

battalions with whom we were to be associated for so many arduous months abroad, the 54th (Kootenay) Bn.; the 75th (Toronto) Bn., and the 87th (Montreal) Bn. The remaining days at Bramshott were spent mostly in continuous drill, the only leave obtainable being two short week-ends, one of which was cut shorter by the desire of Sir Sam Hughes to inspect the 4th Division before his departure to Canada. We surely did love our Minister of Militia when this news came through.

In connection with this review justice demands that a tragedy be related and if at this late date exposure could cause the lopping off of a few official heads there are many 102nd men now living who would indeed feel that "God's in His heaven; all's right with the world." We were on the eve of departure and orders were issued that all private or Governmental property carried by the men which would not be taken overseas was to be packed in the men's individual kit-bags; these kit-bags were to be clearly marked with name and number and piled at a specified place. It was clearly stated that these kit-bags would be stored under Government care and that when on leave in after months men would be able to reclaim their kit-bags and possessions. In pursuance of these orders kit-bags were packed and piled as directed, and the battalion marched away to parade with the Division at the grand review. During its absence a party of men acting under orders went through the kit-bags and burnt or distributed to pedlars all the contents. Absolutely unworn Stanfield's underwear, boots, spare socks and other wearing apparel were either wantonly burnt or given away; that was a shameful waste of public money and an economic outrage. In addition, the private property of the men was burnt, bibles, keepsakes from relatives and all the variety of personal effects which most men carry round with them, were consigned to the flames; that was a damnable vandalism and an outrage on the feelings of God and man alike. Someone must have blundered; the act was worse than criminal; it was foolish; but the Army is a past-master in the art of "passing the buck" and to this day the responsibility for this wholesale destruction has never been disclosed officially. Nothing could be done then, nor can anything be done now to compensate the men for the sentimental losses they sustained; but it is never too late for the Government to recover the monetary value of good under-clothing wantonly destroyed.

Reference was made above to leave. The 102nd Bn. was unfortunate in its King's leave. Whilst at Comox frequent week-end leave had been granted to Vancouver, Victoria and places near-by, but when our sudden departure was announced there was no opportunity for men to get leave who lived far away. "Never mind," said the Colonel; "my men are all British-born, and their relations are in England. They'll get leave over there." One cannot blame the Colonel; we were all keen to get away, and a