

May – August, 2019

The Gault Press

*The Official
Newsletter of The
PPCLI Museum &
Archives*

Anything But Dodgers

*PPCLI & the
Italian Campaign,
SWW*

DON'T CALL 'EM DODGERS!

*Lady Nancy Astor and
the misnomer of the
decade*

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

*What Canadians
experienced in the
Mediterranean*

BRINGING THEM HOME

*Symbolizing over
60,000 souls, the
Eternal Flame comes to
TMM*

Vol. 2, No. 2



The Gault Press is produced by The PPCLI Museum & Archives, located at The Military Museums in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. If you are looking to find out more about PPCLI and its history, please don't hesitate to contact us directly at

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Cover: PPCLI in Rome on the first anniversary of D-Day, 6 June 1945: Sgt. M. Hanna, Sgt. Ben Kelter, RSM W.M. Lambert, CSME Rainbird.

PPCLI Archives: P70(71)-4

Theme:
Anything But
Dodgers: PPCLI
& the Italian
Campaign,
SWW



**DON'T CALL 'EM
DODGERS!**
 LADY NANCY ASTOR
 AND THE MISNOMER OF
 THE DECADE



THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN
 WHAT CANADIANS
 EXPERIENCED ONCE THEY
 ARRIVED IN ITALY



BRINGING THEM HOME
 SYMBOLIZING OVER 60,000
 SOULS, THE ETERNAL FLAME,
 COMES TO TMM

THE ALLIED VIEWPOINTS

In the meantime, big events were shaping. The "Second Front" was to be opened by the Western Allies in 1944 by the allied invasion of GERMAN occupied FRANCE. This all-out effort and a large scale offensive by the Soviets were to be the might blows which would beat the German Armies to their knees. Under such circumstances, the Allied effort in was bound to assume the guise of a strategic detachment in order to economize in Military resources needed prior to and subsequent to the invasion.

Now the purpose of a detachment is to cause a Military threat which will contain forces of the enemy (superior forces if possible) and thereby weaken him where the maximum blows are to be struck. In ITALY it could prevent enemy withdrawal of battle experienced Divisions from ITALY to NORTH-WEST EUROPE or to the RUSSIAN front. To achieve this purpose the Allied Forces would require to maintain a vigorous defensive throughout the winter months and to mount a large scale offensive operations as soon as the ground and weather became fit. MAY was the earliest when the latter could be undertaken. At the same time it was essential that ROME be captured as soon as possible because of its world-wide value in the realm of politics and propaganda.

Excerpt from "Situation in Italy Winter 1943 – 1944." *PPCLI Archives: 74-4-15*

Anything But Dodgers

On 6 June 1944, at the height of the Second World War, Allied forces launched a massive assault against the occupied coast of Normandy in what would become known as "D-Day". Celebrated as one of the turning points in the War, D-Day was an extensive collaborative effort between British, Commonwealth, American, and European countries against German occupation. All three services of the Canadian Forces participated in this action: Royal Canadian Navy ships and sailors supported the landing on the beaches, the Royal Canadian Air Force fought before and during the assault, and Infantry soldiers landed on Juno Beach and parachuted behind enemy lines on the day of battle.

Yet not all regiments were a part of this invasion. As a result, many Canadian soldiers fighting outside of the Northern European theatre were consequently nicknamed the “D-Day Dodgers.”

However, to label these soldiers as “dodgers” undermines the feats they achieved and sacrifices they made in their own theatres of war. The landing at Sicily during the Italy Campaign can be considered the Mediterranean’s D-Day; PPCLI and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (4PPCLI) fought at Ortona, PPCLI also involved in the breaking of the Hitler Line. Notably PPCLI’s combative stance in the Spring of 1944 prohibited the Germans from drawing on reinforcements from Italy to retaliate against the invasion of Normandy. Thus to overlook these significant contributions is to overlook a pivotal campaign of the War.

In this issue, *The Gault Press* discusses the Italian Campaign, including the origin of the term “D-Day Dodger”. It also gives an overview of the 105-year history of the Regiment in light of the anniversary of its founding this summer. Finally, museum news is highlighted, including a traveling exhibition of the “Eternal Flame” of Mons as well as completed and upcoming projects of the Museum & Archives.

Sincerely,
The Editor



Meet a Serving Soldier:

Corporal Andrew Mullett

Collections Manager

PPCLI Museum & Archives

TMM Podcasts is hosted by Greg Wilson, and is available on iTunes, Spotify, and themilitarymuseums.ca

San Fortunato ~ September 1944 ~



*Conflict: Second World War
Where: Italy*

Significance: 60 men seized a critical rail line and held their ground. By 21 September 1944, San Fortunato was in Canadian hands. PPCLI were the first battalion of the 1st Canadian Division to break out of the mountains into the Lombardy Plains, an Allied objective since the invasion of Italy.

The Italian Campaign

~ September 1943 – March 1945 ~

THE ALLIED VIEWPOINT

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Museum News

February 2019 marked the hundredth anniversary of three symbolic events for Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry: the presentation of the Wreath of Laurel on the 21st; the official announcement of Princess Patricia as Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment on the 22nd; and her wedding to Commander Alexander Ramsay on the 27th. In addition, January to March saw the new year settle in with new projects, donations, and exhibits at PPCLI Museum & Archives.

RADD 2019: On 19 January, more than 70 junior officers representing all three Battalions of PPCLI congregated at TMM to learn about their Regiment's honoured history. Their day included a detailed tour of the gallery led by Artefact Specialist James Morgan and General Manager Sergeant Nate Blackmore; weapons handling and cleaning, supervised by Rick Ostashower; and a tour of Collections & Archives, led by Collections Manager Corporal Andrew Mullett. Participants were given a quiz to complete throughout the day, as well as a survey regarding their experiences.

Centennial of Princess Patricia's Wedding: In honour of the centennial of Princess Patricia's wedding, the PPCLI Museum & Archives exhibited the wedding ensemble of this remarkable regimental figure from the end of February until 30 March 2019. The display was designed and curated by Collections Manager Corporal Andrew Mullett and Artefact Specialist James Morgan and was well-received. Photos were included in Vol. 2, No. 1 edition (January to April) of *The Gault Press* and a report about the artefact's preservation and importance was written by volunteer J. Neven-Pugh.

Changes to *The Gault Press*; Discontinuation of *The Marguerite*: *The Gault Press* entered its second year in print and has undergone format changes between No. 1 and No. 2 of its second volume. This format aims to better incorporate the rich resources available at the Museum & Archives and to be more visually engaging. The original children's version of the newsletter, *The Marguerite*, has been discontinued in order to focus on offering a single publication of the highest quality; for the same reason, *The Gault Press* has been reduced to three editions a year.

Museum News continued

Eternal Flame: On 19 April 2019, two lanterns lit by the eternal flame at Mons, Belgium, were on display at The Military Museums of Calgary. These lanterns, specially designed to protect a continuous flame, travelled from Mons to Canada, and prior to being lit were taken to multiple sites in the UK and Europe which were significant to Canadian and British forces in the Great War. The lamps are named Tommy (to represent the British) and Maple (to represent Canadians). The project was spearheaded by Christopher Shaw, Chairman and Heritage Consultant for Shorncliffe Trust in Kent, England. His Canadian partners in this project are Terry and Ed Plant of Canadian Educational Tour Planning (from Edmonton). “Maple” will remain in Edmonton, AB, Canada.

~ ~ ~

The following projects are either underway or slated for the near future for The PPCLI Museum & Archives:

D-Day Dodgers Event: The PPCLI Museum & Archives, in conjunction with the Calgary Italian community, Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadians) Museum, Army Museum of Alberta, KOCR, Calgary Highlanders Regimental Museum & Archives, and the Alberta Naval Museum of The Military Museums collective, presents the history of the “D-Day Dodgers” on 31 May 2019. Co-hosted with the Calgary Italian community, the evening event will present lectures, exhibits, artefact and historical weapons handling, and special gallery tours focusing on the Italian Campaign in the Second World War.

Medals Exhibit Restoration: Staff are working on revamping the Medals Exhibit within the PPCLI Gallery. This includes updating and replacing poor photographs, developing new storyboards to achieve better uniformity, and adding new medal recipients to the permanent display.



Ortona, Italy, December 1944 - a B Coy soldier being dug out from the rubble of a house blown in on a platoon commanded by Lt Bun Allen. Pte Halliday and Capt Roxborough pictured. Loyal Edmonton Regiment. *PPCLI Archives: P70(222)-1*

Don't Call 'Em Dodgers

By: J. Neven-Pugh

Political correctness is both a blessing and a curse. Applied conscientiously, it can help to foster more considerate reception of a subject or group; however, it is often taken to extremes, and these days the levels some expect the public to adhere to are arguably as infuriating as some of the terms and ideas political correctness attempts to address. Yet there is a benefit to being more “p.c.”; for one, it eliminates derogatory terms from everyday language, and helps to break down stigma; second, political correctness can safeguard speakers and subjects alike in that it encourages discretion and expanded thinking when forming an opinion. Such precautions would have been appreciated in 1944, when Lady

Astor, a Conservative MP of British Parliament, made the outlandish statement that all soldiers not involved in the landings at Normandy on 6 June were essentially “D-Day Dodgers”.

Lady Nancy Astor was born in Virginia and married an Englishman, becoming a member of Parliament in 1919 and retaining her position until 1945. Despite being the first woman to take a seat in English parliament, some may argue that she is better known for her vicious verbal exchanges with Sir Winston Churchill; for example, upon telling

Churchill that she would serve him poison if they were married, he unreservedly replied: “Madame, if you were my wife, I would drink it.” In 1944, she went beyond insulting the Prime Minister, going as far as to slander British, Commonwealth, and Canadian citizens, stating to the House of Commons that soldiers serving in Italy were “dodging D-Day”.

The labelling is rife in irony. Never mind the fact that Astor worked with soldiers in hospitals during both World Wars and knew of the physical and mental impact the warzone could have on combatants, her statement disregarded that this war was global in more than the nationalities of participating forces. Given that there were three major and several minor theatres of war stretching across nearly every continent concurrently during the Second World War, with Canadians stationed largely in the European and Mediterranean / Middle East / Africa theatres, her comment manages to be both blatantly inconsiderate and shockingly ignorant; for a single battle or invasion, no matter how successful or game-changing, does not an armistice make, which is what Lady Astor seemed to be implying with her focus upon the Allied invasion of Normandy.

Without the combined efforts of forces stationed in other theatres, such as the Mediterranean, and the support of the home front, the success of D-Day could not have been achieved. According to documents from PPCLI Archives, the 1st Canadian Division was deliberately withheld from the Normandy invasion so as



Leonforte display, 1943. PPCLI Museum Gallery




Battle damaged house, Italy, 1943. *PPCLI Archives: P70(169.7)-2*

to continue fighting in Italy, reducing available reinforcements that would have been called upon during and after the invasion. Without such opposition, Germany could have acquired more support for the Northern Theatre and had a stronger retaliation against the D-Day Allies.

That Lady Astor thought it appropriate to disregard the importance of this campaign and those fighting it is arguably an example of being politically *incorrect*. It is one thing to say that someone wasn't there due to circumstance; it is another to imply that they deliberately opted out of a difficult situation for an easier alternative. To say that someone "dodges" something is to suggest the latter case, and so the term, no matter how much time has passed, remains an insult.

Soldiers are known for their brashness and straightforward natures – not necessarily their penchant to skirt around an issue to save face. Nevertheless, lines are drawn when need-be, especially with regards to the memory and reputation of themselves and their comrades. How they express these lines vary, but examples abound of when anger was translated through humour, as seen in the response to Astor's labeling. "The Ballad of the D-Day Dodgers" was

supposedly written shortly after Astor's statement. First credited to Major Hamish Henderson and then Lance-Sergeant Harry Pynn, and available in several versions depending on which country is singing, the parody is both a sarcastic admonishment and sombre rebuttal to the impressions given by the term. At first encouraging the presumption that soldiers on the Italian campaign languished in the sun and relative safety of the Italian frontlines, it takes an abrupt turn into reality, the author reminding his audience of the sacrifices made by the so-called "dodgers", concluding with the request that the home front remember that they did their "little bit, though far away" from the Normandy campaign.

Regardless of your view on political correctness, it is safe to say that when negative impressions are made of a neutral group or subject, negative opinions begin to form until more facts can be made clear. You may say that PPCLI and others were not a part of the invasion of Normandy; you can even say they fought in the warmer climates of Italy, but at the end of it all, their courage, sacrifice, and contribution to the success of the Allies in the Second World War must be equally reviewed. You can call them brash, straightforward, and fighters, but don't call 'em dodgers! 

Get Involved With The PPCLI Museum & Archives Today!

Tours & Artefact Handling: Tuesday, 10:00 – 11:30

Have anything to share?

The PPCLI Museum & Archives is always interested in donations, loans, and oral histories from the Regiment's founding to the present day. This includes artefacts related to:

- The Great War
- The Cold War Era
- Latvia/Poland
- The Interwar Period
- Peacekeeping
- Domestic Operations
- The Second World War
- Afghanistan

At this time, we are keen to preserve artefacts from recent deployments, such as Afghanistan

Please contact the Collections Manager, Corporal Andrew Mullett, at ppcli.museum@gmail.com for details

Don't Miss These Events to Celebrate the 105th Anniversary of PPCLI's Founding!



Edmonton/St Albert:

**7 - 10 August 2019 ~ PPCLI Assoc. Annual General Meeting in St Albert
(information available at <http://www.ppcliassoc.ca>)**

8-10 August 2019 ~ Better 'Ole, Edmonton

**9 August 2019 ~ French Grey Golf Tournament (tickets available through
RHQ 780-973-4011 ext 5450)**

**9 August 2019 ~ 105th Gala (tickets available through RHQ 780-973-4011 ext
5450)**

Shilo:

10 Aug ~ Better 'Ole

10 Aug ~ Family Day

Details are available at www.ppcli.com and the Regiment's Facebook page



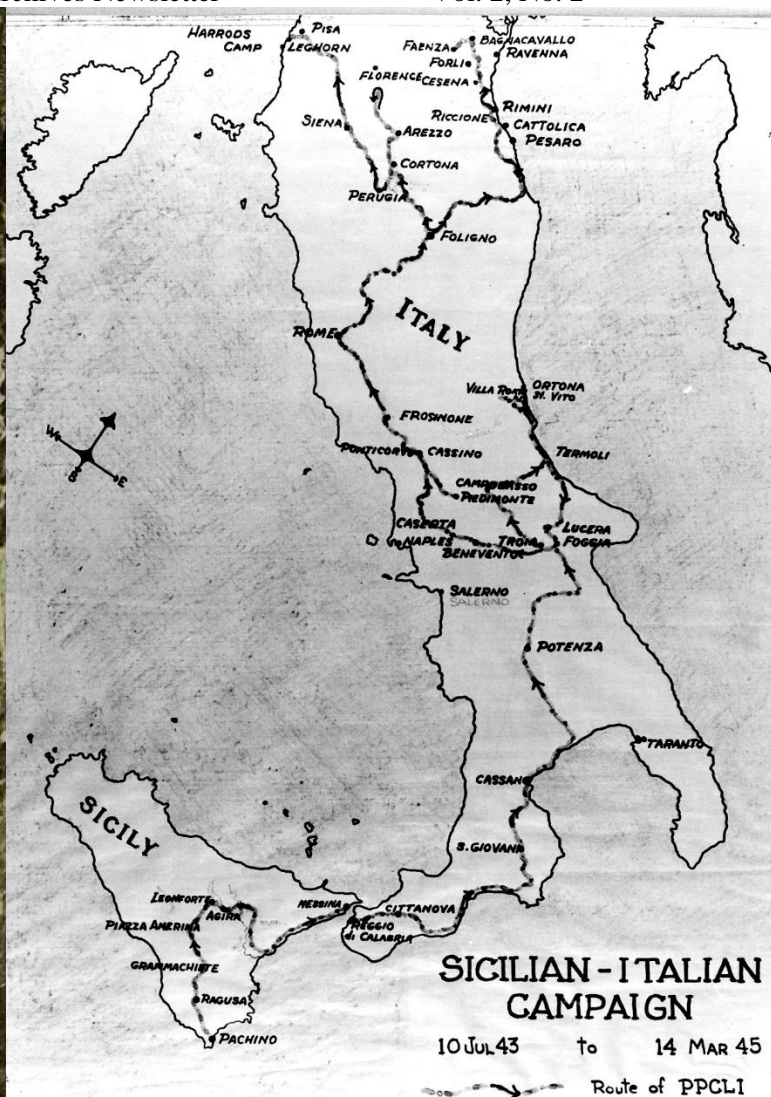
Collected anti-tank mines on beach in Sicily, Italy, 1943. *PPCLI Archives: P70(129)-1*

The Hitler Line

By: Dani Drefko

Canada's longest Second World War campaign was in Italy. More than 93,000 Canadians along with allies from Britain, France and the United States served in the nearly two years of fighting across Sicily and up the Italian peninsula, at a cost of almost 26,000 Canadian casualties.

Throughout the Italian campaign the Allies attempted to open the road to Rome and liberate the peninsula from the clutches of the Nazis. In an attempt to delay the Allied advance towards Rome, German forces had set up a series of fortified defensive lines, collectively called the Winter Line. The two most prominent lines were the Gustav Line, which was intended to be the strongest, and the Hitler Line, which lay 8 kilometers to the rear. The Winter Line was fortified with gun pits, concrete bunkers, turreted machine-gun emplacements,



“Pattern formed by Allied landing boats on the shores of Sicily, 1943,” photo by US Navy Photographer. *Sourced from Wikimedia.org*; Map of Sicilian-Italian campaign: 10 July 1943 to 14 March 1945. *PPCLI Archives: P70(68)-4*

barbed-wire and minefields. In May 1944, the Allies launched their assault on the Winter Line: throwing everything they had into breaking through the lines and pushing the Germans up and out of Italy.

On 11 May 1944 the first assault was launched, with an artillery concentration of 1,000 guns opening up at 2300 hours in an attempt to weaken the fortified Gustav Line. This line was not only fortified with man-made obstacles but also utilized the natural obstacle of the Gari River, which hindered the advance of both the Infantry and the accompanying tanks. Following the artillery bombardment the Infantry moved across the Gari River while bridgeheads were rapidly constructed for the tanks to cross. After four days of hard fighting, the Gustav Line was broken from Cassino to the Tyrrhenian Sea, and the Germans moved back to their second line of defence, the Adolf Hitler Line.

The Hitler Line crossed the valley some eight miles west of the Gari, immediately in front of the villages of Piedimonte, Aquino and Pontecorvo. Unlike the Gustav Line, which was strategically situated beyond the Gari River, the Hitler Line lacked the effective water-barrier and depended upon a formidable wall of concrete and steel fortifications to stop the Allied Armour and Infantry. Due to a confidence in the strength and impregnability of the Gustav Line, this secondary defensive line had been neglected once its main fortifications had been established; yet despite the limited fortifications, the German forces fought ruthlessly to prevent any further advancement of the Allies.



Canadians destroy a German and Italian convoy in Sicily, advancing toward Enna, 1943. *PPCLI Archives: P70(60)-3*

On 16 May 1944, the 1st Canadian Corps received orders to advance from the broken Gustav Line towards the Hitler Line. In the following days individual battalion thrusts were used in an attempt to pierce the Hitler Line; however, it quickly became apparent that the heavy fortifications could only be overcome by a major assault. As the Canadians prepared for a full-scale assault, the enemy regrouped their positions and prepared to hold the line at any cost.

Despite limited reconnaissance and intelligence about the strength of the enemy's defenses, an assault was launched on 23 May 1944. This assault was codenamed Chesterfield and was a two-brigade wide assault. Both the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigades would participate in the assault on the Hitler Line. It was planned that Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry with one squadron of the North Irish Horse would be on the right, the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada with two squadrons of the North Irish Horse in the center, the Carlton and York Regiment of the 3rd Brigade with two squadrons of the 51st Royal Tank Regiment would be on the left, while the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and the remaining squadrons of the 51st Royal Tank Regiment would form the 2nd Canadian Brigade's reserve.

At 0557 hours more than 300 guns of all calibers began laying down a barrage 3200 yards wide across the attacking zone, and at 0600 hours the three assaulting battalions crossed the line of departure.

The full force of enemy fire fell onto Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada as they advanced towards the

Hitler Line. The wooded terrain also hindered the advance; this along with an unexpected minefield all but immobilized the supporting tanks, leaving the Infantry to advance alone. 20 minutes after the assault began, the two leading companies had reached the initial objective line, and by 0710 the second line had been passed. The two companies were then pinned down by heavy artillery fire, and the advance came to a standstill. Direct communications broke down and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment along with the remaining squadrons of the 51st Royal Tank Regiment were unaware of the stalemate on the front and crossed the line of departure at 0800 to meet their objective by 0845. They caught up with the pinned down PPCLI and despite breaching the wire there was no available reserve to relieve the exhausted soldiers and the advance once again came to a standstill.

On the left, the Carlton and York Regiment of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade had advanced with more success. They were able to marry up more closely with the barrage, which resulted in a rapid advance onto their main objectives. Despite the success of the Infantry the Allied tanks were faced with a battle against camouflaged artillery and armour. However, by 10:00 the Allied tanks had silenced the enemy and married up with the Infantry and began preparing to begin the second phase of the attack. The second phase, however, was delayed due to the situation on the 2nd Brigade's front.

It would be a full day of hard fighting before the enemy positions were weakened and phase one of Chesterfield was complete. At the close of the hardest day of fighting, the 1st Canadian Division had driven the enemy from the Hitler Line and pushed them towards the Melfa River. By 24 May 1944 the whole sector had been cleared and the Hitler Line had been breached.

The 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade had suffered extensive casualties, casualties which were unequalled in a single day's fighting by any Canadian brigade during the entire Italian Campaign. They suffered 543 casualties, with 162 killed, 306 wounded, and 75 taken prisoner.

Despite heavy enemy mortar and machine-gun fire, the Canadians breached the defences and the tanks moved towards the next objective. The break out meant that the road to Rome was now open and the pursuit of the Germans out of the Mediterranean could now be intensified.

Although faced with treacherous terrain, suffering a vast number of casualties, and successfully breaking through German defenses, the Italian Campaign became the forgotten front following the infamous invasion of France on 6 June 1944. Despite the sacrifices made, those who were not on the landing crafts at Normandy would become known as the D-Day Dodgers. 🇨🇦



105 Years and Counting ~ PPCLI: 1914 - 2019





Sergeant George Mullin, a recipient of the Victoria Cross in the Great War. *PPCLI Archives: P32.2(38)-1*

10 August 1914 ~ Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry is raised by Captain Hamilton Gault

23 August 1914 ~ Princess Patricia presents the Camp Colour – the Ric-A-Dam-Doo – to PPCLI at Lansdowne Park, Ontario

08 May 1915 ~ Battle of Frezenberg: CO LCol Farquhar is killed in action, and Gault is severely wounded; of over 1,000 men, 154 (150 NCO / other ranks, 4 officers) answered rollcall the next morning. Known as “the Death of the Originals” and PPCLI's Baptism of Fire, the majority of original recruits were casualties in this battle

28 July 1915 ~ a McGill University Company arrives to reinforce PPCLI

30 October 1917 ~ Battle of Passchendaele: Lt Hugh McKenzie (sometimes spelled MacKenzie) directs an attack on a German pillbox which was inflicting damage upon Canadian lines. Sergeant George Mullin charges the pillbox and subdues the enemy. The lieutenant is killed-in-action, but the sergeant survives. Both were awarded the Victoria Cross for this action. It is the only known instance in Canadian history of two Victoria Crosses being awarded in the same action, at the same time, to soldiers working together.

Night of 13 - 14 August, 1918 ~ Sergeant Robert Spall directs his men from an isolated position and gives covering fire at Parvillers. Killed-in-action, he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

11 November 1918 ~ Battle of Mons; Armistice and the end of the Great War

28 January 1919 ~ the Ric-A-Dam-Doo is officially consecrated

21 February 1919 ~ PPCLI is awarded the Wreath of Laurel by Princess Patricia

22 February 1919 ~ Princess Patricia is officially named Colonel-in-Chief

20 March 1919 ~ PPCLI is selected as one of the units for Canada's permanent force

01 September 1939 ~ PPCLI is mobilized for active service in light of war erupting in Europe against the rise of Fascism

10 February 1940 ~ Colonel-in-Chief Lady Patricia inspects the Regiment at Bagshot Park, England

10 July 1943 ~ Operation Husky: Invasion of Sicily by the Allies, 1st Canadian Infantry Division part of the 8th British Army

23 July 1943 ~ Battle of Leonforte: 8th British Army, including PPCLI and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, fight in the Sicilian town of Leonforte, for which PPCLI wins its first battle honour of the Second World War

06 December 1943 ~ Villa Rogatti: PPCLI engage the enemy near the Villa Rogatti, Italy, in support of operations to liberate Rome

20 December 1943 ~ start of the Battle of Ortona

21 September 1944 ~ end of the Battle of San Fortunato, the town in Canadian hands, which opened up the Italian north, an objective since the initial invasion

13 March 1945 ~ disembark with 1 Canadian Corps for the Northern European theatre

08 May 1945 ~ VE Day and the Liberation of Holland: PPCLI is the first Allied Regiment to enter Amsterdam, Holland

01 June 1945 ~ a new battalion is authorized to join the Canadian Pacific Force for a campaign against Japan. After Japan's surrender (15 August) the Pacific Force is disbanded.

08 August 1948 ~ volunteers are requested at Currie Barracks in Calgary for a new airborne unit. Today 3PPCLI maintains airborne capabilities in the form of a Parachute Company

04 April 1949 ~ the North Atlantic Treaty is negotiated in response to the growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the Western nations after the Second World War; Canada is instrumental in this process and one of the 12 founding members of NATO

15 August 1950 ~ 2PPCLI forms as part of the Canadian Army Special Force in light of war breaking out between North and South Korea

24 – 25 April 1951 ~ Battle of Kap'yong: 2PPCLI hold off Chinese forces, calling artillery fire on their own positions, and prevent the capture of Seoul and fall of South Korea. They will be awarded the US Presidential Unit Citation for their conduct in this action

27 July 1953 ~ Korean War Armistice; PPCLI stationed at "Little Gibraltar" at the time

18 October 1953 ~ 2PPCLI relocates from Calgary, Canada, to Soest, Germany, as part of NATO's mission to prevent further occupation by the Soviet Union

19 October 1954 ~ the Loyal Edmonton Regiment is officially designated as an Affiliated Regiment to PPCLI

04 November 1956 ~ Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs proposes and helps to create the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF); he consequently is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957 and the concept of peacekeeping is born. Patricia's will serve in the majority of UN Peacekeeping missions from the 1950s onwards

28 November 1958 ~ Brigadier Andrew Hamilton Gault, founder of the Regiment, passes away, age 76

13 March 1964 ~ Canada agrees to contribute soldiers to the UN's peacekeeping mission in Cyprus; the force is established in 1964

30 March 1968 ~ 1PPCLI deploys to Cyprus; Canadians will rotate every six months 12 times before the Cyprus mission is handed over to the British in 1993

05 October 1970 ~ beginning of FLQ Crisis in Quebec, which will last until the end of December; PPCLI assist in domestic operations during this event

12 January 1974 ~ Lady Patricia Ramsay, Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, passes away, age 88

04 April 1993 ~ Beginning of Operation Harmony in the former Yugoslavia. Part of the UN mission to mediate tensions between Croatian and Serbian forces, Canadian soldiers are deployed in the a "peacekeeping" (non-combative) role

13 September 1993 ~ a ceasefire agreement is drawn up for Croatian and Serbian forces to sign; Lady Patricia, Countess Mountbatten of Burma and Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, visits 2PPCLI in the Medak area to award UN Peacekeeping medals

16 September 1993 ~ Battle of Medak Pocket: 2PPCLI comes upon Croatian blockade in a region known as Medak Pocket. After many hours, LCol Calvin uses a press conference with the blockade to broadcast the Croatians' violation of UN protocol to the world and the blockade is removed

17 September 1993 ~ 2PPCLI enters the region cordoned off by the blockade and discovers evidence of ethnic cleansing in Serbian villages

28 December 1994 ~ The Medak Investigation Report is filed with the UN Security Council

03 November 1997 ~ PPCLI perpetuates the 260th Battalion, which was formed in 1919 and disbanded in 1920

Medak Town after the Croatian barricade is lifted. Buildings in the town were demolished or still burning, while soldiers had to be mindful of booby traps hidden throughout the ruins.
Photographer: MCpl Phil Tobicoe.

PPCLI Archives:
20.39.06



02 February 2002 ~ PPCLI arrive in Afghanistan for a six-month mission; they are Canada's first regular combat troops deployed for this operation

17 April 2002 ~ PPCLI sustains first Canadian casualties in the Afghanistan Mission in a "friendly fire" incident when an American pilot mistakes a training mission at Tarnak Farm, Afghanistan for enemy fire. Eight injured; four killed

01 December 2002 ~ 2PPCLI is awarded the Commander-in-Chief Unit Citation for its conduct during the Battle of Medak Pocket

08 December 2003 ~ 3PPCLI is awarded the Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for its role in Operation Apollo (February – July, 2002)

06 July 2004 ~ Major Harry Schmidt is found guilty of dereliction of duty which resulted in the "friendly fire" incident at Tarnak Farm. He is fined and reprimanded

03 August 2006 ~ PPCLI are involved in battle with the Taliban at a location named "Objective Rugby"; a sergeant is awarded the inaugural Canadian Star of Valour; four soldiers are killed and six are wounded

02 – 03 September 2006 ~ PPCLI forces attempt to cross the Arghandab River during Operation Medusa at "Rugby"; are ambushed and sustain casualties

17 March 2007 ~ Lady Patricia, Countess Mountbatten of Burma, relinquishes her title of Colonel-in-Chief; the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson is appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment

29 November 2010 ~ 1PPCLI is awarded the Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for its role in the Afghanistan Mission from January – August, 2006

12 March 2014 ~ Canadians lower their national flag at NATO HQ in Kabul, concluding Canada's participation in the Afghanistan Mission

31 March 2014 ~ the Mission in Afghanistan officially ends

17 April 2014 ~ the Canadian Armed Forces offers support for UN mission in Latvia; 3PPCLI will deploy for OP Reassurance April – July; this will include the first insertion of Canadian Airborne troops into a theatre since the Second World War

03 May 2014 ~ Canadian Armed Forces bases a Land Task Force in Poland

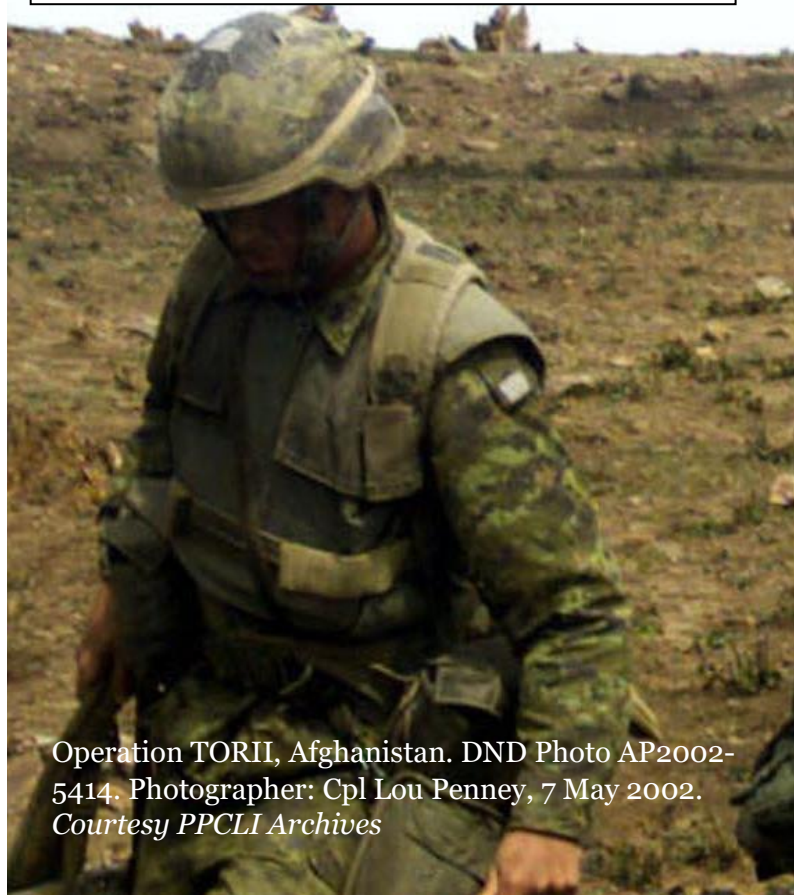
August 2016 ~ 2PPCLI deploys to Ukraine as part of OP Unifier

19 June 2017 ~ Forward Presence battlegroup (led by Canada) created as part of NATO forces

13 June 2017 ~ Lady Patricia, Countess Mountbatten of Burma, passes, age 93

17 August 2017 ~ Land Task Force completes its final deployment in Poland

10 July 2018 ~ Canada's contribution to NATO's Forward Presence is extended until March 2023; overall Canadian Forces Members (Land, Sea, Air) will increase from 455 to 540; all three of PPCLI's battalions have deployed to Ukraine from 2014 to the present



Operation TORII, Afghanistan. DND Photo AP2002-5414. Photographer: Cpl Lou Penney, 7 May 2002.
Courtesy PPCLI Archives



Bringing Them Home: The Eternal Flame in Canada

By: J. Neven-Pugh

Lanterns containing the Eternal Flame of Mons, Belgium. From Left to Right: at the Collegiate Chapel, Mons, Belgium; PPCLI Frezenberg Memorial, Belgium; The Military Museums in Calgary, Canada, *Photos courtesy Terry Plant and J. Neven-Pugh*

On 19 April 2019, two lanterns lit by the Eternal Flame at Mons, Belgium, were on display at The Military Museums of Calgary. Specially designed to protect a continuous flame, the lanterns travelled from Mons to Canada, visiting sites significant to Britain and the Allied Forces during the Great War. Named Tommy and Maple to represent British and Canadian participants respectively, these “living” artefacts symbolized a homecoming for the souls of the Fallen – in essence, to bring home the spirits of Canadian soldiers and nurses who died overseas during the Great War, and whose graves, known and unknown, are on foreign shores.

“We wanted to get them home to reunite families across the sea,” said Christopher Shaw, Chairman and Heritage Consultant for Shorncliffe Trust in Kent, England, who spearheaded the project.

Lit in the Collegiate Chapel in Mons, famous for being one of the final towns where Canadians fought on 11 November 1918, the lanterns have been on a long-awaited journey to return over 60,000 spirits home from across the Atlantic, beginning with locations in both Europe and the United Kingdom connected to the Great War.

“[We couldn’t] go to every point,” Shaw reflected, but he and one of his Canadian partners, Terry Plant of Canadian Educational Tour Planning, travelled to as many locales as possible before and after the lanterns carried flame, including Ypres (now Ieper), Vimy Ridge, Sanctuary Woods, and Hill 62, as well as Orpington, London, and Shorncliffe Garrison in the UK.

The project was an extension of commemorative work done by the Shorncliffe Trust during the Great War centennials. Created by a team of dedicated volunteers, “Light in the Darkest Hour” acknowledged the Great War dead first at Shorncliffe Cemetery on 4 August 2014 – where 300 Canadians are buried – and then in other war cemeteries throughout the area. The project was simple yet poignant, with a small light lain at the foot of every tombstone; the response from the public was overwhelmingly supportive. After repeating the ceremony throughout the centennial years, the team was given a certificate from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in recognition of their work commemorating the Great War’s fallen.

“I think [the idea] came from talking to the people,” said Shaw, who again and again would hear tales of family members who fought and died on a far away field, their graves never to be visited by their kin. Having two grandfathers who fought in this conflict but came home, Shaw decided he wanted to help families to heal, and to bring them closure. Terry and Ed Plant, who had worked with Shorncliffe Trust before, were the ideal partners for this project.

“Once I learned of my great uncle who died in the Mons area it became

Photo courtesy Terry Plant.





more personal,” said Terry Plant, “I knew that I was working on this project for my very own family.”

When asked what the project meant to him, Shaw replied simply that it “just seemed to be the right thing to do.”

“I’m lucky. I never served [because] I never needed to serve. We pay taxes and they [soldiers] do their jobs. We never see the cause and effect. Now I do.”


Terry reflected similarly, emphasizing the healing aspect of the project. “Society tends to remember the soldiers, and very rightly so, but we tend to forget the damage done to families when their loved ones never came home . . . To bring the spirit of those soldiers back to their families, to me, is to allow that emptiness to heal. The family circle can be finally whole again.”

“Tommy” has since returned with Shaw to the UK, where he will continue to tour and be used as an immersive teaching tool. Meanwhile “Maple” will remain in Canada at the Edmonton Garrison Memorial Golf & Curling Club, and is available for displays and events within a day’s drive of the locale. In addition, visitors are encouraged to bring a candle or lamp to light by this flame, in order to bring their soldiers home.

Despite countless hours and energy spent, the emphasis has never been on the people working today to bring this project to life. In the end, it always returns to honouring the Fallen.

“I don’t want people to stand on ceremony on this . . . no egos,” clarified Shaw, “The boys were all buried at the same level. In 100 years’ time I want [these lanterns] to be worn to have been held. I still can’t believe we’ve done it.”

Thus the Eternal Flame was brought to Canada: to fulfill a promise made a century ago to never forget the sacrifices made during the Great War. That “*at the going down of the sun, / and in the morning, / we will remember them.*”

Now, through dedication, action, and ingenuity, more than 60,000 souls will face the sunrise on home soil, embodied in a flame that will never be extinguished. A fate that they and their families could only long for. 

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Myrna Adamec, Sergeant Nate Blackmore, Jim Bowman, Dani Drefko, James Morgan, Corporal Andrew Mullett, J. Neven-Pugh, Ms. Paula, Terry Plant, Christopher Shaw

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Following the Korean War, where was the next conflict in which soldiers of PPCLI were engaged in large-scale firefights and threatened by landmines?

- 1) Italy**
- 2) Greece**
- 3) The Balkans**
- 4) Afghanistan**

Learn the answer in the September – December 2019 edition of *The Gault Press*, available at The Military Museums in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and online at ppcli.com