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# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

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## Canadian War Museum

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**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

I instinctively dread garbage day, and not just because I often forget about it until it's too late. Every week, I find myself wondering what historical treasures are being consigned to the landfill. My mind returns to an incident a few years ago when a colleague called me about some papers that a neighbour of his had saved from a Boy Scout paper drive; he thought they might be of some historical value, and stuck them in his basement rather than watch them go into the pulper. Was I interested in looking at them, he wondered? I was indeed interested, and what I saw astonished me: two boxes of personal papers which had once belonged to a member of the American occupation forces studying the postwar economic recovery of Japan. It was all there: propaganda leaflets, government memos, economic forecasts, correspondence, periodicals, policy papers, minutes of high-level meetings. The collection was a valuable window into Allied plans for Japanese reconstruction, and it had been saved from the trash only by the quick thinking of a scoutmaster.

So when garbage day rolls around, I find myself peering into every dustbin I pass while walking home from the university. I frequently ask my father, a rural lawyer, if any of his elderly clients are likely to have any gems lurking in their basements. And I tell anyone who will listen to keep their eyes and ears open to rescue old documents or photographs that might otherwise be recycled. Unfortunately, it's not always effective to advise friends and acquaintances to donate their family papers to an archives, because many people don't like the thought of giving up their treasures.

That's why a website maintained by Stephen Davies at Malaspina University College in Nanaimo, British Columbia, is so exciting. The Canadian Letters and Images Project, or CLIP, is a permanent on-line archive <[www.mala.bc.ca/history/letters](http://www.mala.bc.ca/history/letters)> of the Canadian war experience, as told through the letters and images of individual Canadians. Its objective is to collect and archive electronically previously unpublished material concerning Canada at war, both from the home front and the battle front. It is unashamedly about people rather than major battles and big events. As the project's brochure says, "it is about the very fact that ultimately the story of war is the story of individuals, individuals with ambitions, hopes, fears, and loves ... Such a collection allows us to better appreciate the struggles, anguishes and joys of Canada during wartime. It will stand as a tribute to all Canadians, past and present, which have in any manner contributed to Canada's wartime efforts."

Perhaps the most unusual thing about CLIP is that, unlike traditional archival collections, it does not ask donors to give away their family heirlooms; they can simply send in photocopies, scans, or digital files, which are then easily transferred to the website. It is, in all respects, a win-win situation: donors get to keep their precious letters, diaries, and photographs in the family, but the content of those materials is preserved for future generations.

And the content on the website is impressive. The project has already collected over four thousand letters, diaries, and photographs, covering the breadth of Canada's war experience. Some collections have only a couple of letters or photographs; others are much larger, like the Frank Cousins collection, comprising some ninety letters from a Regina school teacher (and later law partner of John Diefenbaker) who was wounded in action in 1918. There is the South African War diary of Manitoba native David Morrison Stewart, dozens of letters from Jack Styles, an Ontario man who was killed while flying Halifaxes in February 1945, and over seventy photographs collected by Scottish-born nurse Constance Philip, who served with #1 Canadian General Hospital during the First World War. And it's all within a few clicks of the mouse.

But CLIP needs help. It is always on the lookout for letters, diaries, and photographs to add to the on-line collection, but is also in need of financial assistance. Davies has been doing most of the work on his own, with private donations and support from a few branches of the Royal Canadian Legion; much of the work of transcribing the material has been taken on by a small group of volunteers. There is so much more they could do. There are files full of material awaiting transcription, dozens of letters and diaries waiting to be posted on the website, and a sophisticated search engine almost ready for installation. But it's difficult to do these things on a shoestring budget.

There is a plethora of military material on the internet that ranges from the deplorable to the remarkable. CLIP is one of the best sites around. Students can use it for research essays on the Canadian military experience. Historians who have mined the traditional archival repositories will find in it a fresh selection of primary-source materials. General readers will enjoy simply scrolling through the letters, either reading snippets here and there or following the wartime experiences of a single individual. So pass the word about the Canadian Letters and Images Project - it deserves to be much better known than it is.

Jonathan F. Vance  
University of Western Ontario

Greetings!

Why is The Royal Canadian Regiment (RCR) using the Royal Regiment of Canada's (RRC) web site? As an ex-instructor of Regimental History in The RCR, I was surprized to learn (from page 75 of the Autumn 2001 CMH) that my Regiment was stationed in Iceland in 1940 and participated in the Dieppe Raid. I know the federal government is doing its level best to rewrite our military history but I had hoped your magazine would resist this fad!

I've decided to give you the benefit of the doubt and chalk up these errors to the persistent confusion of titles betwixt The RCR and the RRC!

Major (RCR ret'd)  
J. A. "Robbie" Robertson, CD  
Gloucester, ON  
[ja.robertson@sympatico.ca](mailto:ja.robertson@sympatico.ca)

Dear Sir,

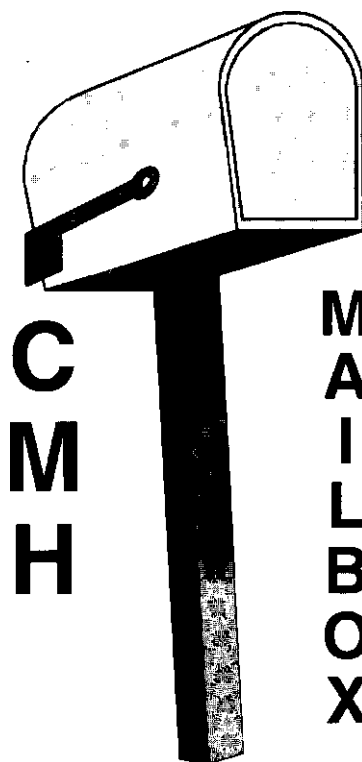
I found this a very interesting issue, the articles on Hong Kong were of special interest. I would draw to your attention however, in the caption on page 44 of Mr. Howe and Brigadier Stuart, Angus Shops were not part of the Montreal Locomotive Works. Angus was a Canadian Pacific shop in Montreal named after Richard Bladworth Angus a former vice president and director and member of the original syndicate of 1880. MLW was another company (owned by the American Locomotive Company). In the book *Constructed in Kingston, A History of the Canadian Locomotive Companies* (McQueen & Thomson) we relate that the Kingston plant made bogies for Valentine tanks (and armour) that went to Montreal where the tanks were assembled.

Regards,  
Wm. D. Thomson  
Bath, ON

Dear Sir,

I found the Autumn 2001 issue of *Canadian Military History* to be most interesting and absorbing for me, concentrating as it was on Hong Kong. I believe that you are aware that my father was killed in that action. For him it was third time unlucky. He survived the Boer and Great Wars.

Aside from the fact that our family name was misspelt - as usual - there is no "e" before the "y", there are a



couple of observations I would like to make respecting exactly how he died. Years ago, Kathleen Christie told me he had died in hospital. On page 29, she says that, "he was pronounced dead on admission." That accords with a description of his death in John Gardam's book, *Canadians in War and Peacekeeping*, Chapter 7, pp.65-66, in John's account of an interview with Rene Charron, my father's chief clerk and there the immediate superior of Clarke, the clerk mentioned in Christie's interview. If you read Christie and Charron together, there are obvious discrepancies. Knowing the deep respect that my father's subordinates, particularly the Ors, felt for him, I would go with Charron's description. Since he died in December 1995, he is beyond any further interviews. And therein lies an irony. Between April 1995 and December, he and I lived across the Rideau River from one another, and I never knew he existed until I read Gardam's book six years later. A different picture is given by Nursing Sister Waters on page 54 of *CMH*. According to her, he was still alive when he was brought to the hospital and "had both legs amputated"! I still go with Charron's story - but am left, of course, with uncertainty. Thought

you might find the foregoing of interest.

Yours aye,  
Admiral Ralph Hennessy  
Ottawa, ON

Dear Sir,

I have just read with interest the Autumn 2001 volume containing several articles on the Battle of Hong Kong. Being a son of one of these veterans, and having had the opportunity of spending considerable time with Capt. Lionel Hurd (historian of the Royal Rifles) and Roger Cyr, now both deceased, I am fairly well informed of these events.

Terry Copp's summary of the military and political "thinking" of the day in Canada; the British state of preparedness for the defence of Hong Kong and their WWI battle mentality; as well as his summation of the Japanese attack, has never before been as well presented in such a brief article. I have had the opportunity of visiting Hong Kong, and unless one sees firsthand the vertical incline of these mountains, and the density of the undergrowth, it is impossible to fathom the effort our troops underwent during those dreadful 17 days of battle. Photographs just cannot do this justice.

There was, however, one major *faux pas* in the photograph on page 48 accompanying Lieutenant-General Kenneth Stuart's brief. The mascot of the Royal Rifles is identified as "Blackie". His name was "Gander". In fact, the men insist that he was given a battlefield promotion to Sergeant, possibly due to his actions against the enemy during their initial landing at Lye Mun. Gander was posthumously and belated awarded the Dickin Medal (fondly called the animal VC) for his actions in picking up a grenade tossed at the Canadians on the Lye Mun road during the retreat and taking the force of the explosion thereby saving lives. The award ceremony took place on October 27th, 2000 at the Residence of the British High Commissioner in Ottawa..

Thank you,  
Derrill Henderson  
National Secretary  
Hong Kong Veterans  
Association of Canada