were 550 casualties to naval personnel, including 75 killed or died of wounds and 269 missing or prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

The losses in the great air battle were large on both sides. The R.A.F. had to fight the enemy in his own air, close to his own fields, and the initial advantage of surprise was lost long before the battle was over. The gallant and successful fight waged in support of the operation against the highly organized German air defence cost the Allied squadrons a total of 106 aircraft, of which 98 were fighters or tactical reconnaissance machines: the R.A.F.'s heaviest loss in the air in a single day since the war began, and indeed the heaviest of the whole war. Fatal personnel casualties to the Allied air forces (killed, missing and presumed dead, as known in 1950) numbered 67, including two pilots killed in crashes when returning from the raid.<sup>4</sup> The heaviest losses in proportion were those of the tactical reconnaissance squadrons, whose duties required them to make deep penetrations over enemy territory. Of a total of 72 sorties in this category nine resulted in the loss of pilots, and 10 aircraft were lost.<sup>5</sup> The two Canadian tactical reconnaissance squadrons, although they made between them a total of 42 sorties, were fortunate enough to lose only two aircraft.<sup>6</sup> All told, the R.C.A.F. lost 13 planes and ten pilots. It claimed ten enemy aircraft destroyed, four probably destroyed and 22 damaged.<sup>7</sup>

The communique issued by Combined Operations Headquarters after the raid claimed 91 German aircraft destroyed and "about twice that number" probably destroyed or damaged. These estimates resulted in the air battle's being regarded as a particularly satisfactory aspect of the operation. (It will be recalled that a major object of the programme of large-scale raids had been to bring the Luftwaffe to action and force it to divert strength from the East.) Post-war examination of German documents, however, indicates that the enemy lost 48 aircraft destroyed and 24 damaged.<sup>8</sup> (At the time, he admitted the loss of only 35, and claimed to have shot down 127 of ours.)<sup>9</sup> Although the result was thus less satisfactory than was believed at the time, the effectiveness of the R.A.F.'s share in the raid must be judged, not by these statistics, but by the fact that more than 200 ships and craft lay off the enemy's coast for a day without suffering important losses by air attack.

### German Losses and German Critiques

The German Army's losses at Dieppe, though not inconsiderable, were much smaller than our own. The communique issued by the High Command after the action admitted 591 casualties suffered by all three services. Figures

**DIEPPE RAID**  
**EMBARKATION STRENGTH—CASUALTIES—DISEMBARKATION STRENGTH**  
**(CANADIAN UNITS)**

Units	Number Embarked		Fatal Casualties						Non-Fatal Casualties						Total Fatal and Non-Fatal Casualties		Number Returning UK on completion of Operation		
	Off	ORs	Killed in Action	Died of Wounds		Died While PW		Total Fatal Casualties		Wounded	Prisoners of War		Total Non-Fatal Casualties		Off	ORs	Off	ORs	
				Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs		Off	ORs	Off	ORs					
			Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	
Headquarters, Miscellaneous																			
Small Units and Detachments																			
Royal Regiment of Canada	42	48	5	—	—	—	5	—	7	7	2	5	2	6	11	18	18	33	37
Royal Hamilton Light Infantry	26	528	8	199	—	2	16	10	217	31	8	95	6	155	16	281	26	498	63
Essex Scottish Regiment	31	551	7	172	1	6	2	9	187	103	7	71	9	88	21	262	31	449	211
Fusiliers Mont-Royal	32	521	5	100	—	2	13	6	115	1	26	3	119	20	240	385	30	500	49
Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada	32	552	7	98	—	4	1	9	8	48	8	103	11	222	21	373	29	484	5
South Saskatchewan Regiment	32	471	5	55	1	7	8	6	70	94	3	33	6	125	18	252	24	322	18
14 Cdn Army Tk Regt (Calgary R)	25	498	3	75	—	3	3	81	7	159	2	22	7	58	16	239	19	320	13
Toronto Scottish Regiment (MG)	32	385	2	10	—	—	1	2	11	—	4	17	13	125	15	146	17	157	15
Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada	5	120	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	8	3	—	1	—	12	—	13	5
Calgary Highlanders	4	107	1	—	—	—	3	1	3	6	—	2	2	59	2	67	3	70	1
RCE Units and Detachments	1	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
RCE Detachments	14	256	2	11	—	—	2	11	3	1	3	7	3	19	5	29	7	40	8
RC Sigs Detachments	7	309	1	22	—	1	2	25	33	33	1	36	—	88	4	157	6	182	4
RCASC Detachments	6	72	—	8	—	1	—	9	2	7	—	3	1	14	3	24	3	33	5
RCOC Detachments	1	37	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	6	—	3	1	—	1	9	1	10	—
Cdn Provost Corps Detachment	10	116	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	3	—	2	1	9	1	14	1	18	9
Cdn Int Corps Detachments	1	14	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	4	—	6	1
Total	2	39	1	—	—	—	1	—	7	—	—	7	—	11	—	25	1	25	1
	2	13	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	5	—	8	2
	305	4,658	47	760	2	26	7	65	851	547	37	531	82	1,224	158	2,302	214	3,153	132

NOTE:—The number returning to the UK upon completion of the operation is obtained by subtracting the figures appearing under "Killed in Action", "Died while PW", "Wounded and Unwounded Prisoners of War" from the number that embarked.

in German reports now in our hands vary from this in detail but not in general effect. The 302nd Division reported the Army losses as five officers and 116 other ranks killed, six officers and 195 other ranks wounded, and 11 other ranks missing.<sup>10</sup> Although we took many prisoners, most of them had to be left behind; the number actually brought to England was 37, of whom only eight belonged to the Army.<sup>11</sup> German losses in material, in addition to the six 5.9-inch guns destroyed by No. 4 Commando, included two of the French beach-defence guns and four 37-mm. anti-tank guns.<sup>12</sup> The German Navy lost Submarine-Chaser No. 1404 with her whole crew of 46; one of the merchant vessels forming the convoy involved with Group 5 (the *Franz*) was also sunk.<sup>13</sup>

The raid had given the German command a severe temporary shock. Great forces had been set in motion towards Dieppe. In addition to the action of local reserves which we have noted, a battalion of the 302nd Division's reserve was brought up to the Forêt d'Arques, south-east of Dieppe, and held ready to deal with any unfavourable development at Dieppe or a possible parachute drop.<sup>14</sup> The movement of the regiment in Corps Reserve towards Pourville has been mentioned. The four battalions of the Army Reserve also moved forward, though so slowly as to arouse the ire of the 81st Corps.<sup>15</sup> And shortly before nine in the morning Field-Marshal von Rundstedt ordered the 10th Panzer Division from Amiens to be committed under the 81st Corps to clean up the situation at Dieppe. Its advanced guard reached Longueville-sur-Scie, ten miles south of Dieppe, at 1:55 p.m.<sup>16</sup> By that time fighting was over; had it lasted longer the division -could have been in action against the Pourville bridgehead before evening.

The Germans had taken even more far-reaching precautions. Shortly after nine o'clock their air reconnaissance reported off Selsey Bill a convoy of 26 ships, with "decks closely packed with troops".<sup>17</sup> This report was highly inaccurate. Admiralty records indicate that the only convoy the observer can have seen was "C.W. 116", which consisted of 14 small merchant vessels en route from the Thames to the Isle of Wight.<sup>18</sup> However, when the report reached G.H.Q. West it was taken to indicate that the "Second Front" was in immediate prospect; and at 10:30 a.m. Rundstedt ordered "readiness for instant action" for the whole of the Seventh Army (guarding the coasts of Lower Normandy and Brittany) and the greater part of his Army Group Reserves. This alert was maintained until the morning of 20 August.<sup>19</sup>

A copy of the greater part of our Detailed Military Plan fell into German hands, as a result of its providing that two copies might be taken ashore by each brigade headquarters. (The Germans state that this copy, No. 37, one of those issued to Headquarters 6th Infantry Brigade, was found on the body of a dead major on the Dieppe beach.)<sup>20</sup> In spite of this, responsible officers at G.H.Q. West persisted in believing that the raid had actually been intended as the opening phase of an invasion of France. The fact that the

26-ship convoy had been reported as returning to Portsmouth convinced them that the failure at Dieppe had caused the cancellation of the main operation. Rundstedt's staff found it particularly hard to believe that we would really sacrifice "29 or 30 of the most modern tanks" for a mere raid. His report, signed by his Chief of Staff, General Zeitzler, suggests that if Dieppe had fallen new orders would have been issued and the full-dress invasion launched.<sup>21</sup> For this supposition there was, of course, no basis whatever; as we have seen, the Allied strategic planners had finally turned their backs on France (as far as 1942 was concerned) about 22 July.\*

The Germans studied our operation carefully, with the aid of the captured order. The Commander-in-Chief West had it translated and circulated. His covering letter<sup>23</sup> commented upon it somewhat rudely:

According to German ideas this order is not an order, but an aide-memoire or a scheme worked out for a map exercise. Nevertheless, it does contain many points of value to us.

First, how much the enemy knows about us.

Second, the peculiarities of his method of landing and fighting.

For that reason, this order is to be thoroughly studied by all staffs, to collect lessons for our coastal defence and for the training and education of our troops.

But it would be an error to believe that the enemy will mount his next operation in the same manner. He will draw his lessons from his mistakes in planning and from his failure and next time he will do things differently. . . .

The Germans generally were of the opinion that the British planners had greatly underestimated the strength in weapons required for such an operation. The 302nd Division's report remarked.<sup>24</sup>

The strength of air and naval forces was not nearly sufficient to keep the defenders down during the landings and to destroy their signal communications. It is incomprehensible that it should be believed that a single Canadian Division should be able to overrun a German Infantry Regiment reinforced with artillery.

The English command at the middle levels . drew up the time-table for the intended withdrawal at "W" hour in a theoretical manner reflecting inexperience of battle (*mit einem kampffremden Schematismus*). ‡

The report of the 81st Corps criticized the order for being too detailed and therefore "difficult to visualize as a whole". It remarked, "The planning

\*All German officers were not in agreement with the Zeitzler-Rundstedt interpretation. The war diary of the Naval Operations Staff, 19-21 August, indicates that the sailors were dubious about it from the beginning, and that Naval Group West reported on the 21st that the famous 26-ship convoy was possibly "a *scheduled* westbound Channel convoy previously located by radio intelligence and radar service". And on 25 September Colonel Ulrich Liss, head of the Western Intelligence Branch of the Army High Command, wrote a letter<sup>22</sup> to an unidentified general asking advice. He had prepared a detailed report which left no doubt that the Dieppe enterprise was a raid and nothing more. But Zeitzler had just become Chief of the General Staff in succession to General Halder, and Liss was worried about putting before him a paper which contradicted his own report! What finally happened is not clear; but no copy of the Liss report has been found. It was doubtless suppressed.

†Equivalent to a British or Canadian Brigade.

‡This was true enough. The plan for withdrawal contained in the Detailed Military Plan was expressed in thirteen successive diagrams, each with its appropriate code name, representing successive stages of the gradual retirement and embarkation.

down to the last detail limits the independence of action of the subordinate officers and leaves them no opportunity to make independent decisions in an altered situation."<sup>25</sup> Actually this German criticism is less valid than might appear. Although there was much detail in the order, the action of individual units is not so closely prescribed as a first glance suggests, and the present writer sometimes had difficulty in constructing from it a detailed account of the intended movements. One example of a Commanding Officer making "independent decisions in an altered situation" is Major Law's deciding to advance inland by the west instead of the east bank of the Scie. This alternative route had in fact been discussed in advance, but there is no reference to it in the Detailed Military Plan.

On the quality of the British and Canadian troops engaged there is some disagreement between the different German reports. That of the 81st Corps<sup>26</sup> compares the Canadians unfavourably with the Commandos:

The Second Canadian Division . were . loaded on to transports and shipped to the French coast without being told either the objective or the mission, so that the ordinary soldiers were completely in the dark.\* The Canadians on the whole fought badly and surrendered afterwards in swarms.

On the other hand, the combat efficiency of the Commandos was very high. They were well trained and fought with real spirit. . . .

There is one other adverse comment; it is contained in a report of "Personal Impressions from the Battlefield" sent on 20 August by General Zeitzler:<sup>27</sup> "English fought well. Canadians and Americans not so well, later quickly surrendered under the influence of the high bloody losses".

The comments of the 81st Corps are specifically repudiated by Headquarters Fifteenth Army, which reported<sup>28</sup> as follows:

The large number of English prisoners might leave the impression that the fighting value of the English and Canadian units employed should not be too highly estimated. This is not the case. The enemy, almost entirely Canadian soldiers, fought-so far as he was able to fight at all-well and bravely. The chief reasons for the large number of prisoners and casualties are probably:

1. *Lack of artillery support...*
2. *The Englishman had underestimated the strength of the defences, and therefore, at most of his landing places-especially at Puys and Dieppe-found himself in a hopeless position as soon as he came ashore.*
3. *The effect of our own defensive weapons was superior to that of the weapons employed by the attacker.*
4. *The craft provided for re-embarkation were almost all hit and sank.*

This obviously makes sense; the reason for the large number of Canadian prisoners was the fact that the Navy simply had no means of taking the troops off the beaches. The proportion of British prisoners was smaller because No. 4 Commando was successfully evacuated, and the greater parts of both No. 3 and the Marine Commando were never landed.

\*As we have seen, this was not true, though some individual soldiers may conceivably have escaped briefing and told this story to German interrogators.

The 302nd German Infantry Division, the formation in direct contact with our troops, made comments<sup>29</sup> which can be read with satisfaction:

The main attack at Dieppe, Puys and Pourville was launched by the 2nd Canadian Division with great energy. That the enemy gained no ground at all in Puys, and in Dieppe could take only parts of the beach, not including the west mole and the western edge of the beach, and this only for a short time, was not the result of lack of courage, but of the concentrated defensive fire of our Divisional Artillery and infantry heavy weapons. Moreover, his tank crews did not lack spirit. They could not penetrate the anti-tank walls which barred the way into the town of Dieppe. . . . In Puys the efforts made by the enemy, in spite of the heavy German machine-gun fire, to surmount the wire obstacles studded with booby traps on the first beach terrace are signs of a good offensive spirit (*Angriffsfreudigkeit*). The large number of prisoners at Puys was the result of the hopelessness of the situation for the men who had landed, caught under German machine-gun, rifle and mortar fire between the cliffs and the sea on a beach which offered no cover.

At Pourville the enemy, immediately after landing, pushed forward into the interior without worrying about flank protection. . . .

The operations against the coastal batteries were conducted by the Commandos with great dash and skill. With the aid of technical devices of all sorts they succeeded in clambering up the steep cliffs at points which had seemed inaccessible.

As we have explained, it would have been virtually impossible to mount an operation like that at Dieppe from England in 1942 without giving the Canadians a share in it. Nevertheless, an assault operation of this type is obviously not a suitable introduction to battle for troops who have never fought. Had the 2nd Canadian Division had previous battle experience, its units might perhaps have accomplished more at certain points; but it seems questionable whether it could have carried out the operation successfully under all the conditions which existed on 19 August 1942.

### How the Public was Told

From the Canadian point of view the manner in which information concerning this complex and controversial operation reached the public in the Allied countries was an unsatisfactory aspect. Canadians themselves were well served by the able and enterprising Canadian war correspondents who accompanied the raiding force;<sup>30</sup> but in other countries the enterprise at first was made to appear in a somewhat peculiar light.

In the early reports in the world press, the parts played by both the small detachment of United States troops and the larger but still secondary component provided by the Commandos were exaggerated at the Canadians' expense. It was natural that Americans, delighted by the news that their ground troops had fought their first action against the Germans, should "play up" the story in this manner. On the face of it, it was a trifle more surprising that newspapers in the United Kingdom should pay so little attention to the

fact that the landing force-and the casualties-were mainly Canadian.\* It is fair to say that the misunderstanding was cleared up only by Mr. Churchill when, speaking in the House of Commons on 8 September, he said:

It is a mistake to speak or write of this as a Commando raid, although some Commando troops distinguished themselves remarkably in it. The military credit for this most gallant affair goes to the Canadian troops, who formed five-sixths of the assaulting force, and to the Royal Navy, which carried them all there and which carried most of them back.

Some of the misconceptions in the English press can be traced to a definite origin. It is always extremely difficult to strike a nice balance in matters of publicity between the components of an international force, and such questions were an embarrassment to the British Ministry of Information throughout the war. In this particular case the Ministry made an attempt to give guidance to the press. In the early afternoon of the day of the raid the Controller, Press and Censorship, issued a "Private and Confidential Memo to Editors" which contained the following passage:

For your own information, I may say that while Canadian troops comprise the main body of the raiding force, they constitute approximately one-third of the total personnel of all services participating in the raid.

This was well meant, although a more imaginative official might have realized that the first battle of an army which had waited nearly three years for action was not the most suitable moment for issuing such a suggestion. In any case, it \_ had an unfortunate result. At least one newspaper quoted it almost verbatim,<sup>32</sup> and it certainly resulted in a general playing-down of the Canadians' part in the operation. The Controller attempted to undo its effect by issuing a further memorandum on the evening of 20 August, asking the newspapers to "bear in mind that by far the biggest proportion of the troops engaged were Canadian forces"; but the damage had been done.

The interest of the Canadian people in the raid was such that General McNaughton was asked to arrange for the preparation of "some authoritative statement in the form of a White Paper or some similar document" which would afford a detailed picture of the operation. A lengthy account was accordingly drafted and was released by the Minister of National Defence on 18 September.<sup>33</sup> Although revision carried out to meet the security requirements of Combined Operations Headquarters had rendered it rather less informative, it did something to satisfy the natural desire of the public for authentic facts.†

\*A particularly glaring example was the account presented in an English weekly under the inaccurate title "Dieppe: The Full Story".<sup>31</sup> In eleven pages of text and photographs, devoted chiefly to R.A.F. and Commando aspects, the only mention of Canadian participation was in two obscure sentences on the tenth page. The explanation of this particular article is the fact that the correspondent who wrote it had accompanied one of the Commandos.

†This "white paper" was drafted by the present writer. It contained some errors, partly resulting from the fact that there had not yet been time to digest fully the voluminous records of the operation, partly from the incompleteness at that date of our knowledge of events on



Some months after Dieppe an American correspondent who had been present in the headquarters ship published a book describing the raid. Although he had of course had no knowledge of the planning, he commented upon it freely, and asserted with particular assurance that the use of Canadian troops was the result of General McNaughton's insistence.\* He implied, moreover, that the Canadians were responsible for altering a more intelligent plan of attack drawn up by Combined Operations Headquarters and inserting in it the frontal assault.<sup>35</sup> How inaccurate these statements were the reader of the foregoing pages knows. McNaughton was invited by National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa to contribute to "a corrective statement" refuting them. He declined to do so on the ground that this would prejudice future Canadian relations with the British authorities, particularly the Chief of Combined Operations, would "be interpreted as seeking to shift responsibility from us to them", and would give valuable information to the enemy.<sup>36</sup> It was a sound and patriotic decision, but one which in the end probably did General McNaughton himself considerable harm.

The immediate consequences of the operation within the Canadian Army Overseas, and in Canada, merit examination. There is no doubt whatever that in the Army it produced a new sense of pride. After nearly three years of disappointment and frustration, it had been demonstrated, it seemed, that this Canadian Army could fight in the manner of that of 1914-18, and the bad luck and the losses did not diminish the confidence thus engendered. Those who visited the wounded in hospitals were deeply moved by their spirit. The censors who read the letters written by soldiers directly after the raid were impressed by the "great uplift in morale" which they reflected. A special report on these letters ran in part:

The morale of all appears very good. Regrets are not shown, but just enthusiasm, satisfaction and pride in achievement, and the Canadians' share in the raid. . . .

Faith in their officers is freely expressed in many letters. . . . Generally the raid has had a stimulating effect on the Canadians, in spite of the losses. . . .

The censors nevertheless noted, "There is evidence of a more realistic tone, which surmises much heavy fighting in the future, and the probable cost of this is faced soberly". The experience had led Canadian soldiers to take a more serious view of the question of their own employment. There would be less demand now for immediate assault upon the Germans in the west; the magnitude of such an enterprise was more clearly apparent than before, as

shore. Perhaps the worst mistake was the statement that the radar station was destroyed. This was carried over from the original C.O.H.Q. communiqué. The destruction of the station was, in fact, reported during the raid and recorded in operations logs,<sup>34</sup> but the report was inaccurate.

\*It seems just possible that this is a garbled second-hand reminiscence of General Crerar's discussion with Admiral Mountbatten early in the spring (above, page 308),

was the need for the most detailed preparation, the most careful training, the most exacting discipline.

In Canada the effects were different. Soldiers and civilians look at such things from widely separated points of view. Canadian civilians, particularly those who had lost relatives, saw only the casualty lists and the failure. It was quite impossible, without helping the enemy, to make any announcement of the actual lessons learned; and as the raid was followed by another long period of inactivity by the Canadian forces, the public mind continued to dwell upon it for months, and comment, frequently very ill-informed, continued in the press and elsewhere. Although, as has been made apparent, the responsibility for the tactical plan was widely distributed, and the Canadian share was limited, it was declared in at least one respectable publication<sup>37</sup> that the project of a raid on Dieppe and the plan for it were almost exclusively the work of Canadian officers and proved the bankruptcy of Canadian generalship; and there can be little doubt that such criticism did something to undermine the hitherto unassailable prestige of General McNaughton with the public.

### The Shackling of Prisoners

The raid had one particularly unpleasant aftermath: the shackling of prisoners on both sides.

It was a practice of the British Special Service Brigade to tie prisoners taken during raids,<sup>38</sup> and this practice was extended to the larger Dieppe operation. The "Intelligence Plan" included in the Detailed Military Plan contained the following passage: "Wherever possible, prisoners' hands will be tied to prevent destruction of their documents". General Roberts states that he argued this point with the Chief of Combined Operations and had opposed including this instruction. On 2 September the Germans, as a result of the capture of it, threatened to place in chains all the prisoners taken at Dieppe. The War Office then announced that if an order for tying prisoners was found to have been issued as stated, it would be "cancelled". On 3 September the Germans cancelled the proposed reprisals. On 7 October, however, they issued a second order, stated to be the result of further investigation concerning Dieppe and of an incident at Sark on 4 October, when German prisoners taken in a very minor raid were reported to have been tied. British and Canadian prisoners in Germany were tied on 8 October; later, handcuffs replaced the ropes.<sup>39</sup>

On the same date the British War Cabinet decided to undertake reprisals against an equivalent number of German prisoners and the Canadian Government was asked to agree and cooperate. There had been no consultation with Canada before the decision, and the Canadian  
Government,

moreover, doubted its wisdom; it nevertheless acquiesced, from a desire to avoid public differences with the United Kingdom. On 10 October, accordingly, a number of German prisoners were handcuffed in the United Kingdom and in Canada.<sup>40</sup> There was resistance in certain Canadian camps; in Camp 30, at Bowmanville, Ontario, the guard had to fire a few shots, although nobody was killed.<sup>41</sup> This episode was rather exaggerated in some press reports.<sup>42</sup>

The situation arising out of these mutual reprisals was so unpleasant that the British and Canadian governments decided to end the shackling in their camps in the hope that the Germans would take similar action. The German prisoners were accordingly unshackled on 12 December 1942, but no reciprocal action by the enemy followed. It appeared that he was still demanding guarantees against the issuance of further orders of the type he objected to. After discussion between the United Kingdom and Canada, the former issued an Army Council Instruction and the latter a Canadian Army Routine Order forbidding the binding of prisoners of war except in case of operational necessity on the field of battle.<sup>43</sup> The Germans objected to this reservation, and the Canadian and British prisoners remained shackled until 22 November 1943, when, following conversations between Dr. Burckhardt of the International Red Cross Committee and the German authorities, the latter, without formally rescinding the order, stopped all shackling. In the prisoners' interest, and with a view to giving the Germans no excuse for further reprisals, no publicity was given to this matter in Britain or Canada.<sup>44</sup>

The shackling brought additional discomfort to our prisoners in German hands, whose lot was unpleasant enough without this. After a period of misery, however, the shackling—perhaps under the influence of Allied victories—fortunately tended to become, in the words of one Canadian officer, largely "a farce". At one camp at least (Oflag VIIB at Eichstatt, where the majority of Canadian officers captured at Dieppe were confined), the handcuffs came to be worn, in practice, only twice a day, on "check-parades"; and as long as the prisoners observed the conventions at these times the Germans made no further difficulty.<sup>45</sup>

### Some Comments on the Operation

The raid on Dieppe was one of the most hotly-discussed operations of the war. Tactically, it was an almost complete failure, for we suffered extremely heavy losses and attained few of our objectives. After the Normandy landings of 6 June 1944, however, it appeared in a new perspective. Historically, it is in the light of that later day that it must be judged; but before attempting to relate the raid to those events it is proper to attempt some commentary upon the tactical failure.

In this connection, the German critiques quoted above are of much interest. The enemy was astonished that, in spite of our generally accurate knowledge of his defences, we attempted an assault on an area strong both by nature and by art, with weapons which he considered inadequate to the task. His comments chiefly emphasized the insufficiency of the support given the assaulting infantry. (The 81st Corps *Combat Report* observed, "A few light assault guns would probably have been more use to the British in their attack, than the tanks".) Surveying the operation over a decade later, this may be bracketed with the frontal attack as the least explicable elements in our planning. It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that from the beginning the planners underrated the influence of topography and of the enemy's strong defences in the Dieppe area.

Reviewing the successive changes in the plan of attack, one returns again and again to the decision, originally taken at the meeting of 5 June, over which General Montgomery presided, to eliminate the attack by heavy bombers. This decision, recommended in the first instance by the Air Force Commander and concurred in by the Military Force Commander, was supported by arguments of some strength (above, pages 336-7, 344). It must be remembered that General Roberts was told that the R.A.F. night bombers were quite incapable of hitting with accuracy such a small target as the buildings fronting the sea at Dieppe;<sup>46</sup> and the United States day bomber force in the United Kingdom was still in its infancy (it made its first small raid two days before the Dieppe operation). But the decision removed from the plan the one element of really heavy support contained in it. The assault as a result was backed by nothing more powerful than 4-inch guns and Boston bombers. Surprise, rather than striking power, was the chief reliance in this operation; yet no surprise could be hoped for in the frontal attack, which was to go in half an hour later than those on the flanks.

The heavy air support having been removed from the plan, the question arises, why was heavy naval support not substituted? After the operation, the Naval Force Commander reported that he was satisfied that a capital ship could have operated in the Dieppe area during the first two or three hours of the operation without undue risk, and would probably have turned the tide ashore in our favour. It may seem strange that the planners never asked for an old battleship to provide fire support, but the fact is that it was so well known that Admiralty policy at this period was opposed to risking capital ships in the narrow waters of the Channel that it was considered useless to make the request.\* Sir Frederick Morgan has described "the explosion that

\*General Roberts pressed, without success, for a larger vessel than a destroyer as headquarters ship. Capt. Hughes-Hallett put forward the suggestion that a dozen heavy bombers might be kept in the air "on call" somewhere about peachy Head, to provide immediate support if required. The Air Force, however, argued that this was impracticable; the bombers would inevitably be shot down.<sup>47</sup>

shattered the cloistral calm of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Room" when he suggested employing one or two capital ships in the Channel in August of 1943.<sup>48</sup> The opposition presumably would have been even stronger a year earlier.

The plan, then, it would seem was unduly optimistic; and it may be asked how it could happen that in the circumstances action was not taken either to increase the support or (since the higher authorities could not be convinced of the need for this) to recommend cancellation of the operation. The writer ventures to suggest that part of the explanation, at least, is found in the procedure by which the plan was made. The reader will have observed how very diffused was the responsibility for it. This was undoubtedly a bad feature, although some dispersion of responsibility is unavoidable in operations involving all three fighting services. In the present case, Combined Operations Headquarters was itself an additional element; while on the Army side G.H.Q. Home Forces and Headquarters South Eastern Command also exerted influence in the early and most important stages. Subsequently, the headquarters of First Canadian Army and 1st Canadian Corps became factors. The three Force Commanders inherited a plan already made and were concerned mainly with detail, although they shared the responsibility for the basic decision to eliminate the bomber attack. So far as any one individual had general authority over the operation, it was the Chief of Combined Operations, Lord Louis Mountbatten; but obviously even his powers were circumscribed. The fact is that the Dieppe plan was the work of a large and somewhat indefinitely composed committee, whose composition, moreover, changed steadily as the planning proceeded. A simpler organization and a greater concentration of responsibility would have been more likely to result in a sound plan. There were a great many cooks, and this probably had much to do with spoiling the broth. The episode may be said to demonstrate the force of an old maxim of the Staff Colleges: The plan of an operation should be made by the same person who is to execute it. In a large combined operation this is not an easy rule to enforce; but the closer one comes to it, the more likely the plan is to be a good one.

The operation was of course most closely analyzed, and in October 1942 Combined Operations Headquarters produced a bulky report incorporating the official "lessons learned".<sup>49</sup> At least the most important of these should be summarized here.

C.O.H.Q. used capital letters and italics to emphasize the point considered of paramount significance: "The Lesson of Greatest Importance is the need for overwhelming fire support, including close support, during the initial stages of the attack." The support should be provided, it was recommended, "by heavy and medium Naval bombardment, by air action, by special vessels or craft working close inshore, and by using the fire power of the assaulting troops while still sea-borne". It was indicated that "special close-support

craft, which should be gun-boats or some form of mobile fort" did not exist and required to be developed.

On the naval side, what was considered the most important lesson was stated as follows: "The necessity for the formation of permanent naval assault forces with a coherence comparable to that of any other first line fighting formations. Army formations intended for amphibious assaults must without question be trained in close co-operation with such naval assault forces." Developing this, the report remarked, "The need for discipline, morale, tactical integration and flexibility and professional competence are not disputed in the case of troops, war vessels and air formations. Precisely the same applies to assault ships and craft." (The Naval Force Commander had reported that while the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve crews by whom the light naval forces engaged were "almost entirely" manned had "acquitted themselves well", nevertheless "the small leavening of experienced officers of the Royal Navy who were employed in positions of control was an important factor in the results achieved".)<sup>50</sup>

Another basic lesson was "The necessity for flexibility in the military plan and its execution". This was essential, "in order to enable the Commander to apply force where force has already succeeded"; and it was further stated as desirable that only the minimum force required for success should be put into the assault, and the maximum force possible retained as a reserve to exploit success where achieved. General Roberts had emphasized this in his own report. But the C.O.H.Q. report added, "It must be recorded, however, that with the state of training of the landing craft crews which prevailed at the time of the Dieppe operation, a flexible military plan could not have been put into execution."

The narrative presented above has made it amply evident that the Force Commanders were never armed with the information concerning the progress of the operation which alone could enable them to exercise proper direction and commit the available reserves in an effective manner. It was natural, therefore, that it was noted as one of the lessons that "the control and communication arrangements should be of the highest standard". The need for improvement in this respect was certainly fundamental.

One other basic lesson was thus stated: "Unless means for the provision of overwhelming close support are available, assaults should be planned to develop round the flanks of a strongly defended locality rather than frontally against it."

In addition to these major lessons, other more specialized and technical ones were listed. Among these were the following: Tanks should not be landed until the anti-tank defences have been destroyed or cleared; a far higher standard of aircraft recognition is essential, in the Navy and the Army alike; the importance and necessity of using smoke cannot be over-emphasized; and "some form of light or self-propelled artillery" must be provided

once

an assault has got across the landing place and is making progress inland.

Such, in summary, were the official lessons. Two others, not specifically stated in the official document, decidedly affected our later planning.<sup>51</sup> First, it had been made pretty clear that the classical plan of securing a beach by landing infantry at dawn was not practicable in the face of well-organized defences. A new technique of landing and support was required, and largely on the basis of the Dieppe experience it was developed before the Normandy assault of 1944. Secondly, it had been shown that the military' plan in such operations must not depend upon precise timing of the landings. Although a high general standard of precision was attained at Dieppe, we have seen that in at least two cases relatively slight inaccuracies in timing had most serious results. This possibility was avoided in planning the 1944 assault.

The report stated frankly that not all the lessons enumerated in it were new. This was obvious, for instance, with respect to attacking strong positions from the flanks rather than frontally. We have seen (above, page 352) that the Germans had assumed that frontal attack was unlikely to be attempted. Nevertheless, as we have also seen (above, page 328), the decision to make the frontal attack at Dieppe had not been taken without thought, and reasons of some force were adduced in support of it.

Some of the other lessons were new, and yet it had not been necessary to attack Dieppe in order to learn them. This was notably the case with the most important naval lesson, the necessity for forming permanent assault forces. This had in fact been deduced by Captain Hughes-Hallett from the training for Operation "Rutter" and had been reported by him before the raid actually took place.<sup>52</sup> It is nevertheless the case that such recommendations acquire greatly increased force from the experience of action. Had it not been reinforced by the events of 19 August, Hughes-Hallett's recommendation might well have been lost sight of.

The conclusions outlined above certainly do not exhaust the effects of the Dieppe operation on the later course of the war. Account should also be taken of its influence on Allied leaders' thinking upon the problem of assault on German-held Europe. In the nature of things this cannot be precisely measured. Yet it is evident that an optimistic appreciation of the problem which was certainly not justified by the facts was current before Dieppe. We have noted (above, page 319) that American officers were ready, and even anxious to make a major cross-Channel attack in 1942; and although the British strategists resisted this idea, the history of the Dieppe planning would indicate that British officers also under-rated the difficulties. In 1944 General Crerar said:<sup>53</sup>

Until the evidence of Dieppe proved otherwise, it had been the opinion in highest command and staff circles in this country that an assault against a heavily defended coast could be carried out on the basis of securing tactical surprise, and without dependence on overwhelming fire support, in the critical phases of closing

the beaches and overrunning the beach defences. . . Although at the time the heavy cost to Canada, and the non-success of the Dieppe operation seemed hard to bear, I believe that when this war is examined in proper perspective, it will be seen that the sobering influence of that operation on existing Allied strategical conceptions, with the enforced realization by the Allied Governments of the lengthy and tremendous preparations necessary before invasion could be attempted, was a Canadian contribution of the greatest significance to final victory.

The Dieppe plan represented in fact a very fair sample of the ideas on the tactics of major assault operations that were held on high Allied military levels in England in the days before 19 August 1942. The Combined Commanders' plan of 31 July for Operation "Sledgehammer", the assault intended to seize and hold a bridgehead including Le Havre, in the event of a break in German morale (above, page 322), lays great emphasis on the importance of surprise and none at all upon naval or air bombardment in support of the assault.<sup>54</sup> No capital ships or other large naval vessels were scheduled as "required in Portsmouth Command" for the operation; the only major units so listed were two anti-aircraft cruisers, 16 "Hunt" destroyers, six Fleet destroyers, and four "V" Class destroyers. It is not clear how many of these were to be used in the actual assault. It was clearly not intended to use heavy bombers in preparation for the assault, although it was hoped to deliver powerful raids on objectives selected to interfere with enemy activity on D Day. This plan was signed by General Paget, Air Chief Marshal Douglas, General Eisenhower and Admiral Ramsay.

The Combined Commanders' draft plan for "Wetbob" (the operation intended to provide a permanent foothold in the Cherbourg peninsula in the autumn of 1942, above, page 322) is very similar;<sup>55</sup> but it notes specifically that direct naval covering fire during the assault can only be provided by medium support landing craft "of which not more than 12 will be available", motor gunboats, and such "older destroyers, *Locust* type gunboats or similar vessels as the Admiralty may be able to make available". Bombardment of coastal batteries by Fleet destroyers and modern cruisers was mentioned as a possibility "if no other means were available"; and again there was no indication of an intention of using heavy air support in connection with the actual assault. The main bomber effort was to be used against aerodromes and suitable "focal points for delaying the movement of reinforcements". The schedule of naval forces "required in Portsmouth Command" was the same as for "Sledgehammer".

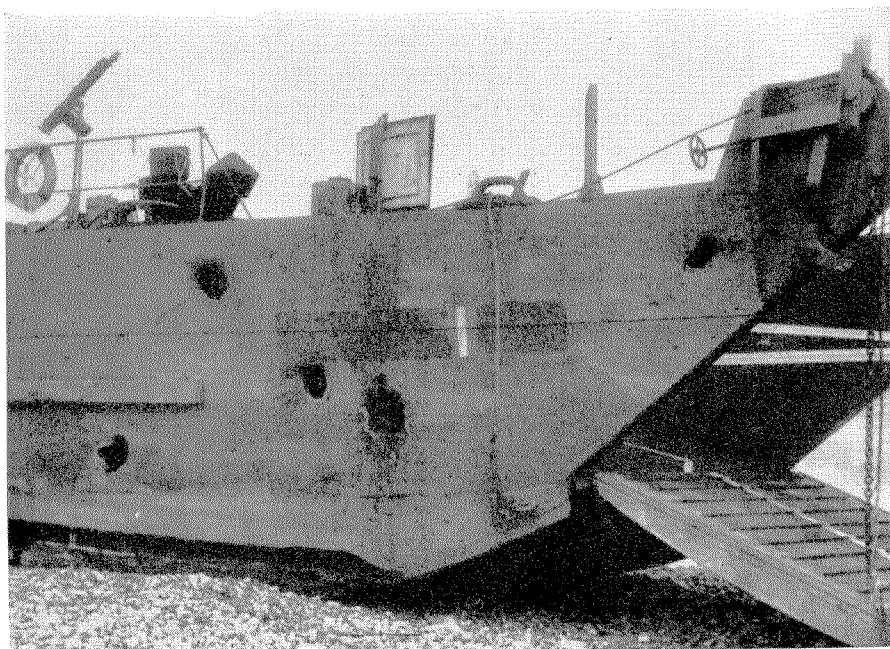
These papers serve to document General Crerar's statement. It is quite clear that the senior British and United States commanders concerned with planning the cross-Channel attack in 1942 were prepared to attempt a major assault on the Continent on the basis of the hope of tactical surprise and without providing heavy naval and air bombardment to help overcome the defences. It is equally clear that these optimistic tactical conceptions were





PART OF THE FLOATING RESERVE AT DIEPPE

Unarmoured landing craft carrying Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal circling off Dieppe previous to landing this unit on the main beaches.



EVIDENCE OF THE FIERCENESS OF GERMAN FIRE AT DIEPPE

This German photograph of the bow of L.C.T. 1, taken on the Dieppe beach at low water, shows marks of five shells which struck the craft within a very small area. This fire probably came from the west cliff.



*German photograph*

#### A DISABLED TANK ON THE DIEPPE PROMENADE

A Churchill tank of the Calgary Regiment. In the background can be seen the Castle and the West Headland. Gun positions in the cliff are visible above the German soldier standing on the tank.

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dissipated with the gunsmoke of Operation "Jubilee"; no more was heard of them after that day on the Dieppe beaches.

Dieppe was the first major amphibious assault attempted by the Allies in the European theatre during this war,\* and the only such assault directed against the fortified coast of North-West Europe before the invasion in June 1944. Between Dieppe and the Normandy D Day many amphibious operations took place in other theatres, and all contributed lessons. It is doubtful, however, whether any other operation had as much influence as Dieppe upon the Normandy planning. A full analysis of that influence would require a chapter to itself, but a comparison of the Dieppe and Normandy assault plans, combined with reference to the Dieppe "lessons" which have been enumerated, should prove enlightening.

The lesson of "the need for overwhelming fire support" had been very fully learned. For the puny bombardment by four destroyers which covered the Dieppe frontal attack, the 1944 plan substituted the fire of a tremendous naval force including five battleships, two monitors and 19 cruisers; this was the "heavy and medium Naval bombardment" recommended after Dieppe. The "special vessels or craft working close inshore" were also in evidence. New support craft of many types had been developed since Dieppe in accordance with the recommendations then made; notable among them were the L.C.G. (gun landing craft) and the L.C.T.(R), or rocket bombardment ship.

The preparatory "air action" was also strikingly different from that at Dieppe. In place of the brief attack by cannon-firing Hurricanes, we have the combined efforts of the British and American heavy bomber forces, dropping more than 11,000 tons of bombs in twenty-four hours; and this was supplemented by great blows by the tactical air forces. For the Normandy assault, means were duly found also of "using the fire power of the assaulting troops while still seaborne". We see the Army helping to clear the way for its own landing with self-propelled artillery firing from tank landing craft; and these guns were available to assist on shore in the early phases of the attack, likewise in accordance with the Dieppe recommendations.

New assault devices were available in June 1944 which had not existed in August 1942; and many of them were products, in part at least, of the Dieppe experience. Notable among these was the AVRE (Assault Vehicle, Royal Engineers), designed to provide armoured cover for men engaged in engineer demolition tasks such as had been frustrated by German fire at

\*United States Marines had landed on Tulagi and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands on 7 August, twelve days before Dieppe. British troops had landed on Madagascar on 5 May. The Narvik landings in May 1940 were relatively minor affairs.

Dieppe.\* The amphibious tank was another specialized device, not however stemming quite so directly from the experience of the raid.

The recommendation for the formation of "permanent naval assault forces", and for training Army assault formations in close cooperation with them, was carried out and had the happiest results in the Normandy assault. In fact, the Dieppe assault force was itself kept in existence as Force "J" (Jubilee), and became an experimental laboratory for the development of combined operations technique. This force, which had landed the 2nd Canadian Division at Dieppe, subsequently landed the 3rd Canadian Division on the Normandy D Day; and the long and intimate association of Force "J" with the Division during training paid a great dividend.

Finally, Dieppe killed the always more than dubious idea of frontal attack on a major fortified port, and at least produced grave doubts as to the possibility of the immediate acquisition of such a port by an assaulting force. British amphibious planners accordingly were forced to a more detailed examination of the possibilities of supporting a great invasion operation by maintenance over open beaches. One of the answers to this problem was the conception of the prefabricated harbour or "Mulberry".

The application of the Dieppe lessons will be further studied in the volume of this History dealing with the North-West Europe campaign. Enough has been said, however, to establish the relationship of the two operations. The casualties sustained in the Dieppe raid were part of the price paid for the knowledge that enabled the great enterprise of 1944 to be carried out at a cost in blood smaller than its planners ventured to hope for.

### The Influence of Dieppe on German Thinking

We have made it clear that the Germans studied the Dieppe operation with scarcely less care than ourselves. It is worth while to attempt to evaluate the lessons which they drew and their influence upon their subsequent thought and action.

The events of 19 August 1942 tended to confirm the Germans in the belief that any attempt at invasion could be destroyed on or near the beaches. Their efforts, they decided, should be concentrated upon preventing landings

\*Lt.-Col. G. C. Reeves, head of the Special Devices Branch of the Tank Design Department of the British Ministry of Supply, accompanied the Calgary Regiment on the raid. On returning to London he posed to his staff the problem of "developing devices to enable obstacles to be surmounted by a tank or be destroyed by a tank crew without them being exposed to enemy fire". A Canadian officer attached to the Tank Design Department, Lieut., later Major, J. J. Denovan, R.C.E., produced by 27 August (eight days after the raid) drawings of an engineer tank. Although the Special Devices Branch was not allowed to foster the project directly, some facilities were given to Denovan to continue it "unofficially"; he borrowed others, including a Churchill tank.<sup>56</sup> On 12 May 1953 the United Kingdom Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors recommended an award of £ 1500 to Major Denovan in connection with the development of the Assault Vehicle Royal Engineers.

and particularly those of armour, and upon destroying any force that might succeed in landing before it could make progress inland. These typically Hitlerian ideas had appeared to some extent in the Fuhrer's directive of 23 March (above, page 349). They were repeated by Field-Marshal von Rundstedt in a communication to his Armies dated 25 August, six days after Dieppe:

It must be the aim of our operations to destroy the enemy on the very day of his landing.

To that effect, and further to the measures that have been taken by the Army and Corps Commanders in respect of their own reserves, I have disposed my motorized Army Group Reserves in such a manner that, on most of the coastal front, one motorized formation at least will be able to intervene on the first day.

Eleven months later Hitler stated the same view very specifically during his conference with Mussolini at Feltre: ". . . at Dieppe ... the attack was broken up by the most advanced regiment. That regiment accomplished more than could have been accomplished -later by three entire divisions. We must break up similar attempts before the enemy can set foot on land."<sup>57</sup>

We have shown that Hitler ordered the creation of an Atlantic wall a few days before the raid. It cannot therefore be said that the latter was responsible for this concept, which continued to dominate German policy down to the invasion of 1944. It appears, however, that Dieppe strengthened Hitler's resolution and confirmed him in the belief that the Atlantic Wall idea was sound: On this same 25 August the Commander-in-Chief West issued an order<sup>58</sup> on development of Channel and Atlantic defences. This ran in part:

*The Fuhrer has ordered:* During the winter half-year 1942-43 the coastal defences in the area of C.-in-C. West are to be strengthened by using all forces and means for the construction of permanent fortifications according to the principles employed in the West Wall. This is to be done in such a manner as to make *any* attack from the air, sea or land seem hopeless, and to create a fortress which cannot be taken either frontally or from the rear. *Towards this end 15,000 fortifications of a permanent nature are to be built in the area of C.-in-C. West during the winter half-year 1942-43.*

Hitler's own views on the Atlantic Wall and Dieppe are well documented. On 29 September 1942 he delivered a three-hour oration on these subjects at the Reichschancellery in the presence of Goring and Rundstedt.<sup>59</sup> He emphasized that France was the Allies' most likely choice for a landing. He said, "Above all I am grateful to the British for having confirmed my views by their various landing operations, and for saving me from appearing as a visionary before those who are forever saying: 'Where then are the British going to appear? Here on the coast there is definitely nothing wrong; we go swimming every day and we have never seen one yet.'" His specific comments on Dieppe are worth quoting:

The Fuhrer describes the Dieppe operation as highly instructive (*ausserst lehrreich*) for both sides. In particular he stresses the point that, regarding the failure of the operation, this time both sides should avoid wrong conclusions.

contrary too it previous occasion in military history. The British should not label such operations as hopeless, and we should not underestimate the danger. As a parallel in military history, the Fuhrer examined the tank battle at Cambrai in the [First] World War in some detail.... After the failure of this operation wrong conclusions were drawn by both sides. The British threw all blame on the shortcomings in technical and fighting qualities of the recently invented tanks.... The erroneous conclusion reached in Germany . . . was: "The tank is nothing but a bogey to frighten children with... .

In this war, a novelty analogous to the use of tanks at Cambrai in the [First] World War is the first large-scale and unsuccessful landing operation at Dieppe. As it should never be assumed that the enemy will draw wrong conclusions therefrom, so we too should avoid the mistake of thinking that the British have realized that even now they can do nothing against our coastal defence. The enemy will not give up the idea of forming a Second Front, for he knows that it is definitely his only remaining chance of achieving victory. And so I regard it as my task to begin immediately doing everything humanly possible (*alles nur menschenmögliche*) to increase the defence potential of the coastal area.

The great lesson drawn by Hitler from the Dieppe raid was evidently the desirability of developing a belt of fortifications along the French coast. Such was, in part at least, the origin of the elaborate and yet ineffective system of defence which we encountered in Lower Normandy in 1944: a thin fortified line along the shore, entirely lacking in "depth", incapable of defeating a really powerfully-supported attack, and offering no means of resistance once the attack had penetrated beyond the beaches.

At the time when Dieppe was raided, we have seen, the Allies were preparing for a large-scale invasion of French North Africa, which was actually carried out on 8 November 1942. This operation took the enemy entirely by surprise, and it is interesting to speculate on how far Dieppe may have contributed to focussing German attention upon the French coast during the late summer and autumn of 1942, and thereby to the success of the North African enterprise.

That Hitler's own eyes were fixed upon France after Dieppe is suggested by the conference of 29 September just described. This impression is further strengthened by an examination of German measures in France during the period between the raid and the launching of Operation "Torch" in November. As we have seen, the area of the Commander-in-Chief West had been reinforced during the weeks before Dieppe, some of the most formidable troops in the German Army being collected there. After the raid, as mentioned above, the dispositions of the troops in the area were somewhat altered, the C.-in-C.'s mobile reserves being moved closer to the coast.

As D Day for the Allied operation in Africa drew nearer, the Germans became more, not less, interested in the Channel coast. About the end of August Hitler decided to move seven reserve divisions from Germany to the West.<sup>60</sup> Early in September information concerning British concentrations in the Isle of Wight and the south of England led him to believe that an Allied landing in the Caen-Cherbourg area was probable, and he ordered one of his

best formations, the 7th Flieger Division, to move forward from its station south-west of Falaise to the area east of St. Lo, "to be available on shortest notice for commitment between Caen and Cherbourg". The matter was treated as most urgent; the order,<sup>61</sup> issued on 4 September, directed that "strong combat elements must be in the new area" by the following morning. When, late in September, this division was moved to Russia, it was replaced in the St. Lo region by portions of the two crack S.S. divisions "Adolf Hitler" and "Das Reich".<sup>62</sup> On 9 October further urgent orders were issued as the result of more reports about imminent landings. Hitler now ordered the whole of the two S.S. divisions to be concentrated in the areas of St. Lo and Mezidon, and this move was very rapidly carried out. At the same time the 165th Reserve Infantry Division was set up as a special operational reserve in the Cherbourg area "to defend the land front of the harbour strongpoints", and the C.-in-C. West's artillery reserve was ordered to move "as soon as possible to an area permitting quickest commitment on Norman as well as Breton peninsulas".<sup>63</sup> Simultaneously a heavy "build-up" took place on the Demarcation Line separating Occupied from Unoccupied France,\* a number of the newly-arrived reserve divisions being used here.<sup>66</sup>

It seems clear that during the autumn the German High Command-or, at any rate, Hitler-became increasingly convinced that a major Allied invasion enterprise was imminent in Lower Normandy, and that a considerable force of *elite* troops was concentrated in this area to meet it. It seems clear too that the Germans intended to invade Unoccupied France as soon as any landing on the Channel coast took place, and made preparations accordingly. Their concentration remained in the Caen area until after 8 November, when the Allied offensive duly materialized, not in Normandy but in North Africa. Although completely deceived as to our intentions, the Germans were of course ready to occupy Southern France, and this operation ("Anton") was put in train at once.

It is interesting and rather amusing to note that in the autumn of 1942, while the Allies were preparing to land in North Africa, the Germans were watching fixedly those beaches in Lower Normandy where we actually landed

\*The force in the area of the C.-in-C. West, from the Dutch-German border to the Pyrenees, and including this interior region along the Demarcation Line, increased from 33 regular and 3 reserve divisions on 15 August (four days before Dieppe) to 40 regular and 12 reserve divisions on 4 November (four days before the North African landings). On 16 June there had been only 26 regular and 3 reserve divisions.<sup>64</sup> It might be dangerous, however, to take these statistics at quite their full face value in terms merely of the menace to the West. At this period France was a rest and training area for German formations exhausted in Russia or being prepared for service there, and frequently movements to or from France were connected with developments in that distant theatre. The Eastern Front was Germany's main concern, the great bulk of her army was concentrated there, and Rundstedt clearly considered the forces at his disposal in the West inadequate to their prospective tasks. His weekly appreciation dated 28 September, for instance, remarks pointedly that the defence potential of Normandy after the withdrawal of the 7th Flieger Division "is being maintained to a limited degree by stopgap measures".<sup>65</sup>

in June 1944;\* but when we did deliver our great blow in Normandy the Germans' main attention was focussed not upon that area but upon the Pas de Calais.

Speaking in the British House of Commons on 11 November 1942, Mr. Churchill observed that the Allied planners had decided in July "to hold the enemy on the French shore, and to strike at his Southern flank in the Mediterranean through North Africa". We have seen that the record affords no reason for believing that the revived enterprise against Dieppe was designed by the Anglo-American staffs as cover for Operation "Torch". Nevertheless, there does seem some reason to believe that in practice it helped to fix the enemy's attention on "the French shore" and divert it from the area which was, for the moment, our real objective. In this as in some other respects, Operation "Jubilee" paid the Allies a dividend which was no part of the calculations of those who planned it.

### Problems of Strategic Employment, 1942-1943

Dieppe was followed by another long period of inaction for the Canadian troops in the United Kingdom. During this period, however, there was constant examination of strategic tasks in which they might be engaged, and some account of these matters is relevant here.

One of these large projects was going forward concurrently with preparations for the Dieppe enterprise. It was Operation "Jupiter", a plan for the seizure of the aerodromes in Northern Norway from which crippling attacks were being delivered upon the Anglo-American convoys carrying supplies to Russia. Mr. Churchill believed that about 70 German bombers and 100 fighters, based on two airfields guarded by 10,000 to 12,000 enemy troops, were the whole menace to this vital supply route and all that prevented Allied entry into Norway. He considered that a successful invasion of this area might initiate a gradual southward advance, "unrolling the Nazi map of Europe from the top", and was very anxious indeed to see this operation undertaken. He has explained that his own strategic programme for the year 1942 was the invasion of French North Africa combined with this invasion of Northern Norway.<sup>68</sup>

The British Chiefs of Staff rejected the Prime Minister's "Jupiter" plan as being "impracticable at the present time". Mr. Churchill, unwilling to accept this refusal, asked that the project be reviewed by a new and unprejudiced mind. The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, suggested General

\*They had however received some reports suggesting action in Africa. Rundstedt's weekly appreciation dated 5 October remarks, "agents' reports deal increasingly with forthcoming Allied operations against West Africa, the groups of islands in the Atlantic and Morocco. Intentions for a large scale operation in the area of C.-in-C. West can be read only from one agent's report, but that one is rather detailed."<sup>67</sup>



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McNaughton; and on 9 July 1942 the Canadian general was invited to meet the Chiefs of Staff, who told him that the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet wished him to review Operation "Jupiter". Subsequently he had an interview with Mr. Churchill. After informing his own government, McNaughton set up a special staff, headed by Brigadier G. G. Simonds, to assist him in examining the project, and during the rest of July it was studied intensively.<sup>69</sup>

On 4 August McNaughton sent his review to the British Chiefs of Staff.<sup>70</sup> It did not paint a hopeful picture. It pointed out that there was little possibility of surprise, and that success would depend on a combination of weather conditions against which the odds would be about six to one in December, the month proposed for the attack. The general conclusion was:

The operation is an extremely hazardous one. With good fortune quick and decisive successes might be gained—on the contrary, the result might be a military disaster of the first magnitude. In view of the size of the forces involved it is considered that the risks would only be acceptable if politically the results to be achieved were judged to be of the highest importance.

The Chiefs of Staff fully agreed with these opinions; but Mr. Churchill was still unwilling to admit defeat. He invited McNaughton to Chequers on 19 September, argued strongly for the plan, and suggested that the Canadian might undertake a mission to Moscow to discuss the operation with the Russians. McNaughton reported this to Ottawa.<sup>71</sup> On 22 September, after discussions with the Chiefs of Staff, Mr. Churchill cabled Mr. King asking authority to propose McNaughton's name to Stalin. He observed, "There will be no question of any Canadian commitment."<sup>72</sup> However, it had been clear to the Canadians throughout that if the operation were undertaken they would probably be expected to do it, and in fact Churchill had written to the Chiefs of Staff on 8 July, "Climate proclaims that the Canadian Army should undertake this task, if it is thought feasible." On 22 September also Mr. Churchill telegraphed to President Roosevelt the text of a telegram which he wished to send to Stalin suggesting the McNaughton mission.<sup>73</sup>

General McNaughton himself had recommended an affirmative reply to Churchill's request, but had added the comment that in spite of the statement that no commitment was specified, if a practical plan was evolved, "then we are certain to be asked to participate".<sup>74</sup> In Ottawa the question was discussed by the War Committee of the Cabinet on 23 September, and Mr. King advised Mr. Churchill thereafter that the Canadian Government considered it undesirable that McNaughton should head such a mission. It was thought that it might be embarrassing for him to have to undertake a double responsibility as adviser to both the Canadian Government and the United Kingdom authorities; moreover, his selection for a mission to Moscow might lead the enemy to speculate that precisely some such operation as "Jupiter" was in prospect. The Canadian Government also suggested that it was important that the United States be consulted about the project. (This,

of course, had already been done). Mr. King remarked that his government's misgivings would not be so strong if McNaughton were to be a member, though not the head, of a combined mission upon which both the United Kingdom and the United States were represented.<sup>75</sup> Following another telegram from Mr. Churchill, the matter was again considered by the Canadian War Committee on 25 September, but the conclusion remained the same. King telegraphed to Churchill that to have McNaughton undertake such a mission "without a realistic plan in which he himself has confidence [and] offering at least a reasonable prospect of success upon which military discussions could be based" would be to risk consequences prejudicial to relations with Russia as well as to McNaughton's own future usefulness.<sup>76</sup>

"Jupiter" was now becoming a lost cause. Sir Winston Churchill has observed that he "did not receive much positive support" for it.<sup>77</sup> It is evident that both the British Chiefs of Staff and the Canadian authorities had the gravest doubts about the project; but Sir Winston, writing long after the war, still affirms his allegiance to it.

On 17 October 1942 General Brooke mentioned to General McNaughton another possible operation in which 'his Army might play a part. It was possible that Spain might be forced into the war as an active partner of Germany, or compelled to allow German forces to use bases on Spanish soil. In that event, the use of Gibraltar would almost certainly be denied to the Royal Navy, and an alternative base would be required. One possible alternative was found in the Canary Islands, and it was desirable to prepare an operation there accordingly. This operation, in the event of its becoming necessary, Brooke now offered the Canadian Army. McNaughton recorded him as saying that this offer grew out of a request for active employment for the Army presented by the Canadian Minister of National Defence to Mr. Churchill and Sir James Grigg (Secretary of State for War) in an interview on 15 October. McNaughton replied\* that he would like to study the outline plan; if he considered it a practicable military operation, he would then seek the necessary authority from his Government.<sup>78</sup> After examining an appreciation drawn up by the British Joint Planning Staff, he sent to Ottawa on 18 October a telegram<sup>79</sup> requesting authority to undertake the operation. The War Committee considered it on 21 October, and on the 22nd the Chief of the General Staff replied giving the required authority, subject to McNaughton's being satisfied of the operation's "military feasibility and

\*In his memorandum of the interview written the next day, General McNaughton wrote: "I ... stated that what we desired, and I was sure this was the view of the Government and people of Canada also, was that Cdn Army should be so used as to make the maximum contribution of which it was capable; we would act in whole or in part and would give most careful consideration to any project; we could not act without the approval of our Government except as regards Home Defence and raids on the Continent of Europe of limited duration.... We were not particularly concerned with fighting for its own sake or glamour, nor did I think that a prolonged wait for a proper opportunity to strike would have an adverse effect on morale. Our officers and men were far too sensible."

value compared with risks involved" and of the adequacy of resources and arrangements for transport and support.<sup>80</sup> The next day McNaughton advised the C.I.G.S., naming General Crerar as commander of the Canadian land forces involved, which were to comprise the required elements of Headquarters 1st Canadian Corps, the 1st and 3rd Canadian Divisions, and such other detachments and units as might be necessary and available.<sup>81</sup>

The proposal for an operation against the Canaries was not new. As Sir Winston Churchill has made clear, the British authorities had made preparations to execute it in 1940, and in fact for a long period they kept a considerable expeditionary force with transports ready to move on a few days' notice.<sup>82</sup> The project, known as "Pilgrim", had been kept alive throughout 1941.<sup>83</sup> It was now to be known as "Tonic".

To assist General Crerar a Canadian Planning Staff was set up in a building near the War Office and work began under a formal directive issued to him, by General McNaughton on 4 November.<sup>84</sup> However, there were many difficulties. The designated Naval Force Commander, Rear-Admiral L. H. K. Hamilton, was constantly absent at sea on other duties (General Crerar and members of his staff flew to Scapa Flow and worked for some days with the Admiral in his flagship); and as a result of the demands of the North African expedition Combined Operations Headquarters was unable to provide all the combined training facilities which the Canadian formations required.<sup>85</sup> On 19 December 1942 the British Chiefs of Staff virtually decided to shelve "Tonic", as it appeared that a German move into Spain was improbable for the present; and Crerar was instructed merely to round off his paper planning, which he proceeded to do.<sup>86</sup> Thus one more project that had seemed to offer the Canadians a prospect of important action had come to nothing.

On the last day of 1942 the C.I.G.S. informed General McNaughton of still another projected operation. This was described as an attack against Sardinia or Sicily, which might involve the employment of one Canadian infantry division.<sup>87</sup> McNaughton having again expressed his willingness to explore any proposal for the employment of Canadian troops, this possibility - was further examined. By 6 January it had been decided that the conquest of Sicily should be brought forward at the forthcoming conference at Casablanca as a joint Allied operation under the code name "Husky", but the Sardinian project was still under consideration as a British operation entitled "Brimstone". The proposal was that this should be carried out by a British corps commanded by Lieut.-General F. E. Morgan. General McNaughton nominated the 1st Canadian Division for the task and it was given special combined training in Scotland.<sup>88</sup> However, before this training was completed the Casablanca Conference took place and "Brimstone" was dropped. It thus appeared that the whole of the First Canadian Army would be available for operations based on the United Kingdom.<sup>89</sup>

The operations in North Africa begun in November 1942 had moved more slowly than had been hoped, and the result was to put, a final end to any lingering hope of mounting a major invasion of North-West Europe in 1943. This was firmly decided by 15 April of the latter year. On that date Mr. Churchill wrote to the Chiefs of Staff, "We should aim at a steady building up of American forces in this country for an overseas campaign in 1944."<sup>90</sup>

During the first weeks of 1943, however, General McNaughton and his staff had been giving considerable attention to the possibility of the Canadian Army taking part in limited cross-Channel operations that year—something similar to the "Sledgehammer" scheme of 1942. In these discussions the assumption was that if a limited opposed operation was attempted, it would be by a force of three or four divisions, one of which would do the initial assault. The intention of General Paget (C.-in-C. Home Forces) was that the First Canadian Army would control this operation, a specially-trained British division assaulting under its command. Plans were also being discussed for a large-scale return to the Continent in the event of a German collapse.<sup>91</sup> But all this was extremely nebulous.

Elsewhere in this History\* the increasing pressure of public opinion in Canada for an active role for the Army will be found described. By March 1943, it seemed clear to the Government and the General Staff in Ottawa that there was very little likelihood of the First Canadian Army's being required for a cross-Channel operation that year. The result was strong representations from Mr. King to Mr. Churchill in favour of using some Canadian troops in North Africa.<sup>92</sup> The subsequent developments lie outside the scope of the present volume. As a result of them, the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade ultimately took part in the attack on Sicily in July, and later that year Headquarters 1st Canadian Corps, along with the Corps Troops and the 5th Canadian Armoured Division, moved to the Mediterranean for operations on the Italian mainland. Thus, nearly four years after the outbreak of the Second World War, Canadian soldiers were finally committed to a protracted campaign.

\**Volume II, The Canadians in Italy.*

## CHAPTER XIII

### SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS

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#### A Unique Experience

**P**REVIOUS chapters recalled how different the experience of the Canadian Army Overseas in 1939-45 was from that of the Canadian troops of 1914-18 and from that of other armies in the Second World War.\* Its uniqueness consisted in the fact that the main Canadian field force spent forty-two months doing static duty in the United Kingdom before being plunged into the bloody campaigns in Italy and North-West Europe. This long period of garrison duty inevitably produced special problems and difficulties.

One of these problems was that of providing an adequate supply of competent officers (including senior commanders) for a rapidly expanding army which was getting almost no battle experience to train and test the capabilities of its leaders. Another was that of keeping up the morale of volunteer soldiers who were denied action for three and a half years during which they were separated from their homes and families. Another, closely related to the second, was that of establishing and maintaining good relations with the people of Britain, among whom so many Canadians took up an habitation enforced during these years. This temporary transplantation of more than a quarter of a million young men and women from the New World to England is one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of the Commonwealth, and was not the least extraordinary incident of a decidedly extraordinary war.

#### The Problem of Finding Commanders and Staff Officers

Despite the general neglect of Canada's military forces between the wars, the country possessed in 1939 a considerable body of competent officers. The older ones had seen active service in France during the years 1915-18

\*See particularly page 254.

and many had later kept abreast of military thought and availed themselves of such command and staff instruction as was to be had. Canada had no Staff College, but 45 serving officers of the Permanent Force<sup>1</sup> had passed one of the British Army's staff courses\* and a considerable number of NonPermanent Active Militia officers had mastered the Militia Staff Course. Thus it was possible in the beginning without too much difficulty to staff the 1st Canadian Division and the small Canadian Military Headquarters in London and to expand the army framework at home. Many of the officers appointed in the autumn of 1939 moved up the ladder of promotion and responsibility during the formative period of the Canadian Army Overseas, but advancing age or ill health forced some of the older men to take less onerous positions before Canadian formations actually came to grips with the enemy in 1943 and 1944. Among the junior Permanent Force officers, without previous war service, who were given staff appointments in 1939, were Temporary Major G. G. Simonds and Captain Charles Foulkes—both of whom were to become corps commanders and lieutenant-generals during 1944. The officers destined to command divisions during the 1943-45 campaigns were Major Christopher Vokes and Captains H. W. Foster and D. C. Spry of the Permanent Force and Majors A. B. Matthews and R. H. Keebler and Captain B. M. Hoffmeister of the N.P.A.M. The two first named were given junior staff appointments in 1939.

When the staff of the 1st Division was organized in 1939, the General Officer Commanding and the two senior staff officers came from the Permanent Force. Of the four brigadiers (the three brigade commanders and the artillery commander) two were regular officers. When the 2nd Division's headquarters was set up in the following spring, the G.O.C. and all four brigadiers were officers or former officers of the Non-Permanent Active Militia, but again the two senior staff officers were regulars. Thereafter, as the Army expanded and new formations were mobilized, there was a strong tendency to fill the senior appointments . in them with experienced officers promoted from within the formations already overseas. In the selection of officers for command and staff appointments in the new divisions, the recommendations of General McNaughton carried great weight.

As we have seen (above, pages 51-2), the contrast with the procedures of 1914-18, when Canadian formations drew commanders and staff officers from the British Army, is notable. The Canadian Army of 1939-45 found its commanders and staff officers almost entirely within itself. To a considerable extent the Canadian Permanent Force played the part that the British Regular Army had played in 1914, particularly with respect to senior staff appointments. As time passed and non-professional officers gained training and experience, some purely temporary tendency appeared for

\*Thirty-two more officers had successfully completed gunnery courses in the United Kingdom, while 19 had obtained technical qualification in artillery and ordnance courses there.

General Staff appointments in field formations to be held by Permanent Force officers, while administrative staff appointments went to former N.P.A.M. officers,<sup>2</sup> though this was never a matter of rule.\* It should be noted in passing that many non-regular officers made great contributions in these administrative appointments. Professional and business men in civil life, often of superior education and accustomed to the direction of large enterprises, they took naturally and effectively to the tasks of army organization.

Where nobody has had much experience of actual operations, the professional soldier, who has devoted his life to the study of military matters, has a great advantage over the non-professional. But no peacetime studies can compare with battle experience as a school for either leadership or staff work; and when the army finally got into large-scale action the distinction between the regular and the citizen officer, already much blurred, soon virtually ceased to exist. Early in 1945 the staff lists of Canada's five fighting divisions showed not one of the ten senior staff appointments (General Staff and administrative) held by a pre-war regular officer;<sup>3</sup> and in the last months of the war, as we have noted, three of the five divisions were commanded by citizen soldiers, as were also both the independent armoured brigades. The Army Commander and the two Corps Commanders, however, were regulars.

When an army is fighting, the problem of selecting commanders tends to solve itself; success is the criterion. But when, as in the Canadian Army Overseas in this instance, an army is denied action for a long period and at the same time is expanding rapidly, so that appointments of many senior commanders have to be made, the problem is a serious one. It could have been solved, in a sense, by turning to the United Kingdom and appointing battle-experienced British commanders to Canadian formations; but Canadian opinion, both military and civilian, would not have countenanced such a solution. All that could be done was to promote the qualified officers who seemed most promising and hope that they would be successful under the conditions of active operations. In the nature of things, this hope was not invariably realized. It was necessary to appoint, as commanders of divisions and even of corps, officers who had never commanded even a battalion in action and whose battle experience, if they had had any at all, was limited to junior appointments in the First World War. Some proved triumphantly successful; others gave way to other men.

In making appointments up to the rank of Colonel, both of staff officers and commanders, the senior commanders overseas had the advantage of the advice of a carefully constituted Selection Committee composed of senior

\*Here it may be recalled again that the General Staff Branch dealt with operations, intelligence, training and war organization, while of the administrative branches that of the Adjutant General dealt with personnel and that of the Quartermaster General with supply.

officers representing the divisions and higher formations as well as C.M.H.Q. The committee was placed on this basis in 1941, replacing a smaller one set up the year before. In 1942 it was split into Senior and Junior Committees, with the latter dealing in general with appointments not above the rank of major. The Selection Committees also chose the candidates to attend Staff College and similar courses. Their recommendations were normally accepted by the Army Commander and the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q.; and their activity served to create confidence in the fact that selection and promotion were on a strict basis of merit, and (since as a rule periods of regimental duty were made to alternate with periods on the staff, and an officer who was promoted was almost invariably sent to a different formation) senior officers were discouraged from building up staffs of favourites.<sup>4</sup>

The problem of battle experience was not peculiar to the Canadian Army. Many officers who did not possess such experience received important appointments in the Army of the United States. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, though a regular officer of seniority, had never heard a shot fired in anger previous to his becoming Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces in North Africa in 1942. But the matter was complicated for Canada by her forces' integration with the British Army. The latter laid a very proper (though sometimes perhaps an exaggerated) emphasis upon the value of recent battle experience; and the British certainly tended to look down their noses at formation commanders who lacked it. Few Canadian civilians realize the difficulty of the position in which General Crerar found himself on taking command of First Canadian Army early in 1944. He had become a Corps Commander at the end of 1941 without having commanded any lower formation in action or indeed even under static conditions (for he took over the 1st Canadian Corps in an acting capacity at the same moment when he was gazetted to command the 2nd Division). He had seen much service in the First World War both as a regimental officer and on the staff; but the only battle experience he had had in the Second was a few weeks when his Corps was in the line on the Ortona front, which at that time was quiet. He now became an Army Commander, over the heads of British officers who had commanded Corps for extended periods of heavy action. That he was successful in the appointment under these disadvantageous conditions says much for his ability and judgement.\*

Something has already been said (above, pages 248-9) of the arrangements made to give a certain number of Canadian officers and

\*General Crerar had repeatedly sought opportunities for operational experience and was prepared to step down in rank to get it. In September 1943, for instance, when it was reported that General Simonds had fallen ill, General McNaughton signalled to General Montgomery in Italy proposing to send Crerar out to take command of the 1st Division for a time. "No question of seniority arises", he wrote, "as Crerar is quite content to serve under any of your Corps Commanders".<sup>5</sup> There is no answer on the file and it seems evident that Montgomery never received the signal. Shortly afterwards the 1st Canadian Corps was sent to the Mediterranean and Crerar went out in command of it.



N.C.Os. some battle experience by attaching them to the First British Army during the Tunisian campaign. It was not practicable to do the same for senior commanders, although as we have seen two Canadian officers who subsequently attained the highest distinction-Generals Crerar and Simonds -were able to visit the Eighth Army during the North African operations. But before the First Canadian Army went into action in North-West Europe in 1944, it was possible to leaven it with senior officers who had seen action in the Canadian operations in Italy. General Crerar himself, as noted, had had some service on the Adriatic front. General Simonds, who had commanded the 1st Division with success in Sicily and Southern Italy, and had subsequently been transferred to the 5th Armoured Division, came back to England to take command of the 2nd Canadian Corps. He brought with him Brigadiers A. B. Matthews and Geoffrey Walsh, who had been respectively his artillery and engineer commanders in the 1st Division, to take the parallel appointments in his new Corps. The command of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division now went to Major-General George Kitching, a 33-year-old officer who had been G.S.O.1 of the 1st Division in Sicily and had later commanded the 5th Armoured Division's infantry brigade for a short time. The 4th Division's armoured and infantry brigades were taken over by officers who had been distinguished unit commanders in Italy respectively, Brigadiers E. L. Booth and J. C. Jefferson; and Brigadier R. A. Wyman relinquished the command of the 1st Armoured Brigade in Italy and assumed that of the 2nd which was preparing for the Normandy assault.

All this was very useful; but the approach of the summer battles of 1944 in the two theatres still found one Canadian corps, two divisions and a number of brigades commanded by officers who had had no battle experience in this war; while the Army, the other corps, two other divisions and several brigades were commanded by officers whose experience had been on lower levels. Thus the Canadian Army's pool of command battle experience was still small, and this valuable commodity was thinly spread across the force. The circumstances of 1940-43 are perhaps unlikely to recur; but this situation prompts the observation that, in the event of another long period of static employment being encountered, it would be desirable to do everything possible to give battle experience to commanders by arranging long-term loans of Canadian officers, of the rank of brigadier and higher, to armies engaged in active operations. Such arrangements are not easy to make, for an army does not like to put another army's untried officers into its senior commands, nor will it want to relinquish them if they make good. However, the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant great efforts.

As the war proceeded, it became more and more evident that command under modern conditions was a task for young men. The British War

Office recognized this fact in making appointments, although it refrained from fixing definite age-limits for senior ranks. The question of setting Canadian limits came under discussion during the summer of 1941. That autumn General McNaughton recommended to the Minister of National Defence and the C.G.S. that, effective 1 January 1942, the following maximum ages should be prescribed:

	Appointment	Retirement
Major-General .....	53	57
Brigadier and Colonel .....	49	54
Lieutenant-Colonel .....	45	51

A latitude of one to two years might be permitted, however, in exceptional cases where no other officer was available and the present incumbent was medically fit. An order in council approved on 2 December 1941 and republished as a routine order accepted McNaughton's proposed limits for field formations and units.<sup>6</sup> It contained the following qualifications:

- "(a) The expression 'field formations and field units' . . . shall not be interpreted to include Line of Communication or Base Units.
- "(b) Where the officer concerned is category "A" and no other suitable officer is available for the appointment in question, these special circumstances may be represented to the Minister of National Defence for his consideration and decision."

The months of January and February 1942 accordingly saw the greatest -shuffle in commands that had yet taken place. A study of the supplements to Overseas Routine Orders shows that, within the Canadian Corps alone, there were changes in command in nine artillery regiments, one engineer battalion, nine infantry battalions and one divisional signals. Changes in command continued to be frequent thereafter; they were often occasioned by what were considered poor performances by the officers concerned (particularly in major exercises), as well as by the operation of the age limits, health considerations and, of course, the effect of promotions. Thus the army's command policy developed along the line of advancing young and energetic officers whom their superiors considered the most competent available.

Age limits for junior officers came later, and after considerable discussion. Everyone agreed that young and active officers were essential in field units (for example, early in 1942 quite low limits\* were fixed for officers of the 4th Armoured Division and 2nd Army Tank Brigade);<sup>7</sup> but it was not considerable desirable to fix arbitrary limits of universal application, and the only such limits actually promulgated (in 1943)<sup>8</sup> were comparatively

*	Appointment	Retirement
Lt.-Col.....	45	51
Major .....	42	47
Captain .....	35	45
Lieutenant .....	30	35

liberal. They provided for compulsory retirement of all officers of the rank of lieutenant colonel or below at ages ranging from 51 in field units abroad to 60 in static establishments at home. The similar range in the case of major generals was from 57 to 60, and in the case of brigadiers and colonels from 54 to 60. Provision was made for extensions of service in very exceptional cases.

### The Problem of Morale

The long Canadian sojourn in the United Kingdom began rather inauspiciously. The winter of 1939-40 was abnormally cold (above, page 232). The Canadians of this war were spared the unpleasant experience of their fathers, who spent the winter of 1914-15 under canvas on Salisbury Plain; instead, they were quartered in the permanent barracks of Aldershot. But neither those barracks nor any other English buildings were designed or equipped for zero temperatures, and the troops, fresh from the comforts of civil life and used to central heating, were not grateful for the privilege of living in them. They probably did not realize that they got a larger allowance of coal than British troops.<sup>9</sup> There was a great deal of sickness in January and February.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Aldershot had been a garrison town since the Crimean War, and its people were too well accustomed to men in uniform to make any great fuss over arriving soldiers of any nationality, And the complacent atmosphere of the "phony war" was not helpful. The Western Front was quiet, no bombs had yet fallen on England, and neither Englishmen nor Canadians had taken the true measure of the seriousness of the situation. These things had their due effect. The postal censors who read a batch of Canadian army mail in February evidently felt that the writers were going somewhat beyond the soldier's traditional right to "grouse":

Boredom, homesickness and a feeling of not being really needed appear to be the main reasons why nearly all these Canadian soldiers grumble. The majority of the writers warn their friends and relations not to join the Army.

The recent bad weather has made them dislike this country considerably . . .

The insufficiency and bad quality of the food annoys the majority of the writers. . .

The Deputy Chief Postal Censor remarked in a covering letter that nothing in this correspondence was "really more serious than the impatience of an active man cooped up by bad weather in an unfamiliar country and eating unfamiliar food".<sup>11</sup> General Crerar replied that "with the coming of the better weather, the Canadian troops should be in much better spirits, when most of the causes for complaint will disappear".<sup>12</sup> As we have seen (above, pages 233, 273) he proved a true prophet; and the warm welcome the Canadians got from the folk of the Northampton district in May was

the beginning of a better era in relationships with the British people generally. To the jaundiced eyes of shivering Canadians in that first war winter, the stolid Briton, refusing to be put out by the war, had sometimes seemed a less than admirable character. But as the eventful months of 1940 passed and they noted that he remained equally unruffled under the bombs of the Luftwaffe and the imminent threat of invasion, they formed a juster appreciation of his qualities.

With autumn drawing on and the invasion danger receding, careful thought was given to the problem of morale during a second winter in England. As early as 3 September General McNaughton pointed out that the troops might now be considered highly trained, and that too intense a syllabus of further training during the winter might only make them stale. He emphasized, accordingly, the importance of organizing an active educational programme to occupy men's minds and also make them better citizens when the war was over. In January 1940 the policy had been laid down that army educational facilities would be provided by the Canadian Legion War Services in conjunction with the Canadian Association for Adult Education, working in cooperation with the Department of National Defence.<sup>13</sup> In the nature of things, there was little time or need for educational work overseas during the active and exciting summer months that followed; but the situation was now quite different. At this moment General McNaughton received an offer of service from Mr. J. B. Bickersteth, Warden of Hart House, University of Toronto, who was on leave in England; and he asked Mr. Bickersteth to undertake a survey of the educational needs of the Canadian troops. When this was completed, Bickersteth remained at Corps Headquarters as personal educational adviser to General McNaughton, doing this work until the summer of 1942, when he went to the War Office as Director of Army Education.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. A. E. Chatwin was appointed Director of Educational Services and arrived in England in November 1940. An Educational Adviser (usually a civilian) was appointed for each formation, and in each unit an officer (later assisted by a corporal who gave his full time to the work) was dcsi noted as Unit Education Officer. The programme arranged for the winter included informal talks and lectures on general and cultural subjects; practical training in trades through classes or text-booklets; directed reading; correspondence courses in a wide variety of subjects; and courses in local technical schools. Unit libraries were set up, carrying both light fiction and serious books, and stocked from the headquarters of the educational services.<sup>15</sup> Along these general lines the system continued to be conducted in succeeding years, and it certainly made a material contribution to maintaining the spirits and interest of the men during the long wait in England.

The education programme was, of course, only one of the influences working to this end. Long before it was launched in earnest the regimental chaplain\* was labouring quietly among his flock and doing a measureless amount of good. Although conducting religious services and acting as friend and adviser to soldiers who sought his help were his official functions, he often found himself saddled with a great miscellany of other tasks. One unit padre stated later that he had served as education officer, mess secretary, welfare officer, sports officer and, on one occasion, as a special assistant to the quartermaster: "I have organized canteens, been in charge of broadcasts, distributed libraries, promoted shows, entertainments and dances-in fact I have done almost anything and everything to help our men and promote their welfare".<sup>16</sup> Visits to men in hospital and attendance at the weekly police court sessions at Aldershot as "character" witnesses or security for the 10 shilling fines levied against soldiers for minor infractions of the law were other tasks that fell to his lot. Although men dislike being "preached at", both Protestant and Roman Catholic chaplains bear witness to the fact that "almost from the beginning, friendly relations were established in units and formations and from many points of view the soldier began to realize that the chaplain was his friend-somebody he could rely on-one officer at least who was sympathetically inclined and kept his confidence".<sup>17</sup>

It is apparent that the unit chaplain did much for the physical as well as the spiritual welfare of the men. However, an elaborate separate organization was set up to cater to the former. In November 1939 the Canadian Government announced that four national voluntary organizations-the Salvation Army, the Knights of Columbus, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Canadian Legion-would be responsible for providing "auxiliary services" for the Canadian forces. Brigadier W. W. Foster went overseas with the "first flight" to co-ordinate such activities, but it was some time before adequate Canadian services could be provided for the troops. In the meantime, the men used the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes canteens which were a permanent part of the British soldier's life. When Canadian units used a N.A.A.F.I. canteen the regimental fund was entitled to a percentage of the profits, just as with British units. A Directorate of Auxiliary Services was established at C.M.H.Q. in the Adjutant-General's Branch, composed of serving military officers; but the "supervisors" provided \*Forsaking the system followed in the First World War, when one chaplain service functioned, the Canadian Government decided in 1939 to provide separate Roman Catholic and Protestant services. The Right Reverend C. L. Nelligan, Bishop of Pembroke, accepted the appointment of Principal Chaplain (R.C.) while the Right Reverend G.A. Wells, Anglican Bishop of Cariboo, became Principal Chaplain (P.). Broadly speaking, the number of Protestant and Roman Catholic chaplains was proportioned to the strength of those religious bodies in Canada. An excellent account of the work of Protestant chaplains is Hon. Major Walter T. Steven, In *This Sign* (Toronto, 1948). For a personal memoir by a Catholic chaplain, see R.M. Hickey, *The Scarlet Dawn* (Campbellton, N.B., 1949); a parallel account by a Protestant is Waldo E.L. Smith, *What Time the Tempest* (Toronto, 1953).

by the four voluntary organizations for work in the units were civilians, although paid by the Government as captains and given the privileges of officers in the units to which they were attached.\* At the end of March 1940 there were 15 such supervisors serving 23,228 all ranks of the Canadian Army Overseas, and the work of organizing sports and dances, and providing movies and concerts, reading, writing and recreation rooms, libraries, mobile canteens and tea vans, and establishing leave hostels and information bureaux for troops on leave was getting under way. By the end of March 1941 there were 65 supervisors serving 64,504 all ranks. By 31 December 1943 the number of Army supervisors was 268.<sup>18</sup>

The four voluntary organizations were not equally well equipped to give assistance to their supervisors, with the result that there were some complaints of uneven service, duplication of effort and competition or rivalry. It had been found from experience that each supervisor serving with a field unit required one motion picture projector, one mobile canteen, one complete set of sports equipment for 1000 men and supplies of radio sets, small games, magazines and stationery. The Canadian Government in 1941 sent Colonel the Hon. R. J. Manion overseas to investigate. He submitted in August a report<sup>19</sup> which praised the work of the voluntary organizations but recommended a larger degree of cooperation and pooling among them, in order to provide uniform service. Even before the report was made, the organizations had begun to work along these lines. They arranged to specialize; henceforth, sports and recreation became the particular responsibility of the Y.M.C.A., concerts and entertainment that of the Canadian Legion, canteens and cinemas that of the Salvation Army and hospitality and social functions that of the Knights of Columbus.<sup>20</sup> Pooling arrangements were made to ensure that each supervisor, irrespective of affiliation, was outfitted uniformly, and more even service resulted.

The four voluntary organizations had made a successful united appeal for financial support from the Canadian public in March 1941, but their estimated needs for the following year rose to \$17,000,000. If such a sum was to be collected, it would be necessary to cease all other appeals for a time, including the sale of Government War Savings Certificates. Therefore the Government decided that, in future, the work of auxiliary services should be financed from the public treasury, although the four voluntary organizations serving Canadian servicemen would still operate. To control expenditure, an Overseas Committee of the National War Services Funds Advisory Board was set up in 1942 under the chairmanship of Sir Edward

\*Scott Young, *Red Shield in Action: A Record of Canadian Salvation Army War Services in the Second Great War* (Toronto, 1950), Alan M. Hurst, *The Canadian Y.M.C.A. in World War II* (Toronto, n.d.), and *War Services of Canadian Knights of Columbus 1939-1947* (n.p., n.d.), are accounts of the work of three of these organizations and how they met the problems encountered.

Peacock. It comprised representatives of C.M.H.Q., the R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters and the four voluntary organizations.<sup>21</sup> During 1942-43 also the Army assumed a larger direct responsibility for the education programme, which had been tending to outgrow the resources of the Canadian Legion.<sup>22</sup>

The Canadian Red Cross Society, unlike the auxiliary service organizations, had to remain on a voluntary basis in order to maintain an international character and observe the obligations inherent in the Geneva Convention. In addition to building and equipping a general hospital at Taplow, on the estate of Lord and Lady Astor, the Red Cross provided equipment and medical supplies for the other Canadian hospitals and its workers ministered to the patients. Red Cross personnel eventually staffed four "Maple Leaf" leave hostels in London, including one for junior officers, and later went to the Continent to work behind the advancing army.<sup>23</sup>

It is out of the question even to mention here the many organizations and the innumerable individuals whose energy and generosity contributed to making Canadian servicemen comfortable and happy in the United Kingdom during these years. But even the briefest account must not fail to pay some tribute to the indefatigable activity and kindness of the Canadian High Commissioner and Mrs. Massey. Of the numerous enterprises in which they interested themselves there is room to speak of only two. The Beaver Club, in Spring Gardens close to C.M.H.Q., a fine commodious recreational club for servicemen below commissioned rank, was established by a committee of Canadians resident in London; Mr. Massey was chairman of its board of management. It was officially opened on 23 February 1940, in the presence of the King and Queen. Although the whole cost was borne in the beginning by the private committee, the Y.M.C.A. subsequently guaranteed the club's finances to the amount of \$50,000 annually.<sup>24</sup> In Cockspur Street nearby Mrs. Massey set up in October 1939 a Canadian Officers' Club which, under her own supervision, continued to provide lunches and a place of pleasant rendezvous for officers throughout the war.<sup>25</sup>

Merely to list the British and Canadian clubs, hostels, canteens, etc., in London and elsewhere, that served the Canadian soldier, would require much more space than we have available. And yet these admirable institutions are far from being the whole story. Many a soldier would say that what mattered most in reconciling him to the long stay in Britain was simply the kindly friendship and hospitality of individual British families. The English have a reputation for reserve, not wholly unfounded, and it took time to get to know them. In the early months, the average Canadian felt much more at home in Scotland; but he did get to know the English in due time, and in an extraordinary number of cases Canadians found their way into English homes where they were treated virtually as members of the family. What

with shortages of every sort, hospitality was difficult in wartime Britain; and yet, in the midst of all their own embarrassments, the English contrived to be kind to the strangers from overseas. The Canadian soldier appreciated the kindness, and admired the courage with which the English civilian faced the peril and misery of war. Enough has been said to indicate that in the early days relations with the British public left much to be desired. There is ample documentary evidence that this state of things entirely changed as time passed. By the spring of 1944 the censors who read the soldiers' letters, who had often had to report that a good many Canadians were making hostile references to their British hosts, were telling a very different story. A report based on the reading of 11,652 letters during the period 6-20 April 1944 makes this very remarkable statement: "The relations between British civilians and Canadian troops continue to be very cordial, and not one adverse comment has been seen."<sup>26</sup> Relations with British servicemen were not so universally satisfactory, but a censorship report covering the period 16-31 May 1944 noted that of over 19,000 letters read 98 writers spoke of relations with British troops as good, while only 28 called them bad.\* (Not many men spoke of relations with United States troops, but there were only 14 "good" references as against 35 "bad" ones.)<sup>27</sup> It is notable that so few men thought it worth while to speak of these matters at all.

The relationship between the troops and the British public was reflected in the number of Canadian soldiers who married in the United Kingdom. There were 1222 marriages during 1940; and the number increased year by year until the total just before the Normandy D Day stood at 17,390. It was the period after VE Day, however, that produced the largest number. By 30 November 1946, when repatriation was virtually complete, 34,296 officers and men of the Canadian Army had been married in the United Kingdom.<sup>28</sup> A few of the brides were Canadian women or women of non-British nationality; but the great majority were of course natives of the British Isles. Thus one result of the Army's long sojourn in Britain was to bring to Canada a large group of new and in general most excellent citizens. The dependents of servicemen were transported to Canada at public expense; the Canadian Wives Bureau at C.M.H.Q. (above, page 201) handled this large task for all three services.<sup>29</sup> All told, from April 1942 through February 1948, 43,464 wives and 20,995 children were brought to Canada under this arrangement.<sup>30</sup> The vast majority came from Britain; similarly, the vast majority were dependents of Army men.

\*Relations with the Home Guard were of course a different and separate matter. General Crerar believes that nothing did more to improve relations with the British people generally than the close connections which his Corps established with the Home Guard in 1942.



## Discipline and Deportment

It would not be difficult to assemble a file of clippings from English wartime newspapers which would give the reader the impression that the Canadians were a thoroughly badly behaved army and a constant source of worry to the English police. And it is needless to say that plenty of soldiers did get themselves into trouble. A modern army is a cross-section of the nation, and every nation has its proportion of trouble-makers; and "single men in barracks" were no more likely to grow into plaster saints during the Second World War than they were when Kipling wrote. But the impression sometimes created by the more lurid London papers was unjust to the Army.

The periods when morale tended to sink lowest and trouble was most prevalent were, of course, the winters, when military activity was reduced and the blackout helped to make everyone miserable. The winter of 1941-42 was probably the most difficult time of the war; not least because it was the third of a succession of uncommonly cold winters.\* As in 1939-40, the state of the war tended to make matters worse. Hitler's attack on Russia had made a German attempt at invading England seem much less probable; the Luftwaffe was busy in the east, and there was little of that bombing of Britain which had had such a bracing effect on soldier and civilian alike in 1940-41; and the outbreak of war in the Far East in December, and the Japanese victories that followed, strengthened the impression that the United Kingdom was now a backwater. These conditions were reflected in some lowering of morale; a censorship report of November 1941 made the comment that, while in general it remained good, a certain number of men were showing discouragement, and this seemed commonest in the 1st Division<sup>31</sup> (which had of course been longest in the country). In turn, this produced some friction in Sussex. The Deputy Chief Constable of Brighton, for instance, was reported in the press as having remarked during a court case which resulted in three Canadian soldiers being fined that there had recently been "rather serious" disturbances at night: "Our men have been extremely tolerant with the Canadians, but recently they have had to draw their truncheons in self-defence"<sup>11 32</sup>

The fact remains that the record shows that even at this difficult period it was only a small proportion of Canadians who got into trouble. A detailed report<sup>33</sup> on the discipline of the Canadian Army Overseas was prepared at

\*"In striking contrast with the weather of 1914-18, when wet winters predominated, the outstanding feature of the weather of this war has been the unusually cold winters. Taken together, January and February, 1942, were appreciably colder over England and Wales than the similar period in 1941, and very slightly colder than that of 1940." (*The Times*, London, 13 March 1942.)

C.M.H.Q. in September 1942. It made the following comments on the question of civil offences:

- "(a) The most prevalent offences . . . are those involving theft, larceny and burglary and the next most prevalent are those involving assault.
- "(b) A total of 923 soldiers have been convicted by the civil courts during the period under review [December 1939 through August 1942]. This figure is not entirely accurate by reason of the fact that records for the early stages are not complete but is sufficiently accurate to show that the proportion of our troops involved in civil prosecutions is relatively small."

At 21 September 1942, 156 Canadian soldiers were serving sentences awarded by United Kingdom civil courts. Surveying the whole disciplinary situation from the beginning, the report concluded:

- "(a) The proportion of troops committing offences has, subject to certain seasonal fluctuations, steadily decreased.
- "(b) The great majority of offences, approximately 90%, are purely breaches of military discipline.
- "(c) The proportion of troops involved in civil offences is small and has steadily decreased."

Two circumstances somewhat qualify the statistics given. First, as stated, the figures for the early days are admittedly not complete. Secondly, the figures are those of *convictions*, and there would doubtless have been more of these but for the tendency of English courts to be lenient to Canadians. At the request of the military authorities, the High Commissioner had spoken to the Home Secretary asking that, in the interest of discipline, "Canadian soldiers charged with offences should be dealt with strictly on the merits of the case" and given no special indulgence.<sup>36</sup> There is no doubt, however, that there often was some leniency in practice.

Whatever doubt may attach to the early figures, there is none about those from 1942 onwards, and they fully support the general conclusions of the report just quoted. For example, for the three months ending 30 June 1943, the total number of civil convictions was 241; for the three months ending 30 September 1943, it was 219; and for the three months ending 31 December 1943 it was 216.<sup>37</sup> On these three dates respectively the strength of the Canadian Army in the United Kingdom<sup>38</sup> was 201,406 all ranks, 204,981 all ranks and 171,273 all ranks (the decrease is accounted for by the dispatch of troops to the Mediterranean). This backs up the statement made in a C.M.H.Q. report, "As an average figure, 4 to 5 soldiers out of every 10,000 are involved with the civil authorities each month".<sup>39</sup> The statement might, it is true, have been more accurately phrased, "involved

\*Unlike the United States forces, which tried all cases occurring in the United Kingdom by their own military courts, as provided in The United States of America (Visiting Forces) Act passed by Parliament in 1942,<sup>34</sup> the Canadian forces accepted the jurisdiction of British civil courts even in cases of capital offences. Six Canadian soldiers were convicted of murder and hanged by the judgement of United Kingdom courts. The Canadian authorities took the responsibility in such cases of ensuring that the accused was competently defended and had every chance.<sup>35</sup>

with the civil authorities to the point of conviction"; but with every qualification allowed for, the figure is still very small.

The picture of the morale and behaviour of the Canadian soldier in the United Kingdom has its dark spots, but viewed as a whole it is remarkably bright and satisfactory. The maintenance of the spirit of the troops during this very long period of inaction, and the steady improvement of their relations with the British people, constitute together something of a triumph. On the eve of the Normandy landings the postal censors who read letters written by the Canadians in the 21st Army Group reported,<sup>40</sup>

This is a cheerful mail revealing eagerness for action, and a fine fighting spirit. These troops are confident in themselves and confident in victory. . . Regimental pride and a fine esprit de corps is evident.... References to English civilians continue to be flattering and show a very friendly spirit.

This was written four and a half years after the first Canadians came to England.

The credit for these results must be widely distributed. A large share must go to the higher command of the Army, and to those who operated the various welfare services which the command provided and directed. A large share must go also to Britain's brave and hospitable people. But no small meed of praise is due to the troops themselves. General McNaughton pointed this out in the course of a press conference on 17 December 1942, the third anniversary of the arrival of the first flight of the 1st Division in the United Kingdom. He then said that the maintenance of morale at the highest level in spite of many disappointments and frustrations was a great tribute to the men of the army. The result was due to the fact that "our men have good common sense"; they were a very intelligent body of men, not an army of adventurers, but men who had come to Britain to serve a cause.<sup>41</sup> There is of course no doubt that the Canadian soldier intensely disliked the inaction which was imposed upon him so long; but he knew his time would come; and it came in 1943 and 1944, in the hard and victorious campaigns in Italy and North-West Europe.

### Leave to Canada

The question of leave to Canada was certain to become important as the war continued. The psychological effect of prolonged absence from home began to be apparent in many men after two years' absence and, of course, was most pronounced on those who had left wives at home. After three years the strain of long separation began to have its effect in many families. During 1943 the British Army instituted a system of home postings ("Python") for men who had been abroad for six years and by the beginning of 1944

this period had been reduced to five years. By that time New Zealanders had received home leave after three or more years abroad and the United States Army was working out the details of a liberal repatriation scheme. A Canadian system of rotation leave came into effect in the autumn of 1944, when some Canadian soldiers had been overseas nearly five years.

Long before this, measures had been taken to deal with the most urgent aspects of the problem. Within a few months of the 1st Division's arrival in England there were requests to return to Canada on "compassionate grounds". Where such a request was granted the man was "struck off strength" the Canadian Army Overseas; incidentally, an officer usually was required to pay his own passage home. The whole question of leave came up for discussion during September 1941 and it was decided that leave in Canada would be granted "only in very exceptional cases" and not ordinarily at public expense; subsequent discharge would be considered only in cases where extreme hardship would result from a soldier's retention in the army.<sup>42</sup> Administrative details were promulgated in a routine order dated 24 October 1941.<sup>43</sup> The only real complaint against the procedure now set up was its slowness. A report prepared at C.M.H.Q. on 15 April 1943 indicated that of 647 applications submitted during the period since 1 October 1942, 338 had been referred to N.D.H.Q. for investigation, but only 112 cases had been approved for return to Canada.<sup>44</sup> Steps were taken to speed up the procedure but it was obvious that, as the period of absence from Canada lengthened, the backlog would tend to grow greater.

Beginning in the autumn of 1940 some officers and men of the overseas army were sent back to Canada for service as instructors or to take officer cadet training or staff or other courses (above, pages 136, 246). By 31 July 1944 some 944 officers and 3750 men<sup>45</sup> had been returned for such reasons and had had the opportunity of spending some time with their families. Another and rather larger group of soldiers were sent home as escorts for prisoners of war being sent to North America (above, page 151). The first such escort sailed on 23 December 1941, and the twenty-second and last in November 1944. The total strength of these escorts was 4758 all ranks. They included from time to time a proportion of men returning on compassionate leave and men whose age or medical category made them unsuitable for further overseas service. Some men going to Canada for officer training or duty as instructors were also included in escorts; there is thus some duplication between the two sets of figures given in this paragraph.<sup>46</sup> It is apparent that the number of men given leave by these various expedients was very small in proportion to the number of long-service men overseas.

By the early weeks of 1944 the problem was becoming increasingly serious. On 17 February the Director General of Medical Services at Ottawa (Major-General G. B. Chisholm) informed the Adjutant General that the Consultant Neuropsychiatrist then visiting Canada from the United Kingdom

had suggested that men overseas were suffering from the long separation from their homes and families and that it might be advisable to allow leave to Canada for men who had completed, say, four and a half years of overseas service.<sup>47</sup> Four days later the matter was discussed by the Military Members of the Army Council. However, "In view of the many administrative difficulties involved, including the question of provision of reinforcement replacements, it was the opinion of Military Members that such a scheme was impracticable and should be deferred until such time as there is a more definite indication of the future trend of operations now contemplated."<sup>48</sup>

The military difficulties were indeed formidable. The invasion of North-West Europe was impending, as were large-scale operations in Italy; and to remove from the units at this moment large numbers of long-service men who in the nature of things were soldiers of exceptional experience was obviously undesirable. It has moreover been made clear that the general manpower situation had been unsatisfactory for a year past; in these circumstances, finding the additional reinforcements that a large programme of home leave would make necessary was certain to be extremely difficult. Finally, there was the question of shipping. Vessels were available to move the normal flow of reinforcements, but could enough be obtained to accommodate the much larger movement that a rotation leave scheme would involve? The fact that the shipping was not under Canadian control made this less likely. In the spring, when the Deputy Minister of National Defence (Army), Lt.-Col. G. S. Currie, was at C.M.H.Q. discussing the question,\* General Montague observed that his own "quick appreciation" of it was that "we would be glad to have a system for leave to Canada established, but ... it would be entirely dependent on N.D.H.Q. producing the shipping".<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless, the problem could not be avoided, for it was growing more pressing month by month. It presented its worst face in Italy, where the 1st Division (overseas since 1939) was serving. On 19 April 1944 General Burns, commanding the 1st Corps there, wrote to the Chief of Staff at C.M.H.Q. concerning the problem of "compassionate leave and the return to Canada of personnel with long service overseas".<sup>50</sup> These two subjects, he said, were closely connected in the minds of Canadian soldiers in Italy: "Many of these men have been away from home for four years and, briefly, their feeling is that few homes can be expected to hold together when the husband has been away for so long". That he did not exaggerate is evidenced by a censorship report from the Italian theatre, covering Canadian mail read during the period 16-31 July 1944.<sup>51</sup>

The increasingly large volume of comment on the question of home leave indicates how large this problem is now looming in the minds of the troops. Those who have served for nearly five years are acutely conscious of the fact

\*It had become a serious issue in the Canadian press as the result of an article in the *Eighth Army News* written by the chaplain of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment.

that they are unable to look forward to a period of leave as a duly-earned right, and the authorities are bitterly criticised for failing to make provision in this respect. The granting of compassionate leave in exceptional circumstances, and the detailing of men for P/W escort duty, have merely tended to aggravate the question in the eyes of the remainder.

"The authorities" had in fact been working hard on the problem for months without achieving a solution. A minor ameliorative measure taken in the summer was the adoption of the British War Office's "Tri-Wound Scheme". As applied to the Canadian Army, this provided for returning to Canada (or, if preferred, the United Kingdom), for duty for a period of six months, men who had been wounded "otherwise than trivially" three times, or had three years' overseas service and had been wounded twice. But the number of men who could qualify was very small.<sup>52</sup>

In September 1944, after prolonged consideration, Headquarters First Canadian Army informed C.M.H.Q. that the reinforcement situation appeared to warrant putting a leave scheme into operation. Shortly afterwards the Minister of National Defence (Colonel Ralston) returned from a visit to Italy convinced of the importance of such a scheme. It was calculated at C.M.H.Q. that the reinforcement position would only justify giving leave to 500 men per month, since to give a man thirty clear days at home would involve his being lost to his unit for three months. On 1 November a firm plan, agreed upon by the Military Members of the Army Council, was submitted to the Minister; it cautiously provided for a quota of only 250 men per month. Generals Crerar and Montague recommended an increase to 450, and on this basis the scheme went into effect. Eligibility was limited to officers and men with "five years satisfactory continuous service overseas", but each completed month of service in an active theatre of operations (the Mediterranean or North-West Europe) counted as two months.<sup>53</sup>

The first drafts sent under the scheme-200 officers and men from Italy, 250 from North-West Europe and the United Kingdom-sailed for home at the end of November and early in December 1944. Later drafts were larger, and 1428 all ranks were embarked during February. Although it had been planned that Rotation Leave men would return to duty overseas, few actually did so.\* Of the 1992 all ranks making up the first three monthly quotas, only 53 were sent back; and in the early spring of 1945 N.D.H.Q. placed the scheme on a new footing. It was decided that men returning to Canada on the rotation quota would normally be retained there; and all returns to Canada were categorized under one of four headings: (a) Rotational Duty, mainly for long-service men; (b) Specific Duty (attendance at courses, etc.); (c) Long Service Leave; (d) Miscellaneous

\*The immediate manpower problem had of course been considerably eased by the decision to send N.R.M.A. men overseas and by the fact that casualties had been fewer than expected.

(medical or compassionate reasons, etc.). Men under (a) and (d) were to be retained in Canada. Those under (b) would return overseas, as would those under (c) at the end of thirty clear days' leave. The men in this last category were those who would normally have been eligible for Rotational Duty, but whose services overseas were required for special reasons. After the new scheme became effective at the beginning of April, practically all long service men going back to Canada went on Rotational Duty; all told, only 26 all ranks went on Long Service Leave.<sup>54</sup>

Down to 21 June 1945, when the rotation programme ceased to operate, merging into the general process of repatriation, a total of 626 officers and 9603 other ranks were returned to Canada on Rotation Leave, Long Service Leave, or Rotational Duty (387 officers and 6022 other ranks coming under the last-named heading).<sup>55</sup> Though the figure was not large, there can be no doubt that the introduction of the programme had a material influence in keeping up the morale of the overseas army during the final months of the war. It was a pity that it had to begin so late, and to be on such a limited scale. The separation of families was not the least of the disasters caused by and inseparable from the war; and Canada paid a heavy price in social misery and broken homes for the long sojourn of her troops overseas.\*

### Repatriating the Overseas Army

That getting the overseas troops back to Canada would be a large and complicated task was of course obvious, and the authorities were making plans for it long before the fighting ended. The great difficulty was going to be shipping, and there was bound to be some international competition for the available bottoms, and some conflict between the needs of repatriation after the end of the war in Europe and those of "redeployment" in preparation for the final phase of the continuing war against Japan.

In March 1945 the Canadian Prime Minister visited Washington and in conversation with him President Roosevelt agreed that servicemen not required for occupation duty should be brought back from Europe to North America in strict "chronological priority", i.e. those who had been overseas longest, whether Canadians or Americans, should be brought back first. Whether the President did anything along these lines before his death on 5 April does not appear.<sup>58</sup> At the end of March the British War Office indicated that it might be possible to move about 90,000 Canadian service

\*It is worth noting that approximately 370,000 all ranks had gone overseas from Canada to Europe by 31 May 1945, when the repatriation programme was getting under way; during the same period approximately 70,000 all ranks were returned to Canada.<sup>66</sup> Medical reasons were the commonest cause of return, accounting for 32,489 cases.<sup>57</sup>

men home during the six months following the defeat of Germany. This was not a satisfactory prospect, and on 20 April the Canadian Government instructed the High Commissioner in London and the Chief of Staff at C.M.H.Q. to press the United Kingdom authorities for an allocation of shipping sufficient to bring at least 150,000 men back during those six months. It appeared for a considerable time that this minimum might not be met; on 4 July, nearly two months after VE Day, the Department of National Defence issued a press release indicating that in spite of strong representations in London and Washington the prospect was that it might not be possible to move more than 126,000 Army and R.C.A.F. men during the second six months of 1945.<sup>59</sup> However, this forecast proved pessimistic. The actual grand total of Army and R.C.A.F. personnel repatriated during those six months was to be about 192,000.<sup>60</sup>

Demobilization planning, long in progress, was accelerated early in q1944. In February it "became policy" to set up a demobilization directorate at Ottawa for each service.<sup>61</sup> Within the Army overseas a Demobilization Committee had existed at C.M.H.Q. since early in 1943;<sup>62</sup> and, as we have seen,\* a Director of Reorganization and Demobilization was appointed there in September 1944, when it seemed possible that Germany was about to collapse. An Army plan for releasing men under a point-score system based on length of service had been accepted in principle in August. The Cabinet War Committee at Ottawa agreed on general principles governing repatriation and demobilization on 23 September, and a special cabinet committee approved a more detailed plan on 19 April 1945.<sup>63</sup> In February work began at C.M.H.Q. on drafting a pamphlet to explain the scheme to the troops. It could not be put into final shape until information was available on the basis on which the Army's Pacific Force was to be formed, and this was not known until after Mr. King's statement in Parliament on 4 April (see below, page 514). The pamphlet was then revised and printed and, by great efforts, was published on 11 May, only three days after VE Day, under the title *After Victory in Europe*.<sup>64</sup>

The plan described in the pamphlet was, speaking very broadly, based on the principle "first in, first out", but it was explained that the needs of the service made it impossible to observe this principle to the letter. Japan still had to be defeated, Germany had to be controlled, and the administrative framework of the army had to be maintained. Subject to these requirements being met, "priority for individual release" would be based on "a point score system" under which one month of service in Canada counted two points, and one month of service overseas counted three; while the scores of married personnel, or widowers or divorcees with dependent children, were increased by 20 per cent. As for the process of repatriation,

\*Above, page 200.



the highest priority for return went to those who volunteered, and were accepted, for the Pacific Force; these were to have "thirty clear days' leave at home before undertaking any further service". Thereafter, the men with the highest point-scores (so far as they could be spared) would be returned to Canada in drafts. The third stage would be the return of major units in the same general order in which they came overseas. The units thus returned would be composed basically of their own lower-priority personnel, so far as these came from the units' home districts, supplemented by men from those districts drafted in from other units. Questionnaires were distributed in mid-May, every individual being allowed to indicate his or her preference: service with the Pacific Force; service with the Occupation Force in Germany; or "reallocation in accordance with individual priorities and the requirements of the service"-in other words, discharge.<sup>65</sup>

The movement homewards began sooner than might have been expected. A large allocation of shipping unexpectedly became available for the month of June; haste was made to take advantage of it, and a total of 15,665 men and women of the Army left the United Kingdom for home that month.<sup>66</sup> This included the whole of the 1st Parachute Battalion, which was sent because it was available in England in spite of the fact that it contained some low-priority men; it thus became the first unit to return to Canada as such.<sup>67</sup> In July, 33,775 Army personnel moved towards Canada.<sup>68</sup> Notwithstanding the speed with which the repatriation mill had begun to grind, one unpleasant incident took place among the troops awaiting return. There was rioting in Aldershot on 4 and 5 July, and much damage was done to property (by 31 March 1946, Canada had paid \$41,541 to meet damage claims). This would have been deplorable in any circumstances; it was particularly indefensible in that it took place so soon after the end of hostilities and at a time when the movement back to Canada was developing rapidly. General Montague expressed the opinion that the ringleaders in the disturbances were certain Pacific Force volunteers "whom I cannot describe otherwise than as racketeers". (There was a suspicion that some men were volunteering for the Pacific Force merely as a means of getting back to Canada at an early date.) In fact, of the six soldiers convicted by courts martial as a result of the riots, three were Pacific volunteers. Most of the six had long records of misconduct.<sup>69</sup> The citizens of Aldershot magnanimously forgave the many the misdeeds of the few, and on 26 September conferred "the freedom of the borough" on the Canadian Army Overseas.<sup>70</sup>

On VE Day (8 May 1945) the strength of the Canadian Army in the United Kingdom and on the continent of Europe was 281,757 all ranks.<sup>71</sup> Between that date and the following 31 December 184,054 Army men and women left that zone for Canada. A few hundred, chiefly individuals

whose services were urgently required in Canada in connection with the Pacific Force or otherwise, were sent by air. Every sort of available shipping was utilized. The great mass went by troopship; but a small number went by "berth ship" (i.e. as passengers on cargo vessels, etc.), and a larger number by hospital ship; and nearly 3000 were taken back, during 1945, in Canadian naval vessels.<sup>72</sup> By 31 March 1946 Canadian troops in the United Kingdom numbered only 17,745 all ranks; on the Continent there were fewer than 800 apart from the 17,000 men of the Canadian Army Occupation Force.\* During the spring and summer the troops who had formed the C.A.O.F., and those who had staffed the Repatriation Depots (the former Reinforcement Units) in the Aldershot area, were returned to Canada. The strength of the overseas army at 31 January 1947 was down to 630 all ranks.<sup>73</sup> Headquarters, Canadian Repatriation Units, had ceased to exist on 22 July 1946; the last Repatriation Depot was disbanded on 21 February 1947. Canadian Military Headquarters itself, once so huge, had a strength of only 20 officers and 45 other ranks at 31 March 1947; and during the following month it changed its name to Canadian Army Liaison Establishment, London, and formally embarked on a peacetime career.<sup>74</sup>

The repatriation of the Canadian Army Overseas was a tremendous administrative task and a great administrative triumph. There has been no room for the details here, but the rapidity and smoothness of the movement reflected great credit on those who organized it, on the Continent, in Britain and in Canada. It is probable, however, that the task could not have been so rapidly completed had it not been for the Japanese surrender in the late summer of 1945. The period of largest movement was December 1945 and January 1946; during these two months 82,474 all ranks of the Canadian Army left the United Kingdom.<sup>75</sup> The shipping for such a movement might not have been available had war still been in progress in the Pacific.

\*The C.A.O.F., and the movements of Canadian formations on the Continent after the end of hostilities, are described in Volume III of this history.

**PART THREE**

**The War Against Japan,  
1941-1945**

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## CHAPTER XIV

### **THE DEFENCE OF HONG KONG DECEMBER 1941**

(See Maps 6 and 7 and Sketches 4, 5 and 7)

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#### The Army in the Pacific War, 1941-1945

**T**HE Second World War may be said to comprise, basically, three great series of operations: the campaigns of the Western Allies against Germany; the operations between the Germans and the Russians on the Eastern Front; and the war waged against Japan in the Pacific. It is with the first of these that the history of the Canadian Army is chiefly concerned. Its main effort was exerted in Europe against the Germans. The Japanese did not enter the war for more than two years after its outbreak in Europe; and by the time of their attack in December 1941 Canada had already built up a large field army in the United Kingdom. Until the defeat of the Germans in May 1945 the support and development of that army continued to be Canada's primary concern, and Germany's collapse was followed by Japan's before large Canadian forces could be re-deployed in the Pacific.

Nevertheless, the Army played a part, though not a very extensive one, in the Pacific war. Two Canadian battalions helped to defend Hong Kong in 1941; an infantry brigade was employed in the enterprise against Kiska in 1943; and a force of divisional strength was being organized for action in the Pacific at the time of the final Japanese surrender. Along with some minor activities, and the home-defence measures in British Columbia already described, these episodes constitute the record of Canadian Army participation in the war against Japan. They are the subject of the chapters which follow.

#### The Situation in the Far East, 1939-1941

Something has already been said of the development of the Japanese menace during the period following the outbreak of war in Europe. We have noted the fears about Japanese intentions which were current in the

summer of 1940, and the steps taken in Canada in consequence.\* No attack took place at that time; Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in September, but remained neutral; and the Canadian force in Britain continued to be built up. As 1941 advanced, however, the situation in the Pacific deteriorated. Relations between the United States and Japan grew worse and it was more and more obvious that the aims of the two countries were impossible to reconcile. Active discussion was going on between them from the spring of 1941 onwards, without important progress being made towards a settlement. The United States had no intention of condoning Japan's programme of expansion; and Japan had no intention of abandoning that programme. As we now know, on 2 July a Japanese Imperial Conference decided to continue diplomatic negotiations while also completing preparations for military action.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it was long before the United States and Great Britain wholly abandoned hope of continued peace-or, at any rate, postponement of war-in the Pacific.

Britain's unavoidable weakness in the Far East-the consequence of the death-struggle in which she was engaged in Europe-had produced painful searchings of heart in London as to the policy to be pursued at Hong Kong. This was particularly the case after Dunkirk. In August 1940 the Chiefs of Staff considered the matter and decided that the colony should be "regarded as an outpost and held as long as possible"; it was recognized that in the event of war with Japan it could neither be reinforced nor relieved. In October the Governor of the Colony, Sir Geoffrey Northcote, recommended the withdrawal of the garrison "in order to avoid the slaughter of civilians and the destruction of property which would follow a Japanese attack". The Chiefs of Staff, after consultation with the Foreign Office, opposed this suggestion on political grounds-such action, it was felt, would discourage China, encourage Japan and shake American faith in Britain. However, a request the same month from Major-General A. E. Grasett, G.O.C. British Troops in China, for an extra infantry battalion to reinforce the four already at Hong Kong was refused on the ground that it could only be supplied by India at the expense of reinforcement for the Middle East.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of 1941 the newly-appointed British Commander-in-Chief in the Far East (Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham) pressed his superiors to reinforce the garrison of Hong Kong. Mr. Churchill had no sympathy with these representations, and he has published<sup>3</sup> a memorandum which he wrote on the subject:

*Prime Minister to General Ismay*

7 Jan. 41

This is all wrong. If Japan goes 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. Any trouble arising there must be dealt with at

\*Above, Chapters III and V.

the Peace conference after the war. We must avoid frittering away our resources on untenable positions. Japan will think long before declaring war on the British Empire, and whether there are two or six battalions at Hong Kong will make no difference to her choice. I wish we had fewer troops there, but to move any would be noticeable and dangerous. .

Subsequently the British Prime Minister was to "allow himself to be drawn from this position". (This would seem to have been one of those cases where second thoughts are *not* best.) In the meantime, however, the Chiefs of Staff informed Brooke-Popham that reinforcement was not considered desirable. They viewed Hong Kong "as an undesirable military commitment", they told him, but demilitarization was not now possible in view of the effect it would have in both Japan and China. It had been decided, however, to increase the official "period before relief" for the fortress from 90 to 130 days, and to build up all its reserve supplies accordingly. A decision to build up food and ammunition reserves to this standard had been taken earlier.<sup>4</sup> The words "period before relief", it should be explained, are simply the usual formula on which fortress reserves are calculated; the use of the phrase did not necessarily imply an opinion that it would actually be practicable to relieve the colony after 130 days.

The Commander-in-Chief in the Far East returned to the charge. His appreciation of the situation in his area was confident. "To us out here", he wrote on 18 January 1941, "it seems no longer a question of reducing our losses in Hong Kong but of ensuring the security of places that will be of great value in taking offensive action at a later stage of the war." The War Office, however, felt that this was too rosy a view, and the Chiefs of Staff adhered to their previous decision.<sup>5</sup>

### The Request for Canadian Help at Hong Kong

In August of 1941, General Grasett, who had just retired from his appointment in China, returned to the United Kingdom by way of Canada, his native country. In Ottawa he had "long discussions" with the Chief of the General Staff, General Crerar, who later recalled that Grasett had said that "the addition of two or more battalions to the forces then at Hong Kong would render the garrison strong enough to withstand for an extensive period of siege an attack by such forces as the Japanese could bring to bear against it." Grasett, however, did not raise the question of, obtaining these battalions from Canada.<sup>6</sup> On 3 September, after reaching England, he met the Chiefs of Staff and argued strongly for such a reinforcement, now suggesting that Canada might supply the units. The Chiefs were convinced, and

on 10 September sent to Mr. Churchill a memorandum<sup>7</sup> recommending an approach to the Canadian Government. The essential paragraphs ran:

3. The Chiefs of Staff have previously advised against the despatch of more reinforcements to Hong Kong because they considered that it would only have been to throw good money after bad, but the position in the Far East has now changed. Our defences in Malaya have been improved and Japan has latterly shown a certain weakness in her attitude towards Great Britain and the United States.\*

4. A small reinforcement of one or two battalions would increase the strength of the garrison out of all proportion to the actual numbers involved, and it would provide a strong stimulus to the garrison and to the Colony. Further, it would have a very great moral effect in the whole of the Far East and it would show Chiang Kai Shek that we really intend to fight it out at Hong Kong.

The Chiefs did not argue that the situation had improved to the point where it would be practicable to relieve Hong Kong in the event of war with Japan. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff had produced a draft memorandum suggesting that relief might be possible after four and a half months; but the Chief of the Naval Staff "considered this misleading" and it was deleted.<sup>8</sup>

The Prime Minister accepted the Chiefs' advice, making however one reservation. He wrote on 15 September: "It is a question of timing. There is no objection to the approach being made as proposed; but a further decision should be taken before the battalions actually sail."<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, on 19 September the Dominions Office, London, dispatched the following telegram<sup>10</sup> to the Government of Canada:

MOST SECRET

United Kingdom Government has been conferring with late G.O.C. who has lately returned to this country upon the defences of Hong Kong. In the event of war in the Far East accepted policy has been that Hong Kong should be considered as an outpost and held as long as possible. We have thought hitherto that it would not serve any ultimate useful purpose to increase the existing army garrison which consists of four battalions of infantry and represents bare minimum required for its assigned task.

Situation in the Orient however has now altered. There have been signs of a certain weakening in attitude of Japan towards United States and ourselves. Defences of Malaya have been improved. Under these conditions our view is that a small reinforcement (e.g. one or two more battalions) of Hong Kong garrison would be very fully justified. It would reassure Chiang Kai Shek as to genuineness of our intention to hold the colony and in addition would have a very great moral effect throughout the Far East. This action would strengthen garrison out of all proportion to actual numbers involved and would greatly encourage the garrison and the colony.

We should be most grateful if Government of Canada would give consideration to providing for this purpose one or two Canadian battalions from Canada. Your Government will be well aware of difficulties now being experienced by us in providing the forces demanded by the situation in various parts of the world, despite the very great assistance which Dominions are furnishing. We consider that Canadian Government in view of Canada's special position in the North Pacific would wish in any case to be informed of the need as seen by us for the

\*The army strength in Malaya increased from nine battalions in August 1940 to 32 on 7 December 1941. Two capital ships (H.M. Ships *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*) were sent to Singapore before the Japanese attack.



reinforcement of Hong Kong and the special value of such a measure at present time, even though on very limited scale. The fact that the United States have recently sent a small reinforcement to the Philippines may also be relevant. If the Government of Canada could co-operate with us in the suggested manner it would be of the greatest help. We much hope that they will feel able to do this.

We would communicate with you again regarding the best time for despatch in the light of the general political situation in the Far East if your government concur in principle in sending one or two battalions.

There is no need to dwell upon the contrast either between this communication and the rugged common sense of Churchill's earlier appreciation, or between the situation as presented in it and the actual facts as known to us today. The historian's hindsight is always far, far better than the foresight of the men, groping in the dark, who had to do the work at the time.

The War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet considered the telegram on 23 September, but deferred decision pending examination by the General Staff and consultation with the Minister of National Defence (Colonel Ralston), who was then in the United States. On 24 September General Crerar sent a memorandum to the Acting Minister, Mr. C. G. Power. This paper itself made no specific recommendation on the point of policy, but indicated that it would be possible to provide two battalions, as requested by the British Government, "without reducing the strength of our Coast Defence garrisons and without further mobilization". That evening however Crerar spoke by telephone with Ralston in Los Angeles, telling him that he had "definitely recommended that Canadian Army should take this on". Ralston approved in principle.<sup>11</sup>

On 27 September a message arrived from Colonel Ralston conveying his approval and specifying that the units "should be sent from troops now in Canada and not from England".<sup>12</sup> On the 29th the Canadian Prime Minister, in his capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs, cabled to the Dominions Office that the Canadian Government agreed in principle to send two battalions to strengthen the Hong Kong garrison, and would be glad to consider arrangements for their dispatch.<sup>13</sup> On 2 October, accordingly, the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, remembering Mr. Churchill's reservation, asked his approval for going ahead with arrangements to send the battalions. He gave it, subject to the concurrence of the Foreign Secretary, which was immediately forthcoming. On 8 October the Chiefs of Staff authorized the reinforcement operation to proceed.<sup>14</sup>

It is worth while to examine the reasons for the Canadian Government's decision. Canada had at this period no intelligence organization of her own capable of making a fully adequate estimate of the situation in the Far East; essentially, Ottawa depended upon London for such information. Nor was any military appreciation requested of or prepared by the Canadian General Staff as to the situation of Hong Kong in the event of war with

Japan.<sup>15</sup> The Canadian Government had not been told of Mr. Churchill's earlier doubts. It was of course amply clear however that the garrison's position in war would be most perilous. The Government's decision was evidently made mainly upon the circumstances as presented in the Dominions Office cable. Colonel Ralston retrospectively explained<sup>16</sup> the reasoning which led him to concur in the dispatch of the Canadian force:

Without labouring it the considerations set out in the telegram were very largely the factors which influenced me in connection with it.... I had at the end of the consideration of the telegram this in mind, that the furnishing of one or two battalions would do a great deal more than a force of that size would usually do. It seemed to me from what I knew generally that above all things we needed time, and I had very definitely in my mind, rightly or wrongly, that if Japan did come into the war the United States would be in, too; and I had it definitely in my mind that the United States were none too ready to come in, and anything which would either defer or deter Japan from coming in would be highly desirable from our point of view. . . . It seemed to me that we had an opportunity to make a contribution, perhaps not large in numbers but certainly effective in its results which we should not disregard.

A similar account was given by the Naval Minister, Mr. Angus L. Macdonald.<sup>17</sup> On 2 October the Minister of National Defence reported to the Cabinet War Committee that the United Kingdom Government's suggestion had been referred to him and approved,, after examination by the General Staff. The Committee confirmed the approval for the dispatch of the two battalions, noting that the actual units would be selected by the Minister of National Defence in consultation with the General Staff.

The selection received careful attention. The Director of Military Training was asked to prepare a list of infantry battalions in Canada in order of priority according to training, and sent it to the Director of Staff Duties on 24 September.<sup>18</sup> The ten battalions which he listed under Class "A", i.e., those best trained, were with one exception units of the 4th Division, which at this time was still in Canada.\* Seven other units were included in Class "B", these being either units of the newly-organized 6th Division or employed on coast defence. Finally, the D.M.T. listed nine battalions, which "due either to recent employment requiring a period of refresher training, or to insufficient training, are not recommended for operational consideration at present".

On 26 September the Director of Staff Duties (Colonel W. H. S. Macklin) made a submission<sup>19</sup> to the Chief of the General Staff, based on these recommendations, providing for consideration lists of alternative selections from both Class "A" and Class "B". The G.O.C. 4th Division (MajorGeneral L. F. Page) strongly reprobated the suggestion that his formation should be robbed of two battalions for the Hong Kong task;<sup>20</sup> and after considering the whole situation the C.G.S. decided that the best course was

\*See above, pages 91, 99.

to select two battalions, The Royal Rifles of Canada and The Winnipeg Grenadiers, which had been included by the Director of Military Training among those not recommended for operational consideration. Both had recently returned from garrison duties in areas adjacent to Canada (the Royal Rifles from Newfoundland, the Winnipeg Grenadiers from Jamaica), and the D.M.T. had presumably considered that they were among those in need of "refresher training".

On 30 September the C.G.S. made his formal recommendation<sup>21</sup> to the Minister. He wrote: "As these units are going to a distant and important garrison where they will be detached from other Canadian forces, a primary consideration is that they should be efficient, well-trained battalions capable of upholding the credit of the Dominion in any circumstances." It would be unsound, he said, to "disrupt" the 4th Division, and it seemed to him best to select units from among those on coast defence duty or from the 6th Division. In recommending specifically the Royal Rifles and the Winnipeg Grenadiers, General Crerar wrote:

10. As you know, these units returned not long ago from duty in Newfoundland and Jamaica respectively. The duties which they there carried out were not in many respects unlike the task which awaits the units to be sent to Hong Kong. The experience they have had will therefore be of no small value to them in their new role. Both are units of proven efficiency.

11. In my opinion, the balance of argument favours the selection of these two battalions. I would be very reluctant to allot them indefinitely to a home defence role as the effect on their morale, following a period of "semi-overseas" responsibilities would be bound to be adverse. The selection represents both Eastern and Western Canada. In the case of the Royal Rifles, there is also 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.

The Minister approved this recommendation on 9 October.<sup>22</sup>

On 11 October the War Office, through C.M.H.Q., asked for a brigade headquarters and various specialists details including a signal section. This request had originated the previous day with the G.O.C. Hong Kong.<sup>23</sup> Mr. Power (now again Acting Minister) immediately approved the proposal and the recommendation of the C.G.S. that Colonel J. K. Lawson, a Permanent Force officer then serving as Director of Military Training, should be appointed to the command with the rank of Brigadier. Colonel Ralston had been consulted. Simultaneously approval was given for the appointment of Colonel P. Hennessy, Director of Organization, as officer-in-charge of administration under the brigade commander.<sup>24</sup>

It may be noted here that after the Canadians reached Hong Kong, and a few days before war broke out in the Far East, C.M.H.Q. informed the C.G.S. that the British Chiefs of Staff Committee had recommended increasing the Canadian force to a brigade group by asking Canada for a third infantry battalion and ancillary troops.<sup>25</sup> This suggestion had in fact

been made by the G.O.C. Hong Kong by 19 November, three days after the Canadians' arrival. He reported that it originated with Brigadier Lawson, who recommended that Canada be asked to provide a third infantry battalion, a field regiment of artillery, a field company of engineers, a field ambulance and certain personnel of other arms and services. Lawson had expressed the opinion that these would be provided with alacrity.<sup>26</sup> Before proceeding with the matter, the British Chiefs of Staff took the significant precaution of checking with the Far East Command to make certain that no one had suggested to the Canadian Government that air support for the Hong Kong garrison was yet in view.\* They also observed that they could not agree with the suggestion of the G.O.C. Hong Kong that this reinforcement would enable him to hold permanently the Gin Drinkers Line on the mainland, but did agree that it would greatly increase the security of the island. On receiving the required assurance, they recommended that a further approach be made to Canada. On 6 December the War Office formally invited the Dominions Office to ask Canada for the additional units; but the approach was never made.<sup>28</sup> The reason is obvious. The Japanese attack began the following day, and the reinforcement of Hong Kong ceased to be practicable.

The Royal Rifles of Canada had been mobilized on 8 July 1940 and in the following winter were sent to Newfoundland for garrison duty. They returned to Canada in August 1941 and in September were assigned to coast defence duty at Saint John, N.B., where they were serving when warned for duty with the expedition to Hong Kong. The unit was commanded throughout its active service by Lt.-Col. W. J. Home, a Permanent Force officer.<sup>29</sup> The Winnipeg Grenadiers were mobilized as a machine-gun battalion on 1 September 1939, and as we have seen were dispatched to the West Indies to relieve a British battalion in the early summer of 1940. At this time the unit was converted to a rifle battalion. It returned to Canada in September and October 1941 and was warned for Hong Kong almost immediately. It had been commanded since June 1941 by Lt.-Col. J. L. R. Sutcliffe.<sup>30</sup>

The establishment adopted for each of the battalions sent to Hong Kong totalled, with attached personnel, 34 officers and 773 other ranks.<sup>31</sup> It was decided that, in addition, the battalions should take "first reinforcements" amounting to six officers and 150 other ranks each. At the time when the

\*The C.-in-C. Far East, when apprised of the forthcoming reinforcement, had inquired whether this implied a basic change of policy at Hong Kong. The Chiefs of Staff replied on 6 November that policy was unaltered—the colony was still an outpost, to be held as long as possible; but it had become practicable for Britain and the United States to "take a more forward line in the Far East". It was emphasized that air resources were still insufficient to permit the stationing of air forces at Hong Kong.<sup>27</sup> It is worth noting that the terms of the message sent to Canada on 19 September (above, page 440) seemed to imply that the "outpost" policy had been abandoned.

units were selected, the Royal Rifles were at full strength and indeed had three officers and 59 other ranks surplus to establishment. The Winnipeg Grenadiers, who at an earlier time had been on a lower (garrison) establishment, were still five officers and 52 other ranks under strength. Subsequently, some 80 men of the Grenadiers and some 71 of the Rifles were struck off strength, for medical or other reasons.<sup>32</sup> To bring the battalions up to strength and provide them with first reinforcements, then, approximately 440 new men in all were required, and had to be provided during the very short period (14-16 days) between the time when the two units were warned for duty (9 October) and their entrainment for Vancouver. It was also essential to maintain secrecy concerning the projected trans-Pacific move, and this somewhat hampered the process of collecting the necessary men.

The policy adopted was that the men required would be found from among those volunteering to serve overseas in a "semi-tropical" climate. Those for the Royal Rifles were provided from Military District No. 2 (102 from two Advanced Training Centres at Camp Borden, and 52 from The Midland Regiment). The Winnipeg Grenadiers got 252 men from Military District No. 10 (189 from an Advanced Training Centre at Winnipeg, which also provided 12 officers; 40 from No. 10 District Depot; and 23 from a Basic Training Centre at Portage la Prairie), and 30 from an Advanced Training Centre at Dundurn in Military District No. 12.<sup>33</sup>

The standard of training of the men thus added to the two battalions was one of the main points considered by the Royal Commission which subsequently investigated the dispatch of the force. The accepted policy governing reinforcements for the Corps in Britain was that men should not leave Canada without undergoing "the full period of training laid down", which was 16 weeks.<sup>34</sup> The Commissioner (Sir Lyman Duff), after careful analysis, found that "approximately 120 men were included in the expedition before they had completed their prescribed periods of training".<sup>35</sup> (An army analysis indicates that of all the men added to the two units, 23 had served for two months or less, while 172 had served for twelve months or more.)<sup>36</sup> These 120 men amounted to about six per cent of the whole force dispatched. The Commissioner concluded that the fact that this small number of men fell short, in varying degrees, of the accepted standard of training at the time when the force sailed, did not detrimentally affect its fighting efficiency. There is no reason to disagree with this finding. The total proportion was small, the majority of these men had been trained for the greater part of the period prescribed, and a young soldier learns his duties more rapidly as a member of a field unit than in a training centre. And all the men concerned had opportunities for improving their training to some extent before the war with Japan began on 7 December.\*

\*The greenest men in the force were three who had only 38 days' service when it sailed, and 78 days at the time of the Japanese attack.<sup>37</sup>

### The Training and Equipment of the Expeditionary Force

A more important question is that of the general state of training of the battalions that went to Hong Kong.

The Royal Rifles had completed basic training before going to Newfoundland. In the island the battalion was at first divided, but in the spring of 1941 it was concentrated as a unit at St. John's and thereafter was in a position to train somewhat more effectively. Company exercises were frequent, but the unit's records indicate that it had little chance to exercise as a battalion in mobile warfare. Range facilities in Newfoundland were not very good, but there was considerable firing with both rifle and Bren gun, and T.O.E.Ts. (Tests of Elementary Training) were carried out for both weapons.<sup>38</sup>

The Winnipeg Grenadiers had made respectable progress before being sent to Jamaica. All personnel had "been taught to use the rifle and carried out T.O.E.T."<sup>39</sup> The majority of men had fired the rifle classification before going to the West Indies. In Jamaica, where the unit was under British authority, hardly any ammunition for training could be spared at this period, but a few more men classified there. After the battalion had been warned for Hong Kong, the St. Charles ranges at Winnipeg were set aside for it for one week and some 600 men fired "a course with rifles at various ranges".<sup>40</sup> Its duties in Jamaica had kept the unit busy and scattered, and there is no record of any tactical exercises on the battalion level. A 'useful programme of field training had been carried out at Montpelier Camp, one company at a time.<sup>41</sup>

Both units' training had been considerably hampered, as was generally the case at this moment, by deficiencies in certain types of arms and ammunition. This was particularly the case with respect to mortars and anti-tank weapons. The Royal Rifles in Newfoundland had 3-inch mortars, but no ammunition, and only one 2-inch mortar for instructional purposes. Before leaving Newfoundland the unit received four Thompson machine carbines, but no ammunition. It had no Boys anti-tank rifles, and grenade-throwing was practised with dummies, no live grenades being available for training. The Winnipeg Grenadiers in Jamaica had anti-tank rifles for instruction, but no ammunition; they had no 2-inch mortars, and although 3-inch mortars were available, again there was no ammunition for training. Of these deficiencies, that preventing adequate 3-inch mortar training was probably the most serious in practice.<sup>42</sup>

Writing on 15 November from the transport that carried the greater part

of the force across the Pacific, Brigadier Lawson made this report on his men's state of training:<sup>43</sup>

*H.Q. Details-These* appear to have been well selected. They are keen, anxious to work, well behaved and so far as can be judged on board ship, are well trained.

*Units* - Both units contain excellent material and a number of good instructors. Having been employed most of their time since mobilization on coast defence duties, neither has done much field training, even of sub-units.

Neither has completed its T.O.E.T.s for infantry weapons since many of these have not previously been available for them.\*

Despite the crowded situation on board ship training has been carried out regularly since the 30th October, time prior to that being required for re-organization of battalions on their new establishments, assimilation of new men, changes in administrative arrangements on board ship, drawing of Khaki drill, etc.

Emphasis has been laid on physical training, weapon training, P.A.G. [protection against gas] and such specialist training as could be carried out... .

The two battalions had clearly not reached that advanced state of training which one would wish troops to attain before being sent against the enemy. The lack of range practice for the Grenadiers in Jamaica is particularly striking, though compensated for in some degree by the week of intensive work at Winnipeg. The absence of tactical exercises at battalion level, the result of the nature of the units' duties in Newfoundland and Jamaica, is noticeable. But to say baldly that they were "untrained" is to give a quite wrong impression. And it must constantly be kept in mind that both British and Canadian authorities believed that the troops were going to Hong Kong for garrison duty, and (in the light of the Dominions Office cable of 19 September) there seemed every reason to anticipate a considerable period during which any training deficiencies could be remedied.

There were no troops in Canada in the autumn of 1941 which can be said to have attained a really high standard of field training. To obtain two battalions whose training was clearly equal to immediate battle, it would have been necessary to bring back units from the Corps in Britain.† But the British authorities had specifically asked for battalions "from Canada" and had emphasized in a cable of 9 October the importance of their moving "at a very early date".<sup>44</sup> It was out of the question to send units from England, nor did the circumstances as known in London and Ottawa at the time indicate that such action was necessary.

The units, having been completed with personnel, moved according to schedule. The Royal Rifles left Valcartier on 23 October and were joined

\*Tests of Elementary Training are normally carried out at the end of a soldier's recruit training. Brigadier Lawson's statement refers specifically only to tests concerning those weapons which the units did not have. We have noted above that both units had carried out T.O.E.T.s. with the rifle. Both had been adequately supplied with light machine-guns and had undoubtedly carried out T.O.E.T.s. with this weapon also.

†One could go further and say that, apart from the few divisions actually in contact with the enemy, there were in 1941 no troops in the Commonwealth properly trained as training was understood at a later period of the war. We still had lot to learn.

at Ottawa the same day by the Headquarters details which had concentrated there. The Winnipeg Grenadiers left Winnipeg on 25 October. The trains reached Vancouver on the 27th and the men went aboard at once. The bulk of the force embarked on the *Awatea*, the British transport provided for the expedition; but four officers and 105 other ranks of the Royal Rifles were carried in the escorting ship provided by the Royal Canadian Navy, H.M.C.S. *Prince Robert*. The ships sailed later the same night.<sup>45</sup>

There were some deficiencies in both personnel and equipment. A total of 51 men, all but one belonging to The Winnipeg Grenadiers, were found to be absent without leave. As the brigade commander pointed out, the Grenadiers were in an exceptionally unfavourable position, having had an especially large number of men lately posted to the regiment, and having taken no less than 15 new officers on strength. Both units, he remarked, "had a number of men who did not know, and were not known by, their officers". Referring to the absences his report proceeded, "some men never entrained, others did not reach the port of embarkation, while others who were employed on loading parties, etc., apparently took the opportunity to absent themselves, the fact that they were absent not being discovered until after the ship sailed."<sup>46</sup>

There was an incident at Vancouver before sailing. The *Awatea* was crowded and uncomfortable. Lawson reported, "While the officers, W.Os., N.C.Os. and the men generally realized that conditions would improve, some 30 or 40 men determined to break ship. They were, however, restrained, force being necessary at one period to do this. The men implicated, were I understand, without exception, those who had not been with the unit long enough to get to know, or be known by their officers".<sup>47</sup> A report from the Embarkation Staff Officer at Vancouver describes how "about fifty" men forced their way "off the gangway into the shed", but were "persuaded by their officers and N.C.O's to return in a matter of about twenty minutes".<sup>48</sup>

All told, the actual strength of the force which sailed was 96 officers (plus two Auxiliary Services supervisors) and 1877 other ranks. This included two medical officers and two nursing sisters (in addition to regimental medical officers); two officers of the Canadian Dental Corps with their assistants; three chaplains; and a detachment of the Canadian Postal Corps. There was in addition one military stowaway, a soldier of the R.C.A.M.C. who was sent back to Canada in *Prince Robert*.<sup>49</sup>

With respect to the force's mechanical transport there was both bad luck and some inefficiency. Canada was to provide this transport, amounting to a total of 212 vehicles.\* It was out of the question for the *Awatea*, which

\*45 motorcycles, 6 Ford cars, 57 Universal carriers, 63 15-cwt. trucks, 2 15-cwt. water-tanks, and 39 3-ton trucks.<sup>50</sup>



had little cargo space, to carry more than a few of them, and no other ship was available to sail simultaneously with the balance. When it came to light that the *Awatea* could carry some vehicles, arrangements were made to fill space by loading six carriers, two water-tanks, and as many 15-cwt. trucks (probably about 12) as there was room for. The vehicles, however, did not reach Vancouver until 28 and 29 October, when the *Awatea* had already sailed. It is not entirely certain that they could have been loaded, even had they arrived on time, for the ship's captain had indicated that it might be necessary to use the space for additional oil fuel.<sup>51</sup> However, the Royal Commissioner after reviewing the record was of the opinion that the vehicles could have been loaded and that it should have been possible to arrange for them to accompany the force. He reported:<sup>52</sup> "Had more energy and initiative been shown by the Quartermaster General's Branch, charged with the movement of the equipment for the force, the availability of this space would have been ascertained earlier and the vehicles would have arrived in time for loading on October 24; and there is, in my opinion, no good reason for thinking that, had they arrived at that time, they would not have been taken on board."\*

The result was that no transport went with the Canadian force, and in the event it received no Canadian vehicles before it was plunged into action. The whole 212 vehicles intended for it were loaded on the American freighter *Don Jose*, which sailed from Vancouver on 4 November, a week after the force, and in normal circumstances would have reached Hong Kong about 6 December. Under orders from the United States naval authorities, this ship was routed by Honolulu and Manila, and reached the latter only on 12 December, after the outbreak of war with Japan.<sup>54</sup> On 19 December the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet approved diverting the vehicles to the use of the U.S. forces then struggling to defend the Philippines against the Japanese.

The Canadian force was fully equipped with armament at contemporary scales when it sailed from Canada, except for anti-tank rifles (of which only two were available) and ammunition for 2-inch and 3-inch mortars and for signal pistols. The British authorities had agreed to supply these items at Hong Kong, although the full scale could not be provided at once.<sup>55</sup>

Brigadier Lawson had been given a comprehensive directive from the Chief of the General Staff.<sup>56</sup> This authorized him to place himself and his troops "in combination with" the British forces of the Hong Kong garrison in accordance with the terms of the Visiting Forces Act (above, page 255) ;

\*There were changes in the personnel of the Quartermaster-General's Branch at the Department of National Defence after the facts came to light but before the Royal Commissioner reported. The Quartermaster General, the Director of Supplies and Transport, and the A.Q.M.G. (Movement Control) were all retired during the early months of 1942.<sup>53</sup>

and he was instructed to do so at the time of landing in the colony. He was not to withdraw his force from combination "other than in circumstances that you judge to be of compelling necessity, in which case you are to seek further instructions from Canada". Other portions of the directive ran:

2. Your mission is limited to the reinforcement of the British garrison serving at Hong Kong (including the Leased Territory) and to participate [*sic*] to the limit of your strength in the defence of the colony, should occasion arise requiring you so to do... .
6. In the fulfilment of your mission, you will bear in mind that all matters concerning Military operations will be dealt with by you through the General Officer Commanding, Hong Kong, whose powers in these respects in relation to the Force under your command are exercisable within the limitations laid down in the Visiting Forces Act (Canada). Insofar as discipline is concerned, the General Officer Commanding has not, under the Act mentioned, been vested with authority to convene and confirm the findings and sentences of Court-Martial, in respect of Canadian personnel serving under your command... .
8. You will keep constantly in mind the fact that you are responsible to the Canadian Government for the Force under your command. In consequence your channel of authority and communication on all questions (except those concerning military operations referred to in paragraph 6 of these instructions) including matters of general policy as well as of transfers, exchanges, recalls and reinforcements, will be direct to National Defence Headquarters.
9. The general maintenance of your Force will be undertaken by British administrative services in Hong Kong.
10. You will keep me constantly informed as to your situation generally.

"C" Force, as Brigadier Lawson's force was called, reached Honolulu on 2 November and Manila on the 14th. At Manila the escort was reinforced by a British cruiser, H.M.S. *Danae*; the Admiralty had arranged this "in view of the altered circumstances"<sup>57</sup> (presumably the advent of the Tojo government in Japan). On 16 November the Canadians arrived at Hong Kong and were welcomed by the Governor, Sir Mark Young. They were given quarters in Sham Shui Po Camp, on the edge of the mainland city of Kowloon. Secrecy had been maintained until the move was completed; however, since a major object in sending the force was the moral effect which it was optimistically hoped its arrival would have in the Far East, an immediate announcement was now made: "A Canadian Force under the command of Brigadier J. K. Lawson has arrived at Hong Kong after a safe and uneventful voyage."<sup>58</sup>

### The Development of the Japanese War Plans

Throughout 1941 the Japanese were getting ready for the war with the Commonwealth, the United States and the Netherlands which would be launched if those countries failed to acquiesce in Japan's imperialistic designs. Japanese planning has been carefully investigated since the war. The report

of the United States Joint Congressional Committee on the attack on Pearl Harbor<sup>59</sup> is a very valuable source of information on the whole situation during 1941. More recently there has been thorough research by American official and semi-official historians<sup>60</sup> as well as by independent scholars.<sup>61</sup>

The Japanese Imperial Conference of 2 July (above, page 438) decided to adhere to a programme of southward expansion. Late in July, in the face of strong British and American representations, the Japanese forced Vichy France to agree to their entering French IndoChina. This was followed by the "freezing" of Japanese assets in the United States and Commonwealth countries. On 1 August President Roosevelt imposed what amounted to an embargo on the export of motor and aircraft oils to Japan. These events brought decision nearer. In an Imperial Conference at Tokyo on 6 September, the Emperor used his influence against immediate hostilities, at least; but the Army and Navy were authorized to prepare for offensive operations.<sup>62</sup> Thus, at the time when the British Government requested Canadian assistance at Hong Kong, the Japanese were actively getting ready for war; but they had not yet made the decision to commence it and presumably would not have done so had they found it possible to gain their ends in the Far East without conflict with Britain and the United States.

While the Canadian expeditionary force was being organized, there was a change of government in Japan. Prince Konoye had been reluctant to take the responsibility of making a decision for war. He resigned on 16 October, and on the 18th General Tojo, formerly War Minister, became Prime Minister.<sup>63</sup> (It was mainly the Army that was forcing the pace.) The new government, it is now clear, was essentially a war government, and its accession marked a decisive advance in Japanese aggressive policy. But this was not fully recognized at the time in London, Washington and Ottawa. It is clear that at first, and for a considerable time, the significance of the change was misconceived. It is important to establish just what the potential Allies' appreciation of the situation was during the next few weeks.

The immediate American reaction is represented in a warning<sup>64</sup> sent on 16 October to the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Pacific Fleet, which ran in part:

The resignation of the Japanese Cabinet has created a grave situation. If a new cabinet is formed it will probably be strongly nationalistic and anti-American. If the Konoye cabinet remains the effect will be that it will operate under a new mandate which will not include rapprochement with the U.S. In either case hostilities between Japan and Russia are a strong possibility. Since the U.S. and Britain are held responsible by Japan for her present desperate situation there is also a possibility that Japan may attack these two powers. In view of these possibilities you will take due precautions. . . .

Similar views were held in London, and continued to be held after Tojo formed his government. On 21 October General Lee, the American

Military Attache in London, reported<sup>65</sup> that he had received comments from the Chief of "the British Far East Intelligence" as follows:

1. It is thought that Japan will not advance southward, *except* possibly into Thailand, because of the danger of becoming embroiled with the United States and Britain, especially in view of the firm stand taken by the U.S. However, Japanese troops will be strengthened in Indo-China. . . .
2. Agreement among all previously divergent opinions in the army and navy in order to make certain of their assistance in any future projects launched is one aim of the new cabinet, which is unquestionably geared for war. The new Premier is wholly pro-German. It is believed that the Japs will advance on Vladivostok [*sic*] and the Maritime Provinces [of Siberia] the minute Soviet disintegration appears imminent. In the meantime, speeches by the new cabinet should be viewed as obscuring their real intention. . . .

In other words, British Intelligence accepted the fact that Tojo's was a government of extremists, but the experts could not yet bring themselves to believe that the war it contemplated was one against the United States and Britain. They believed that the Japanese would attack Russia, who had been at grips with Germany since June. (Actually, the Japanese had set aside all idea of an attack on Russia by the decision of 2 July.)

On 26 October Canadian Military Headquarters, London, sent to the Department of National Defence a Most Secret telegram<sup>66</sup> reporting the latest War Office views of the war situation generally as obtained in "informal discussion". The Japanese situation was dealt with as follows:

Situation Japan. (a) Consensus opinion that war in Far East unlikely at present. While no immediate action by Japan expected, however will be probably more vigorous assertions what she considers her rights. Japan apparently only prepared at moment to assist Germany by rattling sabre to contain Russian troops Far East. Japan realises how she can aid Germany but cannot see quite so clearly what Germany can do for her. (b) Generally considered that when time arrives initial movement of Japanese force will probably be northerly against Russia and not to south against our forces .... (c) Factors in favour northerly expansion by Japanese appear to be, first, presence of Vladivostock within easy bomber range Japan; second, oil in northern half of Island of Sakhalin; third, fishing rights in Gulf of Perzbinski [?Penzhinsk]. (d) Strength Japanese forces Canton area three divisions, one independent bde, one-tank bn. Dispositions follow. Area Canton incl Sunmanfow 104 Div and one tank bn. Area west of Canton incl Samshui Koming 38 Div and 228 Inf Regt. Area south of Canton incl Sunwui 229 Inf Regt. Sheklung 18 Div. Tsengshing 23 Inf Bde. Tamshuihu 35 Inf Bde. Japanese frontier force radius 30 miles Hong Kong strength 3000 with 18 guns. (e) Understand Chinese Government have undertaken to attack Japanese in rear of Canton if Japs attack Hong Kong. Chinese claim to be prepared to use 10 divisions for this effort.

This message was sent the day before the Canadian force sailed for Hong Kong. It will be noted that the War Office did not entirely discount the possibility of a Japanese attack on the colony, but the opinion is very definite, first that war in the Far East is unlikely at present, and secondly that when

\*Details of Russian and Japanese troop dispositions omitted.

and if Japan does attack she is more likely to turn against Russia than against the British Commonwealth.

On 5 November Mr. Churchill sent President Roosevelt a personal message<sup>67</sup> which indicates that he did not yet expect immediate war with Japan. The italics have been supplied:

. . . What we need now is a deterrent of the most general and formidable character. The Japanese have as yet taken no final decision, and the Emperor appears to be exercising restraint. When we talked about this at Argentia you spoke of gaining time, and this policy has been brilliantly successful so far. But our joint embargo is steadily forcing the Japanese to decisions for peace or war . . .

No independent action by ourselves will deter Japan because we are so much tied up elsewhere. But of course we will stand with you and do our utmost to back you in whatever course you choose. *I think, myself, that Japan is more likely to drift into war than to plunge in....*

Such were the views held on the highest level in London when Brigadier Lawson and his-men were in mid-Pacific on their way to Hong Kong. It is clear that the Royal Commissioner was fully justified in expressing the opinion "that nothing occurred between September 29 and October 27 that would have furnished any cogent reason" for Canada's withdrawing from the responsibility she had taken up.\*

At the beginning of November (the precise date does not appear) the Japanese Army and Navy arrived at a "Central Agreement"<sup>70</sup> for their tremendous campaign of cold-blooded aggression. Nothing less was intended than the occupation of "the Philippines, Guam, Hong Kong, British Malaya, Burma, the Bismarcks, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, Timor"; and as is well known the whole programme was duly carried out.

On 5 November the Japanese government decided to make war if a settlement with the United States had not been reached by 25 November. The same day the Chief of the Naval General Staff ordered Admiral Yamamoto, Commander of the Combined Fleet, "in view of the fact that it is feared war has become unavoidable with the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands," to complete "the various preparations for war operations . . . by the first part of December". Yamamoto instantly issued Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 1, which had been in readiness.<sup>71</sup> While

\*During the public discussions later there were repeated references to half-a-dozen secret cables from the Dominions Office to the Department of External Affairs. These have been examined by the present writer. *They* were commentaries on the international situation, and the United Kingdom Government found itself unable to agree to a Canadian suggestion that they be published, the reason being that such telegrams "are framed on the basis that they will not be published and the whole system of full and frank communication between His Majesty's Governments would be prejudiced if telegrams of this nature had to be prepared on the basis that this rule might not eventually be observed"<sup>68</sup> The British Prime Minister confirmed however that none of the messages contained any warning that "early hostile action by Japan against the United Kingdom or the United States was expected".<sup>69</sup> The reader of the foregoing paragraphs will have realized that there is no need of these telegrams to establish that no such expectation was entertained in London. They merely provide additional confirmation of a situation which is made quite clear in published papers.

thus whetting the dagger, Japan was still busy on the diplomatic front. On 15 November a special Japanese ambassador, Saburo Kurusu, arrived in Washington. It would seem that he had a dual role. He was to make a final effort to induce the Americans to accept Japan's terms; there was still time to halt the war machine if Japan could gain her ends without fighting. At the same time, Kurusu's presence in Washington would serve to distract American attention from the military movements and help to ensure a successful surprise attack. The United States Government was far from completely deceived. Its experts had broken the Japanese ciphers, and wireless messages addressed to the Japanese ambassadors were frequently on the American Secretary of State's desk before they reached those for whom they were intended. Mr. Hull knew, accordingly, that a message dated 5 November had set the 25th of the month as the last day by which an agreement could be completed. On 22 November another intercepted message extended the deadline to the 29th and added, "After that things are automatically going to happen".<sup>72</sup>

On 1 December another Imperial Conference in Tokyo, at which the Emperor sat silent, took the final irrevocable decision to commence hostilities. The same day the Chief of the Naval General Staff sent to the C.-in-C. Combined Fleet the following message:

Japan under the necessity of her self-preservation, has reached a decision to declare war on the United States of America, British Empire, and the Netherlands. Time to start action will be announced later....

The naval task force that was to attack Pearl Harbor was already at sea.<sup>73</sup>

Not until the first week of November did the British and American governments begin to believe that an immediate attack by Japan upon themselves was likely. Following the interception of the first "deadline" message, Mr. Hull, at a Cabinet meeting in Washington on 7 November, delivered a warning concluding with these words: "In my opinion, relations are extremely critical. We should be on the lookout for a military attack by Japan anywhere at any time."<sup>74</sup> This may be said to indicate the onset of really acute apprehension.

At the beginning of November the British in the Far East were still sanguine. A "combined situation report" produced by Intelligence at Hong Kong and dated 1 November expressed the view that visible Japanese preparations were "more likely part of a general tightening up to concert pitch rather than the final touches before plunging off the deep end". But about 20 November Japanese military movements suggesting the possibility of early attack began to be apparent to British and American intelligence staffs. On 22 November the British Commander-in-Chief, Far East, made an appreciation which reflects an increasing sense of the danger of such

attack. The same day, precautions were taken; in particular, air reinforcements were sent to Northern Malaya.<sup>75</sup> Only at the end of the month, however, did G.H.Q. at Singapore come to believe that Japan "might be actually on the verge of starting war". On 1. December G.H.Q. ordered "No. 2 degree of readiness" and the volunteer forces in the British colonies were mobilized.<sup>76</sup> The British there and in London, who had long viewed the prospect with considerable optimism, now had somewhat less doubt of the real facts,\* and when the attack came a week later it did not take them by surprise.

It is apparent from the foregoing that the actual Japanese orders for their stealthy attack were not issued until after "C" Force had sailed from Canada, and that the British authorities in the Far East did not become convinced that attack was really probable until about a fortnight after Brigadier Lawson's force arrived at Hong Kong.

### The Defences of Hong Kong

The Crown Colony of Hong Kong consists of Hong Kong Island, off the coast of China, south-east of the city of Canton; the adjacent mainland peninsula of Kowloon; and beyond Kowloon the "New Territories", which are leased to the British Crown. The total area is 410 square miles. The island itself has an area of about 29 square miles. It is extremely mountainous. The strait separating island from mainland is less than half a mile wide at its narrowest point, the Lye Mun Passage at the island's north-east corner. The Colony's population early in 1941 was 1,500,000, the vast majority being Chinese, many of them refugees from the Japanese aggression which had been in progress in China since 1931.

Hong Kong was the headquarters and base of the Royal Navy's China station, and had always been a "defended port" of some strength. The Washington treaties of 1922, however, had included an agreement to maintain the *status quo* in matters of fixed defences in this part of the Pacific. This agreement lapsed only in 1937, and while it was in force the British authorities were precluded from increasing the armament of Hong Kong. In 1935-36, however, they undertook a programme of modernizing and reorganizing the existing armament. By December 1941 the 9.2-inch guns forming the backbone of this armament had been re-sited (three on Mount Davis, three at the south-eastern point of Stanley Peninsula, and two at the point of Cape D'Aguilar); some had been given higher-angle mountings.<sup>77</sup> The main concern

\*Nevertheless, the last combined situation report prepared by the Intelligence staffs at Hong Kong, dated 1 December, observes that it is still doubtful "if war has actually been decided on": "The danger is rather that Japan may drift into war by continuing her present foreign policy which is bound to lead to a conflict with the Democratic Powers sooner or later."

was still resistance to seaborne attack.\* But by July 1939 the War Office in London was planning on the assumption that the Japanese, being now well placed on the adjacent Chinese mainland, were henceforth less likely to attack the colony from the sea.<sup>78</sup>

In December 1941, when war came in the Far East, the fixed defences of Hong Kong mounted eight 9.2-inch guns, fifteen 6-inch, two 4.7-inch, and four 4-inch. The mobile artillery was largely extemporized and included none of the latest types, the guns being twelve 6-inch howitzers, four 60-pounders, and eight 4.5-inch and eight 3.7-inch howitzers. There were also six 18-pounders and four 2-pounders for beach defence. The "approved scale" of anti-aircraft defence for the Colony was 32 heavy and 30 light guns, of which, however, only 14 heavy and two light guns (plus two naval guns) were on hand; four heavy and eight light guns were en route but never arrived. Two of the heavy guns were 4.5-inch and four were 3.7-inch, the others being of earlier models. There was no radar equipment.<sup>79</sup> In view of the absence of air support, this weakness of the anti-aircraft artillery was particularly unfortunate. In justice to the British authorities, however, it must be noted that in October, immediately after the final decision was taken to reinforce the Colony, the War Office cancelled an existing ruling forbidding the C.-in-C. Far East to allocate additional A.A. guns to Hong Kong. He was authorized on 13 October to send any guns he could; but none arrived before the Japanese attack.<sup>80</sup>

By the time of the attack, all major naval vessels had been withdrawn to European waters or south to Singapore. The largest vessel remaining under the Commodore Hong Kong (Commodore A. C. Collinson) was the old destroyer *Thracian*; two other destroyers were sailed for Singapore the day of the attack. There were also several gunboats and a flotilla of motor torpedo boats.<sup>81</sup> A worse weakness was the colony's total lack of air support. At its single airfield, at Kai Tak on the mainland, there was only "a station flight . . . for target towing purposes for which no war role was envisaged apart from local reconnaissance; the aircraft here were two Walrus amphibians and three Vildebeeste torpedo bombers."<sup>82</sup> The nearest R.A.F. station was Kota Bharu in Malaya, nearly 1400 miles away to the south-west. With Japan comparatively near, and Japanese forces in Formosa and on the Chinese mainland, this isolation was the insuperable factor in Hong Kong's strategic situation. British planners nevertheless considered that it should be able to hold out for a long time. We have seen General Grasett's views and noted that reserve supplies for 130 days were now maintained at the fortress.<sup>83</sup>

\*The fortress guns were able to engage landward targets (General Maltby records that "calculations to hit one hundred points" had been worked out in peacetime), but the events of the siege were to show that the quantity of suitable ammunition available for this sort of shooting (25 rounds per gun) was inadequate.



The G.O.C. Hong Kong, Major-General C. M. Maltby, an Indian Army officer who had succeeded General Grasett in July 1941, had under his command for the defence of the Colony a total force, including the Canadians, of some 14,000 all ranks.\* This however includes many non-combatants (nursing sisters, St. John Ambulance Brigade, etc., etc.) and also includes Naval and R.A.F. personnel. Maltby later estimated the maximum strength in actual "fighting troops" at 11,000.<sup>84</sup> The military force included the 8th and 12th Coast Regiments and 5th Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (all three containing many Indian personnel); the 1st Hong Kong Regiment, Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery (Indian troops with British officers); the 965th Defence Battery, R.A. (also including many Indians), which manned the beach-defence guns; and the 22nd and 40th Fortress Companies, Royal Engineers, many of whose personnel were Chinese.

There was one battalion of British infantry (the 2nd Battalion, Royal Scots); one British machine-gun battalion (the 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment); and two Indian infantry battalions (the 5th Battalion, 7th Rajput Regiment and the 2nd Battalion, 14th Punjab Regiment). The Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps included units of artillery, infantry and other arms, and was to do most gallant and useful work during the defence. Counting non-combatants, the whole force amounted to 8919 British, Canadian and Colonial personnel, 4402 Indians, and 660 Chinese.<sup>85</sup> The garrison was thus extraordinarily mixed in its composition; in the words of the "C" Force report, it was "hardly a combination likely to make an efficient fighting force". Its training likewise showed some deficiencies. Of the Canadians we have already spoken. The other battalions also suffered from shortages of special weapons and ammunition similar to those which had affected the Canadian training. General Maltby writes in his Dispatch:<sup>86</sup>

It was unfortunate that the equipment situation in other theatres of war had not permitted earlier despatch of the garrison's infantry mortars and ammunition. For instance, the worst case, the 2/14 Punjab Regt. had had one 3 in. mortar demonstration, of a few rounds only, but ammunition in any appreciable quantity did not arrive until November and then only 70 rounds per battalion both for war and for practice. Hence these mortars were fired and registered for the first time in their battle positions and twelve hours later were in action against the enemy.

The 2 in. mortar situation was worse, for there had been no receipt even of dummies, consequently the men had had no instruction in detonating. There had been no preliminary shooting and the 2 in. mortar ammunition was delivered actually in battle.

Surviving officers of the Canadian units are generally of the opinion that those units' battleworthiness was not inferior to that of the others of the garrison.<sup>87</sup>

\*A very detailed list in the report of Headquarters, "C" Force gives a total of 13,981 all ranks. Air Chief Marshal Brooke-Popham's despatch gives the approximate strength as 14,564.

The Royal Scots had been at Hong Kong since January 1938 and the Middlesex Regiment since August 1937. General Maltby remarks in his dispatch that the former had had a high incidence of sickness, including much malaria. The Rajput Regiment had arrived in June 1937 and the Punjab Regiment in November 1940.<sup>88</sup> The Canadians, of course, landed only three weeks before war began. It was unfortunate that the last troops to reach Hong Kong did not have more time to become familiar with the rest of the garrison as well as with their battlefield.

### The Hong Kong Defence Plan

The defence of Hong Kong was necessarily planned in two successive phases: a delaying action in the mainland territories, followed (assuming that the attack was pressed by large forces) by a prolonged defence of Hong Kong Island. As we have seen, the British had considered for some time past that attack from the direction of the mainland was likely; General Maltby nevertheless records<sup>89</sup> that throughout the siege he anticipated a landing on the southern shores of the island which never came to pass. The Commander-in-Chief in the Far East\* (Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham) emphasizes that the plan was to conduct the main defence on the island. "Whilst the enemy were to be delayed as long as possible in any advance over the leased territory on the mainland, the troops had orders to retire if attacked in force, as they were required for the defence of the Island itself".<sup>91</sup>

Until the impending arrival of the Canadian battalions was reported, the intention was to employ on the mainland only one infantry battalion, its task being "to cover a comprehensive scheme of demolitions and to act as a delaying force".<sup>92</sup> An "Interim Defence Scheme" prepared in 1939 noted that in these circumstances little resistance could be offered on the mainland, as the battalion there was required for the defence of the island and it was essential that it withdraw without serious loss. There was, however, provision for a delaying action astride the Devil's Peak peninsula.<sup>93</sup> Sir Robert Brooke-Popham in his submission of 18 January 1941 (above, page 439) wrote, "From personal reconnaissance on the spot and full discussion with the Service heads concerned, I came to the conclusion that one Battalion on the mainland could only offer a slight resistance and that its evacuation to the Island might have to take place in 48 hours, but that if the one battalion could be multiplied by three the period of resistance would in all probability be multiplied by six." The news about the Canadians enabled General Maltby to change his plan and adopt a defence scheme "which had

\*The C.-in-C. Far East, with Headquarters at Singapore, exercised 'operational control and general direction of training'<sup>90</sup> over Army and Air forces in Malaya, Burma and Hong Kong. The naval forces in his area were not under his command.

been originally outlined in 1937" but had "never been fully practised" as there had never been enough troops available. It envisaged employing three infantry battalions on the mainland, holding a prepared position known officially as the Inner Line, but more commonly, from the fact that its left flank rested on Gin Drinkers Bay, as the Gin Drinkers Line. This line, some ten-and-a-half miles long, was "sited on very commanding country" but had very little depth.<sup>94</sup> The one-battalion plan had provided merely for holding rear guard positions astride the "main defiles" on it.<sup>95</sup> Before the Canadians actually arrived, detailed reconnaissances had been made and "the exact defence plan" for holding the Gin Drinkers Line worked out. Maltby writes, "A considerable amount of work was found to be necessary, for (except for the centre sector) the line was in its partially completed form of three years previously, when the general policy of defence was altered and the Gin Drinkers Line abandoned". A few days before the Canadians' arrival large working parties were provided by the three battalions now to be deployed on the mainland, and a little later the battalions occupied their sectors permanently to push the work on faster.

General Maltby believed that if he had time to develop the Gin Drinkers Line, and if the enemy did not launch a major offensive, this position would protect Kowloon, the harbour and the northern part of Hong Kong Island from artillery fire from the land. In the event of a major attack, moreover, he hoped that the prepared mainland positions would ensure enough time to complete demolitions on the mainland, clear vital supplies from mainland to island, and sink shipping in the harbour. He records that he saw no reason why he should not be able to resist on the mainland for seven days or more.<sup>96</sup>

The Gin Drinkers Line consisted of entrenchments reinforced at intervals by concrete pillboxes. Sir Robert Brooke-Popham observed in his post-war dispatch, with perhaps some slight exaggeration, that although the line was naturally strong and much work had been done on it, "it would have required two divisions or more to hold properly".<sup>97</sup> As it was, Maltby, with his three battalions, planned to hold it with a system of "platoon localities", the gaps between these being "covered by fire by day and by patrolling at night". All the battalions were in the line, and only the Royal Scots, on the left, could spare a company for local reserve; the 2/14 Punjab's fourth rifle company was forward as advanced troops, the 5/7 Rajput's, though not in the line, was earmarked as brigade reserve.<sup>98</sup> Maltby deployed in support of the Mainland Brigade a considerable part of his mobile artillery (one troop of 6-inch and one of 4.5-inch howitzers, and two troops of 3.7s).<sup>99</sup>

The G.O.C. chose for the mainland the three battalions which had been some time under his command: the 5/7 Rajput Regiment as right battalion, the 2/14 Punjab Regiment in the centre and the 2nd Royal Scots on the left. These units were organized into a Mainland Brigade commanded

by Lt.-Col. C. Wallis, Indian Army, who was given the local rank of Brigadier. Under the new arrangements, Brigadier Lawson on his arrival took command of the Island Brigade, composed of the two Canadian battalions and the 1st Middlesex Regiment. The latter unit's task was to hold the system of concrete pillboxes (numbered from 1 to 72) which had been constructed around the island's shores. The Canadian signal section was allotted to the Mainland Brigade.<sup>100</sup> Such was the defence scheme in which the Canadians took their places.

As we have seen, although the Canadian units' battle stations were on the island, they were quartered on the mainland. During the three weeks between their arrival and the outbreak of war they were busy. The first few days were occupied with "smartening up drill to offset effects of voyage" and administrative arrangements, but also with reconnaissance by all officers and N.C.Os. down to section commanders of the terrain which the plan required them to defend. Some weapon training was also done.<sup>101</sup> The following week the units were exercised in occupying their action stations. Brigadier Lawson's report for the week ending 29 November ran in part, 'Battalions have carried out two 48-hour manning exercises each for approximately 50% of strength. Those not manning continued weapon training'.<sup>102</sup> Throughout this training period at Hong Kong, special emphasis was placed upon mastery of infantry weapons.<sup>103</sup>

Beginning on 1 December, an actual "partial manning" was undertaken, evidently as the result of the apprehension of war. In each battalion, one platoon of each company plus some details from battalion headquarters and from the headquarters company took up their positions. They would normally have been relieved by other platoons after a week, but when relief was due war appeared so imminent that they were left where they were.<sup>104</sup>

The Canadian battalions' task under the defence scheme was static: beach defence, to counter that landing from the sea which Maltby expected. The Winnipeg Grenadiers were allotted the south-west sector of the island, the Royal Rifles the south-east one. As a result of the reconnaissances (which were carried out both by car and by motor launch) and the exercises, the units, when the attack came, had some knowledge of the difficult terrain over which they had to fight, though much less of course than they would have had at a later time. But since there was no attack from the sea, they were ultimately employed in a role quite different from that for which their brief training at Hong Kong was designed to fit them. They did considerable actual fighting in the general areas assigned to them in the original plan; but it took the form of mobile warfare against an enemy advancing across the island from the direction of the mainland.

The transport situation was difficult, for military transport generally was

short at Hong Kong\* and as we have seen the Canadians' own vehicles never arrived. In the first instance, during the training period, only half a dozen trucks per battalion were available for them.<sup>106</sup> After the outbreak of war, civilian vehicles were requisitioned, but the supply was never adequate, particularly since many were driven by Chinese who were prone to desertion and sometimes sabotaged the vehicles as well. It is recorded that the Royal Rifles never had more than 12 trucks at one time, but the Grenadiers "operated over 30 vehicles" which served brigade headquarters as well as the battalion.<sup>107</sup> The Royal Scots lent each Canadian battalion one universal carrier for training purposes. These were retained after war broke out and were the only carriers the Canadians had,<sup>108</sup> apart from some belonging to units of the Volunteer Defence Corps which were attached. Since the rugged terrain restricted any kind of vehicle movement largely to the roads, the lack of these tracked vehicles was not particularly keenly felt; but the shortage of trucks for moving men from place to place meant unnecessary fatigue for the troops, who had to move on foot, and slowed our tactical movements.<sup>109</sup> The dozen trucks which ought to have been loaded on the *A watea* would not in themselves have improved this situation very much; but the arrival of the general body of Canadian transport loaded on the *Don Jose* would have helped the defenders a great deal.

As for the general equipment situation, it will be recalled that the battalions left Canada almost fully equipped, the only important deficiencies being anti-tank rifles and mortar ammunition. The Royal Rifles' war diary records that 3-inch mortar bombs were drawn on 4 December. The G.O.C. signalled the War Office on 24 November that the anti-tank rifles available at Hong Kong would be redistributed throughout his command, and this was done. These weapons, however, were of little use in the operations.<sup>110</sup>

### The Japanese Attack Begins

The operations at Hong Kong present the historian with a difficult task. There are almost no strictly contemporary records on either side. The "war diaries" and "reports" which must be used as the basis of the narrative of the defence were compiled months if not years after the events, in Japanese prison camps, under the most difficult conditions and almost entirely from memory. In these circumstances discrepancies and differences of opinion are inevitable. British and Canadian versions of the same event sometimes differ, nor do individuals of the same nation by any means always agree. The information available from the Japanese side is incomplete and defective. Faced with this intractable material, the chronicler can only do his best. The

\*General Maltby lists as one of the major disabilities of his force "the lack of regular transport driven by disciplined drivers".<sup>105</sup>

narrative which follows is the writer's own interpretation of evidence which is often unsatisfactory. Some of those who were there will doubtless not agree with it.

It has been made clear above that although the British authorities in the Far East did not become convinced that war was probable until a late date (if indeed they ever became fully convinced), the Japanese nevertheless did not succeed in surprising them. At Hong Kong, every battle position was manned and ready for action. It is very evident, however, that the energy and skill with which the enemy delivered his sudden stroke were greater than the local British command had expected.

The Japanese plan called for virtually simultaneous attacks at widely separated points. The blow struck by carrier-borne aircraft at the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was only one enterprise of many. The same day saw attacks on Northern Malaya, the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, and Hong Kong. The first bomb fell on Pearl Harbor at 7:55 a.m. on 7 December, Hawaiian time - which is 12:15 p.m. on the same date by Ottawa time, and 1:25 a.m. on 8 December by Hong Kong time.\* The attacks on the other objectives followed hour by hour as the daylight, moving westward, showed their targets to the Japanese airmen. Both the Pearl Harbor and Hong Kong attacks were delivered not long after dawn; but the former thus preceded the latter by over six hours.

We now know that on 6 November the General Commanding the Japanese China Expeditionary Army had been sent orders to prepare to attack Hong Kong, in cooperation with the Navy, with a force of which the 38th Division under the direction of the commander of the Twenty-Third Army "would form the core".<sup>111</sup> The operations had been referred to in the "Central Agreement"<sup>112</sup> between the Japanese Navy and Army in the following terms:

*Hong Kong Operations.*

One group of 23d Army, and 2d China Fleet as nuclear force.

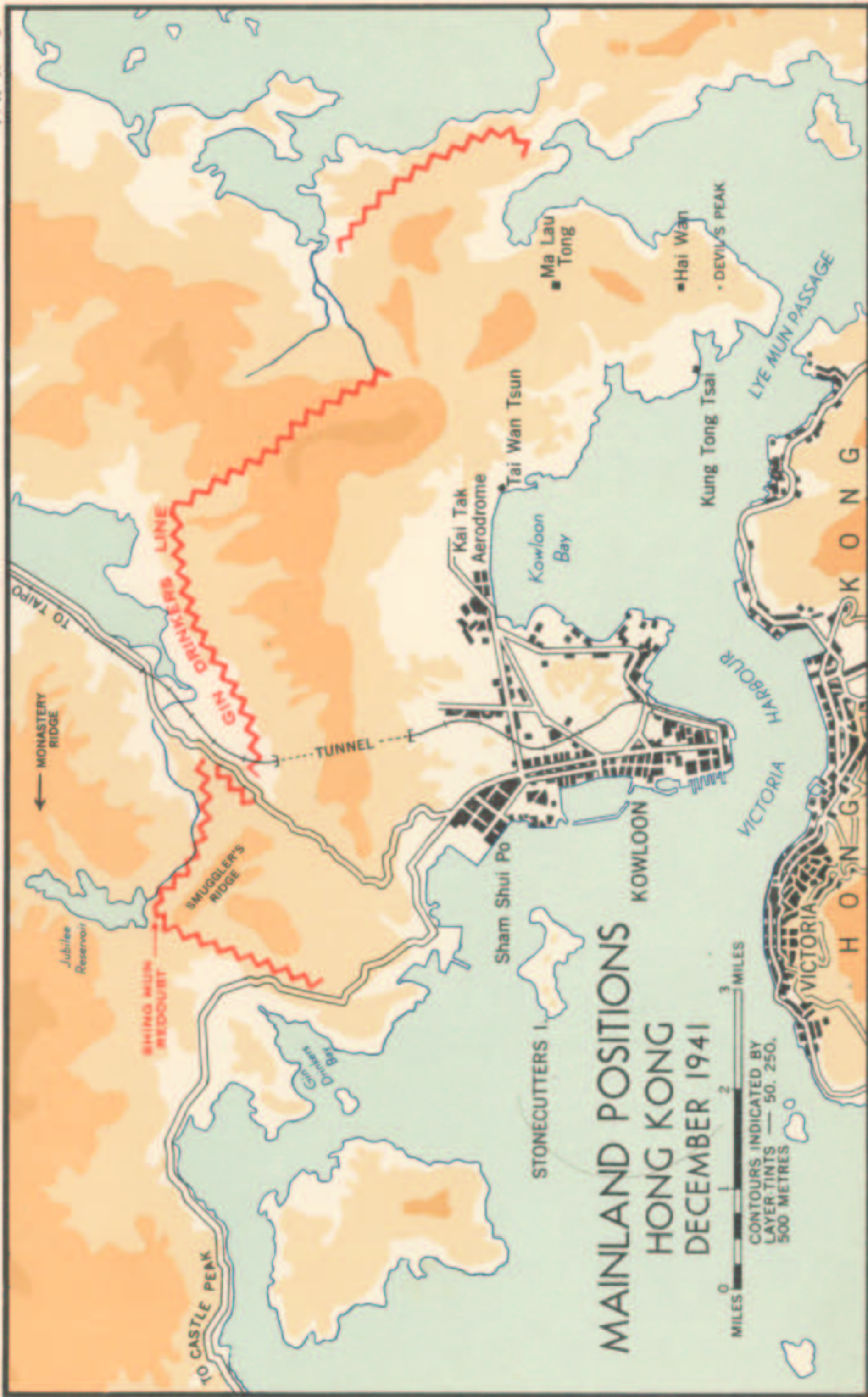
Annihilate local enemy shipping, assault enemy positions on the Kowloon Peninsula, occupy Hong Kong. After completion of the occupation, the group above will be assembled as the group to occupy the Netherlands East Indies.

Although Allied estimates of the military force employed against Hong Kong run as high as three divisions, it is clear from the Japanese sources now available that it was only one reinforced infantry division. The

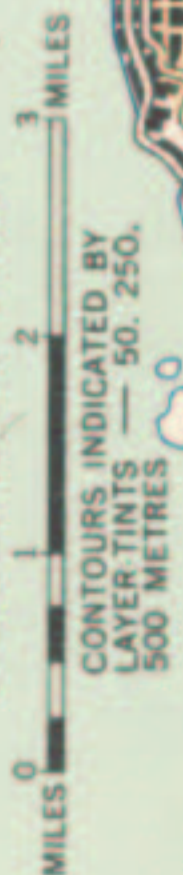
\*All dates and times in the account that follows are those of Hong Kong unless otherwise noted.

†The basic source is a narrative prepared by Japanese officers under the direction of the United States occupation authorities in Tokyo, and kindly made available by those authorities. This "First Demobilization Bureau" account is based partly on documents (it contains many direct quotations, or what appear to be direct quotations) and partly on personal recollections. Many of the original Japanese documents are stated to have been destroyed by bombing or otherwise and their sense "reconstructed from memory"; though it is indicated that use has been made of papers preserved by individual Japanese officers. There is much more detail on





**MAINLAND POSITIONS  
HONG KONG  
DECEMBER 1941**



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Twenty-Third Army (which in western military parlance would have been called a Corps) was the formation operating about Canton. It was commanded by Lieut.-General Takashi Sakai. Before the outbreak of war in the Far East, it was composed of three divisions, one independent mixed brigade and two infantry regiments (equivalent to Canadian brigades). In the autumn of 1941 it was given another division.<sup>113</sup>

The force assigned to the capture of Hong Kong, as already indicated, was the 38th Division, commanded by Lieut.-General Sano Tadayoshi, with Major-General Ito Takeo as infantry commander under him. The division was composed of the normal three infantry regiments, the 228th (Colonel Doi Teihichi), the 229th (Colonel Tanaka Ryosaburo) and the 230th (Colonel Shoji Toshishige). It had the usual units of artillery, engineers, signals, etc.<sup>114</sup> For the Hong Kong operations it was strongly reinforced with additional troops. The translated Japanese accounts of the order of battle are difficult to interpret, but there was a large force of artillery, apparently the whole of the Army Artillery of the Twenty-Third Army. This included a Siege Unit which is listed as consisting of a heavy artillery regiment armed with 15-centimetre howitzers, two independent heavy artillery battalions armed with 24-centimetre (9.4-inch) howitzers, and an independent mortar battalion. Special engineer units (including a landing craft unit) and transportation units were provided. In addition, the division was assisted by the "Araki Detachment", consisting of the 66th Infantry Regiment (three battalions) with an artillery battalion and other troops attached.<sup>115</sup> This force did not take part in the attack on Hong Kong, but had the task of covering the besieging troops against possible interference by the Chinese. A considerable air force was assigned to co-operate with the 38th Division under command of the Twenty-Third Army. It consisted<sup>116</sup> of three independent air squadrons, three reconnaissance "planes" and a light bomber regiment.

The plan of attack was simple. The Japanese were well aware of the existence of the Gin Drinkers Line and expected that the main opposition

the plans than on the operation itself. The shortcomings of this source are evident. We also have, however, the records of the interrogation of senior officers (Ito, Tanaka and Shoji) by the British authorities, some other papers based on interrogations, and an account written by Doi on the basis of his diary and recollections; and these independent accounts support the general authenticity of the First Demobilization Bureau narrative. This narrative is designated "Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 71 (Operation Record of China Theater) Vol. II". The Hong Kong portion is Chapter 3, Section 3. There are some other similar Japanese narratives, but this is the most important.

\*This is the version given in the text of the main First Demobilization Bureau narrative. The order of battle tables accompanying it gave rather different details. In some matters of minor detail this narrative contradicts itself. A narrative of air operations (included in "Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 76") states that the force directly cooperating with the Twenty-Third Army was "an air unit with one light bomber regiment as its nucleus (about 40 planes)", and that a heavy bomber regiment (18 planes) went into action on 16 December. It seems probable that the latter unit continued to take part until the surrender, but this is not specifically stated.

encountered would be along it. They proposed to move immediately after news arrived that their operation in Malaya had definitely begun, attacking across the boundary with the 228th and 230th Regiments and three mountain artillery battalions, grouped under General Ito, on the right, and the 229th Regiment on the left. They would press forward to the Gin Drinkers Line, and organize a major attack to break through it. Having cleared the Kowloon peninsula, they would prepare to attack Hong Kong. The plan was to land on the northern side of the island "and from there enlarge our gains."<sup>117</sup> To facilitate this they proposed to stage an important demonstration against the southern beaches to lead the British to expect a landing there. They intended to make free use of landing craft to turn the British flanks during the operations in the Kowloon Peninsula.<sup>118</sup>

On 6 December, Headquarters China Command at Hong Kong issued a "warning of impending war" and ordered all officers to keep in touch with their units.<sup>119</sup> On the morning of the 7th, the entire garrison was ordered to war stations.<sup>120</sup> The Canadian units were ferried across from Kowloon to the island, and by five in the afternoon they had manned their battle positions overlooking the south shore and Brigadier Lawson's headquarters had been set up in a group of shelters provided for the purpose at Wong Nei Chong Gap, in the middle of the island. Even on this day, General Maltby sent an optimistic appreciation to the War Office, expressing the view that reports of Japanese concentrations near the frontier were "certainly exaggerated" and had been fostered by the Japanese "to cover up their numerical weakness in South China". But he took no chances, and his garrison's dispositions were completed some fifteen hours before the first shot was fired.<sup>121</sup>

At 4:45 a.m. on 8 December Intelligence at Hong Kong reported that Tokyo had broadcast a warning to the Japanese people that war was imminent. Maltby's headquarters immediately sent orders to "blow" the obstructive demolitions on the frontier, and at 6:45 the garrison was warned that war had begun.<sup>122</sup> Pearl Harbor had been attacked about five hours before. The first blow at Hong Kong followed immediately. At about 8:00 a.m. there was a heavy and skilful attack by 48 Japanese aircraft.\* All the very few R.A.F. machines at Kai Tak aerodrome were either damaged or destroyed, as were a number of civil planes. The nearly-empty camp at Sham Shui Po was also bombed, causing the first Canadian casualties, two men of the Royal Canadian Signals wounded.<sup>123</sup>

From an early hour on 8 December the Japanese ground forces were moving across the frontier of the New Territories and were in touch with the British forward troops (a company of the 2/14 Punjab with some armoured

\*General Maltby writes in his dispatch, "The efficiency of the enemy air force was probably the greatest surprise to me."

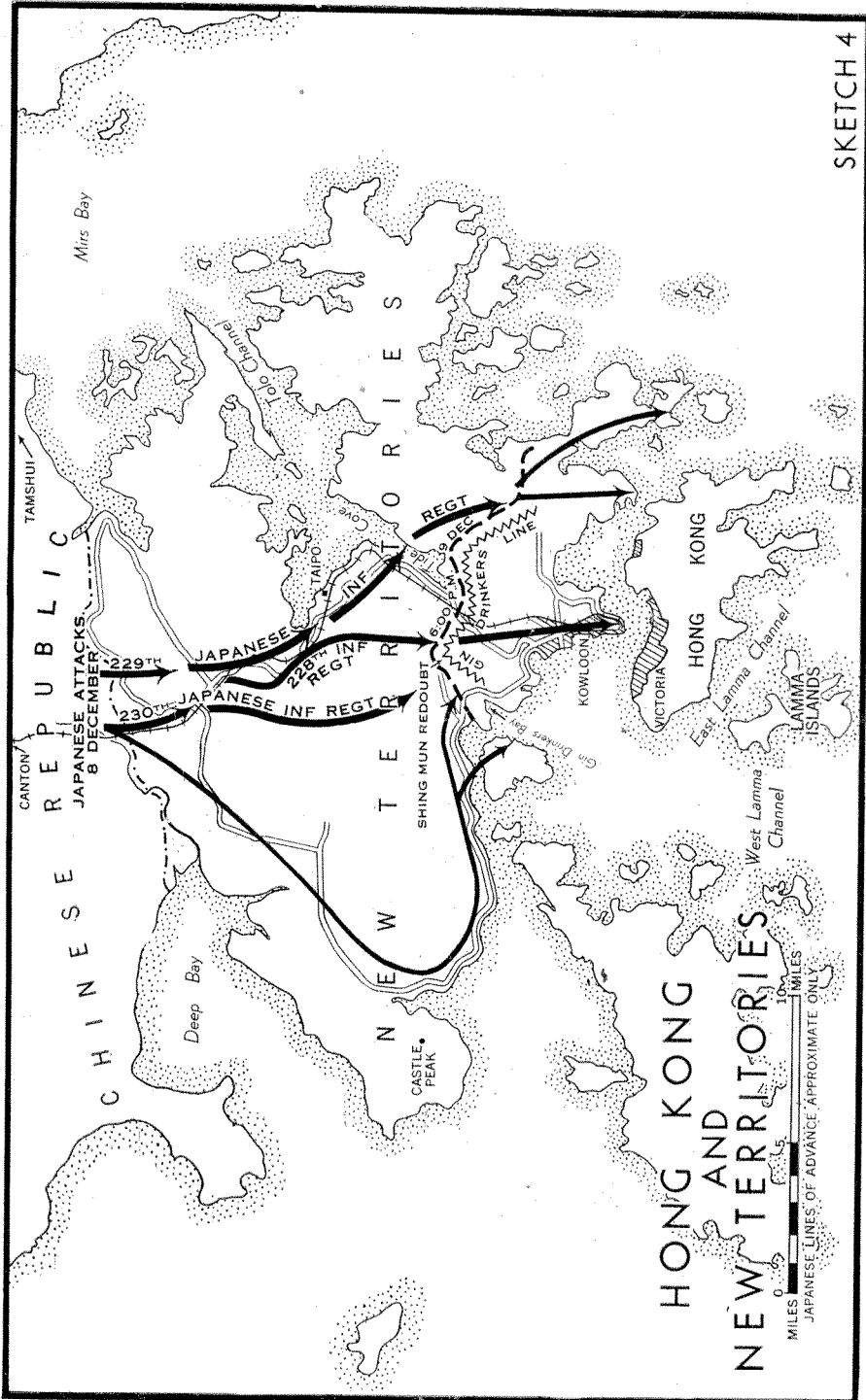
cars and carriers). These troops fell back towards the Gin Drinkers Line, inflicting casualties and concentrating upon ensuring that the demolitions were carried out. In general, this is said to have been effected, although General Maltby writes, "some failed to provide the measure of delaying action anticipated".<sup>124</sup> Actually, the Japanese seem to have been very little discommoded. At dawn on the 9th the British forward troops were on Monastery Ridge, just in advance of the Gin Drinkers Line. That evening they withdrew into the Line in accordance with orders.<sup>125</sup>

### The Loss of the Gin Drinkers Line and the Withdrawal to the Island

The Japanese, expecting serious trouble with the Gin Drinkers Line, had planned a pause before it during which they would "make preparations for a major attack". It is stated that orders issued on the morning of the 9th defined the main point of attack as the high ground south-west of Jubilee Reservoir, and the preparations were to be completed "within a week". However, "the operations progressed much faster than anticipated".<sup>126</sup>

The most important position on the left flank of the Gin Drinkers Line was Shing Mun Redoubt, on the north end of Smuggler's Ridge, directly overlooking the Reservoir—the high ground which the Japanese had seen as their chief objective. It was held by a platoon of the Royal Scots, who also had a company headquarters there. On the afternoon of 9 December Colonel Doi, commanding the Japanese 228th Regiment, who had had the forethought to obtain the divisional commander's concurrence in his exploiting any opportunities that might arise, went forward with a small party to reconnoitre this area. He says he formed the impression that the British were not expecting an early attack. Although the position was in the 230th Regiment's sector, he accordingly ordered a night attack led by his 3rd Battalion, which assaulted Shing Mun Redoubt about midnight. For some time there was fierce fighting, both in underground tunnels and on the surface; but the redoubt fell into Japanese hands.<sup>127</sup>

This was a disaster. General Maltby writes, "The capture by surprise of this key position, which dominated a large portion of the left flank and the importance of which had been so frequently stressed beforehand, directly and gravely affected subsequent events and prejudiced Naval, Military and Civil defence arrangements." The surprise was doubtless facilitated by the fact that the British had believed that "Japanese night work was poor".<sup>128</sup> This had now been proved to be the reverse of the truth. Maltby discussed with Brigadier Wallis "the possibility of mounting an immediate counterattack", but this was ruled out "as the nearest troops were a mile away, the



SKETCH 4

Historical Section, G.S.

ground precipitous and broken, and the exact situation round the Redoubt very obscure".<sup>129</sup> No attempt was made to use the Royal Scots' reserve company (above, page 459) and no counter-attack was made against Shing Mun Redoubt then or later. The G.O.C., however, ordered an artillery concentration to be put down upon it in the early hours of 10 December. Earlier, as soon as it was clear that the Redoubt was gone, he decided to send to the mainland "D" Company of The Winnipeg Grenadiers, which was at Wong Nei Chong Gap as reserve for the Island Brigade. The company, placed at Wallis's disposal, was in position at his headquarters early in the morning. ' It stood by in Kowloon throughout 10 December.<sup>130</sup>

The Japanese command disapproved of Doi's initiative, which was considered irregular, and he testifies that in spite of the precaution he had taken before the attack he was actually ordered to withdraw from the Redoubt! He declined to do so and about noon of the 10th- obtained his superiors' consent to remain. But no further major attack was made that day. Early on the morning of 11 December the Japanese attacked the Royal Scots' left flank, driving them back some distance and "exposing the junction of the Castle Peak and Taipo Roads",<sup>131</sup> thus endangering the withdrawal of the troops on the right of the line.\* The situation was critical, and General Maltby moved up the Winnipeg Grenadiers company and a Bren carrier force from Kai Tak aerodrome to cover the gap.<sup>132</sup> During the afternoon the Grenadiers' forward platoons exchanged shots with the Japanese and came under intermittent shellfire, but there was no heavy engagement and apparently no Canadian casualties.<sup>133</sup> The Japanese give no details of this day, merely observing that, encouraged by their unexpected success at Shing Mun, they attacked on the 11th and "easily" broke through the British line.<sup>134</sup> The Gin Drinkers position was now hopelessly compromised, and in consequence, at midday on the 11th, Maltby ordered the mainland troops to withdraw to the island, except for the 5/7 Rajput Regiment, who were to hold the Devil's Peak peninsula.<sup>135</sup>

The withdrawal was carried out that night. "D" Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers covered the Royal Scots' retirement down the Kowloon peninsula. There was no enemy pressure, but the Grenadiers speak of "slight opposition from fifth columnists in Kowloon". The Royal Scots were in their barracks in Victoria City by 10:30 p.m. The company of Grenadiers were in the quarters where they were to have a day's rest three hours later.<sup>136</sup> "Much mechanical transport, nearly all carriers, and all armoured cars" were reported evacuated.<sup>137</sup> Not all of the 2/14 Punjab Regiment could be withdrawn that 'night, and the battalion headquarters and two companies remained on the Devil's Peak peninsula during the following day. To

\*The TO Po road ran down the east side, the Castle Peak road down the west side of the peninsula. They came together at the north end of Sham Shui Po.

conform to the other movements, the garrison of Stonecutters Island, off Sham Shui Po, had been withdrawn on the 11th, the coastal guns there being destroyed. (Nevertheless, the Japanese air narrative records that aircraft continued to attack Stonecutters on the 12th, 13th and 14th, "silencing the guns.")<sup>138</sup>

Late in the afternoon of 12 December the Japanese attacked the 5/7 Rajput Regiment in the prepared Ma Lau Tong position across the base of Devil's Peak peninsula. The attack was not covered by artillery fire and was beaten off with considerable loss, the island guns intervening with effect.<sup>139</sup> At ten p.m. General Maltby ordered the 5/7 Rajput to withdraw to a shorter prepared line in rear, at Hai Wan. The remainder of the 2/14 Punjab were ferried over to the island in the course of the night, followed by the single troop of 3.7-inch howitzers which had been left to support the defenders of Devil's Peak.<sup>140</sup> As morning approached, Maltby took the decision to withdraw all remaining troops to the island immediately. The pre-war defence plans had envisaged a rather more prolonged delaying action on the peninsula, recognizing however that everything would depend on the general situation.\* Devil's Peak overlooked the north-east corner of the island at short range, and with it in their hands the Japanese would find it very easy to cross the narrow Lye Mun Passage to the island; but the General "foresaw the greatest difficulties and even the impossibility of maintaining the 5/7 Rajput Regt. with ammunition and supplies in their isolated position". He also needed this unit to hold the north-east sector of the island. The Rajputs were accordingly ordered back at once; the last covering troops from the mainland reached the island at 9:20 a.m. on 13 December. Fortunately, there was no Japanese air interference with the movement's final stage, which had had to be carried out in daylight.<sup>141</sup>

The retirement to the island had been well conducted and little equipment was lost. The artillery was successfully evacuated, although some ammunition had to be abandoned and the desertion of Chinese ferry personnel resulted in the loss of most of the transport mules;<sup>142</sup> this was unfortunate in view of the general transport situation and the nature of the island's terrain. If the Japanese had exerted more pressure, they could have made much trouble during this phase. As it was, it is conjectured, they had been so surprised by their own rapid success that they failed to make the most of their opportunities.

Successful though the actual withdrawal had been, it must be said that the defence of Hong Kong had begun very badly. At the first moment of contact with the Gin Drinkers Line, the Japanese had won a success which had a fundamental effect upon all the later phases of the little campaign, and had established a moral superiority over the defenders which

was

never

\*This is the picture presented in Plan "B" (two battalions on mainland) included in the Interim Defence Scheme of 1939. Plan "C" (three battalions on mainland) was to be issued when occasion demanded; no copy has been found.

overcome. The effect upon the civilian population, white and yellow, was particularly bad. The white residents had tended to overrate the strength of the fortress, and the easy success of the Japanese, and the fact that the retirement to the island came only five days after their attack, had a proportionately discouraging effect upon them.<sup>143</sup> At the same time, the disaffected elements among the Chinese population were encouraged in the same degree. The prospect for a prolonged defence of Hong Kong Island was not bright.

Following the withdrawal to the island, the defending forces were reorganized. The infantry continued to form two brigades, but they were differently constituted. The East Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Wallis and consisted of The Royal Rifles of Canada and the 5/7 Rajput. The West Brigade, under Brigadier Lawson, comprised The Royal Scots,\* The Winnipeg Grenadiers and the 2/14 Punjab, with the Canadian signallers attached. The Middlesex battalion was directly under Fortress Headquarters, though its detachments manning pillboxes were under the operational command of the battalions in whose areas they were located.<sup>144</sup> The new arrangement had the serious disadvantage of separating the Canadian battalions and removing one of them from Lawson's command. He recognized the unsatisfactory aspect of this in a telegram sent on 14 December, which explained the action by the "undesirability in present circumstances of taking moves which can be avoided".<sup>145</sup> The point was well taken, doubtless, but the Canadians would have been more effectively employed fighting together under their own brigadier, especially as they had not had time to get to know the British commanders and staff officers properly. Both Canadian units were still charged with the immediate task of defending the southern beaches; General Maltby, with no air reconnaissance to help him, continued to apprehend a seaborne attack and feared to concentrate against the obvious menace to the north coast. The new system of command became effective at midnight 13-14 December. Lawson's headquarters remained at Wong Nei Chong; Wallis established his at Tai Tam Gap, a central position in the eastern sector. The inter-brigade boundary ran just east of the central north-south road across the island.<sup>146</sup>

On the morning of 13 December a Japanese envoy delivered under a flag of truce a letter from General Sakai "requesting surrender of colony and threatening severe artillery and aerial bombardment in the event of refusal". The request was of course rejected. During the day Japanese shelling increased. A 9.2-inch gun on Mount Davis was knocked out by a direct hit, Belcher Fort nearby was also shelled, and there were serious fires in the

\*This battalion held the north-east sector of the island until the night of 14-15 December, when it was relieved by the 5/7 Rajput and withdrawn into reserve. General Maltby considered that it needed a period of recuperation after its experiences on the mainland.

urban communities in the north-western region. The situation report for the day remarked, "Our Chinese labour situation grave and majority of mechanical transport drivers deserted."<sup>147</sup>

The next day Hong Kong reported that the shelling had grown more intense and more accurate; more coast-defence guns were hit, and difficulty with the civilian population continued.<sup>148</sup> On the 15th the shelling of the batteries went on and at the same time a systematic bombardment of the pillboxes along the north shore was reported, several being knocked out. The Japanese were collecting small craft in Kowloon Bay and were clearly preparing to cross. On the night of 14-15 December H.M.S. *Thracian* entered the Bay and shelled two river steamers, which blew up, while a special agent destroyed a third ship believed to be serving as an observation post for enemy artillery. It was reported that Japanese air attacks so far had been "for reconnaissance and nuisance value only".<sup>149</sup>

In the evening of 15 December the Japanese were reported to have made "an attempted landing" at Pak Sha Wan on the Lye Mun Passage, "using small rubber boats and improvised rafts". The garrison brought down heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. "C" Company of the Royal Rifles sent a party to occupy the Pak Sha Wan coast-defence battery, which had apparently been evacuated by its garrison, but when the Canadians advanced no enemy was met.<sup>150</sup> There is no explanation of this affair in any Japanese account available. It may have been a feint intended to induce the defenders to reveal their positions.

On the 16th there was a noticeable increase in both air activity and shelling. This was the day the Japanese brought their heavy bombers into action (above, page 463, n.). By the end of the day "more than half" of the pillboxes on the eastern sector of the north shore, from Lye Mun to Bowrington, had been knocked out.<sup>151</sup> The next day the Japanese sent a second flag of truce with another demand for surrender signed by Sakai and by the Naval Commander-in-Chief, Vice-Admiral Niimi. General Maltby telegraphed, "Envoys apparently genuinely surprised and disconcerted when proposal was summarily rejected. They left with hint that bombardment would be more indiscriminate than hitherto."<sup>152</sup>

Through 18 December the shelling and bombing continued. More damage was done, two 18-pounder beach-defence guns at Braemar were destroyed, and just before and after dusk there was "an extremely heavy bombardment by artillery and mortars" of the Lye Mun peninsula.<sup>153</sup> The fifth column was very active; in the early evening two successive fires at the West Brigade garage shelter destroyed five cars.<sup>154</sup> Large fires were burning along the shore, including a particularly bad one in petrol and oil tanks at North Point. In the morning the Rajput Commanding Officer had decided that "exhaustion from perpetual enemy fire" made it necessary to relieve his right forward platoon, at Pak Sha Wan, but that this could not be done



until after nightfall. It was apparently effected. Late in the afternoon Wallis visited the Rajput headquarters, and "it was jointly appreciated that the long and persistent fire of all natures, air attacks and the heavy pall of smoke drifting across the waterfront were almost certain to prelude an attempt to land after dark".<sup>155</sup>

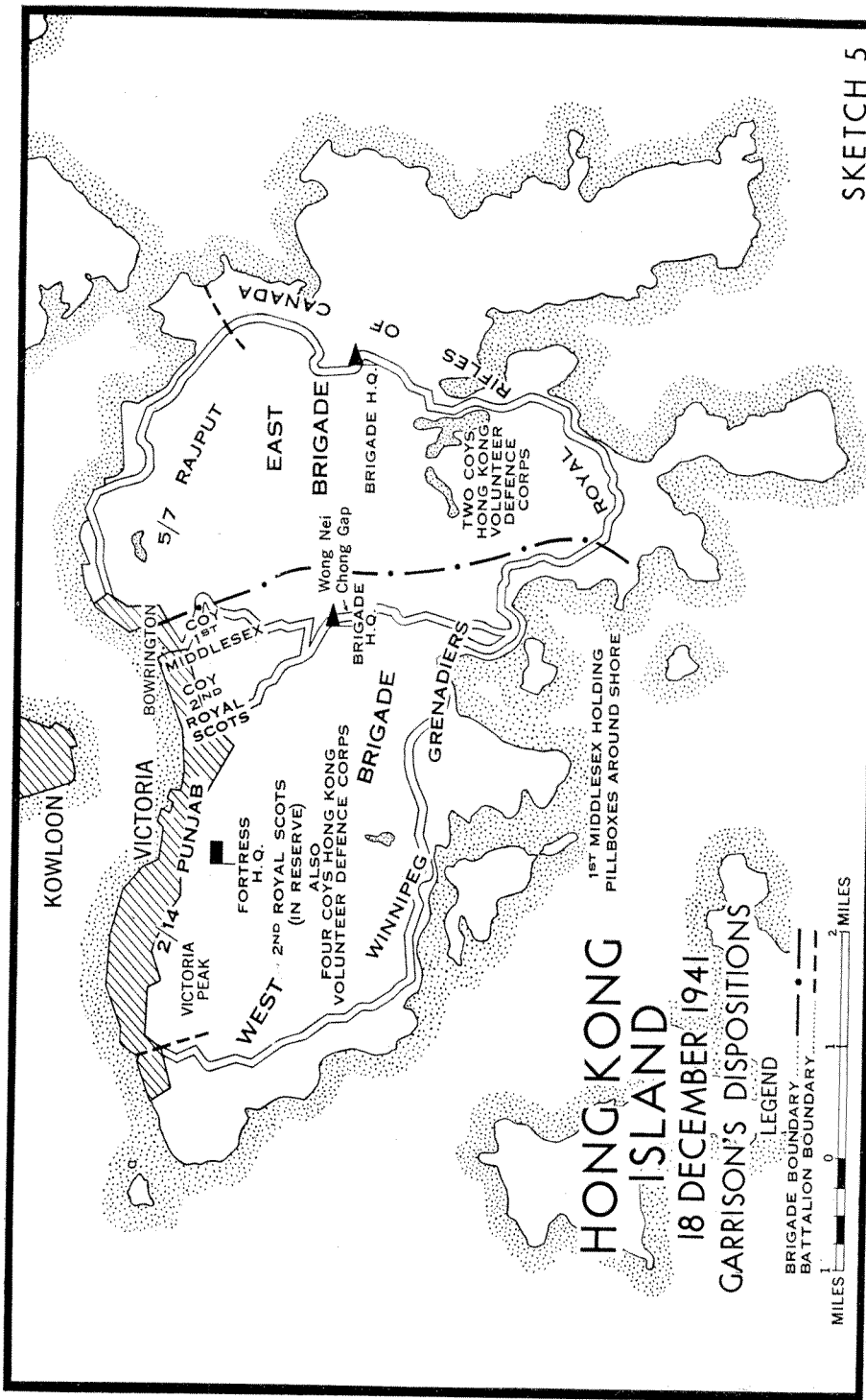
### The Attack on Hong Kong Island

The Japanese narrative observes, "Encouraged by the unexpected[ly] rapid capture of Kowloon Peninsula, the Army decided to follow it up with an immediate attack against Hong Kong, denying the enemy the opportunity to gather themselves." Arrangements were made for the Navy to support the landing and make a demonstration along the island's southern shore as in the original plan; and for the siege artillery to take up positions "on the highland in the northern region of Kowloon City" and bombard the British batteries and beach defences. As in the advance down the Kowloon peninsula, the 229th Regiment was to operate on the left, embarking about Kung Tong Tsai and landing near Sau Ki Wan. The main body, on the right, would embark at Kowloon and Tai Wan Tsun and land in the North Point-Braemar Point area. It was to consist of the 228th and 230th Regiments, with the former on the left. Each regiment was to be without one of its three battalions. The whole main body was evidently to be commanded by General Ito, although Ito does not mention this in his own statement. This force was to break through our beach positions and swing right, advancing westward over the northern half of the island. The 229th Regiment, attacking without its 1st battalion, which was to be held in reserve, was likewise to swing right after landing and advance westward over the island's southern half.\* The 3rd Battalion of the 228th and the 1st Battalion of the 230th were to remain in Kowloon City for protective duty. The landing craft were apparently provided by a "landing engineer unit" composed of the 20th Independent Engineer Regiment and the 1st and 2nd Bridging Material Companies from the 9th Division.<sup>156</sup>

The Japanese account states that beginning at dusk on 18 December the navy made its demonstration against the island's south-western shore. This, if it really happened, seems to have attracted no British attention. The bombardment had left small doubt in the defenders' minds that the attack was coming in on the north shore; and it actually began about 8.30 p.m.†

\*The First Demobilization Bureau narrative indicates that part of the 229th's main body was to attack Stanley Peninsula. The evidence of the regiment's commander, Tanaka, however, is that this task fell to the 1st Battalion, from divisional reserve.

†This is the time estimated by Fortress Headquarters.<sup>157</sup> The Japanese narrative says that the landing began at nine.



SKETCH 5

Historical Section, G.S.

Doi states that his first wave crossed the harbour by rowing in collapsible assault boats; the second wave went in powered landing craft, and in collapsible assault boats towed by landing craft. At Lye Mun Passage "motor boats and small craft" are said to have plied back and forth across the strait.<sup>158</sup>

The first brunt of the assault fell upon the 5/7 Rajput, who were manning the shore pillboxes in the area attacked. Their Commanding Officer's report indicates that machine-guns and mortars took a considerable toll of the Japanese.<sup>159</sup> Probably because of uncertainty at higher headquarters as to what was really happening, and the difficulty of seeing targets (the smoke interfered with the operation of such searchlights as were workable),<sup>160</sup> it appears that the heavy guns of the fortress did not come into action until some time after the first landings, when Brigadier Wallis brought down a series of 6-inch concentrations on the docks at Quarry Point and adjacent areas.<sup>161</sup> The Japanese narrative is very brief at this point and does not refer to losses during the landings. Col. Tanaka, commanding the 229th Regiment, says that his 3rd Battalion met "stiff opposition . . . during the crossing of the harbour" from machine-guns on the east side of Aldrich Bay. Doi also reports intense machine-gun fire. An account based upon information from Tanaka, Shoji and Lt.-Gen. Higuchi, who was Vice Chief of Staff of the Twenty-Third Army,<sup>162</sup> states that machine-gun fire from the direction of Causeway Bay caused "30 or 40 casualties" to Shoji's second and third waves landing at North Point. The Japanese landings were facilitated by the fact that fifth columnists had been cutting the beach defence wire.<sup>163</sup> In the eastern sector, Tanaka's 2nd (left) Battalion moved by way of Lye Mun Barracks upon Sai Wan Hill, while another portion of it pushed south towards Boa Vista. His 3rd Battalion, coming ashore in the middle of Aldrich Bay, advanced straight up the steep slope of Mount Parker\* and seized the summit.<sup>164</sup>

The enemy's immediate objectives in the Sai Wan area were Sai Wan Fort, an old walled redoubt on the hill of the same name, with an anti-aircraft site not far away, and the coast-defence battery at Pak Sha Wan. This whole area had been heavily bombarded by the Japanese 9-inch howitzers; and the Chinese gunners at Pak Sha Wan had decamped or been released on 14 December, reducing the battery's effectiveness.<sup>165</sup> It appears that at the very outset of the landings a truckload of fifth columnists or Japanese disguised as coolie labourers got into Sai Wan Fort and seized it.<sup>166</sup> "C" Company of The Royal Rifles of Canada was supporting this sector, and when the situation became clear the company commander (Major W. A. Bishop) organized a counter-attack with two platoons. It went in at 10:35 p.m.,

\*Major G.B. Puddicombe, who went over the ground with Tanaka at the time of the latter's trial, was impressed with the fact that the Japanese troops must have been in remarkably fine physical condition.

apparently supported by two 6-inch howitzers sited nearby. The hillside in front was cleared, but the old fort's walls kept the assailants out. Another platoon failed to recover Lye Mun Barracks. The attack on Sai Wan cost -nine men killed.\* "At midnight the fight was going fiercely" and repeated Japanese attacks were being beaten back. The fact that the company possessed unusual firepower-it had a number of extra automatic weapons-enabled it to inflict heavy losses on the enemy. At about 1:30 "C" Company, then clearly in danger of encirclement, was ordered to retire southward.<sup>168</sup>

Other elements of the Royal Rifles went into action on the west side of Mount Parker. From midnight onwards three different platoons were ordered forward successively from the Boa Vista area to reinforce the posts on and around Parker, though there is some conflict of evidence as to the orders they received.<sup>169</sup> Since a great part of Tanaka's 3rd Battalion was on Mount Parker, these parties had no chance. The whole of one platoon and two sections of another became casualties.<sup>170</sup>

All along the front of attack, it is clear, the Japanese had got ashore in large numbers, though not without losses. The three regiments worked forward rapidly, Shoji's and Doi's moving south from North Point and Braemar Point respectively, in some confusion in the dark (both regimental commanders claim that their men captured Jardine's Lookout).<sup>171</sup> Before the morning of the 19th dawned the Japanese were in the area of Wong Nei Chong Gap. Throughout, they displayed accurate knowledge of the terrain and the defences; and once more, contrary to the belief so strongly held by the British before the outbreak of war, they had given "conclusive proof of a very high standard of night training".<sup>172</sup>

A message received in London at 5:15 a.m. British time on the 19<sup>th</sup> told a grim story: "Situation very grave, deep penetration made by enemy". It added that cipher books and equipment were being destroyed.<sup>173</sup> General Maltby, however, had not abandoned hope. In a situation report sent through naval channels the same day he wrote, "Japanese will undoubtedly try to ferry more men over tonight and continue infiltration but I hope to be in a position to launch a general counter-attack tomorrow at dawn 11."<sup>174</sup>

### Operations in the Eastern Sector

In the course of 19-20 December the East and West Brigades were separated, when the Japanese reached the south shore of the island at Repulse Bay. It is convenient, accordingly, to deal with the rest of the defence in

\*There was much misunderstanding about this attack. Brigadier Wallis recorded a British officer's report that it was not made:" but the records of the Royal Rifles, who were on the spot, are quite definite.

two sections, relating first the events in the eastern area where Brigadier Wallis was in command.

The 5/7 Rajput, upon whom the enemy's initial attack had fallen, had virtually ceased to exist.<sup>175</sup> Wallis's East Brigade now consisted in practice of the Royal Rifles and some units of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps, with some Middlesex machine-gunners. About 9:30 a.m. on the 19th Wallis discussed the situation with Maltby and recommended withdrawing southward. The enemy was well established on the high hills from Mount Parker to Jardine's Lookout; piecemeal platoon operations against him had failed, and piecemeal company operations were likely to have the same result. Wallis considered that the best course was to concentrate the available infantry and mobile artillery in a secure base area and thus create a reserve capable of effective counter-attack against the high ground. Maltby approved and orders were issued for a withdrawal to the area Stone Hill Stanley Village.<sup>176</sup> Unfortunately, the direction of this retirement, as it turned out, contributed to touch being lost between the two brigades.

Early in the afternoon the Royal Rifles began to fall back, and by nightfall the battalion had taken up its new positions. Brigade Headquarters was set up at Stone Hill, where there was a telephone exchange, with the headquarters of the Royal Rifles alongside. The Rifles had companies at Palm Villa (on the coast of Tai Tam Bay), Stone Hill, Sugar Loaf Hill, Stanley View and Stanley Mound. The battalion's strength had already been much reduced as a result of the fighting around Mount Parker and Sai Wan Fort.<sup>177</sup>

During the day the coastal batteries at Capes D'Aguilar and Collinson on the island's east coast were abandoned, the guns being destroyed before the withdrawal. This disappointed Wallis; since the guns were in self-contained forts he had expected them to remain in action after the infantry withdrew.<sup>178</sup> Moreover, some much-needed mobile artillery (at Red Hill and Gauge Basin) was destroyed during the retirement—in the brigadier's opinion, unnecessarily.<sup>179</sup>

Wallis's plan was to counter-attack either through Gauge Basin or by the more westerly route along the shore of Repulse Bay. He had wished a company of the Volunteer Defence Corps to remain in the Gauge Basin area and had relied on its presence to cover an advance by this route. The company, however, had been driven out after offering fierce resistance to Tanaka's advance; and Wallis accordingly decided to move by Repulse Bay, the object being to reach Wong Nei Chong Gap and make contact with the West Brigade. The Royal Rifles' main objective was to be Violet Hill.<sup>180</sup> The advance began at 8:00 a.m. on 20 December, with "A" Company of the Rifles in the lead.<sup>181</sup> The plan called for support by two 3.7-inch howitzers, the only effective mobile guns remaining to the East Brigade. But they could not help, for they "were only getting into position and sorting

equipment and were unable to fire at this time"; and the heavy coast-defence guns at the tip of Stanley Peninsula could not be brought to bear.<sup>182</sup>

The Japanese had forestalled the Canadians at Repulse Bay, but only by a narrow margin. During the night Tanaka's two battalions had moved south, seizing Violet Hill, and by 8:00 a.m. the 3rd Battalion had reached the Repulse Bay Hotel, where it met resistance from a Middlesex detachment.<sup>183</sup> "A" Company of the Rifles found the Japanese holding the hotel garage; they were also on the hillside above the hotel in strength. The Rifles cleared out the platoon in the garage, but could not evict the enemy above. Attempting to push on up the coast road, "A" Company ran into heavy fire. The advance came to a halt, and the company took up a defensive position around the hotel and a large house called Castle Eucliffe. It was ordered to hold the hotel until the many civilians there could be removed. "D" Company of the Rifles was subsequently pushed forward across the hills on the right towards Violet Hill. Failing to dislodge the Japanese from there, it withdrew to Stanley View. "B" Company, late in the afternoon, was ordered to advance through "A"; these orders were subsequently countermanded by Brigade, repeated, and again countermanded.<sup>184</sup>

On the 21st Brigadier Wallis made another attempt. Believing that the enemy were not so strong on the eastern part of his front, he decided to advance through the area of Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir. Fortress Headquarters approved, and he issued verbal orders early on the morning of the 21st.<sup>185</sup> The movement began about 9:15 a.m. A quarter of an hour later the advanced guard came under heavy fire from the hills ahead. The Rifles pushed forward, and by about noon they had driven the enemy off the hills immediately south of the Reservoir. Thereafter the advance was held up by a machine-gun post at the crossroads at the Reservoir's south end, but Bren carriers were brought up and the troops on the spot, about 30 men of the Rifles and the Volunteer Defence Corps, with two carriers, "rushed the position under a rain of hand grenades (many of which failed to explode)" and wiped out the enemy in it.<sup>186</sup> But despite the degree of success that had been achieved, the advance had broken down. The enemy was still in strength nearby, the Royal Rifles' companies, occupying the hill positions they had seized, had become separated, and the regiment had run out of 3-inch mortar ammunition and was weakened by casualties. The brigade commander was forced to the conclusion that he must withdraw and "harbour his force in its former positions."<sup>187</sup>

In the course of the afternoon, General Maltby had ordered Wallis to send all available men to Repulse Bay and make a new attempt to break through on this line to Wong Nei Chong. The brigadier accordingly sent Major C. R. Templer, R.A., with two carriers and 30 or 40 men, to take charge in the Repulse Bay area and carry out this operation.<sup>188</sup> "A" Company

of the Rifles had previously pushed two platoons northward to join up with some British administrative details who were holding a house called "The Ridge", some 400 yards short of Wong Nei Chong Gap. Templar now took the balance of the company and advanced north, picking up one of the detached platoons on the way. The attack against the Gap failed, and "A" Company withdrew to the area of "The Ridge" for the night. Subsequently, however, two platoons were ordered by Fortress Headquarters (which was still in touch with the troops in this area) to occupy a water "catchment", on the hills overlooking the junction of the coastal road and the road north to the Gap, which the enemy was believed to be using as a supply route. The platoons were ambushed, suffered heavily, and withdrew to positions near Repulse Bay.<sup>189</sup> They had probably struck Tanaka's main force.\*

It may be well to tell here the rest of the story of the fighting in the Repulse Bay area. Early on 22 December Major C. A. Young, commanding "A" Company, was again ordered forward to "The Ridge". He occupied the house, reinforcing the British troops who were still there, with what men he had, and the position was held throughout the day. The senior British officer decided to try to break through the enemy lines. Major Young, feeling that chances would be better after nightfall, held the Canadians in their position, and then withdrew to Castle Eucliffe under cover of darkness.<sup>190</sup>

Late on the night of 22-3 December, "A" Company received through Major Templar orders to retire to the Royal Rifles' position at Stanley. A China Command situation report the following day stated, "Garrisoned hotel was evacuated by Stanley force last [night] as surrounded and untenable, and small party of women and children unable to walk had unfortunately to surrender".<sup>191</sup> This was the end of resistance to the Japanese in the Repulse Bay area. The best chance of rejoining the battalion seemed to lie in splitting up into small groups, and in this manner part of the company reached Stone Hill that night. The next night Major Young with a considerable party got across the Bay to H.M.S. *Thracian*, which was lying aground on Round Island. (The destroyer had been damaged by grounding during her operation on the night of 14-15 December and had been run ashore here after much of her equipment had been removed.)<sup>192</sup> They remained on board for two days, and after dark on the 25th paddled over to Stanley Peninsula in Carley floats. But the island was already fully in Japanese hands. The party turned back, and finally surrendered.<sup>193</sup>

\*In spite of the disjointed nature of our operations in this area, they gave the Japanese much trouble and imposed much delay. Tanaka testified that he himself remained three whole days (20-23 December) in a position on the hill about 500 yards north-west of the Repulse Bay Hotel, and it is clear that almost the whole of his two battalions was in the area. Tanaka writes that the commander of the 3rd Battalion "later reported that he had suffered heavy casualties in the vicinity of Repulse Bay and that his battalion had taken no prisoners". This battalion had been so badly mauled that it took no part in the final phase of the operations.

## The End on Stanley Peninsula

After 21 December no further attempts were made by Wallis's main force to drive northward, for the troops were in bad shape and the 22nd and 23rd saw constant attacks by the Japanese, who had been reinforced.\*

The numbers, physical condition and morale of the Royal Rifles were declining. For several days before the enemy landings, the men had had no hot meals and no sleep except what they could catch in the scattered weapon-pits which they were continuously manning. Even in the earliest stage of the island fighting, it is recorded, "some would fall down in the roadway and go to sleep and it took several shakings to get them going again".<sup>194</sup> Now they were nearly at the end of their rope, utterly beaten down by fatigue. The Brigade war diary and the observations of Canadian officers indicate that there was little mutual confidence between Wallis and this depleted and exhausted battalion which was practically the whole of his infantry force.

At noon on 22 December the enemy took Sugar Loaf Hill, but later in the day three parties of volunteers from "C" Company went forward and by nightfall had retaken the position. "B" Company, however, was forced off the top of Stanley Mound, to the south-west, and when it attempted to recover the position early on the 23rd the fire of enemy troops who had infiltrated to the south of the Mound broke up the attempt.<sup>195</sup> That evening orders were given for a general withdrawal to Stanley Peninsula. Lt.-Col. Home had reported that 18 of his officers were now killed, wounded or missing, and the strength of his main body ("A" Company being at Repulse Bay) was only 350 men.<sup>196</sup> He evidently recommended the retirement in the belief that his worn-out troops would have a better chance on the flatter ground around Stanley Village. It was accordingly carried out after dark.<sup>197</sup> On the morning of 24 December, then, the Royal Rifles were holding positions in and around Stanley Village, across the narrow neck of the peninsula. "B" Company had been sent to occupy an anti-aircraft position at Chung Hum Kok, a subsidiary peninsula to the west, where it would protect the left flank. Part of the company lost its way in the dark, and found itself with the main body in Stanley Village; but about 65 all ranks reached Chung Hum Kok and held on there until the end.<sup>198</sup>

\*It is impossible to be completely definite on the question of what Japanese troops were employed at Stanley, for no evidence is available from any enemy officer who actually fought there. Tanaka said that his 1st Battalion, which was detached from his command, took Stanley. Ito said that after the British advance towards Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir (i.e., on 21 December) Divisional Headquarters ordered to Stanley the reserve battalion of Shoji's regiment (from Kowloon). Doi states that the other battalion from Kowloon (his own 3rd Battalion) was brought from there and returned to his command on the Japanese right flank on 24 December. It seems very probable, then, that Tanaka's 1st Battalion, from immediate divisional reserve, was the first unit employed at Stanley, and that on 21 December it was reinforced by the 1st Battalion of Shoji from Kowloon



During the morning there was a discussion, apparently rather acrimonious, at Brigade Headquarters, which was now in the officers' mess at Stanley Prison. "No R.R.C. personnel had had any rest night or day for a period of 5 consecutive days",<sup>199</sup> and the unit diary records that "Lt.-Col. Home insisted that the Battalion should be relieved otherwise he would not be responsible for what would happen". There was still telephone communication with Fortress Headquarters, and after a conversation between Home and General Maltby it was decided that the unit would be relieved that night and go back to Stanley Fort, farther down the peninsula, to rest.<sup>200</sup>

On Christmas Eve, accordingly, the Royal Rifles were relieved by composite units under Middlesex and Volunteer Defence Corps officers, and fell back to Stanley Fort where sleeping space was allotted; "the last stragglers" came in about 11:00 p.m.<sup>201</sup> In the course of the 24th an attempt to reinforce "B" Company at Chung Hum Kok had failed, and during the night Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps troops tried to relieve the force in that position but were ambushed.<sup>202</sup> About 2:30 a.m. Brigadier Walls telephoned Lt.-Col. Home and instructed him to occupy the high ground immediately north of the fort. This was necessary, he said, "as the enemy were attacking in Stanley Village and there was grave danger of a breakthrough". These orders were carried out by "C" Company. The rest of the battalion got a full night's rest and was reorganized the following morning.<sup>203</sup>

During the morning the Brigadier, finding that the Japanese had gained ground in the Stanley Village area and south of it, ordered the Royal Rifles to counter-attack. "D" Company delivered the attack without artillery support; the hills in the peninsula prevented the coastal batteries at its south end\* from firing into the area of the isthmus. The attack failed, and "D" Company lost 26 men killed and 75 wounded; late in the afternoon it fell back to Stanley Fort.<sup>206</sup> About the same time, Wallis instructed the Rifles to relieve the artillery, acting as infantry, who were holding part of the front line. As the new "A" Company which had been organized during the morning moved forward down the main road to Stanley Village, it came under an artillery concentration and lost six men killed and 12 wounded. "About this time all enemy firing ceased and a motor car flying white flags came up the sloping road towards the entrance to the Fort."<sup>207</sup> In it were two British officers who informed Wallis that the Governor had surrendered the colony. He was unwilling to capitulate without written authority, but told the Rifles

\*These batteries had been intervening actively in the island fighting to the extent to which they could be brought to bear. The 9.2-inch guns used up all their serviceable land ammunition and were reduced to using armour-piercing shell.<sup>204</sup> The two 3.7-inch howitzers, near the prison, had been doing active work, but at this point were out of action as an attempt was being made to withdraw them to a safer position. During the movement the detachment was caught by heavy fire, the lorry being used was riddled and it appears that the guns were never in action again.<sup>205</sup>

"that effective immediately all firing would cease and that the unit would not fire unless attacked". Early the following morning written confirmation was obtained; the force at Stanley then formally surrendered.<sup>208</sup>

### The Fight for the Western Sector

It is now necessary to go back a week and deal with the story of the West Brigade and the Winnipeg Grenadiers.

On 18 December this Brigade was disposed with the Winnipeg Grenadiers covering the south-west and west coasts of the island, the Royal Scots in reserve in the Wan Chai Gap-Mount Parish area, the 2/14 Punjab in Victoria City and a company of the Middlesex around Leighton Hill.<sup>209</sup> The Winnipeg Grenadiers' headquarters was at Wan Chai Gap; their "D" Company was now back in Brigade Reserve at Wong Nei Chong. On Brigadier Lawson's orders, "flying columns" had been organized from platoons of the Grenadiers' Headquarters Company, to be available at a moment's notice. These platoons were billeted in houses south of Wan Chai Gap.<sup>210</sup>

When on the evening of 18 December the enemy was reported landing on the north-east coast, Headquarters West Brigade ordered out the flying columns to back up the landing area in case of a breakthrough. One platoon remained through the night at the road-junction north-west of Wong Nei Chong Gap. Another under Lieut. G. A. Birkett reached Jardine's Lookout shortly before first light. It was attacked by superior numbers and forced off the hill, the platoon commander being killed while covering the withdrawal with a Bren gun. The third column, under Lieut. C. D. French, was ordered to Mount Butler, but was repelled by the Japanese holding that hill, French being wounded and subsequently killed.<sup>211</sup>

About 2:30 in the morning of 19 December, Lawson called "A" Company of the Grenadiers, commanded by Major A. B. Gresham, to his headquarters from its position at Little Hong Kong, and on its arrival ordered it to clear Jardine's Lookout and apparently to push on to Mount Butler. It advanced accordingly. Reports of its action are confused, largely because so many officers and men became casualties. It appears, however, that it became divided, and that part of it, led by Company Sergeant Major J. R. Osborn, drove right through to Mount Butler and captured the top of the hill by a bayonet charge soon after dawn. Two or three hours later a heavy counterattack forced this party back westward. It appears to have rejoined the main body, but in attempting to withdraw to Wong Nei Chong the whole force was surrounded. The Japanese began to throw grenades into its position, and Osborn caught several and threw them back. Finally one fell where he could not retrieve it in time; and Osborn, shouting a warning, threw himself upon it as it exploded, giving his life for his comrades: A sergeant who had

stood beside him believed that Osborn's gallantry saved him "and at least six other men who were in our group".<sup>212</sup> Shortly afterwards the Japanese rushed the position and "A" Company's survivors became prisoners. All the officers had been "killed or severely wounded",<sup>213</sup> Gresham being among the dead. After the defeat of Japan, Osborn was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.\*

An attempt to reinforce the Wong Nei Chong area in the early morning had produced a minor disaster. Three naval platoons on their way up in lorries were ambushed when close to the Gap and lost 24 men killed.<sup>214</sup>

When it became clear that the Japanese were close to the West Brigade headquarters in the shelters in Wong Nei Chong Gap, Brigadier Lawson decided to withdraw to a new site previously selected on the south side of Mount Nicholson. But before the movement could be completed the headquarters was overrun. About ten in the morning Lawson spoke to General Maltby on the telephone and told him that the enemy was firing into the shelters at pointblank range and that he was "going outside to fight it out".<sup>215</sup> In doing so he lost his life, and no witness survived to tell the story. His body was found close to the shelters. Colonel Shoji visited the spot on 23 December. He wrote later, "We wrapped up the body in the blanket of Lt. Okada, O.C. No. 9 Company, which had captured the position. I ordered the temporary burial of the officer on the battleground on which he had died so heroically."<sup>216</sup> In 1946 Shoji helped the Canadian authorities find the grave.<sup>217</sup>

After Lawson's death there was no brigade commander in the western sector until about noon on 20 December, when Colonel H. B. Rose of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps, a British regular officer, was appointed to command the West Brigade. In the interval the Winnipeg Grenadiers took orders direct from Fortress Headquarters. The Headquarters of the West Group of fortress artillery had been with the brigade headquarters and was overrun at the same time, the officers and men being killed. A new West Group Headquarters was organized in rear later on the 19th.<sup>218</sup> It appears that after Lawson's position was overrun a company of the Royal Scots was ordered forward to counter-attack the Gap. It suffered extremely heavy losses and the survivors were brought to a stand a couple of hundred yards north of the headquarters shelters.<sup>219</sup>

"D" Company of the Grenadiers had been stationed in another group of shelters in Wong Nei Chong Gap across the main road from the brigade headquarters. Two of its platoons in positions north of the Gap were cut off and overrun early on 19 December, but the remaining platoon, another brought up from the west of the island, the company headquarters and some

\*It would seem inherently more probable that the hill captured and held for some time by Osborn's party was Jardine's Lookout rather than Mount Butler; but the evidence of the men who were with him specifically identified it as the latter.

individuals of the Grenadiers and other units made a prolonged defence of the shelters. The Grenadiers here were commanded successively by Capt. A. S. Bowman (killed on 19 December while dealing with snipers), Capt. R. W. Philip (subsequently wounded) and Lieut. T. A. Blackwood (also wounded).<sup>\*</sup> The garrison had automatic weapons and plenty of ammunition, and it was able to take heavy toll of the Japanese.<sup>222</sup>

"D" Company's position was of great importance, as it commanded the one north-south road across the island. And it served to impose a most decided delay upon the enemy's operations generally. The fighting hereabouts and at Repulse Bay are the only episodes of the campaign which the Japanese narrative describes as particularly difficult and expensive. It contains the following passage:<sup>223</sup>

... The advance of our assault troops met with many setbacks. The following day [ 19 December] the first assault wave by the troops to the right of our right flank [*sic*] came upon a powerful group of sheltered positions, provided with emplacements at the Eastern foot of Nicholson Hill. The enemy fire from these positions was so heavy that not only was the advance balked, but our troops were thrown into confusion. Our left flank units also faced heavy enemy fire from the defenders occupying a hotel on the Southern side of Tsu-Lo Lan Hill [evidently the Repulse Bay Hotel], and their advance was impeded. Furthermore the terrain in this area was so rugged and separated by interlocking ravines that our contact with the advance units was at one time entirely broken.

Colonel Shoji's independent evidence accords with this. He states that in the fighting on the 19th around the Gap his 3rd Battalion suffered heavy casualties, including the battalion commander; and that he sent a message of apology to the divisional commander on the evening of the 20th for having incurred so many casualties—he says, approximately 800. His account indicates very considerable disruption of the Japanese operations by the resistance in this area, and he reports much uncertainty, particularly in the early stages, as to the whereabouts of the Japanese units on his flanks. During the confusion, it appears, at least one of Doi's battalions got across Shoji's line of communication and came up on his right.<sup>224</sup>

The fighting in the Gap finally ended on the morning of 22 December. At this time the enemy blew in the steel doors and window shutters of the shelters with a light gun. Ammunition was almost gone and the position was full of wounded men. At 7:00 a.m., after two small parties had left in what proved successful attempts to filter through to battalion headquarters, the remnant of "D" Company surrendered.<sup>225</sup>

Another small isolated party had fought a similar gallant fight on the island's north shore. Here a group of Volunteers, chiefly men over military

<sup>\*</sup>Major C.A. Lyndon, Brigade Major, "C" Force, reached the position on the 20th from the site in rear which had been selected for the new brigade headquarters; he was apparently killed on the 21st. Lt.-Col. R.D. Walker, H.K.V.D.C. Engineers, was also present but severely wounded.<sup>220</sup> Throughout 19 December Eurasian machine-gunners of the H.K.V.D.C., commanded by Lieut. B.C. Field and reinforced by a few Canadians, held two pillboxes on the slopes of Jardine's Lookout above the Gap with "superb gallantry" and killed many Japanese?<sup>221</sup>



*Courtesy Imperial War Museum, London*

#### CANADIAN TROOPS ARRIVING AT HONG KONG

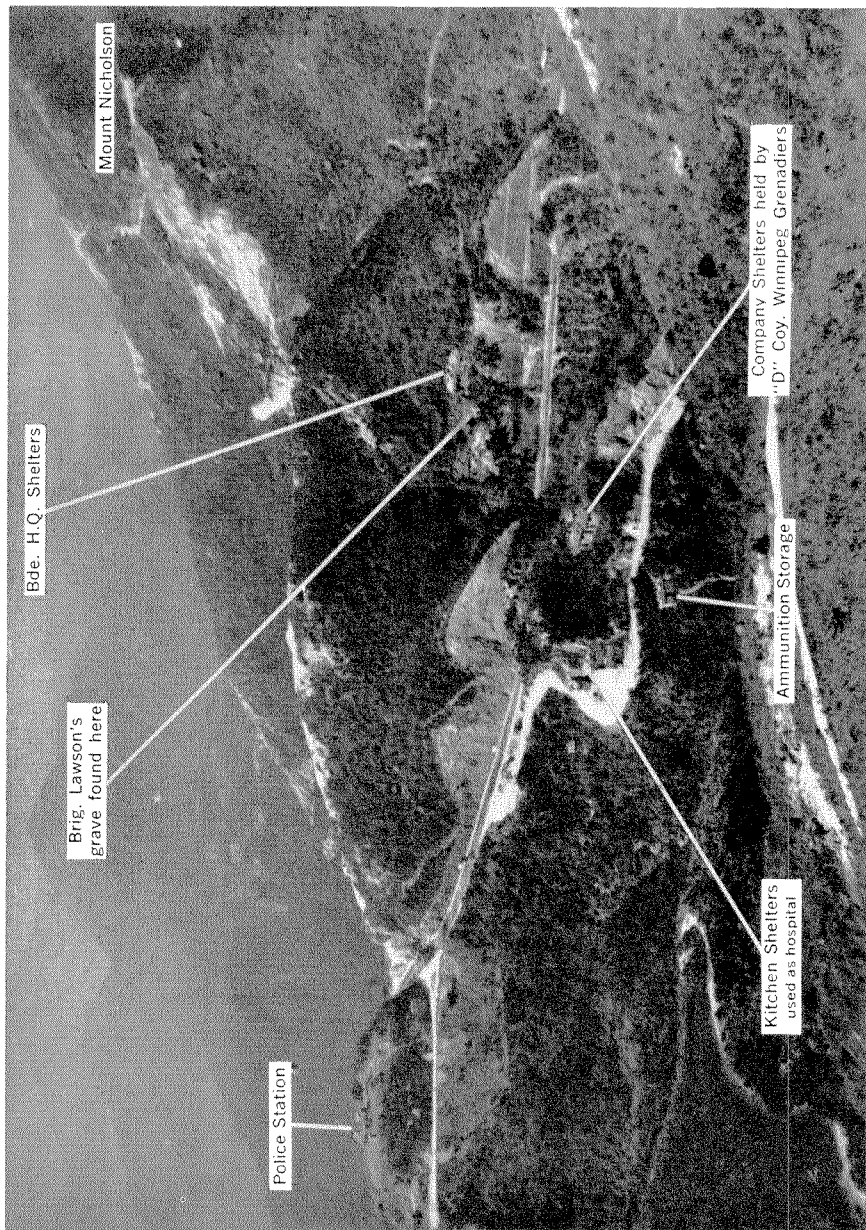
This photograph shows The Winnipeg Grenadiers at Hong Kong on the day of their arrival, 16 November 1941.



*Photograph courtesy Major G. B. Puddicombe, 1947*

#### A FORMER JAPANESE COMMANDER SURVEYS THE HONG KONG BATTLEFIELD

Maj.-Gen. Tanaka Ryosaburo (who was subsequently sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for war crimes) looks down on Devil's Peak and Lye Mun Passage, the narrow strait across which his troops invaded Hong Kong Island on the night of 18 December 1941.

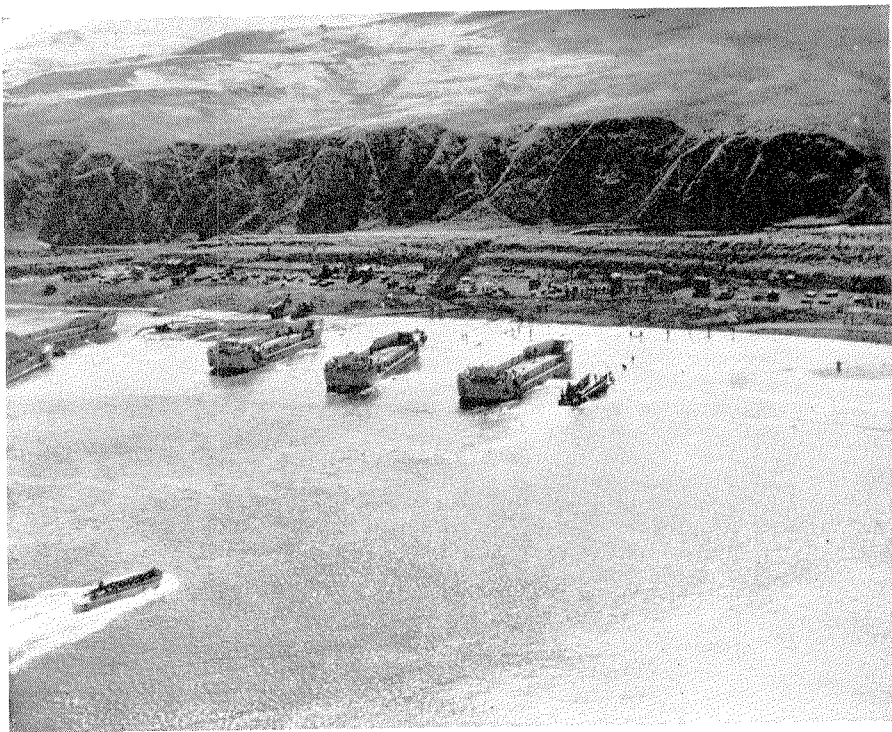


*Photograph courtesy Major G. B. Puddicombe, 1947*

**WONG NEI CHONG GAP, HONG KONG ISLAND**

The scene of one of the fiercest encounters in the battle for Hong Kong. Here a company of The Winnipeg Grenadiers held out for several days and inflicted much delay and many casualties upon the Japanese. The island's main north-south road runs from right to left across the picture.





LANDING AT KISKA, AUGUST 1943

Aerial view of tank landing craft (L.C.T.5s) and other craft engaged in landing men and supplies on a beach on the north-west shore of Kiska. The rugged and inhospitable Aleutian terrain is clearly illustrated here.



# THE MAPLE LEAF

FOR CANADIAN FORCES IN BRITAIN

Free to Canadian Service Personnel

LONDON, ENGLAND, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1945

Vol. 1, No. 71

## 'ALL OVER NOW' JAPAN REPLIES

**T**HE Japs have at last come across. After days of anxious waiting, during which rumors and unconfirmed reports flickered across the news wires of the world, it was announced at the White House early yesterday afternoon that the Swiss foreign office at Berne had received the Japanese reply at noon.

There was at that time no hint of the nature of Tokyo's answer. The contents of the Note, it was stated, would be released simultaneously in Washington, London, Moscow and Chungking.

The Jap Note, which was said to be of voluminous length, had to be decoded at Berne, then encoded for despatch to the Swiss Legation in Washington—a process which would take several hours.

This announcement followed a morning which buzzed with rumors—a morning in which premature peace celebrations broke out in many parts of the world.

At 7 o'clock, New York and San Francisco despatches said that Tokyo radio had announced: "It is learned that an imperial message accepting the Potsdam proclamation will be forthcoming soon." But the wording left doubt whether Japan had accepted the Allies' new conditions affecting Emperor Hirohito.

Two hours later a Japanese News Agency radio report spoke of an important announcement to be made at 1 p.m., but this turned out to be nothing more than an apology from Emperor Hirohito to the people of Asia for "the calamity caused by the United States."

Soon after 11 a.m. the French News Agency, quoting "competent sources" in Berne, said that the Japanese reply to the Allied note had been received at Berne and was being deciphered. At the same time, radio listeners in the United States heard Japanese radio stations beginning to make contact with all Japanese ships at sea.

But at 1 p.m. Michael Fry, Reuters' correspondent at Zurich, cabled that the Swiss foreign office was still "standing by."

Tokyo radio, at the same time, was warning listeners to stand by for an announcement at 4 a.m. (British time), which would be such "unprecedented news" as had on BACK.

### *This Was The Last Farewell*



Gen. Crerar stopped on the gang-plank of the *He de France* and waved a last farewell to the troops whom he had led in Italy and Northwest Europe when he embarked off the troopship at Halifax. He was met aboard the liner by Mrs. Crerar and daughter, Gen. McNaughton and other dignitaries.

## RADAR SECRETS TOLD

Three Big Liners Believed Greatest  
Still Carry Troops to Top Vict

### THE "MAPLE LEAF" REPORTS THE END

Separate editions of this newspaper were published in Italy (January 1944 - March 1945), North-West Europe (July 1944 - May 1946) and the United Kingdom (May 1945 - February 1946). Edited by personnel of the Canadian Army Public Relations Groups serving in each of the areas, it kept men and women of the Canadian forces informed of events at home and the progress of the war. Earlier the "Canadian Press News", first published in May 1942, had served the same purpose in Britain. The cut on the page reproduced here shows General H. D. G. Crerar, lately G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army, landing at Halifax on 5 August 1945 on his return to Canada.



age, a few Fighting French soldiers, and some men of the Middlesex, were cut off by the Japanese advance on the night of the first landings; but they held the North Point power station with great determination, and General Maltby records that the delay they imposed was very valuable to him. They could not be relieved, and resistance in this area seems to have ended on the afternoon of 19 December.<sup>226</sup>

On the afternoon of the 19th also Fortress Headquarters had ordered a general advance eastwards with the object of reaching a line running north from Middle Spur (west of Repulse Bay) through Wong Nei Chong Reservoir.<sup>227</sup> This operation made little progress. As part of it, the Headquarters Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers attacked towards Wong Nei Chong Gap in an attempt to capture the enemy positions there—particularly the police station built on a commanding knoll at the south end of the Gap—and relieve "D" Company. As the company was much under strength, a platoon was borrowed from "C" Company at Aberdeen and some men of the Royal Scots were attached. With a flanking platoon moving over the summit of Mount Nicholson to protect the left, the force moved forward along the mountain's southern slope. A footing was obtained in the Gap, contact was made with "D" Company, and Major E. Hodgkinson, who was in command, got orders from Fortress Headquarters to take the police station and then attack Mount Parker. But the assault on the police station failed, Hodgkinson and most of his men becoming casualties.<sup>228</sup>

It is clear that the death of Brigadier Lawson, and the consequent absence of any coordinating authority in the forward area during 19 December, had serious results. There is record of two other company attacks on the police station, and one on Jardine's Lookout (respectively by "B" and "C" companies of the Royal Scots, and a composite company of the same unit) during the night of 19-20 December.<sup>229</sup> Could arrangements have been made for more effective command above company level, something solid might have been achieved. Even as it was, we have seen that the Japanese were seriously delayed and confused and suffered heavy casualties.

General Maltby's expressed hope of launching a general counter-attack at dawn on 20 December (above, page 474) was not realized. The only major offensive action attempted that day seems to have been the advance of the Royal Rifles of the East Brigade into the Repulse Bay area. The lack of coordination in the forward area of the western sector was still being felt. Colonel Rose took command of the West Brigade at some unnamed hour "in the morning" and apparently began to influence the situation only in the early afternoon.<sup>230</sup> He wished the Royal Scots to push eastward, clear up the situation at Wong Nei Chong and establish themselves in the Stanley Gap area.<sup>231</sup> It evidently proved impossible to do this. However, "B" Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers (Major H. W. Hook), which was still

in its original position at Pok Fu Lam in the west end of the island, was brought up to counter-attack towards Wong Nei Chong. The plan was to send one platoon around the north side of Mount Nicholson, while the main body attacked along the south side. The two parties were to advance during the evening of the 20th to pre-arranged points on either side of the hill, take up positions for the night there, and launch their attack at 7:00 a.m. on the 21st.<sup>232</sup> There was discussion of the desirability of this attack being made simultaneously with the East Brigade's (above, page 476), but the latter could not start so early. It was accordingly decided that the West Brigade should move at seven and the East Brigade at nine.<sup>233</sup> This "West Brigade attack" was in fact delivered by the single company of Grenadiers.

The plan was disrupted on the evening of the 20th, when Hook's main body, pushing forward through fog and rain, ran into the enemy on the south side of Mount Nicholson near the position where it was supposed to spend the night. The fact is that Doi's 1st Battalion had just seized the hill under cover of the dirty weather, having advanced the time of a planned attack to take advantage of it. The Canadian party retired to Middle Gap, having lost two officers and 20 men. At first light it went forward again, the left party going into action at the same time. A very bitter fight followed, in which the Japanese had the advantage of superior numbers; then "B" Company fell back, having suffered further heavy losses.\* Of the 98 all ranks who had gone into the operation, all of the officers, the company sergeant major, six N.C.Os. and 29 men had become casualties.<sup>234</sup>

The Japanese position was steadily improving. They had continued to land in large numbers through the 19th. Commodore Collinson, noting the absence of effective resistance to this movement early that morning, ordered his motor torpedo boats to attack the landing craft. One or more of the latter were sunk, but two of the M.T.Bs. were lost to air bombing and gunfire.<sup>235</sup> On the 20th the Japanese brought artillery ashore on the island, and the following day, their narrative notes, their advanced troops "began to recover" from their initial confusion.<sup>236</sup> The situation report sent out from Hong Kong on 22 December<sup>237</sup> painted a dark picture, recounting the failure of the Grenadiers' counter-attack and that of the Royal Rifles towards Tai Tam Tuk (above, page 476). It mentioned further enemy landings and added, "Our troops are very tired and have suffered heavy casualties." It also reported the death of Colonel Patrick Hennessy, Senior Administrative Officer of the Canadian force. Shortly before ten in the morning of the

\*The account of this attack in General Maltby's Despatch is incomplete. It gives the impression that the operation was intended to take place on the evening of 20 December and makes no mention of the fighting on the early morning of the 21st. But Colonel Doi writes, "At dawn on the 21st, the enemy counter-attacked with about 400 men, but they were repulsed after fierce fighting. In that engagement the unit defending the summit exhausted all its hand grenades and fought by throwing stones. This fighting cost one company about 40 per cent in casualties including the company commander and platoon leaders."

20th, the house on Victoria Peak which had been allotted to him as office and quarters was struck by a large-calibre shell. Capt. R. M. Davies, the Field Cashier, was killed instantly and Colonel Hennessy so severely wounded that he died on the way to hospital.<sup>238</sup>

The Japanese were now firmly in control of Mount Nicholson, and the next hill to the westward, Mount Cameron, became of great importance. On the morning of the 21st Lt.-Col. Sutcliffe ordered his second-in-command, Major G. Trist, to gather all available men and hold this position. Trist occupied an area "along the top of the ridge immediately behind the crest" with about 100 men and held it through the afternoon and evening under intermittent artillery and mortar fire.<sup>239</sup> On 22 December he was reinforced by a platoon of Royal Engineers and the troops on Mount Cameron were reorganized. That afternoon there was heavy bombardment and some casualties.

At 8:00 p.m. Colonel Doi attacked Mount Cameron with his 2nd Battalion and a company from the 1st. Again he reports fierce fighting and heavy Japanese losses. But after half an hour or so a serious threat developed to the rear of the Canadians' right flank. The Grenadiers' report says, "This information was relayed to Lt.-Col. Sutcliffe who, after a conference with Acting Brigadier Rose issued an order to withdraw to Wan Chai Gap". There is a contradiction in evidence here, as Colonel Rose states that the withdrawal was not authorized by Brigade.<sup>240</sup> The troops fell back, apparently "somewhat disorganized".<sup>241</sup> The following day, after a period of uncertainty, the situation in this area was stabilized, when the Royal Scots aided by some Marines succeeded in establishing themselves on Mount Cameron's western slopes.<sup>242</sup>

Throughout the operations the Royal Navy had taken the fullest part that its slender local means allowed. The gunboat *Cicala* bombarded enemy positions from Deep Water Bay on the 20th and 21st; on the latter date she was sunk by dive-bombing. Thereafter her people fought as infantry, as did the *Thracian's* also.<sup>243</sup>

### The Fall of Hong Kong

At the time of the action on Mount Cameron, one company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers had not yet been deeply involved in the operations. This was "C", which was still holding its original positions to the south around the Aberdeen Reservoirs and Bennet's Hill, although two platoons had been taken away for action elsewhere. The battalion records that about midnight of 22-23 December, as a result of the precipitate withdrawal from Mount Cameron, Brigade Headquarters ordered this company to retire to

Aberdeen Village; it was suggested that there was no time to reach Mount Gough, to which other troops were pulling back. However, the company tried to reach Mount Gough by the roundabout route by Pok Fu Lam. Here, on communicating with Fortress Headquarters, it was ordered back to its original positions. The troops were too exhausted at the moment to make the move, but it was carried out on the afternoon of the 23rd, "C" Company having been reinforced by 80 more men. In the meantime, naval platoons from Aberdeen had moved into the Bennet's Hill area.<sup>244</sup>

At midnight 23-24 December, the West Brigade was disposed as follows. On the right were the naval detachments, sharing the defence of Bennet's Hill with the Grenadiers, whose line ran thence to the vicinity of Mount Cameron, their battalion headquarters having returned to Wan Chai Gap. In front, a company of the Middlesex was holding out at Little Hong Kong, almost isolated, although ammunition lorries were still getting through to the magazine there. The Royal Scots were on the northern and western slopes of Mount Cameron, and small remnants of the two Indian battalions were disposed to the north of it. On the extreme left another Middlesex company, much reduced, was holding Leighton Hill with undiminished courage.<sup>245</sup>

It was clear now that the defence could not last much longer. A report<sup>246</sup> sent to London and Ottawa at midday on the 23rd ran:

Enemy has slightly improved his position in last 24 hours but lines hold generally as yesterday. Troops are very tired indeed but spirit generally good and it is understood that every day's resistance is of value to Allied cause. Water position in City and on Peak is most precarious since principal reservoirs are in enemy's hands ... Very heavy shelling mortaring and dive bombing all morning and extremely difficult to maintain communications. Further fighting will be uncontrolled and confined to centres of resistance of unit[s] as [?and] sub-units. No water in hand and all men physically exhausted after days of continuous fighting. Very heavy mortaring and dive bombing of Mount Cameron just reported with incendiaries setting all that countryside alight.

In both capitals the developments had been watched with an anxiety which was deepened by the utter impossibility of doing anything for the garrison. The Japanese landings on the island had evidently surprised Mr. Churchill. He sent this communication<sup>247</sup> to the Governor:

21 Dec 41

Prime Minister to Governor, Hong Kong

We were greatly concerned to hear of the landings on Hong Kong Island which have been effected by the Japanese. We cannot judge from here the conditions *which* rendered these landings possible or prevented effective counterattacks upon the intruders. There must however be no thought of surrender. Every part of the island must be fought and the enemy resisted with the utmost stubbornness.

The enemy should be compelled to expend the utmost life and equipment. There must be vigorous 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, and by a prolonged resistance you and your men can win the lasting honour which we are sure will be your due.

The Canadian Government was disturbed by the paucity of information from the besieged colony. On 20 December the Minister of National Defence sent through the War Office a message<sup>248</sup> to Brigadier Lawson asking for such as could be sent by whatever means might be available. It added, "The anxious hearts and the hopes and confidence of Canadian people are with you all in magnificent fight you are putting up against heavy odds." Before this message was sent Lawson was dead, and when it reached Hong Kong the senior surviving Canadian officer (Lt.-Col. Home) was cut off in Stanley Peninsula. Lt.-Col. Sutcliffe answered it on 22 December, though for some reason the reply<sup>249</sup> did not reach Ottawa until the 27th. It reported the casualties to senior officers and said also:

. . . Situation critical. Canadian troops part prisoners residue engaged casualties heavy . . . Troops have done magnificent work spirit excellent.

This was the last communication from the Canadians at Hong Kong.

The only possible hope of relief for the colony lay in the Chinese armies of Chiang Kai-Shek, and they could do nothing in time. On 21 December the British military attaché at Chungking informed the garrison that the main Chinese attack could not start before 1 January but it was hoped that bombers could operate at once against Japanese aerodromes. There is a vague report of some actual bombing at Kowloon on 20 December.<sup>250</sup> The Japanese, we have seen, had disposed a regimental group, the Araki Detachment, to prevent Chinese interference with the siege. It was stationed about Tamshui, some 40 miles north-east of Hong Kong. The Japanese narrative states that during the Hong Kong battle a Chinese force about one and a half divisions strong advanced towards the detachment but attempted no active enterprise.<sup>251</sup>

A situation report from Hong Kong covering the period down to 5:00 p.m. on the 23rd again emphasized the fatigued condition of the troops and added, "Water and transport situation still very grave." The Middlesex at Leighton Hill had beaten off a determined attack.<sup>252</sup> On the 24th it was reported that the Royal Scots had been driven off the top of Mount Cameron during the night and were holding the lower western slopes. In the late afternoon the Japanese, after heavy bombardment, finally captured Leighton Hill.<sup>253</sup>

There were two enemy attacks in the Winnipeg Grenadiers' sector on this day. One, directed against positions on the south slope of Mount Cameron about 9:30 p.m., was beaten off after severe fighting.<sup>254</sup> About midnight on Christmas Eve a Japanese attack estimated as about two companies in strength pushed one platoon out of its position in the Bennet's Hill area, but another platoon and the sailors held their ground tenaciously and drove the enemy back.<sup>255</sup>

The dawn of Christmas Day found Hong Kong's defenders in desperate straits. Nevertheless, when the Japanese that morning sent another request for surrender, carried by two civilian prisoners, it was still refused, and the Governor reported to London, "Stout fighting is going on. Enemy working toward centre of town. . . . All in very good heart and send Christmas greetings".<sup>256</sup> This was a last gesture. A the re-hour partial truce resulted from the Japanese overture. When it expired at midday the enemy attacked immediately and made rapid progress along the north shore. Mount Parish fell, the Japanese got into Wan Chai Gap and were close to Fortress Headquarters.\* All communication with the isolated force in Stanley Peninsula had now been severed; and the main body had only eight mobile guns left, "with about sixty rounds per gun".<sup>258</sup>

In these circumstances General Maltby decided that more fighting meant merely useless slaughter, and at 3:15 p.m. he and the Naval Commander advised the Governor that "no further effective military resistance" could be made. Accordingly, the white flag was hoisted;<sup>259</sup> and the silence of defeat descended upon Hong Kong.

### The Cost of the Defence

Canadian losses at Hong Kong were heavy. A total of 23 officers and 267 other ranks were killed or died of wounds: five officers and 16 other ranks of Brigade Headquarters (including Signals), seven and 123 of the Royal Rifles, and 11 and 128 of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. This includes some who were murdered by the Japanese when trying to surrender or after they had surrendered. Twenty-eight Canadian officers and 465 other ranks were reported wounded.<sup>260</sup> The enemy committed numerous acts of wanton barbarism, and many of the defenders who had become prisoners were found butchered. The aid post at the Salesian Mission near Sau Ki Wan was the scene of particularly revolting atrocities when it was overrun on the morning of 19 December.<sup>261</sup>

The casualties of the British, Colonial and Indian forces cannot be stated exactly. General Maltby's dispatch indicates them as approximately 955 all ranks killed or died of wounds, and 659 missing. These statistics are clearly far from final, but no better ones have so far been compiled.

\*The statement in General Maltby's Dispatch, that Bennet's Hill "had been completely surrounded and ... forced to surrender" was evidently based on a false report. Evidence including the naval reports indicates that both the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the sailors withdrew from the hill only after they had been notified of the general surrender.<sup>257</sup>

†This is the version given in the Royal Artillery report. The G.O.C.'s dispatch says six guns.

‡Major-General Tanaka Ryosaburo was in due time convicted by a War Crimes Court p4 sharing the responsibility for the atrocities, and was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.

The Japanese paid a considerable price for their victory, though it was not so high as the British estimated it to be. General Maltby, who mistakenly believed that three divisions had been engaged, thought that their losses might run as high as 3000 killed and 9000 wounded. The Japanese narrative now available states the casualties as 675 killed and 2079 wounded.<sup>262</sup> These categorical figures carry some conviction. They indicate that Maltby's polyglot force exacted a very respectable toll.

Only a word can be said of the harrowing experiences of the Canadian prisoners of war. Until 1943 all of them were kept in camps at Hong Kong. Mainly as a result of conditions there, four officers (including Lt.-Col. Sutcliffe) and 124 other ranks died. In addition, four soldiers were shot by the Japanese without trial when captured after escaping.\* A diphtheria epidemic in the summer and autumn of 1942 took 50 lives, the chief reason being the refusal of proper medical facilities by the Japanese. The Canadian medical officers nevertheless believe that this epidemic may have actually saved some lives, for the Japanese ultimately put into isolation men suspected of having the disease, who would otherwise have been forced to labour on Kai Tak aerodrome. Formerly, it had been necessary to send sick and half-starved men out to work.<sup>263</sup>

Beginning in January 1943 a total of one Canadian officer (Capt. J. A. G. Reid, R.C.A.M.C.) and 1183 other ranks were taken to Japan, where they were forced to work in various industries, chiefly mining. Here again conditions were extremely bad, as evidenced by the fact that 136 of these men died.<sup>264</sup> Of the 1975 Canadians who sailed from Vancouver in October 1941, there were 557<sup>265</sup> who never returned to Canada.†

### Some Comments on the Hong Kong Campaign

The sudden attack by Japan resulted in the Canadians who helped to defend Hong Kong going into battle in unfavourable circumstances. The basic cause of their misfortune was the inaccurate appreciation of Japanese intentions made by the western powers in the early autumn of 1941. As we have seen, it was universally anticipated that the Canadians would serve as garrison troops and would have ample time to accustom themselves to conditions at Hong Kong and get further training. These expectations were

\*Col. Tokunaga, Commandant of the Hong Kong prison camps, and Capt. Saito, Medical Officer, were tried by a War Crimes court at Hong Kong in October 1946-February 1947 and sentenced to be hanged. The sentences were commuted to life imprisonment and 20 years' imprisonment respectively, later further reduced to 20 years and 15 years.

†one man had died on the original voyage to Hong Kong. The two Canadian nursing sisters were repatriated in 1943.

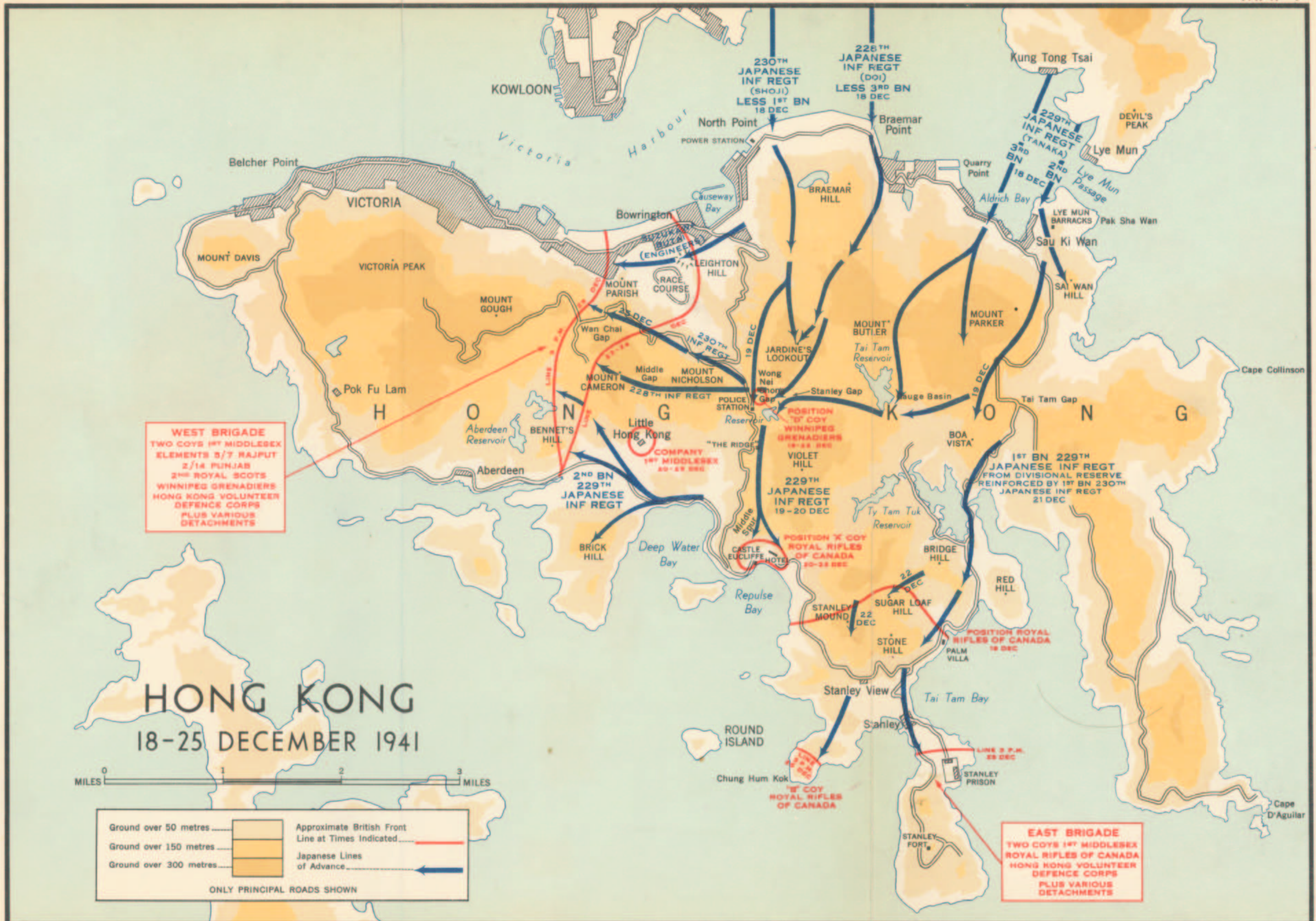
disappointed, and the battalions were plunged into action without having had a chance either to acquire a really thorough knowledge of their battleground or to complete their training, which as we have seen left something to be desired. Nor did the conditions of the short and nasty campaign permit the gradual acquisition of battle wisdom through experience. The extraordinarily rugged terrain of Hong Kong was one of the hardest battlefields on which Canadians fought in any theatre; and after their long sea voyage, followed by brief training for a static role which they were never called upon to play, the Royal Rifles and the Winnipeg Grenadiers were not in good shape for fighting on scrub-covered mountainsides.

The British dispositions for the campaign's final phase—the defence of the island—left the Canadians on the south shore facing the sea and gave other units the task of meeting the first shock of the attack from the mainland. This arrangement was probably influenced both by the desire to maintain the arrangements made before the outbreak of hostilities (and to make no unnecessary moves), and to avoid placing the Canadian units, whose field training was less advanced than the others', in the front line. In practice, it did not prove a particularly good one; once the Japanese had landed on the island and made some progress, the Canadian battalions were practically the only reserve available for counter-attack. This was the task for which their training least fitted them. At the same time, General Maltby's persistent and unfounded fear of a seaborne landing on the south shore, by preventing a timely concentration against the menace from the land side, helped to assure the Japanese of decisive numerical superiority in the actual engagements on the island. It was unfortunate, also, that the dispositions did not permit of keeping the two Canadian units together under their own brigadier.

The Royal Rifles of Canada and The Winnipeg Grenadiers would doubtless have been more effective units if they had received more advanced training before going to Hong Kong. But too much can be made of this. Their casualty lists show that their contribution to the defence was a large one, and the Japanese accounts which have been quoted attest the battalions' solid fighting qualities. It is satisfactory to read in those accounts that it was in areas where these battalions were the major units engaged that the enemy encountered his greatest difficulties and suffered his heaviest losses.

We can see today that the decision to reinforce Hong Kong was a mistake. The idea that the arrival of two Canadian battalions in the Far East could exercise an important deterrent effect upon Japan was shown up, in the event, as an egregious absurdity, and one which cost the Allied cause the





**WEST BRIGADE**  
 TWO COYS 1ST MIDDLESEX  
 ELEMENTS 3/7 RAJPUT  
 2/14 PUNJAB  
 2ND ROYAL SCOTS  
 WINNIPEG GRENADIERS  
 HONG KONG VOLUNTEER  
 DEFENCE CORPS  
 PLUS VARIOUS  
 DETACHMENTS

**EAST BRIGADE**  
 TWO COYS 1ST MIDDLESEX  
 ROYAL RIFLES OF CANADA  
 HONG KONG VOLUNTEER  
 DEFENCE CORPS  
 PLUS VARIOUS  
 DETACHMENTS

# HONG KONG

## 18-25 DECEMBER 1941



Ground over 50 metres	Approximate British Front Line at Times Indicated
Ground over 150 metres	Japanese Lines of Advance
Ground over 300 metres	

ONLY PRINCIPAL ROADS SHOWN



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loss of 2000 soldiers. However, the seventeen and a half days' fighting at Hong Kong was not wholly useless. The colony's defenders inflicted nearly 3000 casualties upon the Japanese and imposed some delay upon the further operations in which they swept on to conquer the whole of South-East Asia and the East Indies.\*

\*The Japanese plan provided, as we have seen, that after completing the occupation of Hong Kong the troops employed would be used against the Netherlands Indies. The 38th Division was in fact used in this manner. The 228th Infantry Regiment was employed successively in Amboina, Timor and Java; the 229th and 230th went to Sumatra and later to Java. Fate subsequently caught up with the 38th Division. The greater part of it was sent to Guadalcanal and was very largely destroyed there during January and February 1943.<sup>266</sup>

## CHAPTER XV

### THE CAMPAIGN IN THE ALEUTIANS

(See Sketch 6)

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#### The War in the Pacific, January-June 1942

FOR half a year after the fall of Hong Kong, the tide of Japanese conquest flowed strongly and, it seemed, irresistibly. Allied naval power in the Pacific had been temporarily crippled by the loss of H.M. Ships *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse off Malaya* on 10 December 1941, and the tremendous damage done to the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor.\* And the Japanese made hay while the Rising Sun shone.

The Allies were astonished by the enemy's ability to conduct simultaneous offensives in a number of widely separated areas. Invasion operations were launched in December against Malaya, the Philippines, and Hong Kong, and smaller expeditions took Guam, Wake Island and North Borneo. In January the Netherlands Indies were attacked, and the attack there widened during the next month. On 15 February Singapore surrendered. The last American garrison in the Philippines, that of the island of Corregidor in Manila Bay, was overwhelmed on 6 May. By that time, the Japanese were also in control of most of Burma and had footholds in New Guinea and the Solomons.

Although the Japanese had no immediate intention of attempting the conquest of Australia, and still less of invading the mainland of North America, they undertook at this period a further advance intended to widen their own defensive perimeter and cut their enemies' supply lines. This entailed the completion of the occupation of New Guinea and the Solomons; the seizure of Midway Island and bases in the Aleutian chain; and the occupation of New Caledonia, Fiji and Samoa. The attempt to achieve the first of these objects was checked in the Battle of the Coral Sea (4-8 May). The second was attempted at the beginning of June. The Japanese hoped that it would bring on a successful fleet action with the United States Pacific

\*In fact, although six battleships were sunk at Pearl Harbor, the vessels which turned out to be most important—the three aircraft carriers—were absent from the base at the time of the attack and escaped damage. Moreover, all *naval* shore facilities at Pearl Harbor remained intact. These circumstances go far to explain the rapid renaissance of American naval power.

Fleet. It actually brought on the Battle of Midway (4-7 June) in which they were soundly beaten. Midway remained in American hands; but the Japanese did gain a foothold in the Aleutians. The third stage was never initiated, for the tide had turned.<sup>1</sup>

### The Japanese Invade the Aleutians

On the map or on a globe, the Aleutian island chain appears to form something like a natural bridge between North America and Asia and accordingly to be an area of great strategic importance. These appearances are deceptive. The Aleutians themselves are barren and very mountainous, with no natural resources to attract or maintain a conqueror; and the weather conditions in those seas—persistent overcast, very frequent fog, very high and variable winds—are acutely unfavourable to either air or naval operations. Moreover, the distances are very great. It is true that it is only some 700 nautical miles from Attu, the westernmost island in the chain, to Paramushiro in the Kuriles, the nearest pre-war Japanese base; but from Attu east to Dutch Harbor on Unalaska Island at the base of the chain, the only American pre-war base in the Aleutians, is about 800; and Dutch Harbor is some 1650 miles from Vancouver, and Paramushiro roughly 1000 from Tokyo.<sup>2</sup>

The aims of the Japanese in going into the Aleutians in 1942 were evidently mainly defensive—to obtain a firm anchor for the left flank of their perimeter and to prevent the Americans from using the islands as an offensive base; although their records, it appears, do not support the idea that they feared an actual American attempt to invade Japan by this route.<sup>3</sup> It was hoped that the islands would provide useful bases for flying boat patrols. Probably prestige—the effect both in Japan and in the United States of the occupation of territory which could be claimed as part of North America—had a good deal to do with the project. At any rate, it was carried out as a secondary part of the Midway offensive. Three Japanese naval forces were employed in it. The Second Mobile Force, built around two aircraft carriers, was to deliver an air attack against Dutch Harbor and cover and support two occupation forces. One of these was to seize the islands of Adak and Attu (the former being occupied only long enough to destroy any American installations);\* the other was to occupy Kiska. The plan in the first instance was to withdraw from the islands before the winter.<sup>4</sup>

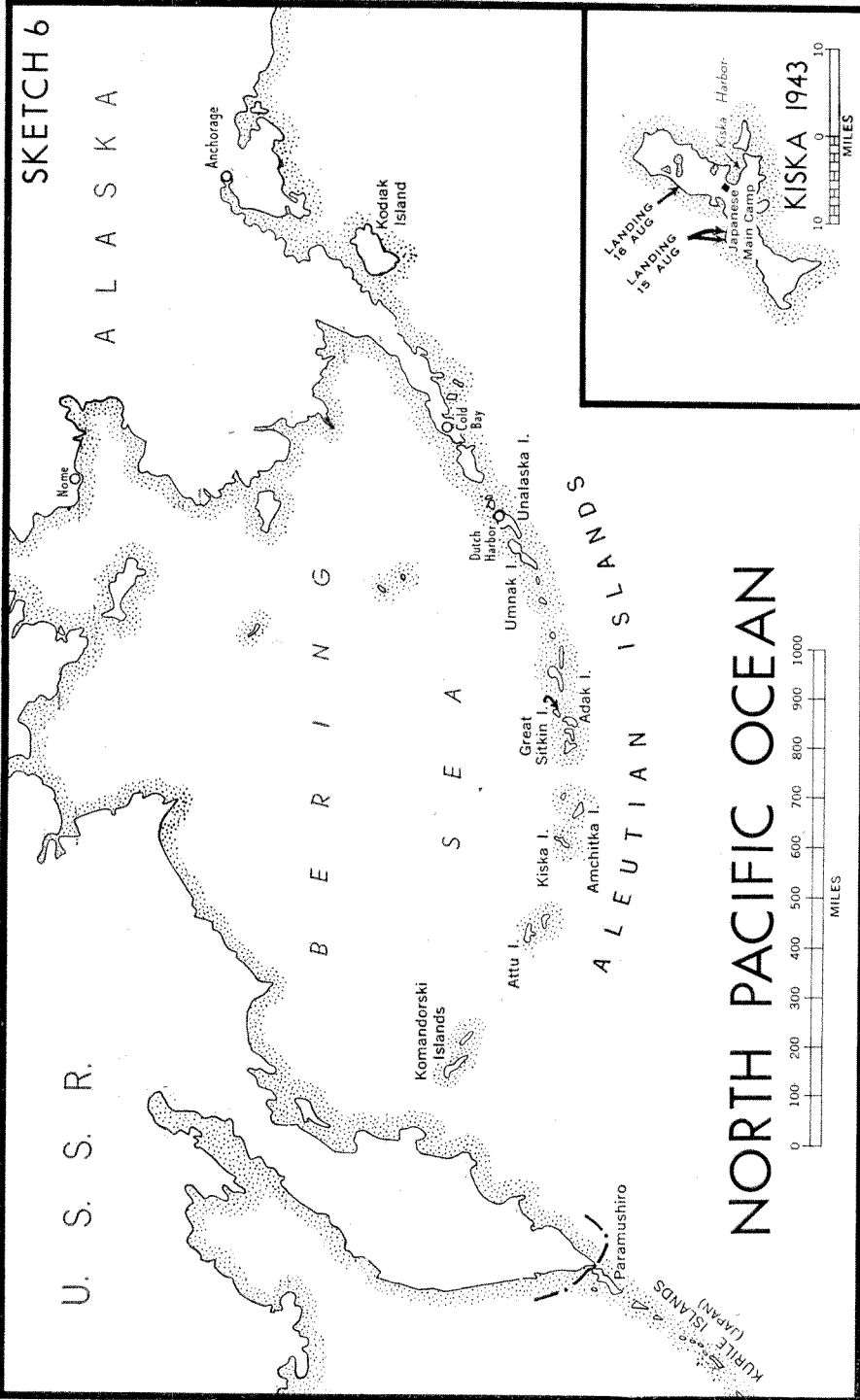
The plan was carried out, but not as written. The first air "strike" went in on Dutch Harbor on 3 June, causing limited damage. A second the

\*There were none. The Japanese knew remarkably little about the American forces and dispositions in the Aleutians.

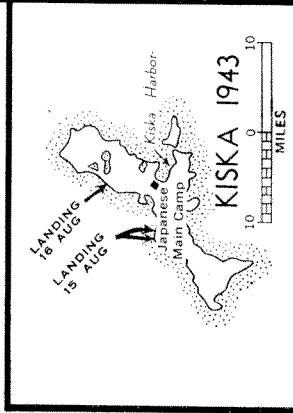
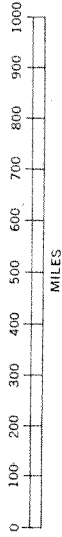
SKETCH 6

U. S. S. R.

A L A S K A



NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN



following day was more successful. This was the day the Japanese lost four carriers at Midway. This untoward event led Admiral Yamamoto to cancel the Aleutian occupation, but almost immediately he reversed himself and ordered it to proceed. Adak, however, was not occupied. American fighters from a new airfield on Umnak Island, of whose existence the Japs had been ignorant, had taken toll of the attackers, and this may have influenced the decision to leave Adak alone. Japanese forces landed on Kiska on the afternoon of 6 June and on Attu early the following morning.\* There were no American troops on either to oppose them, and the Americans did not discover the occupation until four days after it had begun.<sup>5</sup>

Following the landings of 6 and 7 June, the Japanese build-up was comparatively slow. Kiska was reinforced with 1200 men early in July, and most of the Attu garrison was moved to Kiska in August and September. In the autumn, however, the enemy high command decided to retain the islands permanently. Attu was reoccupied at the end of October and a programme of constructing defence works and airfields was put in hand with February 1943 as the target date for completion. A limited air effort was maintained, but weather and Allied aircraft combined to make it of very little value. The garrisons of Attu and Kiska were gradually reinforced, with increasing difficulty as the U.S. blockade tightened, until in the spring of 1943 Attu had about 2500 men. Kiska had close to 6000, including a considerable number of civilians. No further Japanese advances took place and the enemy led a precarious and uncomfortable existence until evicted.<sup>6</sup>

### The Counter-Offensive Against the Islands

United States Army Air Force bombers from Cold Bay at the tip of the Alaskan peninsula, staging through Umnak, attacked Kiska as early as 11 June 1942. From then on, Kiska was hit frequently. Attu had to wait until new American bases were established farther west than Umnak. These were found at Adak (occupied on 30 August 1942), and Amchitka—only 80 miles from Kiska—where American forces landed on 12 January 1943. Attu was under air bombardment at intervals from November 1942 onwards.<sup>7</sup> In these air operations the Royal Canadian Air Force played a part. No. 8 (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadron and No. 111 (Fighter) Squadron moved to Anchorage from bases in British Columbia, 2-8 June 1942, and in July an air and ground party of No. 111 moved forward to Umnak. No. 14 (Fighter) Squadron went to Umnak in March 1943 and the next month relieved No. 111, which had moved up to Amchitka; thereafter these two squadrons alternated in operations in the forward area. The R.C.A.F. had

\*All times and dates are those of the Alaskan zone.

just one air combat, in which a Japanese Zero was shot down; otherwise, the enemy opposition took the form of anti-aircraft fire against the strafing Canadian planes. In the Aleutians airmen found the weather more dangerous than the Japs.<sup>8</sup>

The United States Navy was also busily harassing the intruders. Its submarines were active around the islands, and on 7 August 1942 a cruiser force delivered the first of many bombardments against Kiska. On 18 February 1943 Attu was bombarded, and on 19 February a munition ship bound for that island was intercepted and sunk. On 26 March an attempt by the Japanese Navy to reinforce Attu was frustrated by Rear Admiral C. H. McMorris, who beat off a superior force in the Battle of the Komandorski Islands.<sup>9</sup>

A strong case could have been made for leaving the Japs to freeze in their own juice on Kiska and Attu, where they were at most a nuisance to American operations in the Pacific. However, their presence naturally worried the inhabitants of Alaska, British Columbia and the Pacific Coast states, and there was thus a "political" motive for ejecting them. Lieut.General John L. DeWitt, Commanding General of the U.S. Western Defence Command (which included the Alaska Defence Command) asked the War Department in Washington as early as 14 June 1942 to set up an expeditionary force for the purpose. Washington, however, recognizing that there were far more urgent problems at that moment, proceeded with caution. The only immediate action taken was the occupation of Adak. Later, in December 1942, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, in authorizing the occupation of Amchitka, ordered General DeWitt to prepare a force for an attack on Kiska. The Americans went to the Casablanca conference next month intending to advocate this operation; but General Marshall "came to fear" that the British might construe such a proposal as implying the diversion of large forces to a secondary Pacific theatre, and a memorandum by the Joint Chiefs dated 22 January 1943 accordingly merely advocated that Allied policy should be to "make the Aleutians as secure as may be". This vague and modest formula was written into the agreed conclusions of the conference.<sup>10</sup>

The result of this was that the Kiska operation was postponed; but RearAdmiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, U.S.N., Commander North Pacific Force and in overall command of all three services in the Alaska theatre, proposed instead an attack on Attu, where the enemy's garrison and defences were weaker. This would not entail much diversion of forces from other theatres. The Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the scheme in March 1943; and after due preparation the 7th Division of the U.S. Army assaulted Attu on 11 May. This was the beginning of a thoroughly nasty little campaign, in which the Japanese fought to be killed and the Americans obliged them. A final *Banzai* charge on 29 May was followed by mopping up. The U.S. commander



reported 2350 Japs killed; only 24 allowed themselves to be taken prisoners.<sup>11</sup>

The garrison of Kiska remained to be dealt with. The question received some attention, along with much more important matters, from the Combined Chiefs of Staff during the "Trident" conference in Washington (12-25 May 1943). The U.S. planners argued that until the Japanese were driven out of Kiska the United States would have to keep large air and ground forces in the Aleutians and was obliged to "disperse naval forces to that area"; the Japanese must therefore be expelled. This argument was accepted by the Combined Chiefs, and the final conclusions of the conference, as approved by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, included "Ejection of the Japanese from the Aleutians" as one of the objects of operations in the Pacific in 1943-44.<sup>12</sup> On 24 May, the second-last day of the conference, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff accordingly authorized planning and training for the attack on Kiska, and subsequently gave final approval for the enterprise.<sup>13</sup>

We have already noted the part played by the R.C.A.F. in Alaska. The Royal Canadian Navy, although it had only minor forces available on the Pacific Coast, placed these vessels and its port facilities at the U.S. Command's disposal as soon as the threat to the Aleutians developed. At this time the U.S. Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, placed "all Army, Navy, and Canadian forces in the Alaskan-Aleutian theater" under the Commander Task Force 8, later North Pacific Force (then Rear-Admiral Robert A. Theobald).<sup>14</sup> The Canadian Army's activity in Alaska was limited in the first instance to the anti-aircraft defence of Annette Island (above, page 174). Now, however, it was brought into the Kiska project. This piece of cooperation resulted from very informal American suggestions which were warmly taken up in Canada. On 19 April General DeWitt had visited General Pearkes at Vancouver and given him an outline of the operations projected in the Aleutians commencing early in May. Pearkes reported this to Ottawa. There had apparently been no actual suggestion of Canadian assistance.\* On 10 May, however, General Pope in Washington reported to the Chief of the General Staff (General Stuart) that the Secretary of the American section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, Mr. J. D. Hickerson, had suggested to him that it would be eminently appropriate if Canadian forces cooperated in removing the existing threat in the Aleutians. The following day General Stuart telegraphed General Pearkes referring to the latter's earlier report and inquiring whether it was "too late to consider some form of army participation".<sup>15</sup> (The C.G.S. did not know that U.S. troops had landed on Attu that day, for the operation was not announced until some days later.) On 12 May General Pope was instructed to approach General Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army,

\*The General Staff report on the organization of the Kiska force, prepared later, states that the matter was discussed on this occasion, but there is no reference to it in General Pearkes' report sent at that time.

and had an interview with him the following afternoon. Marshall received the suggestion of Canadian assistance cordially and proceeded to consult the Western Defence Command. On 24 May he wrote Pope that he had had a message from General DeWitt stating that both he and Major-General Simon B. Buckner, Commanding General, Alaska Defence Command, were "delighted at the prospect of having units of the Canadian forces associated with his Command in present and future operations in the Aleutian area".<sup>16</sup>

DeWitt now presented to Pearkes two requests: one for the immediate provision of one infantry battalion and a light anti-aircraft battery "to be ready to move 15 June to reinforce Amchitka or Attu in case of counteroffensive"; the other, the provision in August of a brigade group for "offensive operations"-that is, the attack on Kiska. These proposals were placed before the Cabinet War Committee at a special meeting on 27 May, and although final decision was postponed pending a more formal approach from the United States the consensus was that the second of the two proposals was preferable. On 31 May a further meeting of the Committee considered a letter from the U.S. Secretary of War (Colonel Henry L. Stimson) to Colonel Ralston, extending a formal invitation in general terms,\* and approval was then given for the employment of a brigade group. The battalion scheme was not proceeded with.<sup>17</sup> Arrangements had already been made, on the initiative of General Pearkes, to send ten Canadian officers to the Aleutian theatre as observers.<sup>18</sup>

The decision was taken to use the headquarters of the 13th Infantry Brigade and the three infantry battalions in Pacific Command which were numerically strongest: The Canadian Fusiliers, The Winnipeg Grenadiers (re-formed after the destruction of the previous active battalion at Hong Kong), and The Rocky Mountain Rangers.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, it being considered desirable to include a French-speaking unit, Le Regiment de Hull was added.<sup>20</sup> It took the place of the battalion of Combat Engineers included in the assault organization of the U.S. regimental combat team, which was equivalent to a Canadian brigade group, and one of its companies was attached to each of the three battalion combat teams into which the Canadian force was divided. The other major units chosen were the 24th Field Regiment and the 46th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A., the 24th Field Company R.C.E., a company of The Saint John Fusiliers (M.G.), and the 25th Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.<sup>21</sup> The code name "Greenlight" was assigned to the special training to be given the force (the actual operation against Kiska was called "Cottage").<sup>22</sup>

\*This letter was written on the suggestion of the Canadian Army Staff, Washington, acting on the instructions of the Minister of National Defence. The idea caused some initial surprise at the War Department, which was accustomed to work through more exclusively military channels.

The G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army was asked to nominate a commander for the force, and Brigadier H. W. Foster was brought back from England to take the appointment. With him came Major W. S. Murdoch, for the appointment of Brigade Major. As it was decided to organize the brigade headquarters on the U.S. staff system he was promoted lieutenant colonel and appointed Chief of Staff.<sup>23</sup>

The units were brought up to strength and were assembled as soon as possible for combined operations training, two battalion combat teams at Nanaimo and one at Courtenay. The major units were concentrated by 1,4 June.<sup>24</sup> The programme included hardening and toughening training, weapon and tactical training, and amphibious training comprising work with assault craft, organization of beaches, and loading and unloading of vehicles.<sup>25</sup> It was complicated by the arrival of unfamiliar American equipment. Although in general Canadian weapons were to be used, the U.S. 81-millimetre mortar was substituted for the Canadian 3-inch, and in the field artillery regiment a proportion of 25-pounders (12) was replaced by U.S. 75-millimetre pack howitzers, to provide a support weapon capable of being manhandled across rough country. The U.S. 30-calibre carbine was used as a personal weapon for officers.<sup>26</sup> All transport vehicles were of American types, but little transport of any type could be used on the Aleutian terrain. The Canadians wore their own battledress, but were outfitted with U.S. special Alaskan clothing and U.S. web equipment. American sleeping bags were issued. The administrative task resulting from these equipment adjustments was tremendous, and there were even larger ones on the personnel side. Not only had the units to be brought up to full strength, but it was necessary to ensure that no men were included who had not had four months' training, or who were not physically fit for action. The job was made heavier by the fact that while it was in progress the date of the operation was put forward and the time available reduced from two months to six weeks.<sup>27</sup>

The units contained a great many soldiers enrolled for compulsory service under the National Resources Mobilization Act. One of the reasons adduced by the C.G.S. for taking part in the Kiska enterprise was that "The use of Home Defence personnel in an active theatre will serve to break down the hostile attitude with which Home Defence personnel are regarded by large sections of the Canadian public."<sup>28</sup> As we have seen (above, page 123) an order in council of 18 June 1943 authorized the employment of such personnel in Alaska, including the Aleutians.<sup>29</sup> This was put into effect with some caution. Under its terms, the Minister of National Defence issued on 11 July a "Direction" permitting the dispatch of the "Greenlight" force for "training, service or duty" at Adak or points in Alaska "east of Adak"-i.e., those parts of the Aleutians then firmly in American hands.<sup>30</sup>

Only on 12 August,\* following receipt of a formal report<sup>32</sup> from the Vice Chief of the General Staff (Major-General Murchie), who went to Adak for the purpose, that the state of the force was in all respects satisfactory and the plan represented "a practical operation of war", was "Direction No. 2" issued removing this limitation, and Pacific Command authorized to allow the force to proceed.<sup>33</sup>

### Fiasco at Kiska

On 12 July the 13th Infantry Brigade Group sailed from the Vancouver Island ports of Nanaimo and Chemainus in four U.S. transports. Its actual embarkation strength was 4831 all ranks. j- At this time 165 men were reported absent without leave.<sup>35</sup> Pacific Command attributed these absences largely to the fact that "in the space of about a month, or less, we had to replace about one third of the existing personnel in every unit", and to resultant resentment among men who had found themselves tossed from one unit to another.<sup>36</sup> It is perhaps significant that Le Regiment de Hull, which had suffered less disruption of its "other ranks" than the other units, had only six men absent, while the other battalions had considerably larger numbers.<sup>37</sup>

The status of the Canadian brigade commander in relation to the American forces was defined in instructions approved by the Cabinet War Committee on 18 June and subsequently issued by the Chief of the General Staff to the G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command<sup>38</sup> and transmitted by the latter to Brigadier Foster in a formal letter of appointment.<sup>39</sup> An order in council<sup>40</sup> authorized an arrangement, similar to that made earlier with respect to the First Special Service Force (above, page 108), by which each member of the U.S. armed forces serving in Alaska should "for the purposes of command only (but not discipline and/or punishment) be deemed to be a member of the Military Forces of Canada with rank therein equivalent to that held by him" in the U.S. forces. This was on a reciprocal basis between the two national forces. Brigadier Foster was instructed that "the operational control exercisable by the United States Commander shall be

\*This was at the very last moment, since the force sailed from Adak on 13 August. Generals Murchie and Pearkes had arrived there on 6 August. Since it would have been scarcely practicable for the Canadians to have disrupted at this stage what seemed an important Allied operation, the V.C.G.S.'s report appears little more than a formality. General Pope in Washington subsequently commented that this episode seemed to indicate that "what is needed is a little more political confidence at home".<sup>31</sup> It seems likely that these precautions had their origins in the criticisms directed at the Government in connection with the organization of the Hong Kong expedition.

†This was as reported on 5 August. The report sent on the day of embarkation indicated exactly 4800.<sup>34</sup>

observed in letter and spirit as fully as if he were a Canadian officer". However, certain emergency powers were, as usual, held in reserve. . General Pearkes wrote:

10. Each Government has reserved itself . . . the right under extraordinary circumstances to withdraw from the undertaking. You as the Senior Combatant Officer are empowered to exercise this right of withdrawal, but it cannot be exercised at any lower level. The authority extends to withdrawal of the whole or any part of the force but any such action should only be taken after consultation with me except where there is not sufficient time to enable consultation feasibly to be carried out and it is necessary to act without consultation.

11. In addition to the foregoing the Canadian participation in the campaign is subject to the retention by you as Senior Combatant Officer of the right to refer to the Canadian Government through this Headquarters in respect of any matter in which such force is likely to be involved or committed.

No occasion for the use of these emergency powers ever arose.

Brigadier Foster was informed that his force upon arrival at Adak would come under the command of Lieut.-General Buckner (as he had now become); subsequently Buckner would place it under MajorGeneral C. H. Corlett, the Military Task Force Commander.<sup>41</sup> Admiral Kinkaid controlled the whole Kiska operation, taking his orders in turn from Admiral Nimitz, C.-in-C. Pacific Ocean Areas.<sup>42</sup>

The 13th Brigade Group were not the only Canadians taking part. The "Trident" conference had briefly discussed the employment of the First Special Service Force ("Plough" Force) and the view had been expressed that it should be given some battle experience as soon as possible. General Marshall said it was perhaps a pity that it had not been used at Attu; but there might be an opportunity of using it in "another operation in that area".<sup>43</sup> The United States proceeded to suggest using the force in the Kiska attack, and the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet approved this on 11 June.\* A month later the Force with its Canadian component sailed from San Francisco Bay for Amchitka. There it did its final training.<sup>45</sup>

On 21 July the 13th Brigade Group disembarked at Adak, where it joined the main body of General Corlett's "Amphibian Training Force 9".<sup>46</sup> Here a programme of intensive combined training was carried out under the direction of Major-General Holland M. Smith, U.S. Marine Corps. Its high point was a landing exercise held on Great Sitkin Island the first week in August.<sup>47</sup> Thereafter nothing remained but the operation. On 8 August General Pearkes established at Adak an Advanced Headquarters, Pacific Command from which he could observe at close quarters.<sup>48</sup> D Day was 15 August; on 30 July a conference of officers at Adak, at which Brigadier Foster was not present, had recommended putting it off until the 24th to permit of further training, but Admiral Nimitz refused to allow this.<sup>49</sup> On

\*This approval following an informal suggestion, anticipated a formal request which was made next day.<sup>44</sup>

13 August, accordingly, the assault force sailed from Adak for Kiska. General Corlett had under his command 34,426 soldiers; of these, including the 1st Special Service Battalion, some 5300 were Canadians.<sup>50</sup>

In the light of the sequel, there is no point in describing the assault plan in great detail. Fire support was very heavy. The island had been heavily bombarded on 22 July and 2 August by air and sea forces, and less heavily on other occasions; and to cover the landings there were three battleships, two cruisers and 19 destroyers. The main Japanese defences and installations were on the south and east side of the "caterpillar-shaped island".<sup>51</sup> The scheme accordingly was to deliver the bombardment support and a feint landing on this side, while the real landings were made in two sectors on the north and west. On both these sectors units of the First Special Service Force would be the first men ashore. On 15 August they would precede U.S. troops landing in the Southern Sector; on 16 August the Northern landing, in which the 13th Brigade would take part, was to be made. American troops would land here on the left portion of the sector, followed by the Canadian brigade on the right. The Northern Sector was commanded by Brig.-Gen. Joseph L. Ready.<sup>52</sup>

The landings took place as scheduled, but there was no opposition. The Japanese had decamped, and the invasion was a blow in the air. Conviction that the enemy was really gone came to the attackers only gradually — the more so as the Southern force on the first day "reported having seen a few laps and received a few rifle shots".<sup>53</sup> There were cases of mistaken identity in the fog, and some casualties in consequence. The Canadians had one soldier wounded by unidentified machine-gun fire on 16 August, and one officer killed by a mine the following day; later three other fatal casualties were caused by enemy booby-traps or accidents with ammunition.<sup>54</sup>

The story of the evacuation is now available from Japanese sources. While the fighting on Attu was still in progress, the Japanese decided to withdraw the Kiska garrison and use it to strengthen the Kuriles. The decision was promulgated in an Imperial Headquarters directive of 21 May.<sup>55</sup> An attempt was made to remove the men by submarine, and 820, more than half of them civilians, are said to have been safely brought away in this manner; but this was done at a cost of four submarines lost to the U.S. Navy or navigational hazards, and three others damaged; and the effort was abandoned late in June.<sup>56</sup> Orders were then issued for the job to be done by surface forces under cover of fog. The force detailed for the enterprise made one unsuccessful attempt, being driven back to Paramushiro on 17 July by unsuitable weather and shortage of fuel.<sup>57</sup> A second try was favoured by fortune, in spite of collisions on 25 July which incapacitated two ships. On 28 July (West Longitude date), while one light cruiser stood

off south of Kiska, two others and a flotilla of destroyers dashed in through the fog to the island. The garrison was waiting eagerly, and the whole remaining force-according to the best Japanese source,<sup>58</sup> 5183 servicemen and civilians-were jammed aboard the cruisers and six of the destroyers in, it appears, less than one hour. The force dashed out again and reached Paramushiro in safety.<sup>59</sup>

The American naval blockade of Kiska had heretofore been notably effective, and the failure to intercept the evacuation force was due to bad luck as well as to Japanese skill in utilizing Aleutian weather. On 23 July a U.S. aircraft reported radar contact with vessels south-west of Attu. What vessels, if any, these were, is unknown; but the American battleship and cruiser force in the area moved against them, and the two destroyers blockading Kiska were taken off station to join it. On the night of 25-26 July the American ships' radar appeared to indicate the presence of enemy vessels, and heavy fire was directed at these radar targets; but it subsequently appeared that what had been seen were merely "return echoes" from distant islands. On 28 July, while the Japs were running in to Kiska, the American force, including a destroyer detailed to re-establish the blockade, was fuelling from a tanker 105 miles south-south-east of the island.<sup>60</sup>

The Japs left Kiska eighteen days before the Americans and Canadians made their abortive assault. How did it happen that U.S. Intelligence at Adak did not detect their absence? This misfortune, which led to an attack by 34,000 men on an empty island, requires some analysis.

Fog prevented aerial reconnaissance of Kiska between 26 July and 2 August. On the latter date photographs were taken which showed many buildings destroyed and many barges formerly present missing. However, a number of returning pilots reported some machine-gun and small arms fire from the ground, and similar reports continued to be made on subsequent days. There were also reports of fresh digging, etc. But there were no radio transmissions from the island after 28 July, and pilots reported its radar no longer working; and repeated naval bombardments drew no reply, except for one report of "very light" return fire on 3 August and a similar one on 12 August.<sup>61</sup>

The reports made by No. 14 (Fighter) Squadron, R.C.A.F., on its Kittyhawk sorties over Kiska represent a fair sample of the intelligence picture. Beginning on 3 August and continuing through 12 August the squadron flew seven missions (a total of 33 individual sorties) against Kiska. The only indication of the presence of the enemy resulting from any of these was the report of a single pilot (one of seven in the mission) on 3 August that he had seen seven bursts of anti-aircraft fire. On 10 August the mission reported "no A.A. or M.G. fire of any kind, encountered during the whole

trip-all at low levels". On 11 August the report was "No signs of life seen anywhere . . . No A.A. or M.G. fire received."<sup>62</sup>

Looking at the record a decade later, it may seem remarkable that the evidence on the side of evacuation did not receive more credence. But in 1943 the Japanese were credited-and with reason-with unusual talent for ingenuity and trickery; and the interpretation of the evidence adopted at Adak seemed plausible. The 13th Brigade's operation order, dated 9 August, observed, "As a result of heavy air and naval bombardments enemy forces have been driven into the hinterland and may be met with in small groups on any part of the Island. It is not known which of the installations ... are now occupied and which have been vacated." On 17 August, when the real situation was becoming clear, General Pearkes wrote from Adak, "At the beginning of August he [the enemy] apparently evacuated his main camps and moved, so everyone thought here, into battle positions on the beaches and in the hills. His radar and radio ceased operating and it was believed that they had been put out of action. There was considerable movement of barges around the coastline of the Island which seemed to fit in with the general ideas of the redistribution of the enemy forces on the Island."<sup>63</sup>

How is one to explain the rather numerous reports by airmen of anti-aircraft fire from Kiska after 28 July? It has been suggested that the Japanese left behind a rear party which was to fire light weapons to deceive Allied airmen and naval observers, and which was later removed by submarine.<sup>64</sup> The suggestion is inherently improbable, for the one thing which any deception party would have been certain to do was keep the radio operating. But in any case the information from Japanese sources now available offers no support whatever for the idea of a rear party.<sup>65</sup> Capt. Arichika Rokuji, chief of staff of the 1st Destroyer Squadron which conducted the evacuation, said in 1945, "There was no one left ashore except for three dogs; however, timed explosives were left to detonate a few days later to give the impression that troops were still present and going about the business of changing the defences."<sup>66</sup> These delayed-action charges, plus fog and cloud, must be the explanation of the reports made by the sailors and airmen.

It appears that suggestions were made that it would be desirable to undertake a reconnaissance of the island with boat parties; but "doubts of enemy resistance were not compelling enough to result in advance reconnaissance of Kiska except from the air<sup>67</sup>." In the light of hindsight, this decision seems unfortunate. It was a pity to give the enemy the satisfaction of laughing at us.

On the basis of the experience of Attu, the Kiska enterprise might have produced a very bloody campaign. Thanks to the Japanese withdrawal,



this was avoided. The enemy had lost his only foothold in the North American zone, and this was a source of satisfaction. From the Canadian point of view, however, it was particularly unfortunate that the episode could be presented as such a ridiculous anti-climax. It had been hoped, as we have seen, that participation by N.R.M.A. soldiers in an active campaign would improve the attitude of the public towards them. The Kiska affair certainly had no such result. This was the more regrettable as the N.R.M.A. men had behaved admirably. Their discipline was good and their morale high, and Brigadier Foster received many compliments from United States officers on their general standard of behaviour.<sup>68</sup>

The 13th Infantry Brigade Group remained on Kiska for more than three months, living in "winterized" tents, and engaged in road and pier construction, transport fatigues, building and manning defences, and carrying on such training as conditions permitted. Fog, rain and wind made the island an acutely unpleasant residence, and the troops were heartily glad when the withdrawal to British Columbia began in November 1943. The last shipload of Canadians left Kiska on 12 January 1944.<sup>69</sup> The Special Service Force had left much earlier, and were back in the United States by 1 September.<sup>70</sup>

Though the Kiska enterprise had not brought the action that had been expected, it had been well completed and had set some precedents. This was the first occasion when Canadian units operated in the field under United States higher command and on United States organization. These arrangements worked very satisfactorily. It was also the first occasion in history when an expedition left the shores of Canada prepared and equipped with a view to immediate offensive action, and the arduous task of administration which this necessitated appears to have been well performed.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PACIFIC PLANS AND ENTERPRISES

1943-1945

(See Sketch 7)

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**I**F WE disregard the work of a few individuals, the Canadian Army did no fighting in the Pacific in the later stages of the war. However, Army units and personnel did some useful work of other sorts, and had the war against Japan been prolonged a considerable force of Canadian soldiers would have taken part in it.

#### Eyes on the Kuriles

With the Aleutians cleared of the Japanese, American planners in the North Pacific began to think of the possibility of pursuing the enemy into his base in the Kurile Islands, to which he had retired from Kiska. General Pearkes, when at Adak for the Kiska enterprise in August 1943, found "Generals DeWitt, Buckner, Admiral Kinkaid and all the Senior Officers . . . terribly anxious to get on to the Kuriles". The question of Canadian participation naturally arose. Pearkes. wrote privately to his Brigadier General Staff, "My own view is, as you know, that it is of the utmost importance that we get in this battle if we are to be considered as a Pacific Power. . . . If Canadian troops are to be employed I feel that we should have not less than 3 Bde. Groups; 2 possibly to take part in the initial operation and one to be in the Aleutians ready as reinforcements or to follow up the initial successes gained. The Regt. de Hull is doing so well here that I am inclined to think that it might be of great political value if one of the Bdes. were composed of mainly French Canadians."<sup>1</sup> On 13 August General Pearkes wrote to the Chief of the General Staff along these lines, recommending that the force then at Kiska should be "expanded to three Tactical Groups or Combat Teams (total 12 Battalions plus attached troops)", with a view to the possibility of an attack on the Kuriles.<sup>2</sup>

The 6th Division, as we have already seen (above, page 185), was reorganized accordingly, the War Committee of the Cabinet being told on 31 August that this would meet the possibility of participation in further operations in the North Pacific area. However, the idea of an enterprise against the Kuriles ultimately found favour neither in Washington nor in Ottawa. The Anglo-American strategists, meeting at Quebec immediately after the occupation of Kiska, cautiously included in their approved Pacific programme for 1943-44 "Consideration of operations against Paramushiro and the Kuriles".<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff referred the matter to their Joint Planning Staff, which was doubtful of the project. It was considered that it was unlikely to be useful unless Russia entered the war against Japan; and with this rather remote possibility in view immediate measures authorized in the Aleutians were limited to a moderate programme of base expansion. No invasion of the Kuriles was ever attempted, but for the rest of the war they suffered sporadic bombing from the Aleutians, and the Japanese kept large forces tied up there to provide against the menace.<sup>4</sup>

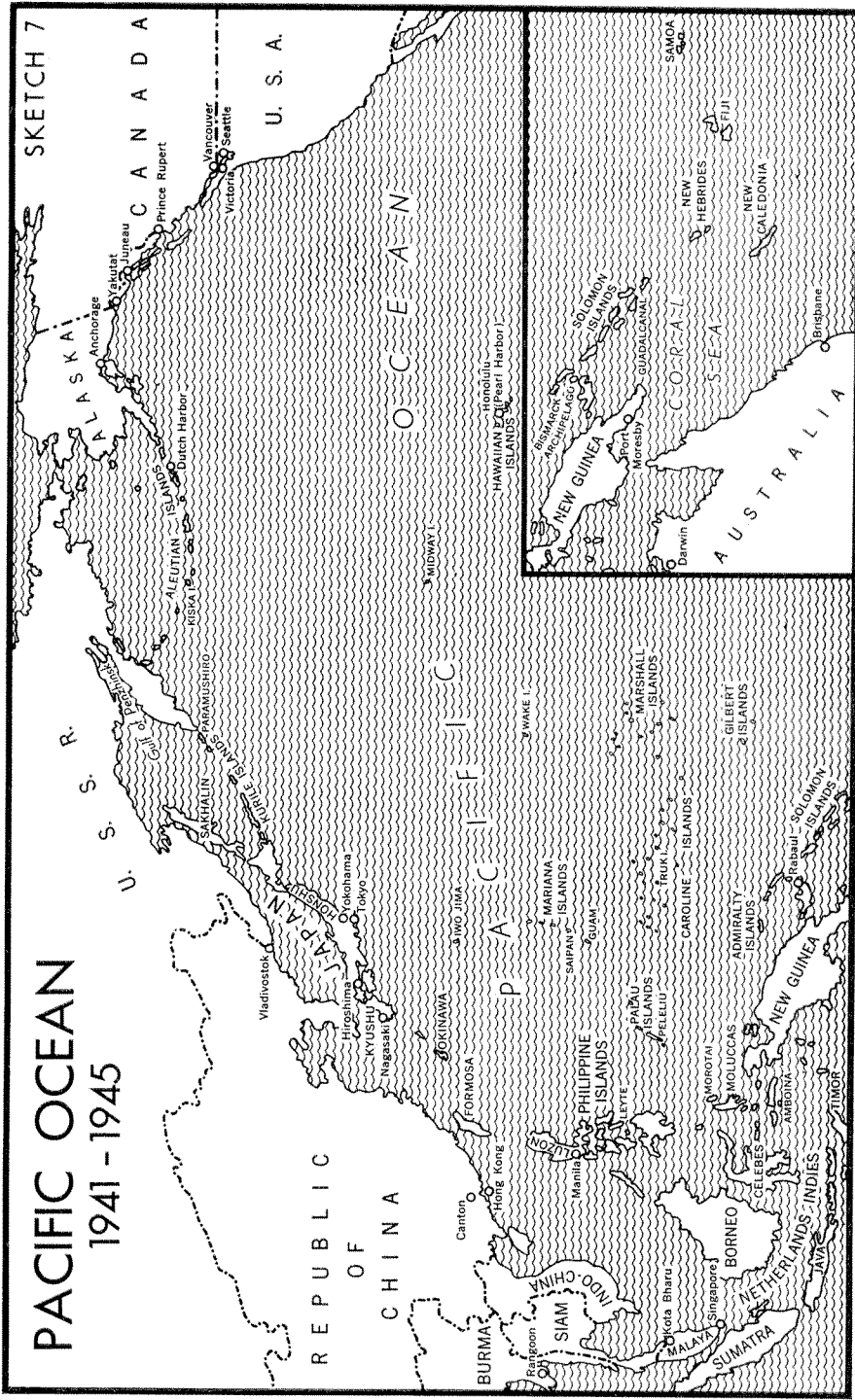
In Ottawa the Prime Minister subsequently discouraged the idea. He suggested that it would be undesirable to incur large commitments in manpower merely to provide against the possibility of American requests for cooperation, or for the Canadian government to put itself in the position of inviting such requests, which might lead to commitments beyond Canadian capacity. The upshot was that the prescribed tasks of the 6th Division, one of which was to serve "as a trained force for any future commitments which may be undertaken in the Pacific Theatre of operations", were maintained (Colonel Ralston specified that this was the case even in March 1944, when he approved withdrawing General Service personnel from the Division for service overseas);<sup>5</sup> but no further operational commitments were made or suggested.

### Observers in the Pacific

When the part to be played by the Canadian Army in the Pacific after the defeat of Germany came under discussion, the question immediately arose of sending officers to the Pacific theatres to gain some preliminary experience of conditions there. And when it began to be evident that there was a possibility of Canadian forces being closely associated with U.S. forces in the final stages of the war against Japan it was evident that officers should be sent as soon as possible to become acquainted with American organization and methods.

# PACIFIC OCEAN 1941 - 1945

SKETCH 7



Historical Section, G.S.

In February 1944 arrangements were made for ten Canadian officers to be attached to the U.S. Army in the Pacific, eight to Australian forces . and two to New Zealand forces. (These two subsequently joined the group with the Australians, which was also enlarged by the addition of three intelligence officers.)<sup>6</sup> During the following summer these officers saw a good deal of the Pacific War; most of those attached to the Americans were present during the bitter fighting on Saipan, while the group sent to the Australians saw training in Australia, operations in New Guinea and (with a U.S. division) the capture of Morotai in the Moluccas.<sup>7</sup> Two officers not included in the twenty just mentioned had special attachments. One (Major R. F. Routh) went to G.H.Q. South West Pacific Area and subsequently to H.Q. South East Asia Command, and was wounded while attached to a British battalion in Burma; the other (Lt.-Col. W. A. Bean) spent several months in Admiral Nimitz's Pacific Ocean Areas command and was with the 1st U.S. Marine Division in the assault on Peleliu.<sup>8</sup>

Arrangements had been made about the same time with the War Office in London for attachment of 20 officers of the Canadian Army Overseas to the South East Asia Command. The number was later increased to 22. The party left England in the early summer of 1944, a twenty-third officer following in the autumn. After a period of attachment to training units and establishments, the members of the group were sent to the Fourteenth Army and 15th Indian Corps in Burma, and were very actively employed in command or staff appointments in the same manner as the Canadians sent earlier to the First Army in Tunisia (above, page 248). After seeing a great deal of mixed service, they were returned to the United Kingdom early in 1945. One of them had been wounded in action.<sup>9</sup>

In November 1944 the U.S. authorities were asked and agreed to accept three successive groups of ten Canadian officers each for attachment to American units in the Pacific. In March 1945 they agreed to take fifteen more officers.<sup>10</sup> As a result of these arrangements, Canadian observers were present during the later stages of the liberation of the Philippines\* and through the bloody campaign on Okinawa (1 April-30 June 1945) which gave the U.S. forces a base only some 300 miles from the southernmost of the Japanese home islands.<sup>12</sup> Three Canadians were wounded during this latter campaign.<sup>13</sup> From these various observation missions a considerable number of Canadian officers gleaned important information concerning the practice both of our allies and our enemies in the Pacific; and the observers' written reports were the means of disseminating this information widely in the army.

\*In addition, at least one of the original group had been present during the initial landing on Leyte on 1 October 1944.<sup>11</sup>

In June 1945 it was calculated that a total of 95 Canadian Army officers had had actual experience in the various Pacific theatres of operations-33 on the staff and 62 as regimental officers.<sup>14</sup> In addition, four officers had attended the Staff School (Australia) as students or instructors, and 16 had attended or were attending various staff courses in the United States. There was thus a respectable nucleus available for training and guiding the Canadian Army Pacific Force.

### Canadians in Australia

Apart from these attachments of officers made for Canadian purposes, some 400 officers and men of the Army were sent to Australia by way of technical assistance to the Australian forces.

In 1944 radar equipment of Canadian design and manufacture (see above, page 159) was being sent to Australia for use in northern Australia, New Guinea and various island outposts. In March 1944 Australia asked for technicians to maintain these sets, and a small cadre for instructional duty at the radar wing of the Australian School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. The Cabinet War Committee concurred on 26 April, and the party, totalling nine officers and 64 other ranks, arrived in Australia in the following September. These experts worked in the Australian zone until the end of the war with Japan. In the summer of 1945 a number of them were posted to anti-aircraft units in Borneo and Morotai.<sup>15</sup> Other Canadians employed in Australia were the personnel of No. 1 Special Wireless Group, Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, which was sent out early in 1945.<sup>16</sup>

A few Canadians went to India, in charge of mules. Early in 1944 the British Army Staff, Washington, then initiating shipment of mules on behalf of the Government of India, asked if Canada could provide men to "conduct" mules from New York to Karachi. The Canadian authorities agreed, and four shiploads of mules were taken to India by Canadian Army parties, the first sailing in March 1944, the last in April 1945. Three of the parties were furnished by the Veterans Guard of Canada, the fourth by No. 2 General Employment Company. In all, 179 Canadians\* made the trip to India, escorting about 1600 mules.<sup>17</sup>

### Policy on Participation in the Pacific

Serious consideration began to be given to Canadian participation in the final phase of the war against Japan about the beginning of 1944. When

\*Not counting one man in the last party who became ill on the outward voyage and was dropped off at Gibraltar. One officer and three other ranks who made two trips are counted only once.

the Prime Minister of Canada went to England for the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers held in May of that year he took with him a General Staff appreciation which did little more than point out that Canadian Army forces might operate either with British forces from Burma and Malaya, or with U.S. forces "on the other flank", through Hawaii and perhaps the Aleutians. In the former case the troops might come from the Canadian Army Overseas (one division was suggested "as a basis for discussion"); in the latter case the troops "would be best supplied from the Army in Canada"-as many brigade groups as could be "secured from the forces available". No recommendation was made as between the two possibilities, nor is it entirely clear whether the two were considered mutually exclusive.<sup>18</sup>

There was little discussion of the question at the London conference, but after Mr. King's return to Canada the Canadian civil and military authorities dealt with it further so far as they could do so in the absence of information of any settled overall strategy. On 27 June Mr. King cabled Mr. Churchill suggesting that Canada's position in the matter was subject to certain "special considerations". The message dealt mainly with the R.C.A.F., and the direction in which opinion in Ottawa was moving was indicated in the remark, "It would clearly be very difficult to have the major Canadian air effort based, say, on South East Asia if large United States forces were to operate from Northwest America".<sup>19</sup> General Murchie, the Chief of the General Staff, had written on 13 June, "it would appear desirable that the Canadian Army participation should take place at a stage and in a theatre where its operations would be directed against Japan proper or against the Japanese Army in China proper rather than in preliminary campaigns in Burma or the Malay Peninsula"; this would entail less retraining than operations in tropical areas.<sup>20</sup> Churchill referred the matter to the British War Cabinet's Joint Planning Staff, which on 24 July produced an *aide-memoire* on the employment of Canadian forces after the defeat of Germany.<sup>21</sup> This, while again unable to offer a firm recommendation "until the main strategy is decided", agreed that it might be appropriate for Canadian land forces to make their contribution in the North Pacific in the event of the main invasion threat against the Japanese homeland being directed from that area. It recommended that Canadian land forces allocated to the war against Japan should be moved to Canada as soon as practicable; and suggested that an appropriate contribution, allowing for some demobilization after the defeat of Germany, would be two divisions, in addition to one employed in the occupation of Germany.

The Canadian Chiefs of Staff reviewed this paper and on 6 September made formal and definite recommendations to their Ministers.<sup>22</sup> They considered that "Canada's contribution should be based on Canadian capabilities and proportionate to the continuing effort of the United Kingdom

and the United States". It emphasized the importance of the North Pacific area to Canada and recommended that, in the event of a major effort being inaugurated by way of this area, either through Hawaii or the Aleutians, Canada should "be represented in the final assault on the Japanese homeland". It was specifically recommended that with this in view "the Canadian Army operate in the North or Central Pacific area", using "one division with necessary ancillary troops". It was recognized that this would entail acting under American command. The R.C.N. should reinforce the Royal Navy in the Pacific; the R.C.A.F.'s main effort should be in conjunction with the R.A.F., but it should be represented by a token force in the event of a major operation taking place in the North Pacific.

The same day the whole Cabinet considered the matter and agreed that, after the end of the war in Europe, Canadian military forces should participate in the war against Japan in operational theatres of direct interest to Canada as a North American nation, for example in the North or Central Pacific, rather than in more remote areas such as South-East Asia; that government policy with respect to employment of Canadian forces should be based on this principle; and that the form and extent of participation by the three services should be determined following the second Quebec Conference, then in immediate prospect.<sup>23</sup> On 8 September the Cabinet further authorized, "as a basis for planning, but without any commitment", one division and ancillary troops as the Army quota for the Pacific war.<sup>24</sup> With policy thus crystallized, Canadian ministers approached the contacts with British and American authorities that would accompany the conference.

### The Canadian Army Pacific Force

When the "Octagon" conference opened at Quebec on 12 September, Allied prospects were bright. A brilliant victory had been won in NorthWest Europe and it appeared that there was a possibility of an early German collapse. In the Pacific, American forces were firmly established in the Gilbert, Marshall and Mariana Islands and about to land on Morotai and in the Palaus; the invasion of the Philippines could now be undertaken. A Japanese invasion of India designed to interfere with Allied air transport to China had been beaten back into Burma by British and Indian forces, while the Allies were also advancing in Northern Burma and the re-opening of land communication with China was in sight.

On 14 September the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet held a special meeting at the Citadel of Quebec. Mr. King was in the chair. Mr. Churchill attended, as did also Lord Leathers (British Minister of War

\*As in previous cases, Canada was not a party to the second Quebec Conference (except as host); but there were concurrent discussions, on this occasion, with both British and American civil and military authorities.



Transport) and the British and Canadian Chiefs of Staff. Mr. King explained the Canadian policies that had been developed. These discussions were followed on the same day by a meeting between the British and Canadian Chiefs of Staff,<sup>25</sup> on 15 September by a conference between Messrs. King, Roosevelt and Churchill,<sup>26</sup> and on 16 September by a conversation between Generals Murchie and Pope\* on one side and General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, on the other. General Murchie explained the situation as to Canadian Army participation, emphasizing the Canadian desire "to share in the final assault on Japan".<sup>27</sup> General Marshall received the Canadians very cordially and told them he could see no obstacle in the way of meeting their government's wishes; but no commitment was made on either side.<sup>28</sup>

The "Octagon" conference did not produce a final strategic plan for the defeat of Japan; the Americans, with whom the primary responsibility rested, were considering alternative lines of operation through Formosa and through Luzon (Philippines).<sup>29</sup> But the final report of the conference<sup>30</sup> expressed agreement upon a programme of lowering Japanese ability and will to resist by air and sea blockades, intensive air bombardment, and destruction of Japanese air and naval strength; followed ultimately by invasion and the seizure of "objectives in the industrial heart of Japan". Mr. Churchill had mentioned at the plenary session on 16 September that the Canadian Government were "anxious for an assurance in principle that their forces would participate in the main operations against Japan", adding that they would prefer that they should act in the more northern parts of the Pacific, "as their troops were unused to tropical conditions".<sup>31</sup> The final record accordingly noted briefly, "Canadian participation is accepted in principle".<sup>32</sup>

During the weeks that followed, the matter was canvassed in the War Committee on 22 and 27 September, and 11 and 20 October. The three services' Pacific proposals were examined, and those of the Navy and Air Force were considerably reduced. Finally, on 20 November, the full Cabinet approved the programme, including Canadian Army participation to the extent of one division, with necessary ancillary troops as required, up to a total of 30,000 men. It was accepted that the bulk of the force would have to be selected from men then serving overseas, since there were not enough trained men in Canada and battle-experienced troops were wanted; and that transportation, refitting and leave in Canada would require six months.<sup>33</sup>

Detailed planning for the Canadian Army Pacific Force now proceeded. The Canadian proposals were put before the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff by General Letson, who had succeeded General Pope in Washington, and were accepted, "with the understanding that this force will be available for

\*General Pope was now Military Secretary of the Cabinet War Committee.

†The War Committee did not meet between 9 November and 11 December.

use in any of the operations mounted in the Pacific".<sup>34</sup> On 7 March 1945 the War Committee agreed that the whole Canadian programme should be re-examined with a view to the possibility of a greater degree of integration between the Canadian services; but the Chiefs of Staff reported on 20 March that participation on a self-contained Canadian basis was impossible without a greatly increased commitment by all three services and the creation of a separate logistic organization.<sup>35</sup> The War Committee accepted this on 22 March and the plan was not altered. On 4 April the Prime Minister made a statement on the Pacific programme in the House of Commons. This included the information that the men to be employed against Japan would "be chosen from those who elect to serve in the Pacific theatre"; in other words, there would be no compulsion.

Four days after this statement, and as a result of this policy concerning voluntary service, the C.G.S. and the Adjutant General (Major-General A. E. Walford) recommended that an armoured division should be substituted for an infantry division in the plan. (It is likely that they had been influenced by the fact that Generals Crerar and Montague had lately expressed the opinion that the men required from the overseas army could not be obtained by volunteering.)<sup>36</sup> They pointed out that an armoured division would give an opportunity to men of the four overseas armoured brigades (as well as the reconnaissance units) who otherwise could continue to serve only by transferring to other arms. At the same time, however, by reducing the infantry requirement from three brigades to one, they wrote, "we limit the numbers needed from the arm from which it can be expected there will be the greatest difficulty in securing volunteers"; and the "overall war establishment commitment" would be reduced, as the armoured division would be only about 10,800 strong as compared with about 14,000 for an infantry division on U.S. tables of organization.<sup>37</sup> This plan was accepted by a Special Committee of the Cabinet\* on 19 April; but it did not meet with American concurrence. On 15 May the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff approved a letter to General Letson covering a memorandum by their Joint Staff Planners which remarked,

It is believed that the force should consist of an infantry division, possibly reinforced with armor, and including a proportion of service and supporting troops, rather than an armored division. It appears that General MacArthur would prefer such a unit and that it would receive much more gainful employment. It is also preferable from a standpoint of supply and maintenance.<sup>38</sup>

The Americans agreed to all the other Canadian suggestions. The same letter detailed the plan:

. . . The Joint Chiefs of Staff suggest . . . that the Canadian Army force . . . should:

- (a) consist of an infantry division, possibly reinforced with armor, with a proportion of service and supporting troops.

\*The Cabinet War Committee held its 339th and last meeting on 11 April. Thereafter there were three meetings of a Special Committee which served Much the same purposes,

- (b) be employed as a follow-up unit in the main operation.
- (c) use United States Army equipment and maintenance, except for uniforms.
- (d) be reorganized along United States Army lines (unless further examination indicates such action will delay employment).
- (e) be trained in the United States under the over-all supervision of the United States Army Ground Forces.
- (f) be supplied as a normal United States Army division and based in accordance with operational plans.
- (g) be returned to North America after cessation of hostilities in a priority consistent with that applied to other forces engaged in the Pacific war.

These proposals were approved in principle by the Canadian Cabinet on 17 May.<sup>39</sup>

It may be noted that General Crerar was doubtful of the need for organizing the division on American lines and suggested that the switch to non-Canadian organization would be "generally unpopular" in the Army.\* It appears that this element in the plan was not originated by the United States. The first suggestion that American organization might be necessary was made by the Deputy Chief of the General Staff (A) in Ottawa on 16 September 1944.<sup>41</sup> The detailed Canadian plan presented to the U.S. Joint Chiefs in the following April<sup>42</sup> contained the remark, "We feel it will be necessary to organize the Canadian Force along U.S. army lines in order to facilitate their staff arrangements for movement, maintenance and operations". The American reply, as we have seen, agreed; the U.S. Joint Staff Planners remarked, "Reorganization along United States Army lines would facilitate issuance of supplies and equipment, maintenance and possibly movement. The only question is whether or not such reorganization can be effected without delaying employment."<sup>43</sup> The adoption of U.S. organization, though in many ways convenient, would not seem to have been a vital part of the plan, and normal Canadian divisional organization, with some modifications to suit American equipment, would probably have met the situation.

As it was, U.S. staff organization was adopted, the system of three staff branches (General Staff, Adjutant-General's Branch, Quartermaster-General's Branch) inherited from the British Army being replaced by the unified General Staff with four branches (G-1, Personnel; G-2, Intelligence; G-3, Operations and Training; and G-4, Supply). Similarly the units of the proposed division and ancillary troops were planned and designated in accordance with U.S. tables of organization, modified in slight degree to meet the circumstances.

Originally it had been hoped to reconstitute the 1st Canadian Infantry Division for the Pacific Force, since it was the senior formation of the First Canadian Army and its units gave excellent territorial representation to all parts of Canada. For operational reasons it had not proved possible,

\*This was in a signal of 6 June 1945,<sup>40</sup> repeating a "personal view" given earlier, possibly in a conference with General Murchie on 22 May. By this time, however, firm arrangements had been made with the Americans,

however, to withdraw this formation from active operations prior to VE Day, and subsequently General Crerar insisted that it would be more practicable to give all volunteers first priority passage to Canada and leave the work of organizing a new division to National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.<sup>44</sup> This reasoning was accepted by the Minister of National Defence (now General A. G. L. McNaughton), who decided that the new formation should be known as the 6th Canadian Division.\* The term "brigade" was dropped in favour of the American "regiment", but the new 1st, 2nd and 3rd "Canadian Infantry Regiments" contained battalions of the same units, from Ontario, Western Canada and Eastern Canada respectively, that had composed the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Brigades of the old 1st Division. Field artillery "regiments" similarly became "battalions". The Saskatoon Light Infantry (M.G.), which had been the 1st Division's machine-gun battalion, provided "cannon companies" for each infantry regiment, while the divisional reconnaissance "troop" was found by The Royal Montreal Regiment. The Canadian quota of corps and army troops called for 151 officers and 1070 other ranks; this included the tank battalion to support the division j- (provided by The Canadian Grenadier Guards), an Evacuation Hospital and three liaison increments to serve with the headquarters of American formations. Base units totalling 239 officers and 1691 other ranks included a 2nd Echelon for personnel administration and a Replacement Group corresponding to the Base Reinforcement Groups which had functioned in Italy and North-West Europe.<sup>45</sup>

Major-General B. M. Hoffmeister, who had commanded the 5th Armoured Division with distinction in Italy and North-West Europe, was selected to command the Canadian Army Pacific Force. Brigadier W. P. Gilbride, who had served latterly as D.A. & Q.M.G. of the 1st Canadian Corps, was appointed Deputy Divisional Commander, a post for which there was no Canadian equivalent. Other command and staff appointments were filled by officers who had served with the Canadian Army Overseas. The infantry regiments were commanded by brigadiers, not by colonels as in U.S. formations.

### Recruiting and Training the C.A.P.F.

Following the lead of the United Kingdom and the United States, Canada authorized special "Japanese Campaign Pay" (amounting in the case of private soldiers to 30 cents extra per day)<sup>46</sup> for the Canadian Army Pacific

\*The Home Defence division bearing this designation had been disbanded in December 1944 (above, page 186).

†General McNaughton had gladly embraced the U.S. suggestion that such a component might be provided.

Force.\* Volunteering began with the distribution overseas of the pamphlet *After Victory in Europe* on 11 May 1945 (above, page 432). The result was moderately satisfactory. By 17 July (the latest date for which figures are available) the grand total of "electors" was 9943 officers and 68,256 other ranks. But 1412 of these were nursing sisters, and 446 officers and 6075 other ranks belonged to the Canadian Women's Army Corps; while a great many of the male volunteers were unfit for active duty by reason of age or medical category. The "most select group", those suitable for service in the C.A.P.F., was defined as men of high medical category, between the ages of 19 and 33 and (in the case of overseas volunteers) single. Of the volunteers, only 2796 officers and 36,386 other ranks were males in this group.<sup>47</sup>

Although the actual strength of the proposed division would be only 790 officers and 15,058 other ranks, and of the whole C.A.P.F. only 1180 officers and 17,819 other ranks,<sup>48</sup> the immediate and prospective manpower requirement was much larger than this. It was calculated that, including three months' reinforcements and a small "contingency reserve",<sup>49</sup> 1513 officers and 27,435 men were required in the first instance, while replacements for eight further months of operations (to 30 September 1946) would amount to 1665 officers and 28,735 men more. As compared with the total of electors of all arms in the "most select group", then, there was an overall deficiency of 382 officers and 19,784 men. This deficiency centred in the infantry; the actual shortage in this arm was 835 officers and 20,775 men. The total of infantry volunteers in the most select group was 996 officers and 18,339 men, as against an infantry strength for the division of 375 officers and 9,276 men.<sup>50</sup> The immediate requirement, including three months' reinforcements, was well covered, with something to spare; but on the basis of past experience there was some reason to fear that in the event of the division's being heavily engaged for a long period a shortage of infantry replacements would develop.

By the end of August 1945, a total of 1963 officers and 22,058 other ranks had actually been posted to the Canadian Army Pacific Force. Of these, 1536 officers and 20,238 other ranks had been returned from Europe.<sup>51</sup> Since the men of the force were almost all well-trained soldiers, the main training problems were accustoming them to American equipment and to the conditions of the Pacific theatre. The plan was to concentrate the units of the C.A.P.F. at nine stations across Canada where they would be introduced to these new problems; the whole force, including the three months' reinforcements, would then move to Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky,

\*By order in council P.C. 1286 of 17 March 1949, this additional pay was granted to survivors of the Canadian Hong Kong force as from 1 June 1945, the date from which such pay was originally authorized, until two months after their return to Canada.

for individual and unit training and divisional exercises. Nine teams of experts from the U.S. Army were to come to Canada to demonstrate weapons during the preliminary phase; and an instructional cadre was formed, whose members would go to the United States in advance of the Force for training as instructors. Special orientation courses for commanders and staff officers were to be conducted at the Royal Military College.<sup>52</sup>

The Japanese surrender interposed before this programme was more than nicely under way. The American weapon training teams duly arrived early in August,<sup>53</sup> and large numbers of the instructional cadre and other members of the C.A.P.F. went to the United States on courses. By 17 August 1945, 347 officers and 1391 other ranks were attending such courses.<sup>54</sup> But the Force as a whole never moved.

Training for Intelligence work required particular attention, and in this field Canadians of Japanese origin had a special contribution to make. By August 1945 the Japanese Language School, an Army unit established at Vancouver, B.C., in 1943, had 114 students in training; of these, 52 were "Nisei".<sup>55</sup>

### The End in the Pacific

On 6 April 1945 General Douglas MacArthur assumed command of all United States Army Forces in the Pacific and with Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander of Naval Forces, began to plan the final operations against Japan. By this time the liberation of the Philippines was approaching completion. Since 24 November 1944 U.S. B-29 bombers based in the Marianas had been attacking the Japanese home islands with devastating effect. The conquest of Iwo Jima (February-March 1945) provided airfields which made it possible to give these bombers fighter escorts and enabled damaged B-29s to make emergency landings. The capture of Okinawa (above, page 509) placed the Allies even closer to Japan proper. In Burma the Japanese were on the run; British forces entered Rangoon on 3 May. In July the U.S. Pacific Fleet, reinforced by a strong British unit in which the Royal Canadian Navy was represented for a time by H.M.C.S *Uganda*, began to attack Japan both with carrier-based aircraft and with shellfire.

The plan for the final invasion of the Japanese islands ran thus. The first phase, Operation "Olympic", later re-christened "Majestic", called for a three-pronged attack by the Sixth U.S. Army on the southernmost island, Kyushu, in the autumn of 1945. The second phase, Operation "Coronet", in which the 6th Canadian Division was to have a role that  
was  
never

precisely defined, was to begin in the early spring of 1946 with an assault by the veteran Eighth and Tenth U.S. Armies against the main island of Honshu. They were to be followed ashore by ten infantry divisions under the First U.S. Army, redeployed from North-West Europe. These armies were to beat down Japanese resistance and occupy the Tokyo-Yokohama area; subsequently the Allied forces would fan out to the north and occupy the remaining islands.<sup>56</sup>

This last campaign was not required. Since the fall of the Tojo government in July 1944 Japanese leaders had been becoming more and more convinced that the war must be ended. After hostilities ceased in Europe in May 1945 an approach was made to Russia, asking that country for intercession; but Russia would give no definite answer. On 26 July came the Potsdam Declaration by Great Britain, the United States and China threatening Japan with "complete and utter destruction" and demanding unconditional surrender. The Japanese government let it be known that this would be ignored,<sup>57</sup> but in fact they were still discussing it when on 6 August the most terrible weapon of destruction humanity had seen,\* an atomic bomb, was detonated over Hiroshima. It may have killed as many as 90,000 people. Adolf Hitler, with the best will in the world, had succeeded in killing only 60,000 civilians by his five-year bombardment of Great Britain.<sup>59</sup> On 8 August, in accordance with a promise made to the United States and Britain at the Yalta Conference in February,<sup>60</sup> the Soviet Union entered the war against Japan. On 9 August a second atomic bomb was dropped, on Nagasaki. Early the next morning an Imperial Conference in Tokyo decided to sue for peace.<sup>61</sup>

Active hostilities ended on 14 August. The same day a Special Cabinet Committee in Ottawa recommended that Canada, having already undertaken a commitment for the first stage of the occupation of Germany, should take no part in the occupation of Japan. On 1 September orders were issued for the disbandment of the Canadian Army Pacific Force.<sup>62</sup>

Japan's war against the West, launched in treachery at Pearl Harbor and Hong Kong in 1941, brought her within four years to total and humiliating defeat. Her abasement was expressed in the instrument of unconditional surrender which her representatives subscribed on 2 September 1945 under the upthrust guns of the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. General MacArthur signed in acceptance as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers; and representatives of nine of those Powers, including Canada, set their names to the paper. So ended the Second World War. It had begun in Europe,

\*Nevertheless, it should be noted that a single "conventional" incendiary attack on Tokyo (ml 9-10 March 1945) had killed more than 83,000 people.<sup>58</sup>

six years and one day before, when Adolf Hitler's armoured divisions marched into Poland. Having caused untold misery and desolation in scores of lands, it now drew to a close on the further side of the globe; and, even though the significance of the dreadful thing that had happened at Hiroshima was not yet fully clear, men and women in every continent prayed that the collective intelligence of mankind might be equal to the task of ensuring that no such conflict would ever come again.



## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX "A"**  
(Four Tables)  
**STRENGTH AND CASUALTIES — CANADIAN ARMY**

**TABLE 1 — STRENGTH — SEPTEMBER TO SEPTEMBER 1947**

Date	Strength		Female	Total Strength (All Ranks)	On Extended Leave (Without Pay)	Strength Less Those on Extended Leave		Remarks
	Male	Female				Extended Leave	Strength	
1939								
30 Sep	GS	61,416	N/S-GS	81	GS	61,497	GS	61,497
31 Dec	GS	63,327	N/S-GS	149	GS	63,476	GS	63,476
1940								
30 Jun	GS	114,890	N/S-GS	264	GS	115,154	GS	115,154
29 Dec	GS	117,302	N/S-GS	508	GS	117,810	GS	117,810
1941								
1 Jul	GS	217,476	N/S-GS	701	GS	218,177	GS	218,177
	NRMA	13,273		701	NRMA	13,273	NRMA	13,273
		230,749				231,450		231,450
27 Dec	GS	256,208	N/S-GS	844	GS	258,166	GS	258,166
	NRMA	16,647	CWAC-GS	1,114	NRMA	16,647	NRMA	16,647
		272,855		1,958		274,813		274,813
1942								
27 Jun	GS	309,359	N/S-GS	1,095	GS	313,895	GS	313,895
	NRMA	33,321	CWAC-GS	3,441	NRMA	33,321	NRMA	33,321
		342,680		4,536		347,216		347,216
26 Dec	GS	360,016	N/S-GS	1,413	GS	369,537	GS	369,537
	NRMA	55,840	CWAC-GS	8,108	NRMA	55,840	NRMA	55,840
		415,856		9,521		425,377		425,377
1943								
26 Jun	GS	396,867	N/S-GS	1,677	GS	410,355	GS	410,355
	NRMA	69,299	CWAC-GS	11,811	NRMA	69,299	NRMA	66,278
		466,166		13,488		479,654		476,633
15 Dec	GS	405,308	N/S-GS	2,012	GS	420,706	GS	418,303
	NRMA	73,839	CWAC-GS	13,386	NRMA	73,839	NRMA	68,441
		479,147		15,398		494,545		486,744
1944								
21 Jun	GS	405,834	N/S-GS	2,876	GS	422,102	GS	417,839
	NRMA	72,971	CWAC-GS	13,392	NRMA	72,971	NRMA	65,858
		478,805		16,268		495,073		483,697

ABBREVIATIONS  
CA(A)—Canadian Army (Active),  
i.e., the wartime force.

CA(AF)—Canadian Army (Active  
Force), i.e., the post-war regular  
army.

CWAC—Canadian Women's Army  
Corps.

GS—General Service.

Int F—Interim Force. Members of the  
CA(A) who volunteered to serve  
until 30 Sep 47 and were permitted  
to do so.

NRMA—Personnel called up for duty  
under the provisions of the National  
Resources Mobilization Act, 1940.

N/S—Nursing Service (RCAMC).

3 Jun (1945)		27 Jun 1945		31 Dec 1945		30 Jun 1946		30 Sep 1946		30 Jun 1947	
GS	411,574	GS	411,792	N/S-GS	3,069	GS	428,155	GS	428,155	GS	424,962
NRMA	63,769	NRMA	49,981	CWAC-GS	13,512	NRMA	63,769	NRMA	63,769	NRMA	56,923
	475,343		461,773		16,581		491,924		491,924		481,885
GS	411,792	GS	411,792	N/S-GS	3,156	GS	428,709	GS	428,709	GS	423,768
NRMA	49,981	NRMA	49,981	CWAC-GS	13,761	NRMA	49,981	NRMA	49,981	NRMA	42,384
	461,773		461,773		16,917		478,690		478,690		466,152
GS	247,436	GS	247,436	N/S-GS	2,027	GS	238,410	GS	238,410	GS	231,431
Int F	2,855	Int F	2,855	Int F	2,027	Int F	2,855	Int F	2,855	Int F	2,855
	250,291		250,291		2,027		261,265		261,265		234,286
NRMA	40,843	NRMA	40,843	CWAC-GS	8,947	NRMA	40,843	NRMA	40,843	NRMA	28,607
	291,134		291,134		10,974		302,108		302,108		262,893
GS	48,828	GS	48,828	N/S-GS	700	GS	52,370	GS	52,370	GS	52,300
Int F	10,112	Int F	10,112	Int F	17	Int F	10,129	Int F	10,129	Int F	10,126
	58,940		58,940		717		62,499		62,499		62,426
NRMA	5,486	NRMA	5,486	CWAC-GS	2,842	NRMA	5,486	NRMA	5,486	NRMA	5,448
	64,426		64,426		3,559		67,985		67,985		67,874
GS	17,401	GS	17,401	N/S-GS	249	GS	17,682	GS	17,682	GS	17,664
Int F	12,283	Int F	12,283	Int F	23	Int F	12,306	Int F	12,306	Int F	12,304
	29,684		29,684		272		29,988		29,988		29,968
NRMA	1,054	NRMA	1,054	CWAC-GS	32	NRMA	1,054	NRMA	1,054	NRMA	1,046
	30,738		30,738		304		31,042		31,042		31,014
GS-CA(A)	1,113	GS-CA(A)	1,113	N/S-GS-CA(A)	1	GS-CA(A)	1,114	GS-CA(A)	1,114	GS-CA(A)	1,114
Int F	730	Int F	730	Int F	1	Int F	730	Int F	730	Int F	730
	1,843		1,843		1		1,844		1,844		1,844
CA(AF)	13,924	CA(AF)	13,924	CA(AF)	84	CA(AF)	14,008	CA(AF)	14,008	CA(AF)	14,008
	15,767		15,767		85		15,852		15,852		15,852
GS-CA(A)	233	GS-CA(A)	233	N/S-GS-CA(A)	—	CA(A)	233	GS-CA(A)	233	GS-CA(A)	233
Int F	31	Int F	31	Int F	—	Int F	31	Int F	31	Int F	31
	264		264		—		264		264		264
CA(AF)	14,337	CA(AF)	14,337	CA(AF)	82	CA(AF)	14,419	CA(AF)	14,419	CA(AF)	14,419
	14,601		14,601		—		14,683		14,683		14,683

*Extended Leave*

Figures in this column reflect the number of personnel granted leave of absence without pay and allowances for the purpose of proceeding on farm, etc., leave.

*GS Figures*

These include personnel called out on service under the provisions of General Order No. 139 of 3 Sep 39. GS strength shown for 1946 includes NRMA personnel serving overseas. Number of NRMA overseas during this year was not reported.

*Peak Strength*

The CA(A) reached its peak strength on 22 Mar 45 when it had a reported strength of 895,804 all ranks including 9,092 on extended leave.

*Source of Figures*

Strength returns compiled at National Defence Headquarters (Directorate of Organization, Adjutant-General's Branch). Strength return bearing date nearest end of the required month has been used.

TABLE 2—CASUALTIES BY CATEGORY AND YEAR, 1939-1947

Category	1939-40		1941		1942		1943		1944		1945		1946		1947*		Grand Total		
	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	
<b>FATAL CASUALTIES</b>																			
<i>Battle</i>																			
Killed in Action.....	1	10	36	329	47	782	89	1,202	742	8,046	210	2,308	—	—	—	—	1,125	12,677	13,802
Died of Wounds.....	—	4	1	20	3	30	31	297	202	2,390	62	644	—	1	—	—	299	3,386	3,685
PW (Prisoners of War) †.....	—	—	—	1	7	54	3	3	12	84	4	27	—	—	—	—	26	169	195
<i>Total Battle</i> .....	1	14	37	350	57	866	123	1,502	956	10,520	276	2,979	—	1	—	—	1,450	16,232	17,682
<i>Ordinary</i>																			
Died of Disease or Injury.....	31	329	47	451	49	682	74	847	88	1,134	93	934	17	144	2	7	401	4,528	4,929
Died of Disease or Injury while PW †.....	—	—	—	—	3	99	—	70	5	92	2	35	—	—	—	—	10	296	306
<i>Total Ordinary</i> .....	31	329	47	451	52	781	74	917	93	1,226	95	969	17	144	2	7	411	4,824	5,235
<i>Total Fatal</i> .....	32	343	84	801	109	1,647	197	2,419	1,049	11,746	371	3,948	17	145	2	7	1,861	21,056	22,917
<b>NON-FATAL CASUALTIES</b>																			
Wounded.....	6	91	22	335	40	573	348	4,328	2,496	32,589	782	10,051	—	—	—	—	3,694	47,967	51,661
Wounded PW.....	—	—	8	61	37	531	3	37	33	264	4	40	—	—	—	—	85	933	1,018
Unwounded PW.....	—	1	61	1,288	83	1,224	16	193	105	1,999	20	425	—	—	—	—	285	5,130	5,415
<i>Total Non-Fatal Battle Casualties</i> .....	6	92	91	1,684	160	2,328	367	4,558	2,634	34,832	806	10,516	—	—	—	—	4,064	54,030	58,094
<i>Grand Total</i> .....	38	435	175	2,485	269	3,975	564	6,977	3,683	46,598	1,177	14,464	17	145	2	7	5,925	75,086	81,011

\*The last recorded death of a soldier carried on strength the CA(A) was on 16 September 1947.

†See Table 4 for breakdown of these figures.

TABLE 3—FATAL AND NON-FATAL CASUALTIES BY THEATRE, 1939-1947

Theatre	Fatal* Battle		Fatal* Ordinary		Non-Fatal Battle		Prisoners of War				Grand Total		
	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Wounded		Not Wounded		Off	ORs	All Ranks
							Off	ORs	Off	ORs			
Canada, Nfld, Labrador, U.S.A., Kiiska, West Indies, Bahamas, Jamaica and Bermuda.....	1†	1†	224	1,951	—	4†	—	—	—	—	225	1,956	2,181
United Kingdom (includes Iceland).....	81	112†	112	1,401	24	276	—	—	—	—	144	1,789	1,933
Mediterranean—													
(Sicily, Italy, North Africa and Gibraltar)	412	4,987	15	360	1,226	18,273	6	72	58	870	1,717	24,562	26,279
Dieppe.....	56	837	—	14	39	547	37	531	82	1,224	214	3,153	3,367
North-West Europe.....	935	9,898	48	815	2,385	28,526	34	269	84	1,748	3,486	41,236	44,742
Hong Kong.....	23	267	4	260	14	286	8	61	61	1,288	110	2,162	2,272
Far East and Pacific—													
(Australia, Japan, Burma, Okinawa and India).....	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	8	2	10
At Sea.....	15	130	5	21	1	55	—	—	—	—	21	206	227
Total.....	1,450	16,232	411	4,824	3,694	47,967	85	933	285	5,130	5,925	75,086	81,011

\*Includes Prisoners of War (causes of deaths while PW are given in detail in Table 4).

†Kiiska (Casualties inflicted by enemy mines or unidentified machine gun fire; in addition two ORs were reported accidentally killed and listed as "Fatal Ordinary" casualties).

‡Most of these casualties were inflicted by enemy bombing attacks.

TABLE 4—FATAL CASUALTIES WHILE PRISONER OF WAR BY THEATRE AND CAUSE

Theatre	Fatal Battle				Fatal Ordinary				Total			
	Died of Wounds		Killed by Enemy		Killed by Allied Bombing		Total			All Ranks		
	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs	Off	ORs				
North-West Europe.....	5	37	1	40	2	9	8	86	94	6	13	19
Mediterranean.....	8	16	1	2	1	2	10	20	30	—	4	9
Dieppe.....	6	42	1	6	—	3	7	51	58	—	—	9
Hong Kong.....	1	8	—	4	—	—	1	12	13	—	—	14
Total.....	20	103	3	52	3	14	26	169	195	5	273	306

**APPENDIX "B"**  
**CANADIAN ARMY**  
**GENERAL SERVICE ENLISTMENTS**  
**1 September 1939 - 31 August 1945**

Months .....	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
January .....	—	6,412	5,863	11,026	12,310	4,482	9,936
February .....	—	3,810	6,318	8,801	9,488	3,689	9,667
March .....	—	4,924	4,890	8,897	8,347	3,490	9,738
April .....	—	4,475	6,102	11,714	6,890	5,896	7,502
May .....	—	6,909	8,008	12,576	6,790	4,905	2,954
June .....	—	29,319	14,216	11,579	5,564	9,748	1,200
July .....	—	29,171	11,902	13,574	4,969	5,938	1,066
August .....	—	15,934	5,505	14,768	5,227	7,132	482
September .....	54,844	9,677	8,848	10,783	5,390	6,304	—
October .....	4,376	4,966	6,867	10,022	4,787	5,795	—
November .....	3,633	3,202	7,723	10,874	4,496	10,514	—
December .....	2,049	3,024	7,287	5,824	2,810	6,749	—
Totals .....	64,902	121,823	93,529	130,438	77,068	74,642	42,545
Grand Total—1939-1945 .....							604,947

Includes personnel enrolled under the National Resources Mobilization Act who volunteered for General Service (from March, 1941) and C.W.A.C. enlistments (from September, 1941). Does not include officer appointments.

(Compiled from information supplied by Director, War Service Records, D.V.A., November, 1951).

## APPENDIX "C"

### CANADIAN ARMY APPROPRIATIONS AND EXPENDITURES, 1939-1946 (Compiled from Reports of the Auditor General, and Public Accounts of Canada)

Appropriations and Expenditures*	Fiscal Years (ending 31 March)										Total		
	1939-1940	1940-1941	1941-1942	1942-1943	1943-1944	1944-1945	1945-1946	1946-1947	1 April 1939 —	31 March 1946			
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	
<b>Appropriations</b>													
Total Defence Department Appropriations	144,409,674	681,438,416	1,033,528,288	1,919,348,020	2,674,653,206	2,962,926,915†	2,153,205,505	11,569,510,024					
Army Appropriation	78,748,103	408,256,969	526,816,520	1,044,280,504	1,337,950,724	1,285,089,301	959,342,678	5,640,484,799					
<b>Expenditures</b>													
Total Defence Department Expenditures	125,679,888	647,922,941	1,011,451,063	1,865,622,613	2,629,094,792	2,938,376,924	2,140,793,565	11,358,941,786					
Army Expenditures	74,799,380	383,462,039	511,410,695	1,038,180,774	1,328,847,454	1,261,799,186	949,667,104	5,348,166,632					
<i>Details of Army Expenditures</i>													
Service Pay and Allowances	37,260,278	150,253,710	238,027,309	366,496,403	495,142,584	509,642,531	497,787,701	2,294,610,516					
Mechanical transport; trucks, etc. (includes operating costs)	1,633,550	53,251,318	81,199,552	223,971,832	173,167,487	108,439,409	89,677,361	731,340,509					
Food; Medical and Dental Stores; Clothing; Personal Equipment, etc.	10,773,165	87,160,730	84,867,405	143,728,381	121,511,599	80,428,142	77,282,235	605,751,657					
Armament, Ammunition and Bombs	1,987,016	6,369,602	21,138,208	100,100,749	73,431,442	46,952,880	39,150,928	289,130,825					
Construction and Repairs; operating expenses of properties	8,657,013	49,686,441	37,389,635	84,197,916	65,714,018	34,256,453	40,808,754	320,710,230					
Travel, Transportation, Freight	2,752,855	13,468,247	26,839,583	48,542,516	65,188,976	51,620,402	62,917,541	271,330,120					
Signal and Wireless Equipment	151,119	1,076,453	3,357,771	19,050,689	24,778,584	11,118,695	8,725,816	68,259,127					
Advance Payments to United States Treasury (purchases from US Government)	—	—	—	19,980,000	207,570,000	7,735,000	—	235,285,000					
Advance Payments to United Kingdom for maintenance Canadian Army Overseas	—	—	—	—	65,960,125	376,334,262	1,651,613	443,946,000					
Other Expenditures‡	11,584,384	22,193,538	18,591,232	32,112,288	36,382,639	35,271,412	131,665,155	287,802,648					

\* "Ordinary" plus "War" Appropriations and Expenditures.

† Includes United Kingdom share of cost of British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (written off).

‡ Examples of such expenditures are:—Civil Salaries and Wages; Northwest Territories and Yukon Radio System; Inspection Board, United Kingdom and Canada; Dominion Arsenals; Censor Services; Dependents Supplementary Grants; Printing, Stationery; Telegrams; Internment Operations; Departmental Administration; Cadet Services; Grants to Military Associations.

**APPENDIX "D"**

**CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE) TRAINING CENTRES AND SCHOOLS IN CANADA, 1 JULY 1943**

DESIGNATION (1 Jul 43)	LOCATION (1 Jul 43)	DATE PLACED		REMARKS
		ON ACTIVE SERVICE		
<b>A. OFFICERS TRAINING</b>				
Royal Military College	Kingston, Ont.	1 Sep 39	Authorized 1 Jun 1876.	
01 Officers Training Centre (Eastern Canada)	Brockville, Ont.	5 Mar 41		
02 Officers Training Centre (Western Canada)	Gordon Head, BC.	5 Mar 41	Disbanded 30 Oct 43.	
03 Officers Training Centre	Three Rivers, P.Q.	1 Nov 42	Authorized as a "Temporary" Training Centre. Disbanded 30 Sep 43.	
44 Cdn Officer Cadet & Basic Training Centre	St. Jérôme, P.Q.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre 15 Feb 41 to 25 Nov 42. 44 Cdn Officer Cadet & Basic Training Centre 26 Nov 42 to 27 Jul 43. S18 St. Jérôme School of Army Instruction from 28 Jul 43.	
<b>B. BASIC TRAINING</b>				
No 6 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Stratford, Ont.		Authorized as a "Temporary" Basic Training Centre effective 1 Dec 42 but never placed on Active Service. Disbanded 30 Nov 43.	
No 10 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Kitchener, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Ceased to function in October 1942 when accommodation allotted to No. 3 CWAC (Basic) Training Centre. Officially disbanded 30 Nov 43.	
No 12 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Chatham, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 12 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.	
No 13 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Listowel, Ont.	1 Aug 42	Disbanded 30 Nov 43.	
No 20 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Brantford, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 20 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.	
No 23 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Newmarket, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 23 Cdn Armoured Corps (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.	
No 24 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Brampton, Ont.	28 Jan 42	Redesignated No. 24 Cdn Armoured Corps (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.	
No 25 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Simcoe, Ont.	28 Jan 42	Redesignated No. 25 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.	



No 26 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Orillia, Ont.	15 Apr 42	Redesignated No. 26 Cdn Armoured Corps (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 31 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Cornwall, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 31 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 32 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Peterborough, Ont.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 32 Cdn Army Medical Corps (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43
No 33 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Ottawa, Ont.	1 Aug 42	Disbanded 1 Sept 43.
No 41 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Huntingdon, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 30 Nov 43.
No 43 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Sherbrooke, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 43 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 45 Cdn Basic and Technical Training Centre	Sorel, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 45 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 47 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Valleyfield, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 30 Nov 43.
No 48 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	St. Johns, PQ.	1 Aug 42	Redesignated No. 48 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 51 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre (The Tremblay Training Centre)	Chicoutimi, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Designated No. 51 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre 15 Feb 41 to 14 Jul 42. Disbanded 1 Sep 43.
No 53 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Lauzon, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 1 Sep 43.
No 54 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Montmagny, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 54 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 55 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Rimouski, PQ.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 1 Sep 43.
No 60 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Yarmouth, NS.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 60 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 61 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	New Glasgow, NS.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 61 Cdn Artillery (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov. 43.
No 62 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Charlottetown, PEI.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 62 Cdn Artillery (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 70 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Fredericton, NB.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 70 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 71 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Edmundston, NB.	15 Feb 41	NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 71 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.

APPENDIX "D" CONTINUED

CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE) TRAINING CENTRES AND SCHOOLS IN CANADA, 1 JULY 1943

DESIGNATION (1 Jul 43)	LOCATION (1 Jul 43)	DATE PLACED		REMARKS
		ON ACTIVE	SERVICE	
B. BASIC TRAINING				
No 100 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Portage la Prairie, Man.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 30 Nov 43.
No 102 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Fort William, Ont.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 31 Oct 43. Accommodation used for Veterans Guard training purposes.
No 103 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Winnipeg (Fort Garry), Man.	28 Jan 42		Redesignated No. 103 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 110 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Vernon, BC.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 31 Aug 43 upon organization of S17 Cdn Infantry School.
No 112 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Chilliwack, BC.	28 Jan 42		Disbanded 30 Sep 43. Replaced by an Officers Selection & Appraisal Centre.
No 120 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Regina, Sask.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Disbanded 1 Sep 43.
No 121 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Maple Creek, Sask.	3 Oct 41		Actually commenced operations in March, 1942 upon disbandment of A18 Cdn Machine Gun Training Centre. Disbanded 30 Nov 43.
No 122 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Prince Albert, Sask.	28 Jan 42		Redesignated No. 122 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 131 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Camrose, Alta.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 131 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 132 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Grand Prairie, Alta.	15 Feb 41		NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Redesignated No. 132 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 133 Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre	Wetaskiwin, Alta.	28 Jan 42		Redesignated No. 133 Cdn Infantry (Basic) Training Centre 15 Nov 43.
No 2 CWAC (Basic) Training Centre	Vermilion, Alta.	1 Oct 42		
No 3 CWAC (Basic) Training Centre	Kitchener, Ont.	15 Oct 42		

No 22 Cdn Army Educational (Basic) Training Centre  
No 42 Cdn Army Educational (Basic) Training Centre

North Bay, Ont. 15 Feb 41

NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre 15 Feb 41 to 14 Apr 42.

Joliette, PQ. 15 Feb 41

NPAM Training Centre from 9 Oct 40 to 14 Feb 41. Cdn Army (Basic) Training Centre 15 Feb 41 to 31 Aug 42.

### C. ADVANCED TRAINING

#### ARMoured CORPS TRAINING

A33 Cdn Armoured Corps Training Establishment

1 Sep 39

Camp Borden, Ont.

Organized 1 Nov 36 as a Permanent Force Training Centre designated Cdn Tank School which was redesignated Cdn Armoured Fighting Vehicles School 1 May 38. Upon authorization of a Canadian Armoured Corps Training Centre, on 10 Aug 40, the CAFV School became dormant. On 15 Feb 41 two Armoured Corps Training Centres (A8 and A9) were authorized. On 28 Jan 42 A28 Advanced Training Centre (later redesignated A28 Cdn Armoured Corps Training Centre) was authorized. A33 Cdn Armoured Corps Training Establishment was created, effective 1 Sep 42, by the amalgamation of the three Training Centres and an existing Cdn Armoured Corps Training Group. Designated A27 Advanced Training Centre 28 Jan 42 to 31 Aug 42.

531

A27 Cdn Reconnaissance Training Centre

Dundurn, Sask. 28 Jan 42

#### ARMY SERVICE CORPS TRAINING

A19 Cdn Army Service Corps Training Centre

1 Sep 39

Camp Borden, Ont.

Organized as a Permanent Force Training Centre 1 May 38. Allotted Number "A19" 15 Feb 41.

A20 Cdn Army Service Corps Training Centre

15 Feb 41

Red Deer, Alta.

#### ARTILLERY TRAINING

A1 Cdn Artillery Training Centre

15 Feb 41

Petawawa, Ont.

A Canadian Artillery Training Centre (Field and Anti-Tank) 1 Dec 39 to 14 Feb 41. Two Training Centres authorized effective 15 Feb 41 and allotted Numbers "A1" and "A2" respectively.

A2 Cdn Artillery Training Centre

15 Feb 41

Petawawa, Ont.

A3 Cdn Artillery Training Centre

15 Feb 41

Shilo, Man.

A4 Cdn Artillery Training Centre

15 Feb 41

Brandon, Man.

A23 Coast and Anti-Aircraft Artillery Training Centre

Eastern Passage, NS. 15 Feb 41

A Canadian Artillery Training Centre (Field and Anti-Tank) 20 Mar 40 to 14 Feb 41. Two Training Centres authorized effective 15 Feb 41 and allotted Numbers "A3" and "A4" respectively.

APPENDIX "D" CONTINUED

CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE) TRAINING CENTRES AND SCHOOLS IN CANADA, 1 JULY 1943

DESIGNATION (1 Jul 43)	LOCATION (1 Jul 43)	DATE PLACED ON ACTIVE SERVICE	REMARKS
C. ADVANCED TRAINING (CONTINUED)			
CWAC TRAINING			
No 1 CWAC Advanced Training Centre	Stc. Annes, P.Q.	1 Oct 42	
ENGINEER TRAINING			
A5 Cdn Engineer Training Centre	Petawawa, Ont.	15 Feb 41	A Canadian Engineers Training Centre 1 Dec 39 to 14 Feb 41. Allotted Number "A5" 15 Feb 41.
A6 Cdn Engineer Training Centre	Chilliwack, B.C.	15 Feb 41	
INFANTRY TRAINING			
A10 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Camp Borden, Ont.	15 Feb 41	
A11 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Camp Borden, Ont.	15 Feb 41	
A12 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Farnham, P.Q.	15 Feb 41	
A13 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Valcartier, P.Q.	15 Feb 41	
A14 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Aldershot, NS.	15 Feb 41	
A15 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Shilo, Man.	15 Feb 41	
A16 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Calgary, Alta.	15 Feb 41	
A29 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Ipperwash, Ont.	28 Jan 42	Designated A29 Advanced Training Centre 28 Jan 42 to 31 Aug 42.
A30 Cdn Infantry Training Centre	Utopia, NB.	28 Jan 42	Designated A30 Advanced Training Centre 28 Jan 42 to 31 Aug 42.

INFANTRY (MACHINE GUN) TRAINING A17 Cdn Machine Gun Training Centre Three Rivers, P.Q.	15 Feb 41	Disbanded 30 Sep 43 and replaced by an <i>Officers Selection &amp; Appraisal Centre</i> .
MEDICAL CORPS TRAINING A22 Cdn Army Medical Corps Training Centre	15 Feb 41	A <i>Canadian Army Medical Corps Training Centre</i> 1 Dec 39 to 14 Feb 41. Allotted Number "A22" 15 Feb 41.
ORDNANCE CORPS TRAINING A21 Cdn Ordnance Corps Training Centre	15 Feb 41	A <i>Canadian Ordnance Training Centre</i> 1 Dec 39 to 14 Feb 41. Allotted Number "A21" 15 Feb 41.
PROVOST CORPS TRAINING A32 Cdn Provost Corps Training Centre	16 Sep 42	
SIGNAL TRAINING A7 Cdn Signal Training Centre	1 Sep 39	Organized as a Permanent Force Training Centre 1 Jan 36. Allotted Number "A7" 15 Feb 41.
D. SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION		
ADMINISTRATION S7 Cdn Army Administrative School	15 Apr 41	Designated <i>S48 School of Army Administration</i> 15 Apr 41 to 31 Oct 42
ARTILLERY S1 Cdn Coast and Anti-Air- craft Artillery School S2 Cdn Artillery School	1 Jan 42 1 Apr 42	Designated <i>Coast Artillery School of Instruction</i> 1 Jan 42 to 31 Oct 42. <i>S1 Cdn Coast Artillery School</i> 1 Nov 42 to 28 Feb 43. Designated <i>Canadian School of Artillery</i> 1 Apr 42 to 31 Oct 42.
BATTLE DRILL S10 Cdn Battle Drill School	1 May 42	Numbered "A31" until 31 Oct 42. Disbanded 31 Aug 43 upon organization of <i>S17 Cdn Infantry School</i> .
CHEMICAL WARFARE S11 Cdn Chemical Warfare School	1 Aug 42	Designated <i>Chemical Warfare Training Centre</i> 1 Aug 42 to 1 Nov 42.
COMBINED OPERATIONS S16 Combined Operations School	1 Jul 43	School actually commenced operating in the Spring of 1943.

**APPENDIX "D" CONTINUED**  
**CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE) TRAINING CENTRES AND SCHOOLS IN CANADA, 1 JULY 1943**

DESIGNATION (1 Jul 43)	LOCATION (1 Jul 43)	DATE PLACED ON ACTIVE SERVICE	REMARKS
<b>D. SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION (CONTINUED)</b>			
<b>DRIVING &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>			
S5 Cdn Driving & Maintenance School	Woodstock, Ont.	1 Apr 41	Designated S11 Advanced Driving & Maintenance School from 1 Apr 41 to 1 Nov 42.
S9 Cdn Army Motor Mechanics School	London, Ont.	23 Jun 41	Designated S15 Mechanics Training School until 1 Nov 42.
S13 Cdn Motorcycle Maintenance School	Barrie, Ont.	2 Sep 42	
<b>JUNIOR LEADERS</b>			
S6 Cdn Junior Leaders School	Megantic, P.Q.	20 Aug 41	Designated S25 Cdn Army Junior Leaders School from 20 Aug 41 to 1 Nov 42.
<b>PARACHUTE TRAINING</b>			
S14 Cdn Parachute Training School	Shilo, Man.	1 Apr 43	Redesignated A35 Cdn Parachute Training Centre 28 Jul 43.
<b>RADIO DIRECTION FINDING (RADAR)</b>			
S15 Cdn Radio Direction Finding School	Barrie, Ont.	1 Apr 43	Did not open until 1 Jul 43. Remembered "A36" 28 Jul 43. Redesignated A36 Cdn Radar Training Centre 15 Oct 43.
<b>SMALL ARMS</b>			
S3 Cdn Small Arms School (Eastern Canada)	Long Branch, Ont.	15 May 40	Originally numbered "A25". Renumbered "S3" 1 Nov 42.
S4 Cdn Small Arms School (Western Canada)	Nanaimo, B.C.	15 May 40	Originally numbered "A26". Renumbered "S4" 1 Nov 42.
<b>TRADESMEN</b>			
S8 Cdn Army Trades School	Hamilton, Ont.	15 Jan 41	Originally numbered "S24". Renumbered "S8" 1 Nov 42.
<b>VOCATIONAL</b>			
No 1 Vocational Training School	London, Ont.	1 Jan 42	

No 2 Vocational Training School	Toronto and Hamilton, Ont.	1 Jan 42
No 3 Vocational Training School	Kingston, Ont.	1 Jan 42
No 4 Vocational Training School	Montreal, PQ.	1 Jan 42
No 5 Vocational Training School	Quebec, PQ.	1 Jan 42
No 6 Vocational Training School	Halifax, NS.	1 Jan 42
No 7 Vocational Training School	Saint John, NB.	1 Jan 42
No 10 Vocational Training School	Winnipeg, Man.	1 Jan 42
No 11 Vocational Training School	Vancouver, BC.	1 Jan 42
No 12 Vocational Training School	Saskatoon, Sask.	1 Jan 42
No 13 Vocational Training School	Edmonton, Alta.	1 Jan 42

## APPENDIX "E"

OPERATIONAL UNITS OF THE ACTIVE ARMY IN THE  
NORTH AMERICAN ZONE, 24 APRIL 1943

Only major units of the Armoured Corps, Artillery and Infantry, plus divisional units and units stationed in adjacent territories, are listed. Numerous non-divisional units of other Corps performed important operational tasks but limitations of space prevent their being listed here.

ATLANTIC COMMAND  
(Headquarters:-Halifax, N.S.)

<i>Areas and Units</i>	<i>Location of Area or Formation H.Q.</i>
<i>Newfoundland</i> .....	St. John's, Nfld.
25th Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
26th Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
103rd Coast Battery R.C.A.	
106th Coast Battery R.C.A.	
Le Régiment de Joliette	
The Pictou Highlanders	
Le Régiment de St. Hyacinths*	
The Lincoln and Welland Regiment*	
GOOSE BAY DEFENCES .....	Goose Bay, Labrador
108th Coast Battery R.C.A.	
The New Brunswick Rangers	
SYDNEY AND CANSO DEFENCES .....	Sydney, N.S.
16th Coast Regiment R.C.A.	
23rd Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
Fusiliers du St. Laurent (less two companies) †	
2nd/10th Dragoons C.I.C.---Attached from 7th Division	
HALIFAX FORTRESS .....	Halifax, N.S.
1st (Halifax) Coast Regiment R.C.A.	
21st Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
The Lanark and Renfrew Scottish Regiment	
2nd Bn. The Black Watch (R.H.R.) of Canada-Attached from 7th Division	
SHELBURNE DEFENCES .....	Shelburne, N.S.
104th Coast Battery R.C.A.	
SAINT JOHN DEFENCES .....	Saint John, N.B.
3rd (New Brunswick) Coast Regiment R.C.A.	
22nd Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
Le Régiment de Chateauguay (Mit)	
The Prince Edward Island Highlanders	
GASPS DEFENCES .....	Gaspes, P.Q.
105th Coast Battery R.C.A.	

\*Le Regiment de St. Hyacinthe relieving the Lincoln and Welland Regiment. Relief completed 11 May 43.

†One company with Shelburne Defences; the other with Gaspes Defences.



7th CANADIAN DIVISION .....Debert, N.S.

*Divisional Troops*

20th Field Regiment R.C.A.  
 23rd Field Regiment R.C.A.  
 26th Field Regiment R.C.A.  
 8th Anti-Tank Regiment R.C.A.  
 10th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.  
 15th Field Company R.C.E.  
 23rd Field Company R.C.E.  
 27th Field Company R.C.E.  
 5th Field Park Company R.C.E.  
 7th Divisional Signals R.C. Sigs.  
 7th Divisional Ammunition Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 7th Divisional Petrol Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 7th Divisional Supply Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 No. 71 General Transport Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 No. 20 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.  
 No. 21 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.  
 No. 27 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.  
 7th Divisional Ordnance Workshop R.C.O.C.

15th Infantry Brigade .....Debert, N.S.

Le Regiment de Montmagny  
 Le Regiment de Quebec  
 Les Fusiliers de Sherbrooke

17th Infantry Brigade .....Sussex, N.B.

Victoria Rifles of Canada  
 The Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles of Canada  
*Attached:--- Les Voltigeurs de Quebec*

20th Infantry Brigade .....Debert, N.S.

3rd Bn. The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada  
 3rd Bn. The Royal Winnipeg Rifles  
*Attached:-The Algonquin Regiment*

MILITARY DISTRICT No. 5

(Headquarters:-Quebec, P.Q.)

59th Coast Battery R.C.A .....Lauzon, P.Q.  
 24th Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A .....Arvida, P.Q.

21st Infantry Brigade .....Valcartier, P.Q.

27th Field Regiment R.C.A.  
 3rd Bn. Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal  
 3rd Bn. Le Regiment de Maisonneuve  
 Le Regiment de Levis  
 21st Brigade Group Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 No. 6 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.  
 No. 19 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.

MILITARY DISTRICT No. 4

(Headquarters:-Montreal, P.Q.)

The Princess of Wales' Own Regiment (M.G.) .....Sherbrooke, P.Q.

## SIX YEARS OF WAR

## MILITARY DISTRICT No. 2

(Headquarters:-Toronto, Ont.)

40th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A. .... Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.  
 The Queen's York Rangers (1st American Regiment) ..... Chippawa, Ont.  
 The Scots Fusiliers of Canada ..... Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.  
 1st Garrison Battalion ..... Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

## MILITARY DISTRICT No. 10

(Headquarters:-Winnipeg, Man.)

25th Field Regiment R.C.A. .... Shilo, Man\_  
 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion ..... Shilo, Man.

## MILITARY DISTRICT No. 12

(Headquarters:-Regina, Sask.)

30th Reconnaissance Regiment  
 (The Essex Regiment) C.A.C. .... Dundurn, Sask.

## PACIFIC COMMAND

(Headquarters:-Vancouver, B.C.)

VANCOUVER DEFENCES ..... Vancouver, B.C.  
 15th (Vancouver) Coast Regiment R.C.A.  
 28th Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.  
 The Royal Rifles of Canada  
 The Canadian Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

*19th Infantry Brigade* ..... Vernon, B.C.  
 26th Field Company R.C.E.  
 The Winnipeg Light Infantry  
 The Prince Albert Volunteers  
 3rd Bn. Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment)  
 No. 25 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.

6th CANADIAN DIVISION ..... Esquimalt, B.C.

*Divisional Troops*

9th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.  
 22nd Field Company R.C.E.  
 6th Divisional Signals R.C. Sigs  
 6th Divisional Ammunition Company R.C.A.S.C.  
 6th Divisional Petrol Company R.C.A.S.C.

*13th Infantry Brigade* ..... Port Alberni, B.C.  
 The Brockville Rifles  
 1st Bn. The Edmonton Fusiliers  
 2nd Bn. The Canadian Scottish Regiment

*18th Infantry Brigade* ..... Nanaimo, B.C.  
 24th Field Regiment R.C.A.  
 25th Field Company R.C.E.  
 The Saint John Fusiliers (M.G.)  
 The Rocky Mountain Rangers  
 1st Bn. Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment)  
 The Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury Regiment  
 No. 3 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.

<i>Victoria and Esquimalt Fortress</i> .....	Esquimalt, B.C.
31st (Alberta) Reconnaissance Regiment C.A.C.	
5th (B.C.) Coast Regiment R.C.A.	
27th Anti-Aircraft Regiment R.C.A.	
21st Field Regiment R.C.A.	
3rd Bn. The Regina Rifle Regiment	
Le Régiment de Hull	
8th CANADIAN DIVISION .....	Prince George, B.C.
<i>Divisional Troops</i>	
8th Divisional Signals R.C. Sigs.	
No. 29 General Transport Company R.C.A.S.C.	
<i>14th Infantry Brigade</i> .....	Terrace, B.C.
22nd Field Regiment R.C.A. ( <i>One battery with Prince Rupert Defences</i> )	
21st Field Company R.C.E.	
The Kent Regiment	
The King's Own Rifles of Canada ( <i>Two companies with Prince Rupert Defences</i> )	
No. 1 Field Ambulance R.C.A.M.C.	
<i>16th Infantry Brigade</i> .....	Prince George, B.C.
24th Field Company R.C.E.	
The Oxford Rifles	
The Prince of Wales Rangers (Peterborough Regiment)	
3rd Bn. The Edmonton Fusiliers	
<i>Prince Rupert Defences</i> .....	Prince Rupert, B.C.
17th (North British Columbia) Coast Regiment R.C.A.	
34th Anti-Aircraft Battery R.C.A. ( <i>at Annette Island, Alaska</i> )	
The Midland Regiment (Northumberland and Durham)	
The Winnipeg Grenadiers	

## ADJACENT TERRITORIES

UNITED STATES	
2nd Canadian Parachute Battalion .....	Camp Bradford, Norfolk, Virginia
JAMAICA	
The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's) .....	Kingston
BERMUDA	
Special Infantry Company (Pictou Highlanders) .....	Warwick
BAHAMAS	
No. 33 Company, Veterans Guard of Canada .....	Nassau
BRITISH GUIANA	
No. 34 Company, Veterans Guard of Canada .....	Georgetown

## APPENDIX "F"

PERSONS HOLDING PRINCIPAL APPOINTMENTS  
CANADIAN ARMY 1939-1945\*

The list of appointments for the Canadian Army Overseas ends with the cessation of hostilities against Germany; that of appointments in Canada continues until the surrender of Japan. The only staff appointments in Canada included are the Heads of Branches at N.D.H.Q.

Officers are shown with rank and decorations as of the day on which they relinquished the appointments concerned. Names of officers who held acting appointments or were detailed temporarily to command are not shown unless they were subsequently confirmed in the appointments. No distinction is made between acting and confirmed rank.

APPOINTMENTS IN CANADA  
(to 14 Aug. 45)*Minister of National Defence*

Hon. Ian A. Mackenzie .....	23 Oct. 35 - 19 Sep. 39
Hon. Norman McL. Rogers .....	19 Sep. 39 - 10 Jun. 40
Col. the Hon. J. L. Ralston, C.M.G., D.S.O. ....	5 Jul. 40 - 2 Nov. 44
Gen. the Hon. A. G. L. McNaughton, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. ....	2 Nov. 44 - 21 Aug. 45

*Deputy Minister (Army)†*

Maj.-Gen. L. R. La Fleche, D.S.O. ....	3 Nov. 32 - 16 Oct. 40
Lt.-Col. H. DesRosiers, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. ....	8 Sep. 39 - 31 Aug. 45
Lt.-Col. G. S. Currie, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C. ....	1 Sep. 42 - 30 Sep. 44
A. Ross, Esq., C.M.G. ....	1 Oct. 44 - 13 Jan. 47

*Chief of the General Staff*

Maj.-Gen. T. V. Anderson, D.S.O. ....	21 Nov. 38 - 21 Jul. 40
Lt.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, D.S.O. ....	22 Jul. 40 - 23 Dec. 41
Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart, C.B., D.S.O., M.C. ....	24 Dec. 41 - 26 Dec. 43
Lt.-Gen. J. C. Murchie, C.B., C.B.E. ....	3 May 44 - 20 Aug. 45

*Vice Chief of the General Staff*

Maj.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, D.S.O. ....	6 Jul. 40 - 21 Jul. 40
Maj.-Gen. K. Stuart, D.S.O., M.C. ....	13 Mar. 41 - 23 Dec. 41
Maj.-Gen. M. A. Pope, M.C. ....	24 Dec. 41 - 14 Feb. 42
Maj.-Gen. J. C. Murchie, C.B.E. ....	15 Feb. 42 - 2 May 44
Maj.-Gen. R. B. Gibson, C.B., C.B.E., V.D. ....	5 Sep. 44 - 2 Feb. 46

*Adjutant General*

Maj.-Gen. H. H. Matthews, C.M.G., D.S.O. ....	15 Aug. 38 - 8 Apr. 40
Maj.-Gen. B. W. Browne, D.S.O., M.C. ....	6 Jul. 40 - 1 Feb. 42
Maj.-Gen. H. F. G. Letson, C.B.E., M.C., E.D. ....	2 Feb. 42 - 30 Sep. 44
Maj.-Gen. A. E. Walford, C.B., C.B.E., M.M., E.D. ....	1 Oct. 44 - 4 Jan. 46

\*Adapted from Appendix "A", *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical*

*Summary.*

†When war was declared, the Department of National Defence had a single Deputy Minister-Maj.-Gen. La Fleche. Although not actively employed as such from 8 Sep 39, he continued to hold this appointment until 16 Oct 40. He was on sick leave from 8 Sep 39 to 17 Jan 40; was appointed Military Attaché in Paris on 18 Jan 40; and became Associate Minister of National War Services on 17 Oct 40. Lt.-Col. DesRosiers was appointed an "Associate Acting Deputy Minister" of National Defence and detailed to carry out those duties in respect to the Militia Service usually performed by the Deputy Minister. On 1 Sep 42, Lt.-Col. Currie became a Deputy Minister (Army). At the same time Lt.-Col. DesRosiers' appointment was changed from that of an Associate Acting Deputy Minister to Deputy Minister (Army).

*Quartermaster General*

Maj.-Gen. H. F. H. Hertzberg, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C. (acting from 15 Aug. 38) .....	21 Nov. 38 - 8 Apr. 40
Maj.-Gen. E. J. C. Schmidlin, M.C. (acting from 9 Apr. 40) .....	24 Jul. 40 - 12 Jan. 42
Maj.-Gen. J. P. Mackenzie, D.S.O. ....	2 Feb. 42 - 6 May 43
Maj.-Gen. H. Kennedy, C.B.E., M.C. ....	7 May 43 - 15 Sep. 44
Maj.-Gen. H. A. Young, C.B.E., D.S.O. ....	16 Sep. 44 - 29 Mar. 46

*Master General of the Ordnance*

Maj.-Gen. W. H. P. Elkins, C.B.E., D.S.O. (acting from 7 Oct. 38) ' .....	9 Nov. 38 - 31 Jul. 40
P. A. Chester, Esq. ....	15 Aug. 40 - 30 Nov. 40
V. Sifton, Esq., C.B.E. ....	1 Dec. 40 - 30 Jun. 42
Maj.-Gen. J. V. Young, C.B.E. ....	1 Jul. 42 - 30 Jun. 45
Maj.-Gen. J. H. MacQueen, C.B.E. ....	1 Jul. 45 - 6 Apr. 47

*G.O.C.-in-C. Atlantic Command*

Maj.-Gen. W. H. P. Elkins, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. ....	1 Aug. 40 - 15 Jul. 43
Maj.-Gen. L. F. Page, C.B., D.S.O. ....	16 Jul. 43 - 26 Aug. 44

*C.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command*

Maj.-Gen. R. O. Alexander, D.S.O. ....	17 Oct. 40 - 30 Jun. 42
Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., C.B., D.S.O., M.C. ....	2 Sep. 42 - 15 Feb. 45
Maj.-Gen. F. F. Worthington, C.B., M.C., M.M. ....	1 Apr. 45 - 22 Jan. 46

## HOME DEFENCE FORMATIONS

*G.O.C. 6th Division*

Maj.-Gen. A. E. Potts, C.B.E., E.D. ....	20 May 42 - 11 Oct. 43
Maj.-Gen. H. N. Ganong, C.B.E. ....	16 Oct. 43 - 15 Dec. 44

*G.O.C. 7th Division*

Maj.-Gen. P. E. Leclerc, C.B.E., M.M., E.D. ....	20 May 42 - 15 Oct. 43
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*G.O.C. 8th Division*

Maj.-Gen. H. N. Ganong .....	11 Jul. 42 - 15 Oct. 43
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*Commander Combined Newfoundland and Canadian Military Forces Newfoundland*

Brig. P. Earnshaw, D.S.O., M.C. ....	16 Oct. 40 - 24 Dec. 41
Maj.-Gen. L. F. Page, C.B., D.S.O. ....	25 Dec. 41 - 5 Jul. 43
Maj.-Gen. F. R. Phelan, D.S.O., M.C., V.D. ....	6 Jul. 43 - 15 Oct. 43
Maj.-Gen. P. E. Leclerc, C.B.E., M.M., E.D. ....	16 O&. 43 - 15 Dec. 44
Maj.-Gen. H. N. Ganong, C.B.E. ....	16 Dec. 44 - 31 May 45

## CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS

(to 8 May 45)

## CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON

*Senior Combatant Officer*

Maj.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, D.S.O. ....	17 Oct. 39 - 5 Jul. 40*
Maj.-Gen. the Hon. P. J. Montague, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C., V.D. ....	6 Jul. 40 - 26 Dec. 43

*Chief of Staff*

Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart, C.B., D.S.O., M.C. ....	27 Dec. 43 - 11 Nov. 44
Lt.-Gen. the Hon. P. J. Montague, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C., V.D. ....	22 Nov. 44 - 17 Sep. 45

\*General Crerar was first appointed to C.M.H.Q. as "Brigadier, General Staff".

*Major General in Charge of Administration*

Maj.-Gen. the Hon. P. J. Montague, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C., V.D.....	27 Dec. 43 - 21 Nov. 44
Maj.-Gen. E. G. Weeks, C.B.E., M.C., M.M.....	30 Nov. 44 - 15 Oct. 45

## FIRST CANADIAN ARMY

*G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army*

Lt.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.....	6 Apr. 42 - 26 Dec. 43
Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, C.H., C.B., D.S.O.....	20 Mar. 44 - 30 Jul. 45

*G.O.C. 1st Canadian Corps*

Lt.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.....	19 Jul. 40 - 5 Apr. 42*
Lt.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, C.B., D.S.O. (detailed temporarily to command from 23 Dec. 41) .....	6 Apr. 42 - 19 Mar. 44
Lt.-Gen. E. L. M. Burns, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.....	20 Mar. 44 - 5 Nov. 44
Lt.-Gen. C. Foulkes, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.....	10 Nov. 44 - 17 Jul. 45

*G.O.C. 2nd Canadian Corps*

Lt.-Gen. E. W. Sansom, C.B., D.S.O.....	15 Jan. 43 - 29 Jan. 44
Lt.-Gen. G. G. Simonds, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.....	30 Jan. 44 - 25 Jun. 45

*G.O.C. 1st Canadian Infantry Division*

Lt.-Gen. A.G.L. McNaughton, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.....	17 Oct. 39 - 19 Jul. 40†
Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., D.S.O., M.C.....	20 Jul. 40 - 1 Sep. 42
Maj.-Gen. H. L. N. Salmon, M.C.....	8 Sep. 42 - 29 Apr. 43
Maj.-Gen. G. G. Simonds, C.B.E., D.S.O.....	29 Apr. 43 - 31 Oct. 43
Maj.-Gen. C. Vokes, C.B.E., D.S.O.....	1 Nov. 43 - 30 Nov. 44
Maj.-Gen. H. W. Foster, C.B.E., D.S.O.....	1 Dec. 44 - 15 Sep. 45

*G.O.C. 2nd Canadian Infantry Division*

Maj.-Gen. V. W. Odium, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D.....	20 May 40 - 6 Nov. 41
Maj.-Gen. H. D. G. Crerar, D.S.O.....	23 Dec. 41 - 5 Apr. 42‡
Maj.-Gen. J. H. Roberts, D.S.O., M.C. (acting from 7 Nov. 41) .....	6 Apr. 42 - 12 Apr. 43
Maj.-Gen. G. G. Simonds, C.B.E.....	13 Apr. 43 - 28 Apr. 43
Maj.-Gen. E. L. M. Burns, O.B.E., M.C.....	6 May 43 - 10 Jan. 44
Maj.-Gen. C. Foulkes, C.B.E.....	11 Jan. 44 - 9 Nov. 44
Maj.-Gen. A. B. Matthews, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D.....	10 Nov. 44 - 6 Oct. 45

*G.O.C. 3rd Canadian Infantry Division*

Maj.-Gen. E. W. Sansom, D.S.O.....	26 Oct. 40 - 13 Mar. 41
Maj.-Gen. C. B. Price, D.S.O., D.C.M., V.D.....	14 Mar. 41 - 7 Sep. 42
Maj.-Gen. R. F. L. Keller, C.B.E.....	8 Sep. 42 - 8 Aug. 44
Maj.-Gen. D. C. Spry, D.S.O.....	18 Aug. 44 - 22 Mar. 45
Maj.-Gen. R. H. Keebler, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D.....	23 Mar. 45 - 19 Nov. 45

*G.O.C. 4th Canadian Armoured Division*

Maj.-Gen. L. F. Page, D.S.O. 10 Jun. 41 - 24 Dec. 41	
Maj.-Gen. F. F. Worthington, C.B., M.C., M.M.....	2 Feb. 42 - 29 Feb. 44
Maj.-Gen. G. Kitching, D.S.O.....	1 Mar. 44 - 21 Aug. 44
Maj.-Gen. H. W. Foster.....	22 Aug. 44 - 30 Nov. 44
Maj.-Gen. C. Vokes, C.B.E., D.S.O.....	1 Dec. 44 - 5 Jun. 45

\*General McNaughton actually relinquished active command of the Canadian Corps on 14 Nov. 41 as the result of an illness. When recovered he left on a visit to Canada, and on returning to England took command of First Canadian Army.

†Maj.-Gen. McNaughton was promoted Lt.-Gen. 10 Jul 40 and appointed to command the 7th Corps 19 Jul. 40.

‡General Crerar never actually commanded the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division as on the same day on which he was appointed he was detailed temporarily to command the Canadian Corps.

*G.O.C. 5th Canadian Armoured Division*

Maj.-Gen. E. W. Sansom, D.S.O .....	14 Mar. 41 - 14 Jan. 43
Maj.-Gen. C. R. S. Stein .....	15 Jan. 43 - 18 Oct. 43
Maj.-Gen. G. G. Simonds, C.B.E., D.S.O .....	1 Nov. 43 - 29 Jan. 44
Maj.-Gen. E. L. M. Burns, O.B.E., M.C.....	30 Jan. 44 - 19 Mar. 44
Maj.-Gen. B. M. Hoffmeister, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D.....	20 Mar. 44 - 6 Jun. 45

## APPENDIX "G"

## NOTE ON THE EQUIPMENT OF THE CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS, 1939-1945

This very brief note deals only with the most important items of armament and equipment used during the Second World War; the object is to give the general reader a non-technical bird's-eye view of the subject, indicating very briefly how the weapons of 1918 pattern with which the Canadian Militia was equipped in 1939 gradually gave place to modern equipment, much of it manufactured and some of it developed in Canada.

Only weapons and armoured fighting vehicles are dealt with, and even in these fields only items issued generally and in large numbers. In the interest of brevity, transport vehicles are omitted, as is also Engineer, Signals and other specialized technical equipment.

## INFANTRY WEAPONS

*Rifles.* Until November 1942 the rifle of the Canadian Army was the .303-inch *Short Magazine Lee-Enfield No. 1* (Marks III and III\*) as used in the First World War; during the following months it was replaced by the *No. 4*, which in June 1943 became available from Canadian sources. Features of the new rifle were greater simplicity of design, the aperture battle-sight which allowed quicker aim, an improved distribution of weight, and the shorter spike type bayonet. The *No. 4* rifle was generally, though by no means universally, preferred to the *No. 1*; the chief objection was to the battle sight, which could be set only at 300 and 600 yards. In July 1944 this device began to be replaced by the more satisfactory aperture leaf sight.

*Machine Carbines (Sub-Machine-Guns).* The machine carbine issued to the Canadian Army early in the war was the American *Thompson* (.45-inch). In 1942 the 9-millimetre *Sten* was introduced, and in June 1943 the Canadian-made *Sten* was adopted as standard issue. The *Sten* was cheap, light, and extremely simple; it had a greater magazine capacity than the *Thompson*, and could fire captured 9-millimetre ammunition. The *Sten* was first used by Canadians at Dieppe. It was not, especially at first, a particularly popular weapon; but many cases of unsatisfactory performance were attributable to inadequate training. In conformity with British practice Canadian formations in the Mediterranean used the *Thompson*, but on rejoining the First Canadian Army in 1945 they were again given the *Sten*.

*Light Machine-Guns.* The light machine-gun was a basic weapon of the infantry. It used the same ammunition as the service rifle. Until early in 1940 Canadian units overseas were still equipped with the *Lewis*, which had been used in the First World War; only gradually during 1940-41 was this gun replaced by the *Bren*. The first Canadian-made *Brens* arrived overseas in November 1940. The *Bren* was a very satisfactory weapon.

*Medium Machine-Guns.* The medium machine-gun is an infantry support weapon capable of more accurate and sustained fire than the light machine-gun, and at longer range. It has been effectively employed mounted on a carrier, but is normally fired from a tripod. The medium machine-gun of the Canadian Army was the .303 *Vickers* which had been used during the First World War; a dial sight had been added to it and with the introduction of new ammunition its range had been considerably increased. It was a first-class weapon in spite of its age.

*Mortars.* The Canadian Army used three types of mortar: the *4.2-inch* (firing a 20-pound bomb), adopted in December 1942; the *3-inch*, firing a 10-pound bomb; and the *2-inch*, an infantry platoon weapon using a 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-pound bomb. In the summer of 1941 the issue of Canadian-made 2-inch and 3-inch mortars commenced. In the winter of 1943-44 the range of the 3-inch mortar was increased from 1600 to 2800 yards.

*Infantry Anti-Tank Weapons.* In the autumn of 1942 infantry anti-tank platoons were equipped with the *2-pounder* gun; this was replaced in the summer of 1943 by the *6-pounder*. Other anti-tank devices of the infantry included the *No. 68 grenade* and



the .55-inch *Boys anti-tank rifle* (which in 1942 became available in considerable quantity from Canadian sources); both these weapons were replaced early in 1943 by the *Projector Infantry Anti-Tank*. This "PIAT" was a shoulder-controlled weapon firing a hollow-charge bomb designed to penetrate armour. Despite its short range it proved highly effective against buildings, pillboxes and all types of tank. The incidence of failure of the bomb to explode on an oblique hit was greatly reduced by the adoption of the "graze" fuse early in 1944.

*Flame*. Late in 1942 the *Ronson* flame-thrower, developed in the United Kingdom with Canadian cooperation and manufactured in Canada, was received. This weapon, mounted on a specially modified Universal carrier, was subsequently replaced by the *Wasp*, a similar device with longer range. The Canadian variant of the *Wasp* known as the *Wasp Mark IIC* proved effective in operations, as did the *Badger*, a Canadian development consisting of a "Kangaroo" armoured personnel carrier mounting a *Wasp II* flame gun.

### ARTILLERY WEAPONS

*General*. In distinguishing between "field" and "medium" artillery, it is convenient to think of a field gun as projecting a 25-pound shell up to seven miles, and a medium as firing an 80- to 100-pound shell up to ten miles.

*Field Artillery*. In 1939 the new *25-pounder gun-howitzer\** was not yet available, but field regiments of the Royal Canadian Artillery overseas were equipped from British stocks with *18/25 pounders* (converted 18-pounders); of necessity, obsolescent *18-pounder* and *75-millimetre* guns were also used for a time. These were replaced during 1941 by the *25-pounder*. Commencing 1 July 1941 this weapon was received from Canadian sources. It was an excellent gun.

*Self-Propelled Field Artillery*. During 1943, two other types of field gun were adopted. These were "self-propelled" (mounted on tank chassis, rather than towed). One was the Canadian-designed and Canadian-manufactured 25-pounder *Sexton*, using a Ram chassis, received late in 1943; the other was the American 105-millimetre *Priest*. Self-propelled artillery was used in armoured formations, and by the 3rd Infantry Division in the assault landing in Normandy.

*Medium Artillery*. The original equipment of the Canadian medium artillery in the Second World War was the *6-inch howitzer*. This began, in October 1941, to be replaced by the *5.5-inch gun-howitzer*. In view of there being insufficient supplies of the 5.5 to meet increased demands, the *4.5-inch gun-howitzer* was introduced in Italy in February 1944, as a stop-gap measure. This weapon, which had greater range and accuracy, proved quite popular and some were therefore retained, supplementing the 5.5.

*Anti-Tank Artillery*. In January 1942 it was decided that the *2-pounder* gun should be completely replaced in anti-tank regiments by the *6-pounder*. Other anti-tank guns subsequently used were the *17-pounder*, the American *self-propelled 3-inch M-10* and the *self-propelled 17-pounder*. The towed 17-pounder and 6-pounder were retained, but on a decreasing scale.

*Anti-Aircraft Artillery*. The light anti-aircraft gun of the Canadian Army was the *Bofors* (40-millimetre); the heavy equipment was the *3.7-inch*. In view of the declining strength of the enemy air force, it was found possible-and effectiveto employ both these weapons against ground targets. The *Bofors* was available from Canadian as well as British sources; in October 1943 the proportion of Canadianmade *Bofors* increased to almost 40%. Another weapon incorporated into light anti-aircraft regiments, brigade support groups and certain armoured formations was the *20-millimetre* gun. Comparatively little need was found for this weapon in its primary role, and its mounting was not well suited to ground use; in August 1944 accordingly it was withdrawn from use. In light anti-aircraft, as in most other artillery, a trend developed in favour of self-propelled equipment.

\*A "gun-howitzer" is a weapon capable of firing either at a low angle as a gun or the high angle characteristic of a howitzer.

## ARMOURED FIGHTING VEHICLES

*General.* The only vehicles dealt with are those employed in close contact with the enemy, and in considerable numbers; namely tanks, carriers, armoured personnel carriers, light tanks, armoured cars and scout cars. The last two are wheeled vehicles, the remainder are fully tracked; no "half-tracks" are included.

*Tanks.* On arrival in the United Kingdom Canadian armoured formations were equipped with the British *Churchill* and *Matilda* infantry tanks, and the American *General Lee* cruiser tank. The first intention was that the Churchill should become standard equipment for army tank brigades, and the Canadian *Ram* cruiser for armoured divisions. The Churchill was used at Dieppe, but even before that operation it had been decided to replace it with either the Ram or the American *General Sherman*. The Ram (which began to arrive from Canada early in 1942) did not promise to be as satisfactory an operational tank as the Sherman, which was of later design and may have been influenced by a "mock-up" model of the Ram; but it gave good service for training purposes, and some Rams served in the field as armoured personnel carriers, flame-throwers, observation post tanks or armoured gun towers.\* The Sherman, a 30-ton "medium" cruiser tank, was adopted for all Canadian armoured formations and used in the campaigns in Italy and North-West Europe. Its armament normally consisted of a 75-millimetre gun and two .30-inch machine guns; later some Shermans mounted the British 17-pounder or the 105-millimetre. The Sherman was a good tank, particularly reliable mechanically, but its armour was vulnerable to the best German guns, to which moreover the 75-mm. gun was inferior.

*Carriers.* Uses of the carrier included the conveyance of infantry carrier platoon personnel and their weapons, carrying the 3-inch mortar and the medium machine-gun (and occasionally mounting the latter), towing the 6-pounder anti-tank gun and the 4.2-inch mortar, and mounting the Ronson and Wasp 2 flamethrowers. For towing purposes the American-made *Universal T16* was used; otherwise the standard carrier of the Canadian Army was the Canadian-made *Universal*.

*Armoured Personnel Carriers.* The armoured personnel carrier ("Kangaroo") was a modified tank or self-propelled gun, used for carrying infantry into battle with a minimum of casualties: its normal load was about 12 men. "Kangaroos" were first used in Operation "Totalize" in Normandy (7-9 Aug. 44). The original armoured personnel carrier was a self-propelled Priest with the gun removed; this was succeeded by a modified Ram cruiser.

*Miscellaneous.* The standard light tank, used as a general-purpose vehicle in armoured formations, was the American *General Stuart* ("Honey"). Scout cars, employed in reconnaissance and liaison roles, included the *Humber*. Among other armoured vehicles of the Canadian Army were the American *Staghound* and the British *Daimler* armoured cars.

\*See J. de N. Kennedy, *History of the Department of Munitions and Supply* (Ottawa, 1950), I, 99.

## APPENDIX "H"

## THE NUMBER OF MEN EVACUATED FROM THE DIEPPE BEACHES

It is impossible to determine with complete certainty the number of men evacuated from the Dieppe beaches on 19 August 1942. The difficulty is that, although fairly reliable statistics are available for the men of each unit who returned to England (see page 389), there is in most cases no basis for settling precisely how many of these men had actually landed.

The 14th Canadian Army Tank Regiment reported after the operation that only three men of this unit had landed and returned (only one having been a member of a tank crew). Returned personnel of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal completed questionnaires which indicate that, of 103 individuals who filled these out, 52 had landed. Three more who did not complete questionnaires are known to have landed and returned. On the basis of statistics of men returned, some 20 others were in hospital or otherwise unavailable to complete the forms; assuming that half of these had landed, some 65 all ranks of this unit landed and returned to England. The report of the Commanding Royal Engineer 2nd Division calculates that 169 R.C.E. personnel landed and only 17 were evacuated. The other major units on the main beaches can be dealt with only by reviewing the fortunes of the tank landing craft in which some parties of their personnel were carried; it can be assumed that nearly all men carried in assault craft landed. In the case of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, 12 men were in L.C.T. 15, which did not touch down, and some men may not have landed from L.C.T. 6; we may perhaps assume altogether a total of about 25 not landed. The Essex Scottish had no large party on craft which did not touch down; in this instance it may be safe to assume that not more than 10 did not land. There seems to be no basis for calculation in the case of the Royal Marines, Royal Canadian Signals and miscellaneous units; it would seem to be conservative to assume for them a total of 50 men as landed and evacuated. On this admittedly unsatisfactory basis, the following very approximate figures emerge for men evacuated from the main beaches in front of Dieppe:

14th Army Tank Regiment .....	3
R.H.L.I. ....	192
Essex Scottish .....	41
Fusiliers Mont-Royal .....	65
R.C.E .....	17
Miscellaneous .....	50
	<hr/>
Total	368

As for the units on the Pourville beach, virtually the whole of their strength was in assault craft, and it may perhaps be assumed that not more than 10 men in each case were not landed. From this we get the following figures for men landed and evacuated:

Cameron's of Canada .....	258
South Saskatchewan Regt .....	348
	<hr/>
Total	601

From the Puy beach only a very few individuals who landed succeeded in returning - perhaps half a dozen. This would give a total of 975 for all the Canadian beaches.

In addition we have from the flank beaches the whole strength of No. 4 Commando (less unreturned casualties), and 20 men of No. 3 Commando. This amounts to 247, and would raise the grand total evacuated to 1222 all ranks. It must again be emphasized that this is only an approximation. But to say that 1200 men were brought away would probably not be very far wrong.

**APPENDIX "I"****NEWFOUNDLAND ARMY UNITS OVERSEAS**

Shortly after, the outbreak of the Second World War, the Newfoundland authorities agreed with the British War Office that one or more artillery regiments should be formed from men offering their services in Newfoundland. Accordingly, on 6 February 1940, a Proclamation by His Excellency the Governor of Newfoundland called for volunteers to "form one complete Heavy Royal Artillery Regiment, and, as far as possible, other Heavy Royal Artillery Regiments". The call met a ready response. In March a recruiting party from the United Kingdom arrived in Newfoundland, and by the middle of April the first draft of 403 volunteers was on its way overseas. By the end of September 1940, 1373 men for the Royal Artillery had been dispatched from Newfoundland.

The first unit to be formed from these drafts was the 57th (Newfoundland) Heavy Regiment R.A. Two months later, on 15 June 1940, the 59th (Newfoundland) Heavy Regiment R.A. was formed. Both regiments were built around a small skilled core of English officers and other ranks, although it was not long before Newfoundland personnel were sufficiently trained to take over the duties of English N.C.Os. In due course some Newfoundlanders were commissioned.

In England in 1940 the two units played somewhat similar roles. The Newfoundlanders helped to man the heavy guns on England's south-eastern coast. At the same time, the 59th Regiment was prepared to assume an infantry role and take over a sector of the Tunbridge Wells defences. As the threat of invasion lessened, more emphasis was placed on regular training as artillery units. The 59th Regiment remained in the Tunbridge Wells area for several years. Here it took part in many large-scale exercises, and early in 1944, with its four batteries newly equipped with 7.2-inch howitzers and 155-millimetre guns, it was undergoing intensive training for the part it would play in the Normandy invasion. Meanwhile, the new C.O. of the 57th Regiment, Lt.-Col. H.G. Lambert, had "agitated on behalf of the men for a change to field guns so they could get real action". As a result this unit became the 166th (Newfoundland) Field Regiment R.A. on 15 November 1941, and its former heavy equipment was replaced with 25-pounders.

In January 1943 the 166th Field Regiment left the United Kingdom for North Africa. By the end of February all its batteries were actively engaged on the central sector of the Tunisian front. The Newfoundlanders supported French and British units until the end of the Tunisian campaign. In October the Regiment was ordered to Italy, and upon arrival came under command of the 5th British Corps. Almost immediately it went into action supporting the 8th Indian Division's 17th Brigade in the San Salvo area north of the Trigno River. Late in November the Regiment supported the attack on the Sangro River line at Mozzagrogna. Thereafter, together with the remainder of the 5th Corps artillery, it supported the 1st Canadian Division's attack south of Ortona on 18 December. It took part in the famous "Morning Glory" barrage opening this operation, the second phase of which was recorded as "one of the biggest barrages which the Regiment had yet fired".

After giving support to Canadian, Indian, British and other Eighth Army formations early in the New Year, the unit was given a short rest preparatory to moving to the Cassino front. Here it supported the 2nd New Zealand, 4th Indian and 78th British Divisions in turn. It returned to the 5th British Corps on 11 April and relieved the 11th Field Regiment at Castelfrentano where it suffered heavy casualties from shelling. Early in June the Regiment was given the role of supporting

the 184th Italian Infantry Brigade, but shortly afterwards was withdrawn for a rest and calibration of guns at Vinchiaturò.

After the fall of Rome the 166th moved north under command of the 10th British Corps, then fighting in the mountainous terrain west of Ancona. During the first weeks of August the Regiment was engaged in the Citta di Castello area north of Perugia. For the remainder of the month, still in the mountains south of Florence, it supported Indian infantry formations near Anghiari, troops of the 85th U.S. Infantry Division and later the 24th Guards Brigade. At the beginning of September the Regiment crossed the Arno River and continued the advance through Castiglione to a position near Vergato, south of Bologna. During the winter of 1944-45 the 166th remained in support of the 24th Guards Brigade, then serving in the Fifth U.S. Army. Snow and ice made living conditions miserable and movement in the Apennines was hazardous. On 19 February 1945 the Regiment was taken out of the line for a rest, so ending an 18-month period during which it had been almost continuously active on the various fronts. It saw no more action.

On 5 July 1944 the 59th (Newfoundland) Heavy Regiment R.A., commanded by Lt.-Col. R.C. Longfield, landed at Courseulles in Normandy under the command of the 1st British Corps. Within 24 hours its batteries were engaging the enemy.

The 59th Regiment was very active during the Normandy campaign. On 7 August it supported the 2nd Canadian Division in the breakout attack towards Falaise, after which it occupied successive positions at Montigny, Angoville and Noron l'Abbaye before being moved up to cover the crossing of the Seine. On 28 August the 23rd Battery was detached to support the 12th British Corps' advance. Its 155-mm. guns were in action at Nijmegen at the time of the airborne landing at Arnhem in September.

Late in September the Regiment came under command of the First Canadian Army. While one battery, under the 4th Canadian Armoured Division, was bombarding shipping in Flushing Harbour, the remaining two (the 23rd was still with the 12th British Corps and was not ordered to rejoin the Regiment until 6 November) gave support to the Canadians in Belgium and south-west Holland. In October, the Regiment took part in the fire plan supporting "Switchback", the 3rd Canadian Division's operation designed to clear the "Breskens pocket" south of the Scheldt. Subsequently it fired in support of the 2nd Canadian Division's operation on South Beveland. On 6 November the 59th came under command of the Second British Army and supported various British formations eliminating enemy resistance west of the Meuse in the Venlo-Roermond area.

The beginning of 1945 found the Regiment divided again: two batteries were supporting the British and American units at the tip of the German bulge in the Ardennes sector while the two remaining batteries were still active on the Venlo-Roermond front. During January both groups were constantly engaged. Early in February the Regiment moved to the Grave area where it was to take part in the First Canadian Army's opening attack of Operation "Veritable". Supported by over 1000 guns, this operation was designed to clear the enemy west of the Rhine, and for the 59th Heavy Regiment it was the beginning of its most strenuous period in action. Throughout February and early March it gave valuable supporting fire to the 30th British and 2nd Canadian Corps in their struggle to clear the enemy from his well-fortified positions between the Maas and Rhine Rivers. After taking part in the battle in the Goch-Wesel area, the Regiment was moved to a less active position in preparation for the attack across the Rhine.

On 23 March it fired for eight hours in support of this attack. Four days later it went forward with the 12th British Corps attack near Wesel. The 59th Regiment subsequently took part in the final operations in the British sector of the Western front - the capture of Bremen and the crossing of the Elbe at Lauenburg.

A total of 2327 Newfoundlanders served overseas with the Regiments. Of these 72 lost their lives.

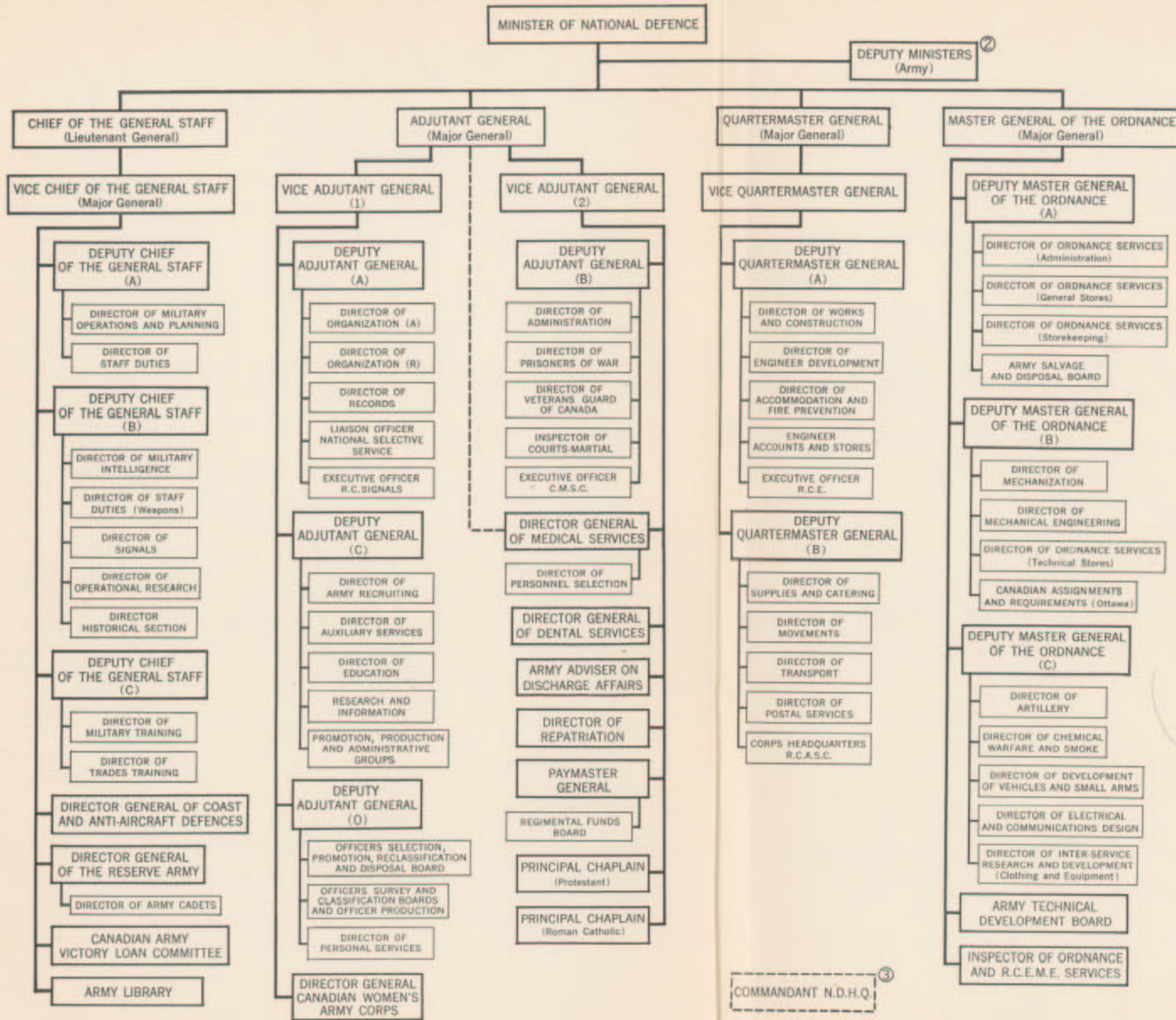
On the Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit, see Chapter VI, above.

The foregoing account is based mainly on the war diaries of the two artillery regiments; on an article on the 166th Field Regiment in the *Eighth Army News*, 2 January 1944; and on an unpublished draft history prepared on the initiative of the Newfoundland Government.



ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE (ARMY), APRIL 1945<sup>①</sup>

APPENDIX "J"



NOTES

① Compiled from the following Home War Establishments (with amendments which were effective on, or before, 30 April 45): GS Branch - Cdn V/305/2 (339 officers, 524 other ranks); Branch of the AG - Cdn V/305 B/1 Interim (635 officers, 2,908 other ranks); Branch of the QMG - Cdn V/305 D/1 (177 officers, 413 other ranks); Branch of MGO - Cdn V/305 E/1 (438 officers, 949 other ranks).

② The Deputy Ministers (Army) dealt direct with the four Branches. The following, not shown in the organization chart, also had a direct channel of communication to Branches: Judge Advocate General, Director of Public Relations (Army) and Director of Estates.

③ The Commandant NDHQ, operating on a separate Home War Establishment, was responsible for the general administration of personnel employed with Branches. There were also a number of other units in the Ottawa Area which, although not an integral part of any Branch, were closely associated with one or more of the Branches, e.g., Corps HQ of R.C.E., R.C.O.C., R.C.E.M.E., Postal Corps, Provost Corps, Forestry Corps; HQ Signal Company NDHQ; NDHQ Transport Company; No. 9 Detachment R.C.A.P.C.; NDHQ Constabulary.

COMMANDANT N.D.H.Q.<sup>③</sup>



**ABBREVIATIONS**

A.A. (Ack Ack) .....	Anti-aircraft
A.A.G. ....	Assistant Adjutant General
A.A. & Q.M.G. ....	Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General
A.C.G.S. ....	Assistant Chief of the General Staff
A.D.A.G. ....	Assistant Deputy Adjutant General
A.D.Q.M.G. (AE) .....	Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General (Army Equipment)
Adv. ....	Advance(d)
A.F.V. ....	Armoured fighting vehicle
A.G. ....	Adjutant General
A. & Q. ....	Administrative Branches of the Staff
A.H.Q. ....	Army Headquarters
A.L.C. ....	Assault Landing Craft
A.O.C. ....	Air Officer Commanding
A.O.C. - in-C. ....	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief
A.Q.M.G. ....	Assistant Quartermaster General
Armd. ....	Armoured
A.V.M. ....	Air Vice-Marshal
Bde. ....	Brigade
B.E.F. ....	British Expeditionary Force
B.G.S. ....	Brigadier, General Staff
Bn. ....	Battalion
Brig. ....	Brigadier
Bty. ....	Battery
C.A. (A) .....	Canadian Army (Active)
C.A.C. ....	Canadian Armoured Corps
Canmilitary .....	C.M.H.Q. [Address used in telegrams]
C.A.O. ....	Canadian Army Overseas
C.A.O.F. ....	Canadian Army Occupation Force
C.A.O.R.O. ....	Canadian Army (Overseas) Routine Order
C.A.P.F. ....	Canadian Army Pacific Force
Capt. ....	Captain
C.A.R.O. ....	Canadian Army Routine Order [issued in Canada]
C.A.S.F. ....	Canadian Active Service Force
C.B. ....	Companion of the Order of the Bath
C.B.E. ....	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
C.B.R.D. ....	Canadian Base Reinforcement Depot
C.C.O. ....	Chief of Combined Operations
C.C.S. ....	Combined Chiefs of Staff
C.D. ....	Canadian Forces Decoration
Cdn. ....	Canadian
C.E.F. ....	Canadian Expeditionary Force (1914-19)
C.F.C. ....	Canadian Forestry Corps
C.G.S. ....	Chief of the General Staff
C.I.C. ....	Canadian Infantry Corps
C.I.G.S. ....	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
C. in-C. ....	Commander-in-Chief
Cmdr. (Cdr) .....	Commander (Naval)
C.M.F. ....	Central Mediterranean Force
C.M.G. ....	Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George
C.M.G.T.C. ....	Canadian Machine Gun Training Centre
C.M.H.Q. ....	Canadian Military Headquarters, London
C.M.S.C. ....	Corps of Military Staff Clerks
C.O. ....	Commanding Officer
C.O.H.Q. ....	Combined Operations Headquarters
Col. ....	Colonel
Comd. ....	Commander
C.O.S. ....	Chiefs of Staff
C. of S. ....	Chief of Staff



C.O.T.C .....	Canadian Officers Training Corps
Coy .....	Company
Cpl .....	Corporal
C.R.S. ....	Captured Records Section (U.S. Dept. of the Army)
C.R.U. ....	Canadian Reinforcement Units
C.S.C. ....	Chiefs of Staff Committee
C.S.M. ....	Company Sergeant-Major (Warrant Officer, Class II)
C.W.A.C. ....	Canadian Women's Army Corps
D.A.G. ....	Deputy Adjutant General
D.A. & Q.M.G. ....	Deputy Adjutant and Quartermaster General
D.C.G.S. ....	Deputy Chief of the General Staff
D.C.M. ....	Distinguished Conduct Medal
D.D.E.M. ....	Director(ate) of Design, Equipment and Mechanization
D.D.M.O. (0) .....	Deputy Director of Military Operations (Overseas) [War Office]
Defensor .....	N.D.H.Q. (Address used in telegrams)
D.G.C. & A.A. ....	Director General Coast and Anti-Aircraft Defences
D.G.M.S. ....	Director General of Medical Services
D.H.S. ....	Director Historical Section
Div .....	Division
D.J.A.G. ....	Deputy Judge Advocate General
D.M. ....	Deputy Minister
D.M. & A. ....	Director(ate) of Mechanization and Artillery
D.M.O. ....	Director(ate) of Military Operations
D.M.O. & I. ....	Director(ate) of Military Operations and Intelligence
D.M.O. & P. ....	Director(ate) of Military Operations and Planning
D.M.T. ....	Director(ate) of Military Training
D.M.T. & S.D. ....	Director(ate) of Military Training and Staff Duties
D.N.D. ....	Department of National Defence
D.O.C. ....	District Officer Commanding
D. of T. & M. ....	Director(ate) of Transport and Movements
Dominion .....	High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom
[Address used in telegrams]	
D. Org .....	Director(ate) of Organization
D. Pers. Serv .....	Director(ate) of Personal Services
D.Q.M.G. ....	Deputy Quartermaster General
D.Q.S. ....	Director(ate) of Q.M.G. Services
D.S.D. ....	Director(ate) of Staff Duties
D.S.O. ....	Companion of the Distinguished Service Order
D.S.T. ....	Director(ate) of Supplies and Transport
D.T.R. ....	Director(ate) of Technical Research
D.V.A. ....	Department of Veterans Affairs
E.D. ....	Canadian Efficiency Decoration
External .....	Cdn. Dept. of External Affairs [Address used in telegrams]
Fervour .....	G.O.C. Hong Kong [Address used in telegrams]
F.O.O. ....	Forward Observation Officer
G.C.M.G. ....	Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George Gen General
G.H.Q. ....	General Headquarters
G.O. ....	General Order
G.O.C. ....	General Officer Commanding
G.O.C. - in-C .....	General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
G (Ops) .....	General Staff (Operations)
G.S. ....	General Staff
G.S.O. 1 .....	General Staff Officer, Grade 1
H/Capt .....	Honorary Captain (Canadian Chaplain Service)
H.D. ....	Home Defence
H.K.V.D.C. ....	Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps
H.M.C.S. ....	His Majesty's Canadian Ship
H.M.S. ....	His Majesty's Ship (Royal Navy)
Hon .....	Honourable
H.Q. ....	Headquarters

## ABBREVIATIONS

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Inf .....	Infantry
Int.....	Intelligence
J.A.G.....	Judge Advocate General
J.W.E.C.....	Junior War Establishments Committee
L.C.A.....	Landing Craft, Assault
L.C.F. (L) .....	Landing Craft, Flak (Large)
L.C.M.....	Landing Craft, Mechanized
L/Cpl.....	Lance-Corporal
L.C.P. (L) .....	Landing Craft, Personnel (Large)
L.C.T.....	Landing Craft, Tank
Lieut. (Lt.) .....	Lieutenant
L.M.G.....	Light machine-gun
L. of C.....	Lines of Communication
L/Sgt .....	Lance-Sergeant
Maj.....	Major
M.B.E.....	Member of the Order of the British Empire
M.C.....	Military Cross
M.D.....	Military District
M.G.....	Machine-gun
M.G.A.....	Major General in charge of Administration
M.G.O.....	Master General of the Ordnance
M.I.L.O.....	Military Intelligence Liaison Officer
Mit.....	Mitrailleuses
M.M.....	Military Medal
M.N.D.....	Minister of National Defence
M.S.....	Military Secretary
M.T.B.....	Motor Torpedo Boat
N.C.O.....	Non-commissioned officer
N.D.H.Q.....	National Defence Headquarters
N.P.A.M.....	Non-Permanent Active Militia
N.R.M.A.....	National Resources Mobilization Act
N.S.H.Q.....	Naval Service Headquarters
O.B.E.....	Officer of the Order of the British Empire
O.C.....	Officer Commanding
O.C.T.U.....	Officer Cadet Training Unit
O.I.C.....	Officer in charge ....
<i>O.K.H.</i> .....	<i>Oberkommando des Heeres</i> (Army High Command, Berlin)
<i>O.K.W.</i> .....	<i>Oberkommando der Wehrmacht</i> (Armed Forces High Command)
O.M.F.C.....	Overseas Military Forces of Canada (1914-19)
Ops.....	Operations
O.S.A.C.....	Officer Selection and Appraisal Centre
O.T.C.....	Officers' Training Centre
P.C.M.R.....	Pacific Coast Militia Rangers
P.F.....	Permanent Force
P.J.B.D.....	Permanent Joint Board on Defence
P.P.C.L.I.....	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
P.S.M.....	Platoon Sergeant-Major (Warrant Officer, Class III)
Pte.....	Private -
P.W.....	Prisoner of War
Q.M.G.....	Quartermaster General
Q.M.S.....	Quartermaster-Sergeant (Warrant Officer, Class II)
R.A.....	Royal Regiment of Artillery
R.A.A.F.....	Royal Australian Air Force
R.A.F.....	Royal Air Force
R.C.A.....	Royal Canadian Artillery
R.C.A.F.....	Royal Canadian Air Force
R.C.A.M.C.....	Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps
R.C.A.& C.....	Royal Canadian Army Service Corps

R.C.E.....	Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers
R.C.E.M.E.....	Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
R.C.H.A.....	Royal Canadian Horse Artillery
R.C.M.P.....	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
R.C.N.....	Royal Canadian Navy
R.C.N.V.R.....	Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve
R.C.O.C.....	Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps
R.C.R.....	The Royal Canadian Regiment
R.C. Sigs.....	Royal Canadian Corps of Signals
R.D.F.....	Radio Direction Finding (now called Radar)
R.E.....	Corps of Royal Engineers
Regt.....	Regiment
RH.L.I.....	Royal Hamilton Light Infantry
R.M.....	Royal Marines
R.M.C.....	Royal Military College
R.N.....	Royal Navy
R.N.V.R.....	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
R.O.....	Routine Order
R.R.C.....	Royal Rifles of Canada
R. Regt. C.....	Royal Regiment of Canada
S.C.A.P.....	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
S.D. and T.....	Staff Duties and Training
S.D. (W).....	Staff Duties (Weapons)
Sec.....	Secretary
Sgt.....	Sergeant
S.O.....	Senior Officer (C.M.H.Q.)
S.O.M.E.....	Senior Ordnance Mechanical Engineer
Spr.....	Sapper
Sqn.....	Squadron
S.S.....	<i>Schutzstaffel</i> (Protective Unit) (Nazi party organizations, including military formations) Stats Statistics
T.C.....	Training Centre
Tk.....	Tank
T.O.E.T.....	Test of Elementary Training
Tpr.....	Trooper
Troopers.....	War Office [Address used in telegrams]
U.K.....	United Kingdom
U.S.....	United States
U.S.A.....	United States Army
U.S.N.....	United States Navy
V.C.....	Victoria Cross
V.C.C.O.....	Vice Chief of Combined Operations
V.C.G.S.....	Vice Chief of the General Staff
V.C.I.G.S.....	Vice Chief of the Imperial General Staff
V.D.....	Colonial Auxiliary Forces Officers' Decoration
W/C.....	Wing Commander
W.D.....	War Diary
W.O. III.....	Warrant Officer, Class III

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## CHAPTER

## V

*Defending the Soil of Canada, 1939-1945*

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## CHAPTER VI

*The Growth of the Army Overseas and Organization in Britain*

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## CHAPTER XI

*The Raid on Dieppe*

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## CHAPTER XV

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