

From the hand-written memoirs of Major Walter Bapty.

The memoirs form a recollection of his life. I have begun the following transcription with the part of his life connected to the Victoria Independent Squadron of Mounted Rifles, which began in 1914. It is the section of the memoirs that begins on page 196 and ends on page 217, together with the first 24 pages of notes added in June, 1958. Both on Microfilm roll A1251, BC Provincial Archives. Major Bapty lived from 1884 to 1973.

(Note on the transcription: This is a hand-written memoir and sometimes difficult to read, especially the names. So it cannot be relied on to be reporting names correctly. I have also found that chronology is frequently unreliable. Major Bapty appears also to have been shy of commas, which I have added where necessary. Numbers in brackets [] are page numbers of the original documents, except where they are obviously dates. — C. T.)

[196] About this time [1912] a Battalion of Infantry, designated as the 88th Fusiliers with Lt. Col. Hall as its Commanding Officer was formed and I was posted as the Medical Officer. At this late date I cannot recall many of the officers but some are Byng Hall, Ross Cullen, Major, George Barton, Carew Martin.

It had not been formed many months before a big strike occurred at the coal mines of Vancouver Island. [Strikes started Sept., 1912.] No doubt the men had ample cause for complaints and finally strike action. When violence threatened, the Attorney General in Victoria applied to the Minister of Militia and Defence, Ottawa, to call out Militia for defence of life and property. From Victoria the 5th Reg CGA and the 88th Fus.[197] and from Vancouver the 6th BCOR and the Seaforth Highlanders. We proceeded by one of the Princess S.S. from Victoria to Departure Bay. The voyage and landing were uneventful. Feeding was the big problem. A small meal was given to us in relays on the Boat but the next meal was a greater problem. Nobody had the inclination. Troops were not popular, certainly not when on strike duty. In the heat of the sun we had to march a few miles presumably to rescue someone who was beset by strikers. My reputation was made when a sick man was brought to me at one of the halts with severe abdominal [198] pains. Yes, he had had something to eat. The examination of the abdomen did not reveal any signs of peritonitis, so a large dose of Aromatic Spirits of Ammonia in water was given, one of the few medicines in my haversack. The man swallowed his draught with difficulty and stood there with a most anxious expression — followed by a loud and prolonged belch, then a smile of relief. And for this I had a most critical and curious audience.

We made the E&N Ry Stn our Headquarters. Lt. Col. Hall was placed in charge of operations. A train was kept at the Stn to convey us down [199] the line if called upon. Later we pitched tents in a field nearby. My memory of events is rather jumbled. Episodes of violence may have occurred before our arrival but we saw none. We did take all precautions and were lectured on our duties if violence did occur. One night we surrounded a big hall where a strikers' meeting was being held. I believe some of the leaders were taken into custody for questioning by the Police. In a few days time we arranged through the District Medical Officer, Major E. C. Hart, for our medical work to be taken over by local physicians, and so returned by train to Victoria.

[200] The Belmont Bldg had space in abundance, so a large suite of offices on the north side served as the Officers' Mess for the 88th and through a back door it was only a step across

the road to the Union Club where some mess dinners were held. My association with the old 88th was always pleasant but it terminated about the end of 1913 when with some others in Victoria we applied for permission to organize and recruit a Squadron of Horse. This was somewhat slow in being authorized, and was not until the outbreak of WWI, in Aug 1914. In the meantime I was posted to the 31st BC Horse as a [201] subaltern (Lieutenant), the Commanding Officer being Lt. Col. Flick.

At that time too the organization of a Highlands Battalion was underway in Victoria with Lieut. Col. Arthur W. Curry as its Commanding Officer. This was the time when Sam Hughes was Minister of Militia and Defence so the Non Permanent Active Militia (NPAM) was riding high. In Victoria we also had a direct line to the Minister in Ottawa. Garnet Hughes was working in Victoria and it was said kept his Father well informed of the local situation. Garnet was also to be a Major in the new Highlands Unit. In Canada Scottish Troops have [202] always been popular and to a Canadian a Scottish Unit must wear the kilt, no matter what part of Scotland they represent.

The group in Victoria who organized the Highland Battalion, the 50th, approached Arthur Curry to take the command. I understand he was diffident about this at first since all of his training had been in the artillery and as he stated he was a Canadian, born of North of Ireland stock. Finally he agreed to assume command and commenced to gather together a cadre of officers. Many of their names are now forgotten but some were Garnet Hughes, Roberts, Ross, Bullen.

[203] The group set about getting subscriptions and uniforms. As things in the West had been booming, several good sized sums were promised, and McCoy, I believe the name was, put himself down for \$50,000. He was immediately put down as the Honorary Lieut. Colonel and this recommendation forwarded to Ottawa. Later I heard he returned to Saskatoon and found his paper fortune had vanished, so I do not know if anything was paid and, if so, how much.

The group further decided on uniform, badge, and Celtic Motto. The uniform was to conform to the Gordon Highlanders of Aberdeen, Scotland. [204] Uniforms and equipment not supplied by the Dept but necessary for a Highlands Batt. were ordered from Glasgow and this included full dress for all ranks.

Perhaps I have given too much space to the 50th Battn. Highlanders, but as it more or less formed a basis for the Canadian Scottish of later years, you will understand as the story unfolds.

In the meantime civilian life in Victoria proceeded at a more or less steady pace. It had boomed for several years. Many fortunes in land had been made and later lost when the boom was over, which was [205] about 1912. Leonard, our second boy, was born at 831 Fort St. on the 7th June 1912, and Anne the 28th January 1914, making four. Number 5, Laura, not appearing till after the War. I was engaged in active medical practice and was also retained by the Provincial Board of Health. This latter continuing until after the start of the War (WWI). With Dr. Fagan unable to visit the office, my allowance was increased to \$200 a month. I secured my uniform for the B.C. Horse from Quantz & Co., Winnipeg, and attended the annual camp at Vernon, June 1914. This was an active place with loads of training under the supervision of Major Lipsett, [206] an Imperial Officer on loan to the Canadian Dept. of Militia and Defence. Soon after, he was to proceed to England in command of the Little Black Devils of Winnipeg and he insisted on Major Harold Matthews, the 2nd in command of the 31st BC Horse, going with him as second in Command (2IC) of the Winnipeg Rifles.

At the Vernon Camp were the 30th BC Horse under Lt. Col. Bott. Major Murtrie, his 2IC

— of them more will be said later — and the 31st BC Horse under Lt. Col. Flick, and Major Harold Matthews 2IC, who in the course of time became Chief of Staff at Ottawa. As a Lieutenant, I was given a Troop in C Sqn under Major Turner, a very fine soldier who had served in South Africa as had also Lt. Col. Flick. I do not remember [207] any outstanding events in that camp. We lived under canvas and were well fed. For the first few days the junior officers and senior N.C.O.s fell in, mounted, at 6 AM with a Sergeant Instructor from the Lort Strathcona's who gave us an hour's intensive training; breakfast followed, and we fell in again before 9 when we gave our men the same training we had received earlier. It was robust and healthy work and we all came back with grand appetites. But in a mounted unit we have to teach the men to care for the horses too, unsaddle, water, rub down and feed. I had no horse at that time taking my chance at finding a suitable mount at the camp. Not liking the mount given to me at first, a lively sorrel gelding [208] caught my fancy so taking him out on parade one afternoon when all junior officers were taken on a ride with some fast mounted drill. On a hot day we had trouble. All went well for a time and I was growing used to my new mount when suddenly, the cause could have been a big horse fly, my horse commenced to buck and they were no half hearted attempts but the real McCoy. I was thrown high, feet clear, and landed on my head. Then it was I blessed the British helmet and the man who made it because the helmet took the force, though I was stunned at the time. [209] Without that stout cork helmet it would have been a very different story. My mount was easily caught and I rode him back to his place but the officer in charge insisted on my taking another mount. And for a time my sorrel received some schooling from Sgt. Meekin, a horseman from Victoria who had been in the RCMP. Major Lipsett was an outstanding man and Staff Officer. The Germany of that date was looking for new fields to conquer. With a war-like leader, Kaiser Wilhel, and a coterie of officers who looked upon war as the normal state of life with intermissions of peace [210] to be used only for preparation for the next war. With leadership like that and a feeling they had an invincible army, it does not take long before a cause for war is found. It was found in 1914, the 28 June, at Sarajevo with the assassination of the Austrian Archduke. The cause meant nothing as something else would have happened to bring on the conflict. Lord Roberts had toured Great Britain telling the people that war was coming and to prepare. Some listened but the general reception was to laugh it off. Students of Military History were able to read the writing on the wall and Lipsett was one of these. Consequently, in all his teaching the theme was be ready for war. In Victoria the winter before this camp, a [211] Militia Staff Course was held and many senior officers who afterwards attained fame and rank attended this course conducted by Major Lipsett. So you can understand why he insisted in putting a practical turn in every exercise carried out.

I secured two horses in Vernon, one a young high-strung pony who got tangled on a picquet line and damaged himself so severely I gave him away. A Board of Enquiry was held on his injuries. They decided he would not be fit for duty for so many days and for that time he should be paid at the daily rate. Eventually, I received a cheque from the Dpt for more than I had paid for the horse. The [212] other horse was of a different type, a beautiful gray gelding, quiet and well trained, belonging to Major Matthews who rode him most of the time while in camp. At the close of camp, as I was entitled to a horse, he was shipped at Government expense to Victoria.

Little else of that camp remains in my memory. Some Infantry Battalions came for a brief week end. I do not remember which ones, and we held some combined manoeuvres. The outstanding feature was Major Lipsett's personality and the impression he made upon us all.

In Victoria we were still working to get our Squadron of Horse [213] recognized. Meekin was to be the Sqn Sgt Major. W.W. Foster then an MPP came to me sometime later. He would like to get in. I suggested he take command and I should go in as 2nd in command. He would not consider this since he said he had not the experience. Others who wished to take part were all good horsemen, Norman Rant, and Bruce Irving, coming in at the beginning and others later. It was not long as time goes between our camp in June and the Declaration of War in August.

With the outbreak of war a certain amount of uncertainty and pandemonium arose on the Coast. Direct telegrams [214] were sent to each Infantry Unit from Sam Hughes ordering them to recruit as many men as possible and to stand by for further orders. Cavalry units were not included in this first order, though instructions were sent to us later. In spite of this, Lieut. Col. Flick did go ahead with his recruiting beyond his authorized establishment. Our Squadron (the Victoria Independent Sqn of Horse) was finally authorized and we went ahead with recruiting. All units were under two fires, one, the direct orders and instructions from Ottawa by Sam Hughes, the Minister. Certainly, he got things done; and two, the District Headquarters, the restraining hand, the old [215] Permanent Force still living in the peaceful past and doing nothing except on direct instructions, and then taking their time. Sam Hughes had no use for the old P.F (Permanent Force) and that is why he dealt directly with units and why we had me, like Arthur Curry, to take on higher commands.

The managers of Belmont House placed a bare basement at our disposal and into this we placed our stores, rifles, uniforms and equipment.

The CNR dock, just completed and empty, was loaned to us for parades. We called for recruits, and more than 100 responded. Then District Hqs got after me and gave me orders not to take on more men than the Establishment laid down [216] for a Squadron. One reason I had been in personal touch with the D.O.C. was because Lt. Col. Flick sent me direct orders to recruit as many men as possible for the 31st Regt. BC Horse. When I took this up with the District Officer Commanding, Col. Roy (he pronounced his surname like WROI) at Work Point Barracks, he cautioned me that now I was a Provisional Major commanding the Victoria Squadron of Horse. Sam Hughes was absolutely wrong in treating with the Commanding Officers of Units but he did get things done and he had his own opinion of the efficiency of the D.O.C.'s (District Officers Commanding) [217] and their techniques for passing on their orders and instructions to the various units of the N.P.A.M.

On the following week owing to the presence of two German Cruisers in the Pacific some alarm was experienced on the B.C. Coast. On the advice of Premier Richard McBride orders were received from Ottawa for the mobilization of all units, but here again, I was instructed by District Hqs it was to be on a peacetime Establishment. Let me explain, the term "Establishment" means what is set down on paper as the correct number of Officers that may be taken on and the correct number of Other Ranks. And the War Establishment is just about double that of a Peace Establishment.

From the Third Series, Part III, dated Oshawa, 16 June 1958:

[1] On our second recruiting parade held in the CNR shed by the Inner Harbor, Victoria, about 250 to 300 men were present. Then it was with reluctance I spoke to them giving the total number that we could take on and as a mounted unit we had no assurance as to when we would

be ordered overseas. Those who wanted to get overseas quickly could go in the two Infantry Units then recruiting, the 88th Fusiliers and the 59th Highlanders.

I use the term "reluctantly" because if any one had given me backing I would gladly have taken on the whole crowd. Those who remained were hard bitten horsemen who had roseate dreams of riding victoriously through a defeated Germany. And these latter we took [2] on strength, swearing them on and issuing uniforms from the basement of the Belmont House. And the second week we were ordered into camp at the Exhibition Ground at the Willows. This was our first parade.

All ranks were instructed to meet on the Mount Tolmie Road, an area of vacant land behind the Isolation Hospital. From this point we marched to the Exhibition Grounds. The officers were my 2nd in command Captain W.W. Foster (in WW2 a Major General) and Lieutenants Bruce Irving, Norman Rant, and Hyndman. This last named broke his ankle when his horse fell with him. All of our members I cannot recall but we had S. M. Meekin, Sgt Marshall, Sgr. Webb, Sgt. Worrell, Cpl Warren, later Sgt. Other names were equally important but no records are here to refresh my memory.

[3] This camp at the Willows gave us an opportunity to properly organize our Squadron, and drill first on foot, and later, as we gathered horses, mounted. To obtain horses presented us with a problem. Officers secured their own. A retired officer living near Cobble Hill gave us a bunch of partly broken horses running wild on the Alberta prairie if we would round them up and bring them here at our own expense. This we did. Another man near Duncan gave us some horses. Then some individuals gave us horses, Richard McBride one, Mr Palmer one. And for a time the owner of a riding school at the Willows let us use his horses if we would feed and look after them. All of this took time whereas at the [4] moment we were sitting in the Fair Grounds with a much larger number of 88th and 50th Infantry, the numbers of this latter being the greater and with them we messed.

For the first few days I was in close contact with Arthur Currie and he showed me the telegrams he had received from the Minister, Sam Hughes. On account of these he was to leave earlier and was taking with him Bob Clark (later a Brig. Gen.) one of his former officers in the 5th CMA, and Captain Johnnie Fowkes who was also the District Paymaster.

[5] At the camp every one was busy and, as you may surmise, recruit drill took the greater part of the time. Field manoeuvres with one side advancing and the other retiring were tried, but various schemes of coastal defence were drawn up as the threat to our Coast was very real until the whereabouts of the two German Cruisers in the Pacific was known. The great booster to the morale of Victoria and Vancouver was the purchase of a submarine from Seattle for one million dollars by Sir Richard McBride. As to how well it would work and whether it had torpedoes is another matter. This was so dead secret that every one knew about it, and the Press published little or nothing. [6] And the story of the submarine lost nothing in the telling and we made sure the German Cruisers were notified. With so much preparedness in their own country, surely they would never believe in our lack of defence.

The Naval Dockyard in Esquimalt came to life taking on recruits and retired naval officers. Was it purely coincidental an expert on submarines was found, on leave?

It was a motley crowd of Officers and Other Ranks who left camp for Valcartier. Those from the 88th Bttn became a part of the 7th Bat. for Overseas. And those from the 50th Bttn [7] eventually with a large contingent from the Seaforths of Vancouver, smaller numbers from the Camerons of Winnipeg and the Argyll and [illegible] and Highlanders of Hamilton because the

16th Bn The Canadian Scottish. This last named unit became after the war the Canadian Scottish Reg. in Victoria, BC.

[7A] We received a telegram from Ottawa couched in general terms to all cavalry units authorizing us to proceed to Valcartier presumably as Infantry. I paraded the Squadron and laid the facts before them, then asked them "Those who would volunteer take a pace forward." To my surprise only two stepped out. One of these was Cpl. Pat Heinkey, a splendid young fellow who came from South Africa. Taking up the matter with the officers I was surprised to find none of them wished to accept this proposal, even Captain Foster. In his case my opinion was he had private business reasons for putting off his departure since as a rule he was one of the first to volunteer for any special service. Besides he had a large young family.

[Back to 7] Lt. Col. Flick arrived at Valcartier with over 500 recruits, most of them former cavalry men. Some went to the LSH (Lord Strathcona Horse) and the remainder to the 5th Battn.

When the recruits from the 88th and 50th left Victoria they left skeleton [8] units to continue recruiting and training.

[8A] After the danger of a coastal attack had passed, all units in the area received a preemptory order from the DOC Col. Roy to demobilize. Since everyone felt he had volunteered for the war this caused great consternation. The outcome of it was that all commanding Officers gathered in the office of the Premier, Sir Richard McBride, since he was the power behind the Government and had been responsible for the initial calling out of the Militia. When we were all seated and Sir Richard understood what was happening he personally phoned the DOC, inviting him to come to the Premier's office.

[8B] In one way it was all most irregular but it had its amusing side. Perhaps the poor DOC should have been warned but when he walked in his expression was a study, first coming in full of assurance, then realizing he was before a court of the Premier and his own officers now his accusers. I do not know if any record remains of this meeting though in a small way it was historical. Sir Richard took things in hand, explaining every thing to Col. Roy and, what was more, getting an assurance from the DOC that all units would remain in camp.

[Back to 8] Lt. Col. Hall remained in camp and soon had a splendid Battn, the 30th, ready for service. As soon as they left, Lt. Col. Holmes raised the 48th Bn. Later other units were formed but by this time we were away ourselves under Lt. Col. Bott of Vernon who with the 30th BC Horse and ourselves, the Victoria Independent Sqn of Horse, formed the 2nd CMR. Before this, however, we had a busy time of preparation in Victoria. Capt. W. W. Foster made an admirable Public Relations Officer and accomplished great results in obtaining horses for our Squadron and funds for their feeding. [9] At the Exhibition Grounds we were fortunate in having a Horse Show Building for our use and excellent Stabling.

[9A] The Exhibition Grounds and Buildings at the Willows were outside of the built up section of Victoria. To the north and west lay a large area of open undeveloped land reaching as far as Mount Tolmie. Towards the Willows Beach were many houses but with dirt roads we had easy access to the sea and also the uplands which had but few homes built at that time. So for mounted drill and manoeuvres the whole area was ideal.

During this period some outstanding men joined up. Jack Branford from Salt Spring Island, a great horseman who had run his own pack train [9B] in the Kootenay Mining District. He had a congenital heart lesion but served all through the war as Transport Sgt. As a packer one of his most difficult feats was carrying several hundred feet of steel cable, on a train of pack

horses over a rough mountain trail during the mining boom. Two experienced teamsters left their ranch at Ashcroft to join with us, finally ending up in the Transport Section, Bob and Bill Marston.

Later on when we were organizing to proceed to England, [9C] George Pearkes, later QC, drifted into the Willows and was promptly sworn in by the Adjutant, Captain Johnston. George Pearkes was serving in the Yukon with the RCMP and had to wait until released from that organization.

[Back to 9] About the end of 1914 our new unit was authorized the 2nd CMR and early in 1915 Lt. Col. Bott brought his A & B Sqns from Vernon with Major Allen and Major Randolphe as squadron commanders, and ourselves to become C Sqdn. From Vernon also came Major Murtrie the 2nd in Command, and Captain Johnston, the Adjutant, who finally commanded the unit in France. Soon after their arrival a large number of remounts came to us and many of our mounts those that passed the inspection of the Permanent Purchasing Officer were taken on our strength.

[10] By the early spring we were a well equipped Regiment of Canadian Mounted Rifles, complete in every way and waiting the call to go overseas. In December 1914 several officers had taken a course in Winnipeg with Instructors from the L.S.H. Personally, I was there for two weeks to obtain a Field Officer's Certificate. Some of the work given in the mornings was easy work but interesting. In the afternoons we were mounted and out in sub zero weather. We wore all the clothing we possessed but even then it was cold. On two occasions we entered a big heated stable belonging [11] to a firm of brewers, a welcome relief from the wintry blasts.

We found the Officers mixed together very well. Lieut. Wm Barber from Kelowna came to C Sqn, but I must mention another Lieutenant who was with us for a time in 1914. That was James Dunsmuir Jr. Fair, not very big but well set up, he was an excellent horseman. One of his mounts, Kismet, of which he was very proud was a big grey hunter which he had purchased from Kilgour in Toronto. Jimmie was very popular. We all liked him. He would take some of us to Hatley Park where we found the stables [12] like a luxurious, well built palace for horses. But Jimmie became restless and feared the war would be over while we would be left in Canada. As it happened he had a brother in law who was at Hatley Park awaiting to be called up. Jimmie was permitted to resign and armed with letters and recommendations, he set out hoping to obtain a commission in the Scots Greys. Arriving in New York he took his departure in the ill fated Lusitania. In our mess we observed a period of mourning for several days.

In June 1915 we left. The horses we sent on first in cattle cars and several of our men as escort. These horses we never saw again though we all had favorite mounts among them.

[13] As to my family — Ella Belle, Harry, Betty, Leonard, and Anne — they had been moved and comfortably settled at the end of St. Patrick St. on the Beach Drive. The beach was wide only at low tide but at a very high tide the water came almost to the roadway which separated the beach from the house. A young family to be leaving? Yes, I freely admit it, but my sister Helen, a trained nurse, was there with them so I felt they would be secure. Before the end of the war Helen was to proceed overseas with the American Red Cross to a big US hospital near Paris. By Princess SS we sailed to Vancouver, but what a send off. I have never seen a more dense crowd. [14] The route Fort St and Government St was well lined but when we came near the wharf it was a case of break ranks and get through that crowd best we could. We all did make it but it was a real struggle. The train from Vancouver was slow but big Commissary cars made the feeding of troops simple and the CPR food was good. In Manitoba a stop was made at Camp

Hughes. Here we found time to march and take much needed exercise. Also we lay close to the train with the 1st CMR. Though it was June we encountered many minor snow squalls. With the 1st CMR we found one of our old friends from [15] Victoria, Major Andros, now 2nd in Command of the 1st. He had ranched for years near Pipistern in South Western Manitoba. He had ridden with us on many of our schemes near Victoria before being called to the 1st CMR.

Camp Hughes was a large area covered with sandy knolls — scrub but an easy place to lose yourself. Each knoll was like the next with no outstanding landmarks and no sun for a guide.

Spite of rumors, we retained the CPR train as quarters, had our meals in it and slept in it. And on the second day we continued our movement towards Montreal.

Arriving at our port of embarkation, Montreal, we found [16] a luxury liner awaiting us, the SS Megantic. But more personal was a family deputation from London, Ont. to see me off — my father, mother, brother Fred, and his wife Margaret and their son Jack. It was a happy gathering but only for a short time. I believe it was 10 pm we all had to be aboard but I was glad to see them and we had a happy family gathering before they packed me onto the liner. During the night we slipped into the St. Lawrence and were well down the River by morning. At Quebec we stopped and had a surprise visit from the Governor General, the Duke of Connaught. He had been a great man and soldier, and was doing his best to keep from open conflict [17] with the Minister, Sam Hughes, who believed in no honor — except his own — no formalities, no protocol. The Duke was not a big man, not a strong man. Certainly too much was expected from him at this time. He looked tired but carried out a formal but friendly ceremony to us and then shook hands with many or all the officers. Nothing is more trying or tiring than shaking hands with a large number of people. His hand was soft and lifeless and long past the stage when it would have a sense of pain. His appearance was very different to the dapper smiling General who had visited Victoria some two years before.

Our crossing of the Atlantic was uneventful — had we been on a pleasure trip it [18] could not have been more comfortable. Our 1st CMR Brigade with Headquarters was on the one ship. Parades and training were at a minimum. We had a Ship's Orchestra to play at dinner. The food was plentiful and of the very best with uniformed stewards to care for our wants. Indeed it was a peacetime voyage except for the zig-zag course the ship pursued. Nearing Ireland and England we were escorted by Destroyers that dashed up and down either side, cutting across our path. From our lofty and steady decks they looked like motor boats, small speedboats, but a closer look gave you the impression of service and efficiency, prepared and even anxious to meet with enemy submarines.

Did I mention a big comfortable cabin shared only by [19] Major Randolph and myself? And the other officers were equally fortunate. The men too were well off as regards quarters and feeding. This was in such marked contrast to what we should find later but at the same time we took it in that spirit, to make the most of what we could get when it was available.

Our destination proved to be Plymouth and a very busy port it was. A personal friend, Lt. Cmdr. Surgeon Smythe had been in charge of the Naval Hospital there following his experience in the torpedoing of the HMS Crecy, but I did not meet him until some time later in London.

It was quick work to disembark. Our train was waiting nearby and soon we were on our way eastward [20] along the beautiful South Coast of England. What seemed to take the attention of all ranks were the pretty maids in their white aprons — they were all thought to be trained nurses. And on the beaches we passed, numbers of girls were bathing, some, it was said, with little or no bathing suits.

In the month of June daylight remains for long in the British Isles and it was late evening before we reached Shorncliffe Camp. We were a bit down and very hungry, having had no food since leaving the Megantic. A short march brought us to Caesar's Camp where we found tents up but no signs of life. Later we found some rations in a tent, but by this time most of the men had slipped off to Folkstone where they found numerous eating places.

It did not take long to settle down to routine, the feeding and messing of a unit. [21] Then our training and hardening exercises and great stress in musketry. For this many of us attended an intensive training at Hyth.

We were still dismounted but with the organization drill and equipment of CMRs. At the insistence of our Btn Hqs horses were finally given to us but none of the mounts we had in Victoria. We worked away with them for a time — finally left for France with only enough horses for senior officers and transport.

Life in England the summer of 1915 was not too upset by the war. Theatres were open. Lighting may have been reduced but no black-outs were yet in evidence. Though preparing for war, weekend leave was freely given. [22] And I found a relation close at hand. Aunt Laura, who in India had married a German man of business, Arthur Strathman, fortunately naturalized before the outbreak of war. They lived in Sutton, not many miles from London in a beautiful big home, and here when on leave I was an honored guest. They had two sons, the older being an Artillery Officer RFA Territorials, and the other one still in school.

Many others found relatives not too far from camp so many happy family gatherings were held before we were engaged in the unholy warfare taking place just over the Channel. On a quiet night we could hear the distant rumble of guns even in our camp.

[23] In Victoria we had been very careful in the selection of our recruits. They were all hand picked. And now in England where so many new units were in process of being formed our hand picked men were in demand to be commissioned as officers. We found we could not keep them. They were going to a greater field. Even the Royal Navy took some of them. The Royal Air Force was later to ask for officers to apply to them, and then, if found suitable, they were put in a school for flying.

Jimmie shot a horse. Jimmie Gordon — a good handsome upstanding young Englishman, was my batsman and he took every occasion to improve his military training. This time he helped himself to some cartridges from my tent to train [24] himself in rapid fire and loading. With these he was working with his Ross rifle in his own tent when the rifle went off and a horse on the picket line was hit on the leg. I believe the poor animal was destroyed later by the Veterinary Corps. Jimmy was paraded to Regimental Orderly Room and reprimanded. And later the C.O. got after me in private.

For practice we had dummy ammunition but when firing daily at Hyth we always had considerable live ammunition so that a mistake could easily be made by the uninitiated. This leads of course to the story of the Ross rifle, which it was said sometimes discharged [something missing]. This weapon was manufactured in Canada and for some few years had been standard equipment for the Canadian Forces. It was a beautiful fire arm.

End of transcription

Card written 2nd Rgt. Canadian Mounted Rifles.
(B. C. H.) *Duplicate*
ATTESTATION PAPER.

No.

Folio.

CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.**QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.**

- (ANSWERS)
1. What is your name?..... *Walter Bapty*
 2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born?..... *London Ont Canada*
 3. What is the name of your next-of-kin?..... *Ellabelle Bapty - wife*
 4. What is the address of your next-of-kin?..... *831 7th St Victoria B.C.*
 5. What is the date of your birth?..... *August 13/1894*
 6. What is your Trade or Calling?..... *Medical Practitioner (M.D. CMCC)*
 7. Are you married?..... *Yes*
 8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated?..... *Yes*
 9. Do you now belong to the Active Militia?..... *Yes*
 10. Have you ever served in any Military Force?..... *Yes - D.R.C.F.A. 1 year, Canada Scouts 12 yrs.*
If so, state particulars of former Service. *South Africa, Lt 51st B.C. +*
 11. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement?..... *Yes* *St. Capt.*
 12. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE?..... *Yes*

Walter Bapty (Signature of Man).*Norman A. Foster* (Signature of Witness).**DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.**

I, *Walter Bapty*, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

Walter Bapty (Signature of Recruit)Date *Nov 18th* 1914. *Norman A. Foster* (Signature of Witness)**OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.**

I, *Walter Bapty*, do make Oath, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

Walter Bapty (Signature of Recruit)Date *Nov 18th* 1914. *Norman A. Foster* (Signature of Witness)**CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE.**

The Recruit above-named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me, at *Victoria* this *18th* day of *November* 1914.

W. A. [Signature] (Signature of Justice)

Description of Bapty Walter on Enlistment.

Apparent Age 31 years months.
 (To be determined according to the instructions given in the Regulations for Army Medical Services.)

Distinctive marks, and marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous disease.

(Should the Medical Officer be of opinion that the recruit has served before, he will, unless the man acknowledges to any previous service, attach a slip to that effect, for the information of the Approving Officer).

Height 6 ft. ins.

Chest measure -
 (Girth when fully expanded) 40 ins.
 Range of expansion 6 ins.

Complexion Dark

Eyes Brown

Hair Dark brown

Religious denominations.
 Church of England
 Presbyterian Yes
 Wesleyan
 Baptist or Congregationalist
 Other Protestants
 (Denomination to be stated.)
 Roman Catholic
 Jewish

CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION.

I have examined the above-named Recruit and find that he does not present any of the causes of rejection specified in the Regulations for Army Medical Services.

He can see at the required distance with either eye; his heart and lungs are healthy; he has the free use of his joints and limbs, and he declares that he is not subject to fits of any description.

I consider him* fit for the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force.

Date Nov 16 1914.

Place Victoria

*Insert here "fit" or "unfit."

NOTE.—Should the Medical Officer consider the Recruit unfit, he will fill in the foregoing Certificate only in the case of those who have been attested, and will briefly state below the cause of unfitness:—

Wm. Raynor St. Anne
Medical Officer.

CERTIFICATE OF OFFICER COMMANDING UNIT.

W. Bapty having been finally approved and inspected by me this day, and his Name, Age, Date of Attestation, and every prescribed particular having been recorded, I certify that I am satisfied with the correctness of this Attestation.