

# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Volume 10, Number 1

Winter 2001

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# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5, CANADA

Phone: (519) 884-0710 ext.4594; Fax: (519) 886-5057

Email: mbechtho@wlu.ca

Agreement No.1372300; Publication mail registration No.08978

*Canadian Military History* is published four times a year in the winter, spring, summer and fall by the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University.

Editor-in-Chief	Terry Copp
Editor, Winter 2001 issue	Geoff Hayes
Managing Editor	Mike Bechthold
Canadian War Museum Editor	Cameron Pulsifer
Book Review Supplement Editor	Jonathan F. Vance
Business Manager	Ev Jones
Layout & Design	Mike Bechthold

Printed in Canada by Beacon Herald Fine  
Printing Division, Stratford, Ontario

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of  
Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program  
(PAP), toward our mailing costs.

ISSN 1195-8472

## Subscription Information

<b>Canada:</b>	
One year (4 issues)	\$32.00
Two years (8 issues)	\$64.00
<b>International:</b>	
One year (4 issues)	US\$27.00
Two years (8 issues)	US\$54.00

### Visa & Mastercard accepted.

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## Canadian War Museum

General Motors Court  
330 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0M8

**T**he Canadian War Museum, the national military history museum, is a living memorial to those men and women who served in Canada's armed forces. It is also a centre for research and dissemination of information and expertise on all aspects of the country's military past from pre-contact era to the present. It preserves the artifacts of Canadian military experience, interprets them for present and future generations, and advances the professional study of Canadian military history, including the effects of war and conflict on the nation and all its citizens.

## The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies

**T**he purpose of the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS) is to foster research, teaching, and public discussion of military and strategic issues of national and international significance. The Centre is intentionally multi-disciplinary; it has strong commitments in military history, with emphasis on the Canadian experience, and in strategic and operational studies, with emphasis on disarmament. LCMSDS supports both basic and applied research as well as teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, the extensive program of LCMSDS workshops, conferences, public lectures, and publications encourages informed discussion of international security and of Canada's national interests in military and strategic issues - past, present and future.

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

# ***From the Editor***

**T**his past year Canada brought one of its soldiers home. The return of the unknown soldier from his place at the Canadian war cemetery at Vimy Ridge marked an important achievement for the Royal Canadian Legion. It was a powerful event. We knew only that he was a young Canadian soldier, whose name is known only to God. As he was no man's son, brother or husband, he was everyone's.

But what if we knew his name? As I found out this past November, the act of remembrance for a known Canadian soldier is no less powerful, and no less instructive. Private Victor Garton Howey was 24 years old when he was killed during intense fighting on a small island in the Maas River in January 1945. Victor Howey was a young Ontario farmer when he enlisted in 1942. He was trained as a gunner. He met his wife Phyllis when he was posted to Newfoundland in 1943; they were married in October of that year and had a brief honeymoon so that Phyllis could meet Victor's parents in Ontario. Soon he was swept into the army's reinforcement pool, and went overseas in August 1944. He wrote his new bride every day.

On 8 November, 1944, Private Howey joined the Lincoln and Welland Regiment. Likely Howey had never heard of the regiment. He would never have been to its armouries on Lake Street in St. Catharines; had never heard its stirring regimental march, "The Lincolnshire Poacher," or knew of its battle honours. As infantry reinforcements go. Private Howey was luckier than most, for he had about two and a half months to learn the infantryman's trade before the Lines' next battle, his last. In that time he likely learned something of unit's past and traditions. He probably heard about Normandy, where the Lines were first committed to battle the previous August. He might have learned about its first awful attack on Tilly-la-Campagne, or the canal fighting in western Belgium in September, or of the hard slogging north of Antwerp, where "the Lines" finally liberated Bergen-op-Zoom in late October.

The Lincoln and Welland regiment's next test was to wrest the small harbour of Kapelsche Veer in southwestern Netherlands from a force of German paratroopers. Already the small garrison had turned back three attacks from Polish and British troops in early January 1945. The operation--codenamed ELEPHANT--was to depend for its success on surprise and speed, an elaborate artillery and smoke plan, and a canoe-borne force. Instead, after five days of slow, costly fighting across a barren, cold stretch of sodden ground and exposed dyke, the Canadians forced the decision. The cost was grim: the Lincoln and Welland Regiment alone suffered nearly 200 hundred casualties, including 50 dead.

Section leader Corporal Whitfield last saw Victor Howey early in the afternoon of Monday, 29 January 1945. The battle was then four days old and Private Howey was acting as a Bren gunner to the west of the objective. He had a leg wound, but the stretcher bearers could not reach him. "It was impossible to evacuate Pte. Howey due to machine fire and this soldier has not been seen since."

In January 2000, members of a Dutch army unit working near Kapelsche Veer found the remains of a soldier and, with the help of Canadian service records, positively identified them as Victor Garton Howey. Soon after, Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Carter, CD, Commanding Officer of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, heard of the discovery, and was invited to dispatch members of his unit for the funeral service. After some resistance and widespread media support (Thanks, Christie Blatchford), Carter managed to send some 30 members of his unit to the Netherlands to oversee the burial of Private Howey.

Why was this "show of support" so important? Private Howey's identity in the army was formed by the regiment he died with. And so it seemed right and proper that members of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment would carry

Private Howey's simple casket into the Bergenop-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on a clear, cool day last 10 November 2000. Private Howey would have known their cap badges with its scalloped shell, and die regimental motto, NON NOBIS SED PATRIAE. About 70 small regimental flags quietly waved throughout the cemetery that day, placed there to mark the graves of the other Lines who had arrived before, and beside whom Private Howey would be laid to rest. It was also right and proper that Colonel Carter would give die eulogy, for he reminded everyone that, even with the passing of over a half century, Victor Howey's family and regiment still remembered him.

What does this all mean? As all living memory of the First World War dies with the last aging

veterans, the symbolism of the unknown soldier is undeniable. But with that symbolism lies the danger that Canada's military past will become blurred, an abstraction. Let's not forget that most of the graves in Canadian cemeteries overseas have names on the stones. Like Victor Howey, these were young Canadian men whose families continue to grieve, and whose units continue to remember and honour them. Thanks, Colonel Carter, Regimental Sergeant-Major Chris Cincio and the other members of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment for reminding us of that important fact.

Geoff Hayes  
University of Waterloo

#### IN MEMORIAM

### SHAUN RICHARDSON GRENVILLE BROWN

b. VANCOUVER, B.C., 1948-d VANCOUVER, B.C., 20 July 2000

I first met Shaun Brown twenty-one years ago at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU). He was a first year student. I was a first year instructor, a newly minted Ph.D., being challenged by this older student who did not seem to realize that I, not him, knew everything there was to know about Canadian history. My first impressions quickly faded when I realized that his comments were based on a broad base of knowledge. Shaun, in fact, became a model of student behaviour in debate. He presented his case politely and eruditely (if somewhat forcefully) but always tolerated other people's opinions. I soon found that these discussions, scholarly and non-scholarly, and particularly political, were so much a part of Shaun's life, and an extension of his personality. My personal relationship with him grew from student and pupil to friend and colleague. In my mind they will exist always.

Shaun showed much promise as a scholar, particularly in the study of Canada's military history. His Master's thesis, "The Loyal Edmonton Regiment at War 1943-1945" was done at WLU under the supervision of his good friend and mentor, Terry Copp. The work was a labour of love, for Shaun's father, Major-General George G. Brown, was a company commander with the "Loyal Eddies" during the war. It was a great highlight for Shaun when he was asked to address a reunion of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment; the gathered veterans thanked him with a standing ovation.

Shaun completed his Ph.D. at the University of Western Ontario where he studied Canada's policy on veterans' benefits with his good friend, Peter Neary. Shaun still kept his links with Laurier, however,

becoming the first fellow of the Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies. Shaun began an energetic scholarly record, contributing to such journals as *The Canadian Historical Review*, *Queen's Quarterly*, and *Canadian Military History*. He also contributed chapters to a number of books. He was revising his doctoral dissertation for publication when he died.

Shaun was a gifted teacher and students across the country will remember his passion for Canada's past. He taught at Wilfrid Laurier University and St. Jerome's University In Waterloo, Ontario; Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario; University College of the Cariboo, University of British Columbia. Just before his death last summer, Shaun was planning to move his family from Vancouver to Prince George, where he was to take up his second year at the University of Northern British Columbia.

Not all Shaun's passions were satisfied within the walls of the academy. Shaun's devotion to his wife, Marilyn, and their three children, Liam, Ryan and Maureen, inspired friends and colleagues In ways he will never know. He always supported his children's interests, whether it was Maureen's Girl Scout troop led by mother, Ryan's accomplishments in cycling and hockey, or Liam's decision to start a landscaping firm in Vernon, British Columbia.

Gardening, rugby and fly fishing were three areas mat were very much Shaun's own. To gardening, there was a practical side as the activity provided extra Income, but this was an avocation as much as a vocation. Whether talking about horticulture or pursuing it, there was a sense that this brought to

Shaun both peace and joy. How fitting then the phrase in his death notice: "Shaun always said in lieu of donations send flowers." It was an admonition taken seriously as the funeral home in Vancouver was piled high with floral tributes. In rugby, Shaun was a member of the Legends, RFC, Vancouver, and a former member of the Kitchener Pirates, RFC. In the past year, he had coached the UNBC women's team and had assisted with the Kitsilano Secondary School women's team. In 1998, Shaun was a member of the International Merlona Rugby Side winning a silver medal at the Nike World Master's Games in Portland, Oregon. In more recent times, Shaun has been perfecting the techniques of fly fishing which allowed him to enjoy the outdoors that he loved so much.

Early in the week following Shaun's passing last July, his sons Liam and Ryan handcrafted his casket. The funeral service, which was filled to overflowing, featured Shaun's favourite hymns and the Anglo-Catholic rituals that were so important to him. In the fall of 2000, the family flew east to the family cottage in Quebec. There his ashes were buried along with those of his mother, Constance Helen Bridgman, and his father, Major-General George Brown. On a rock next to the grave site, his family erected a memorial plaque for someone whose great potential will sadly never be realized.

Gerald Stortz

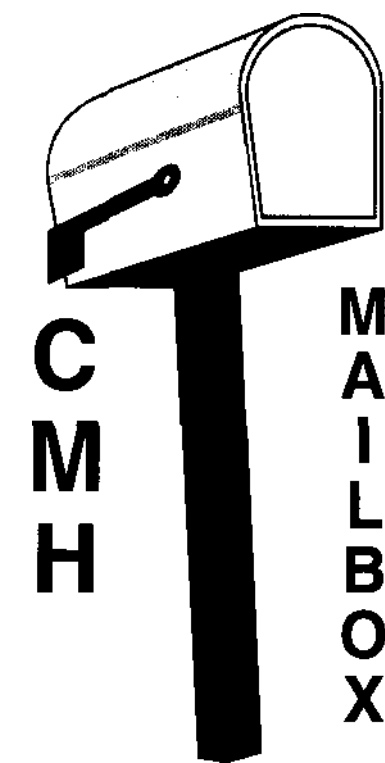
Gerald Stortz was Shaun's Instructor at WLU and colleague at St. Jerome's University.

Dear Sir,

Congratulations on a wonderful issue (Vol 9, No. 4), which hosted varied and fascinating articles. The article "Equipment of the Canadian Infantryman, 1939-1982: A Material-Historical Assessment" by Andrew Iarocci provides a good general overview of the subject and raises a number of points.

Firstly, the statement that "the growing professionalism of the Canadian infantryman has been reflected in this equipment" requires explanation. As "professionalism" refers to competence, the context of this comment is unclear. Were soldiers in 1917 less competent than those in 1944 or 1981? Was it that poor equipment was chosen? Equipment acquisitions tend to be driven more by changes in skill requirements, weaponry, technology, budgetary limitations and other factors. A soldier in 1944 hopefully represented the best skills and training as did one in 1982. But the soldier in 1944 was not as "mechanized" as his modern counterpart or given nearly as much equipment. Changes in load carrying ability were required due to the advent of such things as the parka, sleeping bag, weaponry and personal protection items.

The claim that the "Clothe the Soldier" programme occurred "in the shadow of our neighbour to (he south)" begs elaboration. Throughout the last two decades of the century, deficiencies in Canadian combat clothing and equipment were noted, but little was done. When the degree of personal protection was increased by the provision of flak vests (which oddly did not allow the wearer the



freedom to look up while in the prone position) and, more importantly, operational tempo increased in the 1990s, serious deficiencies in clothing and personal equipment were taken seriously. This led to a series of ad hoc purchases or modifications, which were finally rationalized in the "Clothe the Soldier Programme". Certainly the experiences of other armies were studied, as were advances in material technology, but the design of the equipment was largely driven by a team of soldiers assigned to the project who conducted extensive trials on each and every piece. The results are a family of clothing,

protection and load carrying equipment that are probably the best peacetime products the Canadian Forces has. As an aside, the use of this equipment is not restricted to army personnel. Members of the navy and air force also use it when operational requirements demand its use. Despite budgetary constraints, some excellent pieces of clothing and equipment have been developed.

The simple adoption of equipment from other armies was not possible, as earlier trials had determined that although some of the pieces were excellent, they could not be readily modified to suit Canadian weapon systems or load carrying requirements.

Thank-you.

Major John R. Grodzinski  
Managing Editor  
The Army Doctrine  
and Training Bulletin  
Kingston, Ontario

\*\*\*\*\*

Gentlemen,  
Yesterday afternoon's mail brought *Canadian Military History*, Volume 9 Number 4. As soon as I returned from my meeting, I sat down and read it end to end. A most interesting issue.

Scanning the book reviews revealed many interesting books. The review of *Kamp Westerbork* did catch my eye and I thank you for a most encouraging review. Naturally, I can't resist making some comments on various features, based on my Second World War and later experience; I hope they will be viewed as constructive.

First of all, "On the Beach and In the Bag" was fascinating. I must advise the South Saskatchewan Regimental Association. Some of the surviving POWs from Dieppe will no doubt have something to say, though they are becoming rather few now. I understand your reluctance to "meddle" with historic photographs, but I wonder what harm would come from removing the white spots and similar defects from such old photos, including cleaning up the haze, and improving the contrast for publication purposes only, keeping an untouched copy on file for authentication purposes, I admit it's a slippery slope, but it could certainly improve the information content of the images. Photoshop isn't that difficult, and lesser programs can also do as good simple job.

The paper on "Equipment of the Canadian Infantry 1939-82" by Andrew Iarocci was most interesting, partially because from 1951 to 1954 I was the Principal Investigator on "Personal and Tent Croup Equipment" for the Mobile Strike Force, based at Fort Churchill. But I have other comments. Plate A shows a British Issue mess tin set (note the rounded comers) of tin-plated thin steel. They were issued to Canadians stationed in Britain in the early 1940s, while the Canadian Issue of that time was aluminum, and not so well rounded. "Old soldiers" were easily spotted by their different mess-tins! The "torch" was also a British issue. By the time we went to France, the Canadians were using the American pattern flashlight, still sold in Canadian Tire, and used until the 1960s at least. In Plate B, the soldier on the left appears to be wearing Canadian-Issue khaki "fatigue" coveralls. The corresponding British fatigues were a sort of gray-green, also issued to the Canadian Reinforcement stream in Britain in the early 1940s- The "two pocket rifle ammunition pouch" looks to me to be more likely a compass pouch. In Plate C, the hob-nailed boot soles are definitely of British pattern boots, which had a hard toe-cap. We preferred Canadian boots, but you had to take what they issued. The facial patterns of the soldiers are somehow "Brit" looking too, but the battle dress seems Canadian (no exposed buttons.) By the way, we typically slung a 50-round cotton

bandolier, usually in quick loading clips, around our shoulders. The pouches were reserved for Bren Gun or Sten mags, and grenades of three kinds, #36, #69 blast, and #74 (I think) smoke. Two-inch mortar bombs were more often carried in their treated cardboard containers of six). Similarly for PIAT bombs. Anything else went into a spare small pack except at Battle School! In Plate I, page 38, I happen to be just off [he print to the right (see photo on this page)]. The shovel displayed was not an issue shovel, which had a "D" handle, but either a German or civilian shovel, which was much lighter, much sharper, and had a better handle for surreptitious digging. "Old soldiers" (of more than a week or two) digging in, wanted a real shovel, and only used the folding jobs for patrols or other fancy jobs. The sergeant in Plate H (from a rifle regiment, note the black stripes, - Queen's Own Rifles, Royal Winnipeg Rifles, or Regina Rifle Regiment) looks as if he has a German folding shovel (note the handle), which again were sturdier, sharper, and had a better mechanism than the Canadian issue, though the carrier looks Canadian. The soldier to the left is wearing either an airborne or despatch rider-type steel helmet.

The C-2 rucksack in Plate O is different from the American ones purchased by Canada and used for the MSF Northern Exercises (I still have one!). But we did definitely and deliberately co-operate with the Natick people for many years in the 1950s. We also basically wrote the US "Basic Arctic Manual" issued by the Americans and used by both. I still have the handwritten draft somewhere. We were considered the real gurus of Arctic ops in those days, and I have a Coronation Medal to prove it.

The article by Tim Stewart, "The pipes play on: Canadian Pipers at War, 1914-1918," was particularly attractive because I was both a Piper and a Drummer in pre-war days in the Seaforths, and then 1940 to March 1942 in 2 C Scots R (CAAF) until I went back to the Seaforths in England in April 1942. In passing, the drawing shown on Page 57 is printed backwards. The pipes are on the wrong side, the hands reversed (left hand should be on top) and the Glengarry cap is also on the wrong

side of the head, as is the cap badge. By the way, the 16th Battalion was made up from Non-Permanent Active Militia units from Victoria, Vancouver (Seaforths), Calgary (later Calgary Highlanders) Winnipeg (Cameron of Canada), and Hamilton (Canadian Highlanders, I believe). By 1920 the 16th Scottish of Victoria became the surviving unit. Their First World War tartan was the Lennox in the pipe band, but McKenzie, Gordon, Argylls and who knows what amongst the others. But the 16th is not and was not really a Winnipeg unit. Piper Richardson was well revered in the Canadian Scottish Regiment pipe band, but the 16th had at least three other VCs, really four. Lieutenant-Colonel Cy Peck, VC, DSO, Major J. (Jock) MacGregor VC, MC and bar, DCM, who was 2 i/c and then CO of 2 C Scots R. The fourth I have unfortunately forgotten. The fifth was a Private Wilkinson of "B" Company of the Scottish, commissioned as a lieutenant in the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) who won his VC in 1916. (Ready/or *the Fray, the History of the Canadian Scottish* by R.H. Roy). The picture on Page 62 shows a mixed band from at least two, probably three regiments. Pipe Major Groat, DCM, and another foreground piper are from the 16th Scottish (note the cap badges), while the other pipers are from one or more other Canadian units quite possibly the 79th Cameron Highlanders of Canada, Winnipeg, and at least one other regiment. Note the cap badges, and also the different kilts and hose-tops, plus the different tartans on the bag-pipe covers.

I promise not to "nit-pick" any more, but I have noted these interesting points.

Cecil E. Law,  
Professor Emeritus,  
Ex Capt, S Sask R  
Kingston, Ontario

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor.

**R**e: Volume 9, Number 4:  
photograph on page 28.

The officer next to Major McCool is Lieutenant-Colonel, R. Boyd Somerville who became commanding officer of the Cape Breton Highlanders on 3 August 1944. He

*CMH Mailbox* continued on pg.43.

CMH Mailbox continued from pg.6.  
was known to all in the unit as "Pete the Tramp," was extremely popular and knew that a good CO commanded from the front.

Further details may be found In *The Breed of Manly Men: The History of the Cape Breton Highlanders* (ISBN 0-919-769-80-2), 1994 by myself and Ted Slaney.

Sincerely,  
Alex Morrison  
President, The Lester B. Pearson  
Canadian International  
Peacekeeping Training Centre  
Cornwallis Park, Nova Scotia

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Sir.

When it was revealed In *Canadian Military History*, Volume 9 Number 2, Spring 2000, that Operation "Jubilee" would receive special consideration at the 11th Military History Colloquium in August 2000, I hoped that there might be a revision of the official assessment of the tragedy of August 19th, 1942. It worried me, however, to read that Denis Whltaker was to be the keynote speaker since his opinion of the Dieppe Raid is well known.

I was concerned also when I recalled that Professor Terry Copp, in *The Legion* for August 1996 gave what appeared to be die final opinion on the raid. The sanitized British version: casualties were high but much was learned for future combined operations, especially D-Day In Normandy. At Dieppe the Canadian troops were Inexperienced and not fully trained.

When I saw the CMH cover for Autumn 2000: "A detail from Dieppe Raid by Charles Comfort," I was hopeful that the official assessment had changed. Only to read *On the Beach and in the Bag* by C.G. Roland, detailing how the Canadian prisoners were treated by the enemy. No consideration was given as to how these men were later treated by Canada.

The second article re: Dieppe by George Kerr went in to great detail about Viking Force, a temporary force of personnel taken from the various units of the 2nd Canadian Infantry

Division for the raid. This sort of "force" was common and temporary In the Canadian Army - at least In 1st Canadian Infantry Division - before the Italian campaign.

Kerr is obsessed with die idea that Viking Force was an elite group. The truly elite personnel at Dieppe: and in all land battles In World War II were the "infantry of the line," composed of "the common soldier" who, as Terry Copp has shown, although comprising only ten percent of "total Allied manpower, produced at least seventy-five percent of the casualties."<sup>1</sup>

Montgomery, in his memoirs, states that when he heard that Combined Operations Headquarters planned to revive the cancelled Dieppe Raid "I was very upset...The raid on Dieppe should be cancelled for all time."<sup>2</sup>

Anthony Cave Brown states, "There are those who alleged that the raid had proved nothing more than the dictates of common sense."<sup>3</sup>

C.P. Stacey, although he appears to have accepted the official version, says: "the heavy air support having been removed from the plan, the question arises, why was heavy naval support not substituted?...the fact is that it was so well known that the Admiralty policy at this period was opposed to risking capital ships in the narrow waters of the channel that it was considered useless to make the request" for anything larger than destroyers. Stacey Indicated that the need for "overwhelming fire support" was completely ignored. Success was completely dependent on surprise - which was not achieved.<sup>4</sup>

Brian Loring Villa, In *Unauthorized Action - Mountbatten and the Dieppe Raid* proved that "Never again will we be able to write about the Dieppe Raid In the way we have in the past."<sup>5</sup>

John Keegen, the distinguished British military historian, in his book *Six Annies in Normandy*, states "Dieppe, in retrospect, looks so recklessly hare-brained an enterprise that it is difficult to reconstruct the official state of mind that gave it birth and drove it forward." Later he says, "It was better that the planners should forget about Dieppe. And so,

in a sense, they did"<sup>6</sup> That is in planning for D-Day

Patrick Porteous, a British Commando who was awarded the Victoria Cross at Dieppe, died last October. In the *Toronto Globe & Mail* of October 16, 2000 he is quoted as saying the Dieppe Raid "was the biggest disaster that ever happened" and "The people who planned it should be shot."<sup>7</sup>

I hope that the editors of CMH will give the Dieppe tragedy another careful study and provide the Canadian people *with* a complete and fair reappraisal. In 1992, the 50th anniversary of this tragedy, I suggested to the then minister of veterans' affairs that the government should make the August bank holiday each year "Dieppe Day." The Australians and New Zealanders celebrate "Anzac Day" each year to remind their people of the tragedy at the Dardanelles in the First World War, I ask the editors of *Canadian Military History* to suggest this to the federal government. It is almost too late,

Yours truly,  
Donald E. Smith  
Oshawa, Ontario

1. Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion - Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945* (Montreal & Kingston; McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), p.9.
2. B.L. Montgomery, *Memoirs* (Cleveland and New York: World, 1958), p.70.
3. A.C. Brown, *Bodyguard of Lies* (Toronto and Montreal: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1975], p.90.
4. C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, Vol 1* (Ottawa; Queen's Printer, 1955),p.398.
5. B.L. Villa, *Unauthorized Action: Mountbatten and the Dieppe Raid* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994).
6. John Keegan *Six Armies in Normandy* (Penguin Books, 1983), pp.120, 124.
7. Patrick Porteous, "Dieppe Raid." *Globe & Mail*, October 16, 2000.