

# QUEEN'S OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA

On **1 February 1910** the Regiment was officially gazetted, and headquarters were established in the former Dominion Lands Office at 202 Main Street.

The availability of the number "79" was fortuitous and enabled the new Canadian regiment to emulate its namesake regiment in Scotland, the 79th (Cameron Highlanders) Regiment of Foot. This association with the imperial Camerons became official on 31 January 1911 when King George V authorized the affiliation of the two Highland regiments.

The Regiment's first Honourary Colonel was the **1st Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal, Sir Donald A. Smith, GCMG GCVO PC DL FRS.**

On 9 October 1910 the Regiment received its first stand of Colours, presented by Mrs. D.C. Cameron, wife of the Honourary Lieutenant Colonel. Eight months later, on 22 June 1911 a contingent of 61 Camerons participated in the coronation of King George V.

Theoretical and practical training took place on evenings and weekends and included instruction in weapons handling, first aide, field craft and drill. Shooting took place at St. Charles Range with more intensive training occurred during the summer, at Camp Sewell.

## WORD WAR 1

The Commanding Officer of the 79th Cameron Highlanders placed his regiment at the disposal of the Department of Militia and Defense. However, as militia regiments were now to remain in Canada acting as drafting units, only a company of 7 officers and 250 other ranks were initially accepted. They mustered at Camp Valcartier, Quebec where, along with the 50th Gordons, 72nd Seaforth, and 91st Canadian Highlanders, they formed one of the new overseas units- the **16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish) CEF.** The battalion left Quebec for England with the first contingent on 30 September. Their new home, Salisbury Plain, would soon suffer its worst winter in years.

The 79th Camerons next recruiting task was to supply a company (10 officers, 250 other ranks) for the **27th (City of Winnipeg) Battalion CEF.** The Camerons also provided the second-in-command and signal section. The 27th served in France and Belgium with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Canadian Division. It received no further Cameron reinforcement drafts so that due to casualties inflicted during the course of the war the Cameron Company eventually lost its identity.

The first complete Cameron battalion was formed on 18 December 1914. The **43rd Battalion (Cameron Highlander of Canada) CEF** spent the winter of 1914-1915 training in Winnipeg. They left Winnipeg on 29 May to the cheers of thousands. At Montreal they embarked for England on 1 June 1915 with a complement of 39 officers and 1020 other ranks. The 43rd provided two reinforcement drafts for the 16th Battalion, after which the 79th Cameron Highlanders of Canada Overseas Drafting Detachment in Winnipeg brought up the 43rd to strength. Eventually the 43rd were given a place in the 9th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Canadian Division. They proceeded to France on 21 February 1916.

# QUEEN'S OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA

In January 1916 two more Cameron overseas battalions were authorized. The **179th Battalion CEF** was formed from the Overseas Drafting Detachment and mobilized in February. They spent the summer of 1916 in training at Camp Hughes. The **174th Battalion CEF** mobilized trained at Camp Hughes during the summer of 1917. Both units were absorbed by reserve battalions, which provided reinforcements for the units serving in France.

On 24 October 1923, his Majesty King George V was "graciously pleased" to grant permission for the Regiment to be named the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada.

## WORD WAR 2

The Camerons were officially notified of the impending war on 1 September when ordered to mobilize and recruit to a strength of 807 all ranks. Within seventeen days the Battalion was at full strength.

In April 1940 the Cameron turned in their kilts, and the new battledress trousers and jackets were issued. On 24 May, the Battalion moved to Camp Shilo, Manitoba for unit training in section to battalion level brigade exercises.

The Battalion embarked for England on 16 December 1940, arriving in the UK on Christmas Eve and spent the next year and a half in the Aldershot area.

On 19 August 1942 the Camerons took part in a large-scale raid on the French port city of **Dieppe**. The Camerons landed at Pourville Beach and although the Camerons made the deepest penetration of the day, the main landing at Dieppe had been unsuccessful, and the Battalion was unable to carry its objectives.

The Camerons returned to France at Graye-sur-Mer on 07 July 1944 as part of 6 Brigade, 2nd Canadian Division, and took up positions at Carpiquet. From there the Camerons fought through the Channel Coast, the Scheldt, the Rhineland, Holland and finally into Germany in 1945 and the end of the war. Garrison duty kept the Battalion in Germany and Holland until the end of September when they returned to England.

The Camerons left the U.K. onboard the RMS. Queen Elizabeth on 13 November 1945. They arrived home in Winnipeg at the CPR station where thousands had gathered to meet them. To the strains of "The March of The Cameron Men," they paraded through the rotunda and thus ended the Regiments part in World War Two.

## TODAY

Today, as an infantry regiment within the Army Reserve, the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada form part of the combat arms capability of **38 Canadian Brigade Group**. Organized as part of the Winnipeg Infantry Tactical Group, the Camerons fulfill both military and ceremonial functions at home and abroad. As an infantry regiment, the unit's main focus is provide trained infantry soldiers to meet the operational requirements of the Canadian Forces. Whether it is augmenting Regular Force units on overseas operations such as Bosnia or Afghanistan or fighting floods and forest fires at home, the Camerons provide a ready source of trained soldiers.

## **407 RCACC**

### **QUEEN'S OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA**

The cadet corps, originally named the Winnipeg Highland Cadet Corps, was formed on **April 17<sup>th</sup> 1913** by members of Winnipeg's Scottish community and headed by W.G. Bell. LCol Bell then a Major in the Cameron Highlanders of Canada was the cadet corps first Commanding Officer.

Through community efforts the cadets were completely outfitted in highland uniform. The uniform worn by the cadets was that of the Cameron Highlanders with the exception of a dark blue tunic instead of scarlet and a diced Glengarry.

**Major G. Curruthers** was appointed as the first Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel of the cadet corps and contributed largely to the early success of the corps. In March of 1914 the corps became officially affiliated with the Cameron Highlanders of Canada. Later that same year Mrs. Curruthers presented the cadet corps with a stand of Colours, one of the few corps in Canada to have its own Colours. These original Colours can be seen in the Cameron Chapel of the First Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg.

During the First World War 130 former cadets volunteered for active service overseas. Of these cadets 9 were killed in action, 2 died of wounds and 17 were wounded. As well 7 were granted commissions and 10 were decorated: 1 CMG, 1 DSO, 1MC and 7 MM with 1 bar.

In December of **1930** the Winnipeg Highland Cadet Corps was granted authority to change its name to The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada Cadet Battalion. With this change the cadets also adopted the uniforms of the affiliated unit, including cap badge, blue hackle and dark blue glengarry.

During the Second World War the corps saw 121 former members volunteer with 8 being killed in action, 18 wounded and 7 being decorated or mentioned in dispatches.

As in the past today's Cameron Cadets are active in community and cadet activities ranging from fund raising, and legion activities to field exercises, adventure training and summer camps. Regular training is conducted on Thursday evening between 6:30 and 9:15 at Minto Armouries located at 969 St. Matthews Avenue. In addition to the regular weekday training the cadets also participate in a number of weekend exercises conducted in different areas throughout Manitoba and NW Ontario.

In addition to the regular training cadets can participate in the following optional activities; Pipes and Drums, Marksmanship, Biathlon, and Drill Team. Optional training is conducted on Saturday mornings.

## 407 RCACC

# REGIMENTAL DRESS AND TRADITIONS

The Corps follow many of the regimental dress and traditions of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada and of the affiliated British Highlanders.

### The Colonel-In-Chief

The Colonel-In-Chief is a honorary title given to a member of the Royal Family to denote them as a patron of the regiment. The present Colonel-In-Chief is HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh. The Colonel-In-Chief visited the Regiment HQ and Cadet Corps for the first time in October of 2002 where he was presented with a miniature of the Colours and a regimental coin. His predecessors were Their Majesties, King George V and King George VI.

### The Colours

The flags carried by infantry regiments on parade and in the past into battle are more properly referred to as Colour. There are two distinct Colours, the first being the Queen's Colour and the second being the Regimental Colour. The Queen's Colour is a Union Jack bearing the Regiments name and in the past the regiments number. The regimental Colour for the Cameron's is a Royal Blue standard bearing the Regimental crest and battle honours.

In 1914 the cadet corps was presented with its own stand of Colours, one of the few cadet corps in Canada to have Colours. These were later retired and are now on display in the Regimental Chapel. The corps today parades the Canadian National flag and the Army Cadet Banner. Our current banner was presented to the corps at the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Freedom of the City Parade in **2008**.



### Tartan

The cadets wear the **Cameron of Erracht** tartan of the old Imperial Queen's Own Highlanders who have since been amalgamated with other Scottish Regiments. It is believed that the tartan was specifically designed for the regiment by the mother or grandmother of Alan Cameron, the founder of the regiment. Traditionally present or past members of the regimental family were the only ones entitled to wear the tartan, though it can be seen today worn by people with no attachment to the regiment.

The pipers of the regiment are also entitled to wear the Royal Stewart tartan in recognition of being the Queen's Own regiment, however for fiscal reasons this has never been done.



The tartan of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, Cameron of Erracht.

### Cap Badge

The original cap badge of the cadet corps was a maple leaf superimposed on the St. Andrew's cross, surrounded by maple leaves on the right and thistles on the left surmounted by a King's crown. This was replaced with the present cap badge in 1930, which depicts St. Andrew with cross surrounded by thistles and across the bottom the title "Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada".



### Blue Hackle

The Royal blue hackle worn on the regimental headdress was adopted in 1939 to commemorate the distinction of being the last Highland regiment to wear the kilt into battle. The pipers of the regiment when in full dress wear a Golden Eagle feather instead of the blue hackle.



## Collar Dogs

The collar dogs worn by the regiment as well as senior cadets and bandsmen on the CF tunic was adopted from the Imperial Camerons and is the Royal badge of Scotland. The collar dog depicts the thistle of Scotland surmounted with the Queen's crown.



## Motto

The regimental motto or war cry of the Cameron Highlanders is the Gaelic word **ULLAMH**, which means ready. It signifies the regiment's and corps' commitment to meet all tasks and challenges.

