

NOTE

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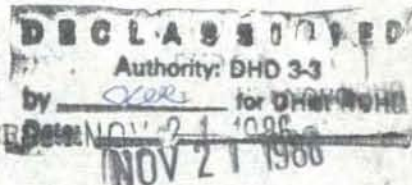
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CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS



18 Feb 43

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

1. This Report presents seven personal accounts of the DIEPPE operation of 19 Aug 42 by officers and other ranks of the Canadian Forces who participated in it. This group of accounts is additional to those presented as Appendices to Report No. 89, dated 31 Dec 42.
2. Work on the historical record of the DIEPPE operation is proceeding. A draft of Part I, dealing with the preliminaries of the operation, has been communicated to the G.O.C.-in-C. First Cdn Army for his comments. A copy was also given to the C.G.S., at his request, during his recent visit to the United Kingdom. As soon as the comments of the G.O.C.-in-C. have been received, and the draft has been circulated to a few senior officers for comment, it will be revised and mechanically reproduced. Copies will then be forwarded to N.D.H.Q. in the usual manner.
3. The actual events of 19 Aug 42 are being dealt with by sectors, and it is hoped shortly to begin circulating drafts concerning these sectors to officers and units who participated.

PERSONAL STORIES OF PARTICIPANTS

4. Attached to this Report as Appendices are seven further records of personal experiences at DIEPPE or afterwards
5. One of these is an account written by the participant himself, and including the training preceding the operation as well as the events of the raid. This officer, Lieut. F. Royal, is a Photographic Officer on the staff of Public Relations Section, C.M.H.Q., who took a number of valuable photographs in the course of the operation, although neither he nor any other official photographer succeeded in landing. He was on board an L.C.T. off DIEPPE. Four of the other documents attached are memoranda, by the present writer, of interviews with the individuals concerned. One of these individuals (Pte. J. Maier) is a soldier decorated at DIEPPE whose portrait has been painted by Lieut. L.P. Harris in accordance with the arrangement described in Report No. 89. Another, that relating to Captain R.M. Campbell, grew out of an interview with Captain Campbell in LONDON following his discharge from hospital.
6. Since Report No. 89 was written, two more Canadian officers captured at DIEPPE, Captain G.A. Browne, R.C.A., and Lieut. A.A. Masson, Fus.M.R., have succeeded in escaping from detention on the continent and returning to England. Both these officers have been interviewed, and attached are memoranda by the present writer relating to their experiences

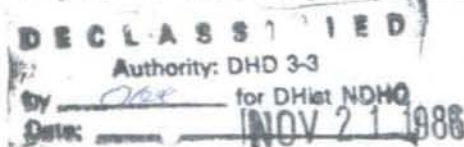
during the operation, and also memoranda by Captain S.H.S. Hughes, G.S.O.III (M.I.), C.M.H.Q., concerning their experiences between the time of their capture and their return to the United Kingdom.

7. A report written by Captain Browne was attached to Report No. 89 as Appendix "A". The memorandum accompanying the present report, and also designated Appendix "A", is merely an addendum to the earlier document. Captain Browne's experience deserves to be considered one of the most remarkable individual episodes in the history of the Canadian Army Overseas so far. It is clear that he did good work as F.O.O. on BLUE BEACH at DIEPPE; naval evidence is that his wireless set was in touch with the supporting destroyer offshore (H.M.S. "Garth") for more than two hours, and had his messages as received by "Garth" been successfully relayed to the headquarters ship, information reaching the Force Commanders concerning events on BLUE BEACH would have been very much more adequate. He was a member of the only party from BLUE BEACH which succeeded in penetrating the enemy defences. This party did not surrender until late in the afternoon. After his capture, Captain Browne made three successive escapes: one from the Germans, while the DIEPPE prisoners were being moved towards Germany; one (which was only temporarily successful) from the authorities of Unoccupied France, where he had subsequently been interned; and one from the Italians, after the latter had taken over part of the formerly unoccupied zone. As described in Captain Hughes' memorandum of his evidence, he crossed the PYRENEES in winter on foot by way of ANDORRA. It is worthy of note that while interned at LYONS he wrote the report forming Appendix "A" of Report No. 89, which is the most complete individual record of the DIEPPE operation that has come to the attention of the present writer. In general, Captain Browne's was a remarkable performance.

8. Records of the interrogation of Canadian "escapers" by M.I.9 (War Office) will be found on C.M.H.Q. file 4/P.O.W./1.

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

- (a) Memorandum of interview with Captain G.A. Browne, R.C.A.
- (b) Memorandum on capture and escapes of Captain G.A. Browne.
- (c) Memorandum of interview with Captain R.M. Campbell, Camerons of C.
- (d) Memorandum of interview with A.21509, Pte. Maier, J., D.C.M., Essex Scot.
- (e) Memorandum of interview with Lieut. A.A. Masson, Fus.M.R.
- (f) Memorandum on capture and escape of Lieut. A.A. Masson.
- (g) Memorandum by Lieut. F. Royal of his experiences.



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

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH  
CAPTAIN G.A. BROWNE  
ROYAL CANADIAN ARTILLERY  
AT CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON  
30 JAN 43

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Subject : The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Capt. Browne was Forward Observation Officer with the Royal Regiment of Canada on BLUE BEACH (PUITS) during the DIEPPE operation. This memorandum is merely supplementary to the very full report written by himself while detained in Unoccupied France after escaping from the Germans. A copy of this report was attached to Report No. 89 of Historical Officer, C.M.H.Q., as Appendix "A".
2. Capt. Browne's very definite impression of the order in which the Royals were intended to land is as follows. In the "YUKON" exercises the unit had landed in two main waves, with "EDWARD FORCE" (then carried in H.M.S. "Garth") as a third wave. At this time the H.Q. group, to which Capt. Browne was attached, was in the second wave. For "JUBILEE", however, it was decided that the whole of the R.Regt.C., proper, would land as one wave, with "EDWARD FORCE" landing subsequently as a second wave. "EDWARD FORCE" included not only some R.Regt.C. personnel, and the detachment from the Black Watch of Canada, but also the detachments from 4 Fd Regt and 3 Lt A.A. Regt, R.C.A., although the latter were not carried in the same ship as the Black Watch.
3. Capt. Browne is confident of the accuracy of the time (0535 hrs) noted by him for the touchdown. To report this time back was his first and one of his most important tasks. He believed at the time that no one had landed earlier than his own boat, for he saw nobody on the beach at the point where he himself came ashore. After reading the reports of naval officers however, he accepts the probability that "A" and "B" Coys had in fact come ashore considerably earlier, at points further to the left (i.e., to the east) than the one where he landed. His craft (L.C.A. 7, from "Queen Emma") touched down near the west end of the sea-wall, and he and his telegraphist hastily carried his 66 set up the beach to where the re-entrant angle formed by the west end of the sea-wall and the beginning of the cliff afforded shelter from fire. He then got his first message off, reporting touchdown at 0535 hrs. He points out that "Garth's" report that she was in touch with him from 0541 hrs clearly indicates that she received this message, as six minutes would be the normal time-lag for reporting an event. (No evidence has been found, however, that this message reached H.M.S. "Calpe", the headquarters ship.)
4. The Boston aircraft seen by Capt. Browne as his craft approached the shore were not attacking the German positions immediately adjacent to BLUE BEACH, but he saw one fairly large bomb dropped, apparently on DIEPPE itself.
5. Capt. Browne explained that the term "Prize Troop" applied to the detachment of 4 Cdn Fd Regt employed at BLUE BEACH was used on the analogy of the naval term "Prize Crew"; i.e., this detachment was for the purpose of taking over and using an enemy battery.

6. After examining air photographs, Capt. Browne identified the point from which Lt.-Col. Catto's party watched the action of the German 88-mm. battery as the road junction at 250694.
7. Capt. Browne identified the two houses cleared by Lt.-Col. Catto's party as those in the middle distance in the lowest photograph facing p.17 of C.B. 04244. There was resistance in the house in the middle of the photograph, facing the camera, but only a shot or two from the house further up the hill near the left-hand side of the photograph.
8. A rumour heard after the operation was that some of our tanks had got into the PARC JEHAN ANGO and had there been stopped by A.Tk guns. There was not a great deal of contact between the captured tank officers and the others after the operation.
9. Capt. Browne read this memorandum in draft on 1 Feb 43, made some additions, and accepted it as accurate.

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

11 Feb 43.

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MEMORANDUM ON CAPTURE AT DIEPPE AND SUBSEQUENT THREE ESCAPES  
OF CAPT GEORGE ALLEYNE BROWNE, 4 FD REGT R.C.A. ATTACHED ROYAL  
REGIMENT OF CANADA AS FORWARD OBSERVATION OFFICER -

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Capt G.A. Browne has already submitted a detailed report on his observation of Operation Jubilee written while interned at FORT DE LA DUCHERE, a copy of which has been seen by the Army Commander. It will therefore suffice to say that as F.O.O. attached to the R. Regt of C. and commanding what he refers to as "the prize Tp, R.C.A." he landed with the regiment on Blue Beach on 19 Aug 42. As F.O.O. it was his duty to remain with the O.C., R. Regt of C. together with his telegraphist. During the course of the operation Capt Browne followed Col. Catto with a party of about 20 all ranks through a gap in the wire up the cliff on Blue Beach. At this time Capt Browne's telegraphist was in the middle of a message and faced with the necessity of maintaining contact with the O.C. he told the telegraphist to finish the message and follow him as soon as possible. Shortly afterwards machine gun fire was opened on the gap through which the party had ascended and all communication was cut off with the remainder of "C" and "D" Coys on the beach and with the ships at sea. This occurred at about 0700 hours.

Having arrived at the top of the cliff and being unable to rejoin his own regiment, Col Catto decided to move westward towards SALVATION BEACH in order to establish contact with the Essex Scottish. This proved unsuccessful because while passing through a wood near PUITS the party realized that it could not emerge without inviting capture. One scout sent forward to reconnoitre was killed. After making two recces towards the cliff edge which proved fruitless, Col Catto and his party decided to remain in the wood and attempt to escape. After waiting till 1600 hours and after all sounds and signs of action had ceased, Col Catto and his party gave themselves up at 1620 hours at a nearby A.A. post. Capt Browne estimates their numbers at about 20 including the C.O. a Coy Commander, two subalterns and the L.A.A. Officer.

The party was taken to a school, Notre Dame de Bon Secours, about half a mile from the A.A. post in a truck. Its members were there searched for weapons and maps. This school appeared to be an R.A.P. Col Catto and Capt Browne were taken before a German Oberst who spoke to the former in English and asked him how many Canadians had been put ashore. This question was not answered. The Oberst then announced that there was only one German regiment between TREPORT and VARENGEVILLE. Since neither of his prisoners made any comment the Oberst laughed shortly and dismissed them. Browne said that he and his staff officers gave the impression of being very pleased with the course of the operation.

The walking wounded and stragglers detained at the school were then marched down to the Hotel Dieu at DIEPPE. Here the Germans were busy evacuating the last of their casualties and all their wounded were taken to ROUEN by ambulance. There was little equipment to distinguish this building as a hospital and according to Browne it appeared to be a deserted convent. French nuns and a few French civilian women worked hard in their endeavours to make our wounded more comfortable. The German doctors after disposing of their own wounded attended to the Canadians with what dressings were left, assisted by three Canadian medical officers, Capt C.T. Robertson and another Capt from 11 Fd Ambulance and the M.O. of the Essex Scottish. The Canadian M.O.'s did most of the work although it was apparent that the German M.O.'s were attempting to perform their duties conscientiously.

At about 1800 hours the non-wounded were marched off to an abandoned factory at Bellegreville and spent the night there. About a dozen officers and men, among whom was Capt Browne, stayed at the hospital in the hope that they could carry as many of the stretcher cases who remained to the station. They worked until about 2300 hours when they were in their turn marched off to BELLENGREVILLE.

In the morning of 20 Aug the Officers, among whom was Capt Runcie who subsequently escaped, were driven off to ENVERMEUX but Browne stayed behind presumably because he had given his tunic the previous night to a wounded soldier and was not identifiable as an Officer. Later in the morning he in his turn was taken to ENVERMEUX. Here they were guarded by German Infantry with Schmeisser machine pistols who were very correct in their behaviour towards the prisoners and in Browne's opinion were smart and well turned out. Late in the afternoon the prisoners were loaded on to a train in which they proceeded to the Dulag at VERNEUIL, apparently a transit camp for P.O.W.s, arriving there the following morning. During the journey Browne noticed that immediately behind the engine was one empty car containing guards, two cars loaded with Officers and another guard car and following these trucks containing O.R. prisoners. The guard cars were open sided. The train moved slowly on the grades and after dark Browne noticed one man getting away through the trees beside the track. The train was stopped and much shooting ensued but the man appeared to make good his escape. In the tunnels the guards used electric torches and the possibility of escaping here was negligible.

On arrival at VERNEUIL on 21 Aug the Officers were segregated and the French Canadian O.R.'s were separated from the remaining Canadian and put in different buildings. Browne was interrogated the following day by a German Intelligence Officer. In the case of Browne's interrogation and in that of nearly all others the interrogator insisted that he be given the date of each prisoner's birth claiming that this information had to be given in accordance with the Geneva Convention. This information Browne refused to give nor did he give any other information than his name and rank. His interrogation lasted for only a minute when the Intelligence Officer realised that it was useless attempting to engage him in conversation. After comparing notes with other Officers it was found that all the interrogators appeared to have been to either Oxford or Cambridge and adopted an attitude of great candour and friendliness. No noticeable pressure was put upon Officers to answer questions at this stage.

At VERNEUIL the Canadians were thoroughly searched on arrival. The seams of all clothing and the linings of boots were carefully examined. Canadian Officers who attempted to dispose of money around their huts before proceeding to the interrogation found that they were not allowed to re-enter them until these had been searched and when they returned all valuables so concealed had been removed. It was obvious that the Germans wanted English money.

During the time he was at VERNEUIL, Browne said that the prisoners were well treated in the camp and although rations were extremely short, in his opinion the Germans were distributing as much as they could spare. Lack of tobacco was the worst deprivation and was apparently a result of design rather than accident. After the rather perfunctory interrogations of Canadian Officers, German Officers would saunter around in groups engaging them in conversation and offering cigarettes. The temptation to indulge in conversation was very strong as a result but to Browne's knowledge no information of any consequence was obtained. The German Officers were interested in the fact that no respirators had been carried by Canadians at DIEPPE and also in the fact that Field Artillery personnel had been included. Browne advised his companions to say in answer to this question that they were merely observers with the Infantry. Senior Canadian Officers cautioned them against talking about the operation. A good deal of discussion inevitably took place among themselves in the hut and in Browne's opinion might have been overheard by concealed microphones although no trace of these was discovered. During this period a sound truck belonging to the German News Agency D.N.B. was introduced to the camp and strenuous efforts were made to induce Canadians to broadcast. The announcers spoke American English and apparently knew Canada. In Browne's opinion, casual conversation in the vicinity of this truck might well have been recorded by concealed microphones and transferred to discs inside the truck.

During this period also a deliberate attempt was made by the enemy through the agency of the Vichy Red Cross to cause ill feeling between French Canadian Ps.W. and their English-speaking comrades. Cigarettes and large slabs of chocolate were distributed freely to the French Canadians. A good deal of these were re-distributed by the French Canadians to other prisoners and the situation with all its implications was explained to their men by any Officer and M.C.O. who had the chance to do so. Both Capt Browne and Lieut Masson, however, were emphatic in stating that a good deal of ill feeling was caused and that had this process of favouring the French-Canadian prisoners to the exclusion of others been continued for two more days it would have succeeded in causing an uproar in the camp. Further developments were forestalled by the movement of the Ps.W. from VERNEUIL towards Germany on 28 Aug.

On this train Browne was in a compartment coach. There was a guard at each end of the coach but no guard in any of the compartments. There was also no light in any of the compartments. The train was hauled by two locomotives but for some reason, possibly due to the imperfect condition of the locomotives, made heavy weather on the grades. Occasionally one of the guards would patrol the corridor and look into the compartment. The atmosphere in the train was very warm and not conducive to alertness. Browne's chance to escape came at the tunnel at CHENNEVIERES-SUR-MARNE and he took it by jumping through the window on the side of the compartment away from the corridor on to the neighbouring track. The train at this point had slowed down sufficiently to make this practicable. Browne hid in an embrasure in the wall of the tunnel until the train had passed then blacked his face with soot and started to walk cautiously in the opposite direction. A slow freight train going in the same direction provided cover for swifter movement and he ran along beside it until he had almost gained the mouth of the tunnel. At this time he noticed people with flash lights moving about several hundred yards back and taking them for a French section gang ran along in the shadow of the tunnel until he had reached the concrete apron at its mouth. Here he climbed the north face of the embankment to the path above it and turned west until he came to a signboard which proclaimed the neighbourhood "Interdit". There appeared to be a machine gun post here and Browne went eastward in the opposite direction. All the houses along the embankment were locked up and appeared to be uninhabited. After making several attempts to get in the different houses, he passed a man on the pathway to whom he said "Bon Soir", and who turned out to be Lieut Masson of the F.M.R.

The two Officers walked in an easterly direction until they came to some workman's dwellings. Masson knocked at the door and announced to the owner who answered it that they were two Canadians from DIEPPE. They were taken in and fed and the owner of the house then consulted with his neighbour as to the best course of action. Browne and Masson were sent to bed.

On the morning of Saturday 29 Aug, they were given civilian clothes and their uniforms and identity discs were destroyed. During the morning they could see from their bedroom window German sentries prodding the brush along the railway tracks with their bayonets and other German soldiers on motor cycles patrolling the roads. They were taken by their protector to a large clump of bramble and told to hide there during the day. After dusk he re-appeared and took them off to the house of his neighbour where they were regaled with a large dinner. Money had been collected for them from his customers by the proprietor of a local restaurant and through the good offices of this man and a summer resident of CHAMPIGNY, who had an apartment in PARIS, they were taken by train to the capital on 30 Aug.

Browne and Masson stayed in PARIS until 10 Sept. During this time identity papers and fresh civilian clothes were obtained for them together with French demobilization papers. On Thursday, 10 Sep, they left PARIS with a guide for NEVERS and from there went by taxi to the village of MEAUCE. Here they crossed the line of demarcation into Unoccupied FRANCE by swimming across the River ALLIER, which was patrolled by German sentries, and from there proceeded to the village of SANCOINS. The road

at this point was controlled by the VICHY gendarmerie. Masson was taken into the police post and his papers examined by one of the agents. Masson was described in his papers as an Alsatian and unfortunately one of the agents was from ALSACE himself. After trying Masson with Alsatian argot his suspicions were definitely aroused when the latter failed to respond satisfactorily. Browne was brought in and examined separately. Browne was described on his papers as being deaf and consequently made little or no reply to questions put to him. When it appeared that they were making no headway with any of the agents, Masson announced that they were Canadian Officers, appealed to the patriotism of the agents as Frenchmen, and offered them 100,000 francs to be forwarded on his return to ENGLAND if they were allowed to proceed. One of the agents said he would do his best and took them to a local hotel, telling them together with the guide to remain there until called. The guide, whose papers had not been called in question, was suspicious and urged them to move on. They walked all night towards ST. AMAND-MONTROND, but owing to the bad condition of Browne's feet, who had been walking barefoot rather than wear the civilian shoes which had been obtained in PARIS for him and which were too small, they were compelled to board a gas electric trolley about half way to ST. AMAND at ST. PIERRE in the morning. On the train they found themselves face to face with one of the agents who had apprehended them at SANCOINS. The agent flourished a revolver at them and after many reproaches succeeded in convincing them that he would handle the whole thing unofficially and see that they got through to their points of contact in the SOUTH OF FRANCE.

At the Gendarmerie in CHATEAUROUX they were interviewed by a Colonel of the Etat Major and by various people describing themselves as members of the Deuxieme Bureau, all of whom assured them of their good intentions and congratulated them upon their escape. Although they were imprisoned in the cells in the Gendarmerie, the attitude of their guards was very friendly and they enjoyed good food and cigarettes. Their false papers were taken from them and subsequently they were put on the train to LYONS under escort and handcuffed. In spite of these precautions, Browne and Masson relied on the promises that had been made to them that they would be liberated at LYONS. On 15 Sep. they were taken to FORT DE LA DUCHERE and interned.

While at FORT DE LA DUCHERE, Capt Browne typed his report on the action on BLUE BEACH at DIEPPE. The completion of this report was interrupted by the removal of Browne to the internment camp at CHAMBARAND. The report was forwarded to the U.K. in the Diplomatic Bag by the American Vice-Consul.

Capt Browne's first attempt to escape from FORT DE LA DUCHERE was undertaken with Commander Prior, R.N. also a P.W. from DIEPPE. They were both in the habit of taking a cold shower each morning. They arranged with the camp barber to have fatigue clothes left in the shower. It was Browne's idea to change in the shower, pick up a mop and bucket and attempt to walk out of the fort. When preparations for escape had been made the fatigue clothes were not forthcoming and the idea was abandoned.

During the first week in October, Browne in company with other internees was moved to CHAMBARAND. This was a modern and extremely well guarded camp although many of the buildings were not complete at that time. It was equipped with searchlights, machine gun towers and a squadron of guard mobile were stationed there for the purpose of guarding the internees. The second opportunity for escape arose as a result of the unfinished state of some of the casernes in which the internees were quartered. Five plasterers were at work in the camp. Browne obtained civilian clothes from one of the plasterers and equipped with a laissez passer prepared by F.O. Hewitt of the R.A.F., walked out of the camp on 23 Oct. He had with him 70 francs and no identity papers. This lack of preparation was due to the plasterers having to leave on the following day.

From CHAMBARAND, Browne walked to ROMANS. This time his boots were too big and he again was compelled to walk bare foot. On reaching

ROMANS he boarded the train for VALENCE with the intention of following the canal from VALENCE to MARSEILLES. At the station barrier at VALENCE two gendarmes stopped him and asked for his papers. These he was unable to produce and when taken to the Gendarmerie he was confronted with a description of himself which had already been circularised. On the morning of 24 Oct an Officer arrived from CHAMBARAND carrying a picture of Browne which had been taken at LYONS for the ostensible purpose of providing identification for his parole. He was returned to CHAMBARAND and sentenced to 15 days solitary confinement. This sentence was increased to 30 days by the local General de Division but the increased sentence was subsequently remitted. On 27 Nov the VICHY authorities liberated some internees to whom the threatened German occupation would have proved doubly dangerous on account of their connection with Intelligence matters but Browne was not one of these.

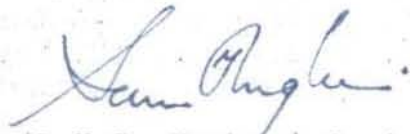
The Italian Army took over the camp at CHAMBARAND on 7 Dec. All the internees were put in buses for transportation to GRENOBLE. There were 11 buses in the convoy, the Officers and Sergeants being put in a bus by themselves. There were two guards in each bus, one at the front door and one at the back. Browne occupied a seat next to the guard at the rear. The convoy started at about 1600 hours and proceeded well closed up towards GRENOBLE. There were no regular halts and this proved very trying to the occupants of the buses. One stop, however, was made for the purpose of checking the vehicles and an R.A.F. Officer was allowed to get out. He re-entered by the front door as the convoy was starting up, followed by the two guards. Browne had discovered that during this process the rear door had been incompletely locked on the inside.

The convoy stopped again at MOIRANS. The buses closed up with lights on. Browne noticed on the right a dark street and when the buses moved off and both guards mounted by the front door, he left by the rear. He ran down the street, jumped over two fences and plunged into a river which was fortunately shallow although fast-running. He left the stream after walking down it for some distance on the same side as he had entered it. An immediate search with torches ensued. Browne rested in a hop row and after about half an hour crossed the river and circled around behind the convoy through adjoining meadows. There he discovered the house of the engineer in charge of the local power station. This man gave him explicit directions for reaching GRENOBLE by road and gave him food and a good pair of socks. Browne had been given an R.A.F. battle dress by one of the Officers at CHAMBARAND and this he left with the engineer after detaching a pair of home made wings which he kept with him. Unfortunately Browne took the wrong turning on leaving the house and went in the opposite direction from GRENOBLE. At dawn he discovered another farm house and enjoyed a great reception when he displayed the R.A.F. wings. The farmer obtained assistance from GRENOBLE and Browne arrived there on 9 Dec. Here he obtained identity documents, money and ration tickets from a De Gaullist and took the train alone from GRENOBLE to TOULOUSE on 11 Dec.

At TOULOUSE, Capt Browne found that German occupation of the former unoccupied zone had impaired the efficiency of the organization to which he had been referred and without so much as spending a night in that city he decided to proceed on foot to the Spanish Border. He left TOULOUSE at 0400 hours and took the road to PAMIERS, walking by day in the fields and by night along the road. He was wearing a blue civilian suit obtained in GRENOBLE, of a pattern issued to demobilized members of the French Air Force. He received casual assistance on the way in the matter of directions and passed through CASTANET, CALMONT, MAZERES and PAMIERS. At PAMIERS a local plumber bought him a railway ticket to USSAT, a village in the Pyrenees and one of the last communities of any consequence north of the border. While walking towards OLBIER he encountered, by chance, a party of young men coming home from a local celebration. Browne offered them his watch and clothes and the money in his pocket and they agreed to show him the paths over the border into ANDORRA. He was concealed in a room at OLBIER for one day as a result of information that he had been spotted in the village. On 19 Dec two of the young men took

him up to the PIQUE DE GABIE, showed him the general direction of the pass or "porte" and left him at the snow line. The snow was here about knee deep and there was considerable danger of losing direction and walking back across the French border into France. At about dusk, Browne reached the head of the pass. There was a high wind and it soon became very dark. At 2200 hours the clouds cleared away and he discovered that he was in fact walking north. The cold was now intense and by great good fortune he discovered the camp of a dam construction project close by. A light was burning in one of the huts but Browne attempted to go to sleep in an empty hut after covering himself with waste found upon the floor. Afraid of freezing to death in the night, he finally made for the light where, fortunately, he discovered friendly engineers in occupation and was put to bed by the camp doctor. The next day he was taken to ANDORRA by two Spanish smugglers. Word was taken to the British Consul in BARCELONA, after 9 days spent with the smugglers, and Browne was repatriated through Gibraltar, arriving in ENGLAND on the morning of 26 Jan 43.

It may be said here that at the conclusion of his interrogation, the British Officer conducting it stood up and with some formality congratulated Captain Browne on a most successful and unusual escape.



(S.H.S. Hughes) Captain  
G.S.O.3 (M.I.)  
Canadian Military Headquarters

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH  
CAPTAIN F.M. CAMPBELL, CAMERONS OF C.,  
AT CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS,  
LONDON, 19 Dec 42

Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. At the time of this interview, Captain Campbell was on the eve of returning to duty after recovering from wounds received at DIEPPE. During the DIEPPE operation he was in command of "C" Company, Camerons of C.
2. Captain Campbell read the memoranda prepared concerning interviews with Major Law and Captain Runcie, although he was not shown the latter's comments on his own gallant conduct. His impressions are not the same as those of Major Law and Captain Runcie on all points. He differs with Major Law on the meal provided for the troops at NEWHAVEN, which he thought not bad, and he also states that, with respect to Major Law's comment on the shingle on the beach at POURVILLE, this shingle was not very different from that encountered in the exercises preceding the operation. He also has a higher opinion of the anti-tank rifle than Major Law. Captain Campbell's impression of the details of events on the beach after disembarkation are not in accordance with Captain Runcie's at all points.
3. Captain Campbell mentioned the remarkable sight presented by the POURVILLE area as the Camerons approached the shore. Much to their surprise, shells were bursting in the water just offshore, and it was apparent that the S. Sask. R. had not succeeded in opening up their bridgehead in the manner expected.
4. Captain Campbell remarked that it appears that those parts of the unit which landed west of the River SCIE got across the sea-wall with comparatively little trouble. At the point where the wall crossed the river it formed a sharp angle (visible on the 1:12,500 map) which had the effect of shielding men west of the river from fire from the high ground east of POURVILLE. Captain Campbell's belief is that most of "C" Company and part of "B" Company - probably Captain Thompson and two platoons - landed west of the river. Two boatloads of "C" Company men landed east of the river. These carried Company Headquarters (including Captain Campbell himself), one section, and a few other personnel. This is the explanation of how Captain Campbell became separated from his Company.
5. The group of men who crossed the river from the east and went into POURVILLE up the west bank of the SCIE with Captains Campbell and Runcie amounted to about thirty all ranks.
6. Captain Campbell described the situation in the vicinity of the bridge in POURVILLE as it existed during the morning. He agrees with Captain Runcie's impression that it was before the arrival of the Camerons that Lt.-Col. Merritt led successive parties of his own unit across this bridge under fire. Captain Campbell states that some of the commanding positions to the eastward, overlooking the bridge, were never cleared. He believes that the pill-box shown on the 1:12,500 Intelligence map at 200682 was never cleared. The pill-box at 198680 was cleared, but may later have been re-occupied by the enemy. The furthest east that Captain Campbell himself

penetrated was the group of houses at 197680. Enemy mortars on the ridge to the eastward, in the area somewhere about 203680, were never silenced. Captain Campbell remarked that the situation around POURVILLE was really one which required artillery to clear it up.

7. Captain Campbell described conditions during the re-embarkation. He himself had been hit in the face soon after landing. When re-embarkation began he helped carry a stretcher case down the beach to an L.C.A. This L.C.A. stuck on the beach, owing to tide conditions not being right for re-embarkation, and Captain Campbell helped to push it off. While thus engaged he was again hit in both legs. He managed to get aboard the L.C.A., but after leaving the beach it sank, possibly because it had not been possible to get the ramp up. Another officer inflated Captain Campbell's life-belt for him, and another L.C.A. took off some of the casualties but could not find room for Captain Campbell. He swam back to the other craft, which was still floating, and with other men sat on it until it turned over; they then sat on the bottom of it until they were taken off by an L.C.A. of another wave which subsequently arrived.

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

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH  
A-21509 PRIVATE MAIER, J., D.C.M.,  
ESSEX SCOTTISH, AT  
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS,  
29 Dec 42.

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Subject: The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Pte. Maier served at DIEPPE as an anti-tank rifleman with Headquarters of No.12 Platoon, "B" Company, Essex Scottish. No. 12 Platoon was commanded by Lieut. A.M. Hueston, and "B" Company by A/Major D.A. Deziel. Pte. Maier is an experienced anti-tank rifleman, having served as such for a year and a half before the DIEPPE action.
2. "B" Company crossed the Channel on two tank landing craft. Pte. Maier was on L.C.T.4. This craft touched down opposite the Tobacco Factory, and the three tanks and one scout car which it carried in addition to the troops were then landed. The scout car was pulled off in flames, the stern portion of the L.C.T. having caught fire as the result of being hit. The L.C.T. pulled back offshore, apparently out of control, but a few minutes later it went in again, close to the point where it had first touched down, and the troops then got safely ashore. About ten men had previously tried to reach the shore by swimming, but only about five succeeded in doing so. L.C.T. 4 was subsequently destroyed by fire on the beach. .
3. All three of the tanks landed by L.C.T.4 had been stopped on the beach. The tank named "Burns" had crossed the first line of barbed wire before it had a track broken by enemy fire, and this opened a path through the wire for the troops. At this point there were only two wire obstacles; one on the Esplanade wall or sea-wall, this wire being in Pte. Maier's opinion about 6 feet high and 6-10 feet deep, and another (that which the tank had crossed) about 10 or 15 yards in front of the wall.
4. The beach at this point rose fairly steeply from the water's edge into a ridge close to the wall. Between this ridge and the wall there was a depression forming a sort of trench along the wall. At the point where Pte. Maier found himself, near the Tobacco Factory and a trifle west of it, the wall was just high enough to enable him to fire over it, and being a tall man he estimates its height at about 5 feet 9 inches.
5. Pte. Maier ran up to the wall with A-34889, Sgt. A.E. Arthur, his Platoon Sergeant. While doing so Sgt. Arthur was wounded in the leg and arm. The Platoon took cover along the sea-wall. Another soldier called Pte. Maier's attention to a sniper in a tower in line with the wall to the right, which can only have been the tower of the Casino. Pte. Maier fired three rounds at this sniper with his anti-tank rifle and silenced him.
6. On the instructions of Lieut. W.H. Scott, the men now began taking turns in maintaining watch across the sea-wall, each man doing a five-minute tour. This was in part with the idea of conserving ammunition. During one of his five-minute tours, Pte. Maier fired with a Bren gun at a sniper on the roof of one of the buildings facing the beach, but is not certain whether he hit him. Subsequently he fired with the anti-tank rifle at

another sniper in the tower of the Casino, lower down than the one whom he had previously silenced. This man he also silenced.

7. After this time, Pte. Maier describes the situation as "quiet", except for constant mortar fire. About 0800 to 0900 hours, a machine-gun, apparently belt-fed, began firing upon the beach from the Casino tower. Pte. Maier fired five rounds at it with the anti-tank rifle. The machine-gun ceased fire after the first shot, and there was no further firing from this position.

8. During this time, while the men of the Essex Scottish were sheltering behind the sea-wall, four tanks were "patrolling" up and down the Boulevard Marechal Foch immediately above, and firing on the enemy positions. Lieut. Scott, who had been wounded, stood up and cheered these tanks as they passed, and it was hoped that they might be able to clear a way for the advance of the troops, but they were unable to do so.

9. Pte. Maier saw nobody actually cross the sea-wall, nor did he see any attempt to organize an attack across it. Any such attempt would, he states, have been suicidal. The most that could be done was to organize the wall as a sort of fire-trench.

10. There were some attacks by German aircraft on the beach, but all were at the ends of the beach, and none reached the sector where Pte. Maier was. Not many British aircraft were seen above the beach, and at the time of the landing no British aircraft were seen attacking the town. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the L.C.T.'s were late in touching down.

11. Pte. Maier states that smoke was already rising from the Tobacco Factory at the time when he landed, and that it was in flames soon afterwards.

12. The continuous mortar fire constantly inflicted further casualties. The Bren gunner with Pte. Maier's party was killed by mortar bomb splinters, Lieut. Scott was again hit, and A-21455, Sgt. Ross, W.J., was also wounded. About one and a half to two hours before the evacuation, Pte. Maier himself was wounded by a mortar bomb while leaning against the wall.

13. When the order for evacuation came, A-21769, Pte. Tousignant, W., although only slightly wounded, stayed behind with Lieut. Scott and Sgt. Ross. Lieut. Scott told Pte. Maier to make for the beach. The tide was out, and the water's edge was perhaps 100 yards from the wall. An L.C.T. was aground north-east of the Casino, with a crowd of soldiers sheltering behind it. The L.C.A.'s came in, but touched down on the Casino side of this L.C.T., where there was heavy fire and no smoke cover. Pte. Maier was unable to reach an L.C.A. without assistance, but Cpl. Donaldson and an English sailor helped him and he got into one of the craft. A-22728, Pte. Ostopovick, C.C., of "D" Company, although himself wounded, saved the lives of many men in this L.C.A., by holding up the ramp of the boat unaided, and thereby shielding those inside from enemy machine-gun fire while the craft slowly backed away from the shore.

14. Pte. Maier was subsequently transferred to a flak ship on which he returned to England. He has only recently been discharged from hospital, and has a piece of "shrapnel" still in him. He states that the story included in the citation for his D.C.M., to the effect that he fainted from loss of blood, was believed to be dead, and was thrown overboard and subsequently picked up by another boat, is not true. He believes that some of his friends saw this happen to another man whom they mistook for him.

15. Pte. Maier states that the mortar fire to which the Essex Scottish were subjected on the beach appeared to come chiefly from south of DIEPPE. He states that the enemy machine-guns were extremely difficult to locate, as were also the enemy snipers.

16. The 2-inch mortar proved useless, in his opinion, except for smoke. About four H.E. rounds were fired with one of these weapons at the buildings in the Boulevard de Verdun, without producing any visible effect. The anti-tank rifle is useful for dealing with snipers and machine-gun nests behind light cover.

17. The tanks continued firing after they had been immobilized by their tracks being broken. They remained in action in spite of hits by heavy shells, some of which left them rocking. Such hits sometimes caused a tank to cease fire temporarily, but fire was subsequently resumed. Pte. Maier states that some tanks were still in motion at the time of evacuation.

18. Pte. Maier read this memorandum in draft on 31 Dec 42 and accepted it as accurate.

31 Dec 42

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

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW WITH  
LIEUT. A.A. MASSON  
LES FUSILIERS MONT-ROYAL  
AT CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, LONDON  
30 JAN 43

Subject : The Operation at DIEPPE, 19 Aug 42.

1. Lieut. Masson was second in command of "C" Coy, Fus.M.R., on the day of the DIEPPE operation. He had not been with the unit during the training in the ISLE OF WIGHT, and had rejoined it (after Exercise "DRYSHOD") just before the operation.
2. The Fus.M.R. sailed from SHOREHAM in L.C.P.(L)s. Mr. Masson was on R.24. This craft, he states, was ill-provided with smoke-making apparatus, only eight smoke canisters being on board.
3. The cross-Channel passage was uneventful. About 0300 hrs an aircraft, which Mr. Masson thought might have been German, flew low over the L.C.P. group carrying the Fus.M.R. After arriving off DIEPPE, the group remained for some time in the Boat Pool. Subsequently Mr. Masson received orders from Capt. Hainault, commanding "C" Coy, by loud hailer. The first message was to the effect that the unit was to land at 0635 hrs; and that another message was to come shortly. When this came it was to the effect that the unit's objective had been changed. The original plan had been for the Fus.M.R. to concentrate in the PARC JEHAN ANGO for its role of covering the withdrawal. The orders now issued made the Tobacco Factory the unit's first objective. At this time the Tobacco Factory was already burning fiercely. In addition to notifying Mr. Masson of the objective, Capt. Hainault instructed him to set up an ammunition dump on the beach after landing.
4. The L.C.P.(L)s approached the beach in single line. "A" Coy was to Mr. Masson's right and the H.Q. group to his left. He thinks that "D" Coy was further to the right, beyond "A", and "B" to his left; but he is not entirely certain of the order.
5. Moving inshore the boats passed through two lines of smoke, but for some distance from the shore there was no smoke whatever, and here they came under heavy and accurate fire, Mr. Masson thinks either from mortars or howitzers. He believes that it came mainly from the east cliff. He definitely saw R.23, the boat immediately to his left, hit and sunk, and saw other craft struck. His own craft was not hit, though there were many near misses. Mr. Masson placed one of his Bren guns on either side of the craft, and they fired on the enemy positions on the cliffs before landing.
6. On approaching the shore the L.C.P. group moved to the right, i.e. to the westward, Mr. Masson believes on account of the heavy fire from the east cliff. The consequence was that a considerable portion of the unit was landed on the narrow strip of beach under the cliffs west of the Casino.

7. R.24 touched down at about 215638, well to the west of the Casino. There was heavy musketry fire here, and Mr. Masson's sergeant was hit, as were also the naval officer in charge of the boat and one of his crew. The boat itself was struck by a bomb and Mr. Masson thinks it did not withdraw from the beach. The tide was out and the beach was therefore wider than it would otherwise have been. It was irregular in contour and provided some dead ground for cover; this, Mr. Masson suggests, is the explanation of the fact that, although the fire was very heavy indeed, there were comparatively few casualties.

8. Mr. Masson could see the unit H.Q. group (recognizable by its wireless sets) on the beach east of the Casino, at about 227690. There were no men of the unit between his own position and the L.C.T. which was burning on the beach near the Casino, though there were some men around this L.C.T.

9. The enemy were dropping grenades from the top of the high cliff overlooking the beach. Many of these exploded harmlessly in the air before reaching the beach. Mr. Masson's party had 3-in mortar ammunition, but no mortar. They returned the enemy's fire with two Bren guns, one of which jammed after a time. These guns used tracer ammunition, which drew fire from the enemy.

10. Mr. Masson states that his men seemed extremely bewildered by the turn events had taken.

11. Mr. Masson is not certain whether there were one or two companies of the unit on the beach to his right; but Capt. Marchand, commanding "A" Coy, was on the beach here, close under the cliff, with Lieut. Allard with him, and apparently more than one No. 18 wireless set. Mr. Masson sent a runner to contact Capt. Marchand, but this man did not return. Mr. Masson received no orders after landing. Capt. Hainault had been badly wounded (subsequently suffering the amputation of an arm) and did not land.

12. Mr. Masson, who was still on the beach, was now joined by Lieut. J.H. Roy. The latter officer subsequently ran in to the foot of the cliff. Mr. Masson called for smoke canisters, but only two could be obtained. He threw one "to see whether the enemy would fire at the smoke". The smoke drew no fire, and he then threw the other to cover an advance in the direction of the Casino. This canister, however, did not ignite. At this point Mr. Masson was struck on the right knee by a shrapnel fragment.

13. Mr. Masson now crawled and rolled forward and reached the sea-wall west of the Casino in the vicinity of 222636. He called for wire-cutters. A Pte. Rochon had a pair, but when he looked over the wall with the idea of clearing the wire on top of it he became a target for fire and was struck on his helmet. The men in the vicinity of Mr. Masson had no ladders or other means of crossing the wall.

14. While Mr. Masson was preparing to make an attempt to cross the wall, after giving orders to his men to follow him, Capt. Marchand and a group of Fus.M.R. men appeared from the west with their hands up, followed by a German officer and some German soldiers with a machine-gun. Evidently the Germans had come down to the beach by some track to the west of the point where the Fus.M.R. men had landed. Capt. Marchand told Mr. Masson that further resistance was impossible, and he and

the men with him then surrendered. The time was now between 1030 and 1045 hrs. At this point Mr. Masson could see none of our troops on the beach to the eastward, but simultaneously a small group of Germans appeared on the beach east of the Casino. He saw no L.C.As. on the beach at any time carrying out evacuation. Some L.C.Ps. were seen but did not beach.

15. Mr. Masson is not quite certain of the number of men of the Fus.M.R. captured under the cliff. His first estimate was 150. After further consideration he decided that 100 would probably be a more accurate figure, but subsequently fixed upon 200, this figure being based upon his recollection of the number of men fallen in on the cliff-top after they had been marched away from the beach.

16. The prisoners were marched west on the beach and taken to the top of the cliff by a steep track at the break in the cliffs at 215685. Mr. Masson's impression is that the Germans had reached the beach by a track still further to the west.

17. On 1 Feb 43 Mr. Masson read this memorandum in draft and after making a number of emendations accepted it as accurate.

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

10 Feb 43.

MEMORANDUM ON CAPTURE AT DIEPPE AND SUBSEQUENT ESCAPE OF  
LIEUT ANTHONY AUGUSTE MASSON - FUSILIERS MONT ROYAL.

Lieut Masson acted as 2 i/c, "D" Coy of the F.M.R. which landed at 0700 hrs on WHITE BEACH on 19 Aug 42. After enduring for some time, with his men, the heavy cross-fire on the beach and while German troops threw grenades from the top of the cliffs, Lieut Masson and the men with him surrendered at 1030 hours on the order of Capt Marchand. German soldiers descended the cliffs and ordered their prisoners up the cliff path. At one stage of the ascent they had to be pulled up the cliff face by ropes. Here they were ordered to pile arms, ammunition and knives. There was an A.A. Battery on the cliff top still firing with what appeared to be a H.Q. nearby. In Masson's party there were five Officers and 150 Other Ranks.

From this point Masson was taken down to the hospital in Dieppe where at about 1300 hours he met remnants of the F.M.R. and S.S.R. and saw German casualties coming in to be attended to. Canadian walking-wounded were lined up in the grounds of the hospital and French nurses gave them water but were not allowed to speak to them. Masson was under the impression that the Germans expected the hospital to be bombed by the R.A.F. and were prepared to evacuate. He said that the individual German soldiers appeared to be anxious to be taken prisoner rather than continue fighting, and that his own men were anxious to carry on with the fight. Some Germans said jokingly that the position would possibly be reversed at any moment. From the Hotel Diet, Masson was taken with other Ps.W. to ENVERMEUX where the Officers were segregated. Here he met Officers of 3 Commando who said that 22 out of 26 of their landing craft had been blown up. At ENVERMEUX, Masson saw German Alpine, Jäger and Luftwaffe troops. The Officers were confined in the church and slept that night on straw. One loaf of bread was issued to each but no water. Next morning they breakfasted on soup. It was apparent however that these rations were similar to those issued to German troops at that time. That morning (20 Aug 42) Masson was taken with the other Officer Ps.W. to the train under heavy guard. He estimated that about 60 men were put into each horse truck. He counted 37 cars on the train and was put with the other Officers in what appeared to be a third-class coach. No rations were issued for the train journey. Between every two coaches Masson noticed two guards with machine guns and a guard coach at each end of the train. On the journey to VERNEUIL, French peasants in the fields threw sugar beets into the trucks, waved and made "V" signs. Near ROUEN, German sentries were stationed every 50 yards guarding the tracks. De-trainment at VERNEUIL took place on 21 Aug and the prisoners were marched off to the camp 2 kiloms from the town.

At VERNEUIL the Officers were segregated in two groups. Masson was interrogated by Germans who had been flown from Germany for the occasion - S.S. Intelligence and civilians from the German Foreign Office. On one occasion when Masson was walking across a field inside the perimeter of the camp, he was stopped by a tall, grey man and engaged in conversation. This man introduced himself as Dr. Paul Schmidt, principal foreign office spokesman and personal interrogator to Adolf Hitler. Masson stated that he recognized Schmidt from pictures he had seen and was confident that the man was what he pretended to be. A conversation began about Canada and turned towards the subject of Nazism. Masson complained to Schmidt of the German treatment of the Poles. Schmidt replied that Nazism and Christianity could not be reconciled. He said further that STALINGRAD would be taken in two weeks time, the likelihood of which Masson denied. Masson asked Schmidt whether he listened to the British broadcast and the latter replied that he listened to the B.B.C. every morning at 8 o'clock. Masson then said that he would escape and some day would answer Dr. Schmidt's arguments on the radio. Schmidt said that the Canadians had been expected at DIEPPE and insinuated that the British had let them down. He went on to say, amongst other things, that Hitler was his own strategist. Masson reiterated his intention to answer these arguments on the radio. The whole conversation, according to Masson, lasted for three-quarters of an hour and he reported the substance of it to Brigadier Southam and told him that he intended to try to escape.

It was at this time that Brigadier Southam asked him to convey a message, if he did escape, asking for 126 service dress. This message Masson subsequently transmitted to the American Vice-Consul at Fort de la Duchere and he understood that it was of some particular significance.

Throughout the period spent at VERNEUIL, Masson said that the German Officers were very friendly, coming round in groups to the Officer Ps.W. after meals, offering cigarettes and suggesting that Canadian Officers broadcast home. He mentioned the attempt of the Vichy Red Cross to create ill-feeling between French-Canadian Ps.W. and their English-speaking comrades, by the exclusive distribution amongst the former of cigarettes, chocolate bars and sardines and agreed with Capt. Browne that this attempt might have been successful had it been prolonged. Masson stated that throughout, the prisoners received inferior rations to the German troops stationed at the camp.

On 28 Aug the Canadian Ps.W. were moved from VERNEUIL by train towards Germany. Masson took advantage of the slow speed of the train in the tunnel at CHENNEVIERES-sur-MARNE. The atmosphere of the compartment in which he was riding was stifling and Masson went out into the corridor, offered the German guard a cigarette and complained of the air. By this means he obtained permission to stand near the door. After speaking a few words to a major of 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde Sigs (Major Rolfe?), he jumped through the window. Unfortunately Masson had chosen the near side of the tunnel and was knocked temporarily unconscious by striking the back of his head against the tunnel wall. This accident, coupled with a shrapnel wound sustained in his right leg at DIEPPE, made progress in the tunnel difficult. After the train had passed, Masson saw four men, whom he believed to be Canadian Officers walking in the opposite direction. He saw the flash of a light and heard them challenged in French after which they were taken away. Masson waited for a train travelling in the opposite direction from the one he had abandoned and when it came ran beside it to the end of the tunnel, climbed up the concrete apron at the tunnel mouth and reached the path above it. Here he discovered a notice warning trespassers that they ran the risk of being shot if found in that area, so he changed direction and walked away from its neighbourhood. Shortly after this Masson passed a man who said "Bon soir" in a peculiar accent. Looking back over his shoulder, he noticed that this man was in battle-dress and after further conversation discovered that it was Capt G.A. Browne, R.C.A.

The two Officers walked in an easterly direction until they came to some workmens' dwellings. Masson knocked at the door and announced to the owner who answered it that they were two Canadians from DIEPPE. They were taken in and fed and the owner of the house then consulted with his neighbour as to the best course of action. Browne and Masson were sent to bed.

On the morning of Saturday 29 Aug they were given civilian clothes and their uniforms and identity discs were destroyed. During the morning they could see from their bedroom window German sentries prodding the brush along the railway tracks with their bayonets and other German soldiers on motor cycles patrolling the roads. They were taken by their protector to a large clump of bramble and told to hide there during the day. After dusk he reappeared and took them off to the house of his neighbour where they were regaled with a large dinner. Money had been collected for them from his customers by the proprietor of a local restaurant and through the good offices of this man and a summer resident of CHAMPIGNY who had an apartment in PARIS they were taken by train to the capital on 30 Aug.

Browne and Masson stayed in PARIS until 10 Sep. During this time, identity papers and fresh civilian clothes were obtained for them together with French demobilization papers. On Thursday, 10 Sep, they left PARIS with a guide for NEVERS and from there went by taxi to the village of MEAUCE. Here they crossed the line of demarcation into Un-occupied FRANCE by swimming across the River ALLIER and from there proceeded to the village of SANCOINS. The road at this point was controlled by the VICHY gendarmerie. Masson was taken into the police post and his papers examined by one of the agents. Masson was described in his papers

as an Alsatian and unfortunately one of the agents was from ALSACE himself. After trying Masson with Alsatian argot his suspicions were definitely aroused when the latter failed to respond satisfactorily. Browne was brought in and examined separately. Browne was described on his papers as being deaf and consequently made little or no reply to questions put to him. When it appeared that they were making no headway with any of the agents, Masson announced that they were Canadian Officers, appealed to the patriotism of the agents as Frenchmen, and offered them 100,000 francs to be forwarded on his return to ENGLAND if they were allowed to proceed. One of the agents said he would do his best and took them to a local hotel telling them, together with the guide, to remain there until called. The guide, whose papers had not been called in question, was suspicious and urged them to move on. They walked all night towards ST. AMAND-MONTROND, but owing to the bad condition of Browne's feet, who had been walking barefoot rather than wear the civilian shoes which had been obtained in PARIS for him and which were too small, they were compelled to board a gas electric trolley about halfway to ST. AMAND at ST. PIERRE in the morning. On the train they found themselves face to face with one of the agents who had apprehended them at SANCOINS. The agent flourished a revolver at them and after many reproaches succeeded in convincing them that he would handle the whole thing unofficially and see that they got through to their points of contact in the SOUTH OF FRANCE.

At the Gendarmerie in CHATEAUROUX they were interviewed by a Colonel of the Etat Major and by various people describing themselves as members of the Deuzieme Bureau, all of whom assured them of their good intentions and congratulated them upon their escape. Although they were imprisoned in the cells in the Gendarmerie, the attitude of their guards was very friendly and they enjoyed good food and cigarettes. Their false papers were taken from them and subsequently they were put on the train to LYONS under escort and handcuffed. In spite of these precautions, Browne and Masson relied on the promises that had been made to them that they would be liberated at LYONS. On 15 Sep they were taken to FORT DE LA DUCHERE and interned.

At FORT DE LA DUCHERE Masson typed and wrote in longhand a report on what he had seen at DIEPPE and subsequently this was transmitted to the U.K. with that of Capt Browne to the American Vice-Consul at LYONS. Here he made his first attempt to escape. The internees in the Fort were permitted to play football and basket ball in the moat. This they did at a point where the moat followed the corner of the fortifications and where it was possible to obtain some measure of freedom from observation. Masson cultivated the habit of sitting on a stone during the period of exercise and every day he moved the stone a little further around the corner of the moat from where the guards were accustomed to stand. In conjunction with Commander Prior, R.N. he arranged for a group of internees to engage in conversation the Vichy gymnasium instructor who supervised exercise at the close of the recreation period. At the appointed time, about 1930 hours, everyone moved around the corner towards the exit, leaving Masson sitting on his stone. When they were out of sight Masson dashed towards a path located by Commander Prior, ran up the outer bank of the moat and took cover under a bush. The alarm was raised immediately and Masson was discovered by a guard who noticed his foot protruding from the bush.

Another escape was planned with Commander Prior and a R.A.F. Officer after Masson emerged from 15 days solitary confinement. This involved the construction of a tunnel through the moat and it was almost completed when the internees were moved to CHAMBARAND in early October.

At CHAMBARAND, Masson and Commander Prior made another attempt to escape concealed in a dung cart. For this purpose they obtained lengths of pipe for breathing and induced an orderly to loosen the wheel of the usual cart, which was too small to accommodate them, in order that the camp staff would be compelled to use a larger cart. Unfortunately for Masson and Prior, the larger cart did not materialise and the smaller one was in due course repaired. During the time spent at CHAMBARAND, Lieut Masson wrote a letter at Commander Prior's behest to

the CHEF d'ETAT MAJOR in GRENOBLE appealing to his sense of justice and patriotism and asking for release.

The opportunity for escape came as a result of the intended occupation of the Unoccupied Zone by the Axis powers. Masson's prospect of being unofficially released was increased by the appearance of a clipping in the Montreal Daily Star describing him as an Intelligence Officer and forwarded to him by post. Those selected for "escape", among whom were Masson and Commander Prior, were asked to give their word that no mention of collusion on the part of the authorities at CHAMBARAND would be made and on 27 Nov they were assisted by a guard to escape. Masson and Prior went by train to GRENOBLE where they were put in touch with an organisation. From here they were conducted into SPAIN via PERPIGNAN on 2 Dec and on the way through, Masson witnessed the strong emotion engendered by the demobilisation of units of the French Army following the German occupation of Vichy territory. French communities along the Spanish border were already full of German Army and Luftwaffe troops. Shortly after entering Spain, Masson was arrested by Spanish frontier guards and imprisoned at FIGUERAS. After transfer to the internment camp at MIRANDA, he was finally released when representations had been made by the British Embassy and repatriated to ENGLAND, arriving 26 Jan 43.

N.B.

It may be noted that after the escape from CHAMBARAND, Commander Prior was in a very precarious state of health and he has testified in glowing terms to the resourcefulness and assistance of Lieut Masson throughout the subsequent period of escape into SPAIN. The British Ambassador in MADRID, Sir Samuel Hoare, was particularly interested in Masson's account of his interview with Paul Schmidt and wrote personally to the High Commissioner for Canada on this subject.



(S.H.S. Hughes) Captain  
G.S.O.3 (M.I.)  
Canadian Military Headquarters

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EXPERIENCES DURING THE RAID ON DIEPPE,  
19 Aug 42,  
AND PRELIMINARY TRAINING.

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1. On Saturday, June 6th, I left C.M.H.Q. in company with ROSS MUNRO, War Correspondent for Canadian Press and Corporal ALAN GRAYSTON of the Canadian Army Film Unit for SOUTHAMPTON. That morning we boarded a ferry for the ISLE OF WIGHT. On our arrival at the island I reported to Major Peter WRIGHT who is G.S.O.2., 2nd Canadian Division. Later that day I met Lt.-Col. MANN, G.I., who explained in detail the type of training the division was doing at that time. Facilities for covering the training were extended to me and for the next five weeks we lived with the troops. Visiting various units I found that great stress was placed on assault landings, demolitions, tank landings, street fighting, cliff scaling and general hardening exercises.
2. On June 11th troops of the 2nd Canadian Division embarked on various combined operation ships for the first large scale invasion practice. The embarkation commenced at approximately 0700 hours and was completed by approximately 1500 hours. All personnel, tanks and equipment were placed on the various ships. The convoy moved off at approximately 1700 hours and sailed down the coast. This exercise which was named "YUKON I" took place on a section of the coast in Dorset known as WEST BAY. The first assault landing was carried out by the R.M.L.I. at 4 a.m. They quickly overcame the barbed wire obstacles on the beach and headed inland. They were followed by the first assault of tanks. The tanks were held up on the beach as the engineers had not completed their demolition charges on the tank obstacles but shortly after gaps were blown and the tanks then moved inland as well. Subsequent landings were carried out and very rapidly the ground defences were taken over by our troops. The evacuation commenced at 1200 hours and all troops including equipment were embarked again by 1500 hours. General McNAUGHTON, Vice Admiral Lord LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN of Combined Operations and General CERRAR witnessed this exercise. The troops returned to the Isle of Wight the following morning and normal training was again resumed.
3. On Tuesday, June 23rd, the same exercise was again staged at WEST BAY. This was known as "YUKON 2". In this exercise the speed of deployment of the first assault waves caught the ground defences by surprise and pill boxes three miles inland which were to be manned by Home Guards were taken over by the troops before the guards could mobilise into action. The evacuation commenced at 1330 hours and was completed by 1500 hours.
4. On the afternoon of June 27th General ROBERTS, G.O.C., 2nd Canadian Division called a meeting of all officers of the Division. I was present at this gathering. His opening words were: "We have waited over two years to go into battle against the Germans. Time has now come when we are going in". He then outlined the plan of operation for the DIEPPE raid. From that day on officers of the various units were briefed in the role and on July 2nd the embarkation of troops commenced. This was completed in the late afternoon.

5. I was taken out to a paddle steamer (JENNY DEANS) and I found that the personnel consisted mostly of the R.H.L.I. Maps of DIEPPE were issued which consisted of large scale maps also intelligence maps showing disposition of enemy weapons. I stayed on board this ship until noon of Tuesday, July 7th, when word was received that the operation had been cancelled due to unfavourable weather conditions. That evening I returned to LONDON.

6. On Aug 14th I was informed by Major ABEL to report to Army Headquarters at 1000 hours on Aug 15th. When I reported there I was told to proceed to PADDINGTON STATION and leave at 1612 for BATH. Hotel accommodation at that point was laid on and I remained at BATH until Tuesday morning, August 18th.

7. In company with various other army personnel I was taken by bus to NEWHAVEN, arriving there at 1950 hours. As soon as I arrived at the dock I was told to report on a tank landing craft, No. 11. On board was one troop of the 17th Army Tank Bn, consisting of three tanks and the 11th Field Ambulance unit. Shortly after coming on board we set sail. A number of raiding craft loaded with troops passed us and when we got into the Channel I could see the assault landing craft and tank landing craft in front of us, on the sides and behind us. We travelled in convoy through the night. The sea was absolutely calm. There was not a cloud in the sky and by the light of a new moon I was able to distinguish the dark shapes of the other craft around us. About midnight I was informed by the craft commander, Lt. F.S.B. APPLETON, that we were crossing a mine field. Troops on board my craft slept for the greater part of the journey over.

8. At approximately 0345 hours I was standing on the deck watching for the first signs of the engagement when I saw two white flares go up. This was some considerable distance in front and to the left. I am unable to say whether the flares I saw were flares dropped by our aircraft to light up their bombing targets or whether they were signals by the enemy as a warning that we had been spotted, but shortly after these flares I could hear gun fire; I could see tracer bullets from the coast going upward and I realised that the R.A.F. were on the target and had started their bombing prior to the landing. This continued from then on until daylight started to break and the cliffs on each side of DIEPPE became visible. The Navy had laid down a very dense smoke screen along the coast that blotted out DIEPPE proper. Hundreds of various craft including destroyers and motor launches could be seen. A large number of our planes were overhead. Shortly after daylight the first aerial combat took place when a number of Focke Wolfe 190 fighters came over, but the Navy laid on a terrific barrage and the R.A.F. fighters soon dispersed them.

9. At approximately 0630 hours we were ordered to make a landing. The flotilla formed up and we started for shore. When we were still about 300 yards out the enemy laid down a terrific barrage of heavy guns and mortar fire and we were then ordered to withdraw. We came out under protection of a smoke screen and cruised around about 500 yards off shore. Even at that distance occasionally a shell would explode in the water around us. About 0830 hrs a number of raiding craft came by us carrying the 4th Commando. One of these came alongside and asked if we had medical facilities on board. We did and they transferred one of their injured officers to our craft. They told us that their part in the operation had been successful; that they had destroyed a 4-gun coastal battery together with a large ammunition dump. The officer received medical treatment and was then transferred on to a destroyer.

10. At approximately 0930 hours we were ordered to face east and move in on the tide. What was left of the flotilla formed up once again and started for the beach, but we came under terrific shell fire and were ordered to withdraw. I saw a T.L.C. receive a direct hit and it seemed to break in half. I cannot say whether this craft was in our flotilla or not as there were a great deal of craft around us all the time.

11. Between 0900 hours and 1000 hours very little, if any, enemy air opposition was encountered, but shortly after 1000 hours Junkers 88's came over and the Navy again put up a terrific barrage, but the R.A.F. soon took the battle out of the Navy's hands and dispersed them. I saw one Junkers 88 burst into flames and came down. Another had one wing completely shot off. Another wave of Junkers 88 came over at approximately 1100 hours and while the Navy guns and the R.A.F. were busy dispersing this formation a low flying plane came over on our starboard side and dropped a string of four bombs which burst approximately 30 yards from the craft I was on. I noticed at about 11.45 that the ships were beginning to thin out and at approximately 12.45 very few of the small craft were to be seen. Shortly after 1300 hours we set sail for England. The flotilla came back in convoy with a R.A.F. umbrella constantly over us. No enemy aircraft was to be seen.

12. One of the most impressive sights that was witnessed was at approximately 0930 hours. A small destroyer came past us and moved into the mouth of DIEPPE harbour and opened fire into the harbour. It fired salvo after salvo for about 45 minutes. Realising the strong coastal opposition that that destroyer was encountering, to remain in a stationary position for that length of time showed the cool courage that is displayed by the Royal Navy in an engagement. It brought to mind historical instances of other battles where the Navy fought against strong odds to establish the tradition of this branch of the service. The troops on the craft cheered this action and everyone who witnessed it was impressed with the cool courage of such an engagement. Unfortunately I was unable to see the outcome of this battle as a heavy smoke screen was eventually laid behind this destroyer.

13. As we neared the English coast I was transferred from the tank landing craft to an assault landing craft and taken to NEWHAVEN. As we were about the last to leave the coastal waters of DIEPPE very few troops who had taken part in this engagement were to be seen at NEWHAVEN. They had, I believe, been dispersed soon after their arrival back. I was taken to the Royal Navy Officers' Mess, given the first meal that I had since breakfast Tuesday morning and at about 2230 hours I was taken by car to LONDON.

Dictated at C.M.H.Q.  
28 Aug 42.