

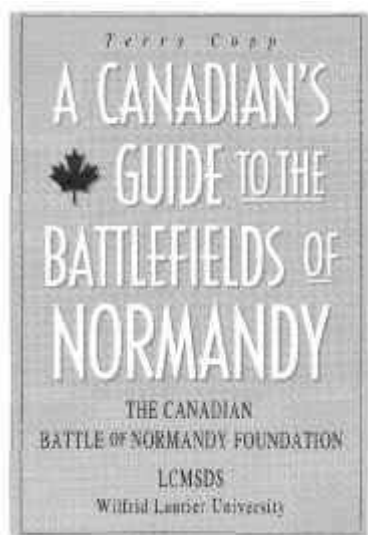
**T**he fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Normandy has stimulated interest among many Canadians in the experiences of their fathers and uncles who fought there in 1944. Some of them will travel to Normandy during this year's commemoration and, hopefully, if interest is not merely transitory, in coming years more will view the invasion beaches, drive roads bearing the names of Canadian regiments, and visit regional museums. Trying to visualize and participate vicariously in old battles is always difficult; invariably peaceful farm fields and villages of today give little sense of the violence of war. That is certainly true of Normandy where fifty years ago young Canadians and Germans fought bitterly over them. This book provides a connecting thread spanning that interval. It will be as indispensable a companion to a successful battlefield visit as a Michelin guide is to museums and galleries.

The book is in two parts that combine the essentials of a good travel guide with a substantial history lesson. Sections of Part I provide practical information that will assist anyone to prepare, plan and undertake a trip: about airlines, rental cars, trains, and also useful addresses where additional information may be recommended.

The second part of the book is concerned with the Canadian operations in Normandy. It has nine sections, each detailing a battlefield tour which can be managed in a few or many hours depending on particular interests. The first two follow the assault landings and 3rd Division's initial encounters with the 12th SS Panzer Division, and the next the brutal struggle at

### **A Canadian's Guide to the Battlefields of Normandy**

Terry Copp, *A Canadian's Guide to the Battlefields of Normandy*, Waterloo: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 1994, 174 pages, \$22.95.



Carpiquet and Caen. Successive tours then take the reader/visitor around Verrières Ridge, through Operations "Totalize" and "Tractable" to the Falaise Gap, and finally the pursuit to the Seine and Rouen. Each section has a succinct account of the operation, describing its

course and outcome, and placing it in perspective. It then provides a detailed route card that the least intrepid navigator will be able to follow without difficulty. Furthermore, the tour section is admirably enhanced by two sets of maps. Those in the text portray the terrain of the battles. The other maps, which fold out from the back of the book for easy reference, highlight the roads that are clearly keyed to the route cards. Finally, appendices identify Canadian commanders, cite both army and RCAF orders of battle, and suggest further readings. The only omission is a listing of RCN vessels that participated in Overlord.

*A Canadian's Guide to the Battlefields of Normandy* fills a large gap in the literature on Canadian operations in 1944. Several books and numerous

articles have been written on the subject during the past fifty years but, even if they are now accessible, none is entirely satisfactory to either a layman or a specialist planning to visit the battle sites. Most are either too general or too specific, and when there, trying to consult more than one operational account simultaneously to get a sense of what happened (as well as Frommer or Fodor to find a bed and breakfast) is too inconvenient to be pleasurable. The value of the book is that it packs so much useful, practical information in a form that can be tucked in a jacket pocket, and followed easily from the Canadian beaches north of Caen to Rouen. Moreover, the traveller will be intelligently informed at every corner en route.

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