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Narrative of the Volunteer Camp at Niagara June 1871

By a full private
[Andrew Greenhill, 13th Battalion]

To provide historical context, the Niagara camp was convened towards the tail end of a period of much ferment and concern as regards Canadian defence. The period had begun in 1855 when, due to the need for troops to fight in the war then raging against Russia in the Crimea, the British substantially reduced the strength of their North American garrison. This caused the government of the then united provinces of Canada to take a serious look at what they could do to defend themselves in the absence of the British regulars. The result was a new Militia Act, which proposed spending money on a force of 5,000 volunteer militia who were to be drilled ten days a year. The emphasis on volunteers moved away from the long-standing Canadian tradition of the sedentary militia, whereby all males between the ages of eighteen and sixty were theoretically liable for military service. This system had proved unworkable in practice, with little enthusiasm for military training being exhibited at its infrequent and poorly-managed musters.

The 1855 Act established the principle that militia service in Canada would be performed only by volunteers. These men would meet regularly for training and henceforth would be the force upon which governments relied in times of emergency, the old sedentary militia remaining a paper force only. This principle of militia service being carried out by volunteers was reiterated in Militia Acts passed by the Canadas in 1863 and by the newly-formed Dominion of Canada in 1868. Meanwhile, the British had renewed the size of their garrison after the Crimean War,
and, indeed, during the American Civil War of 1861-1865, increased it to the highest levels it had reached since the end of the War of 1812. But the sense of crisis generated by the Civil War and other threats that quickly followed it resulted in the Canadians increasing the size of their own volunteer militia as well. During these years numerous battalions came into being that are still on the Canadian militia list today – including the 1st Battalion Militia Rifles of Canada, now the Canadian Grenadier Guards, in Montreal in 1859; the Queen's Own Rifles in Toronto in 1860; and the 13th Battalion, Canadian Militia, now the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, in Hamilton in 1862.³

During the American Civil War many issues put relations between Americans and British North Americans under severe strain. This included the serious Trent crisis of late 1861 early 1862, when members of the Union Navy boarded a British mail vessel of that name on the high seas and forcibly removed two Confederate emissaries bound for Great Britain. The British government of Lord Palmerston reacted with outrage and, with threats of war emanating from both sides, began the large military build-up mentioned above. Three years later the Union government was in turn outraged when a force of Confederates attacked the Vermont community of St. Albans using Quebec as a base of operations. Also during the war, the Confederate commerce raider Alabama had attacked and sunk great quantities of northern shipping. As the vessel had been built in Great Britain, tense negotiations ensued after the war between the United States and Great Britain over claims by the former for compensation for the damage done to them by this vessel. These negotiations were, in fact, still very much in progress as the militia camp met at Niagara in 1871.⁴

Still, the Americans proceeded quickly to demobilize their massive armies at the end of the war, which significantly eased British North American concerns from that quarter. But then came the armed menace of the Fenians. This was a large group of Irish-Americans who thought they could help the cause of Irish independence from Britain by attacking Canada. They were not to be taken lightly as many were experienced veterans of the Civil War. During the war Fenian leaders had maintained a chorus of denunciations against the British presence in Canada and soon after it ended, optimistic that the American government would come to their aid, began to form units that could turn warlike energies northwards.⁵ In November 1865, only months after the war ended, Canadian militia units mobilized to meet Fenian threats, including two Special Service companies from Hamilton’s 13th Battalion being sent to patrol the Detroit River frontier. An even larger number from the battalion turned out for local service to meet threats that emerged in conjunction with St. Patrick’s Day, 17 March 1866.⁶

The story of the Fenian Raids has been much covered in Canadian historical literature, most recently and incisively by Hereward Senior in his book The Last Invasion of Canada (1991). Here it is sufficient to note that it was a period of constant ‘alarums and excursions,’ with British North Americans governments perpetually in a state of vigilance about possible attacks. The first actual incursion came in April 1866 against Campobello Island in New Brunswick. This resulted in an armed stand off against mobilized units of the New Brunswick militia and a force of British regulars for a couple of weeks before the Fenians at last withdrew back into Maine, having accomplished little. This was followed by a much more serious crisis on 1 June, when another Fenian force, numbering close to a thousand, crossed the Niagara River and captured the town of Fort Erie. Then, the next day they confronted and put to rout a force of Canadian militia (including Hamilton’s 13th Battalion) at the Battle of Ridgeway. Although the Fenians did not capitalize on their triumph and withdrew that night back into New York State, Canadian defence authorities were shocked by their success. This was not helped when, only a week later, inexperienced companies of local volunteers companies pulled back before another Fenian force that crossed from Vermont into Quebec’s Eastern Townships. Although this time the invaders withdrew before any fighting took place, the two raids together had a galvanizing impact upon government approval of training for the Canadian volunteers.

Although the Fenians did not attack for four more years, they continued to train and, with threats continuing to emanate from south of the border, British North Americans governments remained in a state of alert. The last great Fenian crisis came in May 1870, when another force
entered Canada across the Vermont border. This time, however, they were confronted by a force of privately raised Home Guards and by companies of local volunteer battalions at a spot called Eccles Hill and sent reeling back across the border into Vermont. A couple of days later in western Quebec at Holbrook Corners on the Trout River, an even larger Fenian force was driven back by a combined force of British regulars and Canadian volunteers. These were the last Fenian invasions of Canada although another was planned against Manitoba in October 1871. A small force actually crossed the border and seized a Hudson's Bay post, but was deterred from doing further harm by the intervention of a force of the American Army. Thereafter the Fenian movement in North America lost momentum and ceased being a concern to Canadian politicians.7

The set-backs of 1866 having convinced Canadian leaders that their volunteers needed more and better training, only two months later, responding to the advice of Colonel (later Field Marshal Sir) Garnet Wolseley, then on the staff of the British military in Canada, the government authorized a special training camp at Thorold, Ontario. Here volunteer units came in rotation for a week’s training with British regulars in drill, musketry, and field exercises, all under Wolseley’s command. The experiment was so successful that camps began to meet annually across the country. A camp at Grimsby, Ontario in 1870 saw the introduction of brigade-size training, which was also the case with that held at Niagara in 1871, with division-size training following in 1872. Doubtless training received an additional impetus due to the fact that by November 1871 the British had withdrawn the last of its garrison from Canada. It was in this atmosphere that the Canadian tradition of the summer militia camp was born.

Like its predecessor the previous year held at Grimsby (which Andrew Greenhill also attended), the 1871 camp at Niagara was for a brigade-size formation, which included infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Militia Orders proclaimed that sufficient funds had been voted ‘to provide for the training of a considerable number of men in Brigade Camps of Exercise for sixteen days continuous Drill the Officers, Non-Commissioned officers, and men attending such camps being paid, practiced, and maintained as if on active duty.8 From a strength of 19,600 in the spring of 1866, the number of volunteers had swelled to 40,000 by 1871.9 Stacey indeed concludes that ‘in the troubled period of the American Civil War and the Fenian raids a new sense of military responsibility and new national feeling grew up together.’10

service." Camps were to be held in all nine Militia Districts into which the new Dominion was divided: at Goderich, Niagara, Kingston, and Prescott in Ontario; at Laprairie (which included Districts No. 5 and No. 6) and Point Lévis in Quebec; at Fredericton in New Brunswick; and at Aylesford Plains in Nova Scotia. The largest by far, nearly twice the size of any of the others, was the camp for Military District No. 2 held at Niagara, where a force of 4300 men was to assemble consisting of some seventeen separate units. Amongst them was Hamilton’s 13th Battalion, which brought to camp 11 officers, 17 Non-commissioned Officers, and 328 men, under the command of Major Henry Irving, the actual commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel J.A. Skinner, then being off with a detachment from the battalion at a rifle-shooting contest at Wimbledon, in England.

The men attending the militia camps were to be paid at the regulated rates, which ranged from $4.87 a day for a lieutenant-colonel, to $2.82 for a captain, to 70 cents for a sergeant, down to 50 cents a day for a private. The daily ration allowance for each ‘Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer and Man’ was:

- 1 1/2 lb. Bread
- 1 lb. Meat
- 1 lb. Potatoes
- 2 oz. Sugar
- 1/3 oz. Coffee
- 1/6 oz. Tea
- 1/2 oz. Salt
- 1.36 oz. Pepper

The rank and file were to come to camp ‘fully equipped’ with knapsack or great coat straps (straps slung over the shoulder to hold a great coat, in which small items could be enclosed), great coat, haversack, water bottle, drinking mug, tin plate, fork and spoon, towel and soap, comb and brushes and an ‘extra pair of socks.’ Shakos and busbies were not brought, however, ‘Forage Caps only being required.’ With the men accommodated ten to a tent, the whole camp came under the command of Colonel Patrick Robertson Ross, Adjutant General of the Canadian Militia.

As laid down by Militia Orders, camp duties were to be such as would be observed by troops on active service.

One gun will be fired by the field battery at daybreak, immediately after which the Reveille will be played by bands or corps of drums and fifes belonging to the battalions appointed daily for this duty in succession, and at sunset another gun will be fired, when the Retreat will be sounded in the same manner as detailed above. The breakfast hour will be at 8 a.m., dinner at 1 p.m., and the evening meal at 6 p.m. Tattoo will be sounded at half past nine, when the reports will be collected and handed to the field officers of the day by orderly officers of battalions and corps; and at ten o’clock the bugle will sound for lights to be extinguished; after which no one will be allowed out of camp except passed by authority, and all officers and men must sleep in camp.

The Toronto Globe had an unnamed ‘special correspondent’ on the scene, whose coverage provides more detail concerning the human circumstances of the camp. Of the gathering’s effect on the town of Niagara, for example, he wrote on 6 June:

The large influx of strangers appears to have reanimated the old capital, usually so very dull, and trade has all at once received great stimulus. Last night the scarlet tunics of the infantry or the dark green of the rifles was to be seen in almost every store, and the streets resounded with their martial tread. There is ample opportunity too, for amusement in the evening if the volunteers only had time for it, which they have not. There are at present in full blaze, female minstrel performances, the inevitable collection of monstrosities, the entertainment of the Gaiety Vaudeville Company ...., concert and dancing hall, etc., and on Wednesday an old Torontonian, Allan Halford, commences a series of dramatic entertainments.

Of the camp’s first ‘grand field day,’ held on 9 June, in which, except for one unit that was at rifle practice, the entire force participated, the reporter wrote that the troops formed up at 5:30 a.m. and marched off to the revue ground on the eastern side of the encampment. ‘Each Corps as it arrived’ he noted, ‘took up its allotted position in quarter column, in a line facing the Niagara River. At 6:00 a.m. the whole marched past the reviewing stand. There were six brass bands with two file and drum bands. Formed into line, the parade was between half and three quarters of a mile long.’ Although he focused mostly on the Toronto units present, he did observe that ‘Amongst the battalions worthy of special commendation for their marching in column was the 13th, who deserve no little credit for the
manner in which each of its companies preserved
an even front and kept a proper distance.’ His
conclusion was that ‘it would be a difficult matter
for any country to show a more robust and hearty
looking lot of men than those who are at camp
at Niagara.’17

The encampment was, of course, directly
across the Niagara River and well within site
of the American Fort Niagara in New York, still
staffed by the garrison with which it had been
equipped during the Civil War. That the militia
camp may have had some salutary effects upon
the American garrison at a time when the British
were in the process of withdrawing their own
troops from Canada is a consideration that
hardly could have escaped the minds of those
concerned with Canadian defence at the time.18

Sir George Etienne Cartier, who visited the camp
on the last full day of activity on 19 June to carry
out an inspection and to preside over a ball for the
officers that night, proclaimed in a speech to the
assembled troops, that ‘they had had the honour
of being visited by distinguished American
officials who had watched the proceedings with
interest day after day, and had expressed their
astonishment at the knowledge the volunteers
had shown of the duties of soldiers and the
manner which they had performed them.’ He
then noted that he had, as courtesy, visited the
American commander at Fort Niagara, General
Richard H. Jackson, and reportedly had assured
him that ‘it was the desire of the Government of
Canada to organize an efficient volunteer force,
but God grant that their services might never
be required against the Americans.’19

Whether
General Jackson, Irish-born himself and a
veteran of the American Civil war, was unduly
worried is not recorded.20

Turning to the 13th Battalion’s Andrew
Greenhill, we do not have a complete life story.
We know that he lived from 1850 to 1923 and
that he immigrated to Canada with his family
as a youth from Scotland. He was evidently a
strong churchman as the Bates family donation
includes a letter that he wrote to his future bride,
Agnes Somerville, of 26 November 1871, where,
in the same clear hand as the narrative, he tells
her of having attended church and comments at
length on the sermon. ‘Who shall roll away the
stone from the sepulchre.’21 While admittedly this
could have been written to impress the woman he
was wooing, nonetheless evidence suggests that

Greenhill remained intimately involved in the
church. The donation also includes a promissory
note to the Merchants Bank at Prescott Ontario,
dated 26 July 1878, on which Greenhill identifies
himself as ‘Treasurer-President’ of the church
committee.’ (This would also seem to indicate that
at some point he moved to Prescott.) The church
affiliation may help to explain a certain element of
restraint or even propriety that characterizes the
narrative. We do know that at the time of the camp
Greenhill was 21 years old and that he was still
living with his parents in Hamilton. He obviously
had received at least a good secondary school
education, as the narrative is well written in a
quite elegant hand, generally clearly expressed
and with usually accurate spelling (although with
careless punctuation).

The narrative consists of 19 closely-written
legal-size pages, although it is cut rather abruptly
short, either because the author ran out of steam
or because the remainder has been lost. This is
sufficient, however, to make the manuscript an
invaluable historical document for its depiction
of the experience of camp life and training from
the point of view of the ordinary enlisted man
in this important period in the formation of the
Canadian military.

There is not much evidence of a sense of
crisis in Greenhill’s narrative, nor are there any
signs of concern over the force’s deficiencies
and ill-preparedness such as those that that
mark contemporary officers’ accounts. There is
nothing in Greenhill, for example, to match the
following remarks about a unit leaving for camp
that appear in a pamphlet published in 1873
by Lieutenant-Colonel R.H. Davis of the 37th
Haldimand Rifles:

On the ill-fated Thursday morning, five or six
companies are formed at the station, waiting for
the cars, and to look at them, one would think
that “moteley” was the wear of the Canadian
militia. Here is a fellow in a straw hat; there one
in a wide-awake [The Oxford English Dictionary
defines this as a popular term for a ‘soft felt
hat with broad brim and low crown.’]. Here is
one in a forage cap, trowsers and shirt sleeves;
there one with a uniform coat across his arm,
but no other article of uniform about him. (The
clothing has to last five years, understand, and
has already been worn by two or three parties,
coming out minus or plus something at every
transfer.) The rifles and knapsacks alone, look
serviceable, the rest of the get up being filthy
through carelessness and neglect.22
Perhaps similar comments could not be made about Hamilton’s 13th Battalion, which seems to have been one of the better-run militia battalions. Certainly there is no evidence of such slovenliness in the photograph taken of it on parade at Camp Niagara. (See photo above).

Clearly it was the fun and hi-jinks that registered most memorably with Andrew Greenhill. This was accompanied by some disdain for certain parts of the military experience, such as fatigues, standing guard, and aspects of the officer-man relationship. At the same time, though, there was much unit pride, real interest in the overall military enterprise at the camp, and a determination to do well in the military exercises. Certainly Greenhill’s conclusion was that the money spent on the camp was ‘not wasted’ and that he had ‘enjoyed the 16 day’s drill thoroughly.’

At the same time, the narrative reveals interesting aspects of the contemporary mentality, such as a fascination with the ‘monstrosities,’ as mentioned by the Globe correspondent, and also the outrage that could result when the men discovered they were being fooled. Random outbreaks of fighting seem to have been a feature of camp life, often as much for the fun of it all as over any real perceived grievances, although there were some of the latter as well. There were also rambunctious and probably dangerous pastimes such as ‘blanket tossing’. Greenhill’s account evidencing some surprising indifference on the part a Christian gentleman such as himself to the fate of dogs and certain camp followers who became victims of the activity. The narrative also brings out the pervasive presence of music in the camp life of the time, with bands seemingly everywhere and playing at every chance they had, not always to the joy of unappreciative listeners such as Greenhill.

The narrative is written partly in ink and partly in pencil on both sides of loose sheets of paper. At some point the pages have been cut in half, but none of the writing has been lost. As noted, although Greenhill writes well in a good hand and his spelling is generally accurate, he is careless with punctuation. Also, he does not use paragraphs. In the following, I have attempted to maintain Greenhill’s narrative as much as possible as he penned it and, in the belief that he can be fairly easily followed, have provided
appropriate punctuation only where I have deemed it absolutely necessary. I have also split the text into paragraphs in the obvious places. Greenhill uses British-Canadian spelling with 're' words like 'centre', but American spelling with words like 'labor' or 'color', which I have retained. I have provided explanatory notes where I have been able to find the information and thought it to be helpful. But it is time to let Greenhill himself do the talking.

**Greenhill's Narrative**

In the spring of 1871 it was decided by government to carry out on a much larger scale than ever attempted before in Canada several camps of instruction for the volunteer militia in the dominion. This wise step was taken with view of giving to the active militia a practical lesson in the duties and necessities of camp life. [Note: the term active militia referred to the volunteers, to distinguish them from the non-active or sedentary militia.] And we may rest assured that the money spent on these camps was not thrown away as men are able to learn more practically in a few days than they would in the drillsheds at home drilling a night every week for a whole year. It must also be borne in mind that the drillsheds in Canada were practically in a few days than they would in the drillsheds at home drilling a night every week for a whole year. It must also be borne in mind that the pay of the men was the same for a year as formerly. The writer was [a] member of the 13th Battalion infantry of Hamilton & with his comrades enjoyed the 16 days drill thoroughly. The largest camp was at the old historic town of Niagara & thither the 13th and other troops composing the camp were ordered to assemble on the 6th of June.

We were ordered to parade at 4:00 am. I arose about 2:30 & packed my kit swallowed a hasty breakfast bade adieu to my parents & shouldering my "snider" started for the drillshed. Daylight was just breaking & I felt quite cold burdened as I was with a full kit rations for two days, accoutrements, overcoat, & the heavy warm dress provided by the government to keep out the heat. Whew I warm up as I think of it. However we were destined as will be seen to suffer from the cold contrary to last years experience at Grimsby when we had intense heat the whole time of our stay. [Editor’s note: The "snider" refers to the battalion’s firearm of the day, the single-shot Snider-Enfield breech-loading rifle. For a time, after the battle of Ridgeway, at which the battalion had used Enfield muzzle-loaders, the 13th had been equipped with American-made Spencer repeating rifles. Militia authorities had deemed these too complicated for part-time militia soldiers, however, and in fall of 1867 replaced them with single-shot Snider-Enfields, then the firearm used by the British army. The Canadian militia was to continue to use them into the 1890s.23]

No young ladies were aboard to witness the conquering hero’s [sic] departure and I got to the drill shed having seen no one except two redcoats like myself. [‘Redcoats’ refers to the colour of their tunics, which were the traditional red of the British and Canadian infantry.] Arrived at the drillshed, I found the three McKeands, Bolton, & one or two others all No. 6 [No. 6 Company – to which Greenhill belonged] sitting on the steps opposite shivering and waiting for the officers to appear, whose last words the night before were to parade at 4 a.m. sharp. I must here pause to enter my protest against this general habit in military affairs. In my limited experience I have seen the absurdity of it frequently. On [the] Queen’s birthday we are ordered to parade about an hour & a half before we are wanted. When we went to Grimsby we paraded at 7 P.M. & did not leave until 9:30. Leaving Grimsby the rouse was sounded at daybreak and we struck tents while the rain was pouring down and after all did not leave the ground until 11:30. Going to Niagara, we were ordered to meet exactly one hour before we fell in and on the morning we left there, we were roused before daybreak & then had to stand shivering until the sun rose to dry tents before we could take them down. And in almost every case the officers who are so emphatic in their order to be in time are generally the last on the ground themselves.

But to resume my narrative. Only two others appeared in the next half hour. Somerville of No 4 [Company], Alf McCracken of No 6 [Company], who had taken lodgings for the night next door to the shed, & who indignantly chased one of our party sent to hurry him up, following him barefooted out to the street & belabored him with a suspender. The bugle sounded at 5 o’clock. We left the drillshed a half hour later and marched off headed by our band playing the “good-luck” march. Sergt [Sergeant] Angus was taken for color guard & before the day was over he wished the colors in distant places and bore his burden often muttering curses not loud but deep. He said at night that if he was ever appointed again he would mutiny.

The sun was now rising brightly and giving promise of a beautiful day, and the time passed merrily with "chaff" & laughter. The privates are
after all the happiest men in the regiment, standing in comparison to the officers much the same as children in school to the teachers. The train was in waiting when we got to the station & we got aboard without delay & were glad to get off our packs & accoutrements. Jack & Ted Thomas, Walter Balfour, Pemberton & myself secured seats together & packed away our baggage as we would not have another change until we got to Clifton. Tom Leggo was meanwhile cutting capers on the platform. He was parading up and down in pants & undershirt only & close cut head & with a car coupling in one hand & an iron pin he went about calling out all aboard for ‘Toronto’. This train for lunatic asylum etc. While Fred Lucas, similarly attired was weeping copious tears for the girl he left behind him. There were not many girls down to see him off. I suppose they could not get their chignons in order at so unseemly an hour. [Note: The Oxford English Dictionary identifies the chignon as a style of women’s hair wherein a large coil of hair, often wrapped around a pad, was worn at the nape of the neck. One of its noted periods of popularity was ca. 1870.] About half a dozen redcoats failed to put in an appearance & Ensign Dyett was left behind to pick them up & Jim McKay was left behind by accident he having gone up street with some civilians to see a man. [Editor’s Note: This phrase ‘to see a man’ recurs a couple of times in narrative, its implication apparently being the obtaining of alcohol. Lieutenant-Colonel Davis, complains in his account, for example, that whenever the train carrying troops stopped it was ‘covered by a cloud of skirmishers, ostensibly for water, but in reality to “see a man” in every tavern in the neighbourhood.’24]

We were joined by the Dundas Company, Lieut [Lieutenant] Foley & Ensign Ogg & moved off about 6 a.m. Tom Leggo created much fun by seizing the coat tail of a contractor [sic] on the train several times, singing out tickets, & before the man could look around, sinking down out of sight. He finally rose gradually up to his full height and looked steadily at the man with a face as solemn as a judge who seemed frightened enough of the strange apparition to sink into his boots. Leggo was joined by Lucas & Melville & the three went through a very comical performance to the great amusement of the men in the car & a number of the officers who had come in to see the fun. Little else of interest occurred before reaching Clifton.

The train sped swiftly along and we passed the time right merrily, & why not. Were we not to be fed clothed & taken care of for the next 16 days by the government? We had not a single care to annoy us so hurrah for the “pipeclay & glory.” At St. Kits [St. Catherines] the train stoped [sic] half the regt. [regiment] rushed off in search of water or something else but to the warning “toot” of the engine they all turned & doubled back in a great hurry. One man got a heavy fall over a curb in the melee & being completely lamed for the time had to be carried back to the train. At the Welland Canal we had to wait for a boat going through & a lot of men as usual rushing out to see what they could. Alf McCracken returned with a lot of cat’s tails & lily blades shouting out artichokes. McKenzie at once closed with him & they rubbed them over each other’s face until their noses bled.

At Clifton there was some delay shunting off the Erie and Niagara Line. This road from Clifton to Niagara is one of steep grades & sharp curves. And until we passed Queenston Heights, the trucks of the cars kept up a continual squeaking noise caused by the sharp turns in the road. The track emerges on the plain seven miles from Niagara and the view from here is extensive and lovely. Two miles to the east is Brock’s Monument. It does not seem ½ a mile the atmosphere is so clear. Further south is Lewiston in the dominions of Uncle Sam. To the west is the pretty little village of St Davids & to the south lies the fertile plains of Niagara bounded by the blue waters of Lake Ontario with two or three sails visible looking like tiny specks in the distance. A man from No 5 Coy [Company] fell off here while the train was going at full speed. An engine with several men was sent back to look for him & very luckily he had fallen into a mudhole and although lying insensible he had no bones broken and was on duty two days after.

We now busied ourselves getting buckled up and sat anxiously waiting for the first view of the “tented field.” It came at last. We rounded a curve and the first thing that met our gaze by the track was a row of the largest willows I ever saw with a long line of artillery horses picketed below them. Beyond that a lot of old solid built military looking buildings, then numerous tents thinly scattered over a wide expanse of green common and beyond all a background of beautiful green woods.

The train was gradually slackening speed & we presently found ourselves at the stopping place in the centre of town. The station proper is a quarter of a mile further down close by the river and a very steep grade extends the whole way. Lieut. Mason in shirt sleeves & top boots drove up as we were forming. He seemed as usual up to his eyes in business and
he certainly proved himself to be a very efficient officer. The order to march was now given and we began a trudge across the common which seemed as if it was never to end. On we went past rows of water barrels set up to supply the troops past newly erected mess houses & canteen, past fatigue parties of different regts. pitching tents, until at last hot & thirsty we halted a short distance from the beautiful woods before alluded to. We piled arms took of [sic] our packs had a swig [?] at our rations and waited patiently for the tents to arrive. Martial strains could now be heard in different directions as the different regiments came on the ground. One lively little fife & drum band at the head of some troops marched close beside us and halted. They proved to be part of the 19th, Col. Currie, and although we were pleased with the music at first we got tired and sick of it in a few days.

[Note: Here, on a separate line, the manuscript contains the words ‘Sketch of Town,’ which is missing.]

The troops in camp consisted of 10 regiments of infantry a brigade of artillery & a regiment of cavalry nearly 5000 men in all. The infantry comprised the 2nd Queen's Own rifles [sic], Toronto, Col Wilmot, the 10th Royals Toronto Lieut. Col. Boxall, the 12th York Infantry, Col. Jarvis, the 13th Infantry Hamilton, Major Irving, the 19th Infantry, Lincoln, Lieut Col. Currie, 34th Whitley & Oshawa Infantry, Lieut. Col. Gracie, 36th Peel Infantry, Lieut Col. ______ [sic], 37th Haldimand rifles [sic] Lieut. Col. Davies, 38th Brantford, Lieut Col. Patton, 39th rifles [sic], Norfolk, Lieut Col. ______ [sic], 44th Welland Infantry, Lieut Col. Barnett. Artillery, the Hamilton Field battery [sic], Capt. Smith, The Toronto Field battery [sic] & the Welland Field Battery, the Brigade under the command of Capt Smith. Cavalry. One regiment, Lieut Col. McLeod, composed of seven troops from Toronto, Burford, Markham, Smithville, Grimsby, St. Catherines etc., & one troop mounted infantry from Queenston. The camp was under the supervision of the Ajt. Gen. Col. Robertson Ross, Commander, Ast Ajt Gen. Durie, Brigade Majors Villiers & Denison, Camp Quartermaster, Lieut Col McKenzie, Chief supply officer Lieut Mason, orderly officer, Lieut Geddes. Brigade office clerk, Sergt Griffen.

The camp was laid out...in 3 sides of a square, the two ends terminating at the wide common used as a division parade, while in the centre was the old military hospital used as the main guard mount, and between the hospital & the tents the ground was used as regimental parades. The old military buildings situate at the south west corner were (with the exception of 2 for supply officer Mason) occupied by artillery and part of the cavalry. The Governor General's body-guard & the Queenston mounted infantry being encamped in the woods between the 13th Batt & the river.

To resume my narrative, the tents arrived at one o'clock. No 1 tent No 6 Coy [Company] was like last year the first up and the ten men told off to it moved in with the furniture and busied themselves putting down the carpets, cleaning the windows, putting up the stoves and ______ no they didn’t, they carried in their packs and with the exception of one unlucky wight who was notified for guard, lay down for a snooze. Our snooze was broken however directly by a call at the door, “Volunteers for fatigue” and your humble servant being anxious to serve his Queen and country went out and found that the duty to be done was to pitch the captain’s tent. Six of us immediately set to work and soon had the “house built” and then were informed by ½ dz No fives [men of No 5 Company] that we had pitched their captain’s tent very nicely. By thunder it was true we had picked up the first tent we had come to without taking the time to look at the line and were laughed at by the six lucky coves whose fatigue we had done. However, there was no help for it so we again set to work & I held the pins while another hammered, lifting he mallet with both hands for an extra hit he brought it down with great force, it glanced & took

A camp scene at Thorold in August 1866. Men from the 13th Battalion lounge in all manner of poses and dress in front of a bell tent, a scene doubtless replicated at the Niagara camp of 1871,
me in the nose with a collision that seemed to me like thunder & lightening together. I saw stars then. I have a faint recollection of being guided to a water barrel, which one man canted up & another applied water copiously to my face. I then got to my boarding house somehow, my tent I mean, and lay down with thoughts rather painful and nose much more so.

I didn’t volunteer for any more fatigues. I made up my mind they were frauds. In about 30 minutes the pain abated and I got up & went out [to] see what was going on. I may state here that my nose was stiff for a few weeks but got quite better since. The fellow who struck me was in great apprehension at first that he would be the cause of my being a bachelor & was much relieved when he found no bones were broken.

Sergt. Gilbert Griffen has been appointed clerk in the brigade office. He called in the afternoon and had a chat with us about things in general. Several bands were playing in different parts of the camp. So with a few chummies I sallied forth to get a look at them. We went to the 10 Royals. The band was playing under the trees. It is a large band, 44 members, no fewer than six leading cornets and Toulman the lead plays a clarionet. They had all apparently been seeing a man a good deal during the day. Their style of playing is rattling and bold but is not considered artistic by our band. Presently a basso man made some remarks damaging to the character of Billy Mitchell the famous 10th drummer. Billy retaliated in some p-r-e-t-t-y strong language and just as a piece was being started the fighting began. Bill went for the basso lively who lay flat down & the drummer fell over him. Before he could get up he was pinned by the guard. Two or more of the worst pills who had engaged in the row were also carried off into durance vile & order being restored the play recommenced. This little incident made for [?] quite a variety in the performance and before leaving camp we had various opportunities of seeing Billy’s drolleries. [Editor’s note: The 13th’s band, it should be noted, had two year’s earlier come under the direction of George Robinson, a former bandmaster of the British Army’s Rifle Brigade and graduate of the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall in England. He was in the process of making this band, with which he was to remain associated until his retirement 46 years later, one of the very best militia bands in the Dominion.25]

Troops were arriving all afternoon. Two or three troops of cavalry passed us going to their ground in the woods. The Hamilton Battery got in in the evening marching from St Kits. Capt Brodie called to see me at 5 o’clock. He has the mess contract for the 44th regt. Jack Thomas and I made a grand discovery of a well & a spring both of excellent water in the yard of the old military hospital. We filled our canteens and took the precious liquid home to our comrades. Went down to the river for a bathe. We found the water cold [and] it got deep near the bank and the current is very swift. The banks are abrupt and 50 or 60 feet high all the way to Queenston and a road runs to that place close to the river forming a beautiful walk or drive. The appearance of the river here is that of majestic grandeur. The volume of water passing through must be immense, as it is nearly a mile in width. At the mouth it narrows considerably. Some idea of the volume of water may he had by the fact that a large steamer can be navigated on either side within 30 yds of the bank.

The 34th Whitley & Oshawa Infantry arrived at sunset per steamer. The band is pretty strong being formed of three … [word illegible] … with the same number of uniforms. They played a tune while marching called the “tooting time.” They tooted away at it morning noon and night until the most unmusical man amongst us knew it & was sick of it. Parade at 7:30 - for orders.

The streets were crowded with men from the camp in the evening all bent on seeing the elephant. Rain began to pour down at first post. Ropes were rapidly pulled down and all made square. We all lay down but not to sleep as some of the boys kept cracking jokes until a late hour. Shortly after ten a sentry was heard challenging and a voice could be heard through the wind & rain “is this the 13th camp?” Yes shouted the sentry & us at once. It was Ensign Dyett with absentees. He knew the sergt’s voice & implored him to get outside & show him the ajt’s [adjutant’s] tent. [Editor’s note: It is not certain what the phrase ‘seeing the elephant’ referred to. Possibly it meant simply that there was an elephant present amongst the ‘monstrosities’ on view on the town, or possibly it was another contemporary phrase for obtaining alcohol.]

Wednesday 7th June. Cool this morning but very hot during the day. Told off for tent orderly. Had to rely on our own rations this morning as the delay at the stores dept prevented us getting anything until noon. Supply officer Mason very busy getting contractors up to time. Blanket inspection in the afternoon so I got off the parade. Saw the 12th out today in heavy marching order. Suppose it would [be] for the purpose of finding something missed.
The sun & wind very hard on the face. Mine is very sore and many of the men worse. Saw three with eyes closed up.

Took a stroll with 3 others up town at night and also went to Queen's royal hotel & to Fort Missauga [sic]. This Fort was built in 1812 [sic] and is in the form of a star. The walls are earth and very thick. In the centre stands a tower 10 feet higher than the walls, its wall being 6 feet thick. Down below are two vaulted rooms to hold twenty men each & a narrow stair in the wall leads to the outlook above. The fort is surrounded by a ditch & inside the ditch a cedar palisade. The gate is a heavy oak, loopholed and is approached by a bridge in the ditch. On the lake front is an old barricaded wharf now nearly demolished approached by a covered way & leading from a sally port. Inside the fort are several square hewn log barracks no part of them being visible from the outside. By pacing I found the wall to be about 400 yds around. [Editor’s note: Fort Mississauga, which Greenhill had some difficulty spelling, was, in fact, built by the British in 1814-1815. It was occupied only desultorily after the end of the war against the Americans, until a border protection unit, the Royal Canadian Rifles, moved in in 1842. This unit left in 1855, however, and the fort remained vacant thereafter until briefly occupied on a couple of occasions during the Fenian emergencies of the 1860s. The fort then entered a long period of neglect and decay until made a National Historic Site in 1922.]

Returning by the station we found the train

[Editor’s Note: The author provides a hand drawn sketch of the Fort, which is not included here]

Returning by the station we found the train with the 39th Norfolk Rifles just arrived and the regiment forming close by. They presented a very fine appearance. The companies were very full & the men unlike most infantry regiments were dressed according to regulation. We marched over with them to the tune of “put me in my little bed.” It seemed quite appropriate as they had been en route since the morning. All marching and wheeling of the artillery was splendid and the march past of our regiment was rewarded by “well done thirteenth” from the ajt. General. Col. Currie acted as Brigadier of the 2nd Brigade today. Broke off at 9 a.m. and “by thunder” didn’t we rush away at its best & not to be behind we got up a nice breakfast for parade in the morning at 5 a.m. for field day. Very hard to get asleep tonight on account of the cold. The regular amount of drill without variation was put in today. Squad drill 6 to 8. Brigade drill 10 to 12:30. Battalion drill 2:30 to 6:30. Complaints about sore faces by many men today. Jack Burkholder is in the hospital tent today suffering the effects of sunstroke received yesterday. Had extra muster today to find a lost rifle. This expedient is generally resorted to and without success in the case of items lost by the men.

Joyful to relate that I succeeded in getting some milk today and shared it with my comrade Balfour and we made that delicious dish called mush. It is simply bread broken up in milk and it forms a welcome variety to government grub. The people of Niagara do not seem alive to the advantage of having a military camp beside them. Milk could have been sold by the hogshead. But very little was brought in and such things as pies, cakes, books, cigars, pipes, tobacco etc. which would have found a steady sale were never brought amongst the tents.

Had a stroll up town tonight as usual. A man exhibiting an 8 legged horse which was a great imposition had his show “busted” by a number of irate volunteers. The horse ran away only using 4 legs and the tent was perforated all over by bayonet thrusts. A guard of the 12th (100 men) was sent to clear the streets.

Music music all over tonight every band banging away at its best & not to be behind we got up a nice little concert in our tent which was crammed full with guests from our own & other Coy’s. Orders read out for parade in the morning at 5 a.m. for field day. Very hard to get asleep tonight on account of the cold.

[Editor’s note: The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘Tommy’ as ‘A soldier’s name for brown bread formerly supplied as rations. … among workmen food provisions generally, especially those carried with them to work.’]
The usual routine of the day was gone through and was very well cleaned up for forenoon parade in spite of the morning work. In the afternoon we marched over to the woods by the river and had skirmishing drill. When marching home we met a rifle regiment at right angles coming down the Queenston road. They were marching well and looked well in every respect. But strange to say none of us found what regiment it was when we got home.

We found that our orderly (Louis Hembel) had just finished his kitchen work. He pointed triumphantly to our (tin) crockery and said look at that pig bile of blates, which remark was followed by a roar of laughter from us which he took in good part & joined in heartily. I cannot proceed without devoting a small space to this worthy. He joined the company a few days before camp was formed. He came to the city a few days before & left a short time after. He was German as his name will imply. No one new [sic] what place he came from or where he went after. We had to take one recruit into our tent by chance and we chose him & we found in a few days that he was quite an accession to our household. He was very strong and willing to work and possessed the rare tact of amusing himself & us all without doing it at the expense of his neighbors. His strong teutonic dialect led him into the only serious row he had. It was this way. Louis heard Bailey singing the song “Why can’t paddy be a gentleman etc. & taking it up he sang it one evening sitting beside Batty, a member of the Coy and squint (?) eyed as well & as he always substituted ps for bs & vice versa he sang “Why can’t Batty be a gentleman” etc. Batty’s ire was aroused & a war of words ensued. Hembel was encouraged by dialect led him into the only serious row he had. His strong teutonic dialect led him into the only serious row he had. It was this way. Louis heard Bailey singing the song “Why can’t paddy be a gentleman etc. & taking it up he sang it one evening sitting beside Batty, a member of the Coy and squint (?) eyed as well & as he always substituted ps for bs & vice versa he sang “Why can’t Batty be a gentleman” etc. Batty’s ire was aroused & a war of words ensued. Hembel was encouraged by the crowd gathering around and said paddy (p for b again) ven you look at a vella py coll you look bast both sides of him ha ha ha. Laughter resounded on all sides and we will indicate the rest of the ruction by

* * * * *

I will just relate one other little incident about Hembel. He went by various names such as louey hammer-handle, Hans von keyser blitzer etc. & one day he ran into the tent crying hurrah py coll y have a pass until 12 o’clock. We asked him where he was going. Out to see dem yankee soltier he said. He cleaned up all day & set out after tea, and after he was gone we dressed up his sleeping place by laying down all the rifles & putting his blanket over them a forage cap at the head and a pair of shoes at the feet so that anyone in a dim light would take it for a man. We lay awake & waited for 12 & shortly before that hour he was heard outside. We began snoring & after he got in he struck a match and saw the figure in his place. Who dis in my ped. Come get out. (snoring increased) Now by coll if you don’t get out I’ll hit you mit the mallet. He gave the supposed man a kick which revealed all & the snoring broke into hearty laughter & Louis in rage began

* * * * *

We are sorry to have to resort to the dots again but it was really necessary.

Saturday June 10th. Got up at 4 am. & repeated yesterdays’ performance. Blanks issued to artillery today & some very rapid firing made by them. Hembel fell out and was carried off to hospital. 13 [13th Battalion] made a fine advance in echelon which was complimented by Brigadier Gilmour before the whole brigade. Had good breakfast and hurried dressing for guard. 60 men & 3 officers required from 13th today, viz 3 officers & 48 men rank & file for main guard. Regimental guard of 12 rank & file & sergt & corp & six men for guard of 12 rank & file on Fort Missaguaga [sic]. The main guard was furnished by each regiment in turn. Jim McKay and I were in the Fort guard. The sergt and corp were both from the country & did not know anything about guard-mounting so Jim bossed the whole concern. Major Irving was field officer of the day & ordered by him to march down & he would come in an hour and inspect the post. [Editor’s note: The Globe’s correspondent noted on 9 June: ‘A new duty is about to be established in connection with the rifle practice. The ammunition required at the ranges is kept in Fort Mississauga, and henceforth the regiment from which the main guard is detailed will be required to furnish a guard consisting of a sergeant, a corporal, and six men, to take charge of the magazine and prevent unauthorized persons entering the fort.’]
which were intended to protect our forefathers against an invading foe. But this time I blush to say an unprotected female had to bolt them against Canadian volunteers. [Editor’s note: This woman was presumably the wife of the caretaker, the fort having come under the jurisdiction of the Canadian militia in 1866.]

Major Irving did not come until 3 p.m. Jim McKay and I saw him first. Jim and I jumped to our positions as sentries & when the major rode in Jim called out the guard as coolly as if we had been on all day.

One of the rooms in the central tower was occupied by the guard. The first two hours off Jim and I spread our blankets together on the hard oak floor and I slept as sound as a top the whole time. We had to turn out at 2 a.m. Jim was put on the gate and I on the ramparts. It was pitch dark and the time dragged wearily along. The only sound that broke the deathlike stillness was the waves washing against the lake front of the fort. The only thing we saw in that long two hours were a dog & a tall figure in a black robe. It glided along the top of the wall swiftly & was seen by Jim as well as myself. My knees shook under me. I fixed my bayonet gave chase & challenged but it glided out of sight & left me more frightened than ever. We said nothing to the guard after being afraid of ridicule. At last the dawn broke [and] two jackals [?] glided into the river. The sunrise gun at the yankee fort & at camp fired off almost together & right after the bugles sounded the rouse clear & loud although two miles away from us. We were relieved a few minutes after and lay down in the ancient vaulted room for another sleep.
We got up about eight and those not on sentry sat on the ramparts gazing across the wide common anxious to get sight of the new guard and what was more important still orderlies with grub. We began to think that our little post had been forgotten, [Note by Greenhill at bottom of page: *Small and isolated but important as the ball cartridge for the whole force was stored in he magazine of the fort.*] and our hunger was becoming ravenous. At last about 10 a.m. the relieving guard emerged on the road across the common & behind them we could see the orderlies with our breakfast. We gave a joyous hurrah although we knew our coffee would be cold & half spilt and a munch of dry bread that would be enough only to sharpen our appetites. Never mind we would be in camp soon & we could go to the canteen, where in the words of the poet –

Ginger beer is sold here
& sausage round the corner

As the party drew near the fort we saw that grub was being brought for about 25 men & we were only eight. We understood the mistake right off. The swell orderly non. com had paid more attention to his toilet than to his duty & had brought all the hash to us instead of leaving most of it at the main guard. We ate the 25 men's rations & then politely thanked the corporal for his kindness & told him his mistake. He gave us one wild look. Then opened his mouth and

* * * * *

A dear reader how I would shock you if I had no dots to take refuge in. The next “joick” [*joke?*] was with the new guard. It was from a certain regiment that shall be nameless. They had piled arms while we drank our coffee and when mustered again the sergeant thought there should be eight privates instead of six. Jim McKay strengthened this belief by saying: I think two of them went over the wall for a swim sir.” Off he went to call them & it was well he left then as the remark was too much for our gravity. But we managed to square up our faces & get our knapsacks on when he came back of course without the men. His corp. [corporal] then said there were only six but he was sternly ordered to be silent. The new guard then relieved & we marched off home. (We did not know if the two men were found.)

I spent the remainder of the day quietly. W_A_ was down and we strolled around all afternoon and night I went to the tent of the Y.M.C.A. This association is deserving of great praise for their Christian efforts in Niagara Camp. Their little low unpretending tent was the resort of all ranks, especially in the evening. The tent was about twenty feet long, 12 or 14 wide & 7 high. A small space at the inner end was left for the speaker. A table ran down the center on which were good books and periodicals & many a wife, sweetheart, friend or relative who had letters from men in camp may thank the men for the letters received who placed this tent here. Letter writing is a difficult task if you have nothing better than a plate or knapsack to write on & noisy comrades all around & it is not to be wondered at that so many availed themselves of this opportunity to perform a duty which might otherwise have been neglected.

The evening prayer meetings were certainly a sight to gladden the eyes of Christian men. The place was always crowded. Standing room was hardly to be had. One end was left open to give those who could not get in a chance of joining in the services. And tall troopers and artillerymen stood outside all around & looked in over the side canvas. A few bandsmen led the singing with their instruments and speakers were always plentiful. Rank went for nothing. Here might be seen an officer who might act as Brigadier in the day-time looking on the same hymn book with a humble private. May rich and effectual blessings be poured down on those who so nobly carried on this good work & may they be long spared to carry on in the future that which has been so well begun.

The remainder of my narrative I will not continue as a diary as it may become monotonous but will just relate a few incidents occurring during the remainder of our stay.

I may here also remark that tricks & jokes form quite an essential feature of life under canvas. Any opportunity is eagerly taken hold of to create fun & jollity. Blanket tossing became a great sport. It was introduced by the cavalry who found out a contractor giving in short allowance of fodder. He was forthwith seized and tossed high in the air no doubt very conducive to his honesty. The 19th then took it up & practiced first on dogs which were sent so high as twenty five feet and the effect on them when they escaped was more magical than a tin pan tied to the tail. After the supply of dogs was exhausted the bootblacks were laid hold of & sent almost as high as the canines. Soon not a bootblack was to be seen in camp. The infection spread over the whole force and now nothing came amiss from a wee bugler to a big fat sergeant.
After the blanket excitement tin pan & fife bands were started. The 13th turned out and “elephant” & noisy parades came off every evening. “Flour fight” was also a laughable sport but only good on wet days when we wore our overcoats. If the cook of No A Coy occupied the attention of No B Coy’s cook while his soup got burnt it was good joke on No A Coy and vice versa. Cook No B confused cook No A so that all the sugar would be in one coffee pot while the other got none. It was a good joke on the fellow so victimized. A good trick on a chap who blowed about his watertight and sunproof boots was shoving them outside into the trench one wet night & in the morning we voted his boots all they were cracked up to be. [Note by Greenhill at bottom of page: *Note this trick could be applied to anything.] Tickling a fellow with a straw when he was asleep was good fun but woe betide the man caught in the act. Blanket would be pronounced on him instanter. I was unfortunate enough to be a “crack shot” with little sticks about an inch long & soon was well known. Others learned it & often afterwards when innocent I was blamed for many a pretty shot. One day after a hot skirmish we were resting under some trees and stick shooting began as usual. A sergeant of No 5 was struck on the nose while taking a snooze & a scrimmage was just beginning when the order was given – Battalion – attention – this of course stopped the row & we were careful thereafter to confine our campaigns to No 6.

One poor fellow in No. _____ who was [a] great sleepy head was constantly teased [sic] while taking his little naps. Several times he awoke to find himself in a most grotesque fashion. His face was painted like an Indian. The contents of several knapsacks were ransacked to deck his person & a large piece of bread stuck into his open mouth. For once, however, he turned the tables on his tormentors by confiscating all that had been put on him.

Of notable characters, we had several in No. 6, viz. “juicy eyes”, “dirty feet”, “Our artist”, liquor pioneer or play-off-sick man and hammer-handle, alias hans von seyser-blitzer. The latter one has been mentioned before. Juicy eyes was forever asking dirty feet why he didn’t wash his feet and he was met by the reply: O don’t look at my soup with those eyes of yours, its thin enough already. The other characters also contributed largely to the fun. The second Sunday in camp a row occurred between a corpl of the 13th & a 44th man. Our corpl. was put in the 44th guard room and for this affront a number of excitable men of the 13th proposed going over en masse & “cleaning out” the 44th. The Artillery Brigade turned out to help us and affairs seemed ripe for a
collision although Major Irving had promised to see into the affair next day. Hostilities were, however, stopped by the exertions of Jack D_____ & the play of sick man, two eloquent fellows who both (greatly to their credit be it said) warned the men against Sunday brawling & advised them not to endanger the character of the regiment for the sake of a drunk man. The men then dispersed to their tents. And the up shot of it was that the non com lost his stripes it having been proved that he was under the influence of liquor & had taken off his belt to hit the 44th man.

A Trip to Fort Niagara

F ort Niagara had been greatly lionized since our arrival. So several of us lay our heads together to get passes and go over to see the wonderful place. Men had gone over by the dozen the first day or two without leave and a row having occurred between redcoats and bluecoats on Uncle Sam’s territory stringent orders were issued from the brigade office that no men should cross the river without a pass from the commandant and fishermen were notified they would be held responsible for taking any over without requisite indenture. Six of us under the Color sergt. presented ourselves before the captain and as we had been “pretty good little boys” he recommended our permit which was passed through duly signed & handed back to us at tea time. The meal was swallowed hastily & belt buckles boots and button were “made to shine so bright” and we started to the United States. We were I must say as tidy a six as could be seen with one unfortunate drawback. The eyesore was the pants of one of the party. He had previous to this been company cook and with the combined effects of grease & lying on his back with knees bent up they moulded so to speak into the shape of elephants legs when kneeling. Added to this they were grease brown color in front & blue behind and being wide also every step he took the whole side gave a convulsive wiggle. We tried to hide them by walking two in front & two behind but still they caused bitter lamentations.

When we got to the river & past all the pickets on the heights we cast about for a ferry. After some fruitless attempts we came upon a tall sombre fellow in pa-nama and linen duster. In reply to us he merely said git in, and we gitted. Another fellow as quiet & sombre appeared & got in. Without a word the boat was shoved off. A shoulder of mutton was hoisted (a sail I mean) and we skimmed over in ten minutes. A heavy sea was running in from the north but the boat which was a strong deep one about 4 or 5 tons burthen rose & fell beautifully without shipping a drop of water.

[Editor’s note: Here the diary ends]

Editor’s Postscript

T he military climax of the camp came on Friday, 16 June, with a grand sham battle. A small contingent of infantry and artillery was set
up on near-by Fort George and the remainder of the camp attacked, the whole carried on before an audience of thousands. Following a short, intense, assault up the fort's glacis, the flag of victory was raised within the fort, thereby enabling those who participated to judge, in the words of the Globe correspondent, 'how glorious a thing is battle.'\(^{29}\)

The weekend was occupied by camp races and other events and, on Monday, 19 June, the final large parade was held, which ended with an address by the minister of militia and defence, Sir George Étienne Cartier, wherein he made the comments quoted in the introduction. Over the next few days the camp broke up, with Toronto units returning home by ship, and other, such as Hamilton's 13th Battalion, traveling by rail.

An even larger camp was held at Niagara the next year, with the number of volunteers receiving training across the country being the greatest it reached for the next 30 years. Thereafter, the onset of a financial depression, improved relations with the United States after the Treaty of Washington of 1871, and the disappearance of a real perceived threat, as the Fenians, introduced a prolonged period of financial stringency. The number of volunteers was considerably scaled back with an even smaller number being sent to summer camp, and these for a reduced number of days. This situation was not to begin to change until 1896, when finances had improved and a new, albeit short-lived, crisis emerged in relations between Canada and the United States.\(^{30}\)

While the circumstances of training at the camps has changed over the years, elements of the personal life of the Niagara Camp of 1871 as described by Andrew Greenhill would remain very much in tact amongst rank and file members of the militia, in spirit if not in detail, down to the present day.

Notes

7. This overview of the Fenian Raids is based for the most part on Senior, *The Last Invasion of Canada*.
12. *Ibid.* As enumerated by the General Orders, these were: the County of York, Squadron of Cavalry; the Grimsby Troop of Cavalry; the St. Catharines Troop of cavalry; the Burford Troop of Cavalry; the Queenston Mounted Infantry Company; the Toronto Field Battery of Artillery; the Hamilton Field Battery of Artillery; the 12th York Battalion of Infantry; the 13th Battalion of Infantry, Hamilton; the 19th Lincoln Battalion of Infantry; the 34th Ontario Battalion of Infantry; the 36th Peel Battalion of Infantry; the 37th Haldimand Battalion of Rifles; the 38th Brant Battalion of Rifles; the 39th Norfolk Battalion of Rifles; and the 44th Welland Battalion of Infantry. And, although they are not enumerated in the Militia Orders, the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto were present as well.
20. For a biography of Jackson, see http://www.famousamericans.net/richardhenryjackson/. The site is entitled “Virtual American Biographies” and the information comes form *Appleton’s Cyclopedia of American Biography 6 Vols.*, New York, 1887-1899. I am grateful to Jere Bruhaker, Curator at Fort Niagara, New York State, for directing me to this website.
it. I don’t know and it is all water under the bridge now anyway.

May I suggest that you read Chapter IV, “The Conquest of Sicily” in my book, A Regiment at War, which will help you understand why I found Powers’ account so awful.

I am sure as an Historian you are aware that you cannot trust official histories. May I suggest that if in the future your magazine is to publish an account of the capture of Rimini in September 1944 that you look into Mark Zuehlke’s recent book, The Gothic Line. He reveals the skullduggery that goes on in changing the facts. For example, the RCR is seen as the liberators of Rimini and on the 35th anniversary at a ceremony in the municipal square, and assembly hall in the Municipio, I was presented by the Mayor with the Medaglio d’Argento since I was acting as battalion commander when we drove the Germans out of the city following a bloody battle on the adjacent airfield. Yet we were ordered out of Rimini by 8th Army and the Greeks marched into the unoccupied city and we are shown in the official Canadian history maps as not having even approached the city. Participation of the Greek Army in the Italian campaign by the monarchist faction of a Greece in turmoil was desired by Churchill, who with Eden, came to Italy from Greece. The Greeks arrived in late August and returned in early October, were thus able to be publicized as fighting on the side of the Allies using their fictitious capture of Rimini as the gimmick. Having lost 28 dead and probably near twice as many wounded I was considerably angered to read that the Greeks had done the job.

However, Rimini has nothing to do with Sicily, so I’ve really got off track. But I have been convinced by both occasions that you cannot believe everything you read in “accounts” given by incompetent officers or by historical works with the seal of approval from DND. I am sure you are aware of this situation, so I do not envy you, or other historians trying to sort things out.

The ordering of the RCR out of Rimini is well covered in Zuehlke’s book on page 428, especially the extensive footnote. I hope you will do me the honour of reading it, which will make it clear why I get fed up with such misrepresenting of historical facts.

By now you will have become tired of my belly-aching, so I will sign off. Here’s to continued success to Canadian Military History.

Yours Sincerely,
Strome Galloway

Ottawa, ON

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Dear Sir,

I was delighted to read in your “From the Editor-in-Chief” page of the Winter/Spring issue of CMH of the progress finally being made in creating memorials to First and Second World War Canadian battle sites. Your note on the Museum of the Western Front in the Cloth Hall at Ypres struck a particular note. A few years ago I was a frequent and ardent visitor to the battle sites of both wars. The Ypres Cloth Hall Museum was very good with one exception – the very minuscule Canadian presence then evident. Virtually every Allied country – even the USA who played only a minor role in the Ypres Salient – were prominently represented by fully dressed mannequins in all their glory. Canada had none.

Thinking this would be an easy matter to redress, I wrote to every relevant Canadian organization - the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs, the Legion, the Canadian War Museum, etc. – and was turned down flat by all of them. This despite the fact that the Ypres Salient bears the heaviest Canadian imprint of all. Indeed in its special supplement at the First World War’s end, the Times wrote, “Never…can the blood spent by Canadians at Ypres…be forgotten.”

Well, it certainly was forgotten, due solely to official Canadian inertia. It was thus embarrassing to visit the Museum thronged with tourists from everywhere with no Canadian tribute in sight. I am aware that we have erected memorials elsewhere in the Salient, but it is the Museum in the Cloth Hall that counts. I hope that this oversight will soon be corrected with a prominent Canadian display. This could be done with a Canadian mannequin display, preferably a soldier of the 2nd Canadian Division (the final victors at Passchendaele). It can be readily and cheaply done and should receive priority.

Yours sincerely,
A.D. McKay

Calgary, AB