

September is far too late to have a camp under canvas at Petawawa. It has been published in routine orders that summer clothing is not to be worn after the sixteenth of September; yet there are many men in my unit who are still drilling in summer clothing because there is not enough serge battle-dress to go round. In one company alone there are eighty men who have no winter clothing. These men are drilling either in civilian dress or in summer denim drill—and this after the battalion had been mobilized for nearly five months.

Our unit was issued rifles two days before going to camp, with the 306 Lee-Enfield. Up to that time our company at Madoc had only three rifles, which had been borrowed privately, with which to instruct over two hundred men. There was absolutely no opportunity to train these men in the care and use of the rifle or in musketry before going to camp. I should like to point out to hon. members that there is a great difference between the 306 Lee-Enfield rifle and the rifle known as the short Lee-Enfield which was used in the last war, and which is used to-day for firing on the ranges. The difference briefly is this. The safety catch is different; the action of the bolt and of the magazine is different; but, most important of all, the sights on the two rifles are entirely different. The point of balance is also different in the two rifles. This may seem a small matter, but in teaching men to slope arms, present arms, port arms and go through other movements you must instruct them in detail just where to grasp the rifle and how.

At camp each man fired a round of musketry with a short Lee-Enfield rifle. When the man was ready to lie down on the ranges he was handed a short Lee-Enfield rifle, and there were just enough rifles to go round, one for each target. The point is this. What is the use of attempting to train men in musketry with one type of rifle and then asking them to go on the ranges and fire with another type of rifle which they have never seen before?

With reference to machine guns, the men in my unit had never seen a machine gun until they went to Petawawa camp, except for the one we carved out of wood. At Petawawa camp there was one Bren gun in the entire camp for one day, and the man who wrote the orders for that day must have had a sense of humour because at the bottom of the order with reference to the Bren gun he wrote, "The gun will pass briefly through your unit."

It was the same thing in regard to gas training. Some twenty-two men from my battalion—and we had 660 men in camp—were given very brief instruction in gas. I realize that gas has not figured to any great extent in

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this war so far, but at the same time it is essential that every soldier should receive training with regard to gas. But without proper equipment how can we possibly give these men gas training?

I wish to impress upon hon. gentlemen that these matters are no secret at all because every man who attended Petawawa camp, and there were several thousands of them, knows the actual conditions. I should like to ask the Minister of National Defence whether the district officers throughout Canada were consulted before these men were sent to camp, or were these men sent to camp purely for propaganda purposes? On several occasions after these camps were closed I saw, in the press, references to the men who had been at the camps as trained men.

Before leaving the question of the non-permanent units I would pay a short tribute to the rank and file. I would point out that many of these men travel up to forty miles at their own expense in order to obtain training. Their pay for one night is sixty cents. Let me give an illustration. In the village of Bancroft, which has a population of about 800, there are over 100 men in the Canadian active service force and over 200 men from Bancroft and the surrounding district connected with the non-permanent unit.

At the present time these non-permanent units are conducting classes for the qualification of junior officers and non-commissioned officers. In my unit we are conducting five separate and distinct schools. Officers and non-commissioned officers attend these classes at night and on Sunday and they are allowed no compensation of any sort for travelling expenses. All other non-permanent units are conducting similar classes. I would make a suggestion to the government. Instead of having thirty or forty or fifty classes conducted in one district, why not have one central class for a period of two or three weeks, where men and officers will be called in to take instruction all day? At the present time the plan of running schools in connection with each battalion for the qualification of officers and non-commissioned officers, in the midst of a war, is almost a farce. Such a course might be all right in a time of peace, but certainly it hardly appears proper in the midst of a war.

Some hon. members who were in France in the early days of the last war will recall the old type of bomb made out of a jam tin. Well, the non-permanent units are to-day making the same type of bombs. The only bombs we have for instruction are jam tin bombs along with some old Mills bombs brought home as souvenirs and a couple of