

AT VALCARTIER MOBILIZATION CAMP



General view of the Valcartier Camp, infantry section, taken just after a large body of troops had de trained and before they had been assigned to their various quarters. The Camp covers about twenty thousand acres of land and is on both sides of the Jacques Cartier River.

Photographs by Chesterfield.

ON August 4th, when it was clear that Canada was at war because Great Britain was at war, the Ottawa correspondent of the Toronto "Telegram" wired to his newspaper as follows:

"The Government is in a position, as far as the mobilization machinery and transportation facilities are concerned, to embark an army division of eighteen thousand men within two weeks."

A day or two afterwards it was decided to send a division consisting of about twenty thousand men. The correspondent's "fortnight" had elapsed on August 20th. If the division has been shipped from Quebec by September 20th Canada will have done very well. We are not the military nation which the Ottawa correspondents, basking in the smiles of the Military Staff, have led the people to believe. The twenty thousand men were easy to get, but uniforms, rifles, boots, horses, waggons and motor trucks were not in readiness.

As has been pointed out in the "Canadian Courier" on previous occasions Canada had no mobilization stores. To send a contingent abroad in two weeks would mean that Canada should have provided herself with a great warehouse at or near Ottawa, which would contain all the equipment required for a complete division of twenty thousand men. That equipment, not having been prepared in advance, must now be collected at great cost and considerable inconvenience. The lack of equipment has sent many soldiers to Valcartier without uniforms and without rifles. This is the price that Canada pays for having been at peace for one hundred years. But we are paying it cheerfully.



From dining at first-class restaurants and home mahogany tables the Canadian volunteer has come down to standing in a line with a mess tin. This is filled with his soup, meat and potatoes. He is then handed a portion of a loaf of bread and the ceremony is complete. A comfortable spot on the grass is his dining-room.



Washing dishes was never popular with the male sex, but the enthusiastic soldiers at Valcartier are learning how to keep their mess tins clean with the assistance of some cold water from the taps. This picture shows that the operation can be performed with considerable cheerfulness.

DESPITE all the difficulties, the militia authorities have shown considerable resource and skill in mobilizing the troops. On August 4th the Government did not even own the property which is now laid out as a training ground and fitted up with a waterworks system, rifle ranges and artillery ranges. In one month the impossible has been performed and more than twenty thousand men are under canvas. By September 15th the equipment of the division should be complete. Any delay that there has been will be beneficial in that it has given more time for seasoning and training. When the men leave Quebec they will be better soldiers than if they had been dispatched a month earlier. This will have a profound effect upon their health, since they will be better prepared to take care of themselves when they arrive on the other side of the ocean and enter upon war conditions.

PICTURES shown on this page indicate that the Canadians at Valcartier are cheerful and adaptable. All the reports from the camp indicate that the men are earnest and enthusiastic in their work. The usual sports of camp life, such as football and baseball, are proceeding as usual in the spare hours. Refreshment booths have been established and all sorts of stores can be bought from enterprising merchants who have established themselves at the camp.

The greatest attention is being given to rifle shooting, and so extensive are the ranges provided that it is possible for nearly every man in the camp to shoot. This is of prime importance.