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CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS



Situation of the Canadian Military Force in the United Kingdom, Autumn, 1942 : I.

Growth of the Force in the United Kingdom, January-September, 1942.

1. This Report deals with the growth of the Canadian military force in the United Kingdom which has taken place since the preparation of Report No. 59 (29 Jan 42). The present Report should be read in conjunction with No. 59, and the tables attached as Appendices are a continuation of those submitted with No. 59.

2. The period under review has seen a large increase in the Canadian force in this country and much progress with the Canadian Army Overseas Programme for 1942 (outlined in Report No. 69, paras 6 and 25). Particularly noteworthy has been the arrival of additional armoured units, including a large proportion of those of the 4th Canadian (Armoured) Division. Drafts of specialists and reinforcements are also noted.

INCREASE IN NUMERICAL STRENGTH

3. The increase in the strength of the Canadian Army Overseas which has taken place since 31 Dec 41 may be traced in Appendix "A", showing the total strength at intervals of one month since that date.

4. It will be noted that the total shown for 30 Sep 42 is exactly 159,000 all ranks, as compared with 123,840 all ranks at 31 Dec 41 (Report No. 59). The "breakdown" of the totals given by A.G. Statistics, C.M.H.Q., for 30 Sep 42 follows:

(30 Sep 42)	Officers	Other Ranks
GHQ and Army Troops	503	8925
1st Canadian Corps Troops	886	16343
2nd Canadian Corps Troops	47	1394
1st Canadian Division	782	16250
2nd Canadian Division	716	15542
3rd Canadian Division	781	16235
4th Canadian (Armoured) Division	397	7008
5th Canadian (Armoured) Division	641	12914
1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade	151	2957
Lines of Communication	938	7478
Others not included above	3402	44710
Total	9244	149756

These figures include 158 Officers and 2527 Other Ranks missing following the Dieppe operation (referred to by A.G. Statistics as "X" List), and the Canadian detachment at Gibraltar.



5. It will be noted from the above ~~data~~ that the actual ~~strength~~ strength of 1st Cdn Corps on 30 Sep 42 was 3316 Officers and 67327 Other Ranks, as compared with 3087 Officers and 59608 Other Ranks at 31 Dec 41 (Report No. 59). The troops under command of 1st Cdn Corps constitute slightly less than one-half of the Canadian military force in this country. 5 Cdn (Armd) Div has been under command of First Cdn Army since 24 Jun 42. 4 Cdn (Armd) Div also passed under command of Army at midnight 21-22 Oct 42.

#### PROGRESS WITH OVERSEAS ARMY PROGRAMME, 1942

6. The figures given in Appendix "A" reflect the progress made towards completion of the Canadian Overseas Army Programme for 1942. (Cf. Report No. 69, paras. 6 and 25.) The greater part of 4 Cdn (Armd) Div is now in the United Kingdom. Indications at the time of writing, however, are that 2 Cdn Army Tk Bde will not now proceed overseas until April of 1943. (C.M.H.Q. file 1/MOVE/1/2).

7. Two large flights of 4 Cdn (Armd) Div arrived on N.A. 15 and N.A.16. N.A.15 brought the Divisional Headquarters (an advanced party of which had arrived on N.A.13) and also Advanced H.Q. 3 Cdn Armd Bde with 26 Cdn Armd Regt (B.C.R.), 29 Cdn Armd Regt (S. Alta R.), and Lake Sup.R. (M); also Advanced H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Bde. 18 (Man.) Armd C. Regt. also arrived by this convoy. H.Q. 4 Cdn (Armd) Div Support Group, with two of its units, 15 Cdn Fd Regt and 8 Cdn Lt A.A. Regt, had arrived previously, on N.A.14. The Division's Engineer units had arrived as early as N.A.10, as had also 5 Cdn A. Tk Regt.

8. The Division's strength in the United Kingdom was further increased with the arrival of N.A.16. The remaining personnel of H.Qs. 3 and 4 Cdn Armd Bdes now arrived. The convoy also brought, for 3 Cdn Armd Bde, 25 Cdn Armd Regt (Elgin Regt), and, for 4 Cdn Armd Bde, 21 Cdn Armd Regt (G.G.F.G.) and 22 Cdn Armd Regt (C.G.G.). 4 Cdn (Armd) Div Sigs was also on N.A.16. The Division still lacks 27 Cdn Armd Regt, for 4 Cdn Armd Bde, and two of its three infantry battalions.

9. Non-divisional units arriving during the period covered by this report included No. 1 Cdn Base Ordnance Workshop; No.1 Cdn Base Ordnance Depot; 2, 3 and 4 Med Regts, R.C.A.; 3 Bn, R.C.E.; Nos. 8,16 and 17 Gen Hosps, R.C.A.M.C.; and Forestry Companies to bring the establishment of the Canadian Forestry Corps in this country up to its full strength of thirty companies. The last Forestry Company to arrive was 27 Coy, C.F.C., which arrived on N.A.16.

10. The phrase "N.A.", which has replaced the earlier "T.C.", is understood to signify "North Atlantic". It will be noted that convoys N.A.2 and N.A.3, although designated in Movement Control files as troop convoys, brought only a very few members of the Canadian Army. There was no N.A.12, this convoy being recalled to port.

#### NOTES ON SEA TRANSPORT

11. Ports of Embarkation. All Canadian troop convoys during the period under review sailed from Halifax. Recently, however, the British Government have proposed that embarkation should hereafter take place at New York, the project being that fast ships, including the "QUEEN MARY" and the "QUEEN ELIZABETH", should carry Canadian troops from this American port unescorted. Shortage of shipping is the reason for this proposal. The Canadian Government have objected to it on the grounds that (a) Canada has no embarkation buildings available in central Canada such as would be required for large troop movements via New York;



and that (b) it is considered desirable that troopships should be escorted at least through the danger zone. A final decision on this matter remains in abeyance until January of 1943. (Documents on C.M.H.Q. file 1/MOVE/1/2.)

12. Ports of Disembarkation. Of the convoys dealt with in the present Report, all have been discharged either in the Clyde or at Liverpool, or at both. Of the ships going to the Clyde, the majority have discharged at Gourock, but some have gone up to Glasgow. The most common procedure has been for the convoy to divide, some ships proceeding to Liverpool and some to the Clyde.

13. Naval Escorts. Attached as Appendices "D" and "E" are photographs of British and United States naval protection afforded N.A.S. These photographs were taken by an officer who travelled in this convoy. Appendix "D" illustrates an aircraft carrier which accompanied this convoy. Comparison with Jane's Fighting Ships, 1941, page 459, suggests the strong possibility that this vessel is a member of the "Long Island" class. This authority describes this class as:

Converted merchantmen taken over 1941 for conversion into "Escort Aircraft Carriers". According to American Press reports, some or all of these ships will be transferred to the Royal Navy under the Lease-Lend scheme.

The officer who took the photograph stated that this carrier flew British colours. Except for the case of T.C.1, which was accompanied at least part way by an aircraft carrier, this is the first and only case actually known to the writer in which a Canadian troop convoy was so escorted. He cannot, however, state with certainty that there have been no other instances. It is possible that the carrier with N.A.S. was simply making a one-way crossing with a view to joining the Royal Navy in European waters.

14. Appendix "E" shows ships in Halifax harbour prior to the sailing of N.A.S. One of these ships is the liner "AQUITANIA", which accompanied N.A.S. across the ocean, presumably carrying United States troops. The battleship shown is either the U.S.S. "NEW YORK" or the U.S.S. "TEXAS" (Jane's Fighting Ships, 1941, page 456). The battleships of this class, old and slow, are presumably considered useful for convoy escort work but for little else.

15. Miscellaneous. The presence of vermin was reported on the "Pasteur", of N.A.16, on its arrival at Halifax. Air Force personnel refused to take passage in this ship. Although the vessel was fumigated, lice and bed-bugs were not entirely eliminated. Army personnel replaced the Air Force, but on the voyage to the United Kingdom some space aboard the ship remained unoccupied because of the infestation.

16. American troopships have lately accompanied Canadian troop convoys eastward bound. Rendezvous for the American ships joining N.A. convoys is usually close to Halifax harbour. When the American troopships are discharging at an English or Scottish port, they become an integral part of the convoy and movement from the ports of disembarkation is handled by British authorities. It is believed that this is done to facilitate rail movement and to keep the entire disembarkation under one central control.



17. Major G.F.G. STANLEY, Assistant Historical Officer, C.M.H.Q., has written a brief note on the passage of N.A.16, on which he crossed the ocean. This is attached as Appendix "P".

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

18. This Report derives mainly from the files of S.D.1a, C.M.H.Q.; A.G. Statistics, C.M.H.Q.; Movement Control, C.M.H.Q.; and the M.Fs.M. 33 in the Records Office, Acton. These sources have been supplemented by references to the C.M.H.Q. files referred to in the text by number, and by information from individuals.

19. This Report is in great part the work of Lieut. W.E. AUSTIN of the P.R.O. Section, C.M.H.Q., who was kindly lent by the Public Relations Officer for the purpose of preparing it.

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Report No. 35

APPENDIX "A"

STRENGTH, CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS

at monthly intervals, January, 1942 -- September, 1942.  
Extracted from monthly returns prepared for the War Office  
by A.G. Statistics, C.M.H.Q. (C.M.H.Q. file 22/STRENGTH/2/2).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Other Ranks</u>
31 Jan 42	7347	117456
27 Feb 42	7324	117457
31 Mar 42	7488	122246
30 Apr 42	7609	124496
31 May 42	7959	130038
30 Jun 42	8526	138931
31 Jul 42	8609	139831
31 Aug 42	8802	143176
30 Sep 42	9244	149756



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APPENDIX "B"

CONDENSED INFORMATION RELATING TO TROOP  
CONVOYS FROM CANADA - N.As. 1 - 16

Note. The figures here given for the total personnel of troop convoys derive from A.G. (Statistics), C.M.H.Q., and should be reliable.

The basis of computation is the same as that adopted for Appendix "B" of Report No. 59. Only Canadian Army personnel are included, though many other groups, and in particular Air Force personnel, travel in troop convoys from Canada.

While these troop convoys carry the great majority of Canadian troops arriving in the United Kingdom, parties of military personnel continue to arrive by independent sailings, as has been the case from the beginning, and there is some movement of personnel by air. In this report, no account is taken of these means of transport.



TROOP CONVOYS FROM CANADA

Condensed Information extracted from M.Fs.W. 33 and Movement Control files, C.M.H.Q.

CONVOY	NO. of SHIPS	DATE OF DISEMBARKATION	TOTAL CDN ARMY PERSONNEL, ALL RANKS	GENERAL NATURE OF COMPOSITION
N.A. 1	2	19/20 Jan 42	1318	No.1 Cdn Base Ord Workshop; Nos.22 and 23 Coys CFC
N.A. 2	1	10 Feb 42	2	Reinforcements
N.A. 3	1	19 Feb 42	12	Staff Officers
N.A. 4	2	9/10 Mar 42	2655	Divisional reinforcements, etc.
N.A. 5	2	23 Mar 42	2006	Radio Location Unit; etc.
N.A. 6	2	29/30 Mar 42	2859	2 Med Regt, RCA; Lieut.-Gen. A.C.L. McNaughton returning from first visit to Canada since war
N.A. 7	2	19 Apr 42	2646	Reinforcements
N.A. 8	4	12 May 42	5663	2 Army Ord Wkshop, RCOC; 2 Army Ord Fd Pk, RCOC; No. 65 Tank Transporter Coy, etc.
N.A. 9	1	26 May 42	1178	3 Bn, R.C.E.; Nos. 28 and 29 Coys, CFC
N.A.10	2	11/12 Jun 42	3799	5 A.Tk Regt, R.C.A.; 6 Fd Pk Sqn, and 8 and 9 Fd Sqns, R.C.E.; No. 6 Mobile Laundry; No. 7 Construction Coy, R.C.E.
N.A.11	2	24/25 Jun 42	5253	3 Med Regt, RCA; No. 45 Gen. Transport Coy, RCASC; No. 26 Coy, CFC; 16 Cdn Gen Hosp; etc.
N.A.13	2	29/30 Jul 42	3471	Reinforcements.



TROOP CONVOYS FROM CANADA (CONT'D)

CONVOY	NO. of SHIPS	DATE OF DISEMBARKATION	TOTAL CDN ARMY PERSONNEL, ALL RANKS	GENERAL NATURE OF COMPOSITION
N.A.14	3	17 Aug 42	5289	8 Lt A.A. Regt, RCA; 4 Med Regt, RCA; 15 Fd Regt, RCA; 1 Cdn Base Ord Depot; etc.
N.A.15	2	1 Sep 42	5279	HQ 4 Cdn (Armd) Div; Lake Superior Regt (Motor); 28 Cdn Armd Regt; 29 Cdn Armd Regt; 18 (Manitoba) Armd Car Regt; 17 Cdn Gen Hosp; etc.
N.A.16	4	7/8 Oct 42	9383	25 Armd Regt (Elgin Regt); 21 Cdn Armd Regt (G.G.F.G.); 22 Armd Regt (C.G.G.); 27 Coy, C.F.C.



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APPENDIX "C"

TRANSPORTS IN CONVOY

TROOP CONVOYS N.A.1 - N.A. 16

N.A. 1	"Bergensfjord", "Stratheden".
N.A. 2	"Volendam".
N.A. 3	"Dominion Monarch", "Alcantara" (1)
N.A. 4	"Cameronia", "Orion".
N.A. 5	"Orbita", "Empress of Canada".
N.A. 6	"Aorangi", "Capetown Castle".
N.A. 7	"Banfora", "Warwick Castle".
N.A. 8	"Batory", "Letitia", "Orcades", "Andes".
N.A. 9	"Banfora".
N.A.10	"Duchess of York", "Batory".
N.A.11	"Empress of Japan", "Letitia".
N.A.13	"Dominion Monarch", "Letitia".
N.A.14	"Bayano" <sup>(2)</sup> , "Cameronia", "Capetown Castle".
N.A.15	"Strathmore", "Letitia".
N.A.16	"Stirling Castle", "Athlone Castle", "Pasteur", "Awatea".

(1) This ship carried no Canadian Army personnel.

(2) Only Canadian Army personnel on this ship, one officer.

The above information was obtained from Strength Returns on Disembarkation (M.F.M. 33) at Records Office, and files of Movement Control.







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APPENDIX "D"

AIRCRAFT CARRIER ESCORTING N.A. 8,  
NORTH ATLANTIC

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APPENDIX "E"

SHIPS OF N.A. 8 IN HALIFAX HARBOUR

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APPENDIX "P"

NOTE ON THE PASSAGE OF N.A.16

1. It was the 22nd Sep 42 when I left Fredericton, New Brunswick, in company with a small party of reinforcement officers and men bound for overseas. We picked up a special train at Fredericton Junction and proceeded directly to the well-known "eastern Canadian port", Halifax, Nova Scotia, where we arrived at about 1200 hrs on the following day. The reception arrangements at the port of Halifax left much to be desired; each officer being obliged to scurry around the pier buildings in order to find the embarkation authorities. Finally, after considerable delay, I obtained my berth, in a cabin with eight other officers, on board the S.S. Pasteur, a vessel of about 30,000 tons built by the French Line just prior to the outbreak of war, as a cruise ship for the Mediterranean Sea. Others embarking at the same time included reinforcement officers for the Fusiliers Mont-Royal, Carleton and York and other units. Other ranks included the Governor General's Foot Guards and territorial reinforcements for the Dieppe battalions taken from the Midlands and Prince of Wales Rangers. There were in addition about 100 British Camerons and a number of Poles from the Near East.
2. The S.S. Pasteur had only recently arrived in Halifax from Durban bringing enemy prisoners from the Near East and she was, in consequence, in a verminous state. Apparently no attempt was made to disinfect the vessel and on the 24 Sep after some of the R.C.A.F. officers had come on board and discovered the state of their quarters, they refused to embark their men. This fact caused a certain amount of resentment among the ranks of the Army units on board. Throughout the voyage a continuous battle was waged by R.C.A.M.C. personnel against the bed-bugs with the latter daily gaining strength.
3. The S.S. Pasteur remained tied up to Pier 22, Halifax, until the other transports bearing Canadian troops, including the Stirling Castle, the Athlone Castle and the Awatea, pulled into the stream on the 27th. On the following day our escort began to enter the harbour, an American battleship of ancient vintage and eight American destroyers. They were accompanied by six transports and two freighters. Three of the transports were painted a two-tone grey, dark on the hull and light on the superstructure. They formed a contrast to the other ships of the convoy which were painted all over a dull dirty grey. These vessels flew the American flag and appeared to be carrying troops. I was unable to identify any of the other transports.
4. On Tuesday, 29 Sep, we pulled out of Halifax harbour in single file forming up outside. Two destroyers went ahead pursuing a zig-zag course while the others formed a close escort, three on each flank. The battleship was immediately in the Van. The convoy itself formed four columns of three vessels each. Overhead the anti-submarine patrol planes of the R.C.A.F. gave us protection while the convoy was forming up and could be seen throughout the day.
5. The voyage was uneventful. We encountered neither storms, surface raiders nor submarines and aside from a little



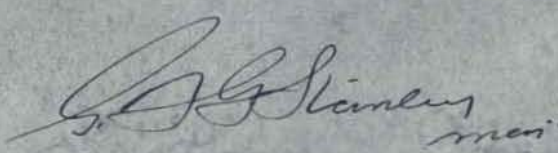
dis-ease owing to the motion of the ship few were heard to complain of seasickness. Only the blackout, the perpetual wearing of lifebelts, the daily boat drill, the zig-zag course and the continued presence of the warships gave evidence that we were, as Lt.-Col. Sutton, O.C. ship, said "in the front line".

About 1100 hours, 5 Oct, a plane was sighted and shortly afterwards we passed a small convoy westward bound; the first break in the monotony of the voyage. More excitement followed on the morning of the 6th when land was sighted off the starboard bow. A grim reminder that the voyage was not yet over came when we sighted a floating life raft, probably from some vessel sunk by enemy action. A more cheerful sight was the appearance of several Spitfires which swept around the convoy in large circles flying close to the water.

7. At noon the Orestes left the convoy for some port in Northern Ireland and two hours later the Pasteur pulled ahead of the others to make her way to Glasgow unescorted. The main body of the convoy with the original battleship and destroyer escort proceeded in a south-easterly direction bound for Liverpool and probably Belfast.

8. The voyage up the Clyde was an impressive sight. The dark hills of Arran and the light chequered fields of the mainland closed in upon a channel containing shipping of every sort and description; lighters, landing barges, submarines and inside the boom at Gourock, large vessels like the Queen Mary, the aircraft carrier Furious and various warships.

9. The Pasteur arrived at Gourock on the evening of 6 Oct. On the following day we were officially welcomed by Admiral Bromley on behalf of the Dominions Office and later the same day about 700 men disembarked. On Thursday, 8 Oct, the remainder went ashore in lighters and entrained for various destinations at Gourock. Needless to say it was raining.

  
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