

SIR JOHN FRENCH DID NOT CONDEMN THE ROSS RIFLE

Detailed Report on that Much Criticized Weapon Laid Before Parliament—Chambers of Rifle were Enlarged as were Also Those of Lee-Enfield to Handle English Ammunition.

Special to The Standard.

Ottawa, Jan. 23.—The first official report from France dealing with the Ross rifle, dated June 19, 1915, and signed by Sir John French, in this report the then British commander-in-chief recounts difficulties experienced with the Ross at the battle of Ypres, explains that the first Canadian division was re-armed with the Lee-Enfield because of complaints from the jamming, requested the war office to send army council experts to France to make tests of the rifle with British ammunition, and went on to say:

"I have never considered the Ross rifle nor have I any sufficient data to justify me in doing so. Owing to the difficulty at present experienced in turning out rifles in sufficient numbers for our requirements, I shall most heartily welcome an authoritative statement which will carry conviction to the men that their apprehensions are unfounded, or what may possibly be found more easy of attainment, viz, a slight alteration in the chamber of the rifle which will better adapt it for use with our British ammunition."

Not Condemned.

Thus three months after Ypres Sir John French was of opinion that there was no reason to condemn the Ross rifle as a service weapon, and thought that a slight alteration to its chamber would render it effective with British ammunition.

As a result of the report and recommendation of Sir John French the chambers of the Ross rifle in existence and under manufacture were enlarged (as were also the chambers of the Lee-Enfield) and after tests with the British army council in England and France, the Ross was declared to be satisfactory and continued in use.

Thus according to the correspondence, remained the situation in regard to the Ross rifle up to the early months of 1916. On March 30, 1916, however, Sir Robert Borden undoubtedly in view of further rumors of Ross rifle deficiency, called Sir George Perley, Dominion high commissioner in London, in an effort to have Canadian troops armed with the improved Lee-Enfield.

The Lee-Enfield.

The Prime Minister mentioned that a large supply of Lee-Enfields were being manufactured for the British government in the United States and expressed a desire that a portion of this order be allotted to the Canadian forces. The reply of Sir George Perley, called after he had several interviews with the British authorities, was to the effect that the British government could not spare a single rifle and that it desired that the Canadian government should not place a contract for rifles in the United States, because of possible interference with a badly needed British supply.

So, long before it had been suggested by government critics or anybody else that the Ross rifle should be discarded, Sir Robert Borden, determined that in such a grave matter there should be no room even for a doubt, was doing everything in his power to have Canadian forces armed with the best rifle available but was rendered helpless, as already said, for the simple and all-sufficient reason that another rifle was not to be had.

Again, on May 15, Sir Robert Borden had a message transmitted to Sir Douglas Haig, the newly appointed British commander-in-chief, informing him that after conference with General Hughes it was decided to urge that further tests be made of the Ross rifle under conditions as experienced at the front, the Dominion government being anxious to have a final decision upon the merits of the rifle. The message added that the Dominion government was prepared to leave the question of the desirability of the further use of the Ross to the judgment of the British commander-in-chief.

Cabled Robertson.

On June 5 the importance of an early and final report upon the Ross was again urged by Sir Robert Borden in the following cable to Sir William Robertson, chief of the British staff:

"By reason of rumors of dissatisfaction with Ross rifle I held consultation with Gen. Hughes on 15th May and sent unofficial message to commander-in-chief that we were prepared to leave matter to his judgment after making all necessary tests of both rifles under such conditions as are experienced at the front. We suggested that making tests should be of equal experience. Ross rifle is only arm we are equipped to produce in Canada at present and we believe it efficient if properly used, but are content to abide by the judgment of commander-in-chief after their thorough investigation and adequate tests. We realize absolute necessity of two conditions, first, that men shall be armed with thoroughly efficient rifle; second, that their confidence in such rifle shall be unshaken. Please let me have your judgment as to the proper course to pursue."

Sir William Robertson replied to this cable through the Colonial Secretary, on June 10, that the Prime Minister's request for an opinion on the Ross rifle had been referred to Sir Douglas Haig, and that his reply would be to be awaited before a definite decision could be made.

Receiving no word up to June 24, Sir Robert Borden again pressed for a report. In a cable to Sir George Perley he pointed out that the Dominion before placing any further orders for rifles for the new Canadian forces, must have an authoritative report upon the Ross. The cable requested Sir George Perley to inquire whether any report on the Ross rifle had been made and concluded: "If not it should be made immediately for our guidance."

Sir George's Letter.

In pursuance of this request Sir George Perley wrote Sir William Robertson, British chief of staff, pressing upon him the necessity of a decision as to whether the Canadian troops at the front should continue to use the Ross rifle, and emphasizing that the Dominion government was prepared to stand by the decision of the British commander-in-chief. The letter concluded:

"During the last six months the Canadian government has had under consideration the giving of a further order for a large number of rifles to be delivered in 1917, but this has been delayed on account of rumors of dissatisfaction with the Ross rifle, referred to in the Prime Minister's cable to you on June 6. The time has now, however, arrived when an immediate decision must be made and the Canadian government hopes that the war office will have a thorough and reliable report regarding the merits of the rifles on which such decision could be based. If the Ross is really not the best for active service work, or if our troops have lost confidence in its efficiency, we would certainly not keep manufacturing it. I ask, therefore, that the war office advise us fully and give us their opinion regarding this."

As a result of this urgent request for immediate decision the war office on July 3 forwarded Sir George Perley for the Dominion government copies of two letters, dated May 28, 1916, and June 21, 1916, received from Sir Douglas Haig. They were to the effect that after extensive tests, made at the request of the Dominion authorities, the commander-in-chief was of the opinion that the Ross rifle was less dependable than the Lee-Enfield, and that, providing a sufficient supply of Lee-Enfields were available, the three Canadian divisions should be re-armed with them.

A few days later the troops from the Dominion were supplied with Lee-Enfields, and thus ended the active war career of the Ross rifle.

Indigestion Resulted From an Inactive Liver

The Bowels Became Constipated and the Whole Digestive System Upset.

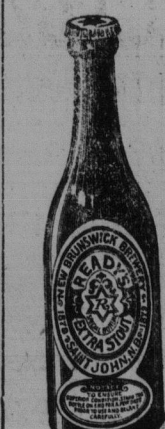
With many people constipation becomes a habit. And it is a dangerous habit which is certain sooner or later to cause serious disease.

"Daily movement of the bowels" is the first and most important rule of health. When the liver becomes torpid the flow of bile into the intestines is stopped and the bowels become constipated. But you can readily overcome this condition by using Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills.

There is no treatment obtainable which so promptly awakens the activity of the liver and bowels and thereby corrects derangements of the digestive system.

Brook, Herbert Doherty, of Beaver Brook, Albert Co., N. B., writes: "I can truthfully say that Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are a great medicine for constipation. I have suffered from constipation ever since I can remember, but got to using Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills and was benefited that I began to study this malady. I found that the indigestion resulted from a bad case of inactive liver, and as soon as I got the liver working right I didn't have any stomach trouble or indigestion. I cannot praise this medicine too highly, and would advise anyone suffering from indigestion or constipation to use Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. My husband also claims that these pills have done him more good than any medicine he ever used. You are at liberty to use this letter."

Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills positively relieve and cure torpid liver, constipation, biliousness, indigestion, backache and kidney disease. Put it to the test. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box, all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Ltd., Toronto.



"Makes good digestion wait upon appetite and health upon both."

Correspondents' Corner

APOHAQUI

Apoahqui, Jan. 23.—Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Hicks were in St. John last week to meet their son, Pto. E. G. Hicks, who arrived from England the early part of the week.

Pto. Hicks was attached to the 104th Battalion and went overseas in June last with that unit. Soon after he was taken ill with appendicitis and subsequently was operated on. However, his case was an exceptionally serious one and his convalescence tedious, complications set in which rendered a second operation necessary, from which he has not yet fully recovered. After spending some months in hospitals he was invalided home and at present he occupies a cot in the Convalescent Hospital for Soldiers in St. John, being unable to continue his journey to his home. His many friends earnestly hope for him an ultimate recovery.

Mrs. Matilda Parlee left last week to visit friends and relatives in Boston and Lowell. Mrs. Parlee will be the guest of her daughter, Mrs. E. F. Parlee, during her stay in Lowell.

Miss Greta Connelly spent Wednesday last in St. John. Mr. and Mrs. Arlie T. Folkins of Calgary Alta., are leaving today for their home in the west after spending a few weeks at Mr. Folkins' parental home, guests of Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Folkins. During their stay Mr. and Mrs. Folkins have received much social attention from their many friends and relatives, who regret their visit being so brief.

Mrs. Harley S. Jones and little Miss Marjorie Jones spent a few days of last week in Hampton, guest of Mrs. Jones' sister, Mrs. M. H. Parlee. Miss Beulah Hicks spent Saturday in St. John, going to the city to visit her brother, Pto. E. G. Hicks, who is a patient in the Convalescent Hospital for returned soldiers.

Miss Mary Cooper is the guest of her cousin, Miss Greta Connelly. Miss Cooper has been spending a few weeks in St. John, guest of her brother, Wm. Cooper, and Mrs. Cooper, and is on route to her home at Point Wolfe, Albert county.

Mr. and Mrs. Neil Johnson have received news of the safe arrival of their son, Robert J. Johnson, in Kingston, Jamaica. Mr. Johnson took passage for that city to assume his duties with the Bank of Nova Scotia, having been promoted and transferred to the branch in Kingston. His voyage, though pleasant, was uneventful and its ending was marked by a happy meeting with his friend and associate, G. E. Connelly, who is manager of the B. N. S. at Spanish Town, Jamaica, and who, too, extended the glad hand to the friend from his home town.

Among those who were here last week to attend the funeral of the late Wilfred Fenwick were Rev. F. H. Wentworth, Messrs. A. J. Fenwick, Talmage Fenwick and Roy Fenwick of St. John; C. W. Weyman, Hampton, and Sheriff S. A. McLeod of Sussex.

MOSS GLEN

Moss Glen, Jan. 22.—Mrs. E. H. Merritt, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Merritt were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Webb more recently.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Bowland are receiving congratulations on the arrival of a son at their home at this place. The many friends of Mr. Ellsworth Puddington are sorry to learn that he is confined to his home with pleurisy and pneumonia. Dr. O. R. Peters, Rothesay, is in attendance.

The many friends of Mrs. John Smith are pleased to learn that she is improving after her recent illness.

Miss H. E. Puddington spent the week-end the guest of her parents at this place, returning to Somerville.

Miss E. MacLean, St. John, who spent two weeks the guest of Mr. and Mrs. N. N. Puddington, has returned to St. John.

Miss Pearl Sherwood, Upham, is the guest of her sister, Mrs. W. Bowland. Mr. L. Merritt, Rothesay, was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Merritt, recently.

Private Roy P. Brien of the 236th Kilties, who has been home on a short furlough, has returned to Fredericton.

CHANCERY SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that there will be sold by Public Auction, at Chubb's Corner, corner of Princess and Prince William streets, in the City of Saint John, in the Province of New Brunswick, on Wednesday, the twenty-eighth day of March, A. D. 1917, at the hour of twelve o'clock noon, pursuant to the directions of a certain decree for Foreclosure and Sale, made in the Supreme Court of the Province of New Brunswick, on the sixteenth day of January, A. D. 1917, in an action wherein Robert Matthew, executor and trustee of the Estate of James D. Fowler, deceased, is Plaintiff, and Union Investments Limited, is Defendant, with the approval of the undersigned Master of the Supreme Court of the Province of New Brunswick, the following described freehold property, lands and premises mentioned and described in said Decree for Foreclosure and Sale, as "All those four several lots and parcels of land situated in Victoria Ward, in the City of the City and County of Saint John, described in the Deed or Conveyance thereof from the late Ward Chipman to Stephen Whitaker, recorded in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the City and County of Saint John, in Book No. 3, No. 3 of Records, pages 427, 428 and 429, bounded and described as follows:—That is to say, commencing at an angle formed by the intersection of the Northern line of the City Road with the Eastern line of the City Road leading towards Gilbert's Mills as now laid out, thence from the said angle running Easterly on the said Northern line of the City Road for a distance of 135 feet to Marsh street; thence at right angles Northward on the Western line of Marsh street one hundred and forty (140) feet; thence at right angles Westerly one hundred and twenty-two (122) feet, or to the road leading to Gilbert's Mills, and thence Southerly on the said road to the said angle, to the place of beginning, the said lot of land hereby conveyed known and distinguished on the plan of building lots in the City of Saint John and Parish of Portland, on the North and South sides of the City Road near the Abolition belonging to the estate of the late Honorable William Hazen by the number one (1), two (2), three (3) and six (6), the said four lots of land having been subsequently conveyed by William Jack, Esquire, as Barrister, to Catherine Ranney, since deceased, Executrix and Trustee of the last will of William Parker Ranney, by Deed, recorded in the office of the said Registrar by the No. 56157, Libro 15 of Records, folio 566, 567, 568 and 569. Save and except so much and such portion of the said four several lots of land and premises herebefore described as was heretofore sold and conveyed by Lewis J. Almon as Trustee of the estate of the late William Parker Ranney to John Murray, by indenture bearing date the twelfth day of March, A. D. 1894, and recorded in the office of the said Registrar by the No. 56157, Libro 15 of Records, folio 566, 567, 568 and 569. Save and except so much and such portion of the said four several lots of land and premises herebefore described as was heretofore sold and conveyed by Lewis J. Almon as Trustee of the estate of the late William Parker Ranney to John Murray, by indenture bearing date the twelfth day of March, A. D. 1894, and recorded in the office of the said Registrar by the No. 56157, Libro 15 of Records, folio 566, 567, 568 and 569. 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