

FREEDOM

OF THE BOROUGH OF ALDERSHOT, ENGLAND

THE MAPLE LEAF

Anyone walking through the streets of Aldershot on Wednesday, between the hours of three and four in the afternoon, would have heard only the hollow ringing of footsteps echoing through otherwise empty streets. It is true that there were people lining the route along which the Canadians were due to march at the conclusion of the ceremony of the presentation of the Freedom of the Borough to the Canadian Army Overseas. But, in the main, the people lining the streets were those who literally could not squeeze into the vast concourse of people watching the Ceremony. Streets where the troops were not due to march were deserted.

On the Recreation Ground the scene was set, onlookers were impressed and, judging by the volume of the applause, most enthusiastic in their welcome to the Canadian Army Overseas as represented by the 2nd Canadian Special Infantry Battalion, which is at present stationed at Camberley. The drill, bearing and turn-out were excellent; even when the command, "Battalion—Rest," was given, it was acted upon with the precision of a General Salute. There was a short, sincere, but appropriate speech by His Worship the Mayor, who was succeeded by the Town Clerk, who, in impressive tones, read the formal address of welcome and appreciation on behalf of the Aldershot Borough Council. The reply of General Montague, Chief of Staff of the Canadian Army Overseas, could not exactly be called formal. It was, if we may say so, a friendly, witty and strong speech, and the peroration was oratory in its true sense.

Much in evidence yesterday was the Maple Leaf, emblem of Canada, that great Dominion. Eight thousand troops watched the ceremony, knowing that it was to them and to their colleagues elsewhere that the honour conferred on their representatives was being paid, and it is hoped that this link now forged between Aldershot and the Dominion of Canada will prove a bond also between the two countries of Canada and Great Britain. And so, in the words of that great song,

"God save the King and Empire bless,
The Maple Leaf for ever."

conferred on the
CANADIAN ARMY

26 SEPTEMBER, 1945

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Canadian Army Receives Freedom

ALDERSHOT GREETS DOMINION

SMART REPRESENTATIVE UNIT

General's Friendly Reply

Camberley Drill Hall was the scene of festivities on Wednesday night when the 2nd Canadian Special Infantry Battalion celebrated after representing the Canadian Army Overseas at the presentation of the Freedom of the Borough of Aldershot.

The people of Aldershot gave a warm-hearted reception to battle-scarred Canadians on Wednesday, when the Canadian Army Overseas received the Freedom of the Borough. It is believed to have been the first occasion on which a complete overseas Army has been honoured in this way, and obviously the men who crossed the Atlantic to fight for the Mother Country in her hour of need were deeply conscious of the significance of this gesture from the town which has been so intimately associated with Canadians in two wars.

Thousands of spectators packed the stands and terraces at the Recreation Ground for the memorable ceremony, among them nearly 10,000 Canadian soldiers and hundreds of school children, who had an excellent view from the north-west stand. The token silver casket containing the script, which had been loaned by Mrs. Arthur Friend, was presented by His Worship the Mayor (Alderman J. W. White, J.P.) to

Lieutenant-General the Hon. P. J. Montague, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C., of Canadian Military Headquarters, who has come to England for two wars.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors all wore their official robes, and when they filed into their seats the Mayor was preceded by the mace-bearer. He was accompanied by the Mayoress (Mrs. E. Middleton) and was followed by the Deputy Mayor (Councillor A. H. J. Stroud, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.), Aldermen J. A. Dines, J.P., C.C., W. J. North, C. J. Porter and Mrs. E. C. Garratt, Councillors A. J. Sims, Mrs. A. Williams, G. Roberts, Mrs. N. P. Bennett-Snell, J. C. Archer, T. H. Day, F. Stay, B. W. Edgoose, J. H. Drew, W. G. Eddy and Miss M. Kemp. The Deputy Mayoress (Mrs. Stroud) was also present, as were the wives of several other members of the Borough Council.

THE GUESTS

Among others in the central portion of the main stand were Mr. W. H. T. Cunningham, M.B.E., J.P., C.C. (Chairman of the Farnborough Urban Council), with whom was the Clerk (Mr. D. Stuart Jones), Mr. A. W. Parsons, J.P. (Chairman of the Fleet Urban Council), Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Friend, Mr. F. B. Bateman, J.P., C.C.,

Brigadier F. A. V. Copland-Griffiths, D.S.O., M.C., Commander, South Aldershot Sub District (who represented the General Officer Commanding Aldershot and Hants District), Mrs. Copland-Griffiths, Brigadier G. F. Gough, D.S.O., M.C., Commander, North Aldershot District, Major-General D. C. Spry D.S.O., Commanding Canadian Reinforcement Units, Major General E. G. Weekes, C.B.E., M.C., M.M., Colonel J. J. Hurley, O.B.E., E.D., Colonel D. F. Spankie, C.B.E., and other senior officers of the Canadian Army.

Before the Canadian infantrymen marched on to the football pitch the children were highly amused by the antics of four dogs which gambolled in the centre of the ground. Laughter changed to cheers as the sound of martial music announced the approach of the Canadian infantry, marching smartly, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. Paterson, and followed by the two equally smart platoons of the Canadian Women's Army Corps under Major Yarwood.

The officers and men on parade belong to the 2nd Canadian Special Infantry Battalion, and are stationed at Old Dean Common, Camberley.

These formed up facing the main stand, and after an opening prayer by the Mayor's



The Representative Unit is seen marching away after receiving the Freedom of the Borough.



Chaplain, the Rev. Father Bernard L. Morris, the troops sloped arms and received the Mayor with a general salute.

THE MAYOR'S SPEECH

Welcoming the Canadians, the Mayor said, "It is my proud privilege on behalf of the Borough of Aldershot to welcome you to-day to this historic ceremony—historic in the sense that I understand this is the first occasion on which a borough has presented its Freedom to a complete overseas Army. This ceremony may be said to be not merely a gesture on the part of Aldershot, but rather as coming from the whole of the British Isles. May your great Dominion be even greater in the years to come."

Next, the Town Clerk (Mr. D. Llewellyn Griffiths, O.B.E.) wearing wig and gown, stepped to the microphone and read the formal address of appreciation, speaking slowly and clearly as he outlined the associations of the Canadians with the district and referred in appreciative terms to their fighting qualities in two wars.

The Mayor then handed the token casket to General Montague, after which the parade fixed bayonets, presented arms and gave a further general salute.

Speaking without notes, General Montague made a friendly and witty reply on behalf of the Canadians.

In his reply General Montague said: "On behalf of all men and women serving in the Canadian Army Overseas I now accept with pride, on their behalf, this token casket and script, signifying the Freedom of the Borough of Aldershot. I am very grateful to you, Mr. Mayor, and the Council of this Borough, for the words of appreciation of the efforts of the Canadian Army, which have been read by your Town Clerk.

"It is 25 years ago since I had to do with the demobilization of the Canadian

Corps overseas. To find myself here in Aldershot, in the midst of the return of the troops from this second great World War, is a matter of pride to me, and I assure you I am very proud to be here. It seems only a little time ago that I was one of a small party that left Canada one October and proceeded to this country to make arrangements for the arrival of our Expeditionary Force from Canada, yet it is almost six years since that party left Canada.

"At the time of the last war our troops came over and were quartered in a part of this kingdom which I have since learnt to love, but about which, at that time, Canadians were not very happy. That was Salisbury Plain, but mud is mud, wherever you find it; we have it in our country, thank God, because it grows wheat. You have had some round Aldershot. On Salisbury Plain, in that winter of 1914-15, we had more than our share, and it was not popular with the Canadians, although many of us have learnt to love it since.

"At the beginning of this war it was a matter of great satisfaction to us that a great Quartermaster-General presided over the accommodation, and other such matters at the War Office—General Venn, who informed us that the Canadian troops, during their training period, would be accommodated in the Aldershot Command, because we knew this was, from a military point of view, the Garden of Eden in England. It is true you have got some old barracks, some built during the Crimean War. (Laughter.) We have overlooked this, although we have tried to fix them up a little bit, but I hope these barracks will be replaced long before the next war. (Laughter.)

"The fact remains that in the Aldershot Command there was the largest concentration of roofs to house people under and to accommodate them during their train-

ing, and with excellent training facilities in the area. Therefore, we are very grateful to the Q.M.G. of that time and to his successor, General Liddell-Webster. During all these years we have never been given anything other than the best accommodation available in the best Command in England.

"We have seen in this area of the Aldershot Command men comprising the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Divisions, and independent brigades as well. We have seen them come here as raw soldiers, very often, and we know that by and large we have turned out efficient soldiers to fight for the Empire. We have seen them go to the different war theatres, from whence some have never returned, and the words of appreciation read by the Town Clerk outline very clearly what an independent person thinks of the efforts of the Canadian Army. We are very grateful for those words he has read to you.

"Aldershot has been more than a place of bricks and mortar, training grounds and huts. It has been the centre of our life in England. Here we have always been a good, happy family. A lot of our men have taken charming women as their wives, and they have formed many friendships. As the address points out, the attachments have ripened into marriage in many cases. I welcome these young women, who will be returning to Canada with their husbands, as citizens of our country.

"A large portion of Hampshire and of Surrey has received us well, and to the inhabitants I say, 'Thank you for the great kindness and forbearance which has been shown to the men and women of the Canadian Army during the past five and a half years.'

"To you civilians here to-day may I say that we have enjoyed being in the United Kingdom? While we are here we

may be a little bit nationalised, but in our own country we are ardent Imperialists, and we always intend to remain so. (Applause.)

"Many men and women of the Canadian Army are, like myself, a mixture of many stocks, but our hearts centre round England as our Mother Country, and we will never forget that. I only hope it will be many generations before there will be any reason for Canadians to come to Europe again to take part in any war. You seem to have a habit, you English-speaking people here, of getting into a war every so often. Well, we cannot stop that, but if there is another one we intend to come over. When I say 'we' I have no hesitation in saying that this is my last war. (Laughter.) I would expect, however, that some of my blood would manage to trickle here in some way.

"To you men and women of the Canadian Army may I say this: During the remainder of your time in this country impress some things on your memory. We are all very proud of the rugged beauty of Western Canada, the Maritime and the Far West, but you will never see lanes like those in Surrey and Hampshire, and you will never see pubs that have looked after you so well in these years gone by. Impress these things on your memories. This country is worth remembering. It is where many of our gallant countrymen have been proud to die. Take back memories of very hospitable people in a very hospitable country, in spite of its bad weather.

"We are very proud to be here to accept this token, the significance of which we realize. We say this to you: We are very grateful to this town, this county, and those adjoining it for the years during which you have housed and looked after us. We give you this assurance, that as long as the winds blow and the rivers run in Canada we will remain loyal to this Mother Country, and we shall never forget Aldershot."

The playing of "O Canada" and the National Anthem was followed by a march past, the Mavor taking the salute.

Town Clerk's Address Speech of Appreciation

The full text of the Borough Council's formal address of appreciation to the Canadian Army Overseas, read during Wednesday's ceremony by the Town Clerk (Mr. D. Llewellyn Griffiths, O.B.E.) is as follows:

When, in September, 1939, Hitler and his maniac crew made their treacherous bid for world supremacy, this Old Country knew well that the desperate challenge to her life and safety would be instantly answered by her sons overseas, for we remembered with proud gratitude the response which came so spontaneously in similar circumstances twenty-five years earlier, and from none of our Dominions more generously than from Canada.

In the Great War of 1914 to 1918 nearly 417,000 Canadian troops came to England to undergo training, before proceeding to France to fight with the Allied Armies, and nearly one in seven of them never returned, while more than half of the total strength suffered casualties. Their exploits will forever live in our Commonwealth history, as they will in the records of that great struggle, and we need mention only such battles as Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele to remind ourselves of the immense debt we owe to the high valour, courage and fighting skill of our Canadian brothers who joined in that earlier conflict for freedom and justice.

We in Aldershot had only limited contacts at that time with the Canadian Forces, for none of them were actually stationed here, but some few were posted to Aldershot Command on various courses, and others spent some of their off-duty hours here when stationed at Bordon, Witley or Bramshott, and in that way we began to know and appreciate them.

It was, therefore, with a keen anticipation that we learned, very early in the recent World War, that Aldershot was to be given over almost exclusively to the accommodation and training of Canadian troops, and within three months of the outbreak of war they began to arrive—men from the cities and the prairies, the lakes, the forests, the ranches and the factories; farmers and lawyers, factors and clerks; lumbermen and scientists, trappers and doctors.

Friendly men they were, three or four thousand miles from home, yet keenly conscious of home ties, and warmly appreciative of every effort we made to offer them a share in our home life. There can be few, if any families in Aldershot that have not been privileged to entertain some of our overseas visitors, and many are the lasting friendships formed, many the attachments which have led to the altar, and not a few Aldershot families have been saddened and grieved by the loss of friends who have made the supreme sacrifice.

Another little piece of service we were happy to do was the establishment of a Dominion Soldiers' Club and Hospitality Centre, housed in one of the large residences belonging to the War Office, and loaned for the purpose, equipped by the townspeople of Aldershot and staffed by voluntary workers. Through this club—which still functions—thousands of Canadians have passed during their training and leave periods, enjoying the amenities of club life and obtaining contacts with warm-hearted folk all over Great Britain who were willing to open their homes to these lads so far away from their own kin; and thus we have learned to know them better.

The response from our Canadian visitors has been genuine and appreciative, and they have expressed their gratitude in many ways by wholeheartedly co-operating in our communal life, and not least by their most generous treatment of our children, for whose entertainment at Christmas and other times they spared neither effort nor expense, sending home for toys and goodies so long as supplies were available. Many an Aldershot junior will long remember those parties and the great-hearted generosity of their Canadian hosts.

And so there has grown up, in these past six years, a deeper and wider understanding and mutual appreciation between the people of Aldershot and their Dominion visitors, until we came to follow their doings on the other side with almost as close and personal an interest as we showed in our own sons and brothers, and we began to hear of their fighting exploits with the same glow of pride.

Less than six months after the first main force reached Aldershot they were ready for active service, and units of the 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade went over to France early in June, 1940. Unfortunately, their arrival coincided with the collapse of the French Army, and less than a week later they were back again, bringing with them, by great good fortune, almost the whole of their equipment.

There followed a period in which these trained troops, augmented from time to time by new drafts, garrisoned these islands against the threat of invasion, while the bulk of our own forces were engaged in North Africa and the Mediterranean, and who shall say from what dire calamity the very presence of these friends of ours saved us during those dark months of suspense and anxiety.

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THE ILLUMINATED ADDRESS

~ SCROLL ~

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL THE HON. P. J. MONTAGUE, C.B., C.M.G.,
D.S.O., M.C., OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS:
It is with great pride that the Burgesses of Aldershot invite the Canadian
Army Overseas to accept conferment of the Freedom of the Borough.

Aldershot is not an ancient town and has little civic history behind it, but for nearly one hundred years it has been the traditional home of the British Army, and for nearly six years many thousands of the men of your Overseas Army have been stationed in our Camp.

Your very distinguished and brilliant achievements both in the Great War of 1914-1918 and in the war just concluded have added new lustre to the name of Canada.

Your men recruited from every part of your great Dominion gained imperishable fame by their feats of arms in the war of 1914-1918, and in the present war that magnificent record has been still further enhanced.

Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Ypres, Dieppe, Ortona, Ravenna, Falaise and Nijmegen are names in the history of the Army that will never be forgotten in the homes of Canada.

It is with these thoughts in mind that we invite you to accept from this military Borough the highest honour which it is in our power to bestow.

At a meeting of the Borough Council held on 5th September, 1945, at 10 a.m., the following Resolution was passed unanimously:—

CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS

“ That the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Aldershot now assembled bearing in mind the fact that the great majority of the Overseas Army have served in the Aldershot Military District and have been our guests since the outbreak of war, and in recognition of the very distinguished and devoted service in every part of the world rendered to this country and the Empire, hereby confer upon the Army the Freedom of the Borough.”



Headed by the Band, part of the 2nd Canadian Special Infantry Battalion, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Paterson, are seen marching from the Recreation Ground after being presented with the Freedom of the Borough.

But these Canadian lads had come over to fight, and were itching to get on with it, so that both they and we were thrilled when the first opportunity came for a serious tilt at the enemy. On 19th August, 1942, the greater part of the 2nd Canadian Division, under Major-General J. H. Roberts (who later commanded all Canadian troops in the Aldershot District) made the historic dawn landing at Dieppe. Casualties were very heavy, but it was upon the invaluable lessons learned from this most courageous and determined operation that the Allied Commands were able effectively to plan for the landings in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and even Normandy.

It was fitting that the 1st Canadian Infantry Division, still comprising many of those who had reached Aldershot in the winter of 1939-40, should be the first Canadian formation to see extended overseas service. Together with the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade and a number of Corps Troops, the 1st Canadian Infantry Division became part of the Eighth Army, under the command of General Montgomery, at the beginning of the Sicilian campaign in July, 1943, and, crossing to the mainland, participated in the advance up the east coast of Italy, and bore the brunt of heavy fighting round Ortona in December of that year.

Meanwhile the 5th Canadian Armoured Division and other units of the 1st Canadian Corps had reached Italy in command of General Crerar, and from then on they played a major part in the successive penetrations of the Gustav and Hitler Lines in the Liri Valley, in May, 1944, and the Gothic Line in October, after hard and costly fighting. In the following December they joined in the drive on Ravenna and the Senio Line, which eventually fell in January, 1945.

In the meantime the 1st Canadian Army had remained in the United Kingdom as part of the 21st Army Group, preparing for the great assault on North-West Europe, and D Day saw the 3rd Canadian Division

on the Normandy beaches, and they soon distinguished themselves in the fight for Caen.

On 23rd July the 1st Canadian Army, under General Crerar, assumed responsibility for the left flank of the 21st Army Group front, and, breaking out from the bridgehead in August, drove south to capture Falaise and link up with American forces, thus encircling large numbers of the enemy and inflicting on him a shattering defeat. General Crerar's army then continued the advance on the left flank of the Allied Forces, and had the difficult and arduous role of clearing the Channel Ports and depriving the enemy of his cross-Channel batteries and flying bomb sites.

The next task was the clearance of the Scheldt Estuary, opening the Port of Antwerp to Allied shipping; then the occupation of the Nijmegen Salient in Holland, where the Canadians remained for the four bitter winter months, moving towards the Rhine in February, 1945. They were in the thick of the fighting in the Reichswald and Hochwald Forests, and their 9th Infantry Brigade took part in the first crossing of the Rhine.

Then their forces fanned out, reinforced by units from Italy, whose job was now done, the 1st Corps striking through Holland to the Zuyder Zee and the 2nd Corps swinging north and east to the North Sea, surrounding the 25th German Army, and then moving north over difficult country, between Emden and Oldenburg, they reached the mouth of the Weser River, overcoming all resistance as they went. The "Cease Fire" found them in the outskirts of Wilhelmshaven, and in the 1st Canadian Army sector they took the surrender of 180,000 Germans.

It is significant that, of a male population under six millions, Canada raised a fighting force of 765,000, mainly by voluntary enlistments, with about 35,000 women auxiliaries. Nor was the war effort of this great country confined to the fighting services. Canadian industry played a very

large and valuable part in the provision of war material, not only for her own forces but for the Allied cause in General, while Canadian airfields witnessed the training of many thousands of Allied pilots under the Empire Air Training Scheme, and the Canadian Exchequer made spontaneous cash contributions to British war finance of nearly 225 million pounds.

So has this vast Dominion and her virile sons earned a high place in the brotherhood of arms, and we in this Military Borough are proud to recognize the kinship by the bestowal upon the Canadian Army Overseas of the highest honour that we, as a town, can confer—the Freedom of the Borough of Aldershot.

God Save the King.

"MAKE US FEEL VERY PROUD"

Scenes in the Streets

"Dieppe made us feel proud, but this honour Aldershot has conferred upon our Army to-day makes us feel a heck of a lot prouder," was the opinion voiced by Corporal E. Jones, of Manitoba, Canada, to an "Aldershot News" reporter on Wednesday after he had seen the new Freemen of the Borough march through the crowded streets with bayonets fixed.

Large crowds of civilians and troops had lined the streets, tension mounting as the band was heard in the distance, and as the troops marched smartly into view cheers and clapping rang out. Flags and bunting had bedecked buildings along the route and as the men marched through the main streets small Union Jacks clasped in the hands of children were waved frantically.

When the parade passed the group of ex-Service men and women under Captain E. J. Keeling, M.C., and Regimental Sergeant-Major Britten, who were standing with their Standards at the bottom of Hospital Hill, the flags were lowered and the officers came smartly to the salute.

Only Englishman on Parade

BRITISH BANDMASTER CONDUCTS

ALDERSHOT NATIVE

The only Englishman in the parade on Wednesday was the Bandmaster of the massed 4th C.I.C. and R.C.O.C. band, Bandmaster L. T. Beare, A.R.C.M., who was born in Aldershot, and is the only Englishman to be attached to the Canadian Army.

He was serving on the Continent with the band a few weeks ago when he heard over the wireless that the Borough was to present its Freedom to the Canadian Army. He immediately got into touch with his H.Q. and requested the privilege of playing at the ceremony.

Lives in Farnborough

The request was granted and he and the band were brought back from the Continent a few days ago. On Thursday the band were due to play at Watford, where Field-Marshal Montgomery was making a visit.

Bandmaster Beare lives with his wife, who is a native of Farnborough, at 132, Peabody-road, Farnborough.

WOMEN IN THE CROWD

The minds of many women as they watched Wednesday's impressive ceremony must have gone out to Canadian homes, for which they will be leaving in the near future. Doubtless a number of English mothers thought of their daughters who have already left this country to join their husbands, or the husband's parents in Canada.

Women who have played such an outstanding part during the six years of war have helped to entertain Canadian soldiers

in their homes, and welcomed them into their own family circle.

A pleasant, smiling-faced woman who watched Wednesday's parade told our representative that she had entertained Canadian troops in her home since their arrival in this country and that she was now the proud possessor of several cables sent from Canada by troops who had visited her home, saying they had arrived safely in their own country and conveying good wishes to her.

Mention should be made of the excellent voluntary work that has been continually carried on by local women at the Dominion Club, which has become a "home from home" for many Canadian soldiers who have passed through Aldershot during their training and spent their leave periods there.

Canadian Nursing Sister S. Milne, of Toronto, stationed at Farnborough, paid her first visit to Aldershot to see the ceremony, and when questioned afterwards she summed it up in these words, "Very, very impressive."

Hampshire Pilot Returns from Canada

TWO-YEAR STAY

GREAT HOSPITALITY

In an interview with the "Aldershot News" Flying Officer Malcolm Lea-Wilson, a resident of Alton, Hants, described his recent stay in Canada as "two rich, never-to-be-forgotten years." He was over there both training and as an instructor under the Commonwealth air training plan.

Stationed, at various times, in Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia, he also visited Montreal and Ottawa. He feels qualified to give people in England some of his impressions. He said:—

"I went out from Hampshire as one of hundreds of thousands of those from 'The Old Country' who went over to Canada to train under the Commonwealth air training plan. I spent over two rich, interesting and never-to-be-forgotten years before passing on to my Liberator Bomber Unit. Whether a man is in Canada for a month or a lifetime there is an indelible impression made on his mind of the warmth and the welcome of its people and its homes.

Canada is a vast country, with rolling, lonely prairies and rocky, scrag-cut mountains, with rich mines and prolific orchards, of wilting heat and intense cold, of expanding cities and the smallest of small villages, and behind all these are the homes upon which Canada has depended throughout the ages. Her pioneers had a spirit of adventure and daring, and this was the spirit that carried the early settlers through the hardships and battles during the early years.

"I have seen in many homes in Canada a rebirth of that spirit of pioneering. So many of us came to Canada not knowing whether to expect friends, or whether Canada was still the wild and rugged west. Our fears, however, were allayed at once, not by the vast buildings that meant civilization or the drug stores, or industries, but by the people themselves, who welcomed us as their own sons, and took us into their homes.

"Like the pioneers of old, it was 'come in son, and have a meal, and then you tell us about yourself after.' In many homes where I was invited to spend my leaves one farmer that I talked to said, 'Yes, I have a good farm alright, and so it must be, if the nation and the starving countries in Europe are going to pull through.

"Aldershot has given the Freedom of the Borough to the Canadians, and all of us who know and love Canada feel that now, in some measure, is being repaid all that was given us during our stay in the Dominion."



Two Detachments of the C.W.A.C., under the command of Major Doris Yarwood, Lieuts. B. Hartstoun and J. Gilmour are also seen.

The Squirrel and the Mountain

By THE REV. S. P. GOODGE

The squirrel, says a Canadian proverb, could not carry a forest on his back, but he could crack a nut. The mountain could carry a forest on his back, but he could not crack a nut.

One day last July a young Canadian padre arrived in this country, and on the following Sunday did me the honour of taking tea with me. After tea I suggested a walk in the garden. "Sure!" he said, "I'd just love to see your garden." So forth we went. He looked round and about, and his eyes fell on the large expanse of yellowing grain, ripening towards harvest in the field adjoining. "Say!" he exclaimed, "That's swell! Who put that in for you?"

Then it fell to me modestly to explain that that was not my garden. My garden was the little lawn on which he stood, flanked by a strip of tilled soil where, for economy of space, flaming nasturtiums overtopped the beetroots, bloody but unbowed beneath them, and roses reared their fragrant heads above the perky lettuce crowding close about their stems. I asked him what vast expanses customarily surrounded Canadian manse, wherein one lived the pastoral life, and what would be my prospects of securing a benefice out there.

In friendly retaliation he reciprocated with a story of a young Englishman who went, like many others, to Canada for his training for the R.A.F. He was put on a train, on leaving the boat, and when he had dumped his baggage overhead and settled down in a seat he inquired of a fellow traveller what time of day the train was expected to arrive at its destination. "7.20 p.m.," was the reply. So he passed the afternoon looking from the window at the country flashing past, and at 7 o'clock he began to get his belongings together. "What are you doing that for?" he was asked. "Well, this train arrives at 7.20 doesn't it?" "Sure it does," was the reply, "7.20 next Tuesday."

For in Canada, it seems, you get on a train and stay on it for best part of a week, if it happens to be going on a journey of a couple of thousand miles or so. And they do really run some of their trains by the calendar more than by the clock—an exhortation sometimes rudely levelled at our English railways.

I remember on another occasion taking two Canadian padres to a meeting at Guildford, and at its close, there being yet a good half-hour of daylight, we went for a walk around the ancient King John's Castle. They gazed in awed wonder at the 800 year old ruins. "Say! we haven't got anything like this in Canada," said one scribbling hurried notes in his notebook. Then came an obliging keeper, who told him that underneath the ruins of the "modern" castle were the foundations of the really old castle, laid down by the Romans in 45 B.C. (I hope I got that right; I had no notebook, and was endeavouring to convey an air of politely-veiled nonchalance, as though there were nothing untoward in that, and every town in England is built on Roman foundations. I think I brazenly told them that Aldershot, of course, as a military establish-

ment, went right back to the near by Cæsar's Camp, of 2,000 years ago).

They began to tell me tales of the vast size of Canada, which impressed me as the hoary ancientness of Britain had impressed them. After an exchange of fire of such pleasantries we came to an agreement that if one could travel hundreds of miles in Canada, whose history was comparatively recent, one could go back hundreds of years in England, even if one could cross from one side of the country to the other in an afternoon. The mountain could carry a forest on its back, even if it could not crack a nut; and the squirrel could crack a nut even if it could not carry a forest on its back.

Our Canadian friends are rightly proud of their vast expanses of territory, where the prairies and the forests roll on for hundreds of miles, and there is room for all to live and breathe. We here in England are equally proud of our hoary history, our ancient traditions, our carefully preserved old-time customs. In the glamour and ceremony and ritual of one of our most ancient customs we are clothing the greatest honour our town can bestow on those who win our highest gratitude and esteem—the presentation to our Canadian friends of the Freedom of the Borough of Aldershot. They will receive it from the hands of our Mayor clad in the scarlet furled robe of an old-time burgher, supported by his Aldermen and Councillors in their blue robes and cocked hats, the top-hatted, liveried mace-bearer carrying that ponderous and ornate symbol of office and the address of Appreciation is read by "our learned Town Clerk," wigged like the settlers in Canada of the 18th century. All these things are the composite symbol of our traditional way of rendering homage to those whom we delight to honour. Our Canadian friends have done things for us which perhaps we could never do, in quite the same way, for them. We bear them our tribute in the way that is peculiarly ours.

To my memory comes back an incident of eighteen months ago. An elderly Canadian minister who, holding high position, had flown to this country, came down to Aldershot next day for the ordination, in an Aldershot church, of a Canadian chaplain. (Alas! little more than a year later some of his comrades held a memorial service for him, attended by the Mayor and Council, in that same church, for he fell in the last hours of battle.) The venerable man saw some English violets in a hedgerow. He stopped and picked a posy of them, that he might send to his wife back in Canada. "I did want to send her some English violets," he said.

There is nothing traditional, ancient, or ornate, about our English violets. Yet they are essentially English. Perhaps Canada's mountains, carrying forests on their backs, could never grow our English violets. Whether it be with gilded casket and inscribed vellum, or with posies of sweet and simple English violets, we speak the same message. They are our way of saying:

AVE! CANADA!