

British Government Entertains Canadian Editors

ARTICLE NO 38
(By Hugh Tompkins)

All kinds of honours were paid to the small group of Canadian editors who travelled to Britain, at the invitation of the British Council, but I suppose the greatest honor of them all was the luncheon given to us by the British Government. We were the special guests at a dinner, at which about half the members of the Cabinet and many other of the great-est in the land were present.

Thirty-two people sat down around the long table in Claridge's Hotel that afternoon of October 1st, 1941. Of the twelve Canadians, two had ranks or titles that sounded impressive when written in full: The Very Rev. Canon Chamberland and The Rt. Rev. Bishop R. J. Renton. The rest of us had none, except the "Esq." placed after each of our names by our polite hosts, so that we wouldn't feel too lonely.

Of the other twenty, there were two Viscounts, one Lord, four Sirs, four Knights, one Air Marshal, one Major-General, one Admiral, one Major-General, one Cardinal, and one Very Rev. Monsignor.

Now can you imagine that?

You Can't Imagine It

The answer must be, "No." You can't imagine it. And I am afraid I cannot describe it, but I am going to make an attempt to tell you in my own way. And I'll reassure you by saying at the start that I enjoyed it.

To give you a better description, I should go back to the beginning of the day. That will provide something of the background.

My diary begins to tell of October 1st: "Slept till 10 o'clock and rose weary and worn, though I had been home by 11 night before."

I had been in London eleven days. There had been strenuous days. There had been a daily program laid out, which usually began about 8.30 in the morning and was apt to continue till long after midnight. It sometimes involved long trips by motor car, sometimes at 90 miles an hour over the broad, straight, new roads that connect the larger cities. There was an exhilaration about the thing that kept me going.

Now, at last, the program was easing off. Instead of seeing interesting places, we were being entertained by various groups, always at "the distinguished visitors who flew the Atlantic to bring us greetings from Canada" or something of the sort.

On the day before, I had met Winston Churchill. Anything after that was kept to be something of an anticlimax, or so I supposed. The night before I had eaten away from the Savoy, at a little restaurant, and had come "home" early and had gone to bed dog-tired.

No Place Like Home

How easily one slips into familiar language. Looking back, the thought of calling the famous Savoy Hotel, "home" causes a smile. Home was never like that, and I trust it never will be.

B. K. Sandwell, of Toronto Saturday Night explained the Savoy to me before I ever saw it. He said it was built out of the profits of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas to provide the height of magnificence in London for visiting potentates and the like.

I believe him. The Savoy Theatre is in the same building. The castle of the Knights of Savoy (or somebody like that) used to occupy the same site overlooking the Thames. Statues of Gilbert and Sullivan were in the garden between the hotel and the river. Its front faced the Strand, one of the most famous old streets of the world; its back looked out over the gardens and the Embankment to the Thames, certainly one of the most famous rivers in the world. Its private dining rooms were named after characters in the operas. I used to breakfast in the Princess Ida Room and when they moved me to the Mikado room for a couple of meals, I felt out of place.

That morning, I wakened late—10 o'clock, the diary says, and turned on the light for the room was so thoroughly blacked-out that the curtains and the blinds kept out the sunlight as they kept in the electric light the night before.

It's rather a wonder I could sleep till ten o'clock. Usually my valet was in before that, or the night-guards he around to "untie" the curtains. There were three push-button beside my head, marked "Valet," "Maid," and "Waiter." I very seldom used any of them. By touching the bottom one I might have had breakfast in bed, but I never did. That seemed a waste of time. I preferred to get up and go down to the dining room where I could see interesting people.

But the valet used to come around in spite of me. I never let him dress me, but he used to shine my shoes every day, hang up my suits for me, lay out the ones he thought I would be wearing, and occasionally consult me about something. But I never got used to having him around.

On the first day, though, he gave me one of my best laughs. I was standing in the bathroom in my pyjamas and silk dressing gown, preparing to shave myself. Perhaps that was a faux pas: I suppose the gentlemen in such suits should not shave themselves, but Canadians are a self-reliant race, so I was there, in front of the huge blue Royal Doulton wash basin, with my shaving kit scattered around its circumference.

The valet knocked and entered. What he was ready to do for me I have not the slightest idea, for I gave him no encouragement. But he was agreeable and friendly.

"Oh, sir," he remarked at last, "I see you have this famous bath-room!"

My curiosity was aroused. Had it been the scene of a murder or something. But apparently not.

"You would see how this 'otel was damaged by the bomb, sir?" he continued.

Yes, I had been. The back of the building, including the wall of the famous restaurant had apparently been removed almost in one piece. At least, there had been a long gash down its face, now repaired. And in front, just outside the window, the workmen were repairing other scars.

The valet stood beside the bath-tub and indicated that it was the damage outside the window to which he referred. I mention the tub because it was the most striking feature of the room. It was huge and deep, set down into the floor, Roman-style. One stepped over a broad edge and down into the big blue tub, also fabricated of Royal Doulton. And on the wall above were two buttons, one marked "Valet" and the other one, "Maid." It used to be a temptation to me every time I took a bath, to lean against them both and see what happened—but I never did.

The valet went on with his story.

"You see, sir, when the blitz was on, Lady Scandso had this suite and the night that big bomb went off out there, she was standing just where you are now, and it blowed her clean into the bloody bath."

That morning was short. It was too late for breakfast, probably the only one I missed while in London. There was no need to wonder what to wear. No person in London wears faggy clothes to even the most distinguished gatherings any more. I had two suits with me and chose the blue one as looking slightly more formal. Downstairs, I met some of the other Canadians, checked up on the program for the rest of the day, and finally took a taxi with Major Christie to Claridge's, the driver talking the now-familiar streets between the Strand and the West End.

Individuals in London, even the most important ones, have given up trying to keep up appearances, but the head waiters and other attendants at these famous London hotels still looked impressive in their tails. The taxi driver let us out at a side door and we walked down a hall to a lobby. There an attendant looked impressed when we asked the way to the Government luncheon and he directed us down a broad ante-room. At the far end, another man in uniform, asked the name. He handed me a folder with my name written on the front, "Hugh Tompkins, Esq." and another attendant inside the door announced me, and I shook hands with the Right Hon. Brendan Bracken, an old friend by this time.

The room was large and decorated in light grey, with big French windows. In the centre of the room, but filling only a part of it, was the long table. At each place was a card with the Government coat-of-arms on it in red.

There was no need to go looking at all the place-cards. In the centre of the folder which had been handed me at the door, there was a plan of the table and the seating arrangement. Opposite my name was a small red card. I sat on the right of the Right Hon. Sir Malcolm Robertson, of the British Council, our host while in England (though not the host at this banquet). On the other side was Col. Sir Eric Crankshaw, though just what position he held in the Army I never did discover. Beyond him was Major D. C. Unwin Simson, who is on the staff of the Canadian High Commissioner in London. Beyond Sir Malcolm sat Gratian Carey of Ottawa, then the Rt. Hon. A. C. Alex. and Viscount Bennett, late-time Prime Minister of Canada, now more happy, perhaps in the House of Lords at London.

I would need a copy of the British "Who's Who" to tell you something about all who were at the table that day, but I have no doubt that the names of all of them could be found in that volume. And scattered here and there, as far as possible in every second seat, were twelve Canadian editors, not one of whom ever found himself in such distinguished company before.

My allotted space has been used for this week. Next week, I'll tell you more about these men and what they did and said.

Bees Kill Bees To Save Honey

Possible Effect of Unusually Warm April on Honey Crop is Forecast

INDIANAPOLIS, (CP)—All-out honey production in Indiana and the United States and Canada is periled by the war, paradoxically, due to an acute need of "sweetenins."

Young bees are killing off their elders in a fierce war of survival as they can eat the remaining honey stores themselves. Hundreds of Hoosier apiarists are taking time out from other vital farm production in an effort to avert this "civil war."

The premature mild April weather tricked the bees into raising an unusual number of offspring which consumed most of the "reserve" honey stores. At the same time, wartime sugar rationing prevented beekeepers from supplying food needed to fido the bees over to the nectar flow in late August and early fall.

Indiana, ranked as the eighth honey-producing state in the union, is foremost in honey originating from clover and this year's Hoosier clover is having a run of "bad luck."

Agriculturists point out that city and farm folk alike will be affected, because the golden goosy stuff has found its way into home and industrial uses.

It's in hand lotions, candy bars, ice cream, cough and cold remedies, it flavors tobacco and cures smoking pipes. Bakeries already are using a third of the annual crop, and the departments of agriculture are urging housewives to can and cook with honey as a sugar substitute.

Indiana beekeepers have asked the government to relax sugar rationing to alleviate this current threat to the bee industry. A. O. Smith of Mt. Vernon, Ind., one of the foremost honey producers in southwest Indiana, warns that unless bees are fed sugar in large proportions at once, hundreds of bee colonies will die before the fall nectar flow.

WAR 25 Years Ago

Germany Started Night Air Attacks in First Great War With Raids on London and Eastern England

BY H. H. GORDON

Canadian Press Staff Writer

London and England's eastern counties experienced night air raids as long ago as 1917. Germany's moon-light snobs at the Empire's capital in the First Great War were trifling compared to the mammoth attacks of 1940, but produced results by no means negligible.

German air raids on Britain 25 years ago in some respects set the pattern for the modern blitz. Airships, used extensively soon after the outbreak of the First Great War, became easy prey and daylight raids by heavier-than-air craft followed until defence efficiency caused the enemy to abandon this form of attack.

Night raiding was not unusual over the battlefields of France and Flanders, but its terror first became known to civilian England on Sept. 3, 1917. Sweeping in over the North Foreland at 10.30 p.m., the raiders followed the Thames estuary and dropped their bombs on Chatham.

Delay in Warnings

There was a central control in those days and warnings were sent out immediately the German course was determined. But there was a serious delay in issuing the warning at Chatham and a bomb fell on a drill hall where hundreds of sailors were sleeping. No fewer than 130 persons were killed and 88 wounded in this raid.

The following night between 20 and 30 raiders crossed the English coast. Of these 10 managed to get as far as London's metropolitan area. Bombs were dropped in Paddington, Stratford, Hornsey, Holloway and Regent's Park as well as in the heart of the city. One bomb fell near Choptank's Needle on the Thames Embankment. Nine persons were killed, but con-

sidering the scale of the raid, property damage was small.

Raids in favorable moon periods continued until May, 1918, when defence measures became so efficient that London was saved from further bombing. In the last raid from 30 to 40 planes of Germany's 3rd Hindenburg Squadron took part. The attackers lost three machines in air combat, three were downed by gunfire and one crashed through engine trouble.

Total Casualties

German day and night raids on England during the First Great War brought death to 1,413 persons and injuries to 3,307. Night raids frequently stopped work over wide areas, but defence measures held men and material from the battlefield in France. Two hundred pilots and as many airplanes were kept in London

at a time when they were badly needed on the Western Front.

"Aprons" were devised as a means of defence after 1917 raids. These were screens of wire that could be raised to 10,000 feet by Conquest balloons. The anti-aircraft barrage described by one cabinet minister as "self-lombardment," proved increasingly effective and night-fighters in fast scout planes met with a measure of success.

SUSTAINED READINESS

LONDON, (CP)—London has opened a recruiting drive for a "Citizen Army" of thousands of men and women not already in the fighting or civil defence services and will train them in anti-invasion tactics and emergency work.

Husband-To-Be Drops From Sky

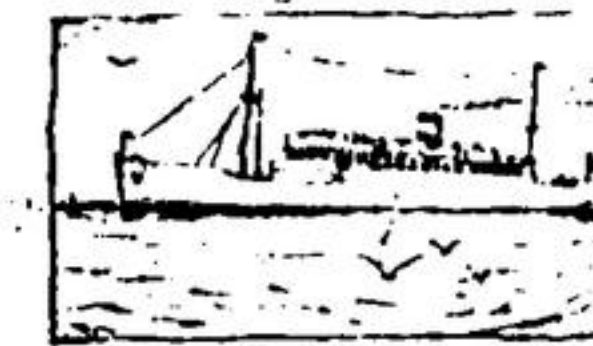
MAIDSTONE, England, (CP)—Love came out of the sky in the form of a paratrooper to Grace Fuller, 18-year-old air-troopwoman of this Kent village. The soldier, Pte. H. Curtis, was on a manoeuvre when he landed in a back garden beside sun-bathing Miss Fuller. Now they are to be married.

CUT CORNERS FOR THE PIPE
OLD CHUM
CUT FINE FOR CIGARETTES

THE RAILWAY AND THE WAR By Thurstan Topham

Steamship Lines owned and operated by the Canadian railways have played a vital part in the war effort of the United Nations

Two of the famous West India luxury liners were among the ships of the Canadian National Steamships fleet which fell victim to the treacherous Axis U-boats.

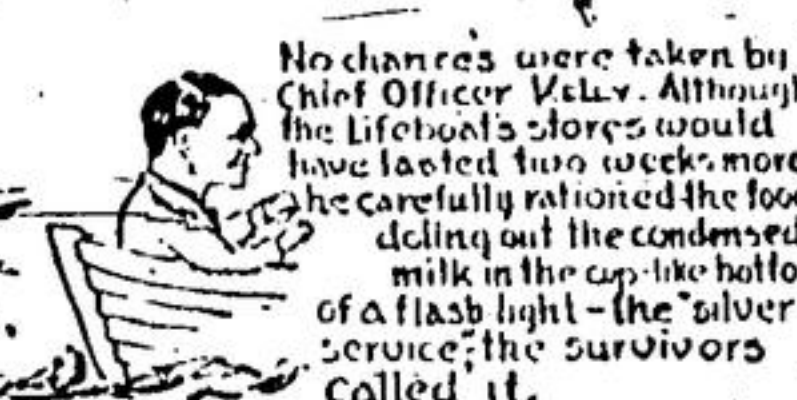


The Lady Somers, requisitioned for War Service, was sunk in action in the Mediterranean on July 15, 1941, while serving as an auxiliary cruiser.



The Lady Hawkins was torpedoed and sunk without warning at sea off the Atlantic on Jan. 10, 1942.

The CNR, in addition to its own ships operating Danish, Finnish, German and Italian vessels seized by the Canadian Government. Its ships have carried thousands of troops and many tons of war materials to the various war zones.



No chances were taken by Chief Officer Kelly. Although the lifeboat's stores would have lasted but weeks more, he carefully rationed the food, feeding out the condensed milk in the cap-like bottom of a flash light—the silver device the survivors called it.

THERE ARE ONLY A FEW PEOPLE WHO WILL BE INTERESTED IN THIS ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T BE A WELSHER

LET'S be brutally frank. The man or woman who buys a Victory Bond or Certificate to save face, then sells it—except in case of dire necessity—is a welsher.

True, there is no law which says you cannot sell your Victory Bonds or Certificates. It is not a legal obligation that you keep them for the duration. But there is a moral promise to make a loan to your Country for the War period. To evade that undertaking through sale, at this time of great need, is to welsh—it is the denial of an obligation which you admitted and accepted by your act of purchase.

Your Country does not ask you to deny yourself those necessary things which make for decent living, that you may buy Victory Bonds and Certificates. But the voice of Public Opinion does say that those persons who now insist on the unnecessary luxuries of life are not themselves decent.

Of course—you have no immediate cause for worry. No one will ask you to cross the beach and climb the cliffs of Dieppe. You are not in a slit trench with Stuka Dive-Bombers showering death about you. The blazing sun of Africa—the wind-driven sands—will never cut and blister your skin until every exposed part of your body becomes a festering sore. No—you will never feel the vibrant crash of a torpedo

—the tilt of a ship's deck under your feet as it slides to Davy Jones. No one is asking you to leave your favorite chair tonight and fly over Germany. None of these things is asked of you.

All you are asked to do is to lend to your Country—Canada—lend at interest all the money you can possibly spare to provide the tools for those men who are fighting your fight. You are not expected to deprive yourself to the extent that you must live below the level of ordinary decency.

But if you think you are doing your part by buying Victory Bonds only to sell them—then, you had better take yourself into a dark room and ask yourself some soul-searching questions. Ask yourself what you are doing to protect your loved ones, your Country, and your way of life.

If you do this we know what the answer will be. We know because the men and women of Canada are inherently decent people. They value the good opinion and respect of friends and neighbors. But most important is the fact that we Canadians value our own self-respect. We ask charity from none—we assume our obligation to work and lend. So there can only be one answer—you will hold your Victory Bonds and Certificates for the duration except in cases of extreme necessity.

NATIONAL WAR FINANCE COMMITTEE