

Hastings Park—a Military Depot

The Exhibition has drawn many thousands of people to Hastings Park, but many thousands of people had never seen the Park until drawn there by ties of kinship, their kith and kin being mobilized there for overseas service. Here at Hastings Park the flower of manhood received their first lessons in warfare. Here they were metamorphosed from raw recruits to finished soldiers of the King. Here met the son of the laborer, mechanic, farmer, with the young men from the banks, from the law offices, from the shops and stores, from the universities, answering the call of patriotic duty. Many of these young men from Hastings Park have been decorated by the King for acts of heroism and bravery, some have ascended the ladder of military promotion for meritorious service. Some now wear an empty sleeve or move on crutches, and also, alas, many sleep in Flanders Fields where poppies grow. The glory of their heroic sacrifices runs from shell riven battlefields across the Channel, through "Merrie" England, across the Atlantic death-trap to peaceful Canada, across her mighty prairies and Rockies to Hastings Park.

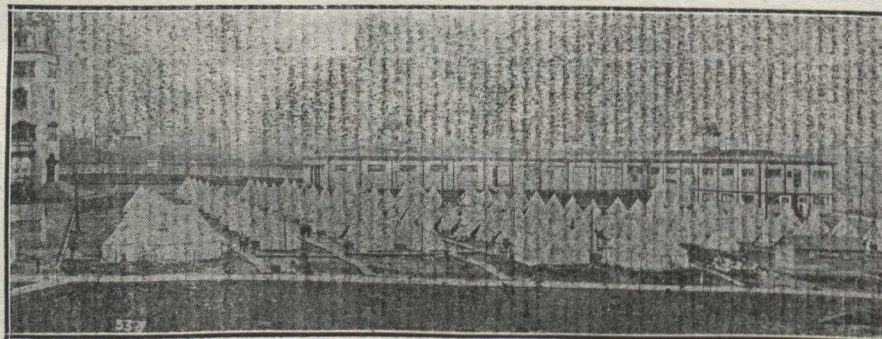
Yes, Hastings Park for upwards of four years has been a great Military cradle, a great Military school, from whence have graduated a class of men who have won honor, fame and glory on the gory battle fields of the greatest war the world has ever seen. Written into history are the heroic deeds and prowess of brave men down through all the ages. When the history of the Great War comes to be written it will be shown that the spirit of chivalry still lives, that brave men still live, and still die for the honor and glory of the good old flag, and that in this far flung outpost of the Empire the bravest of the brave were found.

Hastings Park will ever bring fond remem-

brances to many bereaved souls. It was here they periodically went to visit their dear ones training for the task of their lives. It was here that many last "Good-byes" were said. It was here the pangs of separation were experienced.

When war broke out in August 1914 the Militia took charge of Hastings Park. The then Minister of Militia, Sir Sam Hughes, came to the Coast to settle details of mobilization and arranged with the Exhibition authorities for the use of the Grounds. The first year of the war the Exhibition was held with mobilized troops upon the grounds, the second year it happened that the troops were training in summer camp at Vernon. The third year the troops were accommodated at New Westminster leaving the Grounds free for holding the Exhibition, and the fourth year, the number of troops being small at that time remained in camp upon the Grounds, the Agricultural Building and part of the Grounds being set apart for their occupation, so that Exhibition work right through the war has not been suspended. The encouragement of better and greater production being the primary objects of the Association, it was realized that the operations of that body was war work, and so the training of troops and the encouragement of food production went on side by side.

In the building up of an exhibition the wildest imagination of the promoters would never have conjured in their minds the establishment here of a great military training school. The value to the business people of the city of Vancouver was great. For the first two years it is roughly estimated that one million dollars per year was spent here. The circulation of this war money in the City meant good business for business houses. Now the war is over, Hastings Park should not be forgotten.



Hastings Park Camp