

Research article

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Abstract

This article is an enquiry into the voluntary and part-time nature, as well as the Britishness, of the Canadian militia, especially the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM), in an interwar 'nation-in-arms'. Major-General Maurice Pope's insights are revisited through the eyes of regimental histories, print media, memoirs and other sources. After reviewing the role of voluntarism, unpaid service and improved training, three themes will be considered. The first is a type of training known as close-order drill, singled out by Joseph Pope as a mark of English-speaking regimental culture. The creation in 1937 of a Canadian Guards brigade, part of a wider Guards tradition across the British World, ties into a second theme briefly considered: NPAM participation in the royal tour of 1939 in communities across Canada, which merits a more detailed study. Third, there follows a case study of one exemplary but lesser-known interwar officer in Ottawa, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Lisle of the Governor General's Foot Guards, who, like so many men across the country, as well as his civilian day-job, pursued a lifelong part-time army career as a reserve unit officer and realist contributor to the *Canadian Defence Quarterly*.

Keywords Britishness; citizen soldier; civic militarism; conscription; militia; religious loyalism; reservists; volunteerism.

Introduction

When Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King reluctantly visited Canadian troops on their sports day in Aldershot on 23 August 1941, he was greeted by ‘mixed cheers and boos’.¹ He had arrived 40 minutes late,² in the pouring rain. Waiting for him were 10,000 men, ‘the largest single gathering of Canadian troops ever assembled in Britain’. They comprised about one-tenth of the 125,000 soldiers of the First Canadian Corps, Jonathan F. Vance’s ‘Canadian empire’³ in England, and on that day, a rowdy representation of the nation in arms. As the booing resumed, which ‘lasted for several seconds’,⁴ said *The Ottawa Journal*, it ‘was at times ... more voluminous than handclapping and cheering’.⁵ Major Stacey, then a senior historical officer, although himself not present, in an official report downplayed it as a ‘soldier-like lark’. The men ‘were not, of course, on parade at the time’, not formally drawn up. There was some ‘discontent’ among them, having ‘been in this country for some twenty-one months without seeing action’.⁶

The discontent was predictable – had been predicted: at least one cabinet minister, Chubby Power, repeatedly warned the government between 1940 and 1941 not to let the men’s morale suffer through inaction.⁷ The *Journal* was more explicit: ‘some soldiers’, after nearly two years in England, felt that they should have been deployed ‘beside the Australians’,⁸ who had been fighting with the British, Poles and Czechs all year in North Africa and Greece against Italy and Germany, and in the Levant against Vichy France. Mackenzie King acknowledged in his diary ‘the inactivity’ and that ‘it was clear that they were feeling restraint at not getting to the front’ – although contradictorily he professed to believe ‘clearly [the booing] had been organised’ and was ‘unfair and Tory tactics’.⁹ Indeed, the ‘inactivity’ was one more reason for Canada’s soldiers to resent their political leadership. Those who had served in the pre-war Militia knew the painful neglect that the politicians had subjected them to, the ‘pitifully small’ budgets and ‘great restriction in training’.¹⁰ Now, while others fought, Ottawa imposed on the restless nation in arms a protracted *Sitzkrieg*.

The personification of the nation in arms, as a Napoleonic ‘citizen-soldier’ myth,¹¹ imagined community or ‘invented’ tradition,¹² has appealed to chroniclers and cynics alike since the ‘patriotic yeomanry forsook ploughshare and broadaxe, seized sword and musket, and rallied to the standard of Brock’.¹³ As Marc Milner described it, ‘Until the late 1950s’, the army (regular and reserve) remained ‘a traditional “nation in arms,” ready to mobilise, with a sense of “civic duty” or “civic

militarism.”¹⁴ There was little in the tradition that need be invented. The Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) of 1914–19 had been the ‘greatest thing Canada had ever done’, according to Stacey.¹⁵ It was, in a ‘very real sense’, said Vance, ‘the nation in arms, the life-force of Canada transported overseas’,¹⁶ or as James Wood put it more reservedly, ‘real and imagined ... an army of citizen soldiers’.¹⁷ After 1919, and between the wars, the CEF torch fell to the Canadian Militia, comprising the small professional Permanent Active Militia (PAM) and the larger part-time Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM). The NPAM subsisted mostly in numerous small regiments in towns and cities in every part of Canada, English and French, each with their distinctive, locally adapted British traditions and sustained to a certain extent by unpaid voluntary service.

The prevailing public and official mood in the 1930s, amply described elsewhere,¹⁸ was one of ‘apathy’ towards the military, as an unnamed contributor to the *Canadian Defence Quarterly* (CDQ) observed in 1935.¹⁹ ‘In the absence of an immediate crisis,’ wrote C. P. Stacey in 1940, ‘the country’s political leaders, the members of Parliament generally, and the public at large had all been indifferent.’²⁰ The result for the army was, as one senior officer put it, the ‘familiar policy of partly trained Militia, inadequately equipped, out of balance, lacking modern arms’, what Stanley called ‘an army on the “cheap”’.²¹

The interwar General Staff and most serving officers considered themselves realists: they expected that a second war involving Germany, Russia and the Western powers would come sooner or later. Their view contradicted the prevailing spirit of pacifism, appeasement and funk, even if the British strategy by 1938 was ‘to play for time’ while rearming.²² The realist Permanent Force and part-time Militia believed that in the event of war, adequate numbers of trained officers and men would be an imperative need.

Accordingly, from 1937 to 1939, the Canadian government pursued an ‘attempted rearmament’ as proposed by the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Andy McNaughton, before he stepped down in 1935. As Stacey, Stephen J. Harris, Britton MacDonald and a number of regimental historians have recounted, the realists at National Defence had the odds stacked against them, with anti-war public opinion and pacifist organisations opposing rearmament and defence planning,²³ emboldening sceptical civilian officials who, particularly at External Affairs showed ‘disdain’²⁴ and a ‘long-standing anti-imperial and nationalistic bias’ where ‘imperial defence’ was concerned.²⁵

The NPAM, designated on the outbreak of the Second World War as the ‘Canadian Army (Reserve)’,²⁶ was mostly made up of partially

trained soldiers – part-time reservists who served during their leisure hours, frequently unpaid, relying heavily on the voluntary spirit to train, keep abreast of modern tactics and uphold regimental traditions in the communities where they resided across English and French Canada.²⁷ Despite ‘miserly budgets’ and ‘training deficiencies’, inadequate government support and with little public sympathy,²⁸ reserve units across Canada were forced to find innovative ways to recruit, train and retain troops through the interwar years. They could do so because they felt motivated: they ‘had a hunch in spite of the popular trend, that they’d be needed once again’.²⁹

The NPAM was described by Major-General Maurice Pope as an organisation ‘evolved by Anglo-Saxons’ and ‘well-suited’ to the particular ‘genius’ of English-speaking Canadians. A member of the General Staff and a bicultural Quebecer, Pope was uniquely positioned to evaluate the interwar army, which he described as ‘British through and through with only minor differences imposed upon us by purely local conditions’.³⁰ Innovations were under way. In addition to a streamlined and, it was hoped, modernised reserve army, the restructured NPAM would include a Brigade of Canadian Guards, formed in 1937 and modelled on the United Kingdom’s renowned Guards Brigade (the Household Division), although the Canadian ‘brigade’ would not be an operational unit; it would exist only for ceremonial tasks³¹ – as it were, the citizen-soldier nation-in-arms trooping the colour.³²

Pope, too, was a realist and called the ‘attempted rearmament’ a ‘return to reality’.³³ Despite the lack of a serious procurement programme, training and education went on at every level, and once Canadian troops were required to deploy overseas, the interwar voluntarism of the Militia proved its value: in 1940, they provided ‘the majority of commissioned officers and warrant officers to the CASF’, the initial expeditionary Canadian Active Service Force, in which the reserve’s ‘partially-trained officers, NCOs and soldiers’ formed what Stacey called an ‘invaluable nucleus’.³⁴ And ‘by May 1945, the NPAM provided three of the five division commanders’.³⁵

The interwar struggle to maintain ‘readiness’ was Commonwealth-wide.³⁶ Leo Amery, a former Colonial Secretary, excluded like Winston Churchill from cabinet after 1931, lobbied for reform and investment in the British Army.³⁷ In Canada, the groundwork for Defence Schemes 1 to 4 was built on Sutherland ‘Buster’ Brown’s earlier mobilisation and expeditionary plans before he was pushed out of the Department of National Defence in 1933.³⁸ A realist tradition can also be traced in Australia and New Zealand.³⁹ The efficiency of the British and Canadian army reserves has been compared.⁴⁰

Britishness was a prominent topic in the papers presented at the British World conferences of 1998 (London) and 2002 (Cape Town),⁴¹ and in a wide-ranging series of books, covering many topics across the imperial 'big tent', such as networks, missions, churches, media, universities, scouting, migration and war.⁴² Voluntary activity has been addressed in work on social organisations such as the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire.⁴³ Marc Milner celebrated the Canadianisation of the 'too-British' Navy, while for Peter Archambault, Britishness might be a virtue if Horatio Nelson were the model.⁴⁴ Britishness need not work against Canadianness: the 'shared English-Canadian national identity' born of the CEF, wrote Patrick Brennan, was both Canadian and British.

The result was complementary and hybrid, 'clearly displayed' in the voluntarism and civic mindedness of interwar former Corps officers, Brennan wrote,⁴⁵ indicating a certain *noblesse oblige*.⁴⁶ Such qualities could be described as universal. Addressing the governor general's Foot Guards in Ottawa, the Earl of Bessborough, the viceroy from 1931 to 1935, spoke of 'service' and 'loyalty to a common cause' and compared participation in the NPAM to 'chivalry' and giving 'inspiration' to the young.⁴⁷

This article is an enquiry into the voluntary and part-time nature as well as the Britishness of the NPAM as an interwar 'nation-in-arms'. First, Major-General Maurice Pope's insights will be revisited through the eyes of regimental histories, print media, memoirs and other sources. After reviewing the role of voluntarism, unpaid service and improvised training, three related themes will be considered. The first is a type of training known as close-order drill, singled out by Pope as a mark of English-speaking regimental culture. The creation in 1937 of a Canadian Guards brigade, part of a wider Guards tradition across the British World, ties into a second theme briefly considered: NPAM participation in the royal tour of 1939 in communities across Canada, which merits further study. Third, there follows a case study of one exemplary but lesser known interwar officer in Ottawa, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Lisle of the Governor General's Foot Guards, who, like so many men across the country, over and above his civilian day-job pursued a lifelong part-time army career as a reserve unit officer and realist contributor to *CDQ*.

Future researchers will no doubt add much to the preliminary findings of voluntary service and sacrifice, particularly scholars with direct access to local records, regimental archives, newspapers, correspondence and memorabilia.

Maurice Pope's memorandum

Major-General Pope's memorandum to his chief, Lieutenant General Andy McNaughton, was not primarily about English Canadian characteristics. Entitled 'The French Canadian and the N.P.A.M.', it was an attempt to explain nuances in 'French' military proclivities, which Pope contrasted with those of Anglophones.⁴⁸ Contemporary observers had been struck by the notable lack of a Francophone presence, for example, at the recent Conference of Defence Associations meeting. Francophones were, as is well known, less inclined to serve in the military and less likely to volunteer.⁴⁹ That was true even though the army was the service traditionally most open to Francophones.⁵⁰ But among those who did serve, the 'French' in the city corps, according to Pope, believed on principle that if Ottawa wanted a better trained Militia, then Ottawa should fund more training days in the year. 'Their view is that if the government thinks more training is needed,' Pope wrote, 'it should pay for 20 days instead of 12.'⁵¹ The implication was that while French Canadians were less inclined to serve and train for no pay, English Canadian NPAM officers were willing to do so in order to provide training opportunities for the men.

Pope's attitude has been described as 'sympathetic' if 'paternalistic'.⁵² Beginning with a historical survey from 1608 to the Conquest of French Canada in 1759, he outlined the qualities that enabled the French-speaking 'race' to survive and flourish, developing in due course an 'outlook' that 'is somewhat more local than is perhaps desirable'. The French Canadian 'is fully seized of ... the duty of bearing arms in the defence of the State', he said, but being in the 1930s 'unaware of any menace to their security', was 'not conscious of, and would perhaps be unwilling to admit, any obligation arising from Canada's position as a member of the British Empire'. In short, he might serve at home but not abroad. The explanation for this discrepancy was ethnic allegiance: 'The Imperial tie derives its strength largely from sentiment. It is a blood tie, and the French Canadian is not an Anglo-Saxon.' And Pope repeated the point: the 'Frenchman ... be it remembered, is *not* an Anglo-Saxon'.

That the Militia was overwhelmingly Anglo-Protestant in character was par for the course; so was every institution in the old Canada.⁵³ Pope's description contained echoes of the 'militia myth'. The latter was criticised so heavily by Canadianising historians that it may after all be true: Upper Canada did have Loyalist defenders, celebrated by

their descendants to 1914, of whom Carl Berger wrote in *The Sense of Power*,⁵⁴ and doughty yeoman farmers did take up arms for King Alfred. Former Parks Canada historian Robert Henderson has charted how extensive was the militia's role in defeating the Americans in the War of 1812.⁵⁵ Pope's allusion, however, can be better understood as a matter-of-fact comparison of the differing proclivities of Francophones and Anglophones in a 'voluntary system'.⁵⁶ As a document, Pope's memo will interest students of amateur soldiering across the British World, which has a literature of its own.⁵⁷

Pope was the 'best educated' among Canada's General Staff, noted by a prominent cabinet minister for his perceptiveness and 'inquiring mind'. His 'realisation' of the nuances of French Canada 'coloured everything he did', wrote J. W. Pickersgill.⁵⁸ In 'a wholly English-speaking environment' where only 10 per cent of officers were Francophone, Pope was almost as unusual as Léo Lafleche and the half-Irish Georges-P. Vanier. Pope was 'different', wrote J. L. Granatstein, even 'something of an outsider among the khaki', with a sense of politics and the national interest that went beyond purely military concerns, capable of perceiving both English and French Canadian 'points of view'.⁵⁹

Maurice Arthur Pope was a 'hybrid' French-English Canadian, a Roman Catholic, married to a Belgian countess,⁶⁰ and at least a partial example of what Donal Lowry characterised as 'non-British white loyalism' in the context of 'dominant British Protestant-descended elites' in Canada, Australia and South Africa.⁶¹ He did not exactly fit Lowry's description of an 'ethnic outsider': his maternal grandfather was Sir Henri-Thomas Taschereau, the Quebec lawyer, Member of Parliament and judge. His paternal grandfather, William Henry Pope, was a father of confederation from Prince Edward Island. The Wasp background took a turn when his father, Sir Joseph Pope, private secretary to Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, became an intellectual convert to Catholicism,⁶² transforming him into a co-religionist of the Quebec majority.

In remarking on the Britishness of the army reserve, Maurice Pope was not referring to the Militia's well-known flaws, such as what Lieutenant-Colonel John A. English later called its 'ugly hues of political patronage', regimental and 'social club' proclivities (shared with the British Army) or notorious 'resentment, even scorn, of regulars'.⁶³ Rather, Pope was praising the NPAM's qualities as an organisation ideally suited to Canada's geography and 'adequate to her needs', because those needs were 'small'.⁶⁴

Whether the defence needs of a country of 'three and a half million square miles',⁶⁵ with a 250,000-mile coastline, were small may be debated. What is clear is that the Militia, being closer to civilian populations, did provide opportunities for people of varying backgrounds, professions and trades to serve part-time in a national institution with a unified purpose. The model enjoyed widespread acceptance. 'A Citizen Militia' was, McNaughton wrote, 'the proper type of Land Defence Force for Canada', with the permanent element as an 'instructional corps'.⁶⁶ Their predominantly 'English' culture, Pope believed, was related to another all-important element in the NPAM's success: that of enthusiasm. The willingness to serve outside work hours and during one's leisure time was characteristic, he added, of the 'hobbyist or amateur in the literal sense'. The keenness of the aficionado 'yields free training in city corps', Pope elaborated, in a context where 'Parliament allots too little training funding'.

Under these conditions, the NPAM's low-key, steady commitment to preparedness, their voluntary part-time military training through the lean times and their realist outlook on imperial defence, stand out even more. In the absence of support and higher training, interwar reserve soldiers, at their own initiative and 'often at their own expense', studied the art and science of war, which they believed would not be a waste of time. In the ranks of the realists may be counted not only the General Staff, but thousands of reserve NPAM officers and soldiers who, like Maurice Pope, 'felt in their innermost thoughts that the nation should not be completely unprepared'.⁶⁷

Regiments and leadership

Regimental historians gave expression to this interwar realism. Admittedly, such writers were sometimes former serving officers during the interwar period or during the war (sometimes both) and regimental pride coloured their interpretation of the events, although they did so with the benefit of hindsight. They knew the sting of public indifference and even scorn towards part-time soldiering, and they could recall bitterly the 'years studded with the scoffing of the ignorant', as the historian of the Halifax Rifles, Lieutenant-Colonel J. Gordon Quigley, wrote in 1960.⁶⁸ Quigley began his officer career as a lieutenant in 1923,⁶⁹ and served as a unit officer during the interwar years. He was later a Halifax city councillor from 1961 to 1967.⁷⁰

The civic-minded spirit of the interwar army reserve was captured in romantic terms by the celebrated novelist Farley Mowat in his 1974 memoir, *The Regiment*. In spite of the neglect and underfunding of Canada's defence, 'There was one hidden weapon,' Mowat wrote. 'One ignored by most of those who calculated military strength, ignored by the very government itself – and yet a weapon infinitely more powerful, and more ready than any in the official armoury.' He wrote:

It was called the Militia.

Now there are not many men who love war ... Hating with a depth of understanding born of bloody experience, these men alone were not deluded by the soft complacency that filled the country in the years between [the wars]. Knowing war for what it was, these men – the few – foresaw the day when they, and their sons and grandsons too perhaps, must needs go out again to battle that the unborn generations might survive.

These were the men of the Militia; to which the 'playtime soldiers' ... belonged.

'It was an army,' Mowat wrote of the local Prince Edward and Hastings Regiment in rural Ontario where he had joined up, 'but one that would have been hard put to it to find enough riflemen for one platoon.'

They were an easy target for sceptics to mock as amateur weekend warriors. To outsiders it might look like play-acting, dressing up as soldiers. Still, Mowat insisted that 'the absurdity was purely superficial'. First, there was no other way to train. Second, 'What mattered was the power of the belief that the Militia was a thing to be preserved in readiness.'⁷¹

Mowat, too, referred to an atmosphere of negative 'propaganda' in Canada, of 'political expediency,' pacifism and 'not a few' citizens sympathetic to fascism. The result was 'starvation' for the Militia, 'no boots, no weapons, no interest, and often no pay'. In spite of this, men turned out 'from the farms and from the shops', even though 'often, there was not even the recompense of the miserly militia pay'.

Their officers laboured unceasingly, giving not only of their time, but of their own pockets to buy boots for the men. Against a growing feeling of apathy, or of outright antipathy, the Regiment survived – stood ready against the day of need ... There were never

many of them ... Play soldiers all, the men of the militia received nothing but the opprobrium of their fellow citizens; yet they endured. They endured the years between [the wars], and because of that, Canada was not utterly impotent when the day of danger came.⁷²

It was frequently observed that regimental officers gave back their pay to cover training costs for the rank and file. This began in the 1920s and continued into the 1930s. Britton MacDonald wrote in his unpublished 2009 PhD thesis that in 1927, '402 of the Militia's 870 units' voluntarily 'turned over part or the whole of their pay to their unit'. Members 'gave their time without remuneration' and no soldier was 'coerced' into attending training, giving 'new definition to the term "volunteer service"'.⁷³ The regimental historian of the 8th Canadian Hussars in New Brunswick wrote that men 'were willing to serve voluntarily and raise funds to keep the Regiment active'.⁷⁴ So widespread was this practice that McNaughton at headquarters became aware of their 'self-sacrificing' spirit.⁷⁵ As MacDonald wrote, 'In order to be an efficient member of the NPAM, one sacrificed time and money for a duty, an organisation, or friendships that they deemed worthy. Only the tireless and selfless efforts of the men in the NPAM regiments ensured these units survived a hostile political and public climate.'⁷⁶

The 'volunteer idea' had a long history. Voluntarism, staff historian C. P. Stacey wrote in his 1940 study, *The Military Problems of Canada*, had animated the Militia since the 'citizen force recruited exclusively by voluntary enlistment' in the years after 1855 and in the Active Militia (volunteers) designated by the Militia Act of 1868.⁷⁷ A century later, 'That one outstanding advantage that every volunteer force possesses,' wrote one reserve officer in the *Quarterly*, 'is that every new recruit can be presumed to have that spark of enthusiasm which is an army's greatest asset. The Militia must strive by careful organization to catch that spark, to nurse and kindle it into that warm glow or real enthusiasm which has overcome dangers and difficulties for the British soldier throughout the centuries.'⁷⁸

Apart from Farley Mowat, a handful of officers have left written accounts of the interwar struggle. Howard Graham, who rose from Private soldier (the lowest position in the rank and file) as a young man in the reserves to Lieutenant General and Chief of the General Staff from 1955 to 1958, recalled that as a NPAM officer before the war – in the same unit as Farley Mowat, the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment – 'I can never recall drawing a cent of pay for time spent in regimental training.'⁷⁹

Many drew pay but then turned it over to the regimental fund in order to train men 'for more days than the government paid'.⁸⁰ The Royal Montreal Regiment's officers applied regimental funds, when government funds had run out, to cover the cost of camp training for the junior officers and men at Carillon, Pointe au Claire, Mount Bruno and St John's, Quebec.⁸¹ For officers of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, in Winnipeg, 'membership in the force meant financial loss' and personal assumption of certain kit (uniform and equipment) expenses.⁸² In Ottawa, 'all ranks' of the Governor General's Foot Guards signed a waiver 'relinquishing any right' to their pay, pooling their pay to support training.⁸³ Personal sacrifice of this sort reflected the value placed on ensuring that men who might one day have to face war would receive training; in order to recruit and survive, the regiment must remain viable and reputable. 'We tried to keep the unit active and before the public in many ways,' wrote Graham.⁸⁴

Visibility and popularity in the community were vital. Officers therefore got involved in local non-military events and social functions. Their ceremonial uniforms were interesting to the public and lent a well-attested panache and theatricality to events.⁸⁵ In explaining NPAM enthusiasm in his 1931 memo, Pope noted that attractive uniforms and personal vanity did play some role, as did the pride and social cachet accruing from regimental identity. There was surely 'some element of vanity', he wrote, in the uniform and 'alleged position in the community'. Yet Pope says it would be 'invidious' to scrutinise that human factor too much.⁸⁶ Human foibles were to be expected in any endeavour. It is notable that the ceremonial, pageantry and uniforms are found in the public culture of every country.⁸⁷

Graham recalled many occasions such as a tea in the armoury in Picton and the picnics, dinners and other events that typified social life around the drill hall. Soldiers might wear their mess kit (a formal uniform, typically with scarlet tunic, with medals) to Masonic events – the Lodge being a civilian hub of social and charitable initiatives by men in most Canadian cities and towns.⁸⁸ On other occasions, they would attend a baby's baptism in the Anglican church dressed in 'patrol blues' (a formal uniform with dark blue tunic, trousers and regimental forage cap) with swords, 'all of which', Graham wrote, 'we bought out of our pocket'.⁸⁹ Attending such a ceremony in person was a traditional way to honour the family members, wider community and the church's place in the midst of them. Such activities kept 'spirit and morale high' during the 'difficult years'. But most importantly, maintaining social and training activities at private expense meant that if war came, the regiment would

not be redundant but could take its place in the 'mobilization plans' and recruiting in a crisis.

Another inspirational leader, who left no memoir,⁹⁰ was Major K. S. 'Keltie' Kennedy, an amputee in the Great War and a prominent figure in Princess Louise's Hussars, based in Hampton, New Brunswick, during the interwar period. He, too, believed a second European war was inevitable. He served as Commanding Officer (CO) from 1936 to 1939 and later as Honorary Colonel, a figurehead and community role (with no command authority in the unit) from 1957 to 1969.

During Kennedy's tenure before the war, the Hussars ceased training with horses and adopted mechanisation, using rented cars at their 1936 summer camp because they were not provided with military vehicles. Kennedy managed to organise an 18-member brass band, a traditional way to engage the public and draw recruits, at no public cost.⁹¹ Like militia officers across Canada, he 'inspired men to join the Hussars and to serve the Regiment voluntarily without pay'.

In 1935, for the first time since 1931, the Hussars trained at Camp Sussex with a limit of 14 officers, 38 other ranks and 36 horses but with full pay and allowances. When 'training funds were severely limited and none provided for summer camp' unit officers agreed to go anyway 'at greatly reduced rate of pay, the officers donating their time, and the other ranks receiving 50 cents per day and an additional 50 cents per day for their horse'. Having trained with horses for 90 years, 1935 was the last summer they did so.⁹² In 1936, they rented motor cars to train as a Motorized Cavalry Regiment. Kennedy took command in 1937 and took 135 from all ranks to Camp Sussex that summer with 31 motor cars.

Another Kennedy initiative was to adopt the Lewis machine gun as a weapon in the unit, which assisted with recruiting because it was an interesting weapon system to learn, in addition to the standard infantry weapon, the bolt-action Lee Enfield rifle. The Hussars sent a machine gun section to compete at Valcartier in 1935, 'typical of the spirit of volunteer soldiering', according to the regimental history. During his command, Kennedy extended drill nights, sent officers on staff courses and personnel to the Canadian Armoured Fighting Vehicles School at Borden 'for armoured training'. With an eye on Hitler's rapid rearmament in Europe, Kennedy 'drove himself hard and kept pressing for more and more effort'. When the government tried to limit to 55 the number of Hussars junior ranks sent for training one summer, Kennedy threatened to resign, forcing headquarters to relent and permit 75.⁹³

The struggle to support local unit training was felt at the top end as well, at the Department of National Defence in Ottawa. As Director of

Military Training and Staff Duties at NDHQ in 1934–6, Major-General George R. Pearkes found that even if a given Militia unit could muster 250 men, Pearkes could budget only for 175 members to go for summer training. ‘The remaining 75 went to camp voluntarily or were paid from regimental funds,’ wrote Pearkes’ biographer, Reginald Roy. It was the ‘spirit of duty and sacrifice among militia regiments’ that Pearkes admired, although it was ‘frustrating’ not to be able to fund them properly.⁹⁴

Examples abound from across Canada. According to the history of the Seaforth Highlanders, based in Vancouver, even as ‘both officers and men continued to sign over their pay to a regimental fund’, save for a few dollars at summer camp, ‘the spirit of the regiment shone as never before’.⁹⁵ As a former commanding officer wrote, ‘You had to pay for the privilege of being a member of the defence force of Canada.’⁹⁶ The official history of the Queen’s Own Rifles, based in Toronto, records likewise that pay was ‘signed over to the regiment’ and that ‘No officer or man ever received a cent for his efforts. In point of fact it cost an officer a good deal of money to belong.’⁹⁷

A type of *noblesse oblige* thus played a part in NPAM survival, with serving and retired officers donating funds to assist in sports programmes and granting the use of their private land. Brigadier General C. J. Armstrong, district commanding officer for the Quebec sector, allowed the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR), in Westmount, to train on his family property near Carillon on the lower Ottawa River. The RMR officers’ mess, assisted by private donors, managed to build two bowling alleys in the Armoury.⁹⁸ Outside Montreal, Colonel Frank Meighen provided the Canadian Grenadier Guards of downtown Montreal with space on his own land at Roxboro on the Back River for two soccer fields and a baseball diamond.⁹⁹ In Toronto, Colonel W. G. McKendrick, DSO, donated cash prizes for Queen’s Own Rifles sporting activities.¹⁰⁰

In this way, army regiments provided a ‘well-organised local club and support network for its members’, wrote Britton MacDonald.¹⁰¹ The club-like qualities were part of the attraction for men during the Depression years, ‘a special sort of association to its members in the discouraging thirties’, wrote R. W. ‘Wilf’ Queen-Hughes, who served in the Winnipeg Grenadiers, spent three years in Japanese captivity and after the war became a *Winnipeg Tribune* editor and historian of the Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada.¹⁰² Such activities helped keep morale and participation high, and indeed kept ‘battalion strength over 200 at times’, ‘a real achievement’, wrote Queen-Hughes, that ‘really attested to the attractive worthwhile program offered under trying conditions which almost defied the survival of a militia unit’.¹⁰³ His wife, Gloria, helped

establish the Canadian Women's Auxiliary Corps (CWAC), initially a civilian volunteer body, in Winnipeg after the outbreak of war.¹⁰⁴

In Winnipeg, wrote Wilf Queen-Hughes, 'Instead of individual pay, the citizen-soldiers received street car tickets, coffee and sandwiches, ... beer at 202 Main Street [battalion headquarters] after the Decoration Day parade, outings to the St. Charles ranges, occasional parties ... family picnics', and enjoyed sporting activities. All of these made reserve service palatable to family members who might otherwise feel neglected, wrote Queen-Hughes, giving 'the family of a peacetime soldier an active and proprietary interest in the well-being of the Regiment'.¹⁰⁵

Future researchers will no doubt add much to the preceding preliminary findings of voluntary service and sacrifice, particularly scholars with direct access to local records, regimental archives, newspapers, correspondence and memorabilia. The remainder of this article will examine three additional themes: close-order drill and the Brigade of Canadian Guards; the royal tour of 1939; and the part-time career of an exemplary reservist, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Lisle of the Governor General's Foot Guards in Ottawa.

Close-order drill and the Brigade of Canadian Guards

Maurice Pope in his memo suggested that the English Canadian advantage lay in the high quality of their close-order drill. This refers to the order, discipline and movement of a formed body of soldiers, as in marching, coming to attention, presenting arms and trooping the colour, both as a training instrument and as a feature of ceremonial events. Training in 'drill' has been regarded by militaries the world over as one of the foundations of discipline, obedience and fighting spirit, while also providing an impressive spectacle on ceremonial occasions.¹⁰⁶

The poet Robert Graves, who served with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, recalled how Canadian troops he encountered in 1916 complained about drill. They 'asked what sense there was in sloping and ordering arms, and fixing and unfixing bayonets. They had come across [the Atlantic ocean] to fight, and not to guard Buckingham Palace.' It was a sentiment shared by many troops.

But as Richard Holmes explains in *Firing Line*, a study of soldier motivation and combat performance, while the emphasis on parade square drill can become 'excessive', drill instils discipline and automatic obedience to commands. In combination with 'battle drills' (which refers to minor tactics and section-level fire and movement), close-order drill

'binds a unit together' and 'plays an important ritualistic and morale-building role'. Holmes explains: 'not only does it make men look like soldiers but, far more important, it makes them feel like soldiers'. He quotes Robert Graves' response to Canadian complaints: 'for some reason or other', he told them, 'the troops that fought best' were 'those that had guts and were good at drill'.¹⁰⁷

Maurice Pope observed that while English Canadian units thrived on close-order drill, it 'doesn't appeal to the French Canadian mind'.¹⁰⁸ (Although he adds that Francophone officers possessed the compensating strength that they tended to have a wider life experience and were broader-minded.)

Excellence in close-order drill was characteristic of the Brigade of Guards in Great Britain from Victorian times until 1968. It was made up of the five regiments of Foot Guards (the Grenadier Guards, Coldstream Guards, and the Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards) and was no less renowned for their fighting reputation. (Since 1968, it has been called the Guards or Household Division.)

In 1918, in recognition of their service in the First World War, King George V granted private soldiers (the most junior rank, in Great Britain consisting mostly of working-class men) the unique rank title of Guardsman (abbreviated Gdsm), and extended the same honour to Guards regiments in Canada. In India after Independence, inspired by the British model, Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa, who attended Sandhurst and was the first Indian officer to be trained at Quetta, established within the post-Independence Indian Army, 'The Brigade of The Guards', in 1949.¹⁰⁹ They, like the British and Canadian Guards regiments, used the rank title of 'Guardsman' for their most junior members. Of note, the Republic of Singapore also established a Singapore Guards infantry-helicopter formation in the 1970s.¹¹⁰

Canada has had at least two active Guards regiments for more than 150 years. During the Victorian era, part-time officers seeking to emulate the excellence of Britain's Guards in soldiering and in ceremonial drill, and to provide the Dominion capital and the Queen's representative in Ottawa, the Governor General of Canada, with ceremonial spectacle and music worthy of a capital city, launched the Governor General's Foot Guards (GGFG) in 1872 on the basis of the extant Civil Service Rifles established in 1861 in pre-Confederation Quebec City. Also originating in the Province of Quebec were the Canadian Grenadier Guards of Montreal (CGG), descended from Montreal-area units since 1764 that went through several identity changes until taking the name of 1st Regiment Canadian Grenadier Guards in 1911.

When in May 1936 Canada's Minister of National Defence, Ian Mackenzie, presented the reformed NPAM structure to the House of Commons, it included the creation of a Guards Brigade. The decision was made at the time to limit the Brigade to ad hoc ceremonial capacity on occasions when the two part-time infantry regiments in Ottawa and Montreal were brought together for that purpose.

The creation of a permanent Guards element in the Canadian Army did not occur until the end of the Korean War, on 16 October 1953. Although that event is outside the interwar context of this article, it is mentioned here as an indication of the sustained interest in the Guards idea in Canada. Known as the Regiment of Canadian Guards, a full-time regular force regiment establishment was set up on the initiative of Lieutenant General Guy Simonds, Chief of the General Staff.

Born in England, Simonds settled with his parents in Victoria, studied at RMC Kingston and joined the army in 1926. In the 1930s, he served in the Permanent Force and contributed to *CDQ*. As the history of the Canadian Guards explains, Simonds

had a great deal of respect for the traditions and standards of the British Brigade of Guards. He wished to transplant what was excellent of their training, discipline, and esprit de corps into a uniquely Canadian regiment that would be recruited from 'from sea to sea.'... He believed that a truly national infantry regiment, that would glamorise the ordinary foot slogging infantryman, was needed. The others were too parochial. He had a fondness for elite units that could set a standard of excellence, and made it no secret that he admired the British Brigade of Guards.¹¹¹

According to the Regiment's official 'regimental spirit', 'Belief in the cause of service to one's country is the most honourable task of the citizen and more so as Guardsmen.' They achieved high standards in training, service overseas (in Europe and Cyprus) and ceremonial precision. Even so, the Regiment, when only 17 years old, was eliminated by the Pierre E. Trudeau government, or as the official language put it, the Regiment was 'reduced to nil strength and transferred to the Supplementary Order of Battle on 6 July 1970'.¹¹²

All of that, however, lay in the future. Before the Second World War, the purely ceremonial 'Brigade' of Canadian Guards was authorised by General Order (GO) 91, in May 1937, to be formed out of the two existing regiments.¹¹³ 'This Brigade', said GO 91, 'will only function as a brigade on occasions when the units comprising it are brought together for any

inspection, ceremonial or state duty under special orders to be issued by the Adjutant-General.¹¹⁴

The concept had the potential to concretise McNaughton's attempted rearmament in its prioritisation of excellence in both fighting readiness and ceremonial capacity. A fully realised Brigade of Guards on the British model might, as part of a bundle of reforms, have signalled the development of a stronger, more disciplined NPAM in the period immediately prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. Why the decision was made in 1937 to create only a ceremonial Brigade, one based only on reserve (part-time) units, is an avenue for further research.

The royal tour of 1939

An occasion for the Brigade to operationalise together arrived almost immediately, on the king's birthday, 6 June 1937, when the Brigade of Canadian Guards performed its ceremonial function in the capital, trooping the colour on Parliament Hill in honour of the monarch. They did so again on 19 May 1939, this time on a more spectacular scale, as part of the royal tour by King George VI and his consort, Queen Elizabeth. The Brigade was reviewed by the king before 10,000 spectators.¹¹⁵ Including the combined Governor General's Foot Guards and Canadian Grenadier Guards bands and drums (160 strong), there were about 700 Guards in total on duty that day, embodying the new brigade.¹¹⁶

Thus in Ottawa, as elsewhere in the Commonwealth, military pageantry was everywhere part of the British experience. Nor, some argued, was it mere empty spectacle; the presence of the head of state, even more than that of the governor general, in a ceremonial capacity made the monarchy 'real' to the public. Sir Gerald Campbell, the British high commissioner in Ottawa, remarked on the tour's 'miraculous' success, 'where the new status of the British Empire had been given "a visual representation" by their majesties. "The Statute of Westminster [had] now for the first time [been] understood by the ordinary man"', making visible in a public way the constitutional fact that Canada, since the Statute of Westminster of 1931, possessed its own autonomous crown.¹¹⁷

The 1939 tour was spectacular and effective at forging ties between citizen and monarch, John Herd Thompson wrote, as the king and queen identified themselves with Canada and mingled comfortably with Canadians in English and French.¹¹⁸ Contrary to those who assumed that the king's visit was a pre-war ploy 'for drumming up support for the

monarchy' in the hope that Canadians would fight on Great Britain's side, Claire Halstead has suggested that it was an occasion for Canadians to be *proactive*, stepping forward in their Sunday best to 'claim a piece of the tour for themselves'. By turning out to greet the royals and wave flags, Canadians expressed a desire for the link to the monarchy, cherishing the moment and the memory of it.¹¹⁹ It was Canadians who proactively made the royal family no longer remote or distant but 'humanised, kind, beautiful' to their 'welcoming hosts', the people of Canada.¹²⁰

Neither Thompson nor Halstead cites military sources. Halstead's sole reference to soldiers was to a guard of honour mounted by the Royal Canadian Regiment in London, Ontario, at that time still a significant military hub.¹²¹ But a far-reaching study could be made of the role of NPAM units in the royal tour, drawing on memoirs, newspapers, interviews and regimental histories. The historian of the Royal Montreal Regiment found it 'difficult now to describe the spirit of that event, or convey a sense of the national unity it revealed', as 'the first visit of a reigning sovereign to the land'.¹²² The king and queen brought 'a cleansing wind, which inspired rejoicing'. The week before, the regiment had been training at Mount Bruno.¹²³ In New Brunswick, 'Keltie' Kennedy's Hussars paraded in St John for the king and queen on 13 June 1939, when Kennedy was presented to them together with other war amputees.

The king himself praised NPAM members for turning out for duty – one might say that Canada's citizen-soldiers, supporting Claire Halstead's conclusions, 'proactively' lined the parade route, mounted Guards of Honour in their local community and provided security and crowd control. Reservists were, said the king in a radio broadcast, 'men who are prepared to devote a generous proportion of their spare time to the military service of their country'.¹²⁴ Their role was active rather than passive, requiring a good deal of training and preparation, apart from volunteering to participate on that occasion, which required taking time away from their paid civilian employment.

Service is sometimes its only reward. Howard Graham entrained with 150 officers and men of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment from Picton to Kingston, joining 10,000 spectators at Fort Henry to greet the king and queen. However, Prime Minister Mackenzie King, accompanying their majesties on the train across eastern Ontario, departed significantly from the arranged schedule by adding impromptu stops. The royal party was delayed to such an extent that, when they reached Kingston, the train did not stop but only slowed down as it passed through one of the premier military centres of Canada since the 1700s. Left standing at the station were Graham, his regiment and a crowd that had waited until

dusk – only to see the train appear and vanish in a matter of seconds. By prioritising other locations, Graham wrote, the prime minister ‘did not think of the thousands’ of people, let alone the 150 unpaid Militia soldiers who had donned burdensome ceremonial kit to be inspected by their king.¹²⁵ The prime minister’s diary might be compared with the official tour schedule to identify which stops he had added, and why he chose to prioritise those over Kingston.

A career of part-time service: Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Lisle

When the new Brigade of Guards trooped the colour for the king’s birthday in 1937, the officer commanding the escort to the Colour, No. 1 Guard (GGFG) was a certain Captain Edward Lisle of the Governor General’s Foot Guards.¹²⁶ Lisle was a lifelong Ottawa resident and civil servant who was at one stage in his professional career the Acting Director of Stores in the Department of Naval Service. His family, as of 2021 still living in the Ottawa area, believes Lisle spent his civilian career in public service.¹²⁷

Lisle is an example of the reservist who, outside his daytime work hours, kept NPAM units going through the hard times and whose efforts got some recognition in local news coverage and the regimental history. If his civil service job was unassuming, his service to the part-time army was outstanding. From the early 1920s he served the GGFG in training, administering, maintaining civil-military connections and participating in marksmanship activities.

As regimental adjutant in 1925, Lisle’s organisational skills were noted in helping to run the unit’s orderly room, records, syllabus, quarters, messes and finances.¹²⁸ Lisle served in all facets of unit life. He was a Company Commander during annual camp training at Connaught Ranges, the training facility west of Ottawa, in 1937 when the GGFG won the District Efficiency Award. He served as the Weapons Training Officer when members of No. 4 District came to train at Connaught because the Pointe-Aux-Trembles range had been destroyed by fire.¹²⁹ He accompanied Major-General C. F. Constantine on his inspection of the Cadet Corps at Ottawa’s Ashbury School.¹³⁰

Marksmanship, and notably the National Rifle Association’s Imperial Meeting or National Championship at Bisley, provided a link between NPAM regiments and military units across the British Commonwealth, an expression of unity throughout the British World. Regiments from across

the Commonwealth sent shooting teams to Bisley. Marksmen competed for 'top shot', of whom the best would be awarded the King's Medal.

Lisle was active in the GGFG marksmanship team and a high scorer on the shooting range. As a Major, he served as a Company Commander at the GGFG's home base, Cartier Square Drill Hall in Ottawa, and at the nearby Connaught Ranges.¹³¹ In the summer of 1936, he was reported to have hit the bull's eye on every shot at 300 yards, although his score dropped by one point at 600 yards, at which distance it is significantly more difficult to shoot accurately, particularly with iron sights.¹³²

Shooting accurately was not merely sport but a core military skill: a soldier who could not hit and kill an enemy put himself and his comrades at risk. With the army reserve, shooting was more, then, than an expression of amateur enthusiasm; rather, a means of generating publicity, attracting recruits to the regiment and the army and contributing to regimental pride.¹³³ The participants were often quite ordinary men – and in Canada, at least, the teams' training meetings included some women marksmen, too, as seen in the scrapbooks of Lieutenant-Colonel Horace Bishop of the GGFG, one of Canada's top marksmen from 1924 to 1939, at the Canadian War Museum.¹³⁴

Finally, when the Foot Guards mobilised as part of 4 Division on 31 May 1940 after the evacuation of Dunkirk, Major Edward Lisle took a leadership role in preparing the GGFG for deployment. He served as Commanding Officer of training and recruit-bashing at Lansdowne prior to embarkation, where there were 'shortages of cooks, bedding, clothing, barracks, equipment, transport, arms, and training equipment', but good training all summer in the 'broiling sun' on the 'unshaded' Lansdowne football pitch. He later commanded the HQ Company.¹³⁵

When the GGFG were converted to the armoured role, taking the name of 21st Canadian Armoured Regiment (GGFG), their officer complement was reduced on 26 January 1942, and thus Major Lisle and Lieutenant-Colonel W. G. Wurtele could not deploy with the regiment.¹³⁶ However, Lisle, afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel, did visit the regiment in England at Maresfield, north of Brighton, on 23 April 1944, St George's Day, a few weeks before they began their operations in the liberation of the Netherlands.¹³⁷

Like so many military wives, Winifred M. Lisle (née Ainsborough, of Almonte, Ontario) exemplified the contemporary community spirit as president of the GGFG Ladies Auxiliary for two years during the war,¹³⁸ working on camp food and comforts.¹³⁹ Mrs Lisle also served in civilian Roman Catholic charities, such as the Catholic Women's League, and was a member of the Third Order of St Dominic, one of many voluntary

associations designed to assist lay men and women to live a more Catholic life.

In 1943, Lieutenant-Colonel Lisle, then retired, attended a ceremony at the Ottawa Oval to close the Diocesan Crusade of Prayer for Victory and Peace, commanding the representative parties from military units of the Ottawa area.¹⁴⁰ Lisle's Roman Catholicism puts him in the broad category of non-Protestant loyalism, since he was Anglophone but, like Maurice Pope and Georges Vanier, a Roman Catholic. After the war, Lisle rounded out his lifelong service to the regiment by assisting with the production of the GGFG's regimental history, published in 1948.¹⁴¹

Lisle's career is illustrative of NPAM aspirations in other ways, including the pursuit of higher training. Knowing one's profession as an officer, even a part-time officer, required reading and systematic study. In this regard, Lisle exemplified what John A. English called 'determined reserve officers', who in the 1930s took opportunities presented 'on the individual level' to attain 'a degree of professional excellence'.¹⁴² By 1939, every eligible Foot Guards officer of the rank of captain and up, which included Lisle, had completed the Militia Staff Course.¹⁴³ That course was considered to be 'the finest investment ... ever ... made with training funds', said one-legged General Harry Letson, commanding the Officer Training Corps at the University of British Columbia, in 1933.¹⁴⁴ Lieutenant General Howard Graham, mentioned in the section 'Regiments and leadership' above, was another part-time soldier who completed the Militia Staff Course.¹⁴⁵ In contrast to 1914, when few officers had received a professional level of training before the outbreak of war, when war came in 1939 there were hundreds of staff-trained officers available.¹⁴⁶

Part-time soldiers also contributed to the intellectual life of the army. Before the war Lisle took his amateur soldiering to unusual heights, publishing two articles in the military's premier academic publication, *CDQ*.¹⁴⁷ He won 'Best Essay' in 1935 for a paper, 'Can Canada Defend Herself?', probably one of the contributions that got Harry Crerar, Director of Military Operations and Military Intelligence from 1935 to 1938, and briefly Commandant of RMC Kingston in 1938–9, 'in trouble for allowing some articles critical of Canada's defence preparedness' into the *Journal*.¹⁴⁸

Lisle wrote that, although many were not willing to face up to it, Canada's first obligation and chief military problem was 'how to defend herself'. But Canada also had 'definite obligations' to the League of Nations and the Commonwealth 'British family of nations', including

‘the dispatch of an overseas force should the occasion ever arise’.¹⁴⁹ At the grassroots level, he wrote, ‘the greatest problem with which militia officers have to contend has to do first with recruitment and then with maintaining the men’s interest and enthusiasm’, as we have seen in this article. He concluded that ‘the present organization’ of the military ‘is totally inadequate’.¹⁵⁰

Lisle’s prize paper drew the ire of the prominent Liberal nationalist John S. Ewart who, replying in *CDQ*, made the isolationist case that Canada had no obligation to the Empire, merely ties of sentiment and tradition. In follow-up, Lisle wrote a realist assessment that aligned with the thinking of the General Staff:

Recent history has shown that weak nations may expect short shift from some at least of the world powers if they have only themselves to depend upon ... So long as Canada sees fit for perhaps good and sufficient reasons not to arm to the point of being able to defend herself against all-comers, she imposes upon herself first the necessity of aligning herself with some other power or powers and secondly of assuming certain obligations towards those powers.¹⁵¹

In short, if Canadians refused to invest sufficiently in their own defence, they were giving themselves little choice but to participate in, and surrender some measure of sovereignty to, alliances, which would in turn place obligations on Canada.

In the context of the 1930s, such obligations were not only sentimental but also stemmed from Canada’s interests, vulnerability and willingness to be defended by Great Britain. In Lisle’s view, ‘that Canada continues to be a sovereign nation despite her present almost defenceless condition is proof positive that she is a member of the Commonwealth’¹⁵² – that is to say, reliant on Empire cooperation for her defence.

Lisle wrote in *CDQ* again in 1938, publishing ‘The British Empire and world peace’, an overview of Canada’s position in the Empire and the world that took into account Australia, South Africa, India, the ‘Colonial Empire’ and ‘Defence Requirements of the Empire’. His arguments were typical of mainstream interwar opinion that the League of Nations had failed but that the Empire was too decentralised to be an effective bulwark for peace. He noted that Canada’s trade and prosperity depended significantly on the freedom of the sea-lanes afforded by Britain’s Navy. Since Canada’s seaborne trade was worth \$295 million

per year, 'her prosperity is dependent to a very large extent upon this trade' and 'therefore she in common with the other member-states have obligations one to another'.¹⁵³ Defence cooperation with Great Britain in preserving 'world peace', and in the event of war, was, as P. A. Buckner put it, a 'vital Canadian interest'.¹⁵⁴

Both of Lisle's articles were written before the Ogdensburg Agreement of 17 August 1940, which placed Canada under President Roosevelt's security guarantee. The reserve officer's essays evoke a 'conservative' view that Canada could expect diminished autonomy under American 'protection'. Lisle believed that 'the defence of Canada's sovereign status must continue to rest solidly upon the British connexion and her own maximum contribution'.¹⁵⁵ Canada's security was grounded in the British Empire status quo. To the extent that the United States was not a status quo power, leaders in Washington should be regarded by Canadians as ambitious revisionists whose goals were not necessarily consistent with Canada's interests.¹⁵⁶

Edward Lisle's essays have received little attention from scholars reviewing the work of *CDQ* or the interwar defence debate. Even so, they aligned with the views of senior officers in the Permanent Force such as Andrew McNaughton, Ken Stuart and Maurice Pope, who understood the Empire as an alliance that presented Canada with obligations as well as security.

Conclusion

More could be written from a Canadian viewpoint about the lost peace, in which 'the combined might of the British Empire and its Dominions', as Leo Amery saw it, should have been 'so vast as to act as a deterrent to any European aggressor, and also to police and protect the wider Empire to secure it against both internal unrest and foreign aggression'. This was a concept that one scholar has called the 'imperialist alternative' to appeasement,¹⁵⁷ but which has attracted little study in Canada. It is notable that even a little-known Militia officer such as Lisle counted himself among the realists in reserve units across Canada, who supported regimental training and recruiting while publicly or privately advocating Empire cooperation, in the hope of contributing to Canadian and Commonwealth readiness and deterrence.¹⁵⁸ McNaughton's army reforms had reduced the total peacetime establishment (the number on paper) of the NPAM from 102,182 to 88,943. But in reality, there were only 48,761 enrolled in the NPAM in 1935.¹⁵⁹

The NPAM was a superb expression of interwar Canadian nationalism and identity and is worthy of further study. Whether in field training, marksmanship competitions, ceremonial activities, studying the art and science of war or making contributions to the local community, small groups of men soldiered on in the interwar years. Regimental histories reveal that numerous drawbacks and shortcomings were matched by a striking capacity to maintain good morale, a reasonable turnout and survival for a better day in 'a silent battle for existence'.¹⁶⁰ In 1938–9, there were as many as 30,000 reservists at training camps, more than any summer since the Great War.¹⁶¹ Their efforts meant that by 23 August 1939, when the Nazi–Soviet Pact was revealed and war inevitable, the Canadian Militia were on a sounder footing than ever before.

Note on contributor

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The author declares no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

- 1 'Prime Minister visits Canada's overseas army', *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 23 August 1941, 1.
- 2 Cook, *Warlords*, 266. Mackenzie King's diary says he arrived 'about a quarter of an hour late. The guard of honour had been standing in the wet.' Diaries of W. L. Mackenzie King, 747 (typescript, stamped, Library and Archives Canada. Halifax County, Nova Scotia, Elected Officials. Accessed 4 January 2024, <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/archives/ElectedOfficials-County.pdf>).
- 3 Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire*, 167. For the figure of 125,000, see Stacey, *Six Years of War*, vol. 1: 93.
- 4 Stacey, *Six Years of War*, vol. 1: 93.
- 5 'Troops free to express views says prime minister of booing', *Ottawa Journal*, 25 August 1941, 2.
- 6 Maj. C. P. Stacey to Director (Historical Section), 'Visit of the Rt. Hon W. L. Mackenzie King to Canadian Troops in England', 23 September 1941, Directorate of History and Heritage.
- 7 Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 40–1.
- 8 *Ottawa Journal*, 25 August 1941, 2.
- 9 Diaries of W. L. Mackenzie King, 23 August 1941, 749. Mackenzie King's diary also claims it was Churchill who wanted the Canadians to remain in England, see 752.
- 10 Harris, *Canadian Brass*, 192; Stacey, *The Military Problems*, 94. See Roy, *The Seaforth Highlanders*, 42.
- 11 Forrest, *The Legacy*; Beckett, 'The nation in arms', 1, 4.
- 12 Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*.
- 13 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 105. Peter Vronsky writes, 'In 1862, the *levée en masse* and the idea of the nation in arms guided the hand of John A. Macdonald when as minister of militia he drafted and redrafted the defence policies of the Province of Canada.' See Vronsky, 'Combat, Memory and Remembrance', 14.
- 14 Milner, 'Whose army is it anyway?', 14. Milner thought this voluntarism enhanced their effectiveness in war: 'Unlike many of the conscripts of larger armies, Canadian soldiers took a proprietary interest in their jobs and it showed. This gave Canadian combat operations their peculiar flavour of toughness and resilience, which usually developed into a hard professionalism in combat which most Canadians today would find unsettling.'
- 15 Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 238, quoted in English, *The Canadian Army*, 3.
- 16 Vance, *Death so Noble*, 136.
- 17 Wood, *Militia Myths*, 268.
- 18 Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*; Hillmer and Bothwell, *The In-between Time*; Socknat, *Witness against War*; Owsram, *The Government Generation*.
- 19 [Unsigned] in CDQ, vol. XIII, 1935–36, 33d.

- 20 Stacey, *Military Problems*, 99.
- 21 Stanley, *Canada's Soldiers*, 340.
- 22 McCulloch, 'Mackenzie King', 13.
- 23 MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect'; Harris, *Canadian Brass*; Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*.
- 24 Dickson, *A Thoroughly Canadian General*, 103–9.
- 25 Harris, *Canadian Brass*, 160, 164–5.
- 26 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 240. The Militia as a whole was reborn as the Canadian Army in 1940, see Creighton, *The Forked Road*, 47; Stacey, *Six Years of War*, vol. 1: 89.
- 27 MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect', 240.
- 28 MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect', 240; Delaney, *The Soldiers' General*, 18.
- 29 Queen-Hughes, *Whatever Men Dare*, 10.
- 30 Harris, *Canadian Brass*, 203; Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 53.
- 31 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 236–7.
- 32 In 2009, the former Chief of the Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, wrote of the Guards on Parliament Hill: 'the faces under those imposing bearskins ... reflected who we are as a country', see Hillier, *A Soldier First*, 364.
- 33 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 346; 'attempted rearmament,' Stanley, *Canada's Soldiers*, 347.
- 34 Stacey, *Canadian Army*, 3–4; Stacey, *Six Years of War*, vol. 1: 34–5, 50, cited by MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect', 341.
- 35 They were major generals Bruce Matthews, Bert Hoffmeister and Holley Keebler, see MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect', 340.
- 36 Delaney, 'Imperial armies'.
- 37 Grayson, 'Leo Amery's imperialist alternative', 499.
- 38 Brown, *Buster*, 138; Harris, *Canadian Brass*, 180.
- 39 Crawford and Watson, "'The most appeasing line', 78–9.
- 40 Mowbray, 'Militiaman'; see Jones, 'Pinchbeck Regulars?'
- 41 Buckner and Bridge, 'Reinventing the British world', 81.
- 42 For example, Buckner and Francis, eds, *Canada and the British World*; Buckner, ed., *Canada and the End of Empire*; Buckner and Francis, eds, *Rediscovering the British World*.
- 43 Pickles, *Female Imperialism*.
- 44 Milner, *Canada's Navy*, 175–95; Peter Archambault, 'Too much "Britishness" or not enough? The Canadian naval mutinies of 1949', presented to the International Commission on Maritime History, Calgary, 28 June 1998, cited in Milner, *Canada's Navy*, 195.
- 45 Brennan, 'The other battle', 261.
- 46 Champion, *Strange Demise*.
- 47 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 35–6.
- 48 'The French Canadian and the N.P.A.M.', reproduced in Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 83–9.
- 49 Typically, only one-third of all officers and men attending army reserve summer training in Quebec's two military districts in the mid-1920s were Francophones, although that proportion rose to 46.5 per cent in 1939, see Granatstein, *The Generals*, 241.
- 50 Kronenberg, *All Together Now*, 82–3.
- 51 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 87.
- 52 Leblanc, 'Maurice A. Pope', 55.
- 53 Champion, *The Strange Demise*, 197–221. If unification was not about race, men like Jean-Luc Pépin, MP, made it so, asserting that certain admirals were motivated by a desire to preserve the Navy's 'Anglo-Protestant' character, see

- Hansard*, Parliament of Canada. 1966. Linked Parliamentary Data Service (LiPad), 20 October 1966, 8890.
- 54 Wood, *Militia Myths*, 106; Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 104–7.
- 55 Henderson, ‘The myth of the “Militia Myth”’.
- 56 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 86.
- 57 Beckett, *The Amateur Military Tradition*; Sheffield, ‘Amateur soldiering tradition’.
- 58 Granatstein, *The Generals*, 207.
- 59 Granatstein, *The Generals*, 240.
- 60 Comtesse Simonne du Monceau de Bergendal, see *Maurice Arthur Pope Collection*, Canadian War Museum Finding Aid, Ottawa. Accessed 4 January 2024. https://www.warmuseum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/mauricepope_e.pdf. Granatstein, *The Generals*, 209.
- 61 Lowry, ‘The crown’, 96–120, for French Canadians, 104.
- 62 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*.
- 63 English, *The Canadian Army*, 3–4, 15.
- 64 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 86 ff.
- 65 Lisle, *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 1938, 9.
- 66 Quoted in English, *The Canadian Army*, 25.
- 67 English, *The Canadian Army*, 35, 38; MacDonald, ‘The policy of neglect’, 159; Roy, *Sinews of Steel*, 99.
- 68 Quigley, *A Century of Rifles*, 113.
- 69 *Canada Gazette*, 1923, 1883.
- 70 Halifax County elected officials.
- 71 Mowat, *The Regiment*, xi–iii.
- 72 Mowat, *The Regiment*, xvi–ii.
- 73 MacDonald, ‘The policy of neglect’, 138.
- 74 Crook, *A Pictorial History*, 92.
- 75 Crook, *A Pictorial History*, 245.
- 76 MacDonald, ‘The policy of neglect’, 329.
- 77 Stacey, *The Military Problems*, 59, 61.
- 78 Chesley, ‘Notes on the training’, 182.
- 79 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 105.
- 80 MacDonald, ‘The policy of neglect’, 7.
- 81 Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Montreal Regiment*, 4, 6.
- 82 Queen-Hughes, *Whatever Men Dare*, 4, 6.
- 83 *The Regimental History of the Governor General’s Foot Guards*, 31.
- 84 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 105.
- 85 Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*; Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building*.
- 86 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 87.
- 87 Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*; Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*; Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*.
- 88 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 105.
- 89 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 106.
- 90 The 8th Hussars Museum in Sussex, New Brunswick, has a finding aid. Accessed 4 January 2024. <https://search.canbarchives.ca/downloads/k-s-keltie-kennedy-3.pdf>
- 91 How, *The 8th Hussars*, 92.
- 92 How, *The 8th Hussars*, 96.
- 93 How, *The 8th Hussars*, 98.
- 94 Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery*, 125.
- 95 Roy, *The Seaforth Highlanders*, 36.
- 96 Roy, *The Seaforth Highlanders*, 37, citing Seaforth Archives, interview with Brig. Lough, 18 July 1960.

- 97 Barnard, *The Queen's Own Rifles*, 129.
- 98 Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Montreal Regiment*, 2.
- 99 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 234.
- 100 Barnard, *The Queen's Own Rifles*, 129.
- 101 MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect', 140–1.
- 102 'R.W. Queen-Hughes, editorial writer, dies', *Winnipeg Free Press*, 20 July 1970, 20.
- 103 Queen-Hughes, *Whatever Men Dare*, 2.
- 104 Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 30.
- 105 Queen-Hughes, *Whatever Men Dare*, 3.
- 106 Mackenzie, *Popular Imperialism*, 30–2. See Festing, 'The value of close order drill'; Wardle, 'A defence of close-order drill'.
- 107 Holmes, *Firing Line*, 40–4.
- 108 Pope, *Why I Became a Roman Catholic*, 87.
- 109 Praval, *Indian Army*; Silverthorne and Gaskin, *The British Foot Guards*.
- 110 Ong-Webb and Ho, *National Service*, 116.
- 111 Patterson, *A Regiment*, 2–3.
- 112 Patterson, *A Regiment*, 4.
- 113 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 39.
- 114 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 236.
- 115 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 237. The seniority of the GGFG was shown in its mounting of the first four Guards, including No. 1 Guard, the Escort Guard of the Colour, while the CGG provided Guard Nos 5, 6, 7 and 8. Apart from the Escort, which consisted of one officer and two NCOs, each Guard consisted of three officers and 66 other ranks. See also Dexter, 'At the National Capital', *Maclean's*, 15 May 1939.
- 116 Duguid, *History of the Canadian Grenadier Guards*, 238.
- 117 Fedorowich, 'Sir Gerald Campbell', 367.
- 118 Thompson, 'Canada', 102–3.
- 119 Halstead, 'Daylight upon magic', 105, 107.
- 120 Arnold Heeneey looked on as the 'jittery' ('again') Mackenzie King prompted the king to unveil the monument at the wrong moment, Heeneey Diary, Library and Archives, Ottawa, 20–1 May 1939.
- 121 Halstead, 'Daylight upon magic', 117–18.
- 122 Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Montreal Regiment*, 10.
- 123 Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Montreal Regiment*, 11.
- 124 'His Majesty's message to all Defence Forces of Canada' as 'Head of the three Services', *Canadian Military Gazette*, 22 August 1939, 1.
- 125 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 107.
- 126 'Trooping of Color Ceremony seen by 10,000 spectators', *Ottawa Citizen*, 7 June 1937, 16; 'Trooping of Color rehearsed; Plans made for Sunday', *Ottawa Citizen*, 5 June 1937, 18; *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 42–3.
- 127 Telephone conversation with Winnifred Lisle, Ottawa, 27 September 2021.
- 128 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 31.
- 129 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 46.
- 130 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 40.
- 131 'On the ranges', *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1937, 12; 'Foot Guards compete in Sand Table Competition', *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 November 1937, 1.
- 132 'Harold Borden match won by Montreal shot', *Ottawa Citizen*, 12 August, 1936, 9. The interwar years were good for the Governor General's Foot Guards' shooting team: Lieutenant D. T. Burke managed to win the King's Medal at Bisley Ranges, home to the National Rifle Association in Surrey, England, in 1925, 1927, 1929, 1930 and 1931, while Sergeant W. J. Livingstone earned the King's Medal in

- 1924 and 1926, and Lieutenant A. B. Coulter in 1922. As a Guardsman, Burke had competed at Bisley for the first time in 1924 and won the King's Prize and a Canadian scholarship worth \$2,500. *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 224.
- 133 Delaney, *The Soldiers' General*, 17.
- 134 'Scrapbook of Lt Col William Horace Bishop', Acc. No. 19840059-227, Canadian War Museum ARCH DOCSMANU 58E 3 2.2.
- 135 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 50–1.
- 136 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 65.
- 137 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 88, 210.
- 138 'Mrs. E. Lisle, former city resident, dies', *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 January 1956, 4; 'Priorum Temporum Flores', marriage announcement (Winifred's brother, the Rev. A. A. Ainsborough, officiating), *University of Ottawa Review*, October 1911, vol. 14: 153–4.
- 139 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 59.
- 140 'Catholics participate in ceremony at Oval', *Ottawa Citizen*, 5 July 1943, 18.
- 141 'Stirring story is told of record of GGFG', *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 December 1948, 12.
- 142 English, *The Canadian Army*, 35.
- 143 *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards*, 46.
- 144 English, *The Canadian Army*, 35; Letson, 'Influence of mechanization', 36.
- 145 Graham, *Citizen and Soldier*, 100–1. It is an interesting reflection of the challenges of part-time service that Graham described being 'loath' to continue to the advanced course to seek higher rank because, encompassing international politics, resources, governments and large formations, the advanced course would be a drain on his private and professional life.
- 146 Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 162.
- 147 Ewart, 'A criticism' and Lisle 'A reply', in 'Canadian Defence Quarterly Prize Essay', 1935. English states that CDQ manifested the high quality of Canadian officers in the study of war, *The Canadian Army*, 29.
- 148 Dickson, *A Thoroughly Canadian General*, 105, does not specify which articles.
- 149 Lisle, 'Prize essay', 164.
- 150 Lisle, 'Prize essay', 162, 164.
- 151 Lisle, 'A reply', 461.
- 152 Lisle, 'A reply', 463.
- 153 Lisle, 'The British Empire and world peace', 22.
- 154 Buckner, 'The long goodbye', 198.
- 155 Lisle, 'The British Empire', 20.
- 156 Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power*.
- 157 Grayson, 'Leo Amery's imperialist alternative', 495.
- 158 MacDonald, 'The policy of neglect'.
- 159 Bezeau, *Rocky Mountain Rangers*, 140.
- 160 Roy, *Sinews of Steel*, 99.
- 161 Stacey, *Military Problems*, 121, 124.

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