

2009

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Recommended Citation

"Table of Contents." Canadian Military History 18, 1 (2009)

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CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Volume 18, Number 1

Winter 2009

CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

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ISSN 1195-8472
Agreement No.0040064165
Publication mail registration no.08978

Canadian Military History is published four times a year in the winter, spring, summer and autumn by the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University.

Editor-in-Chief Roger Sarty
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Layout & Design Mike Bechthold

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Printed in Canada by EGRAPHICSGROUP,
Kitchener, Ontario

Subscription Information

Canada: One year (4 issues): \$40.00
International: One year (4 issues): US\$55.00

Subscriptions are handled by
Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Order or Renew online at:
<http://www.wlupress.wlu.ca/press/Journals/cmh/>

Order or Renew by phone at:
(519) 884-0710 ext.6124

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs.



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From the Editor-in-Chief

The diversity of material coming through the door is inspirational, as is the quality. The current issue features reflective pieces by senior scholars, and new research by an array of writers of different ages, and from distinct backgrounds and career paths. The subject matter is equally wide-ranging.

John Maker, a recent graduate of Laurier, has developed his MA research into a hard-hitting look at the impossible circumstances in which the Essex Scottish Regiment of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division made its first assault in Normandy on 20-1 July 1944. Colonel (retired) Pat Dennis has launched a new career in university teaching and research. In this issue he uses the papers of his grandfather, who was conscripted into the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1918 and saw hard combat in the Hundred Days' offensive, to show that conscripts were much more important than previously credited to the Canadian Corps' climactic victories that helped bring the war to an early end.

In recent years Terry Copp has broadened his study of the Canadian Army in the liberation of North-West Europe in 1944-5 to examine the experiences of British formations in that campaign. Here he publishes material developed from British operational research that shows the Canadian divisions were more frequently engaged in intense action than their British counterparts. This, rather than the inexperience of the Canadians, explains their high casualties.

Jack Granatstein offers his reflections about how and why the

Canadian Army in recent decades has become closer to the U.S. Army and increasingly distant from the British Army despite the common historical roots of the two Commonwealth armed services, and the long persistence of tight ties between them. This is the revised text of a talk Jack presented at a conference at Cambridge University.

In the Canadian War Museum section, war art historian Laura Brandon has produced a searching inquiry into why women artists who portrayed the Canadian effort of the Second World War did not figure more prominently in the official war art program, and even in old age have been reluctant to promote their fine work. The piece is based on new research, but also on Laura's own curatorial experience. Gareth Newfield presents fresh results from his project at the museum on British military medicine during the War of 1812, in this case the ardent and, in the end, successful efforts of naval medical personnel at Kingston to overcome desperate shortages of personnel and the most basic supplies.

Ken Reynolds, of the Directorate of History and Heritage, looks at the Canadian government's important "Gateway to Military History" web portal in his column. As a teacher of Canadian military history, I can attest to the site's usefulness as an educational resource. As a former civil servant who played a tiny role in the establishment of the portal, I am grateful that he has captured the substantial challenges involved in the creation of the portal, in which the Directorate of History and Heritage took an imaginative leadership role.

The journal has a new look. This is the first significant redesign since *Canadian Military History* started publication in 1992. Not only does it

freshen us up, but the three-column format allows for greater flexibility in the layout.

Mike Bechthold, our managing editor, must have had some inkling as to how an ex-civil servant like myself might react to the chilling word "redesign." Meetings galore, contracting processes that are horrifically complex, trials of different options, assessments, assessments of the assessments... Perhaps for that reason, Mike just did it, and showed me the results. "I've been fooling around with the design and came up with this. D'ya like it?" he asked. "Why the devil are you asking me? I don't even do paint chips. Ask my wife." "Ok, ok, but do you like it?" he persisted. "Yeah - I like it a lot." "Shall we run with it?" I couldn't believe academic publishing life was this simple. We didn't even do a telephone conference! No one ever mentioned "weighted evaluation criteria grid." Not even once.

Roger Sarty
February 2009

The editors of *Canadian Military History* wish to thank the following people and organizations for their contributions to this issue:

Maggie Arbour-Doucette, Mark Humphries, Kellen Kurschinski, Vanessa McMackin, John Parry, Katherine Rose, Susan Ross, Matt Symes, Andrew Thomson, Jane Whalen.

Canadian Forces Joint Imagery Centre; Canadian War Museum; Directorate of History & Heritage, Department of National Defence; Essex and Kent Scottish Regiment; Security and Defence Forum, Department of National Defence; Library and Archives Canada; Wilfrid Laurier University.