



John Hopkins

IT'S HEARTENING to see that the Royal Canadian Army Cadets still are flourishing, so much so that 'Army Cadet Week' will be celebrated Sept. 24-30.

I was afraid that my few brief months in the movement, back in the Forties, might have forced it to disband. I certainly was the sorriest and most incompetent cadet who ever donned a uniform for king and country.

I loathed marching. My gun kept falling from my hands. My most prolific Morse code output was **one and one-half** words a minute. I couldn't get up in the morning. And I was made to feel something of a stranger because I didn't like sleeping in wet tents at Sarcee.

For the life of me, I can't remember why I joined. The country was at war at the time, but I surely couldn't have felt that it needed me. The cadet leader at the time still can't remember why I was accepted. Probably he hoped that I would desert to the enemy.

Let the unrealistic pacifists whine all they wish. The Army Cadet League of Canada does a good job well. It's reasonable to assume that cadets

might play an important role in another conflict. But the league's biggest contribution probably has been to instill discipline, respect and resourcefulness in thousands of Canadian boys.

IT HAS GIVEN many a new meaning in life. It has started many on careers that might otherwise not have been available. It has given many an opportunity to travel.

I know more about the army cadet movement than I ever did in my life because an old friend, **Brick Brown**, is now general manager of the Army Cadet League of Canada. He's a former commanding officer of the **Lord Strathcona's Horse** and only recently retired from the Canadian forces.

Military training never hurt anyone. As Lieutenant - Colonel Brown (ret.) says: "The function of the army cadet league is to co-operate with the department of national defence to ensure that boys in the 13-18 bracket have an opportunity to participate in the cadet program to develop their citizenship potential through training in leadership, discipline and physical fitness."

There are many corps in Alberta, five of which are in Calgary. They are the **Lord Strathcona's Horse (RC)**

cadet corps, the Calgary service battalion cadet corps, the Calgary Highlanders cadet corps, the Royal Canadian Signals cadet corps and the PPCLI cadet corps.

Involved here, outside of the actual corps officers, are men such as **Bill Howard, Syl McKinnon, Hank Owens, and Charlie McLean.**

The cadet week theme is 'youth in step' and corps across the nation will be staging parades, demonstrations and the like to try to show members of the community what cadet training is all about.

I HADN'T realized that Canada has provided voluntary military training for its school boys since **1862**. They were then known as drill associations. The cadet designation didn't come about until **1899**.

Probably the most important factor in the growth of the cadet movement was the **Strathcona Trust Agreement** of 1910. That year Lord Strathcona, Canadian high commissioner in Great Britain, put up **\$500,000** in trust. The interest was to be used to encourage the formation of cadet corps. The department of national defence agreed to supply equipment and instructors.

Between the years of 1912-1918, the cadet movement thrived and something like **64,000** boys enrolled. For the next 20 years, though, cadet training steadily declined. After all, it had been the war to end all wars. And the depression meant cuts in the defence department budgets.

But 1939 changed all that. The cadet movement more than doubled in size. And by 1941, all the services were requesting provincial departments of education to co-operate actively in the formation of cadet corps.

At the end of the Second World War, more than **115,000** boys were on strength. Something like **124,000** former cadets voluntarily enlisted in the armed forces during the war and more than **19,000** received commissions. Close to **3,000** received decorations.

A ceiling of around **50,000** has been observed by the army cadets for some years.

A boy could do worse.

TODAY'S BOUQUETS (suggested) to firms that guarantee the sale of employees' homes when they are transferred . . . **TODAY'S BRICK-BATS** to anyone who doesn't think we're going to have a lengthy Indian summer. Keep the faith, baby.