

NOTE

This is a preliminary narrative and should not be regarded as authoritative. It has not been checked for accuracy in all aspects, and its interpretations are not necessarily those of the Historical Section as a whole.

Ce texte est préliminaire et n'a aucun caractère officiel. On n'a pas vérifié son exactitude et les interprétations qu'il contient ne sont pas nécessairement celles du Service historique.

Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

DUPLICATE

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: DND 33
by coe for DHist NDHQ
Date: 24 JUL 1985
36
7 Jul 41

Situation of the Canadian Forces
in the United Kingdom, Summer, 1941: II

Recent Changes in Commands and Staffs

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

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



1. A further report is submitted. This, the second in the series begun with No. 33, deals with one of the topics suggested for quarterly survey in N.D.H.Q. letter H.Q.S. 8676 - 1 of 10 Apr 41: "Changes in Senior Commanders and Staffs".
2. The present report attempts to cover the major changes that have taken place since 31 Dec 40. Its basis is the published Supplements to Canadian Army Routine Orders (Overseas), supplemented by such further information as has been available to the writer, though in the nature of things "biographical details of historical interest not likely to be elsewhere recorded" are frequently not to be had.
3. It deals with commanders down to and including the rank of Brigadier, and with staff officers of the rank of Brigadier and those holding the Grade 1 appointments at Headquarters of Divisions. A few other appointments likely to be of interest are included.
4. The figure following a reference to a change in appointment is in each case the number of the Routine Order announcing it; the date is not that of the Routine Order, but that on which the change referred to became effective.

HIGHER COMMANDS

5. There has been no change in the highest commands in the Canadian Army Overseas. Lieutenant-General McNAUGHTON remains in command of the Canadian Corps; Major-General PEARKES commands the First Canadian Division and Major-General ODLUM the Second Canadian Division; while Major-General MONTAGUE continues as Senior Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters.

CHANGES AT HEADQUARTERS, CANADIAN CORPS

6. Important changes have been in progress at H.Q. Cdn Corps. As noted in my Report No. 10, the Staff of the Seventh Corps, commanded by General McNaughton from 21 July 40 to 25 Dec 40, was partly Canadian and partly British. It included two British brigadiers: Brigadier M.C. DEMPSEY, ^{D.S.O., M.C.,} as B.G.S. (sometimes called "B.G.S., Ops") and Brigadier C.A.P. MURISON, C.B.E., M.C., as D.A. & Q.M.G. Three Canadian brigadiers were also included: Brigadier G.R. TURNER, M.C., ^{D.S.O.,} D.C.M., as B.G.S. (Canadian); Brigadier J.C. STEWART, ^{D.S.O.,} as C.C.R.A.; and Brigadier C.S.L. HERTZBERG, M.C., V.D., as C.E. (For the Canadian appointments, see Supplement to R.O. 206 (B).) Certain junior British staff officers were also appointed to H.Q. 7 Corps.

7. When the Canadian Corps was formed on 25 Dec 40 it took over the Staff of 7 Corps. Since that time the gradual liquidation of the British elements of the staff, and their replacement by Canadian officers, has been in progress, and the process is now virtually complete. The system of two B.G.S. appointments no longer exists. Brig. DEMPSEY left H.Q. Cdn Corps officially on 10 or 11 Jun 41; I believe he had already left in fact at the time of my visit there on 9 Jun. A Canadian officer, Brig. E.L.M. BURNS, O.B.E., M.C., is now B.G.S., Cdn Corps (692; 22 Mar 41). Brig. DEMPSEY was promoted to the command of the 46th Division. Brig. MURISON has been standing by at H.Q. Cdn Corps for some time, awaiting a decision from the British authorities on his future employment. He was still at Cdn Corps within the past few days, at least; but Brig. TURNER has for some time past performed the functions of D.A. & Q.M.G.,

though he has not yet appeared in Orders in this capacity.

8. Both these British officers are regarded as unusually able soldiers. For a comment on Brig. Dempsey by an officer serving under him, see my Report No. 10. More recently I have heard this opinion confirmed by other officers. On 4 Jun 41, for example, Lt.-Col. W.L. LAURIE, O.C. 1 Cdn Corps Signals, remarked to me that not only was Brig. Dempsey exceptionally competent, but he was also possessed of a patient good temper which made him agreeable to work for, though it did not prevent his getting things done. As for Brig. Murison, he has perhaps been less universally popular, owing to a certain acidity of speech and a tendency to "rub people the wrong way"; but he too is considered a most competent officer. In conversation he gives an impression of decided intellectual force. It would seem that the British authorities (following honourable precedents of the last war) assigned very able officers to serve with the Canadians on the present occasion.

9. It is interesting to note in passing that, whereas in the last war the senior staff officers of Canadian formations were in general, to the very end of the war, provided from the British Army, they are now being provided from among the trained staff officers of the Canadian Permanent Force. The mixed staff of 7 Corps was a special expedient adopted temporarily, and it appears rather improbable that similar circumstances will recur.

10. Brig. Burns told me on 9 Jun 41 that at that time one British G.S.O. 3 was still serving at H.Q. Cdn Corps. In general, however, it may be said that the process of replacing British with Canadian officers is now complete.

11. It is worthy of note that the functions formerly performed by the B.G.S. (Cdn) at Corps H.Q. are now being performed by a "Canadian Liaison" section headed by Major N.E. RODGER, R.C.E. These functions (broadly speaking) are those which result from the fact that the Canadian Corps, though operating in the field under British command, is administered by National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, through

Canadian Military Headquarters, London. The present situation differs from the former one in that Major Rodger is responsible to the various heads of branches at Corps H.Q., whereas Brig. TURNER was responsible to General McNAUGHTON.

12. One Brigadier in addition to those already mentioned is serving at Cdn Corps H.Q. : the D.D.M.S., Brigadier J.A. LINTON (promotion from Col., 589 (A), 20 Feb 41). The Chief Signal Officer, Colonel J.E. GENET, M.C., should also be mentioned. Brigadiers STEWART and HERTZBERG still hold the technical appointments noted above (para. 6).

FIRST CANADIAN DIVISION

13. Important changes have also taken place in 1 Cdn Div. The commander of 1 Cdn Inf Bde (Brigadier ARMAND A. SMITH, M.C., E.D., who took the Brigade to France in June 1940) was forced to relinquish the command as the result of injuries sustained in a motor accident, from which he did not recover sufficiently to permit of his return to active military life. The accident took place in the autumn of 1940, and while Brig. Smith was in hospital the brigade was commanded by a series of acting commanders. When it was realized that he could not return to duty he was replaced by Brigadier J.H. ROBERTS, M.C., R.C.A., formerly C.R.A. 1 Cdn Div (589 (A), 22 Feb 41). Brigadier ROBERTS also took part in the trip to, and return from, France in June 1940; as commander of the 1st Field Regiment, he distinguished himself, in the eyes of the Canadian Army at least, by insisting on being allowed to withdraw his guns, in spite of orders to destroy them (see my Report No. 15, Appendix "B"). The appointment of an artillery officer to command an infantry brigade caused some comment; but the fact that a modern infantry brigade group is really a mixed force of several arms appears to be a strong argument in favour of such an innovation.

14. 3 Cdn Inf Bde also lost its commander when Brigadier C.B. PRICE, D.S.O., D.C.M., V.D., was promoted to Major-General and

appointed to command the Third Canadian Division (673 (A), 14 Mar 41). He was succeeded by Brigadier H.N. GANONG, formerly commanding the CARLETON AND YORK REGIMENT, a unit of the Brigade. (675 (A), 14 Mar 41).

15. At H.Q., 1 Cdn Div, Brig. ROBERTS was replaced as C.R.A. by ~~Lt.-Col.~~ Lt.-Col. E.D. TREMAIN, E.D., formerly commanding 2 Fd Regt (589 (A), 22 Feb 41). Lt.-Col. R.F.L. KELLER, P.P.C.L.I., vacated the appointment of G.S.O.1 on returning to his unit to take command (785 (A), 5 Jun 41) and was replaced by Lt.-Col. C. VOKES, R.C.E., formerly A.A. & Q.M.G. at the same H.Q. (785 (A), 6 Jun 41). No new A.A. & Q.M.G. appointment has yet appeared in orders.

SECOND CANADIAN DIVISION

16. There have been similar changes in 2 Cdn Div. The commander of 5 Cdn Inf Bde (Brig. P.E. LECLERC, M.M., E.D.) was placed by a medical board in Category "E" and thereby obliged to relinquish the command. (683 (A), 26 Mar 41). He was replaced by Brig. G.V. WHITEHEAD, V.D., previously commanding the ROYAL MONTREAL REGIMENT (M.G.) (683 (A), 27 Mar 41). Capt. J.B.T. LEWIS (CANADIAN GRENADEIER GUARDS), formerly Intelligence Officer at H.Q. 5 Cdn Inf Bde but now holding an appointment at the War Office connected with Anglo-American liaison, has spoken to me of the great regard for Brig. Leclerc felt by his staff and, he believes, the whole brigade. I am told that the breakdown in the brigadier's health was a sequel to an order from H.Q. 2 Cdn Div requiring all staff officers and formation commanders to walk a minimum of five miles every day. (On this order, see Cdn Corps general report for week ending 22 Mar 41: cable Canmilitary to Defense 23 Mar 41.)

17. At H.Q., 2 Cdn Div, Lt.-Col. H.L.N. SALMON, M.C., (R.C.R.), relinquished the appointment of G.S.O.1 (768 (A), 17 May 41) to return to Canada, I believe to take command of 7 Cdn Inf Bde. He was replaced by Lt.-Col. G.G. SIMONDS, R.C.A., recently employed as Commandant of the First Canadian Junior War Staff Course (see my Reports Nos. 14 and 22) (778 (A), 18 May 41).

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS AND
UNITS UNDER COMMAND

18. In strict order of seniority the staff appointments at Canadian Military Headquarters, London, should have been dealt with first, as in Routine Orders; it was convenient, however, to deal first with the field formations.
19. In "G" Branch, Brigadier J.C. MURCHIE, formerly D.M.T. & S.D. at N.D.H.Q., has replaced Brigadier M.A. POPE, M.C., as Brigadier, General Staff; Brig. Pope vacated the appointment as of 19 Feb 41 (675 (A)) and Brig. Murchie was taken on strength of Canadian Army (Overseas) as of 24 Feb 41 (633 (A)). In "A" Branch, Colonel R.M. LUTON, M.C., vacating the appointment of D.D.M.S., was appointed D.M.S. with the rank of Brigadier (589 (A), 19 Feb 41). In "Q" Branch, Brigadier J.H. MacQUEEN has replaced Brigadier G.P. LOGGIE as D.Q.M.G. (589 (A), 18 Feb 41). Brig. MacQueen previously held the appointment of A.Q.M.G., C.M.H.Q. (promotion from Col., 616 (A), 18 Feb 41).
20. The Officer Commanding Canadian Base Units, Brigadier L.F. PAGE, D.S.O., has lately been promoted to the rank of Major-General and appointed to command 4 Cdn Div. This appointment has not yet appeared in Routine Orders overseas, but I note that the promotion is to be effective 10 Jun 41 (Cable AG 1202, Defensor to Canmilitary, 28 Jun 41). No appointment has yet been announced to replace General Page, though I understand one is under discussion. It is reported that Canadian Base Units, in view of the expansion necessitated by the increase of the field force in this country, will shortly become a Major-General's command.
21. It will be recalled that General Page commanded the Canadian troops in ICELAND before coming to the United Kingdom (see my Report No. 4).
22. Lt.-Col. G.E.A. DUPUIS, M.C. (R. 22e R.) has been returned to Canada and replaced as O.C. "B" Group Holding Units by Colonel A.W. BEAMENT, V.D. (appt. and promotion from Lt.-Col., 660 (A), 22 Feb 41). Colonel Beament was formerly A.A.G. (Org.), C.M.H.Q.

23. It is understood that on the arrival in this country of the Canadian Armoured Division, now training in Canada, Lt.-Col. H.A. YOUNG (R.C.C.S.), now G.S.O.1 (S.D.), C.M.H.Q., and Lt.-Col. C.R.S. STEIN (R.C.E.), now A.A.G. (Org.), C.M.H.Q., will take up respectively the appointments of G.S.O.1 and A.A. & Q.M.G. of this formation. In the meantime these appointments are held by British officers.

24. One additional appointment of interest may be noted. Lt.-Col. M.F. GREGG, V.C., M.C., previously commanding the WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT, has been appointed to command No. 3 Wing (O.C.T.U.) of the Canadian Training School (792 (A), 11 May 41). (Cf. my Report No. 21.) Lt.-Col. GREGG won the V.C. while serving with the R.C.R. in the last war, and I believe has served in recent years as Sergeant-at-Arms to the Canadian House of Commons.

FRENCH-CANADIAN OFFICERS

25. The return of Brigadier LECLERC to Canada (para. 16, above) removed from the Canadian Army Overseas the only French-Canadian officer of this rank. In recommending Lt.-Col. WHITEHEAD to replace him, General McNAUGHTON cabled (Carmilitary to Defensor, 1 Apr 41: GS. 529) :

Possibility of replacement by French speaking Canadian officer has been thoroughly explored but there are none in the Canadian Army Overseas who have the required qualifications.

On 19 Apr 41 another cable to Defensor (GS. 663) was sent as follows:

Further your GS 96 which cable puts situation very clearly. McNaughton wishes you informed that he is entirely in sympathy with the need of taking very special action in these circumstances and that he will continue to select promising French speaking officers for special appointments and training whenever this may be possible in the public interest.

References in Canadian newspapers reaching London indicate that the small group in the Province of Quebec which is vocally objecting to Canadian participation in the war has made a grievance of the supposed exclusion of French-Canadian officers from commands and staff appointments.

26. It may be with a view to discovering and developing good

French-Canadian officer material for use in the manner outlined in the cable last quoted that a special Company Commanders' Course for French-speaking officers is at present being conducted at the Canadian Training School.

INTERCHANGES

27. It may be noted that there has been in effect a practical policy of maintaining a constant interchange of Canadian staff officers between Canada and the United Kingdom. Thus Brigadier BURNS, who began the war as G.S.O.1 at C.M.H.Q., returned for some months to N.D.H.Q. and now is back in this country as B.G.S., Cdn Corps. Brigadier POPE, who had been at N.D.H.Q. as D.M.O. & I., came to C.M.H.Q. early in the summer of 1940 and has now returned to Ottawa to be Assistant Chief of the General Staff, while Brigadier MURCHIE, in turn, has come from Ottawa to take his place as B.G.S., C.M.H.Q. Such exchanges are presumably calculated to promote the maintenance of a relationship of sound understanding. At the same time, officers with experience in Canadian formations in this country are being drawn upon for commands and staff appointments in Canada (cf., e.g., the cases of Brigadiers HALDENBY and SALMON, or the recent instance (see my Report No. 34) of the appointment of Major A.R. ROY as G.S.O.1, 4 Cdn Div).

C.B.S.

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

POSTSCRIPT. - Since para. 20 (above) was written, General PAGE's promotion and new appointment have appeared in Canadian Army Routine Orders (Overseas) (801 (A)).

C.B.S.

orig - Kingston Extra St

