

BARRAGE

The RCA Museum News

THE RCA MUSEUM
CANADA'S NATIONAL ARTILLERY MUSEUM



January 2022

The Brigadier-General W. O. H. Dodds Donation

The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum recently received a significant donation from Dale Murray. We are very grateful to receive the Brigadier-General W. O. H. Dodds medals, and we will place them on public display. Over the past few years, Dale Murray donated several other significant Canadian Gunnery medal sets, including Colonel C. E. Montizambert, Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burstall, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Major-General Thomas Benson, M.C.G., and Lieutenant-Colonel F. M. Benson. We display (Great Gunner) Lt-Gen Sir Harry Burstall's military decorations in the museum and Lt-Col Benson's A Battery photo collection on our website. Thank you, Dale Murray, for these generous donations that advance the history and heritage of The Regiment.

William Okell Holden Dodds was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on 3 July 1867. He completed his education in Yarmouth, then became a prominent businessman in Montreal, becoming the Manager of the Mutual Life Insurance Company. Dodds was the Vice-President of the Montreal Board of Trade and Director of National Breweries. He was a strong supporter of local sports and became President of the Canadian Amateur Athletic Union. He married Jean Hamilton Holt Tyre in 1910.



From the left: Distinguished Service Order - George V Issue; 1914-1915 Star; 1914-1920 British War Medal; Victory Medal with Mention in Despatches WW1 Issue; The Colonial Auxiliary Forces Officers' Decoration George V Issue; The Most Distinguished Order of St Michael & St George Companion (CMG); A Society of American Wars of the United States Membership Badge & miniature.

Dodds started his military service when he was seventeen in 1884, serving with the Canadian Garrison Artillery. Captain Dodds served with the 5th Royal Highlanders (Royal Scots of Canada) from 1897 to 1905. In January 1912, he joined the Canadian Grenadier Guards of Canada. The Grenadier Guards remember him as one of their first officers. In early 1914, recently promoted, Major Dodds served with the 3rd Montreal Battery.

After the outbreak of WW1, he joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Major Dodds Commanded the 1st Battery, C.F.A., at Camp Valcartier. Before sailing to England in October 1914, Lt-Col Dodds became Adjutant of the 1st Brigade, C.F.A., under the command of Col E. W. B. Morrison. He commanded the 1st Brigade, C.F.A., in France with the 1st Canadian Division. He then commanded the 5th Brigade, C.F.A., in England and France with the 2nd Canadian Division.



In September 1916, Lt-Col Dodds commanded the 8th Canadian Training Brigade in England. A month later, newly promoted, Brigadier-General Dodds commanded the Royal Artillery of the 4th Canadian Division, later renamed the 5th Canadian Division. In October 1916, he received the prestigious Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (C.M.G.). Also, he was mentioned in dispatches four times for distinguished service from 1916 to 1918. In summer 1917, the 5th Canadian Divisional Artillery, led by BGen Dodds, went to France and fought in all major campaigns until the Armistice on 11 November 1918.

BGen Dodds then served in Germany in the Occupation Forces and was a Military Governor of Bonn, Germany. In January 1919, he received the Distinguished Service Order. In June 1919, Dodds returned to Montreal and resumed his civilian career in the insurance industry. In the 1920s, he was an active leader in amateur sport, notably at the Royal Montreal Golf Club and the Montreal Curling Club.



A photo from the funeral of General Dodds in Montreal, 1934.

BGen Dodds was the Honourary Colonel of the 14th Royal Montreal Regiment starting in 1920. In 1924, Dodds was the President of the R.C.A.A. He was the third Colonel Commandant of the Canadian Artillery from March 1928 to August 1934. A portrait of BGen Dodds, as Colonel Commandant, is currently in the Officers Mess at C.F.B. Shilo.

Brigadier-General Dodds had an exemplary military career over fifty years from 1884 to 1934. During the Great War, BGen Dodds held many senior appointments, including commanding the 5th Canadian Divisional Artillery from 1916 to 1918. As a prominent member of the Montreal business community, he earned the respect of his peers, and as the third Colonel Commandant, he championed the Canadian Artillery. Dodds died at the age of sixty-seven on 25 August 1934.

By Andrew Oakden

Afghanistan Permanent Exhibit Update

We are pleased to open our new permanent exhibit on Operations in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014. My team of curators, led by Senior Curator Jonathan Ferguson, have been busy for months adding a much-improved museum exhibit to honour Canadian Forces members that served in Afghanistan.



Our largest artifact is the CU-161 Sperwer elevated nine feet in the air on a custom mount, shown prominently in the photo above. The idea to add it originated back in October 2019. Two years later, it's now the centerpiece of the Afghanistan exhibit. The Sperwer is a reconnaissance drone that Canada used during Operations in Afghanistan. Ours on display is a refurbished ex-Danish model used by Canadians that crashed near Kandahar in July 2007. In addition to the drone, we have a modified Hesco wall, or a sand and rock-filled defensive barrier, which Canadians used in Afghanistan. We added two 5-foot by 10-foot murals to depict the terrain and environment in Afghanistan. We also added artifact labels, images of the conflict, and a main Afghanistan War text panel.

We included a forward observation officer (FOO) on patrol in Afghanistan with a near-complete kit. We included a 60 mm mortar, a mortar round and a Patricia operating the weapon in one case. In turn, we have artifacts belonging to Lt Turner, an RCA Gunner that died in Afghanistan in 2006, including his photo, medals, a flag, and a ceremonial medalion, shown to the right. We also included a short bio on him. We expanded the exhibit by adding impressive artifacts, including an AK-47 Assault Rifle, an 81 mm mortar illumination round, a civilian contractor hat, an ammunition box with rounds, pamphlets on Canadians in Afghanistan, a Manitoba flag flown in Kandahar, and more. We sincerely hope the exhibition reflects the experiences of Canadian Gunners during Operations in Afghanistan.



By Andrew Oakden

The Mission Afghanistan Exhibit



The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum (RCA Museum) will host the “Mission Afghanistan” exhibit from 25 February 2022 to 24 June 2022. The Military Museums of Calgary and the Directorate of History and Heritage developed the million-dollar travelling exhibit to recognize the achievements of Canadians during the Afghanistan War (2001-2014). Over 40,000 Canadians served in combat roles until 2011, then in training roles until 2014.



Mission Afghanistan is an immersive, first-person exhibit covering 2,000 square feet in our temporary gallery. Visitors explore the Afghanistan War through the eyes of Canadian soldiers, including wounded soldiers and key decision-makers. The exhibition includes many artifacts from Afghanistan, multimedia, and text panels arranged chronologically.

We invite visitors to come and experience Mission Afghanistan.

By Andrew Oakden

The Royal Canadian Artillery 50th Anniversary Medallion – 1921

The Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA) observed the 50th anniversary of the formation of A and B Battery in 1921. At the time, the RCA was the artillery component of the Permanent Active Militia also called the Permanent Force and comprised the RCA staff, Royal School of Artillery (RSA), Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (RCHA) and Royal Canadian Garrison Artillery (RCGA). The rest of Canada's artillery belonged to the Non-Permanent Active Militia and did not share the anniversary even though it provided a large proportion of the A and B Battery personnel in 1871.

The RCGA stationed in Quebec City produced a commemorative medallion in 1921 for its local 50th Anniversary celebrations. The medallions were presented to all serving and ex-members of the RCA in the Quebec City area. The medallions were so popular that they offered them to other RCA units. The archival records located so far reflect only the offer made to the RCGA in Halifax, but presumably similar ones were made to the RCA staff, RSA and RCHA and RCGA units in Kingston, Winnipeg, and Esquimalt.

It is unknown where the idea for a commemorative medallion or its design originated other than it was designed in Montreal. It was struck by the Dominion Arsenal in Quebec City at a cost of 30 cents each (\$4.45 in 2021 dollars) which was paid by the units concerned. The quantity produced is also unknown but was possibly less than the Permanent Force artillery authorized establishment of 1,091 all ranks. The RCGA in Halifax, for instance, had an established strength of 39 officers and 623 other ranks but ordered only 250.

The medallion bears the Royal and Imperial Cyphers of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, and George V placed around the field gun badge, all within the inscription "The Royal Canadian Artillery 1871-1921". These were significant symbols because the RCA wore the cypher of the reigning monarch as the central motif of its cap badge from 1893 when it received the Royal title until 1918 when it adopted the field gun badge with the Canada scroll.



Illustration 1 – The Royal Canadian Artillery 50th Anniversary Medallion, 1921

Illustration 1 shows three medallion varieties which are three centimetres in diameter. The left-hand one is yellow due to a greater zinc content than the other two and has a brooch pin so that it could be worn on a man's lapel or as a woman's broach. The center and right-hand medallions contain more copper than zinc, giving them a darker colour and are without pins. The difference in metal content might indicate they were produced at a different time from the left-hand one, possibly for the Quebec City celebrations or for units who accepted the medallion offer made by the RCGA in Quebec. The reason for the hole in the right-hand medallion is not obvious other than it was done to use remaining stocks for another purpose after the anniversary.



Illustration 2 – The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery Lapel Pins, 1921-2021

The 1921 medallion was followed by three other pins marking the Regiment's 100th, 125th and 150th anniversaries, as shown in Illustration 2. Notwithstanding the 1 RCHA lapel pin, these later events included all regular and reserve force units of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery.

By LCol (Ret'd) JB Dick

A Sperwer Flies Again in the RCA Museum's New Afghanistan Exhibit

The centrepiece of the RCA Museum's new permanent exhibit on the War in Afghanistan is a SAGEM CU-161 Sperwer. This Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, or TUAV, is mounted 9 feet overhead on a custom-made armature that allows visitors to walk beneath its 14-foot wingspan. Operated in part by Gunners, the Sperwer represents the modern incarnation of the RCA's long history of aerial OPs.

The Sperwer was Canada's first UAV operated in combat and for six years it served as Canada's "eyes in the sky" in Afghanistan. From October 2003 to April 2009, Sperwer TUAVs flew over 1,300 missions in support of Canadian troops.



The Sperwer was the aerial platform for three cameras, including a Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) sensor in a ball turret that permitted around-the-clock surveillance. Its geolocating ability could pinpoint targets for artillery or air strikes with an accuracy of 20 m. Launched by a hydraulic catapult, the Sperwer used a parachute and airbags to land.

The first Sperwer crew in Afghanistan consisted of Gunners from E Battery of 2 RCHA, assisted by the Royal Canadian Air Force. Gunners continued to serve in Sperwer rotations after the RCAF was given leadership of the program in 2006. Sperwers were replaced in Canadian service by leased CU-170 Heron TUAVs in April 2009.

The SAGEM Sperwer on display served in Afghanistan from 2006 to 2007. It was one of ten that Canada purchased from Denmark in September 2006. On the morning of 3 July 2007, its propeller broke during launch from the catapult at Kandahar Airfield. The parachute and airbags deployed, but its altitude of only 60 m was too low for a safe landing. It crashed within sight of the base, damaging its wings and nose, and destroying its sensors.



The Department of National Defence rebuilt this TUAV for display as a museum artifact. Visitors to the RCA Museum can now appreciate this aircraft up close as it maintains its vigil by "flying" over our new Afghanistan exhibit.

By Jonathan Ferguson

Sergeant Morrow's Camp Sewell Scrapbook

The RCA Museum has a rare scrapbook containing photographs, and insightful commentary from Camp Sewell dated 1911 to 1914. The camp, located immediately north of CFB Shilo and approximately ten kilometres west of Carberry, Manitoba, operated from 1910 to 1934. The camp's name changed to Camp Hughes after Major-General Sir Sam Hughes in 1915.



A photo of Sewell Station, the entry point for every soldier at Camp Sewell dated 1912.

The scrapbook photographer was Sergeant George D. Morrow. Sergeant Morrow came out of the original artillery unit in Manitoba, the 13th Battery, CFA, also known as the Winnipeg Field Battery. On 13 October 1871, the Canadian government approved the formation of the 13th Battery stationed at Fort Garry, outfitted with two 7 Pounder Smooth Bore Cannons left behind from the Colonel Wolseley Expedition.

Gunners from the 13th Battery took part in the Northwest Rebellion in 1885. Many joined C Battery in 1900 and fought in the Boer War in battles such as the Relief of Mafeking. On 13 January 1901, the 13th Battery moved from Fort Garry to Fort Osborne Barracks in Winnipeg. In 1905, they received their first modern 18 Pounder field guns, which they fired on vacant land at St. Charles on the outskirts of Winnipeg.

In the scrapbook, most of the photos depict the 13th Battery on summer training at Camp Sewell. Many of the images list the names of the soldiers from 1911 to 1914. Note the picture of 13th Battery Gunners at Camp Sewell with 18 Pounders dated 1913.

Before establishing Camp Sewell, militia units from Saskatchewan and Manitoba, known as District 10, participated in decentralized summer training camps.

This district had two infantry brigades, two cavalry brigades, and independent artillery units. They held training locally near armouries on private property, and due to poor communication and standardized instruction, the militia lacked uniform training results.

In 1909, Commander of District 10, the famous Colonel Samuel Steele, CB, KCMG, located a suitable stretch of land to train the militia inside the Spruce Woods Forest Preserve. However, the Federal Government did not permit them to train inside the forest preserve. Colonel Steele made arrangements with the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) to use land next to the Sewell train station and outside the forest preserve for military training purposes.



On 21 June 1910, the first troops arrived at Camp Sewell, and Colonel Steele supervised the training. The 13th Battery, CFA was one of the first ten units to participate in the centralized annual summer camps. The first summer camp included 1,472 officers and men with 1,042 horses over ten days. On 29 June 1910, General Sir John French, the first Commanding Officer of A Battery from Kingston in 1871, inspected all the soldiers at Camp Sewell. The ten units performed efficiently compared to past decentralized camps and developed a cohesive discipline.



The scrapbook contains information about running the camps during the formative years. For instance, it includes photos and notes on the gun drill, forgotten items, such as "tables & chairs for the tents. No supply of paper for purposes of keeping a tab on stores going out. Not enough lanterns." Sergeant Morrow added a photo of the boy mascots of three units. On the right was Dexon, center Grinday, and on the left, Long. From 1871 to 1939, boys were notable militia unit mascots; they also had a dog and other animals such as deer and foxes as mascots.

In 1911, the camp expanded to 2,912 men and 19 units, with the training area growing in size. In 1912, the layout became more formalized, and by 1913 over 4,000 soldiers attended the camp. In the summer of 1914, over 6,600 men with over 3,500 horses participated. There is an exciting photo in the collection of a Gunner operating a heliograph. The RCA Museum displays a heliograph that looks the same as the one in the photograph to the right. The heliograph used a mirror and flashes of sunlight to signal over long distances.



Above is an excellent group photo of members of the 13th Battery dated 1912. The soldier numbered 2, Minden Hall, was killed in action at the Battle of Aubers Ridge in 1915. The 13th Battery remained independent from any brigade until the outbreak of war in August 1914. During the First World War, the 13th Battery did not mobilize for overseas duty. Instead, some of the Gunners from the 13th joined other units that fought in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

At the RCA Museum, we are glad to present Sergeant Morrow's Camp Sewell Scrapbook. It is worth archiving and preserving as a rich historical document that tells the story of Camp Sewell and the 13th Battery from 1911 to 1914. During the war years, upwards of forty thousand men trained at Camp Hughes. In 1934, the camp closed, and Camp Shilo opened approximately 10km to the south. Today, Camp Hughes is a National Historic Site, and the 13th Battery is in Portage la Prairie as part of the 26th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA.

By Andrew Oakden



Chief Warrant Officer Errol E. Patrick and the Korean War

The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery recently added a new Great Gunner to the already impressive list: Chief Warrant Officer (Master Gunner) Errol E. Patrick, CD.

Born in Montreal, Quebec, Errol Patrick grew up in Trinidad before returning to Canada at sixteen. In 1950, against his father's wishes, he enrolled in the Canadian Army to fight in the Korean War. Before joining, he knew very little about the Korean War and said to his friends, "Heck, let's join, let's go and see."

On 25 June 1950, the North Korean Army invaded South Korea and the United Nations called for the withdrawal of the North Korean Army. North Korea did not comply, and in response, the UN organized a multinational police force to defend South Korea. Canada raised the 25th Canadian Brigade Group for service in Korea.

Gunner Patrick had to prove to his father that joining the military was a good idea. He said to Veterans Affairs, "my father wasn't very happy with me... he said I was taking a lazy way out."

Following recruit training at the Royal Canadian School of Artillery in Shilo, Patrick went to Korea with 2 RCHA from January 1952 to May 1952. On 4 May 1951, 2 RCHA arrived in Korea with twenty-four 25 Pounders. Supporting the 25th Brigade, 2 RCHA fired over 300,000 rounds. 1 RCHA replaced 2 RCHA in May 1952. Gunner Patrick stayed in Korea and served with 1 RCHA.

Gunner Patrick learned how to survive the war from seasoned Second World War veterans. Patrick said, "[the veterans] had the experience of how to survive on the battlefield, and taught us a lot."

He said his fellow soldiers protected him, that "I was the only black at that time in that particular troop, they kind of took me under their wings." He continued that, "there's times where somebody would say something and the next thing I know he'd be outside and somebody would be cuffing him."

Regarding his experiences during the Korean War, Gunner Patrick said, "We did a lot of firing, and the ammunition we had was ... from the sea from after they sunk it after World War II. It was dangerous; a couple of them blew up in the barrels." Patrick fought on Hill 355, and "there were a lot of mines... I saw one of my friends trip and get killed by a Bouncing Betty." Gunner Patrick left Korea in March 1953.

In Korea, 4 RCHA replaced 1 RCHA in April 1953. The Canadian Gunners kept up a relentless bombardment of enemy positions until the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement on 27 July 1953.

Over 25,500 Canadians had served in Korea. Canada lost 516 military personnel in Korea, with another 1211 wounded.

CWO Patrick would stay in the military, serving with distinction for 35 years. He reached the rank of Chief Warrant Officer and became the senior non-commissioned adviser to the Director of the Artillery.

The Korean War veteran, paratrooper, Master Gunner, and three-time RSM charted a remarkable military career. He died in Ottawa on 5 January 2021. For his complete bio, please visit our website, under Great Gunners.



DONATE

Thank you for your support! Donations help us to fund curatorial projects and pay the salaries of summer students. In 2022, we currently do not have funding for summer students.

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All monetary donations are appreciated and will be recognized in The RCA Annual budget.

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