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Wartime blood transfusions key to advancing medical treatments *World War I riots in Calgary and Group of Seven war art also in Canadian Military History*

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WATERLOO – Changes in medical research and treatments are often slow, but many important advances are made during wartime. In the latest issue of *Canadian Military History*, released today, Bill Rawling, historian in the Directorate of History and Heritage for the Department of National Defence, highlights this often-ignored side of history by examining advances in transfusion technology and the use of blood products from World War I to the Korean War.

Canada's medical corps was formed in 1903, but it was not until the First World War that it faced the full challenge of industrialized warfare. Rawling shows how Canadians made a number of discoveries and innovations in the area of blood transfusions, particularly the creation of transfusion teams during the Spanish Civil War, the development of blood preservatives, and the application of Rh typing to matching blood donors and recipients.

"[Medical] innovation means experiment, with perhaps catastrophic results," says Rawling, pointing out that medical miracles are often the exception rather than the rule during wartime. "Bringing about change [in medical practice] is less a matter of conflict against the establishment and more of reaching a consensus on how to solve complex battlefield problems."

By the Korean War specialist transfusion units were no longer needed. Because of a generalization of such knowledge among medical personnel, nearly all doctors, nurses and medical assistants were able to deal with the symptoms of shock.

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This issue of *Canadian Military History* also includes:

- An analysis of anti-German attacks on several Calgary businesses in February 1916 by Canadian soldiers and Calgary citizens, and how the military context of the time – recruitment, training and disciplinary practices combined with anti-German hysteria during the First World War – factored into the riots.
- A look at the formation, operation and disbandment of the short-lived Canadian Special Air Service Company. Formed in 1948, this military enigma was originally packaged as a benevolent subunit centered on aid to civil authority, but a fundamental and contentious shift in its orientation eventually lead to the group’s demise in 1949.
- An examination of war paintings by the Group of Seven dating from 1910 to 1923. The article looks at how First World War experiences influenced the work and imagery of A.Y. Jackson, F. H. Varley and other Group of Seven painters.
- The first installment of “Web Watch,” a column reviewing information about Canadian military history on the Internet and highlighting the most effective and useful sites.

The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, publishes *Canadian Military History* quarterly. The Centre, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian War Museum jointly fund the journal. Each issue has a circulation of over 1300 copies.

To receive a review copy of *Canadian Military History*, members of the media can contact Mike Bechthold at mbechtho@wlu.ca or (519) 884-0710 extension 4594.