

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink."

CHARLOTTETOWN SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1950

Charlottetown Honoured

Charlottetown is proud to welcome, for their fourth annual re-union, the ex-members of one of Canada's best-known fighting regiments of World War Two—the North Nova Scotia Highlanders.

Formed in June, 1940, at Amherst, for immediate overseas service as part of the Third Canadian Division, the unit comprised men from the Prince Edward Island Highlanders, Pictou Highlanders, Cape Breton Highlanders and the former North Nova Scotia Highlanders (MG.) whose name they took.

In England they underwent special training for the D-Day assault on the continent, and in the opening days of that memorable campaign of June, 1944, they are believed to have made the deepest penetration of any of the Allied units.

With a record such as this, it is right that every member of the regiment should cherish memories of his war service, and that the annual reunions should take on something of an impressive memorial nature.

Out of Mothballs

Conversion from war to peace brought many changes, but probably the most spectacular was the laying up—mothballing—of thousands of tons of shipping.

Pacific operations again change the picture drastically. Distances are long and even relatively small quantities of war materials tie up much shipping.

His Shoes Hard To Fill

It is said that in the work of any great organization, no man's services are absolutely essential. What amounts almost to an exception to this general rule is the case of Mr. Walter Thompson, who is about to retire as director of public relations for the Canadian National Railways.

viously interposed and if the public generally were unaware of his achievements while others took the bows, that was just what Mr. Thompson wanted.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Two days till the big strike or—? The end of a perfect Old Home Week. Tomorrow, the 11th Sunday after Trinity. Are Railway executives and employees poker players? Were it not for the threatened Railway strike, it would be back to "business as usual" next week.

Welcome to the gallant North Novies holding today their fourth Re-union since Great War II. Ross Munro's criticism of the delay of mail to Canadians on Korea front has brought relief. Arrangements have now been made to have mail flown to and from Tokyo by air.

It does not take long to "sign up" and ultimately land at the training ground. This Province is doing well, though there is still plenty room to fill the ranks with the 10,000 volunteers necessary.

The first rail of the P. E. I. Railway was laid this date 1872. The railway ultimately was made to cover a lot of territory and it took a long time to reach anywhere in particular; ultimately, however, it led us into Confederation.

In Ontario a thunder storm and disastrous hail fall, in the Bahamas an expected fierce hurricane, while here we had a heavy shower, insufficient to dampen the spirits of race fans and Exhibition patrons.

Ottawa's traffic inspector is backing a vigorous campaign against the inanity of cluttering up automobile windshields with fuzzy doo-dads and gew-gaws dangling in the driver's line of vision.

Railway strike or not, it is in the constitution of this nation that communication be maintained between this Island and the mainland. The railways would do well to bear that fact in mind and give definite assurances that they will not compel the Federal Government to find other means of carrying out its obligations.

Mr. W. R. Shaw points out that he found on his recent European trip that European people show great interest in their schools, particularly Folk Schools or, as they could be called, Citizenship Schools where they teach subjects which we Canadians often neglect, such as physical culture, folk dancing and singing, as well as the traditions of their country.

The next week looms as an important one for some 160 high school students across the Dominion who will learn whether they have or have not been selected to attend the Royal Military College at Kingston, Ont., or "Royal Roads" at Esquimaux, B. C.

Plans for the First Maritime Industrial Exposition to be held in Saint John, N. B., September 2nd-9th inclusive, are nearing completion. The Exposition will be held in the new \$1,100,000 Passenger & Immigration Building, West Saint John.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

WOMEN'S WORK

Sir, — It was very pleasant to move out of the sun, dust and noise of the milling crowds into the Exhibition Hall at Charlottetown's annual Fair, and what could be more suitable for an exhibition of women's work? Industry, co-operation and organization, as well as skill have been needed to produce so varied a show.

To one visitor, the outstandingly interesting exhibits were the quilts and the hooked rugs, both local crafts, and both, at their best, showing a very high degree of craftsmanship.

The second quilt that took my attention, hung next to the ring quilt, and I would have found it difficult, if asked to choose between them, the lovely red and green of the conventional flowers, placed so exactly on their gleaming white background, with the smaller flowers outlined in the intervening space, made a very lovely piece of work, one which any owner might treasure as an heirloom.

The lace, embroidery, crochet, leather work, woolen goods, and pottery all deserved closer attention than it was possible to give them. The cellophane coverings, the wooden bar no doubt necessary for protection, and the crowd of interested sightseers were difficult obstacles to close inspection.

My thoughts went back to similar exhibitions seen in England. There, hooked rugs were missing, their place being taken by other woolen rugs of different texture, designs and colourings. Quilts, too, were on show, some patchwork, some quilted, and one very lovely example was made of Glamis linen, coarsely woven in a pale ecru shade.

A notable exhibit is often a collection of soft toys, dolls, rabbits, elephants, teddy-bears, and other animals and birds. These toys always have a ready sale. Leather gloves, felt slippers and nosebags, wicker baskets, have all been shown at one time and another by various Women's Institutes.

It is impossible to estimate the good that has been done by the Institute movement, but perhaps the greatest thing is the way in which women have learned to work together and play together, not for themselves alone, but for the good of their own community, and through their spreading the influence of the Institute to the whole world.

Perhaps the most awkward of all the awkward developments to which these reunions can lead is when we are credited by our long-lost friend with a part in some incident with which, though for all we know it may have taken place, we are perfectly certain that we had nothing to do.

I am, Sir, etc., RUTH SILLITOE Crowlands, Charlottetown.

I Shall Never Forget

(The Times, London) The older we grow, the greater becomes the probability that we shall from time to time meet friends, or acquaintances whom we have not seen for a number of years. The pleasure which we derive from these encounters is sometimes very great, but it cannot be denied that they are fraught with problems of a peculiarly delicate kind.

The North Novas Remember



The Poet's Corner

COUNTRY THINGS The touch of country things is good; The feel of fireplace apple wood, The wobbly coat of a brand-new calf Whose sprawled legs make you want to laugh, A fluffy yellow chick, the shoulder Of a sorrel colt, a rough gray boulder When you climb the sweet-fern pasture hill. The touch of country things will fill Your hands with joy; tough blossoms, scolding wind, Roadside brambles, springtime weed Tool handles, smoothly worn the leather Of harness, grass in rainy weather The whetstone sharpening a scythe. The touch of country things is life: The fine warm feel of sun-warmed loam, And the latch that opens the door of home. —Francis Frost.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.) FAT CATTLE "Quite an interest was excited on Wednesday last, on our Market Square, by the exhibition of a number of stall fed oxen, competing for the Easter prizes. Some ten or twelve were brought forward, which in quality would have been creditable to any part of the world. The first prize was awarded for the smallest and lightest of the lot, a very handsome young steer, bred by Mr. John Hensley, and fed by Mr. John Thorne, being scarcely three years old. The second prize was awarded for an ox fed by James Peake, Esq.; but the centre of attraction and wonder of the day, on whom all eyes were fixed, was a huge ox, of the pure Durham breed, calved on Mrs. Grubb's farm, reared by Capt. Cumberland, purchased and fed by Mr. George Beer, Jr.

"We understand this ox was pronounced to be the fattest and heaviest ever reared or fed on the Island. He was shut out from competing for the prize on account of not having been altered when a calf. Mr. Beer expressed himself dissatisfied with the decision of the judges, and intimated his intention of exporting him alive, so we shall not be gratified with a sight of his beef. The live weight of the ox was 2,550 lbs., estimated dead weight from 1,600 lbs. to 1,700 lbs.

The Age-Old Story

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. BOGOTA, Volumbia, Aug. 18—(AP)—Francisco Jose Urrutia, distinguished Colombian jurist who held high position in the League of Nations and served also the United Nations, died today. He was 80. He was a member of the World Court and presided over the 49th session of the League of Nations Council.

which we are supposed to have taken part. It may, indeed it generally does, exhibit us in a favorable light and it would not injure our credit at all to day with a modest laugh, "Fancy you remembering that silly business!" an let it go at that.

AGRICULTURE is the backbone of Prince Edward Island's economy. Experience through the years has meant the improvement of methods and products. The result is an outstanding position in the markets of the world and the industry is entitled to every encouragement. This firm through 75 years experience is in a position to service farm insurance requirements in all lines. HYNDMAN & CO. LTD. Insurance Since 1877. Offices: CHARLOTTETOWN — SUMMERSIDE — MONTAIGU AGENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE

The North Novas

Today will be filled with nostalgic memories for members of the 1st Battalion North Nova Scotia Highlanders who are gathered in Charlottetown for their fourth annual re-union since the war. The Battalion was formed in early June, 1940, at Amherst. It was a composite unit, drawing its membership from the four Highland Battalions — Prince Edward Island Highlanders (Black Watch), the Cape Breton Highlanders, the Pictou Highlanders, and the North Nova Scotia Highlanders (MG.). The Commanding Officer was Lt. Col. H. W. Murdoch C.B.E., E.D., Truro, N.S., later promoted to Brigadier.

The unit spent a year in Canada training, and a month before sailing overseas in July marched from its base at Debert, N.S., to Charlottetown where it took part in a Victory Bond Campaign. The North Novas disembarked at Avonport (Bristol), England, arriving in Alderhot July 31, 1941, where they took up quarters in Albuhera Barracks. During the three years in England the unit was stationed at such centres as Camberley, Tamers, Weshampnet and Merston, East and West Wittering, Ichenor, Horsham, Hellingly, Worthing, Cissbury Camp and Speer Hill. Battle training in Scotland saw the unit in the hills and lochs north of Fort William and later at the naval base of Rothesay.

Succeeding Brigadier Murdoch as C.O. was Major K. R. Mitchell, later Lt.-Colonel with the R.C. O.C. He in turn was succeeded by Lt.-Col. Charles Petch who had charge of the unit during all its combined operations, training and planning for the invasion. Major J. D. Stewart, Charlottetown, was second-in-command during this period. He was later promoted to the command of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders and his place was taken by Major Don Forbes who later rose to command the Battalion in Northwest Europe.

The Division role in the D-Day invasion plan called for the 27 Armoured Regiment (Sherbrooke Fusiliers) to lead 9 Brigade in a break-through of the bridgehead gained by 8 Brigade with the pipet Aerodrome as an objective. Advance guard mobile troops were to be provided by the Troop of the Armoured Regiment. The advance guard was to be commanded by Major J. D. Learmont and consisted of C. Company mounted on the Carrier platoon. A Company, commanded by Major L. M. Rhodenizer and B. Company commanded by Major J. W. Douglas were each to be mounted on a squadron of ranks advancing on the right and left of the axis respectively. D Coy, on the third Squadron, was to be in reserve.

Loading was completed on 4 June, 1944, with the vehicles in L.T. and the marching troops in L.C.A. A 24-hour postponement kept the craft in harbour that night, but on the afternoon of 5 June they slipped and moved down Southampton Water. There was no looking back until the job was finished the following May.

The fighting in Normandy was hard and bitter. The North Novas in the first two days drove further inland than any other troops, but they were stopped just short of their objective. It was almost a month before the unit finally reached Caen—a month of continual contact with the enemy was waiting for build-up of supplies and forces. Normandy towns and villages such as Bény-sur-Mer, Villons les Buissons, Les Buissons, Buron, Authie, Grouchy, Caen, Monderville, and Tilly la Campagne will strike a responsive chord in the hearts of many today and will ever be remembered when the North Novas are discussed.

During the first six weeks the Battalion suffered about 850 casualties, more than half the total for the eleven months in action. They had withstood the formidable 21st Panzer Division of the German Army and helped pave the way for the advance on the Caen-Palaise road. The Novas were in on the closing of the gap and took many prisoners. The best day's toll of P.W.'s was 3,700 through the unit gate.

In September the unit was poised before Boulogne. It played a prominent part in the capture of this important port, taking pillboxes and other strong points on Mount Lambert, St. Etienne, and what was known as the Radar Station. During the five days at Boulogne the North Novas captured the three strongly fortified positions, taking about 1,500 prisoners. They themselves had a total of some 120 casualties. The taking of the guns at Cap Gris Nez ended the fighting in France so far as the unit was concerned. The Novas and the Highland Light Infantry combined to capture the two gun batteries. The Brigade plan called for the H.L.I. to take out the battery on the right consisting of four 28 cm guns with 360 degree traverse and the North Novas to take the battery on the left, consisting of four 38 cm gun with 120 degree traverse. The attack went according to plan and in all about 700 prisoners were taken for a loss of 22 casualties. A strong position was taken and in addition the enemy lost heavily in dead and wounded.

From France the unit moved into Belgium and the Schelde Estuary. The mobile, fast hitting, heavy fire-power warfare of earlier days gave way to the prodding, plodding type that saw the infantry practically on its own in the dyke-blasted country. There were numerous sharp engagements and the unit fought almost continuously for nineteen days with one forty-eight hour break. The Novas closed on the east end of the Breskens pocket and finished up by capturing the German divisional headquarters in Knoke and last Germans in Belgium when the Winter dyke joined the Leopold Canal. Throughout the fighting on the Schelde, pressure was kept up with little time for sleep or eating, and frequent rainstorms made life disagreeable in general. This action marked the latter part of October.

Following their experiences the Third Division, temporarily at least, became known as the "Water Rats." Their amphibious warfare however, was not yet over. Among the first troops in the line in Germany, they took over early in November at Nijmegen, Holland. For the following three months while the German offensive in the Ardennes was underway, the experience of all battalions in the Third Division was the same. A week or two in the line and then a week or two out became a drill. Suffice it to say there was plenty of excitement and tension in patrols and feeling-out excursions on the plateau and company levels. The role of the Third Division in the break-out from Nijmegen was to clear low ground between the Reichwald feature and the Rhine. The river was high and a number of breaks had been made in the Winter dyke by the enemy. The result was an amphibious operation and most of the Division infantry was maintained by "Buffaloes" for some time.

On moving off from Nijmegen in February the Novas ran into a series of engagements. They hit into Cleve and extended to a point immediately across the Rhine from Emmerich. Here again flooding of the low ground caused misery and hardship. The stage was being set for a big push and divisions were jockeying for position. There will be those who remember well the fighting west of the Rhine; the names Keppin, Udem and Hochwald Forest will ring many a bell to those that were there.

The Hochwald clear, the way was open to crossing the Rhine. The Division regrouped in the Reichwald Forest where ten days were spent preparing for the assault. The Highland Brigade was placed under command of the British 51st (Highland) Division for the crossing with the task of clearing the road near Emmerich.

The assault troops of 51 Division crossed on both side of Rees without trouble on the morning of March 23. They were, however, strongly opposed in the villages beyond. It was at Bienen that the battalion was once again to fight a major engagement and distinguish itself. It was stiff, open fighting and casualties were heavy, but the Novas broke the back of enemy resistance and the way was open for units following.

Bienen is regarded as the most important operation performed by the Battalion, and its effect on the operations of 30 Corps was far reaching. Emmerich fell. From then on until the North Sea was reached, north of Leeuwarden, there was a long succession of canal crossings. Names that will be familiar in the latter days of the campaign are, Warnsveld, Zutphan, Bathman, Zwolle, Heerenveen and Leeuwarden.

It is recorded that a pleasant week was spent in the Dookum area on defence of the coast against enemy raids from the islands. Then followed a few days at Winschoten and the capture of Leer by the 9th Brigade in which the Novas played a prominent role. Neermoor and Timmel followed in the advance on Ender in the closing days of the war.

At 5 p.m. 4 May, 1945, a message was received to the effect that no further offensive action would be taken and the BBC at 9 p.m. informed them that the war in the 21st Army Group sector would be finished officially the following morning.

On Sunday, 6 May, 1945, the battalion proceeded to Norden, Germany, where it spent about 10 days disarming Germans and organizing displaced persons. It then proceeded to Baarn, Holland, where it was responsible in part for 6th Airborne Division until its removal to Germany. With the movement of the Germans in Western Holland to Germany, the battalion finished its work one year almost to the day from its arrival on the beaches of Normandy.

The following honors and awards since D-Day were awarded to the Battalion: D.S.O. and Bar, Lt.-Col. D. F. Forbes. D.S.O., Lt.-Col. F. A. Sparks. Maj. L. C. Winhold, Maj. K. N. Webber, Maj. M. G. Clement, Maj. J. E. W. Wright, Maj. J. D. Learmont, Maj. C. Kennedy. Military Cross: A-Maj. E. S. Gray—K-A 8 July '44, Lt. R. M. Graininger, Lt. W. A. Myers, Capt. K. A. Campbell—RCAMC, Lt. L. E. Fraser. Silver Star (American)—Lt. G. A. Gibson—K-A. Croix de Guerre: (With Gift Star), Maj. A. W. Jefferson, (With Silver Star), Lt. J. D. Campbell, (With Bronze Star), F. 50268, Sgt. Hurley, L. G. M.B.E. (Military Division): Maj. H. M. Cunningham. D.C.M.: K.74053, Sgt. Russel, L. E. K-A 22 Feb. '45. M.M.: F.45938, Pte. Fraser, H. L. F.55261, Sgt. Martin, J. J., F.60272, Sgt. Noonan, R. J.; M.39528, Pte. Smith, N. E.; K.4035, Pte. Moraes, C. F.44705, Sgt. Dukes, S.; F.59900, C.S.M. Bishop, H. J., B.142926, Pte. Scott, G. F.; C.120647, Pte. Shanks, D. I.; F.50197, R.S.M. Baillie, W. A.; F.50377, Cpl. Harrison, R. M.; B.155191, Sgt. Prokopchuk, J.; F.60341, C.S.M. Stewart, A. J.; B.E.M., Sgt. Arsenau, A. J.