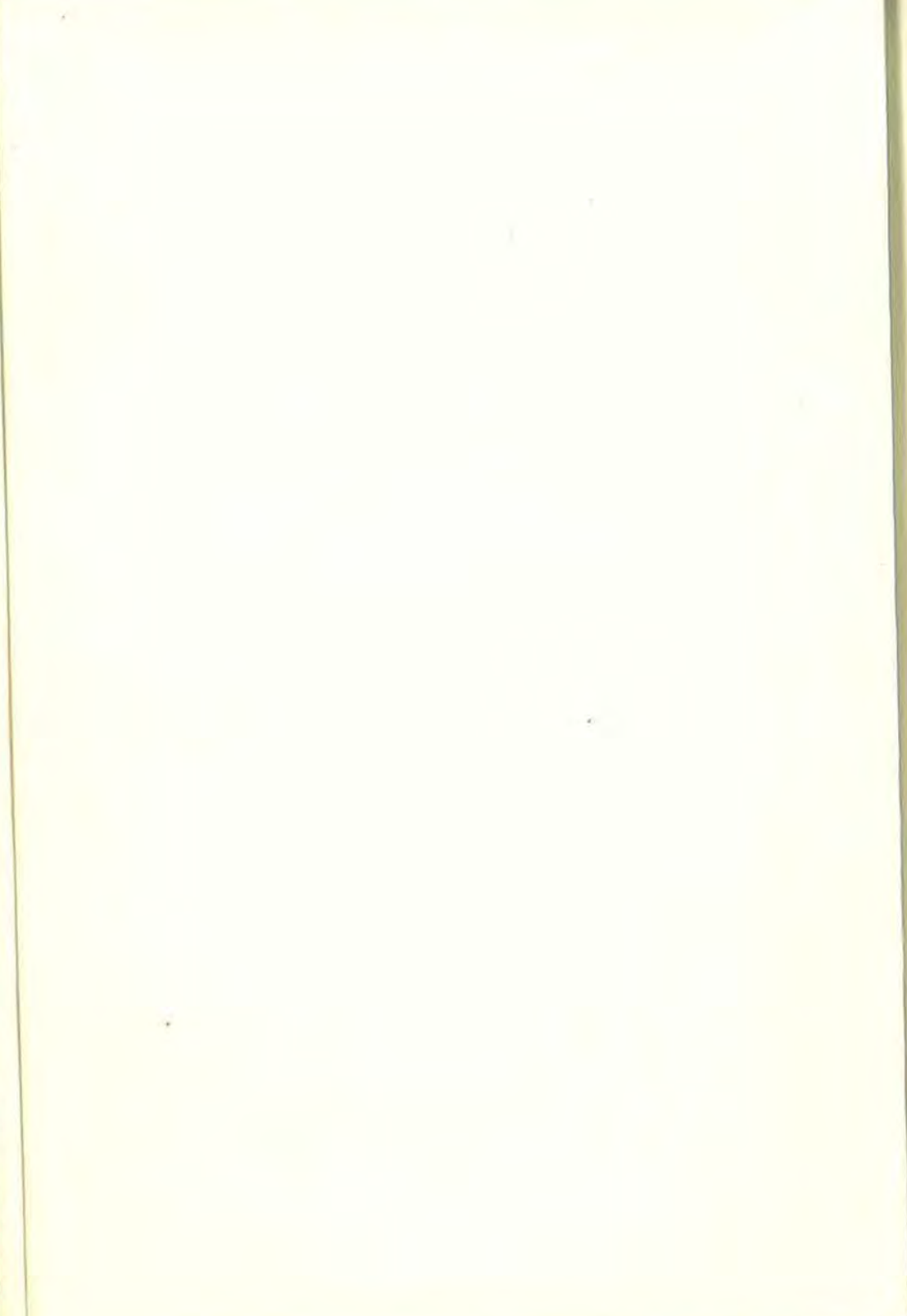


PRINCESS
PATRICIA
CANADIAN
LIGHT
INFANTRY
1919-195

G. R. STEVENSON

VOLUME II

SOUTHAMPTON



PRINCESS PATRICIA'S
CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY

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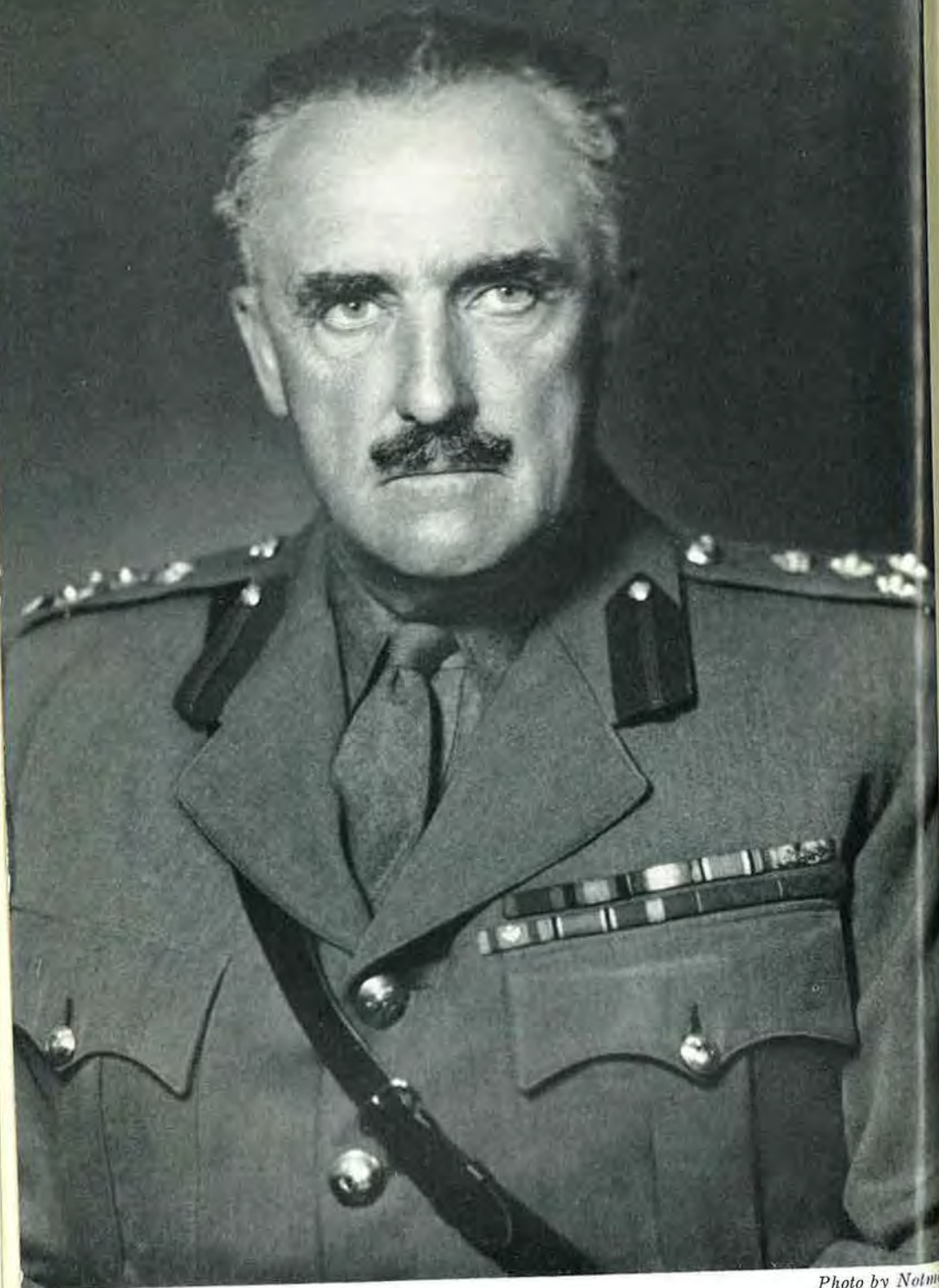


Photo by Nolma

THE FOUNDER

GENERAL A. MURPHY GALT, DSO, ED, CD

PRINCESS PATRICIA'S
CANADIAN
LIGHT INFANTRY
1919-1957

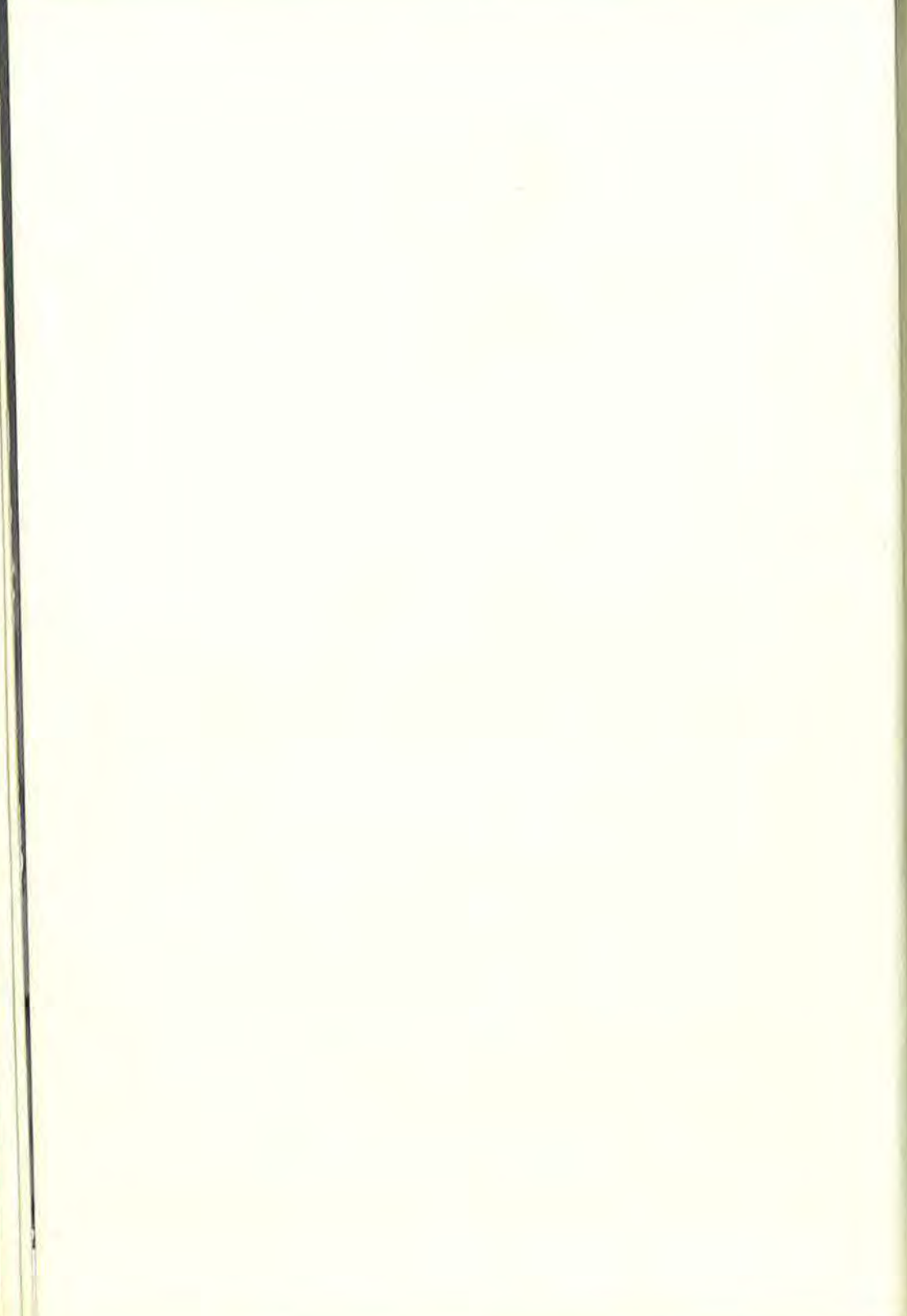
BY
G. R. STEVENS OBE

WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE LADY PATRICIA RAMSAY
COLONEL-IN-CHIEF OF THE REGIMENT

AND AN INTRODUCTION BY
BRIGADIER A. HAMILTON GAULT DSO ED CD
HONORARY COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

VOLUME THREE

PUBLISHED FOR THE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE OF THE REGIMENT,
THE HAMILTON GAULT BARRACKS,
GRIESBACH, ALBERTA.





To write the Foreword to this the third volume of the history of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry is but to strengthen still further my associations with the fortunes of the Regiment ever since 1914, and so I welcome the opportunity to add this tribute.

Since the first and second volumes were brought out, so much that is glorious has been added to the records of the Regiment that it is hard indeed to know where to begin.

Perhaps a fitting start would be to recall that the last time I saw the first Service Battalion was at Bramshott, Surrey on February 21st 1919 when, at the end of the First World War, it was returning to Canada. Twenty years were to pass before I saw it again.

Upon inspecting the Battalion after its arrival in England in 1939 I found worthy successors to the men I had once known in its earliest beginnings, in Ottawa, in August 1914—here I had seen the very first recruits who came to join up there.

The Regiment has now become a unit in the Regular Army of Canada. Throughout two decades (as your historian relates) it had shared in the reduction in numbers which is the fate of British and Commonwealth military forces in times of peace.

During these years Lieut.-Colonel C. R. E. Willets DSO, Lieut.-Colonel M. R. Ten Broeke MC, Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven DSO MC and Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Colquhoun MC carried on and preserved the regimental traditions at their highest.

The appreciative gratitude of the Regiment goes out to its Founder, Lieut.-Colonel A. Hamilton Gault DSO, who remained with the Permanent Force unit during the preliminary period of reorganization and who, at the conclusion of this period received, I am happy to say, the merited distinction of being appointed Honorary Lieut.-Colonel of the Regiment.

During the years in Britain it might be of interest for me to record the various visits I paid to the Regiment as Colonel-in-Chief:

February 10th 1940 (Morval Barracks, Cove)

May 8th 1940 (Morval Barracks, Cove)

September 11th 1940 (Godstone)

October 16th 1940 (Godstone)

March 17th 1942 (Brighton)

March 17th 1943 (Willingdon)

September 19th 1945 (Esher)

I wish to mention also the effective part played by the Regiment in the defense of Southern England and the behaviour of all ranks during the tedious years of waiting—it required forbearance and discipline of a high order to wait and watch, rather than to participate in great events and in this test of morale, the Battalion was not found wanting.

When a move to a theatre of operations was made the Regiment was amongst the first Commonwealth units to land in the invasion of an enemy country. In the whirlwind campaign which conquered Sicily in three weeks the battles of Leonforte and Agira, in which the Regiment played a leading part, were substantial contributions to the victory.

Then came the landing in Italy and the long drive up the Kingdom, until the Regiment came to close grips with the enemy at Villa Rogatti and Ortona. They took part in the great battle of the Liri Valley, which opened the way to Rome.

After this the Regiment returned to the Adriatic for the long-drawn-out battles of the Gothic Line. For six months, from the Metauro to the Senio Rivers, this struggle continued. In bitter fighting around San Fortunato and at the Marecchia crossings the Regiment won fresh laurels and earned outspoken praise from those in high commands, including the G.O.C. Eighth Army. When the battle in Italy was all but won the assembly of Canadian forces took place and the Regiment was sent into North Western Europe, where it was given a substantial task in connection with the liberation of Holland.

Here it was in action when the Cease Fire of the Second World War sounded. In the following five years of uneasy peace the Regiment played

its part in the evolution of Canadian armed forces into a fitting instrument to carry out the international obligations of Canada as a member of the United Nations. Then in June 1950 there came aggression in Korea and the call to all free peoples to resist it.

Two additional Battalions of the Patricias were formed and all three Battalions served in the Far East, where they well upheld the proud record of the Regiment and gained, among other distinctions, at Kapyong, the seldom-granted Regimental Citation of the President of the United States, being the only Canadian unit to receive this signal honour.

Then followed the conversion of the Second Battalion into a Parachute Battalion, Arctic exercises in which the Regiment was warmly praised, and then garrison duty in Germany, first as units in the Army of Occupation and afterwards as allied troops under the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance. To complete the establishment a permanent Regimental Depot was organized.

I shall never forget my visit to Calgary in 1953 and the happy days spent there with the Regiment as its guest. The presentation of Colours to Second Battalion on that occasion is one of my treasured memories.

During my last few years I have been so fortunate as to be able to spend a few days in Germany at different times, first with Second Battalion and then with First Battalion, taking the Salute at the Trooping the Colour there. I was delighted to find the same smartness, precision and keenness displayed at these parades as ever in former times—qualities which have been traditional with the regiment from its earliest days.

Here I must conclude the Foreword. I know that all who read this further history of the Regiment will be moved by the record of deeds which, for gallantry and valour, are second to none.

This record makes me proud indeed to be the Colonel-in-Chief of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, and of the honour the Regiment does me in bearing my name.

Patricia Ramsay
Col. in Chief. P.P. C. L. I.



"The war to end war" had been fought and won. Demobilization was complete. Peace had been declared by the nations and in Germany Von Seckt was busily engaged in re-making an army.

In other lands thinking minds within the services, influenced no doubt by their textbook dictums that "War is the last recourse of policy," were planning for the future and in England the Royal Air Force, notwithstanding the passivism of the postwar period, was consolidating its position and building the Third Service in the face of all kinds of opposition.

In Canada the regular services, reduced to skeletons, were carrying on with little support in the fulfillment of their duties by training the volunteer forces of the country and by maintaining the Royal Schools of Instruction.

Early in the 1930's, only fifteen years after the Armistice had been signed, the National Socialists under the leadership of Adolf Hitler achieved a great political victory at the polls in Germany and from that moment on it was obvious that another war was on the way. Spurning the solemn warnings of Winston Churchill at Westminster and unmindful of the publications of John Gunther and Douglas Reed a heedless world rolled on regardless of the writing on the wall.

In 1936 came the re-occupation of the territories to the west of the Rhine without any action being taken by the old war time allies and this was to be followed in quick succession by the rapes of Austria and Czechoslovakia leading up to the ruthless and uncalled-for onslaught upon Poland, the prelude to another world war.

Not until the last moment would the peacefully minded democracies believe that real war was again upon them but when this was realized they were not slow in arming themselves once more in preparation for the titanic struggle which lay ahead.

In 1939 Hitler, contemptuous of British character, imagined that he had Europe at his feet but the fundamental solidarity of our peoples throughout the world brought them with one accord into battle against the German tyrant. This, with the great contribution again made by the American people and the big battalions of the U.S.S.R., put a stop to his mad ambition and finally brought his regime to an end.

It is to the telling of the part played by Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during these years between the First World War and the present time that Lieut.-Colonel G. R. Stevens OBE, an old and valued officer of The Regiment and the historian of the 4th Indian Division and of the Gurkha regiments (apart from many other literary contributions), has been called.

His task is indeed a formidable one but one to his taste and liking for it includes the chronicling of the many exploits of officers, non-commissioned officers and men who by their valour have maintained the traditions of The Regiment and added to its lustre and its fame. The data before him is immense but from it he has extracted the true story of steadfastness, fortitude and gallantry which have characterized the esprit of The Patricias from commanding officer to latest joined recruit ever since Her Royal Highness Princess Patricia of Connaught, our much beloved Colonel-in-Chief, entrusted her guerdon to the original service battalion at the outbreak of the First World War.

As the Founder and Honorary Colonel of the Regiment it is my privilege to offer the warm and grateful thanks of all ranks to Colonel Stevens and to those who have rendered him assistance for having so generously undertaken at considerable personal sacrifice this most difficult task and for having successfully commemorated the many outstanding deeds of heroism and selfless service which have ever made The Regiment what it is and what it stands for in the fighting history of Canada.

A. Hamiltonault.
Hon. Colonel P.C.C.I.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Any virtues that this history may possess are attributable in large measure to the assistance rendered to the Historian by members and ex-members of the Regiment.

The Founder has been constantly available during its compilation and Mrs. Hamilton Gault has assisted by reading the earlier chapters.

Major Hector Munro CD, as Secretary of the Regimental Historical Committee, bore the burden of the almost endless correspondence arising out of the compilation. Brigadier C. B. Ware DSO CD and Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith DSO MBE undertook special supervisory and liaison duties; their services have been invaluable. Major H. D. P. Tighe MC CD and Major L. W. Basham accepted responsibility for the checking of proper names, initials, awards and decorations and of other specific details.

The following officers and ex-officers have contributed in large part to the detail of various periods of the history; their criticisms and suggestions have been of the utmost value:

Between the Wars (1919-1939) — Major-General F. F. Worthington CB MC MM, Brigadier W. G. Colquhoun CBE MC, Colonel R. L. Mitchell, Lieut.-Colonel M. R. Ten Broeke MC, Lieut.-Colonel J. N. Edgar MC, Lieut.-Colonel J. H. Carvosso MC, Lieut.-Colonel H. F. Cotton CD, Lieut.-Colonel J. D. Cave CD, the late Lieut.-Colonel A. W. Hunt OBE MM, Major A. J. A. Wallace and Capt. O. Gardner CD.

Second World War — Brigadier R. C. Coleman DSO MC, Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Clark DSO, Lieut.-Colonel W. deN. Watson DSO MC, Lieut.-Colonel R. S. Graham CD, Major S. A. Cobbett, Major C. M. McDougall DSO, Major A. E. T. Paquet, the late Major J. R. Koensgen MC CD, Major G. S. Lynch, Major R. W. Potts DSO CD, Major H. W. Mulherin GM, Capt. Egan Chambers MC, Capt. R. G. M. Gammell, Capt. W. D. Roach DSO and Lieut. H. D. B. Beardmore.

The Korean Campaign — Colonel J. R. Stone DSO MC CD, Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Cameron OBE, Lieut.-Colonel H. F. Wood CD, Lieut.-Colonel M. F. MacLachlan OBE MC CD, Major R. E. M. Cross, Major J. R. Roberts CD, Major C. V. Lilley MC

CD, Major P. M. Pyne CD, Major M. H. Marchessault CD, Capt. A. P. Bull, Capt. J. C. C. McKinlay MC and Capt. A. P. P. McKenzie.

Post-War Periods (1946/1950 and 1953/1957)—In addition to many of the aforementioned officers Lieut.-Colonel S. C. Waters, Major W. J. MacDougald, Capt. A. H. Constant, Capt. D. G. MacLeod and Capt. B. M. Munro have lent their assistance.

The Historian also must record his gratitude to the parents of the late Major D. Brain for placing private papers at his disposal, to the Officer Commanding 8 Field Survey Map Depot RE for supplying a large number of maps free of charge and to H.M. Stationery Office, the Department of National Defence, the MacMillan Company of Canada and Hanson W. Baldwin, Military Editor of the *New York Times*, for permission to quote from various publications.

The drawings of the Colonel-in-Chief and The Founder have been donated by J. W. McLaren of the Regiment.

Finally, the History could not have attained its present dimensions and authority without the generous and unwearied assistance of Colonel C. P. Stacey OBE CD, Director of the Historical Section, Canadian Army, and of members of his staff, including Lieut.-Colonel T. H. Carlisle ED CD, who undertook the onerous task of reading and correcting the draft in detail.

—G.R.S.

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"The winning of a battle and the losing of it are exercises of the human intelligence and the human will. That is why the histories of our wars require to be written and deserve to be read even by those who deplore and condemn the whole business of war."

"The general who has made a plan for a successful battle will believe that his plan was the main cause of success, but the company commander and his company who have fought all day and by their valour and tactical ability have dislodged the enemy from an important position will remain convinced that it is they who have tipped the balance toward victory."

—Eric Linklater

CHAPTER ONE

BETWEEN THE WARS

On March 19th 1919 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry after four years, six months and sixteen days' service abroad, detrained at Ottawa and assembled in Connaught Square to be welcomed home by His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, Governor-General of Canada. Thereafter the Battalion marched through cheering crowds to Lansdowne Park. On the tanbark of the Horse Show Building Lieut.-Colonel Andrew Hamilton Gault DSO said farewell to those who had served with him in the Regiment which he had founded. Thus dispersed a great company.

The story of the Patricias in the First World War, as told in the earlier volumes, is proud and splendid. On August 3rd 1914, when the sands were running out and the Royal Navy had moved to battle stations in the mists of the north, Mr. Hamilton Gault had offered, in event of war, to raise and to equip a battalion for overseas service.*

Three days later his offer was accepted and H.R.H. Princess Patricia of Connaught had consented to give her name to a battalion composed largely of ex-service men returning to the colours, to be commanded by Lieut.-Colonel F. D. Farquhar DSO, an officer of the Coldstream Guards then serving as Military Secretary to H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, Governor-General of Canada.

On August 10th the charter of the Regiment was signed. On the next day mobilization began. Eight days later it was completed. Old soldiers had flocked in from every part of Canada; out of 1,098 of all ranks 1,049 had seen previous service. On September 27th the Battalion sailed from Quebec. In mid-November it was assigned to 27th Division and allotted to 80th Brigade, where it found as comrades 3rd and 4th Battalions King's Royal Rifles, 4th Battalion The Rifle Brigade and 2nd Battalion The King's Shropshire Light Infantry. On December

* It seems probable that the Founder of the Patricias was the last man ever to exercise the feudal privilege of recruiting, equipping at his own expense and leading in battle a privately-sponsored force committed to the Service of the Crown. The Canadian Government assumed responsibility for the Regiment as from date of charter.

20th it sailed for France, being the first Canadian unit to reach the theatre of operations. On Christmas Eve it arrived at Blaringham on the Flanders front and on January 6th it went into waterlogged trenches at Vierstraat, on the southern calk of the horseshoe of the Ypres Salient.

After an abominable winter (during which Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar was killed, Major Hamilton Gault was wounded and Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Buller, formerly Adjutant and also of the Governor-General's staff, assumed command) there came a fearful spring. Behind billowing clouds of poison gas the enemy struck at the Salient; the front barely held. On May 8th, when the line was taut to breaking, the Patricias took the shock in the fighting at Frezenberg, at a cost of 10 officers and 392 other ranks. Here Major Gault while in command was severely wounded for the second time. There followed an easy summer and autumn of rebuilding in quiet sectors around Armentieres and on the Somme. On November 8th the Patricias with deep regret said goodbye to their staunch British comrades of 27th Division and returned to Flanders to be incorporated in 7th Canadian Brigade of the newly-arrived 3rd Canadian Division. Their associates were the Royal Canadian Regiment, 42nd Battalion (Royal Highlanders of Canada) and 49th (Edmonton) Battalion.

After another bleak winter in the Salient fighting again raged in the spring. At Hooge and Sanctuary Wood the Patricias lost upwards of 500 men, including Lieut.-Colonel Buller, who was killed on the parapet in Sanctuary Wood. Major Hamilton Gault in taking his third wound lost his leg, but he would not be denied; he soon was back on the staff of 3rd Canadian Division. Lieut.-Colonel R. T. Pelly took over command and the Patricias in September and October took their turns in the blood-bath of the Somme. The price of victory at Flers-Courcelette and at Regina Trench was 400 casualties. Thereafter Lieut.-Colonel A. S. A. M. Adamson assumed command. There followed a winter of alarums and excursions (in the form of trench raids) along the Crater Line at Arras. On Easter Monday 1917 the Patricias were in the van of the great assault which hurled the enemy from the bastion of Vimy Ridge.

Then came frustrated hopes. Russia collapsed and France all but followed suit; the British Empire armies shouldered the burden while the United States made ready. So back once more to the Salient and to a greater and more terrible battle.

At the end of October, on the shell-torn approaches to Gravenstafel Ridge, the Patricias again gained and held their ground but at a cost of 24 officers and 419 men. Nearly half the casualties were killed. Here Lieut. H. McKenzie and Sgt. G. H. Mullin won the Victoria Cross.

Then came the year of full acquittance. The Patricias were not engaged in the furious battles which stemmed the last and greatest enemy assault but on August 8th ("the black day" of the German Army), when thirty Allied divisions swept in counter-attack across the Picardy ridges, they once more were in the van. That evening, for the first time in the war, they were in open country and Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault, who was never far away, came riding up across the fields to cheer them on. There was bitter fighting still to come—at Parvillers, where Sgt. R. Spall died in winning the Victoria Cross, at the breaking of the Drocourt-Quéant switch line and at the forcing of the Canal du Nord defences, where that great soldier and almost legendary figure Lieut.-Colonel C. J. T. Stewart DSO, who had taken over command from Lieut.-Colonel Adamson in March 1918, was killed on the approaches to Bourlon Wood. In smashing through the last German defense lines the Patricias suffered 550 casualties. The end was near. At 0200 hours on November 11th 4 Company of the Regiment entered Mons, where the "Old Contemptibles" of the British Expeditionary Force first had met the enemy. Nine hours later the bugles blew Armistice.

PRESERVATION IN THE PERMANENT FORCES

There had served in the Regiment 229 officers and 4,857 other ranks. Officer casualties had been almost exactly 100%, amounting to 228 in all. Among warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men, there had been 3,848 casualties, or 79.2%. In addition to three Victoria Crosses 466 other decorations testified to the valour and constancy of the Regiment. The first to go, the first in the field, the Battalion was perhaps the most representative of all Canadian units. It had been recruited from all parts of Canada and it had been reinforced for a considerable period by the University Companies, raised at McGill but containing men not only from all Canadian universities but also from many in the United States. Its services with both Imperial and Canadian formations, its royal sponsorship, the manner in which (to the distaste of some members) it had caught the public eye, were circumstances which argued against its

disappearance from the Canadian scene. As early as 1916 conversations had taken place with a view to the preservation of the Patricias in the permanent forces of Canada. As a result for only eleven days did the Regiment cease to exist. On March 21st 1919 the Adjutant-General authorized its reconstitution as a unit of the Permanent Active Militia. It had been decided in preliminary conversations that the new Regiment would retain as far as possible the characteristics of the original battalion.

It is interesting to note that in point of fact the Patricias never have been "Light Infantry." That description originated in the Light Division in the Peninsular War—a formation trained by Sir John Moore for mobility and endurance which became one of the great military instruments of all time. That division's routines were preserved, in some measure at least, in the distinctive arms manuals which are used by light infantry regiments. Such a manual never has been adopted by the Patricias, to the regret of some observers, who feel that its fluid movements would be more natural to Canadians (accustomed to swinging axes, paddles, baseball bats, etc.) than the rigid and abrupt movements of the standard manual. The description "Light Infantry" was adopted, according to the Founder of the Regiment, because it had "an irregular tang" about it. Irregular units had proved to be not only glamorous but exceedingly useful in the South African War.*

Prior to disbandment the officers of the wartime battalion had been circularized as to the possibility of serving with the peacetime unit. A few agreed to stay on; others postponed their decisions. Fortunately Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault consented to retain command during the initial period of reorganization. Among the first officers to re-enlist were Major M. R. Ten Broeke MC, who had seen perhaps as much fighting as any member of the Regiment. A number of other veterans—Major H. W. Niven DSO MC, whose cold nerve in tight corners had become a Regimental tradition, Capt. J. N. Edgar MC, whose battle service was on a par with that of Major Ten Broeke, Capt. J. H. Carvosso MC, who wore five wound stripes, Capt. and Adjutant W. G. Colquhoun MC, who was destined to play a leading role in Regimental affairs in years to come, Capt. D. A. Clarke MC, Lieut. and Quartermaster R. S. Lake and Lieut. McG. F.

* Brigadier Colquhoun comments: "We would have liked to try a light infantry manual and when in England on a course I got myself attached to three light infantry regiments to this end—Durham Light Infantry, King's Shropshire Light Infantry and Highland Light Infantry. I found them all different and unable to agree upon a light infantry manual. So we carried on as we were."

Macintosh—were available immediately. At later dates Capt. J. W. H. G. Van den Berg DSO, the renowned Patricia Machine Gun Officer, Capt. K. C. Burness MC and Capt. E. MacG. MacBrayne MC became available. On transfer from the Royal Canadian Regiment came Capt. J. S. Wood MC, the well-known "Smoky" of First World War days, and Lieut. A. W. Hunt MM. Among other officers posted to the Patricias during its first years as a Permanent Force unit were Major G. R. Pearkes VC DSO MC, Capt. F. F. Worthington MC MM and Lieut. R. F. L. Keller, each of whom in years to come reached the rank of Major-General. Lieut. R. L. Mitchell was another early appointment destined for long service with the Regiment.

A number of veteran non-commissioned officers also re-enlisted, including CQMS F. Gillingham MC DCM, who became Regimental Sergeant-Major as from May 6th 1919. Two years later, when RSM T. J. Turnbull, with upwards of thirty years' experience in British and Canadian regiments became available, RSM Gillingham resigned to re-enlist as Company Quartermaster Sergeant. CQMS A. G. Meachem MM MSM, an original member of the Regiment also re-enlisted and was destined to serve as non-commissioned officer and officer for many years. Other "originals" who stayed on were CSM J. Crawford MM and Sgt. S. Hacking DCM.

Occasionally some of the old hands drifted back to the Regiment. Lieut.-Colonel J. N. Edgar relates the story of Ptes. 701 Owens, D. and 51293 Lovatt, T. "Bosom pals of 8 Platoon, inseparables, wounded together on May 8th 1915, they took their discharge together in England at the end of the war. In civil life they lived together in Liverpool and went to sea in the same ships. In 1923 they both jumped ship in Montreal, reached Winnipeg rather the worse for wear, and on spotting a smart young soldier in Portage Avenue they challenged his right to be wearing Patricia badges. They had not heard of the reconstitution of the Regiment. The young soldier gave them a meal (they needed it) and street car tickets to Tuxedo barracks. The Regiment was not recruiting at the time but Major Niven saw that they were looked after until it was possible to take them on. Thereafter they served with distinction for many years."

AN UNPROMISING FUTURE

In 1919 Canada was perhaps the least promising place in the world in which to raise a unit for peacetime service. As the

Canadian Official Historian has put it, "Canada is an unmilitary community. Warlike her people have often been forced to be; military they have never been."* The men who had gone out to war moving, in Masfield's fine phrase, "like kings in a pageant" had come back out of heart with all things military. So bitter the conflict, so many comrades dead on little hills, that soldiering seemed to many to belong to the bad yesterdays. Moreover there no longer was any necessity for armies; the "war to end war" had been won; there was a League of Nations in the making and the lion would lie down with the lamb. The peace beckoned alluringly; there were the hungers of five years to be assuaged. So 400,000 Canadians stripped off their khaki and donned "civvies" and went back to their farms, factories, mines and forests determined (except on Armistice Days and at unit reunions) to forget the whole affair. A young ex-Patricia officer, invited to join a militia unit, declined tersely. "I have formed my last four," he said. Or as a Canadian military historian put it: "The dislike of a professional military force and the conviction that the militia provided a cheap form of military insurance were rooted deep in the Canadian mind. In other spheres of activity young Canadians might display energy and originality; but in the army Canadians were content to follow familiar patterns. Funds were not available for experimentation and the factor of economy reinforced the traditional conservatism of the soldier in imposing a brake on any change in Canada's military system."†

The peacetime Permanent Force establishment therefore included only three infantry battalions, two cavalry regiments and normal arms and services to a maximum strength of 10,000 men. Even this was too much to please everybody; a prominent Canadian newspaper declared: "The Ottawa authorities may as well realize, first as last, that Canada is not going to stand for the wholesale expenditure of large sums of money for military and naval purposes. The people of this country do not propose to submit to the god of militarism." As insurance against worship at this detested shrine the average vote for the Permanent Force throughout the nineteen-twenties amounted approximately to \$900 per year per man. This sum was all that was available to pay the soldier, house and feed him, clothe him, train him, provide him with weapons and give him something to put aside for his old age.

* "Six Years of War—The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific"—C. P. Stacey. (The Queen's Printer, Hull.)

† "Canada's Soldiers—1604-1954"—George F. G. Stanley. (Macmillan Company of Canada.)

FIRST MOVES IN REORGANIZATION

It was against such background that Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault, having completed the initial tasks of organization, turned over command of the Patricias on January 20th 1920 to Lieut.-Colonel C. R. E. Willets DSO, who had served with the Royal Canadian Regiment in the First World War. On retirement the Founder was appointed Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel of the Regiment.* The strength of the Regiment as of December 31st 1919 was 16 officers and 279 other ranks. Throughout the year recruiting missions had visited Montreal, Ottawa, Halifax, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Victoria. Their yield had been low and the quality of the recruits had left a good deal to be desired. It had been found necessary to discharge one out of every six attested as unlikely to make a good soldier. One out of every three accepted had deserted.

Regimental Headquarters had been established at Stanley Barracks, Toronto, where it remained until September, when the Regiment moved to Long Branch Camp, 12 miles outside the city. In December it returned to Toronto and on January 1st 1920 it shifted to Tecumseh Barracks, London. Here on March 17th a new Regimental tradition was established by the celebration of the birthday of the Colonel-in-Chief. During the same spring "B" Company came into existence in London under command of Capt. F. M. H. Colville MC, a former officer of the Royal Canadian Dragoons. "A" Company had been organized in the previous year in Toronto under command of Major Niven and in May 1919 Major Ten Broeke had been sent to Esquimalt to make a start on "D" Company. In August he brought its skeleton, 41 strong, to Toronto. Twenty years were destined to pass before the fourth rifle company was reactivated.

The first official duty of the Regiment was a Guard of Honour for H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, posted at Government House, Toronto, for the period August 27th/29th 1919. Another Guard of Honour was provided for His Royal Highness at Niagara Falls on October 18th/19th of that year.

Each of the three Canadian infantry battalions had been given a home territory. Ontario and the Maritime Provinces had been assigned to the Royal Canadian Regiment, Quebec to the gallant "Van Doos" (destined to be the Royal 22e Regiment) and Western

* His appointment as Honorary Colonel dates from December 17th, 1948.

Canada to the Patricias. In April 1920 "D" Company moved to Winnipeg and found accommodation in Fort Osborne Barracks. In November Headquarters Company and "A" Company followed and "B" Company was transferred to Esquimalt.

SOLDIERING ON A SHOE-STRING

One of the principal difficulties of peacetime soldiering on a shoe-string was the problem of functioning on a variable establishment. On April 1st 1920 the peace establishment of Canadian infantry battalions was set at 720 of all ranks, as against a war establishment of 901 of all ranks. The peace establishment, however, was dependent upon the annual vote of the House of Commons and there was no assurance from year to year of how much that meagre allowance would be. As a consequence the Patricias' establishment varied from year to year; at no time did the Regimental commander know what the strength of his unit would be next year. This uncertainty made constructive or long-term planning impossible. On June 1st 1921 the Patricias' establishment was reduced to 309 of all ranks and again on August 1st of that year to 294 of all ranks. This was a sparse complement for three rifle companies and a Headquarters Company; yet it was not the end. In 1924 the establishment was reduced to 209 of all ranks and the revised rates of pay led to the discharge of more than a quarter of the total strength. Throughout the next nine years the establishment did not fluctuate greatly, but it seldom rose above 350 of all ranks. In 1924 "D" Company was disbanded, its personnel being assigned to the remaining rifle companies as machine-gun platoons.

Of the routine of those years an officer has written:

"It was pointed out to us that with our limited establishment we existed primarily for the instruction of the Non-Permanent Active Militia. This was literally true. All officers and non-commissioned officers from corporal up were trained as instructors. They were very popular and were in constant demand. They ran the Officers Training courses at the western universities, the Royal and Provisional schools and the Small Arms School at Calgary.

"We usually were able to go to camp about May 24th to carry out small arms training. Then away we went to schools and to the Non-Permanent Active Militia until the end of September. Those not employed on such duties went back to Winnipeg

and Victoria for guard duties and whatever recruit training was possible.

"The leave season then came along and by the time that was over Christmas and the New Year were upon us. We almost always had fifty or sixty Training Corps cadets with us for the week between Christmas and New Year. In January, February, March and April we had the Provisional Schools and the Royal Schools to run—the Provisional Schools at outlying places and the Royal Schools living with us in barracks. The Permanent Force officers also had to find time to study for their own promotion examinations, which were a constant headache, and the odd one of us going up for the Staff College examination."

Records of the period reveal piteous lacks of equipment and bodies. There were no mortars until an officer had wooden models made at his own expense; they of course were only of classroom value. At one time there were as many as seven Mills grenades available; an unnamed scoundrel filched some of them for illicit fishing and thereafter tennis balls were used for bombing practice. For drill purposes ropes and stakes were used to designate platoons and sections; a soldier with a flag represented a headquarters, a soldier with a team of horses a company. It was well into the nineteen-thirties before the first motor vehicles—two fifteen-hundredweight trucks and two motor cycles—were issued.

In 1927 it was found possible for the Manitoba and British Columbia companies to train together; they spent a month at Sarcee Camp near Calgary. On September 19th of that year there was an item in the Regimental log which reflected the slow pulse of Canadian military affairs. "Unit finally equipped" it read "with 1919 equipment."

In 1927 Lieut.-Colonel Willetts completed his period of command and Lieut.-Colonel Ten Broeke took over. In the following year regimental training again was possible at Sarcee Camp; in addition "B" Company was able to participate in combined manoeuvres at Maple Bay with the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force.

In 1929 the Wall Street crash ended the era of easy money and Canada plunged into an economic depression which lasted for four years and which created political divisions that plagued the Dominion until the eve of the outbreak of the Second World

War. Military expenditures were drastically cut; in 1932/33 the already meagre vote for the Services was sliced by a third and camp training was greatly curtailed. In 1931 (perhaps as an economy measure) "A" Company and Headquarters Company marched 124 miles from Fort Osborne Barracks to Camp Hughes, covering the ground in the good time of 47 hours and 20 minutes. During the training camp period the Patricias received a welcome accession of equipment in the form of six Carden-Lloyd carriers.

During 1932 the Patricias twice provided Guards of Honour for the Governor-General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of Bessborough GCMG. In this year Lieut.-Colonel Ten Broeke completed his period of command and was succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven. Two years later RSM T. J. Turnbull after more than forty years' distinguished service passed to well-earned retirement. In the same year there arrived a subaltern, Lieut. C. B. Ware, who was destined to play a leading role in Regimental affairs in years to come.

It was a saddening circumstance that in the period between the wars it became necessary for the Canadian civil authorities to invoke military aid on a number of occasions. In such tasks the Patricias shared. In 1923 troops were dispatched to Sydney, where a coal-miners' strike had created an ugly situation. In 1931 the Winnipeg companies were called out twice against riotous crowds of unemployed. It also became necessary to use troops to restore order at Prince Albert penitentiary. In the spring of 1932 "B" Company was sent from Victoria to Vancouver to support the civil authorities but fortunately the situation improved overnight and military aid was not required.

APPOINTMENTS AND DISTINCTIONS

Bit by bit the Regiment accumulated its characteristic and significant appointments and distinctions. The original Colour presented by H.R.H. The Princess Patricia of Connaught was a Camp Colour and as such was unacceptable to the College of Heralds for purposes of registration. Moreover, like many of the men who had marched behind it and had sung its praises throughout four years of world war, it was a bit frayed at the end of its period of field service. As a consequence it was encased and retired as the Regiment's most precious possession. In 1922 a second Colour was obtained, which was presented to the Regiment on parade at Winnipeg by the Viscount Byng of

Vimy, Governor-General of Canada. At the same time he gave the Regiment a Silk Union Flag for use as a King's Colour.

In 1924 the regimental alliance with The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) was consummated. This unit had been the regiment of H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught and also that of the Patricias' second commander, Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Buller. Its 4th Battalion had proved great comrades in the Patricias' earliest formation, 80th ("Stonewall") Brigade. It was a proud and happy association.

In 1924 also ceremonial dress, consisting of scarlet tunics and blue trousers, was authorized. In the following year, on the anniversary of Frezenberg, the first annual Trooping the Colour took place at Fort Osborne Barracks, with the Founder taking the Salute.

In 1929 the Battle Honours of the Great War of 1914/18 were announced:

To be borne on Colours and Appointments:

YPRES 1915, '17: FREZENBERG: MOUNT SORREL: FLERS-COURCELLETTE: VIMY 1917: PASSCHENDAELE: AMIENS: SCARPE 1917: PURSUIT TO MONS: FRANCE AND FLANDERS 1914-18.

On June 15th 1933 by General Order a new cap badge was authorized. The description of the officer's badge ran "An annulus or Crown in silver, the cypher and coronet in gilt. Within the annulus inscribed PRINCESS PATRICIA'S CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY and ensigned with the Imperial Crown, the Cypher and Coronet of H.R.H. Princess Patricia pierced." The design was identical for other ranks, but in solid metal. In 1948 the other ranks badge became identical with the officer's badge but with the metals reversed.

On April 14th 1934 the Earl of Bessborough, Governor-General of Canada, at a parade in the Minto Street Armouries in Winnipeg, presented the Regiment with new Colours acceptable to the College of Heralds. The old Colours were deposited for safe-keeping in All Saints Church, Winnipeg.

THE DARKENING SCENE

For Canadians the nineteen-thirties was a saddening and frustrating decade. During those years the dominion which had come so proudly to nationhood on the battlefields of France

and Flanders showed cracks in its foundations and seemed to many to be heading for disintegration. By 1933 half of the wage-earners of the Canadian cities were unemployed; for seven years crop failures and lost markets beggared the prairies and wheat fell to its lowest price since the Middle Ages. In the wake of this distress came new and disturbing political divisions. The provinces were at cross-purposes; local and selfish issues strained the bonds of Confederation. Nor had the Statute of Westminster created the new and superior association which was expected to replace the Empire. Four years later the prestige of the Crown, the remaining official tie of the Commonwealth, was shaken by the abdication of King Edward VIII. Disruptive forces seemed to be in the ascendant; there were splits in the old political parties, violence and bloodshed in unemployed and labour demonstrations; the virus of authoritarian despotism could be detected in the agitations and intrigues of strong minority groups in all the English-speaking nations.

Month by month the world situation worsened. The Japanese seized Manchuria, the Italians invaded and conquered Ethiopia; Germany, Italy and Russia alike used the Spanish Civil War for field trials of new weapons. The rule of law and the impulse to decency seemed to be dying out in international relationships. Great Britain, after abasing herself in the cause of peace, slowly came to know that to appease dictators was like feeding meat to wolves—the appetites were insatiable. As a nation blessedly spared from the main currents of disruption and violence Canadians watched the world scene with bewilderment, until it grew certain that the old days were gone forever. It was all too evident that in the not too distant future the free nations of the world would come under challenge and there would be no salvation save in weapons and in ability and willingness to use them.

CANADA — A DEFENSELESS NATION

At the beginning of 1929 Major-General A. G. L. McNaughton had been appointed Chief of the Canadian General Staff. In 1935, when the political skies were darkening, he submitted a comprehensive memorandum upon "The Defence of Canada." Therein he pointed out that the Dominion was to all intents and purposes defenseless. There was not a single modern anti-aircraft gun in Canada. Available field guns of 1914/18 types were outranged by from 3,000 to 6,000 yards by more modern weapons; they were not suitable for mechanical traction; there

was only sufficient ammunition for ninety minutes firing at normal rates. The Canadian coast defenses were obsolescent; some of the big guns could not fire more than a dozen rounds without danger. There were no armoured cars or tanks in Canada and no tractors for hauling heavy field equipment. There were only 25 aircraft of service types in Canada and there were no serviceable air bombs at all.

The Minister of National Defense in a letter to the Prime Minister characterized this shortage of weapons and equipment as "a most astonishing and atrocious" condition. He advised an immediate quadrupling of the defense estimate to \$66,000,000. This "staggering figure" was rejected but the former insignificant vote was increased to some extent. Little of the increase, however, came the way of the Permanent Force. On March 31st 1935 it numbered 3,509 of all ranks. On March 31st 1939, with war a matter of months away, it only had sufficient funds for 4,169 of all ranks.

Nevertheless from 1937 onward, as the pace of Nazi aggression quickened—when Hitler's bullies clumped into Austria, when Czechoslovakia was overrun, when Britain, still lamed by the losses of the last war, imposed compulsory service in peacetime for the first time in her long history—there was increasing recognition by the Canadian Government that something must be done. In 1936 the Non-Permanent Active Militia had been reorganized and its training facilities expanded. Coast defenses were placed in work and a booklet of mobilization instructions was issued. A start had been made upon armoured forces in 1936 when each of the Permanent Force units was asked to contribute a number of officers and non-commissioned officers as the nucleus of a Tank Corps. Among the Patricia nominees was Major F. F. Worthington MC MM, who had been on staff duties since 1932 and Lieut. J. G. Andrews, for several years Senior Subaltern of the Regiment. Major Worthington, who was selected as the first Commandant of the Canadian Tank School (afterwards the Armoured Fighting Vehicles School) went on to command 4th Canadian Armoured Division during the Second World War. Lieut. Andrews afterwards was killed in action at Dieppe while in command of the 14th Army Tank Regiment (Calgary Regiment).

But all this was no more than groundwork; Canada was little better prepared to pull her weight in a world conflict than in

1914. In the words of a Canadian Military Historian: "The greatest single point of weakness in 1939 was equipment. The arms available were almost entirely of 1914/18 pattern; the units, whether of Permanent Force or the Non-Permanent Active Militia, possessed virtually no transport whatever, although the war now beginning would clearly be the most highly mechanized in history. One specific item of equipment may be mentioned as exemplifying the general situation. Until 1938 the Canadian military forces did not possess a single tank. In that year two light tanks were received from England. Fourteen more arrived in 1939, on the actual eve of the declaration of war."*

With hundreds of thousands of hungry young men hitch-hiking about the country in a desperate search for employment and with the portents multiplying that a new and terrible war was in the making, it might have seemed a propitious moment for a recruiting drive, since soldiers at least are housed and fed. The old tradition, however, that military forces in peacetime were a luxury and a reproach to a democratic community, died hard. Although Canada had been forced into a substantial programme of unemployment relief it was not deemed good policy to hire the workless to defend their country. The dole still was more respectable than the uniform.

THE REGIMENT AND THE CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Yet in spite of the non-military tradition of Canadians and of years of neglect and of short commons the Canadian Permanent Force units had survived and indeed had emerged with added prestige and stature. They had worn their cloak of poverty proudly and had made the best of it; they had won a place for themselves in the Canadian community; those who knew them wanted to see more of them. In the case of the Patricias the Band had played a notable role in keeping the Regiment in the public eye. It had been reconstituted under command of Capt. T. W. James, sometime of the Scots Guards; it consisted of highly qualified musicians, many of them graduates of Kneller Hall, the musical academy of the British Army. In 1924 it had played for six weeks at the Wembley Exhibition and afterwards had been invited to broadcast—an unusual honour in those days. Its quality was widely recognized; one of the leading London musical critics

* "The Canadian Army 1939-45"—C.P. Stacey. (The Queen's Printer, Hull.) On declaration of war there were only 29 Bren Guns and four two-pounder anti-tank guns in all Canada.

referred to it as a "wind orchestra." In later years it toured the United States, where it was equally well received. Before unionism restricted its services it was freely available for public and benevolent functions and so became a community asset. Officers and men of the Regiment, on returning from the long and wearying route marches which were the cheapest (and perhaps the most depressing) form of training, could rely on the Band meeting them a mile or more from barracks or encampment and playing them in—a service of no small consequence to tired men.

In sports the Patricias also had earned a fine reputation. In 1920 Cpl. A. Prudhomme had returned from the Olympic Games at Antwerp with the world's amateur middleweight boxing title. There were many fine athletes in the Regiment in the period between the wars, including among the officers Lieut. H. J. Farrer, who was killed in a regrettable accident on the rifle ranges, and Lieut. H. F. Cotton, a well-known boxer and Canadian football player. In field and track sports, in games and competitions, the Regimental teams showed to advantage; they won well or they lost well. A Regimental Rifle Association was formed as early as 1921 and thereafter it became a powerful auxiliary of the training programme. Its teams usually distinguished themselves; a leading member, Lieut. A. W. Hunt MM, represented Canada at Bisley on a number of occasions.

From 1933 onward the log of the Patricias shows an increasing variety of community contacts and local responsibilities—a Guard of Honour here, a parade there, a memorial service, a gymnastic display, a smoking concert, a sports meeting, a Christmas party, a regimental dance. Weak though they were the companies took the lead and provided the touches of colour and of ceremonial that so many occasions demanded. In May 1935 the Regiment was much in evidence during the celebrations of the Silver Jubilee of their Majesties the King and Queen. On January 20th 1936 it again was in the public eye on the occasion of the death of His Majesty the King; in bitter winter it stood with arms reversed while a seventy-gun salute was fired. In 1936 it was represented at the unveiling of the Vimy Memorial and in the following year it was entrusted with numerous duties in connection with the coronation of His Majesty King George VI. Eight members of the Regiment were present on that memorable occasion. By such services (and many others of more local nature) the Regiment had become familiar and cherished. Local pride

in its achievements was growing; it now belonged to the British Columbia and Manitoba communities.

THE PACE QUICKENS

On February 16th 1937, at the conclusion of Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven's period of command, Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Colquhoun succeeded him. It was a busy year, for now it had been realized that the frightening noises from over the horizon were a challenge not only to the British Commonwealth but to all free peoples. In 1936 the plan for the reorganization of Canadian defenses, a task to which Major-General McNaughton had devoted himself for more than five years, reached the floor of the House of Commons. Its proposals were accepted and a Cabinet Defense Committee was set up. The national defense appropriation in 1937/38 increased by nearly 50% to \$17,222,804. In the ensuing year it was doubled. War was coming and unless Canadians turned their backs upon their past they would be in it.

BUSY YEARS

Throughout 1937/38 therefore there was a welcome ferment in military affairs. Patricia officers and other ranks were almost constantly employed in specific duties rather than in routine employments. They were at camps and at courses at Royal Schools for the Non-Permanent Active Militia, or on courses in Great Britain, or else they were engaged in ceremonials or competitions. A number of promotions came through and there were many transfers between Esquimalt and Winnipeg. The Colonel-in-Chief's birthday and the anniversary of Frezenberg now were dates upon which the public was not to be denied its share in the celebrations.

On March 26th 1937 "B" Company provided a Guard of Honour for the Officer Commanding the America and West Indies Squadron of the Royal Navy, Commodore N. H. Harwood OBE, who flew his flag in H.M.S. *Exeter*. Three years later officer and ship alike were in the world's eye because of the roles they played in hunting the German pocket battleship *Graf Spee* to its doom. On September 30th of that year "B" Company also provided the Guard of Honour for the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, during his visit to Victoria. In December "A" Company was on parade in connection with the opening of the Manitoba Legislature.



WINNIPEG, APRIL 14th 1934. — THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA, WITH OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT.

Front row, left to right: Capt. A. W. Hunt MM, Capt. J. H. Carvasso MC, Major D. A. Clarke MC, Major W. G. Colquhoun MC, His Excellency the Governor-General, Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven DSO MC, Capt. J. N. Edgar MC, Major J. W. H. Van Den Berg DSO, Capt. M. Isbester MC.

Back row, left to right: Lieut. P. B. Corisfine, Lieut. A. H. Fraser, Lieut. J. G. Andrews, Colonel P. J. Montague CMG DSO MC VD ADC, Capt. R. L. Mitchell, Capt. E. C. Colville ADC, Capt. R. F. L. Keller, Capt T. W. James, 2/Lieut. H. F. Cotton.



Miss Jenny MacGregor Morris for thirty-seven years has placed a wreath on the Cenotaph in Whitehall on Armistice Day in memory of the dead of the Regiment.



Broom-i-Loo—The Regimental Game.



Long Service Regimental Sergeant-Majors—
T. J. Turnbull and O. Gardner (afterwards Capt. O. Gardner)

In 1938 there were 700 guests at a ball on the occasion of the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday. The Trooping the Colour that year was accompanied by a presentation of medals and certificates; after the parade the officers and sergeants were At Home to their friends. That evening the Patricia Club held its annual dinner. Next morning there was a church parade, a service at the Cenotaph and a March Past, and in the afternoon the officers entertained past and present members of the Regiment.

In September 1938 the Regiment had an unusual but very welcome guest in the person of Miss Jenny Macgregor Morris. This tall Scotswoman had been brought to Canada for a triumphal tour by ex-Patricias, hundreds of whom had been her guests during the First World War at 34 Bedford Place in London. There she had transacted their affairs and had exercised such care over them that she had become known as the "London Mother" of the Regiment. During her tour of Canada she visited "B" Company in Victoria, where Major J. N. Edgar introduced her to all ranks; she was presented with flowers by Boy Shaw, the first boy to be enlisted in the Regiment. At Winnipeg a parade was held in her honour as well as a dance in Fort Osborne Barracks.

On September 16th of that year the Regiment learned that for the second time its teams had won both the Cambridge Challenge Bowl in the Permanent Force Rifle Competition and the Walker Challenge Cup in the Vickers Machine Gun competition—successes which elicited the congratulations of the Minister of National Defense and of the members of the Canadian Defense Council. On October 21st "B" Company provided a Guard of Honour for Rear-Admiral P. W. Nelles, Royal Canadian Navy—the first military guard for a Canadian naval officer of flag rank. On November 11th at the Winnipeg Cenotaph the excellence of the Regimental turnout received much favourable notice from the press. It was a portent of the times. Soldiers had begun to matter once more.

THE LAST MONTHS OF PEACE

Thoughtful Canadians now knew how thin on the ground their defenders stood, in a world in which unpredictable and predatory dictators were on the prowl. A number of new installations, such as barracks, training camps and airfields, had been provided under the unemployment relief measures but arms and other military equipment were hard to come by. The manpower situation

continued to be unsatisfactory. The Regimental establishment called for 773 of all ranks; with the defense appropriation four times what it had been four years before there still was only enough money available in 1938 to support 352 of all ranks.

When spring next came out of the south there was a whipping-up of Teutonic fury against Poland, as against Austria and Czechoslovakia a twelve-month before. Slow but deep anger grew in Great Britain and in the British Commonwealth and hardening resolution. The time had come to call a halt. Throughout Canada life went on much as before, except that each evening more people crowded around the radios, to learn how the day had gone in the chancelleries where war would be made or the peace preserved.

In Victoria and Winnipeg the Patricias were busy. On April 16th they crossed to Seattle to participate in the ceremonies attendant upon the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Washington. Three weeks later came their own celebration, when the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Regiment was honoured by a ceremonial parade. Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Hamilton Gault were present as guests of honour. The Founder presented the band with new drums and other instruments; that evening at a Regimental dinner Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun on behalf of the Regiment presented two silver rose bowls, one to the Colonel-in-Chief and the other to Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Hamilton Gault. The latter were entrusted with the delivery of the gift to Lady Patricia Ramsay in England.

At the end of May Their Majesties the King and Queen visited Western Canada. In these celebrations the Regiment was restricted to escort duties and traffic control. In Victoria the Regimental motor cycle escort under Capt. R. L. Mitchell made a brave show; the officers were to have been presented but events overlapped and Their Majesties conveyed their thanks at second hand. This visit was well-timed; against the background of anxiety and uncertainty the dignity and serenity of the King and Queen revealed the latent strength of the Commonwealth, now about to be put to its supreme test.

On August 21st, when Molotov and Von Ribbentrop signed perhaps the most dishonest alliance in history, the last impediment to war on the grand scale was removed and the alert went out to the German divisions arrayed on the Polish frontier. Concurrently

Canada made her first move; on August 25th 10,000 militiamen were called out to guard public buildings and strategic installations. The last days of peace brought none of the drama of 1914; yet if there was less emotion there was perhaps even greater resolution and unity in Canada than twenty-five years before.

THE DECLARATION OF WAR

On September 1st the Canadian Cabinet authorized the formation of an active service force of two divisions. A mobilization order was dispatched to all Permanent Force units, ordering recruitment to war strength immediately. On September 3rd Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun, returning post-haste from the Small Arms School at Calgary, addressed the Battalion in rousing terms. The die had been cast and after a quarter-century the Patricias again would take the field for the Empire and Commonwealth. On September 7th the Canadian House of Commons met in special session. Three days later Canada declared war on Germany.

Of First World War officers there remained, in addition to the Commanding Officer, Major J. N. Edgar MC, in command of "B" Company at Esquimalt, Major E. MacG. MacBrayne MC at Winnipeg and Major J. H. Carvosso MC at Esquimalt. Among officers immediately reporting for duty were Lieut.-Colonel M. R. Ten Broeke, Capt. D. A. Clarke, Capt. McG. F. Macintosh and Lieut. F. L. Appleton. On September 6th the following telegram was received from Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault in Great Britain: "For your information have cabled the Minister National Defence my services unreservedly at your disposal. Will return to Canada immediately if wanted. Otherwise propose to volunteer for service here." Lieut.-Colonel Ten Broeke was appointed Commandant of the Regimental Depot, Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault was given command of the Canadian Reinforcement Depot in Great Britain and Capt. Macintosh took over at the Small Arms School at Calgary. The services of a number of other former officers also were accepted and six warrant officers were recommended for immediate commissions. Among them was RSM J. T. Harper, who was replaced by RSM O. Gardner, whose regimental service dated from 1923. From all parts of Canada telegrams flowed in from ex-Patricias, offering their services.

On September 10th recruiting offices were opened in Winnipeg and Vancouver and officers were dispatched on the same mission

to outside points. A flow of recruits began. By the end of September "A" Company under Capt. H. F. Cotton was at full strength and "C" Company, newly reactivated, was nearing strength under command of Capt. J. R. G. Sutherland. Headquarters Company under Major R. L. Mitchell also was rounding into shape. "There is a complete absence of jingoism and war excitement," reported a recruiting officer. "Men are volunteering with full realization of their responsibilities." At the beginning of October Major G. E. Walls took charge of recruiting and Major McBrayne became Second-in-Command of the Regiment.*

As a result of a survey conducted in the summer of 1939 by the National Research Council a number of equipment contracts had been placed in Canada prior to the outbreak of the war. Deliveries from such sources, however, could not be expected for months to come; as a result either the dispatch of the Canadian forces must be delayed or arrangements made to obtain British equipment. On September 19th Canada announced her willingness to "organize and train a division to be available as an Expeditionary Force, if and when required." On September 28th the dispatch overseas of 1st Canadian Division at an early date was announced and Major-General A. G. L. McNaughton CB CMG DSO was designated as its commander.

THE PERIOD OF MAKE-READY

On October 4th all resistance ceased in Poland. Great Britain and France, having hurriedly deployed their forces, braced themselves for the shock of the German assault. It did not come; an ominous peace reigned over the Franco-German frontier. It was a welcome respite and nowhere more than in Canada, for battalions cannot be conjured out of empty air. By the end of October the Patricias were virtually up to strength; their lacks, however, both in equipment and in specialists, were legion. Fort Osborne Barracks was crammed to bursting, more than 400 men being accommodated in the indoor drill hall. When on November 8th General McNaughton arrived for his first inspection his keen eye saw shortages on every side. In congratulating all ranks on their turnout he declared that missing

* Shortly after the outbreak of war the McGill University Contingent Canadian Officers Training Corps, which had played such a notable role in the raising of the University Companies in the First World War, was asked to supply a number of junior officers to the Regiment. In the selection of these candidates J. A. de Lalanne, O. B. Rexford and J. Gordon Nicholson took the lead; they were assisted by George C. McDonald, George S. Currie, E. Stuart McDougall, Orville S. Tyndale, Philip Mackenzie, W. E. C. Irwin, Gordon B. Glasco and A. R. Chipman.

items soon would be on hand. This promise was kept. At the end of October the first issue of the new battledress had arrived. It was regarded as both practical and smart but for a week the section leaders were harassed by men who appeared on parade dressed in every manner except the correct one.

Both in Victoria and in Winnipeg the citizens rallied generously to the support of the Patricias as they made ready for war. Ladies' auxiliaries and Patricia Clubs set to work to provide additional amenities for the men. A Winnipeg business man contributed commodious quarters for lounge and recreation rooms; others helped to furnish it. 2/Lieut. J. T. Harper undertook to organize a Regimental concert party, in the tradition of the Patricia party which became one of the elements of the famous "Dumbbells" of the First World War.

On October 26th the Colour was trooped to familiarize newcomers with the Regimental tradition. On November 1st the units of 2nd Canadian Brigade were named. In addition to the Patricias it contained the successors of those fine comrades of the First World War—49th Battalion, now the Edmonton Regiment—and the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, whose forebears had earned such a splendid reputation in the First World War as 16th and 72nd Battalions C.E.F. The Brigade commander was that outstanding soldier and former Patricia, Brigadier G. R. Pearkes VC DSO MC, with Major R. F. L. Keller of the Regiment as his Brigade Major.

At this juncture the Regiment was compelled to yield 18 officers, 7 Warrant Officers and 28 non-commissioned officers as instructors to training cadres. In addition Major J. H. Carvosso MC and Major A. W. Hunt MM were posted to staff duties; Major Carvosso afterwards took command of the South Alberta Regiment. As replacements, officers whose names recur again and again in the Regimental story arrived on transfer from other units. Among them were Capt. W. C. Murphy, Lieut. R. P. Clark and Lieut. V. E. C. Odlum from the British Columbia Regiment, Lieut. D. H. Rosser, Lieut. R. A. Starke and Lieut. John Ogilvie from the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment of Canada) and Lieut. R. A. Lindsay from the South Alberta Regiment.

On November 14th "B" and "D" Companies, 150 strong, moved out of Work Point Barracks at Esquimalt en route to

Winnipeg. They were reviewed before departure by the Hon. T. D. Patullo, Premier of British Columbia; a crowd of several thousands assembled to see them on their way. At Vancouver they were played from the dock by the Seaforth pipers and were entertained at dinner before entraining. At Edmonton they were met by Brigadier Pearkes and by Lieut.-Colonel Louis Scott MC DCM, one of the almost legendary figures of the First World War.

On November 22nd another former officer, Hon./Capt. and Chaplain R. A. Paton, was posted to 2nd Canadian Brigade and attached to the Regiment. November 30th saw a second Trooping the Colour; whereafter the Colour was deposited in All Saints Church for the period of service abroad.

THE DEPARTURE

The move was imminent. On December 5th 2nd Canadian Brigade Headquarters passed through Winnipeg on its way to port of embarkation. That same day an advance party of the Patricias left for Great Britain. Four days later a Regimental concert drew three thousand citizens of Winnipeg to the Auditorium. On December 9th the Patricias' movement order came through. There followed a busy week of preparations. On the afternoon of December 17th large crowds assembled to watch the Regiment entrain and to wish Godspeed to men whom Manitobans now regarded as peculiarly their own.

The two troop trains were well found and the three-day passage to Halifax uneventful. 1st Canadian Division was crossing in three flights, the first of which had already arrived in Great Britain. On the afternoon of December 21st, under an overcast sky with flurries of snow the Regiment, 26 officers and 781 other ranks strong, embarked. The officers' embarkation roster was as follows:*

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS—Officer Commanding—Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Colquhoun MC: Second-in-Command—Major J. N. Edgar MC: Adjutant—Capt. H. F. Cotton: Asst/Adjut—2/Lieut. R. S. E. Waterman: Medical Officer—Capt. C. E. Corrigan: Paymaster—Capt. F. L. Appleton: Hon/Capt. and Chaplain—R. Paton, Regimental Sergeant-Major—O. Gardner.

"A" COMPANY—Major R. A. Lindsay, Lieut. G. R. Corkett.

* Capt. C. B. Ware, Lieut. R. Dawson, Capt. and Quartermaster A. G. Meachem and 15 other ranks already were in the United Kingdom.

"B" COMPANY—Major H. E. Molson, Lieut. J. S. Townsend,
Lieut. A. M. Caesar.

"C" COMPANY—Capt. J. R. G. Sutherland, Lieut. R. P. Clark,
Lieut. J. A. Early.

"D" COMPANY—Capt. W. C. Murphy, Capt. J. D. Ogilvie, Lieut.
E. G. Eakins.

REINFORCEMENT COMPANY—Capt. R. A. Starke, Capt. V. E. C.
Odlum, Lieut. J. D. C. Holland, Lieut. R. G. Woodward-
Jewsbury.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY—Capt. R. L. Mitchell, Lieut. D. H.
Rosser, Lieut. L. H. Young, 2/Lieut. J. T. Harper.

The Patricias shared commodious quarters on H.M.T. *Orama*, a luxury liner from the Australian run, with 27th Field Battery RCA. The convoy consisted of fast and great ships, including the *Reino del Pacifico*, flagship of a South American line, the *Almanzora*, and the *Andes*, popular River Plate liners, and other well-known vessels. The escort included H.M.S. *Revenge*, the French battleship *Dunkerque* and cruiser *Gloire* and a number of British and Canadian destroyers. As the ships got under way all ranks lined the rails and that most moving of all farewells, the last cheers for the country of birth, rang out as the convoy moved slowly down the harbour and sought the open sea.

THE ARRIVAL

For five days the weather held fair, but in mid-ocean a strong blow set the ships to bucketing. On the seventh day the convoy was picked up by a supplementary escort of Royal Navy destroyers for the dangerous passage through the Western Approaches. At 0500 hours on December 30th the convoy passed the boom in the Clyde and in light fog steamed up to Greenock, cheering its escort as the naval craft, their mission concluded, veered away. Landings began soon after lunch and by 1600 hours the troop trains were on their way to the south.

Next morning they drew in at Farnborough, in the Aldershot area twenty miles to the southwest of the outskirts of London. Here Brigadier Pearkes and Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault were waiting. The companies of the first train were played out of the station by the Kneller Hall Band and en route to barracks Major-General Broad, Aldershot Commander, took the salute. At

0930 hours the Patricias arrived at Morval Barracks at Cove, two miles to the northwest of Farnborough. It was bitterly cold, all the pipes were frozen and only small paraffin heaters were available. In frigid discomfort the Patricias saw in their first New Year on service abroad.

There was no chill, however, in the British welcome. On December 18th Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, had announced in felicitous terms the arrival of the first flight of the Canadian Division. His Majesty the King had sent a message of simple dignity: "The British Army will be proud to have as comrades-in-arms the successors of those who came from Canada in the Great War and fought with a heroism which has never been forgotten." His subjects hastened to add their tributes; the *Daily Express* greeting was typical of scores of others:

"The Canadians are here. Britain awakes today with a contingent of Canadian troops encamped in her midst. All night long there has been flashing around the world a message of gladness in every free heart, announcing the first token of the vast gathering might of the Empire."

The enemy also had noted the arrival. The German radio commentator, Hans Fritsche, with condescension and crocodile tears mourned over "the lies which must have been told to these honest Canadian soldiers if they believe that they are defending civilization by fighting against Germany."

Immediately on arrival Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun reported to the Colonel-in-Chief at Bagshot Park. On New Year's Day flowers were sent to her on behalf of the Regiment. On this pleasant note a tour of duty opened that was destined to last for more than three years.

CHAPTER TWO

THREE YEARS IN BRITAIN

The Patricias began their service abroad by thawing out the Morval Barracks water pipes. A similar operation might have benefited the war councils of the Allies. Partly from fear, partly from caution, partly because the British Commonwealth was unready and France had little desire ever to be ready, the situation on the Western front after the first four months of war could be described fairly as a 'deep freeze.' 'The Twilight War' and 'The Phoney War' were current terms of derision; Mr. Churchill, with his keener insight, has labelled this period "The Sinister Trance." On January 15th 1940 the British statesman gave vent to his exasperation by naming eight major frustrations—attitudes of mind which he encountered among his colleagues and which in resolution amounted to "Let us do nothing for the present." This apathy impelled him to a sombre conclusion: "Under the present arrangements we shall be reduced to waiting upon the terrible attacks of the enemy, against which it is impossible to prepare in every quarter simultaneously without fatal dissipation of strength. I have two or three projects moving forward, but all I fear will succumb to the tremendous array of negative arguments and forces."

The Western powers soon learned that the enemy was of different temper. On January 19th 1940 a German air courier made a forced landing in Belgium. His papers were impounded and eventually reached the Allies. They contained full particulars of Hitler's plans for the spring—the violation and seizure of Holland and Belgium and the outflanking of the Maginot Line by a sweep into France through the Low Countries. Yet even with this foreknowledge of German intentions no steps were taken to extend the Maginot defenses to the North Sea. The Belgians refused to be a party to any arrangement with the Allies and French leaders took refuge in the assumption that the captured documents were part of a deception plan to distract attention from other sectors of the front. Thus the torpor and defeatism of a 'Do-Nothing' policy prepared for the tragedy to come.

FINDING THEIR FEET

For the Patricias, however, nothing more tragic than colds and influenza marked their first months in Britain. Training syllabi were issued and after five days' leave all ranks went to work with a will. The initial plan called for four weeks' unit training and five weeks' formation training. According to Orderly Room rumours 1st Canadian Division must be prepared to take the field not later than March 1st.

In addition to other training considerable attention was given to respirator drills as rumours of ARTHUR, a new and frightful gas, were prevalent. Bit by bit missing items of equipment—motor cycles, weapon carriers, new pattern helmets—began to arrive and the training of specialist sections was stepped up. The route marches lengthened out and night marching began. Companies competed for the available firing ranges; the cry was Musketry and More Musketry. Platoons were strengthened to ten men per section and ten additional officers were authorized. Boosey and Hawkes, the London musical supply house, loaned enough practice instruments to allow the stretcher-bearers, who had provided part of the peacetime Regimental band, to make music once more.

The weeks of unit training passed swiftly and although it became known that the early dispatch of 1st Canadian Division to France was improbable the Patricias, undeterred by foul weather, plunged into formation training. On March 3rd Brigade demanded the names of other ranks unlikely to become good soldiers as alternate employment awaited them. Proudly a negative report was submitted. There were no such soldiers in the Regiment.

The friendships and the camaraderie which are as much a part of the craft of soldiering as drills and disciplines were not neglected. On January 12th, on the occasion of the first Officers Mess Night in England, the guest of honour was Lieut.-Colonel A. E. Potts, a former officer of the Regiment who now commanded the Saskatoon Light Infantry. The officers of the Edmonton Regiment also were present. On the following day Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun and a number of his officers were guests of H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught and had the pleasure of meeting the Lady Patricia Ramsay. On January 24th, on the occasion of his inspection of 1st Canadian Division, all officers on parade were presented to His Majesty the King.

On February 10th the Colonel-in-Chief, for the first time in twenty-one years, came to inspect her Regiment. She was escorted from Bagshot House by a motor-cycle escort under command of Major R. L. Mitchell. On arrival at the saluting base she was met by Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault. After a thorough inspection the Regiment marched past in column of platoons and afterwards formed hollow square. Following the Colonel-in-Chief's address she was photographed with her officers. A reception followed and that evening the Regiment entertained a distinguished gathering which included the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, the Agent-General of British Columbia, the Divisional and Brigade commanders, representatives of the Aldershot Command and a large number of former Patricia officers now resident in Great Britain or serving with other units. Among them were Major-General R. T. Pelly and Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven, former commanding officers of the Regiment.

On February 22nd a number of officers attended the memorial services in Westminster Abbey for Lord Tweedsmuir, late Governor-General of Canada. Distinguished visitors continued to turn up at Cove; among them were Lady Frances Ryder (who as in the First World War had mobilized hundreds of United Kingdom hostesses to entertain Canadian soldiers) and Lord Minto, son of a former Governor-General of Canada.

By the end of March the Regiment was rounding into shape. It was not yet up to strength on its expanded establishment, but it was well advanced in primary training and it had been rendered more mobile by the arrival of its first consignment of Canadian vehicles. This matter of wheels was important, for evidence was growing that the anticipated German offensive might contain a number of surprises. On March 26th an intelligence report dealt with the possibility of diversionary attacks upon the East Anglian coast in conjunction with a massive offensive on the Continent. In such contingency a lorry-borne infantryman would be worth two foot-sloggers.

At this time the Scandinavian countries were under close scrutiny. The efforts of the Royal Navy to cut off Swedish iron ore shipments to Germany, the widespread desire to send help to Finland in her stand against the Russian invaders, the thrilling rescue of three hundred British prisoners from the *Altmark* in a boarding action in a Norwegian fjord, all suggested the

possibility of the extension of the war into the far north—a prospect of considerable interest to the Patricias, since there the terrain and the climate would be more familiar to Canadians than to other Commonwealth forces.

HITLER STRIKES IN NORWAY

When the attack came, Mr. Churchill's description—"surprise, ruthlessness and precision"—summarized the enemy operations. On April 10th, forty-eight hours after the first Trojan Horse assault, the principal Norwegian ports were in German hands and the spring campaign had opened with a resounding Allied disaster.

With Denmark and southern Norway gone Great Britain resolved to fight for what remained. Two strong brigade groups were landed in Central Norway at Andalsnes and Namsos, to the north and south of Trondheim; if the Germans could be ousted from this latter port, northern Norway and the invaluable ore port of Narvik might be denied to them.* With these groups closing up from either side a frontal attack on Trondheim was planned and on April 16th 1st Canadian Division was asked to provide troops for this operation. Eight detachments of 100 men would land from destroyers on Trondheim Fjord with the mission of capturing the forts which guarded the entrance to the harbour. Thereafter two battalions of the Guards supported by French Chasseurs Alpins would seize the port and airfield. General McNaughton nominated the Patricias and the Edmonton Regiment for this task force—a signal honour which would have committed these battalions in the first Allied land offensive of the war.

The Canadian contingent had been increased to 1,300 of all ranks, which was more or less the complete rifle strength of the Patricias and the Edmontons. The force would be commanded by Colonel E. W. Sansom DSO, formerly of the Royal Canadian Regiment, with Major R. F. L. Keller as his Brigade Major.

Time was the essence of this project and on the evening of April 18th the Patricias marched to Farnborough station and entrained under the eye of General McNaughton, who had come to wish them good hunting. In mid-afternoon on the following

* The Central Norwegian Force was under command of Major-General Carton de Wiart VC CB CMG DSO, one of the most famous of British soldiers. He had been wounded eleven times in three campaigns. He was an old personal friend of Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault.

day they detrained at Dunfermline, beyond the Firth of Forth to the north of Edinburgh. They marched five miles into a rough-and-ready encampment where Arctic equipment—sleeping bags, leather jerkins and other specialist gear—was issued. The officers immediately were called to a conference at which embarkation instructions and special charts of the Trondheim area were issued. Norwegian interpreters had been attached before leaving Cove; in addition, a fair number of Patricias knew something of the Norse tongue.

The first rum issue of the war on the night of April 20th was taken as proof that OPERATION HAMMER was under way. The Patricias, excited at the prospect of action, were not to know that an extraordinary series of accidents had delayed the departure of the expedition and so had destroyed its usefulness. The first officer appointed to command the Trondheim force suffered a stroke in a London street. His replacement was seriously injured in a crash landing while flying to Scotland to take over. The delays attendant upon these accidents led to a reappraisal of the operation at the Admiralty and at the War Office, in the course of which the planners reversed their opinions as to the prospects of the enterprise. On April 21st the Patricias received a stand-down order.

A second expedition, for the purpose of seizing Narvik, was in course of organization. It seemed possible that the Patricias and the Edmontons might be included in this force. For eight days therefore the two battalions remained in suspense. The embarkation camp was acutely uncomfortable; it had begun to rain on the evening of April 20th and thereafter the encampment was a quagmire. At this juncture the Patricias' cooks rose heroically to the occasion. An officer wrote:

"In a swamp at the foot of our hillside, without an atom of cover from the heavy rain and the chilling winds, they turned out meals that are still gratefully remembered by all ranks. Several were forced to go sick, but the others stuck to their job with never a complaint, with never a request that a meal should be postponed and with a hot drink always ready for any man who came by."

On April 24th the special stores and equipment of the expedition were turned in and on the following evening the disappointed Patricias entrained for return to Cove, in an atmosphere, according to their Commanding Officer, of "gloom, gloom and gloom."

THE CONTINENT ERUPTS

Intensified training was resumed immediately on return. On May 8th the anniversary of Frezenberg was fittingly celebrated at the Polo Club grounds at Fleet, which had been loaned for a Regimental Field Day. The Colonel-in-Chief was present and presented the prizes. Next morning a number of officers went on leave, to be recalled peremptorily twenty-four hours later. The Continental front had erupted: without warning or declaration of war German armies had burst into Holland and Belgium in a wide sweep around the exposed flank of the Anglo-French forces arrayed behind the Maginot Line.

All troops in the Aldershot area stood to and immediately went over to the local security programme—continuous day-and-night duties, rigid black-outs, anti-parachute and anti-aircraft patrols. For those uncommitted to such duties training continued with a fresh urgency, for the news from across the Channel was not good and it seemed certain that the call for 1st Canadian Division would not be long delayed. On May 20th the Patricias moved by road convoy to Salisbury Plain for a week's exercises in conjunction with the other units of 2nd Canadian Brigade. There attacks, withdrawals and counter-attacks were rehearsed in full realization that 200 miles to the east these same manoeuvres were in progress in such deadly earnest that they might change the history of the world. On May 26th the Patricias embussed to return to Cove. On arrival a significant order was issued. Only essential equipment was to be taken from the vehicles.

THE FRENCH COLLAPSE

In a fortnight the Western allies had passed from high confidence to deadly peril. The Dutch resistance had lasted for only five days. British and French divisions, deploying swiftly into the northeast, linked up with the Belgian army; the combined forces, although giving ground at the initial onslaught, fought well. But while the northern flank firmed up the centre collapsed; ten German armoured divisions struck in the Ardennes and virtually destroyed the French Ninth Army. Through a broad corridor the invaders poured into France, taking great risks in order to end the war in a single stroke.

The British Expeditionary Force, strong and full of fight, proposed joint counter-offensives against the panzer columns, British divisions attacking from the north, French divisions from

the south and so taking the enemy between two fires. Such plan was accepted but in Paris and at French General Headquarters the determination to fight it out was fading fast. In his day-to-day reports Brigadier Sir Edward Spears, British representative at French Headquarters, revealed the intrigues and confusions, the deep-rooted sickness of mind and purpose, which were destined to ruin France. On the eve of the day that the Patricias returned from Salisbury Plain General Lord Gort, commanding the British forces on the Continent, was impelled to an agonizing decision. He had launched the arranged counter-attack on the German right flank with considerable local success but the complementary French attack from the south had never developed. In his rear the Germans had broken through the Belgian front and in a matter of hours the British divisions would be trapped between hammer and anvil. There was only one hope—a fighting withdrawal to the Channel ports and the embarkation of those who were fortunate enough to reach the beaches.

At such a tragic juncture it seemed inevitable that 1st Canadian Division, eager and well-advanced in training, would find employment. On May 23rd General McNaughton had been called to London. There he was informed that it was proposed to make the Canadians responsible for the lines of communication between the present British positions on the north bank of the Somme and the Channel ports.

That evening the Canadian commander crossed to France. During the night the first flights of 1st Canadian Division (1st Canadian Brigade with ancillary units) embarked at Dover. On the following afternoon, having examined the situation at Calais and Dunkirk, General McNaughton returned to report the disaster to be beyond repair; reinforcements would be unable to restore the Allied front. In this view he was strongly supported by high officers of the General Staff. As a result 1st Canadian Brigade did not sail.

STRATEGIC RESERVE IN THE MIDLANDS

General McNaughton hastened to Aldershot to organize CANADIAN FORCE, a self-contained and mobile striking force for the defense of the United Kingdom. Four independent groups, each consisting of battalions with the status and equipment of flying columns, were set up for the purpose of intervening wherever

danger threatened. Response was rapid. Fresh equipment and vehicles arrived overnight and officers worked around the clock as they smoothed out the organization of the new formations.

On the evening of May 29th the Patricias took to the road. Next morning the small Northamptonshire town of Kettering discovered that guests had turned up during the night. A Patricia officer wrote:

"At 0500 hours our convoy stopped in a quiet street and we were told that we had arrived. Guides met each company (they had been quietly ferreted out of Cove on the previous evening) and led us to a pre-arranged area of the city. Whereupon, having made discreet enquiries, we learned that we were in Kettering and were about to be billeted on the unsuspecting and still sleeping inhabitants. This was a new experience for the troops and many were the cautionary words passed along to all ranks—barrack language of necessity must be curbed; every consideration must be extended to the householders on whom we were about to descend. The reputation of the Canadians was at stake.

"The good people of Kettering were more than kind. Troops were taken in, given good rooms, tea and in many instances breakfast, together with the freedom of the house. The magnificent reception of the Regiment is still the talk of the troops; we were glad to see that the feelings were mutual, as evidenced by an article in the local newspaper concerning the excellent behaviour of the Canadians."

The stay in Kettering was short; on the following day the Patricias moved into bivouac in Broughton Park, one of the seats of the Duke of Buccleuch, three miles outside the town. Here in ideal summer weather the Battalion camped under the magnificent old oaks. The serenity of the English countryside seemed worlds away from the struggle to extricate the French and British armies in northern France and the even more desperate efforts to save France from utter collapse. The first enterprise was destined to succeed, the second to fail. Between May 27th and June 4th, in one of the most remarkable episodes of military history, more than 800 craft of all categories, from destroyers to self-propelled canoes, converged on the beaches around Dunkirk. A quarter of them were sunk, but the remainder brought 338,226 British and Allied troops to safety.

Without delay plans were placed in train to send all available British and Commonwealth forces to France for the purpose of

ROUTE 100-1000

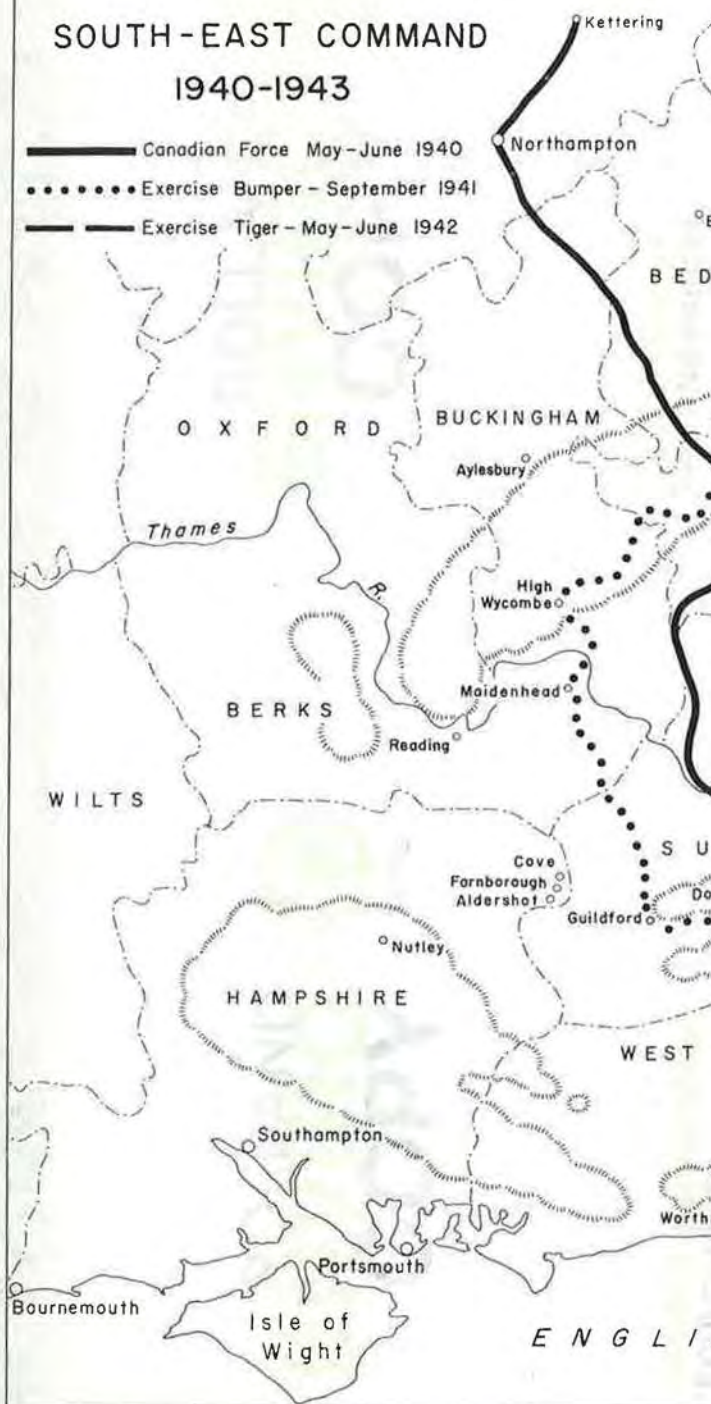
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SOUTH-EAST COMMAND 1940-1943

- Canadian Force May-June 1940
- Exercise Bumper - September 1941
- Exercise Tiger - May-June 1942





HUNTINGDON

S U F F O L K

C A M B R I D G E

Ipswich

F O R D

Colchester

Hitchin

E S S E X

Hertford

H E R T F O R D

M I D D L E S E X

L O N D O N

Thames R.

Margate

S U R R E Y

Canterbury

Nutfield Godstone Limpsfield Oxted

Maidstone

K E N T

S U S S E X E A S T

Standen

Brabourne

Blindley Heath

Edenbridge

Sellindge

Hassocks

Tunbridge Wells

Tenterden

Pyecombe

Lingfield

East Grinstead

Broadoaks

Brighton

Uckfield

Dallington

Hove

Barcombe

Lewes

Rottingdean

Willingdon

Bexhill

Hastings

Alfriston

Newhaven

Strait of Dover

Boulogne

S H A M P S H I R E

Scale of Miles

0 10 20 30 40

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SOUTH EAST
CAMP

1. 0-1000
2. 1000-2000
3. 2000-3000





establishing a new front in Brittany. On June 3rd the *Patricias* left Broughton Park for Kettering. Four days later they returned to the Aldershot area. The first flights of 1st Canadian Division already were on their way to embarkation ports; on June 11th 1st Canadian Brigade sailed from Falmouth.

On return to Cove the *Patricias* found their barracks occupied and they were obliged to bivouac. On the following day Their Majesties the King and Queen walked through the lines of 2nd Canadian Brigade. Their unruffled bearing mirrored the determination of the British races. Preparations for the move to France continued all day and far into the night. Serial numbers and divisional insignia went up on the vehicles over new coats of camouflage; sub-machine guns, iron rations, and maps of France were issued; the Divisional Order of Battle, complete with operational code names, was released; Battalion records and private papers were collected and stored with Aldershot Command. On the morning of June 12th the Battalion transport left for Falmouth to embark.*

THE CALL TO FREE PEOPLES

By now only indomitable leadership could have saved France and at this juncture the abscess in French public life spewed up defeatists and traitors who overwhelmed the few who would have fought on. On June 14th the Germans entered Paris. On the same day Lieut.-General Sir Alan Brooke, the British Commander in France, began to withdraw his forces toward the Normandy and Brittany ports. After a certain amount of confusion and excitement the Canadian units re-embarked without casualties but with serious losses of guns and equipment. Paul Reynaud, the able and courageous premier of France, resigned and Marshal Petain immediately signed an armistice that was tantamount to surrender. On June 18th—the anniversary of Waterloo—Winston Churchill put the deserted ally on the record in words which will echo down the centuries:

“What General Weygand called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy

* The only *Patricias* to reach France were Capt. and Quartermaster A. G. Meachem and his advance party. They landed at Brest—and promptly re-embarked.

must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister and perhaps more protracted by the lights of a perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.' "

Such a voice rang like a trumpet amid the hills. It was a challenge to the blood, so that the confusions and the compromises fell away and the issue was stark and clean. The British peoples were alone, yet they no longer were desperate; they had few weapons yet their courage rose.* As one man the Commonwealth and the Empire took up the challenge to see it through. There is no tribute too great for the English, Scots, Welsh and North Irish, who gladly offered their ancient lands as a battlefield for freedom and for the future of mankind. In the fine words of a Canadian historian:

"During the months that followed her (the British) armies dug and sweated on the beaches, the roads and the aerodromes. Her navy watched ceaselessly for the invader's barges; her splendid air force—already including many Canadians and superior to the enemy's in all save numbers—shot his attacking squadrons out of the heavens day after day. A new citizen army, the Home Guard, sprang into existence to meet the threat of battalions dropped from the sky; and in the factories, from one end of the country to the other, the workers of Britain bent their backs, seven days a week, to the task of replacing the arms and equipment lost in France." †

THE ONLY MOBILE FORCE IN BRITAIN

Movement orders to France for 2nd Canadian Brigade were cancelled on June 15th. The Patricias' transport, which had been

* Out of a thousand unforgettable stories of an indomitable people at bay, perhaps that of a certain East Anglian village best deserves to live. When sappers arrived to mine the roads the villagers insisted that the mines be laid at the entrance to the village. The sapper officer protested, pointing out that the roads should be cratered sufficiently far from the nearest houses to give the defenders a field of fire. "Fire? There be nowt to shoot with," said the village spokesmen. "Us want they Germans to come close, so that we can get at them with clubs and hayforks."

† "The Canadians in Britain 1939-1944" (The Queen's Printer, Hull).

loaded at Falmouth, arrived back at Cove on the following day. On June 20th CANADIAN FORCE was reconstituted and allotted the Oxford area as its base of operations. At an officers' conference General McNaughton defined its function as a central reserve operating on a 360° front. Together with two tank battalions and a few light armoured units it was the only mobile force that Britain possessed.

On the same day Brigadier Pearkes addressed all ranks of his Brigade. He told them that they no longer would have to go to the war; it would come to them. Britain now was a combatant area and the Canadians were the first line of defense. It was a well-timed address, for the impatience of everyone had mounted as great events passed them by. The conflict no longer was an affair of foreign fields. In the words of an English writer, "We are in the final and we shall play it out on the home grounds."

On the afternoon of June 23rd the Patricias embussed and moved northward around the outskirts of London. That evening they bivouacked in Wotton Park, 14 miles to the northeast of Oxford and half-way between the market towns of Bicester and Aylesbury. A camouflaged encampment was set up and entrenching was ordered; the men dug more earnestly on the fourth day, for on the previous night enemy aircraft had dropped bombs within a few miles of them. Troop carriers arrived to replace the civilian busses which had been employed previously and the Patricias began to practise quick moves about the countryside, such as might become necessary if in the dead of any night there came word of an enemy landing. Main and alternate routes were reconnoitred, assemblies and dispersals were practised, together with quick deployments off the line of march and the immediate mounting of counter-attacks.

At Wotton Park the Patricias were honoured by the first of a number of visits by Hon./Colonel T. McCarthy MC, beloved Patricia padre of the First World War and now Chief Roman Catholic Chaplain to the Canadian Forces.

THE NEW ARMIES

With astonishing rapidity Britain was transformed into an armed camp. New fighting formations sprang up everywhere and everywhere the dauntless spirit of battle prevailed. Millions, grasping whatever weapons came to hand, prepared to hold

the soil that had begotten them. Patricias whenever they come together will talk about those times. One will tell how the Home Guard, establishing the first crude road blocks, chose to place them near little hills, behind which their fellows waited with perambulators full of high explosives and incendiary bombs; the prams would be trundled over the crest and down into any enemies who might attack the road blocks. Another will tell of the security checks which were imposed; they were so rigid that one Canadian (if the story be true) compelled his own brother to establish his identification at the point of the bayonet by a cross-examination based upon the more intimate events of childhood. Strangers were regarded with cold suspicion and it was not good policy to be either witty or evasive when questioned. Nor slow in response; there was the case of Pte. Cameron, who considered the Asst./Adjutant to be pondering overlong and who put two bullets through that officer's windscreen in less time than it takes to tell it. There will also be stories of how there came to be code words for everything and of how some of the rear rank, entering into the spirit of the thing, devised peculiar terms for some of their simpler offices; these unfortunately have not been preserved on the record although they were as memorable for their ingenuity as for their indelicacy. Such is the incipient folklore of an occasion when a great company, bound by a single purpose and girt in the age-old garb of valour, asked for nothing better than to go down to a last battle for their cause. Doubtless such tales will grow with the years.

By the beginning of July three British divisions had been organized on a mobile basis after the style of CANADIAN FORCE. It was possible to create two corps—one to the north and the other to the south of the London metropolitan area. General McNaughton was given command of VII Corps, consisting of 1st Canadian Division, 1st British Armoured Division and the first flights of 2nd New Zealand Division. At the end of June CANADIAN FORCE left the Oxford area and occupied the Kentish downs on the southern outskirts of London. On July 2nd the Patricias arrived at Blackrobins Farm, in a wooded district to the south of the Maidstone-Guildford highway.

When the Divisional Commander moved up to command VII Corps, Brigadier Pearkes replaced him. In turn, Lieut.-Colonel A. E. Potts of the Saskatoon Light Infantry took over as commander of 2nd Canadian Brigade and Major R. F. L. Keller became GSOI of the Division.

THE GUARD ON THE NARROW SEAS

The Kentish coast, within sight of occupied France, offered the enemy his most favourable invasion beaches. Early British appreciations deemed that it might be possible for the Germans to land 10,000 men, but not more, in a single incursion either by sea or air; the problem of defense therefore was the destruction of forces of such size before they could be reinforced. Speed of movement—in getting under way, in arriving at threatened areas and in launching assaults before the intruders could dig in—therefore became the basis of infantry training. Reconnaissance squadrons equipped with motorcycle combinations were organized to race ahead and to engage the enemy in order to keep his forces off-balance until the main body of the defenders could arrive. The maze of Kentish highways, byways, lanes and tracks was explored and memorized in order that there might be no traffic jams if substantial forces were compelled to converge on any given area. In view of the great success of enemy armour in the Battle of France it seemed probable that the invaders would bring tanks with them. Numerous devices were introduced to deal with such menaces, some of them so odd as to evoke the comment "Heath Robinson."*

When on July 7th 2nd Canadian Brigade displayed its new battle wares all ranks were in tremendous fettle. The distinguished audience included Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Anthony Eden, General McNaughton and a number of officers of the General Staff.

On July 8th L/Cpl. G. Wilkinson and Pte. D. Cessford returned to Regimental duty with the distinction of having been the first Patricias in action against the enemy. For ten weeks they had been members of an anti-aircraft crew which had accompanied the British trawler fleet to the Iceland fishing grounds. There German aircraft and submarines were constantly on the prowl. It had been an exciting adventure.

On July 16th Hitler threatened Britain with invasion. Two days later he made a peace offer. Great Britain received such overtures with disdain; whereupon SEA LION, the German plan of invasion, went into effect. Neither the Wehrmacht nor the German Navy, however, was prepared to take full responsibility and the lead passed to the Luftwaffe, which was given the

* Heath Robinson was an ingenious illustrator who for many years displayed insane gadgets and incredible machines in the British weeklies.

task of establishing a bridgehead in Britain by means of the destruction of the Royal Air Force. The grand plan was to neutralize the fighter bases along the seacoast and gradually to extend control inland. Thereafter an invasion fleet, protected from the Royal Navy by minefields at the entrances to the Strait of Dover, would land 25 divisions on a front of 40 miles. The line Portsmouth-Guildford-Reigate-Gravesend was designated as the first enemy objective.

THE PATRICIAS BUCKLE DOWN TO IT

The concentration of German airpower began in July, the assembly of shipping for the seaborne invasion in August. Mr. Churchill's masterly narrative reveals that enemy moves usually were anticipated. In mid-July VII Corps altered its dispositions; as a result the Patricias on July 22nd moved to the Godstone area, about seven miles to the northeast of their previous location. The work now became extremely heavy; in addition to training, special defenses were under construction and there were many fatigues. The countryside began to sprout blockhouses camouflaged as cottages, shops, out-houses and even as telephone kiosks. Guns and tanks now were plentiful and various methods of "marrying up" infantry and support arms were tried out, amended, discarded, readopted and refurbished until in course of time they became practicable for use in battle. Of a characteristic training exercise a junior Patricia officer wrote:

"We got to bed at 0200 hours. Reveille was at 0315 hours. After breakfast we moved off to the attack. We marched five miles and crossed the start line on the stroke of 0500 hours. We were on our objective at zero plus 111 minutes.

"We marched back nine miles to an assembly area. It was decided that our company should be the enemy on the morrow, so we marched for another three miles to a wood and took up a position there. I sent my batman for a couple of bottles of beer and had a swim in a pool. The Quartermaster arrived with a hot dinner at 1100 hours.* This went well, as the boys had done a lot of work since their last meal at 0345 hours. Shortly after a message came from the Company Commander, telling us to pack up and come home. Within 35 minutes 100 men had

* Brigadier Colquhoun comments: "Our Quartermaster (Capt. Meachem) was always and continuously on the job."

packed blankets and equipment and had loaded them on the trucks. The boys are certainly a wonderful lot.* They sing all along the way and rather than let the Company down they will continue walking with big blisters on their feet."

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN OPENS

Air strikes on British objectives had begun in July and thereafter had increased in numbers and intensity. At Godstone the Patricias lay under one of the main flyways to London. Every few hours the sirens shrilled and all ranks took to their slit trenches. On several occasions the anti-aircraft platoons found targets and blazed into the blue. The first strikes near the Patricias were on the evening of July 28th when the Battalion was bivouacked in the countryside in preparation for a divisional exercise at dawn. Bombs were dropped in surrounding fields and a Molotov 'breadbasket' all but scored a direct hit on the Orderly Room truck, one incendiary bomb bouncing off the tree which sheltered it. Fires were started and the Patricias were at work on the flames before the civilian fire brigades arrived.

On August 1st there was a heavy strike on Croydon, nine miles to the north of Godstone. In the dog-fighting that followed two enemy aircraft were shot down in the Patricias' area; Lieut. A. M. Caesar captured one pilot and so gave the Battalion its first prisoner. On the following Sunday a church service attended by a number of officers was discontinued because of intense activity overhead. On August 16th attacks were made upon the Croydon and Kenley airfields. On one occasion the Patricias were obliged to remain in their slit trenches for several hours.

On September 6th the code words MOMENTUM FOUR HOURS came through—the signal for Stand-To for invasion.† All railway stations were placed out of bounds, all ranks were confined to camp areas and 50% of all officers and non-commissioned officers stood by for instant call at all times. Air activity was almost continuous. The Luftwaffe was suffering heavily but it might have succeeded by sheer weight of numbers; in a fortnight

* The Company Commander's note to his subaltern had a certain character. It ran: "ORDER, COUNTER-ORDER, DISORDER! Having attended the beatings of a moronic Brigade staff for the past hour the administrative genii of Tanbridge Hall, fearing to break their perfect record of inconsistency, have now decided to use a company of the Edmonton Regiment as enemy tomorrow. Pack up your collective charges and bring them home."

† The code word for "Invasion has Begun" was CROMWELL. This only went out to higher formations.

(August 24th/September 6th) a quarter of all Britain's fighter planes were shot down. On the nights of September 6th and 7th fleets of bombers pounded London, causing great damage and heavy casualties. Of railway stations Waterloo, Charing Cross, Baker Street and Fenchurch Street were knocked out; Victoria, London Bridge and Holborn Viaduct were only partially serviceable. On September 14th/15th the fighting rose to a savage crescendo; had Hitler continued to send his aircraft in equal numbers they soon would have found defenseless targets. Fortunately the Luftwaffe lacked the staying power and the "last quarter of an hour" went to Britain. On September 17th OPERATION SEA LION was postponed indefinitely.

While the battle raged the calm voices of the British broadcasters contrasted strangely with the impassioned tones of the American commentators as they drove home the implications of unrestricted warfare against great cities. A wave of anger, destined to have momentous consequences, swept the United States. In Britain the mood was grim but gay; bereft of allies and expecting after a thousand years a major invasion the British races drew together and gathered strength and courage out of their peril. The Patricias' records reveal that from the opening of the Battle of Britain the amenities offered by civilian neighbours multiplied. Reading rooms, club premises and sports fields were placed at the disposal of the Canadians; cinema shows and concert parties were available in ever-increasing numbers; in the pubs and in the homes the Canadians became less guests than kinsmen. At the same time the flow of comforts from the Women's Auxiliaries and Patricia Clubs in Canada increased. The Colonel-in-Chief continued at all times to be interested in the amenities and welfare of the Regiment.

The Patricias, standing at the alert, remained on the fringes of the battle. Nightly, peering to the north they saw the midnight sky flushed with an angry glare, for London was burning. On the night of August 24th their slit trenches had been machine-gunned, fortunately without casualties. On September 10th incendiary and high explosive bombs were dropped nearby and enemy chandelier flares lit up the camp area. Next morning a number of working parties were detailed to repair bomb damage. That day the Colonel-in-Chief visited the Regiment and lunched with the officers; during her visit the close-at-hand raid warning RED was received and it was necessary to take cover. That evening a heavy concentration of enemy aircraft crossed Godstone

and anti-aircraft guns opened on all sides. On the 13th Breboeuf Manor, where Patricia comforts were stored, was struck. Good fortune continued to attend the Regiment and there were no casualties. The spirit of all ranks rose in the face of the storm; like the British civilians, debonair under fire, every soldier knew that he was making history.

COLONEL COLQUHOUN LEAVES

On September 9th there had been a sad occasion inseparable from the profession of arms. Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun came on parade for the last time: he had been appointed to command a brigade in 3rd Canadian Division and was under orders to leave for Canada immediately. The inimitable 'Shorty,' soldier, sportsman and great companion, was the only 'Original' officer remaining; he would be sadly missed. Major J. N. Edgar MC, who had been temporarily in command of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, returned to take over command. Major H. F. Cotton also left for Canada at the same time to take up an appointment as Brigade Major. By a happy coincidence he was sent to Brigadier Colquhoun's brigade.

On September 18th the Patricias struck canvas and moved into billets in the Godstone and Lingfield areas. Battalion Headquarters was set up at the Clayton Arms in Godstone. Two nights later the area was heavily bombed and "D" Company of the Patricias was commended for its prompt aid in extinguishing fires. On the following night "A" Company and Headquarters Company areas were bombed, but Battalion luck held and there were no casualties. During the same week it became necessary to abandon a combined infantry-tank exercise because of the number of unexploded bombs in the manoeuvre area. Throughout the forenoon of September 27th an air battle raged overhead and a number of enemy bombers and British fighter planes were seen to fall. September 29th was a Sunday but anything but a day of rest. Padre Paton was holding a company service in a Godstone church when a bomb fell in the churchyard, blowing in the windows of the church. No one was injured and the service continued.* That evening Godstone High Street was hit and a number of shops demolished; pickets were dispatched to prevent looting. On the same evening "A" and "B" Company areas received a

* The Padre was something of a target. On the previous Saturday evening his billet had been demolished by a bomb and he had escaped with no more than a shaking-up.

quota of bombs, one man in "A" Company lines being slightly injured. On October 1st "D" Company had its turn, Major Murphy having a narrow escape.

The worst was over. The lessening tension led to the termination of the continuous Stand-To and the substitution of Officers Picquets at dawn and dusk. Church services were re-established, leave was reopened and the casualness in dress attendant upon a period of active service was remedied by a vigorous return to spit-and-polish. On September 24th a highly creditable guard was mounted by the Regiment at Divisional Headquarters at Reigate. Even RSM Gardner, a hard man to satisfy, twirled his moustaches with satisfaction.

There now was an opportunity to take advantage of the many offers of hospitality proffered by civilians of the neighbourhood. An officer wrote: "It was good fun going about Godstone, collecting furniture and fittings for the men's recreation and reading rooms. I went begging from house to house, explaining that my men had moved in for the winter. By noon of the first day I had a ping-pong table and some chairs—also a fine lunch from the donors. Next day I met Sir Frederick Kenyon, a former curator of the British Museum. He gave me fine tables, chairs and books. Everyone whom I have approached has been extremely kind; they get a kick out of our men, all washed up, properly dressed and spick and span, calling at their door to take away some of their furniture."

On October 4th the War Diary noted: "For the second morning in succession there has been no air raid alarm between reveille and noon." The danger, however, was not over; on the following day there were six RED alarms and on October 6th, while "D" Company was on its way to St. Nicholas Church to attend Padre East's first Regimental service, it broke off to deal with nearby bomb craters. Five Patricia crews under Lieut. D. W. McLean were dispatched to Tangmere for anti-aircraft machine-gun training, for low level attacks now had increased: a Patricia picket was shot up at a road block and was lucky to escape casualties. On October 17th bombs fell in "A" Company's area, the windows in some of the company billets being blown in for the third time. On the following night a heavy high explosive bomb and an oil bomb fell in "A" Company's area in Lingfield. On October 21st "A" Company area was bombed

once more and four days later "C" Company received high explosive and oil bombs. Thereafter enemy attacks on the Downs decreased and on November 3rd, for the first time in 57 days, there were no German aircraft over London. In Godstone damage had been substantial but civilian casualties had been light.*

It now became possible to receive visitors once more. During October Lady Patricia Ramsay, Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton Gault and Lieut.-Colonel Niven were guests of the Regiment. On October 25th a number of new officers were introduced at Mess Night at the Hoskins Arms, Oxted. Guests of the evening included Major-General G. R. Pearkes, VC DSO MC, Major-General W. W. Odlum CB CMG DSO VD of the newly-arrived 2nd Canadian Infantry Division, Major-General the Hon. P. J. Montague CMG DSO MC VD of Canadian Military Headquarters, Major-General E. W. Sansom DSO and Brigadier A. E. Potts.

On October 27th the Principal Chaplain of the Canadian Forces took the church service which marked the beginning of the Patricias' choir. As if to remind all ranks that the danger was not past the enemy on this day all but put paid to the Signals Platoon by dropping two 500 lb. bombs within a few yards of its billets. The buildings were seriously damaged but the men escaped injury. In the same attack an oil bomb was dropped on Godstone Green near Battalion Headquarters.

THE MOULDING OF THE MACHINE

When training could be resumed without watchful eyes on the sky the impact of the Battle of Britain could be detected in almost every issue of Part II Orders. Security had become a deadly serious matter, for it now was known that the enemy planned to land troops in British uniforms. Camouflage also had become of great moment, for when defenders were thin on the ground they must remain undetected until the invaders presented perfect targets.† Vehicle movements likewise were the subject of many regulations, for the dangers of road blocks and traffic jams in

* Against all but massed targets bombs were psychological rather than lethal weapons. In October there had been 61 air raid warnings and 810 bombs had been dropped in the Canadian Divisional area without a single serious casualty. The Germans were beginning to realize their failure, for on October 24th Corps Intelligence announced, "An analysis of German propaganda during October shows a marked diminution of interest in the theme of the invasion of Britain."

† One Patricia was crimed for "disruptive painting." He was not an ultra-modern artist; he had merely interfered with the camouflage pattern in beautifying his bivouac.

quick deployments had been recognized. The functions and government of soldiers and civilians on the same battlefield led to a spate of administrative rulings. Other orders dealt with apparent trivia—the length of telephone conversations, the uses to which roads and buildings could be put under special circumstances, the treatment of captured Germans, the offense of rumour-mongering. Each new order added to the testament of a nation that was prepared to be destroyed before it would yield to its enemies.

On October 25th Training Order No. 32 opened with the words which were to become so familiar thereafter—"The Invasion of Britain by German forces has begun." There followed details of a plan that was destined to track down and destroy the invaders. As exercise succeeded exercise a training policy emerged in which every conceivable function of an army in active operations, or variations of such function, would be practised in advance, under the most realistic conditions and most rigorous controls. Gone were the days when manoeuvres meant blackberrying in hedges and turning up at check points in time to reach billets before the canteen opened. Training now recognized war as an intricate business and the winning of a battle as a climax only to be achieved by complete understanding of routines which had been perfected by months of drudgery.*

Throughout 1940 it had become more and more evident that whatever the efficiency of the unit, the knowledge and the attitude of mind of the individual soldier would be the decisive factor in the campaigns to come. It was not enough to inculcate routines; there were times when every soldier must decide for himself and act accordingly. This type of training demanded much of the men and even more of junior officers, who were obliged to create and maintain a relationship with those under their command in which rank and discipline played a secondary role; in which they must exercise command as much by their intimate knowledge of their men as by their proficiency in the arts of war. It was necessary, in a junior officer's words, to enact a role "half-way between that of a wet-nurse and of family doctor." In mid-November a young Patricia officer outlined his responsibilities to his parents in the course of a letter which described

* Realistic exercises, at a time when Britain was under attack, sometimes made it difficult to separate fiction from fact. A patrol report of an October exercise stated that in a clash with a German patrol two men had been adjudged to have been wounded. In the next line the report recorded that "our anti-aircraft section has engaged enemy raiders as they crossed the coast, flying inward and northward from Brighton."

the preparations for the Battalion move from Godstone to Brighton:

"We began with house-cleaning. All spare clothes and little personal articles had to be packed away in the kit-bags. The palliasses were emptied and the straw burned; it made the boys from the prairies lonesome, for they burn the straw out there every autumn. The empty palliasses were tied up in section bundles. The kit bags were tied together by sections. The platoon's spare clothing was tied together and labelled.

"The large packs then were filled with a greatcoat, a change of underwear, a clean shirt, two pair of clean socks and a spare pair of marching boots. Thereafter the house was washed from top to bottom. While this was going on the platoon truck was loaded with our weapons and ammunition. All the Bren and anti-tank magazines were filled and ready to fire. Our shovels, picks, axes and other tools were loaded and tied down under the tarpaulin. I then fell in my men in battle order ready to march.

"I had had these men practically to myself for eight months. I had worked hard on them. I knew all about them—their pre-war jobs, their families, their weaknesses and their strong points. In all that time I only had to put two men under close arrest and four men under open arrest. So on this afternoon when they paraded at 100% strength, cut right down to fighting trim, with 50 rounds of ammunition in their pouches, fully trained and full of spirit, it is hardly necessary to say that I felt proud. If the blitz comes, as I expect it will, we shall face it with confidence."

THREE WEEKS IN SUSSEX

This move to Brighton was in consequence of a new role assigned to the Canadian divisions in mid-October. Passing under command of XII Corps they became responsible for the security of twenty miles of Sussex foreshore between Newhaven and Worthing. On November 14th the Patricias relieved the West Nova Scotia Regiment in the coastal area. (The defenders still were thin on the ground; the force that covered the important port of Newhaven consisted of a squadron of tanks and one platoon of Patricias.) Battalion Headquarters was established in the famous girls' school "Roedean" on the outskirts of Brighton* with outlying companies at Lewes and Rottingdean.

* All ranks of Headquarters Company took the best of care of the appointments of the girls' school, but one fixture may have been overworked. Some of the rooms had push-buttons with the notice, "For a mistress, ring the bell."

It was a pleasant tour of duty, for the noted watering-place retained many of its traditional attractions. An officer wrote:

"The inhabitants were splendid and could not do enough to make our stay pleasant and comfortable. We were now doing something which gave us the feeling that we were taking a definite part in the defence of England. Everyone was on his toes, full of enthusiasm and anxious to do his allotted task to the best of his ability. The period was made more exciting by the presence of washed-up mines, some of which exploded on the shore, in one instance splashing one of our sentry posts with shrapnel. Several barrels of wine were washed ashore during our tour and became the unofficial property of a certain platoon, with unfortunate results. Security was much in the air at Brighton. One of our officers visiting a hospital was detained by the matron and the nurses until satisfactory identifications were forthcoming."

As might have been expected war correspondents and photographers buzzed about in such an attractive environment. In three weeks the Patricias received more attention than in their previous eleven months in England. An unusual duty fell to the Battalion on December 2nd when a Guard of Honour under command of Capt. J. A. Early was provided for the Assize Judge at the opening of the Lewes Assizes.

On December 5th the Patricias were relieved by the 48th Highlanders of Canada and retraced their steps to Godstone. On December 8th twelve officers were bidden to Windsor Castle for a night and a day as guests of the Grenadier Guards. At about the same time nine warrant officers and sergeants spent an enjoyable week-end at Winchester as guests of their affiliated Regiment, the Rifle Brigade. During that month the first war-time candidates for commissions in the Regiment were selected from the ranks. They included CSM H. G. Munro of "C" Company, PSM N. Featherstone of the Support Company and Sgt. C. P. McPherson of the "I" section, who afterwards attained the rank of Lieut.-Colonel.

The weather had turned very cold. Fortunately the Patricias had received a winter allowance of 200 tons of coal; as bombing had impaired the rail services the fuel was fetched from London Docks in Battalion vehicles. No sooner had the ponds frozen than shinny began; then skates turned up from somewhere and real hockey sticks. Within a week a league was under way.

December sped swiftly in routine training until Christmas was at hand. Anthony Eden had appealed to the British public to show hospitality to the overseas troops in its midst; in the case of the Canadians this request was unnecessary, for they had been honoured guests since arrival. In addition to a flood of invitations the Patricias had prepared their own celebrations. On December 19th Major-General Pearkes was the guest of the Battalion. On the following day 2nd Canadian Brigade was At Home at the Hoskins Arms. On the 22nd the Battalion paraded to a Christmas service at Godstone. The Sergeants Mess held its Christmas dinner on the 23rd. On the following day Major R. L. Mitchell was dispatched with seasonal gifts to Lady Patricia Ramsay and Mrs. Hamilton Gault. On Christmas day the companies dined separately but with wassail and good cheer, Colonel Hamilton Gault providing the plum puddings. "C" Company was particularly fortunate; in borrowing a school for the purposes of its dinner it obtained also an enthusiastic band of civilian helpers who insisted on preparing the meal.

On December 27th Colonel the Hon. J. L. Ralston, Minister of National Defense, inspected the Battalion. On the 28th there was a Mess Night for all Patricia officers, whether with the Regiment or seconded or with the Holding Unit. As if to remind all ranks that this Christmas was long after Christ and in an era of monstrous ill will the clouds in the northern sky on the night of December 29th were crimsoned until dawn. The enemy had mounted his greatest 'fire-blitz' and London was burning in fifteen hundred places.

A CHANGED PROSPECT

The Patricias, although restricted to a static role, could not complain of lack of variety in 1940. The following year was destined to be different. The danger of invasion had ebbed; new British divisions, Commonwealth reinforcements, the enormously increased output of the arsenals of Great Britain, Canada and the United States, had transformed Britain into a well-found fortress. At the end of 1940 one could say with assurance what Neville Chamberlain had said too soon, that Hitler had missed the bus. The role of the Canadians had changed; they still were a defensive force but thereafter they would think in terms of attack. On Christmas Day 1940 I Canadian Corps had been formed. Its first task was to integrate its components. The company had been incorporated; it remained to make it a going concern.

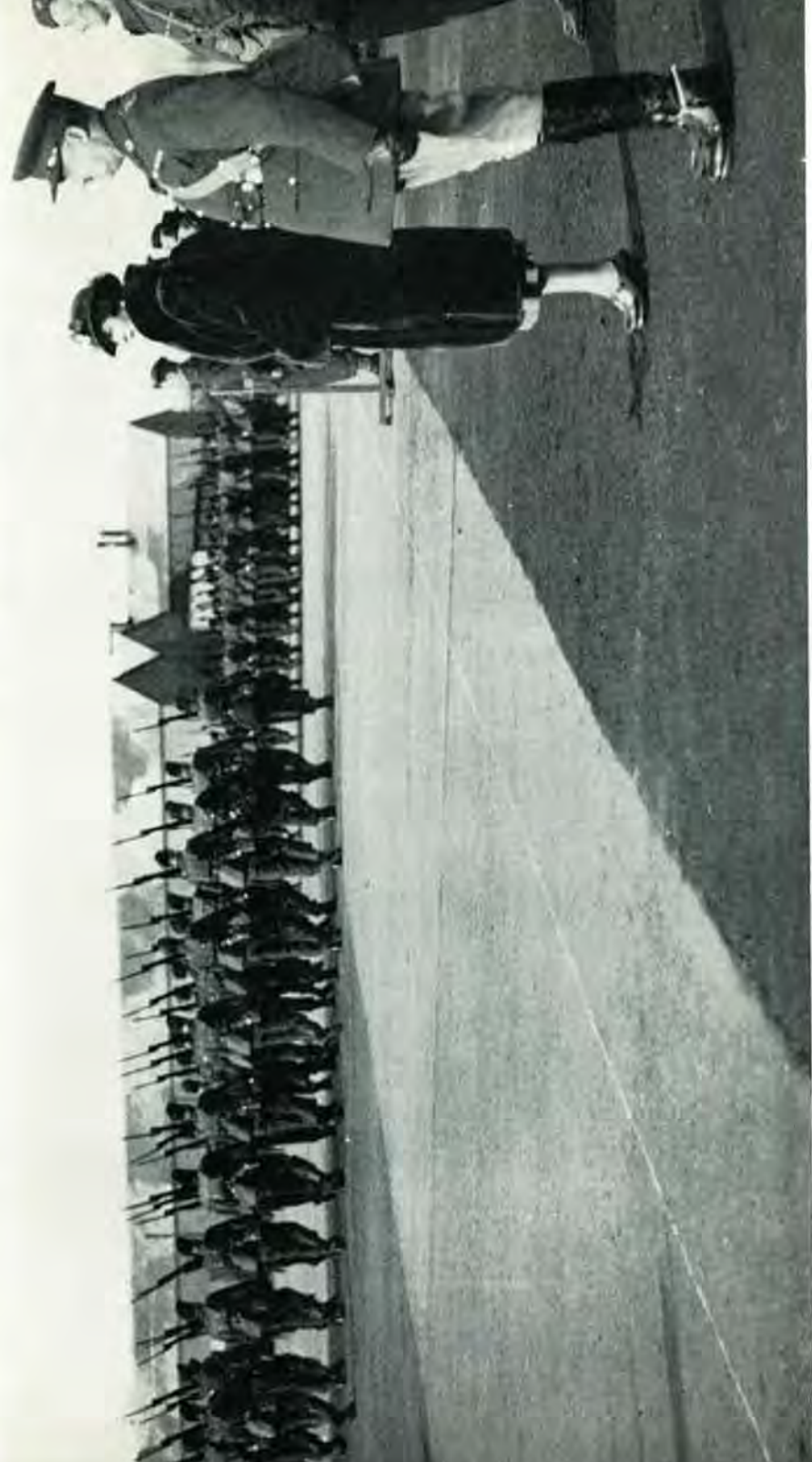
All appreciations of the first year of war agreed upon the decisive factor in German success. It was the ability of the enemy to think quickly and to put his decisions into train instantly which lay at the root of his victories. To defeat him he must be surpassed in flexibility of mind and in rapidity of communications as well as in toughness of body. To achieve these ends there had to be a transformation in the outlook of the individual British and Commonwealth soldier. His wits had to be sharpened, his field of experience widened; his officers had to be acute and instinctively aware of the implications of any given military situation. From the section commander to the commander-in-chief all ranks had to live and fight in an atmosphere of change and of dynamic experience.

An early Canadian Corps training instruction thus summed up this necessity: "All training must be directed towards alertness of the individual, perfection of execution and speed of operation. Under modern conditions of war there is no front and no place can be considered safe. Every soldier must be alert at all times. It is too late on the day of battle." This was a return to the principles upon which Sir John Moore had trained the Light Division, a formation which had changed the face of the Peninsular War and had put Napoleon on the road to St. Helena. After one hundred and forty years the battle of nations once more was about to resolve into a contest of individuals.

This transformation of the infantry soldier (hitherto for the most part taught to allow others to do his thinking for him) into a hunter and a stalker could be brought about only by radical alterations in both the physical and the mental education of the recruit. A greater degree of hardihood and endurance had to be obtained by means of more rigorous exercises—a building of the muscles and a toughening of the nerves which would create exuberant morale and utter confidence. At the same time an intellectual stimulus had to be provided which would transform these severe drills into a game and which, above all else, would compel the soldier to appreciate the reasons for the drill-game and so induce him to play it to the limits of his strength and abilities.*

At the end of January 1941 the physical condition of the Patricias was tested in a ninety-mile route march from which,

* Films played a considerable role in this type of training. In January 1941 thirty-two training films were available. Afterwards there were many more.



The first Review in Britain—Morval Barracks, February 10th 1940.
The Colonel-in-Chief, the Founder and Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Colquhoun MC take the Salute.



The Battle of Britain 1940—Patricia air sentry.



The Battle of Britain 1940—Patricia anti-aircraft detachment in position.



The last Review in Britain—Esher, September 19th 1945.—The Colonel-in-Chief and Major P. D. Crofton.

three days later, all ranks returned fresh and vigorous. In mid-February a large-scale field exercise was attempted in order to school the private soldier, his officer and his formation, in the mechanics of mobile warfare. The scheme, which was of Corps strength, presumed a sea-borne threat to Dover which necessitated the establishment of a defensive cordon across the base of the east Kent promontory. The *Patricias' War Diary* deals with the exercise in a single line; the Battalion went on manoeuvres; it came back from them. It was far from a successful occasion; the official Canadian historian has reported:

"The result was a serious and salutary shock to complacency. At certain points during the exercise most remarkable traffic jams developed; the artillery, in consequence, did not get forward and the infantry, as a further result, was allowed to 'attack' without artillery support. It was a useful if disturbing lesson, which left no doubt in anyone's mind concerning the nature of the shortcomings and the means required for overcoming them."*

1941 - A YEAR OF EXERCISES

There was nothing for it but to do it over again. Throughout 1941 it was done again and again. In early March there was a paratroop hunt. Soon afterwards the *Patricias* moved to the Ashford area to participate in *BEAGLE*, which dealt with road movements and traffic control. April was a busy month; there was *HARE* and *RABBIT* on the Divisional scale, in which rapid movements and deployments by night were practised. A combined exercise involved both the Home Guard and Royal Air Force; the tasks were the establishment of communications when on the move and the passing of messages to and from the ground and the air. There also was an exercise in advancing behind a tight barrage.

In May there was another march of ninety miles, together with *BRENDA*, a scheme which dealt with rapid concentrations and counter-attacks. In June came the massive *WATERLOO* field trials, in which over 100,000 troops engaged in a struggle for the Sussex Downs. The Canadians were defenders; among their assailants were a Guards brigade and 25th Army Tank Brigade, whom the *Patricias* were destined to meet again under sterner conditions in Italy. The climax of this operation in a night battle around Horsham will be remembered.

*"The Canadians in Britain 1939-1944" (Queen's Printer, Hull).

Before the end of that month there followed MAPLE and BULLDOG exercises, both of which required the rapid shifting of large formations across thickly populated areas. BULLDOG took the Patricias and Edmontons across London, part of the metropolitan area being traversed in convoy underground. "It was the finest piece of traffic control I ever hope to see," declared an officer, "The police were marvellous." The exercise continued into East Anglia and along the Broads, to climax in a battle for Norwich.

So engrossed were the Patricias with these affairs that the War Diary for June 22nd 1941 deals only with the weather, the intelligence log of BULLDOG and the departure of officers on training courses. Yet this day was pregnant with destiny, for the German armies had invaded Russia. There probably has never been a greater act of military folly than Hitler's decision to enter upon a campaign in the East while he faced unconquered foes in the West; but the fatuity of Soviet leaders in refusing to heed British advice of German intentions runs it a close second. The immediate results in Great Britain were numerous delays in re-equipment. The Russians, screaming for aid from those they had sneered at previously, were given priority in many items of *materiel* still in short supply to British and Commonwealth formations.

In July the Patricias were set to work upon the tactical problems of the defense of airfields. The recent disasters in Crete had compelled planners to change their thinking concerning the protection of such installations; new tactics, as rehearsed in MANING and BROLLY, put the emphasis upon defense from without rather than from within. Redhill aerodrome was the scene of such exercises. On July 20th the Battalion scouts played the role of enemy paratroopers in an assault on the Home Guard defences at Shere. For reasons which will appear later August was a quiet month in training, except for the provision of parties to play the role of casualties in two medical evacuation exercises.

In September came BUMPER, in which with twelve divisions in the field a battle raged in the Chilterns for ten days against an enemy which had landed in East Anglia. Here the Canadians served for the first time under a quick-thinking imperturbable officer of the new school—Lieut.-General Sir Harold Alexander GCB CSI DSO MC. The Patricias, in a reserve role,

were not committed until the sixth day of the exercise, when they came forward in support of formations which were driving the invaders back from the northern outskirts of London. On October 1st they were ordered to attack from the Dagnall-Studham Line, two thousand yards south of Whipsnade Zoo. Unfortunately their advance bogged down in a snarl of traffic and they were allotted a reserve area near Luton, where they remained until the exercise ended.

HEATHER — HIGH HOPES AND DISAPPOINTMENT

The event of the year had been HEATHER. Late in July rumours had begun to circulate among 2nd Canadian Brigade units. Something was up. No one could possibly have known that the Arctic archipelago of Spitzbergen was under scrutiny by the British planning staff and that it had been decided to destroy its coal mines. Yet in some psychic fashion a rumour was born that HEATHER exercise, as announced on July 29th, was not just another training stunt. Whereupon suspicions multiplied. Kits were not to be above a certain weight; only two carriers would be included in the scheme; officers were slipping away to London on special errands. Morale soared overnight and it was necessary for officers to speak severely concerning blabbing tongues. The security people took undue interest in the conversations of the Patricias and of the Edmontons—the very men, mark you, who had been cheated in the matter of the Trondheim expedition.

On August 3rd all kits had been stamped with new flashes and unit numbers. There were other highly-significant indications; for instance, when the Sergeants Mess failed to settle some local accounts (the tradesmen were willing to wait) it was ordered to pay them immediately. On August 6th the Patricias entrained without benefit of farewell. Next morning they were in Glasgow where without ado they boarded H.M.T. *Empress of Canada*, which sailed that afternoon for an unknown destination. There was great gnashing of teeth on August 9th when they were put ashore on Loch Fyne and marched into Dukes Camp, Inverary. After four days of mountain climbing and beach exercises the dismal truth emerged. The Spitzbergen expedition would proceed but without the Patricias. On August 13th the Battalion re-embarked, landed in Glasgow two days later and immediately entrained for the south. HEATHER had been another 'bust.'

War. Military expenditures were drastically cut; in 1932/33 the already meagre vote for the Services was sliced by a third and camp training was greatly curtailed. In 1931 (perhaps as an economy measure) "A" Company and Headquarters Company marched 124 miles from Fort Osborne Barracks to Camp Hughes, covering the ground in the good time of 47 hours and 20 minutes. During the training camp period the Patricias received a welcome accession of equipment in the form of six Carden-Lloyd carriers.

During 1932 the Patricias twice provided Guards of Honour for the Governor-General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of Bessborough GCMG. In this year Lieut.-Colonel Ten Broeke completed his period of command and was succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven. Two years later RSM T. J. Turnbull after more than forty years' distinguished service passed to well-earned retirement. In the same year there arrived a subaltern, Lieut. C. B. Ware, who was destined to play a leading role in Regimental affairs in years to come.

It was a saddening circumstance that in the period between the wars it became necessary for the Canadian civil authorities to invoke military aid on a number of occasions. In such tasks the Patricias shared. In 1923 troops were dispatched to Sydney, where a coal-miners' strike had created an ugly situation. In 1931 the Winnipeg companies were called out twice against riotous crowds of unemployed. It also became necessary to use troops to restore order at Prince Albert penitentiary. In the spring of 1932 "B" Company was sent from Victoria to Vancouver to support the civil authorities but fortunately the situation improved overnight and military aid was not required.

APPOINTMENTS AND DISTINCTIONS

Bit by bit the Regiment accumulated its characteristic and significant appointments and distinctions. The original Colour presented by H.R.H. The Princess Patricia of Connaught was a Camp Colour and as such was unacceptable to the College of Heralds for purposes of registration. Moreover, like many of the men who had marched behind it and had sung its praises throughout four years of world war, it was a bit frayed at the end of its period of field service. As a consequence it was encased and retired as the Regiment's most precious possession. In 1922 a second Colour was obtained, which was presented to the Regiment on parade at Winnipeg by the Viscount Byng of

Vimy, Governor-General of Canada. At the same time he gave the Regiment a Silk Union Flag for use as a King's Colour.

In 1924 the regimental alliance with The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) was consummated. This unit had been the regiment of H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught and also that of the Patricias' second commander, Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Buller. Its 4th Battalion had proved great comrades in the Patricias' earliest formation, 80th ("Stonewall") Brigade. It was a proud and happy association.

In 1924 also ceremonial dress, consisting of scarlet tunics and blue trousers, was authorized. In the following year, on the anniversary of Frezenberg, the first annual Trooping the Colour took place at Fort Osborne Barracks, with the Founder taking the Salute.

In 1929 the Battle Honours of the Great War of 1914/18 were announced:

To be borne on Colours and Appointments:

YPRES 1915, '17: FREZENBERG: MOUNT SORREL: FLERS-COURCELLETTE: VIMY 1917: PASSCHENDAELE: AMIENS: SCARPE 1917: PURSUIT TO MONS: FRANCE AND FLANDERS 1914-18.

On June 15th 1933 by General Order a new cap badge was authorized. The description of the officer's badge ran "An annulus or Crown in silver, the cypher and coronet in gilt. Within the annulus inscribed PRINCESS PATRICIA'S CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY and ensigned with the Imperial Crown, the Cypher and Coronet of H.R.H. Princess Patricia pierced." The design was identical for other ranks, but in solid metal. In 1948 the other ranks badge became identical with the officer's badge but with the metals reversed.

On April 14th 1934 the Earl of Bessborough, Governor-General of Canada, at a parade in the Minto Street Armouries in Winnipeg, presented the Regiment with new Colours acceptable to the College of Heralds. The old Colours were deposited for safe-keeping in All Saints Church, Winnipeg.

THE DARKENING SCENE

For Canadians the nineteen-thirties was a saddening and frustrating decade. During those years the dominion which had come so proudly to nationhood on the battlefields of France

1941 — THE PATRICIA CALENDAR

It had been a quiet year elsewhere than in the training field. The Home Guard had swiftly recruited more than a half-million men; they were armed after a fashion, to some extent with old Canadian weapons. When the training of this heterogeneous but determined force began early in 1941 the Patricias had accepted certain responsibilities. Thereafter they were continuously involved in Home Guard affairs.

In March the appointment of a Battalion Agricultural Officer had been announced. All companies were entitled to their garden patches; many men who had never dreamed of such a thing found that they had green fingers. That spring the Battalion began to build its own hutments. This work continued throughout the year.

Early in May the sad news was received of the death at sea of Lieut.-Colonel K. C. Burness MC, who was lost in the torpedoing of H.M.T. *Nerissa*. On June 18th Lieut.-Colonel J. N. Edgar MC took his last parade and passed to another appointment. Lieut.-Colonel R. F. L. Keller took over command and was succeeded on July 31st by Lieut.-Colonel R. A. Lindsay. For the period October 7th-November 14th, 1941, during the absence of Lieut.-Colonel Lindsay, Lieut.-Colonel C. Vokes of the Royal Canadian Engineers took over command. In the years to come the Regiment was destined to see more of this aggressive officer.

On July 14th the Patricias moved to South Nutfield, five miles west of Godstone on the Guildford road, where they pitched their camp on ground adjoining the Redhill aerodrome. On return from HEATHER they moved into billets at Limpsfield and Oxted, a few miles to the east of Godstone. There were good crops in this district and during the harvest the Battalion provided much-appreciated working parties for the local farmers.

Official events and diversions in the year were few. On March 17th the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was honoured by a parade at Hobbs Barracks. It was followed by a buffet supper and a concert at the Barn Theatre, Oxted, at which Miss Jenny MacGregor Morris was the guest of honour. On July 1st the Battalion attended en masse the Divisional Sports Meeting at Memorial Park, Redhill. His Majesty the King was a spectator and Patricia athletes did well. On August 23rd Corps sports were held at Aldershot and again the Battalion representatives

showed to advantage. On October 16th the Colonel-in-Chief again visited the Regiment. Throughout the year Colonel Hamilton Gault was a regular visitor, affording advice and assistance on many occasions.

Soon after return from BUMPER it became known that the tour in Surrey was drawing to a close. In October 2nd Canadian Division relieved 55th British Division on the Sussex Coast and in mid-November 1st and 3rd Canadian Divisions (the latter had arrived in England in July) made ready to move to the same area. From the Romney marshes by way of Beachy Head to Selsey Bill the watch on the Channel became a Canadian responsibility; with it went the guard over the storied marches of one of England's loveliest counties. Yet it was with unfeigned sorrow that the Patricias said farewell to the little circle of country towns around Godstone. They and the quiet Surrey folk had seen each other through on a harsh occasion; in dark and even desperate hours they had been pleased with each other. The Hoskins Arms in Oxted, the home of the Friary Ales and of the Hoskins-Masters family, was a favourite hostelry for Regimental functions. The Clayton Arms in Godstone, under that good host Arthur Jell, the Hare and Hounds in Lingfield (where Jack and Dorothy presided), the White Hart in Bletchingly, the White Rabbit near Hobbs Barracks, the Red Barn at Blindley Heath, the Station Hotel at Redhill, the Bull at Oxted, were among the inns where the flashes and badges of the Patricias were cards of membership in that best of clubs, the English pub. Many of the neighbourhood families also had made the Patricias members of their households. Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Stuart-Menteth and Colonel and Mrs. McClintock gave daughters to the Regiment in marriage. Colin and Stella Stokes, Major Ricardo, Lady Henrietta Greenwell, Lady Kitchener, James V. Rank, Sir Geoffrey Heyworth, Sir Ernest and Lady Benn, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Kitcat and Sir Walter Campbell were among those whose hospitality made the stay on the North Downs memorable and whose kindness will be remembered even after days of battle have been forgotten.

THE TOUR IN SUSSEX

On November 24th the Patricias moved to Rottingdean, five miles east of Brighton. Twelve months before, in the first tour of duty along the Channel, they had waited hourly for the enemy to

show on the horizon. They were disappointed when he did not come. Now they would have been astonished if he had dared to come, except in hit-and-run raids against civilians. The temper of the war had changed. Anti-invasion exercises were so-called by courtesy only; in all but name they were invasion exercises. Thirty strong and confident divisions stood in Britain; Egypt and the great deserts had been made secure. When on December 7th Japan capped Hitler's folly by her treacherous attack upon Pearl Harbour the transformation was complete. By the end of the year victory was as certain as it had been dubious at the end of 1940.

THE 'NEW LOOK' IN TRAINING

The change to offensive thinking was demonstrated in the ever-increasing substitution of 'battle-drills' for more conventional military exercises. 'Battle-drill' was a great deal more than the substitution of live rounds for blank cartridges in manoeuvres; it was the substitution of the fighting-idea for the drill-idea. Like the sportsman and the hunter the soldier needed not only the technical ability but the desire and the determination to make his kill. In the past leadership had supplied a large part of this determination and desire; it had been said that if one man out of every eight knew his mind and wanted to destroy his enemy the battle was as good as won. This was not good enough against the Germans; every man had to be (at least in part) an eighth man. 'Battle-drill' therefore had been created to turn out tougher and more cunning soldiers, men of quicker and keener perceptiveness. To these ends the Canadian training in 1942 reverted in its emphasis from the formation to the individual and set out to create soldiers inured to every shock or ordeal that an adversary might visit upon them.

The General Officer Commanding, South-Eastern Command (in which the Sussex area lay) was a small dark Ulsterman who only knew of one way to deal with an enemy. That was to destroy him utterly. Lieut.-General Bernard Montgomery was the high-priest of 'battle-drill' and tough training; he drove his formations ruthlessly against the day when they would surpass the Germans at their own game. 47th British Division had been pioneers in the new training. On November 24th, when the Patricias left Limpsfield for Sussex, Major C. B. Ware and Capt. G. R. Corkett were dispatched to this division's School of Battle Drill. Other officers were nominated to follow them.

Early in December the new routines began to take shape in more work and closer supervision of all tasks of training. Every fit man on strength was committed to at least three days' training per week and the Battalion as a whole was set a minimum of 48 hours' training weekly. A personal training record was set up for every soldier. Training schedules and syllabi for sub-units were made subject to closer supervision and to criticism by senior officers. Training, in all its forms and phases, was made more interesting. Machine techniques finally had caught up with the man in the rear rank.

The 'new look' in training resulted in many empty seats at the mess tables. Officers and non-commissioned officers went off in every direction on all sorts of missions—to train with such ancillary arms as the artillery and the air force, to be perfected in a wide variety of specialist employments, to investigate new battle methods such as silent attacks and unarmed combat, to report upon new weapons such as spigot mortars and booby traps. Psychologists came to lecture; in wriggly graphs they showed the influences which made good or bad soldiers. Although the emphasis now was on 'sharpening up,' the hardening processes continued; one officer made moan to the effect that the South-Eastern Command in reality was the South-Eastern Commando. Consequent upon the Allied landings in Morocco and Algiers a number of Canadian officers slipped away to join British units in order to acquire battle experience in North Africa. The Patricias sent Capt. R. C. Coleman to the Buffs, Capt. G. R. Corkett to the Coldstream Guards.

EXERCISES AND MORE EXERCISES

As soon as spring broke in 1942 a rash of exercises put the winter's tough training to the test. At 0300 hours on April 7th, after breakfast and a tot of hot rum, the Patricias moved to the attack on the Downs between Arundel and Amberley. This was ROBIN I. There followed ROBIN II, BEAVER II, BEAVER III, MOUSE, BATTLE and NIGHTIE.* In these well-staged rehearsals officers and men were confronted not only with simple but with intricate patterns of warfare. MOUSE for instance found the Battalion ambushed while embussed in column of route. The

* The ROBIN exercises were against coastal defences and the subsequent appreciation of the scheme was presented by "Colonel-General Wolfgang von Blatz," who described the manner in which his troops had effected landings in England. BATTLE, like MOUSE, was a night operation. NIGHTIE was a night driving test.

problem was not to escape; it was to fight back and to ambush the ambushers. In the ROBIN series the interior economy of a battle was rehearsed—the administrative problems which would have to be solved if a mobile enemy were encountered and if fighting ranged over a wide area. The BEAVER exercises simulated the fluctuating fortunes of fluid encounter, when it became necessary to alter plans repeatedly because of unforeseen circumstances—communications cut, reinforcements sunk and so on. It was a stern test but at its conclusion the usually reticent War Diary stated:

“During the exercises the troops had an extremely hard time. They marched 60 miles in five days and fought two engagements. Only one blanket per man was carried and it was bitterly cold on the Downs. The P.P.C.L.I. amazed both the Canadian Division and the enemy by their determination and toughness. They reached Horsham (the final objective) at least two days before the enemy expected them and when they withdrew they outclassed him. Morale was exceedingly high—the troops could even joke among themselves after marching all night and while standing on top of the bitter wind-swept Downs at 0630 hours next morning.”

These exercises, however, were but the ‘warm-up’ for what was in store in the following month. At the beginning of May the Patricias left Rottingdean for their summer area at Hassocks, on the Downs eight miles north of Brighton. Three weeks later TIGER was launched under the personal scrutiny of General Montgomery. The plan was thoroughly modern. Sussex and Kent were adjoining and hostile countries and Surrey was a neutral state awaiting the opportunity to pounce upon the first nation to weaken. The Kent forces would advance into Sussex, whose defenders (the Canadian Corps) would withdraw before the invaders. When Kent was fully committed Surrey would plant the dagger in her back. As Sussex rushed forward to crush Kent between her enemies a palace revolution would make peace between Kent and Surrey and the new-found allies would advance together to put an end to Sussex.

For the Patricias the exercise opened on the night of May 21st/22nd with a night march into the north to Barcombe Cross (to man the frontier). The Kentish main forces were identified to the east and on May 25th, in a set piece battle near Burwash, 200 prisoners were taken from 25th Army Tank Brigade and 43rd

British Division. (A major of 27th Lancers was captured who very naughtily carried a marked map showing the Kentish dispositions.) In this fighting Lieut. N. Featherstone distinguished himself by an individual onslaught upon an enemy tank, which he captured by dropping ground sheets over the observation slits and ramming a pole into its driving sprocket. Two Patricia company commanders were missing at the close of day, but were recovered from the enemy later in the operation. The Sussex forces at first drove the Kentish men headlong; then for four days the fortunes of battle swayed; then came the counter-attack. In the Shadoxhurst area the Patricias twice were overrun, once by tanks and again in the early morning (in a most unscrupulous manner) by cyclist troops. "C" Company was wiped out and Major C. B. Ware, Capt. D. W. McLean and a number of Headquarters Company officers were adjudged to be casualties. The Cease Fire came through at 1900 hours on May 30th.

Of this exercise General McNaughton reported to Ottawa: "It was designed to test capabilities to the limit. It lasted eleven days in all, during which some units marched on foot as much as 250 miles, which is about the life of army boots on English roads. Much of this marching was tactical and so at forced pace. Transport was cut to minimum and the troops lived hard under conditions approximating active service. Hardships and heavy tasks were accepted by troops most willingly and though now very tired they have come through these strenuous tests with enhanced morale and confidence in themselves."

On return to Hassocks the Patricias plunged into work once more. The War Diary for June reveals a wide variety of duties. Co-operation with the Home Guard now claimed many hours in the working week. In January Major A. E. T. Paquet had surveyed new defensive areas in and about Brighton—along the foreshore, around the railway terminal and on the Downs behind the town. Thereafter 15th Sussex Home Guard and the Patricias co-operated in the construction of these defenses; four Patricias were killed in minefield accidents during this task. Throughout the year the Home Guard depended in large part upon Canadian units for instructors; in a single month, the Patricias supplied the Sussex men with detachments for such diverse training as paratroop and tank hunting, street fighting and woods clearing, patrolling and unarmed combat. An esteemed friendship grew up between these part-time soldiers and their mentors.

On June 18th Major-General Browning, the 'Boy' of many adventures and now GOC 1st Airborne Division, lectured upon the employment of airborne troops in offensive operations. On June 26th the rifle companies used live ammunition in practice attacks on Thundersbarrow Hill.

In July KITTEN, PHOENIX and HAROLD—a skeleton withdrawal, a battle exercise with verbal messages only, and a specialist deployment scheme—followed in rapid succession. Courses were so plentiful that the Adjutant bewailed his lack of officers—on one occasion only five remained to administer the Battalion. On July 20th realism exacted its penalty; in the course of a brigade Battle Shooting practice, a shell fell short and killed three men of "C" Company. Another man was wounded by a mortar splinter.

Early in August the Patricias shifted from Hassocks to Willingdon, on the outskirts of Eastbourne. Here the war came to them; in a series of sneak raids the Luftwaffe blew up one of the two remaining gasometers, put an incendiary bomb through the ceiling of Capt. Woodward-Jewsbury's bedroom and created an imposing series of craters in the area. The Patricias dug slit trenches fervently. They already had opened their score against the German airmen; on August 4th anti-aircraft gunners under command of Lieut. J. S. Stephens had shot down a Focke-Wulf 190 out of a flight of four raiders.

From first light on August 18th heavy formations of the Royal Air Force continued to cross the Eastbourne area on their way into the southeast. At nine o'clock the B.B.C. newscast carried the announcement of the Dieppe raid and of the employment of Canadian troops in the assault. There was a moment of quick resentment that the assignment had gone to others but within the hour the Patricias were deployed to meet any emergency that might arise. "A" Company was dispatched to patrol the coast towards Seaford, both as a precautionary measure against an enemy counterstroke and to report any homing landing craft which might stray up Channel. Other details moved to Newhaven, where that evening they saw the first convoys of wounded arrive. Two weeks later Lieut.-Colonel Lord Lovat and Major Young, commanders of the special service troops which supported the Canadian forces at Dieppe, addressed the officers of 2nd Canadian Brigade upon the lessons of that operation.

STILL MUCH TO BE DONE

There followed in close succession CRACKERS and PACKS (assault landings by night and the organization of beachheads), VIKING, an assault landing in France but rehearsed on the opposite side of the Channel, and BLACKBOY, in which invaders, including glider-borne detachments, were ferreted out and mopped up.* These specialist exercises revealed that in spite of every precaution and the most rigorous attention to detail there still was much to be learned about the unpredictable business of battle. The Patricia report of VIKING does not suggest a flawless performance:

"Hot soup was served at 0115 hours. At 0200 hours the companies moved off under guides from 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, who represented Royal Navy personnel. On numerous occasions our 'navigators' had a great deal of difficulty in holding to their courses; in some cases whole 'waves' wandered around in the darkness. Very few of the boats landed on the proper beaches, but here the versatility of our 'navigators' came into play. Under heavy fire they calmly led us along the beach until we had reached our proper landing place."

The use of the inverted commas in the foregoing quotation is perhaps a little severe. Nevertheless there was considerable evidence that the Canadian fighting machine, now geared for action, did not always mesh as well as it might. In HARVEST, a signals exercise carried out in early October, the official report declared that much valuable information never reached the headquarters for which it was intended and that items which did arrive often were too late to be of value.

Nor had any amount of training and admonition tightened up security sufficiently. In September two Canadians received heavy prison sentences for loose talk. Yet at the close of that month three men of an intelligence section dressed as German soldiers entered the Patricias' lines by declaring that they were fire-watchers. Three companies accepted them before "C" Company seized them. A bogus officer claiming to be a Free Frenchman also traversed the Canadian area asking questions; he was not apprehended. Part of this laxity was due to incorrigible sentimentality on the part of the British authorities and the British

* BLACKBOY, while designed as a defensive exercise, was intended for offensive study; in order to see an attack from the standpoint of the man "on the other side of the hill."

people. During the Battle of Britain it had been necessary to appeal to householders not to regard shot-down German fliers as benighted guests; it gave them the opportunity to destroy their maps and papers and such reception increased their arrogance. The War Office in consonance with this overly-humane tendency had ruled that weapons might not be used against prisoners of war endeavouring to escape. They might be chased on foot and pulled down, but no other violence was justifiable.

NOT MUCH LONGER TO WAIT

What the Canadians had failed to learn on the training ground they soon would be obliged to learn on the battlefield. Five Canadian divisions now had assembled in Great Britain and less than two brigades of this strong force had been in action in a war that was three years old. When on November 15th the church bells of Britain had pealed in celebration of the victory of El Alamein their chimes also rang out the end of the long Canadian period of waiting.* The tide of invasion had turned and the enemy was being driven back upon the central bastion of his homeland. The Anglo-American landings in Morocco and Algeria promised to put a quick end to the Axis powers in Africa. The question therefore arose—thereafter, where? Logic and common sense alike indicated Italy as the next theatre of operations. The Italians were the weak brethren of the enemy alliance; they were weary of war and it would take a heavy stiffening of Germans to keep them in it. The more Germans engaged in Italy the fewer there would be to man the defenses of the Western Wall in France.

In April 1942 First Canadian Army had been formed, with General McNaughton as its commander. This officer, who served Canada so long and so well, desired that all Canadian divisions should fight under one command. Many Canadians sympathized with this desire; on the other hand it was manifestly unfair and perhaps unwise to allow others to carry the burdens of the battlefield indefinitely. It therefore had been decided to commit Canadian troops, if possible as a corps, in an existing theatre of operations.

* Mr. Churchill had promised Field-Marshal Alexander that the church bells would ring when 20,000 prisoners had been taken. On November 6th the Middle East commander confirmed this figure. Mr. Churchill cannily waited nine days before issuing the order. The bells had rung too soon after the Battle of Cambrai in 1917, when a German counterstroke turned an apparent victory into a near-disaster.

The Canadian formations towards the end of 1942 therefore began to prepare for a new role. As a final contribution to the defense of southeast England I Canadian Corps on December 15th issued perhaps the most comprehensive instructions for a defensive task ever compiled by a military authority. It represented the codification of all that had been learned in three years. Every conceivable necessity was documented—for dealing with the enemy, for taking care of the civilian population, for denying the enemy sustenance and for keeping open internal lines of communication. Under this directive troops and civilians were merged into a single organization with a thoroughness and attention to detail which probably has never been equalled in war planning. Fortunately it was never found necessary to use such plans, but they remain as a memorial to ceaseless labour and thought during the long years of waiting.

Throughout December the Patricias laboured assiduously at their specialist exercises. The intensity of the training can be gauged from the syllabus of any given week. For instance, in the work week of December 13th/18th, in addition to field and barrack square training there were 34 lecture hours, some of which every officer and non-commissioned officer had to attend. Among the lectures, "clinics" (as they had begun to be known) were scattered, in which the audience was expected to join in the discussions. Students' lectures also were included; four-minute presentations upon stated subjects gave junior commanders the opportunity to analyze situations quickly and to express themselves tersely. The lectures ranged over the complete field of war experience. It was military education under a degree of pressure which never had been attempted previously.

As the Christmas season approached a shocking tragedy occurred. On December 18th a sneak raider hit an Eastbourne department store filled with seasonal shoppers. The Patricias were preparing a party for 500 children, the gifts and goodies to come out of Canadian parcels; the innocent dead and the broken homes cast a shadow over the festival. The Battalion soon would be on its way once more and Sussex, like Surrey, would be a memory. Yet also like Surrey it would be a fragrant memory. The good folk of Eastbourne, Hassocks, Pyecombe, Lewes, Seaford and in the countryside had been seen in time of peril and they had shown themselves to be as good as the best. In their training the Home Guard had exhibited the indomitable English

character; in the harvest fields the women, working like navvies, showed all the ancient strength of purpose of the race; in the pubs there was tolerance and cheerfulness and good humour. Over the teacups the Canadian guests caught glimpses of the range and penetration of English thought and of the abiding authority of good manners.

This admiration was not one-sided. Again and again the Sussex folk placed themselves on record (even in letters to *The Times*) concerning the Canadians as soldiers and as guests. A considerable sum was raised by the Sussex Home Guard as a memorial to their comrades from overseas; the Canadians asked that the funds should remain in Sussex and should be employed in some useful maner which would commemorate their stay. Five Patricia officers provided personal testimonials by marrying during the Sussex tour of duty.

1942 — A SPARSE CALENDAR

In 1942, perhaps even more than in previous years, the exigencies of training had limited Regimental participation in other events. On February 12th the Patricias had been in the front seats but had missed the show when in a roaring gale the German battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* escaped from Brest and ran the gauntlet of the English Channel and the Strait of Dover. On February 10th the Regiment sent its heartfelt sympathy to their Colonel-in-Chief on the occasion of the death of her father, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught. A week later the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, paid a welcome visit. On March 17th, when the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was duly honoured, the weather was unkind, the inspection being carried out in a pelting rainstorm. On April 2nd training was interrupted briefly by a high-level 'flap;' a concentration of enemy shipping had been identified in Cherbourg harbour and defensive dispositions were ordered along the English coasts. On June 8th Brigadier A. E. Potts was succeeded in command of 2nd Canadian Brigade by Brigadier C. Vokes, who instituted the custom of touring the area on a bicycle, his pennon flying from its handlebars. Dominion Day was celebrated by the usual Corps Sports in which (also as usual) the Patricias did well, winning the Dalrymple Cup. On September 7th, in the course of a bombing raid on Eastbourne, leaflets were dropped which contained photographs of Canadians captured at Dieppe.

On October 4th, when the Battalion went over to the new establishment, an Administrative Wing and a Support Company were formed and one rifle company was dropped. (It was on-again-off-again; six months later the changes were revoked.) Only one Regimental Dinner and Mess Night was managed during the year and then only for intimate friends of the Regiment.

On January 15th 1943, while the Patricias were engaged on combined operations training, four Focke-Wulfe aircraft appeared and beat up the training area with bombs and machine-guns. There were no casualties and the planes escaped; but on January 23rd, during a similar raid, a patrol from "C" Company opened its game book by bringing down a bomber by light machine-gun fire within 50 yards of Beachy Head post.

THE TEMPO QUICKENS

On February 5th Major-General H. N. L. Salmon MC, who in September 1942 had succeeded Major-General Pearkes as GOC 1st Canadian Division, promised the Patricias that 1943 would be their year. They definitely "would see action." Nine days later the Battalion was on its way with the remainder of 2nd Canadian Brigade to Scotland. It fetched up at Inverary on a sleety, stormy evening. There followed a fortnight of amphibious training, during which the Scottish winter was not too unkind. The various aspects of seaborne invasions, opposed and unopposed, the consolidation of beachheads, the creation of administrative "bricks," loadings and reloadings, classifications of cargoes, establishment of a communications grid, were rehearsed again and again. To the scramble nets were added mountain climbing and other hardening exercises. On February 19th a full scale landing (EAGLE I) was successfully executed. Sweeping ashore on two adjoining Loch Fyne beaches the Patricias burst through the wire, joined up and consolidated a position well within the scheduled time.

The same exercise was repeated by night on February 24th/25th. On March 1st the course was completed in a Brigade exercise (DALMALLY) in which the Patricias led the way ashore on two beaches, isolated the area by cutting the roads, seized an airfield and picketed the surrounding hills. Well satisfied with the mechanics of these exercises and the keenness of all ranks the Patricia officers told each other that next time it

would be the real thing. By March 4th the Battalion was back at Willingdon.

From then onward events moved in steadily quickening tempo. On March 17th the Colonel-in-Chief paid her customary visit to the Regiment. The men were at their best and after the inspection Lady Patricia Ramsay was photographed with her officers. Among other guests of the day were the Divisional Commander, the Brigade Commander and Jenny MacGregor Morris. Next day the newly organized Identification Section finger-printed all ranks. On March 24th 'German Week' began with lectures and demonstrations of enemy tactics and with exhibition drills in which the German manual and words of command were used. On March 30th the Battalion moved out of Willingdon on PAST, an exercise which included five days of cross-country marches with interspersed manoeuvres.

On April 8th, as if to ensure that in the spate of new routines the old rituals were not forgotten, there was a ceremonial March Past, with Brigadier Vokes (who according to the War Diary carried out "a pleasantly swift inspection") taking the salute. Four days later the Patricias took the road that ran along the crest of the Seven Sisters and fetched up at Seaford. Here on the 18th all ranks were roused at 0130 hours to cross one more river—an exercise that with some justice was named JORDAN. The way kingdoms are lost for want of a nail was illustrated at 0300 hours, when after a noiseless stealthy approach under a glorious full moon Major R. P. Clark called for the single bugle note which would launch "A" Company across the river. The only available bugle refused to utter. Brigadier Vokes was present and spoke his mind. Says the War Diary, striking a charming pastoral note, "Nothing was heard save the splash of paddles and the cries of disturbed night birds. Complete surprise was achieved."

The long wait was all but over. On April 24th under the most rigid security cover, operational details of PLAN HUSKY were communicated to the Commander of 1st Canadian Division. In the ensuing operations that Division would serve in XXX Corps, whose Commander-in-Chief, Lieut.-General Sir Oliver Leese, was in Egypt. On April 29th, when flying to consult him, Major-General Salmon was killed in a crash—a tragic beginning to the enterprise. On the following day Major-General G. G. Simonds CBE took over command and with his officers plunged into the massive details of an amphibious operation.

In a military unit rumours are always in circulation. Show a straw and the rear rank descries a haystack. By the beginning of May the Patricia wiseacres had detected more than one straw in the wind. Reinforcements had arrived to bring the Battalion up to the expanded war establishment. "O" Group meetings were called every few hours. The Orderly Room was stoking a bonfire of papers. On May 3rd the Patricia diarist mentions for no particular reason "the continued generosity of the Quartermaster's staff" and that "the tension and suspense is becoming more pronounced—little is said for fear of being overheard." On the next day ears to the ground confirmed the rumours and the old soldiers could swank over their instincts. The Patricias had received orders to move to Scotland for advanced amphibious training. On May 8th the Battalion arrived once more at Inverary and was accommodated in the familiar lines of Dukes Camp.

Thereafter for ten days hardening exercises, fast marches, hill climbing and work on the scramble nets alternated with the practice of assault landings on the Loch Fyne beaches. The weather was bleak and showery but all ranks, roused by the realism of the exercises and now certain that the curtain was about to rise, took the discomforts in their stride. On May 14th, in reporting landing craft exercises, the War Diary records the following incident:

"At 2230 hours the first serials moved to the boat stations. The loading was done with all the realism of a real operation. The humorous side of an otherwise serious affair became apparent when, after a slow cautious shuffle through the bowels of the ship in inky blackness with hand on the man in front, we suddenly emerged upon the deck to find it as light as day in the long northern twilight—all this to the amusement of the smirking naval ratings standing about. After being soaked with rain the troops saw, many of them for the first time in their lives, the spectacle of a lunar rainbow."

On May 17th the Patricias embarked on H.M.T. *Llangibby Castle*, a former South African liner, and moved out into the Firth of Clyde to participate in the Divisional WET SHOD exercise. Shortly after midnight on May 22nd two companies led the assault upon the beaches; before noon they had reached their final objectives. That afternoon the Battalion shifted to Hamilton in Lanarkshire, where it was issued with a syllabus of

mountain training. Here it remained for three weeks, with only details engaged in Divisional exercises; the others waited, some tense, some relaxed, for what was to come.*

On June 5th General Simonds arrived for a meticulous inspection. An officer declared, "Not a pants button was overlooked." A week later came the order to pack up. On June 14th the Patricias entrained for the Clyde and by evening they again were on the *Llangibby Castle*.

After three days aboard many were taken aback when Orders announced another war game. On June 17th in the lee of the Isle of Arran there was held the greatest Combined Operations exercise ever carried out in British waters. After two days of wet and hazardous work on STYMIE all ranks relaxed, took their ease and settled into shipboard routines. The curious clustered around the hatches; as supplies came aboard the packing cases were minutely scrutinized for clues as to the ship's destination. The issue of anti-malaria tablets was regarded as highly significant, although born doubters insisted that these pills were a deception device. On June 28th General Simonds and Brigadier Vokes came aboard and addressed the Battalion. That evening the ships began to move down the river.† An officer wrote:

"Along the shores of the Clyde a holiday atmosphere prevailed. Citizens and soldiers, sailors and airmen, members of the women's services, could be seen walking along the riverside or bathing on the beaches. It was to be our last view of a peaceful setting for a long time. As we neared the anti-submarine boom, we came upon an RAF launch in which three officers stood rigidly to attention as they saluted the Admiral's Flag. From the shore, a naval signals station flashed 'Good-bye and Good Luck.' As we passed the boom, we could see the ships of our convoy in line astern. Soon we came to the outer reaches of the Clyde and away to our starboard the hills and crags of the Island of Arran lay bathed in soft purple hues from the setting sun. We were now in the hands of God and of the Royal Navy."

* Lieut.-Colonel W. deN. Watson, then Adjutant, comments: "For some of us it was a period of intense activity. The Adjutant, Quartermaster and Transport Officer worked day and night preparing vehicles for loading on the ships. All stores had to be loaded in such a way that we would have what we needed when we came to fight at the other end of the trip. It required a great deal of forethought, for then we did not know where we were going, or when."

† There were two convoys from the Clyde—Fast and Slow. With Slow Convoy in H.M.S. *St. Essylt* went Major C. B. Ware, Capt. J. E. Leach, a number of details from Support Company and four of the six Battalion anti-tank guns. This ship was torpedoed; the guns were lost but all ranks were saved. Major Ware was landed in Algiers and imprisoned in a concentration camp until such time as requisite identifications were forthcoming.

The officers' embarkation roster was as follows:

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS—Officer Commanding—Lieut.-Colonel R. A. Lindsay: Second-in-Command—Major C. B. Ware: Adjutant—Capt. W. deN. Watson: Regimental-Sergeant-Major—H. Bennet.

“A” COMPANY—Major R. P. Clark, Capt. T. H. Knight, Lieut. J. S. de Balinhard, Lieut. H. W. Mulherin, Lieut. R. Carey.

“B” COMPANY—Capt. D. Brain, Capt. R. F. S. Robertson, Lieut. A. M. Campbell, Lieut. W. L. Smith, Lieut. G. F. Chapin.

“C” COMPANY—Capt. R. C. Coleman, Capt. R. G. Woodward-Jewsbury, Lieut. R. W. Potts, Lieut. C. M. McDougall, Lieut. H. G. Munro.

“D” COMPANY—Major A. E. T. Paquet, Capt. J. L. Hunter, Lieut. G. S. Lynch, Lieut. J. d'A. Horn, Lieut. W. S. Dewar.

SUPPORT COMPANY—Major J. R. G. Sutherland: Carriers—Capt. P. D. Crofton, Lieut. N. M. Cousens: Anti-Tank Platoon—Capt. J. E. Leach, Lieut. L. G. Burton: Mortars—Lieut. C. M. Cuthbertson: Pioneers—Lieut. N. Featherstone.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY—Capt. J. L. Wiswell: Intelligence Officer—Lieut. G. A. Smith: Transport Officer—Lieut. L. G. Beamish: Signals Officer—Lieut. W. O. Wakeham: Quartermaster—Lieut. C. F. Lawrence: Paymaster—Capt. J. A. McLeod: Medical Officer—Capt. G. C. Fairfield: Hon./Capt. and Chaplain—M. J. D. Carson.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SICILIAN CAMPAIGN

On June 30th, as in clear weather the ships ran down the latitudes, the admiral of the convoy announced its destination to be the Mediterranean.

On the following day a message from General Montgomery was read over the public address system of the ship. In part the Army Commander said: "I want to give a very hearty welcome to the Canadian troops that are now joining the Eighth Army. I know well the fighting men from Canada. They are magnificent soldiers, and the long and careful training that they have received in England will be put to good use."

On the same day it became general knowledge that the Canadians had been committed to the invasion of Sicily. Whereupon the 'ship's bag' was opened—thousands of boxes of maps, air photos, relief models of terrain, topographical reports, loading and unloading schedules, landing orders, naval bombardment tables, Sicilian identifications, regional descriptions of soils and vegetation, details of towns and of roads—every type of military intelligence which might make or mar the expedition. The serious of mind studied these documents feverishly. Others looked them over, sighed and hoped for the best.

Once the operational objective had been revealed evidences multiplied that action was at hand. The presence of Italian interpreters was disclosed; "Dove" (where) and "Que" (what) became the words of the hour. A series of new issues—mosquito nets, sterilization tablets, respirators, packboards and finally landing rations—marked the swift flight of the days. On July 8th all personal documents and papers were turned in. Battle was only over the horizon.

The invasion of Sicily might have been a formidable operation. That island, described as "stormily beautiful and harshly patterned" consisted in large part of easily-defensible terrain. The offshore waters (particularly to the south) were shallow, necessitating a long approach by landing craft. The beaches were soft and sandy, imposing difficulties in the landing of guns, tanks and

heavy equipment. The best beaches were commanded by hilly ridges which grew steeper and more rugged as the invaders moved inland. Interior communications were only moderately good and it would have been easy to block the principal roads by demolitions.

THE STRENGTH OF THE ENEMY

The enemy garrison was of considerable strength. There were 270,000 troops in Sicily of which 40,000 were Germans. The German forces included 15th Panzer Division and the Hermann Goering Division, mustering 160 tanks in all. The Italians had four field divisions with 100 light tanks and five coastal divisions well equipped with artillery. There were 30 airfields on the island.

Had these enemy forces been prepared to fight with determination the Sicilian campaign might have been long and arduous. Fortunately for the Allies the Italians were sick of the war. The attitude so often encountered in North Africa, described by the phrase "osso duro" (too tough) had permeated Italian forces at home. While some units were prepared to stand loyally and courageously to their duty, others hoped only to be quit of the struggle. The Italian coastal divisions were of low quality and undermanned; they were deployed neither to meet the invader on the beaches nor to strike effectively in counter-attack. Their management was static and even lethargic. As a result the German formations, reconstituted after destruction in North Africa and now holding the centre of the island, were spread out in small sustaining groups behind their unsteady allies. It now is known that Hitler himself was in some degree responsible for the unreadiness of the defenders. The dramatic stratagem of floating ashore a corpse which purported to be that of a Royal Marine officer carrying dispatches to the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean had deceived the Fuehrer into believing that the first Allied attack would be mounted against Sardinia.

THE PLAN OF ASSAULT

The plan of assault called for two armies, eleven divisions strong, to invade Sicily from the southeast and southwest. Montgomery's hard-bitten Eighth Army, veterans of three years of desert warfare, would land on thirty miles of eastern foreshore between Syracuse and Pozzallo, 18 miles west of Cape Passero. Seventh U.S. Army under General Patton would land on the Gulf

of Gela, fifty miles west of Eighth Army. Once beachheads had been established the lines of advance of the two armies would be co-ordinated to squeeze out any opponents who might endeavour to hold the intervening ground. To strengthen the tactical plan a squeeze within a squeeze was projected. XXX Corps, consisting of 51st Highland Division and 1st Canadian Division, was allotted landing beaches on either side of Cape Passero, with the Canadian beaches to the west of that promontory. Thus neither for the first nor last time Canada, in a joint enterprise of great moment, served in her role of "linchpin" of the English-speaking allies.

On July 4th, off Gibraltar, the convoy from the Clyde fused into the invasion armada. The *Llangibby Castle* became one of 3,000 ships converging on Sicily. From Egypt came 5th and 50th British Divisions and 231st Infantry Brigade, which had so valiantly defended Malta in the dark days before El Alamein. From North Africa another convoy brought 51st Highland Division, 1st and 3rd U.S. Divisions and 23rd British Armoured Brigade. From the United States came 45th U.S. Division; in Tunisian and Algerian harbours a separate fleet of ships stood ready to load 78th British Division, 9th U.S. Division, 2nd U.S. Armoured Division and 82nd U.S. Airborne Division.

Elsewhere in North Africa brigades of British and American airborne troops lay in the shade of their gliders, waiting to take off and to intervene in the first hours of the battle. Naval craft—300 battleships, cruisers, destroyers and monitors—stood ready to close on the land and to engage the shore defenses. All that thought, experience and imagination could provide to win a battle was available in abundance; it was a far cry from twenty-eight years before when men had scrambled ashore at Gallipoli with little save their rifles and their valor to sustain them. A thirty per cent loss of effectives in the landing had been budgeted for and reserves were standing by in Mediterranean ports to replace all wastages.

THE PATRICIA ROLE

On large scale maps the Patricia officers examined the landing area assigned to them. 1st and 2nd Canadian Brigades were briefed to lead the way, with 2nd Brigade on the left of the Canadian front. The Patricias would be the right flank battalion, with the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada on their left in the initial landing.

The Edmontons would follow ashore immediately.* On the left of 2nd Brigade 41st and 42nd Royal Marine Commandos would provide a flexible link with 45th U.S. Division, which would come ashore at Gela, 30 miles to the west.

The beaches allotted to 2nd Canadian Brigade lay in a shallow bay whose smooth curve was broken by Le Grotticelle, a splinter of lava rock protruding into the sea. This tack-point divided the landing areas of the leading battalions. The initial task was organized in three phases. Upon landing a covering position three miles in depth would be consolidated. In Phase Two the Patricias would lead 2nd Brigade into the northwest heading for Ispica, fifteen miles from the beaches. 1st Canadian Brigade would come up on the right and in Phase Three exploitation would begin on a two-brigade front to a maximum penetration of 21 miles inland.

While the Patricia officers pored over their maps and plans there drew together a great company of ships from east, west and south. On July 8th the divisional diarist wrote, "We now are proceeding along the eastern coast of the Bone peninsula. Tunisian villages, with their mosques and minarets, are plainly visible. No enemy aircraft have appeared, although the sea is filled with shipping as far as the eye can see."

THE EVE OF THE LANDING

Next morning the invasion fleets were rounding Malta, with the shore of Sicily a few hours ahead. Throughout the day the sky and the horizon were scanned anxiously, for it seemed incredible that with the destination of this vast armada revealed the hostile air forces should not intervene. Instead, only one enemy showed—that immemorial betrayer of the best-laid plans, Heavy Weather. Under a stiff breeze the blue waters began to kick up into whitecaps; from the crests of the long rollers the spindrift scudded across the heaving floor of the sea. As the sun wore into the west the ships rolled in a heavy ground swell and the hazards of launching light craft mounted. There might be loss of time or of direction, craft capsized or flooded, rescues to be undertaken—disorganization, discomfiture and even disaster might lie in the seven miles between the mother ships and the beaches. †

* The transposition of battalions which occurred in the actual landing whereby the Patricias came ashore on the left, the Seaforths on the right of the Brigade front, was accidental.

† In point of fact, the churning seas served the invaders well. The General Alert of the German Commander-in-Chief South had not gone out until late in the afternoon of July 9th. The Italian coast defense formations in many instances either ignored or minimized it. They could see the sea; it seemed certain that no one would attempt to land in such weather.

Night closed slowly, bestowing a cool benison after the heat of the day. A new moon trailed across a clear sky; the ships ploughed steadily through the darkness. Below decks anxious junior officers and non-commissioned officers bustled about, checking instructions with their men and making sure that all was understood. When everything was in readiness the men sat quietly in the midst of their gear. A few allowed their excitement to show in chaff and badinage. Some were as intent upon their cards or dice games as if it were any ordinary evening. An astonished merchant marine officer afterwards reported: "You would think they were getting ready for seven days' leave."

At 2130 hours hot dinners were served. Thereafter the officers gathered in the lounge and the old songs rang out—the legacy of one generation to another. Between choruses there might be heard a dull roar overhead. The night bombers were on their way to a last strike before the infantry took over.

THE LANDING

Within a few minutes of midnight the first Patricias stood to. Colin McDougall has written a brilliant description of the Sicilian landing, catching the full flavor of that dramatic occasion. As a Patricia platoon commander he depicts the assembly of his men in the gilt-and-gold luxury decor of the *Llangibby Castle* saloon:

"In battle order they looked grimly incongruous against the gold-leaf-and-pink cherubs. They were weighted down with extra loads of grenades, mortar bombs, SAA bandoliers, Bren magazines. During the past hour they had helped each other dress, like athletes or actors backstage. They carried more on their bodies than could have been expended in the most desperate firefight, but they did not know this yet because they did not know the actuality of war. In the saloon the silence began to settle on their shoulders and in their minds. Over the rasping loud-speaker an unconcerned naval voice called serial numbers—almost as though inviting play in a last game of housey-housey—summoning sub-units to the blackened decks."

Of what followed Capt. D. Brain of "B" Company wrote:

"A final roll call was taken before the groups moved off to their craft. Here the loading proceeded in smooth and orderly fashion. Everyone sat quietly until the ship reached her anchorage. Out clattered the anchor with what seemed to us far too much noise and too many sparks. Then came the order 'Lower Away.'

"Despite the swell we cast off without trouble and made our way to join the assault companies of the other units at the rendezvous. When all were assembled there was a shout from the naval commander and we got under way. From then until comparatively close to shore the men were allowed to stand in order to relieve the pressure in the cramped quarters of the landing craft.

"As we approached the shore flares could be seen, put up by an enemy even more uncertain than ourselves as to what to expect. Machine-gun tracer made attractive patterns against the sky. On shore every once in a while there would appear a bright flash followed by a loud report, as though someone was tossing grenades about. The shore gradually became clearly defined and the order was given for the landing craft to deploy. On touchdown the doors were dropped and the men disembarked in water well above their waists. In a few instances they had to swim for it.

"We made our way up a sandy beach until we encountered wire. From beyond the wire a number of grenades were tossed at us. Fortunately their effect was almost entirely blast; we replied with a couple of 36 grenades which dealt with our assailants. We cut through the wire and made our way forward, bumping into a machine-gun post with two sentries, whom we wiped out. A search of some huts nearby brought to light another Italian just awakened by the noise. He had not had time to put on his uniform.

"From this point we re-organized and made contact with "D" Company, in the process of doing the same thing as ourselves."

Major A. E. T. Paquet with most of "D" Company had kept a Guards alignment. When his landing craft stranded on a sandspit some distance from shore all ranks splashed through the shallows, climbed the first dune, stepped over the tripwires and saw before them the white floor of a dried salt lagoon—exactly where it ought to be. Few were as fortunate. Battalion Headquarters was scattered amid the clouds of mosquito fleet winging towards the shore but managed to coalesce before landing. The craft which bore one Patricia platoon was holed at shipside and took on so much water that its occupants were forced to seek safety on a nearby "flak" ship. Others strayed from course and brought up upon the wrong beaches, where they were regarded as grit in the cogs by those who were working against time to bring order out of confusion. Such minor mishaps were inevitable and they

cost little except momentary anxiety and delays. What mattered was that with astonishing little difficulty and loss of life 80,000 men, 1,000 vehicles and 900 guns had been landed on enemy territory and within thirty-six hours had been organized into cohesive formations and had begun to advance inland.

FIRST HOURS ASHORE

By dawn "A" Company (Major R. P. Clark), "C" Company (Capt. R. C. Coleman) and Headquarters Company (Capt. J. L. Wiswell) had followed ashore. Enemy guns now were shelling the landing beaches and were being silenced by salvos from the inshore ships. Little other opposition was encountered. A few machine guns firing on fixed lines had been avoided, a few grenades had been tossed at leading sections. That was the sum of the opposition on the Canadian beaches.

As soon as dawn broke the various elements of the Battalion coalesced. The mortar detachments arrived on the heels of the last infantry, but without their carriers, which did not turn up until five days later. Capt. P. D. Crofton and his Bren carriers found themselves at first light off 51st Highland Division's beaches; they coasted to the west and were put ashore in 1st Canadian Brigade's area. By 1000 hours normal organization had been achieved and the Patricias were occupying their correct Phase One position.

The Cape Passero coastal belt had little to recommend it. An officer wrote:

"The land, sloping very gradually to the sea, was terribly poor. Rock beds covered much of the surface and towards the sea the soil became almost pure sand. The vines were of a dwarf variety and provided little obstacle to the drift of the sand. To protect the young grain in the windswept soil the peasants had erected long rows of screens made of bamboos and of rushes. Between these—which are six to ten feet apart—they grew their grain."

To the north and northwest rose dim brown hills where the enemy's strength was arrayed. The Canadian task was to advance into these hills as outriders on the left flank of Eighth Army, while three British divisions drove along the coastal plain to seize Syracuse, Augusta and Catania. During July 10th Patricia patrols explored the neighbourhood and discovered the enemy to be in confusion. A number of small details and isolated posts were

encountered, some of which surrendered readily, some of which stood their ground. In one such encounter the Patricias sustained their first casualties. Lieut. G. S. Lynch of "D" Company, seeking a missing patrol, stumbled upon an enemy party in a farmhouse. After some close-range pistol work he escaped into a vineyard where he was wounded; the Italians, however, did not close in on him and several hours later he made his way back to his platoon. His patrol, which had been captured and was being held in the farmhouse, afterwards was released.

"C" Company also was probing inland, with its objective a bridge on the second-class road which ran into the northwest towards Ispica. Once again the historian is indebted to Colin McDougall's narrative. His platoon was in the lead, with sections in single file in an H formation. The Patricias crossed "a mile of the undulating coastal plain, past vineyards and olive groves, through gardens of aloe and cypress. Their boots crushed and released the scents of rosemary and thyme. There were flowering almond trees, distant orange groves—but no sign of the enemy."

Suddenly they were fired upon. "The platoon was climbing on to the road beside a lone poplar tree when there was a sharp, black explosion. Bits of dirt and gravel showered over them. Two men fell wounded. The others pushed on through a wooded parkland where they again were fired upon." In a scrambling charge the Patricias reached the farm buildings on the high ground and found them empty. A quick word brought silence; the men tiptoed forward to peer from cover into an inner valley. Five hundred yards away fifty Italians were gathered around a giant oak. They were being harangued by an officer and had no eyes elsewhere. The platoon spread out swiftly and silently into firing positions and the range was whispered along the line.

"'Fire,' the platoon commander shouted, and every weapon exploded. The knots of soldiers around the oak tree seemed to disintegrate. Some of the green-clad figures escaped to nearby bushes or defiladed bits of ground but most of them remained sprawled around the base of the tree. The three Bren guns spoke, firing expert, exploring bursts into the ground around the dead enemies."

ADVANCE TO PHASE TWO POSITIONS

At 2130 hours that evening the advance from Phase One position began. "A" Company acting as advance guard came under fire slightly short of its objective and at once moved to the attack.

The enemy proved to be an Italian battery of field guns; a number of prisoners were taken and the guns captured intact. At first light the Battalion stood to; when no counter-attack developed scouts were sent out, as well as a patrol mounted on the artillery horses which had been captured on the previous evening.*

The patrols returned to report the countryside to be free of the enemy as far as Ispica. At noon the Edmontons passed through this town and took up positions on high ground to the north. At 1715 hours the Patricias followed up, intending to occupy adjoining positions. Ispica, which stands on a steep-sided lava knoll, commanded the countryside to the southeast as far as the landing beaches. It had been fortified for defense; when such positions were found to be unmanned it was determined to speed up the advance. As a consequence the Patricias, instead of occupying the chosen brigade positions, pushed on and by 0500 hours next morning had completed a hot, dusty and exhausting march of 22 miles. At dawn they seized high ground overlooking Modica, a town of 40,000 inhabitants which lies on the floor and slopes of the valley which carried the river of the same name.

While most Patricias hastened to catch up with their sleep patrols were sent forward to investigate the town. Modica was discovered to be undefended. There was an embarrassing number of Italians waiting to surrender; the patrols returned with considerable "tails" of prisoners and with a certain amount of equipment. In the afternoon Sgt. N. L. G. McGowan in charge of a patrol from the Support Company returned to report that he had encountered an Italian general in Modica who was prepared to surrender to an officer of commensurate rank. It turned out to be General Achille d'Havet, commander of 206th Italian Coastal Division, which had been responsible for the sector in which the Canadians had landed. This soldier's sense of protocol was satisfied by the star and crown of the commander of 12th Army Tank Regiment (Three Rivers) who escorted the prisoner to Divisional Headquarters.

In the afternoon Capt. Coleman led "C" Company through Modica and occupied high ground to the north of the town. During the night and following day the Patricias moved by motor transport ten miles farther north to positions overlooking Ragusa, a modern town which stands 1,500 feet above sea level upon a ridge to the east of the Irminia valley.

* They were magnificent animals. The Patricias were loath to part with them.

Here the Battalion halted for two days. The men needed rest, for nearly a month on shipboard had dulled the edge of physical condition; in addition, after the excitement of the landing there had been a natural 'letdown.' Moreover, this was midsummer—a season in which Baedeker, most knowledgeable of travellers' guides, strongly advises against travelling in Sicily. The great heat, the enervating winds (described by the ancients as "marrow-sucking") and the fine white dust suspended in the exhausted air, made movement a burden and rest no relief. For those newly from northern lands a period of acclimatization and conditioning was essential.

In the first thirty miles of advance the Patricias had seen little to arouse enthusiasm. "The soil seems to be impregnated with sand," wrote an officer. "The roads are surfaced with limestone which has powdered until it permeates everything. There is a noticeable lack of birds and of vegetation; wild growth seems mostly to be cactus and thistles. The peasants live under conditions of extreme poverty—some in white limestone cottages but more in huts in which their livestock also lives. A stench surrounds each habitation."

During the Patricias' stand-fast a major realignment of the opposing forces was in progress. The German divisions, hitherto scattered in a supporting role across the centre of Sicily, concentrated swiftly on Eighth Army's right wing, in order to block the drive of 5th and 50th British divisions into the Catanian plain. XIV Panzer Corps was reinforced from France by 1st Parachute Division, one of the greatest fighting formations ever to take the field. In 700 square miles of rugged uplands around the base of Mount Etna the Germans took up strong defensive positions which, if they could not be held, would be sold for an extortionate price in blood.

In the second week of July General Montgomery had realized that the western wing of his armies must play a larger role in the battle than had been originally planned. The plunge through the right wing must be supported by a run around the left flank. 1st Canadian Division therefore was instructed to veer even further to the west, heading for Enna, in the centre of Sicily 50 miles to the northwest of Ragusa.

On the morning of July 14th a staff car flying the Army Commander's pennon arrived at the Patricias' encampment. General Montgomery, terse and confident as ever, bade all ranks close

around his vehicle. In his customary soldierly phrases he recalled a former meeting in TIGER exercise in England; he praised the high quality of Canadian performances and in downright terms he prophesied victory. The vigor, the intimacy and the informality of the occasion delighted all ranks and the great British commander was sped upon his way amid salvos of cheers.

OFF INTO THE NORTH

On the afternoon of July 15th "A" Company, escorted by three tanks and six carriers, pushed off northward across the ridges towards Grammichele. The route led over rising, improving countryside, with terraced hillsides patched with small olive groves and with handkerchief-size grainfields on the valley floors between the ridges. No opposition was encountered; at this stage 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades were out in front. Halting to the east of Grammichele—a small round town on a ridge 250 feet above the surrounding country—Major Clark and his men awaited the arrival of the remainder of the Battalion, which had moved off from the Ragusa area that evening on foot and had been picked up by troop-carrying transport during the night. It was a hot and tiring move of 20 miles. Throughout July 16th the Patricias remained in positions to the south of Grammichele, but next morning they once more took up the trail into the north, moving in the wake of 1st Canadian Brigade.

They followed the highway which wound westward to Caltagirone, a town of 60,000 inhabitants which stands on a high watershed and from whence, 20 miles to the south, the sea may be seen at Gela. Six miles beyond Caltagirone the column halted abruptly on the approaches of San Michele di Ganzeria; at a road junction beyond that small town the Edmontons were bickering with an enemy rearguard. When the way was clear the Battalion took a branch road through well-cultivated, rolling countryside where the grain fields were full-size and redolent of rosemary, a herb which grows wild in these parts.

FACING THE GERMANS

An early bivouac was followed by a turn-out before dawn. The Patricias marched north for ten miles and fetched up on the southern outskirts of Piazza Armerina, the market town of the most prosperous farming area in Sicily. Here on the previous day the Edmontons in the course of a stiff scrimmage had driven German elements from covering positions to the south of the town.

The news that they now faced the principal enemy stimulated all ranks. In the words of Colin McDougall's narrative:

"Here were the Germans—the cause that had brought them here. Unsmiling men they know only by photographs, grim, unrelenting faces framed in coal-scuttle helmets or peaked baseball caps; lean, suntanned professionals, superbly arrogant. Men clad in paratroop smocks or camouflage-daubed tunics, driving half-track vehicles or ominous square-hulled tanks, towing their 88mm. guns, manning their deadly mortars—the Germans, the professionals, the tough guys.

"Back home, in the long ago, men had looked at those photographs. Then after a moment they had spat on their hands, hitched up their belts and walked into the nearest recruiting office. There were other men just as tough in the world; they were here now, in 1st Canadian Division."

THE MAIN DEFENSE LINE

The enemy, in no great strength but taking advantage of the lie of the land and of fortress positions provided by the compact Sicilian towns, was holding the line of Route 121, the main east-west highway from Catania to Palermo. To proceed further towards the original objective at Enna would expose the right flank of the Canadian advance to foes who could be trusted to take advantage of any opening. Moreover 1st U.S. Division, which had landed at Gela, had crossed the axis of advance of 45th U.S. Division and was closing on Enna from the south. The Canadians therefore were ordered to turn due north towards Leonforte, moving through the hills by way of Valguarnera, seven miles to the north of Piazza Armerina.

The Valguarnera road junction was of tactical importance since it blocked the Canadian line of advance. 15th Panzer Grenadier Division held it. On the night of July 17th 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades attacked; stubborn fighting marked the first serious clash in the campaign. It was not until late on the following evening that the enemy gave way. As soon as Valguarnera was cleared the Seaforths passed through and took the lead in 2nd Brigade's move to the north. Twenty-four hours later troop carriers picked up the Patricias and carried them to within three miles of where the Valguarnera secondary road took off from the main highway. An all-night march followed. Halting at first light

a hot meal was served; thereafter the Battalion passed through Valguarnera, a squalid town huddled about a precipitous knoll. Three miles farther on they came up with the Seaforths, who that morning had taken over as Divisional advance guard from 48th Highlanders of 1st Canadian Brigade. The Vancouver men were held up before a transverse ridge and were under harassing mortar and artillery fire. Brigadier Vokes, brooking no delay, ordered the Patricias to the attack.

"B" Company, moving forward on the left under fire, found dead ground from which to cover the assault. "D" Company then advanced against the enemy position, closely followed by "C" Company, whose objective was a secondary ridge on the right. "A" Company in turn followed up in close support. It transpired that the Germans had been intent on no more than delay; as the attack went in they withdrew, leaving a certain amount of equipment behind. The Patricias occupied the deserted positions and bivouacked for the night.*

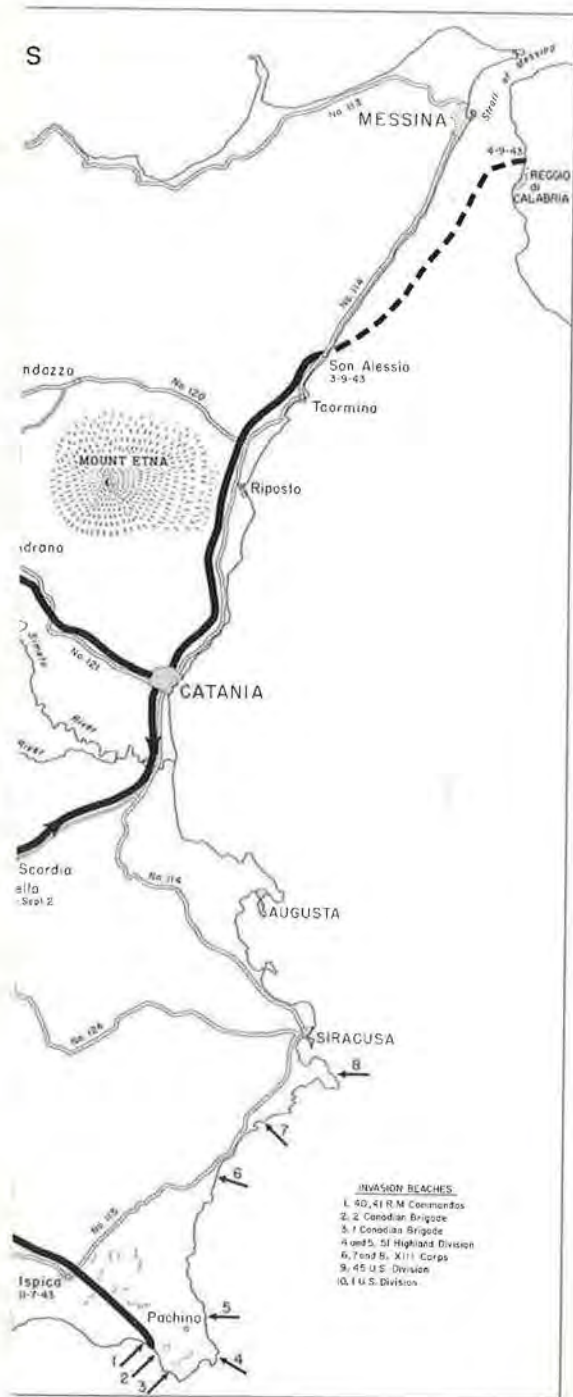
Next morning (July 20th) 2nd Canadian Brigade continued to press northward along the axis of the Leonforte road, with the Edmontons and Seaforths of Canada passing through the Patricias to take over the lead. As the advance approached the main east-west highway (Route 121) resistance stiffened and the Edmontons found themselves under harassing fire from the direction of Monte Rossi, a ridge system on their left flank rear. The Patricias, following up, sent out scouts to reconnoitre this feature; as a result an attack was laid on for 1800 hours that evening.

It was to be a set-piece assault, with divisional artillery, a troop of tanks, medium machine guns and mortar detachments in support of the infantry. After a noisy shoot the Patricias advanced but again the enemy did not stand; again the Battalion clambered to the crests of the feature and spent the night in the deserted enemy positions.

LEONFORTE THE HINGE OF THE LINE

Ahead lay the easy Dittaino valley and its meandering stream. Beyond the river and three miles to the north stood the high hump of Assoro, with Leonforte two miles to its west. The turning movement now was about to commence. At the Leonforte hinge

* On the approach to their objective the Patricia companies crossed grain fields which caught fire. Some of the wounded suffered burns. Among the casualties was Lieut. Gordon Smith, the Intelligence Officer, who had been a tower of strength since arrival in Sicily.



1870
The first of these was the
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The second of these was the
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The third of these was the
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The fourth of these was the
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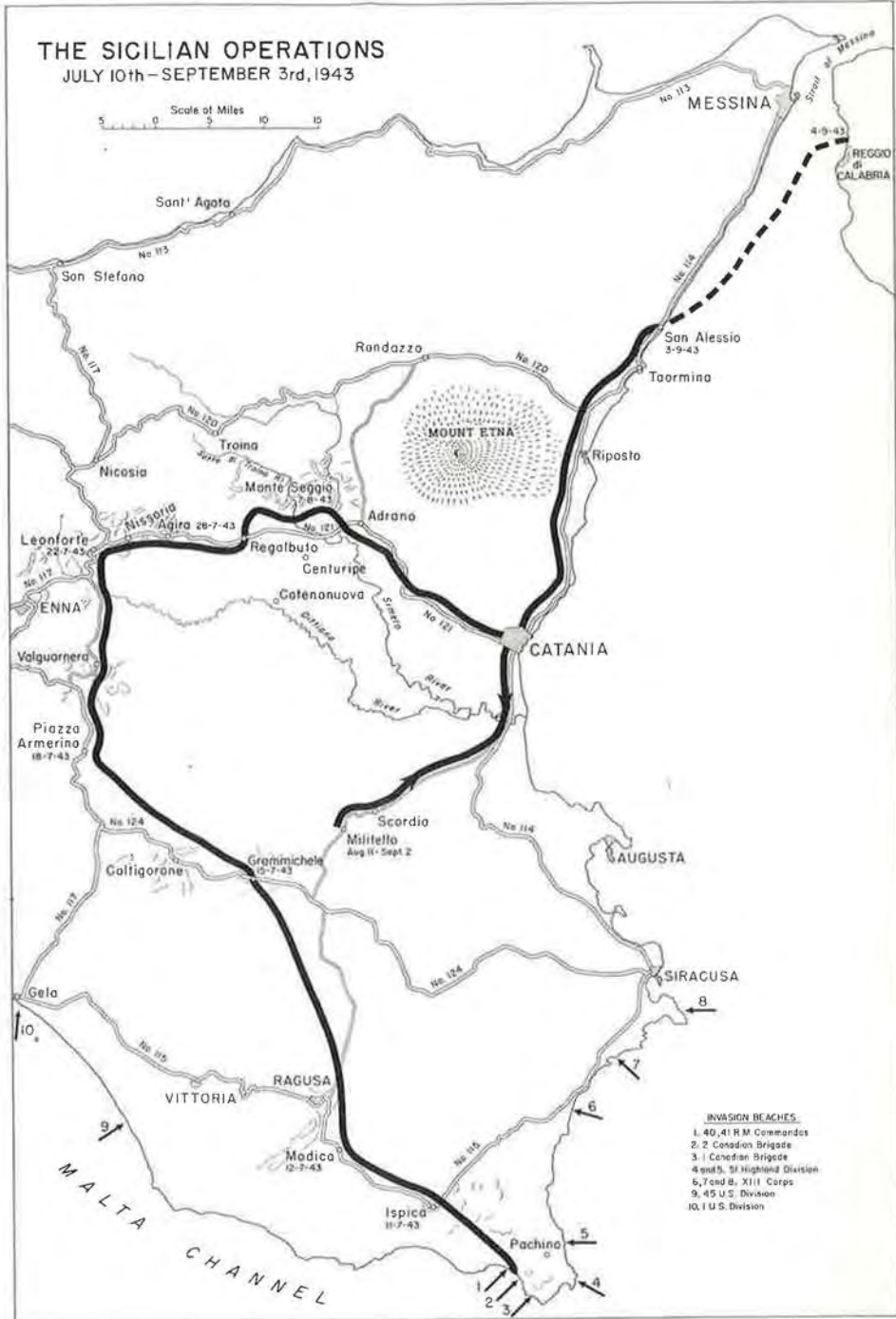
The fifth of these was the
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The sixth of these was the
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THE SICILIAN OPERATIONS

JULY 10th - SEPTEMBER 3rd, 1943

Scale of Miles
0 5 10 15



- INVASION BEACHES**
- 1. 40, 41 R.M. Commandos
 - 2. 2 Canadian Brigade
 - 3. 1 Canadian Brigade
 - 4 and 5. 31 Highland Division
 - 6. 7000th B. XIII Corps
 - 9. 45 U.S. Division
 - 10. 1 U.S. Division



the Canadians would wheel into the east, striking at the flanks of the strong enemy forces opposing 51st Highland Division, which was seeking to cut the line of German retreat to the west of the Etna mountain block. Speed of movement and continuous pressure were essential to the success of this operation. Without delay a Canadian assault was mounted against Leonforte.

The lie of the land presented serious obstacles to attack from the south and this was the only feasible line of approach. The town, oblong in shape and a kilometre in length, could be entered only along a twisty switchback road which crossed a deep ravine on the southern outskirts of the built-up area. The approach to this bridge (which had been destroyed) was on a reverse curve which gave the enemy on the high ground behind and to the east of Leonforte a clear field of fire. The town itself, built on a steep hillside and extending over the crest, was so compact that nothing but plunging fire would reach its garrison. Its narrow twisty ways offered every facility for street fighting and for a dispersed defense.

The afternoon of July 21st was intensely hot. The Patricias moved forward and occupied the junction of the Valguarnera road and the main highway, with instructions to provide a firm base for the ensuing attack. At 1630 hours the Seaforths, while deploying for the impending assault, were mauled by shell fire. Whereupon the Edmontons took over and at 2100 hours, after a furious artillery and mortar bombardment, burst into the town. The sappers came hurrying up to rebuild the ravine bridge in order that tanks and anti-tank guns might cross. From the town there came the harsh rattle of machine-gun fire and the springing boom of grenades; the sharp crack of high velocity weapons revealed that the defenders had either tanks or light guns in close support. Communications broke down and the Edmontons were in the blue, with only the noise of battle to confirm that they fought on.

"C" COMPANY ENTERS THE FIGHTING

While the Canadian sappers worked under fire on the all-important bridge Shermans of the Three Rivers Tank Regiment and six-pounders of 90th Anti-Tank Regiment waited impatiently for the moment when they could cross. At 0300 hours "C" Company of the Patricias was ordered forward to cover the sappers. Ninety minutes later, after passing along the shell-swept road Capt. Coleman and his men arrived on the southern bank

of the ravine.* The bridge had just been completed; the Patricias were ordered to escort the tanks into Leonforte. There they would establish contact with the Edmontons and if possible reinforce a company of that battalion which was holding high ground beyond the town.

At 0645 hours the Patricias formed up but the area was so heavily shelled that the advance was postponed. At 0900 hours Brigadier Vokes, deeply concerned over the predicament of the Edmontons, ordered a flying column to gain the town at all costs. A platoon of "C" Company clambered on the anti-tank guns and quads; the remainder under Lieut. Colin McDougall fell in behind on foot. Then with a single impulse tanks, guns and men dashed for the bridge and beyond it, for the town.

Speed and audacity paid off. In the words of the Official Canadian Historian:

"At breakneck speed the column raced down the road, 'galloped' the bridge and tore up the long switchback hill into Leonforte. Machine gun fire raked it but such was the speed of the rush that this caused only one casualty. A moment later enemy posts near the entrance to the town, stunned and overwhelmed by the suddenness and power of the attack, had surrendered."

The survivors of Headquarters Company of the Edmontons, thirty strong, were discovered in a wine cellar in the centre of the town. Their rifle companies were dispersed in house-to-house fighting and were out of touch. The Patricias, led by a Sherman tank, thrust up the main street and bumped into a roving panzer, which the Sherman destroyed at ten yards range. The street was narrow and blocked by the blazing German tank, whose ammunition was exploding. The Patricias gingerly edged past and made their way to the north end of the town. Lieut. McDougall and his platoon by means of a detour reached the railway station, seized it and held it under heavy fire. Two groups of Germans on the railway track and on the high ground to the east and north staged a counter-attack and were beaten back but "C" Company, now unsupported, was unable to continue its advance.

Throughout the forenoon reinforcements dribbled into Leonforte. At 1300 hours "A" Company (Major J. R. G. Sutherland)

* Capt. D. W. McLean of the Regiment, now Staff Captain of 2nd Brigade, acted as traffic controller, signalling the vehicles and sub-units the right moment to run the gauntlet of the enemy's fire.

made contact with "C" Company in its advanced positions. "B" Company (Capt. D. Brain) thrust up the main street; when held up by machine-guns an anti-tank gun was manhandled into position and dispersed the defenders. When the three companies drew together at the top of the town they felt strong enough to carry out the original plan and to assail the high ground before them. As a preliminary move Capt. Brain dispatched two "B" Company platoons to work around the eastern flank of the German position. This small force came under close-range fire from a tank and a self-propelled gun; 12 Platoon lost 17 men, including its commander, in a few minutes.

THE ASSAULT ON THE HIGH GROUND

The wrecked panzer in the main street had been nudged aside and it became possible for the Three Rivers tanks to reach the forward infantry. The first Sherman to arrive, however, was immediately knocked out by an enemy self-propelled gun and the remainder of the troop dared not sally from cover. If the Patricias wanted the high ground they must go it alone. A quick conference by the three company commanders allotted "C" Company the holding role; as "B" Company had sustained serious casualties the assault devolved upon "A" Company.

At 1520 hours Major Sutherland's men, covered by mortar and machine-gun fire, swept up the hillside in splendid fashion.* The enemy stood firm and on the crest close-range fighting followed. Lieut. Rex Carey with 8 Platoon worked his way forward through dead ground and closed on a series of machine-gun nests with bomb and bayonet. In a quick, deadly encounter Pte. W. Reilly stalked a machine-gun post from the ruins of a house and put paid to its crew. Three Patricias rushed another enemy weapon pit. One man fell dead, a second seriously wounded; the survivor, Pte. S. J. Cousins, firing his machine-gun from the hip at point-blank range, killed five Germans. Changing magazines he dashed against another machine-gun nest; here too he wiped out the defenders. Unfortunately this gallant man was killed that evening.

With the lip of the high ground lost the enemy, no longer able to command Leonforte, began to withdraw. "B" Company, moving forward under fire, came up on the right and established contact with the Royal Canadian Regiment of 1st Brigade.

* Major Sutherland was wounded in this action.

"D" Company, which had remained in reserve during the assault, was given the task of dealing with enemy snipers in the town. At last light, as the anti-tank guns moved up to cover the seized positions, the battle died away.

Patricias' casualties in this sharp encounter had been 21 killed and 40 wounded. Here for the first time the Battalion saw its medical sections in action, working in the open under fire, following the fighting line and ministering to the men where they fell. On this occasion Cpl. R. C. Middleton of the stretcher bearers earned particular notice by his courage and resource. Concerning the Medical Officer, ever one of the most popular Regimental figures, an officer wrote:

"I must say it was a heartening sight to see Capt. Fairfield hastening forward on foot, laden with haversacks filled with first aid equipment and coming up into the midst of the fighting. It gave us a feeling of security to know that if we were hit we would receive immediate and efficient medical attention."

The Patricias' first test against the principal enemy had gone well. It had been a dispersed encounter—an affair of platoons and even of sections, the sort of fighting which demanded the individual virtues—courage, alacrity and tenacity. The junior officers and men had met the challenges of difficult terrain and of hidden defenses with superb assurance. Leonforte was an eloquent forecast of the quality which the Regiment would reveal in the stern months to come.

That evening, as the Patricias settled down for the night on the battlefield, the war in western Sicily drew to a close. United States armoured and airborne forces were at the gates of Palermo; soon they would be free to drive eastward along the north shore of the island; thereafter Messina, the port of escape, would be menaced from the west as well as from the south. The final battle of the campaign was about to open against the enemy anchor positions around the base of Mount Etna. In this battle 1st Canadian Division now was in position to intervene with authority since twenty-four hours before the Leonforte fighting the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment of 1st Canadian Brigade in a magnificent night attack had seized the great buttress of Assoro. The main highway to the east was open and every mile gained in that direction undermined the ability of the enemy to withstand the northern drive of the main body of the Eighth Army.

THE ACTION BEYOND NISSORIA

It was time to get out the whips and to spare neither men nor machines. General Simonds at once directed 1st Canadian Division against Agira on the main highway eight miles to the east of Leonforte. Halfway to Agira, in a saucer of ground with commanding ridges on either side, lay the village of Nissoria. Here on the night of July 24th/25th 1st Canadian Brigade came up against dour defenders; thirty hours fighting followed in the course of which all three battalions of that brigade sustained substantial losses. Eventually the Nissoria position was turned from the south but there still remained three defense lines covering Agira. On the afternoon of July 26th 2nd Canadian Brigade took over the battle and with the Patricias in the lead moved up to launch assaults against these defenses.

To the east of Nissoria stood two saddlebacks of high ground, with a col between them which carried the main highway. It was to be a battle of First World War vintage, with infantry advancing behind a tight barrage. Three field regiments, a medium regiment, mortar and medium machine-gun companies would provide the fire programme—fifteen minutes pounding on the first objective, followed by a barrage which marched 1,600 yards in hundred-yard lifts at three minute intervals. "C" and "D" Companies would lead off from a start line slightly to the west of Nissoria, with their initial objective LION, 500 yards beyond the village. Here "A" and "B" Companies would pass through, to drive for 1,000 yards to TIGER. Thereafter the Seaforths would leapfrog the Patricias and would thrust on to GRIZZLY, 2,000 yards beyond TIGER and on the western outskirts of Agira.

At 2000 hours that evening the shoot came down. Seventeen minutes later the leading Patricia companies moved to the attack. "D" Company immediately ran into opposition from medium machine-guns, mortars and anti-tank guns. Fighting dourly two platoons managed to reach the first objectives and held on, with the enemy refusing to give further ground. "C" Company had better luck and by keeping close to the barrage arrived at LION without great difficulty; the defenders, demoralized by the bombardment, either surrendered or fled. Enemy close supports, however, hurried up; there were spirited tommy-gun and grenade exchanges and a good deal of stalking and chasing about in the dark. (One section of 14 Platoon, seeking enemies, pushed on for a further thousand yards and only returned

next morning.) Considering the rough-and-tumble nature of the encounter, casualties were light, amounting to eleven in all. Among the wounded was the commander of "D" Company, Major A. E. T. Paquet.

When at midnight "A" and "B" Companies had not arrived Brigadier Vokes sent up the Seaforths to continue the attack. Whereupon Patricias and Highlanders swept forward to TIGER. On the following day Seaforths were at it once more in their scheduled advance to GRIZZLY. The Vancouver men, attacking with great spirit, won most of the ground; what remained to the enemy was seized by the Edmontons before dawn next morning.

CAPTURE OF AGIRA

Again it was the Patricias' turn. At noon on July 28th "A" and "B" Companies embussed and were carried to within 2,000 yards of their objective. As they moved up to their start line Lieut.-Colonel Lindsay arrived with the tidings that Agira had been reported as clear of the enemy. As a result the fire programme, which consisted of a thirty-minute preliminary shoot, had been cancelled. "A" Company sent forward a fighting patrol which found no enemies in the western section of the town; whereupon both companies advanced. The plan was to occupy Agira as far as two churches below the crest of the hillside upon which the town stood. At 1430 hours both companies entered Agira, to be warmly welcomed on its outskirts by the civilian population.

Within a matter of minutes "A" Company had received a different welcome. Leading sections were fired upon at close range from buildings in the main street. When supporting tanks came forward they were raked by close-range fire and forced to withdraw. Clambering to a roof-top a Patricia Bren gunner silenced one post; within fifty yards a second nest was encountered. A platoon slipped to flank, shook the building with PIAT bombs, rushed the entrance and took ten prisoners. Cpl. S. C. Butterick and his section, while investigating an alley, bumped the enemy at point blank range; in the scrimmage the corporal was wounded but retained command from the ground. His men chased off the Germans and picked up eight more prisoners. 9 Platoon, advancing along another street, also encountered machine guns and was held up; its commander, Lieut. J. S. de Balinhard, son of a

Patricia officer of the First World War, climbed to a roof-top to reconnoitre and was killed by a sniper. Mortar fire dislodged the enemy and through a maze of streets and passages "A" Company made its way slowly to the top of the town. On the northern outskirts two platoons emerged from the built-up area to find themselves on a brink of a cliff. They immediately were fired upon by the Edmontons who were keeping their flank in the valley below. It was not until 2100 hours that all platoons reported in as "Snug" on their objectives.

"B" Company likewise had an exciting and arduous time of it. When half-way through the town on a narrow, winding street the leading platoon was pelted by small arms fire. It took two hours fighting to dislodge the enemy; the closely-packed houses, the twisty alleys and back passages allowed the defenders to shift about; slippery cobbles and short fields of fire made it difficult to come to grips. Mortars were brought into action to cast smoke; under its cover a number of enemy nests were dealt with. The Germans usually decamped when their assailants came within bayonet range. Two platoons reached the agreed line against light opposition only to discover a further nest of machine-gunners on the high ground before them. These last defenders were winkled out and when darkness fell opposition ceased. Agira had been cleared at a cost of 12 casualties, as against confirmed enemy losses of several times that number.

On July 29th the Patricias established defensive positions to the east of the town and the Edmontons pushed through to clear the neighbourhood. 1st Canadian Brigade also passed through and worked down the road toward Regalbuto, eight miles to the east. This day was memorable for a cloudburst which broke the heat wave and brought relief to the panting Canadians. After three weeks of intense and enervating heat the men were revitalized by the tonic of cool, fresh air.

ENEMY DEFENSES COLLAPSE

Time was running out for the enemy. Along the north shore of Sicily the American divisions, more delayed by demolitions than by opposition, were eating up the miles to Messina. On Eighth Army's front the vital Adrano road junction, which kept open an escape route to the west of Mount Etna, was under pressure from both west and south. The denouement of the campaign was at hand.

On July 30th 1st Canadian Brigade with 231st Brigade under command attacked Regalbuto. Two days of bitter fighting followed before the Hermann Goering Division cried quits and withdrew. Meanwhile 3rd Canadian Brigade, which had diverged from the Divisional axis at Valguarnera and had struck out across country to the east, came under command of 78th British Division, newly arrived from North Africa. On July 30th the Canadians established a bridgehead over the Dittaino river at Catenanuova which permitted the British division to attack Centuripe. On August 2nd/3rd, after perhaps the bitterest fighting of the campaign, the German defense system collapsed.

A NEW ROLE IN THE 'BAD LANDS'

On July 31st a new role was allotted to 2nd Canadian Brigade. To the west of Mount Etna and north of the main highway lay a strip of 'bad lands,' 20 miles in width, between the axes of advance of 1st Canadian Division and of 1st and 9th U.S. Divisions which were headed for Randazzo, at the rear of the Mount Etna mountain block. This was wild and topsy-turvy country, much cut up by dry ravines and abounding in cones and pinnacles which rose high above the countryside. In this wasteland the enemy forces had taken cover; they could intervene against either the Canadian or the United States lines of advance; they also provided the final shield for the German escape route west of Mount Etna. It was necessary to dislodge them; it also was necessary to give 78th British Division, driving from the south upon Adrano, more elbow room for movement along Route 121.

These necessities compelled the Canadians to leave the main highway and to direct their line of advance into the rough mountain land. 2nd Canadian Brigade led the way. The Edmontons and the Seaforths dispatched strong fighting patrols to locate the main positions of the enemy. When located the main body of the Brigade would move to the attack.

Three rivers, or more properly three riverbeds, bounded this helter-skelter terrain. The Salso ran from east to west along the southern fringe of the area, a few miles north of Highway 121. The Troina angled down from the northwest to join the Salso six miles east of Regalbuto. The Simeto also came down from the north four miles to the east of the junction of the Salso and Troina. In the wedges of rough highlands between these rivers lay the principal enemy fortress positions—Hill 736, five miles

north of Regalbuto and two miles west of the Troina river; Monte Revisotto, three miles further east on the opposite side of the river and Monte Seggio, another two miles to the east, overlooking the western lip of the Simeto valley.

The Brigade plan called for the Edmontons to deal with Hill 736 and afterwards with Monte Revisotto. On the right flank of the Edmontons the Seaforths would clear the ground up to the Troina river. Thereafter the Patricias would pass through and establish a bridgehead on the eastern bank of that stream. The Seaforths then would leapfrog to the Simeto River, where the Patricias again would take over, turn north and attack Monte Seggio. Beyond the Simeto 2nd Brigade would relinquish the lead to 1st and 3rd Brigades, which would drive on Adrano.

On August 1st the Edmontons crossed the Salso with supplies on muleback and closed up on Hill 136. The approach march was difficult and the enemy was found in determined mood. There followed two days of confused fighting. Meanwhile the Seaforths had advanced along the north bank of the Salso and by dawn on August 4th were within sight of their objective—a ridge of high ground to the west of the Troina river.

THE PATRICIAS ENTER THE SWEEP

On the evening of August 3rd the Patricias moved forward through Regalbuto to a bivouac on the southern bank of the Salso. At 1500 hours on the following afternoon the approach march began. Early in the evening "A" and "C" Companies with tanks in close support crossed the Troina and established a bridgehead astride the Troina-Adrano road. Here they drew fire from Monte Revisotto, 3,000 yards to the north.

Next morning BOOTH FORCE, consisting of Seaforths and squadrons of Three Rivers Tank Regiment, passed through and headed into the difficult broken land to the east, which was known to be garrisoned by nests of paratroopers. There followed a brilliant action, in which the tanks, in the words of an officer, "shuffled about and cleaned up suspicious-looking places with 75 mm. H.E. and blasts of M.G. fire." By noon BOOTH FORCE had reached Poggio Perriato, on the east bank of the Simeto River.

That evening, when it again was the Patricias' turn to head the drive Lieut.-Colonel Lindsay, believing the principal strength of the enemy to be upon his left flank, decided to leave "C" and

"D" companies behind as a firm base for the Edmontons in their assault upon Monte Revisotto, entrusting the attack on Monte Seggio to his other companies.

After reconnaissance the commanders of "A" and "B" Companies decided to follow the line of the road and railway to the southeast until contact was made with the Seaforths. At 2030 hours the night march began. Capt. Brain has provided a vivid picture of that evening:

"The night was very dark but along the hills on both sides were large fires—burning straw stacks and houses and in one spot an ammunition dump which flared up every now and then. There were flashes of gun fire and shell explosions in the darkness on either side.

"At 2200 hours contact was made with a squadron of Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, who were able to give us a good picture of the situation. They also did us the favour, which is most useful in forward areas, of warning their own patrols and tanks of our approach.

"At 2300 hours we contacted a sentry by the side of the road who led us down a long track to a farmhouse where we met Lieut.-Colonel Hoffmeister at Battalion Headquarters of the Seaforths. The old room at the back of the farm presented a strange sight. A very dirty oil lamp, 'scrounged' from somewhere, was burning on a ledge. The C.O. was sitting on a dilapidated straw chair munching away at some hardtack spread with jam and looking very tired. In another corner Capt. Gowan was supervising a can of hot tea, from which we were given a welcome drink; while against the wall, on a pile of straw, lay a couple of wounded officers waiting to be evacuated.

"We were given the story of the hard fight the Seaforths had had in gaining their ground that afternoon. They also told us about Monte Seggio. To the best of their knowledge the hill still was held in some strength, although no mortaring or shelling of their (the Seaforths') area had occurred since nightfall. In our experience of the Germans, this had little significance.

"Our plan was discussed with Colonel Hoffmeister before we pushed off. On reaching the road again we encountered a squadron of tanks on their way forward to relieve another squadron which had expended its ammunition and petrol. We accepted the offer

of a lift and loaded two companies on the tanks. Unfortunately a wrong turning was made and we finally offloaded on the edge of an irrigation ditch which the tanks could not cross.

"Then began our search for the forward companies of the Seaforths. A patrol was sent out which returned after twenty minutes. A second patrol was dispatched and it, too, returned after a short time but with the good news that contact had been made with Major Bell-Irving's company. We moved forward once more and at 0230 hours we were inside the Seaforth area."

It was decided to rest the men for a few hours and to attack Monte Seggio at first light. At daybreak the supporting tanks had not arrived; whereupon an artillery observation officer with great dexterity "tied in" the various artillery units in the neighbourhood for a shoot on the Patricia objectives. Germans could be seen moving about on Monte Seggio and at first it seemed as though "A" and "B" Companies would receive a rough welcome. It transpired, however, that the enemy was pulling out. The Patricias made their way up the slopes without opposition and by 1500 hours the summit was secure. Three German paratroopers, picked up by "A" Company, divulged that their unit had dispersed and was attempting to rejoin the German main body in twos and threes.

At 1000 hours that morning the Edmonton assault upon Monte Revisotto had gone in. As it won home "C" and "D" Companies of the Patricias, released from their supporting role, force-marched to rejoin "A" and "B" Companies. They were heavily shelled en route, among the killed being Lieut. J. d'A. Horn, a popular officer. As a result, they did not arrive in time to participate in the Monte Seggio attack.

Next morning patrols went out which failed to find the enemy. The German withdrawal to the north of Mount Etna was being covered by last stand groups, including a number of nebelwerfer (multiple mortar) teams which occasionally found the range with disconcerting accuracy. By the evening of August 7th these rear-guards had been dispersed. On August 8th a Church Service with Communion was held on the summit of Monte Seggio.

THE END OF THE ROAD IN SICILY

This was the end of the road for the Patricias in the Sicilian operations. It was twenty-nine days since they had landed on the dunes of Cape Passero. They had advanced 120 miles and

had fought four actions against tough German troops. They had won their objectives on each occasion at surprisingly low cost. Whether in street fighting or in the semi-guerrilla warfare of the mountain block their long and thorough training had stood them in good stead.

Yet not even the most realistic training could simulate the actualities of combat in which a man's fate and those of his comrades often depended as much upon his instincts as upon his reasoning. It is on this account that in the long history of war there never has been a device to replace or to equal discipline. In this first encounter with the enemy the Patricias' discipline had stood the test. There was no intermediate period of schooling; after brushes with the confused and disheartened Italians on the beaches the next adversaries were the elite of the Wehrmacht—soldiers of great tenacity, courage and skill. As an officer put it, "We were in the big league from the start." Only men of high quality could have come off so well against such opponents. Nor was the cost unduly high. Considering the easily defensible terrain, the enemy's knowledge of the country and the necessity to keep up constant pressure, the total Sicilian casualty list—2 officers and 28 other ranks killed, 6 officers and 98 other ranks wounded—was a reasonable price to pay for a clear-cut victory.

For two days the Patricias rested on Monte Seggio. They were awaiting transport, for on August 6th 1st Canadian Division had been placed in Army Reserve. The lull was given over to reorganization, from which the Battalion emerged with a number of changes in the officer roster. Major C. B. Ware assumed command, with Major R. C. Coleman, whose fine leadership of "C" Company at Leonforte had been recognized by a Military Cross, as his second-in-Command. Capt. J. E. Leach took over "C" Company and Capt. J. L. Hunter "D" Company. Major R. P. Clark was transferred to the Edmonton Regiment and Capt. P. D. Crofton took his place in "A" Company. Fortunately Major Clark was not lost to the Battalion. Capt. R. F. S. Robertson replaced Capt. T. H. Knight as commander of Headquarters Company and Capt. R. S. Graham came from staff employment to act as Adjutant, vice Capt. Colin McDougall, who was dispatched upon a course.

REST AT MILITELLO

On August 11th the Patricias moved 35 miles to the southeast to a rest area at Militello, on the edge of the Catanian plain. It

was one of the better parts of Sicily, fertile and well-farmed. All ranks set to work to make themselves comfortable. Drill and fatigues were restricted to the cooler hours of the day and on August 15th the Battalion enjoyed its first holiday since landing. Unfortunately the rest period was marred by a good deal of illness; sandfly fever and digestive ailments led to long queues at the morning sick muster. The provision of a mobile bath unit and other amenities kept the healthy in good heart. A stream of visitors—specialist instructors, war correspondents and photographers—afforded contacts with the outside world.

On August 20th the visitor once again was the Army Commander. General Montgomery had his own way of doing everything. When 2nd Canadian Brigade assembled in hollow square he drove in at the open side and bade all ranks close on his vehicle. Thereafter, in the words of an officer:

“As soon as we were all settled and comfortable and smoking, he said that having us around his car did him more good than being on a formal parade. In a few brief words he covered the Sicilian campaign and then the Canadian share and conduct in it. He reminisced as to what our fathers would have said—those that lost their lives in the last War. Then he came to what he himself had to say. He said ‘You did magnificently, magnificently. My friends all know that when I say a thing, I mean that thing. When I say you did magnificently, I mean magnificently.’ Thereafter he extolled the Canadians as the equals of his veterans of Eighth Army. He wished he had more of them. ‘However,’ he added, in a reflective aside, ‘if I asked for more, they probably would take you from me.’”

In the Militello area as elsewhere in Sicily relationships with the civil population were satisfactory. The Sicilians shared in full the war weariness of the Italian soldiers. They were even less amenable than their kinsmen of the mainland to the blunt and sometimes brutal behaviour of the German forces. In the main they regarded the Canadians as deliverers who would end a reign of hardship and of hazards. They hoped not only for the end of military operations but also for the downfall of the Mussolini regime; immediately after the landings many Sicilians came forward to offer their services to the Allies and to inform upon the Squadristi, a Fascist vigilante organization entrusted with internal security.

In the various towns the troops had received warm welcomes, even when they had brought battle and destruction with them. The correct and soldierly behaviour of the Canadians commended itself to a population weary of official caprices; they perhaps were more esteemed than other British formations because of the many Sicilian ties with the United States. The Patricias therefore had little consciousness of being in a hostile country or of being either aggressors or conquerors. A characteristic impression emerged in a soldier's letter: "We borrowed their country for a battlefield," he wrote, "and I must say that I think they took it well."

GREAT EVENTS IN TRAIN

While the Patricias relaxed with baseball and sea bathing and field days at Militello (and the newly-formed Scouts and Snipers platoon entertained all ranks by requisitioning local horses and turning out as most irregular mounted infantry), great events were transpiring over the horizon. On July 27th Mussolini had been arrested by Marshal Badoglio. On August 3rd an Italian diplomat had approached the British Ambassador in Lisbon with a message from Rome; his countrymen wished to quit the war quickly. On August 5th Mr. Churchill telegraphed the President of the United States a lucid summary of developments, of which the gist was "the sooner we land in Italy the better." A week later, when the British and United States leaders were in conference at Quebec, Mr. Churchill urged General Alexander to speed up plans for the invasion of the mainland. On August 20th the Commander Fifteenth Army Group replied: "Everything possible is being done to put on AVALANCHE at the earliest possible date. We realize very clearly that every hour gives the enemy more time to prepare against us."

PLANS FOR LANDING IN ITALY

It had been known since the beginning of August that 1st Canadian Division would be among the first to land on the Italian mainland. On the 18th Lieut.-Colonel Ware and a group of his officers had reconnoitred a beach area 19 miles to the north of Catania. There the Patricias would embark. On August 24th General Simonds with the aid of a large sand map put his senior commanders in the picture. There would be three landings—a British-Canadian corps on the Messina Strait, a British and an American corps at Salerno to the south of Naples and a British

airborne division at Taranto, at the heel of Italy. 1st Canadian Division and 5th British Division, serving as XIII Corps, would be first to land, with a six-day start over the other invasion forces. When the three groups had made contact they would drive northward.

The task set XIII Corps had inherent hazards and difficulties. The other Allied landings were nearly 400 miles away and once ashore both the Salerno and Taranto forces would move immediately into the north. The Canadians, crossing from Sicily and well to the south of the other invasion groups, would have to march fast and far in order to come up into line with them.

Yet it would have been difficult to find terrain less favourable for rapid movement than their projected line of advance. The toe and instep of Italy, comprising the province of Calabria, is 150 miles in length and it constitutes the blunt southern stump of the spine of the Apennines. On both shores of this rough peninsula the mountains rise out of the sea. Inland a succession of plateaux or terraces is crowned with peaks which spring to six thousand feet; these tablelands are gashed with deep water-courses, dry except in the spates of spring. Highways are few and such as exist wind along hillsides and cross ravines on innumerable bridges; the destruction of such roads involved no more than simple demolitions. All in all, it was the sort of terrain on which skilled and tenacious enemies could delay an advance indefinitely and where, when time was the essence of the enterprise, risks must be taken. The Calabrian landing therefore presented a stern test to those who must lead the way.

There is no evidence that these circumstances weighed in any degree upon the Patricians or upon their British comrades in the new enterprise. The Canadians now were caught in the full flood of the tide that had turned ten months before at El Alamein. In those months the face of the future had been changed. The English-speaking nations, having come through tribulation, had gained their second wind and now were sure of themselves. They would come out at the bell fighting, stronger in each ensuing round.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DRIVE UP ITALY

In the last week of August events moved swiftly in the military councils of the Allies. Marshal Badoglio, whose emissaries had made peace overtures through a number of channels, showed a disposition to haggle over terms. He demanded fifteen divisions ashore in Italy as the price of capitulation, alleging this number of troops to be necessary to protect the Italians from the wrath of the partner they proposed to betray. The Allies were not prepared to commit more than six divisions to the first landings—a number which the frightened Marshal certainly would have deemed inadequate. Had the Combined Chiefs of Staff consented to negotiate the arguments might have been interminable. Fortunately they remembered Mr. Churchill's dictum that time was the essence of the matter. Marshal Badoglio was given until midnight September 1st to surrender. He was informed that whatever his decision the invasion of Italy was imminent.

Had this decision been communicated to the lower echelons many minds would have been set at rest. At divisional, brigade and battalion levels in Sicily it seemed as though the delays might prejudice the success of the invasion. The prevalent anxiety was expressed by the war diarist of 1st Canadian Division in his entry of August 30th:

"Many changes have been made at the highest level, which apparently reflect the political situation on the mainland. The tempo of planning is increasing fast, as last minute amendments keep coming in from what appears as all directions. The whole staff is tearing around with papers in their hands and bewildered looks on their faces. Rumours of all kinds are floating about as to the opposition we may expect on landing. It varies from stories that commandos and a squadron of tanks have captured almost the whole of Italy to that the place is swarming with Germans. In a Combined Operations plan it seems almost impossible to provide for almost all the unexpected things which come up. Craft become unserviceable, at the last minute a change of plan is necessary due to the political situation, all of which makes life most interesting and active. In fact it will be a grand thing to get into active operations again when one can rest."

However, as the days passed the situation improved. On September 2nd the same diarist could write:

“Several people have remarked on the difference in the air about the place from the beginning of the last operation, when the tension was quite noticeable. Everyone seems to be taking this job in his stride—the last minute changes in plan for the crossing of this H.Q. While this caused some wild scurrying and violent language, no one was terribly put out.”

FIRST TO THE MAINLAND

As he wrote, the leading formations of XIII Corps were on their way to the embarkation beaches. At midnight on September 2nd, 13th and 17th Brigades of 5th British Division and 3rd Brigade of 1st Canadian Division filed into their assault craft. It was only a half-hour passage for the British troops at Messina, where the strait was less than four miles wide, but a longer voyage for the Canadians, who embarked at San Alessio 25 miles to the south. The Canadian crossing and landing have been well described by a military historian:*

“The sea was calm and the moonlight sufficient to reveal the outlines of the armada. Two and a half hours later, when the craft was midway between the island and the mainland, the coastline of the former was lit by the brilliant flashes of the massed artillery of the Eighth Army. From the sea to the southward the guns of Rear-Admiral McGrigor’s ships began to pour their heavy shells into the southern environs of Reggio. 530 guns in all were brought to bear on the unhappy town and the neighbouring beaches and as the landing craft prepared to run in to their targets great quantities of smoke obscured the landmarks of the Italian shore from the eyes of their impatient navigators. Some excusable confusion in finding the right beaches occurred as a result, but scarcely a round was fired by the enemy to interfere with the landing arrangements. When the Carleton and Yorks burst into the scarred and silent town, the few remaining civilians received them with open arms. The West Novas, after a breathless climb in the early morning sunlight up the narrow track to the forts, found them and their guns abandoned; there remained only two Italian sergeants, who cheerfully surrendered themselves and large stocks of ammunition. By nine o’clock, the 3rd Brigade had accomplished not only its own task but that of the 1st

* “From Pachino to Ortona” (Queen’s Printer, Hull).

Brigade as well, as columns of Italian coastal troops began to flock down into Reggio to surrender."

2nd Canadian Brigade was last to leave Sicily. At 0200 hours on September 2nd the Patricias began to embus under control of Major R. C. Coleman, who called the sub-units to their vehicles from his "Trouble Centre." The Brigade start line at Scordia, four miles to the northeast of Militello, was crossed at 0500 hours. The route led back to the sea, thence along the foreshore to Catania, then over the eastern haunches of Mount Etna and past the lovely hillside resort of Taormina, long a favourite holiday haunt of the Founder of the Regiment. The convoy halted at Riposto, from whence the coastline of Calabria was dimly visible thirty miles to the northeast.* Here the Battalion rested throughout the afternoon and evening. At 1700 hours Lieut.-Colonel Ware with the aid of a mosaic air photo briefed his officers for the landing. Before dawn next morning the thunder of guns was borne out of the north; soon the welcome news came through that 3rd Canadian Brigade was ashore. Lieut.-Colonel Ware left at 0600 hours with Brigadier Vokes and throughout the morning all ranks waited tensely for the order to move. Words of good cheer came in a personal message from General Montgomery. He said:

" . . . I want to tell all of you soldiers of the Eighth Army that I have complete confidence in the successful outcome of the operations we are now going to carry out.

"We have a good plan, and air support on a greater scale than we have ever had before.

"There can be only one end to this next battle and that is: ANOTHER SUCCESS."

At 1230 hours the Battalion was lifted by troop carriers and moved to the north along the coastal highway. Progress was slow; sections of the road were under repair and the highway, in the words of an officer, was "one long village street." It took four hours to cover the twenty miles to San Alessio. Here at 1900 hours Lieut.-Colonel Ware told his officers of the progress of the invasion. 3rd Brigade had taken all of 2nd Brigade's objectives

* The 2nd Brigade diarist states that the first sight of Italy from Riposto roused deep emotion in the breast of Brigadier Vokes: "After supper he called together his staff, told them of the job that had to be done and stressed the difference between loot and booty."

and 2,500 Italian prisoners; up to 1500 hours no Germans had been encountered. The landing had gone even better than the Sicilian invasion.

The embarkation roster of key officers was as follows: Commanding Officer—Lieut.-Colonel C. B. Ware; Second-in-Command—Major R. C. Coleman MC; Adjutant—Capt. R. S. Graham; O.C. "A" Company—Capt. W. deN. Watson; O.C. "B" Company—Major D. Brain; O.C. "C" Company—Capt. J. E. Leach; O.C. "D" Company—Capt. J. L. Hunter; O.C. Headquarters Company—Capt. R. F. S. Robertson; O.C. Support Company—Capt. P. D. Crofton; Intelligence Officer—Capt. W. S. Dewar; Transport Officer—Capt. N. Featherstone; Quartermaster—Capt. C. F. Lawrence; Medical Officer—Capt. G. C. Fairfield; Paymaster—Capt. J. A. McLeod; Chaplain—Hon./Capt. M. J. D. Carson.

ASHORE AT REGGIO

Three landing craft—two for men and one for vehicles—had been allotted to the *Patricias*. At 2300 hours the Battalion moved to the beach. By the small hours of the morning loading had been completed and at 0800 hours the convoy sailed. "The trip was as quiet and as pleasant as a Vancouver-Victoria crossing," says the War Diary. Passing the battered Reggio waterfront the assault craft touched down on sands adjoining the northern San Caterina suburb. The beach was not more than 500 yards in length and 50 yards in depth; behind the railway and highway the hills rose from the sea. Transverse ridges ran back to the main massif; these flowing spurs, mounting to their source, accounted for the well-known description of the mountains of Calabria as "spilling into the sea." On a high conical crest a small fort commanded the foreshore. Inland the rising ridges commanded the fort.

On landing the *Patricias* immediately moved to their assembly area on a small plateau two miles to the southeast and above the town. Here they rested until 1500 hours when 2nd Brigade was ordered to follow in the wake of 3rd Brigade. The route was to the northeast, through the centre of the Calabrian peninsula. This line of advance would make 1st Canadian Division responsible for the inner flank of 5th British Division, which was hurrying northward along the western coastal highway.

THE FIRST TREKS

At 1600 hours the Patricias set out, their connecting patrols being in contact with 48th Highlanders of Canada. The route led along a twisty secondary road which mounted into the heart of the Aspromonte range. In the first five miles it rose 3,000 feet; within this distance it had been cratered in several places, so that vehicles could not pass. By midnight "B" Company in the van was closing up on Gambarie crossroads—12 miles from Reggio as the crow flies and at least twice that distance as the feet slogged it. Here 48th Highlanders had had a brush with enemy rearguards that morning. By 0300 hours all companies had reported in and were bedded down. The clear mountain air was biting and the chill, which would have been a luxury two days before, kept some awake.

In the morning the Patricias looked out upon a new scene. They had reached a plateau nearly 4,000 feet above sea level, with peaks and barrier ridges rising to the south and east. The mountainsides were clad with pines and chestnut trees, with summer homes scattered among the groves. The road ran into the north and at 0800 hours the Patricias were on it, headed for Delianuova, 16 miles beyond Gambarie. The going was slow; long stretches of road traversed hillsides on which the bridges over the gullies had been destroyed; there were many halts and detours, with unavoidable 'concertinas' as march units overtook each other or dropped back to regain their proper spacing. The dispatch riders, whose motor-cycles could be pushed around the craters, had been organized into a transport section; they raced backward and forward, ferrying essential supplies; they were able to keep the Battalion on a light ration scale. Everyone was dog-tired at Delianuova that evening. For some, however, there was no rest, for nothing had been heard of 5th British Division and it was necessary to establish contacts on the left flank. Scouts went out along a lateral road as far as Cosoleto, but without success.

Battalion Headquarters was fortunate, finding billets in the Delianuova town hall. For those in the open it was a miserable night, since it rained heavily. It now was necessary to keep a watchful eye on both flanks, for 3rd Canadian Brigade, which had moved around the toe of Calabria by way of the coastal road, had had some sharp brushes with enemy rear guards, including Italian formations which had shown no desire to surrender.

On September 6th Patricia patrols went out at first light to east, north and west. They returned in the evening to report the countryside clear of the enemy but that ten miles ahead the Germans had only withdrawn a few hours before. They brought in one prisoner, a corporal of a pioneer battalion.

That evening the Edmontons and the Seaforths passed through to take the lead. The second night in Delianuova was more comfortable, for billets had been found for most of the men; in addition the roadway 'blows' in the rear had been repaired and the Battalion transport had arrived laden with supplies.

At 1100 hours on September 7th the Patricias received orders to move to Cittanova, 25 miles to the northwest on Route 111, the trans-Calabrian highway. The advance led along a secondary road which cut across the numerous tributaries of the Patrace river; it was a series of interminable ups-and-downs; it might have been built for the Duke of York's ten thousand men. The tedium of the march was relieved to some extent by the ebullience of the villagers along the way. Calabria, a poverty-stricken province, has contributed more than its share of immigrants to the United States; many villagers therefore spoke English of a type which the Patricias had not heard since leaving home. All ranks were greeted in warm and ultra-democratic terms and the enemy invariably was described by a characteristic North American epithet. It was 0300 hours before the last platoon wearily trudged into Cittanova. All beds—even the hard Calabrian earth—were downy couches that night.

A CHANGE OF PLAN

At this juncture events elsewhere imposed a change of plan upon 1st Canadian Division. 5th British Division after its landing at Messina had moved swiftly to the north along the coastal highway. Its progress had been expedited by landings by special service troops at Bagnara, 16 miles north of Messina and at Pizzo, 39 miles beyond Bagnara. The German rearguards had been dispersed before demolitions could be effected; as a consequence the British division had a clear run to the north and an enemy stand in Calabria south of the Gulf of Taranto could be ruled out. The Canadians therefore had no flank to keep, since their British comrades were far ahead of them; there no longer was any purpose in advancing over difficult mountain roads when a first-class highway was available along the Ionian Sea.

1st Canadian Brigade, which had continued on the inland route to the north of Cittanova, therefore was recalled and the divisional axis of advance was transferred to the east coast of Calabria. A British and an American corps were at sea on their way to the Salerno landing; 1st British Airborne Division, borne on cruisers and battleships, was nearing Taranto. This change of route promised to expedite the link-up between these forces by bringing the Canadians into the general line of advance sooner than had been anticipated.

THE ITALIAN SURRENDER

In the evening of September 8th a Patricia patrol, entering a village high upon the mountainside, found a celebration under way. News of Italy's surrender had been broadcast from London that afternoon. Next morning came details of the Salerno landing and later in the day the radio reported that 1st Airborne Division had seized Taranto and that the Italian fleet had put to sea to surrender. Such news lent wings to the Royal Canadian Regiment, which led the way to the north on the new divisional axis of advance. Descending from the mountains it had raced along the seashore for 50 miles and had seized Catanzaro, the principal city of northern Calabria. 3rd Canadian Brigade had halted at Locri, the junction of the mountain and coastal roads.

The drama of these days made it difficult for the Canadians to get on with the war. An enemy had turned ally overnight; the Italian populace wished to be joyful, the Italian Army wanted to surrender—both demanded attention. On September 11th the divisional diarist wrote:

"There has been a constant stream of Italian officers in and out all the time. All of course want to see the General. There have been all ranks from generals commanding divisions down to the local Chiefs of Police. Many have offered to fight for us. There are some complete units in the area that have all their arms and equipment, including M.T. No one seems to know quite how to deal with them."

The Patricia diarist on September 9th had commented on the same situation:

"All day long Bn.H.Q. was flooded with people who claimed to be American citizens, wanting to know if they could get to U.S.A., if they could get a job, etc. They all appeared under the impression

that following the Army came foodships for Italians and the civvies are now in for a rude shock. One man approached the Adjt. with this query: 'My son was-a-taken prisoner a Tobruk. Now-a you kom my-a son kom back tomorrow maybe?' "

The hard-pressed officer is said to have found his reply in an Italian translation of the vulgar but useful phrase used by Eliza Doolittle in "Pygmalion."

For four days the Patricias rested at Cittanova. On the morning of September 12th the Battalion made its way down to the coast over a road which followed the crests of the ridges, across highlands reminiscent of the interior plateau of British Columbia. At Locri, a fine modern town renamed by Mussolini to commemorate the ancient city whose ruins lay two miles to the south, the convoys swung north on the Ionian Highway. The coastal plain was narrow and uninteresting, with long stretches of sour land and marsh. Detours were necessary and it was not until 1900 hours that all companies had reported in at their camp on the outskirts of Marina di Catanzaro, a pleasant fishing village and summer resort eight miles south of the city of the same name.

HALT AT CATANZARO

Here 1st Canadian Division came to a halt. It had outmarched its supply echelons. For the troops it was a good encampment; the weather had become exceedingly hot and beautiful beaches and bright seas beckoned. Said the Battalion diarist: "Large numbers of troops were able to enjoy the clear, cool waters of the Mediterranean. These parades are quite a sight—hundreds of soldiers swimming in the nude, the vast majority well-bronzed above the waist and from the knees down, but with a pure white strip around the middle."* Here the first mail to be received in Italy was distributed. A reinforcing draft arrived and was absorbed. Major R. C. Coleman MC, Lieut. R. Carey MC, Cpl. R. C. Middleton MM and Pte. W. Reilley MM were summoned to an investiture to receive their decorations from General Montgomery.

On September 14th Major-General G. G. Simonds gathered 2nd Brigade about him and put everyone in the picture as to the course of the campaign. In conclusion he forbade fraternization

* This was the sight that caused Mr. Churchill, on his first visit to Western Desert to exclaim against the extravagance of sending white bathing drawers to the troops in Middle East. See "The Hinge of Fate"—page 515.

and ordered a correct and soldierly attitude towards Italians. "The Italians," he said, "always want to be on the winning side." This caution perhaps was necessary for there was a marked tendency in this area to praise the Canadians and to disparage their British comrades.*

INTO THE NORTH

Four days had sped when mounting evidence of the arrival of German reinforcements in Italy and developments in the Salerno bridgehead put 1st Canadian Division on the roads once more. A fleet of Allied assault craft was available on either coast of Italy so the enemy dared not hold the logical blocking line—the narrow isthmus of the Scalea Neck which joined the foot to the leg of Italy. The Germans therefore were compelled to withdraw for more than 200 miles to the north, to where the ankle bulged into the calf and the Apennines spread out from the central spine until mountains filled the peninsula from sea to sea. There could be no intermediate stands in the course of this withdrawal, for the Salerno task force was about to break out of its bridgehead and to advance on Naples. But undoubtedly there would be bickering along the way in the dour German fashion and if the Canadians were to come up into line for the drive on Rome it was time for them to be moving.

On the morning of September 17th—the day of the break-out from Salerno—breakfast was eaten under a full moon. With the *Patricias* in the lead 2nd Canadian Brigade headed north. The route led eastward along the foreshore and past the Crotona headland at the entrance to the Gulf of Taranto; thereafter it followed the curve of that great bay across the low-lying plain to Corigliano, where it turned inland through the malarious *Castrovillari* sea-meadows. Here the landscape began to attain greater substance, with rolling ridges and sweeter soil. Ten miles south of *Castrovillari* the *Patricias* took a side road to Cassano, on the edge of a belt of dried marshland. 145 miles had been covered in the day.

5th British Division now was in touch with American patrols to the south of Salerno; Canadian armoured cars had made contact with 1st Airborne Division's screen outside Taranto.

* This dislike of British troops in southern Italy was a local phenomenon, encouraged by the Germans because of the many South Italian ties with the United States. In the north it was different. There the partisan bands usually had attached British personnel for whom the warmest admiration existed.

In addition British divisions were at sea for a landing higher up on the Adriatic. The next move for 1st Canadian Division therefore would be another 150 miles northward. At the end of that trek they could expect to meet the enemy, for in the heart of the Basilican highlands sat Potenza, the most important crossroads in southern Italy. To its west lay Naples, to its east, Bari; only 60 miles away on the Foggia airfields the strength of the Luftwaffe was concentrated. It seemed certain that the enemy would endeavour to hold this valuable junction.

In case German forces should be encountered south of Potenza a flying column (BOFORCE) comprising elements of 3rd Brigade, together with tanks and guns, was organized to head the Canadian drive into the northwest. A striking force from 1st Brigade was given a roving commission towards the Adriatic in order to screen the new British landings on that coast and to conceal the thinness of Eighth Army's Calabrian deployment. 2nd Brigade was held in reserve—to move swiftly to the support of either of the Canadian spearheads which might need assistance.

CLOSING UP ON POTENZA

To expedite the movement of 2nd Brigade it was planned to ferry all three battalions along the Gulf of Taranto in assault craft. There proved to be too few of these vessels available so the Patricias moved by road. On September 19th the Battalion was up betimes and had passed the Brigade start point at 0515 hours. The route led back to the sea, thence along a dreary foreshore for 25 miles before turning inland into rough and rolling country to the south of the Agri river. There now was more authority to the physical features—the rivers were larger, the valleys wider, the grain of the ground coarser and rougher. In the Missenello area, near the headwaters of the Agri, the Patricias bivouacked on a lovely autumn evening.

That night, after a dashing advance through the mountains, BOFORCE by a pincer movement squeezed the enemy out of Potenza and linked up with 5th British Division in the hills to the west of that town. Next afternoon after a confusion of Stop-Go orders the Patricias got under way at the rear of the Brigade column. They had only covered 15 miles when they settled down for the night halfway between Corleto and Laurenzana. Nevertheless at 1030 hours next morning they reached Potenza, a well-built town on a hillside above the north bank of the Basento

river. They were at once allotted defensive positions, for it was German paratroopers that BOFORCE had squeezed out of the city and these gentry were renowned for not accepting defeat philosophically. 2nd Brigade was assigned the area to the west of the town, the Edmontons and Seaforths being responsible for the approaches along No. 7 Highway, while the Patricias on the left patrolled Route 94. "C" Company in the lead established contact with the Green Howards of 5th British Division.

THE IMPORTANT CANADIAN ROLE

At a divisional conference on the morning of September 22nd Brigadier Vokes was told that his brigade would remain in the Potenza area until the end of the month and that it would be responsible for the security of the highway between Potenza and Melfi, a distance of 21 miles. At the same meeting it was divulged that the Allied High Command was very pleased with Canadian performances in Italy. The Salerno landing had been a touch-and-go affair; in spite of massive support from the sea the British and United States corps might not have held their shallow bridgehead if the enemy had been able to mass his full strength against it.

Because of the swift advance of XIII Corps from Calabria the Germans had fought at Salerno looking over their shoulders, for they knew that it was only a matter of hours until foes would fall on their rear. In 16 days 1st Canadian Division had covered 450 miles; it had overtaken and brought to bay an enemy who badly needed more room for manoeuvre and more time to arrange his defenses. This rapid advance apparently convinced the Germans, still grouped menacingly around the Salerno bridgehead, that the game was up. Or as General Dempsey (XIII Corps Commander) put it to General Simonds:

"I hope you realize what a great achievement the capture of Potenza in 16 days has been and what a very big effect it has had on the Salerno operation. I offer you and your Division my very sincere congratulation."

Until Potenza had been reached the demolition squads rather than the mine-layers had been the chief adversaries. Thereafter in the Basilican highlands these two enemies were one. Every mile of advance became slow and dangerous, giving the Germans ample time to disengage, to regroup and to occupy new defensive positions. The advance became a matter of inching forward.

There were more skirmishes than fights proper; it was rather like trench warfare without trenches—local objectives to be seized, rigid tactical patterns to be observed and neither victory nor defeat conclusive. "All roads lead to Rome," said General Alexander in a terse summary of the situation, "but all the roads are mined."

A CHARACTERISTIC OPERATION

The first operation on this tricky terrain was typical of many which were to follow. On September 22nd Lieut. D. E. Jones with scouts and snipers, a wireless operator, dispatch riders and pioneers equipped with mine sweeps, was sent to investigate the Potenza-Melfi highway. Brigadier Vokes, Lieut.-Colonel Ware and the commanders of the Edmontons and Seaforths accompanied the patrol on its first miles. A succession of blown bridges was encountered and the roadway was found to be heavily mined; in some areas civilians already were lifting the mines. At noon the patrol reached Castello de Logopesole, 13 miles north of Potenza; thereafter all senior officers except Lieut.-Colonel Ware returned to Potenza.

Early in the afternoon a second Patricia patrol under Lieut. D. Munro came up. It was acting under orders of the Divisional Commander who wished to know what was going on at Melfi, 15 miles ahead. Lieut.-Colonel Ware ordered the patrols to keep together as far as Atella, half-way between Castello de Logopesole and Melfi; thereafter Lieut. Munro and his men would continue on their independent mission. The Patricia commander then returned to Battalion Headquarters and reported to Brigadier Vokes, who ordered the occupation of Castello de Logopesole.

When Lieut.-Colonel Ware went forward to arrange this occupation he learned that the original patrol had been ambushed when approaching Atella. A group of seven enemy armoured cars had attempted an encircling movement and it had been necessary to withdraw rapidly. Lieut. Jones and four men had been wounded; three men were missing. Command of both patrols had devolved upon Lieut. Munro, who had had his own bit of excitement in the capture of a German pilot who had bailed out of his plane when it was damaged by anti-aircraft fire. Lieut.-Colonel Ware at once dispatched Lieut. Munro and a small patrol to reconnoitre Atella anew as the Germans were in

the habit of reoccupying areas to gain the advantage of surprise. While these patrol operations had been in progress the Battalion had moved up and had seized a crossroad six miles north of Potenza and "C" Company had been sent further ahead to occupy Castello de Logopesole. Next morning Lieut. Munro returned to report that his patrol had been fired on as it approached Atella. Three men had been wounded and a sergeant of "D" Company was missing.

FORCE X COMES ON THE SCENE

As this sort of operation seemed likely to continue the Patricia commander decided to organize the Battalion into Base Force and Patrol Force. Patrol Force (to be known as FORCE X) was placed under command of Major D. Brain. It included "C" Company and part of "D" Company and the Scout and Sniper Platoon. Its support arms comprised a battery of field artillery together with mortar, machine-gun and anti-aircraft detachments.

On September 24th a civilian arrived at FORCE X Headquarters to report that Atella had been abandoned by the enemy on the previous day. Its garrison had consisted of a rifle company, a troop of armoured cars and a number of machine-gun teams. The civilian was instructed to return to Atella and if there had been no reoccupation, to hang a white sheet from a designated building. At 1700 hours a Patricia standing patrol was stationed in the village.

During the night of September 24th/25th several FORCE X patrols were out, one of which clashed with an enemy outpost. Next morning the Germans still were in Rionero, a crossroads to the northwest of Atella, but their line of escape was threatened by patrols which had by-passed the village. During the afternoon of the 25th Patricia scouts came under mortar fire at Ripacandida, three miles east of Rionero. This was the enemy's last stand in the neighbourhood; on the following morning Rionero was found empty.

Barile, a mile to the north of Rionero, also was clear of the enemy. 1st British Airborne Division had come up on the right and the Patricias were in touch with its patrols. Melfi was still held by the enemy but once again the Germans were waiting for the cover of night and on the afternoon of September 27th

Lieut H. W. Mulherin's patrol discovered that that they were gone. The armoured cars of 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards passed through to search the countryside ahead.

THE NEXT ADVANCE

Thus ended the brisk and workmanlike tour of duty of FORCE X. Sometimes Major Brain had as many as nine patrols out at one time, exploring wide tracts of countryside. Congratulations came down from above to all involved. It was as well that the task had been completed so expeditiously for a divisional move was imminent. The new advance was directed against Campobasso, 90 miles to the north, an uplands Apennines town which covered the junction of a number of highways. The move would be circuitous, not only because there were more and better lines of approach to Campobasso from the east than from the south, but also because 78th British Division now was ashore at Bari and a Special Service brigade was at sea for a descent upon Termoli, which was less than 40 miles to the northeast of Campobasso. As Termoli was known to be garrisoned by a strong force of paratroopers the swing of the Canadian columns towards the Adriatic might worry the enemy in Termoli, might lull him in Campobasso.

On September 30th the move began. At the head of 2nd Brigade column the Patricias took off at 0700 hours. They retraced their steps to Potenza, turned east on Route 96 to Gravina, thence northwest on Route 97 to Spinazzola. Here an early bivouac was made. The day's run had been 90 miles.

Next morning the nearby roads were jammed with the traffic of 1st Canadian Brigade and 78th British Division, which were under orders to hurry into the north. 2nd Brigade therefore halted for the day and took off again at midnight. The Patricias followed Route 97 to the northwest and by 0800 hours had reached a concentration area near the old Norman town of Troia, 15 miles south of Foggia. To the west lay 40 miles of rough, rolling tablelands which it was necessary to make secure in preparation for the attack on Campobasso.

THE NEW BATTLEFIELD

It was the Melfi assignment over again but on a larger scale. In this hilly country the tracks were few and well-commanded; the terrain was ideal for defensive hit-and-run operations.

Fortunately the Canadians now knew quite a lot about the enemy dispositions; as the Germans withdrew more sources of intelligence became available. (A Fascist battalion on service with the enemy had been anything but tongue-tied in the villages.) Sometimes the reports were more dramatic than factual but they served as a basis for deduction and investigation. British agents, engaged in the rescue of escaped prisoners of war, also were active in the area. They too proved a fruitful source of information.

A further advantage to the attackers lay in release from the bondage of the roads. In this area it was possible to move across country and this additional mobility was obtained by the impressment of draught animals and the organization of mule trains. (There were more mules available here than in any other part of Italy; the mast collector with his panniered beast and his twelve-foot staff for knocking acorns off the trees was a common sight in the countryside.) Soldiers often have denounced mules as a curse in battle; yet they can go where wheels cannot go and on rugged, mountainous terrain there is really nothing that replaces them.

Three hours after arrival at Troia Patricia patrols were on their way to Casteluccio and Biccari, villages seven miles deep in the foothills to the west. These hamlets were found to be free of the enemy. On October 4th the Battalion followed, swinging in a half-circle to reach Montefalcone, by air line not more than 15 miles from Troina but by track at least double that distance. From Montefalcone patrols were dispatched to make contact with the Edmontons, who were beating the countryside to the north and who wished to be assured of the security of their southern flank in an imminent attack upon Baselice, a village 18 miles west of Troia in the forks of the Fortore river.

"A" Company of the Patricias undertook to assist in this operation, but Baselice was found to be empty. Two of the Patricia patrols, however, bumped the enemy and lost prisoners to a roving German tank.

On October 6th, when the Seaforths were squaring up to attack a crossroads west of Baselice, "C" Company was sent forward to reinforce "A" Company and "B" Company was placed under Seaforth command to guard the Highlanders' rear. Once again the enemy when confronted with solid strength withdrew to the west. The Seaforths followed up and approached Decorata,

situated on a high and bare ridge. The Italian *campagna* now could be seen at its worst—stony and sterile soil whose every clod must be broken with mattocks before it will take the seed. Here the Vancouver men halted and the Patricias prepared to take over the running. On October 8th Lieut.-Colonel Ware received orders for a full-scale attack on Decorata, which was believed to be strongly held.

Support arms were to be made available; in addition to Brigade Group weapons, field guns and a troop of tanks were promised. (It transpired that the only available tanks were out of petrol.) Plans were no more than completed when a patrol reported Decorata to have been abandoned by the enemy. The Battalion, moving forward to occupy the crossroads, lost two vehicles and three men on mines.

At 0930 hours on October 9th the Edmontons passed through the Patricias at Decorata to attack Castelpagano, on the high ground four miles to the west. The Patricias dispatched patrols along a track to the north towards Riccio, a town of 6,000 inhabitants which stood on the western rim of the Sucido valley. Lieut. R. Carey, a patrol leader who usually managed to be in the midst of things, engaged in firefights with two parties of the enemy. He reported the Riccio road to be heavily mined; whereupon Patricia and Seaforth pioneers went forward to sweep the fouled verges. It had been a bleak and showery day; that night the first rum issue of the autumn went down uncommonly well.

CHANGES IN COMMAND

During the early days of October good friends of the Patricias were elevated to the top levels of Divisional command. When Major-General G. G. Simonds had been stricken with illness, Brigadier C. Vokes took over and Lieut.-Colonel B. M. Hoffmeister, whose leadership of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada had contributed greatly to the splendid record of that regiment, replaced Brigadier Vokes as commander of 2nd Brigade. Both officers were confirmed in their rank soon afterwards. In the second week of November those good friends and fine fighters, the Edmontons, were officially redesignated The Loyal Edmonton Regiment, an honour of which they had been apprised while at sea for the descent upon Sicily.

THE APPROACH TO CAMPOBASSO

On October 10th, in cold and drizzly weather, a "B" Company patrol entered Riccio and found the enemy gone. Two miles to the north of the town, at the junction of the secondary road and the main highway (Route 17), contact was made with patrols of Royal 22e Regiment. The right flank therefore was secure. The Loyal Edmontons were making steady progress into the west; on their left the Seaforths were menacing San Croce del Sonnio on the secondary road which ran northward towards Campobasso. While these units made headway the Patricias stood fast in Decorata. On the morning of October 12th they were on the move once more, with orders to seize Cercemaggiore and to exploit to the high ground beyond it. This village lay nine miles to the northwest of Decorata and only two miles south of the main east-west highway.

In this operation, in which 2nd Canadian Brigade wheeled from a western to a northern axis of advance, the Patricias were the hinge upon which the other battalions swung. Campobasso now lay no more than eight miles ahead. It could be approached by an equilateral triangle of roads. 1st Brigade was allotted the short direct route, while 2nd Brigade was given the long way around—west across the base of the triangle to Vinchiaturo, thence north by a twisty road along the eastern slopes of the ridge on which Campobasso stood. The latter also promised to be the hard way, for Vinchiaturo was a bottleneck through which all Germans retreating from the east and south must pass. The town was reputed to be strongly held.

On the afternoon of October 12th a patrol reported the enemy to be gone from Cercemaggiore. The Patricias immediately moved across country and occupied this village. Soon after their arrival they were shelled from the north and also (somewhat inexplicably) from the south, where any remaining enemies would be in danger of being cut off. It was discovered that the Germans had mounted guns on flat cars and using the railway from Isernia had daringly brought these mobile batteries into action on the Canadian rear. A standing patrol at San Giuliano, four miles west of Cercemaggiore, put an end to such impudence.

On the Patricia line of advance there were a number of high conical hillocks similar to South African kopjes. Two of these buttes, Point 890 and La Rocca (Point 1000) seemed to deserve

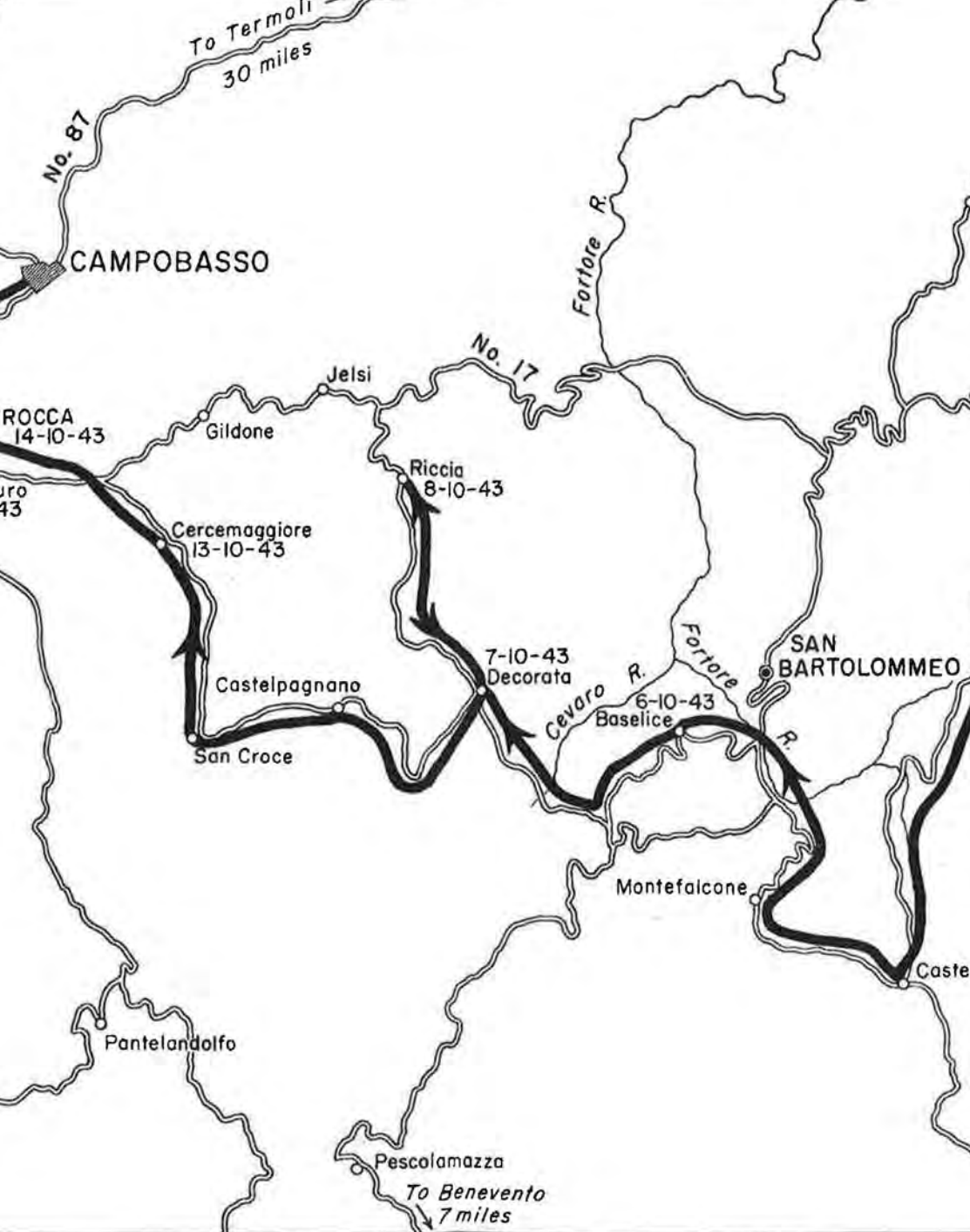
investigation. In each instance small parties of the enemy were found in occupation. An "A" Company patrol with the help of mortar fire chased the Germans from Point 890, taking two prisoners of 26th Panzer Division. The Scout and Sniper Platoon which explored La Rocca found only an observation post on its crest but reported a number of enemy tanks to be in covert on its reverse slopes.

Early on October 14th, in chill and damp weather, Brigadier Hoffmeister convened his "O" Group in a farmhouse on the western fringe of Cercemaggiore. The plan for the advance on Vinchiaturò called for the Patricias to seize La Rocca, whose summit commanded the countryside for miles around. Once again substantial support arms were placed at Lieut.-Colonel Ware's disposal and once again they were unnecessary. At dawn on October 14th the Battalion deployed in a small wood to the north of the main highway and at 0830 hours "A" Company led the advance. Five hours later La Rocca was secure, with one company occupying the crest and the other companies on the slopes of the feature.

THE ENEMY WITHDRAWS

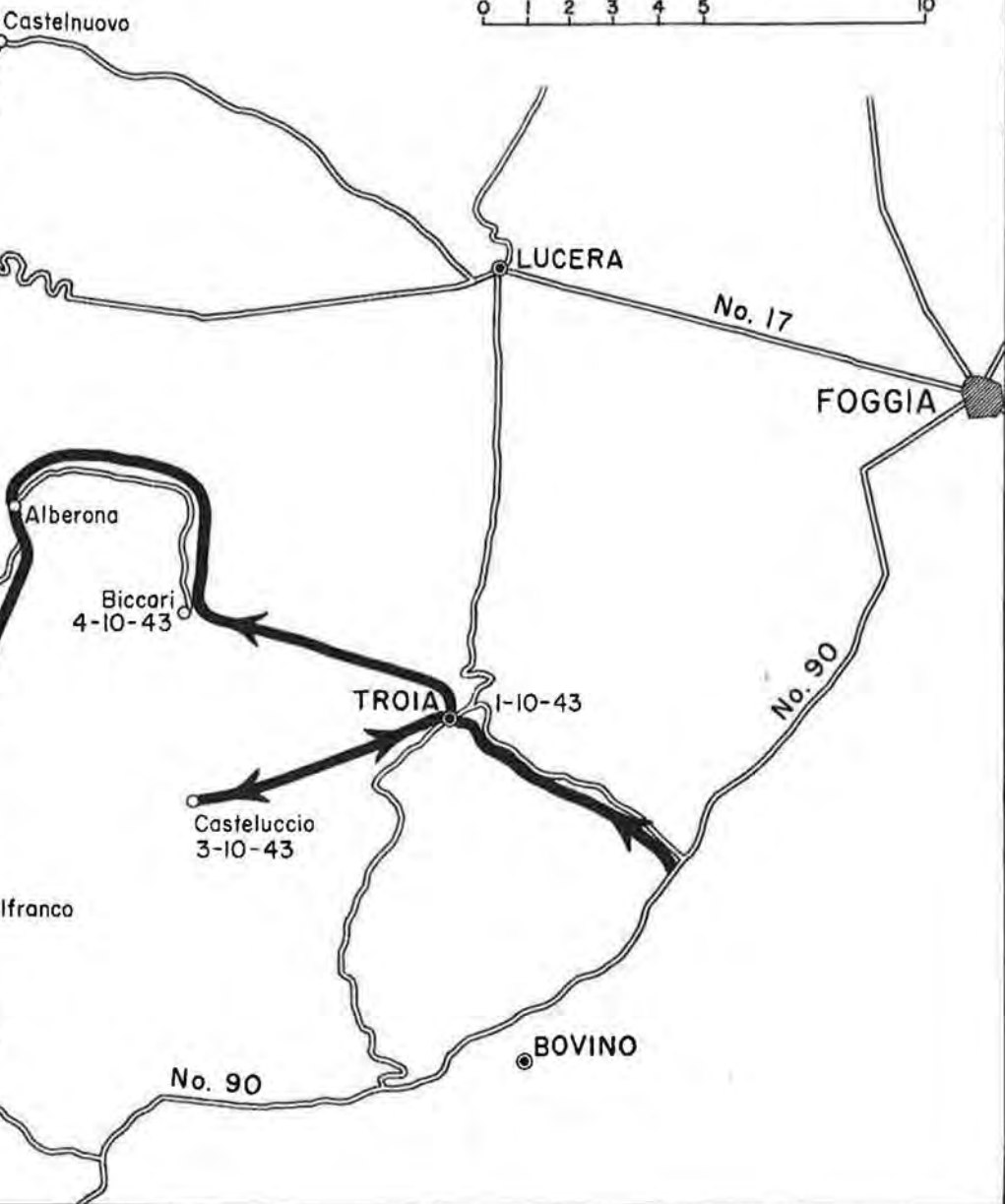
The enemy, although never standing to fight, was loath to leave the neighbourhood. On the night of October 14th/15th "D" Company was heavily shelled, Lieut. C. N. Shea being among the casualties. Before dawn this company was on the move, working forward to the outskirts of Vinchiaturò. German tanks could be heard milling about in the darkness; Sergt. R. W. Critchley, in command of 13 Platoon, was disputing possession of a road crater with a German outpost when tanks suddenly appeared on the opposite side of the crater. The 'blow,' however, was so extensive that the German armour could not pass, somewhat to the relief of the Patricias. "B" Company came forward in support and a cordon was formed along the eastern approaches to Vinchiaturò. Thereafter the Seaforths passed through and took the town against light opposition.

If there was no great battle for Vinchiaturò, there was less for Campobasso. On October 14th it was occupied by the Royal Canadian Regiment without a fight. The Germans had fallen back behind the Biferno, whose capacious valley formed a deep trough from north to south across the line of the Canadian advance. On October 22nd 1st Canadian Division was ordered to cross



ADVANCE ON CAMPOBASSO

Scale of Miles



the river and to drive the enemy from his positions on the far bank. Staggered attacks were planned, with 2nd Canadian Brigade leading off to the west of Campobasso, where the terrain was fairly accommodating. Thereafter 1st Canadian Brigade would force the Biferno to the northwest of the town, where the valley was deeper, the stream swifter and the countryside better adapted for defense.

These assaults were not mounted immediately. A week elapsed in which the enemy was given a taste of Allied air power. The Desert Air Force, newly-arrived from North Africa and highly skilled in dive-bombing, went up to show its wares. At least once a day groups of twenty-four to thirty light bombers swept in to 'soften up' Bajano, Colle d'Anchise, Spinete, Sant' Elena and other enemy concentration points to the west of the Biferno. As spectators the Patricias greatly enjoyed these attacks, in which bombs fell in precise patterns upon the targets. "A" Company became Battalion smoke-master; on estimated time of arrival of the raids red smoke was cast to identify the friendly positions.

On October 21st the 2nd Brigade plan of attack was circulated. The Loyal Edmontons would lead off on the following day against Colle d'Anchise, a village on a high pimple of ground a few hundred yards behind the western bank of the river. Twenty-four hours later the Patricias would cross to seize Spinete, three miles north of Colle d'Anchise and two miles west of the river. 1st Brigade attack would follow with its principal objectives Castropignano and the Torella road junction, 9 miles from Campobasso.

On receipt of orders Lieut.-Colonel Ware dispatched Lieut. C. S. Frost with scouts and snipers to reconnoitre a route between Baranello, where the only passable westbound track petered out, and the banks of the river at the point where the Patricias must cross. The officer returned to report that no route existed which would carry tanks or heavy vehicles; whereupon the Patricia commander decided to move the Battalion forward at once, so that no matter how bad the communications there would be no last-minute scurry in order to keep up with the timing of the attack.

ACROSS THE BIFERNO

On the night of October 22nd/23rd the Loyal Edmontons in a brisk and workmanlike operation crossed the river, climbed

the steep slopes of the Colle d'Anchise knoll and seized the village. The enemy counter-attacked with tanks and was met by the Shermans of the 11th (Ontario) Tank Regiment, which had reached the western bank of the Biferno after a long detour to the south. The presence of this armour on the far side of the river was comforting to the Patricias, for intelligence reports placed 6 and 7 Companies 67 Panzer Grenadier Regiment in garrison in Spinete and with no intention of pulling out.

Not for the first time Intelligence was wrong. On the morning of October 23rd Lieut.-Colonel Ware took the Battalion "O" group forward to pinpoint various Patricia objectives on the opposite side of the Biferno valley. Shelling was heavy and a patrol sent to the Battalion forming-up area was pinned down. After a hot lunch the Patricias moved up to the river, deploying over ground torn by the morning bombardment. At 1300 hours the Desert Air Force struck heavily at the Patricia objectives, the artillery opened and at 1410 hours "D" Company led the way across the river. The nearest high ground was seized without difficulty; "B" Company followed through and occupied a second feature. It was not until "A" Company and the support arms were on their way across that the enemy retaliated. It could scarcely be termed retaliation; the casualties were two mules.

From the newly-won bridgehead patrols went forward to reconnoitre Spinete. In the evening "D" Company, with the enemy armour in mind, laid 'bracelets' of 75 grenades on the track which ran south to Bajano. Patrols were dispatched northward along the same track to Sant' Elena. One patrol returned to report no enemies in Spinete, whereupon a platoon under Lieut. J. G. Clarke went forward and occupied the village, which lay a mile in front of the Patricia positions. By midnight the Battalion was well dug in and quiet reigned along the Biferno.

Next morning mule trains arrived with rations and ammunition. The Canadians now faced wild and solitary country with rough tracks connecting the scattered villages. Contact was established with the Loyal Edmontons to the south; patrols to the north could find no enemies in that direction. Appearances, however, were deceiving; that afternoon Lieut. R. Carey returned to report that he had been fired on while approaching Sant' Elena and had come under heavy fire when he and his men had attempted to work to the rear of the village. He had left a scout in hiding to watch the enemy.

This scout returned on the following afternoon. At dawn that morning he had seen the last Germans leave Sant' Elena. Later in the day a patrol of "D" Company picked up three prisoners who confirmed this withdrawal. That night the roll of artillery fire came down from the north, where the Royal Canadian Regiment had crossed the Biferno and were ejecting the enemy from Castropignano.

It was known that many escaped prisoners of war had taken refuge among the high Matese spurs which loomed on the western horizon. On October 25th seven of these escapees had reached the Patricias; they told of many others hiding in the Dell' Orso and Montagnola areas, ten to fifteen miles to the west, where the forest-clad ridges rose to a height of 5,000 feet. On October 26th Lieut.-Colonel Ware dispatched a deep patrol into this area. It returned with 21 British, Indian and South African escapees. A number of Yugoslavs also were rescued—civilian internees who were the residual victims of Mussolini's disastrous escapade in Greece.

THE PATRICIAS TIDY THEIR FRONT

The relief of 1st Canadian Division by 5th British Division now was imminent. It only remained to tidy the territory in preparation for the hand-over. To this end Lieut. C. S. Frost on the afternoon of October 26th went out with his scouts and snipers to see how matters stood at Frosolone, a village on a track which led northward from Sant' Elena into the mountains. On approaching the hamlet the officer split up his men into small parties. When fire opened from machine-gun posts and rifle pits on the edge of the village an attack went in from three sides. L./Cpl. J. W. Slimkovich's section destroyed one machine-gun post and silenced a second; L./Cpl. E. G. Brautigan's men shot down a number of the enemy in the open. Only Lieut. Frost and the remainder of the platoon were out of luck. They were pinned down and their commander received a bullet in the jaw—the only casualty of the encounter. The Frosolone garrison was estimated to be about sixty strong.

Next morning a shoot was laid on the village and Lieut. D. M. Disney led a strong fighting patrol to observe the effects of a second bombardment which was timed for 1235 hours. Shortly before noon, as the fighting patrol was closing upon the village, an agitated civilian appeared with a message. The Germans,

said this message, had withdrawn from the village that morning and the inhabitants were flocking back from the countryside. He pleaded for no further shoots on the village. As the second bombardment was due to open at any moment and as the Patricia officer had no means of stopping it (nor indeed any positive assurance that he had been told the truth) Lieut. Disney with commendable presence of mind ordered his men to fire short machine-gun bursts over the roofs of the village. There was a rush into the open fields and when the first shells fell Frosolone was empty. At the end of the shoot the Patricia patrol searched the village and passed through to explore the countryside to the west.

REFLECTIONS ON THE DRIVE UP ITALY

That morning (October 27th) parties of Royal Scots Fusiliers and Seaforth Highlanders of 17th British Brigade had arrived at Battalion Headquarters. Relief was completed that evening. The Patricias stood fast until the next morning when they moved into rest. Their destination was Busso, a village less than four miles to the east of Spinete, yet because of the intervening river a full twenty miles distant by road. On its southern detour, near Boiano, the Battalion column came under distant shell fire—a last salute from the enemy. By 1800 hours the companies had reached their billets. Busso had lain between the operational areas of the two Canadian brigades during the Biferno advance and had suffered little damage.

Thus ended the drive up Italy. It had been manoeuvres with live ammunition rather than war. The adversary was terrain rather than Germans; timing and mobility counted for more than courage and weight of metal. There had been a good deal of hunting needles in haystacks and in closing the mousetrap too late either to catch the mouse or to save the cheese. The ability of junior German commanders to offset surprise by quick decisions and swift movements was the principal lesson worth remembering.

All Eighth Army formations had been tied too tightly to their administrative 'tails.' A more rapid advance and the acceptance of a few additional hazards might have snatched most of Italy from the enemy before his reinforcements arrived. To drive the Germans headlong, however, was not an infantryman's but a sapper's problem. The bulldozer, the Bailey bridge and the mine detector were the essential tools of victory. The sappers had

toiled manfully and well; the pioneers, plying their detectors along the deadly verges, had done all that men could do. But it was not as much as could have been done if the physical problems of advancing through a mountainous peninsula had been more accurately evaluated before the invasion had been launched.

For the Patricias it had been a memorable experience. They had seen a great deal of Italy, the weather on the whole had been tolerable, rations had been regular, operations had not been unduly arduous, casualties had been light. They had come out of action just when the going had begun to get tough. All in all, it had been a good show.

A MONTH OF LEISURE

When billets had been put in order in Busso and all ranks were clean and rested and relaxed, the first preoccupation was the Canadian Victory Bond campaign. Rewards in the form of special leave were offered to those units with the largest per capita subscriptions. The Patricia quota had been set at \$40,000. Spirited competition arose not only between companies but between platoons. When subscriptions closed on November 9th, \$46,000 of Patricia pay had been pledged to provide the sinews of war.

Campobasso had been converted into a Divisional Leave Centre with an imposing array of amenities. The various auxiliary services—Salvation Army, Y.M.C.A., Canadian Legion and Knights of Columbus—had participated in the creation of "Maple Leaf City." In this recreational caravanserai, in addition to the usual canteens, mobile baths, circulating library and cinema, there was the "Beaver Club," patterned upon the famous London original and ensconced in what had once been the Fascist Youth Centre. There was the Royal York Hotel and the Aldershot Officers' Club, where a Patricia officer devised a Battalion brew that was a worthy successor to the Wulverghem Cocktail of the First World War.* The Savoy Theatre housed an ENSA troop; the Modern Theatre, Italian variety artists. (Italian entertainers, avid for employment after years of idleness, turned up in embarrassing numbers to offer their services.)

The gay scene appealed to a gay race. The good citizens of Campobasso, their *signorinas* and their *bambini*, undoubtedly

* The Wulverghem Cocktail, named after a Flanders sector, consisted of trench ingredients—rum, lime juice, Worcester sauce and rainwater. The Campobasso Stinger was scarcely less appalling. It was gin, cognac and Rooster Blood—the raw Abruzzi red wine.

obtained an erroneous impression of what life was like in Canada, but warm memories of "Maple Leaf City" and its friendly and free-and-easy clientele remain until this day.

While the Canadians took their ease their Allied comrades on either side of the Apennines carried on the war. Bitter fighting raged on the lines of the Trigno and on the Volturno. On November 1st General Montgomery in one of his characteristic announcements declared that the battle for Rome was about to begin. "The Allies have conquered one-third of Italy since we invaded the country on September 3rd. We are not advancing on the Rome axis, Fifth Army is on that line. Our help is vital if Fifth Army is to secure Rome. We will do our part in a manner worthy of Eighth Army. We will now hit the Germans a colossal crack. Good hunting to you as we go forward."

To the Patricias this view-haloo was a reminder that soldiers, even when at rest, cannot neglect their work. A Non-Commissioned Officers' School, a Mortar School, an Anti-Tank School and a Signal School were opened to train platoon and section commanders. Specialist officers arrived to lecture on their peculiar crafts.

On November 24th it was the privilege of the Patricias to salute a great Canadian. The War Diary for that day tells the story:

"The Regiment was on parade at 0900 hours this morning. Shoes were polished as never before since the landing in Italy. The timing was perfect as the parade had just been turned over to the 2 I/C when the sound of motorcycles could be heard coming up the road . . . As Colonel J. L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence, stepped from his car, he was greeted by Lieut.-Colonel Ware . . . Afterwards he gave a short address from his jeep, which was parked in the centre of a hollow square."

In the third week of November snow showed on the crests of the Matese massif. It had come to stay. As if to make amends for the morrow the last days of the month were bright and sunny; Italy seemed to be attempting a semblance of Indian summer. It was a gallant gesture and timely, for there were stern months ahead.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LOWER ADRIATIC—VILLA ROGATTI AND ORTONA

As blustery gales and snow on the crests of the high Apennines heralded the approach of winter the war of manoeuvre ended. The German armies took refuge in field fortifications on either side of the central mountain spine of Italy.

On the Adriatic front Eighth Army, advancing from the south, had reached the bulge of the Matese mountain block which narrowed the coastal plain to a width of not more than twenty miles. Across this corridor a number of rivers ran, bearing the stormwater of the Apennines to the sea. They had scoured deep troughs and so had created a succession of tactical obstacles—a river valley, a high ridge behind, another river, another ridge, and so on. In this pattern the advancing Allies were confronted at more or less regular intervals by the Biferno, the Trigno, the Sangro, the Moro and the Foro rivers (to name only the principal streams), each with its parallel battlement of high ground behind it. For the Germans each river supplied a moat, each intervening ridge a rampart, each reverse slope a garrison area.

The roads of the Adriatic foreshore for the most part ran inland, traversing the crests of the ridges and so providing convenient lines of communication for the defenders; contrawise the assault forces were compelled to advance against the grain of the ground. The countryside was intensively cultivated, with almost every rood in crop; here grew the famous Pergolini table grapes, shipped to every capital of Europe; the dull silver of olive trees clothed the hillsides; vineyards and groves provided concealment everywhere. The ridges between the rivers were studded with buildings—sometimes strong stone manors standing amid the fields, sometimes clusters of white-walled cottages so tightly compact that only plunging fire could damage them. These hamlets provided the enemy with excellent lookouts and strongpoints. In the wars of the twentieth century they played a role not unlike that of the castles on the peaks in the conflicts of the Middle Ages.

The Eighth Army advance across this difficult terrain was led by 5th and 78th British Divisions. During the opening stages of the operation 78th Division bore the brunt; in a series of sharp

attacks and seaborne landings this fine formation forced the Biferno and Trigno rivers and expelled the defenders from the covering ridge systems. By the third week of November the line of the Sangro had been reached. Then the weather broke. In the words of a military historian:

"The winter rains had set in and no reprieve from bitter cold, swollen streams and sodden earth could be expected. The Sangro in spate averaged five feet in depth and was of such turbulence that patrols on more than one occasion had been drowned. The infantry bivouacked miserably in boggy fields under pelting showers. Transport speedily churned the waterlogged earth into mud soup; vehicles slithered and skidded uncontrollably on the greasy tracks. Heavy transport and guns were winched and man-handled into position by shivering, mud-soaked crews. Sappers and transport services toiled unceasingly to keep the roads open and to get supplies through to the advanced positions. The Provost Corps—those battle-masters whose names so seldom appear in the records—manned their posts for twenty-four hours in the day, clearing traffic jams, sorting out priorities and keeping the tide of vehicles flowing."*

In spite of the malice of the weather the Sangro was carried by storm after bitter, deadly fighting; the enemy had built his main winter line on the guardian ridges to the north of that river. By the first week of December Eighth Army divisions had advanced another ten miles and were closing up on the Moro. It was time for others to take over; the advance had cost 78th Division alone more than 4,000 casualties. On November 26th a warning order reached 1st Canadian Division. It would come down from the mountains to occupy a coastal sector and to continue the advance.

THE MOVE NORTH

The Patricias' transport section, which had been leisurely building winter cabs upon the vehicles, at once began to work around the clock. In three days by dint of much elbow grease and improvisation they were ready for the road. On the morning of November 30th in raw and windy weather the inhabitants of Busso turned out to see the Battalion upon its way. There were warm and tearful farewells, for hosts and guests had been pleased with each other. At Campobasso the column turned north on the twisty highway which led to Termoli.

* "The Tiger Triumphs"—H.M. Stationery Office.

Here the Adriatic coastal highway (No. 16) came in from the south: it was the main supply route of Eighth Army. On the following afternoon the Battalion convoy was engulfed in an endless stream of vehicles moving at the pace of the ox. The Patricias crawled up to the Sangro, where they debussed and crossed on a footbridge; it was six hours before their vehicles were over. (The provosts, ordered to keep the road open at all costs, wasted no time on vehicles in distress; they pushed them into the ditches, to be recovered at convenience.) The Battalion marched on and found camp near Fossacesia, four miles beyond the river. By dawn most of the missing vehicles had arrived.

The weather was raw and blustery—all too similar to that endured by an earlier generation of Patricias in Flanders. The relief of 78th Division was under way but this gallant lot were bent on taking rough leave of the enemy; they wished to hand over as cleansed all ground up to the Moro. As a result 2nd Canadian Brigade stood fast until 38th Irish Brigade chased the Germans from San Vito Chietino, a village upon an eroded pinnacle three miles south of the river. The Patricias aided their British comrades by providing protection parties for the sappers who built a bridge over the Feltrino, to the left of San Vito.

By the afternoon of December 4th 78th Division had completed its task to its satisfaction. That evening the Patricias relieved 6th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on the southern lip of the Moro valley, three miles inland from the sea. On their right were the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada; on their left, elements of 8th Indian Division.

No rest was to be given the enemy, for he was known to be mining and entrenching vigorously on the opposite side of the valley. As soon as reliefs had been completed the Patricias sent patrols forward to examine the Moro crossings. An attack was planned for the night of December 5th/6th with the Seaforths as divisional spearhead at San Leonardo, two miles down-river from the Patricia sector. This main assault would be co-ordinated with two subsidiary attacks by the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment on the beaches at the mouth of the Moro and by the Patricias immediately opposite their present position. The Patricia attack would be supported by a squadron of 44th Royal Tank Regiment and the attack would be preceded by a heavy bombardment of the northern bank of the river.

VILLA ROGATTI—THE LIE OF THE LAND

When on the morning of December 5th the Patricias peered out of cover at their new battlefield, they saw the trough of the Moro below them, with a modest stream meandering through an easy valley. The southern slopes fell sharply to the valley floor, which was perhaps a furlong in width; on the enemy-held side of the river the ground mounted slowly in a long, gentle ascent. A few hundred yards upstream from the Patricia positions a road crossed the valley and made its way to the opposite crest in a series of lazy switchbacks. To the right or seaward side of this road there stood a hump of high ground which was isolated by deep ravines cut into the slopes; on the crest of this hump stood houses which a shallower gulley converted into southwest and northeast groups. This was Villa Rogatti,* commanding the Moro—an enemy outpost and strongpoint.

Intelligence reports had described Villa Rogatti as a fortress position of the hedgehog type with all-round perimeter defenses. A number of machine-gun nests had been identified on its outskirts; from the high ground beyond the village there came at night sounds of the movement of transport. Enemy armour therefore might be found in support of the garrison. A mile behind Villa Rogatti stood the twin villages of Villa Caldari and Villa Jubatti. These hamlets guarded the approaches to the Ortona-Orsogna highway and were known to be heavily fortified.

A supplementary task had been set the Patricias in event of easy success at Villa Rogatti. They and the Loyal Edmontons would drive on Villa Jubatti and Villa Caldari, with the Ortona-Orsogna road as the limit of exploitation. If this road could be cut the German right flank, resting on the strong fortress position of Orsogna, would be isolated.

Early patrols had discovered a ford slightly downstream from Villa Rogatti. This find provided the shape of the operation. The three Patricia assault companies would cross at the shallows at sufficient intervals to allow the leading company to engross the defenders by an attack from the northeast. A second company would advance against the southwest side of the village. A third company would wait on the northern bank of the Moro for fifty minutes; thereafter it would pass through to establish a defensive line beyond Villa Rogatti. The fourth rifle company

* The spelling "Rogatti" is used instead of the more familiar Roatti or Roalti. The name was mis-spelled on some Army maps.

would be held in reserve. The supporting tanks would cross the Moro upstream, on the line of the road across the valley. At first light they would approach Villa Rogatti from the southwest.

Under such plan the enemy, no matter how deployed, would find assailants in his rear.

As night closed on December 5th tank officers and Patricia patrols set out to select a line of advance for the armour. In addition a "B" Company patrol under Lieut. J. L. McCulloch was sent to investigate the rear of Villa Rogatti. The route of descent into the valley was found to be difficult but possible for tracked vehicles; the ford at the blown bridge was unguarded; the trail up the opposite slopes of the valley could be negotiated. Lieut. McCulloch's report indicated that Villa Rogatti was not isolated; there were constant comings and goings between the enemy forward and support positions. It was certain that German armour could reach Villa Rogatti; as a consequence the attacking forces must have its support arms available from the moment of onset. If the British tanks fell behind timing the infantry battle might be won only to be lost.

At this juncture a disconcerting change of plan occurred. On Brigade level it was decided to postpone the artillery 'softening-up' programme and to convert the assault upon Villa Rogatti into a silent attack.* Lieut.-Colonel Ware, however, was not advised explicitly upon this matter and as the evening of December 5th wore away he was torn with anxiety lest his assault companies in over-running the village might progress beyond the artillery fire lines.

THE ASSAULT OPENS

Zero hour was midnight. The Patricias filed to their forming-up positions and Capt. R. F. S. Robertson at the head of "B" Company led the way down the steep slopes into the Moro Valley. Lives hung on silence and the men observed due caution; the mules, however, bearing reserve ammunition and radio sets, were of perverse mind; they acted up and gave tongue. It was decided to leave them behind and to bring them forward after the opening of the battle. On the stroke of midnight "B" Company made its

* It seems possible that the change of plan resulted from the presence of 8th Indian Division troops on the adjoining sector. The Indian troops were much given to silent assaults, which the Germans disliked intensely. One German division already had been removed from this front because of displays of panic in the face of Indian raids.

way through the olive groves, crossed the ford and moved downstream along the northern bank. The leading platoon had passed the junction in the trail from whence tracks led to both sections of the village and was feeling its way cautiously toward the northeastern cluster of houses when machine-gun fire opened from rising ground on the left flank. Grenades followed and machine-guns opened on the right flank also, revealing the leading company to be moving into an arc of enemy posts.

The fire was high and ineffective. "B" Company went to ground while Capt. Robertson swiftly made his dispositions. He determined to break through the enemy outpost line on the left or inner flank. Using Bren guns and two-inch mortars firing in flat trajectory two platoons sped to the attack. Lieut. J. G. Clarke fell with a bullet through his throat but Lieut. G. A. Garbutt cleared one machine-gun nest after another until he ran out of ammunition. By now the main enemy garrison in Villa Rogatti was aroused; there was firing in every direction but for the most part on fixed lines and so easily avoided. The main difficulty was to pinpoint or identify the enemy weapon pits and fortified houses. Firefights continued for more than four hours and it was dawn before "B" Company had made good its ground and had reached the tiny square of the village. A number of houses in the northeastern section still were spitting fire; Capt. Robertson split his men up into small groups and ordered them to winkle out the defenders. By dawn "B" Company had cleared its area of the enemy. Prisoners were taken rubbing the sleep from their eyes; in a number of houses breakfast stood on the tables. Tactical surprise had been achieved; the enemy had not taken the first assault seriously.

"A" Company had been closed up and waiting in the Moro valley when the firing broke out on the slopes above them. Swiftly Major Watson brought his men into close support. When satisfied that "B" Company could deal with its adversaries he opened his own attack against the northern side of the village. As his leading sections swung to the right they crossed the road from Villa Caldari. A German motor-cyclist came racing into their midst shouting "Achtung." He received attention immediately. 8 Platoon closed upon a cottage showing a light; its occupants fled into the arms of 7 Platoon, approaching from another quarter. A number of houses and wine crypts yielded prisoners. By dawn "A" Company had worked its way through its allotted area and

although resistance was continuing the Patricia objectives were securely held. "Snug" was flashed back to proclaim success.

"C" Company together with Battalion Headquarters had kept to its timing and had crossed the river fifty minutes after the opening of fire. It now moved up to the edge of Villa Rogatti. "D" Company came forward and took up covering positions at the Moro ford. At dawn the situation was shipshape, but the forward companies were beginning to run out of ammunition; one section leader ordered his men not to fire at the Germans unless "there was a dozen in the bunch." At the same time it became clear that the enemy had recovered from surprise and would not be content to leave things as they were. Mortars began to fall upon Villa Rogatti; field guns chimed in. On the northern outskirts of the village German riflemen and machine-gunners opened fire from the cover of the olive groves. "A" Company found itself in difficulties; fire from the west was particularly heavy, which suggested that reinforcements had been rushed along the nearby road. Major Watson found it necessary to redeploy his men; while shifting the platoons into new positions Lieut. R. Carey and five men ran out of ammunition, were surrounded and taken prisoner.* In response to an urgent request "C" and "D" Companies sent ammunition forward by manpack and "C" Company stood ready to counter-attack should the situation worsen.

THE TANKS TAKE A HAND

The tanks of 44th Royal Tank Regiment, due to close up at 0500 hours, had encountered difficulties in crossing the Moro valley. Nevertheless they had arrived more or less on time; with fighting proceeding on both sides of Villa Rogatti the tank commander was at a loss to decide where to enter the battle. He therefore went forward on foot and made contact with the Patricias. Lieut. W. Riddell was sent back to the river to lead the tanks to "A" Company's front. On his way this officer leapt down from a ledge and landed on two Germans, whom he took prisoner. Pushing on he reached the waiting troop of tanks and guided them up the greasy and difficult approach to the village.

They arrived in the nick of time. Groups of Germans had worked forward under the cover of the olive groves and were about

* In February 1944 Lieut.-Colonel Ware received a postcard from Lieut. Carey, then in close confinement in a German prison camp. He had escaped after capture and had been free for eight days. In that time he had covered 100 miles and was within carshot of the British guns when recaptured.

to charge. The air was filled with missiles. Patricias sprang into the open to indicate enemy positions; tank officers stood high in their turrets selecting their targets. In a few minutes the Germans had had enough and green flares recalled them. The British tanks then fell back to hull-down positions covering the infantry; the Patricias reorganized their front and dug in. "A" and "B" Companies held the perimeter of Villa Rogatti while "C" Company occupied the centre of the village, in position to lend support to either flank. Snipers along the river were giving trouble so "D" Company spread out upstream and downstream and dealt with them. The mule train arrived; pouches and machine-gun pans and magazines were restocked. The first phase was over.

It had been sharp fighting. The Rogatti garrison, consisting of elements of 90th Panzer Grenadiers Division, had rallied quickly and had bid for their lost outposts. When thwarted they undertook to contain the break-in forces and to prevent further exploitation. In this task they succeeded. The enemy counter-attack troops had come to stay; they carried blankets and rations. They were very alert, attacking instantly if there appeared to be a gap in the defenses. They seemed to be able to smell out Battalion Headquarters, for throughout the morning Lieut.-Colonel Ware and his staff on several occasions moved only in time to avoid direct hits. As the Commanding Officer put it: "The bullets were flying so thickly that it did not make much difference whether we were lying or standing." Nevertheless the best efforts of the Germans were in vain; they were out, the Patricias were in. By noon the Battalion was ready to renew the advance.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK

At this juncture orders arrived from Brigade to consolidate and to stand fast. It seems probable that this decision arose out of the difficulty of getting additional armour forward. Two troops of tanks had reached the Patricias but the track across the Moro valley had degenerated into a series of mud holes; the banks on either side were slithery.* Early in the afternoon the enemy revealed that he had not accepted defeat. A standing patrol on the road to the west of the village warned that tracked vehicles and infantry were approaching. At 1330 hours an artillery shoot fell on Villa Rogatti. In its wake nine Mark IV German tanks

* The Topolini vines require deep cultivation so that thirty inches or more of the topsoil were very soft and friable.

with an escort of infantry burst from cover of the olive groves and swept against the Patricias. The attack fell upon "B" Company in two thrusts, the enemy tanks raking the Patricia positions while small groups of infantry dashed against the outlying posts.

"B" Company stood firm and met the attack grandly, with Capt. Robertson moving about in the open under heavy fire to direct his men. When 10 Platoon on the extreme right took the full weight of the assault Sgt. William Demmy handled the situation in masterly fashion; his handful held off the Germans in spite of furious attempts to close. When ammunition began to run low CSM W. D. Davidson shouldered a number of bandoliers and dashed across the open under close range fire to replenish the forward platoons. The British tanks churned ahead and engaged the German armour at point blank range. Five panzers and two Shermans brewed up.* The enemy, after numerous dashes from the cover of the olive groves, established a foothold in a house. All weapons were turned upon this building; the trapped Germans after suffering a number of casualties hung out a white flag and surrendered. One German tank managed to reach a Patricia position; PIAT shells, launched at few yards range, failed to explode and 12 Platoon was compelled to decamp rapidly.

For two hours sharp fighting continued. Five attempts to pierce "B" Company's front failed. On "A" Company's side of the village a short but heavy shoot in which smoke was cast seemed to presage an attack; it proved to be a feint. In mid-afternoon the battle died away and the Patricia forward companies, in no degree distressed, remained as the victors of the field. They had taken 40 prisoners, a number of mortars and machine-guns and an anti-tank gun that had been manhandled forward in the first attack. German casualties were known to be high. Patricias had lost 8 killed, 52 wounded and 8 missing, with half of the wounded walking cases. The Medical Officer (Capt. W. L. C. McGill) and his helpers handled the casualties dexterously and expeditiously. The wounded were treated under cover throughout the day and evacuated at dusk by stretcher parties which carried them for two miles across muddy slopes and fields before delivering them to field ambulances from San Vito Chietino.

At nightfall "D" Company came into the line on the left of "B" Company. Patrols sent out to ascertain enemy dispositions

* The war diary of 26th Panzer Division dilated on the foolhardy valour of the British tankmen, who showed the "Nelson touch" in closing to fifty yards range to shoot it out.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the atom. It is shown that the structure of the atom is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, and that the structure of the atom is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics.

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VILLA ROGATTI
ORTONA OPERATIONS
December, 1943-April, 1944



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for consistent data collection procedures and the use of advanced analytical techniques to derive meaningful insights from the data.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in data management and analysis. It discusses how modern software solutions can streamline data collection, storage, and analysis processes, thereby improving efficiency and accuracy.

4. The fourth part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data management, such as data quality, security, and privacy. It provides strategies to mitigate these risks and ensure that the data remains reliable and secure throughout its lifecycle.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes by summarizing the key findings and recommendations. It stresses the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the data management processes remain effective and aligned with the organization's goals.

returned to report that the Germans had given little ground; they still held the winding road to the northwest of Villa Rogatti and they were digging a new line in front of Villa Jubatti and Villa Caldari. At 2200 hours reconnaissance groups arrived from the Loyal Edmontons, who were under orders to pass through next morning and to continue the attack.

Shortly before midnight this operation was cancelled. Except for one alarm the night passed quietly. Next morning the Patricias moved about Villa Rogatti without molestation. During the day patrols went out and discovered the enemy to be digging a defensive cordon in the olive groves only a few hundred yards north of the village. The German dispositions were such as to destroy any hope of an easy advance and a renewed assault manifestly required better communications with the rear. Canadian sappers had examined the river valley and CRE 1st Canadian Division had declared that because of the differing heights of the banks it would be impossible to bridge the Moro at this point.*

A NEW PLAN

At noon on December 7th an altered plan of battle was announced. It will be remembered that the forcing of the Moro had been planned as a three-pronged operation. Only at Villa Rogatti had the attack gone well. At San Leonardo, two miles downstream, the Seaforths had gained the far bank after bitter fighting, but had been forced to withdraw. At the river mouth the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment had had to be content with a shallow bridgehead. After scanning the results of the first days of battle General Vokes had wished to transfer the main thrust from the San Leonardo to the Villa Rogatti sector. His proposal did not find favour with the Corps Commander, who considered the Canadian front to be too extended for the stern work in hand. As a result it was decided to turn over Villa Rogatti to 8th Indian Division and to concentrate the Canadian brigades for a decisive blow at San Leonardo.

That evening 5th Royal West Kents of 21st Indian Brigade relieved the Patricias, who withdrew to their start line on the southern lip of the Moro valley. Next morning battle flamed along the entire front. 2nd New Zealand Division hammered at

* The Canadian engineers were not as ingenious as their Indian comrades. Sappers and Miners of 8th Indian Division, which afterwards took over this sector, built the bridge from the enemy side of the river backward. They rather unkindly named it "The Impossible Bridge," putting up a large sign for all to read.

Orsogna on the extreme left of the Adriatic line; 8th Indian Division opened an attack against Villa Jubatti and Villa Caldari and in the coastal sector 1st Canadian Brigade launched a pincer attack towards San Leonardo. 48th Highlanders of Canada established themselves across the river at San Leonardo without great difficulty, but Royal Canadian Regiment, which provided the other claw of the pincer, encountered bitter opposition and failed to make headway. Between San Leonardo and the sea the obdurate enemy clung to the north bank of the river everywhere. On December 9th 2nd Canadian Brigade was ordered to re-enter the battle, to pass through San Leonardo and to drive north as far as the line of the Ortona-Orsogna highway.

On the following morning the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada led the way to the new 2nd Brigade battlefield. The immediate objective was roughly a mile in front of San Leonardo and half way to the Ortona-Orsogna highway. On receipt of the code word PUNCH, signifying the capture of this objective, the Loyal Edmontons would pass through to seize the junction of the San Leonardo secondary road and the main lateral highway. When the code word CIDER indicated this assignment to be complete the Patricias would wheel to the right and clear a low saddleback which ran for 3,000 yards into the northeast. This finger of high ground pointed directly at Ortona and was known as Vino Ridge. When secure it would give its captors a dominating position on the outskirts of the seaport.

The new battle opened before dawn on December 10th. There was formidable support for the infantry—11th (Ontario) Armoured Regiment, guns of 1st Canadian Division, 1st AGRA and 8th Indian Division. In addition thirteen squadrons of Kittyhawk bombers and a regiment of self-propelled guns were on call; offshore two cruisers and six destroyers prepared to engage land targets. If weight of metal could win the battle for Ortona was won.

The Seaforths took their intermediate objective without undue difficulty. At 0900 hours the Loyal Edmontons passed through. Soon the code word CIDER came back. It was the Patricias' turn and at 1130 hours "A" Company crossed the river and entered San Leonardo. The other companies closed up on the southern bank and awaited orders to follow into action.

THE ATTACK FAILS

A few yards short of the Ortona-Orsogna highway and extending from Villa Caldari to the sea there lay a small ravine. It varied from an easy and shallow depression to a cleft in the earth one hundred feet in depth and yet not more than thirty feet from lip to lip. It was filled with thorny acacias, willows and bamboos, with canopied vines and olive trees on its less precipitous slopes. After the autumn rains it carried a small stream.

This inconsequential feature was all that the German sappers had needed for fashioning a deadly trap. They had burrowed into the gully* and had dug warrens impervious to all but the heaviest plunging fire. The ravine lip was lined with weapon pits which could be manned as soon as the barrage had passed. When the Loyal Edmontons, advancing vigorously and within sight of their objective, brought up against these defenses they were greeted with a hail of fire. They fell back, reorganized and attacked anew. Again they were repulsed with serious losses.

On that day the luck of the Patricias was out. During an enemy shoot on San Leonardo Lieut.-Colonel Ware, Major Watson and Major Brain were in consultation in the lee of a tank. A shell struck the vehicle; Colonel Ware was uninjured but Major Watson was wounded for the second time in four days and Major Brain was killed instantly. This fine young officer had returned to Regimental duty two days previously.

Lieut.-Colonel Ware was at Loyal Edmonton's battle headquarters when the code word CIDER came through. The Patricia commander doubted if the attack had progressed sufficiently to warrant the success signal but communications were poor and in lieu of confirmation there was only one possible course—to proceed as planned. "D" Company led off on the advance along Vino Ridge and as the enemy opened fire Capt. Crofton was wounded—the third company commander lost that day. Delay ensued in "marrying up" with the escort of tanks and little ground was gained throughout the afternoon. The Loyal Edmontons' failure to cross the gully and to reach the lateral highway left the Patricia left flank exposed to the enemy.

* The official description of this phase of the Ortona operations is the Battle of the Gully. As the Patricia advance was parallel to this feature and was concerned with the high ground immediately to its south it was known to the Battalion as the Battle of Vino Ridge.

On the following day the Seaforths went to the aid of the Alberta men and the Patricias were ordered to persevere in their thrust along the high ground to the northeast. In mid-afternoon "C" Company led off. As soon as movement began enemy shoots increased in violence. The Germans were scattered about in weapon pits; they defended their positions obstinately until all but encircled; they then hared back to the safety of the gully. The grape vines and trellises were booby-trapped; mines caused a number of casualties. During the afternoon a local counter-attack about forty strong struck at the flanks of "C" Company. Nevertheless by nightfall the Patricias had gained some ground and had established contact with the left of the Loyal Edmontons, which was attempting to make headway on an axis divergent from the Patricia line of advance.

THE SECOND ATTACK FAILS

On the seaward flank the day had gone badly. 1st Canadian Brigade had failed to break out from its beach bridgehead and there was a considerable gap between the Patricias and their right flank neighbour, the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. The enemy, ever quick to detect an opportunity, began to infiltrate. Early on December 12th a hostile group on the Patricias' right flank rear was dispersed by artillery fire.

The present plan of battle manifestly was not good enough so the Divisional Commander decided to revert to First World War tactics. He would punch a hole by mounting a two-brigade attack on a battalion front. A massive bombardment would precede the assault, a rolling barrage would accompany it. In this steam-roller advance "B" Company of the Patricias and a company of the Loyal Edmontons were selected to lead off for 2nd Canadian Brigade.

Before dawn next morning the forward companies were withdrawn for protection during the preliminary bombardment. As the Patricias fell back a small enemy counter-attack struck at their flank; it was beaten off without difficulty. The artillery opened; behind the barrage "B" Company advanced with "D" Company in close support. Green flares soared from the enemy lines and a heavy counter-barrage fell in the path of the attacking infantry. Once again Battalion Headquarters was unlucky; Lieut.-Colonel Ware's radio set was knocked out and touch was lost with the forward companies. No leadership however could

have saved the situation; the barrage completely failed to quell the defenders and in the words of the War Diary: "As soon as it passed the Germans were sitting in their weapon pits waiting for us." As it would have been suicide to press on the assault companies withdrew under heavy fire.

On left and right the other participants in the attack—the Carleton and Yorks and the West Nova Scotias—also were foiled. There was nothing for it but to try again. On December 14th "A" Company of the Patricias came forward to clear the enemy from a house on "B" Company's left flank. Tanks were supposed to participate in the attack but they failed to arrive, having come to grief on a minefield. As the Patricias deployed for the assault enemy machine guns opened fire. Capt. J. B. Hunt, who had been loaned by the Royal Canadian Regiment as a company commander two days before, put through a call for mortar support. It was answered promptly but the first salvo fell short, causing casualties in the assault party. Whereupon Capt. Hunt at the head of two platoons dashed for the enemy-held house. He was killed immediately; command passed to Lieut. A. G. Robertson, who wisely abandoned a hopeless and unfortunate enterprise.

At this stage the Germans were very active. Fighting patrols had infiltrated between the forward and rear Patricia companies; a contact patrol from "B" Company was waylaid on its way to "D" Company. It was a confused situation—not so much a battle as a hurly-burly in which the Germans, by reason of their mobility and tenacity, defied the utmost efforts of the Canadians to eject them.

SUCCESS AT LAST

Although on December 14th the main Divisional assault had gone badly, a subsidiary attack had succeeded. On the extreme left of the battle front the Royal 22e Regiment, the only fresh Canadian battalion remaining, had launched a turning movement around the western end of the gully. After bitter fighting the gallant French-Canadians outflanked the fortified ravine and swept down its northern bank to seize Casa Beradi, a conspicuous white house almost in the centre of the Divisional sector. The enemy reacted venomously; in wild fighting the "Van Doos" threw back counter-attack after counter-attack. (Here Capt. Paul

Triquet won the first Canadian Victoria Cross of the Mediterranean campaign.) Yet even when their flank had been turned and when they were well-nigh surrounded the garrison of the gully refused to cry quits; they clung to their weapon pits and savagely fought on. They were Heidrich's paratroopers, fresh and strong after a rest in the Venice area and now as always they were prepared to stand to the death.

In ten days' fighting every Canadian battalion had suffered severely and a breathing space was essential before the attack could be resumed. On the morning of December 15th "B" Company of the Patricias absorbed the remaining thirty rifles of "C" Company and the Battalion thereafter operated on a three-company basis. In spite of losses morale was high and the spirit of the offensive prevailed. On being asked by the Brigadier if he wished to wire and mine his front Lieut.-Colonel Ware declined such protection. He did not need wire, he said, and as for mines, the enemy already had laid them.

On the afternoon of December 16th an enemy post was detected in a house two hundred yards in front of the leading Patricia position. A platoon of "D" Company swooped in a 'snatch party' and came back with two prisoners of 3rd Parachute Regiment. Once again the thunder of battle rolled on the inner flank. In wild fighting 8th Indian Division broke out of Villa Rogatti and stormed Villa Caldari and Villa Jubatti, while the New Zealanders again assailed the outworks of Orsogna.

At 0800 hours on December 18th 1st Canadian Division with great support strength advanced in a third major assault upon the Ortona defenses. Nine field regiments, three medium regiments and one heavy anti-aircraft regiment were enrolled in a fire programme which created a moving wall of high explosive and steel a thousand yards in width and three hundred yards in depth. Behind this barrage 48th Highlanders of Canada, the Royal Canadian Regiment and the 12th (Three Rivers) Armoured Regiment moved to the attack. They won home and the battle of the gully was over.

On the morning of December 19th "A" Company of the Patricias advanced along Vino Ridge. There was no opposition but some casualties came from booby traps and 'schu' mines. "B" Company passed through "A" Company during the afternoon and gained upwards of a mile along the southern fringe of the

Ortona-Orsogna highway. The Patricias reached and held a junction of lateral and coastal roads six hundred yards short of the southern outskirts of Ortona.

STREET FIGHTING IN ORTONA

At noon on December 20th the Loyal Edmontons moved forward to begin the clearance of Ortona. The town sat on a ledge above the Adriatic. It was compact and sturdy, comprising strong stone buildings along narrow thoroughfares; the side streets were not wide enough to permit the passage of tanks. There were several small piazzas as well as the principal square. The citadel, a thick-walled relic of mediaeval times, stood on a promontory above the harbour. The main coastal highway ran through the town.

The Patricias had been ordered to provide a firm base for the forces engaged in clearing Ortona, with the prospect of sharing in the operation before its completion. They were destined to escape the rigours of this task but perhaps they may be excused if they include the bare bones of its story in their history. The scene is well set in the Official Historical Summary of the Canadian Army:

“Ortona had not been bombed, for the Navy wished if possible to obtain the harbour undamaged and the combatants were locked too closely together to permit us to make much use of artillery. Thus the struggle which now began was primarily an infantry fight. Heidrich's men were past masters of the art of defensive warfare and they possessed great numbers of automatic weapons admirably suited to street fighting. They had prepared the town for defence by blowing houses into the street and covering the resulting rubble piles with fire from machine guns carefully sited in the neighbouring buildings. They also made free and skillful use of mines. Their scheme was to shepherd our troops along the main street to the central square (the Piazza Municipale) which they aimed to use as a ‘killing ground.’

“The methods developed during the next few days became ‘the form’ for town-clearing operations in Italy. The Canadian infantrymen soon found that movement in the streets, in the face of such an enemy, was not a paying proposition and accordingly they took to ‘mouse-holing’—using explosive charges to blast their way through the connecting walls from one house to the next.

Thus the Edmonton Regiment clawed forward, suffering and inflicting many casualties. During the first day the balance of the Seaforth Highlanders was brought in to assist. The two Commanding Officers partitioned the town between them, dividing it into sections which they set about clearing systematically. The tanks of the Three Rivers Regiment gave invaluable support, their 75-millimetre guns blowing the paratroopers out of their positions in the houses. They were largely responsible for enabling the infantry to gain and to clear the Piazza Municipale without the enemy being able to turn it to the grim purpose which he had intended.

“High explosive was the master weapon in this battle. Not only did it open the way from house to house but it was used repeatedly to destroy whole buildings and their occupants.”

The Canadian tactics called for advance on a two-company front, with one company on either side of the street. The allotted frontage to be cleared was never more than 250 yards; the company commander never committed more than one platoon at a time, the platoon commander never more than one section. Covering fire was intricately organized to protect the leaders as they worked forward; tanks were invaluable if the streets were sufficiently open to allow them to pass. Tanks also served as carriers. Mortar fire, both flat and lobbed, was of value when targets had been identified, but many of the enemy positions were impenetrable to all but the heaviest shells. Canadian artillery assisted the assault parties by placing fire cordons around areas under attack; prisoners told of cruel losses while running the gauntlet. Field guns and anti-aircraft guns also were used to blast the roof-tops and upper storeys of buildings which sheltered the defenders.

CHRISTMAS TO NEW YEAR

On December 23rd 1st Canadian Brigade passed through the Patricia firm base and attacked the high ground to the northwest of the town. This operation was brought to a halt, in part because of stubborn resistance, in part because of seas of mud and slush.

Meanwhile Patricia patrols had kept an alert watch on the terrain to the west and to the north in order to protect the rear and flank of the troops engaged in the street fighting. On the night of December 24th/25th sufficient reinforcements arrived to permit the reconstitution of “C” Company, so that as Christmas dawned

the Patricias were whole again. It was a quiet yet cheerful festival; the weather held fair, there was a two-bottle beer issue and a bountiful supply of parcels from Patricia women's auxiliaries and other friends.* The Scouts and Snipers found Christmas wrappings for their gift to Lieut.-Colonel Ware—a P38 German pistol for which he had expressed a desire. (No questions were asked as to how it was come by.) From Ortona came the roar of battle; there the Loyal Edmontons were locked in heavy fighting. The Seaforths had better fortune; in a captured church they served dinner to all ranks and Christmas carols were sung to the accompaniment of the church organ.

On the afternoon of December 26th a reconnaissance party was dispatched to select a Patricia start line in Ortona. The jump-off was set for 1000 hours next morning. "B" Company was first to go forward; it entered the town soon after the dispatch of the reconnaissance party and took up a position to cover the rear of the Seaforths, who had complained of infiltrators. On Brigade level however it was decided that the time was too short for the Patricias to master all the details of the impending operation; as a result the take-over was postponed until the morning of December 28th. † As if aware of the projected relief enemy shelling was heavy and continuous throughout the following night but early next morning, when the Patricias arrived at their start line, silence had fallen over Ortona. The Germans were gone.

On December 27th after five days' incessant fighting 8th Indian Division had stormed Villa Grande, the key to the German defenses, and was exploiting along the upper Arielli valley in a drive which might cut the coastal road to the north of Ortona. Slowly and sullenly the paratroopers had relinquished their last strongholds in the seaport. It had been a defense that had cost them more than the port was worth; according to the Chief of Staff of 76th German Corps, every battalion of Hitler's finest division was down to company strength. Kesselring, the enemy Commander-in-Chief, afterwards declared the defense to have been inspired by considerations of prestige.

* Mrs. Myra Stirling, Secretary of the Women's Auxiliary in Winnipeg under date of November 28th reported that the Christmas parcels for the Battalion would contain 20,000 cigarettes, 1,000 bars of soap, 1,000 packets of Life-Savers, 1,000 handkerchiefs, 1,000 chocolate bars, balaclavas, sweaters, mitts, gloves and scarves. She was budgeting for monthly supplies thereafter on the same scale.

† Brigadier Ware queries this statement, which is taken from the Brigade narrative. He says: "I spent a good deal of time in Ortona with my company commanders from the start of operations, as the Battalion expected to be brought in at any time. I do not know why the relief was postponed but it was not for want of reconnaissance. Our scouts and snipers were constantly in Ortona."

The Patricias passed through Ortona and took up positions on the northern outskirts of the town. Here the coastal highway in the course of crossing a small stream described a double loop before making junction with a lateral road from the west. The Battalion occupied this tactically-important area and awaited orders. December 28th passed quietly except for a brush with an enemy armoured car which boldly drove into the outskirts of Ortona. Lieut. G. C. Hentig and a number of men were wounded in the exchanges.

There still were Germans in the neighbourhood. On December 29th a patrol under Lieut. E. R. Pellant was ambushed and the officer was taken prisoner. Yet when "A" and "D" Companies moved forward that afternoon they encountered no opposition. On the following day the West Nova Scotia Regiment arrived and relieved the Patricias, who withdrew to support positions a mile to the rear, on the northwestern approaches of the town.

During the holiday season the Battalion was showered with congratulatory messages including those of the Colonel-in-Chief, Brigadier and Mrs. Hamilton Gault, Brigadier Colquhoun, and the Women's Auxiliary of Winnipeg. After the sketchy Christmas it was decided to celebrate the New Year in style. During the Ortona fighting the West Nova Scotia Regiment had 'liberated' an excellent piano. On New Year's Eve it was borrowed and an officer of marked proficiency was entrusted with the mixing of rum punches.* Thereafter nature was allowed to take its course. In spite of all wassail the officers were on hand next morning with bright and shining faces to greet Brigadier Hoffmeister, Lieut.-Colonel Jefferson of the Loyal Edmontons and other guests of the day.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

It was a memorable close to a memorable year. Twelve months before the Patricias had been in Rottingdean, amid the amenities of a civilized community. For three years they had stood on guard and had watched the march of events which shook the world. All that time they had been conscious of their static role; comrades and allies were bearing the burdens. Now they were part of the main performance. They had seen one enemy reduced to surrender and the principal adversary forced to give ground and

* To One Sour (lime juice), Two Sweet (sugar), Three Strong (rum), and Four Weak (Ice) Capt. R. W. Potts felt impelled to add jorums of whisky.

to fall back towards his frontiers. In the six months that they had been in action the face of the war had changed and they as Patricias had been among the instruments of that change. So in spite of all discomfort and dangers they now could proclaim joyously, in the words of the old chorus, that they were going to see the whole show through. They knew that in their skill and courage lay the keys of victory.

On the Adriatic front, however, victory had to mark time in the New Year. As Eighth Army redeployed to force another river line bitter weather intervened and on December 31st a blizzard swept the front. On the coast the Canadians were not unduly incommoded but on the high ground further inland a week of sleet, high winds and driving snow blocked the roads, lowered visibility to nil and made controlled movement impossible. The British, Indian and New Zealand divisions, mustering for fresh assaults in Orsogna and towards Tollo, were brought to a halt; as a result the enemy was able to mass his strength against the Canadian sector. The odds in favour of the defenders lengthened and the Eighth Army commander reluctantly decided to await the coming of spring before renewing the offensive.

"MONTY" GOES

It was the last and perhaps the least palatable decision that General Montgomery was called upon to make in the Italian campaign. At the end of the year he returned to Britain to take command of the Army Group which would land in Normandy. This small, dynamic figure, individual of dress, pungent of speech, eccentric of manner yet ever direct and logical of mind, was perhaps the greatest battle commander and soldier's soldier that the world had seen since the days of the Duke of Wellington. The Patricias, like all who had served under him, never will forget him. His farewell was characteristic:

"What can I say to you as I go away? When the heart is full it is not easy to speak. But I would say this to you. YOU have made this Army what it is. YOU have made its name a household word all over the world. YOU must uphold its good name and its traditions . . . May we meet again soon."

THE TOUR IN ORTONA

The immediate role of the Patricias in the New Year was the defense of Ortona. Excellent billets were occupied along the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, a thoroughfare which ran across the northern

fringe of the town to the Castle. Overnight the seaport became a busy place, with sappers and working parties everywhere—clearing the streets, repairing the harbour, restoring the damaged water, electrical and sewage services. The enemy endeavoured to interfere by hit-and-run raids and with long-range shell fire, but to little avail. On the roar of the plane or the shriek of the shell everyone dived for cover; in a matter of minutes, while the smoke still rose from the strike, work was resumed.

The principal Patricia preoccupations of the first fortnight of January are revealed by the message book. The troops are making themselves at home, for stovepipes are beginning to appear through windows and through shell holes in the walls; these innovations, someone hopes, are not against Standing Orders. A search of the town is ordered for "furniture and knick-knacks" suitable for an Officers Mess. The Second-in-Command (Major R. P. Clark) is demanding the Technical School for his N.C.O. classes. The Paymaster (Capt. J. A. McLeod) has set up shop in "the drug store on Main Street." Capt. R. W. Potts has been appointed to a Brigade Committee to rename the streets. The battalion Pioneers are busy repairing a local cinema, where films already are being shown. The Red Shield Salvation Army organization has moved in and thereafter there will be tea for the troops three times a day. The Ortona Officers' Lounge is almost ready; its advance notice advises optimistically, "Watch for the opening of our Pescara premises." Thus was consummated the immemorial cycle of the soldier—to fight and to endure, to rest and to make the best of things in hand.

NEW EMPLOYMENTS

On January 11th a second reinforcing draft repaired the wastages of the recent fighting. (Losses had not been unduly heavy in December—2 officers and 30 other ranks killed, 9 officers and 145 other ranks wounded.) It was cheering to recognize among the reinforcements many who had been early casualties and who now were returning for a second tour of duty. They had arrived propitiously for there was work in hand. 5th Canadian Armoured Division had joined Eighth Army in November, as had 4th Indian Division, a famous formation which for four years had fought in all parts of Middle East and North Africa. It was the intention of General Sir Oliver Leese, the new Eighth Army commander, to widen his battlefield before the resumption of the general offensive in the spring. This plan necessitated the capture

of Orsogna, the enemy's anchor position on the inner flank of the Adriatic front. 4th Indian Division, reinforced by certain 5th Canadian Division units, was selected for this tough task but first it was desired to give the newly-arrived Canadians a 'bleeding' operation. On the night of January 12th/13th 11th Canadian Infantry Brigade relieved 3rd Brigade to the north of Ortona, with orders to clear the enemy from the Adriatic foreshore as far north as the mouth of the Arielli river. This involved an advance of approximately one mile from present positions.

On the night of January 14th/15th the Patricias took over from the Cape Breton Highlanders on the northern outskirts of Ortona in order to permit this battalion to participate in 11th Brigade's first operation. Forty-eight hours later the attack went in. It was unsuccessful, both the Cape Breton Highlanders and the Perth Regiment being roughly handled. The Nova Scotians had attacked on the immediate left of the Patricia positions, which caught part of the enemy's defensive fire, causing 16 casualties. When the 11th Brigade attack was abandoned the Patricias immediately sent out parties to re-establish contact with the enemy. One of these patrols brought back a badly wounded Cape Breton Highlander who had been crawling for four days towards the Canadian lines.

SIX WEEKS' PATROLLING

After the withdrawal of 11th Brigade there followed six weeks of stand-still operations, perhaps as uncomfortable and unrewarding as any period of the war. Amid the snow, the slush and the mud of the bleak countryside it was necessary to pin down a vigorous and bad-tempered adversary skilled in all the tricks of ambush and deception. Night after night the patrols went out across the dark landscape to pinpoint enemy positions. Their major concern was the farmhouses, some of which had been transformed by the enemy into miniature fortresses. An Indian Army Observer thus described them:

"They are the scene of quick, murderous encounters. Our detachments and the Germans live in much the same fashion. Downstairs in the toolsheds and in the cattle stalls the infantry platoons are quartered. The cellars serve as bolt-holes in emergency. The upper storeys, reached by outside staircases, give excellent observation; they also house the machine-gunners, signallers and other specialists. Everyone moves discreetly during

the day to avoid the unwelcome attentions of the guns. When darkness falls the dangers mount. These farmhouses nearly all have blind walls, behind which a raiding party may approach unseen. Throughout the night, therefore, sentries are stationed on all sides in slit trenches. Alarm wires are strung and likely approaches are mined or booby-trapped. The techniques of surprise, like the precautions against it, demand courage and resourcefulness of a high order, as well as skill in battle-tactics which are a mixture of gangster and Red Indian practices.”*

For those who sallied to examine such positions and to report upon enemy activities a patrol meant long hours of listening in the dark, often in cramped cover; crawling considerable distances through the freezing mud; negotiating tripwires strung amid the innocent cordage of the grape trellises; making one's way along paths or roads sown with mines which gave no response to the sweep. Every ridge, every rubble pile, every reverse slope, offered hiding places to enemies who did not make many mistakes. It was a task in which a careless step, an accidental noise, might spell disaster—in which the first error of judgment was apt to be the last. Yet patrols became a nightly routine to be accepted as casually as any other duty. After long hours of strain officers and men would return, often with nothing of importance to report; but sometimes they would bring information which would fill blank spots in the intelligence picture and so add to ever-growing knowledge of enemy dispositions and intentions.†

The Patricias' patrol log for the most part was a terse record, given to statistics and bare facts and seldom enlivened with human interest details. During this six-week tour, however, there appeared a number of intriguing items. On February 1st it was reported “2nd Brigade patrols were engaged by a haystack. On return of the patrols the haystack was engaged by our artillery. It retreated in the direction of a nearby house where it was immobilized by a near miss.”

In the Battalion and Brigade reports of the same period a good deal of attention is given to Mona, variously described as “a siren of the trenches” and “a jug-nosed mongrel bitch.” Mona had been shipped up in the hope that she would distract enemy

* “The Tiger Triumphs”—H.M. Stationery Office.

† Not the least of German advantages on this front was that they did not require intelligence patrols. The Italian civilians, moving freely about the countryside, told them all that they needed to know.

patrol dogs, which were proving troublesome. The eventual conclusion, as entered in the Patricia log for February 8th, was that Mona was not interested in her work.

On February 11th an item appears which provides a basis for fascinating conjecture. "A German cyclist came pedalling down the coast road in full view, pursued by rounds of five-fives, the German medium calibre." Of what happened to the rider, or why his comrades felt impelled to speed him on his way with heavy guns, nothing emerges. Such silence is sheer art.

The record of the night-by-night adventures of the Patricia patrols also leaves a good deal to be filled in. On January 19th a "B" Company patrol under Lieut. E. C. Carter had a firefight with the enemy. On the 22nd Lieut. V. S. Allan with fourteen men investigated a gully between the Patricia and Seaforth sectors; there were Germans in the gully. On the 23rd Patricia scouts and snipers went back to make a 'snatch' but the Germans were alert. On the following evening they again investigated this gully; although unable to close with the enemy they pinpointed positions for the attention of the artillery. On the night of January 25th the beach patrol reported the surf too high to proceed and commented upon the absence of German patrols on the seashore. On the 27th Lieut. D. Hatch with twenty-eight men endeavoured to raid Georgia Gully; although no trip-wires were encountered, exploding booby traps gave the alarm. (Division is interested in this phenomenon.) On January 29th Lieut. R. D. Browne-Clayton's patrol made too much noise and was mortared. On February 4th Lieut. A. M. Mills, in the course of an examination of the Tollo road, was pelted with stick grenades. On the following night Sgt. G. L. Dick returned to report failure because the path to his objective was criss-crossed with bamboo sticks. (Was this a cantrip or a hex? Or was it merely that the sticks crackled underfoot?) On February 7th Lieut. J. L. McCulloch, after a sharp clash with an enemy patrol, brought back his party safely. On the 8th Lieut. Mills, out again, was ambushed while arranging an ambush. On February 12th Capt. W. A. Elhatton with 75 men of "A" Company had a brisk firefight with the enemy. On the 15th Capt. W. S. Stevens and Lieut. V. S. Allan returned with nothing better to report than "Everybody is wet and gumbo-spattered. Our ambush patrols were driven in by the wakeful Germans."

It was more than Standing Orders during this tour that kept the Germans wakeful. Warfare in the dark was telling on their

nerves. On the adjoining Indian front a letter was captured in which a private of 146 Grenadier Regiment implored his brother not to join the infantry. "The lice are at me now and I have not washed or shaved for a fortnight," he wrote. "In the night Tommy comes over suddenly, opens up and we are liable to get a packet. All I am doing is waiting for the war to end." On the Canadian front a parachutist's diary was picked up. It began: "To the parachutist death is a game." It ended, on the evening before his capture: "On the parachutists' graves there are no roses blooming. I cannot smile now." Desertions had become common, particularly from units which contained Poles and other impressed non-Germans.

February wore away in rising gales and bitter weather. The long tour drew to its end and on February 25th the advance party of 48th Highlanders of Canada arrived to take over. Three days later the Patricias left Ortona. The convoys followed the Adriatic highway southward to Termoli before turning inland to fetch up at Guglionesi, on the high ground above the Biferno river. The stay here was brief; on March 5th orders were received to return to the line and to relieve 11th Canadian Brigade on the left sector of the Canadian front. This take-over, however, was postponed and on the following day in the midst of a wintry blizzard the Battalion moved to San Vito Chietino. All ranks arrived cramped and sodden, debussed in a sea of mud and struggled into crowded and cheerless billets. Here Major W. deN. Watson, recovered from his wounds, rejoined and reassumed command of "A" Company.

On March 11th the Patricias shifted fifteen miles southward to Rocca where better billets were available. This was little more than an overnight halt as the postponed relief of 11th Canadian Brigade now was imminent. At 1700 hours on March 14th the Battalion moved forward by cross-country roads and took over from the Perth Regiment in the Crecchio area, two miles to the northwest of the Villa Rogatti battlefield.

Here nothing more than a watching role was involved. Eighth Army was thinning out for transfer across the Apennines to the scene of the spring offensive. Nearly all the battle-trying divisions would go; I Canadian Corps already had handed over the front and the Poles, trained in Middle East after release from Russian prison cages, were on their way forward to take over. The Germans now were holding a narrow neck of Adriatic foreshore



Sicily—Leonforte-Agira Operations, July 21st/31st 1943—The Patricia's moving up into position.



Catanazaro, September 13th 1943—Field-Marshal Montgomery decorates Patricia officers. Major Rowan Coleman MC in foreground.



Castello di Lagopesole, September 24th 1943—Occupation by Patricias (Camouflaged regimental truck in foreground).



September 1943—Lieut.-Colonel C. B. Ware, Major D. Brain and an unidentified officer studying the enemy positions.





ti, December 1943—Crossing the Moro River.





Holland, April 11th 1945—The Patricia embarking in Buffaloes for crossing the IJssel River.

with no more than ten miles between the seacoast and the steep Matese massif. They were content to watch and wait and to train their men for the campaign to come.

The weather had improved, the ground had dried and 1st Parachute Division had left the front—three factors which contributed to Canadian comfort and safety. 2nd Canadian Brigade's responsibility was an area rather than a line, the Patricias being required to police a block of about three square kilometres. Nightly the patrols formed up and trudged off on their investigations. A hint of spring was in the air; it gave the stalks new zest.

The tour began with the rather eerie episode of the Black Dog. During the night of March 16th/17th a large animal prowled in the neighborhood of Battalion Headquarters. When called by the sentries it halted; when the sentries advanced it disappeared. It manifestly was trained for its task and Divisional Intelligence took its visitations seriously. An order was issued that hearts must be hardened and such visitors shot at sight.

There followed the customary sequence of good nights and bad. While the area was quiet it was by no means safe; on the evening of March 29th, 7 Platoon lost 6 men in a concentration shoot. On the night of April 4th Lieut. R. D. Browne-Clayton's patrol came upon a German beer-fest in a gully. They broke up the party with a shower of grenades, which drew mortar and machine-gun fire; in turn the officer called for artillery fire, under cover of which the Patricias withdrew. On the same evening Lieut. D. Hatch and his men had a lively firefight with a German group which tried to encircle them. Three nights later Major Watson decided to destroy a haystack; his suspicions were justified, for on being set alight the stack blew up with a resounding blast.

For the following ten days all patrols drew blanks. On the evening of April 16th the enemy came to life with a sharp attack on the forward Patricia positions. "B" and "C" companies were heavily mortared and a "B" Company forward post was overrun. Defensive fire kept the enemy from the close but fourteen casualties were sustained. On Hitler's birthday Crecchio, which still was garrisoned by the Germans, broke out with swastika flags; church bells rang and there came sounds of singing. The Patricias sent over their kind regards in the form of mortar salvos, which drew a retaliatory shoot. During the commotion L/Sgt. W. L. MacKay and a fellow scout crept out and 'holed up' in a church

tower in the midst of the enemy. They returned on the following evening with information of value.* On the night of April 22nd, with German wrath over the Hitler Day incident still unassuaged, a sharp attack fell on outposts manned by 11 and 14 platoons. Accurate mortar fire dispersed the assault parties.

A NEW FRONT

In such bickering the Lower Adriatic tour drew to its close. In its last days the Sixth Canadian Victory Loan Campaign was more engrossing than the war. Patricia subscriptions reached the satisfactory figure of \$33,000. Since April 4th the Battalion had been hosts to advance parties of 1st King's Own Regiment and of the 3/18th Royal Garhwal Rifles, units of 10th Indian Division recently arrived from Middle East. On April 23rd the take-over was completed and that night the Patricias withdrew to the staging area at Larino.

Two days later, after a long and dusty trip the Battalion arrived at Guardiaregia, a pleasant area on the eastern slopes of the Apennines nine miles south of Campobasso. By now anyone in the rear rank could name the next objective. It was Rome.

* Brigadier Ware comments: "Sgt. MacKay was probably the finest scout and sniper of the war. This habit of 'holing up' in the midst of the enemy lines was a common thing with our very fine Scout and Sniper Platoon. Unfortunately after escaping death dozens of times, Sgt. MacKay fell ill and died in hospital of jaundice."

CHAPTER SIX

BREAK-THROUGH TO ROME

Rome was more than a name. It was a strategic and political prize of great worth. As a consequence in the spring of 1944 the Allied planners eyed the calendar anxiously. The invasion of France, the climactic operation of the war in the West, was set for June. On the Normandy beaches the Anglo-American alliance must be prepared to commit its utmost strength; yet as OVERLORD drew near twenty of the finest divisions of the British Commonwealth and the United States were bogged down upon inconsequential river lines in southern Italy.

It is little wonder that at this juncture British and United States planning staffs disagreed as to what should be done. The Americans, believing military objectives to be paramount, were inclined to be impatient with their British colleagues, who considered victories to be doubly valuable if they served political ends. It is possible that but for the tenacity of one man the Italian campaign might have bogged down and even might have been abandoned on the lines of the Garigliano and Arielli rivers.

Winston Churchill, however, refused to be content with anything less than Rome. He saw the capture of the Italian capital in its wider context. His view of the importance of Rome was fully shared by his great adversary Hitler; in no theatre of operations did the Fuehrer issue more specific commands for a stand to the death; he sent many of his finest troops to Italy and he made their self-sacrifice a matter not only of national but of personal honour. Rome must be held as long as German soldiers breathed.

THE CASSINO FORTRESS POSITION

With such orders in hand the able Kesselring sought a position where his forces, numbering more than twenty divisions in all, might break the teeth of the Anglo-American armies. He had not far to seek, for one nearby locality long had been famous among military students as a classical example of a natural fortress. Sixty miles north of Naples and eighty miles south of Rome a deep gouge separates the Matese and the Aurenci mountain ranges.

It is as though in geologic time, when the up-tilted mountains were cooling, a vast fist and extended thumb had been punched deeply into the plastic stuff of the upheaval and had left its imprint there. The indentations of the fist can be seen in the Rapido valley, a circular enclave surrounded by high ranges. The Liri valley, like a spatulate thumb, extends for fifteen miles into the northwest. Between the closed fist and the thumb there extrudes a high rocky cape which runs down from the great cone of Monte Cairo to the blunt tip of Monte Cassino. This mountain promontory is reared in middle air; it sees all and commands all that would pass beneath it.

All soldiers who would reach Rome of necessity must pass beneath it. The only other route northward to the west of the Apennines lay along the Tyrrhenian foreshore, where a long stretch of reclaimed marshland was checkerboarded with irrigation and drainage canals—untankable ground and almost impassable to wheels. The Allied planners deplored the necessity of storming the Cassino fortress, for it is the tactics of desperation to commit flesh and blood against field fortifications when there is little hope of a quick or easy break-through. In the words of a military historian:

“The mountains which enclose the (Cassino) valleys are ramparts which seem to deny any hope of progress. In the light of early morning and with the shadow of evening upon them they rise like insuperable cliffs beyond Minturno and Castelforte and over the little naked plain of the Rapido. Many a private’s heart must have quailed when he looked up and realized that he and the men beside him had been chosen to break this giant’s keep. Poorer soldiers than the Germans might well have been confident of their power to stand forever on such a line.”*

It was to avoid such a formidable and frightening fortress position that Mr. Churchill battled until he obtained the planners’ consent to the Anzio landings. If this operation had succeeded Cassino might have been by-passed. Unfortunately at Anzio the tragedy of the Dardanelles was re-enacted; a sluggish commander failed to realize that the road to Rome was open until it had been closed. There followed the first assaults upon the Cassino outworks. “Disappointment, bloodily arrayed” was a fair description of the earlier battles. Little ground was gained at great cost.

* *The Campaign in Italy*—Eric Linklater. (H.M. Stationery Office.)

At the end of January 1944 II U.S. Corps tried to storm the Monte Cassino massif by an attack over the high ground to its rear. This assault was carried out with the utmost gallantry and almost won home; a single fresh battalion, a last all-out effort, might have gained the day. When 34th and 36th U.S. Divisions had done all that men could do there came from the Adriatic 2nd New Zealand and 4th Indian Divisions, which for three years had kept each other's backs in North Africa and which were regarded, not without reason, as two of the finest fighting formations of all time. To receive such formidable assailants the enemy brought in 1st Parachute Division, led by the ruthless Heidrich. In February and March battles of Homeric intensity raged on the summit, on the slopes and around the base of the Cassino massif. After six weeks and 8,000 casualties the exhausted New Zealanders and British-Indians held little more than the ground they had taken over from II U.S. Corps.

THE FIFTH OFFENSIVE

Even before the climax of this assault, which found Gurkhas clinging to rocky outcrops within bowshot of the Monastery walls while far down the hillside Londoners and paratroopers battled hand-to-hand in the ruins of Castle Hill, plans were under way for a fifth attack. What one army had failed to do two armies would essay. Thinning out to a holding force on the Adriatic front Eighth Army crossed the Apennines and assumed responsibility for the Cassino-Liri valley operations.

Fifth U. S. Army, which had conducted the earlier offensive, shifted westward to the coastal and Aurunci sectors. In the new battle the striking force would be fifteen divisions—three British, three French-Colonial, two American, two Canadian, two Polish, one French, one South African and one British-Indian. The assaults would be mounted over a front of thirty miles. The Americans would attack on the seaward plain, the French divisions on the Aurunci range, the Poles over the high ground behind Monte Cassino. The main blow, however, would fall in a sector neglected since the first assault—the mouth of the Liri valley, six miles in width, between the toe of the Cassino massif in the north and the junction of the Gari and Liri rivers in the south.* Here seven divisions would attack on a narrow

* The small but tactically important stream that threaded across the battlefield had a bewildering number of names. It began in the mountains behind Monte Cassino as the Rapido. At Sant' Angelo in Teodice it became the Gari. After junction of the Gari and the Liri it was named the Garigliano, which in turn flowed into the Minturno.

front, with the task of piercing and destroying two enemy defense systems.

THE HITLER LINE

XIII Corps, consisting of 4th and 78th British Divisions, 8th Indian Division and 6th British Armoured Division, was entrusted with the breaking of the Gustav line, for which the Rapido-Gari rivers served as a moat. Thereafter I Canadian Corps consisting of 1st Canadian Infantry Division and 5th Canadian Armoured Division would smash through a second fortified zone in the upper Liri valley. This system was known to the Western allies as the Hitler Line.* Its northern extremity was anchored into the slopes of Monte Cairo from whence it descended the mountain-side near Piedimonte, crossed the Liri valley nine miles behind the Gustav Line and climbed into the Aurunci range at Sant' Oliva. It had been built by the Todt organization and contained the latest refinements of military engineering. An historian thus described it:

"It was in the Hitler Line that the defences were the most elaborate. There were evidences that the Germans intended to make it their enduring frontier. Its outposts were semi-mobile pill-boxes to hold two men and a light machine-gun. Behind these there was a system of concrete gun emplacements covered by weapon pits and connected by tunnels and communication trenches, with Tiger or Panther turrets on concrete foundations, with underground living quarters as key points to the system. Each of these turrets, which had all-round traverse, was covered by two or three mobile anti-tank guns on each flank. Passive protection was provided by deep shelters with thick concrete roofs that sometimes were covered by as much as twenty feet of earth."†

The approaches to the Hitler Line were guarded by thick aprons of wire and the ground had been heavily sown with mines. There were long Italian 'N' mines like lengths of rail; paratroop anti-tank mines like over-sized finger bowls; heavy Tellermines which might be buried singly or in sets; shrapnel or 'S' mines

* The engineers who built this defense line proudly called it the "Fuehrer-Riegel" (Hitler Switch Line). In January 1944, when Hitler exacted the oath of sacrifice from the troops in the Gustav positions, the Commander of Tenth German Army was ordered to change the name of his support line. Apparently the Nazi leader had less faith in it than the men who had built it. Thereafter the enemy knew it as the "Senger-Riegel"—Senger being a German corps commander. It also was known to the enemy as the "Dora" Line.

† "The Campaign in Italy"—Eric Linklater. (H.M. Stationery Office.)

whose inner cases filled with ball-bearings sprang breast-high before exploding; limpet mines shaped like Chianti bottles; small 'schu' mines in plastic and wooden cases, unresponsive to detectors; delayed-action mines designed to crater roads or tracks after a certain number of vehicles had passed over them. These mines had been laid with few surface traces. In the Liri valley the fields of standing grain were untrampled, the pasture land unscarred, the woodlands unmarked, the undergrowth unbroken; yet the peaceful earth had been poisoned by innumerable deadly devices which added mortal dangers to every acre.

ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

For the assault forces there was nothing but to accept such menaces with courage and soldierly resource. The movement of Eighth Army from the Adriatic to Cassino began late in March. 78th Division was first to cross the mountains; other formations followed and it was not until May that the call came for 1st Canadian Division. The Patricias had been at rest in Guardieregia for a week when high commanders began to arrive—harbingers of battle as certain as the first robin is of spring. On May 2nd Lieut.-General Sir Oliver Leese came to watch a mountain exercise; two days later Major-General Vokes addressed all ranks. On May 6th the anniversary of Frezenberg was celebrated, for the Patricias would be on the move on the 8th. At a Battalion smoker Lieut.-Colonel R. C. Coleman MC appeared with new flashes; he had been transferred to command that fine unit, the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Two days later the Battalion moved to a pleasant camp near Lucera, where a short period of combined infantry-tank training had been arranged.

The armoured unit which partnered the Patricias in these exercises was North Irish Horse, which had distinguished itself in North Africa. This yeomanry regiment had been equipped with the first Churchill tanks to reach Italy. For three days methods of 'marrying' infantry and armour in attack were practised. The system employed was flexible, leaving as much as possible to the man on the spot; it was in large part a matter of accustoming the associates to the habits of mind of each other. Off duty the Irishmen proved exuberant companions.

THE BATTLE OPENS

On the night of May 11th the rising moon at 2300 hours gave the signal for the opening of the Liri offensive. Forty-five minutes

later the first assault boats, carrying elements of 4th British and 8th Indian Divisions, were launched on the Rapido River. There followed bitter fighting but the assailants would not be denied; by the evening of the first day the Rapido had been bridged and British, Canadian and New Zealand tanks were across in support of the infantry. On the Cassino heights the Poles had been beaten back in their first assault; on the seacoast United States divisions had been roughly handled; but in the Aurunci mountain block French Colonial troops had stormed the peaks which blocked their paths and were about to embark on one of the swiftest and most spectacular advances in military history. The new battle therefore had opened with the usual mixture of good and bad. The only thing certain was that hard and costly fighting would follow.

THE PATRICIAS CLOSE UP

At 0600 hours on May 12th the Patricias began to move towards their new battlefield. The route led to the southwest by way of Benevento; an officer wrote:

“The scenery was characteristic of the two Italys that we have fought over. One is the mountain Italy of the Apennines, the other the well-tilled, better-paved-road and well-bridged Italy of the coast and inland valleys. At Benevento the road dips into the plain where it becomes a narrow, massively-paved highway running straight as a die to the west between ordered groves and tilled fields, with glimpses in the distance of great houses set amidst cypresses and poplars. This is the Appian Way* and how old this country is! The roads are deep in a powdery, yellow dust which makes thick rolling clouds in the wake of every moving vehicle.”

That evening the Patricias bivouacked near Caserta, 16 miles north of Naples, where the vast stone palace of the Abruzzi princes housed Fifteenth Army Group Headquarters. Here they remained until the morning of May 16th. The Liri battle now had entered its second phase. 78th British Division had reinforced the right flank of the attack; after costly fighting the Gustav system had been pierced and the way was open for advance to the Hitler Line. On May 16th 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades passed through 8th Indian Division at Pignataro and began to work forward.

* This great highway of antiquity (The Queen of Roads) ran from Rome to Naples by way of Benevento.

On the Cassino heights the Poles, twice frustrated, were regrouping for a third try. On the left flank the situation had been transformed by the dash of the French colonials. With irregular Goumiers in the van the Moroccans and Algerians scaled peak after peak, destroyed the German garrisons and leapt forward with pantherish bounds to fresh objectives. French armour was thrusting along both slopes of the mountain range, hustling the enemy into a demoralized retreat and threatening within a matter of days to turn the flanks of the defenders both on the seacoast and in the Liri valley. The situation recalled the cry of Foch at the turn of the tide in 1918: "*L'édifice commence à craquer. Tout le monde à la bataille.*"

At 1100 hours on May 16th the Patricias moved off to the north. Highway 6, crammed with the vehicles of three corps, was avoided by a detour over secondary roads along the Volturno valley. All day the troop carriers passed through serene Bellini-like landscapes unscarred by war. Rejoining the main highway they moved through the clutter of a vast bivouac. Turning off eight miles short of Cassino they entered the Liri valley along a railway roadbed which had been converted into a military road by removing the rails and sleepers. They bivouacked for the night in the lee of Monte Maggiore, which had seen stern fighting in the earlier advance to the Garigliano. Next morning they were early a move and at 1100 hours they crossed the Gari, entered the battlefield and closed up on XIII Corps positions to the northeast of Pignataro.

This battered village had been stormed in a wild melee on the late afternoon of May 14th by Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Pathans from the Northwest Frontier of India, both of 8th Indian Division. It now was held by the West Nova Scotia Regiment and was under direct observation from Monte Cassino. The Patricia bivouac area was searched from time to time by long range mortar, machine-gun and artillery fire. Shortly before midnight on the day of arrival enemy planes beat up the area with light bombs and machine-guns, causing a few casualties.

THE STAGE IS SET

The immediate task of 2nd Canadian Brigade was to provide a firm base for 1st and 3rd Brigades in their advance to the Hitler Line. In fulfillment of this role the Patricias on the

morning of May 18th moved 5,000 yards to the southwest and occupied a position which the Royal Canadian Regiment was about to vacate. Here the welcome news was received that in a fierce all-out attack the enemy had been swept from Monte Cassino and that the Union Jack and the Polish standard were flying over the ruins of the Monastery. On the same day the French Colonials came up abreast of Pignataro and were only three miles distant, on the opposite side of the Liri. The stage thus was set for the climax of the battle—the rupture by the Canadian Corps of the remaining enemy defenses in the upper Liri valley.

Unfortunately this attack could not be mounted as a clear-cut and exact operation. In an area of not more than twenty-five square miles four infantry and three armoured divisions were operating. That meant that more than 20,000 vehicles were moving about in this restricted space. They crossed and recrossed the battlefield in every direction; they tangled in hour-long traffic jams at bottlenecks; they created a maze of misleading tracks; they often coagulated in such great clots as to hinder the movement of troops on foot.* In spite of the efforts of the staff and of the Provost Corps the result was confusion compounded and it became next to impossible for units to adhere to their schedules. The Royal Canadian Regiment, for instance, when relieved by the Patricias found its line of advance so cluttered with vehicles that it was necessary to stake out a new track. In a single morning this unit received three sets of orders, each of which in turn had to be cancelled because of the traffic conditions. This vehicular chaos made it difficult to sustain the momentum of a battle whose best prospects of victory lay in a smashing blow which would breach the Hitler Line beyond repair in the course of a few hours' fighting.

THE FIRST PLAN OF BATTLE

On the morning of May 19th Eighth Army's plan of battle was revealed. 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades would clear the ground up to the Hitler Line fortifications. Thereafter an attack by 2nd

* Not all these vehicles were on their lawful occasions. The author of "The Campaign in Italy" says tartly: "Visitors in increasing number were also appearing, most of whom had legitimate business with those formations engaged in battle, but some of whom were indulging in a favourite pastime of the Army, known as 'swanning.' The swan, that gracious bird, has the habit of taking short flights that create appreciable commotion but have no serious purpose. Officers who spent their spare time in 'swanning' had in a like manner no graver reason than a desire to watch some particular fragment of a battle or to visit friends who had lately been embroiled in it, and their cars, though few in number when compared with those of an armoured division, added much to the dust and confusion."

Canadian Brigade would open a gap in the fortified zone. 5th Canadian and 6th British Armoured Divisions then would rush the gap and establish a bridgehead beyond it; a mass of infantry would flood through.

1st Canadian Division's plan, circulated in the morning and cancelled in the evening, provided a foretaste of what was to follow. For the Patricias the day brought an advance of 4,000 yards into the northwest and the occupation of underground quarters in which there were tiers of bunks, cosy furnishings and even in some cases fresh flowers in vases upon the writing desks. It apparently had been a German regimental headquarters.

On the approach to the Hitler Line the *Forme d'Aquino* began to exercise a sinister influence upon the battlefield. It passed through the village of Aquino, which lay in the enemy's forward positions, then cut across the Liri valley on a course diagonal to the Hitler Line defenses. The deep trough and steep banks of this slowly moving stream made it an impassable obstacle to tanks. As long as the enemy retained Aquino village its approaches provided a glacis over which the defenders could sweep the Canadian line of defense with flanking fire. As the gully of the stream encroached progressively upon the Canadian front it meant that the attacking infantry and their escorting tanks must pass through a bottleneck upon which the enemy could concentrate his fire. At best, therefore, the *Forme d'Aquino* was a nuisance and a hindrance; at worst, a serious threat to the success of the Canadian attack.

There followed discouraging days. On May 19th 78th British Division endeavoured to 'bounce' the enemy out of Aquino and was roughly handled. When 3rd Canadian Brigade had closed up on the enemy fortified zone the Royal 22e Regiment was ordered to probe the defenses—an operation which resulted in substantial losses to that fine unit. In the early morning of May 20th a heavy shoot swept the Patricias' bivouac area, causing a number of casualties. The plan still stood for 2nd Brigade to attack on May 22nd, but a number of intelligence items, having been pieced together, put the planners in two minds. The French now were in control of the territory west of the Liri River and their rapid progress on the Canadian left flank suggested the wisdom of mounting a break-through attack in the Pontecorvo rather than in the Aquino area. It also had become known that the Hitler Line had been reinforced by an 'Ersatz Battalion' of low combat

rating which now was in the line near Pontecorvo. An attack against such odds and ends might yield better results than battle against the paratroopers who garrisoned Aquino or the dour panzer grenadiers who held the remainder of the Canadian right flank front.

Thus although on May 20th Orders still held for an assault on the northern front, with Patricias on the right, Seaforths on the left and the Loyal Edmontons passing through for the break-out, there was little surprise (but no little irritation) when at the close of that day Regimental officers learned that the plan might be altered. The jump-off was only thirty-six hours away; indecision at such a time portended ill for the smoothness of the operation.

NOW TWO PLANS

The projected changes in plan arose from two considerations. The congestion of 2nd Canadian Brigade's battlefield and the dangerous role played by the *Forme d'Aquino* had been tardily recognized. It therefore seemed desirable to widen the front of the assault. Quite apart from the attractiveness of exchanging panzer grenadier for 'Ersatz Battalion' opponents, the 48th Highlanders of Canada in a probing attack near Pontecorvo had discovered what they believed to be a 'soft spot' in the enemy defenses. It therefore might prove advantageous to switch the 2nd Brigade assault to the southern sector. These factors were appraised on a high level; as a result the commander of 2nd Brigade no sooner had issued his orders on the evening of May 20th than he was called to Division. At midnight new orders were promulgated; these in turn were changed next morning. Twice during May 21st the Patricias packed up. Each time the movement order was rescinded.*

On the morning of the 22nd, less than twenty-four hours before the opening of the assault, there were two sets of orders covering attacks in two different sectors. Plan One (the original 2nd Brigade assault in the north) still stood, but it would be superseded by Plan Two if an attack by 1st Canadian Brigade, to be opened on the morning of May 22nd, went well. On report of success from the southern flank 2nd Canadian Brigade would move rapidly to the Pontecorvo area and would leapfrog 1st Canadian Brigade to complete the break-through. If, however, the 1st

* The War Diary for May 21st opens wearily: "Today was another day of uncertainty and indecision, order and counter-order."

Canadian Brigade attack hung fire or failed the original Plan One would be carried out but with an important change; the Carleton and York Regiment would join in the attack on the left of the Seaforths and thus would widen the assault frontage from 2,000 to 3,000 yards.

At the conclusion of a Brigade "O" Group on the morning of May 22nd it seemed as though Plan Two—the attack through 1st Canadian Brigade's front on the southern sector—would be chosen. However the 1st Brigade assault which went in at 1000 hours that morning did not prosper and Lieut.-Colonel Ware, returning from the conference, was met by his Adjutant (Capt. R. G. M. Gammell) who informed him that Plan One now was definitely on. There was only one small but aggravating change; 51st Royal Tank Regiment, which had been allotted to the Patricias and with whom everything had been arranged, would support the Carleton and York attack. In exchange North Irish Horse was assigned to the Patricias. The process of 'marrying up' with the armour had to be retransacted at the last moment.

That afternoon the Patricias took over support positions from the West Nova Scotia Regiment, which side-slipped into support of the Carleton and Yorks on the left. Nothing remained but to scan for a last time the detailed plans for the morrow. The Patricias' battlefield was no more than a square mile of valley floor, a triangle of ground whose apex lay to the north, between the *Forme d'Aquino* and the *Aquino-Pontecorvo* road. It was divided into five report lines 300 yards apart—JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL and ABOUKIR—the last the first objective. "C" Company would lead off on the right, with "A" Company on the opposite flank. At ABOUKIR "B" Company would pass through to exploit to Caporetto, on the line of the *Aquino-Pontecorvo* road. With Caporetto secure the Hitler Line was breached.

For three days the artillery of three corps had been playing on the Hitler Line fortifications. For the assault 682 guns, firing 1,500 rounds a minute and advancing by hundred-yard lifts every five minutes, would maintain a tight barrage. Fire power unfortunately was a less decisive factor than the nature of the ground over which the Canadians must advance. Up to the enemy wire it was heavily overgrown, with trees, undergrowth and high crops obscuring the view. The attackers must enter battle blindly while the defenders lay in covert awaiting them.

THE BATTLE OPENS

By midnight on May 22nd the last dispositions had been arranged and Lieut.-Colonel Ware and his officers had a few hours in hand before dawn. An uneasy calm reigned over the valley and the heights on either side; every now and then bursts of fire revealed the nervous alertness of the enemy. At 0400 hours all ranks were astir; on the first streaks of dawn the companies fell in and moved to their deployment areas through the ground mist which cloaked the valley. As "A" and "C" Companies approached their start line counter-battery fire opened, searching the back areas for gun positions. Then at 0557 hours the barrage came down with a resounding roar. It found the Patricias ready, with the Loyal Edmontons closed up behind them. The Battalion War Diary in a handful of words gives a picture of the tense minutes of waiting:

"The steady pounding of guns, the roar of tanks moving forward, the 'marrying up,' made a terrific din and set the pace for a somewhat hectic day. Major W. deN. Watson MC, commander 'A' Company, pushed off with a cheerful remark, 'See you on the objective in Berlin.' Lieut.-Colonel R. C. Coleman MC, commanding the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, was also seen, wearing a soft hat, placidly smoking a pipe, a happy smile on his face . . . the wail of Nebelwerfers and a shower of 10 and 15 cm artillery rained on the woods, adding to the noise and confusion."

A TRAGIC BEGINNING

With the first lift of the barrage the assault companies moved steadily forward. Twenty yards per minute was maintained. At 0620 hours both companies had crossed JANUARY. Small arms fire was intensifying; it was not until fifty minutes had passed that arrival at FEBRUARY, 600 yards beyond the start line, was reported. Lieut.-Colonel Ware, who had moved forward to JANUARY with his tactical staff, received a last message from "A" Company as it reached the Hitler Line wire. Thereafter, silence.

Tragedies followed thick and fast. Although the ground had been swept up to the enemy wire deep-sown mines had eluded the detectors; a North Irish Horse tank brewed up before it reached JANUARY. As the Forme d'Aquino shepherded the armour into a narrow corridor the tanks became the target of concealed self-propelled guns. Those disabled continued to fight

on until blown to pieces or set afire. North Irish Horse lost 25 Churchills that day. Major Griffiths, the commanding officer, remained on the battlefield, organizing his remnants and stricken with distress because of his failure to see the infantry through. He and his regiment had done all that men could do.*

Against the advancing Patricias the enemy garrison in Aquino, which was only under diversionary attack, intervened in disastrous fashion. From the right flank the JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH report lines were raked continuously, making it impossible for supports to reach the forward companies. "B" Company, following in its mopping-up role, pushed ahead through the woods; the trees, the standing crops, the dust, smoke and mist reduced visibility to a few yards. Capt. A. M. Campbell and his men eventually reached the enemy wire, where they were brought to a halt by machine-guns firing from cupolas at point blank range. Snipers seemed to be everywhere; on the left enemy tanks could be seen sallying against the Seaforths. Further progress was impossible and "B" Company halted and held its ground, buffeted continuously by artillery, mortar and small arms fire.

For better tactical control Lieut.-Colonel Ware had moved up to FEBRUARY, where he established his headquarters in the shelter of a disabled tank. The enemy, in the words of the War Diary, "was taking pot shots at the tank, knocking pieces off it." Another nearby tank, engaged in casting smoke along the Forme d'Aquino, brewed up and the Patricias' commander was forced to shift before it exploded. Eventually he and his staff found cover in a ditch from whence communications were re-established with Brigade.

Walking wounded began to come back but none could supply detailed information upon what was happening ahead. The leading companies were through the wire and were pinned down; that was the sum of it. During the forenoon the Loyal Edmontons as in terms of the assault plan passed through the reserve company of the Patricias and advanced on the right flank; they came under heavy fire from the outset but gallantly struggled on; they reached the wire and breached it, only to find themselves upon a mine field. Light artillery arrived but could not be brought into action for lack of targets. Dust and smoke cloaked the battlefield and hid the defenders.

* Cpl. R. Armstrong and his section of the Patricia pioneers raised 75 mines under heavy fire to open a lane through which the tanks of North Irish Horse might advance.

Hour after hour the pounding continued. On the Patricias' left the Seaforths momentarily had better fortune; they reached the wire, broke through and gained their first objectives. When their support weapons failed to make their way forward because of the undergrowth enemy tanks counter-attacked. The PIAT sections exhausted their ammunition and the forward Seaforth companies were overrun, shot up and dispersed.

Thus all three battalions of 2nd Brigade only could cling desperately to the few acres they had won, waiting for aid to reach them. It did not arrive. The Patricias' story of this battle therefore resolves into two narratives. There are the minute-by-minute sitreps which are the record of anxious questions from Division, Brigade and even Corps. Lieut.-Colonel Ware, with 22 set and radio operator in the ditch beside him, strives to find answers. Liaison officers and runners go forward and do not return. There is nothing to see; walking wounded bring back black tidings but only in vague terms—map locations, enemy dispositions, everything definite, has escaped them. Everyone knows that the attack has failed; no one is prepared to accept the failure as final. Reinforcements are moving up, new fire programmes are in course of organization, calls for help are being sorted out and accorded the proper priorities. Fresh units of Eighth Army are being redeployed for a new blow. That three battalions have been dispersed, pinned down and perhaps destroyed is regrettable, but they no longer count. The battle belongs to others.

GALLANTRY BEYOND PRAISE

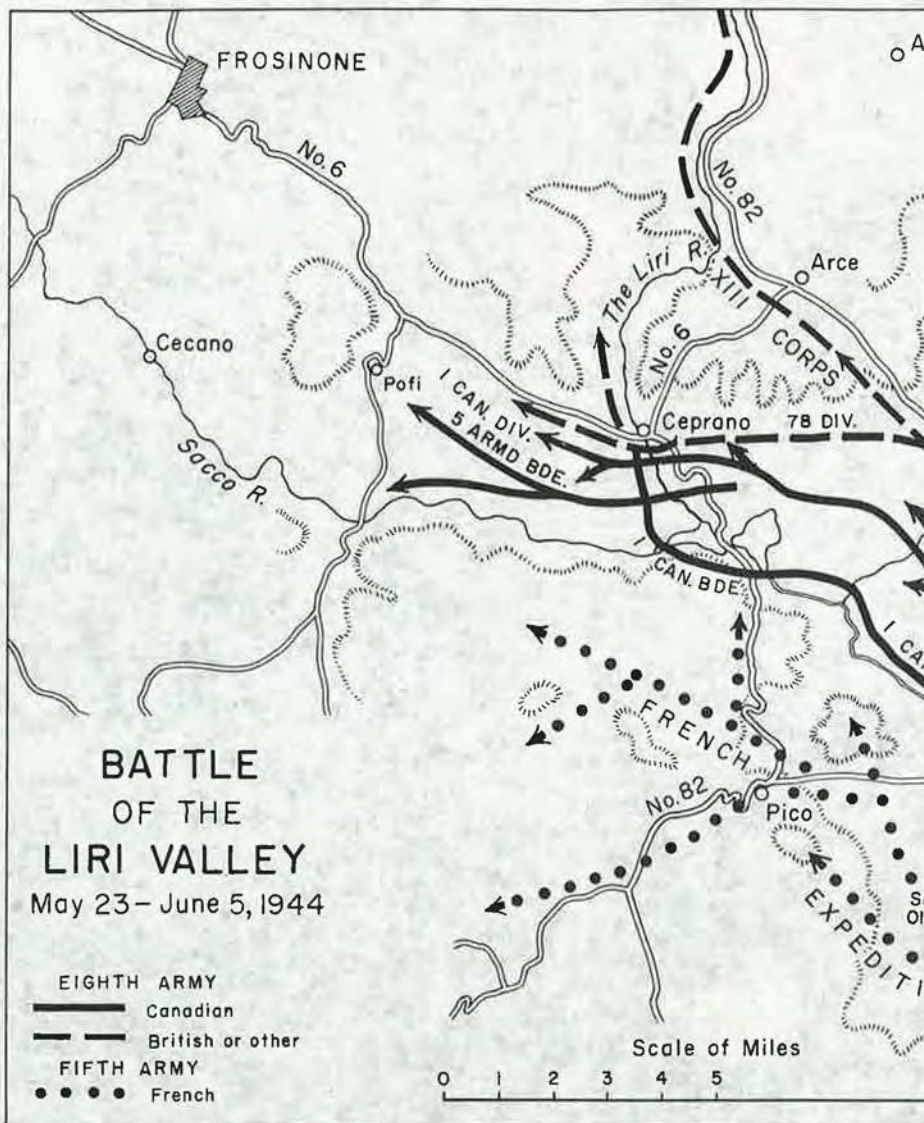
The second story of the day emerges, faultily and with little continuity, out of the personal experiences of the survivors. It is less military history than a collection of tales of how individuals and groups fared. Out of such scattered and partial records, however, there emerge details which blend into a *decor* of courage and tenacity, of fine soldierly bearing and correct behaviour, of endurance, discipline and fidelity to duty in the face of all odds. Prominent in this gallery of gallant figures is the Commanding Officer, who that day so well captained his side. Lieut.-Colonel Ware constantly was on the move, striving to preserve cohesion between his companies, to maintain momentum in the attack and to keep Brigade and Division informed of the situation. He bore a charmed life; again and again men were

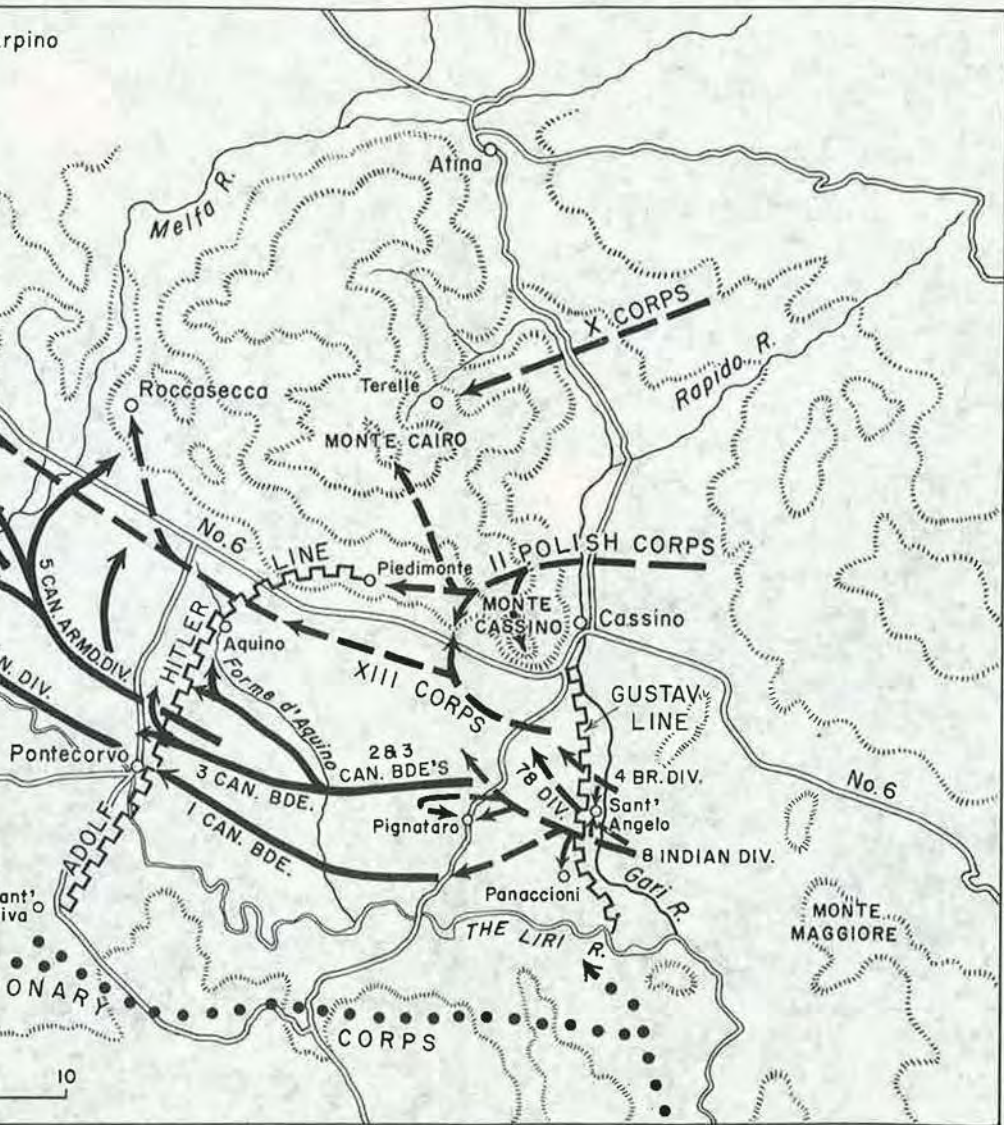
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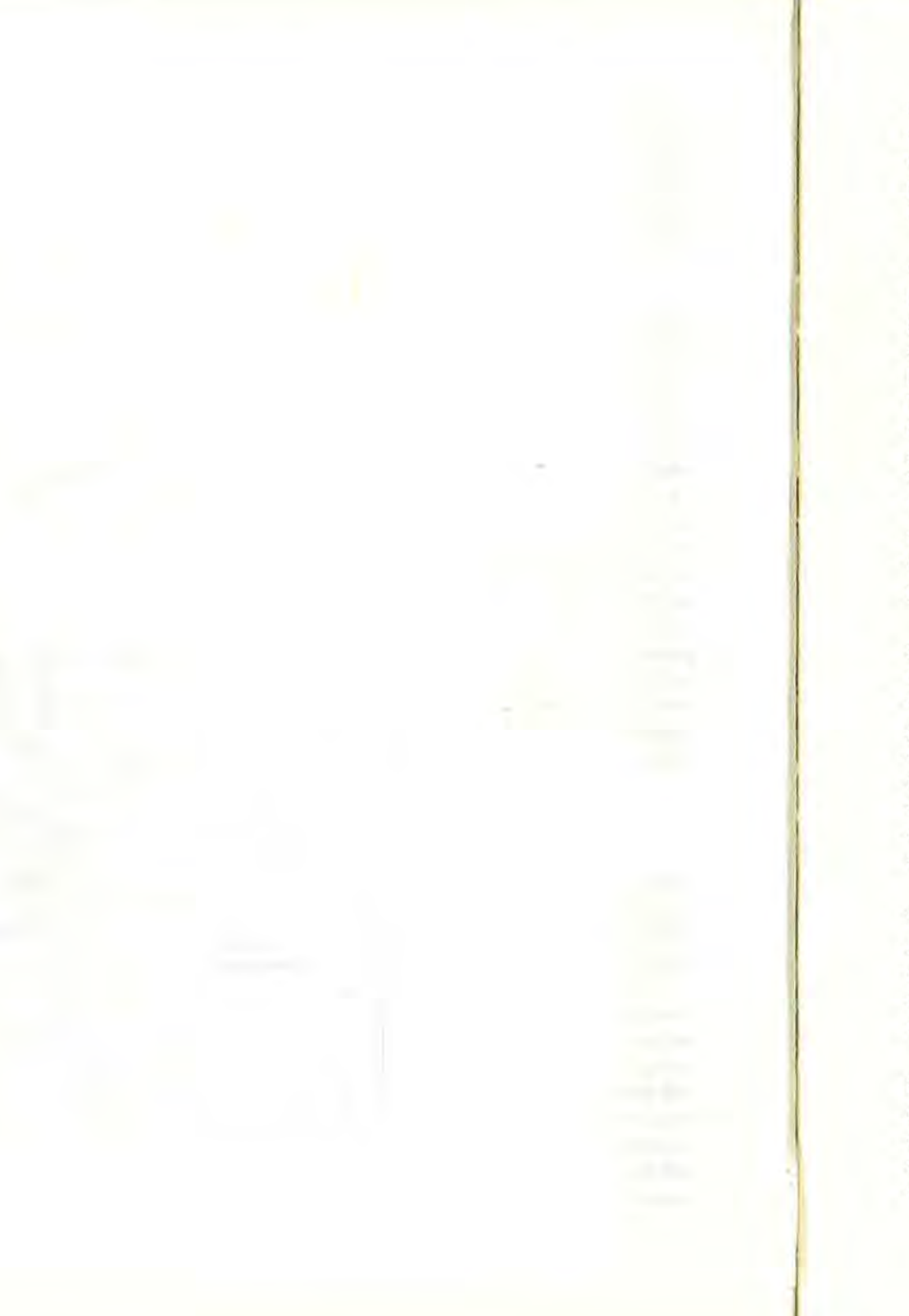


BATTLE
OF THE
LIRI VALLEY
May 13, 1861

Legend:
--- Battle Site
--- River
--- Road
--- Liri Valley







struck down around him. Eventually he was ordered out of action by the Brigade Commander and Major D. H. Rosser took command. That night Lieut.-Colonel Ware's powers of persuasion prevailed and he was allowed to resume command on the following day.

Of the same mould was Major W. deN. Watson, who led "A" Company to splendid failure. "It was difficult to follow the barrage through dense woods," he wrote, "and we soon began to find the wounded of 'C' Company in our path, whereas they should have been on our right. Under heavy fire we reached a large clearing running at right angles to our line of advance. We had not seen our supporting tanks but we knew we had reached the Hitler Line for we could see rows of barbed wire ahead. As soon as we came into the clearing a number of my men were hit. We located the enemy behind a house fifty yards on our left. We could not halt without losing the barrage and we could not advance until we had destroyed this enemy post. We had lost contact with Battalion Headquarters and also with our forward platoons.

"The intense shell fire had drastically reduced our numbers and crossing the two belts of wire took a further toll, as the wire was thickly studded with shrapnel mines. Beyond the wire we came to a tank. Thinking it derelict we paused beside it to gather together the few men who were left. We then discovered our error as the tank started firing the wrong way. The tank crew could not have been aware of our presence and as we had only small arms we could not destroy it. By that time I only had four or five men left. Shortly after leaving the tank I lost all of them except L/Cpl. Amos.

"We stopped in a shellhole to take stock of the situation. Thereafter we set off for our objective—the Aquino-Pontecorvo road. Then L/Cpl. Amos was killed. The objective was quite close so I went on to it. I could find no trace of my men but the enemy was there. By that time I had been wounded twice and realized that the attack had failed."

Throughout the day Major Watson evaded capture and finally settled down in what he describes as a "large and quite comfortable shell hole." That night, thinking that the Patricias or the Loyal Edmontons might have come up, he went forward a second time to the Aquino-Pontecorvo road. He found the enemy still there. Throughout the day he lay doggo in his shell

hole and on the following morning the war diarist recorded joyfully: "Major Watson was located in a shell hole near an 88 mm gun, suffering from a wound in one arm, a piece of his helmet and a schmeiser bullet in his forehead (and a tremendous appetite)."

By the end of the day Capt. A. M. Campbell, who led "B" Company courageously and well, was the only officer of the rifle companies on his feet. As the officers went down or failed to return from their missions non-commissioned officers took over and bore themselves staunchly and well. CSM W. D. Davidson of "B" Company spent a full twelve hours in manifold duties under fire; in that time he searched for and found a lost platoon, stalked and killed a brace of snipers and went out again and again to bring in wounded. Sgt. E. D. Edkins of "C" Company, after being wounded twice in the initial advance, turned over command of his platoon to a corporal in order to stalk and capture a sniper in a camouflaged pit. Sgt. G. L. Dick, after a heavy shoot, found himself in command of "D" Company; he immediately reorganized it with resolution and skill. Sgt. F. Bentham of 14 Platoon, although wounded and with only two men left, continued to attack from shell hole to shell hole and was able to direct the accompanying tanks on to enemy machine-gun nests. Cpl. F. W. Snell fought a duel in the open in which he killed three snipers. When there were no non-commissioned officers left in 12 Platoon Pte. Ian Sangster took command, rallied the men and led an attack against an enemy tank. Thereafter for eight hours he and his small group held their ground against heavy shell fire and repeated assaults.

THE BATTLE IS WON

These acts of valour, glimpsed through rifts in the smoke and dust and casually reported afterwards, were characteristic of the behaviour of men sustained beyond mischance by their quality and training. Theirs was the stuff of victory and although the fortunes of war denied the battalions of 2nd Canadian Brigade the day, near at hand their comrades of 3rd Canadian Brigade turned the trick. On the left of the Seaforths the Carleton and York Regiment punched a hole. 51st Royal Tank Regiment crashed through the fortified zone and at heavy cost held off the enemy until the West Nova Scotia Regiment arrived to man the gap. The battle was all but won; at 1600 hours Lieut.-Colonel Ware, reporting upon the parlous state of the Patricias,

received a cheering message from Brigade: "Hold on. We shall do all we can for you. The Hitler Line has been breached and German transport is streaming north."

At 1630 hours rain began to fall. A few minutes later the artillery of two corps laid a rolling barrage beyond the Carleton and York gap. Royal 22e Regiment and the 12th (Three Rivers) Armoured Regiment passed through and came into action amid what has been described as "a graveyard of burning Churchills"—the price of victory paid by 51st Royal Tank Regiment. The panzer grenadiers, flushed from their shelters, tried to rally, were caught in the open and shot down. 1st Canadian Brigade, pushing up from the southwest, overran Pontecorvo. The enemy clung desperately to Aquino but by dawn on May 24th 5th Canadian Armoured Division was through the Hitler Line and was exploiting up the Liri valley. 6th British Armoured Division passed through on its heels.

At nightfall on May 23rd the Patricias drew together, 77 strong, at MARCH report line. Three officers were known to be dead, five were wounded and four were missing. The area still was under searching fire and the situation beyond the Forme d'Aquino was fluid; during the night 90th Anti-Tank Regiment brought up its guns to protect this open flank. Throughout May 24th men who had been cut off or pinned down reported in. About 50 in all returned from "A" and "C" Companies, some from well beyond the Hitler Line. It was dangerous to move about and there were a number of casualties from 'S' mines; CSM W. D. Davidson, who had been a tower of strength on the previous day, was killed while bringing in wounded. Diehard nests of the enemy continued to snipe at the stretcher parties; fighting patrols covering the rescue workers rooted out the last rearguards. On the evening of the 25th the enemy, under pressure of British troops advancing along Highway 6, abandoned Aquino.

When the tally was complete the cost of the battle to the Patricias was found to be 3 officers and 55 other ranks killed, 5 officers and 157 other ranks wounded, 2 officers and 25 other ranks missing.

DEFECTS IN PREPARATION

These losses were not unduly high. That they might have been lower is scarcely open to question. The lesson of this operation

was that there cannot be too much forethought or too much preparation given to a set-piece battle in the modern manner. Had there been a firmer plan from the beginning; had it been better rehearsed; had there been better co-ordinated reconnaissances; had the tanks been held out of action until the infantry had pinpointed the anti-tank defenses; had the artillery programme been more flexible; had the cleansing of fouled ground by the mine-detectors been more thorough; had more use been made of smoke; above all else, had there been more radio sets and had they been more reliable, the Hitler Line, shallow in depth and undermanned, might have been carried at the first onset. The casualties, therefore, were in considerable degree attributable to faulty preparations and perhaps to an under-estimation of the defensive abilities of skilled enemies ensconced in field fortifications.*

On the morning of May 26th a voluntary parade brought many of the Patricia survivors to Massa Taversa for the simple and moving ceremony of dedication of the Liri cemetery of 2nd Canadian Brigade. That afternoon the Battalion moved three miles to the southwest and bivouacked on the opposite side of the Liri. Here the tasks of reorganization began—absorption of drafts, promotions, transfers and the other processes necessary to blend old hands and newcomers into the familiar Regimental mould.

ADVANCE TO FROSINONE

The respite was short, for at the top of the Liri Valley the enemy was strongly disputing the last mountainous terrain on the road to Rome. 11th Infantry Brigade of 5th Canadian Armoured Division needed help so on the afternoon of May 29th the Patricias embussed and followed Route 82 into the northwest. "It was a lovely evening drive through new country rich in grain and other crops," says the War Diary. To the south of Pofi the Battalion settled down for the night. Here it was learned that 11th Brigade had not yet received its orders to hand over. 2nd Brigade therefore decided to push ahead, clearing the countryside of enemy pockets to the south of Frosinone.

Pofi, a compact town clustered around its peak and only accessible by a switchback road, had been captured by the

* Major W. deN. Watson comments: "I am not in complete agreement with the foregoing summary. In my humble opinion the major fault was a plan which called for a tank-infantry attack through heavy woods and following a barrage. This was contrary to all tactical principles and the soundness of such principles was shown by the failure of the plan."

Perth Regiment on the previous evening. From the small piazza of the village Frosinone, a large-size duplicate of Pofi, could be clearly seen six miles to the north. Next morning, hoping to continue the advance on wheels, the Patricias turned into the west along a secondary route to Cecano, the point of contact of the Canadian Corps and the French Corps Expeditionnaire. The road, however, had been mined and the Frenchmen had been thrown out of Cecano. There was no other route forward for vehicles; with three corps crowding through upon the same axis traffic jams had slowed the pursuit to a walk. A military historian has written:

"Our divisions lay locked in stupid conflict for the right of way. Traffic in the overcrowded, mined and cratered valley had been difficult from the moment our dogged infantry had broken the bloody door and entered. Now traffic became impossible; it ceased to move. Vehicles and idle guns stood nose to petrol-smelling tail in helpless confusion, while officers of all degree swore horribly in impotent wrath and weary huddled soldiers gave their fatigue an aspect of philosophy by sleeping while they could."*

Faced with such chaos the Patricias abandoned their vehicles and took to the wooded trails which led northward across the valleys and ridges. They had no food in their haversacks, for their Quartermaster's vehicles were marooned in the traffic jam. Throughout the warm, overcast day they plodded steadily forward, tightening their belts at the halts. At 1800 hours they emerged from the undergrowth to cross the road which linked Cecano with Highway 6. Here outposts of the Irish Regiment of Canada (11th Brigade) reported contacts with the enemy. Soon afterward "B" Company while crossing high ground was greeted by mortar, machine-gun and small arms fire. The advance was halted until nightfall; during the evening the companies leapfrogged ahead without encountering more than token resistance. After the usual confusion attendant upon a night movement the Battalion came up on the left of the Loyal Edmontons and all ranks went to bed supperless.

At 0600 hours next morning it was discovered that "D" Company had strayed. A delay ensued until Major Crofton and his men were found. The Patricias worked ahead over high ridges and along the narrow valley of the Capobarrile river. "It was a

* "The Campaign in Italy"—Eric Linklater. (H.M. Stationery Office.)

pleasant march," says the War Diary, "through cultivated fields, orchards and vineyards. Many were so hungry they pulled up potatoes and ate them raw." The Brigade plan called for Patricias and Loyal Edmontons to close upon Frosinone and to provide a firm base from which the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada would attack the town. At 0945 hours the Battalion moving across country reached Highway 6, a thousand yards south of Frosinone. The Patricias dug in on both sides of the road. The event of the day was a hot meal at mid-day, rations having arrived after a thirty-six hour fast.

That afternoon the Loyal Edmontons sent a patrol into Frosinone. It did not return. A Patricia patrol which entered the town was fired on. The traffic had thinned out somewhat and early next morning the Seaforths came forward in troop carriers, under orders to by-pass Frosinone and to cut Highway 6 beyond the town. It later transpired that these orders were intended to be applicable also to the Patricias and the Loyal Edmontons, but owing to a coding error the latter battalions had occupied positions well short of their assigned objectives. The Seaforths passed through and after a short, sharp fight (which included a most satisfying ambush of a German convoy) cut the enemy line of escape.

On the morning of June 1st the Loyal Edmontons occupied Frosinone. The Patricias passed through and joined the Seaforths in covering positions beyond it. Such groups of the enemy as remained at liberty were on the run in the hills. Many had been found in the mood to surrender; they were second line troops and rather poor stuff; the Patricia diarist commented:

"We have been using air support considerably in the last few days, most of the targets being based on information gained from prisoners of war. If one did not appreciate the peculiar quality of the German Army's discipline, in which everything is based on the efficiency of the commander, one would be shocked at the indifference of these prisoners towards any harm which may result to their late comrades from the information they give away."*

Frosinone was the end of the battle for the Patricias. The disposition map was tidy, all elements were in place and all missions accomplished. Early in June the North Irish Horse

* During the last stage of the pursuit one prisoner of war volunteered to direct fire upon the German positions. According to the Brigade Diary "he was used to good effect."

arrived in the neighborhood and at once sought out their friends. The tankmen were quite unshaken by their ordeal on the Liri; they were in roaring form for they had been briefed for the pursuit to the north. The Patricias saw them off the premises in two of the best parties of the war. The account of the officers' celebration doubtless reflects the atmosphere, for it is hazy. There is mention that the Irishmen brought their own brands of whisky with them, that the night rang with many things, that the tank officers were carried shoulder-high to their scout cars and that they departed with a view halloo to seek the enemy in the dawn; that a set of false teeth was left behind on top of the Patricias' piano. The other party, given for Patricia non-commissioned officers in the tank sergeants' mess, was more seemly; according to the War Diary:

"After the excellent meal hillbilly melodies followed Irish ballads in rapid succession and 'Shiny Second Brigade' vied with 'McNamara's Band' for volume and gusto. For the hundredth time the discussion developed around the relative merits of Churchill and Sherman tanks. The evening contributed greatly to the cementing of the close comradeship that has grown between our Regiment and the North Irish Horse."*

At Frosinone the axis of advance of Eighth Army divided, with XIII Corps swinging north into the Tiburtini hills to the east of Rome and the Canadian Corps continuing to the west along Highway 6. The Canadians, however, were forestalled by the rapid advance of VI U.S. Corps from the Anzio bridgehead. On June 2nd the American vanguard reached Valmontone, halfway between Frosinone and Rome; thereafter the enemy melted away. At dawn on June 4th jeep-borne reconnaissance groups from Fifth Army saw the high skyline of the Eternal City before them.

At Anagni, 13 miles beyond Frosinone, the Canadian Corps sounded the recall. On June 5th its divisions reverted into Army reserve. They had driven the enemy before them for upwards of 40 miles and it seemed hard to be denied an entry into Rome. There was solace, however, in the great news which came over the radio next morning. British, United States and Canadian divisions were ashore in Normandy and the war was moving irrevocably towards utter victory.

* This fine unit cherishes the memory of its service with the Canadians. In May 1956 Major A. R. Aylmer, in a letter to the Patricia historian, wrote: "On May 24th 1944 Brigadier Gibson honoured the Regiment by requesting the burial of North Irish Horse dead in 2nd Canadian Brigade cemetery. We wore maple leaves throughout the campaign and continue to do so."

On June 16th the Colonel-in-Chief wrote to Lieut.-Colonel Ware:

“The account you give me of the magnificent achievements of the Regiment in the breaking of the Hitler Line has filled me with pride and I am deeply stirred over the courage and heroism of everyone. This action must rank with the greatest things in the glorious annals of my Regiment since its formation. It is so splendid to know that superb qualities of leadership and devotion exist. I do congratulate you and all under your command on your achievements.”

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE GOTHIC LINE

The loss of Rome and the establishment of an Anglo-American bridgehead in Normandy might have induced the Germans to limit their commitments. A withdrawal to the wall of the Alps would have released Kesselring's armies, comprising twenty first-class divisions and seven or eight others of moderate quality, for service elsewhere. Relatively small enemy forces could have blocked the Riviera gateway to France, the Caporetto and Brenner routes into Austria and the Ljubljana gap into Yugoslavia.

By this time, however, Hitler as supreme dictator of German strategy was veering towards a megalomania indistinguishable from paranoia. In his mind were the darkling Nibelungian images of complete destruction; if Germany must burn, the world would perish in the conflagration. As a result he ordered Kesselring to stand fast and to prepare defenses from sea to sea on either side of the great central keep of mountains which covered the Po valley. Even before the Allied forces had begun to follow up the German rearguards the Todt organization had impressed a strong force of Italian labour to rush this new line to completion. Orders went out to the retiring German units that they must exact a heavy price for every point of vantage on the road to the north.

REST AT PIEDIMONTE D'ALIFE

For the time being such decisions were of little moment to the Canadian Corps. On its recall from pursuit it had been allotted a reserve area in the valley of the Volturno to the southeast of Cassino; 2nd Canadian Brigade had drawn the Piedimonte d'Alife sub-area. On June 7th, while all were cheered by the news of the consolidation of the Normandy bridgeheads, the Battalion embussed and was borne southward along Highway 6 and across the Liri battlefield. Around Aquino a good many knocked-out panzers and nebelwerfers were seen. Of the focal point of the fighting the Patricia diarist wrote:

"We approached Cassino at dusk. It was probably the most desolate and complete scene of destruction that the Regiment had

ever seen. The town was razed, not an intact room remaining in any building and scarcely a whole wall anywhere. The only way of identifying the famous Continental Hotel was by a sign painted in grim irony 'Hotel Continental—Now Under New Management.' Streets were unrecognizable in the general ruins of brick and plaster; the rubble piles were heavily mined and booby-trapped. It was a city of the dead with not a living movement to be seen; even the rats are said to have left this doomed area. Over its waste lay scummy water from the burst irrigation ditches of the Garigliano."*

It was past midnight when the Patricias arrived in their new area. Next morning all ranks were busy on the construction of a hillside camp. They had occupied high ground to the north of the Volturno in an Italianate landscape reminiscent of the quattrocento painters—small hillside towns, winding roads, glades, spinneys and ploughed fields, with villages as compact as fortresses upon the crests of the ridges. The Patricias had arrived on a feast day (Corpus Domini) and the streets of Piedimonte d'Alife were thronged with gaily dressed countryfolk. The local band serenaded the troops and the lively atmosphere prompted the officers to start work immediately on a mess, which when completed consisted largely of 'liberated' materials—awnings from captured German tanks and a bar built out of the metal strips used by the enemy to outline emergency landing fields. Leave was opened to Salerno and Rome; officers and men were given permission to visit their friends in 14th and 15th Canadian General Hospitals at Caserta. Officer patients there were Major W. deN. Watson, Capt. L. G. Elhatton and Lieut. R. D. Browne-Clayton. The latter officer had been wounded and captured in the Liri battle and had escaped from an ambulance convoy when it was beaten up by aircraft while en route to northern Italy.

In mid-June the weather broke and torrential rains all but washed the Patricias' encampment from the hillside. Sports had become the order of the day; Patricia athletes had passed from Regimental to Brigade and Divisional meets and had continued to do well. The Drums under Sgt. J. B. Mackie had been reorganized and the Patricias had reached the finals of the Corps baseball tournament. Training had begun at what was described as

* There are two misleading references in the above quotation. The "Continental Hotel" which the Patricia diarist saw on Highway 6 was not the scene of the bitter fighting between paratroopers and New Zealanders; an earlier Continental Hotel stood on the slopes of Monte Cassino above the town. The river at Cassino was not the Garigliano but the Rapido.

an easy pace; the mountain sides and peaks, however, proved too much of a lure to the Officer in Charge of Training (Major R. P. Clark); Capt. H. W. Mulherin, coach of the Patricia track team was forced to complain about the "knotted muscles and stiff legs" which would prejudice Battalion prospects in ensuing competitions. The Training Officer, however, was hard-hearted and by the fourth week of June all ranks were engrossed with long climbs, water crossings and pursuit schemes. 145th Royal Tank Regiment was encamped nearby; the British officers and men often joined the Patricias in work and play.

LIEUT.-COLONEL WARE LEAVES

On June 29th Lieut.-Colonel Ware, due for long leave and other employment, said goodbye in terse soldierly terms. "I have commanded this Regiment, which is one of the greatest honours that can befall any man, through all its battles in the Italian campaign. I am going to leave you. I shall be going on a protracted leave to Cairo and other places. I am handing over to Major D. H. Rosser and I hope you will give him all the support that you have given me." He was sped upon his way with roaring cheers but there was a catch in many throats, for Lieut.-Colonel Ware had been the very body of the Regiment throughout his period of command and his loss was equivalent to that of an essential member. Major R. P. Clark stepped up to Second-in-Command.

Dominion Day was celebrated by a ceremonial parade of 2nd Canadian Brigade on the San Angelo airstrip, at which GOC I Canadian Corps, Lieut.-General E. L. M. Burns OBE MC, took the salute. The Brigade marched past in column of companies. The remainder of the day was holiday; the cool waters of the Volturno were dotted with bathers. That evening Patricia officers entertained groups of British, South African and Canadian nurses from nearby hospitals.

On July 3rd orders arrived for intensified mountain training. Deployments and maintenance schemes on a manpack and mulepack basis were organized; the 'marrying' of infantry and support arms for attacks over high ground and on hillsides received special attention. On July 7th the Patricias, together with their friends of 145th Royal Tank Regiment, rolled out at 0400 hours and took to the hills in VULCAN exercise. Smoke and live ammunition were used and the scheme involved a water crossing; not

for the first time it was discovered that it was easier to carry out manoeuvres on paper than over stiff countryside. On July 9th came *TIMEOUT*, a Corps scheme which involved quick movements and traffic control. General Vokes took a great interest in these exercises and was constantly on hand; the appearance of Brigadier Gibson upon a chestnut charger drew a startled comment from the Regimental diarist. His nerves were further unstrung on the evening of July 14th when "C" Company loosed off a *feu de joie* around Battalion Headquarters; the object (it was said) was to practise a night attack. In the middle of the month the Patricias took time out for forty-eight hours at the seaside. They enjoyed a glorious loaf in clear hot weather on the beaches around Mandragone, a village thirty miles north of Naples.

On July 19th all ranks were at work again. They turned out at 0200 hours to practise a dawn attack. Two days later they were committed to *HILLBILLY*, one of their most arduous exercises of the war. It was a Brigade scheme high in the mountains around Pietra Roya, about twelve miles to the northeast of Piedimonte d'Alife, in an area in which the retiring Germans had destroyed the roads and bridges. The Patricias advanced on a cross-country axis served only by a damaged jeep trail while the enemy, enacted by the Loyal Edmontons, held commanding ground along the line of advance. All day under a burning sun the hillside battles continued, with the climactic task the scaling of a cliff in late afternoon. Both Brigade and Divisional appreciations emphasized the rigour of the Patricias' task and the exemplary manner in which it was completed.

THE NEW FRONT

It now was time for 1st Canadian Division to catch up with the war. After the fall of Rome the enemy had withdrawn for more than two hundred miles into the Tuscan and Umbrian highlands, conforming on the Adriatic coast by a retreat along the foreshore to the neighbourhood of Ancona. In the third week of June, however, resistance had stiffened and it became apparent that the German High Command proposed to compel the Anglo-American forces to fight for the great block of rugged tableland which lay between Perugia and Florence. The high ground and heavily wooded ridges which stood above the upper Arno and Tiber valleys commanded the principal northering

roads; until the enemy had been driven from these crests approach to the German Apennine positions would be difficult. Fighting had begun in the Assisi area as early as June 15th. A month later the attacking forces, slowly gaining momentum, had begun to threaten Florence. The Allied planners now were able to think once more in terms of an integrated enemy front.

For Eighth Army the new operations presented peculiar problems. It now was responsible for three-quarters of the Italian front, for Fifth U.S. Army had lost seven divisions to Seventh U.S. Army, assembling for the invasion of Southern France. Furthermore, it now was known that one of the reasons for Hitler's refusal to withdraw from Italy was the value of Italian machines; hundreds of factories in the industrial north were running twenty-four hours a day on German orders. As a result it could be accepted that Kesselring would cling obstinately to the east-west mountain barrier to the north of Florence. Confronted with this great natural fortress the eyes of the Allied planning staff turned again to the Adriatic. If by means of a surprise attack along that foreshore the enemy front could be pierced, it might be possible to swing behind the mountain line, drive on Bologna, trap the defenders on the high ground and in one swoop put paid to the German account in Italy.

Such a plan took shape soon after the fall of Rome. In mid-July it was communicated under most rigid security precautions to the higher levels of Eighth Army. Within ten days the rear ranks were talking about it. On July 26th the *Patricias' War Diary* speaks intriguingly of "a super-security drive which has been inaugurated throughout the Division. It is earnestly hoped that by conscious efforts on the part of every officer and man the formation will lose its obvious racial habits and conform to those practised by English divisions and in so doing will fool the enemy spies and agents." (One corporal is alleged to have asked his sergeant if there would be an issue of monocles.)

The plan for the rupture of the Adriatic front depended upon surprise; the blow must fall while the Germans believed the bulk of Eighth Army to be on the opposite side of the Apennines. In June, when the enemy withdrew from the Pescara area, the last British and Indian divisions had left the Adriatic and the Polish Corps together with certain Italian formations had assumed responsibility for that front. The first move in the

new battle therefore must be to convince the enemy that he was still facing the Poles and Italians and none other to the east of the Apennines.

THE COVER PLAN

To this end Eighth Army embarked upon an intricate deception plan. In its early stages the brunt of this operation was borne by those unsung heroes, the regimental tailors and painters. Flashes and patches came down and new ones went up; or else shoulders remained bare of insignia; on vehicles and impedimenta identity signs were scoured out and others painted in. Among all ranks there grew a passion for anonymity. Some units changed their flashes as much as four times; the Indian divisions, the last Commonwealth troops to leave the Adriatic front, shifted their British battalions to other formations; a Pathan battalion from the Northwest Frontier of India joined 6th South African Armoured Division and remained with it for the rest of the war. By wireless indiscretions, by exchanges of code names, by a score of devices which must remain dark, the Allies sought to gull the enemy and to lull him into complacency.

In pursuance of this plan the Patricias on the morning of July 27th underwent rigorous inspection in order to be certain that no man's mark remained upon them. Next morning they embussed at dawn. The convoy made its way back to Highway 6 and turned north through now familiar countryside. After a breakfast break near Frosinone the column continued to the staging post at Ost Finocchio, a few miles south of Rome. 130 miles had been covered. Next morning the convoy passed through the Italian capital and took the Flaminian Way along the Tiber and into the rolling uplands of central Italy. Near Trevi, after a trek of 95 miles, the Patricias bivouacked, with rigid orders to allow neither bodies nor vehicles to move during daylight. They remained in this encampment for two days, which were notable only for a thunderstorm which drenched everyone and for a Quiz Contest in which the Warrant Officers out-brained the Officers.

On August 1st the column was on the roads again. By circuitous routes it made its way northward to the west of Lake Trasimene, where it bivouacked near Castiglione del Lago, one of the principal Umbrian summer resorts. On the next day the red herring trail continued; moving into the west the Patricias

passed through the ancient city of Siena and found camp at Fontebicci on its northern outskirts. Here another halt was called, such as would be natural for troops moving up to a battlefield.

On August 5th the Patricias put up their flashes and patches, that the enemy might know where they were. That night they moved across the Chianti wine country and debussed in the early hours of the morning at Casselina, four miles to the west of the great and famous city of Florence. A South African brigade made way to permit Canadian participation in an international sector. Within a few miles British, United States, Indian, South African and New Zealand troops were facing the common enemy.

IN THE LINE AT FLORENCE

The Patricias' sector was a mile to the south and two miles to the west of the centre of Florence. It lay in the low ground of the Arno valley and was overlooked by the higher north bank of the river; the tall buildings afforded the enemy excellent observation. Florence was garrisoned by the tough men of 4th Parachute Division, veterans of Crete, Anzio and Leros; in the back streets and on the roof-tops Fascists and partisans fought a secondary war of their own. All the Arno bridges had been destroyed except the beautiful Ponte Vecchio, which had been blocked by demolitions at either end. The enemy, well aware that he could not hold Florence indefinitely and believing a major offensive to be imminent, was in surly mood. Every night his paratroopers were out looking for trouble. They had many lairs in the suburbs to the south of the river and they bitterly resented efforts to oust them.

The four Patricia rifle companies occupied individual but inter-supporting positions a few hundred yards south of the Arno, with "A" Company on the left at Solacciano, "B" Company at Ugnano, "C" Company close at hand at San Central and "D" Company at Mantignano, near the outlet of the canal which encircles the city. The first night was quiet, but throughout August 6th company positions were shelled; as arranged by the planners the arrival of new troops had been revealed and the Germans proceeded to extend a rough welcome. That night a number of Patricia patrols endeavoured to cross the Arno; all were unsuccessful. On the following day the shelling grew heavier and "B" Company in a clash with a German patrol sustained a

number of casualties. This company's position on the river bank at Ugnano was a focal point of enemy pressure; at 2200 hours on August 7th all companies stood to on a report that Capt. Campbell and his men were surrounded. Several extensive fire-fights broke out and the Canadian artillery intervened, with armoured cars of Royal Canadian Dragoons moving into close support. Shortly after midnight "C" Company was ordered to clear "B" Company's flank and to push the enemy back to the line of the river. This operation was completed in a series of scrimmages at a cost of five casualties.

THE FALSE TRAIL

Next morning the scissors and the needles were in play and the tailors and painters were busy once more. A false trail had been laid and it was time for the Canadians to melt into the landscape. The Patricias, when relieved that evening by 1/12 Frontier Force Regiment of 8th Indian Division, embussed and were borne southward through the night to their former staging point at Fontebicci. Next afternoon they turned northwest by way of Highway 73 to Arezzo, a picturesque walled town on a knoll in the centre of the upper Arno valley. They then made their way southeast over the rolling Umbrian countryside and along the northern shore of Lake Trasimene. Night—thunderous and showery—had fallen when the column wound up the hillside, through the lovely city of Perugia and down into the plain again. Eight miles to the south the Patricias debussed to the drear discomforts of a bivouac in the rain.

This encampment area, served by a side road and remote from all but minor hamlets, was destined to be home for ten days. The wheels of the grand plan were turning; the onus for success now had passed to the combatant formations; from corps to platoon the battle-to-be depended upon the ability of the cogs to mesh properly—to keep up to the time-table, to 'marry' in complete harmony with support arms, to be quick and flexible in decision and in action.

August 12th was a day of good news. On the previous night the enemy had evacuated Florence. The morning radio declared that in Normandy First Canadian Army was at the point of trapping twenty German divisions at Falaise. A no less acceptable item was contained in the home news. All Canadian volunteers, said a dispatch from Ottawa, would receive a cash bonus at the conclusion of hostilities.

On the following day at Brigade Headquarters Patricia officers examined a large sand model of a rolling landscape intersected by a river. Ostensibly it was designed for exercises in the coming week; in point of fact it was an exact reproduction of an area on either side of the Metauro river nine miles inland from the Adriatic coast. Here the drive to the north would take off and in this sector the Canadian Corps would be committed. Of the lie of this new battlefield the Topographical Section of Eighth Army had reported:

"The area consists of a narrow coastal strip (not over fifteen miles in width) which gradually rises into a belt of uplands country. Behind the uplands there is an abrupt transition to the Apennines proper, which rise like a wall behind its foothills. A series of rivers whose general flow is in an easterly or north-easterly direction crosses this foreshore tract. Road communications generally run east and west; communications north and south are poor but for the coastal road. Except for an eight-mile strip between Pesaro and Cattolica, where hills up to 500 feet rise directly from the coast, there is a narrow coastal plain varying from 600 yards to two miles in width. Five miles inland the ground rises gradually to 500 feet or more. The gentle slopes of the hills make movements across country easy except when the ground is wet and greasy with snow or rain."

THE BATTLE PLAN—DOUBTS AND SURMISES

General Alexander's directive laid down as the purposes of the new battle "to drive the enemy out of the Apennine positions and to exploit to the general line of the lower Po." To this instruction was added, as though in afterthought, "inflicting the maximum losses on the enemy in the process." A good many combatant officers wondered if this tailpiece was not the root of the matter. To anyone who could read a map it seemed obvious that the proposed plan of battle, which contemplated a breach of a fortified system and mobile warfare beyond it, was based on wishful thinking. From the Metauro to the Po was more than a hundred miles as the crow flies. There was nearly a score of water lines between the two rivers; if the enemy could stand on one of them he was apt to stand on any or all of them. On such terrain it was difficult to imagine a dozen divisions dashing ahead at breakneck speed, encircling and destroying an enemy skilled in field fortifications and noted for his ability to think and to move quickly.

Nor was there unbounded faith in the surprise factor. On arrival at the new encampment, what is described in the Patricia War Diary as a "super-security blitz" had gone into effect. Local laundresses were not allowed to collect washing; Canadian cigarettes must not be offered to civilians; anonymity was the watchword. Yet everyone knew that in Italy it was next to impossible to keep secrets. Thousands of Italians had been conscripted by the Todt organization and in the mountainous country nothing could prevent them from moving about. As a result the most devious routings, the cleverest deceptions, availed little and it seemed doubtful, even at that time, if any security measures could achieve more than momentary surprise. It now is known that the German formations on the Adriatic had almost complete knowledge of what was in preparation for them. According to an official historian: "German generals daily advised their commanders concerning the progress of Eighth Army preparations and combatant officers gave their men approximate dates, exhorting them to meet the shock manfully. A battalion commander of a Jaeger division was able to supply his subalterns with intimate details of the Allied formations as soon as they arrived at the front."*

There were at least as many German as Allied hirelings among the civilian population and the best (indeed the only) profitable form of security for attacking formations was to arrive before they were expected. The weak point of the enemy was his arrogance, not his lack of information.

On August 14th the Patricias moved out to practise a silent river crossing. The Corps Commander was on hand to observe. Two companies crossed and established a bridgehead while the others seized adjoining high ground. On the following day the Army Commander (Lieut.-General Sir Oliver Leese KCB CBE DSO) arrived to inspect the Division and to compliment all ranks. That evening the Patricia officers were At Home to old friends of North Irish Horse, who had encamped nearby.

ACROSS THE APENNINES

By the third week of August the shift towards the Adriatic had become pronounced and the Polish Corps with two divisions forward began to harass German rearguards and to force the

* "The Tiger Triumphs" (H.M. Stationery Office). It also is stated in this history that the Royal Air Force was so well advised of events behind the German lines that on two occasions when a German general gave a garden party his premises were bombed as soon as the guests arrived.

pace of the enemy withdrawal along the seacoast. 1st and 5th Canadian Divisions were ready to move across the Apennines and to come up on the Polish left flank. 21st Army Tank Brigade would move under command of 1st Canadian Division. V Corps, five divisions strong, would cross on another axis to occupy a position on the Canadian left. 46th British Division would lead this advance, with 4th Indian Division on its Apennine flank. As immediate reserves there were 1st British Armoured Division, 4th and 56th British Infantry Divisions, 10th Indian Division, 2nd New Zealand Division, two Army tank brigades, 3rd Greek Mountain Brigade and CIL Gruppo, an Italian formation which had been blooded on the lower Adriatic.

When 1st Canadian Division began to slip away from the Perugia area it took the long way around, both as a deception measure and in order to leave the shorter trans-Apennine highways to the heavier traffic of V Corps. On the evening of August 18th the Patricias piled into their troop carriers. The convoy moved south along the Flaminian Way to Foligno and thereafter followed Highway 76 across the rolling ridges into the northeast. When a hundred miles on good roads had been traversed the column turned due north at Jesi and followed a jeep track built by Canadian sappers. After slowly negotiating eleven miles a halt was called at Ostra Vetera, a remote hamlet in the foothills twelve miles south of the Metauro river. When slit trenches had been dug and camouflaged all ranks were given a hot meal before sleep.

There followed five days in which everyone lay low, loafing in the hot sunshine and grateful for the sea breezes which came over the ridges from the Adriatic. On August 22nd operational maps were issued to company commanders and the Divisional plan of battle was divulged. 1st Canadian Division would advance to the Metauro behind a masking brigade of Polish troops. The river would be crossed simultaneously by the Canadians and by 46th British Division, with the Poles in the coastal sector conforming to the Canadian advance.

THE NEW BATTLEFIELD

Ten miles from the sea the Metauro at this time of the year was no more than a trickle in a wide bed of sand and shingle. Here 1st Canadian Division would cross on a two-brigade, four-battalion front, with 1st Brigade on the right and 2nd Brigade on

the inner flank. On 2nd Brigade's front the river flowed to the south, then to the east, then back to the north, almost a rectangle; these meanders gave the troops advancing from the south the river on both flanks. The Patricias drew the task of crossing within the confines of this loop. The Royal Canadian Regiment would be on their right, the Loyal Edmonton Regiment on their left. 145th Royal Tank Regiment would support them. The artillery of three corps had been enrolled in a flexible fire programme which could deluge any sector of the front with an annihilating weight of metal.

On the night of August 24th the Patricias, moving by companies, set off into the north along a secondary track. It proved to be a gruelling march not only because of the heat and the bad surfaces but also because artillery units were moving up along the same track, with consequent confusion and congestion. It took eight hours to cover what on the map shows as eight miles; by actual line of march it probably was twice that distance. By 0300 hours all companies had arrived at Barchi, five miles to the south of the Metauro; in this area they bivouacked under whatever cover was available. Every endeavour was made to conceal their presence but apparently without success, as "D" Company's area was shelled accurately on the following afternoon.

THE BATTLE OPENS

August 25th dawned hot and dry and clear; it was only towards evening that cool breezes came from the sea. As soon as night closed the companies fell in and trudged off. From the north came the occasional rumble of shellfire and the faraway and hesitant stutter of enemy machine guns. By 2230 hours the Patricias had reached the river. It had no banks of importance; the river-bed was perhaps 400 yards in width with a small and easily-fordable stream in the centre. As soon as deployment had been completed "A" Company (Major E. W. Cutbill), "B" Company (Major C. M. McDougall) and "C" Company (Major S. A. Cobbett) crossed the river silently and steadily. There was no alarm and the leading platoons moved forward until they were on firm ground about 500 yards short of the lateral highway which followed the north bank of the river.

At 2259 hours the southern sky flared with the simultaneous flashes of hundreds of guns. A wall of smoke and flame began to march into the north; it engulfed the small hamlets of Serrungarina and Saltara, a mile beyond the lateral highway. The shoot

moved forward at the rate of 100 yards in every six minutes; it was very accurate and the leading companies followed it closely without danger. No resistance was encountered on the way to Serrungarina, the first Patricia objective, and casualties consisted of three men injured by 'schu' mines on the riverbanks. (The commander's jeep had been blown up at the crossing, but its sole occupant, the Signals Officer (Lieut J. Rachlis) had escaped with a severe shaking.) Seven dazed prisoners, boys in their teens, had been picked up.

The ease of the operation astonished everyone. The long period of preparation, the deception plan, the emphasis upon the surprise factor, the rumours concerning the formidable fortifications of the Gothic Line, had led to expectations of a stiff encounter. Such anticipations arose out of a miscalculation of enemy intentions. The German commanders were well aware of the ability of Eighth Army to blast them out of any prepared position. They therefore had nothing to gain by standing fast and fighting it out. They saw themselves as swift and agile, Eighth Army as ponderous and slow. They would utilize as few troops as possible and count on their mobility and field fortifications to exact a price for the loss of ground. When the time came that there was more at stake they would not hesitate to commit larger forces; but at the opening of the battle a rearguard screen was all that they deemed to be necessary.

Nevertheless neither for the first nor for the last time in the war the Germans had underestimated their opponents. Eighth Army had moved more quickly than they had expected and had attacked before they were ready. Two rather frayed enemy divisions were in course of relief on the very evening when the attack opened on the Metauro. Two other divisions which were being brought out of reserve to man the field fortifications had not arrived and many of the prepared positions were empty. Furthermore, the assault had not come where it had been expected. The Germans believed that the opening blow would fall on the coastal sector, where the Poles had been behaving aggressively, or in the Apennine foothills, where the massive strength of V British Corps could not be concealed. Instead the attack had come in the centre where the enemy forces were thinnest and where the ground played no favourites, being as suitable for attack as for defense.

These circumstances accounted for Eighth Army's opening blow falling for the most part upon empty air. The crossing of the Metauro had been a walkover. Nevertheless, the enemy had no intention of allowing the assault forces to advance in column of route to the Foglia and the exultant claims of senior officers (as quoted by war correspondents) concerning "a breached defense system," "a broken front" and "a resounding defeat," were premature and somewhat childish.

When on the morning of August 26th the Patricias peered ahead from the ruins of the little village of Serrungarina they saw ridgy and gullied terrain to the north, with considerable dead ground in the hollows. From the northeast came the sound of gunfire. The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, who had crossed the Metauro with no more difficulty than the Patricias, had made excellent progress for three miles north of the river; they then brought up against a hummocky ridge on the crest of which stood the Convento Beato Sante. Here the Germans were well dug in and in no hurry to move. It took the Seaforths and the Loyal Edmontons most of the day to persuade them to clear out. As the Convento Beato Sante lay on the main axis of the Brigade advance it was impossible for the Patricias to take up the drive until the enemy was ousted. By evening the way was open and the Battalion concentrated at Altieri, two miles north of Serrungarina, in readiness to thrust on next morning and to seize the Montè della Mattera ridge, about half-way between the Metauro and the Foglia.

At 0730 hours this advance began, with the companies leap-frogging each other at regular intervals. There were eight of these intermediate objectives and perhaps undue caution was observed since the Patricias encountered no opposition until they were at point of completing their task. Then "B" Company came under shell and small arms fire from the tiny village of Monte Santa Maria on the left. Major C. M. McDougall, whose wireless had failed him, did not wait for orders. Near at hand was Capt. J. R. Koengen and his medium machine gunners, who had manpacked their guns forward. With such support "B" Company wheeled and attacked Monte Santa Maria. A farmhouse 400 yards short of the hamlet was rushed and yielded 12 prisoners; the village also fell easily. Thereafter Major McDougall, leaving a platoon in garrison under command of Sgt. F. W. Snell (whose DCM for the Liri battle had just come

through), led his men into the north towards his original objective. Meanwhile "D" Company (Capt. R. G. M. Gammell) on "B" Company's right had moved on and had overshot its objective by about a thousand yards. It came under fire from Monte Croci to the northeast of Monte Santa Maria and was forced to dig in, suffering fifteen casualties. Major Cobbett and Capt. Koensgen, who had gone forward to make contact with "D" Company, also encountered the enemy and were obliged to decamp quickly.

On the Patricia front the night passed quietly everywhere except at Monte Santa Maria. At 0430 hours next morning a German patrol estimated to be about twenty strong clumped into that village, apparently under the impression that it was empty. Sgt. Snell and his men were alert and held their fire until the enemy was under their muzzles; they pelted the Germans with grenades from the windows of the cottages and picked them off as they tried to escape. The patrol was destroyed at a cost of two Patricia casualties. There still were foes in the neighbourhood, however, for that afternoon when Lieut.-Colonel Rosser came forward to visit "B" Company he was fired on. The Scouts and Snipers platoon hurried to the scene; after a firefight the Germans withdrew, having lost six killed and one prisoner. On the same afternoon 46th British Division chased the enemy from the village of Montegaudio, a mile west of Monte Santa Maria. The Germans fled across "B" Company's front and the Patricia medium machine gunners had a field day, loosing off 14,000 rounds at the fugitives.

5th Armoured Division now had closed up and that evening the Irish Regiment of Canada took over from the Patricias.* The area up to the Foglia had been cleared by the Seaforths and the Loyal Edmontons through the capture of Monteciccardo and Ginestreto. The next move was across that river. In this crossing the curtain would rise upon the main battle, for Eighth Army now was closed up against German field defenses everywhere from the High Apennines to the Adriatic—a distance of about twenty miles.

THE GERMAN DEFENSES

The Gothic Line fortifications consisted of four sectors, each roughly five miles in length. In the Apennine foothills the

* The Irish Regiment of Canada at this time was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel R. C. Clark, a brother of Major R. P. Clark of the Regiment.

defenses were neither continuous nor complete; the ground was so difficult that little more than patrol actions was contemplated. To the east of Auditore, where the foothills began to smooth out into more accommodating terrain, there was no continuous line but there were strong and mutually supporting fortress positions on the high ground. From Auditore to Montecchi the north bank of the Foglia was a natural defensive position—a long glacis sloping back from the river, with rising, rolling ground which provided abundant cover.

In the coastal sector between Montecchio and Pesaro the German field fortifications were profuse. The flats of the Foglia were nearly two miles in width, with ridges rising on either side, like the ramps of an amphitheatre. The river itself was unimportant—a small stream sauntering to the sea through a wide riverbed. Beyond the northern bank the folds and wrinkles of the ground had been cleverly utilized to conceal strong points and gun positions. There were mine-fields everywhere, covered in many instances with machine-gun cupolas at ground level. An anti-tank ditch — incomplete in places — extended from Montecchio to the sea. Wiring had begun but was far from complete at the opening of the battle.

At 1045 hours on August 30th the Patricias were picked up by troop-carrying transport and carried across country to Ginestreto, less than two miles south of the Foglia. Lieut.-Colonel Rosser had come down with malaria and Major R. P. Clark had taken command. Patrols went forward at once to select a route to the river. The Canadian plan of battle called for simultaneous crossings by 1st and 5th Divisions, the former on a two-brigade front. The attack therefore would be headed by three battalions—the Perth Regiment of 11th Brigade on the left, the Patricias in the centre and the West Nova Scotia Regiment of 3rd Brigade on the right. The immediate objective of all three battalions was a secondary road parallel to the Foglia and about a mile beyond its northern bank. Beside this road lay the rubble heaps of Osteria Nuova, razed by the enemy to improve his field of fire over the long, open slopes which ran down the river. These ruins were the first Patricia objective.

ACROSS THE FOGLIA

That night a colossal bombardment crashed on the line of the Foglia to the west of the Canadian positions. Under its cover 46th British Division and 4th Indian Division moved to the assault

upon the main Gothic Line defenses between Monte Calvo and Auditere. The Patricias, peering into the night, were astonished to see long lines of tracer shell streaking across the valley; the Indians were using their favourite directional device. On the Canadian front the dark and silence were unbroken when at five minutes after midnight "C" Company under command of Capt. L. G. Burton led off towards Ginestreto. The Patricias crossed the intervening low ridges, reached the flat floor of the Foglia valley, forded the stream and moved up the easy opposite slopes to a track junction just short of the metalled highway. "D" Company, moving on "C" Company's right, also arrived at its first objective without alarm or mishap.

"B" Company waited at Ginestreto until the forward companies had established themselves. It then moved up, passed through "C" Company and pressed toward Osteria Nuova, 1,500 yards to the north. Lieut. E. E. Chambers was leading the way with 11 Platoon when he encountered a sign-board bearing the ominous warning "ACHTUNG MINEN." After a moment's consultation with his company commander, Lieut. Chambers led the way on to the deadly ground—a singularly courageous act.* "B" Company, walking gingerly in single file, negotiated the minefield with the loss of only three men. It reached and crossed the anti-tank ditch which also was mined; later in the day the Patricia chaplain (Hon./Capt. K. Eaton) while aiding the wounded was fatally injured when he knelt on a 'schu' mine on the edge of this ditch.† At 0600 hours "B" Company reported in from Osteria Nuova. Little resistance had been encountered; a small group of Germans clinging to the ruins surrendered after their commander had been shot. Casualties had been light; among the wounded was the Adjutant, Capt. R. F. L. Robertson, who had been struck down on the approaches to the river.

To round off the first stage of the Foglia operation "A" Company at 0845 hours crossed the river and occupied a reserve position on its northern bank. During the morning paths were swept through the minefield; anti-tank guns and mortars came up to cover "B" Company in Osteria Nuova. The supporting armour, however, was delayed by the mines and by the anti-tank

* In a personal letter to Lieut.-Colonel Ware, Major R. P. Clark wrote: "Colin McDougall's company went through a minefield 600 yards deep with a mine every two feet. The Pioneer Platoon raised 25 box mines within 100 yards, in addition to Teller and 'schu' mines."

† Padre Eaton, who had enlisted when he was too young to qualify for a chaplaincy, previously had served as a stretcher bearer.

ditch and it was with some relief that the Patricias identified tanks of 5th Canadian Division roving on the open ground on their left flank front.

The Perth Regiment had come up into line on the left but on the Patricias' right the West Nova Scotia Regiment had not made headway because of stubborn enemy resistance at Point 133, about 1,000 yards to the northeast of Osteria Nuova. At 1300 hours the Patricias were ordered to assist their neighbours. The first move was to strengthen the firm base at Osteria Nuova. When "D" Company was brought forward on this mission it came under small-arms fire from the left flank; the men went to ground until Canadian tanks rooted out and dispersed the snipers. "A" Company then followed up, wheeled to the right and moved on Point 133 from the flank. The delayed British armour arrived in the nick of time and joined "A" Company in the attack. When two tanks brewed up on mines, Major E. W. Cutbill mounted a third and led his men under heavy fire against the German position. Two platoon attacks, carried out with dash and precision, won the disputed ground and took 42 prisoners. In an attempt to regain the feature an enemy counter-attack broke down and yielded a further 53 prisoners. German dead were estimated at 20; there were 22 Patricia casualties in this brisk and workmanlike action.

Well content with their performance the Patricias snatched a few hours rest while the battle grew about them. That evening the Seaforths with British tanks in support advanced to the outskirts of Pozzo Alto, a small hamlet of about fifty houses a mile to the north of Point 133. During the night both 5th Canadian Division and 3rd Canadian Brigade came up abreast of 2nd Brigade positions and the Canadian Corps sector was consolidated on a three-brigade front.

Next morning after a brisk fight the Seaforths threw the enemy out of Pozzo Alto. Whereupon the Loyal Edmontons with 12th Royal Tank Regiment to themselves rode forward on the backs of the armour to assail Monte Luro, a knoll which rose several hundred feet above the plain. The garrison of this vantage point stood staunchly and it took all day to dislodge them; the infantry assault was suspended on a number of occasions while fleets of fighter-bombers pounded the enemy positions. Concurrently 11th Canadian Brigade on the left had committed two battalions against Tomba di Pesaro, another high knoll which

stood in the path of the advance. At nightfall the enemy relinquished both these commanding features; thereafter the Canadian axis of advance bore east of north at a point where the Adriatic coastline bore west of north. This convergence threatened to cut off any enemies who lingered on the Polish front. The sea was not more than four miles beyond Monte Luro.

On the afternoon of September 1st the Patricias moved up through Pozzo Alto and concentrated 2,500 yards to the southeast of Monte Luro. Here another series of limited objectives was set; by means of successive leapfrogs the Battalion would advance 4,000 yards to the north of Monte Luro and to within striking distance of the main coastal highway. "B" Squadron 48th Royal Tank Regiment had been designated as support, but again the armour was late in arriving; at 2100 hours "C" Company led off unsupported. Before midnight Capt. L. G. Burton reported his men on the first objective. "D" Company passed through and without great difficulty gained the second objective, to the south of San Stefano; in this move, however, the leading platoon clashed with the enemy in the darkness and Lieut. C. F. Dumaresq and a number of his men were wounded.

"A" Company was at the point of moving forward when the missing armour turned up. Major Cutbill and his men clambered on the tanks and rode forward in style. They passed through "D" Company and continued into the north. Beyond the coastal railway they came upon a group of vehicles on the move. The infantry scrambled off and went to ground as the tanks opened fire. Two ration lorries were destroyed, five Germans being killed. "A" Company continued on foot and reported in from its objective at 0230 hours.

At dawn Major Clark decided to risk the light and to push "B" Company through to the final Patricia objective. It lay a mile to the southeast of Gradara and only about 4,000 yards from the sea. Once again the Patricias encountered no opposition. Except for a patrol to Gradara, a small market town with a thirteenth century castle, the Patricias had completed their role in the Foglia operation.

The Canadian Corps had moved swiftly but not quickly enough to trap the enemy in the coastal sector. The German paratroopers who had individually initialled Kesselring's order to hold Pesaro at all costs for three weeks, had pulled out abruptly

on the night of August 27th and had fallen back to positions to the north of the Conca river. In the haste of their withdrawal two 88 mm. guns were abandoned. These were added to the Patricias' game book. Nevertheless there still were Germans about. On the morning of September 2nd Major Cutbill, on reconnaissance with the commander of the British armour, captured a number of prisoners who were accommodated upon the back of the tank. Suddenly one of them began to gesticulate wildly. Before he could be understood a self-propelled gun fired at the tank from covert at point blank range. Fortunately the heavy shell glanced off and Major Cutbill, who sustained burns, was the only casualty.

On the night of September 1st the Seaforths and the Loyal Edmontons had taken the lead. In a scrimmage at Fanano, a mile west of Gradara, they captured six naval guns. Next morning both these battalions reached the seacoast on the line of the Conca. Here 1st Brigade passed through and took up the running and 2nd Brigade moved into Cattolica for rest and reorganization.

INTERLUDE AT CATTOLICA

This small Adriatic town in peacetime had been a favourite resort of Germans and Austrians. It now was empty. Its chief asset was its beach—a beautiful stretch of sand. The rather gimcrack hotels and villas, however, were very welcome to the tired infantry after a long spell of bivouacs. Not even the intervention of the Luftwaffe disturbed the Patricias; the raids were of the 'tip-and-run' variety which had become familiar during the tour of duty on the Sussex coast. Lieut.-Colonel Rosser returned to duty, visitors began to arrive, including war correspondents; a number of Patricia officers now with other units dropped in. On September 9th the new Chaplain, Hon./Capt. S. Iveson, conducted his first service.

It was perhaps significant that during the rest period at Cattolica the rank and file of the Patricias did not, in their customary fashion, lay the war aside. The situation map at Battalion Headquarters was subject to hourly scrutinies; the War Diary for September 13th declared: "The Regiment has become news-conscious—during the morning there was a steady stream of human traffic passing in and out of Bn.H.Q. block, all with but a single thought—'What is happening?' Often the look of disappointment was plainly marked on a face when the individual was told 'Nothing new.' "

This preoccupation arose in part from the proximity of the fighting. At Cattolica the men at rest were within sound of the guns; barring traffic jams a driver could reach the thick of the battle in ten minutes. It was war on the grand scale; on September 16th, when the final onslaught was mounted against the Passano-Coriano ridge, seven British Commonwealth divisions attacked while nine German divisions defended; Kesselring had thrown in five fresh divisions to save Rimini. The Patricias, listening to the thunder in the west, knew that their turn would not be long delayed.

After heavy fighting the Germans fell back across the Marano; but Rimini was not yet won. Two thousand yards to the southwest of that famous city the ground bulged into a great triangular mound, with steep slopes towards the south and west and a gradual fall towards the north and east. It was like a low butte or an Arizona mesa, with a flat crest of perhaps 800 acres in extent and with three villages scattered among its fields and vineyards. The most southwesterly of these hamlets, at the junction of three intersecting roads, was San Fortunato and it gave its name to the feature.

THE SAN MARTINO OBSTACLE

Two miles to the southeast of this protrusion there was another hummock or hump but on a smaller scale—a mere wrinkle in the skin of the earth rising perhaps a hundred feet above the flat floor of the plain. On the northern extremity of this rounded ridge stood San Martino in Monte l'Abate, a cluster of not more than twelve houses; but each house had been transformed into a pillbox and in the cellars concrete shelters had been built which were impervious to all but the heaviest plunging fire. This defensive outpost was designed to compel forces advancing on Rimini to pass along a narrow coastal corridor or else to swing well to the west and so approach San Fortunato from its steepest and most difficult side. On the map neither of these features was impressive, but they were sufficient to divert Eighth Army's thrust line into the northwest, where the ground became progressively more difficult until it rose into sheer cliffs in the Republic of San Marino.

One Eighth Army unit had given San Fortunato and San Martino the code names of Big Brother and Little Brother. In a

military sense they were parts of one anatomy. Little Brother barred the way to Big Brother; Big Brother provided the observation and fire power to protect Little Brother.

BACK TO THE BATTLE

On the night of September 13th/14th 1st Canadian Division re-entered the battle. With 3rd Greek Mountain Brigade under command the Canadians crossed the Marano and began to close up on San Fortunato. The Greeks advanced along the foreshore with 3rd Canadian Brigade on their left; their objective was the line of the railway which ran into the southwest between Big Brother and Little Brother. This railway followed a small stream, the Ausa, across the Canadian front. On the line of this runlet 3rd Canadian Brigade would give over to 2nd Brigade, which would pass through to storm San Fortunato, to cross the Marecchia and to close on the western outskirts of Rimini.

In the projected operation the Patricias were allotted the southwestern portion of San Fortunato, while the Seaforths were given its northeastern half. When the high ground had been cleared the Loyal Edmontons would pass through and establish a bridgehead beyond the river. Celle, a mile to the northwest of Rimini, was set as the limit of 2nd Brigade's exploitation.

This plan foundered on the rock of San Martino. After three days hammering 3rd Canadian Brigade was held up in front of that ridge. Its three battalions had sustained serious losses. On September 15th it was decided that 2nd Brigade must assist in the reduction of Little Brother. The Seaforths were placed under command of 3rd Brigade and were entrusted with an assault upon the obdurate feature. Concurrently the Patricias were ordered to isolate it by infiltration around its western flank. The difficulty was that the only way to by-pass Little Brother was to walk into Big Brother's front yard.

With perfect observation from San Fortunato the enemy had no difficulty in anticipating the Canadian moves. On the afternoon of September 15th the Patricias marched out of Cattolica; that evening they bivouacked on the north bank of the Marano. In this area the shelling was heavy and continuous. On the following day Battalion Tactical Headquarters, situated in a building on the bank of the river, was struck and Lieut.-Colonel Rosser was wounded. Major R. P. Clark took over

command and immediately was confirmed in his rank; Major S. A. Cobbett stepped up to Second-in-Command. Detailed orders for the attack had been received from Brigade earlier in the day. They directed the Patricias to take over WHIPCORD, at the southern extremity of the San Martino feature, where the Royal 22e Regiment had been having a rough time. Thereafter patrols would be dispatched to the rear of San Martino. If a soft spot in the enemy dispositions could be found the Battalion would advance as far as the line of the AUSA.

In view of German strength and aggressiveness any endeavour to infiltrate an entire battalion between Big Brother and Little Brother promised to be difficult. That evening orders were amended and the operation was reduced in scope. "C" Company after relief of the Royal 22e Regiment at WHIPCORD would dispatch patrols to the north as far as the railway line. The other companies would move up into close support positions.

HARD SLOGGING AT WHIPCORD

That night "C" Company took over from the Royal 22e Regiment as arranged, but the attempt to send out patrols failed as the enemy was encountered in strength within 200 yards of WHIPCORD. "D" Company, which had taken up a supporting position 1,000 yards south of "C" Company, found its area unhealthy; during the night it sustained 17 casualties from shell fire. Early next morning "C" Company was threatened by an enemy force, estimated at a half-battalion of infantry accompanied by two tanks, which had assembled a few hundred yards north of WHIPCORD. Protective fire was called for and Major Ingram of 145th Royal Tank Regiment brought forward a troop of tanks; whereupon the enemy withdrew. With such support "B" Company at noon passed through "D" Company and occupied ground 600 yards to the east of WHIPCORD. "A" Company from reserve provided covering parties and protective patrols for the sappers who were preparing to open a road and to bridge the AUSA as soon as the enemy had been driven from its banks.

Throughout that day the Patricias' area was searched repeatedly by heavy shots. "D" Company again was unfortunate, 14 men in one platoon being killed or wounded by a single salvo. With no non-commissioned officer remaining Pte. Stanley Kraemer

of the Scouts and Snipers took charge, evacuated the wounded, reorganized the survivors and acted as platoon commander until the end of the battle.

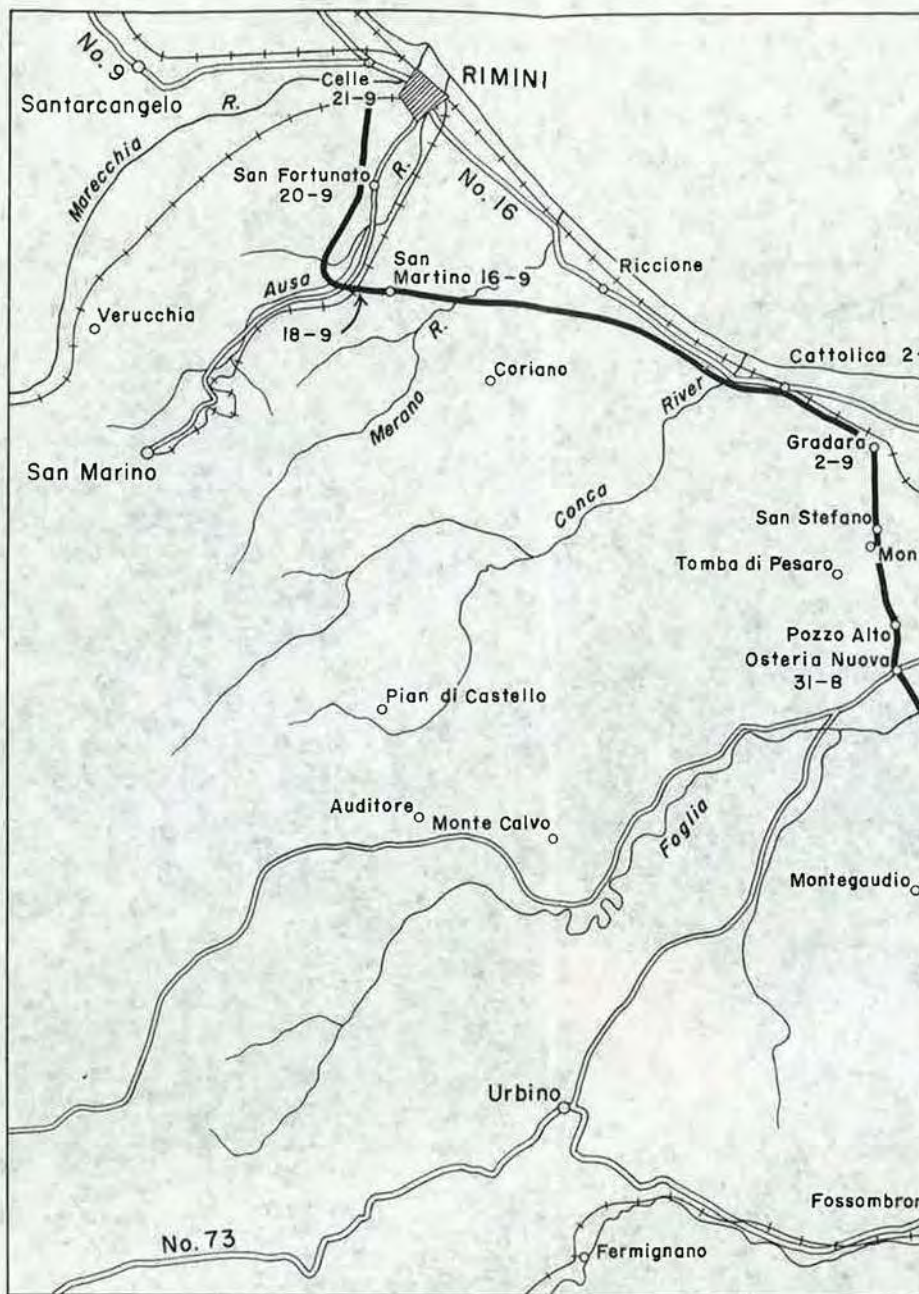
During the afternoon Capt. L. G. Burton was killed and command of "C" Company passed to Lieut. H. E. Dalquist. When this officer was wounded, Lieut. W. G. McNeil took command. The darkness brought no relief; as if aware of what was in store on the morrow enemy shellfire increased during the night. Shortly after midnight Lieut.-Colonel Clark and his staff, while en route to a new location, were bracketed by a salvo, several men being wounded.

At dawn on September 18th, while the coastal sector was cloaked in ground haze, the entire Adriatic battlefield burst into flame. On the left of the Canadian Corps 4th and 56th British Divisions struck in converging blows on the Marecchia crossings. Further inland 46th Division and 4th Indian Division crossed the Marano and assailed the enemy in the Republic of San Marino.

On the stroke of 0530 hours "B" and "D" Companies of the Patricias swung around the left of "C" Company on WHIPCORD and headed for the line of the railway, 2,000 yards ahead. On their right moved the Loyal Edmontons, on their left the Carleton and York Regiment. Tanks of 145th Royal Tank Regiment were up with the infantry. As the leading companies emerged from the lee of the San Martino ridge they came under heavy fire. Every move cost casualties. By 0800 hours half the rifle strength was down; Major P. D. Crofton had been wounded and Major Colin McDougall had taken command of both companies. The tanks had been heavily punished and their commander, Major Ingram, had been killed. At 1000 hours Major McDougall and about sixty men dug in within 200 yards of the railway. Here they were under mortar fire and also under sniping fire from anti-tank guns firing from the crest of San Fortunato.

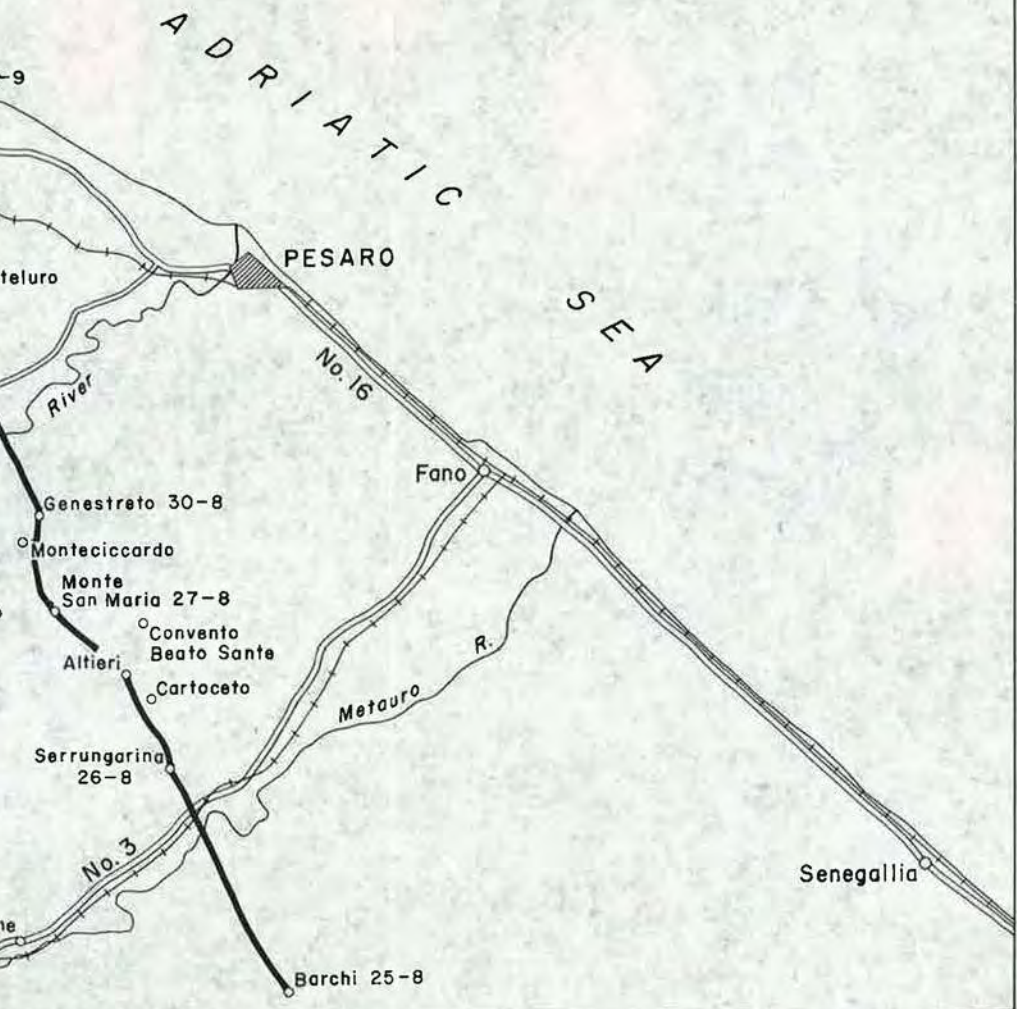
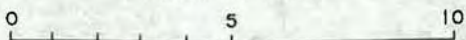
Towards noon an enemy force could be seen assembling near San Fortunato village, on the southwestern extremity of the high ground. Later a pocket of Germans was detected on the opposite side of the railway line not more than 500 yards away. Artillery fire dealt with this latter threat; the enemy was so near and the trajectory so flat that the Patricias' forward platoons were warned to keep their heads down.





THE GOTHIC LINE

Scale of Miles



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By nightfall on September 18th the steady pressure and our courage of the Canadian infantry had turned the tide. The outflanking movement had made San Martino untenable; with the Patricias and their comrades on the line of the railway only a narrow corridor of escape remained to the garrison of the pillboxes. As for the Ausa, which lay beside the railway, a broad bumper could cross it dry-shod; but because of its steep muddy banks it remained an obstacle to tanks. That evening anti-tank and medium machine guns came up and began to deal with the last remnants of the enemy on the opposite side of the stream. Before dawn "A" Company was holding the south bank and work on a bridge had begun. All three Canadian brigades now were in the firing line; 48th Highlanders of Canada had taken over on the right of the Patricias. The day's fighting had cost the Battalion 77 casualties, but only seven had been fatal.

SAN FORTUNATO FALLS

The stage now was set for the final San Fortunato assault. On the evening of September 19th the attack opened with saturation shoots of terrifying intensity. Under the control of intricate trace sheets Eighth Army artillery units became instruments in an orchestra of destruction; they played individually, in unison and in harmony, putting down rolling barrages on axes of advance, lifting from one target to fall on another, switching backward and forward with unending torrents of high explosive and steel.

Such was the accuracy of the fire programme that amid its blasts the infiltrating Canadian infantry moved forward along protected corridors and closed on the demoralized defenders. The Seaforths won the eastern end of San Fortunato and swung to the right towards Rimini. The Loyal Edmontons scrambled up the steep slopes of the southern approaches and made their way to San Lorenzo in Monte on a spur to the rear of the main feature. Men of the Royal 22e Regiment, their blood up at their rough treatment, surged swiftly over the southwest extremity of the high ground and destroyed the defiant German garrisons. Attempts to counter-attack broke down. By first light San Fortunato was secure and the way to the Marecchia was open.

At 0830 hours on September 20th the Patricia rifle companies deployed on a start line 1,000 yards beyond the Ausa. A reconnaissance in detail by Capt. E. D. McPhail had led to the selection

of a series of intermediate objectives and firm bases on the line of advance to the Marecchia. On the first high ground beyond the village of San Fortunato were BOVEY and MOIRE, which in effect were jump-off positions for the push to the river. At MOIRE a church and a cemetery provided conspicuous landmarks; the reserve company of the Loyal Edmontons held this area. A thousand yards ahead NYLON was selected as the first Patricia fire base; a thousand yards beyond NYLON, on the long slope down to the Marecchia, PIQUE was chosen as the forward position from which the companies would deploy for the crossing. 1,500 yards beyond PIQUE, across a succession of vineyards and orchards, lay the broad river bed and narrow twisty channels of the Marecchia.

At 1400 hours "B" and "C" Companies advanced. An hour later they reported in from MOIRE, but without their tanks and anti-tank guns, which had failed to negotiate the steep and greasy slopes of the San Fortunato feature. Here the company commanders were warned that enemy groups, including tanks, had been detected around NYLON. At 1600 hours when "A" and "D" Companies moved up to BOVEY Capt. J. R. Koensgen and his medium machine gunners thrust on ahead and contacted enemy forces which they engaged and scattered by long-range, high-angle fire. A Patricia carrier was destroyed by a direct hit in this action.

ACROSS THE MARECCHIA

Lieut.-Colonel Clark now reached a bold decision. He decided to by-pass NYLON and to continue to PIQUE on the lower ground. He was confident that the operation had reached a stage when enemies in the rear should not be allowed to interfere unduly with its culmination. The orders to by-pass NYLON were issued at 2030 hours but did not reach "B" and "C" Companies at MOIRE until after midnight. (The enemy was jamming all radio transmissions.) At 0225 hours (September 21st) the two forward companies advanced. A short distance beyond MOIRE Lieut. W. G. McNeil and several of his men were killed by a shell and CSM W. H. Clare took over command pending the arrival of Capt. G. R. Corkett, who was returning to the Battalion for the first time since his serious wounds in North Africa. At 0330 hours both forward companies reported in as "Snug" at PIQUE; whereupon "A" Company was ordered forward from BOVEY

to lead the way toward the river crossing and "D" Company was instructed to patrol towards NYLON and if possible to ascertain the strength of the enemy in that area.

By dawn "A" Company had reached the Marecchia. The crossing presented no difficulties and at 0950 hours Major Cutbill and his men were over the river and astride the Emilian Way. There had been a certain amount of shellfire but no other opposition. Orders were issued immediately for the other companies to cross. At 1530 hours "B" Company was over and had turned to the right to exploit towards Rimini. Two hours later "C" and "D" Companies came up into alignment on the left of "A" Company along the Emilian Way and the parallel railway line to its north.

Desultory shelling continued through the night and increased at dawn. A carabinieri station which was serving as "C" Company Headquarters was hit and Capt. G. R. Corkett, who had come up during the night, was killed—the third "C" Company commander to be killed in the battle. CSM Clare once more took command pending the arrival of Lieut. J. V. Spurr. "C" and "D" Companies had picked up a number of prisoners during the night. "D" Company now was under command of Capt. R. W. Potts.

"B" Company, which was moving east to the south of the Emilian Way, encountered a certain amount of resistance. Three machine posts attempted to hold up the advance; they were mopped up, three Germans being killed and six taken prisoners. CQMS F. A. D'Altroy brought hot food forward in a carrier and found himself in the midst of the enemy; he escaped but lost the company supper. When about half-way to his objective (Celle, the junction of the coastal highway and the Emilian Way) Major McDougall discovered a considerable body of the enemy on his northern flank. A scouting tank from this group was discouraged by PIAT fire but lest a dangerous situation arise two of the surviving seven tanks of "B" Squadron 145th Royal Tank Regiment hurried to "B" Company's support.

As his company was down to 40 of all ranks Major McDougall withdrew his men across the river during the night but returned before dawn next morning. At Celle "B" Company was taken under command by 22nd New Zealand Motor Battalion which had come up after Rimini had fallen to 3rd Greek Mountain Brigade. The New Zealanders were in process of relieving 1st

Canadian Division and all Canadian vehicles had been ordered off the main roads to make room for the incoming troops, who were under orders to maintain pressure upon the retreating enemy.

The battle over, congratulations poured in. It had been bitter fighting; September was the most costly month of the Mediterranean campaign for Canadian formations. The Patricias had been fairly fortunate; total casualties for the San Fortunato operation had been 3 officers killed and 9 wounded; 28 other ranks killed and 106 wounded.

These losses represented the cost of solid achievement. Rimini was the hinge of the German defenses; beyond the Marecchia it always was possible to bring converging attacks upon the enemy from west and south. Even on the highest levels it was believed that a turning point had been reached in the grim struggle; General Sir Oliver Leese in his message to the Canadian Corps declared: "You have beaten eleven German divisions and have broken into the Po Valley." His individual message to the Patricias read: "The Regiment may be proud of its part in a great and hard-fought victory. Well Done, Canada."

Further inland the battle also had gone well. San Marino had been captured and the enemy had been flung back along the foothills of the Apennines. The Patricias, therefore, left the firing line with the belief shared by most of Eighth Army—that the decisive battle had been won and that the end of the Italian campaign was in sight.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FIVE MONTHS IN THE ROMAGNA

The jubilant messages of high commanders on the forcing of the Marecchia probably emanated less from the actual achievement than from the knowledge that with the capture of Rimini a door was opened into northwestern Italy and the first strategic purpose of the Adriatic offensive had been accomplished.

From Rimini the Emilian Way, greatest of trans-Italian highways, ran along the edge of the northern plain and thence into the highly industrialized provinces beyond the Po. An advance along the axis of this road would by-pass the mountain block and would effect junction with U.S. Fifth Army, which on September 12th had opened two drives over the crests of the Apennines, one directed on Bologna and the other on Forli. With the San Marino obstacle removed a western corps of Eighth Army could advance into the northeast while an eastern corps was advancing into the northwest. There therefore was the possibility of executing two converging attacks, one within the other—the right and left wings of Eighth Army driving to a meeting point on the Emilian Way and Fifth and Eighth armies thrusting to a junction either at Bologna or in the Po valley.

NATURE THE ENEMY

That such ambitious strategy did not lead to early victory was less the fault of the staff officers who planned and the soldiers who fought than of the two perverse factors which have confounded tacticians from time immemorial—the ground and the weather. With the mountains all but behind and the open plains ahead the Allied armies might have considered the terrain to be favourable. In point of fact the flat Adriatic landscape to the north of the Marecchia was if anything less accommodating for attack than the high mountains to the west and south. An earlier generation of Patricians had had its fill of the waterlogged fields of Flanders. Their successors now were to discover all-too-similar battlegrounds in the Italian Romagna. Of this portion of the Emilian plain Field-Marshal Alexander wrote:

“The whole area is nothing but a great reclaimed swamp—and not wholly reclaimed in some parts—formed by the lower courses

of numerous rivers flowing down from the Apennines in their new northeasterly direction. The principal rivers are, in order from east to west, the Uso, the Savio, the Ronco, the Montone, the Lamone, the Senio, the Santerno, the Sillaro and the Idice. In addition there are hundreds of smaller streams with canals and irrigation ditches between them. By canalization of the main rivers the primitive swamp had been drained after centuries of patient effort; as the water flowed off so the level of the ground sank. The river beds were left thereafter higher than the surrounding country. As soon as they descend to the plain all these rivers need high banks on either side to keep them in their courses and to guide them against sudden rises of level which heavy rainfalls or snow melting in the mountains invariably cause. Even in the best drained areas the soil remembers its marshy origin. When rained on it yields the richest mud known to the Italian Theatre."

On the lower Adriatic the *Patricias* had seen the offensive of the previous winter slither to a halt in the seas of mud and slush to the south of Ortona. There the ground was relatively firm. In the Romagna the flat, highly-tilled fields, with brimming drainage ditches everywhere, threatened to become a morass when the autumnal gales brought driving downpours from the Adriatic.

However the sun was in full orb on the afternoon of September 23rd when the *Patricias* marched back to billets at Cattolica. Nor was the season too advanced for comfortable afternoons on the beaches. For three days there were no parades of any kind. Major-General Vokes came and said a few kind words; Colonel Ralston, Canadian Minister of Defense, held the equivalent of a Town Meeting in the local fish cannery and confessed that some of the questions from the body of the hall stumped him. In the first days of October three parties of long service men left on Canadian leave, some of them protesting that they would rather stay and see it through. General Leese was called to a higher appointment and said his farewells while introducing his successor at Eighth Army Headquarters, Lieut.-General Sir R. L. McCreery KCB KBE DSO MC, formerly Field Marshal Alexander's Chief of Staff and afterwards commander of X Corps.

THE NEW BATTLE

In the second week of October the visits of other 'high brass' gave warning that the rest period was running out. The officers

and sergeants without delay staged their dinners and smokers; the companies also celebrated while there was time. On October 8th Lieut.-Colonel Clark returned from Riccione with details of the ensuing operation. Therein the Canadian Corps would join in the advance into the northwest. 5th Canadian Armoured Division with the Greek Mountain Brigade under command would accept responsibility for the coastal sector. On its left 1st Canadian Division and 2nd New Zealand Division would clear the countryside to the north of Emilian Way, while to the south of that Highway V British Corps would continue on its northering axis of advance until it reached Cesena, when it too would swing into the northwest. At the beginning of this drive 3rd Canadian Brigade would establish a bridgehead over the Fiumicino at Savignano, 9 miles west of Rimini; thereafter 2nd Brigade would pass through, cross the Pisciatello (a minor stream) and exploit to the Savio, a river which ran down from the mountains in a hundred meanders before entering the Romagna plain at Cesena.

Before leaving Cattolica the Patricias equipped themselves with tank-hunters. It had been found profitable for the infantry to take the offensive against armour, particularly in countryside like the Romagna, where tanks had little opportunity for manoeuvre. Under command of Sgt. O. J. Papineau of the Scouts and Snipers twelve specialists, armed with PIATS, anti-tank grenades and light machine guns, were attached to Tactical Headquarters. They were given vehicles to rove the countryside and to rush to the aid of threatened infantry.

APPROACH TO THE SAVIO

On the afternoon of October 12th the Patricias embussed and moved up the coastal road to the Riccione area, approximately half-way to Rimini. Here they remained for thirty-six hours—time enough to allow the Paymaster, Capt. J. A. McLeod, to open a sales office and to dispose of substantial numbers of Canadian War Bonds. On the morning of October 14th the Battalion was borne to Santarcangelo, a small walled town on the Emilian Way 7 miles west of Rimini. Next morning the Acting Brigade Commander, Lieut.-Colonel M. P. Bogert DSO, issued his plan of battle. 1st Canadian Brigade now was out in front and would continue its thrust along the Emilian Way; 2nd Brigade would keep pace a mile to the north of the highway and would cross the Pisciatello at Ponte della Pietra to seize San

Egidio, 3,000 yards from the outskirts of Cesena. This small hamlet would provide a firm base for the crossing of the Savio, 2,500 yards to the west. 46th British Division was closing up on Cesena through the hills to the south. There therefore would be a concentric drive on this objective from east, south and north.

On the night of October 16th the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada attempted to cross the Pisciatello at Ponte della Pietra. The enemy was found in determined mood and it was only after an out-flanking diversion by the Loyal Edmontons that this insignificant barrier was forced. The Patricias with tanks of 12th Royal Tank Regiment under command were ordered to pass through and to make good San Egidio, but due to various extraneous causes—the enlargement of the Pisciatello bridgehead, adjustments arising out of a New Zealand attack upon the right flank and the desire to give 46th British Division a little more time to reach Cesena—orders were cancelled and for two days the Patricias stood fast in the countryside to the west of Gambettola. By the night of October 18th these various affairs had been arranged and at 0850 hours next morning "A" Company led the advance out of the bridgehead at Ponte della Pietra, with "D" Company moving abreast on a parallel axis a few hundred yards to the north.

"A" Company had no difficulty in seizing San Egidio but during the forenoon "D" Company went off the air. It was not until mid-afternoon that Capt. A. G. Robinson and his men were found in trouble about 1,200 yards short of their objective. Lieut.-Colonel Clark ordered "A" Company to wheel to the right and to fall on the flank of the enemy groups which were holding up "D" Company. When this was done the blocking force melted away and "D" Company cleared the countryside farmhouse by farmhouse, dispatching patrols to Le Chiaviche, 1,200 yards north of San Egidio.

ASSAULT ON THE SAVIO

The Patricias now were ready for the crossing of the Savio, which lay about 2,000 yards to the west. Before dawn on 20th October "C" Company filed silently across the sodden fields and dripping pastures to a crossroads about 1,000 yards west of La Chiaviche. Patrols then were sent out; as they approached the river they were fired on from the opposite bank and a number of

Germans were seen emerging from dugouts to man nearby weapon pits. The Canadian artillery at once began to pound the area.

The Savio was a very different river from the meagre streams which the Patricias had encountered previously on the northern Adriatic front. It lay in a muddy trough about fifteen feet below ground level; at this time of the year the river was swollen with storm water from the mountains and at many places it was too deep to ford. The near bank had been cleared of clumps of canes and trees; the western bank, which was slightly higher, afforded the enemy an excellent field of fire. The fields ran up to the river so that the canes and pollarded poplars which divided the holdings gave no cover; moreover the many irrigation and drainage ditches, while no obstacle to infantry, were impassable to wheels and were very liable to cause tracked vehicles to bog down.

Lieut.-Colonel Clark prepared for an opposed crossing. All four rifle companies would close up on the river with "A" and "D" Companies leading. The various support arms—tanks, medium machine-guns, anti-tank guns and mortars—also would close up, if necessary to point-blank range. It was the design for a sharp and decisive encounter; toe to toe the Patricias and their adversaries would fight it out.

THE CROSSING

The position chosen for the crossing was at a meander. "D" Company would cross at the top of the loop and "A" Company would move on past "D" Company into the re-entrant, keeping the river on its right flank. This would allow assaults upon the enemy holding the opposite bank to go in concurrently from east and south. As night closed down artillery fire swelled to a roar and Canadian mortars laid a smoke screen along the Brigade front. The leading Patricia companies spread out in open order and moved towards the river, five hundred yards ahead.

The German gunners were standing to and a curtain of defensive fire fell in the path of the advancing infantry. The protective smoke tended to pillar and only partially screened the assault groups; through the twilight came the ominous chatter of enemy machine guns. German tanks were seen closing up on the far bank of the river. As the Patricias emerged from the smoke small arms fire concentrated on "D" Company, which was pinned to the ground.

On the left "A" Company continued on its way into the re-entrant of the meander. Here the leading platoon found itself on mined ground. Moving to the left to escape this peril it strayed and was lost to the operation. With it went the Company wireless set. The following platoon preserved direction and led in single file by L/Sgt. A. R. Whitford it crossed 600 yards of minefield and reached the bank of the river—a feat of fine leadership and courage. When the river was found unguarded the little party plunged in, waded swiftly across and gained the shelter of the western bank.

ORDEAL OF "A" COMPANY

When Major E. W. Cutbill arrived over he counted heads. He had seventeen of all ranks, isolated and in the midst of enemies. He sent back a man to search for the missing platoons; they could not be found. It seemed a desperate situation; many would have accepted failure and would have withdrawn.

Major Cutbill, however, was of a sturdy breed. He not only had no intention of withdrawing; he also had no intention of leaving the enemy in ignorance of his presence on the far side of the Savio. There exists his diary of these exciting hours. It will be a prized Regimental possession in years to come, for it carries the authentic accents of a fine soldier in a moment of danger, breathing the assurance and capacity to shape circumstance which has endowed great fighting men, from Fluellen to Arthur Ortheris, throughout the centuries. That Major Cutbill's language is neither that of Shakespeare nor of Kipling is immaterial. It is his content that counts.

When he found that he had sixteen men with him on the far bank of the river his impulse was to push on. He had been ordered to seize an objective; why not do it? He sent out a scout who was killed by a machine-gun burst; thereafter he himself went on reconnaissance. With a small party he made his way southward under the shelter of the river bank towards a hedgerow which ran inland and which promised cover. Searchlights were playing on the clouds to create 'artificial moonlight;' Major Cutbill felt this form of assistance to be overdone; it was altogether too light and quiet for comfort. "Perhaps," he mused, "Jerry is resting. Or maybe he is allowing the fly to walk into his parlour." He and his handful gained the shelter of the hedge; they followed it inland until they descried a house ahead. A

fine, large house; it would hold two platoons easily, decided the "A" Company commander. Two of his men crept ahead to reconnoitre and returned to report that there were sentries on duty and movements inside the building which suggested numbers. This caused Major Cutbill to ponder; his speculations ran: "What to do next? Attack the house with the benefit of surprise (perhaps)? Sounds OK. But suppose HE is strong? Or suppose that HE counter-attacks at dawn? Besides we have no communication with Tac. It is doubtful if any tactical success could be achieved by holding a house in the middle of Jerryland and not be able to poke our nose outside without drawing fire."

With some regret he decided to pass up this attractive target. Four hundred yards beyond the house he and his handful stumbled upon an outpost. They ringed it swiftly and hurled grenades; three prisoners and two dead Germans were the yield. There was much outcry and gun fire; the Patricias left hurriedly for the shelter of the river bank. Sgt. F. H. Sparrow then was dispatched across the stream and minefield to put Lieut.-Colonel Clark in the picture, to pick up a wireless set and to bring over any of the strays of "A" Company who might have turned up. He was back at 0400 hours with 18 men, a wireless set and orders from Lieut.-Colonel Clark to stand fast. "That," declared Major Cutbill to his dairy, "is OK by us."

The dawn and the day to follow, however, raised problems. Again to quote the diary:

"Soon after first light there is spasmodic mortar fire of the 'Moaning Minnie' variety. Jerry, I think, does not know what the score is and does not yet know that we are sitting in his lap. I get Sgt. Buckberry (he is with us again) to send out a recon patrol. It returns with the news that von Hun has some beautiful dug-in positions all around us at twenty-five yards distance and is there with flags flying, so to speak.

"Things begin to happen. Over comes the big stuff. He says to hell with twenty rounds per gun per day and just lets it slide over, with no economy at all. The worst is the 'Moaning Minnie' which is very accurate. We spit dirt. He then gets nasty and takes up a position on a wooded promontory fifty yards away and lets fly with an MG 42. It's *no buono*. One of my better shots is told off to keep the place peppered while we resume our watch.

"Sure enough, on the opposite flank he is trying to counter-attack. We chuck the steel at him and he withdraws. Meanwhile "C" Company can bring down medium machine-gun fire on the flat ground immediately beyond the bank where we are dug in. This dueling continues on and off all day. Several times the situation gets quite critical.

"Fortunately we are able to survive and we send out a fighting patrol under Cpl. Baker to quieten other positions that are troublesome. This patrol killed four and captured six Jerries. Good Show."

On the previous evening Lieut.-Colonel Clark had not been content to accept "D" Company's failure as final. He was in the midst of plans for a new attempt to push more men across the Savio when the Brigade Commander ordered him to stand fast; on the following evening the Loyal Edmontons and the Seaforths would cross the river on a two-battalion front. Next morning, while Major Cutbill and his dauntless few were busy beyond the stream Sgt. Sparrow (a bird of passage indeed) arrived at Tactical Headquarters a second time. He was taken to Brigade to advise on the situation in the light of the projected Loyal Edmonton-Seaforth attack that evening. On his return journey he was wounded and CSM J. B. Wood of "A" Company, an original member of Major Cutbill's group on the far side of the river, took over duties as *rapporteur* for Brigade upon events in enemy territory.

Meanwhile the Royal 22e Regiment, clearing the Germans from the east bank of the Savio to the south of the Patricia bridgehead, had retrieved the lost platoon of "A" Company. It had been pinned down within sight of the enemy. By noon the situation had begun to improve but the problem of support was pressing. The Royal Canadian Engineers discovered that because of soft banks the Savio could not be bridged at the site of the present crossing. pontoons had been sent for but they would not arrive in time for the evening attack. The infantry once more must go it alone.

THE NEW ASSAULT

At 2000 hours the Seaforth-Loyal Edmonton attack went in on the loop of river adjoining "A" Company's bridgehead. Bitter fighting ensued; in a close range melee Pte. Alva Smith of the

Seaforths took on three Panther tanks and a platoon of infantry single-handed; in the words of the Official Canadian Historian he proved "both indomitable and indestructible." He won the Victoria Cross. Major Cutbill's description of this attack has points of interest:

"2000 hours rolls around. A barrage of terrific proportions. Our artillery shells and MMG bullets whiz overhead and miss us by a hair's breadth. Let us hope there are no 'shorts.' I hope to God our own infantry don't attack us.

"We see the advancing troops some distance away, silhouetted clearly against our searchlights. "D" Company of the Seaforths arrive in our territory. I give their company commander full particulars of the enemy and of the ground. His company moves out and is stopped by heavy MMG fire. He then calls for mortar support and covered by fire from every weapon in our company he is able to move forward from our bridgehead."

By midnight the Loyal Edmontons and Seaforths in the face of obstinate resistance held the western bank of the Savio to a depth of 500 yards. Major Cutbill and his men continued to be the eyes of the operation, sending a continuous commentary to Brigade. The other Patricia rifle companies and also the stretcher-bearers and the band provided carrying parties throughout the night. The first food and ammunition in more than thirty hours reached Major Cutbill and his men at 0300 hours on October 22nd. By morning a pontoon ferry was in operation and it became possible to evacuate the wounded and prisoners from the western bank of the river.

A sapper reconnaissance of the Savio reported the best bridging site to be opposite Borgo di Rento, 2,000 yards downstream from the 2nd Brigade bridgehead. When the West Nova Scotia Regiment was ordered to cross "D" Company of the Patricias was placed under command of the Maritimers to lead the way. Capt. A. G. Robinson dispatched a patrol to examine the site of the crossing; the banks were found to be steep, the footing treacherous, the water at the ford breast-high. Nevertheless at midnight on October 22nd/23rd the attack went in. Although opposed from the start "D" Company made its way to the far bank and gained the shelter of a group of buildings. Before dawn two companies of the West Nova Scotia Regiment also were across.

At first light a group of enemy tanks charged. Without support weapons it was impossible to hold the ground; there was a rapid (and confused) withdrawal across the river, in the course of which a platoon of "D" Company under command of Lieut. E. A. Shone was cut off. That afternoon, however, the missing Patricias turned up. They had lain low while the panzers swept past them and thereafter they had found their way back by way of another ford.

THE ENEMY GIVES WAY

On the afternoon of October 23rd it was decided that "B" and "C" Companies of the Patricias would relieve the Loyal Edmontons on the far side of the Savio that evening. By now, however, the enemy had discerned the writing on the wall. To the north of the Canadian Corps the New Zealanders had hustled the Germans back across the Savio; as the river was canalized in the Kiwi sector it was a less formidable obstacle. To the south 4th British Division had crossed in the Cesena area. On the Canadian front Corps artillery had gained the upper hand and during the night of October 23rd/24th sappers had bridged the stream at the site of "A" Company's crossing. Next morning the Germans were gone except for pestiferous pockets of snipers who had remained to harass the advance.

All three battalions of 2nd Brigade now pushed forward into open territory and the Savio crossing was a thing of the past. It had not been an unduly expensive operation. The approach to the river and the crossing had cost the Patricias one officer wounded, 9 other ranks killed, 55 wounded and 14 missing.

Three miles beyond the Savio the Bevano river lay across the Canadian line of advance. On the map it seemed of little moment but these inconsequential streams had a habit of swelling into torrents on short notice and for several days rain had been falling. On October 25th Patricia patrols were sent ahead to report; they found the Bevano to be clear of the enemy; whereupon advance to the Ronco was ordered. Each Patricia company was organized as a self-contained force with its own armour (12th Royal Tank Regiment), anti-tank guns, medium machine guns and mortars. Scouts and snipers with penny packets of riflemen were sent out in screen; the tank-hunting platoon also went on the prowl. In spite of the inclement weather ("Cold, wet and windy, with

heavy rain and near gales, low visibility" says the War Diary) it was an exhilarating experience to be on manoeuvres once more, with the added spice of an actual enemy in opposition.

NEXT RIVER—THE RONCO

Patricia officers questioned local farmers about the Ronco. They received copious if not always accurate information, for this was Mussolini's bailiwick, where all were politicians and schooled to be all things to all men. It was learned that the river was about two hundred yards in width and was in spate; that all the bridges had been destroyed; that the best crossings were to the north of the Canadian front, where the river had been canalized. The civilians were voluble about the Germans, for whom they expressed scorn, but not without a careful glance over their shoulders, for the area lately had been held by Heidrich's paratroopers—men who had a short way with those whom they did not trust.

A CHANGE OF PLAN

Such enquiries had no more than begun when they became unnecessary. Fifth U.S. Army after a slow start in its Apennine offensives had gradually established ascendancy over the enemy. By the third week of October American troops were within ten miles of Bologna and the Germans were obliged to divert divisions to the central front. This was accomplished by shortening the Adriatic line; the enemy fell back from the Ronco to the Lamone and at the same time flooded a large area on the Adriatic coast by breaking dykes and damming irrigation ditches. Concurrently room had to be found on the existing Eighth Army front for the Polish Corps, which was moving up from the south. These twin developments deprived the Canadian Corps of its sector; 5th Canadian Armoured Division was flooded out and 1st Canadian Infantry Division was squeezed out of the line. As a consequence both divisions were ordered into Army Reserve. On October 26th 12th Lancers, disgusted at being taken out of their tanks to serve as infantry, arrived and relieved the Patricias. For three days the Battalion stood fast in the countryside between the Bevano and the Ronco. On November 1st troop carriers arrived and bore it back to Riccione. There all ranks came upon a cheerless scene. "The rain, driven by a seaward gale," says the War Diary, "had literally soaked the area. All roads and yards were miniature lakes. Much water had got into the billets and things were in a sorry mess."

That concluding phrase adequately described the Adriatic operations as of that date. The weather had proved to be an even more redoubtable adversary than the terrain. Water and mud had slowed the Allied advance to a crawl at a time when the enemy was reeling, when he could not have endured much more of the sort of punishment that he had taken throughout the first two months of the Gothic Line offensive. The sodden meadows, the sticky clay of the country roads, the greasy hillsides and the brimming ditches were worth a dozen divisions to Kesselring.

General Eisenhower as Supreme Commander had ordered Eighth and Fifth armies to continue the offensive throughout the winter. On receipt of such instructions Field Marshal Alexander considered three alternate employments for the troops in the Italian theatre of operations. They could be transferred to a French front, they could undertake a campaign in Yugoslavia or they could continue to fight in Italy to the limit of exhaustion. The final alternative was adopted. It involved great hardships, particularly in the High Apennines, where the British corps entrusted with the eastern prong of Fifth Army's attack battled amid the peaks in a world of avalanches, blizzards and searing cold.

On the Adriatic front Eighth Army was weakened by the transfer of 4th Indian Division, 46th British Division and the Greek Mountain Brigade to the newly-liberated areas of Greece. The remaining divisions were greatly reduced in strength, a number of British formations being 'cannibalized' to bring others up to effective establishment. There were also grave shortages of *materiel* and particularly of ammunition; in November British field regiments had only fifteen days' stock of shells at normal rates of fire and United States gunners had even less. The Canadian Corps, better off than most, was worried over sparse reinforcements. There therefore was some ground for the feeling that at the moment when victory was within grasp Italy had become the forgotten front and that the rigours and expenditure of a hard-fought campaign were to prove of no avail.

REST AT RICCIONE

If this foreboding ever gravitated down to Battalion level, no hint of it is to be found in the Patricia records of this period. Instead, they reflect energy and optimism. Having surveyed the sodden Riccione billets all ranks set to work to repair them.

The McClure - August 26, 1904



The McClure - August 27



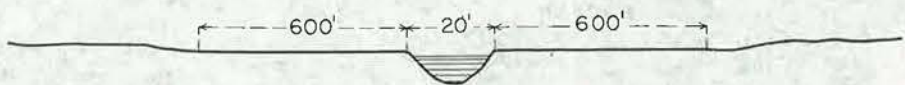
The McClure - August 28



The McClure - August 29



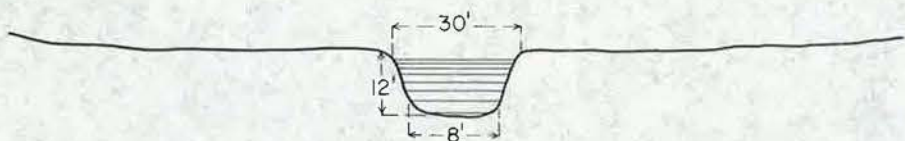
The Metauro—August 26, 1944



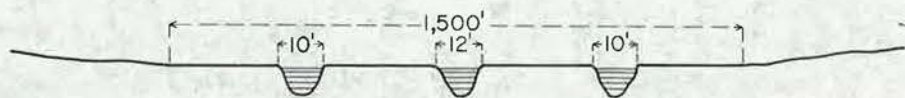
The Foglia—August 31



The Marano—September 15



The Marecchia—September 20



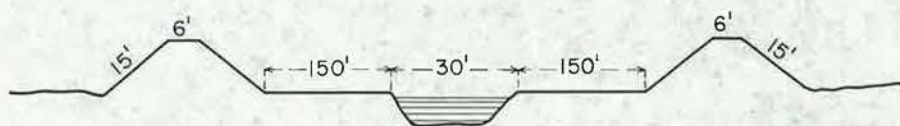
PROFILES OF

(Not drawn to scale)

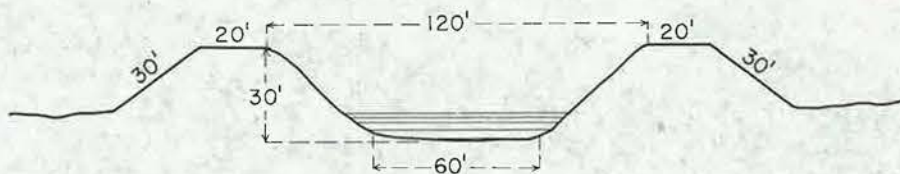
The Savio—October 20



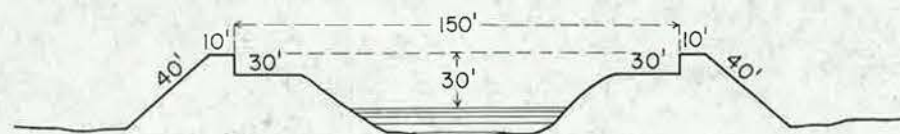
The Montone—December 4



The Lamone—December 12



The Senio—



OF THE RIVER LINES

(all measurements in feet)

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Under the eyes of the Adjutant (Capt. A. M. Mills) and of the Regimental Sergeant-Major (J. R. MacFarlane) the work was pursued with such vigour that within three days Lieut.-Colonel Clark, who never praised for praise's sake, expressed his amazement at the changes which had been wrought. A Bren carrier dragged a length of steel rail to and fro until it had smoothed out a playing field; Capt. N. Featherstone hastened to organize games; leave was opened to Florence and to Rome; another mouthpiece of the rear rank appeared under the name of THE 60th BUGLE (Its predecessors, AICIRTAP and THE BLAST, did not travel well; they had succumbed during transfers from front to front). A Regimental Officers Mess, a Sergeants Mess and a Men's Canteen were opened. On November 13th Major-General Vokes, then acting Corps Commander, took the salute at a March Past. It was the last appearance of this well-known officer, who had exchanged appointments with Major-General H. W. Foster, Commander of 4th Canadian Armoured Division. Later in the month the new Corps Commander, Lieut.-General C. Foulkes CBE DSO, paid an informal visit to 2nd Canadian Brigade.

On November 23rd "A" Company participated in an exercise at Santarcangelo with 12th Royal Tank Regiment. It involved the use of flamethrowers, a new weapon which evoked from the 'Patricias' war diarist the ecstatic comment: "This is IT." Two days later on the Riccione beaches the Mortar Platoon tossed smoke shells 2,000 yards to sea and the Anti-Tank Platoon used them as targets. That evening "C" Company, the Warrant Officers, the Sergeants and the Medium Machine-gunners held the dinners and smokers which had come to mark the end of a season of rest. On the next afternoon the Acting Commander of 1st Canadian Division gathered all officers into the Theatre Dante in Riccione and gave them the outline of the forthcoming operation. Thereafter, says the War Diary wearily, "the usual quantities of pre-operational bump began to flow towards the infantry units of this brigade."

A NEW MILITARY PROBLEM

During November V British Corps and the Polish Corps, thrusting through the Apennine foothills, had outflanked the line of the Ronco and had forced the enemy to relinquish Forli. The withdrawal, however, was no more than five miles deep and when Eighth Army found the enemy on the line of the Montone

it was confronted with a new tactical problem. The embankments of this river rose fifteen feet above the level of the plain, across which they marched as great twin ramparts. Of such floodbanks an official historian wrote:

"They are military works of first importance. They transform each river into five successive obstacles—the fortifications of two outer banks, of two inner banks and of the river itself. The soft ramparts lend themselves to burrowing, so that these high mounds may be converted into elaborate fortifications. When the threat to the Gothic Line became imminent the German military labour organization swung into action. The floodbanks were scooped out and underground accommodation provided for substantial garrisons. Longitudinal tunnels were dug and revetted with stout timbers. Leading off these galleries vertical and horizontal shafts opened on to the outer slopes of the floodbanks, like portholes in a ship. The plain was usually so flat that a weapon pit only a few feet above its level would command the approaches for hundreds of yards. The lazy meanders of the rivers made successive posts mutually supporting and allowed them to sweep a wide front with converging or enfilade fire.

"... Attacking forces were kept at a distance by belts of wire and aprons of mines. The near floodbank was breached in places, with a view to flooding the approaches if necessary. All bridges were destroyed; the garrisons of the near bank crossed on foot bridges which when not in use were swung back against the far bank. The northern or western floodbank for some inexplicable reason usually was slightly higher than the near bank. The few extra inches improved the observation of the defenders.

"Other factors complicated the problems of attack. The narrow dykes offered a meagre target for artillery and even less target for bombs. Without bridging they were impassable to tanks or vehicles. Thus to reach these floodbanks with mechanized arms presented a problem of extreme difficulty; to storm them, a grim task indeed."*

Such difficulties did not daunt the Allied planners. As always a new form of defense bred a new form of attack. The three-fold problem of seizing a floodbanked river line—to approach, to cross and to consolidate—had received careful study, and innovations had been introduced to retain the initiative. The approach was protected by artillery and machine guns deployed to the flanks

* "The Tiger Triumphs" (H.M. Stationery Office).

of the sector under attack; it became possible to shoot down the line of the floodbanked river in such a manner that the infantry advanced into a protective cone of fire. By careful surveys the inner slopes of the floodbanks could be shelled without danger to assault troops on the outer bank. Kangaroos (armoured troop carriers) were used to transport the assault infantry to within a few yards of the floodbanks. For the extirpation of enemy garrisons in the underground warrens of the embankments Crocodiles and Wasps (Churchill tanks and Bren carriers converted to mechanical flamethrowers) and Lifebuoys (manual flamethrowers) would be used to smother the slopes in burning oil and to force flames into the gun shafts and ports of the banks.

For the crossing of the floodbanked river the principal innovation was a variation of the Ark bridge. Instead of a tank carrying a span to the edge of the river and then propelling it across one tank was first sunk in the bed of the river. Thereafter a second tank bearing the span drove on to its back and a bridge was opened for traffic upon a central pier two tanks deep.

OPERATION CHUCKLE

The new Canadian operation was called CHUCKLE but it promised to be no laughing matter. The general intention was to capture Bologna by a general offensive involving four corps of Eighth Army. The task of the Canadian Corps was the capture of the Montone and Lamone river lines and an advance to the Senio, whose high floodbanks held the most formidable of all the enemy's prepared positions. This operation envisaged a gain of twelve miles across a countryside with more canals than Venice, and whose narrow built-up roadways offered the only feasible routes of approach for either tracks or wheels. On return from a Montone reconnaissance a Patricia officer wrote: "The ground is monotonously flat, intersected by a network of drainage ditches, with heavily cultivated fields oozing with sticky mud. All bridges have been blown, the roads cratered and the paths mined. The Montone, a sludgy stream, is no great obstacle, but inside the flood walls a soft mud bottom extends on either side of the watercourse. The distance between the floodbanks is about three hundred feet. The enemy has breached the banks in places and for a thousand yards the approaches are under water. The built-up roadways leading to the river are well ranged by artillery and machine guns."

CHUCKLE called for the Canadian divisions to attack upon diverging axes, but to maintain contact by fanning out as the Corps front widened. After 3rd Canadian Brigade had established a bridgehead beyond the Montone both divisions would pass through—5th Canadian Armoured Division to swing to the east to isolate Ravenna and 1st Canadian Infantry Division to drive into the northwest until it made contact on the banks of the Senio with 56th (London) Division advancing from the Faenza area.

On the morning of December 2nd 3rd Canadian Brigade against light resistance crossed the Montone. Pressing on as soon as the tanks began to pass through the infantry reached the line of the Lamone that night. Here 1st Canadian Brigade took over and attacked. Bitter fighting followed during which the Canadians gained and lost a footing on the far bank. Ravenna fell to 27th Lancers, now under command of 5th Canadian Armoured Division, but General Hoffmeister's men also found the Lamone a tough nut to crack. It was not until the night of December 10th/11th, after protracted and costly fighting, that the enemy gave ground and both Canadian divisions were established beyond that river.

A mile and a bit beyond the Lamone lay the Naviglio Canal. It now was dry, for the Germans had dammed it at Faenza to increase the flow of the Lamone; nevertheless its dykes constituted a formidable obstacle when they had been fortified. Once again a fierce battle broke out and it was only after forty-eight hours' fighting that 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades established themselves on the far bank of the Canal. The enemy counter-attacked with fury, for he was intent on holding his Lamone-Naviglio positions. In this fighting those old friends of Campobasso, the Desert Air Force, intervened with great effect in diving attacks with rockets and machine guns. By the middle of December it seemed as though two-thirds of the Canadian task had been accomplished and there only remained to close up on the Senio. The Germans, however, continued in stubborn mood; they were not prepared except as a last resort to give ground.

THE PATRICIA ROLE—MOPPING UP

During this period 2nd Canadian Brigade had not been committed. On the night of December 1st the Patricias moved by road convoy from Riccione to a concentration area to the north of the Bevano river. Here camouflage was used to conceal their

ivouacs. Two nights later they shifted eight miles to the west and took over from the Royal Canadian Regiment which went forward to participate in the attack on the Montone. On the following day they followed the victorious 1st Brigade across that stream and occupied an encampment three miles south of Russi. Here they remained for five days, awaiting the outcome of the assault on the Lamone. The weather was raw and showery, the billets damp and cheerless.

Although in a reserve role 2nd Canadian Brigade was responsible for the security of the countryside on the left flank rear of the divisional battlefront—territory that was known to harbour pockets of the enemy. In the course of numerous Patricia patrols a number of clashes occurred. On December 9th a German post on the east bank of the Lamone, about 1,500 yards west of the Battalion encampment, was engaged by an "A" Company patrol. On the following day a German officer leading a scouting group was killed by another patrol from this company. A close watch was kept on Cotignola, about four miles to the northwest of the Patricia base, where there was known to be a substantial enemy garrison. In addition, should 3rd Brigade fail to force the Lamone at the site of the present fighting, 2nd Brigade might be ordered to cross higher up the river. These contingencies kept the Patricias alert and busy, so that constant activity mitigated the discomforts of the chill and drab surroundings.

The scouts and snipers, reconnoitring the Lamone in case a second site for a crossing should be needed, could not find a suitable ford; but they discovered a damaged railway bridge upon which infantry could cross. The approach to the river was bare and open; as at the Savio the fields ran at right angles to the embankments, so that the canes, pollards and ditches which divided them afforded no cover. The Lamone floodbanks were unusually thick, their crests accommodating both foot and bicycle paths.

DRIVE ON BAGNACAVALLO

When the enemy defenses on three successive water lines had been breached it was time for 2nd Brigade to enter the battle. On December 12th the Patricias closed up on the Lamone. On the following day they marched three miles downstream to Craversara, crossed on a raft bridge and occupied an encampment halfway between the river and the Naviglio Canal. They now were within range of the enemy; soon after arrival their billeting area was mortared and a supporting tank was destroyed by a direct hit.

Although no more than a narrow corridor remained between the Naviglio and the Senio the Germans continued to hold it and to press in on either side of the Canadian bridgehead. On December 14th the Patricias were ordered to relieve this pressure by clearing the countryside for about a mile on the left flank of the divisional sector. The designated line of advance would bring the Battalion to the Naviglio Canal at the point where it served as a moat to Bagnacavallo, a small walled town which had been spared demolition and which provided a fortress position from which the Germans sallied to harass the attacking forces.

"B" Company led off on this drive to the west. It flushed no enemies. On the night of December 13th/14th "D" Company took over and found better hunting. 16 Platoon under command of Lieut. W. E. Harrington overran a machine-gun post and afterwards stalked and destroyed a Panther tank, capturing its crew of five and decamping rapidly under heavy fire in the light of the burning panzer. In the course of other clashes that night Lieut. C. S. Frost and Capt. S. Worobetz, a popular and efficient Medical Officer, were wounded. At midnight "C" Company passed through "D" Company and continued the sweep.

It then was "B" Company's turn once more. When Lieut. V. S. Allen and his men approached a group of buildings they were fired upon; whereupon the officer told off two sections to give covering fire while with the remainder of his men he charged the enemy nest. Resistance was too strong; when the platoon withdrew Lieut. Allen and three of his men were missing. Their graves were found afterwards. "A" Company then took up the running and having located an enemy post destroyed it in the small hours of December 15th, taking a number of prisoners.

On the evening of December 16th the Carleton and York Regiment relieved the Patricias, who marched a mile to the north-east and took over from the Royal 22e Regiment. The left flank of the new position rested on the Ravenna-Lugo railway embankment. Here there was almost continuous bickering, for the Germans had dug weapon pits on either side of the embankment. "B" Company drew the hot corner, with "C" Company in a brick factory in the centre and with "A" Company on the far flank.

By now the Patricias had become accustomed to these bush-whacking operations and were getting a grim satisfaction out of them. They were better men than their enemies at this sort

of warfare and they had greater resources. "For every round the Hun has the temerity to fire," wrote an officer, "we reply with ten." When the Germans had lost several stalking matches along the railway embankment they transferred their attentions to the opposite Patricia flank. Here on the night of December 17th/18th they tried to infiltrate between "A" Company's outposts. The sentries were alert and the raiders withdrew after suffering a number of casualties.

On the night of December 13th/14th the Seaforths and the Loyal Edmontons had crossed the Naviglio and had assumed responsibility for the bridgehead. The next task was to widen the breach in the enemy's defenses by ousting him from his strongholds along the western bank of the Canal. This was a two-brigade task—3rd Brigade to work downstream, 2nd Brigade upstream. The upstream operation was a pincer movement, for while 2nd Brigade was moving south 56th (London) Division would be advancing north. If the enemy stood obstinately in the corridor between the water lines he might be taken between two fires.

FIERCE FIGHTING ON THE NAVIGLIO

At 2000 hours on December 18th the Patricias were relieved opposite Bagnacavallo by the Royal Canadian Dragoons and withdrew to an encampment near Traversara to make ready for MAROON—the code name of the new operation beyond the Canal.

Early in the following evening they crossed the Naviglio about 3,000 yards north of Bagnacavallo. They then swung to the left with "C" Company in the lead and headed for their first objective—1,000 yards beyond the crossing. Here it was planned to establish a firm base for the drive into the south.

The plan of advance called for 13 Platoon under Lieut. W. D. L. Roach to push through to the firm base area, leaving enemy pockets of resistance to be mopped up by 15 Platoon which would follow up under command of Lieut. M. Garritty. Lieut. Roach and his men came under fire almost as soon as they set out but by changing direction and taking advantage of the cover of the bramble-filled ditches they worked their way forward for upwards of two hours. When they approached the road junction that had been designated as their objective they were detected

by an enemy sentry. He was shot but gave the alarm; whereupon intense fire opened from weapon pits surrounding a house which commanded the road junction. Enemy mortars joined in.

Lieut. Roach and his men dashed to the attack. They gained the shelter of the house but a machine-gun continued to fire from its rear. The platoon commander led the attack that silenced it, killing its crew. Entering the building the Patricias found themselves in what had been a local headquarters. Several wounded Germans lay in an inner room under the care of a medical orderly. On arrival Major R. W. Potts dispatched Lieut. Roach to station outlying outposts. In a momentary lull he switched on his electric torch to scan his map. Apparently one or more enemy tanks or self-propelled guns had crept up to point-blank range; on the flicker of light a series of shells crashed through the building.* Its upper floor collapsed; Major Potts, painfully wounded, was dug out from under the rubble. As the wireless set had been destroyed he dispatched Sgt. C. D. Spiers to Battalion Headquarters to report and on Lieut. Roach's return he handed over command to his subaltern.

Lieut. Roach could smell counter-attack in the air. He immediately made dispositions to meet it. Out of the night groups of Germans dashed to the close, seeking to overwhelm the small garrison. The young officer took charge in magnificent fashion, rushing from post to post to encourage and to direct the defense. Inspired by his example his men gave no ground and beat off two successive assaults. The enveloping force was estimated at company strength; against it stood no more than a dozen Patricia riflemen.

Meanwhile 15 Platoon had followed up and had clashed with the enemy dispositions that 13 Platoon had evaded. Fierce fire, including mortars and shells, swept Lieut. Garritty and his men to ground. Whereupon Cpl. J. McGrath took charge in a fashion which will long be remembered.

He pinpointed an enemy machine gun post 150 yards ahead and worked to within half that distance before ordering his section to give covering fire. Together with L/Cpl. J. H. Fleming he dashed for the post, closed and killed three machine gunners. When fired on from a nearby weapon pit McGrath again placed

* Major Potts comments: "I hit the deck and I recall having one shell go through the wall so close to my head that I saw the gun flash of the next round through the hole, without taking my chin off the floor."

his men in position to cover him and again he and Fleming charged. Well-thrown grenades finished off the defenders.

Fleming was wounded. McGrath took him on his shoulders but before he could regain shelter a mortar bomb killed the wounded man and dazed his rescuer. McGrath was ordered out of action by his platoon sergeant; instead of going back he found 14 Platoon and persuaded Sgt. Spiers to join him in a go at a third weapon pit. They stalked the German machine-gunners who surrendered. Next morning, when an enemy counter-attack struck at "C" Company, McGrath was busy once more. He organized an ambush and with the help of three comrades he killed or wounded four Germans and took 14 prisoners. In a final and splendid act of valour he went out under fire and brought in Fleming's body.

On receiving Sgt. Spiers' report Lieut.-Colonel Clark ordered "A" and "D" Companies to close up and to be prepared to enter the fighting. Nevertheless he felt "C" Company to be competent to handle the situation. So it proved; at 0430 hours Lieut. Roach reported his situation as "Snug." Whereupon the Patricia commander sent "D" Company into close support of "C" Company and ordered "A" Company to thrust on to the second Battalion objective, which had been given the code name of MOOR.

Capt. N. Featherstone and his men came under fire soon after setting out, being shelled at close range by self-propelled guns. The attack bogged down short of "C" Company's position and here "A" Company remained throughout the day under harassing fire. When at 1430 hours "D" Company, under cover of a smoke screen, attempted to advance on a line closer to the Naviglio Canal, the leading platoon was ambushed. On a first count of survivors Lieut. W. E. Harrington and a number of men were reported missing but almost all found their way to safety within twenty-four hours.

During the same evening "C" Company Headquarters was so heavily bombarded that Lieut. Roach was obliged to evacuate the building. Among the casualties was Lieut. M. Garritty, who was killed.

In spite of the determination of the tenacious enemy to contain the break-in force our courage carried the day. At 2100 hours on the evening of the 20th "A" Company moved to the attack

behind massive artillery support. It overran MOOR, capturing prisoners and a self-propelled gun. The success of this assault owed a great deal to Lieut. G. W. Grant and CSM J. H. Woods DCM. "B" Company at midnight passed through "A" Company and occupied a group of buildings 300 yards further south. At dawn "D" Company was at it again; Major Crofton and his men passed through "B" Company and ejected the enemy from other buildings commanding the Patricia positions.

As tanks supported the infantry in these 'inching forward' operations protracted stands by the enemy, with an ever-narrowing corridor of escape, grew progressively more dangerous. After the fighting at MOOR resistance diminished until it became token and formal. During the afternoon of December 21st "B" and "C" Companies set out abreast and against light opposition worked southward until they reached a cemetery 500 yards north of Bagnacavallo. That same day the Carleton and Yorks Regiment entered that town from the southeast.*

LULL AND CHRISTMAS

While the Patricias had been making headway the Loyal Edmontons had kept pace on their right but only after stern fighting. In spite of the loss of Bagnacavallo the enemy showed no inclination to relinquish the remainder of the corridor which separated 1st Canadian and 56th (London) Divisions. To the north 11th Canadian Infantry Brigade had broken out of the Naviglio bridgehead on the evening of December 9th and had battled forward to the line of the Senio, but the task of 5th Canadian Armoured Division would not be completed until it had cleared the enemy from the coastal sector to the south of Lake Commachio, a great marshy lagoon which ate into the solid soil of Italy to the south of the many mouths of the Po. For both Canadian divisions, therefore, there was unfinished business to be transacted and at least one more set-piece operation would be necessary.

As Christmas approached the leading question was—would the attack be resumed immediately or later? It may have been the spirit of the season that influenced the decision but it is more probable that the Allied High Command considered that the much-battered German divisions, if given the opportunity, would

* As the site of this battle was differentiated only by the code names MAROON and MOOR the application for a Battle Honour described the operation as FOSSO MUNIO, a small canal which lay on the right of the 2nd Brigade line of advance.

retire behind the Senio of their own accord. In any event on December 21st a stand fast order came down from Corps and for the time being the battle was over. The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, who had not been heavily engaged, took over 2nd Brigade's front. The Loyal Edmontons were withdrawn for rest and reorganization and the Patricias moved to a reserve area about 4,000 yards east of Bagnacavallo.

Patricia casualties in the Naviglio operations were 2 officers and 23 other ranks killed or died of wounds; 2 officers and 57 other ranks wounded; 3 other ranks missing. 108 prisoners had been taken. The Battalion game book was augmented by a Panther tank, two self-propelled guns and a German staff car.*

Of all Allied troops in Italy only the Canadians, who probably appreciated snow most, were denied a white Christmas. The best was made of the slush and the mud and the day lacked nothing of good cheer. In traditional style the men were served by the officers and sergeants; the menu contained the seasonal delicacies and there were four bottles of beer per man. "Each company," says the War Diary, "had its own witches' brew of punch, containing many and varied ingredients." Brigadier Hamilton Gault had supplied cigarettes for all ranks. The Band came forward and serenaded the companies. The cordial atmosphere would seem to have seeped to the far bank of the Senio; the Corps diarist wrote:

"The Germans serenaded the Seaforths of Canada with carols on Christmas Eve. One Jerry put his head over the river dyke for long enough to wish the Canadians a guttural 'Merry Christmas.' Our troops replied with their version of 'Froehliche Weihnacht.' Encouraged, the Germans tried a little propaganda, calling on our men to surrender. Our counter-propaganda was an artillery 'stonk' on the German positions."

In the last week of the year quiet reigned over the sodden fields of the Romagna. An officer wrote: "No gains anywhere. Both sides sit watching each other, waiting for a move which may or may not take place. The front is so quiet that a staff officer went all the way in daylight forward to an observation pit 50 yards from the Senio and there watched our planes attack the reverse slope of the rear bank. Yet he did not draw enemy fire."

* This staff car became a Battalion pride. It was smuggled out of Italy when the Patricias left for Northwestern Europe.

This halt in the struggle was no more than a rest between rounds. In four months' steady fighting the Eighth Army had driven the enemy more than sixty miles and had ousted him from fortified terrain which every device of military engineering had made strong. During this great offensive the Germans had lost two men for every Allied casualty. Yet at the end of the year Kesselring was able to muster twenty-seven divisions, of which only one had a bad fighting record, while only twenty divisions remained under General Mark Clark's command. With a threatened manpower shortage there was no dividend in slogging through the Romagna acre by acre. On December 30th it was announced that the Senio would constitute Eighth Army's winter line.

THE 'TIDYING-UP' OPERATIONS

The essential 'tidying-up' operations on both flanks were put in train as soon as Christmas was over. In the first days of January 5th Canadian Armoured Division, in a brilliant cavalry-type operation worthy of Rommel at his best, ploughed through the German lines, scattered or destroyed the defenders and cleared the ground up to the Reno, whose last miles carry Senio water to the sea.

On New Year's Day Lieut.-Colonel Clark was given the Patricias' assignment. On the southern Canadian flank the enemy still held Granarolo, a small compact town on the western bank of the Naviglio Canal. This outpost covered the German concentration at Cotignola, three miles to the northeast. 2nd Brigade would establish a new crossing opposite Granarolo, isolate the town and afterwards occupy it. This plan was based on Bagnacavallo experience, which had shown that enemy detached forces would persist in harassing tactics as long as they had bolt-holes nearby to which they might withdraw if severely pressed. Without firm bases, however, they were less willing to take chances. If Granarolo fell it seemed probable that the Germans would withdraw without further resistance from the corridor between the British and Canadian corps.

On the morning of January 2nd the Patricias moved to a concentration area four miles to the southeast of Granarolo. Contact was made with 6th Cheshires, the right flank battalion of 56th (London) Division, whose advance would synchronize with that of 1st Canadian Division. The Patricia attack would go

n behind a creeping barrage, with "A" and "C" Companies leading. "B" Company would follow up to aid in the consolidation and "D" Company would remain in reserve.

THE GRANAROLO BATTLE

The Granarolo operation, as mounted at 1700 hours on January 3rd, was one of those occasions in which everything went as by clockwork. The barrage was steady and easy to follow; there was no resistance except scattered small-arms fire; the Canal was crossed without difficulty and by 2130 hours the leading companies reported that they were on their objectives with light casualties. 55 prisoners had been taken. Whereupon "B" Company passed through "A" Company and occupied a road junction 400 yards west of the Canal. Here a self-propelled gun and a German staff car were captured and here, when a quick German counter-attack was thrown in, Pte. Jacob Brown distinguished himself. All too well illuminated by a burning haystack this courageous soldier singlehandedly disputed the advance of an enemy self-propelled gun; when his PIAT bombs had been exhausted he opened on the escorting infantry with his light machine gun and routed them. In a series of clashes throughout the night "B" Company suffered a number of casualties, including Lieut. W. A. Groome killed and Lieut. G. D. M. Nicholson wounded. Other ranks' casualties amounted to 3 killed, 17 wounded and 3 missing.*

The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, following up closely, passed through the Patricias' bridgehead and swung to the right along the western bank of the Canal. The Loyal Edmontons with equal precision closed up from the east and Granarolo was caught between two fires. On the left 44th Reconnaissance Regiment of 56th (London) Division lent a hand with the wounded and prisoners, thus lightening the traffic on the narrow roads to the east of the Canal. Thus in this operation every individual performance dovetailed smoothly into the ensemble of victory. Resistance was shattered at a blow and such of the enemy as escaped hared back swiftly to the shelter of the Senior defenses.

It is inevitable that the story of almost any battle focuses upon the firing line. There the shock is taken, there the drama unfolds and there the fight is lost or won. As a result it sometimes

* Among those killed at Granarolo was Sgt. W. R. Howard, one of the most highly-regarded non-commissioned officers of the Battalion.

is forgotten that a battle has depth as well as breadth and that performances in the rear often count for as much as what happens in the van of the attack.

At Granarolo "D" Company (left out of action) and the Patricia Pioneers (so often unsung) contributed greatly to the success of the operation. The approaches to the Naviglio Canal in the battle sector were typical Romagna countryside—low-lying fields checkerboarded with drainage ditches, with the existing roads built up to well above ground level and scarcely wide enough for two vehicles to pass. As all three battalions of 2nd Brigade were engaged on a front of less than a mile only one road could be allotted to each battalion; and in view of the speed with which the enemy usually struck back with tanks and self-propelled guns it was of prime importance that support weapons should move forward on the heels of the infantry.

As soon as the attack opened Lieut. J. H. Horton, Pioneer Officer, hurried to inspect the road which had been allotted to the Patricias. It was under fire; in addition the enemy before withdrawal had cratered it. An armoured bulldozer and an Ark bridge were sent forward, but before these heavy pieces could be moved the road had to be swept for mines. A number of Teller mines were discovered so firmly embedded in the surface of the roadway that all attempts to remove them by hand failed. A tow was attached to individual mines; the tow-bar bent, the mines did not give.

Lieut. Horton set charges to explode them but only one mine obliged. Heavier charges were prepared, and the mines blew up with a resounding blast. The bulldozer and the Ark bridge lumbered forward. The Naviglio was of no great width or depth but its dykes rose about six feet above ground level; they were impassable to tracks or wheels. Lieut. Horton brought up more charges, blew the dykes inward and used the rubble as filling for his crossing. All this was done at great speed, working against time and under fire.

It was not enough to stand by and to wait for the road to be opened, as it was known that the Germans had tanks in close support of their outpost lines. Lieut. A. B. McKinnon of "D" Company was given a taper bore two-pounder and was told to use his native wits in getting it forward. He and his men manhandled the piece for 1,000 yards across the fields, surmounting

n route three drainage ditches and a railway embankment. Shortly after midnight they reached the Canal. In two hours they built their own crossing; they were constantly under fire. Having dragged the weapon to the far bank they were given the location of the forward companies and were told that the available road was mined. By this time the extempore gun crew had had enough of cross-country routes. Lieut. McKinnon walked ahead and tested the road; the gun followed in tow of a jeep. At 0845 hours it was delivered to "B" Company.*

WINTER WATCH ON THE SENIO

On January 5th the Granarolo operation was adjudged to be completed. A move to the north of Bagnacavallo followed. The Patricias led the way, the Loyal Edmontons and the Seaforths handing over the liberated territory to units of 56th (London) Division and following a few days later. The new 2nd Brigade front extended along the east bank of the Senio from the Lugo railway embankment to a mile beyond Fusignano—a distance of 9,000 yards.

On January 9th Brigadier Bogert laid down the policy to be observed in this tour of duty. The Canadians would not look for trouble but neither would they avoid it; if the enemy crossed the river or grew belligerent they would be dealt with. Princess Louise Dragoon Guards had been taken under Brigade command and would serve as infantry.

Early in this tour ensued the unusual incident of negotiations with the enemy. It had been reported that the hospital in Fusignano was being put to military purposes. By means of leaflets the Germans were ordered to evacuate it or take the consequences. In response indignant envoys under a white flag crossed into 2nd Brigade lines and offered to submit the hospital to Canadian inspection. It was found to be occupied solely by civilians but there was some evidence that at one time its upper floor had been used for observation purposes.†

* Lieut. McKinnon's day was not yet over. As he and his men retraced their steps a British fighter plane crashed in a nearby field and burst into flames. Ordering his men to stand back because of exploding ammunition the officer climbed into the cockpit and dragged out the badly-burned pilot.

† Enemy stretcher bearers had taken to walking along the eastern floodbank, ostensibly in search of casualties. A number were intercepted and were found to be without the identification cards required by the Geneva Convention. They were told what would happen to them if this practice continued.

On January 6th the Patricias relieved the Royal Canadian Dragoons in the central sector of the Brigade front, a few hundred yards short of the near floodbank of the Senio. This great dyke stood thirty-five feet above the level of the plain; on its inner slope was a firestep ten yards wide. The river was muddy and deep and the trough of the river was 150 feet from crest to crest of the floodbanks. Between the floodbanks and the forward Patricia positions were numerous groups of farm buildings which from time to time sheltered enemy patrols and outposts. These light forces were active on the Canadian side of the river and it had become a matter of prestige to maintain them. Sometimes they penetrated the Canadian front to considerable depths.

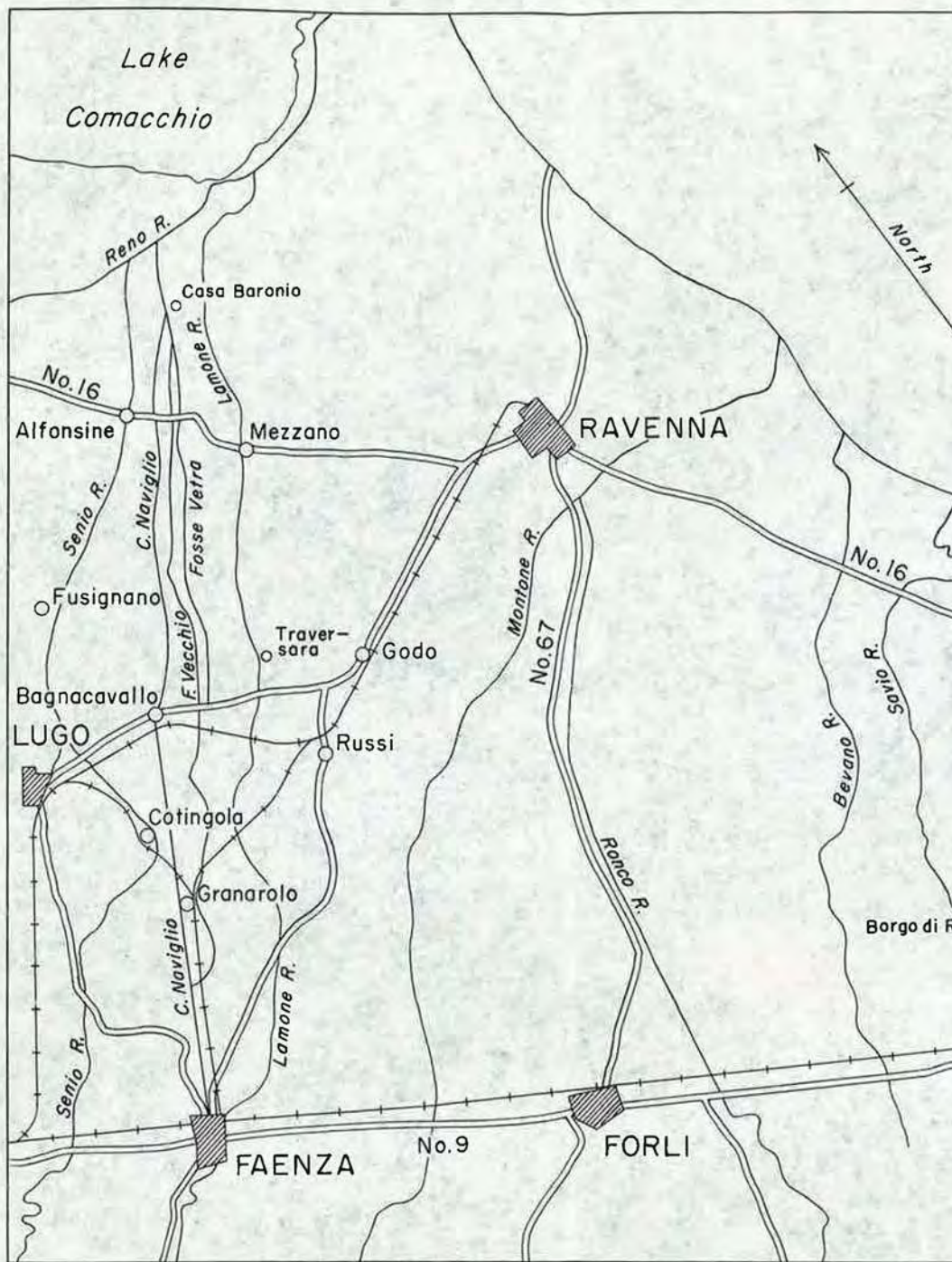
On January 9th, three days after the first snow had fallen, a Patricia wiring and mine-laying party was fired upon by a German patrol dressed in white suits. Three days later "A" Company lost a number of men in another encounter. On January 17th, after five days of heavy fog, both "A" and "D" Companies engaged in firefights in which casualties were inflicted on both sides. This reversion to static warfare, far from depressing the Patricias, stimulated them; there was an individual flavour about it that they liked. The German habit of trundling Teller mines down the outer slopes of the floodbanks was deplored by those told off to patrol the river lines, but the Canadians also had their methods. The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, for instance, took great pride in a sling shot made out of the crotch of a tree and the inner tube of a tire; this modern arbalest hurled heavy grenades as much as 300 yards. The diarist of this fine Regiment wrote:

"With no more than a fifteen foot No-Man's-Land along the Senio dyke the strangeness soon wore off. Our men have grown increasingly bold until the customary Canadian inability to take the war seriously has turned the whole thing into a joke. Suggested improvisations range from grenades tied together up to bicycles and even motor cars loaded with high explosive; they may be costly to the taxpayer but certainly they will be damaging to Hun morale and improving to our own. The end of the Senio tour will find the Regiment in better spirit than for a long time."

THE COASTAL FLANK

On January 18th a brigade interchange began. The Royal 22e Regiment relieved the Patricias, who moved eight miles to the northwest and occupied billets to the south of Mezzano on the





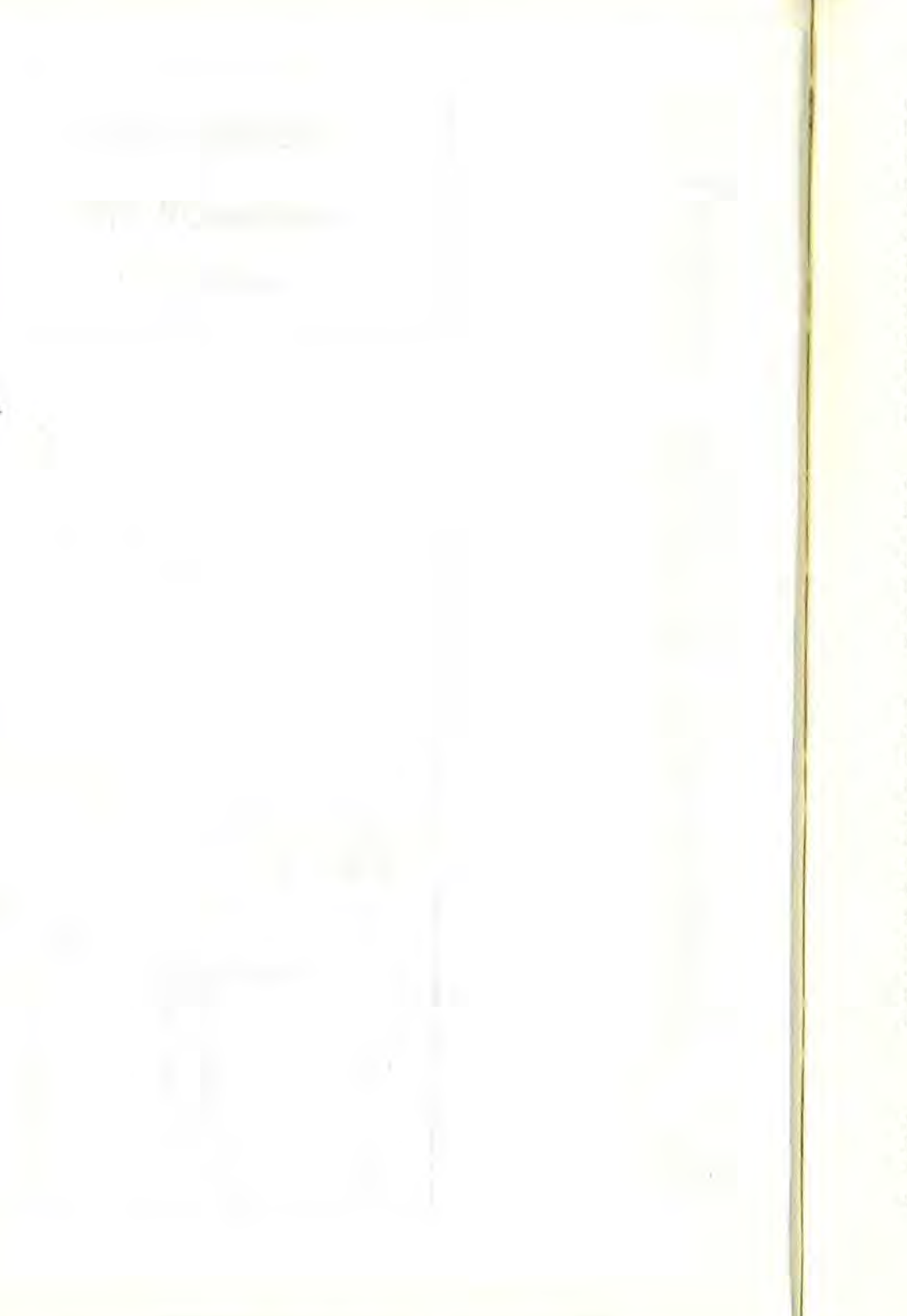
FIVE MONTHS IN THE ROMAGNA

Scale of Miles



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main coastal highway. The Senio lay three miles to the north but the intervening countryside had been well ranged by enemy artillery; Patricia officers found it difficult to believe that a series of shells, arriving so soon after themselves, could have been entirely coincidental.* The Gruppo Combattimento Cremona, an enthusiastic but not always reliable Italian formation, had taken over the territory to the north of the coastal highway. 2nd Brigade not only had its own sector to guard; it also had to hold one battalion in position to intervene should the enemy take too many liberties with the Italians. On arrival the Patricias were allotted this reserve or counter-attack role, while the Loyal Edmontons and Seaforths went forward to relieve the brigade in the line.

The front lay 5,000 yards behind the Senio, at a point where three canals, the Fosso Vetro, the Fosso Vecchio and the Naviglio, converged before emptying into the Reno river. The Fosso Vetro was a dry ditch with low dykes similar to those of the Naviglio; the Fosso Vecchio, on the other hand, had a trough fifteen feet deep with flood banks eight feet high. These watercourses were the outworks of the Senio defensive system. German patrols constantly were on the move along and between them.

On January 27th the Corps Commander visited the Brigade area and took a hand in local dispositions by ordering the Patricias to a new location to the east of the brigade front; formerly they had been to its south. The Battalion was due for a move in any case, for the relief of the Loyal Edmontons had been arranged for the following night. That evening three Patricia companies encamped on low ground to the west of the Lamone river. Next morning at dawn the Loyal Edmontons raided a troublesome group of houses on their front. They lost several men as prisoners; lest security be compromised the projected relief was postponed for twenty-four hours. At last light on January 29th the Patricias took over a deserted and cheerless sector about 800 yards to the east of the dykes of the Fosso Vecchio. The countryside was flat and bare, broken only by scattered groups of farmhouses.

MISFORTUNE AT CASA BARONI

These farmhouses were points of contact and bones of contention. Each night both sides sent out patrols to occupy or to investigate them. Sometimes the result was a profitable ambush

* The rear rank rumour was that the Drums had annoyed the enemy with music too soon after reveille.

but quite as often the presence of enemies was detected in advance and artillery concentrations turned the tables. An officer wrote: "A big, strong house is comfortable and convenient as a headquarters, but in no time at all the big, strong guns will begin to range on it."

The Patricias, like their predecessors, were committed to the offensive. The first task was to pay off a score on behalf of the Loyal Edmontons who had been treated so roughly before relief. The scene of this encounter had been the Casa Baroni, a group of houses on the bank of Fosso Vecchio slightly to the right of the Patricia sector. Plans for attack were delayed by a misfortune to the Gruppo Combattimento Cremona on the Brigade right flank; in essaying the offensive the Italians not only had gained no ground but had lost part of their front line. When this situation had been restored the Patricias directed their attention to Casa Baroni anew.

At 0200 hours on February 3rd a heavy shoot crashed on this group of buildings and on the adjoining dykes of the Fosso Vecchio. Medium machine guns laid down a protective cone of fire beyond the objective. "C" Company closed up; as the shoot lifted 14 Platoon under Lieut. N. J. Lewis and 15 Platoon under Sgt. H. Jones dashed in. The enemy garrison fled helter-skelter for the shelter of the dykes, but when 14 Platoon entered the first of the houses a delayed charge brought down the building, burying a number of men in the rubble. When the remainder of the platoon rushed to the aid of their comrades a perfectly ranged salvo of mortar shells dropped on them. Parties of "A" Company were sent out to carry in those who had not been pinned down; after first light others who had been buried were dug out under a Red Cross flag. It had been a costly affair. Lieut. Lewis and an officer attached from the Jewish Infantry Brigade Group had been wounded, six other ranks had been killed and 26 wounded. One man was missing.

That evening the Patricias were relieved by the Royal Canadian Regiment and withdrew to Russi. There the Battalion resumed its counter-attack role. A quiet and uneventful week followed. On the afternoon of February 10th the Patricias embussed to return to their old stamping ground on the Senio to the northwest of Bagnacavallo. Here "D" Company took a platoon of partisans under command.* The Italians wandered

* These irregulars were not highly regarded. Some of them were said to be still wearing their Fascist membership buttons.

about at night and occasionally brought in prisoners—usually impressed non-Germans who had been awaiting an opportunity to desert. The Patricia sector was quiet, which was the luck of war, since on either flank there was trouble to spare. A new and mettlesome enemy formation, 298th Infantry Division, had come into the line and had begun to patrol aggressively.

On February 9th a sharp attack fell on the Gruppo Combattimento Cremona on 2nd Brigade's right flank. The Italians lost their forward positions and suffered heavily. The next incursion came on the southern flank of the Canadians with very different results. There the Germans caught Tartars in a battalion of Gurkhas of 43rd Lorried Brigade which chased the raiders back to the river, dug in on the outer bank and made life miserable for the garrison in their warrens a few yards away. On February 24th the enemy finally tried his luck against the Canadians. A heavy attack swept against the Loyal Edmontons and Seaforths and only after several hours' hard fighting did the Germans withdraw to their own side of the river.

During this period the Patricias were not molested and such war as existed was mostly of their making. The Battalion snipers claimed a number of victims when concentration shoots drove enemy outposts into the open. PIATS proved useful in demolishing unsuspected buildings. Three enemy gun positions were identified in shafts dug through from the inner bank of the Senio; a medium gun was brought forward and dealt with them in flat trajectory. A German aircraft for the first time in months dropped bombs on a Patricia position and fled through veritable fountains of fire. A German patrol which endeavoured to infiltrate was detected and repulsed with loss. During these minor transactions with the enemy only two men were lost, yet total casualties for the fortnight's tour of duty were eighteen. In an unusual series of accidents two men were blown up while arming grenades, eight men were injured when a booby-trapping party tripped on its own wires and six others were hurt when faulty ammunition caused Battalion mortar shells to fall on Patricia outposts.

Throughout the month the weather continued sunny and mild. When on February 25th 5th Royal West Kents of 8th Indian Division arrived to relieve the Patricias the air was balmy with the promise of spring. The Battalion embussed and rolled southward through the night. At 0300 hours the troop carriers drew

into the staging post at Cesanatico, on the coastal highway thirteen miles to the north of Rimini.

A NEW THEATRE

Without formality, little knowing and little caring, the Patricias had said goodbye to the river lines and farewell to the Adriatic front. They were about to make their adieux to Italy. On February 9th the Army Commander, Lieut.-General McCreery, had met senior Canadian officers in Ravenna. He told them that five divisions, including I Canadian Corps, had been chosen for transfer to Northwestern Europe. 5th Canadian Armoured Division already was on its way.

Reunion of all Canadian forces under the aegis of First Canadian Army was a consummation devoutly to be desired. Yet having come so far in the Mediterranean theatre many officers and men would have liked to have seen the end of the job. It manifestly was so near. Six weeks and a day after the Patricias left the river lines the kill came. Behind the greatest artillery bombardment ever fired in Italy, British, Indian and New Zealand divisions stormed the Senio and Santerno defenses. Fifth Army attacked in Tuscany; the Poles broke through on Eighth Army's left and raced for Bologna; a British commando brigade took to Lake Comacchio in amphibious craft and cut the enemy line of retreat behind the Argenta Gap. Under an avalanche of blows the German armies in Italy staggered; within a week they were dying. With victory in the air Eighth Army took the Po in its stride and drove on Venice and Trieste. "*Guerra e finita*," screamed the Italian crowds in the streets as long columns of infantry and guns surged into the north to utter victory.

On April 22nd 230,000 Germans in Italy laid down their arms. Six days later an Indian armoured car returned to report that far up on the wall of the Alps, on a rocky hillside under snowy peaks, a German formation had dug in and was prepared to fight to the death. Or, at least, it would not surrender to anyone less than a divisional commander. A general was found and hurried forward; on the mountainside all that remained of the Canadians' greatest antagonist, 1st Parachute Division, formed up, laid down its arms and marched into captivity.

LAST TREK IN ITALY

By then the Patricias were far away. On February 27th GOLDFLAKE Operation—the change of fronts—began. That

ight the Battalion fetched up at San Benedetto, 20 miles south of Pesaro. Here Lieut.-Colonel Clark was in receipt of congratulations on the award of the Distinguished Service Order. It had been given for his services at the Naviglio Canal operations. His officers and men knew that it had been amply earned on a dozen occasions.

At San Benedetto there was a wait of five days. On March 10th the troop carriers wound their way across the Apennines to Foligno where an Italian barracks provided comfortable billets. The next stop was Pontassieve, at the bend of the Arno to the east of Florence. A short run brought the column to an encampment in pine woods on the outskirts of Pisa. A former Fifth Army staging post, this camp was well-found and comfortable.

For six days all ranks took their ease. They then embussed for the short run to the docks at Leghorn, where they embarked on March 12th/13th. The embarkation roster of key officers was as follows:*

COMMANDING OFFICER—Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Clark DSO
 SECOND-IN-COMMAND—Major S. A. Cobbett
 ADJUTANT—Capt. A. M. Mills
 ASST. ADJUTANT—Capt. J. R. Koensgen
 INTELLIGENCE OFFICER—Lieut. J. V. Spurr
 OC HEADQUARTERS COMPANY—Capt. A. M. Campbell
 OC SUPPORT COMPANY—Major W. deN. Watson DSO MC
 OC "A" COMPANY—Capt. J. C. Newlands
 OC "B" COMPANY—Major P. D. Crofton
 OC "C" COMPANY—Major J. M. D. Jones
 OC "D" COMPANY—Major A. S. Ennis-Smith
 PAYMASTER—Capt. J. A. McLeod
 QUARTERMASTER—Capt. J. H. Horton
 MEDICAL OFFICER—Major G. C. Fairfield
 SIGNAL OFFICER—Lieut. J. Rachlis
 TRANSPORT OFFICER—Lieut. D. Munro
 CHAPLAIN—Hon./Capt. E. H. S. Iveson

* There also travelled with the Battalion certain bodies not shown on the embarkation roster. A number of dogs accepted the cramped quarters of kitbags during the trek in order to abide with their masters.

There were no ceremonies and no farewells. An officer wrote:

"A surprisingly small number of us were on deck to bid Italy goodbye. We leave a country which we neither loved nor hated, a country so full of history and so beautiful, yet withal so dirty, so modern in its antiquity, that we can truthfully say it puzzled us."*

* It is possible that the views of this officer were coloured by his long stay in the Romagna. It is difficult to love the dour folk of this area. A Canadian officer wandering into a farmyard found the farmer using a dead soldier's shrapnel helmet as a drinking dish for his hens—something unlikely to occur in other parts of Italy. The Romagna was the birthplace of Fascism. It now is said to be a stronghold of Communism.

CHAPTER NINE

NORTHWEST EUROPE AND THE END OF THE WAR

The voyage across the Ligurian Sea and into the Gulf of Lyons was propitious. The Mediterranean was calm and blue, the sun shone, the meals were excellent. On the morning of March 15th the ships rounded a long breakwater and came to rest in Marseilles harbour. Troop-carrying transport was waiting on the quays and whisked the Battalion through the streets of the great seaport and into a dusty camp beyond the city. Next morning the convoy left for the north by way of the central corridor of the Rhone valley.

For six days the Patricias, frankly sight-seers, were greatly pleased with what they saw. "Everyone is delighted," declared the War Diary, "with their first impression of this new part of Europe. It's a real treat to be in a civilized country once again and to see clean happy people. The genuine friendliness of the inhabitants is very evident . . . The clean towns and villages with their up-to-date shops and modern homes are a wonder to behold."

Some of the Patricias recalled the historical background of the panorama that unrolled before them. They passed through Aix-en-Provence, Caesar's first settlement in Trans-Alpine Gaul and now a pleasant town of fine boulevards and fountains. Their route then bore northwest past Avignon with its papal palaces and twelve gateways, through the fertile plains and mulberry groves around Valence and so to St. Rambert, a staging post thirty miles south of Lyons. Next day they were in the Burgundy country, with a halt at Mâcon where Lieut.-Colonel Clark sent around a 'touch of the whip' in order that his officers might drink the health of the Colonel-in-Chief on her birthday. On through vineyards around Chalons-sur-Saône and into Dijon, the ancient capital of Burgundy, the original home of mustard and gingerbread and today a great railway junction. Thereafter the route veered into the northwest along the valleys of the Yonne and upper Seine. It skirted Paris to the east and passed through Melun and Meaux, names which meant something to those who remembered "The Three Musketeers." By way of Compiègne

(where the Germans surrendered in 1918) and through famous hunting forests of the past, the convoy made its way to towns fixed in the memories of an earlier generation of Patricias—Peronne, Ham and Cambrai. Here the debris of war was seen on the roadsides—smashed vehicles, rubble piles which once were houses, pitted road surfaces and temporary bridges; the countryside, however, showed few scars. So across the Belgian border by way of Ath and through the northern suburbs of Brussels. On March 21st after a journey of more than 1,200 miles the Patricias climbed out of their vehicles in the village of Boisschot, midway between Malines and Antwerp.

Of the new area a Patricia officer wrote:

“Ours is a neat village and very clean. The people gave us a warm reception; the children jumped with joy at seeing so many soldiers; the girls smiled, but with a certain reserve. We liked it. Many of our men were billeted in private houses and some were fortunate enough to find rooms in the pubs. That night many of the troops slept on soft mattresses with clean white sheets for the first time since leaving Britain.”

THE BROAD PICTURE

War is a succession of contrasts—after pleasure, pain; after security, danger. The Patricias' new battlefield lay only a few miles away. Following the breakout from Normandy in the previous August First Canadian Army had advanced on the seaward flank. It had mopped up the enemy in the Channel ports, had liberated the islands of the Scheldt estuary and with Second British Army on its right had expelled the enemy from southern Holland. Its drive had been halted against the serried defenses of three river lines—the Maas, the Waal and the Lek—the last two rivers being the lower reaches of the Rhine. In September, in one of the most daring operations of military history, crossings of all three rivers had been attempted in a single airborne operation. The British paratroopers unfortunately were foiled at Arnhem and although the Maas and Waal crossings were captured the lower Rhine still guarded Germany.

This mighty moat served as the 1944/1945 Allied winter line but the Germans were not allowed to rest. On February 8th First Canadian Army with nine British divisions under command launched a massive offensive to make an end to the enemy in the

corridor between the Maas and the Lek. After a month of bitter fighting General Crerar's men had 'squared up' on the Lower Rhine on a front of fifty miles. At this juncture luck veered to the Allies and on March 7th the Remagen bridge, thirty miles south of Cologne, was captured intact by the U.S. First Army. Four Allied armies now stood on the western banks of the Rhine, poised to strike at the heart of Germany.

On March 23rd Field Marshal Montgomery, commanding three armies, rose in his stirrups. "Over the Rhine, then, let us go," he cried. Over the Rhine went Second British Army and Ninth U.S. Army; they fared so well that First Canadian Army was brought back to the battle before the expiry of its period of rest. On March 28th General Crerar was instructed to "clear Northeast Holland, the coastal belt eastward to the Elbe and Western Holland."

It now was possible to enter southern Holland through the back door from Germany. At the beginning of April, II Canadian Corps recrossed the frontier and broke into northern Holland, its armour advancing 70 miles in a week. To the south of this thrust I Canadian Corps with 49th British Division under command was given the task of liberating west Holland, the populous central belt which contained the cities of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague, Leyden and Haarlem. Concurrently 1st Canadian Division was ordered to drive the enemy from the eastern bank of the Ijssel river and thereafter to cross this stream and to destroy the German forces that remained in central Holland.

ORDERS TO MOVE

An order to be prepared to move reached the Patricias on April 2nd. The eleven days in Boisschot had been a time to remember. Training had been restricted to a minimum and had been made as tolerable as possible by concentration upon games. Says the War Diary, with the air of enunciating a new military principle: "Sport is to be considered a part of training and must be rigidly adhered to." (Hockey practices in Antwerp saw everyone on parade.) Leave had opened to England; on March 24th 81 officers and men went off for seven clear days. Twice within a week the Battalion played host to Boisschot children, first to 250 boys and later to more than 300 girls. Each group of five children was given a Patricia guide and mentor; after the girls' party a hard-boiled sergeant was heard to declare

that if his men always behaved as well it would be a pleasure to wear stripes. A number of old friends of the Regiment called and Lieut.-Colonel R. C. Coleman MC, now commanding the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, did not depart empty-handed; he carried off Major W. deN. Watson DSO MC to be his Second-in-Command. Except for three periods in hospital with wounds Major Watson's service with the Regiment had been continuous since the landing in Sicily.

At an early hour on April 3rd the good people of Boisschot crowded into the streets to say many and sincere farewells. The troop carriers headed into the east and by noon had crossed the southeastern tip of Holland into Germany. Here the fruits of Hitler's insanity could be seen everywhere, in the colossal destruction and untilled fields as in the slow pace and hollow eyes of the civilians. In mid-afternoon the convoy entered the Reichswald forest, which lies in a corridor of German territory to the south of the Rhine, fifteen miles east of the Dutch city of Nijmegen. Camp was pitched at a desolate spot; it began to rain as soon as the Patricias debussed. In a bleak, dank bivouac many mourned the lost pillows and comforters of Boisschot.

Here the Regiment spent three cold and dull days. Each evening the wireless brought news of Allied successes everywhere except on the sector which mattered most to 1st Canadian Division—the advance by 49th British Division against Arnhem. Once that objective had been won 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades would begin to mop up to the east of the Ijssel; when the approach ground had been cleared 2nd Canadian Brigade would establish a bridgehead. On April 7th the Patricias boarded their troop carriers and left the Reichswald forest with no regrets. Passing through Cleves, a city now smashed flat, few remembered that here Henry VIII had found one of his wives. The convoy crossed the Rhine on a pontoon bridge 1,300 feet in length; moving into the northwest it entered Holland and came to a halt at Baak, in the highly cultivated countryside six miles east of Zutphen.

'SQUARING UP' ON THE IJSSEL

The meandering Ijssel was only about 4,000 yards west of Baak; the sector chosen for the crossing was eight miles to the north, at a point where the river looped into the west. On the morning of April 9th the Patricias occupied a concentration area in the forest two miles to the east of the crossing site. After

six weeks the feel of a shovel had not been forgotten; as the men dug in the earth flew with a will. There followed arrangements for 'marrying up' with the Buffaloes, the amphibious craft of 4th Royal Tank Regiment which would carry the infantry across the river. Quite a love affair developed between the Patricias and these carriers; in records and in letters they were praised in exuberant terms. The Intelligence Officer (Lieut. J. V. Spurr) and the Scout and Sniper Platoon commander (Lieut. J. Shirkie) carried out detailed reconnaissances of the river banks at the point of crossing. They reported the Ijssel to be about one hundred yards in width, muddy and sluggish, with low and easily negotiable banks. The site of the crossing gave the enemy a clear field of fire; the war diarist wrote: "For a thousand yards to the west of the Ijssel the countryside is as bare and flat as a billiard table. No natural cover exists."

Details of the new operation now were divulged. 1st Canadian Division under command of II Canadian Corps would be launched across the Ijssel as soon as 3rd Canadian Division on the right flank had secured Deventer, an important town three miles to the north of the site of the projected crossing. 2nd Canadian Brigade would lead off and the Patricias and the Seaforths would lead the Brigade. When the bridgehead had been established 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades would pass through to pursue or exploit as far as Apeldoorn, a city of 80,000 inhabitants on wooded ridges nine miles west of the river.

There would be three phases in establishing the bridgehead—the crossing, the thrust to the west to gain sufficient deployment space for the breakout brigades and finally, dispositions for the protection of the flanks of these brigades when they emerged from the bridgehead.

It was difficult to estimate the opposition that might be encountered. To the west of the river, in varying degrees of readiness and resolution, lay General Blaskowitz's Twenty-Fifth Army. It could muster about 120,000 men; in addition, there were some German naval and marine units available. Only two infantry divisions, 1st Canadian and 49th British, could be spared for this drive into the west and only the Canadians were fresh. The general impression however was that the Germans now were fighting to save face and that after token resistance they might prove accommodating in the matter of surrenders.

ACROSS THE RIVER

It was with deep satisfaction that the Patricias learned on the morning of April 11th that CANNONSHOT Operation, designed for the capture of Apeldoorn, would be on that afternoon. At 1430 hours the four rifle companies reported to the Buffaloes in the wooded area east of Gerssel. Ninety minutes later the Canadian artillery opened and cloaked the site of the crossing with smoke. The vehicles took off, reached the river unobserved, plunged down the near bank and swam across. On the far bank the Patricias sprang out, spread into open order and moved steadily into action for the first time in Northwestern Europe.

"C" Company was unopposed and reported in from its first objective thirteen minutes after touching down on the far bank. It had picked up a few prisoners and an abandoned gun. "D" Company on the right encountered a dyke which fortunately was unmanned; as it crossed this ramp fire opened from a group of houses 150 yards ahead. A German tank was spotted; the 17 Platoon PIAT missed with its first three bombs. Further ammunition was being brought forward when L/Sgt. T. Hanberry discovered another bomb in hand. He crept forward, boldly stepped into the open for his shot and scored a bullseye. Thereafter the advance continued without opposition and at 1720 hours Capt. C. S. Frost reported his situation as "Snug," although his men were under harassing fire from the right flank.

The first objectives were about 500 yards west of the river. Here "A" Company passed through "D" Company and "B" Company took over the running from "C" Company. "B" Company's advance was greatly aided by Cpl. D. H. Maidens of "C" Company who volunteered to act as pathfinder. This he did to perfection, penetrating a thousand yards and bringing back 12 prisoners. Cpl. C. D. Ross also contributed to the advance by closing on a German machine gun under covering fire and killing the gunner. With such courageous and skillful assistance "B" Company made its way to the second objective without difficulty. The enemy now was shelling the crossing site and threatening to interrupt supplies. When one Buffalo was disabled RQMS P. A. Scrutton took charge and kept the ferry in operation.

On the right "A" Company was less fortunate, coming under fire from machine-gunners and snipers hidden in farmhouses and out-buildings. Being of wooden construction these buildings when

struck by bombs or shells disintegrated and burned merrily, quite unlike the sturdy stone houses of Italy. In this advance Sgt. C. A. Strom, although wounded, dealt with a number of obnoxious snipers and Pte. Arthur Brauner of 8 Platoon played a considerable role in silencing the opposition. It was not until 2100 hours, however, that "A" Company was firm on its second objective.

On the next leapfrog "D" Company went through on "B" Company's front, as "C" Company had spread out to cover the sappers who were bridging the Ijssel. By 0200 hours "D" Company had reached the third and final Patricia objective; whereupon "B" Company, released from its protective role, set out to come up on the left of "D" Company and so complete the Patricia section of the bridgehead perimeter.

This move led to an exciting encounter. "B" Company's objective was the tiny village of Wilpe, 3,000 yards to the northwest of the crossing site and at a north-south and east-west crossroad. The east-west road ran into "A" Company's lines, passing "D" Company's position en route. At 0245 hours Capt. E. E. Chambers and his men were nearing their destination when rattles and rumbles were heard in the darkness ahead. Moving swiftly and silently Lieut. E. R. Berryman led 10 Platoon to an intercepting position in the village churchyard which lay beside the east-west road. Three enemy tanks with a company of infantry marching behind emerged out of the night and passed the ambush party, which opened fire upon the rear of the column from a distance of a few yards. In the melee which ensued 80 prisoners and a number of vehicles were captured at the cost of three casualties. In this action that fine soldier Cpl. Ian Sangster distinguished himself and Cpl. M. A. Ferguson took ten prisoners single-handed in a house on the outskirts of the village. "B" Company braceleted the road with festoons of 75 grenades and awaited the return of the raiders.

They never came back. The officer in charge of the German column apparently had other things on his mind and he disregarded the commotion in his rear. With the tanks and about 40 remaining infantrymen he continued on towards "A" Company's lines. As the Germans passed across "D" Company's front they were greeted with PIAT bombs and small arms fire; when they reached "A" Company everyone was ready and waiting. The head of the column blundered into 9 Platoon's position,

where Lieut. G. W. Grant put up flares and personally manned the PIAT. The first bomb missed the tanks but exploded among the infantry behind them. The tanks sheered away and there ensued a series of stalks in the dark—PIAT section hunting tanks, tanks hunting Canadian infantry, German infantry hunting PIAT section. On "D" Company's front the leading tank was destroyed by Pte. R. E. Sykes; when the others attempted to withdraw they ran into an "A" Company ambush which put paid to them. Within an hour the only surviving Germans were prisoners.

The Patricias' partners in the bridgehead operation, the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, also had made good headway. By dawn on April 12th the Ijssel had been bridged and tanks and other support weapons had closed up on the infantry. A breakout was imminent. 1st Canadian Brigade's axis lay into the northwest towards Deventer, while 2nd Canadian Brigade would move into the southwest, towards the wooded Velue ridges beyond Apeldoorn.

THE BREAKOUT

During the forenoon of that day advance parties of 48th Highlanders of Canada arrived in the forward Patricia positions to make ready for 1st Brigade's breakout. At noon the Carleton and York Regiment relieved the Seaforths and the Patricias, both of which hastened to redeploy for participation in 2nd Brigade's operation. The Loyal Edmontons already had taken off on the new bearing and were clearing the area between the Ijssel and the Zutphen-Deventer lateral road, three miles to the southwest of the site of the crossing. At 2000 hours Lieut.-Colonel Clark received orders to seize Buslo and Gietelo—twin hamlets on this highway at the point where it skirted the eastern fringes on the Appensche Veld, a triangle of dense woodland on the southern Velue ridges.

By 0500 hours next morning the Battalion had concentrated about a mile east of this objective. Troops of tanks 'married up' with the infantry and at 0600 hours a shoot came down. Ten minutes later the Patricias moved off with "A" and "C" Companies leading. When little resistance was encountered the leading companies, instead of adhering to the 'leapfrog' programme, pushed on. By 0800 hours both Buslo and Gietelo were secure and scouts and snipers had been sent forward to explore

the Appensche Veld. They returned to report that an enemy force of undetermined strength lurked in its coverts.

The northern portion of this woodland—perhaps 400 acres—was a Patricia responsibility. Lieut.-Colonel Clark hastened to organize a forest force. Three groups, each consisting of a Wasp flamethrower, Vickers machine gunners from the Saskatoon Light Infantry, Patricia Bren gunners and scouts and snipers in carriers, were allotted the objectives ALICE, BLUE and GOWN on the far side of the forest. This improvised force functioned excellently. As the Germans had withdrawn along the forest roads and trails they had laid mines; members of the Dutch Resistance, following up closely, had marked each site neatly with chalk. "It made mine-raising a pleasure," declared a Patricia officer. By mid-afternoon the Patricia section of the forest had been cleared. Only the southernmost group had encountered opposition; when the Germans fled from the flamethrower the Vickers gunners caught them in the open and mowed them down. Ten were killed and fifteen taken prisoner. Three Patricia rifle companies ("D" Company being on other duties) followed up and by nightfall were dug in on the far fringes of the forest.

DRIVE TO THE SOUTH

With the clearing of the Appensche Veld the Patricias passed into Brigade reserve. While at rest they mopped up a few remaining pockets of the enemy in the forest behind them. On April 14th the axis of advance of 2nd Brigade swung into the south and a sweep along the western bank of the Ijssel began. The reason for this change of direction was in order that 1st Canadian Division might link up with 49th British Division before continuing the drive to the west. The point of junction of the two divisions was set at Dieren, about twelve miles south of the present Patricia positions.

In the first days of this new operation the Loyal Edmontons and the Seaforths found rough going. Along the line of the Apeldoorn-Zutphen railway a paratroop training regiment had dug in. These young fanatics fought to the death, refusing to surrender even when the flamethrowers closed on them. Two companies of the Seaforths were pinned down in a marsh and had an uncomfortable time of it. As a result it became necessary to recommit the Patricias sooner than had been anticipated.

On the morning of April 15th the Battalion moved south by troop carriers to the Rottin-Tonden area, due west of Zutphen. The plan was to come up on the right flank of the Loyal Edmontons and to sweep into the south through the countryside to the west of the double track railway between Arnhem and Zutphen. As this drive opened it became apparent that the opposition to the Loyal Edmontons and the Seaforths had been the enemy's last gasp. The front was disintegrating and the Patricia advance was neither an attack nor even a chase. It was an occupation.

Immediately on arrival in the concentration area the carrier screen under Capt. W. H. J. Stutt took off. By noon the countryside as far south as Voorstonden had been cleared, many Germans surrendering without a show of resistance. It was a prosperous day in the field; the Loyal Edmontons' war diarist wrote enviously:

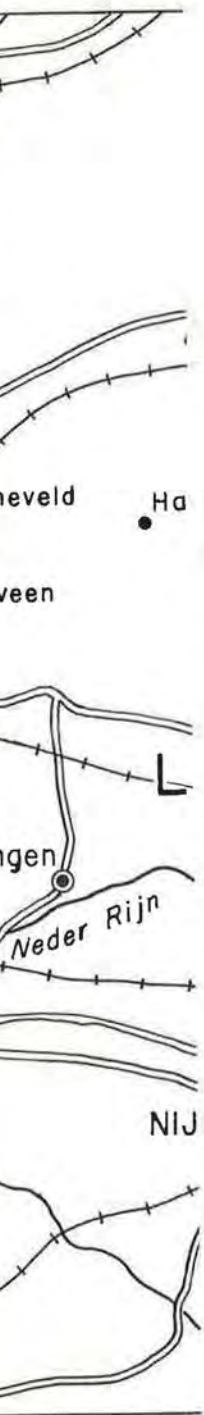
"During our enjoyable period of 'swanning around' the PPCLI and the SH of C had been busy on our right, capturing hundreds of wandering enemy with so much loot that most of the Patricias were offering to resign their position as privates and go home to live in a manner befitting their status as millionaires."* A "D" Company patrol under Lieut. H. E. Beardmore, wearying of footslogging, borrowed bicycles from the Dutch Resistance and rode in carefree fashion into the south. Out of the ditch beside the road a balaclava-ed head rose and in broad East Anglian shouted "CLOSE." As one man the Patricias replied "SHAVE." It was the joint codeword and the gap between 1st Canadian and 49th British Division had been closed.

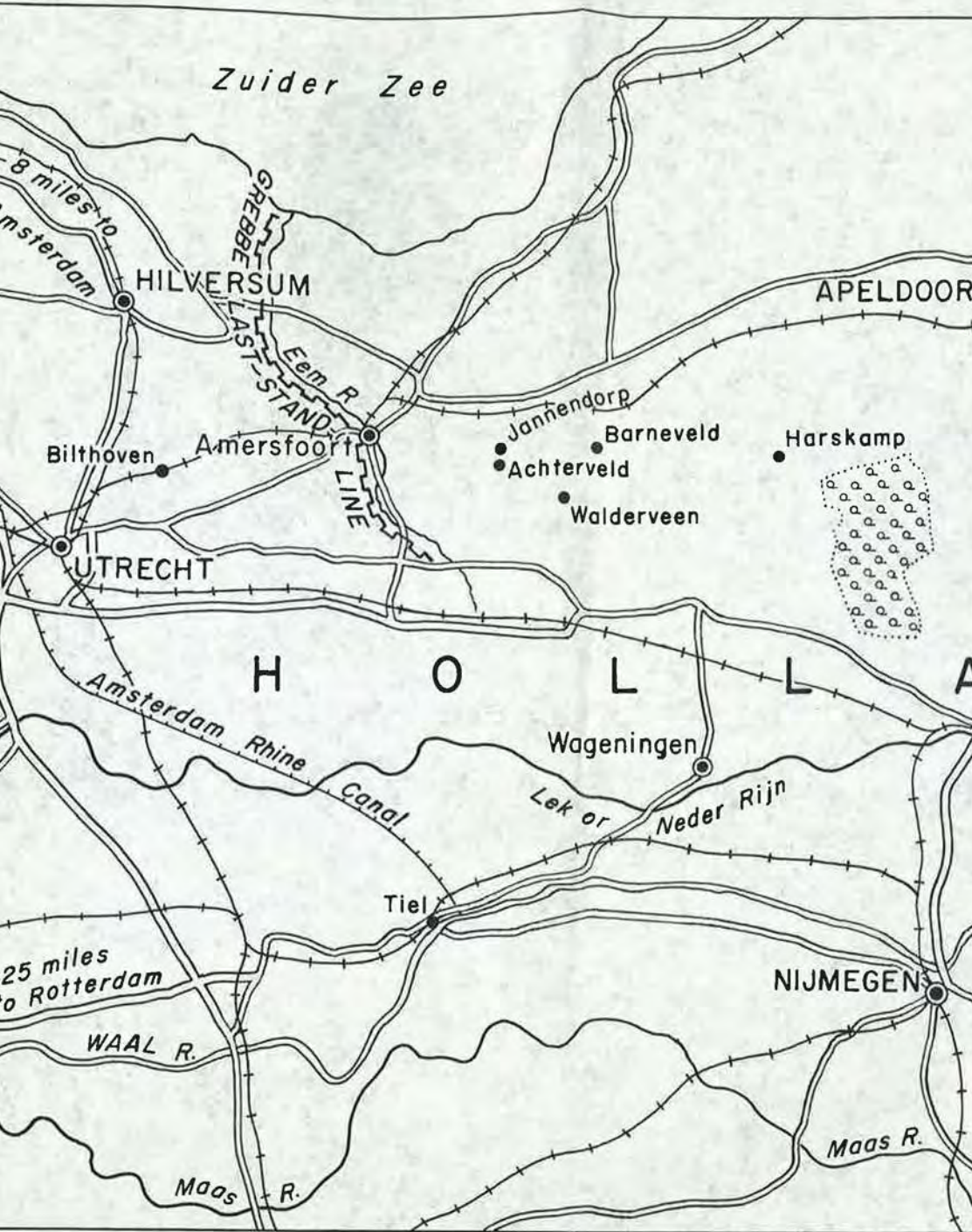
THE LAST PHASE

On the morning of April 16th, 2nd Canadian Brigade was ordered to change direction and to advance into the northwest. From an overnight bivouac five miles to the southwest of Zutphen scouting parties were dispatched to reconnoitre the new line of advance. That night the Brigade concentrated in the forest five miles south of Apeldoorn; next morning a sweep of the countryside to the west began, with the Patricias and the Seaforths leading the way. There was no need to be concerned over the open flanks for 1st and 3rd Canadian Brigades had occupied Apeldoorn and

* The visible 'loot' that the envious Edmontons eyed consisted largely of motor cars. In addition to the Opel captured on the Naviglio Canal, a considerable number of serviceable vehicles had been picked up in Wilpe and elsewhere.

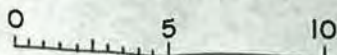


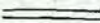


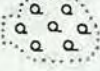



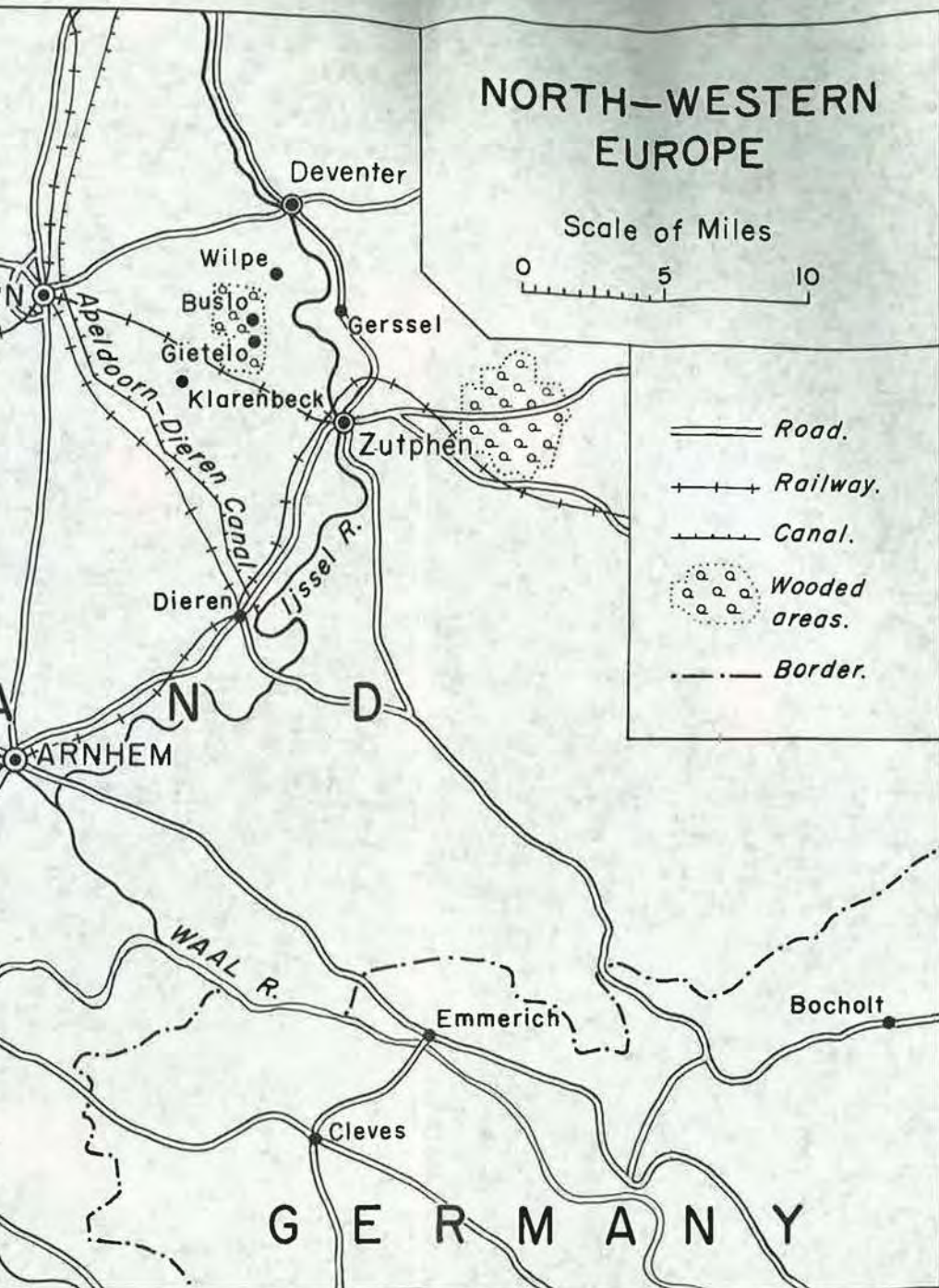


NORTH-WESTERN EUROPE

Scale of Miles



-  Road.
-  Railway.
-  Canal.
-  Wooded areas.
-  Border.





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the south 49th British Division had wheeled west at Dieren join in the drive.

The whips were out, for everywhere the Allies were entering the straight. 1st Canadian Division no longer advanced by local objectives but by leaps and bounds. Throughout April 17th the Patricias worked forward behind their carrier screen; during the day they cleared six miles of forest, picking up many prisoners. As the companies emerged from the woods on the western slopes of the Velue ridge system troop carriers arrived and bore the battalion on for five miles to the village of Harskamp, where a hot supper awaited the hungry men. Next morning came a move to Barneveld, eight miles west of Harskamp. Elements of the 1st Canadian Armoured Division previously had passed through this area.

As the Canadians made ready to cross the few remaining miles to the sea, high authority intervened with what on the face of it seemed to be incomprehensible instructions. Wrote a Patricia officer, tongue much in cheek: "The Battalion has been ordered to advance in a slow and stately manner." There were good reasons for the change of plan. More than 100,000 Germans still were under arms in Holland and General Blaskowitz was organizing a north-south defensive position known as the GREBBE Line, west of the Eem River and extending from the Lower Rhine to the Zuider Zee. Any prolongation of the struggle would bring greater hardship to the civilian population of the Netherlands, the large cities already were reduced to starvation rations. As soon as the line of the Ijssel had been forced Seyss-Inquart, Reichskommissar of Holland, had opened negotiations with the Allied High Command. He was ready, he said, to carry out Hitler's orders and to fight to the last man; if necessary he would breach the dykes and flood much of Western Holland. On the other hand he knew that the game was up and he was willing to negotiate if he could avoid the appearance of treason. The Allies would halt their forces short of the GREBBE Line and would refrain from destruction of the dykes and would allow good supplies for Dutch civilians to enter German-controlled territory. As a result of such undertaking Field-Marshal Montgomery on April 22nd ordered the troops under his command to advance no further than "the general line held east of Amersfoort." Amersfoort was less than ten miles to the west of the existing Canadian front.

Thus for sound humanitarian reasons the Allies cooperated in saving Seyss-Inquart's face with his master. (For equally sound reasons they afterwards hanged him.) The Patricias stood fast, sending out fighting patrols to the neighbouring villages. On April 19th a number of prisoners were taken after a scrimmage at Achterveld, four miles to the west of Barneveld. The Achterveld church tower commanded miles of countryside; when the Battalion Intelligence Officer prepared to use it he was presented by a civilian with fifteen kilos of high explosive which had been placed under the tower by the Germans. On the following day while investigating Walderveen, a village 4,000 yards to the southwest of Barneveld, a Patricia carrier was struck by a Panzerfaust bomb which caused four casualties. On April 21st "D" Company successfully ambushed two German patrols near Achterveld. Next day, as soon as Major A. E. Ennis-Smith and his men had moved into this village, it was shelled. At last light on April 23rd "B" and "C" Companies joined "D" Company at Achterveld. The enemy apparently was unaware of this concentration and a German patrol endeavoured to enter the hamlet in the middle of the night. A firefight followed in which the enemy lost a number of men. "B" Company a half-mile away had a similar visitation during which it took prisoners. Before dawn on April 27th this company dispatched a patrol under Lieut. J. M. Bird to deal with an enemy group which had been located five miles to the west of Barneveld. An ambush was laid; the Germans walked into it. Several were killed and five were taken prisoner.

In this ambush the Patricias fired their last shots of the Second World War. In the advance from the Ijssel 5 other ranks had been killed, one officer and 33 other ranks wounded and 3 other ranks were missing. Approximately 700 Germans had been captured. The game book of the Battalion had been augmented by four tanks, three guns and many vehicles.

THE ACHTERVELD CONFERENCE

On the evening of April 27th an Army Order forbade offensive action after 0600 hours on the following morning. On the afternoon of the 28th Brigadier Bogert of 2nd Canadian Brigade, accompanied by his Brigade Major and a German-speaking intelligence officer, made rendezvous under cover of white flags with an enemy party between the forward defensive lines. The

enemy spokesman was Reichsrichter Schwebel, Judge-Advocate Occupied Holland. The Germans were blindfolded and brought to the Achterveld schoolhouse which the Patricias had hurriedly refurbished for the meeting. There Major-General de Guingand, Field-Marshal Montgomery's Chief of Staff, and a number of other Allied officers awaited them. It was found that Schwebel had no power to act; whereupon de Guingand adjourned the meeting for two days on the understanding that on the next occasion responsible German representatives would present themselves.

On April 30th Achterveld began to fill during the forenoon with staff cars bearing senior Army, Navy and Air Force officers. "Brigadiers," wrote a Patricia, agog with wonder, "were as common as lance-corporals." The Allied representatives were headed by Lieut.-General Bedell Smith, General Eisenhower's Chief of Staff. The German emissaries included Seyss-Inquart and General Blaskowitz's Chief of Staff. Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands was also present; a Patricia officer wrote: "He arrived in a staff car which had been taken from Seyss-Inquart and which bore Licence Number One. The Prince parked it in such a way that the Reichskommissar had to walk around it to reach the conference room." The Patricias' Medical Officer, Major G. C. Fairfield, supplied the typewriter on which the agreement was copied; the Battalion loaned the Russian representative an electric generator to provide power for his radio transmitter. The Battalion also supplied pickets, checkpoints and guards in the village and refreshments in the messes. (According to a usually reliable officer a Russian colonel tossed off four gums rapidly and refused a fifth, saying that he never drank before dinner.)

At this conference it was resolved that arrangements to feed the Dutch civilian population would be put into effect immediately and that a thousand tons of food would be moved daily, under the control of Canadian forces, to designated dumps in occupied Holland.

The stand-fast order to 1st Canadian Division found 3rd Brigade on the right flank, north of the Apeldoorn-Amersfoort railway line and in visual control of the River Eem. In the centre, 2nd Brigade held the area immediately to the west of Amersfoort. On the left 49th British Division was deployed along the line of the Eem and on the canals which led to the Lower Rhine.

THE SURRENDER

The war was not yet over and the men of 1st Canadian Division were destined to be spectators of its triumphant and terrible finale. On May 1st Seventh U.S. Army entered Austria. On that day Stalin announced German casualties for the first four months of the year to have been 1,000,000 killed and wounded, 800,000 taken prisoner. On the following day the British Second Army crossed the Elbe and the German radio announced the death of Hitler. Contact had been established at Trieste between British Eighth Army and the Yugoslav resistance forces. British troops had reached the Danish frontier; next day they entered Hamburg. On May 4th 2nd Canadian Division was in action for the last time in the Oldenburg area; British, United States and Russian forces had linked up on a seventy-mile front between the Elbe and the Baltic. At 0800 hours on May 5th came the general surrender at Luneburg Heath. A million Germans on the western European front laid down their arms.

The Nominal Roll of Patricia Officers at the time of the Cease Fire was as follows:*

COMMANDING OFFICER—Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Clark DSO; SECOND-IN-COMMAND—Major S. A. Cobbett; ADJUTANT—Capt. A. M. Mills; BATTLE ADJUTANT—Capt. J. R. Koensgen; MEDICAL OFFICER—Major G. C. Fairfield; CHAPLAIN—Hon./Capt. G. A. Meiklejohn; PAYMASTER—Capt. J. A. McLeod; QUARTERMASTER—Capt. C. F. Lawrence; CARRIER PLATOON—Capt. W. H. J. Stutt; ANTI-TANK PLATOON—Capt. E. D. McPhail; TRANSPORT OFFICER—Lieut. W. E. Harrington MC; SIGNALS OFFICER—Lieut. J. Rachlis; INTELLIGENCE OFFICER—Lieut. J. V. Spurr; SCOUT AND SNIPER PLATOON—Lieut. J. A. Shirkie; PIONEER PLATOON—Lieut. H. F. Pragnell; MORTAR PLATOON—Lieut. E. A. Shone.

RIFLE COMPANIES—Major P. D. Crofton, Major J. M. D. Jones, Major R. W. Potts, Major A. E. Ennis-Smith; Capt. J. C. Newlands, Capt. E. E. Chambers MC, Capt. G. F. Chapin, Capt. C. S. Frost, Capt. J. H. Horton; Lieut. D. Munro, Lieut. A. D. Fairburn, Lieut. H. E. Dahlquist, Lieut. A. F. Tucker, Lieut. G. W. Grant, Lieut. J. E. Schmitz, Lieut. E. J.

* At the time of the Cease Fire no roster of serving officers was compiled. The foregoing roster is made up from available lists of May 1st and 17th, in consultation with ex-Patricia officers serving at that time. There was a general reshuffle of appointments immediately after the Cease Fire, so that it is impossible to allocate the officers to their proper rifle companies. If there are errors in the list the Historian apologizes for them.

ryman, Lieut. J. M. Miller, Lieut. D. A. Armstrong, Lieut. M. Pyne, Lieut. W. D. L. Roach DSO, Lieut. E. R. Sharpe, Lieut. H. E. Beardmore, Lieut. R. F. Huestis, Lieut. W. W. Stenton, Lieut. A. M. McKinnon MC.

At 1730 hours on May 3rd Lieut.-Colonel Clark was advised that the truce in Holland had ended and that the enemy was free to resume offensive action. This warning was preliminary to the general surrender but precautions were taken to meet any emergency. An officer wrote:

"On the night of May 4th/5th word was received that the cease fire would take effect on the following morning. The Battalion defenses probably never were more effectively manned than that night. Each Bren gunner and rifleman was alert and his eyes showed out the slit trenches. Everyone knew that the Germans facing us were our old adversaries the paratroopers and we were determined not to be caught out on the last day of the war. Behind the Battalion, however, mortar flares and Verey lights were going up and there were sounds of revelry."

On confirmation of the capitulation there was no demonstration or celebration. Guards were posted to control road traffic and all activities continued. Messages of congratulation arrived from General Eisenhower, Field-Marshal Montgomery, General Crerar, Her Majesty the Queen of the Netherlands, the Prime Minister of Canada and many others. Perhaps the most warming and welcome of all came from the original Patricia. "The Old Guard greets the New Guard"—Brigadier Hamilton Gault's message read—"You have magnificently maintained the traditions of your Regiment on the battlefields of Sicily, Italy and Germany and have added proud laurels to your Colours. God bless you all."

THE MOVE TO HAARLEM

Immediately employment awaited 1st Canadian Division in western Holland. There were more than 100,000 Germans to be taken into custody and it was necessary to provide support for the newly-revived Netherlands civil authority, since experience in other theatres had shown that as aftermath of an enemy occupation controversy and even disorder might be expected. On May 6th it was announced that the evacuation of the enemy forces could be administered by German officers under Canadian command. 1st Canadian Division was organized into nine groups to supervise the task. The Patricias were allotted the Haarlem

area, a belt of polder (land reclaimed from the sea) surrounding the famous old city ten miles west of Amsterdam. The Battalion was ordered there immediately. Of this move Lieut.-Colonel Clark wrote:

"I started off about dawn on May 7th to contact the German commanders in Western Holland. The enemy, fully-armed and still manning the Grebbe line, seemed to be extremely surprised to see an Allied vehicle passing through their fortifications.

"Upon arriving at Amsterdam early in the morning the city appeared to be deserted but continuing down the main street the people suddenly recognized an Allied vehicle. There were a few shouts, then heads began to pop out of windows. Before we got to the end of this long main street it seemed as though the whole population of the city was blocking our path. It took us considerable time to push through to meet the German commanders in the Haarlem area.

"From all appearances no Allied soldiers had been along this main road from the south until my small party arrived. I only mention this to back up the claim that the Regiment was the first Allied force to enter Amsterdam."

It was a very happy coincidence that the Patricias should make a triumphal entry on the anniversary of Frezenberg. A staff officer wrote:

"Every village, street and house was bedecked with the red, white and blue Dutch flags and orange streamers, which in the brilliant sunlight made a gay scene. The Dutch people lined the roads and streets in thousands to give us a great welcome. Wherever the convoy had to slow up for a road block or a bridge, hundreds of people waved, shouted and even fondled the vehicles. When the convoy reached the outskirts of Amsterdam it lost all semblance of a military column. A vehicle would be unable to move because of civilians surrounding it, climbing on it, throwing flowers, bestowing handshakes, hugs and kisses. One could not see the vehicle or trailer for legs, arms, heads and bodies draped all over it. The enthusiasm of the crowd seemed even to have infected German soldiers for in many cases they, moving in the opposite direction in wagons or on foot, waved and grinned. Boy scouts as well as civilian police and resistance fighters had turned out in large numbers to attempt to control the crowds and to guide the vehicles to their destinations.

"The Dutch people whom we saw looked healthier than we expected to find them but most of them had sunken eyes betraying months of insufficient food. It was said that there were many thousands in Amsterdam not out to welcome us because they were too feeble from hunger to move into the streets."

REPATRIATION OF THE ENEMY

On arrival at Haarlem the Burgomeister received Patricia officers and extended an official welcome. Comfortable accommodation was found in Bloemendaal, on the northern outskirts of the City. Battalion Headquarters was set up in a park. From the moment of arrival the Patricians were overwhelmed with work. Says the War Diary of May 9th: "All day long civilians and German soldiers stream in and out of Headquarters—the former with their individual problems and worries, the latter to be told what to do and where to do it. Never have so many people in such a short space of time asked so many stupid questions. Because of our commitments for guards, piquets and escorts we have developed a manpower shortage. New drafts are put on duty a few minutes after arrival."

The repatriation of the Germans, the support of the struggling civilian administration, were services comparable in importance with performances on the battlefield. Feeling was running high against the Germans and Dutch collaborators and the more ardent partisans resented the presence of troops who denied them revenge. A staff officer of 1st Canadian Division wrote:

"The work of concentrating the Germans had begun but the wheels of such a complex operation grind slowly and too gently to suit the appetites of the Dutch resistance forces. They are disappointed because (a) they cannot use their arms; (b) they cannot arrest and deal with their Quislings; (c) German soldiers and officers are still occupying their houses and buildings and retaining their bicycles and cars; (d) they are not seeing large columns of Germans march down their streets under guard; (e) the Germans are not being made to dump their arms in public as the Germans made the Dutch soldiers do in 1940.

"At Gouda the Resistance is getting very restless because armed Germans are still in their town and are seen taking away cargoes of food for their own people."

Under such circumstances the removal of enemy prisoners of war from Holland was urgently necessary. Within a week more than half of the German forces had been disarmed and were concentrated for repatriation. At this juncture the Patricias were given a new task—the location, inventory and disposition of enemy dumps of all kinds. The civilian scene also began to intrude upon the military picture. A spate of forms arrived; the Canadian soldier was asked to declare what he wished to do at the conclusion of his present period of service. Would he be available to serve in Pacific Force against the Japanese or in the occupation forces in Europe? If he wished to return to civilian life, what did he require in the nature of additional education or in assistance in economic re-establishment? A grateful country was prepared to do much to aid those who chose to hang up their uniforms, but it likewise hoped that many would continue to wear them. The first canvass revealed that a surprisingly large number of Patricias were willing to see the whole show through. Upwards of 160 of all ranks put down their names for Pacific Force and about half that number elected to join the Army of Occupation.

THE UNIT BEGINS TO BREAK UP

These employments were immediate. As a result the wartime Battalion began to break up. Lieut.-Colonel Clark, who had gone to England on a course, returned on June 1st to discover that he no longer commanded the Regiment. He had been transferred to the command of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, which would serve in the Army of Occupation. Thus passed from Regimental service the officer who together with Lieut.-Colonel Ware had been the outstanding Patricia battle commander of the Second World War. His service had been almost continuous and whenever he had led the Battalion in battle he showed the firm, sure touch of the born soldier. Toward the end of June Major A. S. Ennis-Smith, Capt. E. D. McPhail, Capt. W. H. J. Stutt, Capt. C. F. Lawrence, Lieut. J. R. Schmitz, Lieut. T. Kopanski and Lieut. J. M. Miller also were struck off strength on transfer to the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Major S. A. Cobbett took over temporary command but he had volunteered for service in the Pacific, together with Major R. W. Potts, Capt. J. R. Koensgen, Capt. A. M. Mills and Capt. G. F. Chapin. On June 7th these officers left on home leave prior to re-employment. A first draft of 100 other ranks for Pacific Force left at the same time. Major

P. D. Crofton took over command with Major G. S. Lynch as Second-in-Command and Capt. E. E. Chambers MC as Adjutant.

By the end of May the situation in Holland had eased and there was little further danger of reprisals against the Germans or of challenge to civil authority. The Canadian units therefore were at liberty to take their ease, a privilege which they exercised in full measure. They found the Dutch people to be very much their kind of folk; the cleanliness, energy and good temper displayed by the staunch Netherlanders was to their liking. The Dutch reciprocated such feelings in full; the Canadians, they said, were peculiarly their own. There was such tangible evidence of mutual appreciation that on June 15th a Divisional Order contained a warning: "The Dutch people are expressing their gratitude to the liberators of their country in many ways, often at the expense of their own comfort and prosperity. It will, however, be obvious that the mere presence of a large number of foreign soldiers over a lengthy period is bound to be troublesome. If friendly relations are to continue over the period of repatriation, every officer and man must conduct himself correctly and must be most careful to avoid anything which might impair the invaluable goodwill of the Dutch people." Apparently the Patricias comported themselves in satisfactory fashion for in mid-June, when they completed their task at Haarlem and made ready to move to the new Divisional area to the northeast of Utrecht, the citizens of Overveen, a neighbouring village, presented the Battalion with an illuminated address which read: "The population of Overveen wishes to express their heart-felt thanks to the officers and men of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, under command of Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Clark DSO, which liberated them on that memorable day of May 7th 1945.

"Your arrival marked the end of five years of darkness, starvation, misery and brutality imposed by the German Army of occupation. In recognition of this the inhabitants of Overveen will always be very glad if any one of the Canadian soldiers who liberated them pays a visit to the village, where he will be welcomed in their midst and find every door wide open."

A NEW AREA

On June 20th a two-hour run to the east by way of Hilversum and Amsterdam brought the Regiment to Bilthoven, on the Amersfoort road five miles to the northeast of Utrecht. This

area lacked some of the amenities of Bloemendaal but with depleted numbers and less urgent tasks in hand it was possible to find vehicles for visits to the neighbouring Dutch cities. Officers and men did not lack entertainment; "What's On In Amsterdam," published by the Canadian Corps, listed more than eighty diversions—museums, clubs, concerts, theatres, cabarets, sports and excursions.

With the relaxation of tension, constant turnover of personnel and a return to what was more or less peacetime soldiering, discipline and internal economy were hard to maintain. There has been perhaps too little in this history of the role played by the Auxiliary Services in the provision of amenities and recreations. Throughout the Italian campaign Supervisor Tutte had been indefatigable in providing that little extra that counted so much with the man in the ranks. He was not shown upon the nominal roll as a key officer but he was little less. On arrival in Holland he had been replaced by Supervisor Taylor, who carried on in the tradition of his predecessor.

In July, First Canadian Army disappeared and Canadian Forces in the Netherlands replaced it. General Crerar said his farewells and went home. General Eisenhower sent a last message to the men he had led so well and was gone. There was cross-posting of officers and other ranks to secure territorial homogeneity for demobilization; 74 Patricias from Eastern Canada took their departure and 196 Westerners arrived from other units.

The men who had fought the war now were a minority in the Battalion. They endured drill and educational lectures and softball games in the afternoon but what they really wanted was to go home. When repatriation was delayed they grew restless and began to be haunted by the old soldier's inevitable figment—that they were forgotten men. Yet such was their sense of proportion and good judgment that there was none of the incidents that had marred the period of waiting for Canadians in 1918/1919. At the end of July the Patricias' War Diarist could write with pride: "All things considered the morale of the men is good. There are still a large number of high point men who had hoped to be on their way by now but who have been slated to go home with the unit. They are more or less resigned to their fate and are making the best of a bad job. Discipline is at a high standard."

On August 1st tours of Germany were inaugurated. All ranks returned with an inefaceable memory of the destruction and a

strong conviction of the colossal futility of war. On August 4th the Canadian Forces Track and Field Championships were held in the stadium at Nijmegen; two days later the Patricias' soccer eleven went off to play at Boisschot, that haunt of pleasant memories. (Seventy-two hour passes were given the team and its supporters. "This will allow time," said the War Diary sagely, "for other activities beside football.") On August 10th the surrender of Japan is noted in the War Diary but without comment; five days later VJ Day passes permitted all ranks to visit their favourite resorts in Holland and Belgium. On August 10th an officers' party brought back many 'old hands' from other units, including Lieut.-Colonel Clark, Lieut.-Colonel Coleman and Major Watson. On August 22nd a message from His Majesty the King to the Armies, Navies and Air Forces of the Commonwealth was received. It was a simple and moving tribute to those who had done their duty.

FAREWELL TO EUROPE

Farewell celebrations and ceremonies now were the order of the day. The companies in turn entertained their Dutch friends. On August 29th, Major-General Foster took the salute at the March Past; that evening a Regimental officers' dinner said goodbye to the Continent in fitting style. It was the end of a long road. None remained of those who had been on parade six years before when Lieut.-Colonel Colquhoun had told the Patricias that they were for it once more. The Battalion, a distinctive body and a living entity, had accumulated its thousand tales and memories, its prides and its prejudices, its achievements and its failures. Now it was crumbling in victory as its adversaries had crumpled in defeat. Its heritage would be preserved within the body of the Regiment, but for those who had served in days of battle its passing was personal loss.* All the more reason then, to make the most of the short season of comradeship that remained.

Little remains to be told. On September 4th the Battalion moved to a transit camp at Nijmegen. Three days later it left by train for Ostend. Here some snarl in shipping occurred and a day was spent in a transit camp on the outskirts of the Belgian *plage*. On September 9th after a quick crossing to Dover the Patricias arrived at a repatriation camp on Cobham Common in

* To illustrate the change that had occurred, out of thirty-seven sergeants on the strength of two companies only two had served with the Patricias before the German surrender.

the Thames valley near Esher. All ranks were given leave to say farewell to friends in the United Kingdom. On reassembly only a formal duty remained—a last review by the Colonel-in-Chief. With the ranks filled with westerners from other units, many of whom wore their own flashes and badges (and in some instances distinctive headgear), this parade presented difficulties, particularly as it had been many months since the men had been on the drill square. Nevertheless all ranks co-operated willingly and RSM Gardner, who had rejoined the Battalion in Holland, smartened up the men in his customary style.* Lieut.-Colonel Ware, now commanding one of the repatriation camps, borrowed a British Regimental Band and on September 19th, a day of winds approaching gale intensity, the Patricias rallied to the occasion and marched past their Colonel-in-Chief in rousing style. The band was not accustomed to playing for light infantry and the pace was perhaps a trifle slow; as an officer remarked "this was probably a good thing." In her farewell the Colonel-in-Chief reviewed the past, touched on familiar names and incidents during the Second World War, wished all ranks happiness and success in the future and expressed the hope that she soon might meet her Regiment in Canada.

HOME

On September 25th the Battalion, 20 officers and 541 other ranks strong, embarked at Southampton on the liner *Ile de France*. A swift and uneventful passage followed. As though to remind the Orderly Room staff that they still were in the army a radio message was received when twenty-four hours off Halifax to the effect that entrainment must be arranged in alphabetical order. This meant the preparation overnight of new nominal rolls; some of the remarks of the Adjutant's staff have not been preserved in the records. On October 1st the liner came alongside and the Patricias piled into two special trains. As if to requite the authorities for their perversity Train No. 2 bearing the second half of the alphabet was first to arrive in Winnipeg. There on the afternoon of October 5th an immense crowd had assembled. In the words of the Adjutant: "The Battalion simply melted away into the arms of its welcomers."

All ranks were given thirty days' leave and ordered to report at Winnipeg thereafter for demobilization. On November 8th a ceremony to mark the disbandment of the war service battalion

* All ranks wore Patricia badges and flashes for the ceremony.

was held in the Civic Auditorium in Winnipeg. The Lieutenant-Governor and the Premier of Manitoba, the Mayor of Winnipeg and the Officer Commanding Military District No. 10 were among those present. Brigadier Hamilton Gault, introduced by the Chairman as 'the living legend' of the Patricias, was presented with a plaque in memory of the Regiment's casualties of two world wars. Brigadier Colquhoun, one of the principal speakers, recalled the flight of time when he declared "after thirty-one years in the Regiment they are giving me my bowler hat." Major G. S. Lynch presented a memorial plaque for erection in All Saints Church.

The period of overseas service had been five years, nine months and eleven days. Total casualties had been 13 officers and 260 other ranks killed or died of wounds, 38 officers and 1,028 other ranks wounded. Six officers had been awarded the Distinguished Service Order and ten the Military Cross. Six Warrant Officers and other ranks had gained the Distinguished Conduct Medal; four Military Medals had been awarded. There had been eleven Mentions in Dispatches. Five foreign decorations had been bestowed.

The cemeteries of the Imperial Graves Commission in which the Patricia fallen lie are at Agira in Sicily, at Ortona on the southern Adriatic front, at Cassino, at Coriano Ridge and Villanova on the northern Adriatic front and at Zutphen in Holland.

CHAPTER TEN

THE UNEASY YEARS

In 1945 as in 1919 the majority of Canadians wished to have done with the business of soldiering as soon as possible. This desire was frustrated by two over-riding circumstances. In the Second World War Canada had acquired international responsibilities which could not be put in moth balls. In addition it was impossible for Canada as in the past to disregard the sweeping advances of military science. No one could foresee the shape of wars to come and the nation that continued to think only in terms of men and of their courage and discipline would be inviting disaster. Instead of peace the end of the Second World War had brought no more than armistice. Hitler might be dead but the spectre of aggression refused to lie down.

THE NEW BATTALION

The Government of Canada, confronted by problems of demobilization and at the same time conscious of the necessity of creating a new military instrument, chose to proceed on a tentative basis. Plans for participation in the campaign against Japan were well advanced at the time of the German surrender; as a consequence on June 1st 1945 a new battalion of the Regiment was authorized for service in the Pacific. Its official designation was 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, 2nd Canadian Infantry Regiment.* Its first commander was Lieut.-Colonel P. W. Strickland DSO ED, formerly of the Highland Light Infantry of Canada and afterwards GSO1 3rd Canadian Division, Canadian Army Occupation Force.

Towards the end of June officers and men for the new unit began to assemble at Camp Shilo, 15 miles east of Brandon. Major W. H. V. Matthews MC, formerly of 1st Battalion Canadian Scottish Regiment, took over as Second-in-Command. From the Patricias in Holland came Major R. W. Potts as a company commander and Capt. J. R. Koensgen MC as Adjutant; the overseas battalion also provided a staunch warrant officer in RQMS P. A. Scrutton BEM, who took over the same duties in

* As this unit was formed to fight under United States command its description reflects concessions to American terminology.

the new unit. About fifty other ranks from Holland reported as volunteers for Pacific service. Drafts also arrived from almost every infantry unit in the European theatre.

A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OF NAME

In late July the new battalion moved from Shilo to Camp Macdonald, ten miles to the northwest of Portage la Prairie. Events thereafter moved rapidly. On August 6th the first atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima. Three days later a similar missile destroyed Nagasaki. On August 15th the Emperor of Japan broadcast an unconditional surrender. On September 1st it was announced that Canada would not participate in the occupation of Japan and the disbandment of Canadian Army Pacific Force was ordered. Until such time as the composition of the Canadian Permanent Force could be decided a holding establishment known as "Interim Force" was authorized. On September 2nd, in conformity with these changes, the regimental Pacific Force unit was redesignated 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, Canadian Infantry Corps.

This change in nomenclature had a welcome significance. In 1943 the Canadian Infantry Corps (afterwards the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps) had been formed. The creation of this cadre had been due in considerable part to recruiting failures; the infantry was falling behind the other arms in attracting men and it was felt that it no longer might be able to preserve the territorial affiliations of the battalions in the field. There also were certain administrative advantages in having all infantry in a common pool and so available to serve in any unit which needed reinforcement. On the other hand such establishment ran counter to the intense local loyalties which had created most of the overseas battalions and which had played such a role in sustaining interest in non-permanent active militia units in peacetime. This latter circumstance was deemed to be important; as a result the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps declined to an administrative and titular entity and the time-honoured local affiliations of the service units were preserved. The redesignation of the new battalion of the Patricias was in conformity with this decision.

THE FIRST WINTER

During September and October Second Battalion suspended training and many of the other ranks disappeared on harvest

leave. During the same months reversion from United States establishment, which had been prescribed for Canadian units serving in the Pacific, was completed. Lieut.-Colonel Strickland was demobilized and Major Matthews took over command. Second Battalion's "Interim Force" establishment consisted of Headquarters Company, two rifle companies and a Reception and Disposal Company.

On November 8th a number of officers attended the break-up ceremonies of the overseas battalion which had returned from Holland. By the middle of that month sufficient men had reported in to resume training. On November 25th members of the unit attended the unveiling of a plaque in All Saints Church, Winnipeg to the memory of the Patricias who had fallen in the Second World War. During December a number of former officers and non-commissioned officers of the Regiment joined the new unit. The main event of the Christmas season was a party for Portage la Prairie children; the presents had been made by members of the Battalion in what is described as the Regimental Toy Shop. The citizens of Portage la Prairie in turn issued a host of invitations to the strangers in their midst and during the last week of the year Camp Macdonald was empty except for essential details.

On January 3rd 1946 Lieut.-Colonel C. B. Ware DSO reported to the Regiment and resumed command. A fortnight later the Patricias returned to Shilo Camp. Here drafts totalling 369 of all ranks arrived during the third week of January, bringing the unit to a strength of 18 officers and 621 other ranks. Although a fair number subsequently left on transfer to eastern units under "Interim Force" arrangements sufficient men remained for the reactivation in February of the Support Company under the command of Capt. J. R. Koensgen MC. When Major Matthews left for the Staff College the Battalion welcomed as his replacement another who had strayed from the fold—Major W. deN. Watson DSO MC. The birthday of the Colonel-in-Chief was celebrated on March 18th by a parade, a toast by all ranks, a Regimental luncheon and the Broom-i-Loo playoff in the afternoon. For a dance in the evening three hundred partners arrived by special train from Brandon.

Throughout March and April there were constant comings and goings. A new description appeared; the Patricias now were a "Sortation Unit," exchanging personnel on a territorial basis,

olding candidates for discharge or for acceptance in the permanent forces.

CANADA IN THE FRONT LINE

While this "Sortation" process was under way there had occurred a rapid and melancholy reappraisal of the prospects of peace in the post-war world. At early stages in the peace talks the intransigence of the Russians turned to truculence and the free nations were confronted with a new adversary, perhaps stronger, more subtle and more dangerous than Nazi Germany. The world split into hostile land masses and for the first time in two thousand years the key to peace or war no longer lay in Western Europe, for the United States had emerged as the leader of the democratic powers. Should the Communists as in terms of Lenin's dictum decide that it was impossible for two ideological systems to co-exist on the same planet North America was bound to be a priority target in a clash between Communist and free-world blocs. Canada, which lies between Russia and the United States, would be in direct line of fire and in all probability would provide the battlefields.

Gone, perhaps forever, were the spacious days when Canadians could go to war or could stay at home as the spirit moved them, when the Royal Navy and the presence of a powerful and friendly neighbour underwrote the security of their domain. Now of a sudden eyes turned to the Arctic wastelands, only a few hours by plane from Russia. Without delay an unremitting watch must be set on the Canadian northland.

It was against a background of world tension that in June 1946 the Canadian Army Active Force was reconstituted. ("Interim Force" was allowed to run down; by October 1947 it no longer existed.) The Regiment already had been selected as part of the new Canadian establishment; on March 1st 2nd Battalion had undergone a second change of name and had become Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. The stage now was set for momentous changes in Canadian military policy. For the first time in history Canadian armed forces had a peacetime operational programme. Some degree of military co-operation with the armed forces of the United States was inevitable and Canada no longer could accept British procedures, weapons and training without question. Canadian military establishments therefore must create a distinctive identity for themselves.

Early in May the Patricias moved from Shilo, marching into Fort Osborne Barracks for the first post-war Trooping. It brought back a breath of old times; Winnipeggers turned out en masse and many ex-Patricias from other parts of Canada found it convenient to be in the Manitoba capital that day. At the beginning of June the Regiment moved to its new home at Currie Barracks, on the outskirts of Calgary. There what was described by an officer as "conditioning and shakedown" training began. A Regimental School for the training of non-commissioned officers was established under command of Major R. S. E. Waterman DSO and the Drums were reactivated by that indefatigable veteran, Drum-Major J. B. Mackie.*

On August 16th the Patricias and Lord Strathcona's Horse left for the north for MUNCHO field trials. Of this exercise Lieut.-Colonel Ware has written:

"The interim period was an uneasy one in many respects and those selected for the Regular Army had not yet been notified. I got permission from the GOC Western Command, Major-General F. F. Worthington, to take the Battalion up the Alaska Highway. All ranks were happy to get on the road and to get going at something concrete. There was much useful work to be done in finding out about the north, reconnaissances of airfield defences, river crossings and the like. There was excellent hunting and fishing and the MUNCHO spirit was terrific. When we came back everyone was ready to carry on with setting up the Active Force. MUNCHO was worth its weight in gold; from it stemmed both winter and summer training policies in the Northwest which became part of Regimental training in the years to come."

The Patricias returned to Calgary a month after departure. In November the trustees released the funds and accoutrements of the Regiment to the successor unit and thereafter Currie Barracks sported the prized Regimental possessions.

At Christmas Miss Jenny MacGregor Morris presented the Regiment with an antique silver tea service which had been in her family for generations. Another and much appreciated gift came from the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in the form of a carved mahogany plaque whose inscription recorded the service of the two units in the same brigade in two world wars.

* On the formation of the Canadian Army (Active Force) the Patricia band had been reduced to nil strength, the bandsmen being distributed among other Permanent Force units.

1947—A BUSY YEAR

At Currie Barracks family lines were established and work began on improvements to the men's quarters. A nation-wide recruiting campaign opened early in the New Year and the improved terms of service attracted many old soldiers who had not found Civvy Street up to expectations. Sufficient men soon were at hand to reactivate "A" Company. Major D. L. Clarke took "D" Company to Banff for ski training and the first officers and men left for winter acclimatization at Fort Churchill. The Pioneers' trade section under the guidance of RCEME craftsmen winterized the Regimental vehicles and built prefabricated hutments which could be used either as Arctic bodies on the three-tonners or as ground shelters. These interesting tasks were indicative of the new aspects of Canadian peacetime military service. There were now specific jobs in hand and definite ends in view—work of practical consequence which brought new zest to soldiering and which transformed the outlook of the men in the ranks.

WINTER INDOCTRINATION

On January 17th Lieut. H. Moncrief, Lieut. G. R. Kelly, Lieut. J. E. Lefebvre and seven other ranks left for Whitehorse on HAINES I—an instructors' patrol designed to test living conditions and troop movements in virgin wilderness during periods of intense cold. After lectures, exercises in handling of dog teams and in packing and loading of equipment the party moved into the Arctic wastes at temperatures of around -50°F. Patrols of thirty-six hours duration began, with a view to working up to eight days in the open. A military party for the first time investigated under winter conditions the Haines cut-off, an alternate route into Alaska; it involved a trek of 90 miles through the frozen solitudes. On the final patrol the party caught the full blast of an Arctic blizzard; only a few miles could be covered at a time and due to injuries and defects in equipment the patrol was terminated on the third day.

On February 27th the convoy of winterized vehicles from Calgary reached Whitehorse, having covered 1,700 miles of icy and snowbound roads in ten days. Next day "D" Company and elements of Headquarters Company arrived by train and the Patricias embarked on winter training and conditioning. The instructional staff was supplemented by Inspector H. M. Cronkhite

of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to whom long service in the Arctic had made snowcraft second nature. Unlike the earlier instructors' patrol "D" Company was plagued by mild temperatures and lack of snow. Two eight-day patrols went out but most of the men had to be content with shorter treks.

On March 17th the celebration of the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday at Currie Barracks saw both King's Colour and Regimental Colour uncased for the first time since the Second World War. The holiday also was celebrated at Whitehorse, Lieut.-Colonel Ware flying north to be with the detachments there. The Patricias returned from the Yukon at the end of March.*

On May 10th Trooping the Colour was carried out in traditional style on the square of HMCS *Tecumseh*. (The Patricias' parade ground, one of the largest in Canada, was under repair.) Owing to illness Brigadier Hamilton Gault could not attend and the salute was taken by Lieut.-Colonel Ware, who afterwards addressed the parade. There was a large attendance of old Patricias, including Major-General A. E. Potts, many former officers of the Regiment and that splendid old veteran, RSM T. J. Turnbull.

On May 10th also 88 cadets of the Canadian Officers' Training Corps reported for four months attachment to the Regiment. In June Lieut.-Colonel N. M. Gemmell DSO arrived on attachment preparatory to taking over command from Lieut.-Colonel Ware, who was destined for Staff College. During the Second World War Lieut.-Colonel Gemmell had commanded the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders in Northwestern Europe.

During the summer the Pioneers began work on the Regimental Museum, for which space was found in the Administration Building. In July the Regiment was represented by detachments and a float in the parade which opened the Calgary Stampede. In August the passing-out parade of the attached cadets brought high praise to Major A. E. T. Paquet of the Regiment, now in charge of one of the training wings of the Royal Canadian School of Infantry.

SUMMER CAMP AT WAINWRIGHT

On September 1st the Patricias, having moved by road convoy, opened Wainwright Camp as a training area. During the Second

* During this period Major C. E. C. MacNeill served as one of the three Canadian observers on the United States Winter Testing Scheme FRIGID.

World War it had been a prisoner of war camp; an officer wrote: "The formidable guard towers which dominated the landscape were closely grouped around the camp. The parade square was still enclosed in barbed wire and the buildings had the smell of a prison upon them. Some of the rooms contained exquisitely executed tempera murals depicting scenes from the Rhineland and Bavaria." In combined arms exercises the Patricias and Lord Strathcona's Horse inaugurated the training partnership that has endured to this day. Among such exercises was ADIOS, which marked the last appearance in an active role of Major-General F. F. Worthington CB MC MM who, it will be remembered, left the Regiment in 1936 to become a founder member of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps. On the final day of the exercise General Worthington was permitted to revert to trooper and to drive a tank. On the return journey from Wainwright the Patricias showed the flag in a number of the smaller Alberta towns for the purpose of attracting recruits.

THE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

On October 25th the Regiment held a ceremonial parade in honour of the Founder, now fully recovered from his illness. During his visit Brigadier Hamilton Gault presided at the organization of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Association. In the previous February a meeting of Patricia officers and non-commissioned officers under the chairmanship of Major W. J. MacDougald had drafted a tentative constitution for an Association which would be entrusted with the relationships between present and former members of the Regiment. This draft had been sent to Montreal, where it had been scrutinized by a committee of former officers. Thereafter it had been put in legal form by R. G. M. Gammell. This constitution now was adopted and plans were laid for the closer integration of the activities of the various Regimental affiliates.

On December 5th Lieut.-Colonel Ware was the guest of honour at a farewell Mess Dinner at which he was presented with an inscribed rose bowl. (Lieut.-Colonel Gemmell had assumed command on October 1st.) The Christmas season came and passed with the customary right royal good cheer. On January 15th 1948 five officers and 100 other ranks left by road convoy for Whitehorse. This long trek was completed in five days. The value of the experiences of the previous year was revealed by improved

performances in the long distance patrols. In HAINES II the Alaska cut-off route traversed by the instructors' patrol of the previous year was investigated anew.

During the spring of that year the only breaks in training were the time-honoured celebrations of the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday and of Frezenberg Day. Early in June a national emergency was proclaimed because of the disastrous floods in the lower Fraser valley. On July 4th a party 250 strong under command of Major W. J. MacDougald was dispatched by air in an attempt to save the rich farmlands along the river from destruction. An officer wrote: "The Regiment lived in a field about three miles west of the village of Pitt Meadows, in the shadow of dykes holding back the water fourteen feet above the level of our encampment." Ten miles of dykes became the Patricia responsibility and this section was among the few unbreached by the floods. In July the receding waters released the Patricias from their mission.

WORLD TENSION RISES

In the two years since the German surrender the world situation had steadily worsened. One international conference succeeded another without obtaining agreement even on points of procedure. Unwillingness to compromise became the keynote of relationships between the Communist and the free world; insults came to be the common coin of diplomacy. In ever increasing enmity the Soviet Union and the United States confronted each other. Every circumstance pointed to the likelihood of conflict sooner or later and each clash in the war of words brought home to Canadians the fateful role they must play if in any night they should be awakened by the roar of the inter-continental bombers passing overhead.

A RADICAL DECISION

In the early months of 1948 recruiting had been above average but the march of world events demanded an accelerated growth of Canadian armed forces and particularly of specialist formations. This circumstance led to a radical decision by Canadian Army Headquarters. On August 8th Major-General C. C. Mann CBE DSO, Vice-Chief of the General Staff, visited the Regiment. He afterwards described the scene:*

* Canadian Army Journal," July 1949.

"It was quietly dramatic. The Patricias knew that I had a surprise in store and rumours had been rampant. There was a feeling of anticipation in the air. The unit at my request was seated in a semi-circle in the football field, the officers on one flank, the non-commissioned officers on the other, the men of the Regiment in the centre."

The speaker began by announcing that the Patricias had been selected for conversion to airborne troops. He explained why such a change had become necessary and why the Patricias had been chosen. As it was a change of role which involved parachute jumping only volunteers would be accepted in the Battalion.* Again to quote General Mann:

"I cannot described adequately the thrill and pride when I asked, first the officers in succession, then the warrant officers and men, if they wished to volunteer for airborne service. The response was no mere proportion of the unit: it was complete—100%. Every individual replied in clear, firm, soldierly tones: 'I volunteer to be a jumper, sir.'"

The Patricias as airborne troops would be embodied in the Mobile Striking Force, a formation designed to meet and to contain invaders in the earliest stages of aggression.

This announcement focussed nation-wide attention on the Regiment. The immediate result was an increased intake of high-quality recruits. Specialist training would begin in October; in the meantime there was the customary Active Service Camp at Wainwright. Thence the Patricias moved on September 7th. The weather was kind and for four weeks all ranks trained earnestly. Major W. deN. Watson in acting command reported a peculiar development:

"We are experiencing a psychosis known as 'jump consciousness.' At all hours troops, including officers, can be seen conscientiously doing road work, desperately trying to condition lung and limb to the anticipated shocks of airborne training."

In its seventh week the Wainwright training period reached its climax in CATTALO,† an ambitious three-day exercise in which CHUBB FORCE (Patricias and Lord Strathconas) destroyed its

* It was not necessary by law to obtain a man's consent to undertake parachute training, but in practice only volunteers were sought.

† Lest future generations be curious CATTALO took its name from the experimental cross breed of cattle and bison which had been produced in Wainwright Buffalo Park, where the manoeuvres were held.

adversaries. Before returning to Calgary on October 30th the first airborne training serials, each consisting of 32 men, were dispatched to the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre at Rivers, Manitoba. At Currie Barracks the Patricias plunged into airborne conversion training; this included physical conditioning, basic air portability and pre-parachute training, together with other requisite routines in preparation for advanced paratroop training.

On October 7th Lieut.-Colonel D. C. Cameron DSO ED, formerly of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, took over command from Lieut.-Colonel Gemmell, who proceeded to the Canadian Army Staff College.

By the spring of 1949 the transformation from infantry to airborne troops was nearly complete. Individual training at Rivers finished in May; during that month Army Week was held and the Regiment displayed its new gear and wares at various exhibitions and demonstrations. The week ended with Trooping the Colour, a brilliant performance carried out in inclement weather. Brigadier Hamilton Gault after taking the salute addressed the parade. He said:

"The other day when in London I had the honour of dining with the parent Parachute Regiment under the chairmanship of Field Marshal Lord Montgomery of Alamein, who is Colonel Commandant of that Regiment and who, through me, welcomes you all into the brotherhood of parachute jumpers. From his lips we heard that infantry trained as paratroopers in no way lose their identity nor the proud boast of being the spearhead in attack. So remember that although many of you have been trained to be jumpers before completing your infantry training, a full knowledge of infantry weapons and field tactics is required before you can properly fulfill your duty as paratroopers."

EAGLE—THE FIRST AIRBORNE EXERCISE

It now was time to try out the newly-acquired skills in air exercises. Such exercises were easier to plan than to arrange, for essential equipment such as aircraft and paratroopers' gear was hard to come by. Nevertheless Major-General M. H. S. Penhale CBE, who had replaced Major-General Worthington as GOC Western Command, persevered in his search and eventually collected sufficient aircraft for the try-out. It was a

variegated fleet—9 Mustangs, 16 Dakotas, 28 Harvard trainers, 6 old Mitchell bombers, 3 North Stars and a few miscellaneous corks which might or might not stay in the air.

The plan of EAGLE presumed that Fort St. John airfield, 350 miles northwest of Edmonton, had been captured by an invader and had to be regained by an airdrop. Concurrently a subsidiary glider force would attempt to seize the Peace River bridge, 14 miles southeast of Fort St. John. The Patricias would provide the striking force while the invaders would be enacted by the Loyal Edmonton's militia unit. The hostile air force would be found by Royal Canadian Air Force flights stationed in Northern Alberta.

The sixteen available transport planes were short measure; an airborne battalion required sixty. The Patricias had been obliged to borrow their jump jackets and parachutes from the Air School at Rivers. In spite of such make-do EAGLE, as the first exercise of its kind ever to be staged in Canada, excited wide interest. Early in August newspaper correspondents and photographers began to arrive in Grande Prairie, which had been selected as the Patricias' take-off point. In this exercise the hostile air force, because of its knowledge of the area, proved much too cunning and alert for its airborne adversaries. On August 5th it inflicted heavy damage in surprise attacks on the Grande Prairie airfield and on the waiting troop carriers; the umpires were hard put to find reasons for the continuance of the exercise. On the following morning the Patricias were dropped to the north of the Fort St. John airfield; they were adjudged to have sustained heavy casualties. The glider-borne force, although intercepted and experiencing a number of crack-ups, was considered to have captured the Peace River bridge. The Canadian press took a rather sour view of the exercise, dwelling on the manifest shortages of equipment. Little blame was attached to the performances of the participating troops.*

By August 8th EAGLE was over and the Patricias were on their way to Wainwright. There the training culminated in the first week of October in BIG HORN—a five-day exercise which involved an approach march of forty miles, a river crossing, an attack followed by a pursuit in armoured carriers and a series of minor

* In the summer of 1949 Major H. F. Cotton, after an absence of seven years, returned to Regimental duty as Second-in-Command. In the following spring he was appointed Deputy Commandant of the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre at Rivers.

clearing actions. These manoeuvres went off smoothly and well. On October 12th the Patricias returned to Calgary to be confronted with a heavy syllabus of winter training, the climax of which would be a combined Canadian-American exercise on a major scale. At the end of November Lieut.-Colonel Cameron and a group of his officers left for the United States to discuss this project.

Plans called for a winter camp in advance of the main exercise. Christmas that year therefore was a movable feast, with the unit dispersed on various missions. On January 2nd 1950 the Patricias shifted to Wainwright. Rough weather arrived with the New Year and in temperatures ranging as low as fifty below FLYRITE, MOUTHORGAN, MUKLUK, and HOARFROST were carried out. These exercises included air drops involving a series of supply, maintenance and communications situations. Winter conditions were quite as rigorous as any likely to be encountered in the Arctic.

YUKON AND ALASKA—SWEETBRIAR

On January 23rd the Patricia vehicle convoy left Wainwright for Whitehorse. Some elements of the Battalion travelled by rail and by air. At the Yukon centre the Patricias 'married up' with 1st Battalion 14th U.S. Infantry Regiment, the second unit of the blocking force which would meet an enemy sweeping southward from Alaska. In all 5,000 troops would be engaged in SWEETBRIAR, which was designed as a low-temperature test not only of men but of machines, clothing, weapons and vehicles. In this exercise the enemy would be AGGRESSOR FORCE—a specialist United States formation solely employed in exercises, with distinctive uniforms and equipment and even speaking a special language of its own—perhaps the only unit of its kind in the world*.

At one minute after midnight on February 13th the Patricias, clad in pile-lined parkas and wearing mukluks (nylon and rubber boots), moved out of Whitehorse along the highway to the northwest. Included in the convoy were 'weasels,' 'penguins,' 'snowmobiles'—vehicles specially designed for Arctic use. The temperature stood at fourteen degrees below zero and snow was falling. The destination was Northway, 350 miles beyond the Alaskan boundary.

* In this exercise Brigadier R. C. Coleman DSO MC re-emerged into Regimental view as Chief Canadian Army Umpire.

The rival air forces, which had been expected to play leading roles in the exercise, were in large part immobilized by bad weather. Without great difficulty the Patricias passed Burwash landing on the northwesterly arm of Lake Kluane and entered enemy-held territory to the west. After first encounters with the hostile screen they and their American associates paused to prepare defenses on the line of the Donjek River. On February 18th the joint force renewed its advance towards the Alaskan boundary. The route led into a sea of mountains where reconnaissance and cross-country patrols were all but impossible. The temperature fell to fifty degrees below zero. At dawn on February 23rd, while the United States infantry approached through the surrounding forest on skis, five Dakotas dropped "C" Company of the Patricias on Northway airfield. The operation was adjudged to have succeeded.

Such in bare outline is the narrative of the ten days of SWEETBRIAR—the first attempt to reproduce battle conditions on a major scale in the far north. On the whole the experience was rewarding. In spite of inevitable mishaps it had been proved that soldiers could subsist and could fight in the open under low temperatures and that existing types of clothing, vehicles and weapons required no more than minor modifications to withstand the rigours of extreme cold. In a military sense the bogey of the Arctic had been laid.

The Canadian forces, of which the Patricias were the principal component, had accomplished their mission with few casualties, either real or simulated.* By their doggedness, endurance and ability to improvise they had conquered a greater enemy than the forces arrayed against them. Canadian equipment on the whole stood up rather better than its United States counterparts and Canadian operational routines also had proved superior.† With SWEETBRIAR Canada emerged for the first time as a teacher rather than a learner in a distinctive form of warfare. The role of the Patricias in this exercise, therefore, is of historical significance. It brought honour to the Regiment and lasting credit to the armed forces of Canada.

* Unfortunately one of the few casualties was Capt. J. W. D. Lewis of the Regiment, who was so seriously injured that he was obliged to retire after a long period of service.

† United States newspaper correspondents were very kind to the Canadian participants, praising their performances in generous terms. Messing and hospital facilities elicited special tributes. Said Jim Lucas of the New York World-Telegram: "A comparison of Canadian and United States messes in Operation SWEETBRIAR was a humiliating experience for most Yanks."

NEW DISTINCTIONS

At the conclusion of SWEETBRIAR the Patricias were flown from Alaska to Calgary, arriving home on February 24th. Seven days special leave was granted immediately by the Minister of National Defence. The Regiment now was much in the public eye and as a consequence continued to attract high-quality recruits. In its five years since reconstitution it had grown in stature and in individuality; to old observances it had added new embellishments and distinctions. The wreath attached to the Colour by the Colonel-in-Chief on the occasion of its consecration in 1919 was transferred to the new Regimental Colour, to be worn below the Crown and Lion on certain stated occasions. In 1947 the Regimental blazer had been redesigned in green instead of the earlier blue. Two years later a French-grey backing was authorized for the cap badge. These minor innovations were significant of a progressive tradition.

Spring training in 1950 opened with a jump at Calgary airport by detachments from three companies. Early in May the Red River overflowed its banks, wreaking great damage; a battle to save the Winnipeg suburbs ensued and for most of that month the Patricias were on flood duty on the dykes at St. Boniface. The annual Trooping was postponed until June 17th, when for the first time six guards were on parade.

Ten days later the headlines flared in block type; hour by hour broadcast stations rephrased the startling tidings. In wanton defiance of international covenants Communist armies had invaded South Korea.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

AT WAR ANEW

It was inevitable that somewhere on the frontier of the great and mass of Communist-controlled states a clash would occur, for the totalitarian nations were dynamic and evangelical, whereas the free nations wished to live and let live and to persuade rather than to compel uncommitted powers to their way of thinking. It always has been difficult to convince dictatorships that peaceful and democratic communities will take up arms if their freedoms are menaced or if their sense of justice is outraged; yet the evidence is plain. Three times in this century nations unprepared for battle and hating war as an instrument of policy have accepted the challenge of aggressors. The third time was in Korea.

Korea was about as far from Canada as any country could be. It was vaguely known to Canadians as an historical bone of contention between Russia, China and Japan. Japan had been in control since the turn of the last century; on that nation's unconditional surrender in 1945 Korea became free. Under the aegis of the United Nations the United States and Russia agreed to sponsor twin spheres of influence on either side of the thirty-eighth parallel of latitude; they also agreed to work towards the unification of the Korean nation. Sponsorship, however, meant different things to these powers. In the south the United States endeavoured to establish a democratic regime modelled on those of the free nations. In the north the Russians imposed the rigid patterns of a Communist state.

Since one of the first fruits of political independence inevitably is disputation and controversy South Korea after three years of freedom was still in political swaddling clothes whereas North Korea in the same period had become a regimented state, complete with commissars, secret police and the other mechanisms of authoritarian control. In South Korea the defense forces were in their teething stage; United States troops had withdrawn and American training missions had no more than made a start in setting up the domestic military establishments. About 50,000 infantry were under training, with modest strength in artillery and no tanks at all. In the north the Communists, who regarded armed forces as the chief instrument of authority, had about

200,000 men under arms, well-trained and well-equipped, with guns, tanks and other support weapons and with an air force based (in part at least) on airfields in Russian and Chinese territory. The United Nations, the foster-parent of free Korea, had no army at all. It is one of the sad facts of life that no amount of debate will talk bullets back into gun barrels.

The Communists from the first believed that they held the winning hand; that by means of their customary techniques of infiltration and 'white-anting' they could bring South Korea under their control. The United Nations perhaps would have been powerless to have prevented such a fate had it not been for Syngman Rhee, a strong-minded nationalist who had been elected as first president of the southern republic and who had a short way with spies and traitors. Largely because of Rhee's rough justice three years passed in which the Communists made little or no progress in their campaign of subversion; whereupon their thoughts turned to direct action. They would march first and argue the rights and wrongs afterwards. On June 25th 1950, without a declaration of war or a shred of justification, North Korean armies invaded South Korea and embarked upon its conquest.

THE FREE WORLD RALLIES

This blatant and impudent aggression was a deliberate challenge to the rule of law and to the authority of United Nations. The failure of the League of Nations to prevent the rape of Abyssinia and the Japanese invasion of China had prepared the way for Hitler's campaign of aggression and for the Second World War; unless collective security could be vindicated in Korea the world might be launched on slippery slopes to another catastrophe. At this juncture, when delay might have been fatal, President Truman earned the gratitude of the free world when he ordered United States armed forces in the name of United Nations to intervene in Korea. Other member states rallied swiftly to the call, led by nations of the British Commonwealth, France, Belgium, Turkey, Greece, the Philippines and Thailand. These countries placed armed or ancillary forces at the disposal of General Douglas McArthur, who had been appointed United Nations commander in Korea.

The Communist invaders made rapid headway against weak and disorganized defenses. On June 29th Seoul, capital of South

Korea, was captured and the North Koreans drove with all speed into the south, in the hope of seizing the entire peninsula before the first overseas troops could arrive. The United States, however, swiftly transferred divisions from occupation duties in Japan and early in July American troops were in action. In eight weeks five divisions arrived in Korea and more or less marched from the quays into battle. They were greatly outnumbered and failed to halt the strong and well-found Communist armies; by the beginning of August they had been pushed back to a last-stand perimeter around the southern port of Pusan. Due in large part to United States Air Force strikes at North Korean lines of communication this tiny beachhead held against all assaults and soon the danger of being bundled out of Korea had passed.

In the last week of August 27th British Brigade, the first United Nations unit to come to the assistance of the American divisions, landed at Pusan. On September 1st the North Koreans opened a new offensive for the purpose of putting an end to resistance. An immediate counterstroke followed; two United States divisions were landed near Inchon on the west coast of Korea and cut the lines of communication of the invaders. The North Koreans were compelled to decamp hurriedly; within a matter of days South Korea was quit of them. There then arose a politico-military problem of major importance. Should the North Koreans be pursued and dealt with in their own bailiwick?

THE CHINESE JOIN IN

The United Nations accepted General McArthur's recommendations and on October 9th its forces crossed into North Korea. When resistance stiffened X U.S. Corps in a second amphibious operation was landed behind the Red lines, within striking distance of the Yalu river, the southern boundary of Manchuria. This approach to Chinese territory provided the Communists with an excuse for intervention. Chinese formations masquerading as volunteers immediately crossed the frontier to bolster the faltering North Koreans.

The possibility of Chinese intervention had been foreseen but discounted. General McArthur decided to push on to the Yalu. His forces were badly deployed for such an advance as almost a hundred miles separated X U.S. Corps from the remainder of

Eighth U.S. Army in central and western Korea. Chinese formations poured into this gap; by the end of November several corps (armies under Chinese nomenclature) were on their way southward and were seeking to roll up the divided United Nations forces against the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan. It was necessary for both segments to disengage and withdraw. Within a week such withdrawals had become precipitate retreats.

In late December the United Nations forces sought to establish a firm front along the thirty-eighth parallel but when on New Year's Day the Communists opened a new drive this line gave way. Seoul was lost a second time and the Red forces were fifty miles south of the capital before they were brought to a halt. General Matthew Ridgeway, who had taken over field command from General McArthur, quickly discovered that the invaders again had outmarched their lines of supply. He opened a series of nibbling operations in which he recovered a strip of territory about twenty miles in depth across Korea.

So the situation stood in mid-February 1951. At that time the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade, consisting of 1st Middlesex Regiment, 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 3rd Royal Australian Regiment and 16th Royal New Zealand Field Regiment, were in the centre of the line of advance, working into the north through mountainous terrain on the line of the Han river. It was bitterly cold and the enemy was resisting vigorously. On February 17th the Middlesex in a series of sharp actions had won and lost and won again a series of rocky spurs along the Han valley. Of this day the British Official Observer wrote:

"There was much hand-to-hand fighting, but the companies stood their ground and the New Zealand Forward Observation Officer, with his guns prompt to answer, served them well. When daylight came the Chinese retreated up the valley. They had attacked in Battalion strength—48 of their dead were counted in "A" Company's area alone. That night the frozen cold was succeeded by heavy rain but the Diehards were singing in the darkness. Presently a sturdy reinforcement to the Brigade came to relieve them. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry had arrived."*

* "Our Men in Korea"—Linklater (H.M. Stationery Office).



Calgary, June 10th 1946—The Regiment moves to Currie Barracks.



Exercise—The Yukon, February 13th/23rd 1950.





The Pusan troop train.

THE CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION

To trace the chain of events that had brought a battalion of the Regiment to this faraway battlefield it is necessary to hark back to the preceding June, when the majority of Canadians were less engrossed with the international situation than with plans for their summer holidays. When the news of the Communist invasion came Parliament was in recess and Ministers of the Crown were scattered about the nation. It was of course unthinkable that Canada would not support United Nations but an uneasy feeling grew that perhaps the aggression in the Orient was diversionary and that the main Communist blow might fall elsewhere. It therefore might be unwise to strip Canada of her Permanent Force units. As a result Canadian destroyers were dispatched to the Orient and an airlift arranged to the theatre of operations but it was not until August 7th that Prime Minister St. Laurent, in the course of a nation-wide broadcast, announced that an infantry force of brigade strength would be placed at the disposal of United Nations for service in Korea. Each of the three Permanent Force infantry regiments would raise a second battalion for this formation, which would be known as Special Force.

THE MULTI-BATTALION REGIMENT

Thus arrived a new era in Patricia history. For the first time the Regiment and the Battalion were separate entities—a military family instead of a bachelor establishment. Thereafter the Regiment would be the parent, the battalions the offspring. This meant that in future the home of the Regiment would take on added importance; something in the nature of a depot establishment would be necessary. For the time being First Battalion—as the existing unit now became—would assume the depot functions. It would provide the administration and the training facilities for Second Battalion; it would act *in loco parentis* until the new unit was in position to manage its own affairs. In addition it would retain its individual function as an element in Mobile Striking Force.

On August 8th, in the wake of the Prime Minister's declaration, a flood of recruits all but submerged Currie Barracks. An officer wrote:

“We ceased all training, cancelled all activities and quickly prepared for the new tasks in hand. The men arrived by train

and bus from all parts of Canada. We maintained a fleet of trucks which met all trains. Some arrived without really being in the Army; these were led quietly aside and the oath administered. Personal problems abounded. An officer who was told off to listen to them became known as the 'Wailing Wall.'

"The Quartermaster's stores ran for weeks on a twenty-three hours schedule daily. Orderly corporals woke men when their turn came to draw their kits. Men in civilian clothes lolled about the lawns, spilled over on to the parade ground and gave the Regimental Sergeant-Major apoplexy. Nearby civilian workers fell in with meal queues and ate free . . . Inefficient as our 'crash' methods were, they worked."

SECOND BATTALION TAKES SHAPE

A training group under command of Major G. A. Flint took charge of a Recruit Wing at Currie Barracks and an Advanced Wing at Sarcee. On September 3rd the Advanced Wing, consisting of 300 trainees under command of Major C. V. Lilley together with First Battalion's instructional staff, moved to Wainwright. There the framework of the new unit took shape. By mid-October Second Battalion was 650 strong and its officers, who had been undergoing a refresher course at Calgary, arrived to take up their duties. Command of the new unit went to Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Stone DSO MC, well-known to the Patricias as an outstanding officer of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in the Second World War.

On September 16th, when Lieut.-Colonel D. C. Cameron DSO ED was promoted and appointed Commandant of the Royal Canadian School of Infantry at Camp Borden, Lieut.-Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith MBE took over command of First Battalion. The new Patricia commander, originally of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, previously had held a series of staff appointments.

Three days later the Special Force patch, consisting of "a scarlet shield centred by a gold maple leaf and inscribed by a wreath of silver olive branches with the word CANADA across the top" was issued to Second Battalion. On September 25th the unit was formally placed at the disposal of the United Nations. In October, when the Communist forces were being driven helter-skelter out of Southern Korea, it was believed that the end of the campaign was in sight. As a consequence it was

decided to send only one Canadian battalion to Korea; the remaining units of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade (the new description of Special Force) would be held at Fort Lewis, a U.S. Army camp near Seattle. Second Battalion won the honour of selection as Canada's token force and arrangements were made for early transfer to the theatre of operations, where training would be completed on terrain similar to that on which the Patricias would fight.

OFF TO THE WARS

That year winter came early, snow falling at Wainwright at the beginning of October. Towards the end of that month embarkation leave was granted to all ranks. After a bitterly cold spell, in which men had their toes and fingers frozen on parade, training ended and on November 10th Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith on behalf of First Battalion presented the younger unit with a camp pennant, as a symbol that it was now a full-fledged fighting formation. The order came to pack up and on November 16th a message arrived from the Lady Patricia Ramsay. "Whatever duties may befall their lot" it ran, "I am confident that Second Battalion P.P.C.L.I. will add new lustre to our name." Three days later in terse and soldierly terms Lieut.-Colonel Stone outlined the unique position that the unit would occupy in its impending employment. It would represent Canada in the first army ever to be assembled under the flag of United Nations. It would be the guests of the United States at Fort Lewis, it would travel to the Orient on a United States transport and in Korea it would be under American command. It would have no precedents for guidance; it must rely on the common sense, the native wits and the good manners of all ranks to ensure that the name of Canada did not suffer.

On November 19th Second Battalion entrained on four troop trains and departed for the Pacific Coast. The officers' entrainment roster was as follows:

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS — Commanding Officer: Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Stone DSO MC; Second-in-Command: Major H. D. P. Tighe MC; Adjutant: Capt. R. K. Swinton MC; Asst./Adjutant: Lieut. A. C. Beauchamp; Medical Officer: Capt. E. Karpetz; Intelligence Officer: Lieut. A. P. P. McKenzie; Regimental Sergeant-Major: J. D. Wood DCM.

"A" COMPANY—Major G. A. Flint, Capt. O. R. Browne, Lieut. M. W. Page, Lieut. H. A. Hayes.

"B" COMPANY—Major C. V. Lilley MC, Capt. D. R. Harrison, Lieut. M. C. Edwards, Lieut. D. G. MacLeod, Lieut. H. T. Ross.

"C" COMPANY—Major J. H. B. George, Lieut. J. J. Regan, Lieut. J. H. Deegan, Lieut. J. L. Entwistle, Lieut. R. D. Whittaker.

"D" COMPANY—Major J. L. Firth, Capt. J. G. Turnbull, Lieut. A. F. Wagstaff, Lieut. J. Pearson, Lieut. R. M. Middleton.

SUPPORT COMPANY—Major G. E. Henderson; Mortar Platoon—Capt. L. K. Hill, Lieut. H. R. Inglis; Machine Gun Platoon—Capt. A. Foulds; Anti-Tank Platoon—Lieut. A. H. Constant.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY—Major D. W. Grant; Signals Platoon—Capt. E. G. Coombe, Lieut. J. F. Keay; Quartermaster—Capt. P. M. Pyne; Asst./Quartermaster—Lieut. W. J. Campbell; Paymaster—Capt. J. A. Shaw; Transport Officer—Lieut. J. G. W. Mills.

During the Patricias' last days at Wainwright there had been another abrupt change of fortune in Korea. The United Nations forces once more were retreating, pursued by the vengeful Communists. It now seemed likely that not only would the other components of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade be dispatched to the Orient; it was possible that additional units would be required. The three Permanent Force infantry regiments therefore were authorized to raise third battalions which would serve in the first instance as reinforcing units and thereafter if necessary would take the field in their own right. The Patricias already had a reinforcing draft at Fort Lewis under command of Major W. H. J. Stutt; on November 30th this draft was transformed into Third Battalion. The reinforcement pool and the training cadre at Calgary were dispatched to Fort Lewis to round out this new unit; First Battalion found 13 officers and 36 non-commissioned officers as its christening gift to the youngest of the family.

FIRST BATTALION PICKS UP THE THREADS

After four months of hurry and scurry and of devotion to its junior brethren First Battalion now was anxious to concentrate on its own affairs. (It still was holding 900 men as reinforcements for Second Battalion and for some months it continued to provide drafts for Korea.) During the summer and autumn of 1950 parachute strength had been maintained and with the aid of 435 Transport Squadron RCAF at Edmonton it had been able to continue with advanced airborne training. In early November Exercise ASSINIBOINE was laid on, wherein Battalion Headquarters and a parachute company flew from Calgary to Camp Shilo, a distance of 700 miles, and was dropped within fifteen seconds of estimated time of arrival.

There followed a busy winter. An Arctic Warfare camp was established at Sarcee; the SNOWDROP exercises included the transportation and dropping of every species of low temperature gear and equipment. For the training of Korean drafts and as refresher courses for First Battalion a fieldcrafts camp was established at Vernon, where according to an officer "the good people were startled when the Battalion NCO School parachuted into the training camp. Leading the drop was the Commanding Officer, followed by the Paymaster, who jumped with his money in a special pack." This device of overhead entry proved excellent publicity. First Battalion's hockey team complete with equipment parachuted into Vernon and was given a civic reception and dinner and a sound defeat on the ice; the basketball team was dropped into Red Deer and having escaped the reception and dinner handily won its fixture. The rate of jumping increased and by spring 'hitting the silk' was a routine experience.

On March 17th 1951 the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was honoured by a parade, a Broom-i-Loo game and a buffet luncheon at which Lieut.-General G. G. Simonds CB CBE DSO CD, Chief of the General Staff, was guest of honour. The unit now mustered 34 officers and 873 other ranks; it had run through its prescribed syllabi and everyone was eager for the curtain to rise on the real thing. When news of Second Battalion's stand in the Kapyong battle came through everyone was torn between pride in such progeny and anxiety lest First Battalion should be denied a similar opportunity. May, June and July wore away in familiar tasks. In June Brigadier Hamilton Gault, standing in the open under pouring rain, took the salute at

the Trooping: inspired by his example the Battalion despite sodden uniforms, slippery rifles and uncertain footing put on an outstanding performance. On the following day a special parachute drop and company attack earned the Founder's warmest praise.

"WE ARE GOING TO KOREA"

Throughout the summer there had been rumours of a move. Plans for rotation of units in Korea were common knowledge. On August 17th Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith was summoned to confer with Major-General C. Vokes CB CBE DSO CD, of Western Command. On the following day a full battalion parade waited tensely for tidings. On the commander's words, "We are going to Korea," there was a spontaneous whoop of joy. Embarkation was a mere month away.

Intense disappointment awaited 300 men and a number of officers whom it was necessary to leave behind to fulfill the Regiment's airborne responsibilities in Mobile Striking Force, pending the return and parachute training of sufficient members of Second Battalion to relieve them. To make good this loss Third Battalion, now in training at Wainwright, yielded up a rifle company. As First Battalion was to proceed to Korea on normal infantry establishment a surplus of 40 sergeants existed, since in a parachute battalion each section is commanded by a sergeant instead of a corporal. Many of these non-commissioned officers sacrificed a stripe to go overseas. None wished to abandon the paratrooper's distinctions so special permission was obtained to wear the maroon beret.

It was learned that owing to various exigencies it would not be possible for First Battalion to embark as a unit. "A" and "C" Companies were selected as the first flight, with "D" Company, Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company to follow. "B" Company, which had provided most of the paratroop personnel to be left behind and Support Company, which required as much time as possible to master new weapons and equipment, would be last to leave.

THE NEW LOOK IN THE REAR RANK

The month sped on the wings of a host of enterprises—documentation, equipment parades, pay parades, vehicle inspections, requirements of the Canadian Armed Forces Identification

Bureau, completion of Soldiers' Service books, zeroing of arms and checking of individual training records. Thirty-seven years before, in this same month of August, the original Patricias had been recruited, organized and equipped and had embarked for overseas service within a space of three weeks.* At that time wars were relatively simple enterprises; the soldier carried most of his administrative 'tail' on his back or in his pocket; his weapon and his courage were his principal accoutrements. By 1951 the machine age had caught up with the infantry. The issue list of equipment now ran into hundreds of items. Nor was drill and discipline the sum of the soldier's education; his body, his mind and his spirit now were subject to separate processings, each of which involved organization and documentation on a profuse scale. As an example of the intricacy of such processes, the pre-embarkation medical programme involved nine inoculations, a vaccination, a Schick Test, a blood grouping and a protective regimen of various medicines. Arms, equipment, security and general knowledge requirements were scarcely less intricate.

ON THE WAY

On September 1st a round of farewells began with a ball in the Officers Mess. On September 19th the Warrant Officers, Staff Sergeants and Sergeants entertained the Officers in the Sergeants Mess and as "A" and "C" Companies had to be on parade at 0430 hours next morning few troubled to go to bed. The troop trains pulled out at thirty minute intervals, played off by the Regimental Band; among those on hand to wish Godspeed was Colonel Ware, who had returned from special duty in Korea and now was Commandant of the Calgary garrison.

At 2200 hours on October 7th Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters Company and "D" Company entrained under similar circumstances. At 2030 hours on October 17th "B" Company and Support Company pulled out for the port of embarkation. The combined officers' entrainment roster of First Battalion was as follows:

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS—Commanding Officer: Lieut.-Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith MBE; Second-in-Command: Major J. C. Allan DSO; Adjutant: Capt. R. W. Dudley;

* The Regiment did not sail from Quebec until September 29th 1914 but it had embarked at Montreal a month earlier. For various reasons the original convoy had not been permitted to proceed.

Asst./Adjutant: Lieut. B. E. Harper; Intelligence Officer: Lieut. R. J. Frost; Medical Officer: (appointed in Korea) Capt. D. S. Whittingham; Regimental Sergeant-Major: O. Gardner.

"A" COMPANY—Major E. J. Williams, Capt. L. A. Swick, Capt. G. A. Gunton, Lieut. R. A. Ostiguy, 2/Lieut. A. G. Caesar.

"B" COMPANY—Major C. O. Huggard, Capt. T. Berger, Capt. C. D. McLean, Lieut. M. G. Duncan, Lieut. W. R. Burton-Forster.

"C" COMPANY—Major R. E. M. Cross, Capt. J. G. Costeloe, Lieut. W. H. Jans, 2/Lieut. V. P. Rithaler, 2/Lieut. W. C. Robertson.

"D" COMPANY—Major J. H. B. George, Capt. W. E. Hall, Lieut. J. G. C. McKinlay, Lieut. W. K. Stirling, 2/Lieut. W. J. Jones.

SUPPORT COMPANY—Major R. B. Mainprize; Mortar Platoon: Capt. C. G. Short MC, 2/Lieut. D. A. Middleton MM; Machine Gun Platoon: Lieut. W. Davis; Anti-Tank Platoon: Lieut. A. P. Bull; Pioneer Platoon: Lieut. J. M. Davis.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY—Major S. L. Dymond; Quartermaster: Lieut. M. B. Wood; Asst./Quartermaster: 2/Lieut. T. H. Cory; Signals Officers: Capt. F. T. Harris, Lieut. W. J. Hockin; Paymaster: Lieut. A. J. Theiss; Transport Officer: Lieut. M. R. Bell; Chaplain: Hon./Capt. J. A. Filshie.

It now becomes necessary to trace the individual fortunes of the Patricia battalions in Korea.

CHAPTER TWELVE

KOREA: SECOND BATTALION

(December 1950 — October 1951)

Forty-eight hours after entrainment at Wainwright on November 19th 1950 Second Battalion arrived at Fort Lewis where it exchanged the bitter cold of the prairies for the downpours of a Pacific Coast winter. On November 23rd, as an element of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, the Patricias were reviewed in a driving rainstorm by the Hon. Brooke Claxton, Canadian Minister of National Defense. Two days later they embarked at 0630 hours for the run to the Seattle docks where they boarded *Pvt. Joe P. Martínez*, a United States Army transport which sailed that afternoon.

The transport was no luxury liner. In the squally North Pacific she bucketed and rolled,* the ship was crowded with American reinforcements; the messing arrangements might have been better. Nevertheless after the manner of soldiers the Patricias soon made themselves at home and on the seventh day out, when the ship drew into Pearl Harbor, all ranks were in good fettle in anticipation of a few hours ashore. Unfortunately no leave could be given and the Patricias were obliged to be content with a short route march through the Naval Base area and with the knowledge that they were the first Canadian unit to set foot on Hawaii.

Thereafter the weather worsened and on the ship notice boards the news from Korea revealed an increasingly serious situation. The Communists were driving the United Nations forces headlong and Second Battalion's original assignment as a token force was recalled somewhat sardonically. However, morale was unshaken and spirits rose on December 13th with the first landfall and with prospects of sight-seeing in the Orient. All ranks had been more or less cut off from the world since the muster at Wainwright in the previous September.

FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE ORIENT

The transport remained for a day at Yokohama and for another day at Kobe. In both ports short shore leaves were

* The transport heave-to on two occasions while Capt. E. Karpetz, the Patricias' Medical Officer, performed operations.

granted. As the ship edged into Pusan Harbor on the afternoon of December 18th all ranks lined the rails for a first glimpse of Korea. It had a raggedy-taggety frontier air about it, with strange-looking people scurrying about; but there was a touch of home as well, for the welcoming band played "If I'd Known You Were Coming I'd Have Baked a Cake." That evening the Patricias disembarked and were borne to a camp in school grounds on the outskirts of the seaport.

On December 14th the enemy drive into the south had been halted but it was generally believed that the Communists would mount a further offensive as soon as reinforcements reached them. It therefore was imperative to prepare newly-arrived United Nations units for operational employment as soon as possible. In the case of the Patricias this involved physical reconditioning after twenty-four days at sea, schooling in United States weapons, equipment, clothing and military stores (which in many instances were different from those to which Canadians were accustomed), and finally, some general knowledge of the land, of its inhabitants and of the nature of the terrain on which battle would be joined.

On arrival the Patricias were outfitted on United States Army scale. Many items which the Canadian soldier either had bought for himself or had gone without were now on issue. "We have been given a colossal lot of stuff," said the War Diarist dubiously. Two new weapons—the 60 mm and the 81mm mortar—replaced the lighter Canadian mortars.

NORTH TO MIRYANG

On December 23rd Major H. D. P. Tighe left for Miryang, 54 miles to the north of Pusan, to make arrangements for a training camp in that area. The road ran inland to the east of the Nakdong river, passing over the high mountain ridges which form the spine of the Korean peninsula. On the following day Lieut. A. P. P. McKenzie as Intelligence Officer went forward to mark the route with the Canadian road sign—a green Maple Leaf upon a white background.

For Christmas only a half-day could be spared from training. Nevertheless a brave show was made; a Christmas tree was set up by the Pioneers in front of Battalion Headquarters, a Christmas service was followed by the singing of carols and at noon the officers and senior non-commissioned officers served the men in the

time-honoured fashion.* On Christmas Eve the men received an unexpected increase in field-service allowances.

On December 26th advance parties left for the north, to be followed on the next day by the first lifts of the Battalion. En route the Patricias surveyed a far-from-prepossessing landscape. It was rough, bleak and topsy-turvy terrain, a succession of twisty valleys caught between grim ridges whose steep, rocky slopes rose to narrow crests high above the countryside. Where there was good land on the valley floor or lower slopes it was intensively cultivated but much of the soil was thin and stony. The unkempt and straggling villages reflected the stern struggle for a livelihood.

The hamlet of Miryang lay in a narrowing valley which brought down a river of the same name from the Taegu mountain block. To north and east lay wild and difficult highlands; to the west, fertile and well-populated territory. It was by no means a safe area, for many North Korean guerillas had been left behind when the Communist armies had withdrawn in the previous autumn. Small groups of these irregulars ranged the countryside, terrorizing the villages and bushwhacking unwary United Nations personnel.

The Patricias' camp at Miryang was closely guarded and men seldom left it except on duty. The weather was not unduly severe, temperatures usually being above freezing point. All ranks were housed in United States Army tents which were heated by wood or oil stoves, wood being purchased from nearby woodcutters. Electric light was furnished by local generators.

The first days of the new year brought fresh anxieties. The new Communist offensive fell upon a ROK (Republic of Korea) corps on the eastern flank of the United Nations front. This formation collapsed and the enemy poured through, imperilling the lines of communication of American divisions in central Korea. At the same time severe pressure had developed against the Yellow Sea flank, where 29th Independent British Brigade, which had arrived in mid-November, had suffered severely in heavy fighting and was urgently in need of reinforcements. The Patricias had been tentatively allotted to this brigade and on January 5th its commander (Brigadier T. Brodie DSO) besought Lieut.-Colonel Stone to bring his men forward as soon

* A welcome supplement to the Christmas fare was tinned chicken provided by Brigadier W. G. Colquhoun and former members of the Regiment resident on the Pacific Coast.

as possible. It was arranged that should a break-through occur in the western sector or should 29th Brigade get into more serious difficulties the Patricias would move at once to Taegu, 35 miles north of Miryang, and there hold the bridges over the Naktong river.

TRAINING UNDER PRESSURE

The Patricias' training syllabus anticipated mountain warfare. It was accepted that United Nations formations could not operate in Korea without mechanized transport; as a result the roads, bad as they were, were the first responsibility of the fighting units. They ran along the valley floors; the infantry must hold the hillsides (and if possible the crests) in order to keep them open. As the mountainsides were slashed and scarred by innumerable gullies and as spurs and ridges everywhere ran down from the main spines into the valleys the infantry operating on such terrain manifestly must consist of small and flexible units which would be able to take advantage of every wrinkle in the ground both in offense and in defense. These battle groups must be in large part self-contained and must be able to operate for considerable periods without recourse to parent formations. On such ground the arts of the stalker and the hunter were those of the soldier.

As the Patricias began to rove the mountainsides and to spend nights in the open they discovered that some of their equipment was unsatisfactory. Windproof clothing proved to be anything but waterproof; a number of other items required alterations to meet Korean conditions. The climate and the terrain called the tune, with scant courtesy to armourers or quartermasters.

It also was apparent that the infantry company was a too-large unit for the business in hand. Platoons or even sections could move more quickly and could be sustained, concealed and replenished more easily. Communications were difficult; the high ridges and broken crests impeded visual signalling and wireless reception alike. Wheeled vehicles were useless off the roads; animals were not available; the answer had to be manpacks. Out of these and other circumstances there emerged a picture of a battlefield in which men moved rapidly from place to place in small self-contained groups; in which one bit of ground was as good as another; in which the integration of support arms and infantry

must be complete down to platoon level; in which keen observation, quick decision and instant action were the keys not only to victory but to survival. On such a terrain no military enterprise would prosper unless all ranks were trained to the highest standards of discipline and endurance.

A CLASH WITH GUERILLAS

As matters stood there was time for little more than the beginnings of such training. It had been necessary to send forward the sparse United Nations reserves to plug the hole in the eastern flank; as a result guerilla activity in the back areas increased. Saboteurs and bushwhackers (often dressed in American uniforms) might be encountered anywhere. On January 14th two New Zealand soldiers were murdered and mutilated on the main Pusan-Miryang road a few miles south of the Patricias' encampment. Three days later Lieut. H. T. Ross was wounded by a sniper in the Battalion training area.

The situation called for counter-action. "B" Company with 150 South Korean police under command was dispatched on a sweep through the mountainous districts to the west of Miryang. Closing on an area in which the presence of guerillas was suspected a number of trails were picketed. During the first night two firefights occurred; on the second night three Koreans were killed in similar clashes. The South Korean police did not distinguish themselves in these operations; most of them vanished as soon as the shooting began.

It also was necessary to reckon upon the possibility of a second withdrawal into the Pusan beachhead. On January 14th/15th "C" and "D" Companies were sent to Sinchon, 12 miles to the southwest of Miryang, to work on perimeter defenses in that area.

On January 11th the Patricias' encampment was the scene of a pleasant ceremony. A United Nations flag was presented to the Battalion by Mr. J. Plimsoll, Australian delegate to United Nations. A platoon of "D" Company under command of Lieut. A. F. Wagstaff provided a Guard of Honour.

On January 18th RSM J. D. Wood DCM was killed by the premature explosion of an anti-personnel mine about to be used in a demonstration. This outstanding Warrant Officer, who had won his decoration at the crossing of the Savio in Italy, had been a tower of strength to the Battalion and his loss at this juncture imposed a new strain on unit administration.

MORE PRECIOUS TIME FOR TRAINING

The Patricias were not yet aware of it but the immediate crisis had passed. In mid-January the enemy drive down the east coast of Korea was halted and although in the mountainous central sector heavy fighting continued the Communist forces had been blocked in their main avenue of advance along the Han valley. On January 25th a United Nations counter-offensive opened and the enemy, who once again had gambled, was obliged to give ground. This withdrawal gave the Patricias a few more precious weeks of training; their deadline for operational employment was set back until mid-February.

Specialist exercises now were possible—night movements and approaches, long-distance reconnaissances in force, withdrawals and realignments under attack, rapid establishment of fortress positions, the 'marrying' of isolated detachments and support weapons. Such training was designed to give the feel of combat conditions; how necessary it was may be gathered from the sitrep of one war game, which reported that the Patricia's Intelligence Officer and a scout, while enacting the enemy, were undetected when they left a note under the muzzle of a defender's machine gun.

At the end of January the companies competed against each other in battle drill based on 'advances to contact' problems. On February 5th the wind-up of the training began in the five-day MAPLE LEAF exercise, which was described as "an advance to occupy positions in the dark, a defense of the Battalion area, complete concealment during daylight and continued work on positions during the night, with reports of any movements observed." During this exercise all ranks would subsist on dry rations and would remain in the open. The enemy force would endeavour to infiltrate into the defensive positions.

MAPLE LEAF was carried out in cold and blustery weather with a maximum of enthusiasm and (it is feared) something less than equivalent skill. The Intelligence Log suggests that the enemy, operating in 'penny packets' had the best of it.* But training time had run out; on February 6th the warning for a move into the battle zone came through. Lieut.-Colonel Stone

* Lieut.-Colonel Stone dissents from this view. He writes: "The withdrawal which took place on the last night of the exercise demonstrated that the unit was a battalion and not just a group of companies." On the strength of its performance the Patricia commander reported to Eighth Army Headquarters that the Patricias were ready.

vent forward to confer anew with the commander of 29th Independent British Brigade, but at this juncture EUSAK (Eighth U.S. Army in Korea) intervened with instructions to the Patricias to join 27th British Commonwealth Brigade, now under command of IX U.S. Corps in an area to the east of the Han River, about 100 miles inland from the Yellow Sea.

This sector was 175 miles to the north of Miryang. Except for the last few miles it could be reached by the Pusan-Seoul road, which wandered northward along the valleys and across the mountains, bearing first to the north for 50 miles to Taegu, thence west for 80 miles to Taejon, thence north once more over the easy and well-populated Yellow Sea littoral until high crests appeared to the east of Seoul.

OFF TO THE FRONT

On February 11th an advance party under Major G. E. Henderson left for the front. All the mountain passes were deep in snow and slippery from day thaws. The trip was uneventful and the party reached Changhowan-ni in the rear of 27th Commonwealth Brigade on the following morning. The War Diary thus described the immediate task of the advance party:

"The job is to repair tracks leading to the various company areas, to clear all civilians out of such areas, and to prepare a clean level place for the company kitchen. Routes into the company positions must be marked and company guides must be briefed in case the Battalion should be forced to move in the dark. A large part of the work will be done by the local labour. There is a good deal of sickness in this area and we have seen several dead bodies. The civilians are trying to be helpful in return for being permitted to remain in parts of their villages rather than to be turned out completely."

At daybreak on February 15th the Patricias' convoy drew out of Miryang and headed into the north, moving slowly over the twisty, icy mountain roads. Major Tighe had gone ahead to select an overnight staging post; he chose a river bed beyond Taegu. That afternoon the Patricias bivouacked in this bleak spot, without fuel for fires, with no hot foods and with only canvas windbreaks to ward off the icy blasts which whistled down the valley. Beyond the encampment lay a high and narrow pass through which one-way traffic was compulsory. Supply trains

and a Marines division moving up had been given priorities; the Patricias awaited their turn for two nights and a day. It was not until noon on February 17th that a tired battalion (having been delayed still further by a misdirection by road police) arrived at Changhowan-ni, a road junction to the west of the Han river and 46 miles southeast of Seoul.

JOINING THE DRIVE

There was no time to rest or to repine; the advance was on and 27th Commonwealth Brigade was in it, under command of 24th U.S. Division, which had recently crossed the Han river at Yogu, 15 miles north of Changhowan-ni. Lieut.-Colonel Stone immediately went forward to meet Lieut.-Colonel A. M. Man OBE of 1st Middlesex Regiment, acting commander of 27th Brigade. At 0500 hours next morning the Patricias moved off on the last stage of their trek to the firing line. Of their arrival a British historian has written:*

"February 18th was a day of blizzard but a notable one apart from that. On this day 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry arrived. It is doubtful if the soldiers on their windswept hills realized that this was a red-letter day in the annals of our Commonwealth forces. The 27th Commonwealth Brigade now consisted of an Australian battalion, a Canadian battalion, an English battalion, a Scottish battalion, a New Zealand Field Regiment and an Indian Field Ambulance, and was commanded by an Englishman, Brigadier Coad, who returned from leave on this day. There is no record of any other brigade—or force of similar size—composed of so many contingents of different Commonwealth countries. It seems unlikely that there is a parallel in the history of any army."†

The brigade operational area lay in a triangle of mountainous terrain between the Han river and its principal tributary the Pukhan, which flowed down from the northeast to join the Han twenty miles east of Seoul. In this enclave the grain of the ground coarsened—the crests rose higher, the valleys were narrower, the spurs which ran down from the main ridges were more rugged and numerous. According to intelligence reports the enemy might be encountered anywhere in this area but seldom

* "First Commonwealth Division" by Brigadier C. N. Barclay CBE DSO (Gale and Polden).

† 27th Commonwealth Brigade also had under command 2nd U.S. Mortar Battalion, a first-class unit and firm friends of everyone.

strength; the Communists were in course of withdrawal and were not committing their main forces. On the other hand they could react quickly and vigorously if their lines of retreat were threatened or even if their rearguards were in danger of being cut off.

On the morning of February 19th the Patricias moved into the centre of the brigade front and the advance began. "B" Company took the lead, working forward on either side of a rough road which wound through the valley. On the slopes on either side the British battalions kept alignment. No resistance was encountered but the Patricias passed the bodies of 65 American troops many of whom had been surprised and slaughtered while still in their sleeping bags.* After five hours they approached the line of the Seoul-Wonju railway, beyond which stood a formidable mountain block. That evening the Commonwealth Brigade halted for thirty-six hours to allow the formations on either flank to catch up.

When on February 21st the advance was resumed the Commonwealth Brigade moved between elements of 1st U.S. Cavalry Division on the left and 6th ROK Division on the opposite flank. "A" Company led off for the Patricias with the 1st Royal Australian Regiment as the other leading battalion of the Brigade. The Seoul-Wonju railway was followed into the northeast. Throughout the day the footing on the hillsides proved treacherous, two officers being injured by falls. That night an icy rain fell; the men were soaked and the trails became quagmires. On the following afternoon, as evening mist began to fill the valley "D" Company in the lead was fired on—the first contact with the enemy. At nightfall the Battalion occupied high ground around a tiny mountain hamlet and the Brigade Commander with commendable judgment authorized the first rum issue of the campaign. The War Diary thus summarized the current situation: "Cold, wet and hungry, but morale very high."

CLEARING THE HILLSIDES

On the following day the Commonwealth Brigade spread out over a considerable front and the Patricias had the narrowing valley running north from Sokkong-ni to themselves. Throughout the morning the advance continued on a three-company front,

* Major C. V. Lilley comments: "The immediate effect on Second Battalion was that they never used their sleeping bags in the front line."

with "B" Company on the valley floor, "C" and "D" companies on the hillsides. Early in the afternoon "C" Company found a party of the enemy on a high spur ahead. "B" and "C" Companies continued to work forward along the slopes and after a scrimmage the enemy withdrew, having inflicted the first Patricia casualties of the campaign—two men killed and one wounded.

Soon afterwards "B" Company came under distant fire. Pressing to the attack a platoon chased the enemy from a feature on its front and at nightfall the Patricias had closed up against what appeared to be a strong enemy position. "D" Company on the right also ran into opposition, whereupon "A" Company came up into the line and drove the enemy from a ridge between the "B" and "D" Company positions. The sitrep of these scrimmages revealed the determination of the newly-blooded battalion to play the game according to the book:

"1845 HOURS OUR CHILD HAS CLEARED THE HILL FULL STOP NOW CLEARING GULLIES PERIOD ANOTHER CHILD MOVING TO SECURE FEATURE STOP FIRST CHILD STILL BUMPING SUBS (SUBVERSIVES) ON THE LEFT FULL STOP FIRST CHILD CONSOLIDATING WITH OTHER CHILD AND WILL GIVE IMMEDIATE LOCATION FOR DEFENSIVE FIRE CHILD."

On the following morning the Patricias were confronted with Point 419, a rocky spur which flowed down into the valley and barred the way. The enemy was believed to be holding this position in some strength; limited objectives were allotted and at 0900 hours "C" Company moved to the attack. Within the hour Major George and his men were on the feature, but they came under heavy fire when they attempted to consolidate. "D" Company in a similar advance was thwarted by fire from a ridge to the northeast. At nightfall both companies halted somewhat short of their objectives. The day's casualties had been six killed and eight wounded.

That evening a new formation toiled up the hillsides to the forward positions. Capt. R. K. Swinton MC had organized the Korean porters into a supply train and they had been taken under Battalion command. Their first attempt to reach the front line failed; on a burst of fire the bearers scattered in the darkness. Later they reassembled and before dawn they had delivered their loads. When Canadians and Koreans came to know each other the 'Rice Burners' became cherished auxiliaries.

Before dawn on February 24th "C" Company was withdrawn from its overnight position to allow the enemy-held area to be searched by artillery and mortar fire. During the forenoon two air attacks followed and the Patricias for the first time saw a strike with napalm, the dreaded jellied gasoline bombs. At 1032 hours "D" Company advanced in a second attempt to seize the disputed feature. Capt. J. G. Turnbull and his men at first encountered little resistance, but as neither of the flanking battalions had come up into line the Patricias' advance companies soon were being pelted from three sides. (It afterwards was learned that two regiments of 125th Chinese Division held this sector.) Resistance was so strong that the attack was abandoned. In the afternoon "D" Company made a second try but again the leading platoons were pinned down short of their objectives. At 1630 hours the Company dug in.

For the next two days the Patricias stood fast, awaiting support on their flanks. Forward patrolling continued, in the course of which the bodies of Patricias killed in the earlier fighting were recovered, stripped of their uniforms. There were a number of patrol clashes with the Chinese, who proved difficult to surprise and who usually were willing to stand and fight it out. They plainly were well-trained troops.

In one of these encounters the Patricias picked up a prisoner who proved to be a prize. He was filled with facts and figures and was thoroughly conversant with Communist military organization. He declared that the Reds would mount another general offensive as soon as reinforcements, which would include tank units, arrived from Manchuria. He also divulged that the enemy was at point of abandoning the present front and withdrawing to prepared positions to the north of the thirty-eighth parallel. The present delaying actions therefore were almost at an end.

On February 27th the Australians captured dominating ground on the Patricias' right. With this flank secure the Battalion deployed for another attack but as the assault went in the enemy pulled out. When the Canadian and Australian positions had been consolidated the Commonwealth Brigade occupied a salient which thrust for two miles into enemy territory. The Middlesex moved up and seized a feature which protected the Patricias' left flank.

On March 3rd the Middlesex and the Argylls took over the lead and the Patricias, no longer the spearhead, remained in the forward area as firm base for the British battalions. Throughout the ensuing week platoons were released in rotation and were sent back for baths and an untroubled night's sleep in warmed tents. The weather was very cold and the condition of the men's clothing gave Patricia officers considerable concern.

A SHARP ENCOUNTER

On March 4th a Greek Regimental Combat Team closed the gap on the left of the Commonwealth Brigade, which now passed under command of 1st U.S. Cavalry Division. On the right flank the Koreans still were lagging but with an integrated divisional front it was decided to push on. The terrain was worsening; the watershed of the mountain block between the Han and the Pukhan had been reached and the valleys now ran east and west across the line of advance. It therefore was necessary to cross main ridges instead of spurs—to climb steep slopes in the virtual certainty of finding the enemy dug in on the summits.

The Patricias and the Australians drew the task of driving the defenders from the first of these transverse barriers—a ridge system about four miles to the northeast of Chipyeong-ni. At 0500 hours on March 7th the Battalion moved down from its high ground on the south side of the valley, crossed and attacked up the northern slopes. It had been intended that this assault should go in at dawn, but the approach march had been slowed down by bad footing and it was full light when "A" and "D" Companies closed up on the enemy—"D" Company in a frontal approach while "A" Company endeavoured to turn the left flank of the position. "D" Company immediately came under heavy fire and was pinned down. After a softening-up artillery and mortar shoot "D" Company again tried for the crest but murderous fire once more beat the Patricias to ground. In this action Pte. L. Barton distinguished himself; when his platoon commander was disabled he took charge and although thrice wounded led the assault.

At 1400 hours "D" Company for the third time moved to the attack. A footing was won on the crest of the ridge but only to discover that the position was dominated by higher ground behind. Fire came from three sides and at 1600 hours the Company withdrew, having suffered 34 casualties.

"A" Company in its outflanking approach had made good progress until it fetched up against a series of hummocks and rocky pimples held by the enemy. As there was no room to manoeuvre the Company halted and dug in. At last light "B" Company came forward to close the gap between the two forward companies. As they neared their allotted position Major Lilley and his men were confronted by a steep bank within a few yards of the enemy outposts. At its foot they spent an uncomfortable night; from time to time they were pelted from above with grenades. By 0500 hours they had had enough of this sort of thing. They drew together in the darkness, scrambled up the bank and swept forward with the bayonet. When they leapt into the enemy sangars they found them to be garrisoned only by the dead; 25 bodies were sprawled in the crawl trenches and foxholes and there were many blood trails on the snow. In completing the occupation of the ridge, 22 other bodies were discovered. "A" and "C" Companies moved forward on either side and consolidated a position on the high ground.

THE ENEMY BREAKS CONTACT

It was believed that the Chinese as usual would be found on the next ridge to the north since on either flank of the Patricias hard fighting by a Greek battalion and by the Australians had gained little ground. However when the advance was resumed on March 10th it was discovered that the enemy had left the neighbourhood. It was the end of the tour of duty for the Patricias. On March 13th they were relieved by 5th U.S. Cavalry Regiment and withdrew into Corps reserve in the Chipyeong-ni area.

This first operational commitment had been a sharp initiation for a new battalion whose rank and file were no more than seven months from civilian life. In the depths of a northern winter, on wild and intractable terrain, they had met well-trained enemies to whom survival meant nothing and who knew most of the tricks of a trade that the Patricias were yet to master. Everything had not gone by clockwork; it would have been a miracle if it had. But the experience had been fruitful in that it had convinced all ranks that if they wished to win the war—and to see their homes again—they must give their utmost attention to the business in hand and they must learn the fine points of combat without delay. Fighting Chinese Communists was no pulp-magazine adventure. It was a stark and deadly business.

For three days after relief all ranks were busy tidying up—renewing kit, putting the encampment in order, organizing the rest period. On March 17th the birthday of the Colonel-in-Chief was honoured in customary style. There was a short parade in the morning, a sports meet in the afternoon, a cocktail party and buffet supper for friends of the Commonwealth Brigade, a concert by the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders pipe band, a huge bonfire and sing-song in the evening. The bleak landscape glowed and everyone went to bed well content.

Day by day the news bulletins recorded fresh Communist withdrawals. Seoul was liberated on March 16th and as the United Nations forces continued into the north, the thorny politico-military problem emerged once more—would United Nations forces halt at the thirty-eighth parallel or would the pursuit be continued into North Korean territory? General Douglas McArthur, who held the over-all command, was an exponent of outright victory. He was prepared to conquer North Korea ridge by ridge, even if his conquest meant war with Communist China and perhaps with Soviet Russia. Most of the countries which had contributed forces to United Nations command disagreed with such policy; nor was there the support for it in the United States that this gallant officer had anticipated. On the other hand there were sound military reasons for carrying the war into North Korea. The terrain to the south of the thirty-eighth parallel was not suitable for permanent defensive lines, whereas immediately to its north a huge mountain block known as the 'Iron Triangle' offered a natural fortress position. In spite (or perhaps because of) mounting evidence of increasing Communist concentrations in this area General McArthur decided to recross the boundary between the two Koreas and to seize the 'Iron Triangle.'

A NEW AXIS OF ADVANCE

At this juncture he was relieved of his command by President Truman but on other than strategical grounds; the decision to invade North Korea stood. On the evening of March 24th the Patricias' movement orders arrived and on the following day the Battalion embussed under command of Major Tighe; Lieut.-Colonel Stone had been stricken with a serious illness. The convoy moved west along country tracks to a crossing of the Pukhan river, thence north by a newly-built road to Chonghyon-ni

and on to a brigade assembly area near Chongpyong-ni, where the Pukhan river swings abruptly into the west. Due to bad roads and casual traffic control the last Patricia vehicle did not check in until 0400 hours next morning; it had taken seventeen hours to cover fifty miles. Nor was the new encampment inviting; says the War Diary: "It is the worst in the Brigade. Only one entrance and an exit along a narrow soft-shouldered track winding through paddy fields for 400 yards. The drop of ten feet from road level to track requires two days' work by the Pioneers before the heavier vehicles can be driven out." This concentration area was about twenty miles south of the thirty-eighth parallel.

The Commonwealth Brigade now passed once more under operational command of 24th U.S. Division in an area which one writer had described as "a wilderness of hills." The valleys ran into the north or northwest but they were narrow, twisty and deep, with a tendency to peter out, so that troops moving northwards along them eventually would find themselves in a *cul de sac* of mountains. One such dubious valley was that of the Chojong river, an inconsequential stream which disappeared (and its valley with it) a few miles south of the thirty-eighth parallel. This valley had been allotted as the line of advance of 24th U.S. Division.

Had there been no enemy to dispute the way this move into the north would have been sufficiently strenuous; but to be obliged to climb when encumbered with food and weapons and the many tools of battle and at the same time to be prepared at any moment to meet tenacious and well-sited enemies, made it an exceedingly rigorous and hazardous enterprise. On either side of the canyon-like valley the main ridges rose to a height of three thousand feet. The slopes were steep, seamed with gullies and warty with outcrops; the contours of the crest lines gave alternate dead and commanding ground, so that defensive positions succeeded each other. For the first ten miles there was a road of sorts in the valley. After fifteen miles it would be necessary to take to the hillsides.

The Patricias had been assigned the eastern crest line, with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on the opposite summit. On March 27th they were borne to the end of the road, where they shouldered their gear and trudged on up the valley. They took off in bright sunshine and bivouacked that evening in a

driving rainstorm. Fortunately they had been issued with British service ponchos; these rubberized cloaks proved invaluable.

Next day the climb to the crest line began. On reaching the summit the Patricias passed through 5th U.S. Cavalry Regiment and with "D" Company in the lead moved into the north—now climbing, now descending, working ahead along narrow crests and over steep rock faces. After a short march the companies bivouacked. They awakened next morning in a cold, white world; it had snowed heavily during the night. With "C" Company leading the Battalion plodded on until early afternoon when the scout sections were fired on by quickly-disappearing patrols. Three miles of scrambling ("sliding about in mud and slush," says the War Diary) had been negotiated by late afternoon. That day Brigadier J. M. Rockingham CBE DSO ED, commander of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade which now was on its way to Korea, came forward to visit the Patricias. He was directed on to the wrong side of the valley; after climbing three thousand feet he found the Argylls and was obliged to retrace his steps and to climb to the same height on the opposite side.

On March 30th, at the end of another day of clambering, the valley below had shrunk to negligible dimensions. A pass now gave to the east which carried a track into the Kapyong valley six miles away. Early that afternoon the Patricias wheeled into this col and immediately were fired on from a ridge system to the north. There seemed to be an enemy concentration on the highest ground of all (Point 1250), and the Patricias halted while part of 21st U.S. Regimental Combat Team came forward to deal with it. The Americans failed to take their objective but seized subsidiary ridges which covered the line of advance.

INTO NORTH KOREA

These operations lasted for three days, during which the Patricias bivouacked on the crest line. On April 2nd they were ordered to relieve the American covering troops. A search of the ridges to the north failed to find them but a fairish trail was discovered which led into the east. This route was followed over the gradually-descending hilltops and before the end of that day the Battalion had made its way to the village of Sorakkae in the Kapyong valley about three miles south of the thirty-eighth parallel. Here it passed into Brigade reserve. After

eight strenuous days of hard rations and stony couches the amenities of even a rough encampment were appreciated.

The Patricias now halted for six days while the remainder of the Brigade followed the retreating Chinese into North Korean territory. On April 8th they were under way once more and after a short march they came up with the line of advance in broken and hilly country admirably suited for defense. Here the enemy was resisting in much the same fashion as during the Battalion's first tour of front-line duty. On arrival the Patricias at once deployed and took up the running. "D" Company led off and seized its first objective without resistance. When "A" Company passed through fire opened but Capt. Owen Browne with two platoons chased off a rearguard and dug in. A halt was called but two days later the nibbling process continued, with "B" Company gaining its objectives without great difficulty.

The Middlesex and the Australians then took over and found the enemy in unaccommodating mood. A series of small clashes gained little ground; on April 14th it was the Patricias' turn once more and "D" Company undertook to clear a ridge to the northeast of the Middlesex positions. With artillery and mortar support Lieut. M. G. Levy led an attack which seized a Chinese-held bunker; it proved impossible to gain the main objective. Five casualties, including Lieut. L. Hill wounded, were the cost of this encounter. For the first time the Patricia wounded were evacuated by helicopter.

Attempts to gain ground during the next few days followed a similar pattern. The enemy remained silent and hidden as long as the pressure was applied only against intermediate or unimportant objectives. Should his commanding ridges or lines of withdrawal be threatened he stood fast and fought fiercely and skillfully.

THE QUALITY OF THE ENEMY

After three tours of front-line duty the Patricias felt in position to appraise the Chinese Communist soldier. For the most part they agreed with the estimate of a British observer:

"The Chinese Communist Forces had been well trained, were well led and could escape observation by a sort of natural genius for concealment. They were hardy and quick of foot; they moved easily over the rough, steep hills and would usually make for the

tallest peaks and highest ridges in the landscape, partly for the sake of tactical advantage and partly, it appeared, because their system of communication was primitive and the most prominent features of the countryside were the natural signposts they used to maintain direction. They marched lightly, carrying simple rations for four or five days; their administrative 'tail' was no encumbrance, but the duration of a continuous attack was restricted . . . They found compensation for the poverty of their equipment in the resourcefulness of their minds, the hardihood of their bodies and the discipline of their training."*

ASSIGNMENT AS BLOCKING FORCE

The Patricias had only encountered such adversaries in penny packets; they now were to meet them in the mass. On April 18th the Commonwealth Brigade was relieved by 6th ROK Division. That evening the Battalion embussed and was borne southward to a rest area near Chongchon-ni, a village on the west bank of the Kapyong river less than two miles from its confluence with the Pukhan.

Here the river valley was nearly two miles wide but on either side of the stream great buttresses ran down from the main ridges and stood like the half-closed locks of a canal, restricting all traffic to a narrow passage. To the west of the river was Hill 677, a hummocky knoll with the outline of a footprint in the snow; on the opposite side and standing above a meander in the stream was its twin, Hill 504. To the north of these intercepting shoulders of high ground the valley of the Kapyong swung sharply into the northwest, so that any force moving down the valley would find the way barred by those who held the spurs on either side of the river.

THE OFFENSIVE OPENS

On April 22nd the Patricias were cheered by the return of Lieut.-Colonel Stone after his bout of illness. He could not have arrived more opportunely for that evening, seven miles to the north, the enemy struck in great strength at ROK formations on the right flank of IX U.S. Corps. The front collapsed and next morning the hapless South Koreans were streaming southward along the Kapyong and Pukhan valleys.

* "Our Men in Korea"—Eric Linklater (H.M. Stationery Office).

At this juncture less than three battalions were available to man the Kapyong position. When the Commonwealth Brigade had withdrawn from the front line the New Zealanders had remained behind in support of the incoming South Koreans. As Korean-held sectors were reputed to be porous a company of the Middlesex had remained to cover the guns. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who were due for rotation, were about to leave for Pusan; their replacement, 1st Kings Own Scottish Borderers, had arrived but had not been posted for duty. On April 23rd, therefore, the Kapyong-Pukhan gateway was guarded only by 3rd Royal Australian Regiment on Hill 504 and by the Patricias, who took up their position that night on Hill 577. Three companies of the Middlesex were in close support, with "C" Battery 2nd U.S. Mortar Battalion and "A" Company 72nd U.S. Heavy Tank Regiment on call.

Great anxiety was felt for the New Zealanders, whose skillful gunnery and great-hearted comradeship had endeared them to everyone. To the alarm (and it is feared, the anger) of their Commonwealth associates the first order from Corps instructed the Kiwis to stand fast and fight it out. Whereupon Brigadier B. A. Burke DSO (who at the end of March had taken over command from Brigadier Coad) besought and obtained permission to forcemarch the remaining three companies of the Middlesex to the support of the guns. It quickly became apparent, however, that the situation in front was hopeless; whereupon the Middlesex and the New Zealanders were recalled, reaching the Brigade area during the afternoon, fortunately with few casualties.

At 2200 hours the first enemy skirmishing groups arrived, mixed with the fleeing South Koreans. They opened harassing fire on the Australians on Hill 504 and by 0400 hours they had thickened sufficiently to put in the first set-piece assault. Out of the night came whistles, bugle calls, shouts, screams and showers of mortars on the forward Australian companies. Close behind came scurrying infantry estimated at two battalions strong, hurling grenades and carrying Bangalore torpedoes to breach the wire.

The Australians, staunch and unperturbed as ever, stood fast and blew back one assault after another. The American tanks thrust into the fighting and engaged the enemy at point blank range. Nevertheless by morning the situation was critical; the

perimeters of the forward Australian companies had been pierced and the positions were held by isolated but dauntless handfuls who fought on amidst their enemies. American reinforcements were hurrying forward but the day promised to be fateful, for a break-through would imperil the entire United Nations front.

Throughout the forenoon the fighting continued. At 1500 hours the Australian commander advised Brigade that he no longer could control the battle and that his forward companies had been ordered to fight their way out and to occupy other positions. Shortly after nightfall a new Australian line was established but with the loss of high ground which turned the Patricias' right flank and left Hill 677 as the remaining bastion of the Kapyong position.

The Patricias were dug in on the northern slopes of this feature with three companies forward—"A" Company on the right, "C" Company in the centre and "B" Company slightly ahead of the others on the left flank. "D" Company's reserve position, to those familiar with Canadian football, was that of left flank line-backer. Tactical Headquarters had been set up in the rear of "A" Company; in view of the loss of the Australian forward positions Lieut.-Colonel Stone considered his inner flank to be the more exposed. That afternoon he brought "B" Company across from the left to dig in on a subsidiary ridge on the right flank. In the words of the War Diary he thus "protected the back door." During this move "B" Company was fired on by American tanks. Groups of Chinese already were infiltrating along the west bank of the Kapyong below "B" Company's new positions.

In the course of this shift a most gallant incident occurred. Tactical Headquarters was protected by a girdle of No. 36 grenades set with tripwires. A "B" Company platoon on its way to its new position strayed; someone stumbled over a tripwire and a grenade exploded, killing one man and wounding another. A second grenade lay smoking in the midst of the platoon. Cpl. S. Douglas shouted to everyone to fall flat, dashed forward and snatched up the grenade to throw it clear. It exploded, blowing off his hand but saving the others from injury.

In the forenoon infiltrators were reported in the rear of the Patricias but not in sufficient strength to be more than nuisances. The Scottish Borderers closed up and undertook to deal with them. During the afternoon "B" Company, having hastily

dug in on its new position, reported enemy concentrations on its front. By last light they were sufficiently close for Major Lilley to call for defensive fire. The subsequent events of that night can best be recorded in the words of his report:

"The first attack came in from the north with the usual accompaniment of bugle calls, mortaring and red directional tracer. The attack overran a section of 6 Platoon on the left spine but the remainder held fast and retook the position.

"The second attack of approximately battalion strength came in from the north and east at 2230 hours. It was directed at 5 and 6 Platoons and Company Headquarters. The attack overran two sections of 6 Platoon but the remainder of the Company stood fast.

"The third attack came in around midnight on the same front and in about the same strength. Confused fighting followed. 6 Platoon Headquarters and the section that remained ran out of ammunition and were ordered to fix bayonets and stand their ground. Wireless communications with the platoon broke down and the platoon commander decided to break out.

"When the moon rose at 0100 hours a fourth assault party was detected forming up in the valley about 500 yards to our front. The enemy was dispersed by quick and accurate mortar fire.

"At approximately 0200 hours the fifth attack came in through our back door to the east. It was aimed directly up the ravine at Battalion Headquarters. This attack could not be stopped by our Company, so we informed Battalion Headquarters that in a matter of minutes it would be overrun. Fortunately 81mm mortars and .50 machine guns which were located in the ravine between "B" Company and Battalion Headquarters opened fire at 200 yards range and brought the enemy to a halt."

Throughout the night man after man of 6 Platoon turned up until with known casualties nearly everyone was accounted for. Pte. W. R. Mitchell played a leading role in these escapes. Although wounded early in the evening he again and again held back the enemy by Bren gun fire to allow men to break away. He also brought in a number of wounded.

Meanwhile on the left flank "D" Company had been having an equally rough time. Capt. J. G. W. Mills and his men held an extended front, with 10 Platoon on a hummock some distance

beyond the remainder of the company. Early in the evening enemy groups found their way around the open flank; the machine gunners covering the Battalion mortars engaged one group while the medium machine gunners dealt with a larger party which was fording the Kapyong.

At 0130 hours an assault force estimated at 200 strong dashed against 10 Platoon on its isolated hummock. A supporting machine gun was overrun, the gunners dying at their posts. Lieut. M. G. Levy and his men disappeared in a swarm of enemies and the Chinese swept on against 12 Platoon. But once again, as in the case of "B" Company, the attack failed to mop up. Capt. Mills called for defensive fire on his own position and amidst the exploding shells the Patricias fought on. A melee raged around Company Headquarters; Pte. K. F. Barwise killed six Chinese at close range. The enemy lacked the strength or the dexterity to finish off the defenders.

The assault on both flanks, the alarms in the rear, brought home to Lieut.-Colonel Stone the problem of replenishing the forward companies should fighting continue after dawn. At 0400 hours on April 26th he called for an airdrop. The message sped back through Corps and Army to Japan. Four C119 aircraft immediately took off and at 1000 hours they put down their loads of ammunition and rations accurately, only four statichutes falling out of the Patricias' reach. That afternoon the Transport Officer (Lieut. A. C. Beauchamp) brought up supplies by a track which was closed after the withdrawal of American tanks at last light.

At dawn next morning the main bodies of the enemy withdrew to the north but harassing forces maintained contact on "D" Company's front and infiltrators continued to turn up in the rear areas. With food and ammunition in hand all ranks were in good heart; American tanks co-operated by picking up the wounded, the serious cases being evacuated by helicopter. Throughout the forenoon a number of enemy concentrations were dispersed by protective fire; the Middlesex, who had turned and hurried back on news of the attack, aided the Scottish Borderers in clearing the rear area of pockets of the enemy. During the afternoon 5th Regimental Combat Team of 1st U.S. Cavalry Division arrived and seized a ridge to the north of "B" Company, thus covering the Patricias' open flank. The Kapyong blocking position again was secure. Next morning the enemy

forces were gone from the neighbourhood, leaving as they had arrived—swiftly and silently.

Total Patricia casualties had been surprisingly low—10 killed and 23 wounded. The enemy had removed his wounded but 51 dead were counted on "B" Company's front.

THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

The Kapyong action was one of those occasions which probably aroused greater anxiety on the higher levels of command than in the firing line. If the Commonwealth Brigade as blocking force had not dyked the gap Seoul might have fallen for a third time and there might have been another general withdrawal, with unpredictable consequences. Thus it came about that a night and a day of battle and of duty well done took on deeper significance when viewed in its wider implications. The upshot was the award to the Patricias, to 3rd Royal Australian Regiment and to "A" Company 72nd U.S. Heavy Tank Battalion, of the United States Presidential Citation. This distinction had been established by Executive Order of the President of the United States on February 26th 1942. Its purpose as defined on institution was "to recognize outstanding heroism and exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services." The basis of award to units was "the degree of heroism that would warrant award of the Distinguished Service Cross to an individual." The symbol of the award was the Distinguished Unit Citation streamer, "to be flown from the pike or lance as a component of unit Colours, Standard or Guidon." The award also carried the Distinguished Unit Emblem—a strip of blue cloth in a gold frame to be worn (by Commonwealth forces) below the Regimental flash on the right shoulder.*

INTO RESERVE

On the morning of April 26th 5th Calvary Regimental Combat Team relieved the Commonwealth Brigade.† The Patricias left the front line under command of Major Tighe, as Lieut.-Colonel Stone had assumed command of a blocking force (STONE-FORCE) thirteen miles to the rear. The new position was on the

* In 1956, in consonance with similar decisions by the United Kingdom and Australia, Canadian Army Headquarters granted permission for the Distinguished Unit Emblem to be worn by all ranks of Second Battalion.

† It was now the 28th Commonwealth Brigade instead of the 27th. The change in number came out of the rotation of Brigade Headquarters. The new Commander was Brigadier G. Taylor DSO.

west bank of the Pukhan river five miles below its junction with the Chojong, whose valley the Patricias had ascended on their march into North Korea. Here the Battalion arrived on the evening of April 27th. Picks and shovels were issued immediately, for 24th U.S. Division, which had been mauled in the Communist offensive, needed a covering position behind which to reorganize. The Patricias dug in during the hours of darkness under a cold persistent rain.

Within the next few days it became apparent that the Communist offensive had shot its bolt. At the end of April the covering assignment was cancelled and 28th Brigade accompanied 24th U.S. Division into Corps reserve near Yangpyong, 15 miles to the southwest. This move was no more than under way when orders were changed and the destination became Tokso-ri, 10 miles east of Seoul. Here the construction of a formidable system of defenses, to be known as the GOLDEN LINE, was undertaken. The plan called for a fortified arc with both terminals resting on the Han river, designed not only to cover Seoul and to provide a fortress position but also to create a firm base from which to sally and to harass the invaders. It would include many company strong points covered by minefields and multiple aprons of wire; the approaches to the line would be illuminated by an intricate system of flares and by "Fougasse," a jellied gasoline which would burn for several hours. The project was on such a substantial scale that some officers wondered if the United Nations had accepted a stalemate.

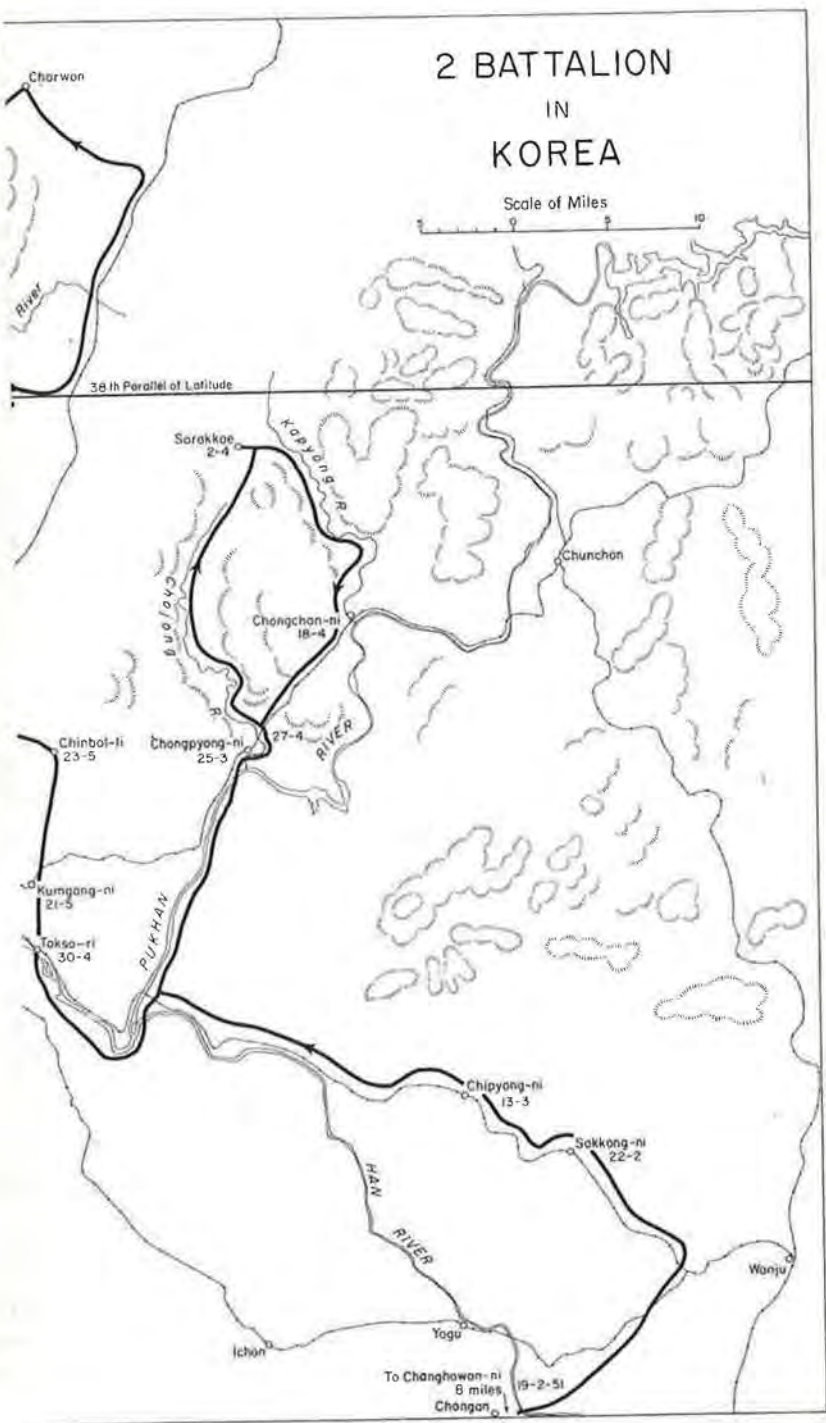
WORK ON FIELD FORTIFICATIONS

On May 3rd, as the Patricias started to dig, they received heartening news. 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade was on its way. It would be good to have Canadian comrades in the field. While the Chinese drive had been halted the enemy was near at hand; on May 4th a fighting patrol of King's Own Scottish Borderers had a sharp scrimmage at Kumgong-ni, less than five miles to the north of the Patricias' positions. During the next few days, while the weather grew uncomfortably warm, the British battalions monopolized the patrolling, but on May 8th "D" Company supported by tanks moved forward and established a firm base at Kumgong-ni, picking up a few prisoners en route.

By May 10th the Patricias had gone underground. Bunkers and dugouts had been built in profusion and the wiring and

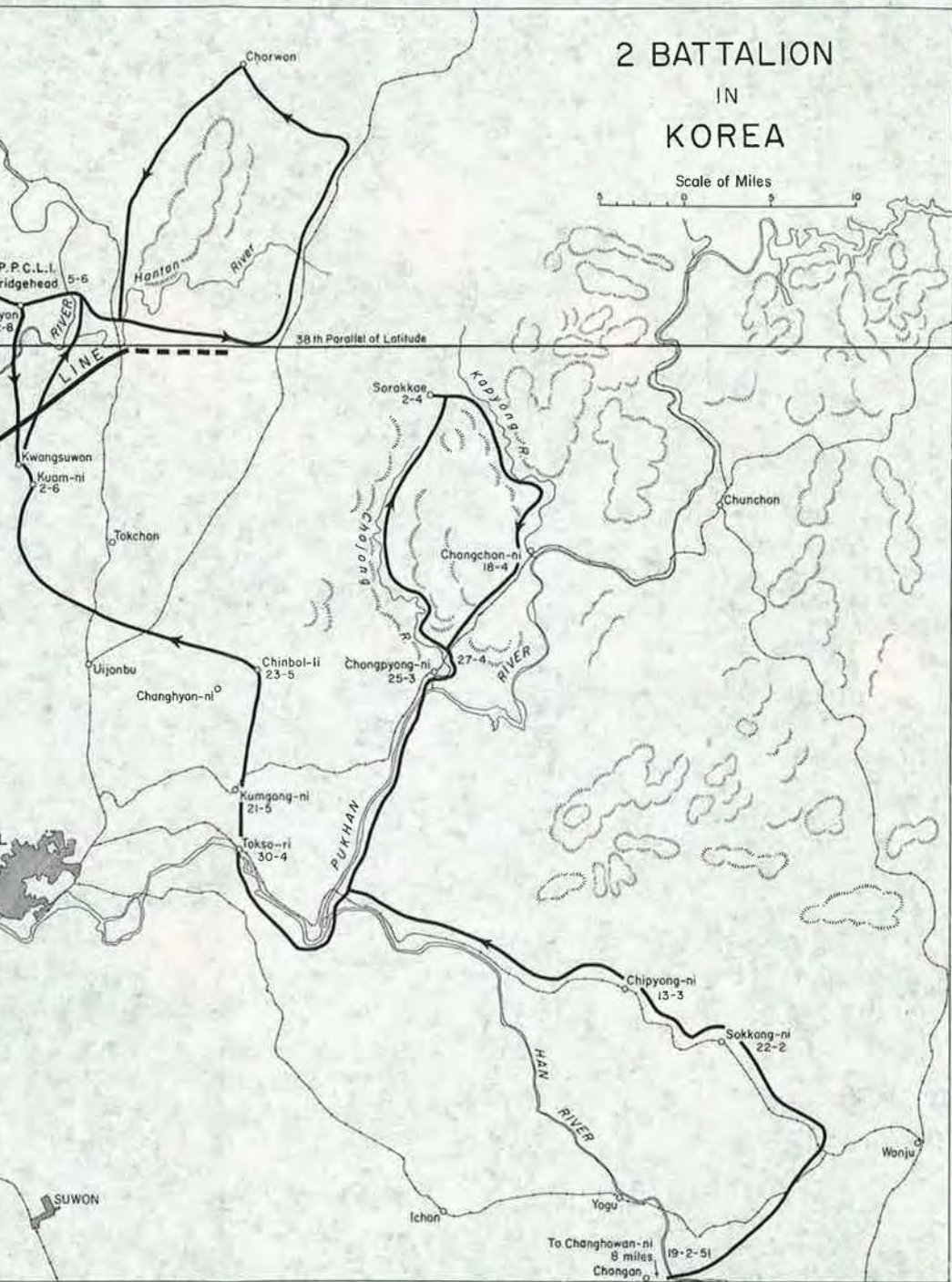
2 BATTALION IN KOREA

Scale of Miles



2 BATTALION IN KOREA

Scale of Miles





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mining of company strongpoints was nearly complete. With a note of pride the War Diary on May 16th reported:

"This day the CO's Command Post was completed. It is an excavated and timbered cave in a limestone hillside with entrance and exit tunnels. The main room 18' x 10' x 7' is complete with telephones, wireless and electric lighting." Unfortunately Lieut.-Colonel Stone was not there to occupy it. On May 12th he had been recalled to Canada on compassionate grounds and Major H. D. P. Tighe once more had assumed command.

Since arrival in Korea the Patricias had been on "C" rations, an adequate but unexciting diet. Now certain fresh foods were available. In addition 25th Brigade had brought supplies of Canadian beer; it outfooted that formation to the front and its arrival in Patricia canteens caused rejoicing. As the weather improved the countryside grew more attractive; the Han, although by no means a sparkling stream, claimed an increasing number of bathers. For the Patricias, therefore, the month of May had its points. However it was only half-spent when the Communist armies once more moved to the attack. On this occasion they struck at the eastern end of the line along the sea of Japan. Again a South Korean corps disintegrated. The other sectors found troops to mend the broken front and the two United States corps in western Korea undertook to advance and to pin down the enemy forces confronting them.

ADVANCE TO CONTACT

The ensuing operations are difficult to describe for there were few evidences of co-ordination or of specific intention. "A private war" one officer called it. A series of small 'pushes' carried the line forward at a slow and irregular pace, with units standing fast or moving on according to local circumstances. The enemy was elusive and was seldom found in greater than rearguard strength. The advance therefore resolved into a leisurely occupation.

On the morning of May 20th "D" Company of the Patricias took over from King's Own Scottish Borderers on Hill 94, about 1000 yards north of the Han River. There had been sufficient rain to make sticky going; in addition, it had been learned that the Chinese had laid box mines which were unresponsive to the

detectors.* On the following day the remainder of the Battalion moved up and encamped around the Tomb at Kumgong-ni, one of the landmarks of the neighbourhood. Here the Patricias halted for a day, for the Commonwealth Brigade was in process of being squeezed out of its present front. Two mornings later they pushed on, on an axis of advance eleven miles further east, one company riding on tanks, one company lorry-borne and the remainder trudging in the dust. By evening they had covered seven miles and they settled down for the night near Chinbo-li.

At this juncture high-level decisions evoked a Musical Chairs succession of events. 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group, consisting of 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment, 2nd Battalion Royal 22e Regiment, "C" Squadron Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians), 2nd Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery and 57th Independent Field Squadron Royal Canadian Engineers, had arrived at the front. The transfer of the Patricias to this formation was imminent; warning of transfer was received on May 27th. There therefore seemed to be no purpose in going further with 28th Commonwealth Brigade. But before transfer could be effected the newly-arrived Canadian brigade was snatched away on a special mission and before it had returned it had been decided to organize the three Commonwealth Brigades into a division; and before these brigades could be concentrated for such purpose a special task had been found for 28th Commonwealth Brigade. The Patricias, therefore, could not join the Canadian Brigade until it had returned from its special task and before it had moved to the Commonwealth Division concentration area it was ordered elsewhere. In terms of location this involved a stay of upwards of a fortnight at Chinbo-li, a shift on June 2nd of 18 miles to the northwest to the area chosen for the Commonwealth Division concentration and from there dispatch to participate in the seizure and consolidation of a bridgehead on the Imjin river.

This substantial stream, after rising in a mountain block in central Korea, flowed southward for a hundred miles before turning sharply west at the thirty-eighth parallel to empty into the Yellow Sea. Its broad valley made it a natural invasion corridor and its three principal tributaries—the Hantan from the

* On May 22nd a group of Korean civilians crossed the guard wires and fetched up on a GOLDEN Line minefield. Six of them were blown up. Sgt. F. H. W. Taylor and Pte. N. Kawanami from "A" Echelon of the Patricias entered the minefield, dressed their wounds and bore them off, making a separate trip for each casualty.

east, the Changin from the northeast and the Samichon from the northwest—provided additional routes into South Korea. To block these various lines of advance it was necessary to hold the north bank of the Imjin on its westering course and to eject the enemy from the salient of mountainous terrain in the elbow of that river. This task had been allotted to IX U.S. Corps, which consisted of 1st U.S. Cavalry Division, 6 ROK Division and the three Commonwealth brigades.

On June 3rd Major Tighe went forward to examine the site chosen for the bridgehead. It was about 5,000 yards upstream from the junction of the Hantan and the Imjin, at a point where a rectangle of a few hundred acres of flat land lay on the far bank of the river. The crossing would be made in assault boats and American combat engineers would stand ready to bridge the stream as soon as the task force had seized positions beyond it. The Patricias and the Australians would lead the way. Zero hour was set for dawn on June 4th.

One of the hazards of the enterprise was that the rainy season had opened and flash floods, which might raise the river level by as much as twenty feet in a night, had to be taken into account. On June 3rd the river was rising rapidly and the operation was postponed for forty-eight hours. On the night of June 5th the Patricias closed up on the river and next morning at 0500 hours "D" Company was first to cross over. No opposition was encountered; the other companies followed across and the construction of defenses on the first high ground began. The only enemy reaction was a certain amount of harassing mortar fire. At nightfall the bridge was incomplete and the Patricias were on the wrong side of the river and without support arms. Patrols were sent out to search the Imjin and the Hantan for fords in case an emergency should arise. The Imjin bridge was completed on the following afternoon.

On June 8th strong fighting patrols of the Scottish Borderers and Royal Australians accompanied by tanks of 8th Hussars passed through to probe beyond the Patricia perimeter. For the next three days these patrols came and went while the Patricias laboured assiduously on the bridgehead defenses. The War Diarist wrote:

"The heat and the heavy work have made the men very tired. This is the third time in thirty days that the Battalion has moved in and wired and mined a new perimeter. The hills in this area

although comparatively low are very steep and the temperatures have been in the middle nineties since the crossing. A great deal of heavy work had been done in an attempt to make a precarious position tenable."

The note of anxiety in the foregoing excerpt was fully shared by the commander of 28th Commonwealth Brigade. He had learned on higher levels that an all-out Chinese offensive was anticipated in mid-June. Should such an attack come the Patricias would be in pawn to the enemy. It was plainly in the minds of many officers that the present deployments were unsafe and that there was more to be hoped for from the forbearance of the enemy than from the tactics of friends. The Patricias' immediate interest in the matter, however, ended on June 10th when 2nd Royal 22e Regiment took over the bridgehead and the Battalion moved back to the Kuam-ni area. Here the unit came under 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade command, an event that was celebrated in rousing fashion at a party in the Officers Mess on the evening of June 13th.

A NEW SECTOR IN THE NORTHEAST

The existing United Nations front at this time ran from southwest to northeast. On the left of the Commonwealth brigades a ROK division covered Seoul. As the South Korean capital always had been a prime Communist objective and as Korean formations too often had proved weak vessels it was decided to build blocking positions in the rear of the present line. When this task was delegated to 25th Canadian Brigade the Patricias told themselves that this was where they had come in—the same tiresome digging, mining and wiring was about to begin anew. But this was a period in which no plan lasted for long; before work commenced the Canadian brigade was ordered to move up to the Hantan river and to protect the bridges over that stream. These orders in turn were countermanded and on June 17th the brigade was placed under command of 1st U.S. Cavalry Division and was dispatched to relieve a regiment of 9th ROK Division of 1st U.S. Corps in the Chorwon area, about twenty miles north of the thirty-eighth parallel and the same distance east of the Imjin river.

This sector was reached by a wide detour into the east. Of the move Brigadier Rockingham wrote with some directness:

"I was ordered to move the Brigade at 2300 hours on June 17th, but was unable to obtain a route on which to move the twenty-five odd miles. Nor could I get I Corps or either of the divisions concerned to give me an assembly area in which to put my troops when I arrived at the other end. What actually happened was that I started, accompanied by my commanding officers, to reconnoitre a route and assembly area. As we reached each bridge or crossroad and found it suitable I would transmit orders over the radio, giving the route which the brigade was to follow. The main body followed up closely, from forty-five to sixty minutes behind. Such a movement would not be recommended to a less experienced formation."

The new sector consisted of a rocky ridge gashed by gullies which stood between the Chorwon and the Chatan valleys. The Brigade responsibility was a front of 7,500 yards and the tour of duty opened with the Patricias in the southern sector, the Royal Canadian Regiment in the northern sector near the village of Chorwon and the Royal 22e Regiment in reserve.

Major Tighe did not care for the Patricias' position. The most accessible road ran into his front line instead of into his rear. His nearest neighbours (1st U.S. Cavalry Division) were on the other side of the Chatan valley. The many gullies that cut across the Battalion sector isolated his battle groups and offered golden opportunities to infiltrators.

There was nothing for it but to fortify. For the fourth time in almost as many weeks the picks and shovels, the pliers and the leather gloves, were issued and the tasks laid out. In course of time bunkers and slit trenches, belts and aprons of wire, minefields and booby traps, bestowed a certain authority and security upon the sector but it never became a favorable site for either attack or defense.

The main task of the Brigade in this area was to locate the enemy, to report on his defenses and to ascertain his intentions. On June 21st Royal Canadian Regiment accompanied by tanks of Lord Strathcona's Horse sallied on the first of the deep patrols. Six miles to the north of Chorwon village hostile forces were encountered in some strength. The positions were pinpointed and afterwards subjected to a napalm air strike. On June 23rd two "A" Company platoons went out in similar fashion but failed to make contact. On the following day when another Patricia

patrol came under fire a call went back for an air strike; the aircraft took so long to arrive that Major Tighe decided to settle the matter in the infantry manner. Heavy fire opened when the Patricias deployed for the attack; the game manifestly was not worth the candle and the assault platoons withdrew. On June 25th a third "A" Company patrol occupied a still smoking feature after a napalm strike. No dead were found, which suggested that the Chinese evacuated their positions swiftly when such attacks grew imminent.

AN UNPLEASANT TOUR OF DUTY

The Chorwon tour of duty will be remembered for its acute discomfort. The weather was very hot, the thermometer sometimes hovering for days around a hundred degrees Fahrenheit. Nearly everyone suffered from heat rashes. Venomous ants abounded whose bites caused first local and then general infections and sores. Poison oak was prevalent and men on patrols often incurred painful scalds. Nearly everyone had sore feet; the tenderness remaining from exposure in unsuitable footwear during the previous winter led to painful blisters and abrasions when the feet became overheated in long patrols or stiff climbs.

If at this time the United Nations found it difficult to come to grips with the enemy, the Communist forces were equally incapable of decisive action. They dared not resort to a general offensive since United Nations preponderance in support arms, such as artillery and aircraft, was overwhelming. The Reds therefore resorted to harassing operations. Communist guerillas, sometimes in uniform but oftener out of it, infiltrated into the battle zone for the purpose of attacking isolated posts and non-combatant detachments. It required a disproportionate number of protective details—guards, pickets and the like—to deal with such intruders. In some areas it became necessary to counter guerilla activities by expelling the civilians. This was a distasteful task, for the peasants and villagers had nowhere to go. Moreover it was almost impossible to make such clearances effective since as soon as an area was emptied it filled with refugees from other districts.

In spite of these frustrating circumstances—fighting an enemy who could not be brought to bay, the physical discomforts of the campaign and its unfortunate psychological background—the morale of the Patricias remained high. Patience was rewarded

when at the end of July a Canadian Government spokesman announced the plan for rotation of Canadian units in Korea. Another development which brought solid satisfaction at this time was the creation of First Commonwealth Division, which came into being on July 28th. This establishment ended the rather gypsy existence of the various Commonwealth units. It is no criticism of United States commanders to record that the new formation gave the Canadians and their Commonwealth comrades a sense of integration and of status that they hitherto had lacked.

At the end of June "B" Company took over the deep patrol assignment from "A" Company. In the ensuing fortnight only one of a series of encounters with the enemy had serious consequences; on July 11th "B" Company lost six men in an ambush.* Four days later advance parties of the Turkish Brigade arrived and on July 18th the Patricias were relieved. They returned to a reserve position on the south bank of the Imjin to the west of its junction with the Hantan. The encampment was on low ground and for three days after arrival it rained. Everyone was flooded out and it took the glow of a rum issue to restore equanimity.

On July 21st "A" Company was loaned to Royal 22e Regiment for a short tour of duty on WYOMING phase line not far from where the Patricias had established the first Imjin bridgehead.† It returned from this assignment three days later to find the remainder of the Battalion busied with dykes and drains which would assure dry tent floors in future. Unfortunately the fruits of this labour went to others as on July 26th the Brigade moved to the Kuam-ni area, but there the Patricias were compensated by a camp upon which the Gloucesters of 29th Brigade had laboured long and lovingly.

GUARD ON THE BRIDGEHEAD

At the beginning of August 1st U.S. Corps circulated the particulars of SLAM, an operation designed to carry the war to the enemy beyond the Imjin. It had been learned that the Communists held a forward zone perhaps a mile beyond the river in little more than screen strength and that their main positions

* Major C. V. Lilley comments: "If this ambush had been pressed home by the enemy it might have been disastrous. It occurred in waist-high corn with enemy machine guns sited on high ground on either flank."

† "Phase line" was the American term for intermediate objective.

were concealed in the hills several miles to the rear. SLAM called for 1st U.S. Cavalry Division* to cross the river and establish firm bases on the northern bank and thereafter to advance to contact the enemy in his main positions.

In this operation 25th Canadian Brigade was entrusted with the protection of the bridgehead through which the Americans would pass. The operation was no more than under way and the cavalymen barely across the river when torrential rains fell. On the night of August 4th/5th all the Imjin bridges were swept downstream and the probing force (with 60 tanks and many vehicles) was marooned in enemy territory. The Chinese did not seize their opportunity and as soon as the bridges were replaced SLAM became a dead letter. Whereupon the Canadians returned to the Kuam-ni area, the Patricias recovering their former spacious camp.

The Battalion enjoyed a crowded calendar during the second week of August. On the 9th the guest of honour was Lieut.-Colonel Eric Linklater, novelist and historian, who had arrived to write a short history of the Commonwealth forces. In the afternoon a Battalion Sports Meet was held, with a turkey dinner that evening for all ranks. On the following day Lieut.-Colonel Stone returned and resumed command; perhaps to honour his return (and perhaps because he brought it with him) Canadian beer was available in the Canteen at a greatly reduced price. The commanding officer also had brought the scroll of the Distinguished Unit Citation for all to see. On August 11th the Brigade Sports Meet was held with Major-General A. J. H. Cassels CB CBE DSO of the Commonwealth Division as guest of honour. After a neck-and-neck race with the Royal Canadian Regiment the Patricias won the team trophy by a bare two points. That evening through the medium of the Forces Newscast the Canadian Minister of National Defense announced the revision of the regulations governing rotation of Canadian troops in Korea. Details were forthcoming a few days later—a winter in Korea or twelve months' service in the Far East or an undertaking to volunteer for paratroop training on return to Canada were the principal requirements for repatriation. On the following day the Adjutant reported that 523 of all ranks were eligible for rotation and that 175 men had put down their names for paratroop training.

* This division was cavalry only in name. It fought as infantry.

Before the end of the month the first draft of such volunteers, comprising five officers and 45 other ranks, had left for Canada.

PATROLS BEYOND THE IMJIN

The abandonment of SLAM did not mean that the enemy was to be left at peace beyond the Imjin. In mid-August the Royal Canadian Regiment inaugurated a series of deep patrols in that territory, penetrating to a depth of several miles. On August 22nd the Patricias and the Royal 22e Regiment embarked on similar missions, the Patricias crossing the river at the site of the original bridgehead. At Misan-Myon, four miles beyond the crossing, their vehicles turned back and the rifle companies continued on foot. A firm base was established at Sochang-ni, 2,500 yards beyond Misan-Myon and at 0200 hours next morning "C" and "D" Companies abreast took off on a sweep of the rolling ridges towards the Samichon river. At noon, when the other companies had taken the lead, they drew fire from a village; when Canadian artillery replied an enemy force estimated at company strength broke from cover and fled into the west. Wheeling north "B" Company continued for a further 2,000 yards to the point of deepest penetration of the patrol. En route it came upon an enemy camp that had been evacuated within a matter of minutes, half-cooked meals being found on the fires. The Patricias now were about four miles to the northwest of Misan-Myon and about twelve miles from the Imjin crossing.

As evening fell and the companies began to withdraw the enemy could be seen reoccupying positions deserted earlier in the afternoon. The Battalion did not return by the outward route but headed due south to the Imjin, where mortars and machine guns had taken up positions on the opposite bank to cover an overnight bivouac. Next morning the Patricias remained in this location to observe the effects of an air strike on targets that they had indicated. That evening the companies independently crossed the river and embussed for return to camp.

On July 10th, at the instance of the Peking Government, there began the truce talks which were destined to continue for more than two years. To simple-minded soldiers it seemed obvious that these conversations were being spun out to give the enemy a breathing space in which to reinforce and re-equip his forces and also (if possible) to erode the resolution of the Western nations by endless haggling. At this time intelligence

reports placed 621,000 Communist troops in the Korean forward zone. Two-thirds were Chinese—tough, well-trained and aggressive. Opposite the Commonwealth Division approximately 45,000 men were deployed, consisting of Sixty-Fourth Chinese Communist Army (24,000 strong), part of Sixty-Fifth Army (15,000 men in all) and a Chinese armoured division. Such concentration suggested that another offensive might be in the making.

MINDEN OPERATION

There was no thought of yielding the initiative to the enemy. At the beginning of September the Canadians relieved 28th Commonwealth Brigade in the right sector of the divisional front, the Patricias taking over from the 3rd Royal Australian Regiment in a sector 2,500 yards south of the Imjin river. On the adjoining sector to the northeast 1st U.S. Cavalry Division was facing aggressive Chinese formations whose infiltration tactics were giving trouble. On relief the Australians shifted to the right, crossed the Imjin and came up on the American left flank. Behind them the remainder of the Commonwealth Division concentrated in the first stage of MINDEN, a somewhat more ambitious version of SLAM, in that it proposed not only to probe but to seize and to hold the area beyond the river up to the main enemy positions. This would involve the amputation of the cape of territory in the bend of the Imjin and it would extend the WYOMING phase line to the east to provide additional protection to the Chorwon-Seoul Railway, the chief supply line of United Nations forces in central Korea. Thereafter there would be a general advance from WYOMING to contact the main defensive positions of the enemy. The second stage of MINDEN would be known as COMMANDO; the new United Nations line at the conclusion of COMMANDO would be named JAMESTOWN.

On September 8th the remainder of 28th Commonwealth Brigade joined the Australians on the north bank of the Imjin. Two days later 25th Canadian Brigade was ordered to cross and to come up on the left flank of 28th Brigade, while 29th Brigade in similar fashion would come up on the left of the Canadians. 1st ROK Division and 1st U.S. Cavalry Division had undertaken to provide firm flanks for the Commonwealth brigades at all stages of the ensuing operation.

The Patricias moved off from their camp on the morning of September 10th. By mid-afternoon they had reached Misan-Myon. There they were in the exact centre of the MINDEN line of advance; as the WYOMING phase line had been convex with its deepest point of penetration in the centre the Patricias already were on their objectives. Their role therefore was to stand fast and to dig in; this they proceeded to do with the usual grumbles about the tyranny of picks and shovels.

The enemy had no intention of standing on his outpost line and except for a sharp scrimmage on Royal 22e Regiment's front there was little fighting on the Canadian line of advance during the MINDEN operation. (For the remainder of the month the Patricias loaned a company to their French-Canadian neighbours whose sector continued to be sensitive.) The weather had turned wet and cold; with only one blanket per man the Canadians were hard put to keep warm in their damp bivouacs and slit trenches.

THE OPERATIONAL SETUP

Battalion organization during these operations is worthy of note. It illustrated the distribution of function that was necessary when the battle unit was a platoon or at most a company. There were five administrative groupings. Tactical Headquarters consisted of the Commanding Officer, the Battle Adjutant, the Intelligence Officer, the Signals Officer, the Medical Officer and his Aid Post. The Artillery Liaison Officer had a small establishment close to the front line; he was on call to company commanders and to Tactical Headquarters alike. Each rifle company had its own mortar and artillery observation officers and sometimes a tank observation officer as well. "F" Echelon, situated near Tactical Headquarters, usually was commanded by the Battalion Medium Machine-gun Officer; it consisted of the Support Company and held emergency supplies of ammunition, rations and miscellaneous defense stores. Further back was "A" Echelon, under command of the Adjutant. It was the home of the Battalion and Company Orderly Rooms, a transport section, the provost section, the padres and a section of signallers. "B" Echelon, well to the rear, held the remainder of Headquarters Company, the Quartermaster's stores, the Paymaster, the Dental Clinic, the armourer and other repair sections and the balance of the Battalion transport.

On September 29th the Brigade "O" Group was attended by Major-General Cassels, who gave details of COMMANDO. The advance from WYOMING to JAMESTOWN would begin on October 3rd with the Canadians participating on the second day. As preliminary to the take-off "C" Company of the Patricias would deal with an enemy bunker which lay on the line of advance.

On the evening of October 1st, after scouts had returned to report this bunker unoccupied, Lieut. J. A. MacAuley took out his platoon to investigate a pimple of high ground further to the north. The night was very dark and the first intimation of the presence of the enemy was when the platoon sergeant in the lead stepped upon a sleeping Chinese. On the alarm enemies poured out of dugouts and slit trenches and a close-quarters melee ensued. For upwards of an hour fighting continued; plying bombs and bayonets the Patricias eventually put an end to resistance at a cost of five casualties. The enemy lost twenty killed and wounded.

ADVANCE TO JAMESTOWN

Soon after dawn on October 4th the Patricias moved to their assembly positions for the drive into the north. The jump-off was delayed by stiff resistance on 28th Brigade's front but by 1100 hours the advance was under way. Tactical Headquarters moved close behind the forward companies. At 1330 hours "D" Company, when within 300 yards of its objective, came under fire. A call went through to the guns, the tanks barged forward and the enemy fled.

In mid-afternoon "C" Company approached Point 187, which was known to be held by the enemy. 10 Platoon led the attack and found the defenders in intractable mood; even when cornered in the crawl trenches and dugouts they refused to surrender. A four-hour battle ended with the total destruction of the small garrison; 24 Chinese were killed and four were taken prisoner. Patricia losses were one killed and 10 wounded. That evening outposts were established 800 yards to the north of Point 187.

Throughout COMMANDO the Patricias had all the best of it. They encountered little opposition whereas there was stern fighting on other battalion fronts. By the evening of October 6th the Canadians were on their final objectives; on either flank the

operation continued for another two days. On October 7th Lieut.-General J. A. van Fleet, Commander of Eighth Army, accompanied by Lieut.-General J. W. O'Daniel of I U.S. Corps, visited the 25th Brigade Headquarters to congratulate the Canadian battalions on a job well done.

THE ENEMY STRIKES BACK

The Patricias however were not destined to escape unscathed. On arrival at JAMESTOWN they set about fortifying their positions and while this work was in hand the enemy turned on them. On the night of October 11th/12th three attacks were launched against Patricia working parties. In a clash with 5 Platoon the enemy took the worst of it, losing several men killed as against one Patricia wounded. A second assault fell on a wiring party in the low ground between "A" and "B" Companies; when this fracas died away Cpl. J. R. Toole was missing. (He afterwards was presumed killed.) At 0150 hours, while 2 Platoon was wiring its front, there was a sudden rush out of the darkness. The enemy force, estimated at 30 strong, was driven off with the aid of the 75mm recoilless rifles—the first occasion upon which the Battalion had used these weapons. In this scrimmage CSM G. S. Trenter of "A" Company was fatally wounded.

At 1915 hours on October 13th an artillery and mortar shoot fell on the forward companies. The bombardment increased in intensity and at 2200 hours the reserve companies stood to. Forty-five minutes later green and red directional tracer flashed across the Patricia positions and the assault came in, headed by bombing squads and sappers carrying Bangalore torpedoes. Groups of the enemy infiltrated between "A" and "B" Companies and attacked "D" Company in the support position. Everywhere the Patricias stood firm and met their assailants with a blaze of fire. When the supporting tanks and guns intervened the assault collapsed. Next morning many dead Chinese were strewn along the company fronts. Patricia casualties were three killed and twelve wounded.

THE BREAK-UP

Second Battalion had come to the end of the road in Korea. On October 9th Lieut.-Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith MBE and two of his company commanders had arrived at Battalion Headquarters. As First Battalion would be arriving in three flights

it was arranged to transfer all Second Battalion personnel eligible for rotation to "C" and "D" Companies who would be relieved by the incoming "A" and "C" Companies of First Battalion. By October 12th this cross-posting had been completed and on the night of October 14th/15th the relief ensued. "C" and "D" Companies withdrew to "B" Echelon and departed two days later for the Canadian base at Kure in Japan. Concurrently four drafts of parachute volunteers amounting in all to 100 officers and men left for Canada. Major H. D. P. Tighe accompanied one of these drafts, Major G. A. Flint taking over as Second-in-Command.

It was more than a fortnight before the remainder of the incoming unit arrived. On October 20th "A" Company of First Battalion took part in PEPPERPOT operation under Second Battalion command. (This story will be told in a subsequent chapter.) Thereafter quiet reigned along the Patricias' front. On October 29th "D" Company arrived from Inchon and was followed by "B" Company and the remainder of the Battalion within the week. On November 4th both units were represented at a parade on paddy fields near Battalion Headquarters. Lieut.-General van Fleet arrived by helicopter and thanked Second Battalion for its services. An exchange of pennons completed the take-over.

Thereafter Second Battalion melted away. From "C" and "D" Companies at Kure groups of paratroop volunteers were flown to Canada. The remainder under Major D. Grant sailed from Yokohama on October 27th, reaching Seattle on November 14th. On arrival at Calgary they paraded through the streets and were given a civic welcome. Of the remainder of the Battalion those eligible for rotation left Korea at various times, some returning to Canada by sea and some by air. The largest group, consisting of 165 of all ranks under command of Capt. P. M. Pyne, arrived in Seattle on December 1st. They too received a civic welcome at Calgary.

Those ineligible for rotation were transferred to two reinforcement companies which were stationed in the back area. Their routine occupation was periodical searches for subversives and enemy agents. These companies melted away as their personnel was drafted into First Battalion or became eligible for rotation. By Christmas only one company remained. Early in the new year it too disappeared.

During the Korean tour of duty 2 officers and 53 men had been killed, 11 officers and 147 men wounded. Awards and decorations included a Bar to the Distinguished Service Order (Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Stone DSO MC), a Military Cross (Capt. J. G. W. Mills), two Distinguished Conduct Medals, four Military Medals, five Mentions in Dispatches and one foreign decoration.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KOREA: FIRST BATTALION

(October 1951-November 1952)

On the morning of September 21st 1951 the troop trains carrying "A" and "C" Companies of First Battalion drew into a Seattle quay and the Patricias boarded USNS *General M. C. Meigs*. Brigadier Colquhoun was on hand to bid them bon voyage. They sailed that evening.

The troopship was crowded, offering few opportunities either for lectures or recreation. Fortunately the voyage was smooth, the meals were good and time passed swiftly. On October 3rd the transport docked at Yokohama. The Patricias immediately entrained on an uncomfortable night journey to the Replacement Depot at Sasebo, passing through Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe and Hiroshima en route. On the following afternoon they re-embarked on a Japanese ship in which there was room to spare but little comfort; the men slept on straw mats and the food was appalling.

At 0830 hours on October 6th they landed at Pusan, and immediately entrained on what the war diarist has described as "an agglomeration of the oldest and worst rolling stock in the universe—no washing facilities, crude toilets and three-tier bunks of wood." The train made its way northward with many stops by way of Taegu, Taejon, Suwon and Seoul. It was not until noon on the following day that it arrived at Tokchong, twenty miles north of the South Korean capital. There Major G. A. Flint of Second Battalion met the tired travellers. They piled into British troop carriers and were borne to "B" Echelon to the south of the Imjin River. Here the Brigade Commander (Brigadier J. M. Rockingham CBE DSO ED) and Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith, who had flown from Canada a few days before, greeted them. There was a happy reunion of all ranks such as seldom occurs on a battlefield.

Tents and a marquee were allotted to each of the incoming companies. On the following day training began with a series of shakedown route marches and instruction in such new weapons as the 60 mm and 81mm mortars, the 3.5 rocket launcher and the Browning machine gun. The signallers set to work to familiarize

themselves with the No. 88 and 300 wireless sets. Officers and non-commissioned officers were dispatched on instructional tours of the forward areas.

On October 12th the two companies set off for the front, twenty miles away. The march took the form of a tactical exercise in which the Patricias moved along the crest lines, shunning the roads and the valleys. It was a blistering day and the men carried full packs; the trek afterwards was remembered as the "Pusan Death March." The final phase of the exercise was an attack upon a hill immediately in the rear of the front line; live ammunition was used and tanks of Lord Strathcona's Horse participated. Thereafter in the space of minutes the Patricias saw the simulated exchanged for the real when Brigadier Rockingham through his portable wireless called down tank and artillery fire on Chinese positions on the ridges ahead.

On the following night the companies took over from "C" and "D" Companies of Second Battalion in the support positions and passed under command of Lieut.-Colonel Stone. It had been seven days since they landed in Korea and twenty-three since they had left Calgary. "The outgoing troops," wrote an officer, "moved off with delighted shouts and good-natured taunts while First Battalion's companies took over quietly and solemnly as befitted newcomers." Next day the Canadian Press correspondent filed a story under the caption "The Cherry Berets are in the Hills."

IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT

Brigadier Rockingham had been ordered to test the strength of the enemy and he had planned PEPPERPOT, an operation in which each of his three battalions would stage a daylight raid. This would involve the employment of a reserve company which in the case of the Patricias meant a First Battalion company. Lieut.-Colonel Stone was loath to detail the new arrivals but with the enthusiastic acquiescence of all ranks "A" Company was chosen.

A First Battalion patrol already had examined the approaches to Point 156 where three humps or saddlebacks of high ground were fused in the shape of an inverted U, with two frontal spurs and an enclave of low ground facing the Patricias. After Major E. J. Williams and his platoon commanders had reconnoitred this feature in detail it was decided to attack up the right-hand spur.

At 0345 hours on the morning of October 23rd "A" Company moved off. In the assembly area it was joined by the Pioneer Officer and a mortar fire controller from Second Battalion and also by artillery, tank and sapper observation officers. Dawn was a streak in the east when at 0600 hours the Patricias closed up on the feature. Ten minutes later the supporting shoot came down.

Sgt. J. E. Stone with 2 Platoon led off, mounting the steep point of the spur to seize an intermediate objective. Sporadic enemy small arms and mortar fire was encountered but the objective was secure at 0715 hours. Capt. G. Gunton with 1 Platoon then passed through and advanced along the broken and rising ridge towards the summit of the feature. A number of false crests gave cover to the enemy; resistance stiffened and as the assault group neared Point 156 it became apparent that it would need support. Whereupon 2 Platoon followed up and gave covering fire behind which the main crest was won; the reserve platoon under 2/Lieut. A. G. Caesar then passed through, bombed the bunkers and communication trenches of the feature and shot down many fleeing Chinese. By 0945 hours the operation was complete. The raiders withdrew under cover of a smoke screen.

Nine enemy dead were counted on the feature and many others had fallen beyond it. Patricia casualties in action were two killed and five wounded but unfortunately two stretcher parties wandered on to mined ground, losing two killed and four wounded. It had been a brisk and workmanlike operation, greatly to the taste of Lieut.-Colonel Stone, who gave "A" Company the highest praise for its first encounter with the enemy.

In the centre of the Brigade front Royal Canadian Regiment had won its feature in the Patricia fashion, neatly and expeditiously and on the left the Royal 22e Regiment had succeeded with the aid of British anti-aircraft batteries which had depressed their guns and had sniped with great accuracy when the French-Canadians were held up. There followed a quiet week during which "A" and "C" Companies mastered the routines of the front line. It was with the air of veterans that on October 30th they welcomed Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters Company and "D" Company, which had arrived from Inchon during the previous night.

THE SECOND AND THIRD FLIGHTS

On the same day that "A" and "C" Companies reached the front line in Korea this second flight had left Calgary. Two mornings later it had been played aboard USNS *Marine Adder*, which sailed that evening. The troopship carried more than three thousand troops, with the Patricias as the only Canadians; their red berets and battle dress attracted much attention. The war diarist commented: "Our chaps are often seen in groups with United States soldiers discoursing on unknown subjects at length. We find the Americans very friendly and likeable as individuals, but as a group they suffer from the great disadvantage of going abroad unassigned, being merely classed as reinforcements. We feel very superior going overseas as a unit."

Early on October 25th the transport anchored in Yokohama harbour. There the ship remained for two days during which the United States drafts disembarked and other American troops ("a smarter and better disciplined lot" says the war diarist) came aboard. The Patricias were allowed ashore and headed by Piper Emslie and the Drums marched through the city. On the afternoon of the 26th they were at sea once more, headed not for Pusan but for Inchon, the principal Yellow Sea port of Korea fifteen miles west of Seoul. Throughout the following morning the transport threaded its way through a multitude of small offshore islands while junks with sails of many colours cluttered the fairway. At noon the ship reached the anchorage and all ranks were delighted to see Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith in the first landing craft to come alongside.

On October 19th "B" Company and Support Company had boarded USNS *General Hugh T. Gaffey* at Seattle in time for breakfast. The transport sailed that afternoon. The voyage was pleasant and uneventful and the ship reached Yokohama on the evening of October 31st. As in the case of the first flight Japan was crossed by train and the Patricias re-embarked on the afternoon of November 2nd. After arrival at Pusan there followed a cold and cheerless rail trip to the north. On November 4th they were met at Tokchong by their own Transport Officer (Lieut. M. R. Bell) and embussed for the forward area.

ENEMY STRENGTH INCREASES

First Battalion now was complete in the field and on November 4th it took over all responsibilities from Second Battalion. This

take-over occurred at a time when the Korean campaign was altering to the disadvantage of United Nations. Seven months before, when Second Battalion arrived, the Chinese had been in a minority. Now they were in the majority and they were much better soldiers than the North Koreans. Their strength in support weapons and particularly in mortars and field artillery had greatly increased; they now could mount bombardments, barrages and fire curtains of great intensity and accuracy. The early United Nations field fortifications had been constructed against manpower rather than firepower; bunkers and trenches were comparatively shallow, many essential installations were not dug in at all and telephone wires had been laid on the surface of the ground. The enemy's increased firepower meant that in many instances the front had to be reconstructed, with deeper shelters, cleverer camouflage and a greater dispersal of targets.

The Chinese formations, with an almost limitless supply of tough and fanatical soldiers, put a low premium on survival. In conjunction with their bombardments they were willing to expend their infantry lavishly. It had always been accepted that assault groups should keep as close to the barrage as was consistent with safety; but likewise it had been considered that there must be a pause between the lifting of the shoot and the impact of the infantry assault. This safety measure the Chinese commanders discarded. They were quite willing to lose a percentage of their spearheads in their own fire if it enabled their men to close before the defenders had recovered from the shock of the barrage. New defensive tactics therefore had to be devised to meet this situation.

Finally, the truce negotiations meant little or nothing to the Chinese. Either they did not care or else they had not been told that the fighting might end at any time. As a result they retained their original tenacity and courage both in defense and in attack. The possibility of being the last man killed in the war meant nothing to the Communist peasant soldier.

"D" COMPANY'S ORDEAL

The sum of it was that the enemy was more dangerous, better equipped and less predictable than heretofore. First Battalion therefore was warned to expect trouble and it did not have long to wait. On the evening of November 1st an enemy patrol crossed the Patricia minefield and managed to cut the tactical wire

without detection; more or less by accident a ground flare was tripped and the intruders stood revealed. The four dead left behind were found to be barefoot, perhaps in order to move more silently.

On November 4th, during "D" Company's first front line tour, the forward positions were hammered heavily by field guns and mortars. Tanks and self-propelled guns participated in the shoot, emerging from cover, firing a few rounds and hurriedly withdrawing into dead ground from whence in due course they would sally anew. The shoot was diversionary; the enemy infantry attack fell on the 28th Brigade front where the Australians and the Shropshires fought far into the night.*

On the following afternoon the enemy guns again began to pound "D" Company's forward positions. The fire mounted in intensity, howitzers participating in the shoot. At 1815 hours a small infantry attack swept against 10 Platoon on the right flank of the Battalion sector. It broke down under steady and well-aimed small arms fire but the bombardment continued. At nightfall searchlights were switched on to keep the enemy's approach lines under observation. A second attack developed against 10 Platoon and afterwards against 12 Platoon; the Chinese worked around the flanks in each case but failed to close. Shortly after midnight a force estimated at two companies was detected on "D" Company's front. Support weapons intervened and the attack did not develop. At 0300 hours a last bid was made to overrun 10 Platoon. Lieut. J. G. C. McKinlay, who had handled his men in exemplary fashion, strapped an 88 wireless set on his back and moved about in the open, directing mortar fire on the enemy. Once again the Chinese were held from the close.†

At first light Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith came forward and found "a haggard but smiling crew." Says the War Diary: "Tonight completely sells us on the 81 mm mortar . . . Our fire fell a scant fifty yards from our positions . . . our medium machine guns were firing at 500 yards range . . . the last attack came in such strength that numbers of the enemy got through the wire only to be killed by small arms fire and grenades . . ." 34 enemy

* 1st King's Shropshire Light Infantry had relieved 1st Middlesex Regiment in 28th Brigade in the previous May. For a short time a battalion of the Patricias had been brigaded anew, after a lapse of thirty-seven years, with a battalion of this fine county regiment.

† For outstanding leadership in a trying situation Lieut. McKinlay was awarded the Military Cross—the first decoration of the campaign for First Battalion.

dead were picked up within 50 yards of the platoon positions and many others were strewn across the approaches. Patricia casualties were 3 killed and 11 wounded.

THE NATURE OF THE FOE

Such weighty assaults put a premium on the quality of field fortifications. New construction had been placed in work; the War Diary of November 5th gives particulars: "Platoon and section positions must not be so tightly sited that one or two tanks or self-propelled guns can neutralize the position. Fighting slits on forward slopes must be flush with the ground in order to protect them from direct fire. Living bunkers on reverse slopes must be connected to fighting slits by zigzag or diagonal communication trenches."

An examination of the Chinese dead and the interrogation of a number of wounded prisoners yielded interesting information. Of the dead the War Diary relates: "Each Chinaman was dressed in his khaki padded-cotton winter dress and many had padded-cotton jackets rolled on their backs. Each carried a Chinese shovel and pouches of loose ammunition, bandoliers and potato-masher types of hand grenades. Many rifles, "burp guns" (SMGs) and two Russian-made Degyarev light machine-guns were found near the dead . . . One enemy wearing a white band, probably a section leader, carried a Verey pistol with a number of rounds of green, red and white flares . . . No signs were found to indicate that officers were among the killed. While there were no official identifications similar to our 'dog-tag' on any of the bodies, most carried a small red diary or note book. A number carried cigarettes, small bags of rice, tooth brushes, lice powder and considerable North Korean and Chinese currency notes."

Interrogations identified the attacking unit as 2nd Battalion 570th Regiment 190th Division, Sixty-fourth Communist Army. They had been facing the Patricia positions for twenty days before the attack, which had been carried out by a force 500 strong. The set task had been the capture of "D" Company's position. According to the prisoners the losses from artillery and mortar fire in the approach had been heavy. The Chinese were anxious to secure prisoners; a fortnight's leave behind the front was the usual reward for a capture.

On November 8th the Patricias met their genial and highly individual Corps Commander, Lieut.-General "Iron Mike"

O'Daniel. He attended a demonstration of bivouacking techniques in cold climates staged by "C" Company under the direction of Major R. E. M. Cross. He was deeply impressed and he ordered a number of United States officers to be detailed to attend future demonstrations.

HOW SIGSMOCHAPIO CAME ABOUT

On November 11th the remaining officers and detachments of Second Battalion withdrew.* It was characteristic of the high spirits prevailing that while in the front line for the first time the Battalion should not be engrossed entirely in the routines of battle. On November 14th SIGSMOCHAPIO appeared and its origin, as engagingly described in the War Diary, deserves to be recorded if only to account for its name. "At the dinner table in the Officers Mess at Tac Headquarters a discussion was started by the Commanding Officer as to what could be done to get 'hot news' to the men, who positively thirst for news of any vintage. The Medical Officer, Capt. Whittingham, mentioned that he had a Zenith radio on which he could pick up the dictation speed news each night, if only he could take it down fast enough. The Padre, Capt. A. Filshie, admitted that he was an old hand at the typewriter, if only there was a way to produce sufficient copies of the news-sheet. Lieut. Frost claimed his Ditto machine would turn out as many copies as required if only there was a way to distribute them to the Companies. Capt. Harris said his morning signals run to all companies would have them distributed by 1000 hours. Thus was born SIGSMOCHAPIO (SIGS-MO-CHAP-IO)."

At this time all three Commonwealth brigades were in the line, holding 27,000 yards of front. Major-General Cassels believed his dispositions to be too thin, giving the Chinese undue opportunities for infiltration and for overwhelming concentration against any given sector. He also was convinced that the enemy was committed to the offensive and that heavy attacks, such as had fallen on the Royal Canadian Regiment on November 3rd, on the King's Shropshire Light Infantry on November 4th, on the Patricias on November 5th/6th and on the Royal Australian Regiment on November 7th/8th, would continue.

* According to the War Diary "Major Lilley the Battle Adjutant was the last 2 P.P.C.L.I. officer to leave. When he finally heard that his 'relief' had arrived at the car park he said to one of his subalterns, 'Go down and guide him up. If any shells come in, fall on him.'"

THE ENEMY ASSAULT ON POINT 227

These fears proved to be justified. Throughout November 17th numerous sectors of the Commonwealth Division's front were raked by short fierce bombardments. As the evening closed in the shoot swelled in fury on the Patricias' right flank where a company of the Shropshires held the hump of Point 227. "Within fifteen minutes" says the War Diary, "the slopes of Point 227 were barren; what had been trees, shrubs, wire, slits and bunkers was now just a mass of churned-up earth . . . A great pall of dust hung over the hill." At 1700 hours the infantry attack went in. By use of dead ground the Chinese were within a few yards of the Shropshires before they came into view. The Patricias swung every available weapon on to the enemy; the tanks of Lord Strathcona's Horse hurried forward and engaged the assault forces over open sights; but by sheer weight of numbers the Shropshires were swept from the crest.

"D" Company of the Patricias, the left flank neighbours of the Shropshires, lay within six hundred yards of Point 227. It had been a disturbing day. Twice friendly aircraft had hung strike markers over its position; fortunately on neither occasion had the bombs followed. As the shoot fell on the Shropshires it also increased on the Canadian lines and during the early evening an enemy force concentrated in jump-off positions on "D" Company's front. The Canadian artillery and mortars which had been supporting the Shropshires swung back to their own targets and dispersed the thickening enemy.

The sharpness and weight of this attack provided the evidence that General Cassels needed to support his case for a shorter front. On November 21st 3rd U.S. Division took over the right Brigade sector formerly held by 28th Brigade—a concession which cut Commonwealth responsibilities to a more manageable front of 20,000 yards. Thereafter the forward battalions had the backing of a brigade in reserve.

There remained an unsatisfactory aspect of the new divisional demarcation. Point 355, rising to the north of the valley which carried a road behind the United Nations front, commanded the countryside for miles around. This dominating ground was certain to be the focal point of any major offensive; it therefore should have been entirely within the boundaries of one division or the other. Unfortunately the change left 3rd U.S. Division

holding the crest of Point 355 and the Commonwealth Division its western slopes.

This divided responsibility soon brought trouble. On the night of November 27th the Chinese struck in great strength at Point 355 and drove the American defenders headlong. The Royal 22e Regiment, holding the slopes of the feature, was drawn into the battle. For a time the "Van Doos" had enemies on all sides but in their usual indomitable fashion they proved more than a match for their adversaries.

The Patricias were not involved in this fighting, but as insurance against the failure of the Americans in their counter-attack Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith worked out plans for Operation RICHARD* whereby his men would retake the feature. Bitter fighting continued throughout November 27th and the Royal 22e Regiment again was heavily engaged. On their third attempt, the Americans regained the summit of Point 355.

THE STAND-STILL AGREEMENT

Point 227, however, overlooking the junction of the Patricia and Royal 22e sectors, remained in Chinese hands. 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade was in the midst of plans for recovering this feature when the Panmunjon negotiators—now in their sixth month of talks and almost completely forgotten by the soldiery—arrived at an agreement to establish a demarcation line behind which the respective forces would withdraw if and when an armistice was concluded. This arrangement led the Corps Commander to order future operations to be restricted in scope. Troops in forward positions might fight only to protect themselves.

The Chinese never made even a pretense of conforming to this stand-still arrangement. On the Patricias' front it became a dead letter within three days. On November 20th the War Diarist wrote: "Six light mortar bombs fell on "C" Company. At 1030 hours, to demonstrate our good faith to the enemy, we fired only six back." On the following day he reported: "At 1730 hours "B" Company was delighted to receive permission to engage two bold Chinamen who doubtless had heard rumours that we would let them romp in front of our positions." On that note the truce ended and the war went on.

* Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith's infant son, news of whose birth had just arrived, provided the name for this operation.

Towards the end of November winter set in. Since footprints in the snow revealed enemy movements deep patrolling was adjudged to be unnecessary but as soon as pressure relaxed the Chinese grew bold. Enemy scouts and snipers crept close to the Canadian outposts and waited with great patience for targets. On the night of December 10th/11th a supply vehicle was ambushed well behind the Commonwealth Division front. There followed the first of the 'skunk hunts'—roundups of all non-military personnel in the back area. The yield in such searches was negligible and attacks grew common. On December 10th the Corps Commander expressed his concern and ordered more aggressive action by the troops in the line.

The Patricias had anticipated such orders and the first of the JANUS patrols—instructed to penetrate deeply, to pinpoint enemy positions for artillery attention and to bring back prisoners—had gone out on the evening of December 7th. On the following night the second patrol of this series located an enemy-held bunker. In the firefight that followed three Patricias were wounded and an enemy sentry was killed.

"D" COMPANY ATTACKS

Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith was concerned over the build-up on his right flank, since on Point 227 the Chinese were improving their defenses. Whereupon the Brigade commander ordered a test of strength through the medium of a strong raid. "D" Company, now in reserve, drew the assignment and at 2000 hours on December 10th Major J. H. B. George and his men moved to the attack. Five objectives were chosen, consisting of three hillocks and the hollows between them. 2/Lieut. W. H. Jones led 11 Platoon against the right flank of the position while Lieut. W. K. Stirling and 12 Platoon attacked on the opposite side. When the flanks had been secured Lieut. J. G. C. McKinlay with 10 Platoon would exploit to the crest of the feature.

The approach to Point 227 was along a series of rising spurs and false crests which left the men of "D" Company in some doubt as to their exact locations—a serious circumstance, since elaborate fire plans had been formulated and it would have been easy to stray into a bombardment zone. The night was pitch black and there were no landmarks for guidance. At midnight 11 Platoon closed up on an enemy position and was greeted with a shower of stick grenades. On the opposite flank the Chinese held their fire

until 12 Platoon was within a few yards of the outposts. Thereafter Lieut. Stirling lost ten of his men within a few minutes. There was some confusion and the supporting fire failed to discountenance the enemy. Four times 11 Platoon was thrown back.

Major George now came forward and took charge. Although wounded he lay in the open in front of the platoon positions and passed back fire orders which were relayed to the tanks. The bunkers speedily became untenable and the Chinese scuttled along communication trenches to other coverts in the rear of the feature. 10 Platoon passed through and led by Cpl. Locke (Lieut. McKinlay having been wounded) made its way without difficulty to the crest of Point 227. With the task completed, withdrawal began under heavy fire. Three of the four officers had been wounded but Major George retained command and was last to leave.

The Patricias came in through Royal 22e Regiment's lines where Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Dextraze DSO personally supervised the evacuation of the wounded. Total casualties had been one killed and 24 wounded. Next morning Major-General Cassels arrived to congratulate the raiders on their performance.

A QUIET PERIOD

During the remainder of December there was little contact with the enemy. The noteworthy events of that month were out of the main current of military activity but none the less interesting. On December 13th "B" Echelon opened the Battalion bathhouse, proudly proclaimed as "The Finest on the Front." The showers were built by a plumber 'imported' from Seoul; they were made of 45-gallon drums and bits of 'liberated' pipe, with beer cans for showerheads. On the following day Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith, acting as No. 3 on a gun of E Battery, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, fired Round 200,001 in Korea. The round was painted in Patricia colours and the shellcase, bearing an engraved inscription, was forwarded to the Regimental Museum.

During this month the Patricias were visited on a number of occasions by a United States Psychological Warfare Team which assuredly must have been the unluckiest unit in Korea. Fog and mist now cloaked the hilltops on almost any morning; the idea was to use such cover to invite the Chinese to desert. Unfortunately

these earnest inveiglers never seemed to be able to get down to it. On one occasion their broadcasting section mired down before it reached the forward positions. A second attempt got the equipment forward but it arrived in the midst of a firefight, at a time when it would have been injudicious to solicit. On a third visit the forward companies would not permit appeals, for there were enterprises of greater moment in train. Finally, having got into position and all things being set fair, the equipment broke down. The Patricias viewed this project sardonically. Knowing the Chinese infantryman for the tough customer that he was it was the general opinion that it was easier and cheaper to kill him than to suborn him.*

PRESENTS FROM THE ENEMY

On December 14th the first Christmas presents arrived—and from the enemy. "B" Company awakened to be confronted by two large and neatly-lettered signs which had been erected during the night beyond its outposts, with arrows pointing to nearby piles of Christmas stockings containing handkerchiefs printed with appropriate Communist slogans, Peace Dove pins, cigarette holders and plastic finger rings. On the same night "C" Company apprehended a Korean boy approaching the Patricia lines laden with similar gifts; he carried as well a "Signatory Book for Demanding Peace and Stopping War" which the recipients were invited to sign and to return; he also bore a letter of invitation to a joint Christmas party between the lines. The invitations were ignored, the presents accepted. They had a high souvenir value but unfeeling Intelligence Officers impounded most of them.

Preparations for Christmas centered around plans for employment in the front line of the reinforcement group left behind by Second Battalion. With a fifth rifle company in hand it would be possible to rotate the sentry-go and so give everyone a full twenty-four hours in the rear. This arrangement went into effect on December 24th and continued for three days; thus each of the four rifle companies had its holiday. When relieved in the forward positions the men were carried back to "B"

* On another occasion a Psychological Officer investigating something or other arrived at Battalion Headquarters and was passed on until he fetched up with a detached platoon of "C" Company. Capt. J. G. Costeloe, the company commander, had notified Sgt. E. P. Shaw, the platoon commander, that he was sending him "a trick cyclist"—a typical British Army distortion of "psychologist." Sgt. Shaw innocently prepared for entertainment—clearing, levelling and hard-stamping a small arena for the anticipated performance.

Echelon where such simple luxuries as a hot bath and a sleep in warmed tents seemed like gifts of the Magi.

On Christmas Day after the church service a motion picture was shown. At dinner the men sat down to a well-laid table in a Nissen hut dining room. An excellent Christmas dinner was served in traditional fashion by the officers and non-commissioned officers. There were two quarts of Asahi beer per man. Piper Emslie and the Drums began what ended as an impromptu concert. It was a homey, comfortable occasion; for the day the bleak landscape, the hardship and the danger were forgotten and the general conclusion was that there were worse things in the world than service in a crack regiment in a faraway country in a war that nobody wanted.

On December 31st on the stroke of midnight a *feu de joie* broke out along the Commonwealth Division front. Signal flares, mortar illumination bombs, artillery star shells and thousands of rifle shots saluted the New Year. Support weapons chimed in with a shoot on known targets. Next morning the Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defense and the Hon. Hugues Lapointe, Minister of Veterans' Affairs, arrived at Patricia Headquarters, where New Year's greetings were spelled out for the distinguished visitors on a series of road signs. Mr. Claxton spoke to all companies on a multiple telephone call and afterwards gave the fire order for a shoot on Point 156.

SERVICE UNDER UNITED STATES COMMAND

It is perhaps only in retrospect that those who served in Korea have come to realize how much they owed to their own formations—25th Canadian Infantry Brigade and 1st Commonwealth Division. At no time was there ever anything but warm appreciation of the character and technical qualifications of United States senior commanders. But American ways were not always the ways of those reared in the British military tradition and there were times when procedures proved puzzling and when there seemed to be a lot of loose ends. Such difficulties diminished when 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade appeared in the field and after the formation of the Commonwealth Division they ceased almost entirely. Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith has written:

"Every army develops its own clichés and phrases, perfectly understood by its own but strange to other ears. Working under

United States command meant getting used to different terms and a new system. There were occasions when some confusion arose.

"When 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade arrived Second Battalion difficulties in this regard diminished; when 1st Commonwealth Division was formed our Canadian brigade was integrated into it. Its headquarters stood between U.S. Corps Headquarters and our forces. From this time on, at the battalion level especially, the direct effects of serving under U.S. command were fairly well filtered out at Divisional Headquarters and again by our own Brigade Headquarters. As a battalion commander I saw very few signs that our higher command was foreign.

"We did have some U.S. medium artillery supporting us but it was directed by our own artillery observers; for a time we had in our lines a handful of American soldiers manning a forward post of a counter-battery radar installation; these and visits by the odd general and a plentiful supply of Hershey bars and American cigarettes were about the only tangible evidences of our higher control. Some U.S. terminology did creep into our vocabulary. We spoke of the MSR (Main Supply Route), TACP (Tactical Air Control Party), of "blocking positions" and of R and R leave (Rest and Recuperation). All these terms were absorbed quite peacefully.

"It was only later when I went to Commonwealth Division Headquarters as a staff officer that I realized how this happy state in the battalions was achieved. Our division worked directly under I U.S. Corps Headquarters and was treated generally, at least on the staff side, as a United States division. We received our orders and directions in the same way as other divisions and we were required to submit our information and returns according to American procedures. Our divisional headquarters, however, always dealt with its brigades in British terms and in techniques familiar to all. Commonwealth Divisional Headquarters was not a 'post office!' It soon developed a staff which could accept American directives and convert them to understandable orders.

"There were substantial differences in tactics, terminology and techniques. This was to be expected; the surprise was that everything worked as well as it did. The Corps Commander held

our GOC on a fairly light rein, certainly much lighter than his United States commanders. Our tactics for holding ground were quite different from those used by the Americans but no serious attempt was made to impose their doctrines on us. We were given our task and were left pretty much alone to do it as we saw best. There were occasions, mostly when some new staff officer appeared on the Corps Headquarters staff, that difficulties arose, but these were quickly settled.

"Everyone anticipated difficulties in serving under foreign command and there were difficulties. These could have been critical if each side had been stupidly rigid and had worked from narrow nationalism. Fortunately we had in vital positions intelligent men who when problems emerged tackled them vigorously, honestly and decisively. The same sense of duty and faith in a common cause which blended the contingents of five nations into a single Commonwealth Division also ensured the successful integration of British forces with those of the United States.

"In any future war we may well have to serve under United States command. It will be easier than in Korea for since then certain standardization of procedures and terminology has been effected. I feel, however, that two principles will have to be accepted:

- (a) A division is the smallest formation that can work for long periods under United States command.
- (b) At the outset it must be accepted that there will be differences and difficulties. Commanders and staffs on both sides must recognize this and be ready and alert to deal with problems as they arise."

PATROLLING A SPECIALIZED CRAFT

The first fortnight of January passed quietly with few incidents of note. Each night patrols were out on various missions. There now was no such thing as an all-purpose patrol; patrolling had become a specialized craft. There were standing patrols, which really were guards, with specific areas of defense and report. There were fighting patrols, which were raiding parties organized for local encounters. There were reconnaissance patrols, whose main function was to collect information and to identify enemy positions. There also were roving patrols, which went out looking

for trouble in designated areas. Finally, there were nuisance patrols, which generally consisted of a few scouts and snipers dispatched to make noises and to lead the enemy a chase if he could be induced to take them seriously.

The decisive instrument in Korean patrolling was the light wireless set which kept the patrol in constant report to company or battalion commander. The patrol went out equipped with fire programmes; a code word whispered over the set could bring heavy and even obliterating fire on pre-arranged targets. The enemy countered these bombardments by burrowing to safe depths or by vacating his positions when such shoots opened. Thus it came about that many a patrol, having located enemy-held bunkers or slit trenches and having directed a torrent of explosive on such sites, would occupy the ground afterwards to find neither bodies nor shaken prisoners; but from a few hundred yards away would come sounds of digging as the enemy prepared fresh coverts.

The Chinese were equally difficult to bring to bay in their guerilla-type offensive operations. Twice in the first weeks of January vehicles were bushwhacked behind the Patricia lines, the occupants being killed. It was suspected that in some instances the 'rice burners' of the Korean Service Corps were serving two masters; Korean officers were not always in effective control of their men. The periodical sweeps and screening of the rear areas seldom resulted in captures although during January "D" Company nabbed two Koreans in the act of signalling by flashlight to the enemy.

On January 10th Capt. C. D. McLean with a "B" Company patrol was cut off in the course of a reconnaissance. It was a cold night and some of the automatic weapons jammed; the Patricias escaped unscathed under a shower of stick grenades. On the following night Sgt. D. B. Urquhart and two snipers on a nuisance patrol led the enemy a merry chase. On January 15th a patrol from "A" Company had completed its mission and was nearing home when it strayed on to a protective minefield. Sgt. R. G. Sorsdahl led a stretcher party on to the minefield; in removing the injured another mine was tripped, killing a man on a stretcher and seriously injuring others, including Sgt. Sorsdahl. Total casualties in this unfortunate affair were two killed and four wounded. On the same evening a United Nations vehicle was ambushed in the rear of the Patricia positions. A "C" Company patrol which hurried to the spot discovered all too



ang, January 11th 1951—Presentation of United Nations flag to Second Battalion.
t.-Colonel J. R. Stone and Mr. J. Plimsoll, United Nations representative, in foreground.)



ly route to United Nations front in Korea.





—Lieut.-Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith with Brig. J. M. Rockingham
P. Bogert in First Battalion's positions.





Imjin Gardens (Winter of 1952).





Korean Front, July 27th 1953—Capt. C. A. H. Kemsley reads the Cease Fire instructions to men of Third Battalion in the forward positions.

late that its captors had booby-trapped it. Four casualties from a Chinese anti-tank grenade was the price of such knowledge. There were few tricks in the trade of war that the Communists overlooked.

A NEW SECTOR

On January 18th the long tour in this sector—it had begun in September—came to an end. 28th Commonwealth Brigade moved up from reserve and exchanged with the Canadians. The Patricias were relieved by the Shropshires and in turn took over the positions of the Scottish Borderers in the elbow of the Samichon river about three miles in the rear of the front line. They were not particularly pleased with their new home which lacked many of the amenities of the front line bunkers—tables and chairs, built-in stoves, washstands, ration bins and cupboards. Since the British battalions had a lower rifle strength than the Canadians it was necessary to enlarge the trenches and the bunkers of these positions.

The Patricia sector was almost directly behind that of 29th British Brigade, which had responsibilities on both sides of the Samichon river. Yongdong Hill, a feature of some tactical importance, lay between the Patricias and 1st Royal Norfolk Regiment on 29th Brigade's left; it also commanded the front of 1st Welch Regiment on the opposite side of the Samichon valley. A Patricia platoon, therefore, occupied the hill under operational control of the Norfolks and a section of Patricia medium machine guns was stationed there on call to the Welch Regiment.

On January 23rd Lieut.-General G. G. Simonds CB CBE DSO CD, Chief of the General Staff, toured the Battalion area and afterwards lunched with the officers. On a "D" Company parade he pinned the ribbon of the Distinguished Service Order on the tunic of Major J. H. B. George—an award well earned in the Point 227 operations six weeks before.

One week, then another, passed in puttering about in the reserve positions. It was not to the Patricias' liking; on February 3rd the War Diary noted: "Everyone is getting restless. It is the first time that we have relaxed since we were warned for overseas duty six months ago and the let-down is considerable . . . A man's propensity to crime increases with his mobility and the sight of many jeeps lying about is a great temptation." Fortunately the hockey gear which the Minister of National Defense

had promised had arrived. The ice on a backwater of the Imjin was cleared; the rink was equipped with dressing tents and even with a hot dog stand. The first games with Royal Canadian Regiment and Royal 22e Regiment were won handily.

On February 7th all ranks were shocked by news of the sudden death of His Majesty the King. Two days later a twenty-one gun salute was fired to mark the accession of Queen Elizabeth II. On February 10th all officers paraded to swear allegiance to their new sovereign and the Patricias entered upon the period of court mourning, the officers wearing black armbands.

"SNARE" PROVES NO SNARE

In February also there began that very odd exercise SNARE. Someone at Eighth Army Headquarters—"a wild-eyed dreamer" declares the War Diarist) wished to see how the enemy would react to a period of non-violence in which no guns would fire and in which there would be no movement in daytime or noises at night—all would be as though every United Nations fighting man had been stricken by deep slumber. There were many cynics who doubted if the Oriental mind would be impressed by such tactics. They were right. Without delay the enemy began to appear on the skyline; when not shot at he commenced digging in on his forward slopes. For six days he conducted himself with exasperating freedom. SNARE had proved to be a delusion. On the seventh day, again in the words of the War Diarist: "our guns suddenly blasted out with the air of a man in a terrible temper who could restrain himself no longer. The Chinamen who had been cavorting on their forward slopes dived for shelter and stayed there . . . five hundred yards closer to us."

February slipped away, with the principal event of note the climb by the Battalion officers of Kamak-San, the dominating peak of western Korea whose crest supplied a magnificent view of 29th Brigade's battlefield of the previous April, when the Gloucesters and the Royal Ulster Rifles had made great stands. Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith had studied this action and in the course of the climb he described it in detail to his officers.

On February 24th after a hockey match between Patricia officers and the staff of 25th Canadian Brigade (which was won in large part by Brigadier Rockingham, who literally trampled his opponents underfoot) a reception and buffet lunch were held

in the Officers' Mess. On the following day, on the occasion of a demonstration of patrol tactics, the Battalion entertained officers and non-commissioned officers of the Commonwealth Division. On February 29th a Brigade exercise (LIMBER) included a crossing of the Imjin and a day's fighting advance across the rolling hills. It was an excellent experiment in mobile warfare and it enabled the battalion commanders to rectify certain shortcomings in command organization and in communications.

On March 1st orders were received to return to the line. The Battalion Commander and his Intelligence Officer at once set off to visit the forward positions held by the Welch Regiment to the west of the Samichon river. On the following day Patricia company commanders and specialist officers also examined this sector. As it had been quiet for several months the earthworks and the shelters manifestly were inadequate to meet present-day conditions and the Patricias ruefully foresaw a spell of burrowing when they took over.

During its period in reserve each battalion was required to send out one deep-penetration fighting patrol. On March 5th Lieut. M. Duncan with a platoon of "B" Company passed through the Scottish Borderers front to the southwest of Point 156. The enemy was encountered on high ground about a mile to the north of the British lines. First contact drew a shower of grenades; whereupon Lieut. Duncan called for protective fire to seal off the area. On moving against the enemy bunkers from the flank the patrol encountered well-sited defenders full of fight. The full fire programme was invoked and as the patrol withdrew a heavy shoot crashed on the Chinese positions.

THE FRONT LINE AGAIN

The relief of the Welch Regiment was completed on the night of March 10th/11th. In addition to the state of the field fortifications there were other features of the new sector which did not appeal to the Patricias, so that for the first few days everyone was busy with changes. The frost had begun to come out of the ground, leaving the footing on the hillsides treacherous; high winds and heavy rains added to the discomfort and difficulty. During this period the front was quiet and patrolling was restricted to defensive requirements.

On March 17th the Colonel-in-Chief's health was drunk at a gathering of officers and non-commissioned officers at "A"

Echelon. There followed the traditional Officers-Sergeants Broom-i-Loo played on the car park in lieu of the rink, whose ice was being preserved for the final hockey match of the season. (In the course of this latter game, in which the Patricias clinched the championship of the Korean League, the ice surface collapsed.)

It was at about this time that the infantry usurped the function of the Royal Regiment—a time-honoured practice which dates back to the Peninsular campaign. Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith borrowed the seventeen pounder anti-tank guns of the other Canadian battalions and set up a battery of six guns in the forward Patricia positions. With the aid of artillery observers and air spotters these high velocity pieces engaged targets as much as eight miles behind the enemy line. The Patricia gunners grew quite snobbish over their hybrid status.

ATTACK ON "C" COMPANY

In the third week of the tour a certain liveliness developed. On March 21st a "D" Company patrol engaged in a firefight with an enemy outpost. Next day five Patricias were wounded by shellfire. On the evening of the 24th, when Lieut. H. E. Gauley took out a fighting patrol to deal with a Chinese listening post, four Patricias were wounded. This minor bickering was climaxed by a sharp encounter at midnight on March 26th/27th. A heavy shoot crashed on "C" Company, then occupying high ground to the south of a tributary valley of the Samichon. An infantry attack swept against 7 Platoon, which was stationed on the leg of an inverted T 400 yards in advance of the main company positions. The enemy made his way around both flanks and the assault came in from the rear. Sgt. R. Buxton, the able non-commissioned officer in command, redistributed his sections for all-round defense and met the blow at his back with a steady blaze of fire. The Battalion mortars came into action and hung protective curtains around the beleaguered platoon. Cpl. J. E. Rimmer in charge of 60mm mortars (on which the company depended for illumination) kept his weapons in action, although he was knocked over by blast on several occasions.

For three hours the fighting continued. Again and again pleas came over the air for ammunition and flares; the bunker in which reserve supplies were stored had been hit and had collapsed. The Company commander (Capt. C. G. Short MC) ordered a

platoon to fight its way through with ammunition and to bring back casualties. By dawn 7 Platoon had been replenished and its casualties evacuated. Sgt. Buxton although wounded continued in command until ordered out of action next morning. There were 100 fresh shell holes in the 7 Platoon area and 65 craters around the Battalion mortars; 25 dead Chinese were counted on the Patricia front.

Early in April a famous fighting force relieved 1st ROK Division on the left flank of the Canadians. On April 13th the War Diary commented:

"Our area is alive with Marines. Our men are very impressed with them but cannot understand why they get so angry when you call them soldiers. They seem to hold the U.S. Army in low regard." New divisional boundaries had relieved the Commonwealth Division of all responsibilities to the west of the Samichon river while on the opposite flank the divisional front had been extended beyond Point 355 to within two miles of the Imjin river. On April 14th the Patricias and the Royal Canadian Regiment were relieved by the Marines. Whereupon both Canadian battalions crossed the Samichon, the Patricias relieving three companies of the Shropshires and one company of King's Own Scottish Borderers on the low ridges to the south of the village of Sanjom-ni. Here a quiet tour ensued, broken only by a number of regrettable minefield accidents in one of which Lieut. J. D. Hamilton, who had recently joined the Battalion, was fatally injured.*

The weather grew steadily warmer; says the War Diary: "The changeover from winter to summer equipment has been completed. Much to the Quartermaster's surprise more stoves and parkas have been turned in than were issued. The summer clothing issue has one major fault. American wind pants are much too hot for summer wear and not nearly as practical as Canadian issue pants.

"'B' Echelon is becoming a real village. Houses built of beer boxes with thatched roofs are being constructed for the Officers Mess and for some of the officers. The object is to save

* These minefields continued to take a toll. In early summer three signallers of 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery strayed and were blown up. One man although desperately wounded escaped and staggered into the Patricias' lines. In dense darkness and under shellfire 2/Lieut. W. C. Robertson entered the minefield and after a search of two hours found the other two men, both of whom had succumbed to their injuries.

tentage which is in short supply. Corral fencing with rock-lined walks of fine sand gives a very neat effect."

CHANGES IN COMMAND

On April 2nd Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith was claimed by the Commonwealth Division as GSO I. This officer's attractive personality, combined with his enthusiasm and tactical skill, had won him the respect and admiration of all ranks. He remained with the Battalion until May 1st, when at a farewell luncheon he was presented with a silver keepsake and with the pennon which had flown at Battalion Headquarters during his period of command in the field. He was succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Cameron, formerly Commandant of 25th Brigade Reinforcement Group at Kure in Japan.

The officer roster of First Battalion had undergone many changes in six months at the front. Major J. C. Allan DSO was now Brigade Major and had been replaced as Second-in-Command by Major S. L. Dymond. Lieut. R. J. Frost also had gone to Brigade (as Intelligence Officer) and had been succeeded at Battalion Headquarters by Lieut. W. Davis. Capt. T. Berger CD now was Adjutant, Major E. J. Williams and Major R. E. M. Cross had shifted to Headquarters Company and Support Company respectively; "A" Company was commanded by Major J. E. Leach and "C" Company by Major C. G. Short MC. In May Major E. R. Isenor took over command of "D" Company and RSM J. C. Austin MC replaced RSM O. Gardner because of the latter's ill-health.

On April 27th Brigadier Rockingham also relinquished command. His successor was Brigadier M. P. Bogert CBE DSO CD, already well-known to Patricias as commander of 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade during the later stages of the campaign in Italy. At a farewell lunch for Brigadier Rockingham the Patricias provided the marquee, the Royal Canadian Regiment the food and the Royal 22e Regiment the drinks. The guest of honour was presented with sets of serving trays and ashtrays and with a silver-mounted map of Korea.

THE TWILIGHT WAR

The wrangles over armistice terms at Panmunjon continued. They no longer interested anyone; the attitude of the fighting man probably was correctly diagnosed by the Patricias' War

Diarist on May 23rd: "This is the twilight war," he wrote. A patrol encounter, an air strike or a quick fierce bombardment was the reminder of a continuing state of hostilities. The Corps patrol policy called for at least one fighting patrol each week from each forward battalion and while most of these excursions into enemy territory proved abortive clashes sometimes occurred. One such occasion was the night of May 20th/21st, when Lieut. D. A. Middleton took out a strong patrol of "B" Company. The area to be explored was Boot Hill, which stood 750 yards from the Patricia positions and across a low valley.

Having established a firm base in the valley and deployed a fire team to seal off the point of attack, the fighting patrol closed up on the suspected enemy position. As fire opened Lieut. Middleton was shot through the ankle; hobbling on he headed the assault party. Five men were struck down and the officer took two more wounds. When it became necessary to disengage Cpl. J. G. Dunbar took charge and the withdrawal was effected without further losses.

On May 23rd "A" Company and Battalion Headquarters were victims of a snap shoot, which apparently sought a section of roving New Zealand guns which had been sniping from behind the Patricias' reserve position on the previous day. There were ten casualties, fortunately all wounded. On the following day shellfire caused another five casualties. Then quiet supervened and day after day the situation report read "No contact with the enemy."

On June 14th however it was resumed in a rather odd fashion. Lord Strathcona's Horse picked up an enemy broadcast which was addressed specifically to Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. It was designed not to seduce but to abuse; concerning its content the War Diary is tantalizingly reticent. "Some of the statements made," it says, "did little to enhance the repute of our unit."

On the same day an old and cherished friend of the Regiment and of Canada turned up. Field-Marshal Alexander did not hide his pleasure at meeting Canadians once more in the field. Lieut.-Colonel Cameron accompanied the great British soldier on his inspection of the Brigade front.

MORE PRESSURE ON THE ENEMY

In mid-June it was decided on higher levels that pressure on the enemy must be stepped up. The first offensive essay was that of 5th Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, whose striking force passed through the Canadian front at dawn on June 17th. The Patricias had two sections of infantry standing by in de-turreted tanks; they also provided guards on the gates of the minefield. The Inniskillings met with misfortune, two tanks bogging down in a valley 1,500 yards deep in enemy territory. The patrol withdrew under fire and without committal to the attack.

On the evening of June 20th Lieut. A. P. Bull led a "B" Company patrol towards Point 133, 2,000 yards beyond the Patricias' front. "C" and "D" Companies, which held the forward positions, undertook to provide firm bases some distance beyond their out-post lines. The patrol having crossed a small valley reached rising ground which was suspected of harbouring enemy outposts. As the men spread out in assault formation a series of shattering explosions struck many to ground.* Lieut. Bull, who was wounded but had retained command, ordered his men to withdraw.

It was discovered that more than half of the total strength of the patrol, which came to 37 of all ranks, had been injured in the explosions. The uninjured bore the dead and wounded across a long stretch of muddy fields; after crossing a stream and clambering up a steep hillside they arrived at the firm base. Here stretcher-bearer parties were organized for the evacuation. An officer wrote: "It was about a mile and hard going. Three hills to climb, three to descend. Four aprons of wire to pass through going up; narrow, sloping and slanting paths to follow. A deep and narrow communication trench to pass through." Dawn broke before the patrol was in. Casualties had been seven killed or died of wounds and fifteen wounded.

On successive nights the Royal Canadian Regiment, the Welch Regiment and the Royal 22e Regiment dispatched fighting patrols with no greater success. The four raids cost 14 killed and 63 wounded. Of these operations the historian of the Commonwealth Division has written:

"It was apparent that the Chinese had developed very efficient defensive fire technique. In a half dozen raids on this scale since

* Lieut. (now Capt.) Bull comments: "It is impossible to say what hit us. It may have been 'souped-up' grenades or mortars, Bangalore torpedoes, 'Bouncing Betty' mines, 'Fougasse' weapons, but to this list it would be as well to add 'etc.'"

the middle of June more than 120 casualties had been suffered—mostly among Canadian and Australian units. It seemed that operations of this sort—which had never met with General Cassel's approval and had been carried out on direct orders from higher authority—were proving much too costly, even when the importance of obtaining prisoners for identification purposes was taken into account. As a result the Commonwealth Division commander ordered the frequency of this type of raid to be reduced, and reported his intention of trying to obtain prisoners by other methods.”*

A MONTH IN RESERVE

On June 29th, the 28th Commonwealth Brigade, now consisting of two British and two Australian battalions, took over the left sector of the divisional front. 25th Canadian Brigade passed into reserve in an area to the southeast of the Commonwealth Division front, about three miles from the Imjin river.

This respite from operational employment permitted Lieut.-Colonel Cameron, as in the phrase of the old jape, to get on with a little soldiering. The month of July, except for a minor amount of digging in the WYOMING reserve positions, was given over to training and to smartening up. By this time the indefiniteness of a half-war which threatened to go on forever, the knowledge that enemy strength was waxing rather than waning, the lack of inspiration in fighting to save a country which not one out of every hundred Canadian soldiers considered to be worth saving, might have been reflected in lowered morale and in resentment at spit-and-polish routines in a long-overdue rest period. Yet no such reaction was evident. The Patricias, like the majority of their comrades of the Commonwealth Division, were resigned if not dedicated to their tasks. Their pride in themselves and in their unit preserved their high morale and good temper.

In the fourth week of July, when rumours of a return to the line began to circulate, Patricia officers in consonance with Regimental custom gave thought to a party. Ambitious preparations were placed in train. Koreans were hired to build a great 'basha'—a straw house to take the overflow from the marquees. An icehouse was dug in a nearby hillside. A bandstand was reared for the musicians of the Royal 22e Regiment. A bar fourteen feet

* "First Commonwealth Division"—Barclay (Gale and Polden).

long was constructed. The Trade Section of the Pioneers produced the requisite tables and chairs. A landing zone was levelled for the Corps Commander's helicopter.

On July 26th 165 guests assembled at noon. The Patricias' cooks had outdone themselves; the tables groaned under a profusion of viands. The drink of the day was Black Velvet, that most adequate fusion of stout and champagne; the available jugs were too small and too few and the brew was mixed in five-gallon jerrycans. The guests were prompt to arrive and loath to leave. As they went they pronounced the party to have been the event of the Korean season.

A NEW FRONT

There was not one but two moves in prospect. At the end of July (as in the previous year) the seasonal floods on the Imjin had carried out the bridges. Until such time as the river subsided the Commonwealth Division, cut off from its rear area, was particularly vulnerable. Intelligence had identified thirty Communist divisions in the line and eleven in reserve; thirty-three of them were Chinese. The United Nations had fifteen divisions in the line with three in reserve but experience had shown the ten South Korean divisions to be question marks in battle. It therefore was sound policy to prepare for the worst and it had been decided to reconstruct KANSAS, the original defensive positions which covered Seoul and continued to the east along the thirty-eighth parallel. 25th Canadian Brigade was allotted a task on these field fortifications; thereafter it would cross the Imjin and relieve 29th British Brigade in the right sector of the Commonwealth Division front.

On August 1st, in cool and overcast weather, the Patricias moved back to a pleasant camp beside a mountain stream in a picturesque valley to the south of the Imjin. Work began at 0630 hours each morning continuing until noon, with a break in the heat of the day and a second trick in the late afternoon—a full eight hours manual labour each day. "Our men," recorded the War Diary proudly, "easily do three times the work of the Korean Service Corps personnel." Nevertheless the original three-day task lasted for more than a week and it was not until the evening of August 8th that the move to the front began. Twenty-four hours later the relief of 1st Royal Norfolk Regiment was completed on the extreme right flank of the Commonwealth Division front.

The Royal Canadian Regiment occupied Point 355 in the centre of the Canadian sector; on the Patricias' right 3rd U.S. Infantry Division carried the line into the northeast and across the Imjin river.*

The Patricias' sector lay to the northeast of the dominating crest of Point 355. It consisted of a series of small valleys with irregular ridges between them. There was no constant grain to the ground; instead, there were scattered hummocks of high ground rising like islets above a sea of paddy fields on the floor of the valley. The Patricia company positions were established on four knolls independent of each other, with low valleys between; three of them faced enemy-held ground to the north, while the fourth guarded the Battalion right flank rear. The key to the sector lay to the north, where a saddleback rose perceptibly above the other humps. This feature, known as Bunker Hill, was too isolated to be garrisoned by the Patricias; on the other hand it was essential that it should be denied to the enemy. It was arranged to station a standing patrol on it during the hours of darkness, with a fire plan in readiness should the enemy show any intention of occupying it.

On the night of August 11th a Chinese patrol, estimated at forty strong, was reported as on or near Bunker Hill. On the following evening a Patricia patrol searched the feature and found no one. Thereafter it was arranged for a section of snipers to lie up on the hummock throughout the day. The first days of the tour were quiet but on August 19th "D" Company in the left forward sector was shelled heavily. By August 23rd Lieut.-Colonel Cameron felt that he had the measure of the enemy's intentions and he decided on a more aggressive policy. Ambush parties and fighting patrols would use Bunker Hill as a firm base from which to carry the war to the enemy.

At this juncture there came heavy rains. The Imjin rose rapidly; Patricia trenches and shelters collapsed. In the valley between the Battalion positions and Bunker Hill the former trickling stream became a tumbling torrent thirty feet wide and eight feet deep. The outlying Patricia standing patrol was rescued with the aid of life lines and guide ropes.

* The Imjin is a confusing topographical reference for it is a river of a thousand meanders. As a guide to relative positions the KANSAS line was south of the river, the WYOMING positions were three miles to the north of KANSAS on the opposite bank and the JAMESTOWN positions were about 5,000 yards north of WYOMING. The Commonwealth Division sector ended 2,500 yards west of the river on its southering course.

GENERAL CASSELS LEAVES

On September 3rd Major-General Cassels visited the unit and spoke to a representative group of Patricias in the Sergeants Mess tent. The inclement weather curtailed the divisional commander's visit and in his customary thoughtful fashion he would not consent to anything in the nature of a formal parade. It was his farewell; he was leaving the unique division that he had led from its inception. Those who served in the independent brigades before the Commonwealth Division was formed knew how much was owed to him and to his staff. A Commonwealth officer said "If you had searched the whole world you could not have found a better man for the job than Jim Cassels." He was replaced by another British officer, Major-General M. M. Alston-Roberts-West CBE DSO.

As the Patricias settled into their new front it became evident that their defensive dispositions—the standing patrols on the gates in the wire, the contact patrols to neighbouring units and the outposts—were functioning well. The offensive patrols, sent out to contact the enemy, to ambush and to seize prisoners, had not been as successful. An examination of the patrol log revealed some of the reasons for failure. The Communist soldier was a wary quarry, ever alert to danger and it was only on rare occasions that he was taken alive. Those seeking him moved through the darkness and silence in search of cunningly-disposed coverts; a uniform bleached until it showed in the night, the glow of a cigarette, a word spoken above a whisper, a breach of any of the rules of stalking, placed the hunters in mortal jeopardy.

The tour of duty was drawing to a close for Third Battalion now was on the seas. First Battalion would leave in two groups. The first to go would be original members of "A" and "C" Companies; the second group would comprise all others due for rotation. At the beginning of September instructional courses began for specialists who would remain temporarily with Third Battalion. Such trainees were found out of those not yet eligible for rotation.

THE ENEMY TAKES THE OFFENSIVE

In the second week of September there were signs of reviving enemy activity. Searching fire played on the Canadian back areas; enemy call signs which previously had been identified with offensive action were intercepted; outposts reported unusual

noises and lights behind the Chinese lines. Before suspicions could be confirmed the blow fell. On the night of September 17th/18th a heavy attack swept against high ground on the Patricias' right, held at this time by a Porto Rican company of 65th U.S. Regiment. It was a typical Chinese operation—a noisy demonstration by artillery and small arms fire, a withdrawal, a diversionary attack elsewhere, then a swift and silent assault on the original objective. When dawn broke the Patricias watched the enemy flushing bunkers across the valley and marching off prisoners. American communications to the rear had been cut but lateral communications had been preserved; for several days the Patricias served as repeating point for their neighbours.

On September 20th the first attempt to recover the lost ground failed. Three other sharp counter-attacks on successive nights broke down. In the midst of this fighting the first flight of Third Battalion, 135 of all ranks, arrived in the line on the evening of September 21st. The newcomers entered upon a rowdy scene—flickering lights and chandelier flares, machine-gun fire from the outposts, cannonades and grenade exchanges, shouts, screams and clatter from the valley floor.

The enemy stood fast on the ground that he had won and bit by bit the fighting subsided. The Patricias resumed their deep penetration patrols. On the night of October 3rd 2/Lieut. N. C. Rhodes set out with 30 men to secure identifications. The patrol penetrated enemy-held territory for two miles but was unable to make a 'snatch.' Returning patrols now were obliged to observe caution as the enemy hung fire curtains to divert them into ambushes. On this occasion Lieut. Rhodes had crossed on to the Royal Canadian Regiment front before heading into enemy territory. Acting on the assumption that it was an R.C.R. patrol that was out the Chinese put down their shoots on that sector. On withdrawal the Patricias crossed back to their own front and so came home unmolested.

THE RICHARDSON PATROL

On the night of October 15th/16th Sgt. J. H. Richardson led a deep penetration patrol into the northwest with a view to pinpointing enemy positions on Tombstone Hill, to the east of Hill 217 and about 2,500 yards beyond the Patricias' outposts. Having left nine men at an intermediate firm base the balance of the patrol continued until Sgt. Richardson located an enemy

working party. He was passing fire orders when a group of Chinese estimated at forty strong walked into the midst of the Patricias. Surprise was mutual. In the words of Sgt. Richardson's report: "I saw a man running toward me. I started to ask him what he was up to when he shot me in the stomach. He was two feet away and still coming on when I shot him in the face. Then hell broke loose." A number of Patricias were struck down but their comrades rallied and beat off the intruders. Sgt. Richardson, wounded in five places, disengaged his small force and began to fall back, followed by the vengeful Chinese. The Patricias reached the firm base with all but two of their wounded, who were subsequently presumed to have been killed. Slung over Sgt. Richardson's shoulders was Sgt. R. A. Prentice of the Snipers. Curtain fire drove off the pursuers and carrying parties from the Battalion hurried out to meet the returning patrol a mile beyond the Patricia forward positions. Total casualties were two killed and nine wounded.

ANOTHER HEAVY ASSAULT

On October 16th Lieut.-Colonel H. F. Wood of Third Battalion and five of his officers arrived to train with First Battalion until the take-over. Three days later reconnaissance parties of 28th Commonwealth Brigade came up to arrange for the relief of the Canadians at the end of the month. At this juncture the Chinese once more came to life. ROK units had relieved the battleworn Americans on the Patricias' right flank and when in the third week of October enemy activity increased it was presumed that the blow would fall against these local troops, who were held in small regard by the Chinese. This guess was wrong; when the attack developed it was against the Royal Canadian Regiment on the opposite flank of the Patricias. "B" Company of that battalion held a spur which jutted out from the main company positions—one of those small exposed salients which invited assault. Under cover of night the Chinese had closed up around this position and had lain in covert throughout the following day. Shortly after 1800 hours on October 23rd a shoot of unusual intensity struck on the Royal Canadians' forward positions; it was estimated that a thousand shells fell in ten minutes. In the wake of the shoot the Chinese infantry came surging to the close and overran the spur. "D" Company of the Royal Canadians moved forward to recover the lost ground and a company of 1st Royal Fusiliers was borrowed as close supports. At midnight a counter-attack ejected the enemy.

"A" Company of the Patricias, in the sector adjoining the Royal Canadians, caught the backwash of the fighting in the form of shelling and mortaring. In order to assist in the consolidation "D" Company was placed under Royal Canadian command and took up a position on "A" Company's left. By October 24th the fighting had died away and that morning a party of South Koreans arrived to reconnoitre the Patricia sector. The Commonwealth Division had been ordered to sideslip to the west and to take over frontage from 1st U.S. Marine Division. At the same time it would be relieved in its right battalion sector. This sideslip for a second time extended the Commonwealth Division front beyond the west bank of the Samichon river.

Relief by 3rd Battalion 11th South Korean Regiment was effected smoothly and expeditiously on the evening of October 26th. Troop carriers bore the Patricias to an encampment to the south of the Imjin, on the opposite flank of the Commonwealth Division.

Thus First Battalion said farewell to the Korean battlefield. Its first flight already was at home for on September 21st, when 35 of all ranks of Third Battalion had arrived at the front, the same number of First Battalion had left at once for "B" Echelon. They crossed from Korea to Japan on September 24th/25th and were held at the Canadian Reinforcement Group at Kure until October 13th, when they sailed on USNS *General H. B. Freeman*. On arrival at Seattle they entrained for the Personnel Depot at Jericho Beach where many of them met their families and where they were sorted into drafts for their various destinations. At Calgary a short stopover permitted them to greet old friends; they received a royal welcome. On arrival at their personnel depots they were dispatched at once on long leave.

On October 29th the main body of Third Battalion arrived at First Battalion's "B" Echelon. Three days later First Battalion moved into the WYOMING reserve line. On November 3rd an Inter-Patricia relief was completed in these positions.

On the following day First Battalion, wearing its cherry berets once more, paraded for Brigadier Bogert to say farewell. In a soldierly speech he thanked all ranks for their courage and steadfastness. On the afternoon of November 8th a guard fifty strong commanded by Capt. W. E. Hall of First Battalion formally transferred its responsibilities to a similar guard

commanded by Capt. L. W. Basham of Third Battalion. Major-General West witnessed the exchange of pennants which concluded the ceremony. When the parade was dismissed Patricias and old friends of the Commonwealth Division thronged the various messes to raise their glasses in the immemorial toast of farewell, "To Our Next Meeting."

On Remembrance Day First Battalion and those of Third Battalion who could be spared from their duties attended a short memorial service. At its conclusion First Battalion embussed for railhead. "Farewells were said, songs were sung and the universal two-fingered salute of the fortunate to the damned was given and returned in good-natured derision" says the War Diary. At Tokchong the pipers of 1st Black Watch of 29th Brigade played the Patricias on their way. After a wearisome overnight ride on the straight-backed unyielding wooden seats of the crowded coaches they reached Pusan next morning. That day they attended a memorial service at the United Nations cemetery in honour of the Patricias' dead. On the following day they embarked for Kure.

After a week at 25th Canadian Reinforcement Group Camp they entrained for Yokohama where on the morning of November 22nd they boarded USNS *General H. B. Freeman*, the same transport which had carried the first flight of First Battalion on its previous voyage. The weather was none of the best and the passage was uneventful. On the morning of December 4th the troopship edged into her berth at Seattle to the strains of "Rick-a-dam-doo" from a band on the docks. Brigadier W. J. McGill DSO CD representing the Chief of the General Staff and Lieut.-Colonel Wilson-Smith were on the quay to greet the arrivals who immediately entrained for Calgary, where they arrived on the evening of December 5th. Following a civic welcome they paraded to the Legion Hall for a reunion with friends and relatives and thereafter dispersed on long leave.

The casualties of First Battalion in the Korean tour of duty had been one officer and 33 other ranks killed in action or died of wounds, 10 officers and 193 other ranks wounded. Awards and Decorations included: Distinguished Service Order 2; Officer of the Order of the British Empire 1; Member of the Order of the British Empire 3; Military Cross 3; Distinguished Conduct Medal 2; Military Medal 4; British Empire Medal 2; Mentioned in Dispatches 19; Foreign Decorations 4.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THIRD BATTALION (1950-1953)

As has been previously noted Third Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry came into being at Fort Lewis on November 30th 1950. At this time the North Korean invaders were in full flight and an early and complete victory for United Nations forces seemed assured. No more than a Canadian token force therefore would be required in the Orient and the thoughts of Canadian military planners turned to responsibilities under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization: if Korean operations were all but over 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade would be available for service in Europe and it would be necessary to raise another battalion to complete it. Hence the creation of Third Battalion of the Patricias, designed to replace Second Battalion, now warned for Korea as the token force.

The nucleus of the new unit was the Patricia reinforcing company at Fort Lewis. The first Commanding Officer was Lieut.-Colonel G. C. Corbould DSO ED, formerly of the Westminster Regiment (Motor), with Major L. H. Young as his Second-in-Command and Capt. C. S. Robertson as Adjutant. Lieut. W. A. Valiquette was Asst./Adjutant and Lieut. M. G. Levy Intelligence Officer. The Regimental Sergeant-Major was H. H. Kelly. Others of the original slate of officers were:

"A" COMPANY—Company Commander—Major W. H. J. Stutt; Capt. G. H. Sellar, Lieut. W. L. Howard, Lieut. J. A. MacAulay, Lieut. H. R. Cleveland.

"B" COMPANY—Company Commander—Major E. J. H. Ryall DSO; Capt. A. G. W. Harbord-Harbord, Lieut. J. R. MacLean, Lieut. A. W. Watt, Lieut. E. R. Knight.

"C" COMPANY—Company Commander—Major A. Lefevre; Capt. E. D. McPhail, Lieut. H. R. Osborn, Lieut. W. Dechant, Lieut. C. A. Petrie.

"D" COMPANY—Company Commander—Major C. M. Rehill; Capt. E. R. Sharpe, Lieut. J. G. C. McKinlay, Lieut. B. M. Munroe, Lieut. J. W. Douglas.

SUPPORT COMPANY—Company Commander—Major C. E. C. MacNeill ED; Mortar Platoon—Capt. R. J. Kerfoot, Lieut. H. Wray; Carrier Platoon—Capt. E. R. Isenor; Anti-Tank Platoon—Lieut. W. K. Stirling; Pioneer Platoon—Lieut. D. R. Honeyman.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY — Company Commander — Major A. J. Baker; Signals Platoon—Capt. J. R. Connell, Lieut. A. E. Anderson; Quartermaster—Capt. A. V. Robbins; Asst./Quartermaster—Lieut. J. D. Hamilton; Paymaster—Capt. K. F. Bovey; Medical Officer—Capt. J. B. Besley; Transport Officer—Lieut. A. Donald.

THE FIRST MONTH

On December 12th Brigadier J. M. Rockingham CBE DSO ED, commander of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, issued the first orders to Third Battalion. Three days later it was placed on a field return basis. On December 20th 432 recruits arrived from Calgary. During Christmas week anti-tank guns and Bren carriers came to hand; machine guns for training purposes were borrowed from other units. By the New Year Third Battalion was almost up to strength and it had taken over First Battalion's task of reinforcing Second Battalion in Korea. Thus the pattern was set that was destined to prove so exasperating. No sooner had strength been accumulated than it was taken away. The next two years were a constant tug-of-war between the requirements of the battalions in the field and the endeavours to build up and to maintain an individual identity.

Early in January Bren and Sten guns became available and the specialist sections began to train. Such training was interrupted repeatedly by the combing out of the most likely men for drafts to the battlefront. On February 5th the Battalion proceeded to the Rainier training area for the *IGNES BELLUM* series of exercises.* These included battle drills with live ammunition, the clearing and capture of fortified positions, street fighting and the use of flamethrowers—advanced training for a young unit. The realism of these exercises aroused hopes of early operational employment but at the end of February two more drafts took away most of the trained men. The weather continued to be abominable and field training was terminated for a period because of the increasing incidence of trench foot.

* Someone in malice christened these exercises "Ignorant Bedlam."

By March the vision of NATO service in Europe had vanished and 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade again was warned for Korea. As Second Battalion would join that brigade there, Third Battalion seemed to have no future. Reinforcing companies for each battalion would accompany 25th Brigade to a base in Japan.

On March 15th Lieut.-Colonel Corbould left to take command of this Reinforcement Group, to which Third Battalion contributed 16 officers and 303 men. He was replaced by his Second-in-Command, Major H. F. Wood, who had served in the Irish Regiment of Canada during the Second World War and who prior to his appointment to the Battalion in the previous February had been Brigade Major of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade.

On April 15th Viscount Alexander inspected the Canadian Brigade; the third battalions of the three Permanent Force units participated in the March Past. Five days later the Brigade sailed for the Orient and the chores of the camp descended on those who had been left behind. These fatigues were of short duration; with its changed status there was no point in Third Battalion remaining at Fort Lewis. On May 7th the Patricias entrained for Wainwright. On arrival there they were greeted with a now familiar demand—a draft for Korea.

Training at the Alberta camp opened with an establishment of Headquarters, Support and two rifle companies. The encampment was comfortable enough but prevailing high winds brought unpleasant and hampering dust storms. Morale suffered from the frequency of drafts; when at the beginning of June it was announced that all non-commissioned officers must revert to private on posting for overseas there developed a marked lack of enthusiasm for stripes.

Everyone cheered up on June 16th when a draft of 465 all ranks arrived from Calgary. (These men had been held by First Battalion until Third Battalion had settled in at Wainwright.) Ceremonial was invoked to foster a spirit of identity; the Third Battalion pennant was broken out in front of Headquarters and a quarter-guard mounted. Construction of a men's canteen began and at the end of June weekend leave to Calgary and Edmonton was opened. A party was dispatched to Calgary to represent the Battalion at Trooping the Colour.

Throughout the summer months training was handicapped by shortage of equipment and clothing. The specialist sections had a particularly thin time of it; says the War Diary under date of August 3rd: "Training aids are non-existent. Owing to lack of 75 mm recoilless rifles the anti-tank platoon is training with 2.36 and 3.5 rocket launchers. Three-inch mortar ammunition being frozen calls for other types of improvisation. The 3-inch mortar platoon was seen on a recent scheme going through the drills of laying and firing without bombs; for sound effect the 2.36 rocket was fired on the fire order." Four out of ten assault boats provided for an exercise on Cotton Lake were found to be unserviceable.

On August 20th Lieut.-Colonel Wood returned from Edmonton with details of future employment. The principle of rotation had been adopted; First Battalion would relieve Second Battalion in Korea in October, taking "D" Company of Third Battalion in lieu of paratroopers who would remain in Canada as an element in the Mobile Striking Force. Winter quarters would be found either in British Columbia or Eastern Canada. After the departure of "D" Company the Battalion would revert to two rifle companies—one for trained, the other for untrained men.

Everyone turned in and worked with a will to make "D" Company worthy representatives in the field. All wanted to go; the Orderly Room was besieged with volunteers. The officers nominated for Korea chose their section commanders from the clamouring applicants and they in turn chose the men for draft. On August 26th "D" Company, 274 strong and under the command of Major J. R. H. George, entrained for Calgary. Another draft of 100 men followed. In spite of the sagging spirits attendant upon comrades gone and ranks depleted the War Diarist was able to write: "By quick action and some very straight talk the morale of the unit was prevented from slipping too low. We are, as of 31st August, in better shape than we were on arrival at Wainwright. We have officers and NCOs sufficient for two rifle companies and the specialist NCOs of Support and HQ companies have not been touched."

WINTER AT IPPERWASH

The matter of a winter camp came under consideration in early autumn. It was decided that Third Battalion deserved a change from Wainwright; as a result the Patricias entrained

on September 22nd for Camp Borden. This would have been an excellent move had there been any room there, but that camp already was hopelessly overcrowded. "Our officers messed with the RCEME Workshop," wrote an irritated officer. "Our men were placed with the Service Corps. The sergeants were farmed out to the Armoured Corps School. Shortly after arrival I found the Regimental Sergeant-Major giving a lecture on Regimental history in the ablution rooms. He was having an uphill time selling pride in the Regiment in a lavatory."

The first duty of note at Camp Borden arose out of the visit to Canada of H. R. H. the Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. On October 13th reveille was at 0345 hours. After breakfast the trained men of the Battalion, amounting to two companies and accompanied by the Drums, entrained for Toronto. There the Patricias under command of Lieut.-Colonel Wood headed a parade which led across the city to Queens Park and to an allotted area in the grounds of the University of Toronto. During the visits of the Royal couple to Hart House and the Ontario Legislative Assembly buildings the wildly enthusiastic crowds were difficult to handle. The Patricias returned to Camp Borden that evening.

After six weeks fortune smiled upon those whom the Garrison Commander at Camp Borden had described as "Herbie Wood and his nomad band." The Chief of General Staff was under the impression that the Patricias were at Camp Ipperwash, on the shores of Lake Huron thirty miles north of Sarnia. He decided to visit them; when he found they were not there he instituted enquiries. As a result Lieut.-Colonel Wood was sent to examine this encampment, which hitherto had been used by cadets in summer. It was found suitable and on December 3rd the Battalion left by road convoy for the new location. It was an isolated spot in winter and exposed to the full sweep of winds across Lake Huron, but there was space to spare—an important consideration in view of an anticipated heavy intake of recruits before the end of the year.

Soon after arrival at Ipperwash a number of new officers were posted and WOI H. G. Lee—a notable acquisition—took over as Regimental Sergeant-Major. Unfortunately (in the fashion of reinforcing units) the Battalion gained only to lose. The backbone of the unit at this time was about 100 other ranks who had enlisted for Korean service but not for the permanent forces.

As the term of enlistment of these men was running out Lieut.-Colonel Wood received orders to ship them to Korea without delay.

When the Christmas season approached a Western Ontario newspaper appealed for neighbourly treatment for the strangers in their midst. As a result one hundred Patricias spent the holiday in family circles. Those who remained in camp were catered for in the traditional manner.

Early in 1952 "D" Company was reactivated, bringing the establishment to four rifle companies once more. In January and February additional drafts were dispatched to Korea yet the strength remained in the neighbourhood of one thousand of all ranks. On February 15th parties were detailed to parade in neighbouring small towns on the occasion of memorial services for His Majesty King George VI.

On March 17th the birthday of the Colonel-in-Chief was celebrated in wholehearted fashion with a parade in the morning, a turkey dinner at noon, free beer, Broom-i-Loo in the afternoon and motion pictures at night. Three days later the Battalion contributed 633 pints of blood and a substantial sum in cash to the Canadian Red Cross. On March 24th a draft 84 strong was played off by the Drums; such departures now had lost their sting for Third Battalion's hour was not so far away. Training as a unit was emphasized; the War Diary for April 5th records: "Today the Battalion marched past in column of platoons. Not a very polished spectacle but everybody was trying." This may have been overly severe; the Battalion quarter-guards had been highly praised by visiting officers.

BACK TO WAINWRIGHT

The tour at Ipperwash was nearly over. On April 29th all officers and men who were driving their own motor cars left for the two thousand mile road trip to the west. On May 5th the Battalion entrained at Thedford, arriving at Wainwright three days later. Here they were met by Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Stone and the band of Second Battalion. En route to camp the salute was taken by Brigadier J. E. C. Pangman DSO ED, commander of 25th Brigade Replacement Group.

Thus began the last leg of the trek from civilian life to the battlefield. Collective training had begun and advance field exercises once more were on the work sheets. With a higher

priority shortages in training equipment now could be filled without delay. On May 30th the War Diary dilated on the impoverished past: "Many shortages have existed for nearly two years and they have placed a heavy strain on the ingenuity and imagination of the instructors. Little or no concertina or barbed wire, practically no ammunition for the 60mm or 81mm mortars, no stripless belts for MMG, no mobile or portable flamethrower equipment, no air photographs, no recoilless rifles and an overall restriction on the use of live ammunition."

Most of these deficiencies now belonged to yesterday. In a specimen week the companies would be scattered over the prairie—"A" Company wiring, mining and booby-trapping under the supervision of the assault pioneers, "B" Company on the Stationary Rocket Launcher range, "C" Company off on a three-day scheme of Attack by Platoon, "D" Company on the rifle range, eating lunch in the field. Next week there would be a general change-over and everyone would be doing something else; there was work in plenty and all of it in practical employments.

During the late summer each of the companies in turn attended a Mountain Warfare course at Jasper under the direction of Capt. P. L. Meek MC, formerly of the Indian Army and now of Third Battalion. It was another kind of training, well-handled and of undoubted value.

UNDER WAY AT LAST

October opened in a blaze of activity. On the 4th two troop trains waited in Buffalo Siding. Next afternoon the men took a breather at Jasper; eighteen hours later many of them saw the sea for the first time. That afternoon they were on to the quay at Seattle and by supertime they were stowed in quarters on USNS *Marine Adder*.

The ship carried 2,000 troops of whom 700 were Canadians. An account of the voyage in the Monthly News Letter of the Battalion supplied fresh evidence that all North Americans were not made in the same image:

"A two-weeks trip on an American troopship furnished a gilt-edge opportunity to study our allies. Relations were exceedingly friendly . . . and doubtless amusing to both parties. The system of announcing meals struck a discord with the British in our souls. At mealtime a nasal drawl over the PA setup

announced to all alive 'Compahment Easy 5: Compahment Easy 5—Chow. Chow!' Aesthetic Canadians suggested that the announcement might be changed. The American staff cheerfully agreed although eyebrows were raised as if to say 'These Canucks—screwy jibonies!' So at the next meal delicate Canadian feelings were soothed to the melody of 'Attention, Compahment Easy 5: Attention Compahment Easy 5. Chow is na'ow bein' soived. Chow is na'ow bein' soived.'

"Canadians were introduced to those necessities of Yank front-line soldiering—Hershey bars, Coca-Cola and ice cream. All in all the Yanks amazed Canadians and the Canadians thunderstruck Yanks—especially the daily PT on 'A' Deck. That, together with the hush-hush rumour that we were a 'volunteer army' made Canadians an unfathomable entity . . . The days slipped on."

On the morning of October 20th the Patricias disembarked at Yokohama and entrained immediately for 25th Canadian Reinforcement Group Camp at Hiro. Here throughout the next week sharpening-up exercises and lectures were mitigated by local leave. On October 27th the Battalion boarded HMS *Empire Pride* and at dawn next morning the ship drew alongside at Pusan. There Lieut.-Colonel Wood was waiting; he had flown from Canada a few days before. Beside him was Syngman Rhee, the doughty President of the Republic of South Korea, together with representatives of the various countries whose troops served under United Nations. Mr. Rhee expressed his gratitude for Canadian support of his cause and presented flowers to Lieut.-Colonel Wood. Third Battalion then boarded the train that earlier battalions of Patricias had deplored. Said the News Letter: "Sans Lights, Sans Heat, Sans Beds, Sans Everything—and "C" Rations Over All."

THE OFFICER ROSTER

An entrainment or embarkation roster of Third Battalion's officer strength would not correctly represent the commissioned personnel of the unit when it arrived at the front. The officers came from four different sources by five different routes. Lieut.-Colonel H. F. Wood had been accompanied on his air passage from Canada by his Adjutant, Capt. P. G. Rogers, by Capt. and Quartermaster C. A. H. Kemsley, Lieut. W. J. M. Beeman the Intelligence Officer, Lieut. D. A. E. Elliott the Signals Officer,

Lieut. R. A. Forbes the Transport Officer and 2/Lieut. R. G. Graham of the Pioneer Platoon.

There travelled by sea with the men Major C. E. C. MacNeill (Second-in-Command), Major J. R. Roberts (OC "B" Company), Major E. D. McPhail (OC "C" Company), and Major C. S. Shawcross (OC "D" Company), Capt. K. C. Crook of the Mortars, Capt. J. H. Bennett the Medium Machine Gun Officer, Lieut. A. M. B. Hanton the Paymaster and Lieut. A. E. Anderson of Signals; Capt. J. H. Meisner and 2/Lieut. M. Barnett of "A" Company, Capt. L. W. Basham and Lieut. J. B. Woodward of "B" Company, Capt. P. L. Meek MC and Capt. M. H. Marchessault CD (Supernumerary) of "C" Company; Lieut. P. J. Worthington and Lieut. R. J. Campbell of "D" Company. In addition two Second Battalion officers joined Third Battalion at time of departure—Lieut. W. Craig of the Anti-Tank Platoon and Lieut. J. L. Halahan of "C" Company.

On arrival at the front there was an influx of First Battalion officers who were not yet eligible for rotation. These included Major E. R. Isenor, Major R. F. Bruce and Major M. M. W. Wilson, who took command of Headquarters Company, Support Company and "A" Company respectively, Capt. S. T. Campbell of "D" Company, Lieut. W. L. Howard, who became Asst./Adjutant, Lieut. G. E. Anderson the Asst./Quartermaster, Lieut. J. E. Hodge of the Mortars, Lieut. R. W. Bull ("A" Company), Lieut. R. S. Peacock ("B" Company), 2/Lieut. E. R. N. Anderson and 2/Lieut. G. McLellan ("C" Company) and Lieut. H. S. Pitts ("D" Company). There also joined Third Battalion in due course from units already in the theatre, Capt. N. H. Gelpke, RCAMC, Capt. J. A. MacGregor and Capt. J. F. Moorhead of the Chaplains Corps and 2/Lieut. D. M. Marvin of "C" Company.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

At Tokchong troop carriers picked up all ranks and bore them to "B" Echelon of First Battalion. Here they remained until November 4th, the officers and non-commissioned officers in the interim visiting the forward positions. 25th Canadian Brigade now was in close support of 28th Commonwealth Brigade, which was about to take over a new sector to the west of the Samichon river. Of the Korean front line a Patricia officer wrote:

"The Observation Post was heavily camouflaged with nets and foliage since it was in full view of the enemy hill positions. Nevertheless we raised our heads cautiously above the protection of the sandbagged parapets. There was little to see, for the Chinese were as carefully concealed as we. A slight haze, shimmering in the heat of the morning sun, obscured the undulating landscape. It was altogether too peaceful and we talked in low tones, although there was no necessity to do so.

"Behind us, muffled by distance, an uneven ripple of gunfire broke the silence as a battery loosed off at some unseen target. Closer the chinkchink of a shovel against rock and sand identified some soldier improving the comfort and safety of his firing trench. We raised binoculars and peered through the camouflage nets.

"The Forward Observation Officer pointed out the enemy positions. 'That's Pheasant' he said, 'directly across the valley. Very little activity there. We're not even sure he is occupying it, although there are signs of recent digging near the top. About eight degrees left is Jane Russell—see what I mean? The Marines gave it that name. The laundrymen have some sort of a flat trajectory weapon tucked in there—shoot up our tanks occasionally if they muck about too much. There are O Pips in that high hill just beyond; the Yanks put in an air strike there yesterday. Successful? Hard to say. They are so well dug in that it is a waste of time to throw artillery at them. You rarely see them in the open. I have been here five months and I have seen five Chinamen!"

"The characteristic wail of a falling mortar bomb sent us to the bottom of the observation post. We had lots of time to wonder what we had done to show ourselves before it landed about fifty feet away. Perhaps our binoculars had picked up a ray of the morning sun and flashed notice of our presence to the enemy. Perhaps it was not meant for us at all."

Among the inheritances from First Battalion were 100 camp followers. Lieut.-Colonel Wood wrote: "They were refugee Koreans who had attached themselves as houseboys, interpreters, laundrymen, mess waiters and so on. The only female, an old woman, was a seamstress. One old man was the operator of the showers at "B" Echelon. Some small ones, scarcely more than babies, were just company mascots. Their numbers had grown over the years." Under standing orders it was necessary to reduce

his number to forty and a sad task it was; the Koreans were homeless and regarded themselves as part of the Patricias' family.

The first Third Battalion working parties went off to dig on the WYOMING positions and "A" Echelon began to wire its area. Early November brought a foretaste of winter, with wet snow and a chilling wind. On November 8th the formal relief was consummated. Then came Memorial Day. The last of First Battalion went down the road and Third Battalion was on its own.

FIGHTING AT 'THE HOOK'

At the beginning of November 1st Black Watch of 28th Commonwealth Brigade, under the arrangement whereby the Commonwealth Division had sideslipped to the west, had taken over a new front line from 1st U.S. Marine Division. In this change an ill-omened responsibility had been assumed. The left Commonwealth Brigade sector now held 'The Hook,' a boomerang-shaped ridge system 2,500 yards west of the Samichon river. This position was the key to the front; it commanded the United Nations lines both to east and to west; its loss might compel retirement to the WYOMING positions. The Patricias' task was to cover the junction of the Commonwealth Division and 1st U.S. Marine Division, to remain in close support of the front line and to hold a company in readiness to counter-attack.

On November 4th the Black Watch had a sharp scrimmage with the enemy. Thereafter for ten days an uneasy quiet prevailed. On November 16th the volume of shellfire increased and two evenings later shells began to fall in the back area, while on 'The Hook' ahead the noise of battle swelled to a roar. "A" Company was standing-to when the Black Watch reported some of their forward positions to have been overrun. Their reserve company was moving up to recover them; the Patricias were asked to send their counter-attack company to occupy the Black Watch support position. As "B" Company officers were more familiar with the ground Major J. R. Roberts as Battle Adjutant gave Capt. L. W. Basham and his men the assignment; greatly to "A" Company's disgust "B" Company passed through and occupied the vacated Black Watch reserve position. The other Patricia companies were alerted in case further assistance should be required.

By 2220 hours the Black Watch had recovered their outposts but soon afterwards an intense enemy bombardment raked the disputed territory. Shortly after midnight a second attack came in. The Chinese again gained a footing in the Black Watch positions; whereupon the Highlanders again counter-attacked. At 0315 hours the commander of 25th Brigade advised the Patricias that the Black Watch had committed their last reserves (including their pipe-band) and had asked for further support. "D" Company moved up and occupied a position covering the Black Watch command post while "C" Company under Major E. D. McPhail pushed on through to the firing line. Arriving at dawn the Patricias found the fighting over, the lost posts regained. "C" Company assisted the Highlanders in evacuating the wounded and in picking up the dead. In this operation 2/Lieut. D. M. Marvin was wounded—the first Third Battalion casualty of the campaign. Three platoons of "C" Company dug in in close support and came under Black Watch command.

Both Patricia companies remained on 'The Hook' and during the next few days received their baptism of fire. The Battalion Pioneers came forward to assist in repairing the wrecked trenches and bunkers; "A" Company provided wiring parties. On November 22nd "C" Company was relieved by a Black Watch company, as was "B" Company two days later.* Total Patricia casualties in this tour of duty amounted to 5 killed and 9 wounded.

On November 24th it was announced that thereafter all three brigades of the Commonwealth Division would hold the front line simultaneously, with two battalions forward and the third battalion in close support. On December 1st the Patricias took over 'The Hook' from the Black Watch with "B" and "C" Companies forward. The first nights of the tour were peaceful, permitting the Patricias to work on their defenses. Behind the enemy lines there was sufficient commotion to suggest that either a relief was in progress or that an assault force was assembling. In the early hours of December 6th Lieut. R. J. Campbell led a fighting patrol to investigate SEATTLE, about 400 yards beyond "C" Company's positions. The patrol closed on the enemy unobserved and a firefight followed in which a number of Chinese were shot down. It was impossible to secure a prisoner. Patricia casualties were one killed, Lieut. Campbell and one other rank being wounded.

* In memory of this occasion Third Battalion and the Black Watch exchanged facsimiles of their camp jacks.

Each night thereafter from eight to ten standing patrols, reconnaissance patrols or ambush parties went out. Supporting tanks closed up and shelled areas which showed new earth; a number of caves and tunnel entrances received attention. The enemy replied with well-directed salvos of mortars but did not patrol with vigor. For the Patricias 'The Hook' failed to live up to its reputation.

If there was little fighting there was much work in hand. 57th Canadian Independent Field Squadron RCE, which now was well into its second year in Korea, had developed a pre-fabricated frame for bunkers which the infantry could install without difficulty. These sappers also produced reinforced concrete slabs as covers for observation posts and steel slit-trench covers which gave protection against all but direct hits. When the Patricias were not installing such improvements they were providing working parties for the KANSAS fortifications. Within three weeks the forward positions had been enlarged, strengthened and rewired; No Man's Land had become familiar territory and enemy concentration points had been identified. By mid-December it was possible to look beyond security to comfort; says the War Diary:

"The greatest hazard to the men in the hills is the cold. Open fires are being used for heating water and food but there is no arrangement to heat the bunkers. The Trade Section of the Pioneers are busy making trench heaters—simple contraptions made from shell casings. They burn diesel oil which is fed by a rubber hose through a drip carburetor into the base of the shell casings, which acts as a splash pan . . . Within the next day or two all bunkers will be equipped with them."

CHRISTMAS IN THE FRONT LINE

On December 18th "A" Company's area was strewn with propaganda leaflets, apparently dropped during the night. Lonely parents, forlorn children, straying wives—these, said the leaflets, were what Canadian soldiers had earned by service in Korea. A few days afterwards a Christmas tree was erected overnight beyond the Patricia outpost positions. Cards and small gifts were strewn around its base.

Christmas dawned clear and cold, the thermometer standing below zero. Brigadier Bogert arrived at first light and with

Lieut.-Colonel Wood visited the company positions in turn. An extemporized force of Headquarters details and the Drums relieved the company of the Royal Canadian Regiment which was under Patricia command in order that it might spend Christmas with its fellows.

The cold continued and with it a dormant front. On December 28th the Royal Canadian Regiment relieved the Patricias less "C" Company, which remained behind under RCR command. At "B" Echelon a host of parcels awaited all ranks from Patricia Women's Auxiliaries and from the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. A Canadian brewery had sent three bottles of beer per man. On New Year's Eve Loraine McAllister, Vancouver actress and singer, was the guest of the Battalion. The New Year dawned on a round of company parties and smokers, all of which were visited by Lieut.-Colonel Wood, who was accompanied (according to the News Letter) by his Chorus of Junior Officers.

TWO MONTHS IN RESERVE

In the support positions the Patricias were committed to a six-day work week. Two days were devoted to the maintenance of the forward defenses, two days to that enduring Sisypheus, the KANSAS field fortifications, and two days to unit economy and training. In addition one company constantly was on call in a counter-attack role. Wiring parties and bridge guards on the Imjin were other responsibilities. A tour in reserve involved so many and such boring duties that by mid-January many men were enquiring when they might expect another rest period in the front line. It was warmer in the bunkers than in tents and on the whole the life was easier.

Unfortunately the next front line tour was many weeks away. At the end of January the Commonwealth Division was relieved by 2nd U.S. Division and it passed out of contact with the enemy for the first time since its formation eighteen months before. When relieved the Patricias were borne back across the Imjin to the Kuam-ni area.

There followed two tranquil months. The first tours in the line had revealed certain defects in earlier training. Communications were not up to standard; there had been serious incidents because of slow or faulty transmission of vital messages. As the

field wireless now was the chief instrument of communication efforts were made to bring home to all ranks the momentous consequences of inefficient use of the radio sets. A Brigade exercise at the end of February was followed in early March by a Corps scheme designed to test the ability of formations to move swiftly in cases of emergency. During this period the interior economy of the Battalion was seriously affected by two factors—the abominable state of the roads and the heavy turnover of junior officers. When the frost went out the paddy fields became morasses; no amount of road building would maintain solid surfaces; it was not in jest that one of the March exercises was called GUMBO. Officer shortages were in part due to the rotation of those who had served in Korea with the earlier battalions and in part to an inordinate demand from higher formations for staff earners. In February alone eleven officers left the Battalion. At one time only five subalterns remained among the four rifle companies.

In spite of the unattractive area and of restricted movements all ranks of the Regiment in their customary fashion managed to make themselves comfortable. The bath house inherited from the First Battalion remained the envy of the Division. Wet and dry latrines were opened, a theatre tent was erected and a sports field levelled. As long as the ice remained on the river the Imjin Gardens was the centre of attraction and the question was not whether the Patricias' hockey team would win their games but by what scores. In four games they rolled up 55 goals with only a single counter against them. The team was coached by Lieut. R. A. Forbes, a former Olympic Games participant; for the third year running the Patricias won the Korean championship. It was hoped to hold a Divisional sports meet in March but the plan was foiled by the condition of the ground. The principal event of that month was the celebration of the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday. It began with a parade on which Lieut.-Colonel Wood explained the significance of the occasion, continued with a room-i-Loo throughout the day and climaxed with a bonfire, singing-song and monumental beer issue in the evening.

Towards the end of March the sun shone out, the ground dried and the stale and unprofitable winter was over. On March 13th the encampment was agog over the arrival of 100 Katcoms (Korean Augmentation Troops, Commonwealth Division) who in the future would serve with the Battalion in combatant roles.

Their training was entrusted to 2/Lieut. E. R. N. Anderson; in the words of the War Diary they proved "small in stature but large in heart." Language at first posed problems but out of two mauled tongues a workable *lingua franca* emerged.

During the last week of March Lieut.-Colonel Wood fell ill of an infection which necessitated his evacuation and which unfortunately put an end to his period of command. Major C. E. C. MacNeill took over as acting commander.

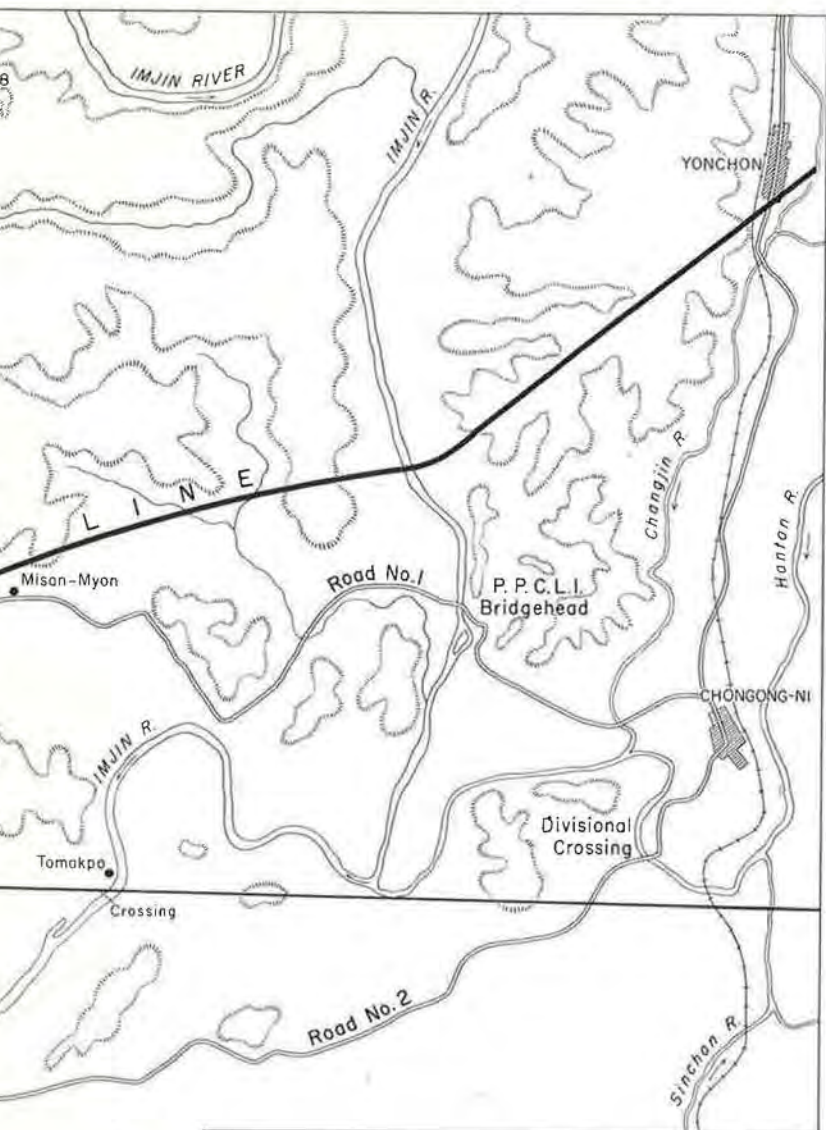
In the first week of April the move back to the line began. The Commonwealth Division returned to its former front but with a switch of brigade sectors; 25th Canadian Brigade now held the central position to the west of the Samichon river. Here on the evening of April 7th the Patricias relieved a Thai battalion of 2nd U.S.Division. For some reason or other the Siamese were reluctant to leave the line. It was necessary to shepherd them gently but firmly to the rear.

THE WAR OF WORDS

The spring brought changes in Chinese tactics. The enemy had discovered that firepower was not everything. The well-trained United Nations troops sat tight under the heaviest bombardment and came out fighting when the barrage lifted; furthermore, they had on call fire curtains of devastating intensity and pinpoint accuracy. As a result the Communists had discarded heavy bombardments in favour of silent attacks. The assault force would be brought up under cover of night to await a favourable moment in which to surge out of the darkness without warning. Such tactics were only successful against careless or badly-deployed troops, but they compelled forward companies to patrol zealously and to remain constantly alert for signs of unusual activity in the enemy lines.

A second major innovation was the campaign of seduction. During the winter mortar shells occasionally had detonated with a pop instead of a blast; the air would be filled with leaflets instead of splinters. The premises of the propaganda never varied; honest Canadians should not allow themselves to be flies in the spider's parlor of Uncle Sam; the wicked Americans should be abandoned to the punishments they so richly deserved. There is no record that these leaflets ever convinced anybody and in the spring of 1953 the Communists brought broadcasting equipment into their forward positions.

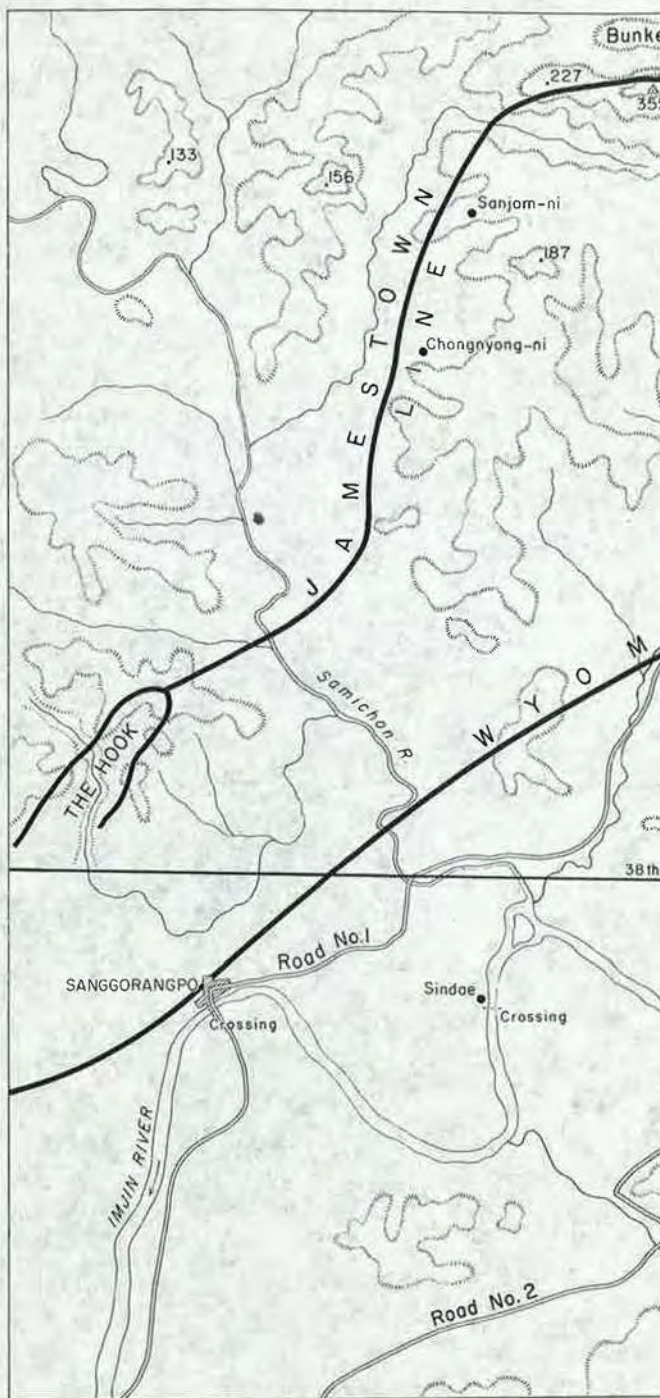


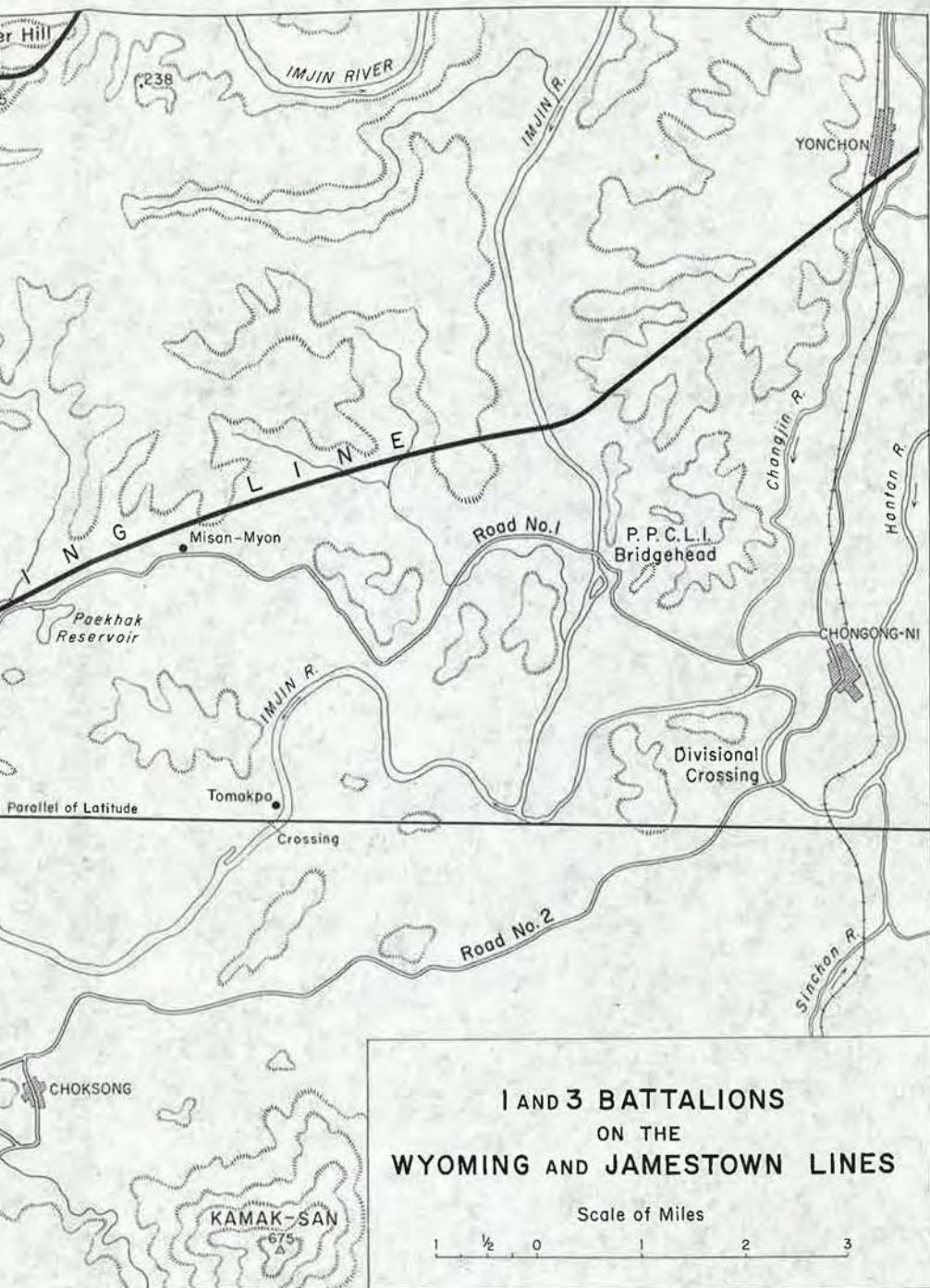


**I AND 3 BATTALIONS
ON THE
WYOMING AND JAMESTOWN LINES**

Scale of Miles









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This innovation created a stir. Here was entertainment. As much the broadcasts received considerable attention. On April 19th the subject was the happy state of prisoners of war in Chinese hands—"the lap of luxury or the lap of a beautiful woman" was how the Patricia diarist summarized it. Two evenings later there was a serious discussion of public affairs, with a prophecy that peace was only a month away. On April 23rd the programme was disappointing—"soulful, stodgy stuff" declared the Patricia commentator. Next evening showed an improvement; it was given over to music which was not Chinese music. "This is much pleasanter" was the verdict. By May the broadcasters had learned of the presence of the Korean auxiliaries and they became a principal target—sometimes of exhortations and advice, occasionally of abuse. The Koreans listened with broad grins but according to the war diarist "prefer chicken and democracy to rice and Communism."

June 16th was marked by the first performance of a woman broadcaster. She grew tearful on the wayward wives and sweethearts theme. "The men are rooting for more music and fewer commercials" declared the war diarist. Three evenings later the lady warned her listeners, "Duck, we are going to shell our hill." As the Patricias were not on a hill they were unmoved.

On June 22nd a United States propaganda unit arrived to counter-attack. "They began with Script 1070—Chinese Communists Forces, for the use of" says the War Diary. "The angry men countered with 'My Old Kentucky Home'." By now the sport was wearing thin. "The Americans are pumping out propaganda. The Chinese are pumping out propaganda" comments the diarist wearily on June 25th. On July 1st "D" Company caught the full blast of the American counter-effort when an aircraft lost its bearings and showered the company area with life conduct passes and leaflets intended for the Chinese on the other side of the hill. "They will do as much good here as there" was the disillusioned Patricia reaction.

This preoccupation with the lighter aspects of war arose out of the lack of more serious employments. During this tour there had been only occasional contacts with the enemy. On the evening of April 23rd an ambush patrol under 2/Lieut. W. J. Kitson and a reconnaissance patrol under Sgt. D. Ardelian met in No Man's Land and simultaneously bumped into a group of Chinese. In the firefight that followed Lieut. Kitson and his signaller were

wounded and Pte. H. H. Brooks was missing; he was the only Third Battalion prisoner of war of the campaign.* On the same evening 2/Lieut. C. B. Snider had a sharp clash with an enemy group which dispersed under accurate defensive fire. On the night of May 2nd/3rd the Royal Canadian Regiment on the right was heavily assailed and a heavy shoot pounded the Patricia front. There were a number of patrols out at the time, some of which found themselves in difficulties. Sgt. L. Steadman and his men narrowly escaped interception by a large group of Chinese; Cpl. P. Thompson's patrol although spotted managed to evade the enemy. A standing patrol 300 yards beyond "B" Company's positions incurred several casualties; in the midst of the shoot Staff/Sgt. V. D. Cole took out a party and brought in the wounded.

The front line tour ended on the night of May 13th/14th when 3rd Battalion Royal 22e Regiment, recently arrived from Canada, took over forward positions for the first time. The weather had broken and with torrential rains damaging the bunkers the Patricias returned gratefully to the tentage of the reserve area.

On May 16th Lieut.-Colonel M. F. MacLachlan MC CD arrived from Germany to take over command. Originally of the Cape Breton Highlanders the new commander had been twice wounded in Italy; previous to transfer to the Patricias he had been Second-in-Command of the First Canadian Highland Battalion.

Early in May the enemy began to press against 'The Hook,' then held by 28th Commonwealth Brigade and against the Turkish Brigade on the adjoining sector to the west. On May 18th a Chinese deserter divulged that a major assault was impending. It opened ten days later and its objective was to seize 'The Hook' positions. For a time the battle swayed; the Patricias made ready to shift on to the threatened sector. The intervention of Allied aircraft, however, proved decisive and by May 30th the battle had ended in complete defeat for the enemy.

This was the last major action of the Commonwealth Division. After twenty months of argument the Panmunjom negotiators were nearing agreement and the Chinese wished to hold as much territory as possible at the time of armistice. Failing to make headway against the Commonwealth Division and the Turks,

* Pte. Brooks was recovered in July.

their attacks thereafter fell on the South Korean sectors, where ground was easier to win.

THE LAST TOUR IN THE LINE

On June 2nd nothing interfered with the joyous celebration of Coronation Day. That morning the artillery fired concentrations of red, white and blue smoke. A divisional ceremonial parade at noon was attended by Syngman Rhee; there was whole-hearted rejoicing everywhere, from the slit trenches of the outposts to the bases in Japan. The Commonwealth fighting men, drawn from the ends of the earth, toasted the tie that bound them and proclaimed their allegiance to the young sovereign.

On June 8th the Patricias relieved 3rd Royal Canadian Regiment in the forward sector at Point 187. Orders had been issued for restricted patrolling but the degree of restriction was undefined; as a result scarcely a night passed on which the Patricias were not seeking contact with the enemy. On the evening of June 24th L/Cpl. P. C. Thompson, Pte. F. W. Gardener and Cpl. Lee Yong Jai of the Katcoms went out to investigate noises in front of the junction of "C" and "D" Companies. They reached rising ground and discovered that posts were being planted for the display of Communist banners and posters. They were no more than in position when an enemy group passed them and took up covering positions for the working party. Thirty minutes later a second enemy group reinforced the covering party, passing within a few yards of L/Cpl. Thompson and his men. A straggler followed who spotted the Patricias and walked up to them, apparently believing them to be his comrades. As he reached for his burp gun he was killed by a Sten gun burst. On the alarm the standing patrol split up, L/Cpl. Thompson remaining to observe; the Chinese immediately began an intensive sweep of the area which continued until they were recalled by flares. As soon as they had withdrawn a heavy mortar shoot fell on the forward Patricia companies. The three men of the patrol made their way safely into the lines.

There was no further contact with the enemy until June 30th when an ambush party under Sgt. N. B. Carlson intercepted a Chinese wire-cutting party. A sharp firefight followed in which the Patricias lost one killed and three wounded; enemy casualties were believed to be substantial. Early in July heavy rains caused a number of front line bunkers to collapse. On July 9th a brigade

interchange occurred; 1st King's Own Royal Regiment of 29th Brigade relieved the Patricias, who in turn relieved 1st Royal Fusiliers on the crest and approaches of Point 355.*

Although the war had reached a standstill there still were roving pockets of the enemy around this much-disputed crest and a certain amount of harassing mortar fire was maintained by both sides. The last hostile contact with the enemy is recorded in an intriguing item in the War Diary for July 19th: "An enemy patrol is suspected of throwing stones at one of our patrols."

THE CEASE FIRE

On July 27th a communication from the Commanding General Eighth Army was read to all troops. A truce had been signed that morning and a Cease Fire would become operative at 2200 hours that evening. The Patricias like the majority of their United Nations comrades took the event calmly. The prevalent attitude was to regard the Korean war as a joke that had become a bore. The enemy, however, was in more buoyant mood; next morning his positions blossomed with flags and bunting; there was noise and music and a general air of rejoicing. The Communists manifestly regarded the drawn encounter as a win.

There was no attempt at fraternization nor any opportunity for it. The terms of the Cease Fire required both forces to withdraw two kilometres from the Demarcation Line. (This line in effect was the existing battlefront.) The four-kilometre belt was declared to be a demilitarized zone, clearance of which must be effected within seventy-two hours. This meant heavy work, as all forward installations and equipment had to be retrieved or destroyed within that period. The Patricias had three hundred lorry-loads of ammunition to shift; the bunkers which had been built over a period of three years had to be dismantled; a thousand odds and ends of equipment had to be dealt with. Says the Battalion News Letter:

"The soldiers who a few nights before had sweated and sworn as they lugged 12" x 12" timbers up vertical cliff faces now had to rip out the same baulks and bring them down again.

* It was perhaps as well for the future fellowship of Canadian fighting men that the Patricias (somewhat belatedly) were given a tour of duty at Point 355. According to the Third Battalion News Letter the Royal Canadians, who had had a rough time in this sector, were prone to swank about it. Each RCR conversation was alleged to begin: "When we were on 355 . . ." There was a time when the corresponding conversational gambit in the Patricias was: "Where were you on the 8th of May?"

Under a sweltering sun they laboured and before the seventy-two hour period had expired the amount of material salvaged was only less in size to Point 355 itself."*

POST-ARMISTICE TASKS

The early days of August were spent on the fringe of the demilitarized zone. On August 10th the Battalion moved to its permanent post-armistice encampment in the Naengjong area, three miles south of the boundary of the demilitarized zone. A Regulating Centre had been established to control all movements in and out of the zone; a fence was erected along its southern boundary and security patrols were set up to keep it under constant supervision. Road blocks and check posts also were set up and observation posts were established to keep watch on movements within the zone.

There was no assurance of the duration of the armistice but the general feeling was that as it had taken twenty months to arrive at a Cease Fire it might be some time before a peace treaty was signed. As a result United Nations forces might be in Korea for at least another winter. This line of reasoning impelled the Patricias to prepare winter quarters, although it was reasonably certain that they would never occupy them. With the aid of borrowed bulldozers a camp area was cleared and the erection of Quonset huts began. Each company built its own; working parties of officers and sergeants built the messes. The Sergeants Mess was first to be completed; at its housewarming on August 31st Major-General West and Brigadier J. V. Allard CBE DSO ED (who in April had taken command of 25th Canadian Brigade) were the guests of honour.

On September 2nd orders were issued to clear the demilitarized zone of all unauthorized personnel. Thereafter a special police force took over security duties; patrols, road blocks and observation parties continued to be a Battalion responsibility. With spare time on its hands the Commonwealth Division resumed training. The ensuing exercises were based on the premise that it might be necessary to man battle positions either in front or to the rear at short notice. No warnings were given; on one occasion the alarm brought the Patricias from their beds soon after midnight.

* The task proved impossible to complete within the allotted period and an extension of time was arranged. As late as September 7th the Patricias had working parties 240 strong in the Point 355 area.

It became known that the rotation of Third Battalion would proceed as planned and that 2nd Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment of Canada) would arrive early in October. September therefore was devoted to smartening up and preparing to depart. On the 5th a Commanding Officers' Inspection was held; the Battalion was played past the saluting base by the Drums, who were equipped with new and shiny instruments. There followed a Brigade Inspection on the 16th. Thereafter considerable attention was given to last touches upon the Battalion buildings. Paint was purchased and timber was 'liberated;' the incoming unit was assured of comfortable quarters pleasing to the eye and destined to redound to the credit of those who had built them.

Early in October a party from the Battalion under Lieut. R. J. Campbell attended the Commemoration service at the United Nations cemetery at Pusan. On October 12th the advance party of 2nd Black Watch arrived. On the following day, as if to contribute to the send-off, six fully-armed North Koreans presented themselves at a Patricia observation post and asked to be taken into custody. On October 14th Lord Strathcona's Horse took over the remaining Patricia responsibilities. A series of farewells and inspections began, with Commonwealth units in turn playing host to the Patricias and with parades rising in authority to that of the GOC Commonwealth Division on October 24th. That evening at 25th Brigade Headquarters a plaque was presented to Third Battalion to commemorate its Korean tour of duty.

Five days later reveille sounded at 0200 hours. An hour later the troop convoy was on its way south. Passing through Seoul it arrived at Inchon, where on the quay a personal letter of farewell was read from General Maxwell D. Taylor, commanding Eighth U.S. Army. The Patricias boarded USNS *Marine Lynx* which sailed next morning.

An uneventful voyage followed and on the morning of November 14th the transport docked at Vancouver. Major-General Vokes, Brig. Colquhoun and many friends of the Regiment were on the quay. On debarkation the Battalion marched past General Vokes; afterwards the Vancouver Ladies' Auxiliary provided refreshments for all ranks. Two days later the troop trains pulled into Calgary. Third Battalion detrained and marched through the city, the salute being taken at the City

Hall by the Mayor and by officers representing the Regiment and Western Command. Eastern members of the Battalion then continued on to their various demobilization centres.

Before leaving Korea it had become known that the days of Third Battalion were numbered. On parade Lieut.-Colonel McLachlan explained that the demobilization of the Battalion would be coincident with the raising of the 2nd Battalion The Canadian Guards, and that it was hoped that many men would join this new unit. On shipboard this information was amplified: officers and men who did not choose to join the Guards could elect to remain with either First or Second Battalions of the Regiment. About half the strength chose this latter alternative. On January 8th 1954 Third Battalion was reduced to Nil Strength. Its official disbandment was published in Orders of July 21st of that year.

Yet the name and number lives on and most worthily, in an affiliation of October 19th 1954, when the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (Militia) became the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry).

Casualties of the Korean tour had been 18 other ranks killed in action, 3 officers and 65 men wounded or injured in action and one prisoner of war. Decorations included Officer of the Order of the British Empire (Lieut.-Colonel MacLachlan); Member of the Order of the British Empire 2; Military Cross 2; Military Medal 3; Mentioned in Despatches 7; and one foreign award.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE NEW ERA

For three months after return from Korea Second Battalion lay in the dormant state known as a Holding Establishment. At the end of January 1952 it awakened. Groups of men reported back from leave; among them were those who had returned earlier from Korea for paratroop training. With so many old soldiers available the resuscitated unit soon was in its stride. Two companies were committed to airborne training and two to the regular infantry manual. Lieut.-Colonel Stone once more was in command.

In February "A" Company left for winter indoctrination at Fort Churchill. "C" and "D" Companies took over the advanced training of the drafts for First Battalion in Korea and the primary instruction of recruits for Third Battalion at Ipperwash.

That spring in addition to the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday and Frezenberg Day the anniversary of the Kapyong battle was celebrated for the first time. The occasion was made doubly memorable by the presentation of the Freedom of the City of Calgary to Second Battalion. Thereafter as in terms of the old courtesy the Patricias might march through the streets "with colours flying, bands playing and bayonets fixed."

By May the airborne companies were ready for exercises. TERRIER at Sarcee was followed by the more ambitious BULLPUP at Wainwright. In DEERFLY II groups received battle indoctrination under summer conditions on the Arctic tundra. No sooner back from the north than GOPHER I and BUFFALO III were enacted at Sarcee and at Wainwright; in the latter exercise Second Battalion played the enemy, harassing a brigade group during a four-day withdrawal. In October came ICE CAP at Whitehorse and early in the New Year WOLF BAIT at Sarcee; the latter name may have originated in current experiments in Arctic rations which included a special pemmican compounded by Lieut.-Colonel Stone.* There followed BULLWHIP near

* Colonel Stone comments. "It was reputed that when asked by a nutrition expert how the troops prepared this ration a soldier said, 'We throw it out at night, the wolf comes along and eats it. The wolf dies, then we skin and cook the wolf.'"

Cochrane and in mid-February an airdrop at Norman Wells. During the latter exercise the diarist records that "the war was postponed for half an hour when Pte. Bodner's rifle valise became entangled with the aircraft. For thirty-five minutes he dangled below the fuselage in thirty-two degrees below zero. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to pull him back into the aircraft; he finally was cut loose at two thousand feet and landed unharmed."

An equally heavy training programme confronted the infantry companies. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1952 recruit training was carried out at Currie Barracks and advanced training at Shannon Coulee on the Sarcee Indian reserve. In November the advanced training company under Major D. O. R. Kearns moved to winter quarters at Esquimalt. At times the Battalion strength was as high as 1,500 of all ranks; there seldom were sufficient officers, non-commissioned officers and instructors available. Upwards of 600 men had qualified at various schools and courses.

THE FOUNDING OF NATO

As prospects of further fighting in Korea receded new employment for the Regiment emerged. Even before the outbreak of the Korean war the increasing truculence of the Communist bloc of nations had caused the Western powers to draw together for mutual protection. In 1948 Canada had proposed a mutual security pact and a year later twelve nations, including the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, formed the alliance known as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The basic premise of this association was that an attack on any member was an attack on all.

In the opening chapter of this history there is quoted the dictum of an historian to the effect that Canada often had been a warlike but never a military nation. This evaluation no longer held good. The Realm (the old description of Dominion now was crowned upon) was committed to three world-wide associations—The Empire and Commonwealth, the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It was much more deeply obligated to fight for its new allies than for the old order. Canadians had put their hands to the military plough. They dared not look back.

In December 1950 a force for the defense of Western Europe was authorized and a number of commands were set up, with General Dwight D. Eisenhower as Supreme Commander. To this force Canada contributed a brigade of infantry and other arms and details. In 1951 27th Canadian Brigade became an element in the Northern Army Group of NATO.* The march of events indicated that this would be a long-term commitment so plans were made for the acquisition of Canadian camps in Germany and for the rotation of Canadian units.

TWO BATTALIONS AT HOME

At the end of 1952 First Battalion, its post-Korean leave behind it, emerged from Holding Establishment and began to rebuild. Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Cameron was in command and under his watchful eye "A" Company, first to be nominated for an airborne role, took shape. Refresher courses for paratroop personnel were instituted and by April sufficient progress had been made to allow the Battalion to reassume Mobile Striking Force responsibilities from Second Battalion. In that month "B" Company, also designated for airborne training, was re-activated. By then the two infantry companies were hard at work, "D" Company being given over to the training of drafts for Third Battalion in Korea.

On March 17th two battalions of the Regiment for the first time came on parade to honour the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday. Lieut.-Colonel Stone as parade commander led the cheers and proposed Lady Patricia Ramsay's health at the men's lunch. The Broom-i-Loo contestants battled all afternoon in a heavy snowstorm.

On April 22nd a Patricia contingent left Calgary for London to attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Lieut.-Colonel Stone was in command of the Canadian contingent; the Patricia party consisted of Capt. R. K. Swinton MC, Capt. R. Dudley and 21 other ranks. They marched in that most colorful of pageants, the Coronation procession, and afterwards participated in the Canadian Guard at Buckingham Palace, with Capt. Swinton as Second-in-Command of the Guard. On Coronation

* 27th Canadian Infantry Brigade consisted of fifteen companies contributed by that number of militia units and organized into First Canadian Rifle Battalion, First Canadian Infantry Battalion, and First Canadian Highland Battalion, together with armoured, field artillery, medical, workshop and other units and details. On October 16th 1955 these infantry units were redesignated as the First Battalion Queens Own Rifles of Canada, Third Battalion The Canadian Guards and First Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

Day (June 2nd) a party of First Battalion two hundred strong under command of Major C. O. Huggard marched from the Exhibition Grounds to the Edmonton Gardens Arena with its colours uncased and with bayonets fixed; there they participated in ceremonies which terminated in a *feu de joie*. In Calgary elements of both battalions under command of Major W. H. Mitchell MC took part in the celebrations.

On May 18th a Regimental investiture was held at Currie Barracks by His Excellency the Governor General, the Right Honourable Vincent Massey CH. The recipients of decorations were:

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER: Lieut.-Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith MBE.

OFFICER OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE—Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Cameron.

MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE—Capt. A. Filshie.

MILITARY CROSS—Lieut. J. G. C. McKinlay: 2/Lieut. W. C. Robertson.

DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL—Staff/Sgt. R. G. Buxton, Sgt. J. H. Richardson.

MILITARY MEDAL—Cpl. J. G. Dunbar, Cpl. J. E. Rimmer, Cpl. V. L. Fenton.

BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL—WOII P. A. Lynch, Sgt. G. W. Elliott and Sgt. K. G. Tutte.

After the ceremony His Excellency met the recipients informally in the Sergeants Mess. On the following day he visited the Colonel Belcher Hospital to present the MBE to Lieut. M. B. Wood and the Military Medal to Sgt. R. A. Prentice.

FORMATION OF THE DEPOT

A new Regimental structure was about to emerge. Canadian soldiers long had envied British regiments the depot establishments which kept the fires burning and the hearths burnished when the combatant units went abroad. A barrack or an encampment only became a home when someone was left behind to take care of it. In 1952 authority had been granted Canadian regiments with two or more battalions to establish an Executive Committee

to administer non-public property and Regimental funds. Such a committee was set up by the Patricias in September of that year with the three battalion commanders—Lieut.-Colonel Stone, Lieut.-Colonel Cameron and Lieut.-Colonel Wood—as members and with Major H. G. Munro as Secretary-Treasurer and Permanent Administrative Officer.

The creation of the Executive Committee was preliminary to the establishment on May 12th 1953 of the Regimental Depot. Its basic duty was defined as the indoctrination of recruits before posting to the battalions. Until now the home battalion had been responsible for the reception of recruits and for their complete training. As Canada now potentially was an operational area the home battalion had specific duties to perform at all times, such as those attendant upon service in Mobile Striking Force; it manifestly was asking too much to expect it to shoulder other burdens. At its inception the Depot undertook the training of recruits for the first weeks; as it got into its swing it took over more and more of these duties until it was responsible for the full twenty weeks of recruit training.

Under the direction of the Regimental Executive Committee it also was assigned the custody and maintenance of Regimental records, property and funds, the administration of the Band and of the Regimental Museum, the compilation of the Regimental history, the publication of a Regimental journal, the administration of Regimental dress instructions and the care of Regimental dependents. Depot elements under its administration included the Orderly Room and Records Office, Quartermaster's Stores, Pay Office, Tailor, Mess and Institute staff, Regimental police, reception and dispatch details and the training cadre. Major H. G. Munro was chosen as its first Commanding Officer with Major D. M. Creighton CD as Chief Instructor and Capt. L. A. Swick as Adjutant. In 1955 RSM O. Gardner was commissioned in the rank of captain and appointed Depot Adjutant.

VISIT OF THE COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

In the spring of 1953 it had become known that Second Battalion would move to Germany before the end of the year. To the delight of all it also was learned that the Colonel-in-Chief would visit Calgary before the departure of Second Battalion and would present a Queen's Colour and a Regimental Colour

to the outgoing unit. On September 9th the Lady Patricia Ramsay, accompanied by Admiral the Hon. Sir A. R. M. Ramsay GCVO KCB DSO and by Brigadier and Mrs. Hamilton Gault, arrived at Calgary airport. The Guard of Honour was commanded by Capt. R. K. Swinton MC; Major P. M. Pyne acted as equerry and Lieut. R. A. Ostiguy as aide-de-camp to the Colonel-in-Chief during the period of her visit.

Former Patricias flocked into Calgary from every part of Canada for a reunion; in many instances former comrades met for the first time in decades. On September 10th the Colonel-in-Chief had tea in the Sergeants Mess. That evening a Mess dinner was attended by 145 officers and former officers of the Regiment. On the following afternoon, in perfect Indian summer, both battalions came on parade before a great crowd of spectators. After First Battalion had trooped its Colour, Second Battalion advanced for the consecration and presentation of its Colours. The consecration ceremony was conducted by the Very Reverend Dean J. G. Sparling, a former member of the Regiment. Following the presentation the two battalions advanced for the General Salute in review order—a memorable sight. The Regimental Depot also was on parade and in the March Past Brigadier W. G. Colquhoun led a company of former members of the Regiment. The turnout and bearing of all ranks was magnificent. It was a moving occasion, a ceremonial rich with pride, vitality and assurance.

In her address the Colonel-in-Chief said:

“Today is a great day for us all on parade and in presenting these colours to the Second Battalion of Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry I should like to record the deep pleasure and satisfaction I feel as your Colonel-in-Chief and as the one whose name your bear, at being present among you here in your home surroundings and at greeting you once more in Canada after so many years.

“It was on August the 23rd 1914 that I gave to the Regiment the first Colour, that camp Colour which I had designed and made. This Colour became the only one to be carried by any unit of our forces in the First World War on active service and, because it had gone everywhere with the Regiment, it was consecrated when the war was over. Much later on, this old and war-scarred Colour was replaced by a new and similar one and this in turn by yet others different in design. These Colours

symbolize the many battle honours of two world wars and of the Korean campaign, recording deeds of the most outstanding character. Much, however, could not be recorded on the Colours and I cannot forget the day to day gallantry and endurance which are not included in these honours, being daily services which were rendered and accepted as a matter of course by a unit as staunch as my Regiment was from its earliest days."

After tributes to the various Regimental commanders and to the many occasions upon which the Regiment had distinguished itself in the field, the Colonel-in-Chief continued:

"Soon the Second Battalion will be leaving for Germany and I know that the honour of the Regiment will be safe with them there. In presenting to you of the Second Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry these Colours, I entrust them confidently to men who I know will ever cherish them in the same magnificent spirit and tradition as did those to whom I entrusted the old original Colour in 1914, which became a symbol and rallying point to them. May these new Colours be the same to you.

"It makes me very proud of my long association with my Regiment, to see your fine bearing on parade today and I should like to conclude on this occasion by saying, if I may, God bless you all and may happiness and good fortune attend you in the future which lies before you."

THE MOVE TO GERMANY

Before leaving for Germany Second Battalion lost its commander. There could be nothing more typical of Lieut.-Colonel Stone than the terms in which he said goodbye:

"I hate to leave the Battalion. I feel that those boys are mine. I've formed them, trained them and seen them through. The best and finest part of my life has been spent serving with this unit. I'm proud of the battalion I'm turning over. It has a wonderful spirit. There have been a host of hard barriers to overcome and at times we have had a lot of grief, but we've also had a lot of fun."

Lieut.-Colonel S. C. Waters, who took over command, had seen extensive service with the Canadian-United States Special Service Force and also with 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion of 6th British Airborne Division. He came to the Regiment from

an appointment on the Directing Staff of the Canadian Army Staff College. Three days before he took over command an advance party of 9 officers and 53 other ranks left for Germany. On October 17th, with the Colours on parade for the first time since presentation, the Mayor of Calgary took the salute and said farewell upon behalf of the City. Next day the Battalion entrained. Its roster of key officers was as follows:

COMMANDING OFFICER—Lieut.-Colonel S. C. Waters; Second-in-Command—Major W. H. Mitchell MC; Adjutant—Lieut. J. J. Regan; Intelligence Officer—Lieut. C. A. Petrie; Company Commanders: Major G. G. Brown, Major D. W. Grant, Major K. J. Arril, Capt. C. M. Pyne CD, Major P. M. Pyne CD and Major D. O. R. Kearns; Regimental Sergeant-Major—WOI L. F. Grimes.

The first flight, consisting of the Battalion less one company, sailed from Quebec on October 21st in S.S. *Samaria*. The remaining company followed a week later. On October 31st the main body arrived at Rotterdam and entrained immediately for the eastern Rhineland, to an area to the southeast of Dortmund where three new British Army camps had been placed at the disposal of the incoming Canadians. One of these camps was at Soest, a cathedral town and railway junction, another at Werl and the third on the outskirts of the old steel-manufacturing town of Hemer. The Patricias drew this latter camp, the others being occupied by 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment and 2nd Battalion Royal 22e Regiment. Adjoining the Patricias' camp was an artillery camp which accommodated 2nd Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. This force comprised 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade Group under command of Brigadier W. A. B. Anderson OBE CD.

THE FIRST MONTHS

On November 10th the Hemer camp was handed over officially by the United Kingdom to Canada in a ceremony attended by the Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Army Group, General Sir Richard Gale KCB KBE DSO MC. By then training syllabi had been circulated and work was in full swing, for this was a time of tension and General Alfred M. Gruenther, Supreme Commander of Allied Powers in Europe, was doing his best to make bricks without straw. The NATO forces had a front of nearly six hundred miles to guard and they were woefully thin

on the ground. They were deployed in two army groups facing the most likely invasion routes—the Franco-American forces opposite the Bohemian gap and the Northern Army Group, consisting of the British Army of the Rhine, I Belgian Corps, I Netherlands Corps and 1st Canadian Brigade, on the North German plain. These forces were strong in armour and held terrain suitable for mobile warfare — circumstances which demanded specialist training of the infantry formations.

On December 2nd the Hemer camp was officially christened Fort Macleod. The name was taken from the headquarters of the Northwest Mounted Police, as established in 1876 on an island in Old Man's River. At Christmastide the Patricias as usual shared their festivities with friends and neighbours, one of the most pleasant events being a party given for German children.

On January 3rd 1954 the Battalion moved by train to Putlos, a former Wehrmacht camp on the Baltic coast. In this cold and windswept area the Patricias worked for nine days on range classifications and other exercises; the climatic discomforts were mitigated by the excellence of the accommodation and training facilities. On return arrangements were made for combined study groups with the personnel of 11th British Armoured Division. These meetings were held in the old town of Hameln, where the frescoes of the Rat Catcher's House preserve the tale of the Pied Piper and his revenge.

On April 11th an advance party under Major G. G. Brown left for Soltau, another first-class training area. Here the Patricias spent a busy four weeks in collective training and combined exercises with 11th British Armoured Division. The last five days were devoted to COMMONWEALTH III, a rigorous field exercise. On return to Fort Macleod routine training continued until mid-August, when the Patricias were on the move once more—this time to Sennelager, which once had been one of the chief training grounds for German armoured units. Here the weather was unfriendly but the unusual resources of the ranges contributed to satisfactory results in field firing trials.

On September 1st the Battalion returned to Fort Macleod to find other employment waiting. BATTLE ROYAL, a full-scale Northern Army Group exercise, was about to open. In preparation for this scheme Lieut.-Colonel Waters, his company commanders





Calgary, September 11th 1953—The Colonel-in-Chief
presents Colours to Second Battalion.



Second Battalion on parade at Fort MacLeod.





Belgium, October 1st 1957—The Founder plants a tree as an element of the Frezenberg Memorial.

(From left to right in the foreground) Major C. V. Lilley, Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven, Lieut.-Colonel M. de Foye,

Padre R. C. Nunn, Brigadier A. Hamilton Gault and Major H. Moncrief.

and Intelligence Officer, were permitted to reconnoitre the Teutoburgerwald area from the air. On September 18th 1st Canadian Brigade passed under command of I Belgian corps and for nine days the Patricias participated in a series of offensive and defensive manoeuvres. Among notable features of the scheme was the presumed use of atomic artillery. When pitted against the crack NATO formations the Canadians acquitted themselves creditably.

THE BATTALION CALENDAR

BATTLE ROYAL was the last major exercise of the first year in Germany. It had been a strenuous period not only in the field and on the drill square; the year had been marked by a host of visitors and many special occasions. The season had opened on February 12th with the arrival of the Prime Minister of Canada. In honour of Mr. St. Laurent's visit the Brigade staged its first ceremonial parade. On March 17th the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was celebrated in customary fashion but with a somewhat unconventional variation in the traditional Broom-i-Loo. An officer wrote: "As we had no other facilities it was decided to construct a large pit about fifty feet square and four feet deep and fill it with soupy mud. The game consisted of the referee throwing a soccer ball into the centre of the pit and the opposing teams rushing in to fight for possession of the ball. At the end of ten minutes the team having possession of the ball was declared the winner. The temperature was just at freezing and the question was whether you drowned in the mud or froze."

On April 25th a memorial parade was held in honour of Kapyong, with tabloid sports and a barbecued ox in the evening. On May 2nd the Chief of the General Staff, Lieut.-General G. G. Simonds CB CBE DSO CD, visited the Battalion at Soltau. When the Queen's Birthday was honoured on June 10th at the Sports Platz at Hemer "B" Company of the Patricias participated in the *feu de joie*. Dominion Day was celebrated by a sports meet and a Canada Day programme at the Dortmund Stadium. On July 9th a ceremonial Retreat was beaten at Fort Macleod by the combined Drums of the Patricias and of 2nd Royal Leicestershire Regiment, which was quartered in nearby Iserlohn. On July 12th H.R.H. Princess Margaret arrived on a three-day visit to NATO forces in North Germany. The Patricias provided Guards of Honour 100 strong both for her arrival and departure.

On August 10th a holiday commemorated the fortieth birthday of the Regiment. The climactic event of the year opened on October 8th when a Patricia Guard of Honour welcomed the Colonel-in-Chief on her arrival at Dusseldorf Airport. She was accompanied by Admiral Sir Alexander Ramsay, Brigadier Hamilton Gault and Lieut.-Colonel Niven. That evening she was guest of honour at Retreat and at a dinner in the Officers Mess. On the following day the Colour was trooped under ideal conditions in the presence of a notable company of NATO military personalities and German dignitaries. The visit was concluded by a garden party and mess dances.

On October 17th the Patricias were saddened by the death in a motor accident of Capt. R. K. Swinton MC, one of the most popular officers of the Battalion. He was buried in the Commonwealth Cemetery at Hanover.

On December 1st the permanent married quarters were opened. Soldiers' families had been arriving throughout the year and had found accommodation in various parts of the Hemer area. The assembly of these dependents into conveniently-situated married lines proved a boon to the Battalion Transport section. It was not until well into 1955 that the transfer of the families into Regimental quarters had been completed.

In carrying out their military duties and in their social proclivities the Patricias never forgot that they could only succeed if their associates in NATO and the Germany population not only respected them but liked them. Westphalians and Rhinelanders, like most North Germans, had a reputation for aloofness and arrogance; it was feared that they would resent the presence of foreign soldiers. Happily this fear was unfounded; the Germans knew soldiers when they saw them; the correct behavior and smart carriage of the Canadians earned them an early and gratifying popularity. Exchanges of hospitality became common; hosts and guests soon came to trust each other.

THE SECOND YEAR

After almost forty years the Canadian infantry was experimenting with a new rifle. In October 1954 "C" Company of the Patricias was chosen for a troop trial of the Belgian-made FN arm.* Early in the New Year another Belgian weapon, the Energa launcher and grenade, was issued to infantry sections

* In 1957 Canadian-made FN rifles became a standard issue.

for anti-tank use. Marksmanship was to the fore; in February the Patricias won the Brigade small-bore championship. That same month saw them at Haltern Camp (near Essen) and at Sennelager for range classifications. Thereafter with "D" Squadron Lord Strathcona's Horse they moved to the Muschede training area for combined infantry-armour exercises. The training cycle was veering back towards the individual; a new infantry specialty structure, with revised pay groupings, was under test. At the end of March a directive emphasized the necessity for collective training at section and platoon levels.

At this juncture a striking triumph bore witness to the efficiency of Patricia small-formation training. On April 28th twenty-two teams, representing crack units of the British Army of the Rhine, began one of the most rigorous of military tests—the four-day competition for the Connaught Shield, awarded to the most proficient team of stretcher-bearers in first aid and in evacuation of casualties from the field. The Battalion representatives may have been spurred by the knowledge that the trophy in question had been presented by the father of their Colonel-in-Chief shortly before he had become Governor-General of Canada. The competition narrowed down to three teams—the Scots Guards, the East Lancashire Regiment and the Patricias. At the final count the Patricias were adjudged to have won. It was the first time that this cherished trophy had passed into Canadian possession.

At the end of May came FLATOUT II, a communications exercise. There followed three weeks at Sennelager during which the Patricias won the Brigade Skill-at-Arms competition. Here also a Battalion team demonstrated the Canadian-developed Iroquois flamethrower to a group of NATO officers. Throughout July, August and September the Battalion was constantly on the move, participating in collective training exercises with British and Belgian formations. Chief among them were HIGH GEAR IV (August 7th - 15th) and COMMONWEALTH IV (September 14th - 19th). HIGH GEAR was on the brigade level—forced marches, night occupations of defensive positions, counter-attack and patrol programmes and in conclusion, a river crossing to exploit the use of atomic missiles. COMMONWEALTH IV was a Corps exercise, carried out in company with the famous 'Desert Rats' of other days, 7th British Armoured Division. It involved a night trek of sixty miles and a crossing of the Weser, a counter-attack

of armour supported by atomic artillery and finally, the containment and subsequent destruction of an enemy parachute force. Not the least pleasing aspect of this exercise was the praise showered on the Canadian Brigade group by a Corps Commander who had won respect and affection on a far-off battlefield—Lieut.-General Sir A. J. H. Cassels KBE CB DSO.

Once again autumn, that valiant season, arrived to tint the woodlands of North Germany with brave colours. The year was drawing to a close and with it the end of Second Battalion's tour of duty. The last year had been strictly business, with few interruptions or extraneous activities. Nevertheless the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday and Kapyong Day had been remembered in traditional fashion. In May an officer and 49 other ranks had been dispatched to Holland in connection with the liberation ceremonies at Wageningen. On Dominion Day the Patricias won the Brigade Sports Meet at Dortmund Stadium with aggregate points almost double those of their nearest competitor: Lieut.-General G. G. Simonds presented the prizes and congratulated the victors. There had been a number of visitors during the first half of the year, but most of them on inspection duties; perhaps the most esteemed were those who were best known, such as Colonel J. R. Stone, now Provost-Marshal and Colonel N. G. Wilson-Smith, now Director of Infantry. In July a group of dignitaries of the Protestant churches visited Fort Macleod, where they held padres hours and confirmation services. They were followed within the week by a group of Canadian parliamentarians headed by the Speaker of the Senate.

On September 1st General Gruenther arrived and was received by a Patricias' guard of honour. On the following day he carried out an inspection and took the salute at the March Past of a brigade group to which the Patricias contributed 33 officers and 399 other ranks.

The month sped in a succession of duties, not the least of which were preparations for the Battalion's second Trooping on foreign soil. On October 7th a Guard of Honour was dispatched to Dusseldorf to receive the Colonel-in-Chief. That evening massed bands beat Retreat on the Patricia square; among these present was Brigadier R. Rowley DSO ED of the incoming 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade. On the following day the Regiment's most prized ceremonial was re-enacted with the customary care and precision.

Thereafter farewells began. They were many and sincere, for the Patricias, as indeed all the Canadian units, had made many friends. On November 8th the exodus began. The Patricias returned piecemeal over a considerable period; it was not until after New Year that the repatriation of all ranks and their dependents was completed. From mid-December onward men were reporting back from leave to pick up the threads of home service.

FIRST BATTALION 1954-1957

In the autumn of 1953, when Second Battalion was no more than on its way to Germany, Third Battalion personnel from Korea began to report in at Currie Barracks. On the reduction of that unit to nil strength a considerable number of its officers and men fetched up with First Battalion.

In January 1954 HOT DOG II opened, to continue until late in February. It was intended as a test of military capabilities in the depths of the Arctic winter. "A" and "B" companies moved by road from Calgary to Silver Creek in the Yukon where they were joined by administrative elements of Headquarters Company. After individual and company indoctrination the training went on to the use of dog teams and resupply by air, with tests of clothing, weapons and vehicles under conditions of extreme cold. The highlight of the concentration was the trek of "A" Company from Silver Creek to the Donjek river. The Patricias covered 77 miles in seven days during which the thermometer hovered around sixty degrees below zero. The Canadian Rangers, a Reserve Militia formation of prospectors, trappers and others of Arctic domicile, participated in the exercise. HOT DOG II was followed in April by OUTRIDER I, the first of a series of monthly exercises involving individual companies in Mobile Striking Force roles.

On May 9th First Battalion paraded to the Calgary Cenotaph for a joint commemoration of Frezenberg and other Regimental days of battle. The salute was taken by Hon./Lieut.-Colonel M. Dutton, a Patricia of First World War vintage. In mid-June the unit moved to Wainwright for six weeks' field training. All ranks plunged into their tasks with gusto; an officer wrote: "The final phase of the concentration began on the west side of the Battle River. On crossing the Patricias hit their full stride and even the Control Staff was unable to maintain the pace. As a result the unit had taken its objectives before they existed

. . . Eventually Phase Three ground to a shuddering halt." Similar keenness was shown in TRAIL, a series of company group exercises which involved advances to contact, attacks and consolidations. Out of ten competing companies from Regular Army units the Patricias finished first, second and third.

In October the salute at the annual Trooping the Colour was taken by Major-General Vokes. On Remembrance Day a contingent participated in the Calgary parade. Winter training began on January 6th 1955 with a 'continuation' parachute descent at Lincoln Park. In February Exercise MIKE led to BULLDOG III, the culmination of the winter's training. In temperatures around twenty-five degrees below zero "A" and "B" companies and Battalion Headquarters were flown from Edmonton to Yellowknife, where they were dropped on snow-covered ice to deal with an invading force enacted by the Royal 22e Regiment.

In March two mass descents were carried out with the new T-10 parachutes. Time out was taken in this busy month for the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday, which was honoured in rousing fashion. In April there were two parachute drops and a final descent of 320 of all ranks on May 14th. Thereafter the Battalion reverted to infantry training in preparation for the autumn relief of Second Battalion in Germany.

At a parade on April 1st Lieut.-Colonel Cameron said farewell. He had been appointed to the Directorate of Military Operations and Plans, Army Headquarters. Major J. R. Koensgen MC took temporary command and was in charge during the annual inspection by the GOC Western Command at the commemoration services on Frezenberg Day. On May 26th Lieut.-Colonel T. de Faye MBE arrived. The new commander had served with the Saskatoon Light Infantry throughout the Second World War and afterwards had commanded 4th Royal Winnipeg Rifles in the Canadian Army Occupation Force in Germany.

Trooping the Colour on June 10th was a gala occasion. The salute was taken by Brigadier Colquhoun; the guest of honour was Lieut.-Colonel Niven, who had come from his home in Scotland to be with the regiment with which he had served so valiantly forty years before. There were four other Regimental commanders and ex-commanders present. An outstanding coloured motion picture of this Trooping afterwards was displayed widely in cinemas throughout the Commonwealth.

On June 3rd the Battalion paraded in honour of the fiftieth birthday of the Province of Alberta. The Mayor of Calgary took the opportunity of tendering an official farewell and presented a glockenspiel in anticipation of the move to Germany. July found the Patricias at the Wainwright concentration. There in the ensuing six weeks they won the Brigade Sports Meet, the Skill-At-Arms competition and a number of lesser events.

On return to Currie Barracks on August 16th most of the Battalion proceeded on leave. A draft of 200 recruits from the Regimental Depot brought the unit up to strength and on September 11th the advance party left by air for Germany. On October 1st the Patricias marched through the streets of Calgary to the City Hall, where the Mayor was presented with a Regimental banner. A week later the first flights entrained. On October 11th two companies sailed from Montreal in S.S. *Neptunia*, to be followed four days later by two companies in S.S. *Scythia*. Thereafter drafts of men and dependents followed at intervals. By mid-December the troop movement had been completed.

The key officers of First Battalion, as of date of proceeding to Germany, were as follows:

Commanding Officer—Lieut.-Colonel T. de Faye MBE; Second-in-Command—Major J. R. Koensgen MC; Adjutant—Capt. A. M. Potts CD; Intelligence Officer—Lieut. A. L. Gale; Company Commanders—Major G. E. Henderson CD, Major W. M. W. Wilson CD, Major R. J. Kerfoot CD, Major E. D. McPhail CD, Major C. G. Short MC, Major B. D. Strachan. Regimental Sergeant Major—H. Haas.*

THE GERMAN TOUR OF DUTY

Despite its recent arrival First Battalion was able to celebrate the Christmas season at Fort Macleod with the customary festivities. Early in 1956 a rigorous training syllabus was issued. The individual training period, which required the qualification or requalification of all ranks in their various specialties, ended early in March with a concentration at Putlos for range classifications. In similar fashion sub-unit training, carried out throughout April and May, terminated with a twelve-day Brigade concentration at the British Army of the Rhine All-Arms Training

* RSM J. G. Austin MC CD, who had been with the Battalion previously, arrived in Germany in January and resumed his appointment.

Centre at Sennelager. Throughout June and July training was at unit level and included five days of strenuous battalion exercises at Borkenberge. Formation training followed, with a series of all-arms exercises in the Soltau area in the latter half of August. The only large formation exercise of the year was COMMONWEALTH V, in which 11th British Brigade and 2nd Canadian Brigade co-operated in September.

In its military activities the Battalion compiled a meritorious record during that first year in Germany. In April the stretcher bearers again won the Brigade competition and in the Army competition against twenty-three British units they lost out only by a fraction of a point in the Connaught Challenge Shield final. The Patricias also won the right of representing 2nd Canadian Brigade in the British Army of the Rhine Small Arms Meet, where individual members of the team did well. In the Brigade Skill-at-Arms competition at Sennelager Patricia teams took four firsts, four seconds and a fourth. On June 23rd they won the Brigade Forced March Competition and went on to the International March at Nijmegen. They were represented by eight shots at the National Rifle Association at Bisley where their representatives were placed 'in the money' thirty-three times during that meet. They also represented the Canadian Army at the LeClerc Prize Small Arms Competition at Sennelager and at the International Allied Service Meet.

In sports they were equally in the limelight. Battalion teams led the field in two British Army of the Rhine ski competitions. Patricia boxers represented the Canadian Brigade in Army meets and swimming teams competed in international events. In track and field competitions the Battalion representatives acquitted themselves well.

Throughout the year the dates on the ceremonial calendar had been duly honoured. In March the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was celebrated in traditional fashion. On April 18th the Brigade commander carried out an inspection and found much to praise, little to criticize. Lieut.-General H. D. Graham CBE DSO ED CD, the new Chief of the General Staff, spent May 2nd with the Patricias, examining the various installations and training schedules. Trooping the Colour on May 15th saw six 54-man guards and the scarlet-clad Drums on parade before representatives of the British, Belgian and German armed forces. About 3,000 civilian spectators also witnessed the ceremonial.

Brigadier Hamilton Gault took the salute and at the conclusion of the ceremony Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven pinned the ribbon of the Canadian Forces Decoration on The Founder's breast.

Dominion Day was celebrated at the Rote Erde Stadium at Dortmund. After a morning of track and field events there followed a Military Tattoo in which 300 Patricias participated. A Wild West exhibit staged by the Battalion drew throngs of curious Germans. On August 30th, during the visit of the Hon. Ralph Campney, Minister of National Defense, the Patricias provided a guard of honour at Brigade Headquarters. On October 16th General Sir Richard Gale, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Group of Armies, came to say farewell. On November 11th the customary Remembrance Day ceremonies were held.

THE SECOND YEAR

The first concentration of 1957 consisted of four days at Borkenberge which were given over to dry and wet section and platoon exercises, instruction on man-packed flamethrowers and night firing demonstrations. At the end of March Phase Two (Sub-Unit Training) began. This syllabus included considerable night training during which, according to an officer present, "all ranks became fairly well used to the routine of Reveille at 1800 hours and Lights Out at 0600 hours." On April 25 the Battalion moved to Sennelager; this stiff trek, which began with a march of 21.5 miles on the opening day, was completed in three days. Seven weeks of training culminated in the Brigade Small Arms and Skill-at-Arms competitions. The Patricias exhibited their customary form, winning for the second time in Germany the Skill-at-Arms Shield as well as a number of individual trophies.

June was a busy month. On the 14th Lady Patricia and Admiral Ramsay arrived for the Trooping. The Colonel-in-Chief presided at the Mess Dinner that evening when in addition to her husband the distinguished guests included General Sir Montagu Stopford, Colonel Commandant of the Rifle Brigade, Major-General A. E. Potts, Brigadier R. Rowley, Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Niven and Lieut.-Colonel R. A. Lindsay. The following day was warm and sunshiny and a large crowd assembled for the ceremony, which was carried out with traditional precision and detail. That evening the Trooping Ball presented a brilliant scene.

Four days later the Battalion left for Putlos. For a week those not immediately engaged on the ranges found relaxation on the Baltic beaches. The Dominion Day celebrations were held at Dortmund on June 27th/29th; the Patricia contributions, in addition to entries in the inter-unit sports meet, were a food booth and Wild West display on the Midway and participation in the *feu de joie* which wound up the Military Tattoo.

In July First Battalion, after a sharp struggle in the finals with 1st Royal Canadian Regiment, 3rd Grenadier Guards and 4th Welch Guards, made it a double for Canada by winning the Connaught Shield for the second time.

The tour of duty in Germany was drawing to a close. In the second week of August First Battalion moved to Soltau for its last concentration, which consisted of a fortnight given to Brigade exercises. Thereafter preparations for return to Canada began. Repatriation was carried out in piecemeal fashion, the largest party returning on the Cunarder *Ivernia* early in November. After the customary leave the Battalion reassembled in mid-December at Work Point Barracks in Victoria.

This record of Canadian military service abroad, with its minor yet varied events, has significant implications. It is the story of a Regimental performance, but it is also a case history of the manner in which Canada was establishing her reputation and prestige abroad; of how she was proving her competence to play a distinguished role among the free peoples of the world. In many ways service in Germany was as much a 'selling job' as a military mission. The Canadian forces undertook to represent standards of behaviour and ways of life which would create confidence in their country and so cement the Western alliances. At the end of 1956 a Canadian journalist after a tour of Europe and Great Britain returned to pronounce the Canadian forces in Germany to be the most soldierly and popular of all NATO contingents. This was high praise and perhaps warranted, but it was a claim that Canadian soldiers would never make for themselves, since invidious comparisons impair the unity that Canada is endeavouring to promote as a partner in an association of free peoples.

MEANWHILE AT HOME

In the post-Korean years the Regiment, after the manner of families, had continued to acquire fresh possessions, privileges

and responsibilities. By December 1955 Second Battalion had reassembled after return from Germany and had taken over duties in Mobile Striking Force. (This force was much in the public eye; some deplored its expense, few denied its necessity.) Early in 1956 winter training began with indoctrination courses at Fort Churchill and endurance tests at Sarcee. Throughout the spring and summer work continued steadily, to be interrupted only by the Regimental holidays and by Trooping the Colour on June 6th—Second Battalion's first Trooping on Canadian soil. His Excellency Livingstone T. Merchant, newly-appointed United States Ambassador to Canada, took the salute and presented the Kapyong Streamer to the Battalion. He also presented the Distinguished Unit Citation Emblem to a veteran of the Kapyong battle, Pte. H. W. Sheppard, who accepted it on behalf of all ranks.

There followed the summer concentration at Wainwright. At that camp the Battalion was selected to test and to demonstrate a new experimental establishment, based on a rifle company which consisted of one support and four rifle platoons. Here the Patricias won the Brigade Sports Day meet and "C" Company tied with a company of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada in Company Efficiency Tests. In the autumn parachute training was resumed and a series of rigorous New Soldier Courses was inaugurated.

After the Christmas and New Year festivals had been honoured training continued at the same brisk pace. In January 1957 winter exercises were held once more in the Ghost River Forest Reserve. The rifle companies spent most of April on the classification ranges at Wainwright. In mid-May, in the annual Inter-Company Drill Competition, Support Company under Major C. J. A. Hamilton MBE CD carried off the honours. In the fourth week of June the Battalion, operating from a base camp at Observation Hill at Wainwright, entered upon its summer training. A series of exercises culminated on July 25th in the largest paratroop descent ever carried out in Canada. At the end of the concentration the Battalion with deep regret said farewell to Lieut.-Colonel Waters, who had been appointed GSOI Eastern Command at Halifax. In December Lieut.-Colonel V. R. Schjelderup DSO MC CD arrived. The new commander, who had seen adventurous and distinguished service in the Second World War with 2nd Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) and who had served briefly with the Patricias in 1946,

reported from his previous post as Commandant, Joint Atomic, Bacteriological and Chemical Defensive Warfare School.

In addition the traditional occasions of the Regiment had been observed in fitting fashion. On March 15th the Colonel-in-Chief's birthday was marked by a parade, Broom-i-Loo and other sports in the afternoon and by mess dinners in the evening. On Kapyong Day parade prizes and trophies were presented; afterwards a film of the Korean campaign was shown and a Korean-type meal was served in the Men's Mess. On May 8th the Frezenberg parade was held indoors because of the inclement weather. On June 7th the Battalion for the first time exercised its privileges in the City of Calgary and marched to City Hall with drums beating, bayonets fixed and colours flying. There the Mayor presented a plaque which bore a silver scroll inscribed with the terms of the Freedom of the City. On June 14th the Drums and the Band were reinforced in the ceremony of Beating Retreat by the Bugles of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and by the Band of Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (Second Armoured Regiment). Next day came Trooping the Colour, with the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, the Hon. J. J. Bowlen, as the guest of honour.

GROWTH OF THE DEPOT

In the meantime the youngest member of the family—the Regimental Depot—had been forging ahead. Its main responsibility—the training of recruits—had been supplemented by a miscellany of other duties. As one officer put it, it had become 'the chief cook and bottle-washer' of the Regiment. It had resuscitated the Regimental journal, which had been discontinued on the outbreak of war in 1939; from 1953 onward *THE PATRICIAN*, an attractive and comprehensive periodical, has appeared twice a year. The reconstruction of the Regimental Museum on a permanent basis was placed in train; due in large part to the tireless efforts of Capt. O. Gardner it was restored and re-organized, being officially opened by Major-General C. Vokes on May 13th 1954. In the same year the Regimental Band was taken under command.

THE MOVE TO EDMONTON

Edmonton was the home station of 435 Transport Squadron RCAF, the essential collaborator of the Patricians in Mobile Striking Force roles. The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada now were

established at Currie Barracks but with their depot at Edmonton. In 1955 therefore it was decided to cross-transfer the two depots as preliminary to the Patricias' move to Edmonton. On January 11th 1956 this exchange was effected. The Regimental Depot occupied temporary quarters adjacent to the Prince of Wales Armouries pending completion of the new barracks at Griesbach, on the northern outskirts of Edmonton. As the buildings were completed the Depot assumed responsibility for them.

By the spring of 1957 nine buildings—the Administration Building, two barracks blocks, Guard Room, Lecture Training Building, Officers' Quarters, Sergeants' Quarters, two 25-yard outdoor ranges and a garage, had been completed. Around a large central parade square the construction of the remaining buildings—a third barracks block, Officers Mess, Sergeants Mess, Drill Hall, two quartermaster stores, Recreation building and Junior Ranks' Club—were well underway. On adjoining ground lay an outdoor training area and a sports field. These quarters would house one battalion and the Depot. Should two battalions of the Regiment be in Canada concurrently one of them would be stationed in British Columbia.

The Patricias' advance party arrived at Griesbach in mid-June, immediately after the Trooping. On July 2nd the Depot moved into the new lines, to be followed on August 3rd by the main body of Second Battalion on its return from the concentration at Wainwright. There followed the inevitable 'shake-down' period. On September 21st, a sunny autumn day, Second Battalion, the Depot and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (3 PPCLI) (Militia) were on parade when the City of Edmonton officially received the Regiment. His Worship Mayor W. Hawrelak presented a scroll of welcome.

THE FOUNDER ONCE MORE

On December 10th everyone was delighted when the Minister of National Defense announced that the new station had been named the Hamilton Gault Barracks. It is fitting that this volume should conclude with an appearance of the fine soldier and indomitable personality whose name was so honoured. On October 1st 1957 Brigadier Hamilton Gault and Mrs. Gault crossed to Belgium to break ground for the Frezenberg memorial, on the scene of the great stand of the Patricias on May 8th 1915. In the party were three others who had shared that day—Lieut.-Colonel

H. W. Niven DSO MC, then a subaltern; Lieut.-Colonel A. G. Pearson MC DCM, then a corporal; and Sgt. H. F. O'Connell, who lost an arm in that fighting. The Founder turned the sod and planted a maple tree which in due season will tower out of a circular memorial seat of blue Belgian granite. Its inscription reads: "HERE THE 'ORIGINALS' OF PRINCESS PATRICIA'S CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY, COMMANDED BY THEIR FOUNDER, MAJOR A. HAMILTON GAULT DSO, HELD FIRM AND COUNTED NOT THE COST." This symbolic union of living tree and undying stone will proclaim to all that come that way that a regiment of free men had stood to its duty and had paid the price.

The Guard of Honour came from First Battalion, under command of Major E. D. McPhail CD. In a ringing address The Founder recalled the Second Battle of Ypres and the performance of the Regiment in that proud and tragic action. Padre R. C. Nunn pronounced the dedication. Wreaths were laid by Lieut.-Colonel Niven on behalf of the 'Originals,' by Lieut.-Colonel T. de Faye MBE on behalf of First Battalion, by Major C. V. Lilley MC CD on behalf of Second Battalion and by Major H. Moncrief CD on behalf of the Regimental Depot.

An officer wrote:

"Thus forty-two years afterwards a new generation of Patricias stood on that muddy field of Frezenberg with a few of the 'Originals' and dedicated themselves to the ideals of service and of sacrifice that have become a Regimental tradition. The monument was dedicated not only to the memory of dead men but also as a reminder to the present, and to those who come after, of the standard of devotion to duty that every Patricia must meet. May the generation whose deeds will be recorded in the next volume of our history continue to be inspired by that spirit."

THE END

Montreal:

March 12th 1958.





THE COLOURS

The original Colour, as presented by H.R.H. Princess Patricia of Connaught, was a Camp Colour and although consecrated was of no heraldic significance. It consequently was unacceptable for registration. In the First World War it had been damaged: on the reconstitution of the Regiment in March 1919 as a Permanent Force unit it was encased and placed in the Officers Mess as the Regiment's most precious possession.

In October 1922 Viscount Byng of Vimy, Governor-General of Canada, on behalf of the Lady Patricia Ramsay, presented a replica of the original Colour but of regimental size. At the same time he presented a Silk Union Flag for temporary use as a King's Colour. The College of Heralds, on being requested to register the replica, found certain aspects of it unacceptable. Although representations were made to secure approval or to obtain permission for the Regiment to carry three Colours, they were unsuccessful.

The Regimental Colour therefore only possessed an informal status until April 1934 when King's and Regimental Colours conformable to heraldic requirements were obtained and presented to the Regiment on parade in Winnipeg by the Right Honourable the Earl of Bessborough, Governor-General of Canada.

On proceeding on active service in December 1939 the King's and Regimental Colours were left in the custody of Lieut.-Colonel M. R. Ten Broeke MC at Fort Osborne Barracks. With the disbandment of the mobilization depot they were placed in storage for safe-keeping. In 1946 they were repossessed by Lieut.-Colonel C. B. Ware DSO, then commanding the newly-formed peacetime battalion.

In 1950, when Second Battalion was formed, First Battalion retained the Colours. In September 1953 the Colonel-in-Chief presented King's and Regimental Colours to Second Battalion. The Colours of the two battalions are identical save for the battalion designations "I" and "II". Second Battalion is authorized to carry the Kapyong Streamer, emblematic of the United States Presidential Citation, at the pike of its Regimental Colour.



COMMANDING OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT

1919 - 1957



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Brigadier)
A. HAMILTON GAULT DSO ED CD
(April 1st 1919 - January 19th 1920)

On the gazette of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry as an element of the Permanent Forces of Canada the Founder of the Regiment took temporary command until such time as the reorganization of the unit had been completed. On retirement on February 20th 1920 he became

Honorary Lieut.-Colonel of the Regiment. Thereafter he resided in England, where he represented the Taunton Division of Somerset in the House of Commons for eleven years (1924-1935). On June 10th 1940 he became Commandant of A Group, Canadian Reinforcement Units, at Whitley Camp—an appointment which he held until September 22nd 1942, when an accident led to his retirement. On December 17th 1948 he was appointed Honorary Colonel of the Regiment.



Lieut.-Colonel C. R. E. WILLETS DSO ADC
(January 20th 1920 - January 19th 1927)

Lieut.-Colonel Willets joined the Regiment after a distinguished career with the Royal Canadian Regiment. During the First World War he had commanded that Regiment, had been wounded in action and in addition to his decoration had been three times Mentioned in Dispatches. At

the end of his period of Regimental command he was appointed to the Canadian General Staff at Kingston. He died in 1931.



Lieut.-Colonel M. R. TEN BROEKE MC
(January 20th 1927 - January 19th 1932)

Lieut.-Colonel Ten Broeke enlisted in 23rd Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1914 and joined the Regiment in France in March 1915. He was commissioned in June 1916 and rose to the rank of Major before the end of the war. On reorganization of the Regiment as a unit in the Permanent Force he was accepted with the rank of major. At the termination of his period of command in 1932 he retired.

On the outbreak of the Second World War he volunteered and was appointed to the command of the Regimental Depot. In 1943, after holding a number of staff appointments, he resigned because of ill-health. He now lives on Salt Springs Island, British Columbia.



Lieut.-Colonel H. W. NIVEN DSO MC
(January 20th 1932 - February 15th 1937)

Lieut.-Colonel Niven was an original officer of the Regiment, having been commissioned before the First World War in the Middlesex Light Infantry of the Canadian Active Militia. During the Second Battle of Ypres he took over command of the Regiment as the senior surviving officer although still a subaltern. He rose to the rank of major during that war; in addition to his decorations he was three times Mentioned in Dispatches and was twice wounded in action.

He was accepted as a major in the Permanent Force when the Regiment was reorganized in 1919. On conclusion of his period of command he retired to Glasgow, where he now resides.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Brigadier)
W. G. COLQUHOUN CBE MC
(February 16th 1937 - September 14th 1940)

Brigadier Colquhoun was an original officer of the Regiment, having previously served in Canadian militia units. Although captured early in 1915 he was decorated, Mentioned in Dispatches and also was brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for War for attempts to escape.

On the reorganization of the Regiment in the Permanent Force he was accepted as a captain. He was promoted to major in 1932. He led the Regiment overseas in December 1939 and in September 1940 he was appointed to command 7th Canadian Brigade in 3rd Canadian Division. He afterwards commanded 13th Canadian Brigade. He retired in January 1946 and now lives in Victoria.



Lieut.-Colonel J. N. EDGAR MC
(September 15th 1940 - June 5th 1941)

Lieut.-Colonel Edgar joined the Regiment as a private on August 21st 1914. He was commissioned in June 1916 and rose to the rank of major. He was twice wounded; as a captain he commanded the Regiment in bitter fighting at Tilloy in September 1918. On reorganization of

the Regiment as a Permanent Force unit he was accepted as a captain. In February 1937 he was promoted to major and he proceeded overseas with the Regiment in 1939 as Second-in-Command. From May 1940 he commanded the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment until appointed to the command of the Patricias. In June 1941 he returned to Canada to take up a staff appointment. He retired in June 1945 and now lives in Victoria.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Major-General)
R. F. L. KELLER CBE
(June 6th 1941 - July 30th 1941)

Major-General Keller joined the Regiment in 1920 after graduation from Royal Military College. On the outbreak of war in 1939 he was a major serving on the General Staff. After his period of command of the Regiment he was given command of a brigade and afterwards was appointed to

command 3rd Canadian Division, which he led during the early weeks of the invasion of Northwestern Europe. He was wounded in August 1944 and thereafter returned to Canada.

He died in London in June 1955, after a visit to the Normandy beach-heads.



Lieut.-Colonel R. A. LINDSAY ED
(July 31st 1941 - August 9th 1943)

Lieut.-Colonel Lindsay joined the Regiment as a major in November 1939, coming from the South Alberta Regiment, with which he had served for several years. He took the Regiment ashore in Sicily and commanded it until the closing days of that campaign, when he was appointed to the

staff of the Allied Military Government in Occupied Territories. He retired in August 1946 and now lives in Great Britain.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Major-General)
C. VOKES CB CBE DSO CD
(October 7th 1941 - November 14th 1941)

Major-General Vokes had held various appointments in the Royal Canadian Engineers and on staff before coming to the Regiment. In November 1951 he was appointed GSO1 1st Canadian Division. He led 2nd Canadian Brigade ashore at the Sicilian and Calabrian landings. In November 1943 he took over command of 1st Canadian Division in Italy. He subsequently commanded 4th Canadian Armoured Division in North-western Europe. He now is GOC Western Command.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Brigadier)
C. B. WARE DSO CD
(August 11th 1943 - June 27th 1944,
January 4th 1946 - September 30th 1947)

Brigadier Ware joined the Regiment on graduation from Royal Military College in 1935. On the outbreak of war in 1939 he was serving on attachment to the British Army. He rejoined the Regiment in 1940 as a major and was appointed Second-in-Command in 1941. He led the Battalion in the invasion of Italy and in all operations up to the end of the battle of the Liri Valley in June 1944. On leaving the Regiment he was promoted to colonel and was given command of a training formation. In January 1946 he resumed command of the Regiment at Camp MacDonald. In September 1947 he proceeded to Staff College and thereafter received a senior staff appointment. On the outbreak of the Korean War he took command of the Canadian Military Mission to the Far East. In 1952 he was appointed Commandant of the Services College at Royal Roads. In 1955 he became Director-General of Military Training, an appointment which he now holds.



Lieut.-Colonel D. H. ROSSER OBE
(June 28th 1944 - September 16th 1944)

Lieut.-Colonel Rosser originally was commissioned in a Canadian militia unit. He came to the Patricias in November 1939 as a subaltern. In November 1941 he left the Regiment to serve in a number of staff appointments, from which he rejoined in May 1944 as Second-in-Command. Following his period of command he served on the General Staff until 1946. He now holds a British civil service appointment in London.



Lieut.-Colonel R. P. CLARK DSO
(September 12th 1944 - June 4th 1945)

Prior to the Second World War Lieut.-Colonel Clark had served in the British Columbia Regiment (Militia). He joined the Patricia's as a subaltern in October 1939. In December 1943 he became Second-in-Command. On assumption of command he led the Regiment throughout the autumn and winter campaign on the northern Adriatic in 1944/45 and also in the closing operations of the war in Holland. He subsequently took command of Royal Winnipeg Rifles. He retired in 1946 and now lives in Vancouver.



Lieut.-Colonel N. M. GEMMELL DSO
(October 1st 1947 - October 6th 1948)

Prior to the Second World War Lieut.-Colonel Gemmell served in the Active Militia. In the campaign in Northwestern Europe he commanded the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders. In addition to his decorations he received a Mention in Dispatches. On conclusion of his period of command of the Regiment he was appointed AA&QMG Fort Churchill. Since then he has served in a variety of commands and administrative appointments.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Brigadier)
D. C. CAMERON DSO ED
(October 7th 1948 - September 15th 1950)

During the Second World War Brigadier Cameron commanded the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. In addition to his decorations he was Mentioned in Dispatches. Before joining the Regiment he had been Commandant at Fort Churchill. For the period of August 14th - September 15th 1950 he held a dual command—of the Regiment and of First Battalion. He left to take command of the Royal School of Infantry and he afterwards served as Director of Infantry. He now commands 4th Canadian Brigade.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Colonel)
J. R. STONE DSO MC
(Second Battalion—August 14th 1950 -
October 4th 1953)

Colonel Stone came to the Regiment after retirement from the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, which he had commanded during the Second World War. He led Second Battalion throughout the Korean campaign, winning a second Bar to the Distinguished Service Order. After return from Korea he commanded the Canadian contingent at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. On leaving the Regiment he became Chief Instructor at the Royal Canadian School of Infantry and thereafter Provost Marshal, an appointment which he now holds.



Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Colonel)
N. G. WILSON-SMITH DSO MBE
(First Battalion—September 16th 1950 -
April 30th 1952)

Colonel Wilson-Smith originally served with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, being wounded in North-western Europe. He was awarded the MBE in that theatre of operations. Thereafter he held a series of commands and appointments before coming to First Battalion from the Directorate of Personnel, Adjutant General's Branch. His service in the Korean operations was terminated by his appointment as GSO1 1st Commonwealth Division. In 1955 he became Director of Infantry, an appointment he now holds.



Lieut.-Colonel G. C. CORBOULD DSO ED
(Third Battalion—November 30th 1950 -
March 15th 1951)

Lieut.-Colonel Corbould served in militia units prior to the Second World War. In the course of Italian and Northwestern Europe campaigns he rose to command of the Westminster (Motor) Regiment of 5th Canadian Division. He emerged from retirement to take command of Third Battalion on its inception and left on appointment as Commandant of 25th Brigade Reinforcement Group in Japan. In January 1952 he assumed command of 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment. He is now Deputy Commandant CJATC Rivers, Manitoba.



Lieut.-Colonel H. F. WOOD CD
(Third Battalion—March 19th 1951 -
May 4th 1953)

Lieut.-Colonel Wood served in the Second World War with the Irish Regiment of Canada. Thereafter he held a series of staff appointments. On formation of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade for service in Korea he was appointed Brigade Major. In January 1951 he came to Third Battalion as Second-in-Command and two months later he took over command. In April 1953 he was invalided from Korea. He is now serving in Army Headquarters.



Lieut.-Colonel M. F. MACLACHLAN OBE MC CD
(Third Battalion—May 16th 1953 -
January 8th 1954)

Lieut.-Colonel MacLachlan served during the Second World War with the Cape Breton Highlanders. He was twice wounded. In 1953, when appointed to the command of Third Battalion, he was serving as Second-in-Command of the First Canadian Highland Battalion in the NATO forces in Germany. He brought Third Battalion home from Korea and on its reduction to nil strength he was given command of 2nd Battalion The Canadian Guards. He is now serving on the Directing Staff of the Canadian Army Staff College.



Lieut.-Colonel J. R. CAMERON OBE
(First Battalion—May 1st 1952 - April 11th 1955)

Lieut.-Colonel Cameron held a series of commands and staff appointments during the Second World War. He took command of First Battalion in Korea after serving as Commandant of the 25th Brigade Reinforcement Group in Japan. After returning with the Battalion he continued in command until appointed to the Directorate of Military Operations and Plans at Army Headquarters—an appointment which he now holds.



Lieut.-Colonel T. DE FAYE MBE
(First Battalion—May 1955 -)

Lieut.-Colonel de Faye served during the Second World War with the Saskatoon Light Infantry. He afterwards held a number of commands and staff appointments. Previous to assuming command of First Battalion he was GS01 of the Directorate of Military Training. He commanded First Battalion during its tour of NATO duty in Germany and brought it home to Work Point Barracks, Victoria.



Lieut.-Colonel S. C. WATERS
(Second Battalion—October 5th 1953 -
August 7th 1957)

Lieut.-Colonel Waters enlisted in the ranks in 1941. On being commissioned and given parachute training he was posted to the Canadian-American Special Service Force, with which he served in the United States, the Aleutians, North Africa, Italy and Northwest Europe. For gallantry in action he was awarded the United States Silver Star. In 1945 he transferred to 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion. On return to Canada he held a variety of staff appointments which culminated in the command of Second Battalion. He is now stationed in Halifax as GS01 Eastern Command.



Lieut.-Colonel V. R. SCHJELDERUP DSO MC CD
(Second Battalion—December 2nd 1957 -)

Lieut.-Colonel Schjelderup was commissioned in 1941 and posted to 2nd Battalion The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Marys). He was wounded in France soon after the Normandy landings, rejoined his regiment a month later, was wounded again and captured. He escaped to Holland and reached the Allied lines in February 1945. He received a Bar to his Military Cross for exploits with the Dutch Resistance and the Distinguished Service Order for gallantry in operations on the Leopold Canal. On his return to Canada he served with the Patricias and afterwards in a series of staff appointments before assuming command of Second Battalion.

MAJOR H. G. MUNRO CD
(P.P.C.L.I. Depot—May 12th 1953 -)



Major Munro joined the Regiment in August 1934 after seven years' service with Royal Canadian Dragoons. In December 1940, while serving as a company sergeant-major, he was one of the first wartime selections for a commission in the Regiment. After service in Sicily and Italy he returned to Canada in 1944 as an instructor and thereafter held a series of Regimental and staff appointments before he was selected as the first commander of the Regimental Depot.