

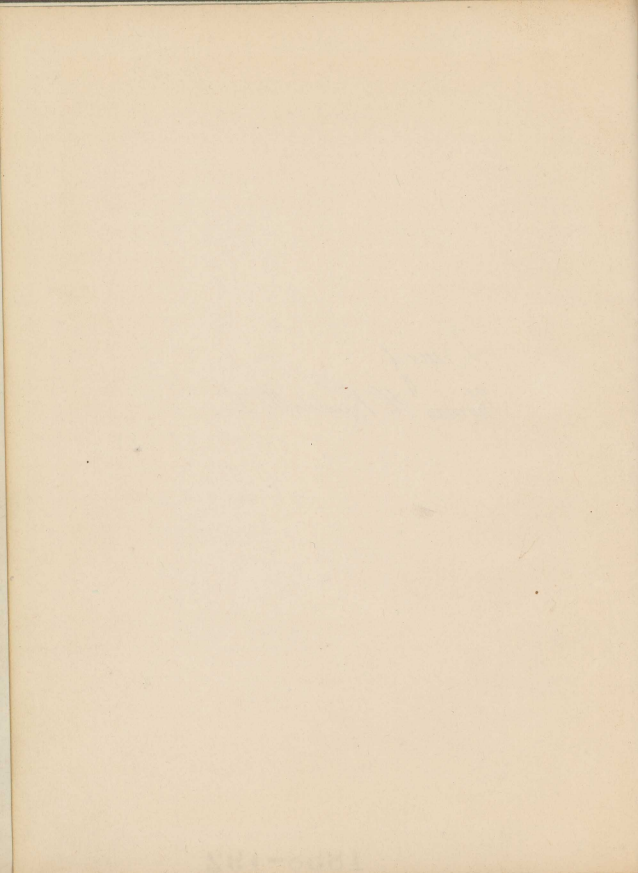
DIARY

DEC. 23, 1941 — MAY 1, 1943



Diary  
Thomas H. Raddall II

1858-192



Tuesday, Dec 23/41 (continued). War news: Japs have landed on Wake Island & claim to have overcome the small U.S. Marine garrison. Jap advance down Malaya is halted by stiff fighting in the Perak valley. Jap air raid on Rangoon beaten off, with 9 bombers & 1 fighter shot down, others damaged.

Japs continue to land troops in Luzon, Philippines, where heavy fighting continues. At Hong Kong the battered British garrison holds on; they have intermittent radio communication with Chungking; last report said Canadian casualties heavy; Brigadier Gen. Lawton & a Col. Hennessy among the killed. In Libya, Gen Rommel's Italo-German army seems to be making a stand at Benghazi. British columns have cut his line to Tripoli & are established on the south shore of Gulf of Sidra. The strange quiet over Britain continues. Very little air activity. Calm before storm?

Roosevelt & Churchill & their respective staffs are deep in conference at Washington.

Wednesday, Dec 24/41 Rain & fog. Snow gone by night. The town fathers decreed that no "bell-snickling" was to be done after 9 p.m.; & this & the rain, gave us the smallest number of Christmas Eve beggars for years. We let the kids stay up & watch us decorate the Christmas tree. About dark we heard on the radio the voices of Roosevelt & Churchill, speaking from the White House portico on the occasion of the lighting of the big Christmas tree in the grounds, witnessed by 30,000 people. Both men spoke of the gravity of the war, & the hard

years ahead, & Churchill ended with a fine Elizabethan ~~and~~  
"and so in God's mercy a happy Christmas to you all."

Christmas, 1941. Mild. Fog. Mud. Not quite so much outdoor lighting displays as in other years but plenty to delight the kids last night. Lights arranged in the universal V symbol are most popular. The crew of the "Beaver", lying at Thompson's wharf, rigged a Christmas tree, lights & all, on their foremast head. This, with the red-white & blue signal & identification lights below, made a fine little bit of colour in the dark of the waterfront. The Freemans and Aunt Marie Bell had dinner with us, & late in the afternoon there was an old-time gathering of the Freeman-Dunlop clan at Hugh Dunlop's with a buffet supper at 8 p.m. The kids nearly tore the house down (especially our Tommy, and Jack Dunlop) and peppery old Uncle Hugh found jittersy old Aunt Marie smoking cigarettes and roared that "any woman that would sit in the presence of a man and smoke cigarettes ought to be kicked to hell outdoors", but all went well, & there was the usual distribution of gifts after supper, & then home.

War news: Hong Kong fell this morning. The garrison after a most gallant resistance were finally cut off from their water supply & obliged to surrender. — 16,000 officers & men. In Malaya, British lines seem to be holding. At Manila, Japanese pressure from the north of Luzon becomes increasingly grave. In Libya, the British are in Benghazi. The

German forces under Rommel appear to have made good their escape into Tripoli, leaving the Italians to their fate.

A small Free French naval force under Admiral Muselier has seized St. Pierre & Miquelon & a plebiscite today shows roughly 98% of the population in favour of De Gaulle. But this evening Washington issued a sharp rebuke, saying that the U.S. had not been consulted, & demanding of Canada what she intends to do about it. A storm in a tea-cup. London & Ottawa claim it was all a surprise to them.

Friday, Dec. 26/41 At 1:30 p.m. we heard Winston Churchill speaking in the Senate Chamber in Washington to the U.S. Senate & House of Representatives in joint (unofficial) session. They gave him a tremendous ovation. Churchill was in his best form, a fighting speech that was thrilling to hear, & it thrilled his audience in the Capitol to cheers that jarred the microphones again & again. Nothing can exceed the hatred which Churchill can put into the word "Nazi" or "Hitler", whom he usually calls "that wicked man", or the contempt with which he can say "the boastful Mussolini, that jackal". He closed with an earnest appeal that U.S. & the British Empire cooperate on foreign policy after this was — "walk together in majesty, justice & peace".

War news: Japs in Luzon have established a good base at Lingayen, have landed large forces well supplied with tanks,

artillery & aircraft, & are pressing MacArthur's U.S.-Filipino army very hard. With the occupation of Nanking, the capital, Japs now possess most of British North Borneo. No change in Malaya. Nothing new from Libya, or Russia, where the German rearwards have stiffened. Strong German forces are attacking Sebastopol.

Saturday, Dec 27/41 A grey day. Temperature about freezing. Went rabbit hunting at Port Mouton with Parker & Smith this afternoon. I got six.

While commodity prices are now "fixed", we are in fact getting less in quantity & quality for the "fixed price". Tinned fruit, vegetables etc, sell for the same price per can, but the cans are smaller. And so on. Particularly we notice gasoline, now  $36\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per gallon for ethyl, and  $34\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ for plain. It is of such poor quality that it will scarcely start a car after a snap of zero <sup>weather</sup>, & even new cars feel the lack of "pep". Brent Smith says he gets 13 miles per gallon now, where last year he got 20; his car is a two-year-old Pontiac in good condition. Bad gas takes as much tank space as good gas. This looks like profiteering.

Sunday, Dec 28/41 Another grey day. Temp about 32°, mild, damp, muddy. No war news except that Japs are increasing pressure in the Philippines & Borneo, pausing in Malaya, & have landed some parachute troops in Sumatra. <sup>(LATER ANSWERED)</sup> Rumours of German troops pouring through France towards Spain. British army & navy forces have carried out another large raid on the Norwegian coast.



Tonight a pleasant chat at Johnson's with the Wickwires & Rev. Capt George Macleod & his wife. Macleod, former U.C. minister here, is now a chaplain in the R.C.A.F., stationed at Halifax in the big new embarkation camp at Willow Park. He said that the troop convoy which reached England yesterday contained 2500 airmen, products of the Empire Training Scheme, all of whom passed through his camp. Says the camp is now being further extended to accommodate about 5000.

Monday, Dec. 29/41. Another grey day. Two more corvettes have arrived, rusty & sea-worn, for overhaul here. The sailors lost no time in getting small Christmas trees to hoist to their mast heads. Corvette "Cobalt" & converted yacht "Beaver" are still here.

No special war news. Australia is angry over the poor management in Malaya, & there continues bitter comment on Britain's failure to send adequate forces to the East while using Australians in the tough battles in Crete, Greece & Libya. On Saturday, Australia's P.M., John Curtin, told the Melbourne "Herald" — "We refuse to accept the dictum that the Pacific struggle is a subordinate segment. I make it clear that Australia looks to America, free from any pangs about our traditional links of friendship to Britain."

All this means, I think, the withdrawal of Australian troops and warships from Britain & the Mediterranean.

(NOTE: This was done. See what happened in Libya in June '42, after the experienced & hard-fighting Aussies had gone home.)

Tuesday, Dec 30/41 Sunny & cold, delightful after so many dull damp days. At 3 p.m. we heard broadcast of Winston Churchill's arrival at the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa amid tumultuous cheers, & then his address to the joint Commons and Senate. He was not in his top form, I suppose the whole thing was rather an anticlimax after Washington; but even in second gear Churchill is vital & gripping. He praised Canada's part in the war, of course, & gave a resumé of the trials of the past 2 years, telling how after Dunkirk the French generals came to the French cabinet at Bordeaux and said "In 3 weeks the Germans will have wrung the neck of Britain like the neck of a chicken". Churchill added quickly "Some chicken!" (laughter) "Some neck!" (pandemonium). He went on to say that the British were "a tough lot", & pointed out that not once had we complained of Nazi methods of warfare. "If they want to play rough, we can play rough too!"

All through his address there was terrific applause at each point, & beneath the clapping & cheering was a rolling thunder caused by members beating hands on their desk lids - an old Ottawa custom, we were told. He delighted the Quebec members by giving part of his address in fluent & sonorous French.

He returns to Washington tomorrow.

War news: Japs have been savagely bombing Manila ever since it was declared an open city two days ago, & raining leaflets urging the Filipinos to disband their regiments.

Russians have made a surprise leap into the Crimea & seized Kertch and Feodosia.

(There is also the big electro-lit V sign on the Town Hall facade)  
(This V-sign ceased to be lit, on A.R.P. orders, about June 1942) ↓

Our town hall presents a much-decorated appearance now. Every night there is a blaze of light in the assembly hall, where the I.O.D.C. ladies have their club for service men; and the usual huge Xmas tree has been set up, ablaze with coloured lights, on the lawn. In front of the 1914-18 war memorial are the Vetscraft wreaths laid there last Remembrance Day, a little faded now. Also on the lawn is the wire cage set up to hold contributions of aluminium; it is emptied every few days but there are always a number of old pots & pans within. Last Sunday, to focus attention on the metal salvage drive, the old German field gun which has stood in Fort Park since 1919 was dragged by a team of oxen through the streets & then to Thompson Bros. foundry to be melted down. Unfortunately they can't use it! But the gun disappeared, never to be seen again.

Wednesday, Dec 31/41 A lovely sunny day & a clear moonlit night. Still no snow. Temp tonight about 30°. Our friends the Feinots, Parkers, Johnsons, Murrays, Macdonalds, Rogers Inness's, Theiss's, decided to hold the usual New Year's Eve party. I wasn't keen, for it seemed to me a poor time for festivity & a waste of money. However we went - cocktails & hors d'oeuvres at Parker's, a movie show at 9 p.m. & then on to Feinot's where we finished out the evening at 2 a.m. The party was much more sedate than in other years, though Theiss got tight & fell & cut his face quite badly.

New Year's Day, 1942. A grey day. Temp about 30°. Walked to Gull Island this afternoon with Rev. Nicholson. Took

Eddih & the kids to Milton at 5 p.m. & had dinner with the Freemans, roast chicken & all the fixings, & a birth-day cake complete with candles, for Eddih.

War news: Japs are closing in on Manila. Russians still advancing slowly. Hitler, after the usual bombastic radio broadcast to his people, has gone to take charge on the Russian front.

Friday Jan. 2, 1942 Manila has fallen. U.S. troops still hold the fortresses of Corregidor & other places controlling Manila Bay. In Malaya, the Japs have got a complete hold on Ipoh, the important tin mining town.

Admiralty announced 2 German & 1 Italian submarines sunk in attacks on our fleet & transport services in Libya. Whenever the Admiralty relaxes its rigid silence on submarine sinkings, we recognise it as a bad sign, for an admission of British loss is sure to follow. And the bad news followed promptly — the cruiser "Septent" & destroyer "Kandahar" lost off Libya.

On land in Libya, our forces have stormed Bardia, cut off by Auchinleck's swift leap to the Gulf of Sidra, taking 1000 German & 4000 Italian prisoners, & releasing 1200 British prisoners.

Saturday, Jan 3/42 Lovely sunny day. Mild. No snow yet. Went rabbit-hunting at Timber Island Lake this afternoon with Parker, Smith, Ed. Parker, Ralph Johnson & V. Ratchford. I got top score — 7. Dinner at Hector

Dunlop's, with the Johnsons, Parkers, Williams. Charlie Williams, in the Mersey Co.'s steamer "Markland" is back in Liverpool after seven months in North Atlantic convoys. Didn't see a German plane or torpedos, though his west-bound convoy, two or three weeks ago, was scattered by gales, & "Markland" came about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way across entirely alone. He made one trip to London, north-abouts, says the war-channel down England's east coast is littered with wrecks. "Markland" now carries in addition to her 4" low angle gun, a Bofors anti-aircraft gun. The 4" is manned by naval gunners, the Bofors by 3 soldiers - all very quaint aboard a merchant steamer.

War news: Again the Admiralty announces 3 German subs sunk - this time in a running 5-day battle with a North Atlantic convoy. Again it proves to be the sugar on a pill. Lost in the same affair were 3 merchant ships, a small auxiliary aircraft carrier "Audacity" (a German steamer captured & converted for convoy protection work) and one of the former American destroyers turned over to Britain, the "Stanley".

Yesterday in Washington was signed a grand alliance of nations at war with the Axis powers. The U.S., Britain, Russia & China are the chief pillars, but including the 4 British dominions and India there are 26 signatories.

General Wavell has been made commander of all British land forces in the far East, together with Dutch & American troops in that area. Admiral Hart, U.S.N., is to command all naval forces from U.S., British & Dutch - in the Pacific.

Today, for A.R.P. purposes, our town council provided each

householder with enough sand to fill a bucket. It was delivered from door to door by trucks. This is a step in advance of most places including Halifax, where the householder is requested to buy sand for himself & consequently gets none. (I kept my hod full of sand in the cellar till the summer of 1944, then threw it out.)

Tuesday, Jan. 6/42. Sunny & cold, with snow squalls. Drove to Beech Hill with Parson Nicholson this afternoon, & walked 3 or 4 miles up a tote road to visit the lumber camp of George Brand, a young New Brunswicker. He is cutting a fine lot of timber - hemlock, spruce & yellow birch. Some of the hemlock are quite big. We counted the rings on one stump, 230; at the butt the log was 36" diameter. They go 60 feet without a limb in some cases. Brand says there is a heavy demand for piling & for lumber & pulpwood. He pays his men \$2.00 a cord & charges 75¢ a day board. Can't get men. The only labour available for lumber camps is old men, tramps & boys of 16 or 17. We had a good supper of baked beans, potato scallop & brown bread & walked out to the car with Brand. Just enough snow to whiten the woods; water everywhere; the tote road was a running stream.

I missed hearing Roosevelt's address, which was broadcast this afternoon. He says the U.S. will spend 59 billion dollars on armament in 1942, & will produce among other things 60,000 planes (in 1943, 125,000 planes.) It was a fighting speech which won't make good reading in Axis countries.

Manufacture of motor cars for civilian use is to cease in Canada on March 31st. next.

Wednesday, Jan. 7/42. Japs steadily advancing on Singapore & occupying more of Borneo. MacArthur's army still holds its hill positions NW of Manila, & Japs are heavily bombing the fortress island of Corregidor. In Libya, Rommel has resumed his retreat towards Tripoli in spite of our claims repeated on news broadcasts & in newspapers over the world, to have him "hemmed in." Total prisoners taken in this ~~the~~ (winter 1941-42) campaign in Libya is 20,000, with about 7000 still holding out at Halfaya Pass near the Egyptian border.

Chinese claim to have defeated a Jap advance on Changsha. Their third big victory at this place. The trouble with Chinese (& Russian) victories is that they exaggerate so much & so often that you take a real success with a grain of salt. But after our grand announcements of "smashing" victory in Libya, & in the light of the meagre results, perhaps we British are just as bad.

Friday, Jan. 9/42. Cold weather yesterday & today. 10° below zero last night. Snow this afternoon.

War news: In Malaya our forces have suffered another defeat, with severe loss, & Japs claim the capture of Kuala Lumpur, with its important rail & road junctions & airdrome.

In Russia the Germans are still retreating slowly to their winter lines, fighting stiff rearguard actions. German prisoners seen by British newsmen were poorly clad & suffering severely from cold. In Germany, civilians have been ordered to give up spare woollens & all furs, for the army in Russia. All of which points to the

now obvious fact that Hitler had expected a complete conquest of Russia by autumn, had made no preparation for a winter campaign. "All quiet" continues on the so-called Western Front, British and Germans making light sporadic air raids, no more.  
British light cruiser "Galatea" has been sunk by submarine off Egypt.

Saturday Jan. 10/42 Snow fell all day, slowly in big flakes. Temp. about 25°. Tonight the sky is clear & all things outdoors are white and soft and beautiful.

War news: In Libya, Rommel is retreating into Tripoli, first running down & destroying or capturing the East Kent (Buff) Regt, which tried to stop him. Our forces are still trying to overcome the garrisons of Sollum & Halfaya Pass, far in our own rear. German reinforcements are pouring into Tripoli & it looks as if Auchinleck will have to acknowledge failure in his attempt to destroy Rommel & withdraw towards Egypt for his own safety. Malta is being attacked by aircraft day & night.

In Malaya the Japs are now using 10 and 14-ton tanks, as well as light tanks & armoured cars, & have an almost complete air superiority. Rumours that the U.S. Pacific fleet is now in north Australian waters.

Monday, Jan 12/42 Sunny. Temp. at noon 30°. Walking with Parson J. W. A. Nicholson this afternoon.  
War news: British have withdrawn to Seremban after the defeat at Kuala Lumpur. U.S. admiral Thos. Hart has arrived at Batavia in a U.S. submarine. Japs have invaded Dutch



Borneo at Tarakan, & Celebes at Minabassa.

Thursday, Jan. 15/42. Spent the afternoon aboard  $\frac{2}{5}$  Markland with Capt Charlie Williams. He had some interesting yarns of convoys in the North Atlantic. "Markland" is now loading papers for New York, & Charlie has shipped his A.A. gun, a fine Kofers, together with its crew of 3 English soldiers, to Halifax for use in a Britain-bound ship. We went aboard the Canadian corvette "Orillia", now refitting at the Mersey wharf, for a yarn with Lieut Commander Briggs, but he was not aboard.

U-boats have appeared off these shores at last. Two days ago a British ship was torpedoed 160 miles off Halifax. He had mostly Chinamen in his fore-castle, & they were ~~all~~ 20 survivors in the boats, soaked to the skin. Most of the Chinamen perished in the bitter weather. Yesterday a Norwegian tanker was hit by 3 torpedoes about 30 miles off Montauk Point. Miraculously she stayed afloat until they got her beached on Long Island.

In Malaya our forces are still in full retreat. American newsmen on the spot are caustic about the lack of preparation for defence & the lackadaisical attitude of the white population before the disasters began. There seems to have been panic in the native population of Penang & elsewhere, with resultant chaos when the retreat began. Apparently no Anzac troops have yet taken part in the fighting.

The Dutch are fighting manfully in Borneo & Celebes. In Luzon the Americans have beaten off several sharp Jap

attacks, but their position seems hopeless.

No word yet of the prisoners taken by the Japs at Hong Kong. U.S. submarines are now in action against Jap shipping in the East Indies. Dutch subs. have been doing a fine job there.

Malta is still under constant air attack.

In Libya our forces are still trying to clean the enemy pocket in their rear at Halfaya Pass.

Friday Jan. 16/42. Cold, snow squalls, temp  $11^{\circ}$  above zero at noon.

The Duke of Connaught died, aged 91. He was the 3rd son of Queen Victoria, a remarkable link with the past. I remember him inspecting the Halifax school cadets, of which I was a member, on the Hfx. Common, I think in <sup>1915</sup> 1917. He was then Gov.-General of Canada.

In Malaya the Australian troops, hitherto in reserve, are now in action, & it is hoped that the retreat on Singapore may be halted. U.S. submarines have sunk two Jap transports, also some Jap freighters.

Another ship sunk by German submarine off Long Island.

Tonight in Liverpool we had our second trial black-out. It lasted 2 hours & the whole district including ships at wharves was thoroughly dark. Stars were out, & snow on the ground made it possible to walk about the streets with ease.

Saturday Jan. 17/42. Sunny but cold. Temp  $10^{\circ}$  to  $24^{\circ}$  above zero, west wind.

Walked around Western Head this afternoon.

War news. enemy forces at Halfaya have surrendered, about 6000 men,

after holding out since Nov 20th, '41. Total prisoners taken since the present  
Libyan campaign began - 32,000.

Sunday Jan 18/42 Mr. Churchill is back in England, having  
flown direct from Bermuda, landing at Plymouth.  
Another of Hitler's top generals has died mysteriously - Von Reichenau,  
the panzer expert who commanded an army in the Polish campaign,  
commanded the forces which isolated the British army at Dunkirk, &  
lately has been in command of an army in Russia. He was a famous  
athlete. The German announcement gives the cause of death as "apoplexy".

Monday Jan 19/42 The corvette "Cobalt" sailed this morning  
after completing her re-fit, with the most gaudy camouflage yet  
seen - light grey, baby blue and pea green, applied in large  
angular sections to give a broken line. Thompsons' whistle tooted  
farewell & "Cobalt" answered with several "boops" of her siren.  
War news. Retreat in Malaya continues, with Anzacs, freshly  
thrown in, putting up stiff rearguard actions. Singapore is  
being heavily bombed & the naval base has been damaged.

The Germans have begun counter-attacking the Russian  
drive, all along the front. They have had no success except in  
the Crimea, where they have re-taken Feodosia. Elsewhere  
the Reds continue progress & are approaching Mozhaisk, Orel,  
Kursk & Kharkov.

Tuesday, Jan 20/42 Sunny, with a warm air from SW, the  
mildest mid-winter day I can remember. The snow simply

vanished. Parson Nicholson & I went walking on the White Point road, myself with top coat & sweater off, he without even a cap. At 4 p.m. with the sun getting low, the temperature was 50°.

War news: Russians have taken Mozhaisk, on the road from Moscow to Smolensk, & fighting continues from the Arctic to the Black Sea. In Libya, nothing; London talks of bad weather; & Hitler has awarded a special Nazi decoration to General Rommel for his brilliant defensive action. Our forces have taken 350 miles of desert & 31,000 prisoners since the drive began; our losses have been heavy, and Rommel's army, which we admittedly (Churchill) set out to destroy, is still intact & is now being reinforced.

In the Malaya the Japs are within 30 miles of Singapore, which they are bombing heavily. Japs & Thai troops have invaded Burma & are approaching Moulmein. U.S. airmen & small surface craft & submarines are active in the waters of Borneo & the Philippines, & U.S. subs have sunk Jap freighters off Tokio Bay.

In the Atlantic, German subs. operating from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras are bagging roughly 1 ship a day ~~mostly~~ - mostly tankers.

Wednesday, Jan. 21/42. Full days - I work on my novel all morning & evening, & walk in the afternoons, sometimes alone, often with Parson Nicholson. He is a pacifist, of a rugged outspoken sort, & I shocked him today by saying that our pacifists (Ramsey MacDonald, Stanley Baldwin, et al) had disarmed our nation in the 20's, kept it disarmed through the 30's, created Hitler's opportunity; and therefore the blood of every British

boy who dies or is wounded in this war stains the hands of our pacifists. War news. Nothing new. Much harping on bad weather in Libya (always a bad sign) & continued defeat & retreat (not too orderly) in Malaya. And while this goes on, London is in a great wrangle, in & out of parliament, over the propriety of allowing a gramophone disc of Churchill's forthcoming speech to the house of commons to be broadcast! (Churchill had requested it, withdrew his request.)

This kind of thing, & the spectacle of two million British troops sitting idle at home, pinned there by the fear of invasion, while an inadequate army (mostly colonial) wanders hopelessly across the Libyan desert, & a most inadequate army (nearly all colonial) wrestles hopelessly with a powerful Jap invasion of Malaya & Burma, is not very edifying to us across the seas.

I don't blame the Australian War Council, which has just issued a blunt statement criticizing British military policy, & demanding a voice in Empire strategy.

Saturday Jan. 24/42 Mild & sunny. No snow anywhere in town or along the roads but 2 or 3 inches in the woods. Parker, Smith, Gordon, Dunlap, Sam Campbell, Parson Nicholson & I went to Eagle Lake this afternoon. The parson recited a fine grace before meat in his booming Cape Breton Scotch voice, rolling the r's gorgeously, & we supped on brawn, potatoes, apple sauce, bread & butter, with a good appetite. After supper we sat & told hunting tales, & Sam & the parson gave us rich Cape Breton anecdotes. At 9 p.m. Sam & Nicholson left for home, by the light of the moon, eked out with flashlights and

the camp lantern, carried by Smith, who escorted them as far as the gravel pit at N<sup>o</sup> 3. (Should have mentioned that on the way up, we saw two bald eagles, killed by some destructive fool with a shot-gun, & hung by the feet, lashed to a low branch. These birds, scarce all over North America, happen to be fairly plentiful hereabouts, but that is no excuse for slaughter. They feed mostly on the crushed eels & other fish which continually float down the tail-races of the power dams.)

Sunday, Jan 25/42. It turned sharply cold in the night, & stiffened the lake ice, which is 3 to 4 inches thick. Parker & Dunlap decided to hunt rabbits near camp. Gordon wanted to clear out part of the trail which runs south from Long Lake, so Brent & I went along, all with axes. It was a cold walk down the length of Eagle Lake, the wind whistling along the ice, & no warmth in the morning sun. Followed the trail from SW. cove, Eagle Lake, to the old camp beside Long Lake. There took to the ice again right to the S.E. cove <sup>LONG LAKE,</sup> cut trees & brush out of the trail all the way to Split Rock Brook, where we had lunch (a tin of "boiled dinner" capsule, heated over a fire) & left Gordon smoking & basking in the noon sun, which beat full on the brook bank. Brent & I cut trail for another mile, then back to Gordon. Returned up the ice, cut across to Haunted Bog & found easy walking on the ice of the beaver brook right out to Eagle Lake!

At camp, Parker had discovered a strange mouse trap. After last fall's deer-hunting the boys left about 'a pint of

molasses in a quart (milk) bottle, sealed with a paper cap. Evidently wood-mice have a sweet tooth, for they had gnawed through the cap & one after another got down into the sticky stuff. There was no getting out, what with the sloping shoulders of the bottle & the gummy mess, & in all 6 mice had perished sweetly.

Dunlap tells me the corvettes "Agassiz" and "Prescott" are now being refitted at Thompson's wharf. Says the big steam yacht "Beaver" may be here all spring. She is an old thing, former name "Aztec", owned by an American millionaire before the war. Her engines were overhauled by the R.F. Shipyards in 1940. The fact is, they are old & worn out. Here, she is to get new boiler tubes, engines taken down completely and overhauled, entire new deck to be installed in place of the old one, etc. A white elephant. Whoever acquired her for the Canadian navy ought to be kicked.

U.S. sugar ration  
is 1 lb per head per  
week?

Monday, Jan. 26/42 Clear & cold. Following the U.S. lead, as usual, Ottawa announces sugar rationing  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. per head per week, effective from once. Ottawa always waits for the U.S. to move first. The one U.S. move we should have followed, to be consistent, is conscription. The timorous fuddy-duddy Mr. King, fearful of bloody revolution in Quebec, announces that a plebiscite will be held on the matter!

I addressed the Kiwanis Club here today on "The Defence of Liverpool", urging their active participation in any local home guard unit which may be formed.

Tuesday, Jan. 27/42 A snow storm at last; the first since Jan 10th. War news: Admiralty admits the loss of the battleship "Bertram".

torpedoed in the Mediterranean last Nov. 25th.

In Libya, our forces are giving way rapidly before Rommel's advance, which now is south of Bardia. In Burma, the Japs are pushing towards Moulmein, and Chiang Kai Shek has sent Chinese troops across the border to British assistance. Could British prestige fall any lower, I wonder?

In Malaya, the Japs are slashing their way towards Singapore, making new landings on the coast behind the flanks of our forces. Japs are now firmly established in the north half of Borneo, north part of Celebes, New Britain island & the Solomon Islands.

British, Dutch & U.S. air forces & light mosquito craft have inflicted heavy damage on a big Jap convoy in Macassa Strait; the various headquarters differ on the details, but it seems probable that 1 battleship, 1 aircraft carrier, 1 cruiser, 1 or more destroyers, & transports to the number of 12 or more have been sunk.

Wednesday Jan. 28/42. Mr. Churchill defended British naval & military strategy in the House of Commons today, & called for a division on a vote of confidence. He accepted entire responsibility for the decision to equip the Libyan army at the expense of Far East defence. He admitted the failure in Libya to destroy Rommel's army but declared we had killed & wounded over 30,000 Germans & Italians, captured over 30,000, & destroyed 2/3 of Rommel's original equipment, all at a cost of little over 18,000 British casualties. He paid Rommel a graceful tribute, "if I may do so across the havoc of war.... a great general." He declared that the British force in action



in this Libyan campaign "at no time numbered more than 45,000."

He declared that 60,000 troops had been sent to Singapore, that the whole defence scheme had been upset by the naval losses suffered by the Americans at Pearl Harbour & ourselves off Singapore.

All of which sounded like, suspiciously like, a big man shielding the incompetence of his staff.

Australia is furious over the whole business & Mrs. Curtin's retort to Churchill's claim of responsibility was that "the defence of the south Pacific must not depend on the infallibility of one man."

American troops have arrived in Ulster, & the waspish Mr. De Valera has issued a long tirade because he was not consulted, and because it "compromises the neutrality of Eire."

Announcement of the Canadian sugar ration, to be tried on an "honour" system for 2 months, proves that the public has no honour. Newspapers report a great rush to buy sugar, from Atlantic to Pacific, with a resultant serious depletion of supply.

We are to have daylight saving, all over Canada, as from Feb. 9/42 - again an echo of an American decision.

Thursday, Jan. 29/42 A wild blizzard began last night & aged all today. Streets blocked. No milk available "except to families with small children". A real old-fashioned nor'easter.

The town's landmark since 1759, the famous old Cobb house, was gutted by fire yesterday beyond repair.

2 weeks later de curus Snow Hunderworn's evident gaps de property to the town. None should be old ruin could be repaired, but the work would be terrific.

War news: Mr. Churchill, after bluntly warning the House that

much worse news is yet to come, & replying sharply to his critics, was sustained on a vote of confidence by 464 votes to 1. About 20 labour members refrained from voting. One of Churchill's most devoted defenders was his son, who sets for Preston, and is in England on leave from the army in the Middle East. He reminded the House to look critically upon itself as well as on the government — "the present body is the Parliament of Munich; it is the Parliament that failed to re-arm the country in time."

Lord Beaverbrook in a radio broadcast disclosed that Britain is now turning out cannon of all kinds from 2-pounders up, at the rate of 30,000 a year — more than were manufactured in Britain during the whole four years 1914-18. "By the end of 1942 I predict a rate of 45,000."

Canadian-West India liner "Lady Hawkins" has been sunk by submarine near Porto Rico. The govt. makes no regular announcements of losses off this coast, but every day sees frost-bitten seamen brought into coastal towns after hours in open boats; one crew passed through here the other day.

In Libya our forces are in retreat & the Germans are in Benghazi already.

The epic attack on the big Jap armada in Macassa Strait is still going on. Estimated at 100 ships, naval and army transport, at least 30 have been sunk so far, & many others damaged. It is thought that the Japs intended a full-scale invasion of Java.

British destroyers tackled a mixed Jap force off the east coast of Malaya. Losses, 1 British, 1 Jap destroyer.

(led by American air force General Chennault.)

The American volunteer air force, originally destined for China, and now defending Rangoon, have been making havoc with large Jap bomber formations attempting to block shipping to the Burma-China road.

In Russia the Germans are still withdrawing from the central bulge, with Red troops following up vigorously.

Friday, Jan. 30/42. The blizzard blew itself out this morning. Trains have got through, but the roads are blocked, & the town is all day digging itself out. Temp. rose from 8° above to 40° above, in the sun.

War news: Japs are only 16 miles from Singapore, & have invaded Burma in force, heading for Moulmein. Jap commander at Manila has called upon Gen. MacArthur to surrender; he refused.

Hitler made one of his ranting screaming speeches today, on the 9th anniversary of the Nazis' coming to power. He blamed Britain for the war, declared that frost and not the Red army had forced a German withdrawal in Russia, promised more great victories in 1942, admitted that the year's end might not bring an end to the war.

Saturday, Jan. 31/42. The town is still digging itself out. Milk is scarce owing to stoppage of supplies from the country.

War news: British forces have withdrawn to Singapore Island - all Malaya is in Japanese hands. Japs have attacked Amboina in the Moluccas - the second largest of the Dutch naval bases in the East Indies. Jap troops, crossing the roadless mountains from Lham, have driven our troops out of Moulmein & are thus on Kipling's road to Mandalay.

Sunday Feb. 1/42. Rain last night & a drizzle all day have settled the deep snow a bit. Rumours of a fight with a submarine off Liverpool harbour yesterday. Sixteen cannon shots were counted, & two merchant steamers came inside Coffin Island & anchored, another hove to off Western Head. Later, two corvettes came inside Coffin Island & then went out again. War news: Heavy fighting NE of Benghazi in Libya. Russians still making progress on the central front. U.S. naval & air forces have raided Jap bases in the Marshalls, and Gilbert Islands, doing heavy damage & sinking Jap transports.

Tuesday Feb. 3/42. Maclean's Magazine wired asking me to go to Halifax and do an article on the navy yard. I drove up this afternoon. The main highway has been ploughed, but Halifax is a fearful mess, deep snow everywhere, only the main streets ploughed, & then only room for 2 cars to pass abreast. Went right down to the dockyard. Maclean's, through Walter Gilhooly, the Naval Information Officer at Ottawa, had cleared the way for me. I began with the admiral in an office on the 3rd floor of a big new brick administration building. He is G. C. Jones, 45 or so, a lean straight-backed alert man with lively dark eyes and fierce grin, profane and cheerful, a good mixer but not a man to be crossed lightly. He was recently promoted rear-admiral from commodore's rank. The Superintendent of the Dockyard is Engineer-Captain F. H. Jefferson, 55 or so, fishy blue eyes, egg-bald with a fringe of clipped blond hair carefully brushed, fresh rather plump face, enormous hands & feet. He jumped to the conclusion that I

purposed writing an article mostly about himself, & protested a little too much about his abhorrence of personal publicity. He impressed me as a stuffed shirt, & he had a secretary to match, a middle-aged soft-voiced obsequious jack-in-the-box wearing lieutenant's rings, named Dixon - my sister Hilda's boss. They gave me a guide, Lieut. Abernethy, tall, plump, young, serious, lumber-gaited, a decent chap. The dockyard engineer is a slight grey-haired man, Lt-Commander S. McMaster, quiet, pleasant, business-like. He gave me another guide, Lt. Commander J. R. McClelland, a fine chap, 35, dark-eyed, deep-voiced with a good Scotch burr.

Wednesday Feb 4/42. Spent all day at the dockyard, mostly with McClelland. All through the various shops, & over ships of all sorts undergoing repair & refit. Several ex-Yank destroyers in. They're built like a knife & don't stand up to the Iceland patrol very well; ~~they're~~ <sup>their</sup> anti-rolling fins are absurdly small; one officer told me an ex-Yank destroyer rolled 68 degrees by the bridge clinometer in one bad sea. Bitter cold weather, temp. about zero, with a high wind. Tough for the men at work about the decks. Quite a number of corvettes in for re-fit. The yard is glutted with work, & dredges, pile-drivers, divers etc are busy preparing for new jetties & slips. The dry-dock (next door, at Halifax Shipyards) is booked up far ahead, but the navy is assembling, north of the dockyard, a 600-foot floating <sup>dry</sup> dock, which will take ships up to 25,000 tons. I went over the harbour in an ice-covered little launch, manned by a big humorous old <sup>or</sup> R. N. seaman named Sandy, to look at the Dartmouth slips where a destroyer and

a corvette were hauled out, both with damaged bottoms. 500 men employed there & new slips are being built to right & left. Guide here a competent young lieutenant named Stockman.

Forget to mention interview yesterday with Pay. Lt. Commander H. E. Hubbard, base supply officer, 35, tall, fresh-faced, competent, the busiest man in the yard.

Thursday, Feb. 5/42 Worked on my article straight through from 9 a.m. to midnight except for a hour which I had to take off for a hurried trip to the police station — I had parked my car within 30 feet of a stop sign on Tuesday & got a "ticket".

Friday, Feb. 6/42. Sent article by air mail this morning 9:30. It leaves Wfx by afternoon plane & should reach Toronto just in time for the deadline. I returned to L'pool this afternoon in clear, cold weather. Ingramport, the cove at Hubbards, Mahone harbor, & other inlets frozen over. Saw 2 corvettes steaming out of St. Margaret's Bay. I learn that during my absence the Liverpool A.R.P. got an alarm from naval headquarters, asking them to prepare immediate hospital facilities for crews of 2 ships, torpedoed off shore, and making for the land. The workers turned out with a will. Word was received at 1 a.m. At <sup>2</sup>2 a.m. the hospital in the high school was set up, fully staffed, supplied & ready. It proved a false alarm, as the ship survivors made land at Lockport.

Saturday, Feb. 7/42. A plane on dawn patrol sighted men in lifeboats rowing towards Liverpool. Word was passed to

urgency corps here at 8 a.m. By 9 a.m. the school hospital  
as set up & ready, & about that time the first lifeboat arrived  
at McClearn's wharf, towed in from Coffin's Island by a fishing  
boat. A second boat landed at Western Head, & a third at  
Beach Meadows. The men were brought in to our hospital by  
fleet of cars. Most were able to walk, but they stumbled, stiff  
legged, grey-faced, sodden & half-frozen. All were wearing their  
dark-blue life-belts for the extra warmth. One chap had nothing  
but boots and an oil-coat. Some were barefoot & we carried  
them in. Doctors Wickwire, Bird & Smith were on hand, & all  
the men were put to bed, with hot-water-bottles. I went down  
to Town Hall & arranged for sandwiches & hot soup from the  
restaurants, got plates, cups, spoons etc from one of the stores,  
carried up milk etc. The ship was a new British steamer,  
the "Empire Sun", 10,000 tons, loaded with grain at Portland,  
Me. & bound to Halifax to join a convoy. She was attacked  
without warning at 11.30 last night, when a torpedo missed  
her stern by a few feet. At midnight she was hit amidships  
& sank in 10 minutes. This took place about 12 miles off the  
harbour; the sky-reflection of Coffin Island light was visible, &  
the boats, after a vain search for further survivors, rowed towards  
the light. It was bitter cold, & the third mate's boat, half full  
of water, headed for Beach Meadows. The second mate's boat  
headed for Western Head, the chief officer's for Coffin Island.  
They had only a few oars, & the set of tide out of Liverpool  
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2 or 3 were frost-bitten. One had a mangled hand & many had bruises. The ship was specially fitted for convoy work, having a Bofors gun manned by soldiers, several of the latest "Hispano" heavy machine guns, a big radio-location tower amidships manned by R.A.F. men for anti-aircraft work, and carried a Hurricane fighter-plane with a rocket apparatus for launching it. Total crew 72, of whom 19 are missing, including captain & chief wireless operator.

Late in the afternoon all but 9 of the survivors were able to leave the hospital for private homes. We took in the bosun, <sup>named Davies</sup> a dark shy man of 32, very deaf. This evening, the carpenter, a comic pint-sized Scot from the Clyde-side, who is staying with the Johnsons, came in for a yarn & we spent several interesting hours. They told me a British merchant seaman now gets £17/12/0 a month, including a war bonus ~~of £1000~~, called "danger money".

Sunday Feb. 8/42. Spent most of the day acting as guide for Pengelly, chief officer of the "Empire Sun", and a chap named Vesey, from the Cunard-White Star office in Rfx, representing the British Ministry of Shipping. The 55 survivors are scattered in homes all over town, all well clothed, fed & happy, swearing that Liverpool is the place to be torpedoed.

Monday, Feb. 9/42. Most of the "Empire Sun's" men went to Rfx today by train, in a special car. Everyone went down to see them off. The men stood together on the platform for snapshots.

All were well clothed, & most were carrying parcels of donated things. Bags, boxes & crates were put aboard the train for them - soft drinks, sandwiches, fruit, candy, cigarettes, tobacco etc. They said, "We shall never forget your people or your town". We gave them 3 cheers as the train moved, & they gave 3 in return, leaning out of windows & making vigorous V-signs from the observation platform. Tonight, with the rest of North America, we set our clocks ahead 1 hour - for the duration.

Tuesday, Feb. 10/42. Cold & snow flurries. 4 of the "Empire Skin's" men are still in Mrs. MacNeill's nursing home. The war news is all bad. In Libya, our troops are back on the old Tobruk line. In Malaya, the Japs have got a strong ~~hold~~ foot-hold on Singapore island & the garrison is hopelessly outnumbered, out-planned & out-gunned. Japs are completing their hold on Celebes, Ambonia, Borneo, New Britain. Japs have forced a crossing of the Salween River & are threatening Indochina. For 2 1/2 years our news has recorded an almost unbroken series of defeats. No one is disheartened; but one can't help feeling that our leadership has bungled things.

In Canada, Arthur Meighen has been defeated by a C. C. F. candidate in an Ontario by-election. Two other by-elections ~~also~~ returned Liberal candidates. Mr. King takes this as an endorsement of himself & is already openly advocating a "no conscription" vote in the forthcoming plebiscite; says the voluntary system is good enough. Meighen's defeat was a surprise; he was recently made leader of the Conservative party again, after many years in the senate. I heard him speak, years ago, in Liverpool; he impressed me as an able man, but too cold for popularity. The C. C. F. party is increasingly popular with farmers & workers generally, & seems to have quite a foothold in Nova Scotia.

Friday, Feb. 13/42 An unlucky day. We learned that the German battleships "Scharnhorst" & "Gneisenau", & the cruiser "Prinz Eugen", which the R.A.F. has managed to keep damaged, in Brest, for the past 9 months, yesterday escaped to Germany by way of the Channel. It was a bold move, favoured by thick weather & guarded by a roof of fighter planes overhead & a screen of E-boats & destroyers. They were not discovered until they appeared in the Straits of Dover. British naval & air forces attacked, but the Germans got clean through & away and we lost 43 planes & probably some light naval craft.

This affair is both humiliating and alarming - for the Germans could have slipped an invading army across the Channel with the same ease.

Saturday, Feb. 14/42 A storm of criticism in Britain and throughout the allied world, of British leadership in general, & bungling the Channel defense in particular.

The Germans are laughing their heads off, and no wonder.

Singapore is fighting hard, but the Japs have already penetrated the city itself, & the garrison is under incessant air attack & suffering heavily.

Submarine sinkings continue off our coast, & there seems to be no convoy system west of Halifax. One sub sank a Greek steamer off the N.V. coast by shell fire - a leisurely job which lasted 3 hours without interference by sea or air.

TORY LISTED



LIVERPOOL, Feb. 22—Thomas Aldall (above), a well known Canadian writer who is living in Liverpool for some time, has again been honored by having one of his short stories listed in an anthology of contemporary Saturday Evening fiction.

"Stories of 1941", to be published shortly in Boston, contains only 22 stories which appeared in that publication that year and among them is "The Wedding Gift" by H. Raddall. "The Wedding Gift" is the story of a young woman in eighteenth century Nova Scotia in mid-winter, and would scarcely be expected to be found against such odds. But in Mr. Raddall's hands, the reader learns much about Nova Scotia in 1794, much about how a young woman of that time introduced the custom of the modern party, got herself

2. Fine & cold. Good skating everywhere including the Grove, and below the railway bridge to a point opposite the

At 5 p.m. we heard Winston Churchill, speaking announce the fall of Singapore & in a slow sombre voice that our arms have suffered a heavy defeat. He called upon us & in the empire, to rally, to refuse to be dis-united & to support the gov't and himself. He mentioned not a man's fleet. The British army at Singapore, surrendered unconditionally after 16 terrific days. We have sunk also many transports & warships, & the cruiser "Arctura".

2. Snow & rain. Awful walking.

We are now invading Sumatra & have captured Burma, British forces are falling back from Rangoon towards Rangoon. Mr. Churchill defended us in the Commons this afternoon.

Mowbray Jones, Paterson & I waited upon the Board to ask that the basement under the new high school be fitted up with a floor, heating & plumbing, so that a permanent emergency hospital ward can be kept set up there, ready at a minutes notice. The Chairman of the Board (Dr. Wickwire) and the principal of the school, R. H. Murray, objected strongly; they had hoped to have the place fitted up for manual training & classes in domestic science this year. We doubted if the Town Council could pass on an expenditure of several thousand dollars

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Submarine sinkings continue off our coast, & there seems to be no convoy system west of Halifax. One sub. sank a Greek steamer off the N. V. coast by shell-fire - a leisurely job which lasted 3 hours without interference by sea or air.

Sunday Feb 15/42 Fine & cold. Good skating everywhere including the river above Hill's Grove, and below the railway bridge to a point opposite the Shipyard Point. At 5 p.m. we heard Winston Churchill, speaking from London, announce the fall of Singapore & in a slow sombre voice admit that British arms have suffered a heavy defeat. He called upon the British, at home & in the empire, to rally, to refuse to be dis-united & scaremongers, to support the gov't and himself. He mentioned not a word of the German fleet. The British army at Singapore, about 60,000 men, surrendered unconditionally after 16 terrific days. The Japs claim to have sunk also many transports & warships, including the cruiser "Arcthusa".

Tuesday Feb 17/42 Snow & rain. Awful walking. War news: Japs are now invading Sumatra & have captured Palembang. In Burma, British forces are falling back from the Salween River towards Rangoon. Mr. Churchill defended his gov't vigorously in the Commons this afternoon.

At 5 p.m. Mowbray Jones, Paterson & I waited upon the Liverpool school board to ask that the basement under the auditorium of the new high school be fitted up with a floor, & heating & plumbing, so that a permanent emergency hospital ward can be kept set up there, ready at a minute's notice. The chairman of the Board (Dr. Wickwire) and the principal of schools, R. H. Murray, objected strongly; they had hoped to have the place fitted up for manual training & classes in domestic science this year. We doubted if the Town Council would pass on an expenditure of several thousand dollars

not to mention the added burden in teachers' salaries etc, in war time. There was some argument, Jones threatening to resign if the A.R.P. couldn't have the basement. On a vote of the board, it was agreed to give us the basement "until such time as the school board shall deem the emergency hospital unnecessary. (For) - John More, Dr. Mulhall, Longley Vincent. (Against) - Dr. Wickwire. Jones is an alarmist, but in this case I thoroughly agreed with him.

Thursday, Feb. 19/42 Cold but sunny. Walked by the main road to Five Rivers bridge & back, this afternoon. Clem Crowell stopped for lunch, full of enthusiasm about the proposed consolidated school for the Caledonia district; after long & patient labours he has won the favour of a majority in each of the school sections affected.

War news: black as usual. Canadian corvette "Spikenard" (refitted here this winter) torpedoed & sunk with a loss of 52 lives somewhere in the North Atlantic. British destroyer <sup>destroyed</sup> ~~Shurka~~ <sup>(the name)</sup> ~~Shurka~~ sunk - whereabouts not stated. Australian naval & air base at Port Darwin heavily bombed & seriously damaged by 100 Jap planes. British forces defeated in Burma & falling back. Rangoon port closed and mined, & the famous "Burma Road" by which China's armies have been supplied, is thus useless. Enemy submarines have appeared near Trinidad & sunk 2 ships right outside Port of Spain. Another sank 4 tankers near the Dutch island of Aruba and even shelled the big Standard Oil refinery there. Sinking



of ships off the American & Nova Scotia coast continues. The one bright spot in this winter's news - the Russian front - no longer glams. The Germans have reached their final positions and are holding stiffly.

The Vichy govt has begun its long-awaited guilt-of-defeat trials at Riom, against Blum, Daladier et al. Both Blum & Daladier blamed the French defeat on General Gamelin today. Canada's second Victory Loan campaign was launched on Monday, & is doing well despite the news.

At 11:30 p.m. Mowbray Jones phoned. He had received a mysterious tip from Canadian Press at Halifax - "Watch out for nautical events near you" - & was advising all leaders of our emergency organization to stand by for a quick call. He then got hold of the senior naval officer of the war craft now re-fitting in Liverpool & at Mersey Mill, & got him to phone naval headquarters, Hfx. HQ refused to impart any information to our civilian organization, but instructed the "Renard" <sup>(armed yacht, two fumelled, gross 23 knots, looks like a small destroyer, armed with 12 pdr, depth charge, 2 torpedoes)</sup> ~~armed yacht~~ ~~(formerly R.C.M.C. run schooner)~~ to go out and investigate in an area known only to themselves. Fortunately the "Renard" had pretty well finished repairs at Mersey Mill & was fit for sea.

Friday Feb 29/42. "Renard" went out at 4:30 a.m. to a position about 25 miles east of Little Hope & returned some time later without seeing anything. M. Jones scratched up a crew of local men under Jerry F. Nickerson to man the yacht "AWENISHE" (formerly "Col. Jones", & sold by him to Mersey Co., who have seldom used it; "Awenishe" has been laid up ever since war began.) They shipped a supply of blankets borrowed from corvettes refitting at Thompson's,

✓ got "Avenishi's" little diesel going.

It chanced that I'd been asked to address the high school in their auditorium at 9 a.m., so I went there & talked about the history of Liverpool, the strange & exciting things that had happened in the past, & how the townfolk had met them & carried on their various tasks. I ended with a parallel in the present times, & how their school might be put into use as an emergency hospital again at any time, & urged them to go on with their studies & keep out of the way etc., except for the cadet corps who could be useful as orderlies etc. As I closed, I saw Principal Murray dive out to answer the phone & come back with a significant gesture from the back of the hall. I returned to my seat there as the girl chairman moved a vote of thanks & Murray whispered that a lifeboat had been sighted from Western Head & that "Avenishi" was on her way out to pick up the men.

I got hold of the oldest boys of the cadet corps & went to the basement & started pulling out the hospital beds & equipment, at the same time removing desks & seats from one of the lower classrooms. We had one ward set up by the time the women arrived, each with her load of bed linen etc. & everything went like clockwork. Jones phoned at 9:50 to say that only 1 lifeboat had been found - 2 others were missing - & that "Avenishi" was coming in very slowly against the NW wind.

I decided to disturb the school as little as possible, so the other two wards were not set up: instead I went down & gave the first-aid teams a hand in setting up the post in Masonic Hall - 8 beds. The first-aid posts at Milton & Brooklyn were also set up.

The ship survivors arrived shortly after noon, 17 men including the captain, named Kyle, & chief radio operator. Her name was the "Empire ~~SEAL~~" & she was sunk by 2 torpedoes yesterday at 5 p.m.

about 25 miles off Little Hope. They had a New York pilot aboard, named Greys, & he was in the captain's boat. This was a motor-boat, which took the other two boats in tow. When they got in close to Port Mouton Island the motor broke down & the boats parted company; this was about midnight. About 3 am. the wind began to blow hard off shore & they had a terrible time rowing the heavy boat, trying to make Liverpool harbour. They were sighted by Mr. Tralis at Western Head at 9 a.m. & he phoned word into town. About that time a plane arrived on the scene, circling over the boat.

The captain & 5 others were in a weak state from exposure, & they were sent up to Mrs. MacNeill's private nursing home. Many had frozen fingers & toes but nothing requiring amputation. Some were attended in the school ward, some in Masonic Hall, 1 or 2 at Brooklyn.

We spent an anxious afternoon. The "Awenishi" was out looking for the other 2 boats. It was a sunny day but bitter cold with a strong NW wind. The Navy & Air Force remained silent about anything they were doing. Finally M Jones phoned the navy o-in-c at Shelburne & discovered that he knew nothing of the affair. The o-in-c there is a Lt-Commander Carr, a writer of naval fiction in spare moments, a rather garrulous sort, full of his importance; however he got busy & arranged for two vessels to go out from Shelburne & 2 from Lockport - fishing vessels. We all knew the poor fellows in the boats could not survive another night. It was an immense relief to hear at 5 pm. that both boats had been picked up & taken into ~~Halifax~~<sup>Halifax</sup>, presumably by vessels searching from there.

Saturday Feb 21/42. Yesterday's events showed a serious lack of co-ordination between the navy and the various civilian emergency

organisations on the coast. M. Jones & I drove to Shelburne this afternoon to have it out with the navy there, at Lt-Commander Carr's suggestion. The base there is still in the early stages of construction, and the office of the N.O. in C. is in a room in the county courthouse. We found in the council chamber, gathered about a long green-baize table top, representatives from Lunenburg, Lockeport & Shelburne. M. Jones told his story, beginning with the fact that our warning of the last affair came as a hint from Can. Press - we heard nothing from the navy. At the head of the table sat Commander Alleyne, R.N., an Englishman lately transferred from active service <sup>in Britain</sup>, he is N.O. in C. Shelburne, a lanky long-jawed heavy-lidded lean humorous man. His second-in-command is the windy Carr, a fat shabby-uniformed bald man with a Keupie face & glasses, about 50. After an afternoon's debate we had the navy's promise of prompt information in matters affecting our emergency organisations, & they had our promise of quick information from our coastal watchers.

Alleyne revealed that one submarine was doing the sinking in the Liverpool-Shelburne area, that it operated close inshore roughly every second night. It had been leading our naval craft a merry dance. "It's time for another flap & we'll have it tonight" said Carr. "Flap" being the current navy slang for "incident", "happening" i.e. "torpedoing".

We drove back to Liverpool in a brisk snowstorm at 5 p.m. Steamers are hugging the coast, & every night sees 2 or 3 anchored inside Coffin Island, waiting for

daylight before resuming the voyage. Mersey Paper Co's ships dash across the Bay of Fundy from Bras Island & follow the N.V. coast from Portland to Cape Cod, where they take the canal across to Buzzard's Bay & the waters of Long Island Sound.

Sunday Feb. 23/42 Grey, with light snow squalls. News of a naval engagement with a Jap fleet & convoy off the island of Bali, no details. Churchill has cut his war cabinet from 7 to 5, one of whom is Sir Stafford Cripps, late ambassador at Moscow.

Tuesday, Feb. 24/42 Churchill has re-shuffled his cabinet. It is not impressive; the new names are unknown & the old names too well known. London received the news with a sour indifference, & so did the world. The Japs are drawing near Rangoon, & have landed in force on the island of Bali despite the losses inflicted on transports & escort in Sunday's fight. Japs claim 73,000 British military prisoners at Singapore. Churchill hints grimly that the army was close to 100,000; the inference being that 27,000 were killed in the battle.

M. Jones & I conferred with the local R.C.M.P. chief, Lt. Corp. Morrison, in my study this afternoon, on the subject of quicker coordination of intelligence re enemy "incidents" off the coast of Lucens. We pointed out that Harry, Shellburne, was hinting that our coastal watch (organised by the Legion in July 1940) should deal direct with them & not through R.C.M.P., in order to save time. We still think the coastal intelligence should operate through R.C.M.P., & Morrison promises to work closely

and quickly with us. Navy is working energetically on better intelligence re submarine sinkings, & today I received a map and a simple code which is to be used henceforth.

Wednesday Feb 25/42 A wild rumour went around town today that a Norwegian naval training ship, operating out of Lüneburg, had been supplying German submarines off the coast, and that 17 of her crew had been taken prisoners to Halifax. Nothing in it. Last summer there was a similar idiosyncrasy about the big Free French submarine "Surcouf", which operated out of Halifax. The "Surcouf" was said to have torpedoed British ships in convoys she was escorting, & the tale said she had been sunk. Young sailors home on leave swore to the tale, said they had it from "a guy that was on one of the ships."

It was nonsense; when I was at the Dockyard 3 weeks ago the "Surcouf" was just leaving on another of her many cruises.

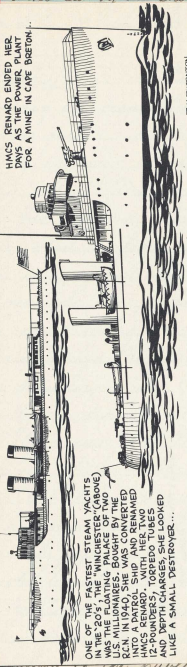
Tonight we had a short practice blackout in Lpool, Brooklyn & Milton, our third, & the first <sup>for</sup> which no time had been given to the public. A complete success.

Saturday Feb 28/42 To Eagle Lake with Dunlap, Parker, Smith, & Gordon. Excellent snowshoeing. Dunlap & Gordon shot rabbits on the way in from Big Falls. About 2 ft of snow in the woods, old snow with a hard crust, plus 2 inches soft snow. Weather mild & sunny. Little black "snow fleas" everywhere, hopping about, making the snow look sooty. Many tracks of deer, & a moose bleeding apparently from a

shank or shanks cut by the snow crust. Eagle Lake covered with snow  
 Lovely night, clear, 3/4 moon.

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H.M.C.S. RENARD ENDED HER DAYS AS THE POWER PLANT FOR A MINE IN CAPE BRETON.



ONE OF THE FASTEST STEAM YACHTS IN THE '20'S, THE "WINCHESTER" (ABOVE) WAS THE FLOATING PALACE OF TWO U.S. MILLIONAIRES. BOUGHT BY THE R.C.N. IN 1940, SHE WAS CONVERTED INTO A PATROL SHIP AND REBUILT AS H.M.C.S. RENARD. HER TANKS (20 WINERS' TORPEDO TUBES AND DEPTH CHARGES, SHE LOOKED LIKE A SMALL DESTROYER...

THE TORRENT

& warm. We spent the morning on a point in the lake, for d to Big Falls at 4:30, plenty of way thawing & muddy. Saw 8 deer  
 icking Java. British have made a the coast of France.  
 Yax club affair. This is a club se & drink beer on the premises; it staff of volunteer women, headed , wife of a surgeon-commander in I met her at Gow's, Jan 10/41; she he club's funds.) The club is on assay Church, whose Kirk Session at through Premier A. V. MacMillan ation) the Yax club's license to Many acrimonious letters have on. Premier MacMillan is an hind him not only the Kirk Session the province. The men of the lly backing Mrs. MacEuan, club's license... (N.B. the license was not renewed & the club was sold to the Norwegian merchant marine)  
 The M.C.V. "Beaver" sailed from Lewispool yesterday on patrol, after

shank or shanks cut by the snow crust. Eagle Lake covered with snow from 3 to 10 inches deep. Lovely night, clear,  $\frac{3}{4}$  moon.

Sunday March 1/42 Sunny & warm. We spent the morning felling & sawing up maple trees on a point in the lake, for next season's fuel. Walked to Big Falls at 4:30, plenty of rabbits along the way. Highway thawing & muddy. Saw 8 deer between Big Falls & Milton.

War news: The Japs are attacking Java. British have made a "commando" raid in force on the coast of France.

Halifax is agog over the Ajax Club affair. This is a club for naval men, who can purchase & drink beer on the premises; it is run by naval ratings & a staff of volunteer women, headed by Mrs. Janet Evelyn MacEuan, wife of a surgeon-commander in the Royal Canadian Navy. (I met her at Gow's, Jan 10/41; she has personally raised most of the club's funds.) The club is on John St., Halifax, near Fort Massey Church, whose Kirk Session has complained of the club; and through Premier A. V. MacMillan (a member of Fort Massey congregation) the Ajax Club's license to sell beer has been cancelled. Many acrimonious letters have appeared in the papers pro & con. Premier MacMillan is an ardent prohibitionist & has behind him not only the Kirk Session but every temperance crank in the province. The men of the navy & their friends are solidly backing Mrs. MacEuan, who is appealing to the public to demand restoration of the club's license. (N.B. The license was not renewed & the club was sold to the Norwegian merchant marine.)

The M.C.S. "Beaver" sailed from Liverpool yesterday on patrol, after



a long refit here. Corvettes "Agassiz", "Prescott" & "Galt" are now at Thompson's, refitting.

Tuesday, March 3/42 I missed seeing the eclipse of the moon last night; it occurred about 6:30 & was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  in shadow.

War news: Java is being steadily overcome by the Japs, & General Wavell has given up his command at Batavia & returned to India. Rangoon still holds, though badly damaged by air bombardment. The Indian natives' leaders headed by Nehru, are steadfastly refusing cooperation with the British in defence, unless India is immediately granted dominion status.

Russians claim to have a large German army trapped at Staraya Russa, near Leningrad. Submarines are sinking ships all along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to Trinidad. Yesterday survivors were landed at Hfx from a convoy which was attacked; they said 7 ships were sunk that they had seen, and they had heard other explosions.

Today the U.S. destroyer "Jacob Jones" was torpedoed off Cape May & sank with most of her crew.

In Liverpool, the I.O.D.E. service club in the town assembly hall entertains 30 or 40 sailors every evening. The scow-building project at Shipyard Point continues in full swing, day & night; & the floodlights used to illuminate the yard at night make a glare visible 15 miles to seaward, a fact which worries our A.R.P. director Mowbray Jones.

The brisk times; the high wages for servants in Halifax; the recruiting of the C.W.A.C. (Canadian Women's Auxiliary Corps); the many marriages to young soldiers

now overseas & the consequent easy money of "separation allowances" — all these have produced a dearth of house-maids in Liverpool. We have managed without one since late in 1940. A negress, Elsie Jarvis, comes in one day a week to do the wash & scrub the floors. She is a plump slattern of 35, a good worker, with several illegitimate children. Her day begins at 9 a.m. when she saunters in & sits down to coffee & toast. She stops again from noon to 1 p.m. for dinner — but she never really stops eating until she leaves at 5 p.m. One hand is always in the larder, & Edith has to hide any pies or other dainties that she needs for our evening meal.

One of the phenomena of this war is a brisk radio-advertising competition amongst the big washing-soap <sup>firm</sup>s. For some ungodly reason each uses a stereotyped form of radio drama, of family life, full of bathos & maudlin love affairs, accompanied by bits of wheezy organ music. They bear such titles as "One Man's Family", "The Life of Doctor Susan", "The Woman in White", "Big Sister".

In the trade they are known as "soap operas" & they clutter up the radio dial from morn to night, with the result that we don't switch on our radio except for news. Just now there is a growing protest against them in newspapers & magazines. One editor points out that, what with the "soap operas", and the unending bad news from abroad, the radio has become an instrument of torture. Sunday night is the only bright spot, with the amusing program of the ventriloquist Edgar Bergen & his dummy "Charlie McCarthy".

Heavy rain all day, the first real thaw of the winter. It has been an admirable winter; only 1 real snowstorm (Jan 28-30) and

little severe weather; just steady frosty weather.

Friday March 5/42. Colonel Good & Major Mathieson, of the 2nd (Reserve) Bn. West Nova Scotia Regt, came to see me this morning. The Batta<sup>n</sup>. is being recruited up to strength, but is a non-active force whose men drill 2 nights a week, with 3 weeks' camp in summer - and that is all they are paid for.

Col. Good offered me a second-lieutenant's commission in B. company, whose headquarters are to be in the old Congregational church, now called the "Armoury". He warned me that it would involve a training course at Brockville, Ont., & much time in recruiting for the company, drilling the men, etc.

My first instinct was to jump at it; but on consideration I realised that all this would interfere violently with my writing, on which I must depend for a living until the battalion is mobilised (if ever) on a full time basis. I pointed this out to Good, who agreed that under existing arrangements, a commission in the Bn. is neither flesh, fowl nor good red herring as far as income is concerned. He asked me to think it over, & if I ever changed my mind the offer would still be good.

Good is a slim dark man of 45 with a good row of medal ribbons on the breast of his battle-dress; a farmer in the Annapolis Valley during the peace years. Mathieson lives at Clyde River. Both quiet men; Good is really taciturn.

I couldn't sleep tonight, & was up smoking & walking the floor from 2 a.m. till nearly 5, feeling that I should have accepted Good's offer at once, and without quibbling, since it

was my duty. But there is my duty to my family, & there seems no chance of compromise, unless the Bn. is mobilised on a full time basis. Even then, a 2nd. Lieut's pay & allowances would be far less than my family's expenses on their present scale. However, when Good asked me if I would take a commission if the Bn. were put on a war footing, I answered Yes. (See Dec 21/41.)

Heavy rain all day, carrying off most of the ice & snow. About 11 p.m. a terrific westerly gale began to blow without warning, our first March "buster" & it howled about the house all night.

Sunday, March 8/42. Lovely sunny day. Shreds & patches of ice & snow in the streets & fields are fast disappearing. I am confined to the house with a severe head cold - after going all winter without a snuffle.

War news is scanty but always bad. Batavia fell 2 days ago, & now the last remnants of the Dutch & British forces in Java are believed to be making a final stand at Bandung. In Burma the Japs are astride the Burma <sup>CHINA</sup> Road & threaten Rangoon now from the north as well as the east.

Monday, March 9/42 Pouring rain all day & night. I had no sleep last night, the cold in my head driving me mad; lay in bed sneezing & nose blowing all day today.

Tuesday, March 10/42. Received my ~~new~~ car licenses for 1942 - cost \$20.74 for the car, plus \$1.00 for driver's fee. As a war economy there is only 1 plate, which is to be fastened on the rear. My number is 40,8<sup>77</sup> the figures black on a light green background.

Wednesday March 11/42. Lunch aboard of Markland at the  
Mersey dock with Capt. Chas. Williams; fellow guests Lt-Commander  
Jeffries of the M.C.V. "Renard" & Lt-Corn J. G. V. MacDonald of  
corvette "Frederickton". Jeffries is a character, a big hunched bushy-  
browed, twinkling-eyed, fresh faced, <sup>silver haired</sup> long jawed man of 53: was a  
commander, R.N., in the last war, drifted out to Canada doing all  
sorts of jobs, was waterfront reporter of the Mx. Chronicle a few  
years ago. He & Mac took me to task about my recent article  
praising the Mx. dockyard, in Maclean's. Why hadn't I pointed out  
some of the things that were glaringly wrong? Mac said I had  
"fallen into the hands of the Philistines". I asked how much of  
the sort of criticism they suggested would have got by the  
naval censor? Mac is bitter about the navy command  
at Ottawa - "the woods are full of admirals, all busy patting  
each other on the back" - and says not one of the Canadian  
naval staff has ever seen a shot fired in war. Says Ottawa  
meddled with the original R.N. design for a corvette & has  
produced something much more costly & less efficient. (His first  
command "Windflower" was built for the R.N.; his "Frederickton" is the  
latest Canadian type.) Jeff is more humorous but equally cynical.  
Typical remark, re R.C.N. officers who painstakingly imitate R.N. ways  
- "So-and-so's a Canadian, you can tell by his English  
accent". (I noticed this at the dockyard, especially on the  
admiral's staff.) They talked a lot of interesting shop, cautioning  
me "this is off the record". Best was Mac's recent trip to the  
U.S., escorting a submarine going there for repairs or rather  
overhaul. His corvette was to see that the U.S. navy didn't sink the

submarine by mistake. No need for worry. He & the submarine (which was on the surface, of course) sailed into the bay leading to Philadelphia & anchored inside Delaware Breakwater without being challenged or investigated by a soul.

Mac drinks quite a lot now, though he carries his liquor well. War news: British forces in Burma have suffered costly defeat & have abandoned Rangoon & Pegu. Command (under Wavell) has been assumed by Gen. Alexander, who pulled off the final withdrawal from Dunkirk. Isolated Dutch forces still holding out in parts of Sumatra. Escapeses from Hong Kong report atrocities such as the bayonetting of 50 British officers & men while bound hand & foot; systematic looting, rape & murder in the city.

Friday, March 13/42 High cold winds, clouds & sunshine. Roads beginning to dry a little. Snow hangs on in shady spots. Much ado over gasoline ration; workers at Massey mill who drive to & from work, have been refused special ration cards; they must get along on the ordinary "pleasure" car-owner's ration. This is not enough, & it looks as if the govt will have to relax a bit, or the war work all over the country will suffer; so many factory workers nowadays live in suburban areas & rely on their cars for transport.

Ottawa announces total Canadian casualties in this war so far, including army, navy & air force: - 1,857 dead. 466 missing. 18,117 taken prisoner. (Most of the prisoners were taken at Hong Kong)

Australian cruiser "Perth" and sloop "Yarra" missing in Java waters, believed sunk with all hands 800-900 men. London has not yet revealed British warships lost at Singapore.

Saturday, March 14/42. Every Saturday is Salvage Day now. Householders put a printed card "SALVAGE" in a front window if they have any old metal, rubber, paper etc., & a truck manned by boy scouts travels the streets picking it up. The old "Advance" print shop is used to store it. At gov't. request the stuff is sold at fixed prices through the recognised junk dealer. In our case this is a Jew named Garson, headquarters at Yarmouth. His district comprises most of Western N.S. & his storehouse is on a wharf. Yesterday the wharf collapsed under the weight of several thousand tons; the accumulated salvage of the district for several weeks is now reposing on the bottom of the harbour. We are told, humorously, that it

16. Help Wanted - Female

WANTED SEPT. 1ST. A CAPABLE and dependable girl or woman for general housework. Wages \$25.00. Post Office Box 91 Bedford, N. S. cs 28 31

Un Robuste Merchant Cuisinier marin Belge en repos pour trois mois, Cherche une Marraine de Guerre parlant le Français. Lettres: Jean Surmont (Belgian Residence) Dresden Row 103 Halifax. cs 29 31

Sunday, March 15/42. Sunny morning. Afternoon tea at Dr. John Wickwire's. A flintlock pistol, found in his attic last fall by workmen tearing out a partition. This house was the home of Dr. (W. G.?) Farish, who came to Liverpool as a young man in <sup>1749</sup> ~~1737~~ & lived to be nearly a hundred. He knew many of the old privatersmen of 1812, & the pistol is doubtless a relic of that time. Made by "Daniel Gross".

War news: Admiralty reveals that in a berserk attack on Japanese warships off the west coast of Java late in February, the allies lost 13 warships, against 8 Jap warships known to be sunk or severely damaged. We lost the cruiser "Exeter," of River Plate fame, amongst other craft; the U.S.N. lost the cruiser "Horstson"; the Dutch

East Indies fleet suffered worst. Object of the attack was the Jap troop convoy bound to invade Java, but our forces found themselves out-gunned and out-numbered.

London explains the comparative inactivity of the R.A.F. all winter with the news that it was the most severe winter in 15 years. Hitler, in a Memorial Day speech on Saturday, said the same thing in excusing his failure to finish off the Russians. He promises that for next summer, but warns the German people that there is much hard fighting ahead.

Monday, March 16/42. Final figures on the Victory Loan - over one billion dollars. The gov't asked for \$600,000,000.

Queens County raised \$728,000 <sup>NOT</sup> including allotment from national subscriptions by life insurances companies etc.

(Including national allotment brought Queens above the million mark)

Tuesday, March 17/42 A tractor & grader were busy smoothing the town streets this morning - the first sign of spring.

But the weather changed & a wet snow was falling all afternoon & evening.

War news: Russians are slowly closing in on Khar'kov. General MacArthur has arrived in Australia by air from the Philippines to take command of the allied armies in Australia.

(U.S. troops have arrived there, & some Dutch forces managed to get away from the East Indies.) His appointment was made at Australia's request. Australians have lost faith in British generalship & make no secret of it. London is sending Sir Stafford Cripps to India in a last-minute attempt to win the support of Indian Nationalist leaders.



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Sunday, March 15/42 Sunny mornings, cloudy afternoons. Afternoon tea at Dr. John Mackenzie's; he gave me an old flintlock pistol, found in his attic last fall by workmen tearing out a partition. This house was the home of Dr. (W. G. ?) Farish, who came to Liverpool as a young man in <sup>1849</sup> ~~1837~~ & lived to be nearly a hundred. He knew many of the old privatersmen of 1812, & the pistol is doubtless a relic of that time. Made by "Daniel Cross".

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Wednesday, March 18/42 Washington announced a great air attack by U.S. & Aussie flyers upon a Jap invasion fleet off the coast of New Guinea. They claim to have sunk or badly damaged 23 Jap warships & transports. The mayor of Boston ordered the church bells rung & a general celebration. All very ridiculous. The tendency of airmen to exaggerate their bombing prowess has fooled the Axis public, as well as our own, too many times. In this East Indies fighting our airmen have several times claimed a smashing success on an invasion fleet (see entries Jan. 27, 29, Feb. 22, 24) — but invasions took place just the same, and on Jap schedule.

In Liverpool, the slips at Shipyard Point are now building the last of the lighters (44 in all) ordered by the govt. These were built by Foundation Maritime Ltd., employing two hundred local men, day & night. All the timber came by rail from British Columbia. It is said that the yard will close.

Much ado. now about gasoline coupon books, which become effective April 1/42, & cost #1. The ordinary car owner is in category A, & this includes paper mill employees, many of whom drive a considerable distance to work. There is much dissatisfaction everywhere, for the same condition exists in every industrial community, & the stringent gas ration will result in seriously hampering the war work. As an A.R.P. worker I am entitled to Category B, which allows 88 "units" of gasoline a year, as against 60 "units" for Cat. A. But I am applying for A. A.R.P. work here has not meant much use of my car, & will not, as far as I can see.

Saturday March 21/42. First day of spring, & a lovely sunny day it is. A patrol bomber got us all up at daylight, circling low over the town. This probably means trouble seaward but so far (8.30 a.m.) not a word has come thru from Navy.

The frost is out of the roads & they have begun to dry. Snow hangs on in the hollows & shady nooks, but none can be seen about the town. This has been the "easiest" winter I can remember. There was steady frost through Jan. & Feb. but the temp. rarely got down to zero, there was little wind, & only 1 real blizzard (on Jan. 30 th.) Edgar Wright, the undertaker, tells me he has seen very little frost in the ground all winter, grave-digging took no more time than in summer.

This afternoon Dunlap, Smith, Gordon & I went to Eagle Lake for the night, taking Sergeant Kay, of the 2nd Bn. West Nova Scotia Regt. as guest. Road very rough. The lake ice hangs on & looks dark & rotten. After supper, in the sunset light 3 big U.S. Army bombers flew low over the lake towards Hfx, & after dark a lone night flier going in the same direction. We used to wonder why we saw so many planes up here, until we examined the map & found that Eagle Lake's north tip lies on the direct route between Yarmouth & Halifax. Snow hangs on in the green woods. Saw a couple of partridge, & two pairs of black ducks were courting in the pool above the old wing dam.

Sunday March 22/42. A sudden change of weather. The wind hauled to S.E. in the night, & by 9 a.m. a blizzard was blowing. We decided to get out while the getting was good. All the way

down the river road we had to stop every  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile & scrape snow off the windshield; the head-on splatter of wet snow was more than the automatic wipers could handle. By the time we reached town it had turned to rain & was still blowing hard.

Churchill's attempts to placate Australian public opinion have resulted in a nasty row between himself and Mr. Curtin. Churchill offered Mr. Casey, popular Aussie minister to the U.S.A., a post in the British cabinet, in charge of affairs in the Middle East. (Obviously a move towards retaining Aussie troops there; Curtin wants them to come home.) The offer was made, was accepted by Casey, & was triumphantly announced by London radio - all without Curtin's knowledge. Australians were more surprised than pleased, & Prime Minister Curtin aired his opinion to the world. Churchill replied tartly about the "tone and substance" of Curtin's speech, & so it goes.

March 23/42 Sent a Bank of N.V. money order for \$1,100.00 to Blackwood's for my subscription to May 1943. Also sent Time Inc. a cheque for \$8, subscription to "Time" for 2 years ending May 1944.

I have figured up my income for 1941 Gross — \$5289.99  
After deducting my agent's commission, & travelling expenses while getting material, my income tax worked out at \$425.63, plus defense tax of \$122.66 = \$548.29. The U.S. govt. had already deducted \$479.00 at the source, so my net tax payable in Canada is \$69.29. (I had to pay \$23 more to satisfy the demands of "Income Tax" in 1943.)

Wednesday, March 25/42 Good March weather, strong W winds, sunshine popping in & out of high-sailing wool clouds. Fine walks these afternoons; alone now, as Parson Nicholson, my winter companion, has ~~been~~ resumed his congregational visiting.

Measured the kids today. Tommy stands 4'-1" Frances 3'-8 1/2"

No war news except that Washington admits 2 more destroyers lost in the Java battle (see entry March 15/42). In Canada, the govt. has announced an ambitious plan to mobilise all man- and woman power for the war. In Halifax there is a crime wave, specialising in robbery with violence, most of it done by men in the uniform of the Canadian Navy. Some say that half the thugs of Montreal & Toronto, of military age, have for some time past been enlisting in the R.C.N., & this is the result. Hardly a day goes by that Hfx newspapers do not record another case, & the police seem helpless. The city is full of sailors & they all look alike in the dark. Naval men from corvettes & other craft in Liverpool have been extremely well behaved.

Saturday, March 28 & Sunday, March 29/42 At Eagle Lake with Parker, Gordon & Smith. Glorious weather. We worked like niggers cutting a trail from the camp to the S.E. cove. Still plenty of snow in shady spots, but the roads are frost-free & drying fast & the trails are mostly bare. Lake is still 3/5 covered with ice.

War news: British naval & commando units raided the German submarine base at St Nazaire, rammed an old (ex U.S.) destroyer, "Campbelltown" into the dry dock gates & sank her.

there, while landing parties blew up dock machinery. There was sharp resistance after the first surprise & our loss was fairly heavy. R.C.F. has resumed large-scale raids on German industrial towns & gave Lübeck, on the Baltic, a pasting last night. Germans attacked a convoy going to Archangel & sank the new British cruiser "Haiad" & several transports. Fighting in Burma, brunt being borne by Chinese troops at Tongou. Japs have occupied the Andaman Islands. Japs have been less fortunate in New Guinea, where Port Moresby is still in our hands and several more Jap warships are reported sunk by Aussie & U.S. bombers. Sir Stafford Cripps is in India with a proposal for full dominion status after the war. Canada is to mobilise 3 more divisions (6th, 7th & 8th) for "home defence". German subs. are still very active from Nfld. to Brazil.

Wednesday, April 1/42. Rain, snow, hail, thunder. Spring gentle spring. But I heard a song sparrow yesterday. No robins yet. Much activity on the Mull Village road about 1½ miles out of Brooklyn, where a local nigger named "Sephus" used to run a little roadside canteen called "Happy Landing"; engineers & other construction workers are arriving, & the gossip is that an airfield is to be created there.

The govt. has sent 100 new steel helmets, army style, for our A.R.P. workers. Mine has an important-looking SUP'T painted on the front elevation, & Q.C.F.A. on the back.

I put it on & my family was much amused. Large numbers of experienced officers & non-coms. from the C.A.S.F. are arriving back in Canada to form the nucleus of the new divisions. Major John Willard of the West N.S. Regt, a Liverpool man, is one. The C.O. of the regt. Milton Gregg, V.C., has also returned to Canada.

Gasoline rationing goes into effect today. It seems unnecessary now that the world's rubber supply is in Jap hands; no driver is going to use his precious tires more than he absolutely needs.

Friday, April 3/42 (Good Friday) About 11:30 a.m. a tug came into the harbour towing a lifeboat full of survivors of a torpedoed ship. She found them 6 miles east of Coffin's Island. There were 19 men including the captain. Their ship was the British steamer "Hartford", torpedoed 5 days ago "about 200 miles south of here", they thought. Our emergency organisation took charge of them at once. The men were brought by car to the emergency hospital in the high school; they were very weak, suffering from exposure & frostbite; we had to carry them in; only the captain felt able to walk. Fortunately (see entry Feb. 15/42) we had a ward permanently set up in the newly floored basement under the school auditorium, & the hospital was fully staffed & ready on 20 minutes' notice. A second lifeboat from the "Hartford" was picked up & taken into Halifax with 21 men; a third boat is still missing.

At 3 p.m., there being no further need of my services, & the day being fine & warm, I took my family (including

my mother who is here for Easter) to Ten Mile Lake, where we had a picnic supper in the woods. — The first picnic of the season & the earliest I can recall. Road very rough beyond Two Mile still. Nothing left of the lake ice but a trash of ice fragments washing against the shore.

Saturday, April 4/42. Fine & warm. Did a turn of office duty at the emergency hospital this afternoon. The men are suffering considerably from their frost-bitten feet, & we have had a specialist, Dr. Webster, sent down from Hlx. His chief treatment is to keep the frozen part packed in ice-bags, & it seems to work. He is confident that every man's feet can be saved. Their ship was a refrigerator steamer laden with New Zealand mutton.

The submarine gave the crew a chance to get clear in their boats before firing the 2nd torpedo which finished her.

The sub. then surfaced & an officer in excellent English asked if they had food & water enough to reach land, & offered medical help if any men were injured.

Spent this evening at M. Jones' house yarning with Jefferson & Windyet, who command the "Renard" and "Metaskivin". Windyet is a ~~small~~<sup>short</sup> bulldog-faced chap of 45, built like a Jap wrestler, looks about 35. An Australian by birth, he joined the R.N. as a cadet about the time of the last war, served in the East a long time, speaks & writes Japanese & Chinese, retired a few years ago & has a fine farm on Vancouver Island. Very keen & dynamic, with an engaging grin, a good raconteur. Has had some wild



experiences in this was in convoy work. Mr Jeff enjoyed a fine old-fashioned grouse against the way the R. C. N. is operated. Called the SNO Hfx. (Rear-admiral Jones) "Jetty Jones", because he never gets past the dock. Said that Canada produces a better naval rating than Britain itself, but a decidedly inferior officer. Growled about the lack of repair facilities & the muddle at Hfx, which keeps ships tied up there weeks on end, with the crew suffering from "dry rot". "Windy" was very bitter.

We ~~heard~~ <sup>heard</sup> from him as scathing an indictment of the system as Sever heard. Went home at 2.30 a.m.

Sunday (Easter) Apr. 5/42. Watery sunshine & edged east wind. Sea with the Freemans in Milton. I did my turn of hospital duty this evening. It's been decided to remove all the patients to Camp Hill Hospital in Hfx, where is special equipment for the treatment of frost-bite. The missing boat from their ship is reported safe.

Monday, Apr. 6/42. We shipped all our patients today in a special pullman brought down fm. Hfx by the morning train, & staffed by a Hfx doctor, 2 nurses & 5 V.A.D.'s. All the men were smiling & seemed comfortable. We put their bundles of personal effects aboard, & supplied 300 lbs. of crushed ice for the foot-packings enroute, also food, drink, cigarettes & reading matter. All expressed gratitude for their treatment here.

War news: Russians continue pressure on the German lines all along the eastern front, but no serious fighting is possible until the thaws

are over. In Burma, the Japs continue to advance, & their bombers have made a shambles of Mandalay. Jap planes in considerable force attacked Colombo in broad daylight & got a severe handling - 27 shot down, 25 believed damaged.

Japs are increasing pressure on American troops in Bataan, P.I. Canada is to have an army in Britain, rather than a mere corps, & Gen. MacNaughton, back in Britain, has set up his new army headquarters.

Wednesday, Apr. 8/42. Lunch aboard H.M.C.S. "Renard" with Lt. Com. Jeffries. She is a former Vanderbilt yacht & looks like a miniature destroyer, very low & long & slim, 2 funnels, speed 25 knots & up. Carries a 12-pdt. on a deck-level platform forward; two 21-inch torpedo tubes, two depth-charge throwers & a double ramp for depth charges on the stern. Crew of 50-odd, most of them crammed into the forecabin. Two stuffed fox heads adorn the wardroom walls. "N<sup>o</sup> 1" is a chap named Mauret from Lunenburg & Cape Breton; the eng. sub. lt., O'Connell from Halifax; the other officers are from the West & Ontario. Brought "Jeff" back to town in my car & he had tea & spent the evening with us. Jeff is a tall, stooped, heavily-built, grey haired, fresh-checked Ulsterman who talks like an Englishman, and twinkles a pair of bright grey eyes at you from under a pair of craggy salt-and-pepper brows. About 55 or perhaps 60, has been everywhere & done everything. Was navigator on Shackleton's 1921 expedition to the Antarctic, commanded a flotilla of sub-chasers at Queenstown during the 1914-18 war; subsequently drifted all over the Atlantic as a skipper of merchant ships, & ashore in South America, the U.S. & Canada in a variety of jobs ranging from wharfinger to newspaper columnist. He has the swift

instinctive pugnacity of the Ulsterman combined with a highly critical tongue, which has cost him every job he ever had - some of them very good ones. He was working for the *Hfx. Herald* when this was begun. He got a 2½ stripe job in the *Can. navy* at once, on the Dockyard staff, but his caustic tongue soon got him out of that & to sea in the little "Renard", where he will probably stay. On board, he combines a curiously democratic manner with the authority of a martinet; knows K.P. & A.I. backwards & sees that all his subordinates live strictly according to the book; constantly makes invidious comparisons between R.N. and R.C.N.; and in spite of all this is popular with his men. He told me the RCN was getting too much half-baked publicity; & referring to a recent *Maclean's* article (which described the sinking of "at least 3" German submarines in a week-long battle with a convoy) said bluntly that in nearly 3 years of war the RCN has definitely sunk only 1 submarine - the one that was taken by the corvettes "Chambly" & "Moosejaw".

Thursday, Apr. 9/42. Fine sunshine but bitter N.W. winds. The war news is all black. The American army on Bataan has been overwhelmed at last - 36,000 men killed or captured. Corregidor Island & subsidiary forts still holding out. Jap planes have bombed & sunk our cruisers "Cornwall" & "Dorsetshire" in the Bay of Bengal, & their subs. & surface craft have sunk many merchant ships on the Indian east coast. Malta is being savagely bombed day & night, & Valletta is in ruins. Rommel's forces are active in Libya. Against all this we can record 1 success - a British sub. sank a 10,000 ton Italian cruiser in the Mediterranean. The R.A.F. is busy with heavy bombers over France & Germany every night.

Friday, Apr. 10/42.

British aircraft carrier "Hermes" sunk by Jap bombers off Ceylon. A U.S. naval brigade managed to escape from Bataan to Corregidor. Here in L<sup>1</sup> pool, the corvette "French" and motor patrol vessel "Raccoon" are being repaired at Thompson's. The lighter-building equipment at Shipyard Point is being dismantled & shipped away. In Milton yesterday the big white house of E. C. Mills at Milton corner was ruined by fire. It was one of the few surviving mansions of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century lumber- and shipbuilding era, built by my wife's grandfather Snow Parker Freeman in 1860, a big 3-story wooden house with verandah on two sides supported by heavy wooden pillars, & fitted inside with marble mantels, oak panelling, tall rooms & big windows. The house burned slowly like a big coal, due to the double plaster - there was a rough "rendering" coat inside the sheathing, as well as the usual lath- & -plaster inside the studding.

Special new receptacles have been set up today on the post office lawn for salvaged material. There is a huge wooden bin, painted white with 3 openings - a small one for bones and fats, a big one for books, papers, rags & magazines, & another small one for tin foil, toothpaste tubes, bottle-caps. Metals & rubber go into a big wire cage affair, some feet away.

Doctor Porter Freeman, dentist, an old hunting companion at Kempton Lake, died <sup>(day before)</sup> yesterday of heart failure, buried today.

Sunday, Apr. 12/42.

Violent gales from the S.E., then from W., yesterday & today, brought snow, sleet, rain & mist.

We had a spot of tea on board "Renard" at Brooklyn this

afternoon, & the kids were treated to ice cream in the wardroom & then were taken all over the ship by a tall blond leading seaman. Tommy had a gorgeous time. Jeffries came back to L. pool & had high tea with us & we sat yarning & arguing (Jeff thinks this war can be won by concentrating on air force & navy alone) till towards 1 a.m. when I took him back to his ship in my car. "Renard" is to be used for towing targets for the trials of the new Tribal class destroyers (2 are being built at Hfx) & is being fitted with a special observation-house aft for the gunnery experts. She was built about 1915 for a giant millionaire named Roues, who had a bug for speed & naval lines. She was built by Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine & designed to do 30 knots. Original name "Winchester IV". <sup>During War One</sup> She served as a naval patrol craft in the U.S. (just as the former Winchester III served as H.M.C.S. "Grise" in Canadian waters) & later on was owned by one of the Vanderbilts. She is 225' feet long, 21' beam.

Friday, April 17/42. Variable weather - sun, rain & just plain grey with bitter N and E winds. Grass is green on my lawn & my shrubs have burst into bud. Frogs jingling merrily on warm evenings, silent in the frosty ones. The war has paused on all fronts, except Burma, where British troops today destroyed all equipment in the oil fields before yielding them up to the advancing Japs. Sir Stafford Cripps has returned to London following the failure of his mission to India; as was foreseen, the Indians themselves could not agree on important points, & did agree on the one point unacceptable to Britain, i.e. that an Indian have full charge of defence. I'm told confidentially by naval officers here that the Canadian navy is now under

direction from "OPNAV", the U.S. navy H.Q. in Washington, & has been, for some weeks. In Liverpool, the lighter-yard which has been such a busy spot, is now empty as before the war, with all the shacks dismantled & machinery shipped away. Much speculation on the plebiscite to be taken April 27. Some say Quebec will vote 80% "No".

Monday April 20/42. A dark day, drizzling rain. Drove to Lfr this morning, taking my family also Edwin Parker's fiancée Nora Bolong. I had lunch with the Kiwanis Club in the Nova Scotian Hotel & gave them a talk on my experiences as a writer. Harold Connolly, Minister of Industry in the N.S. gov't. wanted to see me so I went to his office in the new Provincial Bldg. after lunch. He praised my tales very highly, said I was giving Nova Scotia the finest kind of publicity & made an astonishing proposal - that I enter gov't. employ as head of the Information Bureau (he is getting rid of C. V. Campbell, the present holder of the post) & I could there go on writing, "just as if I were home", with the added income of a gov't. salary. All he asked was that I would be available for consultation on matters of publicity, otherwise I could be my own boss. I refused, saying that writing was my career & that I wanted to see it through under my own power. He admired my "independence", said the offer would remain open any time I wanted to accept, & wished me luck. He is a short crisp dark man, former editor of

the Kfx Chronicle, about 35, keen & suave, a go-getter.

Tea at my mother's, after Edith & the kids returned from a tram ride "round the Belt Line", & then home, singing through the rain to pass the time, the kids joining in.

Three naval patrol vessels (armed yachts) were lying in the creek at Hubbards. St. Margaret's Bay is now a proving ground for anti-submarine devices; corvettes & U.V. & Dutch submarines are constantly exercising there; & the <sup>GAINSBOROUGH</sup> ~~Victoria~~ Hotel at <sup>HOBBARDS</sup> ~~Victoria~~ is being converted into a <sup>naval</sup> ~~naval~~ <sup>naval</sup> training school of some kind. Kfx. had a bad scare (memories of '17!) four or five nights ago when a ship caught fire in the harbour; she had some explosives aboard & had to be sunk by gun-fire right where she was, near George's Island. Some of the more nervous Haligonians took to the woods. (This ship was the "TRONGATE".)

Tuesday, Apr. 21/42. The "Chronicle" ran a fearful blurb on my talk to the Kiwanis, everything misquoted & mixed up. What a mess!

Wednesday, Apr. 22/42. "Renard" has completed her refit & this evening Edith & I were invited, with other friends of the officers, for a cocktail party in farewell. Jeffrey gives up command of "Renard" at Kfx tomorrow & his N<sup>o</sup> 1, a quiet competent Bluenose, Lieut. Maxner, takes command. "Jeff" is going to H.M.C.S. "Quebec", a new corvette just built. The Parkers were there, & Helen Campbell, Mowbray & Phyll Jones, Phyll Byrne, Kathie Waters, Roy & Mary Shipman. There were also Maxner's new sub., a round-faced smiling chap named "Dickie" Lester, and

"Windy" Windeyes of the "Wetaaskwin" (abbreviated by her crew to "the Wet Ass") "Windy" was in good form & led the singing of "Waltzing Matilda", "Far Away"; & "Alouette" was led by a young French-Canadian sub whose only name ~~seemed~~ seemed to be "zhan" (Jean?)

"Jeff" wanted Jones & me to make the run up to Halifax with them tomorrow; I was keen, but J. wasn't, so it fell through.

Just as we were leaving "Renard" about 8.45, Jones got a message from A.R.P. Hfx - "Yellow" - which means Alert. We hustled over to town, gathered up tin hats, torches etc. just as the "Red" message came through. Thompson's whistle blew the alarm - a series of short blasts - and the town & countryside were blacked out in 5 minutes.

Our chief & deputy wardens were both out of town so as Supt. I had to make the rounds checking on wardens myself. All went well & the All clear ("Green") came through in half an hour.

Some practical joker called A.R.P. headquarters at the height of the business, claiming to be N.O.I.C. Halifax, & ordering us to notify all corvettes & other naval craft in port (6) "to issue rifles & ammunition to every available man & turn them all out on the wharves".

I smelled a rat & refused Jones' order to take word to the ships, demanding that he get the order confirmed from Hfx. Jones, very excited, sent off someone else, with what result I know not. The whole affair turned out to be



a routine province-wide blackout, the first without previous warning. (The phone call to Jones proved a beautiful hoax.)

Thursday, Apr. 23/42. A lovely sunny day with warm SW wind, the first fine day in ten. Some time ago I arranged with Harold Singley, stonemason of Halifax, to make a grey marble headstone for Ralph Freeman's grave. His man came with it in a truck today & I went up this afternoon & saw the stone installed on a granite pedestal set in cement. Singley's charge for the stone & the job was \$157.80 (includes \$7.80 sales tax), & it was well done. Marie gave me \$90 & I paid the rest. Parson Nicholson walked with me up the Moose Hill road to Herring Cove Lake - which is 4 miles from Milton corner. Chatted awhile with Frank Freeman, who is one of the dam-keepers who guard the Mersey Co's. water supply, & returned afoot to L'pool. at 5:45.

Saturday, Apr. 25/42 Yesterday & today were burning hot, with temp. 80° in the sun, everybody in shirt sleeves, & a great run on the soda fountains. War news: lull before storm on Russian front. Tokio was bombed a few days ago by U.S. planes operating presumably from the Aleutian Islands; many incendiaries dropped & damage believed extensive, though Japs say No. R.A.F. has bombed the German Baltic ports of Lubeck and Rostock on a heavy scale, their first "blitz" comparable to the bombing of London. Photos show 40% of Lubeck in ruins. Gerald Wright, local boy

in the R.A.F., awarded the D.F.C. Messy Paper Co's steamer  
Vineland, Capt. Ralph Williams, torpedoed & sunk in West Indies,  
crew landed at Turk's Island. This afternoon, Gordon,  
Dunlap & I went to Indian Gardens (I first walking in to  
Eagle Lake to fetch my sleeping bag) paddled up Lark  
Lake a little way in Bill Silver's old out board boat, &  
camped & spent the night on the knoll where we had a comic  
adventure on May 22/37. A fine night with half a moon, &  
a light W. breeze sifting thru the trees, so we didn't put up the  
tent but crawled into our sleeping bags & were snug enough.  
A number of loons yelling in the lake all night made it perfect.  
The cry of the loon is to me the voice of our true outdoors,  
not even the owl can touch it.

Sunday, Apr. 26/42. A sunny morning but wind cool at N.E.  
We fished at N<sup>o</sup> 1 dam (above it & in the tail race) till 3 p.m.,  
when I went home. Gordon caught a fine trout but it merely  
emphasized the poorness of the fishing. I spent a hour or more  
making friends with a rascaron woodchuck, who let me come  
within 5 feet of his cave. Saw 3 gulls attack & drive away  
an osprey - a trade combine, I suppose.

Monday, Apr. 27/42. Fine & cool. Finished the 1st writing  
of my novel "His Majesty's Yankees" this morning. This  
afternoon I got some spruce lumber, dressed 1 side, to put a bit  
of rough floor in the attic. Price \$32.00 per M. plus sales  
tax. The stuff was mostly 8 to 10" wide & from 8' to 12' long, full

of knots & splits, & some rotten; it would have gone as dull in peace time, now it passes as second grade. Worked in the attic till 5 p.m.

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CONSCRIPTION PLEBISCITE, APRIL 1942		Yes	No
2A1	Liverpool East	112	8
2A2	Liverpool East	174	20
2A3	Liverpool East	153	10
2B1	Liverpool West	135	16
2B2	Liverpool West	169	17
2B3	Liverpool West	78	11
2B4	Liverpool West	97	28
1A	Mersey Point	47	15
1B	Western Head	37	23
3	Hunt's Point	28	26
4A	Port Mouton	84	9
4B	Port Joli	19	4
4C	S. W. Pt. Mouton	68	11
5A1	East Milton	130	23
5A2	East Milton	137	29
5B	West Milton	150	31
6A	East Brooklyn	151	34
6B	West Brooklyn	77	17
7A	Beach Meadows	44	17
7B	West Berlin	28	33
	Advance Poll Liverpool	5	
11A	North Brookfield	47	22
11B	South Brookfield	86	35
12	Caledonia	97	16
13	Kempt	94	26
8A	Port Medway	50	34
8B	E. Port Medway	11	0
9A	Mill Village	70	13
9B	Charleston	42	40
10	Greenfield	114	4

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

Here are the percentages of "Yes" votes in the plebiscite according to a Canadian Press compilation:

Prince Edward Island	83
Nova Scotia	79
New Brunswick	71
Quebec	28
Ontario	84
Manitoba	81
Saskatchewan	76
Alberta	72
British Columbia	80
All Canada	62

In Burma, the Chino-British forces after a stout fight have been outflanked and separated & the fall of Mandalay seems imminent. Destruction of the Burmese oil wells &

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## Voting By Provinces

1.30 a.m. EDT - Canadian Press plebiscite vote tabulated by

Province	Yes	No	Polls Reported
Prince Edward Island	21,423	4,268	220 of 241
Nova Scotia	116,839	31,578	1,397 of 1,506
New Brunswick	101,017	41,563	970 of 1,039
Quebec	371,508	934,909	1,651 of 1,976
Ontario	1,183,045	225,944	10,087 of 10,567
Manitoba	212,973	91,103	1,628 of 1,883
Saskatchewan	127,055	43,055	1,847 of 3,202
Alberta	116,165	44,837	1,486 of 2,531
British Columbia	78,765	19,597	705 of 2,336
Totals	2,328,790	1,397,894	25,371 of 31,281

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war rages so far exceed 1500.  
Hear that 1000 R.A.F. trainees, fresh from Britain, passed thru L'pool by train a week ago enroute to Yarmouth air field.

Thursday, Apr. 30/42 Glorious weather, like summer; temp. over 80° in the sun at noon. Took Edith & the kids to

of knots & splits, & some rotten; it would have gone as culls in peace time, now it passes as second grade. Hooked in the attic till 5 p.m. when Edith & I went down to the courthouse to vote in the great plebiscite. Tonight's results show that roughly 75% of the English-speaking Canadians are for conscription (which was really the issue, despite Mr. King's quibbling) and roughly 80% of French Canadians are against it - precisely what we all expected.

President Roosevelt has taken steps to limit inflation by a price ceiling, Canadian style. He has further asked Congress to increase income tax to the point where no man or woman can have a net income larger than \$25,000 a year. This seems to spell doom for that remarkable species, the American millionaire.

In Burma, the Chino-British forces after a stout fight have been outflanked and separated, & the fall of Mandalay seems imminent. Destruction of the Burmese oil wells & apparatus & the seizure of the Burma Road, cuts off China's army from supplies of gasoline & makes its impotence complete.

The air war in the west seems to be a definite struggle for air mastery between British & Germans; constant fighting over the French & Belgian Channel coast, & day & night bombing raids on a heavy scale by both sides. Malta is still being subjected to constant bombing, day & night; total raids so far exceed 1500.

Hear that 1000 R.A.F. trainees, fresh from Britain, passed thru L'pool by train a week ago enroute to Farnmouth air field.

Thursday, Apr. 30/42 Glorious weather, like summer; temp. over 80° in the sun at noon. Took Edith & the kids to

N<sup>o</sup> 2 dam, up the river, this afternoon. Had a picnic tea, & Tommy & I fished for trout, but no luck. Full moon rising as we turned homeward at 8:30, & we saw 4 deer in the river road. I cannot remember weather like this in April. It just doesn't belong in a Nova Scotia spring.

Monday, May 4/42. Fine & hot. Took off my storm windows & doors & put on screens. Forsythia shrubs a mass of yellow blossom. Grass needs mowing already. War news: Mandalay has fallen to the Japs, and the Chino-British forces seem broken & in desperate plight. R.A.F. continues large scale bombing raids on German cities: Hamburg last night. The Luftwaffe have begun the retaliatory raids promised by Hitler against British towns of historic & architectural interest; Norwich first; Exeter last night. Mass shootings of civilians continue in France, Holland & other occupied countries, showing the spirit of the conquered peoples as well as the desperation of the Germans. But all this is of minor importance. All the world awaits the great battle which Hitler must begin soon.

Tuesday, May 5/42. Fine & hot after a brief thunderstorm last night. Gardeners complain of drought. Today, without warning, oil dealers were forbidden to sell household fuel oil of any kind. We are told the measure is "temporary". I use oil in my office stove & in the water-coil in the kitchen. People with oil furnaces are worried, although there is no

need of a furnace in weather like this. Doubleday Doran have announced my forthcoming novel, publication set at Nov. 6th.  
War news: British troops have landed on Madagascar & are fighting Vichy-French garrisons. The move has been expected for some time & we are relieved to know that our forces got there before the Japs. With Japs in ruined Mandalay, the Indian Congress has announced a policy of non-resistance to the invaders.

Thursday, May 7/42. Our troops seem to have a firm hold on Madagascar, & organized Vichy-French resistance has ceased. ~~WRONG: Fighting was resumed in September '42.~~

Friday, May 8/42. A fishing trip to Camp One, Lake Rossignol. Maurice Russell & Sam Campbell drove in by car, while Irving Bain & I went up thru the lakes from Indian Gardens in an ~~outboard~~ outboard-engined skiff belonging to Bert Anderson - a cold trip in a drizzling mist - 2 hours. We installed ourselves in the shack built by the paper company for their fishing & hunting parties. Bain & I fished Rempton Falls (mouth of Shelburne River) tonight but no luck.

Saturday, May 9/42. Overcast & cool. Campbell & Russell went to the Cow Bridge pool & fished all day without luck. Bain & I picked up a few trout on Pollards Falls during the morning, & in the afternoon went by canoe from Pollards to the Cow Bridge, thence to Sand Lake, planning to fish at the outlet from Tobatic, but found

a party of Bridgewater sportsmen camped there. Brought Russell & Campbell down to Pollards with us in the canoe this evening. A poor day's fishing but a wonderful day on this beautiful stream.

Tonight Bob Mackinnon joined us & we had a merry evening at 45's; I won \$2.50. We eat our morning & evening <sup>meals</sup> in the camp mess-hall, where our old friend Leon Meisner dishes up excellent meals. Mersey Paper Co. have had to raise the grub standard in their camps in order to keep men; I noticed butter, sugar & even fresh eggs on the table - an unheard-of thing in the past. The camp crews are almost entirely from the back-blocks of Lunenburg County. Mersey Co. never did get many Queens Co. men to work in the woods. The "Dutchmen" don't seem to mind the low wages which still prevail; & Bob Mackinnon (who is engaged in getting Registration Act particulars from every man) tells me that a certain proportion of them have deliberately taken jobs far back in the woods in the past two years, thereby hoping to escape military service.

Sunday, May 10/42. Heavy rain last night & early this morning. Russell, Bain & I fished Pollard's Falls all morning with small luck, but Bain picked up 8 beauties in the afternoon in the wide hole just above the rangers' camp. Took the canoe, with Russell, in the afternoon as far as the Low Bridge, but small luck. Blackflies swarming & just beginning to bite. Red maples

in full blossom, some of the flowers falling. Back at camp for supper. Bob & Sam & young Randall Mehlman arrived back from Pescauss Sam with 32 beauties; they found the fish biting fiercely & had an afternoon's fun. Our total score: Bob 12, Sam 12, Randall 9, Bain 9, myself 9, Russell 0 - total 51. Poor Russell moaning about no trout & losing money at cards - & we kidding him. Stopped at Pescauss Bridge on the way home all of us (Russell, Bain, Sam & I) in the car - & Bain caught a fine trout in a hole there in a few minutes. Home about 9.30.

War news: a great naval action in the Coral Sea, has been going on since Friday; allied sea forces, chiefly American, have sunk 9 Jap warships so far, including 1 & perhaps 2 aircraft carriers, & damaged many other warships & transports. It is believed to have been an invasion fleet aimed at the N.E. tip of Australia.

Tuesday, May 12/42. The Red Cross campaign began today, Edith collecting on Park St. I am on the publicity committee. Dominion objective, \$9,000,000. Queens County is asked for \$9,000. In 1940 we raised \$6000. (No campaign in 1941.)

War news: The Russian foothold at Kerch on the Crimean peninsula is being heavily attacked; this is thought to be a preliminary to the long expected grand German assault on the Russian armies. Three new British destroyers sunk by dive-bombers in the



Mediterranean. A ship has been torpedoed in the St. Lawrence river - the first to be sunk in Canadian inland waters.

Canadian govt. has cleared away the last obstacle to conscription, & the venerable Quebec member Mr. Gardin has resigned from the cabinet in protest. There are rumours that civilian gasoline rations will be cut sharply soon.

Jerry Pickerson, of the ~~local~~ local fish company, tells me that he may have to close down for lack of men.

All his men but 8 have left him to take jobs at better pay on war work. Malta is still under constant air attack, & defending planes have shot down over 100 German & Italian planes in the past 72 hours.

Saturday, May 16/42.

Gasoline rations in the Maritime provinces are cut 60% - that is, one coupon is now worth 2 gallons instead of 5. Due to heavy losses of tanker tonnage along the U.S. - Canadian east coast. Two more ships torpedoed in the St. Lawrence river, & a ship has been torpedoed in the mouth of the Mississippi.

The Russians have launched a sudden drive towards Kharkov on a great scale. The last remnants of the British army in Burma have made their way into India after a retreat up the Chinwind valley.

Only 5,000 escaped. Japs have pushed up the Burma Road into China.

First anti-conscription riot in Quebec took place at Asbestos, where a couple of young soldiers were arrested for A.W.O.L. & released by a mob of 700 men who broke into the jail. Some Quebec politicians talk of "civil war" if conscription is enforced.

Tuesday, May 19/42 Another flurry of sub-sinkings in our vicinity. We sent out the yacht "Avenishe" to look for survivors, & fishing boats put out from Port Mouton, but understand the men were picked up by the corvette "Loail" which sailed from here at daylight after a several weeks' refit at Thompsons. Corvettes now in here for refit include "Guelph", "Chilliwack" & "Dauphin". Work has begun on a small scale upon the new marine slip here.

In view of the gas shortage, there's a great demand for bikes, in fact bikes are the rage especially with the fair sex young & old. Some comical sights: fat female sterns perched on small bike seats always resemble a blimp that has settled on a church tower.

Wednesday, May 20/42. A single-seater plane landed on Summerville beach out of gas, was re-fueled & took off this morning. No one seems to know much about it. War news: Russians still struggling bloodily towards Kharkov. Canada's minister of supply, Mr. Howe, declares there will be no oil fuel for heating purposes next winter, a sad bit of news for the well-to-do who have in recent years changed from coal to oil for heating. Hon. Angus MacDonald tomorrow will inaugurate at Halifax the building of 2 Tribal-class destroyers, the biggest warcraft so far attempted in Canada.

Thursday, May 21/42. Spoke to The Home & School Association in the vestry of the Christian church at Milton tonight. Subject "After the war". Point: after the 1<sup>st</sup> Great War there followed 20 years of immense progress. No reason to believe the blue-ruin prophets now.

Kicks are running up the river & the brook at Milton. All things fresh & green & charming. Weather warm, with fog at

night & temps. down to 40°. My agent, & the publishers, are hounding me for copy & I am typing the final m/s as fast as I can. Still arguing with Tom Costain of Doubleday Doran over title. I want "His Majesty's Yankees" & he won't hear of it. Am getting Dr. Jim Martell of Provincial Archives to check the m/s for possible historical errors. All this has been a long drag; it will be a year by the time I have checked the proofs.

Tuesday, May 26/42. Went to the "armoury" on <sup>FIRMINGER</sup> Gorham St. tonight & met a Col. Simpson, of Hfx., & his gallopers, a major of the Toronto Scottish. Simpson is in charge of organising the reserve infantry units in N.S. Lt.-Col. Good of the 2nd battalion West Nova Scotia was there, & R.H. Murray, Liverpool school principal, who is in charge of the local company. Good explained that the training requirements for officers have been eased & it's no longer necessary to take a long course at Brockville, Ont. Good renewed his offer to me of March 5/42, & I accepted. Provided I pass the physical test I am to be granted a provisional 2nd Lieut's commission, & qualify for a lieutenant within 12 months. J.A. Parks & Hector Macleod are also taking commissions, & Brent Smith, who has been a member of the local co'y for some time with the rank of sergeant, is also getting a lieutenantancy.

Wednesday, May 27/42. Examined by Dr. Wickwire this afternoon for army <sup>service</sup> & passed with flying colours - Category A. War news: The Russian offensive has come to a bloody halt in front of Kharkov. Rommel's Afrika Corps has struck at our 8th Army in Libya. No details yet, but his air strength appears to be light, so far.

Saturday, May 30/42. Finished the final m/s of my novel at noon. After a long wrangle Doubleday has agreed on my title for it - "His Majesty's Yankees." I got my battle-dress, greatcoat, cap, boots & leggings from the quartermaster at the "armoury" tonight & brought them home. Tommy wept - thought I was going right off to war.

War news: Cologne got an all-out bombing from the R.A.F. tonight. ~~Some~~ About 1250 British aircraft took part in the raid, & 44 were lost. Estimates reckon  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Cologne city destroyed. London claims that the explosives dropped on Cologne tonight amounted to 4 times as much as the Germans dropped in their heaviest raid on London. In Libya, Rommel's advance appears to be held; but he does not appear to have used his full strength yet.

Russia admits her Kharkov drive has been forced to a standstill.

Monday June 1/42 Got a new lawn-mower from Eaton, #12.00. Sent balance of M/S (carbon) to Chambrun, & M/S (original) to Dr. Jim Martell of the Provincial Archives for checking.

Drilling, in a squad of prospective officers & non-coms, tonight at the "armouries." War news: Harbour of Sydney, Australia raided by 3 midget Jap submarines, each manned by 2 men. All were sunk inside the harbour defences & the only damage was a small harbour steamer torpedoed. Cologne is still burning. Eastern front all quiet from the Black Sea to the Arctic. Sub. sinkings continue merrily off our coast. Mercury Paper Co. lost a second ship on May 30th, the "Liverpool Packet", Captain Norman Smith, torpedoed at dusk a few miles off Cape Sable. Two men lost. Ship was formerly the "Lonia" owned by Warrens of Hfx. Capt Smith is a colourful character from Barrington, has been a rum-runner & N.P.P. for Shelburne in his day.

1. Mexico declared war on Germany today. We are now on rations of  $\frac{1}{2}$  sugar per week per person & have reduced our coffee consumption to 3 cups per day per person. We use no tea at all. These three things the govt. has commanded to be rationed; but it is all on the "honour" system, no cards, & the dishonourable (surprisingly many) continue to use all they want. ~~Attended my first dance tonight.~~

Tuesday, June 2/42.

Sunny but cool days, with sharp frosts at night; some of the gardens have been ruined. War news: R.A.F. raided Essen last night on a big scale. 35 bombers lost. In Libya, Rommel's thrust has been turned back with loss. Mexico has declared war on the Axis powers. This leaves Argentina the only important neutral in the two Americas. Drill tonight from 7.30 to 9 on the school grounds.

Wednesday, June 3/42.

Rain. Cold. Jap planes attacked Dutch Harbour in the Aleutian Islands today, with what result we know not. D.H. is the probable base from which U.S. planes bombed Tokio. Heavy fighting continues in the Libyan desert. U.S.A. has declared war on Hungary, Rumania & Bulgaria, to keep the record straight. Acadia Sugar Refinery at Dartmouth has closed down, supposedly for lack of raw material; plant is being partly converted for ship repairs. The famous American actor John Barrymore was buried in California yesterday, after a death <sup>bed</sup> repentance towards the Roman Catholic church. The service was attended by a crowd which newspapers describe as "ribald." Barrymore was a drunken roue in his later years & lately earned large sums by touring the country with a theatrical troupe & making a fool of himself on the stage.

FRIDAY,  
~~Saturday~~, June 5/42. Drove to Hfx today with Brent Smith & Austin Parker in Smith's car. Rainy weather. Shopped at Colwell's for our military equip't, lunched in the C.P.R. station grill. I spent the afternoon at the Provincial Archives with Dr. Jim Martell & Margaret Ellis, going over the M.S. of "His Majesty's Yankees" which they have been examining. They flattered me with their insistence that it was the Canadian book-of-the-year. Tea together (B.S. & J.A.P.) at my mother's flat & homeward bound at 7 p.m.

Saturday, June 6/42. Damp, grey day. Work is well under way for the new marine slip near to Thompson's wharf. The emergency air field at "Happy Landing" is cleared of bush, & grading has begun; the carpenters are just finishing two or three barracks for the construction gang to come.

War news: Admiral Nimitz, chief of U.S. naval forces in the Pacific reports a successful action with strong Jap fleet near Midway Island. At least 2 Jap aircraft carriers definitely sunk; other craft, including 2 battleships, damaged. In Libya, our 8th army claims a costly defeat of Rommel's thrust towards Egypt. (After Cairo's misleading optimism last December we are all inclined to "wait and see.") British continue heavy bombing, day & night, of northern France & western Germany.

Sunday, June 7/42. Fog & rain. I used some of my carefully saved gas coupons today to drive Edith & Marie over to Bridgetown to see Eileen (Freeman) Moore, who leaves for

Ontario tomorrow. Lunched in the car at the foot of Micky's Hill, & had tea at an old mill site at Lake Munro.

War news: Germans attacking Sebastopol. Continued indecisive fighting in Libya. In Australia, Sydney & Newcastle have been shelled by submarines. In mid-Pacific the damaged Jap fleet seems to have eluded the U.S. forces. In China the Japs are pushing strong forces into the interior from Burma & along the main Chinese rivers & railways.

Johnnie Lawson, Liverpool boy, a pilot officer in the R.A.F. is reported missing, presumably in the air raid over Cologne.

Monday, June 8/42 Prospective officers & N.C.O.'s of B. Company commenced a course at the local armoury. We wear battledress as privates, & drill from 7 p.m. till dark on the school grounds, with a lecture on map-reading or some kindred subject, in the lecture room at the armoury afterwards. This takes 4 nights a week. The instructor is a sergeant-major of Canadian Engineers, named <sup>LUNNIS</sup> Lunnis. For the rank & file of B. Co'y there is an sergeant-major instructor named Byers.

Wednesday, June 10/42 Up at 5 a.m. to go fishing at West Brook with Irving Bain, Bert Anderson & Roy Neiforth. Traversed 1st & 2nd Lakes in Bert's boat & spent the day fishing Tony's Falls. No luck - 4 trout in the whole party. Mersey has been driving pulpwood down the brook all spring; they have repaired the old tumbledown logging dams, with the result that West Brook is now a well-nourished stream. A fine hot day & a beautiful place. I ~~to~~ was happy, trout or no trout.

Thursday, June 11/42. Burning hot days & stifling nights. It is announced that Soviet premier Molotov visited Britain & the U.S. in May, & there was signed a formal treaty of alliance against the German Reich (no mention of Japan) each nation pledging itself to make no separate peace. Britain & the U.S. pledged themselves to the establishment of a front on the west of Europe in 1942. In the meantime things are very hot all along the Russian front & the German pressure on Sebastopol is particularly severe. In Libya the Germans have captured the important desert post of Bir Hakeim, the southern anchor of the British line.

Drilling in battletress tonight till dark, very hot. Map-reading class in the "armoury" afterwards, hotter still. It is quaint to be studying the art of war in this old church building, with its gothic pillars & arches, vaulted ceiling & coloured windows. I am gazetted a second-lieut in the 2nd Bn. W.N.S.R. as from May 25/42.

Friday, June 12/42. The Germans are taking a terrible revenge in Czechoslovakia for the killing of Heydrich "the hangman" who was in charge of the Gestapo in C-S, a couple of weeks ago. Hundreds of people, male & female, old & young, have been hanged & shot; & one whole village (near the scene <sup>vicinity</sup> of the slaying) has been razed to the ground, all males shot, all its women taken to concentration camps, all its children removed to state orphanages. We have supped full of horrors these past 3 years & lately they have increased by tales of cruelty to our prisoners in Hong-Kong & Singapore; more horrors do not excite us any more, but in all of us there is a hatred of German & Jap that would have been fantastic 3



years ago. The Italians seem to be humane enough; U.S. newsmen lately released by Italy declare that she is resigned to defeat & hoping for good treatment by the United Nations afterwards.

Saturday, June 13/42. Burning hot weather still.

I was sorry to see in the June number of Blackwood's, a memorial to George Wm. Blackwood. He died in April. He was the first editor to see any value in my work & he never lost his interest.

Tonight a fog rolled in from the sea, & the temperature which stood at 85° at noon, was down to 45° by midnight.

Tuesday, June 16/42. Our 3rd day of bleak easterly rain & drizzle, temp at 9 a.m. ~ 43°. Glad of fires in furnaces & hearths. B Co'y now has a rival unit recruiting in the district - a company of Canadian Engineers (Reserve) is to be formed here, with Snow-bray Jones in command with the rank of major. Two C. E. officers are in town re this.

Our two sergeant-major-instructors, <sup>LUNNIS</sup> Lunnis & Byers, are a hard-drinking hard-hitting pair, I gather from various accounts.

The other night Lunnis & a sailor got into a scrap in the back yard of Wong's cafe & fell through some rotten planking into a cess-pool. Next day Lunnis was on parole with countenance unmarked, so I assume the navy got the worst. Byers was knocked out by a blow over the head with a bottle, at a dance at Mersey Point; at the time he was fighting five men & doing very well, according to witnesses. Both men have had to change boarding-houses more than once, due to drunkenness. They are good men at their duties however, &

they seem a pair of throw-backs to the early time of Kipling.

Each night we drill on the school grounds for an hour & then march down to the Armoury for a lecture. The Armoury is the old Congregational church, given up at Church Union in the late 1920's; it did duty as a garage & for some time was an I.O.O.F. hall. Inside (& outside for that matter) the architecture is still that of a church, with pillared & vaulted roof; we drill in the church part on rainy nights, have lectures in what was the Sunday school & our orderly room & office occupy what were the library & kitchen. It is quaint to be studying the art of scientific slaughter in this devout atmosphere, especially when the twilight pouring through the stained glass windows surrounds the sergeant-major with a nimbus of reds, greens & blues.

War news: Japs have seized one or two of the more westerly Aleutian Islands; admit "considerable" losses in the sea fights in the Coral Sea & off Midway. They are thrusting hard to cut off south-east China from Chungking, & the Chinese (with the usual fantastic claims of immense slaughter of Japanese) are giving way before them. In Russia the Germans are slowly overcoming the defences of Sebastopol in a savage all-out attack, while maintaining pressure on the whole Russian front from the Black Sea to Murmansk. In Libya, Cairo now admits the situation is serious (see entry June 4/42).

Wednesday June 17/42. Fourth day of S.F. weather. Temp. holds steady at 42 or 43°. Last week we sweated in our battledress at drill; tonight a greatcoat would feel fine. Col. Good in a letter marked Secret informs all Coy commanders that companies must be recruited

up to strength at once. Each officer is expected to raise his own platoon; (I have N<sup>o</sup> 1) but how we are to do this while spending 4 nights a week at instruction is not explained.

War news: Two British convoys have fought their way through the Mediterranean, one east-bound from Gibraltar the other west to Gibraltar; they ran a gauntlet of sea & air attack, & the Italians claim large losses inflicted. Admiralty preserves silence on our losses, declares 1 Italian cruiser & a number of smaller craft sunk, many planes shot down. Our 8th Army needs this reinforcement badly. Latest accounts declare Rommel has more & better artillery & tanks, & has air superiority. Our troops are now back on Tobruk with Rommel threatening to side-slip into Egypt.

Friday, June 19/42. Weather turned fine & hot. Contractors making slow progress with the new marine slip alongside Thompson's plant, excavations barely begun. Four corvettes are here for repairs now that yards are available up the St. Lawrence. War news is all bad. Our forces have been defeated in Libya & have fallen back to the Halfaya escarpment, leaving a garrison in Tobruk. Rommel has strong forces & Egypt is in serious danger. U.S. state dept. has advised all U.S. nationals to leave Egypt. In Russia, the Germans have stormed the key fort of Sebastopol, whose fall seems certain. In China, the Japs are pushing hard, they have cut off all S.E. China from Chungking & are thrusting towards Chungking itself from Burma. Queen Wilhelmina has arrived in Canada by air. Winston Churchill has made another dramatic appearance in Washington

to consult with President Roosevelt. Sid Ford, son of Dr. Theod. Ford of L'pool, awarded the D.F.C. He is in a Spitfire-bomber squadron of the R.A.F.

Sunday June 21/42 A fine hot day with a westerly breeze. With the Parkers, Johnsons, Dunlaps, Williams's and Theiss's we picnicked at the point on Carter's Beach, & the kids had their first dip of the year.

War news: The Italo-German forces under Rommel have stormed Tobruk in a terrific two-day assault, & claim 28,000 British prisoners. An immediate leap on Egypt is expected.

Sebastopol defences are cracking one by one. A Jap submarine has shelled the wireless station, at Esteran Point, Vancouver Island. Japs have occupied another island in the Aleutian group.

Tuesday June 23/42 Rain & fog. Clem Crowell had lunch with us today, tells me he is in command of the Lockport platoon of the Shelburne County company, W.N.S.R.

A quaint contretemps has arisen between our company & the new Canadian Engineers (Reserve) company now being raised by Mowbray Jones here. There are not men enough here & Mowbray (who expects to hold a major's rank) has had poor success with his recruiting so far. He has been pulling wires apparently, for today a Colonel Hemington on the Reserve Army staff arrived in town, brusquely told our Lieut Murray that he had no business to be recruiting a full company here, that the local infantry unit should consist of one or at most 2 platoons. Murray said his orders from Colonel Good of the W.N.S.R. were to recruit a full company & he proposed to take his orders from Good. Col. Hemington went

off by car to Annapolis to have it out with Good. All this would be amusing if it did not reveal the appalling muddle of the Reserve Army, mostly brought about by the wire-pulling people like M. Jones. This is why, after two years, there is still no effective Home Guard.

The presence of naval craft undergoing repairs in R'pool has had a sorry effect upon morals. A swarm of girls, most under 20, parade Main Street of an afternoon & evening, pair off with sailors, & indulge in free & unabashed love-making in the handiest field or vacant lot, behind buildings, in cars, even on the courthouse piazza. Much of it is done in broad daylight. When the caretaker of the Yacht Club went there a month ago to clean the place up for the summer season, he found the place in a disgusting state; sailors & girls had been getting in by a window, all spring, & the floor was littered with those things which are never, never, mentioned in print or polite society but which have become a chief accessory of modern life - the so-called "French safes." I'm told that the sailors can obtain these from their medical officers, for prevention of disease; & of course they are on sale in any drug store. One result of all this promiscuous fornication is that a used "safe" is a common sight in the park, in the street gutters, on the courthouse steps, etc. Children bring them home, asking what they are. The worst of it is that the little spruce wood behind the school is a favourite resort of amorous pairs; the other day several of our neighbours' children actually saw a sailor & girl in the act, in broad daylight, & came home wide-eyed, with viva voce descriptions. God knows I'm no moralist but this state of affairs has passed from the disgusting to the alarming. From 200 to 400 sailors loose in a small country town are a problem. Some are decent fellows & the S.O.A.C. club entertains them in the

Town Hall & introduces them into private homes. But most are simply reckless fellows determined to have all possible ~~young~~ women before the ship leaves for another tour of sea duty. They are not altogether to blame — c'est la guerre — but it's time our local authorities took defensive steps. Indignant citizens have visited the town council & I hear the curfew law which has been on the town's books since 19<sup>20</sup> is to be enforced. All children under 15 must be off the streets by 10 p.m., when curfew will be rung on the fire-house bell. This does not solve the problem at all, for most of the amateur prostitutes are between 15 & 20 in any case. The town needs more & better police. Our one policeman, Bob White, is a fat lazy man with a whispering voice caused by a throat wound in the First Great War; the 3 Mounted Police are absorbed in duties outside the town for the most part. The navy shore patrol picks up drunks & stops naval riots, but is worthless in all other ways. What irks me is that the parsons everywhere are in a froth over the liquor consumption, demanding prohibition again, when the young women of every sea-port & every camp town are being debauched, not by liquor, but by simple lechery. The fact is that the proportion of drunks in the men is not more than 1 in 20, while the Lotharios are at least 1 in 4 or 5. Venereal disease is spreading fast (despite the "safes") and the town's poor relief will have a devouring flock of bastards on its hands after the war.

Wednesday, June 24/42 Details of the budget brought down yesterday at Ottawa show new & heavy increases in taxes, all round. Income tax & Defence Tax are now combined & increased heavily, but part is returnable after the war; in short, it's compulsory saving. A married man with a wife & 2 children & an income of \$3000 last year paid \$215 income tax; this year he will pay \$668, of which \$334 is

recoverable after the war. This compulsory savings business is aimed at workers now getting big wages in war factories etc.; many of them were on relief a few years ago, & will be again when the war ends unless something is done to curb their spending now. On all sides I heard approval, though many added "but we want to see gov't waste cut down - it's our money they're wasting."

Friday June 26/42 A last walk with Rev. John Nicholson today. He leaves for Halifax on Monday. Fine hot weather, welcome after several rainy days on end. Gasoline rations & censorship have reduced our knowledge of provincial affairs amazingly. We hear that Yarmouth is a great air station, Shelburne a great sea & air station, & so on, but no detail. It's like being thrust back into the 18th century. Those who know, don't talk; & the newspapers contain nothing. Mr. Churchill has made another flying trip to Washington, & he and Roosevelt have issued a joint declaration pledging an attack in the west to draw German pressure from Russia. Evidently Moscow has demanded some action. Sebastopol still holds, but the German drive from Kharkov is forging towards the Don. In the desert, German armoured forces have appeared before Matruh, the rail head from Egypt.

Saturday June 27/42 School closing & prize giving. Our Tommy "graded" from Class I B to II. He was awarded the class prize for "best all round student embodying the qualities of good citizenship" #1 in war savings stamps.

Monday June 29/42 We received our sugar cards today - one for each member of the family; the cards were made out by I.O.A.E. volunteers in L'pool for all Queens County; the system goes into effect on

July 1st, 1/2 lb. a week per person. Corvettes "Napanea" & "Ahdiaa" are completing refit at Thompson's. All corvettes now adorn their forward gun shield with a painted device of the crew's own choosing; "Ahdiaa" has a pirate in cocked hat & eye-patch with a submarine stuck on his cutlass like a sausage; "Napanea" had an Indian's head, adorned with a full war bonnet, his wide mouth about to swallow a sub.

Went for a sail this afternoon with Doug Inness & some guests in his 30-foot sloop "Egnet". Went about 4 miles outside Coffin Island. A stiff SW breeze & sunshine. Doug belongs to the R.N.V.C. & sailed down from Hfx. on Saturday.

War news: Rommel is pressing his advantage in Egypt, drove our forces out of Mersa Matruh yesterday. The R.A.F. which gave Bremen a terrific blasting 3 days ago (& lost 52 planes at it) has shifted its attention to Emden. In Russia, Germans are still making headway towards the Don. Sebastopol holds.

U.S. secret service has announced the capture of 8 German agents, landed by submarine on Long Island & in Florida, with explosives etc., for a sabotage campaign.

Wednesday July 1/42 A lovely summer day. Under the auspices of the Legion, the day was celebrated in Liverpool with water sports (in the river just above town bridge), other sports including a ball game in the athletic grounds. The theatre had a matinee showing "Dumbo" the latest Walt Disney fantasy (this one about elephants) to which Edith took Tommy & Frances. The day began at 9.30 am. with a parade in the following order: - Legion, naval detachment of about 50 men from corvettes in port, Spool band (sadly depleted by enlistments in the services), our own B company about 60 strong, Boy Scouts, Cubs,



Girl Guides, Brownies. Our company marched without arms & equipment, since a good third are new recruits without rifle training; but they marched smartly & looked well.

War news: Sebastopol has fallen. It cost the Germans heavily; they declare it the most powerful fortress in the world.

In Egypt, Rommel is pressing his advantage furiously, has reached a point 60 miles from Alexandria. Our general Auchinleck has taken over the command in person, superseding Ritchie; he has scraped Palestine for troops to bolster the shattered 8th Army & issued a do-or-die order of the day. British information bureau at Cairo, its false optimism gone at last, admits preparations to block the Suez Canal & blow up the naval base at Alexandria.

Berlin claims that our Mediterranean fleet has already passed out of the canal into the Red Sea.

Thursday, July 2/42 Churchill has silenced his raging critics in the House of Commons with a blunt statement on Libya. He declared each side began the battle with about 100,000 men; the British had control of the air, an 8 to 5 superiority in guns, 7 to 5 superiority in tanks. Our army was in fact preparing an offensive when Rommel struck. We had been completely defeated at the desert crossroads called Knightsbridge, with the loss of 230 out of our 300 tanks. This gave Rommel armoured superiority; with it he over-ran the big garrison of Tobruk (which General Auchinleck had expected to hold out 90 days) in 24 hours, & was now thrusting hard at the remnant of the 8th Army in Egypt itself. We had lost 50,000 men, most of them prisoners, with no corresponding loss to the enemy. At any moment we might hear news of the most

grave importance. Churchill's suggestion (though he refused to say so) was that our commanders had been out-witted and our soldiers out-fought by Rommel & his tough Germans.

Russians claim they are still fighting in the streets of Sebastopol. Japs are said to be massing on Siberian frontier.

Friday July 3/42. Got my (summer drill) uniform from the tailor today. It cost \$28.50 complete with badges & pips. There is no allowance to reserve officers for uniforms or equipment. The army provides cap, boots, battle-dress, greatcoat, & anklets. The rest we must buy ourselves.

My expenses so far: - 1 haversack - \$5.50, 4 khaki shirts @ 2<sup>00</sup> - \$8.00, 1 pr. leather gloves - \$3.50, 1 doz. khaki hdkfs. - \$1.80, 2 khaki ties - \$2.00, 6 prs. tan hose - \$4.50, 1 whistle & cord - \$1.00, 2 prs. pips (1 cld, 1 metal for greatcoat) - \$1.20, 1 button stick \$ .15, 1 tin brass polish - \$ .25, 1 Leyola service protractor - \$1.00, 1 summer-drill uniform - \$28.50, 1 gold collar-pin - \$1.00. TOTAL = \$58.40

In addition I have yet to buy a leather-covered stick (\$1.00), a pair of tan shoes (say \$6.00) & then I have the minimum that an officer can get by with. Col. Good hints delicately that we should "pick up" if we see them for sale at "a good price", a pair of good binoculars, a service compass, a revolver, etc. (I have binoculars, but could easily spend another \$100 or \$200 on these "extras"). My pay as sec.-liut. is \$3.00 per day, (3 drills nights counting as 1 day) but Major Mathieson blandly informed us that it wouldn't even cover our mess-bills while at camp. All of which means that Canada expects quite a lot for her (reserve army) money.

War news: Admiralty admits loss of 1 light cruiser & 6 destroyers in Mediterranean convoy (see June 17) recently. This convoy landed its supplies at Tobruk just in time to be seized by Rommel. What a terrible loss all round! It can't all be bad management; we seem to have all

the bad luck as well. And Rommel is a genius, no doubt of that. At present his hard-driving army is held by our 8th Army remnants 60 miles west of Alexandria but the battle hangs in the balance.

Russia admits that Sebastopol's resistance has ceased.

Saturday July 4/42. A terrific downpour of rain began at 6 a.m. & lasted one hour, with thunder & lightning effects towards the last; it flooded the streets, gardens, cellars, washed out gullies in the gravel roads. I never saw anything like it. Town Hall was besieged by angry citizens demanding that the authorities do something about their submerged cellars etc. The water took several hours to run off, & driving to Mill Village this afternoon I noticed all the brooks in spate, flooding the woods; the site of the new air ~~plant~~ <sup>radar station</sup> at Happy Landing was a wet one - water lying wherever the contractors have gone below the surface. The job is being done by an Ontario company; they are putting up 2 or 3 one-story barracks, covered with patent siding to resemble bricks, are digging an artesian well, & have stripped the turf off a space perhaps 300 yds by 150 yds., all this on the west side of the highway.

This p.m., with Col. Good & our company officers, we looked over the curling rink with a view to making our quarters there instead of the old church. No decision. War news: Germans have broken Russian line east of Kursk. Rommel is held west of Alexandria by 8th army's counter-attacks.

Monday July 6/42 - Wed., July 8/42. *Surviv de deux jours à Hallsdale - "Walkie" - Dr. Cairns et socius - les Martins et leurs trois petites filles - bon temps - bon marché - une lueur de la raison dans cette demence monotone qu'est ma vie au Liverpool.*

Wed. July 8/42. Col. Good called a meeting of officers of the south shore companies, 2nd Bn. W.N.D.R., as a sort of get together and pow-wow. We gathered, 22 in all, at the Mercury Hotel. We had dinner together in a private dining room (for which each man paid 75¢) & a long conference behind closed doors in the big drawing room upstairs. With Good was Don Sinclair, captain in a Keltie regiment, attached our Bn. as administrative officer, a native of Pictou County. Also Capt. Jones, the training officer. Sinclair gave us a talk on the importance of records & other paper work; Jones on training, Good on matters general. Highlight of Good's talk was the reading of a secret order which declares that men in outlying districts must have arms & ammunition at all times. The brass hats, he said, took a serious view of the situation on the coasts. I said that in that case we should get away from "basic training" (forming threes, etc.) & start some actual shooting with the rifles we are to use; not a man in our company had ever loaded a Springfield rifle, let alone sighting it on a target. Capt. Jones jumped up & said that, "by the way", training is to be reduced from 2 nights to 1 night a week — and that 1 night is to be used for "basic training" only. Protest broke out all over the room — "we need more training, not less" — "how did the Col. reconcile this with his statement about the gravity of the situation?" — "we can't keep the men's interest on a 1 night-a-week basis". Col. Good, with his dark neat poker face, then went on, quoting without comment a series of orders he had received, demanding that reserve officers make all sorts of bricks without straw, orders so contradictory & worthless that first smiles & then cynical guffaws broke out from every man. One bold fellow from Yarmouth even declared hotly that the gov't. only wanted a "paper" reserve army, whose muster rolls could

be quoted in Parliament as proof that we had a home defence force. Good made no reply; he had done his duty in reading the orders & would not be drawn into comment. But cynical, blunt, Major Syke, of Yarmouth, told Parker & me, aside, that the whole Reserve business was a mess, & getting worse, & that we shouldn't take it too seriously.

Kellam, of Bridgewater, said much the same. But it's an expensive joke to the officers, who are not only giving all their spare time (& much that they can't really spare) but have had to spend anywhere from \$75 to \$300 for equipment & accessories (at Col. Good's insistence) for which there is no compensating allowance. There are two glaring faults.

- (1) the gov't is trying to run a Reserve Army on a shoestring
- (2) the Reserve is directed by a lot of pompous old red-tails, not one knowing what the other's doing; they are on full time & full pay & allowances, & are quite content with the Reserve muddle as long as it doesn't interfere with those things.

General opinion amongst junior officers like ourselves was that if the Reserve ~~was~~ simply a government joke then the sooner we're quit of it & back to our own jobs the better.

Good gathered up his staff & went blandly on his way at 11:30 p.m., like the Duchess in "Alice in Wonderland" saying (in manner, anyhow) "I make you a present of everything I've said as yet"; & the whole business reminded me of the immortal croquet game.

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Thursday, July 9/42      Drill tonight. M. Jones & his merry men very busy in the Rink tonight, apparently intending to use it for the engineer's co's headquarters; & Jones has a long spiel in the Advance, giving his own life history amongst other reasons why men should rush to join his company. Engineer (reserve) co's are also to be formed in Bridgewater & Lunenburg.

Saturday, July 11/42. To Eagle Lake this p.m. with Dunlap, Gordon & Parker. P. & J. took along a service Lee-Enfield bored for .22 cartridges; together with targets, in order to complete the pre-camp .22 firing required of all Reserve ranks. A bear had been busy biting & clawing trees all along the trail from Big Falls, & here & there he had broken off the whole top of a sapling pine or fir.

Sunday, July 12/42. Mosquitoes got us up at daybreak. We took the canoes down the lakeshore to our wood cut last Feb, & got it to camp very easily by loading 1 canoe (to the swamping point!) & towing it with the other. P. & J. did our shooting. After dinner a swim in the lake, then canoed to Dickie's old line & sawed off 9 or 10unks of a fallen red pine there, bringing the wood to camp for next winter's kindling. Found 4 mice in a nest in the S.E. window & killed them with sticks. Weather warm & overcast. Showers last night. Swamp orchids in blossom; picked some ripe blueberries. Returning found that the power house staff had commandeered our old red punt for some work in their tail race, & smashed it in getting it down over the dam.

Monday, July 13/42. Lovely weather. War news: Rommel is still held in Egypt. Russians are falling back before terrific German attacks, which now threaten the Caucasus. Hitler has sent for the Turkish ambassador, presumably to demand passage for German troops through Turkey. Along the North American coast, submarines are averaging 2 ships sunk every day; our Navy Minister, "Angus L." admitted 3 merchant ships sunk off Gaspe' last week. Mersey Paper Co. is shipping much paper by rail now, having lost two ships. There is a growing shortage of fresh meat all over Eastern

Canada. People in Milton, always dependent on local beef, have had none for weeks. Shortage of western beef all spring forced local butchers to buy up all available animals here, & this supply is pretty well eaten.

Curiously, we have a shortage of fish, too: submarines have scared some of the fishermen off the water, but most have drifted towards the high wages in war work ashore. (Beef is 40¢ lb. so is chicken)

Wednesday, July 15/42 Picnic at Carter's Beach. Hot & fine. War news: In the Don region the Russians are giving way before German attacks. Moscow newspapers demand a British attack in the West, as promised in the treaty between Russia & the British & U.S. govts. Intensive invasion manoeuvres have been held in Britain all spring & there is a tense feeling that the attempt cannot be long delayed.

Saturday, July 18/42 Glorious weather. Farmers are harvesting the best hay crop in years. A terrific nocturnal thunder storm on the 16th did much damage all over the Atlantic watershed of the province & apparently left some snags smouldering in the woods, for a regular epidemic of forest fires broke out yesterday. Amongst many, there is a bad one on the Roseway headwaters near Tobatic, another at Porcupine Lake in the Medway headwaters; today the R.C.M.P. were commandeering men all over Queens to help fight the fires. We can smell the burnt brush at night. Was out target shooting with my .22 today.

Sunday, July 19/42 Drove to Petite Riviere this afternoon & had a picnic tea by the river on an abandoned farm. The new <sup>rail station</sup> ~~one~~ <sup>at</sup> "Happy Landing" has reached the stage of clearing & sod-turning, but there is no visible sign of hurry. (The same can be said for the new marine slip.)

at Thompson's in Liverpool.) War news: Russians are withdrawing under heavy German attack in the Don region. In Egypt, fighting centres about a small ridge called Tel el Eisa - "Hill of Jesus." R.A.F. ace, "Paddy" Finucane, 22-yr-old Irishman with 31 German planes to his credit, is dead. His plane was shot down by a ground machine-gun on the French coast during a ground-strafting raid two days ago.

Tuesday July 21/42. Contractors have begun to drive piles for the new marine slip: dredging is completed. Our infantry coy. is drilling 2 nights (Tues. & Thurs) a week, in spite of orders to reduce it to 1 night. We have 70 men enrolled & they are shaping well. The officers' revolvers have arrived - .38 cal. Smith & Wesson six-shooters with wooden butts shaped western fashion. The engineer coy. is recruiting briskly at the rink, which J.H.M. Jones has made his H.Q. His assistant-organiser, a Major Nicoll, former teacher of electrical engineering at N.S. Tech, now on the permanent staff of the brigade, appears to be settling down for a long stay. He spends most of his time salmon-fishing at the Guzzle - and is in fact quite a "guzzler". He drove up to watch our drill tonight in his army jeep, so drunk that he could scarcely stand up. Our drill on the school grounds draws quite a crowd; it's a temptation to pass the hat. Hot muggy weather. 80° in the shade today. A light rain last night enabled the rangers' crews to get the forest fires under control. Some valuable timber burnt between Sobatic & Roseway Lake. Naval craft reported they could smell the smoke 40 miles off the coast. R.C.A.F. planes helped to locate the fires.

Friday July 24/42. Hot humid weather with occasional heavy showers, usually at night; ideal for crops. War news: Germans have taken



Rostov & their forces are pouring across the steppe towards the Volga. It looks as if the Caucasus is doomed. The Russians, who have been very cocky right along (declaring they would beat the Germans singlehanded) are crying for a British attack in the west. Japs are reported to be massing troops on the Manchurian border. Egypt is quiet. So is India & the Indies.

Saturday, July 25/42. Went to Shelburne this afternoon on a defence scheme. A little  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton army truck arrived at L'pool at 4 p.m. with Capt. Jones driving, & the B'water officers (brought in the lounge who in our Bn. intelligence office) together with Dolliver, Kilborn & Miller; the L'pool officers - Murray, MacLeod, Parks, Smith & myself, together with our sleeping bags, haversacks & gourd, a big load. A very hot day & it was pleasant driving in the open truck. At Shelburne we had tea at the Ritz (a fly-blown little cafe, the only one offering "quick" service) together with the Shelburne, Lockport & Jermouth officers of our Bn. At 7:15 we began a tour of the Shelburne defences & the roads leading up to them. A young R.C.A. captain conducted us, & along the way officers were waiting & eager to explain their particular show - too eager, as we had less than 2 hrs. daylight. This inner harbour is submarine proofed by a double steel net stretching from Sandy Point across to Castle Point; the gate vessels appear to be a pair of old dredges, one painted green, one red. The immediate approach to the net is covered by 2 75-m.m. quickficers mounted on pedestals just above the foreshore; both guns came from the French liner "Pasteur", her former anti-submarine armament. They are mounted in exposed positions & there has been no attempt at camouflage. Manned by R.C.A. personnel living in tents, & supplemented by a searchlight at the shore. Shore line is ~~formed~~ fenced with a double-apron of barbed wire, & then a triple concertina fence. This battery is on a low bare slope known as the Sea Chest. A couple of miles farther on, at East Point we inspected a pair of heavy guns, each in a concrete

pit, with anti-concussion screen. These were 4.7's, old field pieces adapted for fixed defence use. (One was made in 1903, & had the royal arms of Edward VII engraved on the upper side of the barrel.) There are other guns on MacNutt's Island, which we did not see, & a signal station which we did. The island was talking by Morse lamp to the signallers at East Point, & the conversation was most non-military - amongst other things "my girl gets pretty lively when she's had a few wets of gin". It was dark when we left East Point, but the moon was up & near the full; we drove around by Jordan Bay & Jordan Ferry, then took the motor road to Shelburne, turned off at Birchtown & went through Churches & Canning Cove. It was chilly riding in the open truck & the roads rough. Capt. McInnes, our new adjutant, a real Scot on loan from the Pictou Highlanders, found the going very bad for his stomach ulcers & had to be shifted from the colonel's "jeep" to the cab of our truck. Our guide, Kellam, lost his bearings, & we did a lot of wandering over the rough side roads. (At midnight we were on an open beach opposite MacNutt's Island.) Finally we reached our rendezvous (Grandy Down's summer camp at Round Bay) shortly after 1 a.m., after driving something like 80 miles in the open truck from L'pool. Twenty officers in all. Only 7 beds in the bungalow. Parker, Smith & I spread our sleeping bags on some boards on the hillside & after some sportsman came around with a rum bottle & a flashlight we finally got to sleep about 2 + 2.30 am.

Sunday, July 26/42. Awake at 5:30, up at six, shaving with a mirror set up on a wood pile. Got our own breakfast. Started the day's activity with a soft ball game, then squad drill & exercises all morning on the sandy flat by the beach. The col. treated me to a ride in his jeep, up & down the beach, charging over a 5-ft. bank of beach stones, etc. Got our own lunch classes in map-reading, use of compass, leadership, occupied the afternoon. Sheltering hot. We sat under the spruce trees with a fine view over the beach. Burke

off for half an hour for a refreshing dip in the surf. Took a snapshot or two of the bunch (Commandered a charming brunette in blue slacks & halter to manipulate my camera for one or two group snaps) We were to have tea in Shelburne, but at the close of our official program the Col. was full of business about the inspection of our Co'y tomorrow, & it was 8 pm. before we got away. Drove straight through to L'pool, very cold in the truck; arrived famished between 9 & 10 pm.

Monday, July 27/42. Col. Simpson, commanding 36th. (Res) Brigade, inspected B Co'y tonight at 7.30 on the school grounds. He was accompanied by his galloper, a Capt. SMITH, & of course by our own Col. Good & the adjutant Capt. McDermes. He then took his stand beside the War Memorial on Main St. & took the salute as the Co'y marched past. Later, in the Armory, he expressed himself as highly pleased with the appearance and quality of the Co'y, promised us a permanent 15 cwt truck & driver, & told us something of his own struggles to get decent equipment etc. for his brigade. He said it was a fact that reserve units in Manitoba (for instance) have more & better weapons & equipment than those on the Nova Scotia coast.

The crew of a Rockport swordfishing craft of 54 tons have reached land after rowing 100 miles in dories. Their vessel was sunk by shell fire from a submarine and several men were wounded by shell fragments. This is the first Nova Scotia fishing vessel to suffer in this war, although an American trawler was shelled & sunk off this coast some months back.

The House at Ottawa has just passed Bill 80, which enables the govt. to conscript men for service overseas. It has just finished also a long and tiresome wrangle over the Hong Kong bungle, by which the Canadian troops

were sent East without adequate equipment & training. Col. George Drew of Vermont made some violent criticisms of the brass hats, & the gov't. indicted him for subversive language - & then withdrew the charge.

Saturday Aug 1/42 Grandma Raddehall came from Hfx by train yesterday. Edith has rented the old More cottage at Summersville Beach for 2 weeks, so today I took out a load of grub, blankets etc, & this p.m. took out Grandma Freeman, "Little Marie", Grandma R., Edith & the two kids, the cat and the goldfish - a migration. I stayed part of the evening & then fled to town in the rain for a peaceful comfortable sleep in the empty house.

The first party of R.C.A.F. men have arrived at "Happy Landing," on the Mill Village road. It's just a wireless station, after all. (RADAR STN.)

Monday, Aug 3/42 Rationing of tea & coffee begins tomorrow. Ration per person is 1 ounce of tea or 4 oz. coffee per week; (enough for 12 or 13 cups a week). Rumour here that a German submarine was captured off Shelburne last week; the crew were taken off; the sub. blew up & sank while being towed to harbour. (The rumour was false.)

Saturday, Aug 8/42 Up at 5 am. got my breakfast, packed kit (including a folding camp bed borrowed from Murray Co.). Left town 7 am. with Murray, Sgt. Kelly & Corp. Horne Clements, in B Coy's 15-cub. truck. A fine morning & a cool & refreshing ride to Bridgewater, where we found some officers & NCO's from Yarmouth, Clark's Harbour, Lockeport, Shelburne, all heading for the pre-camp course at Aldershot. Left B'water by train at 8:45 & reached Middleton at 11:45. Reported at the Armoury there (H.Q. of the 2nd. Bn. West N.S. Regt.). The Col. absent. Capt. McInnis in charge, a proper old woman in spectacles & glengarry, took  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour to make out a meal warrant for our party. D.A.R. train was late, & overflowing with airmen, soldiers, sailors, W.A.A.C.'s and

(in a great minority) public. No seats to be had, though we managed to squeeze into the diner for a meal. Had to stand between cars all the way to Kentville, sweltering in battle dress. Glad to get out at Kentville at 4 P.M. Found a convoy of army trucks in the station yard, & we together with some very natty & rather supercilious gunner officers went off in them to the camp. Trucks took us to Blueberry Hill, a city of brown canvas, & dumped us off outside a hub full of M.A.C.'s. We were just commenting on the excellence of the arrangements when the trucks discovered their mistake & whicked us off to Strawberry Hill. A long wait there in full kit in the blazing sun while the school commandant (Major Furringer) registered the whole party & supplied stores chits. Finally got to tent allotted Murray & ~~me~~ at 5:30. Alvin Chipman & I helped Furringer distribute knives, forks, spoons & plates to the other ranks attending school - about 200, North Noras, West Noras, Pictou & a group of Hfx Rifles. Supper in the officers' marquee at 6 - corned beef hash, bread, butter, jam, tea. Officers & men continued to arrive all evening & Furringer was a harassed man. Spotted our own M/T driver, Peach, & sent him off to the station for our baggage. Drew palliasses & bolster from O.M. stores, & filled them at a straw pile behind the men's lines. Clem Crowell complained humorously that "I've done more waiting on myself in the past 3 hours than in 3 years of the last war." Furringer observed pathetically that filling our own palliasses would be "an interesting experience for you, gentlemen." Furringer has a staff of young Ass't Instructors ("Ack eyes") trained by himself at Bedford for the past 6 weeks, very brown & fit & smart in shirts, shorts & puttees. East of the school camp is a camp of high school cadet instructors just finishing a 3 week course

under stocky little old Capt. Lolly ("You man on the right, there, you're breaking my heart!") After dark I sat in our tent door with my flashlight & struck up a dot-and-dash conversation which brought me a pleasant visitor, Burns Adams, a teacher in St. Pat's, Hk.

Sunday Aug 9/42. My father was killed in battle at Amiens 24 years ago today. Last night was cold & some of the men found their 3 blankets insufficient for comfort; I have my eiderdown sleeping bag & slept snugly. Dawn came up pink in a black-and-blue sky. We have a fine view eastward down the slope of Strawberry Hill & up to the Infantry Training Centre barracks & fire house, where the tall water tower stands like a great phallic monument shining in aluminium paint. The sun rises between the tower & the dark Norway pines of the officers' compound across the fields. The ground is a coarse sandy gravel with a few scrub bushes struggling up here & there. The sparse grass is dead & brittle after weeks of drought. All the Valley is parched.

Southward we look across the wooded valley of the Cornwalls to the high green ridge where the big house called Ward's Mansion or Ward's Lolly raises its square white walls. Washed & shaved at the abluition trough (luxurious Murray gets hot water from the cookhouse & shaves in the tent) Breakfast at 8 - porridge, hard boiled eggs, bread, butter, tea.

A hot & busy day 8.45-9.30, squad drill; 9.40-10.25 rifle training; 10.35-11.20, field craft; 11.30-12, P.T. 12.30-1 pm lunch; pleasant in the mess marquee with one side hoisted to the west wind; but the waiters are slow, the cookhouse overburdened, & the food comes cold to the table.

No grumbling. We eat the same rations as the men except that we buy table sauce, ketchup, pickles, & patent breakfast foods for ourselves. In the heat of a burning afternoon, squad drill from 1.30 to 2.15; followed

by a lecture in the field on the Springfield rifle. From 3.20 to 4.05, fieldcraft & a most interesting demonstration of use of cover. Major Turminger concealed 6 men in the open ground west of the camp & told us to find them. We all failed to spot them until they fired at us - a shocking little volley of blanks - one man was lying within 40 paces of our line. From 4.15 to 5, bayonet exercise, a hot & furious business. We West Novas noted that the Pictou & North Novas are very cool & smart in shirts, shorts & puttees, carefully fitted, while our own boys have no khaki shirts & can get only ill-fitting slacks & jackets of summer drill. We sent word of this to our Bn. H.Q. at Middleton but the reply was cold. Col. Good is like a dark slender be-spectacled old maid aunt, cautious & bashful, afraid to speak his mind to Brigade, content to let his unit be the Cinderella of the group.

The officers' lines here are separated from the men's by a road & a double row of mess marquees and wooden cookhouses; also there is no bugle at the school. This p.m. we failed to hear the "fall in" whistle, were late for evening parade, & got a fine blowing up, first from Serjt. Mickelburgh our instructor & then from Turminger himself. 7-7.45 a lecture on the rifle. 7.55-9 PM a talk by Turminger (perched with a blackboard on a pile of wooden tent-floorings) on the make-up of a modern rifle battalion.

He is a cheerful but bloodthirsty man ("I Love bombs") who believes & preaches that the whole German race must be erased; small & active, dark, bald, keen black eyes & gothic eyebrows, dapper in shorts, stockings, shirt & glengarry (he belongs to the Toronto Scottish). He is a thurston (he drew up the schedule for this

school!) but a man we all like. His assistant is a small lean furtive man with a ratty face & a monotonous voice, a Lieut Douglas, whom nobody likes. Fortunately he keeps out of sight most of the time. Our instructor, Mickelburgh, is a tough stocky Englishman with a long service in the army though he looks no more than 35 or 40; has a pleasing personality & knows his stuff. At dark the sky clouded & a light rain fell. We scurried about with mauls & pegs, anchoring our tent flaps, until long after dark.

Monday, Aug 10/42. Heavy rain all day. Rveille at 6 AM., breakfast at 7 - grape fruit juice, bacon & beans, bread, butter, jam, coffee. Carried on the training schedule in the marquees all morning. A fine talk on Fundamental Training by the C.O. Lecture by Mickelburgh on aiming, fire orders, locating target on landscape pictures etc. Lunch roast beef, potatoes, carrots, & bread pudding (which nobody ate). Dashed into Kentville in "Bulldog" Fraser's car & bought at Leopolds - drill slacks, \$2.75; belt, 40¢; shoulder flasher W.N.S.R., 25¢; stick, \$1.00. In afternoon, sun came out hot. Squad drill, lectures in Reising, Lewis & Bren guns; bayonet fighting. The bayonet assault course lies on the west slope of Strawberry Hill, sheltered by the pine woods beyond, with the afternoon sun falling straight down.

Glad to get under the cold shower at 5 p.m. About 20 officers taking the course, all fine chaps except 2 from Hq Rifle, a pair of know-it-alls. Shortreed, a little wizened dark man, glasses, a veteran of the last war, a bank accountant. Myatt, a tall young school teacher, languid, superior, glasses, a huge beak nose & pointed chin - Roddy Rhodensis of the North Novas calls him "Einstein."

Tuesday, Aug 11/42. Foggy & mild. Morning schedule included a talk on range etiquette by Sgt Major Nicoll, a Kenwick boy lately



returned from England to act as an instructor here, a fine chap. P.T. period comes right in the heat of the day 11.15-12, but it's a glorious feeling in the showers afterward. A mild form of dysentery is raging in the camp, blamed on the water. Not more serious than the old-fashioned "summer complaint" but it keeps its victims sprinting for the latrines. The Aldershot M.O. sent up an ambulance today to administer castor oil; I saw 40 or 50 men lined up for a dose. Evening parade is called by the S.M.'s whistle at 6.50, the C.O. appears promptly at 7 & the evening's work begins. We did field craft till dark, a stalking exercise in the woods south of the camp, great fun, but the mosquitoes were bad. Afterwards went down to the compound for beer & cigarettes. Hot muggy night, slept badly.

Wednesday Aug 12/42 Fine but overcast. I was officers' marked for the day. Instead of P.T. today we were marched over to Blueberry Hill to watch an A.A. battery at exercises. The guns beautiful little Bofors (120 shots per min. Calibre 4.4 mm) Gunners all French-Canadians; queer to hear the orders being barked in French. Very smart outfit & keen at their work. Also looked over a battery of A.A. heavies (also useful for anti-tank work) 3.7" calibre, hand loaded, shell weighs 50 lb., gun & carriage weigh 10 tons. Made by a Canadian farm implement company. (The Bofors were made by General Electric). Major Cookum arrived in camp for lunch, will be here to the end of August as Brigade Major. Inclined to be pompous but knows his stuff. Hard at the training schedule all afternoon. This evening all troops allowed out of camp from 7.30 to midnight except

the West Noras, who are detailed for fire picquet. Corp. Lorne Clements injured his leg today & the M.O. gave him 3 days free of duty. Much singing in the officers' lines tonight; Donald Peter Chisholm & MacPherson of the Pictou joined with Vernon, Doyle & Rhodemaire of the North Noras, and a quantity of booze. I got to sleep about midnight; Chisholm was then rendering Gaelic songs with great spirit.

Thursday, Aug 13/42. Misty at reveille, & the sun rose like a red ball, with a chill air blowing across the camp from the Cornwallis valley.

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P.T. was a sweating affair. Each night game such as "Buddies", where dummies "leap on your partner's back"; P.T. instructor introduced as "Slap Ass". Advance parties very hour or two, with M/T's loaded ring up like mushrooms all over the riding to syllabus, each day taking the subject. Our comedians are creature deceptively stupid-looking, rugged Highlanders from Antigonish. ancestor, who was asked the names in the world. The answer — "the King — in that order!"

Sent some things to Paul's Laundry in Kentville. At morning parade, Sergt. Mickelburgh informed the troops that anti-venereal treatment (& equipment) is available at the medical station inside the camp gate 24 hours a day "and no questions asked." It was odd to hear the Sergt speaking solemnly of "sexual intercourse." He

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Blazing hot by mid-morning P.T. was a sweating affair. Each P.T. session includes some energetic game such as "Buddies", where you run & at the cry of "Buddies" leap on your partner's back; & a favourite other which the P.T. instructor introduced as "a nice little parlour game called Slap Arse". Advance parties of the Brigade are arriving every hour or two, with M/T's loaded down with stuff, & tents springing up like mushrooms all over the ridge. Training continues according to syllabus, each day taking in a more advanced part of the subject. Our comedians are "Bulldog" Fraser, a child-like creature deceptively stupid-looking, & Donald Peter Chisholm, a big rugged Highlander from Antigonish. I like Chisholm's story of his ancestor, who was asked the names of the 3 most important men in the world. The answer — "The Chisholm, the Pope, & the King — in that order!"

Sent some things to Paul's Laundry in Kentville. An evening parade, Serjt. Mickelburgh informed the troops that anti-venereal treatment (& equipment) is available at the medical station inside the camp gate 24 hours a day "and no questions asked." It was odd to hear the Serjt speaking solemnly of "sexual intercourse." He

usually uses a much shorter word. One of the natural phenomena here is the flight of birds over the camp. Every morning soon after daylight ~~and~~ a number of squadrons of wild ducks fly up from the Cornwallis & pass over the camp towards Canard. Half an hour later, huge flocks of starlings do the same. At sundown they come back in the same order, ducks first, then the starlings. The winged cunts are in migration & tonight the air is noisy with night hawks having a glorious feed in the twilight. Major Turminges lectured us in the field this evening on "The Operational Role of the Reserve Army" most interesting. Told us that Ottawa had at last wakened to the particular needs of Nova Scotian defence & was sending the Reserve here large quantities of weapons, trucks & stores of all kinds. Said that the coastline defended by the West Novas was so extensive that the regiment could only place 1 man every half mile if so required.

Officers in the school: - West Novas, Crowell, Mackay, Bowes, Boggs, Robinson, Barnes, Cross, Chipman, Fraser, Woodman, Murray.  
Nfs. Rifles - Myatt, Shortreed, Mike Ryan.  
Pictou - Chisholm, Mac Pherson  
North Novas - Doyle, Rhodeniser, Vernon

Friday Aug 14/42. Misty dawn, hot day. This is the usual August weather of Aldershot, with the temperature dropping as low as  $40^{\circ}$  Fahrt. at night, from something like  $100^{\circ}$  in the sun at noon. In the forenoon our drill class broke off so that we West Novas could shift our kit from the School lines (these tents are being taken over by the Pictou) to a vague destination towards the east. Our Bn. Quartermaster, a beefy young lieut.

from Middleton named Neilly, too confused to say definitely what tents are to be occupied by West Novas. We fooled about for hours, Kit dumped in a vacant tent, and finally Capt. Chipman got Corkum, the Reb. Major, to show Neilly how to lay off the officers' lines. We still eat in the School mess tent, & the Brigadier ate lunch with us. Soon after, the sky clouded & rain poured. Neilly & his advance party (few of whom had any experience at pitching tents) struggled far into the night, having wasted 24 good hours of fine weather. As a result the tents are poorly pitched, some are down already, & our Co's tents have no floor boards.

Murray & I raised what hell we could, but the O's tangled mind was too much for us. This evening I took up a collection amongst the officers attending the School & "Bulldog" Fraser made the presentation speech to Genl. Mickelburgh. He was doubtful about accepting the envelope - said the instructors were forbidden to accept money - I told him the envelope contained "simply a portrait of His Majesty" (it was a \$10 bill) "which no good British soldier could refuse." He grinned, & thanked us. Tonight Chipman, Mackay, Clem Crowell & I went to the compound for a beer or two. The West Novas are due to arrive at 6 A.M. by special troop train.

Saturday Aug 15/42. Slept little. About 4 A.M. in the pouring rain heard someone shouting that the West Novas train was in Aldershot station. Dressed hastily & turned out just in time to see the boys tramping grimly up Strawberry Hill in the dark & downpour, wearing gas capes over full kit, & tin hats. B Co'y had entrained 11:30 A.M. yesterday & were a tired lot, having come all the way round via Yarmouth. They were allotted tents after a final convulsion of Neilly's mind, & got some breakfast. The School does not break camp officially until noon today, & I found myself appointed Orderly Officer for this last day, & with a young corporal of the Pictou named Sullivan I began my

rounds just as the Pictors came marching into camp, headed by their pipe band. They were followed by the North Noras with a smart bugle band. The School paraded before the Brigadier (Col. Simpson) at 8.30 AM & Major Farningget dismissed us, hoping we "had learned something."

All forenoon Murray, Smith & I galloped up & down trying to get B Coy issued with blankets etc., & above all trying to get floor boards. Cooking arrangements for officers were sketchy - I dined on bread & cheese.

In the afternoon the Training Officer, Capt. Jones ("the O' Jones") a burly active loud-voiced farmer from the Valley, a veteran of World War N-1, gave us a talk on the duties of an orderly officer. After tea in the mess marquee the C.O. ("Aunt Good") called a mess meeting & we appointed a committee & president (Major Sutton of Windsor). It was stated that last year's mess bills had been far too high & this year the officers would stick more or less to the rations. Breakfast & lunch to be informal, mess jackets to be worn for the evening meal. A hot night & humid; mosquitoes fierce; no sleep.

Sunday Aug 16/42 Hot & muggy. Bn. paraded on the flat just east of its lines - a muster parade conducted by a smart young paymaster captain from the I.V.C., in Highland bonnet & stockings. A long business & the men were allowed to sit & smoke. Later the C.O. gave a long fatherly talk to the boys & read the camp standing orders, including a long list of houses out of bounds - apparently half of Kentville. About noon the sun blazed forth. Things were at sixes & sevens all day. Having got the camp pitched after long struggle we had hoped to get on with training, but Brigade objected to the situation of our sergeants' mess marquee ("too near the officers' lines") & shifting it involved the moving of a whole row of marquees. Murray went off golfing all day & left

Smith to take the brunt as far as B Co'y was concerned. In the evening Smith & I went to the compound for rum-and-coke, found Murray there fortifying himself after the day's golf. A lovely warm night, soft breeze blowing along the camp ridge from west, & a new moon playing tag with small clouds. Much noise in A Co'y officers' lines where are 2 noisy men — a huge railway man named Corkum & a wise-cracking drunk named Killam. Brent & I divided B Co'y into 2 platoons for drill purposes. For the sake of air tonight we left our tent flaps up & Smith's sun helmet blew away & was lost.

Monday Aug 17/42. Fine & hot. Our boys picked for duty company today & we were busy all day shifting marquees & at other fatigues. Smith & I pitched in with the rest. Murray vanished. Some excitement at noon, when a lot of straw & pine brush in the refuse pit just west of the transport lines caught fire, throwing sheets of flame towards the M/T park. The armed guards (North Nova) on the transport lines watched it with superb indifference until the West Nova fire picquet (under Corkum of A Co'y) galloped up & spread a cordon about the fire as instructed. The guards then sallied forth with fixed bayonets, intent on their duty — and ordered the intruders off! While this little comedy was in progress the camp motor fire engine arrived. It took these regulars of the fire crew 15 or 20 mins. to get a stream going on the blaze. "Cumb" Good very excited for a while. After lunch I had to take some of our boys & shift tent pegs around the Bonmess marquees so that they made a symmetrical design. Other parties were lining up pegs in the men's lines, picking up waste paper etc. (It was B Co'y's hard luck to be picked for camp fatigue on the day before a general inspection!) What any of this has to do

with the defence of Nova Scotia, none of us can see. Our boys arrived in camp 4 AM. Saturday and since then they have done nothing but shift tents, pull up pegs & hammer them down again according to some brass hat's esthetic whim, & so on. Nothing remotely resembling training for war. Very hot. The North Novas & Pictou in their fine new shorts & puttees have some badly sunburned legs - a consolation to our boys in their shapeless slacks. After evening parade, Turnings gave the lecture on the "Operational Role of the Reserve Army" to the whole brigade on the slope east of our Bn. parade ground. At 10 P.M. Bde. orders advised that the expected Big Shot (Gen. Browne, for whose visit we have wasted so much time) will not be here till Wednesday. Rain fell at dusk & poured all night, with thunder & lightning. Smith is booked for Orderly Officer tomorrow & was awake most of the night consulting his watch.

Tuesday Aug 18/42 Up at reveille (sounded by an amateur bugler whom we know as "The Uncertain Trumpet") & found the lower part of the officers' lines flooded, C Coy orderly tent an island. Shaved at the trough, stripped to the waist, in pouring rain, while Chapman's fatigue party laboured with shovels to drain the flood. Orderly tent leaked in the night & some papers wet. In Smith's absence I made up the daily Parade State on the C.V.M.'s report, dropped it at the Bn. Orderly Room on my way down the lines. Wore gas cape & tin hat, very useful in this weather. Parade impossible in the downpour but we were obliged to hang about in the rain till 8.30 before receiving definite "stand fast" orders. Brent very busy with his orderly duties all day. Weather cleared after lunch & the Bn. paraded for a practice march past (for Gen. Browne). Much fuddle over details



such as (a) subalterns will (or will not) salute, (b) subalterns will or will not give "eyes right" order to platoons, & so on. "The O'Jones" gives his opinion, "Aunt" Good has his, the Adjutant (Pillingham) has another - and Brigade agrees with none. The chief phenomenon of Aldershot is in fact the muddle over elementary drill, there are a dozen different ways of doing simple movements, each with its advocate, & apparently nothing definitely laid down. This afternoon the men were paraded to the hollow south of the officers' lines for talks by the M.O.'s on sanitation, anti-venereal attention, etc. Our Bn. M.O. is Lieut. John Wickwires of L'pool, assisted by Dr. Herbin, a keen & whimsical fellow from Lockport, proud of his sergeant's stripes.

We managed to get in some work on the syllabus this afternoon - the first actual training B Co's has received since arrival in camp. I went with other "veterans" of the pre-camp school to Bde. H.Q. this evening & rec'd. from Major Lumminger my pay for the week 7 days @ \$3.00 less defence tax. The deduction amuses us all. I shall have to spend some of ~~the money~~ <sup>it</sup> at once, since Bde. has decreed that officers provide themselves with shorts, golf stockings, puttees, rank epaulettes for wear with shirts. To the Compound tonight with Eldridge (of Yarmouth) fine mild night, a pleasure to be walking, with the new moon hanging in the west over our camp, & our Bn. orderly tent glowing like a brown lantern on the hill.

Wednesday Aug 19/42. Burning hot day. The Big Shots arrived - Major Gen. B. W. Browne, D.S.O., M.C. & Brig. Gen. W. W. Foster (C.O. of M. & N. 6) together with newsmen, photographers, etc. They wandered over the camp watching various platoons at work asking many questions & getting some pointed answers - as when Browne asked how many men of C Coy (Yarmouth) were in camp. The answer was

# Inspection Of Reserve Army Units Continued By Director-General

1942

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KENTVILLE, Aug. 19 — Major General B. W. Browne, DSO, M. C. spent a busy day at Aldershot today where he made a thorough inspection of all three infantry battalions. Careful attention was given by the general to every detail of camp administration and operation. He spent much time in conferences with the commanding officers, in each unit and visited all of the cookhouses, mess tents and other accommodations for the men. While he made no comment to the press this evening it is understood that he was well pleased with all that he saw.

Tomorrow he will continue his inspection of other units in the morning and in the afternoon the formal inspection and the march past of the troops will be held. In making his rounds today the general was accompanied by Col. W. D. Simpson, brigade commander, and Major H. J. Furringer, brigade major.

Training continued as usual in the units and the general paid visits to the men and watched them carry out their work in various phases of arms life. Conspicuous on the grounds today were the Army Service Corps trucks. All vehicles were in use and the drivers were being given training in military driving. It was explained that to hold an operator's permit did not qualify a driver to operate one of these as the routine is different and there is also the matter of driving in convoy which is most important.

## TO BE INSTRUCTORS

It is planned that as soon as these drivers have qualified they will be used as instructors to teach men in other units with the object of having a maximum of drivers available to meet any emergency.

The training of men in the use and care of the rifle continued, along with the other work today. It is necessary, the Press was told, that a man be fully familiar with this weapon before he fires a round of ammunition with it. It is expected that firing on the range will start on Friday next and will continue until the following Friday after which the men strike canvas and head for home.

Map reading made its appearance on the syllabus today along with various other subjects in line with fieldcraft. The men are not only being taught the use of cover, but to make observations to ensure that an enemy using the same tactics could not creep up on them.

Lectures also are playing a part in the routine of the camp and the men are being instructed in discipline and safety precautions and general matters pertaining to camp organization.

Officers today expressed the opinion the men have shown a marked improvement since their arrival and are taking hold rapidly.

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making the camp look right for men for fatigue."

These men came here to learn to fight.

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"You're in the army now" (- the march down the camp lines every tfully.) Then the Pictou &

"80 men, sir" said Browne, "I see only 50; where are the others?"  
Promptly, "On fatigue duty, sir."

Browne, "Are you duty company today?"

Answer, "No, sir. There was so much work to do, making the camp look right for your inspection, that we had to detach 30 men for fatigue."

Browne, "This must be remedied at once. These men came here to learn to fight."

And so say we all.

After tea Capt. MacInnes ("Archibald MacDonald MacInnes") took us officers apart, having decided that we needed some coaching in marching. A long harangue with some sort of Scotch gibberish about "walking on the pad (pad, Drupp) of the feet." He is a futile little man, sent home by 1st Bn. Pictou (and not wanted, apparently, by Reserve Bn. Pictou) a martyr to stomach ulcers, a mere name on the payroll. His style of marching was the goose-step so far as we could see. We were ribald, & he gave us up, sadly. Dashed into Kentville this PM with Chipman to buy shorts, etc; also got my laundry from Fails.

Thursday Aug 20/42. The big day. A practice march past after morning parade. Worked on the training schedule all morning in blazing sun. (Nearly forgot to mention we had Col. Hanington & a Major Thompson for guests at breakfast.)

In the afternoon, the march past. The saluting base just on the brow of Strawberry Hill, east of our Orderly tent; a bunch of red-tails & photographers - one or two movie cameras. Our West Nova Scotia, off headed by their (really the Kentville) bugle band; then the North Nova Scotia & their bugles & drums playing "You're in the army now" (the only tune they know, apparently. They march down the camp lines every morning after reveille, playing it faithfully.) Then the Pictou &

their pipers, the 22nd Field Ambulance, 1st C.C.V., signal Co'y & transport, about 1½ miles of men & vehicles. We marched around Strawberry Hill by the north road, thence west past the assault course & finally eastward through the camp & past the saluting base. The boys marched well & I was proud of them. The sight of the whole brigade, 3500 men, debouching across the hollow east of Strawberry Hill was thrilling. You felt that you belonged to something tangible at last. Immediately after the march past the various units dispersed to their training grounds. I conducted a bayonet class for our boys, hot work but fun. The boys like action. Murray has decided to take a course in M/T driving & maintenance. This will enable Smith & me to get some real work done. Murray is slack, never makes preparation for the day's work (which causes delay at each training period while he consults the books) & is forever quarrelling with the Ack I's. A letter from Alice Smith today, invites me to call on her & Li, but I haven't the time. To the Compound tonight with Smith & Eldridge. Back at 11 P.M., a cool night & a good sleep.

Friday, Aug 21/42. Cool misty morning. Busy all day in the field, acting as training officer to the Co'y. Felt a bit seedy towards noon & skipped P.T. In afternoon found I had the camp ailment, with consequent sprints to the latrine. In mess at noon I heard that B Co'y may go to the rifle range tomorrow, so I told "the O'Jones" that our rifles were in a filthy state for lack of cleaning apparatus. (There is hardly a proper pull-through in the whole Br. — yet we are warned against using "irregular" pull-throughs) Jones retorted that we must clean our rifles any way we could. So for the final period this afternoon we cleaned the Co'y rifles, using

six pull-throughs made from some "white float" that Smith had. One broke & stuck in the rifle but the S.M. got it out. In spite of this there remains a lot of Aldershot grit in the breech mechanism, impossible to remove without proper brushes. It is monstrous that hundreds of good rifles remain choked with sand for days on end, for lack of cleaning apparatus. (I wondered, during yesterday's march past, what the brass hats would think if they knew that all these rifles, going past so smartly sloped, were so choked with dirt that none would fire properly.)

At mess tonight the C.O. warned me for range duty tomorrow. I am to take charge of the butts during the afternoon, the butt party to be supplied by E & G Co's. Spent the evening running after the Bn. Weapon Training Officer (Cosman) for my butt registers, & seeing the C.O.'s of E & G re my party tomorrow. At mess also "Aunt" Good declared that 75 men had paraded to the M.O. today with foot ailments, & that henceforth Co's C.O.'s must hold daily foot inspections. (Only 1 man in B Co's has reported sore feet.)

Killam of A Co's got drunk this afternoon, appeared on the field & insisted on taking over his Co's for drill; led them some merry antics before Dolliver & Corkum & Miller got him back to his tent. They had a fine row there, with strong opinions in stronger language. Discipline is poor in A Co's & no wonder. This evening Killam wandered about the officer's lines wrapped in a blanket, toga-fashioned, & with his aquiline nose resembled a Roman senator getting up from a 3 day debauch.

Our Co's training went well today & Smith & I are pleased. The men feel better, too & interest is much higher.

Saturday, Aug 22/42 Sun came up like a red ball & stayed like that well into the forenoon. Atmosphere hazy, due some say

to the big forest fires in New Brunswick. It was chilly at 6 A.M. when the first parties moved off to the range but by 11 A.M. it was very hot & getting hotter by the minute. Bomb instruction, then Lewis gun, in the midst of which B Co's was ordered off to the range. I couldn't go as I must be in the butts this afternoon. Brent Smith told me later that the boys shot well, but there was trouble with flare-backs from several rifle breeches. Several boys in other Co's got nasty cheek burns & smarting eyes. To my mind the trouble was caused by grit on the bolt face, preventing proper closure of the breech (one bolt flew back & struck a boy in the face) but Brigade (unwilling to admit that failure to supply proper cleaning tools was at the bottom of it) chose to blame the ammunition. I hear "Aunt" Good got a wiggling from 1 Bde. for being absent from the range while this was going on. While all this was going on, I was in the butts with my first real command - consisting of a 2<sup>d</sup> Lieut (Corkum) a sergeant & 68 other ranks - all green youngsters from Shelburne & Barrington & Lockeport. We moved off from the Bn. parade ground at noon, after an early dinner (which I could not eat owing to the heat & the malaise in my stomach) & I reported to the range officer, a hard-boiled old regular, up from the ranks, Capt. Woodin of the R.C.R. He rapped out some explanations, said he had to see his wife aboard a train, & buzzed off. It was a business, explaining to those raw kids how the various hits were to be signalled, especially with "the O'Jones" impatiently waiting at the firing point. We got going, & I galloped up & down that narrow concrete walk all afternoon, checking on the markers. Also I marked the register for the 1st ten targets, the sergeant registered 11-20 & Corkum 21-30. The kids couldn't understand the danger; once I spotted a tall lad hanging from his hands on the

butt parapet, pulling himself up to peer through the gears. I yelled & he got down. Another time I saw a lad crawling up the slope at the west end. Both episodes during a temporary break in the firing. The heat was terrible in those shallow concrete compartments, the sun beat right on & the high bank behind the targets shut off all the breeze. We had no water, & about 3 pm. one boy collapsed. "The O'Jones" sent up a dixie full of water in a truck & with that we kept going. The temp. must have been  $110^{\circ}$  at least in the butts (it was  $95^{\circ}$  in the shade in Kentville) Coming on top of dysentery this strenuous afternoon in the heat took the starch out of me. At 5 pm. I marched the boys back at a smart pace, anxious for a cold shower, but the shower made no difference. A hot & breathless evening. Called Alice from the Compound to explain why I couldn't accept her invitation. Had some rum-and-coke and beer. Slept naked on top of my bed most of the night. (This evening bumped into Boston Robinson, Wolfville author, who apparently has landed a captaincy on the permanent staff of Brigade. He was sent home from England & boarded out of the Active force)

Sunday, Aug 23/42 Another blazing day. Brigade held a Protestant drum-head service on our Pn. parade ground this morning at 10 AM. (Catholics went to early Mass at the S. J. C. chapel) Hollow square. No less than 5 padres. Service hymn books were distributed & a fine band came over from the S. J. C. to play the hymns. Afterwards we were free for the day - my one & only holiday this camp. "Bulldog" Fraser, Smith & I decided on our picnic at Amethyst Cove. Borrowed 3 tumblers & bought ham sandwiches & cake in a wayside "eatery" near Kentville. ~~and~~ set off

in "Bulldog" car for Scott's Bay by way of Lanning & the Look-Off. Left the car at the north end of Scott's Bay & clambered through pastures & woods over the mountain which forms Cape Split. A gorgeous scramble down to the Minas Basin shore - the mountain drops at an angle of  $70^{\circ}$  or so & the wooden ladders which formerly assisted the passage have rotted beyond use. The tide was out & so we were able to walk  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles or so along the shore under inaccessible cliffs running up 80 to 150 feet. Had lunch at a cold spring at the cliff foot. Spent the afternoon rummaging the foreshore for amethysts - I found a few fair samples, Smith got a beauty. Pleasant in the shadow of the cliffs, watching Cape Sharp & Partridge Island dancing in the heat across the channel. Kept a wary eye on the tide, returned to our crossing place at 5 PM, a stiff & breathless climb - I stripped to the waist to save my shirt from the sweat pouring off me. Washed in a brook at Scott's Bay. Supper in the small dining room at the Look Off, whose proprietress told us we were her only customers - very different from a summer Sunday in peace time. Drove back leisurely through Wolfville, Sleepy Hollow, had a look at the pretty little gorge of the Gaspercau. Reached camp at 8:30 after a most enjoyable day. About 11 PM "the O'Jones", full of cheer, came & sat on the ground in our lines & raised his piercing tenor in song to the moon. There was no sleep to be had, ~~so~~ so we all turned out & joined in, some good voices (Cosman's, Wickwrie's) & none bad (West Novas are the best singers in camp) so we serenaded our Col., went on to the North Novas, who joined us gleefully in a serenade of their C.O., & ended up in the Picton officers' lines with a large &



enthusiastic choir in all stages of undress, singing all things from "Annie Laurie" to "Jesus various, pilot me."

Finished about 1 AM by collapsing a tent on Lieut. Corneau of C. Co'y who was snoring loudly. A muffled yell of "What the hell is going on here?" was the last I heard.

Monday, Aug 24/42 Up & shaved in rain with the other Spartans. In the field all morning with the Co'y, in a drizzle which soaked our battle tunics. Warned for <sup>RANGE</sup> ~~out~~ duty again, this time in <sup>with</sup> ~~the~~ B Co'y. Dinner at 11, moved off at 12. Had the boys bring full water bottles. Did our Bren gun shooting at 100 & 200 yds. Short & sweet, 5 rounds single action & a burst of 10. A sweet little gun, everyone keen on it. After our shoot I marched B Co'y back to the 600 yd. mound, where they could see the relative sizes of men at 100, 200 yd & so on, & gave them a talk on estimating distances, urging them to fix this picture in their minds. Followed a bit of Field Craft, then back to our training field for bayonet exercise. At 4 PM the whole brigade gathered on the east brow of Strawberry Hill to watch a demonstration of battle tactics by a "command's" platoon from the I. V. C. They were in battledress, faces blackened, armed with rifles, tommy-guns, Brens, mortar, anti-tank rifle, & carried H.F. bombs & smoke bombs. They advanced in short sprints by sections in arrowhead formation, always covering the moving section by fire & sometimes smoke; worked a section around to the "enemy" M.G. post's flank, bombed it, rushed it, & quickly moved on & took up a defensive position beyond. The men are athletes all - the distance they covered in their brief sprints was amazing.

It was a good show, climaxed when a sound-truck drove up in front of the Bde, & each man of the demonstrators stepped up to the "mike", told what his job was & what weapons, ammunition etc. he carried.

Tonight the temperature dropped to 45° at sundown, a terrific change from the day's heat, & we officers & NCO's sat and shivered till dark in shirts & shorts in the south hollow, listening to a lecture on map-reading by a slim dark slit-eyed tough-talking officer named Carver (Bridgwater) of the 1st Bn. W.N.S.R., lately sent back from England as instructor. To the Compound afterwards for a rum or two to thaw my blood. There met Alvin Chipman of C Co'y, who told me that his son (who sailed overseas five days ago) was back in Aldershot. The troopship was attacked by submarine not far from Hfx; a destroyer ran in and "took" the torpedos, blew up with all hands & damaged the trooper's bow with her wreckage so that it had to return. A number of officers & men of the Elgin (Ont.) Regt, a crack tank corps, who were on the troopship, are now back at the U.T.C. barracks here.

Phoned Edith from the Compound to hold Doubleday's galley proofs of my novel, as I shall have no time to work on them here. Walked back to camp in the cold light of a nearly full moon. The Bn. "other ranks" were holding their nightly singsong in a mess marquee, very good harmony, accompanied by guitars & violin.

Sent 1 of my issue blankets down the lines to Sergh Kelly who has lumbago. (Murray borrowed the other two)

Tuesday, Aug 25/42 My turn as Orderly Officer coincides with our Co'y's second turn as duty co'y for the Bn. — & the 2nd time B Co'y has been selected for fatigue on the day before a general inspection. (Inspector-General Tremblay comes tomorrow.) I was

awake at 5 AM & up at 5:30, seeing if the Bn. cooks were on duty. At 6 AM the Orderly Corporal brought along the sick parade & I helped him fill out the papers. Bitter cold. I was glad to wear a sweater under my battledress. 7 AM. Made the round of the mess tents with the O. Serjt. asking "Any complaints" & visiting cookhouses to smooth out said complaints. Snatched my own breakfast just before 8 & took my place on the right flank of the Bn. at morning parade (8-10)

At the C.O.'s "fall out, the Orderly Officer!" I fled to the abluition trough & got a share. Then down the lines with the O. Serjt. Found the kits put out neatly but in various fashions, & Capt. McInnes busy showing A Co'y the regulation way (after 9 days in camp!) There was some dirt in the lines, & I set the fatigue men to work cleaning it up. The only real eyesores were several tents occupied by batmen & cooks, who rush off to their duties the first thing in the morning & leave their abode like pig-sties.

About this time along came Brigadier Simpson with the Bde Major (Cookum) & a Major Ashford from M.D. 6. He asked me to fall in with his party for an inspection of the West Nova lines.

There was blood in his eye, & when he saw some matches on the floor of the 1st tent in our lines (the serjeant-major of A Co'y's) he declared it was the "filthiest tent I've seen." He blew up when he saw the kits of various co'ys laid out with unorthodox folds in the blankets, etc, & his ire reached its peak at the lines of D & E Co'ys (recruited within the past few weeks in Shelburne & St. John's Counties). Major Ashford, walking beside me, asked pleasantly how our men got along at the ranges yesterday. I said "Very well considering the small amount of ammunition allowed," and then

burst out something to the effect that the men's shooting was a damned sight more important than the way their kits were arranged of a morning. He talked to me like a Dutch uncle on the "importance of little things in building discipline." I snorted that we were still teaching our men the regulation way to tie a bootlace while the Germans had been teaching their men to fight. The upshot of the Brigadier's visit was that half of each Co'y was called in from the training field & spent the rest of the day making their lines look pretty. Simpson gave "Aunt" Good a fine blowing up, the C.O. passed the buck to the Co'y commanders, who passed it to the C.S.M.'s, & all in all there was a fine pothet all day. I spent the remainder of the morning making rounds with the Field Officer (Chipman, thank God.)

Galloped up & down all afternoon seeing that items noted in the morning were properly attended to, but got a chance to sit down between 3 & 4 PM while inspecting the issue of rations. At tea table Major Sulton heard me express my opinion of the waste of men's time on unnecessary primping today & agreed with me heartily & loudly, I think for "Aunt" Good's ears. All our officers believe the same, for that matter. After tea another lecture in the south hollow by Garber. Then the whole Bde. marched off in the dusk to the ranges, where they witnessed a display of signal rockets, flares, fire bombs, & rifles & Brens firing tracer bullets. It was fine to hear the troops marching back in the dark, singing. They reached camp about 9.45 & suddenly the camp air raid alarm blared forth & I could hear the horns blatting in the distant hollow where Kentville lay. Grabbed my flashlight & sprinted through the lines ordering lights & cigarettes out. No trouble except that

3 drunken Aek I's came reeling through the camp from town, smoking cigarettes. I put one man's out for him & the rest made off. When the All clear sounded, it was time for Lights Out anyhow so I spent the next hour roaming the lines. The troops were in a musical mood & lay in their dark tents singing by companies. Tonight very cold again. There is a total eclipse of the moon at midnight but I was dog-tired & turned in after my last round, so didn't see it.

Wednesday, Aug 26/42 A frost this morning. Washing & shaving at the trough a frigid affair. After morning parade the usual training program, broken at 10 AM. when B. Coy officers & NCO's marched off to the pistol range for a shoot with Reising carbines. An aimed group using "single-automatic", the rest fired from the hip in short bursts. I was lucky & the sergeant-major thinks I'm a dead shot. Smith did well, so did the NCO's, but Murray (who had taken French leave from his motor course in order to join the shoot) missed the target clean in all 3 attempts. (He went back later & did better.) He got a lot of kidding. After dinner, parade & the training schedule again. I marched B Coy over to the south woods & let them plan & make a stalking "attack" with myself as the enemy holding the road. This took most of the afternoon & the boys were delighted with the change & the notion that they were doing at last some practical training in warfare. Tonight at tea (Corn on the cob, the first of the season - one cob per man!) we learned that West Novas will entrain at 6:15 AM Saturday. Presumably this means we shall break

break camp Friday night & sit up (or stand up) all night. Smith & I turned in early but about midnight our regimental roisterers came home from the I.C. officers' mess in fine fettle & held a circus in the mess marquee. "The O'Jones" and "MacSmith" (of H.Q. Coy) held a "bayonet" combat using a rake handle & a mop, amid loud cries of "High port!" "On guard!", etc. There was a "football" match with a dishpan & I understand Boggs did some really good trick bicycling within the confines of the marquee.

Thursday, Aug 27/42. Bitter cold again this morning. I was shaving at the trough in pajama trousers & slippers when a voice exclaimed "Raddall, I admire a man who can stand about dressed like that this morning" — Lt. Good, muffled in a heavy sweater & bathtowel. Much fussing about kits in the lines this morning — Gen. Tremblay's delayed visit is today. Every co'y required to keep at least half its strength at work in the lines all day.

B Co'y was warned for butt duty at the range — again in my charge. Got dinner at 11 A.M. (blazing hot day by this time) & moved off at 12 with A Co'y close behind. Arrived at the 100 yd. range hot & dusty, only to be informed coolly by the sardonic "O'Jones" that he had sent the Adjutant word to cancel our party & what were we doing here? Firing was finished for the day. I voiced my opinion of Adjie & "O'Jones" gave me permission to shoot him on our return. None of B Co'y had ever seen the butts so I marched them up there & showed them how the targets worked, how to signal hits, etc. Smith suggested a route march in the woods behind the range, but first one & then another man complained that his feet were sore until half the company

were "unable" to march. They just lagged, of course, because of the heat & the dust of our journey. (How quickly they learn the old soldier's tricks!) So I marched them back to the training field, much to their disgust, & took up the regular schedule - squad drill, bayonet exercise, field-craft, Reising gun. Major Ashford visited us & talked with Smith & me for some time. 60-ish, grey, with blue eyes, very mild voice, English.

Tonight Smith, Cosman & I made a party. To the compound first, for a Tom Collins or two, thence to the I.S.C. officers' mess, where the drinks are stronger & the atmosphere much more informal. Found there many of our own, together with Pictou, North Novas; Edge Allen, very tight, fat face beaming like a harvest moon; several merry officers of the Elgin Regt. All went merrily, with a gorgeous sing-song at the piano. Major King of the Elgins got a couple more drinks into Brent Smith & for once in his life Brent was singing. Left for camp at 11 PM by the light of a full moon, scrambled a lunch in the mess tent, where other songsters joined us. Led by "the O'Jones" off we went to serenade the North Novas, then the Pictou, & finally (50 or 60 voices) gathered before the Brigadier's tent & rendered "In the evening by the moonlight", "The old beer bottle" & "Good night, Ladies." He did not appear. To bed at some ungodly hour.

Friday, Aug. 28/42. My face chapped from shaving in the past two frosty dawns & I look like a badly sunburned leper. Another fine day. In the training field all morning. After lunch began the process of breaking camp, marked

notably by long lines of men filing down to the fire pit to empty their palliasses. Packed up & turned in my 3 issue blankets (which I had loaned to Murray & Sergh. Kelly) also my palliasse & bolster. All evening the units were busy loading trucks with mess tables & forms, boxing the rifles & bayonets, etc. Renville is to be sounded at 3 AM. so Smith & I turned into our sleeping bags about 11.

At midnight I awakened from a deep sleep hearing a thick voice exclaim "Let's tear this God-damn tent down" & drunken hands fumbling at our guy ropes. I bounced out (clad in nothing but underwear shorts) & found 3 vague figures in battledress. Told them to stop & was given a belligerent answer. I rushed at the nearest, knocked him down with a hard right & left; he grabbed my knees & over I went. I got up on my knees & hit him again several times, sprained my right thumb & barked my knuckles. Smith stood in the tent door, gaping. The fallen man's companions now rushed in & caught my arms, insisting that it was all a mistake. I recognised "Mac Smith's" voice, & Robinson's, & the other got this feel - it was Boggs. All 3 from H.Q. Coy and good fellows. I was sorry, but Boggs insisted he was all right & Robinson & Mac Smith insisted I must join them in a sing. Obviously there was to be no sleep. I dressed & joined a merry crowd in the mess, which included 2 or 3 Pictous & a couple of North Nova majors. Fun was fast & furious "Mac Smith" hurled a gallon tin of apple juice (half full) at "O'Jone" & struck on the head a hatless officer, a stranger from the I.S.C. just entering the tent. The stranger wanted to fight but consented to sing & the whole hullabaloo finally drifted off towards the North



SATURDAY, AUG. 29/42

Nova lines. It was then raining hard so Smith & I returned to our tent. Lay there smoking till 3, when Sergh. Peach appeared & we loaded our stuff on the truck for L'pool. Breakfast at 4 AM. Bn. paraded in the dark at 5 AM. ("Aunt" Good made a funny error in the dark, giving the order, "Battalion! Slope arms!" - when all the rifles had been packed & shipped to Aldershot station) The rain had ceased, & there was a thin glimmer from a clouded moon as we moved off, led by our band playing what I suppose was a funeral march - it was deadly slow at any rate. The I.T.C. must have cursed us as we marched down to the railway, waking their sleeping barracks with our din of brass & drums. The Col. & the Brigadier stood at the end of the platform waving as our badly overcrowded train pulled out in the first flush of dawn. The train was split at Middleton, & 3 coaches with the South Shore troops were hooked on to the C.N.R. train to Bridgwater. A Co'y detrained at B'water & our coaches were hooked to the tail of the regular west-bound train. Arrived L'pool at 11.30 AM, formed up on the platform & marched to the Armouries for dismissal. (At Aldershot we had no radio in our camp & only occasionally got a newspaper. The chief news was that of the death of the Duke of Kent in an air crash in Scotland, & the accounts of the big Canadian raid on Dieppe.)

Tuesday, Sep. 1/42 Completed checking galley proofs with M/S of my novel "His Majesty's Yankees" & set them off, Special Delivery, to Doubleday Doran. Costain wiring, anxious to get them back. Tonight at the Armouries, Smith held a pay

parade; all ranks are now paid up to & incl. Aug 29<sup>th</sup>. Charlie Smith, manager of Thompson Bros, has started to build a house between Pashie's & the Widow Walther's bungalow. This fills up the only vacant lot on our side of Park St. It has been an eyesore for years. Hear that Roger Tupper (Milton) is back in Canada as an instructor, after some exciting months in bombers over France & Germany. Gerald Knight (L'pool) is flying in the Mediterranean area. Sid Lord (L'pool) is still doing great things with Spitfires over the English Channel. Bruce Clark is somewhere in the Middle East or India.

War news: Germans are battering their way into Stalingrad, by which the fate of the Caucasus (& perhaps of Russia) hangs. U.S. troops are thoroughly established at Tulagi & elsewhere in the Solomons, where they killed many Japs in hand to hand fighting. A Jap attempt to land forces at Milne Bay in New Guinea was beaten off by Anzac troops with severe loss. Japs are withdrawing from outlying posts in China & concentrating towards the Siberian border.

Sunday, Sep 6/42 Fine with a cool west wind, a jippy Fall day after 3 days of burning heat. This is Re-consecration Sunday (following the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the war), & tonight the town churches held a combined service on the school grounds. Service units & other organizations paraded there from the Parade - Legion; Navy; Air Force; B Co'y, W.N.S. Regt; Liverpool Band; 36th Role Engineer Co'y; Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Cubs, Brownies - the biggest parade ever held in our small town. Incidentally, the brass-bats at Middleton have been shuffling the "letters" of the 2nd. Bn companies, so that (as from Sep 1/42) we are no longer B Co'y - we are G Co'y.

This means changing all our markings, from clothes to ammunition boxes; for what good purpose  
no one knows yet.

Monday, Sep 7/42 (Labour Day) Fine fall day. No labour parade. The paper mill has been shut down for a week or more, due to lack of shipping; & altho it resumes tomorrow there are people in a position to know who say the mill may be shut down for the duration. Hence labour (as represented by the mill unions) are not in the parading mood of former years. This afternoon & evening the boys of our newly re-named G. Co. had an outing at Earl Thompson's cabin, Broad River. Guests were "Father" John Wilson of Trinity (in captain's uniform) & Lunnis & Sandford of the Engineers. There was plenty of beer (in which Father John dabbled with enjoyment) & cook "Jake" Woulton dished up a really excellent dinner. Lunnis told army stories that grew more & more powerful, but Father John took them all in with amusement & even capped them with one of his own. Strolled over to Bill Wigglesworth's cabin & found there Roy & Olive Campbell from Hfx. Had a chat. Bill full of gloomy predictions about the new marine slip being built at L'pool. (He was many years operator of the old L'pool slip).

Saturday, Sep 12/42 To Eagle Lake this p.m. with Smith, Dunlap, Parker & Gordon. Found bear droppings on the trail from the landing & just outside our privy; droppings are stained deeply with Bruin's meals of huckleberries, of which there is a wonderful crop.

Sunday, Sep 13/42 Null, with SE wind. Gordon foresaw rain & stayed in camp. The rest of us set off for Kempton Lake at 9 AM to pick cranberries. Lakes & streams very low. Left canoe at Half Way Cove & hiked over barely distinguishable trail to Kempton Lake, pouring rain all the way. Picked a few berries along west shore Kempton Lake, & stopped to dry ourselves & eat dinner beside a roaring fire in our old tenting place. Rain eased off to a drizzle but bushes wet & we reached Cranberry Brook like drowned rats. Cranberries scarce, I got about

a quart, the others not much if any more. Turned back at 4, reached camp at 6:30, drank up the last of Gordon's 1914 rum & ate a big supper. Going down the trail in the dusk I suddenly recalled leaving my watch in camp, went back for it & had to make my way down to the river in near darkness. Nearly broke my neck several times. Incident. Near Kempton Lake I attempted to break off the top of a small fir growing about waist high & found myself grasping a handful of fir and a small green snake. What was he doing up there? Saw many tracks of moose, deer & bear.

Capt. Charlie Williams of the "Markland", home for a short leave, tells me that 6 ships out of a convoy of 30 in which he sailed north from Trinidad were torpedoed in the Caribbean. He also witnessed 3 ships blown up by acoustic mines dropped by German subs in the mouth of the Chesapeake.

Monday, Sep 14/42 The great battle for the Caucasus still rages at Stalingrad, where the Russians hang on grimly. The Germans are edging down the Black Sea coast however, have taken Novorossisk. Egypt is quiet. Australians & Japs are fighting for New Guinea. Here at home, prices are creeping up despite the so-called "price ceiling". Firwood, once \$7.00 a cord, is now \$9.50 to \$13. Ham & bacon are 50¢ to 60¢ a lb. when obtainable at all (gov't. has just informed us that "no pork products will be available for the next 7 weeks") & beef-steak is 40¢ - this also is scarce, though there is no gov't. ban. Lamb is 45¢ when obtainable. No bully-beef for sale at all. Fish is hard to get. (Our fish merchant makes his rounds twice a week, often quits before reaching our street, supply exhausted. He gets fish sometimes as far away as Lockport & Lunenburg. Local fishermen are all engaged on high wages at Thompson's & elsewhere, or refuse to go out on account of submarines.)

Our coffee ration gives us 2 cups per day each. We have a cup for breakfast & the other at supper, & drink milk at lunch. Many people sought to eke out their sugar ration by buying pastry, but now the pastry-cooks are rationed. A sign in Smeltzer's (our local pastry-cook's) window today reads "no cakes or pies etc. this week" - he explains that last week he over-ran his allowance. At the liquor store, rum is unobtainable, whiskey & gin & brandy are doled out 1 bottle per person; beer is plentiful at 35¢ a quart. There is much agitation amongst the unco' guid for Prohibition; the Hfx Herald is yelling loudly for them; gov't is saying nothing. Waterproof footwear is now all ersatz rubber, "warranted to wear reasonably well if used with reasonable care". No tires to be had, of course, & there are rumours that gasoline for A class drivers will soon be little or nothing.

Wednesday Sep 16/42. Fine hot weather. Made our annual tour of the Valley today, leaving the kids in charge of Vera Parker. Grandma Freeman & "big" & "little" Marie came along with us. Left at 9 a.m. via Caledonia & Annapolis. Bought plums, pears & excellent apples (Gravensteins have ripened very early this year.) Apples 40¢ peck, pears 75¢ a ½ bushel, plums 10¢ a "strawberry box". I'd hoped to get some corn, but all along the Valley corn-patches stood brown & dead due to the drought. Otherwise the farms were lovely to the eye. An excellent dinner at Middleton's American House, where amongst other good things we had what the menu called "marinated herring." (Simply the old-fashioned Lunenburg "soused" herring, i.e. soaked in brine & then served raw with a piquant sauce of onions, vinegar & spices.) At Kentville Mrs Freeman & the Maries called on Becky Sedrick at

the Lamonts, while Edith & I hunted up Alice Smith, who is secretary-hothead at the Salvation Army hut. Drove down to Wolfville for a look at the Seminary, then back to Kentville & the New Ross road. Had a picnic tea beside a lovely little lake just east of Jeffersville. Then on to Chester Basin & home, which we reached at 8.15.

War news. The Canadian warship "Raccoon" has been sunk by torpedoes together with 3 merchant vessels in a battle with subs near N.S. coast. "Raccoon" was a small armed motor-yacht, crew of 40 & 50, all lost. One was Owen Fralic, former employe of Thompson's Garage here. { "Raccoon" was torpedoed in the Gulf of St. Lawrence } Ottawa has announced the total Canadian casualties at Scipiee — 170 killed 633 wounded 2547 missing (out of about 5000 engaged.)

Friday, Sep 18/42. Fine hot weather, like July. Germans claim a great success in the submarine attack on Canadian convoy. Ottawa admits corvette "Charlottetown" was sunk also, but reveals that 1 sub in a sinking condition surrendered to the destroyer "Acinibini". The whole affair took place in dense fog. Germans & Russians are fighting in the streets of Stalingrad. Tonight I went with Sergt Max Harding in J. Co's truck to Port Mouton, where I have instructions to recruit a section. Bruce Robertson gave me a list of suitable men & we made a house-to-house canvass. They were shy, each wanting to hang back "until the thing has got started" or "I'll sign up if 50 and 50 signs." Of course it is the familiar story of all Queen's County places; all the men between 19 & 45 who are any good are already in the army, navy, air force or merchant service, or are working on warship repairs at Thompson's seven days a week plus 3 nights a week. However, I think enough to make a section were favourable, & next week I shall go back for another prod.

The fishermen are doing well these days, sometimes make \$40 or \$50.

a day each. The swordfishermen got as high as 29¢ a lb for their catch & some shared at \$900 to \$1000 per man for 2 months' work. (Some Pt. Mouton swordfishermen are not home yet.)

Mr. Howe announces that tanker losses this summer have been "appalling" & that gasoline ration for A class drivers will be cut to one-half, this winter.

Sunday, Sep 20/42. Canadian destroyer "Ottawa" admitted sunk by torpedos in the recent convoy battle, with heavy loss of life. Germans claim to have completely shattered a big convoy bound to Murmansk, also; "38 ships sunk including 6 warships" London admits "heavy loss", claims German reports "grossly exaggerated".

The great battle for Stalingrad still rages, with heavy fighting in the streets. British troops are advancing on Tananarive in the final stages of occupation of Madagascar. London newspapers criticize costly Dieppe operation, suggest lack of cooperation between navy, army & air force.

Tuesday Sep 22/42. Heavy rain all day yesterday & today with thunder & lightning effects from 5 p.m. last night to 5 a.m. today - the longest thunderstorm I can remember. Floods everywhere, cellars full, roads & railroads washed out. No trains or mails today.

Friday, Sep 25/42. Still no rail connection with Hfx. Among other damage, a 50 feet of the steep embankment along the foot of the bluff near Hubbards was washed out clean. Town clerk Hector Mackool tells me \$800 worth of gravel will be required to fill the wash-outs in h'pool streets. On Jail Hill one washout was 4 ft. deep. This & the flood of July 4th are unique in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant". War news: Tananarive has been occupied by British troops; French resistance continues in

southern Madagascar. Anti-British riots continue in India, where the pious fanatic Gandhi is demanding withdrawal of our troops (presumably so the Japs can step in.) In the Caucasian region, Stalingrad still holds out.

Saturday, Sep 26/42. Our reserve infantry co'y (formerly B Co'y, now re-named G Co'y for brass-hat reasons) set out on a week-end scheme at 2 p.m., marched to Beach Meadows by the shore road (very bad after the rains). Spent the night in open bivouac in a small field just behind the beach (our 15 w.h. truck had brought along blankets, cooking outfit, rations, targets, etc.)

Sunday, Sep 27/42. Yesterday's fine cool weather turned in the night to a mild moist easter which drenched all our blankets with a fine driving mist. Reveille at daylight (7 AM) followed by P.T., clean-up & shave, then breakfast, prepared by "Jake" Moulton our company cook, a Newfie, a former ship's cook. I spent the morning setting up targets & conducting a shoot for Reising automatic carbines. We used land of Melbourne Wharton for firing points, with a high sand dune facing seaward for a back-stop. Showers fell all morning but training went on. I was in charge of the butt-party during the afternoon rifle-shooting but got a chance to shoot, my first shooting with the old Springfields (Model 1917) with which our Reserve Army is equipped. Excellent rifles they are, too. Wound up the afternoon's range work with some firing of the Lewis gun. Had tea, packed our targets etc. into the truck, cleaned up our camp ground, filled in fire-hole & latrine, etc., & set off for L pool by the inner road about 6 p.m. Weather still humid, the air warm & musty, we sweated all the way home & reached the Armoury in the dark about 8:45.



On this Sunday our children commenced going to the United Church S.S. The increasingly Romish practices introduced into Trinity Church by "Father" Wilson have disgusted us with the C. of E., especially in the light of the fact that Wilson's "project" here is a pet scheme of Bishop Hackenley's; it looks to me as if the wily bishop intended to make his diocese Anglo-Catholic as quickly as possible.

Tuesday, Sep 29/42. Censorship has just been lifted on details of the storm damage in N. V. Sep 21 & 22. From 8 to 9 inches of rain fell in 24 hours, roads & railroads were washed out, cattle & sheep were drowned, whole streets flooded in Hfx, Truro & other towns, the army camp at Bedford was inundated. There were 15 or 20 washouts on the H. & V. N. line; two temporary bridges had to be built. Halifax was isolated for days & the milk supply there is only now getting back to normal. I'm told the Mersey water storage in Lake Rosignol (100 sq. miles including flowage) came up 1 ft. on this one rain. Newspapers call it the worst flood in half a century.

Saturday, Oct. 3/42. Bought my big game hunting license from Mrs. Herb. Minard. Fee unchanged - \$2.00. Each hunter is allowed to shoot 2 deer, of either sex. After lunch I picked up Roy Gordon in my car & drove to Indian Gardens with tent, guns, grub, sleeping bags, etc. for a little hunt. A N.W. gale blowing & the canoe we found in the Mespaco shed was a cruiser's model, narrow & unstable for lake work. However G. thought we could make it to East Brook & we set out. Nearly upset the canoe right by Mespaco wharf. As we rounded point onto First Lake found a big sea running & gale blowing in violent gusts. Impossible to turn back, had to dig into the wind & after a hard fight made shore in the flowage just north of Trout Brook. G. lost his

purse overboard enroute, containing \$140.00. The high water of a few years ago killed the trees for miles along Saunders' Meadows & washed out all underground; now this land is a queer savannah of tall flowering rushes, 3' to 5' high, and rich wild-meadow grass, with the trunks of dead birches & maples standing, branches gone & bark hanging in shreds. The deer feed in these meadows, cropping the grass like cattle. In an hour's hunt before dark I saw 2 does & 1 fawn, G. saw 1 doe 1 fawn. We did not shoot, anxious to get a buck. G. crept within 20ft. of a doe, sprained his ankle badly in jumping from a rock. Camped in the lee of an "island" in the dry flowage near the canoe. Gale blew all night with some rain.

Sunday, Oct. 4/42. Up at daybreak I stayed in camp to nurse his ankle, I took his Savage 300 & hunted along the meadow edge all morning without success. Weather turned fine & hot. Struck camp & paddled back to Indian Gardens at 4 P.M., stripped to the waist. Home at 4.30. Charles Philips, a sailor from the corvette "Dunvegan" in port, up for tea. He is keen to become a writer. A good-looking intelligent fellow of 25, Ontario born, has done everything from gold mining in Kirkland Lake to punching cows in Texas.

Tuesday Oct. 6/42 Drill continues each Tues. & Thurs night. Recruiting is slow. We have 95 on the strength (nominal) of G. Co'y, but several are at sea with the paper Co. steamers most of the time, others are transient labourers on various construction jobs etc, & our working strength is nearer 50. Rifles & full equipment are kept at the men's homes; they bring them in for drill, of course. Those who live in Port Medway, Mill Village, Brooklyn & Milton are carried back & forth in the Co'y truck. We have 100 Springfield rifles; those not in actual use we are compelled (by Monbray Jones' wangling at H.Q.) to hand over to the local Engineers twice a week for drill purposes. As we have to keep the rifles clean, & be in all ways

responsible for them, we kicked at this (we officers offered to resign) but Capt. Murray yielded the point. Our other armament includes 1 Lewis, & 6 Reising carbines. Plenty of ammunition now for all these; but none yet for the officers' revolvers! Personally I'd rather carry a Reising anyhow; it carries 20 rds. of .45 calibre in the magazine & can fire at a rate of over 700 shots a minute. These are for the section NCO's, however.

Wednesday, Oct 7/42 Chas. (Allan) Philips came up from his corvette this afternoon & we all drove to Ten Mile Lake for the last picnic of the season. Lovely weather & the hardwoods are in full colour. We fried venison (shot by Parker last week) over the little portable grill, heated tins of beans & peas & indulged in beer - an extravagance. (I've bought no booze for many months except for drinks in the messes at Aldershot) Watched the sunset & returned home where we talked books & philosophy & the war (& especially the art of writing) until 1 a.m. I took Philips to the Merpace wharf at Brooklyn in the car.

My new gas ration book received. Contains 32 "half units" (good for 48 gallons) which are to last me the next 6 months.

Friday, Oct 9/42 The Germans have put all our men taken prisoner at Dieppe in chains & tonight Ottawa announces that a similar number of Germans in Canadian prison camps will be manacled. The 80 ton auxiliary schooner St. Roch, manned by 8 men of the R.C.M.P., has arrived in Hlx after traversing the North West Passage from the Pacific. They left Vancouver in June 1940. One man died on the passage. Russians still hold Stalingrad. Japs have retreated across the Owen Stanley Mountains in New Guinea after threatening Port Moresby. Jap base at Kiska in the Aleutians is being bombed steadily by U.S. & Canadian planes. Fighting continues in the Solomon Islands.

Saturday, Oct 10/42. Fine warm weather. Hardwoods at their loveliest.

U.S. govt. has ordered 300 gold mines in U.S.A. to cease operations. Workers will be absorbed in more vital industries. Canada has launched another huge Victory Loan. Many wonder how it will fare, now that compulsory savings are taking such a large chunk out of the workers' payrolls.

Sunday, Oct. 11/42. Drove my family to Hfx this afternoon to spend Thanksgiving with Grandma Raddall. Real fall day, cloud & sunshine, leaves lovely but falling fast. A submarine & 5 corvettes lying in Head St. Margaret's Bay, anchored close to the road.

Monday, Oct 12/42 (Thanksgiving Day) Sunny, but cold. N wind. Drove to the Yacht Squadron wall & watched a big white hospital ship steam in from sea. The hull bore a green stripe fore & aft, broken in 3 places by a large red cross. She flew a small red cross pennant at the fore, the blue ensign at the main peak, & the Dutch flag at the main gaff. Later we learned she had brought back from England some of our Dierpe wounded & a number of sick - the first wounded to return in this was except for 1 or 2 airmen & others. I had an hour or two "yarning" with Jim Martell & wife in the afternoon, & drove my family out to Bedford & back. The Hfx - Bedford road is at last completed, a fine wide concrete highway.

U.S. govt tonight admits loss of 3 heavy cruisers in the Solomon Islands landing some weeks ago. Heard Pres. Roosevelt broadcast tonight his impressions of the U.S. war effort after a tour of the country. Full of confidence, but says more women must enter industry & draft age for men must be lowered to 18. He got in a sly dig at newspaper criticisms of United Nations strategy, quoting Robert E. Lee - "all the best generals seem to be working for newspapers". His travelling ambassador, Wendell Willkie arrived in Edmonton tonight by air from China via Alaska.

(My mother tells me there has been no beef for sale in Hfx for 6 weeks, but plenty of pork. In L'pool we can't get anything in the pork line.)

Wednesday, Oct. 14/42. Some days ago the Hfx. Herald asked their local correspondent to get material for a "colour" story of my life. Today it appears, a noble splurge. The Japs are making a great effort to drive the U.S. marines out of the Solomons, by land, sea & air. Two Jap cruisers, several destroyers & transports have been sunk but they are still striking hard. Fighting in Russia has died down; sporadic street fighting in Stalingrad. German submarines are very active in the St. Lawrence river.

We are now using saccharine tablets to eke out our sugar ration.

Saturday, Oct. 17 - Wed, Oct. 21/42. Hunting at Eagle Lake with Parker, Dunlap & Gordon. Lovely in the woods but game scarce. In 4 days I saw nothing but 2 partridges & a doe which I encountered on my way out, loaded down with duffle; I couldn't drop my load quick enough. Gordon got a fine buck near the beaver dam at Long Lake. Just before leaving camp I heard (on Parker's portable radio) General Smuts addressing both Houses of Parliament in London. He said that our defensive role in this war was now at an end & we must soon strike. Mr. Wendell Willkie is just back in Washin. from a flying tour of the world's battlefields, he is urging an immediate attack on Germany in the West. In fact the demand for a "second front" is now universal. Roosevelt quotes Robert E. Lee, "it is a great pity that the ablest generals in this war seem to be working for newspapers. Churchill preserves a stubborn silence. He & Roosevelt seem agreed on the general war policy for the United Nations & they "ain't sayin' nuffin'."

Saturday, Oct. 24/42. The Army of the Nile has launched a heavy attack on Rommel. These are the usual optimistic reports from Cairo but the official news is cautious. Simultaneously heavy bombing raids were carried out against Rommel's rear & communications all the way back to Italy, where Genoa, Milan, Turin & Savona got some of the new 2-ton "blackbusters" which have wrought such havoc in Germany this summer.

Monday, Oct. 27/42. Dark gloomy weather, rain has poured for days with intervals of drizzle. War news: our 8th Army seems to be held by the Germans in the Egyptian desert. U.S. gov't admits loss of aircraft carrier "Wasp" in the Solomon Islands weeks ago. Russians & Germans continue street fighting in Stalingrad. Canada's 3rd. Victory Loan campaign in full swing & doing well. Edith started teaching <sup>at</sup> the piano to the kids.

Saturday Oct. 31/42 Yesterday morning & this I drove to the 4-mile before daylight (7 am) & hunted for deer between the Annapolis highway & the river without luck at all. Quit at 11 A.M. Many hunters, though ammunition for sporting rifles is very scarce.

Sunday, Nov. 1/42. Marched in full battle order with P Co'y to Gull Islands this morning. As usual it rained all day & our cook Jake Marleton had a hard time getting meals in the open. In defiance of the weather we held bayonet fighting practice (I had half the Coy) before dinner. In the afternoon parties reconnoitred along the shore to Scott's Beach, & I took a small party to Black Point & established communication by morse signals (flag) with the main party. All this in pouring rain. For supper in comfort we set up 3 bell tents & had a royal feed. Marched back in the dark & rain. One comfort - no one can call us fair weather soldiers.

Wednesday, Nov. 4/42. The great highway to Alaska thru Canadian territory (built by U.S. Army engineers) has just been completed. Cairo announces a great British victory in the Egyptian desert, the Italo-German army in full retreat, having lost 230 tanks & 270 cannon also 9 or 10,000 prisoners. Several German generals killed or captured.

Friday, Nov. 6/42. 8th Army has gathered a total of 13,000 prisoners & the Rommel Italo-German army is retiring towards Libyan border. Cairo & London are making extravagant claims - "Rommel's army is smashed"

"Axis army flying in disorderly rout", "the turning point in the war", etc. In view of the sour experiences of our army after similar optimism in the past Libyan campaigns, I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

SATURDAY, Nov. 7/42.

All officers & NCO's <sup>MIN. SEC'T</sup> ordered to Aldershot

this week-end for a training stunt. G Co's let set out at 2 p.m., eleven of us in a <sup>3/4</sup> ton truck, screened from the worst of the Nov. wind by a covered-wagon-style tilt of old mill canvas and bent saplings. Very cold & cramped journey by way of Chester Basin & New Ross - 90 miles. Worst feature was engine exhaust, which filled our canvas cave with fumes all the way. Arrived (with splitting head-aches all round) at the ITC barracks in Aldershot about 5 p.m., found there Col ("Aunt") Good, Capt. Cecil Jones, & assorted officers & NCO's from all the Valley & the South Shore, all looking mighty cold & glum. Col Good explained that the Aldershot stunt was "off"; he had received warning from Atlantic Command that a state of emergency existed in N.S. coastal areas & all reserve units must stand-to until further notice.

We must return to our respective areas at once, break seals on operational ammunition etc, & get our co'ys under arms. We were permitted a meal at the officers' mess at the Compound - for which we had to pay 30¢ apiece out of our own pockets - & we managed to get a couple of drinks at the bar before starting back.

Returned by way of Middleton; I rode there in the cab of the Annapolis Co's truck with Lieut. Rafuse. We had a look-in at the Middleton armoury & found Jones & the whole staff busy breaking out ammunition, filling clips & bandoliers, etc. I joined our fellows in the "covered wagon" & we all stopped for a lunch in a chink cafe in Bridgewater at midnight.

SUNDAY, NOV. 8/42.

Arrived at our L'pool armoury about 2 AM & we got to work at once with ammunition etc. Worked like niggers till about 4 AM. Phoned my section corporals & got them out of bed. Hardly any of my men have phones, & I ordered the Co's truck to make the rounds of the houses (all over Milton & town) warning the men & returning later to pick them up. Each man ordered to bring food for 2 meals. About 5 AM I went home & got some sandwiches for my haversack, assembled my equipment etc. Caught a nap on the sofa for an hour. 6 AM. back to the Armoury. Men arriving from all parts in 2's & 3's. Murray conferred with M. Jones, to coordinate our movements with those of Engineers. At 8:15 I went to Broad River in our truck with my platoon sergeant (Max Harding) and a section of riflemen. With us came a demolition squad of Jones' engineers (prepared to blow up - theoretically - the Broad River bridge. They had no explosives, no tools of any sort.) I settled my boys in a natural stone fire-post commanding the bend of the road at the foot of Broad River hill. They were to keep sentries in the road, who were to stop all cars & demand to see registration cards of drivers & passengers. I arranged for 1 boy to stand by the phone at Aaron Broughm's house, on the slope west of the road. Left them looking very warlike in full battle order with bayonets fixed & the thin cotton bandoliers bulging with cartridges. Returned to L'pool, where Murray had commandeered two grocers' delivery trucks; he had sent Parker with a section, plus a "demolition" squad of engineers, to the Mill Village bridge; MacLeod took a picket down to Beach Meadows, & I went up thru Milton & posted a picket at the junction of the Mersey River road & the Annapolis highway. At 11 AM. our preparation were complete, with the main portion of the Co's standing-to at the



Armoury. I ducked home for a shave & some dinner, having eaten nothing since the midnight snack at Bridgewater. Stood to most of the afternoon, at 3 p.m. Col. Good phoned, told us to call in our patrols, arrange for guards & reliefs at the Armoury itself, & then dismiss the rest of the men, warning them that they must be ready to muster again at a moment's notice. At 4 p.m. Brigade Major Farningham phoned with the same instructions, adding cryptically that "things had been happening" on certain other parts of the coast & we must be on the alert for a quick muster at any time.

Our guess is that Atlantic Command wished to test the Reserve organisation. But the town & countryside are agog. One persistent rumour went around to the effect that a party of German saboteurs had landed hereabouts, & we had 15 prisoners under guard in the Armoury!

But these are petty affairs. Today's big news is that U.S. troops have landed at many points in French Morocco & Algeria & are gripping the Vichy-French garrisons in Oran, Algiers & Casablanca. In the meantime it really looks as if our 8th Army has shattered Rommel's army in Egypt.

Wednesday Nov. 11/42. French resistance to U.S. troops in North Africa ceased at 7 this morning. Admiral Darlan, head of the Vichy-French forces, surrendered with the garrison of Algiers. Italian & German troops have moved into Tunisia & seized the naval port of Bizerte. Germany has cancelled the 1940 armistice with France & sent troops to occupy Toulon, Marseilles, etc. Looks as if they will invade Spain for a crack at Gibraltar.

Friday Nov 13/42 I am 39 today, & a wet bleak day it is. My book "His Majesty's Yankees" is out & there was a rather involved but flattering review in today's Herald. Doubleday Doran say the advance sale was 3000 copies in the U.S. & 1000 in Canada. War news: The Russian front has died down to skirmishes at Haltingrad & in the Caucasus. In Libya the 8th Army has reached & occupied Tobruk on the heels of Rommel. Winston Churchill puts Rommel's casualties in the big battle at 59,000, with nearly all of his tanks & guns. In Algeria the British 1st Army has landed & is pushing straight for Tunis. U.S. general Eisenhower & (strangely enough) the captured Vichy admiral Darlan have broadcast to the French fleet at Toulon urging it to sail for Algeria. But German troops already surround Toulon.

SATURDAY NOV 14/42 The first snow, whirling in thick flakes for the kids' delight. It whitened the ground but vanished when the sun came out.

SUNDAY NOV 15/42 Sharp cold. Froze  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch of ice on the pools. Was up at daylight & off to the Armoury, where G. Co's was mustering for a day's coastal patrol. Rations (brought from Shelburne) were divided up. Murray took the main body to Summerville & Rose Head. Parker took a party to Port Medway & patrolled around Medway Head to Ragged Harbour. Mackel took a party to S.W. Port Mouton & worked around Mouton Head to the east bank of St. Catharines river. Smith's party went to Port Herbert & worked around Strom Point. My patrol was to patrol from Port Joli around to the west bank of St. Catharines River. Issuing rations & ammunition took some time. We had our own army truck, plus the 20th Field Coy's truck & jeep, plus 3 commandeered grocery vans, to get these bodies placed. We de-trucked near Avery Macdonald's house at St. Catharines village on Port Joli, & went across the barrens, a rough journey, to the big sand beach of <sup>CANDEN</sup> ~~Canada~~ Bay. Set up targets on the beach & carried out practice with rifle, revolver & Reising carbine. It was bitter cold, N.W. wind, temp. about 20°, a few snow flakes flying. Reached Black Point at 12.30 & had dinner in an old shack at the

abandoned Xanney sheep ranch. Somebody still keeps a few sheep in the meagre pastures & a couple of shaggy black rams emerged & looked warlike for a time before retreating. Left Puckie & Allen to stow the grub, kettles, etc. & pushed on with Harding & Weaver to the east end of the long sand bar which separates St. Catharines Lake from the sea. At the end of the bar we caught sight of Macleod's patrol from Port Mouton but they were turning back & the sun glare made our signal flags useless. We did some more shooting at stationary & floating objects, as instructed, & nobly forbore a shot at the large squadrons of ducks riding the waves off Black Point. Saw one small flock of wild geese. A magnificent surf on the beaches & we could see waves breaking & throwing spray half way up the tall lighthouse on Little Hope. Got back to the truck on the Port Joli road about sun-down. Reached L'pool at 6:30.

Spent the evening at "Capt. Wally Ogilvie". He has made a fortune out of 1 or 2 ships since the war began & has fitted up a fine home. Retired from the sea now (at 40 or so) he has taken up amateur photography on a lavish scale & has become very keen in it. Showed us coloured movies & many stills. Some excellent work. Has an elaborately equipped dark room, etc.

MONDAY, Nov. 16/42. U.S. Navy reports a terrific sea fight in the Solomon Islands, with XV. losses of 2 light cruisers & 5 destroyers, & claims 23 Jap. ships sunk including 1 battleship, 3 heavy cruisers & at least 8 transports filled with troops.

In North Africa, German & Italian troops are defending Tunisia against British 1st Army under Anderson, advancing from Algiers; Rommel has succeeded in withdrawing his main forces to El Azeiza at the foot of the Gulf of Sidra.

TUESDAY, Nov. 17/42. Lovely Indian summer day. Drove to Port Mouton this afternoon with Major Corkum, recruiting for the proposed Port Mouton section. Signed up 2 men. Fishermen are making big money & working longer hours than ever; they insist they've no time for soldiering. British troops are approaching Bengazi in Libya. Spain is mobilising. Bus travel here is now restricted to 50 miles. All travel is getting very difficult. Trains are overcrowded.

Wednesday Nov. 18/42 Local ARP had a big workout tonight with a blackout, "casualties" strewn about the streets, "bombs" and "incendiaries". The "incendiaries" were cat-tail rushes dried & then soaked in kerosene; these were dropped, burning, from cars etc., & the householders were supposed to rush out with their household sand pails & put them out. A fine time for all. Harry Paterson, chemist at Morsey Paper Co., is head of the ARP now, a too earnest, too energetic Scot. The new electric air-raid sirens make a powerful noise & weird.

FRIDAY, Nov. 20/42 To Hfx by car this afternoon with Edith & the kids. Tonight with a Paymaster-Lieut. Kibbell, RNR (a friend of Hilda's) I visited the ~~mess~~ officers' mess at Admiralty House & over several whiskies had talk with a pay-lieut from Montreal, named Luke; an English lieut. RNR, middle aged, pleasant, handsome, (reminded me of old Paddy Smee) named Bacon (Kibbell called him "Straker", of course) & several others. Herbert MacDonald came in & introduced me to Lieut.-Com. King of the corvette "Oakville" which sank a sub. under dramatic circumstances last summer. King was wearing his ~~husband's~~ <sup>husband's</sup> D.S.C. ribbon HE WAS AWARDED D.S.O. 24 DEC. 1942. Pleasant, modest, dark, very bald, served in R.N. in the last war & later moved to B.C. from England. He is a fruit farmer.

SATURDAY, Nov. 21/42 At the Archives all morning. Harvey had read my book & hinted in his slow smug way that historical novels were a menace. Dr. Jim Martell & Margaret Ellis, upstarts, were in raptures over "His Majesty's Yankee". Talked over another historical novel with them. (Doubleday Doran want me to do another. Maj. agent Jacques Chambrun wants a modern novel to sell to the Lat. Am. Post). Satish shopped all day, bought a new fur coat, etc. I took the kids to the Museum & later to a movie to see Walt Disney's "Fantasia". Tonight Edith & I went to Jim Martell's & talked all evening with Jim & Olga, also Margaret Ellis, Marion Selroy, my friend Rev. J. W. A. Nicholson, & Dalhousie professors Wilson (history) and Adshhead (maths). Wilson used to be an isolationist before the war; I had no opportunity to twitch him about it tonight.

SUNDAY, Nov. 22/42 Bleak day, snow squalls, temp. 20°. Drove home this p.m.

TUESDAY, Nov. 24/42 Drove to Hfx again at urgent request of Geo. M. Foster, the young, suave live-wire who is McClelland & Stewart's sales manager. He has arranged an autograph party at the Book Room tomorrow, advertising it in the newspapers & over the radio.

WEDNESDAY, Nov. 25/42 Morning at the Archives. Presented the old ensign of the Shelburne Volunteers (circa 1795) donated by Howland White. Lunched at the Nova Scotian with Foster & Howard Bendeliet. Arrived at the Book Room at 2.30. The window was full of "His Majesty's Yankees" & display cards etc. & outside was an elderly man in the rain with a bundle under his arm. It was old Mr. Silver, who used to keep a little tailor's shop in Monastery Lane when I was a boy. He had bought a copy of my book & had brought it down for an autograph. Inside were many people waiting with copies. Bendeliet had arranged an inner room with a desk, etc. & he & Foster danced attendance while shop-girls brought people in, in small groups, & introduced them by name. Much handshaking & flattery. Most were strangers but several of my old school-teachers were there, Helen (Sandford) Bennett, Dr. Corston & others who knew me in boyhood. People came in, all afternoon. Major Barrett, of CHNS, phoned & asked if I would submit to a radio interview tonight. Took Foster home to tea at Muri's. Went down to Broadcasting House & talked for some time to Burton Robinson, lately returned from army service & now a member of the CHNS staff. At 8.45 we went on the air, Robinson asking questions about my work & I doing my best to answer, all quite impromptu, with Foster & Bendeliet sitting in an adjoining booth like hens who have hatched out a duck. Dr. Harvey of the Archives phoned the studio to thank me for "kind words" about the Archives in the course of the interview. Went to Foster's room at the Nova Scotian for two or three drinks. Then home.

THURSDAY, Nov. 26/42 Drove home this morning in pouring rain. Picked up 2 or 3 artillerymen returning from leave & thumbing rides towards Shelburne.

heard in Lpool that during our absence last week end there was great excitement here - a big rehearsal of landing operations at Port Mouton by (regular) Canadian & U.S. troops, warships, tank landing barges etc. The landing was made at Carter's & Wolankak beaches. Maclean's Magazine writes asking if I would go to Labrador to do some articles on the new bases up there; they are hopeful of getting Ottawa to relax the censorship & of getting air transportation for me. I wrote Yes - providing financial side is satisfactory. The 1st edition of "His Majesty's Yankees" has been sold out completely. News supplies arriving are 2nd edition.

FRIDAY, Nov 27/42 Letter from Doubleday-Doran. "His Majesty's Yankees" is already in its 4th printing & going strong. They want me to start another historical novel at once, for publication a year from now; offer to finance me so that I can drop everything to work on it. War news: Germans have occupied Toulon but their quick grab for the French fleet was foiled. The French sailors fought them off long enough to scuttle everything, 60-odd ships, also to blow up dock & other useful port installations; this is the biggest mass sinking since Germans scuttled their own fleet at Scapa Flow in 1919. Russians have attacked Germans in great force NW & SW of Stalingrad, have penetrated to the Don, threatening the German army before Stalingrad with encirclement. They claim 60,000 German prisoners & enormous quantities of guns, tanks, etc., but Russians notoriously exaggerate German losses & minimise their own, so that one never knows when they have really accomplished something.

In Tunisia, British 1st Army is attacking Bizerte & Tunis. Rommel has halted at El Agheila in Libya after what seems to me a masterly retreat in the face of great odds. Cairo has repeatedly claimed his destruction, but the truth seems to be that he has rescued 150,000 out of the 225,000 Italo-German troops he had in the Western Desert (of Egypt)

"Windy" Winderes (see entry Apr. 4/42) has been awarded the D.S.C. for smart

work in the sinking of a German Canadian wardrooms is that when sinking he conducted the board of the doors, & revealed the shattered who confessed to Mowbray Jones & ~~me~~ last spring that he was losing his nerve!



Lt. Com.  
G. S. Windeyer, D.S.C.  
Duncan, B.C.

SUNDAY Nov 29/42 A bitter NW wind of gale force blowing since Friday. Heard Winston Churchill this afternoon in one of his masterly summaries of the war. He called it a sermon. His text: We have shown that we can take defeat; let us see now how we can <sup>take</sup> the past month's victories. He warned Italy to throw off Mussolini & make peace before we start a terrific aerial & land offensive from Tunisia. Ventured a guess that the war in Europe will end before the war in Asia, but said that a long & bitter struggle lay ahead in Europe.

A good deal of confused sea and air fighting going on in the S.W. Pacific. Flamboyant U.S. general MacArthur frequently reports Jap cruisers & destroyers sunk or damaged by his aircraft & U.S. reports continue to expand Jap naval losses in the Solomons. I think the young U.S. airmen are inclined to be optimistic about bomb hits. Jap battleship "Haruna" which they claimed sunk last spring, is now hinted to be alive & going strong.

Russians are attacking Germans all along front from Moscow to Leningrad, apparently to prevent Germans there from sending troops to the broken lines opposite Stalingrad. 2 or 3 French submarines have arrived at Algiers from Toulon - all that survived the big *hara-kiri* stunt. In Algeria, Admiral Darlan seems to be in control, with Gen. Eisenhower's connivance, & De Gaulle & the Free French are having a fit calling Darlan a double traitor & so on, & reproaching the Allies, particularly the U.S.

THURSDAY DEC 3/42 More sea fighting in the Solomons. U.S. claims 9 Jap ships sunk including 2 light cruisers, 4 destroyers, 3 transports. U.S. loss, 1 cruiser.

Naval losses in the occupation of Morocco & Algeria: British, 2 or 3 destroyers, 1 small aircraft carrier, 1 corvette, several sloops, trawlers etc. U.S. lost 5 ~~more~~ transports. British light naval craft sank 2 Italian destroyers & transports headed for Tunis, but Germans seem to have been able to ferry considerable forces to Tunisia, where British 1st Army is being sharply attacked 20-30 miles from Bizerte. Rommel seems to be holding the 8th Army at El Aghaita in Tripoli. Russian offensive continues but seems held at present; they claim 160,000 German, Hungarian & Rumanian troops killed or captured in 2 weeks. In Canada, Finance Minister Allaby broadcast tonight that prices on certain staples such as coffee, tea, meat, are to be reduced; govt. will absorb the cost - estimated at \$40,000,000 a year.

It has now been storming without let up for a week, gales of wind alternately east and west bringing floods of rain and alternately snow. The low iron fence around the lawn before our Town Hall has gone into the salvage metal pile; a sign stuck in the snowy lawn says "This fence has gone to war." Ten corvettes are in port, overhauling; 3 are nearly ready to sail.

SATURDAY, DEC 5/42 Clear & cold, with occasional snow squalls. Rabbit hunting north of the long gravel pit at Port Joli this afternoon with Smith, Parker & Jordan. I got 5, the others 3 between them. "His Majesty's Yankees" has now been favourably ~~received~~ reviewed in the N.Y. Times, N.Y. Herald Tribune, Boston Globe, Boston Herald & several other leading newspapers. (Herald Tribune review was by Stephen Vincent Benet) U.S. govt. has told the full tale of Pearl Harbour, now that "all naval craft damaged there have been repaired or replaced." The damage was terrific - 2 battleships sunk, 6 others severely damaged, etc. "The Japanese attack", admits the report grimly, "was a great success."

MONDAY, DEC 7/42 Tonight the Kiwanis Club, the Town Council, the Board of Trade & other friends - 110 in all - honoured me with a complimentary dinner in the Legion hall. Doc Mulhall, Mayor John More, Jack McBlain, Sheriff



This was in the old Legion rooms in the second story, corner of Main and Bertham streets, over Weldon's drug store.

Mulhall spoke, & Hector MacLeod in behalf of all present, presented me with a fine English barometer as a token of esteem. I replied, talking mostly about the interesting history & legends of Queens County & the town, & they toasted me and sang "For he's a jolly good fellow". It was most kind & quite unexpected, & once again I felt like the old lady in the tale - "Lawk-a-mussy on us, this is none of I!"

THURSDAY, DEC 10/42. "G" Coy has now completed its allotted 40 days-a-year training (Evenings make 1 "day") & all ranks are <sup>now</sup> paid only for 1 night a week. To maintain interest, we make the 2nd night (Thursday) a voluntary affair & purely social. Murray put me in charge of this (he does nothing himself) & I have a committee of O/R's. We have magazines, cards & a dart game; & we rig up a boxing ring in the drill room & have some really snappy (if unscientific) bouts. I am negotiating with the Community Club for the use of the gymnasium on Thursday nights. We've ordered more boxing gloves & a punching bag & after New Year hope to put on some amateur theatrical. We've had 1 movie (military subject) shown on the projector in the high school auditorium. The films are hard to get.

Strange affair at the Rink today. It's the HQ of "Mr Jones' 20th Field Coy (R) R.C.E." & is in charge of Hugh Major Lunnis, a Western Canadian, an old soldier. This morning Mrs Lunnis came to the Rink enquiring for the O/R. The "Ack S." told her Lunnis was out of town & would be back tonight. Something apparently snapped in her mind. She flew at the men, scratching & kicking, called them all sorts of names. She took off her coat & put it in somebody's car & then walked up the street in the bitter (14° temp) air. The Engineer boys phoned for Doc Murray, & they overtook Mrs Lunnis in Trinity Church, which was open at the time. There was a struggle in front of the altar, in which she threw off the men & scratched Murray's face severely. She ran out onto the school grounds, where they overpowered her & got her into a car. It took 4 men to hold her down. At Mrs MacNeil's nursing home, Murray quitted her with a sedative, found she had a hemorrhage of the brain & could not live more than a few hours. (She recovered)

A corvette crew, just in from patrol, say that the corvette "Algonia"

later & this story false.

foundered in a storm near the Strait of Basse about 2 weeks ago & was lost with all hands. Commander was John Harding, a fine young fellow from B.C., who hunted with us a couple of days last October. "Algonia" was then completing a refit at Hfx after preliminary work here.

SATURDAY, DEC. 12/42 Training for Reserve officers is a sketchy affair. There is no organised training to enable them to qualify for their so-far-provisional. You are supplied grudgingly with sundry handbooks & pamphlets written for Active forces, & you must absorb what you can out of these in your spare time. The exams are now upon us. Under the watchful eyes of Murray & Col. Good, we wrote all afternoon in the lecture room of G. G.'s armoury on Gorham St. - Macleod, Parker, Smith & I. With us were West Nova officers from Shelburne & Lunenburg counties & several engineer officers from the same district including M. Jones - writing to qualify for his captaincy. The subject today was Syllabus B.

SUNDAY, DEC. 13/42 Writing for Syllabus C this morning. Think I made a mess of it. The paper asked many things on which we had been given no study material at all. My sister Hilda writes (a) that she is going to marry a Lieut. Kibble (Fleet Air Arm) soon, in Hfx, and (b) that our mother has had a bad turn & must give up all physical activity if she is to live much longer.

MONDAY, DEC. 14/42 Snowstorm last night & today - the first hazard of the season. British 8th Army has attacked Rommel at El Algeira & the wily Rommel is falling back again. At home, things don't look much like Christmas, despite the snow. Few toys are available and practically no candy or chocolate, chewing gum etc. Our druggist (Peshop) tells me he ordered \$300 to \$400 worth of candy for Christmas, & received about \$40 worth - which was snapped up in a couple of days. Other commodities are scarce, & bare shelves in the stores grow more & more visible as the shopkeepers give up the struggle to disguise them. (For instance, candy show-cases filled with Xmas cards standing in rows.)

The conservative party of Canada, meeting at Winnipeg last week, elected Premier Bracken of Manitoba as its new leader. The party is to be known as the Progressive-Conservative. All the candidates for leader were Westerners.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 16/42

Ottawa announces sharp reduction in production of wines, spirits & beer, to take place at once. Also the Canadian soldier's daily wage is increased from \$1.30 to \$1.50 per day (after 6 months' service). In Africa, the 8th Army has driven Rommel from the El Agheila position at the foot of the Gulf of Sirca, & again the optimists in Cairo declare that the "Afrika Korps" is cut in half & cannot escape destruction. (This is the same Afrika Korps which Cairo has "destroyed" so many times before.) Russians continue their winter offensive without gaining much ground. Progress of our forces in New Guinea is slow; every Jap fights to the death - a notable contrast to the behaviour of our troops at Hong Kong, Singapore & Bataan, not to mention Tobruk last June.

THURSDAY, DEC. 17/42

Bitter weather. Temp. ranging from 4° below to 10° above zero, with high winds, the past 3 days. Nova Scotia's export of Christmas trees this season exceeds one million trees. British troops have crossed into Burma from India & are pushing towards Akyab. "Half of the Afrika Korps" cut off in Tripolitania turned out to be 500 men & 40 guns - all captured. The rest, says Cairo, "escaped." All quiet in Tunis.

FRIDAY, DEC. 18/42

Another bitter day, the 3rd in a row, 6° below zero & blowing a gale. Donald Gordon announced from Ottawa tonight by radio, the rationing of butter. It begins tomorrow. The ration - 1/2 lb. per person per week. The Russians have broken German lines in the great bend of the Don & are pushing towards Rostov in an ambitious attempt to cut off the whole German force before Stalingrad & in the Caucasus. Delhi warns that our "push" into Burma is only a minor excursion, so far unopposed by the Japs.

SATURDAY, DEC. 19/42

TUESDAY DEC. 22/42. Temp. climbed up to 20° this afternoon, & this evening the air was actually soft at 28° with everything thawing — the first break in 6 days of bitter zero weather, the longest zero snap I can remember in these parts. Weather is censored, never mentioned in newspapers or radio, but the extent of the snap is revealed by an epidemic of fires all over eastern Canada & New England, caused by too zealous stoking of furnaces, attempts to thaw frozen pipes with blow torches, etc. And last night a U.S. radio announces mentioned casually that it was the coldest December in New England in 70 years. At the Armoury tonight we got our Reserve Army pay to date — in my case \$43<sup>00</sup>. This brings my pay in 1942 from Reserve Army, to \$107.68; just about the amount I've had to pay out in extra uniform, equipment, etc. Now the officers' revolvers (.38 Colt six-shooters) have been called in to Mfg. & there is a rumour that we must buy our own.

THURSDAY DEC. 24/42. The current song hit on radio & everywhere else is a ditty called "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas", & we have one; a few inches of snow, plenty of ice — skating on the river right down to the little island above town bridge. The usual Christmas extras are scarce — we have some chocolates, doled out to regular customers by the merchants, & no nuts but a handful of almonds (@ 80¢ lb.) & some very rancid walnuts at least 2 years away from California. But we have a fine big goose & a plum pudding & gifts for all. Tommy has made the fatal discovery that Santa Claus is just Dad & Mum, but Frances still believes & they both went to bed very excited. News from Algiers — Admiral Darlan, the French double traitor who had assumed power in French North Africa on the entry of the Allies, was assassinated in Algiers today by a young Frenchman, presumably a de Gaulle patriot.

CHRISTMAS DAY. Mild, but no sun. Grandma Freeman & Marie came down for the day & we had a pleasant quiet time of it.

MONDAY, DEC. 28/42

Steady cold, a little snow falling each day. Fun at a party tonight at the Waters'; many young naval officers there.

Russians still claiming great progress in their drive towards Rostov.

Impossible to buy any woolen underwear here. Shopkeepers have had none this winter, or so they say. Eaton's & Simpson's, the mail order houses, are not much better off. Optimistically (or to bolster morale) they send out catalogues of the usual size, but half the stuff is not available.

TUESDAY, DEC. 29/42

Drove to Port Medway tonight with the Parkers & the Dick Mulhalls for a feast of boiled fresh lobsters at 'Lorne Elements'. The Ben Alexanders were there. The lobsters were all of the delicious small size, known as "tinkers" (sale of which is forbidden by law). Obtained by Ben from fishermen at Long Cove.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 30/42

Left for Hfx on the train, my first train trip to the city in 10 years. (Law forbids anyone travelling more than 50 miles by bus, & my own gasoline coupons are getting too few for such a long trip.)

Train crowded, in spite of several extra cars; mostly service men. Train pulled into Hfx 1 1/2 <sup>hours</sup> late. Spent a cold & fruitless hour trying to get my suitcase from the Baggage Office — a chaotic place, with mountains of trunks, bags, suitcases, kit bags & seaman's hammocks; staff overwhelmed by the swarm of holiday traffic, made up chiefly of service men & girls on Christmas leave.

Abandoned the hunt & sought a taxi — no taxis left (gas rations are pinching them, too, & the number in use has been sharply reduced). Boarded a street-car as far as Buckingham-Barrington corner. Decided not to wait in the biting cold for the Quimpool Road car & hiked over the Citadel & across the Common to Mother's flat at 166 Chebucto Rd. Found Hilda's fiancé, Lieut. Kibble there, swearing that he had driven to the station to meet me with his car, & must have missed me in the crowd. Got something to eat

✓ went on to Jim Martell's at 10 PM. John Fisher was there & we sat into the small hours discussing the broadcast we are doing together over the CBC on Sunday.

THURSDAY, DEC 31/42

At the Archives this morning. Shopping at Simpsons this pm. ✓ managed to get some rayon stockings for Edith. Tonight I made one of a small but merry party at Jim Martell's. John Fisher was there, & Bill & Kay Pecks, Capt. (R.C.A.M.C.) & "Fran" Murphy (Jim's sister), also Jim's brother Bill (an infantry captain) & his wife. Highlight of the evening was a heated & at times brilliant discussion on Canadian unity (all of us seated on the floor in a circle before the fire, like Indians); most of us attacking Quebec for its indifference to the war & Premier King for his bland ignoring of the fact, & Fisher (who speaks French fluently & is fond of the Quebecois) defending both with eloquence. Low comedy was provided by a candle-lighting stunt, attempted by each member of the party while sitting on a beer bottle laid lengthwise on the floor & keeping the left foot cocked up on the toe of the right. "Fran" alone solved it.

Home in pouring rain (on foot - no taxis) at 2:30 a.m. & sat up till 4 drinking whiskey with Kibbe, who was staying the night.

FRIDAY, JAN. 1, 1943

From 3 p.m. to midnight, Fisher, Martell & I worked on our broadcast script - a discussion, one of a Canadian-wide series, dealing with the culture, social customs etc of each province & their relation to Canadian culture etc as a whole. CBC rules prevent us from saying all we'd like, & Jim Martell, who likes to talk, will do most of the talking.

SATURDAY JAN. 2/43

Spent this day & evening quietly with Mother. Weather has turned cold & the frozen slush & water hose made the streets precarious. There are 2 Russian submarines here, possibly from Murmansk.

SUNDAY, JAN. 3/43

At the CBC studios at 3 p.m. for voice tests etc. & our talk was broadcast from 6:03 to 6:30. Fraser, managing editor of the "Chronicle" was there to see us & our announcer was Grosbie (the chief) whose pet hobby

is "The Crucible," a high-brow magazine for Canadian writers (I promised to let him have a short story for it.) A blizzard which has been raging in central & western Canada for 3 days has "downed" all the wires west of Montreal, so our broadcast was far from being the advertised "coast-to-coast hook-up".

Home at 7:30, where Keith was entertaining some of his air friends - Squadron Leader Ken Wilson ("Lil' Abner"), Sq/Lt. Joe Hutt, Sq/Lt. Mackenzie & wife (a Pictou girl, grand daughter of C. M. MacDonald former Minister of Defence.) Flight-Lt. Cecil Wood ("Woody"). Jim & Olga Martell came, & we had a buffet supper of cold turkey, ham & salads & talked over tall glasses from then to midnight.

Monday JAN. 4/43 Shopping at Books this a.m. Called at the Book Room, where Howard Bendelir told me he had sold 600 copies of "His Majesty's Yankees." At the Archives this afternoon. Harvey very nice. Presented me with a copy of his "French Regime in P.E.I." Snowing hard all day & night.

Tuesday JAN. 5/43 Up at 5 am. After phoning nearly all the taxi stands without success I get a cab to take me to the stations. Train crowded & stuffy, left Hfx. an hour late. My seat mate was a Leith Taylor, commanding the corvette "Midland" now at L'pool. He formerly sailed a 3 masted schooner out of Parramore & other Bay ports & was full of good yarns. Everyone feels that 1943 is going to be a big year for the Allied Nations but most say 3 more years of war. I say 2 more.

Sunday JAN. 10/43 Hard weather continues. Temp. drops as low as 10° below zero at night & gets up as far as 15° above, at noon. Our furnace is really inadequate in this sort of weather & the oil stove in my office is a farce. War news: our forces are stalled in Tunisia despite the efforts of crack units like the Guards. The Germans, with inferior numbers, have beaten off all attempts to take Bizerte & Tunis. Rommel is still retreating slowly upon Tripoli, mining all roads & approaches. In New Guinea

combined U.S. & Australian forces are grinding up the Jap positions about Vannandert Point. Japs continue to land troops at other points, despite heavy losses inflicted on their convoys by our aircraft. It looks as if the Japs could keep up this game indefinitely.

TUESDAY, JAN. 12/43 Weather has moderated a little, with a light snowstorm last night. Capt. Murray informed us at drill tonight that our G Company, West N.S. Regt, is to be transferred to the Princess Louise Fusiliers as "C" Co'y. Headquarters of the P.L.F. are at Hfx & we officers were requested by the Brigadier (through Murray) to break the news gently to our men "in view of the prejudice in the province against anything connected at all closely with Hfx". This we did (not without misgivings). The Co'y will continue in L'pool but will train as a machine gun company. One advantage; we should be able to get weapons, gear, etc. a lot easier & quicker than we get things from Middleton. C/O of the P.L.F. is Garnet Colwell, & the 2i/c is my old friend Harvey Crowell, & I think on the whole we shall be better off. I understand Col. Good protested that he was losing his best company. But Brigadier pointed out that best Co'y of the North N.S. Highlanders (the Inuro Co'y) is also being transferred to the P.L.F.

War news. The Russian thrust towards Rostov from the northeast has obliged Germans to withdraw from large parts of the caucasus & their slow retreat continues, tho' they are still maintaining pressure on Stalingrad.

A few days back, a German submarine surfaced not far from Little Hope, within sight of a number of S.W. Port. Monitor fishermen. As a result we have had much attention from aircraft lately, the naval patrol has been increased.

(I saw an American navy YMS boat off Western Head 2 days ago) and a detachment of R.C.C.S. from Hfx is busy repairing the telephone line to Western Head & other coastal points where civilian coast watchers live.

THURSDAY, JAN. 14/43. Steel workers at Sydney, Trenton & Sault St. Marie have gone out on strike for more wages. They object to a fixed basic wage of 55 cents



an hour. At a time when our soldiers are working for \$1.50 a day, this makes my blood boil. I am all for a Soviet-style purge of these greedy petty labour leaders. In the States a strike in the Pennsylvania anthracite mines, cunningly staged in mid-winter, has created a serious shortage of fuel all along the seaboard & we hear rumours of coal rationing. Actually, our coal dealers are already rationing coal to their customers.

Freeman Tupper, of Milton, woods manager in Coupe Breton for Mercury Paper Co, who bought the Mercury Hotel some years ago, has sold it to Alton Snow, former book-keeper with the defunct Seven Seas Fishery Co. "Freem" had his sister-in-law, Grace Clark, for manager, but she couldn't manage. Or Milton, Walker Bros. have sold out their wood-working plant to young Fraser Cole of Bridgewater & his partner. Walkers have made money over the years, and about 7 years <sup>ago</sup> their wives started a grocery store which now does the best trade in Milton. In Liverpool, Thompson Bros continue busily repairing corvettes. They employ 300 to 500 men, including 50 Norwegians who came here originally with the whaler fleet.

FRIDAY, JAN. 15/43. To Bridgewater in a snowstorm by car with Geo. Clements, L'pool grocer in charge of food rationing in district. Attended Kiwanis luncheon at Fairview Hotel, where I was speaker. Talked about myself - a poor subject - and the prospects for a renaissance of Nova Scotia letters. Clements tells me he will net \$2000 a year after income tax, from his new job. His wife runs his L'pool store whenever he has to make a trip on ration business. Met Rev. George Conant (brother of the late W. G.) who is a C. of C. parson in B'water and a bit of a letterateur.

SATURDAY, JAN. 16/43. No Big Falls this afternoon in Gordon's car, with Parker & Dunlap. Walked on snowshoes to Eagle Lake camp. The worst going I ever saw, snow 2' deep on the level, drifted in places to 3' & more, soft, heavy stuff. I was carrying a haversack full of grub, etc, & had my heavy eiderdown sleeping bag slung across my shoulders. At every step the snowshoes sank 8" or 10" & came up laden with the heavy snow. We all reached camp exhausted but a shot of Dunlap's cached rum revived us. Woods lovely, every conifer laden with snow. Lake covered with thick ice & a 10" layer of crusty snow on top.

SUNDAY, JAN. 17/43 Lovely sunny day. I spent the morning felling small maples & making firewood at our old fuel point down the east shore of the lake. The others hunted rabbits, without luck. I prepared dinner - sauer kraut & spuds. (Impossible to get canned grub now.) Finished eating at 2 p.m. Left camp at four. An easy journey out, with the trail well broken. Gordon shot a rabbit on the way. Supper at Grandma Freeman's - a belated birthday party for Edith. (Compliments about my book still coming in. A very nice letter from the Finance Minister, Mr. Illsley, yesterday.)

~~Tuesday~~ MONDAY, JAN. 18/43 Attended Kiwanis luncheon today & spoke on Russian Relief Fund. A good response.

TUESDAY, JAN. 19/43 Snowing & blustery. War news: In New Guinea Aussies have captured Sananander village, wiping out Jap garrison. 8th Army is within 45 miles of Tripoli in hot pursuit of Rommel. Russians have broken the long siege of Leningrad by capturing Schlüsselburg. In the south their advance on Rostov continues. I signed contract with Doubleday Doran for another historical novel, to be finished by Feb. 1944.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 20, 1943.

A light thaw yesterday was the first "soft" note in many weeks of hard weather; but last night a gale of great force sprang up from the west & NW, continued all day & is still shaking the house tonight with the thermometer at zero & the streets a mass of ice.

War news: Our 8th Army reported in outskirts of Tripoli, which is burning. Berlin admitted to Axis Europe that large forces of Germans were cut off at Stalingrad by the Russian drive towards Rostov. A U.S. naval spokesman confesses that U-boat warfare is increasing & losses in shipping are serious.

In Canada, our ration of butter is cut to 2 lbs. per person for a 6-week period. Gov't efforts to regulate milk & butter sales have made matters worse in that thousands of small producers (owners of 1 or 2 cows) are going out of business rather than bother with the various gov't forms, which entail frequent trips to town to consult the local ration board. Beef is scarce & the price good, so they are selling their cows to the butchers. Mill Village & Charleston have a milk famine already, & the impossibility of buying tinned milk makes the matter worse.

President Roosevelt has declared the anthracite miners' strike illegal & ordered them back to work — "or else —!"

In Canada the gov't is still pussyfooting with the steel strike which so seriously affects our war effort. What a contrast!

Frances, who seemed immune, has now developed the mumps.

Tommy is quite recovered & back at school.

FRIDAY, JAN. 22/43

This afternoon, the bitter gale which began ~~Wednesday~~ Tuesday night began to abate & in the full sunshine my thermometer crept up from zero to 20°. This harsh weather makes the fuel problem worse; there is still a little fuel in my coal bin & I have

about 1 cord of wood. There is no coal in town. All the dealers are cleaned out. This serious situation obtains in other parts of the country too, according to the papers. Temperatures of more than  $50^{\circ}$  below have been recorded in Prince Albert & Winnipeg, & everywhere the cry is "fuel shortage". The milk shortage in N. D. is so grave that the Ration Board has released large quantities of tinned milk to retail grocers. Former miners serving in the forces in Canada are now offered 3 months leave if they will spend it working in the coal mines.

The city & port of Tripoli is in our hands at last, & Rommel's army is streaming into Tunisia, there to join the Italo-German army which has kept our 1st. Army & the American 5th. Army & the fighting French out of Tunis & Bizerte. The Russians have taken the railway junction of Valsk in the Caucasus, imperilling the German army there. Heavy R.A.F. raids on German cities continue, with the Germans making small hit-&-run raids on south-east English towns in reply; & there is now an almost constant bombing of the French coast & hinterland by U.S. & British air fleets.

SATURDAY, JAN. 23/43.

A fine long walk around Western Head, after being confined to the house (except for trips to the post office & stores) since the 18th by the bitter wind-storms. Old-timers say it is the hardest winter in 50 years. The roads are covered in ice to a depth of 3" to 10" & the snow has a crust like cement. Off Western Head I saw 2 corvettes making trial runs after refitting here & 2 big bombers came from opposite directions, circling low & swooping over them. War-time scarcities create some queer situations. For many months Liverpool women have had no stockings but lisle. Shortly after New Year a local merchant (Veinot) received 150 pairs of rayon stockings - the sort that servant girls used to wear before the war. He was puzzled, for if he sold them he was bound to offend every customer who arrived too late to get a pair. Finally he donated them to the

I.O.D.C., who auctioned them off. Last week a local merchant received ~~about 100~~<sup>95</sup> gallons of molasses, the humble stuff which vanished from our ken about the end of last summer. He was in the same fix as the stocking merchant; worse, for only women worry about stockings but everyone feels the lack of sweets. So he donated the molasses to the Russian Relief Fund, in this manner: He installed a Russian Relief money box on his counter & announced in a newspaper advt. that anyone donating \$1 to the fund could take away "free" 1 quart of molasses. (Victor Scobey, grocer) The molasses went like magic, none of Scobey's customers could quibble, & the Russian Fund benefited to the tune of \$95.00! Liquor is rationed since New Year: 1 quart of spirits OR 1 quart of wine OR 1 doz quarts of beer per person per week.

SUNDAY, JAN. 24/43 Alexander Woolcott, famous U.S. author & radio entertainer, died of a heart attack shortly after a broadcast tonight. He was 56. He was wittily lampooned in a play, "The Man Who Came To Dinner", two or three years ago; but he got the last laugh by requesting the leading part & actually playing himself on the stage. Eric Knight, the Anglo-American author of "The Flying Yorkshireman" tales & a rather melodramatic novel of England during the "blitz" - "This Above All" - which sold like hotcakes in the U.S., was killed last week while flying to South America in a U.S. army bomber.

TUESDAY, JAN. 26/43 For a week the newspapers have been hinting at some mysterious "big news". Tonight at eleven our radio told us that Mr. Roosevelt had flown to Casablanca on Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, & there met Mr. Churchill, the U.S. & British general staffs, & Generals Giraud & De Gaulle of the Fighting French. After a 10 day conference, final plans were made for a grand assault on the Axis in 1943, to bring about

"the unconditional surrender of Germany, Italy & Japan." Premier Stalin was unable to be present owing to his pressing duties as commander of the Red armies in their great winter offensive.

The truculent attitude of the people of Marseilles, particularly the Old Port section, towards the German garrison, has brought down a savage & typically German punishment. 40,000 people are to be herded off into the interior & the whole Old Port area razed to the ground.

250 people, 80 of them women, have been shot for resisting the evacuation.

In Canada, the govt. has made some wage concessions & the striking steel workers at Sydney & Sault Ste Marie are going back to work. The strikers at Trenton, N.S. are still "out."

A few days ago I signed a contract with Doubleday Doran for a new novel to be delivered in 12 months. They are advancing me \$250 a month on condition that I drop all other work for the novel. Tonight I wrote my resignation as an officer of the Reserve & mailed it to Lt.-Col. Good of the West Noras. In a personal letter I explained that I could not devote the proper amount of time to my military duties this year & must let some other man take over my platoon. I hated to do this but there was no way out. A man cannot serve two masters when one of them is the pen; I know that from bitter experience in the past; and an officer with a decent regard for his duties & his men must give them all his thoughts. Murray, Smith & Parker tried to persuade me to keep on with the company, dropping in once a week etc. but that is not my notion of an officer's duties, even in the Reserve, where much slackness is overlooked.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 27/43

To Port Medway tonight in C. Co's truck with Murray, Parker, Kelly, Vidmarsh & Smith. Picked up some elements there & drove some distance down the west side of the harbour. Road a mass of ice, touchy going, truck went off the road 3 times. Temp. 10° above zero, clear starry night. Left the <sup>truck</sup> ~~car~~ about 1 mile from the lighthouse & walked to Long Cove by a rough path, 1½ miles.

In a fisherman's shack there we found one Whynot & his two sons, fishermen, and a crate of fresh lobsters (all "tinkers") just boiled for us. We had 2 dozen quarts of beer & we had a feast. ~~Left~~ Left the shack at 11.15 for home.

The light in the lighthouse is very dim, not discernible more than 2 or 3 miles.

The Whynots told me that since war broke out the lantern has been covered by a broad circular sheet of tin in which a slit ½" wide has been cut all round. Got home half frozen at 2 a.m. (The truck has a light canvas tilt, open at the back.)

SATURDAY, JAN. 30/43

About 8" more snow fell on the night of the 29th. This morning temp. is 12° below zero, calm & sunny. War news: Russians are still forging towards Kharkov & Rostov, & German leaders are still trying to explain to the German people the causes of these disasters. One thing seems clear; from Russian accounts, the Germans had withdrawn many troops weary with the summer's fighting & replaced them with Italian, Rumanian & Hungarian divisions on wide sections of the front. The Russians, feeling carefully for weak spots in the line, struck hard at these half-hearted substitutes & plunged right through, leaving isolated German troops to be mopped up at leisure. Russian claim 100,000 prisoners on the Voronezh front alone - mostly Rumanian, Italian & Hungarian.

I had a nice note from Theodore Roosevelt, by air mail from North Africa, where he is a general in his old division of the last war. He had just read "His Majesty's Yankees" & was enthusiastic - "all that I hoped it would be when I first wrote you".

Today is the 10th anniversary of Nazi accession to power in Germany - always a day of celebration, usually with a bombastic speech by the Fuehrer. But this time the Fuehrer was in Russia, trying to rally his shaken legions, & it had been announced that Goering would broadcast from the Reichshall in Berlin at 10 AM, & Goebbels from the Sportpalast in the afternoon. Just as Goering was about to speak, R.A.F. "mosquito" bombers arrived (the 1st British raid in daylight on Berlin) & listeners on the radio heard a confused shouting mingled with the bang of bombs. Finally the Berlin announcer declared that Goering's speech would begin "in a few minutes"; that went on at intervals for more than an hour, when the R.A.F. had departed & presumably Goering emerged from the air raid shelter; anyhow he made his speech & in it declared "when we have disposed of the Bolsheviks I shall remember what the R.A.F. has done to Germany." He offered some amusing excuses for the failure to dispose of the Bolsheviks so far, enlarging on the vast scale of Russian preparedness & resources. His most interesting admission was that Russia's blundering campaign against Finland in the winter of 1939-1940 had completely deceived the German high command about Russian strength. He called it "the most cunning & the greatest piece of camouflage the world has ever seen." In the afternoon when Herr Goebbels was about to speak, the R.A.F. arrived again & Goebbels had to postpone his speech also & take refuge. Both raids were carried out with perfect timing & precision, & tonight all the world is laughing. R.A.F. lost only 1 "mosquito," shot down in the second raid. Ottawa announces that meat, butter, sugar, coffee & tea rations of troops in Canada & in the R.C. Navy, are to be cut 25%. (Their rations will still be better than the civilian rations however.)

Much brawling in L'pool streets tonight by drunken sailors off



the corvettes. It was pay-day for the ships' crews here.

For fully a year now the local banks have been staffed with girls. Young men have disappeared from local stores, counters, etc., & the draft calls, which have been fairly heavy in the past month or two, have speeded the process. There is an acute labour shortage everywhere. After yesterday's snow the town was obliged to hire boys of 15 & 16 to shovel off the sidewalks.

SUNDAY, JAN 31/43 Wind east, snowing lightly. War news: The German army trapped before Stalingrad has now ceased to exist, except for one or two isolated posts. ~~14~~ German & <sup>2</sup> Rumanian generals surrendered today. Russians say the German force originally numbered 250,000 men. Another German army of possibly 100,000 men is trapped near Voronezh; but the Germans in the Caucasus are apparently making good their retreat towards Kertch & Rostov. From Italy, Mussolini announces the dismissal of his chief of staff, while Berlin announces that the head of the German navy, Von Raeder, has been replaced by a U-boat expert.

MONDAY, FEB. 1/43 Rain. Our first thaw (It didn't last long, though) Russians reveal that their bag of generals includes Field Marshal Von Paulus, commander of the German 6th Army before Stalingrad; 2 other German generals were killed in the debacle there last month.

I had a kind note from Col. Good, regretting my resignation but understanding my reason and wishing me well.

TUESDAY, FEB. 2/43 "Ground Hog" Day. Grey, overcast, with snow flying. My last drill night. I bade farewell to C Company & particularly to the boys of my own platoon. Murray said some nice things about me to them, & the sergeant-major was almost in tears.

War news: The last group of Germans left at Stalingrad surrendered today. Russians give a list of trophies of the great battle, including 6,500 cannon & 60,000 motor trucks.

Today the Canadian army began enlisting boys of 17 & 18. They will not be sent overseas until they reach the age of 19. Mr. Churchill, accompanied by high British staff officers, has had a mysterious conference with the Turkish premier & staff, at a town in Syria. Reason given - "matters pertaining to the defence of Turkey."

FRIDAY, FEB. 5/43

Rain last night, warm & sunny all day, snow & ice melting fast. Three town councillors were elected last Wednesday. The local C.C.F. party ran a candidate, Gerard "Jerry" Hyde, a Murray Paper mill mechanic; he was defeated by roughly 2 votes to 1. War news: gravity of the U-boat menace is reflected in R.A.F. activities, more & more devoted to bombing U-boat building yards & bases like Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg, L'Orient, Brest - & Spezia, Italy's naval port, which got its first blasting last night. Japs announce a big naval engagement near the Solomons; Washington is silent but admits that a Jap fleet is near Guadalcanal.

SATURDAY, FEB. 6/43

Cold again. I have a septic sore throat which gives me great pain. After ineffectual gargling with Dobell's tablets (my usual resource. I have much trouble with my throat) I have resorted to sulfanilamide tablets, which must be swallowed & upset the stomach. No decent sleep for several nights. Woke at 5 AM & had to get up, too jittery to lie abed. Began to write my novel, after much study of material. War news: Churchill has turned up in Tripoli city, where he took the reviewing stand for a triumphant march past of the 8th Army. As if to find goats for his failures, Mussolini has dismissed a dozen of his staff, including his son-in-law Count Ciano, whose post of Foreign Minister is added to the half-dozen others now borne by the Duce himself.

SUNDAY FEB. 7/43

Pouring rain. Feel rotten. No news, except that U.S.A. begins rationing shoes tomorrow - 3 pairs a year, be you man, woman or child. Ottawa announces that shoes will not be rationed in Canada - the usual optimism.

MONDAY FEB. 8/43

The amazing Russians have shifted their attack to the north of Kharkov & broken the German defences which baffled them last winter. They have taken Kursk & are pushing on. Berlin admits a Russian "break through" "made by a vast number of tanks in a wild snowstorm". Tokio admits that its troops have been withdrawn from Guadalcanal. Evidently the costly efforts in the Solomons (Jap naval losses have been extremely heavy) have induced a change of tactics at the cost of some "face".

Ottawa announces that more than <sup>(100,000)</sup> 100,000 men have been discharged as medically unfit from Canadian active forces since war began, and over 6,000 of these have been pensioned. All this without a battle, except the raid on Dieppe. Ottawa also announces a sort of "lend-lease" arrangement like that in use by the U.S. Under it one billion dollars' worth of Canadian war material will be sent during 1943 to any forces of any nation requiring them for operations against the Axis powers.

THURSDAY FEB. 11/43

Mild weather, mostly overcast, all this week, with mist & light rains. Pouring rain tonight. Snow is melting away, & from my study window I can see large patches of bare turf in the "Sixth field"; but the streets remain covered with 4 to 6 inches of sooty ice, deeply rutted by wheeled traffic. Meteorological office at Hfx. says that last month was "the second coldest January on record in Nova Scotia".

Mr. Churchill, back in London, announces that the Allies have landed 500,000 troops in north-west Africa; also that the 8th Army, now

passing into Tunisia, automatically comes under command of American general Eisenhower, C-in-C. North Africa. French African troops, who have been in action on the right of British & U.S. forces in Tunisia, have been withdrawn "for new equipment & training". They had proved unreliable when attacked by armoured forces under Von Arnim.

SUNDAY FEB 14/43 St. Valentine's Day (Edith had a party for the kids yesterday) Weather turned colder, 3 or 4 inches of snow last night. After more or less mild weather since the 1st of the month we still have 2 or 3 inches of ice on roads & sidewalks except in places much exposed to the sun. War news: Russians have taken Voroshilovgrad & Rostov. The R.A.F. dropped 1000 tons of bombs on the German submarine base at Lorient last night. Germans in Tunisia have defeated U.S. forces near Saffsa & driven them back 30 miles.

TUESDAY, FEB 16/43 16° below zero at 8 AM. - Pitt! Ottawa announces that gas ration for the year beginning Apr. 1, for ordinary ("A.A.I.") car owners, will be 120 gals = 10 gals per month. Canadian corvette "Louisburg" has been torpedoed & sunk by aircraft in the Mediterranean. Heavy R.A.F. raids on Germany, France & Italy continue nightly, & there is a good deal of daylight bombing by U.S. "Flying Fortresses" & R.A.F. "Mosquitos". The R.C.A.F. is now taking a prominent part in these affairs. U.S. Navy admits that in a ship-versus-plane brush with Japs off the Solomons (see Feb. 5) the heavy cruiser "Chicago" & one destroyer were sunk. They claim to have sunk 2 Jap destroyers & several transports in the same affair & to have shot down 60 Jap planes. (American claims of planes shot down are notoriously high. Their total claimed bag of Jap planes in the fighting over Guadalcanal alone was something over 800.) In Tunisia, U.S. troops have counter-attacked & recovered 6 of the lost 30 miles but the important base of Saffsa has been abandoned. This secures Rommel's flank & rear & he can

now make a stand in the old French frontier fortifications (Maréchal Lins) against the advancing 8th Army. The big French battleship "Recheleu", the cruiser "Montcalm" & 2 large destroyers "Antastigue" & "Verrible" have arrived in U.S. ports for overhaul & repair. They were damaged at Dakar during the abortive Anglo-French attempt to take the place in 1941. Tonight the Moscow radio announced, with pardonable fanfare, the capture of Kharkov from the Germans. The recovery of this, their 4th largest city & great steel industry, is a big plum, & even Berlin admits a serious defeat.

Another sub zero night. This morning's temperature in Milton was 20° below zero, in Caledonia 25° below.

THURSDAY FEB 18/43

Today we heard by radio the voice of Madame Chiang Kai Chek as she stood in the U.S. House of Representatives making a passionate & forceful appeal for an all-out Allied assault against the Japanese. She has a high clear voice & when she emphasized her points it had a hard ring like a man's. Her English is that of a cultured American woman, fluent & without a trace of "foreign accent" (She was educated in the U.S.) The German radio (under the ingenious little Doctor Goebbels) continues to urge the Herrenwalk to greater sacrifices & efforts, still promising victory but emphasizing now the terrible consequences of defeat. Goebbels promises a great German offensive "on the old style" next summer. Here in Canada the weather continues to be severe, with the fuel shortage everywhere acute. Liverpool coal merchants now refuse all orders from Milton & other outside places. Edith's people are having a hard time, as firewood is hard to get also.

FRIDAY FEB 19/43

I went to Hfx for sister Hilda's wedding. Train was terribly hot & stuffy all the way. Left Pool 1:15 p.m. reached Hfx 7:15 - 6 hours to go 100 miles. Railway cars (on this line anyhow) are dirty, with shabby

paint & threadbare upholstery; the toilets are a horror. Edith couldn't come to the wedding because we could get no one to mind the kids.

SATURDAY, FEB. 20/43. My sister Winnie is here for the show. Haven't seen her in 15 years & another 15 will suit me very well. The wedding was at 7 p.m. in St. Matthias Church. Groom is a paymaster lieutenant in the R.N.R. serving in Hqs. with the Fleet Air Arm, named Kibble. R.M.V. Canada (shore establishment of the R.N. here) lent "Kibbie" a staff car & crew.

I gave the bride away. No one had been invited, but 40 or 50 friends appeared in the church, & a photographer popped up in the choir stalls & got busy with flashlight bulbs etc. Got away in a blitz of confetti. A small reception at Mum's flat. The parson proposed the toast to the bride. Another photographer arrived in time to "get" the cake cutting ceremony & some pictures of the happy couple. Winnie insisted on a family group. Kibbie & Hilda have a new house at Arnoldale & left for it about 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEB. 21/43. One long bore, like all Sundays in this dirty city. A thaw, streets & sidewalks covered with sooty ice melting into pools of junk. The flat was full all day of females coming in to view the wedding gifts. Someone was always there, beginning 11 A.M., so that we got no luncheon & were nearly starved when the last lingering female drifted down the stairs at 6.15. My God!

MONDAY, FEB. 22/43 All day at the Archives. This evening at Jim Martell's where I met two newspaperwomen - Helen Champion, author of a little book "Over on the island" which I carried with me on my P.C.D. tour in 1940; and a young Mrs. Mayo, graduate of Oxford, husband in the R.A.F. Champion is on the Herald, Mayo on the Chronicle. Present also a fellow named Cole, Newfoundland dept. of finance. Talk & cigarettes & beer. Home at 1.30 A.M.

TUESDAY, FEB. 23/43 Train left Hfx 7 A.M. arrived 12 Noon. Again an ordeal due to excessive heat - temp. in the car must have been 85° or 90° degrees. Sat there gasping, with my jacket off and collar & necktie unfastened, & felt actually ill. What made it unbearable was the tantalising panorama of ice & snow flitting past the dirt-encrusted double windows.

THURSDAY, FEB. 25/43 Germans claim 3000 U.V. prisoners taken in Taid Pass in Tunisia on the 13th, together with great haul of guns, tanks, trucks & stores. Mild weather continues here, a thunderstorm tonight; most of January's ice is gone from the streets, & the river is open all the way to Milton.

FRIDAY, FEB. 26/43 Colder. Only 5° above zero this morning. New ration books are being distributed at the Masonic Hall. Figures issued at Ottawa show that of all men physically fit between 19 & 45, ~~some 40%~~ <sup>the Magicians</sup> had enlisted 39% in the armed forces (Military Dist. N°6). This is easily the highest in Canada. Quebec has easily the lowest with 9%, & voices are being raised in parliament for a more equitable ratio. Conscription, even for "the defence of Canada only" is a joke in Quebec. Bribery & corruption have been revealed right & left, & there is no attempt at enforcement. No trains from Hfx today due to a bad wreck on the line somewhere.

SATURDAY, FEB. 27/43 Snowstorm last night & this morning. Train service resumed. War news: Roosevelt & Churchill both ill - Winston with pneumonia. Russians are now held up all along the line by stiff German resistance; the great Kharkov bulge is in danger so long as Germans hold the shore of the Azof Sea all the way to Taganrog, & Russians are fighting hard to break through to Mariupol.

TUESDAY, MARCH 2/43 A drunken riot amongst sailors from corvettes in port raged along Main St. and Market last night for hours. There are no stores open after 10 p.m. but the 2 Chinese cafes (Kong's on Main St and the "Radio" on Market) were scenes of tumult. As usual the naval shore patrols (2 or 3 men

drawn from the corvette appointed "guard ship" for the day) were unable to cope with it; our fat & elderly town policeman is useless, & the Mounted Police have no jurisdiction within the town limits. The affair (apparently a general brawl between crews) lasted most of the night & continued aboard the ships, where officers were struck & abused. As a result all crews are confined to their ships & those in shore billets are forbidden to attend the theatre or restaurants at night. All this is a direct result of the restrictions on sale of beer & light wines along with heavier liquors in the government store. As in the Prohibition Era, the negroes on Waterloo street & vicinity are making stuff to sell, with methylated spirit, lemon extract, shaving lotions, & alcohol working out of cubes of "Alsons" ("canned heat", a kind of artificial fuel for spirit lamps) as some of the ingredients. The sailors go up there every night & come staggering down into the town, frozen & half poisoned, like a lot of lunatics. Another bad feature is that this leads to contact with the negro women, most of whom have venereal disease, a depraved and filthy lot.

Today was "Luftwaffe Day", one of the holy days in the Nazi calendar & the R.A.F. celebrated it by dropping nearly 1000 tons of bombs on Berlin tonight - the 2nd heavy posting it has got. We lost 19 bombers in the raid. Held up by strengthened German forces in the Ukraine, the Russians have struck out in the north between Moscow & Leningrad, taking the important city of Rzyev. They are commanded by the great Marshal Timoshenko himself. But there has been no break through & the Russians seem to be resolved on local objectives.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3/43 Snowstorm all day. We are to have better train service, 1 train leaving Hfx daily at 3.30 p.m., arriving L'pool at 9.15 p.m.; leaves L'pool. 6 a.m., arrives Hfx 11.45 a.m. This is a service we formerly enjoyed in addition to the regular noon trains but it was



cancelled during the depression of the 1930's. With motor traffic almost at a standstill, & great numbers of service men & war workers constantly on the move, a great strain has been thrown on the railway's inadequate service; & this resumption of the 2<sup>nd</sup> daily train will improve matters to some extent.

Rumours in L'pool about a hostel to be erected for service men in L'pool. No real need of it but certain ~~sharp~~ sharp-business men, who have property to sell, have been advocating a 50 bed hostel to be financed by gov't. and operated by Y.M.C.A. or some other service group. (Ross Byrne has an option on the Elmwood Hotel, Charles Holden wants to sell the Turf property) Argument put up to the town is the now familiar "other towns are getting expensive hostels so let's get some money spent here." Local branch of the Canadian Legion is enthusiastic, wants a big hostel built on the old Bristol shipyard property, owned by Fred Ryan, so that the Legion can take it over as a clubhouse after the war. Ray, editor of the "Advance", declares that the hostel should be built with a view to conversion into a hospital after the war, & the L'pool Hospital Ass'n. (chairman, Mowbray Jones) has taken up the matter from this angle.

War news: Mussolini has ordered home the Italian army of 10 divisions he sent to help the Germans on the Russian front in 1942. It has been badly shattered several times & now, with the Allies just across the Mediterranean, he wants it for home defence. The new Finnish premier, Ryti, announces that his country will fight Russia to the end. He does not mention Britain & the U.S.A. who, as Russia's allies, are at war with Finland also. The brilliant H.Q. of General MacArthur in Australia announces the complete destruction of a Jap convoy by air attack off New Guinea; 7 Jap warships, 12 transports, all sunk, & 55 Jap planes shot down - all at a cost of 1 U.S. bomber & 2 fighters. We take this

with a grain of Pacific salt, remembering those other Jap convoys "destroyed" or "shattered" which nevertheless reached port & conquered the East Indies. Airmen are too optimistic & so is MacArthur, whose despatches and interviews with correspondents always sound like a U.S. senator on July 4th.

Mr. Illsley brought down his budget at Ottawa today. Again stiff tax increases all round. Cigarettes will now cost 35¢ for a packet of 22, of which 22¢ is tax. Letter postage goes from 3¢ to 4¢. Income tax is placed on a pay-as-you-earn basis instead of the old practice of collecting this year's tax on the basis of last year's income.

Issue of new ration books (for coffee, tea, sugar & butter) recently, shows the population of Liverpool to be 4000 - a jump of 700 since the census of 1941. The increase consists of war workers connected with the corvette repair plants at Thompson Bros & Mersey Paper Co, & their families.

Ottawa announces a bonus of \$1 per cord on all firewood cut during 1943: it hopes by this means to avert a serious shortage of fuel in the countryside from coast to coast.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7/43. Freeze-snow-thaw-freeze, so goes the dull round. Thaw today. My new novel grows slowly; to put one's mind into the 18th century and keep it there for hours on end, in the midst of the distractions of a modern war, is a feat of mental gymnastics, nothing else. There is no flavour in it.

War news: Germans in Tunisia are attacking all along the line, altho outnumbered 2 to 1 (according to Mr. Churchill's figures) & presumably handicapped by the same weather which has been the Allied excuse for inactivity. British 1st Army has been pushed back a few miles but the British 8th Army holds firm & Rommel has suffered loss. Russians have had a sharp reverse on their huge southern flank (where Germans have driven them back to the bank of the Donetz above Stalino) with heavy loss. In

the north the Germans have evacuated their dangerous Ryhev - Gzalsk salient near Moscow. On the home front, Cape Breton miners are threatening to strike for increased butter, sugar & tea rations. N.S. gov't has cut the liquor ration to 1 pint of spirits per week per person or 1 pint of wine or 6 quarts of beer. The annual Red Cross drive for funds is underway. Cotth is one of the collectors. I gave \$25, as last year.

MONDAY, MARCH 8/43

Sunny day with keen NW wind. I was pursuing my daily walk along the Port Mouton road this p.m. when Glen Crowell picked up me up in his car, about 2 miles out of L'pool, & carried me to Hunt's Point Beach. I walked back from there, about 8 miles, just a good hike. Glen's reserve unit at Lockport was made the nucleus of an artillery battery some months ago. He will have the rank of major when recruiting is finished. (He served in 1914-18 as a lieut. in a British field battery & was badly wounded in the face in France. He is now inspector of schools in Shelburne - Queens.) He tells me that Madden, our M.P.P., & the mayor & council have been asking for artillery defence for L'pool harbour. Military District N<sup>o</sup> 6 H.Q. at Hfx says it isn't necessary but suggests that Crowell recruit part of his battery at L'pool & station 2 of his (so far theoretical) guns here. With 2 local reserve units (engineers under Monbray Jones, machine-gun company under "Koh" Murray) unable to get up to strength, this seems absurd. Glen says he would want 60 men. The whole thing is a mare's nest, I think.

War news: Canadian corvette "Keeybun" torpedoed & sunk in Mediterranean. Heavy British & U.S. air raids continue day & night on Germany, & occupied France. The Germans retaliate daily with small hit-&-run raids on the southern English counties. London has been bombed several times lately.

FRIDAY, MARCH 12/43

Pouring rain for 2 days, most of the ice is gone from the streets. Nova Scotia gov't. announces, for the year ending Nov. 30/42, the

biggest surplus in history - over \$2,700,000 of these <sup>the</sup> profits of the Liquor Commission were a considerable part. War news: Russians have taken Vyasma on the Moscow front but they are still reeling from their defeat on the Donetz River far to the south & Germans claim the recapture of Kharkov. In Tunisia the Germans continue violent attacks on the British 1st. & 8th. armies. At home, the federal govt is warning the country by radio & newspapers, that a serious fuel shortage this winter resulted in people burning their fences, outbuildings etc, & that a large supply of wood fuel must be cut now, to be dry for next winter.

SATURDAY, MARCH 13/43. Mild, overcast. To Big Falls this pm with Hector, Roy, Austin & Brent in H's car. Frost coming out, road very soft, car dragged in several places. In woods, ground bare in some places, waist-deep snow in others, hard walking, all low spots flooded. Saw 5 deer on the river road. Reached Eagle Lake camp 5:15. Lake ice is thin & mushy but R. & H. walked out on it. Supper, cribbage, talk. H. says the navy now has a shore staff of 20 or 25 officers, ratings, stewards, chauffeurs, typists, in Liverpool, to check on repairs to naval craft at Thompsons & Messy Paper Co. B. says Messy Paper Co is up to all kinds of book keeping fraud to conceal profits from tax authorities. Item: pulpwood has been charged off into manufactured product at a greater rate than actual; result is 20,000 cords of wood in river booms & elsewhere, not shown on books at all; @ \$10 per cord (current cost) this represents \$200,000 completely hidden from govt. auditors.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14/43. Lively sunny day. Cut firewood, tramped in woods. R. & H. played cribbage all day. On homeward trip picked up

Tommy & Frances, who had walked up to Milton this a.m. to spend day with Grandma Freeman & Marie.

MONDAY, MARCH 15/43 Cool but sunny. Another top-rank U.S. author dead - the third in 2 months. This time Stephen Vincent Benet (pronounced BENNY), poet & short story writer. His tale "The Devil & Daniel Webster" was one of the hits of 1941. He did a review of my novel for New York Tribune last fall. He was 414.

Clem Crowell at my house tonight trying to persuade Parker & me to accept commissions in his new (Liverpool) troop of artillery. He told him there was no hope of raising a third Reserve unit in town.

War news: Russians have had to withdraw from Kharkov.

FRIDAY, MARCH 19/43 Sunny & cold. Streets & sidewalks bare but patches of snow hang on in the garden & fields. I've never quite shaken off the sore throat mentioned Feb 6, which was followed by severe bronchial congestion and a most poisonous catarrh in the nasal passages. Now I have a relapse to that condition. I've not been able to smoke for many days & I haven't smoked with any enjoyment for two months. Misery.

War news: Germans still smiting the Russians hard in the Ukraine. R.A.F. hit Essen very hard the other night, great damage done to Krupp. Today I heard on the radio George "Buzz" (also "Screwball") Beurling, talking about his air fighting experiences. He is the Canadian ace, has shot down 26 German & Italian planes, most of them over Malta.

Our boasted big army in India ("a million fighting men") has so far distinguished itself by inactivity, except for 1 small excursion into Burma aimed at the port of Akyab. This force has been attacked in the jungle by Jap troops & has made one of those "tactical withdrawals", so familiar during the past 3 years. Censorship is

very tight everywhere & it is possible that the internal state of India may be much worse than we are allowed to think.

SUNDAY MARCH 21/43 First day of spring. Raining lightly & freezing, a very pretty silver thaw but bleak to look upon. Temp 25°. Town streets bare but much snow in fields & woods. This afternoon by radio we heard Winston Churchill speak 40 minutes on Britain's plans for post-war reconstruction. Amongst other things he advocated a "four year plan" for re-building & re-settling Britain itself.

I think he had felt impelled to speak on this subject by the great furor aroused by the Beveridge Plan, a proposal submitted to the gov't by the economist Sir William Beveridge, which demands all sorts of socialistic schemes without suggesting where the cash or credit is to come from. People in Britain & America are catching at every such scheme now, everyone seems convinced that the post-war world is to be some sort of Utopia. Churchill said stubbornly that his gov't would plan for the time of peace but it would make no promises in time of war. He hinted that the war might end in 1944 or 1945 but he said we must fight it & not divide our attention until it was won. Our minds should be on our jobs & in our spare moments we should be thinking of our armies, navies & air force. Then, dramatically, "I have just received a telegram from General Montgomery, who says the 8th Army is on the move again - & he is satisfied with its progress." He coughed & cleared his throat many times & seemed to be suffering still somewhat from his recent illness.

Hitler also spoke today to a gathering in the War Museum in Berlin. A recording of the speech was broadcast. He spoke in a

low monotonous voice, none of the usual shrieking, said 540,000 Germans had been killed in this war (Moscow claims 4 million Germans killed on the Russian front alone) added that the disaster at Stalingrad had been "undeserved" & that the critical situation on the Russian front had been "restored". (Russian armies are still falling back from Kharkov.) He also promised his people a complete & overwhelming victory.

MONDAY, MAR 21/43 Cold & overcast. I sent off my application for 1943 car license, fee \$20.74, also driver's license, fee \$1.00. When I get these I may apply for a gasoline license, fee \$1.00, quoting my 1943 car license number.

No news from Tunisia, where the British 1st. & 8th. armies, & an American army, are all closely engaged with the enemy. We pin our faith on the 8th, the veteran Desert Army under Montgomery.

WEDNESDAY, MAR 24/43 Sunny & cool. War news: 8th Army pierced the Mareth positions only to be thrown out by prompt German counter-attack. U.S. forces making progress towards Sfax farther north.

Russians seem to be holding their line in the Ukraine & farther north they are still advancing slowly towards Smolensk, but the spring thaws are now in flood & all operations on the east front must soon halt for a time.

THURSDAY, MAR 25/43 Showers & sunshine. Queens County has raised <sup>\$9,768.00</sup> ~~9,768.00~~ in the 1943 Red Cross drive. Our town has increased its tax rate to \$4 in the \$100. This is a two-edged blow, for the town's special assessor raised many assessments (including mine) last fall. News from England says that Lance Corp. Tommy Falls, big (230 lbs.) negro from Liverpool, N.Y. has won the heavyweight boxing championship of the British army. He did a little boxing in N.Y. before the war, used to act as sparring partner for Verence "Tiger" Warrington, Liverpool negro who fought his way to the light-heavy weight championship of

Canada before this war. "Liger" is now working as a rivetter in a shipyard at Hfx. War news: our attack on the Marek line in Tunisia has been completely defeated by the Italo-German force under Rommel.

FRIDAY, MAR 26/43. Sunny S.W. wind. Fine walk around Western Head this afternoon. I keep up my afternoon walks every fine day, though through the winter I've been confined to the Milton circuit (5 miles) & an occasional jaunt out the Port Mouton road as far as Five Rivers, walking (hopping is a better word) back along the railway line, a total of 10 or 11 miles. I eat too much & weigh 180 lbs. My throat & bronchial tubes are still swollen & sore & I'm still unable to smoke. I eat quantities of apples, a poor substitute.

There are now 15 corvettes & minesweepers of the R.C.N. in Liverpool & Brooklyn for repairs. Main St. is full of sailors all the time, mingled with R.C.A.F. uniforms from the radio-location station at Happy Landing (where there are 60 or 70 men.) Our local Reserve infantry unit, now C. Co'y of the Princess Louise Fusiliers, a machine gun battalion, is now armed with 6 Browning .30 calibre m.c.'s as well as their rifles. (M.G.'s & rifles are all U.S. Army stuff left over from the last war. All are painted with a red band near the muzzle, to indicate that .30/06 ammunition is required. There was a legend at Aldershot last summer that the red stripe meant "condemned" i.e. we were armed with rejects from the U.S.)

Beer shortage is arousing much ire. Amongst petitions to our (dry) Premier MacMillan is one from employees of the Halifax dockyard — 3,000 men.



SATURDAY, MARCH 27/43. Marvellous day, hot sun, clear sky, warm S.W. wind, temp. 65° outdoors at 3 p.m. Tommy's group of Cubs had a field day at Hills Grove in charge of 2 older scouts & had a fine time; some took off boots & shoes & waded. War news: 8th Army still slugging away in a frontal assault on the Mareth line. Ottawa says that Canada now has 5 divisions & 2 armoured brigades overseas - total, 190,000 men. Active service troops now training in Canada number 160,000. Conscripts enlisted for "service in North America" total 83,000. The Navy has 53,000. The R.C.A.F. has 200,000. (These figures do not include the 100,000 men discharged from the services since war was begun. Nor do they include the 102,000 part-time soldiers of the Reserve Army.) This gives a total of 686,000 now serving. Every month this is increased by (average figure) about 6,000 for home service and 8,000 for active service. Walked to Potanoc & back this afternoon & heard several song sparrows, the first of this spring.

SUNDAY, MAR 28/43. A great change, snow falling all morning in big wet flakes. Last night the R.A.F. dropped nearly 1000 tons of bombs on Berlin, ~~that~~ heaviest raid yet on that city. The 8th Army has got a mobile force around Rommel's flank in Tunisia.

MONDAY, MAR 29/43 Sunny & cold. This afternoon I bought an old powder horn from Fred Macleod on the West Milton Road. He is a little shummy eyed fellow of 85 or 90, a great moose hunter in his youth, when a few of the old flintlocks were still in use but muzzle loading "cap-guns" were the common weapon. War news: 8th Army has turned Rommel out of his Mareth line after 9 days' fighting & taken 6000 prisoners, mostly German. He is retreating slowly towards Gabès. My cousin Douglas Dorey, a pilot officer, R.A.F., who

trained in Alabama & Ontario last year & sailed from Lpool for England last December. has been badly hurt in a crash. His plane flew into a mountain. Jaw broken in 3 places, severe facial injuries. He was a tall good-looking chap. In Liverpool, George Clements has received word that his son Horace, an air gunner, is missing. He took part in the last big raid on Berlin.

TUESDAY, MAR. 30/43. Sunny & cold. War news: Another big raid on Berlin last night also a raid on Borkum in the Ruhr. We lost 21 planes over Berlin, 12 over Borkum. 8th Army is in Silesia. Sporadic fighting along the Russian front but the armies are now bogged in the spring thaw. Canada starts rationing meat May 1st. Ration will be 2 lbs per week per person. I am rationing myself on all foods, as I now weigh 188 lbs in my clothes - 20 lbs too much. I walk 5 or 10 miles every fine afternoon but exercise alone makes no difference.

THURSDAY, APR. 1/43 Snow & light rain. Nevertheless at 5:30 p.m. I watched the first robin pull the first worm of the season out of my lawn. Warren Dexter, Milton, was notified today that his son Harvey, a most promising lad, was killed in an air accident in Western Canada while training in the R.C.A.F. This is the first Milton boy to die in the war. Thompson's plant in Lpool is steadily enlarging, the new gov't slip (to be operated by them) is nearing completion, & a new foundry is being constructed. These will employ another 100 to 200 men & there is talk of a gov't housing project here as the town is overcrowded now.

FRIDAY, APR. 2/43. Russians say that during the past winter's campaign they inflicted on the German & satellite armies more than one million casualties, of which 350,000 are prisoners in their hands.

SATURDAY, APR. 3/43 Fog. Town tractor crew are grading the streets. Ottawa says that 630 Canadian merchant seamen have perished in this war to date. Of these 147 were Nova Scotians.

SUNDAY, APR. 4/43 A grey day, but song sparrows were chanting this morning. Since last September we have been sending our kids to the United Church Sunday school, not liking the Romish practices being introduced at Trinity by "Father John" Wilson. We never go to church ourselves.

Last night the R.A.F. & R.C.A.F. raided Essen & dropped the usual 1,000 tons of bombs. 21 of our bombers (5 of them Canadian) shot down. In the Pacific, U.S. fliers claim to have sunk 2 Jap cruisers off New Britain. Almost every day we are told of ships sunk & "vital Axis industries" destroyed by our optimistic bombers. How much is true, God knows, but now & again some newsman gets something through the censorship (usually by coming home & talking what he knows) & we discover that our bombers are just as prone to err as the Luftwaffe was, over London in 1940. Nevertheless we are getting in some good licks & there is a satisfaction in knowing that German cities, immune in so many wars, are feeling the weight of Mars at last.

This afternoon I attended the funeral of young Harvey Dexter at Milton. The Baptist church full & overflowing. About 40 men from the air post at Happy Landing were present under an officer, also Murray with 30 men of the P.L.F. Co'y. Very sad. Harvey was just 20 & was to have received his wings next Saturday. The father fought in the 85th Highlanders in the last war, & in the family I noticed young Bill in P.L.F. khaki & a daughter in WRAF uniform.

MONDAY, APR. 5/43 Snow all day, then rain. Was: last night R.A.F. gave Kiel a heavy bombing & yesterday the U.S.A.F. did the same for

Naples. Sporadic fighting in Russia as both sides improve local positions. The British army is to use a khaki beret instead of the wedge cap. Canada will follow suit "as stocks of the wedge type become exhausted".

Liquor ration in Nova Scotia is cut again. One can now obtain 1 quart of spirits, 2 quarts wine or 24 quarts beer per month. I have bought no liquor since New Year, except 1 evening when we were entertaining a couple of sailors from the corvette "Clayoquot"; for this occasion I got 1 quart of Demerara rum which cost, with taxes, \$5.00. It was poor stuff at that.

Night news: U.S. planes bombed a big air factory at Antwerp & the Renault works at Paris which makes tanks for the Germans. R.A.F. planes escorted them & Sid Lord (of L'pool) again distinguished himself. He is leader of the "Wolf" squadron, R.A.F. & wears a D.F.C. and bar.

Introduced Tommy to my .22 rifle in the cellar, firing at a target set up on the woodpile & using the short ammunition. He can't reach the trigger with the butt at his shoulder & has to tuck the butt under his armpit but he does very well. He now weighs 60 pounds and stands 4' 3 1/2" in his socks. Frances is 3' 11" in her socks.

We note much more air activity along the coast since March 1st. Planes over the town at intervals all day - flying boats & twin engined bombers & sometimes big yellow planes with long wings.

TUESDAY, APR. 6/43 Another grey day with snow flying. Tangier radio reports a large fleet of British & U.S. transports left Gibraltar today & Spain reports great air activity at The Rock; they hint at another Allied move like the landings in Algeria last year.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 7/43 Sunny but bitter cold. After a walk this afternoon I overhauled my fishing tackle. War news: 8th Army has driven

Rommel out of his Kadi Alati position on the Sabes-Afax road. 6,000 prisoners. U.S. troops were unable to get through the mountains to cut off his retreat. Ottawa is encouraging housewives to apply for sugar for the making of jams & preserves & as there is no possible check on the use of this sugar the way is open to "chiselers". I hear that some who never made jam & never will, have applied for amounts as high as 150 lbs. A swarm of robins in the field behind our house this afternoon. Tommy noticed them first.

THURSDAY, APR. 8/43 Sunny & cool. In Tunisia the 8th Army has made contact with U.S. forces under Gen Patton. Our 1st Army under Alexander is thrusting hard toward Tunis. Ottawa announces another Victory Loan, the biggest yet - \$1,100,000,000; subscriptions open in May. Saturday Evening Post is exhibiting all over the U.S. a collection of paintings by Post illustrators & original M.S.S. by Post authors. The M.S.S. are to be put up in special covers & given to the purchasers of the highest amount of war bonds in certain key towns & cities. Post has asked me to autograph one of mine ("Silk for Lennie") for the show.

FRIDAY, APR. 9/43 Vimy Day. Sunny, windy, cool. ~~Light~~ Last night R.A.F. raided the Ruhr, losing 21 planes. 8th Army now has 10,000 prisoners & Rommel is in full retreat towards Tunis.

SATURDAY, APR. 10/43 Again sunny & windy but a lovely day. Drove to Caldonia this afternoon, road fair, bad in spots. I went to buy a rifle but the prospective seller had changed his mind. Inquired further from Walter Scott & others but no luck. (No sporting rifles have been manufactured since war began; & with the prospect of having to hunt if one wants a winter's supply of meat, rifle-owners are chary of selling.)

(Ammunition for sporting guns has now vanished from the stores.)  
I saw Clark Murray, postmaster, who fought in the last war in the 85th  
N.S. Highlanders & is now a reserve lieutenant commanding the  
local platoon of the 2nd N.W.S. Regt. He told me another platoon  
is now being raised at South Brookfield. While I was  
thus engaged, Grandma Freeman, Aunt Marie Bell & Edith raided  
the Caledonia stores, found them well stocked with canned goods,  
& bought such things as canned beans, canned corn etc. which  
we have not seen in Liverpool for a year. On the road  
we saw a moose, a deer fawn & a very lame (& tame) hawk.

War news: 8th Army has passed through the port of  
Sfax in Rommel's heels. Nova Scotia's portion of the new  
Victory Loan is to be \$33,000,000

SUNDAY, APR. 11/43 East wind & snow flying. War: Rommel's flight has  
been hastened by an armoured column of our 1st Army breaking  
through the mountains at Teid Pass on his flank. He is leaving guns  
& stores behind. U.S. air force claims to have shot down 60 or 70 German  
transport planes between Tunis & Sicily in the past 2 days. If true  
it looks as though Rommel & his Afrika Korps may be planning  
a dramatic exit by air. Tunis is only 100 miles from Sicily.

Monday, APR. 12/43 Sun today took yesterday's snow except in shady places. I  
picked some mayflower birds near the White Point road. War: Our 8th Army  
has passed through Sousse & is now joined with the 1st Army. It now looks  
as if the French & U.S. troops on this front were comparatively small, token  
forces working between our 1st & 8th; the main fighting has been an exclusively  
British show. U.S. bombers ("flying fortresses") raided the port of Maddalena  
in Sardinia yesterday & sank the Italian cruiser "Trieste" & seriously damaged

the cruiser "Gorizia". British submarines very active between Lunis & Sicily, Torpedoed 15 enemy transport ships of various types in the past 2 days. Hitler & Mussolini, accompanied by full staffs, have had a conference. Forgot to mention that yesterday afternoon by radio we heard Queen Elizabeth broadcast a message of faith & comfort to the women of the empire. Everyone here seems to be planning a "war garden" this year. I am no gardener but Edith is keen to have one. Hear that a new shipyard on the LaHave below Bridgewater is to make large numbers of wooden "invasion barges" to be shipped overseas in pieces. Other plants in N.S. are to turn them out also.

Police have uncovered a gasoline coupon racket in Montreal. The coupons were taken by an employee of the printing plant & distributed through a group of young men to taxi drivers & others. 21 gasoline stations have been closed in Montreal for accepting loose coupons. Police estimate 750,000 gals. of gasoline were procured by this racket during the past winter. It all seems part of the general anti-war feeling in Quebec. Conscription is vigorously opposed & so far has been a failure there. Doctors in military & even air force employ (Quebecois) have granted "physically unfit" certificates <sup>or</sup> sold them for as low as \$2.00 (there was a scandal about this last winter), with the result that the percentage of "physically unfit" in men of call-up age is 3 times the percentage in the rest of Canada. Yesterday 2 policemen arrested a <sup>military</sup> deserter in a small Quebec town, were mobbed, had to take refuge in the railway station, fire their revolvers over the heads of the mob, finally were rescued by a detachment of army provost corps sent out from Quebec City.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 14/43

Rain last night, sunny with a howling westerly gale today. Edith & the other Red Cross ladies have been hard at work for the past several weeks on a "rush" order for field dressings. They still use a couple of rooms at the (old) school. A sort of "Zabern incident" in the Mersey Hotel today. A naval engineer officer, a Lt. Commander Byers of the Hfr dockyard staff, came into the hotel & attempted to enter the dining room, which was locked. The desk clerk, a slight, sickly boy with only one eye, named Roy, explained that Byers was too late for the mid day meal & advised him to go to a cafe. Byers then asked for a room & was told the place was full up. Byers broke into violent abuse, the boy spoke up manfully, & Byers, a well built man of 45, rushed at him & struck him with such force that Roy was stretched out senseless. Byers then attempted to leave the hotel but was stopped by Angus Maclean (a 1914 war veteran) & two or three other travellers in the lobby. They sent for the naval patrol who came but could do nothing, Byers defying them to touch an officer. Then arrived our town cop Bob White who is fat & lazy but strong as a bull & a nasty rough-&-tumble fighter. He managed to induce Byers away from the crowded lobby & then knocked him down, smacked his head against the hardwood floor, kicked him in the ribs several times for good measure, & removed a broken bottle of rum from Byers' pocket. Along came Commander Hall, the elderly S.N.O., Liverpool, just in time to save Byers from a bad beating & to try & smooth things over. But the boy did not recover consciousness & had to be taken to hospital & there happened to be a labour union official from Montreal (here on business with the Mersey



papermakers) who had witnessed the affair. He told Hall (who was trying to ease Byers out of the hotel) "This man must go before a civil court or I shall make a full report of this affair to Ottawa." Hall promised that Byers would not leave town & took him away somewhere. The whole town is buzzing like a hornet's nest. I met Byers at my sister's wedding last Sat. A drunkard.

FRIDAY, APR. 16/43. Lt. Com. Byers was fined \$25 & costs in the police court this morning, costs to include all medical & hospital bills for the injured boy. He apologised for his behaviour & regretted the whole affair - a smooth customer. I think he got off lightly & so does everyone else. Reason suggested is that he's here to survey a site for a possible government wharf - something that Town Hall is very anxious to get.

This evening I cabled Blackwoods asking them to release North American rights on the Red Pipes & other tales of mine so I can arrange publication here. Doubleday in the U.S. and MacCalland & Stewart in Canada are anxious to bring out collections of my tales in book form this Fall.

SATURDAY, APR. 17/43 Rain. War - last night 600 R.A.F. bombers raided Pilsen in Czechoslovakia, where the Skoda works are; also Mannheim & Ludwigshafen. 55 bombers lost - the biggest loss yet in a single night's work.

The flamboyant U.S. general MacArthur, backed by Australian gov't. voices, continues to yell about inadequate forces & the imminence of a great Japanese attack in the south Pacific. Australia insists that Japan should be conquered before any great effort is made in Europe. Today U.S. "flying fortresses" raided the Focke-Wulf aircraft works at Bremen in broad daylight - 16 of them shot down. Russians say

they heavily bombed Tilsit, Danzig & Königsberg last night. In fact the air war against the Axis now seems continuous, for the R.A.F. & U.S.A.F. are bombing Italian ports day & night.

Today I visited the home of the late John George Pyke & bought a few old books. Pyke was a fusty old-fashioned lawyer with side whiskers & an office where the govt. liquor store now is, filled with an incredible litter of dusty files & papers & cobwebs when I did some business with him in 1925. He died in the later 1920's but the widow & her sister Miss Annie Campbell lived on in the big house, which was the old Colin Campbell homestead, just outside the town limit on the Brooklyn road. The Pykes were in those days the cream of Liverpool society & as late as 1926 an invitation to bridge at Pyke's was something every ambitious lady panted for - hence the name awarded the house by some wag of those days, "Pyke's Peak". Mrs. Pyke died in the late 1930's when the "old" aristocracy had been completely displaced by the dollar-crats of the new paper industry, & now poor little Miss Annie is selling house and all (she must be 70 or 80) to retire to the comfort of Mrs. Andrew's boarding house in town. She had clung to the old way of life to the end. There was not a modern device in the house. No bath, no water-closet, no furnace, no electricity except lights in four lower rooms - & that installed in recent years. The well was right under the kitchen & the well-curb, windlass & bucket rope were part of the kitchen equipment. The house is huge, a warren of rooms on 3 floors - no hardwood flooring anywhere.

MONDAY, APR. 19/43 Sunny & cool. Heard a lot of heavy gunfire or possibly depth charges to the N.W. of Western Head while walking around there today. One fisherman thought it might be gun practice in the Halifax forts & when I looked incredulous (it's 70 miles) he told me that in peace time he had heard the Nfx forts at practice more than once on some freakish condition of the atmosphere. War: our airmen in Tunisia had a juicy target yesterday, a huge fleet of Junkers troop transport planes escorted by German fighters, just leaving Tunisia for Sicily. Our boys were in strong force & they shot down 58 of the transports, a fine bag. Last night R.A.F. bombers from England raided Spezia again, a round trip of 1400 miles with two crossings of the Alps. Not much doing on land anywhere. In the Channel & particularly off the coast of Holland our light naval craft are engaging enemy patrols & convoys almost every night. We hear continual reports of unrest in German-occupied countries but most of them originate with the hopeful governments-in-exile; I think the severe German reprisals for sabotage etc. have pretty well cowed most of Europe.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 21/43 Wet & bleak. Young Carmen Dixon missing, believed drowned, while seeking lobsters on an island near Yarmouth, where he was stationed, <sup>with the RCAF</sup> some years ago he married ~~the~~ daughter of my old friend Dr. Porter Freeman. He is the second of the Dixon boys to die in this war. War news: 8th Army has captured Enfidaville in bitter fighting. R.A.F. raided Stettin, Rostock & Berlin last night: 31 bombers lost. President Roosevelt announces that the Japs "barbarously executed" 8 U.S. fliers who fell into their hands after the bombing of Tokyo last year. It is revealed that the U.S. planes took off from the

carries "Hornet", 800 miles from the Jap coast, that they caught the Japs completely unawares & bombed their targets at leisure in broad daylight. & went on to the mainland to make crash landings in China (1 in Siberia); of 80 officers & men, 65 including General Doolittle made their way to Chungking & thence home after many weeks.

Yesterday was Hitler's 54th birthday; he made no speech.

Blackwoods wired yesterday "agree your request reserving right of sale of our edition in Canada after war."

Lunenburg schooner "Flora Alberta" Capt Guy Jannes, rammed & cut in two at night on the Banks by a merchant steamer, 21 men lost, most of them Lunenburgers & Newfoundlanders.

~~COOK FRIDAY~~  
SATURDAY

APR 23/43

Fine & warm. Took my family & Jean & Rose Conrad to Upper Great Brook this afternoon. The women picked Mayflowers. Tommy & I fished for trout with no luck. Picnicked by the guides' shack at Mersy Lodge, the first picnic of the season. War: Our troops are attacking all along the line in Tunisia. Another 20 or 30 big German air transports shot down between Sicily & Tunisia, & 10 ships torpedoed by our submarines.

~~COOK FRIDAY~~  
EASTER SUNDAY, APR 25/43

Lovely day. Picnic tea at Mersy Lodge again. Tommy caught (& lost) his first trout. On the way home met Corporal Morrison, R.C.M.P. & a party of men going to the Suzzle to search for 2 lost children. Dumped my family in Melton, returned, joined the search, about dusk met John Francis, Indian, at the 2nd meadow on Deep Brook. Heard car klaxons blowing long blasts far back on the road, returned, learned that the "lost" kids had been "hiding" on the Suzzle island to play a trick on their parents & had turned up OK. War: savage fighting all along the line in Tunisia, no deep gains. Russian govt. & Polish govt.-in-exile at odds over German claim to have found bodies of 20,000 Polish

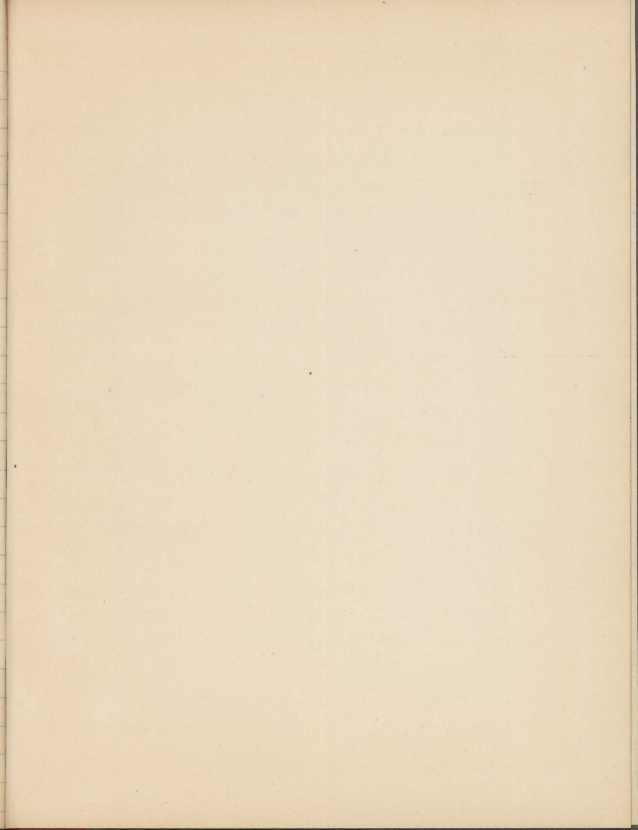
soldiers "murdered by Russians in 1939". (See JAN. 28/44)

MONDAY, APR. 26/43 Fine weather continues. Prince Arthur of Connaught died suddenly at Gov't House, Ottawa. He was 28, had served 2 years in Egypt in this war & has spent the past several months as guest of the Earl of Athlone. Announcement in a small paragraph in an inner page of the newspapers, "natural causes". The title dies with him.

Hard fighting continues in Tunisia. R.A.F. dropped 1500 tons of bombs on Duisburg in the Rhineland. Canadian Victory Loan opened with fanfare today, newspapers have been full of it for weeks, radio likewise; special speaking tours arranged, etc.

THURSDAY APR. 29/43 Cloud & sunshine, cold NW wind, light snow squalls or rain. Irving Bain & I to Albernica this p.m., first stopping at Rapid Falls to dip a few minnows. Borrowed a boat from a farmer named Chute in Cameron Lake & worked it up a steep rush of water into Martin's Lake. I rowed straight up the lake in the teeth of the wind, a long hard pull, & at 6 p.m. we reached the in-fall from the Christopher Lakes, a beautiful pool. Bain broke his rod beyond mending. I lost 2 trout using minnow bait, changed to a small Silver Doctor & a Parmachene Belle just at sunset & caught 3 beauties. Had to leave about 7:30 in order to get out by dark. Bain got out at the road & I ran the boat down the torrent to Cameron Lake, a thrill, though only a hundred yards or so.

SATURDAY, MAY 1/43. U.S. coal miners 300,000 strong celebrate May Day with a strike. President Roosevelt has placed the mines under gov't control & ordered the men back to work. Battle rages in Tunisia with Germans counter-attacking every Allied move. R.A.F. continues heavy night raids on German industrial cities & ports. Nothing but air activity in Pacific. The W.A.C. now has a recruiting office, or rather a desk in



Faint, illegible handwriting on lined paper, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

