

THE 149th CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE LAMBTON'S OWN

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
LAMBTON COUNTY ARCHIVES,
THE COUNTY OF LAMBTON, ONTARIO**

BY

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BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO

MARCH 13, 2020

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This project is submitted to honour the men and their families who
answered the call for King, Country and County

In loving memory of my mother Doris Campbell Wright Miller
who first told me of the boy the war 'took away'

Confidential.
34-7-19

2M.D.

Exhibition Camp
November 2nd 6

The General Staff Officer
Military District No. 2
The General Staff Officer
Military District No. 1

Confidential Report on Battalions.

Military District No. 1.

*With reference to confidential reports on battalions,
I can generally state as follows, viz; - ...*

149th O-S Bn C.E.F.

This battalion has improved enormously of late in camp and in fact should not be delayed any longer in going overseas. They made an excellent impression on a recent inspection. Major W.W. Macvicar, I think, should be appointed to command, Capt. G.G. Moncrief should be appointed Senior Major. I think these promotions are due to the above named Officers on their record at Camp Borden.

(signed)

H.C. Bickford
Colonel
G.S.

1/VR

ABSTRACT

This project is a compilation of the few surviving files of the 149th Canadian Expeditionary Force named and badged as the Lambton's Own, newspaper articles, soldier letters and the service records of the men attested.

It provides an overview of the battalion's existence during its formation, training, embarkation, arrival of 435 men from the 1067 men attested at Bramshott Camp in England, the draft of 200 men to the 161st battalion with the remaining amalgamated into the 25th, later the 4th reserve battalion and subsequent provision of drafts and men to other units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the Imperial Fighting Forces, land, sea and air during the First World War.

There were no unit battle honours but many Lambtons honoured the county and Canada by their personal achievements, loss of life and life-long disability. They are remembered here.

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I thank many people involved in this project who are un-named but their institution is acknowledged. I especially remember the encouragement of my late mother Doris Wright to discover anew the uncle she never knew and my great uncle who is remembered through this project, 845571 Private William Edward Wright of Wyoming, Ontario.

Those who provided very substantial background information on the individual soldiers of the Lambton's Own are Dan Oatman and Sharon Monro. There were helpful staff of the Archives and Special Collections Western University, the Archives of Ontario, the Base Borden Military Museum, the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian War Museum, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Ivey Family London Room of the London Ontario Library, the Lambton County Archives, the Lambton County Library, the Lambton County Museum, the Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies, the Library and Archives of Canada, the Royal Canadian Regiment Museum, the Royal Military College of Canada, the University of Toronto Archives, the Ontario Archives and the members of the 149th CEF Battalion Facebook group with their commentary on items posted.

This project summarizes my understanding of what constituted the Lambton's Own. The Library and Archives of Canada continue to catalogue primary source material adding new discoveries. Perhaps more documents, letters and photographs will appear from surviving relatives in the County of Lambton and in time indexed in the Archives of Lambton County.

The research shared here is sourced from the microfilm of the Lambton County newspapers held at the Ontario Archives. The London Room at the London Ontario Central Library was the source for the two London newspapers. Online transcriptions of personal wartime diaries and letters preserved the original spelling errors and only modified to aid reading.

Newspapers often used familiar names. They relied on local correspondents, business advertisers, letter writers, government advertisements and their subscribers to tell the news in the limited space of eight to ten pages. The editors chose what to print because in close-knit communities they knew what was worthy and what was snuff. The war became intimate when the boys marched off and in time a name would appear as dead or wounded or whereabouts not known because of the cruel war. The story of the 149th is found in the newspapers that survived where regimental files and dairies have disappeared.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

WW1 Abbreviation	Meaning
A.A.	Army Act (on articles related to Discipline)
A.A.G.	Assistant Adjutant General
A.C.I.	Army Council Instruction
Adj	Adjutant
AMC	Army Medical Corps
AWL	Absent without leave
Batt.	Battalion
Batt'n, Bn	Battalion
BSM	Battalion Sergeant Major
Bde	Brigade
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
CAMC	Canadian Army Medical Corps
CB	Confined to Barracks
CEF	Canadian Expeditionary Force
CBD	Canadian Base Depot
CL	Casualty List
CMGC	Canadian Machine Gun Corps
CMR	Canadian Mounted Rifles
C of I	Court of Inquiry
Col.	Colonel
Com	Command
Comdrs	Commanders
Corp.	Corporal
Cpl	Corporal
Coy	Company
CSM	Company Sergeant-Major
DCM	Distinguished Conduct Medal
dis	Discharged
Div	Division
DO	Daily Order (of a unit)
DO Part II	Daily Order Part II
DOC	District Officer Commanding
D of W	Died of wounds
Evac	Evacuated

Gen	General
HQ	Headquarters
LCpl	Lance corporal
LSergt	Lance sergeant
Lieut.	Lieutenant
Lieut.-Colonel	Lieutenant-Colonel
Maj.	Major
MD	Military District (or Depot)
Lieut.	Lieutenant
MD	MD Military District (Home Depot where men were sent for release)
MG	Machine Gun
M.P.	Military Police
M.P.	Member of Parliament
M.P.P.	Member of Provincial Parliament
Mil	Military
MU	medically unfit
OC	Officer Commanding
OMFC	Overseas Military Forces of Canada
O.S.	Overseas
Prov	Provisional
Pte	Private
Pt. II O	Part II Orders
RAF	Royal Air Force
RFC	Royal Flying Corps
RO	Routine Orders
RSM	Regimental Sergeant-Major
RTU	Returned to Unit
Sergt	Sergeant
SS	Steamship
SS	Special service
TOS	Taken on strength (of a unit)
unk	Unknown
WE	War establishment
w.e.f.	With Effective Date
WORD	Western Ontario Regimental Depot
W.O.I	War Office Instruction

Newspaper Abbreviations	
Abbreviation	Meaning
EVT	Evening Telegram
EXT	Exeter Times
FFP	Forest Free Press
FS	Forest Standard
GA	Watford Guide Advocate
LA	London Advertiser
LFP	London Free Press
SO	Sarnia Observer
OSA	Oil Springs Advance
PA	Petrolia Advertiser
PT	Petrolia Topic
SO	Sarnia Observer

INTRODUCTION

The Editor of the Petrolia Topic newspaper wrote on behalf of many. "[T]he 149th Lambton's proposed new unit calls for the enlistment of 1015 men within the county. Anyone can see that it will take every available man or nearly so to complete its organization....Lambton's sons are among the numbers "called to the colors," and the response they make will be a matter of daily record in the public press of the county from the opening of the list at the recruiting centres until they are closed with the announcement that the battalion has been completed to full strength. Much will depend upon the popularity, zeal and activity of the officers appointed whether the time be long or short, and much will depend upon the patriotism and willing spirit of Lambton's young men. The testing time has come. What will Lambton's record be? (PT, December 8, 1915.)

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this project on the 149th Canadian Expeditionary Force Overseas Battalion, raised in Watford, Ontario, was to provide a narrative history for this First World War unit raised in the County of Lambton Ontario. The research question was "What was the contribution made by the 149th CEF Overseas Battalion to the war effort?"

OVERVIEW

The focus of this project was to discover what the battalion known as the Lambton's Own contributed to the war effort of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War. From attestation papers we know that 1062 soldiers were enlisted to the cause of King, Country and County. That is contrasted with the embarkation roll indicating that 435 men, 4 stowaways and 18 officers of the 149th went overseas as a reinforcement draft. Immediately, the question is what happened to the others? The narrative provides some answers.

The timely release of the digitized personnel files of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were a significant source toward answering the question about the contribution made by the men of the 149th and citizens of Lambton County.

In most cases the original spelling and grammar which appears in microfilm, personal diaries and original paper files is used. The Sarnia Observer had daily and evening printing except for Sunday. The Petrolia Topic/Advance printed Wednesdays, the Forest Standard and the Oil Springs Advance printed Thursdays, and the Watford Guide-Advocate printed Fridays.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: FORMING THE LAMBTON'S OWN

The War in Europe had been ongoing for a year. The First, then Second and most lately a Third Contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force had gone to Great Britain. Three divisions of Canadian Infantry were in France and Belgium training and fighting as the Canadian Corps within the framework of the Imperial military commitments. There was a demand for more men to replace the casualties and increase the operational size of the Canadian Corps (Nicholson 1962, 215-218).

The first suggestions about forming the Lambtons came on the heels of the near completion of the 70th battalion filling its ranks from the Petrolia area and branching out to other counties besides Lambton (OSA October 7, 1915). The Sarnia Observer reported October 14, 1915 that Sarnia had sent 101 men to the 70th Battalion at London (SO Oct 14, 1915 p 2,) Much smaller Forest reported,

Both in men and money, our town is bearing a fair share of the burden in the present crises. A glance at the honor roll...shows an enlistment of 75 men now serving the empire and every week new names are added...while we as citizens are proud to thus bear our share, we also are proud that there is no tendency to stop the good work. There are more young men and there is more money in Forest if required (FS October 28, 1915).

Little did the newspaper editor realize what would follow.

On October 30, 1915 Sir Sam Hughes as Minister of Militia and Defence announced a new recruiting effort to raise the Canadian Expeditionary Force to a manpower strength of 250,000 men (Holt, 113). The manpower attrition through deaths and battle casualties had to be replaced (Haycock, 206). Minister Hughes had a new plan which he said would improve enlistments. The Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) would raise recruits through county-based battalions and these would be dispatched to the fighting Front as soon as they were at full complement (Holt, 111).

This scheme provided for men to be recruited and trained not only in cities, where reasonable facilities for the purpose would exist, but also in rural localities. Regulations drafted by the Minister "in his own handwriting" provided for each electoral district to constitute a battalion area (with some districts being combined to form single areas). Each would have a battalion commander or organizer with an adjutant, paymaster and medical officer and the necessary clerical and training staffs. Every centre raising 25 or more men after 1 November 1915 would have such men billeted in homes in the community (Nicholson 1960, 192).

The Lambton County enthusiasm for the war effort had not slowed. From the early days of the war the Lambton County Patriotic League, the Independent Order Daughters of the Empire chapters, church groups and private individuals had raised monies in support of the 'separation allowance' for wives and dependent family members to encourage men to enlist. These groups co-operated and shared in sponsoring well-organized patriotic

meetings which had the clear aim of encouraging military age men to join the colours (Maroney, 73).

Patriotic minded Petrolia saw the earliest returnees from battles overseas arrive November 1, 1915 and marked this with a special welcome for soldiers James Crookes and Gerald Kavanaugh, described in a frontpage article in the Topic:

Petrolia's welcome to the first of her battle scarred to return from the trenches in France is genuine and sincere. The heart of every man, woman and child is proud of the boys, Privates Gerald Kavanaugh and Jas. Crookes, who were among the first Canadians to enlist, and who now return only because they have wounds which compel their withdrawal from active service (PT November 3, 1915).

Mayor William Dunlop, Joseph E. Armstrong the Federal Member of Parliament for Lambton-East and Reverend J.M. MacGillivray gave glowing tributes. Victoria Park had an estimated two thousand people in attendance according to the Petrolia newspaper (PT November 3, 1915).

A week later the Federal Finance Minister, the Honourable W.T. White, addressed a huge patriotic crowd at Victoria Hall Petrolia Monday November 8. It was unsettling news that told Canada collected \$1 per head for the Patriotic Fund and Lambton had contributed 28 cents. Everyone thought they were doing their best and now their pride was hurt. In short order it was moved and passed to urge the County Council to contribute \$5,000 per month until the end of the war, as Lambton was a wealthy county (PT November 10, 1915). These homecomings and patriotic fund meetings kept the emotions high despite the increasing death and casualty listings appearing in the County newspapers. Would the war response be finances only?

Two weeks later the Petrolia Topic reported, under the column heading "Lambton Battalion Will Be Raised", that Doctor Robert G.C. Kelly of Watford had investigated the formation of another overseas battalion from the men of the more rural sections of the county. It was evident there were men ready to enlist and do their part for King, County and Country, a theme shared with much sentiment but without practical consideration (PT, November 24, 1915).

The 1st Division Headquarters (soon to be renamed Military District #1), at Carling Heights, were caught off-guard when the Minister of Militia and Defence made his announcement 30 October 1915, for the large boosting of the C.E.F. enlistment ceiling (Holt, 113). The practical and military minded In Lambton County saw immediate difficulty. Many of the officers of the two militia regiments located there had already enlisted in the C.E.F. Many of the other ranks had gone forward to join a unit of one of the three contingents. Under these circumstances the 27th and the 1st Hussar militia regiments were expected to recruit the 1200 men for the new, yet to be named, Lambton battalion to infantry battalion strength, mobilize and move on to the training depot at London. When training was completed the battalion would embark for England and go to the Front.

Using militia units for recruiting “worked well in the short term, but in the long run part-time staff could not sustain the pace because militia officers and NCOs with civilian employment could not be called out for lengthy periods” (Holt, 112). Many questions on how this would be accomplished remained unanswered. There were already tell-tale signs that enlistments were falling (Maroney, 62). The Minister of Militia had a plan, county-raised battalions (Nicholson, 214).

The Lambton battalion became official with an Order-in-Council on November 11, 1915 authorizing the formation of the 149th C.E.F. in the County of Lambton, Ontario. General Order 151 of the Militia Department duly recorded it was initially formed December 22, 1915. (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Documents/infantry%20battalions.pdf> p.488).

Prior to this, Lambton-East M.P. Mr. Joseph Armstrong and Captain J. Merrison of the 1st Hussar Regiment were reported having sent the Minister of Militia a telegram offering to raise a mounted squadron from Lambton County. As well, Dr. Kelly, commanding officer of the 27th Militia Regiment (The Borderers), had canvassed the situation through the County, especially the eastern part. He was willing to raise and lead an infantry battalion (SO November 18, 1915 and PT November 24, 1915).

Member of Parliament Joseph Armstrong would be especially involved in raising the new battalion in the winter of 1915-16. The Minister of Militia Sir Sam Hughes decided each federal electoral district would constitute a battalion area. The Militia Department would utilize the local Conservative Party apparatus to assist the Commanding Officer (C.O.) in organize and appointing officers such as the adjutant, paymaster, medical officer and all necessary clerical and training staffs (Love, 21, 79).

The Petrolia Topic editor interviewed Dr. Kelly and was told raising a battalion was a fact with preparations being made. It was also reported that news of the proposed regiment was received with enthusiasm: Watford promised 50 men, Forest 30, Sarnia 250 by Christmas and Petrolia 100 men. The ‘operative’ word in Dr. Kelly’s assessment was ‘hope’ (PT December 8, 1915).

An infantry battalion was approximately 1000 men in total ([https://archive.org/details/fieldservicemanu00greauoft/mode/2up\)p](https://archive.org/details/fieldservicemanu00greauoft/mode/2up)p) p.7) and (<https://ia902700.us.archive.org/11/items/canadianmilitiaw00cana/canadianmilitiaw00cana.pdf> p 56). The Petrolia newspaper did not indicate the number of men; it simply said, “The...Lambton Regiment will be a complete unit with full compliment (sic) of officers, signal corps, medical corps, machine gun section, regimental band, etc. and should receive the support and encouragement of every resident of the county. Be ready to enlist.” (PT November 24, 1915).

THE OFFICERS

It is not clear whether Sir Sam Hughes as the Minister of Militia and Defence had directed the appointment of Dr. Kelly as the commanding officer. Colonel L.W. Shannon,

commanding officer of the #1 Military District, did not merely pass on the instructions to form the new battalion. He would have been consulted and confirmed that the proposed C.O. was experienced according to the militia standards at that time. Dr. Kelly was the commanding officer of the 27th Regt. Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly received the official word from London to proceed with recruiting on November 26, 1915 (PT December 1, 1915).

Dr. Kelly certainly had the attributes to raise the new battalion. He was respected in the County as a medical doctor and through church adherence, political affiliation and community involvement. These would be essential for raising a county battalion. (Maroney, 64).

The first matter for Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly was drawing up an officer slate. Under Militia Council orders the commanding officer was responsible “for the recruiting, organization, clothing, equipment and training of their units” (Holt, 113). Kelly needed officers who were already in the militia. These would come from the 27th Regiment (The St. Clair Borderers) and the 1st Hussars (Cavalry), headquartered in Sarnia, and the outlying companies in Petrolia, Forest and Watford. They would be asked to volunteer and be ‘active militia’.

Kelly submitted his list to District Headquarters in London. The names were approved and posted December 3, 1915. They were gentlemen officers who could volunteer for the active militia. At a minimum they were qualified lieutenants, holding a variety of musketry, signaling and machine gun certificates which indicated they knew the theory. As well, the battalion was allowed provisional lieutenants as supernumeraries who would qualify for commissions. The newspapers reported the officer list:

TABLE 1. Officer List 149th CEF Over Seas Battalion

<i>Position</i>	<i>Calling and Military Experience</i>
Commanding Officer Lieut. Col. R.G. Kelly of Watford O.C. 27 th Regt.	Medical Doctor
Senior Major Major W.W. MacVicar, Sarnia 27 th Regt.	Former employee GTR, active militia
Junior Major Major R. Stewart, Courtright 1 st Hussars	Farmer
Adjutant Capt. J.C. Merrison, Sarnia 1 st Hussars	Farmer
Quartermaster Capt. Alexander Kelly, London 5 th Royal Scots	Service Imperial Forces - Boer War
Paymaster Lieut. F.C. Smyth, Watford 27 th Regiment	Bank Manager

Medical Officer Capt. J. P. James, Sarnia Army Medical Corps	Physician
Chaplain Capt. J.M. Macgillivray, Petrolia, 27th Regiment	Ordained Presbyterian Minister
Machine Gun Officer Lieut. R.H. Stapleford, Watford, late 1st Battalion, CEF Belgium	business
Transport Officer Capt. J.C. Waddell, Petrolia 27th Regiment	business
Signals Officer F.C. Browne, Watford 27th Regiment	business

Company Commander Capt. K. B. MacKenzie, clerk Sarnia 27th Regiment
Company Commander Capt. C.W. Browne, undertaker Alvinston, 27th Regiment
Company Commander Capt. R.J. Campbell, teacher Petrolia, 27th Regiment
Provisional Capt. G.C. Moncrieff, lawyer Petrolia, 27th Regiment
Provisional Capt. W.G. Connolly, missionary Watford, 27th Regiment
Provisional Capt. N.A. Campbell, clergyman Alvinston, 27th Regiment
Junior Capt. H.A. Trainor, Sarnia, manager 27th Regiment
Lieut. G.E. Lucas, student, Sarnia 33rd Battalion

Lieutenants R.P. Brown, Watford teacher 27th Regiment
J. W. Knowles, gentleman 27th Regiment
W.P. Cheyne, gentleman 27th Regiment
W.A. Williams, Arkona, merchant 27th Regiment
J. White, Forest engineer 27th Regiment
R. H. Trenouth, Watford merchant 27th Regiment

Subalterns Pv. Lieut. John Duncan, manufacturer 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. Gerald Kavanagh, 1st Battalion, CEF Belgium
Pv. Lieut. Murray McQueen, gentleman Petrolia 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. John Dunfield, gentleman Petrolia 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. G.W. Towse, stock exchange clerk, Petrolia 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. S. M. Stokes, oil refiner Petrolia. 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. F. Pollard, hardware merchant, Petrolia 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. N. Fyffe, gentleman Thedford 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. W.A. Wykesmith, statistician, 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. George H. Kress. bank clerk, Queen's Own Rifles, Toronto
Pv. Lieut. Edward E. Showler, gentleman, London 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. Bruce W. Trenouth, banker, 27th Regiment
Pv. Lieut. P.H. Turnbull, accountant, Petrolia 27th Regiment

Source Petrolia Topic December 8, 1915 trade or calling added from attestation.

RECRUITING

Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly would rely on the assistance of the existing recruiting system. Sarnia, Petrolia, Watford and Forest already had recruiting offices set up from the efforts to fill the ranks of the 70th Overseas Battalion and before that the 18th and 35th in Western Ontario, as well as attesting men for the Canadian Mounted Rifles, the Medical Corps, Army Service Corps and a new field Battery under the administration of 1st Divisional Headquarters at London, Ontario. When the 149th began formal recruiting, the task fell to Major Macvicar who doubled as the Tunnel and Wireless Guard commander and the county recruiting officer. In time he would also handle applications for the Royal Flying Corps. The majority of 149th attestation papers were signed-off by this officer.

The recruiting offices were located where they were already established militia companies. Sarnia would have A Company, Petrolia B, Watford C and Headquarters and Forest with D. Later, recruiting stations were added at Arkona, Bothwell, Brigden, Camlachie, Florence, Oil Springs, Port Lambton, Sombra, Warwick and Wyoming.

The officer roster given by LCol. Kelly to Carling Heights and passed to the Department of Militia and Defence reflected they were well chosen by place of residence and position in the community.

The public concern of the new battalion officer leadership was shared in the Forest Standard December 2:

An officer of the 70 was talking to some of the boys that followed the football team to London on Saturday. "I see they are going to raise a new regiment in Lambton," he said. "Who are going to be officers? Don't some of you sports in Sarnia think you ought to get down here to the training school or are you going to let them get officers from Forest and Petrolia?" (FS Dec. 2, 1916).

Dr. Kelly admitted that much relied on the officers which the Petrolia Topic article covered: "Much will depend upon the popularity, zeal and activity of the officers...whether the time be long or short, and much more will depend upon the patriotism and willing spirit of Lambton's young men. The testing time has come. What will Lambton's record be?" (PT December 8, 1915).

RECRUITING BEGINS

It was not long before the rumours became facts, making the front pages of the local papers. In the first days of December 1915 reporters interviewed the commanding officer for updates on the status of recruit numbers. The most informed would be Major Macvicar who was particularly involved in the effort as seen in the large number of attestations he signed off as a justice of the peace or on behalf of the commanding officer. He had been tasked by the Militia District No.1 to be the recruiting officer for Lambton and in time for the Royal Flying Corps while at the same time commanding the Active Militia detachment guarding the Point Edward wireless station, the railway tunnel connecting Port Huron, Michigan to Sarnia and the Sarnia docks. Recruiting was no simple matter (SO October 18, 1915).

Although the recruiting system was now more refined than the volunteer rush of the First Contingent, the men of the Lambton's Own, as they were soon called, remained volunteers. None were to be forced to join, only persuaded by some means to make the decision to attest. This voluntary enlistment required the recruit to declare a willingness to serve under the Army Act of Canada "for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services or until legally discharged" and "taking a personal oath of allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, his heirs and successors". They were asked if they understood the enlistment terms. The recruit supplied as much information as required by the attestation form and judged fit for service by a doctor. The recruit signed or made his mark witnessed by an officer (Love, p. 63).

The men knew where the recruiting stations were. The war had made these a common feature in the villages and towns of Lambton. But as known as they were the men had to be persuaded in their own minds to join. They were helped.

ASSISTANCE BY THE PATRIOTIC LEAGUE AND OTHER CIVIC MINDED PEOPLE

The Patriotic League of Canada had branches existing throughout Canada. The League was present in Sarnia and the outlying communities of the County. The authorization of the 149 was taken in stride as the League members utilized their experience in raising the 33rd and 70th battalions. The 33rd in winter quarters in London were soon to depart for overseas. The 70th also at London were filling out their ranks with the expectation of departing in the spring. The County Leagues could focus on the 149th.

The Patriotic Leagues located at Sarnia, Petrolia, Watford and Forest used their local papers to encourage recruiting by placing ads and informing about patriotic meetings being held and where. The Sarnia Observer covered the city, the area south to Port Lambton, north to Point Edward and east to Wyoming. The Watford Guide-Advocate covered south to Alvinston, into Plympton Township and Camlachie. The Forest Free Press and the Standard covered the area to Thedford and Warwick and south to Arkona. The Oil Springs Advance covered the area south to Edy's Mills, west to Brigden, east to Inwood and south again to Florence. The Petrolia Topic-Advance printed social columns with correspondents from the mentioned areas and pertinent to Petrolia itself. All had a readership that depended on the Press for their news. The question would be how the new battalion was received and the potential recruits would respond.

THE FIRST MEN

The first men in the new battalion were already on hand. Privates Abraham Dempsey and Harry Murphy who joined the 27 Regt. October 6, 1916 in Watford to be in the ranks of the Active militia doing security and guard along the St. Clair River, the railway tunnel between Point Edward and Port Huron and the Wireless station. By signing attestation papers they were also liable to be in a draft to fill out existing CEF overseas battalions. It can only be surmised that they saw a patriotic duty or good employment over the coming winter.

Dempsey was Canadian born in Watford and a traction engineer (steam power for threshing). Murphy was born in Ireland and said he was a farmer with the harvest season over. The names of both men appeared in Daily Order (DO) 7 of 28.12.15, confirming being taken on service (TOS) October 6, 1915 (The DO and date is what appears in their surviving personnel files. The Daily Orders have disappeared).

Other men offered themselves for the CEF, becoming early enlistees with the Lambton based battalion. Private Robert Parr from Brigden attested at Alvinston November 11, 1915 saying he was in the active section of the 27th Regt. He was a student. His TOS was November 11, 1915 according to DO 2 of 2.1.16.

The first man actually enlisting directly for the 149th was Ernest Mayes, a labourer in Petrolia, who signed up November 30. He was born in England. In time he would reveal he was a Home Child. His TOS was November 30, 1915 according to DO 7 of 28.11.15. This is an obvious administration mistake as DO 7 corresponds to the correct date of 28.12.15. There would many more such administration mistakes until the unit embarked for overseas in March 1917.

The officers too began to formalize their battalion commitment. Captain Alexander Kelly attested at Watford as the battalion quartermaster and Captain C.W. Browne at Alvinston, December 3, 1915.

These earliest enlistees were allowed to stay at the address they gave on joining, in most cases in the family home or the room and board establishment they lived in as headquarters in Ottawa was taking a different approach to enlist men and allow them to train locally (Holt, 115). As well these billet owners received a per diem for their room and board. Many enlistee families took this benefit.

Men began appearing at the nearest recruiting station in a steady flow in December. Some men came separately, with brothers and others in groups of friends. The attestation papers consisted of two pages. The first page was in four sections: Questions To Be Put Before The Attester; Declaration To Be Made By Man On Attestation; Oath To Be Taken By Man On Attestation; and the Certificate of Magistrate (a signature of a qualified person before the law). The second page was: Description; Certificate of Medical Examination and the Certificate of the Officer Commanding Unit.

(http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~brett/genealogy/cef/cef_attpaper.html)

However, the process was more than signing on the dotted line. The second page had the medical finding. The examining doctor would indicate whether the man was medically fit or unfit for military service. There was a separate sheet known as the M.F.B 313 to be retained in the recruit's file along with his important Company Conduct Sheet (<https://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/objects-and-photos/archival-documents/military-documents/conduct-sheet/>).

The medical criteria for the 149th was based on the 1914 medical standard for Infantry soldiers in the Imperial Army. A man had to be 18 years of age to 45 years of age and

stating this without possessing any legal document. His age was taken at his word. The line read, 'apparent age.' For height he had to be at least 5'2", down an inch from a year earlier. The man's mouth was examined for the number of teeth and partial or full plates. They would pass provided they were not suffering from malnutrition or digestive trouble, and otherwise physically fit (Holt, 55, 56-64). Their vision was checked using a wall chart. Recruits with D20/20 were deemed excellent with the minimum was D60/20 in either eye. Hearing was deemed normal if conversation could be heard at 21 feet. The examiner would make a cursory check of the man's muscle tone, the expansion of his chest, listen to his heart and breathing. Most avoided checking the genitals by simply asking if their functions were regular. The physical exam was not long. In many cases the examiner already knew the would-be soldier having treated them as children or knowing the family. After all, rural Lambton was close knit.

The doctor would note any slight defects from the medical standard to determine the man's fitness. Other notes included complexion, eye and hair colour, distinguishing marks such as scars, tattoos and vaccination marks. The write-up would be the long part of the process. For each exam the doctor received fifty cents. (Holt, 64).

The recruiting officer had the last say. He would examine the two sheets. If everything was filled in the last step was the question whether the recruit understood what he was doing. A witness would sign when the recruit signed after the oath of affirmation was taken. Normally a Justice of the Peace would sign off but commissioned military officers could do this as well.

The recruit was now a member of the Lambton's Own of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and from here on had to abide by the King's Regulations and Orders (which they soon experienced), and beginning from that moment on to listen to and obey the orders of those superior to them. Their first order was to go home and settle their affairs with a report time back at the detachment office or armoury the next day.

Prior to the war, Watford had a new armoury erected in 1913.

(<http://regimentalroque.tripod.com/blog/index.blog/2338263/watford-armoury-drill-hall/>).

Forest had a small drill space within a new agriculture hall built 1911 (RG 24, Volume 6240, file HQ 14 -272-1 pT1). Sarnia relied on the use of the city hall. Petrolia had the ample size Victoria Hall. The detachments relied on the generosity of the community who either supplied the community hall or rented space in addition to the detachment office.

The newly sworn recruits assumed they would immediately receive their initial military equipment. This was not always the case. Due to supply problems and sizing many men spent up to two weeks in their civilian clothes, marching, drilling and doing fatigues. The small detachments of each company would have a time to kit at their headquarters, when the CQMS or the BQMS had the supplies. Table 2 below is the typical initial kitting a recruit could receive. The quantity, the article and value are noted.

TABLE 2. Initial Kit

Quantity	Article	Value (\$)
2 pair	boots	8.20
1	forage cap	1.30
1	great coat	8.50
1	serge jacket	5.25
1 pair	puttees	1.00
1 pair	braces	.32
1	hair brush	.25
1	clothes brush	.25
1	shaving brush	.25
1	comb	.06
1	tin dubbin	.02
1	holdall	.25
1	razor	.55
1	flannel shirt	1.40
4 pair	socks	1.20
2	towels	.52
	badges, cap, shoulders	.12
1	waist belt	1.59
Total		\$34.64

(Note, if lost the charge to the individual was the replacement cost)

Source: Kit Declaration of 844214 CHAPPELL, Harry Library and Archives Canada

The recruit numbers for the County-raised battalion began to climb through December but they were widely short of the optimistic numbers given by the Petrolia Topic December 8. Only 160 men throughout the County attested. Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly's survey had indicated 250 men by Christmas for Sarnia alone. Not all were in uniform or completely kitted but they were the small beginning. On December 30, 1915 Forest proudly reported in the Standard two officers, Lt. Kress and Lt. White had processed 16 men (FS November 30, 1915).

THE DEATH OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL KELLY

Colonel Kelly had expected better recruiting results. Unfortunately, he became the first casualty suffered by the 149th. Unexpectedly, he died in the early morning of December 11, 1915. The coroner Dr. Newell assessed his death was due to a cerebral hemorrhage. Comments rippled through the Watford community stating that it was due to his especially busy duties. Attestation records indicate he medically examined four soldiers December 6 and one on December 7, 1915, not surprising as he was the resident doctor. Col. Kelly was before Lambton County Council Friday afternoon December 10 where he asked for \$1500

for recruiting. The Council decided not to take any action regarding the request. At the same time, it decided to not take out insurance policies for any new recruits. Along with this the councilmen voted 12 to 11 not to take action on the request of the Patriotic Fund to provide \$5,000 a month to the National Patriotic Fund. One can imagine how Kelly felt but the council was aware of the pending council elections for the new year.

Colonel Kelly went to an unveiling of a memorial tablet at the Anglican Church in Strathroy the evening of December 10 with Lieut. Stapleford. He had no sleep that night, perhaps concerned on how to raise a battalion of 1000 men without financial support from the County which was required by law to provide. The next day, Saturday, he spent at the Armoury with Lt. Stapleton. That night, December 11, he received a telephone call from a farm outside Watford for a mother in birthing and he was asked to respond. He was on his way. After a wait, the farmer called again. He was told Dr. Kelly was on his way. When Kelly did not arrive, the farmer went to Watford. With the assistance of Captain Stapleford, the next-door neighbor to the doctor, they found him deceased in his car garage (SO December 13, 1915).

When the news reached Sarnia Major Macvicar and Captain Merrison immediately left for Watford to check on the work done by Kelly and plan funeral arrangements. The papers reported it the following Thursday but it was delayed to Friday December 17, allowing a relative from western Canada to attend (SO December 16, 1915).

Colonel Kelly was to be accorded a military funeral. The recent Lambton's Own recruits were untrained in drill and there were not enough to form the minimum of a quarter-guard. The 70th CEF would take that responsibility. The Town of Watford was in mourning Friday December 17 with shops closed for the funeral. It was described as "the largest ever seen in Watford and one of the largest ever held in Lambton County" (SO December 17, 1915). The 70th battalion provided 100 men, a firing party and its Band with Lieut. Colonel Towers leading the military contingent. Rev. Irwin as the parish priest and chaplain to the 70th conducted the funeral rites at St. John's Church and at the gravesite. The 149th Sarnia company of 50 men, officers Capt. Mackenzie, Lieutenants Lucas and Knowles and battalion senior officers Major Macvicar and Capt. Merrison also attended and paid their respects (SO December 17, 1915).

CHAPTER TWO
RAISING THE 149th TO STRENGTH

Colonel Kelly's death was no doubt troubling for the beginnings of the new battalion. Recruiting, administration and training still went ahead. The matter of covering recruitment expenses had to be addressed. When the Petrolia town council held its regular meeting the evening of December 15th. Captains Campbell, Waddell and Moncrieff addressed the council. The Petrolia Topic reported:

According to the new regulations of the Militia department the billeting of men in the number of 25 and up is permitted provided the municipal furnished accommodation. The average pay of the men amounts to \$2.00 per day, and even if only 25 men were located here, it would mean a pay roll of \$8,000 for four months, which would be expended in the town by the men. B company of [the] new battalion were to have their headquarters here and as recruiting proceeded possibly 100 men or more will be in the town. All provisions as far as possible would also be bought in town. This was the business side of the proposition, while from a patriotic standpoint there was no question as to the town's duty in the matter. The committee asked for \$400 as to cover their outlay for four months (PT December 22, 1915).

The presentation was heartily approved by the council and passed, "That this council grant the sum of \$400 for the accommodation and recruiting of the soldiers of the 149th Lambton Battalion to assist in the work as other towns and cities are doing."
(PT December 22, 1915).

The sudden death of Colonel Kelly brought much speculation as to who would succeed to command of the Lambtons. The possibility of Macvicar or Merrison appeared in the Sarnia Observer. The Watford Guardian-Advocate followed with Colonel Kenward. Petrolia had already added a number of young potential leaders to the company roster but none had experience. The 70th already had those. In a time when much depended on the personality in leadership it is unknown if this affected recruiting. The County "Council had already revealed in the last meeting in December by tabling the monetary request and thus non-committal in raising the battalion to authorized numbers. The Wyoming personals reported in the Petrolia Advertiser December 29, "Enlistment for the home battalion, the Lambtons, is not making much headway in the locality. Visitors ask how many have joined from here, but echo answers echo. The cry is heard but there is no response."
(PA December 29, 1915).

The man appointed December 23 as commanding officer must have surprised many of the long-time militia officers, especially of the 27th Regiment. He was Dr. Thomas Pinkerton Bradley who practiced medicine in Sarnia for 12 years. Bradley attested to the 2nd Field Ambulance AMC CEF Depot in London, Ontario August 12, 1915, indicating he had six months with the XIV Field Ambulance Militia in Sarnia. Bradley was carried on the 1st Divisional Area list for Militia medical officers from March 11, 1915. He was at the time slated to escort a 60 man draft overseas (attestation paper for Colonel Bradley and PT January 19, 1916). Attested to the Army Medical Corps (AMC) as a Captain, Bradley was brevetted to lieutenant-colonel. (Militia Quarterly, October 1, 1915 366a), This was done despite the fact Bradley was not the commanding officer of the 27th Regiment (Holt, 113).

One can surmise the rationale in appointing Bradley the new commanding officer was his popularity in the community and his standing in the medical profession. He was not an infantry officer. On the other hand W.W. Macvicar was the OC of the Point Edward Wireless Station and the Tunnel Guard, He was as well the recruiting officer for the district.

MacVicar had nearly thirty years with the Militia having been appointed a Lieutenant March 30, 1888 in the 27th Regiment. He was appointed senior major with the 27th July 18, 1914 (Militia Quarterly January 1, 1916). His experience would be needed in the 149th and Headquarters at London replaced him with Captain James Wood, formerly of the 27th, to be OC of the Wireless Station and Tunnel guard January 1, 1916. (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=327924>).

Bradley was reported as highly regarded in the community. His appointment corresponded to the move by the Department of Militia to have recruiting across the country done by the unit with the county militia commanding officer (Holt p 113). As previously stated Bradley was not in the 27th Regiment. He was listed as a Lieutenant in the XIV Field Ambulance (https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_06742_68/452?r=0&s=1 The Quarterly Militia List of the Dominion of Canada January, Jan. 1916).

In the interim between commanding officers recruiting was still happening. The Forest Standard December 23, 1915 reported on two attesting stations. Arkona under Lt. William Williams had 15 men and Forest under Lieutenants Kress and White had 9 men.

The appointment of Bradley had no immediate effect on recruiting. Arkona, Sarnia and Watford each reported one enlistment on December 24, 1915, Christmas Eve. Perhaps family and social gatherings over the Christmas holiday influenced recruiting into the New Year. On December 27, 17 men attested and 10 on December 28. The numbers declined with 3 men on December 29, 4 men on December 30 and 3 men on December 31.

The Forest detachment had 16 men. Arkona was doing better with 23 men and expected to reach 40 (FFP December 30). Watford also reported 20 men and more expected. The small village of Brigden had one soldier attested December 28, 1915 (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=285780>). The Battalion Headquarters thus reported 160 men attested but not training as many were excused to settle their affairs (FFP December 30, 1915).

The new commanding officer would have to find some means to bring the numbers up, especially as colder weather and snow-drifted roads became the fact. Such conditions would impede recruiting in the outlying areas of the county. Part of the answer was to place advertisements in the papers, not an easy task with the lack of funding, the paid space devoted to the Temperance Option for municipalities and the electioneering for the new councils in each community in the County. Another answer was a visual reminder of recruiting when Capt. McKenzie and sixty men marched on the downtown streets of Sarnia (SO December 28, 1915).

The first recruiting rally was to be held at the Sarnia City Hall Monday December 13 with speakers M.P. J. E. Armstrong of the East Lambton riding, M.P. F.F. Pardee of the West Lambton riding, Mayor W.R. Paul and Colonel Kelly. The death of Dr. Kelly cancelled that.

Presumably, the Christmas Season and New Year precluded any recruiting rallies until the new year and the confirmation of the new commanding officer. That would be LCol. Bradley as of December 22, 1916.

The first wider County recruiting rallies were held the same Sunday night on January 2, 1916. Petrolia announced a recruiting rally for Sunday January 2 at 8.15 p.m. at the Victoria Opera Hall with speakers being LCol. C.M. Graham of London, M.P. F.F. Pardee of Sarnia and Rev. J. M. MacGillivray of Petrolia. The readers were admonished with the concluding line, "We Need You Now" (PA January 29, 1916). The meeting was successful.

The local recruiting league at Watford in turn advertised a recruiting meeting at the Lyceum for January 2. That meeting was to feature speakers the Honourable W.J. Hanna and LCol. T.P. Bradley. A small advertisement encouraging men to join the 149th appeared on one page and the scale of pay on another of that issue (GA December 24, 1915).

Family and social celebrations of the New Year perhaps brought many men to assess what was in their future, especially the war. The first business day of the new year, January 3, found 21 men attested to the Lambton Battalion and half that figure January 4, 1916.

It was certainly evident Sunday evening January 2, 1916 that there was a new approach to recruiting. A large public recruiting meeting at the Lyceum Hall at Watford was described in the Forest Standard, "A monster...rally...in which recruiting addresses were offered by Hon. W.J. Hanna and Lieut. Col. T.P. Bradley. Several from Forest were present, including Messrs. R. McFarlane, W. Ross and C. Gill, who assisted in the program with vocal numbers." (FS January 6, 1916). Through January and February 1916 there were many of these meetings that Colonel Bradley attended and spoke. The more rural areas had similar smaller-scale meetings with Lambton officers present and speaking of the need for men to enlist.

The Watford Guardian-Advocate reported that Sunday January 9 would be a busy evening with patriotic meetings held at 8.15 p.m. Speakers Rev. McGillivray and Ex-M.P. John Fraser of Petrolia were to be at Brigden Methodist Church. Speakers M.P. F.F. Pardee and A.J. Johnston of Sarnia would be at Stewart's Hall Courtright. Speakers Col. Bradley, R. Stirrett and N. McDougall of Petrolia would be at the Masonic Hall at Oil Springs. All would speak on the need for Canada to fight the war and how that would be accomplished (GA January 7, 1916).

The editor also spoke on the honour roll being added with the names of the men already with the CEF and a roll listing all the men to date who attested to the 149th. They were praised:

Our young men are coming forward splendidly to swell the ranks of the Watford Platoons and they make a fine appearance. The khaki is becoming to the men on whom it works magic transformation. They soon learn the value of discipline, move smartly, carry themselves with an erectness and self-reliance, born of the knowledge that they are "doing things" for home and Empire. There are more of our young men who would look well in Khaki and would experience the magic of its transforming influence. There is still room in the Watford Platoons. Why not sign up? (GA January 7, 1916).

In a combination of keeping the off-duty men accountable for their actions and a recruiting ploy the 149th arranged a 'patriotic night' at Fowler's Watford ice rink for Monday January 10, starting at 7.30 p.m. The admission was 25 cents, children 15 cents with proceeds going to the Patriotic Fund. The men in 'khaki' as it read would put on a series of races with and without skates testing the military and the teams (GA January 7, 1916).

The small hamlet of Wisbeach in Warwick township proposed a recruiting meeting for the week of January 9:

Exact details and particulars will be given later. The speakers will present an appeal on behalf of the Lambtons....This regiment is now carrying on an active recruiting campaign and all young men and their parents are...invited to be in attendance (GA January 9, 1916).

A larger recruiting meeting was as well planned for the Orange hall at Warwick on Monday evening January 10. The article was straight-forward and the reader knew who was being solicited:

The meeting will be for the purpose of interesting the young men of Warwick and vicinity in the present recruiting campaign of the 149 Battalion (the Lambtons). Speakers will be announced later by handbill. A musical programme will be furnished. A most cordial invitation is extended to all, parents being especially invited. Mothers of boys in the district will receive a hearty welcome, as an appeal is particularly addressed to them. No admission fee or collection (GA January 9, 1916).

RECRUITING THROUGH ASVERTISING AND MORE RALLIES SARNIA RECRUITING

The Sarnia Observer ran the first of many front page recruiting advertisements for the Lambtons starting Wednesday December 29, 1915:

Line Up For Lambton

There are any number of young men fit for active service who have not yet seen their way to the recruiting officer.

These men should be in khaki.

There is urgent need of their service as soldiers.

*The call of their King and country has by them been unheeded.
 Hundreds of thousands have responded throughout the Dominion but they remain deaf to the call.
 It is tie they wake up to the fact that they are shirking their duty and that everyone they meet know it.
 Men are wanted to fill the ranks of the 149th. Show your manhood by enrolling your name.*

(The Sarnia Observer December 29, 1915)

The ad ran on the front page for three weeks.

There were many observations and thoughts on recruiting the men for the 149th. In particular was the idea that the men were joining because of their British birth and Canadians were ambivalent. Were the men of the county enlisting based on nationality?

The Observer asked for numbers and a break-down in nationality was provided as based where the attestee was born:

TABLE 3. NATIONALITY OR WHERE BORN

Sarnia	Canadian 60, English 27, Scotch 4, Irish 3, American 8	Total 104
Thedford	Canadian 7, English 2, American 1	Total 10
Watford	Canadian 24, English 5, Irish 1	Total 30
Petrolia	Canadian 3, English 2, Scotch 2	Total 7
Arkona	Canadian 11, English 5, Irish 2, American 1	Total 19
Courtright	Canadian 2	Total 2
Alvinston	Canadian 6, English 3, Other 1	Total 10
Inwood	Canadian 1	Total 1

There was no report from Forest or the smaller detachments.

The Sarnia Observer reported the Lambton's Own had a total of 183 soldiers January 10, 1916. Nearly all had family origin in the British Isles.

Much more had to be done. The Thursday January 13 Observer announced three big rallies in the county for the same evening, Sunday January 16. The Sarnia Auditorium would have prominent speakers in the afternoon and evening with reels of patriotic pictures. But there was a limit to such business sponsored rallies. The following day the Auditorium was taken over by the Joe Machan's players until January 29. So much for rallying the slacker-men (SO January 17, 1916).

Along with the civic concern about the 'slackers' the new growing concern was about the after-training hours activity of the soldiers. Many soldiers at the end of the day were now loitering on city streets. All had billets but determined the night was theirs as long as they answered the roll call the next day.

The Sarnia recruiting rally on Sunday January 16 went unreported in the Monday January 17, 1916 Observer but it did report on the 132 men parading to church the previous Sunday at the beat of a drum, 110 to the Protestant service and 22 to the Catholic service. "[The] young men presented [a] very creditable appearance" (SO January 17, 1916). The paper announced the opening of the new khaki club. It also reported, "Some soldiers who were under the influence of liquor got into a fight on Front Street Saturday night. The military police finally arrested the soldier who was the cause of the problem " (SO January 17, 1916).

Concern continued over the after-training hours discipline of the men. The Observer reported the drunk and disorderly Lambton soldier who with an unnamed civilian taken in custody Saturday December 18 and fined \$2 and court costs (SO December 10, 1915). What was remarked on in private conversation now was an open question, "What do we do about the soldiers?" The Board of Trade decided:

The long discussed Khaki Club Rooms were officially opened last evening [Thursday January 20] and every minute of that time was brim full of "Go." The rooms were crowded at 7.30 p.m. and the President C H Belton of the Board of Trade took charge of affairs and in a clear address explained just what the rooms were intended to express to the returned heroes and the soldiers of the 149th, as coming from the Young Men's Patriotic Club and the business men of Sarnia (SO January 21, 1916).

Major MacVicar received "the key of the club rooms and in a neat short address thanked the citizens of Sarnia for the splendid rooms and on behalf of the boys promised care and genuine use of them." Maj. MacVicar "then addressed a few words to the boys in Khaki telling them just what was expected of them as good soldiers." (SO January 21, 1916).

Mayor Doherty, on behalf of the city Council, gave an appreciation of the of the successful Khaki Club and indicated the citizens of Sarnia had pleasure at having the 149th stationed in Sarnia and promised to support their interests. Colonel Bradley was invited to speak and he did in his "well known forceful and plain English giving the "Hot Shot" while discussing the report in the papers as to the [City] Council's stand in regard to assisting the recruiting efforts of the 149th (SO January 21).The Observer reported, "From the hearty applause the Colonel received it was very evident that the business men of Sarnia were heartily in accord with his views. One thing very evident is that there will be no laggards where Colonel Bradley and the Khaki club rule" (SO January 21, 1916).

Colonel Bradley's remarks were about a London Free Press report that Sarnia was giving no grant to the 149th while Petrolia gave \$400 a month toward to the battalion for the soldiers stationed there and asked that the battalion be mobilized at Petrolia. It was not true (SO January 26, 1916). Sarnia would give a grant of \$1000. No doubt more assistance would come.

With Sarnia taking the lead the other Lambton companies set up their own clubs or canteens. They too would receive gifts from local businesses with space, furniture and perhaps a pool table and piano (SO January 31, 1916).

Some in the Khaki Club audience were the young men to whom a message was addressed that day in the Observer:

Have you heard the remark credited to the daughter of the Governor of a Canadian province...observed that she did not care to dance as all the young men "worth dancing with" were on their way to the front....Where will you fit in this winter? (SO January 20, 1916)

The article suggested the young men join the army because young women judged this to be the better option.

It was not just the businessmen interested in the welfare of the men joining the 149th. Devine Street Methodist Church in Sarnia had a supper for 30 men Friday January 21. The pastor Rev. Ashton welcomed the men and said, "We are interested in you because many of the bright boys from our church and homes have joined the colors" (SO January 22, 1916).

He and many others had a distinct understanding where the young men should be.

In part measure to follow the training syllabus, to prevent further discipline problems and to aid recruiting A Coy took a route march to Corunna, beginning the morning of January 26. At Courtright the men were treated to a meal attended by members of the Lambton County Council invited by the town reeve J. C. Whitsitt and who travelled there by train. The intent was to show the Council what the men were doing and the extent of their training. Major MacKenzie and Captain Kelly from Sarnia represented LCol Bradley who did not attend. The 120 men proceeded to Corunna for overnight and there received a dinner prepared by the women of Sombra with a social evening afterwards. The Observer remarked, "The people of Lambton county have good reason to be proud of their soldier boys and should aid so far as possible the recruiting of Lambton's 149" (SO January 29. 1916). The Sarnia Coy was doing well with enlistments among the city-dwellings with rallies and sponsored advertisements getting volunteers who until now had not made the decision.

However, there was a persistent thought that the enlistment numbers did not reflect a conscious effort by the young men of the County to enlist.

A young woman wrote to the Observer and the letter was published:

I do not understand how some of those "slackers" have the nerve to stand around hotels and street corners watching the soldiers parade. I noticed them today and it actually made me sick. If they wouldn't look better in a khaki outfit than the clothes some of them are wearing, well I think I would make for the bush....And those "Willie Boys" with the English suits and sport coats, hanging around ice cream parlours and moving picture

*shows. They too, need to wake up.... Yours very truly, a sister of two brothers in France.
Sarnia Jan. 24, 1916 (SO January 25, 1916).*

The letter brought a prompt reply,

We all know it is no credit to any young fellow to be seen always around a hotel. But at the same time there are many who are accused of this habit that are not guilty of it....We can do more to help recruiting by speaking kindly to the boys than by snobbing them. Hoping to see this in print tomorrow. I remain AN ENGLISH GIRL (SO January 26,1916).

(The meaning of Willie Boy...<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/willie-boy>)

The January 26 Observer reported on the false news given by a London Free Press correspondent. The paper stated that the Sarnia City council had refused to give a grant to the 149th but that Petrolia had given \$400 and asked that the battalion be mobilized there. Sarnia had the money and discussion went to a motion to grant \$500 to the battalion.

Silver collection at the recruiting rallies along with private citizen donations were never enough to cover the mounting costs of recruiting. The grant money extended to the 149th by the Petrolia town council was welcomed along with the expressed interest of Sarnia business. What was needed was the delayed answer from the County Council.

The first recruiting meeting after New Year's was January 25, 1916 in Sarnia. At its December meeting the question of granting money to the 149th was tabled apparently because of the pending annual election of council members. Some of the council took up the battalion invitation to meet the A Coy route-marchers at Corunna. Col. Bradley was received at the Thursday January 27 session meeting. The Sarnia Observer reported on LCol. Bradley's presentation and that he asked for \$5,000. The Council welcomed the C.O. heartily. Council had agreed the day before to a new by-law to give grant money. Council was thus prepared to do so but not to meet Bradley's request. County Council granted \$3000, double what Col Kelly had asked for in December, but short of the acknowledged need. Grants went to the new board of agriculture, the fruit growers and the corn growers (SO [The January County Council minutes were printed] February 23, 1916). The grant was not immediate and monies would be paid out only as bills were submitted. There would have to be more enlistment fund raising (SO February 23. 1916).

The expanding Sarnia company of the 149th brought the need to have a more centralized location for A Company, which up to now was training at the Waterworks building. The Observer noted January 31 that the former medical offices of Dr. Bradley over the Woollen Mills Store were taken over as the recruiting office of which Captain Trainor was in charge. As well generous support with tables, an electric sign, and stationery were supplied. The Wood's store became the meeting and dining hall for the soldiers. A Coy moved from the Waterworks plant to downtown Sarnia (SO January 31, 1916).

No doubt the recruiting campaign was enhanced by the public speeches made by Colonel Bradley, a man six feet tall, of robust build with a good voice. The Sarnia Observer was on hand Sunday January 30 and printed a long article January 31:

*City Hall was Filled and Many Turned Away
Stirring Speeches and Patriotic Music had Great Effect*

The city hall Sunday night was packed to the doors and standing room was at a premium on the occasion of the patriotic meeting held there.

Heralded by the 27th regiment band the members of A Company, 149th battalion marched to the hall but owing to the crowd were unable to gain admission. The north side of the hall had been reserved for the soldiers, but the sittings were rapidly taken up by the citizens.

Mayor Doherty officiated as chairman. On the platform were: - Hon. W.J. Hanna, Provincial Secretary; Jos. P. Downey, ex-M.P.P., Lt. Col. Bradley, A.J. Johnston, Monsignor Aylward, Mr. Doherty; In his opening remarks stated that it was not his desire to occupy too much time. He felt gratified at the large attendance. It was evident that we were with the British Empire. He said he could look back for 60 years and every war Great Britain had been engaged in was for Christianity and civilization. Great Britain had done more for Christianity and civilization than any other nation on earth, she had sent her missionaries to all parts of the earth spreading the gospel. When parents were sending their sons to war, they were fulfilling the Divine edict, "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel." Apart from any territory gain, a new world would result. The people would be more thoughtful, more considerate with a larger sense of kindness to their fellow men. Great Britain was spending her blood and treasure for peace, happiness and prosperity.

Mr. Holland was called on and sang in good voice "Do Your Bit," which was well received.

Lt. Col. Bradley was called upon and said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen; I have been a resident of Sarnia since 1902 and this is the first time I have ever appeared on a public platform. The Lambtons 149 is strictly a county battalion raised from the County of Lambton and we wish to raise it to between 1300 and 1400. A full battalion contains something over 1100 men of all ranks, but it is necessary to have more than that number to allow for sickness, rejections, and other causes. I accepted the office of commanding officer after some hesitation and consideration and I will endeavor to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Col. Kelly. The office was brought to me and was not my seeking. I have accepted it and will fill the duties of that office and the responsibilities for all that is in me. I wish to thank the county council and city council for the donations to the 149th. It may seem an impossibility to raise this battalion after so many men have enlisted from this county. But the men are here and the 149th will receive their full quota, and I believe another battalion can be raised here if need be. This county has an honor to maintain, and Lambton will respond at all costs. We are going to wage a recruiting campaign in Lambton, and we ask men

to join. The men will respond, and will not allow the name of Lambton County to go down as a county unable to raise the 149th Battalion. These meetings are held to stimulate recruiting, and I am sure we will succeed in securing the required number. Should Germany win this war we would be servants of a tyrannical country. The farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer, are asking where they would get men to till the land and perform the work necessary to keep the wheels of industry turning. The answer was to come forward and uphold the flag, push the war to a victory, and peace and prosperity would result. We must decide between two conditions, law, order, happiness, civilization on the one hand, and militarism with all its horrors, fatalities, casualties, retrogression, and death on the other hand. Young man, come forward and do your bit. Avenge the sinking of the Lusitania, the baby killers, the murder of Edith Cavell. Young men if you do not respond to that call I say, shame on you, shame on you; yes, I say thrice, shame on you.

Master Willie Clark favored the audience with a song, "Never Let the Old Flag Fall." (SO January 31, 1916).

The recruits were in such numbers that platoon training had advanced from drill to route marches. LCol. Cohoe of MD#1 came into Sarnia Tuesday January 25 to inspect the wireless station guards and the recruits of the 149th. His impressions were not recorded. He went on to Watford to inspect the recruits there (SO January 26. 1916).

FOREST RECRUITING

Despite the winter weather the outlying areas were finding ways to 'beat the drum'. Weekly reports through the 'Bugle Blasts' column reported in the Forest Standard what was happening for D Coy. The regimental quartermaster sergeant (RQMS) Culley was reported recruiting in the vicinity January 6. Lieut. Williams and Sergeant Price spent the afternoon of January 7 at Camlachie (FS January 13, 1916).

These visits were of a personal form in the smaller communities. Williams was a young merchant and known by many farmers as he sold fencing wire and farm hardware. He was affable. He in turn knew the men of Arkona and Forest. These personal visits were a must as the good intent of the Forest town council was hampered by the lack of funds.

At the town council meeting December 29 the matter of grant money was discussed after a presentation by Dr. J. D. Hubbard and Capt A. O. Smith explained that it was almost decided the Forest would be the headquarters for "D" Coy of the Lambton battalion and established there. Recruiting would have to be pushed to make it happen. The discussion carried on to the \$1000 that had been raised for machine guns and now not required by the government. Council voted on the motion for the money to be returned and "the same be devoted to recruiting expenses connected with the Forest Company – Carried" (FS January 6, 1916).

Mayor Bailey sent a letter to the Militia Department about the money and Defence Minister Hughes replied. Forest was told January 5 "...the Government was expending for machine guns the money contributed by the town of Forest and could not therefore return part for recruiting purposes (FS Jan 6, 1916).

Lt. Williams wrote to Miss Madeline Lucas about his effort:

Forest, Jan 8 1916

Miss Madeline Lucas

Arkona, Ont.

Dear Madeline,

Just a few lines. Am well, hope you are O.K. I am roosting up in the 3rd loft in the Roche House, quite alone and elevated. Some place Forest, never had an introduction to gal yet. Will be back soon to Arkona. Was out to Indians today and brought in one, took train to Camlachie this afternoon and returned 6 P.M. Some town, believe me. [there were a few personal notes] (Letters to Madeline).

Williams had results. The Standard wrote "Forest Has Chance to House Company" and listed those had enlisted to that date. (FS January 13, 1916).

Forest, too, would have prominent speakers. The community decided to make the evening of January 16 one of parading and a patriotic-recruiting meeting. The Forest soldiers, accompanied by the [town] band and boy scouts, would attend the evening service at the Presbyterian church and afterward attend the recruiting meeting at the town hall. The latter was to begin at 8.15 p.m. sharp with the speakers Honourable W J Hannan and Mr. A J Johnston. The paper charged, "Every citizen should attend this meeting and hear an able discussion of the great issues that are before the Canadian people today" (FS January 13, 1916).

Colonel Bradley was going farther into the county to speak at Alvinston January 16. (FS January 13, 1916). The editor also introduced Col Bradley by a short, descriptive biography as many in Forest area knew the name but not the man. After the Alvinston rally Col. Bradley went on to Forest to visit the armoury, look over the men and announced that Forest would have the company headquarters. They would soon know of the man because he attended the Forest armoury dance (FS January 20, 1916).

D Coy Lambtons had their first successful military sponsored dance January 17, 1916 and the 'Blast' reported:

The officers, non-coms and privates of "D" coy stationed here gave a military ball Monday evening at the armoury, which was attended by about sixty couples.

The weather was very cold and the attendance was much larger than expected on that account. Col. Bradley, commanding officer...and several officers from Watford, Sarnia Petrolia, Thedford and Arkona were among the guests. Music was supplied gratuitously by the local orchestra and Miss Jessie Steele, and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Lunch was served at midnight, when a short address was given by Col.

Bradley, after which the dance proceeded until 2 a.m. The funds raised will be devoted to

recruiting (FS 20 January 1916).

Earlier in the day Col. Bradley and other officers from Watford inspected the troops in "D" and formally announced that the Coy HQ would be in Forest but allowing sections up to platoon strength to be formed at Arkona and Thedford. (FS Jan 20, 1916). The day after the 'Ball' the men played hockey on the Forest rink.

Even with Sundays a day of rest, the Forest company was visible in uniform. On the evening of January 23rd the forty or so men paraded to the Baptist church evening service, accompanied by the Excelsior Band. The service was conducted by the pastor Rev. H. Green, who gave "a clear and forceful talk on Christianity as a man's job" (FS January 27, 1916).

The last 'Blast' in January was on the 27th. The 'bugler' summarized:

Forest is crowding Watford pretty close for second place. Eight recruits were sent over to Watford, Monday [January 24] to be fitted. The recruiting campaign has been quietly but energetically carried on under Lieut. Williams with splendid assistance by Sergeant Geo. Price. The results so far are quite satisfactory, and the number is expected to swell considerable during the next few weeks (FS January 27, 1916).

The Forest boys in "D" Coy numbered forty-two according to the paper (FS January 27, 1916).

Along with editorial comments the paid advertising was important to read. The annual Corn Show was on at the Victoria Hall in Petrolia. The Show advertising included listing a public meeting and patriotic concert held the night of January 27 at the hall with addresses by C. C. Jones, Agricultural Adviser to the Dominion Government, The Honourable W. J. Hanna, Dr. J. B. Martyn, and others (FS January 27, 1916).

[Silver collection at the recruiting rallies along with private citizen donations were never enough to cover the mounting costs of recruiting. There had to be direct requests to the County Council. The first meeting after New Years was January 25, 1916 in Sarnia. At its December meeting the question of granting money to the 149th was tabled apparently given the untimely death of Colonel Kelly and because of the pending the annual election of council members.]

PETROLIA RECRUITING

Petrolia had had many recruiting meetings when the 70th CEF was enlisting men and this was primarily because prominent Charles Fairbank was the senior major of that battalion and made sure local men were in his battalion. Now it was the Lambton's Own following on.

Petrolia had its first recruiting meeting for the 149th on the evening of Sunday January 2 at Victoria Hall. The Advertiser described "stirring speeches were made" and listed the speakers as Lieut.-Col. C. M. R. Graham of London, M. P. F.F. Pardee of Sarnia and Capt.

Chap. J. M. MacGillivray of Petrolia. Mr. F.W. Wilson was the chairman. The hall was filled to capacity.

The editor summarized the meeting by printing:

The issues at stake were placed squarely before the people by each of the speakers. The fact that Britain and the allies must win in this great war, or forever be dominated by brutal Prussianism was emphatically stated, and every fit man was appealed to to enlist in the cause of freedom and the final triumph of British arms and British liberty.
(PT January 5, 1916).

The editor added,

The meeting has made a deep impression and things are shaping for brisk recruiting throughout the town and district. One speaker brought the matter very close home when he stated that every able man who failed to enlist only helped to prolong the war.
(PT January 5, 1916).

The Petrolia editor seemed particularly close to the real recruiting issue and that was would there be enough men behind the statement, "It is the desire to have the 149th go into camp in the spring at London at full strength." The editor sensed the challenge to have a truly Lambton battalion, "The regiments that are up to strength in the spring will be able to hold their officers and maintain their identity, which may not be the case where two or more regiments amalgamate." (PT January 12. 1916).

As well he saw the implication of raising the battalion at a time the feelings on the war were mixed and for many a burden with the new jargon "pay or play":

The county council will likely be called upon at their January session to render financial aid to further the work of recruiting, and each councillor will have an opportunity, by his vote, to show that his heart is in the right place (PT January 12, 1916).

There were young men who wanted to play and came from a distance to do so. Cecil Acker came from Croton to the Oil Springs officer Lieut. Fred Browne and with Ercelle Sovie originally Essex county joined at Petrolia January 11(PT January 19, 1916). Their names were added to the honour roll which now had 24 names for B Coy.

The next week issue of the Topic noted that Lieut. Browne "secured three men" for the 149th. They were "William Wilson (whose brother Jack is now in the trenches in Flanders), Frank Lover, and a native of Malta by the name of Lacedonia." (PT January 26, 1916). A large advertisement with the military pay rates reminded readers that the Petrolia recruiting office was on Main street, opposite the Tecumseth Hotel (PT January 26, 1916).

Recruiting for the 149th was evolving into a pattern which worked around weather, adequate funding for newspaper ads, public and patriotic meetings and the popularity of the recruiting officer.

OIL SPRINGS RECRUITING

The Watford Battalion HQ decided that more remote corners of Lambton should be visited. Lieutenants Trenouth and Fred Browne were assigned to Oil Springs and they set about making the 149th known.

The first public recruiting rally for the 149th in Oil Springs was for Sunday January 9, as reported in the January 6, 1916 Advance. The paper included a list of officers for the new battalion for the residents who might be unaware. The Advance reported:

The recruiting rally at the Masonic hall...was a decided success. The hall was well filled and strong patriotic addresses were given by Lieut. Colonel Bradley, Lieut. Dick Stapleford, Mayor Stirrett and Public School Inspector Neil McDougall. All who were there enjoyed the addresses (OSA January 13, 1916).

A photograph of Col Bradley appeared in the same issue.

The Advance had a good readership with its social page. There were contributors from Oil City, south to Edy Mills, points east and west and occasionally running stories from Sarnia. It proved a good opportunity for the 149th to place ads and pass on news of the battalion. The Advance used the January 20 edition to say that Lieutenant Knowles was to be the new recruiting officer: "[He] is now occupying the building one door west of the Glasgow [sic] House. Any one desiring any information regarding enlistment may call at his office." (OSA January 20). The previous recruiter, Lt. F. Browne, had returned to his home in Alvinston (OSA January 20, 1916). He then returned to a signal officer course in London, Ontario.

However, the Lambton's Own recruiters were encountering unique recruiting problems in rural Lambton. These had to be addressed. The Advance ran an article entitled "Enlist For Farm Labor":

Many young farmer are ready to enlist may be declined to leave their fathers without any help....[T]he recruiting officer will assist them securing work on the farm. This will help solve the farm labor problem and greatly assist the Lambton Battalion in enlisting the young men from the country." (OSA January 20, 1916).

FAVOURS CALLED IN

Perhaps school principal R. G. Campbell at Petrolia sensed the time was right to remind former students of their duty. He was also the B Company commander. With the right word the entire Petrolia Star hockey club joined the colours. It did not mean hockey was sidelined as Capt. Campbell sought permission to have an inter-battalion schedule with the London-based CEF battalions. Campbell would be manager and the line-up Goal Cameron; defence Gleeson; defence Houston; rover Harding; captain, wing Wilson; wing Brown; centre McRitchie; spares McQueen, Minton, McGillivray (SO January 26, 1916).

The money grant advance by the Lambton County Council combined with grants from the towns, villages, private and business citizens were spent for ads in the county newspapers to enlist more men, especially the non-committed. The Oil Springs Advance printed a half-page ad listed as "Lambton to the Front" (January 27, 1916). The front page right bottom corner displayed an acrostic using the individual letters of "Lambtons 149" with the sub-script 'Conscription' with a pointed message to the 'slackers'. Underneath this was a poem by Mrs. Margaret Peterson addressed as "The Women's Message". It carried a sub-script 'Encourage Your Men to Join Lambtons 1-4-9.' Elsewhere the Advance reported on the recruiting meeting held Sunday evening, January 23, in the Orange Hall: "[It] was largely attended. The speakers were Colonel Kenward, Lieut. Wykesmith, Mr. Smythe, Rev. Smith and Rev. N.A. Campbell. The addresses were interesting and instructive. Mrs. L.A. Riley sang a solo "Do Your Bit". The united choirs sang "O Canada." Mr. W.R. Dawson occupied the chair." (OSA January 27, 1916).

WATFORD RECRUITING

Watford was doing well, perhaps being named the headquarters of the Lambtons. The Guide-Advocate listed thirty-seven men in the January 7 edition. The paper commented, Monday [January 3] was a red-letter day at this point, no less than seven men being signed up for overseas service with Lambton's 149th. Arkona also is doing work, twenty-six men having signed on up to Tuesday of this week. (GA January 7, 1916).

The district columns were used to advertise such as the Wisbeach:

*A recruiting meeting was being proposed...for next Sunday.
Exact date and particulars will be given later. The speakers will present an appeal on behalf of the Lambtons....The regiment is now carrying on an active recruiting campaign and all young men and their parents are ...invited to be in attendance (GA January 7, 1916).*

Similarly, there was a notice about Warwick having a recruiting meeting Monday January 10 at the Orange hall beginning at 7.30 p.m. The notice made it clear that it was "for the purpose of interesting the young men of Warwick and vicinity in the 149th...." The speakers were not listed but a handbill would tell who were speaking. There would be a musical programme. A cordial invitation was extended to all parents, especially "Mothers of the boys in the district will receive a hearty welcome, as an appeal is particularly addressed to them." The notice concluded with, "No admission fee or collection (GA January 7, 1916).

Under Alvington news the Guide-Advocate noted a recruiting meeting to be held at the Presbyterian Church Sunday January 16 with addresses by Mr. Harry Fowler of London, Major Smith of London and LCol. Bradley and everyone welcome. Immediately below the editor shared:

Get into the game - it beats hockey and baseball to a frazzle and it means something to the rest of the world. How many of you could play hockey or baseball or attend pink teas

or the four hundreds' dances if by any chance the Huns were to win the war? Get into the game! Alvinston Free Press (GA January 16, 1916).

The 'Four Hundred' were the high society of New York City.

The recruiting efforts at Sarnia, Forest, Oil Springs, Petrolia and Watford bear all the marks of merchants supporting those of their social position who formed the officer cadre of the Lambtons. They were using business marketing to recruit. The potential recruit was made aware of the offering and why he had a need to join. How many men recruited this way is not known but the advertising was attention getting.

The numbers for the January recruitment reached 309 in total from all recruiting stations (OSA February 17, 1916).

Major W.W. MacVicar would have grasp of the exact number as he was the signing officer for Colonel Bradley. About this time the Militia Council was making new appointments. The 27th Regiment was to have LCol. J C Massie from Stratford as the commanding officer but he was committed to the 71st Battalion going overseas as the junior major. The Observer surmised the administration duties would rest on Major MacVicar who was still in Canada (SO Jan 26, 1916).

FEBRUARY RECRUITING

The local papers balanced its business advertising with public submissions as a courtesy to the Patriotic League or knowing the limited funds available to the 149th battalion. The Oil Springs Advance carried a patriotic poem February 3, listed the names of men newly attested February 10, recruiting possibilities at Walpole Island February 17 and items on Chaplain MacGillivray being retained with the 149th and Lt. Moncrieff passing his lieutenancy qualification, February 2, 1916. The front page of the February 17 Advance had Colonel Bradley's offer of a day's paid leave for each recruit brought in by a member of the Lambtons. The Advance included a large recruiting advertisement. In the same issue the recovery of Lt. Stokes from illness was noted with the running total for the past month of 1,340 men raised for the colors in south-western Ontario. What appeared in the Advance was typical with the other newspapers in the County.

The Sarnia Daily Observer was doing its 'bit'. On February 4, the total enlistments for A Coy were given as 199. As well business sponsored ads for the 149th were appearing every printing day. The Saturday February 5th paper had an advertisement for the 8.15 p.m. hockey game of the Petrolia versus Sarnia 149th septettes at the Arena with proceeds going to the battalion. The newly appointed chaplain for the 149th had been assigned this duty (SO February 5, 1916).

There were stumbles. Plans for a Sunday February 6 patriotic themed moving pictures show were hit by the 'blue' laws: "It was the intention of the 149th Lambton Battalion to have patriotic entertainment of moving pictures at the Princess theatre on Sunday afternoon but

owing to the law not permitting such meetings on the sabbath the project had to be abandoned" (SO February 5, 1916)

There was some good news as February 4 the Sarnia Public Library Board passed a resolution to grant two hundred and fifty dollars to the Lambtons for their regimental band. (SO February 5, 1916). It was noted as well that the previous night Lieut. Lloyd Lott, Sgt. Major H. Clark and Corp. Manning were guests of the Sons of England. Lieut. Lott remarked that recruiting was making good progress but the 149th still needed 150 more men. He congratulated the Sons of England for their splendid response to the colors with twenty-one percent of their membership having already enlisted. The Observer added that 8 men had attested that day. That was good news despite the note of the public ill-discipline of some 149 (SO February 5, 1916).

The Forest Standard gave a weekly tally of enlistments; February 10, 41 men and February 17 up to 53 men. As well a delivery of new rifles to 'D' Coy was noted and a commentary by the 'Bugle Blasts' appeared.

Lt Williams was the recruiting officer for D Coy but in the first days of February he was ill with a heavy cold and confined at home. A letter dated February 16 to him from Sgt. George Price brought him up to date. Price was unable to go with Lt. White to the Camlachie recruiting meeting:

Lt White had to go all alone. There were about fifty at the meeting and two recruits have signed up from Camlachie that is all that is signed up here since you left. Lieut. Schroader is here now, and is going to Camlachie in the morning to recruit that is the order of the O.C. Col Bradley came here yesterday and left for Thedford on the afternoon train today and will stay with Lt. Schowler until tomorrow afternoon. The O.C. was here when I received your letter and I told him that you were getting along fine and would be back inside of a week and he said he was glad to hear that you would soon be around again. He told me to go off duty until I was feeling alright again...

(Letter of G.L. Price <https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/february-1916.html>).

The letter also mentioned that Captain A. O. Smith had been in to see Colonel Bradley, asking for an officer position with the battalion. Smith was offered a sergeant's position. Smith did not take the offer but continued to offer his services to the 149th and witnessed a number of attestations. The April 27, 1916 Forest Standard reported, "Lt. A.O. Smith has resigned his commission as Lieut. of B Coy 27th Battalion and D.R. McCahill appointed to Prov. Lieut. and placed in command."

The Petrolia Topic added to its 'Honor Roll' the men enlisted from the town and area in the 149th. There was the notice of the big recruiting rally the following evening.

Occasionally items about recruiting at Wyoming village appeared in the Sarnia Observer. The Observer reported February 10, "The recruiting office here which was in the building

next to J.E. Anderson's store has been transferred to the brick Butler building where the soldier boys are made quite comfortable." (SO February 10, 1916).

The Observer occasionally remarked on recruiting at the more distant stations. Thursday February 1st for example: "A dispatch from Thedford says, Lieut. Lucas has taken charge of the drilling of the Thedford company...leaving Lieut. Shouler free to look after recruiting. There are now 48 in the Thedford company" (SO February 1, 1916).

It was remarked there was to be a big military concert in the near future.

No doubt the recruiting campaign was enhanced by the public speeches made by Colonel Bradley, a man six feet tall, a robust build with a good voice. Was he a leader? People would watch. Patriotic concerts and recruiting meetings were part of a concerted effort by many well-meaning supporters to get the recruits. There was a consequence with this. The quality of the men was taken at face value and by what their attestation papers said. The men came from many different backgrounds. By the end of January citizens in Sarnia were remarking on the conduct of the soldiers.

The availability of liquor outside the limited legal sources was causing concern. On February 2, a soldier was called as a witness about such a procurement. He was called to the witness box but when asked to remove his cap he refused. He said his officer told him to leave it on when in uniform. The judge asked him again to remove it so he could take the oath. He refused. The judge found him in contempt of court and was held in custody. It was standard procedure that when a soldier appeared in court there would be an NCO or officer there. Colonel Bradley appeared after the case was adjourned to be heard the next day. Colonel Bradley spoke to the police magistrate and said it was a misunderstanding and that the soldier would remove his cap the next day to be sworn in. This was reported in the Police Court column and it appeared that the Colonel went to 'bat' for the men.

Bradley was concerned when the conduct of his men was questioned but his main concern remained building the numbers. The numbers were disappointing. The Watford paper reported the 149th at 600 men (GA February 18, 1916). The February 22 Sarnia paper reported under 'Town Topics' that the battalion had attested 700 men but still needed 600 (SO February 22, 1916). This number was probably correct as the Observer had a daily source being Major MacVicar at Sarnia.

Advertising in the newspaper was a cost that drew on limited regimental funds. Now business- men stepped forward:

Many merchants through the county are donating for a few weeks part of their advertising space in the local papers to Lambtons 149 for recruiting purposes. Several Watford merchants have commenced this week while others will begin next week. Read the ads and buy your goods from men who act so generously. A mail order house would not give the 149th one cents worth of advertising space and should not have a dollar of your money that can be spent with Lambton men who act so graciously (GA February 18, 1916).

Colonel Bradley continued making himself known in the Watford and Wyoming area. The Petrolia paper noted in the Wyoming column that he came from the Watford headquarters to inspect the Wyoming recruits on Tuesday February 22 (PT February 23, 1916). It was not enough.

Colonel Bradley was advised by his officers and from district headquarters more had to be done. Observing reports from England about the Kitchener New Army and the formation of 'Pal' units he authorized a Pal's Platoon'. It was reported as "The object of this platoon is to afford an opportunity for young men friends to enlist together where social conditions will be as they make them." (GA February 25, 1916).

In addition to Pals, Bradley issued orders to the battalion's officers "that every private who secures a recruit will be given one days' pay leave of absence. Keen interest is being taken and a number of boys have a few days' leave of absence coming" (GA February 25, 1916).

The Watford recruiters were busy through the month of February as well. As an attempt to boost C Coy a patriotic rally was arranged for February 24. This was reported in the Sarnia Observer February 25 as being a recruiting rally. "The Lyceum was crowded to the doors...tonight on the occasion of a recruiting rally held in the interest of the 149th Lambton Battalion. Principal Brown, of the Collegiate Institute, was chairman and the speakers were Major Smith and Capt. Dancey of London. Lieut. Colonel Bradley was unable to attend owing to illness, but all the officers of the battalion were on the platform. Arrangements have been made for a big double-header meeting in Sarnia on Sunday, March 5. (SO February 25, 1916).

Another attempt at raising public awareness of the 149th was the item in 'Town Topics' of the February 25 Observer which stated, "Lieut. Colonel Thos. P. Bradley and officers of Lambton's 149, C.E.F., have issued invitations for an "At Home" to be held in the Watford Armories on Monday February 28th. Music will be supplied by Shook's orchestra of Detroit." (SO February 25, 1916).

The 'Town Topics' note caused the need for a member of the Sarnia Citizens' Band to voice his opinion which the Observer Editor printed Saturday February 26 in the front page despite officially not printing anonymous letters. No doubt the editor knew the man:

I was surprised to see in The Observer of Friday that Lieut.-Colonel Bradley and officers...sent to Detroit for musicians to furnish music for a dancing party they are giving....There are two first class orchestras in Sarnia – the Alexandra and the Sarnia Symphony orchestra, both of which have given their services for free on several occasions to raise funds for the 149th and other patriotic purposes. It seems strange that the officers...should ignore the services and the qualifications of the Sarnia musicians by sending to Detroit for their music when they had money to spend for that purpose. Is it possible that the Boss of East Lambton who created the 149th and has in many ways side tracked Sarnia has placed a ban upon allowing anything from Sarnia to enter East Lambton in connection with the 149th? The battalion drums and bugles have been taken

to Watford and the officers of the 149th are soliciting subscriptions to provide instruments for a band, which, in all probability will be taken to "Headquarters" at Watford as soon as it is formed. Can the 149th expect Sarnia citizens to continue contributing to the battalion bands after offering such insults to Sarnia and its musicians? A Sarnia Musician (SO February 26, 1916).

There is little doubt that the letter shook the officers and the commanding officer of the Lambton's Own. The Alexandra Band played for the 'At Home'. Later the battalion headquarters went to Sarnia. The 'Boss' referred to in the letter was Member of Dominion Parliament Joseph Armstrong who had originally proposed raising the county battalion as he believed there were enough potential recruits.

The 'At Home' was a success as stated in the local papers. However, LCol. Bradley penned a reply which caused even greater divide between Sarnia and the rural companies. It appeared in the March 2 Observer. Here is part of the letter written February 28:

You will please take note, Sir, that as the Commanding Officer...I have one object only – the recruiting of the Battalion to its full strength. It is expected of every one in Lambton County to assist myself and officers in this work, and it is also expected they will refrain from doing or saying anything which might have the effect of keeping even one recruit from our battalion." Bradley continued, "You have allowed a letter to appear...which you might better have consigned to the waste paper basket. You have...taken advantage of a slight oversight on my part and have used it to bring into disrepute...the present member of Parliament... and officers of Lambton's 149....[Hereafter] I would ask if further letters of the type appearing...are sent you for publication to consider that while they might be satisfying some personal feeling of your own they are injuring others in a work they are doing for the Empire. (SO February 28, 1916).

The editor replied after the printed letter, remarking on the printing problem experienced before Bradley's letter went to press. He said Colonel Bradley's letter was addressed 'personal' to the manager and the manager chose not to pass it on for printing "as an act of kindness to Lt.-Col. Bradley." The editor commented,

The display of bad temper and worse manners shown in the letter, together with its blustering, bullying tone is not calculated to increase respect for its writer. The high and mighty role assumed does not fit well on one of Lieut. Col. Bradley's military attainment. It suggests that his sudden rise has put him, "up in the air" so to speak. He cannot come down to earth too soon for his own good (SO March 2, 1916).

Nothing further was printed on the Colonel's competency.

The month of recruiting was disappointing. It was agreed by the officers to try new ways to recruit. Businesses in Sarnia signed up to use their allotted advertising space to make a pitch for the 149th and have their name included at the bottom. Every published day through February had such an ad. For the smaller towns, publishing weekly, local businesses did the same.

Recruiting efforts took many forms in the other communities, Lt. Wykesmith took the direct approach for the Walpole Island Reservation. He crossed by ferry and held many meetings. The Petrolia Topic reported he had received an enthusiastic reception. "He now had 30 recruits. The meetings there were well attended and in many cases lasted from 8 p.m. to 3 and 4 a.m. the next morning, everybody in the audience speaking a few words." (PT February 16, 1916).

Until this point the patriotic and recruiting rallies in Lambton were addressed by community leaders and public officials. There was a change when it was announced that a Captain Dancey was coming to Watford to speak about his war experience and urge young men to join the colours. He was a professional speaker, a journalist and former newspaper editor. The Watford people did not know this. The rally organizers said he had been at the Front. They believed him.

The Watford paper reported the Lyceum the evening of Thursday February 24th was crowded to the doors and from the newspaper account it was very verbally graphic and followed what the city newspapers printed about the rape and destruction of Belgium:

Capt. Dancey gave an eloquent and forceful address of one hour's duration. He told of his experience at the battle front, and how he had seen women and children with their hands and feet cut off and other ways violated by the Prussians. He spoke warmly of the heroism of the Belgium women and the spirit of hatred manifested in Germany, and urged every man fit for service to join the colors without delay. He gave instances of the sacrifice made by the people of Belgium, France and Great Britain, and said it was the duty of Canadians to do as much. He appealed to the mothers of Canada to use their influence and make sacrifice of their sons for the cause of liberty and civilization. The speech was listened to in rapt attention. (GA March 3, 1916).

The paper did not record the number of men who responded to his moral challenge. Lieut. Col. Bradley was known to be a forceful speaker but he was ill that night. Captain Dancey made his mark and he would be back to Lambton County on more rallies.

The 149th Battalion Officers' Ball set for the evening of Monday February 28 at Watford went ahead with a change for the orchestra. The Shook Band of Detroit was to play but concern in the County with the use of local talent changed that. The Guide-Advocate described the Ball as "...a brilliant and successful social event, about 75 couples being present. The Armory was beautifully decorated and excellent music supplied by the Alexandria Orchestra of Sarnia." There was a lunch served by Frank Lovell in the basement rifle range. Dancing continued until three o'clock and concluded with 'God Save the King'. (GA March 3, 1916).

The officers of the 149th with escorts present were, Sarnia – Capt. and Mrs. Mackenzie, Capt. and Mrs. J. F. James, Lieut.-Col. Bradley, Lieut. Lott; Petrolia – Lieut. Pollard; Brigden – Lieut. and Mrs. Towse; Florence – Capt. Merrison; Oil Springs – Lieut. Stokes

and Lieut. Kress; Inwood – Lieut. Young; Courtright – Major Stewart; Thedford - Lieut. Showler; Arkona – Lieut. Cheyne; officers training at London – Lieuts. Trenouth, Brown, Smith, Dodds and Moncrieff. There were Lieut. Parsons and Lieut. McLachlan from the 91st of St. Thomas and Lieut. Ashwell and Lieut. Campbell of the 135th of Strathroy (GA March 3, 1916).

The Sarnia Observer had an interesting story February 26 which told of a young man of Toronto enquiring if he could join the band of the 149th. The band master Sgt Hodder had placed an advertisement in the Toronto papers asking for bandsmen to join the 149th. Sixteen-year-old Victor Blackwell asked by letter if he could join as his father and three brothers had enlisted and he wanted to sign up. “[I]would be pleased to know if you take boys as buglers. If so, I would be very glad to join.” Victor did not become a Lambton's Own. He was underage.

The last large combined patriotic and recruiting meeting for the month of February was the one held Sunday February 27 after evening religious services, in the Petrolia Town Hall. The Topic story was entitled “Red-Hot Speeches” from Col. Bradley, Mr. Tudhope of Orillia, and Rev. Dr. Knowles.” (PT March 1, 1916).

The editor described an ‘enthusiastic’ meeting chaired by Mayor Stirrett who took the opportunity to pay tribute to the Petrolia men overseas and at the Front; “If some of them have fallen who are dear to us, we will not quail, for they have fallen in the greatest cause for which humanity has ever fought.” Mayor Stirrett also commented on the 149th: “Our hearts are with them, and we know they will reflect credit on Petrolia and Lambton county.” Present on the platform were Capt. B. Campbell, Capt. Merrison, Lieut. F. Pollard and Capt. Chap. MacGillivray from the battalion (PT March 1, 1916).

Mr. Tudhope delivered a powerful speech which emphasized the moral duty of all, “If we will not fight for our liberties we are not fit to be free.”

Rev. Dr. Knowles had a short, earnest speech which summarized the purpose of the meeting, “True patriotism will lead us to any self-sacrifice to free our country from the iron yoke or to stay the iron heel of the invader.”

Mayor Stirrett introduced the last speaker Colonel Bradley and the audience gave three rousing cheers. The colonel was brief and to the point:

The battalion should have been raised in one month. We still need 500 men. But it has been raised faster than any other county battalion in the province. The work is slow but there are enough men in the county to raise another battalion.” The colonel recited a list of excuses and concluded, “We want men.” (PT March 1, 1916).

The meeting concluded with an invitation for men to come forward and sign up. The meeting concluded with “God Save the King”. The Topic did not record any men signing up that evening.

MARCH RECRUITING: THE APPEARANCES OF CAPTAIN S. N. DANCEY

No doubt the Military Ball at Watford Armoury gave the Lambton officers an opportunity to discuss recruiting. The signs were there that patriotic meetings and lectures were not enticing men to join. It was decided that the 149th men were to be more visible at sports events, patriotic meetings and entertainment benefitting the war effort.

A large advertisement for a Minstrel Show appeared in the Sarnia Observer March 1, 1916 with the banner:

*Is Your Freedom Worth Having
If So Fight For It
Join the 149
To-day*

The show was to be at the Auditorium and to benefit A Coy of the 149th. The ad was paid for by the Watson Clothing Company (SO March 1, 1916).

The front page that day indicated that the 'largely' attended show, performed by the Young Men's Patriotic Club, February 29, was a success. The club extended an invitation to attend and occupy the centre seats to the 149th A Company for the Thursday night show March 2. That show was a success as well.

But there was entertainment in another form with the double-header patriotic meetings featuring Capt. Dancey of the 135th battalion, assigned by London Headquarters to aid recruiting in southwestern Ontario. The London Advertiser March 3, 1916 recorded, "Capt. S.N. Dancey will speak at Sarnia... Sunday and much interest is shown locally in the event. In order that every one may have an opportunity of hearing the enthusiast, arrangement has been made for a meeting in afternoon and evening. The first meeting will be held in the Crescent Theatre opening at 3 p.m. and the evening meeting in the city hall at 8 p.m." The paper indicated that, "Capt. Dancey, himself has advised the colonel that he can be counted on to address the meeting to the very best of his ability and his experience will warrant the people attending...to hear some very interesting facts about the part that Canada is playing in the great war." (LA March 3 1916). Speeches were also to be given by Col. Hamilton of Ottawa, F.F. Pardee, M.P. and Lieut.-Col. Bradley, O.C. of the 149th. By all accounts the meetings were well attended and interesting. Pardee did not speak as he was detained in Ottawa on government matters.

Dancey spoke well and made many points based on what moderns say are 'trending'. He spoke immediately of the indifference of men and women in Canada to the war. Their attention was on self and not the country. Mothers were holding back sons. He said, "We must prove to the world that Canada is British and that we are prepared to fight for our country and it is necessary to die for our country." He accused the pro-liquor prohibition group of One Hundred of spreading a fractional fight when, "Canada should be united at this time and forget creeds and politics." He as well criticized Rev. Dr. Knowles for his view to not hate the Germans given his own witness of German atrocities. And to the critics of

Col. Bradley he said these were not in the King's uniform and thus should not criticize a representative of the King. Capt. Dancey gave a vivid and thrilling description of the war and spoke of "the gallant stand made by the troops from Canada when they virtually saved the British army from annihilation." His speech was applauded (LA March 3, 1916).

Colonel Bradley's schedule was full. He did not attend the Sarnia evening minstrel show of Thursday March 2 as he was committed to a rally held at the Forest town hall. The Standard shared the highlights of that meeting:

Mayor Bailey occupied the chair and brief addresses were given by H J Pettypiece and Dr J P Hubbard. Col. R B Hamilton of Ottawa...gave one of the finest addresses heard in Forest on "War Conditions". Col. Bradley...addressed the meeting and said that Walpole Island Indians have enlisted to the number of 36 out of a population of 900. If the white people of Lambton did as well as that we would have 1,800 men in the ranks. He urged all who could do so to enlist now. It is men we want, not excuses," declared the colonel, which statement was received with applause. (From the Standard to the Sarnia Observer March 4 and reprinted March 6 in the Sarnia Observer).

Perhaps it was just as well Bradley was in Forest as his controversial scathing reply about the choice of orchestra for the Lambton's Own Officers' 'At Home' held at Watford. His letter indicated his concern above all else was, "...one object only – the recruiting of the Battalion to its full strength." (SO March 2, 1916). He made that point in strong language at the afternoon and evening meetings in Sarnia Sunday March 5. (SO March 6, 1916).

The number of recruits to the 149th were approximate in the mind of Col. Bradley. The London Advertiser had access to the MD #1 figures and these for February are posted in the table below:

TABLE 4. ENLISTMENT NUMBERS END OF FEBRUARY

Walpole	36
Courtright	26
Sombra	30
Sarnia	285
Watford	60
Thedford	52
Forest	56
Alvinston	36
Arkona	25
Petrolia	66
Brigden	30
Oil Springs	9
Wyoming	14
Florence	7

A total of 732 men

March 7, 1916 London Advertiser

The big recruiting rallies of Sunday March 5th did not mean a line-up of would-be recruits the following Monday at the Sarnia recruiting office. The Observer passed on the request that the recruiting office was seeking the names of all men eligible to serve in the CEF. In another section the Observer stated that the 149th HQ had declared, "All soldiers are now required to be off the streets of the city before 10:30 p.m. every night and extra military police have been appointed to patrol the streets." (SO March 8, 1916).

The following day the Observer alluded to the real trouble brewing in Sarnia. The editor had received a letter without name or address which concerned the availability of liquor for young men. He wanted the writer to know he would make it known, doing so. Everyone knew the young men were the soldiers of the Lambton's Own.

The Observer reported on March 10 that sixteen men had attested in Sarnia that week, perhaps swayed by Capt. Dancey's presentation.

Over at Courtright Capt. Dancey with Colonel Hamilton addressed a recruiting rally March 8. They were to attend a rally at Alvinston Friday March 10. Lambton's Colonel Bradley did not attend at either rally. The audiences were large but no numbers joining were given.

There is little doubt the morale of the Sarnia men of the 149th was a concern. The Observer might deflect some of the social etiquette criticism but the officers had to do something. The March 9 Observer reported that the officers had decided on a distinctive regimental badge to replace the one supplied by the Militia Department and thus called for design submissions. The paper indicated several had already been received. The 'mailed fist' was seen as the best so far but that was an oblique reference to the earlier reaction of Colonel Bradley to the letters on the selection of the band for the Military Ball. The jeweler E.P. Battley offered a prize of \$10 gold coin for the winning submission. The Observer reported that the contest would conclude March 31. Design submissions were to go to Capt. Trainor. A distinctly unit badge might unify all the men in a common effort for the war (SO March 9, 1916).

Petrolia was certainly proud of its recruiting. As an encouragement for more men the Topic printed Colonel Bradley's opinion when he spoke at a patriotic rally Sunday February 27 when he passed through Petrolia on his way to the 'At Home' being held at the Watford Armoury; "I am more than pleased with the way they turned out on parade this morning (church parade). They are as fine a bunch of men as there are in the county." The Topic added that the Petrolia company had 62 members and Capt. Campbell and Lieut. Pollard had "...word from the colonel to push recruiting vigourously till the 100 mark is reached. It will be a pride for Petrolia to have 100 men in the Lambton battalion." (PT March 1, 1916). Elsewhere the Topic remarked that Mrs. A.G. Brown had written a song for the 149th entitled 'Marching and Recruiting Song' with music composed by Mrs. E.D. Swift. The paper suggested a good sum would be raised for the Red Cross. (It became the march 'The One Four Nine.') (PT March 1, 1916).

The Topic reported on March 8 that six men were added to B Company. However, there were problems with after training hours.

A private meeting of the Petrolia council was held Friday evening of March 10. The press was not there but it was known there was discussion on "the unsatisfactory condition of the justice department of the town." Increases in fines were discussed. There was no definite action taken at the meeting. (PT March 15, 1916).

The speech made by the Petrolia mayor at the Petrolia banquet the evening of March 15 indirectly touched on local concerns about the habits of B Coy. There were drunks and broken street lights from time to time. On this occasion the Oil Springs, Wyoming and Brigden soldiers had completed a route march over icy roads into Petrolia. The ladies of the Presbyterian church put on a huge meal.

In extending the welcome of the town to the soldiers, Mayor Stirrett paid a tribute to the splendid way in which the Petrolia officers and men had conducted themselves, and to the battalion as a whole for their splendid spirit in "shouldering the responsibilities of the hour." He also called attention to the fact that the soldiers were the guardians of their civil rights. There was no conflict between the police and the soldiers, as some supposed. When the police could not enforce the law it was then that the military would be called to back them up. (PT March 22, 1916).

The appeal for men continued. Over at Wilkesport, small numbers were joining as the social column indicated that Charles Bishop and Morris Murphy had joined the 149th. (SO March 1, 1916).

Colonel Bradley began a series of speaking engagements. He was at the Forest town Hall March 2 where he called on the people assembled to rally to the colours by giving over over the extra sons and the mothers their sons to save their honour, citing that that Walpole Island had attested 30 men out of a total population of 900 (FS March 9, 1916).

Other corners of the County had similar recruiting rallies. Captain Dancey and Colonel Hamilton were at Courtright Wednesday March 8, Sombra Thursday March 9 and to Alvinston Friday March 10, 1916.

The mid-March enlistments into the 149th were stalled. Another approach was attempted. Colonel Bradley requested a special meeting of the local Council of Women for 4 p.m. Wednesday March 15 at the Sarnia Library. Col. Bradley and Lt. Moncrieff gave short addresses to about forty ladies, asking for their sympathy and help in the work of recruiting. The ladies decided to form a committee which in turn would receive the names of women who would be willing to undertake the work now being done by men, thus enabling many men to enlist. (SO March 15, 1916). No follow-up report ever came to the Observer that names were submitted.

That meeting was not the only meeting attended by the two officers. Both Colonel Bradley and Lt. Moncrieff left by train for Petrolia where they spoke at a dinner reception for the men of B Company the evening of March 15. There were a number of patriotic speeches by

the local clergy with comments by Mayor Stirrett. Four-year old Ned McRobie was accepted by Colonel Bradley as the mascot of the Lambton's Own. The Topic said a week later, "The occasion was graced by the presence of the commander of the Lambton Battalion Lt. Col. T.P. Bradley." (PT March 22, 1916).

The special meeting at the Library and the dinner reception at Petrolia were indicative of the slipping number of recruits. Col. Bradley was looking for opportunities to boost recruiting. No doubt the adjutant was responding when he erred in a telephone request to the pastor of the Baptist Church where A Coy was to attend and the Band under Sgt. Hodder were to perform. The note in the Friday Evening Observer March 17 about the pending Sunday services at Central Baptist church caused a concern. The minister replied:

Mr. Editor: An item in your column tonight by whom given deponent sayeth not, reads in part: "In Central Baptist church next Sunday morning Rev. John Morrison has been requested by the officers of the 149th Battalion to preach a recruiting sermon." This, Mr. Editor, is not correct. I was asked over the phone, would I preach a patriotic sermon, and I cordially consented to do so. That is all. Thank you for the space, Mr. Editor. Signed by John Morrison March 17, 1918. (SO March 18, 1916).

It was apparent that whoever made the original request (perhaps given the recruiting situation and on request by Col. Bradley) was ignorant of the Militia Department directive to not have recruiting appeals from church pulpits. Thus, the response from the Baptist minister. A recruiting sermon was against his religious principles. The Monday March 20 Observer reported on the good church turnout.

The better story that Monday was in the letter sent to the Editor. Sometimes the officers were not attuned to what the men were showing by their actions. Mrs. Gilbert wrote:

*...[W]e acknowledge the receipt of twenty dollars so kindly subscribed to me by the men of A company as it did, in the hour of my bereavement, is more than appreciated by my husband and myself, such as set on the part of these defenders of liberty and justice, can only be described as characteristically humane and benevolent, and should serve as a strong incentive to other men to join the 149th Battalion to which my husband belongs and associates and serves with these men whose thoughts and consideration are for the welfare of others. Trusting you will be able to spare space for the letter, I remain, sir,
Yours faithfully MRS. WILLIAM GILBERT
Chippewa Street.*

Over at Forest the Standard reported the local news through its columns. It found space the list of names of 74 men with the Forest detachment and in a small column said that the former British secret service man Captain Dancey and the returned officer Capt. Stapleford would speak at a recruiting rally at Thedford March 30, 1916 (FS March 23, 1916),

Perhaps the smaller rallies brought in new recruits. The recruiting officers investigated:

The canvas of the young men of the city, which has just been completed by the recruiting

officers show that there are over 1,000 men who are available for military work. These are being interviewed personally. Their reasons for enlisting are being carefully recorded and filed. When all have been seen then the names will be gone over and those that have furnished suitable reason will be excused and taken from the file and marked useless" or "physically unfit" or some other term and destroyed. The others that are thought well enough to be carefully looked into will be approached again.
(FP March 23, 1916).

This was not the end of recruiting rallies. On Sunday evening March 26 Captain Dancey and Captain McGillivray addressed a meeting at the Victoria Opera House at Petrolia. The address by Dancey was judged the best yet. Mayor Stirrett presided, patriotic songs were sung and an original poem on the 149th was read. The battalion chaplain Captain J.M. McGillivray "made an enthusiastic appeal for men for the 149th and earnestly warned the people of Lambton that if the necessary number did not come forward voluntarily that before long conscription would have to be introduced into Canada as it was in England now." (PT March 29, 1916).

To test the enthusiasm of the audience Dancey asked that Tipperary be sung. After the first rendering he thought Petrolia was not very enthusiastically British, and Mayor Stirrett had it repeated several times and "each time it improved in volume." (PT March 29, 1916). As for the stories out of Sarnia of his treatment of the clergy Dancey said "he only attacked those who had opposed recruiting, as such men were traitors to the Empire." (PT March 29, 1916).

Dancey used a vivid illustration of what might happen, Zeppelin attacks were very much in the news:

A charge of Zeppelins from one end of Canada to the other declared the captain, would wake up Canadians to their peril...For men we must have, and still more men, to fight this foe who has no honor we must never 'let the old flag fall.' (PT March 29, 1916).

Dancey's address was over an hour long, and was an impassioned appeal for men, married or single, from the farm or the town, to join the colours and to do so at once (PT March 29, 1916). Five men joined B Coy the next day.

There were a lot of words on duty and honour without much mention of sacrifice. The latter word was entwined with war but the Petrolia boys had their first glimpse of loss on a town street. It was not that Petrolia turned a blind eye to the rough housing of the boys as it was taken for granted boys will be boys. The community responded in shock when Drummer Eddie Kerr died because of a horseplay fall. Previously a soldier broke his ankle in the recruiting office at Petrolia in horseplay. Kerr died March 29, 1916. There was a full military funeral for Kerr held Friday March 31 conducted by Capt. McGillivray and 110 soldiers present. The inquest into his death held March 30 placed no blame. It was an accident (PT April 5, 1916).

It was clear something had to be done about the conduct of off-duty soldiers. Colonel Bradley issued orders that every recruiting centre of the 149th would have assigned regimental military police and with that order the Lambton Own soldiers had to be off town streets by 10.30 p.m. The Petrolia military police were V. Matthew, D. Harding, C. Minton and E. Sanderson (PT March. 29. 1916).

The signs of waning enlistments from rural Lambton were obvious. To have a rational training program for the companies the men had to be balanced through the companies. Colonel Bradley sent detachments from A to bolster B and C companies (LA March 27, 1916). As well the rural areas such Arkona were adapting a census taking, door to door knocking, in the villages and a ride along concessions. When the roadways became solid the route marches showed the flag.

Out at Sombra soldiers from there under Captain Connolly marched through the country surrounding Sombra during the week. There was a big recruiting meeting held at Becher Wednesday night [March 22] where Capt. Connolly and Lieuts. Wykesmith and Moncrieff gave addresses and six young men signed up when the meeting closed. Thursday night [March 23] there was a meeting at Charlemont, eight miles from Sombra, and one man enlisted. Friday night [March 24] at Terminus one man came in. There were now 45 men training at Sombra (LA March 27, 1916).

Oil Springs was looking for more recruits. Monday March 27 Dancey was at the Masonic Hall according to the Oil Springs Advance which said the meeting was in every way a success. "[I]f the knockers and croakers will only keep quiet there is no doubt but that good results will follow" (OSA March 30, 1916). Short addresses were given by Lieut. Stapleford, Bugler Whittall, John H. Anderson and George Brown.

Capt. Dancey, the main speaker, told of his military service, as a war correspondent for the British War Office, "gave a vivid and interesting description of the retreat from Mons and Marne, and told of the sufferings and atrocities which the Belgians and the people of Northern France were subjected to. Captain Dancey is a vigorous and forcible speaker and held his audience for over an hour with what he had seen with his own eyes. Those who did not hear him missed a rare treat." (OSA March 30, 1916).

The Forest Standard reported March 30 that another big recruiting rally was occurring April 1 at the town hall with LCol. Bradley and Capt Stapleford addressing the audience with remarks by Principal Grant of the Sarnia Collegiate.

The month of March recruiting effort by the 149th ended with a large town hall meeting at Forest Friday March 31. Capt. S.N. Dancey was the guest speaker with newly promoted Capt. Stapleford representing the Lambton's Own. The Standard reported, "[Dancey] gave a thrilling account of his experiences overseas, and behind the enemy's lines. He appealed strongly to the young men to enlist and pointed out the position the young man would be in after the war, if they failed to answer the call of King and Country now." (FS April 6, 1916). If this was not enough it was reported another big recruiting rally was occurring April 1 at

the town hall with LCol Bradley and Capt Stapleford addressing the audience with remarks by Principal Grant of the Sarnia Collegiate (FS March 30, 1916).

APRIL RECRUITING

The Saturday April 1 Sarnia Observer posted a reminder to readers about the Sunday evening City Hall meeting featuring Capt. Dancey, Colonel Bradley, Capt. Stapleford and MP F.F. Pardee were to be there. (SO April 1, 1916). The community was aware that the Scottish cultural icon Harry Lauder was to be in Port Huron for a William Morris Variety Show Monday April 3rd but he had accepted an invitation to attend the Sunday Sarnia recruiting rally. He did not. The usual vigor of Capt Dancey did not infuse the audience (SO April 3, 1916). It was obvious that those now attending rallies were there to be amused and had no intent to join the CEF.

It was time for Captain Dancey to move back to London as his attachment to the 135th had to be confirmed by a summary of his work. Dancey and Stapleford went down to the Inwood Orange Hall for a recruiting meeting the evening of April 4 which was described as the largest ever held there. Dancey was noted as having been in the trenches and a prisoner of war in Germany. He, Captain Stapleford and Pte Witcomb of Watford addressed the people who had struggled to be there. The Advance reported, "It was a rousing meeting and splendid results are expected when the recruiters...make their visit a good percentage of the young men will respond to the call to duty." (OSA April 6, 1916).

In other parts of the county it was apparent that enlistment in the 149th remained stalled, particularly the rural areas such as Forest. The Forest Standard April 6 had a large advertisement addressed to the farmers who were now thinking of spring planting. There was the assurance that there would be imported American labour. Readers were told the soldiers would receive one month's planting leave and one month harvest leave with payment by the farmer. The 'Appeal to the Farmers of Lambton' concluded with the statement, "Every man who can get away should and those who remain behind are asked if they cannot go themselves to do all they can to make it possible for others to go and do everything they can to Support Lambtons 149." The Watford Guardian had the 'appeal' printed April 7 and the Oil Springs Advance had it prominently featured April 6. It is not known if the advertisement had any success.

The Petrolia Topic April 12 had a large size advertisement about the upcoming minstrel show. Under the auspices of B Coy the Young Men's Patriotic Club of Sarnia were coming to Petrolia to do a show the evening of Thursday April 13. A special train was laid on to bring the 50 member chorus, the eight end men, members of the Sarnia Symphony Chorus and members of the Sarnia Citizens' Band with four year old Ned McRobie drumming. There was to be a big parade. The admission was 25 cents and 50 cents. The community was urged to reserve their seats (PT April 12, 1916).

Over at Forest recruiting stood at 76 men enlisted (FS April 13, 1916). More men were needed to fill out to company size. Men were moved from Sarnia to B and C companies. Forest would receive men as well. Also, men were being moved to other sections as their

skills were recognized. The Standard reported: Robert Hatherall and Frank Bayes to Bugle Band, Patrick Fitzpatrick to the school of musketry instruction, London; Sergt. A. Frayne, Corp. W. Rogers and Pte. C. Jackson to the NCO school of Instruction, Sarnia; Ptes. Roy Michelson, A. Plumb, Geo. Plater, Bert Donald, and Hubert Loetschert, to the signal corps Sarnia; Bandsmen Clarence Culley, P. Nicholson and G. Green to the battalion band, Sarnia. The same issue reported that the Forest town council would grant \$50 for four weeks toward recruitment until mobilization (FS April 13, 1916).

A week later the Standard reported two more men had enlisted at Forest, that Lieut. Williams had a meeting with the 149th officers at Sarnia April 17 and Petrolia town council would grant \$100 a week for B Company "...[W]hen it mobilizes here some time next week and continues while it stays here." (FS April 20, 1916).

The Watford paper was publishing a weekly honor roll. The April 14 issue listed 67 men as enlisted. It remarked, "A thorough canvas of the village of Thedford and vicinity by Lieut. E. Showler for military purposes shows there are eighty young men of enlistment age who haven't signed up yet."

No doubt there were financial interests connected with attesting more men. The Watford paper commented, "A large amount of money is being spent in Watford each month by the soldiers billeted here and it is thought by many rate payers that it is up to the Council to make a grant to the Battalion for recruiting purposes." (GA April 14, 1916). Previous to this report a letter to Lieut. Col. Bradley from a fifteen-year-old Wyoming Ontario girl, printed April 7 in the Guardian-Advocate, gave a perspective of what she was willing to do:

Dear Sir; Being informed that there was to be a league of girls or women formed to take the places of the young men who enlist, I thought I might drop you a line to see if you would enlighten me on the subject as I am very anxious and willing to do my little bit in the great cause." (GA April 7, 1916).

The girl alluded to the fact that she had relatives at the Front and "wishes many times a day she could help."

I would like to assist in some way such as in a munitions factory, clerk, mail carrier, grocery driver, milk carrier, or even go out on a farm to help the farmers along. I am willing to do anything in my power." (GA April 7, 1916).

The printed letter no doubt cast shame on many young men but there was no sudden rush.

Recruiting remained a concern across the county. The Topic reported April 19 that on April 17 the Petrolia Town Council was addressed by Capt. McGillivray and Lieut. Knowles. They asked for more aid to assist in the final recruiting of the battalion nearing the 1000 man mark. When committees reported back it was agreed to give \$100 a week while B Company remained in Petrolia. The Topic reported two men, W. Dobbin and William Lumley attested (PT April 19, 1916).

The men available to join were becoming fewer and fewer from the farms of the county. Osborne reported one more man, John Hodgins, joined the 149th the week before. (PT April 19, 1916). In the same issue Edy's Mills reported that three recruiting officers went door to door the previous week and their popular teacher Bruce Marwick. Marwick did not complete his attestation and did not serve (PT April 19, 1916). On Saturday April 22 Lieutenant Pollard was in Oil City looking for recruits but none attested. On the following Wednesday, April 26, his picture appeared in the Topic and it was noted that he resigned his commission to be with the boys. No doubt his decision related to the decree from Ottawa there would be no more supernumeraries (PT April 26, 1916).

Recruiting efforts intensified. Lieut. Colonel Bradley was reported in the Topic authorizing a 'Student Platoon' with the intent to have the best soldiers of the battalion concentrated in this platoon. No doubt the proposed formation was in response to the accidental death of Pte. Kerr at Petrolia and the drunken and disorderly conduct of some 149th in Sarnia. Such public display was hampering recruitment. These platoons were not unique to the Lambtons Own. It was replication of the 'Pals' platoons and battalions of the UK. Similarly, the appeal to young men wanting to join sports teams was offered through this platoon. The Topic commented, "They will...find congenial friends. Mothers need no longer fear to allow their sons to enlist with this platoon as nothing but young men of the best character will be admitted." The report concluded with "Your King and Country Need You – Immediately." (PT April 26, 1916). The Watford G-A added that Captain Connolly was in charge of the platoon. He would be visiting all the schools in Lambton "...where there are students of military age for the purpose on interesting them in this movement." (GA April 28, 1916). A picture of Captain Connolly was on the front page of the paper.

The Watford G-A concluded the month of April with printing a great amount of information spread through the April 28 issue. Money for recruiting was spent on a large advertisement entitled "The Price of Victory is Sacrifice" and used the scripture 'Greater gift hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his country.' Two smaller advertisements appeared; 'Germany of Britain – Which?' and 'Which Shall it Be?' These said to 'Join Lambtons 149th To-day.' (GA April 28, 1916). The C Coy honor roll had 68 men listed.

It appears that no one was certain of the exact numbers attested and training level of the 149th. The Watford G A reported that the battalion was close to 1000 men. Colonel Shannon from London Headquarters inspected C Coy and the Battalion HQ April 13. There were 80 men under the command of Lt. R.D. Swift that day and the paper said there were 110 men reviewed, no doubt including the battalion headquarters staff. (GA April 21, 1916).

The distant corners of the county were 'doing their bit' for recruiting with the near impossibility in encouraging men to enlist due to farming requirements for the most eligible. Like the other papers the Oil Springs Advance April 13 had a picture of one of the 149th officers, Lieut. H.B. Edward, on the front page. Under the heading 'Our Boys' it listed who heard the call and remarked that young Edward Kerr was the first death for the 149th not even out at the Front. There were twenty-three bona fide residents of Oil Springs in the ranks. Under the honor roll section, Alvinston, Inwood, and Brooke were listed with 22 men attested. Euphemia, Dawn and Enniskillen had 9 enlisted. This was a total of 31 men at

Alvinston section training. Following up on the Capt. Dancey Inwood recruiting visit, Lieuts Wykesmith and Showler held a meeting at the Orange Hall there April 24 and it was reported large numbers were present (OSA April 27, 1916). The Advance had a picture of Sgt. George Stirrett then overseas on the front page and Maj. K.B. Mackenzie of A Company 149th was placed on the second page. Oil Springs concluded the month with a total enlistment of 9, not changing from the February number.

The week of April 22 these ads appeared in the county weeklies:

*Join Lambton 149 Today
Greater gift hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his country.
The Price of Victory is Sacrifice*

A smaller ad appeared,

*Germany or Britain Which?
Join Lambton 149 Today
Honor Roll*

The actual numbers of effective men at the end of April is a guess. The nominal roll would have names of men who attested, perhaps had a few days in civilian clothes marching around, maybe received some uniform parts and then decided they had enough. Some remained for training to honour their attestation oath. The personnel files of the 149th tell the truth.

CHAPTER THREE
ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING

BACKGROUND

As the 149th battalion was a militia-based unit the officers would have familiarity with the existing Canadian militia instructions on the use of the War Office Field Service Manual, 1910, Infantry Battalion. In practice districts were given “complete liberty in regard to the training”. However, the experience of the First Contingent at the Front was quickly communicated to Ottawa and in turn was reflected in the series of supplemental orders passed to districts and the CEF battalions training in Canada.

(<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupname?key=Great%20Britain.%20War%20Office>).

(Great Britain. War Office. Field Service Manual, 1910: Infantry Battalion (Expeditionary Force). London: Printed for H.M.S.O. by Mackie and Co., 1910.)

(Interim Report of the Militia Council for the Dominion of Canada On the Training of the Militia During the Season of 1908. Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1909.)

What training the 149th did in the home county was to prove insufficient for the actual requirements overseas. This is traced to the systemic problems of the Canadian Militia before the War and the incremental adjustment to the realities of modern war (Holt, 155-157).

When the 149th was authorized, WO 156 was the current directive using a ten-week syllabus supposedly more suited to conditions at the Front. That was well and good but such instruction relied on distribution by MD #1 and the attention of the commanding officer. In the case of the 149th the untimely death of Col. Kelly and then the appointment of a medical doctor without infantry experience or for that matter time in the CEF gives the appearance training was a low priority until the men were recruited in numbers. There were few qualified instructors among the appointed officers and non-commissioned officers. In the first three months’ training was in the hands of the former Imperial Force men and Lt. Stapleton returned from the Front for rest having been battle tested.

THE BAND, COMPANIES AND SPECIALIZED SECTIONS

The Lambton men enlisted in small numbers at first. LCol. Kelly had his officer slate in place in the first days of the announcement authorizing the 149th. He brought his officers in from the Active 27th Regiment. The first non-commissioned officers were also from the Regiment. Very few of the other ranks had any military experience. Kelly, his officers and non-commissioned officers were to take raw recruits and form them into an infantry battalion trained to mobilization standard composed of four companies, with headquarters and ancillary personnel of nearly 1100 men. Most people asked on December 12, 1915 about Colonel Kelly’s death would have agreed with the coroner’s finding. It was the stress in those few days after authorization of the 149th that killed him.

When LCol. Bradley spoke of the impossibility of raising a battalion but giving his all at the February 6 monster rally most listeners would have immediately thought of the numbers required. By mid-January the 149th had sections working toward full platoon-size at the four centres. The deeper concern was providing the men with infantry training to bring the battalion to mobilization. This would be no easy task.

The experience of the ill-trained First Contingent for trench warfare and the adaptation of the Second and Third Contingents to the realities of the Western Front had no discernible effect on what passed for recruit training. The Lambton companies, in their isolated communities, followed the standard textbook *Infantry Training 1914*. That was the theory. (Infantry training: 4-company organization, 1914, General Staff War Office 1914 London: Printed under the authority of H.M.S.O. by Harrison 1914).

The first concern was fitting the officers, the appointed NCOs and the rank and file into the war establishment schema. This detailed the number of officers in headquarters, the staff for the HQ numbering 74 men. Then there were the four companies each containing nearly 230 men. As well a machine gun section was to be included and that needed another 16 men. Not to be left from the total were the medical officer and the chaplain with the ancillary soldiers who were the storesmen, sanitation and signalers; a total of 1100 men as Colonel Bradley stated. (Field Service Manual Infantry Battalion (Expeditionary Force) Canadian Militia War Establishment Provisional 1914).

Colonel Kelly secured Bert Culley as his first quartermaster sergeant just before his death. Culley was transferred from the 70th by special request. Kelly knew him as a hardware clerk in Forest. He would have the big job of kitting the battalion from the limited supplies held by the 27th regiment and the Ordnance Stores at Carling Heights. Culley had no military experience prior to joining the 70th.

Col. Bradley found his first acting battalion sergeant major in Joe Ford of Sarnia who had fourteen years with the Imperial Forces and a locomotive engineer. BMS Ford attested December 27, 1915.

Other early enlistees were quickly assessed on leadership and the skills they possessed. William McKinnon became the assistant paymaster sergeant. James Jamieson became the battalion orderly room sergeant. Art Frayne was one of the platoon sergeants.

The word got out to others about enlisting sooner than later for better prospects for rank. Harry Murphy, Andrews, Beecroft, Boody, the Brain brothers, Dodd, Parr and Towse were a few of those. Men like Bob Joss, Roy Lawrence and George Price were often called to put a face on the battalion by staffing the recruiting office. They were not fully trained but witnessed many attestations and were often a ready source of information on the men not known by the officer. Around such men the battalion grew from sections, into platoons and companies.

THE BAND

Many Sarnia citizens saw it essential to provide a band for the marching troops. The Library Board granted \$250 from its funds to start a band. It is not known who was actually in charge of the band nucleus. The Sarnia Observer reported that on January 26 the Courtright town band escorted A Coy into the town. There, A Coy met members of Lambton County Council at the rail station and marched them to dinner.

What was needed, so it was thought, was a band integral to the Battalion and a leader. This was to be Mr. J. A. Dawson, formerly of the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto and said to have years with the Imperial Army. He was appointed bandmaster by Colonel Bradley. However, there are no attestment papers for him (SO January 27, 1916).

This matter seemed straight forward except the detail overlooked the fact a band was not authorized under the Militia Department War Establishment schema of 1914. Drummers and buglers numbering to 15 with a Sergeant were.
(<https://archive.org/details/canadianmilitiaw00cana>)

Bands were a must in a culture where such were the pride of small and large community alike. The Guardian-Advocate made a point:

If we have a 149 Battalion Band Watford should be the headquarters. It should be organized at once and kept on the move through the county for recruiting purposes. Let the Sarnia, Forest, Petrolia and Watford people get together in this matter and have the musicians mobilized at once (GA January 28, 1916).

No doubt as new recruits came, they were asked if they were interested in being in a battalion band. They would have to use their own personal instruments. Dawson appears to have practiced the first band members until Ferdinand Hodder joined the 149th on February 16 and was appointed the Band Sergeant that same day. (<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B4405-S008ce> service record with DO 87 noted)

The first public appearance of the Band with Sgt Hodder was at the Patriotic Meeting held at the Princess Theatre Sunday evening, February 20 (SO February 19, 1916).

With Bandmaster Hodder the band expanded and took on the role of being a visible morale booster to the soldiers of A Company. Every Sunday the Band would lead the church parade and attend the service. Afterwards the Band would march the men back to the company headquarters for dismissal. Occasionally the Band would be present for recruiting rallies Sunday evenings. During the week the band members did the same initial training as the other soldiers. Practices would be arranged for an evening during the week. No doubt the former Boys' Brigade Hall was ideal for such. When required the band would provide a musical escort to begin a route march and when the march returned to company headquarters. Because such bands were not authorized no money was granted from Militia Headquarters. The citizens of the county and especially Sarnia would in time purchase brass band instruments. The Watford paper reported by the end of February that \$2500 had been raised for the instruments (GA March 3, 1916).

There was as well a movement to have a Kiltie Band. The Oil Springs Advance included such a band in its account of the special sections to be enlisted. (OSA March 16, 1916). The town jeweller R. G. B. McGilp at Forest enlisted in D Coy as a piper in anticipation of being in the Kiltie Band. (LA March 27, 1916). This band did not form. The 241st at Windsor raised a Pipes and Drums and drew into it some Lambton pipers and drummers. McGilp later went to that battalion.

The Sarnia public, through the Observer, were aware where the Lambton Band would be on duty for Sunday church parade. With no garrison church designated, A Coy and the Band rotated church attendance at the churches Sarnia. However, the Observer reported many services at Central Baptist where Hodder was the instrument soloist.

SPECIALIST SECTIONS

As the 149th added men the skills and trades were noted for future reference or granted a provisional placement in the battalion. The battalion required butcher, baker a shoemaker, a tailor, an armourer among other tradesmen. Such were deemed 'specialists'. When the battalion mobilized and went into the field these men were important for the day to day administrative function. The same stood for those in the battalion orderly room such as the chief clerk, orderlies, paymaster, chaplain and the medical officer, each having their duties.

There were three larger sections of men within the battalion who were dispersed in the headquarters and companies: the stretcher bearers, the signallers and the machine gun section. It was in mid-March 1916 that Colonel Bradley made the specific call for these men. He was still short of men and he called for men specifically interested in joining these sections as they were needed and counted toward the total number (GA March 17, 1916).

The medical officer Capt James was responsible for supervising and training a medical section composed of a sergeant, a corporal and 13 stretcher bearers who trained in first aid and casualty clearance. Two men would be assigned to each company. When in the field a cart and driver were added.

The signal officer Lieutenant Browne was responsible for supervising and training the signallers who were required to relay messages within the battalion when deployed in the field. He had a sergeant with two signallers as required at headquarters and two in each company. These men were to be skilled in flag signalling, semaphore and heliograph.

The machine gun officers Captain Stapleford and Lieutenant Stokes were responsible for training the two Colt gun teams under the supervision of a sergeant and a corporal. There were 12 men assigned to the guns. In the field there was a cart and driver assigned.

INITIAL TRAINING

As the men attested they were assigned to training sections in their town or village. As the numbers increased, new sections and then platoons were formed. A section was led by a Lance Corporal or Corporal. Four sections made a platoon. A platoon was commanded by a Lieutenant and a Sergeant. In turn, four platoons made a company. At every training level the men had to be supervised by non-commissioned officers and those qualified were few. Former members of the Imperial Forces, the Canadian Militia and even former US Army were appointed to lead the men. They were not enough and demonstrated leadership by some of the men through sports connection in the county had these appointed to temporary NCO rank. They too had to be trained.

The resemblance of training began in the first days of January 1916. There had been modifications to the training syllabus used by Empire troops that used the 'lessons learned' approach. Presumably the coy and plt officers used distributed copies of WOI 156 from Carling Heights. Most who had the militia lieutenancy course would pull out their class notes and supervise what they assigned their NCOs to teach. That alone could be a question as to training content. The Commanding Officer was responsible for the training of their battalions with little specific guidance from either the militia district or the Department of Militia and Defence. (Holt, 113).

However, it was not just the matter of the training content; there was a lack of qualified instructors and officers who could competently supervise. This was a concern across Canada established by communication from the Front and the training depots in England. (Holt 135).

It was reported that Maj. Gen. Sir Sam Hughes "...inaugurated a democratic change in the manner of preparing and educating officers." The Militia Department required such for the expeditionary force. Each military district was to establish provisional schools of instruction; "and members ...of whatever rank of service, will be permitted to attend, provided...they are recommended by their commanding officers and there is room for them." Candidates or probationers would join weekly batches, and they would take a course of instruction with the length depending on the rank they were qualifying for (GA January 28, 1916).

A circular letter about training qualifications went out to all CEF units being raised in MD#1. It could not be ignored. Col. Bradley had to respond by sending candidates. It is not known how he selected these as the militia regiments had a long tradition of not relying on merit but judging the officer by his place in society. Given the fact that Bradley was concerned about enlisting the required number of men and the other administrative concerns he would be challenged as to who went on course. Two subalterns were required at each recruiting station, one for supervision of training and the other doing recruiting. Each station would need two provisional sergeants and three ORs who acted in a non-commissioned rank. Even with training batches every two weeks it was possible for probationary officer appointments could miss instruction. LCol. Bradley recommended candidates most likely on the recommendations of the company commanders and the Adjutant Captain Merrison

would submit these to Carling Heights. It appears that the initial training relied on those few men who had former Imperial service or some long years with the Militia. There are no records existing of the selections Col. Bradley made. There are newspaper references to those from the 149th who passed the eight-week lieutenant course. The best indication of the process is found in the records surviving from LCol. Lohead held at Laurier University (<https://www.archeion.ca/lohead-fonds>).

Given the fact that the men were not billeted in a central area and some had overnight privileges with families created problems. They were expected to form in their respective platoons at the Sarnia Waterworks or Watford Armoury or Forest Armoury or Petrolia's Victoria Hall at 8 a.m., breakfasted, shaved and in uniform. Some recruits found this a problem. Their NCO would mark the attendance and from then on proceed through the day's training, spent drilling on the parade square, learning, to march, form fours and about turn. Between 12.15 and 2 p.m. the men took lunch near the area or at their billets before returning for more drill in the afternoon until 4.15 p.m. Some soldiers might be detailed off for fatigues or work parties thereafter, but otherwise recruits were off duty, although they might have to spend time cleaning kit and shining boots.

As the platoon officers became available there was time allotted in the syllabus for lectures which could consist of current events, the war situation, sanitation, health issues and remarking on the Kings Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Militia. The men soon called these 'smokers' as they were rather informal and a time for cigarettes and pipes, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. More often the men wanted to talk about pay and leave. They wanted to know how and when they received their \$1.10 a day and when leave would come. Pay was generally the last Friday of the month.

The few married men at this time were helped to apply for the \$20 a month separation allowance for their spouse and which widowed mothers could receive as well. The big item was leave and passes. The entitlement was 10 days leave for a year served. Passes could be for the weekend but only 10 percent of the unit could be away on that, Saturday 1300 hours to Sunday Midnight if they were in camp. (Cozzi p 46) The officers did their lectures and hoped that some stayed awake about the military justice system. If time permitted after training hours, they could attend the khaki club which the Patriotic League and interested business set up in Sarnia, Petrolia, Watford and Wyoming, with billiards, a shelf-library, and writing tables and stationary. Otherwise, the men found their entertainment at the community 'opera hall', licensed hotel bars and the 'blind pig'.

The War Office training schedule, modified by the Instructions 156, allotted three months of progressive training to bring a recruit up to the point he and his section were ready to do company training. The flow of recruits determined when a new section could be formed and begin their recruit training. The Lambton Coy and Plt commanders were challenged with covering the recommended hours for a number of subjects in the three-month period.

The 149th recruits would encounter a total of 48 hours training over 6 days of their first week:

TABLE 5. Typical 48 Hours of Training in Week One

Squad drill (without arms)	6 hrs
Musketry	12 hrs
Squad drill	12 hrs
Lectures	3 hrs
Fitting marching orders	½ to 2 hrs
Physical drill	4 ½ hrs

Source Holt p 135 and Army Council Instruction 1103

Enterprising platoon commanders could use the Saturday afternoon for sports. Sunday was not actually a free day as all were required to attend Church Parade unless excused by extra duty, sickness or on granted leave. Lectures that first week may have included the introductions of the men to their officer and NCOs, along with the 'do's and don'ts.' Lectures were also a time to learn about routine orders and daily orders and where to find them or who to ask in the chain of command. The urban boys and the farm boys were, challenged by the training which bore little resemblance to their late civilian world. Some chose not to complete their first week and thus were either AWL for a time or deserted, never to return.

Each new week saw changes in the subjects taught and new subjects to be covered. Each week was 48 hours for training. See the table below.

TABLE 6. Recruit Training Covering 10 Weeks

Week 2 was a continuation of the first week.

Week 3 introduced extended drill which was the formation used for offensive action

Week 4 introduced route marching

Week 5 introduced outposts and added more route marching

Week 6 introduced night work combined with outposts and route marching

Week 7 introduced entrenching

Week 8 all of the above

Week 9 introduced bayonet fighting

Week 10 was platoon drill and all of the above

Source Holt p 135 and Army Council Instruction 1103

Army Council Instructions, No. 1080 - 1115. [1914-1920].

The War Office training syllabus commented on the next training; "On the completion of recruit training the collective training of the company will commence."

There are no training records preserved from the 149th. However, newspaper articles from the local Press give some idea where companies of the Battalion were on the syllabus.

Sometimes the men were off the timetable due to weather conditions. The Watford paper told of the early January work by C Company. They flooded the bowling green next to the armoury into an ice rink. However, the thaw had spoiled the surface and "they had their trouble for nothing." The editor added, "When a good sheet of ice is secured the boys in khaki will fill in their idle time skating and playing hockey" (GA January 14, 1916). Apparently, no one at the armoury was aware of the dilapidated Union Jack flying. "A few more rough days it will be in ribbons. It should be repaired at once, as this is not time to keep...at the mast head" (GA January 14, 1916).

Along with recruiting efforts there were events to mix the soldiers and townspeople. Earlier that week there was a patriotic fundraising Tuesday night January 11 at Fowler's ice rink, held under the auspices of the 149th. There were a number of skating competitions inviting town and soldiers to race. It was standing room only. \$47.50 was raised and after a few expenses paid would go to the Patriotic Fund. The rink was free. The winners were:

Skating race 10 laps – first, Bruce; second, Brown.

Barrel race (boys of the town) – first, Trenouth; second, Cook.

Barrel race (boys of the town) – first, Collins; second, Smyth.

Three-legged race (soldiers) – first, Collins; second, Clark.

The Watford Concert band furnished the music (GA January 14, 1916).

Presumably, C Coy had enough section and platoon drill to undertake an ambitious route march beginning Wednesday January 19. The Coy left for Petrolia on what was described as not ideal,

Despite the bad condition of the roads, the Watford Company Lambtons 149, had an enjoyable march to Petrolia. The boys were delighted with the reception given along the line. At Kingscourt John McCormick and James Thompson treated them to a lunch. Several farmers along the route gave the boys apples. The children of the schools on the road sang patriotic songs as they marched by. At Wyoming they were welcomed by Reeve Wilson and council and given dinner and a pair of socks. Continuing to Petrolia they were met at the outskirts by the band [Petrolia Citizen] and the local recruits. Marching up Main street they were cheered enthusiastically by the crowds of towns people. An address of welcome was given them by Mayor Stirrett. The Ladies' Aid of the Methodist Church served the boys with supper and breakfast. Returning to Wyoming the next day they were given dinner by the Red Cross Society and each man was presented with another pair of socks and a box of candy. They then entrained for home (Watford) well satisfied with their outing. The next long march will likely be south to Alvinston and Inwood. (GA January 28, 1916).

The next march was Wednesday January 26 with a short march into Brooke Township,

Watford Co. of the Lambton 149 Battalion were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. George Bowie of the 12th line of Brooke on Wednesday. Mr. Sherman Hair provided for some 15 to 20 of the Company, the balance dining at Mr. Bowie's. After dinner a few songs were rendered by different members of the company and after photographs had been

taken and cheers given for the host and hostess the boys started back for Watford, making the return trip in very good time. Friends along the road very kindly provided the boys with baskets of apples which were appreciated. (GA January 28, 1916).

When opportunity permitted Col. Bradley and Capt. Waddell replied to the thoughtful citizens. These were printed in the Wyoming column of the January 31 Sarnia Observer.

The Sarnia Daily Observer had a front page description of the route march undertaken by 'A' Coy Wednesday January 26 to Friday January 28. The Observer described how 120 or more men led by the bugle band, with their coy commander Major Mackenzie and Lieut. Cheyne marched through mud and nearly impassable roads to reach Corunna for a citizen-sponsored lunch the first day. Then the company marched to Courtright for supper and billeted in the Stewart hall where they had an evening meal prepared by the local citizens. They were met there by Major Stewart (junior major) and Captain Kelly (quartermaster). Lambton county council arrived by train to attend a patriotic rally. The coy set off the next day and reached Sombra by using the railroad track because of the poor roads and falling rain. The coy had another citizen-prepared dinner and stayed overnight at Sheppardson's hall. 'A' Coy left Friday morning and did the reverse route, stopping at Courtright for lunch and arriving back in Sarnia in the late afternoon.

The march had been twenty miles out and the same back. This was accomplished with a load of a light pack of blanket, towel, soap, comb, brush and shaving outfit for each man. The company rifles had only arrived Monday January 24 so Maj. McKenzie decided they would not be carried. This was just as wise given the weather and no rifle training in that short time before the march. (GA January 28, 1916). The training syllabus said week four was introduction to route marching. It appears that the Coy began recruit training January 3, the first business day of the new year. The Observer concluded, "The people of Lambton County have good reason to be proud of their soldier boys and should aid as far as possible the recruiting of Lambton's 149th." (S0 January 29, 1916).

At the same time A Coy did their march to Corunna C Coy in Watford did a route march to Petrolia and passed through the village of Wyoming. It was successful and there were responses printed in the Wyoming column of the January 31 Observer:

A letter was received by the Reeve Wilson and the Wyoming village council,

Gentlemen, - We have for some time known that there were many loyal citizens in your village and surrounding country within the last few days this loyalty has again so pronounced itself in your warm heartedness to our soldier boys of the 149th Batt. (Lambton's Own) on their route march through the village of Wyoming. Your meeting them, Reeve and council and giving them so hearty a reception and welcome on the behalf of the citizens of the village of Wyoming is beyond any praise we can give you and our boys will long-remember the pleasant stay they had within the village and in saying we wish you to know that there is more behind it, and we will ever feel grateful to you for your splendid arrangements and reception to our khaki boys. I have the

honor to be sirs, your obedient servant. Capt. J. C. Waddell, Transport Officer.

*The Reeve, Red Cross Society and people of Wyoming,
Permit me to express my personal appreciation and that of the officers and men of the
Watford unit for the splendid way in which you treated them on their recent route march
to Petrolia. Your kindness on that occasion is deeply appreciated.*

Thos. P. Bradley Lt.-Col.

Lambton's 149th

(SO January 31, 1916)

Undertaking such marches were remarkable given the weather conditions, the untested spirit of the men which rose to the occasion and the inadequate Oliver webbing worn. The equipment consisted of a waist belt with brass snake buckle, eighty-round cartridge pouch, bayonet frog, pint water bottle and carrier, canvas knapsack, mess tins, canvas cover, a set of braces, with shoulder yoke, to carry the weight. A white canvas haversack with a shoulder strap and a set of leather greatcoat straps also formed part of the equipment. This harness found obsolete in the South African campaign was still used in Canada and was replaced by cotton webbing for the BEF and CEF in active service.

(https://leathersatchels.blogspot.com/2014/04/oliver-pattern-brief-history_27.html)

The newspaper story said nothing of carrying rifles. If they were carried, they were an early mark of the Ross rifle that supplied to the Canadian militia under contract. Some of the men may have had a Ross .303 for hunting. The barrel of the older issued Ross were 28 inches and the newer were 30 inches long, making them cumbersome with its weight of 8.6 pounds. No doubt there were sore shoulders at the end of every day.

(<http://www.canadiansoldiers.com/weapons/rifles.htm>)

The rifles were infantry's offensive weapon and as such required musketry classes. The local high schools had indoor firing ranges for .22 calibre rifles. The Ross was for outdoors with its .303 calibre and required qualified instructors to teach its handling and firing. Colonel Bradley authorized provisional lieutenants B.E. Scott, R.W. Rigsby, R. Schroeder and P. H. Turnbull to attend the musketry course at Carling Heights January 31 to February 12, 1916. They were not needed for the initial training of the recruits. They would be needed for the musketry battalion shooting (LA March 7, 1916).

The Sarnia Observer reported that on January 24, 1916 LCol. J. E. Cohoe was at the Armoury to inspect the progress of training of A Coy. Cohoe was familiar with overseas training requirements having returned to Canada after service with the 1st Brigade.

<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B1842-S004>

Although he was from the Toronto military district he would provide a non-biased view of the training covered. In this case he may have reviewed the future training plans of A Coy and gave authority to carry on. He may have commented on the training location and influenced the choice of a new site. The Waterworks building was changed to Woods' Store (SO February 3, 1916). In addition to the larger Coy headquarters the Sarnia men now had a 'Khaki Club' in the Bank of Montreal building as a social centre away from their billets (SO February 8, 1916).

As the weather permitted the Sarnia Lambtons took in the hockey games scheduled at the St. Andrew's Rink (SO February 7 and 8, 1916). The Petrolia coy went further with their hockey team after a number of Petrolia Stars attested January 24 and began practices under Capt. Campbell at Petrolia (SO January 26, 1916). They asked for a battalion-wide team participation (SO January 26, 1916).

Training continued according to the syllabus with hardening route marches as the main syllabus requirement. On Saturday February 5th A Coy, under Major Mackenzie, did a route march along London Road for eight miles and turned around, making the march from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. They were welcomed back with apples, coffee and sandwiches. (LA February 7, 1916). A Coy had a church parade the next day (LA February 7, 1916).

When the weather and road conditions were suitable route marches were used for training and recreation. The table below gives the mileage covered.

TABLE 7. Mileage between recruited sections of Lambton County

Alvinston to Watford	14 miles
Alvinston to Petrolia	15 miles
Arkona to Forest	9 miles
Bothwell to Alvinston	15 miles
Bothwell to Florence	8 miles
Brigden to Petrolia	9 miles
Camlachie to Wyoming	7 miles
Corunna to Sarnia	7 miles
Courtright to Sarnia	15 miles
Forest to Petrolia	17 miles
Forest to Watford	20 miles
Petrolia to Sarnia	16 miles
Port Lambton to Corunna	16 miles
Sombra to Petrolia	20 miles
Sarnia to Port Lambton	23 miles
Thedford to Forest	7 miles
Walpole Island ferry to Port Lambton	6 miles
Warwick to Thedford	14 miles
Watford to Petrolia	14 miles
Watford to Wyoming	12 miles
Wyoming to Petrolia	6 miles

Source 'Official Automobile Road Guide of Canada, 1912 by James Miln Toronto, Musson Books

When his schedule permitted Col. Bradley visited the companies in Sarnia, Petrolia and Forest from his headquarters in Watford. The papers kept the county aware of his visits. He was in Petrolia Friday January 28 but nothing more was said about the reason of his visit. (PT February 2, 1916). He may have thought company hockey teams was a good idea.

On Monday January 31 a new allotment of 140 Ross rifles were added to those on hand which the newspaper said was sufficient for their need. Every man would have a rifle at the armoury (PT February 2, 1916). Meanwhile, Colonel Bradley was in Toronto for a briefing on recruiting efforts (LA February 5, 1916).

The Sarnia numbers attesting were well ahead of the outlying sections but it also meant there were growing discipline problems occurring in the after-training hours. A partial solution was icing hockey teams through the month of February but there are few references about the inter-company competition. The Guide-Advocate remarked on the number of Watford people into the Saturday night OHA game. There was to be a hockey game between the Petrolia company team and the Watford company team Friday night (GA February 11, 1916).

In Sarnia, it was not clear what actual training was happening. Tuesday February 8 in the afternoon was a reception held by the Pro Patria Chapter of the IODE at the Khaki Club Rooms with entertainment provided by the Sarnia Symphony under the leadership of Mr. Brush. Attendance by Sarnia citizens was low because the weather was "about the worst experienced for this season." (SO February 11, 1916). The Sarnia paper noted that the 149th A Coy thanked Mr. Harris of the Princess Theatre for the free evening on Wednesday February 9 when 100 men attended.

Training as well as they could with bad weather, the lack of instructors and the limited facilities of the Waterworks and Wood's Store on Front street the men had to be kept busy. Some may have used the time to practice hockey skills as well. The first game of the inter-company 149th hockey league took place Saturday evening February 5 at Sarnia Arena. The game took idle Lambtons off the streets and into the bleachers. The newspaper accounts tell of a good game.

Petrolia C Coy defeated A in a mostly close game:

The first and second periods were fast, the first ending with no goals on either side, and the second period ending 2 to 1 in favour of Sarnia. During the last few minutes of the third period the visitors got the five winning goals. (PT February 9, 1916).

The men were:

<i>Sarnia</i>		<i>Petrolia</i>
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Cameron</i>
<i>Halpin</i>	<i>point</i>	<i>Gleason</i>
<i>Sanford</i>	<i>cover</i>	<i>Volway</i>
<i>Fralick</i>	<i>rover</i>	<i>Harding</i>
<i>Cotch</i>	<i>centre</i>	<i>McRitchie</i>
<i>McDermid</i>	<i>l wing</i>	<i>Brown</i>
<i>Ellis</i>	<i>r wing</i>	<i>Wilson</i>

Referee Hillman

At Petrolia (Hockey report PT February 9, 1916)

With more men added to B Coy it was time to see them manage a route march. Forty men under the command of Capt. Campbell and Lt. Pollard marched from Petrolia to Oil Springs and on arrival were greeted by Reeve Sproule and village councillors who directed them to the Masonic Hall where they had supper and were entertained by the Red Cross Society. The men billeted there overnight. In the morning they had breakfast in the basement of the Methodist church before heading back to Petrolia. The Oil Springs social editor said, "Everything that could be done to make it pleasant for the boys was done, and their visit will be remembered with pleasure by all who took part in it (PT February 16, 1916).

Aside of the march discipline the best happening was the exposure of the men in khaki to the village. The Red Cross ladies provided a concert but before the entertainment speeches were made.

Reeve John Sproule was acting as chair "in his happy style" and he called on the village elders, Rev. A. S. Whitehall emphasized the need of men for home defence; Mr. Jackson was "glad to welcome the sight of so many khaki clad men; Mr. F O. McMahon was "sure the fidelity of the sons of Canada in the past was a pledge of this fidelity in the future." Mr. A.W. Parks thought the 149th a credit to their uniform. He added that "the call was universal and the ones left behind would also "do their bit." Mr. Griffen also gave a hearty address of welcome and Mr. Anderson and Mr. Hunter spoke of the need of men for service and congratulated the 149th on their splendid showing. Capt. R.J. Campbell thanked the citizens for their generous reception to him and his men. He said the 149th would fight for truth, honesty, liberty and faith. Capt. Smythe gave a short address "tingling with patriotism." There was a concert of songs and solos which followed the speeches. No doubt the young unmarried ladies enjoyed the company of Petrolia men (PT February 16, 1916).

Wyoming remained short of the anticipated enlistment figure of November 1915. The Sarnia Observer noted that "the recruiting office here which was in the building next to J.E. Anderson's store, has been transferred to the brick Butler building where the soldier boys are made quite comfortable (SO February 10, 1916). Other news told of the men attended the Burns Church service.

The drums were beating at Walpole, so to speak. Lt. Wykesmith. Appointed recruiting officer there, reported of marked success in enlisting approximately thirty men (SO February 9, 1916). Later in the week Colonel Bradley and the Honorable W.J. Hanna planned to visit the Island. The result was impressive and Col, Bradley commented on that in recruiting speeches.

Two weeks later Wykesmith reported from Port Lambton,

I speak highly of the Indians. They have most of the whites trimmed a mile for physique. As an instance, yesterday I got word from Sarnia that uniforms were

available. I hitched up, drove to the Island, over four miles, and had the boys here [Port Lambton] in time to catch the 10.45 train to Sarnia. They all did the four miles on foot, running most of the way ahead of me in the cutter, with never a whimper out of any one of them (LA February 19, 1916).

Wykesmith added that there were four professional ball players, three professional runners, two ex-pugilists, and nearly every man a crack shot, "so you can see my redmen will give a good account of themselves when they get up against the Germans." (LA February 19, 1916).

Recruiting and training were running hand-in-hand for Petrolia and Oil Springs. Lt. Stokes attested new men, Charles Nichols February 5, K. B. Tripp February 6, the Kerr brothers Murdock and Kerr February 7, and youngster Herbert Smith February 8, 1916 in Oil Springs to add to the Petrolia numbers. Captain Campbell must have been concerned with the lower number of recruits in comparison to Sarnia. Accordingly, a new ad for the 149th appeared in the Advance, the 'On to Victory, Are You a Man?' Perhaps this would bring more men. In the meantime, the Coy had training going into weeks four and five. The paper also told its readers that Lt. Stokes was back at the town after being on the sick list for two weeks, "Call and see him...he will give you a hearty welcome." (PT February 9, 1916).

Over at Watford enlistment numbers and training were not keeping pace with Petrolia and was one third that of Sarnia. The Watford Guardian-Advocate reported the roster: LCol Bradley, OC; Capt. R.H. Stapleford, in charge of the Watford area; Capt. F.C. Smythe, Paymaster; Lieut. R.P. Brown, recruiting officer; Lieut. W.P. Wykesmith; and Lieut. G.E. Lucas. the non-commissioned officers with HQ were acting Staff Sergeant R.D. Swift, of the orderly room; Quarter Master Sergeant B. Culley; Paymaster Sergeant W.H. Smyth [spelling corrected] and acting orderly room Sergeant J. A. Jamieson. There were 44 other ranks (Watford GA Jan 21, 1916).

There is little record of what training C Coy was undertaking. The Guardian-Advocate reported that the Coy attended church Sundays but otherwise Watford citizens knew nothing of the actual training. Occasionally it mentioned recruiting at Arkona and the concerts in the area held by the patriotic league in support of the 149th.

D Coy did not progress as far into platoon and company training as did other companies. The men attested at Forest in January did their initial training and then all halted the first two weeks of February because of a mumps outbreak. There was a nurse assigned for their care but she became ill. Presumably with better health they would but not before Colonel Bradley visited February 16 to assess the situation. Lt. Williams was to return to recruiting when fit. Lt. White was to be the senior and thus responsible for training. Mr. Schroeder was to do recruiting. When the men were recovered from mumps the instructor was Sgt. Oliver Dew, the former policeman for Forest.

(Price letter, <https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/february-1916.html>)

The first route march of C Coy was Wednesday February 16 to Warwick Village under the command of Lieut. R.P. Brown leaving Watford at 10.00 a.m. and arriving there 12.10 p.m.

where they were met by its citizens, escorted to the Orange Hall for lunch prepared by the W.I. and followed by entertainment for the ninety soldiers and friends. Pte. Mayes sang 'Two Little Girls in Blue.' A rousing patriotic song "Canadian Jack" was sung by the audience. (GA February 18, 1916).

Generally, the newspaper comments were on observations made by the towns people.

HOCKEY

The hockey match between A and C companies of the 149th in Fowler's rink on Monday night was well patronized and a good clean game was witnessed. The Watford team defeated the Sarnia boys by a score of 9 to 5 (GA February 18, 1916).

DRUM AND BUGLE BAND

A drum and bugle band has been organized by "C" Company 149. It helps to make the daily march out more attractive and pleasant. The boys are doing fine considering the length of time they have been practicing (GA February 18, 1916).

The Topic reported March 1 in the Alvinston social column that the men training there marched to the Brooke and Enniskillen Baptist Church Thursday February 24, attended a religious service and then had dinner at the residence of the Brooke Township clerk Mr. Weed before returning to Alvinston. (PT March 1, 1916).

The Lambton officers finished out the month of February with a 'At Home' Military Ball at the Wyoming Armoury Monday February 28, 1916. It commenced at 8:30 p.m. and concluded at 2:30 a.m. the next day. (SO February 29, 1916). The 'At Home' was an opportunity for Col. Bradley to call a conference meeting on the morning of February 29 of all his county-wide officers and to become acquainted as well. It can only be assumed that training went ahead as weather permitted through each successive week. However, the numbers attesting were faltering. In the new month something had to be done.

Inadvertently the 'At Home' brought forth the first indication that Bradley's leadership was faltering as well. He had chosen Shook's Orchestra of Detroit to provide the music and stated as such in the Sarnia Observer. The next day after the paper reported the editor received a signed letter questioning the choice of orchestra. The editor chose to print the letter as anonymous but indicating it was a member of Sarnia's Citizen Band. What ensued were terse comments from Bradley and the paper editor. Bradley was showing signs he was not totally conscious of community concerns over the costing to put the 149th in the field under his leadership.

MARCH 1916

Many of the junior officers of the 149th were away attending qualification courses at Carling Heights in February. Now the new month meant putting their training in the oversight of their assigned platoons. Some officer had readily proved themselves. The Petrolia Topic

noted March 1 that Lieut. Stokes was at London taking the lieutenant qualifying course and was to be in charge of the machine gun section of the 149th. Lieutenants Trenouth, Brown, Smith, Dodds and Moncrieff were reported to be in London on the lieutenant's course. (GA March 3, 1916). Captain Merrison was at Florence for enlisting and supervision until replaced by Capt. Dunfield (OSA March 16, 1916). The musketry course at London ran from January 31 to February 12 from which provisional lieutenants Rigsby, Scott, Schroder, McQueen, Turnbull graduated (LA March 7, 1916).

Colonel Bradley gave them marching orders. The London Advertiser noted that Arkona's 27 men route-marched to Warwick on Thursday March 2 and were entertained by the citizens there. The 12 men in Wyoming did the same for 14 miles to the Wilson farm where Mrs. Wilson fed the men before they turned around and went back to Wyoming:

The local recruiting squad today enjoyed a pleasant change in the routine. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson of Oban, London road, brother and aunt of Pte. John Wilson in training here, invited the entire squad, twelve in number, to dinner. Though this entailed a march of fourteen miles to and from, the boys were delighted over the affair (LA March 4, 1916).

MORE HOCKEY

Route marches seemed to be the attention-getter at times because the men were seen doing 'something' in the eyes of the townspeople. But the bigger event was associated with hockey. Petrolia was at Watford for a game the evening of Wednesday March 1, beating the Watford squad with a score of 10 to 4. A game was set but some Petrolia fans were upset by the affrontery of the Alvinston team refusing to play the B Coy team Thursday evening March 2. The Alvinston management gave no reason but the boys said, "It is because they fear they will be badly beaten. However, the Petrolia team is so anxious to give the beating that arrangements are being made for that game to be played in Watford on Monday." The paper said the whole Petrolia community was prepared to go to Watford to cheer them to victory. It was also felt the boys should not endanger their chance for the battalion championship by playing on 'strange ice' when it is their turn to play at home (SO March 4, 1916).

For the men directly involved as players, military training could have been a distraction. Or the other view was ice-hockey play was needed when the men were off duties and had time on their hands. The Belleville-Sarnia OHA Intermediate play off that season caught the attention of both civilians and soldiers. March 10 was the big night in Sarnia and drew a large crowd including soldiers. Sarnia was at Belleville March 7 and Sarnia lost 14 to 5. The series ended at Sarnia March 10 with the score of 14-4 in favour of Sarnia. Sarnia won the series over Belleville by the total points 19 to 18. (https://icehockey.fandom.com/wiki/1915-16_OHA_Intermediate_Playoffs and SO March 11, 1916).

Back at Petrolia the festering ill-feeling between Alvinston and Petrolia remained unresolved. An exhibition game was played in Sarnia March 11 and the London Advertiser reported on the game with colour added by their stringer:

Probably the best exhibition hockey seen this year was given in the Columbus rink when the Petrolea Company of the 149th Battalion clashed with an all-star aggregation.

The soldiers were in the pink of condition and played better hockey than they have before this season. Every man played his position, and no one tried individual rushes, but trusted to combination work. Owing to this and the light weight of their opponents they piled up a large score, 10-2. This in spite of the fact that the all-stars played a good aggression game. If the soldiers had not kept on their guard all the time they would have had nothing but the small end of the score and regrets for their carelessness. Gallivan, Collier and Robinson made many attacks on the military goal, but could not get anything past the crack net man, "Stub" Mathews. "Jinx" Wilson showed a few spurts of playing for the all-stars, but in doing so left his goal open and before he could defend it, the soldiers slipped one in. The Petrolea fans were greatly elated at the much improved condition and playing of the soldiers. Only one game, with Alvinston is between them and the battalion championship. But this will be a closely contested one, as Alvinston defeated them in their home town by two points.

Victory would be easy if Alvinston would play the return game, but they have "flunked" and arrangements cannot be made for a game on neutral ice. If the Petrolea team keeps up to the form of tonight's game they ought to easily defeat them, even in Alvinston. After the local boys have the battalion championship packed away, inter-battalion games will be played. Tonight's line-up was:

149th Batt.

All-stars

<i>Mathews</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>P. Wilson</i>
<i>Harding</i>	<i>R Defence</i>	<i>Volway</i>
<i>Gleason</i>	<i>L Defence</i>	<i>Polly</i>
<i>McQueen</i>	<i>Centre</i>	<i>Collier</i>
<i>McRitchie</i>	<i>R Wing</i>	<i>Thomas</i>
<i>A. Wilson</i>	<i>L Wing</i>	<i>Robinson</i> (LA March 11, 1916)

OVER FOREST WAY

After the initial recruiting rush, D Coy was stabilized at 124 men of which 80 were at Forest, 36 were Alvinston, 25 at Arkona, 52 at Thedford and 7 at Florence for the end of February. This distribution affected training as in some locations it was only sections and other locations partial or full platoons. D Coy had yet to work together as a complete Coy. No doubt that in part this was attributed to the three week illness of Lt. Williams (LA March 7, 1916). The Forest Standard reported through the 'Blast' that Lt. Williams was planning for Arkona to meet in Forest and then proceed to Thedford for a route march (March 9, 1916). The Standard also reported that Sarnia had 205 men, Walpole 36, Courtright 26, Sombra 30, Watford 80, Petrolia 66, Brigden 30, Oil Springs 9, Wyoming 14 and Florence 7 all training (FS March 9, 1916).

That gave a total of about 800 men. The 'Blast' said,

Lambtons 149 is now calling for stretcher bearers, signalers, machine gun men and Bandsmen are needed immediately. All vacancies in these branches will be filled and regular training for these branches begun. The machine gun section will be mobilized at Watford in charge of Capt. R.H. Stapleford and Lieut. Trenouth. The signalers will be trained at Sarnia and will be commanded by Lieut. F.C. Browne. The Stretcher Bearer Corps will be under the direction of the Medical Officer of the regiment Capt. J.F. James of Sarnia. This unit offers a splendid opening for druggist's clerks and prospective students in medicine. (FS March 9, 1916).

The Arkona march to Forest was changed. The squad of 27 men "marched to Wisbeach on Thursday [March 9] and were entertained by the citizens of that place. The march was a 14 mile hike and although the roads were heavy, the boys made good time and returned in excellent condition." (GA March 10, 1916).

It was apparent that Col. Bradley was not following the syllabus. Recruit training only ended when all completed platoon training. When Coy training began, the specialists did their training. The way it was presented in the press allowed new men to bypass infantry training. An ad gave the requirements: 20 Stretcher Bearers – 20 Signallers-- 40 Machine Gun Men. "This is YOUR Chance! Sign up today." (SO March 9, 1916). At the same time Lieut. Pardee was enlisting men for an Engineer draft. No doubt the 149th lost some potential soldiers (SO March 10, 1916).

The call for more enlistments would put a strain on the few qualified officers and NCOs the battalion had in the initial formation. The provisional lieutenants brought into the 27th regiment and serving in the Lambton's Own had to be qualified. On-the-job training gave them some training, leadership and administration rudiments. MD#1 allowed the Lambtons to set up a NCO Provisional School of Instruction at Sarnia with a site to be determined and starting about March 20. (GA March 10, 1916).

There are no notes from Colonel Bradley's meeting with his officers Monday February 28. He had just returned from a recruitment conference on Toronto. No doubt he shared what was applicable to Lambton County. There were to be special guests invited to recruiting rallies. There was to be more visibility of the Lambton troops marching to isolated communities. There would be door-to-door knocking. And men were to be selected to go to Officer and NCO training schools. (LA March 4, 1916 Advertiser).

The next group of Lambton officers selected for the Lieutenant Qualification Course at Carling Heights, included R.J. Neelands, C.E. Wilson, A.E. Ellis, W.C. Gilchrist, F.I. McGibbon, R.C. Moorehouse, R.E.L. Lott and H.L. Humphrey (LA March 4, 1916). Specialized training as the Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training [B.F. & P.T.] could be farther away. Lt. J W. Knowles was selected to attend a bayonet fighting course in Montreal along with Sgt. F.H. Trolley, Sgt. R. W. Harrison, Sgt. G. Smith and Sgt. D.B. Thomson. They successfully completed the course (PT April 12, 1916).

Capt. James Merrison, who had served as the battalion adjutant, was named for the Musketry course in the Monday March 6, 1916 London Advertiser.

The Lieutenant course would last eight weeks. The candidates were from across the Military District No.1 and of such importance that Colonel Shannon addressed them Wednesday March 8 on the importance of personal discipline: "Discipline is the backbone of efficiency and it must be applied to self in order to serve the common good. If you cannot command yourself you cannot command others." (LA March 8, 1916).

Captain Cantin was the Training Officer. He explained the course content to the Press. It covered in more detail the initial recruit training of the men. There were discipline matters, drill, bayonet fighting, musketry, tactics and field warfare (as per officers), trench warfare, billeting, machine gun work, interior economy and military law, physical drill and signaling (LA March 6, 1916).

Although not specifically covered in the junior officer training, route marches were of vital importance to an effective infantry battalion. These marches were a test of both the men and the officers who organized them. The less-than fit would be found other jobs.

Route marches were seen as a way of attracting the uncommitted, eligible men to join the ranks. If space allowed the editor would place a 'watch for' such as "The Brigden and Wyoming companies...are on their way to Petrolia today, and will be entertained by the Women's Patriotic League at the Presbyterian church tonight. Petrolia knows how to give a welcome." (PT March 15, 1916).

In a few words the Forest Standard told of one successful march without mentioning the planning details:

Fifty soldiers in charge of Lieut. Williams and headed by Piper McGilp started out at nine o'clock yesterday morning on a route march yesterday (March 15) to Arkona and Arkona and Thedford. They arrived at Arkona about noon and were given a hot dinner by the ladies of the village. In the afternoon the Arkona boys fell in the Forest detachment and proceeded to Thedford where they spent the night. This morning the three detachments will start out for Forest and are expected to arrive here about noon. The Excelsior Band will meet them at the east end of King street and lead the procession to the town hall, where the ladies of the town will serve the men with a hot dinner. In the evening the boys will be entertained at the picture theatre, recruiting committee having arranged with Rumford Bros. to put on a special show for the boys in khaki and any single men over 18 years who wish to attend (FS March 16, 1916).

Lieutenant Williams essentially executed an extended country walk. There was no formal organization like the military books taught. Williams was unlikely to have a copy of the official infantry field service manual but old hands of the Imperials would have set him right; average march of 15 miles, the order of march was guided by the comfort of the men, when marching in fours to keep to the left and allow passage on the right for the commander and supernumeraries, and march at ease (Field Service Book, WO

1914, p.33) The meals enroute were planned. The men had their water and smokes. He knew where they would sleep. Simple. (Field Service Book 1914).

QUEST FOR THE LAMBTON BADGE

As the number of attested men rose the obvious thing for the men was to have a unique badge for the battalion. They were not content with the standard general list 'Canada' badge with a maple leaf badge and '149' above 'Canada'. Col. Bradley formerly asked for a design to be submitted. (SO March 16, 1916) The winner would receive a \$10 gold coin from E.P. Battley, the Sarnia jeweler and optician. This was an attempt to have pride (in their battalion. W.C. Palmer knew more was needed and he donated an unspecified amount of money to the men's canteen (SO March 7, 1916).

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

While the subalterns trained at Carling Heights the men were in their own training routines, being shaped into platoons and companies. It was hard going for the majority as they were raw citizens being turned into a disciplined military group, lacking in many instances a trained cadre of officers and non-commissioned officers and proper equipment. The arrival of new Ross rifles made the news (FS February 10, 1916).

Not all was good. The men in Sarnia were tempted and their consumption of liquor was problematic. The February 12 Observer had a lengthy front page column under Police Court News which read:

The supplying of liquor in bottles to soldiers has been a source of trouble to the officers of the 149th here, and it is the intention to prosecute everyone against whom proof of such acts can be secured. The first case of the kind came up in Court this morning and accused Simon Carroll pleaded guilty to the charge. This having been made an offence by the Provincial Board of License Commissioners, who have wide powers under the Liquor License Act, to make regulations that have the same force and affect as if enacted by statute and with authority to impose penalties as high as \$100, or three months imprisonment for infractions thereof. Sentence was reserved for a week." (SO February 12, 1916).

There were continuing problems and the Police Court News of the Observer printed these, more often just saying they were soldiers. The soldiers in Sarnia were in the majority Lambton's Own. It became so bad that Colonel Shannon intervened: "A new order has recently gone into effect here relative to members of Lambton's 149th Battalion. All soldiers are now required to be off the streets of the city before 10:30 p.m. every night and extra military police have been appointed to patrol the streets." (SO March 8, 1916).

The weather was not always favourable for training and the Sarnia Observer noted:

Captain George Moncrieff, of the 149th, was in the city yesterday endeavoring to secure a drill hall for the training of the officers of that battalion in their drill and duties. If a

suitable place for drills during unfavourable weather for outdoor training, and for lectures can be obtained, the intention is to bring all the officers of the battalion here for that purpose. The class is not likely to assemble until the last week of March. By that time St. Andrew's Rink and the Curling Rink should be available, either of which would make an excellent drill hall (SO March 9, 1916).

The paper readers would remember the paralyzing snowstorm of the previous Monday March 6, 1916 (SO March 7, 1916).

The local papers kept the County up to date on the Lambtons as best they could. When the weather was favourable the men from Sarnia, Petrolia, Watford and Forest with the smaller sections could be observed on route marches or entertained in the 'khaki clubs' or patriotic rallies in the communities. The Petrolia Topic reported that the Brigden and the Wyoming recruits did a route march on icy roads, met together at Petrolia March 15, having a meal and then presumably billeted at Petrolia because a moving picture show was shown afterward (PT March 22, 1916).

At the Battalion headquarters in Watford other matters were shaping up. Among the Want Ads in the Guide-Advocate March 17, 1916 Adjutant Captain Stapleford had this, "In order to accommodate the soldiers coming to Watford. More Boarding-Houses are required. Any person desirous of taking army men as boarders, kindly notify Capt. Stapleford. The rates are \$4.20 per week. Please reply before March 23.1916."

As men were added to the company rolls one more position needed filling. It was made official by the Adjutant General in Ottawa to have Reverend John Milton MacGillivray become the chaplain to the 149th. He had been chaplain to the militia 12th Brigade CFA since 1914. He was appointed chaplain and honorary captain to the Lambtons effective March 4, 1916. (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6841-S036>).

Sometimes the papers reported visitors like the battalion quartermaster Capt. Kelly checking on supplies at Forest (FS March 21, 1916). There were transfers noted such as Pte. Philpott of Thedford going to Sarnia to be an assistant to Dr. James, the 149th medical officer.

Over in Petrolia the news was of the departure of Captain Campbell:

Capt. R.J. Campbell, who has been in command of the Petrolia company since recruiting started here, has been transferred to Sarnia, where he and Capt. G.G. Moncrief will be in charge of the Lambton Battalion School of Instruction for non-coms, which will open there on Monday next, March 27th. Batt. Sergt. Woodrow will be the instructor. Five members of the local company will also leave on Saturday to attend the school. They will be greatly missed by the company here. They are: Sergeants S.H. Hawkins, Sam Howlett, Wes Phillips, Lance Corp. Higgins and Pte. Roy Johnston. During his command here and while the company was small, Capt. Campbell has been able to continue the most of his duties as principal of the Petrolia public schools. This position he is, of course, now compelled to relinquish altogether and he will certainly be missed, for

Petrolia never had a more efficient principal, and the schools never in better shape than now. His place will be hard to fill. Lieut. F. Pollard is now in charge of the Petrolia company (PT March 23, 1916).

Pollard would take on a large responsibility. Although not all the outlying recruiting stations under B Company had moved to Petrolia he would have charge of as many as eighty men. The men in Petrolia had been cautioned on their behavior and the conduct of would-be friends.

The Topic reported March 22 that a 149th soldier had been assaulted and severely beaten by a discharged 70th battalion man. The case went to court and George Keyes was given a suspended sentence based on the distress his family would have if sentenced to imprisonment (PT April 12, 1916).

Other matters were formalized. As the Lambton recruiting centres added men to the roster the Militia District issued appointments. Under the 149th these doctors were to take care of the men in billets: Dr. Hubbard, Forest; Dr. Grant, Thedford; Dr. Martyn, Alvinston; Dr. Dunfield, Petrolia; Dr. Siddall, Watford; Dr. Aiken, Courtright; Dr. McDonald, Sombra; Dr. Reid, Wyoming; Dr. Huffman, Arkona; Dr. Hutchison Oil Springs; Dr. Seager, Brigden; Dr. Cathcart of Port Lambton and Dr. Kelly, Florence. (PT March 22, 1916).

However, the month ended on a somber note as a new recruit died by accident. Drummer Edward Kerr of Oil Spring died within weeks of attesting in the 149. He was just into his eighteenth year. He was healthy in every aspect being a farm boy used to hard work. The only thing that might hold up his enlistment was his height of five feet, one inch. Being a lad he may grow and Dr. Hutchinson signed him off and Major MacVicar accepted him. He was assigned to 'B' company in Petrolia and started his training under serial number 844720. He would learn the rudiments of foot drill, ranks, who to salute, take orders and get use to army life like all the other eager men of Lambton responding to the colours. However, something happened and he was taken to the new Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital where he passed away 29.3.1916 with the simple notation in his case book "Died concussion of brain." (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B5115-S018>)

It would be a military burial with members of his training company present little realizing he would be the first of many other Lambtons who would die in service to their country. His military discharge record states: "The above named man is discharged in consequence of being struck off the strength; a Board of Enquiry, held in Petrolia, Ontario 8-4-16, having declared that this man came to his death on 29-3-16 by an accident, no blame being attached to any person." Further in the document it states, 'Conduct good'. The administrative filing was closed off by Major MacVicar January 19, 1917. (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=498079>)

There is no direct link found in existing files that Pte. Kerr's death brought the need for military police in the smaller detachments. There had been previous hijinks at the Petrolia recruiting office when Pte Ezra McDonald broke his ankle March 6th (PT March 8, 1916). However, Colonel Bradley acted on district headquarters orders and he appointed military police "in all centres where the Lambton battalion is recruiting." The Petrolia paper listed,

The M.P.'s of the Petrolia company are V. Matthews, D. Harding, C. Minton and E. Sanderson. They are designated by a white band on the wrist of the left sleeve. The new orders also require all soldiers to be off the streets by 10.30 p.m. (PT March 30, 1916).

TRAINING APRIL 1916

Spring was in the air and the change in training routine would be noted in the local papers. The Watford Guide-Advocate noted, "Last month was the coldest March in 32 years." (GA April 7, 1916).

Recruiting men for the 149th remained a concern. It was arranged to have the militia district rally speaker Captain S. N. Dancey speak on Sunday April 2. He did three rallies, one in the early afternoon, another in the late afternoon and then the evening, ending at the City Hall. Lieutenant Williams remarked, "Now I must tell you I seen all the boys in Sarnia and today Col. Bradley and I visited the Golf Links and saw all the boys at work. They will be home next Saturday. All are getting along fine. I was at the big recruiting meeting. The overflow at the City Hall filled the Theatre and the Auditorium. Over 2000 in the three meetings. Captain Dancey spoke at all three. How about the meeting in Arkona. Some Dancey." (April 3 letter to Madeline).

The Militia Orders from Ottawa were released April 3, 1916. Listed were officers serving the 149th who had been absent on the Lieutenant qualifying course; P.H. Turnbull, B.E. Scott, R.W. Rigsby, H. H. Pardee, C.W. McRitchie and J.D. Dunfield of the London Provisional Instruction School while G.G. Moncrieff from the Toronto P.S.I. Their return would perhaps smooth the transition of recruits to trained soldiers (SO April 4, 1916).

The month of March was actually a good recruiting month for the Lambtons despite the cold. The true number was a little over 800 but already there were men absent and later becoming deserters. Major Macvicar was authorized to take the last two weeks of March to attend the musketry course at Carling Heights (GSO letter March 9, 1916). He completed the course (LA April 4, 1916). His absence meant LCol. Bradley became the signing officer for the Lambton attestations for that period and could personally review the type of recruit he was taking on. There is nothing recorded on his reactions.

There was a steady stream of letters from 1st Division Headquarters through February and March. One letter of special note was February 14, 1916 circular letter from the a/G.S.O., "I am directed to inform you that Militia Headquarters has now issued explicit instructions that only one supernumerary per squadron, battery or company will be allowed for Overseas units...Will you please forward a list of supernumerary officers with your recommendations for the disposal of those in excess of four." This no doubt caused

problems in retaining officers needed to cover both recruiting and training responsibilities. (<https://www.archeion.ca/lochead-fonds> under circulars).

Bradley also had letters to recommend men for courses at the Royal School of Instruction at Wolseley Barracks. Bradley was able to do so despite the battalion in the recruiting and organization stage. He was specifically instructed by a letter on February 25 to provide an officer and four men to attend the Instructor Course in Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training in Montreal. There was also the submission of officer names for the Field Officer and Captain course at Wolseley Barracks requested February 29 (LA March 3, 1916).

The names of provisional officers Ellis, Gilchrist, Pease, Neelands, McGibbon, Moorhouse, Morrison, Lott, Humphrey and Soper were submitted to join almost 222 other applicants. There was another letter which ordered two officers to report as musketry instructors. It did not get better as on April 4 a letter went out from the GSO requiring an officer and up to 15 men to attend a Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training course at the London Armoury. Another letter April 12 had an opening for two of the battalion to train as armourers even if there was already an armourer with the battalion (GSO letter 12 April) to report April 17. All this correspondence required men to be sent. The question would be as to who as the commanding officer, with companies in four different and distant county locations, could not possibly know the men without the recommendations of the company commanders and junior officers. And this was in the middle of combined platoon and company training.

There were many items about the 149th spread through the April newspapers. As far the public knew, training was progressing toward mobilization. The smaller detachments were still struggling for recruits. The Oil Springs Advance said, "The local company of the 149's has appointed a special recruiting squad under Lieut. Pollard and Edwards and are out to get every available man in Petrolia [area] into the King's uniform." (OSA April 6, 1916). The Watford Guide-Advocate reported the vacant field west of the armoury was levelled and rolled to be a parade ground. This prompted every afternoon being football on the field. The Guide-Advocate commented, "The sport will put them in good condition for the more strenuous work of the battlefield." (GA, April 7, 1916).

The Watford paper went on, "We miss the drum and bugle band. The daily march out does not seem to have the same snap to it." (GA April 7, 1916). Elsewhere the Guide-Advocate noted that Lieut. R.P. Brown who had been the commander of "the Wyoming platoon for some weeks has been transferred to Walpole Island to assist Capt. Wykesmith." On the social side of soldiering the GA noted that the machine gun section was entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Dodds, parents of Sergt. M. Dodds at their residence on Monday evening. "All spent a very pleasant time and much appreciate the hospitality extended to them." Sergt. Dodds was presented with a signet ring by the section (GA April 7, 1916).

The Department of Militia and Defence confirmed April 3, 1916 that P.H. Turnbull, B.E. Scott, R.W. Rigsby, H.M. Pardee, C.W. MacRitchie, J.D. Dunfield and G.C. Moncrieff were now qualified lieutenants in the Canadian Militia (April 3, 1916 Militia Orders).

The Petrolia Topic on Wednesday April 5, 1916 shared the shocking news of the death of Pte. Eddie Kerr which occurred March 29. It was a lengthy column which described the circumstances at a Court of Inquiry held by the officers of B Coy. The Topic said, "The evening before he had been wrestling in a friendly manner with his companions in front of the recruiting office, during which he had struck his head on the cement walk, but nothing was thought of it, and when he went to bed at the boarding house of Mrs. O. Browning, was to all appearances in his usual good health" (PT April 5, 1916). Dr. Mulligan performed the autopsy. The paper reported "[Kerr] died of concussion of the brain due to...hemorrhage." (PT April 5, 1916).

The Inwood column for April 5 spoke of a patriotic rally with Capt. Dancey which was well attended despite the flooded conditions (PT April 5, 1916).

The weather was troubling but there was more disturbing news for the officers of the 149th. The London Advertiser reported April 5 a file from Alvinston dated April 4 that there had been a disturbance in Alvinston the previous week. The Petrolia Topic April 5 carried the roster for Alvinston which totaled 31 men with Sergeant Beecroft and two men away at the 'non-com' school in Sarnia. The Advertiser stated: "Owing to the disturbance on the streets during the past week by some soldiers, Pte. Robert Tait has been appointed the military policeman to look after the soldiers while off-duty. "Bob" is a big, strapping fellow, and can fill the bill as a police officer." (LA April 5, 1916).

The Advertiser also stated, "Lieutenant White arrived in town on Saturday to take command of the local squad along with Lieutenant Schouler [sic] of Forest." The officers officially commanding the men at Alvinston were Captain C.W. Brown and Lieutenant W.T. Cheyne (PT April 5, 1916). The Standard replied with "Lieut. Young of Wyoming has taken charge of the Arkona Co." (April 6, 1916). The Standard also noted that the men were receiving 60 cents a day for subsistence [meals and housing] which the readers knew was being paid to local boarding houses (FS April 6, 1916). It was becoming more apparent that the recent soldier enlistments were not being controlled in a military or civil manner in their after-training hours.

April 6, 1916 in the OS Advance: "The local company of the 149's have appointed a special recruiting squad under Lieut. Pollard and Edwards, and are out to get every available man in Petrolia into the King's uniform". The Advance also remembered the young man of Oil Springs who died so suddenly:

The whole village was shocked on Wednesday of last week (March 29) when the news came from Petrolia that Eddie Kerr, who had enlisted in the 139th [sic], had passed away. The deceased boy was known to all of us and was a general favourite of all, and his sudden death was a shock to all. He is survived by one sister, Mrs. R. Powell, here, Murdock in the 149th, Roy at home, and Will in the Northwest, who have the sympathy of all who knew the brother so well. He was willing to do his "bit". (OSA April 6, 1916).

In Watford the big news April 7 was a train wreck near Wanstead. The news affecting C Company was "[t]he vacant government property west of the armoury has been levelled

and rolled for a parade ground.” The paper also commented, “We miss the drum and bugle band. The daily march out does not seem to have snap to it.” The Band had transferred to Sarnia.

The Band was in Sarnia but lacking the instruments bought through the instrument fund. That was a concern which prompted Col. Bradley to act. Capt. Trainor left for Chicago on April 9th, “in order to hurry them up...sent to the ‘Windy City’ by his commander.” (LA April 11, 1916). That was another cost borne by the unit which had little funds to spare. The Advertiser reported the Band was respected for its work as in Sarnia it did two parades a day and escorted the troops to the training grounds at the north end of the city (LA April 11, 1916).

There was the more important matter of finding billets as the Watford company was ready to bring together the dispersed sections and platoons. Captain Stapleford was looking for billeting for these men and an advertisement appeared. The Guardian-Advocate told its readers that Lt. J.D. Dunfield and Lt. G.G Moncrieff qualified as Captains (PT April 5, 1916).

The comings and goings of the officers filled the newspaper columns but it was the paid government advertisement of one-third page appeal to farmers to support the war effort in the local papers that focused many readers of the seriousness of the war affecting farm production and the enlisting of manpower (GA April 7. 1916).

Back in Sarnia there was an increasing uneasiness about the conduct of the soldiers there and what they were doing after training hours. More often the Police Court News was inside the Observer newspaper. Now more titillating news was appearing on the front page. A lengthy column under Police Court read:

Earl Simmonds [sic] a soldier of the 149th, was arrested last night [April 11] for assaulting and beating his wife causing actual bodily harm to her as a result of the beating he gave her. Two of the woman’s ribs were broken by being thrown on the stairs as she was trying to escape from her husband. Prisoner elected to be tried summarily and pleaded guilty. After hearing the facts in the case, prisoner was remanded for sentence” (SO April 12, 1916).

Simmons was found guilty of assault causing bodily harm on April 17, 1916 and spent three months in civil jail according to his service record.

The Observer ‘Town Topics’ was where readers found the trend of the day. The Wednesday April 12, 1916 had this:

Lambton’s 149 Signaling Section requires 25 more picked men. This unit is one of the finest of the battalion and only the best men need apply. The course takes up semaphore, flag, Morse Code, Bagley lamp [sic Begbie], and heliograph, and will be finished and certificates issued in six months, for those who qualify in this important branch (SO April 12,1916).

There was other 149th related news spread through the paper. The Observer reported April 12, 1916 that 15 men had enlisted at Sarnia. Colonel Shannon and LCol. Smith from London were in Sarnia to inspect A Coy but no comments were made on the inspection. They moved on to Watford to inspect there. The Observer reported what happened there on April 13:

Col. Shannon, DOC and Lieut. Colonel H.D. Smith AGSO, made an official inspection of the headquarters, Lambton's 149th, at Watford today accompanied by Lieut. Colonel Bradley. They inspected the machine gun section, under the supervision of Capt. R.H. Stapleford, and the infantry squad stationed here under Lieut. R.D. Swift. At the close of the inspection Col. Shannon complimented Lieut. Colonel Bradley upon the progress, made by the recruits, and in a short address to the detachment, congratulated them on their appearance and general efficiency of the manoeuvres. He urged them to strive to live up to the splendid standard made by the Canadian battalions now fighting in France. There were 119 of all ranks present for the inspection (SO April 14, 1916).

The number represented the men of the HQ and men of the Watford platoon. The other platoons had yet to join as the full C Coy.

The paper also mentioned that the men were attending church at the Baptist Church Sunday evening April 16. As well, there was talk of forming a football club for the soldiers. And the boys could take in the new Pathescope features at Taylor's Theatre. In a casual remark the Watford paper reported on the neighbouring community, "Petrolia has four military police there." (GA April 14, 1916).

The Watford Guide-Advocate, in its weekly April 21, made few remarks on the recent inspection, "Col. Shannon complimented Lieut-Colonel Bradley upon the progress made by the recruits, and in a short address to the detachment, congratulated them on their appearance and general efficiency of their manoeuvre." As an after-thought the Watford paper added, "The headquarter officers left on the afternoon train." (GA April 21, 1916).

Colonel Bradley continued making rounds and was in Forest April 14 to see the men who were at the armoury for a quick inspection. The night before he appeared with Lt. Williams at the Forest Town Council meeting and received the commitment of more support for the battalion (April 14 letter by Williams to Madeline
<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/april-1916.html>)

There was usually good publicity for the 149th. This was not always the case.

The Sarnia Observer was following the court trial of a Russian soldier of the 149th. He was accused of selling liquor to an Indian [prohibited because the man was 'listed']. The Bartek trial continued:

Further evidence was heard in the case of Fred Burtuk [sic], charged with supplying

Caleb Thompson, an Indian with liquor on Tuesday last. Two Russian friends of Bartuk (sic) testified that they were with Bartuk at 6 p.m. that day and he remained in their company up to 11 p.m., and was in soldier's uniform all afternoon and evening. Thompson swore that he met Bartuk about 6:30 p.m. that afternoon and he was not in uniform. About 7 p.m. Bartuk supplied him with a bottle of whiskey from which he gave Bartuk \$1 and that the latter was not then in uniform. About an hour afterwards he saw Bartuk [sic] on Front Street, who was in soldier's uniform. Evidence is sought for corroboration of Thompson's story and the trial was again adjourned to Saturday at 10 a.m." (SO April 14, 1916).

Edward Bartek paid a fine and deserted in July 1916. (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/list.aspx?SurnameSearch=bartek&>)

Having men involved in sports was one solution how soldiers spent their idle time. The Guardian-Advocate reported the formation of a football club from the men in the machine gun section. The president was Capt. Stapleford, the vice-president Sergt. E. Dodds, secretary William Bissett, treasurer Harry Cooper, captain Lewis Campbell, vice-captain James Ryan, manager Art Skipp. The support committee were the businessmen T. Dodd, F. Rogers, P. Dodds, F. Taylor, L. Aylesworth, and F. O. McIlveen. The paper concluded, "The members of the club wish to thank the citizens of Watford for a liberal cash donation towards the expense of the club. There will be a meeting of the committee in the Music Hall Friday evening [Friday April 14]." (GA April 14, 1916).

Colonel Bradley did not initiate this nor is there evidence he approved.

Training continued. The Sarnia Observer April 14, 1916 noted the route march undertaken by the Walpole Island coy:

Capt. Wykesmith's Walpole Island Company, composed of 40 Indians. Had a route march from Port Lambton to Courtright yesterday [April 13] and did themselves proud in the hike of nearly 20 miles. They were greeted with enthusiasm all along the route, with the exception of Sombra, where they expected to get something to eat, but were disappointed. However, the boys did not go hungry, as on their arrival at Bickford they were treated to sandwiches and coffee. The march to Courtright was then continued and on their arrival at that place a substantial hot supper awaited the red men in khaki. This was followed by an entertainment in the church held at the conclusion of which the soldier boys repaired to Stewart's Hall, where they spent the night. The men were greatly pleased with the kindly reception accorded them by the citizens of Courtright. The return march to Walpole was made today (SO April 14, 1916).

Other matters were being settled at Forest. Col Bradley visited and decided that the Arkona section would move to Forest. Lt. Williams presumed they would go to Watford but that was changed. Also, he was now the officer in charge at Forest and over Capt. Brown. Williams thought Forest was better for his boys as there was 'no whisky' (April 14, 1916 Letter to Madeline <https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/april-1916.html>)

The Sarnia Observer kept the public informed. The delivery of the Band instruments Monday April 10, 1916 was noted in the April 15, 1916 paper. It is not known if Capt. Trainor was stopped on his trip to Chicago. He left the night of April 9th to hurry the delivery. There was a note that all the officers of the 149th were to meet Monday April 17 at the battalion HQ in Sarnia. The city was well ahead of the other recruiting centres with 265 men enlisted. This meant an imbalance, making A Coy oversized (SO April 24, 1916).

To the public it seemed there was momentum to enlistments and training. The Observer reported April 17 that were 1000 men enrolled for the whole battalion. That was not the real story. Men were enrolling, staying a while, and disappearing. The Observer reported how far some went:

Two deserters from the 149th, Wm. Knight and Murray Wallace are held in Cleveland for deportation, having been arrested there by the conductor of a train on which they were travelling. Both of these young men are well known in this city. An immigration officer was in Sarnia today, securing evidence to warrant deportation (SO April 27, 1916).

While the Sarnia Coy was doing company formation training, the other companies were lagging behind. The Petrolia Topic reported April 19, "B Co. of Lambton's 149 will be mobilized at Petrolia this week, the squads from Brigden, Sombra, Courtright and Florence being brought in to make the company up to strength 250 men." On short notice it is uncertain if the full complement paraded as the Topic added April 19, "The Petrolia Company paraded before staff officers from London, who were well pleased with the behaviour and appearance of the men." The paper stated, "'One of the finest units in the district,' was the remark passed." The paper also added that Pte. Dobbin and Pte. Lumley enlisted (PT April 19, 1916).

The Topic noted, "The company was divided into two squads on Tuesday [April 18] and indulged in a sham battle on the golf links and surrounding oil fields. Petrolia is peculiarly fitted for this sort of training." As a special military note the Topic listed Lieut. J.W. Knowles and sergeants F.H. Trolley, R.W. Harrison, G. Smith and D.B. Thomson had returned from the Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training Course in Montreal with their certificates (April 12, 1916). They would have a busy time from here on circulating through the four companies as they approached bayonet training in the ninth week of the soldier's basic training.

A week later the Oil City column in the Topic reported that Lieut. Bloss Scott who recruited there was now assigned to Watford (PT April 19, 1916). A reader would find news that the Honor roll of B Coy was 92 men, still short of the Coy size to be raised. Other good news was that the Petrolia town council passed a motion to, "grant \$100 per week when [the 149th] mobilized here and until their departure from town." (PT April 19, 1916).

It was quite an eye-catching headline in the Topic April 19, 1916:

SEWER PROBLEM SOLVED.

Earlier in the regular Petrolia Council meeting of Monday April 17:

Captain Macgillivray and Lieutenant Knowles of Lambton's 149, addressed the council, asking further financial aid to assist in the final recruiting of the battalion, which is nearing the 1000 mark. The officers are about to mobilize the battalion into four companies in four centres and one of these will be located in Petrolia for four or five weeks (PT April 17, 1916).

The article on the first page went on with more business on page four where it concluded: "Council adjourned at eleven but were hastily called back to their places to consider the matter of a grant to the Lambton battalion." The article concluded: "Reilly-Carey: that we grant the local company of the Lambton Battalion \$100.00 per week when mobilized here and until their departure from town – Carried unanimously." On that note council adjourned (PT April 17, 1916).

Mobilization was the catch word toward the end of April. The coy commanders were bringing in the outlying sections and under the tutelage of the sergeant-major doing company drill. The Watford count was 80 men but this seems not to count the men from the rest of Warwick (GA April 21, 1916).

As the month-end neared the anticipated formal battalion mobilization date was speculated by officers, men and the local communities. "It has been announced the 149th will go into mobilization about May 8 or 15th at London. If the boys go by marches they will leave about May 6 and go from place to place, gathering up the men to proceed. If they go by rail they will leave at the latter date." (GA April 21, 1916).

The speculation added some confusion as a paid ad from Capt Stapleford told creditors to the 149th were to submit their bills by April 18.

The Watford paper said the nominal roll of the 149th was close to 1000 men,"[I]t is expected that within the next three or four weeks the battalion will have all the men it needs to complete its strength, and still allow for the men who may be turned down by the medical examination." (GA April 21, 1916). In another corner the paper reported, "A number of soldiers in C Company have been released for farm work and will be away about a month." A few never returned to duty. And elsewhere it was stated, "The office (meaning the HQ) of the 149th moved to Sarnia on Tuesday [April 18]" (GT April 21, 1916).

The Petrolia paper gathered in other news on the 149th and reported on Watford, "The Alvington platoon of the 149 arrived here Saturday (April 15) for the mobilization of 'C' Company. The boys were given a send off before they left the town....The detachment consists of Lieut. John White, officer in charge; Ptes. Ashkewe, G. F. Austin, Jas. Bond, T. Brant, J.H. Bond, C. Chrysler, J. Chappel. A.F. DeLauche, L. Dodge, M. Dodge, C. Evans, A. Hamilton, V. Johnston, Wm. Johnston, Geo. Johnston, Wm. McMaster, M. Mulholland, F. Small, B. F. Savage, S. Simon, R. Tait, A. Thune, R. Temple, H.N. White,

A. Whitbourne and 'Pixy', the mascot." The paper also noted, "The soldiers training at Bothwell were given a wrist watch by the council of the town." (PT April 19, 1916).

Later the Guide-Advocate needed 'filler' and reprinted the following from the Alvinston Free Press April 28:

...the squad has left us. They boarded the eight o'clock Grand Trunk train last Saturday [April 15] morning for Watford. Quite a number of villagers were present to bid them good-bye for we will not likely see them again in a body until after the war is over. The boys took their leave taking in a matter of fact way yet one could see that they began to realize the grim business before them, and there was little cheering. Songs were started but they fell flat; some there were who had little to say. At Watford they will be drilled in preparation for mobilization at London (GA April 28, 1916).

It was not all training. The Petrolia paper wrote of the sports the men were doing:

The Machine Gun Section of the 149th football team played Thedford at Thedford last Monday (April 17). The game was an exciting one played in continual rain with a field too heavy to make fine points, and resulted in a draw. Corp. H. Cooper refereed the game and his decisions were approved by both sides. The return match will be played at Watford shortly. The M.G. team will play A Company of Sarnia on Good Friday and would like to see a big bunch of rooters go with them to the county town. The M.G.S. wish to thank their kind response to their appeal for funds. Lieut. R. D. Swift has been appointed honorary president of the Association (GA April 21, 1916).

The following week it was announced that the 149th would form a student platoon. There were transfers of officers announced as well with Capt. Brown was moved from Arkona to Watford and Lt. Young was in Toronto, reason not stated. In the meantime the Alvinston men route marched into Watford to add to the company having added the Florence men. Monday April 24, 1916 Lt. Wykesmith and Showler held a recruiting meeting in Inwood. (GA April 28, 1916).

There was not much news from Forest. The April 27 Standard noted that the 70th Barralioin left the previous Friday, April 21, for overseas. The officer in charge at Forest, Lt. Williams, decided to make another recruiting visit at Thedford and Port Franks. He was not impressed as he wrote,

Am well. Lonesome tonight just scribble a few lines to pass time. This is one horrid place dead and whiskey. Mr. Young went back to Forest be back tomorrow and will go to Port Franks. Signed one man and was too drunk to pass. Glad will some be out of here by Saturday I hope.

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/april-1916.html>)

Lt. Williams continued with his letter, "Madeline, it's awful to hear some fellows talk now, and especially this settlement. Am sober so far but if stay here long will be driven to drink. I have a good nest and the grub is good. I hope we get some boys here."

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/april-1916.html>).

He returned to Forest without any recruits.

There seemed more attention placed on the larger centres. The Sarnia Observer April 25 reported the bugle band went to Petrolia. In turn the Petrolia Topic observed, "The bugle band of the Lambton battalion under Sergt. Stubbs, arrived in town from Sarnia on Tuesday and are keeping the town awake with the band with martial airs. B Company with the band of 20 pieces at its head now make a splendid showing on the streets and citizens are not backward in saying so. Their conduct is also commendable." (PT April 26, 1916).

B Coy up to this point at the end of April had not worked together as a Coy. The Petrolia Topic noted: "Captain Campbell was home over Sunday from Sarnia and also spent Monday and Tuesday training his company which is now nearly at full strength." (PT April 26, 1916). The paper also noted: "Company drill was undertaken for the first time on the golf course which makes an excellent parade ground." (PT April 26, 1916). One can surmise it was the first time the company commanded by Captain Campbell was actually working the outlying sections into the company. However, there was a matter which stated Lt. Pollard was going into the ranks and dropping his commission (PT April 26, 1916). Pte. Pollard joined the ranks of the 149th May 15th. He was 845121. Pollard was well-liked throughout the battalion. Pollard was surplus to the officer cadre.

Meanwhile in Sarnia the men trained at a more advanced level. Sgt Hodder did an evening cornet concert at Central Baptist church and this was remarked on in the Observer April 24. There were accolades for the Band under Sgt. Hodder as the Observer noted, "[He] deserves great credit for the excellent state of proficiency that the band now shows." The Band was doing public performances at the market square and leading the Sarnia 149th on training and church parades (SO April 29, 1916).

But with more men held by Sarnia MD No 1 was looking for men to join the 4th Battalion Pioneers and knew where to get them. On April 27 the Lambtons lost 16 men by transfer to the Pioneers (SO April 28, 1916). As well some men by now had enough of the Army and disappeared.

It remained pure speculation to the general public when the 149th would be mobilized as a whole. B, C, and D Companies were completing their own company mobilizations and the OCs were busy completing company training as laid down in the syllabus. Colonel Bradley had more information on this but could not share dates according to the security issue.

MAY 1916

The Sarnia Observer being a city paper printed more international and provincial news as well as news particularly of the city. As May began there were fewer items on the 149th. Recruiting was still ongoing but in the guise of 'patriotic meetings.' The Wyoming correspondent reported that a number from there attended the Friday April 28 Victoria Hall session and "all had a good time". (SO May 2, 1916). Other items told of the completion of

the companies assembling such as the Sombra and Brigden men now at Petrolia and the Thedford men now at Forest (SO May 3, 1916). All the companies were doing drill formations and large route marches.

The civic reports about the general condition of the 149th were better now, especially with the ticket draw on the racing mare 'Irene Barron' that the Goodison Thresher Company gave to Colonel Bradley to raise funds for the battalion. On the evening of May 1 Mayor Doherty was at the Sarnia city hall for the ticket draw. With Captain Trainor present the Mayor pulled one ticket and called the name but it was not answered. This was repeated 11 times and then Mr. H. DeB. Randolph of 503 London Road answered. The amount of money raised was not immediately given but it was a welcome benefit to the battalion general fund (SO May 1, 1916).

The May 1st Observer also noted that on Sunday April 30 that nearly 300 men paraded to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for services and afterwards marched on Christina and Front Streets and "admired by hundreds." (SO May 1, 1916). On page four it was noted that 20 men of the signaling section were off to London to attend a training course. The rest of A Company went to Watford for the day to attend the return match with the Machine gun section, captioned as 'Soccer Football' by the Daily Observer May 3. The game ended at half-time owing to rain with a score of one goal each. The paper noted that the Sarnia boys were handicapped by the bad ground conditions. Only the Sarnia team was named with goal, Travis, backs, McKay and Buxton, halfbacks, Burdett, Dale, Francis, forwards, Hobin, Seeley, Howard, Drinkwater, captain and Stott (SO May 3, 1916).

For some time the off-duty discipline of the soldiers had been remarked upon and was thought to be a hindering influence on recruiting. An attempt to attract young men recently graduated from high school, or from banking and clerical background into a "Students Platoon" by Colonel Bradley was noted on the front page:

The object of the platoon is to provide a means by which the better class of men will be enabled to associate with desirable companions, whom they will be proud to call their friends and to minimize the objectionable feature of camp life." (SO May 2, 1916).

The Observer assured readers the men attested would be of good type intellectually, morally and physically, "bringing together a clean class of fellows." Recruiting for the platoon was being done at each of the recruiting centres. Fifteen men had been selected and stationed at Petrolia, trained separately with their own NCOs chosen from the platoon itself.

The paper thought, "The platoon will not only provide congenial companionship but there will be a great opportunity for the organization of various sports and undoubtedly will soon have reached the required strength." (SO May 2, 1916).

As a hint of things to come, the Observer noted that the 135th OS Bn was entirely mobilized at London, encamped at the Cove rifle range where they would have musketry practice for a week or so and after which they would go under canvas on Carlings' Heights. The

Observer readers were as well informed that on May 1 the Thedford detachment of the 149th had moved to Forest and that the Sombra, Courtright and Brigden detachments had done the same in joining B Coy in Petrolia (SO May 2, 1916).

The Petrolia Topic reported May 3 that while an actual mobilization date was not set, B Company was doing "Good-bye Visits". "The Petrolia company under Lt. Knowles and accompanied by the bugle band made a route march to Wyoming yesterday and were royally entertained by the citizens of that village. The company left town about 9:30 a.m. and returned at 4 o'clock, having enjoyed the change in their program to the full." Their march was actually a farewell before the battalion went to London. "[E]ach of the soldiers was presented with a tag bearing the following inscription:

*Souvenir
Lambton's
149
Good-Bye Day
For King and Country*

The Topic listed "Good-Bye Days" would be held at Oil Springs on May 4th and at Brigden May 6th and 7th. Similar days were planned for all parts of the county. The paper assumed that Petrolia's turn would come at the end of the month when the whole battalion led by the band would visit the town on its way to Camp at London. B Coy would be busy (PT May 3 1916).

The Bugle Band was making visits to the outlying companies as buglers were used to signal changes in company formations as they practiced being in line, in column of route and other formations to maneuver in the field. As well, the band would play and set the beat for company-sized groups marching in column with 100 or more men. Training advanced but was considerably behind the training syllabus and cognizant of the rural peculiarities of weather that did not affect A Coy in urban Sarnia.

The local citizens assumed the drilling was successful. Everyone was busy with daily tasks. It was church services that gave some idea of the training level. On Sunday April 30 Dr. Braithwaite, President of Western University in London, spoke at the morning and evening services at the Baptist church and it was reported, "[T]he congregations listened with pleasure to his splendid addresses." B Coy had attended the morning church service and "...the church was packed to capacity." Dr. Braithwaite was aware of social issues in London. He had a pointed message to the Petrolia soldiers, admonishing them with a strong plea "...to stand by each other in loyal acts of kindness and to help one another to resist the temptations that beset a soldier's life." (PT May 3, 1916).

The next Sunday, May 7, B Coy would be at the Methodist Church where an honor roll of seventy members and adherents of the congregation would be unveiled. Speeches were made by Capt. Campbell, Sergt-Major Woodrow and Dr. Knowles the minister. Music was provided by a soldier choir (PT May 3, 1916).

The Oil Springs Advance of May 4 reported that Capt. Waddell and Lt. Dunfield of Petrolia visited Sarnia the previous week. Perhaps this was in conjunction with the report in the Advance about the march of the Sombra detachment, then meeting the Brigden men and then marching to Petrolia. The Advance reported:

The Brigden and Sombra squads of Lambton's 149 were transferred to Petrolia last week. The Sombra squad had a hike of 24 miles. They were met about 5 miles out by the Brigden squad, which led the procession into town [Brigden] about 5 p.m., all arriving in good condition. Each Brigden man received a signet ring from the Ladies' Patriotic Society after the two squads were hosted to a banquet. Lt. Touse [sic] of the Brigden squad and Capt. Connolly of the Sombra squad thanked the Ladies. They stayed overnight and reached Petrolia the next day (OSA May 4, 1916).

The Brigden column in the Oil Springs paper said, "We miss the Brigden squad of Lambton's 149." (OSA May 4, 1916).

There was speculation; "

The Lambton battalion expects to go into Camp at London sometime this month, but will probably be kept in the different county centres for at least three or four weeks yet to aid recruiting as much as possible. When ready to mobilize the units from Petrolia, Watford and Forest [will] be taken to Sarnia from which a route march of the whole battalion will be made to the city of London" (OSA May 4, 1916).

A circular letter went out May 3, 1916 from the A/GSO MD No.1 Lt. Col. H.D. Smith, on behalf of the District Commanding Officer, to all the district CEF Overseas battalion officers, inviting them to attend a special exhibition of Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training held at the London Armoury on Friday May 5, beginning at 2 p.m. The purpose was for these officers to see the work of the Royal School of Instruction being carried out and how it should be carried out in the units. The 149th were completing week 7 of the recruit training. If training progressed, week 9 would be bayonet fighting for which Lambton instructors attended training in Montreal.

Further to this, the DOC invited the commanding officers to meet with him "at 4:00 p.m. ..at District Headquarters, Wolseley Barracks, for the purpose of discussing with them any matter they may bring before him concerning the proposed march to the Mobilization Camp." (circular letter in fonds <https://www.archeion.ca/lochead-fonds>)

No doubt Colonel Bradley attended the demonstration and remained for the discussion which followed. Before he left Watford for the meeting he left a thankyou in the Watford Guardian-Advocate. It appeared Friday May 5 and stated:

To The Business Men and Citizens of Watford

I wish to express my very sincere appreciation of your recent subscription to the Regimental Funds of Lambtons 149. These donations will be used to the best possible

advantage in furthering the interests of the Battalion. Kindly accept my very best thanks.

Yours sincerely,

P.T. Bradley

O.C. Lambtons 149

(GA May 5, 1916)

The news concerning the 149th seemed to be on a brighter note at Watford. The readers were told under 'Local Happenings' that one of the former G-A printers was one of the twenty-six member brass band (GA May 5, 1916). The honor roll listed 70 men with C Company. The report from the town council included another grant of \$100 to the 149th. The G-A brought further good news that the driving mare donated by the Goodison Threshing Company had been drawn by Mayor Doherty of Sarnia and H. DeB. Randolph of London Road, Sarnia had the winning ticket. The proceeds from the raffle went to bolster the Regimental Funds of the 149th. The sports minded had the news that football game between Sarnia and the machine gun team on Monday afternoon May 1 on Boughner's lot resulted in a score of 3 to 1 in favour of Watford (GA May 5, 1916).

No notes exist from Colonel Bradley on the DOC's briefing at London but hints can be detected in the days following. He was probably given orders to bring the outlying companies together in Sarnia over the last weekend after Victoria Day. When Militia Headquarters in Ottawa announced May 9th as the mobilization date of the London Camp it brought more speculation in the Sarnia Daily Observer (SO May 10, 1916). It seemed that the 149th would proceed to London only when Headquarters had the camp space allotted. The move would be welcomed.

The Sarnia Observer noted soldier drunkenness were becoming common as seen in the Police Court News published on the front page. The Observer reported May 6th how Frank Doxater, an Indian and a soldier in the 149th, was brought in by the police from Christina street north, where he had been lying drunk. His supplier of two bottles was his cousin Schulyer of the 135th battalion who could not be found and probably back in London. Doxater would receive a one month jail term unless he paid a \$5 fine and court costs. Presumably, he paid the fine (SO May 6, 1916).

At the beginning of May "D" Coy at Forest was still finishing platoon training and had just amalgamated the Thedford detachment. The Standard had small news items on May 4 which included, "Art Omer of the 149th is in the London Hospital." It also noted there would be a big military demonstration of maneuvers held in Forest on Victoria Day May 24th (FS May 4, 1916). Captain Brown of the 149th returned May 3 from serving on a Courts Martial at St. Thomas. Also noted was, "Lieut. Williams of Lambtons 149, who has been stationed here ever since the beginning of recruiting for this battalion, has been promoted to the rank of Captain." (FS May 4, 1916). Elsewhere among the social news and advertisements a small item stated, "It is reported here that when the 149th Battalion mobilizes the district units from Watford and Forest ...will be brought to Sarnia. The battalion will then leave on a route March to London visiting Petrolia and Watford on the way." (FS May 4, 1916). The Standard readers were aware that the Parkhill detachment of the 135th were now at the Cove Range encampment.

A week later, the Standard had more news on the local company, "Thedford will entertain D Coy and the brass band of Lambton's 149 on Monday May 15. The Band will be arriving on the morning train and the soldiers will march in from Forest. An afternoon of sports will be carried out at the park and a concert in the evening." (FS May 11, 1916). This was part of the "Good-bye Days' planned for the farewell of the 149th from the company locations in the county.

Good-bye Days of smaller effort took place at Brigden. The Petrolia paper told, "Brigden gave a great welcome to the Petrolia company of the Lambton battalion on Saturday (May 6) in their goodbye visit." (PT May 10, 1916). There was a note that a 'soldier day' was held May 8 in Oil Springs.

The big news was the arrival of the Indian Platoon from Sombra:

About 75 Indian troops marched to town last Friday evening (May 5) and were well received. They will form a part of Petrolia's "garrison" until orders are received to mobilize the battalion. The red men are all from Walpole Island and are of fine physique. (PT May 10, 1916),

One of the former printers of the Topic was Vern Matthews who took a little space to express, "Of the twenty-six players with the 149th band, now stationed in Sarnia, seven of that number are printers. The number would be eight if Vern Matthews, late of the Topic staff had his way." (PT May 10, 1916).

The Wyoming column in the May 10th Topic told that Privates Nichol and Butler were home over the weekend from Sarnia (PT May 10, 1916). The front page had the most direct warning to the public about the pending 149th mobilization as Captain Stapleford had the following advertisement posted on the front page, "All parties or firms to whom the 149th Os Bn CEF is indebted are requested to submit their accounts to Capt. R.H. Stapleford, Watford, not later than May 20th as the Battalion is soon leaving the county." (PT May 10, 1916).

No doubt A Coy already had their vaccinations. Captain James, the MO of the Lambtons, was in Petrolia to do the same, "The Petrolia company were vaccinated on Monday (May 8), the operation conducted under the direction of Capt. J.F. James....Dr. Chas. Dunfield assisted the battalions officers." (PT May 10, 1916).

Many Petrolia residents and B company members would be upset with another item, "Petrolia sincerely regrets that Capt. Campbell's name does not appear on the slate of commissioned officers of the Lambton Battalion that has been drawn up." (PT May 10, 1916). This would be related to the MD# 1 orders of reducing the officer slate, starting with supernumerary officers. Capt. Campbell had been carried as such. No doubt there were other factors. Several of the provisional officers went into the ranks as well.

The May 11 Forest paper had interesting developments concerning "D" Coy. Piper McGilp was summoned to Sarnia May 8 as the 149th pipe band was being organized. The social news had Lt. Young of Forest visiting the previous weekend in Arkona. The paper listed the Honor Roll for men enlisted in "D" Coy. There were 78 names. These did not include the Thedford detachment. A large advertisement was straight as to the need for more men to fill the company:

A Last Request

Join "D" Co., 149

And Do It Now

50 Men are required to complete the strength of the company. Forest and vicinity have done well, but there are still a few who can help at the job of protecting our homes and country.

Officers will be glad to explain any branch of the service you wish to join.

Phone 149, FOREST OR SEE Lieut. W. A. Williams (FS May 11, 1916).

Above the enlistment ad a notice appeared about the upcoming sports days at Forest which stated there would be "sports of all kinds for the Boys in Khaki, including baseball, tug-of-war, athletic events, with good prizes for every event." This was to be the 'Good-bye' day for Forest.

The Watford Guardian-Advocate carried the reminder about outstanding accounts payable by the 149th. There was a civic matter which raised eye-brows as Reeve P. Kenward and Clerk W.S. Fuller offered a \$5 Reward "to anyone giving information leading to the conviction of the persons or persons who have been breaking electric light lamps on the streets." (GA May 12, 1916). This most likely could be traced to the town's soldiers who would be disciplined if found out. The paper noted, "Some soldiers engaged in a fistic encounter on Main street Thursday [May 4] evening and there was also another mix-up on Friday evening, providing attractions for quite a large audience. The boys should wait until they go overseas, but probably they feel as if they should keep in condition." (GA May 12, 1916). It is not known how the reader felt about this. For some, the mobilization could not come soon enough.

C Coy left Watford Tuesday May 9th and marched to Alvinston and if the weather co-operated they were to camp (PT May 17, 1916). The newspapers make no mention of night work or entrenching which was to be covered in weeks 6 and 7. Given the uncertainty of the weather the platoon and company commanders used the civilian billets offered.

On the social side the Guardian-Advocate reported men home on visits from special training in Sarnia. As well, the paper had the news, "Capt. Connolly who has been ill with measles for several weeks is now able to continue his duties and is pushing forward the students' platoon which will be worked to full strength as soon as possible." (GA May 12, 1916). It included news of the Bosanquet Council which "granted \$50 to the town of Thedford to assist in defraying expenses of entertaining the 149th soldiers on their farewell visit next week [May 15]." (GA May 12, 1916).

As a follow-up to the meeting of the Overseas battalion commanding officers held on May 5th at London, a 'circular' letter from MD No.1 containing five copies of the mobilization Camp Standing Orders went out May 16th. The Standing Orders were to be read to all prior to the 149th moving to London.

(1.D. 40-8-1 Circular Letter <https://www.archeion.ca/lochead-fonds>)

The exact date for the 149th Mobilization had not been set. All Colonel Bradley knew was the battalion was to be in London at Carling Heights for the first week of June and there assigned to a camp site. No doubt there were telephone calls to the outlying centres to have all companies in Sarnia by May 27.

Weather conditions affected training and slowed correspondence. The May 17TH Topic printed an item from the Alvinston Tribune dated May 15 which dealt with "C" arriving at Inwood May 10:

"C" Company of Lambton's 149th arrived in Wednesday afternoon from Alvinston, coming by way of the Michigan Central Railway right of way on account of the heavy downpour of rain in the forenoon making the roads so muddy. There were 135 men in line headed by the bugle band and officered by Captain Stapleford and Lieut. Swift mounted and made fine showing as they marched along. They made the trip in one hour and forty minutes. After doing some drill work on Dawson's square they dispersed for the billets. In the evening they gave a minstrel show in the Orange hall, which was largely attended, the proceeds amounting to about \$65.00 which will help to buy soldiers comforts while in camp. On Thursday morning about 10 o'clock they fell into line and marched to Watford (PT May 17, 1916).

In another section of the same paper there was more:

Before the 149th mobilizes in this month the men of "C" Company now drilling in Watford will march to Arkona and Thedford, thence to Forest where they will join the Forest Company. From Forest all will proceed to Wyoming and Petrolia and all go on to Sarnia. A few days later it is expected that the entire battalion will march by way of Petrolia and Watford to London and will probably stop at Watford for a couple of days. (From Thedford Tribune and reprinted in the Topic May 17, 1916).

Rumours of the mobilization date continued to circulate. On May 19th the battalion quartermaster Captain Kelly and the medical officer Captain James were in Forest. The Standard reported, "[They] were in Town... Friday, arranging for the movement of the soldiers from here and... making a final medical inspection of the men. A few underage were rejected." It was still assumed the battalion would route march to London. (FS May 25, 1916).

In this same issue it was reported that Lt. Pollard had relinquished his rank. His attestation papers date his enlistment in the ranks as May 15, 1916.

Training continued but the men seemed to have enough energy left over to make themselves known after-hours.

The Petrolia Topic on May 17 shared a Sarnia Observer report of an incident with a horse, buggy and a woman left stranded. A soldier of the 149th, identified as Lampham (sic Lapham) rented a horse and buggy the evening of May 8 at a Sarnia livery for an hour but had not returned it. The owner traced the rig the next day to Petrolia where a soldier and woman named Mabel Porter were seen. A warrant was taken out for the soldier. The woman later turned up in Sombra and offered to take the rig back to Sarnia. The owner made other arrangements and the woman had to find her own way back. (PT May 17, 1916). It was discovered that Pte. Lapham was AWL for ten days. He received a fine of a 10 day loss of pay. He continued to intermittently absent himself without permission until he was discharged in December 1916.

The many examples of ill-disciplined soldiers suggested to many County residents it was time for the Lambtons to move on.

CHAPTER FOUR

MOBILIZATION

There was obvious excitement at Petrolia. The Wednesday May 24 Topic reported on the coming Friday events. An advertisement spoke of the mobilization and 'Good-Bye Day' for Petrolia for which the 'whole battalion' would be present. There would be 1000 men in uniform, from Sarnia, Forest, Thedford, Arkona, Watford, Alvinston, Inwood, Courtright and elsewhere in the county. The events listed were the Grand Street Parade headed by the battalion band at 10:00 a.m., speeches by prominent speakers at 11:00 a.m., exhibitions of musketry and physical drill at 2:00 p.m. and at 3:00 pm. A Machine gun demonstration, a ball-match between the Indians and B Coy. The readers were reminded of reduced railway rates from London, Glencoe, Sarnia and all points in the county. R. Stirrett invited people to browse his shop for 'Patriotism, Pleasure and Business'. The front page carried a warning from the adjutant:

Citizens are reminded that it is a serious offence to urge or assist a soldier to absent himself without leave from his battalion. This particularly applies at the time of mobilization when it is essential that every soldier will be on parade and prepared to accompany his unit. Any party supplying civilian clothes to a soldier or otherwise conniving at his crossing the border into the United States will, on conviction, be summarily dealt with. (PT May 24, 1916).

The battalion was losing men and mobilization was bringing some men to the reality of volunteering and placing themselves in harm's way.

One member of the battalion knew what he should do. Lieutenant Williams asked Miss Madeline Lucas of Arkona for her hand in marriage. She accepted. Their engagement was announced in the Petrolia Topic 24 May.

The Oil Springs Advance May 25 produced an advertisement similar to the Petrolia ad, adding that it would be 'a tremendous day of special military manuevres.

In the Wyoming news column dated May 22 there was the information that the battalion band had been there on Friday May 19. While waiting for a change of trains to proceed to Petrolia the band "rendered several selections which were heartedly enjoyed by all." (OSA May 25, 1916). There was also a business note. Captain Stapleford was receiving account notices for soldiers and officers which were not the responsibility of the battalion. Billeting accounts were not the battalion paymaster's responsibility (OSA May 25, 1916). As well, the paper noted that sergeants Trick and O'Neil were to attend the bayonet fighting and physical training school at London (OSA May 25, 1916).

Meanwhile, an advance party of twenty men under Quartermaster Captain Kelly left Tuesday May 23 for London to set up the camp site for the soon mobilized Lambtons (LA May 25, 1916).

The mobilization date and place was confirmed with the city of Sarnia the previous week. The Sarnia Observer shared Mayor Doherty's letter in which he said,

As Friday May 26, 1916 is the date set for the mobilization of the 149th at Sarnia

speaking on behalf of the members of council and myself, I seriously hope our citizens come forward and assist in making the battalion welcome, and in doing everything possible to making the Battalion's big Military day the most memorable ever in the history of our city.

Mayor Doherty. (SO May 24, 1916).

Whatever the public knew was an open question. LCol. Bradley was waiting on MD#1 to give the go-ahead on transportation arrangements. Bringing the battalion together in Petrolia was a further assessment of the battalion's capability.

The mobilization date for the 149th was made official Wednesday May 24 when MD #1 sent the formal orders and listed the senior camp staff (LA May 24, 1916).

On May 26, 1916, the 800 plus men of the battalion paraded through the streets of Petrolia, where they were cheered by a crowd of thousands and a reception was held in their honour. The Petrolia Topic had a long column on the front page of the May 31 issue reporting on the events of a week before.

The column was entitled 'Petrolia Says Good-Bye to Lambtons 149. Petrolia Honored with the First Mobilization of the 149th Battalion – 1000 Lambton Soldiers Royally Entertained – Fine Weather and Big Crowds. Good-bye to B. Company'. The column told the good-bye "will be remembered as one of the events of our cherished history." What is not known the circumstances behind "[T]he arrangements for the big day were made in a hurry and it is to the credit of the committee in charge that everything went off in splendid style." (PT May 31, 1916). It is thought that MD#1 assessed the route marching and decided those companies meeting in Petrolia should rest before proceeding to Sarnia. It thus gave Petrolia the excuse to have a more formal send-off.

The previous occasions of soldier and civilian misconduct were remembered, [I]t is...a splendid tribute to the town, the soldiers, and visitors and a fact worth recording, that amongst all the great crowds present not one case of drunkenness as reported throughout the day's proceedings.' (PT May 31. 1916).

The Watford and Forest companies under Captains Dunfield and Merrison marched into Petrolia on the afternoon of Thursday May 25 and were met by the Petrolia company led by Capt. Moncrieff. The men were assigned billets. The evening ended with a 'highly appreciated' concert at Victoria Park.

Next morning, Friday May 26, the Sarnia company under Major Mackenzie, arrived by a special train. LCol. Bradley was not present and the Topic remarked, "in the absence of Colonel Bradley, which was regretted, the battalion formed in parade under Major MacVicar, and it was perhaps the greatest sight that Petrolia has ever witnessed of a military nature to see 1000 men of Lambton in khaki, and realize as they swung along the street that 'ere more months they will all be overseas and up against the real thing."

The whole battalion marched down Front street to Victoria park where they were greeted by Mayor Stirrett with a speech and to which Sergeant Major Woodrowe (sic) responded. The men were dismissed to the billets provided by town families for their noon meal. The afternoon was a field day at the Driving park where a large crowd saw demonstrations of military drills, manoeuvres by the machine gun section of Watford, physical drills, and other military tactics. There was a baseball match between the Indian platoon and B company which the latter won. There were tugs-of-war and foot races, all part of the program.

At 6:30 p.m. the battalion formed up in front of the town hall with their kit, ready for departure. There was a special train of 15 coaches waiting for the men. The Topic commented, "[The coaches] filled with cheering soldiers and surrounded by an immense crowd, pulled out for Sarnia about seven o'clock. Petrolia will miss her soldiers who have...given the town a very military aspect. They have been a fine bunch of men and their conduct with few exceptions, has been a credit to their officers and to their high calling as Canadian soldiers." The proceeds from entry, tag and booth sales amounting to \$600 would be handed over to the 149th to cover "the expenses which are not provided by the government." (PT May 31, 1916).

The Sarnia Observer Friday May 26 had advance knowledge about the late-timed arrival of the Battalion. The front page had a "Special Notice" amongst the war news which told; "We wish to inform the citizens who have promised to entertain the soldiers to meals in consequence of a sudden change in military order, the men will not be in the city for supper this (Friday) evening." (SO May 26, 1916). It is unknown if this was due to orders of the 149th Officer Commanding or the DOC MD#1. "The same notice applies to the hotels and restaurant keepers." The notice also indicated, "Should any trouble arise please advise the Armories at once and it will be adjusted. Signed R. Weaver." (SO May 26, 1916).

In the middle of that same paper was an article about the military parade for Saturday. It would begin at nine o'clock at Market Square. The order of line up was the 149th Band, "A" and "B" Companies, the 149th Bugle Band, "C" and "D" Companies, the Pipe Band, The parade included cars containing returned soldiers, cars with Dominion, Provincial, County and City Officials, then the Cadet Bugle Band, the Sarnia Collegiate Cadets, the Scout Bugle Band, Sarnia Boy Scouts and decorated cars. The route was outlined. The cars for the returned soldiers were to meet at the Khaki Club at 8:30 a.m. for further instructions (SO May 26, 1916).

Another note said the Band instruments bought and paid for by the citizens of Sarnia would be formally presented by Mayor Doherty at 2 p.m. at the parade. There were as well pictures and brief commentaries of several officers including Capt. J.F. James the medical officer, the machine gun officer Capt. R.H. Stapleford, Lt. G.W Towse, Lt. F.C. Browne, Capt. W.A. Williams, Lt. C.W. Brown, Captain A. Kelly the quartermaster, Capt. J.F. Waddell, and Lt. A.B. Brown (SO May 26, 1916).

The long train came into sunseting Sarnia around 8 p.m. Friday night to be greeted by an anxious throng of people readied to billet the men. The farewell committee greeted and then processed the men who were in their companies and names were checked. They were given a verbal outline of the events on the following day, especially the timing for forming up. Then they were released. The Sarnia Observer reported no overnight soldier problems.

Next day, Saturday May 27, the battalion marched through the downtown streets of Sarnia, part of a "Grand Mobilization" weekend of events. Front and Cromwell Streets were so densely packed with people that it was difficult for police to clear a passageway for the troops to move along. The following is a portion of the report on the parade:

Sarnia Entertains the Boys of the 149

... As the battalion proceeded along the streets it was followed by a surging mass of humanity – men, women and children, automobiles, carriages and in fact every kind of vehicle that could be pressed into service. Front Street had been gaily decorated with flags and bunting for the occasion and presented a pleasing sight to the eye. The decorations and the multitude of people all going to show that Sarnia citizens were indeed proud of Lambton's 149.... In the march past, the battalion, nearly 800 strong, presented a soldierly appearance that was most creditable. The steady swing and even tread of the troops to the inspiring strains of the band was a pleasure to behold and each company as they passed along the streets was greeted by cheers and hand clapping from the friends who had gathered to do the boys honor.... (SO May 29, 1916).

At 2 p.m. Saturday Mayor Doherty officially presented the 149th with the band instruments donated by the citizens of Sarnia. The presentation took place on the parade ground laid out on the old golf course. The Observer reported,

Saturday afternoon, at the old golf course, where the sports of the day were run off with every dispatch, the battalion as a whole passed through many intricate drills and showed the onlookers what results had been achieved during the time that they have been under drill. The march past of the battalion headed by Maj. MacVicar, was pleasing spectacle, the starting point at the west end of the field, where Col. Bradley was stationed, assisted by Adjutant Capt. H.A. Trainor. An interesting exhibition of signaling was put on by the signal corps, under Lieut. Brown, the corps spelling out words with great rapidity and winning great applause from the crowd.

The stretcher bearing corps gave an exhibition of their work. Also the physical culture class under instructor Sergt. Harrison. This work was an eye-opener to the citizens of Sarnia and showed what may be accomplished in a short time by steady work.

The Indian platoon of B Company consisting of young men from Sarnia and Walpole Reserve, won a great deal of praise in the march past.

An interesting game of football was staged between the teams of the machine gun

section and a Company, the latter winning out of a score of 8 to 0. The teams were: A Company Goal Francis; backs Buxton and McKay; half backs Dale, Hepburn and Cook; forwards Hobin, Stott, Howard, Drinkwater and Dick. M.G.S Goal Murphy; backs Campbell and Dionne; halfbacks Small, Nichols and Laverty; forwards Bissett, Joss, Ingersoll, Skipp and Spencer. The game was handled in a creditable manner by Battalion Sergt. Major Woodrowe. (SO May 29, 1916).

[There were 57 indigenous attested to the 149th, Indigenous Program DVA]

It appears the soldiers behaved themselves overnight as there were no reports in the Monday paper as to misconduct. In the meantime, the battalion officers were feted at the new golf club. An official dinner began at 6:30 p.m. with an orchestra playing. Presentations were made. Afterward the thirty-five dinner guests went outside to the lawn in front of the club house to hear the 149th Band play on their new instruments, now formally the battalion's. LCol. Bradley, Capt. H.A. Trainor and Bandmaster Sergeant Hodder, representing the 149th signed an agreement to receive the \$2500 worth of instruments from the Sarnia subscription committee "...on the understanding that the said instruments will be returned by the said battalion immediately on the conclusion of the present war." (SO May 30 1916). The three men would not be responsible for the loss or damage of the instruments. The evening came to a crashing conclusion with a sudden rainstorm of lightning and thunder. It did not look good for the Sunday regimental open air church parade.

The Observer reported, 'The programme as printed ...was carried put without a hitch. The battalion was punctual to the minute. Led by the splendid band of the 149th, under the direction of Bandmaster Hodder." (SO May 29, 1916). The religious service was conducted by the leading Protestant clergy of Sarnia. The paper continued, "Sharp at nine o'clock the troops paraded at the city hall square and proceeded by way of Front street to Victoria square, where the military church service was held." There, many thousands of civilians joined the nearly 1000 soldiers attending the service. The offering was presented to the Red Cross for their work. After the service the battalion was dismissed for the remainder of the day. Their departure was next day (SO May 29, 1916).

At the end of the day most men went to their billets. No doubt some had other ideas despite it being a long day. These other activities went unreported or were not reported in the police docket.

In the early morning hours of Monday, May 29th, 1916, the force of over 800 volunteers left Sarnia for training camp at Carling's Heights near London, Ontario to prepare for the front. They paraded from City Hall to Front Street, to the Cromwell train station. The following is a portion of the report on the battalion's departure:

*Bands Play, Women Weep, 149th Gone
Farewell
Here's luck to the boys from Lambton*

*That heard their country's call
Shouldered a gun to fight the Hun
Offered their life, their all
We're proud of our border county
That mustered the one-four-nine
May the deeds they do live history through,
And their valor ever shine.*

... The band played "We'll Never Let the Old Flag Fall," and many of the soldier boys joined in the refrain, while mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts did their best to keep back the tears. The Battalion swung smartly along the street, the steady tramp, tramp, being drowned by the cheers of assembled hundreds. But there was no glitter of gold or brass, no tinkle of accouterment, for these men were on their way to war, and Sarnia was saying goodbye to Lambton's 149.

Lean, brown young men were in the majority of those in the khaki clad columns of fours, though here and there was a head marked with gray – veterans going forth for their country again. And all along the streets were young and old, all assembled with the one object in view – to honor the soldier boys and bid them farewell and God speed....While the men were boarding the special train, the band played "Auld Lang Syne," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and "The Red, White and Blue." There were many tear-stained faces among the crowd but it was not all sadness.

The 149 is not a conscript legion being driven into strife but is composed of free men who have heard and answered the call of their country. Other soldiers have left Sarnia but the 149 is distinctively a Lambton product made up almost entirely of men from Lambton and Sarnia. So with the tears and cheers, was mingled patriotism and though the sacrifice was great – the greatest that could be made – many a woman covered her heart break with a smile....

... And when the last section drew away from the Cromwell Street depot as the clock in the Post Office building tolled seven, there was much cheering, and then a great silence. (SO May 30, 1916).

On May 30 the Observer reprinted a Saturday May 27 article from the Port Huron Tribune which noted, "Lambton county, in which Sarnia is located will, with the 149th have sent five thousand men to the defence of the mother country. It has sent five thousand of its very best type of manhood. It has made the supreme sacrifice." (SO May 30, 1916).

At first glance the departure of the 149th seemed un-marred. The special train headed down the GTR tracks bound for London when it was discovered the prepared lunches were not aboard the cars. A message was sent to Watford the train was stopping and a lunch must be provided. It became a double-double farewell for C COY. The 149th Battalion stopped over in Watford, where they paraded down the decorated main street

led by the Band playing 'Men of Harlech'. The battalion entrained again and freshly made sandwiches were passed to the soldiers provided by the people of Watford.

There was more in the papers. The Sarnia Canadian and the Observer both had large numbers of articles and related items that pushed the war news off the front pages, starting Friday May 26, more Saturday May 27 and then Monday May 29 a summary of the farewell happenings.

For some time before the mobilization parade the citizens of Sarnia had been experiencing the downside of soldiers garrisoned in their city. There were numerous reports of drunken and loud soldiers most evenings. The civil and military police were kept busy. However, an incident at the Point Edward Reserve on late Monday evening of May 18 was problematic. This came to light when the Sarnia Observer had an article from the Police Court about three soldiers and two Indian women in which the drunk soldiers accosted the women.

The Observer wrote, [A]ll three got out of the buggy and subjected these women to considerable annoyance. There is no telling what might have resulted, only that two men came to the assistance of the women who had been screaming. At this the three left." With much work Detective Stringer brought the three before the Police Magistrate who sentenced the soldier who hired the buggy and procured the liquor to four months in the Guelph Reformatory. The other two were fined \$43.30, including costs and "if not paid immediately to go to two months jail each." They paid their fines. F.W. Wilson prosecuted (SO May 31, 1916)

It would not take long for the city and county to realize they were missing the soldiers that for months had trained in their villages and towns. The Forest Standard on June 1 shared the information from the Adjutant about mail:

All mail for soldiers of the 149th Battalion should be addressed in care of the Field Post Office, London, Ontario. To avoid confusion and to ensure prompt delivery the address should contain the following information: Regimental Number, Rank, Name and Company to which the soldier belongs. Example – Pte. James Peterson, No. 844345, A Co. 149th Os Bn CEF. Field Post Office, London, Ontario.
(FS June 1, 1916).

The June 1st Standard commented on the farewell that Forest had for its boys:

Forest's Goodbye

One of the Biggest Occasions that the Town has had for Years

C and D Companies of Lambtons 149 battalion will not forget their goodbye days in Forest. The citizens threw open their houses and the visiting soldiers and bandsmen were looked after, with thousands of visitors turned out to make the Victoria Day farewell a memorable one.

The excellent brass band of the battalion under the leadership of Bandmaster Hodder arrived Tuesday afternoon and immediately marched at the head of D Company out

into the country to meet C Company coming in from in from Watford. The visitors were escorted to the armories, where billets were allotted and the Watford boys given an hour's rest. In the evening the band gave a concert and then followed by a concert in the town hall, free to the boys in khaki.

Wednesday morning the two companies and band paraded on the main streets and were tendered a public welcome by Mayor Bailey at the Old Boys Park. A ball game between picked teams of the two companies were won by Watford 14 to 10. In the afternoon, following a short parade, the throngs gathered in the park, where an excellent program of sports was held. Forest company football team won from the local company's team, 1 to 0 in a hot contest. A tug of war resulted in a desperate struggle which ended in a victory for the Forest company's eight. Other athletic events in which individuals competed, followed this. Physical drill and machine gun exercises by the men were very interesting to the spectators. Admission to the grounds was by tags, sold in aid of the Battalion fund. The Red Cross ladies also provided lunch helping out in the matter of feeding the crowd. After a concert in the town hall the two companies and the battalion band were guests of the ladies at a farewell luncheon. Thursday morning the soldiers paraded at 9 o'clock in front of the soldier's club rooms, where a few short addresses were delivered in behalf of the citizens and celebration committee. The whole proceeds of the day's doings will be turned over to the 149th Battalion (FS June 1, 1916).

The two companies route marched to Petrolia for their Friday farewell. The Standard said that Forest citizens motored to Watford for the unplanned parade Monday May 29th (FS June 1, 1916).

There were without doubt many sad to see the Lambton boys go off for war but there were also people quite happy to see them depart because of the drinking and court cases. The Observer had had many front page stories about misconduct by soldiers of the 149th:

The emotional farewells and the eye-catching mobilization parade at Sarnia proved fleeting. There was a great amount of work by the Sarnia hosts and their good graces were inadvertently devalued.

THE LOTT AFFAIR

The Letter to the Observer June 3, 1916 was a revelation:

Now that the 149th battalion has left Sarnia for camp, it is only just and fitting that the citizens committee who were appointed to see that the outside units of the 149th battalion, should they stay in Sarnia, be provided with the necessary food and other comforts to make their stay was canvassed by willing workers with the result that upwards of 350 private homes were opened to supply meals to one or more men, though quite a number of the men did not accept the offered hospitality, preferring to stay with their own friends unknown to the committee. On the other hand, many of the citizens gave cash donations instead, to provide meals for one or more men at the

hotels and restaurants. For these meal tickets were provided and distributed, the men going just where they pleased to dine. The amount of cash received up to date is \$885.75. The committee expenditure for printing, secretarial expenses and meal tickets amounted to \$325.40, leaving a net balance in the bank of \$563.35, which for the time being is held to be used in the interests of the battalion in some definite way, not yet determined upon. Before closing this statement I wish to refer to one matter which in being discussed for which the local committee is in no way responsible. I refer to the report that the men or part of them at least, were allowed to leave the city Monday morning without partaking of any food. Many not getting any food until they reached camp in London. The facts in brief are, President Johnston, saw Lloyd Lott, of the 149th and arranged 1500 lunches should be provided by the citizens and others of their friends. Mr. Lott failed to do his part in the arrangement. He failed completely to do his duty by his men and in consequence his men suffered the pangs of hunger, for which the local committee was in no way responsible.

At the present time there are still a few outstanding promises in cash unpaid, the committee would esteem it a great favor if these could be paid at the donor's earliest convenience, either to myself, 135 Charlotte street, or to A.J. Johnston, Front street. The committee wishes to extend heartfelt thanks to every citizen who aided them in any way to provide for the needs of the men during their stay in the city. The committee feel amply repaid for the effort by the good conduct of the men while guests of the city.

*Very cordially,
R. Weaver, Secretary.*

GROSVENOR CAMP AND LONDON TOWN

Late afternoon on Monday May 29 the Lambtons arrived in the London rail yard near the Military Stores Building at Carling's Heights. There they were met by runners assigned by quartermaster Capt. Kelly. The runners were the more competent men of the battalion. Each had a company to lead into the camp site set aside for the Lambtons, of nearly 10,000 men to assemble at Carling Heights for training under the guidance of the MD #1. The battalion, guided by runners and their officers, carried their kit bags not to Carling Heights but further northwest to what was called Grosvenor Camp. It had been a pasture. Here the battalion went into a camp site with bell tents and men's mess marquees. Missing was the officer mess tent. Colonel Bradley was aware that many officer amenities had to be supplied by themselves. He previously asked M.P. Joseph Armstrong to enquire with the Militia. There would be officers' mess tent as Major-General Eugene Fiset outlined in his reply (Letter May 2. 1916 in Mess Tents Mess tents RG 24, vol. 1667, file HQ 683-330-2).

The four companies, the band and the headquarters went to ground. Capt. Kelly and his advance party had the tents up and had designated company lines and within these the platoon lines. The 149th Headquarters were central to the four companies. As well, there were mess tents and latrines for each company. There was a tented cook house and

wash house. In many ways it was self-contained with the exception of a daily delivery of food from the Carling Heights storerooms for the following day. There was a standing fatigue party to handle the food supplies. Less frequent was the need for fatigues to fill in potholes and levelling the lines.

Not that the Lambton camp site was ready for visitors, still Camp Orders stated that the camp could be visited without special pass during the hours Monday until Friday after 5 p.m.; Saturdays after 1 p.m., and Sundays after 8 a.m. (LA May 31, 1916).

One Lambton resident was keenly interested in the London Camp. Colonel Kenward followed the 149th to London to see for himself the conditions (GA June 2, 1916). As weather and road conditions improved several auto loads from the County would descend on the London camp; "Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pollard and Miss Louise Pollard motored to London on Sunday to visit Frank and the other Petrolia boys of Lambton's 149th at Carling Heights." (PT June 7, 1916).

The visitors also included officers of the 27th St. Clair Borderers which had been reorganized in 1914 and carried the names of many associated with business and investment in Lambton County. They came to visit the camp and those of the regiment on active service. They were also looking for appointment. And they were not alone as other militia officers were doing the same. They would be disappointed as the Militia Council had ruled that provisional appointments had to be enrolled as private soldiers in the CEF. Still they came.

One was Thomas Leslie Irwin of the 24th Regiment from Chatham Ontario who filled in as a provisional lieutenant as of June 27, 1916, then promoted lieutenant September 1, 1916. He was held back from going with the 149th overseas draft in March 1917. (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B4722-S024>)

No doubt many Lambtons, experiencing the conditions of the camp, wanted to put in for leave as soon as possible. They were use to billets in homes and boarding houses. Camp Orders stated that no more than twenty percent of the men of a unit were allowed to travel away from camp at any time. Subsequently, men were restricted to weekend leave, with ten percent of a unit allowed to leave from 1300 hours Saturday until midnight Sunday, locally. On average, enlisted men could expect approximately ten days of leave per year under the provisions of being on active service, at the discretion of the commanding officer. (KR&O para 1221-1230 and Otter 76,77).

As one can imagine this was a daunting task to know where each man was and in time the Lambton BOR was soon running behind and unable to account for the men. When the Lambtons arrived at London they had 1033 accounted for. (LA June 9, 1916). There was much camp rumour and nothing official until daily orders were issued. The London Advertiser was always the good source of information, shared from MD#1 headquarters. The best news on arrival of the 149th was posted May 31 which said the Lambtons would be paid their end of month pay by cheque June 2 beginning at 8:30 a.m., noted as being the Molson's Bank, King Street entrance. The coy commanders

were reminded that they must identify each man through the assistance of their subalterns and NCOs (LA May 31, 1916).

The battalion's move to London may have seemed simple to the onlookers and families. It was not. After a train trip broken by a sandwich lunch at Watford the men marched from the London train depot to their camp site at Grosvenor under the darkening skies which opened with rain. Capt. Williams wrote his friend Miss Madeline Lucas of Arkona, Ontario May 31,

Dear Madeline,

One more short letter tonight. Have one awful cold, hope you are alright. This has been one fine day but believe me it's cold and wet here. Monday night was one that will never be forgotten by the 149. Some of the boys sleep in water, and I believe every man was soaked through.

Well Madeline, I never was so busy for a long time, was Orderly officer Sunday, Monday & Tuesday and it sure was one awful job for a beginning and a new camp. Have never been up town yet and have never had my clothes off since Saturday. Things will be better now. We have a lot of sick men and some 13 cases of measles already. I hope I don't get pneumonia as some surely will. I really think this one awful life and I only hope things will improve. So wet and cold and our camp is not the best.

Well this is a busy place here some 10,000 man here now and more. Lambton 149 got quite a good reception by the citizens. Please forgive me for boosting the 149. I have Alf for my orderly. I am glad he is. He sure has a cold place too. I forgot to wish you happy birthday. I will be so please to see you soon. I spoke to Col. Bradley just 1 minute since arrival and I will see in a day or two, he is so busy. I really believe I never lived under such conditions as Monday night in my life. Everybody was sick of it but we are away for a good time now.

Madeline I have so much to think about I can't think of more to write. Will write Sunday. Now I wish you health & happiness for the years to come. Believe me and Remember me to all.

GoodBye, Will

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/may-1916.html>)

The rain and damp and the large number of troops from Western Ontario made the mobilization camp a perfect breeding ground for a measles outbreak (LA June 2, 1916). Some like 845592 Jack Wade who enlisted March 17 in Sarnia deserted June 1 could use the excuse of the bad Camp conditions.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B9977-S041>).

There were many changes in the routine for the men. Until mobilization they were billeted in boarding houses or their family homes which supplied their meals. They appeared for first morning parade and, unless given fatigues, were dispersed at the final parade to their billets and personal time, more often amusements such as the local music hall, billiard room or theatre.

They now had a camp routine and training routine set by MD#1. The officer commanding each battalion remained responsible for the training of his companies with a specimen schedule from Monday to Sunday afternoon. Within that training schedule the men had set hours off from duties.

The London Advertiser said the new training schedule differed from the pre-war 'two-week holiday camps' and gave the changes:

TABLE 8. Camp Daily Schedule

Reveille	5:30 a.m.
Sick Parade	6:00 a.m.
Board on mess rationing	6:30 a.m.
Breakfast	6:45 a.m.
Company Office Hour	7:15 a.m.
Orderly Room	8:00 a.m.
First Drill	8:45 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.
Second Drill	10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Dinner	12:00 p.m.
Third Drill	2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Fourth Drill	3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
 Rations issued (Groceries and bread)	 3:30 p.m.
 Sick parade	 5:00 p.m.
Tea	5:30 p.m.
Guard mounting	6:30 p.m.
Retreat	7:30 p.m.
First Post	9:30 p.m.
Last Post	10:00 p.m.
Lights out	10:15 p.m.

Source: London Advertiser June 1, 1916.

If a man missed his corporal's instructions for the next day there was always the Advertiser to tell him the day's schedule. MD No. 1 intentionally sent the weekly syllabus to the paper, which in turned published the new week's training schedule. It was a daily outline except for Wednesday and Saturday when platoon commanders could use the time to redress training shortfalls or do physical training enjoyed by the men.

Grosvenor camp was a farmer's pasture and until recently the north section of the Carling estate. There were rough lanes leading into the site off Grosvenor and Elliott Streets. A soldier on pass with friends had to hike down to Oxford and over to either Quebec street or Adelaide Street to walk or ride a street car to Dundas and King streets which had the theatres, restaurants and stores and illicit booze. Some soldier groups rented hacks and jitneys to go downtown. There was no streetcar service on Sunday which caused many soldiers to petition the city to expand the service of the private company. This never happened that summer. When the weather co-operated there was Springbank Park for a stroll arm-in-arm with a friendly London lass, horse and buggy rentals and even swimming in the Thames. The more worldly found less-than-bashful young women near the camp gates and frequented a house of ill-repute on Park Avenue (LA Feb 17, 1916). Business was such that the London police raided a location on Richmond Street, north of Huron and arrested Kathleen Bolton for keeping a house of ill-repute (LA June 16, 1916).

Many of the pre-war militia were familiar with this aspect of military camping and helped the unfamiliar in settling in. Here Colonel Bradley would rely on his senior staff to get the 149th camp up and running. The coy commanders and the sergeant-majors would have their hands full with the majority of men never having done a militia summer camp. They would be exempt from other duties until a training schedule was published. There were camp duties and Capt. James was tasked Thursday June 1 to be the duty medical officer for the East Camp. (LA June 1, 1916). Lieut. Colonel H. D. Smith, the camp general staff officer, assigned the first full week of training.

The first full week of training for the 149th began Monday June 5 and was based on the decision of the commanding officer but guided by the Camp Mobilization Orders that were posted by the battalions in camp. Each day was to be 5 ½ hour dog's mix of drills and physical training. Wednesday was a half day with 3 hours of a mixed syllabus. The afternoon was set aside for route marches if clement weather. Saturday training would begin at 8:45 a.m. and go to 12 noon with physical training of one hour, drill of one hour and guards, sentries and saluting for another hour. For the men not on weekend pass the afternoon was physical activity involving sports. Unless on company duty or confined to barracks the evenings were free. (LA June 9, 1916). Men could be granted passes if returning home for the weekend on the discretion of the commanding officer. Sunday was church parade which included the all battalions at the camp site. This was a general framework for the battalions.

At this point the Schools of Instruction had not arranged their courses for June. The battalion commanders only knew they had to schedule the four-day battalion annual musketry qualification and work in route marches. The 149th was ready for a new week.

The 149th were settling in at Grosvenor. The London Advertiser reported June 3 that Maj. W.W. Macvicar was the field officer for Grosvenor Camp.

The June letters of Lt. Williams give an idea what the true living conditions at Grosvenor Camp were,

*June 4
London, Ontario, June 4th, 1916*

*To. Miss Madeline G. Lucas
Arkona, Ontario*

Dear Madeline,

Your kind and welcome letter was received. Glad you are well and that you are so cheerful at this particular time. I am well only a very heavy cold which makes one feel so miserable. As I am writing a very heavy storm is raging and the lightning lights the tent up quite bright. The rain is falling in torrents and the boys are mostly in their tents, some went up town in the afternoon and are not in yet. The band boys are in the tents just back of my tent and they are kicking up some noise. They play sadly tonight, due to being away from home or because of the rain. This is one great camp and the several here makes one great military appearance. Some 10,000 in a square mile. We are right in the centre of them all. We are just north of Carling Heights.

Our camp is low and wet and just looks like a lake. I hope it soon quits raining as we are tired of the wet. This will be one uncomfortable night for the boys as I believe some are being flooded out. D. Coy is on good ground and O.K.

I must tell you I was to church parade in the morning and it was great, 2000 of us lay down on the ground and listen to our chaplain. 149 Bn & 168 Bn. We sure have a good Bn and they say in London we are the best. The Officers are tallest and biggest of any Battalion. Now I cannot tell you much more about the 149. Gordon Brown is now a Sergt and Huntley is Corporal now. No boys got passes but Donaldson and I hear McKee and Wyatt are home again. Say they make me tired and they just hate me I suppose if they had never signed up they would be so much better off. They can thank me for getting a girl because of signing up. Several will be home next Sunday. Nearly all wanted home and we wouldn't grant passes. Only 10% will get passes next week. I will explain the camp to you when I come home also my place and the lieutenants we have.

He finished with the personal information regarding their wedding plans.

The conditions of the camp were under-reported in the Lambton county weekly newspapers or not at all. The folks back home knew firsthand with the westerly winds brining rain and disrupting farming. Williams ends the letter with information of his upcoming marriage which had to have approval and which Col. Bradley approved.

The June 4, 1916 letter from Will to Madeline concluded...

I remain as ever,

Your loving friend, Will

P.S. 9:30 P.M. Everybody is in for a time tonight. Tents flooded and another storm coming up. W.A.W. (<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/june-1916.html>)

The sudden thunderstorms were a recognized factor of early summer weather and the health of the men had to be considered. The camp engineers were busy nailing tent floorboard together. The 149th received 16 (LFP June 5, 1916).

The London Advertiser reported June 5 that Maj R.G. Stewart of the 149th was the field officer for the east camp and the 149th had a private telephone line at the Grosvenor camp (LA, June 5, 1916).

Tuesday June 6 may have started as an ordinary day but the headlines changed the mood. The London Advertiser headline was "Kitchener & Staff Perished on Cruiser". The other grim news was the Militia Department could not keep up processing the casualty list from the CEF in France and Belgium (LA June 6, 1916).

In Sarnia the Observer had already printed the day's news. The one directly affecting the 149th was the partial report from the June 5 meeting of the county council which stated:

A communication was read from Col. T.P. Bradley, of the 149th Battalion, asking for a further \$1,200 as the county's share with which to meet current expenses to the amount of \$4,000. The communication gave details of what was needed, and statements to the effect that the \$3,000 which was granted by the council had all been used (SO June 6, 1916).

In the same issue the Sarnia city council received: "A communication from Capt Moncrieff, of B Company 149th Battalion, thanking the council for the use of the City Hall was received and filed." B Company used that as their headquarters when it paraded with the whole battalion during the farewell.

There was a very somber black-bordered note from Ottawa dated June 5 and 'Notifying Relatives'. It read:

Following the battle of Ypres in which the Canadians took part, about 700 names of the rank and file have already been received and will be made public as soon as the next of kin is notified. There are so far very few from Western Ontario (SO June 6, 1916).

Such a statement in all the newspapers throughout Canada spawned dark clouds. Training was often affected by weather and that was the situation Wednesday June 7. The afternoon plan for all the battalions to route march was cancelled because of rain. Colonel Shannon the D.O.C. re-scheduled the 2 p.m. camp parade to Friday with the route march to follow (LA June 7, 1916).

On another matter the DOC ordered, "All orderly rooms in camp will be open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. during which time one officer and one clerk at least must be present. One orderly must remain on duty from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. to take urgent calls (LA June 7, 1916).

In the same orders Colonel Shannon said the camp would follow the city in using daylight saving time advancing clocks by one hour after midnight Saturday June 10.

The DCO ordered, "a commanding officer when leaving camp (not on duty) will leave at the orderly room an address where he can be located. He will also notify the next senior officer, who will remain in camp during the absence of the commanding officer." (LA June 7, 1916).

Back at Petrolia the June 7, 1916 Topic carried the news that Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pollard and Miss Louise Pollard motored to London on Sunday [June 4] to visit Frank and the other Petrolia Boys of Lambton's 149th at Carling Heights." Many like Sergt. Pollard on duty would appreciate that.

The Brigden column reported, "Pte. Gough, who has been sick for some time at his home in Brigden with ear trouble has been sent to the Military Field Hospital, in London for further care." (PT June 7, 1916).

In preparation for the Friday June 9 route march the Thursday night parade state had 1033 Lambtons in camp. The Advertiser remarked, "The 149th (Lambton County unit) was started some considerable time after the two local units -the 135th and 142nd- but, it has run the former a close race and has distanced the latter...." (LA June 9, 1916).

Many soldiers and citizens would know the name Lord Kitchener. His death by enemy action at sea was alarming as he was symbolic of British commitment to victory. His death brought this notice shared in the June 8 Advertiser:

All officers of No. 1 Military District are now wearing a band of [mourning] crepe on their left arm and will be for one week. Orders to that effect were issued yesterday as a mark of respect to the memory of the late Earl Kitchener. The order will be general throughout Canada following wired instructions from headquarters at Ottawa. In addition to the crepe all flags on all military buildings, camps, etc., will be flown at half-mast for the same period (LA June 8, 1916).

The London Advertiser reported Thursday June 8 that Capt. James, the MO for the 149th, was the duty medical at Grosvenor Camp. Major R G. Stewart was again the duty Field officer at the East Camp. It was also reported that all the battalions went to view the work of the bayonet school at the Armoury at London June 8. A number of Lambtons were on that course.

The London Free Press had a long column June 10 about the large march pass at city hall Friday June 9. There were cheers for the Indian platoon of the 149th from the

thousands of London citizens gathered on the streets. The 149th continued their assigned route march and ended the day back at Grosvenor Camp (LFP June 10, 1916).

A London Advertiser reporter interviewed Colonel Bradley wrote an eye-catching column:

Claim Lambtons Are Best Men in Camp

London Advertiser –

Lieut. Colonel T.P. Bradley, officer commanding the 149th (Lambton) Battalion is proud to be in command of what he insists is the best battalion, physically, in No. 1 Military District. Lieut. Col. Bradley is a doctor of medicine in private life, and in order to forestall the possible rejection of medically unfit men, he personally examined every man in his unit before bringing it into camp. He claims that his men are as a whole, the best specimens physically he has ever seen in one organization.

Outsiders who have seen the men from Lambton have also been enthusiastic in their praise. Many of the 'Lambton's' are more than six feet in height. It is also claimed that the unit is the best behaved in camp. The second night after it arrived in camp here, lights were out and not a sound heard after 10;15 p.m. This is considered rather remarkable in view of the fact the men had just moved into a new town, where they might have been anxious to see the sights (LA June 9, 1916).

Bradley's claim was reprinted in the Petrolia Topic June 14, 1916 without comment.

Bradley's inference was a boastful claim. It would have been physically impossible for him to medically screen each man. The medical officer was Captain James who came to the 149th in an official capacity February 15, 1916 and just in Sarnia. The other companies had the local doctor to examine fitness for duty. The majority of men were examined by Captain McMillen of Sarnia. In very short order the boast by Bradley was questioned by the increasing number of Lambtons in the field hospital and the unfit spotted outright.

Colonel Bradley considered his battalion the best but the feeling about the Lambtons Own back in the county was indifference. The Advertiser printed a special report dated June 8 from Sarnia on the June county council meeting. The council's attitude about the commanding officer and the officers was not good: "A spirited discussion took place in the council...on the matter of whether or not the council would grant an additional sum of \$1,200 to help defray the expense of the 149th battalion." (LA June 8, 1916).

It was thought that well over \$40,000 had been raised from all sources for the battalion. In the expenses Col. Bradley asked for \$1,400 to buy horses. That prompted a discussion over the lunch hour. On resuming the meeting:

Figures were brought together...and it was estimated that the battalion had secured about \$12000 from different sources, such as grants from towns and cities, donations to bands, grants by county and societies, and by proceeds from entertainments, tag

days, benefits, raffles of mare Irene Barron, and from the Government, in the way of money for keep of the soldiers while they were billeted by citizens during route marches and trips. The afternoon session 'attacked' the \$1,200 grant to the battalion, and after a few minutes came to the decision that they could not grant the money.
(LA June 8, 1916).

From time to time the London Advertiser brought stories called 'Here And There About The Camps'. The Saturday June 10 paper for example had the matter of the inadequacy of the field stoves. "An agitation has been started to provide permanent kitchens with gas ovens for all units in camp. At present a number of battalions are doing their cooking on an inadequate number of stoves, it being impossible to obtain more from the manufacturers." (LA June 10, 1916).

Aside from the usual sharing of discontent in things Army there were times when things turned to the recreational and the enjoyment of sports. It appears that the 118th battalion had a number of sports minded including the future hockey manager Frank Selke. LCol. Lohead initiated the discussion of providing team sports to occupy the spare time the soldiers had. The Lambton paymaster Lieutenant Smyth represented the battalion at the newly formed Divisional Athletic Association. This initial meeting began plans for a big military athletic day (LA June 9, 1916).

The London Free Press shared a story from Sarnia. Ptes. Farr and McKenney [sic] had deserted from the 149th in London and stole men's clothing from Mrs. Laura Walker from 110 Vidal Street. McKenney was before Magistrate German for the theft but remanded to a week in jail, waiting for the return of Farr who was thought to be in Michigan. These two men were later returned to the 149th and later deserted again. It was reported, "the men had become disgusted with camp life and intended to desert." McKenney had been caught and was escorted to Sarnia Monday June 5 and was released as he was not the thief but returned to face LCol. Bradley for being AWL (LFP June 9, 1916).

Apparently, the Lambton's medical officer had thoughts where he was better utilized. The adjutant was informed by the A. A.G. MD#1 that Captain John James was authorized attachment June 13 with the 14th Field Ambulance at Carling Heights, part of the #1 AMC depot. Then over the week there was more development as Dr. McMillan in Sarnia found Dr. James fit for the CEF on June 20th and MacVicar signed James' Family Particulars June 20th as Lieutenant Colonel, to which he was entitled as the new commanding officer of the 27th, while LCol. Bradley was on his honeymoon. Capt. James' time with his new unit was not long. He returned to Sarnia for the Dominion Day Holiday and never returned to the ambulance. He was AWL. He officially resigned his commission July 4, 1916.

(<https://central.bacilac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B4775-S038>).

At this point in time several NCOs were returned to the Lambtons from the B.F. & P.T. course which ran from May 15 to June 10. These were Sgts. A. Murphy and G. Trick, Corps. C. McLean, S. Richardson, J. Young, and Pte. Webster. Accordingly, they were

to do the intramural training for the battalion. Their busy days would be Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays with 'round-robin' sports supervision. Their certificates would be late in coming. (GA July 21, 1916). It is assumed that the other skill-oriented sections within the battalion such as signallers, buglers, stretcher bearers, and band were being utilized.

The only district order directly affecting the 149th members remaining in camp for Sunday June 11 was the notice that the 149th band would be supplying the music for the church parade under chaplain Captain Ronald McLeod of the 168th battalion (LA June 10, 1916).

For some members of the 149th the time at Camp seemed ideal. The June 7, 1916 Topic carried, "Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pollard and Miss Louise Pollard motored to London on Sunday to visit Frank and the other Petrolia Boys of Lambton's 149th at Carling Heights." Sergt. Bloss Scott was visited by his father J. B. Scott on Sunday June 11 according to the June 14 Petrolia Topic.

The big news shared with the County was the engagement of LCol. Thomas P. Bradley which was noted June 14th in both the Petrolia Topic and the London Advertiser. For some reason the 'P' became a 'T' in the London Advertiser,

Engagement of Colonel Bradley

Mr. and Mrs. R. Bruce Macpherson announce the engagement of their only daughter, Helen Gertrude to Lieut. Colonel Thomas T. Bradley, O.C. 149th battalion.
(LA June 14, 1916).

It proved a very short engagement as the couple married Saturday June 17 in London. Helen MacPherson was 23 years of age and Colonel Bradley was 45 years of age. The bride's father was a sales representative for the Canadian Pharmaceutical Company and lived at 44 Bruce Street in London Ontario, not far from the Cove Ranges.

MD# 1 issued instructions for the half-month pay June 13. The London Free Press carried the instruction for the units receiving pay at specific hours on a specific day. The 149th was to receive theirs Thursday June 15 their pay at the Royal Bank branch located at Sydenham and Grosvenor streets. The orders were explicit:

Officers commanding units will see that their company and platoon commanders are present at this parade. As each company is paid, the company commander will march the men to the bank and will, with the other officers, identify the men for the paying teller (LFP June 13, 1916).

According to the roll taken Saturday June 10 on the arrival of the 63rd and 64th batteries from Guelph there were 9,627 men at the mobilization camp (LA June 12, 1916).

The paper clarified another matter. Their reporters were not banned. It was the civilian visitors who were barred entry and they would need passes to enter the 142nd Battalion

camp site. The 142nd was raised in London and its citizens disregarded training schedules, thinking they had unrestricted access to see the soldiers at any time.

The big news item was the schedule arranged by the Military Athletic Association with the inclusion of the Western Football Association in the sports events taking place after training hours. The W.F.A. wanted each battalion to field an intermediate and senior team. The competition would be for the coadjacent battalions at Carling's Height, the East Camp and the North Camp (Grosvenor) to start the schedule Thursday June 15, 1916. (LFP June 13, 1916).

This is the Football schedule as per London Free Press June 13, 1916:

TABLE 9. Group 2, East Camp Football Schedule

Intermediate	Senior
June	June
15 149 vs 153	16 149 vs 153
19 149 vs 161	23 149 vs 153
22 149 vs 153	27 149 vs 142
26 149 vs 142	30 149 vs 161
29 149 vs 161	
July	July
3 149 vs 142	4 149 vs 142

Source: London Free Press June 13, 1916

Rumours circulated in Lambton and the Sarnia Observer commented June 13 on the lack of recruiting and that Major MacVicar might return to Sarnia to build a new battalion. It noted, "Major MacVicar is a popular officer." It remained a rumour.

The new development of the pending wedding of Colonel Bradley may have taken the rumours to new fields of speculation with a confirmed bachelor marrying a much younger woman.

This news of Colonel Bradley's engagement appeared in the front page of the Watford paper June 16 along with social items and the mention of soldier casualties. The Officers home the previous weekend were noted as being Capt. Stapleford, Capt. Connolly, Lieut. R D Swift, Lieut. R P Brown. A number of men of the 149th were home as well (GA June 16, 1916). In the same issue readers were advised to get their copy of the 149th recruiting march before the 1000 copies sold out.

The London Advertiser listed Maj. MacVicar as the field officer for the Carling Camp for June 14 and Capt. James was the medical officer for Grosvenor Camp (LA June 14, 1916).

The Petrolia Topic told the stories as well. The June 14, 1916 Topic had "Pte William Wilson and Signallers Burt Watson and Ercill Sovie, of the 149th battalion London were home over Sunday". Wilson and the others were home for a memorial service for Wilson's brother who died in France (PT June 14, 1916).

For some of the junior officers just arrived in London it was school. A lieutenant qualification course concluded June 14 and the results were announced in the Oil Springs Advance June 15. W. McClung, R. E. L. Lott and F. F. McGibbon were named among the 150 who attended officer and non-commissioned officer training. (OSA June 15, 1916).

With this many new lieutenants and NCOs qualified in rank the training was modified. LCol. Smith released the training schedule June 15 to occur Monday June 19. He added:

In company casualty drill officers and N.C.O.'s should be made to fall out and junior ranks should be given command to encourage them to learn their duties and be ready to take over command at a moment's notice should occasion arise.
(LA June 15, 1916).

An additional ½ hour of drill involving preliminary work in advance guards and outposts was added. The training day was now 6 hours a day, except Wednesdays and Sundays.

The Lambtons Own seemed to actually enjoy the 'Cowboy and Indian' war play. The Advertiser recounted:

A field of long grass beside the 149th Battalion's drill grounds is proving an excellent place for the training of the machine gun section, and skirmishers. Both advancing and retiring are practiced....By lying flat and keeping their heads low the men are absolutely invisible and furnish quite a surprise for passersby when at the officers; whistled signal sections of the line leap to their feet and advance on the run.... Instruction in placing the guns are also given with regard to the best shelter from fire. Early in the game they must learn to keep away from trees and bushes as these always draw an enemy's fire (LA June 17, 1916).

The times of recreational play could be the source a story about members of the 149th. The Free Press ran a story; Pte. Rhodes Saves Comrade from Watery Grave:

While bathing in the Thames near the Asylum sideroad last Tuesday [June 13], Pte. W.J. Rhodes of the 149th Battalion, noticed another soldier struggling in the water and went to his rescue. After a rather lengthy struggle he succeeded in getting him out. The rescued man refused to divulge his name. Pte. Rhodes left his card with the man and departed. Later, an unsigned letter came to Rhodes and instructed him to go to a local jeweler for a token of the man's appreciation. Rhodes did so and was rewarded a beautiful signet ring by the unknown near victim (LFP June 17, 1916),

The London Advertiser was the better promoter of the London mobilization camp. The Advertiser had a keen interest. The 'Military News and Gossip' section, the 'City Brevities' and 'Here and There about the Camps' often had the unofficial news sourced from district headquarters and the battalions. The want ad and notice section carried notices of events.

As well as sponsorship for military sporting events the Advertiser was supportive of other organizations providing care and comfort for the soldiers. The Advertiser ran a long story about the YWCA rest room at the large camp which served the families visiting their sons and husbands, brothers, male relatives and friends. It was unique as it did not appear in the women's section. Isobel Armstrong wrote of her arrival:

After a hot and dusty walk, some four blocks from the car, the Y. W.C.A. rest room was discovered yesterday west of the Y.M.C.A. camp with The Advertiser tent sandwiched in between. The "room"... is a big white marquee, raised well up from the ground and with an excellent floor, provided by a London man who considers the mission a most important one (LA June 17, 1916).

Miss Armstrong described the camp conditions as dusty with choking grey-brown clouds of dust enveloping everything with surfaces covered in "a layer of dislocated real estate".

She went on to describe a comfortable and shady place where women and girls visiting the training camp could relax. The room secretary was introduced as Miss K. E. Archibald who was trained by the YWCA in Toronto for operating the room. The room was open every day from 3 p.m. until 9 p.m. Miss Archibald told of out of town strangers arriving to see a family member in uniform and leaving behind baking, hoping to have a visit. Another story was of a widowed mother looking for her underage son and through the secretary convincing the authorities to let her son return home with her. Still another story was of the mother with two young daughters without friends in London who wanted to see the husband and father but he was in training and overnight accommodation was found. They saw him the next day. And lastly the room was a place for babies to sleep during visits.

Armstrong related an observation from Miss Archibald, "In still another way it has already been noted that it is performing a useful mission. Young girls who are out in the evening to see fathers, brothers, or other soldier relatives or friends keep an eye on the YWCA tent towards closing time and make it a point to go to their car when the secretary and her assistants are leaving....They seem to feel that our presence gives them protection." (LA June 17, 1916).

The sports section of the same paper on told of the ongoing baseball competition. On Thursday June 15 the 149th and the 186th battalion teams met with the 149th losing 11 to 9. It was the third straight victory for the Kents having defeated the 91st and 168th battalions. The sports page went on to refer to the "artistically inclined in the

149th...using their spare time to beautify the lines.” The writer offered, “Three or four days of dry weather made the camp grounds more habitable and gave the men a chance to think about something else than keeping dry. A boulevard is in the process of construction in one line, which when completed will add materially to the camp appearance. It will consist of a cinder path outlined by geraniums and other flowers.” No doubt this article cast doubt on whether there were athletes in the 149th (LA June 17, 1916).

Wet weather was a continuing problem and the following Sunday, June 18, there were showers that disrupted the worship services of the camp sites. The Monday Advertiser said showers commenced before Canon Howard, chaplain to the 186th, was to begin the service but he addressed the 186th and 149th battalions with the 149th Band providing the music (LA June 19, 1916).

Some men were fortunate to receive weekend passes. Applications for weekend leave were processed through the man’s company and to the battalion. Actual authorization was from the mobilization camp headquarters and submitted 48 hours beforehand. A soldier’s conduct was an important factor. Soldiers were allowed four days leave in a month.

Due to many factors families from Lambton could not go to London but welcomed their boys home when they had leave. The social columns became a source of information regarding the Lambtons in London. The Inwood columnist reported June 19 that Ptes. Merritt, Hill and Miller had been home on Sunday June 18 (PT June 21, 1916). The eye-catching local news that paper issue was what the county council decided on a requested grant to the Lambtons. More details came out and were added to the earlier story from the Sarnia Observer:

When the request of Lieut. Col. Bradley, of the 149th battalion for a grant of \$1200 came up for discussion reeve Dawson of Dawn township moved seconded by reeve McLaren of Plympton township, that no action be taken in reference to the grant in the discussion that followed. It came out that Lambton county council has already given the 149th \$3000 for recruiting purposes which they have spent with an overdraft of \$182.32. in making the request Col. Bradley stated that they needed some \$4000 of which \$1,480 was for the purchase of horses for the officers. In making a rough estimate of what the battalion has had in the way of money from the whole county of Lambton it is said that something over \$12,000 has been actually given to them and now they ask for more. the council decided not to make the requested grant of \$1200 and they also declared not to pay the overdraft of \$182.32 (PT June 21. 1916).

However, grants were made to the fruit growers, the corn growers and the new board of agriculture. The readers knew what was of more importance for the county now. The boys were away.

The folks back in the county knew little of what was happening at Grosvenor except for what information men coming home on weekend pass could share. The June 21 Topic

listed Pte. A. Stirrett and W. Lampman spending the previous Sunday in Wanstead. Oil Spring's Sgt. Thompson "spent the weekend with friends." Bugler Tommy Speller and Ptes. William Wilson and Jack Lumley were back Sunday. Wilson was probably visiting his family again after the death of his older brother overseas. Visitors for Petrolia were Mr. and Mrs. William Brown, Miss Lorne of Alvinston and Capt. C. A. Brown of the 149th, visiting friends. The Inwood column of June 19 noted that Ptes. Merritt, Hill and Miller of the 149th were at their respective homes. The Arkona column remarked that Captain Williams was back for a few days the previous week. Indeed, Williams was back for his marriage to Madeline Lucas at her parents' home at Arkona Wednesday June 14. There was a short article with the honeymoon described as, "[L]eft by auto for Goderich and points north." (GA June 23, 1916). The honeymoon was short. Capt Williams as a junior officer was probably required back at Grosvenor Camp Monday June 19. The couple made their home briefly at 606 Princess Avenue. (Letter of June 25. (<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/june-1916.html>)

While the Lambton county weekly papers did catch up on the news from the Lambtons Own the daily London papers had the current news. The London Free Press began the week of June 18 with a report on Monday that as of June 17 there were 9,764 all ranks at the 'Big White City' in its reference to the mobilization camp (L FP June 19, 1916).

Another catch-up were the weddings of Captain William Williams to Madeline Lucas of Arkona on June 14 and Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Bradley to Helen Mcpherson of London with minimal details (GA June 23, 1916).

On Wednesday June 21 the Advertiser noted that Major R. G. Stewart of the 149th of the North Camp would be the Field Officer of the East Camp. Captain J. F. James of the 149th would be the duty medical officer at the East Camp. The officers knew there would be little ordinary about their duty (LA June 20, 1916).

There was a big military field day planned. The Advertiser column titled 'Additional Military News' described in part the big field day for the camp and an ad appeared in the business section:

Over 335 entries.

Unit securing the Highest Number of Points wins the Advertiser Trophy, which will be a Challenge Cup. (LA June 20, 1916).

The article outlined the competition was in drill, bayonet fighting and physical drill with platoons doing this. Individuals would run distances up to three miles, high jump, long jump, hop-skip-and jump. Teams could participate in sack-race, relay race and tug of war. There would as well be football and baseball teams fielded by the battalions. The battalion with the most points accumulated would win the trophy. The trophy would be a challenge cup for each ensuing field day. As well with the first, second and third winners for each event there were prizes, many already donated by merchants, such as safety razors, knives, military boots, even two bath-house admissions. The day at Queen's Park would end with a march past with Colonel Shannon taking the salute. The

Advertiser added, "Great enthusiasm exists among the men for what will be the greatest event of its kind in London's history." (LA June 20, 1916).

The London Free Press carried more war related news and the bigger world picture but occasionally included small military items such as:

Twenty Men a Week

The 149th Lambton County Battalion is recruiting at an average of about twenty men a week. Yesterday's recruits were W. A. Moxley and James Simmons. The strength of the battalion is now 1,040. (LFP June 20, 1916).

Rumours were swirling through the camps that General Sir Sam Hughes was going to visit. The Advertiser quoted Colonel Shannon, "A routine visit from Sir Sam is possible at any time, but no intimation of such a visit has yet been received." (LA June 20, 1916).

Elsewhere in the paper a change in training was reported. No reason was given for the ceremonial parade rehearsal:

The parade started at 2:15 p.m. when the various battalions formed up on the Carling camp parade grounds, a marker and subaltern from each unit having reported previously to pilot the units to their allotted station.

The officers of the battalions were drawn up in review order and after the units had presented arms Colonel Shannon inspected the massed khaki lines. A march past followed and the units took up their former positions (LA June 20, 1916).

The local county weekly papers seldom reported on camp life. They left that to the visiting soldiers back home. The Petrolia Topic reported June 21, "All the boys look well and report their 'mess' as first class in every particular." Those back home were: Privates West Hollingshead, Joe Volvat, Elmer Sanderson, Robt. E. Van de Sterne, J. Naissons, Ezra McDonald, Ed. Lee, John Hartley, W. Edwards, N. Tomlinson, Len Esson, Art Wilson, John Ward, Howard Ward, Guy Yardley, Seth Yardley, Phonse McManus, Fred Deacon, Murdick Kerr, Ernest Spickett, Will Codling, Joe Landon, Clarence Maitland, Wm Prevott, David Blackwell, Alex MColl, Lance-Corporal David Harding and Sergt. F. Pollard. Capt. John Dunfield and Lieutenant S. Stokes also Sundayed in Petrolia (PT June 21, 1916).

The men appeared well but they were the lucky ones not quarantined. Not all was good news as the serious measles outbreak at Carling Heights hit with the first units arriving at Carling Heights. Normally quarantine of the affected person and those in close proximity was enough. However, measles could lead to other problems. The 186th Battalion had mumps in their line. There was measles in the 135th. Seventeen year old Pte William Adair of Strathroy went into the camp hospital June 1 but developed pneumonia and emphysema and died June 22. Pte. James Melburn McDonald of the 149th was in the camp hospital since June 12 with measles but developed meningitis. He lingered until dying June 26, 1916. McDonald was the third death of the Lambtons

Own at this stage of the War. He received a military funeral by members of the 149th at Bradshaw Cemetery, Bridgen.

The Topic and the other Lambton papers were aware of the measles outbreak and accepted this common illness as reality.

The Topic reported that some of the married women were now following their husbands to accommodations in London; "Mrs. Morrow and Mrs. Perkins will be leaving for London to join their husbands who belong to the 149th battalion." (PT June 21, 1916).

The Topic did not say what was happening with the newly married commanding officer of the 149th. Other sources said the Bradleys were going east for a short honeymoon. The rumours of a pending visit by the Minister of Militia would keep the Colonel close to camp or at least able to return to camp on quick notice. The newly married couple made their home at 114 Elmwood Avenue, London.

<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B1000-S058>)

Back in London the Advertiser reported that Sir Sam Hughes was indeed coming, June 22, to inspect and that the ceremonial parade held on Tuesday was a rehearsal. The paper described how the battalions made their way to the Carling Heights Parade ground. The 149th Battalion marched from its camp to Carling Heights via Sydenham Street and entered the camp by the gate off Oxford Street. All battalions consisted of four companies and were formed in "close column of companies.... [T]he battalions appeared to fine advantage in carrying out the various orders, sloping and presenting arms, etc., and following the inspection...a march-past of all the units was held before Col. Shannon." (LA June 21, 1916).

The big military field day was still on for the afternoon and the London Free Press told of the hopes of the 149th: "A platoon from each battalion is entered for the physical drill and marching competition and the 149th (Lambton) Battalion hope to see its Indian platoon under Lieut. R. D. Smith, carry off the trophy." (LFP June 21, 1916). It was actually Lt. R. D. Swift.

The high hopes for the Indian platoon were soon deflated. The Advertiser had a long column June 22 which emphasized the enthusiasm displayed by the soldiers and officers. Col. Shannon had granted a half-holiday for all the units training at London. The first event was the tug of war. The Lambton team promptly lost to the 153th. Although the 149th had teams and individuals in every event they failed to place except Pte. Iveson Elijah placing first in the mile run and Pte. Floyd Little placing first in the mile walk. These alone could not top the 24 points total overall won by the Hurons Own to whom the Advertiser Trophy went until the next Field Day with date unknown. The poor showing of the Lambtons was nothing to shout about. The duties were posted with the 149th supplying the duty band for Grosvenor Camp June 22 (LA June 22, 1916).

The big news in London Thursday June 22 was the short-notice inspection and review of the London Camp which was set for 9:30 a.m. The Advertiser had less than

complimentary words for Major-General Sir Sam Hughes. The paper praised the raw recruits and had obvious contempt for the Minister of Militia and Defence. It stated,

The long odds the greatest military review ever seen in London was held on Carling Heights this morning. More than 11,000 men marched past the saluting base where Major-Gen Sir Sam Hughes, Canada's war-lord took the salute and he failed to take advantage of none of the privilege appertaining to his exalted station. High officers were ordered here and there like office boys in no uncertain tone of voice. He appeared to be displeased with most things he saw (LA June 22, 1916).

The parade was delayed a few minutes because the 91st of St. Thomas was late arriving off the trains. With the artillery units on the right and facing south 11,000 men in khaki formed almost half a mile in their numbered battalions, stretching to Quebec Street. Sir Sam and his party rode the length of the line with Sir Sam pausing to speak to each commanding officer. At first the march past went as rehearsed with column of platoons and then moved into close column of companies, not practiced beforehand. The crowd applauded.

The Advertiser continued, "At the conclusion of the 'review' all officers were called out, forming four deep about the general they listened to his speech. Ignoring the first principles of propriety or good tact Sir Sam severely criticized some of the higher officers in the presence of their juniors." (LA June 22, 1916).

The review was Sir Sam Hughes' attempt at dispelling rumours about the new training camp at Borden. For weeks questions were asked about the camp and what purpose it would serve when there were mobilization camps already established.

Hughes spent Wednesday June 21 in St. Thomas to check on the readiness of the 91st Battalion to go overseas. That evening he was in London and he spoke with local officials, district headquarters staff and Mayor Stevenson about the move of a majority of the troops at the Carling Heights Mobilization Camp to Borden. It was a bombshell. There were now even more questions.

The impromptu bull session after the parade was not heard by reporters but they soon found out from the officers present. The Advertiser called it a rampage. Hughes did not supply details, only it was necessary. He defended the Ross rifle and suggested it was a German agitation on its quality, defended by his statement, "My old friend Col. Neil Smith of the 186th and I could take a rifle each and get down in a trench; you could send 40 men against us with bayonet and I'll guarantee that not one would reach us." Hughes told the officers 'start packing.'" (LA June 22, 1916).

The London Free Press took a measured look at what would happen with the London camp and reported that Hughes declared "that the Borden training camp...provided by the [Militia] department wholly with a view to fitting Canadian soldiers for the serious duties which they will face in Europe. Local consideration...cannot be allowed to interfere with designs considered to be in the best interests of the empire." Hughes was

not ready to admit the flaws in the training provided in Canada and which in part was not having an area large enough to exercise battalions and brigades up to the size of a division.

The Free Press did find some details despite Hughes deflecting questions by saying matters would be finalized when he returned to Ottawa. He stated that the advance guards of the battalions would go to Borden would leave June 23. He expected the battalions to go under canvas there on July 2. "We will have 40,000 men there." (LFP June 22, 1916).

The London Evening Advertiser of June 22 asked several questions how such a departure would affect the economy with the decreased number of soldiers, how the city would or could absorb the expenses for setting up the small camps and whether there would be compensation from the militia department.

It is difficult to say what the opinions of the citizens of Lambton county were on the matter of Camp Borden. All they knew was that the Lambtons Own were in far-away London and it was difficult to see their men or the men return home. All knew that the battalion would be even farther away.

The concern for the 149th was the support for their families once they departed. There had been two cuts to the separation allowance and they wanted what they thought was just. The Sarnia Observer reported that "Remarks circulated through the city yesterday [June 17] were to the effect that the members of the 149th battalion stationed at London were preparing a petition among themselves to the effect that they wish the city to take the matter up again and make further provision for their dependents." (SO June 18, 1916). It is not known if there was such a petition but the Observer did print a column on provisions made in the Separation Allowance now administered from Ottawa. Without any doubt the 149th officers aware of this would have addressed the individual concerns.

General Hughes' hurried visit caused a stir in London but among the ranks of the 149th they were probably relieved the parade was over and they were back to a daily schedule. The 149th Band was the duty Band Friday June 23 at Grosvenor Camp.

The 149th arrived at wet, soggy Grosvenor Camp May 29. Weeks later many drainage problems remained. The Advertiser on its story tour of the camp sites remarked:

Fatigue parties of the Lambton (149th) Battalion are getting a taste of trench life. The clayey nature of the ground on which they are encamped makes a large amount of drainage necessary. Many new drains have been made, and fatigue parties are engaged today in deepening a small creek which flows close to the Battalion's quarters. Earth thrown up on one side of it gives it the appearance from a distance of a muddy trench in Flanders (LA June 23, 1916).

Other camp sites were sporting white pebbled lanes, flowers and even battalion crests. The Lambtons may have considered this ideal to visually mark their lines that way but they were without a regimental crest. The proposed Lambtons Own crest submitted by Judge McWatt was under review by Militia headquarters in Ottawa.

The rank and file only knew they had a badge and the design was sent off to Ottawa for approval. The battalion orderly room and Lieut. Colonel Bradley waited for a reply to the April 24 submission to the district A. A. G. who in turn sent it on to Ottawa. The battalion had their farewell in Sarnia with a simple Canada badge. Now at London they waited without their own distinctive cap badge.

Colonel Bradley received a reply dated June 10, 1916 which stated, "[T]he design of badge forwarded by you has been approved by the Hon. The Minister, provision of badge to be without expense to the public." The battalion would have to bear the cost and at the time there was no money. The county council decreed there would be no more grants and no-overdrafts would be covered (LA June 8, 1916).

Routines were followed and training went on. Some in the Lambton ranks were pleased that the paymaster was authorized to pay their daily rate and allowances for the period of their employment as officers. Prov. Lieut. Pollard was a recruiting officer from December 20, 1915 to April 26, 1916. Lieut. Schroder from February 21 to April 20, 1916. And the school principal, who absented himself to assist recruiting and training, Lieutenant R. J. Campbell, a temporary Captain with the 149th, was given his pay and allowances for his instructional duties from March 2 to May 16, 1917 (LA June 24, 1916). As well, it was noted the Wellington bn was boasting of a good football record as 'a senior and intermediate game with the 149th last night (Friday June 23) was won by default, as "the Lambtons failed to produce a team." (L A June 24, 1916).

The Lambtons did the Saturday half-day of training and then broke off for their relaxed afternoon of personal matters. Many would be preparing for passes to the city or back home. There was always cleaning their uniforms and shining boots for the required church parade on Sunday if they were not homeward bound. And some were going nowhere as they occupied a hospital bed because of measles.

The table below lists some of the men sent to the London Military Hospital Some chose to go home and recover and were listed as AWL.

TABLE 10. A sampling 149 measles cases found in personnel files

London Military hospital cases dates of admission and release

844093 BROOKS, John had measles June 16 to 29
844291 DODGE, Milton had measles May 8 to 20
844268 DOVE, Walt had measles from May 1 to 13
844544 HAYWOOD, Charles had measles June 17 to 28

844598 HOLDEN, Leslie admitted to the London Military Hospital with measles May 31 and released August 8, 1916 after having pneumonia as well.
844744 LALLEAN, Wilfred had bronchitis July 3 to 11
844690 KENNEDY, Irvine had measles from June 15 to July 1
844839 McGREGOR, Wilfred had measles June 16 and was out June 26, 1916.
844937 MEREDITH, Orma had measles and otitis media June 3 to July 13, 1916.
845114 PARK, Charles Ansel had measles June 26 to July 7.
845111 PREVETT, William Henry In June 1916 he had ten days with measles in the London Military Hospital.
845144 QUINN, Henry had measles June 6 to 9
845329 SMITH, James had suspected June 8 to 28 with suspected measles
845357 TAIT, Robert John had measles May 31 to June 13
845375 TEMPLE, Edward Jiles had measles from May 30 to July 1, 1916.
845390 THOMAS, Robert had measles June 26 to July 1.
845580 WILSON, Thomas had measles May 30, 1916 until June 26, 1916.

Source: The personnel files of the men listed, LAC

The death of Pte. McDonald June 24 was regretful but accepted due to the state of medicine at that time and the limitations on what could be done. McDonald's death was due to meningitis, seldom survived.

On Monday June 26 his body was taken back to Brigden through Petrolia and interred at the Bradshaw Cemetery. The escort officer was Major Stewart with CSM Ford as the senior NCO. There was a firing party of twelve men (LA June 28, 1916).

Even before the Lambtons arrived in London men were at the military hospital, being found fit, but with medical problems that surgery could resolve. 844364 Evans arrived April 5, had surgery for a hernia April 6 and discharged to duty April 26. 845062 Omer was in the military hospital April 3 to April 25, 1916 and had an operation for varicose veins. 844802 McKenzie went to London with a hydrocele April 25 and discharged to duty April 27. He was back in with suspected syphilis June 21 and disappeared June 24, not to return. 844828 McAlpine went to London May 16, operated on May 18 for varicocele and released to duty June 1. CSM Ford went to hospital on June 6 for a hernia and was discharged to duty June 27 after overseeing the funeral of Pte. McDonald. (Personnel files).

Some men became sick with the usual late spring infections. 845437 Ward went into the hospital June 3 and discharged to duty June 29 after having rheumatic fever. 845425 Whistler had a sore throat June 24; examined he was in hospital with tonsillitis until July 4 when he was released to join the Lambtons at Borden. Childhood disease caught up with some. 844409 Fourney was in for mumps June 4 to 26. (Personnel files).

MD #1 HQ posted the next week training beginning Monday June 26. The usual training was to take place except "[O]n the day that battalion drill is being conducted loading and

unloading with dummy chargers will be practiced.” Emphasis on casualty drill was to be continued given junior NCOs to take command (LA June 24, 1916).

About this time the Militia Council was making new appointments. The 27th Regiment (St. Clair Borderers) was to have LCol. J. C. Massie from Stratford as the commanding officer but he was committed to the 71st Battalion going overseas as the junior major. The Observer surmised the administration duties would rest on Maj. MacVicar who was still in Canada (SO June 26, 1916).

With a rounded figure of 1000 men in the 149th camp at any given time there were always men on sick parade to see the battalion doctor and if serious enough off to the camp hospital. The long days with drill, route marches, musketry and bayonet training and physical demands revealed medical problems undetected at attestation or had developed over the weeks. The civilian medical examiners employed by the 149th recognized medical unfitness such as irregular heartbeat, chronic rheumatism or chancres but were unable to detect internal problems (Holt, 64).

Mobilization camp brought together many skilled physicians with diagnostic facilities readily available at Victoria Hospital. Sick parade for the units brought soldiers before Standing Medical Boards.

With the pending departure of many of the units to Camp Borden the AMC detachment of MD#1 decided to review the medical admissions to the hospital and those attending sick parades. Beginning June 26 and continuing as units departed the Boards gave their decisions. The 149th had as many as fifty men deemed fit at attestation who were found medically unfit before SMBs using the set medical standards at that time. Some had a second SMB and after due consideration were released or retained. Some Lambtons were thus released immediately and still others by July 7 in the move of the battalion to take only the fit to Borden. This as well added to the burden of the paymaster and the quartermaster to pay the soldier and take in returned kit. The BOR as well was required to give a statement of release from the CEF.

The common reasons for MU were substandard eyesight, poor teeth, varicose veins, varicocele, hernia, heart problems, hearing impairment, poor chest expansion, substandard height and weight, missing appendages, flat feet, missing digits, skeletal deformity and sinus deviation, to name a few (Clarke, 168-170). The personnel files of the Lambtons Own reveal that most MU during those weeks were for flat feet, hernia, overage and underage. 844464 Stanley Graham of Oil Springs wanted to serve but he was sent home July 7, 1916. Stanley was examined by a medical board June 29, 1916 and found to be too short at 4 feet, 10 inches.

The former MO of the 149th Capt. James was now attached to the 14 Field Ambulance at London as of June 13. He likely heard comments about the hidden medical problems of his former battalion.

The folks back in the county were relatively unaware of the 'unfit for military duty' status of the men. The local papers reported men were home on pass and did not report other reasons.

The Petrolia paper social columns kept many informed of the men being home. The following...were reported home over Sunday [June 25] from Grosvenor Camp, London: Ptes. Chas. Hargraves, John Fraser, Sr., Clifford Collins, John Fraser, Jr. , Ernie Hill, Alex McColl, Fred Russell, Fred Deacon, Wes Hollingshead, Rowe McRitchie, Arnold Shaughnesy, Lc.-Corp. Wes Phillips, Corp. Sam Howlett, and Roy Johnston, Sergt. Wes Phillips, Lieut. Bloss Scott and Lieut. Beecher Edward, also James Clarke, of the 63rd battery, London. (PT June 28, 1916).

The Topic kept its readers informed of the Petrolia boys by printing a London Advertiser item on promotions:

A large number of promotions and appointments have been scheduled in the 149th, Lambton county, Battalion. Lieut. John D. Dunfield and Lieut. George G. Moncrieff have been made captains, their appointments to date to March 4. Lieut. W.G. Connolly, Lieut. S.G. Stokes, Lieut. L.B. Young, Lieut. H.B. Edward, Lieut. R.E.L. Lott, Lieut. R.D. Swift and Lieut. B.F. Scott have been appointed as subalterns on [sic] this battalion. -London Advertiser (PT June 28, 1916).

There was special mention of the Rev. John Milton MacGillivray as he was back from London for his last service at the Presbyterian Church June 25, having officially resigned for the full-time duties as chaplain to the 149th. His appointment dated from March 4, 1916 (PT June 28, 1916).

Along with other news of the world and local items the Advertiser reported 10,928 all ranks at the London Mobilization Camp June 28, 1916. That would include the recent return of two deserters, Howey and Galarneau of the 149th stopped at Algonac, Michigan by American border officials (LA June 28, 1916).

There was a great deal of concern for the married men from Sarnia. There were rumours circulating in Sarnia that a petition was circulating through the 149th at London for the city of Sarnia to maintain its support of families now that the unit was preparing for overseas service. The Topic reported, "It will be remembered that twice the allowance has been cut, and it is stated that the men will not care to go overseas until they receive the amount they were at first promised." (PT June 28, 1916).

Training was changing as schedules were being produced. The Advertiser reported: A very fair insight into the nature of modern warfare is given in the new syllabus. All soldiers will be trained to use the rifle with deadly accuracy on an instant's notice....To-day's camp orders announce the establishment of a school of musketry to be held at the Cove rifle ranges commencing on July 3. (LA June 29, 1916). CSM Clark and 20 Lambtons were assigned to the new school.

HEIGH-HO! HEIGH-HO! IT'S OFF TO CAMP BORDEN WE GO!

Thursday June 29 was a difficult day for a large number of Lambtons. Early in the morning, the battalion and all the others making up the three brigades were on separate but lengthy route marches that came together for lunch at Geary's Corner. Following that the battalion marched back to Grosvenor no doubt exhausted and in need of medical care for many.

It was from this experience the battalion was subjected to medical exams. The boards sat and through the week with the result being fifty plus men being found unfit for further military duty and released July 7, all being seen through the BOR for their discharge.

Many Lambtons went back to the County on leave for the Dominion Day holiday. Some on leave would not return to London including officers; Dr. James, the MO for the Lambtons was granted leave and decided not to return from Sarnia. He was reported AWL. His wife wrote to Militia headquarters of his resignation (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B4775-S038>).

MD #1 set out the training schedule Friday June 30 for the next week and posted the camp roster of 10, 918 rank and file (LA June 30, 1916). Days before there were advertisements for reduced train fare on Dominion Day and celebrations occurring in London. When the Lambtons allowed passes finished their Saturday morning training, they headed to the GTR and for home. The railroads later reported the weekend was extremely busy. Those not so fortunate or staying in town filled the afternoon with sports. There was always a stroll at Springbank Park or a ride on the radial line to Port Stanley and the lakeshore. The Advertiser reported, "There were large numbers of out of town visitors in to see the soldiers or spend the weekend with relatives....[T]he crowds downtown were keenly interested in the war news and the reports regarding the success of the Allied" drive delighted all." (LA July 3, 1916).

The Advertiser posted news in its window front at 191-195 Dundas Street as it came in by telegraph. All knew it was the first day of a big battle for British and Canadian forces. Later in the week the casualty lists became longer and longer and identified many from not only Lambton county but the others in southwestern Ontario. Unknown to most in Canada these casualties were from just holding the trenches assigned to the Canadian Corps in the area of Ypres, Belgium.

Sunday July 2 was different. The humidity was high and a storm was brewing; "Shortly after 11 o'clock a threatened electrical storm developed. Half a dozen bolts of startling resonance crashed, while a heavy downpour, accompanied by hail, fell....[L]ater the sky cleared and a humidity of a suffocating character developed. No rain fell hereafter in London." (LFP July 3, 1916). The storm did not spare Grosvenor Camp. Tents were down, contents drenched and much of the camp site flooded despite the many fatigue hours spent digging drainage.

Back in Lambton those on pass used the time to visit family and no doubt some encouraged their friends to sign on.

The Sarnia Observer commented after Dominion Day these city men went to the 149th; John Brown, Jaul Paul, Herbert Shirk, James Scott, Wm. Daigoram, A. T. Mills, W. R. McLeod, A. Smith, James Kane, and A. F. Chambers. Perhaps after friends returned to the city they too decided to join. The Observer raised the concern, "Of the above not one of the number is a Canadian." That is difficult to confirm as an exact truth. Shirk did not finish attestation. Mills appeared to be Canadian. A. Smith did not finish attestation. James Kane served with the 33rd Battalion but did not go overseas as he was convicted of manslaughter, imprisoned, and appears to have been released to rejoin the CEF and was of American birth. A. F. Chambers was born in London, England, was a Salvation Army officer and grievously wounded in action. (SO July 7, 1916).

The county weekly papers did not have much to say of the holiday. Watford reported, "Dominion Day holiday was spent quietly here. Many citizens spent the day at home whiling away the time. Most of those owning autos spent the day at the lakeside or went to visit friends. The weather was ideal for a picnic." (GA July 7, 1916). The weather was ideal for haying and no doubt the farm boys did their bit to get as much mowed, raked and into the mow.

The District orders Friday June 30 had the disbandment of the Signaller's School July 3 with the men returned to their original units. In place of that the School of Musketry was to be established that day. The District now ordered each battalion to establish a 'Bombing Section' with a complement of one sergeant, one corporal and 35 men. The London Advertiser told what really happened:

Quiet prevails on the northern front, to wit the big camps today. Three battalions, the 110th, 135th and 168th are out of town practically 'en masse,' and of the balance at least 50 per cent of the men are away on pass. Training is at a practical standstill, but it is hoped that tomorrow the men, refreshed from their holiday will get down to hard work.
(LA July 3, 1916).

Into a new week and already a day's training in bombing, bayonetting and musketry lost.

The Lambtons were aware of another big route march slated for Thursday July 6 according to the district training orders. Although there is no record of this happening many personnel files show July 7 as a discharge date for medical conditions just then coming to light.

The Lambtons as well prepared for "a [district] ceremonial [parade] to be held for two hours in the afternoon [July 8] when a review and march past will be held." (LA June 30, 1916). There would be more changes to the training syllabus as units were informed of movement dates and then retracted.

What happened July 6 is questionable as that day the Camp Orders reported by the Free Press had, "The battalions stationed in Carling Camp are having their photos taken at Queen's Park this afternoon." (LFP July 6, 1916). There is no existing picture of the 149th.

The football game between the 153 bn and the 149th did not happen as the Lambtons did not show for the game. What apparently happened as the day's drilling concluded many Lambtons 'waived formalities' and struck off for home to say goodbye (LFP July 7, 1916). As far as Colonel Bradley and staff knew the battalion was to leave Sunday July 9 for Borden.

It was only a matter of time and organization now for the battalions gathered at the Carling Heights camps to move on to Camp Borden. On July 6 Col Bradley received orders for the battalion to be prepared to move to Borden July 9, 1916 (LA July 7, 1916). That caused many difficulties with the main concern being the leave owed to the men. Only trusted would be allowed away. The battalion was to be ready to move on the call of MD #1 over the weekend, depending on the availability of rail transport. In the meantime, the quartermaster and twenty-men went on to Borden with the other advance parties of the battalions at Carling Heights. There were as well many men still owed a pass home. Ptes. Aylesworth and Fowler were back to Watford for a special farewell Friday evening July 7. As well the fifty plus medically unfit for various reasons were on their way back to Lambton.

For those who remained in London did so for training and in some cases in support of those on duty. The Lambton band was on duty at the North Camp for July 5. Major Stewart was detailed for July 6 as the Field Officer for Carling Heights which meant two orderlies and the duties assigned by the Provost Marshal for that site. He would be required to submit a 'parade state' at the end of the day. No doubt there were AWLs and they would rise. The parade state Tuesday evening July 4 was 10,904 all ranks (LA July 5, 1916).

There was good news shared in Petrolia:

The engagement at Cornwall, Ont, of Miss Pearl Smith, daughter of Mrs. G.M. Smith to Capt. H. A. Trainor, adjutant of 149 Overseas Battalion now of London, the marriage taking place quietly July 11. Capt. Trainor was stationed in Petrolia a few weeks when the 149th was being recruited (PT July 6, 1916).

The recent town council meeting impacted the 149th. The correspondence included a letter from Lieutenant Towse, representing the battalion, in which the balance of the money promised, at \$100 a week during the time that B Coy was mobilized in Petrolea. The reply was: "That request from Lambton 149 for balance of funds voted to battalion be laid over for investigation – adopted." (PT July 6, 1916). The matter precipitated further discussion and the Council decided, "That Chas. Collins, treasurer of the Lambton Battalion Fund be asked to present his report of disposition of funds so far granted – adopted." (PT July 6. 1916).

There appears that no further funds went to the battalion from the Petrolia town council.

Those soldiers who read the London Advertiser would not be pleased about the conditions at Camp Borden: "The area set aside for the use of the London battalions has a great number of second growth pine, poplar and birch trees in splendid growth. It is probable that over two thousand troops will be turned into the area to hew down the trees and clear them away." (LA July 7, 1916).

The 149th, depleted of soldiers due to AWL and MU discharges, packed, closed camp and were ready to move off, at the call of MD#1 over the weekend of July 8-9, depending on the availability of rail transport. the meantime the quartermaster and his twenty-men were in Borden with the other advance parties marking the tent lines.

One can only imagine the disorder at times in the BOR and among the tent lines vacating. The adjutant Capt. Trainor, if he were present, and the staff of Lt. F. C. Smyth and Sgt. D. Harding, would be extremely busy. Capt. Trainor did get to Cornwall for his wedding July 11.

CHAPTER FIVE

BORDEN

While the 149th orderly room was dealing with discharges and preparation for the Borden move, Borden was in much confusion. By May 1916, twenty-one square miles of land had been acquired by the Department of Militia and the camp readied for an influx of 30,000 men by July 1. Site preparation was begun in mid-May by the Barrie and Collingwood companies of the 157th Battalion. In early June, another company from Barrie was sent to help speed up the work. It was hot dirty work made worse by sand flies and wind-blown ash from burning pine stumps. The sand, ash and flies contaminated meals, and congested eyes and lungs alike. The men quickly nicknamed the camp 'camp horror' because of the atrocious living and working conditions. (Source: Fisher and Fuller. The Grey and Simcoe Foresters)

Nevertheless, by Dominion Day, July 1st, the camp opened to receive troops and the remainder of the 157th arrived July 2, followed July 4 by the 177th battalion from Simcoe County. The first of twenty thousand troops from MD#2 arrived July 5 and the 10,000 troops of MD#1 arrived July 9 of which the 149th were numbered.

The Lambtons left London Sunday July 9 from the CPR station around 10:00 a.m. It took 8 hours to travel to Camp Borden. There was be a lunch break and a guarded walk about at Toronto station and then back on the train to pull into Camp Borden about 6:00 p.m., march with kit with guides into their tent site and sort themselves out. No doubt the officers were stunned with the news that there was a big parade slated for the next day for Sir Sam Hughes, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

The conditions were a far cry from the London Mobilization Camp which had rain, cool weather, hot and dry days toward the end of June. The Lambtons adjusted to conditions at London were ill-prepared for the Borden environment. They found themselves in a very large camp with areas marked off for the brigades. The Lambtons were with the 118th, the 135th, the 142nd. They were fortunate to be near the GTR station and spur line recently brought into the camp.

The camp was laid out in the form of a town square with streets, electric lighting, a post office telephone and telegraph connections, ablutions, laundry rooms and other conveniences. About a mile away was a running track with three laps making a mile and an athletic field with a grandstand to seat 25,000. The camp was spread over 5 miles. (EVT July 13, 1916).

The Lambtons no doubt appreciated the work of the advance party. The camp was raw and everything new. There was hardly time to settle in. The news was a parade the next day, Monday July 10.

No letters those first days from the 149th survive. Soldier Earl Lawrence from the 161st (Huron's Own) wrote his mother. It is transcribed as it was originally written:

*July 11 1916
Mrs Henry Johns
Elimville Ont*

Dear Mother – Well Mother we are at Camp Borden and it is one sam hill of a place.

Its all sand here its just the color of cornmeal only a lot finer. We had a parade yesterday to get ready for Sam Hughes We had an awfull time from a quarter to eight to half past one We had no water a lot of men fell out they say some of them died after but they did not tell us so There was some time in camp last night they call it a riot. I think it looked like one to see about 5000 men in a mob with sticks and stones yelling like madmen a lot got hurt they let all the prisoners out except the 170th they stood them off with bayonets some were stuck or cut. I expect there will be another this afternoon by the sound of things and no wonder if there is one day in this hole is enough for any man. We marched past Sir Sam this morning it was some sight to see about 85000 men in one place I'll bet they absorbed a lot of water they took moving pictures of us we were a pretty sight when we when we got home just like a lot of threshers just as black as niggers its awfully dirty here its just cleared from a pine bush the logs cut into lumber and the brush burned then they plant our tents on that when the wind blows it full of fine sand just like dust or quicksand when its dry. It's a great sight to see the tents there seems to be miles of them there is tents as far as can see We have two Scotch Batt with their kilts they look fine. It's a God forsaken place all around us I don't think you could grow much grain the grass is all burned dry as a cinder and is nothing but sand,sand,sand.

Pte. Lawrence Johns was correct about conditions but incorrect about the number of men.

Well we left London at 10 o'clock Sunday and it took us 8 hours to get here I tell you what we seen some country in that time but there is no place like Huron for grain or grass it's the best I've seen yet. Our camp is only about ten rods from the G.T.R. [Grand Trunk Railroad] Station we sleep about 20 rods from it but we have the farthest to go to drill about 2 miles I think mabe more or less They have gone to a lot of expence up here. I guess its to be a perment camp. They say they will pave the roads I hope its done when we wake up in the morning They have a lot of German and Austrian prisoners inturned here they do all the carpenter work and ditching pull stumps and so on they have a better time than we do we had pretty poor grub the first day and having to work so hard on it makes you weak as a chicken we have a half holiday today so mabe I'll catch up to it. I suppose the London papers will print a lot about the troubles last night. The Toronto papers out it so as to appear that the London men started it But its not right The Toronto men had just as much to do and maby a little more than the London boys had Well I suppose the folks are all well and have finished haying by now and will be looking at the wheat with a hungry eye. You will notice I am using a new style of writing paper I wonder if you can tell what its made of (Birch bark) just keep it until you find out We can get it for nothing Well I must say good bye for now

Address
Camp Borden
161 Batt
C Co. Ont.
Earl

(<https://www.canadianletters.ca/content/document-12060?fbclid=IwAR1gwGVET5-vfyOfUkniInvY5zBGen35tdSdEVADR1U9faYxEralv13t87A>)

No doubt letters from soldiers of other Western Ontario battalions agreed with Earl.

There was one death. Pte. William Murphy of the 124th battalion wrote home of the parade that the men suffered through and were upset with their treatment:

July 11, 1916

I was not able to see you before we left so I thought I would drop you a line. Well, believe me this is some camp. About 40,000 troops are stationed and more to come in yet. I suppose you heard about the big riot which happened last night. The bunch from London started it. They were sore because they were moved from their own camp at London, which they claim is better than this. Well I think it ought to be. We have to march to the ceremonial ground a distance of about two miles from the camp, and the sand and dust here are ankle deep. The heat is fierce and by the time we reach the drill ground we are thick with dust. We look like a bunch of stokers in the navy instead of soldiers. The sweat rolls off one and with about 20 battalions in front of you kicking up the dust you can hardly see those marching ahead of you for the dust. The stuff gets into our nose and lungs until it almost chokes you.

On Monday we rehearsed, the big review order given by Brigadier-General Logie that the men were not to carry water bottles, and believe me out in all that open ground and the sun striking down on you, you needed all the water you could get to wash your lungs out. As a result about 20 men out of every battalion were knocked out by the heat. The Red Cross was kept busy. The result, I think, has ended in quite a few in the hospital. The riot occurred over that.

So today when we were inspected by Sir Sam Hughes they allowed us our water bottles and only a few dropped out. Believe me she is a corker. The camp, I believe, is 20 miles long. The rifle ranges are about two miles long and the trenches about a mile. They intend a battalion to stay in the trenches 4 days at a time so as to get them up to a finish. (<http://www.doingourbit.ca/profile/william-murray-0>)

Sir Sam was late in arriving. As it was the men stood for two hours in the sun. Pte. Deward Barnes 862690 of the 180th battalion wrote, “[They] didn’t allow us any water. The idea was to get us used to little water.” It made you think of home.

The march past the reviewing stand was in column and “...no one was in step and carried their rifle any old way. When we all got the command to eyes right, we booed General Hughes and said, ‘Take us out of this rotten hole.’ The march past was a failure, but there was nothing done about it.” (Greenhous et al, 33).

Sir Sam Hughes visited a few battalions in their camp sites after the parade. The men now had their water but there was resentment. A soldier Pte. John Campbell of the 204th had died of heat exhaustion. Men now off duty went to the train depot. As Sir Sam

prepared to leave in his special train coach for Ottawa a large group of men loudly booed him, blaming the minister for the shortages of water and the needless death. (Morton 1999, 146).

The train moved off but the men were still resentful. It appears that the mostly Toronto men, including the 204 battalion, took this out on the former London Camp men and a riot took place. The camp duty battalions the 157th and the 177th dispersed the men with fixed bayonets (Fisher and Fuller, 27).

The booing of Sir Sam Hughes at his rail coach instead of the traditional three cheers and the clash between battalions made sensational news and the following day's Toronto papers printed stories causing concern in western Ontario. The Sarnia Observer shared a telegraph report of July 12 which began by saying the Toronto press reported that the London battalions were the lone cause but this was absolutely wrong. Toronto district battalions "were largely interested in the fracas." The Toronto reports are "an effort to saddle responsibility on London battalions is full of malice." The story continued, "Men of the 135th, 142nd, 118th and 149th were held behind their lines and the 149th and 142nd only became interested when units from Toronto district entered their territory." The report said that General Logie [the Camp Commandant] was providing additional facilities for the London [district] men including a special week-end train between London and Camp Borden (SO July 13, 1916).

Under the Bethel column the Observer's correspondent reported Pte. Ernest Henry was home for a few days without mentioning Camp Borden. He may have avoided the battalion trip to Borden but he did eventually return to train with the other Henrys from Sombra (SO July 13, 1916).

The report on Camp Borden and Henry occupied a small corner of the Observer. The big news was France holding back the Germans at Verdun.

A letter from Pte. Gordon Parkinson of the 142nd battalion to his family July 16th told additional information on Borden and what happened earlier. He arrived Sunday July 9, 3 o'clock in the morning,

and had lots of work to do putting up tents and unloading stuff.... On the drill we have had there has always been about a dozen in each battalion fall from the heat each day. We haven't been doing much these last three days.... The riot the other day...we had no hand in it at all. It was the 135 & 168 that had most to do with it. The Indians started it in the 135.... We would all sooner be in London than here I think, but this is the place where we will get real drill. We have big long trenches and bayonets with cloth balls on the end to fight each other with. We are going to have show battles & bayonet fights. There are going to be fights that will last for 2 ½ days & 2 nights without stopping.... The 135th all went home this week but for this battalion only the married men went home.

(<https://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islandora/object/macrepo%3A73929#page/1/mode/2up>)

Parkinson said the pike fishing was good in the Nottawasaga River. At the end of his letter he asked for a letter from home to be on harvest furlough. Ottawa had announced a harvest furlough. Many took the opportunity to be away from dusty, sandy Borden.

Letters were going home from the Lambtons and the folks back home received pointed personal feelings about Borden, Lieut. Williams, in particular, to his new wife Madeline.

Although he did not use the word 'opportunity' that is what some 149th took. Williams was a captain but he did not think for long. He wrote Madeline July 16th and in part said:

1 p.m. – the boys are nearly all on leave or furlough. They really don't act manly or soldierly either. After 7 months and act up like this is ridiculous [speaking of the riot] and should never leave Canada's shores. Discipline is no more.
(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>)

Williams continued:

2 p.m. – We have had a lovely rain and no more dust, cool and everybody happy. Was at church parade this morning. Service was short. Sermon preached by our chaplain. Well, Madeline I really was made use of here and all the boys wanted something. All the officers are away and have been unable to go to Allandale to get a place. However we will be able to get a place. Most of the officers wives arrived yesterday and will stay in Allendale.... I surely wouldn't be a Captain long. Lt. Edward is while push here now and is mean as he can be. Not one Lt. is here the last two days. No wonder the men act as they do. (the rest of the letter is missing).
(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>)

Williams was wearing captain's rank at the order of Col. Bradley.

Back home in the County life moved on with many little items of interest to the Lambton men who might read:

There are 154 families in Lambton county receiving assistance from the Canadian Patriotic Fund. During the month of May the payments made amounted to \$2,229.25.

The county of Lambton war tax for 1916 will total up to nearly thirty-thousand dollars.

The soldiers at Camp Borden are so anxious to fight that they organized a little war last Monday [July 11, 1916].

Capt. H. A. Trainor married Miss Pearl Smith, daughter of Mrs. G.M. Smith of Cornwall, Ontario.
(PT July 13, 1916).

The Guide-Advocate had no war news and had nothing on the boys at Borden. It noted the death of Pte. George Ellis of Leamington, brother of Mrs. John Beer of Bosanquet, who died at Boulogne France; Nine Reasons Why We Need Hydro listed; summarized local Twelfth of July local events and ran an ad for the Western Fair September 8th to 18th (GA July 14, 1916).

After the riot the Lambtons settled into the Borden version of what they experienced at London. But there was a new level of training inserted in the routine of fatigue parties, guard duties, musketry and newly introduced bombing sections.

The Lambtons were with three other battalions in #8 brigade, the 135th, 161st and 168th. LCol. B. Robson of the 135th was the brigadier. There were nine brigades in total.

Each brigade now set the training schedule with rotations through the bayonet and physical training, musketry, bomb throwing, work for the machine gun sections, stretcher bearers and signalers besides the ancillary of quartermaster and armourers as required.

There are no existing training schedules from the summer of 1916. Many letters home and family chats would give a sampling of the training and dusty, wind-blown Camp Borden. A surviving letter of Sergeant Laurence Pridham of the 166th describes some of the training:

I was immediately detail[ed] for Quarter-Guard and on being relieved of that duty marched with the Bn in full kit...and to the trenches for 2 days & went through the trials and tribulations of actual warfare, midnight attackers & everything that would try the nerve of everyman from the want of sleep. The first night my company was in Billets and it was very cold. The other 3 Coys were in Local Reserve, Support & Fireline Trenches. The 159 was occupying the one reverse trench, the two mazes of trenches about ½ mile long & no man's land & wire entanglement in between the two forces. We got back to camp 11 p.m. last night & today there was a terrific sand & dust storm & my eyes are burning with impact of the sand.

(<https://qormuseum.org/soldiers-of-the-queens-own/pridham-lawrence-ducharme/pridham-27-09-1916/>)

Pridham was a sergeant when he wrote the letter. It was not just about duty as he included personal family matters. With that he concluded with matters of duty:

Excuse me there's a bugle. I am BOS [Battalion Orderly Sergeant] today & must inspect the men's mess tents with the officer of the day. – Well it's about 7.30 p.m. Inspected men's mess for complaints, inspected the New Guard, Old Guard, Pickets, Horse Line Picket. Next will be Tattoo parade 10 p.m. Dismiss picket & hike to Brgde [brigade] Hdqtrs with reports & go bed after I make out my own report for the day.

(<https://qormuseum.org/soldiers-of-the-queens-own/pridham-lawrence-ducharme/pridham-27-09-1916/>)

No doubt Mondays for most of the battalions would begin with a first parade that revealed a number of non-effectives who had to go to the camp field ambulance for a medical matter. That reduced the number of men training. Add on the men missing after a pass to Angus or Barrie to see a show or find a boot-legger. And add on the men who did not return after a trip home. Platoon, company and even battalion training suffered in advancing collective training. The weather at Borden as well could be very hot and not inducing strenuous training.

As there are no existing Part 1 and Part II Orders for the 149th it would be speculation as to what was happening with battalion training. The climate was an obvious factor deterring training and affecting retention. Letters from men of other units mention the variety of training. Perhaps it was the lack of leadership displayed by the junior officers as Capt. Williams told his wife Madeline in his July 16 letter "All the officers are away".

That was a serious matter and came about quickly after the 'riot' July 11 with the numbers of un-authorized leave-takers being over 600 and counting. The Sarnia Observer printed a dispatch from Borden which stated Lieut. Col. W.D. Lang was establishing a provisional school for officers and "a site is now being picked out for the school." (SO July 14, 1916). No doubt Brigadier Logie was reacting to the evidence the officers were not controlling their men.

Another consideration in the aftermath of the riot was the identification off the men involved and what unit they were from. The Lambton Own did not go to camp with a hat badge properly their own or the collar 'dogs' as they were known. As there is a certain pride for a battalion's badge there was a realization this had to be rectified.

The Petrolia Topic reported: "Captain Moncrieff of Lambtons 149 at Camp Borden is asking the ladies of Lambton County to take up the work of raising about four hundred dollars for the purpose of procuring cap and collar badges for the men of the 149th. (PT July 20, 1916).

The Lambtons were at Camp Borden without a distinctive cap and collar badge to set them apart from the other battalions. In March Colonel Bradley asked for a design [probably by Judge MacWatt] and one went forward to Ottawa. The correspondence shows that the first design was not accepted. Another design was submitted and approved June 5, 1916 [H.Q. File No. 683-330-I]. Capt. Moncrieff sent a letter to the Tecumseth Chapter IODE in Watford and asked the group to assist with buying the ram's head badge. They replied they would (GA June 9, 1916). Evidently their money and some from school children was not enough. The September 29, 1916 Battalion photo shows the ram's head badge worn on the caps. The money came in after all.

However, having a distinctive badge was a superficial response to the problems in retaining the men. They needed leadership and it was probably not found in Lieut. Col. Bradley. There were rumours in the county that changes were coming for the Lambtons. The Topic subsequently shared, "A report has come out of London that Lt. Col. Bradley

will resign as commanding officer of Lambtons 149, and that he will be succeeded by Major MacVicar. In that case Major Stewart of Courtright will step up to second in command." (PT July 20, 1916).

It should be said this was speculation only. Major Robert Stewart became ill with typhoid and this delayed any consideration of his forming a new battalion or remaining active militia with the 149th. He was eventually fit for overseas service October 18th, 1916 and served as well with the 186th. He resigned his appointment with the 149th April 22, 1917 while remaining in Canada.

A letter to Madeline July 18 from Capt Williams does not mention any rumour of change. It is about some Arkona boys disgruntled with the training conditions:

No end to worries. The boys are all going home and of course are dissatisfied. They don't like the dust up here and are no doubt awful lonesome. I sure done my best for the Arkona boys and I hope in return they will not use me mean. Ed Crawford was going home on furlough tonight and for his good conduct & work was made Serge. in the Transports. Ed is well pleased and so am myself. Ed is sure a good worker and certainly doing the best for the 149. Mr Wyatt made a fight to get home and believe me I did the best that could be done. I only wish all could be used alike and not having to do so much scheming.

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>)

Williams was no doubt tired and depressed about the conditions in the battalion as he added:

Well Madeline I am sure discouraged tonight. Tomorrow am Captain of the day and will be on duty from 5 A.M. to 12 P.M. only 19hrs. It is now 10 P.M. all are away to bed. The boys are singing in their tents and sure sing sad pieces. We need a few ladies here to cheer them up. They miss their friends that was in London. Mr Young left yesterday for Toronto.... and arrived just now.... Show[er] is in Ottawa. Capt. Trainor is doubled up like a few more of the officers. It is very hot here and the boys are working hard today and will sure go to it now. (<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>)

After a few comments on friends in Arkona Williams signed off writing,

*No officer can get home for 4 or 6 weeks.
Must close now as it now very late. Don't forget me in your prayers as I sure feel blue. Remember me to all. Wishing you health and happiness.
Goodnight.
Your loving Will*
(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>)

The comment about the 'doubling up' suggests that officers were taking on added responsibilities but the reason is not known. Some could have been on course or at home on leave and the remaining officers had to supervise.

The July 18th letter of Capt. Williams follows a pattern which emphasizes his connection with the Arkona men who he originally enlisted and felt responsible for. Williams was a popular officer and he and other officers recruited among the men in their home communities relying on popularity and friendships. Matters not stated were coming to a head.

The Topic printed rumours but the Sarnia Observer retained a reporter at Camp Borden who reported July 18 on the water situation and other matters to keep people informed. He reported that the strength of men in camp that day was 28,555, 2,094 men on leave, 1,501 illegally absent with a total [paper] strength of 33,150 men. Colonel Bickford called for a conference of brigadiers and [battalion] commanders for the afternoon of July 19. The meeting attended by Col. Bradley may have prompted him to think seriously of resigning his command. (SO July 20, 1916).

Men were granted leave on the terms of two, two day leave for a month's duty. Many qualified and went back to the County. The Topic recorded that Lt. Sam Stokes and twenty-two other ranks returned to Petrolia the weekend of July 15-16, all B company for leave purposes. This group would be of those granted passes or furlough (PT July 20, 1916).

The conference on July 19 would cover many details. It was probably here that battalion commanders received guidance on training and specific assignments apart from duty battalions providing men for camp fatigues. This may have been when Col. Bradley was told he had to supply guards to the Alien Internment Camp at Kapuskasing Ontario.

The search of medical files of the Lambtons reveals that the first 149th to be admitted to the Alien Camp Hospital did so July 21, 1916. There were a total of 19 men admitted over the remainder of the summer. Thus, the deduction is a composite Lambton company was at Kapuskasing the week of July 16 up to the battalion portrait taken September 29. See table below:

TABLE 11. 149th admitted to Kapuskasing Alien Internment Hospital 1916

Soldier	Admitted	Discharged	Case
844002 Atchison, Lorne	30-7-16	3-8-16	otitis media
844101 Benware, Grant	28-8-16	11-9-16	astigmatism Toronto
844134 Brown, Archibald	28-7-16	19-9-16	raynauds disease
844060 Burke, Charles	30-7-16	12-10-16	gono to Toronto
844281 Durham, Thomas	21-7-16	28-7-16	otitis media
844351 Ellis, George	29-7-16	10-8-16	gono at Toronto
844359 Elliott, Wilson	30-8-16	4-9-16	astigmatism Toronto
844478 Glaab, Alvin	17-8-16	5-9-16	traumatic orchitis

844 551 Howarth, John	31-7-16	2-8-16	contused toe
844632 Johnson, William	24-8-16	2-10-16	gono to Toronto
844717 Kemsley, Frederick	18-8-16	31-8-16	rheumatism
844746 Lightman, Alex	29-8-16	5-9-16	adenoids Toronto
844726 Lyons, William	10-8-16	23-8-26	orchitis media
844852 McFarlane, William	30-8-16	2-11-16	neuritis remained
844945 Morningstar, Herman	8-8-16	15-9-16	rheumatism
845260 Smily, Thomas	11-8-16	7-9-16	otitis media
845298 Smith, Gordon	22-7-16	9-8-16	hypertrophic rhinitis
845254 Stafford, Robert	15-8-16	18-8-16	gastritis
845586 Watson, William	30-7-16	22-8-16	appendicitis
845442 Wilson, Walter	25-7-16	11-8-16	gono to Toronto

Source: Personnel Files held by Library and Archives Canada

The research is incomplete as the pay records of the 149th are in the undigitized files of the Military District #2 which was responsible for the pay of the Kapuskasing guards. The names of the guard members would be there.

With a company of men off to Kapuskasing the training went on for the remainder of the battalion. The letters home to Madeline give few details. On July 20 there was a route march. Williams said July 27 he was in charge of three hundred men of the battalion who had been at the trenches.

The comment in Capt. Williams' July 18 letter to Madeline about the officers not allowed leave for four to six weeks could be in response to the commitment of the company to Kapuskasing and an effort to boost the morale of the men in the Borden 149th companies by having the officers being more responsible for their men. The conference held July 19 by Col. Bickford may as well have been an attempt to have the officers committed to their duties.

The changes going on affected many. The Guide-Advocate told the public that Mrs. Stapleford had received a telegram from her husband Capt Stapleford that he had been appointed the 8th Brigade staff captain (GA July 21, 1916).

As was often the case the notices to local papers regarding the advancement of the men were slow. The GA July 21 had the graduations of Sergts Arthur Murphy and G. O. Trick, Corps C. McLean, S. Richardson and J. S. Young and Pte. Ernest Webster from the Carling Heights Fighting Bayonet and Physical Training School from early spring.

In another letter Capt. Williams told what happened to the officers who brought their wives along to Camp Borden:

In the mad rush for a place Col. Bradley and all the officers' wives who landed at Barrie or Allendale got put out and had to come up to camp and stay 1 day. They went up the line 5 miles to Alliston and have a good place. They want you to go and

*can get a good place for you if you go to Alliston.
Letter to Madeline July 21, 1916*

<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/july-1916.html>

Williams also said he could not get leave for a month.

Presumably, certain matters among the officers were straightened out and training rotations continued with bombing, musketry, trench work, and the other work associated with making the battalion ready for overseas. The weather was hot with little rain. The temperature that August was an average of 84 degrees fahrenheit and low of 59 degrees with the total rainfall 1.3 inches (Barrie weather datum https://climate.weather.gc.ca/historical_data/search_historic_data_e.html)

It was the trusted men who had no problem getting leave. The Topic reported that Capt. G.G. Moncrieff, Lieuts. B.E. Scott and Beecher Edward, Sergt. Frank Pollard, Corp. Fred Knight, Lance Corp. V. Matthews, Privates Cliff Collins, Chas. Bending, Norman Moore, Arthur Wilson, Ernest Hill, Arnold Shaunessey, Neil Brown, Alex. Fraser, Frank Boges, Howard Ward were home Sunday July 23. While on leave Sergt. Pollard, on Tuesday July 25, was hit by a hand crank and required sight stitches. (PT July 27, 1916).

The Arkona column in the Watford paper had the news that "Mrs. W. Williams left Saturday [July 29] for Alliston where she will be with her husband Capt. Williams of 149." As well, "Sergt. Gordon Brown will be spending two weeks at his home." (GA August 4, 1916).

Captain Williams penned several letters to Madeline during the month of August. He reported some of his observations:

Aug 2: Well dear I sure had some trouble today and also a broken heart. This morning I tried a prisoner and had him remanded to the Major, Major Macvicar. He dismissed the prisoner and called me down to a finish in the presence of Officers and men. Really I never had anything equal the feelings I had. Well I stood my ground and never said one word. Immediately after he finished I made straight for Brigade Headquarters to report the Major for reprimanding an officer in presence of men. Major Macvicar called me back, took me to one of the marquees and talked it over for an hour. I also write out my resignation and sent it in. This all caused some talk here tonight and all the officers are on my side. Major Macvicar sure feels terrible over it and apologized to me. He would been cashiered for this if I had made Headquarters. Well they wouldn't accept my resignation, and sure they all know Williams has some spunk.

The letter concluded,

Ernie Showler came in tonight. Capt Merrison also came back going away over

Sunday. They sure hold the job down for getting away I hope you come down Saturday and I will go back with you. Be sure and write tonight. x

Aug 7: Today word was sent to Major MacIver of 146 Bn that the 149 Bn was the cleanest and most tidy of any in our Brigade. I was given praise for having this in such good order. I'm sure it made me feel proud because it came from Col. Wigle. Madeline just me a little praise and no end of nice things I will do for you. Just try some of these stunts. (https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/august-1916_16.html)

Aug 13: Has Dan Donaldson reported yet? They say around here that he has deserted. Into the month of August and the only reports on the 149th were about soldiers home on visits. The Topic reported the August 8th news from Oil Springs which listed Webster and Wilson home Sunday August 6. Under Wyoming Roy Wilson, Tom Brown and George Richardson home for a few days (PT August 10, 1916). Corp. C.E. Sisson "returned to Camp Borden Saturday [August 5] after a three weeks' furlough The GA Capt. Stapleford, Lieut R. D. Swift and Lieut. A.R. Brown were home on the weekend August 5-6 (GA August 11, 1916).

There was a short note in the Guide-Advocate that the custom of giving soldiers two weekends in the month was being changed, to a four-day pass in the month, The men would have four days and one day allowed for travelling, making five days in all. (GA August 11, 1916). Many Lambtons extended their home visit plans. Ptes. Dan, Roy and Hubert Turrill were reported as returning to Camp Borden August 12 under the Inwood news. (PT August 17, 1916).

By now most activities were on schedule and a routine with training Monday to Saturday with Sunday off except for church parade, Wednesday a half-day with sports in the afternoon and similarly for Saturday afternoon. There was plenty of opportunity to take in the moving pictures at the two camp cinemas and lounge in the numerous canteens. Wednesday evening August 16 was different. The cinemas had some patrons, the canteens quiet because there was a big tattoo which the London Advertiser reported:

The great military tattoo held at the camp last night [Wednesday August 16] was a musical event and spectacle of unique interest, the combination of several hundreds of musicians with their blazing torches and the great audience of thousands of soldiers making a scene such as has never before been witnessed in Canada. The 28 bands taking part marched in, in succession, each in a distinct air which those already in line took up. As the bands, in mass, grew in number the volume of sound gradually swelled until when all were in line the popular song "Keep the Home Fires Burning" was played in slow march time the great band of 600 musicians under the direction of Lieut. John Slatter camp bandmaster pacing forward as they played and back again to their places. The effect was magnificent, and the audience showed its appreciation by enthusiastic applause. A number of other popular airs by the mass bands were almost equally well received and the work a vocal choir on old popular songs came in great applause (LA August 17, 1916).

The Tattoo was a great success. No doubt the battalion Band shone for a short time.

Unknown at that time was what was happening with John Peters of Walpole who was on furlough at Windsor. He had an attack of appendicitis and was admitted to the Hotel Dieu Hospital August 17 and died August 20. His death and whereabouts were unknown and he was listed as AWL August 23 and noted as such in DO 214 of 28.8.16. In some way his whereabouts was discovered and DO 236 of 28.9.16 indicated that through a Board of Enquiry, initiated by LCol. Macvicar, established he died August 20. Peters was the fourth Lambton to die while in Canada.

<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B7760-S044>)

Men were still deserting. The Watford paper shared, "A deserter from the 149th Batt., W.J. Knight, was sentenced to twelve month's imprisonment in the Ontario provincial reformatory by Magistrate Gorman at Sarnia." Then there was "A soldier's uniform was found near town. The authorities were notified." And Capt. MacGillivray the chaplain thanked the Watford Kewpie Club for the 1800 pounds of reading material sent to the 149th (GA August 18, 1916).

The Camp Borden Tattoo August 16 led to another big event involving the 149th Band under Sgt. Hodder. The Guide-Advocate and other Lambton papers ran the advertisement for the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto starting August 26th and running to September 11th featuring 1,200 performers, 10 massed bands and a chorus of 60 voices for the 'Empire Federation Spectacular'. The 149th also had men for fatigue duties, marches and demonstrations by the Bombing Section of Lt. Lott (GA August 25, 1916).

When duty called no doubt Capt. Williams took the opportunity to visit family in Arkona as the GA reported:

Capt. W.A. Williams of Lambtons 149th and his recruiting staff were in Watford, Friday Saturday [18-19 August] for recruits to fill vacancies in the battalion. It is expected that the Lambton boys will leave Camp Borden for the front in from four to six weeks. Capt. Williams speaks highly of Camp Borden (GA August 25, 1916).

Capt. Williams went on to Sarnia for recruiting. While there he recognized two men and added another man to take back to Camp Borden with the story told by the London Advertiser:

*Special to Advertiser August 25
Three deserters were apprehended here this afternoon and tonight by Capt. W.A. Williams. They are Ptes. Thomas H. White of the 133rd Battalion, Frank Wallace and William Johnson, 149th Battalion. They will be sent to Camp Borden, under military escort to stand court-martial (LA August 26, 1916).*

Rumours were circulating about embarkation. There was still opportunity to fight if a man wanted.

The social section of the paper also had news of illness and men home. Major Stewart was home with typhoid. Capt. Stapleford was home over Sunday [August 20] from Camp Borden. Sergt. R. H. Trenouth was home from the 'big' camp August 20 as well. (GA August 25, 1916).

There was indeed movement on the pending embarkations but the immediate filling of an officer draft was the priority. Lieuts. George Kress and Ernest Showler made their formal CEF attestations August 25, 1916, found fit by the medical officer of the 149th being Thomas P. Bradley. The paper trail is extremely thin but with the rumours swirling and the early departure of Capt. James it was just Bradley doing the role of the medical officer. Kress and Showler sailed on the SS Tuscania September 26, 1916.

(Kress <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B5256-S070> and (Showler <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B8884-S044>

The assembling of an officer draft for overseas found a few officers quite willing to leave their battalion like Lieutenants Kress and Showler. In their case it may have been the leadership they had shown in the 149th. Or they have been restless to get on with fighting and not training.

With the departure of Lieutenants Kress and Showler, Lt. Robert Olle, former 30th Wellington Regt., was attached to the 149th August 28, 1916 according to DO 230 OF 21.9.16.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B7455-S068>)

The Watford paper reported September 1 that "nearly all the members of Lambton's 149 who were away on harvest leave have returned to camp." It was reported that Captains Dunfield and Moncrieff had qualified as Field Officers. The social section for Arkona had GA Sept 1916 printed Capt. Williams and Mrs. Williams are spending a few days at the home Mr. C. W. Lucas (GA September 1, 1916).

Not all members of the Lambtons were returning to Borden. Walter Knight and Alexander MacKenzie came to trial in Sarnia before Magistrate Gorman. They were sentenced to one year hard labour at the Guelph Reformatory for being absent without leave after being found in Cleveland and returned by American authorities (GA September 1, 1916). No doubt some Lambtons by this time would have pity for the duo for being caught. Magistrate Gorman served in the Boer War.

Major General William Logie of Hamilton, Ontario was tasked with preparing the men of the combined MD#1 and MD#2 Camp Borden for overseas. It was impossible for him to do that along with his many other duties. He appointed LCol. John S. Campbell of St. Catharines to inspect each battalion at Camp Borden. The inspection for the 149th came September 5th. Overall, the battalion came out fair. One junior officer was to be removed immediately. Some were on course or leave and not observed. Lt. John Knowles was praised for his leadership and assessed that he could lead a company at the age of 22.

https://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=1092310&lang=eng&rec_nbr_list=4473525,4473526,4473600,4473601,4473528,4474380,5013274,1092310,2041011,2095973

https://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=1092310&lang=eng&rec_nbr_list=1060483,1890436,1768724,3773956,1091923,1092310,2013328,2014147,2015127,2009565

RG24-C-8. Volume/box number: 4393. File number: MD2-34-7-172-2D.

Colonel Campbell was unimpressed with the battalion administration. The regimental conduct sheets [are] badly kept. The Guard Reports have not been completed or signed. Courts of Enquiry have not been assembled to deal with absentees until they were absent for long periods over 21 days." The most telling observation was that LCol. Bradley and Senior Major Macvicar were unfit and should not be in leadership of the battalion. Bradley was excused by his brigade commander and Major Macvicar paraded the battalion. The total strength in men that day was 318. The Band was at the Canadian National Exhibition.

What followed was a medical examination of the 149th officers at camp. It was either an attempt to save the battalion from immediate break up or to save the officers' reputations. Perhaps both.

TABLE 12. Officer Official attestation to the CEF

LCol Bradley, Thomas	fit Sept 6
Lt. Brown, Arthur	fit Sept 6 resigned November 18, 1916.
Capt. Brown, Clarence	Sept 26 and resigned appointment November 2, 1916
Lt. Browne, Frederick	fit Sept 6
Lt. Brown, Reginald	was on parade September 5 but found medically unfit SOS 16.10.1
Lt. Bruce, Ernest	was removed from 149th September 5, 1916
Capt. Cheyne, Wilfred	fit September 12
Lt. Edward, Harry	fit September 6
Lt. Fyffe Norman	fit September 6
Lt. Irwin, Thomas	fit Sept 6
Lt. Johnston, Byron	fit Sept 6
Lt. Knowles, John	fit September 6
Lt. Lott, Robert	fit September 12
Maj. Mackenzie, Kenneth	suffered hernia August 22, operation August 24 and fit for overseas October 30, 1916, resigned commission December 4, 1916.
HCapt. MacGillivray John	fit October 11, 1916
Lt. MacMillan	fit Feb 7 1917
Capt. Merrison, James	fit Sept. 6, 1916
Lt. Scott, Bloss	fit September 18, 1916
Capt. Smyth, Fennell	fit September 8

Lt. Stokes, Samuel	fit September 8
Lt. Swift, Robert	fit September 8
Lt. Towse, Gwynne	fit Sept 6
Lt. White, John	fit September 5
Capt. Williams, William	September 8
Lt. Wykesmith, William	fit September 6
Lt. Young, Leslie Bruce	was Medically Boarded to take three weeks medical leave 19.9.16 and later went to #2 Construction Battalion

Source: Officer Attestation Papers held by Library and Archives Canada

The 149th officers signified their commitment to going overseas. They were no longer Active Militia but officers under the CEF with its rules under the Militia Council. They were now liable for personal failure under the King's Regulations and Orders.

It is apparent in Colonel Campbell's notes that some officers excelled but did so at the expense of duties missed. The London Advertiser noted that LCol. Charles Graham oversaw a provisional school at London and the paper posted the results from the recent school. Lieutenants H. Edward and W. Wykesmith qualified as captains in the course held August 7 to September 2. Lieutenants R. D. Swift and S. G. Stokes passed the longer lieutenant course July 10 to September 2 (LA September 20, 1916)

Sept 8 GA reported all accounts payable were to be sent in for payment by September 15 and no later. Those late would not be paid. Here was a sign to the general public that the 149th was preparing to go overseas.

Captain Williams had time to write a few letters. His to Madeline September 13 speaks of medical exams which caused the discharge of some men. There were many who just wanted out. The letter:

*Camp Borden, Sept 13th, 1916
Mrs W.A. Williams
Alliston, Ontario*

Dear Madeline,

Am well. feeling fine tonight. Arrived O.K. last night. boys had not all arrived, Arkona boys all back but Geo Watts. Several boys have deserted the Bn. Lots of drunks. Well Madeline we were up at 3 A.M. and out to the ranges all forenoon. Afternoon had had medical examination and about 30 were discharged. butler will get a transfer to an engineers battalion as he is unfit for training. I. Smith is also turned down again. Alf passed through O.K. All officers were examined and I was passed along as fit, also have not to go through operation. Now we will be up at 5 A.M. tomorrow again to the ranges. This is some noisy believe me.

Well my Dear I was glad to be passed as fit as the faces some drew and the yarns they told to get away made one sick. This means my last exam and will surely make good. Alf got along fine all week and done fine. The rest of the boys have Saturday and return Thursday. Say the yarns was awful when I got back, going courses in three weeks and going back to Guelph, London & Sarnia. What information I can get just now. We will be in Canada all winter. Either London or Guelph. Only two Bns will go from the London bunch and we are not to go. I only hope it is true. No officer will take courses here so I believe will get mine in London when go back. Everything is fine and running smooth.

William had more family information and signed off.
<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/september-1916.html>)

The London Free Press Camp Borden correspondent reported on the inter brigade Bayonet fighting competition held September 14. The 149th did not place. The 149th was to compete against the bands of the 118th North Welingtons, 116th Perths and the 186th Kents for “B” band designation. (LFP September 15, 1916)

At this point the Lambtons knew they would not be going oversea but the discussion was on where they would be quartered for the winter. The London Free Press was aware that whatever battalions were in London for winter quarters would not be billeted as, “The militia council has decided that battalions billeted would not be broken up this winter, but will be quartered where such can be most effectually and economically done.” The Free Press said the billeting experiment was not a success (LFP September 15, 1916).

Now mid-September the hot summer weather was fleeting and the Camp Borden tent-lines were cooling off overnight. The men were complaining they needed more blankets. They would be sent (LFP September 16, 1916). With the chill there was the anticipation of embarkation as field training closed off. The officers now began a series of lectures on the European war by cadre who had returned. These officers would know what earlier Canadian troops discovered to their hardship. The rumours floated what battalions were going. MD#1 could not say more other than two battalions would winter in London (LFP September 18, 1916).

Routine training continued amidst the rumours but the signs were there. LCol. Bradley requested an audit of the non-public accounts and that was supplied to him September 21 and then printed in the Watford newspaper October 6, 1916 as seen in Table below:

TABLE 13. Non-public Account of the 149th (Lambton’s Own)

September 21, 1916 Non-public funds 149th

Receipts		Expenditures	
<i>Grants</i>			
Ontario Government	\$ 500.00	Postage	\$ 285.53

Lambton County Council	3,000.00
Watford Council	100.00
Petrolea, per H L Simpson	50.00
Alvinston Council	50.00
Total	3,700.60

Board Money Refunded

Brigden	97.80
Petrolea	266.40
Alvinston	147.60
Sarnia	286.80
Sombra	296.70
Forest	552.00
Courtright	252.60
Total	1,899.90

Tag Days

Sombra	28.62
Brigden	29.17
Wyoming	26.25
Courtright	42.10
Inwood	18.50
Oil Springs	20.25
Thedford	72.67
Sarnia	308.97
Alvinston	24.25
Watford	43.32
Total	614.10

Miscellaneous

Warwick Patriotic Assoc.	30.00
Geo. Lucas, for bugles	22.75
Curtis' pay refunded	17.60
Robert's Discharge	50.00
Lieut. Young church col.	18.50
Forest Committee	694.87
Alvinston Concert	39.50
Watford Citizens sub.	192.00
Sarnia-Dal. Grant	161.02
Capt. G.G. Moncrieff	60.00
Individual Officers' Sub	13.00
Minstrel Alvinston/Inwood	47.15
149 Song Swift/Brown	40.90
Band Concert Petrolea	21.77
Badges Brigden	16.00
Thedford	75.00
Batt. Barber Shop	53.57
Sundry	30.00
Total	1,583.31

Total receipts **\$7,797.31**

Office expense	994.21
Meals and Board	263.85
Livery	780.80
Telephone	43.22
Transportation	784.53
Express	65.15
Printing & Advertising	1,419.05
Benefits for NCOs	
and men	600.77
Band Expenses	480.42
Cartage	54.42
Medical fees	
Dr. Mulligan	56.00
Roberts' discharge	50.00
Cash in Bank	568.23
Exchange	9.00
Camp Equipment	454.78
Recruiting	588.35
Total	7,797.31

Total expenditures **\$7,797.31**

Band instrument account outstanding \$413.59

Source: GA October 6. 1916. Pg. 8

Mr. J. W. Cahill supplied a covering letter about his audit of the Battalion Fund and books to LCol. Bradley and stated that he "[found] the same correct and in accordance with the above statement....Vouchers and cheques were produced for all expenditures, which were duly authorized. He did not audit the "Irene Barron" raffle funds as they did not go into the Battalion funds. He understood the \$3000 Lambton County Council grant had been audited and certified by the Council. The instrument subscription monies as well did not go to the Battalion and he understood \$413.50 was owed. Finally there was \$485.00 still owed for the Battalion badges but he understood a subscription by Petrolia was to pay this bill.

A thorough search finds that only the Watford newspaper published the financial statement with covering letter by Colonel Bradley and it appeared on the back page of the October 6, 1916 issue.

Lieut. Colonel Bradley never wrote a thank you letter directly to the County of Lambton or others. A correspondent unknown copied the Colonel's September 21, 1916 letter to his superiors at MD#1 and passed it to the Guide-Advocate which in turn published it October 6th, 1916 after Bradley had departed. The letter said in part. "All regimental accounts and receipts, as shown therein as well as any other documents pertaining to the expenditures of monies donated by people in the County, are to be placed in the safe keeping of the London Western Trust Company in London, for the perusal of any of the donors."

Bradley went on to say, "Too much cannot be said regarding the ready and willing response made to our urgent appeal for the funds necessary to recruit and raise a battalion of infantry in Lambton County when the available numbers had been apparently depleted by exertions of battalions previously authorized."

Bradley concluded his September 21st letter saying, "On behalf of the officers and men of the battalion we wish to sincerely thank every one who has assisted in any way. Owing to the lack of sufficient time, and the number of people involved we would be pleased if our kind friends will consider this intimation as warmly or as personally as if it was directed to them." (GA October 6, 1916).

The persistent rumours about Colonel Bradley leaving came to an end September 24. The London Free Press reported:

Lieutenant-Colonel T.P. Bradley... announced today his decision of giving up command of his unit in order to enter again the medical branch of the service in which he feels he can be of greater immediate service. Col. Bradley's decision has been reached owing to his expectation that the 149th Battalion will spend the winter in Canada and the practical certainty that on reaching England it will be broken up for drafts. Col. Bradley applied for his transfer some weeks ago and expects to leave for

overseas in about three weeks' time. He will hold the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel in the A.M.C. Capt. Trainor, adjutant of the battalion today, spoke of the regret which the officers of the battalion feel in losing Col. Bradley. Credit for the organization in a large measure was given to Col. Bradley (LFP September 27, 1916)

As Colonel Bradley submitted his resignation there were Lambtons back in Sarnia for the annual fall fair. The London Free Press reported that the bombing officer Lt. Robert Lott and 30 men went back to show what a bombing section did in trench warfare (LFP September 28, 1916). Lt. Lott and his section had done this at the Toronto Exhibition earlier in the month.

Capt. Williams had been into Sarnia as well on a recruiting effort. He wrote a short note to Madeline:

*Camp Borden 25-9-16
Mrs W.A. Williams
Alliston, Ontario*

*Dear Madeline,
I take the pleasure of writing you a few lines. This is a very chilly evening and we are all in the tent with our oil stove working full blast also the lantern supplying some light. Well Madeline I got home O.K. and the boys were all fixed up for bed. The trip home was enjoyable as I was warm and had company. The boys were all sober on the train showing the closing of the bar does some good. It is now 8:40 and all are getting ready for bed as we will have no sleep tomorrow night. By orders our company takes 2nd line at 9, and then 1st line 3 until 9 A.M. We sure will have some excitement.*

[rest of the letter is missing]
(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/september-1916.html>)

Probably September 27 note from Capt. Williams:

Well Madeline we are going back to winter quarters and will perhaps march part of the way maybe to Toronto. This will be a hard one on all. Col. Bradley has resigned at last and no one knows who will be next. 1 Now the boys will go home next Thursday and I expect to get away this time.

His note finished with personal information.

The last duty Colonel Bradley had with the 149th was to stand in front of the formed battalion for the group picture taken at Camp Borden on September 29. The picture shows a much smaller battalion than the one which marched at Carling Heights in June. A close look at the photograph shows a strange angle of the shadows which suggests that the companies shown were formed at different times of the day and then photographic magic brought them together.

Some may have had hurting arms as the new medical officer, Captain Harry Mitchell of Port Arthur, Ontario, had a vaccination parade that day to finish what he started September 14 with the first of the TAB vaccination. His second parade was September 22. This was the third and final for those brought together for the regimental picture with Colonel Bradley September 29. The file on Harry Knight Mitchell has him appointed MO and Honorary Captain 6.10.16 and shown as such with DO 258 of 30.10.16. Later DO 264 of 8.11.16 has him appointed MO with effect from 13.9.16. Major W. Macvicar signed off on his Family Particulars October 3, 1916. Capt. Mitchell was found fit to serve in the CEF by Captain W.N. McCormick October 12, 1916. (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6254-S011>)

Camp Borden was a very hectic place now with the battalions going overseas identified and packing. However, the timings and how they were leaving were changing day by day, if not by hour. The plans were to have those heading to Toronto to do a four-day route march. To ease the complications the four battalions of MD#1 which were wintering were to have their monthly four day leave begin Thursday October 5 (LFP September 30, 1916).

This gave Major Macvicar an opportunity to show new attentiveness to his duties. The acting officer commanding arranged with the GTR for reduced rates for a special train to return all the 149th to Lambton county. The London Free Press reported, "The Grand Trunk Railway is running a special train out of Camp Borden tomorrow morning at 7.55 o'clock carrying the 149th Battalion on month-end leave to Sarnia." (LFP October 4, 1916).

With that arrangement the battalion contrived a furlough for six days, beginning October 5 and concluding by reveille October 11.

OCTOBER

Back in London the District administration details continued. The Tales Tersely Told had, "all units in London will be grouped under the orders of No. 1 Infantry Training Brigade staff for the purpose of camp duties." (LFP October 4, 1916). The wintering battalions could not escape a rotation of camp duties nor excused from such.

The few accounts about Thanksgiving October 8 in the local papers suggest Lambton families were happy to have the boys back. And they behaved themselves as the Police Court did not list any soldiers.

However, the return to Camp Borden was not without incident. There was a shooting and it brought a Court of Inquiry into what happened. The C of I met October 11 at the 149th HQ at Camp Board as called by Major Macvicar. The surname of Pte. Carrothers was misspelled as Carruthers and it is an example of the battalion's administration. The personal file of 845274 Scott, William George contains the only copy of the C of I conducted about his wounding.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B8740-S019>)

Pte. Wm. G. Scott duly sworn stated:

I am a member of the No. 10 Platoon of "C" Company. I was returning on Tuesday afternoon, on the 149th Battalion special from Sarnia, after six days leave with the Battalion. I was sitting in the smoking compartment of the second coach with Pte. Leonard Carruthers. We were sitting opposite each other and there was no one else in the compartment. Carruthers and I are in the same platoon and sleep in the same tent. Carruthers had brought some peaches, apples and maple sugar from home and he had been half lying down in the seat and he sat up and drew a revolver. I should judge a Twenty-Two Calibre. Carruthers was handling the revolver and so it was pointing in my direction so I told him to look out. I meant that he should not let anyone see that he had the revolver and also that it might be loaded.

The revolver then went off and the bullet entered just above the right knee and slightly on the inside. This occurred about 5.30 p.m. I should say, the lights had just been lit. I then let down my trousers and found the mark of the bullet which was not bleeding. I then put on the wound the inside of a clean envelope and tied Carruthers' handkerchief around my leg.

Carruthers said he felt badly about it and not to say anything about it. When we arrived at Allendale I told Corp. Sissons. On arrival at Camp Borden Corp. Sisson took me to Capt. McCormick who examined the wound. I was then sent to the Camp Borden Field Hospital. Carruthers and I had never at any time had any words. We were good friends. In my opinion the accident was entirely due to carelessness on Carruthers' part.

Signed Pte Wm. G. Scott

Scott went to the Base Hospital in Toronto and he remained there until January 10, 1917. He rejoined the Lambtons at Queens Park.

In his sworn statement Pte. Carruthers confirmed what happened:

I had in my pocket a .22 Calibre Revolver which I had bought from Pte Breaton of "C" Company the morning I left on leave, to practice target shooting as I never had any practice....I went to lie down but the revolver made me uncomfortable to lie on and I sat up drawing the revolver from my pocket. I noticed the shells were in the cylinder yet from the target shooting I had done that morning (note: the hammer had to be cocked to remove spent casings). I rested it upon my knee to remove them and Scott warned me to be careful. I raised the hammer and it slipped from beneath my thumb and exploded a cartridge, the bullet entering Scott's leg....I believed all the cartridges were fired.

Carrothers said when the three 142nd men came into the coach he told them he wanted to throw the revolver away or give it away, One of the men took it.

Captain McCormick the acting MO of the 149th gave a statement,

I consider the bullet to be located in...muscle. I ordered him to the Field Hospital from

which he is being sent to the Base Hospital, Toronto for an X-ray Examination. Pte Scott gave me the impression that the wound was due to a small revolver accidentally discharged in the hands of another party.

Dr. C E Martin stated as well, the evidence pointed to being a bullet wound. Patient was in good condition and sober. Corporal Sisson confirmed that Pte Scott came to him and told him Carrothers had shot him. As well Carrothers was now in No. 12 Platoon. Pte Breaton was questioned and he said he sold the revolver to Carrothers on the morning of Thursday October 5 and that it was not a self-cocker. Breaton said he bought the revolver from a civilian in Alliston Monday October 2 and he sold it to Pte Carrothers October 5.

The Board having heard the evidence declared:

“...that the shooting was in sense not deliberate but was accidental; that it was due to the carelessness of Pte Leonard Carruthers...no one other than Pte Scott and Pte Carruthers heard the shot.”

The C. of I. was ‘respectfully’ reported and signed by the three officers and handed to Major McVicar. That was where the incident ended.

There is no record what the morning roll call for the 149th revealed October 11. The fact that the men had up to six days leave and then the Watford Fall Fair running October 10 and 11 would give the men a self-decided tendency to return late. Again, there was rumour circulating that the 168th Battalion, scheduled to go overseas would have to step-aside because over three hundred men did not make the roll call October 10 (LA October 11, 1916).

It was settled for the 149th they would be going to Queen’s Park for the winter. Colonel Shannon said the move would be October 16 (LA October 11, 1916).

The 149th were short of men as well. In many cases the folks back home knew exactly where they were and there was no collaboration on where they were with the authorities. Alvin Thomson of the 149th went AWL September 21. The London Advertiser told the authorities exactly where he was because he was in Sarnia searching for his wife who deserted him (LA October 11, 1916). Thomson did not re-appear until December 27, 1916.

(<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B9622-S006>)

There was a steady stream of administrative matters to be looked after October 10th. Sgt. James Stuart was in to have his wife Ada’s and his four girls’ address in Derbyshire UK changed to Blackpool.

<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B9395-S006>

There was the usual orderly room routine reflected, such as for 844815 McGibbon, Alex who returned to Borden only to find that he was MU as of October 11, 1916 as indicated by DO 242 of 10.10.16.

<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6833-S037>

Yet again there was miscommunication and for a while he was listed as a deserter. There was an AWL recoded for 844815 McGibbon 11 10. 16
<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6833-S037>

The administration items continued crossing Orderly Room desks. Months after his attestation 844076 Bayes, Frank was found MU and discharged October 12.
844431 French, Alex of Muncey was discharged October 12 as he had TB.
845312 Seeley, Ernest was MU October 12.
844861 McFee, Angus was discharged as overage October 12, 1916.
844025 Austin, George was MU and discharged October 12, 1916.
The numbers on paper and those actually at Camp were not adding up.

After a busy day October 12 Lt William Williams wrote his wife Madeline:

*Camp Borden
12 October 1916
9:45pm
Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona, Ontario*

Dear Madeline,

Yours to hand. Glad you are well and contented. Am well and tired tonight. Have been out all day on manoeuvres on parade and attack. The day has been warm and tonight is warm and cloudy threatening rain. The dust is settled and the camp in ideal for training.

Well Dear your prayers have been answered. The 149 leaves for London October 16th for winter quarters. The boys are all glad to get away from here. The nights have been awful cold and they hate this place especially after just coming home from their visit to Lambton

Now you will surely be pleased over this, only for how long will be the next worry. Well I hope until spring and I believe it will be as we will no doubt recruit up to strength. Advance party of 1 officer and 25 men will leave Saturday. The Bn will leave Monday and 1 officer and 50 men will stay behind and clean up for a day or so. We will be quartered in Queens Park. This is out in today's orders. Madeline if you pray as sincerely and earnestly in the future as you have in the past, I may never have to go overseas. Please keep this in mind. How will Lida like to hear of the boys staying. This is my last page and will tell you to get ready for London as you can come down anytime. I hope you go to Mrs Nevilles or Mrs Hawkins - prefer Mrs Hawkins. Will write you soon as get to London also try Sunday if possible not packed up. Mrs Anderson was here today 157 rec'd colours. All Alliston were down I believe. Record

no pay as yet will send some soon as get it maybe Sunday. Be sure and bring my duds when you go to London. Well Dear I'll close and wish you the happiest yet and hope to get letter Saturday.

GoodBye

*Your loving husband, Will
Remember me to all.*

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/october-1916.html>)

What Williams said in his letter did occur except getting to full strength. The bulk of the battalion moved to London by rail October 16. The battalion located in the Western Fair Grandstands and would be joined by the 118th battalion in the buildings nearby. Renovations were still under way and would cost \$15,000 when finished.

(The Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada 1917 v. 2 40 iii).

CHAPTER SIX

WINTER QUARTERS – THE LAMBTONS IN LONDON TOWN

The district had overall responsibility for the wintering of all CEF at London but through a memorandum October 17 outlined what was expected of the OC of the Lambtons Own:

The O.C. the 149th O/s Battalion as Senior Officer Winter Mobilization Camp Queen's Park, London is responsible for discipline of the camp, fire protection, fire drill, quarter-guard, picquets, and all matters affecting the camp as a whole are under his supervision. (Lochead Fonds <https://www.archeion.ca/lochead-fonds>)

This meant the 149th had extra duties that could be assigned outside of training. A District memorandum October 4 indicated all the units in London would be grouped under the orders of No. 1 Infantry Training Brigade staff for the purpose of camp duties (LFP October 4, 1916).

As the Lambtons settled into their new quarters men who had disappeared began to show. The London Police Court for October 17 listed five Walpole Island men, Wilfred Lallen [Lalleen], Isaac Sampson, Silas Showay, Peter Kiosk and Samuel Shipman before Magistrate Judd on the charge of being AWL as presented by Sergt-Major Woodward [Woodrow] of the battalion who stated the men had failed to report for duty since their last leave. Magistrate Judd told them they faced two years in prison. He asked each in turn their reason for being AWL. Shipman said his father was sick. Showay had rheumatism. Kiosk was sick and could not get back. Sampson said, "Well, I couldn't stand the sand up at Camp Borden. It got in my eyes and nose and mouth, so I quit, but I will go back now." Lallen [Lalleen] stated he stayed home to help his father in the harvest but he could not explain why he extended his leave.

Magistrate Judd extracted a promise from each that he would return to the 149th and obey explicitly all orders. He allowed all to go under escort on suspended sentence. Bail was granted in the sum of \$100 each. Their own recognizance being accepted. (LA October 17, 1916).

Two more Walpole men appeared before Magistrate Judd the next morning. Bruce Day and Byron Nahdee were charged as being AWL. Captain Moncrieff spoke on behalf of the two and said they understood that being wards of the Government they could leave the CEF at any time they chose. Magistrate Judd gave them a severe lecture, telling them if they if they did behave they would be given a two year sentence in prison. They too were given suspended sentences with \$100 bail for each and returned to the battalion. (LFP October 18, 1916).

That afternoon Major Macvicar led the battalion on a march down the streets of London with the brass and bugle bands at its head. It was reported "the unit presented a fine appearance and the citizens of the city commented enthusiastically of the men. Major McVicar [Macvicar] is in charge pending the opportunity of an officer to take on the command (LA October 20, 1916).

The next day the Camp Borden Orders made matters clear as it was announced that the units at London would stay for an extended period (LFP October 21, 1916). The orders also had Lt. Vernon Kingsmill attached to the 149th.

The Watford paper the same day reported on the battalion being in winter quarters. Major McVicar as O.C. said he was "greatly pleased with the training and thinks it possible that they may be warned for overseas shortly." (GA October 20, 1916). Presumably being ready to go was inducement for men to remain with the battalion and those who had deserted were offered amnesty from desertion charges. Training was the responsibility of the Training Brigade and the responsibility laid on the 149th for camp discipline went ahead until they received the 'warning'. It proved to be late in coming.

The 149th Band under the leadership of Sgt. Hodder was stepping into its role of the garrison band, doing military funerals, special occasions for patriotic groups and church services. The first of such was the homecoming of 26 returned soldiers. The group arrived October 20 at 4.30 a.m. and remained in their coach until 8 a.m. when they were met by a motorcade of autos. They were loaded on these and with the 149th Band in front they were led to City Hall where the Salvation Army provided breakfast. There would more of the same over the next weeks. (LFP October 20, 1916).

The Band did duty nearly every Sunday as the men remaining at Queens Park marched to the respective Protestant and Catholic church services. The Saturday papers recorded where the men would be.

The Engineers, the 118th and 149th battalions, No. 1 Special Service Company and Ambulance Training Depot marched to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church where the service was conducted by Rev. Dr. McGregor and Capt. J. M. McGillivray, chaplain of the 149th. The Roman Catholic soldiers paraded to St. Mary's Church (LA October 21, 1916).

Church services once a week could not handle the moral issues of the men. There were growing concern about the discipline of the wintering troops. Mindful of the summer troubles L. Col. Brown as AAG issued a circular letter reminding the commanding officers of battalions to make a careful selection of their military police. The district provost martial Major Baron Osborne would make visits. Major Macvicar was forewarned. (LFP October 24, 1916).

His officers like the officers of the other wintering battalions considered what was necessary to divert the men from alcohol and women of suspect morals. Plans were underway for sports leagues and the 118th took the lead but the 149th were to be equally involved. The officers knew they were on stand down for overseas. They knew there had to be 'clean' activities for the men.

The London Advertiser broke the news to the public:

The men have definitely settled down for the winter....[the troops at London including the 149th] now know that they are not going overseas in the immediate future, the unsettling effect of constantly expecting a sudden order to pack up has been eliminated. They have accepted this in the proper spirit and appear to be, one and all, determined to bring themselves [the Lambtons] to the highest point of efficiency of any battalion so far raised in the district. (LA October 25, 1916).

The men did not have to go far for drill and physical training as there was enough open space at the Grandstands. The trench fighting school was situated in the centre of the raceway ring. The boys also knew how easy it was to walk or get a jitney to see the sights of London.

There were men readily involved in clean pursuits with rugby balls. The Advertiser reported "All the rugby football teams [Western U., 149th, 118th and Collegiate Institute] in London are practicing hard in anticipation of some real hard battles in the near future." (LA October 25, 1916).

A conference of officers from the 118th and the 149th on October 25 decided there would be a three-team group including the Western University after the 153rd at St. Thomas and the 186th at Chatham did not reply to the invitation. The group was unsure whether the inactive Sarnia team would participate. However, the 241st at Windsor sought an exhibition game "before the snow flies." The group concluded that a three-team league in London would be the best place given the short season. The officers who attended were Lieut. Knowles, Lieut. McNaughton, and Capt. McGillivray of the 149th, and Lieut. Sommerville and Lieut. Mowat of the 118th Battalion (LFP October 26, 1916).

The County had stories coming back, mainly of discharges. The Watford paper reprinted the Topic October 18 the discharge story of John Nichol from Wyoming. He was determined to be overage September 29 yet remained with the battalion until he handed over his kit October 12 after DO 242 of 10.10.16 released him. He returned home and it was published he was overage for overseas and that he was signing on to the overseas Railway Construction battalion at Chatham. That was the news October 27. John was there January 1 and rejected as medically unfit but he received a new number and years later it was shown he had been there until February 14, 1917. Such were the men the 149th battalion orderly room was dealing with (GA October 27, 1916). His discharges say his character was good. The 149th had any number of these men while the younger ones could not be retained.

The same paper listed the death of James Codling at a Petrolia oil refinery engine house October 18. His only child Pte. William Codling of the Lambtons went home for the funeral (GA October 27, 1916).

Training of a sort was going on as the weather dictated but substitutions were being made. Church parade was the routine every Sunday. The Protestants were to attend First Presbyterian Church Sunday October 29 (LFP October 27, 1916).

A boxing exhibition by the 118th by Corporal C. Wildfang and Pte. G. Deroux caught the attention of few Lambtons (LFP October 28, 1916).

The good news was the rugby schedule was posted. The 149th did not have a senior team but had an intermediate team. The games were to be at Tecumseh Park starting November 1 with the 118th at 149th; November 11 with the 149th at Western U; November 18 with the 149th at 118th; November 21 with Western U at 149th and November 25 with 118th at 149th (LFP October 27, 1916).

The 149th Intermediate Rugby Club had Honorary President – Maj. Macvicar, President-Capt. Moncrieff, Vice-President- Capt. Wykesmith, Secretary-Treasurer Capt. MacGillivray, Manager – Capt. Dunfield, and Executive Committee Major Stewart, Pte. A. McColl, Sergt. Pollard. (LFP October 27. 1916).

Before the first rugby game there was change of time and date. It was rescheduled to October 31 because “both battalions are in for a long route march that day [Wednesday] the footballers thought it best to start the grid iron hostilities on the day before.” Capt. MacGillivray said the game would start at 3.15 p.m. (LFP October 30, 1916).

The Advertiser carried other news about the garrison. There were 15 new recruits the previous week and only one of these was for the 149th. M. Muznick disappeared between his physical and the signing of his papers. The soldiers would also want to see the picture show starting November 6th at the Lyric. It was the “Battle of the Somme” as seen through the camera lens. Seats were 25 cents with a 2 cent war tax (LA October 30, 1916).

The Advertiser posted the transfer of officers and men. The October 30 Advertiser had the formal transfer of Lt. Harry Mitchell from the active militia to the 149th as Captain and medical officer to the 149th (LA October 30, 1916). Mitchell came to the AMC depot of MD#1 August 2 and attached to the Lambtons September 13, 1916 according to DO 264 of 8.11.16.

The Training Brigade at London announced two new courses to improve the infantry battalions’ readiness for overseas. There was Trench Warfare and Bombing School requiring one officer, two NCOs and eight men from the 149th for the latter set for Queens Park (October 30, 1916).

Major Kenneth Mackenzie who commanded A Coy was now recovered from his hernia operation and decided to officially join the CEF. He was fit for overseas October 30 at London.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6978-S027>)

A glowing report appeared in the Advertiser:

Major McVicar [Macvicar], who is in command of the unit pending the appointment of a new commanding officer, speaks enthusiastically of the discipline and spirit of the

Lambtons. On the arrival of the battalion in London, all the N.C.O.'s and those men whose crime sheets are clear were at once given permanent passes, with the result that practically everyone comes and goes at his own discretion. This is a practice only possible in a unit the members of which are considered worthy of trust.

The Advertiser continued:

In spite of the disappointment of not getting overseas the men are...determined that if their own efforts will do it they will be the next to receive orders to prepare for the long trip. A spirit of "work together" permeates the whole unit from the commanding officer down, and it will soon produce results (LA October 31, 1916).

In a well-timed move the big rugby game between the two battalions was moved to Tuesday October 31. There was every opportunity taken to make a great day as the military bands of both units marched their men from Queens Park to Tecumseh Park on the Thames River. (LFP October 31, 1916) There was enough excitement with it being Hallowe'en.

The Battalion officers were looking forward as well to actual winter and icing a hockey team under the O.H.A. within the Northern League. The nearby Jubilee Rink was best for Friday and Saturday nights. The club and rooters were formalized with Honorary President – Maj. Stewart, President – Capt. Merrison, Vice-President Lieut. Cheyne, Secretary-Treasurer – Capt. McGillivray, Manager – Capt. Smyth with the executive committee – Pte. Cameron, Sergt. Phillips, Pte. Sanford.

The game between the two battalions is best told by the Advertiser sports writer:

*Lambton Soldier Boys Get First Rugby Game
Best 118th Pigskin Chasers 6 to 0 in First Game of
Intermediate O.R.F.U. Series*

"Punk" Pollard Stars

The 149th Battalion (Lambton's Own) came into its own in the football world over at Tecumseh Park ...when the lads that hail from Petrolea, Sarnia and vicinity took the first game of the intermediate O.F.R.U. series from the 118th Waterloo Battalion fourteen by a score of 6 to 0. Both battalions were out in force and rooted hard for a victory. People who live in the vicinity of Tecumseh Park thought that the Ottawa ball club was playing in the old lot and that Cy Reidy and Company, of immortal fame, were on the job clouting them out for the noise was terrific. The 118th band was present and livened things up.

First Game for Many

Considering that it was the first game of the season and that many of the players were enjoying the sensation of playing their first game, the boys put up a fine exhibition. Some good runs were torn off occasionally, but for the most part the teams rolled on two bucks and a kick to get them down the field.

Same Old "Puck"

Sergt. Pollard, former star of the Petrolea "Hard Oil" squad, showed that he was still the same old "Puck," and belled his name, for his exhibition was anything but punk. As long as he was in the game, it was all Lambton, and when he had to retire early in the second quarter his loss was keenly felt. The back of his neck was severely strained in a tackle, but he will be all right for the next game.

Experience Won

It was the old story of experience winning. The 149th backs, especially Stokes and Knowles have played the game for many moons and kept things moving their way. "Sissy" Sissons was good and a tower of strength on the Lambton line. He was generally on the bottom of the opposition bucks. Higgins played a grand game until he was laid out and deserves a lot of credit for his game showing, while Hollingshead showed up well as a punter. Stokes and Knowles both played a star game for the Lambton gang. The former pulled off some classy runs, especially towards the close of the game. He and Knowles have played together on the Sarnia team, and did some fine combination work that gained many yards.

118th Not Out Classed

However, this Kitchener team was not outclassed by any means. The boys from Waterloo took their defeat gracefully and will give the 149th an awful run for their money in the return game. At the beginning of the struggle they were clearly outclassed, but picked up the game wonderfully as the exhibition progressed, and were a much better team at the close than at the start. The 118th have a powerful line, and were strong on the tandem bucks that made Petrolea famous some years ago. McKenzie in the scrimmage looks like the class of the 118th. He played a consistent game and when he hit the line it generally was seen to waver. Eccles at flying wing is fast and got away several times for big gains. Boettger played a heady game until he too was laid away with the cripples. Trotter takes his time and punts high and far. The outside wings on both teams showed that the managers knew what they were about when they picked them out as good tacklers. It was a crime the way some of the boys were laid low.

Sissons Carries Ball

Pollard made himself strong with the crowd by his long gains through the lines at the beginning of the game. The fact was that he was worked too frequently. He and Sissons were the only Lambton boys to handle the ball to any extent in the first quarter. Hollingshead gave the Lambtons rooters club a chance to cheer when he kicked for a rouge in the quarter. Lambton was now tearing big holes in the 118th line, and it was not long until Pollard forced his way over for a touchdown. Hollingshead converted and this ended the scoring for the game.

Pollard Laid Out

Shortly after the second quarter started, Pollard was laid out, McRichie taking his place, Stokes pulled a clever bit of work when he grabbed a perfect onside kick and carried it to the Waterloo 10 yard line. Here it was lost on interference, which

played a prominent part in the game. Williams got five yards through the centre, when the ball went back to the 149th for interference. It was politely handed back again, and Eccles gave the 118th something to cheer over when he ambled along for a 25 yard run. Frahlich was doing some great tackling at this time. The teams were battling desperately as half time was called.

118th Start With Rush

In the third period the 118th started off with a rush, and played the Lambton crew off its feet for a few minutes. Boettger gained ground on two end runs and the line helped out with several bucks. Frahlich stole the ball and Wilson tried out his famous humpty-dumpty play. "Hump" couldn't have been working well for the 149th was chased back ten yards in the mix-up. The ball was kept in Lambton territory for the remainder of the quarter.

This Was Some Buck

In the last spasm, all 28 men took part in one huge buck, the Waterloo boy pushing the 149th back for seven or eight yards. It pleased the 118th part of the stands. Wilson then blocked a kick and secured the ball. From then on it was pretty much Lambton. The Kitchener gang tried hard and managed to chase the pigskin down to middle field on several occasions, but could not get past the ever watchful pair, Stokes and Knowles. Smith of the 149th, who received a cracked rib in the third quarter, insisted on continuing the game, although the rib was beginning to give him a lot of trouble. Higgins was hurt and Scott took his place. Boettger was also hurt and Mowat filled in for him. The 149th now took a new lease on life, and with the material aid of Mr. Stokes pushed ahead until the 10 yard line was reached. Five yards were made on the first down, but Mr. McKenzie and his friends were always in the way and the ball went to the Kitchener mob. Time was called with the 118th in possession on its own line. Art Smith and "Tiny" Sage handled the game satisfactorily.

The LAMBTONS OWN November 1916 team were:

Lt. Stokes, Forward, Lt. Knowles, Halfback, Pte. Hollingshead, Halfback, Sgt. Higgins, Halfback, Pte. Wilson, Quarterback, Pte. Thompson, Back, Pte. F. Smith, Back, Pte. Sinclair, Back, Cpl. Smith, Inner, Sgt. Pollard, Inner, Cpl. Sissons, Middle, Cpl. Frahlich, Middle, Pte. Sandford, Outer, and Pte. Gilchrist, Inner.

The first game was brutal. The players and the fans were looking forward to the next game.

The Advertiser writer spoke to Gordon Smith after the game about his boxing prospects. The Lambtons were turning heads towards boxing and its 'fine scrappers';

Smith fights at 155 and trimmed some of the best boys in Montreal last winter." Smith was described as well-built. When asked he replied, "I will not be in shape to fight for a month anyway." He cracked a rib in the game that afternoon. I have been turning out with the football team and got used up pretty well. We have some good fighters in our battalion and believe me will make some of the 118th boys step if we can ever

catch them in the ring. Pte. Sanford weighs in at 160 pounds and I would like to see him take on one of the Kitchener gang. Take it from me Sanford is a fast one. There are others in the battalion who have had ring experience and they may be induced to come out. We should have a good winter's sport (LA November 1, 1916).

Military training went on. No doubt good results occurred November 1. LCol. John Cohoe commanded a joint route march of the 118th and the 149th, going east from Queens Park on Dundas to the Asylum sideroad, east of the fourth concession to the town line between West Nissouri and London township, south through Crumlin to the centre line, west on the centre line to Hale street, north to Dundas and west to the camp. The troops had their mid-day meal just north of Crumlin. (LFP October 31, 1916)

Besides the news printing of the rugby success of the Lambtons the men welcomed the news of their month-end leave. The unit was leaving November 2 and returning Monday November 6 at midnight. Their transport was on an arranged Grand Trunk special train back to the County (LFP November 1, 1916).

Major Macvicar did not know for certainty who was to assume command of the Lambtons. He did know Friday November 3. LCol. Bickford, the GSO of MD#2 wrote to his counterpart in London:

This battalion has improved enormously of late in camp and in fact should not be delayed any longer in going overseas. They made an excellent impression on a recent inspection. Major W.W. Macvicar, I think, should be appointed to command, Capt. G.G. Moncrieff should be appointed Senior Major. I think these promotions are due to the above named Officers on their record at Camp Borden. (written November 2, 1916 and in LAC files).

It is significant as Colonel Bickford knew the conditions of Borden and while not dismissing the observation by LCol. Campbell on the suitability for command of the two senior officers of the 149th on September 5, 1916 Bickford stood by his assessment on Macvicar and Moncrieff.

Macvicar's promotion was back dated to October 4, 1916 for his lieutenant-colonel in the CEF. Macvicar chafed under the leadership of brevet LCol. Bradley and the situation was untenable. Indeed, even when faced with the suggestion he was not to be the CO and the search on for another, he took the battalion and recuperated it into November and December. Bradley raised the battalion and Macvicar enabled the esprit de corps to rise.

Although the morale seemed high there were men with issues. With Colonel Macvicar now in charge of the battalion changes were expected by the battalion orderly room which consisted of the Adjutant Capt. Henry Trainor, Orderly room Sergeant David Harding, paymaster Capt. Fennell Smyth and his assistant Sergeant William Mckinnon. The 'whispered word' was that deserters and AWL were welcomed back as 'overstayed leave' and not punished.

The orderly room staff were busy November 2 processing the four-day leaves granted against the conduct sheets. Most men would go as it was their due. There were two transfers happening. William Elrick, born in Scotland, living in Sarnia requested a transfer to be with his fellow Scots. He was allowed to transfer to the 241st battalion in Windsor November 2, 1916 (DO 268 of 13.11.16). Another Scot, Albert Dewar as well was off to the 241st as a piper (DO 268 of 13.11.16).

As well there were men who had not appeared after the 21 days grace being AWL. The junior officers handled the mandatory Court of Inquiry and duly found Orme Perkins of Oil Springs, Orma Meredith of Oil Springs, Harry Chappelle of Detroit and Wilfred Lallean of Walpole deserted. These men as well took military kit worth \$30 or more. There was the request by CSM Oliver Dew to revert to Sergeant. From this John Edwards was promoted to CSM that day. The other promotion was Isaac Waldron of Walpole Island to Lance-Corporal. Then Bruce Day showed up from civil detention for desertion and he was marked present on the parade slate. As well there were camp hospital admissions, sometimes not clearly known. The BOR knew that John Jones of Sarnia with tonsillitis had been released and it came to light he had married. The surprise was that Capt. Clarence Browne was in to see Major Macvicar requesting that he be allowed to resign his appointment in the battalion. This was granted for November 3. There was always paperwork and a mystery of an accurate number of effectives in the battalion. All knew that at midnight Monday November 6, after the four days monthly leave, there would be a new list, added to older lists, of men absent. The number of Lambtons reported that very day as 734 effectives was undoubtedly going to be reduced. In the previous week there were no new recruits for the Lambtons. They were bleeding. It would be up to Major Macvicar to stop the flow. (LFP November 2, 1916).

Major Macvicar decided to follow the lead of other units now facing a shortfall of local recruitment and retention. Miss Winnifred Evans, a recognized vocalist in London, was attached to the Band at the daily rate of Lieutenant. She was to sing popular songs and do playlets on a patriotic theme when the Lambton Band had public performances. She was noted as doing Nurse Edith Cavell playlets (FP October 26, 1916). In some manner she became involved with a "Capt." W.E. Hagerman who passed himself in Windsor as a recruiting officer for the 149th. He was not active militia or attested as a CEF officer. The story was brief. Winnifred was at a hotel to meet Hagerman to lodge. Hagerman was arrested by London authorities on behalf of Windsor police on fraud. Later she said Hagerman did not appear and she left. She denied her situation with Hagerman, fled to London and left the 149th Band within the week, her reputation sullied (FP October 26, 1916 and GA November 3, 1916).

In London the District Daily Orders stated that given the experiences of Belgium and France, the commanding officers, senior majors, adjutants and company commanders of the 118th and 149th were to go to St. John Village [Arva] to determine how they would place 800 men for billets. The Advertiser said, "At some later date both units will be sent out and the officers will be required to post their men in front of houses in the manner in which they would place them if they were on active duty." (LA November 2, 1916). The

assumption is those officers required do the staff work went out and scouting the situation. It had to be quick as the 149th had leave.

Training at the District level was assessed as going well but at times it appeared the battalions had scheduling problems. Wednesdays were set as route march days and thus rugby was not to be played. The 118th asked Western to delay their game with them November 7 and have it November 14. The 118th were doing an exhibition game in Kitchener November 4 and large number of the soldiers were expected to be there. Dr. K. Neville of the Western University Association agreed. The immediate effect on the 149th was not known (LFP November 2, 1916).

There were officers no longer enthusiastic with their time in the 149th. Capt. Clarence Browne was one of the early appointments by LCol. Kelly. He achieved his captaincy as active militia and he did his overseas medical September 26. However, he resigned his appointment November 3 and went back to his profession as an undertaker in Alvinston.

The District was efficient. The Monday November 6 Orders had a route march laid on for the 118th and the 149th for Wednesday. The route would be "west on Dundas street to Richmond to Horton to Ridout to the 1st concession. The way will lead over the country roads through Westminster where they will have dinner. The return march will take them to Dundas street and so to the park." (LA November 6, 1916).

Tuesday November 7 was the typical make-up day to get administrative matters out of the way. Moses Wolfe of Kettle Point, Andrew Gilliland of Watford, Thomas Turrill of Croton and Bert Adams of Port Huron, Michigan were missing. Wolfe would return November 18. The commanding officer was in wearing his lieutenant-colonelcy. He authorized Pte. Ed Drinkwater promoted to LCpl., effective that date. The next day had the hospital reports in. David Bennett of Petrolia was to be released from the CEF as MU. Thomas Wilson of Oil City was returned to duty after having synovitis.

November 8 brought a pleasant surprise as one of the Watford Advocate printers, Lori Aylesworth, came to the BOR with his 'fit' medical and he was duly attested. He wrote an impassioned plea in the November 3 paper calling for men to volunteer. He did.

Over at Victoria Hospital Pte. John Young of the 160th Bruce Battalion succumbed of a failed mastoid operation and meningitis, November 7. He was from Essex, England and was a farmer at Chesley, 21 years of age.

On Thursday November 9 the 149th were the camp duty and supplied the escort of his body to the Grand Trunk station for his return the Chesley. The 149th Band played the solemn "Dead March" and proceeded ahead of the coffin mounted on a 63rd Battery gun carriage. The pall bearers were Lambton privates under the direction of a sergeant major. At the station the coffin was placed in a baggage car accompanied by a Lambton sergeant and thus homeward bound.

It is not known if Sergeant Ferdinand Hodder was the Bandmaster when the 149th escorted Young's body to the station. Hodder was granted discharge from the CEF

November 11 through the A.A.G. under 'special case'. He had employment at the Aberdeen Club in Toronto. Sgt. Martin Davies of Watford was appointed Band Sergeant December 1. He had been the Bugle Sergeant.

Back in the county the papers spoke of the men home on their long leave. The Watford newspaper said, "They are all well and happy and anxious to go overseas." It also added an editorial which said, "If some of the street corner and easy chair militarists who talk so glibly about the Allies should do would join the 149th Battalion...they would do more towards helping to bring the war to a close." The numbers were there. The 149th had 734 men. It needed 295 for a war establishment of 1029 (GA November 10, 1916).

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP

The Battalion orderly room knew what they saw at the rough played Saturday rugby game and had the follow up reports of the injured players from the game with Western. The hospital took in Joe Volway for an infected leg on Sunday November 13. He worked out with the footballers but had not played.

The Monday November 13 London Free Press brought the highlights of the Saturday November 11 rugby game held at Tecumseh Park. Here is the story:

*Monday November 13, 1916 London Free Press
Lambton's Own Battle Western Varsity to Tie*

*Intermediate ORFU Game Ends 12 All, Amid a Lot of Fault Finding Among the Players and Referee;
149th Is Lucky to Make Talley, Even in Dying Moments
ORFU Int Standing*

	<i>Tie</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Agst</i>
<i>149th Battalion</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Western Varsity</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>118th Battalion</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Next game</i>	<i>Western Varsity at 118th on Thursday</i>				

Old-time feud days were recalled when the 149th Battalion met Western University on the grid-iron on Saturday afternoon, at Tecumseh Park for the purpose of playing an intermediate ORF game. The contest ended 12 all. The soldiers recruited in Lambton possessed a team through which there is a sprinkling of farmers, Petrolia and Sarnia rugby stars and they necessarily engaged in the game with the same keen rivalry which marked all London and Petrolia or Sarnia games in historic rugby.

Ends Under Protest

The going was a little rough, the sturdy soldiers using a get-one-man after another tactics. One thing was brought to surface during the game and that was the futile arrangement which brings local referees or umpires in as officials. The soldiers registered for long kicks at Referee Smith for his decisions and at one time the players would have taken him off the field forcibly had it not been for their officers. The remainder of the game was played under protest and the final score decided the protest as a play-off will undoubtedly be necessary at the of the schedule should this game have any bearing on the group winners.

Conscientious Decision

One thing can be said about Smith's handling of the game which makes him conscientious since he gives his opinion of the game the way he said it played. A decision which enabled the soldiers to tie up the score in the last moment's play was a hard place to test any official. A 149th ball bounded from one end of the field to the others, a Varsity student fell on the ball across his own line, but by the time the referee got to the scene one of the soldiers held the ball for a touch-down and the other held the Varsity student from the ball. A rouge should have been the actual score as disinterested parties witnessed the whole affair.

Varsity Looks Best

The game was strenuous, to say the least, as Lambton's Own moved about en masse like one of the celebrated "ranks" in actual warfare and the real wonder is why they did not score more points against the lighter lines. Varsity deserves no end of credit for their showing, as they undoubtedly played the better variety of rugby. The soldiers' heavy attack pushed the students for many losses, but the open game as played by the latter was the best to resort to under the circumstances.

Varsity Starts Strong

The 149th got the kickoff and Knowles lost the return on the first down, Kingswood made a pretty catch

of Hollingshead's long punt. Brichender carried the ball for a few yards and passed to Smith, who ran for 20 yards and stokes stumbled, Kingswood's punt, and Goldie Elgie put Varsity well into the 149th territory and only 10 yards to go. Smith tried for a field goal but missed, the ball going to the dead line for a point. The soldiers failed to gain their yards on three bucks and Varsity had the ball on the 15 yard line. Knowles was tackled by Elgie and gave the soldiers their first down on their own 10 yard line.

Sanford tackled Kingswood who did not get far after a fine catch. Art Smith gained on an end shift, gaining 20 yards and was injured. Smith again tried for a field goal, but missed and Knowles was rouged for another single point. Varsity got the ball again when Higgins lost it. Knowles ran out a punt and the soldiers lost the ball on the second down, only 2 yards from their own line. Quarterback Wilson was penalized by Smith for three minutes. He said something nasty. Kingswood carried the ball over with Brechender and Smith behind him, making the score 7 to 0 in favor of Varsity at the end of the quarter.

Soldiers Buck Over

Wilson had hardly started to play in the second period till he was banished for three minutes. He jumped into a scrimmage with his knees. Pollard and Sissons plunged for yards and a team buck put the ball over for a touch. Both trys so far were not converted. A lot of kicks were exchanged and it was remarkable how Varsity managed to stand off their heavier opponents. The soldiers rouged Kingswood just before the period ended with the score 7 to 6.

The third quarter started and Wilson got the kick-off on his own 17 yard line. The soldiers gained on three bucks, but Varsity secured the ball in-mid-field. They were sent back on their bucks.

Nothing Wrong Here

Kingswood caught a ball which was kicked into Stokes' back by Hollingshead and ran over half the length of the field for a touch. It was here where the soldiers objected to Smith's decision and walked off the field, only to be sent back by their officers to continue under protest. The score remained 12 to 6 during the balance of the period.

The last period saw Varsity hold their opponents and pressing the soldiers in their own territory when some fun started near the score line. Knowles caught Kingswood's punt behind the line. He ran out with it and gave it a mighty kick. The ball bounded and went flying at high speed. Kingswood fell on it about one yard over his own line, but by the time the scramble of officials, players and spectators was cleared F. Smith decided the soldier scrummager was on top of the ball, while W. Gilchrist was hugging Kingswood.

Referee Smith gave the touchdown and Wilson converted the try, making the score 12 all. The teams just got started when time was called.

Varsity's players suffered most casualties and Art Smith's place was taken by H. Childs during the last half. Smith's ankle was injured, Pardy was also relieved. Don't get the Smiths confused as there were no less than three in the game and no telling how many among the spectators as the crowd was bigger than the previous Saturday.

The 149th Battalion Band furnished music during the parade to the park. The teams were:

149 th Battalion		Western U
Lieut. Stokes	F.W.	Brickender
Lieut. Knowles	H. B.	Kingswood
Hollingshead	H. B.	Art Smith
Sergt. Higgins	H. B.	Anderson
Pte. Wilson	Q. B.	Reynolds
Pte. Thompson	B.	Ferguson
Pte. Smith	B.	Thompson
Pte. Sinclair	B.	Calvin

Corp. Smith	I.	Loughlin
Sergt. Pollard	I.	McLarty
Corp. Sissons	M.	W. Elgie
Corp. Frahllich	M.	Kaiser
Pte. Sanford	O.	Pardy
Gilchrist	I,	G. Elgie
Referee V. Smith		Umpire W. Dunfield

(LFP November 13, 1916)

The London Advertiser praised the “Plucky” play of “Western” in holding the 149th to a 12-12 tie. Then came the bombshell. Western was withdrawing from the rest of the games. (LA November 13, 1916).

The next week was a distraction for the London soldiers. Training went on along with the routine duties but everyone was talking about what Western did. The 118th was scheduled to play the University boys Tuesday November 14. That was not going to happen unless the University was convinced to play the game. There were claims and counter-claims through the week.

There were the usual demands on the BOR. So far, the boys had been behaving with no Police Court Cases. The medical report on William Elliott November 14 was he had venereal disease, probably contracted in London but perhaps while back in the county for his long leave. That meant he would have medical care and no duties until cured. (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6380-S008>)

Herman Morningstar of Oil Springs was in hospital as well with his rheumatism acting up. (<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B6380-S008>)

The BOR noted November 13 that Walter Dove of Wilkesport Fred Russell of Petrolia were promoted to Lance Corporal. James Riggs of Arkona, who had pneumonia from November 3, was released November 14 from the military hospital.

Five days after the Saturday game both local papers gave considerable coverage to the decision of the Western University Athletic Association to withdraw the team from further play. As the Director of Athletics, Dr. Neville gave the reason:

The 149th Battalion showed the poorest sportsmanship ...I ever witnessed in my life.... Our boys have been taught to play the game properly, and to conduct themselves on the field as gentlemen should. They were withstrained from indulging in dirty tactics and the soldiers grew bolder, secured in the fact that they had several hundred men on the sideline willing to help should a fight occur.

The 118th protested that the withdrawal cast a reflection on their battalion as well.
(LA November 16, 1916).

The response from the 149th was immediate and vicious. Both city newspapers printed two letters from the Lambton Battalion. The 149th Rugby Club defended the “line bucking game” of its soldiers, and questioned the sportsmanship of the University team to pocket the game receipts without providing a similar opportunity for the visiting club

(LA November 17, 1916). The gate receipts for the game totaled \$29.25. The 149th had also sent "Western" a cheque for \$15.00 for rental expense of Tecumseh Park. (LA November 17, 1916 and Garry John Burke, "An Historical Study of Intercollegiate Sports at the University of Western Ontario **Garry John Burke, "An Historical Study of Intercollegiate Athletics at 48 49 50 SI the University of Western Ontario, 1908-1945,"** page 84 in particular)

The masculinity of the of the "Western" players was questioned, and a stinging personal rebuke was directed at Professor Neville: "Does it lie in the mouth of any civilian who has declined his country's call to brand the men in khaki...neither sportsmen nor gentlemen?" With the daily casualty list appearing in the newspapers across Canada, and reports of the terrible loss of life at the Somme, the slur of cowardice must have stung the young professor. No further comment came from University officials.

On November 13 Lt. Arthur Brown of Watford was informed his wife in Saskatchewan with her family had barely survived the complete loss of the family home. He requested his resignation from his appointment. The BOR duly noted this was granted effective November 18 (DO 276 of 22.11.16).

Along with the Daily Orders all the officers warned of the morning lecture by LCol. Brown on the subject "Gas and Gas Precautions" on November 16.

By now there was little in the county papers related to what was happening to the 149th in London. The boys were gone and out of sight. Occasionally a name appeared because the soldier was home. The Watford paper reported on the front page the Petrolia Khaki Club made \$75 at their dance when the 149th boys were home their last leave (GA November 17, 1916). The general impression was one of little concern.

In London, the sports scene was very concerned. The Toronto Globe wrote of the O.F.R.U, military series:

*Soldiers Too Rough to Suit Western
University's Supervisory Board Prevents Yesterday's Game
Players Quite Willing*

London College Team Battered by 149th Lambton So Athletic Directorate Calls off Game With 118th in ORFU. Intermediate Series. (Special Despatch to the Globe London Nov. 19).

Notwithstanding the fact that the players were anxious to remain in the fighting to the finish, Western University team has been compelled by the Supervisory Board and Faculty to withdraw from the ORFU. Intermediate series, and the game scheduled for this afternoon against the 118th Waterloo Battalion was called off. The Supervisory Board took action in regard to the "roughhouse work" practiced by the 149th Lambtons in the battle in which the teams were tied at 12

to 12 on Saturday last. The students were pretty badly beaten up, but were anxious to stay in the Union.

The Supervisory Board, however, have advised this withdrawal and stated that Western University had entered in the belief that the games were intended for sportsmen and gentlemen. The 149th played several men who had contested with London in days of bitter rivalry with their home towns of Petrolea and Sarnia, and this is said to have been responsible for the alleged rough play.

Several students were more or less painfully injured. Capt. McGillivray, Secretary of the 149th Battalion team, expressed regret when he heard that the University had withdrawn, and stated that there were plays on Saturday that were not exactly to his liking.

The 118th and the 149th will play off on Saturday, the winner to meet Sarnia. The latter has an advantage of an earlier victory over the 118th, but the Waterloo men profess confidence in their ability to tie the group up before a final settlement is reached.

Several Toronto boys in the 118th Machine Gun Section, former members of the Capitols in Toronto, are now playing with the 118th.

The following resolution of the Western University Athletic Association was passed by Western University:- Whereas we entered a team under the impression that the game would be for sportsmen and gentlemen, but have found that such is not the case, therefore, be it resolved, that we, in accordance with the powers vested in us by the constitution of the Western University Athletic Association, refuse to permit the football team of the University to engage in any further contests."

(TG November 20, 1916)

This new week affected both the 118th and the 149th morale. The Western decision to withdraw brought the realization that the teams were to confront each other and the win had to be decisive. There was training and duties within the winter camp routine but were not the main thought on the soldiers' minds. The morning London Advertiser reported both teams in the November 21 afternoon rugby game were confident of victory;

The 118th bunch are just sticking out all over with optimism, especially since it was learned that Pollard will not be able to play in the game. "Punk" has been sent home with a bad knee.

His absence will be keenly felt on the Lambton line. However, the rest of the crowd are all in good shape and expect to have no difficulty in putting away the Kitchener outfit.

On the other hand the 118th can see nothing but a victory. "We've got them where we want them and just watch us wade through them tomorrow afternoon" said one of the 118th players last night.

(LA November 21, 1916)

The game was to start at 3.30 o'clock sharp. The boys would march to the park, led by the 118th band.

The game would add to the new-found cockiness of the Lambtons. The Advertiser reported next day the results and the game synopsis. The writer wrote in the style of the era and is shared here:

*118th Rugby Fourteen Trounce Lambton Boys
Kitchener Gang Outclasses 149th Battalion Team in Fast Game at Tecumseh
Park – Boetiger and Scott Star*

The 118th Battalion team has it all over John Willard like a test [obscured] is necessary. Yesterday afternoon over at Tecumseh Park the Kitchener crowd sprang a surprise on Lambton's Own football squad, and trimmed it handily 6-2 in one of the best, if not the best game, of the season. The 149th, however, have an alibi which listens fairly well. The boys from Sarnia and vicinity were without the services of Frank Pollard and Lieut. Knowles. This meant a whole lot to them, as both players play a nice steady game. However, the fact remains that they were among those absent. We predicted last week that the 118th looked to be about 100 per cent stronger than it was in the first game, and the Kitchener crew sure came up to scratch.

Back Division Strong

The back division was good, and showed up much better than the Lambton one. It would be hard to find two better, cleaner players than Boetiger and Trotter. The former made the touchdown that won the game early in the second quarter on a beautiful 11 yard run around the 149th left end. He is a speedy boy, and made a good mate for Trotter. The latter lined up to his name all right. He also out-punted Mammy Stokes and Wilson, especially in the last quarter, when the 118th made many yards on exchanged kicks. Eccles and Nicholls finished off a classy back division, and the 118th can thank the backs for the game. Don't get the idea that the line was asleep though. Not so, Claudia! The Kitchener line took a lot of hard buffeting and gained yards on a number of occasions when the going was good.

Babs a Tower of Strength

Babington was a tower of strength at centre scrum. Bab is not big, but he was one of the most aggressive players on the field, and did a lot of missionary work on the line in the early stages of the play. Tow and Rowe played a great game as outside wings, and managed to halt one Samuel Stokes every time the latter tried to get away. Lieut. Mowat at quarter deserves a lot of credit for the way he has

whipped his team into shape. He played a good clever game, and used the right plays at the right time on his own account. Lieut. McKenzie only played one half, but played a whole game in that time. The 149th made few gains through the centre, while he was on the field. Rennison took Lieut. Somerville's place, and played a cracking game. He is some lad. Wacchi showed himself to be a bird and a line plunger, and was also there with some dandy tackles. He and Williams played an excellent game as did also Sargeant.

149th Great Plungers

For the 149th Fralich, Sissons and Smith did some great line plunging. These boys are among the best at this style of play. The great individual performers of the Lambton team was Scott. He showed himself to be the best tackler on the field and nailed Mr. Boetiger on different occasions when the latter had the ball ticketed for a touch. He and Stokes worked the onside kick frequently for good gains, also offside. As the 149th won from the 118th for the first game of the season, it will be necessary to break the tie. The game will be pulled off on Saturday afternoon and the winner will meet Sarnia in the play-off for the championship of this district of the O.R.F.U.

The Game by Plays

The 118th kicked off to Wilson who made ten yards before being downed. The Lambton team lost the ball for interference, and the 118th handed it back on the next down. Hollingshead punted to Kitchener ten yard line. 118th monkeyed with the ball for two downs, and 149th broke through, and nailed Trotter behind the for the first point of the game. The Lambton crew tried hard to follow up their advantage, but Boetiger spoiled the fun for them by making a nice 26 yard run. 118th tried two bucks without gaining, and gained a third down to Wilson, who was downed by Tow. Hollingshead punted to Boetiger. Who ran the ball back fifteen yards on the second down. Wacchi made six yards through the scrum. Kitchener gang tried desperately for the touch but could not make the grade.

At Quarter Time

Quarter time found the ball on 149th five-yard line. Babbington went over the line, but the ball was given up to 149th, who punted on the first down to Boetiger. It was then that 'Babs' made his thrilling run for a touchdown which was not converted. The 149th supporters called for more hard oil, and the Petrolea gang did its best to respond. However, the 118th were confident of victory, and stubbornly contested every foot of ground. Scott grabbed an onside kick for ten yards. Sissons bucked for five and the 149th drew near the 118th line. Scott was called back for an offside on Sisson's onside kick.

Trotters Great Rush

Trotter put his team out of danger by a pretty 25 yard dash. Stokes received the punt on the next down, and was laid low in his tracks. McKenzie broke through and grabbed Sammy before he could pass the ball on the first down much to Samuel's disgust. On the next down the line broke through again and grabbed

the Higgins The 118th worked the ball up to within twenty yards of the Kitchener line where Trotter tried another kick which he flipped into his own line. Sanford grabbed the ball but was tackled before he could get away. Halftime was called shortly after leaving the score 6-1 in favour of the 118th.

Lambtons Start Strong

The 149th started strong for the second half, and kept pegging away. Sissons and Smith both got in some excellent work, and bucked for yards several times. Sargeant relieved matters for the 118th by intercepting an onside kick. However, the 149th came on again and a few minutes later Wilson tried for a drop, which he missed. Trotter was forced to rouge. Mr. Scott was prominent at this stage of the festivities, and was the candy kid when it came to onside kicks he and Stokes worked the play to death at the lines. On an exchange of kicks Nichol fell on a fumbled ball on the 149th 45 yard line and from then on the 118th line was in no danger. Eccles brought down Higgins with a bump and the 149th kicked on the first down. The Lambton boys punted every time they got the pigskin in the vain hope that Trotter or Boetiger would muck the ball. Trotter beat them at the kicking game as time and again he out punted the Lambton backs. The game ended with the 118th boys on the heavy end of a 6-2 score. (LA November 22, 1916)

The two garrison battalions were now attracting a lot of press. The dust-up with the young gentlemen with Western added to a sense of place for the soldiers in London, away from home. It seemed the sports-minded in London and vicinity were looking for good solid games and the two battalions were ready to offer:

Enthusiasm Running High Among Soldiers – Both Battalions Are Confident of Winning Out Lieut. Somerville To Play

The 118th and 149th Battalions football teams are both in good shape, after their strenuous Tuesday afternoon, and will be in fine fettle for the deciding game of the intermediate O.R.F.U. series, to be played at Tecumseh Park Saturday afternoon. The game promises to be the fastest of the season, and enthusiasm among the soldiers at Queen's Park is running high. The 149th crowd, although handsomely walloped in the last game, claim that it was a mistake on the 118th's part, and that the Kitchener team could repeat in a hundred years. The Hard Oil supporters are willing to bet cold hard cash on Saturday's game and as quickly as the filthy lucre appears it is covered by a Kitchener man.

To Attend in a Body

Both Battalions will attend in a body, and practically every member of the headquarters staff will be in attendance. Lieut. Somerville, who was not able to participate in Tuesday's game, will be in the wing line for the Kitchener crew, and will add a whole lot of weight to an already heavy line. The rival team held a light workout yesterday, and no stone is being left unturned by either team to ring up a win. The 118th fourteen to a man are confident that they can repeat Thursday's

dose while the 149th men grin, and ask if they “remember the Maine”, alias the first game of the season when the 118th were treated to a 6 to 0 defeat. Take it from us, there will be a swell game at the old ballyard across the river Saturday and the team that wins will ascertain and otherwise find out that it has been in a real game of the fall spent before the final whistle toots. (LA November 24, 1916)

The London Advertiser followed the teams and reported. Perhaps the Lambtons bought up a bundle of copies because in their short history not much had gone into print about them.

*149th Strengthened For Saturday's Game
Pollard, Knowles and Harding to Play 118th Team Confident*

The 149th rugby team is out to win Saturday's game with the 118th boys. Pollard, who captains the Lambton boys, will be out in uniform again, as will Lieut. Bill Knowles. These men were sadly missed in the game against the 118th Tuesday. In which the hard - oil boys were trimmed 6-2. Dave Harding of the 149th, who has been in Toronto and who played with the team at Camp Borden, will be pressed into the fray and there is a chance that he will work out at quarterback. Dave is a handy man on either line or back division, and it is claimed by the team from the west that with the three above mentioned men in the line-up the boys will just about wade through for a victory. A workout was held in the rain at Queen's Park yesterday and the boys showed lots of pep.

*118th Not Out
The 118th did not turn out, but will hold a workout today, rain or shine. The Kitchener lads are confident that they can lick anything the rugby line in this part of the country, and are not worrying about the result of Saturday's contest. Lieut. Rice, who officiated in Tuesday's game, will be on hand, and it is likely that an out-of-town official will act as referee. The crowd will be kept back in the stands and no one except club officials will be allowed on the side-lines. The game is scheduled to start at 3 o' clock, and both battalions will attend in a body. (LA November 25, 1916).*

The London Advertiser in the Saturday November 25 morning edition said the rugby meet of the 118th and the 149th was to be a hummer. There was a little blanket of snow on Tecumseh Park and it might have a bearing on the game;

The teams are on edge. There has been a lot of faithful drilling during the past few days, and the weak spots have been made strong. The 149th lads are out to win. The boys of the battalion know what Lambton mud is like, and the rougher the going the better they are. With Pollard and a couple more on the line, they figure that they have better than an even chance to cop the game and the honors. (LA November 25, 1916).

Due to injuries Thomas, Sanderson and Sinclair were Scrum, Scott was an Outer. Spares were McRitchie, Neeland, Minton, McColl and J. F. Fraser.

The game went on as planned despite the field covered in snow. The Advertiser commented:

*Lambton Gang Polishes Off Kitchener Crew 10-1 in Hard-Fought Game
The 149th wiped out the lead taken by the 118th Battalion some days ago, and won the local group of the Intermediate O.R.F.U.*

On Saturday afternoon at Tecumseh Park. The Lambton boys won the game 10 to 1. There was a great crowd considering the weather which was ideal for hockey. The winner will meet Sarnia in the next round when the soldier boys from Lambton meet the gang from their own balliwick there will be something stirring most of the afternoon. The game was a good one, under conditions that were far from ideal. The field was snow covered, and the ball hard to handle. Nevertheless. The lads showed good judgement in their play and were trained to the minute on a hard fast field. It would be a swamp between them. The battle would be worth journeying some distance to see.

The Old Army Game

The old army game was the main thing, few tricks plays being uncovered. The 118th team was much the lighter, and they rely on speed to keep them in. With the heavy going, speed was out of the question, and the heavier team, using battering ram methods gradually wore them down, and grabbed the game. Not that Lambton chaps have not the speed, but speed plus brawn is a mighty good asset in the mind or mud. As mudlarks, the Lambton boys are always there. Who can beat the road in Lambton? Any body who survives is a strong person.

First Half

The first half of the game showed the 118th to the better advantage. Trotter, who booted well all afternoon under bad conditions, kicked one to the dead line, and settled a counter. The Parole fellows battering away, but could not get a score. The 149th tried a number of outside kicks and some tricks in this period but they could not get them going as they did some days ago. The ball would roll bully off the kickers' feet often to some Gertrude Huffman wiggling down the line, and the attempt generally resulted in a loss. However, the Waterloo bunch fought hard but could not quite get going.

Second Half

In the second half the Lambton boys started to shine up. Their continued battering on the line took the gimp out of the 118th, and they continually bucked for yards. Finally Smith got away and shoved over a touchdown. It was impossible to kick a goal. Both teams fought hard, but the driving, hammering tactics of the 149th were telling and shortly after the commencement on the last stage, Harding was shoved over in a scrum for the winning goal. As mentioned before, it was unclear to try and kick a goal. For the winner "Punk" Pollard, the general of the winners, stood out. Pollard did not as much brilliant

work himself, but his generalship and grand work were all the way. He kept his men well in hand, and showed good judgement in playing the game that he had outlined. He knew what his men could do and made them do it. Harding was a rare rascal. His larking was something to admire. The Lambton line was good all the way through and to them much credit for winning the position.

118th Game Boys

Among the 118th there were not so many strong but all the lads did good work. This lad Trotter kicked well, considering the circumstances. He's a grand punter, with the right weather. The gameness of the bunch was what took the writer. Outweighed with their plays going wrong. Owing to slippery ground, they battled as the whistle blew. They're worthy these boys, and showed the stuff. Pick out any of the lads on the lineup and you have a regular player. Frank Robbins, Hamilton was referee and Lieut. Rice was umpire. Both did well.

The Lineup:

118th Batt

<i>Eccles</i>	<i>flying wing</i>
<i>Boetiger</i>	<i>half back</i>
<i>Trotter</i>	<i>half back</i>
<i>Nicholls</i>	<i>halfback</i>
<i>Mowat</i>	<i>halfback</i>
<i>Rennison</i>	<i>scrimmage</i>
<i>Babington</i>	<i>scrimmage</i>
<i>Williams</i>	<i>scrimmage</i>
<i>Hessenau</i>	<i>inside wing</i>
<i>Sargeant</i>	<i>inside wing</i>
<i>O'Leary</i>	<i>middle wing</i>
<i>Waclchi</i>	<i>middle wing</i>
<i>Tew</i>	<i>outside wing</i>
<i>Rowe</i>	<i>outside wing</i>

149th Batt

<i>Stokes</i>
<i>Wilson</i>
<i>Hollingshead</i>
<i>Harding</i>
<i>Wilson</i>
<i>Thomas</i>
<i>Sanderson</i>
<i>Sinclair</i>
<i>Smith</i>
<i>Sissons</i>
<i>Pollard</i>
<i>Neeland</i>
<i>Scott</i>
<i>Gilchrist</i>

(LA November 27, 1916)

The Advertiser interview the club Monday night and the next in a short sports article said that Capt. McGillivray was attempting have a sudden-death game between the 149th and the Sarnia O.F.R.C. the coming Friday afternoon on Petrolea. The Battalion would be on their month's leave and "...it would enable most of the lads to see the excitement." The 149th 'gang' were feeling in great shape and confident they would beat Sarnia (LA November 28, 1916).

Winter weather was setting in and the Lambtons were into winter quarter garrison work which meant fatigues, guard mounting, lectures and for many men looking busy. There was one attestation that week after the big game. John Ninham from Muncey came into

London and signed up with the 149th November 27 with LCol. Macvicar signing as magistrate and the commanding officer. Maj. Kingsmill of headquarters found him fit. A new attached officer, Capt. W.H. Irvine, was the witness. John would be dependable. The BOR was now busy going through the Company Conduct Sheets to see whom had reason to be left in London because of some infraction. The rest were looking forward to their end of four day long leave at month's end. That would start Thursday November 30.

Course certificates came in from the District Musketry and Machine Gun course which ran from October 31 to November 13. Sgt-Major W. Ford, Sgts N. Aiken, T. Cronin and J. Edwards were qualified as musketry instructors. Cpl. H. Cooper and Pte. F. Sanford were now qualified machine gun instructors. (LA November 28, 1916). Cooper was soon promoted to sergeant.

The Tecumseh Park was admission 25 cents and the grandstand an additional 25 cents. Both teams had regimental boosters and a large crowd was expected at the Park.

The Watford paper had a brief article on the rugby win of the 149th, pointing out that 149th scored 31 points to 20 by their opponents in four games. The presence of Major C. O. Fairbank was noted:

...of the 70th Battalion, who has just returned from the trenches on the Somme, was delighted with the game as he still retained the presidency of the O.R.F.U. , and to be on hand when a team made up of Lambton boys, especially from Petrolea, were victorious, pleased him highly. (GA Dec 1, 1916).

The Guide-Advocate said nothing of a sudden-death game for the Lambtons against Sarnia. The 149th won their group and the score was 10 to 1. The paper said, "Both Battalions attended the game in numbers. Parading to the grounds, but only the victorious battalion marched back, cheering loudly." (GA December 1, 1916).

The sudden-death game was certainly welcomed and it did go ahead after the scrambling of the chaplain. Reprinted below is the press take up:

*149th Team Confident of Walloping Sarnia
Khaki Pigskin Chasers Should Trim Imperial City Squad at Petrolea This
Afternoon for O.F.R.U.*

That Petrolea has taken the 149th Battalion football team under their wing is evident from the following dispatch from that Oil Town. Big doings are booked for tonight if the soldier boys get away with the game from Sarnia that means the intermediate championship of the O.R.F.U.

(special to the Advertiser) PETROLEA, Dec. 1 – The announcement that the sudden-death game for O.F.R.U. championship between Sarnia and 149th

Battalion teams would be played in Petrolea Saturday was received here with great joy. Up to 1914 since which time Petrolea has had no O.F.R.U. team, the support given local pigskin chasers was the wonder of the province. Gate receipts always more than covered expenses. No matter what the weather was like. This heavy support has been transferred en bloc to the 149th Battalion's rugby team, augmented by people who have friends and relatives in the battalion, and who did not support local teams formerly. Petrolea will turn out in a body to support the soldiers. The battalion will be here almost solid, and a large deputation from Sarnia will come to root for both the soldiers and Woodhead's rompers. The entire population is talking of the coming game and confident of victory for the soldiers. It is remarkable the manner in which the Petrolea fans have adopted the team as their own. They know each player, his position, his weight, his weaknesses, his home, and his past history. Every bit of news about the team is read and learned by heart.

Celebration is Planned

The victory is believed so certain, a great celebration is being planned, led by Mayor Fairbank, and participated in every able-bodied male and not a few of the ladies. The 149th will probably line up as follows: Wilson, flying wing; Gilchrist, Hollingshead, Harding, half-backs; Stokes, quarter-back; Thomas, Sanderson, Sinclair, scrumage; Smith, Sissons, inside wings; Pollard, Neelands, middle wings; Sangford, Scott, outside wings. [Sanford is correct spelling] (LA November 2, 1916).

Capt. McGillvary was able to complete the arrangements for the game between the Sarnia intermediates and the 149th. The game was to be held in Petrolia Saturday December 2, in the middle of the 149th monthly leave. If the weather remained good there was every possibility of a large crowd, a good finish to the season and gamblers making some money on the wiling team.

The game was expertly reported by a stringer to the London Advertiser which in turn printed in the following Monday newspaper:

149th Battalion Beats Sarnia's Rugby Team

The O.R.F.U. Finale

The Soldier Lads Take the Measure of Tunnel City Eleven in Fast Game

[special to The Advertiser]

PETROLEA Dec. 2 The much vaunted Sarnia team proved unequal to the task of beating the 149th Battalion club here today. In the O.F.R.U. finale the Khaki men winning 12 to 1. The Tunnel City Backs fumbled at critical times, and their booting was not up to the standard. The soldiers went after the visitors from the start and in the first five minutes of play scored a touchdown, following a fumble to McCart. After that, the Sarnia men tried hard, but were outclassed although the heavier team. There were some collegiate men on the team but they did not stand up under the hard grading. Punk Pollard handled the winners in fine style and showed rare generalship. The back division did its duty in fine shape and

kept the khaki men in the going every minute. The day was ideal for football, and a good crowd watched it. The field was fairly fast, with the result that there was plenty of back field play. The speed with which the wings followed down caused the backs to fumble somewhat, as they tried to work too fast. Saurwain for the losers scored a touchdown, but it was not allowed as an off-side play, causing some dissatisfaction. The play was properly called in the opinion of the majority of spectators. Jeffery for the losers, did not kick up to his usual form, a disappointment in the Sarnia following. Hollingshead and Wilson for the 149th Battalion played swell football. F. A. Robbins of Hamilton refereed the game and, as usual, gave entire satisfaction. Lieut. Mowatt of the 118th Battalion was umpire, and while quite impartial in decision, was supporting the 149th Battalion team. Lieut. Mowatt played a splendid game as quarterback for the 118th Battalion, and knew the style of rugby that would be dished up to the Sarnia boys. It was a difficult game to handle owing to the fact that soldiers and civilians were meeting, but the proof of their ability was in the fact that no trouble arose. The crowd number close to 450, most of whom were rooting for the soldiers. Civil and military police handled the crowd well.

The Play

149th was the team and elected to kick off, Sarnia choosing the south goal, as there was absolutely no wind. Thomas kicked off to Phippen who was quickly downed. Sarnia tried to buck, fumbled but recovered. After another buck McCart kicked to Stokes. 149th gains their yards on three downs, using their star buckers in succession. Pollard, Smith and Sisson. Soldiers gained nicely on an onside kick to Harding but 149th put ball on ground from which it was kicked on an offside. The ball was now within fifteen yards of Sarnia's line and Pollard gained his yards, then Sisson bucked for nearly ten yards. Smith was bucked over from the five yard line and made the touchdown within five minutes of play. Wilson tried to convert and it looked good, but the goal judge said not. 149th 6 Sarnia 0. McCart kicked off to Gilchrist, who was quickly downed. Stokes kicked and Sarnia's back division kicked twice without success when McCart kicked to Stokes. The soldier's back division tried a couple of runs without success. On the last down Hollingshead kicked to McCart who was down in his tracks. Jeffrey and Campbell kicked unsuccessfully and Jeffrey kicked to Harding. 149th gain yards on an offside. Pollard bucked for yards and then a fake had Sarnia guessing but a second fake failed. Smith kicked for yards and Hollingshead booted a nice one to Phippen. Jeffrey lost on a buck, and then a back division run failed, and McCart kicked to Harding who ran it back nicely. Campbell was hurt and replaced by Saurwain. Quarter time, with ball on Sarnia's 25 yard line. Wilson tried on a field goal, but was much too low, and McCart ran it out. Sarnia division lost on two runs and McCart kicked to Stokes who fumbled and Sarnia secured. McCart made a nice run and was brought down by Wilson. A half-line run failed and Jeffery kicked to Stokes who was downed on his own five yard line, but Pollard bucked for a big gain, and Smith made a long buck, but the soldiers lost the ball in interference. Parrott tried a buck. McCart a run but back failed and on this third down a soldier buck charged and grabbed LeBel before he could pass. Smith

broke through on a kick and ran over 29 yards to be brought down by McCart. Harding made a nice run but lost the ball on an offside. Sarnia booted to Harding who fumbled pass on soldiers' first down. Jeffrey made a little run nicely but Parrott could not follow his example. Jeffrey kicked to Stokes and Smith bucked but lost the ball on interference. Sarnia could not buck and McCart kicks through scrimmage and the Sarnia boys went crazy when Saurwain secured and went over the line. However, the play, a parallel of the one in the 149th Varsity game, which the latter made a touchdown, was called and soldiers got the ball on the ground and kicked from. An onside kick by Scott called out being the required ten yards in length and Harding rested five minutes for tackling a man without the ball. Sarnia bucked but Sanderson secured a ball fumbled by Woodhead for an onside kick. Phippen made a rambling run for fifteen yards. McCart kicked to Stokes. Half time with ball in midfield. The half was marked by the long bucks of the lighter soldiers and the kicking attempts by McCart and Hollingshead who were evenly matched as kickers.

Second half

Leach kicked off to Stokes, who returned to McCart, who made the sensational run of the game for 30nyards to be brought down by Wilson and Harding. Phippen followed McCart with a nice ten-yard run, and Jeffrey ran, being booted in by Sinclair, and the soldiers got the ball on downs. Pollard bucks 20 yards and Smith and Sisson followed with long gains. Stokes tried an outside kick but failed, and McCart kicked to Harding who made a beautiful 25 yard run. McCart ran back a kick beautifully, and drew words of great approbation from all present. The 149th secured the ball on a [not deciphered] pass from LeBel, and Smith bucked eight yards and Stokes kicked into the scrimmage. Jeffrey kicked to Harding. Hollingshead kicked to McCart. When Sarnia kicked, Sanderson and Bosenbury [Bosenburg] decided there was not enough excitement, and started mixing it. They each traded five minutes. Jeffrey kicked to Sisson and Stokes tried an onside kick but called three-quarter time. The 149th declared ball on offside and made nice gain on an onside kick to Scott. After two bucks Hollingshead kicked to McCart, who was carried back five yards by Wilson. Jeffrey kicked to Stokes who made a beautiful scoop on the run. Wilson again tried a field goal and failed. Jeffrey kicked to McCart, who fumbled behind his own line, and Harding secured for the soldiers. Wilson converted. Score 11-0.

McCart kicked off to Stokes who returned. Jeffery kicked to Harding and the 149th lost the ball on yards. Jeffrey kicked over to Stokes who played safe by holding it and Smith forced him to rouge. 11-1. Stokes tried an onside kick to Wilson who made a 25-yard gain. Hollingshead kicked beautifully and Jeffery bucked to Stokes. Full time score 11-1.

It would be impossible to fix the honors for the soldiers for everyone played his position well, The line plungers, Pollard, Sisson and Smith were the [indecipherable] while Sinclair was a tower of strength. Harding and Wilson were good to runs and tackling while Hollingshead can match with everybody for booting. It is worth while to see this "fair-haired-boy" get in on every play. There

is no trouble in picking the stars for Sarnia McCart and Jeffery were playing a leading part and Phippen and Smith collegiate boys out played their more experienced comrades. Phippen was a special joy to rugby enthusiasts. The play was had as clear as usual. Even McCart and Harding, who are usually clean tacklers preferred to get them around the ears.

The Lineup

149

Sarnia

<i>Harding</i>	<i>F wing</i>	<i>Phippen</i>
<i>Gilchrist</i>	<i>Halves</i>	<i>Parrott</i>
<i>Hollingshead</i>	<i>Halves</i>	<i>McCart</i>
<i>Wilson</i>	<i>Halves</i>	<i>Jeffrey</i>
<i>Stokes</i>	<i>Quarter</i>	<i>LeBel</i>
<i>Sanderson</i>	<i>Scrimmage</i>	<i>Ramassen</i>
<i>Thomas</i>	<i>Scrimmage</i>	<i>McDonald</i>
<i>Sinclar</i>	<i>Scrimmage</i>	<i>Woodhead</i>
<i>Smith</i>	<i>I wing</i>	<i>Leach</i>
<i>Sisson</i>	<i>I wing</i>	<i>VanAlstyn</i>
<i>Pollard</i>	<i>M Wing</i>	<i>Campbell</i>
<i>Neelands</i>	<i>M Wing</i>	<i>Bosenberg</i>
<i>Minton</i>	<i>O Wing</i>	<i>Smith</i>
<i>Scott</i>	<i>O Wing</i>	<i>Newhouse</i>
<i>Saurwain was a replacement</i>		

(LA December 4, 1916).

Two other items appeared. The Guide-Advocate reported that recruiters were scouring Lambton County for recruits (the men on leave were encouraged to get friends to join). The Brooke township community were told that Maj. Macvicar said that Alvin Brander had not deserted. (GA December 1, 1916). His records say he was in hospital but not stated whether the military hospital or Victoria Hospital and the reason not given Alvin was on leave in November, sick in December and then his January pay was covered by the district. Another example how administration was not strong and current in the 149th.

One of the many with ongoing medical issues was George Sinnott of Boston, Massachusetts. He saw Capt. McMillan the MO, signed the papers with Pte. W. Redding of the 27th Regt., all on December 2nd. He trained but by May he was MU with bronchitis.

The search for men extended to an active search for the AWL of the 149th. Back on November 7 a detail under the district Provost Marshall Major Baron Osborne and Sgt. Finnegan apprehended Moses Wolfe at Kettle Point. Moses attempted to flee and was shot in the right shoulder by Sgt. Finnegan. Moses was attended to by the local doctor and remained at Forest until there was a trial. He was a witness at a trial for Sgt.

Finnegan for "shooting with intent" before Magistrate Thomas Jones on November 18, 1916. The magistrate passed the matter to "the next court of competent jurisdiction". Sgt. Finnegan later appeared in Sarnia and his sentence was suspended. Finnegan went back to the 149th. Major Osborne arrested Wolfe at the Forest trial as a deserter and Wolfe returned to London under escort (GA November 24, 1916).

Another man reappeared after some absence and that was Capt. S. N. Dancey. He paid a brief visit to London December 2 at the London Advertiser and said he was with an eastern Ontario Battalion, preparing to go overseas. There were rumours of his sudden death on a transport bound for England. (printed in the Goderich Signal December 7, 1916).

In matters of the officers the BOR was very current. There were confirmed changes coming for a few officers. Colonel W. Shannon. AO of Military District No. 1 wrote the Secretary of the Militia Council and recommended promotions and appointments: Maj. W.W. Macvicar to be Lieutenant-Colonel and command the 149th CEF with effect from October 4, 1916 as recommended November 21, 1916; there was no recommendation as a second-in command; Major and Company Commander Robert Stewart, formerly junior major with effect from November 25, 1916; Capt. James Merrison with effect from December 10, 1915; Capt. J. Dunfield with effect from August 17, 1916 and Capt. George Moncrieff with effect from August 17, 1916. There were three recommended to be Captains; Lieut. Wilfred Cheyne with effect from December 11, 1916, Lieut. William Wykesmith with effect from October 7, 1916 and Lieut. John Knowles with effect from October 7, 1916. The 149th were to have new Lieutenants: John McMillan of the 77th Regt. with effect August 15, 1916; Byron Johnson with effect September 1, 1916; Thomas Irwin with effect from September 1, 1916; and A. O. Olle, 30th Regt, with effect from October 26, 1916. The letter concluded by saying that "These appointments will not cause the authorized establishment of officers to be exceeded." (HQ 593-6-1, I.D. 87-32-2 to Secretary of Militia Council Dec. 5, 1916).

In Lambton County the weather took a noticeable change and the locals began thinking of a hockey season. The Ontario Hockey Association had called team submissions for December 6 and the London Free Press reported, "Sarnia will enter three teams, one each in the junior, intermediate and senior series. Their hope is to be grouped with the 118th Battalion (London), Stratford and 153rd Battalion (St. Thomas)." There was no mention of the 149th having a team. (LFP December 7, 1916).

The folks in the Watford vicinity were informed that Capt. R.H. Stapleford was in the line in France as the commander of #3 Coy of the 1st Battalion CEF, that Watford boys were home on their long leave last weekend, all were well and that Pte. W.C. Aylesworth was confined at his home with inflammatory rheumatism. (GA December 8, 1916).

The latter note would prove problematic for Aylesworth. Later the BOR had him in hospital to account for him but there is no record of what hospital. He subsequently was refused a pension when he was found medically unfit and he claimed his rheumatism was service related.

The Guide-Advocate had a very pointed editorial to the young men of the vicinity who would read the December 8th paper. On the front page with the news Capt. Stapleford in France was the observation, "The young men are showing an utter indifference to the appeals of the recruiting officers and refuse to assist by contributing to the patriotic fund." The editor shared a letter of a young man in France who wrote back to his father reassuring that he was well, "Please do not worry about me at all. But remember if any thing happens to me that thousands of others have fallen too, and I would a thousand times rather die in France than stay at home and shirk. I am not saying this to make out that I am brave at all, but if you knew just how I feel about it, it may help you and mother to bear it if any thing happen to me. Remember I am here because I wish to do my duty." The editor concluded "...when the war is over and the boys come home...those whose hearts are bleeding to-day will come into their own." (GA December 8, 1916).

It was the young men that Canada needed at the Front. There was now the problem and it was what to do with the surplus senior officers in the United Kingdom whose units were broken up. The Militia Council decided December 6th that if senior officers were unwilling to revert to lieutenant to go to the Front they would be returned to Canada and to civilian life. (FP December 8, 1916). There was no immediate effect on the Lambton officers. Training would go on, duties covered with the anticipation all on the establishment would go overseas to the United Kingdom. From there on nobody knew.

The Saturday December 9 Advertiser reported that the District Provost Marshall was at the Guelph prison farm to pickup and return forty men who under the amnesty were to be returned to their units still training in the district. All others were to be attached to the 149th. (LA December 9, 1916).

Major K. B. MacKenzie must have been upset when he heard the contents of the Militia Council letter to Colonel Shannon at MD#1 December 5. The position of second-in-command remained unfilled. He would naturally assume he would be that officer. He now knew he was passed over and surplus to the establishment. He was permitted to resign his appointment effective December 4, 1916 (DO 291 of 12.12.16). The Watford paper printed this news with additional information that Major Mackenzie sent in his resignation to Major Macvicar (this suggests before the confirmation of ranks and appointments by the Militia Council). As well he and his wife were sailing January 4th for England where he would re-enlist in the C.E.F. (GA December 15, 1916). He enlisted as a private, remained a private and survived the war.

Unless they had overnight passes and thus granted absence the majority of 149th paraded to Hyatt Avenue Methodist Church in the company of the 63rd Battery and the Special Service Company for the morning service Sunday December 10. (LA December 11, 1916).

The BOR began another busy week starting with the release of Alexander Mckenzie from Detroit, Michigan. Alex was habitually absent without permission and was declared a deserter July 17, 1916. Alex reappeared December 8 and was immediately into the

military hospital where he was found medically unfit for infantry. His was released from the C.E.F. December 11 under DO 319 23.12.16. Alex went to casualties, became active with the 7th Regiment and overseas for service. He survived the war.

The regular administration proceeded as it did the previous week but they had to be on the watch for reappearing AWL Lambtons taking advantage of the pardon or the practical reason for finding shelter and food for the winter. These men had to be passed medically fit for infantry. Some were not and discharged from the C.E.F.

The newspaper advertisements were more to the point such as, "Skating-Tonight-East End Rink, corner York and Rectory streets. Good Ice." (LA December 12, 1916). Some soldiers including Lambtons had other uses for their off-duty time. The Police Court had, "A soldier and an Indian maid, whose home is on the Muncy reservation but...employed for some months at a local hotel...in court...charged with disorderly conduct." Such conduct was having public sexual relations. The soldier was fined \$5 and costs and the girl remanded to jail for one week until her parents could be contacted. It was claimed they were out for a friendly moonlight stroll. "This makes the fourth pair of soldier and Indian maid to appear on a similar charge in the past month." (LFP December 12, 1916).

The Advertiser noted that recruiting was actually picking up. Young men from London and the rural area were joining the units wintering at Queen's Park. John Scott of Barrie Ontario enlisted in Sarnia December 13. He was a sailor and for him the shipping season was over with the onset of winter. Dr. McMillan found him fit and he was sent to London and into the Lambtons as 845235. John deserted in March when the ice broke and shipping resumed.

Christmas was fast approaching and the Overseas I.O.D.E. in London decided to hold two nights of an 'At Home' for the soldiers stationed in London. The first evening, Thursday, would be for the 118th Battalion and the second evening, Friday, for the 149th. The smaller units in training were to be divided between the two nights. The amusement would be cards, dancing and a program of singing and readings with refreshments served. The last comment for the keen was, "Plenty of fair partners are assured." An afterthought was that the 76 members would make up a "floor committee" and distinguished by a white badge would introduce perspective dancing partners (LA December 13, 1916).

The soldiers and their friends could look through the advertisements for varied entertainment at the theatres, dance halls and hotels. The Women's Emergency Corps ran the former Red Cross Tea Room every afternoon from 3.30 to 6 p.m. with delicious home-cooked meals at moderate prices. The East End Rink offered skating on good ice every evening at the price of 10 cents for ladies and 15 cents for gentlemen. The Iroquois Hotel had a billiard parlour which cost a soldier in khaki 30 cents for an hour (LA December 14, 1916).

Major Merrison and Captain MacGillivray had other plans as well. On the night of Thursday December 14 D Company was invited to St. Andrew's Hall where the young people of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church treated the men to a 'delightful evening'. The program novelties were Miss Gladys Comber playing the bagpipes and Miss Jean Walker reading selections. Tempting refreshments were served (LFP December 15, 1916).

The next night the 149th Battalion had their 'At Home' with the I.O.D.E. as previously arranged.

Captain Richard Stapleford was named in the front page of the Guide-Advocate as reported wounded at the Front. His actual hospitalization was due to his first wound in 1915. His old ankle injury could not bear field conditions. Captain Stapleford was discharged August 31, 1917 to return home to Watford. On the same page was the longer worded resignation of Major McKenzie and his plan to sail to England to re-enlist in the C.E.F. (GA December 15, 1916)

Very little now appeared in print about training and duties performed by the battalions wintering at London. There were occasional references to the drunkenness of soldiers and misconduct in public but names were not given. Efforts were made by well-meaning groups to provide alternatives for the free-time of the soldiers.

Hockey games attracted many spectators and was fast becoming the national winter pastime. The commanding officer may have decided there should be a 149th team but it was probably the young officers who pitched for a team and the result was printed:

149th Battalion Ready for Big Hockey Season

The decision of the 149th Battalion to enter a senior hockey team in the Northern League was arrived at by a meeting held yesterday afternoon (Thursday). The boys from Lambton, in going through the ranks discovered quite a number of boys who could undoubtedly keep up their athletic name gained on the gridiron this autumn by landing the Ontario championship. With some assistance from the 63rd Battery and a number of civilian players in the city, the 149th can put a strong team on ice for the series with the 118th and 153rd Battalions in the N.H.L. [Northern Hockey League]. The 149th has two good goalers in Joss and Cameron of Sarnia, while the balance of the team could be selected from the following: Wilson, Harding and McRitchie, of Petrolea City League, Lieuts. McNaughton and Knowles, formerly of Sarnia; Sangford [Sanford] and Frahllich, also of Sarnia, in addition to Phillips and Wells, of the battery, who formerly played with local teams, Roach of Watford; Leitch, of Alvinston. Civilian players available are: Chapman, Arthurs, Art Nelles, Johnny Bell, Geo. Chantler, Harry Leckie, Merritt Flint, C. Armstrong, Betteridge, Arnold Henry, Barney Clark, Bill Legg and any number of others. The team will hold a workout tonight at the Jubilee Rink along with the 118th.

(LA December 15, 1916)

There as well appeared a new spirit among the officers as LCol. MacVicar and the officers sent a Christmas card to friends and associates of the battalion.

One Lambton in particular, Sgt. Finnegan, had been waiting for his day in court. The magistrate in Forest could not proceed in the "wounding with intent" charge and was to go on to the "next court of competent jurisdiction" and that was before Judge McWatt at Sarnia December 15, 1916. The London Advertiser printed the decision of that court:

[Special to the Advertiser]

Sarnia Dec. 15 – Sergt. Robt. Finnegan of the 149th Battalion, charged with wounding Pte. Moses Wolfe, an Indian member of the same unit on November 7, while endeavoring to bring Wolfe, who was a deserter, back to his unit, had a hearing before Judge D.F. McWatt today, and after taking the evidence of several witnesses Finnegan was found "guilty" but was allowed to go on suspended sentence.

When put in the box Wolfe displayed the usual Indian stolidity, and claimed that he did not understand English, very well, but answered the questions of the attorney when the judge threatened to sentence him to jail for contempt of court, and evasion of questions.

Refused to Go

Wolfe told of the coming of Corp. Carrier and Sergt. Finnegan to the residence of Wesley Shawkensis, where he was boarding and of their asking him to return voluntarily to his battalion and upon refusal, Carrier pulled out his handcuffs and Finnegan his revolver, and at the sight of these he became frightened and made a break for the woods, but before he had gone very far he received a bullet in the shoulder, but continued his escape until he reached the house of Bernice Brissette. Where he had the wound dressed. Jessie Thomas, an Indian maid who witnessed the affair, also testified. Dr. Blaine and Dr. Patterson of Forest told of the extent of the wound, and Dr. Blaine told how he removed the bullet.

The Defence

The defence offered by R. C. Fisher, counsel for the defendant, was that desertion was a crime, and that there was no intent to injure Wolfe, and that the trial should be before military authorities. The judge, having ruled that a soldier is still a citizen, and liable to the civil laws. Pte. Finnegan testified that he had pulled the weapon merely to frighten Wolfe and after calling to Wolfe to halt, fired low at him, pulling the trigger twice before a shot was fired. Corp. Carrier and Capt. Merrison were in the box, and told of the orders given to bring Wolfe back to the battalion. In rendering his decision Judge McWatt stated that it was a lucky thing for Finnegan that the wound had not proved serious. He said it showed an excess of zeal on his part as he was not asked to bring him back dead or alive, but under the circumstances the Court could not be too severe, and although he was found guilty on the evidence, sentence would be suspended due to the fact that he was no doubt trying to do his duty. (LA December 18, 1916)

The arresting soldiers were Lawrence Carriere and Robert Finnigan. Wolfe had been in the London military hospital with tonsillitis and quincy from December 7 to 14 and then to Sarnia for the trial. He remained with the Battalion until he deserted March 19, 1917 as the battalion prepared to leave for embarkation.

The 149th was now receiving weekly medical reports on infectious diseases among the troops in training in M.D. #1. The report for the week ending 16 December indicated 5 men were in the military hospital with scarlet fever and they remained there. One man had chicken pox but returned to duty. There were 9 men with venereal disease and apparently one reported with the disease. Four men had returned to duty with six remaining in the military hospital. (Weekly Report of Cases of Infectious Diseases Occurring Among Troops in Training or On Duty in M.D. No. 1 for the week ending Dec. 30th, 1916. Lohead files).

The Sunday church parades for the battalions came into question because of a misunderstanding the Ministerial Alliance and the military authorities would not discuss. The Alliance met Monday morning December 19 and discuss an arrangement to have a rotation of the Protestant soldiers to the churches closest to Queen's Park. It was agreed to rotate between St. Paul's Cathedral, the First Methodist Church and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church beginning the next Sunday December 24. Capt. J. M. McGillivray of the 149th was present and said the military authorities wanted nothing to do with the churches. Arrangements had been made for a half-hour service in the armoury which was unheated and without seating. McGillivray had asked that the rotation arrangement be used instead and that was agreed to. The Roman Catholics would continue doing what had been arranged for them (LFP December 18, 1916).

The sports followers were told that the Northern Hockey League annual meeting in Palmerston agreed to the grouping of the 118th, 149th and 153rd to play in the senior division. All game schedules were to be given to W.H. Rhodes of London by Saturday December 23rd.

Christmas 1915 was not a good time for the 149th as LCol. Kelly had suddenly died and the officers appointed by him waited to hear who would succeed. A year later LCol. Macvicar and officers sent out a Christmas card to all the friends of the 149th. The red lettering and emblazoned badge of the Lambtons Own made it unique. Unfolded it read,

*Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Macvicar
And Officers of the
One Hundred and Forty Ninth Overseas Battalion
Canadian Expeditionary Force
Send their best wishes for a
Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year
London Ontario Christmas 1916*

The Officers were listed by rank and name.
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1687474308208763/>)

A similar card was on sale for the men. In reference to the past year and hopes for the future its message read,

*Wishing you a merrier Christmas
And a happier New Year
Than the merriest and happiest
You have ever known.*

*From
149th Overseas Battalion
Canadian Expeditionary Force
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1687474308208763/>)*

The Tuesday December 19, Free Press informed the wider public which they may have suspected about the poor medical fitness of the soldiers raised for the C.E. F. in the District. It was reported back from England that the five battalions sent from the district most recently had men medically, unfit, underage and overage at the rates of 23, 20, 13, 12 and 9 per cent of their draft. The paper put this to the negligence of the medical boards and the battalion medical officers. The article continued saying recently recruiting centres had been established in No. 1 Military District, each with a medical board who are to pass only "those men who are certain to be of permanent use." (LFP December 19, 1916). Dr. Harry Mitchell as the MO of the Lambtons knew this and suspected that those just in the hospital for tonsillitis or other illnesses would be given a medical board and if unfit promptly discharged from the 149th. It was happening. The paper told, "When ...[unfit] men get to England they are thoroughly weeded out and sent back to Canada and in the meantime the country has been put to a tremendous expense in training and maintaining them." (LFP December 19, 1916).

The December 21 Free Press morning edition said the paper was making its office available to the Officers of the 118th, 149th and 153rd battalion clubs' meeting that afternoon to draft a group schedule for the Northern Hockey League (LFP December 21, 1916).

The Free Press reported that plans were being made for Christmas in Camp with special dinners being arranged. The funding was coming from "An extra 25 cents per man ... authorized by the authorities at Ottawa, and this will be devoted to providing extra dainties for those who remain in camp." This last comment is because the units were allowed to split their four days' monthly leave between Christmas and New Year's leaving the unit at half-strength at those times. (LFP December 21, 1916). As well the London Advertiser remarked on some of the unit Christmas plans. The 149th had made no arrangements at press time. There is nothing in the available records to say what the 149th did. The Advertiser noted in its article, "Lieut.-Col. Lohead purchased and presented a cup to the 149th Battalion in honor of its having won the football championship in the district." (LA December 21, 1916).

What may be assumed is the officers and men who lived in London with family would observe Christmas there. The single men with ties in Lambton would go home. As the battalion was not at this time exclusively from the County other men went to their distant homes.

LCol. Macvicar, no doubt, had Christmas with his family in London as they were now living there. Lt. William Williams took his Christmas leave in Arkona where his wife Madeline was living with her parents. He was back to duty in London December 27. Lt. Thomas Irwin would be back to Chatham Ontario. Capt. Trainor would be in Cornwall.

The Watford paper at near centre of the County often took the role of watchman and it did when it copied and circulated an article from the Thedford Tribune:

What a disappointment it must have been to the hundreds of men of the 149th battalion to find, after training for nearly a year, they were unfit. In some cases men have relinquished a good position to join the army and on the first few examinations have been passed only to be finally rejected....[I]t is some satisfaction to know that at last the medical examination of recruits is being put on a proper basis.
(GA December 22, 1916).

The Guide-Advocate noted,

The appointment of Major Wm. McVicar to the command of the 149th (Lambton) Battalion and his advancement to the rank of Lieut-Colonel, is well received by the public generally. Col. McVicar is a well known and highly respected citizen of Sarnia and is well qualified to fill the important command for which he has been selected.
(GA December 22, 1916).

The weather for Christmas was a question answered by the Free Press. It was to be fair and cold with the probability of colder and snow for Saturday. The overnight temperature 8 o'clock p.m. to 8 o'clock a.m. max. 26 degrees F min. 20 degrees F.
(LFP December 22, 1916).

The Free Press reminded people that military training would be disrupted and only routine work carried out as half the garrison was on holidays (LFP December 23, 1916). The sports section had for many the most important news and it was the hockey schedule for the senior military group. The dates were:

Dec. 30 - 153rd Battalion (St. Thomas) at 118th Battalion (London)
Jan. 2 - 118th Battalion (London) at 153rd Battalion (St. Thomas)
Jan. 5 - 118th Battalion (London) at 149th Battalion (London)
Jan. 10 - 149th Battalion (London) at 153rd Battalion (St. Thomas)
Jan. 13 - 153rd Battalion (St. Thomas) at 149th Battalion (London)

The weekly medical reports on infectious diseases among the troops in training in M.D. #1 came punctually. The report for the week ending 23 December indicated there was

one reported case of mumps and the man was in the military hospital. Scarlet fever had increased and five men remained in the military hospital. There had been six cases of venereal disease with three back to duty and three men remained in the military hospital.

(Weekly Report of Cases of Infectious Diseases Occurring Among Troops in Training or On Duty in M.D. No. 1 for the week ending Dec. 30th, 1916 Lohead files).

The weather December 26 was fair with high predicted as 19 degrees F and the low 10 degrees F.

(LFP December 26, 1916)

December 27 Lt. William Williams wrote to his wife Madeline about the bayonet fighting and physical training course in Stratford:

*Queen's Park, London
27-12-16
8.17 P.M.
Mrs Madeline Williams
Arkona Ontario*

Dear Madeline

With pleasure I write you these lines. Arrived O.K. and feeling alright today. Gene took Alf and I out to Watford, and believe me it was a cold ride. We had to wait about 30 minutes for train. When we got off the train in London it was raining. Alf and I went to Alexandra, and had lunch after which Alf went to show and I came to camp, arriving here about 7.30 p.m.

On going to the orderly room found I was orderly officer today, and of course had an easy day again. I was the only officer here last night, until late in the night, when several drifted in. Some came in the morning. Major Merrison, Capt Knowles and Mr Olle arrived at noon. Col MacVicar was here yesterday and was out for the evening. I just got into my nest and had a good rest, and tonight I will get to rest about 11 p.m. Nearly all the officers are uptown.

Well Madeline I am alone tonight and feel lonesome perhaps you are lonesome too. Believe me it will be quite a change for me when I go over the pond, but we can stand just as much as any one if we pray. Now I must tell you I intend going to Stratford for this reason. Today my application which was sent in was sent back for me to get Major Merrison's approval and I was so damn mad I just tore it up before Major Merrison's eyes. I don't have to ask him for permission to attend and they can stick their courses up their —. I will take the course in Stratford and then will get my Dear Wife back and that's better than my Captaincy. If I took the course here and then Stratford I would not see you for 8 weeks. Nothing doing. Not I.

When I come back if there should be a course I may put application, but you will be right here to live with me. Now I feel just as pleased as if I had found a thousand dollars. Alf he thinks it best to go to Stratford as it will only be for a little while and the course will do me good. Lyda said you would be down to see me. Sure come down and stay over Sunday for a visit.

I must tell you Alf and I had a little trade of Christmas cake Mrs Ross gave him some and so we traded and he said yours was the best. I gave Mr Fyffe a piece of it and he gave a piece of short cake which came from Scotland. Today I sent up a piece of the cake to Geo Price and I am sure he would be pleased. I heard he will soon be out again.

Seen Mr Wyatt this morning and he is alright again, he got out last Saturday morning he and Mr Omer are invited out tonight and he said Wilbert Beattie asked him to go to his place for New Years. He is going down to Arkona for a couple of days so will have a chance to see his friend again. Well I think this is about all the news as I have not been away over 24 hrs. Be sure and write soon as you get this letter and tell all the news.

I enjoyed myself on those apples and oranges and tonight will see the finish of those. Then comes the olive oil for the after dose. Those stockings will come in fine for Physical training and will sure be comfortable. Will get that watch cover when you come to Stratford. I will send you some bills before long. Be sure and send Ethan's address next trip so I can forward his letter. Now I must close and get the canteen tickets counted as it is after 9 P.M. Be careful of yourself and try and enjoy yourself while home.

*Remember me to all and lots of love to yourself.
Your loving husband,
Will*

P.S. Please destroy this letter as it sounds nasty. Billie's temper was not this bad. W.

Lt William Williams wrote Madeline December 27, 1916 from Queen's Park...courtesy Michael Williams...27 December 1916 [Will to Madeline: the bad weather isn't helping Will's lonesome mood.]

There were as usual matters to be handled in the BOR. Pte. G. Burnett was transferred to the No. 1 Special Service Battalion and Pte. William Blackwell was discharged as medically unfit. Sgt. George Gibbs was detailed to be an Instructor at the Stratford Ontario School of Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training (LFP December 28, 1916). William Wyatt was mentioned in Lt. William's letter had tonsillitis December 21 to 23 and was back to duty.

The new order from the Militia Council had to be added to Standing Orders in that any soldier under corporal rank who had two years' service in the C.E.F. without an entry on his company conduct sheet would be awarded a Good Conduct chevron to be worn on the left sleeve of his tunic. None qualified in the Lambtons as the unit only existed from December 1915 (LFP December 29, 1916). The Free Press also had an article on the 118th Battalion hockey team meeting a team from Preston that evening. Pte. Robert Joss of the 149th was to be the goalie for the 118th team.

The Watford paper informed everyone who was home for Christmas leave and the names included, "Lieut.-Colonel Macvicar and officers of the 149th Battalion issued a very handsome Christmas greeting card." R. D. Swift was home, Pte. A. Omer home, James Riggs of military police home and I. Weedmark visited Arkona (GA December 29, 1916)

After the departure of Bandmaster Sgt. Hodder there is little evidence that the band was doing anything except duty as the garrison band. The Free Press however carried an advertisement about a patriotic song service New Year's Eve at the Majestic Theatre with the 149th Band in attendance under the direction of Sgt. Martyn Davis. An article in the paper indicated it was the I.O.D.E. Overseas Chapter who were sponsoring the evening and there was a silver collection for the 118th! The paper commented, "These bands have given their services free of charge on many occasions." (LFP December 30, 1916).

For some time there were rumours that Canadians would be called on to do some form of national service. The talk had not been on military service but service in the industrial and agricultural sector. A facsimile card called the "A National Call for Information" appeared in the newspapers and distributed by mail. It was a voluntary submission. (LFP December 30, 1916).

The 149th was receiving weekly medical reports on infectious diseases among the troops in training in M.D. #1. The Lambton had two soldiers in hospital with mumps in isolation and one returned to duty. Five men remained in the military hospital with scarlet fever in isolation. Three men had venereal disease and were retained in the military hospital. (Weekly Report of Cases of Infectious Diseases Occurring Among Troops in Training or On Duty in M.D. No. 1 for the week ending Dec. 30th, 1916).

The BOR was informed of another discharge. Donald Matheson of London attested December 26 and then found to be underage and thus discharged December 30.

Lieutenant Williams sent in his application for the Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training School and was accepted but he needed a physical fitness examination. He and others were examined on January 2. He wrote to his wife about the results:

Queens Park, London
2-1-17
Mrs Madeline Williams

Arkona, Canada

Dear Madeline

Just a few lines, Am well. Hope you are in the best of health. Well Madeline I am not going to Stratford this time. We had a Medical examination today and I was turned down, and had to get another officer to take my place. Sergeant Majors Edwards [John Edwards] and Bucroft [Fred Beecroft] Sgts Knight [Fred Knight] and Branden [William Brandon] and Corp Howie [Morley Howie] were turned down also. Believe me there is some talk around this joint tonight. About half the 118th Bn got murdered in the exam. Only 15 of us 149th and b. turned down. They don't want men very bad or else they wanted to show off. There were only four of those doctors on the job. Now I am done for overseas so they say, and all I can do is take the operation and in hopes of being alright by the time they leave here. Everybody is good at giving advice what to do; but I have nearly decided to go to the hospital at once. I am feeling kind of blue tonight, and will be more able to tell what to do tomorrow. Will let you know by phone if I go soon, and you can come down here and stay for a while. Now don't worry over this little affair as it amounts to nothing. Must close. Write soon and tell me what to do, and don't tell anyone the trouble.

Goodbye

Your loving husband
Will

(<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/january-1917.html>)

William Williams was diagnosed with varicocele and was operated on January 8, 1917.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B10409-S026>)Soldiers reappeared because they heard they were pardon for desertion. 845318 Wilson Sands was born December 23, 1881 at Walpole Island. He attested three times. Each time the information was basically correct. He attested in Port Lambton February 7, 1916. He trained but at Camp Borden he went AWL September 18, 1916. He reappeared January 4, 1917.

Wednesday January 3, 1917 the London Free Press made the announcement of the acceptance of the 149th in the Senior Northern League of hockey. The secretary of the club was Capt. MacGillivray who had the day before received the certificate for the Lambtons to play. He was now busy signing up the players who would make up the purely khaki team. The team was reported to have had a practice every day when the Simcoe Street rinks was available. The told, "Manager Lieut. McNaughton has a smart bit material, and a lively series of games between the 153rd, 118th and 149th Battalion teams is being looked forward to this winter." The first game was to be the previously scheduled game with the 118th as the plan to have the Aura Lea team of the senior Ontario Hockey League fell through for manager Selke. (LFP January 3, 1917). Capt. MacGillivray also set the record straight. It was a tied game in Watford.

New Year's in Watford had an exciting hockey game January 2 described as:
A fast game...on Fowler's rink...between a picked team from the 149th Battalion and a Watford seven. There was a good audience present, the game resulting in a tie with a score of 5-5. The lineup:

<i>149th Batter</i>		<i>Watford</i>
<i>McRitchie</i>	<i>goal</i>	<i>Roach</i>
<i>R. Williams</i>	<i>r.d.</i>	<i>T. Dodds</i>
<i>McNaughton</i>	<i>l.d.</i>	<i>N. Roche</i>
<i>E. Dodds</i>	<i>rover</i>	<i>V. Auld</i>
<i>Sangford</i>	<i>centre</i>	<i>E. Hicks</i>
<i>Hardy</i>	<i>r. wing</i>	<i>Henderson</i>
<i>Bruce</i>	<i>l. wing</i>	<i>R. Brown</i>
<i>Referee Capt. F.C. Smythe</i>		<i>149th Battalion</i>

(GA January 5, 1917).

Hockey and Fist fights for the 149th according to the January 15, 1917 London Advertiser

While hockey was the current sports in London, the boxers and wrestlers were looking afield. Clayton Deroux went missing January 2 according to the 118th. He still had not appeared when the 118th set off for Halifax. In time he too was now the administrative responsibility of the 149th on January 5. He too was pardoned December 20, 1919. His kit shortage was \$23.75.

On Saturday January 6, 1917 a recruiting advertisement appeared in the London Advertiser. The Lambtons needed recruits and one way was to have this circulated in Sarnia, Forest, Petrolia and Watford papers along with London. Yes, some men came forward and joined but hardly the numbers hoped for as the Battalion first formed in 1916.

The main reason for the few attestations was the uncertainty surrounding the course of the war. From October to Christmas of 1916 the Germans were throwing out feelers for peace. But England and France were distressed that the Germans wished to retain all captured territory along with unrevealed items that remained unknown to the general public. When the Lambtons recruited it was generally accepted another year of War. The request was as follows:

Wanted
149th Battalion Going Overseas Soon

If you are not eligible yourself you can do a great service
for your country by sending in the name of someone who is.
His Name

Name.....
Address.....
Occupation.....
Where does he work?.....

Please cut out and mail, and we will do the rest.

Send to Lieut-Colonel WW MacVicar O.C. 149th O.S. Bn. CEF London, Ont.

(LA January 6, 1917).

In connection with recruiting the Majestic Theatre was hosting a patriotic address by Colonel Cockshutt of Brantford Sunday January 7 with the 149th Band providing the music. (LA January 6, 1917).

The Advertiser noted January 6 that a new course was to begin January 21 at the armouries. The course was sniping, scouting and patrolling, no doubt reflecting the training changes required by the British War Office. Two NCOs or men from each unit training in the district were to be selected and sent to attend.

Colonel Mcvicar would find the men. In the meantime he was busy signing documents that should have been signed off weeks ago, beginning with the former commanding officer files and now his own [evident in the signing off personnel who were deserters or medically unfit] as he was forewarned that the Inspector General Lessard was beginning his annual inspections.

Colonel Macvicar as well deliberated on the matter of CSM George Price. Price was one of the earliest members of D Coy and had become the quartermaster of that company. On November 25, 1916 he had a uniform to pick up at the Barracks Stores. He asked for permission to use the Coy Commander Capt. Merrison's horse. Being warned of the horse's habits and in company of the stable groom George Price picked up the uniform. On his return the horse bolted, with him in saddle, and jumped a lumber wagon to fall on the other side, pinning Price and breaking his left ankle. Price went to the Military Hospital for care.

Colonel Macvicar called a Court of Inquiry November 29 and he found on January 10, 1917: "As there is no authority for CQMS Price being mounted, the responsibility for any injury reflects upon himself, notwithstanding the fact that he was on duty at the time." The break did not heal quickly and he could not go overseas with the Lambton draft, going instead to #1SS to #1SS March 20, 1917.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B7974-S057>)

There was a lot of speculation in the new year at London about what units were leaving for overseas. The authorities reminded the public about secrecy, as spelled out in the 1914 Order-in-Council, in the London Advertiser of which this is part:

Recently certain information which was vital to the expeditionary force was

communicated by members of that force to interested civilians. Other information affecting the same force has been discussed openly in the street cars and other public conveyances. The result in both cases was immediate and unfortunate in the extreme. (LA January 8, 1917).

This reminder was timely as the 118th Battalion left for Halifax that day. The immediate impact with lack of secrecy was a number of 118th men vanished.

The medical boards were meeting regularly to decide who stayed and who were to be released. Thomas Witty was released January 11. He was a carpenter and a married man who discovered to have low vision not correctable with glasses. His case was reviewed and he was deemed as MU for further service. Thomas was recorded as a 'bandsman' in the 149th.

The Arkona social column reported Mrs. Madeline Williams was returning to London after spending two weeks with her parents Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lucas. The paper did not mention that Lt. Williams had surgery (GA January 12, 1917).

The Saturday January 13 Advertiser had a small item on the 149th lineup for the evening hockey game of the 149th with the 153rd. A Lt. McNaught of Galt was listed. He was actually MacNaughton and as it turned out he did not play, the reason was not given in the later report on the game.

Recruits were trickling in. Joseph Atchison living in Petrolia attested at London January 12, 1917.

The Saturday night January 13, 1916 game was played and the newspaper reported:

*149th Battalion Wins From St. Thomas Sextet
Lambton Soldier Boys Grab First Northern League Series
Fixture by 4-3 Game Close and Exciting
McRitchie, in Goal, a Star*

The 149th Battalion hockey team get away to a good start in the series of the Northern Hockey League Saturday night at the London Curling Club rink, when the Lambton soldiers defeated the 153rd Battalion septet of St. Thomas 4-3 in a game that had both good and bad hockey mixed up careless like in it. The 149th did not display as much teamwork as the St. Thomas boys, but their individual work was good. After the local soldiers have had a little more practice they will be a much more formidable aggregation than they were Saturday night.

A Close Game

The game through out was close, and kept the small crowd of spectators on the jump all the time. Both goalkeepers were on the job, and some hair raising stops were made by both McRitchie and Hamilton. McRitchie sure put up the grand game, and it is more than likely he will be given a try out on the 118th O.H.A. team. Time and again he stopped shots that were ticketed for a score. His work

throughout the whole pastime was sensational. Bill Phillips, who used to cavort around right wing for last year's London junior O.H.A. team, played defence for the Lambton gang, but would have been effective on the forward line. Bill was the best little stickhandler on the ice and shot dead on goal. Mr. Hamilton showed great agility when William was on the job, and was always at home when Bill knocked at the door. Cotch played a nice game at centre ice. He is not very big but he was generally on the job, and scored two goals for the local seven. Harding at the left wing, though awkward, was very effective. He scored the other brace of goals for the 149th. When this boy gets to know the game better he will be gifted star. Art Nelles, a former player of the London juniors, was pressed into service, and played a steady game. It was the first time Art has been on skates this winter, and considering that fact, his game was remarkable. Mr. Dodds as the defence was generally among those pressed and broke up a number of rushes.

Gray Plays Great Game

Gray was the shining light of the 153rd 's attack. He scored two of the visitors' goals, and made himself generally useful. He also checked back well, and did some wicked shooting. Mr. McRitchie testifying to the effect. Lawrence was also effective, and scored the first goal of the evening's entertainment. The St. Thomas lads showed flashes of combustion that were real good, and would have scored more frequently had not Mr. McRitchie been guarding the nets like the Germans do their gals. Lawrence started the goal-getting by slipping a hot one past McRitchie three minutes after the puck-off. There was nothing doing in the scoring line until two minutes before the period was up, when Harding evened the count with a nice shot. In the second period the game waxed fast. Some good deathly slugging was indulged in which made the boys peeved. Bill Phillips, especially, got hot up, and played like a demon. He gave a great exhibition of skating and stick-handling, but the heavy St. Thomas defence was strong on body checking, and played for Bill every trip. Harding splashed the rubber behind Hamilton half a minute after the face off in this period, and eight minutes later Gray beat the local net minder on a nice poke. He repeated the offence three minutes later, putting the visiting crew into the lead. This ended the scoring for the period, although the Lambton boys tried desperately to even matters up.

Hands Out Advice

Manager Smythe of the 149th gave his boys a good talking to during the intermission, and they came out for the last period determined to walk away with the pastime. Phillips played up on the forward line, and the St. Thomas goal was soon in danger. Cotch bringing the team on a level once more by batting the rubber past Hamilton. Cotch gained monumental fame for himself by repeating the dose shortly afterwards. It was the last goal of the evening. Bill Legg refereed a good game. He was strictly impartial, and had his hands full, both teams being anxious to mix things up. He stopped several fights in the bud, and chased the boys to the side until their ardor cooled somewhat.

Following are the teams:

*McRitchie..... Goal.....Lawrence
PhillipsL. Defence.....Thompson
Dodds....R. Defence..... .Lawrence
CotchCentre... .Gray
Harding....L. WingWeatherforce
Nelles R. WingBurrows*

Referee Wm Legg, Hamilton

Goals First Period

153rd Battn – Lawrence- 3 minutes

149th Battn -Harding – 12 minutes

Second Period

149th Battn – Harding – ½ minute

153rd Battn – Gray – 8 minutes

153rd Battn – Gray - 12 minutes

Third Period

149th Battn – Cotch – 4 minutes

149th Battn – Cotch – 15 minutes

The notable consequence of the game was that Phillips injured his ankle and would be eventually found medically unfit.

When the London Advertiser on Monday January 15, 1917 reported on the 149th hockey defeat of the 153rd on the same page was a little item on the coming Friday night boxing (January 19) at the Liberal Club. E. Diamond was to box and Chief Ingersoll Ashkwee was to wrestle. The paper said, "The officers and men of the 149th Battalion are taking great interest in the coming battles, and it is expected that the audience will be largely a khaki one." Edward Diamond was found fit to go overseas January 22 but admitted to the military hospital March 18 with rheumatism and missed going overseas. He was found to have asthma in July 1917 and remained with the Garrison Depot until deemed medically unfit and released from the CEF August 7, 1918. Ashkwee appeared ready to go overseas after passing his medical and doing a Form of Will. When the battalion boarded the train to Halifax Ashkwee was missing. He was pardoned with the December 20, 1919 Federal amnesty.

The news was not good for the 149th recruiting two weeks into the new year. Despite the mail-in coupon with the would-be soldier's name it was reported there was only one recruit for the Lambtons (LA January 17, 1916). This was offset with the dubious transfer of the 118th AWL to the 149th of which the majority never returned to London to report. The numbers for the 149th had stabilized to around 800 men on paper.

Some men had changes to make in their marriage status. Alex MacKenzie named his mother Christine MacKenzie of Yale Michigan as his NOK when he attested June 11,

1916 in Sarnia. He was a lumber man by trade. It was noted he was AWL in July 1916 at Camp Borden but he was back in September. He was away to marry Sophia Garnett who was named in his January 19, 1917 family particulars. Back at Queens Park Urquhart was found fit February 16, 1917 and boarded the Lapland with the others.

Officers were needed to fill vacancies. Lt. James Harold Egan January 20, brought on to 149th provisional subaltern to bring the battalion to officer complement.

The inspection was not unexpected and the day came The Inspector-General Major General Lessard was in London January 22 to visit the units in MD#1. First, he requested was the latest parade state for the 149th.

Captain H. A. Trainor submitted there were 719 soldiers with the battalion. Then there was a battalion parade of those who were not in hospital or on leave.

It was reported:

Major-Gen Lessard, Inspector General, warmly commended the work of the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the 149th (Lambton) Battalions, which he inspected yesterday afternoon at Queen's Park. The chief inspecting officer apparently was satisfied with the work of the 149th in every way and complimented Lieut.-Col. McVicar. The officer commanding, who had charge of the battalion, the company commanders, the machine gun section and the stretcher-bearer section on the general excellence of the way in which they performed their respective movements. The discipline of the 149th received special notice from Major-Gen. Lessard, who congratulated the men for their steadiness on parade. The trying weather, which included an icy breeze, made anything but ideal conditions for the inspection, and the showing of the 149th is all the more creditable on this account. (LFP January 23, 1917)

General Lessard made handwritten confidential comments regarding the leadership and the unit.

January 22, 1917 Hon Capt H K Mitchell: "Not satisfactory in so far as attending to his duties owing to the fact that he was attending courses which prevented him paying strict attention to his camp."

January 22, 1917 assessment by General Lessard... "Capt. H A Trainor Has very little experience. Is very willing, energetic and qualified but will require more training to make him efficient as an adjutant."

"Few have had previous military experience."

"Major Dunfield stands out perhaps as the best and the other company commanders are fair."

"Of the platoon commanders, appeared to me as best are Lieutenants F C Browne, N Fyffe, REL Lott and B E Scott. Lieutenants J R White and W A Williams are very poor."

On Maj Moncrieff, " A very good officer who although without any military experience has turned out to be very efficient. He is tactful and well qualified. He will soon be fitted to succeed to command.

On LCol MacVicar, "A good officer, well qualified, perhaps a little brusque in manner but in my opinion very efficient. He is reported to have good control of his unit and he is fitted to command.

Parade State given by Capt Trainor the adjutant. There were 719 pers accounted for. Needed to complete the battalion was 431 pers.'

The General Observations by General Lessard were: that there has been a marked improvement in the Unit since the change of command. The audit inspection was entirely satisfactory in all Departments. During the audit inspection evidence of close supervision on the part of the District Headquarters was discernible, and where much supervision was exercised the efforts of the Branch was greatly facilitated.

The final Observation, "On the whole the battalion did not appear to have the smartness I have seen in other units."

To put it simply General Lessard was pleased. His observations would be passed to the Militia Council in Ottawa.

(Inspection RG 24, vol. 4393, file 2D. 34-7-172-2D
Inspection reports prior to leaving Canada RG 9 IIB5, vol. 6)

There was other military news.

The Sniping and Signalling courses arranged for the Armouries to begin January 22 were cancelled to January 29 (LFP January 22, 1917).

Some men still managed to slip through what was less than a more rigorous medical examination. Alfred Leighton attested at London Ontario January 27, 1917 stating that he was born at Essex, England but he did not know his age, he was single, NOK was his sister Annie Leighton at Essex England, no military experience, working as a farmer at Ilderton. Maj. Kingsmill, the senior MO, found him fit. A notation suggested he was born June 15, 1897. Alfred was on the Lapland and in Liverpool April 7, 1917. He was transferred to the 25th Res Bn April 19, 1917 where a full medical discovered his deformed legs. He was given Cat Bii which necessitated transfer to the CFC depot at Sunningdale May 1, 1917. After training there Alfred was transferred to the 37th Coy CFC in France May 18th, 1917. He survived the war.

The Monday February 5, 1917 London Free Press reported on the Saturday February 3 exhibition game in Sarnia. The game was described as fast. 'burlesque comedy' hockey at the Arena with the score of 13 to 8 in favour of the Tunnel City sextet. The 149th were the Red and White who played hard against the White and Blue Sarnia team. At five different times the score was tied by either side. It was a back and forth game with the Sarnia boys "playing cat with a mouse before final destruction." Dore, Hillman and McCart had a splendid workout on the Sarnia team. Both Prentis and Nelles of the 149th displayed creditable ability. The lineup was:

<i>Sarnia</i>		<i>149th</i>
<i>Dwyer</i>	<i>goal</i>	<i>McRitchie</i>
<i>McCart</i>	<i>defence</i>	<i>Harding</i>
<i>Hillman</i>	<i>defence</i>	<i>Prentis</i>
<i>Wright</i>	<i>centre</i>	<i>Cotch</i>
<i>Rose</i>	<i>right</i>	<i>Nelles</i>
<i>Dore</i>	<i>left</i>	<i>Leach</i>

Referee Mike Simpson Sarnia
(LFP February 5, 1917).

The recruiters were out from the district and having success. The men added to the Lambtons were given the series 846***. George Aldis was born in Yorkshire England January 17, 1899. He was living in St. Mary's Ontario with his parents Mr. and Mrs. George Aldis. He attested in London on February 6, 1917. George was unmarried and a machinist. He was now 846001. He went overseas with the 149th. Aldis was the only one attested in that number series.

The BOR continued processing men, more often for their release and sometimes because they were from another unit and had returned from AWL. William Zink came nearly tail end in the alphabetic listing of Lambtons. He was an habitual AWL. Zink returned to the Lambtons in London January 15, 1917. He had a medical January 16, 1917 and that revealed he had defective eyes and Graves disease. He was MU. William was discharged as MU February 9, 1917 under DO30 of 7.2.17. He went home to Sarnia.

There was a disruptive medical matter that was becoming increasingly of more concern affecting the entire battalion. There had been a case of mumps beginning December 23 but by February 10 a letter by Colonel Shannon to Ottawa brought the Secretary of the Militia Council disturbing news that mumps was virulent in the Lambtons. Colonel Shannon listed the cases week by week.

Despite the medical officers being briefed on assuring attestors were of age some still slipped through. Ernest Robert Liverance said he was born January 1, 1898 in Wiarton. He was living in Sarnia when he attested in London January 24, 1917. He was single, stated he was a teamster at that time. Another form states he was a butcher. It was found out later he was born December 31, 1900. He was fit. His Form of Will February

8, 1917 named Mrs. Frank Atchison as his beneficiary. She would get assigned pay. He went AWL March 5 but reappeared March 16 in time to go east, board the Lapland, land in England, get posted to the 161st by June 1, 1917. Then the actual birthdate was confirmed and he went to the Western Ontario Reserve Depot October 1 for his disposition. Ernest was sent back to Canada from Liverpool 18 October. He was discharged November 15, 1917 in London, Ontario.

On occasion soldiers originally from other units were either picked up by the military provost Major Baron Osborne or they came back on their own volition. 651943 Lazarus Kabashkung enlisted in the 160th Battalion, trained, transferred to the 153rd and transferred to the 149th according to the London Free Press Saturday February 24, 1917. Lazarus stayed and he was on the Lapland with the Battalion.

Alfred Leighton was born about June 15th, 1897 but not sure at Essex England where his sister Anne still lived. He was working as a farmer in Ilderton. He was not married. This was his statement made at London January 27, 1917. He became 844764 in the 149th.

The men listed above were typical of those joining the 149th at this point in time. They were perhaps the hesitant few or those who were rounded up from absences.

Having the one month warning for overseas Colonel Macvicar appears to have made a conscious decision that could benefit the 149th. He was aware of the spoken and printed concern about the pro-German interests in the United States possibly using this period of intense diplomatic maneuvering between the neutral United States and Imperial Germany to do acts of terrorism in Canada. The militia was asked to add sentries at vital points but refused as they did not have the soldiers. Macvicar was aware as well that many Lambtons from Sarnia would welcome a posting home. As for recruiting it was flat but it was plausible that the sight of khaki uniforms might move men from Sarnia and vicinity to join. The London Free Press reported:

Going to Sarnia – It is expected that as soon as authority can be acquired from Ottawa one company of the 149th Battalion will be sent to Sarnia for recruiting purposes. Quarters have been prepared at the Tunnel City and Lieut.-Col. McVicar, officer commanding the 149th, which is a Lambton battalion, believes that he will be successful in securing a large number of men (LFP February 16, 1917).

For the men in the Lambton ranks hockey was the attention getter. The February 16 hockey game between the 149th and 118th was reported as follows:

118th Trounces 149th In Rough Senior NHL Tilt

*Thirty Minutes of Penalties Imposed by Referee Legg
Don't Keep It Clean*

The first game between the 118th and the 149th Battalion hockey sextets in the soldier Northern League developed into a hammer and tongs after last night the

118th winning by a score of 22 to 11. It was quite apparent that not the mostly friendly feeling existed between the contestants. Before the battle subsided since many love taps were exchanged, content with two short but lively, little fisticuffs

Referee Legg tried his best to keep the game within the rudiments of clean hockey, but the players did not take him seriously and in that manner made more or less a joke of the affair.

There was absolutely no possible chance for the 149th to win, but their game fight, during the early stages of the game earned for them no end of praise, but when they introduced the chopping methods it endangered the rud[d]y complexions of every one on the ice.

Some stiff body checks were handed out, and on three occasions one man on each team was banished for too much aggressiveness at the same time in the same locality.

The 149th led by five goals to four in the first period but this advantage soon faded by the time the second period closed, as the 118th were playing their opponents off their feet, the more at the end of the second period favoring 118th by 16 to 7.

Davenport, Harding and Phillips were the pick of the 149th, while McRitchie starred in the nets. The 118th played a bang-up article, but did not really extend themselves much and Joss in the nets had a night off.

The teams:

<i>118th Battalion</i>		<i>149th</i>
<i>Joss</i>	<i>goal</i>	<i>McRitchie</i>
<i>Hagerman</i>	<i>defence</i>	<i>Phillips</i>
<i>Arthurs</i>	<i>defence</i>	<i>Harding</i>
<i>Hillier</i>	<i>centre</i>	<i>Davenport</i>
<i>Edwards</i>	<i>wing</i>	<i>Nelles</i>
<i>Leroux</i>	<i>wing</i>	<i>Leitch</i>
<i>Referee W. H. Legg of London</i>		

*Penalties: 149th 12 minutes Harding 2, Phillips 4, Leitch 2
118th 17 minutes Edwards 11, Hillier 2, Leroux 2, Hagerman 2*

The article concluded with a long list of goal scorers and the time scored.
[Art Davenport, a civilian from Glencoe, Ontario]. (LA February 17, 1917)

Elsewhere In the sports the LA kept the summary to few words:

The 118th battalion hockey gang walloped the 149th battalion soldiers 22 -11 in the Northern League game at the London Curling Club last night (February 16). The

game started out like a real hockey match, and the boys played fast hockey for the first period and part of second. The spasm then developed into one of those chopping matches. As hockeyists gang got away with some great axe work.
(LA February 17, 1917).

The 149th Band was advertised in the London Advertiser February 17, 1917 for a concert night at the Masonic Temple Monday 19th. The small advertisement said the evening was under 'the auspices of the Overseas Chapter I.O.D.E. and the popular Band of Lambton's 149th Battalion.'

Honours and awards also came to the 149th. Sergeant Jackson was presented with a medal emblematic of being the champion of Bayonet Fighting and Physical Training for Eastern Canada which was from Halifax to Windsor Ontario. Sergeant Nelson of the Lambtons was a runner-up in the 'mad minute' competition which simulated "a bayonet charge on an actual battle front." (LA February 17, 1917).

Through the week of February 11 there was a great amount of excitement and comments among the military in Canada and overseas. Rev. Dr. Charles Flanders of London wrote an article published in the British Weekly which appeared to be critical of Canadian military leadership and the effect of alcohol on troops at Canadian training camps in the UK.

Lieutenant-Colonel Macvicar was interviewed about the matter. He was concerned about the effect on recruiting. He questioned the direct quotation, "But when our men return wounded from the front with whispers of what might or might not have been. If only their brave officers had been truly themselves, our women ask their pastors, touching the moral obligation involved in the reckless exposure of their loved ones to unnecessary and criminal blundering in the hour of danger." Colonel Macvicar said, "Dr Flanders considers that because England manufactures beer our boys should not heed the call.... Flanders should be in Flanders." Macvicar and the other commanding officers were set to not do church parade to First Methodist the next Sunday, February 18. (LA February 17, 1917). District headquarters said the units in London could choose which church they attended for church parade. Dr. Flanders spoke in earnest of what he had heard was happening to good, godly Canadian boys once they got to England. Despite his reply defending his stance he caused irreparable damage to recruiting in the military district. (LA February 17, 1917).

The Advertiser reported that recruiting for the District had been up over the last two weeks. For the 149th there was little effect on the roster as only four men were added (LA February 17, 1917).

In advance of the concert evening February 19 a very clear photograph of the 149th Band appeared in the Advertiser. The concert won praise. Young Ned Robie, the four year old drummer from Petrolia, performed and had two encores.

The program had music selections, vocal solos, readings and dancing. Bandsman Harrison Williams performed an Indian Dance, Sergeant Major Grant performed a piccolo solo, Bandsman A. Zeller performed a violin solo and Bandsman J. Reid performed a cornet solo. The Band was under the direction of Martin Davies with Capt. McGillivray as the chairman. The proceeds went to the Band Fund (LA February 20, 1917).

The medical authorities at MD#1 were well into the medicals for the 149th battalion warned for overseas. January 22 is mentioned in many files as an examination day. George Haines had been in the military hospital with hives, January 9 to 17, 1917. George passed fit for overseas January 22, 1917. From then on to the actual embarkation day men would be called for a medical verification of fitness. Those in the military hospital were now released to duty often with a statement on medical fitness and whether passed for overseas. Robert Guthrie of Sarnia, Amos Iverson originally from Norway but now Sarnia and Frank Burdett originally England but now Point Edward were found fit that day.

Now into February the men found unfit in the ranks of the 149th were not off-set by new recruits. The 256th Railway Construction Battalion forming in London had received six men from the 149th. (LA February 20, 1916). To add to the failure to attest more men from Sarnia and vicinity the recruiting team of London officer Lt. William H. McPhillips of London was in Sarnia seeking men for the Army Service Corps (LA February 20, 1917).

The 149th had to attract men from outside Lambton county as it had done a year before. Harry Hershon was living in Windsor, Ontario when he attested there February 19, 1917. He stated that he was born at Bay City, Michigan April 9, 1895, his NOK was his mother Bertha Hershon of Bay City, single and a moulder. He was a fill-in for the Lambton boys not attesting.

When the enrolment count had to be up District was making demands. The 149th was to send one officer, one NCO and nine men to a bombing course starting Monday February 26. The losses continued. Charles Evans of Point Edwards was unfit because of age and was to go to the Special Service Coy (LFP February 21, 1917). Charles was released from the CEF March 12, 1917. The next day Cystenyn Evans of Alvinston but originally Wales was transferred to the Service Coy and later the Canadian Forestry Corps in England. Every day there were new declining numbers for the strength of the 149th.

A large number were simply unfit because they were in recovery from an illness or a surgery. Wilfred Walker of Point Edwards was in the hospital with mumps January 31 to February 24, 1917. He was judged fit on his release to duty and he too went up the gangplank of the Lapland. He was KIA September 2, 1918. He left a widow in Tupperville.

The Saturday papers February 24 had a lot of sports news but there was nothing on the 149th. The hockey team season was over with more defeats than victories. Every

Lambton presumably did not want to talk about it. At least they tried hard and had potential.

Colonel Macvicar had other matters to attend to. One was the completion of the Family Particulars. Each man had to state his next of kin information and for which Colonel Macvicar had to signature. Monday February 26 was such a day when Nathan Hall came in. He joined from the Tecumseh Hotel in London December 11. He said he had been in the American 7th Cavalry. He was no trouble to the Lambtons. In time he would be in England and France and in prison. Who knew?

At this time stories unsubstantiated circulated about possible war factory bombings in Canada planed by German Americans. Something had to be done to protect Sarnia industries The sending of a company of Lambtons to Sarnia to recruit was a ruse. The border security concern was behind that and the general public told a false story. The Watford paper February 23 had information on the actual recruiting and who was doing it. It would be the Band of the 149th.

Watford was the first stop and the evening outdoor concert was to be at Fowler's Rink The newspaper urged spectators to see the band February 28 (GA February 23, 1917).

February 27 was the day Gordon Ellerker died. The circumstances were not unexpected. There was a great deal of sickness in London at the time and it was reflected in the hospitalization and quarantine of a number of Lambtons. Gordon was living at RR#1 Wanstead when he attested at Forest January 8, 1916. He stated he was born in Warwick Twp April 2, 1896. His NOK was his father George. Gordon was single and he a farmer. Dr. Hubbard found him fit. Gordon was assigned to D Coy and did all the training right back to Queens Park. He readied to go overseas, doing a Form of Will in favour of his mother Mrs. George Ellerker February 7 and a form saying he would go to special service if he could not go overseas signed off February 9, 1917. Gordon was passed fit for overseas February 14, 1917. He did not go. Gordon contracted tubercular meningitis February 14 and deceased at the Military Hospital in London on February 27, 1917. He was a promising farmer and aspiring soldier. Gordon is interred at Beechwood Cemetery, Forest, Ontario.

(<https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B2863-S056>)

With the departure date for Halifax still uncertain and the ongoing medical for all there was an officer addition. Harold Pinkerton came to the 149th at Queen's Park December 12, 1916 seeking a commission with the Lambtons. Dr. Mitchell, the MO, found him fit. His papers went forward to District and Ottawa, Mr. Pinkerton was commissioned as a lieutenant with the Lambtons February 27, 1917. He was not selected as an officer to go over with the battalion.

Tuesday February 28 the thirty man band of the 149th arrived in Watford to begin their recruiting circuit of Lambton to add men to the battalion. The band played the patriotic rally and skating night at Fowler's Rink. The route planned was Petrolia Wednesday, Brigden Thursday, Courtright Friday, Saturday and Sunday at Sarnia, Monday Forest,

Tuesday Thedford and back to Watford Wednesday. The band was to return to London on Thursday March 8. (GA March 2, 1917).

The Watford paper had previously shared a London Advertiser article about the benefit concert held in London February 19 and added comments about the band being in the charge of Sergeant Martin Davies "...who has become so popular with the people of London on account of the fine work of the band. It is expected that the different towns enroute will respond well and assist the campaign." (GA March 2, 1917).

The paper said the band...

made an imposing sight as they marched up Main street from the station.... Their march was inspiring and of great volume....[T]hey gave a number of selections at the post office corner to a good crowd of pleased hearers and were highly praised by all who heard them (GA March 2, 1917).

The concert evening February 28 had a crowd of about 200. It was reported that there was an excellent program of music. During the intermission Capt. Hindson of Headquarters spoke, urging "...young men to enlist to help bring the war to a successful finish." The rink was free of charge and about \$50 was raised for the Red Cross. (GA March 2, 1917). The other communities had similar crowds as the weather dictated

The band returned to Watford and performed the evening of March 9 at the Lyceum. The paper commented, "The program was of a high order and ranged from classical selections to popular airs and the players as proficient in grand opera overtures as national melodies." As well, "Watford is proud to have some of its own amongst the members." The audience was thought small due to the inclement weather. The Lambton Chapter I.O.D.E. presented a wristlet to each man. The opinion of the paper was, "We doubt if there is a better Military Band in the province." (GA March 9, 1917).

In the same paper Lieut.-Col. Macvicar made his last printed request for men of Lambton County to enlist. He stated the battalion was soon to leave. The roll stood at 700 and the 149th needed 300 more men. Macvicar observed,

Is it possible that we, as a generation, have really weakened? Do we thoroughly realize that, to weaken now, is certainly to fail? This final appeal to you is to your advantage. It is to point to a duty, to which both the heart and the conscience of the county [']s call.

W.W. McVicar

Lt. Col. McVicar Commanding

The Forest Standard printed the same appeal March 15, 1917. There was no great rush to join.

Colonel Macvicar was well aware of what was happening. Men were disappearing in some cases after doing good service for nearly a year and some with less time too.

Edward Temple joined at Alvinston March 1, 1916. He was found fit for overseas February 8, 1917 and he disappeared March 3 and officially a deserter March 22 as the much reduced numbers of the 149th boarded the train for Halifax.

Sam Dale from England joined February 16, 1917. He was found unfit for infantry February 6 because of moderate flat feet. He was medically boarded and offered a place with the 122nd battalion, raised for forestry, on March 12. He eventually was on active duty with 3rd Battalion Infantry in France.

The movement of the 149th depended on a number of factors. The Annual Audit and the Annual Inspection had gone well. There was a myriad of other matters though. A Clothing Board had to be held and Colonel Macvicar asked for this. District provided a Board of Officers who examined the equipment to be returned to the Ordnance Stores, the clothing records of the men and the wear on their clothing, March 20. Everything was in order and the report was sent to the Quartermaster-General in Ottawa (683-330-17).

Arrangements were made to return surplus clothing and equipment to MD#1 Ordnance. Medical Boards were reassessing the unfit. Everything was falling into place except the men and there was a continuing decrease as the roster was formalized.

Each man was responsible for his kit and with many in as long as some the less kit on charge was better when it came time to clear their kit being taken overseas. Pte. William Wright, of RR#2 Wyoming, had his cap and brass badges as well as personal items. At the time of going overseas he had on charge: 1 pair boots, nil great coat, 1 jacket serge, 1 jacket sweater, nil puttees pairs, nil shirts service, 1 trousers lounge, nil trousers service, nil drawers, 2 shirts flannel, 1 shirts sweater, 2 pr socks, nil rubbers, and nil chevrons 1bar, 2bar, 3bar. No doubt he had acquired through purchase or had 'found' what he needed. A year as a soldier taught him a lot about soldiering.
(Inspection reports, clothing and equipment RG 24, vol. 1667, file HQ 683-330-7
Inspection reports RG 24, vol. 1667, file HQ 683-330-8)

The last of the men quarantined for mumps were released from the hospital. Colonel Shannon informed Ottawa, "All the men of this Unit remaining in quarantine...have been discharged and the Battalion is now free of this Disease." (683-330-4).

The London Advertiser published an anonymous poem:

To the 149th Battalion

Since the fateful day in August, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen

The good old Forest City - of battalions much has seen –

But on top of all for qualities, that make a soldier shine,

Unanimous opinion marks battalion 149.

Their escutcheon stands unequalled

'tis a thought of sweetest sound

*No matter whether it's to France or Egypt they are bound-
The foe may take a toll – horrible of its kind
But there's consolation as a true 149.
Issued is the order and the boys will now prepare
To follow soon the glorious path to do their proper share
In crushing down the lying foe who's tried his best to grind
The freedom of our Empire – to the front, the 149!
The months they've tarried in our midst have forged a lasting tie
And our hearts will feed a natural pang when wishing them good-bye
But we're proud to know they're helping to break the tyrant's line
So here's good luck to every boy of our 149.
(LA March 15, 1917).*

There is no way to know the true feeling citizens of Lambton County had for its soldiers. The citizens of London seemed pleased that the Lambton's Own had wintered there.

The Forest Standard republished the appeal of Lieut.-Col. Macvicar March 16. By then the appeal fell on deaf ears. The death of Pte. Gordon Ellereker was noted as well (FS March 15, 1917).

The Watford paper had more timely items. It offered advice to creditors of soldiers in the C.E.F. that accounts should be cleared as after men left for overseas such accounts were lost. Soldier wages could not be garnisheed. The paper added that as of March 15 the company of the 149th stationed in Sarnia was returning to London. The last item associated with the 149th was that Lt. and Mrs. Williams of London were in Arkona for a few days (GA March 16. 1916).

The Battalion Orderly Room was now especially busy roughing out the nominal roll of who was medically fit, who had completed Forms of Will and the matter of NCOs to cover the sections in platoons. James Hargraves of Petrolia was raised to that rank March 16, 1917 but disappeared March 20th (DO 60 of 16.3.17).

There were men reappearing from long absences. 845188 William Reynolds, a Salvation Army officer from Sarnia, passed a new medical March 16, 1917 and became 845197. He would die of wounds August 9, 1918. Carl Baxter from Mount Brydges, formerly of the 135th and AWL, asked to be taken on with the 149th. He was fit.

There seemed no end to the medical rejections. Harold Jamieson of Watford, a 149th since December 11, 1915, failed his medical March 17 and deemed unfit for further service. He was home in Watford Sunday March 18th with his return to civilian life noted in the paper. (GA March 23, 1917).

Even in the waning hours before departure men joined. 844312 DAVIS, Harold Bernard was not from Lambton County. He was born in Toronto, York County, November 28, 1895. He was living in London with his father William Davis. His mother lived in Chicago. It was in the last days of the Lambtons in London that Harry attested. Much happened that day. There was a small presentation in the battalion orderly room to accept the Kings and Battalion Colours. One of the officers was marrying. Perhaps these made Harry join up. Harry attested March 19, 1917, fit for infantry. He was a clerk, unmarried and absolutely no military training. There would be a rush to kit him to make him presentable enough as a soldier. At Halifax he boarded the Lapland as the others.

The London Free Press commented:

With the departure of the 149th Battalion London will have lost one of the finest battalions ever quartered in this city. Composed of young, clean cut and red-blooded men who have themselves to be possessed of refinement and manliness. The discipline of the 149th has been well-nigh (sic) faultless, and it is considered in this respect one of the best units in the country. And these qualities have not gone unnoticed by the citizens of London. Everywhere the Lambton lads have gone they have left an impressive good-fellowship and were always welcomed on a second visit. In athletics, in musical circles and in military circles their record is an enviable one, and they will indeed be missed for Londoners whom they leave behind.

The article briefly covered the battalion organizational history with the names of the three commanding officers, recognized their military training, athletic accomplishments and their part played in social functions in the community. The article concluded, "Although it is not known when the 149th will leave it is safe to say that the many friends its members have won in London will be on hand when they leave to wish them good luck and godspeed." (LFP March 19, 1917).

Unknown to the public the 149th was slated to leave London March 22. A large delegation from Sarnia arrived from Sarnia Monday morning March 19 to present the regimental colours to the Lambton's Own. It was a crisp 20 degrees Fahrenheit but a formal parade was not planned due the fact that equipment had been turned in, other items packed and the staff extremely busy with final preparations before the move. No invitations had been extended and the informal ceremony took place in the battalion offices at Queen's Park. Mrs. Macvicar, wife of the commanding officer presented the regimental colours and Mrs. W.T. Goodison, wife of the president of the Sarnia board of trade, presented the King's colours in the presence of friends and relatives. There was no reception. The colours returned to Sarnia and were later deposited at the county courthouse (LFP March 19, 1917).

That morning had another presentation. Charles Woodrow had been the Battalion Sergeant Major of the 149th but he was released from the CEF and then appointed to the commissioned rank of Lieutenant (LA March 19, 1917).

The flurry of activity continued. The BOR processed the transfer of Clifford Duncan of Brigden into the 122nd Battalion as he was medically unfit for infantry but suitable for forestry (DO 63 of 20.3.1917). At the end of the day the report was received from the Clothing Board. The battalion had all its stores returns accounted for and thus ready to start their move to Halifax.

Those granted leave or overnight passes were back. Many no doubt had used the time to say their goodbyes. For Lt. Wilfred Cheyne it was a wedding. On March 21 he married Florence Maud Stevely who was a daughter of a former alderman and mayor of London Ontario. There is speculation that the couple made arrangements for Wilfred to meet the battalion in Halifax. (Lt Williams wrote Florence was not permitted to board the Lapland to see Wilfred off overseas).

CHAPTER EIGHT EMBARKATION

DEPARTURE

The long-awaited day came. The Battalion formed up at 1.30 p.m. Thursday March 22 at the parade square at Queen's Park. After a roster call, with little doubt there were names not answered, the battalion marched up Quebec street to the C.P.R. station with the band at the head. The newspaper accounts described what was estimated as nearly 600 men looking in every way as Tommies, "as they swung...carrying packs, blankets, and full equipment, their kit bags under their arms. They lacked the rifles to make one feel that they were marching behind the lines in France" (FS March 29, 1917).

The previous two days were described as bustling preparation but now at an end as the men were on their way and followed by a large crowd of family and friends who came into London or residents who wanted to see the popular boys of Lambton off.

On their arrival at the station the men were marched into an area cordoned off by a detachment from the 63rd battery which kept the crowd away from the men. The men were loaded in the coaches and when the last were aboard the crowd was allowed forward to the coaches to wave their loved ones good-bye. The train began to roll out at 3.30 p.m. with the men on their way to 'an eastern training camp' (FS March 29, 1917).

The men went with a lunch provided by the Overseas Chapter of the I.O.D.E. Each box contained, in addition to sandwiches, cake and fruit, cigars donated by local manufacturers (FS March 29, 1917).

The Forest Standard concluded, "Forest and Lambton county generally unite in wishing Lt. Col. MacVicar and the men of the 149th a safe voyage to England and the fullest measure of success to officers and men individually when they join their Canadian comrades at the front." (FS March 29, 1917).

The story of the 149th does not conclude with the Lambton boys leaving on the train. There is more.

As there are no preserved Daily Orders or other battalion records the story is brought together by surviving letter and diaries of the men of the unit or those associated closely with the battalion through their service. The letters of Lt. Williams add to that story.

THE LAMBTON'S OWN TRIP TO HALIFAX

Lt William Williams wrote a letter to Madeline March 23, 1917:

*Somewhere Ontario
March 23rd. 1917
11:30am
Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona Ont.*

Dear Madeline,

Will write you a list of our doings. I am feeling fine just now but have been sick as usual. We are at present about 50 miles from Montreal and expect to be in at 12:30 P.M. Today is bright and thawing some. The country is covered with snow and fences half buried. Perhaps two feet of snow on the level. The country for over a hundred miles back or since leaving Smith Falls is stony and very poor soil and covered with small poplars and evergreen trees. There are nothing but crows everywhere you look and seem to be their home. This part of the country is old and not up to date, rail fences wherever you look and the houses small frames. No place like Lambton Co. for me if farming was my profession. Nearly all the buildings are white washed and are few and far between.

The boys are all well and are enjoying themselves playing cards and music and others writing letters. The train just stopped at a station and I can write just a little better but she starts again now. Just about 1 minute stop. The place is St. Polycarte Jnc. It's well named. We passed thru Toronto about 11pm last night, arrived at Smith Falls we halted half an hour. Ed. Crawford called up, Pvt Wright and he came down to see us all. I scribbled a card just in a minute and gave it to him to mail. He looks fair and was glad to see us all. Well I have not much news to tell as this is a poor place for news and I am just coming to life again after a sick night of it. I went to bed at 9 P.M. and got up at 6 A.M. Not very much sleep for a starter. No one slept much. The Bn left Queens Park 4:30 and marched to the train and loaded at once pulling out 5:35. There was a large crowd at the station and I believe we got the best send off of any Bn I ever saw go away. The papers will tell all about it no doubt. There are about 575 men altold. I only wish you could of seen the Bn leaving. The Officers have a sleeper and dining car. I am glad I did not bring any lunch as we all are fed in the dining car at the Government expense and believe me it's some meal. I also had a ' good bed all to myself and will be comfortable.

We have just passed St. Clet. Stn. The men are being well fed and are comfortable. I went into dinner last night at 7 P.M. And 30 minutes later was relieved of it. Just two hrs after leaving London. Well I went to bed and felt better this morning only at Smith Falls. I was sick again and after 9 A.M. Tried some breakfast and now feel alright I guess I was worried too much and flustered also but I will be alright now, and hope to be able to sleep and eat. I heard at Smith Falls that we were the 8th train load of troops passed thru in 24hrs. There will surely be some doings when they get to Halifax.

Well I will write again after leaving Montreal as there will be nothing important this side. I will mail this lingo and hope this will be interesting. It's awful hard to write so \ excuse the writing. Hope you are feeling better and that all are well. Remember me to all. I hope you arrived home alright.

Have just passed Vaudreuil and in Montreal in 30 minutes.

P.S. I will write you as promised and don't worry about being sick as we are all much looked after.

*Goodbye,
Your loving husband,
Will.*

<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/march-1917.html>)

The letter has information that calls into question the departure time given in the newspaper article printed March 29 in the Forest Standard, reprinted from the March 23, 1917 London Advertiser. The number of men is a question in itself. It is doubtful the adjutant knew the number who actually boarded the train. Pte. Wright was probably William Edward Wright of D Coy and from Wyoming. The NCO was Sgt. John Crawford of Arkona.

William Williams continued his letter writing:

*Somewhere Quebec
March 24th .17
3:30 P.M.
Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona
Ont.*

Dear Madeline.

I will try and scribble a few lines this day. The day is fine and cloudy, thawing some. This is very cold country compared to ours. Ever since we left Montreal the snow has been two to 6 feet deep every where. I am sure there will be snow here until June. Parts of Quebec the country is perfectly level and all the fences are buried up, only tops of posts showing. They are sure some people these French. I am sure they don't know there is a war on. They just gop at us guys. Their houses are small frame and there are no barns only stables. They live on beans and potatoes so they tell me.

They don't seem windy enough for such strong fruit. We have just passed Trois Pistolis a small village and nearly buried with snow. Several of the villages we have passed have thousands of cords of green pulp wood piled up. I guess this is about all they have to sell. The houses are full of kids thru Quebec. They believe in the scriptures. Well enough said about these poor innocents. We are at present travelling close to the south of the St Laurence River. It is clear and seems to be miles wide perhaps two to 5 miles wide. I and a good view of the Quebec bridge with the broken span. It sure will some bridge when completed. We stopped for 40 min at Riviere De Loup and this is all since leaving Montreal. We are travelling awful slow since leaving Montreal. This is a heavy train 15 coaches. There was 4 different engines last night taking us 50 miles in 10 hrs.

All the boys are well and feeling rather tired after the long train ride. They are quiet and do considerable sleeping thru the day. I believe it will be Monday before we get to Halifax. We have to cross thru New Brunswick yet. I forgot about myself but that is a good thing. I am not the least sick now and enjoy the ride. I spend much time with the boys as there is always something going on. Alf feels fine and will be able to tell some story when he gets home. I would rather travel west than east. You and I will surely go out west for a trip when I get back. This is not fair for me to go and you not to see some of the world. You must sure have a trip someday. Will write again tomorrow. We passed Rimouski 6:30 A.M. We are at a new place and the train is stopping. I will try and mail this at once.

*Goodbye
Your loving Husband
Will*

<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/march-1917.html>

The train load moves into New Brunswick:

*Somewhere New Brunswick
March 25th 17
12:30 P.M.
Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona
Ont.*

Dear Madeline,

This is a lovely day sunshine and warm. The fields of New Brunswick are getting clear of snow. We stopped at Monckton N.B. For 30 minutes. They met the train and paraded the boys around town. We are getting back into civilization again. They told us we form the 15 train of troops the last two days. The northern part of New Brunswick is deep with snow and all pine. There is lots of game in this country. We passed through N.B. In the night so had not much to write. I went to bed 10 P.M. And slept 8 A.M. We spiked our watches on 1hr in N.B. All the boys are well and I feel the best. All busy writing and reading. No church parade today.

Williams came back to his letter and continued,

*Somewhere in Nova Scotia
March 25th 1917
3 P.M.*

We passed into N.S. About 2:30 and have just passed Amherst. This was a large place and looks like home now. The snow has nearly all gone here and we see a few buildings and farms like at home. We expect to hit Halifax about 9 P.M. And will fill up a letter by that time. Have just passed Macan. We are travelling at a fast clip today.

8:30 Well we have seen some great sights going thru N.S. There was so much doing this afternoon I could not sit down and write until now. We got orders at Truro that we would board tonight about 9:30. We are now only 30 miles from Halifax. We are the senior Bn and we board first. There are 17 train loads. We were 15 all along and the last two hrs have passed 8 train loads. We have 60 miles from Truro to make in 2 hrs and we are travelling some. This is sure some great bunch of troops, all the way from Alberta. I was just up to see the boys and they are feeling fine. Now this is all the news of the day. Should we pull out at once there will be no more letters until the other side. Will try and wire if possible but if the Col does it for all you will understand. It is so rough I can't hardly write. So will close. Remember me to all and in your prayers don't forget your hubby. I am feeling fine and will not be sick unless all are sick.

*Wishing you health and Happiness. I remain your loving husband
Will. X*

<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/march-1917.html>

The Lambton's Own coaches pulled into the Halifax rail yard adjacent to Pier 2 the morning of March 25. The men where in need of ablutions and exercise. The trip from London had stretched over three days with short breaks in Smith Falls, Montreal, Moncton and now they anticipated a 'hurry up and wait'.

To their surprise they were immediately embarked on board the SS Lapland. Some were familiar with the activity as they were themselves recent emigrants to Canada. For many others it was a new experience. Most did not realize the Lapland had hours before previously filled its bunkers with coal, topped off the water tanks and stored provisions for the trip to an unknown British port across the Atlantic Ocean.

The men lighted from the coaches, formed into their platoons and waited.

The dock manager briefed Colonel MacVicar and the headquarters staff and in turn the junior officers received their orders. All their personal gear would be carried. Men were assigned to assemble the officer luggage and battalion stores of files and equipment. These were left with the longshore men, hopefully being properly stored. Then the Battalion began a long line at the gangplank to board.

As each man went up the gang plank he was given a card which told him exactly where his bunk was and where he was to take his meals and his sitting time. As well he received an instruction card which emphasized in simple language safety on the ship and his responsibility.

TABLE 14 Safety Card

A life preserver will be found in each bunk and will be returned where found before debarking.

The use of tobacco, either smoking or chewing, is prohibited at all times in the berthing spaces. Smoking is permitted on open decks only.

No food will be eaten in the berthing spaces or latrines.

Air ports must be kept closed at all times, except when opened by a sailor detailed for that duty.

Do not throw rubbish, rolls of toilet paper, candy tins or cigarette packages in the latrines.

Do not spit on deck, inside or outside.

Do not throw paper or rubbish about the decks, there are cans provided for that purpose. Use them.

Wash your mote gear in the troughs provided for that purpose.

Do not touch drinking fountains with your lips. To do so may spread disease.

Scrub your teeth and wash your hands before each meal. It will prevent "catching disease."

Loud talking, gambling, profane or obscene language, and all unnecessary noise and confusion are strictly forbidden.

In case of "Abandon Ship" remember there is lots of time, move as quickly as possible but do not crowd or pack. To do so will cause confusion and possible loss of life.

Source:

(https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=2555233228138046&set=qm.2626386994317485&type=3&eid=ARDes0kr4ko4GZLUKqYtJMxdXoxoEKJaKy518cOx9ZX6ZNq51pP8CD2sw68RO_cO-bGNnyNWjW91q0n4&ifg=1)

(<https://exhibits.library.unt.edu/wwi-poetry/uss-madawaska-instructions-troops-card>)

At the top of the gang plank stewards directed the men to follow them through doors, hallways, down steps and into their assigned rooms and bunks. They received instructions about care of their rooms, where the latrines were and where they could walk and not walk. For most of the men it was a foreign language being sea terms and such spoken to boys from the city and country. Doors were now bulkheads, latrines were heads, stairs were ladders.

If Grosvenor Camp, Camp Borden and Queen's Park did anything for them they seasoned them as soldiers looking for comfort and keep on little effort. For many

Lambtons the accommodation and meals were better than expected. The officers had state rooms and a lounge area for their meals and relaxation. The NCOs had their own area in the second class with similar amenities as the officers. The men had bunks of four to six in a room and assigned tables in a dining room. The meals were on the Canadian scale, at the level of 3rd class passengers. If that were not enough a canteen was available. The Lambtons settled in.

The Lambtons benefitted from a refined and improved system. The Lapland had had a number of military trips both ways across the Atlantic behind her. The authorities attempted a quick turn around from port to port. At Halifax the troop loading and departure was two days, depending on the weather.

The Lapland finished loading with the 186th and the 244th and moved into Beford Basin to get the men sorted out, briefed on the ship routine, practice lifeboat drill after first finding the boat and managing the lineup for meals. There was free time but that came after the routine of drill, fatigues, physical exercise and talks by their officers. It was similar to the routine of Queens Park. There was guard duty which was as standby to 'dog' locks on watertight passageways if required in an emergency such as being hit by a torpedo, doing so under command of an officer on guard duty. Every man knew he too had responsibilities on shipboard. (Innis 2016, p.48-50).

A letter to Madeline Williams from her husband tells his observations of the 149th on the Lapland:

*Halifax Harbor, N.S.
March 27th. 1917
11 A.M.*

*Mrs. W.A. Williams
Arkona. Ont Can.*

Dear Madeline,

I now take the pleasure of writing you. All the boys are well and myself feeling fine. This is Tuesday P.M. and we have just finished physical training. All the Battalions had 1 hr from 9.30 to 10.30. The 149- 186 and 244 are at once so you may picture 1800 men on the decks. There are immense crew on this boat. Well we are certainly comfortable and have good quarters. Our men are on the 2nd and 3rd decks. The officers have 1st class. I have a lovely room and in the centre of the ship. I will tell you about the ship when I get back. She is 620 ft long and 18000 tons. We have the fastest and best boat. The Metagama has 2.500 but she is only a troop ship and not like ours. The Southland is loaded and lying near us. The Saxonian is loading and I believe the Tunisian is the other boat. I met Mr Young on the wharf, also F.C. Browne, Beatty and McNaughton. They are all on the Southland with the negroes.

They sure looked when they seen us pull in and go right on the Lapland. Mr Young

looks well and had only a hand shake with him. Well we loaded Sunday evening and are all lying in the harbour and no one knows when we will pull out. It will likely be tonight sometime. The harbour is full of boats of all nations. The warships are outside the harbour and cannot be seen from where we are anchored. We are anchored in the centre of the Harbor. No one was allowed off the boat and no message can leave the boat. This letter will be held for five days before going on. Mrs Capt Chenye heard we would be held in Halifax and she came down often and of course nothing doing.

She can go back. There are no females on this boat so I will be alright so far. I heard there was 12 nurses on the Southland. Perhaps they may bring some out and board on this boat. It is sure a batchelors hall. The meals are good and we are well waited on. This is one time the 149 has been used the best. The 186 comes from Kent and I know nearly all the officers. The 244 Bn is Kitcheners Own from Montreal. They are all English and a good bunch. They are about 700 strong. Now I will have to close soon and will just have the trip to write about. There are so many incidents I could write books but will not do so this time. We do not see any papers, so will not know when the war is over. We expect to be two weeks going over as we only travel as fast as the slowest boat. This one can go in 6 days. Now you must now worry as I will be with so many and worry will do no good. I only wish you were with me and I could enjoy myself, but no one is allowed over now and all the officers had to leave their wives behind. I expect you wrote on Sunday and I will get it soon in England. Madeline be sure and take care of yourself and remember me to all. GoodBye for now. Your loving husband, Billie X

P.S. 3, 15. 28th Am officer on guard ship. Am going this to the pilot to mail, expect to go out of harbour before night. Will

<https://lambton149thbattalion.blogspot.com/p/march-1917.html>)

There were no more letters until Williams was in England.

Unknown to the Lambtons the Forest Standard gave a summary of the Lambton's Own departure that appeared March 29:

After two or three days of bustling preparation the packing was finally completed, and owing to the excellent arrangement of Lieut -Colonel MacVicar and his staff everything was in fine shape. The men looked the typical "Tommy" as they swung along about 600 strong carrying packs, blankets and full equipment, their kit bags under their arms or swung over their shoulders. They only lacked the rifles to make one feel that they were marching behind the lines in France."

The Standard continued:

An excellent tribute to the popularity of the Lambton boys was the large crowd in which while a large number of men were present, women predominated. A large representation of the headquarters staff of this district also attended. Each officer and man of the draft was provided with a dainty lunch by members of the Overseas

Chapter I.O.D.E. Each box contained, in addition to sandwiches, cake, fruit and cigars." (FS March 29, 1917).

Private David Aikin of Wheatley, Ontario was on the Lapland as a member of the 186th draft. He recorded his passage and highlighted the daily events:

March 27,

We arrived in Halifax at 4.30 P.M. We had just a short walk to the docks where we got aboard at 7.30 and we got some supper.

(https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/aba81b1e3abac802db85fe05d3facc9a/the-letter-of-private-private-david-aikin/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3MU_7y5q7fvADmJ4Lesir8JXh3SV27uj3Fyk-IZPHMEgkyQei7S4hkD2Y)

As the men boarded the ship each received a Meal time, Berth location and Safety Card.

TABLE 15 Accommodation and Life Boat

**S.S. LAPLAND
KEEP THIS CARD**

**You will occupy ONE BERTH
SECTION N Room.....**

**You will Mess at Table No. 53 in
Dining Room Aft 1st Sitting**

**Note ; - This card must be
Punched when a meal is served
and no meal will be served without it.**

**You are assigned to Boat P.....
Raft 13.....**

General safety orders

- 1. Never open air port or Opening in the Ship's side**
 - 2. Do not tamper with any machinery, apparatus or electric lamps**
 - 3. Smoking permitted on upper decks**
 - 4. No smoking below decks at any time
No smoking below decks**
-

Source:

(<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10156495868473915&set=oa.2198779230411599&type=3&theater>)

The LAPLAND embarked troops at Halifax 25 March 1917 and sailed on the 28th with the METAGAMA, MISSANIA, SAXONIA, and SOUTHLAND, escorted by HMS CALGARIAN.

(SS LAPLAND LAC RG E Volume 559 File 211-4 (Reel T-60)

The Lambton's Own, then Kent's Own and lastly the Kitchener's Own were aboard. They did not put to sea immediately but anchored in Bedford Basin.

All soldiers were asked for mail and many would write. The mail was delayed as all mail was censored for security reasons. The ships left that evening without lights and shepherded into the Atlantic by HMS Calgarian.

On his trip on the Lapland Pte. Harold Fowler recorded the distance in nautical travelled by the Lapland, given by Officer of Day, courtesy the watch officers:

TABLE 16 Distance in Nautical Miles

218 Thursday	[29 March]
296 Friday	[30 March]
304 Sat	[31March]
226 Sun	[1 April]
297 Mon	[2 April]
265 Tuesday	[3 April]
287 Wed	[4 April]
306 Thurs	[5 April]
350 Friday	[6 April]
150 Sat	[7 April]

2679 miles total

Source

(<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10157922563788915&set=oa.2198779230411599&type=3&theater&ifg=1>)

Pte. Aikin's diary continued:

March 28, Well we are still in harbour....This ship is well guarded in case there should be any spies on board We have had pysical [sic] drill and life boat drill and wore our life belts for the first time 8 P.M. [W]e weighed anchor at 4 oclock [sic] this afternoon....

March 29,

Well I got up at six o'clock this morning and took a walk around the Promenade deck the air was cool and bracing it was a beautiful morning the ocean is quite calm....We did nothing but eat and lie about all day it was to [sic] nice a day to work I guess.

March 30,

...we done a little Pysical [sic] drill and carried out our Boat drill[.]

No diaries of that time exist from the 149th men. Because the 244th has letters and diaries preserved from that time Lapland story continues with what Signaller Raymond

Duval wrote in his diary:

Wednesday March 28, 1917: Didn't go on duty last night too much fog. So went to bed and had a good sleep. Had boat drill in the forenoon am in boat #4 A Lieut Hort in charge mostly all men of 15 platoon in this boat. Wrote Clare a postal but couldn't get it off. Set sail from Halifax about 4:30pm. Went on duty at 6:00pm till 8 o'clock got few messages from HMS Calgarian.

[\(https://royalmontrealregiment.com/category/history/duval-diary/\)](https://royalmontrealregiment.com/category/history/duval-diary/)

Thursday March 29, 1917: Beautiful night grand sight to see the convoy steaming out to sea. Wafted a kiss to my dear wife as the shores of Canada gradually faded away wonder when I shall see her again Got up and had breakfast a lot of men very sick including the C.O. Maj. Pillow and the Adj[utant] feeling fine so far on deck all morning and a grand day on the sea can see the other five boats of the party Guess will start a serial to my little girl

Friday March 30, 1917: Went on signal duty on Conning Tower from 4 – 8 am saw a steamer heading for Halifax also saw four big whales The 6" in gun on stern was fired twice for practice smashing a barrel. The cruiser stopped a strange working ship heading westward went to bed and will write some more to my little wife before going to sleep.

Saturday March 31, 1917: Pay day – nothing unusual to report was on sig[nal] duty from 4 to 6 Beautiful day pretty heavy breeze guess I will write a few words to wifie before going to bed.

Sunday April 1, 1917: Not much to do except eat and sleep today stiff breeze blowing and heavy sea rolling otherwise fine feeling tip top.

Monday April 2, 1917: Still a high wind blowing not much doing woke up with a splitting headache didn't feel good all day – felt very lonely for my little girl but hadn't the energy to write her got to bed pretty early was on duty from 12 to 4am.

Tuesday April 3, 1917: Got up feeling ok again boat drill this am and went on duty from 12 to 4pm. Nothing out of the ordinary today guess will write a few lines to my Little Wife

Wednesday April 4, 1917: Fine weather but windy towards went on Sig[nal] Duty 8 to 12 strange ship on starboard bow dark left her for astern everybody very nervous on acct [account] of being now all in war zone

Thursday April 5, 1917: Fine day – escort of 6 destroyers came up about 9am have left Saxonia and Southland for behind we are now steaming about ½ mile astern of Calgarian

Friday April 6, 1917: Nothing unusual. Fine weather. Finished letter to my little girl. Prior to arrive safely in Liverpool went to bed about 12.30

Saturday April 7, 1917: Woke up with a start as our ship struck a mine off the mouth of the [?] damaging bows and killing one from D Co (Walton) Rushed to deck but we did not put out boats as front compt [compartment] only busted. Stayed on deck till 5.30 when we disembarked and got on train and came to Shoreham camp getting here at 6pm when we immediately marched to huts and slept on floor pretty cold too.

(<https://royalmontréalregiment.com/history/duval-diary/>)

As is the case in many sudden events there were other perceptions of what occurred on the SS Lapland April 7. Pte Aikin of the 186th wrote:

[W]ell we had quite an experience coming up to Liverpool when we were about 15 miles from there it was about 12 oclock a.m. we had just got our Pilot aboard and everything looked lovely and we were feeling quite safe so most of us went down below for a little while, till we would get close to the dock. I had just laid down on a bench by the table and was covering my eyes with my cap when there was a crash and rattle everything that was loose and glasses came down[.] [T]he ship seemed to rise right out of the water then it seemed as if it was going away down into the bottom of the ocean. On realizing that something had happened I found myself on my hands and knees [“hollering grab your lifebelts boys[“] but somebody had already grabbed mine[.] I had laid it on the floor beside me when I laid down but I soon got another. We got up on deck and to our boats as soon as possible[.] [T]here was men Pouring out of the gangways. There was no excitement everyone seemed to be saying “take your time” and they did so. No one got hurt going up. There was two men of the 244 Batt. killed and a couple of men of the 149, and one of our men got hurt by the explosion of the mine. It will take a long time to forget the sound and the gas that comes from it.

(https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymaps/aba81b1e3abac802db85fe05d3facc9a/the-letter-of-private-private-david-aikin/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3MU_7y5q7fvADmJ4Lesir8JXh3SV27uj3Fyk-IZPHMEgkyQei7S4hkD2Y)

Pte. Aikin continued with his vivid memory of that day's sights and sounds:

We got our boats and the roll called all men on board answered except two which was killed....After Roll we stood to (sic) our boats the ship began to settle - it looked as if we would have to we travelled at half speed. We got to Liverpool at about five o'clock then we went below and got what we could of our equipment we then disembarked and had a couple of hours for a train....

There were two fatal casualties due to the mine. The merchant marine casualty was Trimmer James O'Connor.

The soldier killed on the SS LAPLAND April 7, 1917 was 1054576 WALTON, William Blackett, a member of the 244th, who was coming home as he was born in England. He

The 149th and the 186th left Liverpool and found themselves in the urban outskirts of Liverpool over to Birmingham and eventually to Liphook. From there the two battalions route marched to Bramshott where the battalions were placed in the Segregation Camp.

The 149th had a short wait for its train. Before leaving Lieut.-Colonel Macvicar sent his obligatory telegram.

The actual embarkation count was 447 men. There 18 officers making 465. Of these, 12 men were added from other units which had already sailed for England. They were the ones who had deserted or were held back because of illness.

(<https://data2.archives.ca/e/e444/e011087758.pdf>)

The unit Medical Officer, Capt. Harry Mitchell, was ordered not to go by headquarters but managed to be attached to the 149th at the last minute. Unknown to the Colonel was that four ORs had stowed away from London and their Lambton friends his them until they were at sea. These soldiers were Henry Ward of Sarnia, Albert Cogger of Sarnia, Oswald Matthews of Sarnia and Clarence Wilson of Petrolia. These soldiers were medically re-boarded and assigned service as their health permitted.

In a sense the story of the 149th ended here. After the 10 days in quarantine the men were administratively moved into the 25th Reserve Battalion. The men delivered to England was 451. The total attestation was 1062 men. Colonel Bradley arrived at Grosvenor Camp with 1033 men. The attrition was due to medical unfitness and desertion. Perhaps 200 of the medically unfit at the time did find employment in CEF. Many remained in London with the 1st Special Service Company or moved into units such as railway construction or forestry and overseas that way. Some of the deserters were found and returned to the ranks. Still many disappeared to resurface when the Federal government December 20, 1919 gave amnesty to all deserters of the CEF. The honours and awards of the Lambtons are found in their service records which are available from Library and Archives Canada at <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx>

CHAPTER NINE
BRAMSHOTT CAMP – The End of the 149th

*Bramshott. England
Easter Sunday. 1917*

*Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona. Ont. Can.*

Dear Madeline,

This is Sunday Eve and will try and writ you a brief but interesting letter. I am real well and sincerely trust you are well also. I do hope you are feeling better than when I left you in London. Well Dear our trip was certainly one long and tiresome one over two weeks and no experience to speak of. We landed at Liverpool Saturday morning and went at once to Bramshott Camp, arriving here about 4 P.M. We got off the train at Liphook Stn and walked to our camp about 2 miles. Bramshott is about 1 mile from here. I believe there are several small villages outside this camp. The camp is very high and dry and will be much like Borden. We are in tents, but will be in huts before long. All the troops coming here are put in tents and not allowed to move off their ground for 10 days. 149 and 186 are here together. The weather here is much like home and the nights very cold. The day has been find and tonight cold west winds. The spring is very late and no signs of the trees coming out in leaf. The grass is always green as it is so wet and the winter mild. That is not frozen up. England is certainly a beautiful land and no wonder it's such a nation. Madeline I must be careful what I write about as you may not get this letter, but there is every reason to be proud of being a Briton. How I would love to tell you how these men have enlisted and their numbers in khaki. Walter Woolvett came over to see us this morning. I had quite a talk to him. He leaves for France tomorrow, also saw Mr Gardener who was in the bank in Arkona. He was turned down and will be kept here on Red Cross work. They will not let us within 30 feet of each as there are double guards on.

Tomorrow they are going to fence the camp and we will be able to talk through the fence to other boys. After 10 days we will likely get 6 days leave. This C.B. Is for sickness in the camp and to prevent any being brought in. All the 118 Bn are here yet. It will be a long time before the 149 get across. There are a lot of officers here to go and my turn will be a long time. I hope this letter gets thru and if I can get stamps to send it. I hope you got the message sent and was pleased. Be sure and tell me all the news. All the boys are well after our experience. Will write something funny before long. Our trip was sort of thrilling and your hubby nearly got wet. Address: Army P.O. London England. Remember me to all and lots of love for yourself.

*Goodbye, Your loving husband.
Will. X.*

*Bramshott. Camp Eng.
April 10th 1917
4:30 P.M.*

Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona Ont. Can.

Dear Madeline,

I take the pleasure of writing your this P.M. I am well hoping this may find you enjoying the best of health. Today is cold and squally snow flurries. We feel the cold terribly here and make us hump around. The tents are not hot by any means and simply broke the wind off us. They gave us lots of blankets to keep us warm at night but sleeping in tents and snow outside isn't warm. I sleep on the floor its not like a bed by any means. This food is scarce and quality poor. The men complain and almost not over the food. The bread is all very scarce. They grind the wheat for flour, bran shorts and all together. The bread is very dark but good. There is not butter, every body gets margarine. Very few potatoes and meat. The boys all miss the good meals at home. They wish to be in Camp Borden now. They never will get through bickering.

Well today we were out for a route march and all feel tired. The roads are all hard and nearly breaks your bones. This camp is very large and of course up to date as so many have trained here. The boys are all well and have all written reports by now. I had a big job yesterday. The 186 were trying to get our boys to start a row and believe me they tried hard but the boys quit and the 186 went on strike themselves. We heard today our boys will be here for 3 months anyway and the officers much longer. We have to drill our own men and wait our chance of going overseas after the surplus officers have gone. I will get lots of courses by what I hear. I am so glad I had none at home because we go thru all again here. After today C.B. We all get 6 days leave and then no one gets any for 14 weeks. I hope this is true because I will go down to London. It is just 42 miles straight east of here. I am not turned around in this land.

This is all the news today and I hope Dear you will be pleased with these few scribbled lines.

Bye Bye. Your loving husband Billie.

The battalion was Confined to Barracks for 10 days of quarantine. The problems with the 186th ended April 19 when that battalion was removed to 4th Reserve Battalion. After quarantine the battalion was assessed by the Training Cadre. The battalion was found to have completed the equivalent of 7 weeks in the forty weeks after being mobilized. Lt. Williams would not have known this. He had heard fourteen weeks but that was the standard for completely untrained soldiers. (Holt, 156). There would be seven more weeks of training.

As for the battalion they were no longer the 149th but officially 25th Canadian Reserve Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel Newman Hoyles, who had been to the Front. From him came the hard news. Williams and the other officers would be offered employment or

shipped home. All either accepted reverting to Lieutenant or be declared surplus to the needs of the OMFC and shipped home.

Lt Williams sent another letter home:

*Bramshott Camp. Eng.
April 11th 1917
10 A.M.
Mrs W.A. Williams
Arkona Ontario Canada*

Dear Madeline,

I promised to write more about our trip over the pond. Good Friday passed off fine but Saturday A.M. Brought forth fin in a hurry. No doubt you people heard at home of the accident to our old friend the Lapland. Well those Huns put a fire cracker in the road and we hit it and hit it hard too. Friday we passed into the St Georges Channel we all felt safe for the first since leaving Canada. About 1:20 A.M. Saturday morning while passing up the Mersey River we hit a mine and stopped the whole works. I was asleep at the time in the 2nd deck cabin and the old devil hit right below in the 2nd floor down below. The explosion tore a hole about 10 feet wide in the side and smashed everything to smitherines.

Had the boys not been on the upper decks sleeping in the open some would have been killed. As it was only two or three of the 244 were killed and several hurt. The 149 Bn were at the rear of the boat and missed the fun. Several of the 149 were on guard and had some experience. I was the only officer of 149 who was down below in the bow of the boats. They shifted me from 139 to 117 room because it was healthier, so that is why I got such a lift. The lift consisted of a bump on the ceiling and then on the floor. I was dressed at the time and all I had to do was put on my great coat and life belt and get out. Believe me no one stopped to share or light a cigarette. Well everybody went to their boats and stood awaiting orders to move. However they closed the water tight doors and only two decks got flooded. About 27 feet of water came into the front of the boat but still she held and we moved along slowly and landed at Liverpool 4:10 A.M. We were all landed at once and put into sheds until trams arrived. There will be all kinds of yarns about this mine. But it was pure and simple laid for the Lapland and because the boat did not sink was because the bulk heads held us and kept the water from the boilers. The Captain give the boys great praise for their coolness and only for their long training there would have been a panic as the crew all left their posts first. Your hubby was quite cool and did his best to hold the 244 Bn boys who were at the bow from rushing the boats. The boys will tell the rest if Augustine thinks my heart went bad. The Arkona boys all deserve credit for their behaviour.

I hope this lingo proves satisfactory.

Billie.

There is nothing in the personnel records as to when the six-day Landing Leave started for the Lambtons. With 10 days confined to barracks in the Segregation Camp the leave could have begun April 17. Such leave was in small party groups with an officer and an NCO familiar with the leave locations such as London, Edinburgh and Belfast. The personnel files of the Lambtons who were at Bramshott reveal no incidents with the civil authorities during the period up to June 1917. The Lambtons returned to Bramshott at the end of their Landing Leave and for the next seven weeks completed the training required.

In a letter April 22 to Madeline:

Well Madeline I am well and enjoying myself my own way. I do hope you are well and enjoying the spring time. How I would love to be with you tonight but all I can do is just think about it. Have you got your brown silk made up and what kind of hat did you get this Easter. Be sure and tell me all and send me your picture because I am pretty lonesome tonight. I have been alone all day and have not left camp. All the officers are away to see the villages around and tonight they are in the mess. I was to church parade this morning and the service was grand. The chaplain was a Canadian from Salonikia. Over here is where a sermon is appreciated and how the boys were interested, the singing was wonderful. How I wish I were a chaplain, after today's sermon.

The Arkona boys are all well and comfortable, the food is much better now and no complaints. Elmer Smith came over from Witley camp and stayed all day. He looks fine and wishes he were with us again, expects to go to France soon. He left Camp Borden last August. Pte Martelle Port Franks has suspected spinal meningitis. Pte Roger Foust [Forest] diphtheria. Pte Berry, Forest, pneumonia. All three are very serious cases. Capt Wykesmith and Edwards are in the hospital, cold and sprained ankles resp. Mr Scott Swift Fyffe and MacMillan left this morning for a two weeks course in trench warfare. Mr Scott is transferred to Royal Flying Corps. Capt Cheyne and Knowles refuse to revert to Lt. And are trying for the air service. Mr Stokes trying also. Capt Trainor Wykesmith and Edwards have reverted. Col. Macvicar refuses to revert also Major Dunfield, Morrison [Merrison] and Moncrieff. They may yet or go in some other branch of the service. Well me for the infantry, what is good enough for the men is good enough for me. Will write you particulars later.

William's letter continued with some personal matters and concluded.

Charles Rogers of Forest was gravely ill. He went into the Bramshott Military Hospital and later placed at the isolation hospital at Aldershot on April 15, 1917. He became dangerously ill. A telegram went to Lillie advising her of this. Another went out as Charles died May 11, 1917 due to diphtheria. Charles was the first of the Lapland Lambtons to die overseas.

Ezra Martelle of Thedford was quarantined and then admitted to the Connaught Hospital at Aldershot with NYD (not yet determined). It was the flu which began April 21 and ran its course until May 31, 1917. Martelle survived the war.

Edwin Berry from Camlachie was in the Bramshott Hospital April 9 from the segregation camp. He had pneumonia and into serious condition which took him to Bearswood Hospital. He was released to duty May 21, then into training. He survived the war.

It was evident in the April 22 letter that the officers wanted to get on with the war. It was not known what the officers thought regarding their me. Williams kept an eye on his men. The others were seeking for themselves.

The landing leave of six days was taken in groups under their officers and likely beginning April 27 or 28.

The following table lists when the officers were struck off service and where they were first assigned:

TABLE 17 Officers Struck Off from 25th Reserve Infantry Battalion

Officer	SOS	Receiving Unit
W.W. Macvicar	12.7.17	Imperial Forces
John Dunfield	28.7.17	Seconded to War Office
George Moncrieff	28.7.17	Imperial Forces
Janes Merrison reverted to Lt 15.6.17	SOS 3.9.17	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Wilfred Cheyne reverted to Lt 15.6.17	SOS 14.9.17	Labour Corps Depot
Harry Edward	12.7.17	Imperial Forces
John Knowles	10.8.17	WORD
Harry Mitchell of DMS assigned 30.4.17	assistant	medical officer Musketry School
Henry Trainor to Bexhill 17.9.17	SOS 14.2.18	2nd Canadian Pioneers
William Wykesmith	12.7.17	Imperial Forces
Norman Fyffe	9.12.17	1st Battalion CEF
Robert Lott	23.4.17	to RFC
John MacMillan	9.12.17	Canadian Corps Reinforcement Camp
Bloss Scott	9.12.17	2nd Canadian Pioneers
Samuel Stokes	9.12.17	18th Battalion CEF
Robert Swift	9.12.17	1st Battalion CEF
William Williams	6.10.18	2nd Canadian Pioneers
Charles Woodrow	9.12.18	18th Battalion CEF

Source: Service Records <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx>

The battalion came together after Landing Leave for further training. On June 1, 200 of the Lambtons went to the 161st Battalion which was in the 5th Canadian Division at Whitley. No officer of the 149th was transferred with the men. They were marched off by escorts from the 161st. That was the end of the 149th. The remainder of the men stayed with the 25th Reserve Battalion. They would in time serve directly and personally the war effort. They died, were injured, their lives never the same. They are the generation forgotten.

There were regimental debts. With the Lambton band dissolved at Bramshott, the instruments were sold at auction for £70. The instruments cost over \$2500 (GA March 3, 1916) and given to the Band with the understanding these would be returned to the citizens of Sarnia when the battalion returned at war's end. No doubt the instruments have new homes while the men of the 149th C. E. F. Overseas Battalion are only names on memorial scrolls or cenotaphs. In too many cases there are families who do not know what the relative of the generation did in that first great war. (Mobilization accounts RG 24, vol. 1667, file HQ 683-330-5 letter dated 22 March 1923).

The 149th Battalion was officially disbanded April 11, 1918.
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_infantry_battalions_in_the_Canadian_Expeditionary_Force).

What did the 149th Overseas Battalion accomplish? There were no battle honours. The first commanding officer died two weeks after appointment. The second commanding officer was a medical doctor like the first. He had recruiting ability and brought nearly eleven hundred men living in the County of Lambton to the Colours. But judged by the military standard he was incompetent and replaced. He was replaced by a man who was deemed incompetent but proved himself a man capable of restoring the morale of the men and giving spirit to the Battalion. The Lambton's Own played good ice hockey and excelled at rugby. They are forgotten champions. And those Lambtons who got overseas and to war they too did well. Many of the returned Lambtons were the generation who built Lambton in the 1920s and 1930s and sired the men and women from Lambton who fought a Second Great War.

Hopefully, this project has brought many pieces of the remembrance of the Lambton's Own together so future generations may know of the sacrifice in lives made by these men.

LEST WE FORGET Those Lambton's Own who died in service:

TABLE 18. The 149th Who Died Due to War Service

<u>WALKER,</u> <u>WILFRED</u> <u>DAVID</u> <u>KENNETH</u>	Private 845445	02/09/1918	21	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	E. 26.	UPTON WOOD CEMETERY, HENDECOURT-LES- CAGNICOURT
<u>POTTER,</u> <u>ALBERT</u> <u>EDWIN</u>	Private 845109	06/08/1918	22	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	I. A. 1.	LONGUEAU BRITISH CEMETERY
<u>PINNANCE,</u> <u>J</u>	Private 845113	28/09/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian	I. B. 18.	RAILLENCOURT COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION
<u>SMALL,</u> <u>A. IVER</u>	Private 845269	02/04/1918	24	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	VI. E. 5.	DOULLENS COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION NO.1
<u>SIMMONS,</u> <u>M J</u>	Sapper 845299	06/04/1918		Canadian Engineers	Canadian	VI. B. 14.	ROCLINCOURT MILITARY CEMETERY
<u>WHITE,</u> <u>DANIEL</u> <u>K.</u>	Private 845583	12/08/1918	30	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	I. C. 2.	FOUQUESCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY
<u>THOMSON, D A</u> <u>E</u>	Private 845352	03/09/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>SPOONER,</u> <u>ERNEST RUE</u>	Private 845282	21/10/1918	24	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	C. 63.	DENAIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY
<u>SHAW,</u> <u>CLARENCE</u>	Private 845311	03/09/1918	21	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>WRIGHT, W</u> <u>E</u>	Private 845571	29/09/1918	20	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	III. A. 13.	DRUMMOND CEMETERY, RAILLENCOURT

<u>STOTT,</u> <u>HERBERT</u>	Private	845252	17/08/1918	35	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	K. "U." 340.	DEWSBURY CEMETERY
<u>TULLOCH,</u> <u>S J</u>	Private	845382	09/05/1918	24	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	N. 405.	NETLEY MILITARY CEMETERY
<u>KERR,</u> <u>EDWAR</u> <u>D</u>	Privat e	844720	29/03/1916	17	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		PETROLIA (HILLSDALE) CEMETERY
<u>ARMSTRONG,</u> <u>FRANK</u>	Privat e	84402 6	03/05/192 0	3 2	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	Spec. Memorial .	WALPOLE ISLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH
<u>BROWN,</u> <u>WILLIAM</u> <u>PAYNE</u>	Private	844100	05/09/1918	21	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	IV. A. 24.	AUBIGNY COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION
<u>BEAUMONT, G</u>	Private	844052	01/10/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian	C. 16.	MILL SWITCH BRITISH CEMETERY, TILLOY-LEZ- CAMBRAI
<u>BLOOMFIELD,</u> <u>A D</u>	Private	844064	12/09/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian	III. E. 43.	TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE
<u>BRIMACOMBE,</u> <u>THOMAS</u> <u>ALEXANDER</u>	Private	844090	31/10/1918	23	Canadian Machine Gun Corps	Canadian	C. 42.	DENAIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY
<u>BROWN, G L</u>	Sapper	844082	06/11/1918	23	Canadian Engineers	Canadian	A. 18.	QUIEVRAIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY UPTON WOOD CEMETERY, HENDECOURT- LES- CAGNICOURT
<u>CAUSLEY, E F</u>	Private	844180	30/08/1918	20	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	B. 30.	

<u>DAVIES, SIDNEY RICHARD</u>	Private 844276	11/10/1918	36	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	C. 26.	NIAGARA CEMETERY, IWUY
<u>DOXTATOR, FREDERICK</u>	Private 844252	15/11/1918	22	Canadian Engineers	Canadian		SARNIA ST. CLAIRE FIRST NATIONS CEMETERY
<u>DUFFY, J F</u>	Private 844269	02/09/1918	20	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	IV. E. 31.	AUBIGNY COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION
<u>EDWARDS, GEORGE</u>	Private 844356	26/08/1918	26	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>GLEESON, LEO THOMAS</u>	Private 844475	27/08/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>GORE, G</u>	Private 844493	01/05/1918		Canadian Forestry Corps	Canadian	A. 12.	CHAMPAGNOLE COMMUNAL CEMETERY
<u>HASTINGS, NEWELL</u>	Private 844575	31/10/1918	19	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	LXVI. M. 25.	ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY
<u>HOWARTH, J L</u>	Private 844551	06/11/1918		Canadian Machine Gun Corps	Canadian	II. E. 19.	VALENCIENNES (ST. ROCH) COMMUNAL CEMETERY
<u>HOWIE, MORLEY</u>	Private 844560	03/09/1918		Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL

The man below helped fill out 149th

<u>KABASHKUNG, LAZARUS</u>	Private 651943	17/08/1919	21	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		CHIPPAWA HILL RESERVE (FRENCH BAY) CEMETERY
<u>IVESON, AMOS</u>	Private 844603	27/08/1918	31	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>JOHNSON, GEORGE</u>	Private 844630	21/04/1920	22	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	Near Logan Monument .	LOWER MUNCEY (ST. PAUL'S) CEMETERY

<u>KEENE,</u> <u>WILFORD</u>	Privat e	84471 1	03/09/191 8	2 3	Canada n Infantry	Canada n		VIMY MEMORIAL
<u>KIYOSHK,</u> <u>JOSEPH</u>	Privat e	84469 5	07/10/191 8	2 4	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	IV. F. 47.	TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE
<u>MAITLAND,</u> <u>CLARENC</u> <u>E ROY</u>	Privat e	84496 2	03/09/191 8	2 0	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	I. A. 14.	DURY CRUCIFIX CEMETERY
<u>McMULLIN,</u> <u>LEONARD</u> <u>CALVIN</u>	Privat e	84483 1	25/05/191 8	1 9	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	II. F. 15.	WAILLY ORCHARD CEMETERY
<u>MERRIAM,</u> <u>MAGOR</u> <u>LEIGH RAE</u>	Privat e	84493 3	27/09/191 8	2 7	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	II. F. 30.	BUCQUOY ROAD CEMETERY, FICHEUX
<u>OKE, G E</u>	Privat e	84507 0	02/06/191 9	2 1	Canada n Infantry	Canada n		ALVINSTON PUBLIC CEMETERY
<u>ROGERS,</u> <u>C E</u>	Privat e	84516 4	11/05/191 7	3 6	Canada n Infantry	Canada n	AA. C10.	ALDERSHOT MILITARY CEMETERY WALPOLE ISLAND (HIGH BANKS) CEMETERY
<u>SANDS,</u> <u>ALLEN</u>	Privat e	84531 7	16/02/192 1	3 1	Canada n Infantry	Canada n		

2Lt WATTS, Albert
(845607)
RFC

06 March 1917

ARRAS MEMORIAL
Pas de Calais, France

Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission <https://www.cwgc.org/>

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Canadian Expeditionary Force

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