



Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) REGIMENTAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 24, No. 1 WINTER/SPRING 2010

Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) Regimental Society, PO Box 10500 Station Forces Edmonton, AB T5J 4J5

Message from the Colonel of the Regiment

By Colonel J.E.N. Roderick

Recently, as I was composing a Christmas message to our soldiers in B Sqn in Afghanistan, it hit me that the Squadron was almost halfway through its third tour in that theatre. It seems only a few months ago that I was



in Wainwright with the Regiment and **LCol Squally Demers** was on his Blackberry getting the order to start preparing B Sqn to deploy ASAP. Where has the time gone? Well, the time is passing and, as much as I hate the thought, I am in my last few months as your Colonel of the Regiment and we will all too soon be gathering in Edmonton for our Regimental Reunion where I will be handing over the best appointment in the world to my successor.

As most of you were likely aware, our plan was to hold the Regimental Change of Command and Change of Colonel of the Regiment appointment at a parade the start of the Reunion week-end. Unfortunately because of the availability of certain senior officers in the command chain and the need to follow change of command protocols, this plan has had to be amended. The Change

of Command Parade will now take place on 18 June and the Change of Appointment Parade will now be held on 26 June during the actual Reunion program. For those who live near Edmonton you will now be able to attend two parades but, more importantly, we will still be able to have the handover of Colonel of the Regiment take place in front of the larger assembly of the 'family' during the Reunion.

Since the last edition of the Newsletter there has been no letup in the activity level of our Regiment, as you will read in succeeding articles. Fortunately I can also report that during my visits and discussions with all ranks, I have found that there has also been no let up in morale, enthusiasm and professionalism on the part of our soldiers. The Regiment continues to excel and to exude pride in purpose and it is always a joy to be among such fine young Canadian women and men. You are going to enjoy their company at the Reunion I am sure.

As not everyone will be able to attend the Change of Command Parade, I think it important that I use this medium to commend and thank the outgoing CO and RSM, **LCol Derek Macaulay** and **CWO Joe Ramsay**, on behalf of all Strathcona's for their outstanding work over the past two years. They have trained excellent sub-units for war and now are deploying with every available Strathcona to Vancouver to take on a major security

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Commanding Officer

By Lieutenant-Colonel D.A. Macaulay

First, let me say Happy New Year and I hope that 2010 brings happiness, health and prosperity to you and your entire family.

The soldiers of the Regiment have just returned from a well deserved rest after another busy fall season which not only hosted the prerequisite yearly individual soldier training but collective training in preparation for another tank squadron (A Squadron/ Task Force 1-11) to Afghanistan and a Regimentally lead Task Force for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games (Task Force Vancouver). This well-timed holiday leave provided me a great opportunity to once again reflect on how our amazing Regiment was able to successfully accomplish its assigned tasks within the 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group's high operational tempo. Interestingly and perhaps not surprisingly our Regiment's success was revealed to be an integrated mix of soldiers' hard work and attitude combined with unwavering support from our families.

In my previous newsletters I have had an opportunity to speak to and thank the greater Regimental Family for its support (September 2008), highlight the accomplishments of the Regiment on the occasion of being presented the CDS Unit Commendation (January 2009) and emphasize the leadership teams that continue to have the honour to lead the soldiers of our Regiment (September 2009). So now I would like to speak about and thank our families.

I want to thank the spouses, children, mothers, fathers, grandparents, in-laws and everyone else in the families that support the soldiers of

the Regiment. Your love and strength towards those in the unit, whether it is in their daily duties, long training cycles or during a domestic or international operation, are a key component of the Regiment's success.

An example of this support is best exhibited by the Regimental Ladies' Club and their "Tastes of Home" campaign. This generous endeavour sends each soldier on tour in Afghanistan, a care package at Christmas and Canada Day. These care packages are a product of support from not only the Edmonton community but from organizations from across the country which include Legion #260 from 100 Mile House in British Columbia. There are far too many ladies that have assisted in making this initiative a success to mention all of them in this short article, however, I must mention the ladies that have spearheaded this campaign over the last two years. They are **Rhonda Macaulay** and **Kathy Batty**. To all of members of the Ladies' Club, thank you.

So, again, thank you to the soldiers' families for your sacrifices and your strength. Many people have said that your husbands and wives in the military are heroes. I agree and it is my honour to serve with them every day, however, you are all heroes. Thank you and, once again, best wishes in 2010.

Regimental Sergeant-Major

By Chief Warrant Officer J. Ramsay

I hope everyone had a fantastic Christmas and all the very best to everyone in 2010!

Early December found me in Afghanistan visiting B Sqn.

Although it was a very short visit I was lucky in that the whole Squadron, for the first time in a month were in the Forward Operating Base. The soldiers were doing very well and although extremely busy, their spirits were high. The troop warrants managed to barbeque up some steaks for lunch and I was able to update the troops on what was happening back in Canada. They had recently received their "Tastes of Home" packages and asked me to pass on their thanks, as the packages were greatly appreciated.

A large number of single soldiers have been taking advantage of Home Leave Travel Assistance (HLTA) to visit Europe and points south. From some of the stories I was told they thoroughly enjoyed the trips. When they asked about the weather in Edmonton, at that point I was able to tell them it had been a very warm and nice fall. Of course a week later the temperature nose-dived to -30. The soldiers' thoughts were of their families at home, and it made them feel a bit better knowing that at least the weather was being nice. The soldiers are focused on the mission and they wanted everyone to know they appreciated the care packages.

Closer to home, upon my return we were right in the middle of the week of the soldiers Christmas dinner and Sports Day. For the first time in quite awhile the Sgt's & WO's won the hockey game while the Cpl's and Tpr's won most of the sports against the MCpl's. The parade prior to the soldiers Christmas dinner saw the Area Commander present Sacrifice Medals to Strathcona soldiers and the Brigade Commander promoting a larger number of soldiers. The At Home was a huge success. **Maj Adams** was the undisputed winner of the oversized boxing glove tournament. The Officer's also won

Continued from Page 2
Regimental Sergeant-Major

the Wii bowling, (truthfully, I was quite happy not to have won a video game competition).

Upon our return from leave, we have A Sqn in Fort Irwin, continuing their training for Afghanistan. The CO and I just returned from visiting them. The geography definitely mirrors that of Afghanistan. The soldiers were training hard but doing well. The remainder of the Regiment, minus those who just returned from overseas, is or will be deploying to Vancouver and Whistler for OP Podium. All told, another start to a busy year. The soldiers returned from a well-deserved break, ready to support Canadians both on International and Domestic Operations. Thankfully, the weather in Edmonton has improved drastically since our departure, so hopefully, it will make it a bit more bearable for the families we have left behind. Again, I wish everyone all the very best in 2010. To our families; thanks again for all your support.

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Colonel of the Regiment

role for the Olympics. Although I will have the opportunity to thank both of them in person, I think it important that their contribution also be recognized in this Newsletter as it goes out to all the Regimental family. In case anyone missed the news, the incoming command team will be **LCol Trevor Cadieu** and **CWO Jim Dorrance**. We again are blessed in that the Regiment is able to pull forth such strong leaders from within our ranks. They will have "big shoes" to fill but I'm assured they both have "big feet" and it will be a smooth and easy transition for all.

Finally, I want to remind everyone who made a New Year's Resolution to get Reunion reservations in to do just that. NOW!

Perseverance

Regimental Association Alberta Branch

By Howie Owen

Greetings everyone. At the Annual General Meeting in Calgary on 12 January 2010, I received the honour of being elected as your new President. My name is **Howard Owen**, AKA Howie, and I feel honoured to serve the Strathcona Family through the Regimental Association (Alberta Branch).

The newly elected executive for another term is:

President - **Howie Owen** (new)

V/President - **Peter Wonderham** (new)

Secretary - **Ron Howard**

Treasurer - **Clair Lane**

Membership - **Keith (Slider) Welsh**

As far as the operation of the Association for the coming year is concerned, our top priority is to work with **Dave Biener** and the gang up in Edmonton to ensure that Reunion 2010 will be successful in every way.

The Regiment is very, very busy and with the 2010 Vancouver Games, less than one month away the tasks will only get worse.

I received a couple of emails recently which I will mention. One is from **LCol D.A. Macaulay**, Commanding Officer. The subject of the email is Change of Command Parade, and Reunion 2010. The CO states the

Change of Command Parade, which was scheduled for Friday 25 June 2010, is now changed to Friday 18 June 2010, and the change of Colonel of the Regiment will take place 26 June 2010 to coincide with the Regimental Open House.

The other email was from **Capt. Dave Biener** who is being called to Vancouver to help with the Pre-Olympic tasking. Dave has appointed **James Strayer** as 2IC to carry on with the R2010 preparations.

I am happy to report that registration is picking up speed and as of 12 January 10, 170 people are registered. Well done Dave.

The Regimental Association membership renewals were of some concern earlier, however our man **Slider Welsh**, through his diplomatic demeanour, has sweet-talked some stragglers to pay up (OR ELSE).

Well friends, that about does it for this edition (my first); however, before I close I would again like to thank my predecessor **Bob Lett** for all his HARD work and the expertise he showed during his tenure. It was no less than first class, Bob.

See you all at R2010. Bye for now.

Perseverance



*The Owen Team during the August 2009
Strathcona Family Golf Tournament.*

Regimental Association Edmonton Chapter

By Dave Biener

Membership continues to grow slowly within the Edmonton Chapter. On a regular basis we have about 20 people showing up so that's not too bad. That doesn't mean we couldn't use some more. Since our last report, there has not been a great deal of activity; however, we managed to conduct a September meeting at the Norwood Legion that was well attended. We had hoped to elect some new committee members but alas, it was not in the cards! December saw a mixed group of 24 sit down for some Christmas turkey at the German Canadian club in the south of Edmonton. I had promised a German style meal but it seems the club had other plans! We still managed to have some fun, even though the temperature outside was minus 30 and the roads were like a skating rink. Even the Gallagher's (**Ed and Michelle**) showed up after a drive in from Onoway (way out there!)

For those who wish to join the Edmonton Chapter, you are welcome and encouraged to attend any of our events. This is a no pressure organisation. Our general meetings (which are very short by the way) are held every three months, usually on a Thursday night, at the Norwood Legion. These meetings start off with a supper meal and then a guest speaker prior to the meeting. Luncheons normally take place at the St Albert Legion, usually on a Friday.

On a sad note, we lost one of our original Chapter start-up members – **Mr Phillip Anley** passed away

at the age of 85 in October after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was a WWII and Korean War vet and a very proud Strathcona.

Upcoming Events - Edmonton Chapter

28 Jan 2010 General Meeting

27 March Moreuil Wood Dinner

29 April General Meeting

22 May Melfa River Dinner

For more information on the above events, check out our website at www.ldshrc.ca

Reunion 2010 update

Good news regarding Reunion. The attendance number is now close to the two hundred mark and things are progressing nicely. There has been one change regarding the Change of Command Ceremony which was planned for the Friday 25 June. It has moved to June 18th, however, there will be a Regimental parade on Saturday 26 June that will involve the Colonel of the Regiment handover. The remainder of the schedule is unchanged. To date we do not have a large number of golfers in the mix for Thursday, the 24th. So if you want to golf, get your returns in please.

Chilliwack B.C. Reunion

By Rollie Keith

September 2009, once again, saw some sixty Strathconas and their ladies gather in Chilliwack for a mini BC reunion. In the continuing tradition of the BC Interior Reunions, originally initiated by **Vic Binnie**, western Strathconas have gathered together on non - national reunion years in Kelowna, Penticton, Vernon, Okanagan Falls, and now for the second year in a row, at Chilliwack in the eastern Fraser Valley.

Participants from the lower mainland, Vancouver Island, and the BC Interior along with a few stalwart Albertans who crossed the mountains renewed friendships and told stories in true Strathcona tradition. The gathering was delighted to also have **Maj Chris Bradley** and **MWO Tony Batty** participate as representatives of the CO and RSM. They, in turn, delivered a very frank and insightful presentation of the Regiment's service in Afghanistan.

Rollie Keith and **Dick Thody** along with **Bernie McNicholl**, **Carl Cole** and **Fred Schuh** once again hosted the weekend. A few members took the opportunity to enjoy Chilliwack

Summer/Fall 2010 Edition Deadline

The deadline for submissions for the
Summer/Fall 2010 Strathcona Newsletter is
6 September 2010.

Submissions should be forwarded to
newsletter@strathconas.ca

or mailed to:
Lord Strathcona's Horse
(Royal Canadians)
PO Box 10500 Station Forces
Edmonton, AB T5J 4J5
Attention: Kathy Batty

golfing and many visited our Canadian Military Education Centre Museum with its display of military vehicles including a recently rebuilt Ford Lynx Mk 1 Scout Car.

The weekend began with a meet and greet on Friday the 11th at the Area Support Unit's Mess followed by the Saturday catered breakfast and dinner which was once again accompanied by the musical entertainment of Fred and Madeleine Schuh. Many "war" and tank stories were told and **Jim Ellard**, once again delivered the Colonel of the Regiment's message. Fallen comrades were remembered and all departed looking forward to the Regimental Reunion this June in Edmonton.

Before then, however, many of us hope to take advantage of the Regiment's deployment here in BC for the Olympics and participate with them in a Moreuil Wood commemoration in the lower mainland of BC.

On behalf of the committee,

Perseverance



*Committee Members Chilliwack Strathcona Reunion 2009
Carl Cole, Rollie Keith, Dick Thody, Bernie McNicholl and Fred Schuh*



*Rollie and Bernie holding their Troop Pennant from 56 Cdn
Recce Sqn, the first recce sqn in Egypt 1957*

Vancouver Area Black Hat Luncheon

The Vancouver Island group of "Black Hats" will be gathering for their annual lunch to remember the actions of the First Canadian Cavalry Brigade (RCD, LdSH(RC) and FGH) at Moreuil Wood. All regular serving and ex-members of the Corps are most welcome. We are extending a special invitation to members who may still be in the Vancouver area as the result of Olympic security duties.

We also would like to include those of militia regiments (retired and serving) who have served with The RCD and/or LdSH in Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Date - Thursday 25 March **Time** - 1100 until 1600 **Place** - Sidney and North Saanich Yacht Club (very near the Swartz Bay ferry terminal).

**For further details please contact Dave Letson at
dieflyn@shaw.ca before 25 Feb 2010.**

The Long Road to Bisley

By LGen (Retd) Jack Dangerfield

(With help from "Strathconians" of the mid '60s)

When I read the last LdSH (RC) Regimental Society Newsletter I noted the letter from **Patrick Johnson** who is doing some research on the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association (DCRA) and is requesting assistance in identifying Strathconas who are in a picture taken in Fort Osborne Barracks, Winnipeg in 1938. The picture includes (then) **Major F.M.W. Harvey** and clearly is of a rifle team wearing Strathcona cap badges.

I was a keen rifle-shooting competitor in my young days, starting out as a 13-year-old army cadet firing the same old Lee Enfield rifle as in the photograph. But I have to admit that I was unaware of the existence of a Strathcona team that was competing at the national level (DCRA) until I saw that photo. Perhaps readers of the Newsletter will be surprised to learn that thirty years later another group of Strathconas also competed in rifle competitions - and won! With those wins they became the Canadian Army Rifle Champions and earned the right to compete internationally at Bisley, England. To my knowledge this was the first time an Armoured Corps team succeeded in a field traditional dominated by the infantry. But it was a long road getting there. The following contains some "laundry lists" chronicling the achievements of these Strathconas. I make no apologies for this format - they were CHAMPIONS.

It is difficult to know when the journey began (who knows, perhaps in 1938?), but I will start in the 1963 competition season when **LCol Ian Grant** commanded us. In those days, rifle competition consisted of two quite different aspects - the civilian and the military. Civilian shooting came under the auspices of the DCRA and its provincial branches - in our case the Alberta Provincial Rifle Association (APRA). Although the APRA held Service Condition matches, the bulk of DCRA competition shooting was deliberate fire (prone position, spotting scopes, bull's-eye targets, few (if any) time constraints) - often referred to as "belly shooting". The military competition was organized by the Army and run by the Commands and Areas. Although this shooting had some deliberate firing, the bulk of the competition was military in every sense - snap shooting, rapid fire, fire and movement, often standing or kneeling, and team oriented. In 1963, the Strathcona Rifle Team had the core of the team that would eventually end up at Bisley. In the APRA matches, **Cpl RM (Ron) Ransom** (team coach), won the deliberate fire and the rapid fire matches and came third in the overall aggregate. **Sgt CA (Charlie) Wilson** won the standing snap shoot and **Sgt G (George) Riches** won a bronze medal in the fire and movement run-down.

The year 1964 was a big one for the Rifle Team. The big competition for us came from 2 PPCLI who had several Bisley shots on their team and bags of training time. Fortunately for us, our new CO, **LCol Brick Brown**, was as supportive as his predecessor and allowed us some time from our regular tank jobs to practice. We squeaked by the 2 PPCLI team during the Alberta Area competition and then began to practice in earnest. This allowed us to blow away the other infantry teams at the Western Command Army Competition. It was now on to Ottawa and the Canadian Army Championship at Connaught Ranges. After a really tough match against the best Army rifle shots



The 1966 Canadian Army Rifle Champions

Standing - Major John Bell (Team Captain), Sgt George Ritchie, Sgt Ron Ransom (Team Coach), Cpl Brian Hill, Cpl John Castleman, Cpl Bob Clements, Cpl Bob Standem (QOR), Sgt Joe Daigle (R22eR) Cfn Bill Dymtruk (Armourer), Lt John Derry (Administrative Officer)

Kneeling - Cfn Peter Eichelbaum, Cpl Chuck McBride, Capt Jack Dangerfield, Sgt Roger McMahon, Cpl Bob Labreque (R22eR)

from across the country, the team emerged deadlocked in a first place tie with the Black Watch (RHC). Rather than invoke a shoot-off, the judges decided that the results achieved in the 600 yard portion of the competition would be used to break the tie. It was a big disappointment to us to learn that we had lost by a scant two points! Nevertheless, our winnings that year included the General Vanier Trophy (presented to us at Government House) and:

- Alberta Area Rifle Championship Trophy
- Western Command Rifle Championship Trophy
- The Sir Arthur Currie Shield (DCRA)
- Individual trophies :- **Cpl BD Hill** (Rapid Fire), **Cpl RM Ransom** (Standing Snapshooting), **Tpr J Kabatoff** (Tyro Army Champion), and **Sgt GJ Riches, Sgt JB Robertson, Cpl RM Ransom, Cfn PK Eichelbaum** (Falling Plate Army Champions).

1965 was our year!! Shooting better than any other team since the introduction of the FN C1 rifle, the team won almost every trophy it was allowed to compete for. They won the APRA matches in May, the Alberta Area matches in June (with **LCpl L Keltica** being the high aggregate winner), and the Western Command Championship also in June (with **Sgt RM Ransom** being the high aggregate winner).

The Canadian Army Small Arms Competition began on 16 August 1965, lasting one week, and pitted the best shots in the Canadian Army against each other – including the RHC team that just returned from Bisley. We won, and we won big:

- The Letson Trophy – best rifle team in the Canadian Army
- The Roberts Trophy – winners of snapshooting team competition
- The Churchill Trophy – winning the team obstacle course match
- The 600 yard deliberate fire team match
- Tyro Marksman, and 300 yard deliberate fire - **Sgt RH McMahon**
- Deliberate fire aggregate, and snapshooting – **Sgt RM Ransom**
- Rapid fire aggregate, 200 yard deliberate, and 200 yard rapid fire – **Cfn PK Eichelbaum**
- 600 yard deliberate fire - **LCpl DA Zimmerman**
- 200 yard snapshooting – **LCpl RG Castleman**
- Fire and Movement – **Capt JK Dangerfield**

The team won two hundred points ahead of its nearest competitor, set a Canadian Army record for the FN C1 rifle, and began preparations for the journey to Bisley.

In June 1966 the team left our new home in Iserlohn, Germany and concentrated in Bisley, England. In those days the Canadian Army team consisted of nine soldiers from the winning Regimental team plus three others who were the next individual winners at Connaught. The nine Strathconas of the 1966 Bisley team consisted of **Capt JK (Jack) Dangerfield, Sgt RM (Ron) Ransom, Sgt RH (Roger) McMahon, Sgt GJ (George) Riches, Cpl RG (Bob/Clem) Clements, Cpl BD (Brian) Hill, Cpl CS (Chuck) McBride, LCpl JG (John) Castleman, and Cfn PK (Peter) Eichelbaum**. The three other members of the team were **Sgt Joe Daigle** and **Cpl Bob Labreque** of the R22eR and **Cpl Bob Standen** of the QOR. We were assisted by **Maj John Bell** as our Team Captain, **Lt John Derry** as our Administrative Officer, and **Cfn Bill Dymtruk** as our Armourer. Our time at Bisley was a great experience. We were able to visit the Household Cavalry at Wellington Barracks, tour Canadian memorials and cemeteries, and have some good old English pub fare (including a yard of ale, or two) before we got down to serious business. During the Queen Mary Match there were 563 entries from all over the world taking part in the competition and the Strathconas placed seven in the top fifty! I had a good shoot and came third - winning the bronze medal; **Cfn Eichelbaum** and **Cpl Castleman** were hot on my tail as fourth and fifth. **Cfn Eichelbaum** came third in the sitting match, **Cpl Castleman** came third in the standing match, I tied for first with **Cpl McBride** in the 200 rapid fire and came third in the rapid fire aggregate. I think we did damn well – considering we were tankers!

The Road to Bisley is a great story and one that the Regiment should be proud of. It was made possible by two encouraging and supportive Commanding Officers – **Ian Grant** and **Brick Brown**, and a great coach - **Ron Ransom**. This was another case where PERSEVERANCE paid off.

Your Photos



I am enclosing a picture of **Ken Haughton** taken in the Sgt's Mess in Germany during our tour of duty in 1965/1969. Ken was a member of the RCME and was attached to the Regiment. **Bill Bailey** on the left, **Ken** in the middle, and "**Tiny**" **Alexander** at the bar, the fourth and fifth person's are familiar to me but I cannot put a name to them.

Those of us who knew Ken, he was always a gentleman.

Submitted by Al Kaatz.



Terry Martin President of the Army Cadet League of Canada, Alberta presents League President **Emeritis Roy Jardine** with the League's Volunteer Service Medal for his service with the Army Cadet League. Roy was League President for the years 1982 and 1983, and Chairman Southern Zone for many years.

HOW THE NEWSLETTER IS FUNDED

Our regular readers (Aren't we all?) will remember that a few years ago the *Newsletter* lapsed because the reduced size of the Association in Calgary made it a task that was beyond their capabilities. At that time, the Regimental Society stepped forward, moved the publication process to Edmonton, and Kathy Batty, the CO's Secretary volunteered to do the formatting and publishing. I think this has been a very successful move and I have heard a lot of praise for the recent editions from many of you. I'm glad you like it because now comes the "hook".

Previously, members of the Regimental family were making a lot of donations to support the *Newsletter* but these have dropped off considerably and the cost of publishing is being borne by the Regimental Society. Today, the cost of the *Newsletter* is becoming a drain on the Society. Our Society, as I hope you all know, maintains our Museum, the Strathcona Mounted Troop, the Historical Vehicle Troop, the Family Support Troop, the Strathconian, and a number of other activities. The funds to carry out these activities come from donations made by Regimental family members, fund raising activities, and friends of the Regiment. Serving members are encouraged to make monthly pay assignments to the Society so I'm appealing to all the former serving members of the Regimental family to open your wallets and make regular donations to our Society to support all these activities. Cheques made out to the LdSH(RC) Regimental Society can be forwarded to the Regiment and all will receive a charitable donation receipt for income tax purposes.

Remember, charity begins at home and the Regiment is, after all, our home!

Col John Roderick (ret'd)
Colonel of the Regiment



3 Troop Recce Sqn Egypt 1961. Taken at Fort Harvey



*D Squadron Wainwright 1963. **Bruce Rutherford** was our OC.*

Photo courtesy of Bill Prouse

Strathcona Message Board

www.strathconas.ca/board

Someone is interested in how you are doing. Have you checked out the Strathcona Message Board lately? Some of the Old Guard and not so Old Guard are invoking some interesting reading, while others are looking to connect with old friends. With over 10000 posts and 750 members, you are sure to come across a familiar name.

Check it out today.

Letters from Cyprus – or “Call Sign 45, where are you”?

By Ian Barnes

Forty-Five years ago the Regiment deployed a Reconnaissance Squadron (90 soldiers) as part of the Canadian Contingent committed to the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) from October 1964 to April 1965. It was part of the second Canadian Contingent and consisted of 1100 soldiers of the 1st Canadian Guards, the Strathcona's, Brigade HQs and a small logistics element. The Squadron was commanded by **Major Barry Rose, WO II Vic Scur** was the Squadron-Sergeant Major. The Squadron operated five troops of four ferret scout cars. The ferrets mounted a .30 cal machine gun. The crew commanders carried the 9 mm pistol and the drivers the Sterling machine gun. During that time I wrote 82 letters to my wife Beverley using the blue Forces Air Letter-with a 5 cent stamp. The following are excerpts from those letters relating to what the squadron and in particular fifth troop (call sign 45) did during the tour. Members of the troop were, **Lt Ian Barnes, Sgt Pat Patterson, Cpl BVH Johnson, LCpl Slater, Tprs Dennis Arsenault, Bob Murphy, Knolton and Searle.**



*Two scout cars of C/S 45 patrol through a small village in the Kyrenia Mountains in Cyprus 1964. In the lead Ferret Scout Car (Mark II – with a turret) is **Sgt SL (Pat) Patterson**, crew commander and **Tpr RE (Bob) Murphy**, driver. In the second Ferret Scout Car (Mark I – no turret) is **Cpl Slater** crew commander and **Tpr Searle**, driver.*

3 Oct 64 – First letter from Nicosia - Left Calgary

Oct 1, with 24 Ferret drivers via TCA to Toronto-on to Picton, then Trenton-left at 11a.m. by Yukon-11 hours to Marville-on way to Nicosia engine conked out-back to Marville-left at 5:30 p.m. Fri-arrived Nicosia at 1 a.m. Sat-met by Major Barry Rose, and Lt Terry Mayne. Camp is situated on the west side of Nicosia, the capital, a few feet from the Green Line (line of separation between the Greek and Turk Cypriots), a dried up river bed. Camp used to be an agricultural school.

4 Oct 64 - Took a jeep ride through the old walled city of Nicosia and a troop of scout cars into the country. There are defensive positions everywhere along the Green Line manned by Turk & Greek forces with the UN positioned in the middle.

6 Oct 64 - The rest of the squadron has arrived-we have officially taken over – the RCD squadron left today. Temperature - 80 (day), 50 (night).

7 Oct 64 - Quiet- no incidents. The squadron's job is to patrol a large area north of Nicosia to the Mediterranean Sea. To accomplish this; the five troops will rotate on a weekly bases; Week 1. Main Camp-Duty tp (maintenance, rest and duties), Week 2. Kyrenia Outpost-on coast (patrolling), Week 3. Main Camp-Training. (Note: This eventually became the convoy troop) 4.Main Camp-Delta Force (standby), Week 5. Bogahzi Outpost-in the Kyrenia mountains (patrolling).

13 Oct 64 - Situation is quiet with only the occasional rifle shot.

15 Oct 64 – Today we patrolled from Kyrenia (a small fishing village on the north coast) to the north west tip of island-scenery magnificent-roads treacherous-narrow and winding-continually climbing-1000 ft drop to sea on one side and solid rock on the other. Our patrolling consists of checking every side road and village looking for guns, men, vehicles and equipment, noting time and place-drove into Greek Camp-coffee with commander-used one of his soldiers as interpreter-at first not too friendly-he is from Greece-soldiers are all Cypriot. Patrol Outpost-Kyrenia is a vacant Greek home, no furniture, no windows-like houses on TV show 'Combat'.

17 Oct 64 – Weather-good-spent day patrolling-maps are terribly out of date-in one village the roads were too narrow for the cars-had to back out.

19 Oct 64 – Today we patrolled east of Kyrenia - 15 miles along the Mediterranean Sea coast.

23 Oct 64 – Things quiet- weather still good. Tomorrow we will recce a route from Famagusta to Nicosia for rotation of Turkish soldiers.

26 Oct 64 – We just finished a hectic day. The Turkish Contingent (soldiers from Turkey stationed as part of agreement when the Republic of Cyprus was formed in 1960) has been rotated without an incident. We led the first batch at 5 a.m. from a small village outside of Nicosia to Famagusta, the only ship accessible port on the west coast. As part of the agreement that allowed the rotation of the Turkish soldiers to Turkey, a daily convoy escorted by the UN will operate between Nicosia and Kyrenia (16 miles) to provide easier access for Greek civilians to get to the north coast. Our troop will start convoy escort duties tomorrow.

1 Nov 64 - Watched ‘Wrong Arm of the Law’ outside using 16mm projector, it was really cold-none of the buildings have heating-they have fireplaces-wood scarce.

4 Nov 64 – Back patrolling-Boghazi Outpost-an old chicken coop (a disgusting place) provided by a retired Brit (**Col Simmons**)-we guard his property at night in return. (This is not a happy situation - the soldiers very rightly feel that we are being used). One day after patrolling we were cleaning our weapons and **Dennis Arsenault** was expressing his frustration at our situation so I told him to fire his SMG at a tree to let off some steam. His volley brought a request from the 1st Guards Battalion HQs (whom we were in support of) to investigate. I replied, “Roger Out”, waited an hour and reported back to HQs that the firing was only some Greeks hunting birds. Apparently **Col Simmons** had phoned Battalion HQs, as he thought he was being attacked. Got info on extra pay - Foreign allowance - \$16.50, Cyprus allowance \$69.00.

11 Nov 64 – The soldier that you read about being shot was with the 1st Canadian Guards.

23 Nov 64 – On patrol-rained for 5 days-roads becoming impassable.

25 Nov 64 – Changed to winter dress (Battle Dress). Big changes to our patrolling – no more staying over at Kyrenia and Bogazi, all patrols will operate out of Nicosia. With the help of some Finnish soldiers we are building a sauna.

26 Nov 64 – Other UN contingents with UNFICYP; Brits, Danish, Swedes, Finns, a few Austrians and Indians. Today at a small Turk village along the Kyrenia-Nicosia road we were covering two Turkish positions. As the convoy was passing by one of the Turkish soldiers put on a mask, cocked his weapon moved towards the convoy taking aim at the cars. We surrounded him; double cocked and aimed our .30 cal-he got the message-no further incident.

4 Dec 64 – Temperature - day 70s, night 40s. On road convoy-Greek vehicles increasing to 40 or 50-difficult to handle. (Note: eventually reached over a hundred). The road from Nicosia to Kyrenia is 16 miles and travels through two Turk villages and a mountain pass.

7 Dec 64 – It’s raining like mad. The rain has brought about a change in the island-everything is green. CBC entertainers are here-saw the show last night- it was great. Entertainers are; **Gordie Tapp, Bert Nioosi Band, the Rhythm Pals**, Miss Canada (**Linda Duma**). Cast visited our camp for an hour on Sat-gave them rides in the scout cars-the Brigadier wasn’t very pleased.

11 Dec 64 – Another wet and miserable day-out patrolling-kept fairly dry.

13 Dec 64 – Your parcel arrived last night. The fellows enjoyed the Playboy calendar. The rain is still pouring down. It hasn’t rained this much in 30 years. I just had sauna-190 degrees Fahrenheit. We run in the buff from the sauna to a little outside reservoir to cool down and back to the sauna-the neighbours must get quite an eyeful.

16 Dec 64 – The weather finally broke and we had sunshine for the first time in two weeks.

17 Dec 64 – Standby troop last night-called out at 9 p.m. to intercept convoy of trucks and equipment obtained by the Greek Cypriots from Russians-returned at 10 a.m-then out at midnight-uncomfortably cold. Heard Posties found liquor in some parcels-hope mine OK.

20 Dec 64 – Tomorrow is a big day in Cyprus. One year ago all the trouble started. There is a lot of anxiety and anticipation. Each side is sure that the other will start something. The mandate has been passed for us to stay another 3 months.

21 Dec 64 –Duty troop. Xmas cheer arrived–12 beer & one carton of cigarettes each.

22 Dec 64 – Quiet. Tomorrow party with Sergeants. Christmas tree arrived.

23 Dec 64 – Once again no mail. I have just finished decorating the Christmas tree.

26 Dec 64 –On Christmas Eve we were singing Christmas carols-10 troopers appeared and invited us to their mess-then we visited the Sergeants Mess. Christmas Day-quiet. I was Orderly Officer so manned the squadron radio-had dinner by the radio-quiet with no flare ups.

27 Dec 64 – Went to the Sergeant's Mess for a few drinks-they were very potent (Green Line Specials). One hour later many of us were full of cheer.

30 Dec 64 – Quiet for past four days-tonight alerted to follow equipment being off loaded at Famagusta harbour on east coast, but then stood down-false alarm,

1 Jan 65 – At 11:00 last night we went to the Men's Mess tent and brought in the New Year, then returned to our mess to watch the movie "Dial M for Murder". Most of the day has been taken up with the New Year's Levee. **Maj Barry Rose, Lt Jim Derby** and I visited the Turks-saw Dr. Kutchuk, Turkish leader-visited two other Messes-then returned to party at our Mess.

8 Jan 65 – It is quite cold here now- another rainy period. We had a tense incident with the convoy the other day. There was an accident with two of the cars and the rear of convoy was stopped-**Sgt Patterson** radioed me of the problem-rode on the back of a Finnish motor cyclist to accident scene holding up the convoy-**Dennis Arsenault** left in charge at the front. Found tremendous strength-pulled the fender off the tire of one of the stalled vehicles, the Greeks cheered and we got on the road again. The Greeks were scared to death as we were in the Turkish controlled area and it was getting dark. I must admit I didn't cherish the thought of having to guard a convoy of frightened Greeks all night. The media took photos of **Dennis Arsenault**, a Finnish motor cyclist and me. Tomorrow switch to two weeks of Patrol duty.

14 Jan 65 – Plans for the return home under way-barrack boxes go on the 5th of March.

17 Jan 65 – The weather is cold and rainy. We have picked the gift for the Officers Mess. It will be Cypriot linen and lace-80 sets of place mats and table napkins.

22 Jan 65 –Tomorrow is our medal's parade.

24 Jan 65 – Sir Winston Churchill is dead- lowered our flags-big hassle whether to or not.

27 Jan 65 – 'Battle Efficiency' tests today-fireman's lift and the 2 mile run. Following our medals parade on Saturday, we had the Squadron photo taken.

31 Jan 65 – It's quiet around here. Today I am Duty Officer. Temperature - 60 degrees.

3 Feb 65 – We drove into a prohibited area-immediately fired upon by the Greek Cypriot soldiers-we took cover but they continued to fire upon us-moved out of range-no way out except to backtrack the way we came-I dismounted and eventually managed to talk to them and convinced them not to fire. Chief of Police of Cyprus arrived. Our Brigadier (**Wilson-Smith**) and the UN Commander, **General Thymeya** were informed. The Greek Cypriots are trying to make something big of this. I am in trouble for causing an incident. The Chief of Police ordered us to surrender our weapons-I told him where to go. He ordered his troops to take them from us. We cocked and aimed our weapons, meanwhile the squadron deployed troops in behind us- finally after 7 hours things cooled down-escorted back to camp by a UN Liaison officer.

5 Feb 65 – Well, the incident has calmed down. I had to write a letter of apology to **Superintendent Pantelidies**-Brigadier talked the Greeks out of sending me home.

6 Feb 65 - Bride (wearing wedding dress) and groom travelled on convoy this afternoon.

10 Feb 65 – We had a false alarm last night. At 10 o'clock put on 15 minutes notice to move-a Turkish invasion was expected. As I was getting ready in the quarters one of the other troop leaders was priming grenades on his bed- We armed ourselves to the teeth-Out all night- at 2 o'clock got word that there was no Turkish invasion, instead the Greek Cypriots were expected to attack the Turk Cypriots. Nothing occurred. Cold and rainy.

15 Feb 65 –The flag raising ceremony to replace the Red Ensign with the new Canadian flag (Red Maple Leaf) was held on Monday. The Canadian Guards were on parade-Canadian High Commissioner read a Proclamation. We were all proud of the new flag.

17 Mar 65 – Did 9 mile march

6 Mar 65 –Greek Cypriots brought in 29 Russian tanks (T 33s). We are off to find them.

7 Mar 65 – We were out all night until 9 a.m. We followed the tanks to their new home base.

8 Mar 65 – Temperate-70s. **Lt Clive Milner** and **Capt Bob Billings** writing Capt to Maj exams.

15 Mar 65 –Sunny during the day-chilly at nights. I write the Lt to Capt exams on the 26th.

30 Mar 65 – Last letter. The RCD are here; my troop was not replaced so we continue to patrol- also involved in the Turkish rotation, it went OK. We leave Nicosia at 1 p.m. Friday arrive Calgary 7 a.m. Saturday, April 10-clear customs at the airport-at Sarcee drill hall an hour for pay, etc. Looking forward to being home with you and Elizabeth. (Note: we were 12 hrs late)

Your Dispatches

Sandy and I moved from Prince George on July 15 this year. We decided that now since we have both retired that we could avoid the harsh winters in Prince George by moving to Vancouver Island where we can golf all year round.

There is mention in the newsletter requesting old newsletters. I'm sure I have a few so I'll dig around and see what I can find. I also have some great slides and photos from Ft. Beausejour days 1964 to 1968. If anyone is interested I can get them into my computer and e-mail them.

Thanks to you and all the others for your hard work in organizing the newsletter.

Best regards David Coverdale

Dave – We hope you find those Newsletters and we can always use more pictures – especially if you can identify the people and locations (HINT!) - Ed



*During a trip to England and France in August/September last year, my wife and I took the opportunity to attend the September 14 wedding of an old and dear friend, **John Doble**, the last 17th/21st Lancer exchange officer that the Regiment had in Iserlohn, Germany. After his tour with the Strathcona's, John took his release from the British Army and entered the Foreign Service.*

Among his many postings, which included several in southern Africa, was a tour as British Consul-General for Western Canada, stationed in Edmonton. Happily, his time there overlapped with my time as CO in Calgary from 1985 to 1987, so we were able to get together on a few occasions.

After several years of being reacquainted with the bachelor life, John decided to try marriage again. Although both John and his new bride, Susan, live in Devon in southern England, the wedding was held in northern England, on the outskirts of Preston

in Lancashire, in an old church for which one of Sue's ancestors had laid the cornerstone.

I include photographic evidence of the event for all those who remember John from his days with the Strathcona's.

John Boileau

Thanks, John. Tracking down all the former Lancer exchange officers might be a good exercise for some Junior Officer - Ed



John Doble and his new bride, **Sue**, prepare to leave the church in a horse-drawn coach after their wedding on Sept 14, 2009

Your Dispatches...continued

When Bonnie and I moved East, one of the challenges we brought with us was to locate “**Perky**” **Perkins** grave site and see if it needed any special attention. Sounded easy: after retirement as Officer Commanding Meaford AFV Range, **Major Perkins** lived in Clarksburg, Ontario, near Meaford. He had a beautiful home there on the river, as well as an orchard that was part of his retirement business: “Perkins Fine Foods”.

Perkins passed away at Meaford General Hospital on July 16, 1986. Everyone we talked who had known Perkins said that he was buried in nearby Thornbury Cemetery. Bonnie went to Thornbury, visited the local cemetery and met the caretaker. He had known Perkins and stated that he was not there. He took Bonnie to the home where Perkins had lived and introduced her to the current owners. He thought that Perkins’ remains might have been shipped to the family plot at Stanstead, in Quebec. We did learn from the Ferguson Funeral Home, Meaford, that Perkins was cremated and the remains handed to “the family”, i.e. his wife. They had no knowledge of their final disposition. He is not in his family plot in Crystal Lake Cemetery, Stanstead, Quebec, where his parents, **Bessie Lyons** and **Joseph Perkins** are buried along with another **Edward Perkins** circa 1911 - we presume that to be his grandfather. He is not on any of the cemetery registers in Ontario or Quebec. After chasing many leads, including Stanstead College that he had attended as a young man – sadly, their records suffer from loses in fires over the years – and the Stanstead Historical Society; we were ready to conclude that his



Major Edward James “Perky” Perkins, DSO, CD
Service No. ZD - 126
Born: 6 November 1917 at Rock Island/Stanstead,
Quebec
Died: 16 July 1986, Meaford General Hospital
Meaford, Ontario
Cremation, Ferguson Funeral Home, Meaford
Memorial Service at St. George’s Anglican Church
Clarksburg, Ontario, July 23, 1986
Interred, Worthington Park, CFB Borden

ashes had been scattered. If so, we guessed that they would have been scattered either in the river at home or in his orchard, places that he must have loved. I spoke to **Major John Fisher** - a Forester in Barrie – about our search for Perkins. He responded: “He’s got to be at Borden!” We had no idea that he could be at Borden – almost in our backyard – but it seems that Worthington Park, final resting place of **General Worthington**, father of the Canadian Armoured Corps, is consecrated ground, available to any member of Canadian Armour who wishes to have his/her ashes placed there.

We called **LCol Stu Beaton**, curator of the Base Borden Museum, who told us: “We have him here! There is a small brass plaque with Perkins name (undated) on it in the Museum Chapel. That can’t be there unless he’s in the Park!” We had found him.

It was an interesting search and many people were helpful along the way. We even managed to fill in Perkins birth date from the Regimental Museum in Calgary. We also ran across a number of interesting documents that may add

to our knowledge of Perkins, the man. Although some of these may already exist in the Regimental archives, I will send them in for the record along with pictures of the Borden plaque and his home in Clarksburg. I also wonder if it might be meaningful to consider a more permanent memorial to Perkins such as a small stone in Worthington Park?

Murray Cayley, January 15, 2010

Good hunting, Murray and Bonnie. The papers will be a welcome addition to the archives and we’ll pass on your suggestion of a marker in Worthington Park to the Regimental Society. - Ed



My uncle, **Sgt. G.F. Johnson** (U.S. Bronze Star, Mentioned in Dispatches), served with the regiment during WWII. I am working on what will hopefully be the definitive WWII photo album of Lord Strathcona’s Horse (RC). I welcome direct contact from anyone willing to contribute photos taken during the years 1936-1946. With over 2000 digital photos assembled, the challenge has been to put names to the many faces. Interviews with over 100 veterans have filled in many blanks but there are photos where the identities have stumped all. The five men in the photo are all unknown, except for the man on the lower left whose first name may be Don. The photo was taken near Beaumont Barracks in Aldershot, England, 1941.

Any help from readers to identify these men would be greatly

Your Dispatches...continued



appreciated. Readers may contact Patrick directly at:
patrick.johnson@sympatico.ca

Thanks so much! and Happy New Year!

Patrick

Hopefully you will hear from some of the Regimental family who will recognize one of more of the people in the picture, Patrick, and who may be able to help you with your collection. Happy New year to you too! - Ed



Hello Sir:

Several months ago, you responded to an email which I had sent regarding a few questions I have concerning the June 2010 reunion.

Thank you for that. I am sorry that I didn't get back to you immediately. Unfortunately, some unforeseen circumstances took my attention in another direction until this time.

And now to the purpose of my email.

First, my father will not be attending the reunion as he passed away November 22, 2006. He would have loved to have been there. All through my life I heard story after story of his

experiences as a soldier in WWII. He told of the camaraderie and the good things. He could always find something positive and hopeful in the most devastating of situations.

Often I heard about Lord Strathcona and how he would love to be able to "hook up with a few of them just one more time". Just before his death, he gifted me with the pin that he wore in his uniform's hat (tam??) as well as his zippered log book. How special I feel since he does have other children.

Secondly, I ask if you know if it is possible to learn if there is anyone of his platoon still alive. I have my doubts, though, as Dad would be 91 if he were still alive. But, on the chance that there is, I would like to contact them. Is that possible?

Sincerely

Bonnie Russell

PS. All the best with your plans and the Reunion, itself.

Bonnie, if you can find any reference in his log book to the squadrons or troops your father served with, along with any dates, we'll be happy to pass it on to the Association chapters and also put it in the next Newsletter. They may tweak someone's memory. - Ed



Lord Strathcona's Horse
(Royal Canadians)
Regimental Society Newsletter

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Your Dispatches...continued

As usual, an excellent publication which is read from cover to cover. Regt Assn (AB Branch):

I note a sign on page 4 being pointed at by “Slider” Welch --One of our daughters regularly visits Water Valley Ranch where she and her sister have a number of horses--is he really out there? We worked together in Kingston and also won an armoured corps bonspiel in 1980-81 in Petawawa.

In 1964, Col Ian MacD Grant took CAPTAINS Carew and Collett out to a splendid dinner in Washington, DC when we were visiting with the Cdn Army Staff College. He was a tremendously loyal regimental officer and a great Strathcona.

Wally Heinrich and I took a draft of “Y” Sqn (PANDASQN) to Petawawa in Dec 51 (just before Christmas). It later became D Sqn and went to Germany in the fall under Maj Norm Buckingham.

Wally and I also served together in Korea.

Diane and I noted the letter from (Eileen) (nee Lee) Childs (nee Curtis). Lee was a super Lt (N/S) in the 1952 53 era. She is remembered with great affection. A Revelstoke gal.

The letter from PA Daniel regarding the pay Sgt reminded me of another incident regarding a nameless subaltern in Korea who appeared at a nameless tank at night whose crew had noticed “lights in the valley” about 1000 yards ahead of their position. The Lt said “Cover those lights with your Sten Gun” and the casual response was “What range would you like me to set on it ,sir?” The Lt departed.

I will be sending a donation under separate cover.

Perseverance PH Carew

PS: Somewhere I read that you were wondering when the newsletter was first published in its present form. I have pretty well all of them including Vol 1, No.2 September 1986 in which the CO (then John Boileau) refers to “the second number of the Strathcona Newsletter”.

I seem to recall a newspaper type letter published many years before; but it was through RJT “Dick” Blockberger’s good offices that we took a big step forward.

Thanks for the letter, Pat, and thanks in advance for the donation. We look forward to any and all donations to the Newsletter. The search is still on for Vol 1 No. 1 of the Newsletter in its current format. We found a large number of the original Newsletters that were published in Winnipeg by the Association. - Ed



Yesterday we attended the Remembrance Sunday service at Christ Church Cathedral here in Victoria. Prince Charles was wearing his Strathcona Regimental tie which was good to see since he is the Colonel -in- Chief of so many

Regiments. I was the only Strathcona present as far as I could tell and was also wearing my Regimental tie. As we were on the aisle I was able to catch Prince Charles’ eye, he recognized the tie, and gave me a smile and a nod.

In today’s Globe and Mail British Columbia section there is a picture of the Prince outside the Cathedral and it shows off, in colour, our Regimental tie. Perseverance

Barry Rose

Good to hear from you, Barry. You were not alone at that church service actually. The Regiment was represented by the Adjutant, SSM HQ Sqn, and five others including Kathy Batty, the lady who puts the Newsletter together. This was in response to a last minute invitation from the Royal Tour organizers. You probably missed the Regimental representatives because they were taken aside right after the service for a private meeting with our Colonel-in-Chief. That was the only opportunity for HRH to meet with Regimental personnel during his visit to Canada, in spite of requests made by his staff. Prince Charles has advised the Colonel of the Regiment that on his next visit to Canada he will do everything possible to have Alberta included in his itinerary. Unfortunately visits by the heir to the throne are closely controlled in Ottawa so he cannot really pick and choose the locations he visits. When meeting with our group, Prince Charles pointed out that he was wearing the Regimental tie. A Royal protest against his handlers perhaps? - Ed



Photo courtesy of Globe British Columbia

Extracts From and Reflections on Anglo Boer War 1899 – 1902, Lord Strathcona's Horse Capt RBE Clark, MMM, CD (Ret)

Submitted By Murray Cayley

Our last installment reviewed the "White Flag Incident" on July 1, 1900 and introduced some new material to Nobby's work. We now pick up the story a week later and cover events including Richardson's heroic rescue under fire of a wounded McArthur.

On the 6th of July, the Strathcona's were honoured in providing an escort for **Sir Redvers Buller** from Standerton to Heidelberg and on to Johannesburg. On the 11th of July **Lt. General C.F. Clery**, 2nd Division, requested support against **Ben Viljoen's** Commando Force which had been harassing Buller's force from Heidelberg to Standerton. Steele placed a Squadron under his personal command in support of his guns. Attached to a troop from "A" Squadron was **Major Sangmeister** of the Border Mounted Rifles. During the advance, with Strathcona's at the advance guard, the column came under fire from Boer sharpshooters entrenched in a Kopje known as One Tree Hill. Sangmeister ordered his troops to charge the position in a somewhat heroic but very foolish manner. On reaching the top of the hill they found a strong Boer Commando Force waiting for them. Trooper Robinson and Dodd were wounded. Five soldiers, including Major Sangmeister had their horses shot and were taken prisoner. The feud continued to Holgafontein where the Boers, about 800 strong, had taken up defensive positions along a three mile stretch of kopje. Included in their defences were four artillery guns and a Pom Pom. In addition, they had set fire to the veld as an obscurant. Lt. General Clery brought up a battery of howitzers and a couple of field pieces. Strathcona's, again in support of the guns, came under heavy fire from a Boer position located near a kraal but suffered no casualties. On the 30th of July, the Strathcona's Regiment was ordered to join Sir Redvers Buller at Perdekop and arrived on the 3rd of August. The time between the 3rd and 7th of August was spent in preparing for Sir Redvers Buller's advance northward in which Strathcona's Horse, as part of the Third Mounted Brigade, was to play an important part.

"While the Regiment was still at sea, Lord Strathcona had asked the Militia Department to recruit fifty men and one lieutenant, with horses and equipment, to serve as reinforcements. Agar Adamson was placed in charge of shepherding the reinforcements to South Africa. Seventeen of the men were recruited in eastern Canada, mostly in Ontario. Temporarily attached to the South Africa Light Horse, the detachment joined the Natal Field Force on 2 July. On July 16, six weeks after arriving in South Africa, Adamson and his men at last joined the Strathcona's. "Have been given my draft as a separate command," he wrote in delight. With the rest of the regiment, he was to do "all the advance and flanking work for Dundonald's column. "The enemy snipe at us every day."

While they waited at Standerton for orders, the Canadian reinforcements took their turn at outpost and patrol duty. They first came under fire on 5 July. The engagement began soon after a detachment of men from Lieutenant Adamson's and Lieutenant Harper's troops, about thirty-eight Canadians in all, left Standerton as the advance guard of the South African Light Horse. Small, scattered parties of Boers soon emerged on the horizon, but vanished as the Light Horse approached. Suspecting a trap, the Light Horse halted and followed a plan devised by Adamson. The Canadians were to go forward in extended order, draw the Boers' fire, then withdraw, while the Light Horse divided and took up positions on the flanks, ready to surround the Boers should they pursue Adamson's men.

The plan might have worked had its timing and movements been coordinated and had it had more disciplined leadership. As it was, Adamson's troop, having spotted the Boers on the horizon, galloped forward under fire to within a thousand yards of their opponents, then dismounted, leaving their horses behind unattended and vulnerable. The Boers also had a plan not unlike Adamson's, but they were more disciplined. As the Boers retreated slowly Adamson's men pursued them, far too quickly and recklessly, despite a growing crossfire from the front and flank. Unfortunately, when the Canadian troops stopped they were only about three hundred yards from their opponents, completely out of touch with their supports and almost surrounded.

Continued On Page 18

Continued from Page 17

Separated from one another and with no orders from Adamson, or any idea of where he was, the men fled in all directions. In the melee three of Adamson's men were severely wounded: Private George A.A. Sparkes, a close friend of Adamson; Private Jonathan McGougall; and Private Alex McArthur, who had been shot in the arm and hip. Seeing McArthur wounded and without a horse, Sergeant Arthur H.L. Richardson rode back on a wounded horse under a heavy cross fire, picked up McArthur, and brought him to safety, an act which earned him a Victoria Cross. When they withdrew, McArthur and McDougall were left at a Boer farmhouse under a white flag.

"The skirmish had been an unfortunate and costly failure. Adamson never makes clear why the Light Horse failed to return to trap the Boers. Although under fire all day and greatly outnumbered, Adamson had not lost a single man, other than the two who were taken prisoner. Moreover, he had brought back all his wounded. "Richardson carried McArthur out of range on his own horse," Adamson reported. "I have forwarded an account of the action to headquarters. It would be a great thing if we could get him a V.C. for Canada, the Strathcona's and the Mounted Police to which he belongs."

Born in Southport, England, Richardson was brought up in Liverpool. When he was twenty-one years old, he came to Canada where he worked as a rancher prior to joining the North-West Mounted Police. A letter from the assistant adjutant of the RCMP, on March 3, 1970 to Dick Malott, still a major in the Canadian Forces but later to be the chief curator of collections for the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, stated that Richardson's "Previous occupation was shown as a dentist." This hardly seems credible, but it is no more strange than the mystery and circumstances surrounding his life later on. At the outbreak of war, he took 'leave' from the force to join the Canadian army. After the war, Richardson returned to serve with the Mounties, but in 1907 was forced to retire due to poor health and was made town constable of Indian Head, Sask. However, for both financial and health reasons, he lost that job and for some time depended on the welfare of the townsfolk. During this time he married and had a daughter.

In 1908, he returned to Liverpool. That much is known as fact, but the next sixteen years of his life are clouded in mystery. Apparently his wife died around 1910. *The Liverpool Post and Mercury* of December 16, 1932 described Richardson as the "Shy V.C." and reported that he had worked as "a tramway ganger, cinema attendant and so on, unknown to his relatives who believed him to be dead." That a message to that effect had been sent to his mother from a nurse in Montreal only deepens the mystery. Apparently Richardson again fell on hard times and went into seclusion until 1924 when, as the newspaper report continues, "There was a happy reunion between the long-lost V.C. and his mother and eldest brother." Richardson later found employment with the Edge-lane tram depot as a foreman.

Although Richardson preferred seclusion, a namesake had been impersonating him in Scotland, where he was feted and honoured wherever he went. This imposter even had the effrontery to attend a garden party for VC holders hosted by King George V at Buckingham Palace. His role as a fake was not discovered until after the real Arthur Richardson VC died in Millroad Hospital, Liverpool, and was buried with full military honours on December 15, 1923."

Adamson himself had won a mention in the despatches. "My nerves today are a bit trying and feel very restless," he wrote the day after the engagement. Adamson seems to have drawn from the experience a realization of just how difficult this war would be. "The whole country is full of Boers and spies, all orders are issued only a quarter-hour before they are required," he wrote. "Nor did all the spies wear moustaches." The dangerous and lonely days and nights followed each other and more and more often Adamson allowed the strain to show in letters that he wrote to his wife, Mable.

A Cambridge educated man about Ottawa, Adamson went out to South Africa with the Regiment's reinforcements, and did not join the Regiment until July. His distain for Steele's manners extended to his brother officers, whom he saw as a mixed lot. What they thought of him is not clear, but they were unlikely to have shared his affection for Hutton, or his exalted opinion of the officers of the South African Light Horse, with whom he had served for a month while on his way to join his regiment.

“Although Adamson’s correspondence hinted at regimental “dirty linen” and dark deeds condoned by Steele, Adamson’s specific charges against his Commanding Officer are difficult to confirm or deny in the absence of more evidence. That men suffered from bad boots was scarcely the fault of Steele. And his refusal to permit men to ride on the wagons may have been an effort to save the animals, upon which the battalion depended for its safety. Adamson also alleged that Steele ordered a dozen men suffering from piles to gallop flat out for five miles, his cure being to burst them and make them bleed. This seems an uncharacteristically sadistic act, if indeed it occurred. Adamson, who recounted this story to his sons much later, may have attributed the order to the wrong source. Medical prescription was outside of the normal purview of the Commanding Officer, and no evidence seems to exist to suggest that Steele was in the habit of usurping the authority of the medical officer. Some of the men, however, found the Medical Officer, Captain C.B. Keenan, unsympathetic and callous.

Steele, of course, was no saint. His language could be strong, even offensive to Adamson’s sensibilities, and his punishments severe. Existing evidence, however, does not suggest a sadistic or insensitive man, but one whom his men regarded as the father of “a happy military family,” an opinion shared by the men in Adamson’s troop.”

In the next issue, we move to The Northern Campaign and Lydenburg.

Welcome to Strathconas.Ca

The Official Website of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians)

Lost Trails

Summer/Fall 2009 Newsletters and Reunion Information which have been returned

Boudreau JE - Calgary AB	Merritt JA - Edmonton AB
Burger JD - White Rock BC	Milne SC - Gladstone MB
Chartrand NL - Windsor ON	Nemeth MA - Welland ON
Gallant OJ - Vulcan AB	Noftall AW - Morinville AB
Hawkins DA - Calgary AB	Redmond TG - Cambridge ON
Jordison L - Edmonton AB	Somerset SJ - Langley BC
Lussier JG - Farnham QC	Whitford W - Ashmount AB
MacKenzie C - Kindersley SK	

LAST TRUMPET CALL



ANLEY, Philip 16 November, 2009 St. Albert AB

COLL, Robert (Bob) 30 September, 2009 Calgary AB

FINCH, William (Bill) 26 October, 2009 Calgary AB

HAUGHTON, Kenneth H Age 86, 12 December, 2009 London ON

L'HEUREUX, Richard 8 January, 2010 Suffield AB

MAY, Bill Age 89, 28 January, 2010 Calgary AB

SMYTH, Edward J Age 80, 23 December, 2009 Grand Prairie AB

WAGG, "Doc" Age 68, 12 September, 2009 Acme AB

WALLACE, Jack Age 73, 20 January, 2010, Calgary AB

In Loving Memory of Wives

CLARK, Jeanette (*RSM RBE Clark*), Age 81, 19 January 2010, Calgary AB

KAUFMAN, Malone (*Lawrence*), October 2009, Windsor ON

Our apologies for lack of details in some cases