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## MILITARY HISTORY AT UNB:

### CELEBRATING A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AT THE FRONT

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# CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

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**Canadian War Museum**  
330 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0M8

The mission statement of the Canadian War Museum is: "To share in the remembrance of, and serve as a memorial to those Canadians lost in, or as a result of war; to examine the war and war related history of Canada and its effects upon Canada and Canadians; and to document Canada's commitment to peacekeeping and the maintenance of international security." To this end the CWM maintains an exhibition facility with three floors of galleries, and a collections building housing close to half a million artifacts.

## The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies

The 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

Few, if any, of Canada's warships saw as much action as HMCS *Haida*, the Tribal Class destroyer now preserved at Ontario Place in Toronto. She was off North Cape, Norway, in December 1943 when the British Home Fleet cornered and sank the German battlecruiser *Scharnhorst*. She and the other destroyers of the 10th Flotilla swept the English Channel of enemy surface forces in the months before D-Day. It was there that *Haida*, driven by Commander H.G. "Hard Over Harry" DeWolf, earned her reputation as a hard hitting, enormously professional and rather lucky ship. Her sister, *Athabaskan*, was lost in one of those frantic and confused night actions. *Haida* saved some of the crew before approaching dawn and the fear of E-boats forced her to run for safety. She was hurried on by *Athabaskan's* captain, Commander John Stubbs, floating alongside. "Get out of here, *Haida*! E-boats!" Stubbs admonished. It was a selfless act from a man who could have saved himself. Stubbs was never seen alive again. It was also the closest thing we have in Canadian naval history to "England expects..." or "Don't give up the ship!"

*Haida's* exploits in the Second World War were immortalized by William Sclater in his classic *Haida* (1946 and subsequent editions) and she went on to further fame in the Korean War. That fame saved her from the wreckers in 1964. In 1965 she was brought to Toronto and opened to the public. In 1970 *Haida* was purchased by the Ontario government and became one of the main attractions at the newly-opened Ontario Place.

And she has floated at her berth at Ontario Place ever since. Over the years the interest of the Ontario Government in the ship waned and funding was steadily reduced. The dedicated group of volunteers who keep the ship going slowly lost the money and the technical expertise to stay ahead of the decay. Although declared a national historic site in 1990, provided with some modest support by DND and renewed volunteer efforts since 1989 with the founding of the "Friends of the *Haida*," a non-profit charity devoted to preserving the ship, time and rot have taken their toll and *Haida* now faces her greatest challenge since 1944. A 1997 engineering survey done by the Heritage Conservation Branch of Parks Canada determined that *Haida* was on "an exponential line of decay." If something is not done soon it will be impossible to stop the leaking

and she will either settle to the bottom or her bottom itself will drop off. *Haida* will be "a constructive total loss." Should that happen a priceless piece of Canadian heritage will be lost forever.

The salvage task facing the Friends of the *Haida* is daunting. A total of \$5.5 million is needed over the next four years to save the ship. The lion's share of this, some \$4 million, is required for dry docking and actual repairs, especially to the hull and to the funnel uptakes. But it will take fully a quarter of a million dollars to dredge the East Causeway just to get the ship out of her berth. The balance is required for artifact storage, docking surveys, hiring additional staff and the like.

Unfortunately, government interest in the project is tepid at best. It was assumed in 1970 when the Ontario government purchased the ship that it would take responsibility for maintenance and preservation, but the purchase agreement failed to state this specifically. Moreover, *Haida* represents no appreciable voting constituency, and she is now a small draw for crowds at Ontario Place. And yet, since *Haida* is the property of a provincial government, the ship can expect little help from Ottawa. Rather typically, both levels of government have passed the torch to the Friends with a promise to match or supplement some of what the volunteers can raise. Most of the money, however, has to be raised the hard way.

The Friends of *Haida* will therefore commence a full scale, national fund raising campaign this fall. While the appeal will be directed at all Canadians, the Friends are particularly anxious to increase the profile of the campaign and the importance of the ship within business, industry and major foundations. Canada's most storied warship and a unique and valuable piece of Canadian heritage is at risk. Do what you can, and spread the word. Those who wish to donate or can assist in the campaign should contact:

Friends of H.M.C.S. *Haida*  
2 Bloor Street West, Suite 100  
P.O. Box 405, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2  
Tel: (416) 314-9755

Marc Milner  
Summer 1998

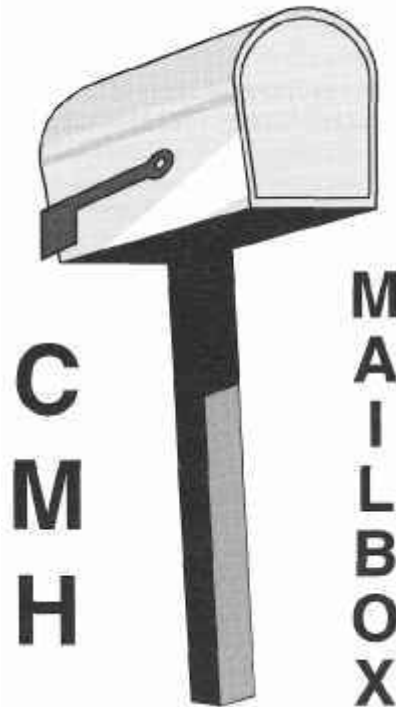
Dear Sir,

Please accept my congratulations on another outstanding issue of *CMH*. I am always delighted to find the latest edition in my mail box. When work and family matters seem overwhelming, the arrival of *CMH* reminds me that we have so much to be grateful for in Canada today, and of the veterans to whom we owe so much for their contribution and sacrifice.

With a personal interest in the Canadians in Normandy in 1944, the inclusion of any article on this theatre is most welcome. The quality of those in the Spring 1998 issue is excellent, with many references provided in the notes to permit further research into the source documents summarized in the articles. Might I add a further detail which might be of interest to your readers.

The photograph on page 14 with the caption "Canadian soldiers examine the deadly German 88..." (NAC PA 131349) is correct as far as it goes. However, it should be noted that the soldier with his right arm in a bandage is in fact Sgt. Jack Stollery of the Canadian Film and Photo Unit. His injury was sustained on August 20, near St. Lambert-sur-Dives when two jeeps from the Film unit were machine gunned by German troops still exiting from the "Falaise Gap."

Sgt. Stollery was a cine cameraman, who was partnered with still photographer Lt. Donald Grant. On the morning of August 19 1944 they had worked their way from Trun to St. Lambert along with another camera team. As fate would have it, they were in the "right place at the right time." We are fortunate to have today the 11 still photographs and perhaps 2 minutes of cine film of the opening of the action that would win Major D.V. Currie of the South Alberta Regiment, along with troops from the Lincoln and Welland Regiment and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada, the Victoria Cross.



In what is without doubt the most famous of the still photographs taken by Lt. Grant that day, showing Maj. Currie with pistol in hand accepting the surrender of a German convoy that drove into the Canadian positions, Sgt. Stollery can be seen on the far left of the photo, filming the scene with his movie camera. In subsequent photos, especially those where the rear elements of the convoy attempt to turn and escape and a firefight ensues, Sgt. Stollery can be seen in the thick of the action, continuing to film the scene. Indeed, it is fascinating to watch those still photographs, featured in almost every text on the Canadians in Normandy, come to life in the cine film that survives today.

When the members of the film unit attempted to return to St. Lambert the following day to continue to record the events that, with hindsight, we now know as a heroic feat of arms by Maj. Currie's battlegroup, their jeeps came under machine gun fire, wounding Sgt. Stollery and Sgt. Million (cameramen) and drivers Tpr.

MacKay and Pte. Zentnery. The events of that day were recalled to me by Lt. Grant in the summer of 1996, with such vivid detail and emotion that I regard that interview as one of the high points of my life.

Sgt. Stollery, already wounded before in Italy and earlier in Normandy, was hit in the right hand. The picture on page 14, taken in early September 1944, shows that he survived once again.

Although there is so much more to the story of Lt. Grant and Sgt. Stollery (sufficient perhaps for a future article if you are interested), let me close with this observation. Having spent many days in the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, the untold story from all my research into the events of August 19-21, 1944 in St. Lambert-sur-Dives is the unforgivable arrogance of the National Film Board, and its war time director, John Grierson. Having demanded that all film shot overseas by the Film and Photo unit be handed over to the NFB once it was returned to Canada, it failed through gross negligence to protect this irreplaceable asset of national importance. The original nitrate based film was never copied on to safety film (as was done with the British and US film collections), and the whole collection (over 1,500,000 feet of film) was incinerated in a fire at the NFB vaults in 1967. The work of Sgt. Stollery and all the other cameramen, several of whom were killed while filming at the front line, is gone forever.

The limited footage available through newsreels produced during the War, serve only as poignant reminders of what has been lost to historians and, perhaps more importantly, to the citizens of Canada who are dedicated to the proposition that "We will not Forget."

Yours sincerely,  
Stephen Campbell, CA  
Manotick, Ontario

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to your request in the winter 1998 issue of *Canadian Military History* for feedback on the content of the journal.

I have been a subscriber from the first issue, and plan to remain so, but I have made some observations on the content of the journal.

A quick but by no means scientific survey of the content suggest the following:

a. the articles are heavily weighted towards World War II, in particular the land battles of Northwest Europe. Maybe you might try inviting some "experts" in fields other than World War II to contribute articles?

b. the largest single identifiable source of authors are veterans (a plus in my mind). This is followed by academics (grad students, recent grads and professors). Though the research done by this group is first rate I feel there is a danger of *CMH* becoming like other academic journals, too technical and filled with articles of little interest to the general reader. My feelings on this last point are mixed. I understand the desire of grad students and professors to get their work published (also given the lack of journals willing to publish pure military history). I would hate to see *CMH* contribute to the publish or perish attitude in universities. What I feel is needed to keep balance is to continue to publish articles by serving soldiers and other non-academic historians.

c. at the risk of contradicting my previous point or maybe I missed it but there is also a general shortage of historiographic debate? Some of the letters you published move in this direction a little. Maybe some room in the letters column for some well reasoned rebuttals?

d. also I was not able to find in the journal any statement inviting articles or indicating what length and style is preferred by the

journal. At first blush this left me thinking (wrongly given the scope of contributors) that *CMH* was just an organ of the Wilfrid Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies.

Otherwise, I have always been impressed with the quality of *CMH* and look forward to each issue.

This was just a quick letter (hence grammar errors etc) to give my (hopefully) constructive opinion.

Yours truly,  
David Ratz

Thunder Bay, ON

*(Editor's note: CMH welcomes articles from all parties. We do not have a formal style guide as we are open to all submissions. In general we ask that articles be no longer than 20 pages typed, double spaced. If possible submit on paper and on disk (IBM or Mac format is acceptable) and give an indication of any illustrative material you have available (photocopies are suitable at this stage). Any questions regarding suitability or style can be directed to the address, phone number or email address found on page 2.)*

Dear Sir,

I refer to *Canadian Military History*, Volume 7, Number 1 (Winter 1998), page 80 where the poem, "Birth of a Regiment" is reproduced.

A fine gentleman, and still a barber here in Peterborough, on Tony B, served in "D" Company of the Hasting and Prince Edward Regiment in Sicily and Italy. I showed him the poem the other day and he pointed to a framed version of it on the wall of his shop which identifies the author as George McElroy of "C" Company. Apparently, the poem was written for a concert at a place called Castropignano in Italy. McElroy is said to have moved to California some time after the war.

Regards,  
A. William Breck  
Peterborough, ON

Dear Sir,

The reaction of Lee Windsor of the Conference of Defence Associations Institution (Letter, Spring 1998) to the amount of misinformation being disseminated by Canada's Armed Forces is curious. He seems to want to circle the wagons, carry out more research, and thus educate "students of modern military affairs" by placing "each Canadian Forces operation under the microscope."

The belief that the current bad image of Canada's Armed Forces can be corrected in this way ignores the nature of modern media. The media community, like the military community, has its own culture. The main aim of the media is to jolt people - not inform them. Its members are purveyors of second-hand ideas and information.

Canada has a magnificent military record. This country invented modern peacekeeping, and has an excellent reputation in this field.

A German friend who fought on the Eastern Front and in Italy compared fighting on the front line to making love: "Unless you've done it, you can't imagine what it is really like." He developed a great admiration for the Canadian soldiers in Italy and has spoken to Legion chapters about his feelings.

Bodies like the CDAI should not go into laager - they should attack, go with the offensive, and start replacing incorrect information with accurate facts and figures based on the experiences of Canadians who served. It is axiomatic that if you do not tell your own story, others will - and they will get it wrong!

The Nova Scotia International Tattoo keeps Canada's military tradition alive. For several years I have written the programme notes

*CMH Mailbox* continued  
on page 22.

**CMH Mailbox**  
continued from page 6

for the Tattoo, and interviewed members of Canada's Armed Forces. I have been struck by their intelligence, courage, commitment - and modesty - as they told their stories.

The various non-governmental organizations concerned with Canada's military, past and present, should get their act together and develop a strategy for informing the public about the reality of life in the services. There are any number of things that can be done at the tactical level to ensure that Canada's military story is told accurately. I'm not suggesting a public relations campaign, but rather the preparation and distribution through many channels of stories about where our service people have gone and what they have done

- warts and all.

Community newspapers are always looking for material and first-hand pieces from our veterans could be featured on anniversaries - June 6, August 19, etc. Errors in the media should be corrected immediately. And it would be useful if Mr. Windsor could contact Mr. Conrad Black and suggest that he appoint a knowledgeable columnist to write on defence matters in his new national newspaper. This is a British and European tradition unknown in Canada but which is sorely needed here.

Yours etc.,  
Jim Lotz  
Halifax, NS

Dear Sir,

**B**ravo, David Hall, you've gone to primary sources to shed light on the conundrum of moral warfare. (Re: "Black, White and Grey": Wartime Arguments for and against the Strategic Bombing Offensive" (Vol.7, No.1 Winter

1998). Yes, indeed, let us pay attention to cleric and scholar (pg.17) whose testimony on bomber offensive, to me, doesn't seem all that far apart. Rev. John Collins offers moral support, without condemnation, as near as can be told from Hall's paper, to airmen at Yatesbury (pg. 11). On pg.12 Collins is said to be disturbed by the escalating spiral of warfare. Perhaps Mr. Hall would tell us how Rev. Collins sorted out his own dilemma/conundrum. Collins brought in politician Cripps, a living conundrum as minister of aircraft production AND a moralist. He apparently told Harris' aviators that "...it is important to be sure...that operations...are essential." And sure enough, W/C Weldon tells them, and us, that bombing is effective (and presumably essential). (Who doubts it? What's the problem here?)

Well, there we are. On the one hand shelter your morals in God. On the other, be sure that what you're doing is right, even if you don't have access to all the information on your side, let alone information from the other side. No easier then, than now, in spite of the best efforts of Harris, Weldon et al..

I think Mr. Hall is suggesting that, to GWWYG is no sin. In WWII

and earlier this was more often expressed as DYB, DYB, DYB. In either case, one can only do what one can do, moralists, militarists, technologists, apologists not excepted.

Personally, I have no doubt that Bomber Command did right, and probably did good. Mr. Hall and others can provide the moral shelter. God bless 'em...but please, let's see the testimony supporting Mr. Hall's contentions.

I am in favour of taking the oral history of as many veterans as possible, particularly those of Bomber Command, whose history was interrupted and dislocated by the CBC and their minions. Alternatively, why not run a contest to produce the best script for a mock trial of the perpetrators of *The Valour and the Horror*. A mock trial would be at least as fair as the shake given us by the Canadian legal establishment, and who knows, might be a lot more fun. It will certainly turn out better than could have been expected from the courts. It should not be hard to find players up to playing the fools who wrote and produced and defended that crap.

Please, Mr Hall, you're on the right track, carry on, let's hear the testimony of Collins, Cripps, etc.

Sincerely,  
Ken Berg

The editors of *Canadian Military History* wish to thank the following people and organizations for their contributions to this issue:

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