

A FREE PRESS AT THE BATTLE FRONT, THE "MAPLE LEAF" IN CAEN 1944

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"If you've ever thought of starting an army newspaper in a devastated town a few miles behind the front line, think twice" (1) was the lead sentence of an introductory article in the first edition of *The Maple Leaf*, a Canadian Army newspaper published in Caen, France, on July 27, 1944. The journalist's words may have been meant as a light-hearted admonition to possible rivals or imitators but the circumstances in which they were printed were deadly serious. On that date, the city of Caen was indeed devastated and the front line of the Battle of Normandy was barely five miles from the printing press. For the start of a new enterprise, conditions could hardly have been worse.

Included among the objectives of the Allied landing forces on June 6, 1944 (D-Day) but taken only in the second week of July, Caen had undergone such destructive aerial and naval bombardments and artillery barrages that only about one quarter of its pre-war buildings were still standing. Its supplies of water, electricity, gas and food were completely disrupted. Whether by death or forced evacuation, its inhabitants were reduced in number to fewer than ten percent of the pre-war population of 61,000. The enduring memory held by civilian and military witnesses of Caen in July, 1944, is one of ruin, rubble, dust, death and decay (2).

Less than five miles southward, the battle front of the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions lay along a wavering line between Bourguébus and Saint-André-sur-Orne. It had taken seven weeks to reach that line, some fifteen miles inland from the landing beaches of D-Day, but at last there were signs that the crowded Normandy bridgehead was about to expand. On July 27, General B.L. Montgomery, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied 21st Army Group, issued a directive to General H.D.G. Crerar, Commander of the 1st Canadian Army. It included the following statements :

As a result of having got the bottleneck of Caen behind us and having gained a good bridgehead beyond it, the enemy has brought a very powerful force across to the east of the Orne to oppose our further advance southwards in the direction of Falaise. He is so strong there now that any large scale operations by us in that area are definitely unlikely to succeed, if we attempted them we would merely play into the enemy's hands, and we would not be helping on (*sic*) our operations on the western flank. . . . The present period is a critical and important time. The summer is drawing on and we have not many more months of good campaigning weather; there is still much to be done. . . . The armies have been fighting "for position" during the past weeks. We have come through that period successfully and have gained the

positions are wanted . . . The armies on the eastern flank must now keep up the pressure in the Caen area (3).

According to a Canadian military historian :

The whole of the available Canadian force was now in Normandy . . . The 4th Division now confronted the enemy immediately east of the great road to Falaise, in the area Four-Bourguébus. Between the road and the Orne the 2nd Division held the line. Great events were impending on this front (4).

That same day, a "blessed event" took place in the ruins of Caen, the birth of the France edition of *The Maple Leaf*, a newspaper for Canadian troops. It may not have been one of the great events anticipated by General Montgomery, but for General Crerar, who had observed the popular success of an earlier edition in the Italian combat zone, it represented the accomplishment of a difficult task that he had had assigned to Number 3 Canadian Public Relations Group under the command of Lt-Colonel Richard S. Malone, an officer with previous newspaper experience in both Canada and Italy (5). His assessment of the viability of the new project was expressed in a commemorative booklet published after the Battle of Normandy.

There are many ways of starting a newspaper but the simplest is to move in an editorial crew and publish in a plant that is already functioning, using local press people and labour. When Caen was reached this was impossible. The town had received a terrific battering from Allied and German artillery and half the buildings were in ruins from heavy RAF bombing. Members of the French civilian press were beneath the rubble. The collaborationist members of the newspaper had fled with the enemy. The city's electrical facilities were completely destroyed and shrapnel had ripped through press cylinders, linotype machines and other equipment. The outlook for *The Maple Leaf* in Caen was a bit on the grim side (6).

Despite these obstacles, Volume 1, Number 1 of the France edition of *The Maple Leaf* appeared in Caen on July 27, 1944, introduced to its readers by its Editor-in-Chief in a signed editorial under the heading "Le Maple Leaf Encore " :

The Maple Leaf makes its bow to Canadian troops in France. This is the second appearance of a Canadian Army newspaper published in Europe. The birth place of the first Maple Leaf was on Presse il Mattino in Naples last winter. . . .

Quite frankly we were rather surprised when General Crerar told us that we

were to start cracking again on a France edition the minute a "liberated" press came our way. We rather imagined after the pangs of the Italian birth that they had just about "had" us. . .

But here we are, the Maple Leaf sign is hanging up in front of *La Presse Caennaise* and the baby is all set to go to bed. We think we have these French presses and lino types sized up O.K., but to be on the safe side will hack along on a three times a week basis for a bit before hotting it up to a daily. The circulation department may take a few days to figure out just where everyone is over here, so have a little patience - then if your copy doesn't come - scream. It's for free and it's your paper.

The day we got into CAEN(*sic*), les boches persisted in chucking shells and shrapnel into our joint, one morning we woke up to find our editorial office missing, the next day two of the linos copped it and also the automatic flat bed. Then it seemed that we had to produce a dose of "triphase 220 volts AC 45 chevaux vapeurs" from some place. At this stage we let out a scream for Jock McLean and Spike Birmingham and Daddy Storms. They produced the necessary juse électrique (*sic*) just like it was nothin'. Many thanks to them and in particular Maj. C. Wrenshall and his crew who carried out the electrical work.

The people back home say they will take care of all these financial encumbrance things. The Canadian newspapers and C.P. will give us a hand in sending over Canadian news and comic strips, etc. Old Maestro MacFarlane of il Giornal Canadense in Rome says he will loosen up on the corner he has of the pin up girl pictures . . . But there is a little matter of a side bet we have with Mac in Italy however which we hope he hasn't forgotten : it's about which edition of the Maple Leaf is going to publish the first copy in Berlin when Dr. Geobel's (*sic*) press *Volkischer Beobachter* gets "liberated" (7).

Appointed at the very beginning first as Acting Editor and, later as Managing Editor, was Captain Seth Halton, who also was to mark the occasion with a special article entitled "Troubles, Hopes, Thanks" :

If you've ever thought of starting an army newspaper in a devastated town a few miles from the front line, think twice. Even if everybody in the army is pitching on your side and pitching well, think twice.

Rollers were missing on our rotary press and some Fritzie's filled the ink trough with glass. We fixed that. There was no power for any of the machines but Engineering experts of the Canadian Army overseas fixed that.

They turned Major C. Wrenshall loose, and Maj. Wrenshall got a flock of 10 Fd. Park Company boys to set us up.

Now we're set and though it may take some plugging we be (*sic*) turning out a daily paper any day or week now.

Maj. Herry Hyde, who installed some of Toronto's printing presses, gave us a big and willing hand. So has every army outfit whom we've asked for help.

The postal boys are giving our circulation department full time cooperation in getting The Maple Leaf to the front, and fast. Printing and stationery are digging up paper supplies, and that's a tough one. For the first editions we are borrowing, trading, begging and praying and if the price of looting weren't two years in a barred slit-trench, we'd be stealing.

War correspondents who get paid to write about us are writing for us, and all their work hasn't got a byline. We'll have more news from Canada, more everything when C.P. news service reaches us. Next edition, we hope.

To Jam Cook, who writes about us for Sifton papers, two eggs for breakfast! Jam is a first class newspaperman and he hasn't beefed yet at being practically conscripted for our first few editions.

Well, these things got fixed, and two days ago we got a staff of lino men, compositors, mailing room lads and what-not. It was tough waiting for them. They were held up off shore for three days and we couldn't even test the machines until they arrived. And when we did get around to testing, the machines were damawful. They've been bombed, tinkered with, sabotaged. But eventually they worked.

Little things, like scarcity of type and shortage of staff and language difficulties and air raids, we've sweated out. We'll be doing lots more perspiring and no mean bit of cussing. But with Volume 1, Number 1, the worst is over. From here on it's your paper (8).

Technical problems, including the shortage of newsprint, were recalled thirty years later by the Edito-in-Chief :

We had no trained newspapermen available, so we simply had to take boys out of the ranks and teach them the job. Our big problem was in casting stereo plates and running the press. An army jeep driver, by the name of Strokes, who had worked in the railroad shops before the war and knew something about metal

took on the job of stereotyping. His first few efforts were very bad. A sergeant named Losty and a French Canadian boy we called "Frenchie" undertook to run the presses. Having a little knowledge myself, I gave them a hand but we had great troubles. There was a great deal of broken glass in the ink fonts, due to the fact that the building had been hit several times by mortar bombs and we had great problems in threading the press properly at first. The folder kept chopping the papers in half, till we found our mistake. All the electricity in Caen, of course, had been destroyed so I arranged to bring a large electric generator from England on a tank transporter, which the engineers got operating within 48 hours. This supplied power for the plant and we were also able to give some electrical power for the local hospital, etc. . . . At that time, the Germans still occupied Vaucelles and kept firing mortar bombs into the town for the first few days that we were publishing. There was no newsprint immediately available but a local resident told us it was kept in a warehouse across the river in Vaucelles. One of my younger officers, Lt. Doug Smith, took an army truck and in some way was able to cross the river and locate the warehouse.

There were several shots through the windshield of the truck when he returned. I had to get news for *The Maple Leaf* from a number of the war correspondents, who were with my PR group and also from Canadian Press News Agency via London. In addition, I had a wireless set net into an AP news Agency broadcast out of Spain and pirated their news also for the first week or two (9).

It these numerous obstacles stood in the way of the publication of a Canadian Army newspaper in Caen in late July, 1944, and if, once publication had finally started, there was strong doubt that the newspaper would thereafter be printed on a regular daily basis, two questions come to mind. Why was this project adopted and the effort so resolutely maintained? Did the printed product justify the effort?

To answer the first question is to recall facts and to make suppositions. According to the former Managing Editor of the Italy edition of *The Maple Leaf*, J.D. Macfarlane, Canadian troops in Italy wanted to know how the battle was going elsewhere, what the news was on their own front and what was happening at home. At the beginning of 1944 they needed a newspaper :

Colonel Ralston, then Minister of National Defence, was visiting his men in Italy at the time. On realizing this need he instructed the ADPR to get busy. "I'll fix up the money and things at home, but get a paper started at once", he said . . . The Canadians hadn't been in Normandy long after their historic part in the D-Day landings when General Crerar gave the word go on a France edition of the *Maple Leaf* (10).

Uttered by a general officer, the word "go" is certainly to be interpreted as a command but it is not clear, in this case, whether General Crerar was initiating an order or approving a request. In any case, it seems that some of the impetus came from the troops who "... wanted to know the news. They were cut off from their daily newspapers and radios back in England" (11). The Editor-in-Chief relates another incentive :

I had a bet with the American forces that we would get a newspaper in production before they were able to produce one in Cherbourg. . . . We beat the Americans by three or four days (12).

That the production of a battlefield newspaper be assigned to an Army Public Relations Group or that such a group be formed for the purpose is not surprising. What is surprising in the circumstances is to discover in this hastily edited and printed publication how carefully it informed its readers about "relations with the public", i.e. defining appropriate attitudes to adopt towards non-Canadians, be they French civilians or officials or enemy soldiers or prisoners of war. On these subjects editorials and articles are so perceptively written that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that "public relations" was one of the objectives of this hazardous enterprise. To "boost the troops' morale" is necessarily the purpose of entertainment shows, movies and magazines in the Army and it may be assumed that *The Maple Leaf* was created for this purpose too. Some veterans have suggested that in the very restricted space behind the static front in the bridge-head, there was time to read and that *The Maple Leaf*, if not created for the purpose, certainly helped to kill time in the slit trenches and reserve positions.

Regardless of the Variety of possible reasons for the creation of *The Maple Leaf* in these unfavourable circumstances, there seems to be no doubt that the newspaper was wanted and "avidly read" (13). The second question is of more interest to readers thirty-five years later : was this English-language publication, comprising thirty-four issues, from July 27, 1944, to September 9, 1944, worth the time, effort and money spent ? Obviously, the answer to this question can lie only in the mind of the reader, whether in 1944 or in 1979, but it does require a thorough examination of the form and contents of the Caen edition of *The Maple Leaf* as both a battlefield military organ and a Canadian newspaper.

For a reader of the European press of 1944 the Caen edition of *The Maple Leaf* holds many surprises. Printed on four pages, each measuring 30 cm. x 46 cm. and composed of five columns, the newspaper started to appear daily (Sundays excepted) with Number 5, only ten days after publication of Number 1, a remarkable achievement considering the difficulties enumerated earlier. Within that short period, clarity of printing and photo reproduction were improved immensely and, in appearance, the printed product left little to be desired.

Although it may be classified as a military or wartime newspaper, *The Maple Leaf* cannot be dismissed as a "propoganda sheet", whether one uses the standards of the local press at the time or not. In its news stories, editorials or feature articles, the tone is calm, disciplined, non-vindictive, objective and, at times, understated. The reader of its editorials never feels "bombarded", day after day, by one single theme in exaggerated language, as if a war of words was being waged against the enemy. Only on two occasions does the editorial column appear to have been "loaned" to an official voice, that of General Montgomery (N^o. 11 : "A Message from Monty" and N^o. 19 "The End in Sight"). Otherwise, one has no impression of reading the same message from the same source ; on a wide variety of topics, the editorials are characterized by informed and independent thinking.

Similarly, although the masthead carries the line "Contents Passed by Censor - May be Mailed Home", it is difficult to detect signs of external control or suppression onf controversial material or military information unless, of course, one is seeking the exact position of a particular regiment on a given day. In an early issue it is explained that ". . . for security reasons the censor will only let us tell about certain outfits at certain times" (14). There appears to be no "cover-up" in its pages concerning battlefield casualties, whether in general (figures and sources are given) or in particular (names and ranks are identified). Certain articles relate recent engagements on the Normandy front and, even if their purpose is to recognize and feature the rôle played by one Canadian regiment or another, the cost in casualties is not concealed. From the home front, reports are numerous and thorough enough to cover the "bad" news as well as the "good". Often, during the first weeks of publication, *The Maple Leaf's* readers are invited to make their complaints known by sending letters to the editor.

More specifically, in form and content, this battlefront daily resembles a regular "home town" or even "big city" newspaper of the period. Under the banner "For Canadian Troops - THE MAPLE LEAF - France Edition" the front page carries international news stories, from many sources, and headlines which vary in size, depending on the importance of the stories. Combat on the many world fronts is the principal topic of these reports but not exclusively : the front page of every issue carries news from Canada (politics, economics, housing, education, labour, agriculture, crime), often provided by the Canadian Press News Service, or from other countries, which was provided by international news correspondents (15). No issue is without one or two photographs or a map on its front page : most often, the photographs reflect what the soldier's life was in Normandy and the maps illustrate the military situation in Europe. Limited in size but extensive in coverage, the front page is very informative and hardly suffers in comparison to professional publications in Europe at the time.

Page two of *The Maple Leaf* displays its masthead, which was modified twice during its stay in Caen (16) and, immediately below, in every issue, presents

an editorial printed on two columns. Only the first one (N^o .1 : "Le Maple Leaf Encore") is signed (R.S.M.) but it may be assumed that subsequent editorials were written by either the Editor-in-Chief, Richard S. Malone, or the Managing Editor, Seth Halton. As noted earlier, two of General Montgomery's messages were printed in this space. The contents of these daily editorials will be considered in later paragraphs. Also appearing regularly on this page are cartoons drawn by Les Callan, under the title "Monty and Johnny", "Bing" Coughlin, under the heading "This Army", and L.E. Weekes. Amusing, perceptive and sometimes sardonic, these sketches may not be interpreted as "political cartoons", critical of public figures or institutions ; nor may they be considered as propaganda weapons aimed at the enemy. Les Callan's work seems to have been done on the scene because, in most cases, it is a faithful and humorous reflection of conditions in the Lower Normandy countryside. "Bing" Coughlin's drawings constitute a broader commentary on the soldier's life and seem to be borrowed from earlier Italy editions ; they are not identifiable as illustrations of the Normandy front. Cartoons by L.E. Weeks are too few in number to allow comment (17). The remainder of page two is composed of feature articles or "human interest" stories, i.e., on subjects which range from accounts of the rôles of various Canadian regiments (VIIIth Recce, Chaudière, Regina Rifles) or Allied units (Belgian, Dutch, Polish) in recent operations to stories of French Resistance activities to a series of opinion polls conducted among the troops and signed "Tom Peep". This page occasionally carries news reports, as well.

For some readers, the most attractive aspect, if not the most appreciated, of page three of *The Maple Leaf* is the daily appearance of one or more "cheesecake" photos. From the first issue on, the soldier's eye is attracted by the photograph of a pin-up girl and, judging from comments in the columns, these pictures were actually pinned up in slit trenches, at least until the stalemate of combat near Caen became a break-out from Lower Normandy. The suddenness of the latter may explain the disappearance of these "paper dolls" from the last ten issues of the newspaper. The lightning-like advance allowed little time or place for pinning them up. Page three is also where the reader finds news from the home front and, although such may now be forgotten, this term included two countries at the time, Canada and Great Britain. Thousands of Canadian soldiers, before landing in Europe, had spent several years in England or Scotland and many had formed close family ties there. In early issues of *The Maple Leaf*, news items from these countries seem as important, if not more so, in printed space, as news from across the Atlantic. To quench the different thirsts, a broad variety of small news bulletins from countless sources were printed under "Home Brew", for Canada, and "Mild and Bitter", for the British Isles, from Number 1 through the last issue. In these columns, the reader might easily find what was happening in Pugwash, Nova Scotia or Prestonpans, Scotland. In later issues, as the precarious bridge-head expanded and finally burst open, the proportion of Canadian news in these columns grew greater. Distant Canada drew closer, became more real, as is evident in other articles on page three. "Feature Stories" or "Inside Reports" on local

developments (regimental, engagements, the "re-awakening" of Caen, the arrival of C.W.A.C.s and nursing sisters, honours lists, Civil Affairs Branch, the re-opening of some seaside resorts) began, in late August to make room for articles on the present and future in Canada. Prospects of post-war careers and benefits for ex-servicemen began to appear on this page, as a sense of early victory developed and with it, the nearer prospect of return to the homeland.

Today's daily newspapers usually reserve the last page or pages for an entertainment section ; so did *The Maple Leaf* in Caen in 1944. At least a quarter of page four's columns are on sports, in the form of columns written by Al Vickery and Ted Reeve or lists of results and league standings, particularly for professional baseball in North America. As summer came to an end, readers could find predictions for the World Series of baseball and the forthcoming National Hockey League season. Noteworthy, however is the fact that Ted Reeve did not limit all his articles to sports : many were reports on daily life in the battle zone on the flat lands between Caen and Falaise. Cartoons appear again on this page, either by "Bing" Coughlin and reproduced from the Italy edition or by an unidentifiable internationally syndicated cartoonist on subjects ranging from the Pacific theatre of war to "civvy street" at home. Identifiable by today's readers are the still popular comic strips "Dagwood" by Chic Young (Nos. 1 to 9) and "Li'l Abner" by Al Capp (Nos. 12 to 34). Amusement is also provided in a regular column entitled "Shootin' the Breeze" by "Listenin' Luke", who delivers a monologue in the vernacular on his problems as an army cook with the men who line up for his "chow". Something of a home-spun philosopher, "Listenin' Luke" also has an attentive ear for his soldiers' comments and anecdotes and in this way, even if the level of his humour is not consistent, he gives today's reader an insight into the infantryman's preoccupations. Good examples of this are to be found in the first few issues (Nos. 2 and 3), where boredom and restlessness are evident in the confined space of the bridge-head, and in one of the last issues (No. 29), where the complaint has become "always on the move" ! The literary talents of *The Maple Leaf's* readers were also encouraged on this page. For four successive Saturdays, starting with Number 16, a weekly column for "Rhyming Canucks" was printed under the heading "From Bad to Verse" and each included three or four signed poems, of varying length, some serious or sentimental others humorous, in the barrack-room tradition. Finally, for further diversion, the daily schedule of A.E.F. radio broadcasts was available in almost every issue.

The last page was not given exclusively to entertainment, however : here were printed, as well, news bulletins and analyses, summaries of articles which had appeared in New-York and London newspapers, mostly on Canadian and American affairs, or feature stories over the by-line "From the Italy Maple Leaf". Interestingly, the proportion of this news-and-views section to the entertainment section grew considerably

after the closing of the Falaise pocket at Trun-Chambois and as the troops turned northward to advance through Upper Normandy and Picardy.

The preceding summary of the form and content of the *Caen Maple Leaf*, presented mainly in terms of quantity, size or proportions, might perhaps overemphasize the journalistic abilities of its editors and staff over a seven week period of time. In these four pages, published thirty-four times, they did achieve their objective of informing and entertaining the troops but, perhaps, unwittingly, they were also creating a printed document that would disclose other meanings to other readers at another time. By this, it is meant that the *Caen Maple Leaf* reveals in its editorials, articles and "between the lines" certain characteristics that clearly identify it as a Canadian production, on foreign soil, at a time when the seventy-seven year old country was still... lamenting its modesty, decrying its inferiority complex, and asking itself quite audibly why it was so timid about raising its voice" (18). In addition, despite the brevity of this edition's life span, the period during which it existed was very important in the Second World War, i.e., the early months of the "second front" in Europe. Today, therefore, this newspaper serves as a chronicle, albeit an incomplete and imperfect one, of non-strategic aspects of the decisive days between the standstill in the area of Caen and the victorious rush towards the Scheldt estuary in Holland.

In 1944, lacking a national flag, these editor-soldiers chose as the title of their federal government was to adopt more than twenty years later as Canada's flag. The fact that *The Maple Leaf* was read by thousands of men and women from every province of the Dominion is thought to have had some influence on their Parliament's choice in 1965 (19).

Canada's military history is recalled from time to time, particularly the rôle played by the soldiers' fathers against the same enemy, in the same country during the First World War. For example, in Number 7, the main news story on the front page, under the headline "Large Canadian Attack Launched", starts with this paragraph :

Mere minutes from the 26th anniversary of German General Ludendorff "blackest day in the history of the German army" -- when the old Canadian corps spearheaded through at Amiens in 1918, Canada's First Canadian Army with British troops under command, landed a solar plexis punch on the Hun pivot position south of Caen.

In an editorial a week later (No.13 : "The Canadian Stature"), this idea of national continuity is clearly expressed :

"The Dominion of Canada has reached full stature among the great nations of the world." The Evening Standard of London pays tribute in commenting last

week on the expansion of Canadian forces in France to the status of a powerful national army. "It is difficult", the Standard says, "to recount our debt to Canada : harder still to express our gratitude. The heroism of her troops in the last war is legendary ; her present sons their worthy successors . . . Now, on the anniversary of the decisive onslaught launched by their fathers at Amiens against the Kaiser's armies, they are entering into their heritage."

Similarly , in number 31, under the headline "Vimy Taken Without Fight: Famed Memorial Intact", a special dispatch evokes the significance of this Canadian shrine on French soil :

.... The famous Vimy memorial, on the ridge where so many Canadians fought and died in the Great War, was found undamaged. . . . Vimy this time fell to troops of the Second British Army, whose commander was congratulated by Lt. Gen. Crerar. His reply described its capture, along with that of Dieppe, as a "great day for Canada".

Also evocative of World War I is the frequent use of the short epithet "Hun" in *The Maple Leaf's* headlines and stories. It may have allowed the editors more printing space on their restricted pages but it is definitely a word that belongs to the vocabulary of 1914-1918, rather than 1939-1945.

Of more recent date, the predominantly Canadian raid on Dieppe in August, 1942, is recalled for its historic and national significance. On September 2, 1944, the main story on the first page appears under the headline "Canadians Come Back to Dieppe Battleground, Settle Old Score" :

A two-year old score was settled between Canadians and Germans yesterday, when regiments who were at Dieppe two years ago took the town. Recce elements first entered, followed by Essex Scottish, Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and Royal Regiment of Canada. All other regiments of 2 Division that took part in the 1942 operation also are approaching the city . . . The comrades who did not return from the Dieppe show in 1942 have been avenged.

The significance of the event is stressed in at least four other articles but a slightly different interpretation appears in the excerpts from *The Evening Standard* that constitute the editorial in Number 13 :

. . . They are not avenging Dieppe, where they bore the heaviest burden of a brave experience. They are exploiting the experience of Dieppe with the skill, tenacity and the shining courage of a great and grand people.

As if an indication that Canada's overseas soldiers were beginning to recognize the sound of their own footsteps and to discover their own identity, a theme is discernible in the pages of *The Maple Leaf*, a theme of growing independence. On the front page of the first issue, Les Gallan graphically depicts his newspaper, in the guise of a Canadian soldier, leaping across the English Channel from Great Britain into France and, two weeks later, the editor examines not only the country into which the Canuck has jumped but also the one he has left behind :

. . . In England we saw the miniature quality of things : the tiny trains and cars, and the low-set little cottages. At first we laughed at all that - we were too greatly concerned with the horrible beer and the hellish plumbing - but, later, when we got to know the people, we began to understand the "rightness" of all those things . . . In fact, so well did some of us learn to know and appreciate, the English and their little island that the departure from there, to some, was as sorrowful as the departure from Canada (No.10).

It has already been noted that, as stalemate near Caen turned into an Allied "blitzkrieg" in August, the proportion of news from Canadian sources and about Canadian affairs to news from and about Great Britain rose rapidly, to the point where one senses an increasing awareness that "home", after all, was not the "home away from home" in Great Britain. Many soldiers had been sent from Canada early in the war to defend the British Isles and many more had arrived since, to train and await future developments ; in the meantime some had acquired some degree of affection for "Old Blighty" but, once on the continent and on the road to final victory, their thoughts turned less to England than to Canada. A good example of this change appears in the last editorial (No.34) under the title "England reverts to the English".

. . . Poor England ! She saved herself from an invasion by the Nazis - but what other hordes of strangers she was near submerged beneath ! The Canadians took over Surrey and Sussex, married off all the eligible females and started a wartime generation of little Johnny Canucks overseas ; the Americans flooded the Midlands, spreading their peculiarities of good-will and gum-chewing, while the Poles set up house-keeping in Scotland. Innumerable minorities - the Free French, Dutch, Belgians, Australians, and so forth - paraded the streets of every large city in the British Isles. . . . England was grand. We'll always remember her for what she was and is - an eternal symbol of bravery and dogged determination. But, even so, we're glad to see her get her lights back. We're glad to see her get her island back.

Also, after the break-out from Lower Normandy and with the growing certainty of victory, the contents of the more numerous articles from Canada changes in

a remarkable way. Where once some of these reports reminded the soldiers of specific allowances and indemnities that they would receive for their service overseas, they now shifted emphasis to broader aspects of the return to "civvy street" in Canada, as if that return were an imminent reality. Examples, in the form of headlines follow.

Diplomatic Jobs for Vets in Governmental Service (No.16)

Training Centres Are Planned to Aid Servicemen After War (No.31)

Fund for R.C.A.F. Men Exceeds Half Million - Company to Assist with Personal finances (No. 31).

More Hospital Room in Canada Planned for Wounded (No.33)

Returned Men First for Jobs, Drew Says (No.33)

Even "Listenin' Luke" in the "Shootin' the Breeze" column changed the subject of his monologue from the local scene to post-war Canada.

The reader is also reminded in these pages of the traits of character that were often attributed to "Johnny Canuck" : modesty, restraint and calmness. These characteristics, usually explained as a consequence of Canadian dependence on a Mother Country or the propinquity of a bigger, older, more confident American neighbour or the severity of the climate, are evident in the form and content of *The Maple Leaf's* columns. Although it is a Canadian Army publication, the Canadian Army's contribution to the Allied cause is not cited out of proportion to that of others. In fact, most first page stories concerning the Normandy front relatethe advance of the British or American Armies ; as well, the achievements of Belgian, Dutch and Polish units are frequently highlighted. Above all, Allied unity and cooperation are stressed in these repors. A message of restraint is remarkably evident in one of the first editorials. It refers to a tragic affair, the killing of Canadian prisoners of war at Authie, three miles west of Caen, immediately after D-Day. The title is "Murder of Prisoners" in number 4 :

... On June 8, two days after the attack on Normandy was launched, an officer and 18 other ranks, all members of a Canadian infantry brigade, were deliberately murdered near Pavie (*sic*), in the county of Calvados, Normandy. Members of the 12 SS Panzer Division - the Hitler Jugend Division, well indoctrinated with Nazi brutality - committed the deed.

The authenticity of this terror story cannot be doubted. The court of inquiry made exhaustive inquiries and examined all evidence carefully. It is understood that French civilians who witnessed the murder have confirmed everything ...

It is important for us to remember that retaliation in kind must not occur. It will only make matters worse.

On the other hand, a note of vindictiveness appears in one of the last editorials (No.27: "For Future Peace ") but it seems generated more by concern for French civilians than for Canadian troops.

... In modern times no war has been fought on German soil. Her people - the mass of people who make war possible - had never tasted the devastation of battle until the Allied air forces started pounding their cities. In the years when they were planning the present war they had no memories, no reminders of the ruin and tragedy left in the wake of battles.

This is the point of carrying the fight to unconditional surrender on German soil. Put a few Caens and Falaises and Lisieux around the country. It sounds brutal but in fact it's not brutal. It's just a good way to make sure that the Germans won't be starting again in 20 years to throw the world into another war.

For students of World War II, the Caen edition of *The Maple Leaf* may serve as a short chronicle of human and non-strategic aspects of the period spent in the Normandy bridge-head. Between June 6 and the last week of August, 1944, more than a hundred thousand Canadian soldiers lived and fought in this confined area and, within the limits imposed by space and policy (20), the pages of *The Maple Leaf* express their thoughts, feelings and hopes.

Today, after the publication of numerous histories and biographies, which are controversial when not unfavourable about General Bernard Montgomery as a man and as a leader, it is sometimes forgotten that his celebrity was at its peak in the summer of 1944. Canadian soldiers admired him and, whether serving under the command of the 2nd British Army or the 1st Canadian Army, seemed proud to be considered among "Monty's Men". His immense popularity is evident in *The Maple Leaf's* news stories, editorials and, as already noted, in Les Callan's series of cartoons entitled "Monty and Johnny", which carries a sketched portrait of the general on one side of the title and one of "Private John E. Canuck" on the other. Already noted, too, are the two times when the newspaper's editorial space was given to a non-*Maple Leaf* voice, that of General Montgomery (No.11 : "A Message from Monty" and No. 19 : "The End in Sight - Monty's Message"). This same space was devoted to him on September 4 (No.29) under the heading "The Big Picture - From The London Times" in which it seems clear that "Monty's Men" were perplexed, if not resentful, about the subordinate rôle he would play after General Eisenhower had assumed command of all ground operations in Europe. A thorough explanation seemed due because only the day

before (N^o 28), in a front page story, the newspaper had reported that Montgomery was now a field-marshal : in an early (No. 7) it had also supported the conjecture that "Monty" would be Canada's next Governor-General. Using column space as a standard of measurement, Mackenzie King, Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, George VI, Dwight Eisenhower and H.D.G. Crerar are relatively minor figures in the pages of *The Maple Leaf*.

The change in attitude from one of cautious determination to exuberant optimism, consequent to the sudden shift in the tide of battle as reflected in the successive issues of this newspaper, has already been mentioned but all the reasons for this change have not yet been examined. *The Maple Leaf's* readers are informed daily about the collapse of the enemy's defences before them and, of course, are swiftly caught up in the surge northward but, at the same time their eyes on dispatches, articles and editorials under the following captions :

- The End in Sight - Monty's Message (No. 19)
- Canadian Troops Talk of War Over in Weeks (No. 20)
- Home for N.H.L. Playoffs (No. 22)
- Huns Worse Off Than in 1914-1918 : War Should Be Stopped Now (No. 23)
- Sees End of War October 1st (No. 25)
- For Future Peace (Editorial) (No. 27)
- Murphy Named to Help Rule Reich (No. 28)
- End Near As War Enters Sixth Year (No. 29)
- End Near : Caen, Falaise Decisive (No. 29)
- The Hour Approaches (Editorial) (No. 32)
- Surrender Only Way to Survive, U.S. Vice-Président Tells Germans (No. 33)
- War Clouds Lifting Fast - Smuts (No. 34)

- Canucks on Rampage - A relief After Caen, Falaise (No. 34)

Today's readers know that final victory in Europe was not to be won for another eight months, after more bitter combat, but how many are aware to what extent this sudden burst of enthusiasm in the late summer of 1944 was stimulated by the "media" of the times ? It is also known that Allied plans for the campaign in western Europe did not include such a rapid liberation of France. One wonders therefore whether it had not been expected that this edition of *The Maple Leaf* was going to be published in Caen for more than seven weeks and whether it, too, was not suddenly overcome by the spirit of "Blitzkrieg for Blitzkrieg" (21).

Finally, it might appear that the significance of the city and country in which this newspaper was published and distributed was not sufficiently treated in *The Maple Leaf*. Such is not the case. D-Day *did* take place in Lower Normandy, this *was* the first area of occupied Europe to be liberated and was, consequently, the testing ground for General De Gaulle's provisional government. In one way or another, these facts are considered in almost every issue of the *Caen Maple Leaf*, whether in the form of editorials (no fewer than five), news reports (almost forty), feature articles (at least twenty), illustrations (ten of Les Callan's cartoons portray local people and places in a friendly, gently humorous manner) and photographs. In all instances, the tone is unreservedly positive concerning France's history, present plight and future prospects and in some issues there seems to be a definite correlation between the editorial content and the quantity of news reports or special articles. In this respect, *The Maple Leaf* may be considered not only as an information sheet but also as an excellent public relations organ.

Since this "French content" of *The Maple Leaf* is so abundant and varied, it is difficult to make a representative choice of examples of this material : to select is to exclude. Nonetheless, portions of the five editorials should be cited to illustrate the editor's affirmative point of view. The following text appears in the second issue under the title "Canadians in France" :

Events of history have brought Canada and France very close in the sisterhood of nations. Frenchmen were among the first of the early Canadian explorers and colonizers. Since then the growth of French-Canada and the retention of many of the ways of life of Old France have maintained the kinship. The fact that twice in the lives of most of us we have been allied with the French in fighting the Germans has strengthened the bonds of friendship

Just the same it is surprising and encouraging to see the welcome given by the French people with their homes in ruins around them.

We pock-mark their fields with the scars of war. Though our leaders take precautions to prevent it, our bombs and our guns must unavoidably kill French people. And still, with the exception of the traitorous few that might be found in any country, they consider us friends.

After defeat in battle, and four years of Nazi rule, the French bear new devastation of their land with dignity and philosophy.

Seldom has a war done so much to bleed the soul of a nation. But France, distraught as she is, bled as she is of her wealth and power and young men, is not dead. Some day she will again be a civilized gracious country.

... It will help considerably if we, as the liberating soldiers who must unwillingly add to the destruction of the land give her some encouragement. It will help France, and lend greatness to the stature of Canada if, as well as being good soldiers, we treat the French with kindness and consideration.

In Number 10, under the heading "Now The French Way", the editor writes :

... Now we're in France. It's an abnormal time. The people are still half dazed, and perhaps at times they appear strange to us, or their actions queer... We have to learn another lesson. We have to learn to understand the Frenchman. Let's make a good job of it.

Five days later, in Number 15, the significance of France's capital is recalled in "Paris Calling" :

... Paris, through history has been both the birth-place and the battleground of the rights of man. Paris could have been defended in 1940, but in her hour of need, France was cursed by "defeatists, mystical generals who believed that she had sinned and could only be regenerated through great suffering, by industrialists and bankers who preferred the German Nazi to the thought of their own armed people.

But today the picture is different. Paris is carrying on her own fight, and she is calling to the Allied nations : calling a message of hope and of courage for the fulfillment of a long-cherished dream - her complete liberation. And the Allied Nations have heard her call. Now they are answering it.

That Paris was symbolic of France in the editor's minds is evident in an editorial written shortly after the liberation of Paris. In "France Has Risen", in Number 20, these lines are an illustration :

... There has been a lot of discussion in the years since 1940 about the future of France. Would she rise again to her former place of greatness in the ranks of the nations, or would the shame of her dismal defeat leave her as a third class power ? No statesman should ever have tried to answer that question. The answer remained with the people of France. Now they have given their answer, in a clear certain voice that rings loudly, furiously, happily over the world. And her answer is a most emphatic yes : France HAS risen To us France HAS regained her place in the ranks of the nations.

Less exuberantly, more realistically, the editors assess the prospects of "The New France" three days later in Number 23 :

... The magnificent achievements of the French Forces of the Interior have strongly shown that the French are able to manage their own affairs to a large extent, even during the actual process of the liberation. In almost every liberated community an organization has been found ready to take over the routine job of administration and the temporary but very important job of lending assistance to the Allies in their advance. These executives, liberation committees as they are frequently called, are part of de Gaulle's provisional government. The new agreement signed by the Allies gives them just such provisional power.

This does not mean that upon the cessation of hostilities, the de Gaulle committees will take over the government of France. It seems probable that French opinion will make de Gaulle head of the new state, but he will be chosen by democratic means.

With regard to the Free French leader it is amusing to note, on the front page of this same issue that "De Gaulle (is) With Troops in South" and, on page three, that "General De Gaulle Enters Freed Paris". In a later issue, the source given for information on the provisional government of France is *Liberté de Normandie*, a newspaper published in Caen in the same printing plant and with the help of *The Maple Leaf's* staff (22). As stated earlier, news stories and articles about the F.F.I., the Maquis and other aspects of the liberation appear daily in *The Maple Leaf* and are too numerous to reproduce here ; however, since the newspaper was published in the first liberated area of France, a few local examples, in the form of headlines, are appropriate:

Caen Girl Was Joan of Arc (No.2)

Security Officers Get Spy Prospects in Caen (No.4)

Reconstruction in France Proceeds under Coulet (No.7)

Cupid Scores Direct Hit on Canadian (No.8)

Caen Comes Alive (No.9)

The Majestic Bar, A Hot-Spot and Jive-Joint in Caen (No.10)

Rich History of Caen Recalled (No.10)

Cave Dwellers Liberated by Canadians - This Dramatic of Patriots' Resistance to Nazis is Revealed (No.11).

On the other hand, despite the abundance of copy on France, these soldier-journalists disclose little accurate knowledge of local administrative structures and, sometimes, of geography. The lower Norman *départements* of Calvados, Manche and Orne are never mentioned by name and Caen, St-Lô and Alençon are never identified as *préfectures* : all are grouped under one word, Normandy. This imprecision may not

be surprising if one considers possible censorship requirements ; it should also be remembered that each place name had first been learned in a code language, e.g. Maynooth for Asnelles, Poland for Caen, Alba for Courseulles, Wigmore for Ouistreham. Unfortunately, it is also known that all this "'French content"' of *The Maple Leaf* could seldom be appreciated by one part of the reading public, the local inhabitants. The quantity of text on current events in their country was outstanding but to most of them it was incomprehensible. It was in English (23).

To inform and entertain the local population was not, of course, the newspaper's purpose and to make this minor criticism in 1979 is to engage in "wishful thinking". "For Canadian Troops", *The Maple Leaf* was faced with a wide enough diversity of obstacles to overcome, deadlines to meet and tastes to please and, in the circumstances, its soldier-journalists met the challenge with humour, tact and proficiency.

APPENDIX A

A personal account of the publication of the first two issues of the France Edition of *The Maple Leaf* (24).

Dear Sir,

Am sitting in the office of a former Vichy editor - just waiting for my second edition of the France Maple Leaf to roll. What a headache this one has been. Will enclose a couple of copies of the first edition - a lousy print job I know - but I didn't have a single experienced press man ; a DR I had was once a press minder, and that was all. We had press spoil all over the room mixed up with ink and plate metal. I did the casting and routing myself ; then gave a hand trying to thread the web. We had to use some bond ink cut down with kerosene. Most of the ink rollers had been cut with shrapnell (*sic*) from the bombing a few nights ago. We were mortared twice in the plant the night we got the first issue away. The blast had jarred the casting box loose and I didn't realize it with the result I flooded the floor with metal. Was foolish enough to try a half tone the first issue - the results you can see. It was a lousy Dom new Acy mat to begin with ; by the time I did the shell casting on it, mounted it on a block of wood, then sawed it with a hack saw, in lieu of any shavers, it didn't have a chance. It gathered ink all the run. Then I got a page 2 and 3 transposed in some mysterious way, but we got a sheet out. I had to steal a 75 horsepower generator to get the plant running and the sapper big shots took a lot of cooling down about it.

I got two linotype operators, two compositors rushed over and that was the entire mechanical staff. In under 72 hours we had the first edition off. The junior sapper pals of mine rewired the plant as the civic electric plant is a complete wreck. We unfroze two of the linos, the others were damaged. Didn't have any time for the editorial end, as arranging a complete circulation set-up and break-down of units into mailing bags as well as the mechanical end, was all I could manage. Turned young Seth Halton loose on the editorial end, but he had never written a head in his life, or done any desk work. At this stage I conscripted JAM Cook for a day. It did my heart good to see him take hold and put Seth on the right track. It looked very natural to see him leaning over a chase and doing the last minute make-up. You will likely spot a smell of JAM's style make-up in the first issue. We were very short of type faces to do a real job. Strips of wood had to be used between the colns (*sic*) as we couldn't find any metal rule. I used Halton's shirt to dampen down the matrix sheets as far as I could recall it looked like a wet mat system. A No.1 petrol cooker was scrounged from Ord. to melt the lead and it took over twelve hours to get the temperature up to 300 degrees. We didn't get any sleep for a couple of nights as the machinery kept breaking down. JAM and I had a couple of good laughs however, and wondered what

would have happened if Bill Vennels, Bill Lord and Jack Owen could have walked in.

Since yesterday I have dug up a French stereotyper, a sign sgt. who was a pressman on the New York News, another lino man and a circulation lad, so have great hopes that this edition will be an improvement. It will be another hour before we can get the page proofs back from the censor, then I am off to bed. Of course the minute I got the presses running I was descended upon by Free French regional commissioners and delegations trying to crowd me out. I couldn't understand a damn word they said and we all screamed at each other. I was too tired to argue so gave them a real blast or two. I think the matter is settled now for a day or two at least.

Kindest regards, Dick .

APPENDIX B

The editorial staff of *The Maple Leaf* published in Caen, France, between July 27 and September 9, 1944. Three mastheads.

Numbers 1 - 10, July 27 - August 11 :

THE MAPLE LEAF

(Contents Passed by Censor - May be Mailed Home)

Published in CAEN, FRANCE, for the Canadian Armed Forces by the Cdn. Army Public Relations Group under direction Cdn. ADPR, 21 Army Group.

Lt.-Col. RICHARD MALONE

Editor-in-Chief

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Address all correspondence to the Editorial Office, THE MAPLE LEAF (France)
c/o No.3 P.R. Group Canadian Army B.W.E.F.

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Acting Editor

Lieut. DOUG SMITH

Business and Circ. Manager

Lieut. LES CALLAN

Art Editor

Cpl. G.R. KIDD

Sub-Editor

Numbers 11 - 29, August 14 - September 4 :

The same text and format but the following modifications :

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Business and Circ. Manager

Lieut. LES CALLAN

Art Editor

Cpl. G.R. KIDD, Pte. J.E. CARLOVA

Sub Editors

Numbers 30 - 34, September 5 - September 9 :

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Editor-in-Chief

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Capt. JACK GOLDING

Assitant Editor

Lieut. DOUG SMITH
Lieut. LES CALLAN
Sgt. KEN BROWN
Cpl. GEORGE KIDD, Pte JOHN CARLOVA

Business and Circ. Manager
Art Editor
News Editor
Sub Editors

APPENDIX C

An alphabetical list of signatures printed over articles, reports and dispatches appearing in the thirty-four issues of *The Maple Leaf* published in Caen, France, between July 27 and September 9, 1944.

Allen, Ralph : *Toronto Globe and Mail*

Brown, Ken : *Maple Leaf* Staff Reporter

Carlova, John

Clark, Gerald : *Montreal Standard* War Correspondent

Cook, J.A.M. : Sifton War Correspondent

Craburn, Larry

Cranfield, W. : London Correspondent of *Toronto Telegram*

Desjardins, Maurice : Canadian Press

Earl, Laurence : *Montreal Standard* Photographer

Ecker, Margaret : Canadian Press War Correspondent

Essel : Belgian War Correspondent with Canadian Forces

Feldhurzen, Maciej : Polish Telegraph Agency

Finnie, A.M.

Flick, Don

Golding, Jack : *Maple Leaf* Reporter

Griffin, Frederick : *Toronto Star* War Correspondent

Halton, Mathew H. : C.B.C. War Correspondent

Hunter, Louis V. : Canadian Press War Correspondent

Hutton, Geoffrey : Australian War Correspondent with Canadian Army

Kelly, L.E.

Kent, Allan : *Toronto Evening Telegram* War Correspondent

Kick, Robert : War Correspondent with Dutch Forces

Kidd, George

Lynch, Charles : Reuters Special Correspondent

Munro, Ross : Canadian Press War Correspondent

Pancerney, Dywizti : War Correspondent with Polish Forces

Reeve, Ted : former *Toronto Telegram* Sports Reporter

Sanburn, R.L. : Southam War Correspondent

Shapiro, L.S.B. : N.A.N.A. War Correspondent

Stewart, William : Canadian Press War Correspondent

Stewart, H.

Syrop, Konrad : Radio Polskie War Correspondent

Vickery, Al

Watt, Sholto : *Montreal Star* War Correspondent

Ziman, H.D. : *Daily Telegraph* Special Correspondent

APPENDIX D

The editorial policy of *The Maple Leaf* (25)

1. No editorial directives, regulations or policies for the Maple Leaf have at any time been issued by either military authorities or from Canadian Government sources. Decisions on editorial matters rest entirely with The Maple Leaf Staff. On the founding of the various editions of the Maple Leaf however the ADPR Lt.-Col. Malone in each instance set forth a basic policy to be followed as long as The Maple Leaf functioned. This policy involves two principles only and was accordingly registered with Field Marshal Montgomery, General Crerar and the Defence Department in Canada. They in their turn agreed to a policy of non interference. This policy which must be maintained at all times is as follows :

- a) There will be no holding back of actual news at any time either domestic, military or foreign events. All factual stories considered of interest to the troops will be published with a prominence according to reader interest. No such stories will be deliberately overplayed if such treatment could result in loss of morale or friction within the Army or political controversy, i.e. troops within the Army are entitled to their own political views whether Liberal, Labour, Conservative or C.C.F., etc. As there is only one newspaper available to the troops, there can be no special emphasis given to news of one particular political body, racial group or provincial division.
- b) Editorial comment and opinion appearing in the Editorial Column proper of necessity represents the official view of the Maple Leaf. The basic purpose of The Maple Leaf is for assisting troop morale and at the same time keeping our forces up to date with the news as well as providing some interest and entertainment.

2. For the above reasons the following subjects will not be dealt with editorially :

- a) Any comment or opinion on domestic, political issues in Canada which would cause friction within the Army and between the troops overseas and people at home thus injuring Army morale.
- b) Any internal military question which would tend to cause antagonism and set one group, formation or service within the Army against another. This applies equally as regards other national interests within the Canadian Army i.e. subjects which would cause friction between Canucks, Limies, Poles, Yanks, etc. Rather the governing principle should be that the Maple Leaf should be a strong medium for binding our Army together and maintaining a team spirit throughout. The strength of The Maple Leaf lies entirely in that direction.

- c) On the question of letters to the Editor, i.e. complaints, grouses and grievances, these lettres should be published as space permits, priority being given to constructive letters rather than destructive. Where it is obvious that a grouse is well-founded, The Maple Leaf should make efforts to secure accurate facts and add Editor's note or if of sufficient general interest to secure a statement or article from the authorities in explanation. In cases where there appears to be a general complaint on one particular point, The Maple Leaf has an obligation in an effort to have the situation corrected by reference to the authorities concerned.

APPENDIX E

A list of abbreviations appearing in the preceding pages

A.D.P.R.	Assisatant Director, Public Relations
A.E.F.	Allied Expeditionary Force
A.P.	Associated Press
A.T.S.	Auxiliary Territorial Service
B.W.E.F.	British West Expeditionary Force
C.B.C.	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
C.C.F.	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
C.P.	Canadian Press
C.W.A.C.	Canadian Women's Army Corps
D.R.	Dispatch Rider
F.F.I.	French Forces of the Interior
N.A.N.A.	North American Newspaper Alliance
N.H.L.	National Hockey League
Ord.	Ordnance (Army Ordnance Corps)
P.R.	Public Relations
R.C.A.F.	Royal Canadian Air Force
Recce	Reconnaissance
W.E.	War Establishment

FOR CANADIAN TROOPS

THE MAPLE LEAF

With Canadian Press News Service



Vol. 1, No. 1

FRANCE, July 27, 1944

OUR TROOPS IN HARD FIGHTING

Reds Advance take Narva fight for Loo

MUSSIAN

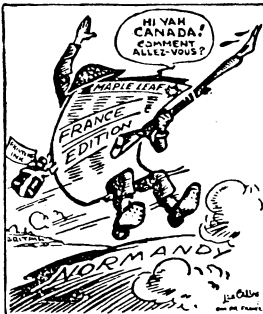
The Russians have taken Narva, after nine months. Evrons and pushed to miles beyond, it was announced today.

Further south, they have driven deep into the town of Loo, less than 100 miles from the Baltic coast.

Other Soviet troops reached the Vistula on a wide front to a place within 50 miles of Warsaw.

The announcement said that the Russians have cut the enemy's last escape railway out of Breslau-Lowitz in the Soudan. They broke into the suburbs of Loo, where the Germans are now completely encircled.

HERE WE GO AGAIN!



Enemy Counters To Regain Ground

By CHARLES LYNN
Rouler Special Correspondent

With the Canadians in Normandy, July 27—On Tuesday the Canadians broke into the strongest German defenses on the rim of the beachhead, and yesterday battled to find what they had gained. Some ground had been given up last night.

That is the way a spokesman summed up the picture on the Canadian front.

To the soldiers it has been two days of blood and death and whistling shells and an almost continuous roar of explosions as three boys from the Dominion fought their way uphill to flush the Germans out of their trenches and pillboxes and dug in tanks.

The main front was about three miles wide three miles of wharfedale and hedges and sheltered villages where the Germans made their first determined stand since the Canadians and British troops hurled them out of their strongholds north of Caen.

It was high ground that the Canadians assaulted, with the Germans looking down and the German gun positions looked down on the Canadians from above and from the right, across the river Orne.

Canadian guns have been snatched shells into these German positions across the Orne in an effort to blunt the enemy's attack but the mortar fire pours down.

The heaviest fighting took place yesterday and last night. Today the Canadians are fighting themselves and most of the activity has been in the area of the Canadian Infantry launched the attack in the plain blackness of 1000 hours Tuesday.

The Germans fought bitterly for the contact, and the prisoners were taken.

It was a large prolonged attack behind a cerebral artillery barrage.

Among the troops were going to the east of the advance a machine gun, killing a company of enemy guns. No surviving Canadians reported the attack behind the German lines, which had no German where they had been.

The Germans, who had been strengthening their positions on the high ground for the last week, reacted quickly to the attack and shortly after dawn were mounting a counter-attack and trying to break through the Canadian lines.

The first counter-attacks were beaten off but the Germans broke through in spots and drove in again and again.

During fighting went on all day and last night. The Canadians saw the Germans holding their fire and their position with the Canadians' firing firmly in the Canadian and British tanks, guns and first strikes remained in take a roll of German tanks which were sitting around the battlefield all day.

It was the heaviest fighting on the Canadian front in the months since the Americans in the St. Lo sector for the first time.

The heaviest and most intense fighting was in the area of the Canadian front in the months since the Americans in the St. Lo sector for the first time.

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Beyond St. Lo

American tanks have smashed a mile wedge into the German defenses west of St. Lo. They have captured the village of St. Gilles and the town of Marigny on the road leading west from St. Lo to the big road centre of Coulaines.

Three years for forget

OTTAWA, July 25—Francis George Connor, 67½-year-old former assistant treasurer of War Service Department was sentenced by Judge MacIntosh in three-year imprisonment on 10 charges including theft, forgery, and use of cheque. Sergeant Detective William H. Stivan told the court the total amount of charges included in all charges was in the vicinity of three thousand dollars.

There were eleven charges of forgery, one of receiving and thirteen of theft.

Connor pleaded guilty to the most difficult charge about which he said, by being transferred from Calgary where he maintained a home to Ottawa.

"In Ottawa we put him in jail," he said. "I had no intention of hiding anything."

Births!!!

Born: To him and Save Miss to a daughter. Ross Myron is a well known Canadian war correspondent. Here is the well known Canadian nursing sister married. She is now in Canada. Congratulations.

Butter thick for French people but bread still slices thin

By M. J. BARDON
The Canadian Press

How is the civilian population of liberated Normandy faring at the moment? Well, it is not so good as it might be. The food situation is still a problem.

Canadian Research

OTTAWA, July 25—A report from the Canadian Research Council, which is well advanced for the establishment of a wool research laboratory to investigate values of wool fibres in relation to breeding of sheep.

"Lithuania, which has been accorded the best place to establish the laboratory as most of the high quality wool breeds of sheep now are in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan."

The minister said that the wool research will continue this year to experiment with the recovery of mineral salts in both S. Oils and New Brunswick. A thousand dollars was spent last year on recovery experiments.

The minister said that the wool research was a serious threat to spinners in the Canadian Valley of British Columbia and was causing considerable damage to orchards in Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec. New methods are being used in an attempt to control the pest.

can be obtained a fair picture of the situation.

Food is a problem. Even under the best regime the Germans were eating well and carrying out a policy of rationing.

Food offers a more serious problem.

It is a problem of bread. The Germans have always relied on their own bread. It is a problem of bread. The Germans have always relied on their own bread. It is a problem of bread. The Germans have always relied on their own bread.

Food boards

The situation in the south is looking in areas where supplies still have much.

Villages with surplus produce have more than 100 to 150 food stores. Many of which have been taken by the Germans.

There is more butter than ever before in the region and prices are still at reasonable levels.

With a market to find. The region has discovered that the troops like milk and will take it in the form of more or less.

It is a mild form of attack.

Factory boys took off their caps and put the rest to soldiers at their feet. Many of which have been taken by the Germans.

With a market to find. The region has discovered that the troops like milk and will take it in the form of more or less.

It is a mild form of attack.

MAPLE LEAF DELIVERY

The Maple Leaf is distributed free to all Canadian troops in the theatre on the basis of one copy per seven men. It will require a few issues to get the delivery system going.

A hundred per cent of your pleasure, action or big cheer will get to proper attention as per year will be getting the regular bundle. It will get you to get your mail and let us know we will see you get an ear that grows.

Separate bundles are made up for the unit and will be delivered in the same day as possible to the forward post office. After picking up your mail to return packages dividing up between platoons and detachments.

The one thing the Germans fear

more bombs and shells to have to drink water. He has been over generous with the food and his reserves are getting regularly low. It will be three or four months before he can again organize his supply.

When the Germans were here the substance ratios were infinitesimal. Four or five cigarettes a month. The Normans used to grow some tobacco plants in their gardens but this is an art and the leaves they raised produced foul cigarettes. However, with our health handouts they are smoking them regularly.

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NOTES

1. "Troubles Hopes, Thanks", **The Maple Leaf** (France Edition), July 27, 1944, p.4.
2. Excellent accounts of the effects of the Battle of Normandy on civilians in Caen have been given by H  l  ne Dufau, **Le tragique   t normand**, Paris : Editions de la Nouvelle-France, 1946 ; Andr   Cosset and Paul Lecomte, **Caen pendant la bataille**, Caen : Ozanne, 1946 ; Jean L  on-Jean, **Le drame de Caen : juin-juillet 1944 - R  cit d'un rescap  **, Rouen : Imprimerie Rouennaise, 1945 ; A. Monzein and Y. Chapron, **A la charni  re - Caen 1944**, Paris : Flammarion, 1947 and Joseph Poirier, **La Bataille de Caen, 6 juin - 15 ao  t 1944**, Caen : Caron, 1944.
3. C.P. Stacey, **The Victory Campaign : The Operations in North -West Europe 1944-1945**, Ottawa : The Queen's Printer, 1960, pp.199-200, citing M515, General Crerar's file GOC-in-C 1-0. The reader is reminded that Allied strategy was to attract and retain enemy armoured forces around Caen to enable American forces to prepare a break-out from the western sector of the bridge-head. With "Operation Cobra" this occurred to the west of Saint-L   on July 25, 1944.
4. *Ibid.*, p.202.
5. Thirty-four years old at the time, Richard S. Malone had had experience in various Canadian newspapers since 1928 and had also followed a military career first in the reserve army and, then in armoured and infantry divisions which participated in the landings in Sicily and Italy in 1943. He later explained his duties in Normandy in 1944 as follows : "**The Maple Leaf** was only one section of 3 PR Group. The PR Group also included the following sections and units : war correspondents' section ; wireless and transmission section censorship, film and photo unit ; psychological warfare section (loudspeakers on scout cars, leaflet units and so forth) ; administrative section (for operating press camps). There were other detachments involved from time to time, such as broadcasting units and the whole was operated by a small headquarters section commanded by myself" (Letter to the author, January 8, 1979).
6. "The Story of The Maple Leaf", **The Maple Leaf Scrapbook**, Brussels : Le Soir Press, 1945, cover page. Reference is made here to a printing plant owned by Caron et Cie. and situated on rue Demolombe in Caen. From October 25, 1940 to June 5, 1944, a daily newspaper entitled **La Presse Caennaise** was printed on its press. The subject of "collaboration members" has been studied by

R.L. Bennett, *Les journeaux de Caen 1940-1944* (Caen : Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences humaines de l'université de Caen, 1969).

7. Editorial, *The Maple Leaf* (France Edition), July 27, 1944, p. 3. Reference is made here to J.D. MacFarlane, Managing Editor of the Italy Edition of *The Maple Leaf* which was published first in Naples and then in Rome, starting in January, 1944. The last European edition was published for the Canadian Forces of Occupation in Delmenhorst, Germany.
8. "Trouble, Hopes, Thanks", *Ibid.*, p.4. A twenty-five year old brother of Matthew Halton, a C.B.C. war correspondent whose voice was familiar to Canadian radio-listeners during World War II, Seth Halton had had some journalistic experience in Calgary and Toronto before enlisting in the ranks and being sent overseas as a lieutenant. Thirty-five years later, his former editor-in-chief wrote : "While I wrote the odd editorial from time to time, all the day-to-day editorial work was under the direction of Seth Halton . . . I was able to give only general guidance to the Caen edition, visiting them about once a week" (Letter to the author, January 8, 1979).
9. R.S. Malone, letter to the Editor-in-Chief of *Liberté de Normandie*, February 18, 1974. A more personal account of the production of the first issue of *The Maple Leaf* in Caen is reproduced in Appendix A.
10. "The Story of The Maple Leaf", *The Maple Leaf Scrapbook*, cover page.
11. R.S. Malone, mimeographed letter to Canadian newspaper editors, 1944.
12. R.S. Malone, letter to the Editor-in-Chief of *Liberté de Normandie*, February 18, 1974. Volume 1, Number 1 of the "Continental Edition" of *The Stars and Stripes* "Daily Newspaper of the U.S. Armed Forces in the European Theater of Operations", was printed in Cherbourg and bears the date Tuesday, July 4, 1944.
13. J.L. Ralston (Minister of National Defence), mimeographed letter to Canadian newspaper editor, August 9, 1944. Today, as then, it would be difficult to ascertain how many soldiers read *The Maple Leaf*. According to R.S. Malone : "The circulation of *The Maple Leaf* varied from week to week depending on the ration draw. It ran anywhere from 30 to 40,000 copies per day, as the units were built up in the beach-head. . . . Each day, all over the front, every unit put in their ration draw according to unit strength. We sent *The Maple Leaf* forward to the units with their rations, as the units were moving from place to place every day. The issue was on the scale of one copy for three men" (Letter to the author, January 8, 1979).

14. *"Give Us Time, Corporal", The Maple Leaf (France Edition), August 2, 1944, p.2, R.S. Malone has explained that : "The Maple Leaf was only subject to the same security censorship as any regular newspaper at home, or as applied to war correspondents in the field re names of units, locations, movements and so forth" (Letter to the author, January 18, 1979).*
15. *A list of names signed to articles and reports in the France Edition of The Maple Leaf is given in Appendix C.*
16. *The composition of The Maple Leaf's editorial staff, as given in these mastheads, appears in Appendix B.*
17. *Les Callan's cartoons appear in twenty-two issues ; "Bing" Coughlin's, in seventeen ; L.E. Weekes', in six.*
18. *Ralph Allen, Ordeal by Fire , Canada 1910-1945, Toronto : Popular Library, 1961, p.454. It is noteworthy that an article by this Canadian historian, an overseas correspondent for the Toronto Globe and Mail who landed in Normandy with Canadian troops on D-Day, was printed in the first issue of The Maple Leaf in Caen.*
19. *In later editions, a suggested distinctive Canadian flag prompted the greatest response in letters to the editor and the majority favoured a maple leaf emblem. The former Editor-in-Chief has recently commented that : "I can't think that The Maple Leaf had any subsequent effect on having the maple leaf chosen as our national flag. . . most Legion branches in Canada were against the change" (Letter to the author, January 18, 1979).*
20. *An "Editorial Policy" concerning what could or should be printed in The Maple Leaf was formulated in early 1944 and printed in July, 1945. It is reproduced in Appendix D.*
21. *The title of an editorial on September 5, 1944. In 1979, R.S. Malone affirmed that : "No, I realized that the Caen edition would be a temporary arrangement and would ultimately move forward to Brussels and then either Bonn or Berlin" (Letter to the author, January 8, 1979). Without giving any notice to their readers that No.34 was their last issue in Caen , the staff put it to bed on September 9, moved to Brussels and published the first issue of the Belgian edition on September 16 in the undamaged printing plant belonging to Le Soir. Shortly before, on the Italian front, The Maple Leaf in Rome had printed : "This is no 'out of the trenches' by Christmas business. You can't win wars on optimism" (August 4, 1944).*

22. *The first issue of **Liberte de Normandie**, sub-titled "Daily Organ of the Liberation Committee", carries the dates July 9-13, 1944 . It was printed on a single sheet of paper measuring 25 cm. x 32 cm.. A small, foot-operated press at the Caron et Cie plant as used for the purpose. In the following weeks, the staff of **The Maple Leaf** printed proclamations for the new prefect of Calvados, Pierre Daure.*
23. *The fact that **The Maple Leaf** was an English language publication may be a partial explanation for the absence of copies in the area today. Copies of **La Voix des Alliés**, a small news bulletin published by the British Army at Douvres-la-Délivrande in the summer of 1944, are not difficult to find in 1979.*
24. *A letter written on July 30, 1944, by R.S. Malone and communicated to the author on November 7, 1978, with the comment that : "This is perhaps the most accurate account ." R.S. Malone states that this letter was sent to J.L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence, Ottawa, but the technical vocabulary and references to newspaper colleagues cause the author to wonder if it might not have been addressed to another editor or publisher in Canada.*
25. *Although printed on July 1, 1945, this statement of editorial policy was formulated at the time of the publication of the Italy Edition of **The Maple Leaf** in January, 1944. It was communicated to the author after the completion of this study and is reproduced here because it is a fair reflection of the editorial content of the France Edition of **The Maple Leaf**. The former Editor-in-Chief has written that : "I insisted that the editors should not have to take orders from senior officers on editorial matters. Ralston supported me in this and it was finally agreed that I would lay down the editorial policy to the editors but they would not have to take orders from any other officer re editorial content. The policy was to be mine alone and not the government's. Then if they wished to court-martial or fire anybody, I would be the one. Incidentally, I was given direct access to the Minister in Ottawa, in this connection. It was in Italy that I drew up the statement of policy for the editors and I used this for all editions of the paper, though it may not have appeared in printed form until later" (R.S. Malone, letter to the author, January 18, 1979).*