

2004

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# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Volume 13, Number 3

Summer 2004

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# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

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### Canadian War Museum

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The Canadian War Museum, the national military history museum, is a living memorial to those men and women who served in Canada's armed forces. It is also a centre for research and dissemination of information and expertise on all aspects of the country's military past from pre-contact era to the present. It preserves the artifacts of Canadian military experience, interprets them for present and future generations, and advances the professional study of Canadian military history, including the effects of war and conflict on the nation and all its citizens.

### The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies

The purpose of the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS) is to foster research, teaching, and public discussion of military and strategic issues of national and international significance. The Centre is intentionally multi-disciplinary; it has strong commitments in military history, with emphasis on the Canadian experience, and in strategic and operational studies, with emphasis on disarmament. LCMSDS supports both basic and applied research as well as teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, the extensive program of LCMSDS workshops, conferences, public lectures, and publications encourages informed discussion of international security and of Canada's national interests in military and strategic issues - past, present and future.

The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies was founded in 1991 as a Research Centre affiliated with Wilfrid Laurier University. Its primary support has come from the Department of National Defence and from Wilfrid Laurier University. The Director of the Centre is Professor Terry Copp, Professor of History.

## From the Editor-in-Chief

The ceremonies commemorating the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings were among the most impressive and best organized I have ever witnessed. Security was tight but it did not prevent visitors from participating in a variety of events. The Canadian ceremonies were particularly impressive and the new Juno Beach Centre grounds were an ideal site for the day-long activities of 6 June. Both the staff of the Centre and Veterans Affairs are to be congratulated for their efforts.

For veterans the highlight was the visit of the Queen. Her Majesty is of course a veteran herself and she spoke with real emotion and rare eloquence. The Queen's presence also meant that the Governor-General and the Prime Minister had to be on time!

The Canadian Battlefields Foundation, which has been actively promoting a Canadian presence in Normandy since 1993, invited the veterans' delegation to its annual ceremonies at the Canadian Memorial Garden on the grounds of Caen's *Le Mémorial Museum*, the square in the heart of Caen where Canadian troops entering the city met the civilian refugees sheltering in the *Abbaye des Hommes*, and the *Abbaye d'Ardenne* where Foundation President LGen (ret'd) Charles Belzile and Vice-President MGen (ret'd) Clive Addy read the names of the Canadian soldiers taken prisoner and then murdered by the 12th SS.

The Foundation was again able to bring students from Canadian universities to Normandy for an intense two-week study tour. Each student was asked to develop a presentation on an aspect of the campaign and to research the background of a Canadian soldier buried in a Commonwealth War Graves cemetery. Students talked about "their" soldier at the grave site, a powerful learning experience for everyone.

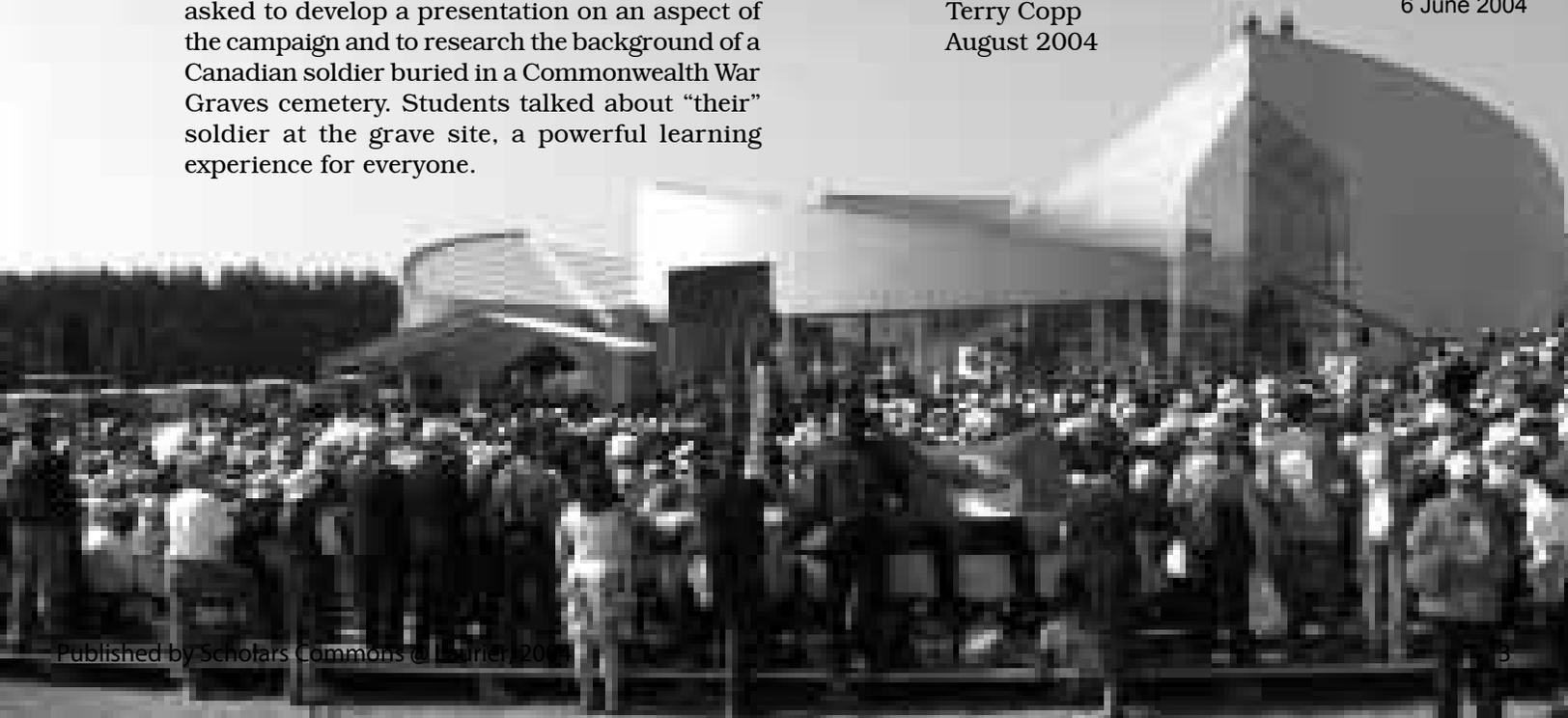
Our Centre, the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, assists in organizing the annual study tour and works in partnership with the Foundation to develop battlefield viewing areas and explanatory plaques at battle sites. We are particularly proud of the belvedere at St. Lambert-sur-Dives and are working closely with the community of St. Martin-de-Fontenay to further develop the Verrières Ridge/Point 67 site as a tribute to those who fought in the battles south of Caen.

The work of the Foundation and the Centre would not be possible without the support of many individuals. At Laurier we are especially grateful for the financial support provided by John and Pattie Cleghorn and Peter Kenny. The Cleghorn gift allowed us to develop a battlefield study tour for Laurier students and to contribute to the costs of battlefield viewing areas and our series of battlefield guides. Peter Kenny's gift permitted us to hire a new staff member, Michelle Fowler, who will assist us with publications and publicity.

One of Michelle's first projects, *A Nation at War: Essays from Legion Magazine* contains the text of the articles I wrote for *Legion* from 1994 to 2004 with new maps and photographs. All proceeds from the book, including author's royalties, will be donated to the Canadian Battlefields Foundation and the Royal Canadian Legion. We are asking Canadians to buy a copy for themselves and a second copy to donate to a school or public library. You can find more information, including ordering information, at the back of this journal on page 79.

Terry Copp  
August 2004

The Juno  
Beach Centre,  
6 June 2004



Dear Sir,

Here is my very first letter to the editor in a dozen years of reading *Canadian Military History*.

I am writing in reaction to Andrew Iarocci's article on "1st Canadian Infantry Brigade in the Second Battle of Ypres," (Volume 12, No.4, Autumn 2003, pp.5-18), in which he suggests that previous historians treating the subject may have under-estimated the 1st Division's preparedness for battle. What most struck me about his argument was his relation, on p.10. of LCol Hill's reaction to orders to extend his left flank. Instead of following blindly, he chose to discuss his orders, then "wisely dug in his reserve troops toward the rear on a higher piece of ground from which he could cover some of the gap..."

Two things are important here. First, Hill's willingness to alter orders to suit the situation; covering the left flank by digging in to meet the formation on the left would have spread his unit so thin as to render it useless. Second, his decision to cover the necessary ground with fire rather than with troops, which demonstrates a certain tactical maturity. Hill obviously knew his business. Are there other examples of such sophistication within the Canadian contingent at that time? Where did Canadian officers learn such things? While in the Militia, in Canada, or only after war was declared and they moved to England? These are issues historians may want to pursue

in relation to the Canadian Corps.

It would seem that, as early as 1915, at least one field officer knew when not to follow orders to the letter and how to properly dominate part of a battlefield. Perhaps the learning curve in the First World War was not as long as some historians have suggested.

Bill Rawling  
Ottawa, ON

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Sir,

*Canadian Military History* is absorbingly good and this Autumn 2003 issue is as usual informative and readable throughout with imaginatively chosen topics and presentation of the highest quality.

The editorial team deserves additional credit for publishing critical letters like that of Strome Galloway in relation to an article on Sicily in the previous issue. I am not well enough informed to judge Stome Galloway's strictures on that particular article but it takes a journal with a well-based confidence in its overall quality to publish such a letter. Congratulations. May I add, just a little miscievously, did Tim Cook in his article "The Great War of Words" achieve his deserved United Nation's Humanitarian award to historians in desperation for his gentle review of John Mosier's comedy with errors, *The Myth of the Great War?*

Peter Liddle  
The Director  
The Second World War  
Experience Centre  
Leeds, UK

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

Maggie Arbour-Doucette, Brandey Barton, Michelle Fowler, Mark Humphries, Teresa Iacobelli, Andrew Iarocci, John Maker, Karen Priestman.

Canadian Forces Photographic Unit; Canadian War Museum; Directorate of History & Heritage, Department of National Defence; Security and Defence Forum, Department of National Defence; National Archives of Canada; Wilfrid Laurier University.