

CSMMI *Journal*

WINTER 2023



A Sign of the Times
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CANADIAN SOCIETY OF
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CSMMI *Journal*

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President's Message

Juan José Besteiro, President CSMMI, #1859

Dear Members of the Canadian Society of Military Medals & Insignia,

As we move away from this great weather, it's my pleasure to bring you an update on the latest developments and opportunities within our society. We're thrilled to announce that the Canadian Society of Military Medals & Insignia has taken over the stewardship of the Military Artifact – MilArt website. (visit <https://milart.blog>) MilArt remains dedicated to exploring all aspects of Canadian military artifacts and related topics. We would like to encourage our membership to visit this great resource and share with us your valuable insights by submitting your articles to milartcsmmi@gmail.com. I am certain that this blog that has been providing Canadian Military history since 1996 will fall perfectly within the educational framework of our society.



I would like to remind you all that our Journal thrives on the contributions of our members. We invite you to share your knowledge, experiences, and personal collections with us. Your articles play a pivotal role in the growth of our publication. Whether it's a historical account, a personal narrative, or insights into your collection, we welcome your valuable contributions.

Our September show was a resounding success. It was exciting to see new vendors and a strong turnout of enthusiastic participants. Your support is essential in making these events a triumph, and we're grateful for your continued participation.

Our September show was a resounding success. It was exciting to see new vendors and a strong turnout of enthusiastic participants. Your support is essential in making these events a triumph, and we're grateful for your continued participation.

Don't forget that our monthly shows offer an excellent opportunity for members to showcase, sell, or trade items from their collections. You don't have to be a full-time dealer to take advantage of a show table. In fact, it's our policy that everyone gets one free table per year. We believe this encourages engagement and enriches the experience for all members and dealers. Please reach out to us for coordination.

Continued on page 2733

This latest show served as a great opportunity to present three of our members with the CSMMI Long Service Medal. Mr. Bud Migory was awarded the medal with 4 bars representing an outstanding 60 years of service, as well as, Mr. John McKinnon with the medal with 3 bars for 57 years of service. I would also like to extend my congratulations and the Long Service Medal and 3 bars to Fred Hayman for his 51 years of service with us.

We are proud to have introduced the CSMMI Long Service Medal as a gesture of our appreciation for the dedication of our longstanding members. This medal is available to current members who have maintained 20-years continuous membership. Bars will be awarded for each additional 10 years of continuous membership. We would like to extend our gratitude to Past President Bryan Patterson for his invaluable efforts in making this medal a reality.

Qualifications for the CSMMI Long Service Medal are:

Current members in good standing holding the following membership numbers:

Membership #1429 to #1638 qualify for the 20-year medal.

#892 to #1375 qualify for the medal and 1st bar,

#312 to #880qualify for the medal and 2 bars,

#16 to #276 ...qualify for the medal and 3 bars.

Please reach out to the membership secretary Ken Keegan, at bcatp8@hotmail.com, so we can arrange the correct address for sending your well-deserved medals.

In closing, your involvement and contributions are what make the Canadian Society of Military Medals & Insignia the vibrant and thriving community it is today. Your dedication to preserving and sharing the rich history of our nation's military artifacts is truly commendable. Thank you for your ongoing support and participation. We look forward to the winter season with great enthusiasm, and we encourage you to engage with our society, submit your articles, and take advantage of the opportunities we offer.

Wishing you a wonderful winter season, filled with history, camaraderie, and the joy of collecting.

OFF TO WAR

INTRODUCTION

by *Juan José Besteiro*

Collecting militaria can be a very rewarding pursuit, especially when reuniting families with their history and retelling a forgotten story. I had the pleasure to participate on a recent story with *Legion – Canada's Military History Magazine* which showcased some amazing pictures of Canadian military history preserved through the efforts of one of our past members Bob French. We are honoured to reprint *Off to War* by Stephen J. Thorne. This article was originally published by *Legion Magazine* in their September/October 2023 issue (pages 48-53) and is used here with permission. I am sure that you will enjoy this fine article and I invite you all to visit their website at <https://legionmagazine.com/off-to-war/>.

A Recently Unearthed Trove of Photos Captures Canadian Men Before They Embarked to the Great War

Stephen J. Thorne

These 47 Canadians, many born in the British Isles, descended on recruiting stations in Toronto, Kingston, Ont., Valcartier, Que., and elsewhere between 1914 and 1916, driven by the call to defend king and country in lands far away.

They were bricklayers and electricians, clerks and painters, office workers and locomotive engineers. Most were young recruits, just out of school and living in west-end Toronto. Arthur William Rawlinson was 35. Sydney Raven was 16. All were photographed before they went off to fight. A memento for loved ones.

Rendered on glass plates in faded sepia, their faces reflect a range of pre-combat attitudes and emotions—innocence, confidence, anticipation, apprehension—the grim realities of the new,

industrialized warfare yet to be realized.

Almost a third didn't return. More than a third survived debilitating wounds and poison gas. Miraculously by the standards of the day, just over a third made it home physically unscathed.

Some of the photographs have the address of a photo studio once located next to the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre on Yonge Street in Toronto. They were discovered in the estate of Bob French, a retired corporal of The Queen's Own Rifles, and consigned to Juan José Besteiro, president of the Canadian Society of Military Medals & Insignia.

Short profiles of eight of the men are included with their photos in the following pages.

Continued on page 2736

**WHEN HE SIGNED UP IN MARCH 1916,
HIS COMPLEXION WAS
DESCRIBED AS “FRESH”**

IN HIS ATTESTATION DOCUMENTS.

Sydney Vernon Raven of Toronto was just 16 years old when he signed up in March 1916, his complexion described as “fresh” in his attestation documents.

His 22-year-old brother, **Frank Leonard Raven**, had joined in January and served as a driver with No. 35 Field Ambulance before he was sent home in December 1917 with trench fever—a highly contagious, liceborne disease marked by high fevers, severe headaches and soreness of the legs and back. Pte. Sydney joined the 12th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery headquarters in England as a driver a few months after he signed up. Less than a year later, he landed in France with the 5th Canadian Divisional Ammunition Column. He was granted permission to marry an English girl, Lillian, in December and given 14 days’ special leave to do so. He served out the war and returned to Canada with his bride in June 1919.



Born in Liverpool, England, **Private Arthur William Rawlinson** was 35 years old when he enlisted at a Toronto recruiting station in September 1915. He was just five-foot-four, 123 pounds. After sailing out of Halifax with the 74th Battalion aboard the *Empress of Britain* in March 1916, Rawlinson was reassigned to the 1st Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles, after it was overrun in a German attack and suffered 80 per cent casualties at Mount Sorrel. Rawlinson was wounded on Sept. 15, 1916, as his battalion joined the first wave attacking Mouquet Farm on the Somme. He was back in the line five days later, only to be killed in action on Sept. 30. He was 36.



Frank Shrubshall was born in Faversham, England, in 1881 and became a locomotive engineer with the Canadian Pacific Railway before he enlisted at age 34 in Toronto in March 1916. As a member of the 38th (Ottawa) Battalion, he received a field promotion to sergeant in October 1917 and was, according to his records, “killed instantly by a machine gun bullet during the advance on the Drocourt- Quéant Line on the morning of September 2, 1918.” He was awarded a posthumous Distinguished Conduct Medal, the second-highest award for valour, almost five months later. He left behind a wife, Edith, and two children.

Sergeant Bertram John Topham, a native of Northwich, England, was an electrician before he signed up for military service at Valcartier, Que., shortly after the war began in September 1914. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his actions with 3 Company, 14th Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment), at Mount Sorrel on June 3, 1916. According to a unit history, Topham led a party of 14 men and established contact with the enemy at a point on the Allies’ left flank. “When his advance was checked, Topham took up a position and for the whole day defied the enemy’s efforts to eject him,” it said. “Casualties he could not avoid; and gradually his little party dwindled. At night, together with some two or three survivors, he retired on the main body of the Battalion.” His medal was awarded by none other than Lieutenant-General Julian Byng a month later. Topham fought through France and Belgium. He was concussed and suffered lifelong hearing loss from an exploding shell before the war ended. He died in 1962 in Toronto, age 67.



Continued on page 2737



Toronto native **Frederick Swebert Kirkwood**, a clerk, signed up at Kingston, Ont., in September 1916 and served as a driver with 'C' Battery, the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, for 16 months before he was shot in the thigh at Amiens, France, during the German spring offensive of April 1918. His leg was amputated well above the knee, leaving just a 25-centimetre stump. Twenty-two at the time, he would spend a year in hospitals in France, England and Canada. He endured several operations and would suffer phantom foot pain in wet weather for the rest of his life. He returned to Toronto, resumed work as a clerk, and married Ruby Alexandria Whillier, a 21-year-old stenographer from England, in 1925.



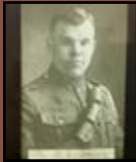
Born in Toronto, **George Peter Mallaby** was a gunner with the 21st Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, when he was gassed at Passchendaele, Belgium, on Nov. 1, 1917. Artillery shells and heavy rains had turned the battlefield into a wasteland of mud, swamp and water-filled craters. Canadian units took 15,000 casualties, including more than 3,000 men confirmed killed and 1,000 more missing and presumed dead, many of them lost in the mud. Mallaby, a Woolworth employee before signing up at age 21 in March 1916, was back in circulation within a month and survived the war.

Montreal-born **William George Fell** was a 32-year-old master painter and decorator when he signed up in Toronto in March 1916. A lance-sergeant in the 116th (Ontario County) Battalion, he was wounded on a raid north of Avion in July 1917, then went missing in action around Ypres on Sept. 30. He was officially declared killed in action in April 1918; his remains were never found. His name is on the Canadian National Vimy Memorial on Hill 145 north of Arras, among 11,285 Canadian soldiers listed who were declared missing and presumed dead in WW I France.

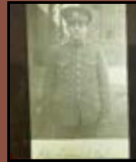




**These Canadians descended on
recruiting stations in Toronto,
Kingston, Ont., Valcartier, Que.,
and elsewhere between**



1914



and

1916.





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CANADA'S MISSION TO SUPPORT UKRAINE: TRACING THE TRANSFORMATION OF OPERATION UNIFIER'S INSIGNIA

By Beau Harper #1914

Beginning in 2015, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have been engaged in Operation UNIFIER, a military training and capacity building mission in support of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.¹ Since the start of the operation, Canada has aided in the training of tens of thousands of Ukrainian military and security personnel in battlefield tactics and advanced military skills.² While the first rotations of CAF personnel provided direct training, the responsibility gradually shifted to fully trained and equipped Ukrainians. For the Canadians, this meant stepping into advisory and mentor roles, as well as assisting in the development of courses.³ In February 2022, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the mission was temporarily paused.⁴ Canadian participation in directly training Ukrainian recruits has since resumed in the United Kingdom and Poland.⁵



The Camp flag of Operation UNIFIER used the colours of the Canadian Joint Operations Command



Original concept sent to Captain Yohann de St-Cyr for revision (2016)



Second proposed design. Much closer to the insignia originally produced by ROTO 1 (2016)

The story of the Operation UNIFIER insignia begins in 2015 when Rotation Zero came up with the idea for a unique patch to be worn by the Canadian members of the force.⁶ The deployment's spearhead design was inspired by the badge of 2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (2CMBG) from which the Rotation Zero personnel of the Royal Canadian Regiment originated.⁷ The 2CMBG patches were inspired by the First Special Service Force, an elite fighting brigade formed

Continued on page 2741

during the Second World War, which consisted of both American and Canadian personnel.⁸ During Rotation One (January to August 2016) the Commanding Officer of Joint Task Force Ukraine, Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Arsenault, gave Captain Yohann de St-Cyr a concept design to finalize.⁹ Yohann, the Task Force Information and Operations Advisor, sent the concept to a Psychological Operations production cell member in Canada who finished creating the patch and camp flag design.¹⁰ The flag that was designed and produced was based both on the spearhead concept of the operation with a background reflecting the colours of the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC).¹¹

The initial design for the operation patch contained the motto “ne jamais lâcher” a French quote which translates to “never let go”. This was proposed by Lieutenant Colonel Arsenault who used it as his personal motto while commanding the task force.¹² The concept changed to “Unified For Ukraine” and later entered production as “United For Ukraine”.¹³ A few hundred of the round patches were initially produced for wear with bronze coloured font.¹⁴



An early example of the first pattern operation patch produced for official wear.

Photographic evidence shows slight variations being worn including types with black or white font and various camouflage background types.

Many rotations opted for specifically designed patches to indicate their rotation number. The most common patch worn during Rotation Four and Five was the standard circular patch imposed on an olive drab rectangle. In the bottom left corner of the square there was a black “IV” or “V” identifying the Fourth and Fifth Rotation. During Rotation Five UNIFIER was having issues with sizing from various suppliers.¹⁵ A large square patch was produced with a coloured spearhead.¹⁶ In practice, this was generally worn by headquarters staff due to the colour and size, while a smaller subdued version with a two-tone olive spearhead was worn by the other personnel of the operation.¹⁷ Ironically, the smaller subdued

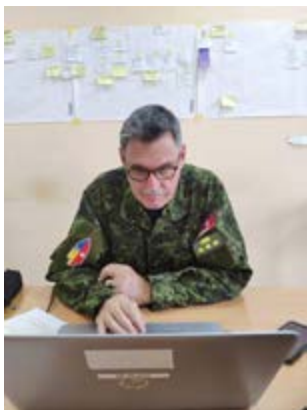


Bottom- The standard subdued patch worn by Rotation 4. Top- Subsection patch indicating Charlie Company (Canadians) and that the wearer was a member of the Armour Training Team. Worn by Brad Padvaiskas. These patches were worn overlapped due to sizing.

patches were produced first and due to dis-satisfaction from command, the larger, coloured patches were then produced, which were even more disliked.¹⁸

Patches have also been utilized to indicate sub-units; this type of patch was worn above the deployment patch on the right arm. One instance was explained by Brad Padvaiskas, former member of Rotation Four. His sub-section patch included a capital letter “C” indicating that he was in Charlie-Company (Canadians) and a tank which indicated his attachment to the Armour Training Team.¹⁹ The designation of C-Company had no reflection on the tasks assigned, the only purpose was to act as an indicator for base administration to determine who was Canadian.²⁰ The training mission out of Starychi, Ukraine during this rotation was primarily U.S. lead, being comprised of two U.S. companies and one Canadian company.²¹

Unofficial patches, often referred to as “morale patches” have also been worn during Operation UNIFIER. This type of insignia is often personal and produced in small quantities for individuals or groups. Terry Hunter, the Task



Terry Hunter (TDO) wearing his operation insignia on the right arm and moral patch below the Canadian flag patch. (2019)

Force Training Development Officer (TDO) of Rotation Seven explained that he was allowed to have a morale patch produced but was not allowed to wear it when he returned to base camp.²² Terry’s patch showed four post-it notes with “Training Development Officer” on it.²³ Terry chose this design as Training Development Officers use many post-it notes when planning courses.²⁴ Unofficial patches have been popular throughout the operational history of UNIFIER, often representing an individual’s roles that may not be represented in official patches. During Rotation Fourteen, the members of UNIFIER serving in Poland wanted their own distinctive insignia. They were not allowed to wear the insignia they created on their uniforms but were permitted to attach these to other personal items such as backpacks or notepads.²⁵ Many unofficial patches

have been created throughout the rotations as additional souvenirs or as indicators for the specific duties carried out by an individual or group. Just because a patch has been produced, or evidence has been provided for its usage does not mean the insignia was authorized.

Around 2019, possibly during Rotation Six, a new operation patch was ordered to take place of the round type.²⁶ The new patch kept the spearhead design

and eliminated the circular portion and motto. Since the introduction of the second pattern, almost all rotations have used embroidered spearhead patches with only slight variations. The Rotation 15 deployment in England broke this trend and began searching for a manufacturer that could adequately produce an infrared variant.²⁷ They were seeking a small order of 250 patches that were required to be infrared, Velcro backed, conform to the existing colour scheme, and had to be nine by five centimetres in size.²⁸ After acquiring concepts and quotes from various international manufacturers in countries including Canada and Pakistan, a supplier in France was chosen to fill the order.²⁹ Rotation 16 has ordered more infrared patches to be worn in England.³⁰ The actual practicality of this insignia is slim to none. Although part of the training involves night operations, night vision is not used during the course.³¹ During night operations when enemy are also using night vision, users generally avoid turning on their infrared as it allows the enemy to spot you from a distance. The spearhead patch is also commonly seen in wear with rotation specific insignia generally worn above it.

Rotation specific insignia came in various styles, yet sometimes retained the same design. For example, Rotation 10 chose a rectangular patch resembling the Ukrainian flag with a maple leaf in the centre, an “R” in the upper-right corner and a “10” in the lower-right corner. Rotation 11 chose an olive drab rectangular patch that read “R11 Op UNIFIER” and displayed a trident in the upper-left corner and maple leaf in the upper-right corner. Rotation 12 retained the same design, only the number was changed.

Another piece of insignia which has changed throughout the operation is nametags. Usually, members of the Canadian Armed Forces wear and have worn a nametag displaying their



Nametag worn by Brad Padvaiskas during ROTO 14/15 (2023) this nametag translates to “Master Corporal Bradley”.

last name on their left chest. During the early years of the operation, blank nametags were worn, supposedly being mandated by CJOC due to the Russian threat.³² When Rotation Four had switched to nametags they made them with only the rank and first name in a Slavic script called Cyrillic.³³ During Rotation Five, the anonymity and discrete presence of Canadians in Ukraine came to a halt. Major General Mike Rouleau visited the operation just two months after taking command of the CJOC and immediately noticed and abruptly ordered the blank nametags to be removed and normal name tags to be worn again.³⁴

The general's justification was that he had served numerous years commanding the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, his face had been all over the news and television, yet not once had someone come knocking on his door.³⁵ Rotation Five was also allowed to openly wear CADPAT uniforms in all cities and public places.³⁶ The Task Force Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Fraser Auld, was thinking that the Russians would not risk an international incident with the CAF.³⁷ It was also understood that nametag or not, if the Russians wanted to discover the identity of Canadian Armed Forces personnel, it was easy for them to do so.³⁸ Throughout UNIFIER, Canadians switched between blank, Cyrillic, and normal nametags. Ultimately, changes have come almost exclusively due to changes in command and differing opinions.

Although the Insignia of UNIFIER has developed from a lineage of history and tradition spanning back to the Second World War, there has been little attention given to maintaining consistency of official insignia throughout the rotations. Since the inception of a UNIFIER operation patch, changes in command and manufacturers have been the most prevalent causes for change. The one thing that has remained consistent since 2016 is the use of a spearhead that displays the national symbols of both Canada and Ukraine, symbolizing the Canadian's commitment to supporting the Ukrainian Armed Forces. As Operation UNIFIER continues, the usage of insignia will likely continue to evolve, meeting the desires and needs of commanders and the capabilities of manufacturers.



*French made infrared patch introduced by Rotation 15 for usage in England.
Night vision without IR filter (middle) and with IR illumination (right).*

References

¹ National Defence. "Operation UNIFIER." Canada.ca. / Government of Canada, January 17, 2023. www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-unifier.html.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Interview with Yohann de St-Cyr, task force information operations advisor ROTO 1 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 4, 2023, *transcript*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Interview with Mark Antony, ROTO 5 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 6, 2023, *transcript*.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Interview with Brad Padvaiskas, Armour Training Team ROTO 4, ROTO 14-15 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 5- May 3, 2023, *transcript*.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Interview with Terry Hunter, Task Force Training Development Officer (TDO) ROTO 7 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper,

Facebook Messenger, February 5, 2023, *transcript*.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Interview with Brad Padvaiskas, Armour Training Team ROTO 4, ROTO 14-15 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 5- May 3, 2023, *transcript*.

²⁶ Interview with Yohann de St-Cyr, task force information operations advisor ROTO 1 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 4, 2023, *transcript*.

²⁷ Interview with Jacob Hiseman, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, July 23, 2023, *transcript*.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid; Interview with Richard Law, Commanding Officer of the United Kingdom Training Element (2023), Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, July 21, 2023, *transcript*.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Interview with Mark Antony, ROTO 5 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 6, 2023, *transcript*.; Interview with Yohann de St-Cyr, task force information operations advisor ROTO 1 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 4, 2023, *transcript*.

³³ Interview with Brad Padvaiskas, Armour Training Team ROTO 4, ROTO 14-15 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 5- May 3, 2023, *transcript*.

³⁴ Interview with Mark Antony, ROTO 5 UNIFIER, Interviewed by Beau Harper, Facebook Messenger, February 6, 2023, *transcript*.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

JOY OF COLLECTING BADGES

Bill Alexander #721 & ChatGPT

I have been using ChatGPT, fiddling around with the program to see what it is capable of writing. This was a combined effort. My prompting and input with the composition being ChatGPT.

Collecting Canadian Military Badges: A Historical Journey Through Valor and Identity.

Collecting military badges can be a rewarding hobby for history enthusiasts, and Canadian military badges, in particular, offer a unique and fascinating glimpse into the nation's rich heritage and military achievements. These badges serve as tangible symbols of valor, service, and identity, making them highly sought-after collectibles among history buffs and veterans alike.

A Tapestry of History: Each Canadian military badge tells a story, weaving a tapestry of the nation's past. From the early colonial conflicts to the modern-day operations, these insignias chronicle Canada's involvement in major world events. The designs and materials of the badges have evolved over time, reflecting the changing face of the Canadian Armed Forces and its missions. Collectors can explore various themes, such as regiments, branches, campaigns, and ranks, each representing a significant chapter in Canadian history.

Symbolism and Artistry: Beyond their historical value, Canadian military badges also showcase exquisite artistry and craftsmanship. Skilled designers meticulously crafted these emblems to represent the essence of the military units they represented. These badges often feature intricate details, such as native symbols, animals, or iconic landmarks, fostering a strong sense of identity and camaraderie among servicemen and women.

Preserving National Heritage: Collecting Canadian military badges is not just about acquiring artifacts; it is also about preserving the nation's heritage. By cherishing these badges and sharing their stories, collectors play a vital role in safeguarding the sacrifices and accomplishments of those who served the country. Many collectors actively participate in educational initiatives, museums, and veteran associations, ensuring that the memory of these brave individuals live on for future generations.

A Thrilling Hunt: The thrill of hunting for rare and unique Canadian military badges is an exhilarating aspect of the hobby. Scouring flea markets, antique shops, online auctions, and engaging with fellow collectors creates a sense of adventure and excitement. Unearthing a rare badge or discovering an insignia with a remarkable

backstory can be a truly unforgettable experience.

Connecting People and Communities: Collecting Canadian military badges fosters connections among individuals with shared interests. Enthusiasts come together in clubs, online forums, and gatherings, exchanging knowledge, insights, and memorabilia. The sense of community in this hobby enriches the experience and provides an opportunity for lifelong friendships.

A Priceless Tribute: For many collectors, the value of a Canadian military badge goes beyond its monetary worth. Each badge represents the valor and sacrifices of those who served, making it a priceless tribute to the men and women who defended the nation and upheld its values.

In conclusion, collecting Canadian military badges is a captivating journey through time, art, and human courage. It allows enthusiasts to explore the nation's history, honor the service of its armed forces, and build meaningful connections with like-minded individuals. For those seeking to delve into the tales of bravery and valor, this hobby offers a poignant and rewarding experience that transcends the mere gathering of artifacts.

2024 Show Dates

The CSMMI Executive Committee has approved the show dates for 2024.

Two-Day Annual Show

Friday, June 21 and Saturday June 22, 2024
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Monthly shows are held on Sunday mornings at the
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October 20, 2024	November 17, 2024

Keep in touch with up to date information on the website at www.csmmi.com or the CSMMI Facebook site.

HEADDRESS OF THE 53RD SHERBROOKE BATTALION OF INFANTRY 1866-1914

By Lorne Waid Jr #1937

Headdress has been a common feature of a soldier's accoutrements for centuries and is an element which is often overlooked in the study of military uniforms. The Canadian Army's headdress traditions originate from those of the British Army, dating to when Canada was part of the British Empire and Canada's army was closely associated with, and modeled after, the British Army of the era. This article will discuss the types of headdress that the 53rd Sherbrooke Battalion of Infantry, (later, the 53rd Regiment), wore from its founding, in 1866, to the eve of the First World War. This period in the Canadian Army is typically referred to as the *Militia Period*, spanning from 1855 (the *Canadian Militia Act of 1855*) until the eve of the First World War in 1914. It was characterized by the creation of many urban and rural militia units clad in unit and arm of service identifying colours, such as, scarlet, blue or green uniforms, and wearing the typical white waist belts and pouches, iconic of the British soldier of the Victorian era. The outbreak of war in 1914 saw the final retirement of these unit-specific coloured tunics and frocks. Already obsolete for some time, these uniforms were relegated for ceremonial duties only. Khaki serge service dress uniforms became the norm, as the First Canadian Contingent sailed for Europe and the battlefields of France and Flanders.

1866 was the year the 53rd Battalion of Infantry was authorized and founded. During this initial period, defined by the American Civil War, the Fenian Raids, and Canada's Confederation, establishing the Canadian Militia became of critical importance. The need for a larger, well-trained, armed and equipped militia was of great urgency for our new nation's security. Canada, as a semi-independent dominion of the Empire, followed the lead of the imperial army in organization, tactics,

equipment, and uniforms. Outfitting requirements for the expanding Canadian Militia, fell upon British manufacturers — who patterned most of its clothing and headdress designs direct from British Army dress regulations and norms. This article will focus specifically on the various types of headdress influenced by the imperial forces, as worn by the 53rd Sherbrooke Regiment during the Militia Period.

Most of the research for this article is based on published works and period photographs. Unfortunately, the very early period of the 53rd, from 1866 to 1880, lacks essential photographic references. Consequently, determining the exact types of headdress that was worn is difficult, but based on period photos of other local militia battalions and the dress regulations of the time, we can hypothesize that two basic types of headdress were worn. The first, the *Kilmarnock cap*, of Scottish origin, was the standard undress headdress for the line infantry of the Canadian Militia from the 1860s, into the early 1870s, after which, it was replaced by the Glengarry.



Militia soldier wearing the Kilmarnock cap.
Unattributed.

◀The photograph shows the Kilmarnock cap in wear by a member of the 1st Battalion, Canadian Militia circa 1866. Note the brass numeral “1” worn on the cap, and the white leather pouch equipment — all common features of the period. This man is armed with the Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifled Musket.

During the period, most Canadian militia officers wore the *Pattern 1855 Forage cap*. Again, there is a lack of photographic evidence, but it is likely that this was the headdress worn by officers of the 53rd Sherbrooke Battalion in this early period.



Examples of the Pattern 1855 Forage cap
Source: *Uniforms of the British Army*
Between 1751 and 1914, D. S. V. Fosten, B. K. Fosten.

Pattern 1855
Forage Cap

Continued on page 2752

Photographic evidence from the late 1870s into the 1880s, shows the **Pill Box cap** as the standard other ranks undress headdress of the 53rd. Similar to the Kilmarnock cap in appearance, it differed in size, style of wear, construction and typically included a chin strap, but was brimless. This was the standard headdress of cavalry and engineers, both in the British army and the Canadian militia during this period, but uncommon in line infantry units. As stated previously, the Glengarry replaced the Kilmarnock cap as the standard undress headdress of the both the British Army and the Canadian Militia in the early 1870s but for reasons unknown at this time, the Pill Box was adopted by the 53rd and worn until replaced by the Field Service cap circa 1898.



*Examples of the Pill Box cap. Note the brass regimental numeral "53".
Source: The Sherbrooke Hussars Collection*

While the Pill Box cap was the standard for the rank and file of the Sherbrooke battalion, the **Pattern 1880 Forage cap** became the standard undress headdress for the officers, Senior NCOs and Warrant Officers of the battalion. Adopted by the British Army in 1880, to replace the Pattern 1855 Forage cap, it was soon accepted for wear by the Canadian Militia.



*Examples of the Pattern
1880 Forage cap
Source:
The Sherbrooke Hussars
Collection*

◀ The photograph shows an excellent example of this pattern of forage cap in wear by an officer of the battalion. Officers were typically required to purchase most of their own uniform and kit. For this reason, these types of headdress are often of higher quality, having been produced by private British, or later, Canadian military outfitters, hat makers or tailors. Embroidered numerals were common and appear to have been the standard within the 53rd. A photograph of a surviving example from the Sherbrooke Hussars Collection. This pattern of forage cap was worn until it was replaced in 1903 with the Naval Pattern Forage cap.



*Pattern 1880
Forage cap*

In 1898, the British army adopted the **Field Service cap** as a replacement for the Glengarry. It was adopted shortly thereafter by the Canadian militia as the standard undress headdress for infantry and was common among other branches and support units of the Canadian militia as well. Dark navy blue in colour and often adorned with a unit or corps cap badge, these caps appear in most photos of the 53rd from 1899 - c 1906. These caps were later replaced by the Naval Pattern Forage cap for all ranks in c1906.

A photograph, taken circa 1900 - 1905, of a drill team of the 53rd wearing the Field Service cap and an interesting regimental T-shirts which were scarlet, with white-trimmed dark navy - blue



*Examples of the Field Service cap
Source: The Sherbrooke Hussars Collection*

Continued on page 2754

roman numerals, “LIII”. The men are armed with Mark-I Magazine Lee Enfield Rifles which had recently replaced the aging Snider Enfield in service.

Another photo from early 1900s, taken during the Dominion Textile strike in Magog, showing several types of headdress in wear. Included are the Pattern 1880 Forge cap, Field Service cap, and the Universal Pattern Helmet. Note the men are no longer equipped with the white belts and pouches, but rather with the brown leather Pattern 1899 Oliver Equipment — a type of infantry equipment unique to Canada, and one of Canada’s earliest departures from British patterns (and systems of supply).



*Examples of the Pattern 1880 Forge cap, Field Service cap, and the Universal Pattern Helmet.
Source The Sherbrooke Hussars Collection*

In 1903, the Pattern 1880 Forge cap was replaced with the ***Naval Pattern Forge cap*** for officers, certain Senior NCOs and Warrant Officers. This headdress proved popular with all ranks. Unlike previous types of headdress, it was more practical and offered greater protection from the sun and elements. It was often fitted with a white cloth cap cover for wear during summer months. Regimental or corps cap badges were typically worn on the cap. (*Editor: please see image at top of page 2755.*)



*Example of the Naval Pattern
Forage cap.*

*Source The Sherbrooke
Hussars Collection*

The Naval Pattern Forage cap was the final type of undress headdress worn by the regiment prior to 1914.

The start of the First World War saw the suspension of many traditions in the Canadian militia, including coloured tunics, frocks and ornate headdress. (These were relegated to ceremonial full-dress status only.) From 1914, Khaki Serge Service Dress would become the standard uniform, with its accompanying Service Dress cap. The First Canadian Contingent would wear these on their departure for Europe in 1914.

In 1906, the Canadian militia adopted the Naval Pattern Forage cap for all ranks (with minor exceptions), replacing all other types of undress headdress then in wear. The photo shows three NCOs of the 53rd Sherbrooke Regiment attending the 1911 Coronation of King George V. Note the white summer covers and the 53rd Sherbrooke cap badges.



The Naval Pattern Forage cap with summer covers.

Source: Morrison Family Collection

Continued on page 2755



*Example of a Senior Officer's Naval Pattern Forage cap.
Source: Author's Collection*

Above, an example of a Senior Officer's Naval Pattern Forage cap, complete with 53rd Sherbrooke cap badge. Note the gold wire braid along the edge of the visor denoting this cap was for Senior Officers.



Lt Col W.E. Hibbertson,
Commanding officer,
1870-1882

*Example of a Home
Service Pattern Helmet, or
"Blue Velvet Helmet"*

The final headdress to be discussed are the Home Service Pattern and Universal Pattern Helmets. These are seen in wear by the 53rd Battalion, from the early 1880s through the early 1900s. The ***Home Service Pattern Helmet***, or "Blue Velvet Helmet", to which it was sometimes referred, was first adopted by the British army in 1876 for soldiers on home-service. (Home-service, referred to service within Great Britain.) Dark-Blue was the standard colour, although dark green for rifle regiments and light green for light infantry also existed. In the late 1870s, Canada adopted this pattern of helmet as well. Although authorized

for wear by all ranks. The surviving examples to the 53rd Sherbrooke seem to indicate that only officers wore these helmets which would be stored in their original metal carry/storage cases.

Likely due to expense and availability, these helmets do not appear to have been very common. They were quickly replaced, unofficially, with the British Foreign Service Pattern Helmet as early as 1880. The Foreign Service Pattern Helmet was intended for use by British troops when on service outside of Great Britain hence the term “foreign service”. This pattern of helmet officially replaced the Home Service



Example of a Home Service Pattern Helmet, or “Blue Velvet Helmet”

Pattern Helmet in Canadian service in 1886 and was referred to as the ***Universal Pattern Helmet*** while in Canadian service.

The photograph taken circa 1882, shows an example of the Blue-Velvet Home Service Pattern Helmet of the Officer Commanding the 53rd Battalion, Lt.Col. Ibbotson, 1870-1882.

Above, two photos showing, a surviving example of a 53rd Sherbrooke “Blue-Velvet” Home Service Helmet from the collection of the Colby Curtis Museum, Stanstead Historical Society. Both the Home Service and Universal Pattern helmets were adorned with brass helmet plates featuring the battalion numeral and regimental motto. This example is named to Lt. W. Embury, 53rd Sherbrooke.

The Universal Pattern Helmet (also referred to as the “White”

Continued on page 2757

Universal Pattern Helmet), was worn by all ranks for both formal occasions and field service. These are often seen in photographs of the 53rd Battalion from the late 1880s through the early years of the 1900s. The photo which was likely taken circa the late 1880s or early 1890s, shows the helmet in wear by Lt. T.S. Somers of the Battalion. The Universal Pattern Helmet was formally abolished in 1909 in favor of the Naval Pattern Forage Cap although it likely continued to be worn for formal occasions until the First World War.



Lt. T. S. Somers.

Example of a Universal Pattern Helmet.

Source: The Sherbrooke Hussars Collection

A surviving example of the Universal Pattern Helmet to the 53rd Sherbrooke.

Note the brass Queen Victoria Crown helmet plate, brass spike, and brass chin strap. All common features of the Universal Pattern Helmet.

In 1914 the Regiment was only 48 years old, yet photographic evidence shows that at least eight types of headdress were worn. It is difficult to comprehend how men were able to keep up to date with the latest military fashions. It is very likely that other types of headdress may have been worn. The author would be interested in hearing from anyone who has documented evidence to identify and support their use.



Example of a Universal Pattern Helmet.
Source CWO. Justin Dohler Collection

A surviving example of the Universal Pattern Helmet to the 53rd Sherbrooke. Note the brass Queen Victoria Crown helmet plate, brass spike, and brass chin strap. All common features of the Universal Pattern Helmet.

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¹ (The full history of the 53rd Sherbrooke Battalion of Infantry is well beyond the scope of this article. For more details see *The Sherbrooke Regiment (12th Armoured Regiment)* by LCol H.M. Jackson M.B.E., E.D.)

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A SIGN OF THE TIMES

by Phil Miller #1003

Often, it's not the big or expensive things in our collection that bring us joy. Sometimes, it is the simplest of treasures. One day, maybe two and a half decades ago now, I was visiting a couple I had been privileged to officiate at their second wedding. Both had lost their partners and found second love and companionship with each other. Del had been a Spitfire mechanic in the RCAF with 411 Squadron stationed at RAF Digby. Myrtle was a war bride from Salisbury, in the south of England.

Over tea and cookies, Del and I were talking about his wartime memories. Myrtle excused herself and was gone for a bit. On returning, she had something in one hand and a photograph in the other. She handed me both. It was an Air Raid Warden sign and a picture of where it was located during the war.



Myrtle said she had taken it down from the fence at war's end and, for some unexplained reason, packed in her belongings when she came to Canada. Its original location was on a fence in front of 25 Beechcroft Ave, Laverstock, Salisbury, England.

The commentary on the back of the photograph noted, "Wartime Window Treatment." On closer inspection of the house, you can see the large Xs of tape placed on the windows, to mitigate flying glass

should a bomb detonate in the area. I decided to see if the house was still there, and, though changed, it is. On another site, I found the descriptor of care for the sign.

Fifteen years ago, Del answered the Eternal Roll Call. It was 127 days later that Myrtle joined him. This sign and picture sit on my bookshelf. It causes me to pause and think of dear friends. One of my treasures.



*The Air Raid Warden plaque
from Beechcroft Ave.*

*An example of the plaque
with care directions.*



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GOING TO WAR ON A BICYCLE?

By Marion Warburton #1795

I never suspected that WWI soldiers rode into battle on bicycles – until this button caught my eye. The Canadian Corps Cyclist Battalion (CCCB) was created in May 1916, from the cyclist companies of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Canadian Divisions; their purpose, to carry out offensive reconnaissance and intelligence work. The Battalion was outfitted like

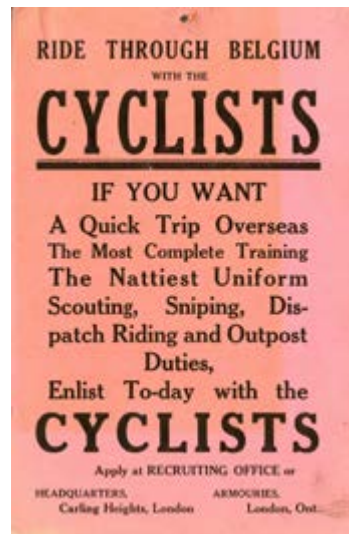


Infantry, with the addition of military bicycles and three Lewis guns for each Company. While the CCCB's main function was reconnaissance, to prepare for intelligence work, the Cyclists were trained in musketry, bombing, bayonet fighting, signalling, topography and map reading, range-finding, tactics and use of Lewis guns; physical training prepared them for hours of cycling.

Soldiers on bicycles have some advantages over soldiers on horses. Bicycles don't make any noise; they don't need to be fed or watered or shod or rested. All the soldier needs is a small repair kit in case of a tire puncture. The superiority of cycles over horses became clear at Cambrai in 1917, where the CCCB was ordered forward after almost all the horses of the Canadian Light Horse were gunned down by machine gun fire.

The Corps performed many different jobs, especially working with the Canadian Engineers. Setting aside their bicycles, the men of the Cyclists laid and buried cable to

the front line at the Somme and laid and maintained light railways under shell fire and gas attacks at Vimy, for which they received special recognition from the Army Commander. In addition to guarding POWs, traffic control, and acting as guides and dispatch riders, they dug tunnels for the Engineers. Some tunnels, which were used to hide troop movements, telephone cables and water



Continued on page 2763

mains, were 25 ft. or more underground and extended for miles to the front lines.



In 1918, the Cyclists came into their own, when the entire Canadian Corps moved into position to the west of Amiens. The CCCB arrived at 06:00 on August 2, having ridden their bicycles 57 km through the night, carrying a kit of almost 90 lbs. As part of the Canadian Independent Force under the command of Brigadier General Raymond Brutinel, the CCCB made a “most significant contribution” by

reconnoitering ahead of the main force, locating the enemy, and reporting their position. Cyclists were ideal for this kind of stealth maneuver. One Cyclist, Lieutenant (Acting Captain) William Duncan Herridge, was awarded the Military Cross “For conspicuous courage and devotion to duty” at Amiens.

As the enemy retreated, the Canadian “infantry were usually preceded by a forward screen of cavalry, cyclists and armoured cars”. The Cyclists, among others, cleared out villages and machine gun nests in advance of the infantry. Sometimes their advance was as much as a day ahead of the main body-exposing them to direct contact with the enemy. By the end of the war, of 1,138 cyclists who enlisted, 261 were killed or wounded, a casualty rate of 23 %. After the Armistice, the CCCB made up part of the occupying forces.

Originally, the Cyclists used CCM and Planet bikes made in Canada. Later, these were supplemented by BSA 24” Mark IV bicycles made by the British Small Arms Company. Some of the Canadian bikes lasted almost to the end of the war.

Lance-Corporal Alan MacNab described his experiences in 1918:

MacNab and his platoon approached a bridge blown up by the enemy. Leaving their bikes by the bridge, they proceeded on foot across the shallow river, until stopped by relentless enemy fire. When the 72nd came up to relieve them, MacNab returned to the bridge for his bike, but “I said goodbye to my trusty old Planet Junior Cycle, which had been issued to me in the spring of 1915 in Toronto and which I had babied and scrounged parts for. It was cut in two” by machine gun fire.

According to the Officer Commanding the 72nd Infantry Battalion: “The work of the Cyclists attached to this Battalion throughout the recent operations cannot be too highly spoken of and their services reconnoitering cross-roads and tactical Points was of immense value.” In their last push towards Mons, the Cyclists were hindered by “shell-cratered roads and rain that poured every day, except one, from November 1 to November 11, 1918”. Some craters were 40 ft. in diameter and 12 ft. deep. On patrol near Quiévrain, the Cyclists met an enemy cyclist patrol, so they set up their Lewis gun and held the road until relieved by the 72nd Infantry Battalion.



The Toronto Star newspaper wrote in April 1919: “In the last two years of the war, no battalion had a more adventurous life than the cyclists...they were never awarded battle honours...battle honours were issued in the late 1920s, and the corps were disbanded before that.” “The Battalion Association’s stand of Colours was consecrated by Bishop Robert John Renison (Anglican) in Toronto, Ontario on 27 June 1937.” On 16 April 1987, the Colours were deposited at the Canadian War Museum by the Battalion Association’s National Secretary, Captain (Ret) Wilfred Dancy “Dick” Ellis, then aged 91, who was at that time, one of the final surviving members of the Canadian Corps Cyclist Battalion.



The Corps is remembered on Facebook by the Canadian Corps Cyclists Battalion Descendants Association. For detailed information about Corps activities, see Ted Glenn’s book *Riding into Battle*, Dundurn Press, 2018, and various web sites.

Thanks to Ken Keegan for making the CCCB button available.

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