

was born of great training. The men knew how to shoot straight and how to use their bayonets; there were many bloody bayonets at Arleux and Fresnoy. They knew how to use the bomb, the rifle grenade and the machine gun; but, best of all, they knew the most effective combination of these weapons.

"When things do not go as planned, or when new and unexpected features are encountered, the resourcefulness, the self-reliant initiative of the Canadian is most marked. The men are accustomed to solve their own problems every day. Quickly and accurately they size up the situation and find the solution."

No better example of the self-reliant, independent Canadian soldier could be found than General Currie himself. That fact is brought out time and again in tracing his remarkable military career. And surely there's a smack of genius in a man who, at 42, is given the command of 300,000 trained veterans in this greatest of all wars. He is a son of Ontario, but Western Canada, and British Columbia in particular, shares with the eastern province the pride that it felt when Currie was made commander of the Canadians in France; because he grew up and entered military life on the Pacific Coast and, more than that, he's a typical Westerner.

General Currie has a commanding appearance. It is powerful and resolute, but without the slightest trace of harshness. His face is full and ruddy; but his features are clean-cut. Keen-eyed, he has a high, intellectual forehead, with a square-chiselled jaw—the kind that denotes stern, relentless determination. On the field he cuts an imposing figure. He stands well over six feet, and is well proportioned—every inch of him a fighter.

JUST a line as to how General Currie is thought of by the soldiers serving with him. Big-hearted, affable and companionable—a "good mixer," you might say—there's not a more popular man in France than General Currie. There's hardly a Canadian officer who has served abroad but felt even before the appointment was made that the big British Columbian was head and shoulders above the other possibilities. As a matter of fact, with Currie in the running, there were no other real possibilities for the job. He was right in line for it, and the announcement of his succession to Sir Julian Byng was hailed with the utmost satisfaction.

In the army they say that rapid promotion is sure to cause unpopularity. Well, it hasn't happened to Currie, and he's certainly had a taste of fast-traveling during the past three years. And no one holds him in higher regard, both personally and in appreciation of his worth as a soldier, than the Canadian Tommy.

Napperton, near Strathroy, Ont., is the birthplace of Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Currie, C.B., K.C.M.G. It's a little place; so small, in fact, that it isn't even listed in the Canadian Almanac. He is the only son of William Currie and Jane Garner, and was educated at the Strathroy Collegiate Institute. When only eighteen he set out for British Columbia. That was in 1893, and his first occupation was that of a public school teacher at Sidney, Vancouver Island, then little more than a village. Some years later he went to Victoria, and there entered the real estate and financial business as a partner in the firm of Currie & Power. Victoria has the truest claim to General Currie, for there he lived and served in the militia until the outbreak of war. Victoria is still his home, nominally speaking, although Lady Currie is now in England.

This, briefly outlines his history in the militia; Enlisted in 5th Regiment, Canadian Garrison Artillery, Victoria, as gunner, 1897; received commission as lieutenant, 1900; assumed command of No. 1 Company, 1901; promoted to captaincy, 1902; major, 1906; lieutenant-colonel in command of whole regiment, 1909; transferred to newly-organized 50th Highlanders of Canada on formation, becoming commanding officer, 1913. During his command of the 5th Regi-

ment, that unit achieved a wonderful record in competition with all other garrison artillery corps of the Dominion.

When the call went out for volunteers in August, 1914, General Currie, then a lieutenant-colonel, was among the first to respond. Only a few days after war's declaration he was offered the command of a brigade with the rank of brigadier-general. Holding

that post, he trained with the First Canadian Contingent at Valcartier and Salisbury Plains. He went to France as the commanding officer of the 2nd Infantry Brigade, composed of the 5th, 7th, 8th and 10th Battalions. The brigade saw some of the hardest fighting and was in the thick of it at Ypres in April, 1915, where the stand of the Canadians "saved the situation," and thrilled the Empire.

General Currie's conduct in that engagement did not pass unrecognized. The King made him a Commander of the Order of the Bath, while France conferred upon him the Legion of Honour and the Croix de Commander.

At the battle of St. Julian General Currie's brigade held 2,500 yards of trenches. German poison gas forced the 3rd Brigade, entrenched close by, to retire.

It was written of Currie for his part in that action that "in the very crisis of this immense struggle he held his line of trenches from Thursday at 5 o'clock to Sunday afternoon. And on Sunday he had not abandoned his trenches. There were none left. They had been obliterated by the artillery. He withdrew his undefeated troops from the fragments of his field fortifications, and the hearts of his men were as completely unbroken as the parapets of his trenches were completely broken."

In September, 1915, he succeeded General Alderson as commander of the First Canadian Division, and since that time has proved himself just as skillful in offensive operations as he was when attacked by superior numbers at Ypres.

In a recent letter to Premier Brewster he said: "We must and shall win. The Lord has not brought about the alliance of the English-speaking peoples that they may be overthrown."

## A Boy's Hero

By BRITTON B. COOKE

THIS is about a new song for Canadian cradles. I don't know the words nor the tune, but I have met the theme—in France—and sat through a thunder storm with his mother up in the township of Adelaide in the county of Middlesex, Ontario. It is the story of General Sir Arthur Currie, Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian forces in France. He might well become a household tradition in Canada. Here is a Canadian born, Canadian bred—a real Canadian who has done something to fire the hearts and quicken the souls of little men and women (and older ones, too, for that matter).

The splendid thing about General Currie is that not all the King's horses nor all the King's men could ever make him anything else than a Canadian.

In the early part of September, 1915, when the first party of Canadian newspapermen visited the Canadian lines in France, there was only one Canadian division. It was under the command of General Alderson, an able and amiable little English fighting cock. General Currie, of Victoria, B.C., was then in command of one of the Canadian brigades and held a third of Canada's four mile front opposite Messines, south of Ypres. Turner and Mercer were his colleagues in charge of the other Canadian brigades. Mercer and Turner were both held in the very highest esteem by the British War Office and by the British and French officers beside them

on the firing line. They had rendered excellent service even then. But for some curious reason the name which everywhere was dinned into the ears of the visiting Canadian newspapermen, was Currie. English officers spoke of him as though he were a new sort of being. They spoke of him with that curious mixture of enthusiasm and reserve with which the English officer usually treats a subject which inspires him, but of which he is still just a little bit uncertain. It was everybody's secret that this big husky Canadian, with the baby pink face and the blue eyes and slow, smooth, bellowing voice, was to be in command of the second Canadian Division which was just then being organized. A few days after the newspaper men were back in London, the appointment was confirmed.

In the meantime we had seen Currie. He had his headquarters in a long low farm-house that had been badly mauled by German shells. Under a wrecked roof repaired with sandbags was the office from which the activities of Currie's brigade were directed. The peasant family still lived in the cellar of another part of the house, and still tended their fields—dotted here and there with patches of graves. There was a sow and the peasant girl's bird in a wooden cage—and the seltzer was made from greenish pump water.

NO place except Canada, I venture to think, produces such voices as Currie's, or such tremendous easy-moving bodies. He met the newspapermen with a smile and a great outstretched hand. The gesture was something like that of a popular preacher shaking hands with the little children on their way out of the church. But the voice was the great thing. It seemed to come from illimitable depths, rolling up smooth and musical, kind and yet full of the ring of confidence and authority.

Alderson—a kindly host—had been quick, staccato, delicate in his manner of speech. Mercer and Turner had the tongues of Canadian citymen—and eastern ones at that. Currie had all that delightful ringing drawl of the Ontario farmer who has gone west and lived on good terms with his digestive organs. It suggested at once—poise! Unlimited balance! Cool judgment that could never be upset under any or all circumstances. One could not imagine Currie ever being anything but humorously calm, steadily good-natured even in the midst of an enemy barrage.

The very bombardment that had wrecked the roof over Currie's head failed to disturb his equilibrium, so we were told. Officers who saw Brigade headquarters being "strafed," and who saw the roof blown in over Currie's head, whispered among themselves that that would be the last of Currie. But it wasn't. He emerged—not smiling, perhaps, for that would have indicated bravado—but as calm, and smooth and pink as ever, and with all his officers beside him, unhurt. The day the newspapermen first visited him

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As He Was Lately.



As He Used to Be.