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Directorate of History  
National Defence Headquarters  
Ottawa, Canada  
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July 1986

Visit to Headquarters, Canadian Corps.  
Interview with Lieutenant-General McNaughton.  
Present state of the Corps and plans for its  
development.

Canadian Military Headquarters,  
2 Cockspur Street, S.W. 1,  
London, ENGLAND.

The Director,  
Historical Section, General  
Staff,  
National Defence Headquarters,  
Ottawa, CANADA.

Sir,

I have the honour to present a  
further report.

2. This report describes a visit to the Headquarters of the Canadian Corps and an interview with General McNaughton; while some general notes on the present situation of the Corps, based mainly on documents available at Canadian Military Headquarters, are appended.

#### VISIT TO CORPS HEADQUARTERS

3. I had desired to visit the Headquarters of the Canadian Corps as soon after my arrival in this country as possible; but the prolonged illness of Brigadier Pope, B.G.S., C.M.H.Q., who had promised to take me there and introduce me, postponed the visit for about a month. Finally, as the Brigadier's return to duty was being continually deferred, I seized the opportunity presented by a visit to Headquarters on the part of Lt.-Col. H.A. YOUNG (G.S.O., S.D., C.M.H.Q.) who kindly took me with him and introduced me to the Corps Commander and other officers. This was on 29 January.

#### HEADLEY COURT

4. The Headquarters of the Canadian Corps is situated in a house known as HEADLEY COURT, the property of the CUNLIFFE-LISTER family, about two miles from LEATHERHEAD, which lies to the west and a little to the north of it. The house is a very large, rather pretentious but not particularly convenient structure, built of brick and dating, one would gather, from the late Victorian period. It has a relatively retired situation. It has magnificent gardens particularly remarkable for hedges clipped into various fantastic shapes; the front door is approached by a drive lined with such hedges, and from the windows of the ante-room of "A" Mess one sees a gigantic garden sundial whose gnomon and numerals are formed of living box.

5. This house has accommodated General McNaughton's Headquarters since 2000 hours on 20 July 1940, when the Headquarters, CANADIAN FORCE, opened in it. At 0001 hours on 21 July, the following day, the CANADIAN FORCE was absorbed by 7 CORPS, of which General McNaughton took command. On the organization of the CANADIAN CORPS (25 Dec. 40) its Headquarters continued to occupy this house. (On these July transactions,



see General Staff War Diary, H.Q. 7 Corps, for that month

# INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL McNAUGHTON

6. Lt. Col. Young introduced me to Lieutenant-General McNAUGHTON, who received me most kindly. The General proceeded to comment at length on some questions that had arisen out of the "VICTOR" exercise conducted during the preceding week. I have made a memorandum of these remarks, in the belief that the General was willing to have them recorded; but since he prefaced them with a special injunction of secrecy I think it best not to commit them to the mail at the present time.

7. The Corps Commander very kindly promised that the very fullest facilities would be given me for my work, and that all material at Corps Headquarters would be open to me without reservation. He added of course that I should be expected to observe due discretion, and I assured him that I thoroughly understood this.

8. At luncheon in "A" Mess a little later, I sat beside the Corps Commander and talked with him further. He spoke of various subjects, including the Canadian-American joint defence agreement of 1940 and the military aspects of the new constitutional status of Canada as expressed in the Statute of Westminster, etc.

9. I was introduced to a large number of officers at Corps Headquarters. Among them were Brigadier G.R. TURNER, M.C., D.C.M., the B.G.S. (Cdn); Brigadier J.C. STEWART, D.S.O., the C.C.R.A. (who in the course of conversation after luncheon remarked on the great value of the system, pursued in the last war, of sending officers to advise units on the preparation of war diaries); Brigadier C.A.P. MURISON, C.B.E., M.C., a Canadian by origin but a British officer, the D.A. & Q.M.G., who held this appointment in 7 Corps; Lt.-Col. C.S. BOOTH, M.P., (THE WINNIPEG LIGHT INFANTRY), the D.A.A.G.; Col. J.E. GENET, M.C., the Chief Signal Officer; Capt. Lord TWEEDSMUIR, G.S.O. (I); Capt. Lord DUNCANNON, A.D.C. I did not meet Brigadier C.S.L. HERTZBERG, M.C., the Chief Engineer, who was not at Headquarters, or Brigadier M.C. DEMPSEY, D.S.O., M.C., the B.G.S. in special charge of operations (another "Imperial" officer appointed to 7 Corps). Capt. G.P. HARTLING, R.C.A., who showed me about the building, is in the "G" branch under Brigadier Dempsey, and remarked that he was a splendid officer whom he was very glad of the opportunity to serve with.

10. It will be noted that the staff of the Canadian Corps still includes a certain number of the British officers appointed to 7 Corps in July, 1940. What the ultimate situation will be is not yet clear, but presumably these officers will shortly be replaced by others from the Canadian service.

11. At Headley Court I also met J.B. BICKERSTETH, Esq., who since September 1940 has been at Corps H.Q. assisting in the organization of the Army educational programme. Mr. Bickersteth is on leave from the University of Toronto, where he is Warden of Hart House, and where I knew him well in civil life. I had a quarter of an hour or so of conversation with him on the work he has been doing, but as I hope to deal at length with the educational programme in a later report, when I have had opportunities for further talk with him and with Dr. A.E. CHATWIN, the Director of Educational Services, I shall not attempt a partial description here. Mr. Bickersteth appears to be the only civilian at Corps H.Q. He served in the last war as an officer of THE ROYAL DRAGOONS.



ARTICLE FOR "CANADIAN GEOGRAPHICAL JOURNAL"

12. On 17 Jan. last I received a letter written on 19 Dec. by G.M. DALLYN, Esq., editor of the "Canadian Geographical Journal", and forwarded to me from Ottawa. It stated that Mr. Dallyn had just received a letter from the Department of National Defence quoting the terms of a cable from General McNaughton (who is a Vice-President of the Canadian Geographical Society) which suggested that I should write an article on the subject "Our Army Overseas" which was required for the "Journal". After consultation with the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., I cabled Mr. Dallyn that I would consult General McNaughton; and in the course of my visit to Headley Court on 29 Jan. I handed to Brigadier Turner an outline of the proposed article. On 31 Jan. Brigadier Turner visited C.M.H.Q. and returned to me this outline, with the Corps Commander's comments. Since that time I have been chiefly occupied in drafting the article. This morning I handed the draft over to a typist, and I propose to send it to Corps H.Q. for approval before putting it into final shape for despatch.

13. While work of this sort is not strictly within my province as Historical Officer, C.M.H.Q., compiling this article has been a decided advantage to me. It has enabled me to obtain a sort of bird's-eye view of the proceedings of the Canadian troops in England during the past year, and has thus afforded me what will, I think, be a valuable background for my work from now on. In the course of compiling this account I have done a good deal of work among the war diaries in the Records Office at Acton, but I have supplemented this by conversations with various officers conversant with the events which I have had to deal with. In the nature of things, I have come across a good many incidents and aspects not suitable for present publication. With this in view, I propose to use this article as a basis for a report, forwarding a copy of it to you, accompanied by additional notes for the files of the Historical Section.

COMPOSITION OF THE CANADIAN CORPS AND  
ANCILLARY TROOPS

14. The present is a convenient opportunity for presenting some general notes on the present situation and composition of the Canadian Corps, based mainly on study of various documents on file at C.M.H.Q., which may possibly be of value to a future Official Historian.

15. The Canadian Corps, as is well known, is the successor to the 7th Corps, which as noted above was organized under General McNaughton's command on 21 July 1940. This Corps was partly Canadian, partly British; this being true of the Corps staff as well as of the troops composing the Corps. It was a powerful formation, including in addition to the 1st Canadian Division the 1st Armoured Division, and the 2nd New Zealand Division; while the 1st Army Tank Brigade was included among its Corps Troops. The New Zealand Division was removed from its Order of Battle in September, 1940 (amendment to Order of Battle, dated 15 Sept.); but the Armoured Division and Army Tank Brigade were still included up to the time of the organization of the Canadian Corps. General McNaughton evidently relinquished command of these formidable formations on 25 Dec. 40, when the Canadian Corps was formed, and the 2nd Canadian Division came under his command. Their departure leaves his Order of Battle somewhat less powerful in appearance than it was before; but it is interesting to note that the Canadian overseas army programme for 1941, announced by the Rt. Hon. Mr. King on 3 Feb. (The Times, London, 4 Feb 1941) proposes to



raise it to a higher point of power than it has yet attained, by providing from Canada successively, in addition to further Corps troops required for the force now in England, (1) an Army Tank Brigade; (2) the 3rd Division, mobilized in Canada in the summer of 1940; and (3) an Armoured Division. This would place under General McNaughton a force equivalent on paper to the 7th Corps at its greatest strength plus one division.

16. There are now very few "Imperial" units remaining in the Canadian Corps. The 53rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, R.A., was deleted from the Order of Battle by a amendment of 5 Feb 41; and the only British units which I can now identify in it with certainty are 6 M.A.C. (Motor Ambulance Convoy) and 3 Mobile Laundry.

17. The successive Orders of Battle and amendments referred to above are found in C.M.H.Q. file 1/Formations/6.

#### NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE WAR OFFICE

18. At the suggestion of Brigadier Pope and Lt.-Col. Young, I have examined the minutes of a conference held at the War Office on 17 Jan. 41 for the purpose of discussing the provision of additional Canadian Army Troops, the supply of equipment, etc. This document is signed by the B.G.S. (Cdn) Cdn Corps and dated 19 Jan. 41; it is labelled with file numbers 1/104/3(G), 1/166(G), and 1/171(G), and copies of it were reserved for the Cdn Corps war diary. As the document will be available for future historical purposes I shall content myself here with calling attention to its importance and noting some of the trends which are discernible in it.

19. At this meeting, in addition to General McNaughton, Brigadier Turner, and Lt.-Col. Young, the following British officers were present: Major-Gen. G.N. MACREADY, A.C.I.G.S., War Office; Major-Gen. A.E. NYE, D.S.D., War Office; and Lt.-Col. H.V. WATSON, G.S., S.D., War Office. As outlined by General Macready, the object of the meeting was to arrive at a mutually satisfactory list of Canadian units to be provided surplus to the Corps proper; the War Office having suggested a list totalling about 20,000, while Canadian counter-proposals provided for about 15,000. An Appendix presents both the W.O. proposals and a suggested scheme (evidently in part new) put forward at the meeting by General McNaughton subject to approval by the Government of Canada. In general this latter scheme was accepted; and it was noted that the agreed list, including the Army Tank Brigade which was suggested by Canada though not present in the W.O. proposal, amounted to more than 20,000 men. No mention of the future Canadian Armoured Division is found in this document.

20. I have not yet had an opportunity of discussing these matters with General McNaughton; but indications of the future direction of development of the Canadian Corps and its ancillary troops, as now envisaged, can be seen in the minutes of this conference. General McNaughton remarked that "in general terms, the chief requirement is to make the Canadian Force a coordinated organization rather than a collection of individual units." Some of the points where discussion took place are perhaps worth noting. General McNaughton desired to have a mobile Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, whereas the War Office had suggested a non-mobile one; and though it was pointed out that it might be difficult to equip a mobile one at the present time, the Canadian proposal was accepted. The Corps Commander had also proposed one Army Field Regiment not found in the War Office list; and in this connection he "stated that, although it



would be primarily a Canadian unit, he would be prepared to place it at the disposal of the Army Commander if the military situation so requires; its inclusion on this understanding was accepted by General Macready as it would relieve the British of the necessity of providing one of these units for Army Troops." In the matter of Medium Regiments, "General McNaughton stated that Canada has taken preliminary action towards the provision of these on a scale of one per Div. and two per Corps, or a total of five; as a short-term policy, he considers it desirable to have them on a scale of one per Division or a total of three." (I have since heard General McNaughton speak of the prospective five regiments and their great fire-power, at a First Division conference on 15.Feb.) There was also some discussion over General McNaughton's suggestion of three Troop-Carrying Companies; the British preference was for two of these and a Bulk Petrol Company. This matter was not finally settled.

21. Without going into further detail, it seems fair to conclude that the Canadian military authorities in the United Kingdom are keeping before them the desirability of developing their force along the same lines which proved so successful in the last war: making it, that is, a self-contained Canadian formation capable of a large degree of independent action, and possessing special strength in the technical arms, notably the artillery. It seems probable that when and if circumstances permit the artillery of the Canadian force will be increased beyond the ordinary scale of strength in the same manner as in 1917-18. The desire to add strong armoured components to the force, and to keep the whole as mobile as possible, is also obvious. What seems to be in view is a Corps which will have just as much striking-power under the conditions of to-day as the old Canadian Corps had under the conditions of 1918,- and one which can be employed as a self-contained national unit.

#### THE EQUIPMENT SITUATION

22. The same document affords information on some aspects of the present state of the problem of providing equipment. At this meeting at the War Office General McNaughton mentioned that difficulties were arising through the lack of equipment, and asked for further measures to ensure "at least a reasonable training scale". In reply, General Macready gave the facts in connection with certain items of equipment, indicating that with respect to Light Anti-Aircraft Artillery production was satisfactory; that it was much less so with respect to Medium Artillery, the new 5.5-inch weapon coming in very slowly; that all Field Regiments should have 25-pounders by March, 1942; and that there is a great and serious lack of barrels for anti-tank guns, which may be somewhat relieved by production in Canada beginning about June, 1941. This is enough to indicate that the armament situation is still far from satisfactory. It is clear also that the programme initiated in Canada in the spring of 1940 will only begin to produce large results in the summer of 1941; and presumably it will be longer before it can really influence the course of the war.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Copied in Historical  
Section, Jul 43.)

(Sgd.) C.P. Stacey

(C.P. Stacey) Major,  
Historical Officer, C.M.H.Q.