

Big Peacetime Manoeuvres Finished At Camp Gagetown

By DAVE MCINTOSH
Canadian Press Staff Writer
CAMP GAGETOWN, N.B. (CP)—The Canadian Army's biggest peacetime manoeuvres in history ended today as they began—in the rain.

Generally, the 1st Infantry Division's Exercise Rising Star was considered a success.

But some officers said they felt it could have been made a lot more realistic with a bigger "enemy" force.

The role of the enemy was taken by only one battalion, the 2nd Black Watch. Ranged against it were six battalions, three squadrons of tanks, artillery and supporting arms.

As a result, some said, non-veteran soldiers in the big force had no real sense of what an enemy could do.

the 1st Black Watch, 1st Royal Canadian Regiment and 1st Royal 22nd.

BRIDGE RIVER

The second phase, involving a left wheel, bridging of a river and advance from bridgehead, was carried out by the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Guards, 3rd Royal 22nd and the Royal Canadian Engineers.

The bridging was done at night over a river swollen by a day's torrential rain.

The infantry spent the day and night slogging through sodden fields or crouching in weapon pits half-filled with water.

The exercise began in similar weather last Sunday. It cost one man's life when a Bren gun carrier slipped off a muddy road at night and tipped over in the ditch.

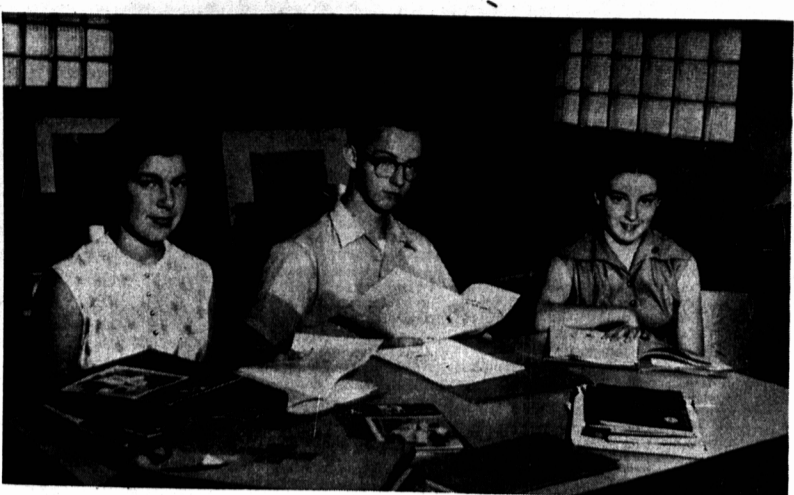
MINOR HITCHES

The general plan was a divisional advance on a five-mile front to defensive positions, a general withdrawal under enemy pressure, prodding attacks and then a counter-attack. The plan was followed fairly closely with only minor hitches.

The navy put up 48 planes on the three fine days—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday—and they flew some 300 sorties, carrying out air strikes with small bags of chalk.

Senior officers will hold a critique on the exercise and then a more detailed study will probably be done for army headquarters.

The exercise was directed by Maj. Gen. E. G. Plow, chief of Eastern Command, and it was watched by military attaches from 18 countries.



Will attend International Study Centre

Pictured above are the three delegates who have been chosen to attend the Junior Red Cross International Study Centre to be held at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, from August 21 to 31. They are Maureen Wood of Souris, James Norton of Summerside and Ernestine MacDonald of Truro. This week they spent a day at Red Cross Headquarters in Charlottetown with Miss Marie Bowness, Director of Junior Red Cross for P. E. I., where they studied the various aspects of the program in which they will take part at the Study Centre. There they will hear outstanding speakers and discuss such topics as: "Making Ourselves at Home in Our World Neighbours", "Helping Our Neighbours in our National and Local Communities", "Building a Healthy World", and "Canadian-American Relations". Lectures, discussion groups, panels, role playing, field trips and other group-learning methods will be employed. These three delegates are being sponsored by various organizations in their own communities — the Y's Men's Club, the Catholic Women's League, the School and the Junior Red Cross.

NEWSY NOTES

THE MUSKRAT

The muskrat (Fiber zibethicus) is a North American rodent that belongs to the mouse tribe Muridae and is related to the English water-rat of the sub-family Mithridinae. It is native to this continent and is a common quadruped found from the Rio Grande River in the south to the Arctic regions in the north.

The only other species of the genus Fiber in North America is (Fiber alleni) of Florida. The muskrats of the Rocky Mountain region are paler in colour than those in the East, but are classed in the same species.

The muskrat is a heavily built animal with a broad head and short limbs. It has comparatively small eyes and its ears scarcely project beyond the fur of its head. The fore legs are four-toed and have a rudimentary thumb. The hind legs are larger; they are five-toed and are united with a web at the base. The hind feet are set obliquely to the legs. The toes are all armed with claws. The tail is laterally compressed; it is scaly and nearly naked, being fringed with stiff hairs, and is a powerful swimming appendage.

The muskrat resembles a gigantic mole or field mouse. It has thick, soft underfur, interspersed with long, stiff, glistening hairs which cover and conceal the former on its back and on the sides of its body. Its coat is a dark, umber-brown and is almost black along its back turning to a chestnut-brown on the sides of its head and body, and to grey along its belly. Its tail and the naked parts of its feet are black.

The musky odor from which it derives its name is due to a secretion from two small skin glands that are present in both sexes. These musk glands render the flesh unpalatable for commerce, but it is eaten by Indian and Eskimo trappers and their families in the far north.

The average muskrat measures about 21 inches in length, including its seven inch tail. Its muzzle is blunt and furry, the palps and soles are naked and fringed with fur. It is most active at night. In temperate regions the muskrat builds a large elaborate house at the beginning of winter; it is constructed of sticks, mud, sedges, rushes and grass that are heaped together in a conical or dome-like form resembling a tiny coil of hay. All nests have their openings under water. Some live in burrows on the banks of streams, and all houses have several entrances.

The muskrat lives on the shores of lakes and rivers, small streams and marshy areas. It is a great water animal and has a great many enemies besides man, and as a means of protection it usually hides during the day or remains in its nest. It is timid, and the smooth-walled chamber of its winter house is above the water line; when this is frozen solid it provides protection from carnivorous animals. Its house is usually destroyed by spring floods, so that it builds a new house each year.

The female muskrat is a good mother with 3 to 9 young at a birth, and from 2 to 3 litters per year. When food is plenty the muskrat population may increase very rapidly.

The food of the muskrat consists largely of insects, worms, fruits, vegetables, water lily roots, fresh water mussels and mollusks. The fur is valuable. It was used during the 19th century in the making of "beaver" hats. In more recent times it was used for more purposes under the trade name of "Hudson seal". The Canada year book for 1952 gave the number of muskrat pelts sold as 3,292,110 for \$4,675,562 or at an average price of \$1.42 per pelt.

From forty to sixty pelts were required to make a "Hudson seal" overcoat. At the June 27-28, 1955 fur sale, 761,310 muskrat pelts brought \$731,330. Sales at Regina in 1955 amounted to \$350,000 - the average being \$2.24 per pelt. The pelts from Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces realized much higher prices than western pelts.

Quebec is the only Canadian province that has a Director of Fur Services under the Department of Game and Fisheries. A registration system has been established in most provinces for certain trapping areas. The registered trapper is made responsible for the conservation of fur bearers.

in his own area. This system has proved highly successful.

The Aklavik area, 150 miles inside the Arctic Circle, is one of the best muskrat hunting grounds in Canada. The area around the many-mouthed delta of the Mackenzie River covers 2,000 square miles of territory that is alive with fur-bearing animals. There are great swampy areas adjoining the sluggish Mackenzie River as it nears the Arctic Ocean, making an ideal home for muskrats.

March 1st is the opening of the muskrat season in Canada's northernmost community, and the schools are vacated by the Indian and Eskimo children, who follow their parents to the trap lines, that each year secure 200,000 pelts. The season lasts for two months, and is packed full of adventure for the children, who return to school with stories to tell their white school mates.

Each family has its own trap line. This is usually about 75 miles long, though some extend for 200 miles. In the settlements of Aklavik and Fort McPherson which adjoin it, there are 250 trapping areas. These were allotted by the Government shortly after the war, and are handed down from father to son.

In the north the muskrat builds a small snow house on the ice near its fishing hole. The trapper sets his trap within this house.

Last year the price of pelts dropped to 65 cents each, and trappers averaged only about \$50.00 from their pelts during the season. During World War II, there was a boom, when prices reached \$2.50 for each raw pelt, and some earned as much as \$6,500.00 a year.

An Eskimo who took his wife to California on a trip is said to have returned with ten truck loads of furs. This included four tuxedo suits for himself.

More recently, prices have tumbled, but the next year trappers is that the next year may be a record year, there may be a rise in price, a better trap may be secured or that someone may again make a fortune.

West Germany Challenges Britain For World Trade

BONN (Reuters)—West Germany is challenging Britain for second place after the United States among industrial powers of the Western world.

At present, economists of both countries regard Anglo-German export competition as a healthy factor in encouraging lower prices and increased production in an expanding world market. But they warn that if a reverse trend sets in the struggle for economic survival, or at least solvency, might revive the bitterness of previous periods.

In steel production, usually regarded as a pointer to overall industrial strength, the two countries now are running almost neck-and-neck.

During 1954, West Germany produced a monthly average of 1,453,000 tons of crude steel compared with the British figure of 1,568,000 tons. Figures for the first seven months of this year showed that West Germany had narrowed the gap to about 90,000 tons.

COAL LEAD OFFSET

In coal production, Britain remains well ahead, with a monthly average of about 19,000,000 tons in the year ended March 1955 compared with West Germany's figure of about 11,000,000 tons. However, West German lignite production of about 8,000,000 tons monthly and her increasing oil production, expected to reach 3,000,000 tons this year, level off the difference to a large extent.

In some fields, West Germany is already ahead of Britain. Her production of aluminium, for example, totalled 129,000 tons in 1954 compared with Britain's 32,000 tons, and the United States' 1,325,000 tons.

Comparison of exports during the last three years shows a pattern similar to that of total production.

Three years ago, the average monthly value of West German exports was slightly more than half that of Britain's. In the first quarter of this year, it was nearly two-thirds of the British level, which then stood at \$257,000,000.

West Germany's greatest challenge in the export market is machinery, of which she sold about \$300,000,000 worth in the first three months of this year.

In shipbuilding, she passed Britain in export orders last year, but this was partly due to the fact that domestic demand for British ships is much greater than that of Germany. Figures announced this month showed that gross register tonnage on order in German shipyards totalled 1,800,000 tons, compared with 4,000,000 tons in Britain.

Other export fields in which West Germany has been catching up and overhauling Britain are chemicals, iron and steel products, electrical and optical goods and motor vehicles.

LONG-TERM CREDITS

Big German industrial firms have gained many long-term contracts by offering long-term credits to economically weak Asian and South American countries, or by willingness to invest in joint projects in these countries. The German negotiators of such deals have been helped by Asian suspicion of Britain as a colonial power, a status which Germany lost in 1918.

Another factor has been the ability of some German firms to offer earlier delivery and firmer agreements on prices than some of their British competitors, a factor evident in recent ship repair con-

Time's Notes On Fur Farming

At the recent fur sale in Lenin grad Russian muskrat was 85 per cent disposed of at prices estimated at 10 per cent below London May levels. London was said to be the major purchaser. Muskrats from Russia are embargoed by the United States.

The American Fur Auctions, New York, will place an offering of approximately 15,000 standard mutation mink and about 7,000 silver fox including pearl and platinum on their August 31 sale. It is expected that the demand for foxes will be good and better prices will be realized than previously.

Increases in loan rates now being instituted in the United States by the government are expected to have little direct effect on the fur industry though it is possible the trade may suffer some side effects in the future. This is the opinion of bankers, factors and other credit men in the fur trade. The Federal Reserve System has taken steps to increase its discount rates to curb the mounting volume of business loans by member banks. This Federal move is designed to slow down inflationary spiral affecting the national economy. Sensitive as the fur industry is it is felt to be quite possible that deflationary pressure on the nation's economy may be felt in the retail fur business. As one fur trade source put it, "the depressing effect on the fur industry is it is felt to be probably will creep in the back door—a m.e.l.y., through reduced consumer purchases of luxury furs."

Fur industry credit reached its peak in July and from now on it looks like liquidation. All the rate hike may do will be to make the cost of money a little higher. Also in a tight money market banks will become more selective in granting loans to new customers. The amount of credit granted by local banks to the fur trade is said to be at a seven year high. One important bank for example reports it has increased its fur trade loans 40 per cent above last year. Fur trade factors' loans are also at near record levels. Factors' discount customers' paper at the banks. Should the banks raise their discount rates, factors too, may have to make their credit more expensive.

The above would seem to indicate that fur farming by British firms to German yards.

This is partly due to the industry of the average German workman and the average 55-hour week, including overtime, which he works in most export industries.

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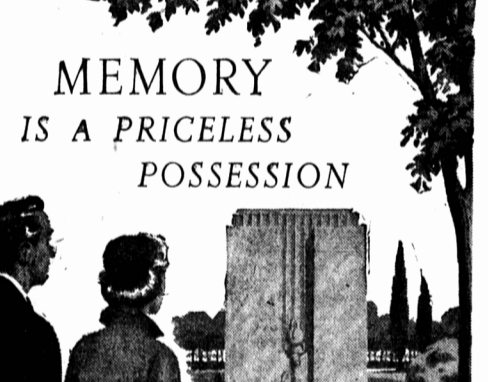
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