



THE MUSKOKA WILDCATS, 122ND BATTALION, ON THEIR GREAT RECRUITING TREK THROUGH MUSKOKA. TAKEN AT PORT CARLING.

# THOSE MUSKOKA WILDCATS

*Short Story of a 90 per cent Canadian-born Battalion who Won the Championship of the good old Canadian Game of Lacrosse at Camp Borden*

**P**UT it to the tune of "John Brown's Body." Picture a Battalion marching in sixes and sevens. Imagine the brass band in front playing "The British Grenadiers," and the bugle band a few yards back blowing "We're in the army now." Think of 850 lusty-lunged youths and thirty officers shouting or singing in one grand discord of joy,

"Our battalion number is a hundred and twenty-two, Our battalion number is a hundred and twenty-two, Our battalion number is a hundred and twenty-two, As we go marching along. Glory, glory, hallelujah, Glory, glory, etc., etc."

Then you might have a small idea of the triumphal procession of the 122nd Battalion, of Muskoka, through the main streets of Camp Borden one afternoon not long ago.

Why such indecorous unmilitary behaviour?

Just behind the band was the Battalion motor-truck. In the truck was the lacrosse team of the 122nd Battalion, and in the hands of the Captain of the team was a huge silver cup, donated by Sir Adam Beck, and emblematic of the lacrosse championship of Camp Borden.

Many a hard fought game the boys had played to reach the finals, and many a splendid team went down to defeat before them. On the season's play their opponents scored 7 goals. The lads from Muskoka scored 45. In their soldiers' league they had met and vanquished the pick of Canadian athletes, for any athlete worthy of the name is in khaki to-day.

The score of the final game was 5-0.

By Jove, I was almost forgetting! Gentlemen of the Officers' Mess—three cheers for the 147th, of Grey county . . . and a tiger!

Charlie Querrie and Jimmie Murphy handled the game to perfection. Feeling was tense and the field was literally thronged with the two Battalions and innumerable supporters. The "rooting" was a revelation. Querrie, writing in the Toronto News, stated that he had seen hundreds of lacrosse matches in the United States and Canada, but had never seen one fought with such spirit and a feeling of fair play at this game. It speaks volumes for military discipline that with excitement at fever heat, the six thousand soldier spectators never once encroached on the playing field, though there was not even a rope to restrain them. There's something in the army system after all. But how the six thousand yelled! Any man of the 122nd who couldn't show evidence of a sore throat after the game was looked upon as a renegade. As for the Chaplain, known officially as Captain Marshall, but affectionately designated "Charlie" after the immortal fil-

By **LIEUTENANT A. B. BAXTER**

magician—I know he won't be in shape for Divine service for at least two weeks. Too bad Sir Sam wasn't there to see his old game and what a really magnificent camp is Camp Borden.

I saw our smallest drummer solemnly collect two dollars from their smallest bugler, immediately after the game. I noted Trollope, of the Signallers, who is about as communicative as a clam with an impediment in its speech, solemnly pocket \$10 presented to him by a lugubrious Machine Gunner of the 147th. Captain MacDonald, our M. O., stood eight of us treat at the canteen on his winnings, and—but I daren't go any higher. I rather imagine, though, that the Chaplain was the only man in the 122nd who hadn't backed the team to win, and somehow I don't feel too sure of "Charlie."

**A**FTER all, a game is only a game, but after the criticism levelled against the Canadian-born generally, it is refreshing to think that the grand old Canadian game of lacrosse still thrives, and that the Camp Borden championship was won by a battalion where over ninety per cent. are men who were born in Canada.

The 122nd is the most Canadian battalion of them all—lumber-jacks, bushwhackers, soldiers of fortune, sons of farmers, bank clerks, and no less than four preachers in the ranks. No officer could ask for better men behind him "when the guns begin to play."

Muskoka is popularly supposed to be a watery district, where the tired businessman spends his week-ends and where the feminine portion of his family display elegant bathing costumes and carry on violent flirtations. Muskoka is also regarded in Pennsylvania as a Pittsburgh watering resort. In fact, around Beaumaris one hears American spoken much oftener than English.

Muskoka in the winter? No one gave it a thought. They put it away with moth balls in the closets of their memories. Yet Muskoka has sent over a hundred men into the trenches and eight hundred more are waiting at Camp Borden for the order to move overseas.

Lt.-Col. Donald M. Grant, a soldier-barrister of Huntsville, is Muskoka's miracle man. Last December he was in command of a Simcoe battalion, with headquarters at Barrie. He had raised six hundred men and had perfected his organization for procuring the remainder. He received an order to go to Muskoka and raise a battalion there. Almost any other man would have thrown up the sponge. Col. Grant threw a few belongings together and journeyed

to Huntsville. An orderly room was established. Captain Hampton Jory followed him from Barrie and took over the Quartermaster's Department with a genial thoroughness born of long military experience. Everybody helped Colonel Grant—they wanted to make his failure in Muskoka as easy on him as possible.

Company headquarters were established in Bracebridge and Gravenhurst, as well as Huntsville. Platoon headquarters were arranged in Port Carling and Utterson. Equipment began to pour in rapidly—recruits came in—not so rapidly. It was a hard, thankless task. No one but a Scotchman with a will like Gibraltar would have stuck it out. Incidentally there was Mrs. Grant, who is a soldier's wife in every sense of the word.

Recruiting (that strange Anglo-Saxon fetish of asking a man to do what he should be ordered to do) occupied practically all the time.

Parties went far into the woods and told the lumber men how things stood with the British Empire. Some of them did not know that England was at war, and that Canada was therefore at war also. Indians, half-breeds, pure descendants from the mighty Ojibways, young Canucks from the farms—they drifted in by twos and threes. Few of them had ever seen a soldier before, some of them could neither read nor write; but almost any man-jack of them could pop over a deer at long range. Captain Rixon, of A Company, known to us "subs" as "The Old Dog," began to teach the strangely assorted crew the mysteries of forming fours. Lieutenant Bobby Milton arrived from Porcupine to help him. The only reason I can give for the nom de militaire "Bobby" is that Milton's real name is Charles H.

The blustery winter winds swept over the rocky hills and besieged Huntsville with overwhelming forces of deep white snow, until the whole district became ice-bound. Still the 122nd went on, for the King had called for men.

**T**HE question of officers became of vital importance. Scott Waldie, of Toronto, widely known for his warm personality and as the son-in-law of the Hon. A. E. Kemp, took charge of B Company at Bracebridge. Captain Waldie was a lumber magnate and he knew his men. He could have had a high rank in almost any Toronto battalion, but he threw in his lot where he thought he could do his bit to best advantage. He is in the army for what he can give—not what he can get. He has a brother buried in France.

Captain Ramsden journeyed from Midland to take command of C Company, at Gravenhurst, where he showed good judgment by enlisting all the lacrosse players in the town. Lt. Harry Reed, of the 48th