

124TH BATTALION C.E.F.

THE 124th Battalion, under command of Lieut.-Col. Vaux Chadwick, who had previously raised the 4th C. M. R.'s, recruited early in the New Year, 1915, and characteristic of the mounted units of this city, conducted a whirlwind campaign, with such vigor and energy that their establishment was complete in record time.

The battalion was first quartered at Jesse Ketchum school, on Davenport Road, which was converted into a barracks, and named "Davenport Barracks." These quarters were ideal, quite commodious and new, besides having good parade area, which enabled the battalion to carry out its preliminary training prior to going under canvas for field work.

In May they were sent to Niagara-on-the-Lake, to undergo further training on a larger scale, and were brigaded with other overseas units.

Despite the inclemency of the weather and the incessant rain, the battalion made considerable headway in bayonet fighting, physical drill, etc.

On the 4th July, 1916, the unit was sent to Camp Borden from Niagara camp. The men were in heavy marching order, and in addition each man carried two blankets.

Whilst the regiment were entraining they were almost deluged with heavy rain, but this did not dampen the spirits or ardour of the men, and in a short time they were fully accustomed to their new surroundings and gladly entered upon this new phase of their training.

They arrived at Camp Borden early on the morning of the 5th, and after a trying march, they reached their camping area and were brigaded with the 176th, 213th and 216th Battalions. Their brigade area like all the rest of the brigade areas, lacked shelter from the heat, the only foliage being in the rear of the 124th, 176th lines, which was an undergrowth along the Catawampus creek. This did not afford much protection, as it was infested with mosquitoes, and the men preferred the open, rather than be tormented by these pests.

The battalion was withdrawn Sept. 19th, and next day started on a march of 45 miles (during which Lieut. Benson Wright rejoined them, his wound being better), and entrained for the Somme. On arrival the battalion rested and prepared to add new laurels to those already earned, and were engaged in the vicinity of Courcellette and Mouquet Farms, successfully maintaining and enhancing its reputation, willingly paying the price, but inflicting heavy losses on the enemy in successfully achieving its objective wherever engaged. On the 18th of November it participated in the historic attack on Regina trench, when a successful drive was organized and this supposedly impregnable barrier was captured by our Canadian boys, adding to the reputation for bravery and initiative already earned at Ypres and Festubert. The attack was made at daybreak and fighting continued all day. Losses were heavy, but, as one officer writes, "What we went after we got." The work was hand-to-hand and in many cases practically underground. It is impossible to give a list of casualties, but among the officers



LIEUT.-COL. VAUX CHADWICK, O.C.

Lieut.-Col. Vaux Chadwick acted as brigadier of the brigade, and Major Ardagh commanded the 124th Battalion. This brigade, with the other brigades in the division, were called upon to perform one of the most trying ordeals for a soldier, that was the ceremonial parade, with the decreasing and increasing of intervals between units and brigades, then the march past, and the men strained every nerve to look their best under the scrutiny of the inspecting officer. These ceremonial rehearsals, also the ceremonial parades, were conducted under intense heat, and it was observed then that the 124th Battalion showed the benefits of its training. They set an example to the junior units in the brigade by their steadiness on parade.

The 124th Battalion remained at Camp Borden until the afternoon of the 4th of August, when they left in heavy marching order to go overseas. They eventually reached their destination at Bramshott, and were installed in comfortable quarters, the men having huts. Officers' and sergeants' messes were provided with

excellent accommodation and recreation rooms for the men, which added materially to their comfort. This battalion, shortly after they arrived, furnished a draft of 300 or 400 men for France, and the remainder were moved to Whitley Camp. There is a possibility of the battalion being included in the new 5th division. They were recently reinforced by Wentworth and Brockville drafts, still leaving a number of vacancies to be filled in order to bring them up to strength.

Col. Vaux Chadwick surrounded himself with an exceptionally fine lot of officers, mostly young men, who are filled with vim and enthusiasm, and are, in the majority of cases, athletes. This has been a great incentive to organizing sports with the rank and file, and no doubt has been one of the chief factors in making the battalion one of the smartest corps that has left Canada.

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were Major Alex. Milne, who lost his life while consolidating a position captured. Lieut. D'Arcy Wadsworth was killed. Among the wounded were Lieut. Wm. E. Chester, who was wounded by shrapnel below the right knee, but continued fighting until ordered to the rear at 3 p.m. that afternoon; he has since returned to the firing line. Lieut. L. E. Porter, wounded in the right arm, is now in England. Lieut. G. G. Wimperley sustained shrapnel wounds in several parts of his body and is now in the hospital in London, England. Major Poupore was also wounded, but particulars are not known.

Bearing incredible hardships, with a fortitude unequalled, these men of the 75th Battalion continue to fight in the cause of civilization and liberty, maintaining the honor of their country with the conviction that their efforts will ultimately be crowned with success.

"Fortes a fortibus creantur."

(Brave men are created by brave men).