

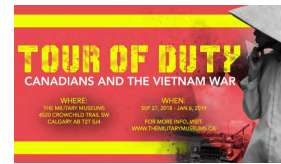
This Issue's
Theme:
Upholding
Tradition



100 YEARS
BATTLE HONOURS:
SIBERIA, 1918 -1919



25 YEARS
THE PPCLI AND MEDAK
POCKET



UPCOMING EXHIBITION
CANADIANS IN VIETNAM

THE GAULT PRESS

The Official Newsletter of the PPCLI Museum & Archives



"Remember tradition does not mean that you never do anything new, but that you will never fall below the standard of courage and conduct handed down to you. Then tradition, far from being handcuffs to cramp your action, will be a handrail to guide and steady you in the rough places."

~ Field Marshal Sir William Slim

Letter From the Editor

By: J. Neven-Pugh

I am a civilian. This means that I have never experienced combat, existed as part of a disciplined hierarchy, or held a live weapon. Neither have I been a part of a collective group outside of grade school, having little identity other than that which I have created as an individual.

Thus, writing about a regiment without an experience within, nor even connection to, can be very difficult. To put it frankly, there is always a fear of promoting ignorance; of either expressing something inaccurately or explicitly mixing up the facts. This is in part due to the need to sort out pop-cultural teachings and historical facts through a civilian point of view. In regards to this newsletter, *Volume 1, Issue 2: Upholding Tradition* presented the unique challenge of working with a theme related to the intangible; i.e., that which is unseen but contributes to creating a community's culture and heritage.

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "intangible heritage [includes]: the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith — that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, *transmitted from generation to generation*, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity."¹ In essence, the word "intangible" represents practices and traditions that define a culture.

But how do you discuss and edit this subject when you have no experience with it? How do you pin point the sentiments of a community's members; their traditional values which are still upheld, and those

~ September 1993 ~
Medak Pocket



Conflict: Croatian-Serbian Conflict

Where: former Yugoslavia

Significance: Incident during UN Peacekeeping tour where 2PPCLI members faced Croatian troops while attempting to stop "ethnic cleansing" of Serbian civilians. Awarded the Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for professionalism in the line of duty.

Names of Note: Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Calvin, Major Drew

newly created? Placing the intangible into words can be difficult at the best of times. How do you manage this without any context?

In my case, you approach the source. Challenges arise here as well. Simply put, asking 100 Patricias will garner 100 different answers. I simply asked three, but nevertheless gained unique replies. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry has a century-long history to be proud of. The first in the field in the First World War, they have maintained their reputation as a formidable, loyal, and professional force throughout the decades, constantly setting the bar higher with each new deployment. As stated by one Patricia, "the soldiers [of] today will be looked upon as setting a new bar too . . . [bringing] forth what was started by others, [striving] to maintain what feats they have done, and in so, [perpetuating] what has gone on before," while adapting to new situations and current needs.

Most importantly, he emphasized the need to uphold these values in honour of those who came before.

"The traditions we hold were created by brothers, but from earlier times. To forget those traditions is tantamount to faltering, letting 'them' down. Their hardships help us understand and deal with our own tough situations. They guide our actions in whatever we encounter in the present and will do so in the future."

Whether striving for excellence, maintaining calm and professionalism in the face of crises, or remaining loyal to those whom you know or who have come before, I hope you appreciate the lessons to be found in this edition of *The Gault Press*.

Sincerely,
The Editor

Last Quarter We Asked...

What Would You Do...?

An officer in the Machine Gun Corps at the Battle of Passchendaele, you are leading your men when you see a band of PPCLI soldiers struggling in the wake of enemy fire from a German pillbox. Do you...

- a) Remain with your men and carry on; there's nothing you can do
- b) Remain with your men but send word for reinforcements
- c) Hand over command to an NCO and lead a raid on the pill box
- d) Order an NCO to lead a raid and save the Infantry company

Answer:

c) Hand over command to an NCO and lead a raid on the pill box

See Page 8 to learn about the Victoria Cross Recipient who helped his former Regiment at the Battle of Passchendaele



Medak Pocket

By: Ms. Paula

In the late summer '93, Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Calvin, commanding 2PPCLI, arrived in the Medak Pocket of the Croatian region. While creating a buffer zone (also known as the demilitarized buffer zone) between the Serbian civilians and the Croatian troops, 2nd Battalion patrols were regularly fired on.

On 9 September 1993, Croatian troops launched an all-out attack on the Medak Pocket. Many times the Croatian troops attempted to remove or "cleanse" the Serbian population from the Medak Pocket area.

The day before the "The Medak Pocket Agreement" was to go into effect, Lieutenant-Colonel Calvin reviewed the operation plans with his subordinate officers and NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers). The operation was to go in four phases starting on September 15th. The four phases of this operation were:

Phase 1 — To occupy the Serbian frontlines.

Phase 2 — Establish a crossing point in the "No-Man's Land" on the main road that runs the length of the valley between the opposing armies.

Phase 3 — To secure the crossing point as well as to occupy the Croatian forward positions.

And, *Phase 4* — To make sure that the Croatians withdrew from their pre-September 9th positions as well as to completely separate the opposing forces and the new demilitarized zone (DMZ) established.

Unfortunately, implementing this new agreement did not go as planned. September 15th was the day that the PPCLI held their ground against a Croatian assault. The Croatians launched the assault by using mortars and heavy machine gun fire. Some of the PPCLI positions were under constant fire for 12 hours straight. When a ceasefire was brokered by the United Nations, the Croatians backed off of PPCLI positions.

In the morning hours of 16 September, members of the 2nd Battalion woke up and saw a horrifying sight. They could see smoke rising from several villages and heard explosions as well as occasional bursts of automatic rifle fire on the Croatian side. It became all too clear why the Croatians resisted the Patricia's advance. They were giving the Croatian Special Police the time they needed to finish their ethnic "cleansing" of the villages. The members of the 2nd Battalion couldn't do a thing except listen helplessly to the shooting and explosions in the villages. When the Croatian Special

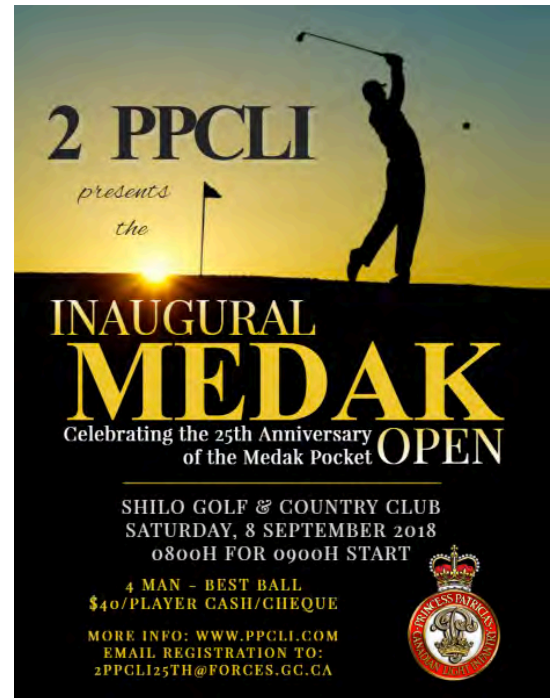


Police left, Lieutenant-Colonel Calvin sent out patrols to search for any evidence of war crimes and to try to stop any further atrocities the Croatian troops were suspect of doing against the Serbian civilians.

Not long after 2PPCLI convoy left, under the command of Major Drew, they found themselves unable to enter the buffer zone in the Medak Pocket because of obstacles that the Croatian troops had created. The Croatian troops were protected by a minefield as well as a T-72 main battle tank on the left, and two towed anti-tank guns including a bank of Sagger missiles on the right. All were pointed at the Patricias. The Senior Croatian officer Brigadier General Mezic, the senior liaison officer to local Croat Operational Zone Commander General Ademi, absolutely refused to allow the convoy to pass. All weapons from the Croatian troops and the Patricias were ready to engage. Throughout this very tense standoff, which lasted for over an hour, these highly trained and disciplined Patricias maintained their cool as the Croatian troops grew increasingly uneasy.

When Lieutenant-Colonel Calvin arrived on the scene, he had a very heated argument with the ranking Croatian officer Brigadier General Mezic. Mezic was using this as a stall tactic which was allowing the Croatian Special Police the time they needed to erase evidence of the ethnic cleansing. Finally Lieutenant-Colonel Calvin had enough. He went before 20 international journalists and media crew, making sure the camera crews were filming the Croatians' very obvious interference with United Nations efforts to make peace, and told them what the Croatian Police were doing on the other side of the buffer zone. When Lieutenant-Colonel Calvin finished with the journalists and media crew, the Croatians troops cleared the roadblock and the 2PPCLI convoy continued on that they could reach the villages before the evidence could be erased. The standoff had wasted precious time as evidence was being destroyed.

The Patricias did in fact find evidence that ethnic cleansing had occurred. 2PPCLI was awarded the Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for their courage and professionalism in carrying out their duties in the former Yugoslavia. Their actions were noted as having been under extreme peril, facing enemy artillery, heavy machine gun and small arms fire, as well as anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, and holding their ground while driving the Croatian troops back. The members of the 2nd Battalion PPCLI were presented this commendation award in Manitoba, 1 December 2002.



Battle Honours: Siberia, 1918 - 1919

By: Myrna Adamec

260th Battallion. CEF



Organized: 1 November 1918 (G.O. 128/1918)

Service: Component of the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force.

Strength: 42 Officers and 984 Other Ranks, 520 of which were drafted under the Military Act of 1917.

Disbanded: 15 November 1920 (G.O. 215/1920)

Perpetuated by: Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry



"A Machine Gun Officer, Siberia"
by Colonel Louis Keen

The 260th Battalion, Canadian Rifles, Canadian Expeditionary Forces (Siberia) was formed on 1 November 1918 in Victoria B.C. They, along with the 259th, were named the "Canadian Rifles" to indicate they were not regional in composition and their sphere of influence was not the Western Front in the war. The force embarked for Russia on 29 December 1918 on the SS *Protesliaus* at Gordon Head, arriving in Vladivostok 15 January 1919. They served with the 16th Infantry Brigade in eastern Russia. It was disbanded on 15 November 1920. In 1997 the PPCLI agreed to perpetuate the 260th Battalion and become official safe-keeper of the Battalion's heritage. The PPCLI now carry the Battle Honour Siberia 1918-1919.²

The British commander was Canadian General James Hemsley. Despite the Treaty of Brest-Livstok (between Russia and the Central Powers, in which they agreed to cease hostilities) the Germans continued to press on in the Eastern front and posed a threat to vast amounts of Allied material stockpiled at Archangel and Murmansk in the north and Vladivostok in the east.

The British Secretary of State for the Colonies sent a telegram to the Duke of Devonshire, the Governor General of Canada, laying out the requirements for the Canadian contingent.³

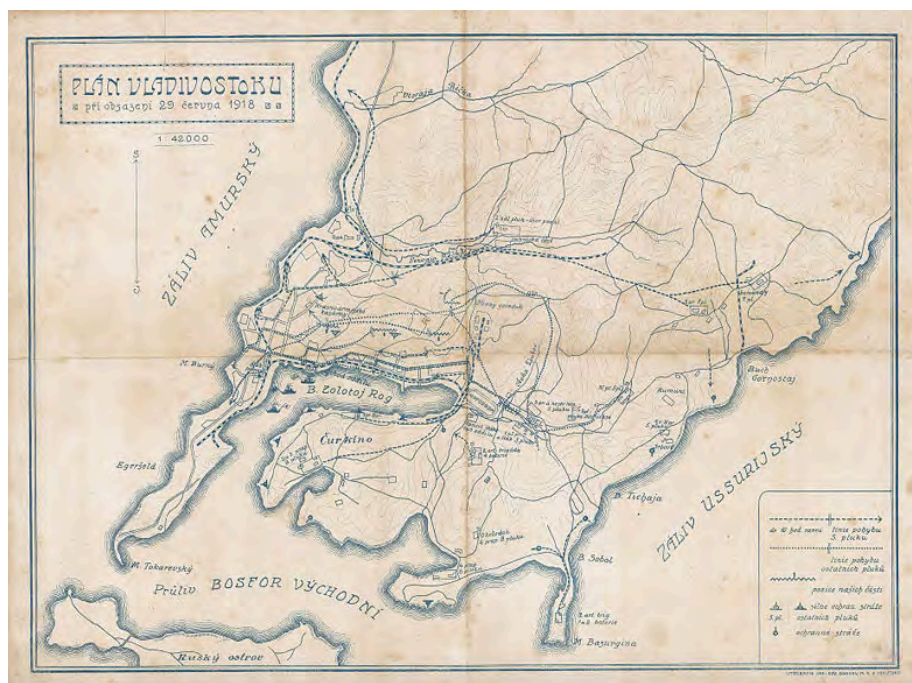
Conscripts enrolled under the Military Service Act had to be employed to make up the total complement of the force. The majority of the brigade consisted of two Infantry battalions, the 259th Canadian Rifles and the 260th Canadian Rifles, two batteries of Artillery, a machine gun company, and a squadron of Cavalry drawn from the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. The 260th Battalion was drawn from the other provinces; one company from Atlantic Canada, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, and was commanded by LCol F. C. Jamieson.⁴ According to a handwritten nominal roll in PPCLI Archives, there were 56 Patricias in this contingent.

On 12 April 1919, Bolsheviks surrounded the village where Russian troops were holding prisoners. It was feared that the Bolsheviks would capture the whole village and endanger the mine in the vicinity. The Japanese commander called for an Allied force to rescue the Russians in the village, but the Americans refused to take part.⁵ The Canadians sent a company from the 259th Battalion to be part of the rescue force.⁶

However, when they arrived at the village on 19 April, the Bolsheviks had already dispersed, and the force returned to Vladivostok two days later without having fired a shot.

The only positive outcome for the Canadians from this operation was the Japanese gift of 96 bottles of wine, 18 bottles of whisky, and 3 casks of sake, in grateful acknowledgement of the efforts of the Canadian troops.⁷

Consolidating all of the information, a time-line of events can be constructed. For additional details, please refer to the on-line Siberia War Diary Collection at Library and Archives Canada. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/search/Pages/search.aspx>



Vladivostok, June 1918; wikimedia

“Tip of the Spear” Person Highlight: Lieutenant Hugh McDonald McKenzie, VC



Name: Hugh McDonald McKenzie

Rank: Lieutenant

Regimental Number: 1158

Service: First World War: PPCLI Private; Lieutenant with the Canadian Machine Gun Corps

Significance to the PPCLI: Launched an assault on a German Pill box during the battle of Passchendaele after witnessing the casualties sustained by members of PPCLI.

Profession Before WWI: Teamster

Honours and Awards: Victoria Cross (Machine Gun Corps, 13.2.18 posthumously), Distinguished Conduct Medal (PPCLI, 14.1.16), Croix de Guerre (PPCLI, 24.2.16)

Born: 5 December 1885, Inverness, Scotland

Died: 30 October 1917, Passchendaele, Belgium

Interred: Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium, Panel 32

Extract from the “London Gazette”, 12 February 1918:

“ [Awarded the Victoria Cross] For most conspicuous bravery and leading when in charge of a section of four machine guns accompanying the infantry in an attack. Seeing that all the officers and most of the non-commissioned officers of an infantry company had become casualties, and that the men were hesitating before a nest of enemy machine guns, which were on commanding ground and causing them severe casualties, he handed over command of his guns to an N.C.O., rallied the infantry, organised an attack, and captured the strong point. Finding that the position was swept by machine-gun fire from a 'pill-box' which dominated all the ground over which the troops were advancing, Lt. McKenzie made a reconnaissance and detailed flanking and frontal attacking parties which captured the 'pill-box', he himself being killed while leading the frontal attack. By his valour and leadership this gallant officer ensured the capture of these strong points and so saved the lives of many men and enabled the objectives to be attained.”



Tour of Duty: Canadians and the Vietnam War — A Special Exhibition in the Founders Gallery

By J. Neven-Pugh

Beginning this autumn, visitors to The Military Museums of Calgary will have the chance to see an exhibition highlighting an under-recognized period in Canadian history.

“Tour of Duty: Canadians and the Vietnam War” tells the story of the war from multiple perspectives, discussing the Americans, South Vietnamese, and Canadians who served there.

It may surprise many to learn that Canada was involved in the Vietnam War; attention is usually focused on the US, with stress being placed on both the conflict in the field and on the home front, protests spiralling out of control as the war carried on throughout the 1960’s and early ’70’s. However, around 40,000 Canadians volunteered to serve in the US Army during this conflict; this is in comparison to the roughly 30,000 Americans who refused duty (commonly known as Draft Dodgers). In addition, Canadian Peacekeepers were deployed with the Canadian Forces after both armistices in 1954 and 1973 respectively.

Rory Cory, project manager and lead curator for the exhibit, as well as the senior curator for TMM, says that now is a pivotal time for telling these stories.

“Veterans of the conflict are aging and already starting to pass away. Since we started this project actively, we’ve already lost two veterans,” he reflected recently, “We wanted to ensure that we bring their stories to light and try to achieve a measure of proper recognition for them before it’s too late.”

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of two of the most well-known points on the Vietnam War timeline – the Tet Offensive and the battle of Khe Sanh. In addition, thanks to a detailed series by PBS, public interest in the war has peaked since last year. With a team of several volunteers actively assisting with development, including Ken Raychert, Bob MacDuff and James Baldwin, Cory has been working on the exhibit for just over ten years, stating that he began to work “more in earnest” four years ago.

Throughout this time, he says, the exhibit has evolved.

“The exhibit has grown organically as we’ve worked with the various veterans’ groups and as word has spread about the project. We were worried initially that we wouldn’t have enough artefacts to mount it. Now we have enough to almost fill the entire gallery.”

Alongside more than 150 tangible items, an exhibit of protest posters of the time period will be on display, curated by the University of Calgary. In addition, there will also be a half scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of Washington, D.C., called “The Moving Wall”, which has the names of all those killed in Vietnam on it, including some Canadians. The wall will be on display in the open field onsite from October 6 - 14.

In the end, though, the intangible will be the main focus, the curator stressing the importance of preserving memory and fostering new understanding.

“We hope people will come to appreciate this group of veterans better, that the veterans themselves will feel more valued, that people will understand Canada’s role in the conflict better, and that generally there will be some healing, understanding, and historical perspective on a conflict that has been misunderstood and a group of veterans who served honourably but have even been reviled for their efforts. Hopefully this is possible after several decades.”

The exhibit will open 27 September 2018 and run until 6 January 2019 in the Founders Gallery. Please note that photography will not be permitted. Admission is included in The Military Museums’s general admission, with the Gallery open daily 9:00 - 17:00.



“In the Field” Weapon’s Feature: Lewis Light Machine Gun (Air Cooled)

Summary: The Lewis Light Machine Gun was the main light machine gun of Commonwealth Forces in the First World War.

CALIBER: .303 British

SYSTEM OF OPERATION: Gas, automatic fire only

WEIGHT: 27 lbs

OVERALL LENGTH: 50.5 Inches

BARREL LENGTH: 26.04 Inches

FEED DEVICE: 47 Round Drum/97 Round Drum for Aircraft Use

SIGHTS: Front: Barley Corn

Rear: Leaf w/aperture

MUZZLE VELOCITY: 2440 f.p.s

CYCLIC RATE OF FIRE: 500 r.p.m.

MAXIMUM EFFECTIVE RANGE: 880 Yards (800 Meters)

MAXIMUM RANGE: 3,500 Yards (3,200 Meters)



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Phone: (780)973-4011 ext 5454.

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The PPCLI Museum & Archives is always looking for highly motivated volunteers. Please contact Jennifer Brookman, The Military Museums Volunteer Coordinator at jennifer@themilitarymuseums.ca to join our team. If you are looking to find out more about the PPCLI and its history, please don't hesitate to contact us directly at ppcli.museumgm@gmail.com.

Thank you again for your passion and support of the PPCLI Museum & Archives, we look forward to your visit.

Contributors:

Myrna Adamec, TMM Senior Curator Rory Cory, Sergeant Nate Blackmore, Jim Bowman, Regimental Major Slade Lerch, James Morgan, Corporal Andrew Mullett, J. Neven-Pugh, Ms. Paula, Chris Schlotterbeck

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Tip of the Spear Highlight

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