

2000

“More a Medicine than a Beverage”: “Demon Rum” and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War

Tim Cook

Canadian War Museum, tim.cook@warmuseum.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh>

Recommended Citation

Cook, Tim “More a Medicine than a Beverage”: “Demon Rum” and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War.” *Canadian Military History* 9, 1 (2000)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Canadian Military History* by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.



**"The Spirit of our Troops is
Excellent"**

*from "The Bystander's" Fragments From
France by Captain Bruce Bairnsfather
(London: 1915)
(Redrawn by Kirsten Sheffield)*

“More a medicine than a beverage” ‘Demon Rum’ and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War

Tim Cook

A couple of months before he was killed at Vimy Ridge, Private Ronald Mackinnon noted that he had to cut his letter to his father short because he heard "the joyful cry [of] 'rum up'."¹ In the trenches, everyone reacted when rum was issued. The rum ration was, in the words of Private E. Seaman of the 3rd Battalion, "the highlight of the day."² First Battalion infantryman Ralph Bell wrote that "When the days shorten, and the rain never ceases; when the sky is ever grey, the nights chill, and trenches thigh deep in mud and water; when the front is altogether a beastly place, in fact, we have one consolation. It comes in gallon jars, marked simply 'S.R.D.'"³ That SRD was army issued Special Red Demerara rum.

Rum was an institutionalized and regimented part of the ritual of enduring the war. Throughout the history of warfare, soldiers from all nations have used forms of stimulants, including drugs and alcohol, before going into battle.⁴ For some men these were as necessary as the weapons they carried. "Morale, can be, and had to be, created,"⁵ the 1922 Report on Shellshock concluded. Rum did just that and was a significant agent in fortifying the body and the mind. And although rum may not have been the prime trigger in combat motivation, it was certainly an important component. As a nuanced tool of morale, it is perhaps not surprising that more than one soldier remarked: "If we hadn't had our rum, we would have lost the war."⁶

Rum was used as a combat motivator, as part of the reward system and as medicine. Furthermore, an examination of the many uses of rum in battle situations provides insights into the mentalité and collective lives of the Canadian Great War soldier. An analysis of rum, and the social mores surrounding it, sheds some light

on the difficult questions of trench culture and, perhaps more importantly, how soldiers survived the ghastly conditions of the Western Front.⁷

Accepting Britain's declaration of war in August 1914 as its own, Canadians greeted the conflict's arrival with enthusiasm and celebration.⁸ Notions of glory and adventure were enough to enthrall many young *men*; moreover, there were the "Big Words" - patriotism, empire, and honour. Once overseas, however, soldiers found that the type of conflict they had envisioned was far different from the reality of the Western Front. The mud, corpses and constant encounters with death and suffering quickly destroyed all notions of glory and adventure. Such heroic sentiments were replaced by the grim need to "stick it out." Surviving in the trenches - both physically and psychologically - required that morale at the individualistic and group level be continually buoyed.

The fighting on the Western Front has often been envisioned as one "big push" after another. The futility of the Somme, with soldiers climbing out of the trenches to be gunned down, continues to shroud the popular memory of the entire war. There were, no doubt, moments of pure terror, but more often the fighting was characterized by long periods of waiting. Soldiers did not attack day after day in relentless assaults, yet they were terrorized daily by stray shelling, sniper fire and poison gas. The inability to strike back at the enemy steadily eroded morale.⁹

Morale has always been an essential factor in war. It was as necessary in battle as good equipment or leadership, and like those factors,

morale has been an element that can be the difference between success or failure. Without it, seemingly efficient, well-equipped armies of millions could disintegrate into armed mobs. But if strong morale makes good soldiers, what makes strong morale?

As important as it is, morale remains an intangible spirit that is hard to qualify, and thus is defined in different ways. Studies on cohesiveness and the memoirs of soldiers repeatedly attribute the desire by the soldier to fight for his brothers-in-arms. Common ordeals and experiences were a strong binding force among soldiers. Many factors might have brought a soldier into the army, but his close companions at the platoon or company level gave him strength to endure the strains of war.¹⁰ So important has this factor become in studies of wartime morale, however, that it seems to preclude all other analysis of combat motivators for the soldiers.

Soldiers are prepared to fight for a variety of reasons, of which loyalty to mates is but one. Two military sociologists who have studied the fighting efficiency of soldiers have declared that "Morale is the willingness to fight. It involves cohesion among men, commitment to some type of cause."¹¹ A British historian looking at one specific unit in the Great War described morale as "a quality of mind and spirit which combines courage, self-discipline and endurance."¹² Imposed discipline is another component, as men were drilled to follow orders and complete tasks unquestioningly. But beyond this is the more subtle pressure from officers and NCOs, pride in the regiment, fear of punishment, religious conviction, revenge, faith in a cause, or simply because this was necessary to get home. All of these factors helped to keep soldiers fighting in conditions more dreadful than any could have imagined.

Canadian infantryman Vick Lewis opined that it was not winning a Victoria Cross or Military Medal that distinguished a man's courage, instead, it was the common ranker who stood up under the constant horror while not cracking up.¹³ So trying were the weapons of war that killed men at random that most soldiers acquired a fatalistic view of life. To mentally shield themselves from weighing their chances every minute of the day, many soldiers decided that it

was not worth worrying about survival since one would live if it were meant to be, or else get it "when your number was up." A determined mind set was helpful, but there were other tools of survival. Religion and superstition were essential for some men, less important for others. Threats and punishment were all used to keep men from breaking down. More positive features were also prevalent. Occasional leave was given or medals awarded. Rather than considering combat motivation to be simply peer-bent, it is more balanced to think of this motivation as a subtle blend of issues. One of those factors was rum. There were certainly men who were against it, but most found the daily issue of rum a valued prop to steel the will and keep from going "windy."

Rum and other strong spirits had long formed part of the daily issue of the British soldier on campaign; and soldiers complained when they did not get their ration of it.¹⁴ During the South African War, where Canadian troops fought under British high command, they too had received a rum ration consisting of ° gill of rum [two ounces] three times per week.¹⁵ When the 1st Canadian Infantry Division arrived in France in February 1915, it was apprenticed to British veterans already in the line. In the process of learning how to survive on the Western Front, they were again introduced to the rum ration. Not surprisingly, Canadian soldiers adopted the rum ration tradition quickly.

Issued at the discretion of their officers, rum was given to men at stand-to at dawn and stand-down at dusk. As these were the expected times for an enemy attack, the whole forward unit was called out to wait with rifles at the ready. If no attack came, sergeants doled out two ounces of 186 proof Jamaican rum to each man.¹⁶ It was to be drunk in the presence of the NCO or officer so no hoarding could be done, with any extra rum to be poured out into the mud.¹⁷ In reality though, not a lot of rum went into the dirt, with friends of the NCOs and old-hands generally benefitting. As one memorandum to Overseas Minister A.E. Kemp noted, "It is left to the discretion of the Commanding Officer as to whether Oxo, Soup or Rum is required. As a general proposition, preference is expressed for the latter. The individual man is in all cases free to refuse the issue of Rum if he so desires, but this option is only exercised in a few instances."¹⁸

Rum was popular in the trenches. But on the homefront, there were organizations at work trying to deny the long-suffering trench soldier his rum ration; war might take the soldiers' bodies, but "Demon Rum" would not take their souls.

The most influential of these groups was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). It and many other groups believed alcohol to be a fundamental source of social malaise.¹⁹ Drinking was portrayed by these groups as immoral and depraved; insanity, moral decadence and physical degradation were all linked with the consumption of alcohol. Abstainers employed all manner of quasi-scientific evidence and moralistic warnings to keep "Demon Rum" from destroying the lives of Canadian soldiers.

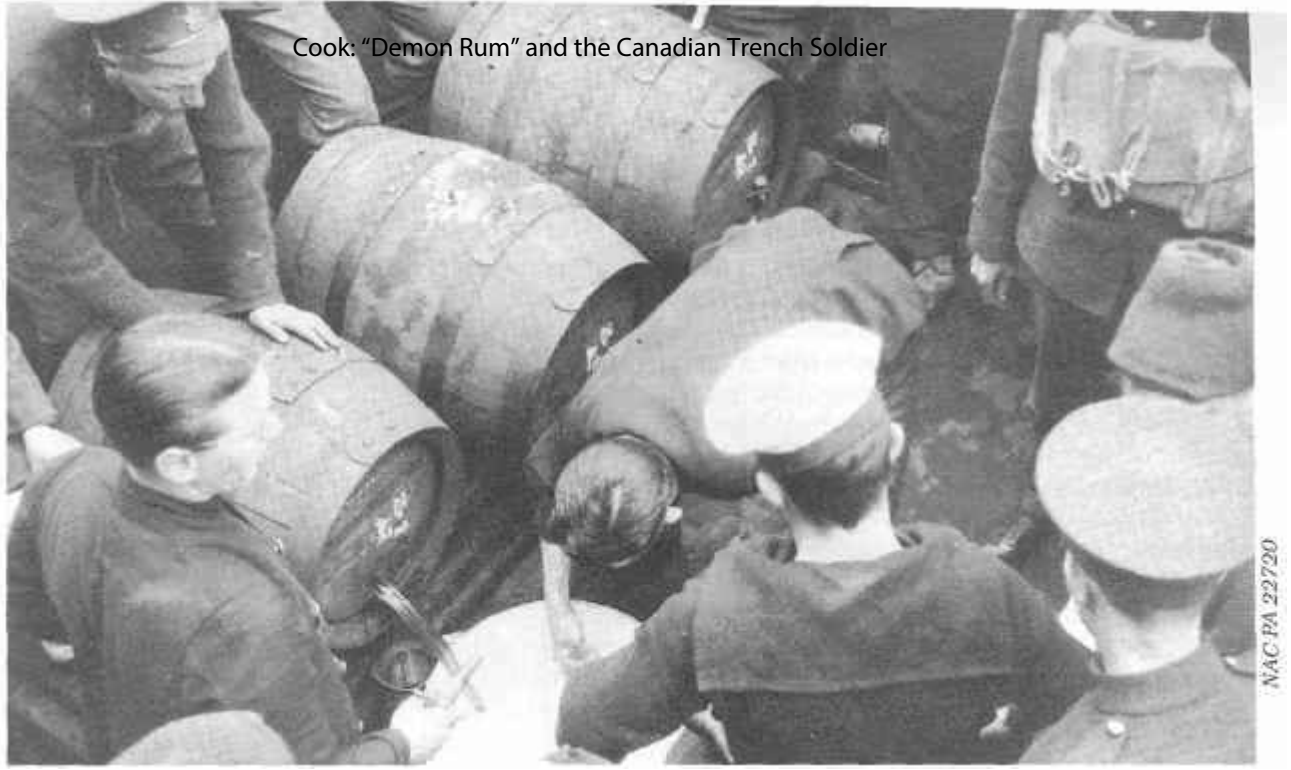
The temperance movement was not new in Canada, but the war proved to be a powerful stimulus for it by allowing advocates to effectively argue moral and economic reasons for prohibition. Anti-drink advocates were all too happy to mix the message of temperance with the war effort. Harnessing the twin motives of patriotism and guilt, groups like the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), church organizations, and the WCTU demanded that Canadians make a parallel sacrifice of alcohol for the war effort. As many people saw it, prohibition would be a chance to do something good and strike at the Hun from the homefront. How was one to argue with editorials that declared: "anyone who will vote in favor of liquor might as well enlist under the Kaiser as far as patriotism goes."²⁰ Abstainers extolled citizens to do all they could for their country, with "lolly-gagging" and drinking in pubs not conducive to the war effort. Those who failed to give up drink, were, in effect, hindering victory. Prohibition was patriotic. When 10,000 men, women and children marched on Toronto's Queen's Park on 8 March 1916, presenting a petition of 825,572 signatures to Premier William Hearst, a teetotaler himself, he felt compelled to bring in prohibition measures.²¹ Those politicians who failed to heed



from Twenty-Five Cartoons on the War drawn by Clayton Duff and reprinted from The Welland Telegraph.

the increasingly urgent message became victims, like R.P. Roblin's Manitoba government. By 1917, all provinces of Canada save Quebec had enacted prohibition.

Spurred by this success in Canada, the temperance groups pushed to revoke alcohol privileges for soldiers overseas, pressing the government with petitions and shaming tactics to achieve a "dry" army. Various influential groups began to question whether they should continue to send their sons overseas to be corrupted. Canadian Methodist Dr. Samuel D. Chown questioned the Army's "moral right" to pollute Canadian boys against their mother's will.²² Chief Justice of the Quebec Supreme Court F.-X. Lemieux attributed the lack of successful recruitment in Quebec after 1917 on reports of drunkenness in army camps. "Surely such examples were hardly of a nature to place recruiting in a favourable light in the estimate of fathers and mothers of families. Enlistment appeared fraught with danger for the morals of their sons; it seemed to them a school of



The WCTU and other temperance groups sought also to deny Canadian soldiers beer, without success. Here, soldiers from the 92nd Highlanders receive their Beer issue on board Empress of Britain, 24 May 1916.

drunkenness and depravity," he wrote to Prime Minister Borden in January 1917.²³ Temperance texts like Vance Thompson's *Drink and Be Sober* (1917) went so far as to exclaim: "Men with drink...cannot even fight...Drink does not give courage...all it does is to destroy the moral nature in the man."²⁴

While alcohol could be banned on the homefront, it was not so easily abandoned by the trench soldiers. Military officials advanced the claim that drinking was absolutely necessary for war-fighting and perhaps they were right.²⁵ During the bitter winter months, rum acted as an important stimulant for keeping up morale and sometimes for even keeping men alive. To soldiers, holding their thin ditches and open graveyards under the steady fall of high explosives, rum was more than a drink: they viewed it as medicine, a combat motivator and a general reward for life in the trenches; designated as such, rum was also assigned social properties which were incorporated into trench culture.

Trench soldiers reacted to the anti-drink movement with cynicism and outright hostility. Harold Baldwin, a 5th Battalion infantryman who lost his leg in action, seethed with anger towards the perceived hypocrisy of the homefront:

Oh you psalm-singers, who raise your hands in horror at the thought of the perdition the boys are bound for, if they should happen to take a

nip of rum to keep in a little warmth in their poor battered bodies. I wish you could all lie (sic) shivering in a hole full of icy liquid, with every nerve in your body quivering with pain, with the harrowing moans of the wounded forever ringing in your ears, with hell's own din raging all around. Any one of you would need a barrel of it to keep his miserable life in his body.²⁶

His vitriolic response is an indication of the value that Baldwin and other trench soldiers placed on the rum ration. His remarks also offer an introduction to some of the issues surrounding rum and the Canadian trench soldier of the First World War.

Life in the trenches was nasty, brutish and short. Summer months were spent in sweltering heat, with rotting corpses and a plague of flies. Winter carried its own trials, with mud and freezing water saturating the trenches - the flies disappeared but the rats and lice remained. The squalor broke men down; it was as unnatural a way to live as having people you have never met attempt to kill you each day.²⁷ With their apocalyptic landscape, battlefields like the Somme in 1916 and Passchendaele in 1917 were indescribable. M.A. Searle of the 18th Battalion was one of the infantrymen ordered to hold the dissolving ground at Passchendaele. He frankly recounted: "Most of us carried on at Passchendaele because of not limitless but more

than ordinary issues of rum."²⁸ Fighting in the same mud, Private G. Boyd of the 8th Battalion remembered that "if we had not had the rum we would have died."²⁹ Without the rum, it is quite clear from the soldiers' testimony that many would not have been able to endure the daily trials of war. Unsure if they should pray, scream or run, the rum ration at the end of the day was a small milestone for men who stayed and endured at their post.

Just as rum could take the edge off the most appalling characteristics of the war and give ordinary men a way to cope, rum was also useful as a depressant. While in the trenches, soldiers were chronically sleep-deprived. One American who served in the Canadian Corps recounted in a postwar novel: "Sleep, sleep - if only we could sleep. Our faces become gray. Each face is a different shade of gray. Some are chalk-colored, some with a greenish tint, some yellow. But all of us are pallid with fear and fatigue."³⁰ Rum helped. It acted as a sedative and because of its potency it could knock men out for hours, notwithstanding the cold or heat, the lice or rats, and the constant pounding of the big guns. Twenty-year-old Lieutenant Claude Williams scrawled a letter to his mother after winning the Military Cross at Vimy Ridge, that rum can "be regarded more as a medicine than a beverage. It is...absolutely invaluable to put men to sleep when they are wet and cold."³¹

Rum protected men from physically and psychologically crumbling under the rigors of trench warfare. Not blind to human frailties, front-line officers and NCOs realized that their men were under a terrible strain. Rum was issued to fortify the Canadian Tommy in his barbed-wire enclosed muddy ditch from whatever else lay beyond the safety of the trench wall. This understanding of war, however, was juxtaposed against the very real need to continue to shore up defences at night or to protect the front lines by patrolling and raiding. As a result, rum was one of the few rewards for men who went beyond the call of normal soldiering.

Patrolling and raiding in no-man's-land at night were particularly dangerous assignments. The raids, consisting of parties anywhere between two or several hundred, were designed to win control of the battlefield, gather intelligence, destroy the enemy's fighting efficiency, provide

training and, obviously, kill the enemy. Upon carrying out their duty, the survivors were rewarded with a stiff mug of rum.³² Other strenuous tasks, like carrying wounded men through miles of mud or digging new trenches, also made a soldier a candidate for a late-night liquid issue.³³ Particularly ghastly work like grave digging was among the worst of the soldier's fatigues. Private Ernest Spillett of the 46th Battalion wrote in a 1917 letter home about having to clear up the corpses from the battalion's last tour on the front line:

one man sniped through the heart, two sergeants killed by bombs and one Moose Jaw man, a private, a Rum Jar³⁴ got him the poor devil. It made a sorry looking parcel of him, both legs were off...I am afraid I shall give you the horrors but that is war, there is no glory in it just scientific murder. I am used to these sights they don't have to prime me with rum before I can handle a man[;] altho' I have and do certainly drink it sometimes on those jobs but usually afterwards, to take the taste of dead men out of my mouth.³⁵

Such were the grim realities of life at the front. They were made more palatable by the issue of rum as a reward system.

Despite soldiers shivering in the trenches, working all night to shore up the ever-crumbling defensive perimeter, and then waiting during the daylight hours for enemy attacks, the reason why they were there was to break through the enemy lines. The big battles may have been infrequent but they were nonetheless the focal point of war. After the disastrous campaigns of 1915, the British concluded that the infantry could only get across the killing ground of no-man's-land by advancing behind massive artillery barrages. Still, the barrages never annihilated all the defenders, and one machine-gunner was enough to wreak murderous havoc. With the enemy counter-barrage aimed to land behind the attacking creeping barrage, men who left the relative safety of the trenches endured a storm of steel from which many soldiers realized they would not be returning.

With hours and even days of waiting for one's artillery to soften up the enemy defences, the worst time in battle was waiting for zero hour. As time drew near, men fiddled with final adjustments, prayed and gripped their rifle stocks with sweating hands. Sergeant Archie Mackinnon

of the 58th Battalion, a machine gunner who was wounded several times and finally permanently crippled on the Somme, wrote to his sister that "after a three hour artillery bombardment, when you finally get the word 'Over top in one minute.' Your hearts comes clean out of your mouth."³⁶ Many felt like they were waiting for their own executions.

"We were all scared.. .but there was a job to do and you had to do it. The thing to do was to try and hide it from the others and not let fellows know you're scared, " recounted Sergeant James Page of the 42nd Battalion.³⁷ That was not always easy, but George Bell of the 1st Battalion recorded that "a good stiff 'tot' of rum served to buck up the spirits of those wavering."³⁸ Officers and NCOs went up and down the forward firing line to calm men with a greeting and a ladle of rum. Lieutenant Lunt of the 4th Battalion remembered doling out rum to his boys and wishing them "best of luck" as he moved down the line before the Battle of Amiens on 8 August 1918. Coming across one green lad, he was shocked to find his teeth chattering so loudly that it sounded like he was breaking his jaw. Lunt plied him with four double rum shots before the shaking stopped. When they finally attacked, Lunt remembered seeing the young lad stumbling forward in a drunken daze before he was shot in the face.³⁹ On the Somme, where soldiers were ordered to advance headlong into uncut wire and hardened machine gun nests, some units like the 21st Battalion simply laid out the brown, earthenware jugs of rum and let the soldiers take what they needed.⁴⁰ Even the generals far from the front realized the importance of giving artificial stimulants to their warriors. Operational orders for the Canadian attack on Vimy Ridge, for instance, declared that "the comfort, efficiency and fighting value of the troops are greatly increased by the issue of solidified alcohol for use during the opening days of an attack, before the regular supply system can be introduced, [rum] should invariably be supplied."⁴¹

Rum was essential for providing some men with liquid courage, while for others, it helped to control nerves or simply dull them. In the words of another Canadian trench soldier it was a "self-appointed builder of morale."⁴² "Under the

spell of this all-powerful stuff," wrote one Canadian, "one almost felt that he could eat a German, dead or alive, steel helmet and all."⁴³ Another 25th Battalion sergeant, after chugging what was left of his company's rum ration before going over the top, later recounted that he was so drunk that, in his words, I "would have killed me own mother."⁴⁴ Going "over the top" was one of the most difficult psychological strains for the trench soldier. It is not surprising then, that the smells of "rum and blood" were reported as being overpowering on the battlefield after an assault.⁴⁵

Fortifying men with alcohol was not always the best policy as Sergeant J.H. MacArthur of the 7th Battalion warned: men fired up by rum sometimes did not "use their heads and, instead of shooting a man, they'd run after him with a bayonet."⁴⁶ For that very reason, rum was sometimes withheld before battle. Once again, it depended on the officers and units. Lance Corporal C.J. Albon, a teetotaler it should be noted, refused to give his men rum before battle because he claimed of "several instances where men were lead into death traps just because the officer was drunk."⁴⁷ Like the Australians who generally followed the same policy, the survivors were given rum after the battle.⁴⁸ That policy, however, did not always sit well with the expectant soldiers and one draft of rough lumbermen from Northern British Columbia threatened a 54th Battalion officer when he tried to withhold their rum before battle.⁴⁹ They got their rum.

Some operations succeeded while others failed, but all had terrible casualties. The ebb and flow of battle meant that soldiers attacked and were in turn counter-attacked. The wounded were left behind as flotsam. During and after battle, those wounded men who could walk struggled to the rear; those who could not, called out in pain or waited as stretcher-bearers heroically braved enemy fire, administering to them in turn. When soldiers were found, wounds were bound and a shot of rum poured down throats to help lessen the pain. Those who survived the agonizing hours until they made it back to a casualty clearing station or a field ambulance were once again given medical pain-killers like rum, port or morphine before an operation.⁵⁰



Canadian soldiers enjoy a quiet moment in the trenches, with a rum jug and beer bottles evident.

Yet rum had medicinal uses other than for treating casualties and it was frequently used in a preventive role. If one is to believe the soldiers, rum helped to quell the rampant flu and colds that circulated. In addition, rum was valuable in cases of emotional trauma. At the June 1916 Battle of Mount-Sorrel, while being relieved for sentry duty, 19-year-old Private M.E. Parsons watched his friend get shot in the head, his brains splashing all over Parson's face. A quick moving sergeant-major grabbed Parsons, wiped the blood off and gave him a triple shot of rum. Reflecting on the event years later, Parsons believed that the only thing saving him from shellshock was the rum.⁵¹ Another soldier declared in his postwar memoirs: "There are not one, but numberless occasions, on which a tot of rum has saved a man from sickness, possibly from a serious illness. Many a life-long teetotaler has conformed to S.R.D. and taken the first drink of his life on the battlefields of France, not because he wanted to, but because he had to."⁵² For the trench soldier rum was viewed as genuine medicine, an antidote against both physical and psychological maladies. Moreover, rum was one of the few tools at the disposal of medical

officers or NCOs to aid soldiers who had undergone severe psychic shock.

Although rum was an essential tool for morale, it also played a key role in the social interaction of the trenches. Soldiers adapted to their surroundings and they reveled in the few pleasures available to them. For men desperately looking to push aside the ghastly nature of war, the simple joys of letters, food, cigarettes, and rum became paramount. The difficulty, however, was in getting this valued material to the front.

The logistics for supplying the thousands of troops garrisoning the front lines was one of the amazing feats of trench warfare. Keeping these men from starving to death was accomplished by the Quartermaster's Department and transport section which brought food, water, clothes, ammunition; in fact, all the necessities of life and all the accoutrements of war. With the lifeline to the front regularly swept with high explosive fire, shrapnel and gas, theirs was a dangerous task.⁵³ Despite the casualties, the food, letters and rum had to be brought up. Without it morale would plummet.



Rum was used to dull the pain of the wounded. Canadian soldiers receive a welcome drink at an advanced Dressing Station in France. September 1916.

Pork and beans, bully beef, maconochie stew, jam, and hardtack biscuits were the staples of diet.⁵⁴ As Major D.E. Macintyre wrote, the food was of "good quality but deadly monotonous."⁵⁵ That might have been a generous assessment and as an officer the Major profited from a servant to scrounge for and cook his food. Others, like Private Gregory Clark of the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles remembered that the "rations came up in sandbags so that your bread was always plastered and covered with hairs. Bully beef was our great staple. Maconochie rations were dreadful things with about a quarter of an inch of gray grease."⁵⁶ Another soldier remarked that the army-issued plum and apple jams were so strong that if you got some on your hands it would stain them for days.⁵⁷ This was reflected in one of the litanies of the trenches: "From plum jam and bully beef, good Lord deliver us."⁵⁸ The food had some value but it was terribly bland. Rum, however, was not. Being both powerful and sugary, rum was a treat.

"Hot food, soup and tea can often be sent up to men in the front-line trenches in containers; but if this is found impossible, rum, which is easier to transport, should be sent up to men in

advanced positions whenever the weather is cold and wet," one operational order stressed.⁵⁹ Rum was as crucial as food, and in some cases more useful. It was consumed in great quantity, with Divisional Pack Trains carrying more than 100 gallons of rum to the front each day.⁶⁰ There was little left over. One Canadian soldier recounted how he and his companions were stationed on the Somme and literally surrounded by decaying bodies: "Nobody wanted anything to eat. These dead bodies lying all around took your appetite right away. However, we had a drink of rum."⁶¹ Rum, along with cigarettes, was one of the few pleasures for front line soldiers. Men could stoically endure a drumfire bombardment or the swirling tendrils of poison gas, only to swear and scream bloody murder when their Woodbine cigarettes failed to arrive or their rum ration appeared smaller than the bloke's beside them.

As the issue of rum was left to the prerogative of commanding officers (CO) and medical officers, it placed an important agent in their hands. If a CO were a teetotaler, then the men got lime juice and pea soup instead of rum. One of the Canadian Corps' most attack-oriented commanders, or a "fire-eater" in the parlance of



A YMCA hut provides non-alcoholic comforts to soldiers returning from the firing line, August 1917.

the time, was Victor Odium, CO of the 7th Battalion and then the 11th Brigade. With a missionary background, he refused to issue rum to his troops. In the words of E.L.M. Burns, a signaller in the 4th Division and a general in the next war, his temperance stance "got minus zero in the front-line opinion polls."⁶² Mutinous feelings became so strong that his superior officer, General David Watson, had to overrule him and instigated the rum ration in February 1917. In an organization where soldiers had little if any power, the withholding of rum was important enough for them to raise their disenfranchised voices.

Soldiers expected the rum ration and many considered it as owed to them for their hard life in the ditches of the Western Front. Perhaps some even saw it as their reward for surviving another day. When rum was issued, men were content. If it were withheld, it could lead to a plunge in morale. R.J. Manion, a medical officer, and future parliamentarian and leader of the national Conservative Party, believed that the rum ration was often the only "cheery thing" for the soldiers who eked out an existence in the trenches.

Without it, soldiers could turn mutinous or "swing the lead" [malingering].⁶³ This was their form of protest against a perceived injustice. Frontline soldier Ralph Bell echoed Manion when he wrote that men will work in the rain or stand in mud for hours on end if they knew they would receive a shot of rum in the end: "Deny it to them, and more than half will parade sick in the morning."⁶⁴

The issue of rum to soldiers also reinforced the hierarchical nature of the armies which was so integral to their success. A few lead, many follow. In the unparalleled slaughter of the Great War, discipline and hierarchy were essential. Soldiers rarely questioned orders, even seemingly suicidal ones. Punishment and discipline were the main deterrents for potential trouble-makers, but rum also played a role in reinforcing this hierarchy of command. The clay rum jars were issued to the battalions, with each quartermaster dividing it out to the companies. But it was the sergeants or officers who actually served the rum. Men who were under punishment were excluded. Those who were in the good books lined up and the more senior ranking men moved down the line dolling out the precious liquid. It was a ritual



Behind the lines Canadians wait for refreshments, likely to be coffee or tea. Farther forward rum was the preferred drink. November 1916.

of war and akin in many soldiers' eyes to that of a religious offering. Each soldier waited patiently for his share, all the while aware that it was the higher-ranking soldier who divided up the portions, giving a little more or less depending on his whim. Just as rum was meaningful to the individual soldiers, it was also essential to the officers in helping to enforce their role in the primary group. If the enlisted men were against having their rum curtailed, it is also clear that it was not in the interest of the officers to support the temperance calls from the homefront. The politics of power were essential in all armies and the rum issue helped to support them.⁶⁵

If drinking rum was a ritual of war and helped to enforce the command hierarchy, alcohol consumption was also a practice of male youth. Warfare is a masculine operation that cultivates and expects aggressiveness, comradery and heroics. Even in civilian life, the act of drinking was often understood to be what distinguished boys from men, especially by young males. When J.I. Chambers of the 7th Battalion had his first tot of rum, he remembered that it felt as if he'd "swallowed a red-hot poker."⁶⁶ The powerful liquid

may have been painful to drink but, like other male activities such as rough sports, the acts proved that the drinker could measure up to expectations. Many saw the rum ration as a rite of passage and conforming to the norms of the group was an essential part of soldiering.⁶⁷ Others thought and were told that drink was the least of their worries; they were doing men's work and they would partake in the few advantages afforded to them.

Although it remained a worry among some that rum was being abused, the ration was usually delivered in small enough portions so as not to make soldiers exceedingly drunk. Still, the powerful rum affected men differently and soldiers who secretly pooled their issues could get into real trouble. At the same time, soldiers had an amazing ability to ferret out non-army sanctioned alcohol in the rear. The French-run informal estaminets were extremely popular among soldiers who could get a bite of eggs and frites, washed down with cheap wine or watery beer. Generally, however, while in the trenches, it was the officers who abused the rum ration as they were the ones who had ready access to it.

**The Thirst for Reprisals
" 'And me a rifle, someone.
I'll give these -----s
'ell for this!'"**

*from "The Bystander's" Fragments From France
by Captain Bruce Bairnsfather (London: 1915)
[Redrawn by Kirsten Sheffield]*



In either case, as in past armies, drunkenness was common, and despite not always being reported, within the Canadian Corps it resulted in more courts martials than all other crimes combined.⁶⁸ Major Agar Adamson of the PPCLI remarked in a letter home to his wife that "Rum is a great warmer, but it gives us more trouble than almost anything else, and certainly gets more men into trouble out here than its companion and associate - women."⁶⁹ Despite being abused on occasion, when the rum issue was being given out, each man waited, staring intently for the one before him to finish his shot, with little thought of pooling his portion for a latter time.

Notwithstanding this, there were soldiers who did not participate in the ritual and who actively opposed its use. Lieutenant-Colonel J.J. Creelman of the Canadian Field Artillery wrote in his diary that "I have just been outside watching the men have their issue of rum. They certainly do enjoy it and not one in a 100 refuses it. As far as I know there are only two teetotalers

in the Brigade, and they are brothers."⁷⁰ Few men were "on the dead," but those that remained were often shocked by the behavior of their companions. William Ogilvie, who enlisted at the age of 17 from Lakefield, Ontario, frankly recounted his introduction to the rough world of soldiering: "As I stood in line for my first meal I was amazed at the cursing, the extravagant use of four letter words seldom heard in our quiet village. I, whose swearing propensities generally ran to such inoffensive outbursts as, 'God all fishhooks,' or 'gosh, golly,' or an occasional 'darn' or 'damn,' was now treated to round after round of obscene language."⁷¹ Others like the future historian and Baptist, Harold Innis, recounted to his diary that military life was monotonous but filled with temptations from "beer and rum and electric pianos."⁷²

Soldiers raised in strict religious or moral families found the "drinking" lifestyle trying, and many feared for their companions. One of the soldiers' letters that made it past the various censors was by a young medical officer

corresponding with his father, who later published his letter in the *Christian Guardian*. In it he outlined how alcohol corrupted young men and would ultimately cause the Allies to lose the war. Even worse, "let me say in all seriousness that the poor fellows who have soddened themselves with alcohol haven't an earthly chance on recovering from the ghastly wounds caused by shrapnel; even the fellows who have been fairly temperate have a far harder fight for recovery as against abstainers. I don't know what you're doing in Canada about the drink business, but if you've any influence, for God's sake use it to suppress the cursed liquor traffic during the war."⁷³ Others like Frank Fox, moreover, were constantly worried about the long-term moral effects on their companions and, speaking for his like-minded abstainers, concluded in his diary that with alcohol "the world is very, very wicked."⁷⁴

Many Canadian soldiers had gone to war with promises to their loved ones that they would not drink. Charles Stafford of the 116th Battalion remembered that the only opposition his mother had to his enlistment was to be sure that he did not "get in with a drinking bunch."⁷⁵ At the same time though, there was a general misunderstanding between both soldiers and patriotic citizens as to what war entailed. For those who made it to the front lines, the true nature of war was all too apparent. Many eventually took the rum to ease the burden of war. One such Canadian tried to convince his father in a letter:

This war has opened my eyes a great deal about the drink question. Like thousands of others, I am now no longer bigoted against the drink traffic if properly controlled. I have seen that done here. The rum too - perhaps you read what Dr. Gordon (Ralph Connor) a great temperance minister as you know, told the people of Winnipeg after returning from France. He said "Rum is an absolute necessity for the soldiers in the field. I would rather dispossess them of their rifles than the rum they are now issued." Those were his exact words. I have no love for it, but sometimes take it with the others when very cold and wet. I am sure it does more good than harm.⁷⁶

Another religious soldier, Charlie Sprague, wrote to his brother, still using his Canadian YMCA letterhead: "This life has changed a lot of us. I think, I believe, I have changed a lot myself, and

can raise a little hell with the rest of them."⁷⁷ The war eroded old beliefs and broke bonds with the past. Soldiers were forced to forge new ones among their surrogate family of the trenches. An essential social and cultural component of that family life was rum.

The importance of rum in the trenches was reinforced by its prominence in the cultural expression of the soldiers. Some of their favourite anecdotes in their memoirs and letters revolve around rum. An examination of their writings, rather than those of the senior officers or official historians, shows how it slips into so many of their poems, trench newspapers and memoirs. Even the name of the rum itself - Special Red Demerara rum, or S.R.D. for short - was toyed with by the men. They jokingly referred to it as "Services' Rum Diluted," "Seldom Reaches Destination," "Sergeants Rarely Deliver," "Soldiers' Real Delight," or "Soon Runs Dry."⁷⁸ Along with their shared language, rum was a component of their poems and songs. A favourite, "The Old Barbed Wire," has a stanza that revolves around the real suspicion of the sergeant-major hoarding and cheating the soldiers out of their rum:

If you want to find the sergeant-major,
I know where he is, I know where he is.
If you want to find the sergeant-major,
I know where he is,
He's boozing up the private's rum.
I've seen him, I've seen him,
Boozing up the privates' rum,
I've seen him,
Boozing up the privates' rum.⁷⁹

Even weapons of war, like the tightly packed drums of explosives that the Germans catapulted into the Allied lines, were nicknamed by soldiers as Rum Jars to help ease some of the fear and make them less terrifying.⁸⁰ In the strange world of trench warfare, rum worked as a cultural tool to both express and come to grips with their unique situation.

Aware of the daunting pressure to abolish the rum ration, those who joined "the colours" wrote home attempting to convince those on the homefront of rum's importance.⁸¹ It was a wrenching task for some men, especially the padres, many of whom had been at the forefront of the temperance cause before the war. Their calling required their rejection of alcohol, but to

fight against it meant losing all influence they might have had with the soldiers.⁸² Catholic Padre B.J. Murdoch was able to assuage his conscience by justifying the rum ration as medicine.⁸³ Another chaplain laid out the issue in stark terms: "When we sent our men to slaughter other men, to thrust bayonets into them and to experience all the carnage and devilry of war, don't you imagine it will make spiritual beings out of them because it won't."⁸⁴ Despite their prewar perceptions, many of the chaplains of the overseas forces came to realise the importance of alcohol in the soldiers' lives.

It was not just the padres, but also soldiers who attempted to convey the necessity of rum. Private Ronald Mackinnon wrote to his father shortly before he was killed in battle: "A few people at home are chewing the rag about brave boys leaving to drink 'rum'....I take my rum...not because I like it, I don't, but it drives out the wet and cold and keeps a man fit... Those people who worry about the soldier's rum should do a sentry-go in the front line; they would know then. They do more harm than good as they make the boys' mothers worry about their sons and they have enough to worry about as it is."⁸⁵ Echoing Mackinnon's sentiments, George Maxwell poked fun at the moralizing prohibitionists:

Reformers in your hours of ease,
WCTU's and stern T.T.'s,
Why do you try to make us "good"
By pointing out the way we should
Travel along, because you think
The army cannot stand a drink
Of rum, but through it will our wives
And homes forsake, and e'en our lives
WILL RUIN....

When we have been out on patrol,
Or listening post in damp shell hole,
And through the long night vigil kept,
Mind you in feather bed had slept,
While we had not a wink to sleep,
But constantly to arms did leap
At each alarm, with bated breath
And nerves a quiver, braving death
FOR YOU....

Then in the morning cold and gray
The haggard men in every "bay"
Show on their faces the awful strain
Of war, but yet they hope to gain
Some rest and sleep with coming light.

But no! For see that fearsome sight
Of bursting shell, above, below,
Before, behind! think you go
TO SLEEP!

Yes, golden liquid from a jar
Marked S.R.D. - what spells there are
Within thee, that each tired limb
And aching nerve is filled with VIM
And rosy glow. With sweet content
To sleep and dream, through magic lent
By you, scorned rum, of home and love
And friends - Forgot the strife above!
KIND RUM.

Reformer, if you wish to do
One kindness, and I think it true
You this intend, then have the grace
To come out here and hold my place
And send me back home again,
Back to the farm amid the grain
And I will promise not to drink
Ought stronger than - what do y' think?
BUTTERMILK!⁸⁶

Soldiers felt it was absurd that they were forced to live in unspeakable conditions, suffer every type of abomination, and even kill other men, while those on the homefront implored them to abstain from alcohol from their pulpits and then went home to their clean, dry houses with a clear conscience.

When the Armistice was finally struck on 11 November 1918, some 60,000 Canadians were dead and another 170,000 wounded and maimed. It was a harsh price to pay for victory. So when Canadian soldiers were eventually demobilized, they were not particularly amused to find that although they had won the war, they had lost the right to drink. With the help of the veterans, prohibition was repealed in most provinces during the 1920s.

Military history is boring and old-fashioned. That, at least, is how most mainstream academic historians view the field. They are wrong, however, and while shunting military historians to the periphery and averting their collective gazes, academic historians have missed that military history has continued to evolve, borrowing and blending methodologies from social, cultural, labour and intellectual historians

to give a fuller, richer representation of war, where the song is as important as the diary, where combat motivation must be tempered with an understanding of the structures of power.

Social historians looking to study the marginalized or the "other," are generally left to second-hand documentation, collected by individuals who interacted with them, as the disenfranchised themselves rarely kept accounts. This type of evidence carries its own problems and biases, so that the historian is often forced to treat the record with extreme caution. There is no doubt that the trench soldier had been downplayed for many years following the Great War, silenced by the generals or memory-makers were better able to study and present their own views on how the war was to be remembered. A clearer image of the lowly ranker becomes clear, however, through a reading of their discourse in the letters, diaries, memoirs and postwar reflections. And it is here, captured in the documentation that they created, where the important role of rum in the soldiers' lives was revealed.

Although all but ignored in the official military records, rum, as well as the canteens, estaminets, cigarettes, letters and trench newspapers, were essential to the trench soldier. It was these small comforts that affected the individual in the firing line; grand operational plans mattered far less. As we have seen, rum was overflowing in both song and poem and played an essential role in the life of most trench soldiers: by raising morale; by helping men to cope with the strain of war; by being employed as a medicine; by being offered as a reward; and finally, by reinforcing the hierarchy of the army and the masculinity in soldiers. By examining these many uses of rum, a window into understanding the often neglected trench culture of the individual soldier is provided. Viewed in this way, rum was a complex and multi-layered tool for morale. Equally important, 'Demon Rum' was the soldiers' tool and without it, the common men who made up the soldiers' profession - the bankers, clerks and farmers, who put down their pens and ploughs for rifles - might have collapsed under the terrible strain, both physical and psychological, of trench warfare.

Notes

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 10th Military History Colloquium at Wilfrid Laurier University in May 1999 and this essay has profited from the discussion that followed. In addition, Sharon Cook, Timothy Dubé, Andrew Horrall, and Bill Parenteau offered valued advice and insight which helped to strengthen the final draft.

1. National Archives of Canada [NAC], Mackinnon family fonds, MG 30, E 547, letter, 27 January 1917.
2. NAC Records of the Canadian Broadcasting Company, RG 41, vol.7, 3rd BN, E. Seaman, 2/5.
3. Ralph Bell, *Canada in War Paint* (London, 1917), p.123.
4. See Richard A. Gabriel, *No More Hews: Madness and Psychiatry in War* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1987), p. 104; Richard Holmes, *Firing Line* (London: Pimlico, 1985), p.244; Forward by John Keegan, in Paul Addison (éd.), *Time To Kill: The Soldier's Experience of War in the West, 1939-45* (Pimlico, 1997).
5. Quoted in Andrew Parsons, *Morale and Cohesion in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment 1914-1918* (Memorial University of Newfoundland: Masters Thesis, 1995), p.14.
6. As noted by Pte. G. Brownbridge of the 13th Northumberland Fusiliers in Martin Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme* (Penguin Books: 1971, 1984), p. 160. In addition, one medical officer testifying before a 1922 parliamentary committee investigating the nature of shellshock offered his opinion: "Had it not been for the rum ration I do not think we should have won the war." As quoted in Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.47.
7. There are few works on the First World War which specifically examine trench culture. The seminal work is J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Desmond Morton's *When Your Number's Up* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1993) is the best full-length social history of the Canadian trench soldier.
8. Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship During Canada's Great War* (University of Alberta Press: 1996), pp. 13-22; Robert Rutherford, "Canada's August Festival: Communitas, Liminality, and Social Memory," *Canadian Historical Review* 77 (June 1996), pp.226-229.
9. Tim Cook, "Creating the Faith: The Canadian Gas Services in the First World War," *The Journal of Military History* 62 (October 1998), pp.775-779; Tim Cook, *No Place To Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War* (University of British Columbia Press, 1999), pp.175-181.
10. For example, see the two most influential works on morale: S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire* (New York: 1947); and Lord Moran, *Anatomy of Courage* (Boston: 1967).
11. Moris Janowitz and E.A. Shils, "Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II," in Moris Janowitz (éd.), *Military Conflict* (London: 1975), p.216.
12. John Baynes, *Morale* (London: 1967), p. 108.

13. NAC RG 41, Vol.7, 4th BN, Vick Lewis, Tape 1/Page 13 and 2/4.
14. See Alan Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), p. 144; Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), pp.7-8; Edward Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980), p.41; Carol M. Whitfield, *Tommy Atkins: The British Soldier in Canada, 1759-1870* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1981), p.43.
15. Max Reid, "Rum and the Navy" in James H. Morrison and James Moreira (eds), *Tempered by Rum: Rum in the History of the Maritime Provinces* (Nova Scotia: Pottersfield Press, 1988), p.36.
16. NAC Aubrey Wyndham Griffiths fonds, MG 30, E 442, Memoirs, p. 13.
17. NAC Victor Odium fonds, MG 30, E 300, Vol.24, file Trench Discipline, Extract of Trench Routine Orders, n.d. [end of 1916]
18. NAC A.E. Kemp fonds, MG 27, II-B-9, Vol.147, file L-4, Memorandum for the Honourable Minister on the Subjects: (a) sale of Liquor on board Transports, (b) Wet Canteens in England and France. 18 June 1918.
19. For the temperance issue see: Sharon Anne Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1974-1930*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "John Barley Corn Must Die: An Introduction to the Social History of Alcohol," in Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (éd.), *Drink In Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).
20. Vance Thompson, *Drink and Be Sober* (New York: Association Press, 1916), p.102.
21. Brian Douglas Tennyson, "Sir William Hearst and the Ontario Temperance Act," *Ontario History*, Vol.LV (1963), p.239.
22. J.M. Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," *Canadian Historical Review* (September 1968), p.225. See also, Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship*, pp.97-98.
23. J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.33.
24. Thompson, *Drink and Be Sober*, p. 180.
25. NAC Records of the Department of External Affairs, RG 25, Vol.277, file P-8-15, Ashplant to Borden, 24 May 1917; Kemp to Borden, 14 June 1917.
26. Harold Baldwin, *Holding the Line* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1918), p.267.
27. Malcolm Brown, *The Imperial War Museum Book of the Somme* (Pan Books: 1997), p. 19.
28. NAC RG 41, Vol.12, 18th BN, M.A. Searle, 2/1. See also A.G. Roland, 49th Battalion, 1/9.
29. NAC RG 41, Vol.9, 8th BN, G.Boyd, 2/5.
30. Charles Yale Harrison, *Generals Die in Bed* (Potlatch Publications: 1928), p.94.
31. NAC Claude Vivian Williams fonds, MG 30, E 400, Williams to mother, 28 Dec. 1916. See also NAC RG 41, Vol.7, McGowan, 1st BN, 1/11; and Gordon Reid, *Poor Bloody Murder* (Mosaic Press: 1980), p. 153.
32. The Adjutant, *The 116th Battalion In France* (Toronto: E.P.S. Allen, 1921), p.81; William Ogilvie, *Umyt-Iddy-Umyt: The Story of a Canadian Signaller in the First World* (Erin: The Boston Mills Press, 1982), pp.46-47; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, p.91.
33. Due to the mud at Passchendaele, the carrying of the wounded was absolutely exhausting. One soldier remembered that both the patient and the stretcher-bearers got shots of rum when they arrived at the clearing stations. NAC RG 41, Vol.9, 8th BN, G. Boyd, 2/5.
34. A "Rum Jar" was a nickname for a barrel-like explosive charge which was catapulted from the enemy lines. Packed with explosives they could knock in large sections of the trenches. They were terrifying weapons because the jars could be visually tracked and soldiers would spring away down the trenches trying to evade the projected landing site.
35. NAC Private Ernest Spillet fonds, MG 30, E 209, letter 22 March 1917.
36. NAC Mackinnon family fonds, MG 30, E 547, letter 10 November 1916.
37. NAC RG 41, Vol.13, James Page, 2/4. See also, Vol.13, T.D. Bonn, 44th BN, 2/16.
38. NAC George Bell fonds, MG 30, E 113, Memoirs, p.45. See also, Hickson in *As It Was Then*, p.61.
39. NAC RG 41, Vol.7, 4th BN, Lunt, 2/2.
40. Morton, *When Your Number's Up*, p. 157.
41. Great Britain, *First Army Administrative Report on the Vimy Ridge Operations*, 1917. (I would like to thank Paul Marsden for lending me his personal copy of these bound operational files.)
42. Arthur O. Hickson in D.G.L. Fraser (éd.), *As It Was Then* (Nova Scotia: Acadia University, 1988), p.77.
43. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship*, p. 181.
44. NAC RG 41, Vol. 11, Crooks and McCorry, 25th BN, 7/13.
45. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, p.47.
46. NAC RG 41, Vol.8, 7th BN, J.H. MacArthur, 2/6. See also, NAC John P. McNab fonds, MG 30, E 42, Diary, p.9, for a personal account of getting a hold of jug of rum, drinking his fill, and walking overland, totally ignoring the protective trenches.
47. NAC RG 41, Vol.11, 25th BN, C.J. Albon, 3/17.
48. Guy Chapman, *Vain Glory*, (London: Cassell, 1968), p 408.
49. NAC RG 41, Vol.8, 7th BN, MacArthur, 2/6.
50. Norman Miles Guiou, *Transfusion: A Canadian Surgeon's Story in War and in Peace* (Nova Scotia: Sentinel Printing Ltd, 1985), pp.38-39.
51. NAC RG 41, 2nd CMR, M.E. Parsons, 1/6. Pre-war doctors thought that alcohol would be enough to keep soldiers from falling victim to psychological strain of war. It was not, but it helped. Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation* (Boston: Kluwer & Nijhoff Publishing, 1982), p.273.
52. Bell, *Canada in War Paint*, p. 124. See also, Ernest Black, *I Want One Volunteer* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1965), p.128.
53. It should be noted that food was also cooked in the front lines but the supplies had to get there first. For a recent examination see Ian Brown, *British Logistics on the Western Front, 1914-1919* (Praeger: 1998). Although this book is excellent at analysing the larger strategic problems of supplying soldiers, it all but ignores how this was actually done at the battalion level. Instead, see The Adjutant, *The 116th Battalion In France* (Toronto: E.P.S. Allen, 1921); Arnold Warren, *Wait For the Waggon: The Story of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1961); and F.R. Phelan, "Army Supplies in the Forward Area and the Tumpline System," *Canadian Defence*

- Quarterly, Vol.VI, (Oct. 1928), pp. 22-33 [reprinted in this issue of *Canadian Military History*].
54. The average British portion consisted of 1 lb. of frozen meat (usually beef), 1 lb. of bread or 12 oz. of hardtack biscuits; 8 oz. of fresh vegetables or 2 oz. of dried vegetables; 4 oz. of bacon; 3 oz. Cheese; and tea, jam, tobacco, sugar, salt and others Charles R. Shrader, "Maconchie's Stew" Logistical Support of American Forces with the BEF, 1917-18," R.J.Q. Adams (éd.), *The Great War 1914-1918* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 118.
 55. D.E. Macintyre, *Canada At Vimy* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1967), p. 18. See also, J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p.59.
 56. NAC RG 41, 4th CMR, Gregory Clark, 1/8.
 57. NAC RG 41, Vol.7, 4th BN, Vick Lewis, 1/13.
 58. Armine Norris, *Mainly For Mother* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1919), p.59.
 59. Great Britain, *First Army Administrative Report on the Vimy Ridge Operations, 1917*, p.76.
 60. NAC Records of the Department of Militia and Defence, RG 9, Vol.4553, Ration Pamphlet, S.S. 571.
 61. NAC RG 41, 27th BN, H. Snape, Vol.11, 1/6.
 62. E.L.M. Burns, *General Mud* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1970), p. 14; Pierre Berton, *Vimy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), p. 113; Jeffrey Williams, *Byng of Vimy*, (University of Toronto Press: 1983, 1992), p.160; NAC RG 41, 54th BN, R.H. Sinclair, 1/9; NAC RG 41, Vol.8, 7th BN, F Dawson, 2/14.
 63. R.J. Manion, *A Surgeon in Arms* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1918), pp. 107-8.
 64. Bell, *Canada in War Paint*, p. 125. Also see Robert Graves as quoted in Richard Holmes, *Firing Line*, p.249; and NAC RG 41, Vol.11, W.R. Allen, 26th BN, 3/1.
 65. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, p.46; Chapman, *Vain Glory*, p.576.
 66. NAC RG 41, Vol.8, 7th Battalion, J.I. Chambers, 1/7.
 67. See Mike O'Brien, "Manhood and the Militia Myth: Masculinity, Class and Militarism in Ontario, 1902-1914," *Labour/le Travail*, 42 (Fall 1998), pp.138-140, for a discussion on these issues in the pre-war militia.
 68. Morton, *When Your Number's Up*, p. 109; Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship*, p. 160.
 69. *Letters of Agar Adamson, 1914 to 1919*, (ed.) N.M. Christie, (CEF Books, 1997), p. 154.
 70. NAC John Creelman fonds, MG 30, E 8, Diary, 26 May 1916. See also, NAC Cecil J. French fonds, MG 30 E 558, Vol. 1, file 1. In a 12 August 1916 letter to a friend, Sergeant Cecil French wrote that "a teetotaller, sorry to say, is a curiosity in this army."
 71. Ogilvie, *Umty-Iddy-Umty*, p. 10.
 72. Michael Gauvreau, "Baptist Religion and the Social Science of Harold Innis," *Canadian Historical Review* (1995 No. 2), p. 174.
 73. NAC RG 25, Vol.263, file P-3-99, "From the Christian Guardian: A letter received from a father in Victoria BC, whose son is with the medical corps at the front."
 74. NAC Frank Benbow Fox fonds, MG 30, E 565, diary, p.44 (ca. March 1915).
 75. NAC RG 41, Vol.17, Charles Stafford, 116th BN, 1/1.
 76. NAC Claude Vivian Williams fonds, MG 30, E 400, letter 25 January 1917.
 77. NAC Sprague family fonds, MG 30, E 523, Charlie Sprague to his brother Jim, 19 December 1915. See also, NAC RG 41, Vol.8, 7th BN, W. Wiseman, 1/5.
 78. NAC William Woods fonds, MG 31, G 30, Memoirs: "Comments and Notes to *When Your Number's Up*", p.9; J. Clinton Morrison Jr, *Hell Upon Earth: A Personal Account of Prince Edward Island Soldiers in the Great War, 1914-1918* (P.E.I.: J. Clinton Morrison Jr., 1995), p. 111 ; George A. Maxwell, *Su>an Song of a Rustic Moralist* (New York: Exposition Press, 1975), p.90; Edwin Oye, "S.R.D.," *The Legionary* (March 1938), p.7.
 79. John Brophy and Eric Patridge, *The Long Trail: Soldier's Songs & Slang 1914-1918*, (London: Sphere Books Limited, 1965,1969), pp.29, 54. See also, NAC George Bell fonds, MG 30 E 113, Memoirs, p.45.
 80. See footnote 34.
 81. For examples of women supporting conscription see Robert Bray, *The English Canadian Patriotic Response to the Great War* (York University: PHd. Dissertation, 1977), p.353; and Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, p. 75.
 82. Duff Crerar, *Padres in No Man's Land* (Queen's-McGill University Press: 1995), p.37.
 83. B.J. Murdoch, *The Red Vineyard* (Iowa: The Torch Press, 1923), pp.30-3.
 84. David B. Marshall, "Methodism Embattled: A Reconsideration of the Methodist Church and World War 1," *Canadian Historical Review* (1985/1), p.57.
 85. NAC Mackinnon family fonds, MG 30, E 547, letter 2 February 1917.
 86. George A. Maxwell, *Swan Song of a Rustic Moralist* (New York: Exposition Press, 1975), p.91. See also NAC RG 41, Vick Lewis, Vol.7, 4th BN, 1/13, 2/8; and Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship*, p. 144, for particularly harsh attacks on the WCTU.

Tim Cook is a graduate of Trent University and the War Studies programme at the Royal Military College of Canada. He is the Transport Archivist in the Government Archives and Records Disposition Division, of the National Archives of Canada. His book entitled, *No Place to Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War* has recently been published by University of British Columbia Press.