



The GROUND SHEET

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF
THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSN.

104th — 47th — 131st — The Westminster Regt.

Dedicated to the Ideals and Comradeship We Knew in Two World Wars

Vol. 12, No. 3.

Box 854, New Westminster, B.C.

May, 1962.

Annual Melfa Dinner

THE ASTOR HOTEL

Kingsway, Burnaby

(FOUR BLOCKS FROM SIMPSON-SEARS)

Saturday, May 26th, 1962

7 p.m.

EXECUTIVE, 1962 - 1963

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
P. O. BOX 854
NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C.

President JOHN HOU
4781 Kingsway, Burnaby 1, B.C. HE 1-9855

Vice-President NELSON SCOTT
335 Churchill St., New Westminster, B. C., LA 1-3294

Past President SCOTTY LOW
1481 Best Street, White Rock, B.C., WI 7-7385

Secretary BOB CARTER
931 Walls Avenue, Coquitlam, New Westminster, B.C.
WE 9-7743

Treasurer VERN ARDAGH
c/o Bank of Montreal, 6th Ave. & 6th Street
New Westminster, B.C., LA 6-1551

C.O.'S. Rep. WALTER HOGG
1109 Seventh Avenue, New Westminster, B.C.
LA 2-6793

EXECUTIVE:

Bert Stephens 674 Gibbons Drive
Richmond, B.C. BR 7-8476

Ron Hurley 2229 Bonnyvale
Vancouver 16, B.C. FA 1-8464

Tom Forman 8118 Twelfth Avenue
Burnaby 3, B. C. LA 1-1723

THE GROUND SHEET

President	W. S. (SCOTTY) LOW
1481 Beth St., White Rock	WE 7-7385
Secretary	R. (BOB) H. CARTER
931 Walls Street, Coquitlam	WE 9-7743
Editor	TOM FORMAN
8118 — 12th Avenue, Burnaby 3	LA 1-1723
Joe Kingsnorth	9680 Lyndhurst Street
New Westminster, B.C.	WE 9-1513
Bill Williams	927 Walls Avenue
Coquitlam, New Westminster, B.C.	WE 9-0190
Barney Jones	256 King George Hwy.
R.R. 2, White Rock, B.C.	WI 8-9479
H. W. Parker	11655 — 75A Avenue
R.R. 9, North Surrey,	Newton 451R1
Red Williams	9132 — 120th Street
North Surrey, B.C.	Newton 99X2

"WAS YOUR JOURNEY REALLY NECESSARY?"

April 2, 1962.

The 17th anniversary of V.E. Day is fast approaching (You remember that, it was the cessation of the "War" that was fought to amend the blunders of "The Great War" that was fought to "End all Wars") and although you may not be convinced, what with all the 'Police Actions', Algerias, Koreas, Vietnams etc., there was an official armistice declared in that May of 1945.

Notwithstanding the rather present shaky condition of the universe, much has been written by many by way of explanation (not too clearly I might add) with respect to that 1939-45 fiasco. Politicians, War Correspondents and particularly frustrated Generals, victorious and defeated alike, have put ink to their thoughts and have thus committed their blunders to posterity. I am sure you are acquainted with the more notable volumes — Churchill's famous works, Eisenhower's *'Crusade in Europe'*, Mark Clark's *'Calculated Risk'*, Montgomery's *'Command in Battle'*, Rommel's Diary, Quentin Reynold's *'Dress Rehearsal'*, W. L. Shirer's epic *'The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich'* ad infinitum. I have read all these and many many more and, although, I have emerged somewhat bewildered, I did find them all quite entertaining. Now where, you may ask, are the biographies of Pte. Smith,

Sgt. Jones and Corp. Brown? You might suppose that these chaps never committed themselves and left the literary world to the 'Brasshats', don't you believe it. I have discovered their source and they may not be quite so articulate, but are, if anything, more prolific than the first group. These people have been infinitely more considerate in distribution too. You won't have to pay exorbitant prices at fancy book-dealers for their memoirs; two bits to four bits at any newstand will supply you with enough know how and tactical information to become a 'General' in the next one. These stories can be found in all the better 'Men's Magazines' such as 'Man', 'Sir', 'Click', 'Climax', 'War Adventure', 'KE', 'But', etc. and numerous others — there is definitely no shortage of material. These periodicals are most informative and will satisfy the most curious of minds. I have, for example, finally discovered who won the war and what with all those Generals writing this has been no easy task.

In fact if the War Office had consulted Smith and Jones they could have conducted the entire Global Campaign with a handful of these glossy-print commandos. This would, of course, have left the Generals bereft of writing material but no doubt they would have all become brilliant raconteurs at the Officers Club. I might explain that all these non-commissioned scribes are Americans, but that shouldn't disturb you too much, after all they are our brothers or is it cousins, in any case they were on the same side — I think. If you haven't yet read any of these action packed accounts please *Run* to the nearest newstand and do so. You will be absolutely amazed at the prowess of these chaps; and the relative ease and courage with which they dispatched the enemy. By way of example: You probably all think that Montgomery and his 'Desert Rats' won the battle of El Alemein. Not so. It so happens that by a most unprecedented coincidence, there was an American Infantry Sgt. attached to one of the 8th Army Signals H. Q. This was no ordinary chap however. Not only was he an expert on communications, he was a better tactician than Rommel and just happened to speak finer German than Von Ribbentrop. This most modest fellow, who, by the way, had never been off the farm in Iowa, before the war, cleverly intercepted the German H. Q. code and forthwith rode out to the desert in a captured German Scout Car and spent the day directing the Desert Luftwaffe in a massive Air Strike against their

own strategic positions. The Luftwaffe were never better and almost obliterated the Afrika Korps. In the confusion Monty simply mounted up and chased the Krauts effortlessly back to Cape Bon. True to tradition this noble chap sought no glory and recognition and it is doubtful if Monty and the 'Rats' are aware to this day of the vital role played by this simple American farm boy. As they say — truth will out and it is most heartening to have this revealed in print at last.

Then there's the 'Burma Campaign'. You undoubtedly still believe that the late Erroll Flynn chased the Japs out of this country. Pure Hollywood — don't believe a word of it. It was two American Sgts. (Those Sgts. were sure active,) who were parachuted to organize effective guerrilla resistance. Now one of these chaps was a hardnosed kid from the Bronx (All Bronx kids are hard nosed) and the other was a sharecropper from Georgia. They had one thing in common though. They both spoke every dialect peculiar to the vast South East Asia Command and fluent Japanese for good measure. These talented chaps and their organized natives so completely disorganized the Japanese General Staff that it now appears completely unnecessary for all those Aussies, New Zealanders and Indian Troops to have been there at all; to say nothing of so many of them perishing from malaria, beri-beri and snake bites. In addition to all these variegated activities, these fellows took time out to make love to all the native ladies in this vast area; much to the chagrin of the male natives and Japs alike. It is believed in some sources that the results of these amorous infiltrations are responsible for the expression 'Ugly American', much used in that part of the world to this day. Then, of course, there was Stalin-grad. This great battle, considered by many military historians as the major turning point of the Second World War, was a glorious achievement, or so it would appear. Now it can be told. They had help; this time from a rugged American Private who, you can be sure, was fluent in Russian, German and every other central European tongue. (This is always a real help). All this fellow did was to organize a group of patriotic peasant women into a ruthless band of killers and saboteurs, who it seems, were solely responsible for cutting off the German escape route. The Russian High Command can be forgiven, of course, for they had no idea this admirable fellow was around. They, in their ignorance, suffered

enormous casualties in what they thought was a glorious victory. Von Paulas didn't know of this either, (He doesn't mention it in his war diaries,) but then, of course, he wasn't supposed to know. And what about our own war in sunny Italy? All of those people in the north you thought were 'Partisans' were, in fact, systematically organized by a group of Americans (mostly Sgts., Corps., and Pvts.) into highly capable roving bands of commandos. Naturally they all spoke the language, loved Vino and were irresistible to the 'Signorinas'. It can now be told, that all those hill and river crossings were completely uncalled for — and you can all be truly grateful to those dedicated G.I.'s for your prolonged and much enjoyed Mediterranean sabbatical. Their efforts were so pronounced that it is reported that Von Kesselring went home to Germany, a frustrated and beaten man and that his successor, when appraised of the intolerable situation, dispatched an emissary to Switzerland to sue for separate peace. It appears that there was not one corner of the Globe that these remarkable vigilantes left uncovered and the 'Free' world should ever be thankful. Now before I leave you to explore this wonderful world of adventure for yourselves, bear with me while I tell you of just one more of this band of talented emancipators. This time he was a young and green second 'Looie' (It figures — this was one of the few schemes that failed!), who, in fact, never got overseas at all but was part of an Army Technical Warfare team somewhere in the southern U.S. Now these people were constantly designing and suggesting new and unique, if not always orthodox, methods of winning the war in a hurry. Some wanted to harness the sun, others to direct shooting stars and others had suggested dislodging the polar icecaps and floating them into enemy shipping lanes; but this 'Looie' came up with a dandy. In the course of his studies at dear old 'U', he had somehow become fascinated with the study of the mating habits of Bats — the furry winged type that sleep upside down all day and fly around all night sucking up blood etc. His plan was simplicity itself. He would attach miniature, but highly volatile, incendiary bombs to the wings of Bats, turn them loose over large concentrated areas of enemy territory, which in turn would onset the greatest conflagration ever known to man. He did, quite logically, suggest Tokyo because of the flimsy construction and the density of the populace, as the first target. Surprisingly enough, he actually got the go ahead

to do research on this plan and he bent to his task with great diligence. It was no trick for the lab boys to come up with the miniature flame bombs and now all he required was the co-operation of the bats. A cave in the southwest provided the answer to the number of bats required; there was purported to be 30 to 50 million of them jostling about and he estimated 12 million would be ample to cinder Tokyo like a bride's toast. Several thousand of the furry 'Spitfires' were rounded up and testing began in earnest.

At first the experimets were somewhat discouraging for the Bats didn't like daylight and were lonesome for their caves, so unsportingly died by the hundreds. This was solved when it was discovered that Bats, somewhat like homing pigeons, have a built-in radar and could find their way unerringly back to roosts and the eaves of buildings blindfolded. So they were actually blindfolded and now, thinking it perpetual night, flew about with great abandon. Success seemed imminent and final testing areas were soon readied. Mock villages were constructed on a little used air runway which possessed only a few barracks and some rather large, obsolete hangars, which were now used for storing experimental explosives and weapons etc. Thousands of bats were fired up and there, before a large gathering of visitors from the Pentagon and the Senate, they were to be turned loose to vent their fiery vengeance on the hated enemy. Disaster struck quickly. The bats, their radar seemingly completely out of control, soared out and landed everywhere but where intended. The entire place, with exception of the mock village, was a raging inferno. The Hangars blew up in a roar of flames along with the living quarters and all the transport and the dignitaries themselves were put to flight to escape the wrath of these fuzzy fire-balls. Soon all that remained was the crackling of flames, acrid smoke, the mock village intact, some highly embarrassed officials, a very disconsolate 'Looie' and the bats, by now quite well-fricaseed, but truly in the 'Belfry'. So much for success — which only proves that even these remarkable chaps were human after all and had to fall once in awhile. Well, there you have it; a brief resume of the wonderful world of adventure that waits you in these truly revealing publications. I hope you enjoy them and when you have familiarized yourselves with the truly exceptional exploits of these military globe-

trotters, ask yourselves this question — WAS YOUR JOURNEY REALLY NECESSARY?

(Ron Hurley).

READERS WRITE . . .

J. A. Breitenback writes with a bouquet for the "Groundsheet" (Thank you, it isn't very often we of the editorial staff get a compliment and we certainly treasure those we do receive). Harold Russ Miller of San Fernando, California, writes advising that he has only recently heard of our association — apparently the last contact he had with Westminster Regiment members was on discharge at which time he returned to the United States — welcome to the association, Russ. Mrs. W. Hindle penned a word of thanks to the association for the life membership card recently presented to her husband, Bill. From her letter it is obvious that Bill is very proud of the card and what it represents — Lt. Col. Fred Simpson has, as you probably all know, provided all these life membership cards and does a wonderful job on them. Gerald Neve of George Derby H&O Centre, 88 years young and a former 47th Battalion member, writes thanking the association for his life membership. He advises that he donated his own war diary to the Historical Section, Ottawa. The diary contained notes maintained by Mr. Neve of the front line action during World War I. — Milt Smalley writes advising of addresses for two of our missing members — thanks Milt, we only wish that more of our members would follow your lead. — Scottie Clifford (RSM) advises of his new address so as to ensure receipt of association mail. — D. Picone sends in his dues for both 1962 and 1963. — J. J. R. Snowden writes, enclosing his dues for a life membership. — Mrs. R. G. Holtby forwards her husband's dues and advises that he is presently a patient in Saughnessy Hospital. Sincerely hope, Mr. Holtby, that you will not have too long a stay in hospital. — Mr. Robert E. Hardy writes advising that much of his mail from the association is going astray. Your new address has been noted, Bob, and thanks for the dues. — Raymond O. Jones writes advising of the recent passing of his father, Meredith Owen Jones, also an ex-Westminster — please accept our sincerest sympathy in your recent bereavement. — J. E. Bus Richardson forwards the name of an ex-47th Battalion member who is interested in the association. Welcome to the association Bill Hopkins. — Mr. C. P. Armour writes advising the secretary that his name had

been omitted from the list of life members published in the "Groundsheet" of last issue — I think now, Mr. Armour, we now have this pretty well straightened out, our sincerest apology. — S. Burnby writes enclosing a clipping from the Kamloops Sentinel advising of the death of Paul Udesen on February 10th, 1962, the association's sincerest condolences are extended to Paul's family. — Bert Sutton (RSM) writes forwarding his dues. He also comments that he knew all the life members listed in the last issue. — Charlie Collison writes advising of his new address. — George Hughes, presently Master of the S. S. Berkshire, writes from Mexico congratulating the author of the article published in appreciation of Nelson Scott's effort in a recent issue of the "Groundsheet". — Bill Gamon writes congratulating the staff for the fine job in the last publication of the "Groundsheet". He comments briefly on the last smoker and makes specific mention of the floor show. (This is the first reply we the editorial staff have received as regards the preference with reference entertainment at the smoker. The staff would greatly appreciate expression of opinions from members as to what type of entertainment, if any, we should have at our annual smokers). Thank you very much Bill Gamon.

THAT TRANSPORT CONTROVERSY

Sgt. Moorehouse,
"A" Coy, Tran. Sgt.
Dear Stan:

In reply to your letter, through the Groundsheet, praising "A" Coy Transport personnel and which you were going to bring up at the General Meeting — but you were A.W.O.L., like many more.

I want to tell you, Stan, of a few little things that "B" Coy personnel performed. I remember a certain Major we had in Italy who drove a Bren Gun Carrier back to Camp with the front bogie wheel missing — not saying how the bogie wheel got smashed; but that takes some doing Stan; and then I remember one time again in Italy, I found myself without a D.R.; but I had a damned good soldier by the name of Hamersley standing by and immediately gave him his orders and my pride and joy, my Norton. Three days later I see Hamersley riding in the water wagon. I never did find out what happened to my Norton; and then again this time in Holland I had a R.C.O.C. fitter by the name of Humphries, and one night after a "B" Coy Dance, Humphries borrowed the

Major's Scout car (unknown to the Major), to take a girl home from the dance. On returning back to camp, he got either sleepy or hungry, I don't know which, but he ran the Major's car plum into a farmer's kitchen and right into his bedroom. I went to see him in hospital a few days later, but he sure wasn't in any mood to do any talking.

I could go on and on, talking about good old "B" Coy, Stan, but I think I had better close for now and leave a bit of space for some of the other Transport Sgts.

So will sign off now. Hope to see you all at the Melfa dinner.

Sgt. E. Williams,
(Red to you)
"B" Coy Sgt.

"CANADA AT WAR"

The members attention is drawn to a television series "Canada at War". It is a half hour program and commenced Wednesday, April 4th, at 10:30 p.m. on CBUT. The series continues for thirteen weeks and is reputed to be excellent coverage.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FLIGHT

Just prior to preparing this issue for publication, Vernon Ardagh, was contacted to ascertain the numbers of acceptances received to date on the charter flight to Europe next year. Thirteen days after mailing the initial mimeograph explanatory note, Vernon has 23 firm acceptances. He advises that if this sojourn is to be a success we will require many more participants.

MELFA DINNER

The Melfa Dinner this year will again be held at the Astor Hotel, commencing at 7:00 p.m., May 26th, 1962. This year we are most fortunate in having as our main speaker Lt. Col. Gordon C. Corbould, D.S.O., our Commanding Officer during World War II.

A good time is assured and we of the executive hope to see the biggest turnout ever.

ANNUAL REPORT — 1961-1962 SICK AND VISITING COMMITTEE

Your Committee is composed of Tommy Thomson, and myself as Chairman, this past year we made fourteen visits to Shaughnessy Hospital and eight visits to George

Derby Hospital. We visited in all one hundred and thirty-two of our Comrades, leaving with them the usual gifts of cigarettes, tobacco, pocket novels, chocolates, playing cards and socks, and also the knowledge that they aren't forgotten. For the letters of appreciation many thanks.

Your Committee enrolled ten new members into our Association. Four of our hospitalized Comrades passed on during this past year, Sam Powell, W. B. Grant, Fred Durrant and Paul Udesen.

Expenditures for the year were:

Canteen Credits	\$ 31.80
Comforts distributed on visitations	\$ 182.18
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 213.98
Against this we had donations of:	\$ 75.00
	<hr/>
Leaving a Net Cost of:	\$ 138.98

Thanks to those members who accompanied us on our visitations, and also to those who assisted by contributing cash and pocket novels.

NOTE: Bert Stephens, Committee Chairman, requests that any members that have pocket novels in "A1" shape be asked to make these available to the Hospital Visiting Committee.

WHAT BECAME OF KELLY? — APRIL, 1962

G. BORTOLUSSI	POWEL RIVER, B.C.
R. S. BOYD	WESTVIEW, B.C.
NORM D'ARCY	NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.
J. L. FRASER	NORTH SURREY, B.C.
G. GRAY	NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.
ALFRED D. LAW	NORTH SURREY, B.C.
BUD MABBETT	WELLINGTON, B.C.
G. FABIAN ROBERTS	CHILLIWACK, B.C.

From THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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