



“Take Post”

The Journal of The Toronto Gunner Community

Edition 4, 15 March, 2015

THIS EDITION

- Maj Smid – awarded the MMM
- Change of Command – 105 Army Cadet Corps
- Basic Winter Warfare Course
- Being a Recruit in 7th Toronto Regiment
- The “Simcoe Guns” and the Gunners of Toronto
- And Much More!

This journal, “Take Post” is published bi-monthly under the authority of the Honorary Colonel, 7th Toronto Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery. Take Post reaches out to all Gunners and those interested in being part of the Regimental Artillery Family of the Greater Toronto Area. The purpose is to share information and strengthen the ties between serving members, retired Gunners, Gunner families, friends of the Artillery, and the greater Toronto and region community.

Notes and Letters to the “Editor” can be sent to:
beno@kos.net

Major Ryan Smid, MB, CD, Awarded the Order of Military Merit



Major Ryan D. Smid, MMM, MB, CD with His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston Governor-General of Canada

Appointments in the Order of Military Merit recognize conspicuous merit and exceptional service by members of the Canadian Armed Forces, both Regular and Reserve. The order consists of three levels: Member (MMM), Officer (OMM), and Commander (CMM), the latter being the highest. The level of responsibility assumed by the individual determines the level of appointment.

This year's investiture ceremony was preceded by a Chief of Defence Staff's reception in the Ottawa Army Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at which guests were personally greeted by General Lawson and Chief Warrant Officer West. The reception included music and provided an excellent opportunity for recipients and their families to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere.

The investiture ceremony took place the following morning in Rideau Hall, the official residence of the Governor General. The ceremony was attended by approximately 50 recipients and their guests, as well as many previous Chiefs of Defence Staff and the recently appointed Minister of Defence, the Honourable Jason Kenney. Following the ceremony, the Governor General hosted a reception at which he socialized with the recipients and their guests. Tours of the residence and its history were given by knowledgeable staff which proved to be quite popular with those in attendance.



From left to right: Dennis Smid, Ms Natalya Smid, Governor General, Major Ryan Smid, Ms Tatyana Smid, Mrs Lisa Smid

Basic Winter Warfare Course 2015 – Train To Survive, Survive To Fight

Lt Jerry Ma

Operating and fighting in a winter environment is a basic skill that every soldier throughout Canada must master. Lessons throughout history, such as Napoleon's failed winter invasion of Russia in 1812, are perfect examples of the harsh realities what soldiers can expect to face when confronted with the challenges of surviving in the cold. Basic considerations from regulating one's body temperature to supply and logistics become challenges that could easily lead to failure. Those who fail to prepare, prepare to fail.

After returning from Christmas stand down, the training momentum was well maintained with the start of Basic Winter Warfare Course on January 16th 2015. The intent of the course was to

train newer members of the Regiment on how to operate, survive and fight in a winter environment.

Lectures such as navigation, basic survival skills, clothing, packing, winter defences and first aid for winter injuries were just some lessons that were given to soldiers at Moss Park Armouries on parade nights and weekends. The culmination of these lectures would end in a practical confirmation of their knowledge by deploying on a field training exercise to Meaford.



Left: Candidates embark on a winter move in blizzard like conditions to experience what they would need to do in actual combat operations.

Centre: Candidates rest after building ice defences

Right: A few thousand years late...Sgt. Lapalante makes a fire using survival techniques taught on the BWW course. There is yet hope for humanity!

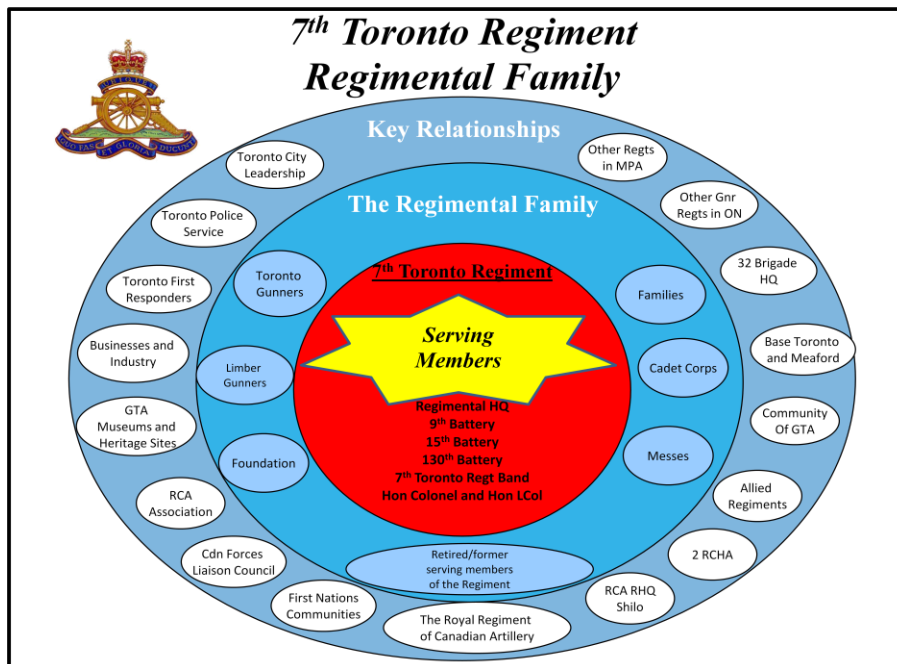
This year's winter has been particularly cold in Southern Ontario with temperatures reaching -28C and wind chill factors of -38. These conditions set a perfect environment for soldiers from 7th Toronto Regiment to train and practice their new skills when they deployed to Meaford from 6-9 February 2015. Upon deployment to the field, troops were immediately faced with the challenges of remediating failing equipment. One example was that fuel nozzles on several stoves were frozen due to condensation and freezing. As the troops quickly adapted and improvised, it became apparent that the lectures provided in class were invaluable.

The deployment to Meaford also allowed troops to experience navigating the training area with toboggans& snowshoes, building snow shelters, ice defences and improvised fires. After facing blizzard like conditions, morale was high amongst **the** troops as they were bestowed with the confidence in being able to operate in a winter environment.

A Shot Downrange – Words from Honorary Colonel Ernest Beno

2015 continues to be a tremendously active and productive year. The Regiment and the Regimental Family continue to do us proud.

This week I will publish our “Regimental Family Strategy.” My aim is to get all elements of our regimental Family aligned and focussed, working cooperatively and collaboratively towards common goals and objectives, and mobilizing the full potential of our greater Regimental Family. The graphic below shows what our Regimental Family is made up of, and all of the stakeholders who can and should be supporting our Regiment:






Our Mission: *To foster a credible, relevant, cohesive and valued 7th Toronto Regiment.*

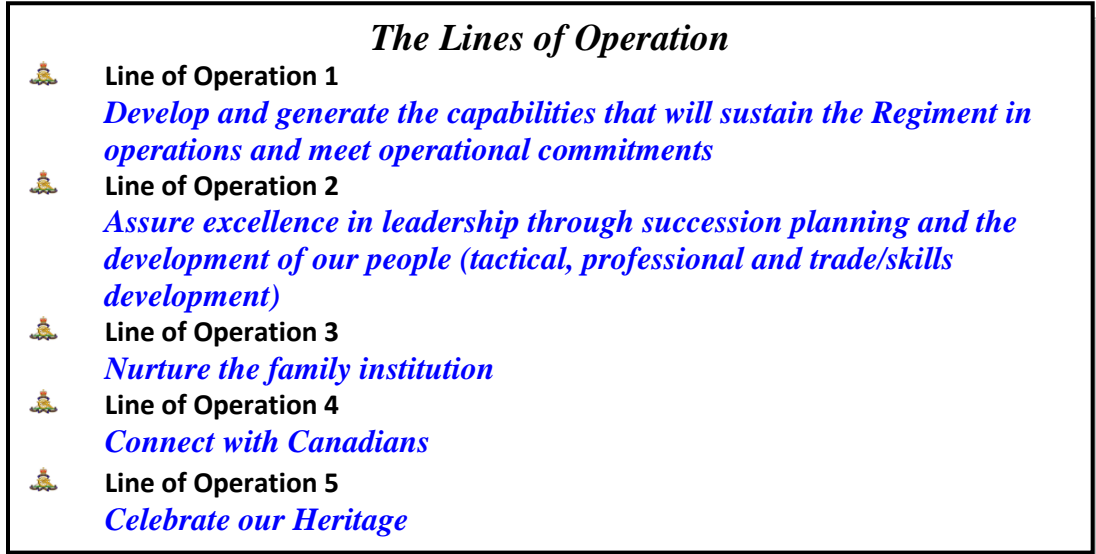
The Centre of Gravity of 7th Toronto Regimental Family: *People – the right number of the right people doing the right things for 7th Toronto Regiment.*

Our Strategic Objectives:

7th Toronto Regiment's Strategic Objectives

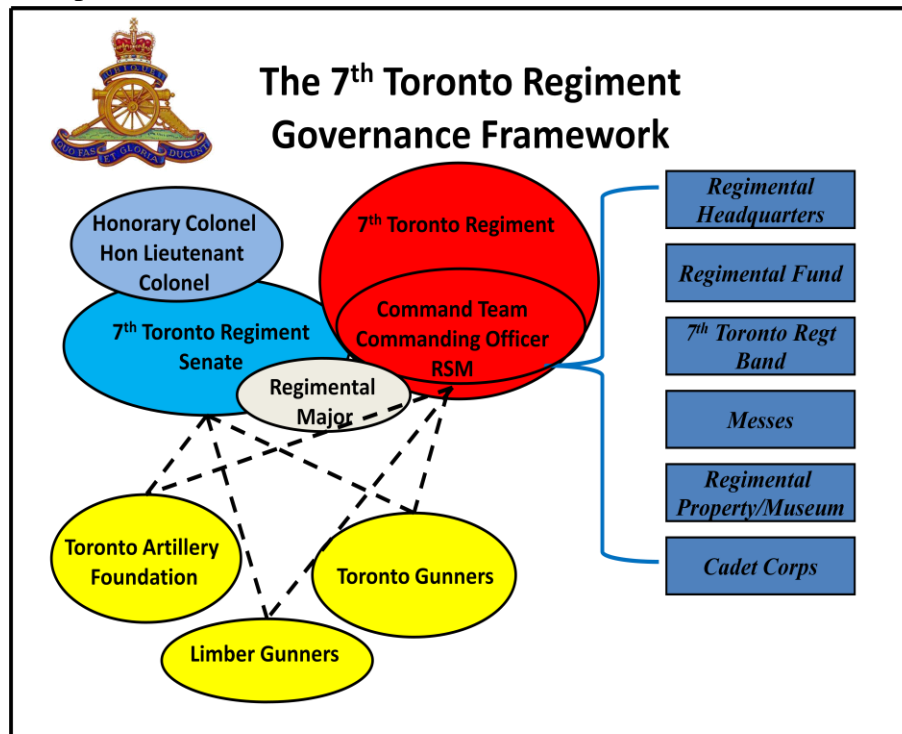
-  Maintenance of the Regiment's operational and institutional credibility within the Army and the communities with which it is associated, today and tomorrow.
-  Achieving the capacity to meet the non-public wants and needs of the Regimental Family.
-  Become recognized as one of the best Regiments and Regimental Families in the Brigade, the Division and the RCA.

Our Lines of Operation:



Governance: Governed by a strong Command Team (Commanding Officer, 2 I/C and RSM) and a wise, experienced and connected Senate, the Regimental Family has the ability to support our soldiers and network throughout the GTA for moral, financial and public support.

This next graphic depicts our Governance model:



I hope that the above demonstrates:

- a. The importance of our Regiment as an operational and training unit, first and foremost;
- b. The inter-relationships and inter-dependence of the many elements of our Regimental Family;
- c. The great potential that we have in reaching out to the broader military, business, civil and public community; and,
- d. The governance framework we have in place to develop, implement and maintain a strategy that supports the Regiment and the greater Regimental Family.

There is much going on with the Regimental Family – live firing, Garrison Ball, winter training, Liberation of Holland, and so on. Well done to all ranks of the Regiment on Exercise BLACK HAND in Meaford. You have proven your ability to train collectively, and operate independently, at the Regimental fires level. Well done on running two independently operating and commanded Batteries, and successfully firing two Regimental fire plans. Our thanks for support from 4th Division Gunner units, particularly 30th Field and 49th. Also, we thank Brigadier-General Patterson, Deputy Commander 4th Div and a well known Gunner, for visiting our Regiment. The Commanding Officer will elaborate on Ex BLACK HAND in the next edition of Take Post.

In closing, I continue to be impressed with and proud of 7th Toronto Regiment – a “Regiment certainly worthy of its Hire!!” **Good Shooting! UBIQUE!!** Hon Col Ernest Beno, OMM, CD

A Dash With The Canadian Armed Forces: Pte (R) Michael Sellers

My name is Michael Sellers. I'm 39 years young and currently a primary reserve recruit with the Canadian Armed Forces, serving in 7th Toronto Regiment out of Moss Park Armoury in Toronto, Ontario. So far, it has been two years since I applied and I am currently half way through my BMQ-L course. This is the story of my military service up until now.

We all have our own reasons for enlisting with the Canadian Armed Forces and while some of them may be similar, (i.e., willingness to challenge ourselves, family traditions, pride in Country etc...) it stands to reason that in the end our motives are our own. While we are all different in our own right there are three events that we all share with one another: our birth, our passing and that small dash between them commonly called life. That dash, although small on the surface is the one thing that represents everything we've accomplished in our lives; the good and bad times, the hardships and friendships. They're all represented by that one simple dash.

Back when I applied, my life had been very sedentary and I thought it was time to look for a challenge. Not only that, but my grandfather, who is still alive today had served in the British military and landed on Gold Beach in WWII. I also had other family members and friends who had served or were currently serving and their service helped motivate my decision to enlist.



Private Sellers - 3rd Row, first on the left.

When I enlisted, I had no idea what I was in for. I remember getting the acceptance from Ottawa in the summer of 2013 and partaking in the swearing in ceremony in November. Due to a conflict in my schedule I was unable to be sworn in with other recruits. While unfortunate it afforded me the chance to gain a tour of the armoury during my ceremony. It was also a more personal experience and I was able to meet with the staff and learn about what life would be like serving with 7th Toronto Regiment and the military.

Soon after I was given the schedule for my BMQ course I remember thinking to myself that the next couple of months were going to feel like an eternity. Before I knew it I was walking through the entrance of Fort York Armoury to begin what would be the first of many long, hard days of training on my way to becoming a soldier.

The training has been challenging but not impossible. Prior to enlisting, I had spent the last couple of years training to be a power lifter. I found out however that as enjoyable as power lifting was, being in the military meant that I should start focusing more on endurance training if I truly wanted a career as a soldier. The great thing I've learned from my military training was that my limits were actually a lot higher than I had previously thought. This was a result of

having some rather motivating staff push me to achieve my full potential.



Recruits, Checking their Kit

Often my fellow recruits proved to be just as motivating as the staff in giving me and each other that extra push. From setting up and putting away our cots, to gearing ourselves up for morning ruck marches and even catching up on lecture material, my fellow candidates understood and knew the value of helping each other out. Throughout the last few months my professional development has also continued with 130 Bty where I have been instructed in skills development, policy and procedures as well as physical fitness.

As a result of the knowledge and skills gained from simple things such as knowing how to shine ones pair of boots, to experiencing and applying team cohesion and working with new equipment foreign to my civilian life; compared to where I would be now without having enlisted, that one simple dash has an even greater significance in my life.

I look forward to serving Canada with 7th Toronto Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.
UBIQUE – Private (Soon to be Gunner!) Michael Sellers

Deputy Director of Artillery, Reserves Lieutenant-Colonel Finley Mullally, CD

Born in Weston, Ontario in 1968, LCol Finley Mullally was sworn into the primary reserve under the RESO programme in 1990. He served with two units, the 1st (Halifax-Dartmouth) Field Artillery Regiment and the 30th Field Artillery Regiment, Ottawa. He was promoted to Major in July, 2007 and took command of the storied 2nd Battery until deploying to Afghanistan in 2009. LCol Mullally served with Combined Joint Task Force 6 in Kandahar where he was Chief of Operations in the RC(S) HQ CJOC. Upon redeployment in 2010, LCol Mullally was promoted to his current rank and appointed as CO of the Bytown Gunners, a post he held for four and a half years. He is currently directing staff on the Army Operations Course at the Canadian Army Command and Staff College in Kingston. In his civilian career, LCol Mullally is the Head of English and sometimes acting Vice-Principal at Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Stittsville, Ontario. He lives in Perth, Ontario with his wife, Leydin, and their three children.



LCol Mullally was appointed by the Artillery Council as the first Deputy Director of Artillery for the Reserve in Jan 2013. In this role, he is part of the RCA HQ team working primarily to the Director of Artillery, providing specialist advice on Branch issues related to strategic policy, force development, equipment, training and personnel in the reserve. He has had a leading role in revising the Artillery establishment and in drafting the plan to incorporate Surveillance and Target Acquisition (STA) elements into the reserve force. Working with the Regular Force Deputy Director of Artillery and other stakeholders, LCol Mullally represents the perspective of the field force to the training authority. In this role, the RCA team has made many gains by synchronising the scheduling of national and regional training courses. In concert with the RCAS and the newly appointed RSM RCA Reserve, recent changes have been made to several career courses in the artillery, effectively revising NCM and NCO training along lines requested by reserve unit command teams.

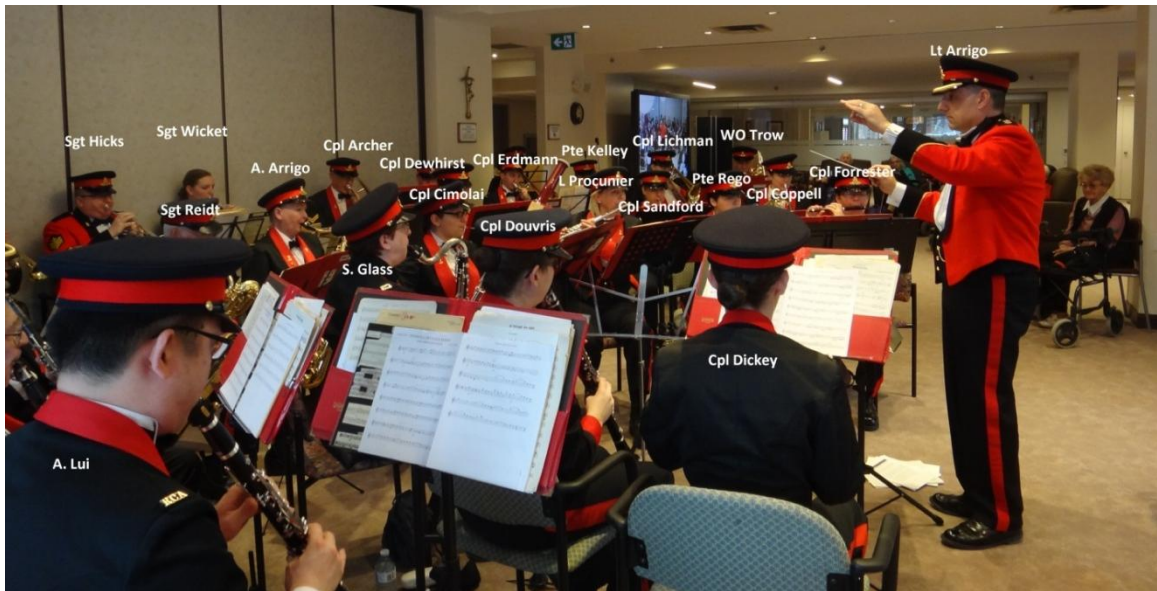
As DArtyRes, LCol Mullally provides another resource to the RCA HQ by acting as a single point of contact for many agencies seeking input from the reserve artillery on issues as diverse as succession planning, employment of artillery in the TBG, procurement and distribution of new equipment, and maintenance of in-service guns. He also speaks for the field force at AABs and writes an annual review of reserve issues for the Artillery Council, updating regimental leaders on problems resolved, trends developing and issues outstanding.

LCol Mullally is very proud of the working relationship among the RCA leadership across the branch and is fiercely loyal to the guns and those who serve them. He may be contacted at: finley.mullally@ocsb.ca

The Band of the 7th Toronto Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery

Happy 2015 from the 7th Toronto Band

Our first performance this year was a special concert At Copernicus Lodge on Roncesvalles and invited the band to play at the home any time. He was impressed with the selections performed by the band especially a March that we played called March of The First Brigade.



The March was revered in Poland during WW1 commemorating the soldiers of the First Brigade and is viewed as Poland's unofficial national anthem.

The concert occurred on Saturday January 31st to a full and pleasant audience. The residents demonstrated their appreciation for the band with an open invitation to come back any time.

The beginning of February brought Captain Christian Richer from Ottawa to meet and visit with the band to observe and assess our running status. Capt Richer is the supervising officer of reserve bands. Our band performed for an hour in our concert band format. This was followed by an informative Q and A with the band. We then demonstrated our skills on the parade square. Many thanks to the Regiment who observed our performance on parade - they were very vocal for our selections and performance.



The rest of February and the month of March will be taken up with the preparation of the Garrison Ball hosted by the 7th Toronto Regiment.



Upcoming events will include performances at the gun salutes on Victoria Day and Canada Day. We look forward to seeing you at Queens Park. Lt.Nick Arrigo, Director of Music, 7th Toronto Regiment RCA.



THE TORONTO ARTILLERY FOUNDATION **(Established 1978)**

March 2015

Liberation of Holland - Keep Them Rolling - Final Push

The Foundation would like to congratulate the Honorary Colonel, BGen (Ret'd) Ernie Beno on his initiative to send a number of soldiers from the 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA to Holland in early April of this year to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands by the Canadian Army.

These soldiers will participate in ceremonies, visit Canadian war cemeteries and conduct battlefield tours and studies.

This initiative is the first major project being facilitated through the Foundation as part of the new business model being worked on by the Executive and Board of Trustees.

Foundation Update and Overhaul

For the first time in some thirty-five plus years since its inception in 1978 the Foundation has commissioned an extensive review of its governance under the guidance of the Chairman.

From the initial review it appears that the Foundation has weathered those thirty-five years in good shape thanks to the original work done by John Gibson, the original Secretary, in setting up the charity.

Capt Eric Laxton, the Assistant Secretary, will bring a fresh corporate perspective to our operating documents and will be completing this review including recommendations in various areas of the Operating By-law. The Letters Patent are in good shape and appear not to need any modifications.

In addition we will be developing a number of Standard Operating Procedures and Terms of Reference for the executive and others who may undertake to serve on various committees of the Foundation as well as a business development plan.

To stabilize and enhance our past on and off fundraising efforts, especially outside the Foundation's current financial sphere, a Fundraising Committee is to be established so that we will have a cohesive and coherent fundraising effort for the future to allow for better long term funding of our beneficiary, the 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA.

In the near future the Foundation will be seeking volunteers to take on some of these positions and responsibilities to see these various plans and action to fruition.

Toronto Garrison Officers' Ball - 2015

For 2015 the 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA is the designated host unit for the Toronto Garrison Officers' Ball.

Subject to availability through the waiting list, limited numbers of tickets may still be had. However, it will be on a first come first serve basis. If you are interested please contact the Director of the Ball, Capt (Ret'd) David Burnett either by telephone at (905) 415 - 2012 or by e-mail at dburnett@endtoend.com to put your name on the list.

Ubique

Paul Kernohan
Treasurer
The Toronto Artillery Foundation

105 (7 Tor RCA) Army Cadet Corps

Change of Command at 105



24 Feb 15 – 105's Regimental Family (Front) Capt B. Dhillon , C/CWO A. Anderson, Maj P. Preikschas, Maj L. Van Ooyen, LCol P Szabunio, MWO P. Reyes (Back) Lt B. Fung, OCdt P. Tran- Nguyen, 2Lt N. Harper, Capt E. Edelsward, Lt J. Rozema, Sgt T. Bankasingh

After three years as commanding officer, Major Lorraine Van Ooyen relinquished command to another long serving officer at 105 – Major Paul Preikschas.

Major Van Ooyen, talking about her time as CO, “..my time at 105 as the Commanding Officer went by so quickly but in retrospect, we faced and conquered several major hurdles...”

One of her first tasks was moving from our old building to the new one. Having amassed so many things over 20 years in one location, the move was time and labour intensive. Our newly assemble Parent support committee, several officers and senior cadets were able to pack and purge for the move out and in, over the span of the summer.

Once housed in the Streetsville Cadet Centre, we experienced a major growth spurt in cadet membership, going from a regular parade of 30-40 cadets to over 70 in that first year. We then went through a second growth spurt in year 2 of the new building to over 100 cadets, also meaning a promotion her to Major. The growth brought challenges in training with staff issues as well as uniform issues. We have found inventive ways to meet both challenges; staff bringing in specialist speakers or going to off site training opportunities, working with other cadet units to

train together or units trading for needed uniform parts, selling off non essential items for needed items.

She worked on strengthening our ties with sponsoring units, especially, our affiliated unit 7 Tor Artillery Regiment, and currently have an officer sitting on the Gunners Association board, providing newsletter for the monthly Toronto Gunner Community Newsletter and working with them on the Garrison Ball, as well as having been involved with the Change of Command Parade and several Church parades and are exploring trg opportunities for our senior level cadets with both the Unit and the Limber Gunners Association.

She feels that teamwork is the single most thing she feels most proud of and wants to thank everyone for all the hard work and the memories!



24 Feb 15 – Major David C. Forster, CD – Change of Command Presiding Officer, Major Lorraine Van Ooyen – Outgoing CO, Mayor of Mississauga, Bonnie Crombie and Major Paul Preikschas – Incoming CO

So who is the new Commanding Officer at 105 Army Cadets?

Major Paul Michael Preikschas has been a CIC officer for over 22 years, he began his military career as a Civilian Instructor with 183 Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron and has worked with a number cadet units in south western Ontario, until moving to Mississauga in 2000

On the 1st of January 1994, he transferred to 1943 Norwell Army Cadet Corps located in Palmerston, Ontario and was appointed Commanding Officer on 13 January 1994. That same year Maj Preikschas was chosen to run a pilot for the first "Garrison Exercise" involving multiple army cadet units in a joint training exercise. The pilot was successful and the concept was used to create the standard for joint exercises in use across the Central Ontario Area.

He was promoted to Lieutenant on 30 May 1995 and remained as Commanding Officer of the Palmerston Corps until June 1996. Upon relinquishing Command, he stayed on as a Battery Captain, managing the training and operations of the unit, until transferring to 105 RC (Army) CC in September 2000. During his time at 105 RCACC Maj Preikschas held a number of positions including Second in Command, Adjutant and Quartermaster. In 2006 he assumed command of 105 until 2012 when he relinquished command to Major Lorraine Van Ooyen.

Being a proud member of the Cadet Instructor Cadre, in the fall of 2008, Maj Preikschas embarked on a special project for the 100th anniversary of the Cadet Instructor Cadre. He was instrumental in getting the Ministry of Transportation to approve the CIC crest (Cap Badge) to be placed on selected Ontario Licence plates.

In addition to his regular duties with 105 Royal Canadian Army Cadets, Major Preikschas is the Zone 13 Marksmanship Coordinator and is qualified as an Air Rifle Maintainer for Central Region.

In his spare time he runs a successful engraving, awards and promotional items business with his family.

Memories of the 42nd Medium Regiment by Major Richard Baxendale JAGC, US Army (Ret.)

Is it possible to fall in love with an armoury and all the regiments it enclosed? Well I did, and this is how it happened. A few days after my fifteenth birthday in March 1958, I hitchhiked from my home in Rexdale one evening to join the 42nd Medium Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery. I had picked the 42nd out of the phone book as strange as that might seem.

Serving in the armed forces was what my family did. Having five children and being a mathematics teacher in England during the war, my father was exempt from service but had nevertheless joined the RAFVR. After moving to Canada, my





Gunner Richard Baxendale, Age 16

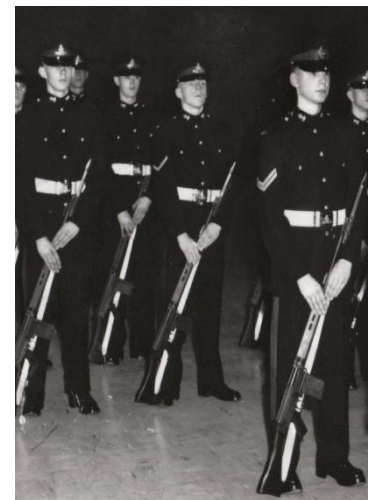
brother Michael served with the 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment as a paratrooper at Wolseley Barracks and my brother David had a stint with the 8th Field Regiment, RCA when we lived in Hamilton, and was soon to serve as a navigator on antisubmarine patrols with the RCAF out of Summerside, PEI. I certainly was not going to be left out. Why the 42nd Medium? It simply sounded more impressive to me than my brother's "8th Field". Bigger guns, higher number - who knows how a fifteen year old thinks.

I remember approaching the University Avenue Armoury for the first time and almost turned for home. It was monumental and majestic, and reeked of martial spirit and remember, I was there under false pretenses. When I finally went inside I was transfixed. Here they all were: The Queens Own Rifles of Canada, The 48th Highlanders, the Governor General's Horse Guards, the 29th Field Regiment, RCA, a RCASC transportation company, a squadron of RCEME, and finally the 42nd Medium Regiment. (In later life, the thought occurred to me that at full strength, these units together would make a very powerful independent brigade striking force).

I entered the 123rd Battery orderly room directly across the parade square from the armoury entrance and assured a skeptical officer that I wanted to join and yes, I had just had my **16th** birthday. In quick succession, I was kitted out, started to attend drill evenings and participated in my first shoot at Meaford later that spring. I loved everything about my new military life and I couldn't stay away from the armoury. On Friday evenings, I would hitchhike down just to watch the 48th Highlanders pipe band practice. I also noted the faded paint over some orderly rooms to the east of the 42nd. I wondered what "CMR" meant. Later I read about the glorious Canadian Mounted Rifles of the Boer War and WWI.

In the summer of 1958 I attended the 42nd's high school militia program at Northview Heights Collegiate under the tender tutelage of Sergeant Major Saul with occasional visits from Major Secord. That fall I was promoted Lance Bombardier and no one could have been prouder. The next summer, in 1959, I attended the Junior NCO course at Wolseley Barracks and that fall was promoted Bombardier. For the following two summers, I was an NCO instructor at the high school militia programs at North York while continuing to attend weekly drills. I was promoted Sergeant just after my eighteenth birthday in 1961.

I think my first love was drill and I had the best teacher in Sergeant Major Saul who I confess to trying to emulate. Then, there was the



Bombardier Baxendale (Right), Gunner Beno (Left)

live firing and gun salutes at Queens Park and at the airport for various dignitaries including General de Gaulle. I especially valued the camaraderie, the teamwork and the personal commitment to excellence that was required to fire the guns quickly and efficiently and to look very smart on parade. And we did look smart with our spit shined boots, brilliant brass and precision drill. I never accepted that perfection on parade was the province of the infantry regiments alone. The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery was second to none as far as I was concerned and the 42nd Medium was at the top of that list.

A move by my family to New York in the fall of 1961 ended my career with the 42nd but I have always felt pride in the association and never forgotten the wonderful and transforming experience of those years. I was grieved when I learned of the demolition of my magnificent armoury in 1963, ironically, for the construction of law courts, for it was to be the law where I spent my entire career.

How then did my service with the 42nd Medium help shape my professional and personal life?

In many ways, from the simple to the more complicated. It stems from pride - pride in your unit and in yourself as part of that unit. It reflects itself by being on time, properly turned out and thoroughly prepared for the task at hand no matter how humble and never letting your mates down. This applies to being a member of a gun crew firing a salute at Queen's Park to firing for keeps in Afghanistan to arriving in the courtroom completely prepared in plenty of time to represent your client confidently and effectively. The teamwork required of all gunners and the will to excel - to be the best and sharpest gun crew - and the pride you bring to that task, apply in

nearly all human endeavors. In my case it translated into striving to be the best lawyer possible and working hard for my clients but always within ethical bounds.



As look back 57 years to when I first ventured into the University Avenue Armoury on that March evening to join the 42nd Medium Regiment, I reflect that there is nothing that could be finer for a young man or woman getting started in life than joining the militia. You get it all - camaraderie, excitement, a sense of being part of something important and you get to serve your country to boot. I would do it again in a second.

Note from the editor:

In 1966, Major Baxendale, received his commission in the US Army upon graduation from Rutgers University in New Jersey and after law school served on active duty in Germany as a trial counsel at courts-martial and as a military judge. He remained in the JAGC reserves as a judge until retirement. He is a member for the State Bars of Texas, Oregon and Washington and has practiced energy law for over thirty years. He makes his home in Seattle with his wife Eleanore, also a lawyer, and sails Puget Sound, the San Juan Islands and British Columbia in his restored classic 40' Concordia Yawl *Vintage*. He may be reached at richard@baxendale.com.

Readers – Soldiers of 7th Toronto: What a fine example of what one learns by serving in the Reserves – self-discipline, confidence, teamwork, leadership and determination. My thanks to Sergeant (as he was back in the day with 42nd Medium Regiment, RCA (M)) Richard Baxendale.

Limber Gunners Artyfacts



The Limber Gunners are going to have a very busy year with 18 events this year from the 15 round Salute fired at the Garrison Ball for the Lieutenant Governor the Honourable Elizabeth D Dowdeswell, to the Remembrance Day Salute at Queens Park on 11th November.

The Regiment will be running a training day with the Limber Gunners taking part to train the 105 Cadet Corp on Saturday, April 25th at Moss Park Armouries.

The Limber Gunners are looking forward to take part in the in the Liberation of the Netherlands Festival and possible salute on May 2nd at Nathan Philips Square Toronto City Hall.

The Limber Gunners will be carrying out training throughout March and April 2015. The LG will be holding short administration meetings on the first Monday of each month followed by training

- March 2nd – Gunnery Training
- April 11th – Driver Training and Gunnery Training
- April 18 & 25th– Driver Training



Upcoming Events – March to June

- March 28 – Garrison Ball salute and display
- May 2nd – Liberation of the Netherlands Festival parade and salute
- May 3rd – the 16th annual Ontario Police Memorial Remembrance Ceremony Salute at Queens Park
- May 18th – the LG will be firing the 25Pdr. with the Regiment's Guns for the 21Gun Salute at Queens Park for Victoria Day.
- May 23rd – Fire Power Display at Old Fort York
- May 30th - Ontario Regiment (Ferret Club) Militaria Show, Oshawa Museum- Aquino Day

- June 13th – 30th Annual Highland Creek Heritage Parade

To the members of the Regiment that have retired ,and you if you like the smell of the gun power, driving a WWII Field Artillery Tractor and firing salutes with WWII Equipment and taking part in an active Aquino Day with WWII to Desert Storm tanks. **Join the Limber Gunners !**

The LG is still looking for a Limber for the second 25pdr.

Regimental Part II Orders

Honours, Awards, Promotions & Appointments

The following was the recipient of the Master Gunner Chip Evoy Bursary.

Bdr P. Koch



Master Bombardier Koch receiving the Master Gunner Chip Evoy Bursary, awarded by the Royal Canadian Artillery Association annually. Lieutenant Colonel Szabunio presents the cheque for \$1,000 towards MBdr Koch's further education.

Meaford – Ex BLACK HAND

Promotions

The following was promoted to Lieutenant: (This is a field promotion on Ex BLACK HAND)

Lt J. Lum



2Lt Jeremy Lum getting promoted to Lt by DComd 4 Cdn Div, BGen David Patterson.

The following were promoted to one hook Private (Gunner)

- Gnr B. Gee
- Gnr B. Phillips
- Gnr R. Krushnisky
- Gnr R. Dos Santos

Regimental Family Calendar Of Events

- 06-08 Mar 15 – FTX BLACK HAND, 4 CDTC Meaford.
 - 10 Mar 15 – Pre Garrison Ball Swing Dance Lessons, MPA.
 - 11 Mar 15 – C3 Mortar display, CFC.
 - 21 Mar 15 – Range Shoot/CBRN FTX, Winona.
 - 28 Mar 15 – Toronto Garrison Officers’ Ball 2015, Liberty Grand Entertainment Complex.
 - 29 Mar -13 Apr – 70th Anniversary, Liberation of Holland PD/Field Study.
 - 10-12 Apr – SG 15 work up FTX (TBC).
 - 23 May – Artillery Day – Fort York “Two Hundred Years of Firepower”
 - 30 May – Artillery Day Dinner (RCMI).
-

Did You Know? Conn Smythe, 'The Major' of the Maple Leafs

Constantine Falkland Cary Smythe, MC (February 1, 1895 – November 18, 1980) was a Canadian businessman, soldier and sportsman in ice hockey and horse racing. He is best known as the principal owner of the Toronto Maple Leafs of the National Hockey League (NHL) from 1927 to 1961 and as the builder of Maple Leaf Gardens. As owner of the Leafs during numerous championship years, his name appears on the Stanley Cup eight times: 1932, 1942, 1945, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1951, 1962.



Major Conn Smythe OC, MC, began his military career in the First World War as a gunner in 25th Battery. He was commissioned in 1915, and invited to join the 40th “Sportsman's” Battery. In 1916, for his support to the Cape Breton Highlanders during the Battle of ARRAS, Smythe was awarded the Military Cross. After the Canadian triumph at Vimy Ridge, Lieutenant Smythe transferred to the Royal Flying Corps as an artillery observation pilot. On 18 October 1918 he was shot down and wounded at Passchendaele; he spent 14 months a Prisoner of War, returning to Toronto in February 1919. At the end of 1927 Smythe took over ownership of the NHL’s Toronto Pats and immediately renamed the team the Toronto Maple Leafs, adopting as team insignia the Maple Leaf cap badge of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In late 1931, amid the



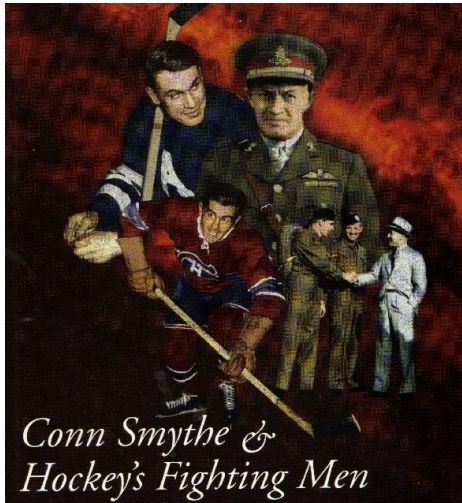
Con Smythe (far left) enlisting for the Second World War

despair of the Great Depression, he opened Maple Leaf Gardens and won the Stanley Cup the following spring. In September 1941, the 30th Battery of the 7th Toronto Regiment was placed on active service under the command of Major Conn Smythe.

Smythe attracted athletes from many sports to join the battery. After manning anti-aircraft defences on both Canadian coasts, 30th Battery sailed for England in October 1942. Major Smythe was critically wounded while the battery, assigned to protect the Orne bridges in Caen, came under intense

bombing and shelling by the Luftwaffe. When invalided to Canada he informed The Globe and Mail of the shortage of trained reinforcements and a scathing editorial appeared.

Reaction was immediate; the Defence Minister visited Normandy and confirmed. This sad episode ended Conn's military career.



His wound left him with a marked disability, inspiring him to aid the less fortunate. He immersed himself in philanthropic activities, working for the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, Easter Seal Campaigns, Variety Village, the Crippled Children's Centre and the Ontario Community Centre for the Deaf. Conn Smythe's contributions to Canada, his community and to sports were recognized in 1980 with his appointment to the Order of Canada.

Note: In 1942 the reserve component of 30th Field battery was reorganized as 30th Reserve Anti-Aircraft Battery Type 2H (i.e. two troops of 3.7" AA Guns). In 1946 the battery was transferred to 58th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. To reconstitute 29th Field Regiment to three batteries, 130th Field Battery was formed. In 1947, 58th LAA Regiment was split into two regiments, at that time 30th Battery was assigned to 49th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment (Sault Ste Marie), RCA and is currently the senior battery of the 49th Field Artillery Regiment.

NOTICES

1. Take Post, Edition 5

The next Take Post will be published by 15 May 2015. Articles to be submitted by 08 May to: beno@kos.net

2. Toronto Gunners and Limber Gunners – Recruiting Now - **WE WANT YOU!**

Toronto Gunners and Limber Gunners
*Join this illustrious group of men and women who serve 7th
Toronto Regiment, RCA and the greater Canadian Armed
Forces community*
Follow The Colours!



We will see you at The Toronto Officers' Garrison Ball Go To:

<http://garrisonball.com/>



TWO CENTURIES OF FIREPOWER

Artillery Day at Fort York

23 May 2015, Beginning at 10:00 am



Join the Guns and Gunners at Fort York on 23 May organized by Fort York, the Toronto Artillery Foundation and 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA. We will have guns from the early days of settlement in North America, to the War of 1812, the South Africa War, World Wars I and II, Korea War and Afghanistan.

All Gunners, Wanna-be Gunners and Friends of Gunners are invited – young and old.

Celebrate Artillery Day, on 23 May, with a Bang!

Make a point of attending, bring your family and friends, bring your boss and fellow employees, and help spread the word.

Good Shooting!

UBIQUE!



**Fields of Fire Tours
and Merit Travel
Canada**
presents



**Gunners Return to Vimy
& the Battlefields of Normandy
1 – 10 April 2017**



Unveiling of the Artillery Memorial Thélus 1918



- Participate in the rededication of the Gunner Memorial on Vimy Ridge
- Visit important Gunner battlefields in Normandy and Dieppe
- Pay tribute to the war dead of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery
- Attend the 100th anniversary ceremonies in Arras, France
- Visit museums and Commonwealth War Cemeteries
- Locally (12-18 members) group projects and personalized service

**For more information contact David Patterson
at dave@foftours.com, or call 613-539-4660**

Return to Vimy: Tour Itinerary

Day 1 – 1 April ... Depart Canada for Paris.

Day 2 – 2 April ... We arrive in Paris, meet our bus and then drive to Normandy where we will visit Juno Beach and the Juno Beach Centre. We will stay in Caen tonight.

Day 3 – 3 April ... Today we will start with a visit to Beny-sur-Mer cemetery to honour the Gunners there. We will then visit Verrières Ridge where the Corps Artillery was first deployed.

Day 4 – 4 April ... Departing Caen we will head for Dieppe. Though not a specific Gunner battle, many gunners landed on the beach with the infantry and a UK gunner earned the VC. We will tour the beach and museum and stay in a local hotel.

Day 5 – 5 April ... We will make an early start from Dieppe and drive to Ypres where we will look at the battles of 1915 around St. Julien and 1917 around Passchendaele. We will participate in the Menin Gate ceremony that evening and stay in Ypres.

Day 6 – 6 April ... Today we will visit the Somme. Starting with Beaumont-Hamel we will then tour the Courcellette battlefield before heading to Arras where we will stay for the next four nights.

Day 7 – 7 April ... We will tour the battlefield of Vimy Ridge before attending the Freedom of the City of Arras parade that will be held today.

Day 8 – 8 April ... Today we will parade at the Gunner Memorial in Thélus on Vimy Ridge and rededicate it to the memory of Gunners who fell in this important battle.

Day 9 – 9 April ... This day will be the big event as we attend the 100th Anniversary ceremonies marking the capture of Vimy Ridge. Thousands of Canadians (including notable VVIPs) and French citizens will throng the memorial park to witness this historic event.

Day 10 – 10 April ... We will depart early to make flights from Paris that will return us to Canada.

Tour Price (Toronto departure)

Estimated CAD \$4,000 – (per person, Double occupancy)

(single supplement: \$700 – limited availability)

Final cost will be determined when hotels and transport are confirmed

Departure costs from other major airports (Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax, Vancouver, etc.) will be determined based on demand

\$500 per person deposit required when Bus and Hotel costs finalized

Price includes:

- return air travel
- all meals
- all travel coach bus
- accommodation as shown in the itinerary
- services of historian/guides:

Not Included:

- travel insurance
- items of a personal nature such as beverages

Note: limited single room availability – “first come, first served”



‘Thank You Canada’ - Dutch Liberation Festival

Saturday May 2 2015

During the Dutch Heritage Month in May, we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands and thank the Canadian Armed Forces for their contribution to the freedom of the Dutch people. Because of Canada’s role in the Netherlands during the Second World War and the tremendous sacrifice they made for peace and freedom, a close relationship and affinity between the two countries remains 70 years later. Our shared history has laid a solid foundation for our friendship, which has evolved and grown stronger over the years. Canada and the Netherlands are like-minded nations, sharing the same values and vision for a common future. To show our appreciation and honor the veterans who served during the Second World War, the ‘Thank You Canada’ Dutch Liberation Festival will be organized on Saturday May 2nd.

At 12:00 noon, a **parade** with veterans will march from Queens Park south on University Avenue, east on Queens Street and ending at City Hall. Authentic army jeeps or other military vehicles will also participate. Several marching bands will accompany the parade with music.

At Nathan Phillips Square, an opening ceremony will start at 2:00 pm on the main stage, followed by the raising of the Dutch flag. Multiple bands will provide musical entertainment afterwards. Furthermore, Dutch festivities will be organized for everybody to enjoy. The square is divided in several different areas and activities:

- *Main stage.* The Canadian Armed Forces Band, the Western Silver Band and the Toronto All Star Big Band will be performing music from the 1940’s to dance to.
- *Dutch Beer Garden.* This area with seating and umbrella’s will provide beverages for everybody during the day.
- *Dutch Market.* Dutch snacks, candy and perhaps even Dutch bikes will be sold to the public from several market vendors.
- *Sponsors/Dutch Community Info Area.* Tables/tents will be available to showcase sponsor and community information to the public.
- *Dutch Flower Tribute Garden.* A large Canadian flag made of red and white tulips will be displayed with tribute flags to fallen veterans.
- *Kids Zone.* An area where kids can play typical Dutch games or can actively take part in creative activities.
- *Dutch Street Organ.* The street organ will play cheerful music and remind the crowd of former Dutch times.
- *Photo exhibition.* Authentic photographs of the Canadian army and the liberation 70 years ago will be showed to the public.

Contact information

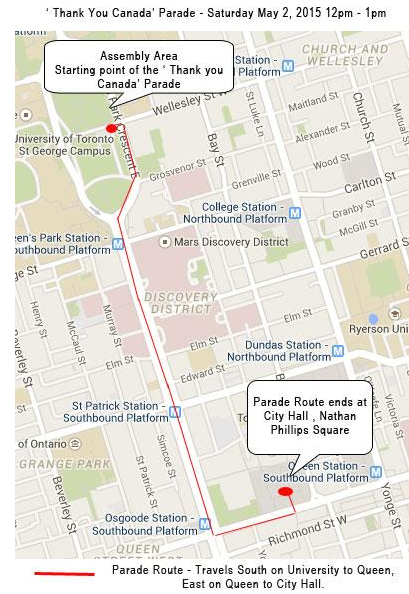
fien.verheij@minbuza.nl

tel: 416-595-2407

www.thankyoucanada.nl

www.facebook.nl/thankyoucanada

www.twitter.nl/dutchliberation

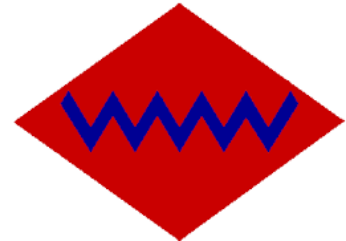


ANNEX A

9 (Toronto) Battery's Great War 100 years Ago (Colonel Retd Brian MacDonald)

Ref: <http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e047/e001150023.jpg>

AUG 4, 1914 War declared
Oct 4, The first contingent sailed for England



War Diaries – 3rd Field Brigade Canadian Field Artillery
Summary of Events, and Information



Gunners of 9th Field Battery, France, World War I

ROUGE CROIX

- Mar 2 – Received orders to march to our gun positions. Left our billets at 2 P.M. Reached CROIX DU BEC at 7 P.M. Went into billets for the night.

CROIX DE BEC & RUE DE BOUT

- Mar 3 - Received orders to leave our billets at 4:45 P.M. CO went forward with all OCs Batteries and saw all positions occupied by 35th BDE RFA. Moved BDE into position by 9 P.M. All men in billets and everything reported quiet and snug by 12 P.M.

RUE DE BOUT

- Mar 4 – Registered targets by 9th, 10th, and 11th batteries. The 12th Bty still N of LYS the other side of SAILLY. Positions of batteries as follows: 9th battery SE of CROSS ROADS H.31.a. 10th battery S of R in RUE BIACHE in H.25.d. 11th battery 100 yards SW of CROSS ROADS in H.26.d.
- Mar 5 – Continued registration of lines. For objects engaged see firing reports attached hereto. The infantry requested we fire on House in N.16.a.3 and dispersed enemy at the double
- Mar 6 – Weather misty which interfered considerably with our observations. Registered lines see firing report for this date for detail. Also shelled a farm at the request of the infantry.
- Mar 7 – Enemy battery near F..... showed considerable activity. Three batteries (9 -10 -11) took it on with RAFALES. see firing report for particulars. Our Heavies succeeded in bringing down FROMELLES CHURCH TOWER which has been fired on for months and has used as an observing station by the Enemy. Weather fine.
- Mar 8 – Weather alternating between fine and misty. Received two messages from Infantry. 1) At 4 PM that enemy were shelling RUE PETILLON and asked us to retaliate by shelling their trenches. See attached firing report for results. 2) Infantry at 5 PM reported that Enemy building a new breastwork in N.8.d.6.3. This was engaged successfully. 8 shoots were fired from 11 PM to 2 AM night of 8th – 9th March. One of our men on piquet in 10th battery was wounded in the leg. Shots were said to be fired at a mounted man who galloped through our lines.
- Mar 9 – Infantry called in on left battery to shell a house occupied by enemy snipers. House satisfactorily shelled. The Brigade Major 3rd Inf Division asked us to take on what looked to be a mine being pushed ahead into the forward trenches. This was successfully shelled & turned out to be a mortar. Orders marked “A” 9/3/15 were received at 1155. Range reports attached hereto.
- Mar 10 – Heavy fire opened by all batteries at 7:30 AM. The 8th Division on our right reinforced by the 7th attacked on our right. Enemy trenches on a front of some 3 miles taken. 1200 prisoners marched through E..... Our guns silenced a battery which attempted from our front to enfilade the troops on our right which were advancing. See firing report for methods employed by guns to shell enemy trenches. Fire was extremely heavy at 8 AM when assault seemed to be taking place. Heavy gun fire continued on our right till well after dusk. Reopened at 2 A.M. 11/3/15 when the enemy apparently made a counter attack.
German prisoners very dirty, clothing poor and the men looked poorly fed.
- Mar 11 – Firing from all guns covering our front commenced at 7:30 A.M. – bursts of gunfire at fifteen minute intervals – received an order to move forward all our billets South of the RUE DE BATAILLLE – The 10th Division is to go into SAILLY – Our troops seemed to make good progress towards AUBERT which seemed to be in our

hands and NEUVE CHAPELLE which also seemed to be in our hands judging by the noise of the firing. Our 4.7 guns of which there are at least four batteries just from right hand fired a great deal. They are immune from the German fire which is not nearly the same range. We picked up a driving band today which consisted of an extremely hard alloy of copper & something else. It will (damage) their guns if firing is continued with it.

- Mar 12 – Orders received to open fire from 0730 A.M. – 10 rounds per gun firing order from DIV ART signed BDE MAJ received at 4:30 P.M. Order begins “We are going to attack enemy trenches from N.8.d.4.0 to N.9.c.5.2 Be ready to open fire with all your available guns on this line. You will fire on forward line of trenches for one ½ hour precisely, the minute the ½ hour has expired you will increase your range by 300 yards and continue firing for 15 minutes precisely. The line of opening fire will be notified later. Guns not used for this purpose will act similarly on trenches in their own sectors. Nature of your fire at your discretion. Recommend bursts of fire as rapid as extreme accuracy will permit.
- Mar 13 - 12th battery brought up one section into action – just beside position occupied by the 9th battery – The HQs and OCs units of North Midland Territorial Bde visited us with a view to being billeted here and coming into action at this point. Orders were cancelled for them to come in.
- Mar 14 – Quiet day on the whole. Only 86 rounds fired. Everything very quiet on our immediate front.
- Mar 15 – Our brigade received orders and counter orders to leave as we were being relieved by the R.H.A 3rd Can Division. Ended in a morning out at 6:30 P.M. Went into billets almost 6 miles back. Settled in billets 2:30 A.M.
- Mar 16 – Reconnoitred new position for batteries. The 9th, 11th and 12th occupied new positions and dug themselves about 7P.M. to 12 (midnight). Received orders to get back into our positions. Left 15/3/15/ and moved into positions at 4 A.M 17/3/15.
- Mar 17 – Re-registered all points. Bde visited by many staff officers. Following batteries now in our area: two batteries 118th How Brigade. N, V, M batteries R.H.A. See range report.
- Mar 18 – Weather colder today. Everything extremely quiet on our front. Our brigade only fired 15 rounds altogether. Our F.O.O. s report that the German first line trenches appear to be almost empty. They have guns concealed where it appears to enfilade our trenches.
- Mar 19 – Snow fell in the night. Weather misty and not suitable for the observation of fire. Noted 3 more how batteries in the area. Everything very quiet.
- Mar 20 – Beautifully clear day. Good observation. Aircraft busy on both sides. Anti-Aircraft guns did some shooting. Enemy seem to be preparing 2nd and 3rd line of trenches.

- Mar 21 – A very quiet day. Beautiful sunshine and a great day for observation. German aircraft very busy. Our planes also busy. Enemy seems to be preparing second line of defence before us.
- Mar 22 – Nice weather and a quiet day. German aircraft busy. 12th battery moved into new position. Registered one new point. Rumours we are to get out.
- Mar 23 – Cloudy and difficult to observe. Wet in the afternoon. Visited by Reconnoitring Offices for 7 Bde R.F.A who are to be “superimposed” on us.
- Mar 24 – Clear morning. Cloudy afternoon finishing in rain at night. Billeting Officer from R.F.A. bde through here.
- Mar 25 – Misty day. Observation poor. Brigade fired very little today. No aircraft activity.
- Mar 26 – Day misty. Brigade fired very little again today. Our infantry left for a rest. 24th Inf Bde relieved them.
- Mar 27th – Very clear. Bde fired very little. Nothing further to report.
- Mar 28th – No firing today. Bde left positions at 0730. Only 11th battery left one forward gun behind. 12th battery is to move at 4 A.M. tomorrow morning.
- Mar 29th – 12th Battery took over from 106th Battery R.F.A. at 4 AM. Everything OK. Lovely morning, with one aircraft busy. No German planes today. Registration “A” with 10th and 12th batteries. Issued orders for registration point, in prepared maps.

(Page for Mar 30 and 31 is missing)

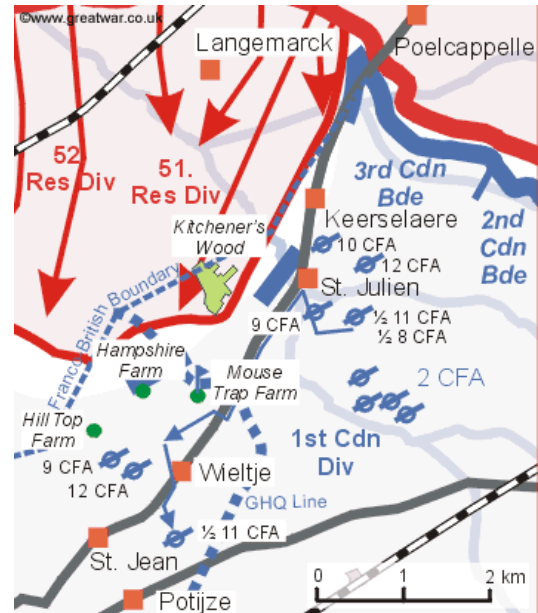
Note: Please take note of points from the 9 Battery War Diary

I would ask folks to consider the following points from the War Diary of 9th Battery 100 years ago:

- Note that the 9th Battery has only just arrived at the front, but because of their training and adoption of “Lessons Learned,” they are quickly into the thick of it.
- Modern Gunners can identify with the numerous tasks assigned to 9th Battery –
 - Engaging both neutralization missions and precision missions (knocking down a church tower that held German observers)
 - Counter-mortar and Counter-Battery fire.
 - Defensive fire tasks.
 - Close and intimate support for the infantry.
- Although we envision a static war, the guns frequently move, and they dig in at every position.
- There is close cooperation with British Gunner units and British HQs and formations.
- You’ve got to love it when they record: “*Our brigade received orders and counter orders...* ”! Things haven’t changed much!!

- Next month is the Battle of Saint Julien: 22 April 1915: 21.00

From 5pm to 8pm the **9th, 11th and 12th Batteries** of the **Canadian Field Artillery (CFA)** had fired continuously onto the German front trenches. At 9pm the order was given by the commander of the **1st Canadian Divisional Artillery, Brigadier-General H W Burstall**, for all four Canadian field batteries from **3rd Brigade CFA** (i.e. **9th, 10th, 11th and 12th**) to withdraw. In their current positions north-east, east, south-east and south of **St. Julien** they were under 1,000 metres from the German advancing infantry. The order was to move to the north of **St. Jean** so as to be able to cover **Kitchener's Wood**. The **3rd Brigade CFA** commander, **Lieutenant-Colonel J H Mitchell**, ordered the four batteries to rendezvous at the crossroads near **Hill Top Farm**, to the south-west of **Mouse Trap Farm**.



Battles of the 9th Battery

Date	Battle	Date	Battle
1915 April	Ypres	1917-May	Fresnoy
1915 May	Festubert	1917-May	Avion
1915 June	Guinchy	1917-Nov.	Passendaele
1916 April	St. Eloi	1918-Aug.	Amiens
1916 June	Sanctuary Wood	1918-Sept.	Drocourt-Quent
1916 Sept.	Thiepval	1918-Sept.	Bourlon Wood
1916 Oct.	Bourcellette	1918-Oct.	Cambrai
1916-Oct.	Regina French	1918-Oct.	Denain
1917-April	Vimy Ridge	1918-Nov.	Valenciennes
1917-April	Arleux	1918-Nov-11	Mons -"Armistice"

Annex B

Lt. W. Simcock – His War In Normandy, 1944

By Col. BT McGrath

After I wrote a short article about my father Tom McGrath's experiences in World War Two, BGen Beno asked me do to a similar article about my former father-in-law, William Simcock.

Bill Simcock was born in Halifax, Yorkshire, in 1920 (his father, who had emigrated to Canada in 1912-13, had re-joined his regiment, The Scots Guards, when WW I broke out and had served the entire war finishing as a Company Sergeant-Major). Bill came to Canada as an infant and was raised in Fredericton where his father was on the town police force. After graduating high school and finding his family couldn't afford university, Bill joined the Army as a gunner in 1st Field Regiment RCHA (in those days just "The RCHA") posted to Kingston.

The RCHA were stationed in Fort Frontenac and in "Artillery Park" – across King St. from the fort in the area where the municipal swimming pool is now located. Bill used to comment on how the city has changed and told of how they would slip out of the fort on unauthorized evenings by climbing over the permanent coal pile that was against the wall just south of the area where today one finds the old foundation of the original fort. I don't recall how such an absentee got back in although I do recall him talking of the difficulty of returning suitably cleaned up.



When WW II broke out Bill was a Lance Bombardier and on leave in Fredericton. He received orders to report to the regiment assembling in Halifax NS for dispatch to England and, as one of the first of the regiment to arrive, joined a friend in snaffling a first class stateroom (with steward) on the liner assigned to them which, although designated to be converted to troop ship duty, still had the normal peacetime crew. Needless to say, when the whole regiment was boarded there was a considerable pressure to reassign them to more rank-appropriate quarters,

but the CO directed that in recognition of A) their initiative, and B) the lack of such comforts in their future, they should cross the Atlantic in luxury.

Bill served with the RCHA in UK until mid to late 1942. Like the entire first contingent he received a letter of welcome and thanks personally signed by King George VI (which he proudly displayed in a frame in his home), took part in the Regiment's brief foray to France and return (with guns) in June 1940, and the regiment's hectic subsequent months deploying back and forth across southern England trying to look like a couple of divisions' worth of artillery to German



reconnaissance. During that time he met and married my mother-in-law-to-be and my wife was born. Sometime toward the end of 1942 he was selected for officer training, I believe he was a L/Sgt (possibly a Sgt) at the time and after training was awarded a war-time commission as a 2Lt and posted to 13 Field Regiment RCA, one of the divisional artillery regiments of 3rd Cdn Infantry Division, assigned to Operation Overlord, the D Day landings.

In preparation for D Day 13 Fd Regt (along with 12, 14, and 19 Fd Regts) was equipped with 105mm Self Propelled Howitzers. This was the American 105 mm Howitzer mounted on a Sherman tank chassis with an open topped armoured "box". The vehicle had a maximum elevation limitation of 35 degrees giving it about 3000 yds less range than the 25 pounder. It also had limits on left and right on-carriage traverse, (of course the whole vehicle could be slewed if necessary). In American use it carried 69 rounds of 105mm but if radio equipped, as I believe all the Canadian guns were, it carried only 47 rounds. For the landing each gun towed a "porpoise," a metal sled/float that could hold about 45 more rounds (that's a guess based on the dimensions, as I couldn't find any other detail.) It seems that the landing regiments came ashore with something under 100 rounds per gun – the need for both the regiment's echelon and service corps re-supply to be "well up" was important even on D Day. The Priest also had a .50 cal machine gun with 300 rounds.

During the landing the regiments were loaded with one troop on each LCT (Landing Craft Tank) and fired onto the beaches during the run-in. Initial orientation and fixation was given by the Navy and fixation (thus range) based I believe on radar. As the run-in to the beach proceeded at a fixed rate, range was reduced every two minutes by an



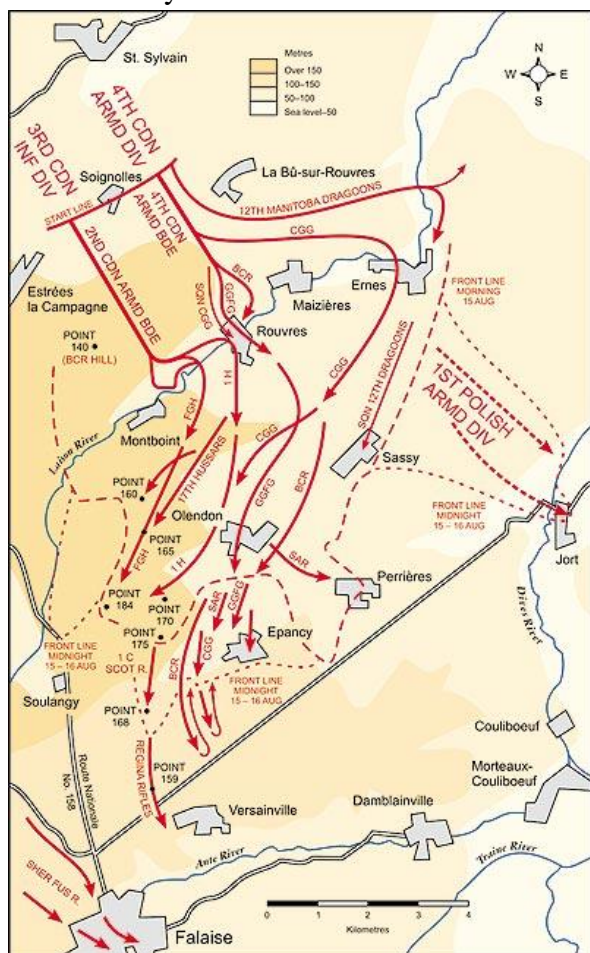
appropriate amount indicated by a specially designed clock in each LCT. 13 Fd Regt opened fire at 0705 hrs and continued for about 30 minutes, firing 100 – 150 rounds per gun (clearly the ammunition for the run-in fire plan was separate from the first line aboard the SPs and in the porpoises.) I asked Bill how they compensated for the rolling of the sea, and he said they set the elevation and each gun fired as its bubbles came level; this explains the report in the history that they opened fire at a range beyond that achievable because of the on carriage elevation limitation. The only other direct comment about the Priest that I recall Bill making was that the gun crew's show-off way of dismounting from a Priest was to grip the side with one hand and dive over head-first, pivoting on the arm holding the side to land on one's feet. He didn't elaborate on the casualty rate.

13 Fd Regt landed as planned. While other regiments lost several guns to enemy action, they did not. They did however take considerable casualties among the FOO/BC parties losing among others two majors and two Captains. This may explain Bill's subsequent frequent employment away from the gun position. He never told me anything of significance about his service at the guns, but he did tell three stories about serving as an OP.

1) He was tasked to establish an OP (Observation Post) to observe a portion of the fireplan for a corps attack. The plan included a barrage of considerable duration. He was to observe a couple of on call targets, report if they became active, and adjust fire onto them if required. As he was part of the "pure" artillery plan he didn't effect liaison with any particular infantry. He occupied his OP, by a pig farm that was just beyond him and the start line, identified the targets he was responsible for and noted where the first line of the barrage was to fall, a couple of hundred yards to his front. A short time before the barrage was to start, a British infantry company came up on his right and lay down in the open to await H Hour. Unfortunately they'd gone too far forward and rather than being just short of the start line were actually on the first line of the barrage. Although worried about time, Bill went to the company to tell them of their error. He met "a pompous English captain who wouldn't listen to "a colonial subaltern" who said if the artillery was concerned about his company's location, they should change where they were going to fire as clearly there were no enemy at that spot. After a short, angry argument Bill returned to his OP to watch the opening rounds fall onto line one of the barrage and kill a large number of English infantry.

2) On a more jocular note Bill told of another occasion when he was part of a patrol from the Regina Rifles. During the patrol they passed through the railway yards around Caen. As they were walking along the parked freight cars in the yard, he noticed a German patrol walking in the opposite direction on the other side of the row of cars, probably 15 – 20 meters away. He pointed them out to the patrol commander who gestured to ignore them, Bill said he quickly realized that the Germans were equally aware of their presence and equally determined to pretend otherwise. The two patrols passed peacefully on in opposite directions.

3) Lt. Simcock was once again assigned to OP Duties in support of the Fire Plan for Operation TRACTABLE (a follow-on to TOTALIZE as part of the closure of the Falaise Gap) on 14 August 1944. In this case his task was to observe the effectiveness of a very large smoke screen that was to cover the flank of the Corps advance and if necessary call on designated guns to “fill in” any gaps in the screen. Unlike his previous tasks the designated OP location was well into enemy territory, and he was to travel in a tank with the assaulting formation to get to it. Bill was to take two gunners with him (OP Tech and Signaler). He never told me the type of tank (Sherman?), the unit it came from, how he and his crew fitted in – he gave the impression that he had command of the tank although he also said until he joined up with them for the operation he had little hands-on tank experience. He did say that the one piece of advice he got was “Don’t stop! Keep moving as fast as you can!” He also said he was struck by how little faith the bulk of the troops had in their armour.



He arrived at the Armoured Brigade HQ for orders well ahead of time, and went to the latrine...as he was standing there a young officer in a scruffy sweater came in and standing beside him they exchanged pleasantries. He was surprised a few minutes later when the Brigade Commander appeared in his battle dress tunic to see that it was the same man – Brigadier Booth.

The attack started as planned, Bill’s tank, advanced with the others at a good speed. A few minutes after their launch, “a whacking great mass of HE (high explosive shells) came down about 200 yds behind us – We’d got through the German DFs (pre-planned artillery defensive targets) just in time.” There was a lot of fire, the dust was very heavy, the smoke was drifting through them, and the rising sun’s glare made driving, let alone map reading very difficult. At some point they passed a couple of stopped tanks and he looked down to see Brigadier Booth,

clearly badly wounded, lying on the ground with several officers standing around him. (Booth died.)

As he neared the area where he was to set up his OP he became increasingly concerned about his map reading and ordered the tank to stop so he could orient himself. The crew argued against doing so but he insisted. Less than two minutes after they stopped, “The whole tank was a mass of flames.” He never heard the anti-tank round hit, nor any explosion. His next memory is lying on the ground a few feet from the tank watching it “brew up.” He thinks someone dragged him over to a tree (you’re less likely to be run over if you’re by a tree than if you’re just lying in a field.) and then passed out. He never commented on what happened to the others in the tank (The Gunner History says the two gunners with him were also “badly burned.”) His next memory is that the field he was lying in had caught fire and was burning over him, but someone was moving him. (This may have happened before he was moved to the tree.)

Eventually, he has no idea how much later, he was found and evacuated to a casualty clearing station where he was triaged, given pain killers and set aside on a stretcher as the many casualties of the day flooded in. He lay through that night drifting in and out of consciousness, aware that many of those around him were dying and thinking that the medical assessment was that he would too. About dawn the next morning medical staff came over to his area and noted that he was still alive and took him for further treatment.

Bill was evacuated to hospital in England. He had extensive third degree burns to his face and hands and although his uniform had protected him to some extent, second degree burns to his legs, and arms. He was hospitalized until late 1944 but, for future career reasons, he was very concerned that he return to duty as soon as possible. Eventually he persuaded the doctors to release him to light duty, although their opinion was that he needed further treatment on his hands. He served on light duty in a variety of administrative functions in England until the war ended.

Bill, got his permanent Commission and served until the early 70s, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.

His hands bothered him for the rest of his life.

* * *

The above is the bare-bones tale of Bill Simcock’s war. I’d like to add a few comments about this tale and the previous one about my father.

Although there are similarities between the two stories, (Gunner subalterns in action in Normandy, rather taciturn and closed personalities who rarely spoke of their war-time experiences, very reluctant to be thought to be exaggerating any tale) there are enough differences to make this a bit of a challenge. Although my father eventually stayed on in the army after the war (he retired in 1965) when he joined in 1940 only intending to stay 'for the duration.' On the other hand, Bill Simcock was, that very rare bird, a pre-war gunner who foresaw a career in the artillery. As a permanent force soldier with a new family, the "war time commission" was a major break-through for 2Lt Simcock. In the pre-war army it was difficult to earn a regular commission other than through RMC. Bill said he set a goal to convert it to a permanent commission that would continue after the war. In this he differed from most CAASF officers who looked forward to the war's end and a return to civilian life.

As mentioned, Bill Simcock served until the early 70s, After the war he attended the Long Gunnery Staff Course at Larkhill, did several tours as an instructor in Gunnery, including an exchange tour at Larkhill, staff tours in Ottawa at D Arty and on "I Staff" with militia, 18 months on the UN monitoring staff in Indo China, and a three year tour as 2ic of 3 RCHA in Germany. Our careers overlapped. He was posted to be Chief Instructor in Gunnery at the School of Artillery, Shilo while I was on staff (yes, I married the boss's daughter).

I know the shelling of the British infantry haunted Bill for the rest of his life. "What was a Lt supposed to do with a Corps Fire Plan at five minutes to H Hour...that arrogant, ignorant SOB was responsible for all those...." (When he first told me the story, I wondered about a Canadian OP having such a contact with a British officer from another division, but a check of the history shows that 13 Fd Regt fired on Fire plans for Operation EPSOM with 49(UK) Division and Operation CHARNWOOD with 59 Division.)

I suppose today's reader must give thought to PTSD. Bill's family thought "the war changed him" – that was a common comment of families with returned vets. In my experience, he was a demanding officer with a strong, quick temper who expected and got very the best of all. His most significant characteristic was his sympathy for and understanding of soldiers (I suspect they generally didn't realize it). Woe betide any of his officers who he thought was not looking after his men! He had an incredible antipathy to any "superior who lorded over those with less power". For years and years, after he retired he made it a point to visit the local DVA hospital at least weekly and paid particular attention to those poor souls who had been overwhelmed by it all. He would be appalled by today's DVA approach to "pay-out and forget!"

ANNEX C

The “Simcoe Guns” and The Gunners of Toronto

The stretches of the North American unknown lay just to the north of the back woods colonial capital. Only missionaries, fur traders and a handful of explorers had reached into the abject wilderness that strictly Aboriginal tribes were able to live and thrive in. United Empire Loyalist refugees settled by the sheltered harbour on the north shore of Lake Ontario in the two decades after the American Independence. Mostly to escape Republicanism and any backlash they would experience due to their loyalties to the crown during that war. But war would find them again. When it did, they defended what would be Toronto with some of the most unique and out of date field pieces forged by man.



Blockhouse and Artillery 1812

The image above is an artist's conception of how the fortifications at York might have looked at the beginning of the War of 1812.

At the time of the American attack in the Spring of 1813, the post was lightly garrisoned and incomplete. The blockhouse was burned during the raid; the lakeside battery was incorporated into the new fort built after the war. It is now separated from the lake by the Gardiner Expressway and nearly two centuries of landfill.

While many think the Regimental Adjutant is an unappreciated job, and in some cases it is, but it is a job in which you will witness and become involved in the political functions within the Canadian Forces. One of the endless string of actionable items during my term as Adjutant of the 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA was working on the Regiment's offer to accept the perpetuation of Incorporated Artillery Company of 1812-1814. In doing so, there were some immediate questions that came to mind,

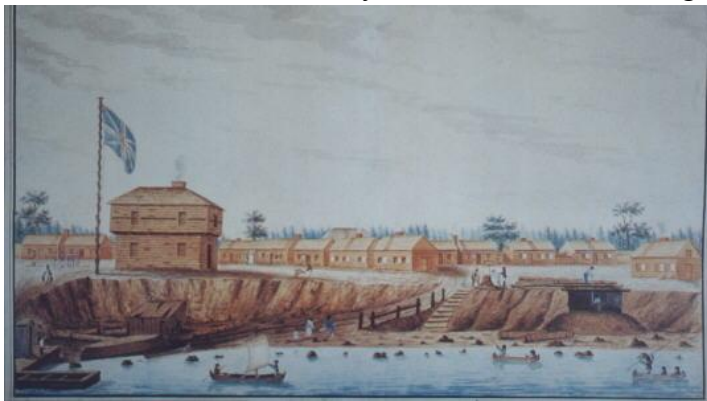
- 1) Isn't this a British Army Unit?**
- 2) What kind of Battle Honour is York if it was a terrible defeat? And,**
- 3) Where are the guns?**

Answering the first two questions was simple. The men of the Incorporated Artillery Company were Torontonians. While they fought under the British Army, they were essentially Canadian, and thus their legacy is more Canadian than British. This type of perpetuation is not unique. In Canada the Queen's York Rangers trace their lineage back to the American Revolution and even other nations such as the Jamaican Defence Force perpetuates the now defunct British West Indian Regiment.

In the spirit of the Gunner Family the men of the Incorporated Artillery Company need to be remembered. As gunners we live through the successes of men such as Morrison, Currie, Crerar

and McNaughton. We empathise with the struggles of the nameless men and women who dragged guns across the scrub of the Transvaal, the mud of Flanders, the heat of Ortona and the sands of Kandahar. Of all of these struggles we have not accounted for the reservist of 1813 and it is with that century's soldier that we at the 7th Toronto Regiment, RCA have the most in common. The Reservist of 1813 did not project his arms to continents abroad but here at home, in the city that we now all live in and the Regiment that bears its name. The militia soldier in Toronto, during what amounted to an American sack, were not fighting for principles, for King and Country or even for the other gunners in their detachments. They were fighting for the city they lived, where they had their families and property. Their backs were against the wall when the British regulars retreated to Kingston with the cache of modern equipment when they saw American sails off the Scarborough Bluffs on 27 April 1813.

In 1813 the militia gunners were not that unlike the gunners of 7th Toronto Regiment. Few were full time soldiers. The ranks were made of local tradesmen, labourers, students and farmers. The officers were prominent men of York and bore names that still exist today - Jarvis, Strachan, Ashbridge. Also of note is that many of the members were not even born in Canada or they were second generation newcomers. This element continues on today in the perpetuating regiment as 7th Tor Regt is often identified as being the most multi-cultural in the CAF. The settlers of York had come to the location of old French Fort Rouille in 1792. These settlers came with Lt Gov John Graves Simcoe. They were his Queen's Rangers; volunteers and veterans of the War of



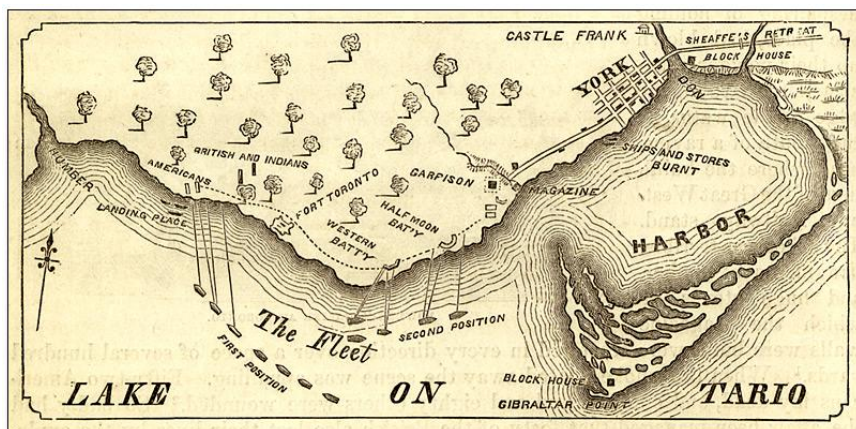
Fort York - 1804

Independence of the Thirteen Colonies to the south. Simcoe used his Rangers not only as a veteran defence consideration but also as general labour. The Rangers carved out parts of Yonge Street, Dundas Street and Kingston Road. While the towns, farms and hamlets grew young men were often raised for militia training and replaced the aging Rangers. Likewise, British regulars still garrisoned the frontier

forts and key points. As tensions with France rose to a fever pitch, the local militias were relied upon in case war with the United States was to resume. Similarly, the regular regiments were committed to the battles against Napoleon.

The 7th Toronto Regiment came to the realization that perpetuating the men of the Incorporated Militia Company we are also adopting their actions, history and their colours – represented in the guns. With the sweep of a good intentioned and publically popular policy, their history became our history. In a Corps context that prides itself on never having lost a gun to the enemy, the 7 RCA thought to itself over long debates in the Officer's Mess - where are the Simcoe guns?

The story of the Battle of York (27 Apr 1813) has been told many times, but for gunners of a Corps who are now growing and adopting more events that not only include glory and honour but also defeat and sorrow we take the bad with the good.



The guns are in fact, right under our noses. The Simcoe Guns are still at Fort York. The guns of the Incorporated Artillery Company came to Toronto at the end of the 18th Century with Simcoe and his Rangers and it is there that they still remain.

Cannony then, like now, is extremely heavy and difficult to move. Guns were at a premium and the defeated Loyal Forces did not have much to choose from. The Guns available were antiques even then and would have been extremely difficult to relocate from the newly created American Republic.

In what would eventually become Toronto, the Simcoe Guns were put to work defending the new colonial capital of York. Like today, the militia was equipped with what was best described as training grade items. Our current howitzers are Korean War stock. This was no different than what the Militia Artillery had access to 200 years ago. The Simcoe Guns were already 150 years old. The trunnions and buttons had been removed. While they were still able to fire the removal of the trunnion made it next to impossible to elevate the gun. It also had to be tied down either to a very heavy carriage or even onto earth works. The button would absorb and direct much of the recoil and without stabilizing the gun the firing would make its recoil unpredictable and therefore very dangerous to the operators.



Culverin Drake (Circa 1650)



Armstrong 9 Pounder

The three guns known as “The Simcoe Guns” are registered as artefacts owned by the City of Toronto and are tracked to some degree by the Royal Armouries. They encompass:

1. Armstrong 9-pounder. Smooth-bore muzzle-loading (SBML) forged between 1737-1756
2. Drake culverin. SBML forged c.1650
3. 1 pounder. SBML. Forged c. 1770.

The culverin that was brought into action against the American amphibious fleet is one of the rarest and most unique pieces in the British tradition. Currently on display at Fort York in Toronto it has evidence of Oliver Cromwell’s Commonwealth cypher. The piece in general is pock marked and worn and the armourers who took the cannon after the Crown was restored did not fulfil their intent on replacing the Commonwealth Cypher with the simple “CR” of the restored King Charles II.

A culverin is considered an early-modern artillery piece. The convention today is to class a gun by its size (either shot weight or calibre). Prior to 1700 guns were given names relative to their size. Culverins were muzzle-loaded smooth-bore weapons that had a 5” to 6” calibre firing a 15 to 20 lb shot. Brass or bronze culverins weighed about 4000lbs while iron Culverins weighed about 7000lbs. Culverins originally were popular with the field armies of Medieval Europe but due to their size became fortress and naval guns. They began to be manufactured in the late-medieval period and by the mid-17th Century they were being mass produced by the Commonwealth government in England. The improved culverin that became known as Drakes, were lighter and shorter than contemporary cannons being made in continental Europe. This was done by changing the shape of the powder chamber, which allowed the metallurgists to commit less metal to the barrel and more to the chamber. The decrease in weight allowed iron (now 5500lbs) to become the popular choice of metal again. Iron munitions were standard during the medieval period but brass and bronze munitions began to take over during the Renaissance due to being significantly lighter. Brass and bronze were also very expensive compared to iron. During the English Civil War in the mid-17th Century the Commonwealth ordered about 3000 Drake cannons, all made of iron.

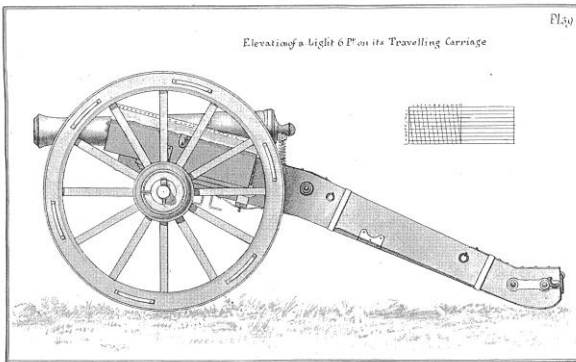
Culverins were becoming obsolete when used in the field even in the early 17th Century as they



were incapable of firing exploding munitions and their weight restricted their movement compared to modern field pieces. Drake culverins and other similar primitive cannons remained popular with European navies and fortresses as they were dependable and were able to fire accurately and weight was less an issue.

A British cannon design was standardized by the time the next Simcoe Gun, the Armstrong 9-pounder was forged. Able to fire exploding ordnance with a 4 inch calibre, the Armstrong

design changed the way the bores were forged and formed, thus, allowing guns to be lighter and safer for handling. Unfortunately, the increased potency of gunpowder during this period was not coupled with gun design improvements resulting in many accidents in the bore and chamber. Still SBML, this cannon was a development piece as the Armstrong design was not standardized and perfected until 1760. This type of cannon was typical during George II's reign. They were used as field guns, garrison guns and naval guns.



During the Battle of York, the gunners did use the 9-pounder but due to its age and relative instability (also missing its trunnions and button) it would have been just as dangerous behind the piece as in front of it.

During the 18th and early 19th Century the job of the quartermaster and the ammunition NCO's would have been very difficult. They would have had to manage not only the stocks

of ammunition of these antique cannons but also the modern 18 pounders and any lighter field guns they could deploy. Often aboard ships during this time it was not uncommon to find half a dozen different calibres of guns on a single ship!

The invading American's were not a crack army. Discipline in the ranks and rivalries between states were troublesome to every commander. When the battle was all but lost, and only the instruments of surrender remained, the gun powder magazine exploded at the fort. This accounted for many American casualties, including General Zebulon Pike, namesake of Pike's Peak, Colorado. The invading Americans took it upon themselves to loot the town. In a strategic sense the Americans took most of the war stores they could salvage. Of that, the guns of the Incorporated Artillery Company would have been diplomatically surrendered to the Americans. The militia was disbanded and the soldiers were paroled in the articles of surrender.

When the Americans left York after a one week occupation, they left the Simcoe Guns. The prize of the invasion was the almost complete *HMS General Brock* which was scuttled by Navy Wharf at some time during the invasion or occupation. The Fort was ruined but thankfully the Simcoe Guns were either not located by the Americans or they did not care to transport them back across the lake. The Legislature's Mace and the Kings Standard were both taken as trophies. The Mace was returned but the King's Standard is still on display at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The Fort and the Guns fell into decay after Fort York and its defenses became obsolete early in the 19th Century. Depending on the threat, whether American, Fenian or Republican the Fort

saw some action until the end of the 19th Century. Its building and its treasures sadly fell into disrepair. The Simcoe Guns were actually used as bollards; namely they were half-buried in the ground on the corner of major streets in Toronto. This was done to protect buildings from runaway carriages and later motor cars.



With the perpetuation of the Incorporated Artillery Company the gunners of 7th Toronto Regiment can still visit, touch and honour the guns that Toronto militia men took into action to defend our city. The guns, which are representative of our colours, date back to the very beginning of powder artillery. We should all feel lucky that during the week of American occupation the gunners and officers somehow kept these trophies from being moved south of the Great Lake. Protecting the guns from the fate of becoming a war trophy, is in itself, an honorable act that is worthy of perpetuation.



*Captain Paul Thompson with
Artillery Bollards - Cuba*



Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery Sergeant of the Year Award



This is for info to all Gunners. We are now in our third year of nominating Sergeants for The Brigadier-General Ernest Beno Award for Leadership in the Rank of Sergeant (The RCA Sergeant of the Year Award). Nominations are due annually at RHQ RCA by 26 May. This is an update of the Sergeants selected for the past two years.

The Award is for Sergeants whose performance has demonstrated over the period of the assessment year, outstanding leadership, emphasizing the example set, the gaining of the respect of his or her subordinates, peers and superiors, and the positive effect on The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery which the nominee has had. Factors that should be considered in the selection include competence, confidence, courage, fitness, integrity, military achievement, CF recognition, self-improvement and education advancement, and loyal and dedicated service to The Royal Regiment and its members – thus having a positive influence on the RCA as a whole, setting an example for all Non-Commissioned members and making us proud to be Gunners. There is one award annually to a Regular Force and a Reserve Component Sergeant serving in the RCA.



The Sergeant of the Year, Regular Force and Reserve, have their name inscribed on a plaque on the 18 Pounder trophy, and their photo is placed above the trophy for a one-year period. The 18 Pounder trophy is strategically placed inside the main entrance to the Royal Canadian Artillery School, Gagetown, so that all passing can be alerted to the recognition given to these Sergeants. We want all Gunners, Bombardiers, Master Bombardiers and Sergeants who walk by and see this trophy to strive to have their name on it.

The RCA Sergeant of the Year Award 2013 - Regular Force - Sgt King, Second Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery

Citation – Sergeant David King: *Presented for outstanding leadership and performance throughout the year. Sgt King's consistent high standard of leadership and technical expertise provided a positive example for his subordinates. He has proven to be an asset to the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery.*



The RCA Sergeant of the Year Award 2013 - Reserve Force - Sergeant Jim Cavin, 56th Field Regiment, RCA



Citation: *Sgt Jim Cavin has demonstrated outstanding leadership skill and been instrumental in the orchestration of training. His expertise, guidance and mentoring produces highly motivated and technically sound gunners for the Regiment. His performance as a senior NCO has been exemplary.*

The RCA Sergeant of the Year Award 2014 - Regular Force Sgt Raymond Curnew CD, 4 Regiment (GS), RCA



Citation – Sergeant Raymond Curnew: *Sergeant Curnew's superb leadership and strength of character were instrumental to his outstanding performance as a Troop Commander and RDS. He was influential in fostering a positive work environment enabling soldiers to develop their professional abilities and their leadership skills. For this he has been awarded the Brigadier-General E.B. Beno award for leadership in the Rank of Sergeant, Regular Force.*

These are the words that Sergeant Curnew offered to all ranks 4th Regiment (GS), RCA:



"Gen Beno (Ret), LCol Leigh, RSM, Distinguished guests, Gnrs of the Artillery core and the 4th Regt (GS) It is an honour for me to accept this award and I cannot tell you how thankful I am to have even been considered let alone selected for such a distinguished presentation.

Leadership, passion, determination, and drive these are the things that make Gnrs of the Royal Regt great. To care about the path and more importantly the people on it is what solidifies our success as a team and a family.

Individual agenda's for personal gain must cease to exist as focus on the future of our corps is critical now more than ever.

The Gnrs of today will in fact be the Sgt's of tomorrow. Know them, mentor them, respect them and prepare them for what is to come. The corps needs true leaders to replace the ones that have gone before us.

Lead by example, Lead from the front, but more importantly lead with your heart. This award stands true and is a testament that excellence is a collective effort. I am standing here today not as an individual but as a representation of the teams that I have worked with throughout the years."
UBIQUE!

The RCA Sergeant of the Year Award 2014 - Primary Reserve Sgt Grant W. Philpott CD, 56th Field Regiment, RCA

Citation – Sergeant Grant Philpott: *Sergeant Philpott's leadership combined with his strong military values and his exceptional organizational skills has brought credit to himself, his unit, the Royal Regiment, and the community that he serves. For this he has been awarded the Brigadier-General E.B. Beno award for leadership in the Rank of Sergeant, Primary Reserves.*



Why recognize a Sergeant of the Year? I cannot tell you how proud that I am of the Sergeants in The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery. From the days when I joined the Militia, to the day I got off the train in Douglas Manitoba, to the days when I was a Junior Officer, and on it goes – Sergeants had a great influence on me. My Number 1 on “Baker Dog” (Bravo Delta these days), D Battery 2RCHA, whipped me into shape, and helped make me the Gunner I was. Then as a 2nd Lieutenant, Lieutenant, Captain, etc to BGen, the Sergeants coached, mentored, encouraged and energized me.

Sergeants are truly the backbone of the Royal Regiment. They command detachments (Gun, Missile, STA, Command Post, FOO Party, Survey, etc). Hence, the trophy of the 18 Pounder represents what a Sergeant commands. Sergeants make things happen – whether getting the gun into action, double checking the bearing, elevation and charge, looking after the horses, training their detachment, or defending the gun position. They translate the orders from their leaders and face the soldiers direct on – and through their personal will, determination and leadership they get the soldiers to achieve things the troops never thought they could.

During my time as Colonel Commandant I got to see first hand the great quality of Sergeant that we have today. I have seen them on training exercises, the armouries floor, on parades, and in operations. Because of their knowledge, skills, talents and motivation they have a great impact on the soldiers of the RCA and the operational success the RCA is noted for. They are mission oriented, and they make the mission happen. Today's Sergeants are every bit as good as those I knew more than fifty years ago, and they were, and continue to be the backbone of the Royal Regiment.

That is why we should recognize our Sergeants of the Year!

GOOD SHOOTING!

UBIQUE!

EB

