

DUPLICATE

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HISTORICAL OFFICER  
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

Situation of the Canadian Forces in the  
United Kingdom, Spring, 1942: III

Position and Roles of Canadian Forces

Canadian Military Headquarters,  
2 Cockspur Street, S.W. 1,  
London, ENGLAND

The Director,  
Historical Section,  
General Staff,  
National Defence Headquarters,  
Ottawa, CANADA.

1. This report briefly summarizes the distribution and present roles of the Canadian Military Forces in the United Kingdom. It may be regarded as a continuation of [Report No. 58](#) (dated 19 Jan 42), which dealt with the situation in these respects as it existed at the beginning of the present year. This Report surveys the developments which have taken place since that time.

LOCATION AND ROLE OF 1st CANADIAN CORPS

2. The role of 1 Cdn Corps has undergone no fundamental change since [Report No. 58](#) was written. The Corps remains in SUSSEX, charged with the responsibility of defeating any possible German attempt at invasion on the frontage described in para 37 of [Report No. 58](#). No immediate change of role appears to be in slight.

3. CANADIAN CORPS PLANS TO DEFEAT INVASION. The role of 1 Cdn Corps and the manner in which it is to be carried out are very fully defined in a series of Operations Instructions issued from H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps beginning 10 Feb 42 and collectively entitled "Plans to Defeat Invasion". These instructions now constitute a very bulky volume in which every aspect of the defence of 1 Cdn Corps District is completely dealt with.

4. Brigadier SIMONDS (B.G.S., 1 Cdn Corps) has pointed out to the writer that when 1 Cdn Corps took over in Sussex from 4 Corps they found no complete defence scheme provided for their guidance. The "Plans to Defeat Invasion", which have now been prepared at H.Q., 1 Cdn Corps with such care and in such detail, will be available to any formation which may in future relieve 1 Cdn Corps in this district, and will certainly greatly reduce the burden laid upon the staff of such a formation.

5. The plans are arranged in three parts. Part I is the Appreciation; Part II, the Operation Plan; Part III, the Administrative Plan. Part II is in 22 sections, of which, at the time of writing, a few have not yet been issued.

6. In general this anti-invasion plan is simply an expansion of Canadian Corps Operation Instruction No. 27 (27 Nov 41), which is described and summarized in [Report No. 58](#), paras 41 Oct. There have been few fundamental alterations in the system of defence there laid down.

7. The general tactical disposition of the forces remains as described in [Report No. 58](#) (although there has been some interchange of units and formations, as noted below). That is to say, the Corps is disposed with two divisions forward and one in Corps Reserve in rear. The right forward division has all three brigades forward. We left forward division two forward

and one in reserve. The general disposition of battalions in these divisions is as described in [Report No. 58](#), paras 50 et seq. That is to say, the DOWNS continue to receive special attention, and only the really vital areas on the beaches are manned.(1)

8. On 20 Mar 42 the writer had an opportunity of visiting the positions held by the EDMONTON REGIMENT in the forward area in and around SHOREHAM-BY-SEA. This battalion has two companies on the DOWNS immediately above the town (on MIL HILL and SLONK HILL) and two on the beach (this being one of the four particularly vulnerable areas noted in [Report No. 58](#), para 44). The "D" Coy position on MIL HILL was heavily wired and constituted one defended locality consisting mainly of two-man weapon-pits. The latter are carefully camouflaged, all spoil being removed and the pits covered to prevent their being observed by enemy reconnaissance aircraft. This company had under command three 2-pdr A. Tk guns and one platoon of the SASKATOON LIGHT INFANTRY (MG). It also possessed two static medium machine guns manned by its own personnel. The beach at SHOREHAM is mined, wired and obstructed by tubular scaffolding and concrete blocks to prevent the landing of AFVs. Weapon-pits (carefully concealed, like those on the DOWNS) have been provided, among the remains of light building along the shore which have been demolished to clear the field of fire; there are several concrete pillboxes disguised as innocuous buildings; and a party of R.C.E. were engaged in constructing a concrete emplacement which the writer was told would accommodate two 75 mm guns. "A" Coy, on the beach, had six static MNGs.

9. Every attempt is made to billet the men as close as possible to their battle positions. In the case of the two companies of the EDMONTON REGIMENT on the DOWNS, there were fortunately buildings available close by; but it is understood that some units with positions along the escarpment of the DOWNS to

the north have had to quarter their men some distance from their defended localities.

10. This account on one unit's position may serve to illustrate the manner in which the forward formations of 1 Cdn Corps have been carrying out their anti-invasion role. It may be noted that 2/Lt. E.J. HUGHES, War Artist, spent the month of April, 1942, with this unit at SHOREHAM, and made many sketches of its defended localities, etc.

11. A few changes of some importance have taken place in the defensive system described in [Report No. 58](#). Notably, a British Independent Brigade (71 Ind Inf Bde) has been provided to relieve 9 Cdn Inf Bde in the role of counter-attack for the TANGMERE group of aerodromes. This brigade is under direct command of HQ 1 Cdn Corps, and it has attached to it 11 Cdn Army Fd Regt, one section of 14 Cdn Army Fd Coy, and one company of the ROYAL MONTREAL REGIMENT (MG). As a result of this relief, the Canadian division in Corps Reserve now has all three of its brigades under command and available for its own counter-attack role.

12. The units of 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde are no longer immediately upon the beach ([Report No. 58](#), paras 53 and 69) but have been withdrawn some distance (see below), perhaps lest they be overrun in the first moments of an invasion. Their primary role continues to be "the immediate counter-attack of any hostile tanks landing at beaches or ports", and it is laid down that army tank battalions should be employed as a whole and not dissipated in small detached sub-units. 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde less one battalion comes under command of the right forward division on "Stand To", and the remaining battalion comes under command of the left forward division.

13. In addition to CHICHESTER, HORSHAM and EAST GRINSTEAD ([Report No. 58](#), paras 47 and 58), LEWES, HAYWARDS HEATH and HAILSHAM have now been scheduled as defended towns, to be made tank-proof localities. These six towns would be defended mainly by the Home Guard.

14. COMMAND AND STAFF PROBLEMS IN 1 CDN CORPS DISTRICT. As noted in [Report No. 58](#), paras. 25 at sec, the assumption by HQ 1 Cdn Corps of command of a static Corps District, including a considerable number of British units, has necessitated the addition of a British "static element" to HQ, 1 Cdn Corps. This static element is organized in accordance with a special British War Establishment (V/541/1). This Establishment provides (for example) officers for the conduct of relations with the Home Guard and with the Civil authorities, and also a Colonel in Charge of Administration to assist with the administration of British units, although HQ 1 Cdn Corps District takes responsibility (including financial responsibility) to the War Office for such units under its command. Much of the work of the Colonel i/c Administration is concerned with Courts Martial.

15. Brigadier Simonds has told the writer that this system of a British static element works "fairly well" though not perfectly.

16. Under the arrangements described in [Report No. 58](#), paras 26 et sec, HQ 1 Cdn Corps District assumes operational command of all ground forces and establishments within its district. Brigadier Simonds remarked that there have been some minor difficulties resulting from the lack of a clear understanding of this point by various authorities. For example, the War Office might establish a school within the Corps District and make arrangements for its local defence without reference to HQ. 1 Cdn Corps; A.A. Command has been known to change the location of gun sites without such

reference; and the R.A.F. has similarly been known to establish RDF stations without previous consultation with Corps Headquarters, although those Headquarters are required to undertake the defence of such stations when established. Brigadier Simonds remarked, however, that these difficulties appear to have been largely resolved, and such questions now arise with less frequency.

#### LOCATIONS OF FORMATIONS AND UNITS, 1 CDN CORPS

17. The present distribution of formations as notified in CMHQ Location Statement No. 14 and Amendments Nos. 1-4 is as follows.

18. Advanced HQ 1 Cdn Corps remains at WAKEHURST PLACE, with Rear Headquarters at WORTH PRIORY.

19. Corps Troops under command of HQ 1 Cdn Corps are distributed chiefly in the rearward areas of Sussex, as noted in [Report No. 58](#), para 68.

20. 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde, in accordance with the revised arrangements noted above, now has its headquarters at COLWOOD HOUSE near WARNINGLID (692452). 11 Cdn Army Tk Bn (ONTARIO REGT) is at SHERMANBURY PLACE (650379). 12 Cdn Army Tk Bn (THREE RIVERS REGT) is still shown as at WORTHING, and 14 Cdn Army Tk Bn (CALGARY REGT) is at SEAFORD; but these units' action stations are some distance in rear of these points, in the WASHINGTON and ALFRISTON areas respectively.

21. The First Canadian Division continues to occupy the right forward sector of Sussex with Advanced Headquarters at KNEPP CASTLE ([Report No. 58](#), para 70) and Rear Headquarters at WOODGATERS (591435). The Divisions' brigades are disposed with their Headquarters as follows:

- |    |                              |                                 |   |
|----|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| a. | HQ 1 Cdn Inf Bde<br>(Right)  | SLINDON HOUSE                   | ( <a href="#">Report No. 58</a><br>para 70)   |
| b. | HQ 2 Cdn Inf Bde<br>(Left)   | WHITTINGHAME COLLEGE<br>PRESTON | ( <a href="#">Report No. 58</a> ,<br>para 70) |
| c. | HQ 3 Cdn Inf Bde<br>(Centre) | GREYFRIARS,<br>STORRINGTON      | ( <a href="#">Report No. 58</a> ,<br>para 70) |

22. The Second Canadian Division was relieved in the left forward sector of Sussex immediately following the conclusion of Exercise "BEAVER IV" (cf. [Report No. 70](#)), command passing to 3 Cdn Div. at 1800 hrs on 14 May 42. (General Report for 1 Cdn Corps, week ending 16 May 42). 2 Cdn Div. then proceeded into the Reserve area formerly occupied by 3 Cdn Div., where presumably it will be disposed in much the same manner as described for 3 Cdn Div. in [Report No. 58](#). At the moment of writing, however, HQ 2 Cdn Div., 4 and 6 Cdn Inf Bdes and details of Engineer and Administrative Units are absent for special training in combined operations, having left the area, accompanied by 14 Cdn Army Tk Bn, on 18 May 42. The permanent locations of Headquarters of brigades of 2 Cdn Div. are now given as follows:

- |    |                  |   |
|----|------------------|---|
| a. | HQ 4 Cdn Inf Bde | HARBOLETS HOUSE<br>WEST CHILTINGTON,<br>(537401)  |
| b. | HQ 5 Cdn Bde     | HAWKHURST COURT,<br>WISBOROUGH GREEN,<br>(463426) |
| c. | HQ 6 Cdn Inf Bde | LEONARDSLEE<br>LOWER BEEDING<br>(659452)          |

23. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the Division in Corps service has a most important function in the general Sussex defence scheme. The Corps Plans to Defeat Invasion lay down the following principle (Part I, para 14).

Passive defence has never won a battle.....The necessary complement to the system of locality defence is vigorous counter-offensive action.

Defence localities will delay and disorganize an assaulting force but they cannot destroy it. The latter can only be achieved by the offensive action of reserves.

24. The Third Canadian Division, under the new arrangement, now holds the left forward sector of Sussex, with its HQ at HEATHFIELD PARK, HEATHFIELD (036397). The Headquarters of its brigades are located as follows:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| a. HQ 7 Inf Bde<br>(Right)       | DELVES,<br>RINGMER<br>(883316)               |
| b. HQ 8 Cdn Inf Bde<br>(Left)    | CROSSWAYS HOUSE,<br>UPPER DICKER<br>(987286) |
| c. HQ 9 Cdn Inf Bde<br>(Reserve) | TANNERS MANOR,<br>near WALDRON<br>(998371)   |

LOCATION OF UNITS UNDER HEADQUARTERS  
FIRST CANADIAN ARMY

25. The dispositions of troops actually in the Canadian Order of Battle having been described above, those of units not yet fully mobilized, or not forming part of the Field Army, will now be dealt with.

26. The formation and the present functions of Headquarters, First Canadian Army, are described in [Report No. 69](#). An Order of Battle of units under command of the Headquarters will be found in Canadian Army Overseas Routine Order No. 2004, a special secret Order. As noted in [Report No. 69](#), HQ First Cdn Army is located at HEADLEY COURT, LEATHERHEAD, and the relatively small number of fields army units at present under its command are chiefly located close by in SURREY. HQ 1 Cdn Corps Med Arty, which is now under command HQ, First Cdn Army, is located at FAIRLEIGH HOUSE (601776) near LEATHERHEAD. This Headquarters has under command 7 Cdn A Fd Regt, 2 Cdn Med Regt, 5 Cdn Med Regt, and 7 Cdn A Tk Regt. All these units are stationed in SURREY.

LOCATION OF UNITS UNDER CANADIAN  
MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

27. The present locations of the most important bodies of troops remaining under command of Canadian Military Headquarters will now be briefly outlined.

28. Fifth Canadian (Armoured) Division. This formation, with its mobilization and training still incomplete, remains under command of C.M.H.Q. Its HQ remains at the ROYAL PAVILLON, ALDERSHOT. As noted in [Report No. 68](#), 1 Cdn Armd Bde and 2 Cdn Armd Bde have exchanged quarters since [Report No. 58](#) was written, and in consequences HQ 1 Cdn Armd Bde is now at TWEENWAYS, near HINDHEAD, and HQ 2 Cdn Armd Bde is at KNOLLYS ROAD HOUSE, ALDERSHOT. HQ 5 Cdn (Armd) Div. Support Group remains at WATERLOO BARRACKS, ALDERSHOT. (cf. [Report No. 58](#), para 75).



29. First Canadian Anti-Aircraft Brigade. HQ 1 Cdn A.A. Bde remains at DRURY LODGE, COLCHESTER, although an increasing number of the Light Anti-Aircraft units trained under its direction have lately joined the Order of Battle of 1 Cdn Corps.

30. Canadian Reinforcement Units. Headquarters, Canadian Reinforcement Units remains at SMALLSHOT LODGE, ALDERSHOT. The Headquarters of Groups remain as stated in [Report No. 58](#), para 77, except that two additional groups have now been organized, with their Headquarters located as follows:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a. HQ "E" Group,<br>Reinforcement Units<br>(Armoured Corps)                 | BLACKDOWN CAMP,<br>north-east of<br>ALDERSHOT |
| b. HQ "F" Group,<br>Reinforcement Units<br>(Ordnance and<br>miscellaneous). | R.E. INSTITUTE BUILDING<br>BORDON             |

31. Canadian Forestry Corps. The CFC continues its work at various locations in the Scottish Highlands. Twenty-five Companies of this Corps are listed in the Order of Battle, Canadian Army Overseas, as of 11 May 42; all of these are located in Scotland. For details, see CMHQ Location Statement No. 14.

32. Medical Units. Since [Report No. 58](#) was written there has been some further increase of Canadian Medical Units in the United Kingdom. 8 Cdn General Hospital, RCAMC, has arrived, and has taken over PINWOOD HOSPITAL, CROWNTHORNE, near CAMBERLEY. Locations of major medical units otherwise remain as given in [Report No. 58](#), para 79, except that 14 Cdn General Hospital has now moved to HORLEY, Surrey, directly south of REDHILL.

33. Details of locations of minor units under CMHQ will be found in CMHQ. Location Statement No. 14 as amended. It should perhaps be noted that both 2 Cdn Tunnelling Coy and a Special Detachment of 1 Cdn Special Tunnelling Coy are still at work at GIBRALTAR, and that another Special Detachment of 1 Cdn Special Tunnelling Coy is working in the SHETLAND ISLANDS. These units are under CMHQ, though the main body of 1 Cdn Spec Tun Coy is under HQ First Cdn Army.

#### SURVEY OF OPERATIONS, RECENT MONTHS

34. As in previous Reports, the actual operations of the past few months can be very briefly dealt with. There have been no active operations against the enemy, except for the fact that a Canadian detachment participated to a limited extent in the combined operation in the BOULOGNE area in the early morning of 22 Apr 42. Due to no fault of their own this Canadian party did not get ashore and into contact with the enemy. This matter will be dealt with in a subsequent Report.

35. Apart from this, the Canadian troops of the active Order of Battle have been occupied in improving their training, and details of the programme pursued and the progress made will be found in [Report No. 70](#). The training programme of 1 Cdn Corps culminated in Exercise "TIGER", 19-30 May 42, - an extensive two-sided Exercise in which 1 Cdn Corps opposed 12 Corps in operations covering a great part of SUSSEX and KENT. This also will be the subject of a subsequent separate Report.

#### FORCES IN THE BRITISH ISLES

36. In [Report No. 58](#), paras 6 et seq, the military resources at the disposal of the C-in-C. Home Forces in recent months were reviewed, with a view to elucidating the function of the Canadian Military Forces in the defence of the British Isles. The following facts are now presented for purposes of comparison.

37. Was Office State of Equipment ... as at 14th May 1942 of Formations, Groups and Army Units including Allied Contingents in UK, Iceland (C) and the Faroe Islands lists the following as present in Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

Infantry Divisions:	Twenty-four
Independent Brigade Groups:	Three
Armoured Divisions:	Six
Army Tank Brigades:	Nine

Canadian formations are included in these figures. Comparing the latter with those given in [Report No. 58](#), para 7, it becomes apparent that during the past few months the relative importance of the Canadian Forces in the United Kingdom has somewhat increased.

(C.P. Stacey) Major  
Historical Officer,  
Canadian Military Headquarters