Booby Traps And Other Things

Another in a series of articles written by W. R. Legge and C. V. Charters, who represented the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association in a recent tour overseas.

(Article No. 15)

By Walter R. Legge

September 1st, spent with the Royal Canadian Engineers was a day taken up with study of a wide range of subjects, one of which was a practical demonstration of "Booby Traps".

There is probably no other arm of the service with so many ramifications as the Engineers, and in a technical war such as this, their work becomes of paramount importance. Everyone knows of them as bridge builders, and the demonstration of this branch of their activities was described in the eighth article in the series.

We were visiting the No. 1 Canadian Engineer Reinforcement Unit commanded by Col. G. H. Whyte, M. C., V. D., of Vancouver Other officers were Lt. Col. V. S. Thompson, of Hamilton, Lt. Col C. N. Mitchell, of Montreal, Major F. A. Crich, of Seaforth, Ont., and Major M. A. Buell, of Brockville.

Course of Training

Men arriving at this unit are documented, medically inspected, and interviewed by the Tests of Elementary Training staff, so that an idea may be formed of their capabilities, and then they are posted to various training companies.

This training comprises Military Duties, Drill, Weapon Training, Gas, First Aid, Air Defence, Map Reading Military Law, Physical Culture, Field Engineering, Knots and Lashings, Use of Spars, Field Defences and Obstacles, Field Craft and Battle Drill, Demolitions and Booby Traps. In addition there are special courses for officers, N.C.O.'s, and Sappers, which include, Regimental Instruction, Administration and Tactics, Field Engineering and Demolitions, Bridging, Maintenance and Driving, Sappers, Junior Officers etc.

Booby Traps Demonstrated

After visiting classes at work on these courses, we went to the area which had been fitted up for the Booby Trap demonstration.

Just where the expression Booby Traps came from is not clear, but as there are still some people who do not know just what they are, it might be explained that they are innocent looking articles which when touched or disturbed explode with tragic results to anyone in the vicinity. They follow no set pattern or plan, and there is no limit to the variations they may take. A favourite stunt of retreating Italians is to leave some article such as a fountain pen, which appears to be equipment lost or thrown away, but which explodes when touched.

This booby trap area was chosen because of the natural safety offered, and the object of the course is to teach the class how to set mechanism. The explosive charges were all set under water and when exploded a jet of water and mud was thrown up into the air.

We were therefore all attired in oilskin and metal helmet to protect us. It was the picture taken at this time of the two representatives of the Canadian Weekly press, looking as if they were going to a fancy dress ball, which was printed with such glee by so many weekly publishers.

The course was laid through a swampy patch of brush, and as we stepped on various bits of wood, or pushed aside branches of the bushes, certain of them set off hidden mines in the water.

Actually we did not learn much about distinguishing booby traps, for we never did know just what twigs or bits of wood were responsible for setting off the mines.

At this booby trap demonstration the section officer was Lieut. Brewster, of Cobourg, Ont., and the Instructor was Lieut. N. B. Billies, of Braeside, Ont.

Grenade Throwing

From this we went on to a Grenade range to watch a section undergoing instruction in the handling and throwing of grenades, and our instructions read "Normal range precautions must be carried out, and gentlemen will please wear steel helmets provided and take cover behind the breastworks". The section officer was Lieut. J. B. Donald, of Kimberley, and the instructor was Lieut. W. E. Steeves, of Ottawa. In addition to the grenades here, we studied some special types of incendiaries.

Then we went to an artificial lake where demonstrations in improvised rafting were carried out, and we watched a 5 cwt. Jeep ferried across on special floats. We also watched pontooning being taught to a bridging class.

At Canadian General Reinforcement Unit

We had spent the morning of that day with Brigadier H. Lefebvre and Brigadier A. E. Nash at the Canadian General Reinforcement Unit. Brig. Lefebvre was in charge of Military District No. 5 at Quebec before going overseas, and enquired especially after the Hon. Henri Renault M. L. A. who is publisher of the Beauceville "L'Eclaireur".

We saw many field gadgets, for use of troops in the field, such as easily constructed, but efficient, sewage systems, shower baths, stoves for heating water and cooking, made out of discarded oilcans, and burning old, oil, disinfecting of blankets etc., in the field; disposal of garbage and sewage by burning, and many other items which are problems for troops in actual warfare.

Incidently, we were told that the Canadian Soldier is the cleanest of all troops in the world.

An extra activity of this Reinforcement unit is the use of corners of their grounds for growing vegetables, and they proudly showed us a prize winning display of potatoes, tomatoes carrots, onions, beans, beets and turnips all grown in their camp. Last year 30 tons of potatoes were grown in these grounds of the camp.

Going over to the C.A.S.C.R.U. we met Major Alex. Gagnon of Quebec, who called our attention to a company which was just returning from a ten mile hike carried out in a little less than two hours. One of the men in this company was Pte. St. Cyr, of Shawanigan Falls, Que., Major Gagon asked me to impress on the people of Canada that they are a real part of the show, and that their lads are being well taken care of.

Here we were shown student cooks being trained in their work.

The day was brought to a delightful conclusion with dinner at the Officers' Mess of the Royal Canadian Engineers. It was a fine meal served in a building that must have been a pretentious mansion before the war, and their excellent band was playing outside on the grounds during the meal, which added to the enjoyment of the evening.

Preacher says Anglo-Saxon snobishness has been the cause of unrest in Canada. Our Lady of the snobs?

PORTLAW

(Intended for Last Week)

Mr. C. D. Meldrum is spending a few days visiting friends in Toronto.

Mr. Everett Fisher, who has been in Alaska district is home for a few weeks.

Miss Susie MacKinnon spent the week end at her home on the South Line.

Pte. Cecil Shier of Niagara is enjoying a two week furlough with his parents and other friends here.

The Fourth Line Red Cross branch met at the home of Mrs. L. Fisher, where another quilt was completed, several knitted articles were handed in and letters of thanks from boys overseas who received cigarettes were read. The treasurer was to send $25.-00 to the Russian Relief Fund and $10.00 to F. and A. Red Cross branch. The next meeting is to be at the home of Mrs. Wallace Fisher on Thurs., Feb. 11. A dance and card party is being held in Port Law school. See advertisement elsewhere.

Our best wishes go out to Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Taylor of Flesherton, former residents of here, who celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary, Feb. 1st, also to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Blackburn, who also celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary on Feb. 1st.

We are sorry to report Mr. Art Wilson under the doctor's care and has been moved to Markdale hospital.

VICTORIA CORNERS

As we pick up our pen again this week, our thoughts turn first to the weather. Still we are faced with severe storms, road blocked and many other inconveniences.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Gallagher and Kingsley were in Toronto Thursday attending the funeral of the former's aunt, the late Mrs. James Gallagher.

The annual meeting of Inistioge United Church was postponed from last Friday afternoon until Friday afternoon of this week.

Born — On Saturday, Jan. 30th, 1943, to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Arnold (nee Margaret Moore) of Buffalo, N. Y., a daughter.

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Appreciated Gift

Pte. Murray W. Fisher of the Canadian Army Overseas wrote a card of thanks for cigarettes, as follows:

Dec. 19 1942

To the Fourth Line Red Cross;

Just a few lines in appreciation of the lovely parcel of cigarettes you sent me. I received them fine. You will never know just how much a few cigarettes or a letter can be appreciated. It really helps our morale and leaves a fellow with the understanding that he hasn't been forgotten by the folks back home.

Cheerio for now and thanks a million.

Yours sincerely,
Murray Fisher.

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For Quilts. They come in a big range of colors 36 in. wide, yard .. **25c**

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Small Ad. Column

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WANTED — Set of 1-horse sleighs —J. K. McLeod, Ceylon, phone 4[illegible]

HELP WANTED — Capable girl for general housework. Write or apply to Kennedy Bakery, Dundalk.

FOR SALE—Boots and skates, size 3, first class condition. Can be seen at The Advance office. 35c1

FOR SALE— Several Heifers due to freshen this month. — Joyce Porteous, R.R.1, Flesherton. 33p2

WANTED — Horses and cows fi for mink feed. — John J. Meads Priceville, phone 21 r 4.

POTATOES WANTED — Will pay $1.50 for Grade A potatoes delivered at Flesherton. Write Box 29, Flesherton. 33p3

FOR SALE — 2 Large domestic ice refrigerators, ice plow, 2 sets tongs, 1 spud, silent salesman in good order.—G. B. Welton, Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Several cows and good breedy young calves arriving Wed Feb. 10.—Gordon Stuart, Flesherton, phone 26. 37p1

HIDES — Again in the market for hides—beef, horse, sheep and calf skins.—Frank Eagles, R. R. 3, Proton Station, phone 41r3 Flesherton.

FOR SALE — Purebred Hereford Bull, six months old, heifer calf seven months old, both registered. Wm. Fadden, Phone 22r4-1, Feversham, Ontario. 35p1

LOST — In Flesherton on Saturday, Jan. 16, black Newfoundland dog, answers to "Teddy." Finder please notify W. A. Weber R.R.4, Markdale or phone 73r12 Flesherton.

Chicks? immediate delivery; also started. Or order for future delivery. Bray wants your order early to insure delivery. Agent will quote prices and book order. John McWilliam, Flesherton.

WANTED — Horses and cows fit for mink feed.—F. Eagles, Proton Station, R.R. 3, phone 41r3.

FOR SALE — Stock mixed hay.—Chas. Stafford, R.R. Flesherton. 37p2

NOTICE — Fishing, hunting or trespassing prohibited on Lot 24, Con. 6, Artemesia; trespassers will be prosecuted. R. Jones, Flesherton, R. R. 1. 37p4

NOTICE — We are buyers of red clover, alfalfa, sweet clover and timothy seeds. Mail samples, state quantities. New cotton seed bags for sale.—J. E. Muir, Ceylon, Ont., phone 40r22. 37p2

FOR SALE—7-room brick house a Flesehrton, large lot, arage, good well, must be sold o settle estate of the late Andrew Gilchrist. — Apply to John Stewart, Executor, Flesherton. 24p4

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