



The
**CANADIAN
 COURIER**
The National Weekly



Vol. XX.

August 5th, 1916

No. 10

TWO YEARS AGO YESTERDAY

Canada Elected to Go to War With the Enemy of Free Peoples!

And This The Epic

THE stories of our Canadian Heroes, collected in this War Anniversary Issue of the CANADIAN COURIER, are the

Her Sons Have Written

WITH 350,000 men under arms at home and abroad, two years after Canada was asked for 20,000 men as a voluntary contribution to the army of the Empire, it is the biggest single problem of this country to understand the significance of our army. We are confronted by two sets of extremists. One set claims that Canada is not doing enough, and should adopt conscription; the other, that we are doing precisely 100 per cent. too much, and never should have gone to war at all. The sensible truth lies in what Canada has already done of her own free will, without conscription and without putting anti-enlisters into internment camps. Four and a half per cent. of our total population is under arms. Our original force of 20,000 effectives has multiplied itself by 17½ in two years. But that original 20,000 was not a standing army. It was part of our non-professional militia, which numbered all told 45,000 men. When the war broke out, Great Britain had a regular army, stationed in England, of about 175,000 men. In addition she had the Territorials. By the raising of Kitchener's army to 5,000,000 men, that force has multiplied itself by about 28. As a mere matter of comparison, therefore, Canada's is a good showing. Geographically, we are a mean average of more than 4,000 miles from the nearest battle-front. England is a mean average of about three times the effective range of the biggest gun in the army or navy. On land we were less prepared for war than England; on water not at all. Logically, our preparation against Germany should have been naval defence. England expected invasion. An invasion of England would have been an invasion of Canada. Had London been as far from Berlin as Montreal is, perhaps the army organized by Kitchener would not have reached more than 175,000 times 18, or about 3,000,000; which was just about what the army would have been without national registration. On a purely voluntary basis, 4,000 miles from the nearest battle-front, we have done as well in army-

priceless heritage which this war has given Canada. Every day adds its horror, yet a horror crowned with glorious episodes. What the war has cost Canada is greater in money than the total capitalization of our greatest transportation system. In death and disablement it has doubled, trebled and quadrupled all the national calamities we ever had. But what the war has gained for Canada in the inspiring of a free people, in discovering to ourselves the high quality of our common clay, is greater than all the cost, whether of treasure or of human lives. In no decade of our history, not even the fabulous epoch between 1900 and 1910, did this country achieve so much real human progress, as in the two years between August 4, 1914, and August 4, 1916. And the little stories of great actions recorded in the following pages are to Canada what Homer's Iliad was to the Ancient Greeks.

have compelled the independent democracy of this country to raise even a single brigade in response to a command. England had the good sense to demand nothing. She only intimated, in response to our offer, that if we felt like doing it, a force of 20,000—which was all Generals French and Hamilton credited us with, in their tours of overseas inspection—would be very acceptable.

That superb "please yourself" attitude made Canada and all parts of the Empire leap to please England. The response, as we know, was absolutely spontaneous. The act was spiritual. The organization of our army, so far as its men are concerned, was a thing of the imagination and the spirit. Therefore, the conduct of that army abroad, no matter what its temperamental peculiarities before it goes into deadly action, was that of an heroic force. Men left homes, incomes, directorships, business prospects, all their share in a great and prosperous young country, for the sake of proving that they had it in them to suffer, to dare, to die for a principle inherent in a free people.

raising as England—thanks, largely, to the inspiring example of England, and the fact that British-descended and British-born citizens of Canada have never made their loyalty to the government of Great Britain a matter of mere economics, geography, or argument. It was a matter of spiritual decision of character. We had borrowed from England money, taken from her citizens, accepted from her protection of our coasts, copied from her institutions of government, and imbibed from her the innate love of Freedom, that makes a country get saved, or go to the devil, in its own way, without compulsion or advice from Potsdam, or any other kind of "dam" headquarters.

Had England demanded of Canada an army of 50,000, she would have been replied to by no army; and no government or Canadian war-office ever could

But the great thing this war has done for Canada is to furnish it with Canadian traditions. It has given the word Canadian a new meaning, one that will inspire future generations of Canadians. Bill MacTaggart—that wasn't his name, but what matter?—used to hang round the livery stable at —ville. He was in a fair way to becoming a no-good when the war broke out. He was rough and boisterous. He hated churches and stiff collars and he liked beer. The town regarded him askance.

Bill MacTaggart joined. Bill MacTaggart died in France and—well, some hero ancestor of Bill MacTaggart got the better of him before he died. . . . How he died!

Now his name is an inspiration to the whole village. The stories that follow (taken from Sir Max Aitken's official records, "Canada in Flanders,") should be told in every Canadian nursery.

MAJOR NORSWORTHY (Montreal 13th Battalion) was in the reserve trenches (at Ypres), half a mile in the rear of the firing line, when he was killed in his attempt to reach Major McCuaig (13th Batt.) with reinforcements; and Captain Guy Drummond (13th Batt.) fell in attempting to rally French troops. This was on the afternoon of April 22nd, and the whole responsibility for coping with the crisis fell upon the shoulders of Major McCuaig until he was relieved early on the morning of the 23rd.

All through the afternoon and evening of the 22nd, and all through the night which followed, McCuaig had to meet and grapple with difficulties which might have borne down a far more experienced officer. His communications had been cut by shell fire, and he was, therefore, left to decide for himself whether he should retire or whether he should hold on. He decided to hold on, although he knew that he was without artillery support and could not hope for any until, at the earliest, the morning of the 23rd.

The decision was a very bold one. By all the rules of war McCuaig was a beaten man. But the very fact that he remained appears to have deceived

the Germans. They might have overwhelmed him, but they feared the supports, which did not in reality exist. It was not in the enemy's psychology to understand that the sheer and unaided valour of McCuaig and his little force would hold the position.

But with a small and dwindling force he did hold it, until daylight revealed to the enemy the naked deception of the defence.

In case the necessity for retreat developed, the wounded had been moved to the trenches on the right; and, under the cover of machine gun fire, Major McCuaig withdrew his men just as Major Buchanan came up with reinforcements.

The sorely tried Battalion held on for a time in dug-outs, and, under cover of darkness, retired again to a new line being formed by reinforcements. The rearguard was under Lieut. (now Captain) Green-shields. But Major McCuaig remained to see that the wounded were removed. It was then, after having escaped a thousand deaths through the long battle of the night, that he was shot down and made a prisoner.

The 7th Battalion (British Columbia Regiment) was attached to the 3rd Brigade (this was at Ypres),

and occupied a position on the forward crest of a ridge, with its left flank near St. Julien. This position was severely shelled during the day. In the course of the afternoon the Battalion received an order to make its position secure that night. At half-past four Colonel Hart-McHarg, a lawyer from Vancouver, Major Odum (who is now Lieut.-Colonel commanding the Battalion), and Lieut. Mathewson, of the Canadian Engineers, went out to reconnoitre the ground and decide upon the position of the new trenches to be dug under cover of darkness. The exact location of the German troops immediately opposed to their position was not known to them. The reconnoitring party moved down the slope to the wrecked houses and shattered walls of the village of Keerselaere—a distance of about 300 yards—in broad daylight without drawing a shot; but, when they looked through a window in the rear wall, they saw masses of Germans lining hedges not 100 yards away, and watching them intently. The three Canadian officers began to retire. They were followed by rapid fire the moment they cleared shelter. They threw themselves flat on the ground. Colonel Hart-