

4-9-2015

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### Recommended Citation

Norman Hillmer (2010) "The Canadian War Museum and the Military Identity of an Unmilitary People," *Canadian Military History*: Vol. 19: Iss. 3, Article 3.  
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh/vol19/iss3/3>

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# The Canadian War Museum and the Military Identity of an Unmilitary People

Norman Hillmer

The Canadian War Museum was its country's first national history museum, but also one of the most neglected of federal institutions. Its usual fate was pedestrian quarters, meagre financial resources, and a miniscule staff. Canada, after all, styled itself as the very opposite of a warrior society. Governments promoted an official brand of nationalism that obliterated the internal divisions and dilemmas that Canada's wars exposed.<sup>1</sup> Their project succeeded, and not simply with Canadians. One visitor to Ottawa, a museum scholar from California, was astonished by the very idea of a Canadian War Museum. The image of Canada that rushed to her mind was that of the cartoon Mountie Dudley Do-Right, not of a country with a long pedigree of military service and distinction.<sup>2</sup>

Yet a magnificent new Canadian War Museum building rose up in the national capital during the first years of the twenty-first century. The renaissance of the war museum was the result of an extraordinary alchemy of events and impulses that challenges the notion of Canadians as an unmilitary people.

Military conflict and military endeavour are woven into the national fibre,<sup>3</sup> but post-Second World War Canadians constructed

**Abstract: Late in the twentieth century, intent on a new vision and new building for their museum, Canadian War Museum planners crafted an interpretative scenario that emphasized the military as a national symbol and the importance of war and conflict in the shaping of Canada and Canadians. A striking architectural design followed, and a renewed war museum opened in May 2005. A flood of visitors came, and they have continued to come. Public prominence has brought applause and controversy as a buried military identity is refolded into the nationalist narratives of Canada.**

an understanding of themselves that made it easy to overlook the pivotal role of warfare in the definition of their country. Modern Canada began to see itself, and ostentatiously describe itself, as cosmopolitan, progressive, tolerant, generous – and peaceful. The military personnel who caught the national imagination were Canada's peacekeepers, who became the leading international practitioners of the craft. The country's foreign minister, L. B. Pearson, won the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for the diplomacy that had solved the Suez Crisis (and "saved the world," in the words of the Nobel Committee) with the expedient of a Middle East peacekeeping force. Although it wasn't true, Pearson got credit for

having invented peacekeeping, and politicians for decades after tried to repeat his success. There was hardly a peacekeeping mission in the second half of the twentieth century that did not have Canadian participation.<sup>4</sup>

Peacekeeping might constitute a very small part of the defence budget, but it bulked very large in the public and official mind. Peacekeeping became indelibly Canadian as national interests, ideals, and expectations combined, accumulated, and took firm hold. With peacekeeping came the conviction that other countries waged war, and that a superbly, supremely moral Canada cleaned up their messes. The world needed Canada, the belief went, just as Canada needed the world.<sup>5</sup>

The peacekeepers of the United Nations were given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988, an award that Canadians promptly appropriated to themselves. Two years later the government of Canada decided to erect a peacekeeping monument to reflect "a dramatic shift in the role and purpose of the Canadian Armed Forces" and to represent "a fundamental Canadian value: no missionary zeal to impose our way of life on others but an acceptance of the responsibility to assist them in determining their own futures by ensuring a non-violent climate

in which to do so." So read the guideline for the competition to choose the monument's sculptor.<sup>6</sup> The monument was unveiled in 1992, very near the National Gallery and the Canadian War Museum and pointing directly at Parliament Hill.

At the same time, however, a Canadian military identity that stood apart from peacekeeping was beginning to reassert itself. The celebrations of the fiftieth anniversaries of the last years of the Second World War brought its diminishing numbers of veterans to the fore. They and their lobby groups in turn took a notable role in promoting their causes and defending themselves against revisionist history that questioned their actions and sometimes their integrity.<sup>7</sup> Remembrance Day on 11 November, the date that the First World War had ended, attracted more attention and more participants and spectators. Late in the 1990s a popular Bell Canada television

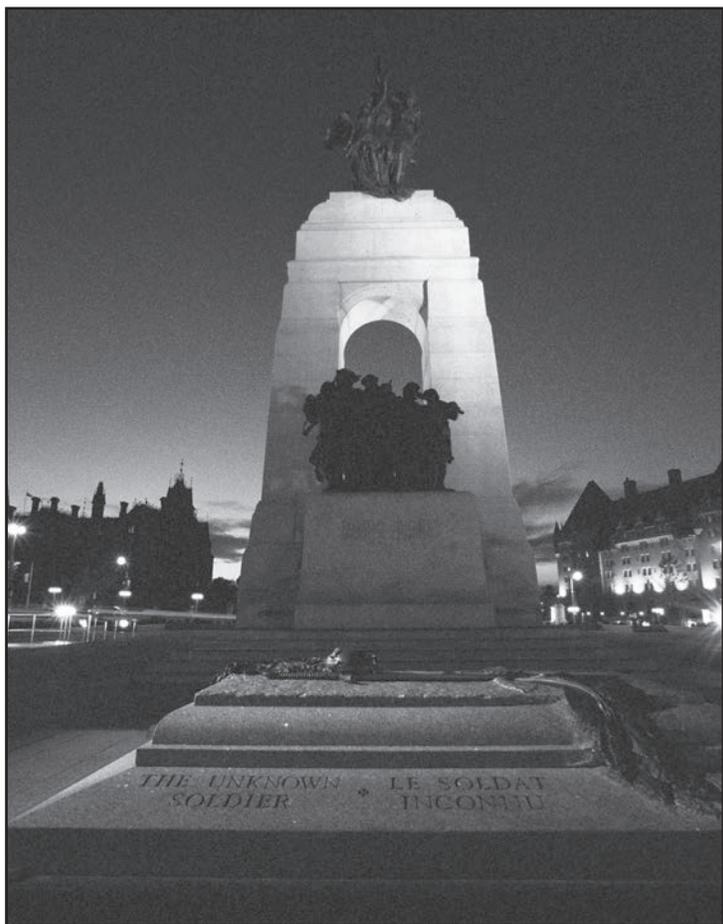
commercial played repeatedly before and on 11 November; it featured a contemporary young man's telephone call home from a Second World War battlefield in France thanking his grandfather for his military service. In May 2000 Canada's Unknown Soldier was brought from France and interred at the National War Memorial in the centre of Ottawa, in front of 20,000 observers and millions more on television.

After years of neglect, veterans and veterans' issues were being integrated into ideas of what it meant to be Canadian. A Veterans Memorial Highway sprung up on the road leading away from Ottawa towards the United States, and a parade of other memorials, coins, stamps, advertisements, and tributes marched into the cultural content of Canadian identity. The vets became "imbedded in a powerful narrative of sacrifice, honour and nationhood."<sup>8</sup>

When the Cold War ended, the Canadian Forces found themselves challenged to justify their existence on the one hand and yet busier than ever on the other hand. Peace support opportunities abounded, and Ottawa seldom refused international requests, but the trend as the last decade of the century dwindled away was toward enforcement and combat operations of the type Canada carried out in the Balkans. In 2002, the country went to war in Afghanistan, where

it fights still. An outspoken general, Chief of the Defence Staff Rick Hillier, championed the war effort, downgraded peacekeeping, and forged a populist link between the military and the people. Politicians, who had already begun to respond to the increasing calls for more defence spending, incorporated military themes and support for the Canadian Forces into their rhetoric. Canadian governments under Paul Martin and Stephen Harper, the first a Liberal and the other a Conservative, agreed that a robust military engagement with the world was indispensable to Canada's national security and international standing. The public seemed to take the same view.<sup>9</sup>

The war museum had meanwhile stumbled into the 1990s.<sup>10</sup> Its building had a prominent address at 330 Sussex Street, beside the Royal Canadian Mint and not far from the residences of the prime minister and governor general. However, the structure, the former national archives, was unsuited to the needs of a museum. The inadequacies, in the words of war museum historian Cameron Pulsifer, who had to live with them, were manifold, ranging from "awkward and cramped exhibit space, environmental conditions which were hazardous to artifacts, the lack of a freight elevator, floor loading capacities that could not support heavy artifacts, and lack of space for educational and other public activities."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the war museum was dwarfed by a new next door neighbour, the Moshe Safdie designed National Gallery of Canada, which spilled onto the museum's property. Next to the gallery's imposing modern glass structure, the Canadian War Museum looked more ancient and threadbare than ever.

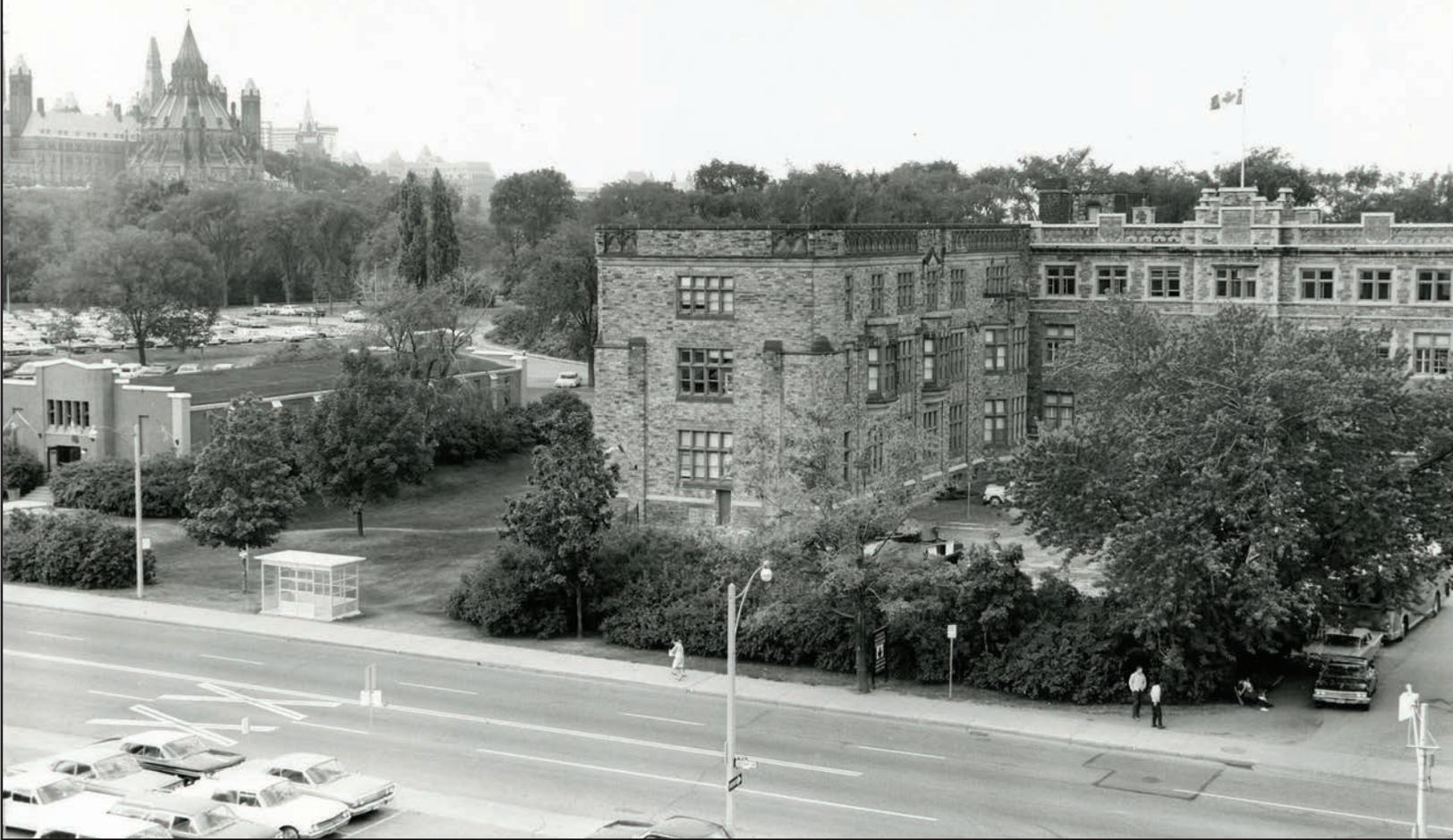


Canadian Forces Joint Imagery Centre ISCO0-400-25

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**The repatriation of Canada's unknown soldier in May 2000 capped a decade of growing interest in Canada's military identity.**

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**The original Canadian War Museum on Sussex Drive (here photographed in 1967) enjoyed a prominent location in Ottawa (note the Parliament Buildings in the background) but the building itself was unsuitable for a national museum.**

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The 1991 report of a Task Force on Military History Museum Collections in Canada damned the museum as an “embarrassment” and a “national disgrace.”<sup>12</sup> The report concluded that contemporary museum design and technology had far outpaced the Canadian War Museum’s practices, while the research function, on which an historical museum depended, was completely inadequate. Well covered in the media, the report demanded better resources for the museum and suggested that it would be better off as an independent agency, separate from its parent institution, the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (CMCC). The CMCC responded to the criticisms with \$1.7 million for the war museum’s exhibits. A contract was then awarded to the Toronto architect A. J. Diamond

for the design of an extension to 330 Sussex that would make use of the space in front of the building, which was set well back from the street.

Further government help for the war museum was not in the immediate offing. Spendthrift Canadian governments, over decades, had run up a mountain of debt and deficits that were no longer sustainable. Budget cuts were expected for every federal institution, and they were ruthlessly implemented by a Liberal government elected in the fall of 1993. Officials at the Museum of Civilization and the war museum began to cast around for ways to attract financial support and sponsorships. The Friends of the Canadian War Museum, a volunteer group of museum supporters, announced in 1995, fifty years to

the day after the end of the Second World War in Europe, that they would spearhead a major fundraising effort. “Passing the Torch,” the campaign was called, to convey the responsibility of Canadians to carry forth the work of earlier generations.

Passing the Torch set out to assist the museum with its plans to modernize 330 Sussex. In its initial phase, as revealed in internal war museum documentation, the drive to raise money looked to “critical national and ethnic groups as an important source of funding that will prove crucial to the ultimate success of the campaign.”<sup>13</sup> Prime targets were wealthy Jewish and Dutch veterans, with the eventual goal of raising \$2 million from each group. A Netherlands Memorial Theatre was contemplated, to highlight

Canada's role in the liberation of Holland in 1944-1945. So too was a gallery concentrated on Jewish Canadian war heroes. Since contacts with Jewish Canadians revealed their interest in integrating a remembrance of the Holocaust into the refurbished war museum, that became part of the planning as well.

Recognizing the opportunity to graft these proposals onto their dreams of transforming the Canadian War Museum into a major facility, the director and CEO of the Museum of Civilization, George MacDonald, and senior war museum officials picked up on the possibilities. In mid-1995 MacDonald approached the Bronfman Foundation, the Montreal-based philanthropic organization, to ask that it help underwrite a Jewish gallery. He was aware, however, of the pitfalls of raising issues of cultural and religious sensitivity. The gallery would not pivot around the Holocaust. Charles Bronfman, the foundation's key figure, agreed with MacDonald. Bronfman was reportedly "more interested in celebrating Jewish achievement than in reviewing past historical injustices."<sup>14</sup>

These views did not carry the day for long. Over 1996 and into 1997, the scheme to honour Jewish Canadians transmogrified into a vision of a gallery that had the Holocaust as its only subject. When planning began, the Holocaust Gallery was expected to cover 2,000 square feet. That number ballooned to 2,500 and then 4,000 square feet, and finally was projected to come in at 6,000 square feet, which would have made it the largest gallery in the war museum by a factor of four. George MacDonald declared the creation of a Holocaust Gallery a major corporate priority of the Museum of Civilization Corporation. Victor Suthren, the director of the war museum, embraced the concept and pushed it forward. Charles Bronfman and his foundation were nowhere to be seen, but other prominent Jewish

Canadians took up the cause. One of them was the historian Irving Abella, an expert on Canada and the Jews of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s.

It is easier to chart the upward trajectory of the Holocaust Gallery than to explain quite how and why the project acquired a dominant place in museum thinking. The fundraising potential loomed large, without doubt, the more so because a survey of visitors to the museum had demonstrated interest in the Holocaust. The appeal and success of the Holocaust Museum in Washington also invited imitation; Suthren was energized by a visit there in March 1996. At that stage the plan was still to feature the war service of Jewish Canadians in what was then being called the "Holocaust and Jewish War Veterans Gallery." That idea was jettisoned by year's end, however, the reasoning being that a gallery given over to one identifiable grouping would fuel the expectations of other groups. There would be no stopping the demands for further galleries. A war museum document concluded that "a collection of little such galleries would destroy the integrity of our current and planned exhibits and galleries."<sup>15</sup>

The war museum was right to refuse to cut up its mandate and share it with outside interests. Yet it was wrong to think that a Holocaust Gallery would be free of external constraints. Suthren and his allies, moreover, hatched the idea of using the Holocaust "as a means of addressing intolerance, prejudice and the dehumanizing of other ethnic groups which lie behind not only past wars but current issues such as 'ethnic cleansing' in Yugoslavia, Rwandan atrocities, and many other problems which Canadian peacekeepers are called on to address." The swing in emphasis was in line, Suthren maintained, "with the museum's increasing focus on the origins of human conflict in general as opposed to a mere chronicling of the military

past."<sup>16</sup> The museum was moving away from its moorings and on to dangerous ground. It would be vulnerable to every spasm in the body politic and every imaginable charge of ethnic bias.

Holocaust Gallery committees and opinions, expert and not, proliferated. Critics emerged, notably history professor Robert Bothwell, a member of the Museum of Civilization Corporation Board of Trustees, and his University of Toronto colleague, Michael Marrus, an authority on the Holocaust. They counselled caution, citing the inadequate research capacity of the museum, and the sheer scope and complexity of the Holocaust itself. The presentation of the Holocaust catastrophe, Marrus pointed out in a memorandum of April 1997, "is a particularly formidable challenge. It is all the more difficult because debate on many issues continues, because some areas remain contentious, and because responsible people differ considerably in their emphases and interpretations. As often with historical subjects, while historians debate, the more public search for meaning sometimes fluctuates strongly. Different communities and different generations draw different lessons and significance from the Holocaust."<sup>17</sup>

MacDonald took these arguments very seriously, as was his responsibility. He drew away from Suthren, his subordinate in the chain of command. When Suthren demanded a vote of confidence from MacDonald, it was not forthcoming. The two men parted company, Suthren's tenure at the war museum ending in early October 1997.

Suthren had not survived, but the Holocaust Gallery did. The A. J. Diamond architectural plan was made public in mid-November 1997. At a cost of \$12 million, Diamond proposed three substantial additions to 330 Sussex, including a glass dome that would cover the courtyard in

front of the building, extending it out to the street. The revolutionized war museum would have much enhanced exhibit space, a Memorial Chamber, a theatre, and room to display some of the war art collection that was the museum's hidden treasure. None of these welcome changes caught much interest. What did was a 6,000 square foot gallery exclusively set aside to describe and remember the Holocaust.

The formal announcement that the Holocaust would be a prominent aspect of a revamped museum mobilized Canada's veterans, who were quick to point out that they had not been consulted about the decision and had felt marginalized by war museum management over many years. They set out to defeat the idea, arguing that the Holocaust was a horrible part of history, but not part of Canada's history, and more particularly not part of Canada's military history. Their story had been hijacked by someone else's story. At the helm of the opposition campaign was Clifford Chadderton, the savvy president of the National Council of Veterans Associations, a longtime Ottawa lobbyist who knew his way around the media. George MacDonald fought back as best he could, but he was no match for Chadderton and other veterans' groups, whose publicity machines ensured widespread coverage of the vets' point of view.

Politicians, sniffing publicity, involved themselves. A parliamentary committee, the Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs, summoned MacDonald and the chair of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Civilization Corporation, Adrienne Clarkson, to hearings on the Holocaust Gallery issue in early 1998. They, and Clarkson especially, encountered fierce antagonism from committee members, and from the veterans and other opponents of the gallery who populated the hearings. The committee's mind was made up.

The Holocaust Gallery was a travesty. Clarkson and MacDonald were scarcely allowed to speak. Utterly defeated, they announced that the gallery would have to go.<sup>18</sup>

The salvation of the war museum had come disguised as a crisis. The Holocaust Gallery debacle brought the parlous condition of the museum to national attention and cleared the way for the dynamic leadership and ideas that resulted in an innovative new building with a clear if complex message about the Canadian military identity.

The government had already moved to still the commotion, and give direction to the war museum, after Suthren's departure. The previous autumn, minister of Canadian heritage Sheila Copps, whose responsibilities included the national museums, named Barney Danson to the Museum of Civilization's Board of Trustees and to a war museum advisory committee, which he would head and which would give a voice to veterans and scholars alike.<sup>19</sup> Danson was a well-connected politician from the party in power, a former minister of national defence, and a Jewish veteran who had been wounded in the Second World War. He could speak to both sides of the Holocaust debate, and he had the political clout to manoeuvre his powerful friends into action.

Danson wanted the Holocaust remembered, but not in the war museum. The modest A. J. Diamond extension to the war museum ought to be reserved completely for the museum's own collection, most of which was in precarious storage at Vimy House, an old streetcar barn visited from time to time by flooding. The Danson committee concluded, in fact, that the Diamond plan did not go nearly far enough. The war museum needed a fresh start in a new building, and in the meantime, it needed the intellectual respectability that had been missing

from the Suthren era, when elaborate re-enactments of historical events passed for scholarly substance. Danson recruited J. L. Granatstein, the country's best known historian, as the museum's director and chief executive officer for a two year term.<sup>20</sup>

The Granatstein goal was excellence, energetically delivered, and he shook the antiquated museum to its roots. He extracted more money to add to the tiny museum budget, oversaw the correction of hundreds of errors in exhibits, set up a Centre of Military History and a publishing program, restored relations with Canada's military museums and the Canadian Forces, and squeezed more autonomy from the Museum of Civilization. Most important of all, and as a condition of his employment, Granatstein hired three established military historians: Roger Sarty, Dean Oliver, and Serge Durflinger.<sup>21</sup>

The museum's research team, now led by Sarty and Oliver, developed a uniform vision for the future, which they housed in the interpretative scenario, an evolving document that was tested across the country and before various publics. It was driven by the story line of Canada's military experiences, and the belief that the country's history had been formed by them. Everything in the museum from the organization chart through collections policy and exhibit development flowed from the interpretative scenario, tracking Granatstein's straightforward view that the war museum must "be research-based, chronological, and historically accurate," or it was nothing. Intellectual integrity had to be at the gut of any reputable museum.<sup>22</sup>

Within a month of Granatstein's arrival at the war museum to take up his duties in July of 1998, the plan for the Diamond expansion of 330 Sussex was on hold. Danson, with his extensive contacts, had been at work. He managed to secure an ample parcel of property near



**Left & right: The new Canadian War Museum located on the LeBreton Flats opened in May 2005.**

the National Aviation Museum on the Ottawa River, a gift from the Department of National Defence, which was closing the Rockcliffe Canadian Forces Base.<sup>23</sup> Granatstein promoted the cause of a Rockcliffe museum across the country. He secured a Donner Foundation grant to put some of the war museum's 13,000 art works on tour, reasoning that "the collection was its trump card with those who might not think battles or tanks or medals mattered."<sup>24</sup> Funding commitments were sought, painstakingly. Passing the Torch pledged \$15 million, and the government committed \$58 million in March 2000. A new war museum, unimaginable just months before, was in view.

There was one last twist in the renewal of the Canadian War Museum. Danson and Granatstein were elated by the 35 acre Rockcliffe plot, which had plenty of space for outdoor displays, ceremonies, parking, and picnicking. The project was well advanced when Prime Minister Jean Chrétien intervened to change the site to the more central location of LeBreton Flats, a short distance from the National War Memorial and the Parliament Buildings. The LeBreton area had been rejected early on in the planning because the ground was full of pollutants, the legacy of heavy industrial use decades before. The prime minister had the problem solved forthwith;

the contamination was removed.<sup>25</sup> Briefly an architecture student before he became a lawyer, Chrétien took a special interest and pride in the creation of a grand building that he believed, as the *New York Times* later reported, would celebrate the national capital as a place that stood for something more than and beyond politics.<sup>26</sup>

The architects chosen for the war museum project, on the basis of their response to the interpretative scenario document, were Raymond Moriyama and Alexander Rankin, backed by large teams from their respective firms. The museum's research group assembled historical images that captured the storyline in visual terms for the architects' use, while Moriyama and Rankin crossed the country, coming to poetic conclusions about Canada's character and diversity. As a young boy, Moriyama and his family had been among the thousands of Canadian Japanese who were removed from their homes and relocated to camps during the Second World War; Rankin was from Northern Ireland, a land torn apart by sectarian violence. Both were convinced that modern Canada was very different from what they had known. Moriyama recalled that in his consultations with Canadians he found history's wounds in abundance, "and yet all the speakers shared a wish for a brighter future of inclusion and hope." He

bound the theme of regeneration into his museum design, and manipulated the building on a gentle rise towards the Peace Tower of the Parliament Buildings, in a silent salute to "the symbolic home of all Canadians."<sup>27</sup>

Moriyama and Rankin exploited the natural contours of Canadian geography and historical development. The museum seemed, deliberately, to be more landscape than architecture. Staying low and hugging the ground, it resembled a traveller hunkered down to brave a stiff prairie wind. It reached out from Ontario to the hills of Quebec on the western side of the LeBreton site, and to the east toward central Ottawa and Parliament, the vertical wedge of Regeneration Hall mimicking an Arctic whale, or the Rocky Mountains, or Canada itself as it moved on a steady upward climb from colony to country. Canada and its people, Rankin was convinced, were "quiet, modest, and strong," just as their museum would be.<sup>28</sup>

The museum's architecture got at war through the use of tilted planes and rough hewn materials, creating an impression of trauma and disequilibrium. On the exterior Moriyama created the effect of war visited on the land. On the inside he sought the intensity of an urban landscape scarred by battle: "Walls emerge sharp and unrefined from the floors at jagged angles. Concrete is left raw and exposed. Joints of

forms are rough." The contractors for the building were instructed to achieve "a controlled imperfection."<sup>29</sup> Novelist Alan Cumyn's first visit to the museum revealed an almost omnipresent "grey, unadorned concrete angled back as if to deflect the shock of explosions, and cut only with narrow slit windows." He felt "off-balance and uncomfortable, in keeping with the jarring and fractured nature of war."<sup>30</sup>

Veterans liked almost all of what they saw in the striking new museum, but not everything, and they had been conditioned to believe that what they did not like was not acceptable. The Holocaust Gallery experience had raised expectations that they would have a permanent role in deciding how the future museum would look and what it would include and omit, a belief that was reinforced by the museum's mandate to be a place of remembrance as well as a war museum.

When the museum opened, the veterans were immediately unhappy about artistic renderings of a photograph that showed a Canadian soldier holding a baton to the throat of a Somali teenager, who subsequently died of his wounds. Their complaints, however, were

muted, and to little effect, in part because no one could dispute that the terrible event had taken place. It had been photographed. It was real and shameful. It was part of Canada's past. The regiment involved had been disbanded. The president of the powerful veterans interest group, the Royal Canadian Legion, was prepared to let the matter pass.<sup>31</sup>

A more serious attack on the war museum's integrity came when veterans, although not all veterans, condemned the interpretation of the Second World War allied bombing of Germany, in which some 20,000 Canadian airmen participated and half of that number died. The controversy centred on a concluding panel containing two stark assertions: that the value and morality of strategic bombing remained bitterly contested, and that the bomber offensive had been largely ineffective until late in the war.<sup>32</sup> Accompanying the words were photographs of the destructive impact of the bombing on German cities and civilians. The war museum had consulted with the veterans as the Second World War gallery was being developed. Changes were made, including information about the extent to which enemy resources were tied down by the bomber

offensive, but the offending panel and the graphic photos remained.<sup>33</sup>

Again the veterans mounted a withering attack, and again the Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs implicated itself, with similar impacts and similar results. Prominent in the veterans' charge was Paul Manson, a Cold War pilot, former Chief of the Defence Staff, and the person who had led *Passing the Torch's* fundraising for the new museum. The veterans and their interest groups insisted that the bombing had been crucial in bringing Hitler to his knees, and that the war museum was accusing the air veterans of immorality at best and criminality at worst. War museum officials testified at the committee hearings, saying that they were making no value judgements about the airmen; they pointed out that the exhibit as a whole demonstrated Canadian heroism and sacrifice, and contextualized the bombing campaign in a manner sympathetic to the allied side. Professional historians weighed in on the debate, but they were of differing views.<sup>34</sup>

The senators were not. The museum was "technically and professionally correct in its stand," the subcommittee reported, but the vets had been insulted and should



be given their due. The panel ought to be revisited and revised.<sup>35</sup> The Board of Trustees of the Museum of Civilization Corporation agreed to do so, and the director of the war museum, Joe Guerts, was forced out in the bargain. The panel was reworked by senior representatives of the CMCC and the war museum, and discussed with the veterans and David Bashow, an historian favourable to the vets' interpretation.

It was history by committee. The new text was three times as long as the discarded panel and many times less direct. Glossed over were salient facts, notably that the bombing campaign in which the Canadians were involved (with no share in decision making) was explicitly designed to destroy Germany's cities and kill civilians.<sup>36</sup> Shades of the Smithsonian Institution's capitulation in 1995, the critics of the decision shouted, when protests erupted and a director's head had rolled over an exhibit featuring the Enola Gay, the airplane that had dropped an atomic bomb on Japan forty years before.<sup>37</sup> The war museum, however, could draw on a great deal of media, academic, and public support – and on its own expert staff. It had not withdrawn the exhibit as the Smithsonian had, the photographs accompanying the panel were not altered or abandoned, and the museum insisted on historical accuracy in the rewriting of the Bomber Command panel.

The Canadian War Museum was a witness to, participant in, and beneficiary of a significant shift in the country's socio-political culture. The engagement and prominence of the vets were part of the story, but only part. In the short time since the opening of the museum in 2005, well over two million visitors have come to a hall of history and memory that emphasizes the military as a national symbol, and the importance of war and conflict in the making of Canada and Canadians. The

building's architects did not shy away from the horrors of war, but they shared the commonplace conceit of Canadians that they have fought wars and sacrificed lives for the right reasons, not for gain or glory. The museum's unflinching portrayals of conflict, suffering, and death are lashed to lofty messages of peace, hope, and rebirth. A military people perhaps, but if so, a people with a particular way of war.

### Notes

The original version of this paper was delivered at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 9 November 2009. I am indebted for advice and assistance to Stephen Azzi, Andrew Burch, Alan Cumyn, Malcolm Ferguson, Philippe Lagassé, Mark Phillips, Ruth Phillips, and Susan B. Whitney.

1. Roger Sarty, "The Nationalization of Military History: Scholarship, Politics, and the Canadian War Museum," in Norman Hillmer and Adam Chapnick, eds., *Canadas of the Mind: The Making and Unmaking of Canadian Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), pp.110-33.
2. Lara Bickell, "Canadian War Museum," *The Public Historian* 24, 1 (Winter 2002), p.72.
3. J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, "Introduction," in their *Battle Lines: Eyewitness Accounts from Canada's Military History* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2004).
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5. J. L. Granatstein, "Peacekeeping: Did Canada Make a Difference? And What Difference Did Canada Make to Peacekeeping," in John English and Norman Hillmer, eds., *Making A Difference? Canada's Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order* (Toronto: Lester, 1992), pp.222-36; Norman Hillmer, "When Peacekeeping Became Canadian," a presentation to "50+ Years – Canada and Peacekeeping: History, Evolution and Perceptions," University of Ottawa, 13 May 2006.
6. National Capital Commission, *Peacekeeping Monument: Competition Guideline* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1990), pp.1-2.
7. Sarty, pp.126-7.
8. David Dean, "Museums as Contact Zones: The Canadian War Museum and Bomber Command," *Museum and Society* 7, 1 (March 2009), p.10.

9. See Michael Valpy, "Invisible No More," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 21 November 2009.
10. The account in the paragraphs that follow leans heavily on interviews conducted by the author in the autumn of 2009 with Robert Bothwell, J. L. Granatstein, Alexander Rankin, and Roger Sarty, and on Canadian War Museum documents, particularly Cameron Pulsifer's helpful unpublished study, "The Roots of a Museum Crisis: Exploring the Origins of a Proposed Holocaust Gallery at the Canadian War Museum."
11. Pulsifer, p.2.
12. Quoted in *ibid.*, 3. See also Sarty, pp.124-5.
13. Quoted in Pulsifer, p.9.
14. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp.11-12.
15. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.19.
16. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.20.
17. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.24.
18. I was a consultant to Adrienne Clarkson at the time, and experienced these events first hand.
19. Barney Danson, with Curtis Fahey, *Not Bad for a Sergeant: The Memoirs of Barney Danson* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2002), p.273.
20. *Ibid.*, pp.273-4.
21. J.L. Granatstein, "At Play in the Fields of the Museologists: Two Years at the Canadian War Museum," Ross Ellis Memorial Lecture in Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, 19 January 2001, pp.8-9.
22. *Ibid.*, p.6; Roger Sarty, "The Canadian War Museum and National History," The Shannon Lectures in History, Carleton University, 3 October 2003.
23. Danson, p.275.
24. Granatstein, p.9.
25. Danson, pp.276-7.
26. Clifford Krauss, "New Canadian Museum Has a Battlefield Focus," *New York Times*, 27 April 2005.
27. Raymond Moriyama, *In Search of a Soul: Designing and Realizing the New Canadian War Museum* (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2006), pp.22-4, 48-9, 63.
28. Rankin interview, 27 October 2009.
29. Moriyama, p.69.
30. Alan Cumyn, "Behind the Front Lines," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 4 May 2005.
31. Dean, p.3.
32. For the text, see Robert Bothwell, Randall Hansen, and Margaret MacMillan, "Controversy, Commemoration, and Capitulation: The Canadian War Museum and Bomber Command," *Queen's Quarterly* 115, 2 (Fall 2008), p.368.
33. See Dean, p.4.
34. *Ibid.*, pp.3-7; Bothwell, Hansen, and MacMillan, pp.368-70.
35. Bothwell, Hansen, and MacMillan, p.370.
36. *Ibid.*, pp.384-7. The altered text is on p.384.
37. *Ibid.*, p.375.

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## From the Editor-in-Chief

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an important disjunction between the veterans of the French Canadian 22nd Battalion who celebrated their comradeship in arms in a sacred cause, and the increasingly predominant nationalistic view that the war was a British one of no interest to true Canadians. When Geoff presented his results at the military history colloquy at Laurier last spring, members of the audience encouraged him to produce the article published here, and the anonymous peer reviewers have been equally positive.

Regular contributor Laura Brandon of the Canadian War Museum examines printmaking and other reproduction of works in the war art programs of the two world wars. In the First World War, the art program was organized by Lord Beaverbrook as something like a private enterprise, and the reproductions were sold on a commercial basis to raise funds. By contrast, the government sponsored the Second World War program, and the wide distribution of reproductions reveals some of the reasons for official support, including the value of the art for propaganda posters. Perhaps more important was a conviction that art should be encouraged for the benefit of Canadian society and culture, an idea that in part can be traced to government funding of art projects in the United States during the Depression as part of the Roosevelt administration's "New Deal" for economic recovery.

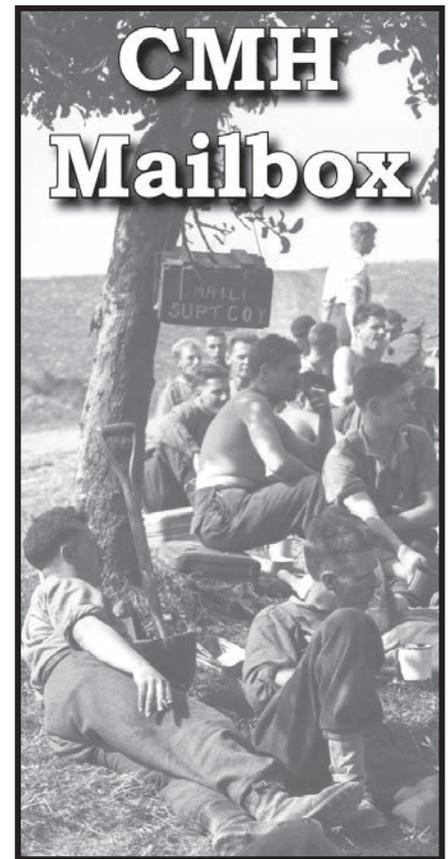
Sean Maloney, another regular, presents a first-person account of a Canadian-Afghan operation in August 2008 built around Canada's capable armoured forces. These have proved invaluable in the broken, constricted, heavily overgrown terrain that features in key parts of Kandahar province. In the early part of this piece the doubts about

the continued value of heavy armour expressed so vehemently in the recent past are answered by a chilling account of a light armoured vehicle's instant destruction, with heavy casualties to the crew, by an improvised explosive device. It brought to mind a talk by General Hillier in 2004 when he explained that in the Afghan environment, one really needed the protection and precision punch of a tank to "reach out and touch someone" – and not least to do so with minimum losses both to our personnel and noncombatants.

This issue has two special features, both cinematic. Tim Cook of the Canadian War Museum has cavassed ten colleagues for their ten favourite war films. As interesting as the diversity of the movies chosen is the commentary by each of the historians. Wittingly or not, these are auto-biographical. Films, as much as books (and music) evoke powerful memories on the part of the viewer about when she or he first saw the work. Here is a snapshot of the markedly different life experiences and perspectives that have brought some of this country's leading teachers, writers and museum professionals to military history. Tim collaborated with Christopher Schultz of the University of Western Ontario to produce the second feature, an analysis of the historical content of Paul Gross' important film *Passchendaele*. Christopher, who has worked in film studies as well as history, and Tim, who has worked on many exhibits in several media aimed at broad audiences, are both well qualified to comment on the compromises with scholarship so often essential in a cultural product with a hefty price tag. It is worth noting that the \$20 million budget for *Passchendaele* was roughly equal to the whole budget for exhibit planning, design and construction, including artifact conservation and preparation, for the new Canadian War Museum building. The exhibits were

designed to last (with maintenance and periodic upgrades) for about a generation. Thus Christopher and Tim's speculation that Gross' film will, with the limited funding available in Canada's cultural sector, likely have to stand for a generation or more seems exactly correct from the financial perspective.

Roger Sarty  
August 2010



Dear sir,

Arlene Doucette has been diligent in her article "From Belgium to Broadway" (*Canadian Military History*, Spring, 2010) in tracing the connection between the Watson and Massey families and the chain of events that may led the button, reportedly taken at Ypres, being bequeathed to the Canadian War Museum.

It is unfortunate that she did not devote as much attention to the button itself, which is actually not a German button. A little research into heraldic

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