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From the Editor-in-Chief

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In November 2011 Western University in London, Ontario, hosted an international conference on the First World War, "From History to Memory," intended to help set the stage for the centennial of the war's outbreak. Christopher Schultz and Jonathan Weier, PhD candidates at Western, have provided a report that highlights the breadth of the presentations and discussions. Participants from many nations, disciplines and experiences broached equally wide ranging subjects, including the teaching of the First World War in secondary and primary schools, family history, representations of the war in diverse media, and battlefield tourism (whose continued growth is just one indication of the persistence of the war in the cultures of several nations, including, not least, Canada).

Our contributors (and peer reviewers) have provided complementary pieces that feature new research on combat, in the latter half of the war. Andrew McEwen, now a PhD candidate at the University of Calgary, has further developed work he originally did for his MA at the University of Waterloo on the first battlefield use of tanks at Flers-Courcellette in September 1916. The tanks supported British, New Zealand and Canadian units, and Andrew did extensive research in sources from all three nations to assess the shortcomings and achievements of the new weapon. David Borys, now a PhD candidate at the University of New Brunswick, wrote an MA thesis on the generalship of Sir Arthur Currie at the University

of Alberta. Here he presents a fresh analysis of the crossing of the Canal du Nord in late September and early October 1918 by the Canadian Corps, which he argues showed Currie at the pinnacle of his formidable powers

Robert Engen, a PhD candidate at Queen's University, takes a broader look at combat effectiveness, in the Second World War. US Army battlefield historian Brigadier S.L.A. Marshall's assertion that only a small minority of American infantrymen fired their weapons in combat has since the 1940s been widely accepted in many nations as proof of an instinctual resistance to killing, and a central problem in military training. Robert challenges this received wisdom on the basis of literature critical of Marshall's methods, and the experience of Canadian infantry in the Second World War.

Evaluation of battlefield testimony is of course one of the great challenges in military history, and military studies in general. The British novelist R.F. Delderfield had a direct and disturbing encounter with the challenge when, as a public affairs officer in the Royal Air Force, he visited the French port of Le Havre to report on the effectiveness of the Allied strategic bombing that had supported the assault by British ground forces under the command of First Canadian Army. Here we publish his account in which he relates how French civilians denounced the bombing as a disaster that smashed the city while failing to hit the German defences, even as the British troops hailed the bombing as essential to their success.

The Canadian War Museum section features contributions by two of our well-known authors. Laura Brandon has an obituary for Leonard Brooks, an official war artist for the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War, who recently passed away shortly after reaching the century mark. Andrew Burtch lifts the veil on a little known but substantial Canadian Army program to build some 2,000 fallout shelters across the country in the early 1960s. The shelters were to be fitted with monitoring and communications equipment to allow volunteer observers to report on radioactive fallout in the wake of a thermonuclear attack. Many shelters were in fact built, but defence budget cuts prevented the acquisition of the equipment needed to make the system fully operational.

Roger Sarty
November 2011

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of the Summer 2011 Issue of your *Canadian Military History* magazine. Of particular interest is the article written by Jean-Francois Born concerning the Westlake Brothers of the Mount Dennis area in Toronto. While our legion branch is not mentioned by name in the article, we were very much involved in assisting Gary Westlake to fulfill his dream of establishing a permanent recognition for his three valiant uncles who were killed in action during the early days of June 1944. Our branch paraded en mass along with the Queen's Own Rifles on 9 June 1996 to officially rename the park and unveil the plaque that was erected there. In fact, our legion branch continues to visit the park every Remembrance Day afternoon to hold a "Last Post" Service in memory of the Westlake Brothers.

This past summer our branch had the honour of hosting a group of 30 students and 20 adults from Normandy, France at the park for a special Memorial Service. This group, known as the "Westlake Brothers Souvenir Association" (WBSA) was formed in 2006 by a French teacher Christophe Collet of Victor Lepine High School in Caen, France. The group believes it is their duty to remember all of the Canadian soldiers who fought for the freedom of France in the Second World War. They host 16 memorial services each year at Canadian monuments and cemeteries in France. This year, through some ambitious fundraising, some of their group were able to travel to Canada to personally thank Canadian Veterans who are now too old and frail to visit France. During their three week stay in Canada the WBSA conducted a total of 10 memorial services at Canadian monuments, in Veterans' long term care facilities and in armouries in Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, Shawinigan, Quebec-Levis and Beauceville. They



take to heart "their namesake" as the symbol of how much it cost Canada to ensure France's freedom from tyranny and they will be forever grateful. Their memorial services, organized entirely by the youth of the WBSA, consist of songs, poetry readings, the act of remembrance, wreath and flower tributes and the anthems of both France and Canada. Their service at Westlake Memorial Park on 23 July 2011, conducted in both english and french, was especially moving. In attendance, along with our branch members, were the Queens' Own Rifles, the 1st Hussars, Gary Westlake, who was a guest speaker, and local residents. We, at Mount Dennis Branch 31, will be forever moved by the WBSA's dedication to living Veterans and their commemoration of our Canadian fallen. Many of their "Tribute Memorial Services" are available on Youtube as slide shows. Simply Google their name to search for their videos. It is well worth your time.

To conclude this letter, I wish to thank you for sending us two copies of your publication, which were presented to us by our comrade Trevor Hamilton. One copy will be kept by the branch for our library and the second copy will be presented to Kathy Finel, Secretary of the WBSA, who is currently here in Canada to take back to France for the WBSA.

Sincerely,

Lee MacNeil

Royal Canadian Legion
Mount Dennis, Branch 31
Toronto, ON

Dear Sir,

Ed Storey's article "The Success of the Light Armoured Vehicle" in the Summer 2011 issue of the *Canadian Military History* is very interesting and informative. I was involved in the acceptance trials in the early 1960s of both the Bobcat and M113A1 as well as the introduction of the latter. So there was a bit of nostalgia there too.

One thing that I found intriguing was the photo of M113A1CDN APC 35000 and the comment that it was the first M113 delivered to Canada in 1965 and so its army vehicle number was recorded as 65-36000.

The first M113A1, that 4 Canadian Infantry Brigade (4 CIB) in Germany received, arrived in the fall of 1964 with the assigned vehicle number of 64-35000 (see photo). It looked just like the one shown in Ed's article. It was part of a maintenance training kit destined for a maintenance training school to be set up in 4 Field Workshop RCEME. The school was formed to teach wheeled vehicle mechanics, who had been posted to the brigade's newly formed mechanized infantry battalion repair platoons, the skills necessary to maintain the M113s.

The school opened in late 1964 and closed in early 1965. 64-35000 was given a major overhaul and then was assigned to 4 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (4 CIB's

Murray C. Johnston photo



Murray C. Johnston photo



Above: W02 Herbie Krupp (driver) and Captain Murray Johnston (crew commander) demonstrate the new M113A1, CAR 64-35000, in Fort Chambley, Germany in the fall of 1964

Left: CAR 64-35000 in 1992 in Croatia after being disabled by a mine strike on 29 October 1992.

new name). Along the way it was converted to the A2 version and fitted with the Armoured Cavalry shields mentioned in Ed's article.

The shields must have been fitted early on in that program because in October 1992 64-35000 ran over a mine that destroyed the first road wheel station on the right hand side (see enclosed photo). Its active service life was over and it was eventually sent back to Canada for disposal. It went to 202 Workshop Depot where its log books showed that it was the first M113A1 CDN delivered to the Canadian Army. (Ed Storey in his

article noted that the first was 35-36000. We asked the DND Life Cycle Materiel Manager look into it. He confirms that 64-35000 was the first.)

When the Canadian War Museum asked the Canadian Army for a M113 to represent that type of vehicle in its displays, 64-35000 was cosmetically fixed up for museum display and presented to the Museum in 2006 where it had been on display ever since. The scars from the mine blast are still there.

So, like 64-36000, you can say it is still "in service" – not active service mind you but an important purpose

nevertheless. It helps to tell the story of Canada's military to all Canadians. For me it has an additional personal connection. I was its first "owner" and I drove it many times. My grandchildren call it "Grandpa's tank"!

Sincerely,

Col (retd) Murray C. Johnston, MSM, CD
EME Branch Historian Emeritus
Ottawa, ON

Dear Sir,

I would like to comment on the article "The Battle of Hong Kong: 70 Years Later" by Tyler Wentzell (Summer 2011). On page 69 it states that Brigadier Lawson was "the highest ranking Canadian killed in the Second World War." This could imply he was the only person of equal rank that was killed in action.

Brigadier E.L. Booth, DSO, was also killed in action commanding the armoured brigade in 4th Canadian Armoured Division. He had survived prior service as the commanding



M113 64-36000 as it appears today on display at the Canadian War Museum.

officer of 12th Canadian Armoured Regiment (Three Rivers Regiment) throughout Sicily and Italy up to Ortona, before being promoted brigadier and returned to England. Booth came to the Three Rivers Regiment on promotion from the 1st Hussars of London, Ontario.

Cheers,
Edmund Griffiths

Dear Sir,

I was reading and enjoying Vanessa McMacklin's article "Rearranged Snowdrops" in the latest edition of *Canadian Military History* when all of a sudden I am reading about how "In 1979, officers from 4th Canadian Service Battalion (CSB) part of Canadian Forces Europe, based in Lahr, West Germany..." It seems the confusion in current Canadian naming conventions is never ending with the media and Canadian authors not knowing how to correctly identify present day formations, units and RCAF Squadrons. To

the uninitiated, current Canadian formations, regiments, units and RCAF squadrons are numbered, but not consecutively like we see with other military forces. Using 4 Brigade in Germany as the example, it is not referred to as 4th Brigade and the sub-units not as 4th Combat Engineer Regiment, 4th Service Battalion or 444th Squadron. The correct terminology for this formation and its sub-units that served in Germany until 1994 would be 4 Brigade (4 Bde), 4 Combat Engineer Regiment (4 CER), 4 Service Battalion (4 Svc Bn) and 444 Squadron (444 Sqn). The exception though is the infantry battalions; they are still referred to consecutively such as 1st Battalion or 2nd Battalion, and using the Royal Canadian Regiment as an example would be abbreviated as (1 RCR or 2 RCR).

Since Canadian brigades are numbered, some of the fighting arms and support units are numbered tying them to their parent brigade. In the case of 4 Brigade, there was 4

Air Defence Regiment (4 AD Regt), 4 Combat Engineer Regiment (4 CER), 4 Headquarters and Signals Squadron (4 HQ and Sigs), 4 Field Ambulance (4 Fd Amb), 4 Service Battalion (4 Svc Bn) and 4 Military Police Platoon (4 MP Pl).

444 Squadron (444 Sqn) was the tactical helicopter squadron for 4 Brigade, although since Canadian Air Force Squadrons are all part of the 400 series, this squadron was the only one which completely matched, number-wise, with its parent brigade. The other tactical helicopter squadron numbers for the other brigades do not match as well, such as 427 Squadron which supports 2 Brigade.

Deciphering current Canadian naming conventions can be slightly confusing but knowing and recording these units correctly will ensure that the historical record for these units and their achievements will be correct.

Sincerely,
Ed Storey
Nepean, ON



Fields of Fire Tours

Tour Schedule for 2012



Canadian Battlefields of the First World War

March 31 - April 14, 2012

This tour will visit all the major Canadian battlefields of the First World War. Ypres, and the battles of the Salient, Vimy and Hill 70, Passchendaele, Amiens and the battles of the 100 days will be on our agenda. Vimy Day commemorations at the restored memorial will be included and we will end the tour in Mons, where the war ended for Canadian troops. A two-day visit to Paris will close out the tour.

Canadian Battlefields of the Italian Campaign – Southern Italy

May 5-20, 2012

Following the path of the 1st Canadian Division from Sicily to Ortona, this tour will examine battles of 1943 in Italy. Starting on the beach at Pachino, the group will trace the route of the "Red Patch Devils" through the rugged hills of Sicily, cross the straits of Messina and drive the boot of Italy to the scenes of bitter struggle along the Moro and into Ortona. A stop at Salerno will take in that important battlefield as well. The tour will end with a cultural visit to Rome, where the glories of that ancient civilisation can be explored.

Canadian Battlefields of the Normandy Campaign

August 10-21, 2012

The Normandy Campaign was one of the pivotal moments of the Second World War. Our tour will start with a visit to Vimy Ridge, where the newly-restored memorial and interpretive centre await. We will follow this visit with a stop in Dieppe to examine this tragic raid, often cited as a precursor to Juno Beach. We will then start our tour of the Normandy sector ending with the struggle to close the Falaise Gap. A two-day visit to Paris will close out the tour.

Battlefields of the War of 1812 - Niagara

October 20-27, 2012

For the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, we will visit all the major battles of the Niagara Peninsula, the key theatre of operations. Queenston, Chippewa, Lundy's Lane and Stoney Creek will be on the itinerary as well visits to Fort Erie and Fort George. The ceremonies commemorating the Battle of Queenston Heights will also be attended. This seven-day tour will be followed in 2013 by further tours to the Kingston and Montreal theatres of operations.

At **Fields of Fire Tours** we pride ourselves in delivering high-quality individualized tours of the major Canadian Battlefields of the 20th Century. Led by experienced academic historians and military personnel, our tours examine the detail of Canada's contribution to the Liberation of Europe. Travelling in comfortable 9-passenger minivans, our tours can access sites unavailable to large bus tours. Visits to local cultural sites are always added.

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