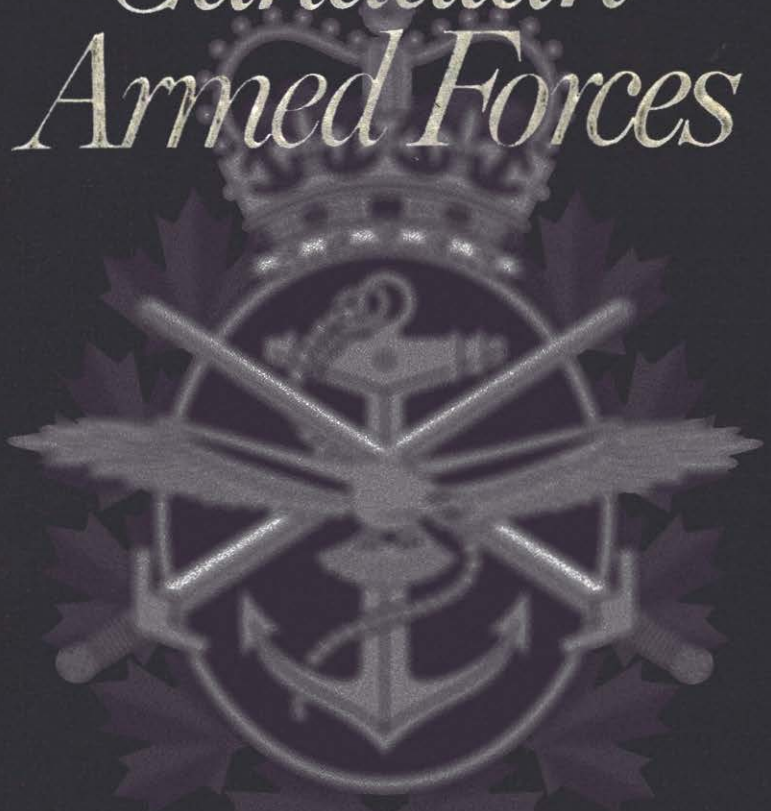
Customs and Traditions of the Canadian Armed Forces



E.C. Russell

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by E.C. Russell

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This modern tendency to scorn and ignore tradition and to sacrifice it to administrative convenience is one that wise men will resist in all branches of life, but more especially in our military life.

Field Marshal Lord Wavell:
Address to the officers of
the Black Watch
(Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada,
Montreal, 1949.

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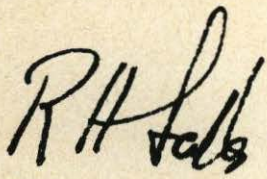
Foreword

As nations go, Canada is a young country. Her armed forces, therefore, relatively speaking, are mere striplings in point of time. Yet, in the century and a bit since Confederation, through war and peace, the Canadian Forces have won respect the world over. Canadians, often called an "unmilitary" people and seldom known for excessive demonstrativeness, have come to regard the forces with esteem and, indeed, affection. Reduced to simplest terms, when they were needed, they were there, ready. Whatever the task or the magnitude of the sacrifice, the forces have acquitted themselves with spirit and a professionalism second to none.

In the course of these pages, the author has gathered the threads of Service beliefs, ideas and attitudes, coloured them with scenes of historical experience and achievement, and woven these threads into a rich and bright-hued fabric called custom and tradition in the Canadian Forces. This book, therefore, though not a history, is an important milestone in the development of the forces.

Many books have been written describing and interpreting the histories of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force. It is too soon to attempt to do the same for the eleven-year-old unified force. But this volume is a timely one. For the first time, the customs and traditions currently observed in the forces have been recorded and their importance in the preservation of high morale and what might be called the "spirit of the Service," described. It is my expectation that this work will

contribute in a substantial way to better understanding amongst our sailors, soldiers and airmen, and the people of this wonderful land.



R. H. Falls
Admiral
Chief of the Defence Staff

National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Ontario
4 December 1979

Preface

On 1 February 1968, the three former Services, which had been for four years proceeding through various stages of integration, became a single, unified Service called the Canadian Armed Forces (more often called, simply, the Canadian Forces). Overnight, the legal entities known as the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force ceased to exist in favour of the new single force. In the near-decade since that day, many of the wrinkles in the new all-green fabric have been ironed out, producing an even more smooth and efficient product.

However, in such a drastic reorganization of a centuries-old system, which in the past had served so well, it was recognized by the defence staff that there was a danger of creating a vacuum in a realm of the old Services — customs and traditions — unless positive steps were taken to inform the officers, men and women of the meaning and value of this aspect of their heritage. This book is the result of one of those steps.

At the outset, it was readily apparent that in treating such a vast subject, the major challenge would be the setting of limits. While history is an indispensable tool in discussing the origins of custom and tradition, there was to be no attempt to present the history of the Canadian Forces or its units. Fundamental to the work would be a discussion of customs and traditions as they exist and are observed today. It was also decided that areas such as dress distinctions and unit badges, though related to the subject of this study, are too extensive for the present volume, and guidance to the reader as to where such material may be found should be provided in footnote form.

On the matter of documentation, it was felt that the casual reader could readily disregard the footnotes, but that the serious student might profit from

full citations throughout the work. Full chapter notes are listed at the end of this text.

Most works of this kind in the past have been designed primarily for the commissioned officer. The treatment here is hoped to be of interest to all ranks and the public at large.

In the researching and writing of this work, I have been most fortunate in the assistance I have received. In their wisdom, senior officers in National Defence Headquarters made it my good fortune to be attached to the Directorate of Ceremonial, whose director, Lieutenant-Colonel N. A. Buckingham (ret'd), and staff, have unstintingly shared their knowledge of my subject as well as clerical and stenographic help, in a truly cheerful, co-operative manner.

The task of researching this study would have been doubly difficult had I not had the fullest co-operation of the staffs of the Library of the Department of National Defence and the Directorate of History.

In addition to books and primary source documents, a very important, indeed indispensable, reservoir of source material is the current knowledge and living memory of Service people, active and retired. I am greatly indebted to the hundreds of people, from general officer to corporal, whom I have interviewed in establishments, units and ships, and to those who took the time and trouble to answer so fully my numerous written queries.

My obligations also include those patient, interested people who graciously read the manuscript at various stages of the writing and saved me from many a slip and error: Lieutenant-Colonel N.A. Buckingham (ret'd); Mr. P.A.C. Chaplin; Rear-Admiral J.A. Fulton; Colonel Strome Galloway; Major General G.A. MacKenzie; Lieutenant-General H. McLachlan; Captain (N) J. W. Russell; and Lieutenant Commander N.J. Russell (ret'd). However, in defence of my critics, I must record that errors of fact, inferences drawn and opinions expressed, are my own.

E. C. Russell
NDHQ Ottawa
1 January 1979

Introduction

Custom and tradition are part and parcel of our daily lives, civilian and military alike. They are very real aspects of life, yet they are rather nebulous terms. Custom and tradition are hard to define with any degree of preciseness; it is easier to say what they are not than what they are.

Custom may be said to be a long-established, continuing practice or observance, considered as an unwritten rule, and dependent for its continued reality and usage on long consent of a community. Many aspects of our social existence are governed or regulated by custom.

Tradition is not so much a practice, but a process of handing down, or passing from one to another, knowledge, beliefs, feelings, ways of thinking, manners or codes of behaviour, a philosophy of life or even a faith, without written instructions. Tradition employs symbolism, as it must, for human beings, save for the exceptionally articulate, find it difficult to express spiritual and abstract ideas in a few words. Long-held feelings and convictions, man has found, are much more effectively conveyed one to another embodied in a symbolic act or a phrase long understood and accepted. How better can one express one's love of country, respect for law and institutions, consideration for one's fellow citizens, and veneration of one's heritage, than by the physical stance and attitude taken when the national flag is hoisted or lowered?

But it must also be remembered that customs and traditions are not sacrosanct for all time. Like words of the language, they are living things; they come and go. For they reflect social conditions and moral values. They mirror political innovation and technological advance. They change. As Alfred Whitehead, the philosopher, put it, societies which cannot combine reverence for their symbolism with freedom of revision must ultimately decay. It is essential that outworn sentiment be quietly retired, and it will be, for the essence of custom and tradition is that they live by consent.

The rate of rapid change in modern society has of necessity resulted in the disappearance of countless minor customs within a generation. For example,

only a very few years ago, no commissioned officers would be seen in civilian clothes without a hat. How else would he give or return a salute without lifting his hat? But the trade of the hatter, like that of the milliner, has to a large degree disappeared. Again, he would not be seen in uniform camouflaged with burgeoning bags of groceries. But with the arrival of the supermarket, the discouragement of goods delivery, and the mass entry of wives into the outside working world, there is no practical alternative. Similarly, there was a time not too long ago when few commissioned officers would be seen riding a bicycle into barrack or dockyard, but wartime shortages of fuel and transportation soon changed the picture.

Some changes in customs in the Canadian Forces came about through the legislated unification of the Services. To many, it seems strange to see seagoing officers and men wearing moustaches contrary to the custom long held by the royal navies but fully in line with army and air force tradition. Yet the time-honoured naval hand salute, with the back of the hand visible, now applies to land and air personnel.

On a more serious note, one recalls the story of the mutiny in HMS *Bounty* in 1789, the eventual courts martial, and the anguished scene as the young midshipman learned his awful fate when he saw his dirk on the table pointing towards him. Right up to the unification of the Services in 1968 a regulation of the Royal Canadian Navy read:

> If the Accused is an officer and has been found guilty, the Officer of the Court will, prior to the court reopening, have turned the Accused's sword towards him.[1]

Another custom that is not long gone was the auctioning of a deceased man's belongings and the paying of prices away beyond the value of the goods by his comrades in arms. This was an effort to cushion the financial blow to the man's wife and children before the days of Service pensions.

Perhaps people are more honest today. In any event, the coloured strand called the Rogue's Yarn once laid into naval cordage, to discourage theft and fencing, has disappeared, as has the Broad Arrow which marked the king's stores from the time of Henry VIII until 1949 in Canada, almost four centuries.[2]

Sometimes, words describing a custom remain part of the language, long after the custom itself has disappeared, for example, "drummed out." One of the last times that a soldier was tried, found guilty, and "drummed out" of the regiment to the tune of "The Rogue's March" and suffered the indignity of being booted out the barrack gate by the youngest drummer, was in 1867.[3]

Similarly, though the term "cashiering" is still fairly well-known, this

ignominious form of dismissal of an officer has seldom been practised in recent years. An interesting case of such a sentence being inflicted was that of an officer of the 64th Regiment of Foot found guilty of drunkenness while responsible for prisoners of war at Melville Island, in the North-west Arm of Halifax harbour in 1813.[4]

Then there are those customs that start out in a more or less frivolous way, become firmly entrenched for a time, then quietly fade away. An example is the top button of the uniform jacket. During the Second World War, in the Royal Canadian Air Force, to leave the top button not done up was the mark of the fighter pilot. In a corvette or a frigate of the Royal Canadian Navy with perhaps six or seven lieutenants borne, including the captain, the top button of the naval officer's monkey jacket, left unsecured, identified "No. 1," the first lieutenant, that is, the executive officer or second-in-command. A very popular custom in the informal atmosphere of war, the unsecured top button could not stand up to the "good order and discipline" of peacetime.

On quite a different plane, it is unfortunate that in the minds of some outside the Service, there is confusion regarding military tradition. From time to time "the military mind" is castigated, and it is said that military people are hidebound, unbending traditionalists who look at defence problems today in terms of how the last war was fought. Such critics confuse and compound two quite separate areas of thought and endeavour.

No one in his right mind is going to be a party to strategic concepts, tactical thinking, or operational procedures that have no place in modern times. But this should not be confused with the traditional military appreciation of the solid value of the qualities we call patriotism, dedication, loyalty, honour, courage, and the resultant pride in one's unit and pride in the Service.[5] An eminent naval historian has said it most aptly:

> The planes, torpedoes, bombs and mines of the Navy may be likened to mushrooms in the meadow of its long story: but Tradition — what is expected of it and what it expects of itself — is a full-grown oak tree, still in its prime, still planted squarely in the middle of the field.[6]

Canadians in the past learned to their sorrow that sometimes a people must stand and fight for the principles they cherish. Essential characteristics of a military force charged with the defence of a people are the standards of training, the levels of discipline, and the quality of leadership, which together constitute professional competence. The goal, then, is to prepare the sailor, soldier and airman to face with confidence and spirit the stresses and demands of modern warfare. But there is one more ingredient in the mix that produces

the first-class fighting man. It is morale. As Field Marshal Montgomery has said, the morale of the soldier is the most important single factor in war.

A Serviceman does, indeed, "march to a different drum." To succeed in action he must have courage and the mental and physical toughness essential to endurance. His training must give him the necessary skills, and confidence in his weapons. He must believe in his leaders, have trust in his comrades, and know what he is fighting for. His self-discipline must be such that he can and will obey orders implicitly under the most trying conditions, yet do so with imagination and resourcefulness, and if need be with independence. No matter how sophisticated the vehicle or the weapon, it is the spiritual well-being and professional competence of the individual fighting man that determines the decisive force in battle.

The history of our forces over the years gives ample confirmation that custom and tradition make a strong contribution to the building of high morale and sense of purpose by fostering that pride in the Service and in themselves that has so often inspired Canadians to press on in adversity and win through to victory.

1
The Salute

The salute is as old as history itself, for, essentially, it is at once a greeting and a mark of respect, and, as such, long pre-dates organized military forces. In whatever stratum of society, the characteristic that marks a gentleman or a lady is the respect he or she shows towards superiors, subordinates and peers alike. One way in which members of the Canadian Forces show such respect is in the pride and smartness with which they salute or pay compliments, a mark of good manners indispensable to Service discipline.

Like many other customs, saluting has something dynamic about it. Whether by hand, gun or ensign, it is full of life. Outward appearances change from time to time, but the symbolism, the feeling or message conveyed, remains constant. An eighteenth century author described the salute of his day in this quaint, but colourful, word-picture:

> Salute, in military matters, a discharge of artillery, or small arms, or both, in honour of some person of extraordinary quality. The colours likewise salute royal persons, and generals commanding in chief; which is done by lowering the point to the ground. In the field, when a regiment is to be reviewed by the king, or his general, the drums beat a march as he passes along the line, and the officers salute one after another, bowing their half-pikes or swords to the ground; then recover, and take off their hats. The ensigns salute all together, by lowering their colours.[1]

Salutes can be categorized as royal salutes, national salutes and personal salutes. Such marks of respect or paying of compliments are accorded in different ways, examples being: the hand salute; the sound of bugles or trumpets; piping the side on board ship; the playing of the national anthem and other musical salutes; parading guards and bands; the discharge of guns;

and the dipping of ensigns and lowering of colours. Each form of salute has a long tradition of its own.

The hand salute is the personal salute of officers and other ranks. It is a symbolic movement having several meanings. It is a greeting. It is a mark of mutual respect, trust and confidence. It is an act of courtesy and good manners. It is a mark of loyalty. It is a recognition of the authority vested in the queen's commission and the responsibility and status of the bearer of that commission; it also demonstrates the willingness, indeed the obligation, to accept direction. And there is no servility in the salute, no loss of dignity, for everyone in the Service has a superior and receives direction, right up to the chief of the defence staff and Her Majesty the Queen who exercise their various authorities by virtue of the powers vested in them by Act of Parliament.

The hand salute of the Canadian Forces is the naval salute in which the palm of the hand is turned slightly down and inwards, and is not seen, unlike the flat, open-palmed salute of the army and air force tradition. It was adopted at the time of the unification of the forces in 1968. Yet, historically, the hand salute was used in the British army long before it was in the Royal Navy.

There are several stories about the origin of the hand salute, but because of the long practice of this custom such beliefs can seldom be substantiated. Most contain the idea of showing friendly intention: the open right hand, the weapon hand, empty; the visor of the knight's helmet lifted to the open position, showing the face and demonstrating the voluntary vulnerability of the person saluting. However, in spite of the lack of hard evidence, it would seem reasonable to assume that the hand salute has evolved from the ancient gesture of greeting and mark of respect, the uncovering of the head, which, itself, probably originated in the days of chivalry.[2]

Previous to the middle of the eighteenth century, in the British army as well as on the continent, it seems quite clear that the personal salute was given by removing the hat. Indeed, this custom persisted in the Royal Navy well into the nineteenth century. But in the years between the Rising in Scotland (1745) and the American Revolution (1776), certain regiments of the British army sporadically introduced the hand salute of touching the head-dress. A regimental order of the Coldstream Guards in 1745 read: "The men ordered not to pull off their hats when they pass an officer, or speak to them, but only to clap up their hands to their hats, and bow as they pass by." This would seem a reasonable step when one considers the ornate design of the regimental headdresses of the period and the wear and tear involved in their continual removal.[3]

This would seem, too, to explain the difference between the army salute —

the flat, open palm and the simple touching of the elaborate hats of the time, and the naval salute — the turned down palm (said to be soiled with pitch) being the first movement of seizing the broad-brimmed tarpaulin hat of the sailor between thumb and forefinger for purposes of removal in saluting. Certainly, the naval hand salute, the one used today in the Canadian Forces, became official in the Royal Navy in 1890 and was clearly defined in article 145 of *King's Regulations & Admiralty Instructions* (1908) which applied to the newly established Royal Canadian Navy on its formation in 1910.[4]

Of course, the hand salute has a much wider application than the mark of respect given and returned by individual persons. There is the expression of loyalty when the national anthem is played; of respect for the flag and what it stands for, at colours and sunset; and for the queen's colour and the standards, colours and guidons of units.

One such observance is peculiar to shipboard life. It is customary for officers and men to salute when boarding and leaving the ship. In some navies, the person pauses at the ship's side, faces the stern (where the ensign and quarter-deck are located) and then salutes. Although this is not normal practice in HMC ships, the salute associated with stepping on to the quarter-deck is still a practice in Canadian ships of war.

The origin and precise meaning of the salute to the quarter-deck have long been debated. Some claim that it is a mark of respect for the place of command and the royal authority from which the command, the captain's commission, is derived. But many historians believe, though without solid evidence, that this salute has evolved from an obeisance paid to a shrine or crucifix which it is said was once housed aft, and may even be related to religious observances of pre-Christian times.

Certainly, there is abundant proof that, for centuries, the quarter-deck has been considered a territory almost hallowed in nature, respected as the place of honour in the ship, the seat of authority and command, an area of the upperdeck restricted to use by only certain members of the ship's company, and requiring a standard of dress and decorum not demanded for other parts of the ship.[5] Something of the aura of a respect approaching reverence peculiar to the quarter-deck may be seen in this excerpt from the writings of a sea officer nearly a century and a half ago:

> Every person, not excepting the captain, when he puts his foot on this sacred spot, touches his hat . . . So completely does this form grow into a habit, that in the darkest night, and when there may not be a single person near the hatchway, it is invariably attended to with the same precision.[6]

In HMC ships, what is deemed to be the forward limit of the quarter-deck is marked by a strip of brass fixed to the deck plating, forming a line across the ship's deck from side to side. This is a far cry from the quarter-deck of the old "wooden walls," elevated above the main deck and, yet again, above the half-deck. And it may be because of the radical changes in ship design that the ancient custom of saluting the quarter-deck is, in fact, waning. The locating of sonar detection gear, mortar wells and flight decks in the after part of the modern destroyer has probably doomed the spacious quarter-decks of yesteryear and, therefore, the activities and observances traditionally associated with them.

Finally, there is the hand salute which is given in certain units in commemoration of those who have gone before, an act which symbolizes what might be called the "spirit of the Regiment." Each day all ranks on first entering the armoury housing the Royal Montreal Regiment face and salute a tablet fixed to the wall which is dedicated to the regiment's fatal battle casualties. The same observance is made in the Belleville Armoury of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment where an eight foot square plaque in the form of a crown and shoulder flash, unveiled in 1965, is a reminder of those who have been transferred to the regiment's "White Battalion."[7] Similarly, all ranks who pass the plaque in the centre of the drill hall of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal pause and salute the regimental dead who fell "au champ d'honneur."[8]

The cadets of the Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, are reared in the same tradition. At the entrance to the college grounds is a massive gate of limestone and granite erected by the RMC Club, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1923 by the Governor-General, Viscount Byng of Vimy. On bronze tablets affixed to the gate are the names of the college's war dead. In keeping with the custom of the Service, all cadets salute the Royal Military College Memorial Arch.[9]

Closely related to the hand salute is the salute when armed with a rifle, the "present arms," and the first movement of the "present," the butt salute. Here again is the continuing theme of voluntary defencelessness to show friendly intent. In the position assumed by the sentry or guard the weapon is harmless.

An early instance of the present was the case of the Green Regiment, one of the regiments of the City of London Trained Bands or Militia, at the Restoration of 1660. This unit formed a guard of honour at Southwark Bridge for the return from exile of King Charles II. We are told that these troops "who by order of their Officer's, had presented to His Majesty as he passed the Butt end of their Musquets, gave and discharged a great many Vollies of shot" after the royal cortège had passed.[10]

Although there is no official Canadian Forces pattern sword, this weapon is

still used on ceremonial occasions, and this despite the fact that the Royal Canadian Air Force discontinued the use of the sword in 1952. Swords are used by armed parties escorting the queen's and unit colours, and in change of command ceremonies. Sea officers still wear swords when making formal calls on dignitaries at ports-of-call.

As in other forms of salute, the sword, though drawn, is, in the final position, pointing to the ground, a friendly, as opposed to a hostile, gesture. This act symbolizes the trust in putting down one's guard. The guard, or that part of the sword protecting the hand, was in early times in the form of a cross, and still is in some patterns today. This has given rise to the long-held belief that the first movement, wherein the hilt is brought up to the chin, is a relic of the Crusader of medieval times and his custom of kissing the cross (hilt) immediately before going into combat.

The firing of gun salutes in honour of a royal or other distinguished personage, or in honour of a foreign state, or to mark a special occasion, is a very old custom. Gun salutes executed by the Canadian Forces today are fired from the guns of HMC ships, and by batteries of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery at designated saluting stations from coast to coast.

This ancient custom seems first to have developed in ships at sea. In the days of sail, the guns ranged at their ports along the length of the gun decks were often kept fully shotted and charged, ready for action. Firing them in salute meant that for the considerable length of time it took to swab, re-load and run out the guns again, the ship was virtually defenceless, indicating friendly intent.

Some form of protocol measuring the degree of honour accorded by the number of rounds fired has always been observed. Many a gunner has passed marbles from one pocket to the other to make certain of avoiding insulting some lofty personage or causing an international incident! It is interesting to compare the language used in regulations today with those of nearly two centuries ago:

> Military honours consisting of gun salutes . . . to distinguished personages . . . shall be classified as: . . . General Salutes in which the number of rounds fired depends on the occasion or the status of the personage being honoured . . . .[11]

> When any Persons of Quality, or of a Publick Character, embark on board any of His Majesty's Ships, they may be saluted at their coming on board, and also at their departure, with the following Number of Guns.
> viz.:
>
> A Duke, or Ambassador with 15 Guns. Other Public Ministers, or Persons of Quality, with 11 guns or less, according to the Degree of their Quality.[12]

The point that intrigues most people regarding the gun salute is the fact that on most occasions the number of rounds fired, both long ago and in modern times, is an odd number: twenty-one guns for a royal salute and national salute, nineteen for an ambassador, seventeen for an admiral or a general, and so on. Here, again, much has been written about this interesting custom related as it is to ancient religious beliefs and old superstitions. Shakespeare was very much aware of this phenomenon, as shown in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," where he has Falstaff saying in regard to a third-time occurrence:

> I hope good luck lies in odd numbers . . . They say there is divinity in odd numbers . . . (Act V, Scene 1).

The fact is that, traditionally, odd numbers in the firing of salutes meant joyous occasions, and even numbers indicated death, though, of course, there have been exceptions. A seventeenth century writer had this to say:

> The odd number in ways of salute and ceremony is so observable at sea, that whensoever guns be given otherwise it is taken for an expression that either the Captain, or Master, or Master Gunner is dead in the voyage . . . . It is a general custom also (as aforesaid) upon the death either of the Captain, Master, Master-Gunner, or any chief officer, that when the corpse is thrown overboard to its sea grave, to ring the knell and farewell with some guns; the which (as aforenoted) are always to be of an even number.[13]

Just when the practice of firing gun salutes took on the status symbol system of number of rounds fired is not known. The evidence suggests the human frailty of one-upmanship was the villain. Certainly, as early as Elizabethan times, there were complaints about the expense of firing guns in salute in large numbers.[14] This led to various regulations designed to limit and define the number of rounds fired.

One of these was published in 1688 in London called "An Establishment Touching Salutes by Guns to be Henceforth Observed in His Majesty's Royal Navy." A scale of salutes to be accorded naval officers was laid down: for a captain, eleven guns; for a captain doing the duty of a commodore, thirteen guns; a rear-admiral, fifteen guns; a vice-admiral, seventeen guns; and an admiral, nineteen guns. No mention was made of the honours to be accorded royalty, but by regulation in 1731 the admiralty decreed that a royal salute was to be "such number of guns as the Chief Officer shall think proper, not exceeding 21 guns each ship." Thus, it would seem that the salute for the sovereign was perhaps a progression from that for an admiral.[15] But where the Lord High Admiral of England came into the picture was not mentioned.

A quite different form of salute is the dipping of the ensign. It evolved from the early custom of lowering topsails or, in small craft, letting fly the mainsheet. In spilling air out of the sail, the symbolic gesture of taking way off the vessel was achieved, indicating submission. This idea can be seen in an eighteenth century seaman's handbook: "To lower or strike the Flag, is to pull it down upon the Cap; and is either done in saluting with the utmost Respect, or in Token of yielding to an Enemy in Fight."[16]

In the British tradition the custom of dipping the ensign to a ship of the Royal Navy developed in the centuries between King John and Trafalgar, a period of six centuries. The English monarchs demonstrated their sovereignty over the "Narrow Seas" of the English Channel by demanding, and for the most part getting, this mark of respect for the British flag.[17]

Finally, the gun salute has for centuries had a part in expressing the joy of a people's thanksgiving, much in the same spirit as a Te Deum is sung in the churches for deliverance from catastrophe. Sometimes the guns roared out in the sheer joy of celebration.

One such occasion on the grand scale was the celebration of a small city, Norwich in East Anglia, when the Spanish Armada was destroyed in battle and storm in 1588.

> On 22 September, the daye of giving God thanks for the overthrowe of the Spanyards, the great guns were firing salvoes in salute all day long, the town's soldiers let off their calivers and muskets in the meadows. The flags were hung out and to the accompaniment of drums, flutes and trumpets the waits [official bands of musicians maintained by a city or town] sang at the city cross.[18]

Many have seen the great cross illuminated against the night sky high on Mount Royal above the city of Montreal. But few relate that scene to one that occurred only a few decades after the Armada battle.

The stockaded settlement of Ville-Marie on the island of Montreal was founded in 1642. On Christmas Day that first year, the little fort housing Maisonneuve and *Messieurs et Dames de la Société de Notre-Dame pour la conversion des Sauvages de la Nouvelle-France* was threatened with imminent destruction by floodwaters of the swollen St. Lawrence.

On 6 January, the day of the Feast of St. Joseph, 1643, Maisonneuve carried to the mountain top a newly fashioned cross and the settlers erected it there in gratitude for their deliverance. On returning to the fort, the tiny garrison continued the celebration "by the firing of the cannons that stood on a platform to defend the settlement."[19]

Very few Canadian cities have had the distinction of receiving their names

accompanied by a royal salute. Such was the case for Toronto. It was 24 August 1793 and the site, protected from lake-borne gales by Toronto Island, had for inhabitants a few friendly Indians and a small garrison. It was at this time that Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe learned of the Duke of York's victory at Famars earlier in the year. To celebrate the victory and to mark the naming of the new station, York, Simcoe soon marshalled his resources. Drawn up on the sandy beach at the edge of the pine forest were twelve- and eighteen-pounders brought earlier from Oswegatchie and Carleton Island, and a detachment of the Queen's Rangers. Offshore lay HM Schooners *Mississaga* and *Onondaga.* All the forces that day participated in the royal salute which simultaneously gave thanks for success against the enemy in Europe and marked the beginning of a great city which would rise out of the wilderness of the New World.[20]

Finally, there is one royal salute that must surely have confounded the queen's enemies. It was 2 June 1953 in the Canadian lines opposite Hill 227, to the northward of Panmunjom in Korea. In the celebration marking the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, "a bounteous rum issue provided the wherewithal for a toast to Her Majesty" by the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment. But, not to be outdone by the "footsloggers," the divisional artillery and tanks of Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians), supporting the RCRs, fired salutes. Some of these salvoes revealed themselves to be red, white and blue smoke enveloping "two humps known to be occupied by the enemy."[21]

2
The Mess

The word "mess," in the Service context, conjures up different pictures for different people. It is a matter of time and place. In the Canadian Forces, there are separate messes for commissioned officers, warrant officers and sergeants, and junior ranks. There are unit messes, base and station messes, and messes in HMC ships.

Derived originally from the Latin *missum,* the Old French word *mes* had the meaning of a dish, a serving of food or a course of dishes and, eventually, a serving dish holding food for four people. This, in turn, took on the connotation of a group of four who habitually sat together at table and helped themselves from the same dishes — hence a mess.

The usual definition for mess indicates the functional, practical role — the home of all those officers, men and women, who live in; the club for all serving personnel; the centre of social life on a base or station, or in a ship. Indeed, in the two hundred years we have had messes, the continuing theme common to all is that the mess is where officers and men take their food, whether they are bivouacked in the field, comfortably housed in a modern barracks, hanging on to the mess table in a ship at sea, or dining amidst the splendour of plate and crystal, good cheer and sparkling repartee, of the finest mess in the land.

But the mess is more than that. There are characteristics that tend toward the abstract, and are therefore not so readily defined. The seasoned regimental sergeant major knows the value of the friendly, informal atmosphere of the unit mess where, over a period of time, the Service attitudes and professional competence of junior sergeants are slowly but surely built into something approaching the peak of perfection — far better than can be done in the classroom.[1] The same kind of learning process, so essential to a professional fighting force, goes on continuously in every wardroom and every unit

officers' mess ashore, where that blend of authority and mutual respect, of friendship and good-humoured sharing of experience, contributes so much to *esprit de corps* and pride in service. This whole concept is something unique to the military.

Since time out of memory, organized fighting forces, unless compelled to live off the land, have been provided by their masters with rations of food and water, essential as they are to survival. It is likely that messes designed for communal eating first came into being in the name of economy of time, expense and effort. The common pot or kettle was the more efficient way to prepare the soldier's stew and the sailor's lobscouse. But, no doubt, companionship had much to do with it, too. As Falconer's dictionary put it back in 1815, "Mess among seamen, implies any company of the officers or crew of a ship, who eat, drink and associate together."[2]

The beginnings of organized messes in the army seem to be eighteenth century in origin. Certainly, there is a marked difference between officers' messing arrangements in the Seven Years' War and those at the close of the Napoleonic Wars. As Montcalm prepared for the defence of Quebec in the spring of 1759, Amherst was gathering his forces at New York, and a glimpse of regimental life may be seen in the daily order book of one of his regiments, the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment, under date of 14 March 1759: "Such of the Gentlemen of the Regiment as intend to mess with Mrs. Calender, the sutler, for next campaign, to give their names to the Adjutant by Monday morning. Divine Service tomorrow as usual."[3]

In other words, in the forthcoming advance up the Hudson and down the Richelieu to Montreal, Amherst's officers could make their own arrangements for cooking their rations, or, for a fee, could sit down to table with other officers in the tent of Mrs. Calender, one of several sutlers who customarily followed on the heels of armies in the field for the purpose of turning a profit.

To indicate the advances made in the concept of messing, it is of interest to note what amounted to an elaborate mess dinner in the field during operations in the year 1812. One of Wellington's young subalterns during the Peninsular War described the tactical situation on the Tagus River in the spring of that year and a "jollification dinner" in which all officers and men of the 34th Regiment of Foot participated:

> So we determined to get up a big mess dinner for the whole regiment once for all, to celebrate the battle of Albuera .... We selected a pretty spot outside the town, under some cork-trees, marked out the size of our table on the green sod, and cut a trench all round. Our legs in the trench, we sat on the ground, with the table in front, but without a table-cloth. This was our arrangement.[4]

In garrison, organized mess life received a real impetus when permanent barrack buildings came into vogue. Certainly, at Halifax in 1787, where there were three barrack blocks, the army officers' mess was the centre of the port's social life. The members' rations for a week, valued at three shillings, sixpence, were augmented by means of a levy of two dollars, to purchase extras for the table, though there were complaints from the officers of the 4th Regiment of Foot about the high cost of mutton at sixpence a pound and twenty pence a bottle for sherry and port.[5]

Army officers early in the nineteenth century dined well during passage at sea, though, on occasion, their mess facilities were not as stable as when in garrison ashore. In January 1809 HMS *Fisguard,* frigate, was escorting a troop convoy to reinforce the British army in Spain. Brigadier-General William Dyott recorded an incident in the army officers' mess on board the *Fisguard* in the notorious Bay of Biscay:

> In the night another gale of wind came on, and it blew extremely hard the next morning. We were sitting at breakfast in the cabin, when a wave struck the ship, and in consequence of our all clinging to the table hands and feet, the lashings gave way, and coffee, tea, ham, biscuits, generals, aides-de-camp, sailors, etc., were sprawling on the floor, paddling away in different fluids, some with a slice of ham plaistered to his cheek, others with his eye closed by a pat of butter; it was the most ridiculous scene possible.[6]

Naval messes afloat are institutions of great antiquity. Emphasis has been not so much on organization, as upon actions and attitudes distilled over the years into a body of customs that have withstood the tests of time and of social and technological change. Much of what we see in ships' messes today has been dictated by space limitations in ships and by conditions imposed by the long sea passage. Indeed, in a sense, conditions which obtained in Drake's *Golden Hind* prevail in HMC submarines today.

The ship, in terms of the numbers of officers and men embarked and the masses of fighting equipment borne, is a relatively small vehicle. Add to this fuel, stores, the means of propulsion and the ships' capacity to keep the seas for long periods of time, and the problems of living cheek by jowl and at the same time preserving the strictest discipline essential to top fighting efficiency become readily apparent. It is these factors, which down through the centuries of seafaring have produced the customs routines and what may be called "a system of manners," that govern mess life at sea.

In the days of sail a ship-of-the-line had several decks. The seamen had their quarters, their home, on the lowerdeck, the lowest of the gun decks, where the

ships heaviest guns were ranged on both sides, each with its port through which it was aimed and fired. To this day, the ratings, or other ranks as they are called now, of the ships' company, are known collectively as "lowerdeck."

A visit to HMS *Victory* at Portsmouth will reveal how these gun decks in action had an unimpeded, clear sweep the length of the ship. It was over the guns that the seaman slung his hammock and, in groups of six or eight, called a mess, sat down at a movable mess table secured between the guns.[7] One man, on a rotating basis, called the "cook of the mess," carried kettles to the galley, drew his mess's cooked rations, and divided them between his messmates. This was called "broadside" messing, a system largely discontinued in the Royal Canadian Navy in the 1950s with the arrival of new construction ships and dining hall cafeteria messing. (However, HMC submarines *Ojibwa* and *Onondaga* still have broadside messing.) Today, the spaces where seamen sleep are still called "messdecks."

The naval officers' mess is called the wardroom, a term in use in the Royal Navy for well over two hundred years. It has a curious derivation. In a sailing ship of war, the great cabin, which was the captain's quarters, was under the quarter-deck. Below that, at the after end of the upperdeck, was what was called in the seventeenth century the ward robe, adjacent to which were the cabins of the ships's officers. This ward robe was originally a store room for items of value taken from captured ships. When empty, ships' officers, off-watch, would congregate there and use it as a mess, and ward robe became wardroom.[8]

In a military force, no matter what the defence policy of a nation may be, the primary objective must be professional military competence, the ability and the readiness to carry out military operations of a very high standard. Such a goal requires leadership, discipline, skill, courage and equipment. But in war, and in peacetime, too, all of these are of little avail without one more ingredient — morale, or *esprit de corps.* Here, the mess has always had an important contribution to make, and that contribution takes several forms, some of which newcomers to the military may be quite unaware.

After the formal classroom and on-the-job training is complete, it is often in the day-to-day contacts in the mess that professional competence is honed to a fine edge. Of necessity, the military is an authoritarian form of social organization where all are subject to the same code of discipline. Yet it is the mess where that delicate balance between formality and informality promotes a healthy spirit amongst its members, seniors and juniors alike, building that sense of mutual respect and trust so necessary in a fighting force. Where men are forced to live in confined quarters, such as the wardroom of a small ship or the mess of an isolated station on land, it is the time-tested philosophy of

custom and routine, of civility, good manners and good taste, a basic and lively consideration and respect for others, that encourages the healthy relationships so essential in a first-class fighting unit. Inevitably, the tone and attitudes of the mess are almost electrically reflected in those of the unit as a whole. The great British admiral, Earl St. Vincent, was very much alive to this when he wrote: "Discipline begins in the Wardroom. I dread not the seamen. It is the indiscreet conversations of the officers and their presumptuous discussions of the orders they receive that produce all our ills."[9]

3
Dining in the Mess

The uniquely military institution, the mess, has always had the connotation of the taking of food at table in a congenial atmosphere. One of the difficulties of the novice in understanding this aspect of mess life is the variety of terms used in connection with mess dining. We are not concerned here with the snack-bar facilities provided in some messes, but rather with properly served meals.

Normally, in a unit's or ship's mess, breakfast and luncheon are informal meals. In wartime, generally speaking, the evening meal is of the same category, properly served to mess members who are properly dressed in accordance with the mess rules, but still, informal.[1]

In the navy this evening meal, served without formality, where members may come or go as they see fit, is called supper. In home ports, or large ports elsewhere, normally supper is served in the mess. In large ships, where dinner in the evening is daily routine, an early supper is also served for those who for any reason, including duty, cannot dine. In small ships, supper is the norm and more formal dining is arranged periodically as circumstances afloat permit.[2] The Royal Air Force has used the word "supper" in this sense since its inception and there was a similar tradition in the former Royal Canadian Corps of Signals.[3]

Mess dining, on the other hand, means that there is a degree of formality, or ritual, governed by customs which have proven their worth over the years, together with rules developed by the mess, both of which contribute so much to the sense of satisfaction of good fellowship and good dining.

While different terms are used in different messes ("different ships, different long splices!"), mess dining can be broken down into three categories — dining in, mixed formal dinner (for want of a better term), and the mess dinner. The word "formal" is really redundant in this context because all

military dining enjoys a degree of formality. Also, in reading various unit standing orders, many variations of terminology were found for these three types of mess dining. Because messes differ so widely in terms of size, location, amenities and historical background, the wide variety of protocol and custom in mess dining in the Canadian Forces serves to enrich military life.

A dining-in is less formal than attending a mess dinnner, but it is a parade, ensuring the attendance of all members unless there is just cause. In some messes, this kind of dinner is used to welcome new members and to say farewell to those leaving the unit. In the navy, it is called "dining in the mess" and is normal routine in large ships. In the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, there is what is called ordinary guest night, which may be a dining-in once a week for living-in officers only, attired in dinner jackets, or may be a more formal regimental guest night, say once a month, where mess dress is the order of the day.

A mixed formal dinner is a dinner in the mess to which lady guests have been invited. (It is an awkward term, for the dinner by mess definition is formal, but then an impression of the courses being mixed would be undesirable, too.) Procedure for this type of dinner is that of a normal mess dinner except that members escort into the dining room the lady seated next to him according to the seating plan, not his wife or lady guest. Also, the lady guests leave the table when smoking commences and proceed to another room for coffee and liqueurs. As often occurs, protocol does differ, and a member is well advised to know beforehand the customs of the mess. For example, CFP 195 *(Military Knowledge Manual)* states one should seek out and escort the lady to be seated on one's left, while various regimental standing orders say it is the lady on the right. One can readily imagine the foul-up scene!

The high point of mess life is, of course, the mess dinner. One has only to participate in a well conducted mess dinner to appreciate how over a period of two centuries a whole series of customs, usages and rituals have been fashioned into a work of art which is a pleasure to the eye and a challenge to the mind, as well as a delight to the palate. Mess dinners are intended to be happy "family" occasions, not doleful, stuffed-shirt affairs. Rather uniquely, they allow for camaraderie in a setting governed by formal rules of conduct. Juniors and seniors meet in the mess on a footing of social equality, though not professional equality, and in the mess, it being the home of living-in officers, the good manners of ordinary home life, such as respect and deference to one's seniors, are very much alive. The mess dinner affords the opportunity for all members, of whatever rank and responsibility, to meet on a friendly but formal occasion.

Like a dining-in, a mess dinner is a parade; all members are expected to

attend. Basically, it is a dinner for the members of the mess alone, although, upon occasion, guests of the mess may be invited. Some messes set aside particular mess dinners as guest nights, to which both guests of the mess as well as guests of individual members may be invited. But whatever term is used to describe the occasion, the mess dinner is the most formal function held there. It is where every member is turned out in his sparkling best, and the mess plate graces the table; where punctuality, ceremonial hospitality and good manners are the order of the evening; where the traditional rituals of military dining foster good fellowship in an atmosphere of what might be called "spirited formality."

The proceedings of mess dinners vary according to unit tradition. This is particularly characteristic of army messes where dining customs have come down from individual regiment or corps practice, while naval and air force messes tend to share a single Service background. However, common to all are four stages of mess dining — assembly, the meal itself, the Loyal Toast and the conclusion.

The usual time for members to assemble in the ante-room or lounge area of the mess is 1930 hours (sailors consider the word hours superfluous when speaking of time and say simply "1930") which allows a half hour for a friendly glass with friends before dinner. It also affords an opportunity to speak to the commanding officer or the senior officer present, and, in some messes, the president of the mess committee known as the PMC. If it is a mixed formal dinner, this is the time for each member to view the seating plan and determine which lady he is to escort to the table.

During the half-hour assembly there are sound signals or calls which inform the members the amount of time left before dinner and the time to proceed into the dining room. The number of calls and the method by which they are sounded differ from mess to mess.

In messes of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery and 1st Canadian Signal Regiment, the half-hour dress (meaning one half hour until dinner), the quarter dress and the officers' mess calls are sounded by one or more trumpeters, and at the first two of these calls, members go on chatting as if the signals had not been heard. In the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, the officers' mess call is called the "dinner horn."

At a mess dinner of the warrant officers and sergeants at CFB Kingston the three traditional warning calls, including the five-minute call, are sounded by trumpet, and then, when dinner is ready, and in recognition of the number of sailors on base and the contribution made by the ship's company of the former naval communications establishment, HMCS *Gloucester*, a "bo's'n of the day" pipes "hands to dinner."[4]

In naval and air force messes, the senior mess steward simply informs the mess president that dinner is ready to be served and a few quiet words soon has the members heading for the dining room.

The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment has the unusual custom of the vice-president of the mess committee, "Mr. Vice," assembling all but the head table in the dining room five minutes before dinner, where the members stand behind their chairs to await the arrival of the head table officers and guests who meanwhile have been marshalled by the PMC.[5]

Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, during the half-hour assembly, have two interesting events — formal reading of the dinner proclamation by the adjutant and the presentation of guests to the guest of honour.

In most messes, smoking is permitted during the assembly in the ante-room or lounge, but traditionally, in air force messes, there is no smoking during the pre-dinner assembly right through until after the Loyal Toast.

In some messes, for example those of the North Saskatchewan Regiment and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, officers and guests are played into dinner by the commanding officer's piper leading the way. But, if a unit is fortunate enough to have a band in attendance, the old tradition of walking to the tune of "The Roast Beef of Old England" is likely to be observed.[6] This piece of music has been a popular officers' mess call for many years ashore and afloat. A captain of the Royal Navy, writing of service in HMS *Leander,* fifty guns, on the North American station in 1804, referred to the drum beating " 'The Roast Beef of Old England', the well-known dinner signal of the officers."[7] Interestingly enough, this call is employed to this day in ships of the United States Navy.[8]

On entering the dining room, mess members proceed directly to their places, led by the president who escorts the guest of honour if there is one, although in some messes this honour goes to the commanding officer, or senior officer present. In army and air force messes, members remain standing behind their chairs until grace is said, but in naval wardrooms officers seat themselves as soon as the president has done so, after which grace is said.

If a chaplain is present, he is usually asked to say grace, if not the president does so, or he may ask any member to ask the blessing. Traditionally, grace is the simple "For what we are about to receive, thank God." However, variations are permitted and are heard, but the idea that the navy's grace is the abrupt "Thank God!" is a myth and is generally discouraged when attempted. Yet, these very words — Thank God — comprise the reverently offered grace of the Royal Canadian Hussars, of Montreal.

In the Canadian Forces, the whole matter of what officer is responsible for the conduct of the mess dinner encompasses considerable variety of tradition.

"Mr. President" ("Madam President") may be the PMC (president of the mess committee), the president of the mess, or a president for the day. In each case, he is assisted by "Mr. Vice" ("Madam Vice") (the vice-president) who may be the vice PMC or simply vice-president for the day. Very often, he is the junior member of the mess. In many regimental messes, the PMC certainly arranges the dinner and the mechanics of its smooth running, but it is the commanding officer who presides over the dinner proceedings. In the air force tradition, the president may invite the station commander to lead the way into dinner and escort the senior guest, but retain actual control of the dinner.[9] In naval messes, the picture is quite different owing to the internal organization of a ship of war and its confined spaces. The captain of one of HMC ships has his own quarters and dines alone; he is not a member of the wardroom. In a large ship, the president of the mess may be any officer appointed to that ship. In destroyers and below he is most likely to be the executive officer of the ship. At a naval mess dinner the president is in complete charge and always leads the way into dinner. The captain may attend as an invited guest or as an honorary member. Also, unless it is a large dinner with a seating plan, naval officers take their seats without reference to rank.[10]

The dinner itself consists of several courses with appropriate wines. Conduct throughout the meal is intended to be congenial but formal and most presidents will "nip in the bud" any attempts at horseplay or practical joking until after the conclusion of the dinner. Smoking is not permitted at table until after the Loyal Toast. Indeed, over the centuries dining rules have evolved which have proven to contribute considerably to a sense of well-being and the enjoyment of dining in the mess.

Traditionally, and in fact at the risk of sanctions, a member may not without the permission of the president, whatever his rank; come in late and sit down at the table; leave the table, or return to it after being permitted to leave; read or write; partake of a course before the president; use coarse language or tell off-colour stories; discuss or place bets; discuss political, religious or other potentially highly controversial issues; "talk shop" of other than general Service interest; mention a woman's name unless she is a member of the Service or a well known public figure; speak in a foreign language; or propose a toast on his own initiative[11] — all of which make a mess dinner sound like a heavily circumscribed affair, which it is not. It is just that these rules, which have become customs, help to ensure good dining in an atmosphere of relaxation, moderation, courtesy and stimulating conversation.

Once the meal has been consumed, preparations are made for the Loyal Toast and the other toasts which may follow. All is cleared from the table except the port glasses. It is at this point that a curious custom is practised in

the messes of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery which traditionally use runners on the table. On a signal, given as soon as the cutlery and china have been removed, the mess stewards take up position at the ends of the table. There they proceed to twist the runners, the number of turns depending on the length of the cloth. When ready, the stewards at the foot of the table pull the cloths clear of the length of the table with one swift motion.[12] The decanters of port wine (sometimes madeira) are now placed on the mess table in readiness for the Loyal Toast.

The custom of toasting or drinking healths comes down to us from ancient times. Greeks and Romans drank to their gods and libations were poured to honour the ladies. In the course of time, "good health" became an expression of greeting. The word "toast" dates from the closing years of the Tudor period and originally was associated with the custom of drinking to the ladies. A bit of toast was placed in the wine in the belief that it improved the flavour.[13] To this day the toast remains one of the most cherished customs of mess life.

Even though in the course of a mess dinner there may be several toasts, dining in the mess today is the acme of moderation compared to that of our military ancestors. A young subaltern of the 4th Regiment of Foot in garrison at Halifax in 1788 left a record of a mess dinner honouring His Royal Highness Prince William Henry, Captain of HMS *Andromeda:*

> We sat down twenty to a very good dinner .... After the royal toasts, and after he had given the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, we had three times twenty-one, and two bands playing 'Rule Britannia.' We drank twenty-eight-bumper [brim-full] toasts, by which time, as may be well supposed, we were in pretty good order. At nine o'clock a 'feu de joie' was fired by the garrison from the citadel. Those that could walk attended. I was one of the number that got up the hill.[14]

Another glimpse of the toast of an earlier time in Canada may be seen in the journal of a French nobleman, travelling in North America at the time of the French Revolution. In the summer of 1795, he was at Kingston, Upper Canada. There he was invited to a mess dinner of the 60th Regiment of Foot in celebration of the detachment of the regiment forming the garrison being relieved by another detachment of the 60th. Le duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt reported:

> The ingenuity of the English in devising toasts, which are to be honoured with bumpers, is well known .... Unwilling to oppose the general will, which becomes more imperious in proportion as heads grow warmer, you resort to slight deceptions in the quantity you drink, in hopes thus to avert the impending catastrophe. But this time none of us, whether French or English, had carried the deception far enough,

and I was concerned to feel, the remainder of the evening, that I had taken too lively a part in the event of the two detachments relieving each other.[15]

As in colonial times, the Loyal Toast in Canadian Forces messes today follows the ritual of passing the port. The table cleared, a decanter of port wine is placed before both Mr. President and Mr. Vice.

At this point customs differ in some messes, but, generally, the PMC removes the stopper from the decanter before him and charges his glass, as does Mr. Vice. In HMC ships, however, the president unstoppers the decanter and passes it; he charges his own glass last. This is also the case in artillery messes.

In some messes, the PMC takes a sip to test the quality of the port, but this is also a relic of our suspicious ancestors who insisted, as guests, on being reassured that the wine proffered had not been poisoned.

One aspect of the passing of the port that is common to all messes, is that the decanter is always passed to the diner's left. But the manner of its passing is another matter. In most air force messes and some units, for example, the Royal Westminster Regiment and les Fusiliers du St. Laurent, the decanter as it is passed is not allowed to touch the table. In naval messes, and in regimental messes such as the Canadian Grenadier Guards, the Royal Canadian Regiment and the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, the matter of decanters touching the table is of no account. In the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, the custom is to set down the decanter to one's left with a light but distinct thud. On the contrary, in wardrooms, the decanter is slid along the polished tabletop from member to member (in fair weather; in heavy weather deliberately dampened linen may be employed), practices dictated no doubt by "the gentle motion of the waves" against the ship.

When the president is satisfied that all glasses have been charged with wine (or it may be water, though the sailor's superstition dies hard that the personage toasted in water will depart this life by drowning), he stoppers the decanter, raps the table for silence and says, "Mr. Vice, the Queen," in English or French. Mr. Vice alone rises and proposes the toast "Gentlemen (or Ladies and Gentlemen), The Queen of Canada," in the other official language. If a band is present, the first six bars of "God Save the Queen" are played immediately upon Mr. Vice proposing the toast, for which, of course, all members stand. All present at table then raise their glasses and reply, "the Queen."

Here, again, unit tradition is very much alive. In artillery messes it is

considered improper to add the fervent "God bless her," which is the normal response in other messes, for example, officers of field rank and above in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

The custom of drinking a toast to the health of the sovereign is universal in the Canadian Forces, but, as can be seen, the procedure is not uniform in all units, ships, stations and bases, and in these matters it is incumbent upon hosts to inform and assist their guests at dinner.

While the Loyal Toast is in most messes drunk standing, such is not the case in HMC ships, where the health of Her Majesty the Queen is honoured while seated. The origin of this privilege enjoyed by naval officers has been attributed to several sovereigns. But the story generally accepted is the one about King Charles II returning to England in 1660 after the Cromwellian interregnum, who, replying to the Loyal Toast, rose and struck his head on a low deckhead beam, typical of ships of the time, and declared that, henceforth, wardroom officers should drink the king's health safely seated. Some idea of the antiquity of this custom may be seen in a print published in 1793 showing King George III, who reigned from 1760 to 1820, with a group of officers in the great cabin of a ship-of-the-line, glasses in hand for toasting the royal guest, and seated.[16]

In this connection, the officers of CFB Halifax to this day adhere to the old *Queen's Regulations for the Royal Canadian Navy* (QRCN) which ordered that the health of Her Majesty the Queen shall be honoured while seated in all naval messes whether on shore or afloat, even when "God Save the Queen" is played, on all occasions except when Her Majesty or a member of the royal family is present (when the personage's pleasure as to procedure is previously sought), or when official foreign guests are present.

In addition to the Loyal Toast, depending upon circumstances and tradition, there may be other toasts at a mess dinner, including those proposed to: foreign heads of state when their official representatives are present; the colonel-in-chief; "fallen comrades"; the regiment; "the ladies," and others. In ships of war, one of these is called the Toast of the Day, and there is one for each day of the week. There may be slight differences in wording, but the substance of the daily toast has remained constant for many years:

Monday — Our ships at sea
Tuesday — Our men
Wednesday — Ourselves (as no one else is likely to bother)
Thursday — A bloody war or a sickly season (to ensure quicker promotion)
Friday — A willing foe and sea room

Saturday — Sweethearts and wives (and the usual wag's aside — May they never meet)
Sunday — Absent friends[17]

The date of origin of these daily wardroom toasts is not known. Those for Thursday and Friday are limited pretty well to historic interest today, though in the days of sail they expressed a real hope. A young officer writing about service on the West Indies Station at the close of the eighteenth century during the wars with Napoleon, recorded that "Their toast in a full bumper of grog [rum and water] of an evening was usually 'a bloody war and a sickly season.'"[18] The toast for Saturday night is of even greater vintage. The Chaplain in HMS *Assistance* recorded on 26 June 1675, a Saturday, while cruising in the English Channel; "And towards evening we lie on the deck, and drink healths to the King and our wives, in bowls of punch." On subsequent Saturdays in the Bay of Biscay and off the Portuguese coast, these entries were made: "We end the day and the week with drinking to our wives in punch-bowls," and, again, " . . . and punch like [that is, as plentiful as] ditchwater; with which we conclude the day and week in drinking to the King and all that we love; while the wind blows fair."[19]

Speech-making is not generally a feature of mess dinners. Indeed, in most messes, speeches are actively discouraged, and if tolerated, they must be brief. Traditionally, dining in the mess means the taking of food and drink in a congenial atmosphere with a degree of formality in which stimulating, intelligent conversation is a major feature, and not a captive audience for a speaker. However, occasionally, a guest of honour is invited to dine and to deliver an address, the subject of which is known to be of more than passing interest to the members of the mess.

A mess dinner comes to a conclusion when the commanding officer or the president, as the case may be, rises, and leaves the table, escorting the guest of honour if there is one. At this point, members are also free to leave the table.

As mentioned, dinings-in and mixed formal dinners usually conform in most respects with the format which has evolved in each mess for the mess dinner. But in army messes, there is another, the annual regimental dinner, the main feature of which is the reading by the commanding officer of his summary of the year's achievements in the regiment. The annual regimental dinner is a mess dinner, but the usual order of things is altered. A good example is that of les Fusiliers Mont-Royal of Montreal. The following procedural order of the dinner reveals how one regiment of the militia conducts this much anticipated event:[20]

Cocktails in the mess lounge; reading of the dinner proclamation by the adjutant; presentation of the guests to the guest of honour; parade of the head-table guests into the dining room; the Grace; a moment of silence for fallen comrades; the toast to Her Majesty the Queen; the parade of "l'allumeur"; the parade of the main course; the parade of the snuff; the CO's toast to the bandmaster; the CO's toast to the head chef; the introduction of the head-table guests; address by the guest of honour; annual report of the Commanding Officer; the toast to the Regiment; the toast to the guests; the singing of the Regimental Song: "Nous sommes les Fusiliers du Mont-Royal"; the National Anthem.

4
More Mess Customs

It is a characteristic of men and women everywhere that symbolism is used from day to day to convey ideas and feelings that cannot be expressed otherwise except in the time consuming spoken or written word. Thus it is that friendliness is expressed in the simple handshake, reverence or respect in the bowed head. As in civilian life, the observer sees these symbolic acts, however inconspicuous, in the home that is the mess. A member, entering the mess, is a good example.

In many messes, for example le Régiment de Hull, a member pauses very briefly at the door and comes to attention before entering. Sometimes, as in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, such symbolism represents what might be called regimental spirit, something akin to the feeling one gets when the toast "To the Regiment" is made — a moment of reflection and respect for those who have gone before. Or take the messes of the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment, of Thunder Bay, or le 62e Régiment d'Artillerie de Campagne, of Shawinigan, where the custom is a simple mark of respect for Her Majesty the Queen. In others, for example the 48th Highlanders of Canada, Toronto, it is a mark of honour for the colours encased in glass in the anteroom, another expression of pride in the unit in which one serves.

A custom similar in feeling and meaning is to be seen in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and the Royal Westminster Regiment, where the colours are uncased and displayed at every mess dinner.

The toasts which follow the Loyal Toast after the meal is over afford an opportunity to honour units within the Commonwealth with which regiments of the Canadian Forces are allied. A reminder of this in the Royal Montreal Regiment is the figure in sterling silver of a mid-eighteenth century boy drummer which always stands before the commanding officer when the

regiment dines. The statuette was presented a half century ago by the unit's new ally, the West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own).

The shared glass of port is a tradition which through the years has contributed on formal occasions so much to the feeling of mutual respect which is so important to the sense of well-being amongst the several elements of a unit. In the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, the 8th Canadian Hussars (Princess Louise's), and many other units, there is a long tradition of the commanding officer sharing a cup with the bandmaster and the cook in a spirit of goodwill and common purpose.

Typical is the Piper's Toast proposed at mess dinners of the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) of Victoria by the pipe-major, with the response by the commanding officer. This little sidelight reflects the ancient Scottish relationship between the clan piper and the clan chief. It is symbolic of the prestige of the pipe-major within the regiment. In the Candian Scottish, he pipes himself around the table and comes to a halt facing the commanding officer. The latter rises and each takes up a quaich or quaigh (from the Gaelic *cuach* — a kind of shallow drinking cup usually made of wood, sometimes of silver). Each holds up his quaich while the pipe-major recites the mottoes of the famed 16th Battalion of the First World War Canadian Expeditionary Force, and the other battalions which are perpetuated by the Canadian Scottish. This done, they both drain the quaich at one draught, turn it upside down and kiss the bottom of the quaich to show that the contents have been entirely consumed.[1]

In the Royal New Brunswick Regiment, they have what they call "The Passing of the Quaich," right after the toast to Her Majesty. The commanding officer invites the bandmaster and the pipe-major to the table and passes the quaich first to the pipe-major who proposes the toast to the regiment in Gaelic. He takes a draught and returns the quaich to the commanding officer who responds. Then the quaich is passed, being replenished from time to time, to the bandmaster, the senior guest and each member of the mess in turn. The last officer sees to it that the quaich is properly drained and turns it upside down to prove it.[2]

On occasion, the Scottish quaich plays a part at mess dinners of air command bases. A lone piper, in this event, leads the members into the dining room, marching round the perimeter until all the diners have found their places. Later, he may play during the passing of the port in preparation for the Loyal Toast. Then comes the Piper's Toast, a bit of ceremony very much like that of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa and many other Scottish regiments.

The piper, leaving his pipes in the ante-room, enters the dining area, marches round the perimeter, halts and faces the base commander and salutes. The base commander rises to greet the piper while a tray bearing two silver quaichs is brought forward. As the president raps his gavel for silence, the piper raises his quaich and gives the ancient Gaelic toast:

Slàinte mhath (pronounced Sl*awn*-cha Vah') meaning "Good Health to You."

To which the Commander replies:

Slàinte (pronounced Sl*awn*-cha) meaning "Good Health."

Having drained the scotch whiskey from their quaichs in one draught, they are returned to the tray and the piper salutes the base commander, turns smartly about and marches briskly out of the room.[3]

Typical of the rich variety of mess customs observed with enthusiasm in the militia regiments are those of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Dating back to when the regiment's forbear, the 49th Battalion, took its pipe band to France in the First World War, the honorary colonel of the regiment is to this day piped to dinner in the mess. And all new officers who have joined since the last mess dinner are presented to the honorary colonel at the mess table and with him drink a toast to the regiment.

In the messes of armoured regiments, there are often reminders of their cavalry origin. When the PMC of the British Columbia Dragoons demands silence at the table in preparation for the Loyal Toast, it is not the gavel, but the riding crop, with which he raps the table-top. The riding crop used was originally owned by an officer of the regiment killed on active service in Kashmir in 1950.

The Royal Canadian Hussars, Montreal, are also very proud of their cavalry background. It is a tradition at dinner that after the Loyal Toast the commanding officer declares a ten-minute interval to "water the horse." The "last parade" of the Hussar's regimental dinner is a memorable event called "The Ride" and is presided over by a senior officer who served in pre-Second World War days when the regiment was horsed. At the orders "prepare to mount" and "mount," all members place their index fingers on the table. At "walk march," the fingers are raised and brought sharply down in rhythmic slow time. Through "trot," "canter," "gallop" and "charge" one can imagine the rising crescendo (and hilarity) as the finger tips are drummed as rapidly as possible, followed by the reverse process and the welcome order to "make much of your horses."[4]

On a more sombre note is the traditional toast to fallen comrades, usually observed in silence but in some messes accompanied by the plaintive, yet poignant, music of the lament played by a lone piper.

In the 48th Highlanders of Canada this is a very moving scene. When the toast, "fallen comrades," is proposed, the members remain seated and the piper plays the lament, "Flowers of the Forest," after which the members drink the toast in silence with the commanding officer drinking from a silver chalice. The last lines of the old ballad convey the sorrow after the battle long ago just as they do today:

> The Flowers of the Forest that fought aye the foremost,
> The prime of our land lie cauld in the clay.
>
> We'll hae nae mair liltin' at the ewe milkin',
> Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
> Sighin' and moanin' on ilka green loanin',
> The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.[5]

Perhaps the most colourful customs in mess life are those traditionally observed in Scottish regiments. One such custom is the proposing of a toast with "highland honours."

The Calgary Highlanders wear a special shoulder badge bearing an oak leaf and acorn awarded for the famous counter-attack by the regiment, as the 10th Battalion, CEF, in the Battle of St. Julien near Ypres in 1915, during the first German assault using gas. It was in a stand of oak trees known as Kitchener's Wood, hence the design of the badge. Ever since, the toast to the regiment has been to "The Glorious Memory of the Twenty-second of April," with full highland honours.[6]

In the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, Winnipeg, the giving of highland honours is almost exclusively reserved for the "dining out" of the commanding officer on relinquishing the command of the regiment.

When the 48th Highlanders of Canada, Toronto, dine in the mess, each company of the regiment is honoured in the course of the dinner by the band playing each company's march and by a toast with highland honours.

To those unacquainted with the toast proposed with highland honours the ritual gives a glimpse of the lively night scene long ago in the clan chief's great hall by torch-light. Today, highland honours in the mess of the Toronto Scottish Regiment is described thus:

> . . . all members stand with the left foot on the chair, right foot on the table, face the portrait of the colonel-in-chief (Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother) and, after the Piper's tune, drink the toast.[7]

Another tradition of Scottish dining is the "Piping of the Haggis." A revered dish of great antiquity, the haggis consists of the heart, lungs and liver

of a sheep or calf, chopped up with suet, onions and oatmeal, seasoned and boiled in a sheep's stomach. The parade of the haggis, which after the ceremony is served as a side-dish with the main course, is carried out in different ways in different messes, usually immediately after the grace.

Two junior subalterns leave the table and meet the piper in the ante-room. The haggis is carried on a board having two handles on each end designed to rest on the young officers' shoulders. Led by the piper, the haggis bearers are followed by the officer designated to make the address, the whole party being piped around the entire mess, eventually coming to the centre of the mess table where the steaming haggis is brought to rest. It is at this point that Robert Burns' time-honoured address, "To a Haggis" is recited:

> Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
> Great chieftain o' the puddin race!
>
> Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
> That jaups in luggies;
> But, if ye wish her gratefu' pray'r,
> Gie her a Haggis![8]

There follows the ceremonial slicing of the stomach-bag using the Scottish officer's dagger, the dirk.

The West Nova Scotia Regiment enjoys a tradition of more than twenty years in the "Parade of the Stag's Head." It seems that, originally, this parade was carried out the day after a buck was shot when the unmounted head was presented to the first lady mayor of Kentville. Ever since, when dining in the mess, an antlered deer's head mounted on a tray of wood is brought to the mess table in symbolic memory of earlier regiments absorbed, and in gratitude for the abundance of food produced in Nova Scotia.

Immediately preceding the main course, the stag's head, surrounded with food, is paraded to the music of "Floral Dance" on the shoulders of four subalterns led by the adjutant. This officer presents the stag's head to the commanding officer with a brief address featuring a dubious use of the language of heraldry:

> Sir: Nova Scotia being the recognized province of plenty, I present to you a stag's head, emblematically denoting meat which is the main food of our province [The Land], flanked by lobsters which are rampant in the sea around us [The Lunenburg Regiment (1870)], and surrounded by dormant apples, denoting the sweeter dishes [The Annapolis Regiment (1869)]; all of which makes us truly thankful for our rich heritage.

To which the commanding officer replies: "Which we are honoured to defend. On with the feast."[9]

An interesting custom in several messes is the ancient one of passing the snuff, particularly in Scottish regiments. Traditionally the snuff is contained in a silver snuff box or mull recessed in the skull between the horns of a handsomely mounted ram's head, known in the Stormont Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders as "His Lordship."

In the Toronto Scottish Regiment, the toasts completed, the PMC stands and calls: Mr. Snuff. The subaltern delegated retires to the ante-room where he picks up the regimental snuff mull, and re-enters the dining room. The piper pipes him to the mess table where he offers snuff to the commanding officer, then to all members and guests. He then returns to the commanding officer who rises and offers snuff to Mr. Snuff. Retrieving the ram's head, the subaltern is piped out to the ante-room.[10]

Service in Normandy during the Second World War brought new customs to several Canadian units. One such practice that has matured into a highly cherished tradition is the proposing of particular toasts in calvados, the Norman drink distilled from the apples for which that district of France is so well known. In le Régiment de Maisonneuve, the toast to the regiment is always in calvados, as it is in le Régiment de la Chaudière.

In another Montreal regiment, there is a curious yet strongly held belief that calvados makes *un trou* (a hole) in the stomach, and that somehow this assists the second part of the meal to be more easily consumed. This is why it is that part way through the main course the commanding officer traditionally rises and proposes the long anticipated toast "Trou Normand" and the calvados is downed in one draught, just as the 17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars were wont to do some thirty odd years ago on the battlefields of Normandy.[11]

Over the years, colourful traditions have grown up which reflect the culture of the region from which the unit has sprung. This is particularly so amongst French-speaking regiments. An example of this is the wearing of the many-hued sash and tuque of the *habitant* over mess dress when dining in the mess of les Fusiliers Mont-Royal.[12]

Similarly, to be present at a mess dinner of le Régiment du Saguenay is to see observances which have come down from the native Indians of the Lac Saint-Jean country, and from the early French settlers in the valley of the Saguenay.

Immediately after the toast to the Queen, there commences the colourful ritual of the peace pipe's *"la touche de l'amitié"* or the "puff of friendship."

It all begins when all members, their right hands over their mouths, make

the wild, five-second Indian cry. The PMC at once breaks into the ancient Indian folk-song "Ani Couni, Ani Couna," members joining enthusiastically in the chorus.

Then commences the ritual of the peace pipe, when two previously designated officers rise and, with arms crossed at shoulder level, proceed to the fire cauldron. Standing face to face they don feathered bonnets and raise their right hands above their heads in the traditional Indian greeting of peace. Going to their knees the two simulate digging a hole and bury the "war hatchet" or tomahawk beneath the bearskin rug.

Then seated on the bearskins with legs crossed, the two chiefs, facing each other across the fiery cauldron, take up the pipe of peace, fill it with tobacco and light it with a twig of cedar. Each then takes a "puff of friendship."

The two chiefs rise, and, in time with the song, still being lustily sung, pass the pipe from guest to guest. The puffing completed, the chiefs return to the cauldron, empty the pipe and ceremoniously place their bonnets on the bearskins.

The second custom much enjoyed by the mess members is *la lampée de caribou* which might be called "The Swig of Caribou." Caribou is a cup of welcome of long tradition in the province of Quebec. It is a fiery drink of fortified wine. As the members voice "La Marche du Régiment du Saguenay," two officers approach the jug of caribou and put on their woollen tuques. The jug is carried around the mess table enabling each guest to have his swig of caribou. Then all together they drink to the health of the regiment and utter the long "ahh" of satisfaction reminiscent of the very expressive belch of the nomad of the desert after feasting on mutton.[13]

Another set of customs with a regional quality about them are observed with zest in Cape Breton Island, specifically at Canadian Forces Station Sydney. Indeed, there is something reminiscent of Champlain's *L'Ordre du Bon Temps* in the founding in 1956 of the unofficial, but very real, Royal Cape Breton Air Force. Not that Sydney, Nova Scotia, is isolated as is many a radar station, but it is considered by the station's people to be off the beaten track of military traffic, hence the establishment of the very successful RCBAF some twenty years ago, a concept which has enhanced mess life markedly.

At dinner, mess dress includes the colourful bow tie fashioned in the Cape Breton tartan. The Loyal Toast is followed by another in special rum with all due solemnity, and with one foot on the table highland fashion: "Chimo — the RCBAF!" — all in keeping with the spirited, if impolite, motto of the mess, *Nil Illegitimus Carborundum.*

In lieu of the usual farewell mug to a departing member, is the presentation of a sword for the defence, in time of crisis, of the homeland which, naturally,

is Cape Breton. It is said that no visiting officers are allowed into associate membership unless they demonstrate the ability to write decent reports about the station, and the rank of honorary marshal of the RCBAF is bestowed only on those with fifteen years continuous duty at CFS Sydney![14]

A tradition widely observed is air force messes in a singular antipathy towards speeches in the mess. But there is an exception, and that is when a member is about to be re-appointed out of the squadron or base and he is asked "to say a few words." Before he is allowed to utter a word, he is suffered to endure a rendering by the mess of the following rollicking ditty, "The Chug-a-Lug-Song." When the line, "So drink chug-a-lug" is reached the speaker is required to drink the contents of his specially prepared glass in a single draught and turn the glass upside down over his head to prove "mission completed."

Here's to . . . ,
He's true blue,
He's a drunkard,
Through and through,
He's a drunkard,
So they say,
Tried to go to Heaven,
But he went the Other Way,
So drink chug-a-lug,
Drink chug-a-lug etc.[15]

Dining in the mess is a formal occasion, but the high jinks, fun and games which often follow the concluding of the dinner are anything but formal. The arrangements for entertainment are often left to the younger, high-spirited members of the mess, and they seldom fail to come up with activities of a lively kind. The game described here has been chosen because it illustrates the boisterous nature of these affairs, and also because it has enjoyed a long popularity in all branches of the Service. It is called "Greasing the Gun."

The long mess table is tilted by supports placed under the legs of one end to form a polished, inclined plane. Chesterfield cushions are spread out on the floor at the lower end of the table. The "volunteer" is placed face down on a blanket on the table top. The gun's crew on either side grasp the blanket edge, and, in accordance with the rhythmic orders of the "NCO" — "one — two — fire!," slide the victim back and forth to gain momentum. On the order "fire," they release their grasp and the victim is propelled at a considerable rate of knots off into mid-air and the inevitable crash to follow.

But the point is, that, before being launched, the "projectile" has a match

and match-book in hand, and if he fails to ignite the match while in flight, a misfire is declared, and the fun commences all over again.

The base officers' mess at CFB Petawawa is located on an eminence with a fine view of the Ottawa River and the Laurentians. Just outside the entrance is a venerable red oak tree with great spreading boughs. It is known as the "drinking tree" or "subaltern's tree."

It has often been said that on certain evening occasions, subalterns stationed at Petawawa climb the subaltern's tree and seated out on the spreading boughs, champagne in hand, render wondrous songs on the night air, and such goings-on are duly recorded in the drinking tree log-book.

As the mess, formerly the gunner's mess, is an old temporary building, and has been slated for demolition, fears have been held that the subaltern's tree might also become a victim of the bulldozer. But, ever resourceful, the young officers have assured their beloved tree a considerable degree of life expectancy.

There on the trunk is a highly polished brass plate designating the spot as an official bench mark of the Dominion of Canada, and therefore sacrosanct: elevation, 507.3 feet; latitude 45° 55′ 12″ north; longitude 77° 17′ 23″ west.[16]

5
Words and Expressions

Customs and traditions serve many purposes, one of which is that they span the years of Service life from one generation to another. One aspect of this is language, words and expressions used from day to day in the course of a Serviceman's duty, in both peace and war. Language in the Service is a part of custom and tradition which bridges the years forming a living continuity between the Serviceman and Servicewoman of today and those who have gone before.

Able Seaman
The rank, or rating as it was once called, of able seaman, or AB, is the equivalent of the private in the army and air force. It was fully established in the Commonwealth Navy of Cromwell in the seventeenth century.[1] As the words imply, the able seaman is fully trained for upper deck duties. In the days of sail, the saying was "able to hand, reef and steer," that is, fully capable of going aloft to take in sail and to take charge of the helm.[2]

Adjutant's Tea
Adjutant's tea is sherry served in the field before breakfast, for example in the Grey and Simcoe Foresters.

Admiral
The rank of admiral signifies the commander-in-chief of a nation's navy; a senior naval officer in command of a fleet or squadron, or of a command or station ashore. Before unification of the forces, admirals with such appointments were known as flag officers. The word admiral is derived from the Arabic *emir* or *ameer* meaning "chief." It made its way westward from that

cradle of navigators, the Mediterranean Sea, from the medieval latin *amiralus*, through the Old French *amirail* and the Spanish *almirante*. In Britain, the term admiral developed in a rather complex way from medieval times, but became firm as the commander-in-chief at sea in the seventeenth century. In a large fleet at sea in the days of sail, the main squadron in the centre with the Admiral of the Fleet was preceded by a squadron in the van or lead and bearing the second-in-command, the vice-admiral of the fleet, hence the rank of vice-admiral. The rear of the fleet was covered by a third squadron or rear-guard, bearing the rear admiral of the fleet, hence the rank today of rear-admiral.[3]

A curious use of the term in our own maritime heritage is to be seen in a Royal Proclamation dated 26 June 1708 concerning the "fishing admirals." Each year, fishing fleets would arrive in Newfoundland waters, base themselves in numerous coves and havens and land their catches there for drying, before returning to Europe in the fall, their holds full of dried fish. Good order was maintained in these outports by appointing the captain of the first ship to arrive "season admiral of the said harbour or creek," the second ship, vice-admiral, and so on. The admiral's decision about foreshore rights and disputes which might arise was binding.[4]

Artillery

Guns used by the army; the arm or branch of the land forces that uses guns. Of early French origin, the word is derived from *artiller*, to equip or arm. Originally, artillery encompassed a wide variety of war equipment, including all missile-type weapons. In 1539 the "Guylde of Artyllary of longbowes, Crossbowes and handegonnes" marched from Aldgate, City of London, to Westminster, where it was reviewed by King Henry VIII.[5]

Awkward Squad

This term of good-natured derision is still occasionally heard. It refers to recruits who have difficulties of co-ordination and therefore are slow to come up to the standards of their drill instructors. This is a phenomenon of long standing. General Amherst, on the march up the Hudson River in 1759 bound for Montreal, required the awkward men to be exercised by themselves twice a day, and infantrymen who fired before the word of command were punished with extra drill with the "acquart men" in the evening.[6] Similarly, at the raising of His Majesty's Newfoundland Regiment of Foot, 1780-1783, early provision was made to exercise the awkward men.[7]

Barn

A barn is a hangar.

Battalion
The origin of this word is obscure. It dates from at least the sixteenth century in the old French form, *battaillon,* and is believed to have a common root with the word battle.[8] The battalion, traditionally, is a unit of infantry composed of several companies and forms part of the larger brigade or regiment. In the organizational sense, the structure of the battalion has had many changes through the centuries to meet the needs of changing roles and tactics, and of advances in the technology and doctrine of war. Today in the Canadian Forces the term battalion has two applications: an infantry regiment, which may consist of one, two, or more battalions, manned and equipped as fighting units; the administrative unit for support troops, called service battalions.

Bird
Naval slang for a sailor with a long record of disciplinary misdemeanours. It has the same origin as "jail-bird," one who has been confined in prison which often was called "the cage." In earlier times such felons were often sentenced to serve in the Royal Navy.

Bivouac
An encampment without tents or huts. It is thought to be derived from the German *Beiwacht,* having a connotation of watch or guard.

Blue Bark
An example of Service jargon which has become official language in regulations. A blue bark is a passenger travelling via Service aircraft for compassionate reasons to attend the funeral of a member of his or her family. The term came into use in the early 1960s and is particularly associated with service in Europe. The origin of the term is not known but is thought to stem from "embarkation" and travel priority categories.

Boatswain
The term boatswain (bo's'n) is the oldest title in the sea service. It is derived from the Old English *batswegen* or *batsuen* (boat's swain or husband). In Saxon times the boatswain was in command. In medieval England, he was the officer who made the ship go, having charge of the masts, yards and sails, and was second only to the master. Nathaniel Boteler in his *Dialogues,* in the reign of King Charles I, showed the wide responsibilities of the boatswain in the early seventeenth century. He had charge of all ropes, anchors, sails, flags, colours, and care of the long-boat. He called up the watches to their duty, kept the sailors "in peace, and in order one with another," and he saw to it that all

offenders were punctually punished (boatswain's mates had to wield the cat-o'-nine tails), "either at the Capstan, or by being put in the bilboes, or with ducking at the main yard-arm."[9] It is readily seen that through the centuries the boatswain has had the duties not only of command, but those associated with the coxswain and the late master-at-arms. But through it all the boatswain has remained to this day the seaman specialist, particularly in terms of equipment related to seamanship. In HMC ships today, the boatswain, usually a master or chief warrant officer, looks after small arms, anchors and cables, hawsers and fenders, paints, life rafts and demolitions, as well as parade and small arms training.[10]

Boatswain's Mate
In harbour, the boatswain's mate is a member of the gangway staff under the officer of the day. He pipes all orders and generally assists the quarter-master. At sea, he keeps his watch within hail of the officer of the watch.

Boondocks (Boonies)
Area not considered part of the runway or taxiway, or a relatively isolated base or station.

Brigadier-General
The rank between colonel and major-general. A definition of the time of Wellington, it has stood the test of time, if not terminology, rather well: "Brigadier, a military officer, whose rank is next above that of a colonel, appointed to command a corps, consisting of several battalions or regiments, called a brigade."[11] The term has its origin in the Italian *brigata* meaning company, related to *brigare* (brawl) and *briga* (strife). For a time in the Canadian army the rank was simply brigadier. The term brigadier-general was reinstituted in 1968.[12]

Buffer
Slang term for the chief boatswain's mate, usually a petty officer, dating from the eighteenth century. Its derivation is obscure. While the boatswain is responsible today for all the upperdeck seamanship equipment, the chief boatswain's mate, or buffer, is the "foreman" of the hands who keep the internal spaces of the ship in good repair. In destroyers and lesser ships, the boatswain and the buffer are likely to be one and the same person.

Camming-up and Camming-down
The fitting up and taking down of camouflage netting as used, for example, to hide the positions of guns and vehicles.

Captain
In the Service today, the term captain has several meanings. In terms of rank, the naval captain is equivalent to colonel, while the army and airforce captain is the rank between lieutenant and major. In terms of office, there is the captain of a ship, and the captain of an aircraft. Captain is derived from the Latin *caput* meaning head. With the head being the directing or controlling portion of the anatomy, it is not difficult to see how the Romans came to use *capitaneus* to denote the director or leader of troops. There is a very long tradition of the captain as the officer commanding a company-size unit of from one hundred to two hundred men. Even in the navy the term captain is of military origin. The seamanship and navigation essential to making a passage at sea were in earlier times the province of the boatswain and the master, the latter term being still very evident in the merchant service. The captain came on board with his soldiers to do the fighting, while the master, the seaman, conveyed the troops to the right place to engage the enemy at sea or on a foreign shore. With the advent of "great guns" in ships in the sixteenth century, the master became the captain who not only directed the ship, but led his fighting seamen.[13]

Chit
Shortened form of chitty, an Anglo-Indian word from *chitthi,* meaning a written note, or a voucher tendered in lieu of cash for refreshments in the mess.

Colonel
A rank which today denotes a senior staff officer, not yet a general officer, but no longer the senior officer in a regiment — with one exception. The Canadian Airborne Regiment, consisting of three commandos capable of operating independently, is commanded by a colonel.[14] The term dates from the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century when the process of merging the normal army formation, the companies under their captains, into regiments under their colonels, was well advanced. The origin of the word itself is unknown. Sometimes it was spelled "coronel" as in the French of the period, which suggests "crown." This, itself, raises several conjectures including insignia, also the authority for the colonel's commission. In the Italian *colonnello,* there is a relationship with *colonna,* meaning a column.

Colour Sergeant
The title given to warrant officers in regiments of foot guards; the title given to selected non-commissioned officers having the honour and distinction of

attending (escorting) the queen's and regimental colours of foot guards and certain other infantry regiments.[15] It was the Duke of Wellington who initiated the idea of the colour sergeant "for the encouragement of good men,"[16] and it was established as a rank in the British army in 1813, the general order making it clear that "the duty of attending the Colours in the field shall be at all times performed by these Sergeants."[17] In the days when the colours were carried into battle at the centre front of the regiment, they were prime targets for the enemy, and casualties among ensigns and colour sergeants in the defence of the colours were high. So, while it was considered a great honour to be given the custody of the colours, it took men of high courage to accept that honour. Today, colour sergeant is not an official rank, as it was prior to 1919 in the Canadian Militia.[18] It is a traditional title in the foot guards and an office or appointment of honour on specific occasions as in the "trooping of the colour."

Commander

The rank of commander evolved from the split command situation in the early warship where the captain commanded the soldier fighting men and the master navigated the ship by commanding the mariners. After the arrival of great guns in ships of war in the time of Henry VIII, sailors both worked the ship and fought the ship. As ships developed in tonnage and gun-power, the captain in command of a ship-of-the-line had under him a master as his chief navigator, but in lesser ships the two offices were combined in one officer called "master and commander."

In the mid-eighteenth century the "master and" part was no longer needed when an officer was placed on complement to relieve the commander of his navigating duties, but it was not until 1794 that the rank of commander came into official use in the Royal Navy.[19]

In 1875 the lieutenant of eight years seniority was given the well known "half-stripe" of the lieutenant commander, and this title was officially recognized in 1914.[20]

Commando

A body of troops, highly trained for specialized tasks or missions. In the Second World War, British commandos were amphibious shock-troops often employed on raids or operations with limited objectives. It is a Portuguese term derived from *commandar* (command), and from the late Latin *commandare*. Commando was used by the Boers and became a familiar term during the South African War at the beginning of the twentieth century. The word is used today in the Canadian Forces to denote the three components of

the Canadian Airborne Regiment — the two parachute commandos and the mechanized commando.

Commodore

Unlike the Royal Navy, commodore is a permanent rank in the Canadian Forces, between captain and rear-admiral. At sea the commodore traditionally is in command of a detached squadron. Today the appointment of senior officer afloat is that of a commodore. The term is from the Dutch *Commandeur* introduced by them in 1652. King William III of Orange brought the title to the Royal Navy in 1688.[21]

There is an old saying connected with the commodore. Well into this century, it was the custom to fire a gun at sunset, when in harbour, and lower the colours. On hearing the evening gun fired, one would hear, "the commodore has fallen down the main hatch," meaning his day's work is done and so is mine.[22]

Company

The dictionary meaning of this word is given as "a body of persons combined for common object," and this definition applies to the use of the term today: a sub-division of an infantry battalion, or of a naval reserve division for parade purposes, or simply the ship's company or ship's crew. It is also used to denote a detached unit of support services. There is a curious commercial origin to the term company. Towards the end of the medieval feudal period, mercenary bands of professional soldiers appeared in Europe, whose captains would accept contracts to fight for or against anyone. Money was invested in these bands, which soon were called companies, to share in the profits obtained from plunder and ransom.[23]

Corporal

The master corporal of today is the corporal of earlier times, a leader of men. This attribute is reflected in the derivation of the word — the Italian *capo* (head), *di squadra* (of the squad), sometimes written *capo de escadra,* referring to squad, or squadron, or to the earlier fighting formation, the square. The French called this man *caporal* and, in English, he became corporal. Sir James Turner, soldier, in his *Pallas Armata* (1683) made some rather pithy remarks in describing the function of the corporal of old:

> A caporal . . . hath an absolute command of his squadron, neither may any in it disobey him; if any do, the caporal may beat him with his sword, and commit him to prison . . . and he is bound to teach them how they are to behave themselves when

centinels, . . . to teach all that belong to his squadron their postures, and to handle their arms. So you see this caporal or ours hath work enough to do, for all the pay or wages he gets.[24]

Coxswain

The coxswain (cox'n) today is the senior non-commissioned seaman in the ship, usually a chief warrant officer. He is the connecting link between the ship's officers and the lower deck other than that provided by the divisional system. He sees that daily routines on board are carried out, and attends the captain's and the executive officer's tables when requestmen and defaulters are being seen, formerly the duty of the ship's master at arms. In action, or in confined waters, he takes over the ship's helm. A second meaning for coxswain is the seaman in charge of a ship's boat when away from the ship — coxswain of the boat. The name coxswain is a very old one at sea. It is derived from the medieval Latin *cussus,* the Old French *coq* and the Old English *coc,* all meaning "cock" as in "cockboat," that is a small boat. In recent years, the coxswain has lost ground in professional status as a seaman. As a specialist seaman, command of the ship once devolved on him if say, in action, all the executive branch (seamen) officers had been incapacitated. This is no longer so.[25]

Crabfat

Aircrew. (Used in good-natured derogation by fishheads.) Early in the twentieth century, crabfat meant the relatively new paint colour (battleship grey) used on the hulls and superstructures of warships. The modern usage may have originated between the two world wars when the RAF, in their blue-grey uniforms, provided the aircrews for Royal Navy aircraft carriers.

Dhobey

Sailor's term for washed clothes. It is derived from the Hindu word *dhob* meaning washing.

Dragoon

Today, a dragoon is a member of an armoured regiment. Before the days of self-propelled vehicles, a dragoon was a mounted infantryman. The word is thought to derive from "dragon," a form of cavalry pistol of the early seventeenth century, mounted on a swivel in a sling, later replaced by the carbine. One early writer quaintly described dragoons as " . . . a sort of Mungrels betwixt the Two [that is foot (infantry) and horse (cavalry)], who are bound to fight either on Foot or Horseback . . . "[26]

Engineer
Today there are many forms of engineers in the Service — aeronautical, marine, flight, and others — but the longest established is the military engineer. His appearance, historically, long pre-dates the civil engineer. Throughout the ages, the military engineer had charge of the "engines of war." This is why the engineer and the artilleryman can trace their ancestry back to a common source, guns being engines of war. The engineer has been described as one who designs and constructs military works. An engine is a mechanical contrivance. Ingenious means clever at contriving. All of these words are derived from the Latin *ingenium,* meaning cleverness.

Ensigns
Ensigns are colours that are worn chiefly by ships for purposes of national identification. They are normally flown at the ensign staff at the stern. In battle, one or more ensigns may be hoisted in a variety of positions for distinguishing friendly from enemy ships — at the peak of the gaff, at the yardarm, or at the masthead. These are called battle ensigns.[27] A ship may wear a masthead ensign when dressed for a celebration. The ensign worn by HMC ships is identical to the national flag and should not be confused with the Canadian Forces ensign which is not worn at sea.

The ancient rank of ensign is still used by certain regiments of the Canadian Forces in lieu of second lieutenant. It was his duty to carry the colours into battle.[28]

Fishheads
Surface ship sailors. (Used derogatively by submariners and maritime airmen.)

Flak
Anti-aircraft fire, from the German *fliegerabwehrkanone*; also used in the sense of verbal objection to policy decisions, etc.

Flight
A subdivision of an air squadron, a group of say three or four aircraft under a single command — hence the source of the former air force ranks of flight lieutenant and flight sergeant. In the early fifteenth century the term was used in much the same sense, as in "a flight of goshawkes" and "a flight of douves." The word is derived from the Old Saxon *fluht*, meaning the action or manner of moving through the air.

Flip
Flight in a Service aircraft.

Fly-Away Kit
An air cargo consignment of one or more large metal containers (Paul Bunyan's), containing all the essentials for a given number of men for a particular mission to a particular geographical region, all prepared and packed from a permanently held check list.

Flying a Desk
A pilot suffering through a non-flying tour of duty.

Formation
Derived from the Latin *formatio*, the term formation was used in Roman times to describe the disposition of troops going into battle. In the Canadian Forces today the word has two connotations: one, in a sense, static; the other, one of movement. The first is an ordered arrangement of troops and/or vehicles (used in the broadest sense of the term) under a single command, such as an air division, a brigade group, or a naval task force, organized for a specific purpose. The formation having the connotation of movement is as in the traditional air force sense of formation flying where two or more aircraft are led and manoeuvered as a unit. This latter meaning for formation is also seen in the drilling of troops, in tanks advancing, say, in echelon, and in a squadron of destroyers making, say, a torpedo attack.

Fusilier
There are six fusilier regiments in the militia today. Down through the centuries, the fusiliers performed the role of light infantry, with a special capability of protecting artillery and the encamped battalion. They were armed with a light musket called a fusil fitted with a sling so that it could be carried on the fusilier's back, leaving his hands free for other defensive duties.

The word is derived from the French *fusil* and the Italian *focile*, both of which have their origin in the Latin *focus* meaning hearth or fire. The soldier called a fusilier appeared in the seventeenth century and coincided with the introduction of the flintlock musket or fusil which gradually superseded the earlier matchlock.[29] This lighter, shorter musket carried by the fusilier had an important technical advantage. The spark from striking the flint was kept close to the pan containing the powder, whilst with the matchlock, a sputtering fuse was used to ignite the musket charge, an ever present danger when protecting the artillery train and its attendant powder tubs. The first fusilier

regiment in the British army was raised in 1685, the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment).[30]

General
Together with admiral, the highest rank in the Canadian Forces. The term was used in the English language of the Middle Ages, having come from the Old French and, originally, from the Latin *generalis*, with its root *genus* meaning kind of things or species. The question of why a major-general is junior to a lieutenant-general may be answered by looking at the seniority and precedence of general officers in the Parliamentary Army of the Civil War period in Britain in the seventeenth century. This army was commanded by a captain-general, the horse (or cavalry) by a lieutenant-general, and the infantry by a sergeant major general. When the term sergeant was dropped from the title of the most junior of these general officers, it muddled up the accepted sequence of precedence.[31] The term captain-general is not used in the Canadian Forces, with one exception. Her Majesty the Queen bears the honorary appointment of captain-general of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery.

General Officers
The collective term for officers of the ranks of: general and admiral; lieutenant-general and vice-admiral; major-general and rear-admiral; brigadier-general and commodore.

Goofing Stations
A piped announcement used in HMC ships to give off-watch members of the crew ample notice of an unusual spectacle to be seen from the upper deck. The term originated in the icebreaker arctic patrol ship, HMCS *Labrador*, during her first voyage when she became the first naval ship, indeed the first big ship of any description, to navigate the North-west Passage (1954). The pipe "hands to goofing stations" was made so that the enthusiastic would not miss the sight of polar bears, walruses and huge icebergs close at hand.[32] The term was used earlier, in HMS *Kenya* on passage in the Indian Ocean, 1943.[33]

Grenadier
Through the centuries, there have been several types of foot-soldiers. One of these is the grenadier, represented in the Service today by the Canadian Grenadier Guards. The grenadier came into being in the seventeenth century, initially in France. They were the men picked from each company of the regiment as having the height and strength to hurl a hand grenade, usually shown badge-wise as a sphere spouting flame, with great accuracy and effect.

Thus the grenadiers became the élite of the infantry and to this day jealously guard their ancient title. Like the fusilier, the grenadier slung his musket over his back to free his hands as he led the attack hurling his grenades, which word, incidentally, comes from the ancient French *pome grenate*, or pomegranate. The relationship between the pomegranate, that large fruit containing an abundance of seeds, and the grenade, is abundantly clear in Durer's famous painting of the Emperor Maximilian (1519), even to the orifice-like appendage from which the flame is traditionally shown being emitted. Similarly, the heraldic device representing the city of Grenada in Spain is the pomegranate.

Grey Funnel Line
Her Majesty's Canadian ships.

Grunt
A soldier.

Guidon
A swallow-tailed pennon or flag. It is to armoured regiments what the regimental colour is to infantry regiments. The present system of guidons and colours came into being in the British army in the mid-eighteenth century and guidons were the special mark of dragoons. The term, guidon, is derived from the ancient French *guydhomme*, the leader of horse.[34] Eventually, the word shifted from the idea of the rank of the officer who bore the guidon into battle to the colour itself.

Hangar Queen
An aircraft having the status of AOG (aircraft on ground) in a hangar from which parts are taken to keep other aircraft operational. Such transfer of parts and equipment is of a temporary nature and not to be confused with "cannibalization" or permanent removal.

Heads
Naval term for toilets. It originated from the location of the seamen's latrines in the days of sail — out over the open bows at the ship's head with no protection from head seas other than a canvas dodger or screen. The heads were sometimes used for other purposes, which explains an amusing incident in HMS *Thetis*, frigate, on the pacific station in 1853. A sheet of flame was seen forward and a heavy explosion shook the ship. The *Thetis* was quickly put before the wind but it was soon evident there was no fire. It turned out that

"...the gunner's boy, instead of throwing the powder [sweepings from the magazine] overboard, had tilted it down the head-shoot" and a sailor's burning pipe ashes had ignited the powder![35]

HMCS

The four block letters, HMCS, standing alone, bring memories to many, of the silk cap "tallies" of naval ratings during the Second World War. There was no ship's name on the ribbons, just the four letters in gold, so as not to broadcast to enemy ears the identity of ships in harbour. But there was no mistaking the meaning of the letters; the wearer was a member of the ship's company of one of His Majesty's Canadian ships in commission. These letters represent a centuries-old tradition.

Originally, the sovereign was personally responsible for the defence of the kingdom, and the ships intended for that service, as distinct from ships owned by merchants, were called the King's ships, later His Majesty's ships. From time to time in the seventeenth century, the word "Majesty's" was, in the written form, abbreviated, but the letter abbreviation did not come into fashion until the late eighteenth century. Early examples were references to HMS *Phoenix* (1789), HMS *Alfred* (1795) and HMS *Diadem* (1795).[36]

The first ship in the Royal Canadian Navy was a light cruiser, and at her commissioning on 4 August 1910 (four years to the day before she would be at war) she was called HMCS (for His Majesty's Canadian ship) *Rainbow*. The custom continues to this day.

Hoochie

A soldier's shelter made from natural materials in the field, for example, a lean-to made of evergreen boughs. Also used in a figurative sense for billet or accommodation.

Hussar

Today, a hussar is a member of an armoured regiment. The term dates from the fifteenth century and originated in Hungary. Hussars through the centuries were light cavalry.

Infantry

Soldiers who fight on foot. From the Italian *infanteria* and *infante* meaning youth, or foot soldier, as opposed to the more mature cavalryman of earlier times.

The oldest infantry regiment in the Canadian Forces is the Canadian

Grenadier Guards, of Montreal, established 17 November 1859 and styled the "First Battalion Volunteer Militia Rifles of Canada."

Jock or Jet Jock
A pilot, or more specifically, a jet pilot.

Junior Officers
The collective term for officers of the ranks of: captain and lieutenant(N) (for Navy); lieutenant and sub-lieutenant; second lieutenant and acting sub-lieutenant.

Killick
Slang term for leading seaman, the sailor equivalent to corporal. Killick dates from the seventeenth century, its derivation unknown. It means a heavy stone used in small craft as an anchor. Such a stone, usually encased in strong pieces of tree branches to facilitate securing with a rope, is the earliest form of anchor. The leading seaman received the name killick because his badge of rank on the left sleeve of his jumper was the single anchor. The rank of leading seaman was established in the Royal Navy in 1853.

Kye
Hot cocoa. Prepared by the duty cook, kye has traditionally been available when the hands are called in HMC ships, also in training establishments ashore before "pipe down" at night. Kye is also traditionally available during the night watches at sea. Certainly, during the Second World War, this was much appreciated in small ships in heavy weather. Back in 1881-2, during troubles in Ireland, the Royal Fusiliers were guarding Pembroke Dockyard, Milford Haven, Wales. The "queen's cocoa" was issued to all night sentries, a personal gift of Queen Victoria.[37] In 1941, the last class of boy seamen in the Royal Canadian Navy were given a hot cup of kye each morning, having been turned out at 0530 by the duty PTI (physical training instructor).[38] There was once a custom in the army called "gunfires," or "gunfire tea." The custom still survives but the term seems to have disappeared. It consisted of hot tea or cocoa served from the cookhouse immediately after reveillé and "before PT — to hold one until breakfast." The term "gunfire" came from the practice of firing a gun at reveille.[39]

In HMC ships today, the traditional kye has all but disappeared, largely because of improved facilities in the messes where, throughout the night watches, it has become routine for hot coffee and food to be available.

Interestingly enough, the traditional naval kye or hot chocolate is still very much a live custom for the cadets of the Royal Military College, Kingston.

Liberty Boat
Ship's boat which carries the liberty men, that is, men permitted to go ashore — on liberty, that is, on short shore leave.

Lids-Off
This is a term peculiar to the Royal Military College, Kingston. A lids-off is very much like a "stand-down," an unplanned period of relaxation from normal duties, with this difference — while a stand-down usually applies to everyone except the duty watch, a lids-off is awarded to only a portion of the main body, say a squadron, a group, or a team, for a job particularly well done.

Lieutenant
A commissioned officer immediately below the rank of captain in the army and air force, and immediately below the rank of lieutenant-commander in the navy. A word of ancient French origin, lieutenant originally meant one who acts for, or in lieu of, a superior officer. The land and air forces pronounce this rank "leftenant," while seamen say "letenant." The rank of sub lieutenant, between midshipman and lieutenant, was introduced in the Royal Navy in 1861.

Lieutenant-Colonel
The rank between colonel and major in the land and air forces. He is the commanding officer of an armoured or artillery regiment, or of an infantry, signals or service battalion. By the time of the civil war in Britain in the seventeenth century, the process of establishing regiments by amalgamating the independent companies was well advanced, and in Cromwell's New Model Army fighting against King Charles, the second company of a regiment was commanded by the second-in-command of the regiment, the lieutenant-colonel.[40] Such regimental ranks and company commands, within the regiment held by the colonel, the lieutenant-colonel and the major, are commemorated today in the Canadian Forces by the "differencing" of the company colours carried by regiments of foot guards.

Major
The rank in the land and air forces between lieutenant-colonel and captain. In

the period bridging the close of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, when the independent companies were being collected into regiments for more effective command in the field, the colonel commanded the regiment, but he also commanded the first company in the regiment. Similarly, the second-in-command of the regiment, in addition to his regimental staff duties, commanded the second company of the regiment. He was called the sergeant major, that is, "greater sergeant," and in due course, the commission rank of sergeant major was shortened to major.[41] Later, when the rank of lieutenant-colonel was introduced, he was second-in-command of the regiment and also personally in command of the second company. The major, once called the sergeant major, now commanded the third company.

Master Seaman

A new naval rank is the master seaman, created to conform with the concept of the single rank system of the unified force. The master seaman is between the leading seaman (or killick) and the petty officer second class, just as the master corporal is midway between the corporal and the sergeant.[42]

Matelot

A sailor, from the French. Pronounced mat'lo.

Militia

Reserve regiments today are officially part of the reserve force as opposed to the term regular force. But the term militia continues to be used in the reserve regiments and, indeed, their geographical groupings are called "militia areas." The word itself is derived from the Latin *militare*, and *miles, militis* meaning soldier. Traditionally, militia has the connotation of a citizen army, a constitutional force raised under the sanction of government for the defence of the realm in time of emergency such as threatened invasion.[43] This idea can be traced back to the ancient Saxon *fyrd*, which was a compulsory levy of all the able men in the country. In England the term used in Elizabethan times was "trained bands."[44] In the London of 1660 there were six regiments of trained bands.[45] Traditionally, the militia has been raised locally, in the cities, towns and counties. In the old French colony of New France in the valley of the St. Lawrence, the militia, made up of all the able-bodied men, contributed to the defence of the colony.[46] It was militia regiments in British North America which were called out for service in the Fenian Raids and, after Confederation, in putting down the North-west Rebellion of 1885. A series of Militia Acts in the latter half of the nineteenth century prepared the way for

the reserve regiments which until the unification of the forces were collectively known as the militia.

Milk Run
Routine mission.

Mule
A tractor for towing aircraft and supporting equipment on an air station or aircraft carrier.

Muster by the Open List
A surprise muster of ship's company where every man reports who he is, his rank, and his duties on board. This was to counteract the practice of some pursers of having non-existent people on the ship's books. Today, a muster by the open list is sometimes used by a senior officer on taking up a new appointment to meet and size up the people of his command.

Orderly Officer
Duty officer of junior officer rank in the army and air force who, during a twenty-four hour period of duty on a base, station or in the field, is responsible for the smooth running of routine proceedings and the maintenance of good order and Service discipline. His duties are comparable to those of the officer of the day on a ship of war in harbour.

In an earlier time, there was little disciplinary action which could be taken by a commanding officer against erring subalterns other than by the ponderous court martial. Extra duty, such as service as orderly officer, had a salutary effect on the offender.

Other Ranks
A collective term of all those not of commissioned rank.

Paul Bunyan
A large box-like container for crating air cargo.

Petty Officer
Today, the naval rank of petty officer second class is equivalent to that of sergeant in the army and air force; petty officer first class to warrant officer; chief petty officer second class to master warrant officer and chief petty officer first class to chief warrant officer. The rating of petty officer was known in the Royal Navy in the eighteenth century. The captain chose his seaman petty

officers from the best able seamen. The master-at-arms (that is, instructor in small arms, later to take on police duties), the armourer, the sail-maker, and the ship's cook, were all early petty officers, literally small or minor or inferior officers, taken from the French *petit*, including pronunciation. The rank of chief petty officer dates from 1853.[47]

Pigeon
An airman.

Pioneers
A proportion of a force equipped with spades and other tools which precede and prepare the way for the main force. In Canadian infantry regiments today, pioneers are to be seen on ceremonial occasions, heading the parade smartly turned out in white leather aprons and gauntlets with shining broad axes. But pioneers have not always enjoyed such exalted prestige. One early writer stated that pioneers in camp were summoned to their labour by the "pioneers' call" — "round heads and cuckolds, come dig!" — and a private soldier could be demoted to pioneer.[48] Sometimes, pioneers were employed in large numbers. Major-General James Wolfe, on board HMS *Richmond*, frigate, in the St. Lawrence in 1759, ordered three hundred pioneers to parade ashore with tools under the direction of an engineer.[49]

Piquet or Picquet
Of ancient French origin, the word picquet originally meant a pointed stake used in a palisade, and piquet, a small pointed stake used to tether a horse. The present military term thus carries the same connotation of security as did the original meaning of the words.

Also, during and after the civil war in Britain, the pike of the infantryman was gradually replaced by the musket. By the end of the seventeenth century, pikemen formed only a small body whose duty it was to protect the colours, and here the relationship can be seen between the terms pikeman and picquet or picket.[50] To this day, the orderly officer of a guards regiment is called the picquet officer.

Pongo
A soldier.

Poopy Suit
Rubber ditching or anti-exposure suit.

Private
The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines private as an "ordinary soldier without rank, one below non-commissioned officers." In eighteenth century rolls, he was listed under the heading of "private men." Shakespeare, in the sixteenth century, used the term "private soldier" in his play, *Henry IV* (part 2, act 3, scene 2). Some authors relate the word to the close of the medieval period when a soldier, no longer bound to his feudal master, might make a private contract for military service.[51] Other researchers associate the word with British seventeenth century usage. Elite regiments at the time of Charles II recruited "private gentlemen" into the ranks. Also, before the Restoration, in Cromwell's army, there is evidence of dissatisfaction with the designation "common soldier," which originally intended no disparagement, but rather had the same sense as the navy's age-old rating of "ordinary seaman."[52]

Prop-blast
An airborne term referring to a party in celebration of qualifying as parachutists. In the technical sense, prop-blast means the buffeting a parachutist experiences from the slip-stream of the aircraft.

Pukka
A word of Hindu origin having in its military sense a connotation of genuineness, of being solidly built. A "pukka-sapper" is a certificate awarded by members of the military engineering branch to a non-engineer who has made some significant contribution with or to military engineers.

Pusser
This is a distortion of purser, the supply officer in HM ships in earlier times. Because the purser was not paid in the same way as the other officers of the ship, he was permitted to operate what amounted to a concession for the sale of personal gear to the seamen, for example, clothing — purser's or pusser's slops. In time the term described government or regular issue — such as pusser's rum or pusser's dirk (seaman's knife). Pusser, today, also has the connotation of that which is regular, or proper, as opposed, say, to "tiddley" items acquired ashore.

Quartermaster
Quartermaster has two distinct meanings in the Service today, one used on the land, the other in ships. Historically, the quartermaster in the army was

responsible for providing billets for troops on the march, or when on garrison duty before the day of barracks, and for laying out a camp during operations in the field. Today, he is responsible for unit equipment, food — receipt, accounting, care, custody, control, and maintenance — and proper distribution of all material on charge to the unit,[53] much like the air force's supply officer.

The naval quartermaster is a petty officer, leading seaman, or able seaman who, at sea, is the helmsman who steers the ship, receiving his orders from the bridge. In harbour, he keeps watch under the orders of the officer of the day, is a member of the gangway staff, pipes routine orders and generally assists the officer of the day in seeing that harbour routines are properly carried out.

Rank and File
A collective term for all below the rank of sergeant.

Rattle
"To be in the rattle" is the sailor's expression for being on the list of defaulters to be paraded before the ship's executive officer for a hearing regarding an alleged offence, that is, being on charge.

Recce
Reconnaissance or reconnoitre.

Regiment
The regiment is a permanent recruiting and training unit of the army with a permanent depot or home station, and is divided according to its function into companies, squadrons and batteries. The meaning of the word, even today, is a complex one. Sometimes it has the "total family" meaning of the infantry, including the depot, as well as the battalions, the operational units of the regiment. In armour, the regiment itself is the operational unit, while in the artillery there are regiments within the regiment. In a signal regiment the squadrons, which make up the regiment, are capable of independent, detached service. Before the seventeenth century, the military unit was the company. But, as the management of land forces advanced in the tactical sense, the need soon arose to collect these independent companies into groups under the rule (or regimen or regime or regiment) of a single officer who was called the colonel.[54] (Several regiments of the militia in Canada came into being in the late nineteenth century in the same way, the combining of independent companies.) Hence the word regiment, from the Latin *regimentum*, meaning rule.

Rig of the Day
The uniform clothing to be worn by a sailor as laid down by pipe or by routine order. The pipe "hands to clean!" does not mean cleaning; it means that the ship's company is to dress in the rig of the day as specified.[55]

Rodents
A name worn with pride by the cadets of Royal Roads Military College, Victoria, British Columbia.

Sapper
The basic rank of a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, or a collective term for the military engineer branch. Sapper is derived from the French *saper*, to undermine, which points up the original role of the sappers — demolition. In the days of fixed fortifications and defensive positions, sappers and miners were employed in tunnelling right under the enemy's walls which were then breached by the use of explosives. The advancing of trenches for the purpose of reaching enemy positions was known as sapping, and the men as sappers. (New Westminster was originally called Sapperton because of the work of the Royal Engineers in the early days of British Columbia.) "Sappers are soldiers belonging to the artificers or engineers, whose business it is to work at the saps — a gallery sunk underground . . . , these serve in sieges to carry on the approaches under cover . . . "[56]

Scran
Slang for ship's food. A scran bag or scran locker is a repository for stowing personal gear left sculling about the mess decks, which is recoverable only by paying a fine. Scran, of unknown derivation, dates from the eighteenth century. The scran bag was originally a bag in which discarded bread and sea biscuits were collected. Because ships' companies have always lived in such confined spaces, passage-ways have had to be kept clear and the blockage of pumps by clothing, et cetera, avoided. Much importance was, and is, attached to keeping mess decks cleared up. Within living memory, belongings committed to the scran bag could only be redeemed at the price of a piece of soap[57], but today it is a nominal cash fine which goes to the ship's fund.

Scuttle-butt
Ship's rumour, or gossip. In the days of sailing ships of war, scuttle-butt was literally a scuttled butt or breached cask, " . . . a cask having a square piece sawn out of its bilge, and lashed upon deck. It is used to contain the fresh water for daily use, whence it is taken out with a leaden can."[58] Just as the women of

European villages met daily at the village fountain to draw water and exchange gossip, so did sailors meet at the scuttle-butt. The same occurs to this day round the office water fountain or the coffee vending machine.

Senior Officers
The collective term for officers of the ranks of colonel and captain(N) (for navy); lieutenant-colonel and commander; major and lieutenant-commander.

Sergeant
Non-commissioned officer above master corporal. This title has come down from the English of the Middle Ages, from the Old French *sergent* and the Latin *servire*, to serve, *serviens*, servant or military servant, and *serviens eques*, serving knight.[59] Long centuries after the weapon was obsolete, the special mark of the sergeant of infantry was his carrying of the halberd. This pike-like weapon on a long wooden shaft was effective against cavalry. The head consisted of a spear-head to seek out chinks in the knight's armour, a hook to pull him out of the saddle, and an axe blade.[60]

Sheriff
In air force slang, the orderly officer.

Shine Parade
One hour in barrack routine, usually just after the evening meal, devoted to cleaning, pressing clothing and polishing personal equipment.[61]

Sick Bay
Space or quarters in a ship for treating the sick and hurt. The first of such quarters, called "sick birth" or "sick berth," were ordered to be fitted out in every line-of-battle ship of the Mediterranean fleet of the Royal Navy by Earl St. Vincent in 1798. They were not to be in the dark, smelly bowels of the ship, but just under the forecastle deck on the starboard side. The forecastle bulkhead or wall at this time was square, but when rounded bows were introduced shortly after Trafalgar, the rounded timbers of the bulkhead suggested the curve of a bay to seamen, and sick berth in the sailor's jargon became sick bay.[62]

Silent Hours
This is the period of the night watches in HMC ships between "pipe down," when those not on watch turn in for the night, and the calling of the hands in

the morning. It is customary during the silent hours to avoid disturbing the watch below by performing the routine duties of working the ship as quietly as possible. Even the marking of the hour by striking the ship's bell (when this was carried out in HMC ships) was largely suspended during the silent hours. The term silent hours is used similarly in Canadian Forces bases to denote that period between the close of one working day and the beginning of the next.

Skylarking
Seaman's term for frolicsome, mischievious behaviour, tricks and practical jokes. In the days of sail, skylarking included racing and chasing up the ratlines and shrouds of the rigging and sliding down the royal-stays and backstays for amusement — hence skylarking. This sometimes led to serious accidents. Moresby reports that on HMS *America*, forty-four guns, in 1844 off Cape Horn, he and two other "youngsters" " . . . were mastheaded, — one at each masthead, I at the mizen — for skylarking about the rigging."[63]

Slops
Dating from the fifteenth century, slops are ready-made clothing worn by seamen and usually procurable from naval stores either afloat or ashore. Pursers (supply officers) made handsome profits by the sale of slop clothes to sailors in HM ships of the early seventeenth century when such were ordered "to avoyde nastie beastlyness by continual wearing of one suite of clothes, and therebie boddilie and unwholesome ill smells in every ship."[64]

Soldier
Member of an army; the word soldier has been in common use in English since the fourteenth century. It has its origin in the idea that a soldier is, and almost always has been, a hired fighting man. This is to be seen in the medieval English *souder* and Old French *soudier* for soldier and *soude* meaning pay, as well as the medieval Latin terms *solidarius* and *solidus*, the coin with which the soldier was paid.

Sprog
Air force slang for student pilot, but, in the navy, recruit or novice sailor. While the word's origin is obscure, its use in the Service is related to another use of sprog, meaning an infant.

Squad Boss
In air force slang, the squadron commander.

Squadron
This term has a wide application. It denotes a grouping or organization of aircraft, armoured vehicles or ships. Airmen, signalmen, military engineers and cadets are members of squadrons for administrative and operational purposes, and in some cases for parade drill. Squadron is derived from the Italian *scadra* or *squadra*, which in turn came from the Latin *quadra*, meaning square. The early regiments of horse in the British army were divided into squadrons, as were Canadian cavalry regiments in their day.

Stand Down
A stand down is a period during which normal work routines are suspended. It is very similar in meaning to the sailor's "make and mend" or "makers." Like the French *descente de la garde*, stand down has the connotation of going off duty, or marching off guard, that is, standing down after a period of standing to, say, on the ramparts of old, expecting an attack. There is also the technical meaning of standing down or immobilizing a piece of equipment, for example, grounding an aircraft for purposes of refit or repair.

Standard
A square flag which is the colour of certain regiments and of air squadrons. In the Middle Ages, the standard flown by armies of the time was a large flag made to stand before the tent of the army's commander as opposed to being carried. Considered superior to the guidon, the standard, by the mid-eighteenth century in the British army, was the mark of a regiment of dragoon guards. The only regiment in the Canadian Forces today which is distinguished by its standard is the Governor-General's Horse Guards, of Toronto.

The flying squadron standard is a rectangular flag of light blue silk eligible for presentation when an air squadron has attained twenty-five years of service. Perhaps the best known standard is the queen's personal Canadian flag, which is an adaptation of the Royal Standard and is flown when Her Majesty is resident in Canada or is borne in a ship or aircraft of the Canadian Forces.

Stick
A group of parachutists who jump from one exit of an aircraft during a single pass.

Sticks and Bricks
Construction engineers.

The 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, in combat dress, parading the colours on the anniversary of the Battle of Kapyong, Korea (1951), CFB Winnipeg, April, 1972. (Note the United States presidential citation, awarded to the unit for gallantry, secured to the regimental colour.)

Subaltern
A commissioned officer of the combat arms of the army below the rank of captain. The word is derived from the Latin *sub* (under) and *alternus* (alternate).

Subordinate Officers
The term for officers of the rank of officer cadet.

Tanker
A member of an armoured regiment equipped with tanks, as opposed to reconnaissance vehicles.

Thumperheads
Field engineer junior ranks.

Troop
Historically, this word was in use in the sense of a troop of horse, that is, part of a squadron of cavalry, as early as the sixteenth century. Indeed, a troop of horse at this time could be a formidable force. King Charles II, describing his escape to France after the Battle of Worcester, 1651, encountered a troop of Cromwell's horse amounting to "twice twelve score."[65] Its origin is obscure, but it is generally believed that troop came from the French *troupe* or *trope*, and from the Latin *troppus* (a flock). Troop today denotes a part of a squadron of armoured vehicles, and is also used colloquially in the collective sense, "the troops," meaning other ranks.

Voltigeur
The voltigeur is a member of a light infantry unit specially chosen for his agility and rapid movement. This class of soldier was first raised by Napoleon in 1804 and has the distinction and privilege of leading the attack. The voltigeurs were literally "springers and leapers," usually men of small but wiry physique, capable of taking full advantage of surprise and shock tactics in the field. The term is still extant in the Canadian Forces in a regiment based in Quebec City, Les Voltigeurs de Québec.[66]

Wake
When friends and fellow pilots gather in the mess following the death of a fellow officer. Sometimes provision is made previously by the deceased to pay for the spirits consumed.

Wardroom

Naval officers' mess. The precise origin of this word is not known. It has been said that wardroom evolved from ward robe, a store room for stowing valuables taken from captured prizes. It was located beneath the captain's cabin which was right aft under the quarter-deck. When empty, the ward robe, being adjacent to the cabins of the ship's officers, was used as a mess.[67] This was in ships-of-the-line. In frigates and lesser ships officers messed in the gun room. The midshipmen, who normally served in the larger ships of the fleet, slept and messed down in the bowels of the ship, in the "cockpit" or midshipmen's berth.[68]

Almost certainly, the word wardroom or ward room came into use in the eighteenth century.[69] An early use of it in print is to be found in a report from off the Portuguese coast in April 1758, the year of Louisbourg. When a ship-of-the-line of ninety guns was lost by fire, the first word received by the ship's lieutenants not on watch was when "the word was passed into the ward room, by the centry, that the fore part of our ship, the *Prince George*, was on fire."[70]

Warrant Officer

Today, these words are used to designate the three senior non-commissioned officer ranks in the Service: chief warrant officer, which has replaced the former warrant officer class one of the army and air force and corresponds with the chief petty officer first class in HMC ships; master warrant officer, the former warrant officer class two, and the equivalent of the chief petty officer second class; and the warrant officer, which encompasses the quartermaster sergeant, the staff sergeant and flight sergeant of the former Services, and is the opposite number of the petty officer first class in HMC ships.[71]

The word warrant can be traced to medieval times and the ancient French *warant*, itself a variant of *guarant* or *garant*. There are similar roots in the early German *warent* and *wahren*. Even today, the word has many meanings but, in the military context, it contains the idea of an authority granted by one person to another to do something which he has not otherwise a right to do, not unlike a commission.

Indeed, a chief warrant officer today receives a warrant, a document, bearing the signature and seal of the minister of national defence, which reads in part:

> By virtue of the Authority to me, by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council in this behalf given, I do hereby Constitute and Appoint you the said . . . to be . . .

from the . . . and to continue in the said Office during the pleasure of the Honourable the Minister of National Defence.

The melding of the warrant ranks (and their equivalents) in the three former Services began in 1949 when the rank structures and pay scales, but not rank titles, were made uniform. It was at this time that the naval warrant officer of old (who wore a thin ring), and the commissioned warrant officer (who wore a thick ring, the same as a sublieutenant), both of whom lived in the wardroom, began to disappear. Indeed, it was this standardization in the rank structure which pointed up the vastly different origins of these senior non-commissioned officers, who over the centuries were given positions of authority between the men and the commissioned officers.

Historically, the warrant officer of the army and the air force evolved from the experienced soldier with leadership capability specially selected for the job by the colonel of the regiment,[72] much as the captain of a ship of war selected his petty officers from his ablest able seamen.

But the old naval warrant officer was a very different person from a petty officer. This special breed of warrant officer had his origin not in the warrant or document giving authority to act, but in the warrant or document by which material or stores were requisitioned. This concept dates back to the beginning of the Royal Navy under Henry VIII in the sixteenth century.

When the sovereign required a ship for naval service, she was requisitioned from her merchant owner by warrant which in Tudor times meant that the ship arrived in the king's yard complete with stores and the ship's standing or warrant officers. It would be unthinkable in those days for a ship to be taken into service without her master, boat-swain, carpenter and cook, and, later, the gunner. They were part of the ship — standing officers, acquired by warrant. They went with the ship, and even stayed with her when in ordinary, that is, in reserve. They were the officers who made the ship go. When it came time for the fighting, the king would put his soldiers and their officers on board, the commissioned officers bearing the sovereign's commission. When the operation was over, they went ashore again, but not the warrant officers.[73]

White Knuckle Airlines
Service air transportation (usually non-scheduled flights).

Wing
A wing is an organization of two or more air squadrons — hence the origin of the former air force rank of wing commander. The term is also used in a parade square sense, wing drill being similar to battalion drill.

Zip Driver
A CF-104 Starfighter pilot.

Zipperheads
Junior ranks of an armoured regiment.