



The Glen

The Newsletter of the Calgary Highlanders Regimental Association



Editor's Page

Denis A. Mascardelli

This issue of The Glen marks the end of the garrison portion of the 2014-2015 Training Year and the beginning of summer,

which, if Environment Canada is to be believed, will be warm and dry. However, regardless of what the weather might be, and wherever you are reading this, please accept our best wishes for the summer months.

Those following our coverage of the 10th Battalion's exploits during the First World War might remember that our last issue ended with the Battalion preparing for the assault on Vimy Ridge. This issue takes a bit of a detour, temporarily leaving the Tenth to instead present a broad overview of the Canadian Corp's historic victory at Vimy Ridge. This is necessary to provide context for the Tenth's role in the battle, which will be recounted in the Glen's fall issue.

The big story for the Calgary Highlanders during the past several months has no doubt been the Battlefield Tour (17 April-1 May) which included stops in England, France, Belgium and Holland. One of these, a dinner at the location of the Fighting Tenth's night attack on Kitcheners Wood, is recounted in an article by LCol Vernon.

Colonel Vernon informs us that the battlefield tour video he shot captures the sights and sounds of the main ceremonial events in April: the St. Julien ceremony, Kitcheners Wood,

Ypres' Menin Gate, Vimy Ridge, Villers-les-Cagincourt, and the *sous-terrain* tour near Vimy.

His intent is to upload each segment to the internet and provide a DVD of the entire video to all donors and participants. The video editing should be completed in September, with DVD distribution to follow.

The entire video will then be screened in the theatre at Calgary's Military Museums during Remembrance Week in November. Details to follow.

This issue of the Glen is also filled with photos and other articles including the award of France's Legion of Honour to Sgt (Ret'd) Percy DeWolf and a piece by George Petrolekas questioning the efficacy of the West's current strategy against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. We trust you'll find lots to interest you.

Enjoy your summer.

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A Message From the Command Team

LCol Kyle Clapperton and CWO Chris Tucker

It's been a great year to be a Calgary Highlander, with commemorations and opportunities to reflect on the legacy of Calgary's Infantry Regiment. In April we commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of St. Julien and the counter-attack at Kitcheners Wood- arguably the most defining moment in our regimental history.

For many, the highlight of the St. Julien centennial celebrations was the battlefield tour, brilliantly organized by Major Peter Boyle and CWO Emmett Kelly. A trip of a life-time, there were numerous memorable experiences beginning with the parade at the Canadian Memorial in Green Park and meeting the Colonel-in-Chief, HM Queen Elizabeth II, at Canada House. Likewise, retracing the advance of the 10th and 16th Battalions CEF during for the counter-attack at Kitcheners Wood, and standing on that sacred ground 100 years to the minute after the attack was launched while the Pipes and Drums played Highland Cathedral and Amazing Grace, has given "the Glorious Memories of the 22nd of April, 1915" renewed and visceral meaning. The rest of the trip was no less memorable and the impact of the public duties, military study and the genuine hospitality experienced, especially from the communities of St Julien and Villers-lès-Cagnicourt, will be memories we will keep for a life-time.



Despite all the ceremonial activities of the past year, we still maintain our raison d'etre- training highly capable reserve infantry soldiers who can shoot, move and communicate and contribute at home or abroad when Canada calls. This year's training will culminate with EX GRIZZLY DEFENDER 15, 15-23 August, which will be the training event of

the year, challenging our soldiers and validating their ability to fight and operate in a collective environment. Current serving members of the Regiment need to be on this exercise, and once again soldiers from the 1-161 Infantry Regiment, Washington Army National Guard will be training shoulder to shoulder with us. The upcoming training year will continue to be challenging, beginning with a focus on soldier fundamentals - covering infantry weapon systems, pairs and group live-fire and movement and a Close Quarter Combat Basic (CQCB) course. In March we will transition into a collective training phase with a focus on defensive and stability operations that will again culminate in the summer training event to validate our capabilities.

Enjoy the summer and time with family and friends. Good luck on your courses and summer tasks. We will see you in the field on EX GRIZZLY DEFENDER 15.

... **AIRAGHARDT!**

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Photos from all eras of the unit's history are welcome and may be sent to our email address (above) or in the case of prints, to The Calgary Highlanders Regimental Association, Mewata Armoury, 801-11th St SW, Calgary AB, T2P 2C4. Prints will be scanned and returned upon request. Photos should be accompanied by a note explaining who or what the image captures and when and where it was taken.

Letters and articles are encouraged and, if published, may be edited for content and length.

Sgt. Percy DeWolfe Appointed to Legion of Honour



On the 19th of April Sergeant (Retired) Percy DeWolf was appointed as a "Knight of the Legion of Honour" in a ceremony held at the Royal Canadian Legion in Qualicum Beach, BC.

The Legion of Honour is the highest honour conferred by the Government of France. It was created by Napoleon in 1802 to recognize extraordinary civil achievement in peace time or extraordinary military bravery and service in times of war. Since 2014 France has expressed its desire to pay special tribute to those surviving Canadians who took part in military operations to liberate France from Nazi occupation by appointing them to the Legion.

Percy enlisted in Vancouver, BC on the 4th of March 1943.

Although he wished to serve as either an air gunner in the RCAF or Army paratrooper, he found himself in the infantry. After training in Canada he was ferried to Aldershot, England, where he was given a choice of infantry regiments to join. Percy chose the Calgary Highlanders because his good friend John McKenzie was a Highlander.

In the early afternoon of 6 July 1944, one month after the historic D-Day landings, Percy landed in Normandy, one of 817 members of the regiment. On 19 and 20 July the Highlanders went into battle as part of the drive to take the city of Caen, beginning a period of intense combat that didn't end until Germany surrendered on 8 May 1945. During 10 months of fighting through France, Holland, and into Germany, the Highlanders suffered 403 killed in action and 1,354 wounded, the highest casualties of any Canadian Infantry Battalion in North West Europe 1944-1945.

Percy was wounded on 2 August 1944 during the Highlanders attacks on the heavily fortified village of Tilly-la-Campagne. He returned to the Unit only to be wounded once again on 8 September as 5 Brigade advanced on the heavily-defended port of Dunkirk.

After recuperating in a military hospital Percy once again rejoined the Highlanders. In Holland he sustained a chronic back injury when he entered a barn occupied by the enemy, who opened fire and threw grenades which caused the building to collapse.

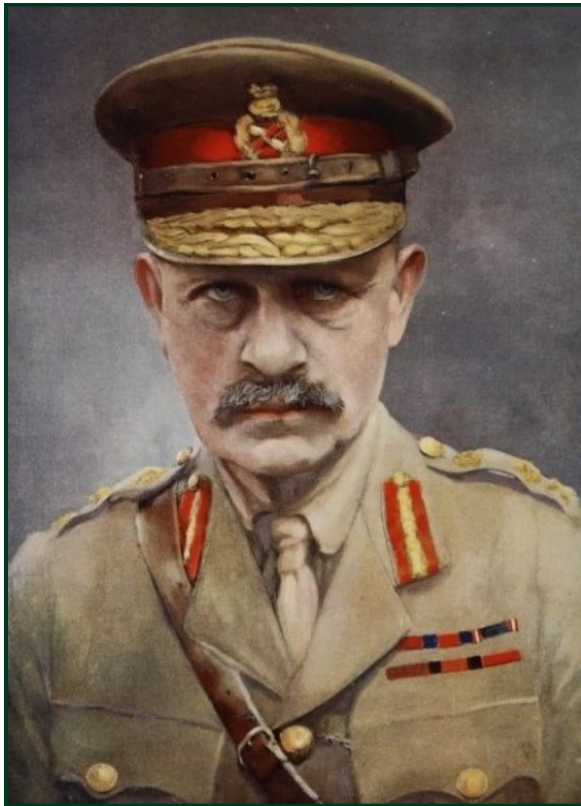
At the war's end Percy returned to Vancouver where he was discharged on the 10th of January, 1946. He became a plumber and worked in Vancouver, Kemano, Kitimat and Whitehorse before retiring to Qualicum Beach in 1976.

Percy will celebrate his 100th birthday this November. 🍁

Vimy Ridge: The Best of Times, The Worst of Times

By Denis Mascardelli

It is impossible to cover every detail of the Canadian Corp's now almost legendary capture of Vimy Ridge in April 1917 within the constraints of the relatively short articles presented in the Glen. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this article - which can only give a broad overview - will provide some context to the 10th Battalion's contribution to the historic victory, which will be covered in the next edition of the Glen.



Allposters.com

Lt Gen Sir Julian Byng, the British commander of the Canadian Corps, June 1916-June 1917. Well liked by his troops, he played a pivotal role in the development of the Corps into a deadly fighting force. He served as Governor General of Canada 1921-1926 and the NHL's Lady Byng Trophy is a gift from his wife, an ardent hockey fan.

Even after the enormous casualties of 1916 at Verdun and the Somme the Allies hadn't given up the goal of achieving a major breakthrough of the German defences that would restore mobility to warfare and, it was confidently asserted, quickly lead to a decisive victory. The Somme campaign had originally been intended to achieve this, but was frustrated when the Germans attacked first at Verdun, forcing

the French to withdraw much of their forces and redirect them to that battle.

By late 1916 the new French commander-in-chief, General Nivelle, planned a massive French assault involving 54 divisions supported by 5,300 guns intended to smash through the German defences in the Aisne sector. In January 1917 he persuaded David Lloyd George - the new British Prime Minister since the resignation of H. H. Asquith in December 1916 - that if the British launched a huge diversionary assault farther to the north to draw German soldiers away from the Aisne region, then the war-winning French offensive must succeed. It was agreed that the French assault would begin in mid-April and the British would make their diversionary attack in the Arras sector, approximately 70 kms to the north, a week earlier. The objective of the Canadian Corps, as set by the commanders of the British Expeditionary Force, was to capture Vimy Ridge - the German-held high ground along an escarpment at the northern end of the Arras offensive.

The ridge lies 8 kms (5 miles) northeast of Arras on the western edge of the Douai Plain. It rises gradually on its west side - the side which faced the Canadian Corps - and drops more quickly on the east side. It is approximately 7 kms (4 miles) in length and rises to 60m (200 feet) above the plain. It had been captured by the Germans soon after the war's outbreak in 1914 and they had successfully turned it into a gigantic fortress by taking advantage of its soft chalky bedrock

which was ideal for excavating. Its defenders had defeated three previous Allied attempts to capture it while inflicting perhaps as many as 150,000 casualties on the attackers. General Neville considered it impregnable and advised the British to exclude it as part of the Arras offensive but did not press the matter.

Vimy's chalky bedrock also lent itself to tunneling and 'mining', where tunnels were dug beneath enemy positions, packed with explosives and detonated. This practice had been aggressively pursued by the Germans against the French and, after the British took over the sector in February 1916, by both sides. The underground war of mining and counter-mining meant that by 1917 no fewer than 19 distinct crater groups existed along the Vimy front. Because of their size, depth and steep sides these craters were serious obstacles as any soldier who entered one would find escape difficult.

The British High Command recognized the enormity of the task given to the Canadian Corps and allocated resources accordingly, including dedicated aerial reconnaissance squadrons and observation balloon units, engineer, labour and infantry units, and a great deal of additional artillery so that the Corps could deploy almost a thousand tubes ranging from 18 pounder field guns to giant siege artillery. To feed the guns, 1.6 million rounds of artillery and mortar ammunition were allocated to the attack, including the new instantaneous 106 fuse which, though in limited availability, was very effective in demolishing barbed wire entanglements.

Unlike the Somme, when infantry battalions were usually down to 600 or 700 men even before an attack, the battalions of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Divisions now averaged about 1,100 men and those of the 4th Division about

...the Canadian plans called for an extremely violent assault - what today would be called 'shock and awe'

1,000. Each division also had an extra (thirteenth) battalion. The total strength of the Canadian Corps was 97,184, of whom 56,494 were front line infantry, supplemented by another 11,554 infantry from the British 5th Division. The logistical skill and effort required to keep this force in the field was staggering, particularly in an era when motorized transport was in its infancy and much of the material had to be moved by horse-drawn wagons.

Of equal, or perhaps even greater importance than the physical resources available to the Corps, was the war-fighting transformation that the Canadian soldiers had undergone since the Somme (see accompanying article,

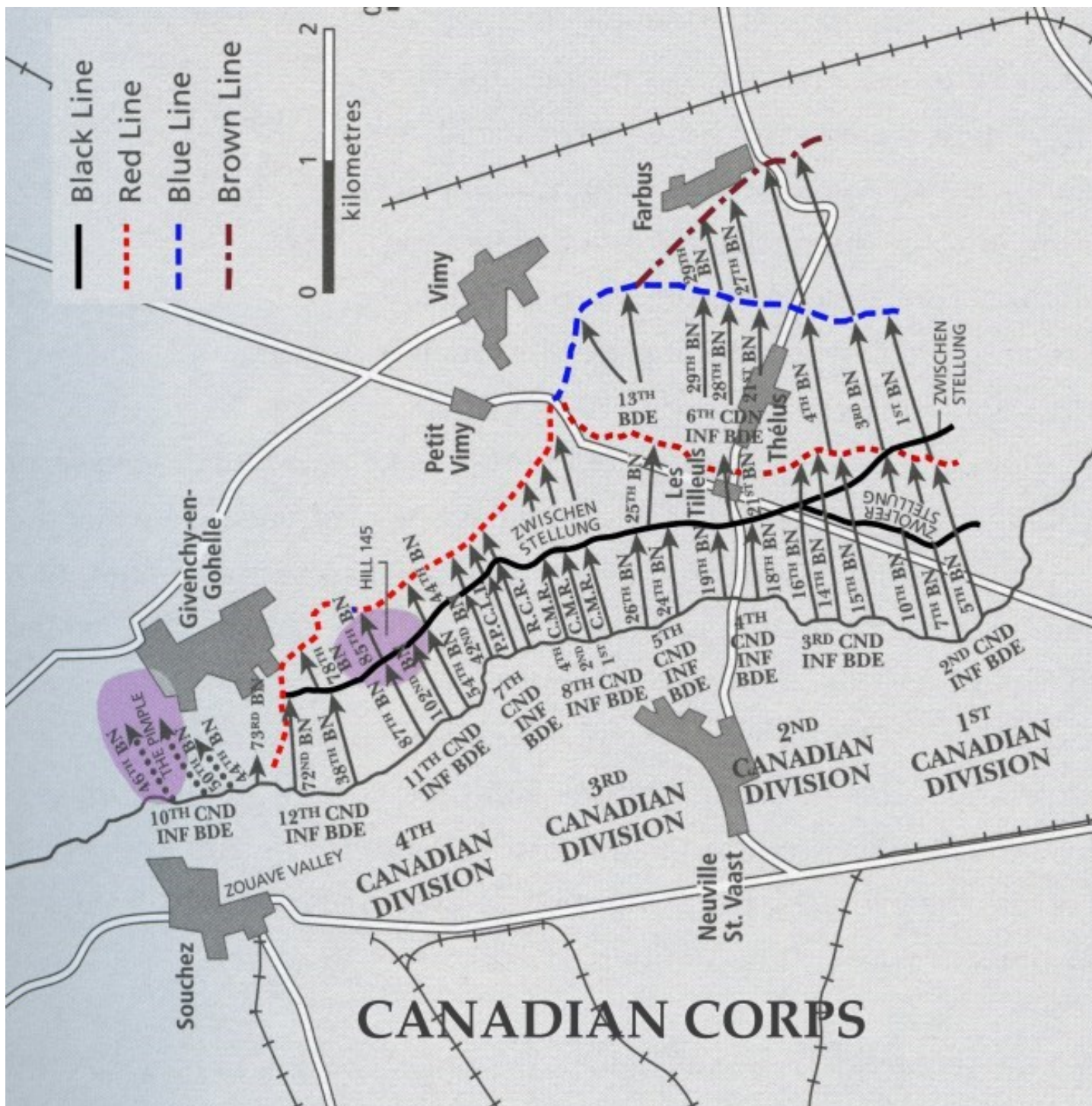
Transformation of an Army):

the artillery was now versed in scientific principles and had introduced the creeping barrage and effective counter-battery measures; while in the infantry, junior officers and senior NCOs were given more responsibility and initiative and the platoon - now recognized as the most important tactical unit in an infantry

battalion - had been reorganized to increase its combat power.

Vimy Ridge, while a formidable fortress held by three German Divisions (though these divisions were smaller than their Canadian counterparts) was narrow and could not be defended in depth. The Germans were confident - based on experience - that it could hold out for days against any conceivable assault, long enough to bring several divisions of counter-attacking forces forward from their rest positions more than 20 kms to the rear. In order to prevent this the Canadian plans called for an extremely violent assault - what today would be called 'shock and awe' - that would overwhelm the defenders before counter-attacking forces could arrive in large numbers.

The overall plan for the attack was relatively straightforward in concept though not in exe-



Tim Cook, Shock Troops

This map illustrates the Canadian attack on Vimy Ridge, 9-12 April 1917, including the four phase lines, Black, Red, Blue and Brown. The ridge is steepest and narrowest at the north, in the 4th Division's sector and more gentle, but wider at the south. The Corps Commander, Sir Julian Byng, did not believe that he had sufficient infantry to seize all objectives at once; 'The Pimple', at the extreme north end, was therefore not assaulted until the rest of the ridge had been captured.

cution. The ridge would be subjected to a massive and lengthy bombardment designed to force the Germans down into their deep 'bomb proof' shelters, smash their defensive

works, cut their wire, and silence much of their artillery. The assault, to be carried out simultaneously by all four Canadian Divisions (the only time this occurred during the war), would be supported by an elaborate fire plan

in which the advancing infantry would hug their creeping barrage which would advance at the rate of 100 yards every three minutes. While the field artillery laid down the creeping barrage, the heavier guns would direct their fire on strong points farther ahead.

To help ensure the assault's success British tunnelers laid 13 large explosive charges (mines) under the enemy positions, some to be detonated during the preliminary bombardment and others at the beginning of the assault.

If all went to plan the ridge would be taken in a matter of hours. Once it was firmly in Canadian hands the heavily-fortified 'Pimple', located at the ridge's extreme north end, would be seized. The Corps' four divisions were to be arrayed opposite the ridge in numerical order on a 7 km front with the veteran 1st Division - including the 10th Battalion - at the south end and 4th Division at the north.

The ridge is narrowest but steepest in the areas allocated to the 3rd and 4th Divisions and included Hill 145 (the highest point on the ridge) and 'The Pimple'. In contrast it is broader and less steep in front of the objectives given the 1st and 2nd Divisions. The result was that the 1st Division would have to cross 4,000 m to reach its objective at Farbus Wood while the 4th Division, farthest to the north, would have to cross less than a kilome-

tre but was faced with the most difficult terrain.

Four phase lines were established where the Canadians would pause in their attack to mop up any bypassed strongpoints and consolidate before pressing on: Black, Red, Blue and Brown, though the latter two only existed along the south half of the ridge opposite the 1st and 2nd Divisions.

The Black Line was to be captured thirty-five minutes after a 5:30 am zero hour. A pause of



George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum

In this striking nighttime photograph, a British 6-inch gun fires during the pre-assault bombardment. Almost 1,000 Allied guns and mortars pounded the ridge for three weeks prior to the assault.

forty-five minutes was then planned to allow the leading wave to consolidate on the objective and fresh units to pass through. The Red Line was to fall twenty minutes later. The assault would then again pause, this time for two hours and thirty minutes before beginning again at 9:35am on the 1st and 2nd

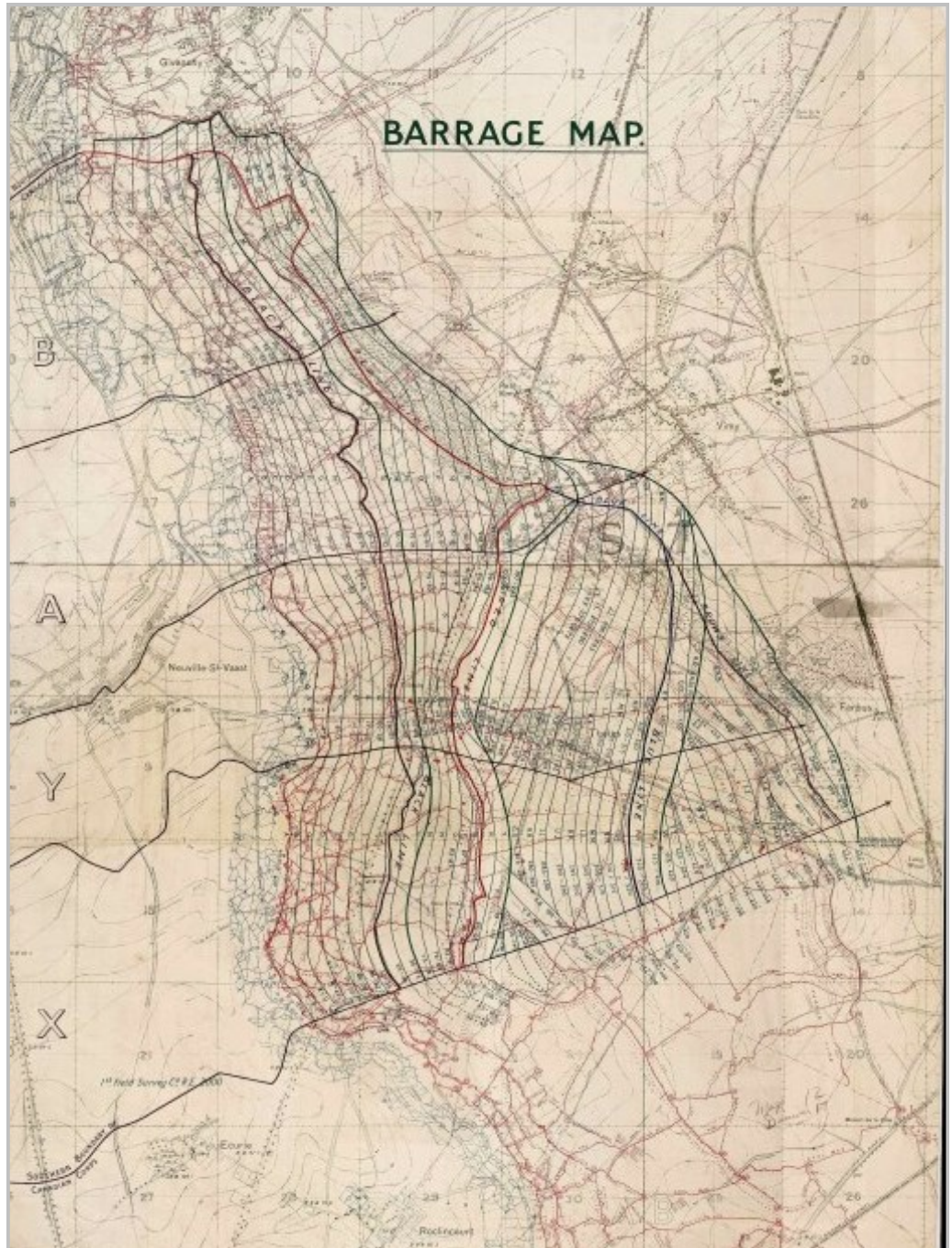
Divisions' fronts. The Blue Line was to be in Canadian hands seventy-five minutes later. Then, after a pause of ninety-six minutes, the final attack would begin at 12:26pm and the Brown Line would fall at 1:18pm, seven hours and forty-eight minutes after zero hour. Strong enemy counter-attacks were expected but they would have to be made up the ridge's steep eastern side in the teeth of a huge volume of artillery defensive fire and would find the Canadian infantry ready in newly-prepared positions.

The complexity of the attack depended upon strict adherence to set timings since once the fire plan began it could not be altered, as commanders could not communicate in a timely manner with either the gun batteries or the infantry. The entire operation would have to run like clockwork and for this to occur the infantry had to be put through meticulous rehearsals, which in turn required detailed knowledge of the enemy's fighting positions. For the artillery it meant determining the location of the German guns which were located in reverse slope positions.

Although patrols and raids had a role to play, the majority of the information needed for the Arras offensive, including Vimy Ridge, had to come from aerial reconnaissance, which precipitated an air battle which raged over the entire Arras front. The German flyers, including Baron Manfred von Richtofen (The Red Baron) and his Flying Circus, took a terrible toll on reconnaissance aircraft and April 1917 saw the life expectancy of a RFC pilot dip to eleven days. Despite this, the outnumbered Germans could not achieve air dominance and enough reconnaissance aircraft got through that very detailed mapping of the enemy's positions was made possible.

The infantry would be the key to victory and they rehearsed again and again using models and courses

built from aerial photographs to simulate the battlefield. General Currie of the 1st Division had a full size practice course constructed in which every known enemy position was represented. 40,000 maps were printed and distributed - an innovation without precedent - and every soldier understood what and where his



Wikipedia

Artillery barrage map for the April 9, 1917 Canadian attack on Vimy Ridge. Note the complexity of the scheduled lifts as the timed creeping barrage raked over the battlefield from west to east (left to right). A careful examination will reveal the four phase lines, Black, Red, Blue, and Brown.

objective was and the route to it. The practice sessions included the removal of key officers as 'casualties' so that junior leaders had to take over. Tim Cook comments in his book, *Shock Troops*, that, 'In short, into each man was drilled the dictum, "should your officers be knocked out, it up to you to improvise and fight forward"'.

A preliminary bombardment, never using more than half the available batteries at a time, began on March 20. For thirteen days the guns hammered the ridge with almost 350,000 shells, forcing the

enemy down into his dugouts while on the surface fortifications and wire entanglements were destroyed. Then, a week before the April 9 assault, the intensity dramatically increased: all batteries were now involved, firing 2,500 tons of ammunition every day. The bombardment's tempo

was deliberately varied, sometimes even stopping. Every time this happened the defenders were forced to rush out of their dugouts and man what remained of their fighting positions in case this signalled the beginning of an assault. Instead, the bombardment would suddenly begin again at a frantic intensity. The Germans referred to these seven days as 'the week of suffering'.

During the late hours of April 8 (Easter Sunday) the Canadian infantry - 21 battalions of the first wave - began moving into their assembly areas. As they did so, the weather, already cold and damp, continued to worsen. The men, expected to assault uphill through the mud and craters created by the lengthy barrage, were burdened with large loads of ammunition and the engineering material they'd need to consolidate on the captured

objectives. For instance, in the 10th Battalion each rifleman carried sixty-five pounds of equipment, bombers and rifle grenadiers carried seventy pounds, and Lewis gunners laboured under almost ninety pounds.

As the 5:30 am April 9 zero hour approached the gunners slowly reduced fire until the artillery fell silent. Then, precisely at 5:30 am all 983 guns and mortars began firing, the 18-pounder field artillery laying down the creeping barrage while the other guns fired on strongpoints and attempted to silence the



George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum
A German machine-gun emplacement of reinforced concrete on the crest of Vimy Ridge, and the Canadians who seized it.

identified German guns. At the same time 150 heavy machine guns opened up in an indirect fire role, laying down a hail of bullets 400 metres behind the creeping barrage. Seconds later engineers detonated three huge mines and two smaller charges beneath no man's land and the enemy's forward po-

sitions, and the infantry began to advance.

Many of the enemy had been killed or wounded during the three week barrage and all were short of food and water and exhausted from lack of sleep. Many were trapped in their dugouts as the Canadian infantry were upon them as soon as the creeping barrage lifted and moved on. But as the Americans were to discover in the Pacific War some twenty-five years later, no amount of artillery fire could destroy every fortification or break the will of the most determined defenders, and some artillery batteries survive even the most thorough counter-battery campaign.

Everywhere along the front entrenched pockets of resistance erupted, often fighting to the last man, and only overcome in the most savage hand-to-hand fighting. The weather gave some support to the advancing Canadians

since it blew sleet and snow in the defenders' faces, but the attacking infantry had to fight their way across a blasted landscape through deep gelatinous mud without cover. The German machine guns and snipers took a terrible toll amongst the attackers, but the well planned and executed Canadian attack proved irresistible and, despite heavy casualties, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Canadian Divisions took their objectives by day's end on the 9th.

Unfortunately the same could not be said for the 4th Division. It had the shortest but steepest objectives, dominated by Hill 145, where the enemy had constructed four defensive lines to ring the top of the hill, and deep dug-outs had been built into the reverse side of the ridge. It has been described as 'the citadel atop fortress Vimy', and was supported by enfilade fire from the Pimple. Ideally Hill 145 and the Pimple should have been attacked simultaneously, but Sir Julian Byng, the Canadian Corps Commander, didn't believe that he had sufficient troops to do so and so the Pimple was to be screened with smoke and poison gas. The 4th's initial attacks failed and it was the evening of the 10th before most of Hill 145 was captured in an unbelievable bayonet charge, though even then parts of the eastern slope remained in German hands. It wasn't until the following afternoon that the 4th Division could report that all of its objectives on Vimy Ridge had been taken.

At this stage the 4th could turn its attention to the heavily fortified Pimple, which the Germans had reinforced during the previous several days of combat; it fell to a co-ordinated, though costly, artillery and infantry attack on April 12, bringing the Battle of Vimy Ridge to a close.

The Canadian plan had anticipated strong enemy counter-attacks and while there were several, they were localized and relatively small. The German Sixth Army did in fact have several divisions available for counter-attack, but despite clear indications of an imminent Canadian attack, they had been held more



National Archives of Canada

Canadian troops celebrate their success (and survival) following the battle.

than 20 kms to the rear where they could be more easily billeted and were safe from long-range artillery fire. Although these divisions would take some time to organize themselves and get to the ridge if needed, the German commander, General Ludwig von Falkenhausen was not overly concerned, apparently reasoning that the forces on the ridge could hold their powerful fortress for days, time enough to move the counter-attacking forces forward. The speed with which the attack unfolded - most of the ridge was in Canadian hands by evening of the first day - completely defeated this strategy. It also brought von Falkenhausen's military career to an end: his failure to move his reserves farther forward prior to the attack saw him removed as commander of the Sixth Army and given the position of Governor of occupied Belgium.

Vimy Ridge had been a triumph for the Canadian Corps and marked the moment when it was recognized as no longer an organization of brave amateurs but a deadly professional force. The Canadians had succeeded against arguably the best Army in Europe and the world, and where previous Allied assaults had failed. Not surprisingly, the victory at Vimy Ridge soon came to symbolize Canada's coming of age as a nation.

The price of victory, though, was high: 3,598 killed and another 7,004 wounded during the four days of battle. 7,707 of these casualties had been taken on the battle's first day and April 9, 1917 was the bloodiest day in all Canadian military history.

In 1922 a grateful France granted Canada perpetual use of 100 hectares of land at Vimy Ridge for a battlefield memorial. The memorial - Canada's largest and principal overseas war memorial - took eleven years to build and was unveiled on July 26, 1936 by King Edward VIII before a crowd estimated at up to 100,000. It is located on Hill 145, the highest point along the ridge, and commemorates not only the battle but all Canadian soldiers killed during the First World War.

Unfortunately, while the Battle of Vimy Ridge was an undoubted success, the same cannot be said of the overall Allied offensive of which it was a part.

South of Vimy, the Battle of Arras began well and significant gains were made during the first two days before the German defences stiffened and the battle became another stalemate. The Arras operation was successful in drawing German troops away from the Aisne sector farther south where the massive and war-winning French breakthrough was to take place. However, these successes must be weighed against the almost 150,000 British casualties (not including the Canadian losses at Vimy) sustained between 9 April and 16 May.

The real failure of the Allied effort was the inability of the Nivelle offensive to achieve the decisive breakthrough promised in the Aisne sector. Although gains were made, the German defences

held and the French suffered as many as 187,000 casualties. The French soldiers had had enough of being used as cannon fodder and many units mutinied during May. Nivelle, who had promised so much and delivered so little, was replaced by Marshall Pétain whose first order of business was to restore order and rebuild his Army. He did this through both reforms which improved the welfare of French soldiers and by executing somewhere between 40 and 62 of the mutiny's ringleaders. He also decided that the French Army would not launch any 'decisive' offensives for a year. This would give the French the time they needed to rebuild while giving the Americans, who had finally declared war on Germany on April 6, the time they needed to raise, train and equip, and transport an army to France. In the meanwhile the Canadian Corps would have little rest as Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig, Commander of the British Expeditionary Force, believed that his armies would have to go on the offensive so that the Germans could not take advantage of the situation. A long road lay ahead for victors of Vimy. 🍁



thecanadasite.com

The Canadian memorial at Vimy Ridge, located at Hill 145, the ridge's highest point. It was unveiled in 1936, ironically only four years before the German Army would once again seize and occupy much of France.

Transformation of an Army

By Denis Mascardelli

During the winter of 1916-1917 the Canadian Corps began a process of transformation that saw it become perhaps the deadliest force on the European battlefield. The April 9-12 Battle of Vimy Ridge was the first test of the Corps' new war-fighting capability.

By late 1916 the battles of Verdun and the Somme had inflicted two million casualties on both sides and temporarily exhausted their armies. It was obvious to the leadership of the Canadian Corps that the war-fighting techniques of 1914-1916 were hopelessly inadequate to deal with the European battlefields of the industrial age, and to stubbornly persist in doing more of the same would only continue

what best practices could be borrowed from lessons learned by their British and French allies. Senior leadership was not exempt and General Byng, the British commander of the Canadian Corps, extended this examination to the corps' senior officers, replacing 15 of the 58 battalion commanders and two of the twelve brigade commanders.

During the search for ways to improve com-



Canadian War Museum

The Lewis machine gun was air-cooled and gas operated, 50.5 inches (1.28m) long, weighted approximately 28 pounds (13 kg), was fed by a 47 round magazine, and had a cyclic rate of fire of 500-600 rounds/minute. It was introduced in 1915 and pushed down to the platoon as part of the lessons learned after the Somme. It quickly became an essential weapon during infantry assaults and when holding ground.

to yield unbearable casualties while accomplishing little. Throughout the winter of 1916-1917, one of the coldest in decades, they took advantage of the relative quiet to examine every aspect of their war-fighting; their battle procedure, training, organization, tactics, equipment, and communications, trying to determine what worked and what didn't and

bat effectiveness it was realized that once an attack was launched and the soldiers 'went over the top' it was impossible for Company Commanders - far less a battalion CO - to control the battle. Recognizing that it was a platoon commander's war, training was changed so that junior officers and senior NCOs were given more responsibility and ini-

tiative. At the same time, with the understanding that the platoon was the most important tactical unit in an infantry battalion, it was reorganized to increase its combat power and to make it a small, self-contained unit composed of four sections: riflemen, rifle grenadiers, bombers, and Lewis machine-gunners.

Infantry formations were also modified so that there was more space between advancing soldiers and the normal (but not mandatory) battalion attack called for two Companies up, with the one behind advancing in a diamond-shaped formation.

It was also recognized that at this stage of the war there could be no great breakthrough of the German lines. This led to the development of 'bite and hold' tactics with limited objectives whereby the infantry moved in bounds. For example, a battalion would be assigned the objective of capturing a section of an enemy trench system. Once they'd accomplished this, instead of pressing on, they would stop and consolidate on the position, thereby forming a firm base through which a fresh battalion would pass to attack the next major defensive position.

But no matter what tactics the infantry employed, the fact remained that every attack was a frontal attack against a well-trained and equipped enemy in elaborately prepared defensive positions with clear fields of fire across the blasted landscape. The key to any successful attack was effective artillery support.

During the first years of the war the artillery

tried to smash the enemy defences prior to infantry attacks. But, no matter how heavy the bombardment, many German soldiers survived in their deep dug-outs. Once the artillery lifted they rushed out and manned their trenches (or what was left of them), quickly put their machine guns into operation and inflicted terrible casualties on the attacking infantry before it could cross the killing ground of No Man's Land.

Part way through the Battle of the Somme the gunners introduced a new innovation - the creeping barrage - a wall of fire that moved over enemy lines slowly in short leaps while the attacking infantry 'leaned into the barrage'. In theory, if everything went to plan, the enemy wouldn't have time to scramble out of his deep bunkers and get his machine guns operating before the attackers were upon

him. Thus, instead of artillery gunfire preceding movement, it was combined with movement.

However, during the Somme the Germans had countered the creeping barrage by firing their own barrage behind the moving wall of shells in order to catch the advancing infantry in the open. Clearly the enemy guns had to be located and destroyed as part of any attack if the creeping barrage was to be effective.

The challenge was daunting since the German artillery was often well concealed and sometimes positioned on reverse slopes where it could not be directly observed. In response



Canadian War Museum

Andrew McNaughton was one of the pre-eminent gunners of the war. He applied the principles that he mastered as a prewar lecturer in engineering at McGill University to improve the ability of gunners to locate and destroy enemy artillery in counter-battery work.

the 'Canadian Counter-Battery Office' (CCBO) was established at Corps HQ to carefully analyze all intelligence that could be gleaned regarding the location of the enemy's guns. In addition to intelligence yielded by prisoners, information was gathered from scouting aircraft (both observations and aerial photos), from 'flash-spotting' (where carefully placed observers recorded the bearing of gun flashes, allowing triangulation to give location) and the

sitions and guns, an invaluable source of information when planning attacks. It also meant that any artillery fire plan from this point forward included effective counter-battery fire to suppress the German artillery's ability to break up attacks.

No one measure taken by the Canadian Corps during the relative quiet of the winter of 1916-1917 was, on its own, decisive. However,



Canadian War Museum

The Taking of Vimy Ridge, Easter Monday 1917

This painting by Canadian war artist Richard Jack depicts the crew of an 18-pounder field gun firing at German positions on Vimy Ridge. The 18-pounder was the British Commonwealth's most widely used field gun during the First World War. More than 10,000 were produced and they fired approximately 100 million shells during the war.

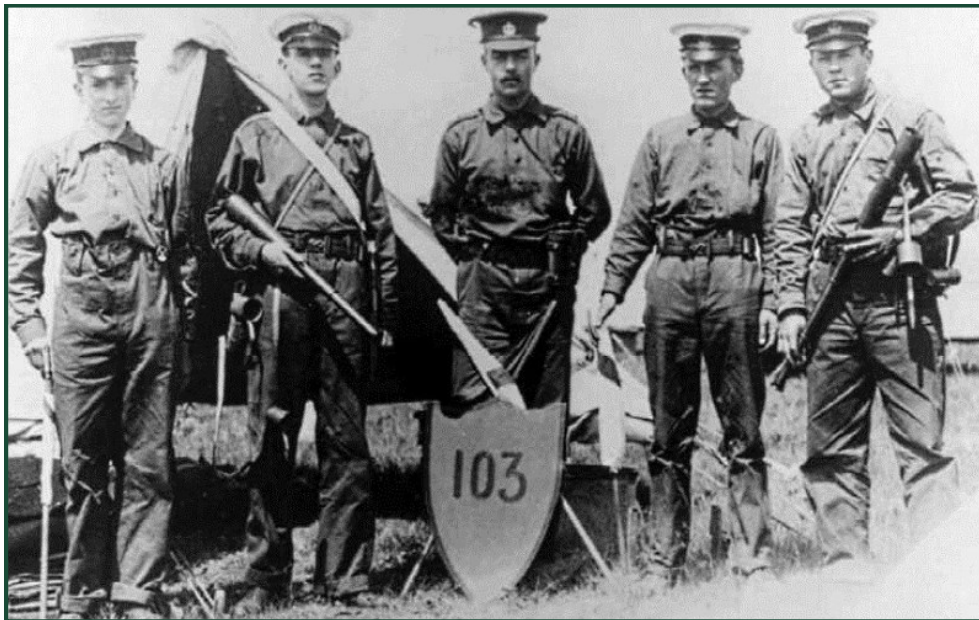
new science of sound ranging (where recordings of shells passing overhead were made by microphone; analysis of these recordings then allowed the enemy guns to be located within 25m under perfect conditions). In addition, British scientists were brought in to teach Canadian gunners how to compensate for barrel wear and meteorological conditions in order to increase accuracy.

This careful gathering and analysis of intelligence allowed detailed mapping of enemy po-

when combined they began a transformation that saw the Corps become the most deadly force on the battlefield. Its first great test was not long in coming, as by early April 1917 the Canadians would assault the heavily fortified - and some thought, impregnable - German positions at Vimy Ridge, whose defenders had defeated three previous Allied assaults while inflicting perhaps 150,000 casualties on the attackers. 🍁

The Regiment in Photos

Readers are encouraged to send in photos from all eras of the Unit's history in order that the archive may be expanded. Digital images can be sent to calghighr.association@gmail.com. Prints should be mailed to The Calgary Highlanders Regimental Association, Mewata Armoury, 801-11th St SW, Calgary, AB, T2P 2C4. Prints will be scanned and returned upon request. When sending photos, don't forget to include information on who/what, when and where.



Calgary Highlanders

Early 20th Century

Five members of the 103rd Regiment (Calgary Rifles). The Calgary Highlanders origins begin with the establishment of the 103rd on 1 April 1910. The 103rd did not go overseas during the First World War but recruited and trained soldiers for the overseas battalions, most notably the 10th. The Regiment was reorganized and renamed 'The Calgary Regiment' on 15 March 1920.

World War II

This somewhat grainy photo shows Calgary Highlanders training in England. The two soldiers on the left are carrying Thompson submachine guns, made infamous by American gangsters during the Prohibition era. The Thompson, mechanically complex and very expensive to produce, was replaced by the much cheaper Sten Gun in Canadian Army Units assigned to NW Europe before D-Day.



Calgary Highlanders



Dave Paul Photography

14 March 2015

The Calgary Highlanders held this year's Grand Highland Military Ball at Calgary's Westin Hotel on 14 March.



Calgary Highlanders

11 April 2015

This year's St. Julien Commemoration was held earlier than usual since the Battlefield Tour was scheduled from 17 April to 1 May 2015. Fortunately Calgary enjoyed an early and warm spring and the weather was almost perfect for the parade to The Cathedral Church of the Redeemer where a service was held. From there the Unit was joined by the Old Guard for the march to Calgary's Old City Hall where wreaths were laid.



Calgary Highlanders

11 April 2015

Following the St. Julien parade the Regimental Association held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Mewata Armoury where a new President, Mr. Reg Sprately, was elected. The AGM was followed by presentation of the Unit Awards and the Reunion Dinner. This photo shows Mr. Sprately presenting the Sgt. Miller Trophy to WO Klein (the trophy is awarded annually to the most proficient Senior NCO).



Calgary Highlanders

7 June 2015

Royal Canadian Army cadets from all four units affiliated with the Calgary Highlanders (2137-Calgary, 2383-High River, 3016-Airdrie and 3125-Chetermere) held a combined Annual Ceremonial Parade (ACR) at Mewata Armoury. Lieutenant-Colonel Kyle Clapperton, CO of the Calgary Highlanders, was the reviewing officer for the well-attended Parade.



Donna DeWolfe

19 April 2015

Sgt. Percy DeWolfe receives his appointment as a Knight of the Legion of Honour from M. Jean-Christophe Fleury, Consul General of France in Vancouver. For more information on this event see the article on page 3.



Calgary Highlanders

28 July 2008

During fighting in Zhari District, Afghanistan, Capt. Cox (centre) was serving with a joint Canadian-Afghan patrol. According to official citation, after the lead elements of the patrol were pinned down and in danger of encirclement, he “moved through intense enemy fire to reinforce the isolated Afghans. Despite fierce enemy resistance, he persistently continued forward, returning a heavy volume of fire to suppress the insurgent position...(His) courage and selflessness prevented the patrol from being surrounded by a numerically superior enemy.”



Denise Cruikshank

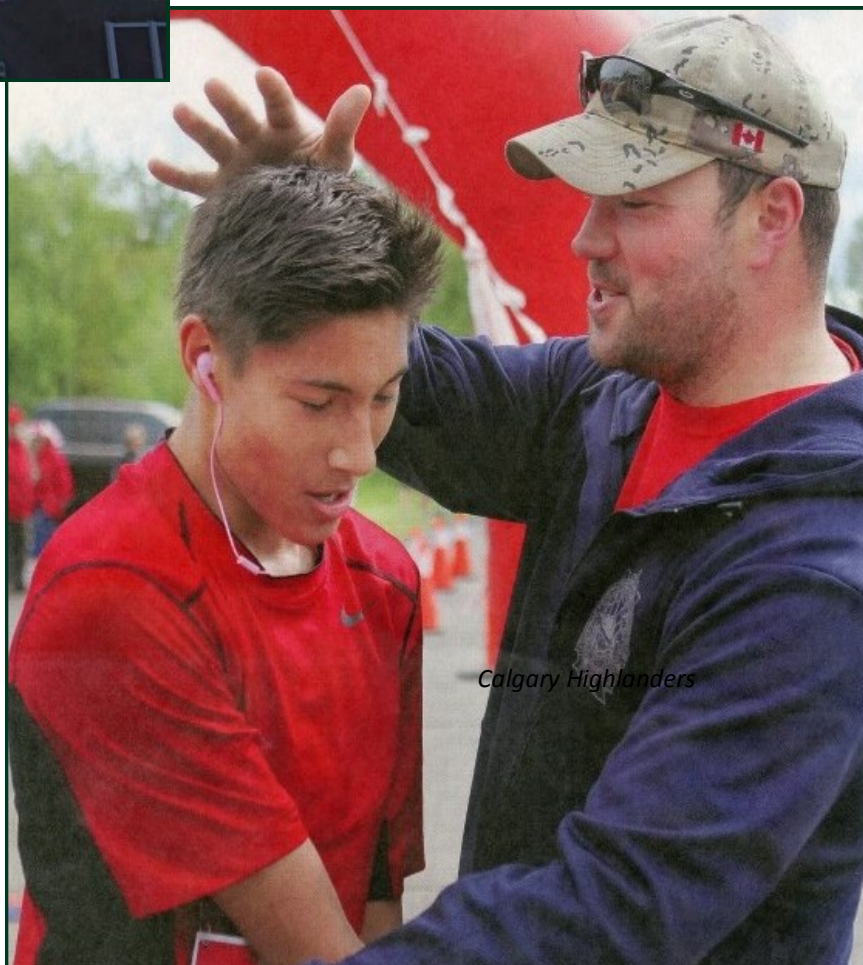
20 June 2015

More than 60 soldiers from 41 Brigade Group, including many Calgary Highlanders, rappelled from the iconic 191 metre (626 feet) Calgary Tower. This photo shows the CO, LCol Kyle Clapperton, beginning the long trip down to street level.

21 June 2015

MCpl Shawn McDermott congratulates his son, Brendan, 15, at the finish line of the eighth annual Loops for the Troops Father's Day Run/Walk in North Glenmore Park. The event was founded by Michael Hornburg in honour of his son, Corporal Nathan Hornburg who was killed on active duty in Afghanistan on September 24, 2007. All proceeds from the event are used by RAUSI for the benefit of CF members, veterans, first responder services, and the Cadet program.

Calgary Herald



Calgary Highlanders

The Calgary Highlanders Meet Their Colonel-in-Chief

Maj. Peter Boyle

Of the many key events that occurred in Europe as part of the centenary of The Battle of St. Julien, one that was most memorable for the soldiers of the Regiment was meeting their Colonel-in-Chief. Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II has been Colonel-in-Chief of The Calgary Highlanders since 1981, and during the past 34 years she has visited her Regiment in Calgary a number of times. The 19th of April 2015 would be the first time that a large contingent from the Regiment visited Her Majesty in England.

While the initial planning to have Her Majesty

participate in the centenary events began a number of years ago, it was not until her acceptance to attend the reception at Canada House was received that the detailed planning could commence. Following receipt of the initial acceptance in late 2014, a coordination meeting was held in London during February of 2015 where Major Peter Boyle and CWO Emmett Kelly met with a number of key members of the Royal household to coordinate the events of the 19th of April. No detail was left to chance, and frequent communication occurred between Calgary and London in the weeks leading up to the trip.



Calgary Highlanders

Honorary Colonel Michael Shaw (L) and Major Peter Boyle with Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment.



Calgary Highlanders

. Calgary Highlanders with their Colonel-in-Chief, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, at Canada House, London, on 19 April 2015. Seated with Her Majesty are (L to R): L Col. Michael Vernon, former CO; Maj. Peter Boyle; Hon. Col. Michael Shaw; LCol. Kyle Clapperton, CO; CWO Christopher Tucker, RSM; and LCol Lee Villiger, former CO.

On the 19th of April, with all planning complete, the Regiment took part in the commemorative parade at Green Park prior to moving to Canada House for the reception and to meet Her Majesty. On schedule, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh arrived and were met by the Canadian High Commissioner, His Excellency Gordon Campbell. As the group made their way to Canada House from the street, Pipe Major Kevin Ponte welcomed them with the skirl of the Pipes. Upon entering, the Royal Party was introduced to the senior members present and then Honorary Colonel Michael Shaw invited Her Majesty to join the Regiment for a group photograph taken at the Trafalgar entrance to Canada House. Following the photograph, Her Majesty signed the guest book while members of the Regiment took their places in an adjacent room in

preparation for a personal meeting with their Colonel-in-Chief. Her Majesty entered the MacKenize-King/Borden Room and was immediately introduced to the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Kyle Clapperton as well as the Chieftain of the Clan of Gallant Canadians, Colonel Fred Mannix. Honorary Colonel Michael Shaw then invited Her Majesty to meet with the other members of the Regiment, and for the next hour she toured the room and spent time with each member of the Regiment who was present.

At the conclusion of her visit, Her Majesty bid farewell to Honorary Colonel Shaw and Lieutenant-Colonel Clapperton prior to her departure from Canada House. For those in attendance, it would be a day to remember and a memorable beginning to the almost two week St. Julien centenary pilgrimage. 🍁



Calgary Highlanders

Lieutenant Colonel Kyle Clapperton (L) and Honourary Colonel Michael Shaw with Her Majesty at her departure from Canada House.

Fallen Comrades



Harold Norman Holmgren

Norman passed away on March 17, 2015 in Calgary at the age of 94 years. Born and raised in Estevan, Saskatchewan, Norman enlisted on 15 June 1940 and arrived in England on Christmas Day of that year as a member of the Ambulance Corps. He managed to get himself transferred to the Ordinance Corps where he rose to the rank of Sergeant before returning to Canada in August 1943 for officer training. He was sent back to England in July 1944 as an infantry Lieutenant, but not before he managed to marry Nefia, his long-time sweetheart.

Norman was soon transferred to France where he joined the Calgary Highlanders as an officer in C Company. On 9 October 1944 he was wounded at Hoogerheide during the Highlanders defence of that Dutch town against repeated large-scale and determined German counter-attacks. Norman was one of 100 casualties (30 dead, 70 wounded) the battalion suffered during seventy hours of continuous combat that saved the brigade front. Norman's injuries were serious enough that he was returned to Canada in February 1945 and discharged in June of that year.

After the war Norman held a variety of jobs in Western Canada and Texas while he and his wife raised a family. He was predeceased by Nefia in August 2014 but is survived by six children, 14 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held in Calgary on 26 March.



Donald Maxwell

Former Pipe Major Donald Maxwell passed away on 21 March at 76 years of age. Donald, a native Calgarian, was an accountant by profession and worked in the oil patch, becoming Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer of PanCanadian Petroleum Limited.

While working and raising a family he made the time to indulge in his hobby of playing the bagpipes, and served as Pipe Major of the Calgary Highlanders twice: 1964-1965 as Sgt. Maxwell and 1977-1982 as MWO Maxwell. Donald is survived by Marilyn, his wife of 55 years, four sons, five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services were held in Calgary on 27 March.

Fallen Comrades



Hugh Finley McPherson

Hugh, a veteran of the Second World War, died on 6 April at the age of 89. He grew up on the family farm in Hardesty, Alberta until joining the Army in 1942 and serving in the battles to liberate Holland.

Hugh met and married Melba McAndrews in 1949 and they raised a family together while he worked for Alberta Government Telephones until his retirement in 1985.

Hugh was a lifelong member of the Legion and had attended several St. Julien commemorations in recent year. He was predeceased by Melba, and two sons but is survived by a sister, daughter, six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren together with numerous nephews and nieces.

A service was held for Hugh in Cochrane on 14 April.



Jim Rycroft

Jim Rycroft passed away on Thursday, 23 April 2015 at 90 years of age.

Jim was born on 10 December 1924 in Spirit River, Alberta, the 9th child of Robert and Helen Rycroft. He joined the Army during the Second World War and served in the Calgary Highlanders. Jim was one of the last remaining veterans to have fought at the Walcheren Causeway during the Canadian Army's drive to clear the Scheldt Estuary in order to open the port of Antwerp to Allied shipping.

After the war Jim returned to Alberta and married Edith Spry, his wife of 66 years until her death in April 2014. Together they raised seven children who, together with 18 grandchildren, 18 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews, survive Jim.

Jim's funeral service was held on 30 April in Beaverlodge Alberta.

Kitcheners Wood

22 April 2015

By LCol M.C. Vernon



Nancy Saxberg

22 April 2015

The Calgary Highlanders and the Canadian Scottish Regiment, together with the Old Guard and led by the combined Pipes and Drums, march past the Kitcheners Wood memorial located beside the home of Ignace and Francine Bentein.

The first thing I noticed as we disembarked from the buses was the light. It was the so-called "golden hour" of the day, when the sun's rays are particularly warm and flattering, and the late afternoon shadows are long. The low angle of the sun highlighted the geome-

try of the perfectly-formed furrows that swirled within the farm fields around us.

Very quickly, the hundred-plus uniformed members of the Calgary Highlanders and the Canadian Scottish Regiment formed up on the narrow asphalt road that would take them to

the battlefield where their predecessors, the 10th and 16th Battalions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, had counter-attacked one hundred years before.

The combined Pipes and Drums led off, pipes skirling, followed by serving soldiers and then the Old Guard. Watching through the viewfinder of my video camera, I noted that every soldier was perfectly in step, white spats flashing in unison, as they marched proudly along the winding road towards the Kitcheners Wood memorial, co-located beside the home of Ignace and Francine Bentein.

Like many that day, I was not prepared for the outpouring of generosity that awaited our arrival at the memorial and the Benteins' farm.

At the memorial, Glenn Millage played Last Post, then Pipe Major Kevin Ponte played Flowers of the Forest as the sun began to set. It was a solemn moment to contemplate the 1600 men who had counter-attacked a century earlier, over ground that was this night marked with flags to show where it had taken place. The majority of the officers and soldiers in those two battalions were killed, wounded or captured within hours, including the 10th Battalion's commanding officer, LCol Russell Lambert Boyle. We were honoured to share this night with his grandson CPO1 Russell Boyle (Retired) and his wife Melody.

The mood was entirely different once we were inside the nearby farm equipment building (it

was cleaner than any barn I've ever seen...). It was set up to host a community supper and local volunteers worked hard to keep pace with soldiers' drink orders at the bar set up just inside the door. A sea of tables, decorated with flags, accommodated several hundred Belgians and Canadians. And at the back of the building a chip wagon was parked beside another truck with chickens spitted on rotisseries.

I honestly don't recall much about the various speeches and presentations, but the chicken... the chicken! It was succulent and superb.

The best I've ever had.

The Pipes and Drums stirred up a storm of primal energy when they played at the front of the room. Back in 2010, their rendition of Highland Cathedral sent electric shivers down my back when they played it at Ypres' Menin Gate. This time, it was their spirited version of The Gael that swept over us, reminding everyone of their power to

move and motivate the regiment on such important occasions. It was a fleeting but amazing sensation I won't soon forget.

As Canadians 100 years removed from the fighting, I don't think we fully appreciate how horrible both world wars were to the people who endured them--especially the civilians caught between the armies--and how this affected their families for generations to come. This evening totally exceeded my expectations so I'll always remember the generosity of the Bentein family and the Belgian people who

It was a solemn moment to contemplate the 1600 men who had counter-attacked a century earlier, over ground that was this night marked with flags to show where it had taken place.

worked so hard to make this anniversary so memorable. Due to linguistic limitations, it wasn't possible for all Canadians and Belgians to speak freely, but everyone shared in the sense of community, recognizing that this was a once in a lifetime event of significance to all.

And when the meal and speeches and music were done, we moved outside en masse. As

on Kitcheners Wood. One hundred years ago to the day. To the hour, in fact.

The regimental families of the Calgary Highlanders and the Canadian Scottish Regiment commemorated that heroic event by playing and singing Amazing Grace beside the memorial, our Belgian hosts joining in with their voices too.



Nancy Saxberg

A dinner to commemorate the night attack on Kitcheners Wood by the 10th and 16th Battalions exactly 100 years earlier was held in the Bentein farm's equipment building. The outpouring of generosity by the Belgians will not be forgotten by those present..

we did so, school principal Robert Missinne handed out gifts from his students in St. Julien: shrapnel balls recovered from the battlefield. The sun was completely down and only a handful of streetlights illuminated the scene, but it was more than our ancestors had when they formed up for their fateful counterattack

And then, before it was all over, we formed a massive circle on the roadway and sang Glenwhorple, belting it out into the night. A rousing and most appropriate way to remember our history and all those who have soldiered before us. 🍁

Calgary Highlanders 2015-2016 Training Calendar

July - 2015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	Canada Day																													
3-17	Calgary Stampede 2014																													
15	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																													
29	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																													

August - 2015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
3	August Long Weekend																													
12	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																													
15-23	Exercise Grizzly Defender 2015																													
26	Leadership AAG (Sgt and Up)																													

September - 2015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
1	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																								<u>Unit Run Course: BMQ IST/Start</u>					
2	AAG																													
5-6	161 Social Visit - MCpl and Up - In WA																													
7	Labour Day																													
25-27	Highland Marksman																													

October - 2015

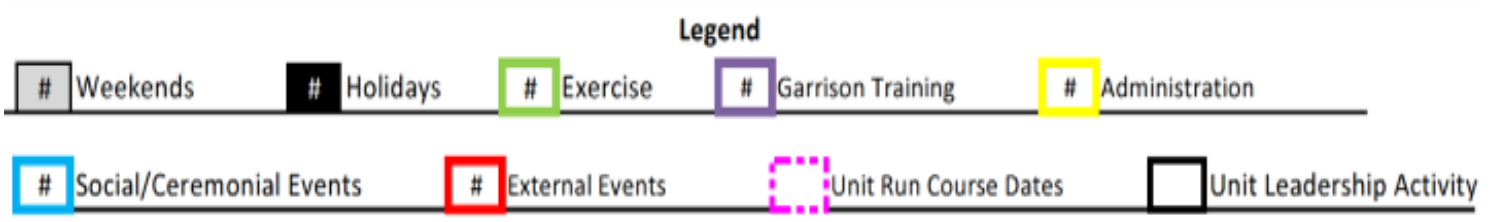
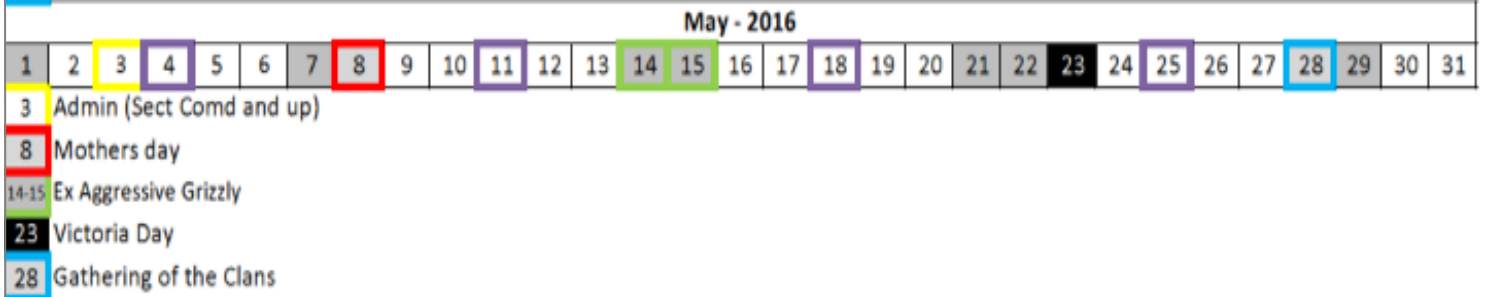
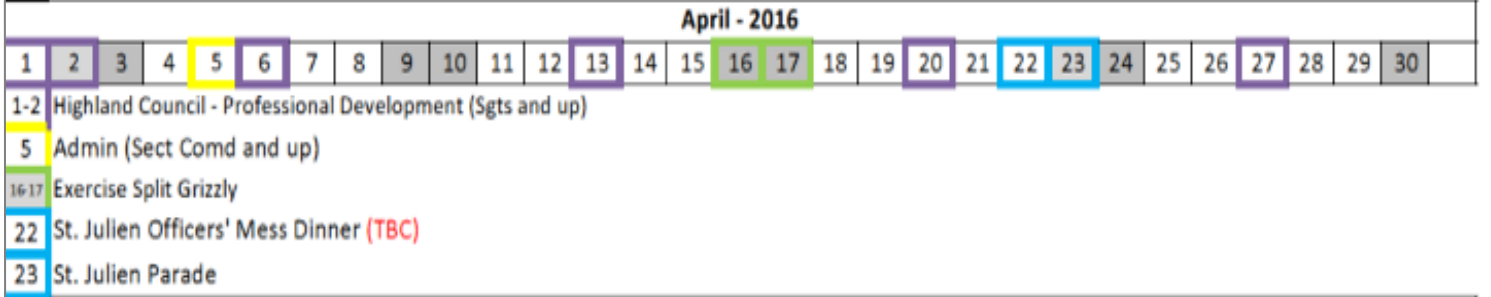
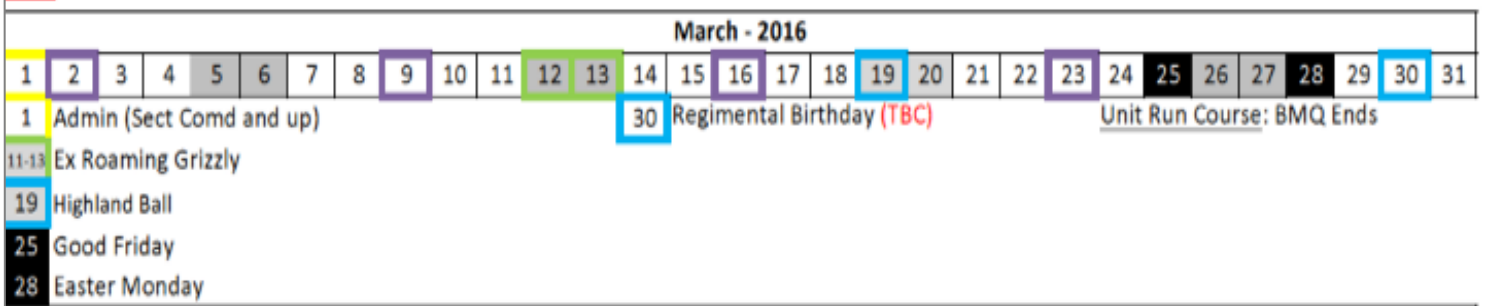
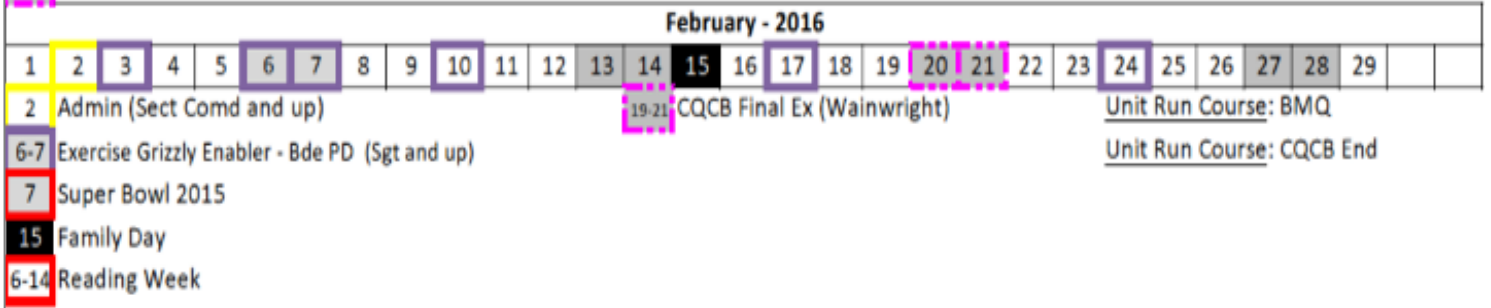
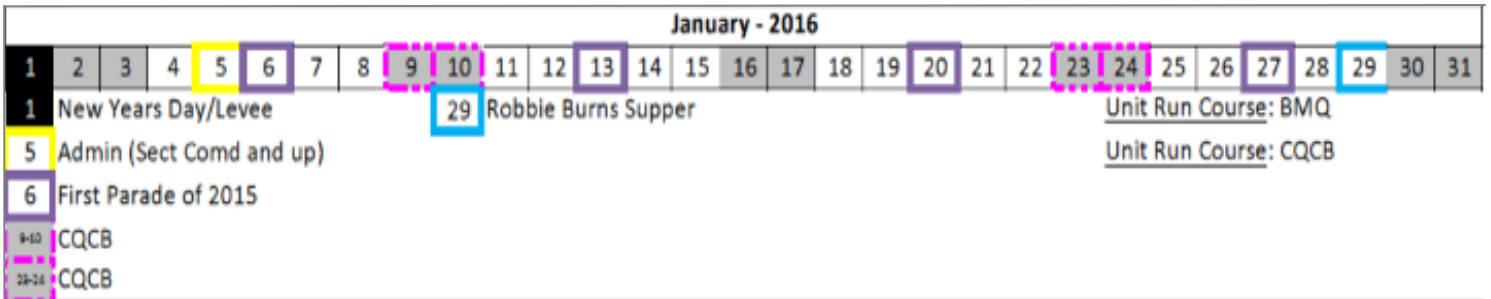
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
3	Local Training [IBTS, BFT](TBC)															30 Walcheren Officers' Mess Dinner (TBC)										<u>Unit Run Course: BMQ</u>					
6	Admin (Sect Comd and up)															31-1 Local Training - Weapons Handling (M203, SRAAW (M), SRAAW (L), Claymore)															
12	Thanksgiving																														
17-18	Heavy Metal																														
14	Admin - Instr Prep																														
28	Walcheren Parade (TBC)																														
31	Halloween																														

November - 2015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
31-1	Local Training - Weapons Handling (M203, SRAAW (M), SRAAW (L), Claymore)																								<u>Unit Run Course: BMQ</u>					
2	Regimental Council										29 102nd Grey Cup										<u>Unit Run Course: CQCB IST</u>									
3	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																													
6	WOs' & Sgts' Mess Dinner (TBC)																													
11	Remembrance Day																													
20-22	Local Training - Weapons Handling (M203, SRAAW (M), SRAAW (L), Claymore)																													

December - 2015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	Admin (Sect Comd and up)																								<u>Unit Run Course: BMQ</u>					
5-6	CQCB																													
13	Kids' Christmas Party																													
18	Soldiers' Christmas Dinner																													
25	Christmas Day																													
26	Boxing Day																													
																									<u>Unit Run Course: CQCB Start</u>					



After Ramadi, Canada should question U.S. strategy to defeat IS

By George Petrolekas

George Petrolekas is a fellow with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI). He has served in Bosnia, Afghanistan and with NATO, and has been an adviser to senior NATO commanders. This article appears courtesy of CGAI (www.cgai.ca).



U.S.A.F. Photo by Staff Sgt. Perry Aston

RCAF CF-18 breaks away after refueling by an USAF KC-135 Stratotanker over Iraq.

Canada's military contribution to the war against IS includes training Iraqi Kurdish forces (Peshmerga) as well as dedicated air assets (six CF-18 strike/fighter aircraft, one CC-150T Polaris aerial refueller to support coalition air operations, and two CP-140M Aurora surveillance aircraft to contribute to coalition ISR capabilities).

With the city of Ramadi falling, almost completing the Islamic State's takeover of Iraq's Anbar province, the earlier "not to worry" line out of Washington is giving way to questions. With Canada investing up to \$500-million before the current 18-month commitment is over, it may be time to question whether the entire strategy should be reviewed.

Canada does not decide the anti-IS strategy. Its choices are limited to whether it will participate, and with how much. The strategy itself is formed in Washington.

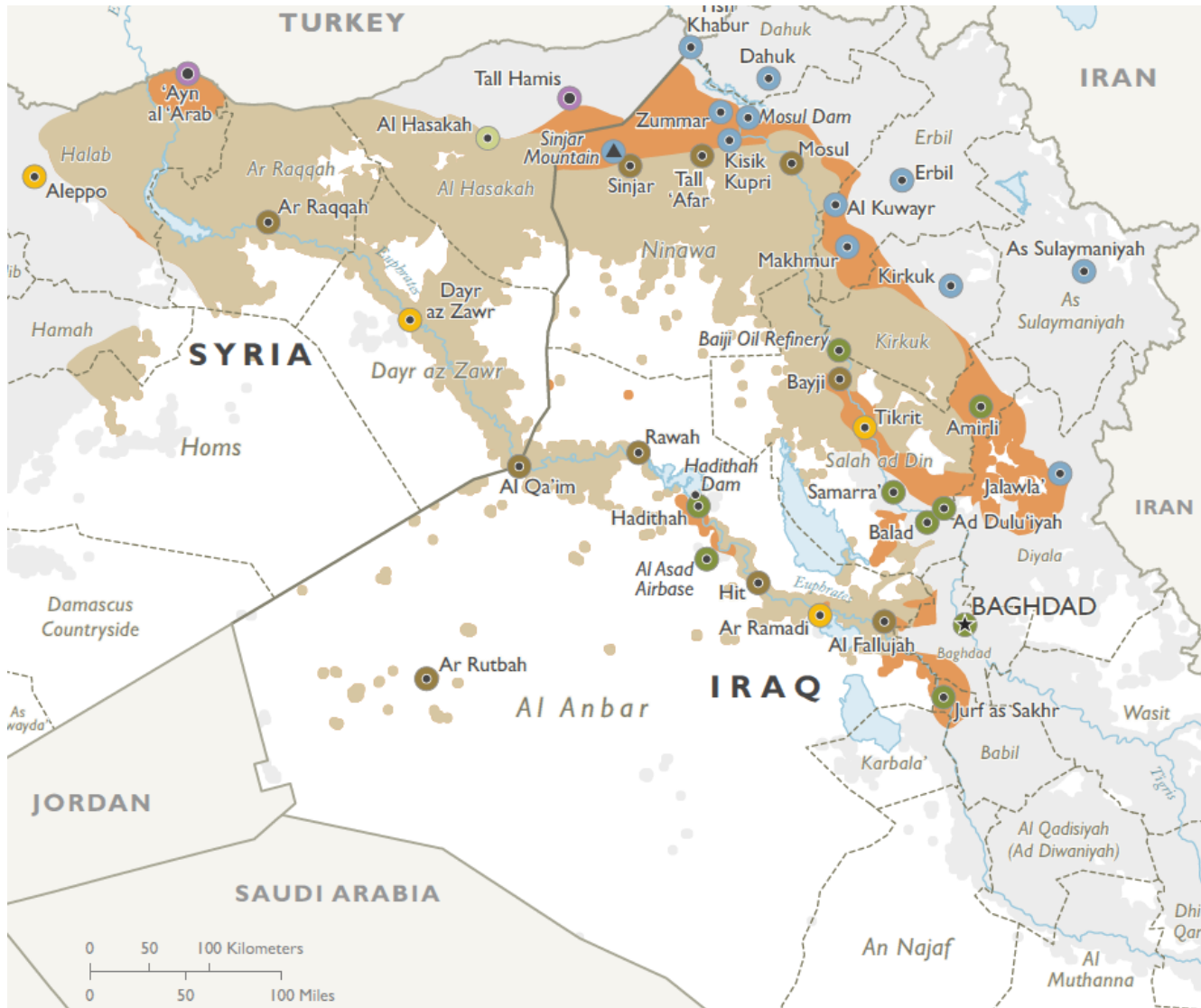
When it was announced by President Barack Obama in September, 2014, it revolved around several presumptions.

The first and most important was no U.S. boots on the ground: a U.S. ground force

Continued on p. 29

Iraq and Syria: ISIL's Operating Areas as of April 2015

This map, produced by the US Department of Defence, shows the broad swath of territory across Syria and Iraq controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or IS) as of April 2015. The Iraqi city of Ramadi (shown here as 'contested') has fallen to ISIL since the map's publication. Territory has been recaptured, mostly in Western Iraq by Kurdish forces (Peshmerga) which have received coalition training (which the Canadian Army has been involved in) and support from coalition airpower. In contrast, the much larger and more heavily armed Iraqi Army has accomplished little to this point with the notable exception of retaking the town of Tikrit, though this operation required strong support from Iranian-backed Shia militias.



Areas of Influence

- ISIL dominant as of April 2015
- ISIL's territorial losses since August 2014
- Populated area
- Sparsely populated or unpopulated
- Administrative boundary

Dominant Group

- ISIL
- Syrian Kurd
- Iraqi Kurdish security forces
- Iraqi Government
- Syrian Government
- Contested city

Note: Our judgment as to which group has dominant influence over a particular city is based on a body of sources that we deem reliable.

US Department of Defense

would not shoulder the responsibility of defeating IS. That would have to be done by Iraq and some unknown or undefined proxy in Syria. That decision limited the choices to air power and training the Iraqis.

Iraq had an army, and so the United States defined the campaign as a bid to destroy IS there, and degrade it elsewhere. But very quickly it became apparent that the Iraqi army was rotted from within and could not defend even what it controlled, much less recapture lands from IS.

Before IS could be destroyed in Iraq, it would have to be contained and degraded to buy time for the Iraqi military to be reconstituted somehow through intensive training. Canada signed on for these parts, contributing aircraft in support of the containment and degradation strategy, and advisers for the regeneration of the army. More accurately, it is training Kurdish Peshmerga, whose future in a hoped-for unified Iraq is much in question.

So nine months into this campaign, is the strategy working, and are the losses of cities like Ramadi temporary setbacks – just bricks and mortar and not symbolic of anything, to paraphrase General Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in recent congressional testimony?

Clearly, the strategy has severe problems. To have any chance of succeeding in its present form, it must be seriously re-tuned or altered.

The first is that the air campaign is proving unable to contain IS. It has had successes, most notably in areas like Kobani or around Mosul, where it has degraded IS at the fringes. On the one hand, where it has utterly root-ed out IS, as in Kobani, it is difficult to claim a victory after four months of bombing left the city in ruins and likely in need of billions of

dollars to repair. On the other hand, while the IS advance has been stopped in places, not enough air power is available to gut the economic wherewithal of IS. The recent success in Ramadi demonstrates that IS can move where air power is not. The coalition's undisputed technical superiority does not translate into numerical sufficiency.

When markets are full of produce in Mosul, and IS and civilians alike are driving vehicles, it means IS can still move, fuel its vehicles, arm its weapons and feed its soldiers. Even control of key locations such as the oil fields near Baiji and its refineries are still in dispute.

And so, as a very first step in giving the current strategy a chance to work, the air campaign must be seriously enlarged and the movement of people, goods and fighters in and between population centres IS controls must be halted – in essence, an air blockade.

On the ground, it is a different story. To roll back IS, the plan calls for 12 brigades to be trained – nine Iraqi and three Kurdish ones; nearly 60,000 soldiers who appear far from ready. And so the training contingents of Western advisers need to be substantially increased. In the meantime, the coalition is stuck with Iranian-backed Shia militias, whose use could fuel IS propaganda and defeat the purpose of not allowing a full-out sectarian war to develop.

Without this recalibration, the only hope of making this strategy work would be to bring U.S. ground forces once again into the region. And so, the fall of Ramadi must make all coalition members review the current strategy. As for Canada, if changes are not in the offing, it may be better just to come back home in full awareness that in doing so, we would be permitting one of the most gruesome regimes in recent history to exist. 🍁

“...very quickly it became apparent that the Iraqi army was rotted from within and could not defend even what it controlled, much less recapture lands from IS.”



The Calgary Highlanders Regimental Association Dues, Gifts and Membership

If you are an existing member of the Association, either Ordinary or Associate, all you have to do to renew your membership for 2015 is to send us your annual dues of \$15.00 (Box A)

If you are not an existing member and wish to become one, please complete the application form (Box B) and attach the 2015 annual dues of \$15.00.

All serving soldiers are automatically Ordinary Members upon receipt of the annual dues and need not apply for membership.

If you are unsure of your status, complete Box B.

BOX A: DUES/GIFTS

2015 dues are \$15.00 and, of course donations are much appreciated.

A tax receipt will be issued for donations of more than \$10.00; annual dues are not tax-deductible. Cheques should be made out to 'The Calgary Highlanders Regimental Association' and mailed to:

The Calgary Highlanders Regt Assn
Mewata Armoury
801-11th Street SW
Calgary AB T2P 2C4

Enclosed are my annual dues of \$15.00 (2015)

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Please complete if this information is not on your cheque or has changed.

BOX B: MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I am a former Calgary Highlander (applying as an *Ordinary Member*)

I am NOT a former Calgary Highlander (applying as an *Associate Member*)

PLEASE PRINT:

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rank (indicate 'Ret'd' when applicable if providing rank) _____

Given Name(s) _____

Surname _____

Decorations/Post Nominals _____

Military Service (if applicable)

Unit _____ Dates Served _____

Unit _____ Dates Served _____

Street Address: _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

EMAIL: _____

OR

I do not have an email address

Former Calgary Highlanders become Ordinary Members upon receipt of the annual dues (\$15.00). The Board of Directors may grant conditional memberships to any applicant for Associate Membership, but such memberships must be confirmed at the Association's Annual General Meeting.

Mail to:

The Calgary Highlanders Regt Assn
Mewata Armoury
801-11th Street SW
Calgary AB T2P 2C4