

the
TANK
 CANADA

No. 4

Camp Borden, Ontario, April, 1942

Vol. 2

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What We Have For You . . .

Starting with first things first, we are more than pleased to present that action photo on the front cover of Major-General Worthington, officer commanding Fourth Canadian (Armoured) Division. "Worthington?" echoes the rawest recruit in the training centres, "He's the guy that started from scratch to build the C.A.C. Worthy's the one that kicked the red tape out the window . . . that went and did things, then told his distraught orderly room 'fait accompli' and fix it up if they could. When he couldn't get tanks to train with, he grabbed the relics from exhibition grounds, then bought the Renaults from Uncle Sam. Sure, I know all about Worthington. The guy's a legend!"

And lending credence to that last remark is a tale which arose from his brief visit to Camp Borden last week. It is said to have happened.

A certain H.Q. orderly room telephoned the guard commander at the North Barrier asking to be advised when Major-General Worthington was at the gate. Time slid along. Then the guard telephone rang again.

"Why were we not notified when Major-General Worthington arrived?" demanded the orderly room.

"He hasn't come through here," replied the guard.

"Do you mean to say that a staff car with a red flag didn't come through the barrier?"

"Yes," replied the guard. "There was one about an hour ago, but that wouldn't be Worthington. He'd be in a tank."

"Since armoured corps work is perhaps the most exacting that the army has to offer, it follows that recruits must be of a high standard." Recruits must be of high mentality and be physically fit. If not, they will be sent elsewhere. "Training the Tank Soldier," first of a series on this subject, is on page 3.

Tactical schools may move a vote of thanks to Major R. M. Odum for his article on "Air Support and the Armoured Corps," on page 6. The O.C. Army Staff Section, No. 123 (A.C.T.) Squadron, is an outstanding authority on his subject.

A historical summary of the famous "Les Voltigeurs de Quebec," recently re-organized as the 24th Canadian Army Tank Battalion forming part of the 2nd Army Tank Brigade, appears on page 12. News from the British Columbia Dragoons and the Lord Strathcona Horse is fresh from across the water and Sgt. "Scotty" Carmichael is with us again with a breezy dispatch from the Grey and Simcoe Foresters.

Prize winners in last month's "Letters to the Editor" contest find themselves in print on page 22.

EDITORIAL

ONE SOLUTION Speaking to the 21st annual meeting of the U.S. National Council for Social Studies, Professor Bernadotte Schmitt of the University of Chicago gave the assembled knowledge notables a few succinct ideas. Said Prof. Schmitt:

"It is really intolerable that the world should be plunged into war every 25 years by Germany. The first essential is complete and overwhelming military defeat of Germany to be accomplished if possible on German soil . . . They need to be made aware of the horrors of war."

This speaker continued by pointing out that the warlike French had been tamed by invasions of 1814 and 15 when Napoleon was overthrown, and by the swift defeat of 1870. He can see nothing more effective in convincing the Huns of their mistakes than a dose of that same medicine.

"Germany should be reduced to that agricultural economy which she will impose on conquered Europe if she can. . . . Since there are only 45 million Britons, 45 million Italians, 40 million Frenchmen and 30 million Poles as opposed to 80 million Germans, the equilibrium of Europe would be more stable if there were only 50 million Germans," he blasted in concluding.

The first part of his statement will find plenty of supporters in the army and out. Whether killing 30 million Germans would permanently settle the issue is another question. At least the Germans can't complain too much about the idea. They are willing enough to kill 30 millions of any people to achieve their alleged "destiny."

TALKING THE WAR A former advertising salesman for an Ontario weekly newspaper came back to his old office on his first leave after joining the army.

"How do you like military life?" asked the editor.

"Fine," came the reply. "Since I've been in uniform I've yet to hear anyone speak of the war."

That was many months ago. For weeks previously—on every call he had made—war was the one standard topic of discussion. The most startling change that salesman found in the transformation from civil life was that the army did not talk of the war.

Of course that is not strictly true—yet it is undoubtedly a fact that military men in Canadian training camps discuss the conflict relatively little as compared with civilians. And military men read less about it. Other ranks often go weeks without seeing a daily newspaper, except on leave. Many officers read one less than twice a week.

Perhaps, at the present time, this insulation from current events is not without its benefits. Yet it may hold a danger, too—the danger of forgetting the reason why we volunteered to wear this uniform. Even in the midst of tanks and weapons it is possible to overlook, too often, the fact that there is a war to be fought.

Though the suggestion is not new (and though to some it may sound facetious), it might be that some good would be served if commanding officers took five minutes on each morning parade to summarize the war news for their troops. When bound soldiers are bayoneted, tell the men. A hundred hostages are shot, a country starved, civilians machine-gunned—tell them what kind of fanatic savages we are fighting.

A Singapore falls—tell them that it was because there were not sufficient trained men to defend it. If the information does the training of Canadian troops no good, at least it can do no harm.

* * *
Mistakes have been made—they are being corrected. Effort has been wasted—it is being harnessed to the task. But time that is lost is difficult to regain.



"She wants to know, George, if we could squeeze her inside here for a few minutes."
—Humorist.

Training The Tank Soldier

(This is the first of a series of three articles on the training of a recruit for the Armoured Corps. This article deals with Basic Training; a second will cover Advanced Training; and a third, the aspects of Overseas Training.)

There are several ways in which a recruit may enter the Armoured Corps. He may join a unit at mobilization; he may join a reinforcement group of a mobilized unit; or he may simply join as reinforcement for the C.A.C.

In the first event it is unlikely that he will go through basic and advanced training centres, but in the latter two he is almost certain to take training in this way. From the standpoint of training, however, the instruction given in either method of approach is uniform, and follows the laid down policy of standard efficiency for all corps personnel.

For the purpose of this article, however, we shall follow the training of an Armoured Corps recruit in the reinforcement bracket, the object being to show what standards of efficiency are required, and how all the various stages of training eventually link together to form a composite picture of the man ready, mentally and physically, to meet any foe in the world on even terms.

RECRUIT REQUIREMENTS

Since armoured corps work is perhaps the most exacting that the army has to offer it follows that recruits must be of a high standard. Every man has to be able to take and send wireless messages. Obviously, illiterates cannot qualify, and the very nature of that work means that recruits must be of high mentality.

This is a specialized, highly technical branch of the service, and some technical knowledge in at least one of the branches of training will be a decided asset. A good mechanic, radio engineer or wireless man has an advantage from the start. It has been found that there are undeveloped, and startlingly effective mechanical abilities in many people who had no idea that such talent was theirs, chiefly because they had never tried their hand at any mechanical operation. Many of these find armoured corps work most fascinating, and will more than likely follow some sort of mechanical pursuit, and to good advantage because of their war training, when the conflict is over.

Then again, because it is strenuous, wearing on both mind and muscle, C.A.C. work demands physical fitness. The physical weakling cannot get into the

—Please see page four

NEW WEAPONS FOR CANADIAN SOLDIERS



Canada's newest and lightest weapon is shown, at right, in the hands of a Canadian soldier. The Sten sub-machine carbine, an all-metal gun used in a similar manner to the American Thompson sub-machine gun, weighs only seven pounds and is designed specially for parachute troops. Small Arms Limited, a Crown company, is now tooling up for the production of this "tommy gun" and it is expected that by mid-summer monthly output will reach the four figure mark. The same company turns out the Lee-Enfield rifle and bayonet held at the attack position by soldier at left. The bayonet is the new type adopted by the Canadian Army. Much shorter and slimmer than the 1914 version it is easier to handle and every bit as efficient. It is triangular in shape.
Photo—Public Information.

Armoured Corps, or if he does will soon show up, and be sent elsewhere.

Fighting with the tanks and A.F.V.'s is one of the most exciting games in the world, but at the same time one of the most trying. Therefore physical development is part of the training, and it cannot be neglected if the recruit is to go into battle properly equipped to meet the foe.

THE BASIC CENTRE

Having proceeded to demonstrate that Armoured Corps work is a specialist's job, it may be difficult for the uninitiated reader to understand the object of the first two months of training. In this basic training the specialist viewpoint is entirely forgotten, and the C.A.C. recruit is merely one of a collection of recruits destined for service with many arms of the service.

The answer to this is two-fold. First of all, a surgeon specialist, to be a true specialist, must have a working knowledge of the whole medical profession. He is a regular doctor first, and only becomes a specialist through extra training when the ordinary lessons are learned.

That is precisely the story with the C.A.C. recruit. He must be part of a huge pool of army men and be taught the basic lessons common to all arms. He must learn to fire weapons found in all branches of the service, the rifle, pistol, anti-tank rifle. He must learn to dig trenches, throw grenades, take advantage of cover and camouflage. That sort of training is as useful to a Tanker as to an Army Service Corps man when his convoy is attacked from the air or ground.

Secondly, and not the least important, the recruit gets the idea that all branches of the army are in this show together. There are no "bomb-proof" jobs any more. Divisional headquarters clerks are as likely to be in the battle as a front liner. Basic training centres foster friendships between men in different branches of the service. They establish an army esprit-de-corps that is invaluable. All realize that their job may be important, but it is only one side of the picture. This unconscious mental lesson is perhaps one of the biggest things that comes from the first two months in uniform.

In summary, then, it can be said that the goal of basic training for the C.A.C. recruit is to achieve the following objects:

1. To give a thorough grounding and practice in subjects which are basically required of soldiers in all branches of the Canadian Army.

2. By virtue of this training to make each recruit capable of carrying out duties of internal security and meeting any emergency with ingenuity, resourcefulness, and determination.

3. To so instruct the recruit that his standard of proficiency reached will permit him at the Advanced Training Centre, to exercise, rather than be instructed in elementary subjects, so that his entire attention may be devoted to learning the specialties of his particular job in the service.



" during the black-out test unofficial manoeuvre, sergeant . . . !"

4. To establish his army career on a sound mental and physical basis, without which the fighting soldier, fit to fight, cannot be produced.

Finally, and this point is most important, the recruit will be continually impressed with the idea that he must learn to think. It will be constantly pointed out that this war is a battle of ideas and brains, and his whole training, from basic centre on, will be stressing the necessity of learning to think for himself, and to reason soundly. Each man, it will be shown, must be a cog in a machine, part of the team—but at the same time he must be a thinking member of the syndicate, not a dumb automaton.

Those who pass through the basic centre and fully grasp the import of this message will be well on the way to becoming good soldiers, and skilled artisans of modern war.

The raid had started some time ago and the gunfire was terrific, but the little man still lingered in the doorway of his home, watching the flashes as the shells burst all around the place. Meanwhile, his large wife was in the shelter in the garden, yelling to him to take cover with her.

Just then a warden friend of his passed by. "Hallo," he said, "where's the missus? Sheltering from the storm?"

"Not exactly," said the little man with a grin. "Storming from the shelter."

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AIR SUPPORT . . . and The Armoured Corps

By MAJOR R. M. ODLUM

It should be understood that all air activity constitutes, or should constitute, air support. A strategic bombing raid on the Renault factory near Paris is important to the Army and is a form of Air Support. For the purpose of these notes, however, the term air support is being restricted to that portion of air force activity which is under the control of the Army.

First of all it seems desirable to emphasize the importance of correlating all information and keeping each item in its proper scale. In this connection it is particularly important to bear the enemy in mind, continually. In our instruction in dealing with a weapon we not only teach the use and capabilities of the weapon, but also the defence against the use by the enemy of the same or a similar weapon. Thus if we say that by always preparing alternative positions we can reduce the effect of an enemy concentration of fire, whether from the ground or the air, we must remember that he can do the same thing and reduce the effectiveness of our fire. This type of thinking is particularly necessary in acquiring a correct appreciation of the use of air support.

The air force provides a very important form of support to a modern army, armoured or infantry. An adequate volume of air support, intelligently used, is important in the present war in the same scale as is an adequate volume of artillery support, intelligently used, against an enemy who has such support available to him.

The provision of an adequate volume of air support depends on the resources of a people and their will to produce the necessary equipment and personnel. The decision as to what constitutes an adequate volume depends, in part at least, on the volume of air support available to the enemy. Further considerations affecting this decision might be the other demands on the total resources available, the general policy regarding centralization of control of resources, the particular phase of an operation, and the intention of an operation. As yet no policy has been announced, indicating a possible scale of total air support which may be available to army formations. Only the policy that there will be air support of certain types has been published.

The intelligent use of air support to armoured formations depends on the thorough understanding by all officers of the capabilities, limitations and best employment of armoured formations, including all the component parts thereof, and of air support (army cooperation) squadrons. The types and value of the air support required by an armoured formation then become obvious from putting the two together. When these have been mastered the mechanics of providing and obtaining air support are readily understood.

Those reading these notes will have read the various articles in our excellent C.A.T.Ms. dealing directly or indirectly with air support. Many of you will have read "The Employment of Air Forces With the Army in the Field," other pamphlets and intelligence summaries, all of which throw more light on the subject. And yet some at least think of air support as a mysterious panacea which will cure all our seeming illnesses. But this is not so.

To illustrate this the following examples are interesting. Based on considerable experience to date much of our teaching stresses the fact that the moral effect of bomber attack on troops is very great and out of all proportion to the material damage done. If adequate precautions are taken the actual damage done is likely to be slight. Again our more recent publications bring out the very great importance of concealment and camouflage, against air as well as ground observation, emphasizing that if proper precautions are taken the effect of air attack can be minimized, and in our training great stress is laid on dispersal, the placing of field defences in natural concealment, track discipline, camouflage, and the planning of positions to blend with the natural background. Again experiences in Greece and Libya in particular have shown that while vehicles on the move are very difficult to conceal, movement in suitable density, generally not over 15 v.t.m., provides adequate protection against air attack. Well spaced vehicles are not a good target and generally little damage will be inflicted on them. Also we point out that A.A. fire of all types, will generally keep aircraft high enough to interfere seriously with the accuracy of their bombing. (Appendix XV of C.A.T.M. No. 8 enlarges on many of these points.)

The foregoing points have been brought out to emphasize the fact that in our training we consider the use of air support by the enemy a very important factor but at the same time are learning not to let air attack overwhelm us, and this attitude should provide a very sound clue as to how to use our own air support.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE ARMoured DIVISION

The first step in learning the correct use of a supporting arm is a thorough understanding of the characteristics and employment of one's own arm. At this point it seems desirable to point out certain of those characteristics which have a particular bearing on the use of air support.

The first is the range, mobility and speed of movement of units of the armoured corps. These factors all being much greater in infantry formations, will have a material bearing on the nature of the required air support, e.g., tactical recce. will probably be required over a greater area.

The next point is the normal method of employment. Rarely are armoured formations used to assault adequately prepared static defences. Rather they are used against the less strongly defended areas, to flank the "strong points" and interfere with their communications. Or alternatively, if no "weak spot" is available, they are held till the infantry formations have created a breach in the prepared defences and then employed to exploit the breakthrough. Again they may be employed to destroy armoured formations. In this case it is recommended that other arms keep clear of the battlefield, as the confusion of battle is likely to be so great as to make other support of doubtful assistance. In brief, armoured formations are frequently employed in a running fight or in a confused battle of great mobility.

Again armoured formations are essentially employed in an offensive role. Even in defence they are normally held back and used primarily for the counter offensive. During a considerable portion of the ordinary operation A.F.Vs. of armoured formations must move "closed down." This results in a restricted range of vision and materially reduces the probability of a vehicle commander observing an aircraft signal calling for identification.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ARMY AIR SUPPORT

The essential characteristics of Army Air Support are adequately dealt with in para. 9, appendix I of C.A.T.M. No. 10. The more important of these, which may well be repeated here, are:

Flexibility:—The ease and speed with which the control of air support can be centralized or allotted to subordinate commanders. In this respect aircraft are unlike all other supporting weapons, which have physically to move to the necessary area in order to come under control. In the case of aircraft the necessary messages only must be passed, under some circumstances by wireless only, and the air support can be decentralized to the control of subordinate formations and centralized under the control of the higher formations without any actual movement of the aircraft.

Range:—The very great distances which aircraft can cover, in a relatively short time. This is particularly important in conjunction with the previous characteristic in that it enables operation at widely scattered areas from a central position. Coupled with this distance of manoeuvre must be the limited staying power of aircraft. Unlike artillery, which can be moved up to a position in anticipation of employment at some future time, aircraft can only be brought to their operational position, over the enemy's area, a relatively short time before their action is required.

Mobility:—The ease with which aircraft can surmount any ordinary obstacle. Coupled with this must be the ability of aircraft to carry out some operation even over the obstacle of a quite unfavourable air situation.

Vulnerability:—Included in which is the limitation imposed on the operation of aircraft by bad weather, as well as by mechanical failure, enemy action and A.A. fire.

Other Limitations:—Of which should be mentioned the inability of a pilot, on reconnaissance, to force contact with enemy land forces, and the practical impossibility of distinguishing friend from foe from the air. A well trained enemy can remain concealed from an observing pilot, though it will involve a great deal of care and a considerable effort. During a battle, particularly of a mobile type such as an action between armoured units, the difficulty of recognizing land forces from the air frequently makes impracticable the intervention of air support on the immediate battlefield.

It may be thought, from the above notes and the additional characteristics listed in the article in C.A.T.M. No. 10, that an undue emphasis is placed on the limiting factors affecting the use of air support. However, a knowledge of the limitations of a weapon is also important, and particularly so in the case of a weapon such as aircraft which appears to have unlimited capabilities. Too much stress cannot be placed on the necessity for army officers to have an understanding of and a reasonable attitude toward the capabilities and limitations of air support. This should help to forestall many unreasonable expectations.

FORMS OF AIR SUPPORT REQUIRED BY ARMoured FORMATIONS

Strategical reconnaissance will invariably be required in the preparation of the plan for an operation by armoured formations. It will normally be

—Please see page eight

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obtained by long range fighter or bomber aircraft under instructions from G.H.Q. or Army H.Q. Information so obtained will be included in the orders or instructions for the operation to the commander of the armoured formation.

Tactical reconnaissance will be essential during the operation, including the preparations for it. The nature of the action of armoured formations will probably necessitate emphasis on the range and extent of reconnaissance and on speed of communications. Except in preparation for the operation it is probable that little photography will be required. The time required to obtain and interpret photographs and the rapidity and range of movement of armoured units will generally make the use of air photography impractical. Also armoured formations normally are involved in a battle of movement and will rarely become committed to a static position requiring deliberate artillery action. Therefore it is improbable that Arty/R will be required to any extent. There may well be occasional periods when the advance of the formation has been held up and it is necessary to launch a more or less deliberate assault on the enemy position by the motor battalions or the infantry battalion supported by the support group. Generally under such circumstances the artillery will carry on the F.O.Os., but sometimes it may be desirable to call for air observation. A form of recce. which may frequently be invaluable is the location of our own forward troops. This is called contact recce. and is very important. In the case of armoured formations it constitutes an extremely difficult problem to solve.

Army air support will be essential. The terms "close" and "direct" support have been replaced, as being confusing, by the term army air support. However, to revert to the former terms for a moment, "direct" support will be very necessary to supplement the work of the artillery. By this is meant air attack on targets in the vicinity of the battlefield, aimed at interfering with the movement of enemy reserves toward the battlefield, disruption of his communications, neutralizing fire from gun positions and generally isolating the battlefield. "Close" support, **direct intervention on the battlefield**, will be extremely valuable whenever it can be used. The success of our use of this type of air support will depend on our ability to learn to use the support vigorously, quickly and accurately and on the number of aircraft made available.

Fighter support is a general requirement in every theatre of war. Its importance is to create an air situation which will permit the other forms of air support to be carried on with a minimum of interference from enemy aircraft, and at the same time prevent, as far as possible, enemy forces from obtaining air support. Sometimes this fighter support is provided by carrying on an offensive against enemy aerodromes and sometimes by fighter "sweeps" designed to destroy any enemy air activity encountered. In this task of providing a favourable air situation, all offensive air action, including bomber attacks on targets other than aerodromes, is important as it tends to force the enemy to reserve aircraft he might use otherwise for the defence of his vital areas. Normally the attempt to gain air superiority in a theatre of war is based on offensive action with

the result that normally this struggle will not be apparent to our forward land forces. In circumstances in which a favourable air situation cannot be created it may sometimes be necessary to provide fighter escorts for aircraft engaged in carrying out other types of air support.

Air transport is a form of air support of considerable potentialities. Transport of any large body of troops or quantity of supplies requires large numbers of aircraft. As yet it does not appear that these are available for normal operations or allotment to any subordinate formations. As yet any operation involving the use of air transport would probably be planned by G.H.Q. and the necessary special arrangements for the aircraft made through G.H.Q. and A.F.H.Q. However, as the surplus of available aircraft, over the number required for strategic attack on important military objectives, increases, it is probable that broader arrangements may be made for the inclusion of air transport in the plans for an operation. This form of air support may then well become extremely valuable to armoured formations. Two main uses appear desirable. Following a breakthrough the use of aircraft to maintain the essential systems of supply might well be the only, or at least a very important supplement to the normal method. A development such as this might enable armoured formations to operate further afield and create confusion to a greater depth than if the necessary supplies have to be brought forward by land transport. Again the use of aircraft to trans-



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port troops might well be the most practical method of maintaining the mobility of armoured formations which have been held up by enemy secondary defences following a breach of the main position. The troops might be carried to a position from which they could attack the points of resistance from the rear. As yet these uses of air transport should be considered only as a form of support which might be provided through G.H.Q.

THE ARMY COOPERATION FORCE

The organization and employment of the A.C. Force are laid down in Appendix I of C.A.T.M. 10. Normally, there will probably be a fighter reconnaissance squadron, used almost entirely for tactical reconnaissance, under the control of an armoured division. In addition some squadrons may be allotted for army air support during particular phases of a battle. These may be bombers or fighter aircraft and will attack such enemy targets as they are directed on by bomb, machine gun, or cannon. On the other hand the army air support may be carried out under direction from Army or G.H.Q. on a prearranged plan.

RECONNAISSANCE

Tactical recce. for an armoured division will be carried out by the A.C. Squadron normally allotted to the division. Control will almost invariably be retained by the division commander.

The general air situation which is likely to obtain in any important theatre of war has had an important effect on the method of carrying out tactical recce. The normal method of a 2-hour search of an area by one aircraft is the ideal. It is the most effective and efficient method of carrying out tactical air recce. However, frequently it will not be practical for an aircraft to remain searching an area for 2 hours. It has therefore been necessary to adopt what is termed the mission sortie method.

A mission sortie consists of a quick flight by an aircraft to one point, or possibly up to 3 or 4 points, to obtain information in reply to specific questions. The pilot does not linger over the enemy area, but makes his observations and returns to his aerodrome as rapidly as possible. A task for a mission sortie might consist of a search of a short stretch of roads, a small wood (it must be a small one) or a bridge. The questions for which the pilot is to find the information must be simple and direct, e.g. "Are there any troops on the road—?": "Is the bridge at — intact?"

The use of the mission sortie imposes on the military commander the necessity of ordering each specific task he requires to be performed. The order for the task must then be passed to the aerodrome where the pilot can be briefed by the A.L.O. The most efficient means of doing this is for the military commander to forecast all the probable tasks he may require in the carrying out of his operation. In some form these are sent to the A.L.O. at the aerodrome. They may be sent as a list of tasks, or as a tracing showing the tasks marked. To the extent that it is practical the tasks may be specifically or

—Please see page ten

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dered in advance in order of priority. It is probable, however, that the need for the carrying out of some tasks will be brought out only as the operation proceeds. These would be ordered at the time by simply demanding a number or code name, whichever was allotted.

During the operation this order for a task will probably be sent by wireless (R/T or W/T) to the A.L.O. at the squadron. There the pilots are kept continually in the tactical picture so far as the A.L.O. has obtained it. Thus when the demand is received it is merely necessary to give the task to the pilot. In a very few minutes (5 to 10) he should be in the air and the length of time before he sends his report will depend on the distance he must fly to his objective.

When the pilot has made his observation he records it, generally by writing it down, and then sends it by wireless. In the case of an armoured division the message will probably be sent by R/T. This message will be received by those A.F.Vs. allotted for tactical recce. on the several formations and regimental H.Q. From here the information received will be redistributed through the normal wireless nets of the armoured division.

Speed in communications is essential in regard to tactical recce. for an armoured division. The requirements for this have been well met by the arrangements that have been made, as shown. An equally important factor is the adequate forecasting by the military commander of his probable requirements.

A form of tactical recce. which may frequently be desired is the contact of our own forward troops. In the case of the armoured division serious difficulties are met. During a battle, when the A.F.Vs. must operate closed down, the noise of the vehicles and the restriction of the vision of the commander make it unlikely that any practical signal from an aircraft would be noticed. On the other hand it is practically impossible for a pilot to identify our own forces from the air. The most practical method of obtaining the necessary information appears to be for the formation commander to lay down in advance the time and type of recognition signal that will be given.

ARMY AIR SUPPORT

Army air support constitutes an alternative form of fire power available to the military commander. An important principle in its use is that aircraft should not be used when artillery can be, just as artillery should not be used for a job which can be done by M.G.s. However, aircraft supplement, by their increased mobility, the fire power available from the support group. The nature of armoured formation operations indicates that occasionally the A.F.V's. may outdistance, or in some other manner become separated from, their normal support. At these times air support will of course be invaluable. However, rarely will air support be called for on the immediate battlefield. Accordingly, the bulk of the tasks requiring air support will originate from tactical recce., either by air or by the Armoured Car Regiment.

The operation of the Army Air Support Control is adequately described in C.A.T.M. 10. In the case of an armoured division a demand originating at a forward troop would be passed back through the usual wireless nets to the division H.Q.

At the present time there is provided only one A.F.V., each with one wireless set, available at each H.Q., including the divisional H.Q., for working with the air force. It appears essential that these sets should remain on the tactical recce. frequency, and so would not be available for working with an Army Air Support Control. It seems probable that eventually an additional set will be provided, at division H.Q. at least, for this purpose.

The demand is passed to the A.A.S.C., and from there to the aerodrome, if the demand is approved. In any case the division H.Q. will be notified whether to expect the air support requested. At the aerodrome the pilots are briefed by the A.L.O. and the aircraft are sent off to carry out the task. The length of time it takes from the time the message leaves the tentacle, division H.Q., to the attack of the supporting aircraft will be affected by a number of factors, the most important of which is probably the distance from the aerodrome to the target. This time is normally considered as 1½ hours but under favourable circumstances it may be as little as ½ hour.

A possible development will be to have the aircraft ordered in the air sufficiently in advance of the anticipated requirement for the aircraft to be in the vicinity of the target area at the time the attack is required. The final briefing and the indication of the target could then be done by forward troops by wireless or ground signal. This procedure appears to be a practical possibility when the volume of available air support is much greater.

The greatest problem in the control and therefore of the effectiveness of air support is that of communications. Speed demands the use of two-way R/T. But R/T, and even W/T, is not completely reliable for the distances required by modern war. One of the commonest causes of failures of air support is in the communications. Another problem facing a commander is the choice of the most advantageous form of fire power. An important factor in this is the accuracy and effectiveness of bombing, as generally air attack must be considered neutralizing fire. This means that the air attack must be very closely coordinated with the land attack to obtain the desired results.

The vulnerability of aircraft to weather, mechanical failure and enemy action is one of the commoner causes of the non-appearance of air support.

Finally the difficulty of discovering, locating and recognizing enemy land forces constitutes a serious limitation. These factors necessitate a relatively elaborate establishment for the distribution of intelligence to the pilots.

To summarize, air support, though not in itself decisive, is extremely important to all land forces. The lack of adequate air support may well be fatal.

How It Feels To Fight In A Tank

(The following article written by an English tank commander in Libya, expressively portrays the feelings and the job of men who fight in tanks.)

The big Diesel engines in my Valentine are roaring: the tracks are clattering. I stand with my head and shoulders out of the turret and watch the countryside through binoculars.

Not until the last moment shall I get down and close the lid.

As I stand there, behind me the radio mast on its flexible base sways with the movement of the tank. We are doing about 15 m.p.h. On my head are ear-phones, before my lips is my speaker. Through the one I receive radioed orders; through the other I give orders to my crew. I hear the actual voice of my commander and, if necessary, I can reply to him.

There is a crew of three to this tank . . . the driver, the machine-gunner and myself. The driver is seated very low down and in front. He gets aboard by climbing through the small hatch.

Now he is steering his course by looking through a bullet-proof window in front of him, but, when he goes into action he will cover the window with a steel visor and steer through periscopes to right and left.

The machine-gunner sits opposite me in the turret. On a level with my knees, as I stand, the polished breech block of the quick-firing two-pounder gun extends into the middle of the turret and, in a way, divides it into two parts.

Around the inside of the turret runs a rack, in which stand the shells. There are different kinds, from smoke shells to armor piercing. The ammunition for the big Besa machine-gun is beside the gunner.

A Bit Crowded

My tank is fitted with all kinds of devices and gadgets, but the whole appearance of the turret is one of neatness and compactness. There is not much room to spare when the machine-gunner and I are there, but the hands fall naturally on to whatever is required.

We are well protected from possible injury through being thrown about, although we are not thrown about a great deal.

When I sit on my seat in action my left shoulder fits snugly into the padded rests; my head falls naturally on to a head rest that brings my eye up against the rangefinder. As with me, so with the machine-gunner and driver.

There is a very neat periscope that I can push up, and through which I can see what is going on around me.

My left hand reaches comfortably for the trigger of the quick-firer, and my right hand takes shells from the rack and slips them into the breech, which is opened automatically. The turret is power-operated and moves at will to right and to left.

The crew of a tank is a little family—each is capable of doing all the jobs there are to do. If ne-

cessary, I can take over the driving or the machine-gunning and both of the others can do the same.

Our tiny, but immensely powerful, home on tracks is a place where three men do their day's work to orders. In my opinion the discomforts of a tank are exaggerated. It is not a job for an arm-chair critic, but I like the game and so do all my friends in the unit.

When travelling I have never had any feeling of sickness and the jolting is curtailed by good driving.

Tanks are not driven all out, no matter what the condition of the ground. Photographs show tanks assuming all kinds of extraordinary poses, but the good driver has regard for his passengers and also regard for the shocks which he gives the machine.

He steers by checking the speed of one or the other of the tracks, so that the machine turns to the right or the left.

Watch a good driver take a tank up and over the top of a hill. The sixteen tons of machinery is handled like a 10 h.p. car and your first thrill comes when—having reached the top—her bows still stay in the air until the centre of gravity is reached, when down she goes, moving easily, responding at once to the easy-handed man at the wheel.

The tanks are ventilated; air is drawn in through the back by fans, so that, even when the lid is down, the conditions inside are not intolerable.

There is even a back-door bell so that, in action, the infantry can let us know they are there.

The crew sleeps with its tank and the servicing is a job of work. Every use is made of cover and camouflage and supplies are brought to us.

This time tank fighting is far different from the last war. Then it was a matter of "piercing the crust," now it is a large-scale tank-versus-tank battle and the tanks are used, to my mind, more in a naval than a military sense.

* * *

In that period immediately following hostilities, we failed to visualize the dangerous length of the handicap gained by the Axis. That failure held even greater prospect of disaster than our pre-war blindness. For both, we are paying dearly today.

COMPLIMENTS OF

LAKEVIEW DAIRY

BARRIE-ALLANDALE DAIRY

CITIZENS' DAIRY

(Suppliers to the Armoured Corps)

24th Canadian Army Tank Battalion

A historical review of "Les Voltigeurs de Quebec"—a regiment famous in Canadian militia annals—recently selected to form part of the 2nd Army Tank Brigade.

By CAPTAIN O. BEGIN

Among the many Canadian Units called up for active service in this war, the 24th Army Tank Bn., formerly "Les Voltigeurs de Quebec", is one of the oldest in Canada. Its origin can be traced to the very beginning of our country's history for it took birth with the old militia of 1649.

At a time when the colony did not exceed 1000 in population, fifty settlers were armed to fight the Iroquois marauders; this was the beginning of "La Milice Canadienne". Until the arrival of the French regiments in 1740, these armed men assumed practically alone the defence of the settlements.

After 1760, "La Milice Canadienne" was maintained. This was a wise move and in 1761, 600 of this militia helped the British defeat Pontiac near Detroit.

In 1775, another glorious page was added to the history of "La Milice Canadienne", when they defeated the Americans at Quebec and pursued them to the boundary line. When Burgoyne and the Imperial Troops arrived, the country had been freed.

The name "Voltigeurs" was made famous on the 26th of October 1813, when Colonel Charles de Salaberry defeated General Hampton at Chateauguay. For thirty days, General Hampton and his seven thousand men had been trying to force their way to Montreal. The only obstacle was a wall of strong and resolute men: 434 militia-men of which 6 were English and 150 Indians. Of this number, only 140

Voltigeurs, 190 other militia-men, 6 Englishmen and 28 Indians, all told 364 men, actually took part in the battle.

In 1856, the first company of the now existing Unit was organized at Quebec. Its number soon increased to be large enough for a regiment, and it became in 1862 the 9th Battalion, (Voltigeurs de Quebec). Its first O.C. was Lieutenant-Colonel Charles de Salaberry, the son of the hero of Chateauguay. The motto on De Salaberry's coat of arms, "Force a Superbe, Mercy a Foible" (Strike the Proud, Spare the Weak), became that of the regiment.

In 1864, one company was detailed to Sandwich and Windsor. In 1865, when the Trent affair occurred, another company was sent to the boundary line.

In 1866, when the Fenians tried to invade the country, part of the regiment served at Niagara while the remainder were kept in readiness at Quebec. In 1870, the regiment was again mobilized for active service against the Fenians.

In 1885, the Battalion was again on active service and took part in the North-West Rebellion campaign. In 1899, some officers and other ranks from the regiment served in the Canadian South-African Contingent in Africa.

When the first Great War broke out in 1914, the whole regiment, under the command of Lt.-Col. L. G. Chabot, a veteran of the North-West Expedition, was mobilized in 48 hours, a record in mobilization. Detachments were sent to Gaspe and Anti-

costi Island, the remainder served around Quebec City at vulnerable points. Detachments from Quebec left periodically for Europe, so that more than 500 officers and other ranks served overseas in other Units, mainly in the 22nd Bn. C.E.F., now the Royal 22nd Regiment.

The father of the three Generals Panet commanded the regiment in 1866.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was made Hon. Colonel of the Unit in 1899, and Major General T. L. Tremblay, C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C. in 1920.

One auxiliary Bishop of Quebec, Mgr. Plante, served in the ranks before being ordained a priest.

The following is an extract from the Officers' Records Books concerning an Officer who served with the Regiment during the North-West Rebellion, and whose record of service is certainly outstanding.

CASGRAIN, PHILIPPE HENRI DUPERRON,

Born on the 31st of May, 1864,
Graduated at R.M.C., Kingston, in 1883.

In 1885, he was appointed adjutant "Les Voltigeurs de Quebec" and served in the North-West Rebellion. After the North-West Rebellion Campaign, he was appointed Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers and after a few years service in this country, he went to India. There he took part in the Manipur Expedition in 1891. He attended courses in England at the Ordnance Survey Bedford from 1891 to 1895. During his courses in England, he qualified as a Russian Interpreter in 1893 and was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1894. He served in the South-African War, where he was mentioned in dispatches and was awarded two medals and 5 clasps. He was promoted to the rank of Major in 1902 and retired from the Imperial Army in 1907. He studied priest-hood in Rome, where he was ordained in 1911 and was then appointed Director of Catholic Immigration Association of Canada. At the outbreak of the Great War, he was appointed Chaplain in the Can-

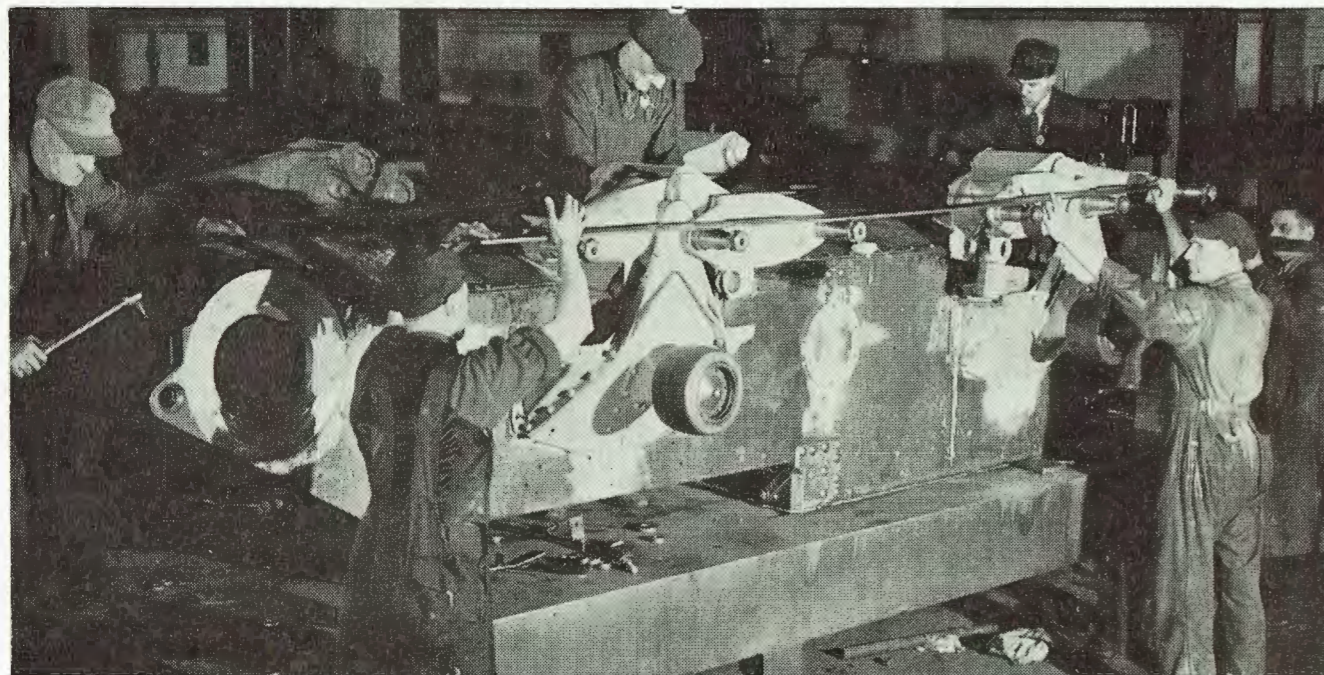
adian Expeditionary Force, but, being considered an authority on languages, especially the languages of Central Europe and of Russia, he was soon called to serve in the General Staff of the War Office, London, England. For his services in India, he was made a member of the Order Star of India. He was mentioned in dispatches during the Great War, and was awarded the C.M.G. in 1917, Order of Stanislas (Russia) and was decorated by Pope Pius the XI with Cross "Pro Pontifica and Ecclesia" (1923).

The records of the regiment show the names of members of the most outstanding families: one Lt. Governor, Sir Pantaleon Pelletier: a poet, Pamphile Lemay, our Canadian Lamartine: a Canadian Minister to London, Hon. C. P. Pelletier: Cabinet Ministers, a senator, members of the Legislature, judges, Commanding Officers of M.D. No. 5, etc.

At the outbreak of the 2nd Great War, a detachment of 200 officers and other ranks was mobilized for home guard. When relieved by veterans a few months later, most of this personnel was transferred to other Units and many are now serving overseas.

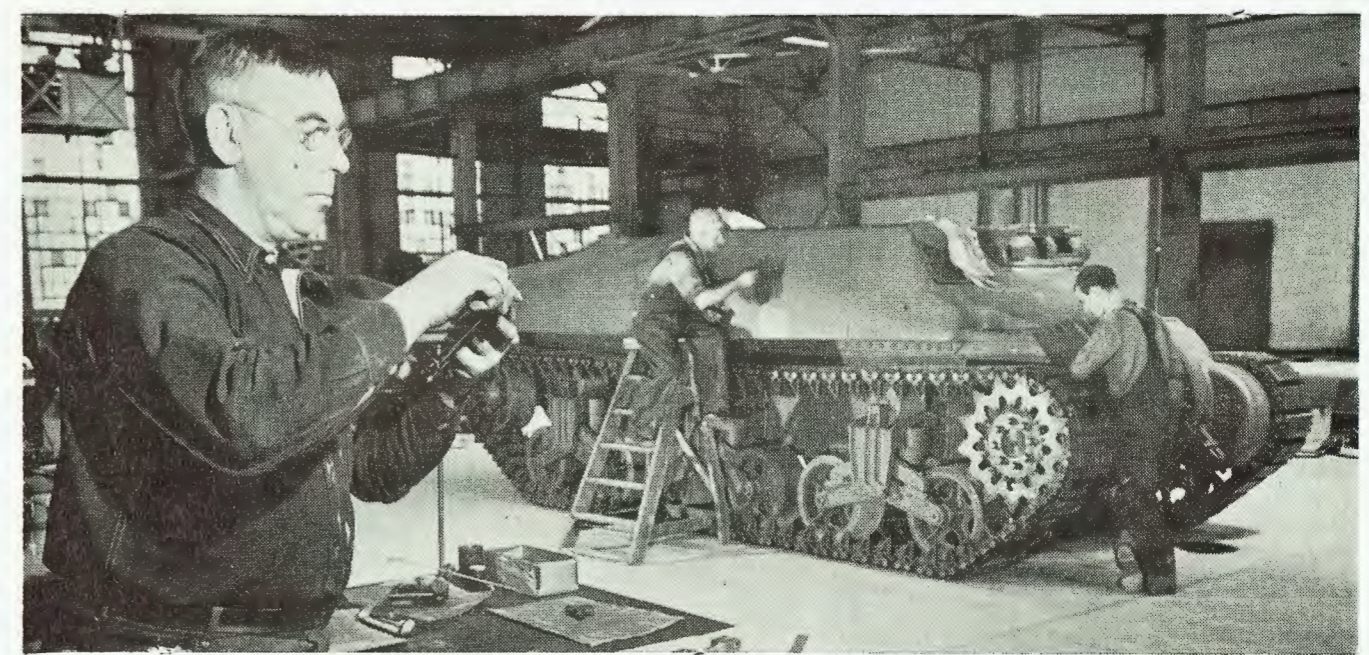
Another role the Unit was called upon to perform before the mobilization was to recruit, for active units, amongst its personnel. Young men were sent to the R.C.A.F., Navy and other branches of the Army. So, at the eve of the mobilization of the Unit 55 Officers and more than 600 other ranks were already on active service.

On May 21st 1941, Les Voltigeurs de Quebec were mobilized; within a short time they were at full strength. As a matter of fact, more than 1000 men went through its ranks. Many, anxious to see action, were sent with draft overseas. Younger officers had to be found, while the other ranks were sent to Training Centres; 35 Cadets went through Brock-
—Please see page fourteen



TANK TEAMWORK IN ITS PRIMARY STAGE

Here's another sample of teamwork in tanks. Workers in the C.P.R. Angus shops prepare the body of a Valentine for the addition of bogey wheel suspension equipment. The tank is turned upside down at this stage of the proceedings.



CRUISER TANK IN ADVANCED STAGE OF CONSTRUCTION

The worker in the left foreground checks micrometer adjustment as others speed the task of preparing another one of the 30-ton Ram, Canadian-made cruiser tanks for the battle lines. The turret has yet to be added, but the hull, at this stage of the work, is virtually finished. Tracks, however, are not normally added until the other main parts have been assembled. The suspension and drive sprocket can be clearly seen.

ville or St. Jerome for their qualification and many more will be sent when required.

During February, from an Infantry Unit, the Voltigeurs were transformed into a Tank Unit; and were sent to Camp Borden from Valcartier where they had been since mobilization. The new slate of officers submitted has 45 names, all young and well-qualified; the men are trained and the Unit is ready to serve.

However, before starting a new kind of training, the Unit has some other duties to perform. Having been at Camp Borden for just about 2 weeks, they are sent to Niagara to relieve another unit.

The present O.C. is Lt.-Col. J. A. G. Roberge, a P.F. officer. Experienced and well-liked, he has served overseas with the Royal 22nd Regiment, the First Division, was on the Staff of the 3rd and 4th Divisions before his appointment.

Fort Knox

The United States Armored Force School at Fort Knox was authorized by the Secretary of War, Sept. 19, 1940, and was established Nov. 4, 1940, with a staff, faculty and detachment of 182 officers and 1,847 enlisted men and a student capacity of 300 officers and 5,000 enlisted men. The mission of the Armored Force School is to train the technical specialists required to operate, maintain, and repair the instruments and vehicles with which this force is equipped.

The school works on a two-shift daily basis with approximately 500 students entering each week. Its production rate has been doubled twice without increasing the physical size of the school. Tank, wheeled vehicle, communication, gunnery and field engineering courses are conducted for officers and these plus clerical and motorcycle courses for enlisted men. Major courses are of three months' duration and under the present double shift and staggered increment system, the school is graduating specialists at the rate of 1,440 officers and 22,000 enlisted men annually. The school is in operation 13 hours a day, 6 days a week.

* * *

NON-STOP RUMOR

Absolute knowledge I have none
But my Aunt's washerwoman's son
Heard a policeman on his beat
Say to a laborer on the street
That he had a letter just last week
Written in the finest Greek
From a Chinese coolie in Timbuctoo
Who said the Negroes in Cuba know
Of a colored man in a Texas town
Who got it straight from a circus clown
About somebody in Borneo
Who heard a man who claimed to know
Of a swell society female fake
Whose mother-in-law will undertake
To prove that her 7th husband's niece
Had stated in a printed piece
That she has a son who has a friend
Who knows when the war is going to end!

ARMoured FORCE NEWS.

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9th Canadian Armoured Regiment B.C.D.

In starting this brief account of some of our Unit's activities in England, we would like to send our greetings to those in Canada. We hope you will enjoy reading of our experiences as much as we did having them.

After a pleasant but unexciting crossing, we were greeted by our G.O.C., General Sansom, and were soon travelling to our new home. Our first location was in a very charming old Western English town and there we had our initial experience of operations during the blackout. The regiment was billeted in the town at night, with the exception of B Squadron which was in the near-by countryside, and as we marched through the streets, the men were told off out into their billets in groups of five or six.

Next morning the Unit woke up to find itself right in the middle of a typical English town, complete even to a town crier who had been called out of retirement to publicize Warship Week. The men were well received by the local citizens and enjoyed their stay there very much. Highlights of the stay were several dances put on for us, and a regimental dance, at which we played host. Major Harry Angle arranged a party for the children of the town, which was enjoyed by all.

It was here also that our first "sporting" event was started; a weekly three mile run for all ranks. No records were broken, as we "ran" the distance in Army boots.

Many members of the regiment were attached to English training units at this time, and received the benefit of various courses.

After several months we moved once more, this time to a country location where we are operating as squadrons. We are now actively engaged on training, and have also started inter-squadron sports competition.

Recently two football matches were held, "A" Squadron vs Headquarters Squadron, and "B" Squadron vs "C" Squadron. The weather was decidedly Canadian, with snow falling heavily and the field partly covered with ice. Captain J. L. Tyrer and Lieutenant J. Letcher took the field for "A" Squadron and when Trooper Holden scored a goal, the game was won. L/Cpl Hawkey played goal very ably for Headquarters but the assistance of S.S.M. S. F. Bettschen and Lieut. B. J. Finestone was to no avail, and "A" Squadron won by score of 1 to 0. "B" and "C" Squadrons tied their game with a goalless draw. Trooper P. Bennett refereed the games, being the only man with a knowledge of the rules.

Troopers J. W. Mills, G. McCormack, Cpl. F. Glover and Trooper J. Shiffitt are among the men from the Regiment competing in the Brigade boxing.

Lt.-Col. J. H. Larocque and some of the officers and men of the Regiment broadcast recently on a programme, to be heard shortly in Canada. Men from both the East and West were selected, and most parts of B.C. were represented. B.J.F.

YOUR IDEAS Are Worth Money !

This publication is interested in finding out what members of the Canadian Armoured Corps feel is most interesting in their training here. This is a war of ideas, and we want your ideas, constructive of course, on how you think your training could be improved.

To stimulate your interest "The Tank" has started a special feature in each issue. All you have to do is to write us a letter, of not more than 300 words, outlining your thoughts on the subject "Why I Joined the C.A.C."

Fill out the form to be found on this page, printing your name and unit, and mail it to The Editor, The Tank, C.A.C. Headquarters, Camp Borden, Ont.

You may send in as many letters as you wish, the only stipulation being that they must be submitted one at a time in individual envelopes. All letters must be in the hands of the editor by midnight of April 12, 1942.

Those submitted will be judged and the letter selected as the best will win a cash prize of \$3.00 for the writer. Two further prizes of \$1.00 each will be paid to the writers of the next two chosen. We cannot undertake to return any entries, however.

Letters will be judged for originality and constructiveness of suggestion as well as general content. The three prize-winning letters will be published in the May issue of the magazine.

Here is your big opportunity to become a contributor to these pages and get paid for it. We suggest you write your letter at once. All members of the Canadian Armoured Corps are eligible.

Fill out this form and attach to letter

To The Editor,
The Tank,

Camp Borden, Ontario.

Please accept this entry in your letter writing contest. I am,

(Name)

(Unit and Address)

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PHONE 2433

BLUE TAXI

PHONE 4040

"The Iron Horsemen" L.S.H. (R.C.)

The censor can rest his scissors on this. The Regiment is in England. It must be so. The first words we heard came from an angry mother warning her mischievous, smudgy son indoors, "Yer nime's Dripping. Grease!"

Kaleidoscopic impressions of this tight little island, gleaned while spinning to billets from the landing point: A Girl—be-capped, be-scarved navvies—a little engine, a funny little whistle—chimney pots and grey, Arnold Bennett towns—A Girl—Weather-beaten, mossy farms and lichened fences—turnip fields—double-decker buses—A Girl—hay stacks, looking like freshly baked loaves from a clean baking oven—signs "Every rivet a bullet," "Even the walls", "Sink savings to save sinkings"—A Girl—A gasometer, tiny freight cars—planes overhead.

Cross Sections—Christmas Day—turkey, Brussels sprouts, pudding, cigarettes, chocolates, beer, New Year's Day—Ham, headaches. The Regiment becomes vastly more religious. Everyone goes to church on Sunday morning over here. Who is the padre who chides us firmly when our colds permit us to sing only feebly, no matter how enthusiastic our spirits may be?

By January 23rd, the men and officers had learned how quickly English money could be spent. The average Strathcona has already paid a visit to Scotland. "Great Country," "Great People," to sum up mass opinion.

Lord Haw Haw greeted our safe arrival with the recommendation, "Give the Division a bottle of rum and a motorcycle. They'll kill themselves." "That's what he thinks," muttered Trooper Jesky. "You couldn't hit a bull in the bottom with a bucketful of beads," Hart retorted. "I could with a motorcycle though," Jesky boasted. Does that prove anything?

Commissioned to write a monthly regimental column, I forthwith set out to interview Mr. Average Trooper. I found him standing well back from a "B" Squadron fireplace—to avoid the tremendous heat. "Beer here?" "Rotten." "English humour?" "Too punny to be funny." "Food?" "A helluva sight better than boat rations!" "Cigarettes?" "Censored." "People?" "There are them that is good and them that is bad." "Girls?" "There are them that is . . . What did you say?" "Girls?" "Ah-h-h-h, yes!"

Through one good eye . . . The unit has secured some new iron horses for training. Scene 1. Bus Driver: "Oi, gor blimey! That's me noo bus!" "Yeah? This is me noo tank," said Sgt. Astle. "I was a sissy, I missed the top deck."

Now that the unit has settled in its new birth, training goes on apace. Rypa machines day and night, D. & M. classes, signalling, gunnery and fatigues.

Orders recently announced two stripes for Jerry Wilson. "Hate to see a good man go wrong," sez Hutch.

Tired out from a day's hard toil, Trooper Hearne observed: "No matter how high you may rise in the army, you can never hope to equal the man in the asylum who thinks he is Napoleon."

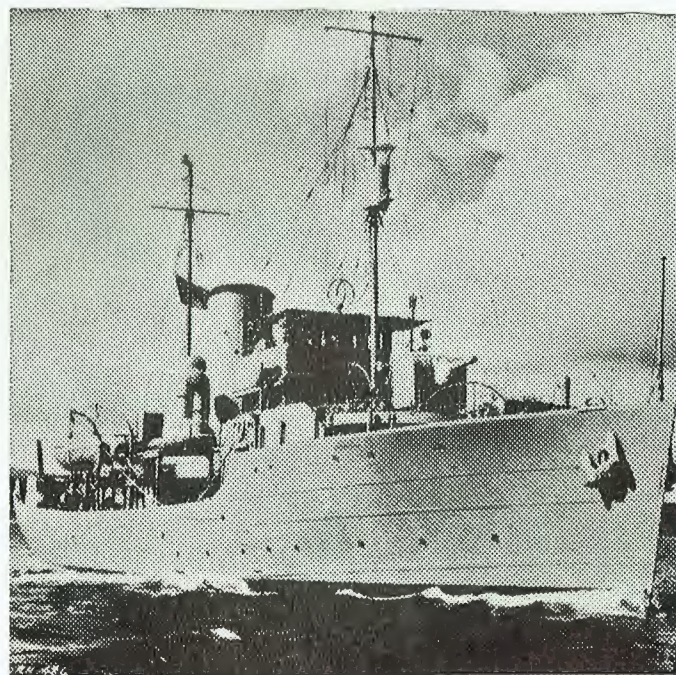
* * *

Births.—Since the Regiment's arrival in England a little bit of increased pay (son) has been born to Cpl. and Mrs. Ross Forrest. Also future income tax exemption came to Tpr. and Mrs. A. Lee (daughter). A son to Cpl. and Mrs. D. I. Munnion. The James boys staged a brother act with pay book changes in the form of a son to Cpl. and Mrs. W. James and a daughter to Tpr. and Mrs. Harry James. All five men are progressing favourably.

Marriages.—Tpr. Bailey, better known as "Ace" of "A" Squadron, fidgeted in the corridor the other morning before the colonel's door. He will be the first of the Regiment to "aisle" it since landing. The ambitious swain comes from Sault Ste. Marie. According to newspaper reports, thousands of Canadian soldiers have taken unto themselves a ball and chain in England. There are eyes that glow and hands that tremble here.

* * *

In their first game of the season, played January 22 at Perley, the Strathcona hockey aggregation won a 7 to 0 decision over the Sixth Armoured Regiment (First Hussars), Eastern Canada Regiment. With the exception of two players, Taylor and McGowan, the Strathcona's used the same team which last year played in the Ontario Intermediate play-



GUARDING THE CONVOYS

Canadian troops overseas do not need to be told that this is an R.C.N. corvette—one of the trim Canadian-built naval craft which are fighting a winning battle to keep the sea lanes open for the passage of men, munitions, and vital supplies.

downs. "They played a great game," Cpl. Forrest said of his crew. "I wuz covered with respiration by the time it wuz over," Cpl. Karpinka wheezed. Line-up: Goal, Cpl. J. R. Forrest (Capt.); defence, Sergeants Stephens and Craig; Cpls. Karpinka and Kennedy; centres, Sgt. May and Tpr. McGowan; Left wings, Lieut. Scramstad and Sgt. Patterson; Right wings, Sgt. Cade and Tpr. Taylor; Utility, Cpl. Clark.

* * *

It was with deep regret and a sincere feeling of personal loss that all ranks heard the sad news of the death of our Honourary Colonel, General Sir Archibald C. Macdonell, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., E.D., a splendid soldier to whom Regiment and Old 1st Canadian Division were very dear. As he used to say, "Once a Strathcona, always a Strathcona," and we have always treasured that remark.

Members of the Regiment were grieved recently by the news of Canadian losses in the defence of Hong Kong. Many Strathcona's had relatives and friends in the ranks of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. We write no eulogy for the men and officers of that fine Canadian regiment, their fate is not fully known to us but if some have gone to join a Greater Army than any on earth, there are those remaining who will avenge them.

* * *

Crow, as a steady diet, becomes increasingly distasteful. After Greece, Crete, Hong Kong, Singapore, Java and Mandalay, C.A.C. men, with some justification, may wonder when the diet is going to be varied. There is no question as to whether it shall be—merely when and where. And an ever-present mental query as to what part the C.A.C. will play in redrafting the menu.



HULLS ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE AT MONTREAL TANK ARSENAL

This is a typical picture of an early stage of the assembly line in the Montreal Locomotive Works tank arsenal. The hulls are being made ready for advanced stages of construction. These cast steel portions are mammoth mountains of metal in their own right as the picture illustrates.

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TORONTO

26th Canadian Army Tank Battalion

(Grey and Simcoe Foresters)

By SGT. W. J. CARMICHAEL

We do not make very much money but we certainly see a lot of country.

It seems that the powers that be have decided to keep us on the move constantly and so far they have succeeded in this purpose to the letter. During the last two months the Foresters have stuck in one place just long enough to grab a quick shave and a change of laundry. "See Canada First," is our motto—and anyway, the life of a tourist is never dull.

After our return from the East Coast early in February, it looked as if we were going to get right down to business and the new tank training proved to be right down the Foresters' alley. We were talking in terms of squadrons and troopers instead of companies and privates—when: bingo! along comes the order to shove off to Niagara to take over the important guard duties in that district.

So here we are in the Chippawa Sector of the Niagara Area for a few weeks. It will just serve as a nice little rest before we get back to Borden again and into those tanks.

At the time of writing, our Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. V. R. Fell, M.M., and our Adjutant, Captain R. E. Buell, are busy at the task of arranging the Battalion into Squadrons and as a result the morale

of the troops has soared another forty per cent in the past twenty-four hours. There is even a whisper that the little black tams will be on issue any time now.

To date since the Battalion was mobilized in June 1940, it has been: Camp Borden—Toronto—Mulgrave—Debert—Camp Borden—Niagara-on-the-Lake—Niagara Falls—? Little man, what next?

At the present our new set-up in the 26th Army Tank Battalion is as follows:

Commanding Officer—Lt.-Col. V. R. Fell, M.M.
2 i/c—Major E. I. C. Wagner.
Adjutant—Captain R. E. Buell.
H.Q. Squadron Commander—Major C. D. Raikes.
H.Q. Squadron 2 i/c—Captain C. E. Nettleton.
"A" Squadron Commander—Captain W. E. Harris.
"A" Squadron 2 i/c—Captain C. R. Korman.
"B" Squadron Commander—Captain E. M. Wilson.
"B" Squadron 2 i/c—Captain S. A. H. Cressey.
"C" Squadron Commander—Captain J. Y. W. Braithwaite.
"C" Squadron 2 i/c—Captain A. T. McNabb.
Quartermaster—Captain A. H. Harker.
Battalion H.Q.—Captain G. W. Cutbush.
Paymaster—Captain W. P. Telford.
Medical Officer—Captain J. Lederman.
Chaplain—Captain W. L. Brown.

And although we are not just sure of the exact set-up for the Senior N.C.Os., we do know that Regimental Sgt.-Major Michael J. Fallon, height, 6 ft. 2½ inches, weight, 260 pounds, will be in charge of that pleasant task of discipline.

So we hope to skip right through this guard duty and then right back to Camp Borden and those big steel horses.

Tank Fighter Team

By LIEUTENANT ROBERT M. GERARD

Reprinted from "Infantry Journal"

Part Five—Defeat

The most amazing thing about our escape through the German column was that we met no other enemy forces until we reached the Loire River, late that evening, sixty whole miles farther to the south. The Germans had concentrated their forces on a few roads, thus apparently to slice up the French Army by going from the northeast to the southwest, toward Brittany.

At Ancenis, on the Loire River, the bridge was still standing, but mined, however. Here the handling of the traffic was excellent, and we quickly crossed the Loire, which was very wide at that place. At least, we now hoped, we would see a real organized defence make a good stand behind the Loire. But our hopes soon vanished. For, as behind the Seine, no defensive preparations had been made.

Since our own division, the one we had acted as rear guard for, could probably be considered as lost and surrounded somewhere back around Ernee, it seemed best to find some other division and get ourselves attached to it. For we had lost our kitchen truck and all of our gasoline. Our men could hardly go on fighting long without food, or gasoline for the vehicles. So now, since we had some choice, we

searched for some good unit to be attached to. We were fortunate enough to find a splendid commander of a cavalry division, which we knew was an excellent outfit, half motorized and half horse.

This commander was by now, however, almost a general without a division, for his unit had lost by far the greater part of its men and vehicles, and all its animals, in battle in northern France. But the supply trains of the division were left, and an antitank-gun company, and a few artillery pieces—in all some five hundred men. The general had known my captain somewhere before. He decided to use the Groupe Franc as a protection for his headquarters.

We now headed for Montrevault where his headquarters were, a village south of the Loire. There we put our machine guns in position, with one man at each gun, and rotated our men on this duty. And now the entire Groupe Franc went to sleep. For we were more than exhausted, we were practically dead. Before I turned in myself I had a delicious bath in a small stream of water, which I needed for I had not undressed for two weeks. I found no bed anywhere, and so I spread myself out on the grass, under a tree, and there sawed them off from 1.00 in the morning of June 19 to 7.00 in the morning of

—Please see page twenty

"WORTHIE'S" RAMS REACH "BLIGHTY"

"Ram" cruiser tanks—speedy, powerful fighting machines designed by Major-General F. F. Worthington, M.C., M.M., are reported to be arriving in England for use by Canadian Armoured Division. Manufactured in Canada, their design incorporates outstanding features of English and American tanks. Shown above is a typical scene from the training tests which have been conducted winter-long at Camp Borden.



THEY SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY

These two-pounder anti-tank guns are being turned out in large quantities from a Canadian factory. Precision-built, accurate, easily handled, they are a credit to Canadian craftsmanship. Though now of relatively low calibre, they are an adequate answer to all but the heaviest types of enemy armoured vehicles. Like their big brother, the six-pounder, they speak with authority. And they talk fast.

June 20. Thirty hours, without eating, without waking! Even then one of the men woke me up to say that the Groupe would be leaving in half an hour. Our men fixed a whale of a breakfast for me, eggs, bread, and all. And I ate it all and felt fine, ready to fight again. My captain, who had also slept a long time, told me that the few men left in the division had been fighting the enemy since early that morning, and had prevented the enemy from crossing the river in that vicinity. But the general had to order a retreat because a German column had been able to cross the Loire somewhere off to the east.

From this morning on, until the night of June 24, four days later, we saw no enemy, except numerous hostile planes over our heads. We kept going at full speed to the south, through Bressuire, Parthenay, Poitiers, Angouleme. Near Parthenay, in Glazier, a little village, we heard Petain on the radio publicly telling the people of France that he had asked for an armistice.

Near Poitiers, in the village of Laverre, we organized a position behind a tiny river, called the Clain. All day on the 22nd we stayed there waiting for the Boche to show up. We still had a faint hope: someone remembered that Nostradamus in his prophecies had said that France would be invaded from three sides, but that the Germans would finally be beaten near Poitiers. Here we were near Poitiers, but the big battle prophesied so many centuries ago

was not forthcoming. Instead, there was another order to retreat, at 2.00 on the morning of June 23, just before the Germans reached our position. And all during the day of the 23rd we retreated slowly, stuck in the middle of a never-ending jam of traffic.

On the 24th, near Angouleme, our repair truck with our mechanics and one truck from the cavalry division were taken prisoner by the advance guard of the German panzer unit we had on our trail. The truck had had motor trouble and had been left behind with the mechanics who tried to make a hasty repair.

In the afternoon of the 24th our Groupe arrived in Benevent, on the south side of the Isle River, a tributary of the Dordogne, a place about sixty miles northeast of Bordeaux. Since we had no more explosives, we were unable to blow the bridge across the Isle. We cut big trees, however, and installed a strong barricade. And antitank guns from the cavalry division were set up to defend it.

About 8.00 o'clock in the evening we saw some enemy troops on the other side. We fired and they fired back. Since it was late and the Germans had probably advanced some distance during the day, my captain figured that they would wait until morning before attempting a crossing. About that time we were informed that the French had blown up all bridges along the Dordogne, thirty miles to the south. In other words, we were now trapped between two rivers by the action of our own higher

command. We therefore prepared to make a last and desperate stand the next morning.

But at 11.00 o'clock that night we heard by radio that the armistice had been finally signed with both Italy and Germany, and that it would become effective in a few hours, at exactly 1.30 in the morning of June 25.

We still had ammunition, however. And there were Germans on the other side of the stream. If we didn't use it up, we would probably have to surrender it. My captain decided accordingly to fire and fire until exactly 1.30 in the morning. And we fired every kind of ammunition we could find in the division supply trucks: tracer bullets, armor-piercing bullets, regular bullets. The Germans fired back, but not very much. Our antitank guns kept firing toward the enemy with shells. We certainly must have killed a few of the enemy, but on our part we suffered only one casualty. At 1.30 on the dot we stopped. And the Germans stopped too.

Now the silence was overwhelming. In the dark of the night we heard the Germans singing the official Nazi song and hollering "Sieg Heil!" or "Nach England" every once in a while. We answered with the Marseillaise, but the seventeen of us left in the Groupe Franc made a sad job of it. The jour de gloire had not come, and France had been defeated worse than it had ever been in all its two thousand years of history.

For a few days, and until the demarcation line between the occupied and so-called unoccupied zones was finally marked, we kept on the alert at all times. We kept all our vehicles on the road, toward the southeast, ready to leave at any minute if the enemy showed any sign of crossing the river to occupy our village. Finally we learned that the demarcation line between the two zones was to be twenty kilometers east of the railroad line between Angouleme and Mont de Marsan. This made the line pass only two miles west of our village. We were, therefore, already in the last village of unoccupied France, the next ones being Montpan, on the River Isle, where the Germans soon sent a detachment.

I stayed on in Benevent until the beginning of August, supervising the demobilization of our men and helping refugees who crossed the line to go back home into the occupied territory. I myself was released from the Army on August 8, 1940, and re-joined my wife on the Riviera. After several months I finally obtained the papers that enabled me to leave France, but I was unable to cross Spain to Lisbon, without taking the risk of being put in a Spanish concentration camp. This was done to many young Frenchmen by the Spanish government, acting under pressure from Berlin. Berlin wanted to prevent all Frenchmen of military age wanting to join the British from crossing Spain and Portugal.

And so in desperation I got aboard a small cargo boat which ran the English blockade across the Mediterranean and landed in Algeria. From there I took a train to Morocco, and then to Tangiers opposite Gibraltar, which at that time was still an international town. From Tangiers I took a plane to Lisbon, where I met my wife who, as an American citizen, had been able to cross Spain. And later we both sailed for the United States. This trip from France back to the United States seems simple to speak of, but it actually took four months because of the endless complications. It felt good, I can assure you, to be back in the United States, and free.

THE END.

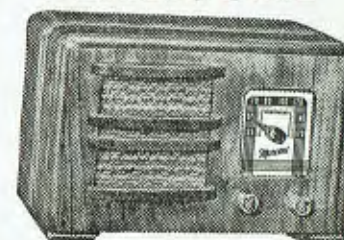
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRIZE WINNER

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

I am writing my letter on behalf of the people in the Training Centres who are employed at some particular job such as cooking, clerical or even instructing in any of the different subjects that go to make up the education of the modern soldier.

Many of the young soldiers come into the army straight from jobs or school. They join up to be soldiers and naturally want to learn all they can about the army.

In many cases the young soldier is given a specific job to do and that job takes up all his time, with the result that he receives little or no training. He could not fire a Bren gun, read a map, drive a truck or even do simple dismounted drill if his life depended upon it. In course of time he is given stripes in many cases and is a corporal, sergeant, or even staff sergeant on the strength of his being able to do some particular job efficiently. In most cases he deserves the promotion but still he has not received training that every N.C.O. should have. In the case of an instructor it will be found that he is instructing people from other training centres who have at least had an all round basic training. Surely our instructor should know as much basically as the people that he is instructing, albeit he is an expert in some particular subject or subjects.

Many of the young soldiers would like nothing better than to be able to obtain some knowledge of D. & M., Gunnery and the other subjects that go to make up the education of the modern soldier. In many cases his job is monotonous and he is impatient to get Overseas. When he was in civilian life, if he thought that he was in sort of a rut or could not seem to get ahead, he would have several alternatives; he could quit his job and get another one, he could go to night school and study for a better

position or he could simply go along doing his work in a disinterested manner in any sort of fashion.

We have the same situation in the training centre. The man wants to get courses of some sort and cannot seem to do so. Naturally he cannot quit the army but he can go A.W.O.L. and frequently does. Or he continues with the job in a half-hearted manner.

I do not see why it would not be possible to have classes at night in different subjects such as Gunnery, D. & M., etc. We have Bren guns and Tommy guns and the people who could at least explain the elemental workings of them; we certainly have plenty of maps and also people who could instruct in simple map reading. Also with the approach of fine weather surely one or two trucks or a carrier could be utilized and interested persons given instructions in driving and maintenance.

These classes could be of a purely voluntary nature with the proviso that a soldier once he started would have to attend a majority of the classes. I do not suggest that a full course covering all angles of each subject be given but at least a working knowledge could be imparted. This I think would give the young soldier some training and make him feel that he is on the way to being the soldier he joined up to be.

Another angle that might be considered is the fact that these people doing a specialized job might have to be utilized some time to help stem an attempted enemy invasion in Canada, which at present is not unlikely. What would happen to these cooks, clerks, batmen, fatigue men, etc., against determined and fully trained Japanese and German soldiers is not hard to figure out.

GORDON RITCHIE, Sgt.

ED. NOTE: A well-presented viewpoint worthy of serious consideration. Cheque for \$3.00 is going forward to Sgt. Ritchie as winner of First Prize in The Tank—Canada's monthly letter writing contest.

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WIRELESS WING

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

A few weeks ago I arrived in Camp Borden to take an instructor's course in D/O. Before I say more I must say how glad I was to get changed over from infantry to Tanks. And the more I see of the boys in the black tams, the more I realize how fortunate I was. For here you have a modern fighting force, free from old outmoded ideas and burning with enthusiasm and confidence to meet and defeat Jerry.

Seeing that an opportunity to express your own ideas for improvement of training was offered by The Tank (which again demonstrates the spirit of the Tanks), I thought my personal experience might prove interesting.

Speaking from a wireless operator's standpoint, I feel that in the teaching of "organization" a sand table would be a most instructive and interesting method of putting over this somewhat confusing subject. At present, model tanks are being used, but a sand table is needed in conjunction with these other aids.

Another point which has caused me confusion is the fact that different instructors have disagreed on several small points (procedure, etc.). True this may seem trivial, but as we have to return to our units and instruct, it can be readily seen that any such differences are bound to bring challenges from our pupils, and make our already difficult job, more difficult. A little collaboration on the part of the instructors would quickly clear up this point.

In closing please accept my suggestions as constructive, and in no way think that I am being critical. The officers and NCOs at the Wireless School are doing a splendid work and cannot be too highly praised.

"THE HORNET."

ED. NOTE: Instructors have always had our sympathy. Cheque for \$1.00 is going forward to prize-winner "Hornet". (Wireless Wing loves its code names.)

It is axiomatic that it is the task of training to produce trained soldiers as speedily as possible. There is none to deny that the task is important, that it is urgent, that it must be done quickly and well.

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WINTER WARFARE

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

"What I Have Learned From My Armoured Corps Training Course," would I'm afraid, be somewhat of a misnomer in this case so I have not given the letter any title whatsoever, chiefly because the subject matter really has little to do with training as it exists but rather with training as it might exist some day in this or any country where our armies will be fighting a "winter war."

It is curious that although two wars have been fought in the last two years in the severest winter weather, and the latest and most important of these, the Russo-German war is still being fiercely fought along a two-thousand mile front, there have been no exclusively new weapons adapted to winter warfare. The technique of ski-troops and sled-drawn artillery is neither new nor exclusive to either side, and all their other weapons and tactics are equally hampered by heavy snows and sub-zero conditions.

Here in Canada, without knowing it, we have developed what, with some experiment and careful thought, might prove the answer to the snowy stalemate which restricts this type of fighting. Several years ago in answer to the skiing problem in the Laurentians and the Rockies, a few enterprising hotel-keepers devised a car with skis placed on the front. A success, this makeshift became known as the "Snowmobile", and was followed up, until today

—Please see page twenty-four

"It takes
the real thing,
'Coca-Cola,'
to make a pause
refreshing"

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it has become a machine which can run up a 60 degree slope covered with three to four feet of soft snow with a six-person load. On the level across open country it can cruise at 30 or 40 miles per hour with ease.

The machines in question are called "Bombardiers", and are made in Valcartier, Quebec. Powered by a Ford V-8 engine, mounted on skis sprung in shock absorbers in the front, and on rubber tracks riding on two rubber bogie wheels driven by a steel sprocket in the rear, topped by a steel and wood cab, the whole presents a compact medium of swift, sure conveyance over any condition of snow.

Were it possible to provide such a machine with a more powerful engine, a sheet of armour-plate, and the necessary armament, its easy manoeuvrability where other tracked vehicles fail, would prove an invaluable winter reconnaissance and scout-car, and would definitely outmode the motorcycle.

JOHN STARNES, Lt.

ED. NOTE: Ideas have value. This one sends a cheque for \$1.00 to Lt. Starnes—and we hope the matter is not closed.

**WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
Canadian Armoured Corps
BARRIE**

On Thursday evening, February 26th, the Women's Auxiliary to the C.A.C. held the first of what is hoped will be regular monthly social meetings. Trinity Parish Church kindly lent their Parlour. About thirty-six members attended, including a carload from Angus.

The evening began with Mrs. Cunningham showing moving pictures of Camp Borden taken during the last couple of years by Major W. H. Cunningham. It was a great thrill to the "old-timers" and interesting to the newer arrivals as well. There were lots of pictures of C.A.C. personnel, and consequently much excitement and shouts of "There he is!" when somebody's husband appeared. Enthusiasm was infectious and everybody clapped when any husband was recognized!

After the picture, court whist was played which was enjoyed by all, except the round where no one was allowed to speak once the cards were dealt. That was a strain, and several penalties were paid. Prizes were won by Mrs. Loudon, Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. Derrij, Mrs. Gale, Mrs. Hopkins and Mrs. Squance. Everyone appeared to enjoy the evening.

After sandwiches and coffee, Mrs. Senkler played the piano and members sang songs before breaking up. Everyone appeared to enjoy the evening immensely.

Early in February this Auxiliary was deeply moved by a very generous contribution to our funds from the Men's Canteen Committee of A-8, C.A.C.T.C., to be used for the benefit of families of men in the C.A.C. We greatly appreciate the confidence and trust implied by this gesture, and will do our utmost to administer these funds wisely and justly.

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