



Spring 2022



Blue and Gold

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President's Message

Commitment Communication and Leadership are 3 things I have repeatedly seen in my years with the Regiment. These are daily outputs that reflect responses to the motto of the Regiment "Facta Non Verba".

I see these actions by the members of the Regiment, the Association, the Senate and Foundation and am impressed that it is easily seen and reflected in the success of the Regiment before and during the confusing times we live in. The Regiment and its family have set and maintained a high standard of service to Canada and their community and should be proud in their efforts.

It is great to see things start to return to normal again after those 2 plus years of uncertainty. There are a number of events being planned to gather, celebrate and remember the history of the Regiment. I hope you will all plan to attend Cambrai Dinner in November and the Cavalry Ball next year. I have hear rumours that another pilgrimage is being talked about and my next column will look at past trips I have been on with the regiment.

I hope all have a wonderful summer and come back refreshed. And anxious to commit to the next year.



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FGHRA DUES SUSPENDED FOR 2022 FOR UNIT MESSES

At its meeting on January 16, 2022, the Executive of the FGHRA determined the 2022 FGHRA dues for the Unit Messes would be suspended as with the previous two years as a result of COVID-19. While our Association is dependent on dues, donations, and kit shop sales to maintain its operations, the Executive felt it appropriate to suspend the dues as the Messes have not been in operation during this time.

Moving On Down The Dusty Trail

With September approaching, and the Change of Stick parade being finalized, I look back at the changes The Fort Garry Horse has navigated. From Iltis to G-Wagon to TAPV. From Olive Green uniforms to CadPat, and of course the big change from Reconnaissance to Calgary, we continue to lead the way in Reserve Armoured Training.

I cannot say enough of the challenges faced and meant head on not only by our leadership, but the men and women that stand proudly on our parade square.

With all the talk about culture change, our one culture stands above the rest and that's the Regiment. The soldiers past and present wear our cap badge with pride, always doing their best and what is best for our Regiment and each other.

I look today at not only the number, but quality of our Senior Non-Commissioned officers and I know the Regiment will succeed for many years to come. The spirit and dedication of Junior Ranks is at the highest level I have ever seen in my 30 plus years, providing me with the reinsurance that the Regiment will continue to prosper.

I want to thank all the members past and present of the Association, Foundation and Senate for their continued support to me and the Regiment. I also want to thank all the Honouries that helped me along as RSM.

My final ask is for all of you to welcome Chief Warrant Officer Joel Pederson to the Regiment. He is very excited and has put in a great deal of effort to get to know the Regiment. He experienced his first Armoured Corps conference and was very impressed and happy to be apart of the transition to Calgary.

As I move on down that dusty trail to the Brigade Battle School, I take great comfort that I can still wear our colours and in a small way contribute to the future of the Regiment. Being your Regimental Sergeant Major will always be the pinnacle of my career.

"Once a Garry always a Garry"

"Fact Non Verba"

My sincere gratitude,

Robert Jones

Chief Warrant Officer





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Royal Canadian Armoured Corps Conference

conference was set-up in the Museum Tank Hangar of the Ontario Regiment Museum.



Conference Day 1

RCAC Members gather at Ontario Regiment Museum for Meet-&-Greet. Attendees were welcomed by Col Dove (DIR RCAC), Gen (ret) Natynczyk (Col Comdt), Dan Carter (Mayor of Oshawa), and more. Many friends meet after several years due to pandemic.



Conference Day 2 - Part II

The annual RCAC Mess Dinner returned after two years on the parade floor of the R.S McLaughlin Armoury. Pictured below on the right is HLCol Stones.

Conference Day 2 – Part I

Meetings of the Corps were held at the R.S McLaughlin Armoury of The Ontario Regiment RCAC, the Ontario Regiment Museum, and 420 Wing Oshawa Inc. The





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Another Joint Display at 215 Royal Canadian Legion Branch 215

The Fort Garry Horse Museum, Manitoba Museum and family member Stephane collaborated on another joint display at Royal Canadian Legion Henderson Highway Branch 215, 215 Maxwell King Drive, East St. Paul, MB. If you have an opportunity please stop by and have a look.



Submissions to the Blue and Gold

Articles and submissions to the Blue & Gold are always welcome. We will publish January, May and September each year. If you have an article you would like to submit for inclusion within the Gold & Blue please contact Bob Dolyniuk. We look forward to your submissions.
(BobDolyniuk@gmail.com).

Keeping Canada's North Secure And Engaged.

Land Task Force members make their way across the Arctic tundra during Operation NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 22, on February 24, 2022.



1226 Cadet Corps Back In Business

After nearly two years, the 1226 Fort Garry Horse Army Cadets are finally back at the Lieutenant-Colonel Harcus Strachan, VC, MC Armoury, kicking off their return with a game of dodgeball!



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As summer steadily approaches, normalcy finally will settle into the 1226 Fort Garry Horse Army Cadets, as they begin departing for Cadet Training Centres and Cadet Activity Programs. The future is bright, and 1226 is now back in business.

*SSM MWO Guzzi,
1226 Fort Garry Horse RCACC
March 2022*

1226 Cadet Corps Support Committee - Call for Volunteers

One of the first things on the checklist was an overdue Fitness Test, which cadets completed with pure excitement in the air. The long overdue return to the armoury kept being halted due to the on-going Covid-19 Pandemic, but things began to look up as March rolled around. When the cadets got news we will be returning to in person training, everyone was eager to enter the armoury doors again. The Green and Red Stars who have never entered the armoury were mesmerised as MWO Guzzi and WO Vergara took them on a tour.

1226 Cadet Corps is seeking volunteers, typically parents of cadets to be part of their corps support committee. The committee has an active role in ensuring the success of our activities and is a great way of being part of a cadet's journey. For more information, please email president@armycadetsmb.ca or speak with any current corps staff

Online learning included many great lessons, but the experiences and atmosphere of the armoury always make a world of difference. Expedition, drill, marksmanship, fitness- those classes always tie the cadet experience together, and everyone now can find their passion in the program.

As spring soon arrives, more outdoor activities are in the corps future! With an outdoor day planned over spring break, the newest cadets are able to experience what a Field Training Exercise (FTX) is.

Garry's (past and future) on OP NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 22





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2022-2023 FGHR Executive Elected

On April 24, 2022, the FGHR held its Annual General Meeting. As a result of the elections that occurred during the meeting the FGHR Executive currently consists of:

President:	Gordon Askew
Vice President	Gord Crossley
Treasurer	Brian Peternaik
Correspondence Secretary	Gord Austin
Recording Secretary	Bob Dolyniuk
Kit Shop Manager	Rod Klinck

Members at Large	David Stones, Kelly Woiden, Jim Scott, Merv Gunter, Barb Gillis, Gerry Abbott, Monty Johnson, Jim Kirkland
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Thank you for your commitment to our Association.

Family members and friends are reminded that they too can participate in our Association. If you have an interest, please contact one of our Executive members.

In Memory of David M. Letson

BORN 1929. DIED 2022



Born in Vancouver, David Moore Letson died peacefully at home in Sidney. He will be sorely missed by family, friends, and all those involved in his care. There will be no service, but wherever you are, his family hopes that you raise a glass to wish him well on his next great adventure.

Published by The Times Colonist from Mar. 17 to Mar. 19, 2022.

The following is from Digger J. R. MacDougall

A memory I shared after I received notice that Brother Officer of The Fort Garry Horse and friend David Letson had passed away.

David and I served together in The Fort Garry Horse, Canadian Armoured Regiment during the 1960s. During that period of time, David commanded a tank squadron and was tasked by the regimental commanding officer to restore and repair Canada Park in Doetinchem in The Netherlands. This was the city which was liberated by The Fort Garry Horse in April 1945 as the regiment made its way into Nazi Germany. At the end of the one-week restoration job, a large and beautiful park centred around a destroyed Sherman tank, was ready to exist in perpetuity for the townspeople. A parade and granting of the freedom of the city was given to David and his squadron. 49 years



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later David and I returned to Europe to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings for the Normandy invasion. My personal plans included a visit by my wife and me to Doetinchem. Early in 2014, I notify Dave that I would be doing this and asked David to recommend a gift which I could present to the city to commemorate my visit there. David said he would look after that. David created and published a large, beautiful book of photographs that recorded the restoration and repair of Canada Park in 1965. On June 2, 2014, it was my honour to present to the mayor of Doetinchem, David's book, an impressive record of the work which he orchestrated and supervised over the period of one week in 1965. David's name will live on in the city's records, in the display in Canada Park of The Netherlands and in the book which is proudly displayed in the mayor's office.

Attached to this "memory" is a 2014 photograph taken during the 70th anniversary of D-Day, of David, myself, Stan Butterworth, whose brother was the first fatal Canadian casualty in the liberation of Holland, and the honorary colonel of the regiment, the FGH.

Sincere condolences, and best wishes for comfort and peace to family, friends, brother officers and all whose lives were touched by David. He was a wonderful friend and a true gentleman who I admired them from whom I received significant guidance during regimental duty in West Germany when we were part of the NATO forces. May God grant his soul in eternal rest.

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old. Eight shall not weary then nor the years condemn. At the going down of the

sun and in the morning we will remember them.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

Digger J. R. MacDougall





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The following letter was sent to HCol Williamson from Kristine, David's daughter.

Dear Bob

It is with great sadness that I write this letter to tell you that Dad, David Letson, died on Monday, March 14. He died peacefully in his home at The Peninsula in Sidney, British Columbia.

Impossible to squeeze ninety-two years of adventures, experiences, accomplishments, joys and sorrows in a letter. Many of you will know Dad's accomplishments already, and your friendships will span a greater scope that I can even imagine with your own memories and tales and laughter.

In the past few months hanging out with Dad, I have been privileged to hear many a story of his extraordinary life. Boyhood mischief, clambering up and down mountains in BC, his career in the Canadian Armed Forces, his marriage to Mom, sailing adventures, his love of travelling...luncheons and dinners, clubs and organizations. He lived a full life every single minute. His memory for details, people and experiences was amazing. All of you made Dad's world rich with content and diversity. He thrived on it.

He was a generous man and loved to see things happen. He made things happen! His final contribution was in donating his body to UBC's Body Donation Program, something he felt strongly about and had the full support of his family in his choice.

As his youngest daughter, I can only say, simply, he was the best Dad. He was a stalwart friend and an unstoppable advocate. He supported all my aspirations no matter how whacky. As he was fond of saying, he always gave me enough rope to hang myself! But he was also always around to undo the knot. I don't think the words "can't do that" ever occurred to him and he willingly gave his all in aiding and abetting me in my own chosen lifestyle, no matter how odd it may have seemed to him.

There is no service planned for Dad...not really his thing. I do know that he would love to know you are laughing, making the occasional politically incorrect comment, raising a glass and sharing a tale. He would tell us all to "get on with it".

Thank you for being part of Dad's world and for all the friendships over the years.

kristine 

Dad was so proud of being a Fort Garry Horse!
He loved attending all the shenanigans in Winnipeg and
keeping his connections to all things FtH.
We miss him so much.

We will remember them



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Retired Warrant Officer Chris Kolodka

When a civilian decides to volunteer with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) they find themselves in a unique position where they must learn to balance their civilian career, Family Life & military career. By doing this they gain a different perspective on the importance of defending/supporting others during their hour of need. The longer they remain in the CAF the deeper the bond grows towards CAF, their unit and their comrades in the Profession of Arms. This bond becomes so strong that it now creates a family forged when experiencing difficult or challenging situations due to working in adverse conditions while conducting training. These experiences and memories create bonds that will last a life time. Because of this bond our unit has a second motto "Once a Garry Always a Garry", several members carry/wear this motto on their sleeves as a badge of honour. When a Garry requires some assistance they immediately ask what they can do to help.

Retired Warrant Officer Chris "The Wedge" Kolodka, CD served in The Fort Garry Horse for 20 years (1978 – 1998). Chris was one of those unique people that you could never forget. His personality, reputation of being a strong supporter of the troops under his command, and the things he did during his career, made him known across the Royal Canadian Armour Corp. Anyone that served with him can start a story with a line "Well one day, The Wedge and I were...."

Chris received the nickname "The Wedge" when he was a Corporal. Although a wedge is one of the simplest tools, a wedge will never, bend or break under pressure. Chris loved the nickname, and applied that philosophy to everything that he did.

Chris cared deeply for the regiment. It was his home, and its members were his family. On his days off he could often be found in the armoury, offering to lend a hand whenever one was needed. When Chris passed, he bequeathed a donation to the regimental foundation, so that he could continue to support Garries who needed help.

Chris, on behalf of Garries around the globe we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your donation. Your desire to help other Garries is legendary, retired, current and future generations of Garries will forever be in your debt for the assistance your donation will provide them during their darkest hour.

"FACTA NON VERBA"

Capt C Hayden

In Memory Frank Scaletta

Frank Scaletta was born on February 16, 1936 in Winnipeg, Manitoba and passed away on April 10, 2022 at Misericordia Hospital. We thank the staff of Cornish 6 for all of their care, kindness and support during Frank's stay there.

He was predeceased by his wife of 58 years, Betty Scaletta and his brother



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Zeno (Dora) Scaletta. He is survived by his son Tony (Gail Fifik); his sisters, Josie (Dominic) Dacquisto and Vivian (Pat) Grande; his nieces and nephews, Tony Dacquisto, Joanne (Dan) Bolen and their children, Gina, Krystina and Nick (Sarah); Frank Grande (Joanne Izzard) and their child Michael; Virginia Grande (Barry Leschinsky) and their children, Jackson and Spencer; Bonnie Wrighton and Wendy Moxon, as well as numerous cousins.

Frank served in the Canadian Forces from 1954 to 1979. Following retirement he worked at Public Service of Canada. Frank was a lifelong car enthusiast and enjoyed memberships with car clubs participating in numerous car competitions with his beloved Ford Model A's. He enjoyed spending time with family and friends, especially family dinners with his niece and going to morning coffee with the 'Coffee Gang'.

Funeral mass was celebrated on Friday, April 22, 2022 in St. Bernadette Parish at 820 Cottonwood Road. If friends so desire, donations in memory of Frank can be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation.



FGH Shilo – Prickly Pine MG Range April 1977 – Eight point check Frank Scaletta, Jimmy Langford, Duncan Canvin

In Memory of Sgt Ronald Bruce Keller C.D.



On Sunday, May 22, 2022, we said 'goodnight' to an amazing human being, a man of faith, family and community. Ronald Bruce Keller was born in Winnipeg on October 14, 1936 to two loving parents, Katherine (nee Hiebert) and Jack Keller.

Ron spent his youth growing up in the west end of Winnipeg. He attended Somerset School, Hugh John McDonald and Daniel McIntyre. Though his family faced many challenges, Ron would later describe his childhood as being 'a rich one.' He was very close to his mother and



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described his father as 'always there' for him, telling him to "work hard and be honest."

Ron's first full time job was with the Winnipeg Free Press as a copy boy in July 1952. He continued working for the Free Press for nine years as a Fairchild Engraver operator and taking pictures for the paper. It was during this time that Ron met Patricia, thanks to the matchmaking skills of the 'Jumble' puzzle ladies. They were married on September 9, 1961 and celebrated their 60th Anniversary in 2021.

Ron joined the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps Reserves in 1955. He spent ten years with the 6th Column Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (M) before transferring to the Fort Garry Horse, and finally with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders 407 Cadet Unit as a Cadet Instructor. He proudly served, attaining the rank of Staff Sergeant. In 1981, Ron was awarded the Canadian Decoration (C.D.) for over twelve years of service, an earthly achievement that he was very proud to receive.

A private burial service will take place, followed by a public Memorial Service on Monday, June 6, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. at Cross Church, 1787 Logan Avenue, Winnipeg.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Cross Church.

A Personal Account on Exercise ARMOURED BISON 2022

CFB Shilo - 28 April to 2 May, I participated in the final big exercise of the 2022 training year, Ex ARMOURED BISON ran by the Fort Garry Horse and supported by The Saskatchewan Dragoons and five other units within 38 Canadian Brigade Group.

During this exercise, the two armoured units ran a troop of TAPVs and two troops of G-Wagons or 12 crews through a level 3 live fire range which for many including myself was the first time doing such a range and in a cavalry manner. A Squadron had carried out a lot of training up until this point to sharpen their skills, but even with that it was different doing it with live ammunition.

As a crewman on Ex ARMOURED BISON, my job was as the Troop Leader's gunner in 2 Troop, or call sign 12. Gunners in the G-Wagons regularly help the crew commander find better firing positions, call out other call sign positions and give hand signals to other call signs for additional information to help reduce radio traffic, and point out any uncertain terrain that the driver might not be able to see from their point of view.

During the range there were three different tasks that were accomplished, first being the troop advance to contact during the day, finishing with a FOO (forward observation officer) from the ATG (Artillery Tactical Group) calling in effective indirect fire.



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The second part of the Ex was the night troop shoot and the advance to contact. The TAPVs lead the advance, followed by the G-Wagons, which was all support by the artillery using illumination rounds. G-Wagons crews used night vision goggles, and TAPVs crews used their thermal sensors to operate unbothered by the dark. Being my first time using night vision during any range it was definitely quite the experience.

The last part of Ex ARMOURED BISON was the squadron firepower demonstration, which was by far the most amount of fighting vehicles I've seen put on a range. After that, we moved into a Squadron level dry advance to contact, to practice our cavalry skills.

Although weather wasn't always on our side it was going to take a lot more wind and rain to bring down the Fort Garry Horse's morale on Ex ARMOURED BISON 22.

Facta non Verba.

Corporal Hunter

A Blast from the Past - The All-Officer Troop 1973

The year 1973 was an eventful year for the Garrys. It included:

- Change of command in October from Larry Lajeunesse to Jack Hubbard, at which part of the unit, B Squadron, paraded for the first time in the green service uniform.
- On the same day as the change of command, The Honourable WJ (Jack) McKeag, Manitoba's

Lieutenant Governor was installed, resulting in his 26-year service as Honorary Colonel.

- Exercise Protector near Tolstoi in November, Manitoba, the civil security exercise that resulted in questions asked later in Parliament (refer to the May 2021 issue of Blue & Gold and page 308 of Facta Non Verba, the regimental history, for more details)

A less momentous occurrence was in early July at the summer Militia Concentration (MILCON) in Wainwright. Four western units included the Garrys were combined to form a seven-troop reconnaissance squadron. As recounted on Page 307 of Facta Non Verba, there was a surplus of officers and so a five-car troop was formed commanded by a captain and four junior officers.

I was the captain/troop leader and Borys Gengalo was the troop 2IC. The other crew commanders were Gil Couch, Ian Wingfield and Larry Hoffman. The week with this cast of characters alternated between being enjoyable and challenging. Enjoyable, because all four are bright individuals with each their own type of humour. Challenging, because they were at times rebellious, others might use the term mutinous.

The rest of the troop members were mostly confused, but sometimes amused, at this arrangement of command.

Borys would, on occasion, attend briefings and orders groups with me and



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more than once delivered an alternative interpretation of the orders or information, that I then needed to resolve. I am quite certain that if Borys reads this article, that he will again offer an alternative and more colourful interpretation.

The first part of the week involved refresher on recce drills, building then to patrol and troop movement and reporting. Preparation for the final two-day exercise, required for the seven troop leaders to copy the traces marked on the seven maps taped to a wall in our quarters. This took a number of hours because of the scope of the exercise area outside CFB Wainwright. We were expected to copy all of the information for all seven troops. The importance of this became obvious later.

On the drive to the start line, it was raining and glued in my memory is the image of my driver, Trooper Dawes, eating luncheon meat (similar to Spam) cold from a can with a spoon, when we were stopped, and he would empty rainwater from the can from time to time.

A few hours into our traces, we were informed that troop boundaries were to be adjusted because one of the troops, commanded by Michel Abourousse, FGH, was re-tasked to meet the Army Commander whose party was going to visit the training in progress. That is why it was important to have the other troops' boundaries.

Because of the large area of training, communications proved difficult and it required that some call signs provide

radio relay to other troops for passage of information back and forth with squadron headquarters.

There were several issues with vehicles, including that of 2Lt Hoffman, resulting in it being towed by a fitter's vehicle from the Lord Strathcona's Horse. On the way to the base workshop, there was an incident, related to a loose gravel shoulder where the jeep ended up inverted in a water-filled ditch. It took some effort to recover all of the kit from the ditch and the jeep was ultimately written off. The crew were travelling in another vehicle.

The exercise was memorable for me because of its scope, communication issues, vehicle issues and the all-officer troop.

*David Stones,
Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel
January 7, 2022*

Exercise ARMoured BISON 22: A New School of Thought

CFB Shilo - From 28 April 2022 to 2 May 2022, participants from Fort Garry Horse (FGH), The Saskatchewan Dragoons (Sask Ds), 38 Artillery Tactical Group (38 ATG), 38 Service Battalion (38 Svc Bn), and 16 Field Amb (16 Fld Amb) all participated in Exercise ARMoured BISON. This Ex which is typically an end of the year exercise run by FGH or the Sask Ds, combines various trades in order to confirm accumulative training conducted throughout the year. This year the Ex took a different route as we shift doctrine from traditional reconnaissance



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to cavalry doctrine; essentially switching from “Sneak and Peak” to “shoot, move, communicate”. Ex ARMOURED BISON 22 confirmed preliminary training into this new cavalry doctrine.

The first two days of the exercise consisted of dynamic level 3 live fire ranges; this is a troop sized element (4 vehicles) advancing to contact and engaging different types of targetry at various distances and directions. The goal is to practice maintaining symmetry during the advance and establish overwhelming firepower onto the enemy through coordinated fire and maneuver. All positions, from the driver to the crew commander required practice with the implementation of this doctrine. With the new cavalry mindset, every member was on an equal learning plane. However senior NCO’s and officers had the extra task of having the strong foundational knowledge to conduct this type of exercise while simultaneously learning the new cavalry mindset. The learning atmosphere surrounding Ex ARMOURED BISON facilitated the development of leadership and allowed the required knowledge to be built. This was proven over the following days.

The remaining training days were used to conduct dry training at the squadron level. Ex ARMOURED BISON allowed for the implementation of training the armoured units received throughout the year; specifically we focused on two mission tasks, the advance to contact and the delay. The Ex provided the opportunity to execute full battle procedure from Squadron Commander to Car Commander, which provided the

leadership with more realistic training. This training allowed for officers and NCO’s to prepare for their upcoming career courses such as, RQ Officer and RQ WO. Ex ARMOURED BISON provided unparalleled training that set a high standard for all training moving forward into the new armoured cavalry world.

2Lt Hiebert

Certificate of Appreciation

At the FGHRA Annual General Meeting on April 24, 2022 a certificate of appreciation was presented to the FGHRA and accepted by President Gordon Askew. The certificate is an expression of appreciation from the FGHRA’s sponsorship of the Stichting lichtjessavond Groesbeek (Candles of Light Groesbeek) and signed by Roland Boschman, Chairman of the Foundation Stichting lichtjessavond Groesbeek and dated December 24, 2021. The certificate can be viewed at the Regimental Museum.





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CAMP BORDEN, SEPTEMBER 1940 / FORMATION OF THE CANADIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Excerpt from “Facta Non Verba” Eighty-two years ago....

Canada had created a small armoured force in 1936 consisting of six tank battalions and a school to train them. The commandant of that school, Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Worthington (universally known as ‘Worthy’) was destined to play a large role in the future affairs of the Fort Garry Horse. As commander of the Canadian Armoured Fighting Vehicles Training Centre, as the tank school was now called, he had worked hard to train a nucleus of armoured units for the coming war. He had also drafted a plan to create an armoured corps for Canada but the plan had gone nowhere. There were now four ‘armoured’ units on active service in Canada. These included the Regiment and the 1st Hussars who were now designated the 1st Canadian Cavalry Regiment (Mechanised). This was an *ad hoc* unit consisting of a squadron each of Royal Canadian Dragoons, Lord Strathcona’s Horse plus two Hussar squadrons. The other two armoured units were The Three Rivers Regiment (Tank) and The Ontario Regiment (Tank) both organised as ‘Army Tank Regiments’ and meant to be included in the order of battle of the first two infantry divisions.



Canadian Armoured Corps cap badges. These were worn by instructors at training schools, and by those undergoing training before they were posted to regiments.

The doctrine of the time called for an army tank regiment to be equipped with ‘infantry tanks.’ These were slow and heavily armoured vehicles that would accompany the infantry in their assault on the enemy’s trenches, crushing the barbed wire and neutralising the machine-guns. This idea was a throwback to the Western Front of over twenty years before. It was a different function from that of the ‘armoured regiments,’ which had lighter, faster vehicles and a more independent role. Indeed, the commander could use them for a wide range of duties other than close support to the infantry.

Because NDHQ had decided that tanks would not play a part in this war, ‘Worthy’ was told to cancel all armoured training and convert the Three Rivers and Ontario Regiments back into foot-borne infantry. ‘Worthy’, somewhat typically for him, turned a Nelsonian blind eye to the orders and continued the armoured training anyway. It took the Allied debacle in France in the spring of 1940 to finally persuade the government of the urgent need for armoured formations. ‘Worthy’s’



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once rejected proposal for an armoured corps was resurrected and re-submitted to the chief of the general staff on 19 June. It included a plan to train an armoured brigade and then to split its units among newly raised brigades to spread the limited store of armoured knowledge as far as possible. The new corps was formally raised on 13 August 1940. Four motorcycle regiments (actually four cavalry regiments that had been converted to this new role to act as brigade reconnaissance units) joined the original four units of armour. Also added were the Royal Canadian Dragoons and Lord Strathcona's Horse, both of whom had been mixed up with the 1st Hussars in the composite 1st Canadian Cavalry Regiment (Mechanised) and in the creation of one of the motorcycle regiments. Thus, effective 13 August 1940, the Fort Garrys became a charter member of the new corps.

The Regiment was now assigned to the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade under Worthy's command. The brigade included the original four armoured regiments. Worthy needed vehicles to train his men on and so travelled to the Rock Island Arsenal in Illinois, where he located and purchased 236 Great War-era M1917 tanks, a copy of the Renault FT 17, for \$120 each. The Americans generously threw in another 45 tons of spare parts at no charge. The purchases were then shipped by flatcar to the 'Camp Borden Iron Works' as 'scrap metal' in order to get around the inconvenient fact of American neutrality. As fighting vehicles, the M1917s were useless, but as training vehicles they were priceless. They broke down frequently and had a

nasty tendency to catch fire. Lieutenant Harry Sleight recalled: "You could get the engine running and then you wouldn't get the tracks moving. Or, if the tracks would move, something would go wrong with the engine. But at least we had a piece of hard equipment to deal with."



One of the M1917 tanks rumbles down the road in Camp Borden.

In early February 1941, 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade was broken up, as 'Worthy' had planned, with the Three Rivers and the Ontario Regiments going off to form 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade under his command. This was a collection of the army tank regiments intended to work closely with the infantry. The Regiment, along with the 1st Hussars and the Strathcona's, now joined 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade commanded by Brigadier 'Uncle' Tom Rutherford. Along with the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade (the Governor General's Horse Guards, 8th (New Brunswick) Hussars and the British Columbia Dragoons), they formed the 1st (soon renamed 5th) Canadian Armoured Division under Major-General Ernest Sansom.

On 11 February 1941 the Regiment was redesignated as the 10th Canadian Armoured Regiment (The Fort Garry Horse). This was another of 'Worthy's'



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initiatives. He had wanted the new corps to wear a single cap badge and to have numbered units - much like the artillery, however, this concept was not acceptable to the regiments, who each treasured their names, badges and traditions. For that reason the regimental titles were retained in brackets after the numeral. The numbers themselves did not reflect any tradition as some units were listed in accordance with their previous seniority in the cavalry while others were just assigned the next digit upon transfer to the new corps. The designation '10th' would remain a part of the Regiment's identity for the next 17 years.

It was at Camp Borden that the Fort Garrys finally began to come together as a fighting armoured unit, as Harry Sleight observed:

In due course we started to be issued with our four-wheeled transport. We therefore - [once] we were in proper barracks - we started to improve in morale. We started to do PT at 6 o'clock in the morning. We became competitive in at least the sense of sports activities with the other units.

Sports played a role in building the Regiment's morale as the unit received an invitation to watch the 1941 Memorial Cup game in Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens between the Winnipeg Rangers and the Montreal Royals. A convoy exercise was laid on with the Fort Garrys - less 'B' Squadron, which had to stay in camp on duty - filling 31 trucks. The Toronto police met the convoy on the

outskirts of the city and escorted it to a College Street parking lot where the troops were fed sandwiches and coffee courtesy of the YMCA. Then, led by the Regimental Band, the 10th Armoured Regiment marched smartly through the streets of Toronto to the Gardens. The Winnipeg team won the match and the thoroughly satisfied Manitobans returned to Camp Borden. It was a pleasant event with the War Diary noting: "the only dark spot being, when it was heard that some unfortunate radio announcer had referred to the party as "Strathconas!"

In May the Regiment was given an unexpected task, to parade as a complete armoured regiment for inspection by the minister of national defence, Colonel J.L. Ralston, and a number of Members of Parliament. The Regiment did not have a full establishment of either personnel or vehicles, and so this project required scrounging many vehicles and about 100 men of the Governor General's Horse Guards to flesh out the organisation. With Lieutenant-Colonel Cox giving a commentary over a loudspeaker system, the various elements of the unit were presented and described. The Regiment then marched past the dignitaries before mounting the vehicles and driving off, taking 45 minutes to complete this final activity.



Spring 2022



14 May 1941. M1917 tanks pass by in review for federal members of parliament. Each of these obsolete, unarmed vehicles had a piece of paper stuck on the left side to indicate what it was representing, i.e. an infantry tank, cruiser tank or close support tank. (LAC)



FGH dispatch riders 1940. L-R: Corporal J.H. Palmer, Trooper E.K. Johnstone, Corporal A. Huggins, Trooper H. Turner, Trooper J. Selman, Trooper S.N. Furness, Trooper M. Taylor, Trooper W.J. Hudson, Trooper D.A. Bond, Trooper O.G. Baker, Trooper A.G. Munnoch, Trooper D.L. Thomson.

By this point, Britain was anxious to have a Canadian armoured division deployed overseas, which they proposed to equip with American M3 tanks. Apart from the M1917s, and the few vehicles at the Training Centre, there were no tanks in Canada. The prospect of using modern tanks meant that all ranks were anxious to get overseas. Lieutenant-Colonel Cox would not, however, be going with them. On 15 September he announced to the Regiment that he would be stepping down but that his replacement had not yet been determined. Two officers were being considered for the job, Major George Robinson of the 1st Hussars and

Major Morton of the Strathconas. In the end it was the latter's Western Canadian connections that determined the choice. The new commanding officer would be Major Ronald Edward Alfred Morton.

The Mystery of the Piano in the Officer's Mess

Gord Austin was reminiscing and remembered a piano in the Officer's Mess at the armoury (and Steve Thompson playing it). Gord is prepared to bet there is an epic story someone knows about how the piano got up there.

According to Barb Gillis the officers spent many a night singing late into the evening. When Steve Thompson left, we became desperate, and it became a question (rather a joke) to officer applicants at officer boards as to their piano playing abilities.

Regulars usually sang the songs from the songbook "From the Front and Rear" (Songs from the Front & Rear: Canadian Servicemen's Songs of the Second World War Paperback – January 1, 1979 by Anthony Hopkins (Author)). A regular singer included Capt Kim Scott whose favourite was "Cats on the Rooftop" that kind of became one of the songs sung at every session.

