

FIRST VISIT OF CANADIAN TO ENGLAND

Officer Just Arrived Writes His First Impressions Of Country As He Sees It

LONDON STREET TRAFFIC Many Things Different From Canada But Visitor Says He Thinks He'll Like It

A relative of a local lady, who holds the rank of captain in a Canadian unit, crossed to England recently and on the day they left "Lord Ha Ha" broadcast from Germany the fact that they were leaving. However, nothing happened. The day was calm all the way. They had a good escort and the trip proved most enjoyable with plenty to eat and drink and good accommodation. It was the first visit of a Canadian to that country.

After arrival the officer says: "We caught on of those cuckoo English trains to a camp and, although they look like the clear McCoy for a family, much like a coach in the automobile line—that is little compartments holding six apiece that the kids could not get out of. We ran through a couple of air raids on the way here but did not even hear anything drop although the lad had dropped a few in one of the towns we came through about an hour before we got there.

"One thing I can say, these trains are far from comfortable to sleep in and we didn't have a diner on the train. Various organizations along the road, however, were very decent and served buns and coffee. Why anyone in England should drink or serve coffee I don't know because in the first place it isn't remotely related to coffee and while tea is served scalding hot they always serve coffee lukewarm. They think these Canadians are funny fellows. They have real coffee, all the "liar brands, but it certainly does not taste the same. Must be especially put up for export. Their Scotch does not taste like ours either or must have been made up for export, as this is much smoother, so perhaps it all evens up.

I got quite a kick out of the freight cars here. They are about ten feet long, about five feet high and run on four wheels with hand brake. They go like a bat out of hell like their trains but I haven't been able to fathom how they move large pieces of machinery around. Perhaps they have larger cars but I didn't see them. They could teach our engineers how to start and stop a train and their roadbeds are certainly smooth. Not a ripple and their trains run at about 65 to 70 miles per hour. They have one train, they tell me, the Flying Scotsman, which makes

the trip from London to Glasgow at the rate of 72 miles an hour with only two stops, which means that they must be hitting about the even hundred part of the time.

Rationing
"We have not noticed any great shortages. The food is rationed. 4 ounces butter, 16 ounces bread, etc. per day but the bread has vitamin B in it. I'm not fussy about it but it is said to be exceptionally good for one. We have no fruit juices, no fruit, and very little canned goods but the garden stuff is just coming on the market and, no doubt, with the States where they are now, we will soon have lots of transport and be away to the races.

"We are quartered in a beautiful part of England and it is just the right season of the year. Everything is green just around our quarters, where they tell me soldiers have been quartered since the Crimean war. There are some beautiful flower gardens and in our rooms and mess we have fresh daffodils every day with a lot of flowers whose names I couldn't tell you, perking their heads up the next few days. It is damned cool at night, at least we think so, and this English system of heating a room about the size of our old parlor has a little fireplace about 8 inches wide and they don't know the meaning of the word "Insulation." However, it warms up nicely during the day time and we will, like the rest of them, get used to it as time goes on.

"We had quite a long train trip and saw no signs whatsoever of damage by bomb. I had occasion to take a trip into London yesterday and did see a large number of bombed areas but nowhere near as bad as one would have imagined. There might be in London and no doubt are areas of a few blocks square completely gutted but I was down past Hyde Park, Regent Street, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly but in no place were there more than two or three buildings to a block at all badly damaged. Perhaps the corner of a three storey building and the windows broken across the street and next door. Selfridge's store was badly hit at one corner and most of the windows along one side were broken but business went along as usual. It appeared to me that the Hun would have to keep up for about fifteen years at the rate he has been going to make much of an impression. One officer was telling me he saw what was called one of the worst blitz yet when 146 bombs dropped in an area about the size of a small prairie town. It did wreck a lot of houses and shook the people up a bit but the total casualties after a four hour raid was one two-year old calf which had in some manner or other wandered in. Admittedly not a pleasant sight to see bombed buildings of any kind but a great waste of time, men, money and machines.

Driving In London

"Although driving in Chicago was tough to start with it is mild compared to this. Motor cycles, baby Austins and many even smaller cars, huge lorries, bicycles and pedestrians all on what I would say was the wrong side of the road and all going to beat hell. It's tough on the nerves and any people who can drive through traffic like that wouldn't be bothered by a mere air raid. They tell me that licenses are issued on the basis of horsepower not wheel base. That is why 99 percent of the cars are in the baby class from 8-12 horsepower and with a wheel base of 60-80 inches mostly on motorcycle wheels. My Nash with 110 horse power would cost me \$400 a year for license and besides that petrol is rather on the expensive side even in peace time.

"The Indians must have learned from the English in the matter of trails and roads. They never go over or through anything that they can go around in this man's country and in no place known to man is there any roadway in the British Isles with a straightaway of over 150 yards. Beautiful trees line the roads which probably average eighteen feet in width with cross roads, farm entrances, here, there and everywhere. These bicycles would drive you nuts. Still it's a great country and worth coming to.

"We are to get five days landing leave but I'm broke and won't be taking mine for some time. When I do I expect to go to Ireland or northern Scotland. A nice quiet rest in some country inn looks good to me after working for the past ten months.

"Well I haven't told you much outside the fact that I think I am going to like England. We are starting to work next week. A couple of air raid alarms so far but no noise."

SERVICE IS COMPULSORY

Canada Had Provision for Conscription in Country's Defence Nearly 300 Years Ago

By Gladys Arnold Canadian Press Staff Writer

OTTAWA, May 29; (CP)—Canada again is at war and is enforcing compulsory military service for defence of the Dominion but actually this power to conscript defence forces has been on the statute books since 1669. It came into being under the French regime and is fully described in documents recently acquired and which now may be seen in the public archives.

Copies of correspondence, regulations and laws governing Canada's first military history, beginning in 1651 and carrying through to the beginnings of the British Period when in 1777 it was ordained that every citizen from 20 to 60 years of age was obliged to serve in the militia of the parish in which he lived under pain of fine, are part of the 1940 report issued by Dominion Archivist Gustave Lanctot. On June 6, 1651, Canada's first

militia regulations were sent out by Governor d'Alleboust to "Pierre Boucher, captain of the inhabitants of Three Rivers." He was told to see to it that drill took place as often as possible including target practice and to "see that each one keeps his arms in good condition and well charged with ball and shot." To ensure that the inhabitants did not sell or otherwise dispose of their arms, Capt. Boucher was further instructed to visit each home regularly and check up on the arms.

Orders from Louis

In 1669 a letter from King Louis of France instructed compulsory service. He ordered that the whole population be divided into companies and captains, lieutenants and subalterns be appointed to command them. Those easily assembled were to meet once a month in their own districts for drill in handling arms. Wrote the king: "I leave it to your judgment to assemble only those who can do it and return home in two days time in order that more time is not lost which should be devoted to their business or cultivation of their lands."

In order that those who had no money might buy arms Aubert de la Chesnaye, merchant of Quebec

was commanded to sell arms to them and "take in payment good genuine wheat at the rate of 50 sous the bushel and in salt port at the regular price."

In 1758, after the change of regime, the British government passed an act establishing and regulating the militia. "All male persons, planters, inhabitants and their servants between the ages of 16 and 60 residing in this province (Nova Scotia) shall bear arms and duly attend all musters and military exercises of their respective companies . . . three months time shall be allowed to every son after coming to 16 years and to every servant to provide themselves with arms and ammunition," the act read.

Arm Themselves

The act provided that "every enlisted soldier be provided with a musket gun or fuzil' not less than three feet long in the barrel two square flints 12 charges of powder and ball on penalty of 40 shillings fine . . . or one month imprisonment with hard labor for want of such arms."

Citizens were obliged to provide their own firearms and ammunition as well as serve without remuneration while residents of both town and country were obliged to

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billet the soldiers free of charge. Penalties for not attending military exercises included fines and imprisonment.

BEST HALF FOOD
Canada makes up half of the North American continent.

In 1777 Quebec came under similar military regulations.

FAVORS NO PAY
LONDON, May 29; (CP)—Secretary for War Margesson is not in favor of paying Home Guard commanding officers, even though they devote their whole time to their duties.

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Italy has announced plans for colonizing 80,000 families in Libya during 1942.

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