

NEWSLETTER



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K2

pg. 3.

NO BRIDGE FOR US

When I was 17 I signed up to fight overseas. In Italy I joined the PPCLI Regiment. With them I fought in Italy, France, Belgium, Germany and Holland.

In April 7, 1945 the PPCLI Regiment was in Joppe, Overysse, and Holland. Plans were made to cross the Yssel river.

In April 9, 1945 we were situated in Baak and from there we moved slowly towards Gorssel, where the crossing was to take place. The rendezvous was there on April 11, 1945. We would cross the Yssel river at the same place Napoleon did so many years ago. He crossed to conquer and we came to liberate. This was to be the start of the liberation of the western part of the Netherlands.

I was with the first 500 and we were in D (Dog) Company. Some of us were terribly nervous, because we knew what was waiting for us on the other side.

After checking our guns and equipment we climbed into the Amphibious Tanks. On the way to the river we saw a farmer plowing his land while the mortars were flying around him. One exploded very close to him and this made him run home.

Then we saw the river, there was no bridge. We saw the bunkers on the other side where the Germans were waiting for us.

Under a hail of mortar bombs we crossed the Yssel river. Our tank made it to the other side. Then it was kill or be killed.

We helped to liberate Wilp, Voorst, Apeldoorn, Hoederloo and Barneveld. At the last place we stayed till May 8th 1945. From there we moved to Amsterdam and the PPCLI was the first Regiment to enter that city. Our destination was Bloemendaal, outside of Haarlem, we stayed there until June 1945.

On April 11, 1990 I was back there, 45 years later. I looked around to see where I was so long ago. The river is still flowing, the bunkers are still there, there is still no bridge. I spoke to the people around there and they remember and they are still thankful for what we did so long ago. It is peaceful there now.

I remember the ones we left behind, the ones who died in the fight for freedom. They are buried in Holton and Groesbeek cemeteries. They were so young, their life had just begun. THEIR GRAVES ARE LOVINGLY CARED FOR BY THE DUTCH. THEY WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

I am proud to have been part of this and proud to be a member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

Lloyd Rains

(Picture on Cover)

Lloyd and Olga Rains

PRINCESS PATRICIA'S

CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

A bi-annual Newsletter devoted to the interest of all retired members of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, published at Currie Barracks, Canadian Forces Base Calgary, Alberta, as an official Regimental Publication, under authority of the Colonel of the Regiment of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

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FROM THE

EDITOR'S DUGOUT



In the last edition of the Newsletter I said that it will be my last report - wrong, I am back for one more try. Indeed Captain Keith Flowers is our Regimental Adjutant - however, he cannot replace me as Secretary-Treasurer of the Association until so elected or appointed at the A.G.M.

Perhaps this is then a time for reflection over the past 8 years as your Editor and Secretary-Treasurer. The Association is indeed in good shape. From a mere 85 paid-up members in 1982, we can now proudly proclaim that in March of 1991, we have 915 paid-up members. Not the 1,500 we had hoped to have at the end of the 75th Anniversary, but a solid core nevertheless. However, one cannot live forever in the past and time dims the solemn sworn promises made to comrades on parting, the Association of ours should continually, like the eagle, renew its youth as new members are taken on and the old guard fades away. On my visits to Branches I have often seen too often I might add, small groups dictating to the membership what will be done - resulting in bitterness and loss of members. Whatever happened to esprit de corps? Yes, there is still a we and them attitude - happily this is restricted to just one geographical location, but it is there. We have not been able to attract Patricias who have retired during the past 10 years. While we have been attracting some middle/senior ranks, we have failed considerably with the junior ranks. Is there a message? I shall continue to be an active member of the Association and serve in whatever capacity so required. The Association needs the full support of everyone of us.

In conclusion may I take this opportunity to express my gratitude both for the opportunity and the wonderful time that has been my lot as your Editor, and also to convey my thanks to every member of the Association for the support I have received. And finally, a special thanks to Rod Middleton my friend and mentor, and LCol Harry Elliott, for their unwavering support and loyalty, which permitted me to do the things that I thought needed doing.

God Bless,

Your Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By W.E. Harrington

In the last Newsletter I mentioned the two primary reasons for the Association. That is to maintain a fraternal association of Patricias and to promote and foster the well being of the Regiment. Both of these objectives are only possible with the cooperation of you, the members, and the second depends upon the first.

Membership should not be just joining and paying dues. Membership is participation. Membership is attending Branch functions, meetings, departed comrades funerals and most important the social functions of the Branch. For instance, the "commemorative" dinner that all Branches hold once a year. It is realized for some of you who are, participation might be a contribution to the Hamilton Gault Memorial Fund towards the Museum or the Hall of Honour. The latter is on-going, and needs your contributions. They are tax deductible, by the way.

A reminder, this year's Annual General Meeting is being hosted by the Saskatoon Branch in Regina, May 31, June 1st and 2nd. The Saskatchewan Branch promises an interesting and enjoyable weekend. Details and registration are detailed elsewhere in this issue. Come and participate. Why not arrange to meet an old comrade in Regina.

A final note: this Newsletter will likely be our Editor, Rudy Raidt's last. I believe Rudy developed the Newsletter's current format, and has guided publication for many years. Captain Raidt begins retirement leave in August. I express the Association's appreciation for all of the years of service that Rudy has given the Association. I'm sure that all members of the Association join me in wishing him the best of life in his retirement from Regimental service, but not service to the Regiment. I understand that he is to continue to live in Calgary, and thus his expertise and advice should still be available to the Association.

I wish at this time to welcome Captain Keith Flowers. Who as Regimental Adjutant will be duly "elected" Secretary-Treasurer and ipso facto Editor of the Newsletter. I'm sure he will carry on in the Patricia tradition.

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The Gold Stripe V.1-3, 1919//

THE GOLD STRIPE

The "Princess Patricia's" First Entry Into the Trenches in Flanders

(5-7 January 1915)



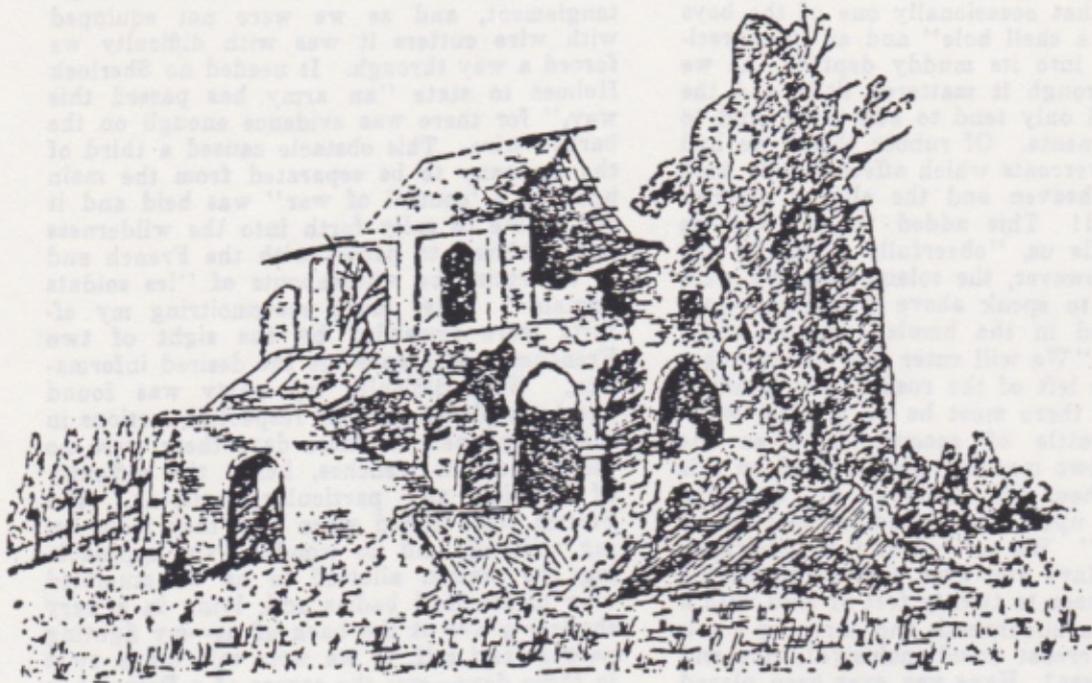
AFTER a cramped railway journey from Le Havre, we detrained at a town called Aire, and proceeded in the darkness—for it was midnight—to the village of Blaringhem. Here we billeted some companies in the village and others in the neighborhood. During our stay here our time was much occupied by guard, picquets and working parties. Although the front line was twenty-five miles away, we carried our rifle and ten rounds of ammunition wherever we went. Working parties, which went out to dig reserve trenches each day—and each day the distance grew longer!—carried full marching order with full stock of ammunition. When digging the trenches we placed our equipment on the parapet side of the trench with rifle and fixed bayonet placed with muzzle towards the enemy. Rain or sunshine—and there was very little of the latter—this work went on. Troops coming back soaked to the skin, their packs and greatcoats being no lighter in weight owing to the addition of mud and

water, would welcome the sight of their billet, for there they knew the cooks had a hot meal of stew for them. Also the postman would be calling out the mail. The farmhouse or billet in which we were quartered was unsanitary. It comprised almost a quadrangle of buildings, the house, stables, cowshed, poultry house, barns, pigsties, all followed in sequence around the square, in the centre of which was the refuse pit which contained filth from all the buildings mentioned. The troops were quartered in all these buildings including the bakehouse of the farm from which, later on, we were expelled, and being homeless we commandeered a farm wagon, which we slept in at night, the farmer using it during the day but bringing it back wet and muddy.

On Christmas day we went to visit our friends, the Imperial troops, who were brigaded with us, for, although we only had bully beef we knew the English regiments would be faring better, and it proved to be so. We were warmly welcomed.

Then came the day on which we received the order to move in a few days' time "up the line." Troops were paid a few francs to get necessaries for the trenches. Some of them mistook the word "epicerie" (grocery) for "estaminet" (saloon)! When the troops of my billet arrived back from the village, some one agitated for a "camp fire." The response was great. Anything and everything that would burn was collected. One of the men—he's dead now, poor chap—mounted a box and invited the assembly round the fire—they needed no second bidding. He then opened the meeting with these words: "Gentlemen, I have the honour of calling on our esteemed brother and comrade in arms, Private Underwood, for a song or recitation." Each announcement was loudly applauded. Choruses were sung over and over again. During the height of this revelry, the farmer had sent for the officers who when remonstrating, were cordially invited to join in, the farmer included. The troops were happy and cares had departed from their minds—pro tempore! There is always a morning after a night before! This scene kept up until five the following morning, and as parade fell in at seven, there was no time for rest. Seven o'clock came and

THE GOLD STRIPE



RUINS OF CHURCH *Trise - sur - Somme*

*W. Gray art
October 1918*

after much hurry and scurry to find their respective equipment, the troops moved off—on a fifteen miles' agonizing march. Agonizing it was, for as there was a lack of shoe repairers, and also a lack of ordinary sized boots, some of us had to walk the distance with the big toes inquisitively protruding through—no joke on a cobble or stone set road. On the journey, we would occasionally ask the distance to a village. Various answers were given and none of them right. For instance, "just up the road,(" and "not far" meant from three to five miles. They lacked powers of imagination. However, we finally arrived at a "billet." Some hovel! Here we expected to rest at least a day after our fifteen-mile march the day previous; but not on the march again at 10 a.m. My boots were awful, and on asking for another pair I was told "we have only size eleven," and as my size is eight—well! declined with thanks! Without entering into detail it must be mentioned that the cobble stones were still with us until we entered a field near Dickebusch, there to wait until dusk set in. Here we were given some bully beef and biscuits and some hot tea. Our cook apparently had "lost the

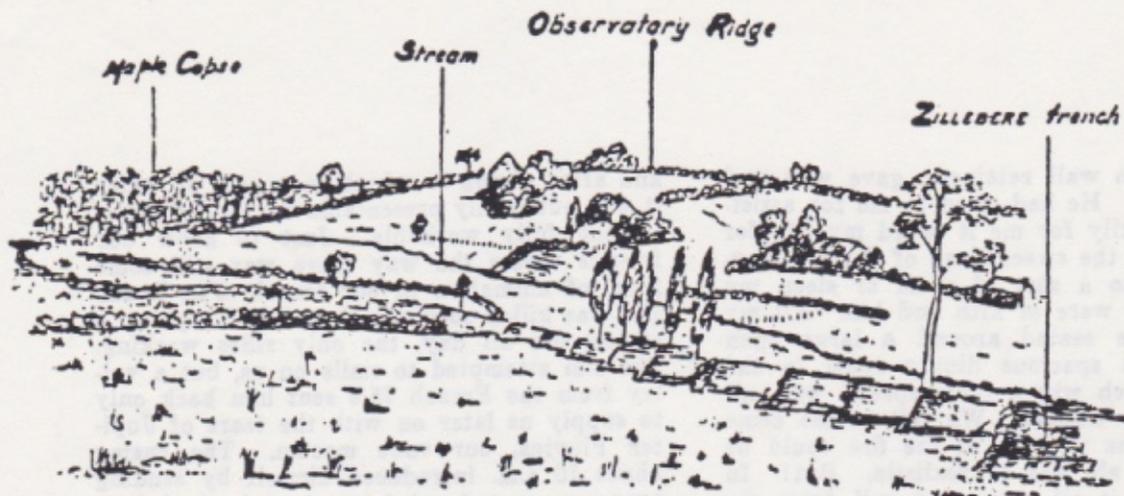
toss" for the milk and sugar. However, it was hot, that's all we cared. We were entertained during our meal by an aeroplane duel, the first we had seen. As dusk was now upon us we were lined up on parade, and after a few enquiries as to ammunition, water and emergency ration supplies, carried by the "man mule," we entered on to the old familiar stone set or paved road. Orders were given: "No smoking," "All pipes and cigarettes to be put out"—we were about three miles from the firing line proper.

We entered the village of Dickebusch in darkness; some villagers were about and greeted us with "Vive l'Angleterre, saviour de Belgique," they not knowing we were representing Canada. Some of the boys asked for water and one generous and human civilian brought us a pail of coffee with "elixir of life" in it—rum. It was a godsend for the night was miserable and a drizzling rain which had been our companion for a fortnight previous was falling. In the middle of the village we came to a road which led off to the right to a hamlet called Groote Vierstraat (Great Crossroads). Here we halted to form up into single file and were told to look

out for large shell holes in the road which were filled with water from the recent rains. We continued solemnly like a funeral procession except that occasionally one of the boys would "find a shell hole" and an unappreciative plunge into its muddy depths. As we were wet through it mattered little and the plunge would only tend to add more mud to our accoutrements. Of rubber sheets we had none, only overcoats which affectionately held the dew of heaven and the ally of Jupiter Pluvius—mud! This added weight was, as the press tells us, "cheerfully borne by the troops!" However, the solemn—for we were not allowed to speak above a whisper—procession halted in the hamlet and an order came round, "We will enter into the trenches by a gate on left of the road a few hundred yards down; there must be no talking, whispering or rattle of accoutrements as the enemy have two machine guns trained on this spot, and when star shells go up, everyone must lie flat upon the ground irrespective of where he is!" We arrived at this gateway—of death! Have you ever essayed to paddle through eighteen to twenty feet of mud with a greasy bottom underneath and carrying a soldier's kit, overcoat (mud inclusive), rifle and many et ceteras? Have you ever been placed in the awkward predicament of bumping your head while in polite society and dare not, for fear of ostracism, give vent to natural ejaculation? Well, such was our predicament. Many of the boys wallowed full length in this deep, slimy entrance called a gateway, on the other side of which was a field much pitted by shell holes and camouflaged with barbed wire and ditches which in those days were termed trenches. Look out! A star shell goes up, and like ninepins, we gravitate to Mother Earth with its repulsive admixture. We rise, painfully—our friends across the way two hundred yards distant, had not discovered our presence. We trudged on till we came to a creek, for we were in a sort of valley with the enemy on top of the ridge; a "cock of the roost" position which he maintained all along the line until July 1st, 1916. As intense darkness prevailed, we had difficulty in locating the creek; some were fortunate in finding a plank crossing which necessitated a Blondin (tight-rope walker) display. As they were not all Blondins, most of them performed aquatic exhibitions which, except for the splashing, passed unrecognized. Our next obstacle was a disused trench well filled with water over which we had to jump, and jumping it meant to fall or slide back into the ditch, for the opposite bank was the parapet of the trench which was about two feet high,

and with a pack and heavy overcoat on, it made jumping clear of the trench impossible. In front of this trench was a barbed wire entanglement, and as we were not equipped with wire cutters it was with difficulty we forced a way through. It needed no Sherlock Holmes to state "an army has passed this way," for there was evidence enough on the barbed wire. This obstacle caused a third of the company to be separated from the main body so a 'council of war' was held and it fell to me to sally forth into the wilderness and darkness to parley with the French and to ascertain the whereabouts of "les soldats anglais." After much reconnoitring my efforts were rewarded by the sight of two Frenchmen who gave me the desired information. With difficulty my party was found and later placed in their respective sections in the firing line. In these days there were no communication trenches, hence the difficulty of locating any particular regiment. The French were elated when told they were being relieved, and no wonder. On approaching the section allotted to us we stumbled over many dead bodies and, lying in a very shallow grave at the back of us—my fighting partner and self, as we were told off in twos in those days—was the corpse of a Frenchman on whose body my feet found terra firma on entering the trench. My desire was to ascertain the depth of the latter, so putting my foot into it, reached down as far as possible without touching bottom, and finally decided to enter with both feet. On doing so my thoughts turned to an experience of mine in the bogs of Ireland! Down, down, down, Larry, down until my feet touched something solid but unnatural for soil. We discovered next day it was the body of a Frenchman. We had been told when in billets that the trenches were dry, had dugouts, also coke braziers, but found them—ditches six feet deep with much water and mud, the enemy perched on a hill or bank above us, who, occasionally, pumped or bailed the water out of his trench which flowed down the hill side into ours. Needless to say it was not clean water either! As to dugouts, there was one and that one occupied by the officer commanding the platoon or company.

However, our first night in the "ditch" gave us much time for reflection, although my time was much occupied, being detailed to look after rations for my section. As soon as we were established at our posts, men were warned off to draw rations which were lying at the Cross Roads in Groote Vierstraat. Think of it! All that ground to travel over again and then back again! We assembled on



VALLEY COTTAGES
FROM ZILLEBEKE

*W. J. ...
May 30 1916*

the paradeau of the trench and moved off in pairs defying orders governing star shells, being absolutely indifferent, although machine and rifle bullets whizzed all around us. We reached the cross roads with four men out of eight. The rations consisted of eighty pound tins of bully beef and a sack of bread for the platoon. My comrade and I agreed to carry the bully beef in relays of a hundred yards, but owing to his weakness from exposure and lack of good food he could not manage it, and it devolved upon me to carry the whole eighty pounds. Strange as it might seem, these tins were not in a sack but we discovered a sheet and wrapped them in that, but we had not gone far when r-r-r-rip! it gave way and precipitated the contents into the mud at the gateway, ut supra. By groping in the mud we recovered only twenty tins. These we stuffed into our pockets and haversack and a few we carried, but after numerous other adventures we finally arrived at the trenches with about ten tins. What had befallen the bread party? They had had ill luck at the gateway to the field and had abandoned their sack of bread in the mud and water there. It would have been useless anyway for it had been left out in the rain along with the "preserved meat"—as a staff officer termed it.

As dawn broke, we gazed out on our "abode of discontent and misery." What a sight! How these male species of the human fungi could live under these conditions baffles the keenest student of humanitarianism. On my right and left, men were in agonies of rheumatism, trench feet, sickness of all sorts, and not to be wondered at considering what they had undergone in three days and nights—a march of thirty miles in two days and on the night of the second day to be placed in this filthy, water-logged, muddy hole which afforded no possible relief to their agonies! The only communication with the rear headquarters was by runner at night. The wounded had to remain in the trench until night fell no matter if he received his wounds at 6 a.m. in the morning.

And here was our temporary—thank God! only temporary—abode with the living, the sick, the wounded, and the dead. We were weak not wholly from hunger but from exposure and lack of rest after our long, tedious and burdensome march. The rain had soaked us through and through until not a dry stitch remained untouched. The mud was everywhere, almost all the rifles were clogged up with it and rendered useless. My fighting partner had lost his in the mud the previous night when the parapet of mud and filth, for

there were no wall retainers, gave way and pinioned him. He had cried to me for assistance and luckily for me it saved my life for my sleep was the sweet sleep of death. Having fallen into a sort of coma or sleep my dream visions were of kith and kin. All my relations were seated around a large open fireplace in a spacious dining room in the centre of which was a table spread with all that humanity desires. We felt in the acme of comfort, the warmth of the fire could be felt, in fact, all was so realistic. But! In the midst of it all came this yell from my fighting partner—he was killed afterwards at Vimy. I was dazed and my senses came back to me slowly but painfully on realization of my predicament—and his! On making a movement the water around my waist made itself felt by its coldness, as also did a stream down my back. However, realizing my chum's predicament and remembering reading of Capt. Scott, Lieut. Oates and the other heroic members of his party in the fateful South Polar expedition, it gave me courage. There was not a spade to be found for miles so it became necessary for us to use our hands. At first he resented my suggestion on the ground that he had not been accustomed to such misuse of his digits, being a watchmaker by trade. After working for many hours, we succeeded in throwing back most of the clay, but in our eagerness we had covered up the loophole and were now robbed of our only viewpoint, and as it was early dawn the enemy would lie on the watch. However, it had to be cleared and quickly, too, and it meant climbing on the parapet in full view of the enemy. My partner said, "Don't attempt it, one life here is worth a dozen dead ones," but on mounting the parapet and working hard, for excitement lent me the power, the loophole was cleared and made workable, but the enemy had discovered me and two bullets narrowly missed my right leg. After a diligent search in the mud, my fighting partner discovered his missing rifle,

and after giving it a bath in a pool of water it was outwardly presentable but unfortunately not fully workable. Just to show our friends across the way there was still some form of animation in our trench, Pte. Roche (he was killed soon after) and self kept up a steady fire all day, the only rifles working. The sun attempted to smile on us, but a volley from the French 75's sent him back only to supply us later on with the tears of Jupiter Pluvius, our vade mecum. The enemy about 10 a.m. introduced himself by sending over some new fangled heavy twelve-inch bore shells which, as the main shell passed over us, would explode a shrapnel, then pass on to a second line of defence trenches—have no recollection of any though!—and explode one there, while the main or mother shell proceeded onwards and to earth, causing another explosion by percussion. This cannonading kept up all day. Fortunately the first ones burst in the distance, but later got our range and dropped in the trenches—more added misery and agony! By now 'twas awful and the growing dusk made a weird scene. Wounded men patched themselves up as best they could, for little assistance could be given by others, they being helpless themselves. Word was sent back that relief was imperative and that night we were relieved by an Imperial regiment.

The task of relief work was not by any means light as those performing this arduous task had to bring out the sick, wounded, and later, the dead; the last were buried in the first Canadian graveyard in France—Dickebusch, near Ypres. Some bodies were later transferred to Voozmezele where there is the "Princess Pats" Regimental Graveyard.

And so ends a true—ah! very true! narrative of the Princess Pat's first engagement in the great war of 1914-18.

WALTER M. L. DRAYCOT,
ex-Princess Patricia's Canadian
Light Infantry.

Note: Walter Draycot, a founding member of the Vancouver Branch. Resided in Lynn Valley, North Vancouver. Lived to 103. Died 1985.





READ WHAT OTHERS SAY

VICTORIA BRANCH

By Don Worsfold

The Victoria Branch has been active in the 1990/91 season with the added strength of our Lady Associates.

We met as always, on the last Friday of the month, at 2000 hours in the WO's and Sgt's Mess, south wing, of Workpoint Barracks, 3 PPCLI.

In addition to our annual Dinner on May 4th, we have a Picnic in July and a Christmas Bingo in December. The latter two events are combined PPCLI Association and Unit 27 K.V.A. and help raise funds.

Our Jan 91 meeting was enhanced with the unveiling of our Regimental Association Colours and Canadian Flag on crossed staffs with an Oak base with Regimental Cap Badge Plaque. These Colours were constructed with the kind assistance of Majors Stan Willow and Paul Hale, and the Pioneer Platoon of 3 PPCLI. These Colours will be carried on all future parades.

Our Feb 91 meeting was brief, due to the fact that we were invited to a display, in the DeLalanne Building of Workpoint Barracks, of the modern weapons and equipment of an Infantry Company. Thanks to our L/O Major Paul Hale and the volunteers of "A" Company, 3 PPCLI. We were very impressed.

The Mar 91 meeting will include an information briefing by member Cliff Ludtke, on Survivors benefits through the Canadian Legion. Also other services for widows of deceased Veterans, so we try to add a little bit of interest to each meeting for all members.

I am personally looking forward to attending the Annual General Meeting in Regina this coming May 31st and June 1st and 2nd. Winnipeg on June 26th is another destination for which many of us plan to be present. The Second Battalion's celebration of new Colours and the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Kapyong should prove to be a very good chance for many of us to get together.

I would like to invite anyone who plans on visiting the Victoria Area in the near future to feel free to call on me at area code (604) 384-5894 and we'll put you in touch with the members of this Branch, who number at present approximately 100 strong.

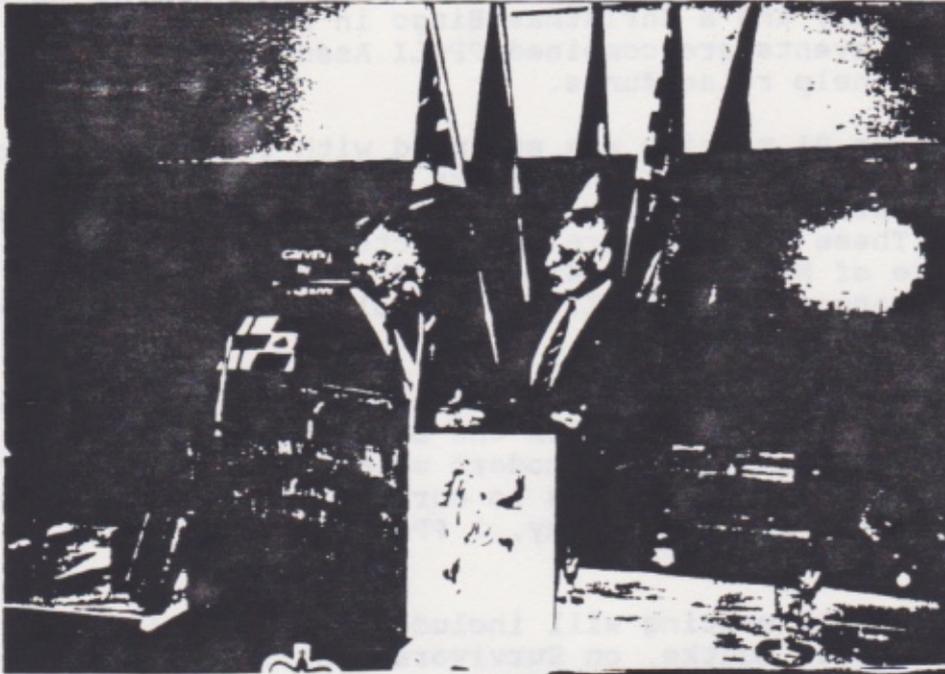
READ WHAT
OTHERS SAY

VANCOUVER BRANCH

By D. Parr-Pearson

The Vancouver Branch will again host their Annual Dinner (our 46th) at the WO's and Sgt's Mess, Jericho, on March 16th, 1991. Last year, 65 members turned out and, perhaps this year, with Chuck Davis, well-known Vancouver Province writer, as guest speaker, and possibly an appearance by the Honourable Mary Collins, Associate Minister of Defence, we may see an increase on this occasion. Our next function will be a Barbecue Sunday, June 2, 1991, at the Richmond home of Don (Sam) and Jenny Urquhart. Any members in the vicinity on vacation would be more than welcome.

The Branch mourns the loss of W. (Wes) Jantzen, a senior member, who passed away in January 1991. He will be missed.



Jim Shaw receiving the PPCLI Award of Merit from Larry Harrington, National President, PPCLI Association, for his carving (see photo below which is now in the Regimental Museum.



OKANAGAN/THOMPSON BRANCH

By Tom Tyson

October, 20th 1991 will be another day to remember, my wife and I had the pleasure to attending the "Dedication of the Memorial Hall of Honour" by the Colonel-in-Chief, "Lady Patricia". Congratulations to Rod Middleton, the Project Director and Calgary Branch for a job well done.

While there I had the pleasure of presenting "Lady Patricia" with pictures of her visit to the Okanagan/Thompson Branch on May 24th and 25th, 1990 to go into the album the Branch has presented to her at that time.

In October, 1990, George and Jean Cook enjoyed immensely a trip to Korea under the auspices of the KVA. George was with Pioneer Platoon, 2nd Bn PPCLI at Kapyong and is now retired in Kelowna.

Our first event of the year was a Luncheon Meeting held at the Royal Knight Restaurant on January 26th, 1991. Where plans of our coming events are as such, to have a Luncheon Meeting each month, the next being 23rd February, at these two functions approximately twenty people at each.

The Regimental Birthday will be held on March, 17th with a Luncheon at the Royal Knight Restaurant at 1200 noon.

Our 75th Memorial Improvement Programme is rather ambitious for 1991. Fundraising and related plans are well in hand to replace the temporary entrance archway with one of ornamental wrought iron. The overhead span will particularly enunciate the walkway leading to the Memorial as Patricia Way. Funds permitting, bench-sitting areas may be installed as well.

The Kapyong Day format envisages a brief service at our Memorial that will include a reading of the names of the Patricias that paid the supreme sacrifice during that action, and reading of the Presidential Unit Citation by a Kapyong veteran Branch member. A Luncheon will follow at the Royal Knight Restaurant. The service will be at 1100 hours.

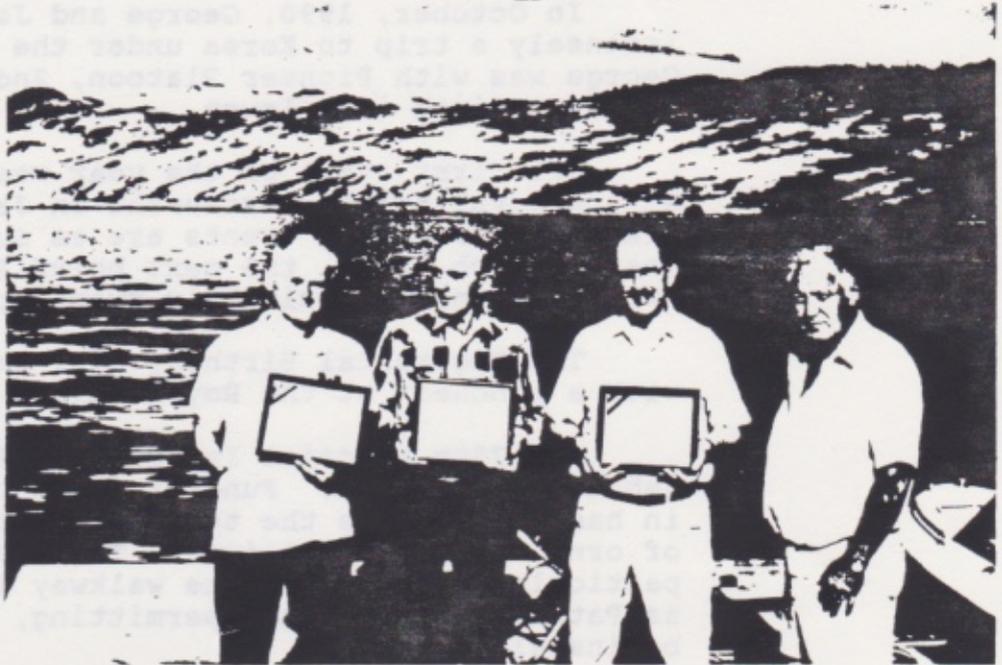
President Tom Tyson will lead four Branch members and their wives on a pilgrimage to the Memorial Hall of Honour in Calgary. This visitation will be tied in with attendance of the Annual General Meeting in Regina.

Later in June, some members will travel to Winnipeg, for the 2nd Battalion's New Colours, returning to Vernon, for the Okanagan/Thompson Branch Eighth Annual General Meeting and Dinner on the 30th of June, 1991 at the Vernon Military Camp, Officers' Mess at 1530 hours.

Branch membership stands at twenty-nine regulars and eleven associates, there are only four who have not paid their dues for 1991 and we have only two who are not rejoining the Branch.

We have a few members under the weather at this time and hope all will be back on their feet real soon. Pat Casement, Bill Davis, Grant Whyte, Don McDonell and Henery LeClair is now recouping at home after his operation for cancer. Best to all.

In 1990 the Branch honoured three members for their outstanding work in the Branch.



President Tom Tyson presented Certificates of Appreciation to Jerry Richard, Bob Casement, Bill Davis.

CALGARY BRANCH

By J. Hodge

Over 100 members and their guests attended the Fall Ball in the Home Station Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess on 3 November. Good company, good food and good music (by D.J. Wayne Delroy) assured a good time for all. Special thanks to Kay Zoboski for the excellent arrangements. Our next social function will be the Spring Fling on 4 May - join us if you're in the neighborhood.

The security imposed at CFB Calgary during the Gulf War prevented us from holding our January and February meetings in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess for the first time in more than 29 years. Our membership cards were finally reorganized for access to the Base on the day the War ended.

One of the terms used extensively during the Gulf War was "collateral damage". Jim Cowling, in a letter to the Calgary Herald, put the term in perspective: "I am a retired professional soldier and served in Korea 1950 and 1951.

In any war civilians will be killed. No bomb, artillery or bullet has printed on it "for military personnel or vehicles only." For instance, look how Germany bombed England and killed thousands of innocent civilians at the same time the Allies bombed Germany and killed thousands of Germans.

In Korea in different places there were civilians killed and when I was in Seoul it was just about flattened. I don't know how many civilians were killed there alone. How many Afghan civilians were killed by the Soviets?

Also there are those servicemen on either side who got killed by their own fire as in Kuwait."

We were saddened by the sudden and untimely death of Bob Vickers on 25 February 1991, at the age of 50 years old. Bob served for 20 years with the Queen's Own Regiment of Calgary and the PPCLI. His post-retirement life was devoted to the service of his Native People and at the time of his death he was President of the Calgary Native Friendship Club.

SASKATCHEWAN BRANCH

By Lloyd Jones

We, like everyone else at this time of year look forward to spring and warmer days. It has been a very quiet winter with little in the way of excitement. We, in this branch are certainly looking forward to our Branch get together weekend on 23-24 March with all of the fun and enjoyment we normally experience with old and new friends.

On the weekend of May 31 through June 2 will be an event of great expectation for this Branch with the holding of the A.G.M. for the Association here in Regina. We all look forward to this event and certainly hope that many from throughout the nation will come and experience some Saskatchewan hospitality. All the details and reservation forms will be enclosed for your indication and needs. We certainly plan to do our best to ensure a pleasant time for all.

On the evening of February 15 it was my pleasure to represent this Branch at the presentation of the Branch Charter to the Korean Veterans Association. It was a pleasure to talk and meet with their National President and our good friend Sam Urquhart, CD who with local President Gerry Uphall. Representative of the Korean Government and many other dignitaries made for a most enjoyable and pleasant evening. We in this branch certainly wish good things for the new Branch of the Association.

We are continually on the lookout for new members to keep and maintain our high level of membership.

Retired Colonel Keith Macgregor has moved to Saskatoon and has undertaken to be the Saskatchewan Secretary for the Last Post and we in this Branch certainly say welcome.

Looking forward to our upcoming events and hoping that you will be attending one or the other.

MANITOBA AND N.W. ONTARIO BRANCH

By Norman L. McCowan

Recently our Secretary asked me to write a couple of paragraphs for our Branch Newsletter re our Regimental Colours (first replica) that were laid up at All Saints Church in Winnipeg. When he read that although they were laid up in 1934, it was not until March 17th, 1946 that our Ladies Auxiliary placed a suitable plaque in the Church stating the date the Colours were laid up. His first question was "Did we have a Ladies Auxiliary?"

This reminded me of our National Meeting in Edmonton where the importance of wives was expressed, but I could not remember any write up on Ladies Auxiliary. Therefore, I decided there should be something written for our National Newsletter - here it is.

During World War II we had active auxiliaries in Winnipeg and their branches at Esquimalt, Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary. Although not a branch, some Toronto ladies did contribute to the cause.

Although I do not have the records, Vancouver Branch had 30 active members. For the other branches, it is interesting to list their work from 1940 to 1945 inclusive:

Calgary Branch:

Money raised	- \$2,002.67
Cigarettes sent overseas	- 292,000
Knitted articles	- 621

Plus many small items too numerous to mention, such as handkerchiefs, candy, soap, toothpaste, razor blades, Xmas cake, gum, tooth brushes, Oxo shaving cream, etc.

Edmonton Branch

Money raised	- \$1,494.06
Cigarettes sent overseas	- 67,000
Knitted articles	- 635

Plus donations to many charities including Red Cross, Poppy Fund and "Jenny Morris Fund".

Esquimalt Branch

Money raised - \$11,373.97
Cigarettes sent overseas - 509,000
Knitted articles - 11,634

In addition, 799 jerkins, 2855 handkerchiefs, plus large quantities of tea, coffee, Postum, powdered milk, cheese, candy, dried prunes, apricots and raisins, life savers, gum, chocolate bars, soap, candles, razor blades, shaving cream, tooth paste, tooth brushes, lighters and soup.

Winnipeg Branch:

Money raised - \$13,016.05
Cigarettes sent overseas - 757,500
Knitted articles - 24,873

In addition, 1000 jerkins and each year 1000 Xmas parcels, plus all the small items mentioned in the Esquimalt Branch report. Donations were made to United Services Centre, Red Cross, etc. They made 8400 hospital visits and each year they held a Christmas Party for the children of the Regiment.

Only wives of Patricias could hold office, but they had some outside help. In January 1946 the Winnipeg Branch presented life memberships to 40 of those volunteers. The last war time President was Myra G. Stirling (Mrs. Wm. Sn). Her Treasurer was Mrs. Connie Coyne. I know these two are still around as I see Mrs. Coyne quite frequently and Mrs. Stirling attended our 75th in Calgary.

This is my salute to the Auxiliary Members and their wonderful work.

SOUTH WEST ONTARIO BRANCH

Fellow Patricias:

We open this newsletter with much sadness, to inform our members and ex-members of the death of our much loved and hard working secretary, Mary Kelter, on October 2, 1990, also the passing of Helen Maginn in March, 1990 who was very dedicated too. We will all miss them.

Remember

Life gets shorter with each passing day
As we drift along our way.
Please take a moment just to think
Of a comrade who has crossed the brink
For some time on this long highway
We'll meet again and reminisce our bygone days.
In comradeship

Approximately twenty-eight people attended our annual barbecue held in Lyle and Elaine Gillespie's home in Peterborough. A good time was had by all but we missed so many smiling faces. We hope in the future this will be corrected. It was decided that this event would take place on the third weekend of August in Peterborough from now on. In future may we please have more support in our branch activities.

Our Past President, Ted Sutherland, had delicate surgery during the summer and brought his two-holed cushion to the barbecue and is now getting back on track.

Also our Sgt-At-Arms Hub (Santa Claus) Lalonde made the big step into marriage this past summer.

At this time the President would like to inform everyone that Hub Lalonde has been appointed as interim Vice President, also Anne Stringer acting secretary.

Our annual Birthday meeting was held on March 16, 1991 at the Strata Motel, Hamilton. The dinner and dance were at the Pinetree Restaurant on Centennial Parkway (easy walking distance from the Strata Motel). The guest speaker was Captain Rudy Raidt from Calgary.

I would like to notify you at this time that all dues are to be in Calgary by January 31, 1991 so they should be forwarded to Anne Stringer soonest. Please send these in the addressed envelope including both your dues cheque and the reservation for the Annual Meeting in March if you wish. Dues are \$20.00 per year. We do encourage wives to join our branch.

TORONTO BRANCH

By James Reid

Well here we are into our 74th year and still going, not strong, but still carrying on in fine Patricia form. 1990 was a quiet year for our group, March 17th was celebrated in traditional fashion with a buffet lunch at the Toronto Scottish Officers' Mess, Fort York Armouries. This is always a great day for us, we gathered with the Patricias of the Regular Force serving in the Toronto area. Major-General R.I. Stewart dropped in to have lunch with us and to say hello. The Frezenburg Dinner, held at the Primrose Hotel this year and once again we had a small turn-out, a few of our members were away to the Netherlands attending the celebrations, which are held about the same time as our own.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the Annual General Meeting in Winnipeg, the first one I have ever been able to fit into my plans. I was very surprised to see such a large gathering of Association members. I met several from "A" Company that I had not seen for over 45 years or more, they had not changed a bit! Two others I enjoyed meeting were Lloyd Clemens and Ed Slater, both related to our family.

I like the idea of the exchange of Newsletters, I received two so far, one from Winnipeg and the other from Regina, it gives one a chance to read about what the other Branches are doing, and how they are operating.

At the first of this article I mentioned that our Association had been going for 74 years. Of interest, I located an old notice telling of a meeting that took place in 1966 that reads: "The Toronto Branch was formed in 1917 while the Regiment was still overseas." In the early days it was called the PPCLI Service Association and the dues were \$1.00, the name stayed that way until all the different groups formed together in 1947. The Ottawa group was called the Patricia Club.



"Any complaints, old man?"

ATLANTIC BRANCH

The PPCLI Association, Atlantic Branch held a reunion for past and present PPCLI members at Camp Aldershot, Nova Scotia on the 5, 6 and 7 Oct 1990. This reunion was well attended and the Guest speaker for the mess dinner was Gen Wilson-Smith Ex Commanding Officer of 1 PPCLI.

Some of the past members of the Regiment who made this weekend a success were, Mr. Bill Schofield, Mr. Arnold Burbridge, and Mr. Vern Wentzell as well as Mr. Mike Ricketts and Mr. John McIssac.



Picture of Gen Wilson-Smith at the Kentville Legion during a Church service.



Church Parade March Past during services in Kentville, Nova Scotia 7 Oct 90, 1100 hrs.



Mess Dinner in Camp Aldershot 6 Oct 90 who could the individual with the big smile be.



Cocktail Hour - Sat 6 Oct 90.

CROSSING OF THE IJssel RIVER

By Sydney Frost, JR, QC

A donation of \$263.00 has been made in favour of the PPCLI. The story behind this donation is rather unique and the goodwill it represents is out of all proportion to the amount of the gift. Briefly, the story is that during my Pilgrimage to Holland last May 1990, the Burgemeesters of Voorst and Gorssel organized a Re-Enactment of the Crossing of the Ijssel River which the Patricias had assaulted on April 11th, 1945. I had the honour of commanding "D" Company in that attack and the subsequent capture of the village of Wilp.

Many years later, the 48th Highlanders claimed they had done the job, and the Burgemeesters of the municipalities involved gave them a great reception and named a street in Wilp after their Commanding Officer, LCol Don Mackenzie, whom the 48th claimed was killed there. In fact, the 48th Highlanders never assaulted across the Ijssel River and their C.O. was killed about a mile north of Wilp. They were merely in a follow-up role and were ferried across the river on April 12th, after my Company had helped to beat off a German counter-attack on Wilp.

I was not aware of this chicanery by the 48th until May 1985, when I participated in a Pilgrimage to Holland. When the Burgemeesters of the municipalities on either side of the river heard the true story they were very apologetic for not giving the PPCLI their due, and promised to make amends in 1990. This they did to the Queen's taste!

Last May 1990, Dutch engineers erected a pontoon bridge at the site where my Company had crossed in 1945. I was loaded into a jeep and driven across the bridge at the head of a guard of honour from the RCR, the pipes and drums of the RCR and the Military Band of the R22ndR. The honour of the Patricias had been redeemed!

The Re-Enactment was witnessed by thousands of people and the event was recorded by a corps of photographers, (including aerial photos), TV, radio and the press. All the Dutch newspapers reported the story on the front page.

Finally, I come to the \$263.00 donation! One of the Dutch citizens who had helped in the planning of the Pilgrimage, a Mr. Burgers, was so moved by the significance of the occasion that, on the spur of the moment, he arranged for 1000 aerial photos of the Re-Enactment of the river crossing to be hurriedly printed and distributed to the Veterans and Dutch spectators without charge. He also conceived the idea of having 200 prints made of me crossing the river in a jeep and selling them for 5 guilders each,

the proceeds to go to the PPCLI. The friendship, respect and kindness of the Dutch citizens for our Veterans and indeed for our country is quite incredible.



THE BATTLE OF LEONFORTE

By E.A. (Tommy) Thompson

My service as a Patricia only covers the period 26th June 1940 to 13th January 1944. The theatre of my operations with the Regiment being that of the Sicilian and Italian campaigns. Of all the engagements I was involved in while a member of the Patricia's the battle of Leonforte stands out as the most significant battle to commemorate.

This battle was the first Major offensive action undertaken after the landings that employed the whole of the Regiment. After advancing some 65 miles against relevantly light opposition (Italian and German). This was the Regiments first real encounter against the principal enemy, the elite of the Wehrmacht, consisting of elements of the German forces, ie Panzer Corps, the Herman Goering Division and the 1st Parachute Division.

The outcome of this engagement testifies to the success of this battle. In less than 24 hours, the Regiment had successfully accomplished their task. Their prime objective was to attach the town, establish contact with the "Eddies" who were cut off and holed up somewhere in the town. Capture and secure the town, take the high ground, and to secure the left flank to establish the hinge for the swing towards Mount Etna.

At 0300 hours on the 22nd of July 1943 "C" company under the command of Captain R.C. (Ronnie) Coleman was moved forward to provide cover for the Sappers working to replace the bridge across the ravine. The Sappers were working under very heavy enemy fire. A platoon was sent forward to offer what ever assistance they could. When the platoon leader asked where he could be of the best assistance, he received a rather humorous reply: "Oh! We're doing quite nicely thank you. You see we are non-combatants". The main body of C Company arrived at 0230 hours and the bridge was ready. The main assault had been scheduled to go in at 0645 hours, but due to the heavy shelling this was delayed and didn't get underway until 0900 hours, with Captain McLean directing the vehicles and troops across the bridge with one platoon from C Company riding on the tanks and the gun carriages of the anti-tank guns. The remainder of the company under the command of Lieutenant McDougall followed on foot.

The speed and boldness of the assault paid off. In the initial drive up into the town, only one casualty was recorded. By noon C Company had made contact with HQ Company of the "Eddies" (it is

noteworthy here to reflect that this fine Regiment, would in later years become the 4th Battalion of the PPCLI). C Company carried on to secure the northern section of the town, and occupied the railway station, and were immediately engaged in repelling repeated counter attacks. By 1300 A Company under the command of Major Sutherland had made contact with the forward elements of C Company. B Company under the command of Captain Brian, forced the assault up the main street, with two platoons dispatched to work around the eastern flank of the German positions. D Company under the command of Major A.E.T. Paquet was to remain in reserve during the assault and were later to take on the task of dealing with the pockets of snipers that remained in the town.

When all three companies A, B, and C converged at the top of the town, the company commanders held a quick short conference. It was agreed, if they were to complete their assignment, they would have to do it without the support of tanks, as they were pinned under cover by self-propelled guns and could not break their cover. The decision was made. A Company under Major Sutherland would attack the high ground. Captain Coleman's C Company would have the task of the holding role from the positions they had already established. After the high ground was secure and firmly in our hands B Company would move forward and establish contact with units of the 1st Brigade on the extreme right flank.

A Company swept the hill with covering fire from our Mortar Platoon and Machine Gun sections. Once the hill was firmly in our hands, B Company moved forward to their prearranged positions on the right flank.

With high ground lost, the enemy began to withdraw. At last light on that day the 26th of July 1943 with guns manhandled into position to cover the seized ground, the fighting died away. The Patricia's first test against the principle enemy had gone well. The Officers and Men had met the challenge with outstanding determination and courage.

The cost of this encounter was 21 killed and 40 wounded; the official Canadian history of this battle states "Among the many deeds of bravery performed that day in and about this hard fought town, altogether 21 awards were made for the Leonforte engagement.

We at present celebrate the Battle of Frezenburg, and some celebrate the Battle of Kapyong. There is a great deal of similarity between these engagements. They were decisively great outstanding

defensive battles. It is interesting to reflect, Frezenburg involved the Originals that formed the Regiment in 1914. The Battle at Kapyong involved the Originals that formed the 2nd Battalion in 1950-51.

The Battle of Leonforte involved the Originals that had brought the Regiment up to strength in 1939-40. This Battle of Leonforte was a major offensive battle fought by all elements of the battalion. Sadly to say this battle was the start of the decline and loss of a great number of our great Patricia Family members. One's that had served between the two wars, and the one's that had joined in the early stages of the war in 1939-40. All who had trained so hard and diligently for the past 3 years to meet this task. This action was a prime example of the quality of our training, the leadership and the courage displayed by all ranks.

As stated earlier, this battle was a major offensive battle, comprising of the Originals of the 1939-40 era and those that had served between the two wars. If we decide to select a specific WW II battle to honour, I would like to see us select an offensive action.

* **Note:** This account of the Battle of Leonforte was submitted by Tommy Thompson, Vancouver Branch in support of the Branch submission for selection of a WW II Commemorative Day. It is considered a fair description of the battle by one who participated.



• And how long have you been bringing your laundry here? •



• You think they're bad, eh? Nothing like the flies in Sicily. They came in escorted by Messerschmidts. •

REGIMENTAL MUSEUM UPDATE

Much has been said about the new facility - is it open or isn't it. Well, it is not! While Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, ceremoniously opened the Museum of the Regiments at 1125 A.M., 30 June 1990, little, if anything has happened since. The Society (Calgary Military Museum Society) still requires to raise 1.5 million dollars in order to complete all museum exhibits in the four Regimental areas and the coffee/gift shop. Fund raising for this phase of development is under way now. We are all optimistic and wish the Society good luck. If someone out there has 650 thousand dollars for the Regiment's exhibit area, your donation would indeed be welcome. It should be noted that of the \$5.9 million raised to date, 99% has gone directly to "bricks and mortar" costs.

The Museum has hosted a number of functions and tours and provides presentations to a variety of groups; as the institution has become better known, the demand for its resources has increased proportionately. It bears repeating that the Museum is now at a critical juncture of its development. While the fund raising Committee is exploring every possible avenue, and to be quite frank, the corporate and private sector has dried up, consequently we are depending on our "friends" as usual.

In conclusion, we are optimistic that the Regimental exhibit can be completed by 1992. As of this date of writing two museums are being contracted and should be completed within six months. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but we are only halfway there.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Dear fellow Patricias,

During our 75th Anniversary celebrations, the Regimental Archives staff handed our forms for you to fill in regarding your time in the Regiment. Very few of these ever came back. At present time we can give personnel accounts of WW II. But when children and grandchildren come in and ask, "What did my father or grandfather do in WW II, or Korea?", all we can do is give them the Regimental History book. Not a very personal account of what happened. Not the humorous stories nor what you saw. Not only is this important to your family today but for their future, the Regiment's future and for the future of Canada. PLEASE don't let this history be lost, sit down now and make our history complete. What we are missing is as follows:

- Personal accounts of what you saw;
- Personal letters;
- Diaries;
- Photos;
- Memorabilia; and
- Anything to do with your time in the Regiment.

Please send to:

PPCLI Regimental Museum and Archives
4520 Crowchild Trail S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T3E 1T8

In Memoriam

Alexanderson, Kenneth	Korea		16 Sep 90	Moose Jaw, Sask
Bowen, Virgil A	WWII	Pte	04 Oct 90	Edmonton, Alta
Carnegie, Thomas			20 Jul 90	Glaslyn, Sask
Campbell, Dougall W.	WWII	Pte	31 Jul 89	Chetwynd, BC
Campbell, William J.	WWII	Sgt	28 Jul 89	Calgary, Alta
Cain, Everett W.	Korea	Pte	01 May 89	Springhill, NS
Clowater, Reginald C.	Korea		11 Dec 90	St. John, NB
Crundall, Fred A.	WWII	NO2	19 Mar 90	Winnipeg, Man
Dodds, James	Korea	Pte	30 Jul 89	Cambridge, Ont
Donnelly, F.P.	Korea		10 Aug 89	Colborne, Ont
Frank, Robert J.	WWII		09 Feb 90	Vavenby, BC
Fines, George A.	WWII	Pte	11 Jan 90	Winnipeg, Man
Ferguson, Sidney R.			05 Mar 90	Kamloops, BC
Hobeth, Kenneth	WWII		18 Nov 89	Winnipeg, Man
Hersack, Thomas M.	WWII	Sgt	27 Sep 89	Brandon, Man
Holland, Thomas	WWII		20 Dec 90	Manitoba
Horek, James	Korea	Pte	10 Sep 90	Calgary, Alta
Jackson, Jeremy L.	WWII		15 Nov 90	Banning, Ca
Jeuning, Clifford J.	WWII, Korea	Pte	24 Aug 90	Vancouver, BC
Krassman, Alex J.	RF	Pte	Jul 90	Medicine Hat, Alt
Leonard, R.J.	WWII		27 Jul 90	Winnipeg, Man
Lickers, Robert S.	RF	Cpl	25 Feb 91	Calgary, Alta
Mann, George H.	WWII		07 Jan 91	Winnipeg, Man
Martindale, Lloyd C.	WWII		24 Nov 90	Winnipeg, Man
Matthews, Henry	WWII, RF	Sgt	07 Sep 89	Indian Head, Sask
Mazeroll, Joseph A.	WWII, Korea, RF		16 Aug 89	Chatham, NB
McRae, Frank M.	WWII	Sgt	23 Jun 89	Port Moody, BC
Mace, Reginald A.	WWII	Pte	18 Jul 90	Calgary, Alta
Milum, Gordon C.	WWII	Sgt	24 Jul 90	Golden, BC
Martin, Bennett	Korea	Pte	16 Aug 90	Nipigon, Ont
Morrison, Francis J.	WWII	Pte	04 Oct 90	Sault St. Marie,
Nystrom, Helgi	WWII		08 Jul 90	Ingaceba, Ont
Pages, Marcel R.	WWII		07 Jan 91	Winnipeg, Man
Palframan, Harry	WWII		20 Dec 90	Winnipeg, Man
Pretzer, Daniel W.	WWII		11 Jan 90	Moose Jaw, Sask
Pearson, Donald			16 Dec 89	Maple Ridge, BC
Prince, Robert D.	WWII	Maj	02 Aug 89	Thoruold, Ont
Paxton, Norman J.	WWII	Pte	18 Aug 90	Port Alberni, BC
Ralko, Terrance	WWII		05 Jan 91	Winnipeg, Man
Rowley, Ronald C.	RF	Pte	Nov 89	Whiterock, BC
Robertson, Delmer R.	RF	Cpl	11 Oct 89	Morinville, Alta
Rankin, Murray B.	WWII, RF		02 Jul 89	Dryden, Ont
Russell, Osmond	Korea	Pte	21 Jul 90	Pointe Verte, NB
Sanson, Walter S.	WWII		26 Feb 91	Winnipeg, Man
Smith, Robert S.	WWII, Korea		03 Jan 90	Poplar Point, NB
Schappert, Robert J.	WWII	Pte	06 Oct 89	Laugensburg, Sask
Squires, Russell W.	Korea	Pte	09 Aug 89	Stephenville, Nfl
Sankow, Martin E.	Korea	Pte	Sep 90	Port Moody, BC
Schuh, Richard W.	RF		22 Aug 90	Medicine Hat, Alt
Smilie, H.	Korea	Cpl	16 Jul 90	Flin Flon, Man
Swidinsky, Roman	WWII		15 Aug 90	Winnipeg, Man
Troche, Steven T.	WWII	Pte	22 Aug 90	Winnipeg, Man
Vaughan, Jimmy W.	WWI		17 Jan 90	Winnipeg, Man
Whittaker, Robert D.	Korea	Lt	14 Jul 90	Fredericton, NB
Wilson, Harold	Korea		15 Feb 90	Winnipeg, Man
White, William K.	WWII, Korea, RF	Cpl	07 Apr 90	Perth, Ont