



THE CANADIAN MACHINE GUN (OVERSEAS) ASSOCIATION

Annual
Remembrance Day Dinner

Prince George Hotel
Friday, November 8th, 1940

at 8 p.m.

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President—A. E. LANNING

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Annual Remembrance Day Church Parade
SUNDAY, November 10th, 1940

THE CORPS THAT WAS

AND YET LIVES ON

*A Swingin' Traverse through 55 Years of
Canadian Machine Gun History*

Uppin' your range to 1885, across your sights will swim, like a mist, the limitless Canadian prairies. Through the pattern of Empire are being drawn two scarlet threads—columns of soldiers they are—red-jacketed—and skirting coulees as they move toward Cut Knife Hill and Batoche. Scattered rifle fire, the flash of sunlight on gleaming bayonets, exultant shouts—and Cut Knife Hill and Batoche have been etched into an Empire's history.

Listen! There are derisive echoes ricocheting. They'd be directed at the Gatling guns. Sure 'Metis bit the dust'—but the trusty rifle gets the credit.

And so, the dawn of Canadian machine gun history comes—a dawn across which the scuds, the clouds of ridicule. Well, no matter

Down your range a decade and a half! It's hard to observe machine gun fire through the dust clouds raised by blots of horsemen—the kaleidoscope of thin lines of skirmishers, red-coated at first, then khaki-clad, which move across the Africa veldt. The hot sun of almost two summers blazes down upon reverses and defeats before it is reflected back from the burnished victories of Paardeburg and Cronje's Laager. Into the sound—the whine and spat of bullets, the bark of field pieces, there comes the infrequent chatter of Maxims. It is an undertone, scarcely audible.

Down that range again another decade and a half! Less mistily now the calvacade of 1914-18 takes form. Men pour out of mine, factory, office, bank; off farms, out of schools, magically they become Battalions, Brigades, Divisions, a Corps—a living tradition. In the vanguard move armored cars—The Automobile Machine Gun Brigade No. 1—mobilized Aug. 20 and sailing Sept. 29, weeks ahead of a mighty armada to follow in its wake. Now a chain of khaki links Canada to the Motherland as the demoniac din of modern battle grows louder each day, each passing month, each dragging year. Those ominous clouds of yellowish vapor will be Second Ypres. It is Canada's first testing and how magnificently Canadians meet it. Fisher, Bellew, Peerless, Aldritt, machine gunners all, loom up through the smoke and confusion of battle against the backdrop of the Victoria Cross—among the earliest to win Britain's highest, most sparingly given, award for valor. At small-scale Givenchy is unrolled the drama of Lieut. Fred Campbell, Mt. Forest farmer firing his blistering hot Colt into enemy ranks and using Pte. Vincent, burly lum-

berman for a tripod—What a nursery for tradition, and nursery it is. The Tree of Tradition, nurtured by countless thousands of lives; given growth by the sap of an indomitable racial spirit has many branches. Out of the salient at Wipers stemmed the Machine Gun branch, strong and vigorous—its earliest budding the lone gun detachment, isolated, cut off yet fighting its own grim battle—the jaw is set; knuckles stand out white in grimed hands as they bear upon a thumb-piece; bleared eyes hold the sights upon oncoming targets; six men who so often become just one, whose throbbing gun sings a requiem for his dead grouped around him. In three rushing years, the buds flower into Companies, Battalions, into a Corps even—fed as they are by close-knit comradeship yet ever menaced by the blight of death.

The gun sights of 1915 move through Hooze, through torn Sanctuary Wood; they pick up crowding Battalion sections, and the Bordens, Eatons, Yukons, the 86th M.G. Bn.; they linger momentarily on the establishment of a school at Shorncliffe which moves on to Crowborough and to Seaford. Ah, Sussex of fragrant memories, so full of country lanes and pubs so full. The traverse hits New Years Day, 1916. Brigade Machine Gun Companies are now official. It may not linger on the concentrated Hell that was St. Eloi craters, nor on the June show at Mt. Sorrel. But it must tarry a moment at the magnitude of destruction being hurled across the desolate terrain of the Somme.—Into that man-made Inferno which belches explosive for 25 miles in width march four Canadian Divisions—12 M.G. Companies, the Motors. The motors back there on the hard sands of Camiers at ebb tide had traced a pretty pattern of machine gun barrage fire and Muerling transfers it to the Somme. Iron monsters wobbling crazily over the tumbled earth are tanks—M.G. Heavy Sections—adding their weight to M.G. prestige—the status and the stature grows—the only things that grew at Moquet Farm.

That Ridge swinging into the sight aperture is Vimy. A M.G. Coy. has been added to each division and then comes the snow-flecked dawn of April 9 through which the Canadians swarm up to the coveted crest and over. Over four millions rounds of S.A.A. fired from 358 Emma Gees join the weight of iron and steel which rocks a landscape. Hard on Vimy, April 16 to be sure, the Canadian Machine Gun Corps is born. Hill 70 climaxes dogged fighting under the hot Artois sun.

That miasma rising above a fetid earth, made more obscene by added years of fighting indicates Passchendaele—that sodden sublimity. In that morass of mourning all arms rise to new heights of stamina, endurance, fortitude, and of heroism and none higher than the Machine Gunners. The exploits of lone detachments here, many of them unrecorded and unsung must surely win a nod of approval

from those who shaped an Ideal in this same Salient years ago before they died.

There's Vimy again and weeks of tense waiting for the testing the Boche never dared and where in the waiting a third Company was added to the expanded strength of M.G. Battalions—a pause for the dash of the Motors South in that sinister March to fill the gap before Amiens—where mobility and stout hearts multiplied their 40 guns by ten times and etched imperishable fame on the Machine Gun record.

Again and again, the flood of imminent defeat threatens to engulf the Allies before it is turned to the ebb at Soissons. Now it is August 8th and through the summer haze your sights pick up the Canadian Corps, geared to a new tempo and coordination of swooping planes, swiftly darting tanks, artillery limbered up in a new-found mobility—the flash of sun on sabre and lance—M.G. Companies with careening limbers, in pack-mules in artillery formations—Motors daringly thrusting down flank roads—an incredible rush and elan such as the war had never before seen. First toddling steps of Blitzkreigs to come.

Again and again this spearhead thrusts through the weakening fabric of German field grey—carving a swathe of victory through the Drocourt Line, the Hindenburg line, flattening out the Canal Du Nord defences and a bit dulled at last, faces the defences of Cambrai, which ultimately falls to the harvest. The Last Hundred Days—the most glorious days in all the annals of British arms—come to an end just as the Canadians capture Mons—that Mons of tragic yet glorious memory.

“The dash and magnificent bravery of our incomparable infantry have at all times been devotedly seconded with great skill and daring by our Machine Gunners” in Sir Arthur Currie's tribute. On November 11th, 8, 771 could share that tribute. Over 16,000 had served in the C.M.G.C. of whom 5,777 had been killed or wounded.

Men of the breed of Fisher and Campbell had not died in vain.

And now. After two decades of peace, your tangent sight must be lowered to the zero of the present. In a series of engulfing catastrophic, cataclysmic events, the Empire is left to fight on alone. To every one a different Image of the wellsprings from which our race must draw its courage to face such a task as confronts it. To members of the M.G. Corps that Image must inevitably be that of the lone gun detachment, fighting to the last ditch, fighting its gun to the last. Dunkirk, mass heroism hoisted to new pinnacles, was that spirit expressed by a nation. The Battle of Britain has brought forth a valor that is more than fortitude; is a kind of fierce and lofty joy. Those who gripped hands at other Zero Hours knew such ecstasy and recognize it as a heritage of race.

Menu

Grace

From the "Laudi Spirituali" (A.D. 1545)
"For these and all Thy mercies given,
We bless and praise Thy name, O Lord;
May we receive them with thanksgiving
Ever trusting in Thy word,
To Thee alone be honour, glory,
Now and henceforth for evermore." Amen.



Soup

VEGETABLE

CELERY

Poultry

ROAST STUFFED CHICKEN

Vegetable

CHATEAU POTATOES

GREEN BEANS

Sweets

APPLE PIE WITH CHEESE

ROLLS AND BUTTER

COFFEE



THE KING

The President's Remarks

LAST POST

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REVEILLE

Programme

1. SING SONG - - with Barnes at the Piano

2. THE 1942 REFRESHER CLASS

Instructor—Louise Goldsmith

Recruits—Dorothy Parsons, Helen Stewart

Gertrude Garde, Bessie Correll

Lillian Robertson

3. VIC JAMES - - - - Accordion Band

4. HELEN STEWART - - With a Skate On

5. PAT BAILEY - - - - No. 1 Stoppage

6. COMEDIAN

7. TO SUNNY SPAIN - With Louise Goldsmith

8. VIC JAMES - - - - Accordion Band

Intermission

9. THE REFRESHER CLASS SQUAD DRILL

10. PAT BAILEY - - - - No. 2 Stoppage

11. DOROTHY PARSONS - - Physical Jerks

12. VIC JAMES - - - - Accordion Band

13. COMEDIAN

14. THUMBS UP - - - Louise and the Girls