

NOTE

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Directorate of History  
National Defence Headquarters  
Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0K2

July 1986

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R E P O R T   N O . 56  
HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)  
ARMY HEADQUARTERS

18 Apr 58.

The German Surrender, May 1945

AMENDMENT NO. 1

Delete last sentence (and reference) in para 36  
and substitute:

Authority for the air drop was given  
on 24 Apr 45; but the required conditions for the free  
dropping of supplies (cloud base not below 1000 feet  
and visibility greater than three miles in the D.Z.)  
were not fulfilled in the period 25-28 Apr. During  
this period there was bad weather over bases in the  
United Kingdom, along the route and over the D.Z.

("No. 3 Group R.A.F. Monthly Summary  
of Events," Apr 45; "Food for the Dutch", memo  
prepared by Hist 2, 28 Mar 58, in 215A21.013 (D27)).

*J. M. Stacey*  
for (C.P. Stacey) Colonel,  
Director Historical Section.

REPORT NO. 56

DECLASSIFIED

AUTHORITY: DHD 3-12

HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)

BY Ode

FOR DHIST NDHQ

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

DATE: NOV 12 1986

18 Nov 52

The German Surrender, May 1945

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REPORT NO. 56  
HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)  
ARMY HEADQUARTERS

18 Nov 52

The German Surrender, May 1945

1. This report deals with the surrender of the German forces facing First Canadian Army in May 1945 at the end of the fighting in North-West Europe. It is divided into three parts. Part I gives the background to surrender and the general situation in North-West Europe. Part II relates the circumstances of the truce and subsequent surrender on the front of the 1st Canadian Corps and describes the evacuation of the German troops from the Netherlands. Part III deals with the surrender and the later events on the front of the 2nd Canadian Corps.

2. The reference material for Part I was obtained from Operation "ECLIPSE" files in Hist 4, from C.M.H.Q. file 1/Post War/1 and A.H.Q. file T.S. 9128-1. The basic sources of information for Parts II and III are accounts by Canadian Army Historical Officers written at the time of the events and reports afterwards compiled by the Historical Section (G.S.). Of particular value to Part II is a series of notes written by Capt T.J. Allen, Historical Officer of 1 Cdn Inf Div at the time of the surrender. ((H.S.) 235C1.013 (D11)). Additional sources are the war diaries and intelligence bulletins of units and formations concerned. In many instances, unfortunately, these records are not as complete as the occasion would warrant, but such might well be expected at a time when the tension of war had suddenly ceased.

Part I: Background and General Situation

CANADIAN BACKGROUND TO SURRENDER

3. At the press conference on 24 Jan 43 which followed the Casablanca Conference, President Roosevelt declared that the Allies would enforce "unconditional surrender" upon their enemies (Churchill, W.S., The Hinge of Fate (Cambridge, Mass, 1950), p. 686). There has been bitter dispute over the advisability, and the manner of revelation, of this principle. There will be no comment here on either the introduction or the wisdom of the principle. It is sufficient to state that the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable W.L. Mackenzie King indicated his acceptance of it when he said "Armed forces of Britain, the United States and Canada are now in the forefront of an attack [on Sicily]

which has as its ultimate objective the unconditional surrender of Italy and Germany." (The Ottawa Citizen, 10 Jul 43)

4. Having decided that the Germans must yield absolutely, the Allies had still to determine what they were going to do with Germany and how they would implement their policy. The three Great Powers made the necessary decisions pretty much on their own. Canada could exert her influence in an indirect manner only -- chiefly through the United Kingdom. The extent to which Canada became associated with Britain in the early planning of the Instrument of Surrender and related matters is revealed in a memorandum of 31 Jul 43 from the Senior Officer C.M.H.Q., Maj-Gen The Hon P.J. Montague, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C., V.D., to the Minister of National Defence, Col The Hon J.L. Ralston, C.M.G., D.S.O. General Montague pointed out that while Canada was represented on the British "Military Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Committee on Reconstruction Problems", she was not represented on the Ministerial Committee itself. Membership in this committee (and effective participation in the Military Sub-Committee) hinged upon the answer to a cable sent by the British Prime Minister to the Canadian Prime Minister. The cable had been sent on or about 19 Jun 43 and pointed out that the extent to which the Dominions would be consulted in regard to the matter of armistice terms would depend upon the extent to which they were prepared to participate in an army of occupation. As far as General Montague knew, no reply had been despatched. Meanwhile, important decisions were being made with regard to the occupation and Canada had no voice in them. She did not belong to the Ministerial Committee and her members on the Military Sub-Committee could act as observers only. Because of this and particularly because of the Italian situation at the time, the General made it clear that he regarded the matter as urgent. (1/ Post War/1: Montague to Ralston, 31 Jul 43)

5. External Affairs Telegram No. 130, despatched to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs the day before General Montague sent his memo, supplied in part the answer to Mr. Churchill's cable (Ibid, Wrong to Massey, 12 Aug 43). The answer could not have been very definite for the Canadian members of the Military Sub-Committee (later re-organized as the "Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee") remained little more than spectators. The Canadian representatives had to inform the chairman that they considered it impractical to participate in the drafting of the documents chiefly because of the lack of guidance provided by their government. The representatives of New Zealand, Australia and South Africa had to confess similar feelings (Ibid, Ritchie to Under-Secretary of State, 10 Oct 43). Consequently the British proceeded with the drafting of their version of the Instrument of Surrender alone.

6. Meanwhile, in Canada on 27 Jul 43 the Chiefs of Staff met with the Secretary of the Cabinet and the

Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to consider questions raised by the United Kingdom authorities concerning Canadian activities directed to the pacification of Europe at the end of the war. It was decided to establish the "Working Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems, Ottawa" for the purpose of making studies and reports for the Cabinet War Committee. (T.S. 9128-1, vol 1: Memo, Working Committee to Cabinet War Committee, 24 Nov 43) The first meeting of the Working Committee was held on 3 Aug 43 under the chairmanship of Mr. H.H. Wrong, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. The Army, Navy and Air Force each had one representative, External Affairs two and the Privy Council one. (Ibid, Minutes of Meeting, 3 Aug 43) The Committee's first formal report, dated 3 Nov 43, summarized the recommendations of the Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee in London. The more important passages are repeated here:

The Sub-Committee envisages three stages of occupation:

- (i) The first stage will come immediately after the cessation of hostilities. At that time there will probably be large land and air forces of the United Nations in Europe, a large proportion of which will be available, at any rate for a short period, to occupy enemy territory in strength.
- (ii) The second stage covers the period between the date on which disarmament begins and the time when Germany has been deprived of the capacity for any effective military action. It is estimated that the first two stages might be completed within two years and that, towards the end of this period, it may be possible to reduce the strength of the occupying army.
- (iii) Stage three is the period during which the disarmament of Germany and the destruction of her armament industry will be completed. During this time air forces could be used to an increasing extent to reduce the number of land forces.

For purposes of occupation the Sub-Committee recommends that Germany should be divided into three main zones [with the forces of the British Commonwealth in the north-western zone] under a single allied supreme commander.

Army -- the total land forces required for the British Commonwealth zone during the second stage have been estimated by the Sub-Committee as follows:

1 armoured division  
9 infantry divisions  
1 division organized for air transport including a proportion of paratroops  
7 regiments of armoured cars and the necessary non-divisional units.

During the third stage, it might be

possible to reduce the land forces in the British Zone to one armoured division, four infantry divisions, one brigade organized for air transport, including paratroops and three regiments of armoured cars.

(1/Post War/1: Working Committee Report, 3 Nov 43)

7. Having summarized these and other recommendations of the London Sub-Committee, the Canadian report went on to state:

Presumably Canada would be expected to contribute to the forces required of the British Commonwealth.

In 1918 and 1919 the demand for the return to Canada of men in the services was so strong that it made extended Canadian participation in the occupation of Germany impossible.

It may be expected that there will be strong pressure to bring home at least those men who have been abroad three or four years. This pressure, along with the demands of the war against Japan, will, it is expected, raise opposition to extensive Canadian commitments in Europe which would involve the retention on that continent of any considerable force. If, therefore, it is essential for Canadian interests that Canadian forces should participate in the occupation of Europe, plans should be laid in advance, so that the public and the men themselves may fully appreciate what is expected of them.

If Canadian obligations are small, it may be possible to fulfil them with volunteers or members of the permanent forces.

(Ibid)

8. The report concluded with the following recommendations:

The experience of the last war indicated that uncertainty and difficulties will arise if the main lines of policy are not decided in advance. The Working Committee, therefore, strongly recommends that early consideration should be given to the nature and extent of the Canadian contribution to the tranquilization of Europe. Preparations now will enable Canada to plan a balanced contribution which will be advantageous not only to the people of Europe but also the people of Canada. Such preparation will also strengthen Canada's voice in international councils at a time when Canadian interests are at stake.

(Ibid)

9. On 9 Nov, the Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of the Cabinet and the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs met to consider the Working Committee's report. The meeting expressed the view that Canada should not help police Europe unless it participated in the inter-Allied machinery of control. This and other views were passed to the Cabinet War Committee in the form of a memorandum. The memo also contained a review of the five main reasons why Canada could not fail to be directly involved during Europe's post-hostilities period -- Canada would be an important source of relief supplies, particularly of food; Canada would be asked to contribute occupation forces; Canada would be asked to help remove allied and enemy mines laid in European waters; Canada would have a national interest in taking part in the inter-Allied machinery of control in Europe; Canada was directly concerned in the planning and execution of measures to liberate and repatriate Canadian prisoners-of-war. The memo to the War Committee concluded with a request for general guidance. (T.S. 9128-1, vol 1: Memo, Working Committee to Cabinet War Committee, 24 Nov 43)

10. The Cabinet War Committee did not answer the memorandum in detail but informed the Working Committee that:

It was important to avoid commitments which would involve the use of extensive Canadian Forces in Europe after the cessation of hostilities and which would involve heavier burdens financially and otherwise than the Canadian people would be inclined to accept after the long strain of war.

(Ibid, Holmes to Collinson,  
30 Nov 43)

Canada's reluctance to give firm, long-term commitments stemmed from more than the pressure of public opinion and expense. The frequency with which the Working Committee referred to post-war defence arrangements with the United States and to the Committee's uncertainty as to the role the Americans intended to play after the war indicates that Canada waited to see which way the Americans were going to go. In considering the likely course of American policy, the Committee recognized that Russian behavior would be a determining factor. The Committee estimated that there was no danger of Russia attacking North America during the first ten years after the war (1/Post War/1: Memo, Advisory Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems to Cabinet War Committee, 6 Jul 44).

11. Although the Canadian representatives in London were unable to take an active part in drafting the various documents and reports of the British Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee, they were able to pass on the views of the Canadian Post-Hostilities Problems Working Committee. In March 1944, Mr. Ritchie of the Canadian High Commissioner's Office pointed out to the London committee two fundamental differences

between British and Canadian assumptions:

[British planning] was based on the assumption that an International Security Organization could not be expected, at any rate in the immediate post-war years, to work effectively. This was a negative approach. Our view was based on the assumption that an International Security Organization could and must be made to work. In the second place... [they] postulated a closed Imperial defence system whereas we were thinking in terms of an International Security Organization.

(Ibid, Ritchie to Wrong, 11 Mar 44)

12. By 5 May 44 the planning had reached such a stage that the Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee was able to produce a paper showing the progress made and the main differences between the British, American and Russian views. Perhaps the most significant difference lay in the fact that the British wished the Instrument of Surrender to be a comprehensive document, embodying not only military but also political and economic clauses, while the Russians and Americans preferred a shorter document. The Russians wished specific military provisions with one short article whereby Germany would undertake to carry out all additional requirements. The Americans wanted comprehensive provisions expressed in the most general terms and the paper observed, somewhat bitingly, that they "appear pre-occupied with the importance of proclaiming to the world their unconditional acceptance [by the Germans]".  
(Ibid, State of Planning, 5 May 44)

13. When the Post-Hostilities Problems Working Committee saw the Draft Instrument of Surrender (Ibid, Draft Surrender Instrument for Germany, fol. 159) in June 1944, the members had two very strenuous objections. They protested the fact that Germany's surrender would be made to "the Supreme Commanders of the U.S.S.R., the U.K. and the U.S.A. acting by authority of their respective governments and in the interests of the United Nations" for the Ottawa Committee felt that the Instrument should be purely a military one and that no reference should be made to the respective governments of the Three Powers. In the committee's opinion, the surrender should be from the German High Command to the Supreme Commander of the Soviet Force on one hand and the Supreme Allied Commander on the other. The words "in the interests of" were not deemed satisfactory to those countries which had participated actively in the war against Germany and which should therefore be associated directly with the terms of surrender. (T.S. 9128-1, vol 2: Minutes of Meeting, 16 Jun 44)

14. The second point to which the committee took exception was a "catch all" article giving the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia "supreme authority with regard to Germany". The committee considered that if sole authority were given to the Three Powers over Germany, other European Powers might not agree to the settlement or accept responsibility for it. The comments on the Draft Instrument concluded with:

As this document in its present form might well provide an argument against the provision of occupation troops by Canada apart from any other objectionable aspect, it had been decided to send telegrams without delay presenting the views of the Canadian Government both to the Dominions Office and to the High Commissioner in London.

(Ibid)

15. In September, the chairman had to inform the members that the United Kingdom, while in sympathy with the arguments put forward, had not been able to satisfy either the United States or Russia with regard to the proposals of the Canadian Government concerning the Instrument. (Ibid, Minutes of Meeting, 7 Sep 44) However, the document finally signed at Rheims and Berlin did embody the Canadian proposal that the Germans surrender to the Supreme Commanders of the Soviet and Allied Armies respectively.

16. The Ottawa Working Committee had this to say concerning the status of Canadian troops before and after the surrender:

At the present time the position of Canadian forces was clear. They were serving in combination with United Kingdom forces under the authority of the SCAEF, who in turn came under the Combined Chiefs of Staff. When the authority of SCAEF, however, gave way to the tripartite Control Commission, the position would be changed. The Canadian forces left for occupation duties would continue to act in combination with the United Kingdom forces, but the Control Commission in Berlin would no longer come under the authority of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, but would be answerable to the respective governments represented on the Control Commission. As Canada would not be represented on the Control Commission, Canadian participation in occupation duties would have to be worked out with the United Kingdom Government. As Canada would have no voice in the policy governing the control of Germany, opposition might well be raised in Canada to the continued service of Canadian troops on occupation duties in Germany, and it was, therefore, not desirable to make any long-term commitments for keeping Canadian occupation forces in Germany.

(Ibid, Minutes of Meeting, 20 Jan 45)

It is not correct to cite lack of "voice" as the real reason Canada declined to make long-term commitments. It has been made clear (Supra, para 10) that as far

back as November 1943, the War Committee did not wish to be tied down in the matter of occupation forces for reasons quite apart from the degree of Canadian control over Germany.

17. To put into effect those plans for surrender which had been agreed upon by the Big Three and which affected the Anglo-Canadian Armies, 21st Army Group proceeded with Operation "ECLIPSE". This was defined as "plans and preparations for the operation of occupying Germany" ((H.S.) 215A21.016 (D4): Preface to "ECLIPSE" Pamphlets, January 1945). These plans and preparations were to be made by a special "ECLIPSE" staff and based on a series of 14 pamphlets which laid down principles and methods. Thirteen of the pamphlets are in the possession of Hist Sec ((H.S.) 215A21.016 (D4)). The missing pamphlet is titled "The U.S. Enclave and Berlin Garrison" and is not immediately available.

18. Operation "ECLIPSE" was designed to ensure "that once and for all no possible shadow of doubt shall be left in the mind of a single German that the military might of the Third Reich has been shattered" (Ibid, Pamphlet 1, Chap I, para 13). Before setting forth the manner in which this was to be achieved, the planners considered at some length German obstruction and evasion following the First World War (Ibid, Chap II). The occupation of Germany in 1919 had also taught the Allies that a commander should not be made responsible for the military government of a starving and disease-stricken population (Ibid, Pamphlet 10, Chap IV, para 17). And, although control was to be complete, there was to be no oppression.

19. The nature of the plans depended to a great extent upon the condition of Germany at the time of its surrender. According to Chester Wilmot, "the decision of the Three Powers at Yalta [to demand unconditional surrender] made it certain that the war against Germany would not end until the Western and Eastern armies met in the heart of Europe". (Wilmot, C., The Struggle for Europe (London, 1952), p. 660) The planners of "ECLIPSE" did not draw such a conclusion and proceeded on the assumption that surrender would occur with 21st Army Group no further than the Rhine (Case A). Provision was made to amend the plans if surrender occurred after the Army Group had fought its way 50-100 miles into Germany (Case B) or after all or nearly all the ultimate British Zone had been captured (Case C) ((H.S.) 215A21.016 (D4): Pamphlet 2, Chap II, paras 24-29). However, a formal revision of the estimate that surrender would take place at the border does not seem to have been made and planning continued on the basis of the original appreciation.\* The result was a certain amount

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\*There was considerable justification for 21st Army Group making this appreciation in light of their predication that if the enemy were defeated on the West Front, the East Front forces would fight on, but if the enemy were defeated on the East Front, the West Front would collapse ((H.S.) 215A21.016 (D4): Pamphlet 2, Chap I, para 19). The mistake, if mistake it was, lay in not revising the estimate later.

of wasted effort.

20. The principles and methods set down in the 21st Army Group pamphlets (publication of which started in January 1945) became the starting point for Canadian planning on Operation "ECLIPSE". There was, however, one very, very important limitation -- First Canadian Army was to provide for the occupation on a temporary basis only. The area it occupied was ultimately to be handed over to a British Corps District. ((H.S.) 215C1. (D699): Operation "ECLIPSE", Organization Required, 13 Mar 45, p. 3) Some uncertainty existed as to just how long "temporary" was. A period of upwards of six months became the basis for the original planning ((H.S.) 215C1. (D709): C. of S. to Col. G.S., H.Q. First Canadian Army, 5 Mar 45). To assure continuity, two thirds of the "ECLIPSE" personnel for Headquarters First Canadian Army were to be British ((H.S.) 215C1. (D704): Tel SD74, Main First Cdn Army to Canmility, 11 Feb 45).

21. The build-up of the "ECLIPSE" staff was slow. The first personnel reported for duty 26 Feb 45 and although estimates of the personnel required by First Canadian Army ran from 1200 to 1700, there were only 228 actually on strength by 15 Apr 45 ((H.S.) 215C1. (D699): "ECLIPSE" Plans, 13 Mar 45, p. 3; (H.S.) 215C1. (D356): G.S.O. 2 S.D., First Cdn Army to G.S.O. 1 S.D., 28 Feb 45; (H.S.) 215C1.009 (D67): S.C.Q. (Maint) "ECLIPSE" to A.Q.M.G. "ECLIPSE", 15 Apr 45). The war establishment finally approved was considerably smaller than the earlier estimates. Under Increment "G", 481 all ranks were to operate at or out of Army Headquarters; and under Increment "K", 138 were to be attached to corps and divisions. On 5 May 45, only 293 all ranks had been posted under Increment "G" and none under Increment "K". ((H.S.) 215A21.009 (D133): Strength Return, 5 May 45) The delay in posting "ECLIPSE" staff to corps and divisions may have been caused by the failure of C.M.H.Q. to authorize Increment "K" before 24 Apr 45 (W.D. A.&Q./"ECLIPSE"/First Cdn Army, 18, 24 Apr 45), but probably stemmed from the fact that the corps commanders would not consent to have their staffs virtually doubled just as the final and more mobile stage of operations was reached ((H.S.) 215C1.013 (D21): "ECLIPSE" Plans, 13 Mar 45).

22. One of the problems before and after the surrender was the establishment of quick and effective control over German war material. To solve this problem, four Headquarters of Canadian War Materials Reconnaissance Teams were established. Each headquarters consisted of 22 all ranks. As the reconnaissance was to be a technical one, the teams were made up of representatives of the technical arms and services, formed mainly by temporary attachments from existing headquarters and units. It was considered that each headquarters of a War Material Recce Team would fill out its ranks by 40 such temporary attachments. The teams existed to locate and report the larger dumps of war materials. (5/War Mat Recce/1: folios 1-11) To assist them in this work, General Crerar's headquarters prepared a list of the known and suspected locations of German ammunition, ordnance (clothing and M.T.), food, petrol, oil, lubricants, military accommodations, hospitals and medical stores ((H.S.) 215C1. (D366): First Cdn Army Adm Instr No 20, 3 May 45). "Q" branch was to

coordinate the information concerning war material and send to "G.S." branch the requests for guards and to pass on to military government and supplies and transport and to the ordnance, engineer and medical services such intelligence as concerned them ((H.S.) 215C1. (D356): Col Adm "ECLIPSE" to D.A. & Q.M.G. First Cdn Army, 16 Mar 45).

23. Plans and preparation for surrender were restricted by the decision to issue the 21st Army Group Pamphlets down to corps level only. Plans were, however, to be discussed verbally with commanders and senior staff officers of divisions and brigades. On the other hand, talks to units were limited to disclosing, in general terms, that the German armed forces were to be disbanded, that Military Government was to be established and Nazism eradicated. It was considered particularly inadvisable to discuss below corps headquarters the boundaries of the zones of occupation, the special procedure for dealing with the Waffen SS, the intention of detaining all officers of the German General Staff Corps and the extent of the control to be exercised over all information services ((H.S.) 215A21.026 (D1): C.-in-C. 21 A Gp to SHAEF, 19 Jan 45). While these security regulations were later relaxed, it might have been better to have revealed more to the unit commanders earlier.\* It was these who enforced the surrender and frequently with little guidance beyond a few general principles and their common sense.

#### THE GENERAL SITUATION IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE

24. By the end of April 1945 it had become evident that the total disintegration of the German Army would occur in a matter of days. On every front military collapse was imminent. Having crossed the Rhine and encircled the Ruhr, the Allied forces under General Dwight D. Eisenhower were driving directly across Germany. Meanwhile, the Allied Armies in Italy had routed their opponents and eliminated the last vestige of former Axis power in the Mediterranean. With irresistible force the Russians were sweeping from the East to close in upon Berlin. On 25 Apr elements of their 58th Guards Division met patrols of the 69th U.S. Infantry Division in the area of Torgau, on the Elbe. By this historic junction of the Eastern and Western Fronts, Germany was cut in two. (Eisenhower, Report by the

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\*A progress report on ordnance aspects of Operation "ECLIPSE" in First Canadian Army put this much stronger when it said "this with-holding of information about their next operation from lower formations had unfortunate consequences later" ((H.S.) 215C1.009 (D11): "ECLIPSE" Progress Report, 9 Jun 45).

Supreme Commander to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the Operations in Europe of the Allied Expeditionary Force, p. 107)

25. Already the First Canadian Army had sealed off the Germans in Western Holland by successive penetrations to the North Sea - 2 Cdn Inf Div to Zoutkamp\* on 15 Apr; 3 Cdn Inf Div west of Leeuwarden on 16 Apr; 5 Cdn Armd Div to Harderwijk, on the IJsselmeer, that same day. (Stacey, Col C.P., The Canadian Army, 1939-1945. (Ottawa, 1948), pp 263-64; Hist Sec Report No. 32, "The Concluding Phase of Operations by the First Canadian Army", Part II, paras 217 and 317). While the Canadians set about clearing the coastal area as far east as Bremen, the Second (British) Army captured that great port on 26 Apr and three days later established a bridgehead over the Elbe south of Hamburg. (Eisenhower's Report, p. 114). With 1 Cdn Para Bn among the units in the van, Field-Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery's troops raced for the Baltic and first met the Russians on 2 May near the port of Wismar. (Hist Sec Report No. 17, "The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion in the Low Countries and in Germany, Final Operations", pp 31-32). When Lübeck fell the following day, the German garrisons in Denmark and the Hamburg area were completely cut off. During April there had been strong rumours that the commanders of these forces were quite willing to surrender once their isolation became a fait accompli. They needed only an assurance that neither the Russians nor Nazi coercive elements from the interior could reach them. (Montgomery, Normandy to the Baltic (London, 1946), p. 220). Such a guarantee now existed.

26. The first major capitulation of German forces became effective in Italy on 2 May 45. By then both civilian and military control in Germany itself had become completely chaotic, and the dictator had taken his own life in the ruins of the Berlin Chancellory. On 1 May Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz assumed the Presidency of the Reich and promptly put out feelers for peace. As emissary he employed General-Admiral Hans Georg von Friedeburg, his successor as Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy. Dönitz first sent Friedeburg to Field-Marshal Montgomery's tactical headquarters at Lüneburg Heath on 3 May with a limited offer to surrender to the Western Allies alone the German forces in Holland, North-West Germany, and Denmark, in order that they might not fall into Russian hands. Montgomery sent him back with a curt refusal to consider anything but unconditional surrender, but took advantage of the opportunity to show him first an operational map which clearly revealed the hopelessness of the German position. After conferring with Field-Marshal Wilhelm Keitel

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\*For this and other place names connected with the surrender to First Canadian Army, see the map attached as Appendix "A" to this Report.

(Chief of the Armed Forces High Command), von Friedeburg returned the next day. At 1830 hours 4 May he signed with Montgomery the instrument of surrender of all German armed forces in Holland, North-West Germany (including all islands) and in Denmark.\* Other signatories were: Lt-Gen Eberhardt Kinzel (Chief of Staff to Field Marshal Ernst Busch, who commanded the Army Group opposing 21st Army Group), Vice-Admiral G. Wagner, and two staff officers (Colonel Poleck and Major Friedl).

27. At midnight General H.D.G. Crerar sent the following message to all ranks of the First Canadian Army:

From Sicily to the river Senio, from the beaches of Dieppe to those of Normandy and from thence through Northern France, Belgium, Holland and North-West Germany, the Canadians and their Allied comrades in this army have carried out their responsibilities in the high traditions which they inherited. The official order that offensive operations of all troops of First Cdn Army will cease forthwith and that all fire will cease from 0800 hrs tomorrow, Saturday, 5 May, has been issued. Crushing and complete victory over the German enemy has been secured. In rejoicing at this supreme accomplishment, we shall remember the friends who have paid the full price for the belief they also held that no sacrifice in the interests of the principles for which we fought could be too great.

(W.D., G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army, May 1945,  
Appx "D")

28. On 5 May Admiral von Friedeburg proceeded to the headquarters of General Eisenhower at Rheims, where he was joined the following day by Col-Gen Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff. There, at 0241 hours on 7 May, the latter signed on behalf of the German High Command the Act of Military Surrender\*\* which ended active operations in Europe. Lt-Gen W. Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff to General Eisenhower, signed on behalf of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force. Maj-Gen Ivan Sousloparov signed for the Soviet High Command, and General Francois Sevez of the French Army (Deputy Chief of Staff for National Defence) signed as a witness. (Eisenhower's Report, p. 120)

29. Formal ratification of this surrender took place on 8 May in Berlin. With one or two additions the text\*\*\*

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\*For the text of this Instrument of Surrender see Appendix "B" to this report.

\*\*For the text of this Act see Appendix "C" to this report.

\*\*\*For the text of this document see Appendix "D" to this report.

largely repeated that of the Rheims document. It was signed on behalf of the German High Command by Admiral v. Friedeburg, Field-Marshal Keitel, and Col-Gen Hans Jürgen Stumpff, representative of the Commander-in-Chief of the German Air Forces. Signatories for the Allies were Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder (Deputy Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force) and Marshal Georgi Zukov for the Supreme High Command of the Red Army. Also signing as witnesses were General Carl Spaatz (Commanding United States Strategic Air Forces) and General Francois de Lattre-Tassigny (Commander-in-Chief, First French Army). Thus victory in Europe became official on 8 May 45. (Ibid)

Part II: Truce and Surrender on the Front of 1st Canadian Corps.

30. During the last days of the war the task of the First Canadian Army was to clear the western "coastal belt" of Germany and protect the left flank of the British Second Army. Until 4 May all divisions of the 2nd Canadian Corps were still advancing northward and still meeting opposition. On the extreme left, however, conditions were quite different.

FAMINE AND THE TRUCE

31. For some days prior to the general surrender there had been a truce in effect on the front of the 1st Canadian Corps, which faced Western Holland. The Germans trapped there comprised the remnants of the Twenty-Fifth Army under Col-Gen Johannes Blaskowitz. A few weeks previously General (G.A.F.) Karl Christiansen had relinquished his position as Military Governor of the Netherlands leaving Blaskowitz as C.-in-C. Netherlands and in command of Twenty-Fifth Army. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945: Appx 43, Intelligence Summary No 289, 5 May 45). The senior Nazi official was Dr Artur Seyss-Inquart, Reichskommissar of the Netherlands, later executed as a major war criminal. Throughout the winter the plight of the Dutch population under him had grown steadily worse; with the isolation of that area from Germany starvation threatened to become a stark reality. The defences known as the Grebbe Line\* were too strong to be

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\*The Grebbe Line, sometimes called the Geldersche Valley Line, was based upon the Grebbe River in the south and the Eem River in the north, together with the marshy polderland bordering the IJsselmeer. It stretched from the IJsselmeer to Nijkerk, south-west to Amersfoort, south-east to Veenendaal and thence to meet the east-west defence line along the Neder Rijn at Wageningen and Grebbe. Further west was the New Water Line, which could be more easily inundated and therefore had less extensive field works. It extended from Gorinchem in the south via the Merwede Canal to the Lek River, thence north to Utrecht, then north-west and north along the Merwede Canal to the IJsselmeer, ending near the perimeter defences of Amsterdam. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div, Appx 18: Int Summary No. 136, 9 Apr 45, "Defence Lines in the Western Netherlands")

attacked without diverting forces required for the drive into Germany itself. Moreover, the enemy would probably have opened the dykes to flood the land, thus ruining its fertility for many years to come and increasing the privation of its hapless people. (Eisenhower's Report, p. 114).

32. The Allies had long been planning relief measures for the Dutch civilians in Western Holland. In part, the need for relief grew out of the railway and shipping strike which the Dutch instituted at the time of the Arnhem airborne landings and the subsequent traffic embargo even against the movement of food supplies imposed by the Germans in retaliation (Trial of the Major War Criminals (Nuremberg, 1948), Testimony, vol XVI, pps. 14, 214). As early as November 1944 the War Office had formed a committee in London to determine how food could be sent to the Netherlands. It was headed by Maj-Gen A.V. Anderson, Director of Civil Affairs, and comprised representatives of the War Office, Admiralty, Air Ministry, Foreign Office, Ministry of War Transport, the Netherlands Government, SHAEF, the Netherlands Mission to SHAEF, 21st Army Group, and C.-in-C. Nore. The original intention was to send over supplies from the United Kingdom by landing ships, liberty ships or coasters, but SHAEF urged consideration of supply by air on a large scale. Eventually plans for direct shipment by sea were abandoned in favour or routing through Antwerp. When the work of the Committee came to an end, on 4 Jan 45, responsibility for the relief operations was transferred to 21 Army Group. Control was vested in a new Western Holland District formed under Maj-Gen A. Galloway, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C. ((H.S.) 205S1.053 (D1): vol 1, Minutes of Meetings, "Committee on Relief Supplies to Western Holland", 16 Nov 44 - 4 Jan 45). As part of this plan SHAEF had already initiated arrangements for temporary relief supplies to be sent in by road or barge for a period of four weeks, until mines could be swept from the sea (Ibid: W.B. Smith to Allied Naval C.-in-C. and C.-in-C. 21 A. Gp, 4 Dec 44).

33. The question of relief for the Dutch was of grave concern to persons on the highest political level. Urging action before and not after the liberation of the rest of the Netherlands, Queen Wilhelmina and her Government-in-Exile on 15 Jan 45 sent a note on the subject to H.M. the King, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, with a copy to General Eisenhower. This note concluded with the following paragraph:

Should, contrary to the hopes of the Netherlands Government, immediate military help be out of the question, then immediate relief in the form either of mass evacuation or in that of food, clothing, fuel and medical supplies is an imperative necessity.

(Ibid: Note, 15 Jan 45)

34. The first definite action was taken through Sweden, with the help of certain Swiss nationals and the International Red Cross Joint Relief Commission (I.R.R.C.). This involved two shipments destined solely for the three

Western provinces of its Netherlands, whose population was 4,300,000 (of these, 3,500,000 were townspeople, 860,000 were children under 13 years). One shipment contained 2,657 tons of rye to be sent by rail from German stockpiles at Essen. Due to the transportation strike, the sealed grain cars had to be hooked up to German military trains returning to Rotterdam. The first cars left on 12 Feb 45 and were ten days en route, but by 11 Mar some 990 tons had been delivered in this manner.

35. The second shipment was a cargo of 5000 tons of provisions sent from Sweden on the S.S. Henri Dunant. While at sea this ship was found to be too heavily laden and had to put in at Gothenburg, a Swedish port. There it discharged about one-third of its freight, including a number of Canadian Red Cross packages which were to be delivered later. Reaching Delzijl on 8 Mar 45, the Henri Dunant began to unload its cargo of flour, rice, oat flakes and lentils (the following day). These supplies were distributed to the people by Dutch officials under the supervision of the International Red Cross (Ibid, p. 33).

36. Meanwhile SHAEF had continued to explore the possibilities of supply by air, which first had been mooted as a token measure in November 1944. Due to airfield demolition and general flooding, air landing was considered to be impracticable. Parachutes were in too short supply to be used. It was felt, therefore, that the quickest and easiest method to ensure distribution over a wide area would be free dropping, i.e. in packages without parachutes. Authority for this was granted on 24 Apr 45, but plans were delayed pending negotiations with the Germans in Holland. (Ibid: SHAEF to AGWAR, 27 Apr 45, and "Free Dropping Ops for Relief in Holland").

#### THE FIRST MEETING AT ACHTERVELD, 28 APR 45

37. On 13 Apr the Allies began to receive messages through resistance channels saying that Seyss-Inquart wished to discuss ways and means of getting food to the starving Dutch.\* On a Governmental level this intelligence was discussed at the International conference then being held at San Francisco. (Ibid; p. 40) In the field SHAEF handled the matter but could not arrange an initial meeting until 28 April. For this parley Maj-Gen Sir Francis de Guingand, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., Chief of Staff, 21st Army Group, was designated as

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\*Seyss-Inquart stated that on his own initiative he contacted confidential agents of the Dutch Government on 2 Apr in an attempt to reach the Allies for truce talks (Trial of the Major War Criminals, vol XVI, p. 16)

the Supreme Commander's representative. His orders were to obtain agreement for the immediate entry of food, and also to sound out the enemy regarding their possible capitulation in Holland. (Guingand, Maj-Gen Sir Francis, de, Operation Victory (London, 1947), pp 445-46)

38. The arrangements for this first conference between representatives of the opposing sides were made by Lt-Gen Charles Foulkes, C.B., D.S.O., G.O.C., 1 Cdn Corps. It was held in the schoolhouse at Achterveld, a small Dutch village about five miles east of Amersfoort in the area occupied by Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. Instructions were issued that after 0800 hours 28 Apr no weapons would be fired by troops of 1 Cdn Corps unless they were attacked. By means of wireless communication with the enemy the village of Vinkenhoef was designated as a rendezvous. (W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 27 Apr 45)

39. The senior officer selected to meet the German party there was Brigadier M.P. Bogert, D.S.O., O.B.E., Commanding 2 Cdn Inf Bde. He took with him the following officers: Maj A.G. Magee (B.M.), Maj J.H. Wharton (A.A. & Q.M.G.), Capt E.B. Bradish (I.O.), Capt H.S. Robinson (T.O.), Lt D.G. MacCulloch (I.O.), and Lt G. Koransky (I.O., 1 Cdn Inf Div, who acted as interpreter). The party motored as far as a road block (433991) set up in the centre of the F.D.Ls. of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment; the Brigadier, Brigade Major, and interpreter then set off on foot under the protection of a white flag. As no one was found at the appointed place, Brigadier Bogert had to walk a little further into enemy territory before contacting the first Germans. The War Diary of his headquarters states:

The enemy parlementaire consisted of Reichsrichter Schwebel, Judge Advocate for Occupied Holland, who greeted the Bde Comd with a 'tired' Nazi salute; a Jr Staff Offr; the I.O. 6 Para Div; a civilian interpreter and a paratroop Unteroffizier (Cpl) who... carried a tremendous white flag on a very large pole.\*

(Ibid, 28 Apr 45)

40. About then the two parties set off for Achterveld by an indirect route, the Judge Advocate riding

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\*Claiming they were part of the German party who had got lost, an officer and a corporal carrying a white flag wandered into the lines of the Royal 22e Regiment that afternoon. H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div verified their statements and ordered them to be taken back to Vinkenhoef and put on the road to Amersfoort (W.D., 3 Cdn Inf Bde, April 1945: Intelligence Log, 1650 hrs, 28 Apr 45).

with the Brigadier in the latter's staff car and the remainder in jeeps. According to convention, the Germans were blindfolded until reaching the schoolhouse. Waiting there were the following Allied officers:

Representing 21 Army Group:

Maj-Gen Sir Francis de Guingand, C. of S.  
Brigadier E.T. Williams, B.G.S. (Int)  
Colonel O. Poole, Col "Q" Plans  
Maj E.R. Culver, (American) A.D.C. to C. of S.

Representing Allied Naval Forces:

Capt R.E. Jeffreys, C. of S. to the Flag Officer

Representing Allied Air Forces:

Air Commodore A.J.W. Geddes

Representing the Russian Mission to 21 Army Group:

Col Ivan Zinkovitch

Representing Netherlands Forces:

H.R.H. Prince Bernhardt, C.-in-C., and his C. of S.

Other Allied Officers:

Maj-Gen A. Galloway, G.O.C. Netherlands District  
Brigadier N.B. Brading, Comd 6 L. of C. Sub-Area

Representing HQ First Cdn Army:

Brigadier C.C. Mann, C. of S.  
Brigadier W.B. Wedd, D.D.C.A.  
Colonel A.F. Downe, Col "Q" (British)  
Colonel G.P. Henderson, Col Mil Govt  
Lt-Col J.C. Clunie, A.Q.M.G. (M)  
Lt-Col W.J.C. Stikeman, A.Q.M.G.  
Lt-Col L.V. Chater, G.S.O. I (Int) (British)  
Lt-Col J.A.D. Craig, G.S.O. I (Adm)

Representing 1 Cdn Corps:

Lt-Gen C. Foulkes, Corps Comd  
Brigadier G. Kitching, B.G.S.  
Brigadier W.P. Gilbride, D.A. & Q.M.G.  
Brigadier A.E. Wrinch, C.S.O.  
Lt-Col J.M. Houghton, G.S.O. I  
Colonel J.S. Adam, A.C.M.G.O.  
Lt-Col P.H. Tedman, A.Q.M.G.  
Lt-Col F.B. Neary, S.O. I (Adm)

Representing 1 Cdn Inf Div:

Maj-Gen H.W. Foster, G.O.C.  
Brigadier W.S. Ziegler, C.R.A.

(Ibid; W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn  
Corps, 28 Apr 45})

41. The senior civilian and German officer were first admitted into the conference room to present their credentials to Maj-Gen de Guingand, who ignored their proffered handshake. He then ordered in the remaining officers, who grouped themselves on either side of a long table. Dr Friedrich Plutzer supported Schwebel as delegate of the Reichskommissar, and two German officers acted as escorts. The main points of the Allied plan to send in food were explained to the enemy representatives, who took many notes and occasionally raised points such as an objection to the air dropping scheme. The Dutch official who accompanied the German party appeared to be most astonished and delighted at the plan of the Allies. Schwebel contended, however, that he could make

no definite commitments until Seyss-Inquart had examined the proposals. Thereupon de Guingand demanded that they should be reviewed carefully before the next meeting, which should be attended by Seyss-Inquart himself, General Blaskowitz, and the necessary experts to ensure immediate action.\* The request of the Germans that the next meeting be on their side of the line was refused, but they were told they need not be blindfolded. (de Guingand, op cit, pp 447-48)

42. At noon luncheon was served in two large marquees erected on the church grounds adjoining the schoolhouse. The Germans were left to eat their meal in their waiting room inside the school. (W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 28 Apr 45). Afterwards Maj-Gen de Guingand asked Schwebel to see him alone, but the latter insisted on bringing along the Army representative. The **two Germans** were then told of the difficulties which would result if hostilities continued and were given a strong hint that the Allies were prepared for their part to hold fast the line of the Grebbe and Eem Rivers. Schwebel replied that he was not authorized to discuss such matters but would report to his chief. (de Guingand, op cit, p. 449)

43. It appears that all equipment for the conference had been arranged for except a typewriter. Consequently, there was some delay until one was rushed up from the R.A.P. of the P.P.C.L.I. - one which turned out to be a portable Olivette, "liberated" in Italy. (Notes by Capt Allen). As soon as the necessary documents had been drawn up, both parties signed and the conference concluded about 1630 hours. Brigadier Bogert and his contact party thereupon drove the Germans back to the road block in the Edmonton's lines, walking with them as far as the crossroads (427997). That evening all concerned were warned that the "no firing" order remained in effect. (W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 28 Apr 45)

44. On 29 May Brigadier Bogert, accompanied by Brigadier Kitching, Maj Magee, and an interpreter, returned to the same RV, followed soon afterwards by Lt-Gen Foulkes and Brigadier Wrinch. There they met Lt-Gen Hermann Plocher, Commanding 6 Para Div, who was accompanied by three staff officers. With their interpreters the two senior officers promptly adjourned to the least-damaged house on the crossroads to confer briefly over the Allied demands and the meeting for the morrow, the Germans being told "in no indefinite terms" the area where there would be no firing. The parley lasted less than an hour. (Ibid, 29 Apr 45)

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\*An unsigned copy of the Articles of Agreement prepared for the signatures of the representative of the Supreme Commander A.E.F. and the Reichskommissar is attached as Appendix "E".

45. That afternoon the Brigade Major requested the Edmontonians to check for mines and mark a lane around the road block (431993) in order that jeeps could by-pass. This unit received a report that approximately 30 of the enemy armed with light mortars and machine guns had occupied the vicinity of map reference 411987 (about one mile from Vinkenhoef), but no great concern was felt as it was considered a natural reaction in view of the high-ranking officers then in the area. (W.D., L. Edmn R., 29 Apr 45)

46. That same day the first food for the relief of the Dutch was flown in by Allied aircraft. Free dropping operations scheduled for 28 Apr had had to be cancelled due to weather, and, owing to the difficulty of removing mines, it was also necessary to substitute another dropping zone for Waalhaven. The four D.Z.s. agreed upon for use were: The Hague racecourse, Ypenburg airfield (of The Hague), Valhenburg airfield (of Rotterdam), and Kralingsche Plas beach (on the outskirts of Rotterdam).\* The method employed was to pack rations in sacks, each weighing about 23 pounds, and drop them without parachutes from a height of 300 feet. The sacks dropped initially contained bread, dehydrated meat, potatoes, vegetables, margarine, sugar, chocolate, and other foodstuff. On the first day (29 Apr) 239 aircraft dropped 510 long tons or 550,000 rations. These figures were almost doubled the following day, when 502 sorties were flown in order to drop 1074.6 long tons or 1,070,300 rations. ((H.S.) 205Sl.053(D1): vol 1, Diary, "Free Dropping Ops for Relief in Holland", p. 41)

#### THE SECOND MEETING AT ACHTERVELD, 30 APR 45

47. Definite arrangements for feeding the Dutch were agreed to at a second conference held at the same schoolhouse in Achterveld on 30 Apr. Both sides sent experts and representative officers additional to those who had been at the first meeting two days before. General Eisenhower's personal representative this time was his Chief of Staff, Lt-Gen W. Bedell Smith. Other senior Allied officers included: Prince Bernhardt, Lt-Gen Foulkes, and Maj-Gen Ivan Sosloparov, head of the Russian Military Mission to SHAEF. For Holland it was a gala day -- the birthday of Princess Juliana.

48. At 1100 hours Lt-Gen Foulkes, accompanied by Brigadier Bogert, left H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde at Barneveld in a convoy of five staff cars and nine jeeps bound for

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\*The Germans reported that, contrary to the agreement, food was dropped on 29 Apr at Waalhaven, a large part landing in water and between mines on the airfield.

the RV (427997). As the staff cars could proceed no further than the road block at 433991, the two Commanders changed to jeeps. They were thus able to ride past a second road block at 432992 and drive to the RV, where the following events took place:

There was a short wait here until a German Col and two staff offrs arrived to explain that the main body of their party had been somewhat delayed as they were forced to scramble over or around the many rd blocks erected by the enemy between the RV and AMERSFOORT. A few minutes later the main body arrived headed by Reichskommissar Seyss-Inquart, number one of the War Criminals List for HOLLAND. With the Reichskommissar were the Judge Advocate, Reichsrichter Schwebel and Generalleutnant Plocher, Comd 6 Para Div. The remainder of the party which totalled 24 were various German Staff Offrs and the Reichskommissar's private secretary, his constant companion, a 'young doll'. Seven Dutch civilians included in the party represented the various civil departments that would be engaged in the supervision of the distribution of food.

((H.S.) 112.3M1009 (D133): 1 Cdn Corps Int Sum No 290, 6 May 45)

The Canadian representatives arrived at Achterveld at the same time as the Russian delegation. Then came Lt-Gen Bedell Smith and his retinue and finally the Germans with their Canadian escorts. The conference opened in the following manner:

The eyes of every officer, other rank and villager were on the central figures in this drama. Leading the procession, limping along slightly in advance and looking straight in front of him moved the hated SEYSS-INQUART, Reichskommissar of THE NETHERLANDS. With the disappearance of the German party, the Allies' representatives made their way into the school from the other side. After some slight rearrangement the first main conference between General SMITH on the one hand and SEYSS-INQUART on the other began.

(Ibid)

49. After his introductory remarks Bedell Smith asked de Guingand to outline the general plan to feed the Dutch. This he did, stating the amount of food available and explaining the various methods to be employed -- supply by air, by ship, by rail, road and canal. In addition, medical arrangements for those who were in various stages of starvation had to be made. The presentation of this general outline required about one and a half hours but appeared to satisfy Seyss-Inquart. Those present then formed themselves into syndicates, each comprising British, Dutch and German representatives. (de Guingand, op cit, pp 450-501)

50. The Naval Syndicate dealt with the selection of Dutch ports, the routing of relief ships there and the piloting of them through minefields. The Air Syndicate selected dropping zones and arranged for the routing of aircraft, also for the control of enemy anti-aircraft. The Allies insisted upon the Dutch being allowed complete freedom in distributing the food dropped, but only after a great deal of pressure did the enemy agree to this. The Germans, however, promised to supply all information regarding mines in the canals, also to repair the bridges for traffic by road and rail. (Ibid)

51. General Foulkes dealt with General Plocher regarding the terms under which convoys by road and inland waterway could pass freely into Holland. The first suggestion Plocher made was that merely one road should be considered neutral, and that only for certain periods of the day, but he was soon made to see how ludicrous this would be. Then they discussed a certain demarkation line north and south of the road to allow convoys to go through unmolested. General Foulkes desired an area sufficiently large so that no unfortunate incident could occur, and proposed that a truce be declared over the complete battlefield between the Waal and the IJsselmeer.

General Plocher received this suggestion with obvious agitation and became very uneasy. No, he could not entertain such a suggestion without reference to higher authority. General Foulkes' annoyance grew with the increasing uneasiness of General Plocher. If the whole area was not acceptable to General Plocher, then a slightly smaller area might be considered, but the boundaries had to be clear and well defined. General Plocher interposed, however, by saying that he was fully used to drawing up boundaries which ensured that no incidents for which ~~he~~ was responsible, occurred within those points. It was pointed out to him, however, that there existed in the German Army the odd man who might well mar the whole arrangement by loosing off a bullet or shell unless the boundaries limiting the neutral area were ones which could not possibly be mistaken by the stupidest man.

At this point General Foulkes stated that he had had enough. What he wanted was a military commander who had authority to deal with him on his terms, not merely a divisional commander whose sector did not take in the whole front. A request was made that either General Plocher should be given the authority by General Blaskowitz or that the latter should come down and meet General Foulkes and thrash out the whole question. After some hesitation, General Plocher agreed to this.

((H.S.) 112.3M1009 (D133): 1 Cdn Corps Int Sum No 290, 6 May 45)

52. While the negotiations were under way, General Smith had a conference with Seyss-Inquart in a room in the British Embassy in Berlin. It is reported that the Nazi attended alone, while Lt-Gen Bedell Smith was supported by Maj-Gen de Guingand, Maj-Gen K.W.D. Strong (head of SHAEF Intelligence) and Brigadier E.T. Williams (head of 21st Army Group Intelligence). When Bedell Smith pointed out that within weeks or perhaps days Germany would have to admit complete defeat, Seyss-Inquart declared "I entirely agree". Yet he contended that it was up to General Blaskowitz to initiate such a matter as surrender. Warned that he would have no say in the penalty for further loss of life, the Reichskommissar replied in a quiet voice: "I am not afraid to die, I am a German."\* (de Guingand, p. 452)

53. Meanwhile, other officers engaged in conversation a major and a captain of the S.S. who had accompanied Seyss-Inquart.

The Captain said that the food situation was indeed atrocious and the first drop of supplies had been a great success. All the aircraft had dropped their packages well and truly in the areas arranged for. According to him, they came in low and not a shot was fired by the German defences as they flew on their mission of mercy. The Dutch food authorities apparently had the arrangements well co-ordinated and there was no confusion.

((H.S.) 112.3M1009 (D133): 1 Cdn Corps Int Sum No 290, 6 May 45)

After questioning the Dutch representatives who had accompanied Seyss-Inquart, Prince Bernhardt's Chief of Staff confirmed that what the S.S. men had said was true.

The first dropping of food had been an unqualified success. At The Hague, when the bombers came over there was a scene of wild rejoicing by the inhabitants standing on the roofs of houses, in the streets and in the squares. They gave the aircraft a tremendous reception. In fact the whole town went mad with joy, not so much for the food that they received, but for the fact that the Allies had not forsaken them. This was only a beginning and in token form, but in their minds it augured well for the future.

(Ibid)

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\*Another version of this exchange runs as follows:

General Smith held a smaller conference with Seyss-Inquart to explore more fruitful possibilities. A dramatic incident occurred when General Smith turned during this discussion to Seyss-Inquart and said: "Well, in any case, you are going to be shot." To which the Reichskommissar replied: - "That leaves me cold." General Smith then retorted: - "It will!"

((H.S.) 112.3M1009 (D133): 1 Cdn Corps Int Sum No 290, 6 May 45)

54. To coordinate the work of the various sub-committees, a conference was held at the end of the day when each service was called upon to recapitulate the decisions arrived at. By 1845 hours agreement had been reached on both sides, and, after arrangements had been made for further meetings, the various parties separated. The main points still to be solved were the matter of the temporary truce and the area over which it was extended. These were to be decided at a meeting the next day at 1200 hours.

55. During the conference the Russians wanted to set up a W/T Station but had no place to put it. Lt-Col R.P. Clark, Commanding P.P.C.L.I., made room in the Tactical Headquarters he had set up across the road from the school, and arranged for the use of a generator belonging to the Battalion's "Sally Ann". (Notes by Capt Allen)

56. As the Germans emerged from the schoolhouse, they were confronted with a luxurious Mercedes car driven by Prince Bernhardt. It had been presented to him after a 16-year-old lad of the Dutch Underground had stolen it from no less a person than Seyss-Inquart. (How it got across the line has not been explained.) That day it was parked in the most conspicuous place possible, with a Dutch National pennant flying gaily from its radiator. (Ibid)

57. In his subsequent trial as a major war criminal, Seyss-Inquart testified that he came to realize that military resistance in the Netherlands was in vain through a statement which Reich Minister Speer had made to him on 1 Apr 45. He said he then decided to negotiate on the basis that Allied troops should not advance further into Holland. In that case no further destruction would occur and the Allies could take over the feeding of the civilians through direct contact with the Dutch authorities for food supply. In his evidence he said:

SEYSS-INQUART: Then the negotiations dragged on, and on 30 April I had the conversation with Lieutenant-General Bedell Smith. I purposely did not ask for authorization from Berlin in order to avoid a refusal or be prohibited from carrying out my intention. I did this on my own. General Blaskowitz, the commander of the Netherlands, was very apprehensive. He called me during the night, because his superiors had asked him just what was going on. Nevertheless, I was determined to carry through this matter, for it seemed the only reasonable step I could take in this situation. I stated that I would assume all responsibility. On 30 April the conference took place and the result that I had desired in effect materialized-- the giving up of the military defense of Holland.

DR. STEINBAUER: Then what did you personnally do?

SEYSS-INQUART: Admiral Dönitz, as head of State, called me to Flensburg. I went by speedboat across the North Sea and reported to him, and the Admiral will confirm this as my witness; I succeeded in having the demolition decree rescinded and tried my very best to return to the Netherlands. Finally I plunged ahead and was arrested in Hamburg.

(Trial of the Major War Criminals  
Vol XVI, p. 17)

#### MISSIONS OF MERCY

58. One of the major decisions resulting from the meeting at Achterveld on 30 Apr was to increase the air deliveries as rapidly as possible to 1550 tons daily. Some ten D.Zs. were selected for that purpose. The air supply plan was made by SHAEF and put into effect immediately. On 1 May nearly 900 aircraft (504 R.A.F., 392 U.S.) dropped 1739.4 long tons or 1,592,500 rations ("Free Dropping Ops", p. 41). It has been estimated that between 30 Apr and 7 May some 7500 long tons were dropped into Holland. ((H.S.) 205S1.053 (D1): Civil Affairs 1 Cdn Corps Weekly Report, 11 May 45)

59. 1 Cdn Corps was specially charged with the delivery of supplies, including coal and medical supplies, by land. This job was handled by a special organization headed by Lt-Col E.A. DeGeer, CRASC 1 Cdn Corps Tps, with Maj T.W. Bigelow as 2 i/c. Under the name of Operation "FAUST" they set up an ad hoc headquarters about 100 yards beyond the Canadian F.D.Ls. and 300 yards from the enemy. Deliveries by land began on 2 May and by the following day convoys of 30 vehicles were proceeding over the line every 30 minutes. CRASC "FAUST" was disbanded on 10 May. (W.D., H.Q. R.C.A.S.C., 1 Cdn Corps Tps, 1 - 10 May 45)

60. The Canadian troops participating were transport platoons drawn from the following R.C.A.S.C. units:

1 Cdn Inf Bde Coy  
3 Cdn Inf Bde Coy  
1 Cdn Div Tps Coy  
1 Cdn Armd Bde Coy  
2 Cdn Med Regt Pl  
32 Cdn Corps Tps Comp Coy

In addition, the R.A.S.C. supplied platoons from the following units: 118, 460, 482, and 483 Coys, 930 Coy (G.T.), 1542 and 1578 Arty Pls, R.A.S.C. Most of the loading was done by Dutch labour. Exclusive of Netherlands transport, daily tonnages (long) delivered by Canadian and British lorries were reported to be as follows:

2 May 840  
3 May 905  
4 May 1002  
5 May 878

6 May 1141  
7 May 0\*  
8 May 1029  
9 May 1118

((H.S.) 205S1.053 (D1): vol 2,  
S. & T. Branch 1 Cdn Corps, "Daily  
Sitreps FAUST Control", 2 - 9  
May 45)

61. Deliveries by land were made mainly from No. 80 Base Supply Depot and No. 192 Detail Issue Depot R.A.S.C., Nijmegen, \*\* to a roadside dump in No Man's Land between Wageningen and Rhenen, Dutch villages on the Neder Rijn. Dutch authorities then became responsible, but they were handicapped by the number of workers who had been forced to go underground and the weakened physical condition of those available. Actual distribution did not begin until 10 May in Amsterdam, 11 May in The Hague and the Province of Utrecht. To assist the overextended Dutch transport facilities, some 200 Canadian military vehicles were handed over for use in first line distribution of supplies and more were offered. Coal, a much-needed yet bulky commodity, ran close second to food in priority (Ibid; Civil Affairs 1 Cdn Corps Weekly Report, 11 May 45).

62. On 7 May 45 officers of Civil Affairs, 1 Cdn Corps, conferred with a delegation of the German Civil Administration headed by Schwebel. Although admitting that experts differed widely in estimating the actual state of affairs in Holland, a Canadian report written after this meeting stated:

It is gratifying to note that the situation is NOT as bad as been expected; \*\*\* nevertheless, our forces arrived none too soon as the German Comd, a humane man for one of his breed, is reported to have planned to surrender on 12 May, as he calculated that after 15 May acute starvation conditions would set in...

In general it may be said that death from starvation was confined to the very old, the very young, and the very poor. Rotterdam was in the worst plight due to more widespread poverty.

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\*7 May was used to clean vehicles and equipment.

\*\*Moved to Utrecht, 8 May 45.

\*\*\*At his trial as a major war criminal Seyss-Inquart admitted that 25,000 Dutch people died of starvation (Trial of the Major War Criminals, vol XVI, p. 16).

Conditions in The Hague were roughly parallel, and probably slightly better in Utrecht. Dr. Banning, Chief Medical Inspector of Health for the Netherlands, who succeeded in maintaining his position and independence throughout the entire German occupation, gave as his opinion that the suffering was caused more by lack of quantity in the rations than by any marked vitamin deficiency. In Rotterdam approximately 400 cases of adv starvation were reported per day. In Amsterdam 130 people died during the week prior to our entry. The Swedish Red Cross were treating 8000 cases of semi-starvation and 2000 in The Hague. Factors such as lack of facilities of light and heat in the hosps, and ambs to carry patients there, contributed their toll.

(Ibid)

63. In view of these conditions, it is unfortunate that there was such a delay between the delivery and the distribution of the needed supplies. One must bear in mind, however, that the Dutch control authorities did not have the facilities of Army organization. Although it is true that the Germans caused some delay by frequently changing the type of passes issued to Dutch drivers of vehicles engaged in carrying supplies from Rhenen, there is no evidence to indicate that they used intimidation to prevent distribution taking place. The real reason for the time lag was a shortage of Dutch labour and transport. To assist in overcoming this, Canadian vehicles continued to be made available even after responsibility for distribution had passed to Netherlands District on 14 May 45. By then preparations were well in hand for large scale deliveries by ship and canal barge. ((H.S.) 215C1.043 (D4): Report by Maj A.K. Reid, "Canadian Civil Affairs Contribution to Feeding the Dutch in Western Holland". See also Hist Sec, C.M.H.Q., Report No. 172, Canadian Participation in Civil Affairs/Military Government, Part IV: Belgium and Netherlands, General Historical Survey).

MEETINGS BETWEEN LT-GEN FOULKES AND LT-GEN REICHELT,  
1 AND 3 MAY 45

64. On instructions of the C. of S. 21st Army Group (de Guingand), Lt-Gen Foulkes twice met Lt-Gen Paul Reichelt, C. of S. Twenty-Fifth Army, to make detailed arrangements for the safe conduct of the land shipments of food going into the German-controlled portion of Holland and their subsequent distribution.

65. The first of these meetings took place on 1 May 45 in a little wayside inn near Wageningen. ((H.S.) 215C1.98 (D362): Notes of Meeting, 1 May 45; (H.S.) 215C1.98 (D372): First Cdn Army Int Periodical, 14 May 45)\*

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\*For a detailed account see (H.S.) 225C2.012 (D4), Surrender Arrangements.

Agreement was reached that a neutral corridor would be established between the Arnhem-Utrecht railway in the north and the Waal River in the south through which the food convoys would be given safe passage. In that area all troops would stand fast and there would be no patrolling or firing of any weapons. The northern boundary was to be readjusted about 6 May, when the road Arnhem-Ede-Zeist would be ready for use. General Foulkes sought to extend the neutral zone much further north, and promised to carry out no offensive operations between the Ijsselmeer and Walcheren. General Reichelt agreed in principle and for his own part undertook not to carry out offensive operations north of the railway, but he pointed out that this meant, in effect, the neutralization of the German forces in Western Holland. It would therefore require authority from the C.-in-C. Occupied Holland, he said, and perhaps would have to be referred to the Supreme Command. He promised to obtain a decision on this for the next meeting on 3 May. In addition, General Reichelt undertook to provide guards to protect food dumps from civilians and German troops. It was further agreed that the C.-in-C. Occupied Holland and G.O.C. 1 Cdn Corps would each send a representative to further meetings of the Joint Food Distribution Committee in order to deal with any complaints regarding looting or improper distribution of food. ((H.S.) 225C2.012 (D4): Foulkes to Foster, 1 May 45)

66. General Foulkes at once implemented this agreement by forbidding offensive operations on the front of his Corps from Walcheren to the Ijsselmeer and ordered his Commanders to explain the situation carefully to all ranks. He restricted artillery concentration to the absolute minimum required to prevent enemy penetration, and decreed that there would be no firing of artillery within the corridor except on the orders of G.O.C. 49(W.R.) Inf Div or Comd 1 Cdn Armd Bde. (Ibid)

67. Two days later, at 1100 hours on 3 May, Generals Foulkes and Reichelt met again at the same place as before and agreed that the corridor south of the Arnhem-Utrecht railway, including the Waal River, should remain neutral. During hours of daylight free use could be made of the river and canal system, and between 0500 and 2100 hours the Ijsselmeer was to be neutral. Arrangements were made for a telephone line to connect the F.D.Ls. of 49 (W.R.) Inf Div and the enemy in order to enable messages to be passed without the use of wireless. Although it was further agreed that the neutral corridor could be extended at a later date on the opening of the Ede-Zeist-Utrecht road, the German C.-in-C. would not agree to the extension of the neutral zone north of the railway and gave notice that he reserved the right to carry on local operations, i.e. patrolling, etc, from 0500 hours 4 May. General Foulkes in reply renewed his assurance that 1 Cdn Corps would undertake no offensive operations, but he gave a solemn warning that any incidents on the German front would be retaliated tenfold (Ibid, Memo by General Foulkes, 3 May 45).

68. At the conclusion of their talk the two generals carried on an informal discussion on the question of surrender. General Reichelt declared that he and the German soldiers would flood the country and, if necessary, die in Holland rather than submit to surrender, which to them meant being deported to Russia as slave labour. The Canadian Corps Commander replied that such an act of flooding would cause untold misery and warned that those responsible would be treated as war criminals. This warning General Reichelt promised to draw to the attention of General Blaskowitz, and he himself undertook not to carry out any flooding until such time as 1 Cdn Corps recommenced the offensive. In a memorandum written after this meeting, General Foulkes, described the fears of the enemy in the following manner:

Gen Reichelt pointed out that they had been informed that one of the agreements of the Yalta conference by the Three Powers was that all German PW would be handed over to the Russians to be transported to Siberia and other places, into slavery. He pointed out that there was no German soldier who would not rather die than be handed over to the Bolsheviks.

Gen Reichelt was assured that he would be treated like any other German PW who had fallen into British hands and that now was the appropriate time to surrender. He asked if I would give him my written word that this was an actual fact. It was naturally impossible for me to do this without consultation with higher authority. I gained the impression, however, that if this assurance could be given to Gen Reichelt that he would be ready to consider surrender.

(Ibid)

#### THE SURRENDER AT WAGENINGEN, 5 MAY 45

69. Shortly after 2000 hours 4 May 45 the B.B.C. announced that the enemy forces in Holland, Northern Germany and Denmark had surrendered unconditionally to Field Marshal Montgomery effective 0800 hours the following morning (W.D., G.S. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945: Intelligence Summary No. 289, 5 May 45). The War Diarist of the 49th (West Riding) Infantry Division, which was then under command 1 Cdn Corps, commented that the news came "at long last, yet rather unexpectedly because it had been felt that the honour would first fall to 1 Cdn Corps in respect of all German troops in Holland" ((H.S.) 235B49.018(D1): W.D., 49 (W.R.) Inf Div, 4 May 45)

70. At 2200 hours 4 May HQ 1 Cdn Corps sent out the following order:

All offensive action will cease forthwith. NO firing of any type of weapon will take place from 050800B hrs.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps,  
May 1945: Appx 11, G.O. 434,  
4 May 45)

This was followed by an order to all troops to "stand fast until further instrs" (Ibid, Appx 12, G.O. 435, 4 May 45). General Crerar's forces were then facing two ways. His two Corps Commanders therefore accepted on his behalf the surrender of the enemy troops on their respective fronts.

71. The surrender terms for the German Twenty-Fifth Army were dictated in Wageningen, a Dutch town situated on the Neder Rijn between Rhenen and Arnhem. Partly destroyed by German air raids in 1940, Wageningen had been rebuilt but again damaged in the final advance of 49 (W.R.) Inf Div (Notes by Capt Allen). On the truce agreement being reached a barrier had been erected there and no vehicles other than those on relief operations had been allowed past that point (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945, Appx 4: G.O. 400, 1 May 45).

72. At 1100 hours on the morning of 5 May Generals Foulkes and Reichelt met there in a preliminary session, with the press in attendance for the first time. General Foulkes opened proceedings by reading over the general terms of surrender furnished by SHAEF; the German replied with such information as Dönitz had given him. As the items were gone through one by one, he signified approval by a nod or just the one word "understood". An account of that meeting states:

Some of the more important topics discussed included the immediate opening of the Ede-Utrecht road, the standstill order, responsibilities of the German staffs at all levels, the posn of the Dutch SS, the German order of battle, and the immediate removal of the charges from all the dykes.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps,  
May 1945, Post Mortem No. 5,  
16 May 45)

Press photographers had a field day when the German Volkswagen on departure became hopelessly entangled with a food convoy winding through the village (Ibid).

73. That afternoon the Germans returned with Col-Gen Blaskowitz at their head for the official act of surrender. This historic event has been described as follows:

The meeting took place in a partially damaged, bare and small hotel, 'The World'.

Long tables had been set out in the lobby with chairs on one side for the Cdn staff officers and on the other side for the German staff officers. The remainder of the room was crowded with chairs for press photographers, movie camera-men, war correspondents and a variety of official on-lookers. These chairs were rapidly filled. The first senior officer to arrive was Prince Bernhardt of the Netherlands. Then came the Cdn staff officers followed immediately into the room by the Germans.... For a brief moment the atmosphere of that shabby room of 'The World' was charged with cosmic significance, and despair and hope exacted a full look at each other across a wooden table.

(Notes by Capt Allen)

Canadian officers taking part were: Lt-Gen Foulkes, Brigadier Kitching, Brigadier Gilbride, and three G.S.Os. (Int) including Capt D.G.E. Molnar, who acted as interpreter (Ibid).

74. Clause by clause Lt-Gen Foulkes read out the surrender terms in English, pausing for the German interpreter to translate. From time to time General Blaskowitz asked questions, which were translated into English, but General Foulkes made it quite clear that he would allow no discussion of terms other than for clarification or amplification. Prince Bernhardt asked for the recognition of the Dutch Underground as a legal military force, and after hesitation General Blaskowitz agreed. The Germans were to disarm and imprison the Dutch SS immediately. German naval personnel were placed under command of the senior German military authority. (Ibid)

75. The official surrender orders were based on instructions for local capitulation previously issued by SHAEF through 21st Army Group ((H.S.) 225C2.012 (D4): C. of S. 21 A. Gp to First Cdn Army, 19 Aug 44). In certain instances Lt-Gen Foulkes altered and initialled the typewritten English text,\* crossing out, for example, an order holding the Germans responsible for the maintenance and safeguarding of all United Nations personnel in their area. The two leaders affixed their signatures at 1630 hours 5 May 45.\*\*

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\*A photographic copy of the text in English and German is held by the Historical Section ((H.S.) 215C1.016 (D28)) For a copy of the English version see Appendix "F" to this report.

\*\*The Political Intelligence Department Intelligence Summary #34, 19 May 45 states that "the Instrument of Surrender required re-typing, and was finally signed on 6th May" ((H.S.) 219C1.009 (D10)). But as the photographic copy of the text very clearly shows the date of signature to be 5 May and as no other source discovered makes reference to the signing on the 6th, it is presumed that the Intelligence Summary is in error here.

76. The terms of the surrender required the German Commanders to retain the troops under their command, in their existing locations; to be responsible for their discipline; and to allow no movement without Allied authority. They were to furnish all necessary information, to disarm their own personnel, and to preserve for the Allies their war material and records. They were to be responsible for the maintenance of themselves and their animals. They were to take under command all members of the police and the concentration camps, arresting all personnel connected with the camps other than inmates. They were to continue to clear the canals for barge traffic and to assist in further arrangements for feeding the Dutch civilians. ((H.S.) 215C1.016 (D28): First Canadian Army Orders to German Commanders on Surrender, 5 May 45)

77. After the formal proceedings Lt-Gen Reichelt was asked to produce the dispositions and strengths of the units in Holland. In doing so he stated that the number of troops in the country, Army, Navy and G.A.F. was 120,000. When told that the Allies had been chasing his headquarters with their Air Forces several times, he broke into a wide grin and replied "I know - you got me out of bed twice" ((H.S.) 224C1.009 (D7): Intelligence Summary No. 289, 5 May 45).

#### FURTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR SURRENDER

78. On 6 May Col-Gen Blaskowitz returned to Wageningen accompanied by his Chief of Staff and other senior officers for a conference on details of the surrender. In addition, he signed a receipt for the orders given him the previous day. The "opposite numbers" of the Twenty-Fifth Army and 1 Cdn Corps got together, and the Germans handed over the necessary charts and documents. When Blaskowitz asked that his troops be allowed to retain their arms "for protection against the Dutch", Lt-Gen Foulkes replied "I will protect you just as efficiently as I fought you". (Ibid, Intelligence Summary No. 300, 7 May 45 (renumbered 291)).

79. Written orders by General Crerar dated 6 May issued to Col-Gen Blaskowitz defined the latter's area of responsibility as the Netherlands and that part of Germany lying west of the River Weser, including the Frisian Islands as far east as inclusive Alte Mellum and Wangerooge, and north of the general line Delmenhorst - Cloppenburg - Lingen - Nordhorn. Within that area Blaskowitz was held responsible for all German armed forces, auxiliaries and civilians, except such personnel of the German Navy and Air Force as might later be expressly excluded. Until further notice he was to receive his orders through the G.O.C. 1 Cdn Corps and could accept orders through German channels only from the Headquarters of Field Marshal Busch, C.-in-C. North-West.\*

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\*For a diagrammatic outline of the chain of command, see Appx "G" to this report.

((H.S.) 225C2.012 (D4): Crerar to Blaskowitz, 6 May 45)

80. From Lt-Gen Foulkes on that same day Blaskowitz received orders to continue to exercise command over all German troops in Western Holland. He was to place all his troops, except headquarters and installations, under command of either the German 88th or 30th Corps for purposes of disarmament and concentration. 49 (W.R.) Inf Div, under command of Maj-Gen S.B. Rawlins, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., was to take over the 88 Corps area commencing 0900 hours, 7 May. 1 Cdn Inf Div, under command of Maj-Gen H.W. Foster, D.S.O., was to take over the 30 Corps area commencing 0900 hours 8 May. German formations and units were to receive orders to concentrate in the agreed areas and to be disarmed at dates and times as ordered by the respective G.Os.C. direct to the German Corps Commanders. Disbandment of headquarters and installations would be ordered later. (Ibid, Foulkes to Blaskowitz, 6 May 45)

81. Instructions issued to formations of First Canadian Army stated that all enemy forces would be held as capitulated troops and not given the status of P.W.\*; formed German units were not to be broken up without reference to Corps H.Q. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945: Appx 16, Message S.D. 2141, S.D. 1 Cdn Corps to 1 Cdn Inf Div and 49 (W.R.) Inf Div, 6 May 45). The next day H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps sent out the following message:

Until further orders German officers will be permitted to carry a personal weapon. This weapon will NOT repeat NOT be displayed but will be carried in a pocket. German O.R. emp on gd duties may carry a weapon. This concession will NOT be extended to members of S.S. and para fmns.

(Ibid, Appx 19, G.O. 463, 1 Cdn Corps, 7 May 45)

Later the Corps Commander informed General Blaskowitz that, in order to maintain discipline, German M.Ps. while on duty within the confines of the various concentration areas were permitted to carry a personal weapon (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div, May 1945: Appx 10, Message O-66, 1 Cdn Inf Div to Div formations and units, 9 May 45). German engineers and pioneers permitted to leave the concentration areas for work in clearing enemy defences, however, were to move in organized groups protected by Canadian or British personnel (Ibid, Appx 11; Message Q-65, 1 Cdn Inf Div to Div formations and units, 9 May 45). All troops of nationality other than German serving in the German Army were to be considered as German soldiers and treated as such ((H.S.) 225C2.012 (D4)):

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\*The status of capitulated troops is determined by negotiation and is not restricted to any degree by international agreement. Had the Germans been declared prisoners of war, the Allies would not have been able to use German administrative facilities to the extent they did. The Allies would also have been responsible for the maintenance of the Germans and the pay of the officers. (Manual of Military Law, p. 286, paras 88 and 95)

G.O. 499, 1 Cdn Corps, 10 May 45).

82. H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps moved on 9 May from Apeldoorn to Hilversum, the former headquarters of Col-Gen Blaskowitz. The Germans had used the houses of a wooded suburb as billets and messes and had built an impressive bunker for a command post. Well camouflaged, it stood about 80 ft by 50 with its roof some 15 ft above ground. The concrete was about 10 ft thick and appeared to be untouched, although houses all round were smashed and sagging. Inside were a dozen or more offices, each with a wireless, a bed and some maps. They were air-conditioned, had fluorescent lighting, and were well-appointed, with masses of flowers and Dutch paintings. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, 9 May 45 and Post Mortem No. 5 dated 16 May 45)

#### EVACUATION OF THE GERMANS FROM WESTERN HOLLAND

83. Prior to the movement of the Germans from Holland, there was a complete check for arms in the final concentration areas. The removal of personal arms was easy enough but there was some confusion concerning naval artillery and coastal installations for these were under command of the German Admiral of the Netherlands and he in turn was responsible to the British Flag Officer Holland (Vice Admiral Sir Gerald Dickens, K.C.V.O., C.B., C.M.G., R.N.). Infantrymen in the IJmuiden area and gunners in Den Helder were faced with the problem of disarming submarines, torpedo boats and the like (Notes by Capt Allen). But an order dated 15 May emphasized that the guns and equipment of the coastal defences would not be demolished without reference to the Royal Navy (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div, May 1945: Appx 20, Message O-108, 15 May 45).

84. All German troops were screened in order to sift out war criminals and other wanted persons. These included 600 members of the Gestapo and SS and about 200 officers and N.C.O.'s of the German Intelligence Services. The Dutch SS were said to number approximately 3,400 all of whom were to be arrested and concentrated in the Otterloo area for screening. SS and police troops were to be brought together in the area of The Hague, special precaution being taken to guard them (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945: Appx 33, Ops Instr No. 52, 14 May 45) German paratroops were also guarded more closely than the regular troops. It cannot be claimed that all wanted men were found, but at least the attempt by Comd 6 Para Div to shield Germans of automatic arrest category\* was partially frustrated when a German

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\*Persons to be arrested automatically fell into the following main classes:

- (a) Certain key Nazi Party and public officials.
- (b) All personnel of the German Intelligence Services and of the Gestapo, and certain key police officials.
- (c) All Officers, Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of rank of Scharfführer and above of the Waffen SS, and senior officers of the following para-military organisations: Allgemeine SS; S.A.; Hitler Jugend; N.S.F.K.; N.S.K.K. and R.A.L.
- (d) Certain sections of the Wehrmacht, including personnel of the Abwehr, Gemeine Feld Polizei and Lehr Regiment Kuhrfuerst.

officer turned informer ((H.S.) 220C1.009 (D104): G.S.O. 2 1(b) 1 Cdn Corps to "A" "ECLIPSE" 1 Cdn Corps, 10 Jun 45)

85. The enemy was stripped of loot. Canadians guarding the Den Helder - Causeway area alone collected 700 horses, 2000 bicycles and 16,000,000 guilders ((H.S.) 142.5M 2011 (D1): Powis Force Notes).

86. While this disarming, screening and inspecting was underway, preparations for the evacuation were completed. The Germans were concentrated into main areas and transit camps along the exodus route set up. The estimated rate of movement was 15 miles per day for 12,000 to 15,000 troops commencing 25 May. The actual movement began 22 May and the largest number handled was 9000 (Ibid).

87. All German troops in the First Canadian Army area were destined for the Wilhelmshaven - Emden peninsula for full documentation prior to disbanding (de Guingand, op cit, p. 458). The bulk of the Germans being in West Holland, the route to the peninsula was across the northern end of the IJsselmeer either by L.C.T. to Harlingen or across the causeway. Approximately 26,000 were to use the former route and 74,000 the latter. 20,000 also sailed direct to Wilhelmshaven in German naval craft under British escort. ((H.S.) 124.013 (D1): "Extract from the preliminary narrative, The War at Sea, Vol VI, pp 275-276, Jan. 1945 to Sept. 1945" as certified by Lt. E.C. Russell, Naval Historian (R.C.N.), 17 Oct 52; Notes by Capt Allen) Once across the IJsselmeer, those troops proceeding overland to the disbanding centres marched through Bolsward - Sneek - Rauwerd - Akkrum - Oldeboorn - Beetsterzwaag - Kortenemmen - Een - Zuidlaren - Nieuwe Pekela - Beeta - German Frontier - Weener - Leer - Warsinusfehn - Bagband to a dispersal point one mile south of Aurich on the Aurich - Bagband road. ((H.S.) 215C1.(D96): 5 Cdn Armd Div Op Instr No 4, Appx A & Amendment to Appx A, 20 May 45) A beaten Army returned to its homeland by the backroads of the country it had once occupied.

88. Each Canadian formation guarded its own German troops until they moved into the evacuation stream. Having shifted from Aurich in Germany to Utrecht on 17 May 45 (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 3 Cdn Inf Div, 17 May 1945), 3 Cdn Inf Div handed over the capitulated troops in its new area to 1 Cdn Inf Div at Ijmuiden, approximately 10 miles north of Haarlem (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, May 1945: Appx 38; Op Instr No 53, 22 May 45). 49 (W.R.) Inf Div, located in Amsterdam, also handed over its prisoners to 1 Cdn Inf Div at Ijmuiden (Notes by Capt Allen re interview with G.S.O. 1,1 Cdn Inf Div). 1 Cdn Inf Div handed over to "Powis Force" near the western end of the causeway. "Powis Force", the main component of which was 2 Cdn Med Regt, supervised the despatching of the Germans from Den Helder to Wilhelmshaven or Harlingen (Regimental History, 2nd Cdn Med Regt RCA, p. 86). At Harlingen 5 Cdn Armd Div took over and controlled the movement across North East Holland (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Div, \* 25 May 45). Those troops which crossed the causeway were received by "Dalby Force" consisting of 5 Med Regt R.C.A. and 3 Med Regt R.A. and then passed on into 5 Div area (Notes by Capt Allen re interview with I.O., AGRA).

2 Cdn Inf Div was responsible for the final concentration zone except where British or American troops had taken over (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, 23, 24, 29 May 45). 4 Cdn Armd Div moved from Germany to Holland at the time the main evacuation started and had little to do with it (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Div, 26-31 May 45).

89. In broad outline, that was how the evacuation of the capitulated Germans in Holland was accomplished. It should be remembered that a very great deal of the work and responsibility was left to the Germans. They were responsible for feeding themselves, using their own rations which they were allowed to retain. Looted food and luxuries were, however, seized and turned over to the Dutch Food Control Commission. ((H.S.) 245C5.013 (D4): Operation "EVAC", paras. 3,6) They prepared their own plan of evacuation; they staffed their own transit camps; they disciplined their own troops, even to the extent of executing deserters (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div, 13 May 45 and Appx 25). German discipline for German troops did cause some difficulty in as much as the powers to be allowed the enemy commanders had not been defined. ((H.S.) 219C1.009 (D224): Minutes of Meeting, 11 May 45) Nevertheless, a workable arrangement was achieved.

90. Maj.-Gen. H.W. Foster, C.B.E., D.S.O., (G.O.C. 1 Cdn Inf Div) stated that the arrangements made with the Germans worked out very well. "They showed all the willingness in the world to co-operate", he said, "but the rigidity of their system of command made it rather exasperating and apparently slow to our local commanders." He therefore explained to General Kleffel commanding 30 German Corps our system of decentralization and told him to instruct his local commanders on the spot to obey the orders of local Canadian commanders and not to appeal to their own Corps Commander "for every mortal thing". This speeded up the whole programme and the evacuation of 120,080 enemy troops was accomplished with surprisingly few incidents. The movement was virtually complete by 7 Jun 45. (Notes by Capt Allen)

#### RELATIONS WITH THE DUTCH

91. When one considers the treatment they were given during the German occupation, the Dutch civilian population was a model of good order and restraint, during the evacuation. They treated with disdain the Germans who might be occupying the building next door, but caused no demonstrations. Civic administration had a token revival, for in each community the pre-quisling-era burgomaster resumed office. As soon as possible, however, Dutch Military Government took over. Capt Allen has commented as follows:

By the end of the month L. of C. units and 'Militair Gesag' had taken over most of the civilian problems with which the div had been forced to deal; electricity was available on a limited scale; the people were being fed, the

Dutch prisoners in German conc camps were returning, likewise the children who had been sent into country districts for food, and the slave-labour from Germany. 'Militair Gesag' is not too popular with many Dutch civs, who feel that their affairs are being run for them by Dutch offrs who had been living comfortably in England or behind the Allied Armies for a year or two, and now returned to Holland to occupy seats of authority without really knowing what conditions were or are now.

(Notes by Capt Allen)

92. As a staff officer at H.Q. 1 Cdn AGRA said, "A thousand and one problems cropped up for which there were no answers in the book, and no book". These problems ranged all the way from a dispute over the ownership of a ship to a claim for a radio in a German fortress, from trains to horses, from a Dutch doctor's request for petrol to a German complaint that Dutch civilians were robbing military storage houses of beef or potatoes. (Ibid)

93. The Dutch Underground Forces, known as the N.B.S., had grown to a large and widely scattered agglomeration armed with thousands of sten guns and other weapons. In early days they were not so numerous yet had done valiant service for the Allies. After September 1944, when British troops were expected daily from Arnhem, more men and youths went into the N.B.S., and there was a large influx in the late winter and spring when the German downfall was assured and imminent. At the time of the surrender; therefore, the "old-timers" who had done most of the dangerous work were far outnumbered by recent volunteers, most of them youths, who might or might not have possessed a blue denim coverall as a uniform, who had received little training or discipline, but who wanted to shoot off the weapons in their hands. They were not hot-headed or irresponsible, but many were teenagers who had concealed themselves in the previous months to avoid being sent to Germany for forced labour. While in hiding they had played no active part in the Resistance; now they wanted to be up and doing. (Ibid)

94. The Germans were obviously concerned lest the N.B.S. should wreak vengeance, but at the Wageningen meeting of 5 May Lt-Gen Foulkes assured Blaskowitz that he "would stand no more nonsense from the Dutch than he would from the Germans". On first entering occupied Holland the Division and Brigade Commanders contacted the Underground leaders and told them they were expected to maintain strict control of their men. It was made clear that the Underground was to take no part in the forthcoming concentration and disarming of the Germans, except when asked to do specific tasks by a Canadian local commander. The N.B.S. cooperated to the best of their ability and their men were invaluable in relieving Canadian soldiers of guard duties or other tasks for which there were insufficient troops. According to Capt Allen, the general orders were:

(a) That no one was to carry arms who was not doing a specific authorized task of guard work.

(b) That all those entitled to carry arms for official work authorized by a Cdn comd, would be issued with arm bands.

(c) That there was to be no wholesale arrests of 'collaborators', and no head-shaving and other such gestures.

(Ibid)

Part III: Surrender and Later Events on the Front of 2nd Canadian Corps.

LAST DAY OF WAR FOR 2nd CANADIAN CORPS

95. 4 May 45 was the final day of active warfare for 2 Cdn Corps. The divisional tasks for that day were as follows:

3 Brit Div within own boundaries to maintain seal against enemy infiltration across Weser. 2 Cdn Div will continue advance Northward within divisional boundaries. 4 Cdn Armd Div will continue advance on Varel. 1 Pol Armd Div will capture Neuenburg and continue advance on Jever. 3 Cdn Div; 7 Cdn Inf Bde to capture Aurich, 8 Cdn Inf Bde to bypass Aurich and with 9 Cdn Inf Bde invest Emden. 5 Cdn Armd Div to control all West of River Ems.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div: Ops Log, Serial 7144, 4 May 45)

This order does not suggest the difficult nature of the country over which the Corps had to fight, or the fact that its opponents were among the best soldiers remaining to the German Army, including a high proportion of parachute and SS troops. The order does, however, give some indication that the pressure on our troops to attack hard and often had been relaxed. Only two towns were actually ordered captured--Neuenburg and Aurich. Since the end of April, the battle had been slowing down and the troops had become increasingly careful ((H.S.) 225C2.011 (D2): Brigadier Rodger's Personal Diary, 1 May 45). Time and time again after 1 May, the unit war diaries show that contact with the enemy was lost and that hours passed before it was re-established. There was no headlong pursuit of the enemy on 2 Corps front during the last few days of war. Much of the time was consumed repairing craters and waiting for support weapons to move up. It was sufficient to maintain light pressure against the Germans who were virtually bottled up in the Emden-Wilhelmshaven Peninsula. The war was almost over and the Germans were beaten.

96. But although they were beaten, German officers were fighting for the record. The higher chain of command had not yet disintegrated and until orders came down that chain, most of the German soldiers continued to resist the Canadian advance. Such surrenders of individual towns and garrisons as did take place were piecemeal affairs and had little influence beyond the sector of the Canadian division concerned. It was only when the negotiations were opened for the surrender of Aurich that there was a promise of complete collapse on the 2nd Canadian Corps front. These negotiations were called off by the Germans when they learned of the talks between Field Marshal Montgomery and General-Admiral von Friedeburg.

97. The knowledge that these talks were going successfully came to 2 Cdn Corps in the form of a phone call from General Crerar 4 May 45. The G.S. diarist of the Corps recorded that the call came in at 1225 hrs:

Army Comd phones to say that negotiations [for surrender] at H.Q. 21 Army Group were going well and would probably be concluded satisfactorily by evening. In the meantime our divisions were NOT to become involved in any assault against a German held position.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Corps,  
4 May 45)

Then for 2050 hours the diarist entered this:

Following a B.B.C. special broadcast [at 2030 hrs] on the subject, C. of S. First Cdn Army phones to say that C.-in-C. 21 Army Group had accepted surrender of all German forces on its front. All offensive operations were to stop forthwith and "Cease Fire" to take place at 0800 hrs on 5 May. A message to that effect was immediately put out to divisions under command, heads of branches and services.\*

(Ibid)

Thus the war ended. It ended with 2nd Canadian Corps in command of one British, one Polish and four Canadian divisions. It ended with all divisions but one engaged with or preparing to engage the enemy. But to understand the surrender on the Corps front, it is necessary to review separately the circumstances of each Canadian division.

#### SURRENDER ON THE FRONT OF 5th CANADIAN ARMOURED DIVISION

98. This review is given in the order from left to right in which the divisions were placed along the Corps front. 5 Cdn Armd Div occupied the left flank and was concerned with clearing the North East corner of the Netherlands.\*\* This task had required some fairly bitter

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\*For a sensitive account of what this message meant to the troops actually engaged at the time see Appendix "H" to this report.

\*\*The Concluding Phase of Operations by the First Canadian Army is covered by Hist Sec, A.H.Q., Report No. 32. In Report No. , operations are presented only when they have a bearing on the surrender itself.

fighting over difficult country but on 30 Apr 45 there remained but one main point of resistance on the entire divisional front--Delfzijl. Before the main assault began on this last stronghold, leaflets bearing the following message were fired into the area:

TO THE DEFENDERS OF  
THE POCKET DELFZIJL

Himmler has today [28 Apr 45] offered unconditional surrender to the Allies to prevent further unnecessary bloodshed.

We Canadians assume that up to now you don't know about this.

The War is practically over.

You have done your duty. Send a parlementaire over with a white flag as a sign of your surrender.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Div, April 1945: Appx 1)

99. While the leaflets were partially effective, it required a more lethal kind of persuasion before the enemy surrendered, and 11 Cdn Inf Bde pressed on the attack supported by armour and artillery. It fell upon the Cape Breton Highlanders and the Irish Regiment of Canada to finish off the pocket, although both the Westminster and Perth Regiments had done much of the preparatory work. The latter unit suffered the heaviest casualties in the brigade for they were the first to crack the outer perimeter of the enemy's defences and at a time when German morale was still high. (W.D., 11 Cdn Inf Bde, 2 May 45) The C.B. Highrs began the final assault on Delfzijl itself on the morning of May 1st and were in complete occupation of the town by 1600 hrs (A.H.Q. Report No. 32, para 710). Although the harbour installations had been prepared for demolitions, the charges were not set off and the C.B. Highrs captured the port intact (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Div, 3 May 45). The Ir R.C., attacking from the opposite side of the pocket, had three small towns to take before reaching Delfzijl. When "B" Coy was preparing to assault the third, Farmsum, on 2 May 45, the German commander sent over one of his officers under a flag of truce to learn the terms of surrender. He was told that the entire garrison must surrender unconditionally. This the enemy accepted and the German commander, Col Wolters, ordered his men to lay down their arms. The garrison numbered 1378 all ranks (W.D., Ir R.C., 2 May 45). The Farmsum surrender ended the fighting for 5 Cdn Armd Div and when the capitulation to Montgomery was announced, the "men of the mighty maroon machine" could indeed declare--"It did not closely affect us for all the Germans [in our area] were on their way to the P.W. Cage or dead". (W.D., Ir R.C., 5 May 45)

100. While the infantry battalions of the division were capturing Delfzijl, other units policed the remainder of N.E. Holland. For example, the 9th Armoured Regiment (The British Columbia Dragoons) were responsible for preventing sabotage, stopping raiding parties of the Frisian Islands' garrison from landing on the mainland, taking custody of any German troops surrendering from either the islands or the mainland, guarding against terrorism of the local populace by pro-Nazi elements and eliminating enemy spies. (W.D., B.C.D., 3 May 45) From the lack of comment to the contrary, it would appear that the security role presented no great difficulty and, with peace, the division was able to get on with the evacuation of the Germans as described in Part II.

SURRENDER ON THE FRONT OF  
3rd CANADIAN INFANTRY DIVISION

101. On 29 Apr 45, 3 Cdn Inf Div captured Leer ((H.S.) 235C3.013 (D3): Summary of Ops 3 Cdn Inf Div, April 1945). Two days later the Corps Commander ordered the division to advance on Emden and Aurich (A.H.Q. Report No. 32, para 421). When the last day of battle opened, 8 Cdn Inf Bde was fighting to establish a line along the Ems-Jade Kanal. Once that line was established 7 Cdn Inf Bde, held in reserve, would assault Aurich, whereupon 8 Brigade would swing over and help 9 Cdn Inf Bde invest Emden. 9 Brigade was then fighting its way up the East bank of the Ems river towards the port in the face of determined resistance and heavy artillery fire ((H.S.) 235C3.013 (D3): Summary of Ops 3 Cdn Inf Div, May 1945).

102. As it developed, 8 Brigade did not have to clear the start line for 7 Brigade's assault on Aurich. Shortly after midnight 3/4 May 45, a German school principal and a German Red Cross officer arrived in the R. de Chaud lines and asked to be taken to the commander to discuss the surrender of their city.\* Lt-Col G.O. Taschereau, O.C. of the unit, escorted them to Brigadier J.A. Roberts, D.S.O., commanding 8 Cdn Inf Bde. When he learned that these representatives of Aurich had been unable to persuade the German military commander to yield, the Brigadier refused to parley further. He also declined their offer to guide the Canadians into the city by an unguarded route. He did, however, promise not to shell their city before 1200 hrs 4 May 45. During this period of grace, the principal and the Red Cross officer were to return to Aurich and persuade the garrison commander to surrender. When the Germans had left, the Brigadier moved forward the artillery because, unknown to the negotiators, their town was then beyond the range of the division's guns. ((H.S.) 2658.011 (D2): Interview with Brigadier Roberts, paras 2, 3)

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\*The war diary of 8 Cdn Inf Bde gives their time of arrival as 2300 hrs 3 May 45. R. de Chaud war diary declares the time to be 0200 hrs 4 May 45. Brigadier Roberts states that they arrived at his headquarters at 0200 hrs 4 May 45 ((H.S.) 26508.011 (D2): Interview with Brigadier Roberts, para 2).

103. The next morning the infantry of 8 Cdn Inf Bde were to be relieved. This was to take place should the garrison commander prove adamant. At a cost of 2 killed and 1 wounded, "C" Coy, Q.O.I. of C. had just reached its objective, a crossroads beyond Ostersander when a German car flying the white flag drove up to their position. (W.D., Q.O.R. of C., 4 May 45) This vehicle contained the military representative of the Aurich commander. It arrived so late that it had seemed that the plans to discuss the surrender had fallen through. (W.D., 8 Cdn Inf Bde, 4 May 45).

104. The German party which consisted of a Colonel Harms (variously described as Lt-Col or Col Harms, Harmz and Haurumz) and the school principal, were taken to see Brigadier Roberts and the G.O.C. 3 Cdn Inf Div, Maj-Gen R.H. Keebler, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D. who was visiting 8 Brigade. While Colonel Harms did carry a properly signed authority from his commander, he did not have permission to surrender Aurich. His mission was to learn the terms of surrender. When General Keebler discovered this he refused to have anything further to do with the man. Nevertheless, he did agree to let Brigadier Roberts enter Aurich to see the German commander in the hope that lives could still be saved. ((H.S.) 265C8.011 (D2): Interview with Brigadier Roberts, para 4)

105. Accordingly, Brigadier Roberts made the journey into Aurich and met the commander, Kapitan sur See Jaehncke, a career officer. The meeting began at 1400 hrs and from all accounts did not proceed very satisfactorily. The situation was complicated by the fact that while the meeting was in progress Jaehncke received word that von Friedeburg was then negotiating with Field Marshal Montgomery.\*\* Because of these negotiations, the German refused to discuss the Aurich surrender further. The Brigadier then sent back an officer to division to learn the facts concerning the talks at Wunstorf Heath. Waiting for his messenger to return Brigadier Roberts remained in the German

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\*Both the Brigadier and the Brigade war diary put the time of arrival at the meeting as 1200 hrs. However the war diary of 7 Cdn Recce Regt gives the time as 1430 hrs and that of Q.O.R. of C. as 1500 hrs.

\*\*Concerning this stage of the surrender arrangement, General Crerar wrote as follows:

The German High Command had received word that the towns of Jever and Aurich had been summoned to surrender by the Commanders of the 1st Polish Armoured and 3rd Canadian Infantry divisions with the alternative of immediate assault by their troops. The German representatives had asked that such action should not be pressed to a conclusion while the negotiations were in progress. The C-in-C considered it desirable to agree to this request and I was asked to withhold the attack until further word from him. In the meantime, the activities of our own troops were to be limited to reconnaissance and the improvement of their dispositions.

((H.S.) 215C1.013 (D1): Report by Gen Crerar, 11 Mar - 5 May 45, p. 11)

Officers' Mess. He found the attitude of the enemy unusual--rather like that of a losing football team. "The war is over, we have lost, let us at least be congenial." (Ibid, paras 7, 8)

106. Maj H. McKibbin, the officer the Brigadier had sent, returned at 1700 hrs with a note from the G.O.C. stating that negotiations were in fact in progress and empowering Brigadier Roberts to make any decision he considered right. Kapitan Jaehncke still would not surrender without further orders. The meeting broke up at 1800 hrs after Roberts informed the German that the Canadians would march on the city at 0700 hrs, the following day and that if one shot was fired at his men, artillery would raze the city. (Ibid, para 9)

107. At 2030 hrs that night Brigadier Roberts reported to the G.O.C. During their talk, the BBC announced the news of the general surrender on the 21st Army Group front. The war had ended for 3 Canadian Infantry Division. (Ibid, para 10)

#### SURRENDER ON THE FRONT OF 4th CANADIAN ARMOURED DIVISION

108. Of all the divisions in 2 Cdn Corps, 4 Cdn Armd Div saw the heaviest fighting during the last few days of war. This is borne out by a comparison of war diaries and casualty figures. From 15 Apr to 5 May the Canadian component of the 21st Army Group suffered 664 fatal casualties; 4 Cdn Armd Div suffered 179. From 1 May to 5 May the Canadians received 111 fatal casualties; 4 Division received 32. ((H.S.) 133.065 (D593): Summary of Casualties, 6 Jun 44 - 5 May 45; W.D., A. & Q., H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Div, May 1945)

109. A "Battle Reading" by the divisional G.S.O. I reviewed the last weeks of war and advanced two main reasons for the heavy going: difficult terrain and lack of infantry. The countryside was so wet and swampy that all the division's vehicles were road-bound -- not only were they road-bound but it was constantly necessary to rebuild the roads or to construct new ones before an advance was possible. Because it could not deploy, the division was reduced to fighting on a one-battalion or two-battalion front. The second reason, lack of infantry, really grew out of the first reason, difficult country. The 4th Division was an armoured division fighting in what was primarily infantry country and poor infantry country at that. The shortage of infantrymen placed a great strain on those available and reduced the division's effectiveness. ((H.S.) 245C4.013 (D12): Ops 4 Cdn Armd Div, Battle Reading, p. 5)

110. These circumstances produced some stiff fighting and left the men of the green patch in no mood to bargain with the enemy. Their unrelenting attitude

is evident in the following ultimatum:

To the Burgomeister of BAD ZWISCHENAHN

1 Your town is now completely surrounded by Canadian Armour and Infantry. Strong artillery forces are deployed within range. Aircraft are available on immediate call.

2 The shattered remnants of 7 Para Div in your town are completely inadequate to defend it or to break out of it.

3 NO German forces are available to attempt a relief.

4 The Canadian Commander offers you the following alternatives:

(a) Unconditional Surrender

If you elect this course, you will:

(i) Collect all weapons in the town, whether in the possession of troops or of civilians, and place them in the custody of your Police Chief.

(ii) At \_\_\_\_\_ hrs report in your own person, or send your senior alderman, to \_\_\_\_\_, where you will surrender your town to the Canadian Commander and receive your instructions.

After surrender, the troops in your town will be treated as PW under the Geneva Convention. Civilians will remain in their homes, and, aside from War Criminals, will suffer NO damage or loss of property. War Criminals will be committed for trial.

(b) ANNIHILATION

If you elect this course, you will bring the fire of all arms upon your town until it is utterly reduced. In the process, a very large number of civilians, including women and children, are bound to perish. At a time when the Reichsfuehrer SS, Heinrich Himmler, is attempting to negotiate the unconditional surrender of the entire Reich, you may NOT be prepared for so criminal a sacrifice.

5 If you are NOT at \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_  
hrs, it will be assumed that you have chosen  
ANNIHILATION.

Signed:  
for THE CANADIAN MILITARY COMMANDER

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 4 Cdn  
Armd Div, April 1945, Appx  
77)

111. The appropriate time and place was inserted and on 30 Apr 45, a local priest was sent into the town under a white flag (Ibid, 30 Apr 45). The cleric was taken to the garrison commander who first read the ultimatum and then blindfolded and sent him to the German divisional H.Q. The divisional commander promised not to defend Bad Zwischenahn but retained the right to mortar and shell the town if he deemed it necessary. With this message the priest and the commander's military representative returned to the Canadian lines at 0730 hrs 1 May. At 1000 hrs, guided by the two Germans, representatives of H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Bde, Military Government, Field Security and Provost entered and took over the town. Except for through traffic the place was declared out of bounds. Thus the division accepted its first surrender of a German town. (Ibid, 1 May 45; (H.S.) 24504.013 (D12): "Battle Reading," p. 4)

112. But the fighting did not end with the capture of Bad Zwischenahn for the troops were ordered to continue their advance. The following entry in the divisional headquarters diary reflects contemporary uncertainty over the next objective:

From the time that 2 Cdn Inf Div appeared on our right flank, our interest in Oldenburg has progressively lessened but it was not until this morning [1 May] that we were given an objective in its stead--Varel.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Div,  
1 May 45)

113. The advance on Varel was not marked by any particularly vicious fighting. Blown bridges, craters, road repair and construction, mines, shelling and mortaring all caused their delays but at no time was a "set-piece" attack required. Perhaps this entry of 4 May in the divisional headquarters diary best describes the situation:

The enemy has had no hand in directing the battle today. At a few points small groups of infantry knotted around a mortar or an S.P. gun have fought well. More often, however, they have been very ready to surrender. The 18 Cdn Armd C. Regt, for example, accepted the surrender of the whole of Bn Voss of 22 Gr--something like a thousand men.

(Ibid, 4 May 45)

The diary goes on to say:

The situation was ripe for capitulation - of which our first intimation\* tonight was a BBC broadcast at 2040 hours quoting SHAEF to the effect that C.-in-C. 21 Army Group had accepted the unconditional surrender of all German forces in N.W. Europe.

It was the end of the road.

(Ibid)

SURRENDER ON THE FRONT OF  
2nd CANADIAN INFANTRY DIVISION

114. The taking of Oldenburg was to mark the final success of 2 Cdn Inf Div in the Second World War. A judicious combination of words, weapons and flanking movements led to the town's capitulation at little cost to the division.

115. On 2 May 45 surrender leaflets were fired into the city. One side, addressed to the citizens of Oldenburg, ran as follows:

The Second Great World War draws rapidly to a close. The Allied Armies occupy more than one half of the Greater German Reich. Berlin is surrounded. Bremen has fallen ...the Russian and American Armies strongly clasp hands at Dresden.

Through these five years of world suffering caused by the lust of the German peoples your city has escaped the weight of destruction from the air.

NOW YOUR HOUR HAS STRUCK

Powerful armies stand at the city gates while the air forces await the signal to attack. Within a short period the victorious forces of the United Nations will be in your town.

Will they find the town untouched by war or a mass of rubble crushing the twisted bodies of soldier and citizen alike? IT ALL DEPENDS ON YOU! If Oldenburg resists our forces, the houses will be tumbled into their cellars and onto the streets. All the weapons of modern war are ranged against the town to ensure that resistance is crushed by fire and steel and not by the blood of our soldiers.

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\*There is no record that the information in General Crerar's noon phone call to Corps, referred to in para 97 of this report, was passed on to 4 Cdn Armd Div.

Take your choice. If you want to live and have your city live with you, get the misguided soldiers and sailors to lay down their arms and surrender the town before it is flattened.

If there is resistance think twice before you join in. There is no mercy for the civilian in arms or for his property.

Your fate is sealed, your life hangs in the balance.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div,  
May 1945 - Appx 3)

An appeal to the soldiers, sailors and marines in the city was printed on the other side. Addressed to the ordinary citizen and serviceman, the leaflet was essentially emotional in approach - thus contrasting with the ultimatum presented by 4 Cdn Armd Div to Bad Zwischenahn, which had relied on the force of relentless logic.

116. Mortars and artillery were the chief weapons used to get the infantry into the outskirts of Oldenburg. They were brought to bear with such effect that few direct assaults were necessary. Indeed, the greatest problems were clearing the mines and repairing the roads so that the support weapons could be brought up. The speed of the advance was as often determined by the engineers as the infantry. (A.H.Q. Report No. 32, paras 627, 634, 641)

117. The advance of 4 Cdn Armd Div on Varel threatened the West flank and rear of Oldenburg. The movement of the Essex Scottish into the eastern suburbs threatened the other flank. With 6 and the remainder of 4 Cdn Inf Bde advancing from the South, the city was surrounded on three sides. Moreover, 8 Para Div, the one force capable of putting up a real defence, had been withdrawn towards Wilhelmshaven even before the leaflets were fired into the city. The citizens were understandably anxious to surrender. (Ibid, para 636; W.Ds. Essex Scot, and 4 and 6 Cdn Inf Bdes, May 1945)

118. Preliminary arrangements for the actual surrender were made by telephone--both the S. Sask R. and the R.H.L.I. Having contacted the burgomaster by this means on the evening of 2 May (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, 2 May 45). It would be difficult, however, to credit the honour of accepting the surrender to any one unit. In an incredibly short time, the burgomaster contacted the Os. C. S. Sask R., R.H.L.I., R. Regt C. and Fus M.R. (W.Ds., S. Sask R., R.H.L.I., R. Regt C. and Fus M.R., 2-3 May 45). It was this last regiment which first established a bridgehead over the canal which cuts the southern part of the city (A.H.Q. Report No. 32, para 646). But it was the R.H.L.I. which first entered the heart of the city. They were guided by the burgomaster who led them in at 0830 hrs 3 May 45 (W.D., R.H.L.I., 3 May 45).

Until that time this German official had been unable to declare the city vacated by the defenders. His various offers previous to this were unacceptable as he was not empowered to speak for the military. The unresisted occupation of a German city was so unusual an event that the R.H.L.I. diarist wrote with pardonable exaggeration:

The actual occupation of the centre of the city was one of the most amazing sights of the war. German soldiers, police, civilians and D.Ps. stood in the streets and stared as a handful of Canadians in German cars came down and ordered them off the streets.

(W.D., R.H.L.I., 3 May 45)

119. By mid-afternoon of 3 May, all infantry battalions of 4 and 6 Cdn Inf Bdes had entered the city which, aside from the fire of a few snipers early in the morning, was occupied without a shot. The bulk of the Canadian force was moved to the northern outskirts of the town or slightly beyond to prevent the enemy from returning. Others in the division got on with patrolling the streets, stopping the looting (chiefly by D.Ps.), searching for documents and administering a large Russian P.W. Camp. All houses were checked and each household required to list the occupants. In a short time law and order was re-established. (W.Ds., 4 and 6 Cdn Inf Bdes, and G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, 3 May 45)

120. After the fall of Oldenburg, H.Q. 2 Cdn Corps instructed 2 Cdn Inf Div to move Northwards, but the order did not specify how far, how soon or with what urgency (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, Ops Log, Serial 7144, 4 May 45). Most of the units in the division passed the night 3/4 May quietly. The daylight hours of 4 May were spent in preparation for the thrust towards Brake on a one brigade front. (A.H.Q. Report No. 32, para 655) The only unit in contact with the enemy was the 8th Reconnaissance Regiment (14th Canadian Hussars) and then only during two brief skirmishes--one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The morning's skirmish resulted in the death of three Hussars (W.Ds., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div and 14 H., 4 May 45). 5 Cdn Inf Bde, the brigade which was to lead the thrust to the North, was actually holding its final "O" Group for the next day's advance when the BBC announcement came over the air (W.Ds., 5 Cdn Inf Bde and 4 Inf Bde, 4 May 45). 2 Cdn Inf Div did not let the war pass without a suitable demonstration. At 0755 hrs, 5 May 45, five minutes before the "cease fire" came into effect, the divisional artillery fired a salvo of red, white and blue smoke (W.D., 4 Cdn Inf Bde, 5 May 45).

#### THE ENEMY DEFEATED

121. The following quotation from the war diary

of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada indicates the extent of the German defeat:

Hundreds of German soldiers, most of them unarmed, were streaming along the roads, completely disorganized and without any sign of supervision. Some going North and others going South. Some on foot, others on bicycles or horsecarts, in groups of two or three or in groups of two or three dozen. We could now see for ourselves that the once super-efficient German Wehrmacht had collapsed completely and permanently. Every soldier in this procession seemed to belong to a different division and unit. Their parent formation had been cut to pieces and was now scattered throughout Northern Germany. Their vehicles were either destroyed or out of fuel, their officers had left for undisclosed destinations and the men simply stayed and waited for the end of this nightmare.

(W.D., A. & S.H. of C., 6 May 45)

These observations were made during the battalion's move into Varel on 6 May. Their accuracy is borne out by the number of entries in other diaries in the same vein. The Germans had been thoroughly beaten. There were 4106 officers and 88,793 men in the sector opposite 2nd Cdn Corps ((H.S.) 581.009 (D74): 2 Cdn Inf Div, Eclipse Instr No 3, 27 May 45, Appx "A").

#### ARRANGING FOR THE SURRENDER

122. It was the negotiations at H.Q. 21 A. Gp which really ended the war on the 2 Cdn Corps front. But to give effect to the surrender required considerable effort by 2 Corps. The first problem was to contact the German officer responsible for enemy forces opposite the Corps. G.O.C. 3 Cdn Inf Div sent Brigadier Roberts into Aurich on the morning of 5 May to bring Admiral Weier, Commanding the Emden Area, to divisional headquarters. The Brigadier was unable to reach the Admiral as the latter was on Norderney Island. It also seemed to Roberts that the Germans were trying to stall, so he returned to divisional headquarters to see what further steps might be taken. At headquarters he met the Corps Commander who had decided to implement the surrender through Weier. Accordingly, Lt-Gen G.G. Simonds, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., informed Brigadier Roberts that he was to have the Admiral at Bad Zwischenahn at 1700 hrs that very day. Moreover, the Brigadier was to advise Admiral Weier that unless he was present on time, the Canadians would reopen hostilities and send in bombers ((H.S.) 265C8.011 (D2): Interview with Brigadier Roberts, May 1945).

123. General Keebler accompanied Brigadier Roberts on his return to Aurich. Kapitan Jaehncke, the garrison commander, was in a highly agitated condition. He said that they had had no word of a meeting and that he could take no action without orders from his superior. It was pointless to discuss anything with a man in his condition. General Keebler started to leave, followed by Jaehncke. The General made the point absolutely clear that it was the responsibility of the Germans to have their commander at the conference or take the consequences. Brigadier Roberts remained after the G.O.C. left. He brought in a half track WT vehicle to keep his H.Q. posted. (Ibid)

124. A further development now occurred. Admiral Weier was not the Commander-in-Chief, but was merely the naval commander in the area. General Erich von Straube was the C.-in-C. East Friesland, with his headquarters near Wilhelmshaven. Much confused telephoning and running about the countryside followed before this officer was finally contacted. He then agreed to leave for Aurich in ten minutes. Von Straube arrived about 1630 hrs and appeared indignant that the Corps Commander was not there in person to meet him. There was all too little time to cater to his whim as it was essential to get him to Bad Zwischenahn immediately. He was taken to the Corps Commander about 1730 hrs. (Ibid)

#### THE SURRENDER TO GENERAL SIMONDS

125. General Simonds had called the meeting with General Straube in the office of the burgomaster at Bad Zwischenahn, where Corps headquarters had been installed that morning. The meeting was attended by all the divisional commanders and heads of services of the Corps. ((H.S.) 225C2.013 (D30): Op Summaries - 2 Cdn Corps, Folio 3) General Straube, accompanied by two staff officers, duly appeared to be given a lecture on the instrument of surrender. The General, however, was far less composed than his superior Blaskowitz. His noticeable ignorance of the composition of his command--an assemblage of units which was a puzzle even to those charged with keeping the German Order of Battle-- and his unbending mind were a source of obvious embarrassment to his staff officers. He had only recently assumed the command of Armee Abteilung Straube, whose area comprised the whole of East Friesland, and he seemed appalled by the number of detailed instructions involved by the surrender terms. He was also shocked to learn that he was to be held responsible for internment and concentration camps. However, after his attention had been drawn to Paragraph 3 of Field Marshal Montgomery's instrument of surrender (which prescribed strict and immediate execution of orders by the German command), the General rallied magnificently. He requested that no order impossible of execution be given to him lest he appear as an officer unwilling to co-operate. General Simonds made it clear that such was not the intention of the Allies. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Corps, May 1945:

2 Cdn Corps Intelligence Bulletin No. 2, 11 May 45)

126. The Canadian divisional commanders arranged details of the surrender with their opposite numbers in Armee Abteilung Straube ((H.S.) 235C2.016 (D14): Conferences, Meetings with German Comds, Ops 2 Cdn Inf Div, Folios 1 to 6; W.D., G.S., H.Q. 4 Cdn Armd Div, 5 May 45). Except for 5 Cdn Armd Div, which had previously cleared the Germans from its area, the formations of 2 Cdn Corps prepared to move to the coast and occupy the areas allotted them. On 6 May the troops moved into the remainder of East Friesland. Guides for all the columns moving forward were provided by the German forces of the area. While this move was taking place further conferences were held between the Canadian heads of arms and services on the one hand and senior German officers on the other hand to clarify the surrender pro-formae which had been issued and to expedite the concentration, disarming and evacuation of the German armed forces. ((H.S.) 225C2.013 (D30): Ops Summaries, 2 Cdn Corps, Jan/Jul 45, Folio 2) In these conferences, Corps Headquarters worked through Armee Abteilung Straube, 2 Cdn Inf Div through 490 Inf Div and Battle Groups Schilling and Stephan, 3 Cdn Inf Div through the Naval Commander of the Emden Sector, and 4 Cdn Armd Div through Battle Group Gericke (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div: 7 May 45; Appx 2, Int Summary No. 84; Appx 13, Notes by G.S.O. I 2 Cdn Inf Div on visit to 3 Cdn Inf Div).

127. On 7 May the Divisions of 2 Cdn Corps completed the occupation of their allotted areas and the disarmament of the German forces commenced. The defeated Germans co-operated fully in the task. The corps was also responsible for the reception of Germans in the concentration areas North of the Ems-Jade Canal. These arrangements, made in conjunction with the Flag officer Wilhelmshaven and General von Straubes' Headquarters, dealt particularly with the control and guarding of all food stocks. (W.D., A & Q, H.Q. First Cdn Army, May 1945: Appx 4.)

TURNING OVER THE BREMEN ENCLAVE TO THE U.S. ARMY

128. The basic outlines of the British and American zones of occupation had been agreed upon at the Quebec Conference in August 1943. This agreement left the American zone land-locked. Consequently, it was also decided then that the Americans would control the ports of Bremen and Bremerhaven and the necessary staging areas in the immediate vicinity. (Leahy, Fleet Admiral William D., I Was There (New York, 1950), p. 263) It was this decision which resulted in the Bremen Enclave. The agreement having worked its way down through the Governments, armies and corps concerned to the actual troops involved -- 29 U.S. Inf Div and 5 Cdn Inf Bde -- the territories of the Enclave were accordingly handed over. When the Enclave changed hands a composite battalion from 5 Cdn Inf Bde represented the Canadians and a composite battalion from the artillery units of 29 U.S. Inf Div represented the Americans at the ceremony to mark the occasion. The ceremony took place 23 May on the hospital grounds in Brake. A band

from the Royal Welch Fusiliers played "God Save the King" as the Union Jack was lowered and a band from the U.S. Army played the "Star Spangled Banner" as the American flag was raised. This was followed by a March Past. Formality having been satisfied, the Canadians held a party that night to entertain the Americans and next day completed the work of handing over. (W.Ds. 5 Cdn Inf Bde and R. de Mais, 23 - 24 May 45) 29 U.S. Inf Div assumed complete control of the Enclave at 2359 hrs, 24 May 45 ((H.S.) 215C1.009 (D144): Tel QVR8/9/10, C.G. 29 U.S. Inf Div to C.G. XVI Corps, 25 May 45)

THE END OF THE OCCUPATION BY 2 CORPS  
AND TAKING OVER BY 2 CDN INF DIV

129. On 15 Jun Headquarters 2 Cdn Corps handed over all its responsibilities in Germany to Headquarters 30 British Corps. The Canadian Headquarters then moved from Bad Zwischenahn to the vicinity of Hengelo in Holland before being disbanded on 25 Jun 45. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Corps, 15 Jun and 25 Jun 45) Headquarters 2 Cdn Inf Div took over the old Corps quarters in Germany and came under command 30 British Corps. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, 15 Jun 45) By 18 Jun all main German formations had arrived in East Friesland and a total of 192,099 all ranks were concentrated in their allotted area north of the Ems-Jade Canal. This figure also includes 2348 female auxiliaries. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, June 1945: Appx 2, Sitrep of 18 Jun)

130. On 6 Jun 2 Cdn Inf Div assumed control of the Twenty-Fifth German Army. On that date Maj-Gen A.B. Matthews C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D. and divisional staff officers met representatives from 101 Central Section\*\* and Lt-Gen Reicheld, Chief of Staff, Twenty-Fifth German Army. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the changes in the chain of command and the rulings to be established in the area north of the Ems-Jade Canal, exclusive of the Bremen

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\*The adm order issued by 5 Bde stated that the parade was to take place at the Sports Field of the Marine School and that the massed pipe bands of 2 Cdn Inf Div were to play (W.D., H.Q. 5 Cdn Inf Bde, Appx 6, 21 May 45). The diarist of R. de Mais purporting to describe what actually happened, declared that the parade took place on the hospital grounds and that the band of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers provided the music for the Canadians (W.D., R. de Mais, 23 May 45).

\*\*101 Central Section was an organization designed to be a link between 2 Cdn Inf Div and the German Army for the purpose of giving orders, obtaining information and ensuring that all orders were promptly and efficiently complied with by the Germans (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, June 1945: Appx 8, ECLIPSE Instr No. 5, 8 Jun 45).

Enclave. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div: Appx 8, ECLIPSE Instruction No. 4, Appx "C") Between 5 and 11 Jul 3 Cdn Inf Div (C.A.O.F.) took over from 2 Div, which then returned to the Netherlands, where it was concentrated in the area between Apeldoorn and Amersfoort, awaiting movement to the United Kingdom for repatriation (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, June 1945: Appx 8, Instructions for the relief of 2 Cdn Inf Div by 3 Cdn Inf Div (C.A.O.F.) 28 Jun 45). The last Sitrep of 2 Div in Germany was dated 4 Jul 45 and listed a total of 183,552 German servicemen in the concentration area including 3166 female auxiliaries (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Div, July 1945: Appx 2, Sitrep of 4 Jul).

#### OPERATION "ECLIPSE"

131. In the Preface to the 21st Army Group Pamphlets, Operation "ECLIPSE" was defined as the preparation for occupying Germany. This would indicate that the actual operation was going to be given another code name, yet Chapter I of Pamphlet 1 declares that the first day of "ECLIPSE" was "A" Day -- the day that Germany formally surrendered, or the day that the German forces capitulated or were overpowered. ((H.S.) 215A21.016 (D4): Pamphlet I, Chap I, paras 2,3) This confusion was further compounded by the fact that many of the "ECLIPSE" staff did not know where their responsibilities started and stopped ((H.S.) 235C3.013 (D19): Memo by ADOS, 3 Cdn Inf Div, n.d.) Moreover, "for reasons which have been impossible to identify, the overall Army plan gave the impression to commanders and staffs at lower formations that Operation "ECLIPSE" was a special event to be performed by "ECLIPSE" Increments unaided" ((H.S.) 215C1.009 (D11): "ECLIPSE" Progress Report (Ordnance), 9 Jun 45, para 5).

132. With a few exceptions this staff, much smaller than it was supposed to be, was held at Army Headquarters until the end of the fighting. From 4-10 May it was despatched to corps, divisions and lower formations. On 10 May, the "ECLIPSE" personnel remaining at Army H.Q. were absorbed as part of the regular staff with many going to a new section of "A" branch called Reorganization, Reallocation and Demobilisation. (W.D., A. & Q./"ECLIPSE"/ First Cdn Army, 4-10 May 45)

133. The work accomplished by the "ECLIPSE" staff who went to corps, division or lower formations is revealed by the following excerpts from a progress report on the operation:

During the planning period the available staff was very small. The rest of the staff at Army and lower formations arrived so late that they had limited time in which to grasp

the essentials of the operation and plan.

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The Problems

- (a) Large tracts of country, particularly in Eastern Holland, had been liberated and contained quantities of German War Material.
- (b) War Material Recce Teams were reporting in detail much of this material.
- (c) Troops were NOT available to guard war materials when found.\*
- (d) There was NO transport available for collection.
- (e) The inhabitants were looting eagerly and in Holland the Netherlands Administration was appropriating war material at will.
- (f) Even if materials were collected there were NO control teams to supervise dumps.
- (g) It was often difficult to distinguish between Salvage and ECLIPSE commitments.

The Solution

- (a) The problem was considered jointly between ECLIPSE and Salvage and each service helped the other with its resources, with a large credit balance to Salvage.
- (b) Four centres were selected for the concentration of war material:-
  - (i) Richtersbleek Factory, Enschede  
Map Reference Pl 412013
  - (ii) Sugar Factory, Groningen  
Map Reference Ll 196136
  - (iii) Harskaamp  
Map Reference 2 648937
  - (iv) Oldenburg (Artillery and Flak Barracks)  
Map Reference M2 3106

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\*Eventually, the provision of guards for all vulnerable points resulted in "extreme dispersion" of the occupation forces and great fatigue to the troops burdened with frequent sentry duty. Consequently, 21 A. Gp accepted a greater element of risk and reduced the number of places guarded. ((H.S.) 215C1. (D344): 21 A. Gp to First Cdn Army, 15 Jun 45)

(c) These four depots were thrown open to the results of both War Material Recce and Salvage Recce: and, in effect, the surrounding areas have been swept into these depots.

(d) 10 Canadian Salvage Unit was made available from 15 Canadian Army Road Head and one section was placed in each of the four depots: officers were provided from various sources, including the ECLIPSE staff at Headquarters.

(e) Local labour was employed.

(f) Workshops supervised by Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers were set up to inspect and service vehicles, as recovered, so that they could be put to stock, as far as possible in a running condition.

(g) Transport from Army reserves and drivers from various sources were made available by the staff.

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#### Germany

2 Canadian Corps in Germany were to order the Germans to arrange concentration areas for the troops in Germany and from Holland, in the area North of the Ems - Jade Canal.

#### Primary Disarmament

Primary Disarmament dumps were set up in Wilhelmshaven, Emden, Oldenburg and Meppen (artillery equipment only). In the first three dumps it is noticeable that small arms are abundant, but there is great shortage of other forms of equipment.

#### Recce and Clearance

It was early found that the delay between discovery of material by War Material Recce Teams and collection often meant that the material was lost. This difficulty was solved as follows:

(a) The part of 2 Canadian Corps area South of the Ems - Jade Canal was divided into two from North to South.

(b) One War Material Recce Team was placed in charge of each area with under command of each:-

10 Salvage Recce Officers  
A pool of Ammunition Examiners  
Royal Canadian Engineer Advisors

Detachment Royal Canadian Electrical  
and Mechanical Engineers  
One Pioneer Company  
One Transport Platoon

Three Inspecting Ordnance Officers were available to advise either team.

(c) Each War Material Recce Team divided its area into 10 sub-areas.

(d) Materials were cleared into the ECLIPSE Depot at Oldenburg and into a newly formed depot at Leer.

(e) Clearance of the area North of the Ems - Jade Canal was left to 2 Canadian Infantry Division which was engaged on disarmament and control in that area.

This was known as Operation SALVAGE.

((H.S.) 215C1.009 (D11):

"ECLIPSE" Progress Report (Ordnance),  
9 Jun 45)

134. A comparison of "ECLIPSE" plans with "ECLIPSE" achievements leads this narrator to conclude that the Operation failed to fully achieve its ambitious goal. The Operation failed because:

- (i) The original plans were based on two false assumptions, that surrender would occur with 21st Army Group at the Rhine and that the responsibilities of the First Canadian Army would continue for six months or more.
- (ii) It was never clear whether the "ECLIPSE" staff was to be a planning and advisory body or an executive body.
- (iii) The difficulties inherent to the planning by one group of an operation which entailed execution by another group were never really overcome.
- (iv) The plans were over-elaborate and called for the presence of several hundred experienced staff officers who just weren't available.
- (v) The staff actually posted to "ECLIPSE" Increments was posted too late for adequate training.
- (vi) The unit commanders were not kept "in the picture".
- (vii) The delay in getting the "ECLIPSE" staff from Army H.Q. to the forward areas meant that unit commanders had to make "on the spot" decisions during the crucial few days following the cessation of hostilities.

This is not to say that the surrender was not fully and properly executed. It was -- but by troops using their common sense in applying a few general principles. Nor do the results of Operation "ECLIPSE" speak against preliminary planning but they do reveal the limitations of too detailed a preparation for an operation which, by its very nature, required the use of much initiative by local commanders.

#### THE CANADIAN SOLDIER AS REVEALED BY THE SURRENDER\*

135. The men of the First Canadian Army formed the largest body of volunteers which fought in North-West Europe.\*\* The feelings of these volunteers are important for while the description of battle often requires that battalions be considered as chessmen, the true understanding of an army demands some knowledge of the kinds of men in it. War may frequently be a matter of impersonal objectives to staff officers and military historians; but to the soldier in a regiment, war is primarily a subjective experience. The nature of this experience is revealed in the following excerpts from 2 Cdn Corps war diaries at the time of the German defeat. These war diaries vary according to the character and circumstances of the unit and according to the perception of the diarist. Each diary shows but one part of the Canadian soldier; together the diaries come close to presenting the whole man.

#### 5th Canadian Armoured Division

136. 3rd Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment (The Governor General's Horse Guards);

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\*At the time of the surrender, General Crerar issued a directive to his commanders concerning the discipline and training of his soldiers. The directive shows a great understanding of the character of the Canadian soldier and it is repeated as Appendix "I" to this report.

\*\*There were of course some 12,908 N.R.M.A. soldiers sent to join the First Canadian Army during the last four months of the war in Europe but these men formed considerably less than 10% of the Army's strength and suffered only .5% of Canadian fatal battle casualties in North-West Europe (Stacey, op cit, pp 235, 272).

4 May The long awaited announcement [over the BRC] was followed by a mad scurry for the rum bottles and all ranks "spliced the main brace".

5 May At 1500 hrs orders were received to cancel all rum issues as a death had occurred in the division and poisoning was suspected. No further rum until the medical investigation is complete. The irrepressible C.B.H. immediately requested 20 gallons for experimental purposes.

137. 2nd Armoured Regiment (Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians));

4 May During a show at R.H.Q. news came of the surrender. The C.O. announced same ~~amidst~~ cheers and whistles.

138. 5th Armoured Regiment (8th Princess Louise's (New Brunswick) Hussars);

4 May At 2230 hrs the long awaited for message was received from Rear 5 Cdn Armd Bde. A dance was held by the officers mess during the evening.

13 May Sunday broke as a warm, sunny day with light breezes prevailing. A memorial service was held to honour those of our regiment who had fallen during the war against Germany.

139. 9th Armoured Regiment (The British Columbia Dragoons);

4 May At 2035 hrs a BBC news flash [announced the end]. Some wild and dangerous celebration by civ population was tolerated by the military forces in view of the great announcement.

140. The Perth Regiment;

4 May At 2045 hrs Bde called to say [that the war was over]. A rum issue was authorized and a minor celebration took place.

141. The Cape Breton Highlanders;

4 May The remainder of the evening passed quietly with all coys in their new position and carrying out normal guard duties.

Late this evening we heard the good news over the radio... This news brought hearty cheers from the boys.

142. The Irish Regiment of Canada;

4 May Our first day out of the line (after 37 days in) finds everybody busy cleaning up. This afternoon we buried our dead from the last battle. Lt Gourlay, Sgt Caswell and 8 other ranks. This evening the radio brought good news. Can this be the end?

8 May To-day came the news we have been waiting for for nearly six years. Tomorrow Germany will surrender. It leaves one with a curious mixture of feelings. Mostly there is just a feeling of thankfulness and relief. But there is no great sense of extreme joy, just a quiet acceptance and thoughts of all those fellows who waited and fought and died in Italy and Holland that the rest of us might carry on to this great day. To many of us it means no more crouching in slit trenches or waiting for the next shell to land and wondering how much longer your luck will last, no more dawn attacks or night patrols.

143.

The Westminster Regiment (Motor);

4 May The evening was being spent quietly until 2045 hrs when the BBC announced... This news was received with great excitement by all ranks and parties were immediately organized to celebrate the best news since 1939. The remainder of the evening must be described as confused.

### 3rd Canadian Infantry Division

144. 7th Reconnaissance Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars);

4 May As a patrol approached the bridge at MR 998410 it was blown and the enemy opened fire from across the Ems-Jade Canal. In this skirmish Cpl Morrison was killed and Sgt Dabbs later died of wounds. At 1430 hrs an envoy under a flag of truce, purporting to be from the garrison comdr at Aurich was conducted to 8 Cdn Inf Bde H.Q. The Squadron [A] was ordered not to cross the canal... Total Prisoners of War for the day was 208...

Word was received from 3rd Canadian Infantry Division in the evening that "Cease Fire" would take place at 0800 hrs 5 May 1945.

Weather: Very cool with heavy showers.

145.

The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (M.G.);

4 May Message received at 1830 hrs to cease offensive action--a further message received [2033 hrs]-- the war is over as far as the Camerons are concerned in this theatre.

146.

The Royal Winnipeg Rifles;

4 May

We got the information from Bde at 1455 hrs that the Brigadier of 8 Cdn Inf Bde was in Aurich accepting that city's surrender. This news made us feel very happy because we had expected to assault and take the place... We had no sooner arrived in Holtrop [1845 hrs] than we got two written messages. One was the very sad news that Maj D.B. Robertson had died of wounds yesterday. His loss is deeply felt. The other message said that no further offensive action by infantry including patrolling would be taken and that casualties were not to be incurred... At 2030 hrs we heard [the news] over the BBC. Bde sent us the following message at 2250 hrs: CEASE FIRE with effect from 0800 hrs 5 May.

6 May

It seemed strange to see German soldiers walking around... They certainly are a rare assortment.

147. The Regina Rifle Regiment;

4 May

By 2000 hrs all Coys are in position [in the concentration area for the assault on Aurich]. A Bn "O" Group is ordered for 2130 hrs.

At 2015 hrs a signaller comes into the Ops Room with the news that BBC has just announced that the War in this sector is over. We sit tight until the news is broadcast at 2100 hrs, still having heard nothing from Bde H.Q. on the subject.

At 2100 hrs the news states that German troops... have agreed to surrender unconditionally... The Bn "O" Group is forgotten and everyone sits down and tries to figure things out. Everyone is going around with a silly grin on his face and trying to let the significance of it all trickle through. Finally official notification comes through Bde H.Q... The balance of the night is spent in "quiet meditation" by a small number but the majority calmly go to bed with little celebrating. What can be done on water?

148.

1st Battalion, The Canadian Scottish Regiment;

4 May

At 1950 hrs the news [of surrender] came over the BBC. We had been expecting it sooner or later; but, when it came it was hard to realize it was true and there would be no more fighting.

9 May

Many of them [German soldiers] have been separated from their units so they have wandered around the roads with no definite purpose in mind. They have been unarmed and we have not bothered with them so the situation has presented a great contrast from that of a week ago when we were shooting one another on sight.

149. The Queen's Own Rifles Rifles of Canada;

4 May At 1330 hrs C Coy was pinned down by SA fire just short of the objective [X rds 875369-- near Ostersander]. Supporting arms went into action and cleared a way for the Coy. Two of our men were killed and one was wounded.

At 1500 hrs C Coy were all on their objective. Shortly after C Coy took the X rds, Lt-Col Haurumz of the Wehrmacht came in with a white flag to negotiate surrender and he was followed a few minutes later by the Burgomaster of Aurich.

At 1900 hrs the greatest news since D Day is officially announced. There is no celebration but everybody is happy.

150. Le Régiment de la Chaudière;

4 Mai La nouvelle nous vient par la radio [at 2030 hrs] que les troupes allemandes en face du 21e groupe d'armée, d'après leurs supérieurs ont mis bas les armes et se sont rendues aux alliés.

5 Mai Une Messe est célébrée et le "Te Deum" est chanté [at 0815 hrs] sur la place des chars d'assauts afin de remercier Dieu de la victoire accordée.

151. The North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment;

4 May At 2030 hrs we heard via radio that all German Forces on the front of 1st Canadian Army had surrendered.

12 May There will be no future rum issues.

152. The Highland Light Infantry of Canada;

3 May A few PW were taken and they spoke of a complete surrender in a few days.

4 May At 1720 hrs the following message was received at this H.Q. "Firm up your present area, accept no casualties, don't engage in any unnecessary action and do not use any arty if it can be avoided."

At 2030 hrs the BBG announced [the surrender to Montgomery]. A strange atmosphere prevailed, everybody appeared happy and relieved but no mood for rejoicing developed.

Weather - raw and cold

Visibility - poor

Morale - good and rising.

8 May More letters were written today than on any other day during the past eleven months.

153. The Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders;

4 May [At 1704 hrs] The Brigadier phones all offensive action is to cease forthwith except arty which is to be used with discretion.

[At 1830 hrs] It is very hot in our area. Jerry must suspect that cessation of hostilities is imminent and is set to get rid of his ammunition. It is a bit nerve-wracking: no one is interested in becoming a casualty at this stage of the game, and even the most intrepid are beginning to look around for basements. Our artillery is busy retaliating with fire, engaging a suspected German H.Q. at Petkum, and other targets.

[At 2345 hrs] Enemy arty activity appears to have stopped, we hope.

6 May [At 1700 hrs] Unit has arrived in Emden. It is a curious experience coming into close contact with Jerries. They appear to be wandering about the place at random and it takes a bit of "getting used to". The situation is like something out of "Alice in Wonderland".

28 May Voting for the Federal Election starts today. The morale of the battalion is noticeably high, the boys seem to be reacting favourably to this life of pleasantness and relative ease. Discipline is well maintained and few of the lads are up on charge.

154. The North Nova Scotia Highlanders;

4 May The Battalion remained in position [in Timmel] all day waiting for supporting arms to be moved up. A and B Coys employed the prisoners of war and civilians in removing road blocks and filling in the craters. Around 1700 hrs a message was received from Brigade that no offensive action would be taken which would be liable to cause casualties to our own troops. Rumours were rife and many and various were the conjectures on what was taking place. At 2100 hrs, the BBC [announced the surrender to Montgomery].

5 May The effect on the men of the news of unconditional surrender of all Germans on our front was not very evident. There was rather an air of disbelief as though it were difficult to realize that the fighting was actually all over, than of celebrating. The

men were quiet and went about their duties as before or fell to discussing among themselves how soon they would be making the home bound trip across the Atlantic.

6 May By proclamation posted through the town [Norden] by the German Army, the civilian population had been ordered to stay in their houses during our arrival. But instead they thronged the streets and particularly the square more it seemed, because of curiosity than of any desire to welcome us. They did not cheer or wave flags, yet they did not appear sullen and dejected.

7 May The [radio] news contained reports of the unrestrained celebrations in various parts of the Allied world and the plans for the celebrations on V.E. day. But by the troops this news was received with the same calmness as the news of the collapse on the 21st Army Group front. There were no celebrations.

16 May [When in Germany] the law of "non-fraternizing" had been kept to the letter and the behaviour of the troops had been exemplary. However it was a relief to be back in Holland amongst a friendly people.

#### 4th Canadian Armoured Division

155. 29th Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment (The South Alberta Regiment);

4 May After supper and about 2030 hrs, the men were listening to Glenn Miller's dance band, when the music was stopped and a news flash sent. All German forces on 21 Army Group front had surrendered unconditionally. Nobody could believe his ears and then realizing what they had heard, everybody started leaping around and cheering. The relief was tremendous. A double issue of rum was handed out and in a limited manner everybody has a good time.

6 May Confirmation that the Germans to our front are actually surrendering makes us feel better. The war is definitely over for us. Now for the spit and polish soldiering.

156. 21st Armoured Regiment (The Governor General's Foot Guards);

4 May The good news was received with enthusiasm but tempered in most cases by a certain distrust of the enemy.

8 May Again the news was received with a kind of restrained enthusiasm as though everyone hoped it were true but still doubtful.

157. Guards); 22nd Armoured Regiment (The Canadian Grenadier

4 May This morning the Brigadier came to our combined H.Qs. [C.G.G. and L.S.R.]. It was laid down that we would have to push on and it was decided to run an armoured thrust up the right flank with a force consisting of 2 Sqn and "B" Coy L.S.R.

A terrific number of P.O.W.'s streamed back all afternoon. Sgt. Hubert drew quite a laugh when he had a group of 100 of them at RHQ singing "Marching against England".

At 1500 hrs... it was reported by P.W.'s that there were some wounded Germans in the vicinity of 291186 so the Padre and Lt Goldie went out to bring them in. They never returned.

The C.O. ordered a Recce element to be sent forward to 284249 but at 2045 hrs a message from RHQ ordered no further advance owing to a BBC announcement.

The end came when we were out in front pushing on.

158. Dragoons); 9th Armoured Regiment (The British Columbia

4 May "C" Sqn with Argyll and Sutherland Regiment of Canada moved North to town of Weifelstede and made contact with the enemy. Tonight the Regiment heard the news of a surrender to the 21st Army Group but the Regiment stood fast until morning 5th of May.

15 May Cpl Smith of Recce troops had his arm blown off by an explosion in his tank at 2300 hrs. Cpl Smith went to his tank to pick up something and when he opened the hatch a pre-arranged and boobyed grenade went off. It is believed that the work was done by a civilian and action was taken to find out the origin.\*

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\*Having determined that a German was responsible for the booby trap, the town folk were assembled and told that it was necessary to clear a field of fire about the tank harbour. When the O.C. had given them this information, he ordered the work of clearing to proceed. One house was bulldozed flat and another burnt to the ground. (W.D., 10 Cdn Inf Bde, 15 May 45)

159. The Lincoln and Welland Regiment;

4 May At 2200 hrs word was received from Bde to stand fast until further orders.

5 May At 0100 hrs... the long awaited order [concerning the "cease fire"] had come in. The troops spent the day resting.

160. The Algonquin Regiment;

30 Apr Since crossing the Küsten Kanal 17 April the battalion has advanced just a little over 5 miles, always against fierce resistance and over terrain where it was impossible to use tanks except on the roads. Fortunately the country ahead appears to be more suited to mobile warfare and there are indications that the enemy defence is already beginning to crumble.

4 May Only a few people had heard the broadcast and the others, though they wanted to believe it, were hard to convince. [One company was actually engaged at the time of the broadcast, suffering and inflicting casualties.] Then at 2205 Lt-Col Akehurst sent the following message to all coys: "All offensive action will cease until further notice". Even after this word was received, there was still not the jubilant reaction one might have expected. A few people were noisily excited but most were just deeply and quietly thankful.

5 May By evening the mood for celebrating had begun to take hold and most of our people who were not on duty proceeded to encourage that mood with the aid of several kinds of liquor that mysteriously appeared in many places.

15 May After much grumbling at being dragged out of bed so early, the area round up [in Varel for German deserters and war criminals] got under way at 0500 hrs as scheduled. Houses were entered and searched while the majority of citizens were still in bed. Others, both male and female were caught in various stages of dress and undress. Some strange sights were seen and as the men began to realize the interesting possibilities this business had to offer, the grumbling was forgotten and the job progressed rapidly amidst mounting enthusiasm.

19 May Early reveille for "A" Coy and the Carrier and A Tk pls. Their job was to guide and shepherd several thousand German troops who are moving through our area en route from one camp to another. All day long the German marched and rode past in the strang-

est assortment of vehicles ever assembled for the movement of troops. The scenes reminded one of the days back around Falaise where bedraggled looking Germans were surrendering by the thousands.

161. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's);

3 May Capt Sherwin Doig, O.C. "A" Coy was killed. During these days we deeply regretted casualties since we could truly feel that the war's end was but a few days away.

4 May The announcement from higher formation that the Argylls were the only unit in the entire 21st Army Group who were still encountering opposition\* did not help our troops. At 2040 hours and somewhat unexpectedly came the announcement we had been waiting and hoping for since our first day of action... There was spontaneous and justifiable rejoicing and celebrating as soon as word of the surrender spread amongst the troops.

7 May A good many of the prisoners did not quite grasp the significance of what was happening. They seemed to be under the impression that they were "under command" of 4 Cdn Armd Div and would join us in an Anti-Russian Crusade.

24 May [Nijverdal, Holland] For the first time, now that the war was over, we could detect a new vigour in the Dutch town-life; business was re-opening, factories began to work again, transportation for the civilians-- though still on a reduced scale-- was once again functioning and the people themselves seemed to be able to think and act again. Their local newspapers, representing every shade of political thought, re-appeared with discussion on national as well as international events. The change-over was rather fascinating to behold; in the past we had only seen what warfare and close quarter fighting will do for a country, now for the first time we could observe the beneficial by-products of peace.

162. The Lake Superior Regiment (Motor);

3 May During the afternoon it was learned from "B" Coy that the telephone system connecting Rastede to Wilhelmshaven was intact and operational. At 1730 hrs Lt W. Craig accompanied by an interpreter from 22 C.A.R. and his

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\*This was incorrect.

driver went to "B" Coy on the outskirts of Rastede where they picked up a section of carriers and proceeded to shoot their way into the town which was not yet clear of enemy. On reaching the Post Office Lt Craig with the aid of the interpreter put through a telephone call to the Garrison Comdr at Wilhelmshaven, and in the name of the Allied Military Comdr, issued an ultimatum to surrender. After a wait of approx 1 1/2 to 2 hrs Lt Craig again called and received the reply that the garrison would fight to the last man.

4 May

Another 75 mm gun was sighted at approx MR 290197. One sec of #8 pl moved forward to take out the gun, covered by the remaining two secs. Pte McGillivray took the PIAT and on reaching the edge of the woods came under S.A. fire. He continued to edge forward however, and on reaching a suitable position he fired two bombs. The first was a direct hit at the junction of the piece and the shield, knocking out the gun, and the second penetrated the shield killing the crew. The Coy moved ahead again... After encountering another road block, another 75mm (which the FOO knocked out with his own 75 mm tk) and a bridge prepared for demolition, the Coy finally firmed up at MR282235 on receiving the "cease forward movement" order.

#### 2nd Canadian Infantry Division

163.  
Hussars);

4 May

A Sqn [fanning out from Oldenburg and making towards the coast at approximately 0500 hrs]. ...kumped another 88 and lost 2 cars and were forced to abandon a third. Lt. Roy Matheson and Tprs Mosull and Shopland were killed. At dinner the Padre came in with the news that the War was over.

5 May

We first shuddered about the spit and polish era which was about to descend upon us. On the whole, the surrender was taken very calmly but everyone felt let-down. The general feeling was "La Guerre est finis"-- so what!

6 May

Out of Victory comes confusion. What a mess! The one object in the mind of every Jerry is to get home and he is certainly doing his damndest to get there.

8 May

A German woman claimed that a dark man, wearing a black beret, raped her, so we called the provost and had an identification parade. First stop, C Sqn. The gal walked up and down a few times and [then] pointed the finger of guilt at the woman-hater of the Regt. He'll never live it down. The look on -----'s face was priceless! After

a lot of fussing about and more parades, she finally decided that it wasn't any of our men.

16 May The number of officers and men volunteering for the C.A.P.F. is appreciable. This would indicate a high standard of morale within the unit. If the smartness of the gate picket is any indication, the lads are responding to the spit and polish very well.

164. The Toronto Scottish Regiment (M.G.);

4 May A wave of excitement was caused tonight when it was announced on the wireless that all resistance opposite 21 Army Group would cease as of 0800 hrs 5 May 45.

165. The Royal Regiment of Canada;

4 May At 2035 hrs it happened--a radio report of the collapse... It was a great moment.

5 May We are still just a little dazed with the news. It is very hard to realize that our part of the fighting in Europe is over. There are no great celebrations in our camp but [we are] quietly thankful that the struggle on our front has ceased.

7 May It is reported that VE Day is here and that the German commanders have surrendered unconditionally. Tomorrow is to be official VE Day. This comes as an anti-climax.

11 May The people of the village [Wardenburg] try to be friendly but meet with no success. The men have seen too much to be anxious to fraternize. As yet there has been no sign of any "Resistance Movement".

166. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry;

4 May [At 2000 hrs] news of the German surrender to 21 Army Group circulates around the battalion. It was picked up by the sigs and I section radio and soon spread. Even though [we] did expect it, it was still hard to believe.  
[At 2130 hrs] expect high ranking German officers to come through our lines with plans for surrendering.  
[At 2200 hrs] the liquor and beer issue arrived at a very fitting time too as a major celebration was in order.

5 May The troops themselves in all coys seem sur-

prised, relieved and quite a bit disappointed as V day had no special celebration for them.

167.

The Essex Scottish Regiment;

4 May

The chief and most exciting news of the day was from the 2100 hr BEC broadcast... For many the news was hard to realize but confirmation came from a Bde O Group at 2130 hrs. The company commanders met in the CO's office at 2315 to hear the terms of the surrender and drink a toast to the end of hostilities for the Regiment. It was a proud moment and the work of the many who were not present to share this hour was not forgotten.

168.

Canada;

3 May

Liberated and conquered radios tonight brought us the news of the complete capitulation of the German Armies in Italy. This coupled with the word that Berlin is now Kaput leads us to the belief that the end is definitely in sight.

4 May

The [BBC] broadcast brought us the news we have awaited so long, and for which we have travelled so far... There was a moment of silence while the enormity of it all was comprehended, then followed a round of mutual congratulations. There was some celebration... but largely the feeling was one of relief rather than jubilation.

8 May

It has been reported to us that some of the Poles [D.P's] in the district have been guilty of appropriating food stocks from private homes. After an examination of the conditions under which the forced labourers have had to exist it is some wonder that they content themselves with taking food.

10 May

On behalf of the three hundred men under his command, the officer [commanding a German A/A group] wished to sign up in the Canadian Army to fight against the Japanese.

12 May

There has been a great deal of pressing of uniforms, blanccoing of web and shining of brass recently but not a single gripe on the subject has been heard. It would appear that the men are only too willing to put up a good front before the Heinies of the town.

The K. of C. have been instrumental in delivering books to each company. As there

are all too few to go around, corporals may be seen reading aloud to groups of men gathered around them.

28 May The massed pipe band of 2 Cdn Inf Div played Retreat tonight in front of our Bn H.Q. [in Varel]. Even the Germans seemed impressed.

169. Le Regiment de Maisonneuve;

8 May For VE Day it is fair and sunny. At 1930 hrs we had a VE Day parade. One platoon of each rifle company and H.Q. company paraded downtown [in Brake]. We had a march past and our C.O. Lt-Col G.L. Lalonde took the salute and after that he read to us messages from the Army, Corps and Div Comdrs. Our Padre... paid a tribute to our dead. The Last Post and Reveille were sounded and the parade was dismissed. It was very impressive.

170. The Calgary Highlanders;

5 May At 0800 hrs official word was received that the attack planned in the Bde huddle 4 May was cancelled. Although there was no mention from higher command of the reported surrender of German forces, it was felt that this change in plan, in view of the progress of the war during recent weeks was a very strong indication that the fighting was ended. And so as this news was slowly comprehended by the battalion, all ranks looked into the future with misgivings at the prospect of an occupational role and "peace-time" soldiering.

A Bde huddle at 2100 hrs revealed the first of the battalion post-war tasks-- occupy for two weeks a portion of northwestern Germany during which time the Germans were to collect and surrender their arms and commence demobilizing.

7 May Bn HQ being in the small town of Rodenkirchen was besieged morning until night by German soldiers and civilians, by Russians and Frenchmen, by Belgians and Dutchmen, even by an Englishman-- all lost, displaced or hungry and all desiring to return home as quickly as possible... Many a fervent prayer was offered for the speedy arrival of Military Government.

19 May The demolition of mines and panzerfaust was continued by the Pioneer Platoon. By this time, the experts of the Pioneers were really warming up to their work and becoming a trifle over zealous, they exploded the teller mines in groups of 100 at a time. An irate Dutchman immediately stormed up to Bn HQ to protest that his barge, lying 2000 yds from the demolition area, was completely lacking in window glass. The Pioneers, called in for an explanation couldn't understand why they were blamed for the Dutchman's plight. They did admit however that there was a hole at the demolition area that would "envelop a small battleship" and that "it rained dirt for 5 minutes after the explosion!" Next time the mines were blown up in groups of fifty.

171. Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal;

5 May Cease fire is officially given by Brigade starting at 0800 hrs today... Even though operations had ceased in our area [Alexander Airfield, Oldenburg] the whole battalion was kept at the stand to and no one lost his head over this great news. Discipline was very good and all acted as real soldiers as they have always done.

8 May VE Day. A ration of beer is distributed and everybody drank a toast to victory.

12 May The convoy was cheered while passing through Holland. The bright decorations of VE Day were still all over the place and the happy and pleasant smiles of the population reminded the men of all the receptions they have had while liberating their part of Holland. The battalion moved into the town on foot. The parade was good and very soldierly in spite of the heat and the fatigue of the journey [from Germany]. The billets are very good and the little town [Rijssen] is pleasant.

172. The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada;

4 May At 2000 hrs the BBC [announced the surrender to Montgomery]. The news was received with great hilarity in the battalion and numerous little parties were held to celebrate the long awaited news. There were many discussions about the future role of the battalion and many of the personnel were doing rapid calculations in an attempt to figure out when we reach Canada.

173. The South Saskatchewan Regiment;

4 May The news came over the radio... It is momentous news and a great tribute to Field Marshal Montgomery.

8 May Today the weather is the finest we have had for a long while and everyone is enjoying the sun despite the fact that they are in Germany and itching to get back to Canada.

At one minute past midnight, the boys celebrate the "Cease Fire" by shooting off flares and in the distance A/A tracers were seen drifting up into the sky. This marks the end of WW II in Europe.

9 May At 0001 hrs today the war ended.

The Coys were occupied during the morning preparing for this afternoon's [commemoration] service. Also the battalion training got under way at 0900 hrs with 45 minutes of PT followed by an hour of arms drill.

At 1400 hrs the parade was turned over to the CO and the service began. [Both the Protestant and Catholic Padres addressed the men and the battalion recited aloud the Lord's Prayer].

The Last Post was played by Pte. A.E. Bachinsky of D Coy, after which there was a two minute silence of memory of our fallen comrades. The bugler then played Reveille, after which everyone joined in singing God Save the King.

#### CONCLUSION

174. In the last few months of the Second World War, the following divisions were employed or available for employment against the Germans:

180*	Russian
68	American
16	British
10	French
5	Canadian
3	Polish
2	Indian
1	New Zealand
1	South African
1	Brazilian
287	divisions

\*Wilmot, C., The Struggle for Europe (London, 1952), p. 623; The Army Almanac (Washington, 1950), p. 489; Field Marshal Alexander, The Italian Campaign 12 Dec 44 - 2 May 45 (London, 1951), Appx "C")

The above figures make it plain that Canada could not have expected to influence the nature of the surrender terms to any great degree. Part I of this report also sets forth some of the reasons why Canada was unwilling to press for greater voice when possession of that voice meant committing herself to occupying part of Germany for a considerable time. These reasons were fear of public opinion, uncertainty over post-war defence arrangements with the United States, uncertainty concerning the post-war intentions of Russia and a belief that the division of responsibility for policing Europe should be determined by an international security organization. Under the circumstances, the best Canada could do was to go along with the decisions reached by the Big Three while continuing to help defeat Germany on the field of battle. Therefore, First Canadian Army was only concerned with the military surrender of the Twenty-Fifth German Army opposite 1st Canadian Corps and the 2nd Parachute Corps opposite 2nd Canadian Corps.

175. The German surrender to 1 Cdn Corps was quite different from the enemy surrender to 2 Cdn Corps. In the Western Netherlands, the Germans had suggested a truce in order that the Allies might feed the Dutch. Seyss-Inquart's willingness to accept responsibility, and the fact that no part of the German homeland was involved, were two very important reasons why a workable agreement was reached. Hostilities were never resumed after they were suspended to permit food drops and the entry of food convoys into the Netherlands.

176. In East Friesland, a good part of Germany was at stake, including the ports of Emden and Wilhelmshaven. In this sector, no high ranking German officer would accept responsibility for surrender. Negotiations on the highest level were required to put an end to the fighting. Until the negotiations between Field Marshal Montgomery and Admiral Dönitz were successfully concluded, the majority of the enemy continued to resist. That they did fight on is a tribute to the discipline and courage of German soldiers. Their valour, however, only served to compound the folly of their leaders.

177. The policy of 2 Cdn Corps was to crush resistance "by fire and steel and not by the blood of our soldiers". Unfortunately, the terrain in East Friesland was such that bringing to bear this fire and steel proved most difficult. General Simonds was not able to bring into play anything like the full force of his armour and artillery. Consequently, the burden fell heaviest upon the infantry and the engineers. Nevertheless, by 4 May, 2 Corps had forced the surrender of Delfzijl, Oldenburg and Bad Zwischenahn. Aurich was on the point of yielding when von Friedeburg signed the surrender documents. The enemy had been totally defeated on the field of battle.

178. The Germans could not claim that they had been overwhelmed by numbers on the Canadian Army front. Blaskowitz' force numbered approximately 120,000 and Straube's 93,000--a total of 213,000. General Crerar commanded 260,000 troops at

the time of surrender.\*

179. Fortunately, while the enemy's defeat was complete, there remained sufficient German headquarters to assist in the disposal of the vanquished. Even with their help, the task was a huge one. Over two hundred thousand enemy servicemen had to be disarmed, screened, concentrated and prepared for demobilization. Over one hundred thousand of these had to be evacuated from Holland and the road distance from Amsterdam to Wilhelmshaven is roughly 200 miles. Nevertheless, the greater part of the task was finished within one month of the capitulation.

180. It is rather fascinating to learn how quickly the bitter memories fade from the minds of Canadian soldiers. The reaction to peace of the men of 4 Cdn Armd Div was altogether different from that of 5 Cdn Armd Div. In 4 Div, which was in action until the very end, there was a tremendous feeling of relief at the "cease fire", almost as if the condemned had been reprieved. In 5 Div, which had a three-day break between its last battle and the end of hostilities, there was the beginning of that happy reminiscence with which soldiers recall their past wars. Rarely did the Canadian soldier really hate the enemy. It was only towards the end when he saw the German concentration camps that there was any strong feeling on his part--and that was closer to disgust than hate.

181. With the "cease fire", the Canadian soldier felt that he had done his bit--he wanted to go home. He had done his share in helping to win the war--it was up to someone else to give meaning to his victory.

182. This report was prepared by Captain J.R. Madden, Gen List. Paragraphs 24-82, 91-94, 125-127, 129 and 130 were taken from the draft of a report prepared by Major J.W. Ostiguy, D.S.O., R.C.I.C. and revised by Major R.B. Oglesby, R.C.A.S.C.

*J R Madden Capt*  
(C.P. Stacey) Colonel  
Director  
Historical Section

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\*The total strength of First Cdn Army on 5 May 45 was 225,011 (W.D., A. & Q., H.Q. First Cdn Army, May 1945: Appx 6). This total does not include figures for the 3rd British Infantry Division, the 4th Commando Brigade and the 308th Infantry Brigade and the Royal Netherlands Brigade which were also under General Crerar's command. There were approximately 25,000 soldiers in these four formations, bringing the total in First Canadian Army to 260,000 all ranks.



Instrument of Surrender

of

All German armed forces in HOLLAND, in  
northwest Germany including all islands,  
and in DENMARK.

1. The German Command agrees to the surrender of all German armed forces in HOLLAND, in northwest GERMANY including the FRISIAN ISLANDS and HELIGOLAND and all other islands, in SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, and in DENMARK, to the C.-in-C. 21 Army Group. This, to include all naval ships in these areas. These forces to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally.
2. All hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by German forces in the above areas to cease at 0800 hrs. British Double Summer Time on Saturday 5 May 1945.
3. The German command to carry out at once, and without argument or comment, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject.
4. Disobedience of orders, or failure to comply with them, will be regarded as a breach of these surrender terms and will be dealt with by the Allied Powers in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.
5. This instrument of surrender is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the Allied Powers and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.
6. This instrument of surrender is written in English and in German.

The English version is the authentic text.

7. The decision of the Allied Powers will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

"B.L. Montgomery  
Field-Marshal

"v. Friedeburg"  
"Kinzel"

"G. Wagner"

4 May 1945

"Poleck"

1830 hrs"

"Friedel"

(Germany Surrenders Unconditionally,  
Facsimiles of the Documents  
(Washington, 1945), p. 7)

Only this text in English is authoritative

ACT OF MILITARY SURRENDER

1. We the undersigned, acting by authority of the German High Command, hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command all forces on land, sea, and in the air who are at this date under German control.

2. The German High Command will at once issue orders to all German military, naval and air authorities and to all forces under German control to cease active operations at 2301 hours Central European time on 8 May and to remain in the positions occupied at that time. No ship, vessel, or aircraft is to be scuttled, or any damage done to their hull, machinery or equipment.

3. The German High Command will at once issue to the appropriate commanders, and ensure the carrying out of any further orders issued by the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and by the Soviet High Command.

4. This act of military surrender is without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by, or on behalf of the United Nations and applicable to GERMANY and the German armed forces as a whole.

5. In the event of the German High Command or any of the forces under their control failing to act in accordance with this Act of Surrender, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and the Soviet High Command will take such punitive or other action as they deem appropriate.

Signed at Rheims at 0241 on the 7th day of May, 1945.  
France

On behalf of the German High Command

"Jodl"

IN THE PRESENCE OF

On behalf of the Supreme Commander,  
Allied Expeditionary Force.

"W.B. Smith"

On behalf of the  
Soviet High Command

"Sousloparov"

"S. Sevez"

Major General, French Army  
(Witness)

(Germany Surrenders Unconditionally,  
Facsimiles of the Documents  
(Washington, 1945), pp 9-10)

ACT OF SURRENDER

1. We the undersigned, acting by authority of the German High Command, hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and simultaneously to the Supreme High Command of the Red Army all forces on land, at sea, and in the air who are at this date under German control.

2. The German High Command will at once issue orders to all German military, naval and air authorities and to all forces under German control to cease active operations at 2301 hours Central European time on 8th May 1945, to remain in the positions occupied at that time and to disarm completely, handing over their weapons and equipment to the local allied commanders or officers designated by Representatives of the Allied Supreme Commands. No ship, vessel, or aircraft is to be scuttled, or any damage done to their hull, machinery or equipment, and also to machines of all kinds, armament, apparatus, and all the technical means of prosecution of war in general.

3. The German High Command will at once issue to the appropriate commanders, and ensure the carrying out of any further orders issued by the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and by the Supreme High Command of the Red Army.

4. This act of military surrender is without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by, or on behalf of the United Nations and applicable to GERMANY and the German armed forces as a whole.

5. In the event of the German High Command or any of the forces under their control failing to act in accordance with this Act of Surrender, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and the Supreme High Command of the Red Army will take such punitive or other action as they deem appropriate.

6. This Act is drawn up in the English, Russian and German languages. The English and Russian are the only authentic texts.

Signed at Berlin on the 8th day of May, 1945.

"V. Friedeburg"      "Keitel"      "Stumpff"  
On behalf of the German High Command

IN THE PRESENCE OF:

"A.W. Tedder"

"Zukov"

On behalf of the  
Supreme Commander  
Allied Expeditionary Force

On behalf of the  
Supreme High Command  
of the Red Army

At the signing also were present as witnesses:

"F. de Lattre-Tassigny"

"Carl Spaatz"

General Commanding in Chief  
First French Army

General, Commanding  
United States Strategic  
Air Forces

(Germany Surrenders Unconditionally,  
Facsimiles of the Documents  
(Washington, 1945), pp 32-34)

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

THE SUPREME COMMANDER ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE of the one part and the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of the GERMAN FORCES in HOLLAND of the other part AGREE to the following ARTICLES.

1. DEFINITION. Where HOLLAND is referred to in this agreement it is understood to be bounded by the frontier existing on 1st January 1938 and includes all offlying Dutch islands.

ON THEIR SIDE THE GERMAN AUTHORITIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS (ARTICLES 2-9):

2. The truce hereby declared is without prejudice to the demand, to which the Allies adhere, for the ultimate unconditional surrender of all German forces in HOLLAND. There will be no transfer of any part of these forces from HOLLAND by any means during the period of this agreement.

3. All German forces in German occupied HOLLAND will cease all active operations, including all forms of naval and air activity conducted from this area.

4. All Allied Prisoners of War shall be surrendered. The German Authorities will deliver to the Allied lines all such prisoners within 48 hours of the effective date of this Agreement.

5. The German Authorities shall refrain from any form of inundation or destruction of capital goods or equipment, including, in particular, transportation facilities, bridges, locks, machinery and accommodation.

6. All political prisoners shall be transferred from prison to accommodation organized in accordance with the standards prescribed by the International Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 27th July 1929. Delegates of the International Red Cross shall be allowed to visit these prisoners to report their condition.

7. No further executions of political or other prisoners shall take place. Raids and similar measures by the security police shall be discontinued. No reprisals shall be taken against persons not actually concerned in any act and no hostages shall be taken for hostile acts against Germans.

8. The German Authorities shall freely admit the introduction and facilitate the distribution of all forms of relief supplies for the Dutch population under the arrangements mentioned below.

9. The following arrangements shall be made for the introduction and distribution of relief supplies. A commission of the International Red Cross shall act as the intermediary to facilitate the detailed day to day coordination of these matters.

a. General

1. All vessels, aircraft, railroad trains and road vehicles bringing in relief supplies shall be given complete immunity from interference by the Germans. They shall be given safe passage into and out of the occupied areas and be allowed to deliver their cargoes at the agreed points of discharge. After discharge their return to Allied territory shall not be delayed on any account.
2. The Dutch Authorities themselves shall have complete freedom of action in deciding the scale and distribution of relief supplies. The German Authorities shall afford the maximum assistance possible in accepting, handling and transportation of these supplies.

b. Airborne supplies

1. No offensive action by enemy forces in or based on German occupied HOLLAND shall be taken in any way against Allied aircraft.

c. Seaborne supplies

1. The port(s) of shall be opened for direct entry of shipping from the sea. The German Authorities shall indicate a route clear of minefields into such port(s), and guarantee that shipping thereon shall be free from attack by forces based in HOLLAND.
2. Safe routes by inland waterways shall be guaranteed from SOUTH BEVELAND via DORDRECHT to ROTTERDAM, and from SOUTH of the MAAS and across the ZUIDER ZEE into occupied HOLLAND.

d. Overland supplies

1. On the roads near AMERSFOORT and RHENEN Allied vehicles shall be permitted to deliver relief supplies for collection.
2. On the railroads near AMERSFOORT and GROEP Allied trains shall be permitted to deliver relief supplies for collection. At the same point any trains sent out of occupied HOLLAND to bring back supplies will be turned over to the Dutch Authorities.

ON THEIR SIDE THE ALLIED AUTHORITIES AGREED AS FOLLOWS  
(ARTICLES 10-12):

10. Allied forces will not advance beyond the line Mouth of EEM River - R. EEM to 350011 - railway 349010 - along railway to railway junction 373979 - Western perimeter round AMERSFOORT back to railway 395968 - along railway to RHINE at RHENEN 5175 - OCHTEN 5069 - River WAAL to sea.

11. Allied forces (ground, naval and air) will cease active operations against German forces within German occupied HOLLAND. This will not prohibit Allied operations in Dutch territorial waters against German forces operating there.

12. The Allies will supply fuel for German owned transportation employed on delivery and distribution of relief supplies.

TERMINATION

13. The Allies reserve the right to terminate this agreement or such part thereof as they may decide at 24 hours notice.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

14. The Reichskommissar in HOLLAND signifies by his signature to these articles his approval thereto and undertakes to secure their execution within the sphere of his responsibility.

15. The Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, has been authorized to conclude this agreement by the Governments of the USA, Great Britain and the Netherlands, and has delegated power to sign it on his behalf to

EFFECTIVE DATE

16. This agreement shall take effect at

Signed on behalf of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force

.....

Signed by the Reichskommissar in HOLLAND

.....

Dated.....

((H.S.) 225C2.012(D4):  
Surrender Arrangements)

THE ORDERS OF LT-GEN C. FOULKES,  
C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., TO COL-GEN  
BLASKOWITZ ON THE SURRENDER AT  
WAGENINGEN

- 1 Troops under your command will remain in their present location. You will be held personally responsible for their discipline and that no movement of your troops, either individually or otherwise, takes place without authority from the Allied Headquarters specified in paragraph 17 below.
- 2 You will provide in accordance with the forms to be delivered to you the following information together with any other information now or later demanded :-
  - (a) detailed order of battle of your Command, location of all subordinate units, headquarters and their strength.
  - (b) the maintenance plan of your command together with an estimate of the amount of food, petrol, oil, lubricants, medical supplies and forage under your control.
  - (c) a plan of all minefields, prepared demolitions of all types and other obstacles to movement and a report of the condition of routes and other communications in your area.
  - (d) the layout of your signal communications, detail of codes and cipher systems.
  - (e) information of the number, by nationalities and \* CP locations, of United Nations personnel whether who are prisoners of war or civilian internees in your area. This information will be provided at 1600 hrs 6 May.
  - (f) your weapon, vehicle and animal states.
  - (g) the locations and holdings of all military installations, dumps, depots and parks in your area.
- 3 You will be responsible for the accuracy of the information you give and the delivery of such information within the prescribed time limits.
- 4 You will make no communication by wireless or any other means with any other German unit, force, place or station from the time of receipt of this order, except communication may now be established with Field Marshal Busch.
- 5 You will allow no destruction, removal or consignment of war material of any description including records and documents of any description within your area.
- 6 You will disarm all your personnel when ordered by me and dump war material in places as ordered.

- 7 You will be held responsible for the maintenance and safeguarding of all United Nations personnel in your areas. CF
- 8 You will be responsible for your own maintenance and will make application for authority to carry out such movement as will be necessary for that purpose.
- 9 You will retain all animals now in your possession and will be held responsible for their maintenance.
- 10 You will take under your command immediately all members of the Kaserneierte, Polizei and ensure that the above orders are applied to them.
- 11 You will take under your control and be responsible for the maintenance of all concentration camps in your area. You will arrest all personnel connected with the camps other than the inmates.
- 12 You will be responsible for notifying all troops under your command of these orders.
- 13 You will report for future orders

as directed by me

and will be accompanied by officers of your staff:

as required by me from

time to time

- 14 Your attention is drawn to Military Government Ordinance Number 1 the provisions of which are applicable to you and your troops and a copy of which is attached. You will be responsible for, promulgating this ordinance to all troops under your command, without delay.
- 15 You will continue, as already arranged, to clear the canals of obstructions, mines, etc, so that normal barge traffic may be recommenced.
- 16 You will continue to assist in the arrangements for feeding the Dutch civilian population.
- 17 These orders are issued to you without prejudice to, and will be superseded by, any general instrument of surrender applicable to GERMANY and the German Armed Forces as a whole.

Charles Foulkes

Commander Lieut-General, GOC 1 Cdn  
(Signature of Allied Commander) Corps

- 18 I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the above orders at 1500 hours on 5 May 1945 and undertake to comply in every respect.

(Signature of German Commander)

Name rank and personal number of German Commander:

\*Blaskowitz

Generaloberst

Unit

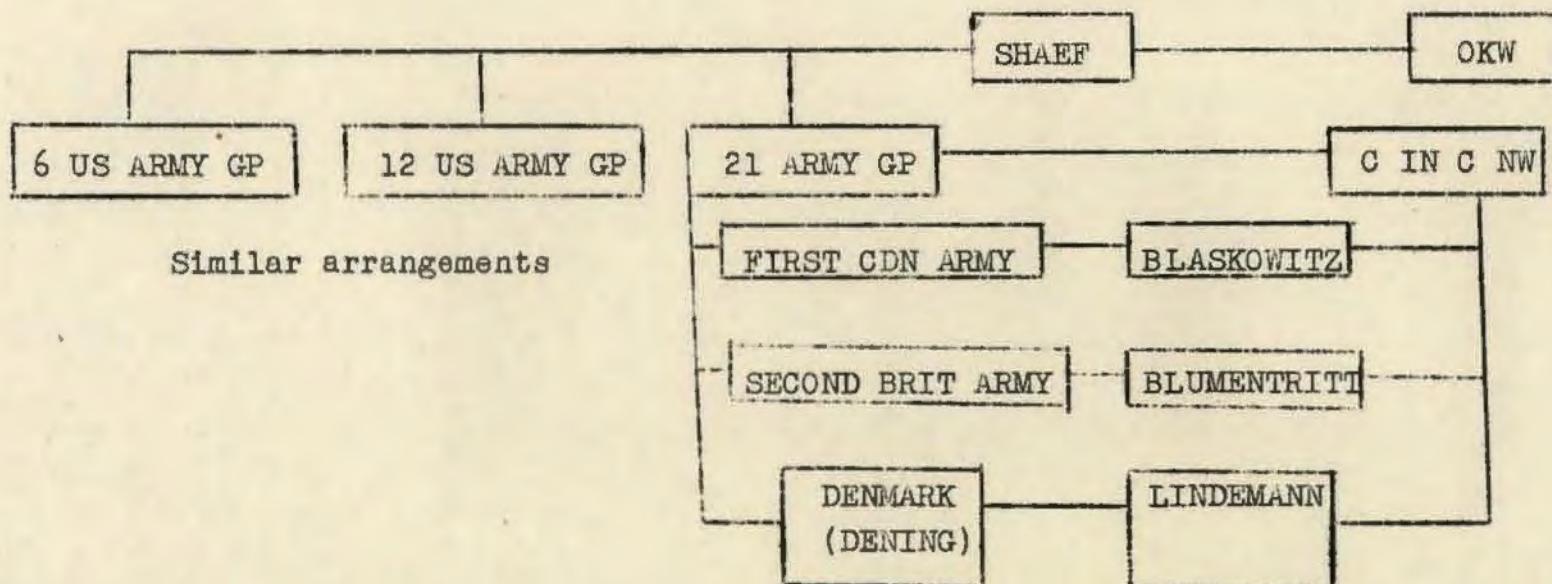
Formation

In the field

5 May 1945

((H.S.) 215C1.016(D28): Surrender  
Orders, 5 May 45)

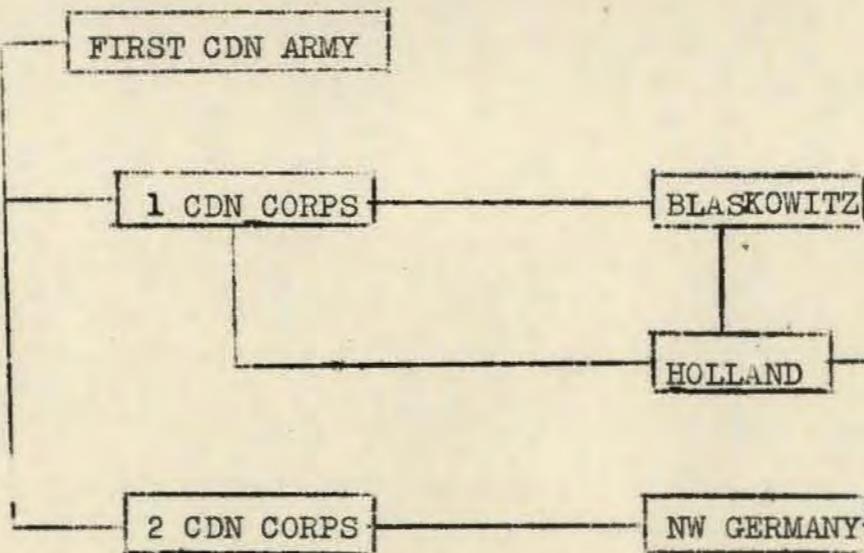
CHAIN OF COMMAND  
BETWEEN ALLIED AND  
GERMAN FORCES



... contact C in C NW  
with OKW

(1) No executive orders  
on this net except  
as ordered by 21  
Army Gp who will  
send copies of such  
to armies in 21  
Army Gp.

- (a) In present layout all orders from Army Comd will be transmitted through 1 Cdn Corps to BLASKOWITZ.
- (b) Later, when BLASKOWITZ is ordered, by Army, to move into NW Germany then all orders to him through 2 Cdn Corps.
- (c) Only orders which are applicable to his areas generally; all others by Corps.



- (1) No executive orders on this net except as ordered by First Cdn Army who will inform both Cdn Corps simultaneously.
- (2) No contact with other German HQ except with C in C NW as shown here.

((H.3.) 225G2.012(D4):  
Chain of Command, May 1945)

THE MEANING OF THE CEASE  
FIRE MESSAGE TO CANADIAN SOLDIERS  
IN CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY AT THE  
TIME OF RECEIPT.

.... On the 4th of May they [A. & S.H. of C.] had set their course for the more northerly town of Spohle. They kept on driving along the main road with tanks in support, until a heated flurry of small arms fire and the periodic crack of an SP, stopped them. They held on until nightfall and a pincer movement involving two companies, one moving on the east and one on the west side of the road, while two companies held, was planned for 10 o'clock that night. The troops were in a disgruntled mood for they knew that the 2nd Division were in Oldenburg after no fighting, that Berlin had long since been captured, that the Poles were racing to Wilhelmshaven, and that of all the Division they and the Lake Superiors were the only units in contact. It was bitter to know they had already lost 15 men, two of them killed, and that they still had a fight before them. Everyone was possessed by a certain feeling of hopelessness--a realization that the war should be over, that the German Armies were not cohesive fighting formations any longer. It seemed a terrible breach of justice that they should be the ones to go on, to probably die at the hands of a rabble of fifth rate marines, boys, and embittered, lost fanatics. Twenty minutes before H hour a message finally trickled through to the 18 sets of the forward companies, "Withdraw all forward troops and take up defensive positions well out of contact." The company commanders thanked God and withdrew. A little later the message of all time came through--a message that will never fail to recall the greatest of many great moments in the eventful lives of all who were there. It read:

To 29 Cdn Recce Regt, Linc and Wel, A/ SH of C, 10 Cdn Ind MG Coy, 28 Cdn Armd Regt, 27th Royal Marine Bn, Int, AG, Sigs, Camp, CRA, Rep, CMO.

From--G 4 Cdn Armd Div Main  
G02, All offensive Ops cancelled forthwith. Cease fire 0800 hrs 5 May 45. All units stand fast until further orders.

Ack. All infm

dated 042350

Thus, in these simple, terse, military words and abbreviations, was found the crystallization of over five years of millions of hopes and millions of prayers. It had come, it was here, it was over. Some of us had heard the unbelievable news of the German surrender in all North West Europe on the 8.30 BBC news, and we were silent in our wonder. How many had listened for those words before, and had always said to themselves--"to-morrow".

And now that to-morrow had come--a to-morrow called peace. But to us it didn't seem like the end of anything as yet. The skies were overcast, the rain dripped slowly from the thatched roof of the farmhouse, the lake looked grey and cold and a cutting wind shook steel-like raindrops from the new green leaves. All was very quiet. The men at

Brigade had been gambling by the stove when they heard the broadcast. They rushed outside and called wildly to one another. Five minutes later they were back by the fire and their cards. The quiet returned. No it was not apathy--it was something there is no word for, a feeling too large to express, to know, yes, even to exist. One kept saying to oneself--"its over, its over," all the time half expecting to see a rainbow in the sky, to hear the shouts of millions in Trafalgar or Times Square, to experience some outward manifestation of joy, praise, thankfulness, or of great emotion flooding through the gates of restraint. But nothing happened. There were no bells in Germany, there were no happy people, and the conquerors were dumb in the greatness of their relief.

(Patterson, Major R.A. The Tenth Canadian Infantry Bde (Hilversum, 1945), pp. 69-70)

8 May 45

GENERAL CRERAR'S DIRECTIVE  
CONCERNING MAN-MANAGEMENT  
IN THE FIRST CANADIAN ARMY  
DURING THE PERIOD FOLLOWING  
THE CEASE FIRE.

1 The very wide distribution of the units and formations of First Canadian Army makes it impractical for me to call you together, in order to address you. In consequence, I am putting my thoughts into written words and communicating them to you in this manner.

2 The subject of my communication is the very important, and equally difficult, problem of "man-management" in a military formation, or unit, in the period following "Cease Fire" and prior to repatriation and demobilization. Apart from any question of my appointment, I happen to possess knowledge of this problem, borne of my experience in the last war. I speak to you, therefore, with added authority.

3 The first thing which all Commanders must clearly and continually realize is the irresistible, post "Cease Fire", tendency to a decline in the "unit spirit" and an equivalent increase in the regard of each individual for himself and the accomplishment of his personal ambitions.

4 Now, "esprit de corps" is one thing which no unit or formation can afford to lose. It follows that Commanders must devote a great deal of imaginative thought and energy to the utilization of ways and means which will revive and strengthen this essential possession. This can, and must, be done without penalizing the proper ambitions of the individual.

5 To this end, training or recreational activities should be organized, whenever possible, on a sub-unit or unit basis. Inter-unit, and sub-unit, competitions of all kinds should be strongly encouraged. In all these activities, full proportionate representation of officers, commissioned, warrant and non-commissioned is quite essential.

6 Occasional unit and formation parades can contribute most importantly to "esprit de corps". They must, however, be done with all the "trimmings", to make them a fine military spectacle. Also, they require very efficient staff arrangements so that there is no needless marching about, or waiting about. Unfair fatigue, and periods of boredom, are things to be avoided on such occasions.

7 While the great majority of all ranks of the Canadian Army will be returning to civil life and, in consequence, are not interested in now becoming "super-guardsmen", it is equally true that the majority wish to continue to look, and be, worthy of the magnificent reputation they have made as "fighting men". This situation must be realized and military training balanced accordingly.

8 From what I have just said, it follows that "over doses" of drills and exercises, route marches and weapon training will produce nothing but trouble. On the other hand, sufficient of these strictly military activities to keep all ranks fit, smart and efficient will be understood and appreciated.

9 The truth is that a smart, alert, well-behaved and cheerful-looking soldier is, invariably a good soldier. A tough-looking, untidy man is nearly always a poor soldier in, or out, of action. The main requirement is to "sell" this truth to the soldiery and to keep on selling it. If this is accomplished then many of the Commander's disciplinary problems disappear.

10 An absolute necessity at this time is to ensure obvious fairness to all ranks in the allocation of duties and pleasures. Nothing can turn a unit "sour" more quickly than a reasoned belief, amongst other ranks, that the officers are taking less than their full share of the daily "unpleasantness" and more than their proportionate share of the pleasure, relaxation and amusement. It gives the "barrack-room lawyer", or "soap-box orator" type of mischief maker, all the material he needs to stir up trouble. Commanders, senior and junior, must be resolute in maintaining strict and proportionate equality in such matters.

11 A potentially prolific source of complaints, and cause of trouble, is the evidence of bad administration. Poor meals, bad living conditions, unnecessary parades, or delays as to action when parades have been called, each and all bring out the critical, and antagonistic, outlook in any man. Commanders will need to spend much of their time, from now on, dealing with matters of administration. Nor will the previous great gallantry in action and outstanding leadership in battle shown by Commanders take the place of proved administrative efficiency in these days to come.

12 A handbook, dealing with rehabilitation, training and welfare for soldiers of First Canadian Army in the post-hostilities period, will very shortly be issued on a liberal scale. It will be noted that the general policy to be followed by formations and units First Canadian Army will be that the mornings are to be allotted to compulsory training, mainly military, and that the afternoons will be set aside for optional activities - i.e. education, in all its forms, organized sports, and recreation.

13 The essential thing is to keep all ranks mentally and/or physically active, and interested, for most of their waking hours. It follows that while each man should be given the maximum latitude in the choice of his afternoon activities, such activities must be organized, and supervised, by the Commander and all ranks must take part in the pursuit of their choice. If the choice is games, and not vocational training, then participation in those games must be ensured.

14 This closing chapter in the history of the First Canadian Army in this World War will provide a different test to Commanders and leaders to those met and overcome, in operations, but a very definite test of character will certainly be encountered. It is up to each one of us to surmount it.

(H.D.G. Crerar) Gen  
GOC-in-C First Canadian Army

(W.D., Q.O.R. of C. May 1945: Appx 9)