

VALCARTIER

BY ELISABETH FLAGLER MACKEEN

WHERE a little river winds over a sandy, slightly hilly plain, dotted with woods and lonely farms, among lovely Laurentian Mountains, grew Valcartier Camp.

Electrically lighted, with purified water and baths for every unit, with broad roads and board walks, with post-office and hospitals, a network of telephones, a bank and Y.M.C.A. tent, with canteens for soft drinks, goodies and smokes: in two short weeks it was ready for use.

Then came our lads—

" from Montreal,
From Quebec and Saguenay,
From Ungava, Labrador,
All the lands about the Bay,
Which old Hudson quested for."

Eager and earnest they were. Many had given up valuable positions, others with only their strong bodies and loyal hearts to give; they came from every walk and grade in life—trappers, ranchers, old soldiers, deep-sea fishermen, commercial travellers, lawyers, clerks, Indians, Jews, Americans, many English, and above all the Canadians born—but only the fittest, the Dominion's finest and best.

Ten miles round was the big camp, and to reach it one boarded a train at Quebec and rode for an hour or so, through a smiling land, to Valcartier Station. On the way was felt the change from normal life: the many officers and soldiers, the hospital car attached to the train, and at every bridge a little tent for the soldiers who guarded its safety.

A mile from Valcartier were seen the rifle-butts—the most extensive in the world; next came the station and the crush: crowds of people, ambulances, army transport waggons, cabs, motors, orderlies holding riding horses; and a distracted provost guard trying to preserve order.