



## THE GROUNDSHEET

President ..... JOHN R. FORD  
3757 W. 35th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. .... AM 3-3682

Editor & Secretary ..... RON HURLEY  
2229 Bonnyvale Rd., Vancouver 16, B.C. .... FA 1-8464

Authorized as second class mail by the Post Office Department,  
Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting was held on March 20, 1969 with a sparse crowd of some 37 bodies in attendance (12 of which were serving executive members). The following constitute your executive for 1969.

President, John Ford; Vice President, Nelson Scott; Secretary, Ron Hurley; Editor of Groundsheet, Ron Hurley; Treasurer, Vern Ardagh; C.O's Rep., Basil Morgan.

Elected Executive Officers: W. Ly'e, Bert Stephens, Bill Williams, Bill Robson, Clarence Huff, Robyn Hues, Alan Coe, Walter Tyler.

Appointed to executive by the President: Doug Glenn, J. Graham, Andy Hunter, Ian Douglas, H. McGivern, J. Rosso.

The various committee reports were evidence of a large volume of work extremely well done for which appreciation was expressed by the entire meeting. Perhaps the highlight of the meeting was the rather disturbing news by the editor, Ron Hurley that fast rising costs of printing and postage had endangered the very existence of your Groundsheet. Immediate steps were taken by the assembly to assist in this problem and it was moved and unanimously endorsed by all that commencing immediately. An additional levy of \$1.00 per year (in addition to your \$1.00 dues) be assessed ALL members to help defray the additional expenses. It was also hoped that MORE unpaid dues would be forthcoming to assist those steady paying members in supporting the Freeloaders who have enjoyed the paper in the past. The meeting closed with a note of optimism that all would be better in the future and your 1969 executive have pledged themselves to continue working tirelessly on your behalf . . .

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

I thank the membership one and all for the continuing confidence you have shown by electing me to

another term of office as Your President for 1969. I have had a thoroughly enjoyable year and have worked with the finest executive body a President could wish for. You have assured me of a repeat performance by re-electing another fine group of executive members. Although some of the history of 1968, as previously mentioned by the Secretary, was somewhat of a disappointment, I know we shall overcome all difficulties and that the comradeship and loyalty of ALL members will produce a brighter year for 1969. Thank you all.

JOHN FORD.

## SECRETARYS NOTE: NOW HEAR THIS:

YOUR general meeting has endorsed an additional levy above and beyond your annual dues. This levy is in the amount of \$1.00 for YOUR GROUNDSHEET and is payable immediately and will be most welcome by your secretary and entire executive. PLEASE REMIT NOW: . . .

## MY, HOW THE TIME DOES FLY:

25 years to be precise and many of us are getting some what long in the tooth. It is for this reason that WE ALL should strive to attend this year's 25th Silver Anniversary edition of The Melfa. The eyes may be dimmed, the hearing a little dull, the hair perhaps finito but the warmth of reunion and some added libations will bring back the bloom of youth, for a few hours at least. WONT YOU MAKE AN EXTRA VERY SPECIAL EFFORT TO ATTEND THIS YEAR'S MELFA CELEBRATIONS?

SPECIAL EVENT: 25th ANNIVERSARY MELFA MASTERS GOLF TOURNAMENT.

PLACE: HAZELMERE GOLF CLUB. (Half mile east of Rd. Jct. at Campbell River Rd. and Old Pacific Highway, South Surrey).

TIME: 9:00 a.m. Sharp. ENTRANCE FEE \$2.00.  
GREEN FEES \$3.50 — PRIZES AND TROPHIES.  
TOURNEY CHAIRMAN: BARNEY JONES —  
PHONE ENTRIES TO 531-4479.

PLEASE PHONE YOUR ENTRIES IN ADVANCE AND IF YOU WISH TO RENT CLUBS PHONE THE PRO AT THE HAZELMERE CLUB. . . LETS HAVE A BIG ENTRY.

**EXTRA EVENT**

Its our 25th Anniversary and we have arranged an extra function that includes the ladies. Members and Ladies are invited to an open house at the Sergeant's and Officer's Mess. This has come about by the kind permission of Lt. Col. Deane, Commanding Officer of The Royal Westminster Regiment. The time is 2:30 P.M. Sunday, 25th May, 1969. Refreshments served with Bar Service. Be especially kind to your Lady whether you were late at the Dinner the night before or not. She will enjoy it. We Guarantee.

*Many years ago I wrote an article based on an actual event at The Melfa in 1944. I have been asked to re-run this and I hope that those of you that were present that day, particularly from Charlie Coy, will remember and share a chuckle or two.*

RON HURLEY.

**"THE RESURRECTION OF LOUIE"**

It's incongruous how the mind works; important and major milestones of shattering importance are often readily dismissed while seemingly inconsequential incidents remain clear and evermost in our thoughts. It is just such a well remembered incident that prompts this little tale. On this 25th anniversary of Melfa perhaps it seems trite to treat lightly that which should better be solemnized; but such is the memory of man and it is a well known fact that an old Infantryman associates many of his past memories with more than just a little twinge of humour and this macabre twist of thought became even more pronounced as the going got tougher—extending to death itself. This sort of thinking was a crutch to the Canadian Foot Slogger and a source of complete bewilderment and frustration to his methodical minded adversary.

Louie was a Charley Coy Private. This is a statement of fact as all other items mentioned herein are factual and true. This writer, however, not being acquainted with the legal terminology of libel, will refrain from the use of names. Those who were there (not from choice assuredly) and took an active part in Melfa will readily recognize the incidents as such. Those who were unfortunate (UNFORTUNATE) not to be there, may garner a chuckle or two. Enough of the preamble, on to Louie.

As stated, Louie was a Private, but such a Private has never been seen in any man's army. He was a large (not Herculean mind you—more of a large Teddy Bear type), affable kid from the Jewish quarters of Toronna. He spoke pure Hog-Town and had all the many mannerisms of our buddies from the East. Louie, however, was as apart from his Toronna comrades as he was from those of the West. Briefly, Louie was a funny looking guy. Not funny physically mind you, no more no less regular features than the rest. It was Louie's skin; it had a strange, almost indescribable hue, which can best be defined as that of a long dead Mohawk crossed with the Green Men from Mars.

Nature's unkind colouring of Louie's flesh was a source of much embarrassment to him and the poor kid was the butt of many cruel jibes and jokes. Many thought Louie did not avail himself of the ablution facilities provided and he was, on a few occasions, dumped protestingly under the shower. The detergent qualities of all the soap and water in the world made no impression on Louie's skin and he was soon left alone. Louie withdrew within himself and was a very unhappy boy for sometime—until the day that he was assigned to the Coy Cook house on a more or less permanent basis. This then was the first rebirth of Louie. The transition was amazing. Coy Kitchens supposedly are much the same in anyone's army; not C Coy's, however. There were enough characters in this "Mess" to provide material for a psychiatrist's picnic. They took to Louie. Louie took to them. There were no cooks there; but did they have fun! He changed overnight (except his skin of course) to a smiling, almost cherubic happy man. Louie loved the kitchen, particularly in the serving line; he had control of the grub and had some meaning now. Those who once had scorned no longer bothered him and they were quick to adjust to his new-found temperament. After all he had the spoon, hadn't he? As Louie went so went your ration of grub. He had no say in the quality (who did?) but he sure monopolized the quantity. This idyllic setting was Louie's military home and was to be his until a week before Melfa. He was suddenly and rudely removed. This was the First death of Louie.

C Coy had a commander, affectionately referred to as "Scabby". He became embued with the idea that the Coy needed more Fighting Men and he was determined to strip the deadwood from the kitchen, stores, etc. You guessed it. Such was the fate of Louie. Louie came under the personal charge of a Platoon Leader, fondly called

1939-45



25th ANNIVERSARY  
Regimental Association  
ANNUAL MELFA DINNER

SOMME 1916
ARRAS 1917-1918
VIMY 1917
HILL 70 1917
YPRES
PASSCHENDAELE
GROCOURT QUEANT
CANAL-DU-NORD
AMIENS
VALENCIENNES.

SUNDAY 25th MAY

2:30 p.m. RECEPTION FOR THE LADIES in  
the COMBINED OFFICER'S,  
SERGEANT'S MESS  
(By permission of the Commanding  
Officer Lt. Col. L. K. DEANE CD.)

DINNER MENU

SMORGASBORD

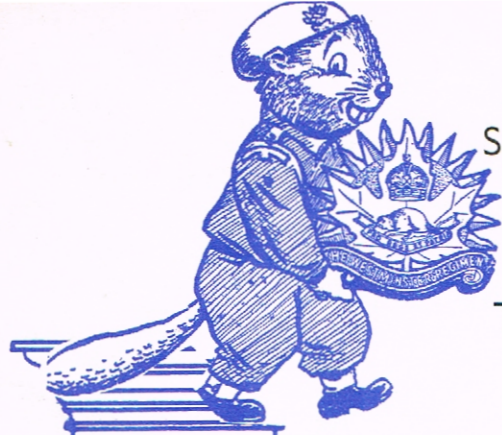
Baron-of-Beef . . . Curried Rice & Chicken . . .  
Meat-Balls . . . Cold Meats . . . Salads . . .  
Cheeses, . . . Vino . . . Vino . . .

PRICE \$3.00



MELFA CROSSING
GOTHIC LINE
CORIANO
LAMONE CROSSING
MISANO RIDGE
NAVIGLIO RIDGE
ITALY 1944-1945
IJSSEL MEER.
DELFIJL POCKET.
NORTHWEST EUROPE.45

1914-18



# MELFA DINNER

Saturday, May 24th, 1969

NELSON SCOTT — CHAIRMAN

# MELFA DAY

## Twenty-fifth Anniversary

# PROGRAMME

May 24th, 1969

- 9:30 a.m. MELFA GOLF TOURNAMENT  
Hazelmere Golf Club.
- 6:15 p.m. CENOTAPH CEREMONY:  
Assembly Drill Hall (Under Bert Hoskin)  
Wreath-laying  
Conducted by Rev. Padre George Turpin.  
March Past ..... Brigadier-General  
E. G. EAKINS MC., CD.

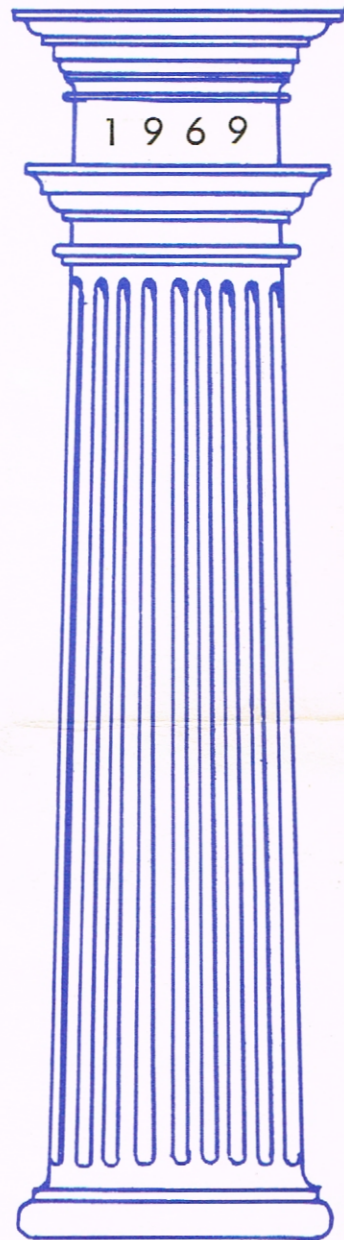
## DINNER - Legion Auditorium

CHAIRMAN - PRESIDENT JOHN FORD

- 7:15 p.m. Cocktails.
- 8:00 p.m. One minutes Silence, Departed Comrades.  
Grace.  
The Queen.  
Dinner.  
President's Report.  
Presentation Golf Trophy.

### INTERMISSION

- Introduction of head table.
- Toast to City of New Westminster . . .  
Norman McAskill
- Reply ..... Acting Mayor Alex. Siego
- Comrades-in-Arms, Brig General Eakins
- Reply & Toast to THE REGIMENT  
H. F. HOSKIN
- Reply ..... Lt. Col. L. K. DEANE CD.
- Introduction of Guest Speaker  
B. V. Morgan
- Toast to THE MELFA  
PETER CROSSMAN
- Bar re-opens for GOOD AND WELFARE



"Dusty" and a certain corporal called many things, fondly or otherwise. Now it is doubtful if Louie had ever heard of T.O.E.T. let alone passed it and when he arrived at the Motor Platoon he was figuratively greener than his skin (which was pretty green). To say that Lt. Dusty and the Corporal were displeased is a colossal understatement. On the eve of a major engagement, what can you do with a green recruit? And a Green green recruit at that. They were, however, used to setbacks like this and as time was of the essence they carried on with the various "O" Groups with little thought to the ministrations of Louie. If others appeared unconcerned over Louie's fate it was not so with him. What was to be the Regiment's finest hour was Louie's private war within himself. It was not that Louie was more frightened than others (anyone who claims he wasn't is a colossal liar), he was, perhaps, just more apprehensive. But then he had never been exposed to the strange and harsh sounds that the Tedeschi had been wont to use. He had never heard the crump crump of the mortar, the screams of the "Moaning Minnie" or the wicked shrieks of the "88's". Louie had tremendous pride however and never verbally expressed concern for himself. He had a terrible premonition that he would let the others down because of his inexperience and it gnawed at him like a toothache. He constantly reminded the Lt. and the Corporal of his failings and begged them not to give him too responsible a task, lest he be the cause of the platoon's complete annihilation. It was with these misgivings, then, that Louie went to war.

Melfa is history. You know the story. There were no failures, personal or otherwise. Men dug down within them and came forth with courage and energy they never knew existed. Yes, even Louie. He personally ran a couple of messages to Tac H.Q. that would have made Garcia swell with pride. All was well with the Regiment and Louie until—well, things just came to a halt. C Coy was at the apex of Able Coy's hard won bridgehead that hot morning of the 24th when they were stopped cold and pinched in the jaws of a gargantuan "Stonk". Casualties inevitably mounted and the stench of the dead became nauseating in the hot morning sun. The entire Coy was jittery and particularly Lt. Dusty's platoon of which Louie was now an integral part. He had acquitted himself well in the rough early going and this waiting, sitting duck type of warfare was not for him. He was heard to exclaim many times through the din of battle that this was the end for him. He was going back to the kitchen or they could lock

him in the booby hatch. Louie needn't have worried—you see he became a casualty, a mortal one at that. In the heat and glory of Melfa was the second death of Louie. Now death is usually final (earthwise, that is) and we mere mortals are generally resigned to this fact; but even in death Louie had to go and botch things up and his personal Valhalla was short lived (lived?). Now Louie, being of the Jewish faith would probably deny this vehemently, but a sort of miracle took place (Miracle of the Melfa) and he was resurrected. Mystifying? You should have seen Louie when he learned of his sad demise. All on account of that strange looking skin of his too.

As mentioned before the day was hot and the stench of battle was not exactly like Attar of Roses. Major Scabby, being a sensitive man, ordered the dead removed from the battlefield and things cleaned up in general. Complying with this urgent request, Coy H.Q. dispatched a truck and a few men under the command of that lovable C. Coy Transport Sgt (he later was to become famous for the kind and considerate manner in which he personally acted as point man for a Sqdn. of German Panzers). As is well known, burial detail was not the most sought after task and the Sgt. and his men carried out the job with the greatest dispatch. On arrival at the river bank, which was to be the final resting place of our departed comrades, it was found that one of the victims was not readily identified and the Padre of course began immediate enquire. The Sgt. knew who it was of course. None other than Pte. Louie. Hadn't he seen that strange looking skin before? Of course. It was sad but there it was and nothing could be done about it. (It was said later that there was a striking resemblance between Louie and the unfortunate victim particularly the color of the skin.) Now it is well known the transformation of casualties exposed to the hot sun, but somehow the Sgt. had overlooked this and after all he could believe his own eyes, couldn't he? Louie had been a character but he would be missed.

The solemn and ever sad ceremony of burial continued and while it is not known of the presence of a Star of David Louie was given his due accord and the subsequent notifications to next of kin, etc., began their long and tortuous journey homeward.

Meanwhile, back (as they say in the Westerns) at C Coy area things were still hot and sticky and for the moment life was for the living and time for mourning was not yet at hand. In due course the Cowboys of the B.C.D.'s broke through with their horses and the at-

mosphere calmed considerably. It was a time for breathing and recollections, of satisfaction and personal relief that you had come through unscathed. The roll of transport echoed the union of the Coy once more and it was more back slapping as you saw old faces again, congratulations for a job well done, and regrets and true sorrow for those pals who had answered the last roll call. It was too bad about Joe and George and Mac and yeah, too bad about Louie too, he was a funny lookin' guy, but all in all a pretty good kid. This last expression came from none other than our old friend the Sgt. and listening behind him in his slit trench was a very interested party indeed. "What do you mean, too bad about old Louie," was the plaintive cry, "what happened to him?" The Sgt. turned to answer. "Whatsamatta? Didinja hear?" His words cut off abruptly and a strange pale look stole over his face, in fact he seemed to waver just the slightest. There with a demanding look, stood Louie, perhaps a paler shade of green, but green nevertheless and still Louie. Suffice it to say the explanations were many. Now you would have thought that a man would be happy to learn he was no longer among the mourned—but not Louie. He was loud in his protestations and more determined than ever to hasten his return to the kitchen. He was temporarily saved from further indignations by being quietly given special leave. Yes, leave in the middle of the battlefield. Seems they were holding some Jewish Festival in Naples and Louie was the only one qualified to go. The Sgt. left in the wake, was heard to mutter several times, "He was so green! Green I tell you! Just like Louie."

In his hurry to depart it is doubtful Louie even said "thank you". As far as is known Louie achieved his one desire. He was returned to the kitchen and was still around when Adolph pulled the pin on himself. He of course had to be taken back on strength and it was some time before the brass at H.Q. were satisfied of his official return and kicked through with some pay. In the quiet and calm of his kitchen however, Louie was happy. He was back among friends.

It is 25 long summers since Melfa and Louie seems to have vanished from the scene. It is hoped that he is still among us, and who knows, with all this talk of interplanetary travel and such, and if he still has that lovely green skin, why he'd be a natural as earth's first ambassador to outer space.

RON HURLEY.

## THE REGIMENT REPORTS . . .

It was about eighteen months ago that The Royal Westminster Regiment was assigned to a new and important role as an integral part of the newly formed Pacific Region Strike Battalion. Along with our sister regiments on the coast, The Canadian Scottish of Victoria and the Seaforths in Vancouver, the "Westies" were to provide one company of one hundred all ranks to be available at all times to the Strike Battalion. This commitment was to be additional to our normal duties as an independent infantry regiment. The "Wetsies" tackled the new job with their usual mixture of good humour and enthusiasm, and the first year's training culminated with a week-long exercise over Easter at H.M.C.S. "Quadra" on Vancouver Island, working alongside the other components of the strike force. The general opinion at that time was that the training had proved worthwhile, and the Concentration had been a very satisfactory one. However the Regiment realised that we had only just begun the job of producing a highly efficient, mobile, and well-trained force. That was a year ago. Since then we have stepped-up and extended our training, determined to do even better the second year. On April 6th last, we set out for "Quadra" again.

The previous year the emphasis had been on section and platoon tactics, with a company exercise at the end of the week. This year, in addition, we trained at scouting and patrols, cliff-climbing, and wound up with a full battalion attack at Nanoose Bay. This involved an "advance to contact", setting up a defended area overnight, and a battalion withdrawal. This time we had the assistance of two Escort Destroyers of the R.C.N., H.M.C.S. "Chaudiere" and H.M.C.S. "Columbia", in making our assault landings. No doubt some of you read the infantile and petulant press "coverage" of the exercise in the local papers; it seems that the Fourth Estate, with its propensity for free liquor and food, missed out on a lunch at the Navy's expense. Their nasty little reports were the result. (Older Association Members will no doubt compare, somewhat ruefully, this kind of treatment at the hands of the press today with the hysterical and gushing support they received 25 and 50 years ago . . .) In spite of this unfortunate incident the exercise was entirely successful. Everyone involved worked tremendously hard, learned a great deal, and enjoyed themselves in the bargain! Our Colonel, LtCol Deane, and the O.C. the "Westie" contingent, Major "Larry" Watkins, have both expressed their appreciation for a fine effort on the part of all concerned.

No scheme of this nature would be complete if it did not produce its crop of new stories. Like the lad who, just several minutes after we hit the beach, returned with two valuable "prisoners" from the British Columbia Regiment, the "enemy", "liberating" a quantity of useful stores at the same time. Or the other young soldier who never quite mastered the sentry's challenge, and kept hissing, "Halt! Who goes there? Friendly foe?" And, of course, we had an "Awkward Squad" who managed to lose the sling from his rifle. Even the veterans amongst us could not figure THAT one out. The solution was quite simple really; somehow the top swivel came loose and then he unwittingly trod on the trailing end . . .

The three infantry regiments at the exercise competed for the Infantry Sword, emblematic of the best outfit present. The "Westies" were very narrowly beaten by the Seaforths into second place. However we felt this was only fitting as their Colonel, LCol D. J. Anderson, is retiring very shortly. And now we are all looking forward to next year when, we understand, the concentration will be held in the excellent training area of the Chilcotin . . .

The Regiment would like to remind the Association at the City Hall parking area on May 4th, starting at that our Annual Parade and Inspection will take place 2:30 p.m. All our old friends, and new ones too, will be very welcome at that time, should they like to attend.

Finally, many serving members of the Regiment are looking forward very much to meeting the Association again at your annual "Melfa" dinner. See you then!

H. A. SEDDON.

#### FROM THE POST:

Basil Morgan received a warm Letter from Joe Tattersall of 5 Kirklands Avenue, Balldon, Shipley Yorkshire, England, who remarked on the note by Charlie Richmond of Alan Coe. Joe recalled that he had been responsible for evacuating Alan after his wounds on the Melfa. Joe you may remember was built quite close to the ground and he recalled this with a good deal of satisfaction because he felt that a taller man would have been decapitated by the intense machine gun fire. As an adjunct to this action Joe recalled that later on board train in England he overheard a group of Canadian soldiers discussing as they termed it the actions of this brave young officer who fired the PIAT so effectively. With pardonable pride Joe says he identified himself and we can only concur with his actions. Sorry to hear of your long illness Joe but pleased to note of your improvement. How about some of your marvellous cartoons for our Groundsheet, Joe . . .

#### LEST WE FORGET



James Herbert Sclater  
Duncan Dr., Ladner, B.C.  
William Crukshank, Van., B.C., 47th Bn.  
Bernard Barton, New Westminster, B.C.  
Paul Dekker, .... Whonnock, B.C., W.R.

From THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 854, New Westminster, B.C.



E.G. SHANNON  
940 DIXON ST  
RICHMOND BC