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The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42: Personal Stories of Participants.

1. This report presents a group of accounts of the DIEPPE operation of 19 Aug 42 by officers and other ranks of the Canadian forces who participated in it. This report is additional to No. 83, and is preliminary to a full historical record of the operation which is now in preparation. The documents now forwarded are sent with a view to reducing the number of Appendices to be attached to the final record, and in order that additional material on the operation may be available at N.D.H.Q. in the meantime in case of need.
2. The G.O.C.-in-C., First Cdn Army has approved plans for the preparation of the historical record referred to. These plans provide that the main record shall be divided into two sections, one dealing with the preliminaries of the operation (a very large topic), and the other with the execution of the operation. It is proposed in addition that a special report shall be prepared dealing with the communications exchanged with N.D.H.Q. previous to the operation.
3. This was an exceptionally complicated operation, and the written records of it are very voluminous. The story becomes increasingly complex with further investigation, and although the accounts of the preliminaries of the operation and of the communications exchanged with N.D.H.Q. are now complete in rough draft, and considerable progress has been made with the account of the operation itself, it will still be some time before the record can be completed.

PERSONAL STORIES OF PARTICIPANTS

4. Attached to this report as Appendices are nine records of personal experiences at DIEPPE. They comprehend all the Canadian sectors of the operation with the single exception of Red Beach.
5. Six of these records consist of memoranda by the writer of interviews with officers and other ranks who distinguished themselves and whose portraits have been painted in connection with the recording of the DIEPPE operation. A total of seven portraits of individuals decorated for gallantry at DIEPPE has now been painted by Lieut. L.P. Harris, C.A.C., who is attached to Historical Section, C.M.H.Q., as a War Artist. Two of these portraits have already been forwarded to N.D.H.Q. It is considered that the set will constitute an important record of Canadian soldier types in this war. The present programme, now nearly complete, envisages the painting of at least one portrait for each major unit engaged. At the present time, the only such unit remaining to be represented

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is the Essex Scottish, and arrangements have been made to paint a soldier of this unit also.

6. One advantage of the arrangement made for painting these portraits has been the fact that the officers and other ranks represented have in most cases been brought to LONDON, and the Historical Officer has, in consequence, had the opportunity of interviewing them at length, and obtaining their comments on memoranda of their statements. All of these men saw a great deal and were able to give illuminating evidence.

7. In addition to these memoranda of statements by individuals whose portraits have been painted, the present collection includes memoranda of interviews with two individuals who had the misfortune to be captured at DIEPPE, and the good fortune to escape subsequently. The evidence of such individuals is a valuable supplement to that of persons who returned with the main force and to unit War Diaries, as it includes accounts of the last stages of the operation not otherwise available. One of the memoranda, relating to P.S.M. Dumais, is the work of Lieut. F.H. Walter, attached to M.O. & I. Section, C.M.H.Q. The writer also interviewed P.S.M. Dumais briefly, but thought it unnecessary to make a separate memorandum.

8. Special interest attaches to the report of Capt. G.A. Browne, R.C.A. This officer's report was written while he was "illegally detained" in Unoccupied FRANCE, prior to the German occupation of that area on 11 Nov 42. Capt. Browne had made his escape from the Germans only to be detained by the French authorities in the unoccupied zone. His very careful report materially increases our knowledge of events in the Blue Beach sector. It was received by C.M.H.Q. from Combined Operations H.Q. References in a similar report received by C.O.H.Q. from Lt.-Cdr. R. Prior, R.N., who was also detained in Unoccupied FRANCE, indicate that this report was forwarded to England by the agency of the United States Consul at LYON. A somewhat less interesting report has been received from Lieut. A.A. Masson of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, who was similarly detained. This has not been copied.

9. The following is a list of the Appendices attached to this report:

- "A" Report by Capt. G.A. Browne, R.C.A.
- "B" Memorandum of interview with D-62050, Sgt. Dubuc, P., M.M. Fus. M.R.
- "C" Memorandum of capture and escape of D-61182, P.S.M. Dumais, L.A., Fus. M.R.
- "D" Memorandum of interview with B-66984, Cpl. Ellis, L.G., D.C.M., R. Regt. C.
- "E" Memorandum of interview with L-13282, Pte. Haggard, W.A., D.C.M., S. Sask. R.
- "F" Memorandum of interview with A-19407, L/Sgt. Hickson, G.A., D.C.M., R.C.E.
- "G" Memorandum of interview with Major A.T. Law, D.S.O., Camerons of C.
- "H" Memorandum of interview with Capt. John Runcie, Camerons of C.
- "I" Memorandum of interview with B-36973, C.S.M. Stewart, J., D.C.M., R.H.L.I.

C.S.

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REPORT On the
OPERATION at DIEPPE
19 Aug 42.

(by Capt G.A. Browne RCA
FOO att'd R. Regt C.)

1. The Landing at BLUE BEACH

As far as I know, R. Regt. C. suffered no casualties while approaching the beach, although we were fired on for about 10 minutes before touchdown by light weapons whose calibres I was not able to ascertain from my seat in the stern of the ALC. ROYALS touched down at 0535 hours, as I remember my first message to HMS GARTH, "DOUG TOUCHED DOWN 0535." We were met by intense, accurate LMG fire, sustaining heavy casualties. A and B Coys, who were landed immediately in front of the BLUE BEACH sea-wall, met intense and unexpectedly heavy MG fire from a number of posts on the wall, sustaining very heavy casualties as they left the ALCs. The survivors, who attained the comparative cover of the wall itself, were pinned to its face by enfilade fire from well-concealed positions on the flanks. Some of the wall MG posts were put out of action however, at further heavy cost, and, in this regard, it may be permitted to mention the conduct of Lieut. Wedd of the R. Regt. C. Leaving the ALC at touchdown with his platoon, he reached the wall with little more than a section, and there found he was still being fired upon by one of the wall posts, a pillbox. There being apparently no other way of attacking the weapon, he left his left corner of relative shelter and sprinted the short distance directly toward the pill-box with a M36 grenade. With complete disregard for his own safety, and displaying great skill, he flung the grenade through the fire slit of the pill-box, killing all its occupants and putting the gun out of action. His body, riddled with bullets, was later picked up in front of the pill-box. I could not myself witness this act from my position farther WEST on the beach, but it was verified later at VERNEUIL by Officers of the Battalion who had seen it and spoke of it. C and D Coys were landed at the extreme right of the beach, D Coy EDWARD force and the PRIZE TROOP RCA WEST of the sea-wall, under the cliffs. C Coy, which impinged upon the right end of the sea-wall where it meets the cliff-face forming a kind of spur jutting out into the beach, was caught in enfilade fire from both flanks. D Coy and the C.O.'s party were in a sort of re-entrant on the western side of this wall's end spur. EDWARD force and the Prize Tp RCA were a hundred yards or more farther WEST down the beach. The remnants of C and D Coys, led by the Colonel, then attempted to cut a path through the wire at the western end of the sea-wall and scale the cliff up to the western prominent house. There was considerable delay here because D Coy's Bangalores had been lost overside from the ALC shortly after leaving the mothership, through being improperly secured, and the Bangaloremen of C Coy were shot down in the water as they sprang out of the ALCs. The only way through the wire was by wire-cutters. A path was finally cut by the Colonel, Sgt. Coles and two other ranks. Lieut. Stewart, who attempted to cover this operation by standing in the wire, upright with a Bren, the only position from which he might see from where the fire was coming, was shot down instantly, though not, I believe, killed. Cutting through the wire took some time, and it was not accomplished until after 0610 hrs, at which time I reported to HMS GARTH "DOUG STILL ON BEACH CASUALTIES HVY MG MORTAR FIRE 0610." The path made through the wire, the Colonel led his party up the cliff to the top, between bursts of MG fire. The party cleared the two houses at the top, immediately above the WEST end of the sea-wall, resistance being met in the first only. Arrived at the top were, the C.O., Capt. Hauser, Lieuts.

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Ryerson and Taylor, Sgt. Coles, and 11 Other Ranks R. Reg. C. Besides these, there were Lieut. McVetteridge RCA and three men of his LAA Prize detachment, and myself as FOO att'd to the Battalion. The above were the only men with the ROYALS who got beyond the beach.

In the meantime, the fire from A and B Coys was dwindling away to nothing, their casualties being so heavy. The remainder of C and D Coys, pinned into the re-entrant at the junction of the sea-wall and the cliff by accurate steady bursts of MG fire could see nothing to shoot at. The Battalion's 3-in. mortars were never fired, and scarcely set up, two crews in quick succession being shot down at them, until I think, there were no more mortar personnel left. Water, and chalk from the cliffs jammed some of the Thompson SMGs and Stens, and the 2-in. mortars, in some cases, being wet, could only with difficulty, and at reduced range, fire smoke bombs. There were not enough of these. The Battalion 18 Set would not function, as, I believe, the microphones and key assembly had fallen into the water when leaving the ALC.

All this time, the remainder of the effectives having got out of the LMG fire by sheltering in niches in the cliff-face on the beach, were now heavily engaged by German 3-in. mortars and stick grenades lobbed down from the cliff top above. We sustained further heavy casualties from this mortar fire which the German was able to place well within twenty yards of the bottom of the cliff. The stick grenades, although not as effective as our M36, were still very effectively employed, and there seemed to be lots of them. The DF fire of the German artillery (as I was later told by a German soldier, 75-mm Infantry guns) was apparently extremely well surveyed, for the shells burst precisely at the water-line at impeccably correct interval and timing. I saw two ALCs sunk by hits or splinters from this fire. From a Gunner's point of view, it was admirable shooting.

I saw the Colonel going up through the wire, and, my telegraphist being at that moment in the middle of a message, I told him to follow me up as soon as he had finished, and myself sprinted up the cliff after the Colonel. As it later appeared, MG fire from a new position on the hill behind the fortified house on the left end of, and above, the sea-wall, closed the gap in the wire, and prevented any more men reaching the top. The Colonel and his small party were now cut off from the remainder of C and D Coys on the beach. It was now nearly 0700 hrs British time.

Sounds of firing on the left flank had now died completely away. From the centre and the right flank we could hear intermittent bursts of German automatic fire and the steady detonations of their mortar bombs. From this we inferred that A and B Coys had been knocked out, and that the survivors of C and D Coys were still pinned down in the angle of the cliff, being cut up by mortars. We discovered that we could not get back to the beach, nor could we get back to the cliff edge because of LMG fire from the left flank, up on the hill-side. Just at this moment, Lieut. Ryerson saw a strong patrol coming along the road through the trees toward us from the direction of the fortified house on the left flank.

The decision was made to move toward SALVATION BEACH westward along the cliff top by the walled road under cover of the trees as far as they went. We would try to contact the ESSEX. Accordingly we struck through the small wood immediately to the WEST and above the beach, toward N.D. de BON SECOURS. We pressed through the wood, following the line of the walled road under cover of the trees, turning gradually SOUTH until we came to the road running between PUIITS and N.D. de BON SECOURS. Ahead of us to the WEST across the walled road, and beyond an open field of about 100 yds were the billets and gun positions of the 88 mm

Battery of the air photos. On our right, along the cliff edge 200 or 300 yds to the NORTH were three LMGs at that moment firing on aircraft. Behind us was the patrol, which Ryerson had estimated at two platoons. Also behind us, at the junction of the BERNEVAL - PUIITS - NEUVILLE - les-DIEPPE roads were the six and eight-wheeled armoured cars of which we were later told by Lieut. T.D. Archibald RCA, who was led past these AFVs after his capture. On our left, across the PUIITS - N.D. de BON SECOURS road were the 4-gun 75-mm Infantry gun battery and a detachment of 88-mm AA guns, whether two or four I could not discover. These may have been the guns which I later saw (four) at Bellengreville the following morning, with their half-tracked tractors. It was then getting on toward 1000 hrs, and the Infantry guns were firing on the beach. They had previously been engaging the destroyer, with, I was told considerable accuracy, for, when GARTH came close in to engage shore targets at direct fire, she was forced to withdraw by bursts of gun-fire from this battery which fell too hazardously close to her. One shell, it was rumoured appeared to have struck her on the bow.

A scout of our party who went out on the road to recce, was shot. The Germans had LMGs sited at each road and track intersection in this vicinity, with fields of fire in all directions. Shortly after ten o'clock (or it may have been nearer eleven) while in the wood, we heard the survivors of the beach being marched past under guard. Before noon it was apparent that from all the sound of firing that we could hear both from RED and WHITE beaches, as well as BLUE where there was none, there was little or no land fighting, and that the operation had resolved itself into an air battle. As far as we could see and hear from the wood, the German gunners had an unlimited supply of 88-mm., 20-mm., and LMG ammunition for AA use, because they fired persistently and determinedly at every RAF machine they could see, without cease right up until 1600 hrs. The 88-mm. Battery of 6 guns on the cliff top between N.D. de BON SECOURS and PUIITS served its guns magnificently. It was low-level-bombed at least four times and machine gunned oftener by our fighters after 1000 hrs, that is, between 1000 hrs and 1600 hrs, with us as witnesses, and each time the guns were back in action within a matter of a few seconds, firing upon the departing aircraft. Once, after a low-level attack, only two guns were instantly back in action, the other times always at least four.

Twice we made a recce to the cliff edge to see what might be taking place on the main beach at DIEPPE, but we could see neither the beach, which was just barely out of sight around the bend of the cliffs, nor any sign of ships. The situation suggested that we were trapped. After long consideration the decision was taken to surrender. We surrendered at 1620 hrs.

It may be permitted to mention the conduct of the troops in general on the beach. I can speak with authority of C and D Coys which I saw myself. From reports later heard at VERNEUIL from Officers of the Battalion, the other Coys conducted themselves with no less credit.

In spite of the steady approach to the beach under fire, the ROYALS in my ALC appeared cool and steady. It was their first experience under fire, and although I watched them closely, they gave no sign of alarm, although first light was broadening into dawn, and the interior of the ALC was illuminated by the many flares from the beach and the flash of the Bostons' bombs. The quiet steady voice of Capt Thompson, seated just behind me, held the troops up to a confident and offensive spirit, although shells were whizzing over the craft, and could hear the steady whisper and crackle of S.A. fire over the top of the ALC. At the instant of touchdown, small arms fire was striking the ALC, and here there was a not unnatural split-second hesitation in the bow in leaping out onto the beach. But only a split - second

The troops got out onto the beach as fast as any of the SUMMER exercises, and got across the beach to the wall and under the cliff.

By the time we touched down, the smoke laid by the RAF had almost completely disappeared, traces only remaining in the tree-tops above the beach. The beach was thus plainly visible to the Germans, whose own fire positions were extraordinarily well-concealed from our view. The ROYALS were shot down in heaps on the beach without knowing where the fire was coming from. Their not unnatural bewilderment in this respect may have been contributory to the fact that in five minutes time they were changed from an assaulting Battalion on the offensive to something less than two Coys on the defensive being hammered by fire which they could not locate. The narrow confines of the beach did not permit moving away from the fire to engage it from another position. Notwithstanding this, the troops followed their leaders smartly where they could, and when there was no place to move to, as in most cases, they lay still among the mortar bombs and watched their platoon and section commanders for what might be next. The only instance suggestive of panic that I saw or heard of on BLUE beach was when the Ambulance ALC put back into shore about six o'clock (0600 hrs). A few men from the little spur where C Coy had been landed, were taking LMG fire from both flanks right into the thick of them. They couldn't go forward, they couldn't go sideways. The arrival of this ALC bearing a large red " A " on its standard, suggested a means of getting out of this murderous cross-fire. Probably twenty men ran for the ALC. They were all killed in the craft's bow-gate, by LMG fire. The ALC, washed out by the waves from the shore, its engines out of commission, and its crew killed, drifted away from the beach in a sinking condition, until a shell sank it.

Supporting the Battalion was HMS GARTH. As FOO, I could not indicate targets to GARTH because I could not get to a position where I could see any targets. When the destroyer came in close to carry out direct bombardment -- she had to come in quite close to observe her own targets through the intermittent small smoke screens put up by 2-in. mortar -- she was forced out by enemy shell-fire, and further discontinued her fire because her shells struck so close to own troops that they called her off.

The Germans indubitably had casualties here on BLUE beach. Lieut. Archibald RCA saw their aid Post above the beach at PUTS full of German wounded. These were very quickly evacuated to a hospital in ROUEN. They were however by no means as numerous as ours.

2. OBSERVATIONS

The following are a few opinions on the employment of Infantry and other Arms in an assault landing. They are the result of a week's discussion with surviving Officers of the ROYALS and other Officers of 2 Div at VERNEUIL, and are necessarily influenced by the particular conditions of BLUE beach. It is realized that the same conditions of ground and the peculiar advantage of the defence in this instance will not always obtain.

(a) TIMING

If, as it appears, we were 45 minutes late in touching down, (0535, instead of 0450 hrs) this certainly accounts for the extremely alert state of the Germans.

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By the same token, when a number of attacks are to be put in along a, say 25 kilometre stretch of coast, should they not all be put in simultaneously? This would give each individual attack a better chance of surprise.

Further, is surprise easier to obtain, than the preparatory heavy air bombardment which in our case would quite probably have succeeded where surprise, or rather the hope of surprise, failed?

The landing was made in growing daylight. This did not make for an easy or swift penetration of the beach, having regard to the enemy defences.

(b) SUPPORT

RAF. It is felt that, given that the landing had not been delayed, preliminary low-level, or better, dive-bombing, on the sea-wall and the fortified house would have put us through PUIITS faster and with fewer losses than any attempt to do so with the hope of complete surprise. In the case of dive-bombing, it cannot of course be used at night or at first light, for the simple reason that the pilot cannot see his target, but the experience of that 88-mm. Battery with low-level attacks should point up the ineffectiveness of such attacks. In the situation at BLUE beach, where at the time of the land, the RAF had complete fighter superiority, dive-bombers could have been used for the first hour of daylight with every chance of success, and a minimum of interference by enemy fighters. Only a dive-bomber, it is suggested, could have done immediate heavy damage to the sea-wall, and the fortified house.

NAVAL BOMBARDMENT. It cannot fairly be said here that naval bombardment failed, for it wasn't given an opportunity. As FCO, I was constantly in touch with the supporting destroyer through the good work of my telegraphist Wilkinson who continued to pass information messages to the ship until he was captured on the beach. But while on the beach itself, I could not see any origin to the fire being poured upon us. On the cliff-top I was cut off from my communication to the ship -- I had no telephone link to Wilkinson. To save weight I had not brought telephones with us; we had never used them in exercises. On closing in for direct engagement of targets the destroyer was driven off by the 75-mm Bty. which was well within her range, but which it is doubtful that she would have been able to engage without bombardment charge, the Battery being below her guns' trajectory. GARTH had no bombardment charge.

(c) SMOKE

The use of smoke by sub-units needs more study particularly as to when and where it should be used. Frequently our own smoke obscured the situation for us as much or more than it did for the enemy. When we wanted a screen badly, to screen the Ambulance ALC or the path up through the wire, there was not enough smoke to do the job. Theoretically, according to establishment, there should have been enough, there must have been enough generators, 3-in. and 2-in. mortar smoke bombs and smoke grenades. However, it seems that many of the men who carried the principal amount of this smoke equipment were lost at the water's edge, or later, were not at the positions where the smoke was desperately needed. This may suggest a change in the distribution and natures of smoke producers.

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(d) MORTARS

As has already been said, the 3-in. mortars never got into action, all the crews been shot down before they could get a round away. The 3-in. mortar crews did their best with gallantry, but the German snipers and automatics were too quick. The 2-in. mortars, some of which were clotted with water and wet chalk, were able only with difficulty to fire smoke grenades at reduced ranges. I do not know the reason for this 2-in. mortar trouble.

(e) BANGALORES.

Whether a wider distribution of Bangalore torpedoes, made up in standard interchangeable sections of a smaller length which one man could easily handle would have served the situation better, is worthy of consideration. As I remember, the Bangalores with the ROYALS were well over six feet long, so long in fact that they were carried on the gunwale of the ALC. In the ALC I was in, these Bangalores, improperly secured to the gunwale, were lost overboard shortly after leaving the mothership. Shorter Bangalores could have been carried inside the ALC in safety. Shorter lengths would have been easier to handle for a man leaping out of an ALC. Interlocking, interchangeable sections, if this is feasible, would permit of a wider distribution of these aids against wire, which means putting more eggs in many more baskets. They might have saved us 20 to 30 minutes getting through the wire.

WIRECUTTERS. At least ten minutes were spent waiting for wire-cutters to be passed up. Only one pair finally arrived. This was not because there was only one pair of wire-cutters, but because the dispersion of men on the beach, forced by the volume of fire, also dispersed the available wire-cutters. I saw one man shot trying to get his wire-cutters up to the Colonel. There may have been others. For an operation of this nature, where wire is to be expected, probably the scale of issue should be increased.

(f) ACCOUTREMENTS.

It was felt that the haversack, carried on the back at shoulder height, was an impediment, and interfered with the men's fighting efficiency. The fact that so many men, where they were not carrying ammunition, grenades and mortar bombs in them, threw them off, lends colour to this view. These who were carrying grenades or mortar bombs in the haversacks found it unhandy to get at when lying or crouching. It is of course the best position for marching, but not for fighting. Many of the Officers and NCOs thought that some form of shinglers' apron, modified, which would permit a man to crawl on his belly without losing the apron's contents, would be much better than the haversack. If the Bren mags are left in the pouches where they belong, the only place left for the M36 grenades is the breast pockets of the battledress. Something after the fashion of the cotton bandolier for .303 ball ammunition, might be adapted to be worn on the upperoutside of the thigh or on either hip, to carry M36's 69's and/or smoke grenades or generators. Such an adaptation would permit more than two grenades being carried, with greater comfort and handiness. Scaling ropes or toggle-ropes of some sort would have been a great help in getting up through the wire. We had nothing like this with us.

(g) COMMUNICATIONS

The No. 18 Set The set is heavy. If the man carrying it is in the stern of the ALC, it frequently happens that because of the kick-back of the man preceding him out of the craft, and the wave action, the ALC may have drifted out a foot or two, forcing him to leap into the water to get to the shore. If, as he may easily do, he should lose his balance on rocks or slippery shale on the bottom, the weight of the set will topple him into the water. If the set, or the microphone or key assembly gets wet, the set will be out of action until the parts can be replaced or the set completely dried and cleaned. This was what happened to the Battalion HQ set, although it was as well wrapped up in gas-capes as a set on listening watch can be. Obviously a more thorough method of water-proofing the set and its components must be found. My own set, a No. 66 (modified No. 18 for Naval use) was not on listening watch while in the ALC, although pre-netted, and was, no aerial mast being fitted, very thoroughly wrapped in two gas-capes. Wilkinson, moreover, a big husky lad, had the good luck not to stumble as he went into two feet of water. The set consequently functioned perfectly.

In this situation, where there was no battalion wireless, some alternative means of inter-coy communication was essential. Runners, lamp and flag could be used. Indeed, the Battalion Signals Officer, attempting to get his set operating, while reaching for a key assembly exposed the side of his face for only a few seconds to get a snipers bullet under the ear. The alternative means then left were rockets, coloured smoke, whistle signals, and signalling by small arms fire. This was not resorted to, either because the rockets and coloured smoke were not present, or because suitable whistle and/or small arms fire signals were not known or had not been practised. I was with the C.O. from the moment we reached the beach, and, as far as I know, he had no information from Brigade about the situation on the other beaches. Rockets, and/or coloured smoke would have been of the greatest assistance here, as well as in inter-coy communication.

These points, it may be repeated, are the gist discussions held among remaining Officers of the ROYALS at VRI VERNEUIL where we were held prisoners for a week after the attack.

3.

SURRENDER.

Colonel Catto and I surrendered to an Officer at N.D. de BON SECOURS. He wore a Steel helmet of the ordinary type with the Luftwaffe eagle painted on the side instead of the usual stylized helmet eagle. He wore a cover-all of cotton or very light wool, quite shapeless, navy blue in colour, with three white rings around the cuff of each loose sleeve. About his waist he wore the six-magazine carrier for the Schmeisser machine pistol magazines and carried the gun slung on one shoulder. He had no waffenfarbe that I could distinguish, and I was unable to discover what his arm of the Service was. He took us to meet the senior German Officer present, who was standing surrounded by his staff on the cliff-top by the telegraphic tower at N.D. de BON SECOURS. This German was an Oberst, a small dark man not over 35 years, who wore a number of ribands and an Iron Cross around his neck. He questioned Col. Catto in hesitant English, assuring him that there was no more than one Regiment between Treport and Varengeville, and demanding to know how many Canadians had been in the attack. He got no information from us, and with a short

laugh, finished his questions. From N.D. de BON SECOURS, the walking wounded and stragglers who had been rounded up at the new school there, were marched down to the Hotel Dieu in DIEPPE which had been prepared as an Aid Post. The Hotel Dieu seemed to have been a deserted convent; at one time it may have been a hospital, for I remembered seeing large red crosses painted on the roof, and the front lawn had red crosses set in the flower beds, but if it had been a hospital it was appallingly short of hospital equipment. There were simply a large number of furnitureless wards with a number of beds in each. Running water or other plumbing and sanitary facilities there appeared to be none. The Sisters, French nuns, and a few French civilian women worked very hard trying to look after our wounded. The doctors who were German, were busy looking after the last German wounded still remaining, and despatching them to ROUEN. At length the doctors got round to our fellows, and did as much as they could for them, with the dressings at hand. The doctor in charge was an Oberstarzt, an ex-Serviceman, good-humoured in a brusque manner who worked hard to patch up our wounded. He was assisted by a German captain and a Lieutenant both M.O.'s and a Red Cross doctor who was, I think, a German, and from his costume appeared to be doing all the operating. A great part of the work was actually done I later learned by three of our own M.O.'s Capt. C.T. Robertson 11 Pd Amb., the M.O. of the ESSEX whose name I don't remember and another M.O., a young Captain from I think the 11 Pd. Amb.

It may be of interest to remark upon the behaviour of Canadian and British wounded and that of the few remaining German stretcher cases which I saw. Most of our stretcher cases were mortar-bomb wounds, very unpleasant and painful. From all the British and the one French civilian (a railroad employe) who were conscious on their stretchers, there was not a murmur; these who had cigarettes and were able to smoke sucked stolidly at a cigarette, the others lay silent and uncomplaining. Not so the Germans, who were vocal and querulous in their pain. This was remarked by many of us, as well as by the French civilians in the hospital.

Between 1800 hrs and 1900 hrs all the non-wounded were fallen in at the Hotel Dieu and marched up to an abandoned factory at Bellengreville, arriving there about 2300 hrs, where they went to sleep. About a dozen of us remained at the hospital in the hope that we might be able to clear as many of the stretcher cases as could be moved to the station whence, according to the Germans, they would be routed direct to a base hospital at ROUEN. The Germans had not more than four hospital orderlies who were used on the ambulances. Our small gang worked until shortly after 2300 getting the "transportables" out of the hospital, into the ambulances and away to the station. We were then taken out to the factory at Bellengreville. I later learned at LYON from Cmdr. Prior R.N. that our stretcher cases were put into box cars at DIEPPE station and left there overnight.

4.

BELLENGREVILLE

The following morning 20 Aug 42 at Bellengreville, we were issued with 300 grammes of French army bread, a little stale very hard, very dark and sour. It was most welcome. We also were given a mug of camomile tea. There I learned that all Officers had been sent the night before to a church at ENVERMEU. Our guards at Bellengreville were Jaeger troops, and except for the Untereffizier who appeared to be a C.S.M. or its equivalent, were very young. They were also very well armed with M34 machine guns and Schmeisser machine pistols. They wore the Jaeger cap, heavily studded boots ankle and on the tunic sleeve above the elbow a badge which seemed to represent an edelweiss or some such flower. I spent the morning talking with the Prize Tp RCA who had had only three casualties, and the remainder of the ROYALS. A few Canadians who could speak German appeared among the prisoners, and the Germans

used them as interpreters and general Orderly Sergeants. A few German Officers appeared and took a keen interest in the Brigade and Battalion patches. Nearly all the men still had their paybooks and still wore the Divisional patch and their Brigade and Regimental markings. About 1100 hrs I was driven as the sole remaining Officer at Bellengreville, to ENVERMEU by a German Major. This type spoke quite good English, and appeared to be fairly senior. I thought from his service ribands that he was a War I veteran. His opening remarks to me en route were, "Well, where are your friends?" I didn't understand this, and he continued, flourishing an arm vaguely to the NORTH, "There they are, the English, and there they will stay. You have spilled your blood for the English, and to no purpose." As I had personally spilled no blood whatever, no reply seemed indicated. "They will not come," he continued, "Never!" I murmured that he need only be patient, and he would see how mistaken he was. He stared at me for an instant, grunted and turned back in the front seat, and we finished the journey in silence.

At ENVERMEU church were the remaining uninjured Officers of 4th Bde. About 1400 hrs a mobile kitchen gave us a mug of very thick potato soup, very hot, very good. About 1800 hrs the troops from Bellengreville were marched down to ENVERMEU station where we joined them. The N.C.O.'s and other ranks were packed into box-cars with signs 8 chevaux 40 hommes; the Officers were loaded into 3rd or 4th class compartment coaches. It was a long train. The first coach behind the engine was open-sided and in it sat a few guards with machine pistols. Half-way down the length of the train was another of these coaches with more guards similarly armed, and immediately in front of and behind the last two coaches which carried the Officers were two more open-sided coaches with the remainder of the guards with electric torches and the machine-guns supplementing their rifles and Schneissers. In spite of these precautions, one man at least got away. The engine-driver, whether because of French sympathies, or because the train was too heavy for the locomotive could not make much speed on the grades, and after dark I saw one man getting away through trees beside the track. The train was instantly stopped and a quantity of ammunition was poured into the trees after him, but he got away. Escape in the tunnels was too risky, the guards using their torches with skill.

The following morning we arrived at VERNEUIL, and marched from the station to a Dulag three or four kilometres WEST of VERNEUIL.

5.

VERNEUIL.

The camp at VERNEUIL (departement de l'Eure) appeared to have been an original French Army camp, for the bunkhouses still carried on the numbers of forgotten pelotons and the twin triple-decker bunks still carried the tags of French soldiers, 1st and 2nd class, with their matricule numbers.

SECRET

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
D-62050, SERGEANT P. DUBUC, M.M., FUS.M.R.,
AT CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS
3 NOV 42.

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug. 42.

1. Sgt. Dubuc was attached to Battalion Headquarters of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal on the day of the action at DIEPPE, and was evidently a member of the Protective Platoon, though he never actually received the detailed information concerning his job which he had been told he would get from Major Painchaud.
2. Sgt. Dubuc landed from an L.C.P.(L) near the west end of the Casino at, he thinks, about 0700 hours. There was very heavy fire as the boats came in, but Sgt. Dubuc did not actually see any of the craft carrying his unit sunk. One L.C.T. was burning on the shore.
3. On landing, Sgt. Dubuc ran forward about 150 yards with a Bren gun and took cover in a depression in the beach. He stayed here "a long hour". In front were pill boxes, and there was heavy fire "from everywhere". During the time that Sgt. Dubuc was on the beach, Pte. H. Daudelin maintained a smoke screen by means of generators. After a time Sgt. Dubuc and Pte. Daudelin crawled up to the pill boxes shown on the Intelligence map on the esplanade wall west of the Casino at 222686 and 223687, and threw grenades into both of them.
4. In the water north-east of the word "RAMP" on the 1:12500 Intelligence map there was a tank (somewhat further to the west than any appearing on the map based on air photographs taken on 20 and 21 Aug). This tank had come off an L.C.T. in deep water and had been "drowned". Sgt. Dubuc had seen the crew leave it. As the tide went out, however, this tank was left exposed. Sgt. Dubuc went out to it and sheltered behind it to fire his Bren gun. The entrance door being open he then entered the tank with another man of whose name he is not certain and they fired away the whole of the tank's two-pounder ammunition at the German positions on the cliff. Sgt. Dubuc is not certain of this tank's name, but thinks it may have been "Caroline".
5. Sgt. Dubuc then left the tank and moved in towards the cliff, where he found a group of men of the Fus.M.R. There were five L.C.P.(L)s on the beach here. Sgt. Dubuc feels certain that there were not under the cliff at this point as many men as the 288 whom (according to a returned prisoner of war) the Germans subsequently captured here. He suggests that some other men may have taken shelter here at a later time after failing to find boats to take them off.
6. Sgt. Dubuc now made his way east, passing through the backyards of houses on the Rue Alexandre Dumas. He was followed by about 11 men of the Fus.M.R. He was the senior N.C.O. of this party. He cannot give the names of any of the men in it. On arriving close to the corner of the Rue de Sygogne, he saw Captain Vandelac coming around the south-eastern corner of the Casino with a party of perhaps 20 men who were directing fire

towards the Castle. Sgt. Dubuc's party took cover to avoid hindering the fire of Captain Vandelac's men. Sgt. Dubuc saw Captain Vandelac enter the buildings fronting on the Boulevard de Verdun near the Porte du Port d'Ouest, with his men, apparently under excellent battle discipline, following "two by two". Sgt. Dubuc does not know what happened to this party afterwards.

7. Sgt. Dubuc's party now ran forward through the gap in the road block across the Rue de Sygogne. There were some Germans here but Sgt. Dubuc says they had no rifles. The party advanced down the Rue de Sygogne as far as the intersection of the Rue Claude Groulard. Here in a little green park at the intersection, which appears on both the 1:5000 and the 1:12500 maps (224683), there was a machine-gun pit manned by three Germans. The latter fired on Sgt. Dubuc's party. One man of the party threw grenades at them and their fire ceased. The party then advanced, found the three Germans lying in their position apparently uninjured, and killed them with Tommy gun fire.

8. From this point Sgt. Dubuc's party turned east and ran rapidly along the Rue Claude Groulard and the Quai Berigny past the Public Garden. They were fired on from the windows of a school building near the little park already referred to, and one man was hit in the heel. Sgt. Dubuc told him to go back to the beach but he preferred to carry on with the party. Their fire being returned, the Germans stopped firing. The Fus.M.R. party reached the edge of the Bassin Duquesne and turned to the right, skirting the Bassin by way of the Pont Amiral Courbet and the Quai du Tonkin, still running, and under fire from the vicinity of the machine-gun post shown on the Intelligence map at the northern end of the Pont Lavoinne. Arriving near the north-west corner of the Bassin du Canada, they saw two men of "B" Company, Fus.M.R., not belonging to their party, lying in the street and talking to some Frenchmen.

9. In the Bassin du Canada were two "Commando boats" not unlike our L.C.As, and two small submarines. There were guards on the "Commando boats". Sgt. Dubuc states that he remembers the cranes along the sides of the Bassin. While Sgt. Dubuc remained near the north-west corner of the Bassin, some of his men went close to the vessels, fired on the guards and he thinks killed them. These men then returned and the whole party moved south along the railway tracks on the west side of the Bassin.

10. When they reached the south-west corner of the Bassin about fifteen Germans suddenly appeared from different directions. Sgt. Dubuc now had no ammunition left for his Bren gun, and he believes that some of the other men had also exhausted their ammunition. The party therefore surrendered.

11. The Germans made signs for the Fus.M.R. men to come with them, and the party were taken west or south-west into a backyard. Here one of the Germans spoke to them in German, which they did not understand, and then told them in English to undress. As nobody moved, the German who had spoken to them spoke to another German soldier, and this man repeated the order in French. The whole party now took off their uniforms and equipment, stripping to their underwear, and piled their equipment and uniforms in a heap. The Germans lined the party up against a wall, forcing them to face the wall and place their hands against it; they then departed, taking the discarded clothing and equipment with them, and leaving only one German soldier to guard the prisoners. Four men of Sgt. Dubuc's party had at first escaped capture but were subsequently captured

and had been brought in before this time. The total number of prisoners including Sgt. Dubuc was twelve.

12. After standing for some minutes in the manner already described, Sgt. Dubuc spoke to the German guard in English, asking him if he spoke English. The guard replied that he spoke a little English and French. Sgt. Dubuc then asked him for a drink of water, not, he explains, with any special plan in view at that moment; but when the man turned away Sgt. Dubuc saw an opportunity and threw himself upon him, the other men immediately doing likewise. One man picked up a long piece of pipe which lay to hand, and swinging it over his head cut the German's head in half.

13. Thus released from captivity, the party immediately began to run. Sgt. Dubuc explains that from this time on he has no clear recollection of the route he followed, but he finally found his way on to the Promenade in front of the town by one of the streets leading into the Boulevard de Verdun. He states that, at this particular moment, everything was strangely quiet, a striking contrast with the heavy bombardment earlier. He was alone when he reached the Promenade, and has not seen any other member of the party who were with him since.

14. Sgt. Dubuc ran on across the Promenade to the beach north-east of the Casino, where he found a group of at least three tanks on the shingle. Here he found his Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. Menard, lying wounded. He also saw Captain Vandelac on the beach. There were many men of the Fus.M.R. on the beach at this point. A smoke screen was laid by aircraft, and Captain Vandelac then gave orders to withdraw.

15. Sgt. Dubuc asked Col. Menard if he was going aboard one of the craft which now came in. The Colonel replied that he would not do so until all his men had been taken off. Sgt. Dubuc and D-62051, Cpl. (now Sergeant) Berube, nevertheless compelled Col. Menard to come with them, and got him safely on to an L.C.A. Sgt. Dubuc then returned to the beach, picked up Cpl. Cloutier of No. 3 Platoon and carried him to another L.C.A., embarking with him. Subsequently they were transferred to an L.C.T. which brought them back to England, landing them at NEWHAVEN. During the voyage back Sgt. Dubuc gave assistance to wounded men.

16. In the course of this operation Sgt. Dubuc was struck in the back by a piece of shrapnel. He did not know this until three weeks later, when symptoms appeared and he was sent to hospital.

17. Sgt. Dubuc believes that a Corporal of the Fus.M.R. named Laframboise entered the town of DIEPPE with a Sergeant of the R.C.E.

18. Sgt. Dubuc states that on the beach at DIEPPE he met some men of the Royal Regiment of Canada who said that they had come round by land from Blue Beach. (It seems likely that these men had invented this story.)

19. Sgt. Dubuc told his story to reporters after the operation, and it was published at length in the Sunday Dispatch of 23 Aug 42, although Sgt. Dubuc's name appears as "Pte. Dubec".

20. On 7 Nov 42 Sgt. Dubuc read this memorandum in draft. The writer revised it with him and Sgt. Dubuc agreed that it was an accurate account of his experiences.

(C.P. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

7 Nov 42.

SECRETMEMORANDUM ON THE CAPTURE AT DIEPPE AND SUBSEQUENT ESCAPE
OF D.61182 P.S.M. LUCIEN ADHEMARD DUMAIS (FUS.M.R.)

1. No Canadian Intelligence Officer was present at the detailed examination of P.S.M. Dumais conducted by M.I.9. The information included in this memorandum was obtained at an interview which took place on 23 Oct 42, two days after P.S.M. Dumais' return to the U.K.
2. 19 Aug 42.

At 0700 hrs P.S.M. Dumais landed from an R craft on the beach at a point about 50 yards east of the Casino. This craft contained 20 men from No.3(Mortar) Pl. of H.Q. Coy, Les Fusiliers de Mont-Royal. Only six men had time to jump ashore before the craft containing the other fourteen men and the mortars backed away and put out to sea again. P.S.M. Dumais shouted to the Naval personnel in charge of the craft to put about again but his efforts were unsuccessful.
3. P.S.M. Dumais and the five other men of No.3 Pl. found themselves alone on the shore midway between two beached T.L.C., one of which was burning furiously. They were at once exposed to heavy fire from both flanks and there were casualties almost immediately.
4. Working his way westwards P.S.M. Dumais met Lieut. Loranger, O.C. No.3 Pl., who had made a separate landing with another section of his platoon. Lieut. Loranger had been wounded and ordered Dumais to take over command of the platoon.
5. Followed by Cpl. A. Vermette and others, P.S.M. Dumais made for the Casino, which by that time had been cleared of enemy troops. On the way they found a mortar abandoned by the R.H.L.I. and took it along with them, but as they could find no ammunition they left it behind before actually reaching their first shelter; a sand-bagged position behind the Casino.
6. While in this shelter they were bothered by M.G. fire from a house opposite, but Cpl Vermette finally managed to put the enemy post out of action by fire from his Bren.
7. P.S.M. Dumais' party then entered the Casino proper and worked their way into the east wing. There two enemy P.W. were discovered who were at once passed on to the beach for embarkation. While in this part of the building P.S.M. Dumais made a search for documents in a room which had obviously been used as living and office quarters by enemy troops.
8. The party then went to the west wing of the Casino where Cpl Vermette knocked out two more enemy M.Gs. by fire from his Bren. Some R.C.E. personnel helped P.S.M. Dumais' party to blow down the door of a steel safe in this part of the building.
9. It was now approximately 0800 hours and P.S.M. Dumais went up to the second floor to help organize the defence in that quarter. He then made his way along a trench to a shed on the south side of the Casino where he established contact with a Lieutenant of the R.H.L.I. who appears to have assumed command of operations in the Casino and its immediate vicinity. From this shed P.S.M. Dumais was able to observe several British tanks in action. He saw one silence an enemy pill-box to the south-east of the Casino, while another, after receiving several direct hits from an anti-tank gun, succeeded in putting the guns out of action and then continued on its way. Incidentally the successful passage of these tanks effectively disposed of an enemy mortar which had been harassing the party in the Casino.

10. By 1000 hours enemy fire had diminished to an appreciable extent, though there was still some sniping from the steeple of St. Remi Church. P.S.M. Dumais engaged these snipers himself with a Bren and succeeded in silencing all fire from that quarter.

11. An attempt was then made, using an R.H.L.I. W/T set, to establish contact with our forces elsewhere and inform them that the position in the Casino was now favourable. When these efforts failed, P.S.M. Dumais went back to the beach, where he collected six more men to augment the force in the Casino, which now numbered about thirty all ranks.

12. At about 1030 hours a plan to attack across the street to the south had to be abandoned because of a lack of smoke bombs for the two-inch mortar. As craft were then observed approaching the beach, the Lieutenant of the R.H.L.I. gave the order to withdraw. He himself remained behind to cover this withdrawal and was assisted in this task by a sergeant of his own regiment and by P.S.M. Dumais.

13. P.S.M. Dumais supervised the evacuation of wounded and enemy P.S.W., getting the latter to carry the former to the beach. He helped load a wounded corporal onto a portion of a raft and pushed out with it to an A.L.C. which was lying about 50 yards off shore. He tried to clamber aboard himself, but lost his hold and sank in 8 feet of water, borne down by the weight of his sodden pack and equipment. He swallowed a good deal of water and was almost drowned before he managed to crawl into the shallows and get his head above the surface.

14. On getting ashore again P.S.M. Dumais made for the shelter of one of the two beached T.L.C. mentioned in para 3. Here he found a captain of the R.C.A.M.C., Lieutenant Bissonnette of the Fus.M.R., Cpl. Desaulniers of the same regiment in a seriously wounded condition and others who had been unable to get away from the beach. The wounded were given morphia, a defence system was organized, but the rising tide made the situation untenable and, on the appearance of the enemy in strength on the edge of the beach, our small force surrendered after destroying all maps and documents.

15. The party was assembled at a spot near the Casino and taken from there to the Dieppe Hospital. Various attempts were made to get the Germans to look after our wounded but they were not attended to, though the German guards permitted French civilians to give the Canadian prisoners water.

16. P.S.M. Dumais was then made to march about six miles to a sports field where the German Feldgendarmerie were relieved by very youthful looking Jaeger troops. The column then proceeded further to a factory where they were lodged for the night and given bread, water and an unpalatable species of tea. There were about 800 P.W. in this batch and the supply of water was insufficient for their needs. Some German M.Os. put in an appearance but they just looked at the wounded and made no attempt to give them any treatment.

17. 20 Aug 42.

The Canadian prisoners were let out into the yard in the morning and given a cup of ersatz coffee and an eight pound loaf of black bread apiece. As soon as breakfast was over P.S.M. Dumais and some of the survivors of his platoon began to make plans for escape. They thought at first of remaining behind hidden in some nearby concrete-mixers, but observed that the guards had thought of this possibility too. P.S.M. Dumais, who speaks a fair amount of German, got into conversation with some of the Germans and, when he spoke to any of them alone, readily got them to admit that they were fed up with the war.

18. In the course of the morning a German I.O. picked out six men for interrogation. P.S.M. Dumais wormed his way into the group and urged them not to give away any information. Some of them seem, however, to have been rather shaken by the German I.O's. display of knowledge. According to Sgt. Brousseau, one of those interrogated, the officer had on his desk photographs of commando training on the Isle of Wight and declared to the Ps.W. that they, the Germans, knew all about Operation Jubilee and its cancellation in June and that they had been expecting the raid for some time.

19. At 1600 hours the Canadians were marched to a railway station about eight miles to the south-east of Dieppe, where they entrained in cattle cars, 20 men to a car, with one sentry to every other car. Officer Ps.W. occupied a passenger car near the end of the train. There were A.A.M.Gs. mounted on the rear of the caboose.

20. The train started at 1900 hours and proceeded by way of DIEPPE and ROUEN, reaching the latter town after nightfall. The Ps.W. in P.S.M. Dumais' car began once again to make plans for escaping, but they had first to deal with a German spy in British uniform planted among them. A sergeant sat on his head while the others pulled up some of the floor boards thinking it might be possible to escape that way. They decided this was too risky and pulled a bar off the window instead. P.S.M. Dumais, followed by Cpl. Vermette and Pte Cloutier of his platoon climbed out onto the buffers and jumped in succession when the train slowed down on a gradient to a speed of about 12 m.p.h.

21. As the train passed him the German guards started firing and P.S.M. Dumais is convinced that a good many other Canadians got clear of the train at about the same time as he did. He was obliged to lie low for some minutes as he observed two French Gendarmes patrolling the track in his vicinity. During this time he could hear Cloutier calling his name from a distance.

22. When the gendarmes moved on, P.S.M. Dumais walked down the track to look for his companions. He whistled the tune of "Un Canadien Errant" as a recognition signal but failed to find his fellow escapees.

23. 21 Aug 42

P.S.M. Dumais spent the rest of the night in a barn at THUIT (near ELBOEUF) and in the morning revealed his identity to the farmer and his wife, who found him a hiding-place in the woods and brought him food.

24. 22 Aug 42.

Next morning they fitted him out with civilian clothes, gave him 500 francs and directed him to a railway station. There he bought a ticket for POITIERS and proceeded that day as far as LE MANS. He found a farm in the neighbourhood of the town where he was allowed to put up for the night and was also directed to a restaurant where the sympathetic proprietor gave him food and bread tickets.

25. 23 Aug 42

P.S.M. Dumais continued his journey to POITIERS by way of TOURS.

26. 24 Aug 42.

POITIERS was reached at 0330 hours and Dumais remained on the platform for three hours, when he left without giving up his ticket. He started along the highway towards LIMOGES in unoccupied France when he was picked up by a lorry-driver who, on learning his identity, took him to the Free French Organization

in POITIERS.

27. This organization got him across the Demarkation Line that night and kept him hidden in a hotel in a small country town for the next five weeks. The organization in question sent a wireless message to the Free French in England addressed "CMHQ" and giving P.S.M. Dumais' name, rank and number followed by the words "SUIS EN BONNE SANTE RENTRERAI BIENTOT".

28. P.S.M. Dumais seems to have conducted himself with great bravery and to have shown considerable initiative prior to the surrender. Once he had been taken prisoner he began at once to plan his ultimate escape, while at the same time using his knowledge of German to extract information from the enemy.

F.H. Walter

(F.H. Walter) Lieut. I.O.

MJT

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
 B-66984, CPL. L.G. ELLIS, D.C.M.,
 ROYAL REGIMENT OF CANADA, AT
 CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON,
 20 OCT 42.

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Cpl. Ellis (then a L/Cpl.) is the only member of the Royal Regiment of Canada known to have crossed the sea-wall during the attack at Blue Beach who subsequently succeeded in returning to England.
2. Cpl. Ellis landed on Blue Beach with "A" Coy, R. Regt. C., which landed on the right flank (i.e. the west end of the beach), as part of the first wave.
3. Cpl. Ellis describes the situation at Blue Beach as follows. At the head of the beach was a sea-wall perhaps 8 to 11 feet high, on top of which there was a triple concertina wire obstacle. So far as his observation went, his impression was that the wall ran the whole length of the beach, i.e. from one cliff to the other across the mouth of the valley in which lies the village of Puits. Where the wall ran in front of the slope of the hill it was cut into the slope; that is, on climbing the wall a man found that there was no drop on the other side. There was a clear space perhaps 4 or 5 feet wide on the landward side of the wire obstacle on the wall; and beyond this was a deep and very thick obstacle of "bundled" wire, virtually impassable.
4. On the western section of the wall, in front of which "A" Company landed, there was a double flight of steps; that is, there was a recess in the wall containing flights of steps leading up to the top of the wall both to right and left. At the top of the western flight of steps was a pill-box, probably the one at 252696 shown with three arrows attached (Intelligence map, 1:12,500). This pill-box was found not to be manned.
5. Cpl. Ellis's company were transported in H.M.S. "Princess Astrid", an L.S.I. (Landing Ship, Infantry). From this vessel the troops were transferred into L.C.As. which carried them to shore. Cpl. Ellis noted that there seemed to be a slight delay in forming up after leaving the "Princess Astrid", and he got the impression that the reason was that a couple of boats appeared to be missing. The first part of the trip in the L.C.As. was quite uneventful, but during the latter half flares were seen. Cpl. Ellis is not certain whether these came from the shore. He did not himself see searchlights illuminating the L.C.As.
6. The craft were still perhaps half a mile from the shore when daylight came. Objects formerly only vaguely distinguishable were now clearly visible. The L.C.As. proceeded into the beach and landed the troops. Cpl. Ellis saw no fire directed against his L.C.A. before it beached.
7. Cpl. Ellis was about the fourth man off the L.C.A. The ramp had not gone fully down; he jumped on it to try to bring it down, but without effect. He then leaped out on to the beach, getting no more than his feet wet. He ran up the

beach to the sea-wall, and crouched against it waiting for the other men to join him. Looking back, he saw these men being cut down, chiefly by machine-gun fire which was now sweeping the beach.

8. The men who were not struck came up the beach and took shelter against the wall in the vicinity of the steps already described. The wall, however, gave no protection from the fire of a machine-gun, evidently sited on the eastern cliff somewhere in the area about 254697, which was able to enfilade the wall effectively and caused very heavy casualties. Cpl. Ellis got through a barbed wire obstacle obstructing the steps and went up the steps on the right to the pill-box, from which no fire had come. He looked inside and found it empty. He then went back down the steps and ascended those to the left; at the top he found himself confronted by a very thick wire obstacle, so thick that he could not shoot through it.

9. About this time he was joined by Capt. G.G. Sinclair, commanding "A" Company, who had with him a private armed with a Sten gun, probably his batman. Capt. Sinclair shouted for a Bren gun and Cpl. Ellis also shouted, but no gun was brought. Capt. Sinclair then called for a Bangalore torpedo, and this was passed up. The Bangalore was set in the wire above the eastern steps and blown. It made a good hole in the wire. Capt. Sinclair looked over the wall and said, "Come on over". Cpl. Ellis pushed past him and went over the wall.

10. By this time the second wave of the Royal Regiment had beached, coming in probably just before the explosion of the Bangalore. The men came up and lay against the wall, and Cpl. Ellis had shouted to them to warn them against the fire of the machine-gun already mentioned.

11. After crossing the wall, Cpl. Ellis crawled a short distance to the right and then asked for wire cutters. He was about to start cutting when he noticed that at intervals there was a roll of concertina wire running through the inner wire obstacle and providing the possibility of passing through it comparatively easily. He crawled through one of these rolls, doing some cutting where necessary, and in the course of his passage severed two wires which he believed at the time to be signal cables. The wire which he passed through was on a steep upward slope, and after passing the obstacle Cpl. Ellis found himself near a house at the top of the hill, probably the house shown on the Intelligence map at 252695, immediately south of the pill-box.

12. After going to the rear of the house and noting the position of a back window, Cpl. Ellis entered through the door. Finding a door opening from the entrance hall into a room at the right, he threw a grenade through it, and entered after the explosion. The room was empty, but on the floor were cartridge cases which were still warm. Cpl. Ellis left this room and started upstairs, carrying ready for action a grenade from which he had pulled the pin. When he was halfway up the stairs the Navy opened fire on the house, he believes with pom-poms. Cpl. Ellis therefore returned to the ground floor, and to avoid exposing himself to this fire left the house by the back window.

13. He went up a pathway which ran into a path skirting a wood which lay close behind the house. Here he turned to the right and after following the path along the side of the wood for some distance turned back and met the private with the Sten gun already referred to. They then returned together along the path in the direction of the sea as far as a point where it forked.

14. Cpl. Ellis told the private to wait at this point while the Corporal followed the path towards the sea. The private, however, followed him for a short distance, and Cpl. Ellis then told him to go back and bring up the Company Commander and the troops.

15. Cpl. Ellis himself followed the path until he came to a pill-box, presumably the one on the edge of the cliff shown on the Intelligence map at 251695. He examined it, and it also was empty. After going a little further along the path he returned to the intersection and went some distance along the other fork. He saw nothing, and wondered what had happened to the troops. He then cut back through the woods, coming across three weapon pits, all empty, and came out not far from the house which he had visited, and went to the edge of the hill. He believes that during this circuit he must have been close to the fortified house on the hilltop at which (as he heard later) our men on the beach were firing; but he never saw this house. He now crawled east to a point overlooking the valley where he found an empty sniper pit and got into it.

16. On the opposite side of the valley he saw a massive white pill-box. Dust flying about this pill-box indicated that our troops were firing at it. Cpl. Ellis saw no fire from the pill-box, but tracer bullets were coming from a bush close to it on the side towards the beach, and were falling on the beach. In the bush Cpl. Ellis thought he could discern a gleam of white which might be the machine gunner's face. The Corporal, who is a sniper, set his sights at 650 yards and fired at this gleam. He saw the stream of tracer bullets change direction from the beach up into the air, as though the gunner had been struck and had fallen back with his finger still on the trigger. No more fire came from the bush while Cpl. Ellis watched.

17. From the position he was in he was able to survey the village of Puits, in which nothing was stirring. He fired a few shots into the village at places which might harbour snipers. While in this sniper pit a bullet creased his steel helmet.

18. Cpl. Ellis now crawled back towards the house. An officer whom he did not know, armed with a Sten gun, came up and asked whether the house was clear. Ellis replied that it was, but that the Navy was firing at it. Either not hearing this explanation, or ignoring it, the officer entered the house. Immediately afterwards there was a heavy burst of naval fire against the lower floor, and it is possible that this officer may have been killed or injured. After the naval fire ceased, Cpl. Ellis crawled back to the point at which he had climbed the slope and looked down on the beach. He saw one L.C.A. on the beach embarking troops, with men shoving in an attempt to get the boat afloat.

19. Ellis now went downhill towards the beach, and in doing so came across a soldier lying paralysed. He half dragged, half carried this man downhill as far as the wire obstacle, and finding another roll of concertina wire affording a passage, began to work him through it. He came to what appeared to be another signal wire, and having lost his wire cutters, and believing it to be a continuation of the wires he had previously cut, pulled it. It was, however, connected with a buried booby trap which exploded, killing the paralysed man and wounding Cpl. Ellis slightly in the face, the right hand and the left foot. Either by this explosion or that of the Bangalore torpedo he also suffered a punctured eardrum.

20. Cpl. Ellis now passed on through the wire and reached the open space between this wire obstacle and the concertina wire on the wall. Having no way of getting through the latter obstacle,

he jumped right over it and landed on the beach (on a further pile of wire). He ran to the L.C.A., and found the naval officer in charge shouting at the men to shove. Many of the men present were wounded, and Cpl. Ellis saw Capt. Catto, who appeared to be in bad shape. Cpl. Ellis got some of the men to shove the boat and helped others to enter it. The naval officer was struck and fell. Cpl. Ellis saw a naval rating hitting the hands of men who were trying to climb aboard this craft, which was greatly overcrowded. Ellis himself did not enter the craft. He saw it pull offshore and turn out to sea; when he looked at it again it was upside down.

21. It seems possible that this craft was the one referred to in the stories of Sub-Lt. Boak and other Canadian naval officers and those written by B-67002, Pte. E.J. Simpson, and other men of the Royal Regiment. A number of men of the unit were subsequently rescued from the bottom of this craft under heavy fire by "R" boats commanded by Sub-Lt. Boak and Sub-Lt. Franklin.

22. Cpl. Ellis looked about him and saw no movement on the beach, on which many dead men were lying. He decided to swim for it, and taking off his boots and equipment plunged into the water. While he was doing the crawl stroke a sniper fired at him and the bullet came within a few inches of his nose. He pretended to be hit, and no further fire was directed at him. Cpl. Ellis took off his lifebelt and all his clothes and swam until he was almost exhausted, for perhaps 1½ to 2 hours. He then came across a dead soldier floating and took his lifebelt. Subsequently he found another dead man and took his lifebelt also as well as his jacket. Both these dead men had head wounds (possibly inflicted by snipers). He floated for a time but found it necessary to keep swimming to avoid losing consciousness. Just before he actually lost consciousness he saw a dinghy, and this may have been the craft which picked him up. He was rescued by Sgt. Legate of his own unit, who had been in the capsized landing craft and had got into a small boat.

23. When Cpl. Ellis recovered consciousness he found himself on board a "Flak ship". The naval crew of this vessel treated the rescued wounded "like princes", alternating between feeding them and giving them first aid, and fighting off the German aircraft which were still attacking.

24. It is a rather remarkable fact that although Cpl. Ellis was probably over an hour on shore (he landed about 0515 or 0520 hours, and his watch stopped when he entered the water at 0630 hours) he did not see a single German, except for the face, if it was a face, in the bush at which he fired, and one man whom he saw on the skyline some 2,000 yards away who may have been an enemy soldier. None of the enemy positions which he inspected were occupied at the time. Near the house he looked into a weapon pit which might possibly have covered the mouth of a tunnel, but he did not investigate further. All this time the enemy was maintaining a most destructive fire on the beach.

25. Cpl. Ellis saw nothing of the Black Watch, a company of which is believed to have landed on Blue Beach after the Royal Regiment had been repulsed at this point.

26. At the time of his return to the beach, Cpl. Ellis saw only one L.C.A. - the one which subsequently overturned.

27. This memorandum was dictated on 21 Oct 42 on the basis of notes made during an interview with Cpl. Ellis on the previous afternoon. On 22 Oct Cpl. Ellis read it, made one or two

suggestions which were incorporated, and accepted the draft as accurate and as being as complete as he could make it without adding material which he did not know at first-hand.

(C.F. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
 L-13282 PRIVATE W.A. HAGGARD, D.C.M.,
 SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN REGIMENT,
 AT CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS,
 12 NOV 42.

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE - 19 Aug 42.

1. Pte. Haggard served at DIEPPE in No. 13 Platoon ("C" Company) of the South Saskatchewan Regiment, which landed at POURVILLE. "C" Company was commanded by Major Orme. "C" and "B" Companies embarked on the same ship at PORTSMOUTH. Pte. Haggard's platoon was on an upper deck of the ship examining air photographs, etc., at the time when a grenade explosion took place below. He believes that this was the result of carelessness while cleaning grenades.
2. Private Haggard slept during most of the trip to shore in the L.C.As. At the time he awakened no fire was being directed at the boats, but some men told him that there had been fire earlier. The landing was made without enemy interference, and after Pte. Haggard had got on to the beach he heard somebody say that the time was "five minutes to five". Nobody was wounded on the beach, but some enemy machine-gun fire was directed at the L.C.As. as they retired from the shore. Some of this fire came from a large white hotel overlooking the beach (probably the building shown on the 1:12500 Intelligence map of the area at 193678), opposite which Pte. Haggard had landed.
3. Pte. Haggard's Platoon, which had no officer, but was commanded by L-12403, Sgt. H.E. Long, went around the east end of the hotel, Pte. Haggard being in rear. There were two German soldiers on guard at the door on the south side of the hotel. By the time Pte. Haggard reached the spot, these two men had been shot and there was no further resistance. The hotel was found to be occupied by men brought in from outside the area for purposes of forced labour. A number of these were Belgians. Considerable time was lost in getting these men out of the house, especially as they were much frightened. By this time it was beginning to get light.
4. In a house south of the hotel were two French women whom L-13504 Pte. (now Corporal) G.B. Berthelot was able to address in their own language. They told him that the German troops were on the hill behind the hotel, and that they had been "waiting for" the attack for three days.
5. The Platoon, led by Sgt. Long, now advanced in single file up a path leading up the hill, Pte. Haggard at this time being still in the rear. At the top of the first rise the head of the Platoon came under fire, and Sgt. Long was wounded and a Bren gunner who was with him was killed. The Platoon being thus deprived of leadership, there was hesitation for a few minutes. The men were anxious to get on but were waiting for somebody to assume command and tell them what to do. Some men sat down, wondering why no orders were being given.

6. Pte. Haggard now went forward to see the situation for himself. The wounded Sergeant had disappeared, but Pte. Haggard met another Sergeant who said that the advance was being held up by machine-gun fire from further up the hill. Pte. Haggard now took charge of the situation, in the absence of leadership from any N.C.O. On reconnoitring he discovered that the German force in front was disposed in slit trenches near the house at 192677, close to the edge of the wood. With the help of Pte. Berthelot, a Bren gunner, Pte. Haggard now organized an attack on this position, which was subsequently found to have been held by about 50 Germans with four machine-guns. As two sections of the Platoon were pinned down by fire in front of the German position Pte. Haggard took the third section and placed it in position with a view to taking the Germans in the rear. He then returned and instructed the other two sections to attack when they heard fire from that direction. Returning to the third section, he led them around the corner of the house against the German position. The Germans opened fire as they saw his party advancing, and at this point Pte. Berthelot was wounded while attacking and firing his Bren gun from the hip. The enemy, however, gave in comparatively easily as soon as they realized that they were being subjected to an encircling attack. Twelve enemy prisoners were taken here, all the rest of the German force being killed.

7. Pte. Haggard arranged for searching the dead and the prisoners, and collected all written material. He then handed the main body of the Platoon over to an N.C.O. and himself with a party took the prisoners back to Battalion Headquarters, which had been established in an orchard in POURVILLE at about 195678. On the way back, five more Germans surrendered to the party and were taken along. At Battalion Headquarters, where Major J.E. McRae was in charge, Pte. Haggard handed his prisoners over to the "I" Section, and started back with a view to rejoining his company.

8. At this time the Cameron Highlanders were landing, and Pte. Haggard saw them coming over the seawall. Behind the hotel already mentioned Pte. Haggard found Sgt. Long. After conversation with the Sergeant, finding that it was uncertain where the Company was, Pte. Haggard decided to take Sgt. Long and another wounded man to the Regimental Aid Post; but in doing so his party became lost and found themselves near the road-fork at 194677. Here they met some friendly Frenchmen who gave them a wheelbarrow to carry the Sergeant. The party now went back to Battalion Headquarters, turned over the wounded men, and reported to Major McRae, who told them to take up a defensive position around the orchard while he tried to make contact with "C" Company by wireless. He apparently was unable to get "C" Company, and Pte. Haggard's opinion is that the Battalion's 18 sets were not very effective during the operation generally. Subsequently Major McRae sent a Sergeant to Pte. Haggard's party to tell them to help evacuate stretcher cases to the beach. They carried on this work for some time.

9. Pte. Haggard now saw "C" Company withdrawing towards the beach in the vicinity of the hotel. He spoke to Major McRae, who told him to rejoin the Company and take the other "C" Company men with him. Accordingly he rejoined the Company on the Promenade along the sea front, where the men took up a defensive position along a low wall. Here Pte. Haggard met Lt.-Cdr. Prior, a British naval officer who was "doing a fine job", and who gave him a pair of wire cutters and told him to cut passages through the wire to facilitate passage to the beach. Pte. Haggard worked at this for some time.

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10. As he finished the work of cutting the wire, mortar bombs from the hill to the eastward in the direction of the R.D.P. station began falling on the beach. The village had been under mortar fire throughout the morning.

11. There was still a wait of about half an hour before the arrival of the L.C.As. When they arrived Pte. Haggard was about to assist in the work of carrying stretcher cases, but Lt.-Cdr. Prior told him and other men to embark at once as it was undesirable to have a concentration of men on the beach. Lt.-Cdr. Prior exposed himself constantly in directing the embarkation, at one point signalling to the craft offshore with flags from the top of a pillbox under heavy fire. Pte. Haggard accordingly entered an L.C.A., where he set to work bandaging the wounded men. The L.C.A. was aground, the rest of the men got out to push it off, and before they succeeded in doing so Pte. Haggard had finished his work with the wounded and joined them. The boat was successfully pushed off under machine-gun fire from the high ground on both sides of the village. At this point Pte. Haggard was wounded in the arm while lying on top of the L.C.A. trying to pull aboard a comrade who was weighed down by his heavy equipment.

12. The L.C.A. reached a destroyer in safety and the men in it were transferred. On the destroyer the wounded men were taken below and given sandwiches and rum. Pte. Haggard slept most of the way back. The destroyer remained off the French coast for about two and a half hours after the return of the L.C.As, and Pte. Haggard believes that it was hit several times by shell fire in addition to being attacked by aircraft.

13. Pte. Haggard believes that the fire which killed the Commanding Officer of the Camerons on the beach at POURVILLE must have come from the east, from the direction of the R.D.P. station. He says that the whole of POURVILLE was gradually cleared of the enemy, Battalion Headquarters having disposed of some isolated snipers after the Companies had moved on.

14. Pte. Haggard saw nothing of enemy artillery fire. The worst menace his unit had to confront was, he states, the heavy German mortars which continued firing all morning. These mortars were believed to be of 4-inch calibre, and the bombs were "very noisy".

15. The objectives of "C" Company were the machine-gun posts on the hill behind the hotel, and Pte. Haggard believes that his Company, alone among those of the unit, succeeded in taking all the posts it was supposed to take. The aerial photographs issued in advance of the operation had enabled officers and men to obtain a very accurate idea of the enemy defences. The post which was cleared by Pte. Haggard's attack was indicated in this Intelligence material as a "probable" machine-gun post.

16. Pte. Haggard considers that in this action the Canadian troops showed themselves far better soldiers than the Germans whom they encountered. Their morale was excellent and they were anxious to fight, whereas the enemy infantry gave in easily when it came to close quarter fighting.

17. On 17 Nov Pte. Haggard read this memorandum in draft and agreed that it was accurate.

(G.P. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

17 Nov 42.

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
 A-19407 L/SGT. G.A. HICKSON, D.C.M.,
 7 FD COY, R.C.E., AT
 CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, 13 OCT 42.

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Sgt. Hickson was in command of a party known as "Hicks Party", a party of 7 R.C.E. personnel charged with the destruction of the telephone exchange in the Post Office. He was also to co-operate with Field Security men, blowing open the Post Office safe; and was subsequently to help prepare the torpedo dump in the east cliff for demolition, this being a special project of Lt.-Col. G.H. McTavish's. Hicks Party was transported in H.M.S. "GLENGYLE", and came ashore on M.L.C.I., touching down at 0520 hrs on 19 Aug 42, on White Beach opposite the north-east corner of the Casino. Sgt. Hickson's party was accompanied by a covering party of 35 men of the R.H.L.I. commanded by Lt. Webster. Upon landing the party made straight for the Casino, which was its rendezvous.
2. Sgt. Hickson describes the seaward defences of the Casino as follows. In front of the building, but not so far west as is indicated on the Intelligence map of enemy defences prepared before the operation (1: 12,500, 1 Aug 42), was a heavy pillbox mounting a gun comparable in size to our Bofors 40-mm, and manned by five men. Built into the north-west corner of the Casino was an emplacement for a heavy gun, very solidly constructed and brand-new. On the seaward front of the Casino, east of this emplacement, was a machine-gun post, and there was another on the other side of the emplacement on the west side of the building. At the north-east corner of the Casino was a sandbag emplacement.
3. On the Esplanade immediately east of the Casino was a very large low building whose true character our aerial photographs had not revealed. It was in fact an enemy post armed with at least one anti-tank or similar gun as well as machine-guns. This post was responsible for causing heavy casualties.
4. In front of the Casino were two wire obstacles. That nearer the water had been damaged by the tide and was not hard to negotiate; but the second one, on the Esplanade wall in front of the building, had to be cut by the use of Bangalore torpedoes with which the infantry party had been provided. This operation was carried out under heavy fire from the Casino defences. Before the wire was crossed, the pillbox was knocked out, chiefly with grenades, which killed the German crew. Three of the five men of this crew were wearing respirators, i.e. with facepieces adjusted. The first Bangalore did not detonate, and a second was then tried. One man was killed through deciding too soon that this also was a "dud", and standing up just as the explosion took place.
5. After passing the wire, the survivors of the party rendezvoused in the shelter of the sandbag emplacement at the north-east corner of the Casino. Here the wounded were left,

among them Lt. Webster, who had been struck by several bullets. At this stage four of the original party of seven Sappers remained, along with an uncertain number of infantrymen.

6. Sgt. Hickson now took command of the survivors of the party. He attempted to move the gun from the pillbox to use it against the enemy, but it was too securely fastened. He therefore placed a charge on the breech and blew it, rendering the gun useless. He then led his party into the Casino, entering the building on the north or seaward side just east of the centre, at a point where a "sort of sun porch" projected towards the sea. Sgt. Hickson's party now proceeded to clear the north-east corner of the building. Sgt. Hickson used one of his demolition charges to destroy a sniper's post, and in doing so blew down several walls. Throughout the operations inside the Casino enemy prisoners continued to be taken, the final total being 23.

7. The Casino was a very large building, and its interior was a maze of rooms and passages of various sizes which made clearing it a complicated operation.

8. After clearing the north-east corner of the Casino the four Sappers divided into two parties. L/Cpl. Fisher of 1 Pk Coy R.C.E. took Sapper Huyck, and these two Sappers, in company with an officer whose name Sgt. Hickson does not know and a party of infantry, penetrated into the town about the centre by a route unknown to Sgt. Hickson. The governing idea was that Fisher and Huyck would attempt to reach the Post Office by a circuit to the eastward, while Sgt. Hickson, with B-25252, Spr. W. Price of 2 Pk Coy R.C.E., attempted to reach the objective by a more direct route. (Spr. Price however was subsequently ordered by Sgt. Hickson to remain with Lt. Ewener.)

9. In the meantime Lt. W.A. Ewener, 7 Pk Coy, R.C.E., in charge of the party assigned to the duty of destroying the heavy road blocks across the heads of the streets facing the Promenade, had come through to the south side of the Casino and with his men attempted to carry out this duty. Here Lt. Ewener was wounded. A-20191 L/Cpl. M.D. Sinasac, 11 Pk Coy, R.C.E., accompanied by A-35020 Spr. L.W. Laur of H.Q., R.C.E., 2 Cdn Div, and a third man who was shot down and whose name Sgt. Hickson does not know, rushed across the open in a most gallant attempt to destroy the road block across the head of the Rue de Sygogne, leading into the main roads to the south. This road block was covered by extremely heavy fire, and in spite of extreme gallantry it could not be demolished. L/Cpl. Sinasac has since been awarded the D.C.M.

10. Having cleared the north-east corner of the Casino, Sgt. Hickson and his men set about clearing the remainder of the building. Snipers were firing from the vicinity of the north-west corner. In order to get at one sniper, Sgt. Hickson blew a wall with another charge, destroying the sniper as well as his cover.

11. In the meantime a L.C.T. had landed close to the north-east corner of the Casino and three tanks had come ashore from it. A Bren carrier came ashore about the same point and perhaps from the same L.C.T. One tank was stopped almost at once but continued firing, engaging the big gun emplacement in the Casino already referred to, which was also being engaged by naval fire. Another tank was carrying reels of chespal on the front. It laid this, climbed the Esplanade wall successfully, and went east along the Esplanade. Sgt. Hickson saw about five tanks in action on the Esplanade at the east end of the town.

12. Sgt. Hickson's party now attacked the heavy gun emplacement. The two machine-gun posts flanking it were both "put out" with grenades, the crews surrendering comparatively easily. The emplacement itself was of two storeys, and was heavily built of good concrete, on which the artillery fire directed at it had had little effect. The lower storey contained the sleeping quarters of the gun crew, and this was provided with a steel door which was closed and fastened. The gun itself was in the upper storey.

13. Sgt. Hickson fixed a 3-pound plastic charge to the door and detonated it, blowing the door outwards. The explosion knocked out the gun crew of five men in the upper chamber of the emplacement, and the gun ceased fire. Sgt. Hickson now entered the emplacement, accompanied by a French Canadian Corporal whose name he does not know. They climbed into the upper storey and found the gun crew lying about dead or stunned. Sgt. Hickson fixed a one-pound "Clam" charge to the breech of the gun, in which there was a shell, and fired it. He did not reenter the emplacement to observe whether the gun was totally destroyed. He is not sure of the size of the gun, but mentioned that it was similar to a naval A.A. gun. This suggests that it was of 4 to 6-inch calibre. As the ammunition was fixed (projectile and charge in one piece) the smaller size is perhaps more probable.

14. Sgt. Hickson returned to the south side of the Casino and visited Lt. Ewener. Seeing a man in German uniform run towards the north-west corner of the building, he followed him, but he and his party were at first unable to dislodge him from the position he took up. This enemy soldier was undaunted by grenades and by heavy fire directed at his position, and he rolled at Sgt. Hickson's party a "saucer-shaped" grenade which shook them up somewhat. The French Canadian Corporal already mentioned then fixed his bayonet and rushed the German's position, when he immediately came out with his hands up.

15. Various parties of men had reached the south front of the Casino, and some had got into a slit trench on the town side of the building. Among these was Lt. Counsell of the R.H.L.I., who was present in the Casino while it was being cleared and who evidently had penetrated into the town, for he told Sgt. Hickson that he had been as far as the Church of St. Remy and had "found nobody there". (This was presumably Lt. L.C. Counsell, commanding 18 Platoon. Lt. J.G. Counsell, commanding 14 Platoon, was also present; he was shot through the spine while assisting tanks on the beach, and has been awarded the M.C.)

16. One tank came along the front of the town, moving west, and stopped near the south-east corner of the Casino, apparently immobilized. It engaged machine-guns in and around the Castle and silenced much of the enemy fire at this point, doing a splendid job. This may have been the tank called "Bert" which appears in German photographs (Sunday Pictorial, 6 Sep 42), although the tank in the photographs is facing east instead of west.

17. After the heavy gun in the emplacement ceased firing and the tank came up to the Casino, five heavy German shells were fired into the area, probably from south of the town. Four fell immediately south-west of the Casino; the fifth struck the building just west of the centre of the town side and made a hole ten to twelve feet in diameter.

18. Sgt. Hickson now collected a party of about 18 men and led them alongside the south-east wing of the Casino and across the Boulevard de Verdun. No casualties were suffered in crossing, thanks to the tank. They penetrated through the buildings facing the beach and reached the intersection of the Rue de la Martiniere with the Rue de l'Hotel de Ville and the Rue de la Halle au Ble, a short distance north of the Church of St. Remy.

Here there was much activity by enemy snipers. The Canadians were much surprised to find that in spite of this a number of civilians, or at any rate persons in civilian clothes, were moving freely about the streets and making no attempt to take cover. After watching the situation carefully for some time our men came to the conclusion that these "civilians" were in fact engaged in giving away the positions of individual Canadian soldiers to the enemy snipers; they therefore cleared the streets with Bren gun fire.

19. One sniper firing from an upper window was killed with an anti-tank rifle. Sgt. Hickson mentioned that this is a very fine weapon for such purposes, being very accurate even at long ranges. One house was cleared and the party of German infantry holding it destroyed. There was hand-to-hand fighting in this house. Ammunition becoming exhausted, Sgt. Hickson was then obliged to withdraw his party to the Casino. Before retiring they did all possible damage, including cutting telephone cables. While on the way back to the Casino they heard the hooter signal for withdrawal.

20. While operating in the vicinity of the Rue de la Martiniere, Sgt. Hickson saw three tanks, the leading tank flying a pennant of whose colour he is not quite certain, moving west on the Rue de la Barre. Subsequently, after evacuation, Sgt. Hickson encountered on shipboard a man who said he had spoken to the crews of these tanks and they had told him they were "on the way to Paris". Sgt. Hickson is certain that these tanks did not enter the town at the Casino end.

21. On returning to the Casino, Sgt. Hickson gave first aid to a German prisoner who had been badly wounded earlier but who had remained unattended up to that time, and also helped two others. One of these men spoke fairly good English, and he told Sgt. Hickson that the badly wounded man was a Bulgarian. In the Casino he saw Col. Labatt of the R.H.L.I., an officer and a Sergeant-Major; this party had apparently returned from the town. Col. Labatt asked Sgt. Hickson if he had any ammunition, but by this time the Sergeant's party had nothing left but two bren pouches full of grenades. The Colonel took two grenades and went in the direction of the beach.

22. L/Cpl. Fisher and Spr. Huyck now returned from the town, and after taking steps to destroy their remaining demolition stores the survivors of the Sapper party withdrew to the beach for re-embarkation. The beach in front of the Casino was swept by very heavy fire, and was thickly covered with the bodies of a naval beach party which had suffered heavily. While on the beach Sgt. Hickson saw a great rush of infantry down from the centre of the beach towards the boats. Instead of scattering, he observed, they seemed to concentrate on a few craft, and the crowd of men around these craft drew heavy fire. On the beach Sgt. Hickson saw Col. Labatt standing beside the prostrate body of the officer who had been with him, and firing, he thinks with a pistol.

23. Sgt. Hickson succeeded in getting aboard a L.C.A. some distance offshore. So many infantry men climbed into this craft that the door could not be closed and it was in danger of sinking. Sgt. Hickson set the men to work baling with their helmets. He remarked that he tried to get them to sing but this proved difficult. He found himself singing alone, and deciding that this sounded "rather foolish", desisted.

24. Subsequently Sgt. Hickson and some other men from the L.C.A. transferred to a support craft, and were able to assist in transferring wounded men from three L.C.A.'s to a

destroyer. The support craft went back shoreward to assist in further evacuation. Sgt. Hickson and the men with him wished to go with it but the naval officer in charge would not take them.

25. Sgt. Hickson returned to England on the destroyer already mentioned. He remarked that the only time during the day when he was really frightened was during this return voyage, when a bomb struck the stern of the destroyer, causing a number of sailors to leap overboard, and starting a fire.

26. Sgt. Hickson returned to his unit a day late, and found that he had been believed to be a casualty. Presumably as a result of this, all his kit had disappeared.

27. In the course of this operation two bullets passed through Sgt. Hickson's left sleeve, and one through the leg of his trousers; but he received no actual injury except a scratch inflicted by barbed wire.

28. He spoke particularly of the fine bearing of our wounded men, who were never heard to murmur however great their pain.

29. Spr Price, who understands German, talked with one of the prisoners in Sgt. Hickson's presence. This prisoner said that the enemy "knew we were coming, but didn't know when". This prisoner was wearing a metal decoration for sports, and said he was a 100-yards sprint champion and had taken part in the Olympic Games.

30. The above memorandum was drafted on 14 Oct 42, following a long conversation with Sgt. Hickson the previous afternoon. On the afternoon of 14 Oct Sgt. Hickson read the draft and revised and corrected it in collaboration with the writer, adding considerable additional detail. There was further revision with Sgt. Hickson on 15 Oct.

(C.P. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

P O S T S C R I P T

31. On the question of the Sten gun, Sgt. Hickson states that he used two different Stens during the operation and found them unsatisfactory. He considers, however, that the Sten is in general a more satisfactory weapon than the Thompson gun, both the weapon and its ammunition being much lighter. He attributes the difficulties encountered with the Sten during this operation to the fact that the magazine platforms stuck. During training, the men had filed the magazine platforms of the guns then in use and they then worked satisfactorily.

NOTES ON FURTHER INTERVIEW WITH
L/SGT. HICKSON, 19 OCT 42.

1. Sgt. Hickson explained that the party which he led from the Casino into the town passed through a 5-foot gap in a road-block across an alley-way running into the Boulevard de Verdun. He believes this alley-way does not appear on the 1: 12,500 map, but believes it to be roughly in line with the Rue de la Martiniere or perhaps a trifle to the west of it, i.e. at about 225686.
2. Sgt. Hickson saw no German tanks, and believes that none were present.
3. Sgt. Hickson saw Col. Labatt coming back from the town to the Casino through the buildings directly opposite the centre of the Casino. The Colonel had with him a party of about 15 to 20 all ranks.
4. The Sergeant did not see Brigadier Southam or his headquarters during the operation.
5. Sgt. Hickson confirms that the Fus. M.R., or a considerable proportion of the unit, landed in front of and to the west of the Casino.
6. Sgt. Hickson did not use explosives to get into the Casino. Some of the infantry men with his party preceded him, cutting the wire on the "sun porch" with wire cutters, with which the Engineers were not equipped. Sgt. Hickson believes, however, that these infantry men attached to his party were the first of our troops to enter the Casino.
7. With reference to paragraph 15, above, further investigation indicates that Lt. L.C. Counsell was killed on the beach comparatively early in the action. The officer whom Sgt. Hickson met in the Casino and who had returned from the town can thus scarcely have been either Lt. L.C. or Lt. J.G. Counsell.

C.B.S.

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
MAJOR A.T. LAW, D.S.O., CAMERONS OF G., AT
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, 3 DEC 42.

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Major Law was second in command of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada at the time of embarkation for DIEPPE. As the Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. Gostling, was killed immediately after disembarkation at POURVILLE, Major Law took command of the battalion and commanded it during the subsequent stages of the operation.
2. This memorandum is supplementary to the narrative entitled "The Role the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada Played in the Dieppe Raid, 19 Aug 42", which was prepared by Major Law and a copy of which was placed upon the unit War Diary.
3. Major Law states that officers of his unit first heard of Operation "JUBILEE" on or about Friday, 14 Aug 42, when the Commanding Officer, the Adjutant and the Company Commanders reported at H.Q. 2 Cdn Div for what was announced as a cloth model demonstration, but turned out to be an exposition of the proposed operation on the DIEPPE model. The operation was to be carried out under cover of a movement exercise entitled "FORD I", and with a view, supposedly, to being prepared for this exercise, the unit was ordered to be on very short notice for a move.
4. When the move order arrived on 18 Aug 42, information was that a Troop Carrying Company was to report to the unit at its quarters at CATER CROSS, near PITTLEWORTH, SUSSEX, at 1400 hours on that date. The Troop Carrying Company, however, was late, and the unit began its move on its own transport supplemented by what could be obtained for it from the other units of the brigade by H.Q. 6 Cdn Inf Bde. The vehicles of the Troop Carrying Company were met after departure. The journey to NEWHAVEN was made at a speed of about 50 miles per hour, arrangements for traffic control being admirable.
5. The unit arrived at NEWHAVEN at about 1700 hours and the men were then fed. The meal provided was extremely poor, consisting of stew (the meat in which was extremely tough) and tea which was almost undrinkable. Subsequently it was found that of the soup prepared for consumption on the landing craft perhaps 75% was of no use, as flames could not be lit for heating it. The consequence was that the men of the unit got nothing in the nature of a substantial meal between lunchtime on Tuesday and breakfast after their return to their own quarters on Thursday morning.
6. At NEWHAVEN the unit collected a considerable quantity of equipment, including additional pistols and grenades, Sten guns, and demolition stores. The latter were not labelled as had been laid down in orders, and this caused much trouble for the Pioneer Platoon. The equipment in general was simply dumped in a pile, which caused delay and difficulty. The Sten guns and other weapons were filthy, being covered with grease just as they came out of stores, and on the landing craft the men had no light by which to clean them.

7. Major Law stated that during the training in May, June and July for Operation "RUTTER", Lt.-Col. Gostling was the only person in the unit who actually fired a Sten gun, ammunition for practice not being available. He remarked that the Sten magazines for "JUBILEE" were provided ready-loaded. Many had been improperly loaded, and this was responsible for many difficulties with the gun.
8. The Channel crossing was made in R-boats. The sea was calm and in general the unit had "a marvellous crossing".
9. The unit landed about twenty minutes late. Major Law believes, but is not certain, that this was the result of a decision by Lt.-Col. Gostling, who desired to give the S. Sask. R., who had gone in ahead, time to develop their bridgehead.
10. The shingle on the beach was of a sort which nothing had led the unit to expect. It was about the size of eggs, and "terrible to cross". Unexpected difficulties were also encountered with the sea-wall in front of the village of POURVILLE. Information had been to the effect that this was only two or three feet high, but it turned out to be seven or eight feet, and there was some trouble in negotiating it in consequence.
11. The landing craft carrying Lt.-Col. Gostling touched down, for some reason, on the left (i.e., the east end) of the beach. This section was commanded by a German pill-box which the S. Sask. R. had not been able to clear, as it was on the east side of the bridge which they had not yet succeeded in crossing. Major Law believes that Lt.-Col. Gostling was killed by machine-gun fire from this pill-box.
12. The sea-wall caused some delay, the more so as not enough holes had been cut in the wire upon it. Nevertheless the unit suffered only a few casualties on the beach before penetrating into the village of POURVILLE. There were no enemy troops in the village, but the enemy kept the main street of POURVILLE under very heavy fire from the pill-boxes at the east end of it, beyond the bridge. As soon as the Camerons entered the village, very heavy enemy fire, chiefly from mortars, came down upon it. This fire was extremely accurate, and it was necessary to move wireless sets after sending one or two messages, as they always became targets. Major Law mentioned that while the blast effect of the German mortar-bombs was considerable, the splinter effect was much less, and bombs burst close to some of our men without injuring them. (During the actual landing, the unit had come under artillery fire, which was obviously under excellent control. Fortunately the shells burst not on the shingle, which would have caused very numerous casualties, but on the water just offshore. Major Law himself was knocked down by the blast of one such burst.)
13. The unit had issued no written orders for the operation, but a conference of Company Commanders held by Major Law just before embarkation had served to ensure that every company understood its role thoroughly and was fully conversant with the verbal orders which had been issued. These orders had specified that while the unit would advance towards its objectives (the aerodrome of DIEPPE-ST. AUBIN and the Divisional Headquarters at ARQUES-LA-BATAILLE) by the east bank of the river SCIE, making contact en route with the tanks landed on the main beaches, there would be an alternative route up the west bank of the SCIE for use if circumstances made this desirable. As the S. Sask. R. had made little progress to the east of the river, it now seemed desirable to

adopt this alternative route, and Major Law issued the necessary orders over his 18 set immediately. "D" Company was already committed in support of the S. Sask. R.; he therefore decided to leave this company and to advance inland with the remainder of the battalion. (The No. 18 wireless sets provided excellent communications within the battalion; but there was no communication with Brigade Headquarters. The set allotted to the P.O.O. with the battalion was knocked out very shortly after landing.)

14. The battalion began to move inland along the main road south from POURVILLE in the direction of BAS DE HAUTOT, but almost immediately it came under machine-gun fire from the direction of LES 4 VENTS FARM. The observed mortar fire had followed the battalion as it moved. Accordingly the battalion took the right fork at the road junction at 194676 and moved into the woods and up the "draw" in the direction of BERNOUVILLE. This route gave them cover from the fire from the positions to the east, but they were constantly harassed by German snipers who were extremely difficult to locate. At the trail junction near the O in BERNOUVILLE on the 1:50,000 map, the unit took the left fork, and moving on past the farm nearby, turned east and reached the vicinity of the O in HAUTOT. The unit now deployed, "A" Company moving to the right and "B" to the left.

15. Battalion Headquarters had a complete view of the bridge over the SCIE, which it was necessary to cross in order to reach the objectives. Major Law looked for British tanks but saw none (almost all the tanks landed by 14 Cdn Army Tk Bn having been held up on the beach or esplanade at DIEPPE). German infantry were seen moving south on the road from POURVILLE, possibly from the group of farm buildings at 193672. These were taken on by two snipers of Bn H.Q. (mentioned in para. 17, below) and successfully dealt with, the whole party of about 15 being destroyed. Considerable enemy activity was also visible east of the river, what appeared to be a cyclist platoon being seen. Major Law decided to cross the bridge and secure the high ground beyond. He had no information beyond what could be seen from Battalion Headquarters, and as time was getting short he decided to abandon the attempt against the original objectives and instead to push "A" and "B" Companies northwards to clear the area of LES 4 VENTS FARM. Orders to this effect were issued at about 0900 hours.

16. Enemy troops were now seen advancing across the high ground at LE PLESSIS. About the same time a horse-drawn mortar detachment was knocked out by "A" Company as it approached the bridge from the south. Three enemy close-support infantry guns, also horse-drawn, arriving by the same route, succeeded in crossing the bridge and took up positions covering it. These guns were engaged by small-arms fire but without effect, being well shielded. The Camerons had no 3-inch mortars available as these had been knocked out in POURVILLE.

17. Major Law now decided that there was no chance of forcing the passage of the bridge. Accordingly, about 0930 hours, he issued orders for withdrawal to the beach by the same route which had been followed in the advance. On returning immediately afterwards to the position where his 18 set was working, he found that a message from Brigade to the S. Sask. R. had been intercepted. This message said, "Vanquish from GREEN BEACH at 1000 hours, get in touch with the Camerons". The unit now began to withdraw, after sending a message to the S. Sask. R. advising of this intention. The Camerons fought a rear-guard action back to POURVILLE, causing a considerable

number of casualties to the enemy. Major Law believes that in all the Camerons may have inflicted 200-300 casualties. One sniper, Pte. Huppe, since awarded the Military Medal, accounted for about a dozen of the enemy, and another, Pte. Hebert (Mentioned in Despatches) did almost as much.

18. The Camerons re-entered POURVILLE, with about 80 per cent of their strength intact, at 0956 hours.

19. Major Law went to the headquarters of the S. Sask. R., where Lt.-Col. Merritt informed him that the time for evacuation was 1100 hours and that the Camerons would go first. Major Law gave Lt.-Col. Merritt information concerning the German troops who were coming up in rear of the Camerons, and made arrangements to hold the west side of the bridgehead with two companies. When this had been done there was nothing to do but await the arrival of the boats. Our troops held the village of POURVILLE, including the main cross-road near the west end of the town (194678), but all the high ground on the outskirts was now in German hands.

20. The process of thinning out began about 1045 hours, and at exactly 1104 hours the first L.C.A.'s appeared. As soon as the troops began to cross the beach, a very heavy cross-fire from machine-guns and musketry came down upon it. There was also mortar fire, and some shellfire, for Major Law saw an L.C.A. hit by what must have been a shell. A beach party had been organized by the S. Sask. R., and the troops went down the beach as L.C.A.'s became available. Some enemy prisoners were used as stretcher bearers, and did the work very efficiently. Nevertheless, Major Law believes that very few stretcher cases were safely evacuated.

21. The Camerons completed their re-embarkation about 1200 hours, having suffered more heavily during this last phase of the withdrawal than during all the previous stages of the operation. Major Law himself returned to England on the destroyer "Bleasdale". This vessel was continually fighting for two hours after Major Law reached her, repeatedly closing the shore in an effort to evacuate more troops and to give support to those still in action. The Navy "did a wonderful job" throughout.

22. Major Law mentioned that the experience of the Camerons was that the Boys A.Tk. Rifle was of little use, and moreover it drew fire. The Camerons captured one prisoner during their advance inland (they had no time or facilities to deal with a large number) and this enemy soldier was used to carry one of these heavy weapons. He carried it into action and out again, and in general was very useful.

23. The German inland positions consisted of slit trenches, extremely well camouflaged. The enemy utilized these by "leap-frogging" from one position to another as he was forced back. The Germans had apparently paid special attention to the organization and training of snipers. The latter were very well concealed and very formidable.

24. Major Law read this memorandum in draft on 7 Dec 42, revised it to some extent, and agreed as to its accuracy.

C.P.S.

(C.P. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

7 Dec 42.

SECRET

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH
CAPTAIN JOHN RUNCIE, CAMERONS OF C., AT
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON,
11 Dec 42

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Captain Runcie, a native of Scotland and formerly in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, was in command of "D" Company of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada at the time of the DIEPPE operation. He is the first of the numerous Canadian officers captured during this operation to succeed in making his way back to England. The only other Canadian prisoners of war to return to this country so far have been four other ranks of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal.
2. Captain Runcie read the memorandum which has been prepared concerning an interview with Major A.T. Law of his regiment. His impression differs from Major Law's in some particulars. For example, he considered the meal provided for the Camerons at NEWHAVEN before embarkation a very good one; though he agrees with Major Law that the administrative arrangements there were in general bad, and he mentioned that although every landing craft had theoretically been provided with emergency rations for the men whom it carried, some boats actually had none. Captain Runcie also points out that the impression given in the memorandum of Major Law's evidence, that the latter had with him during his advance inland the whole of the battalion except "D" Company, is not entirely accurate, as the officer commanding "C" Company, and part of his command, had remained in the POURVILLE area under the command of Lt.-Col. Merritt of the S. Sask. R.
3. Captain Runcie's company landed on the beach at POURVILLE in the second wave of the battalion, along with Battalion Headquarters. He was not aware of the landing being late, nor does he see how Lt.-Col. Gostling could have been responsible for this. He knows of no message sent with a view to delaying the landing.
4. Captain Runcie and his company landed east of the outlet of the River SCIE. None of the pill-boxes here had been cleared at this time, and the beach in consequence was under heavy fire. Captain Runcie was only a few feet from Lt.-Col. Gostling when the latter was killed, and Captain Norman Young, commanding "B" Company, who was himself killed later, was also very close by at this time. Lt.-Col. Gostling was killed instantly by fire (probably machine-gun fire) from the left front.
5. Captain Runcie and his men went up the beach, across very difficult shingle, to the shelter of the sea-wall. This wall, which had been reported to be four feet high, was actually about seven feet. A large number of men were crowded in front of it, taking shelter from machine-gun and mortar fire coming from the left, i.e. the east. The plan had been for "A", "B" and "C" Companies, constituting the first wave, to cross the wall and assemble in a designated area beyond it;

but "B" and "C" Companies had been pinned down by enemy fire and up to this time had not been able to cross the wall. Both Captain Young and Captain R.M. Campbell, the commanders of "B" and "C" Companies respectively, were on the beach east of the river.

6. Captain Runcie discussed the situation with these two officers, and as no fire seemed to be coming from the right he decided to reconnoitre in that direction. He took his orderly with him, and crawling past "C" Company, which was sheltering against the wall, he crossed the SCIE, which was at this point "only a trickle", and reaching the western part of the beach found it quiet. "A" Company had gone forward across the wall, the wire had been cut, and the way was open for advance in this sector.

7. Captain Runcie now sent his runner back to give the companies east of the river this information. The runner returned accompanied only by Lieut. P. Jackson, second in command of "D" Company, and about fifteen men, chiefly of Company Headquarters. It was reported that "B" Company had advanced across the wall, and the platoon commanders of "D" Company had decided to take their platoons forward with it, believing perhaps that Captain Runcie had become a casualty. "C" Company was still on the beach, and it now crossed the river and joined Captain Runcie.

8. Captain Runcie climbed the wall and entered the town along the west bank of the river, followed by his own 15 men and those of "C" Company. In POURVILLE he met Lt.-Col. Merritt. Captain Runcie asked Lt.-Col. Merritt whether he thought he should cross the bridge and attempt to rejoin his company, which was pushing inland up the east bank of the river. Lt.-Col. Merritt replied that he thought it better that Captains Runcie and Campbell, and the men with them, should come under his command and reinforce the S.Sask.R. This accordingly was done. Captain Runcie succeeded in getting into touch with Major Law on his 18 set, and Major Law agreed to this arrangement. The small party of "D" Company with Captain Runcie, and the men of "C" Company with Captain Campbell, passed under Lt.-Col. Merritt's command, and these two officers remained with Lt.-Col. Merritt during the balance of the action. After this time Captain Runcie never saw the main body of his own company. The subsequent fighting in and around POURVILLE was done by men of the S.Sask.R. and Camerons of C. mingled together.

9. At the time when this arrangement was made Lt.-Col. Merritt particularly desired assistance in clearing the houses on the south side of the main street of POURVILLE immediately west of the bridge (i.e. at 196678). This was successfully done. At the time when Captain Runcie met Lt.-Col. Merritt, the latter said he had already got some men across the bridge, and the episode referred to in the citation for Lt.-Col. Merritt's Victoria Cross, his leading the survivors of four successive parties across the bridge under heavy fire, had presumably occurred before this time. Lt.-Col. Merritt had set up his headquarters in the block of buildings north-west of the bridge, at 196679, but he had "a sort of forward headquarters" closer to the bridge.

10. From this time, throughout the remainder of the engagement, Captain Runcie and his men worked in the vicinity of the bridge, on one side of it or the other. All through the action they were subjected to extremely accurate enemy mortar fire. Before the withdrawal, however, all the enemy positions in the vicinity of the bridge had been completely cleared.

11. Captain Runcie wishes particularly to direct attention to the courageous behaviour of Captain R.M. Campbell, Camerons of C. This officer was with Lt.-Col. Merritt and shared in his gallant actions; Captain Runcie believes that he assisted Lt.-Col. Merritt in clearing one of the pill-boxes commanding the main road and the bridge. Captain Campbell had received a severe facial wound on the beach shortly after landing, and Captain Runcie remarks that many men would have considered this an ample justification for retiring to the R.A.P.; Captain Campbell, however, carried on throughout the action to the time of re-embarkation, and in spite of further painful wounds was indefatigably active, setting a fine example to his men. Captain Runcie believes that no one fully acquainted with Captain Campbell's actions has previously returned to England to tell the story, and in his opinion Captain Campbell's gallantry deserves more recognition than it has received. Captain Campbell was mentioned in Despatches after the operation.

12. As noted by Major Law, the message received by S.Sask.R. concerning the time of withdrawal was to the effect, "Vanquish at 1000 hours". The companies of the S.Sask.R. occupying the high ground around POURVILLE were accordingly withdrawn into the village with a view to re-embarkation at this hour. The actual time appointed for re-embarkation, however, was 1100 hours, and the boats did not arrive until this time. The result of the premature withdrawal was that the enemy was able to re-occupy the high ground commanding the beach before the re-embarkation began; and this undoubtedly contributed to produce very heavy casualties during this stage.

13. Lt.-Col. Merritt, with Captain Runcie and the other officers who had been fighting in and around the village during the morning, formed a covering bridgehead through which the main body of the Camerons, which had fought its way inland under Major Law, was able to withdraw. Captain Runcie emphasized the fact that this covering party included a large proportion of men of the Camerons, from "C" and "D" Companies and Battalion Headquarters.

14. The covering parties withdrew gradually, holding a steadily narrowing perimeter in POURVILLE, until they were almost on the plage immediately above the beach. They then withdrew on to the beach itself, and took cover behind the sea-wall. The sea-wall had been under repair, and scaffolding erected along it gave the men the means of standing up and firing over the wall at the enemy, whose advance was thus held up for some time. The party on the beach, commanded by Lt.-Col. Merritt, and composed in about equal proportions of men of the Camerons and the S.Sask.R., held on in the hope that boats would come in to take them off. The boats, however, did not return, and Captain Runcie remarked that it would indeed have been suicidal for the L.C.A.'s to have attempted to come in again after the enemy had fully established himself on the headlands on either side of the village. During the actual re-embarkation of the men who were withdrawn, there was extremely heavy machine-gun and mortar fire on the beach, and casualties were very numerous. This fire continued after the boats withdrew.

15. Captain Runcie mentioned one special act of gallantry at this time on the part of Lt.-Col. Merritt, who, although himself wounded, crossed the wide beach through this extremely heavy fire, and carried to shelter under the wall a wounded soldier who was lying at the water's edge. Lt.-Col. Merritt was again wounded shortly afterwards. Throughout the day his actions were almost incredibly gallant: "It wasn't human, what he did".

16. After the withdrawal of the boats, a force of about six Spitfires swept in and heavily machine-gunned the beach, doubtless under the impression that it was in enemy possession. This happened twice. Captain Runcie is quite certain that these aircraft were British. This attack caused some casualties.

17. Scouts sent out by the party on the beach now reported that the enemy was pressing forward in steadily increasing numbers. Lt.-Col. Merritt conferred with Captain Runcie, the senior officer of the Camerons present, and gave him an opportunity of offering advice. Captain Runcie suggested that all the officers should be asked their views, and "a confab" took place accordingly. There was now comparatively little ammunition left, particularly for the automatic weapons. The officers discussed whether to fight to the last man and the last round, or to surrender in order to prevent further loss of life; and as it seemed clear that no further damage could be done to the enemy it was unanimously decided to surrender. The men on the scaffolding, who were still firing, were called down, and "we chucked our weapons down and called it a day". By this time the Germans were already on the plage.

18. The surrender took place about 1500 hours or a little later. At the end the party on the beach numbered five or six officers of the Camerons, and exactly 120 other ranks. (Actual count by Captain Runcie of the men in camp that night.) The strength of the S.Sask.R. was about the same.

19. The story of Captain Runcie's subsequent experiences is told at length in a memorandum by Lieut. F.H. Walter, found on C.M.H.Q. file 4/P.O.W./1. Before the Canadian prisoners were removed from France to Germany, Captain Runcie simulated an attack of appendicitis which led to his being removed from a prisoner-of-war camp at VERNEUIL to a hospital in PARIS. From this hospital he escaped, with the assistance of a French civilian, on 5 Sep 42. After remaining ten days in PARIS, he made his way, chiefly on foot, to the Spanish frontier, representing himself as a Basque mechanic returning home. After a very arduous journey of more than nine weeks, in the course of which he got two lifts on German army lorries, he reached the frontier on 22 Nov, crossed it in safety, and reported to the British Consul at SAN SEBASTIAN. After being taken to MADRID and making a report to the British Embassy there, he was brought back to the United Kingdom by way of GIBRALTAR.

20. Captain Runcie read this memorandum in draft on 15 Dec 42, made some emendations, and accepted it as accurate.

(C.F. Stacey) Major,
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

15 Dec 42.

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH B-36973
W.O. II (CSM) J. STEWART, D.C.M., R.H.L.I.,
at Canadian Military Headquarters, 26 Oct 42

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. C.S.M. Stewart was Company Sergeant Major of "B" Company, R.H.L.I. This memorandum is additional to a statement already written by him and included with other personal stories by officers and soldiers of the unit in its War Diary for this operation.
2. C.S.M. Stewart landed about 0520 hours in the vicinity of the north-east corner of the Casino. His party ran up the beach under heavy fire, stopped about half way and threw themselves down, and then made a further advance to a point where a hollow in the shingle afforded some shelter from the enemy's fire. Here Pte. Barnes, a signaller, reported to Captain A.C. Hill, the Company's second-in-command, that Captain G.E. Matchett, the Company commander, had been badly hit in the legs. Barnes brought Captain Matchett's maps to enable Captain Hill to assume command.
3. Captain Hill said, "We had better get out of here", stood up, and led his party into the Casino through some doors on the north side which had been obstructed by wire which had been cut. (This was evidently the same point at which Sgt. Hickson and the infantry with him entered the building.) Captain Hill's party passed through the Casino to the south front, encountering no opposition. The party now consisted of about fourteen men, with one Bren gun and one Sten. Not all the men were from "B" Company.
4. A Bren gun group was organized under C.S.M. Stewart, and Captain Hill gave orders for a rush across the open to the buildings on the front of the town. This was carried out under cover of fire from the Bren. Captain Hill and the main body crossed in safety, and C.S.M. Stewart then followed with the Bren gun. Nobody was hit during this rush across the open, but a man named Clausen was wounded immediately afterwards. The party attempted to cross the road block obstructing the first street east of the Rue de Sygogne, (unnamed on 1:5,000 map) but this block was covered with heavy wire which as they had no cutters proved impassable. The party, however, broke through a window on the east side of the street and found themselves in a "sort of store-room" attached to a cinema theatre which is evidently the "Theatre" shown on the 1:5000 map of the town.
5. Captain Hill, who is described by C.S.M. Stewart as a bold and aggressive leader, was determined to push on into the town. The party accordingly left the theatre by a door on the east side and went south on the Rue Couronne. C.S.M. Stewart is not absolutely certain of the route followed thereafter, but he believes that the party followed the Rue Saint Remy to the Rue de Sygogne. Here an enemy patrol was engaged, and the party turned back along the Rue Saint Remy and down the Rue des Bains, as far as the Rue de la Barre. Here C.S.M. Stewart fired with the Bren at an enemy soldier at close range, but is not quite certain whether he hit him. The German retired in haste, as did other men behind him. The Canadian party then returned to the square surrounding the Church of St. Remy, and moving along the south side of the square made their way by the short unnamed cross-street opposite the centre of the church into the Rue de la Barre.
6. From this point they were able to see what appeared to be an enemy headquarters, and enemy troops in the street, near the Place du Puits Sale. C.S.M. Stewart fired on the enemy with the Bren gun and is sure that he killed or wounded two men. During this episode a signaller, L/Cpl. Harris, was killed by a bullet probably fired by a sniper from an upper window. This was the

(continued overleaf)

only casualty suffered by the party in the town. The 18 set which L/Cpl. Harris was carrying had not worked all morning, and his loss accordingly did not deprive the party of communications with Battalion Headquarters, which were already non-existent.

7. As the enemy was bringing heavy machine-gun fire to bear, the party now retired, C.S.M. Stewart believes by the same cross-street, into the square surrounding the church, and returned probably by way of the Rue Saint Remy, the Rue de Sygogne and the Rue du Port d'Ouest to the cinema theatre. During this movement the party saw an enemy piece of artillery, apparently an anti-tank gun, in position in the vicinity of the intersection of the Rue de Sygogne with the Rue Claude Groulard. The R.H.L.I. party engaged the enemy troops about this gun, and these troops then seemed to attempt to pull the gun back off the road.

8. The party remained in the theatre for about two hours, i.e. from about 0730 or 0800 hours to 1000 hours. C.S.M. Stewart considers that they had left the beach for the Casino not later than 0600 hours, and that they had actually spent about one and a half hours in the town before their return to the theatre.

9. In the theatre the party was joined by Major Lazier, Cpl. West, and three or four men of "A" Company, R.H.L.I., who arrived from the direction of the Casino. A few R.C.E. personnel also joined it. These latter were carrying heavy charges of explosives, but lacked the primary charges necessary to detonate them.

10. C.S.M. Stewart reports that the attitude of the French civilians who were encountered was very friendly. They waved to the troops and in some cases warned them of the presence of enemy patrols. C.S.M. Stewart was astonished at the amount of civilian activity which continued in the streets in spite of sniping and the fact that very heavy fighting was going on in the beach area nearby. While Captain Hill's party were maintaining themselves in the cinema theatre, C.S.M. Stewart saw a woman come out of a house in the Rue de l'Hotel de Ville, walk along the street, purchase a loaf of bread, and return to her house. While the Canadian troops were in the cinema theatre, an elderly Frenchman employed as caretaker was engaged in sweeping the building.

11. There was some debate between the officers as to whether or not to return to the Casino, which was apparently being subjected to heavy fire. At this point, Pte. Liss reported German Infantry converging on the theatre from more than one direction. While C.S.M. Stewart and Pte. Liss engaged the enemy with Bren and rifle fire, the main body of the party made their way out of the theatre by the Porte du Port d'Ouest, the gates of which, formerly shut, had now been unbarred. The officers held the party inside the gate until C.S.M. Stewart and Pte. Liss were able to join it, then the whole group made a rush across the open to the shelter of the Casino. During the crossing, Pte. Barnes was hit. One of the first men who met them on their arrival in the Casino was Sgt. C.A. Hickson, who helped attend to Barnes' wound.

12. C.S.M. Stewart did not see Col. Labatt in the Casino at any time, nor did he see him in the town. No Canadian troops except Captain Hill's party were seen in the town. It would appear that Sgt. Hickson mistook either Major Lazier or Captain Hill for Col. Labatt, and that the party which he saw returning to the Casino through the buildings directly opposite it was in fact this party of which C.S.M. Stewart was a member.

13. In the Casino, Captain Hill proceeded to gather the wounded men in a place near the north-east corner where there was good shelter. A considerable number of troops were now in the building. At a very rough guess, C.S.M. Stewart estimates that the total number might be 100-150 men, including the wounded; and there were perhaps as many as 35 Bren guns, for which C.S.M. Stewart says there was plenty of ammunition. All the men that C.S.M. Stewart saw in the Casino were of the R.H.L.I., except for a few R.C.E. personnel. In the Casino C.S.M. Stewart saw Captain Whitaker, who had cut the badges of rank off his battle-dress, presumably to avoid becoming a special mark for snipers.

14. About 1100 hours it was noticed that smoke was drifting in from the sea, and it was reported that boats were coming in to take the force off. Previous to this time C.S.M. Stewart had almost given up hope of getting back to England. Captain Hill now gave orders to prepare the wounded for evacuation, and they were carried to the beach under cover of the smoke. The troops who had been maintaining an all-round defence of the Casino then withdrew, the riflemen going first. C.S.M. Stewart stayed behind for some time with the Bren guns, which were covering the withdrawal as far as possible. He then withdrew to the beach with the Bren gunners. Captain Hill gave the order for the Bren gunners to withdraw, and C.S.M. Stewart saw him going towards the beach, but did not see him afterwards.

15. There was no organized beach party at work, and the men awaiting evacuation simply got aboard the boats which were available in any way they could. C.S.M. Stewart emphasized that although nobody was losing any time, there was no panix. Some boats, however, became overloaded. He states that without the smoke it would have been quite impossible for the boats to come in at all, but by the time the men were re-embarking the smoke was thinning and in his opinion more smoke would have been helpful. The breeze was onshore.

16. For a time C.S.M. Stewart took shelter in the lee of a tank some distance east of the Casino. An L.C.A. came in, and C.S.M. Stewart got aboard it with considerable difficulty. This L.C.A., however, immediately sank, about twenty yards offshore.

17. C.S.M. Stewart now took off most of his clothes and began to swim. He believes that he had swum for at least two and a half hours and had covered about two miles when he was picked up off the West Jetty by an L.C.A. which was cruising about picking up survivors.

18. C.S.M. Stewart mentioned particularly the excellent battle discipline maintained by Captain Hill's party while fighting in the town. The men profited by the intensive training they had received and showed no tendency to bunch. The one Sten gun with the party proved unsatisfactory.

19. C.S.M. Stewart saw one tank come off an L.C.T. in front of the Casino. It blew off its waterproofing, advanced 30 or 40 yards, and stopped. It never got off the beach.

20. After returning from the town, C.S.M. Stewart saw another tank on the beach in front of the Casino, firing west at targets on or about the Rue Alexandre Dumas. This tank contributed materially to the safe withdrawal of many of the infantry, as it kept down much fire which could have enfiladed the beach from the west.

21. At the time when C.S.M. Stewart re-embarked, there was no such large group of tanks on the beach north-east of the Casino as appears in the air photographs taken on 20 and 21 Aug 42

22. This memorandum has been read in draft by C.S.M. Stewart, who agrees that it is accurate. On 31 Oct 42, C.S.M. Stewart, with the writer, traced the route followed by the party in the town on the 1:5000 map. and satisfied himself that, while it was difficult to be absolutely certain in this matter, the account given above was in accordance with his recollection.

(C.P. Stacey) Major.
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

31 Oct 42.

Krypton Extra St

